

From novel to webcomic:
transmedial translation and collaborative
process in graphic storytelling

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Abstract

The subject of this PhD will analyse the collaborative process within a creative team and the practice of writing as research when it explores a new medium under emergence, in this case webcomics. As the project is concerned with the transposition of my trilogy of novels, I assumed the responsibilities of translating the prose into script and creating the story boarding. After the first brainstorming session with the illustrator on panels design and flow, changes are negotiated by the team and worked by the artist in the final draft of the panels. It is important to note that, while the illustrator's input is a vital part of this project, choices concerning the structure and the narrative of the project are in the hands of the author. The research project will take into consideration the dynamics of such partnership and how the loop of creating and feedbacking challenges previously established creative processes while it helps to set new ones. Similarly, as the project has taken the shape of a webcomic, the behaviour of online readers and their response to the content will be monitored through tracking tools on media platforms to see if and to what extent (likes, shares, visit prior posts) readers interact, thus affecting dissemination. This project will research how modern politics, historical events (the Italian Years of Lead) and attitudes feed the narrative, and show how these are balanced and blended with fictional elements. It will also take into consideration the inner mechanisms of both genre and medium as tools capable of dissecting, analysing, and offer alternatives to the questions asked by the contemporary discourse. Finally, as an Italian/English bilingual Fantasy writer, I will reflect on how writing in English has actively shaped my work and argue that my conscious decision to write in English aims at placing my work within the British comic books' tradition. This choice is also motivated by the lack of an Italian academic tradition in studying creative writing and genres other than literary fiction.

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Declaration

Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.
This thesis is my work and has not been submitted in substantially the same form for the
award of a higher degree elsewhere.

This thesis uses the Harvard Reference System.

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“then the voice in my head said
WHETHER YOU LOVE WHAT YOU LOVE
OR LIVE IN DIVIDED CEASELESS
REVOLT AGAINST IT
WHAT YOU LOVE IS YOUR FATE” (Bidart, 1984)¹

Introduction

When I first drew an outline of the PhD project, politics and politicised topics were at the forefront of my initial proposal. In the original plan, I modelled the conflict in *Storms* by taking inspiration from the terrorist acts of the Years of Lead carried out in Italy between 1969 and 1980 by the armed factions dubbed Black Brigades (affiliated with neo-fascist parties) and Red Brigades (affiliated with leftist parties). I intended to study the collaboration between fiction and non-fiction on multiple levels: first, how reality can become fiction because of a lack of transparency (the spread of fake news and conspiracy theories online have blurred the lines between the two); secondly, how fiction comments on reality and sometimes even foreshadows it. The novel was supposed to be a tool to study and interpret recurring historical patterns when—a part of—our society believed to be post-race and, though the aim has not changed, the focus has shifted since then. This was made even more timely as far-right claims and politicians were on the rise again following Brexit.

When I first wrote *Storms* in Italian in the late 2000s, it was a collection of short stories connected by the same characters; a few years later (in 2012) when I translated the short stories in English, I kept the fantasy setting and main characters, but opted to turn the stories into a novel, before I developed it into a trilogy. This was the first major restructuring *Storms* has undergone. In 2015, when I started the MA, I set out to eliminate elements that spoke of my Christian heritage and upbringing before submitting my work to my peers. The reason that prompted to do so was to instil new life into the trilogy and test the world-building of my narrative universe. Finally, the last major change happened when during the PhD I translated *Storms* from novel into graphic novel

¹ Bidart, F. (2017). *Half-light: collected poems 1965-2016*. New York: Farrar, Straus And Giroux.

and, as I dismantled the trilogy and put it back together, I structured it to explore how global political issues might affect everyday life.

Once, during a supervision with George Green and Brian Baker, they mentioned how my project addressed two different politics: capital p “Politics” and lower p “politics”. For instance, the making and unmaking of a country using terroristic attacks, espionage, and misinformation might be considered “Politics”, while issues regarding gender representation, the (female) body, and civil rights fall under the umbrella of “politics”. The difference is not a matter of relevance or importance, it has more to do with how the subject is no longer material (a topic of the graphic novel) but structural (the graphic novel has become a tool to explore and dissect the subject).

An important element in the project, that has come to prominence more recently, is the role of fairytales within the graphic novel and in my academic research. Marina Warner mentions how dissidents are drawn to the form despite its conservatism. Both Angela Carter and Italo Calvino, who identified as leftist, were advocates of the form; “as a member of the partisans who fought Fascism and as a communist in Italy after the war, he [Calvino] saw fantastic fiction as the literature of the people whom he wanted to reach and represent. When he proclaims ‘Folktales are real’ (le fiabe sono vere) he means that they speak of poverty, scarcity, hunger, anxiety, lust, greed, envy, cruelty, and of all the grinding consequences in the domestic scene and the larger picture.”² In the graphic novel, the fairy-tales are memories coded as weaponised messages, used across different timelines to spur had-ais (in the past) and humans (in the present) into action. Their volatile nature (they are easy to disseminate and manipulate) makes them the perfect Trojan horse.

Despite its very Italian roots, I translated this project into English. The decision was very much a consequence of wanting to pour new life into the project and of having adopted English as my preferred language for my creative endeavours. It was also, in its own way, a political choice. When I emigrated to London, the Italian publishing market was not keen on speculative fiction. To this day, Italian sci-fi and fantasy authors are mostly relegated to the pages of magazines rather than the shelves of a bookshop. I wanted more, and I wanted an audience that would approach my work with an open

² Warner, M. (2018). *Fairy tale: a very short introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

mind. What started as a need for validation turned into love for the language, the culture, and the literary tradition; now, writing in English has become first nature overriding my first language.

There is another layer to the translation process, and that is the transmediation from one form to the other, from novel to graphic novel (also addressed as transmedial translation). My fascination with the medium is well-documented, from my teenage years spent reading manga and comic books, to my academic interest in researching transmedial translation.

This project sits in the middle of a Venn diagram, its totality the results of the overlapping layers of my experience as an artist and a person. This becomes evident when we take into consideration how *Storms* has changed since its inception. Because of such a layered progress, next you can find a glossary that will help you navigate the terminology I use to discuss the different creative processes.

Glossary

Adaptation: the process to adjust (the novel) to different conditions or uses, or to meet different situations (graphic novel);

Ådhit: the secondary world in the graphic novel *Storms*;

Anime: Japanese films made using characters and images that are drawn rather than real, or one of these films (they had a great influence on me as a teenager and fed my imagination);

Comics: juxtaposed images organized in a sequential manner;

Comic books: a magazine or book that contains a set of stories told in pictures with a small amount of writing;

Fillers: in television and other media, material that exists outside the story arc to pad out other material;

Graphic narrative: narrative work in the medium of comics;

Graphic novel: a long-form, fictional work of sequential art. In this dissertation used to talk about *Storms* when in graphic narrative;

Had-au (pl. had-ais): magical beings from the secondary world of Ådhit. They have been cursed to reincarnate in human beings to keep them away from their world.

Manga: Japanese comic books that tell stories in pictures;

Storms: the name of the novel (first instalment of the trilogy) turned graphic novel;

Transposition: in this dissertation used to indicate a form of free translation where the translator exercises their freedom to attain equivalence;

Translation: something that is translated, or the process of translating something, from one language to another. Used it to refer to the process of translating *Storms* from Italian into English and from novel into graphic novel;

Transmediation or Transmedial translation: the process of translating a work into a different medium;

Webcomic: comics published on a website or mobile app, used in the dissertation to discuss *Storms* when published online.

1. Comic books, graphic novels, manga, and their influence.

1.1 A (quick) history of comics.

As the field of comic studies has developed over the years, many have tried to find noble ancestors for the medium: from the paintings in the Chauvet-Pont-d'Arc Cave in France to the Trajan Column in Rome. Although there are elements that may indicate a correlation between comics and early pictorial storytelling, the popularity of the former is rooted in the technological advancements resulted from the Industrial Revolutions as the mechanical evolution of the printing press allowed for a wider circulation of newspapers and magazines, which included the comic strips on their pages.³

When comics appeared across Europe and the United States of America (US), they underwent similar developmental stages. In Italy, *Il Corriere dei Piccoli*, a magazine dedicated to children, was the primary outlet where young readers had access to comic strips, just like British children poured over the pages of *Funny comics*. The philosophy behind *Corriere dei Piccoli* saw comics as a pedagogic tool useful to teach children and young adults moral lessons; similarly, in the UK, publishing houses tapped into the same demographic resulting in comic strips finding a home in dedicated booklets aimed at readers between the age of eight of twelve. In France, the Church – through its *Union des œuvres ouvrières catholiques de France* – provided similar content for children. It is no surprise that the medium has been infantilised and dismissed as a lesser form of entertainment, with the notable exception of Germany and the UK, where comics found a home – as caricatures – in satirical magazines (e.g., *Simplicissimus*, *Illustrated Chips*).

The first differences can be noted in the shift of attitude towards the form and its content in the interwar years. Where British publishers pushed original, humorous content, Italian magazines and publishing houses were quick in importing and adapting (by removing balloons and re-arranging the words in the panels) American comics for the Italian market, but when the fascist government opted for an autarchic regime, the publication of all American comics was suspended (except for *Mickey Mouse*) in favour of Italian original characters. These are also the years of some of the most popular Franco-Belgian *bandes dessinées* (drawn strips); *The Adventures of Tin Tin* paved the way

³ Haver, G. & Meyer, M. (eds 2008), *Il comic book delle origini tra cinema, altri media e attualità in Cinema e Fumetto*. Udine: Forum Edizioni.

for subsequent comics. Hergés's stories became so successful that *Tin Tin* migrated from the pages of the magazine *Le Petit Vingtième* to comic book form, earning its own independence and more space to delve into the plot and expand the narrative. During the German occupation of France and Belgium, the Nazi regime suspended the import of American comics as they were deemed to be of questionable character. But because of their popularity, French and Belgian authors continued writing the stories of popular titles such as *Superman* and *Flash Gordon*. As the regime moved to ban the titles permanently, the comics artists and writers filled the gap in the market producing original content, giving a chance to artists such as Peyo, Jacques Martin, and Albert Uderzo to emerge and lay the foundations for the future Franco-Belgian comics tradition.

In the decades following the end of the global conflict, Europe had to share the market with American publications and their success, which led to a public outcry against the moral decadence depicted across Europe and the Commonwealth. On the night of Friday 24th September 1954, in Glasgow, hundreds of children went hunting vampire-like monsters between the headstones of one of the city's cemeteries. Michael Scanlan, Glasgow's City Education Officer, had little doubts where to point the finger; Scanlan encouraged the government to ban American comics, as the public would and could not enforce the ban on their own. The scare provoked a wave of legislative measures across the Commonwealth nations.⁴

Not long after the events of Glasgow, on the pages of *The Times*, journalist John Sringhall penned the article *Horror Comics: The Nasties of the 1950s* where he asserted that the reason of the moral corruption of the current society was caused by "the trade that has sprung up of presenting sadism, crime, lust, physical monstrosity, and horror to the young".⁵ The accusation was not unlike the sentiments expressed by Fredric Wertham in *Seduction of the Innocent* (1954) that found in comic books the cause of youth delinquency. The publication of the book had long-lasting effects leading to the

⁴ Patrick, K. (2011) A Design for Depravity: Horror Comics and the Challenge of Censorship in Australia, 1950–1986. *Script & Print: Bulletin of the Bibliographical Society of Australia and New Zealand*, 35(3), 133 – 156.

⁵ Sringhall, J. (1994). Horror Comics: The Nasties of the 1950s. *History Today*. [online] 1 Jul. Available at: <https://www.historytoday.com/archive/horror-comics-nasties-1950s> [Accessed 27 Jun. 2020].

establishment of The Comics Code Authority (CCA) to promote the industry's self-regulation and avoid unwanted attention from Congress.

In 1955, the British Parliament prohibited:

Any book, magazine or other like work which is of a kind likely to fall into the hands of children or young persons and consists wholly or mainly of stories told in pictures (with or without the addition of written matter), being stories portraying (a) the commission of crimes; or (b) acts of violence or cruelty; or (c) incidents of a repulsive or horrible nature; in such a way that the work as a whole would tend to corrupt a child or young person into whose hands it might fall.⁶

The same sentiment found echoes in Italy where author Mario Soldati had one of his characters ponder about the differences between his and his children's childhood. By proxy, Soldati wonders about comics and how it simplified the act of reading.⁷ The author and the character complain that illustrations made everything easier and took away from the reading experience as the images fulfilled the role that imagination would have while reading a novel.

In the aftermath of World War II, Belgian and French artists and writers had other issues to contend with as, members of the publishing industry that had kept working and publishing during the Nazi occupation, faced charged of collaborationism with the German regime. Most accusations did not even make it to trial, but some publications were forced to shut down and went out of business. As Hergé was caught in the storm, it was difficult to find a publisher that would take on his work; Raymond Leblanc founded *Les Éditions du Lombard* (*Le Lombard* as of 1989) to launch *Tin Tin* (1929 – 1983) magazine and, in time, became the first comic-specialised publisher as it promoted the work of artists and writers that collaborated with Hergé. The post-war years did not see an improvement in the circulation of American comics in France or Belgium either, quite the opposite. The “Law of July 16th 1949 on Publications Aimed at the Youth”, strongly supported by the French Communist Party (who had become widely popular considering the role in played in the Resistance), the Catholics, and the Secularists forbade the

⁶ British Parliament (1955) *Children and Young Persons (Harmful Publications) Act*. London: The Stationery Office.

⁷ Soldati, M. (2019). *La messa dei villeggianti*. Bompiani.

circulation of American comics to avoid the French youth from being influenced by the corruption portrayed in the stories. This varied coalition was vehemently anti-American, as they were protecting the rebuilding of the French identity after the global conflict. The law, which would remain in place until 1968, left a void that was soon occupied by Belgian and French magazines and comics.

With the advent of the 1960s, the comics market in Great Britain changed. Despite the popularity of action-driven titles such as *Valiant* and *Tiger*, as well as the beginning of the Marvel era, the industry was challenged by the rise of television and other pastimes that caused children's attention to drift away from comic books while also opening its doors to a more mature audience. The British publication *Eagle*, which had been a great success in the early Fifties (the first issue sold roughly 900,000 copies), struggled towards the end of the decade and throughout all the Sixties because of a mix of factors (loss of revenues followed by changes in leadership and scope).

Albeit still dismissed, Italian comics started gaining more popularity. In Italy, a new format, dubbed *albo Bonelli* (the Bonelli format), after the publisher that had invented it, took the market by storm: a travelling size comic booklet bigger than the regular pocket size and very popular with commuters. The new format, as Bonelli stated, allowed for more plot development compared to serialised strips in newspapers and magazines:

My mother Tea and I realised that the public was changing, that it wanted a longer read than what was being offered by comic books of the time, that people had more money and therefore could indulge in something more sophisticated. We also realised that people no longer wanted to wait a week to read a story that would take them just a few minutes to finish.⁸

The work of scholars such as Umberto Eco gave dignity to the medium. In essays such as *Opera Aperta* (Open Text) (1962) and *Apocalittici e Integrati* (1964), Eco takes into consideration new forms of art (from contemporary music to comic books) and how their fruition hinges on the role of the user as much as on the intent of the author, "Ogni fruizione è così una interpretazione ed una esecuzione, poiché in ogni fruizione l'opera

⁸ Tosti, A., *Europe Comics* (2018) *The History of Italian Comics / Part 1*. 18 Jan. Available at <https://www.europecomics.com/history-italian-comics-part-1/> [Accessed 10 June 2020].

rivive in una prospettiva originale.”⁹ (Each use is therefore an interpretation and a performance, because in every use the work relives in an original perspective).¹⁰

Eco has always been partial to the often-overlooked form and his interest has given rise to specialised comic magazines and to the first symposium on comics in the world¹¹ where critics, authors, and aficionados alike discussed the medium and its relevance (rebranded as *Lucca Comics & Games* in 2006). Eco and Dino Buzzati were the first Italian thinkers to engage with the form at a deeper level. Where the former studied its narrative techniques and potential, the latter wrote the first Italian graphic novel, *Poem Strip* (1969). It is not a coincidence that Italy’s most prestigious ComiCon is Eco’s legacy, one that celebrates the profound connection between the form and its consumers.

The Sixties saw different trends co-existing in the Italian market: genre comics (adventure and thriller) captivated the imagination of most readers, while narrative and prose authors embraced the freedom and the subversiveness offered by the medium. It was the years of Hugo Pratt’s *Corto Maltese* first adventure *A Ballad of the Salt Sea* (1967), and Buzzati’s *Poem Strip* demonstrated the public the range of topics and art that could be found in comic books. This sense of wonder and experimentation was embodied by dedicated magazines, such as *Linus*, that offered authors a more flexible space to experiment in – compared to the more rigid structure of serialised comics. It is not dissimilar to what happened in the panorama of underground comix in the USA; it is interesting to notice how Enrico Fornaroli, Jan Baetens, and Hugo Frey attribute the birth of the graphic novel to experimentation and creative freedom of the cultural revolution. The political, social, and cultural turmoil of the decade pushed authors to create subversive works that spoke to the current political climate and addressed contemporary debates.

Despite the important changes and shifts in the British comics market, sales started their slow decline. Until the 70s, comics could be found mainly in newsstands, toys stores, and grocery stores but, in those years, independent bookstores became pivotal players in the network of comic books distribution as, both in North America and

⁹ Eco, U. (2017) *Opera Aperta*. Firenze: Bompiani.

¹⁰ Translation of the author.

¹¹ Restaino, F. (2004) *Storia del fumetto*. Torino: UTET.

the UK, indie shops opted for a more direct relationship with publishers bypassing distributors. Although independent stores were not a novelty, they had first emerged during the Sixties selling mostly back issues and underground comix, the adoption of the “direct market” model de facto cast them in the role of agents who actively shaped the comic book industry by interpreting the requests of readers and offering alternatives to the titles of the “Big Two” (Marvel and DC). They also opened the market to smaller and independent publishing houses that could pitch their product directly to the sellers. Albeit the model operated on the policy of no-returns (speciality shops could not return unsold merchandise for refunds), there were plenty of other advantages: from timing (independent bookstores received the issues in advance), variety of products (grocery stores and newsstands could not sell comics that portrayed violence, nudity, offensive language, etc.), and a general organisation of the shelves and titles that made browsing for titles easier. In the UK, shops like “Dark They Were and Golden Eyed” and “Forbidden Planet” were the backbone of the comics culture in the Seventies. The former specialised in comic books, fantasy, and science fiction and it was the largest specialised store, but it was replaced by the latter, which had opened as the retailer for Titan Distributors, when the shop closed in 1981.

The British underground comix scene was alive with magazines such as *International Times* (IT), *Nasty Times*, and *Oz* which developed unique content that spoke specifically to the British counterculture. Though, these magazines were unsuccessful economic ventures, and the magazines started re-publishing materials without paying royalties to their creators because of a lack of contracts that would protect the rights of underground authors.¹² Such publications, though not specifically tailored for comic strips, harboured numerous comics that challenged societal norms of that time to leading to *Nasty Times* and *Oz* being trialled for publishing content that defied the Obscene Publications Act. Both magazines were acquitted on appeal, but the negative publicity, and the dying out of the counter-culture movement, led to the publishers ceasing their activity. The Seventies saw the foundation of one of the most iconic publications in the British comics market when *2000 AD* launched in 1977. The weekly anthological magazine collected some of Britain’s most influential comic artists

¹² Sabin, R. (1996) *Comics, comix & graphic novels*. London: Phaidon.

(Steve Moore, Dave Gibbons, Alan Moore, Garth Ennis, etc.) as well as titles like *Judge Dredd* (1977 –) and *The Ballad of Halo Jones* (1984 – 1986). A few years later, editor Dez Skinn left *Marvel UK* to open *Warrior*. Although its publication history is short (1982-1985), *Warrior* was pivotal in bringing Alan Moore and David Lloyd's *V for Vendetta* (1982 – 1985) to the public. The ground laid in Britain during those years allowed many comic artists to explore the American comics market.

France saw a revitalisation of its comics market as magazines founded in the aftermath of the 60s cultural revolution overtook Belgian titles which had dominated the francophone market until the mid-60s. The revival had the spirit of the Anglo-Saxon underground comix; the titles were aimed at a more mature audience and channelled the cultural changes of the time. Magazines such *Métal Hurlant* (Heavy Metal) and its creative team, which included creator Jean Giraud aka Moebius, have often been credited to have contributed to the growth of the *bandes dessinées* in France. The anthological magazine presented varied content, from comics, to articles about science fiction and cinema, reviews, and it specifically targeted adults by experimenting with complex graphics, surreal narratives, and cinematic imagery.

In the past thirty years, the interest in comic books in Italy and the rest of Europe has moved along two different routes. The Italian popular opinion has slowly opened towards the form and, in 2016, it was estimated that Italy was the fourth country in the world for comic books sales (200 million euros), behind Japan (4 billion euros), USA (840 million euros), and France (429 million euros). According to the Associazione Italiana Editori (Italian Publishers Association) this marked a 37% increase compared to the previous year.¹³ At the heart of the growth, there are Italian *edicole* – the equivalent of newsstands which account for 80% of the sales.¹⁴ The data is relevant as it speaks to how Italian readers are more attracted to Italian products and stories (e.g., *Tex*, *Dylan Dog*, *Julia*) compared to European and Anglo-Saxon comic books sold across libraries and dedicated comic book shops. The health crisis caused by the pandemic might have helped as, in the first six months of 2021, a 214% increase in the sales of comic books

¹³ la Repubblica. (2016). *I fumetti conquistano l'Italia, il mercato vale 200 milioni di euro*. [online] Available at: <https://www.repubblica.it/economia/rapporti/osserva-italia/conad/2016/10/15/news/fumetti-149704597/> [Accessed 15 June 2020].

¹⁴ Ibid.

and graphic novels was recorded.¹⁵ Moreover, in the last fifteen years, the internet has offered an important space to authors and creators who elected the “ninth art” – as Umberto Eco dubbed comics – as their favourite medium. Such authors have found a much more democratic and open space to share their work. The Italian cultural establishment has also given timid signs of acceptance – Gipi’s *Unastoria* (2013) and Zerocalcare’s *Dimentica il mio nome* (2014) were shortlisted for the Strega Award, Italy’s most prestigious literary award, in 2014 and 2015, respectively. However, both graphic novels were runners-up and no other graphic narrative product had been included since, which might cause critics to ask whether the cultural establishment is genuinely invested in the form or if it is only surfing the wave of its popularity.

Determining the state of the UK comics market today is no easy feat. Although the sales of specific titles have been contracting – *The Beano* sold 34,000 issues a week in 2017, though online subscriptions were on the rise – other magazines have filled the gap, specifically graphic novels and American superheroes titles.¹⁶ The decline of certain titles might be partially explained by the distribution system, as the “direct market” model has been replaced by the *de facto* monopoly of Diamond. The vibrant comic scene that catered to the needs of readers and interpreted the social and cultural changes of an era has been replaced by a flattening in the content offer, as distributors work with more established publishing houses.

There is another element to consider, and that is the development of comic studies across the world. Anglo-Saxon countries – the United States before anyone else, followed by the United Kingdom – have welcomed the form in their lecture halls, but despite a healthy tradition in Italy, the study of the form has been ostracised. Debates concerning the “quality” or “worthiness” of comics are not uncommon, but most of the Italian academia seems to be immune to the interest and the hold that comic books have on scholars, readers, and moviegoers. The study of the discipline is not a foreign concept in Italy, but it is limited to art and private academies dedicated to the craft. The reticence might be explained by the state of the Italian Higher Education system,

¹⁵ Digital, D.R. (2021). *Buone notizie: l'Italia legge! In crescita i tassi di lettura e acquisto libro nei primi 6 mesi del 2021*. [online] ELLE. Available at: <https://www.elle.com/it/magazine/libri/a37024925/libri-italia-2021-tassi-lettura/> [Accessed 17 September 2021].

¹⁶ Freeman, J. (2020) *The British Comic Industry Q&A*. Available at <https://downthetubes.net/british-comics-reference/the-british-comic-industry-questions-and-answers/> [Accessed 15 June 2020].

specifically its hierarchy and the disparity between tenured professors and temporary or occasional researchers and lecturers, and the lack of stability that the latter face in Italy since 2005 when the then-Minister of Education, University and Research Letizia Moratti introduced fixed-term contracts phasing out open-ended ones, pushing many to move abroad to pursue a career in academia.

As a child, I was drawn to titles such as *Diabolik* (1962 –), and comic strips like *Peanuts* (1950 – 2000) and *Calvin and Hobbs* (1985 – 1995). It was in my early teens that I approached manga and anime, forms that have had the biggest influence on my creative endeavours. The romantic graphics, colourful covers, and dramatic heroines were some of the elements that attracted me the most, especially as in Italy contemporary children’s novels and comics were mainly aimed at a male audience. The variety of the Japanese offer, marketed to a specific audience depending on gender and age, meant that finding products that suited my sensibility was easier and more immediate; below follows a classification of the Japanese market subdivision:

- Kodomo – aimed at young children.
- Shōnen – aimed at boys.
- Shōjo – aimed at girls.
- Seinen – aimed at young adult men.
- Josei – aimed at young adult women.

Although manga are a fairly recent phenomenon (modern manga were coded in the 1950s), the term itself appeared for the first time during the Edo period (1603 – 1867) and it became popular towards the end of the 18th century when several works were published, among which Katsushika Hokusai’s *Manga books*, a collection of illustrations in the *Toba Ehon* style characterised by strong outlines and fluid strokes.¹⁷ Even though such booklets presented little to no text, they clearly represent the inception of manga as we know them today. Interestingly, historians Natsume Fusanosuke and Miyamoto Hirohito insist on the transculturality of manga as an investigation in the legacy of the Meiji era (1868 – 1912) comics shows how such publications resulted from the influence that Western magazines, specifically the British

¹⁷ Lee, P. (2020) *Dare to Enjoy the Twisted World of Toshio Saeki Art*. 20 Jan. Available at <https://www.widewalls.ch/magazine/toshio-saeki-art> [Accessed 20 June 2020].

Punch and the American *Puck*, had on the Japanese publications *ponchi* and *pakku*.¹⁸ The importance that American entertainment (comics and cartoons) had in influencing the form during the American occupation of Japan (1945 – 1952) cannot be denied either. Pivotal figure of the time is Osamu Tezuka – widely known as the godfather of manga. If the popularity of the form grew and crossed Japanese borders, it is mainly because of his work and the distinctive syntax he perfected for the form. The author incorporated cinematic techniques and narrative depth in his work, which has influenced generations of mangaka (from Hayao Miyazaki, to Go Nagai, to Monkey Punch, and Naoki Urasawa).¹⁹ Tezuka's influence does not stop at the Japanese borders, as he made an impression on Western artists and directors alike. Both Walt Disney and Stanley Kubrick appreciated his art and Disney even proposed they collaborate on a science fiction project together, while Kubrick invited the mangaka to London to work with him on *2001: A Space Odyssey* (1968).

Part of Tezuka's revolution found its *raison d'être* in how he deployed his stories and characters. The author had his most prominent character from the eponymous series *Atomu Taishi* (Astro Boy 1952 – 1968) herald messages against oppression and slavery. Another pivotal work was *Ribon no Kishi* (Princess Knight 1953 – 1956); the series portrayed a princess born with both male and female hearts who dons male clothes to protect her kingdom from an evil duke. The series is considered the first example of *shojo* manga and even though Sapphire's androgynous look and adventures challenged gender stereotypes to a certain extent, the series did not abandon them entirely. Not only does the main character marry a boy at the end of the series, finding happiness in the traditional role of wife that society has cast for her, Sapphire also loses her ability to wield a sword when she loses her boy heart.

Shojo manga evolved in the following decades. Albeit depicting romantic love was taboo, unless the story was set in fantasy realm, as readers matured, so did the stories. The Seventies was an important decade for the genre as the *Year 24 group* (an ensemble of female authors born in the year Shōwa 24) experimented both with the form and the themes of the genre. Notable work of the decade is Riyoko Ikeda's

¹⁸ Suter, R. (2016) *Reassessing Manga History, Resituating Manga in History*. In *Rewriting History in Manga: Stories for the Nation*. New York: Palgrave MacMillan.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

Berusaiyu no Bara (The Rose of Versailles 1972 – 1973) where many of the themes already tackled in *Princess Knight* are present (gender swapping, androgynous forms, and a female heroine who denies part of her identity to protect her country). In 2008, Yukari Fujimoto writes how, in the Nineties, the genre was widely influenced by the political panorama of those years.²⁰ The end of the 20th century saw the publication of titles such as *Bishōjo Senshi Sērā Mūn* (Pretty Guardian Sailor Moon 1991 – 1997), *Majikku Naito Reiāsu* (Magic Knight Rayearth 1993 – 1995), and *Sora wa Akai Kawa no Hotori* (Anatolia Story 1995 – 2000) which depicted the importance of friendship especially in a group of girls, as well as self-actualisation over romantic love.

1.2 A language of their own.

When I was growing up, mangas were available in comic books shops, but – before I started reading manga as a hobby – all the aforementioned titles had already been adapted as anime and were available to watch on television (Italy slotted several anime in the morning before most children left to go to school and in the afternoon after lunch). At the end of the late 90s, MTV Italia helped popularise more adult anime (seine and josei) – and by extension the correspondent manga – by broadcasting several series at lunchtime (Monday – Saturday) and launching *Anime Thursday*, when the network would broadcast three different series for ninety minutes of entertainment.

It was only towards the end of my secondary school years that my interest shifted to more layered narratives found in Anglo-Saxon comic books.

These important influences could not be any more different, especially in the way the different traditions manage the narrative flow. Scott McCloud can be of help to discuss the differences; in *Understanding Comics* (1993), McCloud dedicates his third chapter to transitions and narrative flow. He arbitrarily proposes six different types:

²⁰ Fujimoto, Y. (2008) Shojo (Girls) Manga. *Japanese Book News*, 56, 12.

1. Moment to moment (this sequence of panels requires little closure),



Figure 1.1 Understanding Comics: The Invisible Art (McCloud 1993, p. 70)

2. Action to action (features the same subject during the evolution of an action),

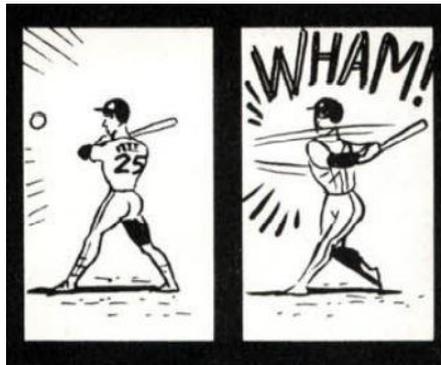


Figure 1.2 Figure 1.1 Understanding Comics: The Invisible Art (McCloud 1993, p. 70)

3. Subject to subject (focuses on the same scene or idea but requires the reader to connect the different panels),



Figure 1.3 Figure 1.1 Understanding Comics: The Invisible Art (McCloud 1993, p. 71)

4. Scene to scene (requires deduction on the reader's part as this transition transports the reader across time and/or place),



Figure 1.4 Figure 1.1 Understanding Comics: The Invisible Art (McCloud 1993, p. 71)

5. Aspect to aspect (the wandering eye focuses on different elements in the scene that contribute to establish the mood),



Figure 1.5 Figure 1.1 Understanding Comics: The Invisible Art (McCloud 1993, p. 72)

6. Non sequitur (presents no logical sequence).

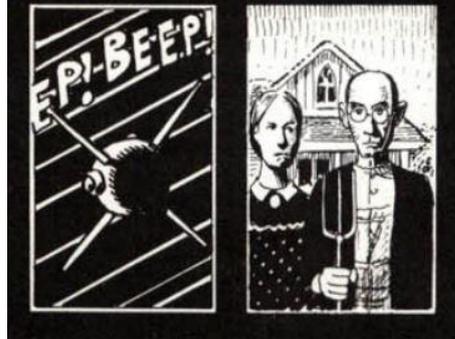


Figure 1.6 Figure 1.1 Understanding Comics: The Invisible Art (McCloud 1993, p. 72)

Most of American and European comics employ types two, three, and four (often relying on type two more heavily) as a story is seen as a series of connected events. The approach changes when McCloud analyses Japanese manga and Osamu Tezuka's work more closely. Although the Japanese mangaka relies on more straightforward narrative transitions, he also employs aspect-to-aspect transition to set the scene and the mood. The reader is required to assemble the distinct elements to understand what is happening.



Figure 1.7 Figure 1.1 Understanding Comics: The Invisible Art (McCloud 1993, p. 79)

Not that the fifth transition leads the way in Japanese storytelling, but is more prominent than in the Western narrative tradition. McCloud explains the difference by pointing out that Japanese authors had more space, in terms of pages, to explore the development of the story and the narrative is less action-driven than in the West. Hayao Kawai, in *The Japanese Psyche: Major Motifs in the Fairy Tales of Japan*, resorts to a Jungian analysis to explain the differences between Japanese and Western narratives by examining fairy tales. According to Kawai, such differences are mainly the result of the layered reality of Japanese culture and identity. Where Western culture is more concerned with the hero journey and accomplishments, Japanese narrative is more interested in connecting the dualities (e.g., male and female; human and divine; human and nature; innovation and tradition) that shape the human existence.²¹ Analysing the story of *The Bush Warbler's Home* could be of help to better understand the point Kawai

²¹ Kawai, H., Reece, S. and Snyder, G. (2021). *The Japanese psyche: major motifs in the fairy tales of Japan*. Thompson, Conn.: Spring Publications.

tries to make. In the fairy-tale, a young man crossing the woods is asked by a beautiful woman to guard her house. The man accepts and is warned to not open the doors to the bedrooms, a condition to which he agrees. As time goes by and the man gets bored, he walks in and, looking around, he finds treasures of all sorts; he drinks the wine he finds and cracks three eggs that he has stumbled upon. When the woman comes back, she soon realises what has happened. She accuses the man of having killed his daughters (the three eggs), then turns into a bush warbler bird and flies away. The man is left alone in the woods as the house has also disappeared. Kawai notices how there is no heroic struggle in the story, no demon or evil creature guards the door, something that would have been expected in a Western fairy-tale. The unnamed protagonist easily accesses the house and its content but, just as easily, he is left with nothing. The overall effect of the story is what Kawai calls a sense of beautiful sadness, in Japanese *a-wa-re*. “Rather than living happily ever after with a noble victory, or a wonderful marriage, as in Western fairy tales, these stories often end with a sense of wistfulness.”²² A similar narrative pattern will be found in the fairytales used to tell the story of *Ādhit*, the secondary world in the graphic novel.

Considering how my formative years were spent pouring over a wide range of manga and comics, it was no surprise that a substantial part of the feedback received focused on how a lot of the action happening in the novel was of the contemplative kind. Both in the novel and the in the graphic novel, I relied on details that were not action-oriented to help convey the atmosphere, but if I had no space-related boundaries to contend with in novel form, the same was not true for the graphic novel. There was the matter of the space (of the page) and time (within the narrative and of Fasulo’s); hence, the more I worked on the panels, the more I eliminated details and transitions that could be easily inferred. Interestingly, though, when I started editing graphic novel, I noticed how the elements I had discarded added layers of richness. Below, you can find examples of the aspect-to-aspect transition can be found across the graphic novel. Some of them (in the prologue and in the second chapter) result from a literal transposition from novel to graphic novel, others were added during the latest editing stage.

²² Ibid.

In the prologue, the different panels focus on distinct elements of the landscape and the scene both to show where the characters are and to create a strong juxtaposition with the sudden, and almost traumatic, vision.

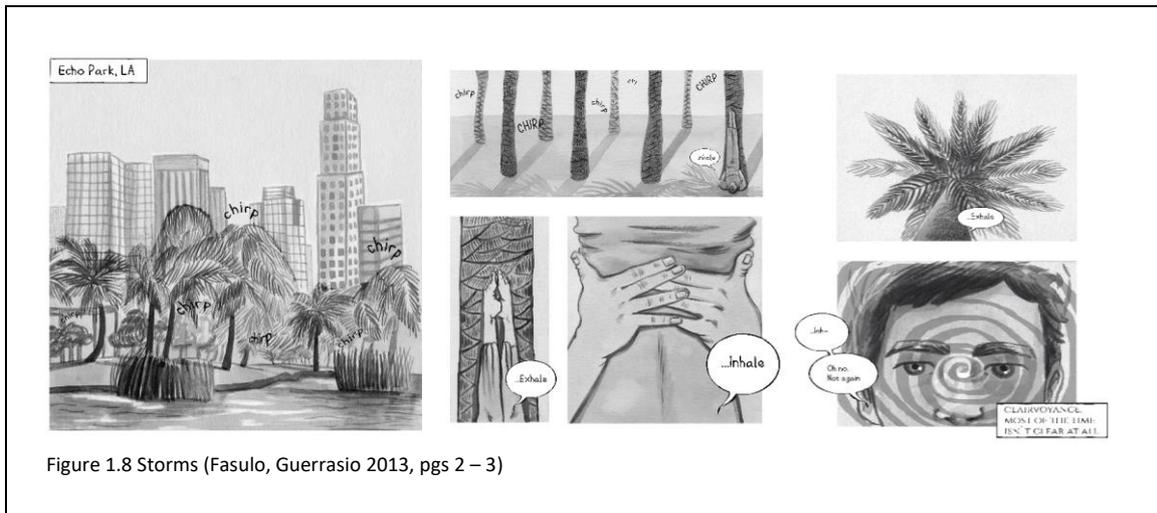


Figure 1.8 Storms (Fasulo, Guerrasio 2013, pgs 2 – 3)

In the first chapter, instead, Nicole takes in the different elements that make the gym from the players on the court, to the supporters cheering, and Nicole’s sense of longing at not being part of this world anymore.

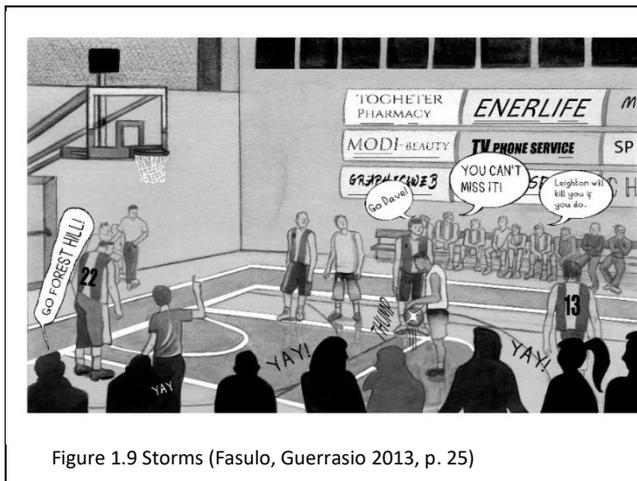


Figure 1.9 Storms (Fasulo, Guerrasio 2013, p. 25)



Figure 1.10 Storms (Fasulo, Guerrasio 2013, p. 25)

The panels below were added at a later stage and helped set the mood in the scenes. The dark strip on the other side of the door in concert with the lyrics in chapter four, and the empty house in chapter eight, serve the purpose of explicating what is not being verbally expressed.

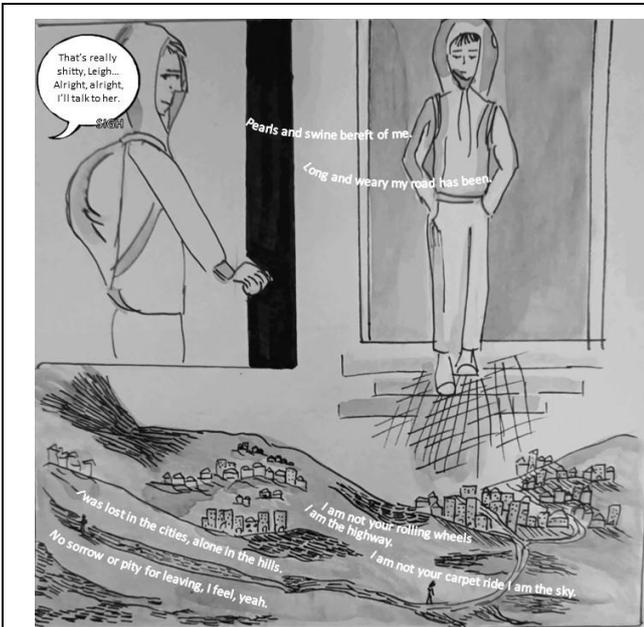


Figure 1.11 Storms (Fasulo, Guerrasio 2013, p. 60)

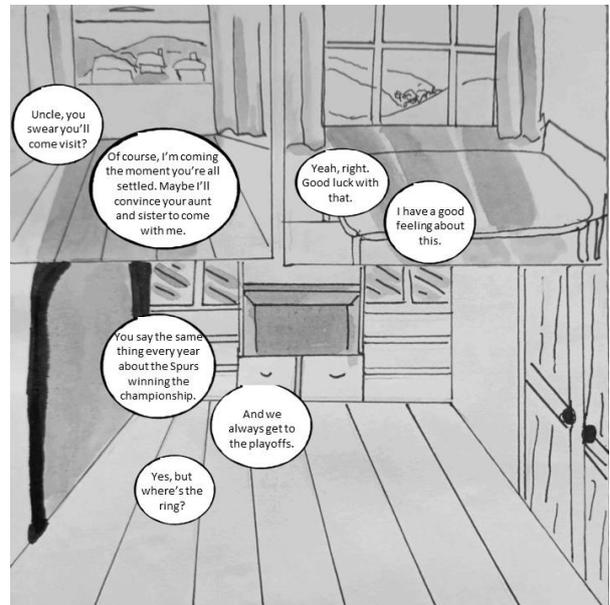


Figure 1.12 Storms (Fasulo, Guerrasio 2013, p. 93)

This type of transition has also another purpose; it serves the narrative structure that sees the characters moving through the story as if they were collecting pieces of a puzzle for the reader to put together and solve the different mysteries presented in the plot.

2. Feminist and speculative fiction writers, and their influence: re-appropriating the narrative.

My introduction to speculative fiction, fantasy in particular, was facilitated by the anime I watched at a young age, and was cemented later in life by reading manga first, and classic of the genre later. As I found my voice through my writing and found my thinking reflected or answered in works of fiction and critical theory, I realised how—to be true to myself and interrogate the current state of society—I had to write about things I knew intimately. Feminist writers like Maggie Nelson, bell hooks, and Clarissa Pinkola Estés showed me how to bring my beliefs into focus, while Margaret Atwood, Ursula K. Le Guin, and Joanna Russ – among the others – demonstrated how to code them in my writing using imagery and archetypes that speculative fiction offers.

In her acceptance speech for the Pilgrim Award, Le Guin explains the connection between female authors, genre, and politics. She creates a parallelism between women being ostracised in the publishing industry and some genre literature (fantasy, science fiction, children’s books, and young adult literature) being deemed unworthy of criticism. It seemed only natural for the former to find a place in the latter. Such sentiment is echoed by Brian Attebery in the introduction to his *Strategies of Fantasy* (1992).

Many women write in the modes Le Guin lists, and many of the best are undervalued for that reason. That they find such genres congenial, nonetheless, is evidence for my argument that nonrealistic literature has something special to offer to the woman writer, who is defined by her culture as the irrational, the disruptive, the formless, the Other.²³

Many feminist writers are also responsible for re-appropriating fairy tales. The general understanding was that fairytales had become a tool of the patriarchy, especially considering the sanitisation carried out by Wilhelm Grimm (one of the most obvious examples is how any hint of a pregnancy is removed in the tale of *Rapunzel* in the final version of the collection). Feminist writers have recombined elements to give life to “anti-tales: they seize hold of the old story and ‘tell it slant’”²⁴ and at the centre of this

²³ Attebery, B. (1992). *Strategies of Fantasy*. Indianapolis: Indiana University Press.

²⁴ Warner, M. (2018). *Fairy tale: a very short introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

new movement, there was sexual education and, possibly, liberation, with Angela Carter and Jeanette Winterson leading the charge.

I cannot deny the fascination that subversion, as a narrative device, exercises. It might be the reason I have always been partial to Rosemary Jackson's statement "Fantasy is subversive"²⁵ and to her interpretation of fantasy as literature of "desire", one that challenges repressive systems. Defining Fantasy as a genre has always been tricky for academic purposes, less so for commercial ones. There have been many detractors among academics who have ignored or failed to understand the merits of the genre. Darko Suvin, in his *On the Poetics of the Science Fiction Genre* (1972), ignores the mode of Fantasy only to criticise the formula.

When fantasy does not make for such a tension between the supernatural and the author's empirical environment, its monotonous reduction of all possible horizons to Death makes of it just a subliterature of mystification. Commercial lumping of it into the same category as SF is thus a grave disservice and rampantly sociopathological phenomenon.²⁶

Although Suvin will update his position almost thirty years later in his essay *Considering the Sense of 'Fantasy' or 'Fantastic Fiction'* (2000), Attebery's proposition of the "fuzzy set", proposes a categorisation of the genre that takes into consideration the core of the work rather than its boundaries²⁷ and reconciles some of the discrepancies.

Speculative fiction is the perfect place to ask certain questions because it is through the lenses of the fantastic that the familiar becomes foreign and eerie. The line between known and unknown becomes blurred and the two elements begin a conversation. The way my personal experience, the genre, and the imagery conjured for my stories have interacted and built up on each other has yielded results I had not expected at the beginning of my career as a writer. Recurring images and myths across the stories have become so intertwined that have naturally led me to create a narrative universe inhabited by all the novels I have planned so far.

²⁵ Jackson, R. (1986). *Fantasy: the literature of subversion*. London; New York: Methuen.

²⁶ Suvin, D. (1972). *On the Poetics of the Science Fiction Genre*. *College English*, 34(3), p.372.

²⁷ Attebery, B. (1992). *Strategies of Fantasy*. Indianapolis: Indiana University Press.

Over the years, Italian authors asked me why I wrote about fantasy. Why not write about something I was familiar with, not realising that fantasy allowed me to dissect the inner mechanisms of teenagers at war with themselves, their family, and the world. As I matured, I realised how the connection between political and personal is a well-documented occurrence among feminist writers in genre fiction. From Margaret Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale* (1985), to Le Guin's *Left Hand of Darkness* (1969), to Joanna Russ's *The Female Man* (1975), female authors have used the framework of their preferred genre to explore topics revolving around gender, civil rights, the inequality and imbalance between genders, race, class in our current society, and much more, and they have all done it by presenting a reality that subverted the system they were living in so that the flaws and shortcomings of our society became evident. After all, when the patriarchal society carries out a war against female and non-conformative bodies, the personal cannot not be political. Because of their influence, my stories and the act of writing have become a call to arms. I have done my best to create characters who, albeit flawed and even unsympathetic, would know they were powerful and entitled to the strength that came from it. Power might seem like a gift to female characters, one that helps them level the playing field, and it is this assumption that I try to dissect and dismantle in my stories.

The research into and the current debates on the connection between patriarchal and rape culture has also had a direct impact on a much-debated plot point first in the original novel and later in the graphic novel, forcing me to think about and revisit some of my narrative choices.

At the end of the first novel in the trilogy, Nicole leaves Forest Hill when she realises it is not safe for her to stay after being sexually assaulted by Lucifer (Lilith's soulmate, allegedly). I have debated long with myself about that scene and, at the time of writing it, I asked myself a series of questions to make sure that it was motivated by inner mechanism within the story and not by misconceptions that use gendered violence as a ploy to further a character's development. Initially, I justified that the rape would fit the narrative and power dynamic between the characters involved. Nicole (host of had-au Lilith) craved acceptance and a place to call her own. Levi (host of had-au Lucifer) wanted nothing more than to control Nicole (and Lilith), and neither the character nor the had-au had qualms about using violence to assert their dominance, but a troubling

element was that Nicole and her abuser were in a romantic-adjacent relationship. The assault would also lead Lilith to confess that her relationship with Lucifer was abusive and toxic too. Given the framework of the debated scene, I was worried it might romanticise the violent act. On the other hand, one of the various objectives of the stories I write is to explore the uneven power dynamics between characters. Consequently, I cannot – nor do I intend to – hesitate in exploring sexual and gendered violence as a patriarchal tool to exercise power. The trauma following the assault opened a debate in the graphic novel about victim-blaming and victimhood. Nicole is not the perfect victim; she does not openly agree, but she does not enthusiastically consent either. When she tries to voice her reluctance, she's steamrolled by Levi when he forces himself upon her. Her first reaction is denial. All the emotions following the rape are locked somewhere deep where she does not allow herself, nor anyone, to analyse them. The reader is not privy to what Nicole is thinking and feeling and the aftermath of the rape is narrated from her siblings' point of views, not because she is not entitled to her voice or story, but because she cannot bear to look at what has happened to her, the latest denial of her agency over her body.

Rape is an obviously contentious trope in writing, one that has been abused, therefore its use is often ostracised, but graphic narrative seldom shies away from it. Series like *Watchmen* (1986 – 1987) and *The Boys* (2006 – 2012) offer several examples of gratuitous sexual violence (mostly aimed at women), but there is no depth to it nor commentary. Raping is just another abject act in a list of long, awful acts some characters carry out. In *Watchmen*, the Comedian tried to sexually assault the first Silk Spectre. He is stopped and beaten, but the act is romanticised when the two characters develop romantic feelings. Trauma is not explored nor discussed when Silk Spectre's daughter discovers what happened to her mother after the Comedian's death. Authors like Alan Moore and Garth Ennis have depicted sexual violence in their works without many qualms, and those scenes rarely seem warranted. This is especially true for the attack that the character Barbara Gordon suffers at the hands of the Joker in Moore's *Batman: The Killing Joke* (1988). Although Gordon metabolises her trauma and comes back as a stronger fighter (The Oracle), her attack is framed as a means to an end; she is an afterthought in the whole narrative. Barbara's attack, and implied sexual assault, is a way to torture Jim Gordon psychologically and show Batman anyone can turn into a

psychopath if they have a “really bad day.”²⁸ Readers and critics are not all of the same mind, some believe that the way the panels are framed (Gordon is depicted naked, bleeding on the floor, and her body is being manipulated while she manifests great distress) are evidence enough of the sexually charged violence.

Other believed that Moore would have not shied away from it as he had never done it in other of his works. But, as Maverick states, “To specifically depict the character being raped may have removed any ambiguity from the story, but would have forced the issue to be addressed in later.”²⁹



Figure 2.1 Batman Noir: The Killing Joke (Moore, Bolland, Starkings, p. 21)

²⁸ Moore, A., Bolland, B. and Starkings, R. (2016). *Batman Noir: The Killing Joke*. Burbank: DC Comics.

²⁹ Maverick, C. (2018). Oracle of the Invisible: Rape in The Killing Joke. *The International Journal Of Comic Art*, Vol. 20(1), pp.418–429.

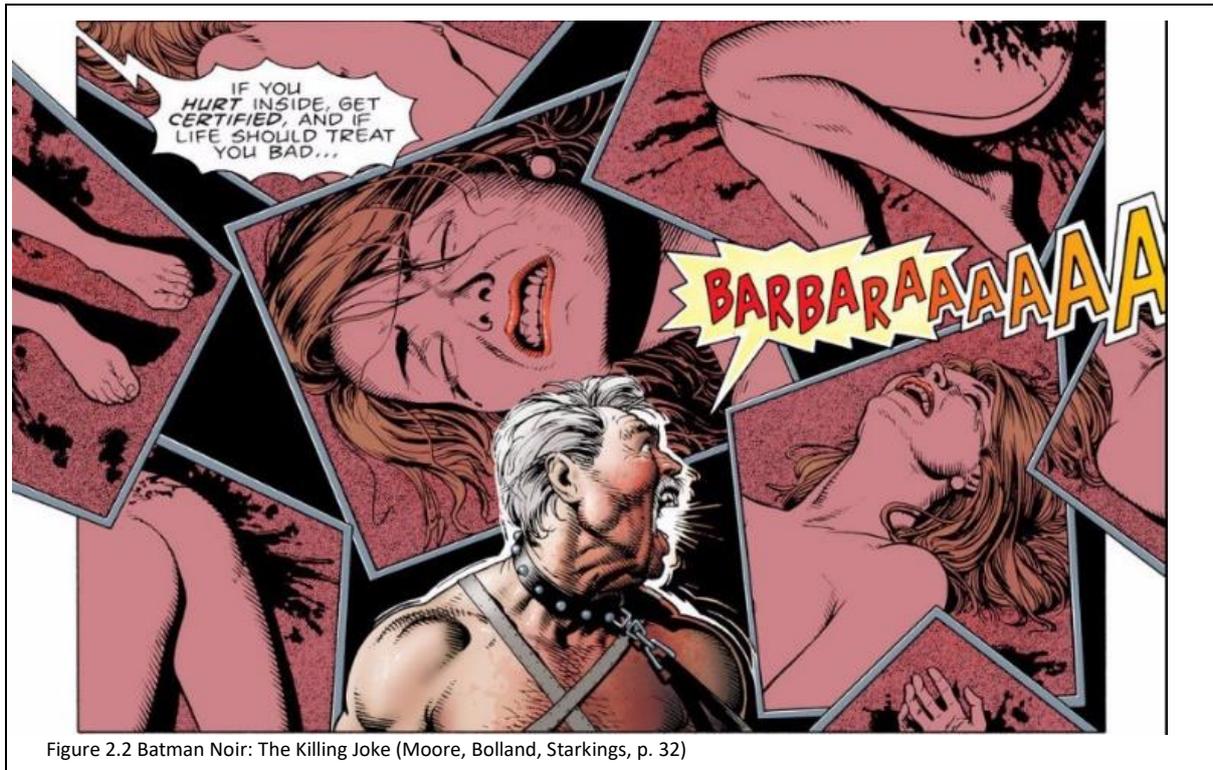


Figure 2.2 Batman Noir: The Killing Joke (Moore, Bolland, Starkings, p. 32)

In the popular Webtoon *Lore Olympus* (2018 –), Rachel Smythe states from the beginning that her comics will address topics and themes some readers might find distressing (trauma, whether sexual or of other nature, domestic abuse, and toxic relationship are some of the most frequent), but unlike in *Batman Noir: The Killing Joke*, the sexual violence that the character Persephone suffers at the hands of Apollo investigates consent, the trauma of having to co-exist with one’s abuser, and the responses a victim might have during the assault and immediately afterwards.³⁰

³⁰ www.webtoons.com. (n.d.). *Lore Olympus - Episode 24*. [online] Available at: https://www.webtoons.com/en/romance/lore-olympus/episode-24/viewer?title_no=1320&episode_no=26. [Accessed 22 July 2022].

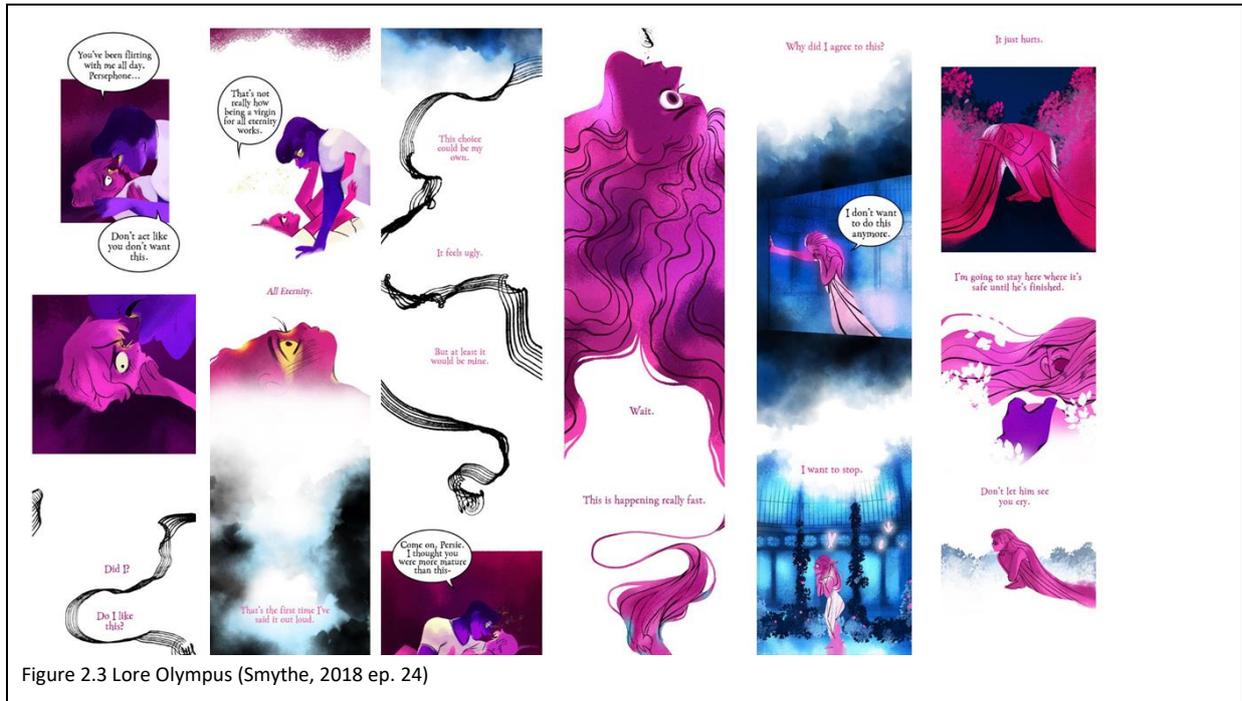


Figure 2.3 Lore Olympus (Smythe, 2018 ep. 24)

The strips from *Lore Olympus* are supposed to be read from a smartphone or tablet vertically, but to collect the entire episode in a table that could be read easily, I opted to edit out some panels and have laid them in a table that would give a bird-view of the events unfolding. It is possible to notice the use of the white space changing as the sexual assault happens. In the first column, the white is mainly used as the “gutter” in a classic comic book, it allows the transition from one frame to the next. As the narration continues, the white space becomes less structured in the second column, connecting what is happening to Persephone to her stream of consciousness (third column). The gutter becomes a protective cocoon where the main character retreats to, while also sparing the readers from the graphic reality of the violence.

In *Lore Olympus* paper version, though, the white space loses its poignancy. The panels occupy as much of the physical page as possible, sometimes overlapping with each other. Each panel is tightly kept in neat edges so that they don't lose themselves in the white space and the edges are always reinforced.³¹

³¹ Smythe, R. (2021) *Lore Olympus*. New York: Del Rey Books.



Figure 2.4 Lore Olympus (Smythe, 2022 ep. 23)



Figure 2.5 Lore Olympus (Smythe, 2022 ep. 23)

This brings forth the matter of adapting webcomics into graphic novel, after all the different supports come with different tools heavily influencing narrative choices. Quite different is the transposition of Nate Stevenson's *Nimona* (2012 – 2014; 2015), whose layout – even when published online – closely replicated that of a page.³²

³² web.archive.org. (2014). Page 1 | *Gingerhaze*. [online] Available at: <https://web.archive.org/web/20141002082133/http://gingerhaze.com/nimona/comic/page-1> [Accessed 2 August 2022].



Figure 2.6 Nimona (Stevenson, 2012 ep. 1)



Figure 2.7 Nimona (Stevenson, 2015 p. 1)

The horror of what happens in *Batman Noir: The Killing Joke* and in *Lore Olympus* has made me think about how I would manage the graphic nature of sexual violence in *Storms*.

In the novel, I wanted to use Nicole's point of view to convey the duality of Lucifer's feelings towards Lilith, what he considers being his romantic feelings for her and his even more visceral need to control her. There would be gestures that Nicole would see as caring and even romantic, while other elements in their interaction would alert her to Lucifer's toxic nature. Unfortunately, the scene in the novel was cluttered with cues that seemed to be more for the reader's benefit than for the sake of the narrative. What really came forth was how little Lilith trusts him, which raises questions about the myth of the two had-ais in love inspiring a war against their creator. In the graphic novel, this part of the chapter will be portrayed to give relevance to the inner

dialogue between Nicole and Lilith. In the provisional storyboard, Levi and Nicole are pushed on the left side of the panel, with Levi against its edge and Nicole more central, while the rest of the page is occupied with caption boxes. While their initial coming together borders on sweet and nostalgic, the encounter soon makes Nicole uncomfortable.

What I intend to portray in this chapter is how this violent act triggers Nicole's pre-existing insecurities about her lack of agency, and that is the element I intend to focus on the graphic rendition of the assault. In the transposition from novel to graphic novel, the event loses its sharp edges and violent description and instead investigates consent and agency in connection to the body. What graphic narrative as a form allows me to do, which is not as easy in prose form, is to mobilise different narrative layers on the page and in the panels. The reader is privy to what is happening to Nicole and to what she is thinking. Much like in *Lore Olympus*, the gutter will expand to encompass not white space but a neutral area where the crooked paths meet (already explored in previous chapters of the graphic novel) where consciousness (Nicole's and Lilith's) and timelines (past and present) meld to offer readers a peak into Lucifer's thirst of power and control at the expense of others' agency. It would work also as a visual element to signal Nicole's disassociation first from her body and then from her trauma.

Despite my doubts, the depiction of the sexual assault in *Storms* is warranted. It cannot be denied how central the event is to Nicole's subsequent devolution from protagonist to the antihero of the story. Her trauma and her denial of it will lead her to devising a plan that ignores everyone's agency. Yet, at the end of the story, Nicole is not left powerless, only scarred for life, and that seems a great enough consequence for her actions.

In her article *Is Gender Necessary?* Le Guin compares her novel *The Left Hand of Darkness* to a thought experiment, "Einstein's elevator, Schrodinger's cat, my Gethenians, are simply a way of thinking. They are questions, not answers; process, not stasis."³³ The same is true for *had-ais* and how their existence challenges contemporary notions of gender and what a body should look like. Representing the latter has become a priority in my writing. The topic has different layers (e.g., gender, race, class, sexuality,

³³ Le Guin, U.K. and Wood, S. (1980). *The language of the night: essays on fantasy and science fiction*. New York, NY: Perigee.

disability) each with its set of meanings and issues (from body autonomy, to agency, representation, etc.), but it was well into adulthood that I understood how I could use my writing to affect and possibly change the narrative.

As a young reader, I lacked substantial representation of girls my age. I spent my teenage years being much taller than my peers, a size too large or thinking I was a size too large. When film franchises, TV shows, books, and comic books legitimised female heroines, they all presented the same type of characters: canonically beautiful according to Northern-Western standards, often an object for heterosexual desire. A wider representation is a more recent phenomenon, one that I can appreciate as an adult, one that fifteen-year-old me desperately needed to feel less out of place.

In *Storms*, Nicole is sick because of a terminal illness. She has always been proud of her body, not because of what it looked like but because of her strength and agility. At the beginning of her narrative arc, though, I wanted to present her as the subversion of the tomboy; Nicole's interests lie in sport and fitness, which are still considered an area of interest predominantly for men. She is also thin in a way that is not appealing nor sexy and she wears clothes that do not fit her at all, as she cannot bear to see the form of her body. Where tomboys are often seen as children threading the boundaries between genders with freedom and ease, Nicole's refusal to inhabit a specific box is a consequence of her refusing her body at a time where agency over is negated by the illness. When the cancer catches up with her, she is saved when Lilith forsakes her body and her soul is grafted to Nicole's. During and after the miraculous recovery, Nicole never really feels at home in her skin, as both the tumour and Lilith have undermined her sense of self and identity; they have invaded her body without her consent and denied her agency. For much of the plot, Nicole is untethered. The traumatising experiences she endures throughout the story only intensify her dissociation from her body, her family, and her allies, and it is this lack of connections that will set her on the path that will turn her into the tragic hero (sometimes downright villain) of the story.

Conceptualising what had-aids are and how they behave has been one of the most contentious points for me as a writer. When I conceived the characters, I failed to notice the potential for disruption that they carried. We might borrow Maggie Nelson's terms

as *gender-hackers*³⁴ to describe them. In a world obsessed with taxonomy and categorisation, *gender-hackers* defy the boxes. The initial design saw them as androgynous, angel-like characters void of reproductive organs, then they became human-like creatures incapable of reproduction. Finally, they crystallised in their current form: ageless, magical creatures equipped with reproductive organs but unaware of gender and its social constrictions. The arrangement that had-ais and human beings share implies fluidity and multiplicity, gender identity has little to no meaning in the construction of the former. Although had-ais do not share the same struggles as transgender people, they share the fight against a highly structured and patriarchal society, one built by their Creator to oversee every aspect of their life, especially private, and that wishes to limit their rights and agency.

³⁴ Nelson, M. (2016). *The Argonauts*. Melville House UK.

3. The different layers of collaboration.

All the interviews in this chapter were obtained and quoted after seeking verbal consent from all the people involved.

3.1 Creative dilemmas and narrative imperatives: negotiations in a creative partnership

When adapting *Storms* into graphic narrative, I initially established that the new product would mirror the progress of the plot of the original novel. The initial PhD project was mainly interested in the collaborative nature of writing the product and on the tools to translate *Storms* from one form to the other, but as the adaptation process progressed, working in graphic form implied more than transposing³⁵. In fact, it involved extensive re-writing, especially when elements specific to the form were taken into consideration.

The most important change in the adaptation process was the shared maternity of the project, not just because of the creative debates Fasulo and I would often entertain when negotiating changes, but also because I was – and still am – relying on her time and resources. As we struggled at the beginning of the PhD (we were both learning new tools and navigating each other’s creative processes), one of the most important decisions we took was to constrain chapters into a pre-set number of pages to streamline the production process on both ends. Fasulo and I discussed together the number of pages we would work on and aimed to find a number that would allow the narrative to develop well and consent Fasulo to complete the work in time to meet the deadlines and publish our work online. To balance all these different creative and logistics needs, I cut elements and details and relied on the reader’s ability to make sense of abrupt transitions and jumps. I put Fasulo’s needs ahead of the narrative ones and it wasn’t until last year, during a supervision with Mary Talbot, that I saw how much I had left unsaid or discarded for the sake of efficiency. This also produced a disconnection from the source material.

When Fasulo and I started our collaboration, we laid out some ground rules to regulate the partnership. One of the most important tenets was that every decision was open for discussion and debate – especially if of graphic nature – but ultimately, I had

³⁵ A form of free translation where the translator exercises their freedom to attain equivalence.

the last word in the editing process, as I had the full picture of the direction of the story. This specifically has meant editing dialogue, possible spelling mistakes (Fasulo introduced text in the speech bubbles directly on Photoshop), changing the order of the panels and of the chapters. The biggest problem throughout the project – but more so at the very beginning – was that both Fasulo and I were fiercely individualist artists, so we tried our best to keep an open line of communication and work in a way that was truly collaborative.

First of all, we go through Monica's rough storyboard of the chapter. We basically analyse every single panel and then I do research through pictures and texts. I notice every detail and let inspiration come to play. Usually, during the re-sketching, some elements of the original layout change. We review my final version of layout, and if there are more changes to apply, I keep working until we are happy with it. [...] I finally ink the drawings by hand and Photoshop. In the beginning I analogically used pencils but now I cover the lines with digital pencils to mark the lines.³⁶

When the collaboration begun, we started by fleshing out the characters. I provided Fasulo with visual aids that would help her understand what they looked like, as at that point I had been tinkering with the story for almost a decade. Those feverish first days were the best. It might come with no surprise that those were also the days Fasulo and I were living in close quarters. In my interview with Mary Talbot and comic artist Bryan Talbot, similarly, their personal and creative partnerships seemed to be intertwined to the point that it would be difficult to pick them apart.³⁷ When they described their process when working on a project, their words reminded of the first days the illustrator and I spent brainstorming the graphic novel and the wider project. In a following session with Mary Talbot, we reflected how peculiar it was that we both have had the chance to collaborate with someone we are so familiar with; there are no boundaries between personal and creative spaces as they often were one and the same. Every meal shared or walk taken was an opportunity to discuss the project, share ideas, and negotiate creative choices.

³⁶ Fasulo, D. (2020). *Discussing the process*. Interview by Monica Guerrasio, 15 February.

³⁷ Talbot, B. and Talbot, M. (2020). *Discussing collaboration in creative partnerships*. Zoom. 13 Jul.

That the illustrator and I had a pre-existing relationship, and we were both familiar with each other's work and creative process, really helped get the project off the ground. When I moved to Italy and started working on the PhD and my part-time job, the workflow and communication became stilted as the latter happened through broken down text messages rather than conversations.

As Fasulo was also at her first collaboration on a graphic novel, she asked me to prepare a storyboard that showed the panels' distribution on the page and the relationship between characters in each panel (where were they placed, their gestures, and facial expressions). Although daunting (I was not confident in my drawing skills at all, at the time), the request really forced me to think – together with Fasulo – about the mechanics of the translation and the space that the action, the balloons, and onomatopoeias would take on the page. It was the first step in the journey that would take me from transposing my novel into graphic narrative to creating a graphic novel based on the trilogy. Those early attempts saw me struggle to create guidelines that would give Fasulo a clear idea of what I had in mind while also leaving her the freedom to take those guidelines and interpret them. That was until I understood Fasulo thrived when I provided her with encompassing descriptions that brought to life the world I had created. She was more interested in flashing out the connection between the written and graphic components:

Monica writes the dialogues and I am in charge of creating the relationship between written and graphic components within the single panel. The questions I ask myself when I try to find the best coupling of text and image are: does the reading flow? Is the emotion or the dramatic situation understandable? Is the overall panel effective and harmonious?³⁸

³⁸ Fasulo, D. (2022). *Discussing the process part 2*. Interview by Monica Guerrasio, 29 December.

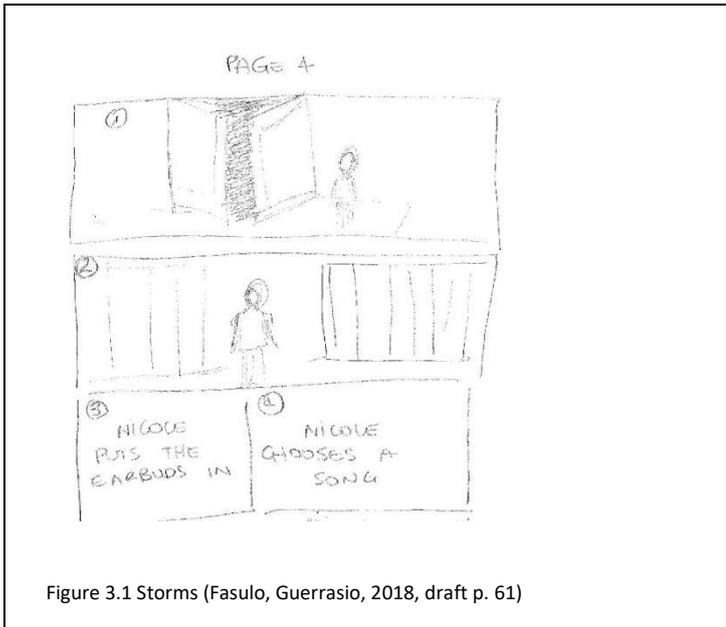


Figure 3.1 Storms (Fasulo, Guerrasio, 2018, draft p. 61)

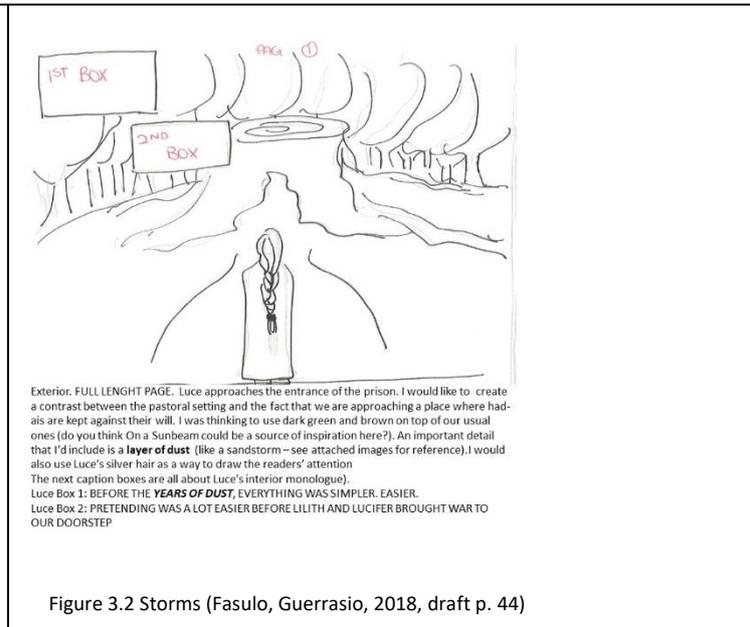


Figure 3.2 Storms (Fasulo, Guerrasio, 2018, draft p. 44)

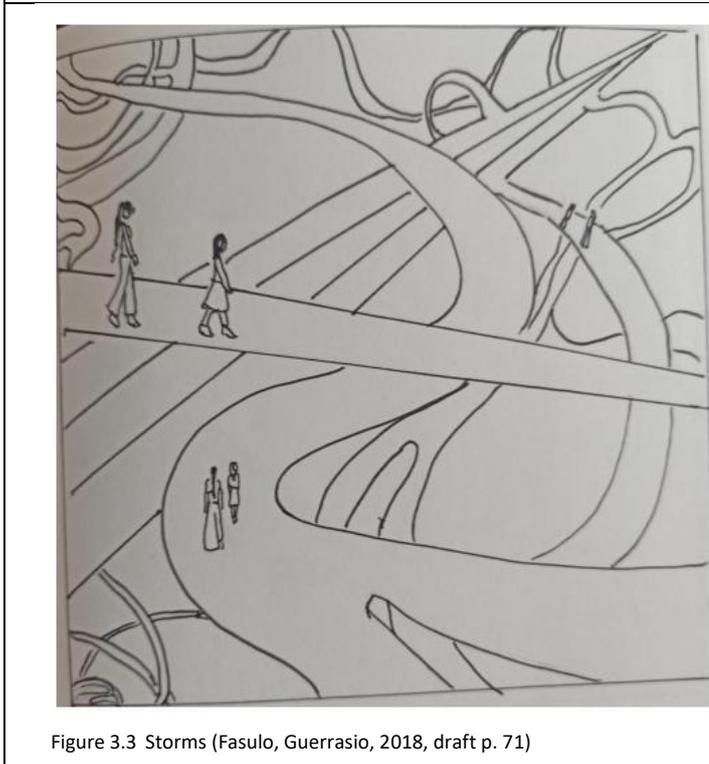


Figure 3.3 Storms (Fasulo, Guerrasio, 2018, draft p. 71)

PAGE 2 - FULL PAGE
 KIRA and YOUNG NICOLE are walking one behind the other. KIRA doesn't know where her guide will take her but is confused and a little worried. At this point, KIRA has no idea of the connection between NICOLE and LILITH. When I thought about this panel, I thought of ESCHER. There is no hierarchy in terms time (no present, past, future) which means that the BLOCKS of conversation don't have a coherent sequence. KIRA's monologue is LOOSE and doesn't have a proper order of when things are said.
 KIRA: You look a lot like my sister Nic, only younger.
 KIRA: It's you, isn't it?
 KIRA: SIGH. This is not a good sign...
 KIRA: I need to roll a cigarette.
 CEMIRA BAE: FOCUS!
 KIRA: EASY FOR YOU TO SAY.

In the attempt to create storyboarding that would be helpful and detailed, I started attending drawing lessons which, unfortunately, were cut short by the pandemic. Laying out the panels and building action across them became second nature. I even stopped looking at the novel for guidance as I had devised a plot that considered the latest draft of *Storms* and scenes from previous versions, while also adding new scenes that I might have not considered in novel form. By that point, Fasulo and I had honed our creative process. Once my storyboard was done, I would scan and upload the panels,

add the visual references that I had used so that she could have a better idea of the general mood and ambiance, and finally add the script on the side. When in doubt about something, I would leave questions as comments for her to address or for us to discuss later.

If we had little to no problem in working on chapters based in the primary world – Forest Hill is roughly modelled on Lancaster and Avellino, the latter is our hometown, which gave us plenty of common ground – working on the chapters set in Ådhit came with a whole new array of challenges. The first one, and probably the easiest to overcome, was finding references that would help me fully focalise the images in my head and the illustrator have a clear idea of what I was thinking. When I asked Fasulo, if she had ever considered reading the novel and let her imagination start from there, she answered that she thought of our process as a middle ground where our imaginations met and collided.

Well, it's not only about my imagination. It's also about the writer's imagination. Both imaginations have to find a middle point. We found it through dialogue. Monica, the writer guided me into my vision, my own vision by providing for me the material such as photographs, the script, the layouts, the suggestions for the technique. So, I started from there to develop my own imagination and transform the storytelling into images.³⁹

The second, and most egregious challenge regarded negotiating our different aesthetic which, albeit similar, not always overlapped. This was the case specifically with chapter six. It did not help that, as I have previously mentioned, our different lifestyles did not always allow to have direct conversation and we often had to rely on text messages which did not allow us to fix the problem or clear any doubts immediately.

³⁹ Ibid.

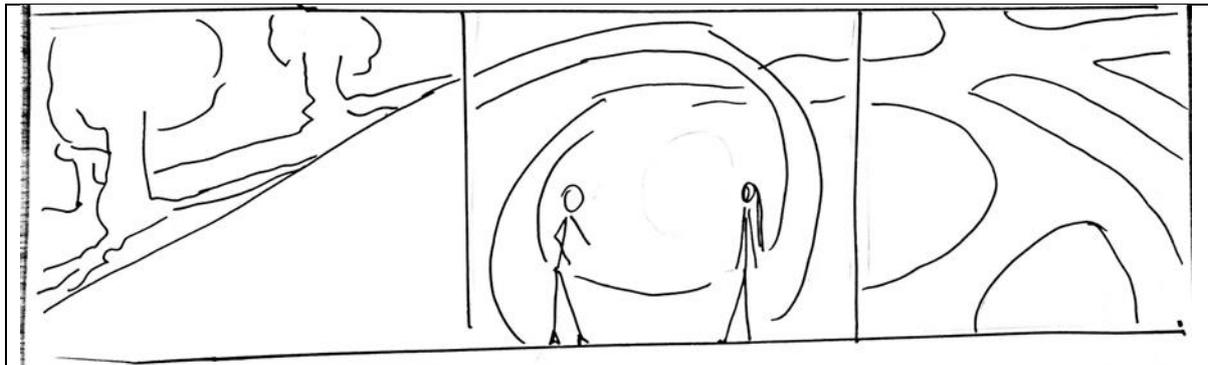


Figure 3.4 Storms (Fasulo, Guerrasio, 2018, draft p. 68)

PAGE 6
 PANEL 1 spread – Full length (MAKE SURE is the size of two squares)
 The environment slowly changes from the basketball court to the dream world.
 KIRA: C'mon, follow me.

Nicole and Kira need to be swapped (Kira is leading the way).



Figure 3.5 Storms (Fasulo, Guerrasio, 2018, draft p. 68)

In the first draft, I envisioned a transition that clearly signalled the shift between one dimension (real world on the left) to the next (dream dimension on the right). The second draft of the same scene presents a more abrupt change as the illustrator thought about it as “an oil stain” that gradually saw the second dimension take over the first one. My primary concern with the transition was not of a graphic nature but, at that point, I had developed reservations about the challenges that we offered the readers. This can be read in an exchange over text messages:

Guerra: I think we need to add just a tiny detail: either by showing the paths/door landscape behind Kira’s head or by extending the path one or the other should do.

Guerra: Premise: the changes I suggested are not an indication of me having changed my mind about the quality of the work. I still like it and I think it works really well. Sometimes, though, I worry that we're a bit too adventurous with our panels and we may leave the story behind or there are elements that need to come out to help the narration. That's why sometimes we need to use clichés because readers know them and understand them more quickly.⁴⁰



Figure 3.6 Storms (Fasulo, Guerrasio, 2018, p. 68)



Figure 3.7 Storms (Fasulo, Guerrasio, 2018, p. 67)

⁴⁰ Guerrasio, M. (2020). *Webcomic*. [WhatsApp].

Fasulo understood my concern, and we agreed to keep the last page of the chapter as she had drafted it but to follow my suggestion and show the second dimension opening in the previous page.

Despite the logistics, the collaboration has been punctuated by moments of support and discovery; it helped that we were both novices as we both understood that bumps along the way and the blunders were all part of the process.

As we readied the material to share the characters and the story on the web, we presented a story that would explain our collaboration: an illustrator and a writer joined at the head by a nuclear explosion. Fasulo created an avatar that we used for our social media profiles and to tease the publications of different chapters.

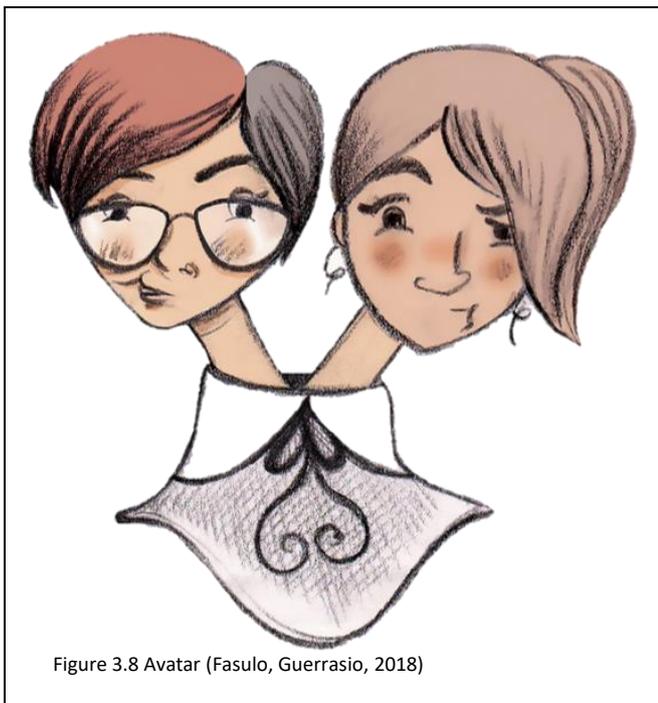


Figure 3.8 Avatar (Fasulo, Guerrasio, 2018)

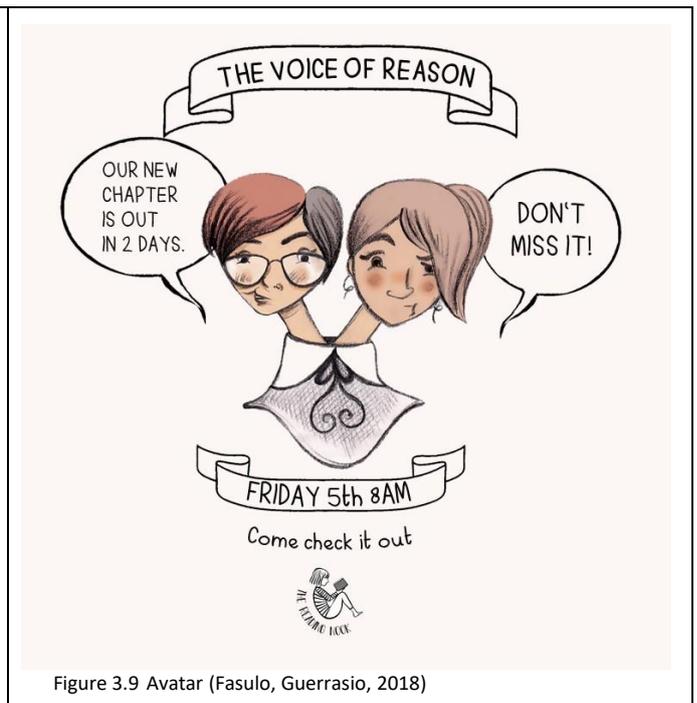


Figure 3.9 Avatar (Fasulo, Guerrasio, 2018)

The avatar worked as a metaphor of our collaboration: two heads guiding one body, two creative processes at the service of the same project. That was the idyllic image I had of our collaboration at the very beginning, not knowing that the boundaries we established at the very beginning planted the seed of an unbalanced power dynamic within our team. When I asked Fasulo how much she saw of herself in the work and how much she felt it was her own, she echoed my sentiment that we were not on equal footing because of my attachment towards the characters and the story. “Monica has

always had a clear vision of the story as a whole, and it's that kind of possession [...] that limits a perfect 50/50 per cent ownership."⁴¹

As my project and investigation in graphic narrative developed side by side, I became more interested in the dynamics at work in a creative collaboration outside of the bubble the illustrator and I had created. My main objective was and still is to identify patterns in the way creators interact with each other and the form, especially when such form involves with collaborative processes within itself.

In 2020, I conducted several interviews to understand how other partnerships behaved. In July of that year, I managed a workshop online during the *XI International Graphic Novel and Comics Conference* where participants would be split up in groups and create a webcomic in the time allocated. Attendants expressed their preference at the beginning, whether they wanted to work as a writer or an illustrator and were then paired; some participants preferred to observe only and were welcomed by teams who did not mind being joined by an observer. Once all the groups were formed, the participants were informed about what they had to do; they were told there was no theme set beforehand and were free to choose one and that they had an hour to complete their work. Most of the groups picked a theme quickly and jumped into the brainstorming phase right away, but group four made up by Subir Dey, illustrator, and writer Jaya Wathare, tried to work out all the rules of the partnership before approaching the creative phase. They were reminded of the time limit and were encouraged to prioritise the writing and drawing, but insisted on setting clear boundaries in the collaboration. On the opposite side of the spectrum, group two, made up by illustrator Gemma Li, writer Martin Flanagan, and observer Linda Berube worked on an idea while the illustrator took notes of the idea in the form of drawings. When interviewed at a later stage, Li explained the boundaries were never an issue in their group, as the most pressing matter was that of time and respecting the deadline. As the collaboration became more established, Berube also started collaborating by giving feedback and helping to re-focus the narrative. But what helped the group was how Li took the concepts and shaped them on the page giving her partners a concrete image of what the comic looked like. When asked about their creative process, the three

⁴¹ Fasulo, D. (2022). *Discussing the process part 2*. Interview by Monica Guerrasio, 29 December.

participants replied how the collaboration helped them overcome their instinct to self-censor their ideas and instead it pushed them to share and build on each other's contribution. Below you can read extracts from the interview held on Zoom:

Monica Guerrasio: And what about your creative process? How did this collaboration affect your creative process?

Martin Flanagan: So probably because I collaborate with people on books, I know how to give and take and compromise, as Gemma said, and brainstorming probably made me a little braver with ideas. I kind of knew that there was no point hiding ideas and put boundaries around them [...]. It was quite useful having Linda because I felt like there was someone checking the idea. I felt surprised that I would be able to put the creativity into that because I don't think of myself as that creative with what I'm doing normally.

Linda Berube: Well, I think that my kind of position within the group was really interesting, but kind of odd because I originally went in as just a spectator because I had nothing in the game to offer myself [...] but there was a kind of a disinterest, I guess maybe a distance. And that, for me, allowed a certain amount of freedom. I mean, I have to say upfront here that the end product was not how I was seeing it. And that's not to take away from Gemma and Martin. But I was willing to kind of go along with what they were thinking and what their ideas were and to chip in when I thought I could help things along or whatever. And I suppose that allowed me to kind of think a little bit more about how I saw the concept and whatever.⁴²

At the end of the workshop, the result was a braid of entangled elements that could not be taken apart. The participants could recognise some of the core elements they had presented at the beginning of the collaboration (Flanagan proposed the theme, while Li offered the visual element of the puzzle), but ultimately if one tried to pick it apart to claim the maternity or paternity of one element, the whole project would come undone. The interview closed with Berube stating how a project whose origin and execution is shared among different artists would never belong to one or the other, but it will always be the fruit of the collaboration.

⁴² Flanagan, M.; Li J.; Berube L. (2020) *On creative collaborations*. Interview by Monica Guerrasio [Zoom], 2 July.

I think if I had been more invested and I think this is what we're all saying, you know, if it's yours [...], if it's your responsibility of all the investment, then there's a real kind of weight there and you get bogged down and feel like there are too many ideas, and you don't know which ones to use and which ones to discard. But the whole process really eliminated all that and therefore kind of freed creativity, I think a little bit more.⁴³

It was interesting to note, though, how differently I felt about the PhD project. Although Fasulo and I established good collaborative practices and an open line of communication to discuss creative choices, it cannot be denied that the original material source was very much my creation. Separating the novel from the graphic novel is nearly impossible. Re-thinking the material using graphic narrative language and being so involved with the drawing process has only strengthened the bond between myself and the project. The feeling of being the chief author of the project only strengthened when Fasulo took a backseat because of personal reasons. Months later, when we tried to reconnect at a creative level, she admitted she felt a profound disconnection which prevented her from engaging with the project, a feeling that I had experienced myself and understood. Just like group four during the workshop, Fasulo and I were limited by the constraints we had put in place. There were clear reasons for preferring this kind of approach. As Fasulo stated, "we agreed on working this way for time reasons,"⁴⁴ and to meet the deadlines that we had established to make sure that our work could be published as a webcomic. In hindsight, producing the webcomic was another reason I started taking charge of more and more aspects of the production process. The speed at which we needed to publish chapters online (and draw an audience) added extra pressure we could not sustain considering we could not devote all our time to the project.

More recently, I hosted another creative writing and graphic narrative workshop during a *Progressive Connexions* conference (March 2023), where I asked attendees to re-imagine witches' origin stories. Providing a specific theme beforehand (attendees had access to the abstract where I also suggested a list of critical and creative works they

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

could read prior to workshop) and offering questions as starting points at the beginning of the session (e.g., What do you like about witches? If you could rethink where their origin stories, what would it look like?) allowed participants to focus their ideas more quickly.

There were four teams in total, each one made up by two attendees. After a brief introduction, I informed the participants of the time constraints and suggested to have a fifteen-minute brainstorming session before they tackled any creative work. I then distributed the materials providing everyone with blank paper, pencils, and rubbers, while I kept pencil colours, coloured pens, magazines, scissors, and tape on a separated desk so that the participants could decide what they needed and when they needed it.

After that, I started circling the room to monitor the process, but when I realised that the teams might feel self-conscious about my presence, I opted to sit down and only occasionally circle the room to observe the collaboration dynamics during the different stages of the session; I also informed the participants of the time left at regular intervals.

The results of the collaborations were interesting and very different. In the table below, you can see the final outputs.

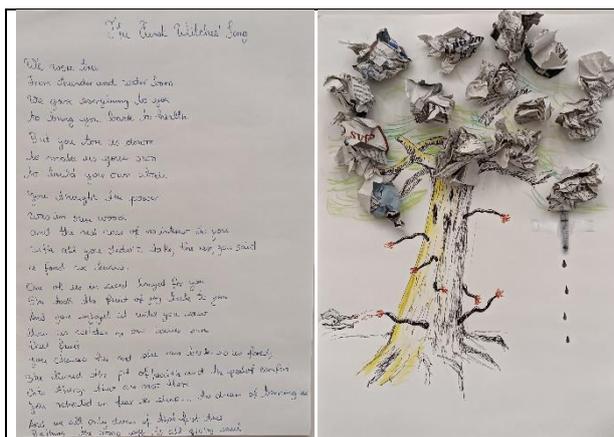


Figure 3.10 Workshop (Gordillo, Mejía Suárez, 2023)



Figure 3.11 Workshop (Goldberg, Kaplánková, 2023)

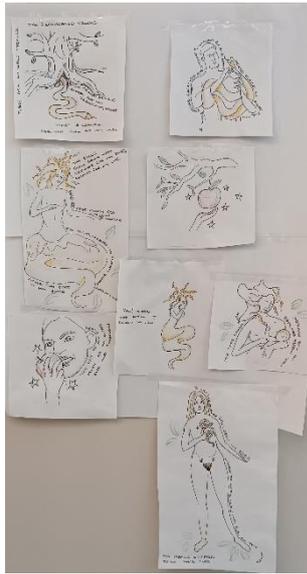


Figure 3.12 Workshop (Allan, Owen, 2023)

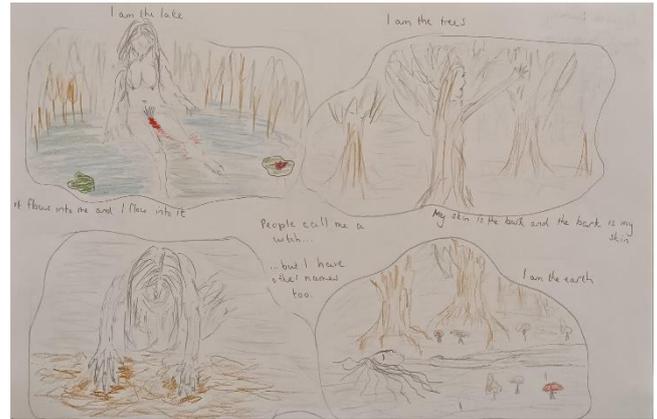


Figure 3.13 Workshop (Dearnley, Panteli, 2023)

At the end of the session, we spent a few minutes to go over the different works. In the initial timeline, I had slotted fifteen minutes for this stage, but as the groups needed more time to finish their work, I decided to adapt to their needs which left us with a bit more than five minutes to discuss the creative works.

Each work was the result of a very different vision. Adriana Gordillo and Carlos Maria Mejía Suárez (Group 1) wanted to create something that transcended culture and borders, “something that was pan”.⁴⁵ On the other hand, Kristyn Goldberg and Barbora Kaplánková (Group 2) bonded over and were inspired by their Slavic heritage to create a collage that spoke of the duality of modern witches, representing “a hag hiding in plain sight”⁴⁶ while also engaging with pop culture elements like the witch aesthetic so popular on social media. Group 3 (Lucy Elizabeth Allan, Jennie E. Owen) and Group 4 (Elizabeth Dearnley, Georgia Panteli), instead, found inspiration in old myths and connected the natural and womanhood to wielding magick.

The most interesting element was how each group connected the graphic and written elements. Gordillo and Mejía Suárez opted to split the two entirely, they wrote the poem on one page and drew a tree – the main subject of the poem – on another one. When asked about it, Gordillo said the choice had been guided by her vision of a diptych. “The key to a diptych is that they need to talk to each other, they need to

⁴⁵ Gordillo, A. (2023). *Post workshop Interview*. Interview by Monica Guerrasio [Zoom], 5 April.

⁴⁶ Kaplánková, B. (2023). *Post workshop interview*. Interview by Monica Guerrasio [Zoom], 1 April.

inform each other [...], the whole thing speaks.”⁴⁷ The initial vision saw the poem shaped in the form of a tree but there was not enough time to make that happen, so the team decided to draw one and, as Gordillo has experience with collage, they used the newspapers to add a third dimension to the drawing.

Goldberg and Kaplánková (Group 2) worked mainly with collage. The team used the Easter images and typical attire portrayed in the newspapers to represent the natural element, while they shaped the crossword page into a “black and white cityscape”⁴⁸ in contrast with “the colourful, organically shaped Nature on the other side”.⁴⁹ During the brainstorming phase, they discussed of including a drawing, but as they discovered more and more images that fit their narrative, they decided to scrap the element altogether to also help them finish the work on time.⁵⁰ As a final touch, they used the imprint of their painted lips on a piece of paper as a spell to link the two halves of the collage.

Another interesting point was to notice each group’s specific dynamic. Gordillo and Mejía Suárez (Group 1) were already familiar with each other’s work as they are part of the same collective. As they brainstormed ideas in their native language (Spanish), Gordillo would write down words while Mejía Suárez would doodle drawings on a blank page, and even though the poem was born out of Mejía Suárez’s main idea, as Gordillo points out, “the final product, it was both of us [...]. He created a baseline for us, but that baseline was created out of the conversation we had.”⁵¹ Likewise, Goldberg and Kaplánková (Group 2) used the newspapers as a funnel for their creative endeavours which led to a “50/50 collaboration”.⁵² Whereas Allan and Owen (group 3), after an initial brainstorming phase, split the work clearly. Allan created the images while Owen devised the poem, before they came together in the last stages of the workshop to join the two elements.

The time constraints, material options, and theme worked as guidelines rather than obstacles allowing the teams to negotiate the creative process and choices. Given

⁴⁷ Gordillo, A. (2023). *Post workshop Interview*. Interview by Monica Guerrasio [Zoom], 5 Apr.

⁴⁸ Kaplánková, B. (2023). *Post workshop interview*. Interview by Monica Guerrasio [Zoom], 1 Apr.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Gordillo, A. (2023). *Post workshop Interview*. Interview by Monica Guerrasio [Zoom], 5 Apr.

⁵² Kaplánková, B. (2023). *Post workshop interview*. Interview by Monica Guerrasio [Zoom], 1 Apr.

my previous experience, I was also more engaged with the groups during the *Progressive Connexions* conference, clearly signalling the time, answering questions, and making suggestions in relation to their production process, so that they would avoid spending too much time on one phase. Another element in favour of the *Progressive Connexions* conference was the physical proximity of the participants which allowed for a more streamlined flow of ideas and a better observation on my part.

Despite their differences in the use of the materials, their approach to the collaboration, and relationship with the constraints, it is interesting to note how each group seems to have told a different version of the same key concept which can be “summarised as the connection between Nature and knowledge.”⁵³

The research into collaborative partnerships and their dynamics has prompted a few questions on the way the illustrator and I have worked together. Would have things been different had we had the chance to continue our co-habitation? Would the illustrator have been more engaged if we had worked on a project whose inception, we would both share the maternity of? Would both premises ensure a long-lasting collaboration or just one would suffice? Fasulo suggested that a more balanced partnership, in our case, would have been possible if I had given “freedom to someone else to graphically create the whole universe of the comics,”⁵⁴ statement that feels at odds with the initial requests of having detailed storyboards.

Even though our first collaboration yielded mixed results, Fasulo and I continue our conversations and are aware of the lessons learnt so far; we are always on the lookout for the next project we can collaborate on.

3.2 Less is more: from prose to graphic narrative.

Scott McCloud suggests there is a specific path that leads to the creation of a work of art which starts from the idea and the purpose of the work, and is articulated in five more steps which ideally would help pin down the form, the idiom (meant here as genre), the structure, the craft, and the surface.⁵⁵ As I worked on the transmedial translation process, I realised that even though the message of the story had not changed, the way it was being articulated needed to take additional elements into

⁵³ Gordillo, A. (2023). *Post workshop Interview*. Interview by Monica Guerrasio [Zoom], 5 Apr.

⁵⁴ Fasulo, D. (2022). *Discussing the process part 2*. Interview by Monica Guerrasio, 29 December.

⁵⁵ Mccloud, S. (1993). *Understanding Comics: The Invisible Art*. New York: HarperCollins Publishers.

consideration, specifically the synergy between written and graphic components specific to the medium.

When transposing the novel, the panels were thought in a sequence that would replicate the pace, the rhythm, and the dialogue of the opening. The result was met with mixed effects as the prologue looked and read stiff with the graphic and written components not working harmoniously. Groensteen states that comics – as a medium – is built on the “simultaneous mobilisation of codes”⁵⁶ and therefore any product of graphic narrative needs to be thought holistically. The several elements that make comics need to be read in concert as they can “corroborate, reinforce, or question that of the other modes that enter this dynamic process.”⁵⁷ The adaptation of the prologue did not take all the medium’s tools into account and, although the images contributed to moving the story along, rather than having being thought as parts of a whole, the graphic and written components read and looked like two disjoint elements.

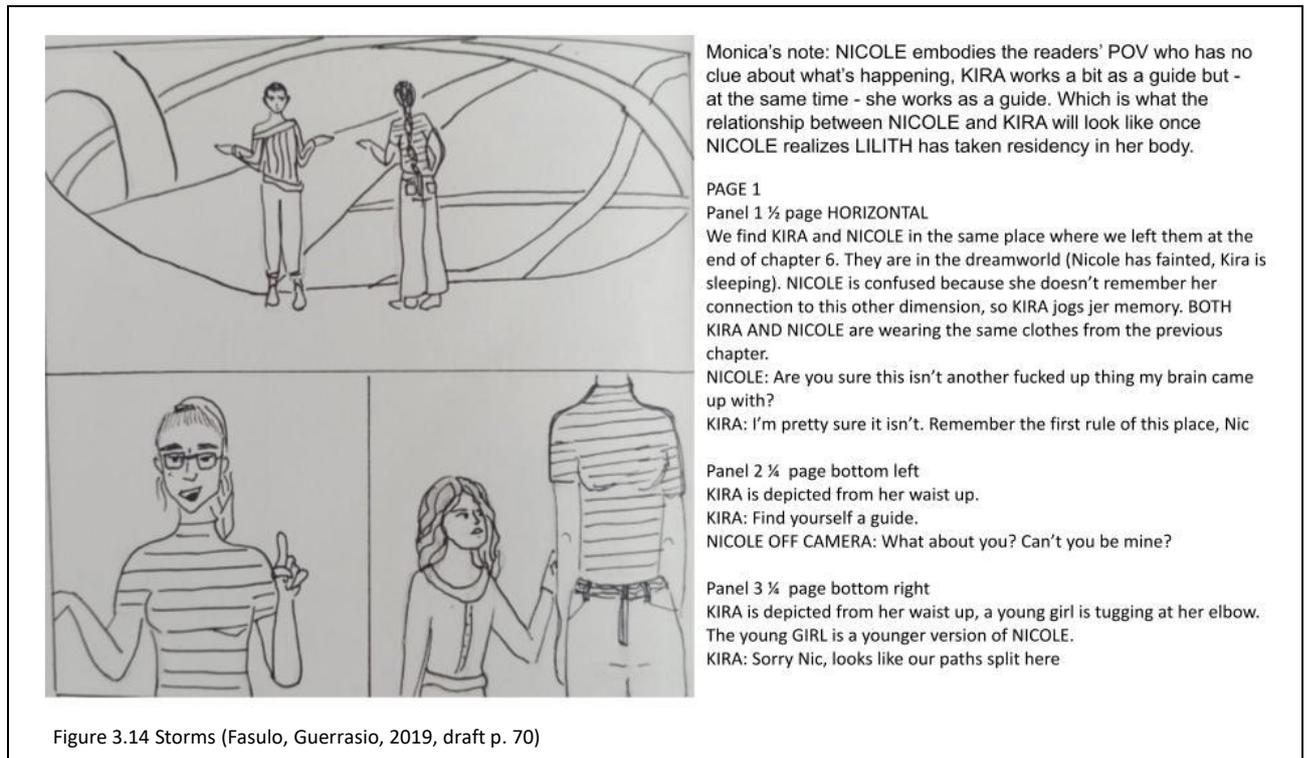
After the shift in paradigm, I had to grapple with how I should approach the story in graphic form. First, it was important that the illustrations and words worked to advance the story. Then, two questions followed, and they were closely interconnected; how much story should the graphic adaptation tell and from which characters’ perspective? Finally, the last issue to explore and consider was how focalisation would affect the work or if it had an impact at all. Since then, it has become clear how the element that has most influenced the transmedial translation is the weight that words have and the space they occupy in the two different media taken into consideration and how the written element cannot be severed from the graphic narrative. Words and images have different ways of interacting on the page, but – at their best – they are like pieces of a puzzle filling each other’s gaps. Albeit there are many products that present both elements together, such symbiosis is peculiar of comic books and for the synergy to work at its best, the reader needs to supply their own contribution. Wolfgang Iser discusses how literary texts ask the reader to recreate the world represented on its pages giving life to the virtual dimension of the text, which is not the text itself, nor the imagination of the reader, but the “the coming together of text and imagination.”⁵⁸

⁵⁶ Groensteen, T. (2007). *The system of comics*. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi.

⁵⁷ Kukkonen, K. (2011). Comics as a Test Case for Transmedial Narratology. *SubStance*, 40(1), pp.34–52.

⁵⁸ Iser, W. (1978). *The Act of Reading: a theory of aesthetic response*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Univ. Press.

The writing has also gained a quality akin to stage directions, which need to be exhaustive and clear to offer the illustrator the best description possible for the realisation of panels that would feel true to the original idea and purpose.



Will Eisner explains the mechanisms of the process by stating that “writing for film or comics is economical, eschews literary style, and does not need descriptive passages that evoke images by analogous prose. The *idea* is the dominant element.”⁵⁹

Collaborating on the adaptation of my novel into graphic narrative has showed me how changing the medium would open the story up to new interpretations and analysis both by its author and readers. What started as a literal translation – the idea that every single scene in the novel needed to be translated into comic form – developed into the awareness that the original material needed to be dissected under a microscope and picked apart to be put together. With this came the realization that the material, originally thought in a structure that would highlight narrative patterns and plot twists, needed to be reorganised. The webcomic braids different strands of plot and timelines from the trilogy in a way that deconstructed the original structure. Probably the most important lesson learnt during the process is how easily can stories change

⁵⁹ Eisner, W. (2008b). *Graphic storytelling and visual narrative: principles and practices from the legendary cartoonist*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company.

once they undergo an adaptation process and how unrealistic were the boundaries that both Fasulo and I set in place while working on the creative element of the project. The tighter we held onto the rules we had set in places, the more negatively the product was affected. Instead of allowing for the form to indicate us how to shape the narration, we prioritised logistics needs.

Initially, the trilogy was built on a system of symmetrical narrations that would compare the events in Timeline A (present), when the promise of a conflict tears apart a family, with what happened in Timeline B (past), which explains the reasons behind the conflict. In *A Theory of Narrative*, Rick Altman points out how *La Chanson de Roland* is built on a similar premise, the space given to the different groups in the text (Christian and Romans) and characters (Charlemagne and Marsile, Roland and Aelroth) aims to counterposing them. The tension within the text is driven by what Altman defines “exceptions”, elements that may alter the status quo which In *La Chanson de Roland* emphasises the psychological element. Similarly, the continued juxtaposition and counter-position of events and motives in *Storms* aimed to shed light on the characters’ inner mechanisms, and how past and present conflicts were connected. I decided which elements to lie out and in which order, but it’s the reader’s contribution that brings the loop full circle. This is yet another level of collaboration that happens with graphic narrative. Scott points out how readers’ experience plays a role in filling the gaps that the gutters (the space between panels) open, “Here, in the limbo of the gutter, human imagination takes two separate images and transforms them into a single idea.”⁶⁰

In 1962, writing about a similar practice, Umberto Eco caused a controversy when he published *Opera Aperta* (Open Text). According to the Italian author and critic, modern works of art deliberately consider the role of a participant to make them whole and, although Eco’s reflection stems from the analysis of instrumental music productions, his theory can be extended and applied to other forms of art. Open works of art are ever-changing, not because of a careless arrangement of forms and messages on the author’s part, but because of the different sensitivities and experiences that each user relies on at the time of the fruition process.⁶¹

⁶⁰ Mccloud, S. (1993). *Understanding Comics: The Invisible Art*. New York: HarperCollins Publishers.

⁶¹ Eco, U. (2017) *Opera Aperta*. Firenze: Bompiani.

Besides the role of the reader in relation to the work, it is interesting to consider the weight that the medium may have. Gabriel Rippl and Lukas Etter's stance on Inter- and Transmedial Narratology succinctly summarises the matter at hand as they propose that the medium chosen to carry the message is not "innocent", rather "its internal structural and medial laws define the ways in which the categories of time and space are used."⁶² Kukkonen takes it even further, when she refers to the run of "Arabian Nights" in *Fables*, the comics series that brings to life characters from fairy and folktales, to assert how the creative team behind the graphic novel crosses media boundaries and how "storytelling practices both shape and are shaped by the media in which they unfold."⁶³

Some critics are still debating around narrative and media interconnection and if a story can be retold across different media. In *The Power of Movies*, Noël Carrol defines medium specificity as the view that the media associated with a form necessitates specific possibilities and presents constraints on representation and expression.⁶⁴ This approach provides a normative framework for what artists working in that art form should or may attempt. It is not a matter of what, but how. When I approached the transposition of *Storms*, I never worried about whether the story could work in graphic narrative; the main concern was how I could tell the story using the tools the form offered. Once I became more confident with graphic narrative, I stopped thinking about how I could translate one moment in the novel into graphic narrative, rather I looked at the moment in narration and asked myself what it would look like in the graphic novel, how could I translate the feelings in images or facial expressions? I ceased looking at the latest draft of the novel and considered the story as I knew it, and – more importantly – the story I wanted to tell, devoid of the novel formal experimentations and external feedback. This is when my storyboards became more and more detailed, shifting into what may be considered the first draft of our chapters.

⁶² Rippl, G. and Etter, L, (2013) Intermediality, Transmediality, and Graphic Narrative. In: Stein, D. and Thon, J. (eds), *From Comic Strips to Graphic Novels: Narratologia Contributions to Narrative Theory*. Berlin: De Gruyter.

⁶³ Kukkonen, K. (2011). Comics as a Test Case for Transmedial Narratology. *SubStance*, 40(1), pp.34–52.

⁶⁴ Carrol, N. (1985) The Power of Movies. *Daedalus*, 114(4), 79-103.

3.3 From graphic narrative to webcomic.

Initially, *Storms* was the first instalment in a trilogy. Each book explored the plot through two different siblings' perspectives (the first and the second through twins Nicole and Kira, the third one through Luce and Lilith). In *Storms*, the twins' narration covers the plot linearly; sometimes, the characters narrate the same segment to give the reader a 360 degrees picture of the action, although often, the two adjacent points of view alternate. The graphic adaptation starts off from the prologue at the beginning of *Storms* but provides flashbacks to Luce and Lilith's time in Ådhit, their world of origin. In this sense, the structure of the narration is closer to that of the first book, but it is wider in scope as the reasons for the conflict are finally brought to light when Luce delves into the politics of Ådhit.

Where the novel moved at a slower pace, the webcomics needed to move at a different rhythm, especially considering the project would be published on the web and that webcomics seem to be more plot-driven. Considering this, I decided to build the chapters following the same pattern which aimed to introduce clues and narrative elements to the reader (initially such items would vary from characters, world-building elements, to relationships to gradually developing towards clues) and they would close on a cliff-hanger, not unlike an episodic format of TV shows or serialised fiction. The technique calls upon the reader's faculty to establish connections to foster participation.

As the novels presented characters with a rich inner life – having to co-exist with an alien soul – the story turned out to be more dialogue than action-based and suffered from excessive exposition. For the webcomic, readers would play a more active part by providing a more faceted narration that would allow them to make the connection and draw the proper conclusions, often before the characters could. The decision to switch to a richer cast of point-of-view characters influenced the material to be adapted into graphic narrative. The translation from one form to another presented an old but challenging question: where is the camera? Despite the differences between graphic and cinematic storytelling, the similarities between comics and films are many and – perhaps – one of the most important ones is how both forms think of their material in shots.

When faced with the conundrum about developing the narrative, it was useful to think the panels in terms of camera shots, whether they served a prosaic need, such as informing the reader about what was happening or conveying feelings and emotions, the

creative choices considered during the adaptation process aimed at clarifying who the reader was supposed to look at and why. As I completed each chapter, my choice between panels and frames was no longer motivated by the adaptation process of the webcomic, but it rather considered a new way of devising the narration.

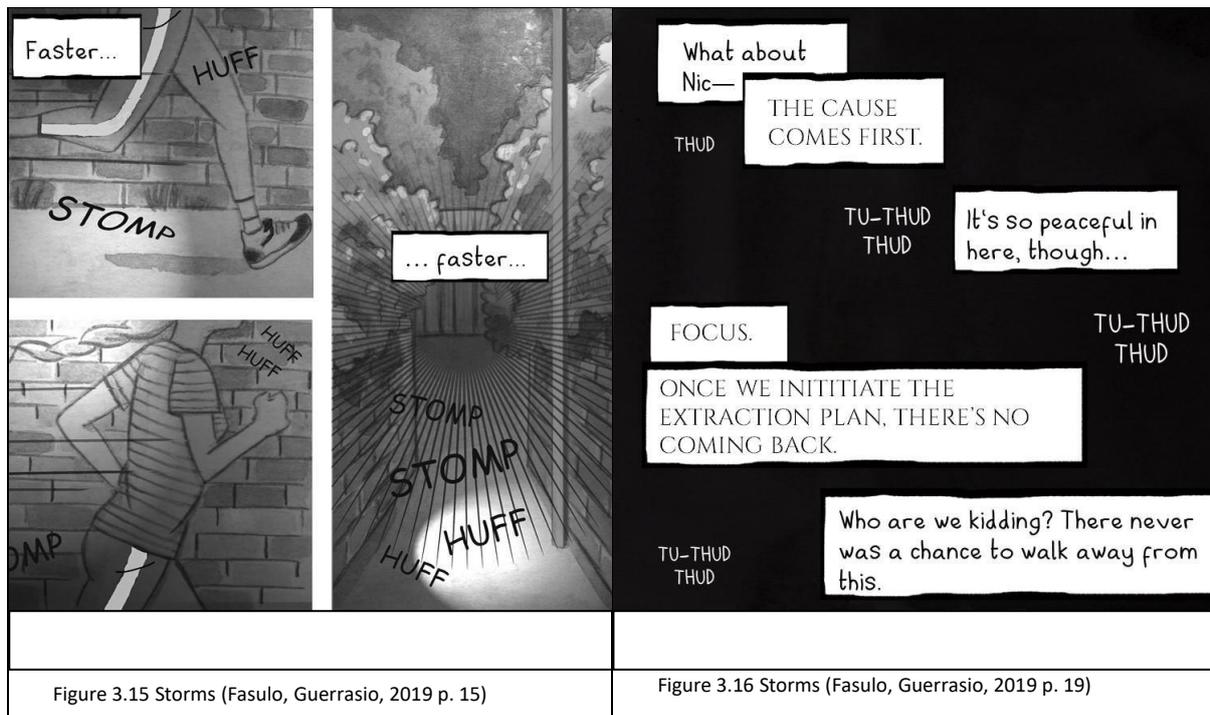
One of the fundamental differences an author who engages with graphic narrative needs to consider is space. Dialogue and sounds occupy no space in films, they happen alongside the images, while in comics these elements need to be accounted for. When the first two chapters from *Storms* were being translated, the first drafts read like silent films. No onomatopoeias had been included resulting in the odd and eerie sensation that the reader was experiencing the panels “on mute”.

The placement of the camera has become an essential element in the translation process, and strictly connected to the question of its placement is that of focalisation, whether the change in medium would affect focalisers, and – if so – how and to what extent. Because of the different tools at their disposal, graphic and non-graphic narrative have different ways of engaging the reader, although the result may be similar, the way the two forms trigger immersion is different. Where *Storms* the novel relied on a prose that would eliminate filtering (words that would delay or interrupt the action such as think, feel, hear, etc.), *Storms* as a webcomic relies on the synergy between graphic and written components to involve and engage the reader.

The adaptation process has brought up some questions regarding the way some information is shared and shown. Gérard Genette’s model of focalisation can be of help here; Genette believes there are three different types of focalisation (non/zero-focalisation, internal focalisation, and external focalisation) which vary depending on the access the reader – through the focalisers – has to the information.⁶⁵ If in the novel, the narrator and character overlapped in a pattern that can be recognised as variable focalisation – and at times as multiple focalisation – Genette’s model didn’t seem to translate well in graphic form, as the split between narrator and character became clear. In the webcomic, the narrator was sacrificed as the characters carried the weight of the narration. The inner dialogue between human beings and had-ais fulfilled – to a certain

⁶⁵ Genette, G. (1983). *Narrative Discourse: an essay in method*. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press.

extent – the duties that a classic narrator might have in comic books and graphic novels (see images 3.15 and 3.16).



Mieke Bal expands Genette’s theory by opening it up to the possibility of representing other minds’ perceptions and adopting somebody’s point of view.⁶⁶ Bal’s contribution is particularly relevant as several focalisers share and interact on a plan beyond the one of earthly experiences. Human being and had-au Mason and Hananæt, as well as twins Kira and Nicole share dreams and telepathic events. Rendering such moments in a way that is both clear and engaging is paramount to provide the readers with clues to solve the mystery. Bal’s contribution has been pivotal in formalising the depiction of one of the trickiest elements within the novel, which was the relationship – together with the modality of communication – that human beings and had-ais entertain. The novel *Storms* represented the switch in voices through a change in lettering. As the sudden modification might have confused the readers, the device was tested in the prologue. Where the vision is only brushed upon in the novel, it claims its power in the graphic transposition, with a full-page illustration that shows the details

⁶⁶ Bal, M. (1990). The Point of Narratology. *Poetics Today*, 11(4), p.727.

that Mason and Hananæt experience as they happen while the reader is told what is happening and the had-au explains the power of clairvoyance.

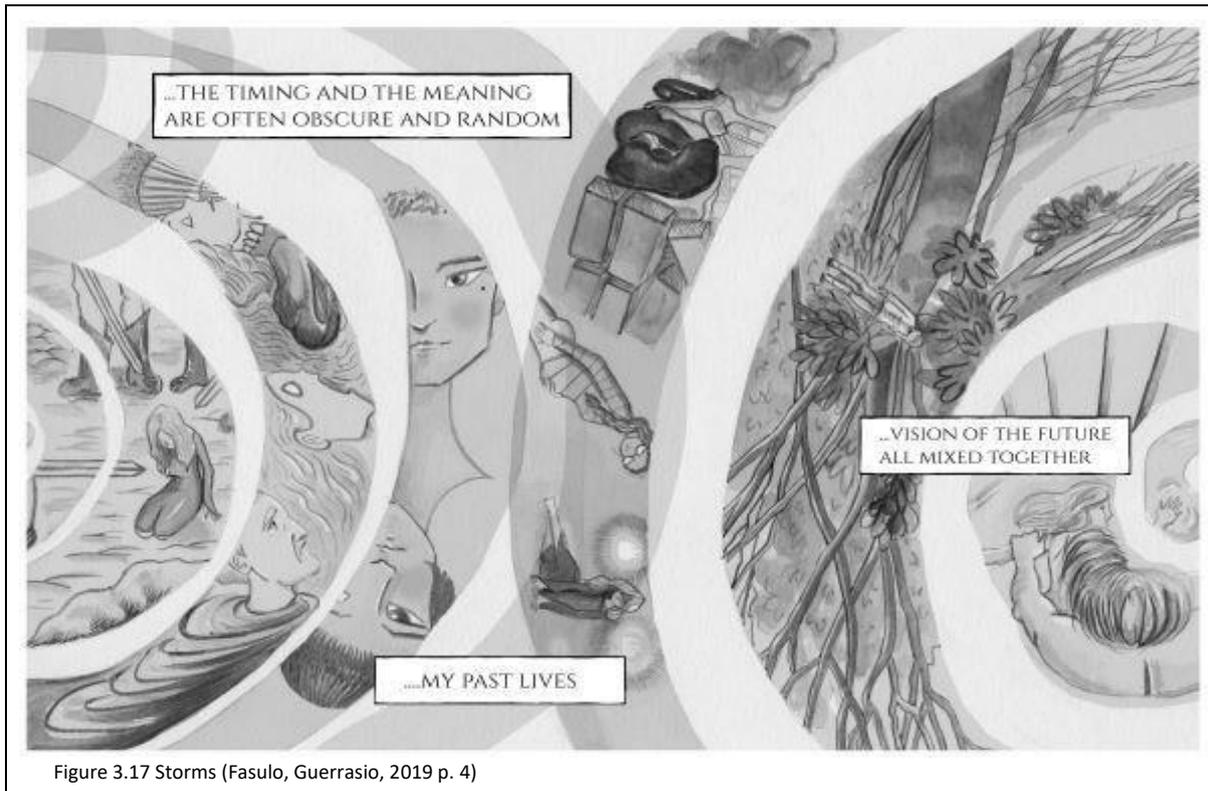


Figure 3.17 Storms (Fasulo, Guerrasio, 2019 p. 4)

In graphic form, the differentiation in voices between had-au and human beings is made explicit by the way they are encapsulated and rendered. Human characters are assigned specific speech bubbles and font, while had-ais's speech is written in a different font and is presented in text boxes. Altman's words help understand what is required of the reader to understand the different levels of interpretation at play in this specific instance.

To make sense of multiple-focus texts, we must always step beyond the language in which they are couched. Only by discovering a common denominator among characters and activities are we able to stitch together the studiously separate strands of the multiple-focus fabric.⁶⁷

Despite its flaws, the prologue succeeds at interweaving words and illustrations in a way that the ultimate results present the reader with several strands of information and only when they are experienced together, the reader can make sense of what is

⁶⁷ Altman, R. (2008). *A theory of narrative*. New York: Columbia University Press.

happening. The panel has different layers and it can be read as a whole or in segments, depending on the approach the reader favours.

Finally, as the project of the PhD is a graphic narrative that was supposed to be distributed on the web, there are further elements that need to be taken into consideration as we tested the first panels on online platforms. Webcomics are a relatively recent phenomenon (mid – to late 90s) and they are predominantly thought for mobile devices (tablets and smartphones), therefore Fasulo and I agreed *Storms* would be published on some social media platforms such as Instagram and Tumblr. But our first attempts at graphic narrative saw the panels and the pages in a hybrid format more suitable for a print publication than for one on the web. The more we worked and posted, and I researched other webcomics online, the more I realised the panels did not suit online readers; the balloons and the fonts were too small making it difficult to read the text. The frames around the panels were too large eating space that could be occupied by the images and I suggested Fasulo that we shift from rectangular panels to square ones, as both the chosen platforms favoured that layout.

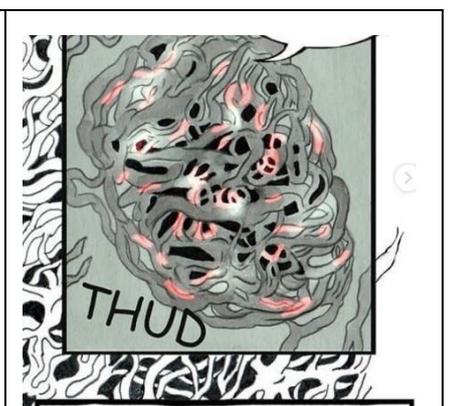


Chapter one, *The Voice of Reason*, can be considered the turning point in the adaptation and collaboration process (please note than in the original plan it was chapter four) as the experimentation was taken farther. We worked on the panels so that the reader could manipulate them. Panels five and six were thought as a rectangular full-page that could be uploaded in a way that readers could scroll horizontally, as well zoom in and zoom out, to explore the different sections of the illustration. The ultimate result was a page that replicated the feeling of being enveloped by the roots and to

trigger immersion. Ever since then, Fasulo and I actively worked to ensure that the chapters worked as narrative units and were fit to be read online.



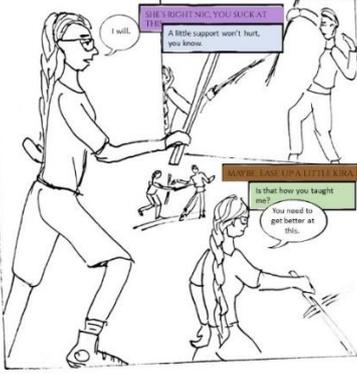
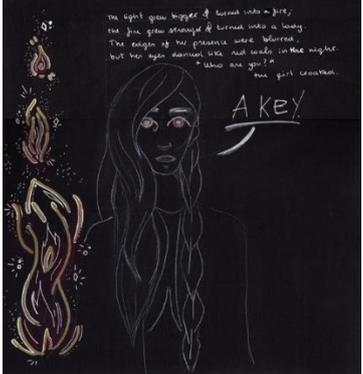
As the reader must swipe to see the rest of the panels, the movement – mixed with the advancement of the roots – bears echo to a film montage (see images below for different ways to interact with the panel online).



3.4 From translation to creation.

From the moment the trilogy was conceived in novel form, I had been trying to introduce a lore system specific to the world of Ādhit, but I struggled to introduce them in the narration in a way that was organic and purposeful. As the process of translating

the novel into graphic novel came to a halt, I diverted my creative efforts to code the lore element. It soon became clear to me that the fairytales were Luce’s memories relayed to Leighton, who coded them as fairytales so that she could share them with her siblings. Although some elements of the lore will be included in the first volume (towards the end) of the graphic novel, most of the corpus will appear in the second volume to avoid clogging the narrative as it reaches partial completion at the end of the first instalment. The tales will be drawn and written on back paper to resemble pages from illustrated books. The creative choices aim to signal the reader that they are entering a new narrative realm alongside the focaliser. Below, a table that exemplifies the differences:

POV Morgan Siblings	POV Luce	Fairytales
White paper with a digitally altered background (colour changes depending on POV).	White paper with a digitally altered background (yellow).	Black paper.
The illustrations are black and white.	The illustrations are black and white.	Coloured illustrations.
Purple used as an accent colour.	Purple used as an accent colour.	x
Use of speech bubbles and text boxes.	Use of speech bubbles and text boxes.	Words become part of the illustrations / layering of speech bubbles and metanarrative text.
		

As the act of transmedial translation shifted to become one of creation, I started working on elements that would appear later in the story; I have also become more confident in manipulating panels and pages around to create a more streamlined and complex narration. The most relevant example is that of chapter nineteen which marks my first attempt at straying from the linear narration of the to bring together strands of the story that worked together; it also introduces a new pattern in the narration as we see two different focalisers sharing the page and the chapter. This is justified as the siblings, who until that chapter had been geographically and emotionally separated, reconnect with each other. The twins especially share a power that goes beyond their entanglement with had-ais. They can walk in each other's dreams, which sometimes have a prophetic quality. In chapters four to six, the reader is confronted with an everyday situation (Nicole playing basketball) only to be told that the characters have moved into another dimension when Kira appears in one of the last panels.

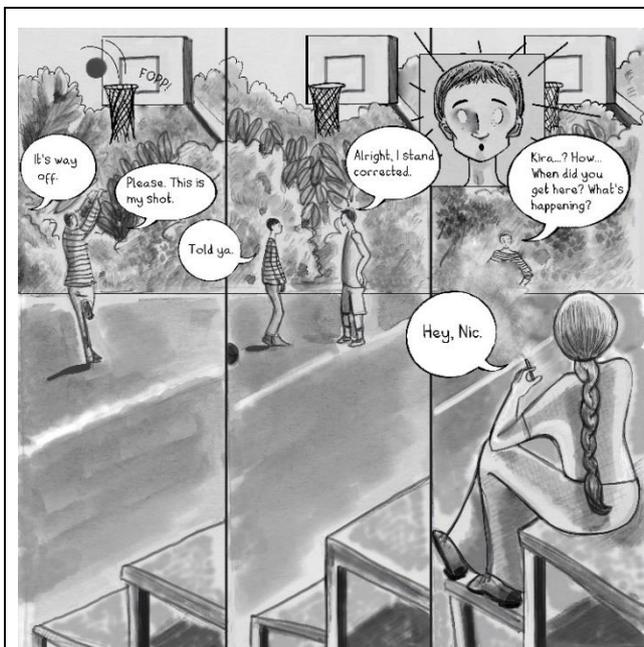


Figure 3.25 Storms (Fasulo, Guerrasio, 2019 p. 66)

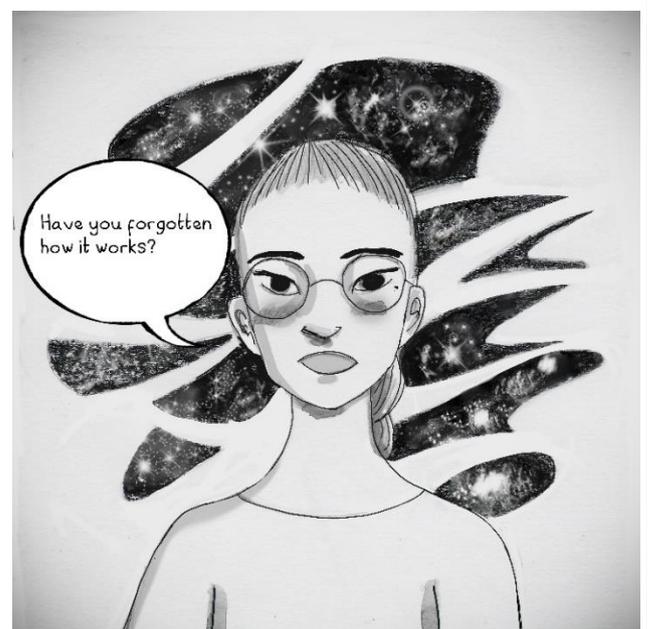


Figure 3.26 Storms (Fasulo, Guerrasio, 2019 p. 67)

The following two chapters see the twins roaming around by themselves in a dimension that is not purely dreamlike, but works as a backdoor to other realities (the past, memories, empty pockets of the void). The twins don't share a chapter or the page again until chapter nineteen, which is the conflation of three shorter chapters coming together:

- POV Nicole: Nicole recalls the event since she has woken up from her coma.
- POV Kira: Kira seeks an explanation for Nicole's status.
- POV Kira and Nicole: Kira trains Nicole while she hides her from the rest of the Rebels.

By joining the three different chapters, I wanted to explore how different consciousnesses (Kira & Cemira Bael; Nicole & Lilith) melded, collapsed, and clashed and how the focalisers would be affected by this creative choice.

In the first page of the chapter, we can only read Nicole's thoughts, which are followed by Kira interjecting on page three, when she becomes the prime focalisers until the twins begin their training together. It is then then the readers realise they are witnessing not a stream of consciousness but a conversation between the two.

Chapter nineteen is also a study into the two characters' relationship and sets the basis for the drift that will pull them apart by the end of the first volume. Given the intensity and density of the chapter, it became paramount to make sure that readers could get through it without difficulties. When Mary Talbot offered to have a one-to-one supervision, I thought it would be a great opportunity to test the graphic novel with a person who had not read my creative work beforehand. During our meeting, Dr Talbot noticed how the graphic novel did not offer an easy reading experience and caused confusion about which character would say what. She reminded me of her work (especially *Dotter of Her Father's Eyes*) and how she used colour-coding to move across timelines and different point of views. Although I already used graphic elements (the use of caption boxes and a different font) to signal the change from had-au to human being, I concluded that adding colour-coding and the name at the beginning of each chapter would help the reader navigate the intricacies of the narration.

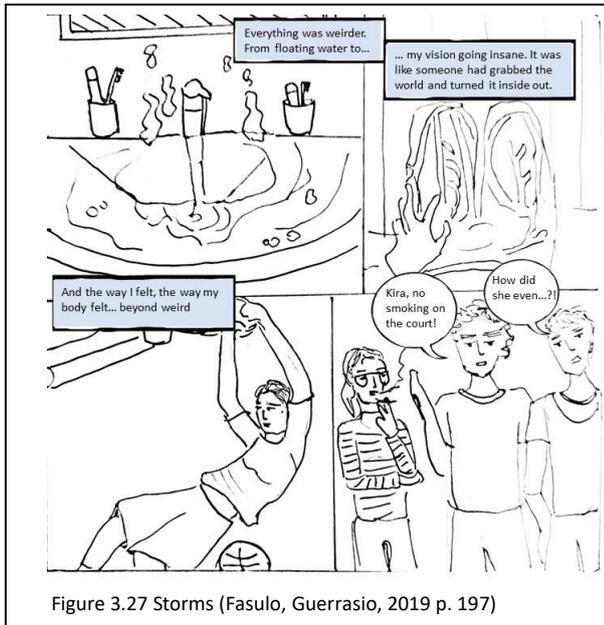


Figure 3.27 Storms (Fasulo, Guerrasio, 2019 p. 197)

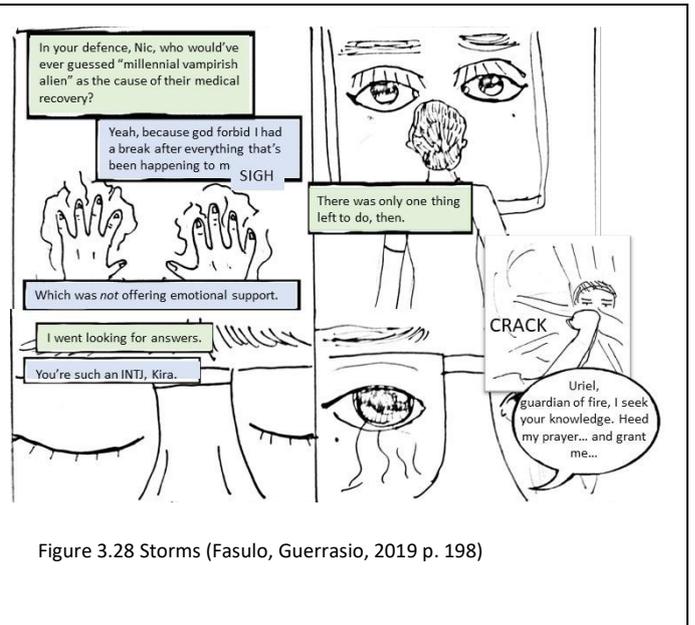


Figure 3.28 Storms (Fasulo, Guerrasio, 2019 p. 198)

Initially, I believed that each focaliser would have a colour assigned and their panels would be washed in the same hue, but then I realised that this option might be problematic as future narrative choices see more point of views occupy the same space. Therefore, I applied the solution only to speech bubbles and caption boxes when more narrators occupy the same page and space constraints do not allow to clearly tell who is saying what. The language deployed in the speech bubbles and caption boxes is clear and devoid of frivolities. Clarity was the primary goal in mind when I wrote the dialogue in this chapter.

A more interesting effect of transmedial translation regards the exploration of Ådhit's boundaries as a physical world. I use Dio as a metaphor for the creative forces behind the graphic novel. When the character brings his vision to life, he cannot acknowledge the mechanism of his world. Ådhit has a centre structured like a small citadel surrounded by thick woods, but the moment that the characters move into the wilderness, they are soon met with a world that looks bare and incomplete, as if the creator had got bored with his creation. Exploring this element graphically will have an even greater impact than describing the landscape, mainly because it was the translation process that brought to my attention the relevance of the issue. From a graphic standpoint, I intend to have the characters walk through a forest only for the tree to thin until they are confronted with a landscape that does not just look bare but unfinished.

All the changes examined in this chapter have been a direct or indirect result of my exploration into graphic narrative and transmedial narration. The most relevant aspect is the relationship that semiotic signs strike on the page and how they affect the content they are delivering.

3.5 From particular to global: the politics of comics

Cultural and artistic endeavours do not exist nor happen in a bubble; the elements that make up a product – the creator, the content, and the medium – are all subject to political influences, from within themselves and without. Hence, part of the aim of this project is to explore *Political* and *political* issues and their impact as the story unfolds.

The novels were to examine several social and political mechanisms, from repression – whether political or social – to civil rights movements, to the broader matter of representation. The topics were supposed to be treated straightforwardly in a way that felt coherent to the story and the characters. The initial plan, though, was thought and conceived for when *Storms* was part of the trilogy of novels; the new configuration of the plot in graphic narrative form sees the juxtaposition of two different timelines, one set in the past in Ådhit, the secondary world, and one in the present in the primary world. Such proximity will show how certain topics have grown and changed throughout the years; the webcomic will do so by presenting two worlds: Ådhit – where had-ais come from, a pastoral dystopia inhabited by gender-fluid magical beings – and a world similar to that known by the reader, populated by inhabitants some of whom capable of bending elemental magick. The choice to build worlds that are both familiar and foreign to the reader stems from the hope that the comparison of the two realities may prompt the reader’s reflection. The bridge between these two worlds is represented by the fairytales. The Morgan siblings, like the readers, face an uncanny yet familiar world where they are transported by the stories they read, which causes “dislocating the reader from his/her familiar setting and then identifying with the dislocated protagonist so that a quest for the *Heimische* or real home can begin.”⁶⁸

By juxtaposing the two timelines, and asking the reader to strike a correlation, the story pushes questions of social and moral values that – today, more than ever – are

⁶⁸ Zipes, J. (1982). The Potential of Liberating Fairy Tales for Children. *New Literary History*, 13(2), p.309.

relevant, from topics such as representation of female characters in speculative fiction and comic books, gender and genre fluidity to questions concerning dark ecology, grassroots political movements, and populism. Some artists who have shared their products (*Riot Nrrd* 2009 – 2013, *Arthur King of Time and Space* 2009 – 2014), have been playing with stereotypes and working to dismantle them in their work since the inception of the form. It is not unlike the spirit that moved the artists who shone in the underground comix scene of the Seventies, when authors were moved by the intention of tackling taboos and deconstruct them.⁶⁹ Henry John Pratt believes this is part of the ethics of comics:

The creators of comics, as noted earlier, tend to be outliers, historically afforded little respect within the art world and society in general. This outsider status, combined with the marketing need to appeal to a youthful demographic and the sense of rebellion it involves, might suggest that comics creators have a strong tendency to produce narratives that reflect a deep subversiveness and cynicism about the mainstream values that have pushed both the creators and audiences of comics aside.⁷⁰

⁶⁹ Hatfield, C. (2006). *Alternative comics: an emerging literature*. Jackson, Miss.: University Press Of Mississippi.

⁷⁰ Pratt, H. J. (2009). Medium Specificity and the Ethics of Narrative in Comics. *Story Worlds: A Journal of Narrative Studies*, 1(1), pp.97–113

4. Between a rock and a hard place: bilingualism, heritage, and cultural differences.

4.1 An immigrant in my own country.

One of the most recurring questions I have had to answer in my academic career is why I write in English, my second language (L2), rather than in Italian, my first language (L1). The reasons were so obvious but also difficult to pin down as it was something that I felt deeply, but I had never tried to vocalise.

Italian researcher Alessandra Rizzo analyses Jhumpa Lahiri and Monica Ali's experience as second-generation immigrants filtered through the lenses of their Anglo-American upbringing. Despite the differences in circumstances revolving Lahiri and Ali's decision to immigrate (they had no agency as it was their parent's decision to move), there are some points of contact between their experiences and my own. Some of the most important negotiations that happen when moving to another country is reconciling two different languages and the cultural baggage that comes with them, it creates a "non-static and fluctuating experience [...] richer identities and new systems of identification."⁷¹ When Lahiri and Italian author Domenico Starnone, whose work Lahiri has translated into English on multiple occasions, discussed Lahiri's wish to adopt Italian as her language, Starnone replied "A new language is almost a new life, grammar and syntax recast you, you slip into another logic and another sensibility."⁷² Starnone's point also applies to the transmedial translation process. I cannot deny that two of the most pivotal points in the writing process of *Storms* happened when I translated the novel from Italian into English in 2012, and from novel to graphic novel in 2018. Approaching the story from different angles helped bring into focus elements (the had-ais, the magical system) and themes (transgenerational trauma, liminal places) that I had not fully embraced or explored.

Although psycholinguists studies have disproved the popular theory that bilingual or multilingual people change personality when they make the switch between their L1 and L2, psycholinguist Susan Ervin-Tripp's experiment indicated that bilinguals change responses according to the language they employ and the one adopted by their

⁷¹ Rizzo, A. (2012). Translation and Bilingualism in Monica Ali'' and Jhumpa Lahiri'' Marginalized Identities. *Text Matters*, 2(2), pp.264–275.

⁷² Lahiri, J. (2016). *In Other Words*. London: Bloomsbury.

interlocutor. When authors move from their L1 to their L2, the shift is modulated through a series of negotiations and compromises that happen at different levels and that take into consideration, among the different variants, cultural and social expectations; this affects both mundane aspects of the authors' life and their creative process.⁷³ It is not surprising, then, that the two major shifts in framework (language and form) affected *Storms*, both the story and I needed to learn how to exist inside new structures, adapt to their inner rules, negotiate them, and eventually break them when we both felt comfortable or the need to do so.

Akin to Lahiri's search for a new identity, my decision to move to the United Kingdom and study in London for a Master's in Journalism equalled to claiming a creative identity I already felt I partially inhabited. By that point, I consumed English entertainment regularly (from stand-up comedy clips available on YouTube, to films and TV shows, to books). Although I have been writing fantasy novels and short stories for twenty years, my approach to Fantasy literature, as a reader, happened later in life when I was in my mid-twenties. Genre literature used to be frowned upon in Italy (still is, though to a lesser extent) which has led me – as an author – to interiorise the prejudices surrounding the genre. Therefore, I had little exposure to the corpus of Fantasy literature, if not for the notable exceptions (e.g., *Lord of The Rings* and *The Chronicles of Narnia*). When I booked my one-way ticket to London, I knew with unwavering certainty that if I wanted to tell my stories, I needed to master the language of the Western Fantasy tradition.

Where Lahiri felt anxious about leaving the English tradition and language behind and embracing Italian,⁷⁴ I shared none of the same concerns. Unlike Lahiri, who grew up at a conjunction of languages and cultures, my Italian upbringing was encompassing and unshakable, but studying languages in primary and secondary school opened a window into new realities. I did, however, feel unease when I moved back to Italy in the aftermath of the Brexit referendum. In the chapter "Exile", Lahiri discusses the sense of separation and alienness that accompanies her while in Italy,⁷⁵ a feeling that I

⁷³ Ervin-Tripp, S. (1964). An Analysis of the Interaction of Language, Topic, and Listener. *American Anthropologist*, 66(6_PART2), pp.86–102.

⁷⁴ Lahiri, J. (2016). *In Other Words*. London: Bloomsbury.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

understood and shared after having spent six years abroad. This sense of exile was re-enforced because when I moved back to my country, I did not return to my hometown but to Milan, a metropolis which, like London, offered professional opportunities and a wide portfolio of cultural and social activities.

My experience of moving back to Italy stands in stark contrast to my relocation to the United Kingdom. When I moved to London, the initial fear and sense of loneliness was shadowed by the excitement of the new adventure. Tony Murray describes well the fascination that London exerts on many immigrants, “For centuries, London has occupied a powerful place in the imagination of artists of all kinds.”⁷⁶ Finding a part-time job and a house within days of having arrived contributed to enforcing the romantic idea that “it was meant to be”. Last but not the least, I had time to roam the city to make it mine and claim some pieces of it as my own.

Going back to Italy had the aftertaste of bitterness and defeat, especially as I felt displaced in my country. It created an eerie mirage-effect of being home, chasing the idea of making the new city home, without ever feeling like I had come back to a place I was familiar with. Salman Rushdie’s describes immigrant writers as being “haunted by some sense of loss, some urge to reclaim, to look back, even at the risk of being mutated into pillars of salt.”⁷⁷ Islam points out how this fear of severing and losing one’s own connection is often reflected in diaspora authors’ work where writers devise a narrative revolving around characters who strive to save their connections to their heritage and this is a recurring theme in my creative work: searching for and finding a place to call home.⁷⁸

In *Storms*, the four Morgan siblings (Leighton, Kira, Nicole, and David) struggle to come to terms with their pasts; their familial connections have been severed by the death of their parents and unresolved issues. Their parents’ house is the centre towards which they gravitate and orbit without fully inhabiting it. Albeit the four Morgan siblings may be considered more emotional immigrants rather than geographical ones, the fantasy element contributes to reinforcing the discourse of exile. Of the four brothers

⁷⁶ Murray, T. (2012). *London Irish fictions: narrative, diaspora and identity*. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press.

⁷⁷ Rushdie, S. (2010). *Imaginary homelands: essays and criticism 1981-1991*. London: Vintage Books.

⁷⁸ Islam, M.S. (2018). Alienation, Ambivalence and Identity. *Critical Survey*, 30(4), pp.40–53.

and sisters, three – the three women – are involved with supernatural beings who have been expelled from their home-world as the result of a curse. They cannot access it until they resolve the conflict that has been tearing them apart.

Albeit some of these themes had been hinted at in previous drafts, it was while I tackled the project during the MA that the conjunction of familial and alienness became the liminal space that most of my characters and the story itself inhabited. Finally, it was when I expanded my work for the PhD that I acknowledged my condition as a “bridge” between two cultures and languages and bring forward the elements of displacement and identity, rather than shy away from the narrative. Embracing the duality of my identity opened a liminal space in my narrative too, one that I had been trying to structure with little success. In that space, I created Forest Hill, a town that wasn’t properly British but could pass for one, a town filled with the history and the symbols of the graphic novel, where the lore that I crafted for the secondary world took hold by farther shaping it. The red thread that saw the different parts of my identity – and their expression in *Storms* were the fairy-tales.

Stories slipped across frontiers of culture and language as freely as birds in the air as soon as they first began appearing; fairy tales migrate on soft feet, for borders are invisible to them, no matter how ferociously they are policed by cultural purists.⁷⁹

Creating fairytales and to have them become part of the narrative presented few challenges, from the tone of voice to the actual content, but when I focused on narrating the origin story of Ādhit in fairytale form, everything found its place.

Where most of diaspora authors are forced to leave their home country for political reasons, my experience was not as dramatic. Italy was not being torn apart by conflict nor war, it was the financial crisis of 2009 – still in full swing two years later – that convinced me it would be best to seek fortune elsewhere. There were other factors that convinced me to leave Italy behind and that was the intellectual attitude towards my favoured subjects of research. It is not unlikely to encounter an elitist mentality in Italian scholars and authors when subjects such as Fantasy literature and comic books

⁷⁹ Warner, M. (2018). *Fairy tale: a very short introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

are brought up, even though some of the most respected personalities of the Italian cultural panorama (i.e., Italo Calvino, Umberto Eco, and Dino Buzzati) often praised them. Putting some geographical distance between myself and Italy allowed me to gain a new perspective on social and cultural debates, giving me room to grow and become more independent, both as a writer and individual. Lahiri asserts Italian made her a freer writer, the English language – as well as the baggage that came with it and the expectations of writing in English – constrained her.⁸⁰ Embracing a new language helped her disregard the assumptions that had been made about her and re-invent herself. I firmly believe that English had the same effect on me. It offered – from a creative standpoint – a wider representation of fiction and genres than Italian. I often think about how a part of my family, and to a certain extent Italian readers, might be excluded from reading what I write, but I am aware of how, in Italy, my stories might be considered niche both because of the themes and the genre. There is freedom in shaking off the expectation of writing in my language and the expectations of its literary tradition and move to a language and a (much wider) selection of readers who might be more open and accepting of my work.

Another important element that needs to be considered is that of translation. In Lahiri's own words:

Translation shows me how to work with new words, how to experiment with new styles and forms, how to take greater risks, how to structure and layer my sentences in different ways. Reading exposes me to all this, but translating goes under the skin and shocks the system, such that these new solutions emerge in unexpected and revelatory ways.⁸¹

Translating *Storms* – when still in novel form – equalled to re-writing. The project went through different stages, from its first inception as an anthological collection of dark fantasy short stories in Italian to the webcomic that it is today. The most important change happened in the years 2012 – 2013 when I approached the novel and re-wrote it completely. I had just moved to England when that happened and I was struggling with

⁸⁰ Lahiri, J. (2016). *In Other Words*. London: Bloomsbury.

⁸¹ Lahiri, J. (2021). *Jhumpa Lahiri on the Joy of Translation as Discovery*. [online] Literary Hub. Available at: <https://lithub.com/jhumpa-lahiri-on-the-joy-of-translation-as-discovery/> [Accessed 31 July 2021].

the decision of what language I should adopt. When I finally set out to do the work, writing in English came naturally. But how did my approach to writing change once I decided to adopt English as the primary language? Italian and English are different. There are a few points of contact provided by the remnants of Latin in the English language, but when it comes to creative writing, the attitude could not be any more different. Where the former is lush in structure and vocabulary, the latter is more streamlined, opting for a cleaner and more efficient style. It is also important to note that my first approach to writing in English happened in the framework of newswriting, as I had moved to London to attend a course in journalism. Where Italian news-reporting is long and repetitive, English journalists opt for a concise and effective style. Approaching the writing from a practical standpoint, and not only creative, helped me reconsider my writing skills. I had to renounce the embellishments and baroque elements in favour of a simpler and cleaner approach.

That change was followed by another one just as big in scope. The collection became a novel. The short stories included a set of recurring characters that worked as a *fil rouge* across the collection, but when I approached Anglo-Saxon fantasy books in their language, they provided much-needed inspiration. I structured the short stories into a cohesive plot and brought forward the fantasy inspired by the Judeo-Christian religious elements.

The second main re-structuring effort happened when I started the MA in Creative Writing at Lancaster University. By 2015, I had developed a narrative universe that would incorporate not only *Storms* and the whole trilogy but also my debut novel, short stories I had published in the meantime, and the novel and novella in the pipeline. It was then that I stepped away from my first source of inspiration and coded the fantasy element into a new vocabulary and set of images that would be specific to the narrative universe I envisioned. Culture is coded in language and, having embraced English as my first language of communication – and creative endeavours – adapting specific elements of my culture and heritage seemed appropriate (Christian religion is deeply embedded in the Italian culture).

The year I attended the program, the workshop was constituted by nine people, four women and five men, half of the group had just graduated from their Bachelor's degree, while the other half was more mature and I – in my late twenties – stood in the

middle between these two different age groups. We were all white but came from different social classes, and if race and religion were sometime discussed, class seldom was.

I was the only non-native speaker.

Upon starting the MA, my main concern was to sound – and write – as native as possible, but I was soon faced with feedback and critiques from my peers regarding the contrast between my awkward phrasings and the setting of my work. For most of the first term, I strived to erase my cultural identity and tried my hardest to conform to a standard of English that could pass for native. Over the course of my residence in England, pressure – often in the form of micro-aggression – was put on me to conform to specific standards of Britishness, whether it was by policing my accent, speech patterns, or cultural references. By the time I started the MA, I had interiorised the coloniser’s mentality that because I had chosen to be here, I had to conform otherwise I would not be accepted and, by extension, my art and writing would be dismissed because they lacked value. Sometimes, trying to fit in took priority over my creative endeavours as if the act of writing my story had become a performance of sort. When George Green suggested incorporating some elements of my background into the work, I reluctantly followed the advice. During the year, I still worked tirelessly to polish my prose and edit out the linguistic calques, but – at the same time – I slowly started embracing the different facets that made my experience and seeing the value of inhabiting two cultures. What helped reconcile the conflict was the city of Lancaster itself, which reminded me of my hometown. Acknowledging my roots, as well as my current state, helped me ground my creative work in ways I would have never imagined. For years, I had tried to assimilate to the British culture and deny my own, but when I tried to reconcile the two, things started falling into place. The location of the novel – which is the same as the graphic novel – became a liminal space where I could meld aspects of my hometown and of the city of Lancaster (they share some elements). I became more engaged with my work, which resulted in a more alive and vibrant prose. Though that the location was initially criticised for resembling a small, nondescript American city, demonstrates the great lengths academia still needs to go to ensure that learning spaces are unbiased. It was not much later that I understood how exhausting it

had been to juggle two different languages and cultural systems, and how much work it would take me to find a balance between the two.

Author Kaori Fujimoto recalls the difficulties in learning how to write in English. Her personal experience is very similar to mine; Fujimoto found solace and refuge from her mundane life in English fiction and, soon, started learning the language off classic and contemporary novels. After her initial attempts at smoothing her prose, Fujimoto saw where the strength of her writing lies.

I began to focus more on being 'me' in my writing. While working on drafts, I looked squarely at simple facts about myself relevant to the work at hand, including being a native East Asian, a person who had an unhappy childhood in a dysfunctional upper middle-class family, a daughter of parents who experienced war, and a woman with no interest in raising a family. I acknowledged the experiences, one by one, heartwarming or heartbreaking, that these qualities had brought me and embraced them. I fully embraced them so that I would recount them in my truthful voice.⁸²

No course is without flaws, but despite them, the years spent working on my MA and PhD made me the author that I am today. The MA first, and the PhD later, sent me on a journey of unlearning everything I knew about writing and shed some of my assumptions about myself as a person and as an author. The MA prepared me for the PhD and caused a shift in perspective; it forced me to explore all my creative choices and writing. Annie Dillard expresses the sentiment well:

Probe and search each object in a piece of art. Do not leave it, do not course over it, as if it were understood, but instead follow it down until you see it in the mystery of its own specification and strength.⁸³

⁸² Fujimoto, K. (2021). *Embracing Imperfection: On Writing in a Second Language*. [online] Literary Hub. Available at: <https://lithub.com/embracing-imperfection-on-writing-in-a-second-language/> [Accessed 1 August 2021].

⁸³ Dillard, A. (2013). *The writing life*. New York; London: Harper Perennial.

4.2 Portable homes: fairytales and liminality.

After having spent a year working on the transmedial translation of the novel into graphic novel, I needed to take a step back and start drawing connections between the creative and the critical elements of the thesis. It was around this time I focused on the fairytales element and their influence in establishing the magick system and the lore of the universe. Fairytales especially became synonym for *home*, a universal language and portable home for both me as an author and the characters in the graphic novel.

When Kira discovers a collection of transcribed fairytales that Leighton used to tell her younger siblings, she soon recognises them as both familiar and unfamiliar. As an adult, she sees how different they are from the classic fairytales most children are told growing up while also recognising some elements pertaining to had-ais' history. The fairytales are Leighton's interpretation of Luce's memories, where the former is metaphorical, the latter is didascalical. There is an abysmal element to it, like two mirrors facing each other when an object is placed between them, reproducing the reflection endlessly while also distorting it. They also became a threshold connecting Ådhit and Earth; each time, Leighton would share a tale with her sibling, she would invite a piece of the secondary world into her home, turning the Morgans' house into an umbilical cord between the two worlds, humans and had-ais.

After a few attempts at writing the fairytales, it emerged that Leighton might be the best character to bring them to life as she was the one to receive the stories from Luce. Two versions of the same story soon showed that one that tried to emulate the Grimm's style appeared amateurish.

Once upon a time, a King and a Queen ruled over a barren land. They worked, and they toiled and filled their kingdom with tame forests, bottomless lakes, and children, so many children. The wise king taught them the rules of magick and one simple rule they needed to abide by: you shall know no greater love than the one you bear to bear your monarch.

The next version seemed to work better as it used recurring images used in the novel and graphic novel, as well as my personal style reworked for the occasion; it was a nice change from the script-like style as I had the chance to stretch my creative muscles after a long time. Instead of relying on western fairytale conventions, especially those

found in the Grimms' work, I took a step back and visualised the story I wanted to tell. When images and scenes from the graphic novel bubbled up, I translated them into words, and carefully chose vocabulary that would highlight certain aspects (e.g., black hair like nothingness) preferring the use of colours or images that would summon colours in the reader's mind (e.g., purple eyes like galaxies swirling at the edges of the universe). The choice tells also the story of where the fairytales originated, which was not on Earth but on the secondary world of Ādhit.

There once lived a girl, black hair like nothingness and purple eyes like galaxies swirling at the edges of the universe. Hers was the power to walk the crooked paths, but she didn't know that then. There once lived a king, greedy and hungry. His was the power to balance the universe, but that was not enough. He looked at his neighbours, his brothers and sisters, and craved what they had. The power to create life, to love, to build.

The stories narrate the adventures of Ādhit's history, of Dio and his siblings, archetypes responsible for the functioning of the universe, not unlike a Greek pantheon or *The Sandman's* Eternals. An entire cycle of fairytales is devoted to Dio and his effort to escape a fate he did not approve (as keeper of the void and balance he was not supposed to use the power, only to guard it) and create a world he could call home, only for it to be corrupted by his arrogance and ego. The stories that have him as a main character walk the fine line between folk/fairy-tale and myth. The mythology surrounding the character is concerned with how power is handled and hoarded, especially when the character in question was tasked with safeguarding it from those who might use it to their advantage.

Dio also embodies the role of the creator meant as the author. There is a meta-textual element that connects his creative process to the authors' (writer and illustrator) when they engage with their creative practice.

When Dio told his fellow council members that he was going to build his own world, the pillars that held the universe broke before him. [...]

'Pray, tell, how do you expect to do this?' Pha inquired.

'With thread and needle, obviously.'

And so, Dio started sawing. The universe was not as young as it used to be, neither stretchy nor flexible. The fabric ripped and frayed easily; sawing together all the pockets of void required a lot of patience and skills he didn't possess. [...] His fingers became quicker, more experienced, nimbler. As he reshaped the universe, experience suggested where to pull the thread, where the fabric needed space. Manipulating the fringes had become second-nature. He didn't know how long it took him to complete his work. Without Uchuu keeping his side, time had become a slippery concept. Like water without a container, it spilled all around him threatening to drown him. No rush, he told himself, there was no rush. Dio held his will like a beacon of light that kept him warm and lit the way. When all the pockets of void in the universe had been joined together, he flapped his creation out. His world was far from perfect. It stood like a jagged scar against the vault, criss-crossing through galaxies, looping around planets. His blood was the thread that kept his creation together. How fragile.

In the graphic novel, Luce and Leighton are the two clear links in the chain of dissemination, but Luce, despite being the main pollinator, absorbs stories from different sources and worlds making the tracking a complex task; she travels the crooked paths that connect worlds and dimensions, and she learns hard lessons about magick and power. She collects these pieces of history and turns them into stories, not for the sake of fictionalising them or turn them into messages or morals, but because "Drawing people into a story is a way of ensuring they'll bear witness."⁸⁴ And when she shares tales about the origin of Ådhit – omitting, forgetting, or adapting details – her retellings affect the geography of the world. Ådhit is not a physical place, matter and the laws of physics do not work the same way as on Earth; it was willed into existence by Dio and has been sustained ever since by powerful magick, stories, and the communal belief that the world existed in the first place. But the world does not rest on solid ground, it does not rest on ground at all, its fabric is stitched in its inhabitants' consciousness, and there is nothing more efficient than stories when affecting one's mind. When Luce decides to destroy her father's legacy, not trusting herself to undo his work, she goes at it indirectly. She passes her stories on to the new generation

⁸⁴ Adelman, M. (2022). *How to Be Eaten*. Little, Brown.

of had-aids and uses them to groom the next generation and plant the seed of Rebellion against the dictatorial order established by Dio.

When discussing the fascination that folklorists and anthropologists had towards fairytales, Tolkien states academics did not use the fairytales as “they were meant to be used, but as a quarry from which to dig evidence, or information, about matters in which they are interested.”⁸⁵ When Kira discovers Leighton’s legacy, she pours hours trying to decipher what they mean and why Leighton wrote them. It is only when she steps away from them and sees them for what they are – (hi)stories, not tales; the message, not the bottle – that she makes sense of them.

When I set in place the magick system, I made sure that the source of power had a safety valve that would not allow characters to become invincible and indestructible. The system is thought to explore the structure of power and the ways it is used. The characters have access to natural elements only when they trade something of the same value, but – as the system is abused – the graphic novel studies the ramifications of such behaviour. When discussing the topic during a supervision with Brian Baker, we both agreed that this accountability system allowed for a sense of precariousness which forced human characters to reflect on their relationship with power and the consequences of attaining it. I also introduced another kind of magick, like the one found in fairytales and that uses one’s will and words to affect the events, instead of relying on inherited abilities. In the graphic novel, when Kira discovers the notebook Leighton filled with fairytales and spells, she also finds the rationale for how her sister built them. But, just like an open-source system, Kira changes the wording to fit her needs. As the characters are used to relying on elemental and blood magick, which might be considered more powerful but also more costly, introducing these home-made spells forces Nicole and Kira to think about where their power comes from and how it works. It is not a case that it was Leighton who first coded this kind of magick. She was fully embedded in the magickal system but, unlike Kira and Nicole, had no elemental power of her own to call upon, working mainly as a conduit for Luce’s magick. The development allows Dave – the only non-magical sibling – to access magick and becoming involved in the supernatural conflict. The decision, initially motivated by the narrative necessity to

⁸⁵ Tolkien, J.R.R., Flieger, V., Anderson, D.A. (2014). *Tolkien on fairy-stories*. London: Harper Collins.

have the three siblings converge together, found a deeper reasoning in how my perception of power and attitude towards it have evolved over the years. While expanding my narrative universe, I decided that ultimately everyone could wield magick if they decided to do so. Magick is how the characters interact with their world and reality, and how they shape them; it was only fair that everyone had the opportunity to affect. Daniel Worden in *The Politics of Comics* describes the comic book series *Pretty Deadly* by Kelly Sue DeConnick and Emma Ríos as a “rich, multivalent world disjointed yet intersecting temporalities, and this worldview’s alternative, multiple epistemologies imply that there are other ways of thinking about humans and their relation to the world, their relation to time.”⁸⁶ The way characters wield magick is a testament to their relationship to every aspect of their existence. The magick system and the fairytales are the backbone of the world-building

The ramifications of this stance are currently being explored in a new creative project that carries out and keeps exploring the areas of the research so far discussed.

⁸⁶ Worden, D. (2015). *The Politics of Comics: Popular Modernism, Abstraction, and Experimentation*. *Literature Compass*, 12(2), pp.59–71.

5. Conclusion

When I first drafted my PhD application, I did not intend to write a graphic novel, nor to explore the process behind collaborating on one; I meant to investigate the political predisposition of fantasy and science fictions as genres, especially in the Italian literary tradition. I wanted to claim a space and time to dedicate to my craft as I focused on writing *Echoes*, the last instalment in the trilogy that explored the question about the interconnectedness of genre and politics. But what was initially conceived as an exploration of “a political satire of the Italian society while, at the same time, create a space for Italian Fantasy to represent a greater political diversity,”⁸⁷ has evolved into a foray into collaborative partnerships and an investigation of liminality applied to areas inside and outside the creative element of the project. The focus has shifted away from genre to emphasise the creative processes within a collaboration when this is declined across multiple levels, such as:

- Collaboration between illustrator and writer;
- Collaboration between original source material (the novel) and the new creative output (graphic novel);
- Collaboration within the form of graphic narrative when written and graphic components work in concert together, and within the medium, which is the space where the graphic narrative is published (in our case social platforms like Instagram);
- Collaboration between the story and the reader.

What I have learnt from examining the different elements working in concert is how volatile a story can be and how easily it can change depending on the inputs it receives. When I approached *Storms* at different stages of my life, I had already noticed how each new draft almost constituted a new story, and even though the latest major shift has not affected the story, contending with a new form has had an impact on narrative choices I had made before approaching the translation process, and each of the dynamics listed above has had a direct influence into how the story was told. The best way I can describe

⁸⁷ Guerrasio, M. (2017) *AHRC North West Consortium Doctoral Training Partnership in the School of Arts, Languages and Cultures*. Lancaster.

the process is that I thought I was approaching a new draft of *Storms*, when it was like going back to writing a first new one. Interestingly enough, my creative process has not changed since I started writing the graphic novel; I have always thought about my stories as a blend of scenes as well as narrating them. It was such disposition that has prompted me to adapt *Storms* in graphic narrative in the first place.

Unfortunately, one point I would have liked to explore more was the active collaboration between readers and webcomics and how the former might affect the dissemination process of the latter. As Fasulo and I worked on the publication of the graphic novel, we realised we would have needed chapters as buffers as we published them; our approach saw chapters being published as they were produced, which was not sustainable. When we went on a hiatus to work on chapters that would be subsequently posted online, developments in Fasulo's personal and professional life caused further delays until, eventually, we realised the webcomic could not continue.

The connection between language, culture, and home has also brought to light how important the locus of *home* was within the graphic novel and without. There is a connection between my choice to embrace my Italian heritage and the development of Forest Hill into a threshold connecting the primary and the secondary world in *Storms*. The latter is a formalisation of the former. Forest Hill became the sum of my experience and its graphic depiction, a place where different cultural elements could co-exist, where beings from different worlds lived in symbiosis, colonising each other at a molecular level while also living in conflict with one another, metaphors for my experience as an immigrant both abroad and in my country. And the backbone of this world is the lore. The past few years have also allowed me to explore this research avenue I had not yet fully conceptualised. The magic system and fairytales helped establish the mythology and lore of the secondary world, as well as offering a space where the liminality of Forest Hill could be explored. Although I rely on well-known tropes and themes, the way I used them pertains specifically to the story I want to tell and the political issues I aim to dissect. Elemental and blood magic are magical systems already explored in other fantasy novels; the nursery rhymes are elements in fairytales, but when the three come together in my graphic novel, they speak of different ways of wielding power and the costs attached to them, and the imbalance between who has access to what.

Finally, although I intended to complete the PhD with a project that would be a commercial product, now that is no longer a priority, delving into the depth of my world-building has allowed me to fine-tune it and use it for future creative projects.

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Storms

The Plot

Present timeline – primary world

After years spent fighting an aggressive brain tumour, Nicole Morgan is forced to go home and reconnect with her siblings Leighton, Dave, and Kira, but a decade of lies and secrets is difficult to forget and bury. Leighton – the eldest – realises that Nicole’s hallucinations are not different from the memories from Leighton’s past life as Luce in Ådhit, an alien world from which creatures known as had-ais come from. A mysterious character cursed all the had-ais to reincarnate in human beings until they would reunite in the same place and time to resume the conflict that disrupted Ådhit thousands of years before.

Devoured by her sense of guilt for having pushed Nicole away when she was a child, Leighton makes a deal with Lilith, co-leader of the Rebels Army. Lilith – the only had-au who is out of the reincarnation cycle – will forfeit her life and join Nicole in her mortal body. But the laws of blood magic require Leighton to give up something of the same value: her own life. The eldest Morgan accepts and – when Nicole is close to her death – Leighton and Lilith perform the ritual. When Nicole wakes up and finds she hears a voice other than her own, things complicate. She confides in her sister Kira, who turns out to be a had-au too, and the two sisters join forces. Nicole is forced into the leader and warrior role Lilith had, one Nicole never asked for. But as they are forced to co-exist, they learn new things about each other, their allies, and enemies. Dave, in the meantime, discovers his sisters’ magical skills.

Per the terms of the Leighton and Lilith’s deal, Leighton dies which prompts the three Morgan siblings to go over their sister’s things and discover that she was also involved with had-ais. Kira discovers Leighton had illustrated and written a book of fairytales that she used to tell them when they were younger. Kira connects the dots and realises that the fairytales are the keys to unlock the mystery regarding the curse. In the meantime, Nicole gets closer to Lucifer, Lilith’s partner from their years on Ådhit. Although Kira and Lilith both warn Nicole against trusting Lucifer and his human Levi too much, Nicole doesn’t listen and gets entangled with the other leader of the Rebels’ Army. After Levi assaults her, Nicole asks Kira and Dave to leave Forest Hill and start afresh somewhere else. Kira worried the Rebels may come for them, asks her sister to give her enough time to devise an exit strategy. Nicole agrees, but the following day Kira and Dave wake up to Nicole’s empty bed and a note that informs them she’s run away.

The Plot

Past timeline – secondary world

Luce, the secret daughter of Dio and his first created had-ai Megami, lives a seemingly idyllic life as she is cared for by the four guardians, Gabriel, Raphael, Uriel, and Missei, who keep her safe from the other had-ais afraid of Luce's power to shape and change reality. As the four guardians instruct her in their aspects of elemental magic, water, earth, fire, and air respectively, Luce travels the crooked paths that connect Ådhit to other neighbouring worlds. During one of her visits on Earth with Raphael, Luce discovers that her existence is a threat to her father's creation as she has the power to undo his magic because of the bloodline they share. As Raphael and Neil, Dio's brother in disguise as a human, try to push Luce down a path that would see her defeating her father's dictatorial rule over the had-ais, Luce is scared and enrolls in Dio's army instead.

Because of her affinity with water, Luce is trained as a healer instead of a warrior and finds a new home in the Blackguard's regiment, a group of misfits had-ais usually tasked with dangerous missions across different worlds (unbeknownst to them they usually destabilise those worlds only for Dio to sweep in and impose his rule). After a while, Luce and the Blackguard are summoned back to Ådhit, where they are tasked by the guardians to go to Earth and find what happened to Adam, one of the few had-ais that had befriended Luce as a child. Despite her protests, the regiment agrees to go with Luce.

Disclaimer

As the creative project is still in progress, and also to allow for a more complete understanding of the creative process, the chapters are at different drafting stages: the first chapters are in their ultimate form, the middle ones vary depending on when they were drawn or re-drawn, and the script form, the last ones are in script form.

As the editing process is still ongoing, you will find pages at different drafting stages within the same chapter.

Prologue

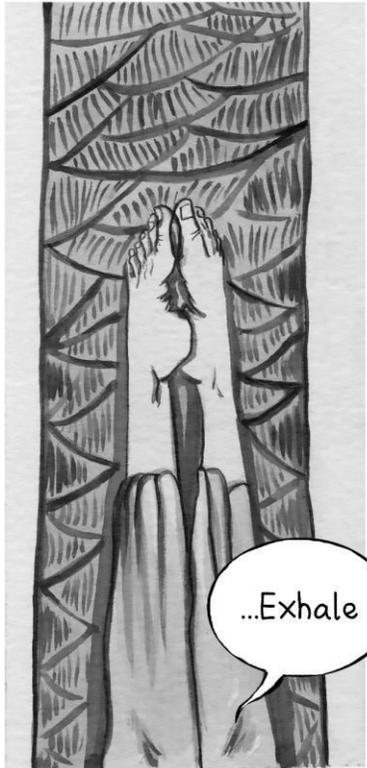
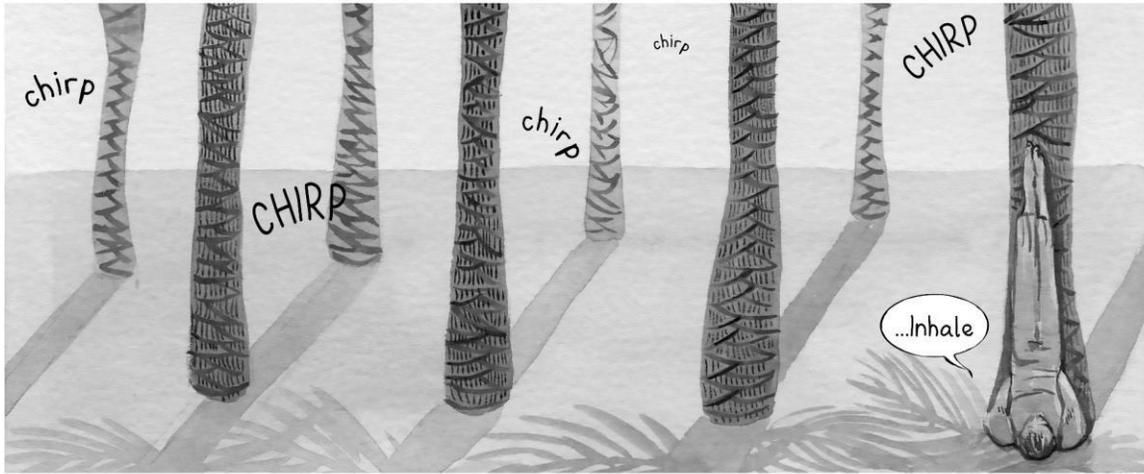
From the Void They Crawl

Mason

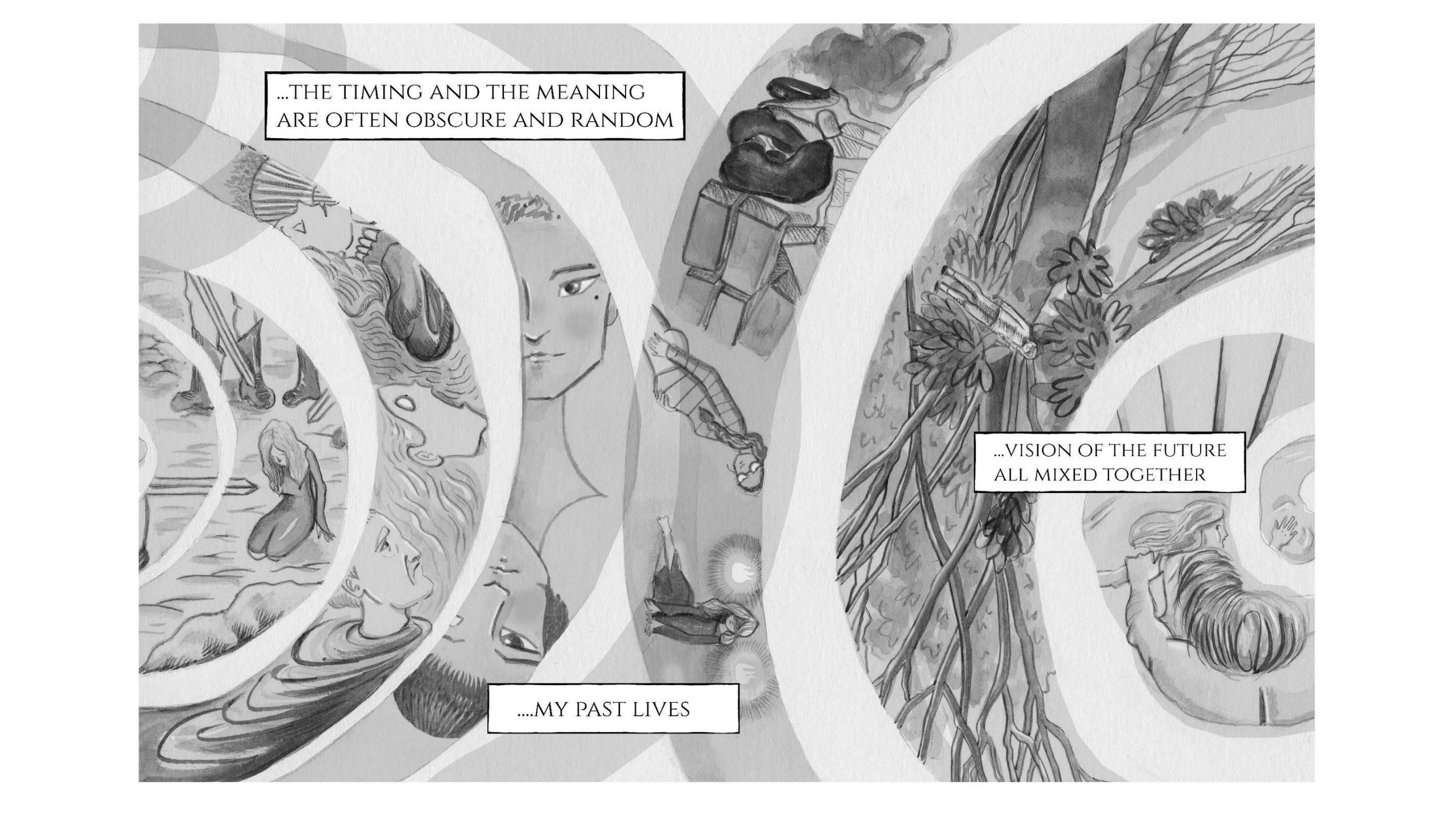
Echo Park, LA

Present





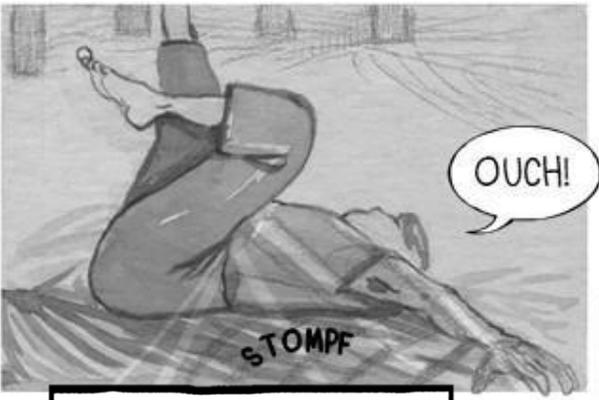
CLAIRVOYANCE,
MOST OF THE TIME
ISN'T CLEAR AT ALL



...THE TIMING AND THE MEANING
ARE OFTEN OBSCURE AND RANDOM

...VISION OF THE FUTURE
ALL MIXED TOGETHER

....MY PAST LIVES



THEY SURPRISE WHEN WE LEAST EXPECT IT.



LIKE THE TIDE, OR A FLOOD... THERE'S VERY LITTLE WE CAN DO AGAINST THEM.



AND JUST LIKE ANY NATURAL
DISASTER, THE AFTERMATH IS THE
WORST PART.



Ok, Hana.
Let's do this



GETTING KNEE-DEEP IN THE MUD,

AND DIG

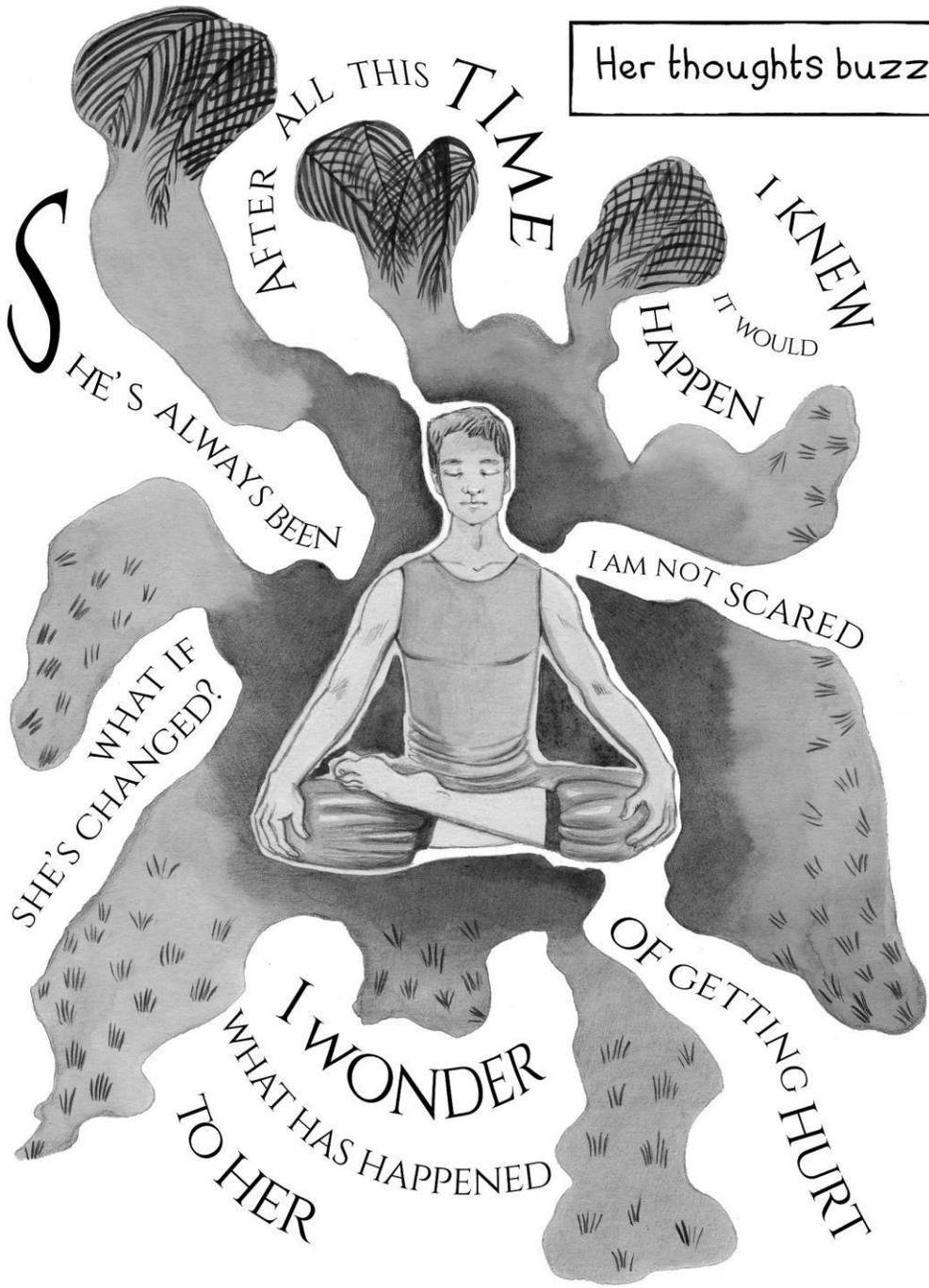
TO FIND THE BURIED BODIES.



Hana, are
you there?

MASON?

Her thoughts buzz like wasps





Hana, you
can talk to me



AFTER ALL THESE CENTURIES
SPENT LOOKING...WAITING FOR HER

I'D STARTED THINKING
SHE MIGHT BE DEAD



BUT IF SHE'S ALIVE...THIS CAN
ONLY MEAN ONE THING...



How long before
the war breaks?

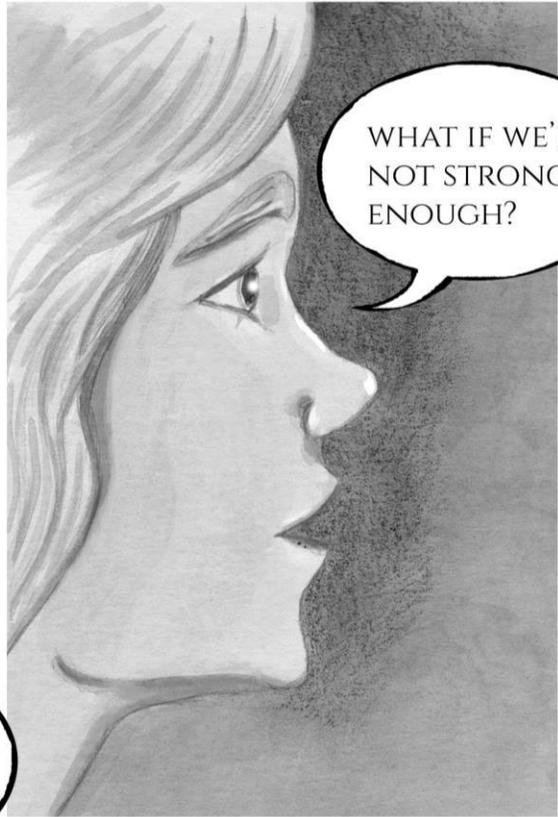


NOT SURE





We'll get through this



WHAT IF WE'RE NOT STRONG ENOUGH?



Then we'd better get ready. Who's our first stop?

KIRA MORGAN.

1

The Voice of Reason

Kira



London, UK

Present

CRIMINALS
BE AWARE
STREET LIGHTS
AND SIGNPOSTS
ARE IN PLACE

Fast.

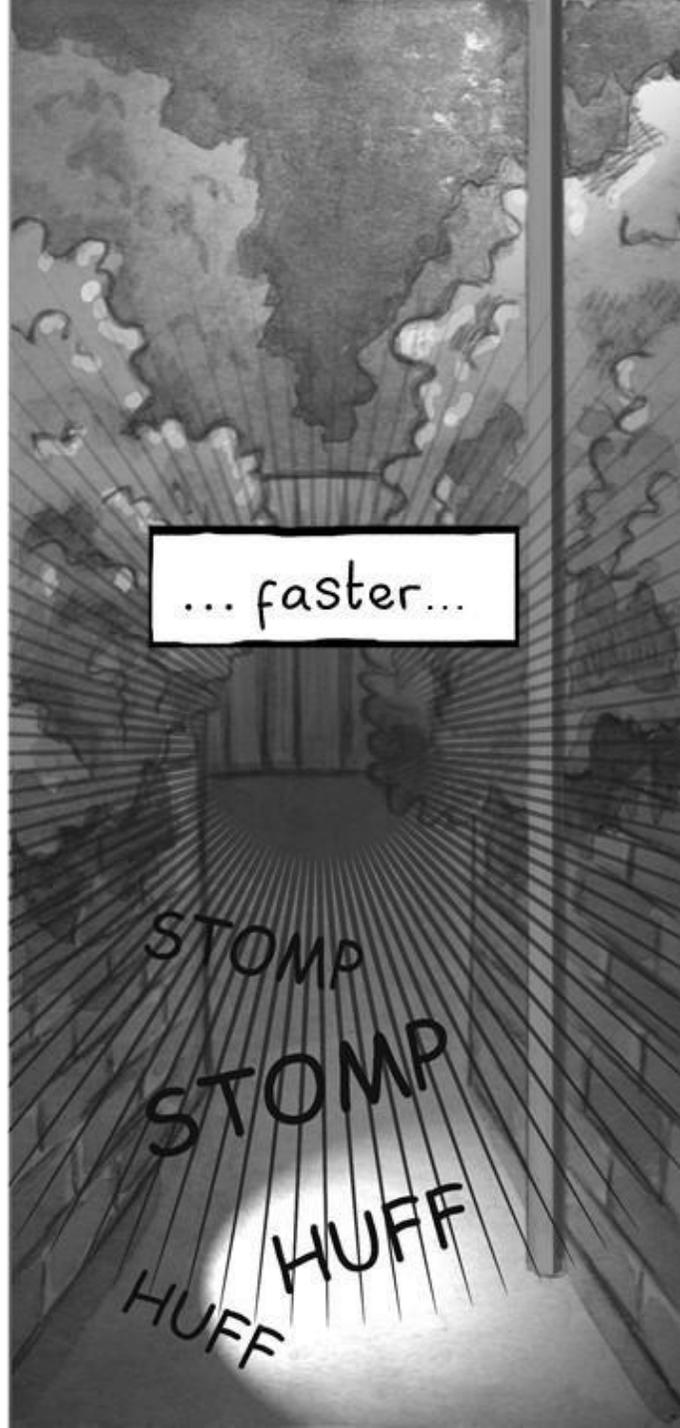
HARRINGAY
PASSAGE

HUFF

STOMP!

HONKS

HONKS



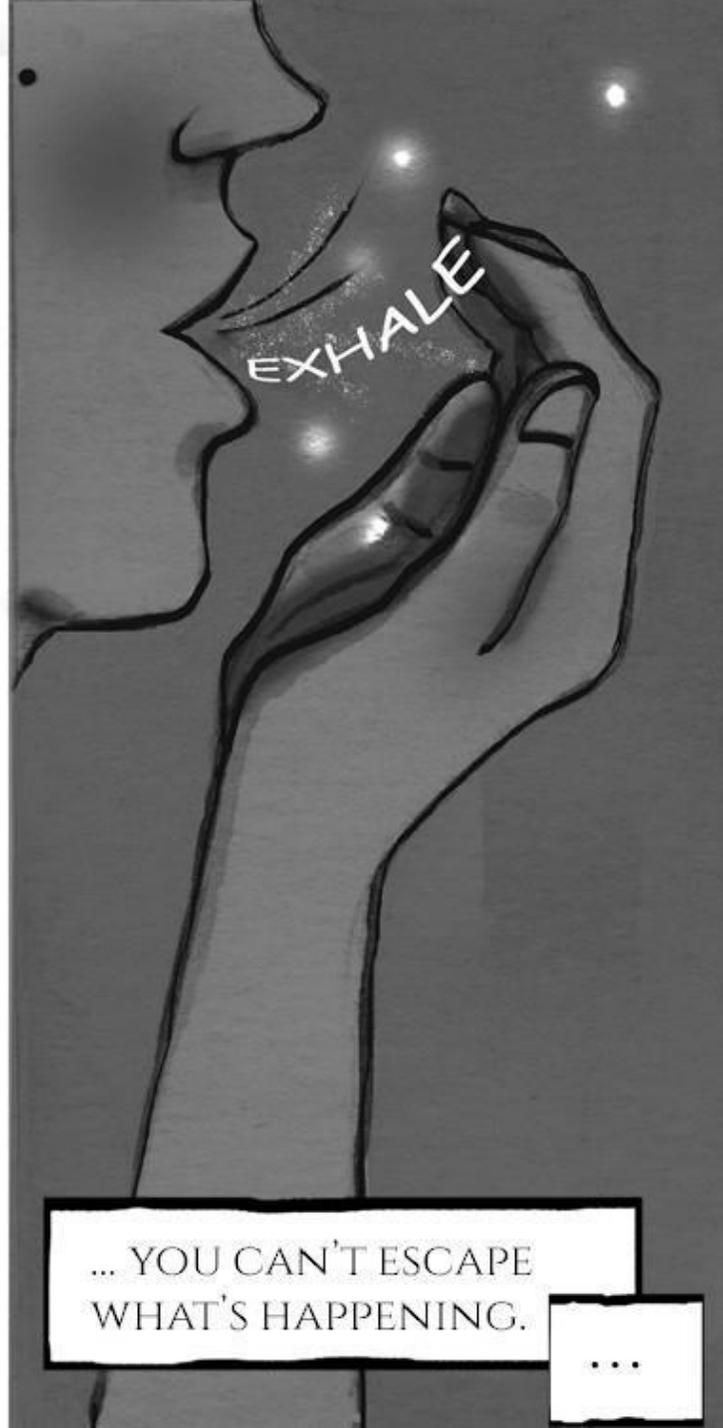


IT DOESN'T MATTER HOW HARD YOU TRY...

HUFF
STOMP



tap
tap



EXHALE

... YOU CAN'T ESCAPE WHAT'S HAPPENING.

...

YOU CAN'T IGNORE ME FOREVER, KIRA.
DO NOT FORGET OUR DUTY.

...



REPEAT THE INSTRUCTIONS.
ALOUD.

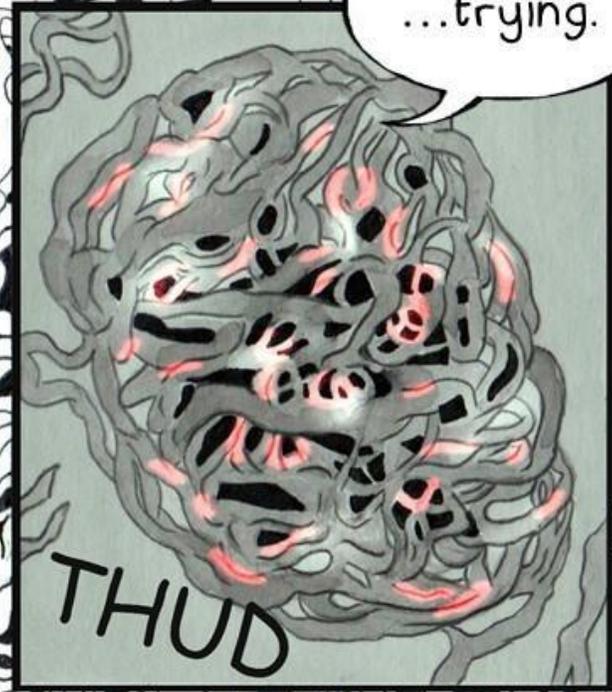
Find Lilith



or die ...



...trying.



THEN, YOU KNOW WHAT WE
MUST DO.

What about
Nic—

THUD

THE CAUSE
COMES FIRST.

TU-THUD
THUD

It's so peaceful in
here, though...

FOCUS.

TU-THUD
THUD

ONCE WE INITIATE THE
EXTRACTION PLAN, THERE'S NO
COMING BACK.

TU-THUD
THUD

Who are we kidding? There never
was a chance to walk away from
this.

VROOM
VROOM
VROOM

It's late. 10.51pm

Come home. 10.51pm

Now. 10.51pm

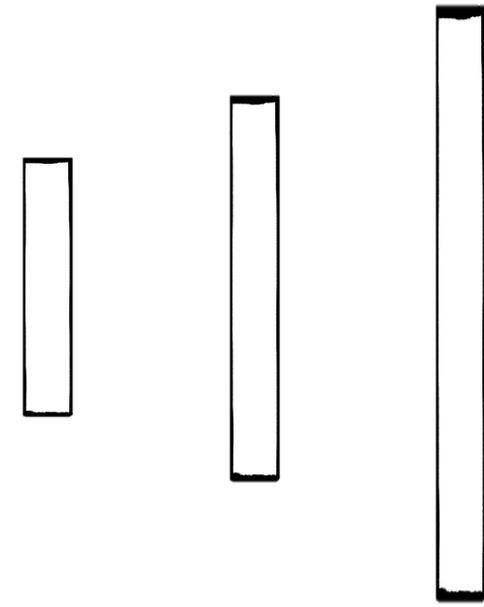


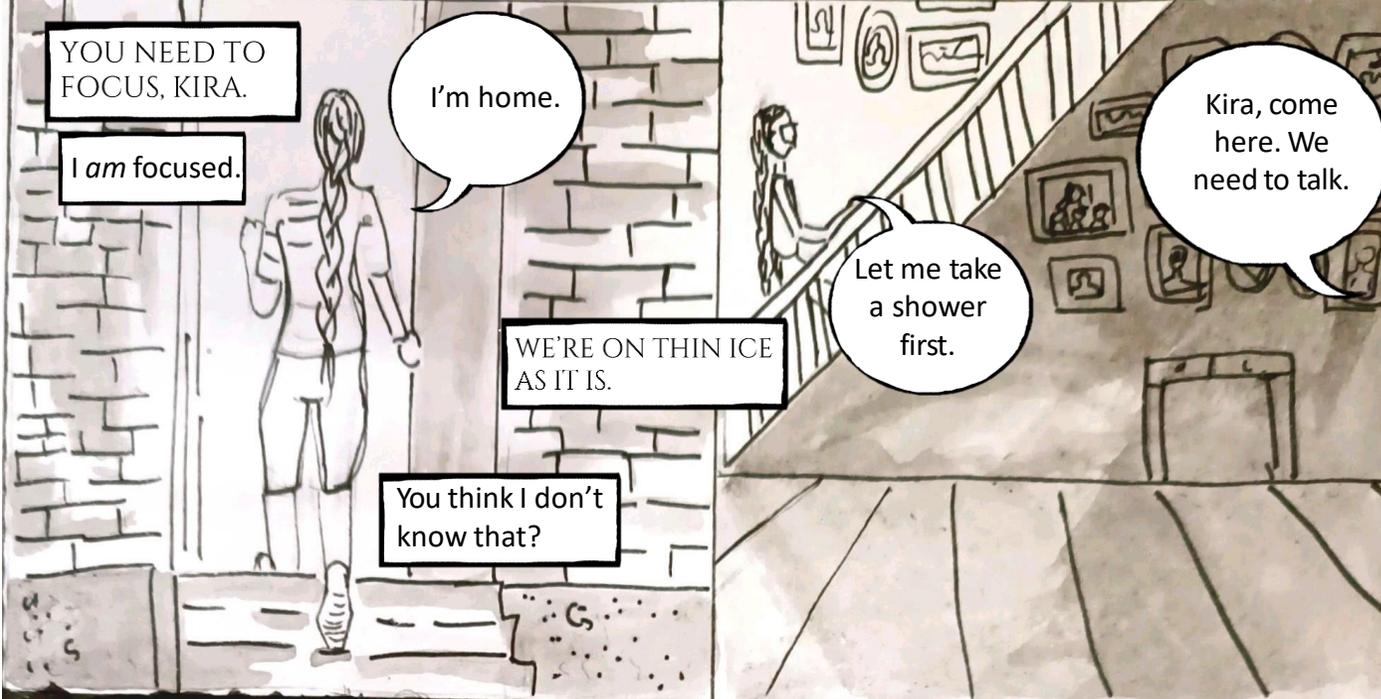
Sigh...

REINCARNATING IN A
TEENAGER... WHAT'S THE
WORD?

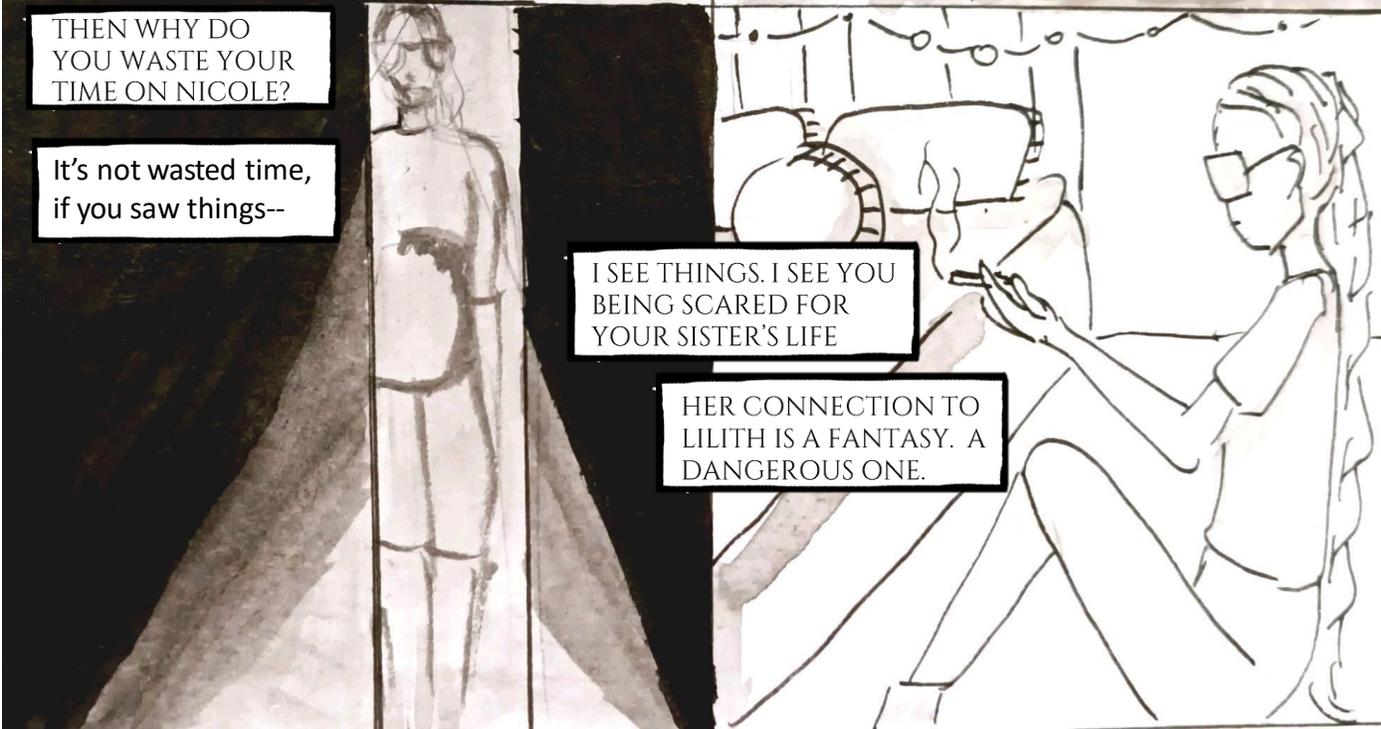
Sucks?

YES, THAT.





Panel 1 1/4 top left
 KIRA (seen from the back) is getting in. We see bits of the exterior walls while the door is in the middle.
 KIRA (balloon): I'm home.
 CEMIRA BAE: You need to focus, Kira. (CINZEL)
 KIRA (caption box): I am focused.



Panel 2 1/4 top right
 KIRA (seen from the side) is walking up the stairs. On the walls we see frames with pictures in them, partially covered by the balloons.
 AUNT CHARLIE: Kira, come here. We need to talk.
 KIRA: Let me get a shower first.
 CEMIRA BAE: We're on thin ice as it is. (CINZEL)
 KIRA (in caption box): You think I don't know that?

Panel 3 1/4 bottom left KIRA (is seen from the front) is walking in a dark room. The light comes from behind her.
 CEMIRA BAE: Then Why do you waste your time on Nicole?
 (CINZEL)
 KIRA (in caption box): It's not wasted time, if you saw things--
 CEMIRA BAE: I see things. I see you being scared for your sister's life. Her connection to Lilith is a fantasy. A dangerous one. (CINZEL)

Panel 4 1/4 bottom right
 KIRA (is seen from the side) is sitting on the ledge of a window. We see part of her bedroom (bed and wall). KIRA is sitting in the dark, a cigarette in her hand.



OUR POSITION
AMONG THE TWELVE
IS TENUOUS AT BEST.

DON'T GIVE ANYONE
THE EXCUSE TO
DOUBT YOUR WORK.

OR WORSE...

... YOUR ALLEGIANCE.

Let's not kid ourselves, Cem. Levi
has it out for us or he wouldn't
have given us such an impossible
mission.

Find Lilith or die trying?
It's a setup.

CHAPTER 1 – page 9 rectangular
All dialogue in this panel happens in caption boxes.

Panel 1 1/3 in length full height left
The only light coming through is the one from the outside. The camera is on KIRA's left side. She is leaning against the ledge and is holding a cigarette in her hand. She is snapping her finger.
CEMIRA Bael: Our position among the twelve is tenuous at best. Don't give anyone the excuse to doubt your work. (CINZEL)

Panel 2 detail
Round balloon across panels 1 and 2
KIRA snaps her fingers, cigarette held between her fingers. Smoke crosses over into panel 2.

Panel 3 2/3 in length full height right
Roots emerge from the corners and open a curtain. Behind the curtain we can see different objects: a map at the top, another map below the bigger one. Several post-its. In the foreground, we can see part of KIRA's bed.
CEMIRA Bael: Or worse... Your allegiance. (CINZEL)
KIRA: Let's not kid ourselves, Cem. Levi has it out for us or he wouldn't have given us such an impossible mission. Find Lilith or die trying? It's a setup.

All dialogue in this panel happens in caption boxes except for Charlotte's line.

Panel 1 full page

The curtains are wrapped on each side of the wall. In the middle, we see KIRA staring at the map. There is a map at the top, another map below the bigger one and several post-its. In the foreground, we can see part of KIRA's bed.

CEMIRA BAEL: We have an advantage, we can actually feel had-ais (CINZEL)

KIRA: Yes, but Lilith is not even a blip on the radar... why?

CEMIRA BAEL: Then use that big brain of yours to find the missing queen. (CINZEL)

Panel 2 detail

Small, square KIRA is touching her mouth with her hand.

KIRA: Fine, but I'm sure you won't like what comes next. (IN CAPTION BOX)

CEMIRA BAEL: Try me (CINZEL)

KIRA: We need to go back to Forest Hill.

CEMIRA BAEL: ... (CINZEL)

CEMIRA BAEL: Yeah, I don't like that. (CINZEL)

AUNT CHARLIE (off camera): Kira! No smoking in your room! KIRA: When will the war break out again?



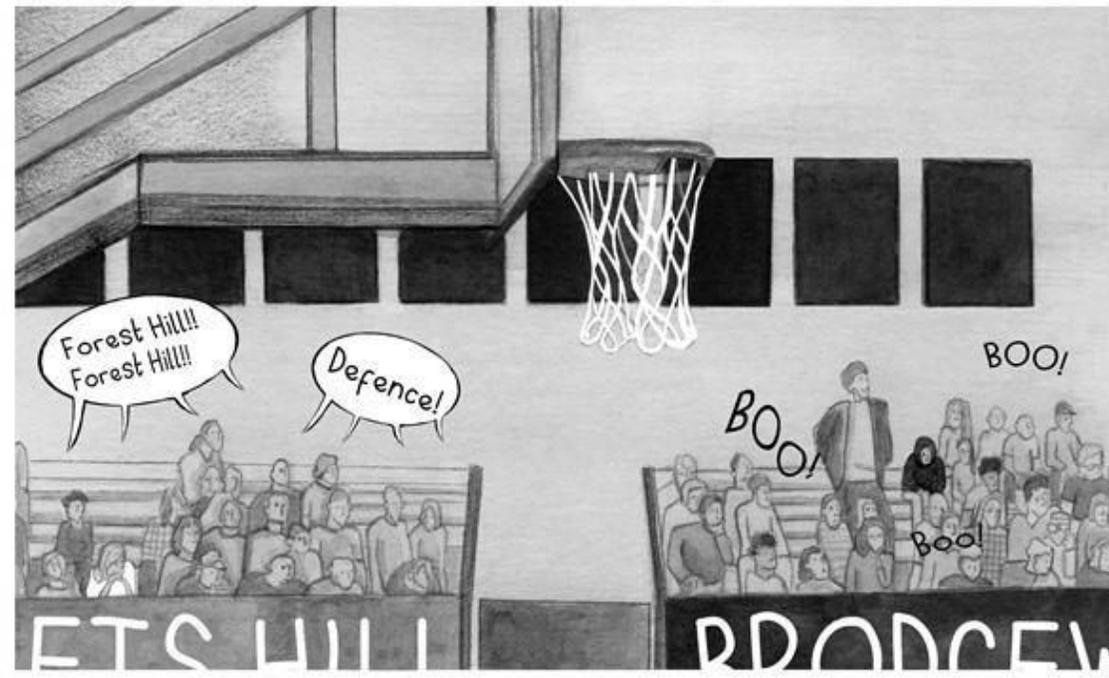
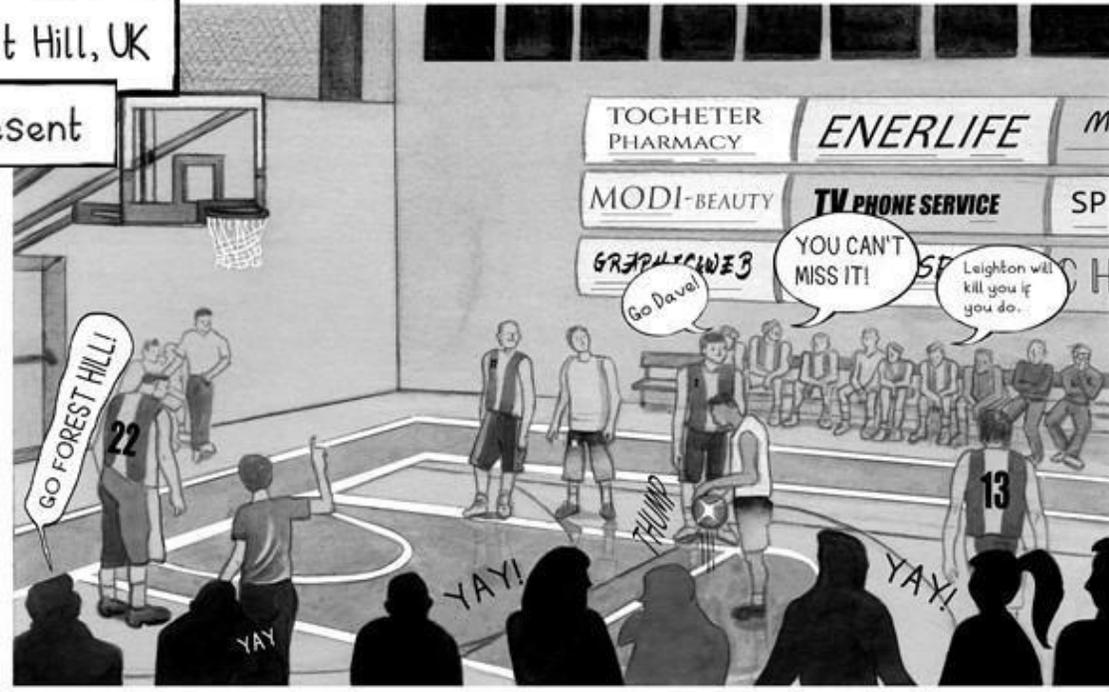
2

Butterflies and Hurricanes

Nicole & Leighton

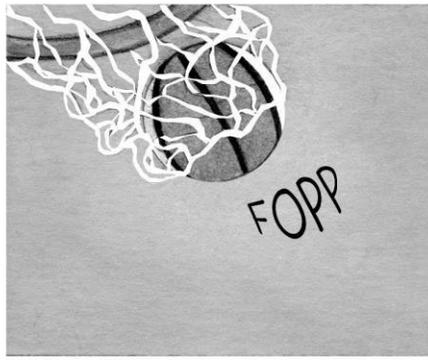
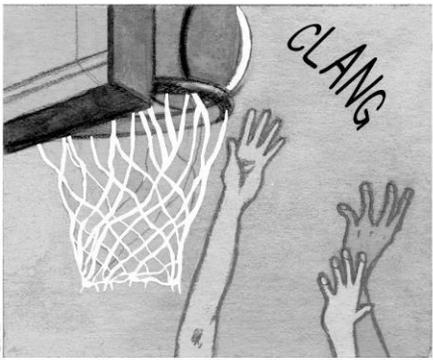
Forest Hill, UK

Present



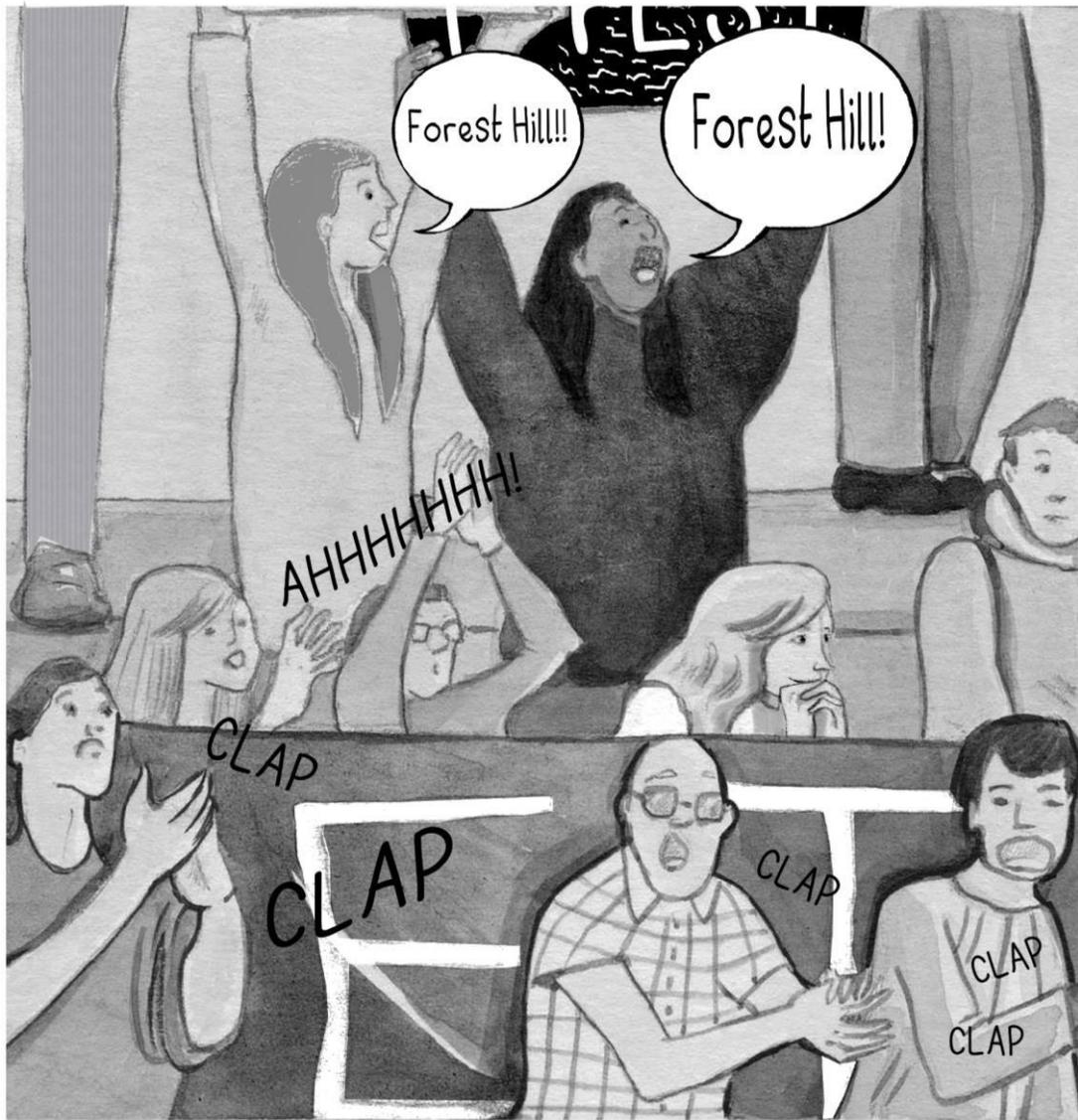
C'mon Dave,
you can't miss
the shot. Leigh
will kill you if you
do.

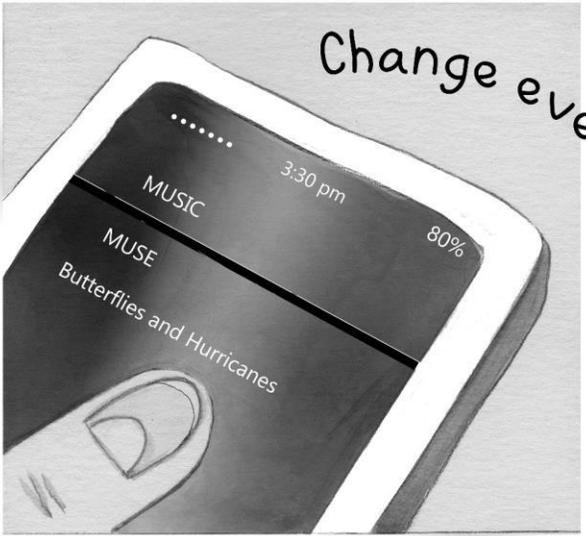
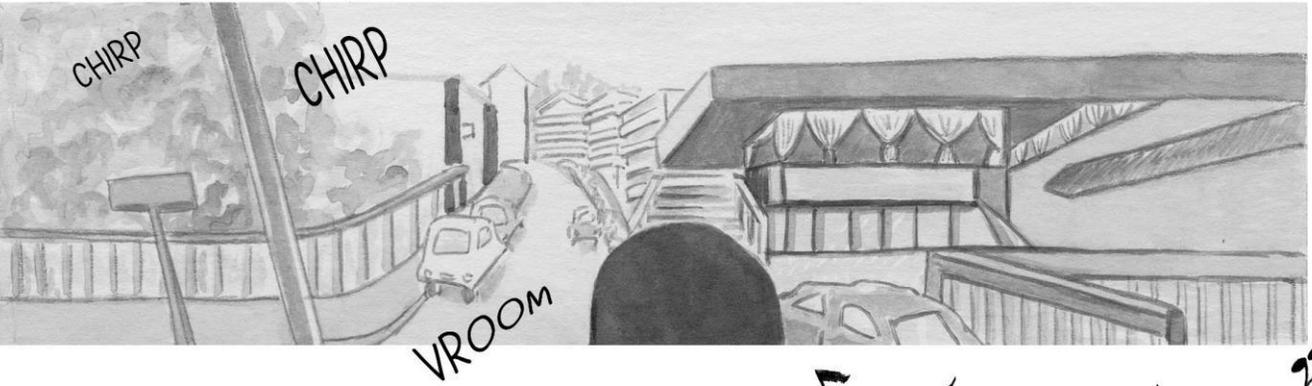
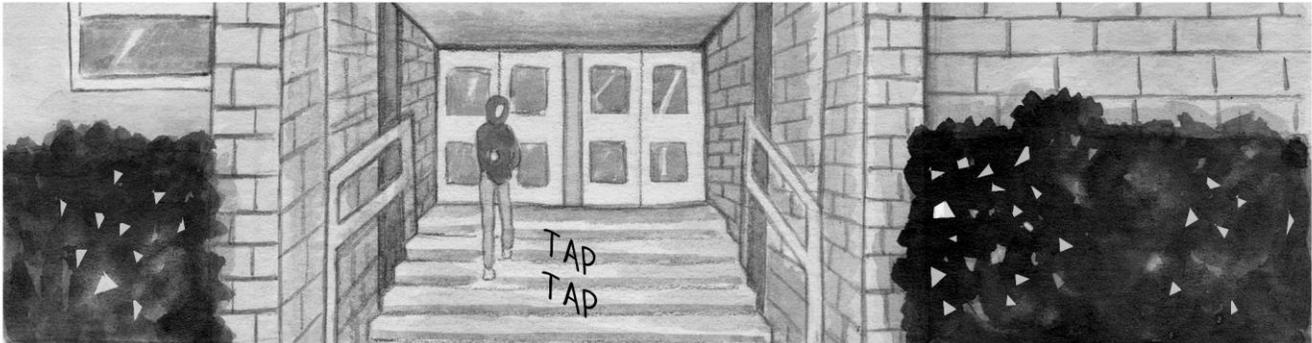


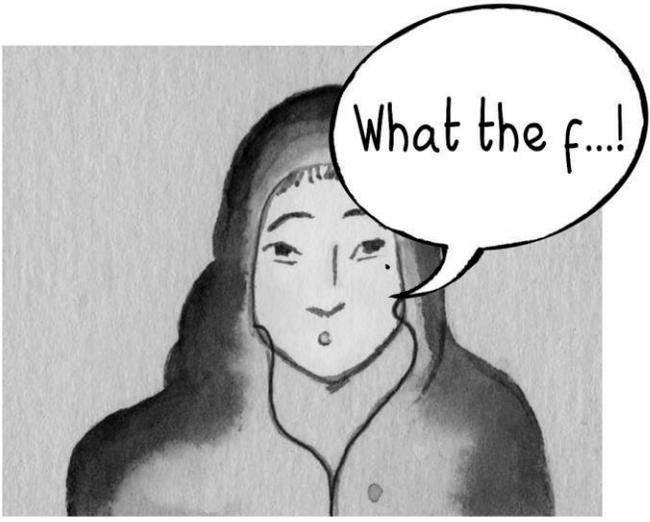
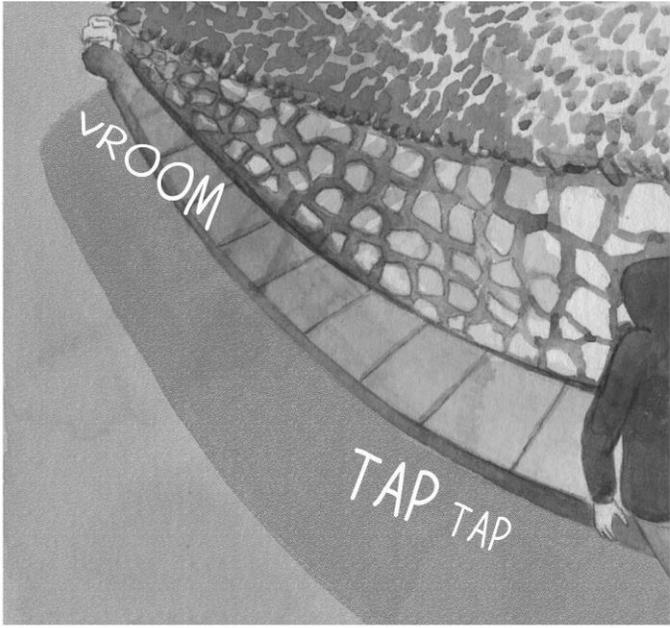
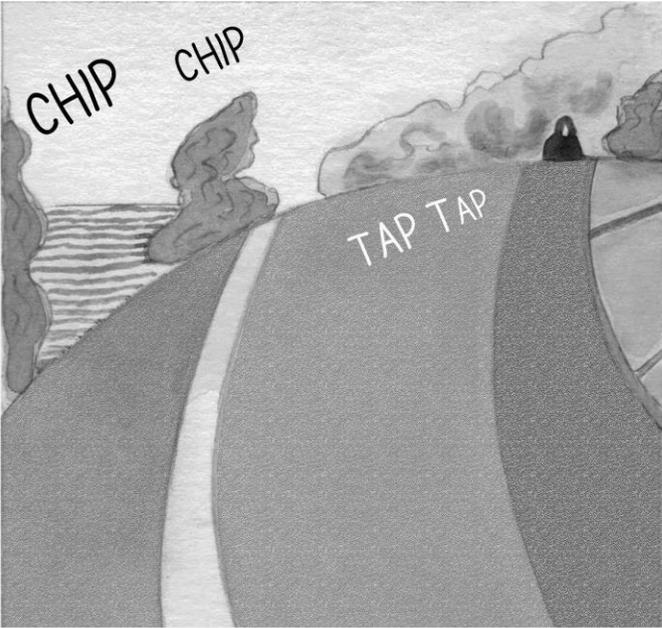


FHC **76** YEAHHHHHHH!! BWT **72**
1 26



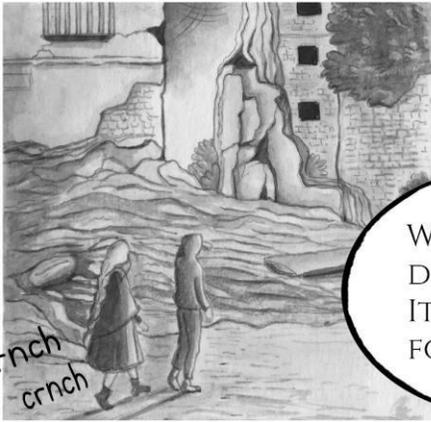








Holy shit!



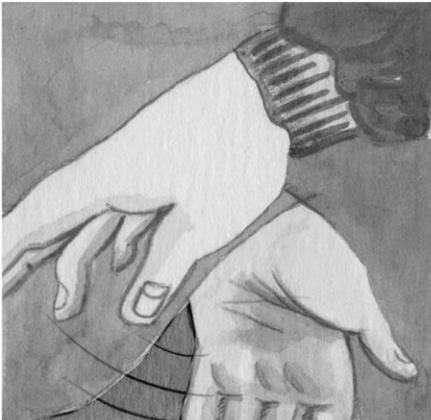
crnch
crnch

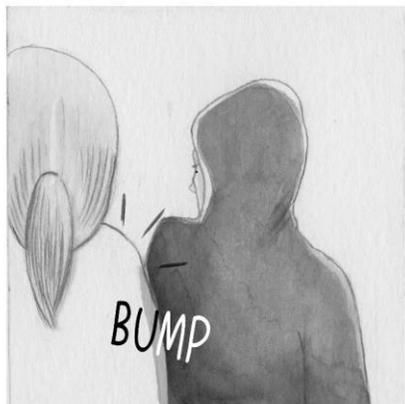
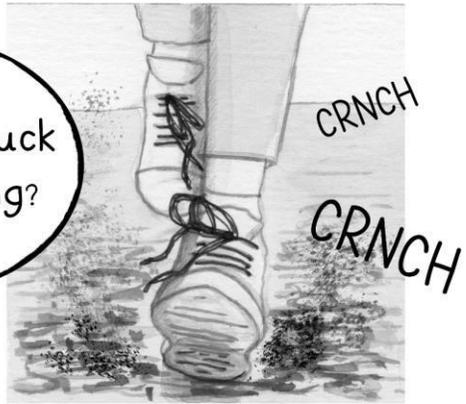
WHAT ARE YOU
DOING HERE?
IT'S NOT SAFE
FOR YOU.

Leigh-? Wait,
who are you?



GRIP







Good game.



They played well.

Stupid-fucked up-brain.



The page is divided into two halves. Three panels of different sizes in the top half, four panels of different sizes in the bottom half.

Panel 1 top right

NICOLE is texting her uncle. Detail on her mobile phone in her hands. Wiggly lines to show it's vibrating.

NICOLE (caption box): Hey, uncle T, can you come pick me up?
(in caption box)

Panel 2 top middle

NICOLE turns around because she feels observed and she scans the crowd. Movement lines to show she turns around.

NICOLE (thought bubble): Something feels weird.

Panel 3 top left

Random crowd with speech bubbles, speech unintelligible

Panel 4 bottom left

NICOLE is facing the camera.

NICOLE (thought bubble): Maybe I'm becoming paranoid. I don't see---

Panel 5 bottom middle

Random crowd with speech bubbles, speech unintelligible.

Panels 6 and 7 bottom right

NICOLE and DAVE lock eyes (detail: focus on DAVE'S eyes and NICOLE'S surprised gaze respectively).

NICOLE: Shit.





On my way. Be there in 5.

Shit, I think Dave and I just locked eyes.

Language.

He's your brother. Just go and say hi.

Just hurry.

Please.

OK, go, go, go go. Maybe I'm lucky and he didn't see me.

Or maybeeee, you and your siblings could sit down and talk like regular people.

Honestly, I don't see that happening soon. Dave will freak out in 0.1 sec

Kira will be a no-show, as usual, and Leighton--

Leighton is coming later tonight for dinner. To talk.

What?!
QUOQUE TU, TRAITOR?

Panel 1 1/3 top
NICOLE is on the side. We can only see her chest and waist. She's holding her phone in her left hand. The squiggly lines show the phone is vibrating.

Panel 2 middle left 1/3 in height 2/3 in length
On the side, we can see a string of text messages (in caption boxes, grey for TONY, white for NICOLE).
UNCLE TONY: On my way. Be there in 5.
NICOLE: Shit, I think Dave and I just locked eyes.
UNCLE TONY: Language.
UNCLE TONY: He's your brother. Just go and say hi.
NICOLE: Just hurry.
NICOLE: Please.

Panel 3 middle left 1/3 in height 1/2 in length
NICOLE and TONY sitting in the car side by side. TONY needs to be swapped with NICOLE (position, the reference I used was for a European car). NICOLE is looking outside the window.
NICOLE: OK, go, go, go go. Maybe I'm lucky and he didn't see me.
TONY: Or maybeeee, you and your siblings could sit down and talk like regular people.

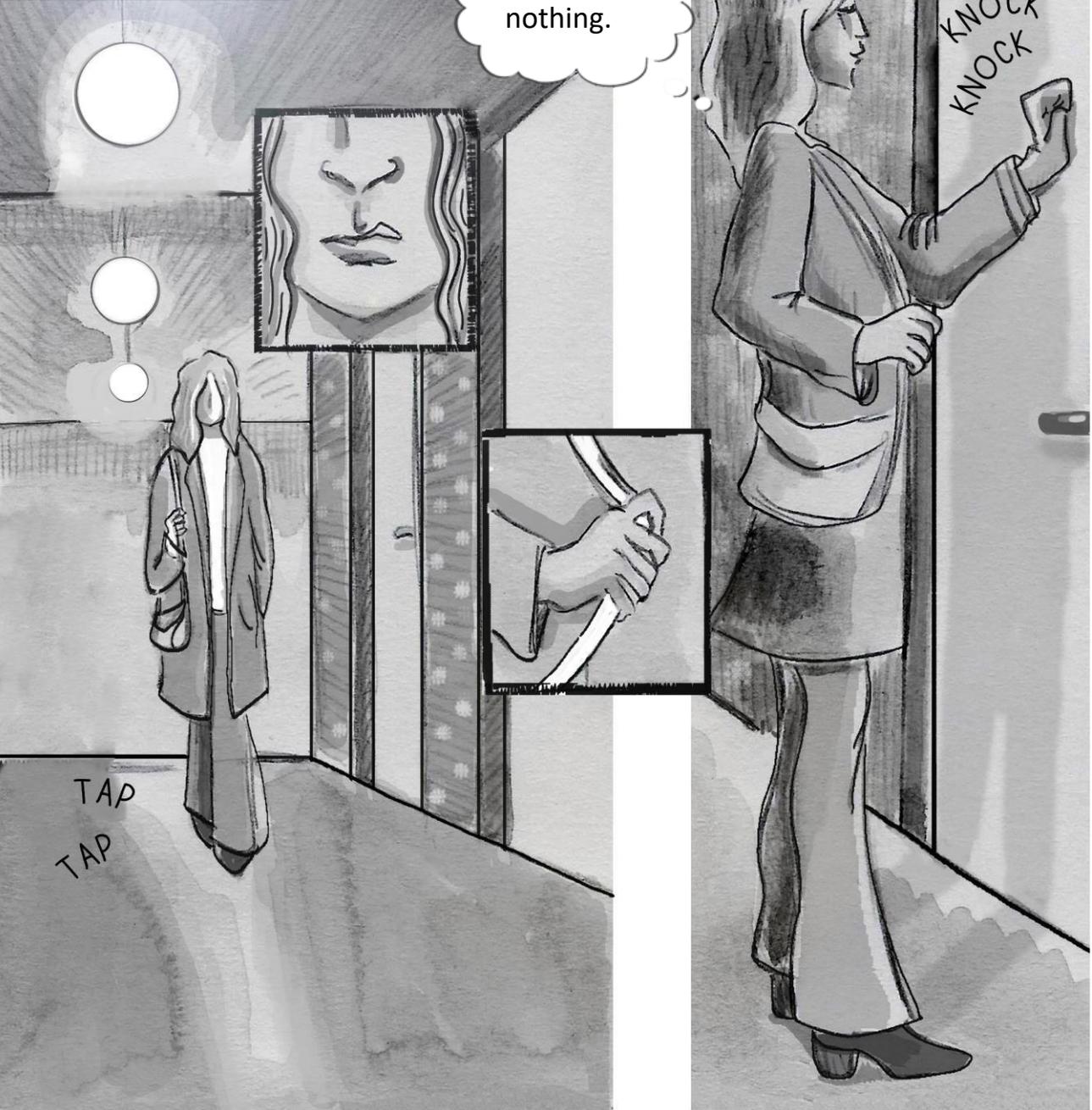
Panel 4 middle right 1/3 in height 1/2 in length
We see some parts of the town, a road, some shops, a traffic light.
NICOLE (off camera): Honestly, I don't see that happening soon. Dave will freak out in 0.1 sec

Panel 5 bottom left 1/3 in height 2/3 in length
NICOLE is looking outside (rotate image). She is resting her head on her hand, her arm is bent. A mountain is in the background, a river is running alongside the road.
NICOLE: Kira will be a no-show, as usual, and Leighton—
TONY (off camera): Leighton is coming later tonight for dinner. To talk.

Panel 6 bottom right 1/3 in height and length
Focus on NICOLE sitting in the passenger seat, seatbelt on.
NICOLE: What?! / Quoque tu, traitor? -> outside balloon.

Later – that night.

Here goes nothing.



TAP
TAP

KNOCK
KNOCK



Hey Nicky, you look well.

Yeah right.

Can I come in?

If you have to...



Nic, I'm going for a shower. Be nice to your sister.



Looks like
you're pretty
much packed.

Coffee,
please.

Yup. Anything to
drink?

In this page, the panels are all cut diagonally rather than vertically to show the fraught relationship between NICOLE and LEIGHTON while also symbolising the imbalance of power between the two siblings. The camera is always on the side, framing the sisters from their right and left profile.

Panel 1 1/4 top left

NICOLE is framed from her waist up, her back to her sister. She is opening a cupboard to prepare Leighton some coffee.

NICOLE: Nope.

Panel 2 1/4 top right

LEIGHTON is looking at her sister. She is framed from her waist up, no background.

LEIGHTON: Has uncle Tony told you why I'm here.

LEIGHTON: Dave saw you earlier at the game. You could've—

Panel 3 1/4 bottom left

NICOLE is framed full figure. She has turned to look her sister. No background.

NICOLE: Is *that* why you're here? Because I've been in Forest Hill for months, if you haven't told our little brother I was in town, not my problem.

NICOLE: Shocker.

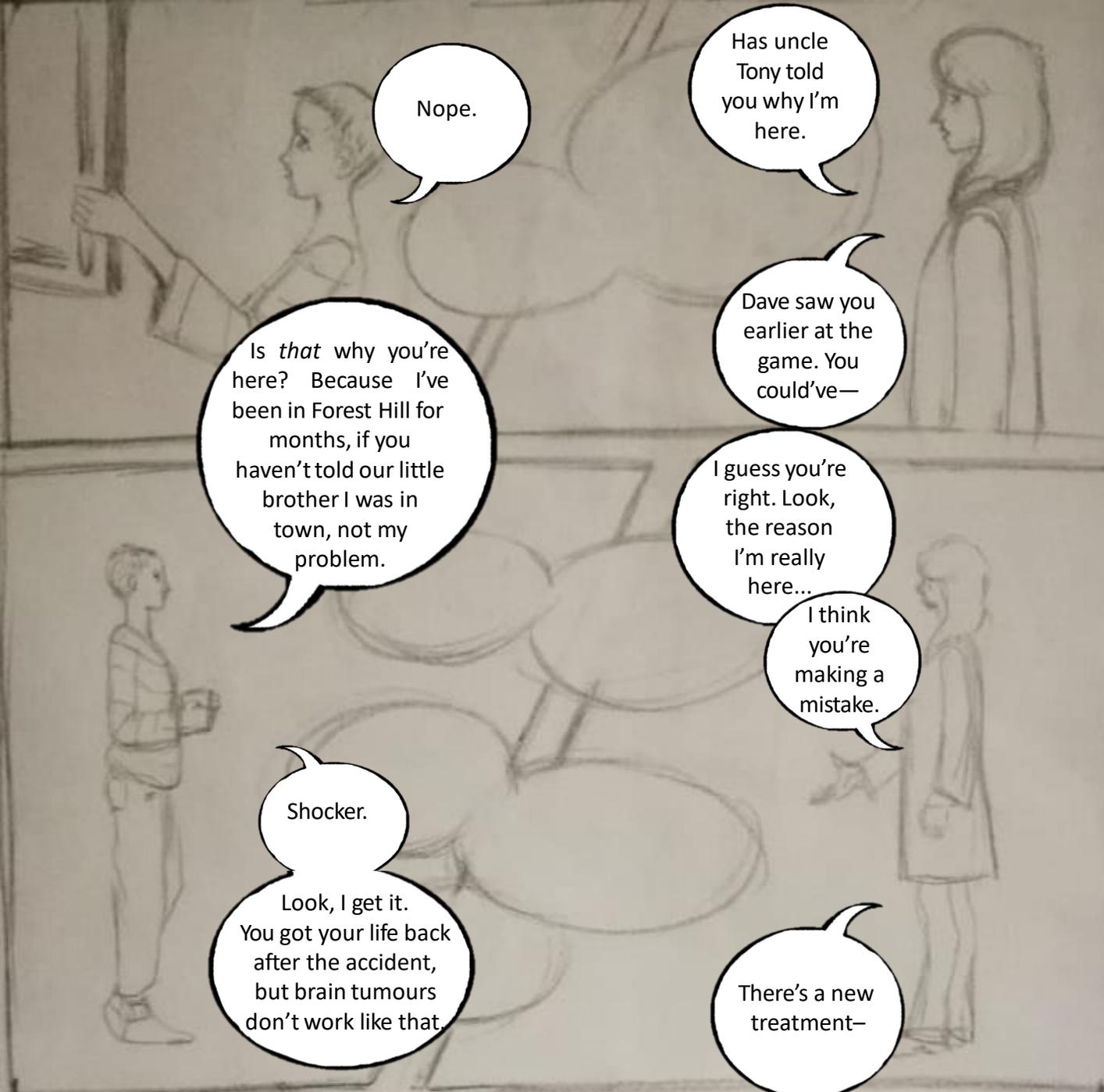
NICOLE: Look, I get it. You got your life back after the accident, but brain tumours don't work like that.

Panel 4 1/4 bottom right

LEIGHTON is framed full figure, she looks at her sister. No background.

LEIGHTON: I guess you're right. Look, I think you're making a mistake. LEIGHTON: There's still a lot we can try.

LEIGHTON: There's a new treatment—



Nope.

Has uncle Tony told you why I'm here.

Dave saw you earlier at the game. You could've—

Is *that* why you're here? Because I've been in Forest Hill for months, if you haven't told our little brother I was in town, not my problem.

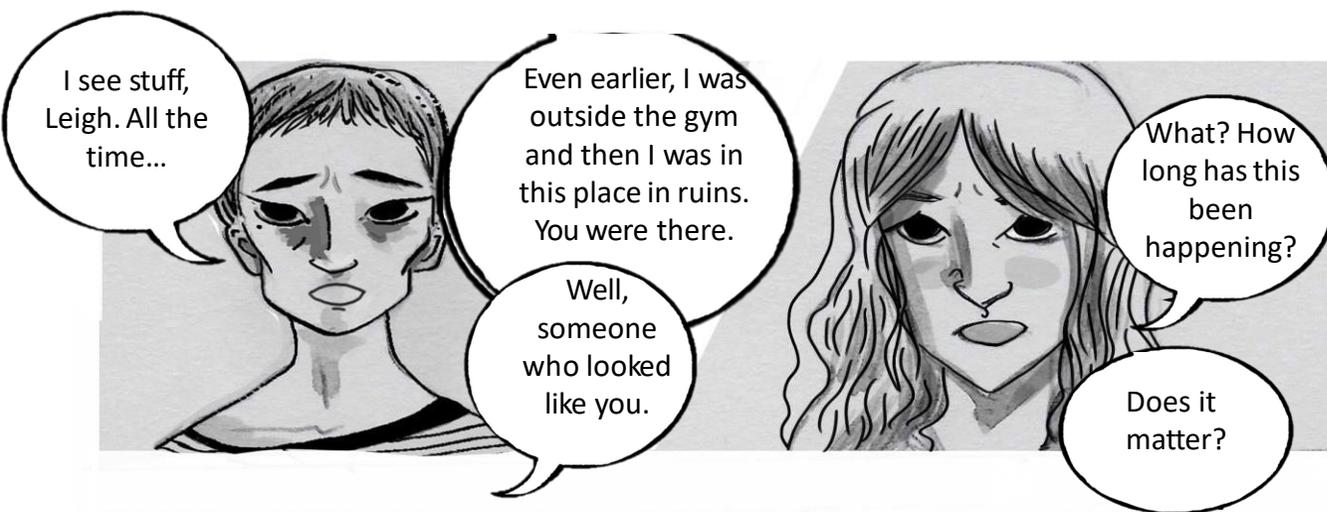
I guess you're right. Look, the reason I'm really here...

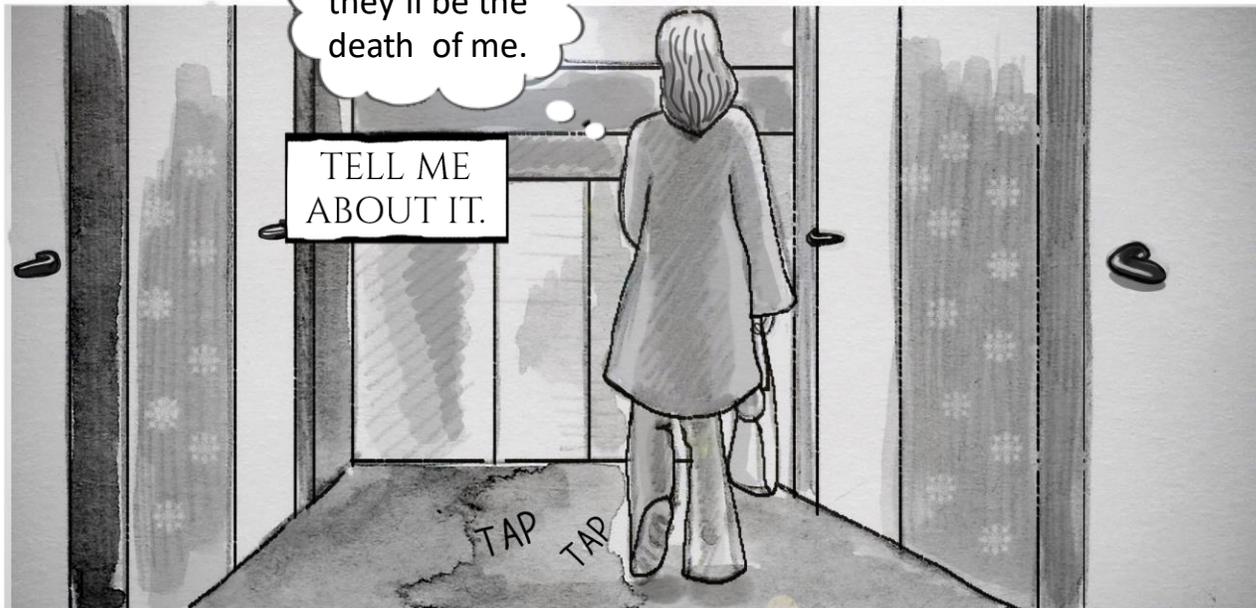
I think you're making a mistake.

Shocker.

Look, I get it. You got your life back after the accident, but brain tumours don't work like that.

There's a new treatment—





3

Echoes part 1

Luce

ĀDHIT - PAST

EVERYTHING WAS SIMPLER
BEFORE THE YEARS OF DUST.

PRETENDING THAT OUR WORLD WAS
A HOME WAS A LOT EASIER.



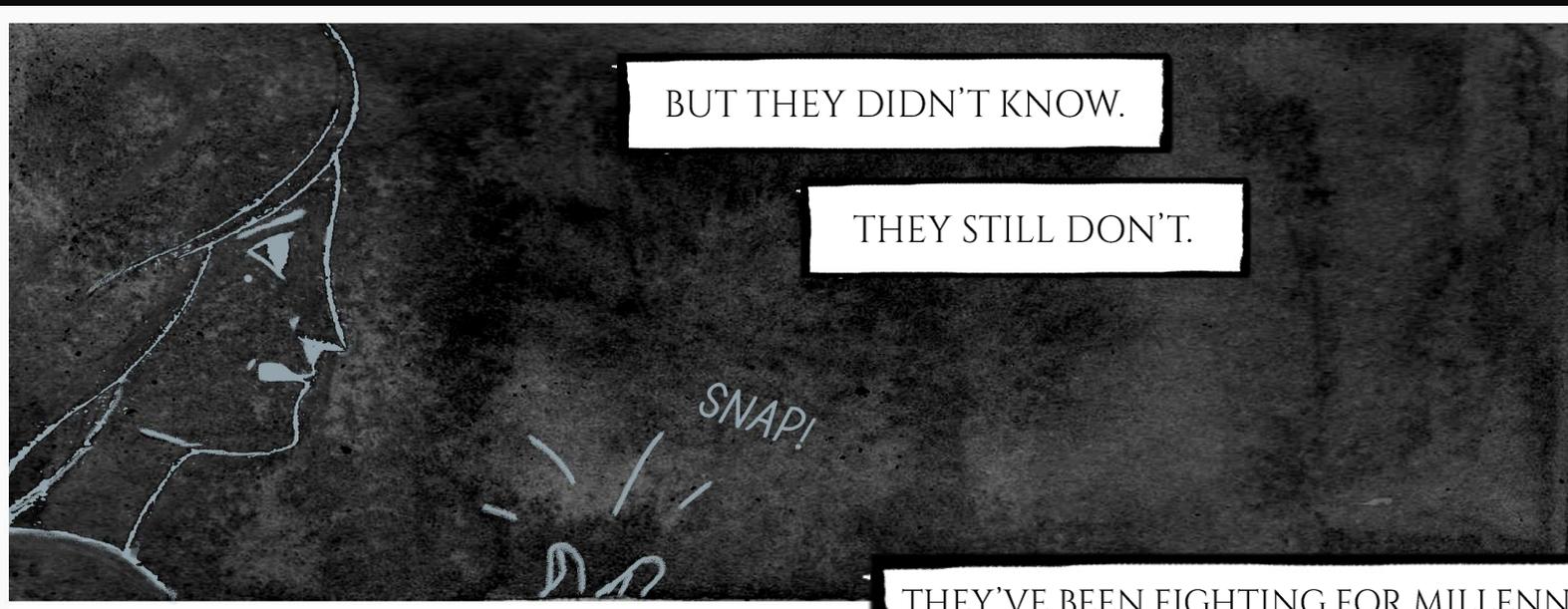


AFTER DIO FLED, ADHIT STARTED CRUMBLING.



LIKE A THRONE MADE OF A SAND.

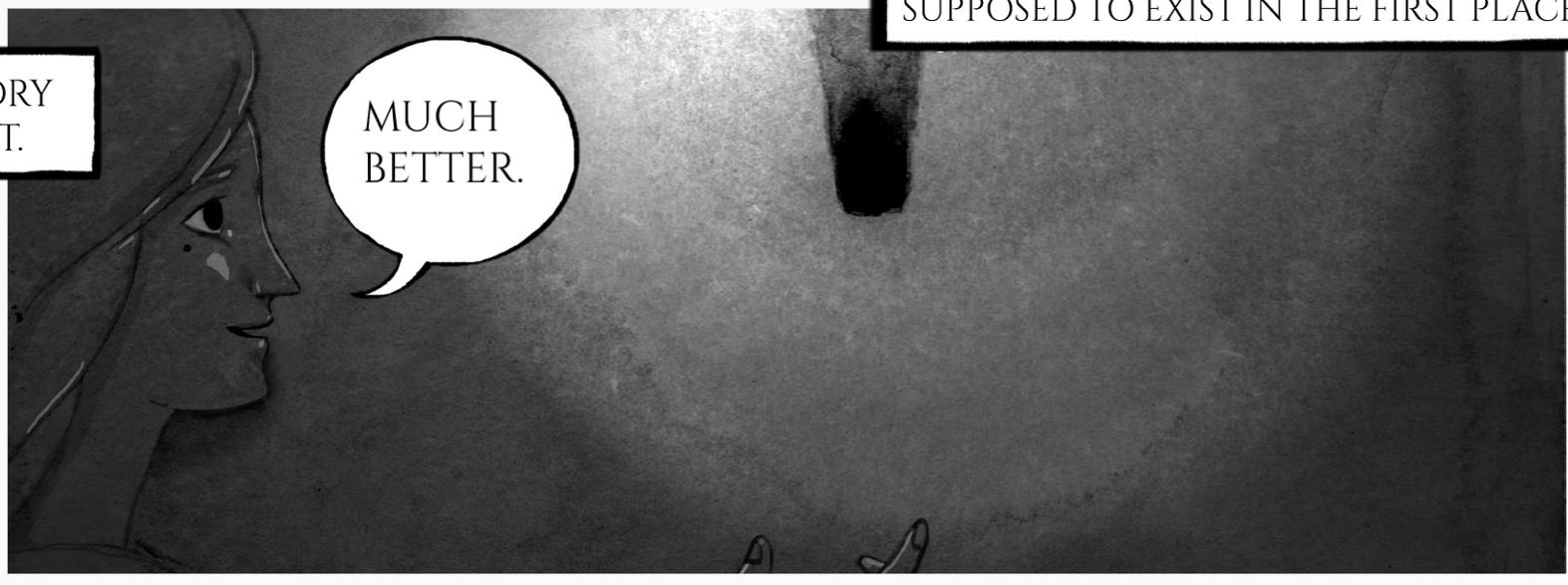
AND IT WAS DRY SAND AT THAT.



BUT THEY DIDN'T KNOW.

THEY STILL DON'T.

THEY'VE BEEN FIGHTING FOR MILLENNIA OVER A SOMETHING THAT WASN'T SUPPOSED TO EXIST IN THE FIRST PLACE.



MUCH BETTER.



SOMETIMES, I FEEL LIKE
MAYBE I SHOULD TELL THEM.

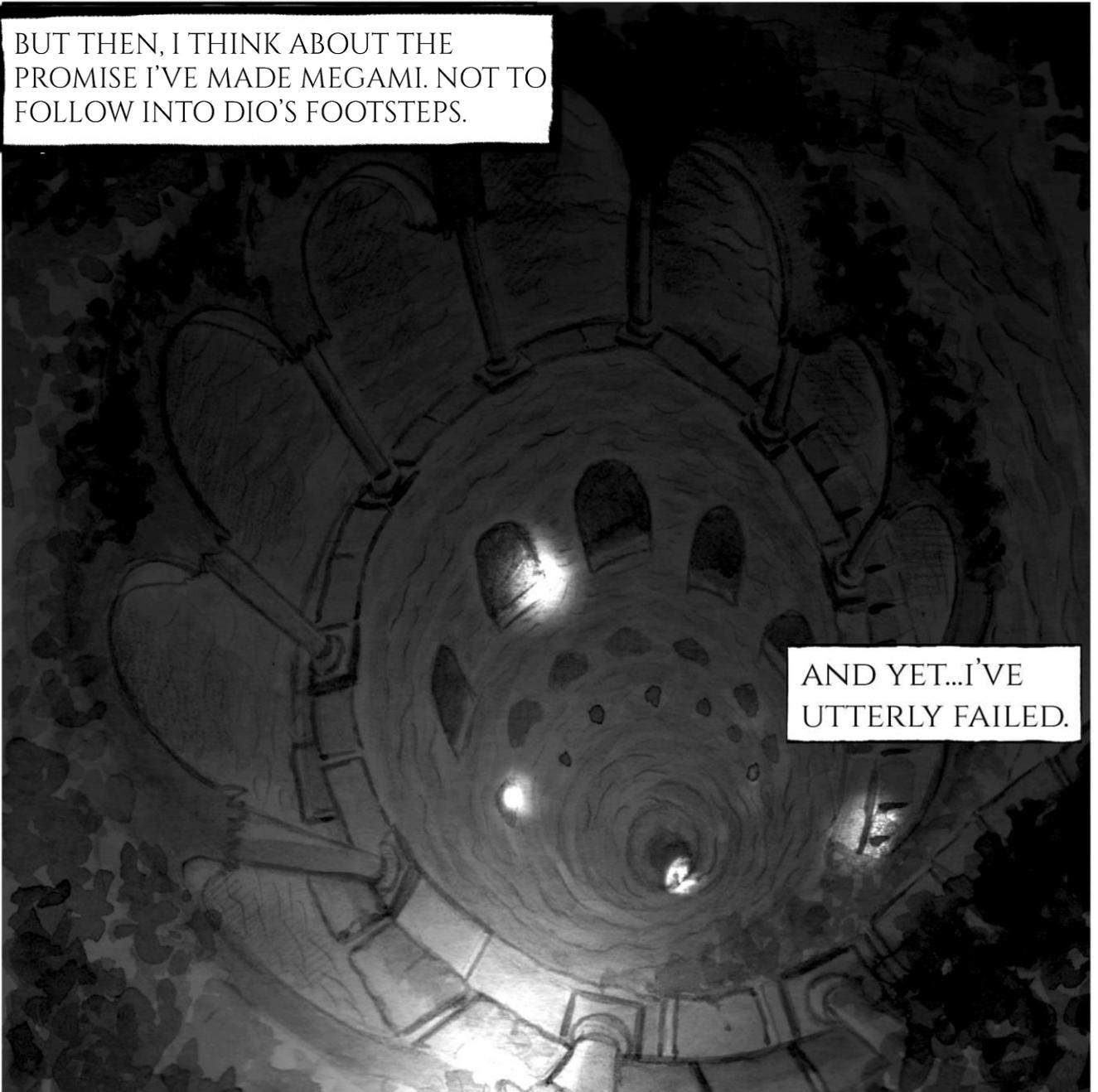
'GET OUT OF HERE.'

'BE FREE.'



'START LIVING.'

BUT THEN, I THINK ABOUT THE
PROMISE I'VE MADE MEGAMI. NOT TO
FOLLOW INTO DIO'S FOOTSTEPS.

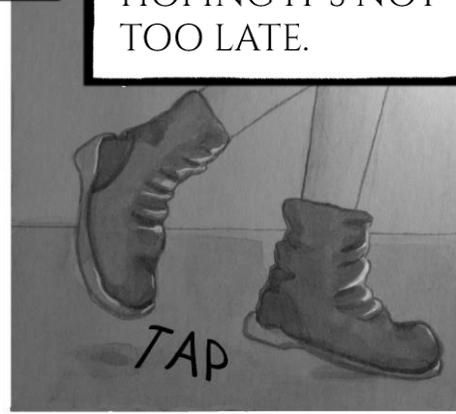


AND YET...I'VE
UTTERLY FAILED.

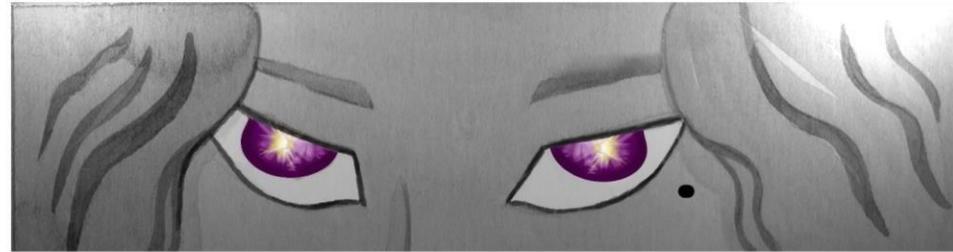
SO HERE I AM, TRYING TO
RIGHT SOME WRONGS,



HOPING IT'S NOT
TOO LATE.



HELLO,
LILITH.





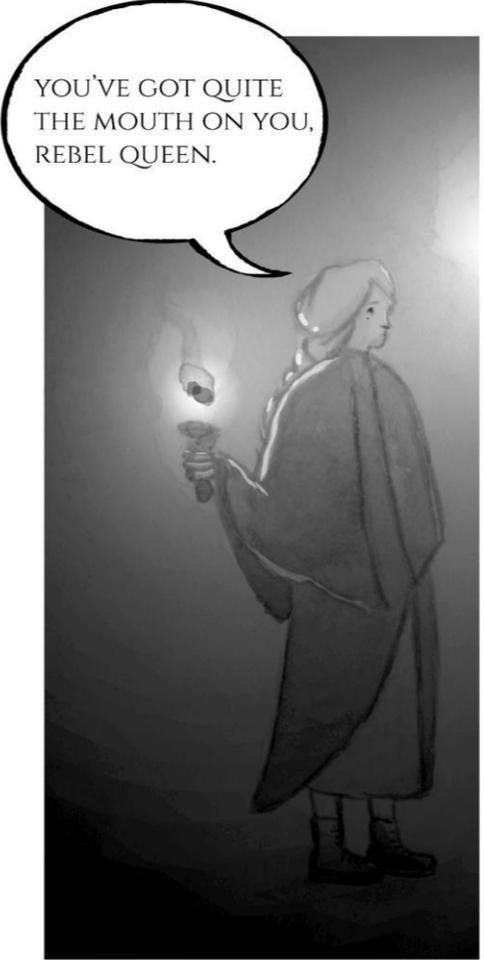
LOOK AT THAT. DIO'S DOG HAS COME TO PAY A VISIT. DO YOU KNOW WHAT A DOG IS, LUCE?



IT'S AN ANIMAL THAT ALWAYS DOES ITS MASTER'S BIDDING.



IT'S ALWAYS LOYAL AND SWEET BUT IT CAN ALSO BE A FUCKING NIGHTMARE.



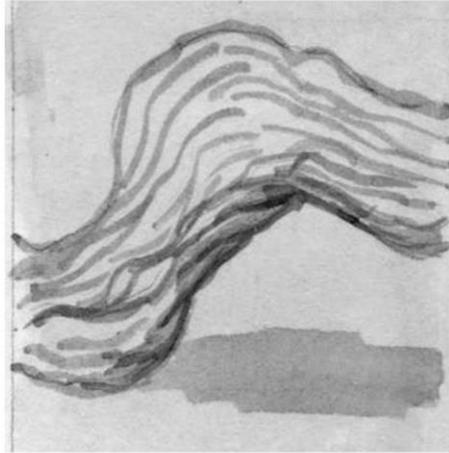
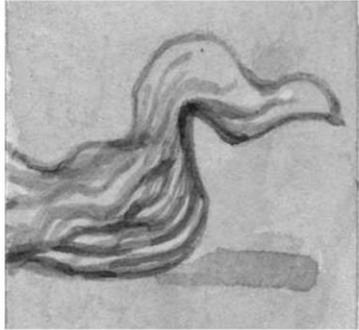
YOU'VE GOT QUITE THE MOUTH ON YOU, REBEL QUEEN.



YOU'VE TAUGHT ME WELL.

WHERE IS DIO ANYWAY? I THOUGHT HE WAS GONNA COME HERE, BEHEAD ME AND PARADE MY HEAD AROUND ÄDHIT.

THERE'S SO
MUCH YOU
DON'T KNOW,
REBEL QUEEN.



LUCE WIELDER
OF WATER AND BLOOD.
HOW CAN YOU
MANIPULATE EARTH?



WE'VE GOT A LOT TO
DISCUSS, LILITH. HOW ABOUT
YOU TAKE A SEAT AND
SHUT UP UNTIL I TELL
YOU OTHERWISE.

LET'S START AT
THE BEGINNING.



ADHIT-PAST

BEFORE THE WAR, I WAS
ALWAYS RUNNING AFTER
RAPHAEL.

RAPHAEL!,
WAIT FOR
ME





HE TAUGHT ME THINGS
HE WASN'T SUPPOSED TO
LIKE BLOOD MAGIC.

HE TOOK ME WHEN HE
VISITED OTHER WORLDS.

YOU'RE NOT
GOING TO VISIT
NEIL AND MIRA.

YOU'RE LATE
I WAS ABOUT
TO LEAVE LUCE

I TRIED TO GET
HERE EARLIER BUT
YOU KNOW URLIEL'S
LESSONS.

IF YOU NEED TO ACCESS TO THE POWER
ALL YOU NEED TO DO IS ASK. ASK THE
QUESTION AND LISTEN TO THE ANSWER.

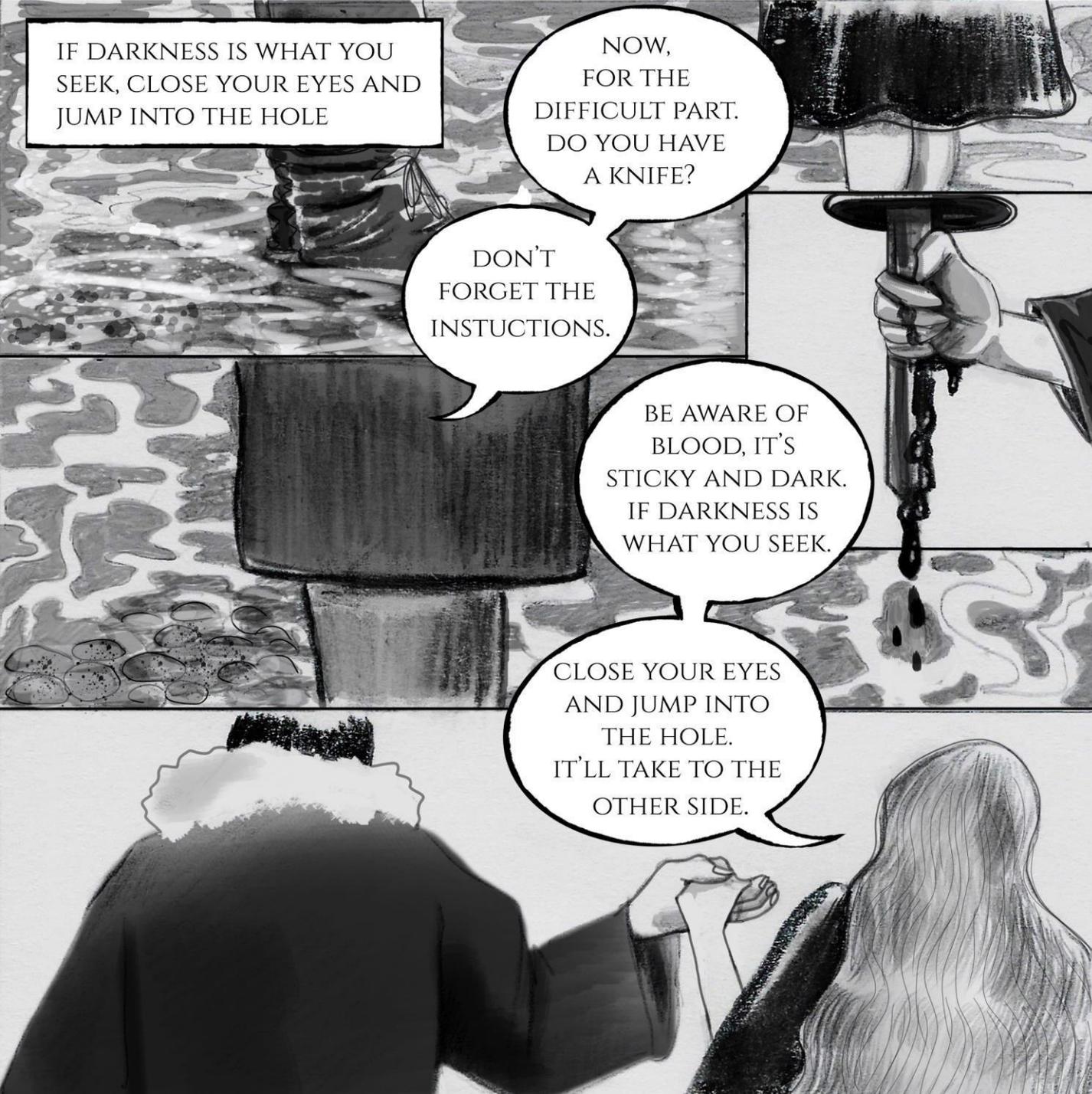
ARE YOU
SURE
YOU FEEL
UP TO IT?

I HAVE PRACTICED
HOLDING TWO STRANDS
OF MAGIC AT THE SAME
TIME.

CARRY THE ANSWER IN
YOUR POCKET AND SHARE IT
WITH THE UNIVERSE.

ALRIGHT THEN.
LET ME SEE
WHAT YOU'VE
GOT.





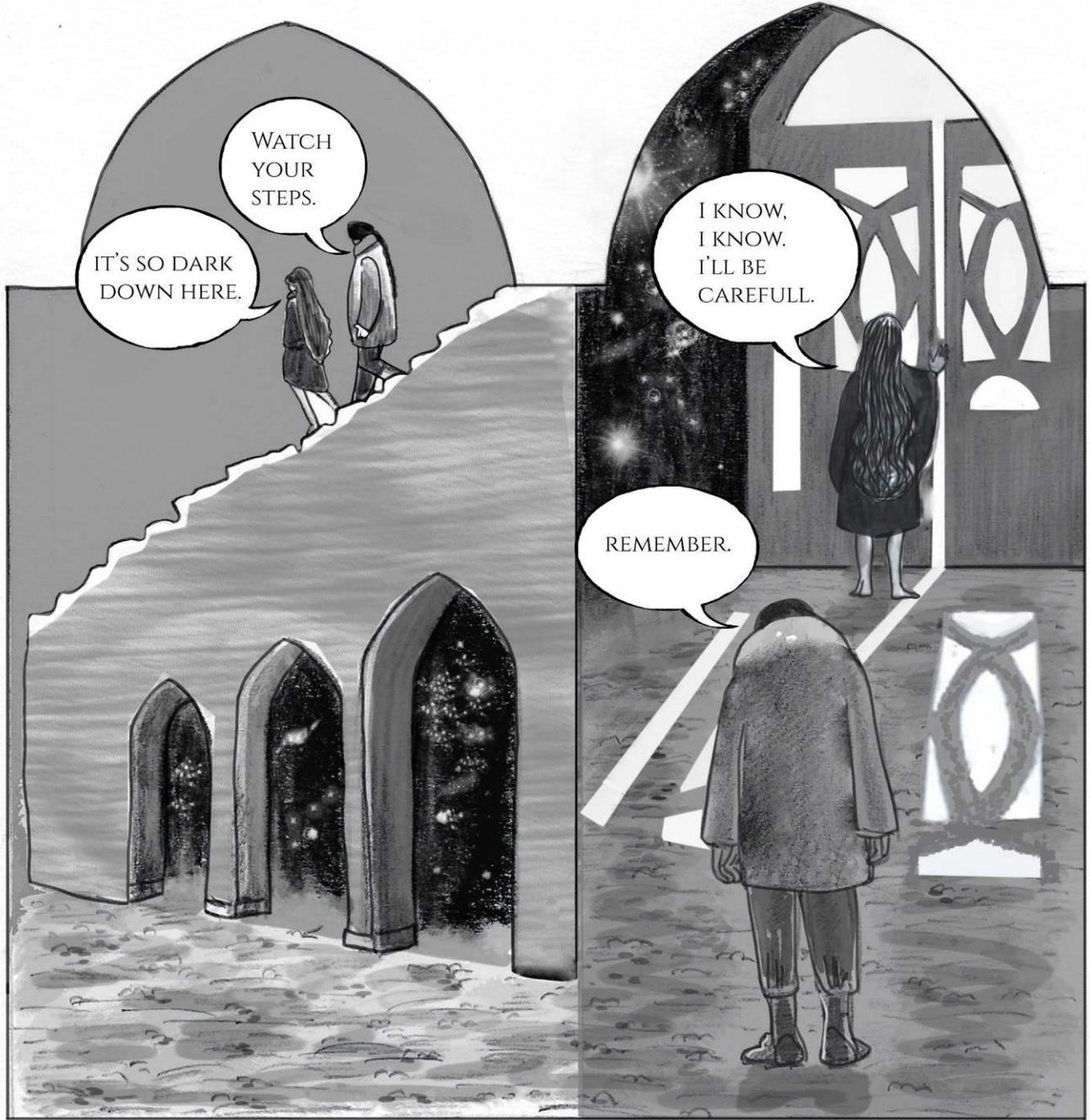
IF DARKNESS IS WHAT YOU
SEEK, CLOSE YOUR EYES AND
JUMP INTO THE HOLE

NOW,
FOR THE
DIFFICULT PART.
DO YOU HAVE
A KNIFE?

DON'T
FORGET THE
INSTUCTIONS.

BE AWARE OF
BLOOD, IT'S
STICKY AND DARK.
IF DARKNESS IS
WHAT YOU SEEK.

CLOSE YOUR EYES
AND JUMP INTO
THE HOLE.
IT'LL TAKE TO THE
OTHER SIDE.



IT'S SO DARK
DOWN HERE.

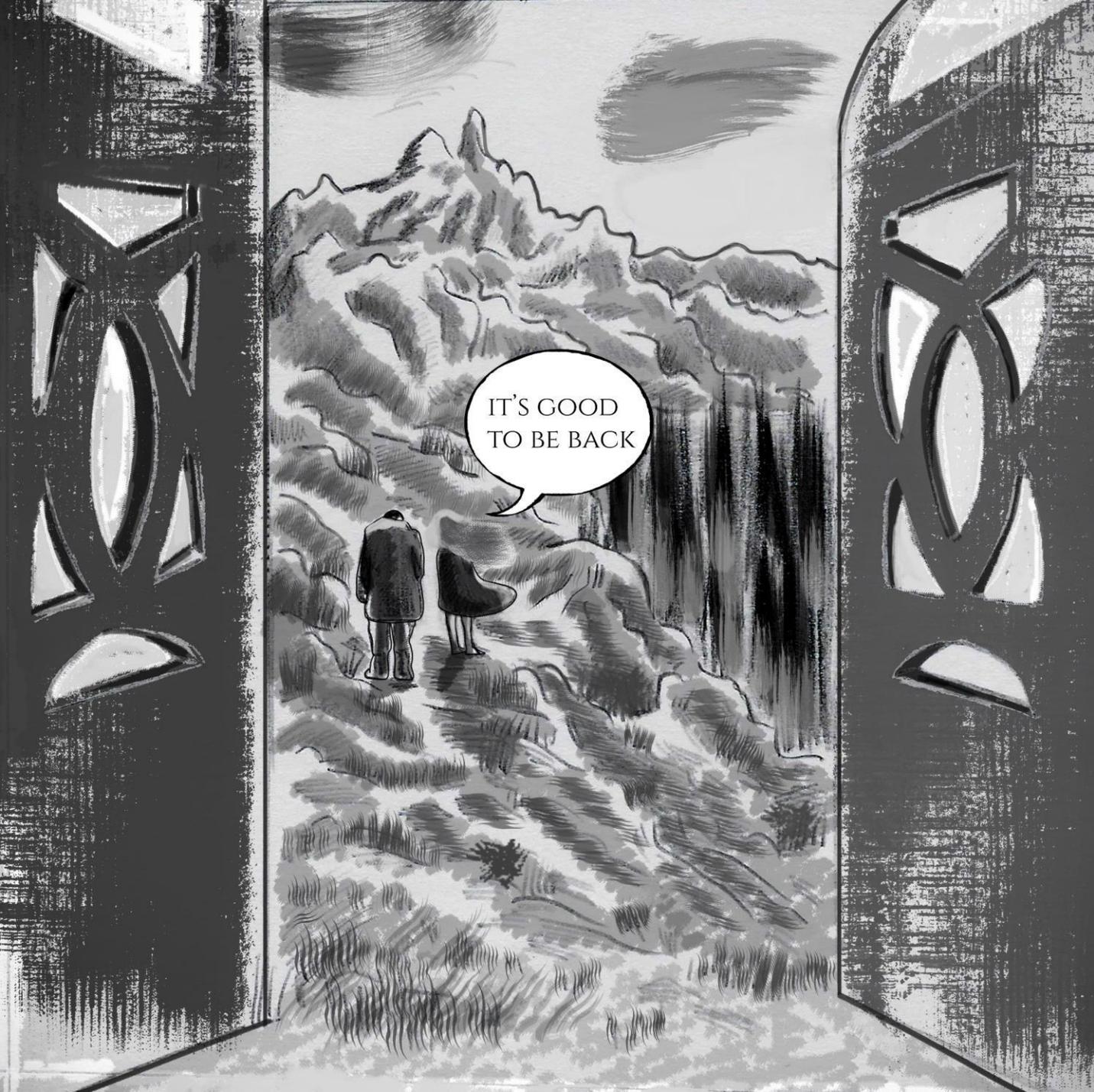
WATCH
YOUR
STEPS.

I KNOW,
I KNOW.
I'LL BE
CAREFULL.

REMEMBER.



NO RUNNING,
LUX!



IT'S GOOD
TO BE BACK

4

Have you forgotten how it works?

Nicole

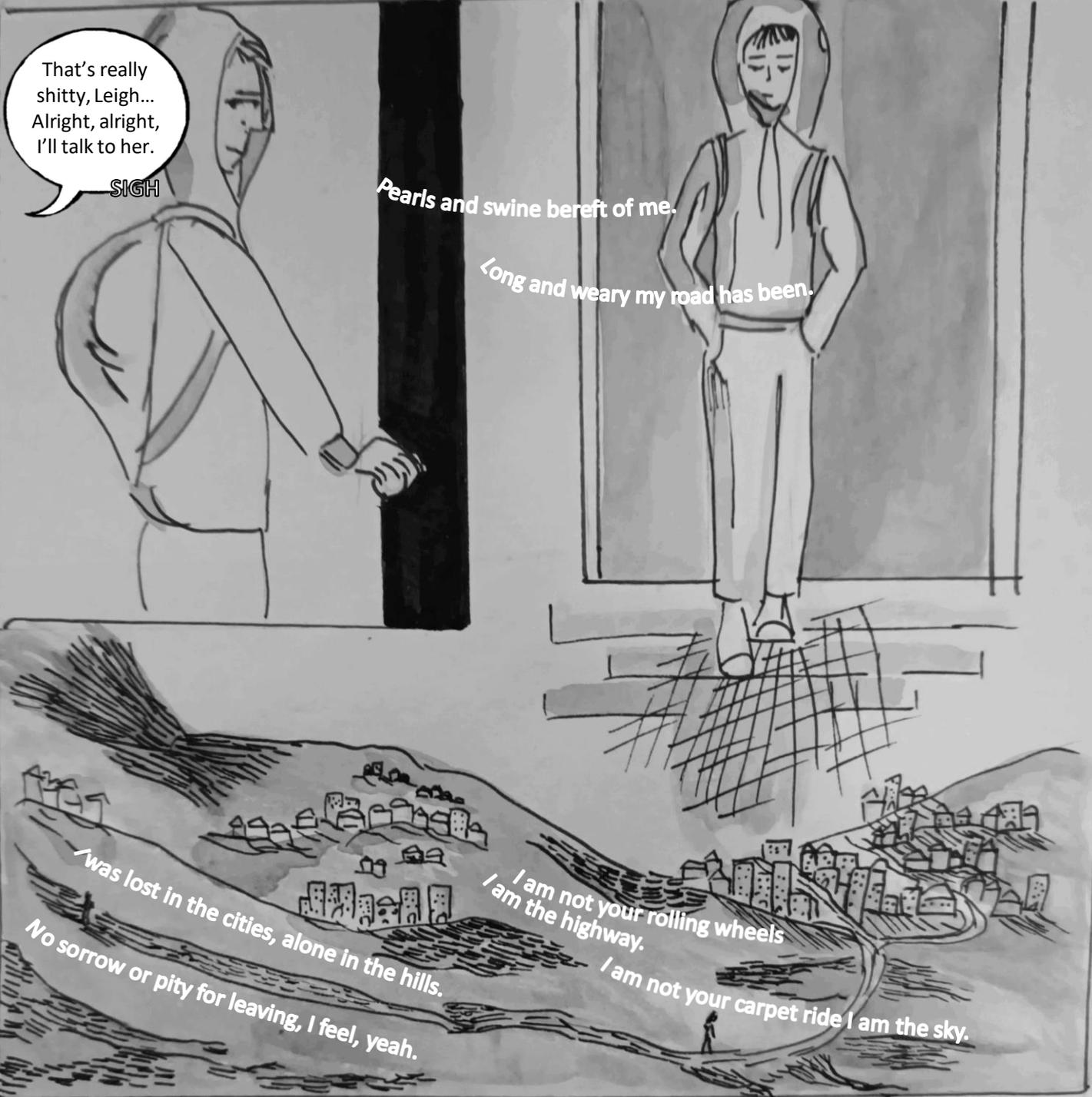


Panel 1 smaller than 1/4 top right squared
NICOLE is sitting against the wall, on the floor. She has her knees against her chest, arms wrapped around her legs. She's wearing a hoodie, her hood is on, and sweatpants. In the left corner of the panel, TONY is talking on the phone with LEIGHTON. There is a cupboard on TONY'S left, packed boxes on the floor.
UNCLE TONY: Look, Leigh, Nic wants to stay with me. Don't you think— Don't give me that, you know she's like a daughter to me.

Panel 2 smaller than 1/4 top left squared
Close up on NICOLE'S face, she looks sad and defeated.
UNCLE TONY (off camera): It's not your choice, Leigh. Nic's been through enough. She said she's had enough. Can't you respect that?

Panel 3 1/2 page bottom
NICOLE is standing. She is still on the other side of the wall. In the left corner of the panel, TONY is talking on the phone with LEIGHTON. There is a cupboard on TONY'S left, packed boxes on the floor.
UNCLE TONY: I know your dad entrusted them to you, but your mum—
UNCLE TONY: Leigh, listen to me. If you take me to court, Nic will spend her last months fucking hating you.
ADD BALLOONS with three dots inside to emphasise TONY'S silence.

Panel 4 detail bottom right
NICOLE is pushing a basketball ball in her backpack.



That's really shitty, Leigh...
Alright, alright,
I'll talk to her.

SIGH

Pearls and swine bereft of me.

Long and weary my road has been.

Chapter 4 – page 2

Panel 1 top left rectangle
NICOLE is shown on the side. She's opening the door. She has a backpack on her shoulder.

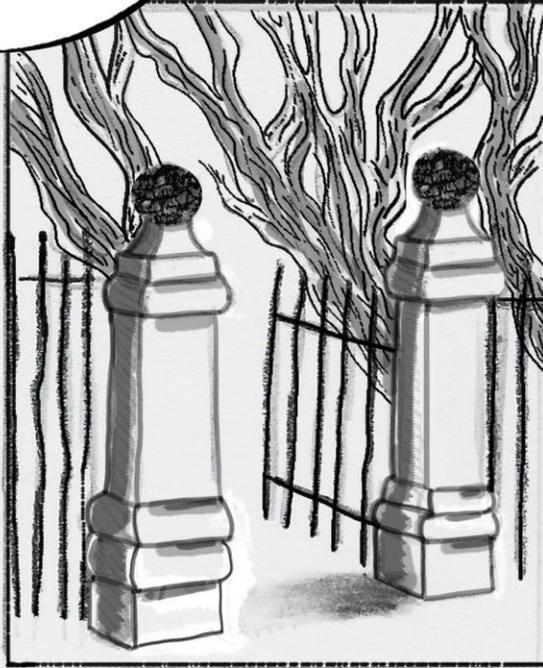
UNCLE TONY (off camera): That's really shitty, Leigh... Alright, alright, I'll talk to her. Add SIGH to the balloon.

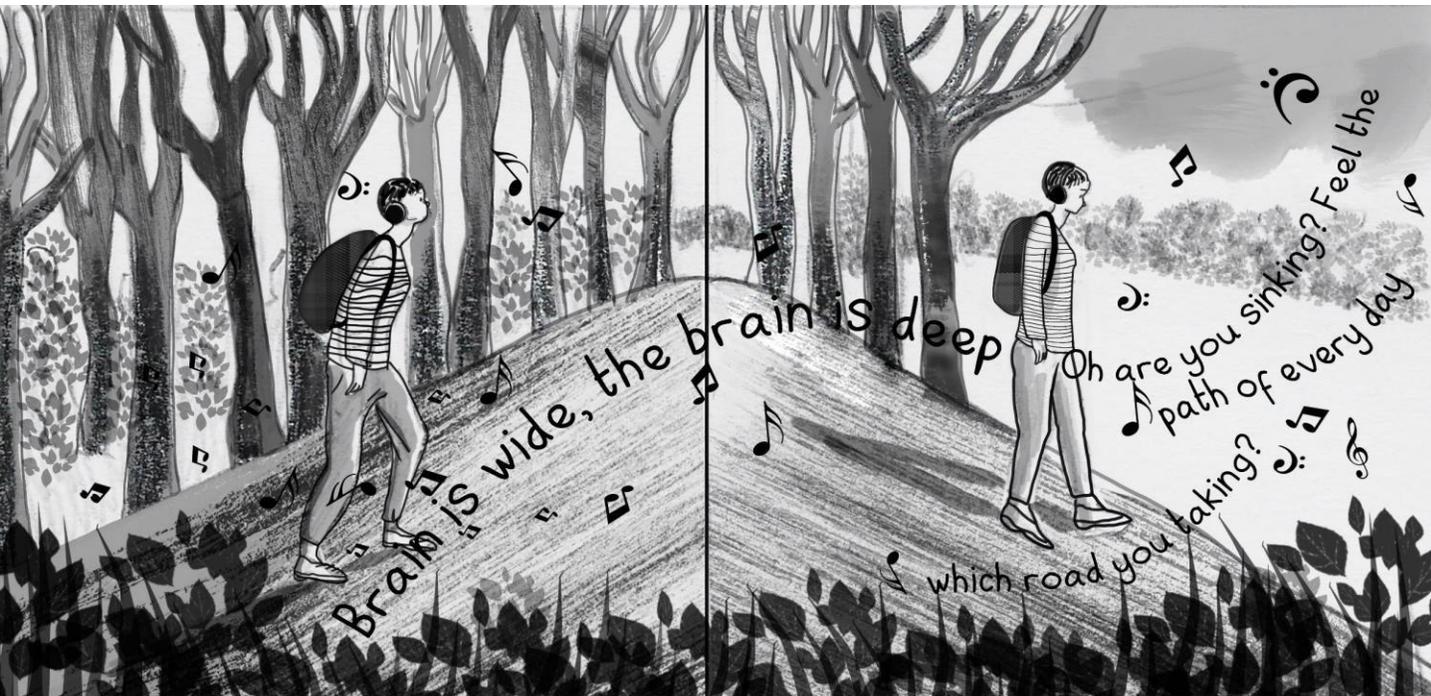
Panel 2 top right rectangle
NICOLE is exiting the building, the front door behind her. She is shown from the front. She is listening to some music. This panel bleeds into the one below.
SONG: Pearls and swine bereft of me. Long and weary, my road has been.

Panel 3 – 1/2 page bottom
Bird-view of FOREST HILL, NICOLE is shown on two different parts of the path. The town is ahead. In the background, we see the hills and different houses, buildings. The lyrics of the song float around.
SONG: Pearls and swine bereft of me. Long and weary my road has been.
I was lost in the cities, alone in the hills. No sorrow or pity for leaving, I feel, yeah.
I am not your rolling wheels – I am the highway. I am not your carpet ride – I am the sky.



Wow! some things
do stay the same.







Finally!



OH my god, I'd almost forgotten the feeling.

Hey, d'ya play?

Yeah, my mate's just left. D'ya wanna play together?

What?

Yeah! Why not.





Panel 1 1/4 top left

NICOLE (left) and WILLIAM (right) are facing each other and they are shown from the side, full-figure. NICOLE doesn't have the hoodie on anymore. WILLIAM is wearing a basketball jersey and baggy shorts. WILLIAM is tossing the ball to NICOLE. No background.

WILLIAM: Are you new around here?

NICOLE: Nope. I was born here.

Panel 2 1/4 top right

NICOLE is dribbling (ball in her left hand). She is shown almost full frontal (cut off below the knees). WILLIAM is shown from the side. He is bent on his knees, his arms extended. No background.

WILLIAM: Uhm.. I've never seen you on the court before.

NICOLE: This is not my usual spot.

Panel 3 1/4 bottom left

WILLIAM is on the right shown from his side, arms extended to block NICOLE's shot. NICOLE is on the left. She is attempting a shot. The ball is in her hands. Ball is in the right hand, supported by the left. The right arm is at an angle. No background.

WILLIAM: No? Then which?

NICOLE: There's a place in the hills. It's pretty rundown—

Panel 4 1/4 bottom right

The ball is in the net. We can see the trees and bushes on the side of the court behind the hoop.

WILLIAM (off camera): Shit! You're Dave and Leighton's sister.

Shit! You're
Dave and
Leighton's
sister.



Panel 1 1/4 top left

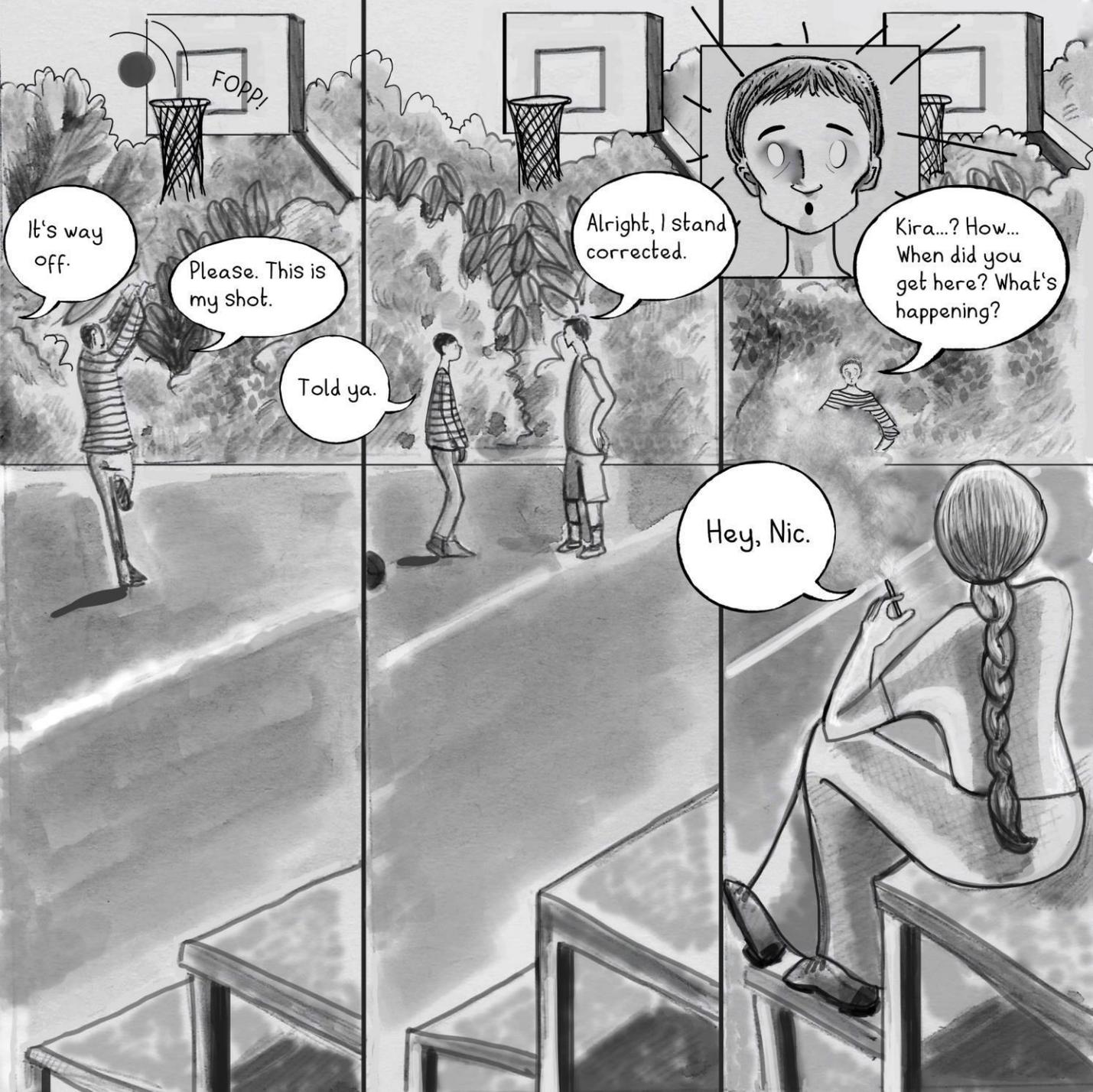
NICOLE (left) and WILLIAM (right) are next to each other. They are facing the camera, but they are not looking at it. NICOLE is hunched on her legs, WILLIAM is leaning forward (bent at the waist), hands resting on his thighs. They are both sweating. No background. NICOLE: Of course you know them. Did Leigh train you? WILLIAM: Nope, actually I grew up seeing your sister play. My dad was her coach. But I played with Dave in school.

Panel 2 top right bigger than 1/4

WILLIAM is on the left and is handing the ball to NICOLE on the right. They are looking at each other; the camera is closer to them than in the previous panel and frames them from the side. NICOLE is smiling and is taking hold of the ball. No background. WILLIAM: Which means you must be one of the infamous twins. NICOLE: Infamous? WILLIAM: The genius and the rebel. Which one are you? NICOLE: I'm Nicole. And I guess I'm technically the rebel.

Panel 3 bottom irregular shape/ rest of the page.

WILLIAM is on the right, NICOLE is on the left, they are both shown from the side. NICOLE is dribbling. The hoop is in sight and we can see a lot more details of their surroundings. In the background, we can see bushes and trees; in the foreground we can see benches. The camera is far away. NICOLE: You can also add basketball genius to the list of nicknames. I don't mind. WILLIAM: I bet you wouldn't. NICOLE: Nicole, rebel, basketball genius Morgan. It has a nice flow. WILLIAM: Alright, rebel genius, let's see what you can do.



It's way off.

Please. This is my shot.

Told ya.

Alright, I stand corrected.

Kira...? How...
When did you get here? What's happening?

Hey, Nic.

FOPP!



Have you forgotten
how it works?



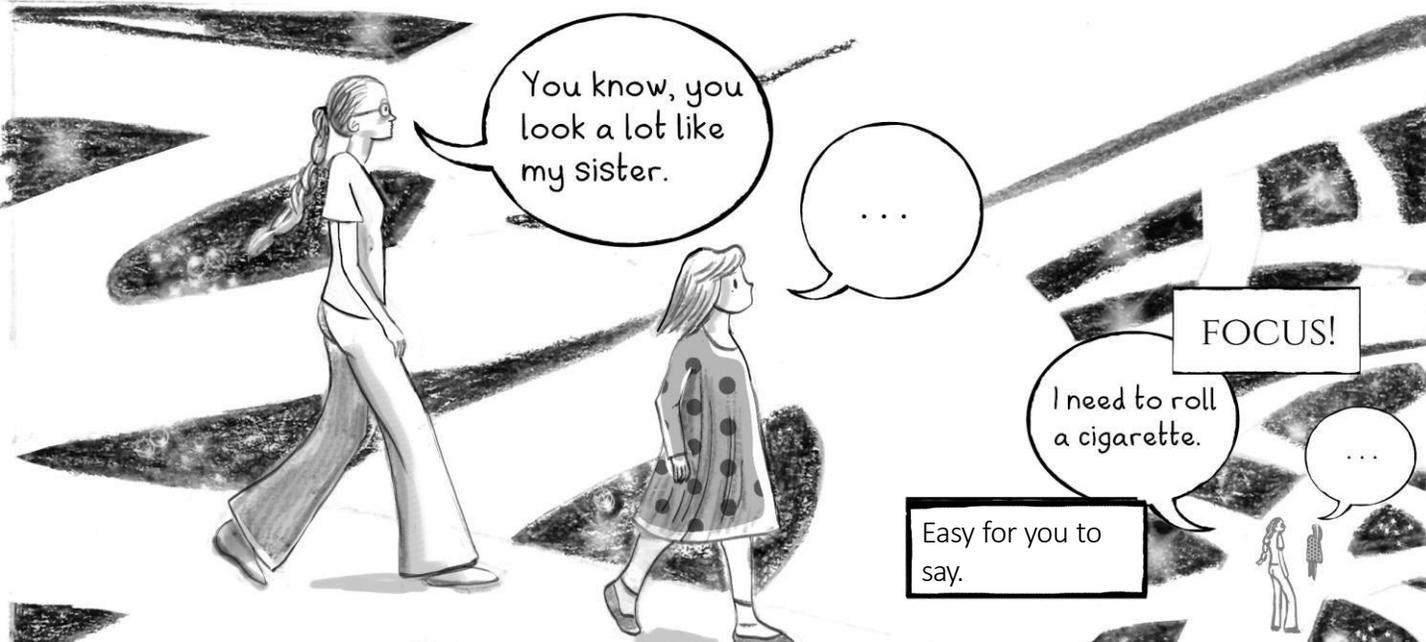
C'mon,
follow me.

5

The Dream-World part 1

Kira





You know, you look a lot like my sister.

...

FOCUS!

I need to roll a cigarette.

Easy for you to say.

...



It's you isn't it?

...



Ok, I think we've walked enough. How about you tell me where we're going?

She's waiting for you... but she's tired.

Ok, Nikki. Would you like to tell me who is in the cave?

Are you scared?

...

Are you?

You know where Lilith is, don't you? Is she *with* you?

SOMETHING'S WRONG.



Uh?

Yes, a disturbance in the force...

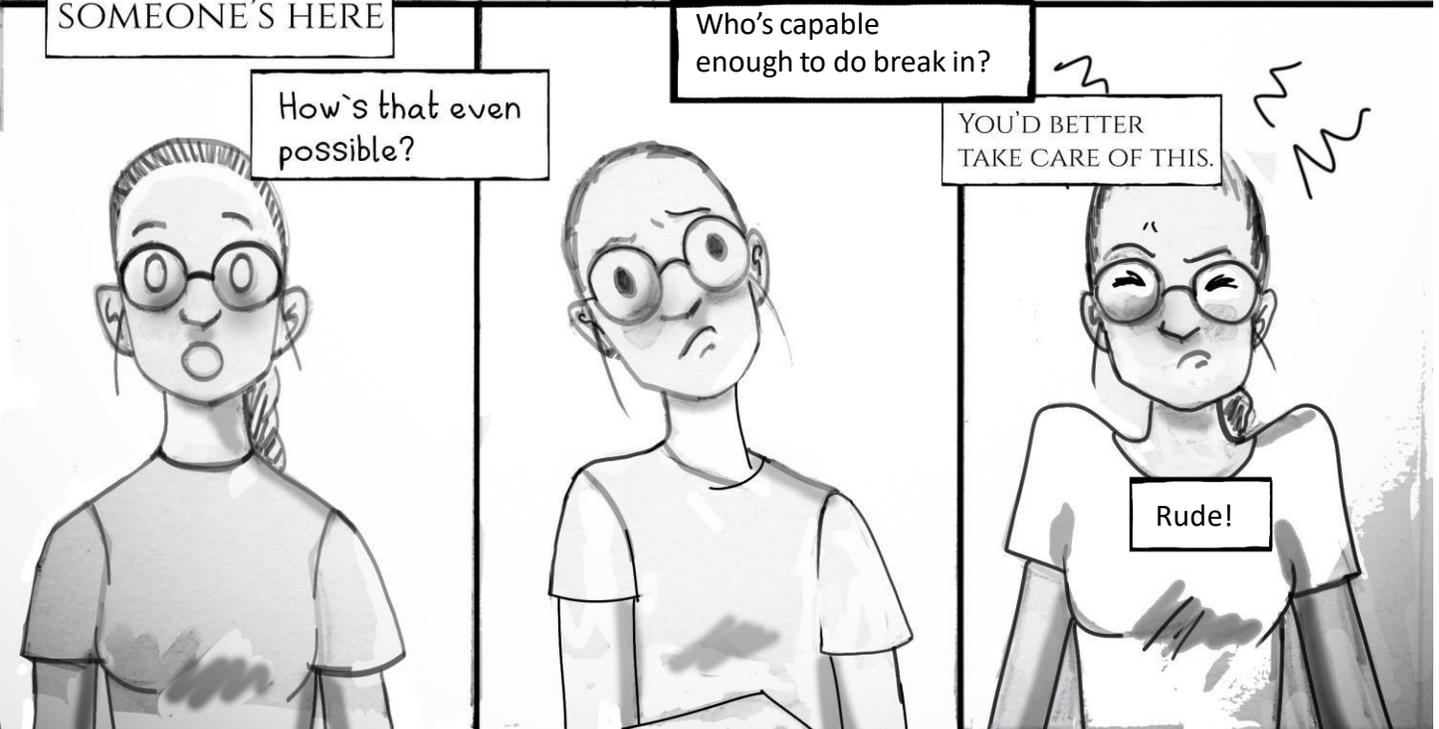
SIGH...

SOMEONE'S HERE

Who's capable enough to do break in?

How's that even possible?

YOU'D BETTER TAKE CARE OF THIS.



Rude!

Not these two.

NOT THESE TWO.

Well,
hello Kira
Morgan, fancy
meeting you
here.

Don't you
know it's common
courtesy to give
a heads up before
invading someone
else's
dreamscape?





What do you want, Hananaet?

My name is Mason, I only travel wth Hananaet.

Tomayto, tomahto

What ever it is, you've got the wrong person.

I need to talk to you. I'm sorry I umbushed you.

I've been looking for you for a while and there's something...

Lilith's back.

HOW DOES HE KNOW?

How does he know?

I said Lilith's back.

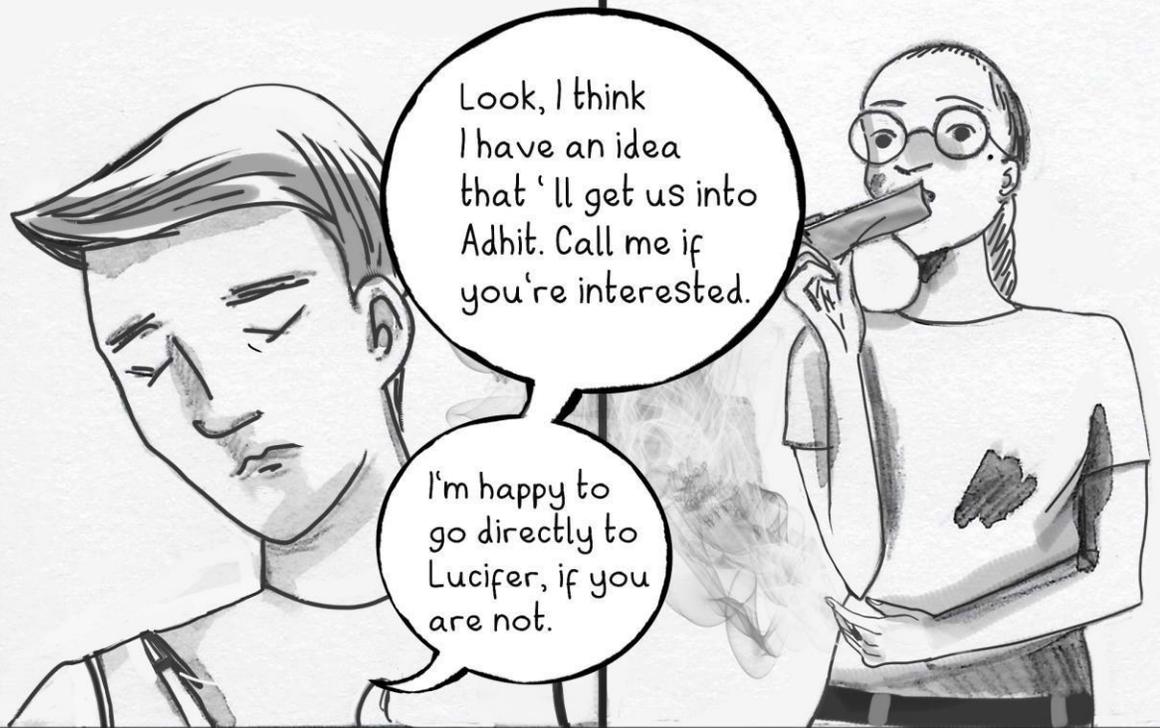
I heard you the first time.

Aren't you a bit young to be a smoker?

Cliche` much?

SIGH! ...
So, how long have you known?

You've just told me. Anyway how sure are you?

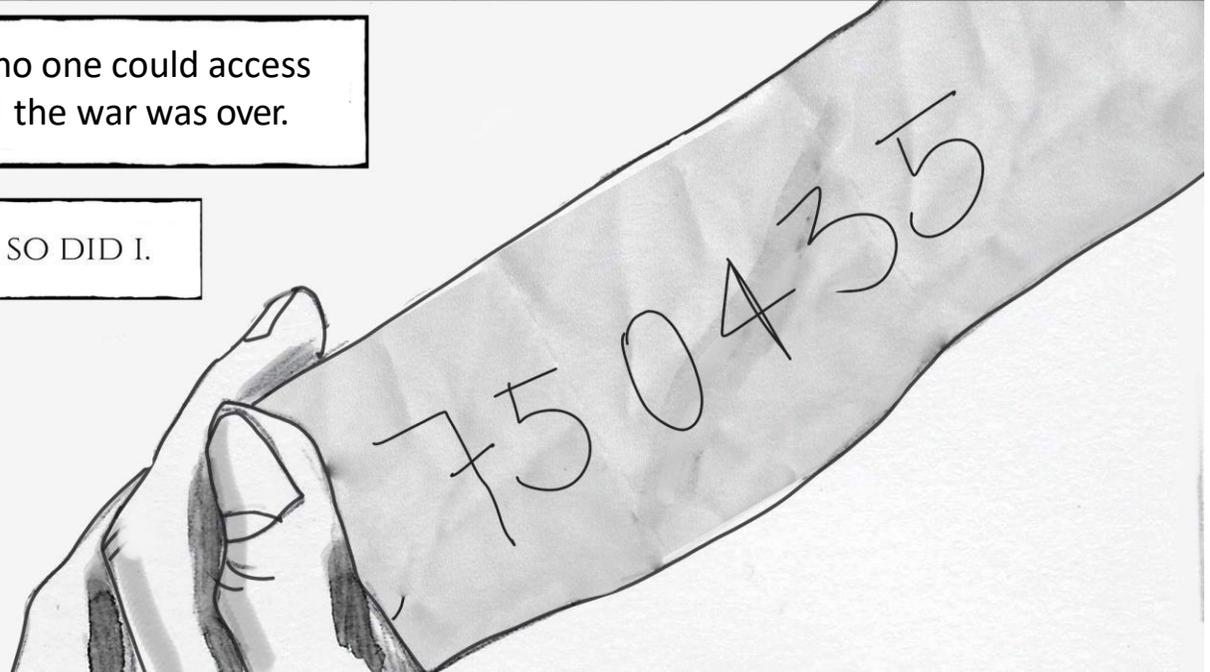


Look, I think I have an idea that 'll get us into Adhit. Call me if you're interested.

I'm happy to go directly to Lucifer, if you are not.

I thought no one could access Ådhit until the war was over.

SO DID I.

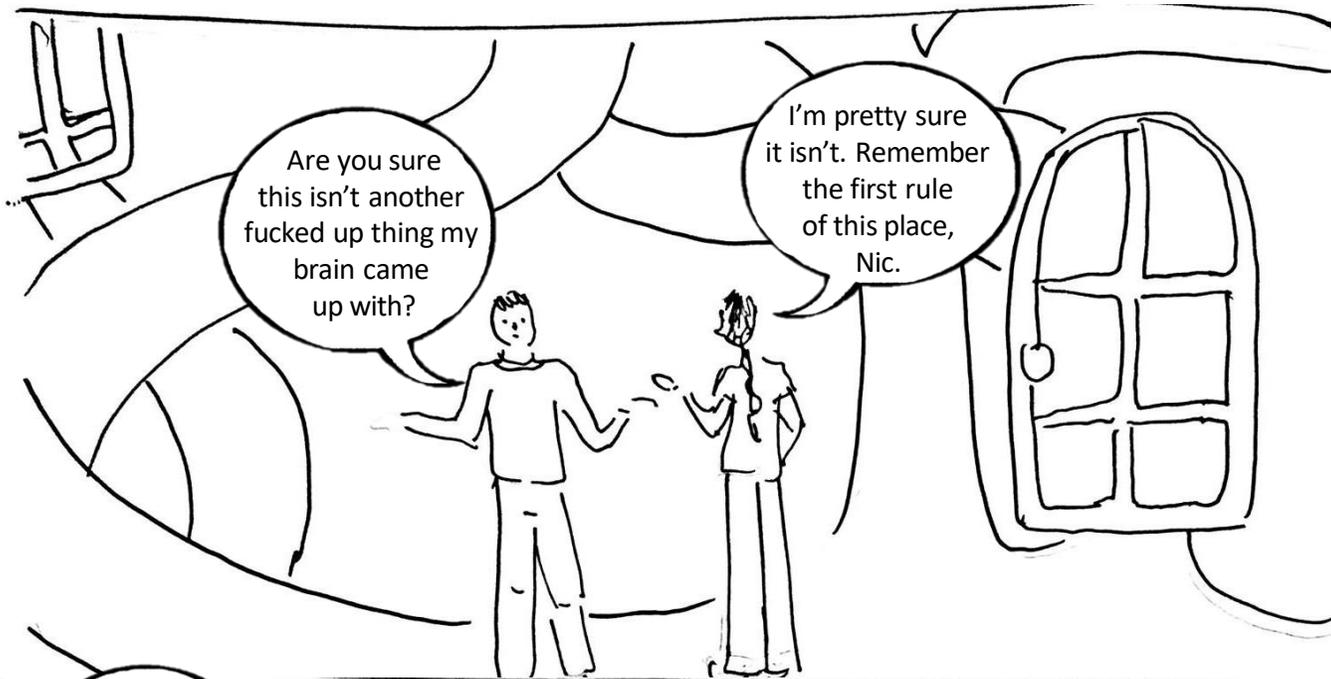


750435

6

The Dream-World part 2

Nicole



Panel 1 1/2 page top

Same panel from the fifth chapter, just different dialogue.

NICOLE: Are you sure this isn't another fucked up thing my brain came up with?

KIRA: I'm pretty sure it isn't. Remember the first rule of this place, Nic.

Panel 2 1/4 bottom left

Close up on NICOLE, she is wearing the same clothes from chapter 6 and beginning of chapter 7. In this close up, there's little to no background. We can show black / space behind her head.

NICOLE: Find yourself a guide.

Panel 3 1/4 bottom right

NICOLE turns around, she is wearing the same clothes from chapter 5. We need to make sure to highlight the **MOVEMENT LINES**



Panel 1 full page

This is the same panel from KIRA's chapter. We need to remove young NICOLE and **replace KIRA with OLD NICOLE**. The paths don't need to be the same. The **background can change** however you want, but **it's the same dimension with paths and doors**.

NICOLE's guide is different from KIRA's. NICOLE's guide is the disembodied voice of LILITH. The conversation doesn't have an order.

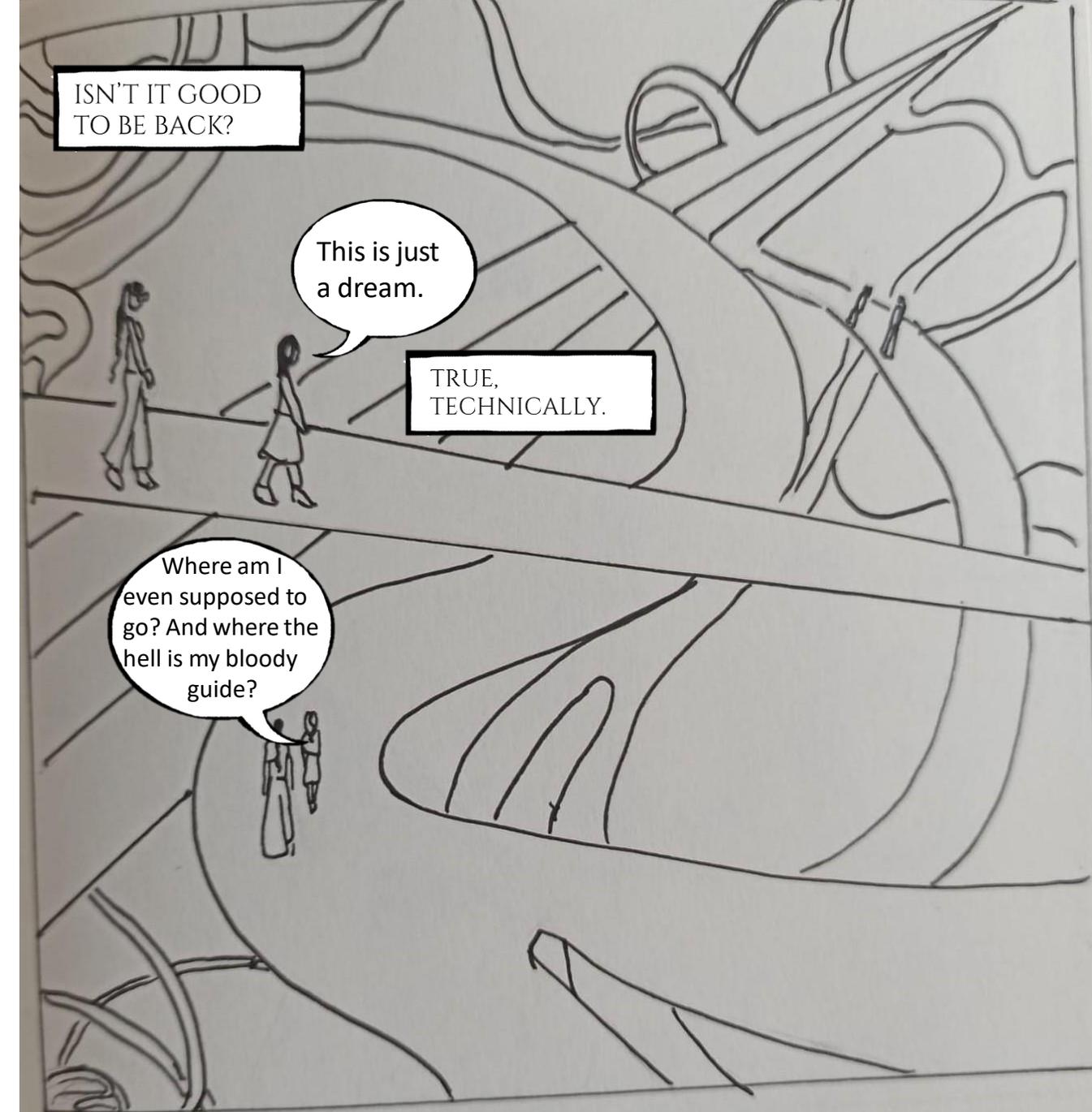
LILITH: Isn't it good to be back? (CINZEL)

NICOLE: This is just a dream

LILITH: True, technically. (CINZEL)

NICOLE: Where am I even supposed to go? And where the hell is my bloody guide?

We could think about splitting the page in different panels to show NICOLE's exasperation or maybe introduce small boxes against the background.



ISN'T IT GOOD TO BE BACK?

This is just a dream.

TRUE,
TECHNICALLY.

Where am I even supposed to go? And where the hell is my bloody guide?

Panel 1 full page

In this panel, NICOLE meets LILITH face to face for the first time. She's scared, but she doesn't want to show it. She's also very confused as to what's happening. Is this her brain tumour or is it her weird connection with KIRA? Is it a bit of both? She doesn't know, but she doesn't feel safe. That's for sure.

All of this is happening against the backdrop of Ådhit devastated by the war between Loyalists and Rebels (same location as CHAPTER 3). You can find the reference images also in this chapter and you can also have a look at the actual panels from the first chapter.

The people in the distance are

LUCE – LEFT (she's wearing the same clothes we've seen her in in Echoes from the past 1 and Chapter 1)

LILITH – MIDDLE (kneeling down on one knee, her hair running in front of her face, see reference picture Lilith kneeling. She's wearing the same clothes she wore in Echoes from the past 1)

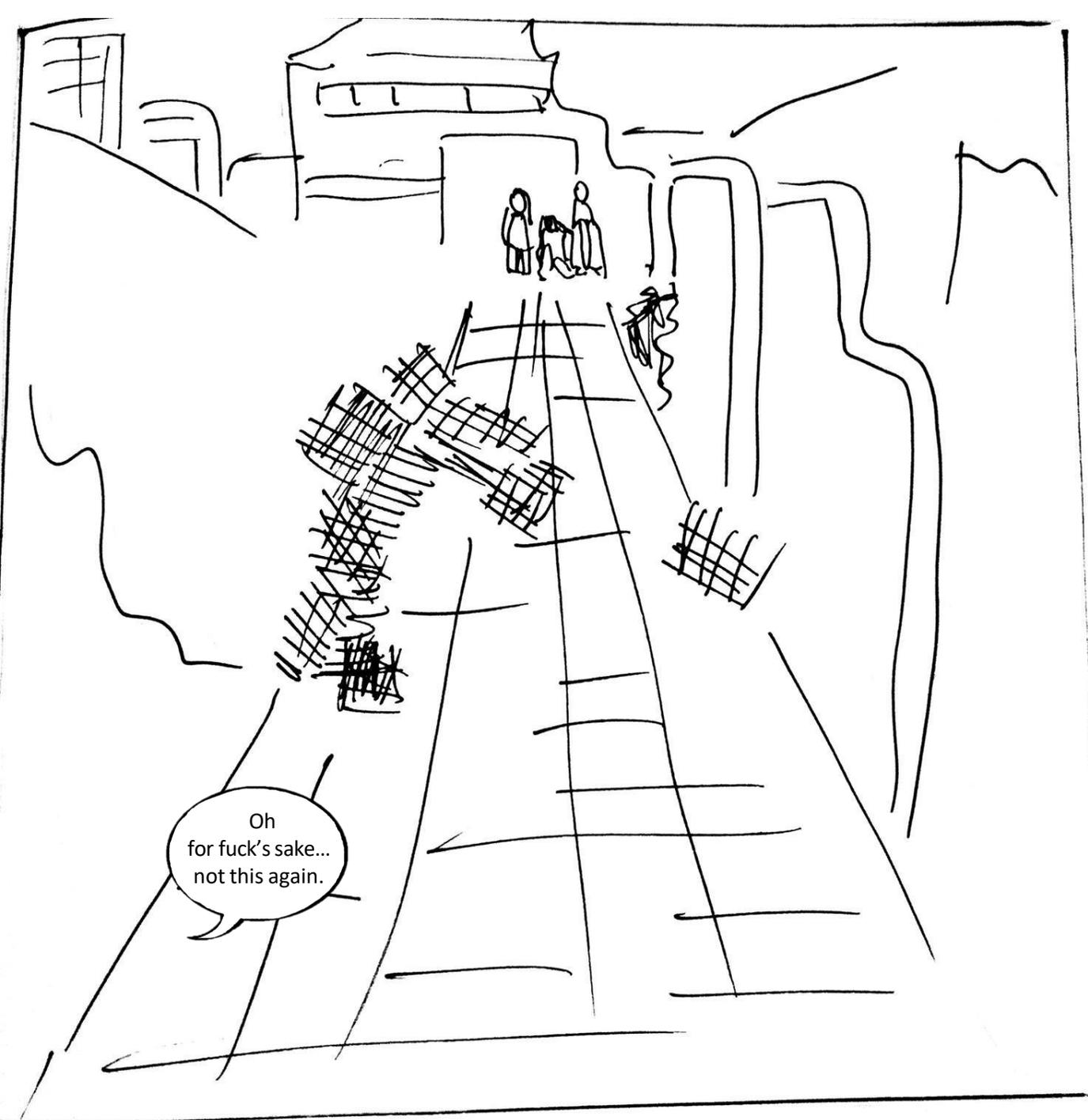
ARKTO* – RIGHT (standing up with a double-handed sword in front of her).

NICOLE – embodies the reader's POV so she doesn't appear in the panel.

NICOLE (off camera): Oh for fuck's sake... not this again.

*ARKTO's features.

She is tall with broad shoulders (see the reference ARKTO body type). She has short silver hair (See reference ARKTO's hair) and she's wearing the same clothes that we see soldiers wearing in MASON's prophecy in the prologue.



ARE YOU SURE YOU WANT
TO STICK WITH THAT
STORY?

OK,
everything's
fine. This is just a
dream.

AS SAFE AS YOU CAN BE IN
YOUR FUCKED UP BRAIN.

OK, enough!
Who's there?

I'm fine.
I'm safe

Panel 1 1/2 panel top

Same landscape as page 3 but from above. We see details of the four figures from above and we get to see all the destruction from above.

NICOLE: OK, everything's fine. This is just a dream.

LILITH Are you sure that's the story you're sticking to? (CINZEL)

Panel 2 1/6 bottom left

Close up on Nicole, she is facing the camera but looking away from it. No background.

NICOLE: I'm fine. I'm safe.

LILITH: (across panels 2 and 3): As safe as you can be in your fucked up brain. (CINZEL)

Panel 3 1/6 bottom middle

Close up on Nicole, she is facing the camera but looking away from it. No background. Nicole is surprised to hear the voice.

Panel 3 1/6 bottom middle

Close up on Nicole, she is facing the camera but looking away from it. No background. Nicole is scared.

NICOLE: OK, enough! Who's there?

Panel 1 2/3 top

NICOLE is giving her back to the reader. The three figures are a lot closer now (they all have their eyes closed) but they're not as static, the wind has picked up. The lines you see in the panel are supposed to give the feeling that now there's wind (this is a recurring element in the interactions between NICOLE and LILITH).

NICOLE: Who are you?

Panel 2 1/3 in height full length

NICOLE gets really close to LILITH. The camera is on their side and they are facing each other. We should add ARKTO's silhouette's on LILITH's and NICOLE's right (our right). We should highlight NICOLE and LILITH's similarities. Same profile. We should start thinking about LILITH as an adult / grown-up version of NICOLE.

NICOLE: Are you the one I keep seeing?



Panel 1 1/2 page top

NICOLE is really close to LILITH. The camera is on their side and they are facing each other. We should add ARKTO's silhouette's on LILITH's and NICOLE's right (our right). We should highlight NICOLE and LILITH's similarities. Same profile. We should start thinking about LILITH as an adult / grown-up version of NICOLE.
NICOLE: Why can't you people leave me alone?

Panel 2 1/4 bottom left

LILITH opens her eyes (close up / detail). We should highlight her PURPLE eyes and signal the strong wind maybe by showing her fringe moving.
LILITH: Coward. (CINZEL)

Panel 3 1/4 bottom right

It's like NICOLE is being pushed away by LILITH's stare. There's an image that I like I think depicts graphically this push. It's like NICOLE not only is pushed to the ground but also from the dream dimension back to reality (see reference push / fall).





Panel 1/3 in height full length top

NICOLE wakes up in a hospital bed. She's wearing a hospital gown. DAVE is sitting next to her on (our) right. There's a window behind her but it's so late that it's dark outside and works as a mirror. Highlight the line movements that signal NICOLE'S laboured breathing.

NICOLE: pant pant (don't need to be in a text bubble, can be written in as a graphic element).

DAVE (off camera): Leigh, come in! She's awake.

Panel 2 1/3 in height full length middle

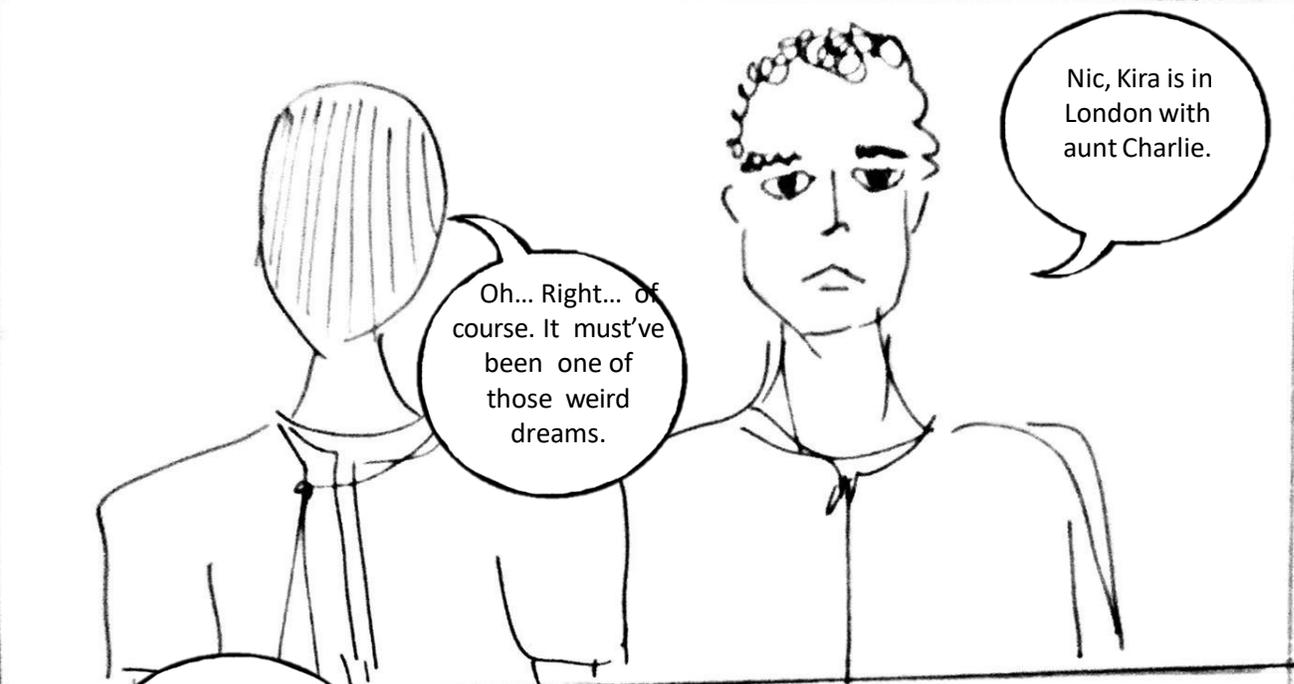
The camera moves to show us Dave sitting on a chair by the bed. We can only see NICOLE'S legs under the blankets. There's no background. We could show something on the wall behind DAVE but it's unnecessary. DAVE is wearing a simple hoodie and tracksuit bottoms (although we can only see the hoodie).

NICOLE: Where am I? What happened? DAVE: You're OK. Everything is fine. You passed out in the park.

Panel 3 1/3 in height full length middle

The camera has moved again and is now behind NICOLE. DAVE is now sitting on the bed next to NICOLE'S legs.

NICOLE: Where's Kira? She was there. I... I saw her...



Panel 1/2 page top

NICOLE and DAVE are in the same frame. DAVE is clearly confused and worried about NICOLE's confusion. NICOLE is shown from the back.

DAVE: Nic, Kira is in London with aunt Charlie.

NICOLE: Oh... Right... of course. It must've been one of those weird dreams.



Panel 2 1/4 page bottom left

LEIGHTON walks in through the door. She's wearing a grey cardigan over a white turtleneck and black trousers. She's wearing her mother's engagement ring around her neck.

LEIGHTON: You're up. Good. How are you feeling?

NICOLE: OK, I guess...

Panel 3 1/4 bottom right

Close up on LEIGHTON's face. She's staring at NICOLE. She's not angry, but she's tired and also adamant that Nicole will go back with her. She doesn't want to put up with her tantrums anymore (See reference assertive Leighton).

LEIGHTON: Good. Get some sleep. We're staying with you tonight, but we're all going home together first thing tomorrow.



7

Echoes part 2

Luce

ĀDHIT

PAST

DESPITE THE UGLINESS,
THOSE DAYS SEEMED
EASY AND CAREFREE.

I THOUGHT THE GUARDIANS
WERE THE FAMILY MOTHER AND
FATHER NEVER WERE.

WAIT, MOTHER AND
FATHER? SO YOU'RE
A BORN HAD-AU?

MORE ON THAT LATER.

I WAS STILL GREEN

Panel 1 full page

The panel opens immediately after “Echoes from the past”. This is what LUCE and RAPHAEL see from the mountain. The panel is divided into thirds. In each section, we see the characters getting closer to the cabin in the distance. All the dialogue on the next two pages goes in the caption box and it is in the font CINZEL.

LUCE in yellow caption boxes, LILITH in purple caption boxes.

LUCE: despite the ugliness, those days seemed easy and carefree. I thought the guardians were the family mother and father never were.

LILITH: wait, mother and father? So you're a born had-au?

LUCE: More on that later.

LUCE: I was still green

I MISTOOK IT FOR LOVE.



BUT THEY WERE ONLY PREPPING ME FOR WHAT WAS COMING NEXT.

CHAPTER 7 – page 2

Panel 1 1/3 in height full length top

RAPHAEL and LUCE reach the cabin where they find the MIRA waiting for them. See “page 2 panel 1a” for reference for MIRA and “page 2 panel 1a clothes” for what she is wearing. MIRA pats Luce on the head. Behind RAPHAEL, we can see the village at the back.

All the dialogue here goes in the caption box and it is in the font CINZEL

LUCE: I mistook it for love. But they were only prepping me for what was coming next.

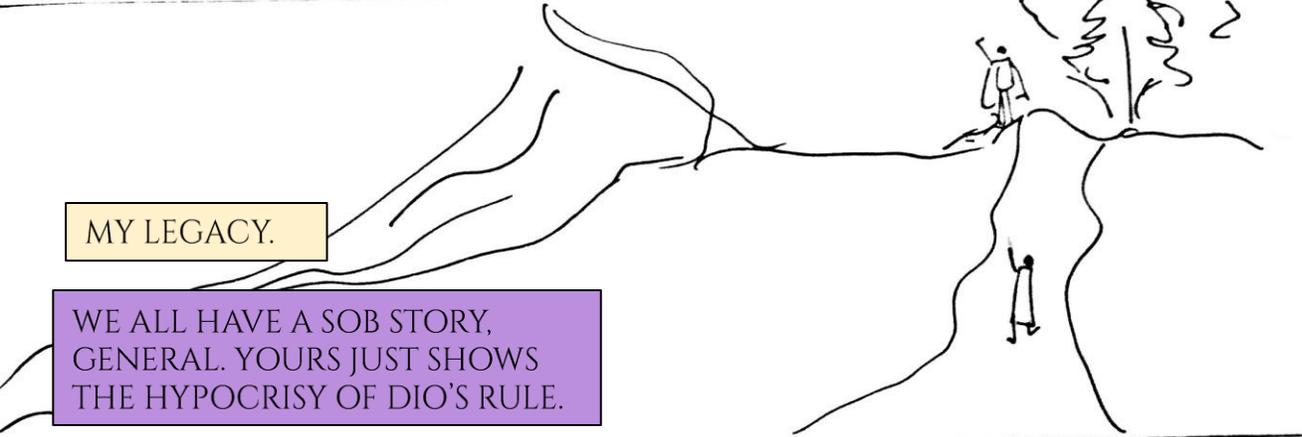
Panel 2 1/3 in height full length top middle

NEIL is waiting for LUCE and RAPHAEL at the top of the hill behind the house. Neil is waving at Luce. Raphael is behind and cannot be seen. Behind NEIL we can see the edge of the woods, fill it with more trees.

LUCE: My legacy.

LILITH: We all have a sob story, general. Yours just shows the hypocrisy of Dio's rule.

MY LEGACY.



WE ALL HAVE A SOB STORY, GENERAL. YOURS JUST SHOWS THE HYPOCRISY OF DIO'S RULE.

Panel 3 1/3 in height full length top bottom

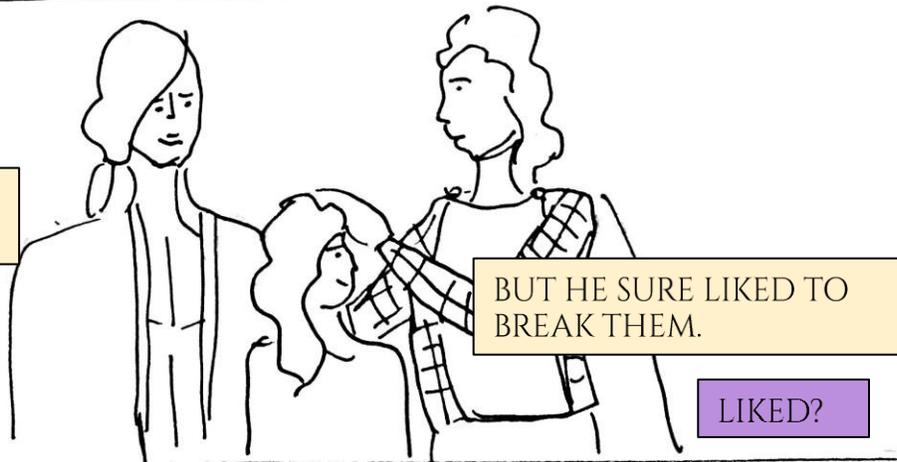
NEIL pats LUCE on the head. LUCE is standing between RAPHAEL and NEIL. See “page 2 panel 1c” for reference for NEIL and “page 2 panel 1c clothes” for what he is wearing.

LUCE: I'm not here as a general, Lil. And I agree. Dio made the rules. But he sure liked to break them.

LILITH: Liked?

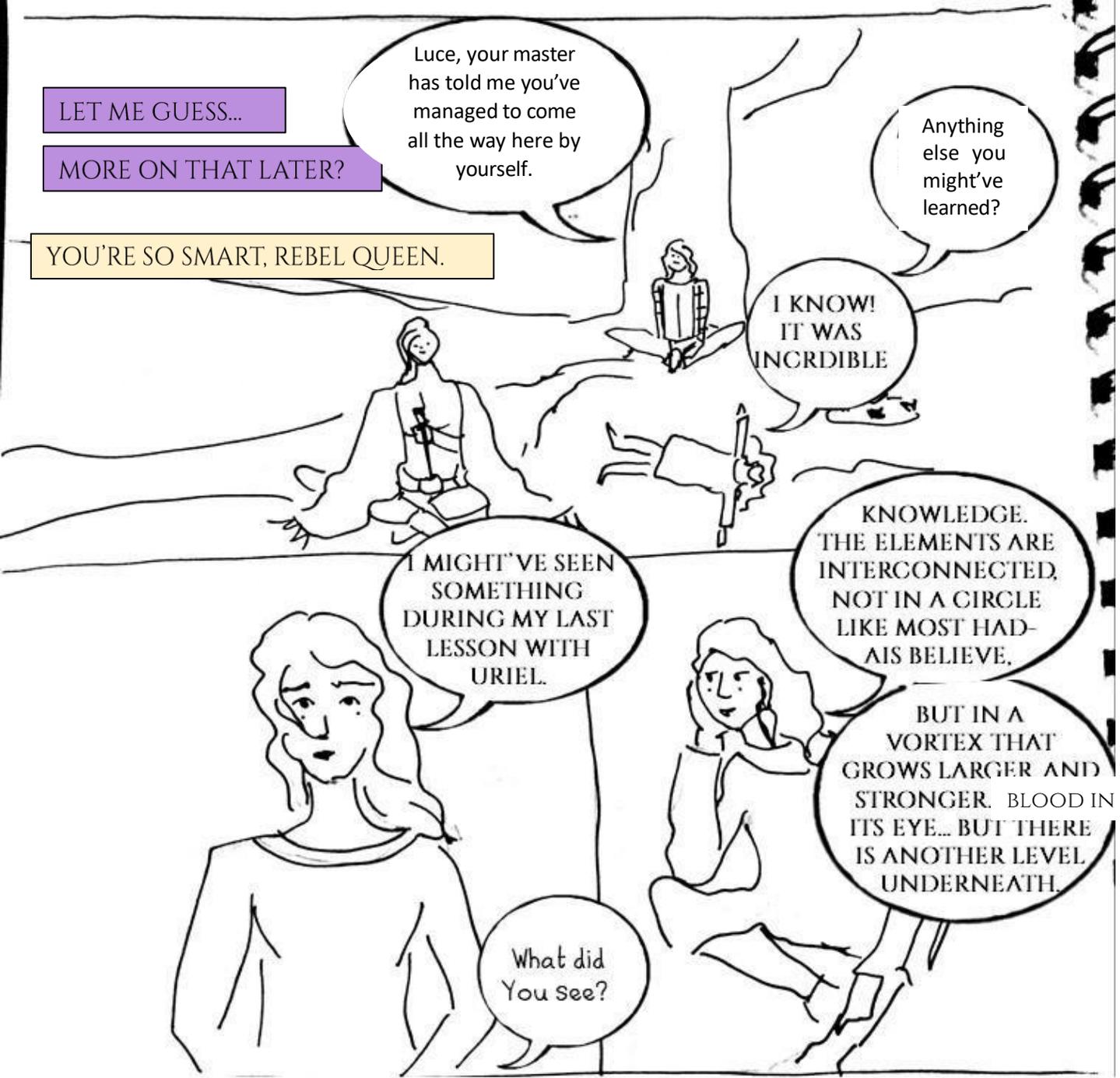
I'M NOT HERE AS A GENERAL, LIL.

AND I AGREE. DIO MADE THE RULES.



BUT HE SURE LIKED TO BREAK THEM.

LIKED?



LET ME GUESS...

MORE ON THAT LATER?

YOU'RE SO SMART, REBEL QUEEN.

Luce, your master has told me you've managed to come all the way here by yourself.

Anything else you might've learned?

I KNOW! IT WAS INCREDIBLE

I MIGHT'VE SEEN SOMETHING DURING MY LAST LESSON WITH URIEL.

KNOWLEDGE. THE ELEMENTS ARE INTERCONNECTED, NOT IN A CIRCLE LIKE MOST HAD-AIS BELIEVE.

BUT IN A VORTEX THAT GROWS LARGER AND STRONGER. BLOOD IN ITS EYE... BUT THERE IS ANOTHER LEVEL UNDERNEATH.

What did You see?

Panel 1 1/2 page top
RAPHAEL, LUCE and NEIL are all sitting on the ground. NEIL is sitting in the shade. Behind him we can see the trees becoming a forest. LUCE is sprawled on the ground and is not really paying attention to what the two men are saying.

LILITH: Let me guess... more on that later? (CINZEL)
LUCE: You're so smart, rebel queen. (CINZEL)
NEIL: Luce, your master has told me you've managed to come all the way here by yourself.
LUCE: I know! It was incredible. (CINZEL)
NEIL: Anything else you might've learned?

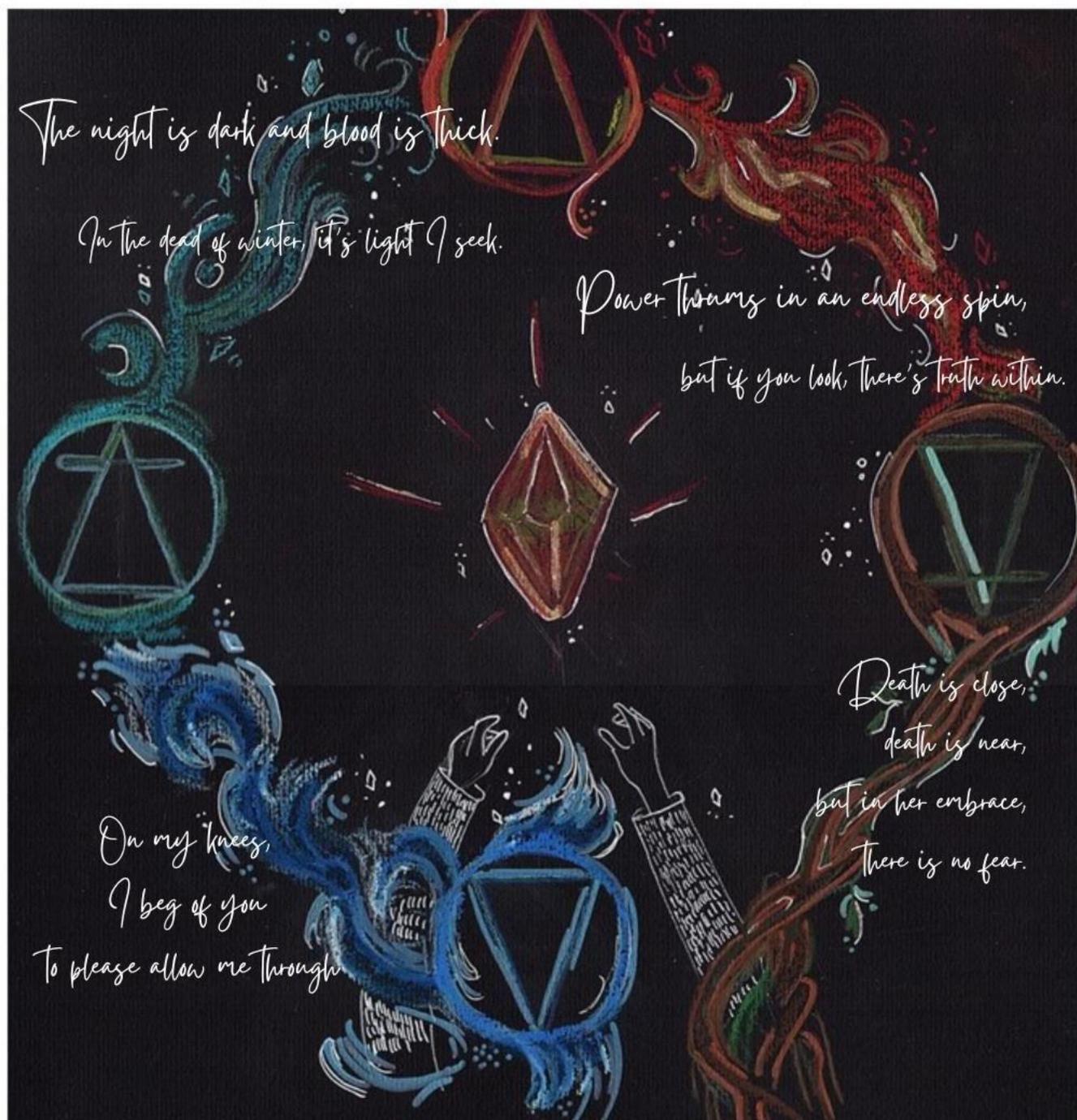
Panel 2 1/4 bottom left
LUCE sits up suddenly. No background, but the wind is blowing.
LUCE: I might've seen something during my last lesson with Uriel. (CINZEL)
NEIL: What did you see?

Panel 3 1/4 bottom right
LUCE is sitting, her head resting on her hand. No background.
LUCE: Knowledge. The elements are interconnected, not in a circle like most had-ais believe, but in a vortex that grows larger and stronger. Blood in its eye... but there is another level underneath.

Panel 1 full page

The four elements are represented by their alchemical symbols from the top, clockwise: FIRE, EARTH, WATER, AIR. At the bottom of the page, there are two arms extending towards the diamond in the middle (the SEED). Across the page there is a spell. It needs to be read from the top corner clockwise.

The night is dark and blood is thick / In the dead of winter it's light I seek.
Power thrums in an endless spin, / but if you look, there's truth within.
Death is close, death is near, / but in her embrace, there is no fear.
On my knees, I beg of you / to please allow me through.





Panel 1 1/2 page top

RAPHAEL and NEIL are sitting side by side in the tree's shade.

NEIL: Do you know what that means for you?

LUCE (off camera): ...

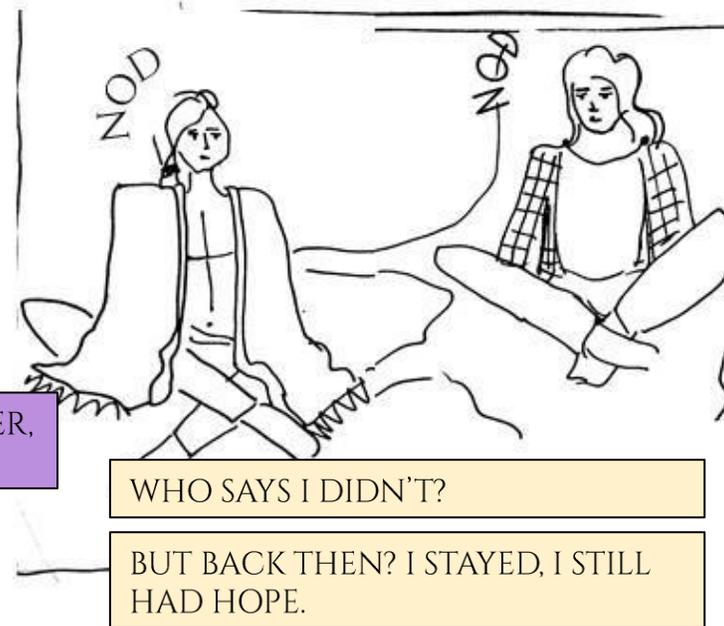
LUCE (off camera): And knowledge on how to unlock it came to freely. (CINZEL)



Panel 2 1/4 page bottom left

LUCE sits with her hands in her laps. There is no background, but the wind is blowing.

LUCE: It's why I can travel through the portal Dio has sealed. (CINZEL)



Panel 3 1/4 page bottom right

RAPHAEL and NEIL are sitting side by side in the tree's shade. They nod at the same time.

LILITH: So, if you had all of this power, why didn't you walk away? (CINZEL)

LUCE: Who says I didn't? (CINZEL)

LUCE: But back then? I stayed, I still had hope. (CINZEL)



Panel 1 1/6 top left

LUCE is still sitting on the ground. She goes through different emotions and feelings in the first three panels. First emotion: dejection.

LUCE: Maybe everything we know about magic is wrong and. Maybe, if we can access one element, we can access all of them. (CINZEL)

LUCE: Why didn't you tell me that you needed me? (CINZEL)

RAPHAEL (off camera): Us guardians can travel across even without the use of blood magic. (CINZEL)

Panel 2 1/6 top middle

LUCE is still sitting on the ground. She goes through different emotions and feelings in the first three panels. Second emotion: anger.

LUCE: You mean all these trips have been for my benefit? Why? (CINZEL)

NEIL (off camera): Knowledge is power.

Panel 3 1/6 top right

LUCE is still sitting on the ground. She goes through different emotions and feelings in the first three panels. Third emotion: resignation.

LUCE: What can I do with this magic? (CINZEL)

RAPHAEL (off camera): You can create worlds. (CINZEL)



Panel 4 1/2 bottom

LUCE is still sitting on the ground. She goes through different emotions and feelings in the first three panels. Fourth emotion: **understanding (change her expression to slightly frowning)**.

LUCE: And destroy them? (CINZEL)

RAPHAEL: if you wish. (CINZEL)

LUCE: Is that why Dio regrets my existence? (CINZEL)

LILITH: Wait, wait... if you can undo Dio's work... Luce, does it mean you're his daughter? (CINZEL)



YES, AND I'M
NOT THE ONLY
ONE

8

Love is Noise

Leighton

Panel 1 1/4 page top left

The house is empty. This page is all about showing the emptiness and Nicole's reaction to moving back into her old house. Shot of the living room without the sofa and the boxes.

NICOLE (off camera): Uncle, you swear you'll come visit?

TONY (off camera): Of course, I'm coming the moment you're all settled.

Maybe I could convince your aunt and sister to come with me.

Panel 2 1/4 page top right

The house is empty. This page is all about showing the emptiness and Nicole's reaction to moving back into her old house. Shot of Nicole's bedroom.

NICOLE (off camera): Yeah, right. Good luck with that.

TONY (off camera): I have a good feeling about this.

Panel 3 1/2 page bottom

The house is empty. This page is all about showing the emptiness and Nicole's reaction to moving back into her old house. Shot of the sitting room.

NICOLE (off camera): You say the same thing every year about the Spurs winning the championship.

TONY (off camera): And we always get to the playoffs.

NICOLE (off camera): Yes, but where's the ring?



Uncle, you swear you'll come visit?

Of course, I'm coming the moment you're all settled. Maybe I'll convince your aunt and sister to come with me.

Yeah, right. Good luck with that.

I have a good feeling about this.

You say the same thing every year about the Spurs winning the championship.

And we always get to the playoffs.

Yes, but where's the ring?

Panel 1 1/2 page top

NICOLE and TONY are depicted in a tight hug. The spotlight is on them, but there's no background.

TONY: Take care, love. I'll miss you, but I'll come visit soon. I promise.

NICOLE: I'll miss you too.

LEIGHTON (off camera): C'mon Nicky, it's time to go.

Panel 2 1/2 page bottom

NICOLE, TONY, and LEIGHTON are all on the left-side of the page. They're seen from a distance, framed in their full figure. The car is in the middle and Dave is leaning against the other side of the car. He is texting.

We can see hills and clouds in the background.

TONY: Call me whenever you need to, alright love?

NICOLE: OK.

LEIGHTON: Dave, come and say goodbye to uncle Tony.

DAVE: Bye uncle T.



The page is divided into thirds horizontally.

Panel 1 1/3 height full length top

In the first panel, NICOLE is in the car going back home. She is resting her head against the car window (see reference images page one, panel 1, 1bs, 1tris to decide what we see reflected in the window). Music is playing in the background.

THE VERVE: Are we blind - can we see? We are one – incomplete are we blind - in the shade waiting for lightning - to be saved cause love is noise and love is pain

Panel 2 1/3 height full length middle

NICOLE is sitting on her bed looking at the landscape outside her window (see reference images page one, panel 2, 2bis for an idea of the twins' bedrooms' layout).

THE VERVE: love is these blues that I'm singing again.

Panel 3 1/3 height full length bottom

LEIGHTON and DAVE are talking at the table while having breakfast.

DAVE: Have you checked the results of the game?

LEIGHTON: Naaa, I'm gonna catch the highlights first.

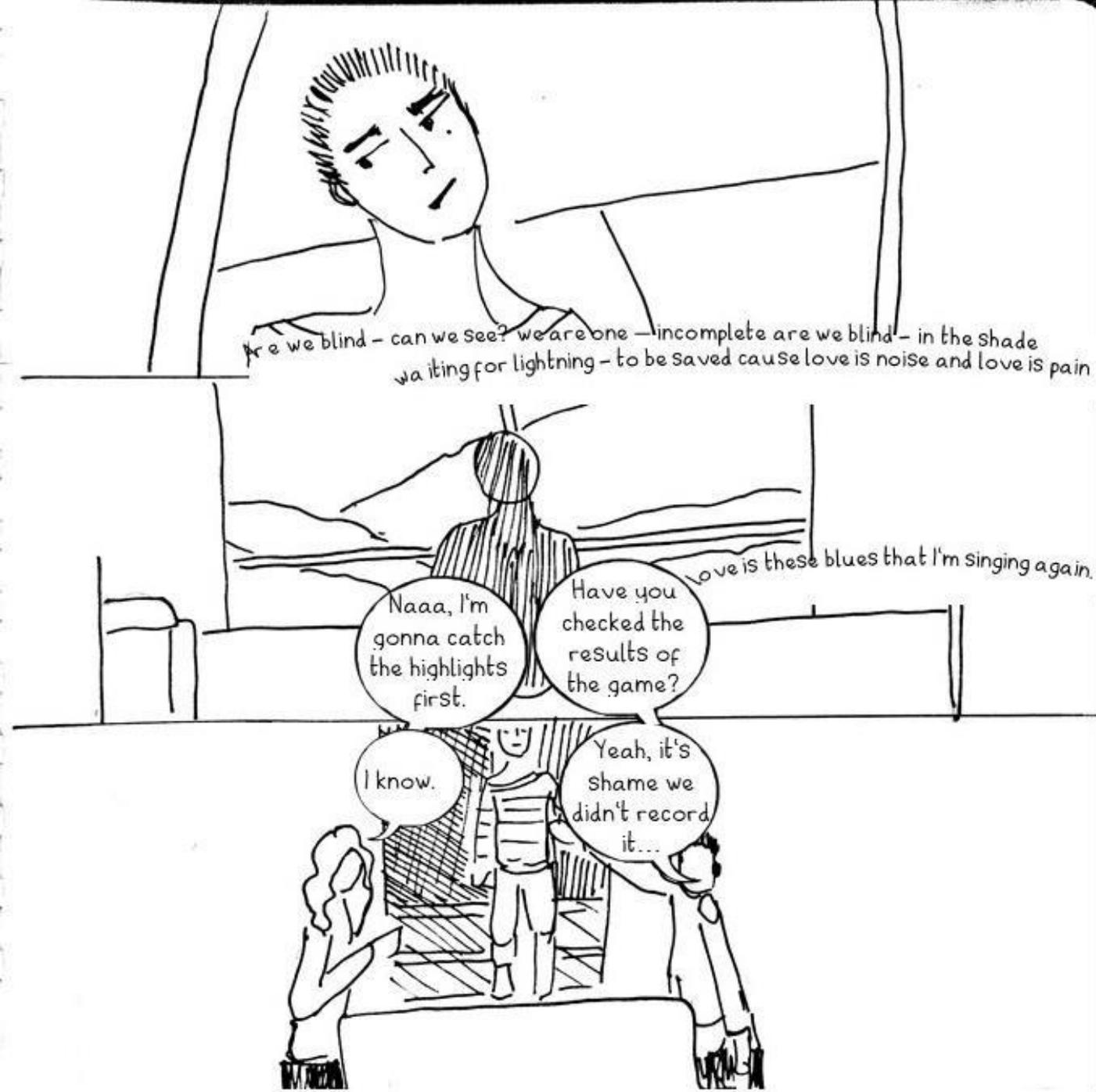
DAVE: Yeah, it's a shame we didn't record it...

Panel 4 detail – It needs to be added on the right of the panel.

Focus on NICOLE'S face, she looks queasy.

LEIGHTON (off camera): I know. Oh, hey Nic, would you like to eat?

NICOLE: Naaah, I'm good





Panel 1 1/2 top

NICOLE is laying down on the bed in foetal position. Someone knocks at the door. The camera is above her.

NICOLE: Come in.

Panel 2 1/4 bottom left

DAVE opens the door and DAVE walks in with a bowl of hot porridge.

DAVE: Hey, I've brought you porridge. Leigh says your stomach is a bit upset.

NICOLE: Thank you.

DAVE: How are you feeling?

NICOLE: Mmh...

Panel 3 1/4 bottom right

NICOLE and DAVE are sitting on NICOLE's bed. They're facing the camera but not looking at it. There is a French window behind them. DAVE wants to say something to NICOLE, but he doesn't know what. NICOLE is eating the bowl of porridge.

DAVE: Sigh...

NICOLE: Enough, spit it out.

This page is divided into three horizontal panels. On the left NICOLE, on the right DAVE. Although they are sitting on the same bed side to side, the gutter in the middle is a sign that their conversation is far from amicable. All three panels have the same characters and background (even though There's no background in panel 1 and 3). What changes are the characters' attitude and facial expressions. Each panel is split in the middle to indicate the distance between the two siblings.

Panel 1 1/3 top

NICOLE is trying to remain calm. She is willing to talk to DAVE. DAVE looks like he wants to stay calm, but his temper is quickly getting the better of him.
DAVE: Did it ever cross your mind to give me a heads-up 'hey brother, I'm in town'?
NICOLE: I don't sound like that at all and I'd never call you brother.
DAVE: Why are you even back?

Panel 2 1/3 middle

NICOLE is visibly annoyed now. DAVE is displeased and also annoyed. They're both using their arms a lot.
NICOLE: Hasn't our beloved sister told you?
DAVE: Would I be asking otherwise?
NICOLE:...

Panel 3 1/3 bottom

NICOLE looks kind of deflated and defeated. She's hunched forward, her arms in her laps. She is not making eye contact. DAVE is hit by the news but doesn't let it show and reacts aggressively in the next page.
NICOLE: I'm sick. Sick as mum was.





Panel 1 1/2 page left

DAVE stands up from the bed. He's almost full figure (head to slightly below the knees). His hands are on his hips. There's no background behind him. He looks angry, defiant.

DAVE: Then, why didn't you come home sooner?

NICOLE (off camera): I was home.

Panel 2 1/2 page right

NICOLE is still sitting on the bed. She's looking up, her arms in her lap, her hands on her knees. She feels guilty and looks like she is caving in. DAVE is standing in front of her, hands on his hips. This panel and the next one are the two most important scenes to develop NICOLE and DAVE'S relationship.

NICOLE: C'mon Dave, don't do this.

DAVE: Do what?

NICOLE: Pretend this whole thing is just in my head. Don't you dare pin this on me.

DAVE: You don't think I've asked questions in the past years? Why did you leave Nic? Why didn't you come back when we needed you?



Panel 1 full page

Change -> DAVE and NICOLE are both standing facing each other and they're both furious.

In the background, they have the window and the bed.

NICOLE: I was eight! Do you think I had a choice?

DAVE: What about when you were twelve? Or thirteen? Or four--

NICOLE: I thought it was my fault, alright? Mum and dad told me I was going to stay with uncle Tony for a while until Leigh got better.

NICOLE: But she never got better, and I started thinking it was my fault, otherwise why would they send me away? I felt guilty. I still do. Don't you?

DAVE: I wasn't the one who ran in front of the car.



Chapter 8 – page 8

Panel 1 full page

LEIGHTON is eavesdropping from outside the door. On LEIGHTON's left, the door is open showing DAVE standing in the background and the window behind him.

NICOLE and DAVE are speechless after the argument

NICOLE:...

DAVE:...

LEIGHTON (thought bubble): Fuck.

LUCE: Fuck. (CINZEL)

09

From Great Powers

Kira

Eyland, UK

Present

THIS IS NOT PRUDENT KIRA. EVEN BY YOUR STANDARDS.

I'm just doing my best to carry--

YEAH, RIGHT.

Look, the big boss gave us a job to do. I really think Mason may help us.

VROOOM

SNAP

CRACKLE

KNOCK KNOCK

YES. BUT BLOOD MAGIC IS...

Exactly what we need right now?

STICKY.

Hi Mason, thank you for coming all this way.

No worries. I didn't expect you to call this quickly.

CHAPTER 9 – page 1

Panel 1 2/3 top

KIRA is inside the cabin moving the furniture around (detail “vroom”). There is a sofa on the right, a table being moved on the left, a fireplace surrounded by two windows in the background, and a rug on the floor. KIRA is talking non-stop with CEMIRA BAE (CB).

CB: This is not prudent Kira. Even by your standards. (CINZEL)

KIRA: I'm just doing my best to carry —

CB: Yeah, right. (CINZEL)

KIRA: Look, the big boss gave us a job to do. I really think Mason may help us.

Panel 2 1/3 bottom left

Someone knocks at the door (detail “knock knock”). There are also two more panels as details. KIRA snaps her fingers (detail “snap”), and the fire is lit up in the fireplace (detail “crackle”).

CB: Yes. But blood magic is... (CINZEL)

KIRA: Exactly what we need right now?

CB: Sticky. (CINZEL)

Panel 3 1/3 bottom right

MASON is framed from the chest up. There is no background. KIRA (off camera): Hi Mason, thank you for coming all this way.

MASON: No worries. I didn't expect you to call this quickly.

YOU DON'T KNOW HANANÆT LIKE I DO. YOU CAN'T TRUST HER. OR HER HUMAN.

So, how do you plan to get us into Ådhit?

We need a backdoor entrance. And I know you can build one.

We'll need a blood magic sacrifice to get in. Are you ready?

AREN'T YOU WORRIED HE KNOWS ABOUT YOUR DREAM ABILITY?

How much is the price for this ritual?

We shouldn't be affected that much.

KIRA! I FORBID YOU! IT'S TOO DANGEROUS

Sorry, Cem. Not this time.

I know Cemira Bael must be driving you crazy right now, but try to relax.

Panel 1 1/2 top

KIRA is facing MASON and the camera, while MASON's back is to the camera. They are both sitting on the rug; the fireplace is visible behind KIRA. KIRA is holding a conversation CB and MASON.

CB: You don't know Hananæt like I do. You can't trust her. Or her human. (CINZEL)

KIRA: So, how do you plan to get us into Ådhit?

MASON: We need a backdoor entrance. And I know you can build one. We'll need a blood magic sacrifice to get in. Are you ready?

CB: Aren't you worried he knows about your dream ability? (CINZEL)

Panel 2 1/4 bottom left

KIRA and MASON hold each other's arm, there is blood flowing from a wound they nicked over their wrists, mixing and flowing together.

KIRA: How much is the price for this ritual?

MASON: We shouldn't be affected that much.

Panel 3 1/4 bottom right

KIRA is depicted in the right corner of the panel. Her eyes are not visible from behind her glasses, but her gaze is cast down. CB head and torso are framed behind KIRA. She looks furious. There is no background.

CB: Kira! I forbid you! It's too dangerous (CINZEL)

KIRA (caption box): Sorry, Cem. Not this time.

MASON (off camera): I know Cemira Bael must be driving you crazy right now, but try to relax.

Panel 1 2/3 top

KIRA and MASON are lying down on the rug next to each other (KIRA'S head is at MASON'S feet; MASON'S head is at KIRA'S feet). The camera is above both of them so we can see them full figure. They are still holding each other's arms, but it is covered by the caption box. **Change -> draw Mason with wellies on.**

MASON: Breathe in, breath out. Focus on your breathing and my voice.

Panels 2 and 3 details at the bottom of the panel. Detail of KIRA'S eyes closed.

Detail of KIRA'S eyes open.

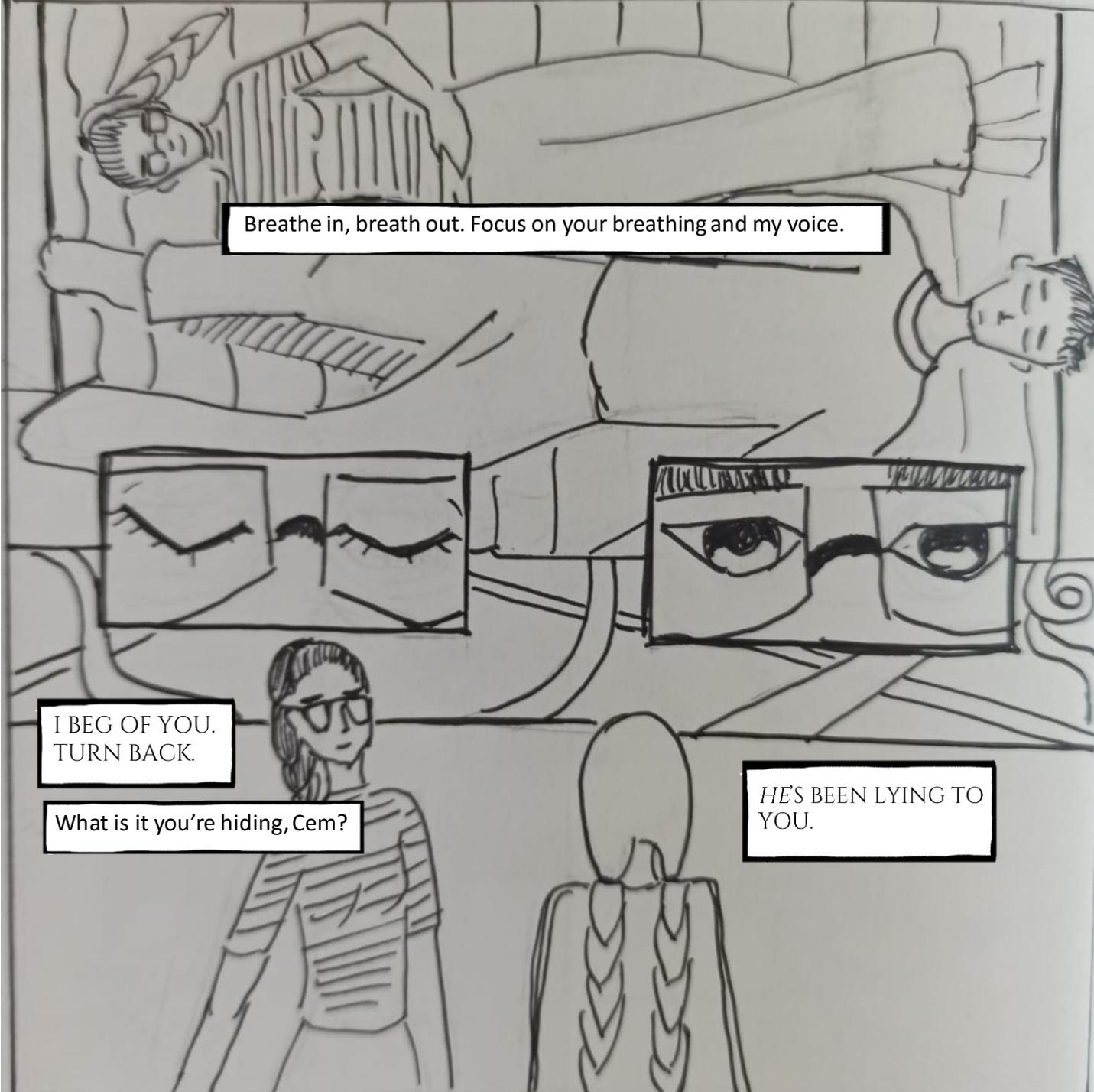
Panel 4 1/3 bottom

KIRA and CB are arguing. **Change -> add the crooked paths in the background.**

CB: I beg of you. Turn back. (CINZEL)

KIRA: What is it you're hiding, Cem?

CB: *He's* been lying to you. (CINZEL)



Breathe in, breath out. Focus on your breathing and my voice.

I BEG OF YOU.
TURN BACK.

What is it you're hiding, Cem?

HE'S BEEN LYING TO
YOU.

Panel 1 full page

KIRA and MASON walk the crooked paths, we can see them at different points of the paths. They talk as they walk. The colours help tell the difference between who's saying what. **Change -> draw Mason with wellies on.** We need to add the figure of CB trailing behind KIRA and as she walks, the less defined she becomes. This panel will feature CB as one of the talking character even though she isn't drawn in. CB's speech is also faded.

MASON: So, have you figured out how the "curse" works?

KIRA: I might have.

KIRA: How much more would we be able to see if we had their power?

CB: Kira, please... (CINZEL)

MASON: OK, Kira. Let's hear it. I'm curious.

KIRA: Had-ais seem to reincarnate in humans roughly every generation.

There's a specific affinity between human and had-au. MASON:

Very well!

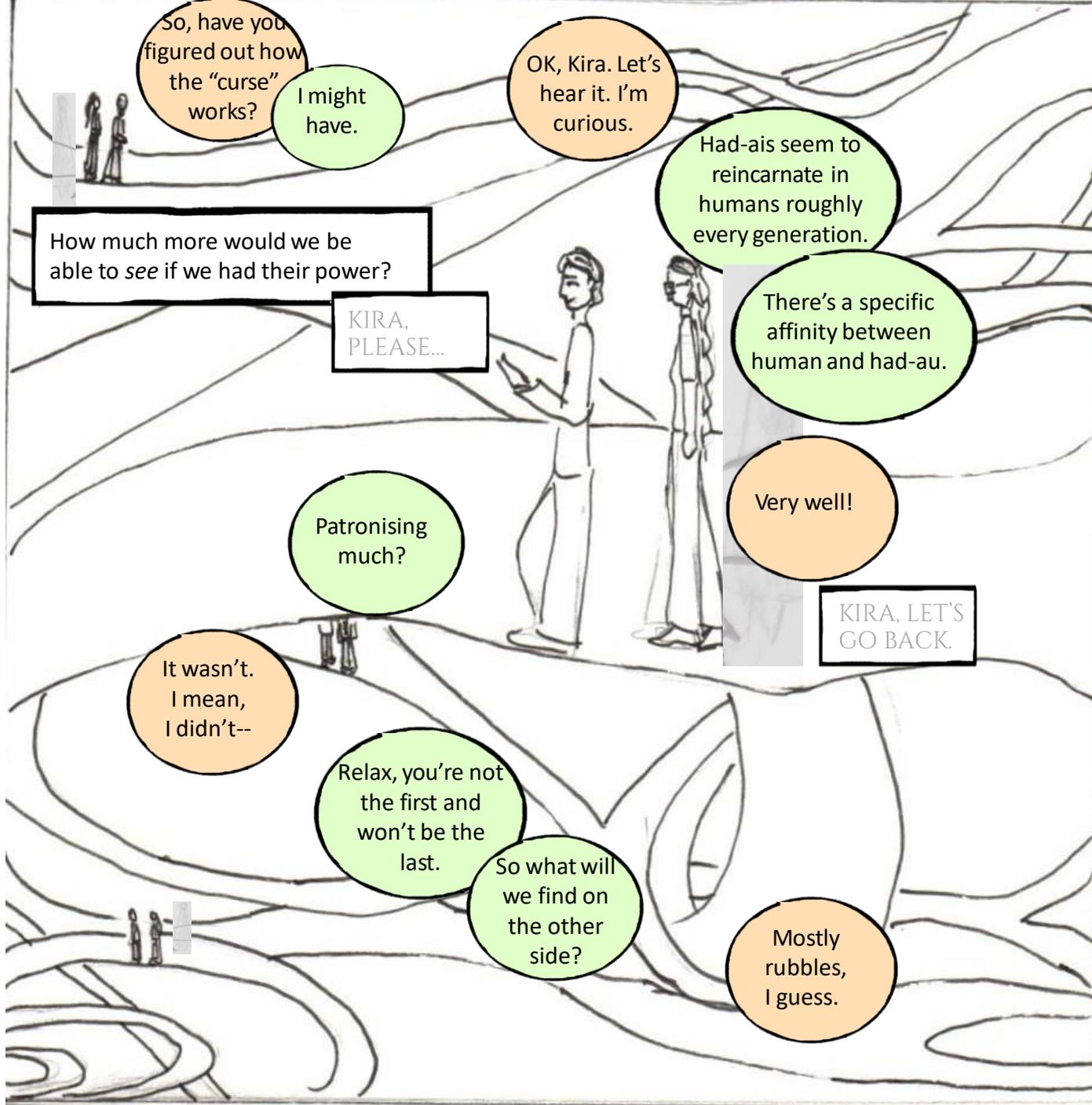
CB: Kira, let's go back. (CINZEL)

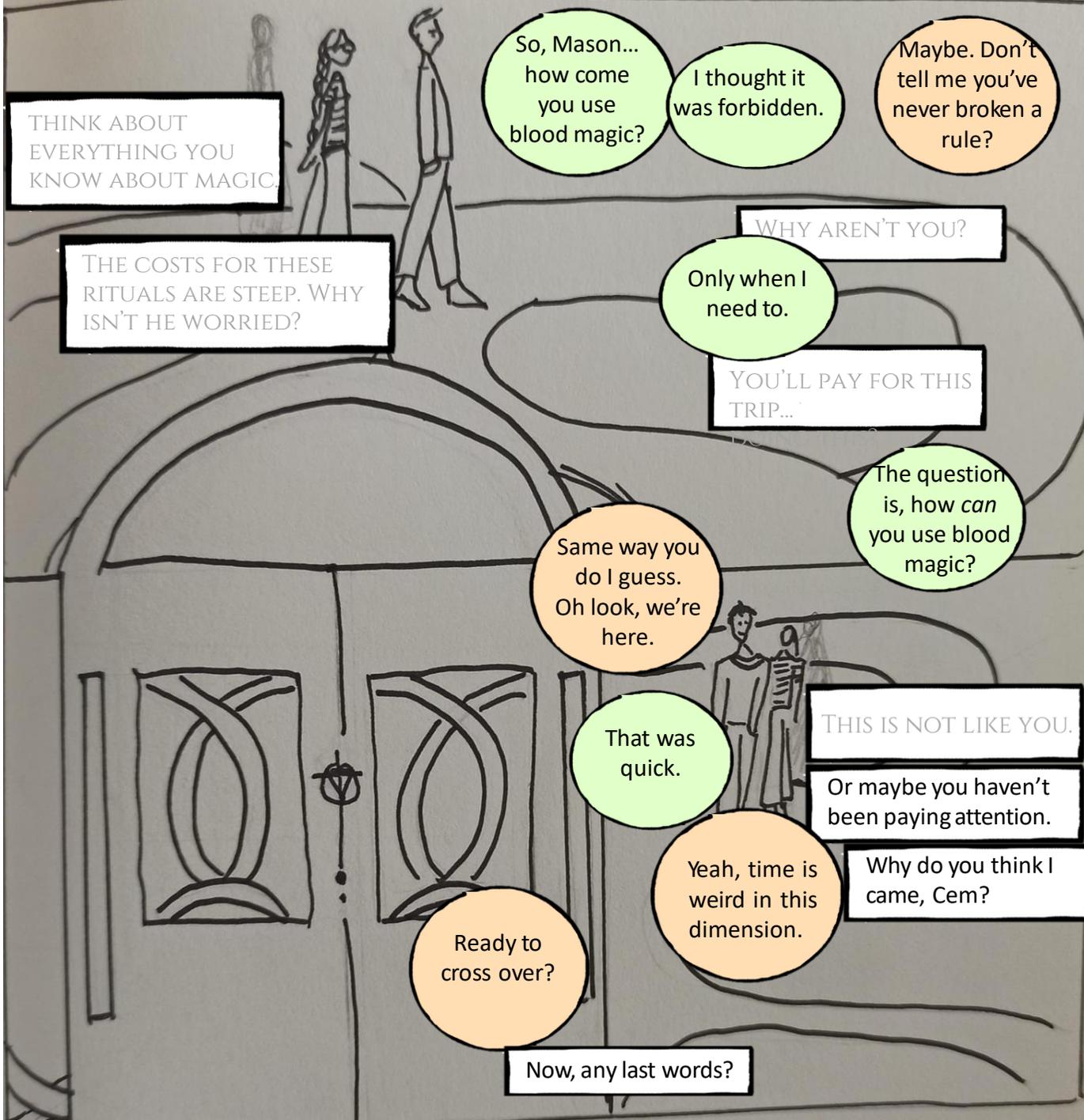
KIRA: Patronising much?

MASON: It wasn't. I mean, I didn't—

KIRA: Relax, you're not the first and won't be the last. So what will we find on the other side?

MASON: Mostly rubbles, I guess.





Panel 1 full page

KIRA and MASON walk the crooked paths, we can see them at different points of the paths. They talk as they walk. The colours help tell the difference between who's saying what. **Change -> draw Mason with wellies on.** CB is trailing behind KIRA and as the farther she walks, the less defined she becomes. At the end, we can see the door to access Ådhit.

CB: Think about everything you know about magic. The costs for these rituals are steep. Why isn't he worried? (CINZEL)

KIRA: So, Mason... how come you use blood magic? I thought it was forbidden.

MASON: Maybe. Don't tell me you've never broken a rule?

CB: Why aren't you? (CINZEL)

KIRA: Only when I need to.

CB: You'll pay for this trip... (CINZEL)

KIRA: The question is, how can you use blood magic?

MASON: Same way you do I guess. Oh look, we're here.

KIRA: That was quick.

MASON: Yeah, time is weird in this dimension.

CB: This is not like you. (CINZEL)

KIRA: Or maybe you haven't been paying attention. Why do you think I came, Cem?

MASON: Ready to cross over.

KIRA: Now, any last words?



Panel 1 1/3 length full height left
KIRA and MASON arrive in the SILVER LAKE. The panel shows KIRA down on the ground. The water level is low and covers only her legs. She is taken aback by the absence of CEMIRA BAE. Despite her brusque dismissal in the previous panel, she needs time to adjust.
KIRA: (caption box): Cem? Are you there? Wow... she's really gone.
KIRA (thought bubble): So, this is it. This is Ådhit.
MASON (off camera): Looks like we're in the middle of a lake.
KIRA: Lucky you, you have wellies on.
MASON (off camera): Let's go, I can see buildings in the distance.

Panel 2 2/3 length full height right
KIRA and MASON walk the path that takes them from the lake to the MAIN PLAZA. The buildings are destroyed. **Change -> draw Mason with wellies on.**
KIRA: You seem to know a lot about this place. I'm guessing this isn't your first trip.
MASON: You're a very suspicious young girl.
KIRA: Well, can you blame me? Also, you haven't given me a single straight answer yet.

Panel 1 1/2 left

KIRA and MASON are at the entrance of the MAIN PLAZA. KIRA stops in front of a statue. It's the statue of RAPHAEL, guardian of Earth who's trained CEMIRA BAEI and KIRA. He's the personification of the element. The camera is behind KIRA; we see the ruin of the statue and KIRA's back.

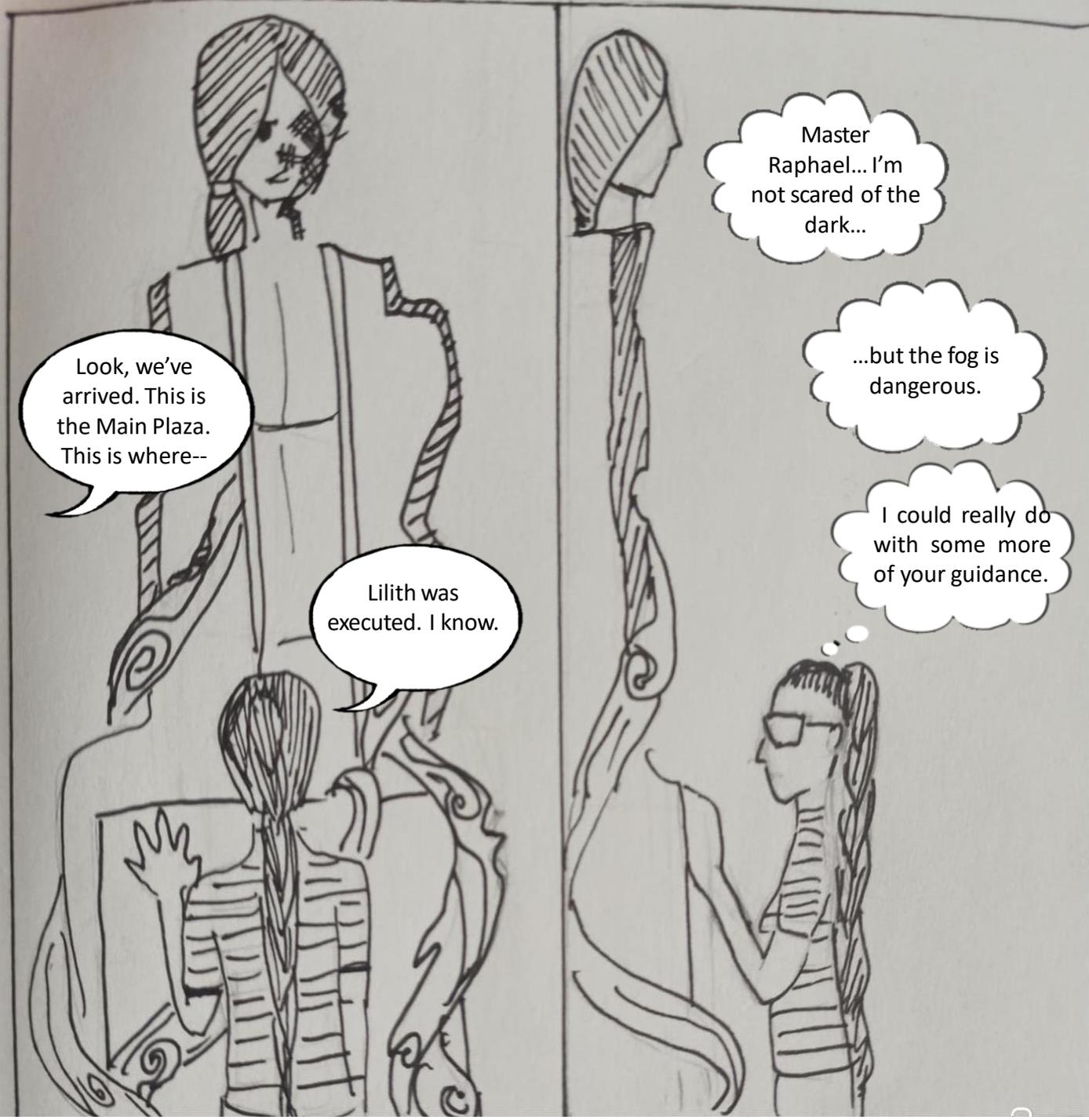
MASON (off camera): Look, we've arrived. This is the Main Plaza. This is where--

KIRA: Lilith was executed. I know.

Panel 2 1/2 right

KIRA and MASON are at the entrance of the MAIN PLAZA. KIRA stops in front of a statue. It's the statue of RAPHAEL, guardian of Earth who's trained CEMIRA BAEI and KIRA. He's the personification of the element. The camera is on KIRA's left.

KIRA (three thought-bubbles): Master Raphael... I'm not scared of the dark... but the fog is dangerous. I could really do with some more of your guidance.



Look, we've arrived. This is the Main Plaza. This is where--

Lilith was executed. I know.

Master Raphael... I'm not scared of the dark...

...but the fog is dangerous.

I could really do with some more of your guidance.



Panel 1 full page

KIRA and MASON arrive at the MAIN PLAZA. They are in the middle of the plaza surrounded by collapse buildings and rubbles. The colours help tell the difference between who's saying what.

KIRA: Wow. I'm actually glad Cem is not here. This would break her heart.

MASON: You know most people never realise there is a separation between us and had-ais. That we're separate people, different souls.

KIRA: You do know, I'm technically a genius, don't you?

MASON: Wow! Humility is not your strongest suit.

KIRA: I simply know who I am. Why hide? Anyway, over the phone, you mentioned Hananaet had a vision?

MASON: Yes, mainly images.

KIRA: Anything discernible? A face? A place?

MASON: Nope, it happened really fast. There was a lot of purple too.

KIRA: Easy, Lilith's eyes are purple.

Wow. I'm actually glad Cem is not here.

This would break her heart.

You know most people never realise there is a separation between us and had-ais.

That we're separate people, different souls.

You do know, I'm technically a genius, don't you?

Wow! Humility is not your strongest suit.

I simply know who I am. Why hide?

Anyway, over the phone, you mentioned Hananaet had a vision?

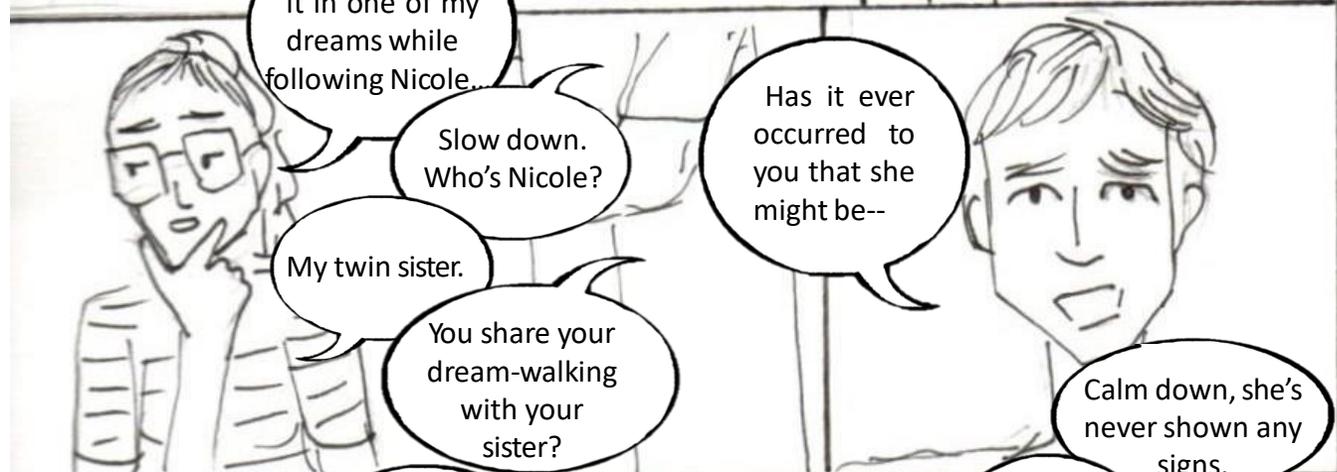
Yes, mainly images.

Anything discernible? A face? A place?

Nope, it happened really fast. There was a lot of purple too.

Easy, Lilith's eyes are purple.

The panels are all 1/3 in height but have different lengths. See the storyboard for more details on their size.



Panel 3 1/6 middle left
KIRA is crouching down while MASON is standing next to her. The camera is closer to KIRA. She's holding her head between her fingers. She looks pensive, while MASON is getting more agitated. No background.

KIRA: I might've seen it in one of my dreams while following Nicole...
MASON: Slow down. Who's Nicole?
KIRA: My twin sister.
MASON: You share your dream-walking with your sister?

Panel 4 1/6 middle right
DETAIL: the camera is on MASON's face. He looks surprised and taken aback. No background.
MASON: Has it ever occurred to you that she might be--
KIRA: Calm down, she's never shown any signs.

Panel 5 1/6 bottom left
The camera is farther away from KIRA and MASON, who are framed from their feet up. No background.
MASON: Other than dream-walking, you mean? It's not common magic. And plenty of had-ais have reincarnated in twins. Lucifer and Lumen—

Panel 6 1/6 middle right
The camera is on KIRA, she is framed from her waist up. She is holding her right arm with her left hand. She is looking away.
KIRA: Not that it's any of your business, but Nic is dying. Brain tumour. She hasn't got much left. So drop it.

Panel 1 1/4 top left

The camera is on KIRA's face; she's framed from her shoulders up. She has a nosebleed. No background.

MASON (off camera): I'm sorry, I didn't know– I thought... How long has she been sick?

KIRA: Only our family knows. And again, none of your business.

MASON (off camera): Oh fuck Kira! Something's wrong!

Panel 2 1/4 top right

The camera is on MASON's face; he's framed from her shoulders up. He looks worried. No background.

MASON: Your nose is bleeding. And look at your hair. It's gone white.

Panel 3 1/2 bottom

KIRA has undone her braid and is examining her hair. A section has gone fully white/silver. She still has a nosebleed (**make it clear as it's not visible in this panel**).

KIRA: Shit. Well, I guess Cem was right. You've got to pay for this kind of magic.

MASON: I thought you had access to blood magic. We gotta go back. Now!

KIRA: How much do you reckon I've lost?



LONDON, U.K.

Later that night.

HOW ARE YOU
FEELING?

Like I've lost a few pints of blood.
Mason said I've given up three years,
maybe even five.

YOUR RECKLESSNESS WILL KILL
YOU SOONER OR LATER.

Oh, I'm sorry. Have you forgotten there's a war coming?

THIS IS NOT A GAME. IT'S NOT
SOMETHING YOU CAN THINK
YOURSELF OUT OF.

You think I don't know that? At least I've
learnt something.

OH YEAH? AND
WHAT IS THAT?

Sorry Aunt
Charlie!

Mason and Hananaet can use
blood magic without paying a price.
Which means...

HANA IS A
BORN HAD-AU!

Panel 1 full page
KIRA and CB discuss things at the end of the
day . We only see their speech bubbles
against a black background.

CB: How are you feeling? (CINZEL)

KIRA: As if I've lost a few pints of blood.

Mason said I've given up three years, maybe
even five.

CB: Your recklessness will kill you sooner or
later. (CINZEL)

KIRA: Oh, I'm sorry. Have you forgotten
there's a war coming?

CB: This is not a game. It's not something you
can think yourself out of. (CINZEL)

KIRA: You think I don't know that? At least
I've learnt something.

CB: Oh yeah? And what is that? (CINZEL)

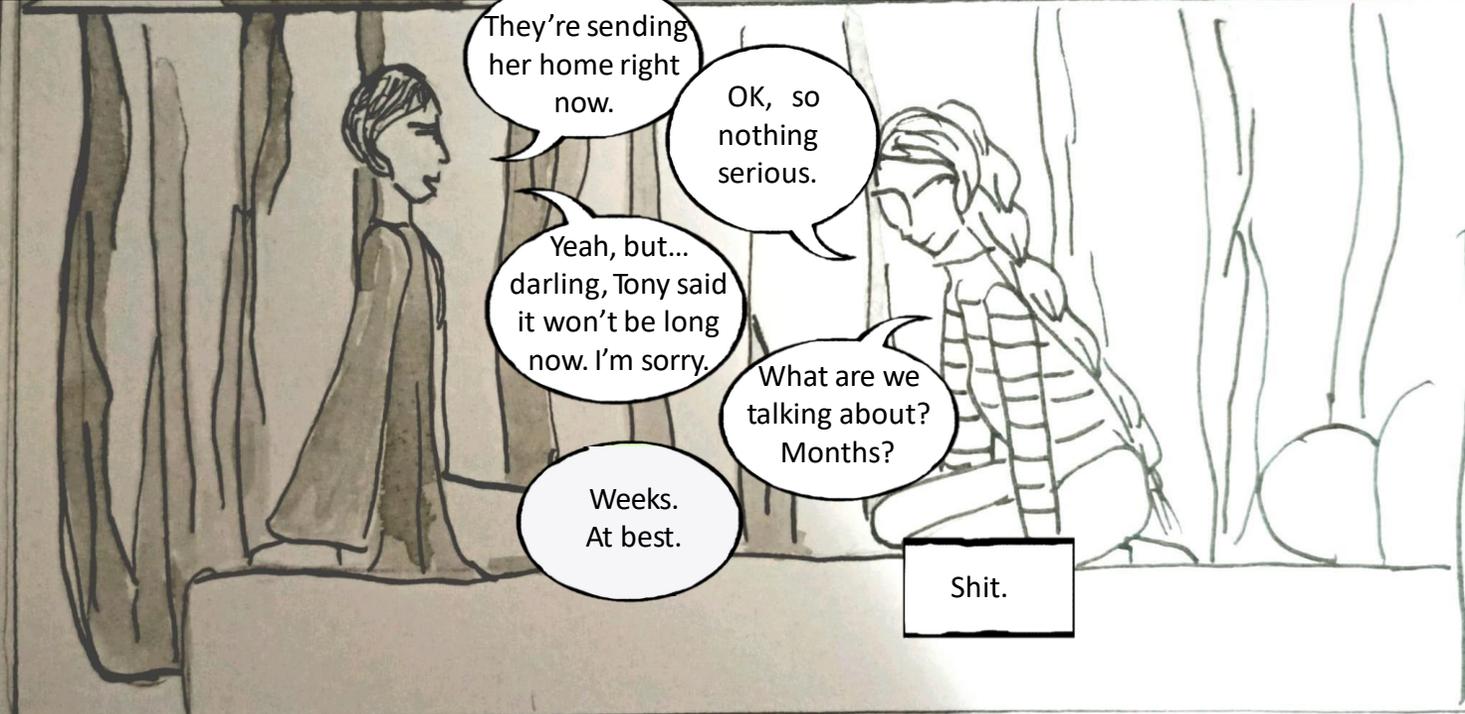
KIRA: Mason and Hananaet can use blood
magic. Which means...

CB: Hana is a born had-au! (CINZEL)

Panel 1 slightly bigger than 1/2 top left
 KIRA and CB discuss things at the end of the day. We only see their speech bubbles against a black background. Detail “knock knock”
 KIRA: Exactly. Aaaand... Mason thought I could wield blood magic.
 CB: OK. What does that mean? (CINZEL)
 KIRA: Don't know yet... but he was hiding something.
 CB: I told you so! (CINZEL)
 KIRA: Come in.

Panel 2 slightly smaller than 1/2 top right
 Charlotte walks in the bedroom. She's at the door. Light spills from behind her into the bedroom.
 CHARLOTTE: Hay Kira, how're you feeling?
 KIRA: Could be worse. Is it everything OK?
 CHARLOTTE: I've just talked to Leigh, Nic's in the hospital for a nosebleed.
 CB: What are the odds? (CINZEL)

Panel 3 1/2 bottom
 CHARLOTTE and KIRA are sitting on the bed facing each other. The camera frames them from the side. The curtain covering KIRA's clues is in the background.
 CHARLOTTE: They're sending her home right now.
 KIRA: OK, so nothing serious.
 CHARLOTTE: Yeah, but... darling, Tony said it won't be long now. I'm sorry.
 KIRA: What are we talking about? Months?
 CHARLOTTE: Weeks. At best.
 KIRA (in caption box): Shit.



10

Only if for a night

Nicole

CHAPTER 10 – page 1

Panel 1 1/4 top left

Detail at the top “Forest Hill, UK – Present (earlier that night)”

The camera is on the side framing the MORGAN siblings as they walk one behind the other. NICOLE, DAVE, and LEIGHTON are walking together in town. Around them there are a lot of people looking at different stands. LEIGHTON is walking ahead, DAVE is in the middle on his phone texting people, NICOLE is at the back listening to music. LEIGHTON and DAVE are talking, but NICOLE can't hear what they're saying, so the words in the speech balloon are scribbled and unintelligible.

Panel 2 detail across panels 1 and 3

DAVE snaps NICOLE's headphone. No background. We see details of her hoodie that reads MANCHESTER UNIVERSITY.

Panel 3 1/4 top right

DAVE talks to NICOLE but looks away. The camera is focused on DAVE's surly expression; we see NICOLE's from the back. She's a head shorter than DAVE. No background.

DAVE: Let's go.

NICOLE: Where?

DAVE: The bonfire, my team, is already there.

Panel 4 detail at the bottom of panel 3

The focus is on NICOLE's face. She looks annoyed. She's frowning. No background. We see details of her hoodie that reads MANCHESTER UNIVERSITY.

NICOLE: Nope. I don't need a fucking sitter.

Panel 5 1/4 bottom left

LEIGHTON is standing in front of DAVE. DAVE has his arms up as if to say “Well, I've tried”. LEIGHTON is pinching the bridge of her nose. Her face is cast downwards. We see NICOLE's from the back. No background.

LEIGHTON: Honestly, Nicky. Would it kill you not to swear for five minutes?

Panel 6 1/4 bottom right

LEIGHTON takes NICOLE by the elbow and takes her away. Use line movements to show that they have moved a few steps to the side. The camera is showing the two sisters huddled next to each other. NICOLE is rolling her eyes. No background. We see her hoodie that reads MANCHESTER UNIVERSITY.

LEIGHTON: It's important that you guys spend some time together. He might not realise that yet.

NICOLE: Fine.

Panel 1 1/2 top

NICOLE and DAVE walk the same path that NICOLE walked in CHAPTER FOUR, page four (we can use the same images but need to change it to night time). NICOLE walks behind DAVE. They are framed from their side, head to feet. There are some people around them. We can see speech bubbles with unintelligible words, but NICOLE and DAVE do not talk to each other.

NICOLE (thought bubble): Should I say something? Maybe...

NICOLE (thought bubble): Maybe not the best idea.

NICOLE (thought bubble): Urgh.. Fucking Leighton.

Panel 2 1/4 bottom left

NICOLE and DAVE get to the basketball court. There are some people playing, while others are on the sidelines cheering (use outside text like in CHAPTER 1 page 1).

NICOLE (thought bubble): OK, this is cool.

Panel 3 1/4 bottom right.

The camera frames DAVE and NICOLE from the back. DAVE turns around to look at NICOLE and talks to her over his shoulders. No background.

DAVE: I've seen my mates. You do you, I'll see you later.

NICOLE: Whatever.

NICOLE (thought bubble): Arsehole.

CHAPTER 10 – page 3

The panels on this page are divided into strips of $\frac{1}{3}$ in height. Each strip is divided into two parts ($\frac{2}{3}$ and $\frac{1}{3}$ in length) for a total of six panels. See the structure on the side to better understand what I mean.

Panel 1 $\frac{2}{3}$ top left

There are two teams on the basketball court playing. Background is minimum, show the court and some trees surrounding the court. Random crowd, unintelligible speech.

Panel 2 $\frac{1}{3}$ top right

NICOLE sits down on the benches on the sidelines. She has her hood on and is focused on the game. We see details of her hoodie that reads MANCHESTER UNIVERSITY. Random crowd, unintelligible speech.

Panel 3 $\frac{1}{3}$ top left

NICOLE sits down on the benches on the sidelines. She has her hood on and is resting her head on her right hand. We see details of her hoodie that reads MANCHESTER UNIVERSITY. Random crowd, unintelligible speech.
NICOLE(thought bubble): Is it too early to text Dave to go home?

Panel 4 $\frac{2}{3}$ middle right

There are two teams on the basketball court playing. They are different from the teams in panel 1. Show them in a different moment of the game and differentiate them by using different details like clothes and uniforms. Background: the court and some trees surrounding the court. Random crowd, unintelligible speech.

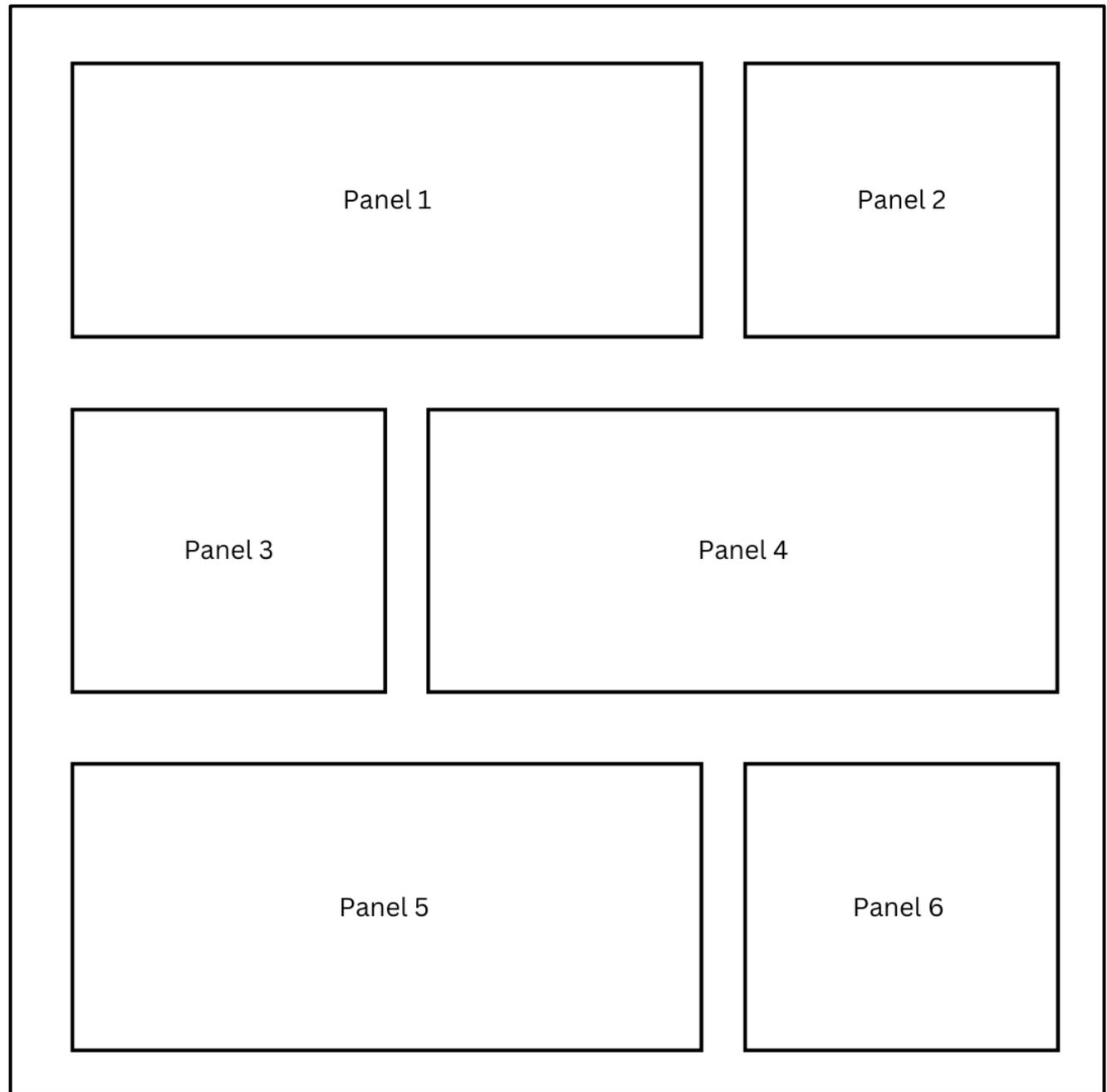
Panel 5 $\frac{2}{3}$ bottom left

There are two teams on the basketball court playing. They are different from the teams in panel 1 and 4. Show them in a different moment of the game and differentiate them by using different details like clothes and uniforms. Background is minimum, show the court and some trees surrounding the court. Random crowd, unintelligible speech.

Panel 6 $\frac{1}{3}$ bottom right

NICOLE sits down on the benches on the sidelines. She has her hood on and she's about to fall asleep. There is a hand on her shoulder. Random crowd, unintelligible speech.

NICOLE(thought bubble): I'm sure Leigh will get mad if I call her now.



CHAPTER 10 – page 4

Panel 1 detail (inside panel 2)

NICOLE looks up and is surprise.

WILLIAM (off camera): Back on the scene of the crime?

Panel 2 1/4 top left

WILLIAM sits next to NICOLE. The camera is focused on them sitting very close to each other, their legs are touching. They're both leaning forward with their arms on their legs.

NICOLE: Ahahah. Well, I couldn't stay away.

WILLIAM: Glad to see you're OK. How are you feeling?

Panel 3 1/4 top right

WILLIAM sits next to NICOLE. The camera is focused on them sitting very close to each other, their legs are touching. WILLIAM is leaning forward with his arms on their legs. Facial expression shows he's laughing. NICOLE is still sitting, but her back is straight and she has her arms out as if she wants to show her muscles.

NICOLE: Never better.

NICOLE (thought bubble): OK, that was cringe.

WILLIAM: chuckles (text outside).

Panel 4 1/2 bottom

WILLIAM sits next to NICOLE. The camera is focused on them sitting very close to each other, their legs are touching. They are both leaning forward. They're looking at each other but away from the camera.

WILLIAM: So, are you one of ours?

NICOLE: What?

WILLIAM: Your hoodie. Do you go to Man Uni?

NICOLE: Oh no, this is Leigh's.

WILLIAM: Well, it suits you.

NICOLE: Thanks.

Panel 5 detail (inside panel 4, bottom right corner)

WILLIAM's widened eyes.

WILLIAM: Oh shit, you're bleeding.

Panel 1 1/4 top left

NICOLE looks at her hand so she is not looking at the camera but downwards. There's blood on it. There's blood coming from her nose too. The camera is on NICOLE; she is framed from her head to her shoulders; she has her hood on.

NICOLE (thought bubble): This hasn't happened in years.

WILLIAM: What should we do?

NICOLE: I'm sure it'll stop soon. Do you have a tissue?

Panel 2 1/4 top right

WILLIAM is standing next to NICOLE. He has his hands in his pockets and is framed from his feet to his waist. Nicole holds one of her hands to her nose.

NICOLE (thought bubble): Shit, why now?

DAVE (off camera): Nicole! What's happening?

Panel 3 1/4 bottom left

NICOLE, DAVE, and WILLIAM are all standing in a circle. The camera is facing NICOLE, but she is partially covered by DAVE on her left and WILLIAM on her right. WILLIAM and DAVE are talking to each other.

DAVE: What is wrong with you?

WILLIAM: She just started bleeding.

NICOLE (thought bubble): Please, please, please, just kill me now.

Panel 4 1/4 bottom right

NICOLE, DAVE, and WILLIAM are all standing in a circle. The camera is facing NICOLE, but she is partially covered by DAVE on her left and WILLIAM on her right. WILLIAM and DAVE are talking to each other.

NICOLE: I'm fine. It'll stop soon.

DAVE: Will, can you take us to the A&E?

WILLIAM: Of course. Let's go, my car is this way.

Add bars to signal time has passed

Add bars to signal time has passed

Panel 1 1/2 top

Inside hospital room, use the same as in CHAPTER SIX, page seven. The camera is facing NICOLE and takes all the characters in. NICOLE is on a stretcher and is looking at WILLIAM (right-hand side of the frame). WILLIAM has dozed off on the chair next to NICOLE's bed. DAVE is standing on the side of the stretcher, his back to NICOLE, his focus on his phone (left-hand side of the frame)..

LEIGHTON (off camera): I'm here.

Panel 2 1/4 bottom left

The camera is on LEIGHTON. She looks on the dishevelled side of things, hair is unkempt, her coat has slid down a shoulder. She's panting slightly.

LEIGHTON: What happened?

NICOLE: Nothing serious, just a massive nosebleed.

Panel 3 detail inside panel 2 (bottom right corner).

Camera on LEIGHTON's face, her eyes harden.

LEIGHTON: Boys, can you leave us?

Panel 4 1/4 bottom right

The camera is on the side showing NICOLE and LEIGHTON from the side, facing each other. They are both sitting on the stretcher, on the back we can see the door to the room and some medical equipment against the wall.

LEIGHTON: Kira passed out. She's fine. Would you like to guess what made her faint?

NICOLE: What?

LEIGHTON: A massive nosebleed.

Panel 1 1/4 top left

The camera is on LEIGHTON (head to shoulders). She looks really serious. No background.

NICOLE (off camera): What are the odds of that?

LEIGHTON: Nicky, is your sister up to something?

NICOLE (off camera): What do you mean?

Panel 2 1/4 top right

The camera is on LEIGHTON (head to shoulders). She looks downwards and shakes her head. No background.

LEIGHTON: Never mind. Look, Dave and I will wait for you at the entrance. I'll send William in. It's only fair you tell him.

Panel 3 1/4 bottom

The camera is on the side showing NICOLE and WILLIAM from the side, facing each other. They are both sitting on the stretcher. On the back we can see the door to the room and some medical equipment against the wall.

WILLIAM: Hey.

NICOLE: Hey. Thank you for staying. You didn't have to.

WILLIAM: So... look... it's none of my business, but... are you sick?

NICOLE: Yeah.

WILLIAM: How sick?

NICOLE: Cursed-kind of sick.

WILLIAM: So, how long?

NICOLE: How long what?

WILLIAM: *How long?*

NICOLE: Oh. Not long, I'm afraid.

WILLIAM: Shit.

11

It's my curse I can't reverse

Nicole

CHAPTER 11 – page 1

Panel 1 1/2 top

NICOLE is standing in her bedroom in front of the French window. The camera is away from her so that the reader can take her full-figure, plus some of the scenery outside (the hills behind the house and some trees). It's raining really hard.

NICOLE (though bubble): Looks like someone wants to drown us all.

Panel 2 detail inside panel 1 (bottom right, but not in the corner)

KNOCK KNOCK and NICOLE turns to face the camera

Panel 3 1/4 bottom left

LEIGHTON walks in the room. She looks like LUCE, but with LEIGHTON's clothes. LEIGHTON is partially covered by the door, her body half inside the room, half outside across the threshold.

LEIGHTON: Ready to go?

Panels 4 and 5 details across panel 3 and panel 6

The panels are stacked one on top of the other. NICOLE's closed eyes in panel 4. NICOLE's open eyes in panel 5.

Panel 6 1/4 bottom right

LEIGHTON looks like LEIGHTON again, but she looks worried. She is partially covered by the door, her body half inside the room, half outside across the threshold.

LEIGHTON: Are you OK?

NICOLE (off camera): Yeah fine. Where are we going?

LEIGHTON: We are driving to school. Let's go.

CHAPTER 11 – page 2

This page is a rectangle, not a square, and it's divided into sections to show the real world vs the world NICOLE is hallucinating (Ådhit). See structure.

Panel 1 1/3 in height and length top left

NICOLE is stepping down the stairs, and poison ivy climbs up the banisters while moss covers the steps. NICOLE's POV embodies the camera. We can see NICOLE's hand on the banister being enveloped by the tendrils of the plant.

NICOLE (thought bubble): Everything's OK. I can do this.

Panel 2 1/3 in height and length top middle

NICOLE's POV embodies the camera. LEIGHTON is at the bottom of the steps and looks like LUCE again, but with LUCE's clothes. LEIGHTON looks up at NICOLE. On the right side, we can see the walls being covered by the ivy covering some pictures. On the left side, the banister has disappeared underneath the ivy.

LEIGHTON: Are you sure you're OK? You look pale.

Panel 3 detail across panels 2 and 3

NICOLE closes her eyes.

Panel 4 1/3 in height and length top right

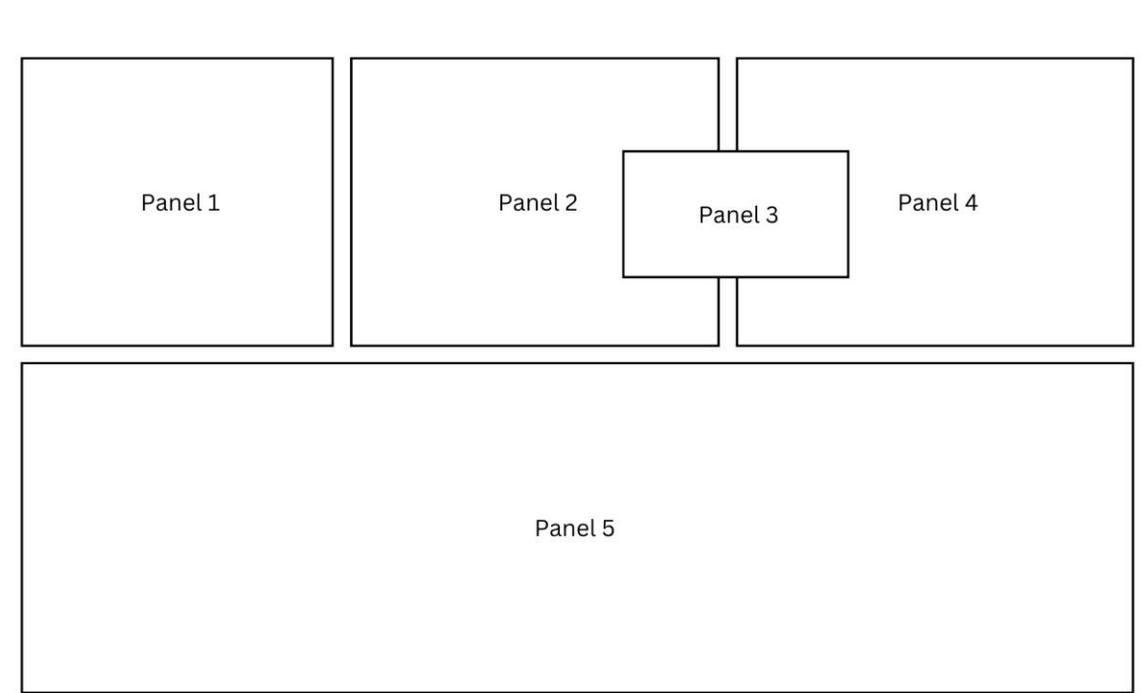
NICOLE's POV embodies the camera. LEIGHTON is at the bottom of the steps and looks up at NICOLE. On the right side, we can see the walls are back to normal. On the left side, the banister is back to normal.

NICOLE (off camera): Don't worry. Let's go.

Panel 5 1/2 bottom

The camera is behind NICOLE. We see her head and what she is seeing. NICOLE stands on the threshold of her house. She's opened the door, and on the other side, she sees the main plaza. Just like she saw it in CHAPTER SIX, page three. LILITH is in the distance flanked by two people.

NICOLE (thought bubble): Shit.



Panel 1 1/3 in height full length top

NICOLE is sitting in the car's backseat and she's looking out. The camera is on her side so that we see both her leaning against the window and the landscape outside. LEIGHTON and DAVE are off camera, but we see the balloons of their conversation (unintelligible). The radio is on and we see some lyrics. Use the same frame as CHAPTER 2, page twelve, panel five.

The landscape outside is not FOREST HILL but ÅDHIT. Use scenery from CHAPTER 3, page one.

NICOLE (thought bubble): This is not real. Deep breaths. This is not real.

LYRICS: In this hell of a season give me more of a reason to be with you be with you, yeah

LYRICS: Say you'll be better I'll keep waiting forever You know I do Know I do, oh

Panel 2 1/6 middle left

NICOLE is still leaning against the window, but the camera is much closer to her face. She has her eyes closed. There's no physical background, but the back is lined with words (from the song and the conversation) that gradually lose their shape only to become scribbles.

NICOLE (thought bubble): Deep breaths. This is fine.

Panel 3 1/6 middle right

Replicate panel 2.

DETAIL: Knock knock

NICOLE (thought bubble): Everything's fine. I'm rea—

Panel 4 1/3 in height full length bottom

NICOLE gets out of the car. The camera frames her as she gets off. LEIGHTON (framed from her feet up to her waist/chest) is on NICOLE's left, holding her door open. There's very little background other than the ground and the car.

LEIGHTONE: Nicole...?

NICOLE: I haven't slept much, that's all.

LEIGHTON: I'm taking you to the hospital after this.

DAVE (off camera): Leigh, Noel texted me to go to the gym.

This page is a rectangle divided into three sections

Panel 1 1/3 in height full length top

The camera is far away and takes in the three MORGAN siblings (from the back) and some of the background. DAVE and LEIGHTON are facing each other. DAVE looks annoyed. He is wearing his school uniform (see reference chapter 11 – 1a). LEIGHTON is wearing her usual outfit (coat, turtleneck, trousers, boots). NICOLE is behind LEIGHTON. She is wearing her usual outfit (trousers and hoodie). We see the school in the distance (it looks old, a bit like a castle – see reference chapter 11 – 1b).

DAVE: Why do you have to come?

LEIGHTON: What is your problem? I just want to say hi to coach Harrison.

DAVE: Look at her. She can barely walk.

LEIGHTON: Be nice to your sister.

NICOLE: Yeah. Be nice, asshole.

Panel 2 1/3 in height 1/2 length middle left

The three MORGAN siblings (DAVE, LEIGHTON, NICOLE in a line) walk past the front gates. The camera is on their left side. No background.

LEIGHTON: Nicole! Not helping.

NICOLE: Wasn't trying to.

Panel 3 1/3 in height 1/2 length middle right

The three MORGAN siblings (DAVE, LEIGHTON, NICOLE) walk towards the gym (they're walking next to each other, NICOLE is farther back) through the football field (see reference chapter 11 – 1c). We can see buildings in the distance, the sports hall, but not the children that you see in the reference picture. NICOLE is looking up, most likely rolling her eyes.

LEIGHTON: Is it too much to ask you to behave like proper human beings?

NICOLE (thought bubble): Honestly, if I have to die, can it be like now?

Panel 4 1/3 in height full length bottom

The three MORGAN siblings walk in the gym (use the same gym as seen in CHAPTER 2, page one). The camera is behind their back framing the three of them, the gym and the people in the distance in a circle. They're all wearing their uniform.

DAVE: I'll go join them.

NICOLE: I'll go to the toilet.

Panel 1 1/4 top left

NICOLE embodies the camera. She is standing on the parquet and the floorboards turn into sand. Discuss what the perspective would be (she'd probably see her feet and legs). Balloons with unintelligible speech inside.

Panel 2 1/4 top right

NICOLE embodies the camera. She goes down a flight of stairs; she holds onto the handrail; the steps are covered once again in ivy. Same POV as panel 1. Balloons with unintelligible speech inside.

Panel 3 1/4 bottom left

The camera is farther away from NICOLE; it frames her from behind as NICOLE rushes into a toilet stool.

Panel 4 1/4 bottom right

NICOLE is sitting on the toilet. Same vertigo effect as in EPILOGUE, page 2 panel 5.

NICOLE (thought bubble): Deep breaths. Deep breaths.

NOEL (off camera): You know this is the boy's toilet, don't you?

NICOLE: Shut up. Gender is a social construct anyway.

Panel 1 1/2 in height and 1/3 length top left

NICOLE and NOEL are in the frame, the camera is on NICOLE's right. We see NICOLE sitting on the toilet, NOEL on the threshold. The wall of the cubicle in the background.

NOEL: You OK little Morgan?

NICOLE: Hey, Dave is the baby... who're you?

NOEL: Noel, I play with your brother.

NICOLE: Of course. Look, I need help.

NOEL: Shoot.

Panel 2 1/2 in height and 2/3 top right

The camera is on NICOLE (face + shoulders). There is no background. We see her face. She's in pain (she's frowning, sweat is beading on her hairline).

NICOLE: I can't be the girl who died in the fucking cubicle.

Panel 3 1/4 bottom left

NICOLE is holding onto NOEL's arm. The camera is in front of them. NICOLE is a good head shorter than NOEL. There is no background.

NOEL: Maybe I should call your brother.

NICOLE: Nah, he'll make a fuss. I'm fine with your arm.

Panel 4 1/4 bottom right.

The camera is behind NICOLE and NOEL. They're standing on top of the flight of stairs that connects the gym to the lower levels where the toilets are. NICOLE and NOEL are framed by the walls and the ceiling. On the other side, NICOLE doesn't see the gym but an open field and a figure in the distance.

Panel 5 – detail inside panel four (right corner at the bottom).

NICOLE closes her eyes.

Panel 1 detail inside panel two (left corner at the top).
NICOLE opens her eyes.

Panel 2 1/4 top left

NICOLE and NOEL are still in the clearing. The camera is at an angle away from them. NOEL is talking to her but NICOLE only picks up certain words. LILITH is in the panel, but is far away.

NOEL: ... fine... step... ... can do... ... brave

LILITH (caption box): Don't listen to him. Just let it go.

NICOLE: Will it hurt?

LILITH (caption box): It'll be like falling asleep.

Panel 3 detail across panel 2 and 4

NICOLE lets go of NOEL's arm.

Panel 4 1/4 top right

The camera is behind NICOLE and we see LEIGHTON's worried face. Behind LEIGHTON we see the outline of LILITH. NICOLE is unsteady, and it looks like she's falling.

LEIGHTON: Nicky?

Panel 5 1/2 bottom

The camera is above NICOLE. NICOLE is on the floor (almost foetal position)

LEIGHTON: Nicole!

LILITH (off camera in caption box): You're safe now.

12

We live to fight another day

Kira

Panel 1 1/4 top left

We see the outside of a hospital.

KIRA (off camera): '...we shall be free; the Almighty hath not built Here for his envy, will not drive us hence:

Panel 2 1/4 top right

We see the outside of a hospital room.

KIRA (off camera): Here we may reign secure, and in my choice to reign is worth ambition though in Hell: Better to reign in Hell than serve in Heaven

Panel 3 2/3 bottom left

The camera is on the side taking in KIRA, sitting at the feet of NICOLE's bed. There is a window behind her. NICOLE's lying in bed, she's intubated.

KIRA (thought bubble): This is so frustrating...

CB: It takes time. (CINZEL) -> across panels 3 and 4

KIRA (in balloon not caption box): You don't say.

DAVE (off camera): What?

Panel 4 1/3 bottom right

The camera is focused on KIRA, who turns towards DAVE. No background.

KIRA: Nothing. I was following a train of thoughts.

DAVE (off camera): And?

KIRA: It derailed.

Panel 1 1/3 in height full length top left

KIRA stands up and stretches. The camera takes her from her knees up, one of her arms stretched upwards, the other is bent behind her head. No background.

KIRA: I need some air.

DAVE (off camera): I'll stay with —

Panel 2 1/3 in height and length middle left.

KIRA is outside the room. She is holding her head between her index and middle fingers of both her hands. Her eyes are closed, her eyebrows are all scrunched up.

Panel 3 1/3 in height and length middle right

The camera is behind KIRA's back. She's fishing her tobacco pouch from her back pocket.

Panel 4 1/3 in height full length bottom

KIRA is close to the window. The camera is behind her. We see her from her waist up; she is rolling a cigarette, but we only see the back of her arms. In the distance, we see the rest of the hospital structure, especially the terrace, which is in the top left corner of the frame.

KIRA (caption box): Two years ago, when she called...

CB: I remember. (CINZEL)

KIRA (caption box): Maybe I should've let her go. Maybe she would've found peace.

CB: Kira... (CINZEL)

Panel 1 1/6 top left

KIRA is walking down the corridor. The camera is on her left side; she is framed full figure. In the background, we see more windows and hospital staff walking.

KIRA (speech balloon): I couldn't do anything then.

CB: Do you mean other than talking her down? You bought her time. (CINZEL)

Panel 2 1/6 top right

KIRA is opening a door that leads to a staircase. The camera is on her back; she is framed full figure. In the background, we see stairs going up.

KIRA (caption box): Time does nothing. Time doesn't cure.

CB: This is your grief talking. (CINZEL)

Panel 2 1/6 middle left

KIRA is going up the stairs. The camera is on her left side; she is framed full figure. In the background, we see stairs going up.

KIRA (speech balloon): She's not dead.

CB: I know. (CINZEL)

Panel 4 1/6 middle right

KIRA is opening a door that leads to the terrace. The camera is on her back; she is framed full figure. We also catch glimpses of the terrace.

KIRA (caption box): Maybe she doesn't need to.

CB: Kira. (CINZEL)

KIRA (caption box): ...

Panel 4 1/3 in height full length bottom

KIRA is on the terrace, the camera is on her back. She's framed full figure. We see the terrace, hills rolling in the background, and some parts of the town. She's leaning against the banister. The wind makes her braid sway.

CB: What are you thinking? (CINZEL)

KIRA (speech balloon): That "sometimes when you fall, you fly."

Panel 1 1/2 height 2/3 length top left

KIRA is on the terrace, the camera is on her back. She's framed full figure. We see the terrace, hills rolling in the background, and some parts of the town. She's leaning against the banister. She supports her head with right hand, a cigarette in her left hand. The wind makes her braid sway.

CB:...

KIRA (caption box): Maybe we can do something.

CB: You're not happy with what you've lost already? You want to bargain more of your life? (CINZEL)

KIRA (caption box): But what if I can save her?

Panel 2 1/2 height 1/3 length top right

The camera frames KIRA's face. She's pinching the bridge of her nose with her right hand, her glasses are on her forehead.

CB: You can't though. (CINZEL)

KIRA (caption box): Let's look at this objectively.

CB: Objectively? (CINZEL)

Panel 3 1/2 bottom

KIRA embodies the camera. She's looking down at the ground below. We see the hospital building, the road, and some people. **Question for Dolores:** would the POV include some more background?

KIRA (caption box): Listen! Nic's tumour's never behaved the way it was supposed to.

CB: So? (CINZEL)

KIRA (caption box): So maybe this is more. Think about it, Cem.

CB: So this is not about saving her, but getting answers.

Panel 1 detail inside panel 2. Top left corner.

KIRA stubs the cigarette on the banister.

KIRA: The two things are not mutually exclusive.

CB: And how would you prove we confirm this theory of yours?(CINZEL)

Panel 2 1/2 height 2/3 length top left

The camera is facing KIRA and the background behind her, part of the terrace and the hills rolling behind her. She has her hands in her pockets. She's smirking.

KIRA: The only way we know how. We see what the tumour is for ourselves.

Panel 3 1/2 height 2/3 length top left top right

KIRA is going down the stairs. The camera is on her left side; she is framed full figure. In the background, we see stairs going down.

CB: Too bad we don't have that kind of power. (CINZEL)

KIRA: Yeah, but, listen... what if we bargained for it?

Panel 4 detail inside panel 5 top left corner

KIRA is stopped in her tracks. Camera is focused on her face (head + shoulder in the frame). She looks slightly surprised, but we only see hints of surprise on her face.

CB: You've only got your years as a chip. Do you really want to give them away? (CINZEL)

KIRA (caption box): I'm willing to take that risk. Yeah.

KIRA: Leigh. What are you doing here?

Panel 5 1/2page bottom

LEIGHTON and KIRA are facing each other on the stairs. There's only a step to separate them. LEIGHTON is standing against the wall. She's got her arms crossed. KIRA is taller than LEIGHTON. She still has her hands in pockets. The banister partially covers them. The camera takes them from the side.

LEIGHTON: Needed some air? You?

KIRA: I went for a fag.

LEIGHTON: Still that heinous vice

KIRA: Could be worse. Could be tattoos.

LEIGHTON: You stink of smoke.

KIRA: It relaxes me.

Panel 6 detail inside panel 5 – bottom right corner.

LEIGHTON scratches one of her hands.

Panel 1 1/2 page top

LEIGHTON and KIRA are facing each other on the stairs. There's only a step to separate them. LEIGHTON is standing against the wall. She's got her arms crossed. KIRA is taller than LEIGHTON. She still has her hands in pockets. The banister partially covers them. The camera takes them from the side.

KIRA: Leigh?

LEIGHTON: Yeah?

KIRA: Will she make it?

LEIGHTON: We all knew it was coming. Just not this quickly. I thought I had a bit more time.

KIRA: To do what exactly?

Panel 2 1/3 in length 1/2 height bottom left

The camera is on LEIGHTON, she's looking away from KIRA, her gaze is cast downwards. Her arms are still crossed below her chest. She has a necklace with an engagement ring and a wedding band (head to arms in the frame)

LEIGHTON: Never mind.

KIRA (off camera): Leigh?

LEIGHTON: Yeah?

Panel 3 1/3 in length 1/2 height bottom middle.

The camera is on KIRA and she's looking directly at it. She has her hands in her pockets (head to chest in the frame). She's leaning against the wall.

KIRA: What... what if I could do something? For Nicole, I mean.

LEIGHTON (off camera): And what is exactly that you could do?

Panel 4 1/3 in length 1/2 height bottom right.

The camera is on KIRA and she's looking away from it. She is fiddling with her braid. She's leaning against the wall.

KIRA: I don't know... donate my blood or something?

Panel 1 1/2 page top

LEIGHTON and KIRA are facing each other on the stairs. There's only a step to separate them. LEIGHTON is standing against the wall. She has her sister's braid in her hand. KIRA is taller than LEIGHTON. KIRA is crossing her arms below her chest. The banister partially covers them. The camera takes them from the side.

KIRA: You don't know what options are out there, Leigh.

Panel 2 1/3 in length 1/2 height bottom left

The camera is fully on LEIGHTON (head to shoulders in the frame). She looks stern and determined.

LEIGHTON: Yes I do. And I'd suggest you stopped chasing fantasies. Maybe it's time you worked on the few relationships you have left.

Panel 3 2/3 in length 1/2 height bottom right

The camera is behind KIRA's left shoulder. We see the back of KIRA, who's still standing on the stairs as well LEIGHTON's back who's turned away and ended the conversation. In the Frame: KIRA is framed from her head to her waist, LEIGHTON is framed almost full-figure, the door that connects the staircase to the floor where NICOLE's room is.

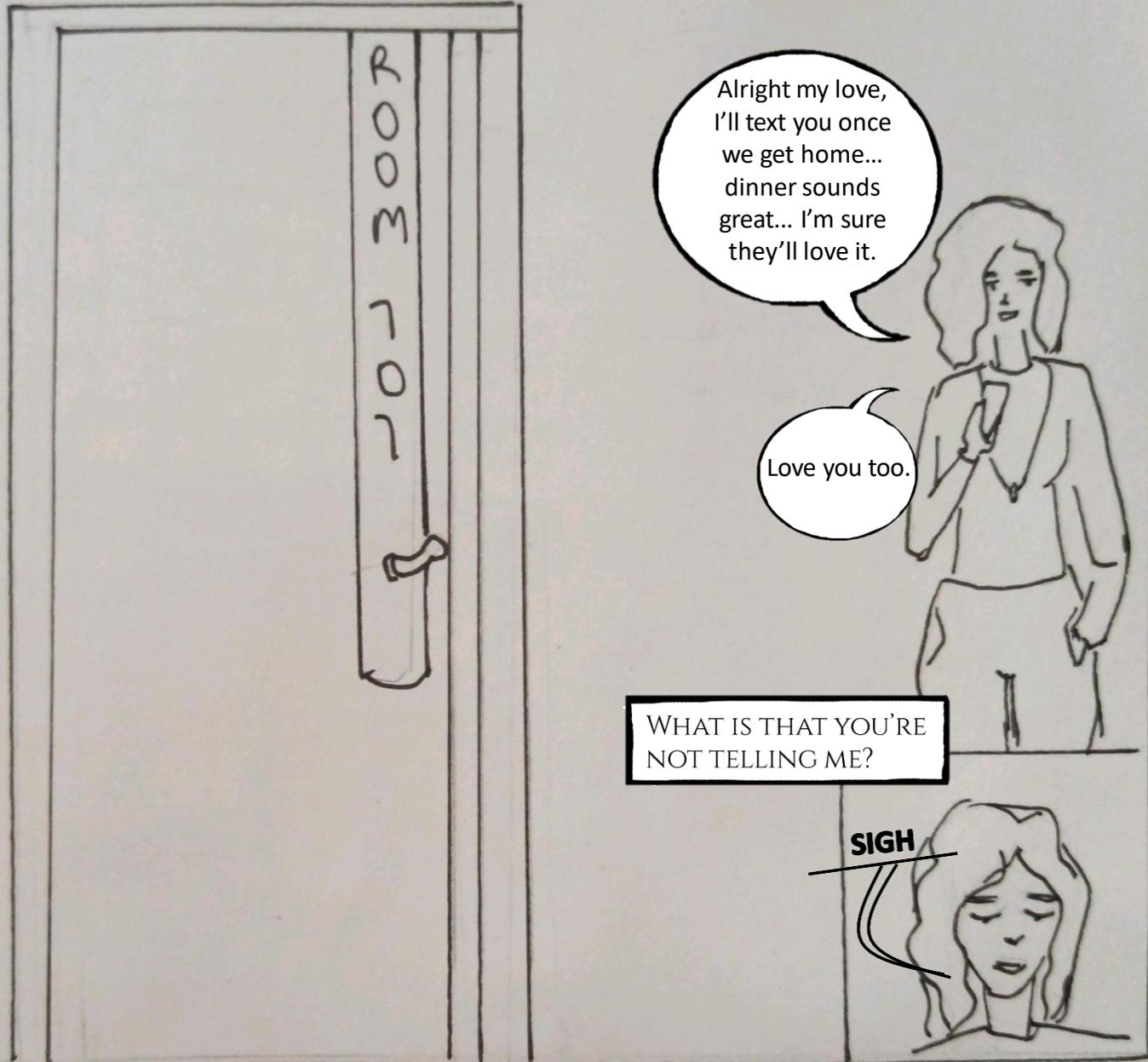
CB: Damn (CINZEL)

KIRA (caption box): That was weird.

13

I would burn this town down for you

Leighton



Panel 1 full page

LEIGHTON is outside NICOLE's hospital room. LEIGHTON is leaning against the wall, her hand in her pocket. She's talking with someone on her phone. The door is on her left (room 707)

LEIGHTON: Alright my love, I'll text you once we get home... dinner sounds great... I'm sure they'll love it. Love you too.

Panel 2 – detail inside panel 1 (bottom right corner)

Close up on LEIGHTON's face. She looks tired.

LUCE: What is that you're not telling me? (CINZEL)

LEIGHTON: Sigh

You're being paranoid. Again. I've already got too much on my plate.

AND I'VE LEARNT THAT WHAT YOU DO WITH MY FEELINGS IS CALLED GASLIGHTING.



DING

I'm on the rooftop.

5.30 pm

Coming.

5.30 pm

WHO ARE YOU GOING TO MEET?

You'll see soon enough.
Do you really have to ask?

DON'T THINK I HAVEN'T
NOTICED YOU SNEAKING AWAY
MORE AND MORE OFTEN.

WHERE DO YOU GO?

CHAPTER 13 – page 2

Panel 1 1/2 page left

The camera is on LEIGHTON's right-hand side; we see her profile. She's texting with someone. There's no background more like a halo around her. Her right leg is bent at an angle.

LEIGHTON (caption box): You're being paranoid. Again. I've already got too much on my plate.

LUCE: And I've learnt that what you do with my feelings is called gaslighting. (CINZEL)

Text 1: I'm on the rooftop.

Text 2: Coming.

Panel 2 1/4 top right

Detail of the stairwell

LUCE: Who are you going to meet? (CINZEL)

LEIGHTON (caption box): You'll see soon enough. Do you really have to ask?

Panel 3 1/4 bottom right

LEIGHTON is going up the stairs. We see her feet on the steps.

LUCE: Don't think I haven't noticed you sneaking away more and more often. Where do you go? (CINZEL)



I'm here.

ARE YOU ALONE?

I wish.

RUDE.

WAIT... IS THAT...?

Yup.

LEIGH, WHAT IS SHE DOING HERE?

She said she can help with Nic's situation.

WHAT IS SHE SAYING?

She's asking why are you here.

OH... SHE WON'T LIKE THIS...

CHAPTER 13 – page 3

Panel 1 1/2 page left

LEIGHTON is framed full-figure. She has one foot on the hospital terrace, the other one is on the other side of the threshold.

LEIGHTON: I'm here.

LILITH: Are you alone? (CINZEL)

LEIGHTON: I wish.

LUCE: Rude. Wait... is that...? (CINZEL)

LEIGHTON: Yup.

LUCE: Leigh, what is she doing here? (CINZEL)

LEIGHTON (caption box): She said she can help with Nic's situation.

Panel 2 1/2 page right

LEIGHTON is on the other side of the door but is standing on the spot, she is not walking towards the figure leaning against the banister. The woman is wearing a jumper and a skirt. Beyond the terrace we see rolling hills.

LILITH: What is she saying? (CINZEL)

LEIGHTON: She's asking why are you here.

LILITH: Oh... she won't like this... (CINZEL)

Panel 1 full page

The woman has turned around to face LEIGHTON. The camera is behind the woman. We see the banister, the woman on the other side of the banister. The woman's skirt and hair are swaying in the wind. In the distance, LEIGHTON is standing at the entrance to the roof terrace.

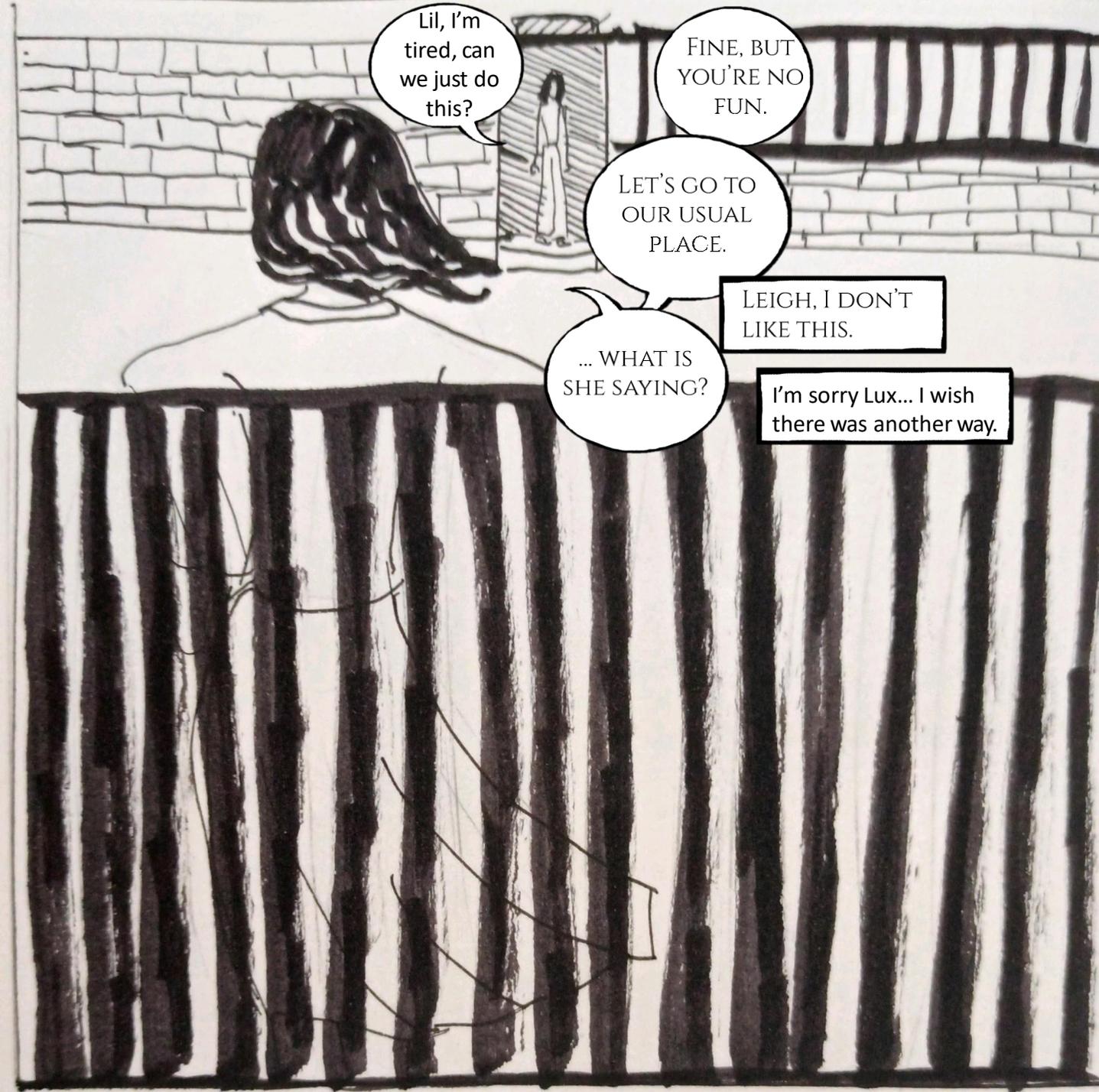
LEIGHTON: Lil, I'm tired, can we just do this?

LILITH: Fine, but you're no fun. Let's go to our usual place. (CINZEL)

LUCE: Leigh, I don't like this. (CINZEL)

LEIGHTON (caption box): I'm sorry Lux... I wish there was another way.

LILITH: ... what is she saying? (CINZEL)



Lil, I'm tired, can we just do this?

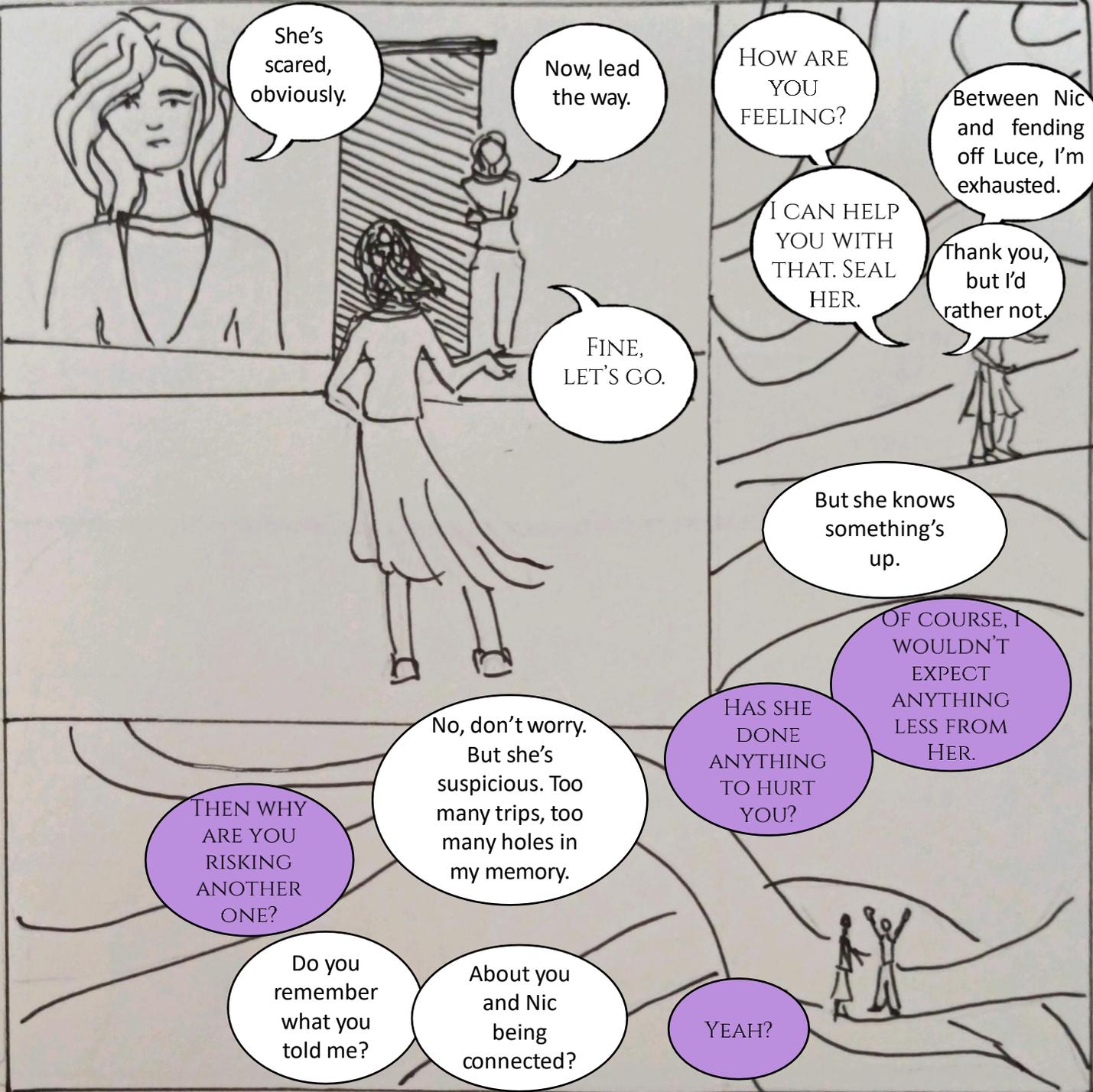
FINE, BUT YOU'RE NO FUN.

LET'S GO TO OUR USUAL PLACE.

LEIGH, I DON'T LIKE THIS.

... WHAT IS SHE SAYING?

I'm sorry Lux... I wish there was another way.



CHAPTER 13 – page 5

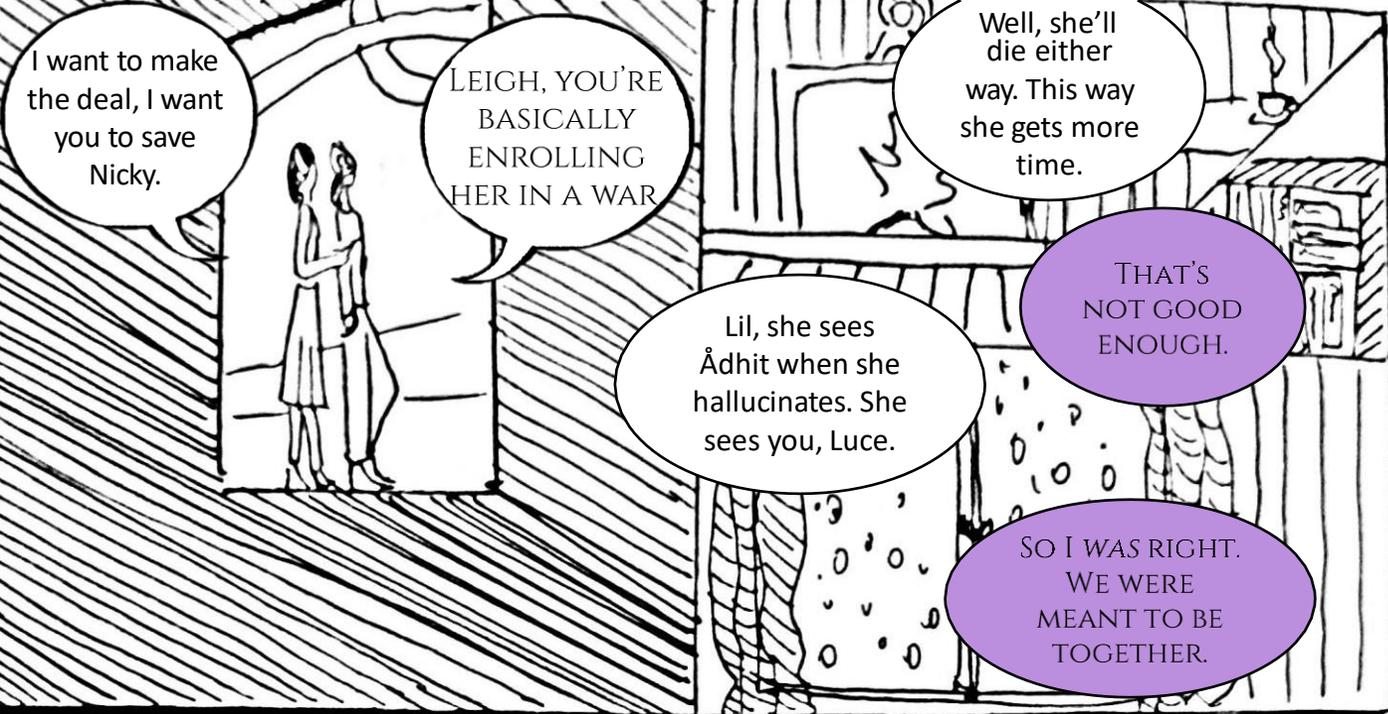
The panels on this page are irregular, so have a look at the storyboard to better understand the size and their placement.

Panel 1 bigger than 1/4 top left corner

Close up of LEIGHTON's face in the left corner. The door works as a separation between the closeup and the rest of the scene. In the rest of the panel, LEIGHTON and the WOMAN are still on the terrace, still facing each other. The camera is facing LEIGHTON so we only see the WOMAN's back. LEIGHTON has her arms crossed below her chest. The WOMAN has her left hand on her hip, her right arm is bent at an angle.
 LEIGHTON: She's scared, obviously. Now, lead the way.
 LILITH: Fine, let's go. (CINZEL)

Panel 2 Rest of the page

LEIGHTON and the WOMAN are shown crossing the crooked paths.
 LILITH: How are you feeling? (CINZEL)
 LEIGHTON: Between Nic and fending off Luce, I'm exhausted.
 LILITH: I can help you with that. Seal her. (CINZEL)
 LEIGHTON: Thank you, but I'd rather not. But she knows something's up.
 LILITH: Of course, I wouldn't expect anything less from her. Has she done anything to hurt you? (CINZEL)
 LEIGHTON: No, don't worry. But she's suspicious. Too many trips, too many holes in my memory.
 LILITH: Then why are you risking another one? (CINZEL)
 LEIGHTON: Do you remember what you told me? About you and Nic being connected?
 LILITH: Yeah? (CINZEL)



Panel 1 1/4 top left

LEIGHTON and the WOMAN are shown as if they were walking in front of the door. They're framed by the rectangle and we see the crooked paths behind them, but there's nothing on this other side of the door.
LEIGHTON: I want to make the deal, I want you to save Nicky.
LILITH: Leigh, you're basically enrolling her in a war. (CINZEL)

Panel 2 1/4 top right

This panel is divided inside to show different elements of the room being created on the other side of the door

- A fireplace and a table with smoking mugs next to it
- A bookshelf filled with books
- A window and snow on the other side.

LEIGHTON: Well, she'll die either way. This way she gets more time.
LILITH: That's not good enough. (CINZEL)
LEIGHTON: Lil, she sees Adhit when she hallucinates. She sees you, Luce.
LILITH: So I was right. We were meant to be together. (CINZEL)



Panel 3 1/2 bottom

The camera is facing LEIGHTON. She's shown sitting in a comfortable armchair, her back to the fireplace. LEIGHTON faces the woman sitting in the opposite armchair. The WOMAN is not visible except for her arm resting on the armrest.
LILITH: You're aware of the consequences. (CINZEL)
LEIGHTON: Yeah, well, I guess it's time I do the right thing.

14

We're not in Forest Hill anymore part 1

Nicole

CHAPTER 14 – page 1

All the panels will be rendered in black and purple.

Panel 1 1/2 page top

The camera is on the top left angle of the panel and is framing an open door. There's a figure (framed from her head to her feet) on the threshold letting in light in the room.

MARGARET: Nicky, wake up.

Panel 2 1/2 page bottom

The camera is lower and is facing NICOLE who's laying in bed under the duvet. Her head is resting on the pillow. The figure is sitting on the bed. Her back is to the camera, one arm is on NICOLE's back, the other is next to her. We only see part of her hair and her back, plus her arms.

MARGARET: C'mon Nicole, we'll miss your sister's game if you don't get up now. Dave is on his way to pick you up.

Panel 1 detail inside panel 3 top left

NICOLE is waking up (one eye open, one closed). The camera frames her head, part of her pillow, and a hand resting on her head.

NICOLE: Mum?

Panel 2 detail inside panel 3 top middle

The camera is framing a woman. This is NICOLE's mother, MARGARET. Her head is slightly inclined to the side. Her hair is long and partially covers her face. She has LEIGHTON's face but is older. She has two moles, one under each eye.

MARGARET: Yes, get up and get down for breakfast. Your father and Kira are almost ready, and you know how they get when someone's late.

Panel 3 – full page

NICOLE is sitting in her bed. She looks confused. No background.

NICOLE (though bubble): This is odd.

Panel 1 full page

NICOLE is standing on the threshold of her bedroom door. There are black stripes on her side because the room is still in total darkness, but there's only white on the other side of the door. She's framed from the back (head to waist). Her hair is ruffled. Her left arm is raised at an angle and her left hand is resting against the wall, blood is seeping from a wound in her hand down her arm.

LILITH (caption box): You're not supposed to be here. (CINZEL)

Panel 1 full page

NICOLE embodies the camera. She's looking at a scene in the dining room. The table occupies most of the scene. There is no background. KIRA is sitting on the left, her eyes are focused on her phone. She has a mug with tea in it in front of her. She's wearing her usual outfit. NICOLE's father PETER is sitting at the far end of the table. He's hidden by the newspaper he's holding. There's a detail that indicates someone's rang the doorbell.

NICOLE: Where's Dave?

PETER: His parents said he'd be over before going to the gym.

KIRA: Can I ride with you?

MARGARET: I think that's him.

Panel 1 1/2 page top

The camera is behind DAVE. He's. framed from the back, he's wearing a basketball jersey with LEIGHTON'S number and last name. We see NICOLE's face (she's framed head to chest). She looks a bit disoriented, but happy.

DAVE: Ready to go?

NICOLE: Sure.

LILITH (caption box): Something is not quite right, isn't it? (CINZEL)

Panel 2 1/2 page bottom

The camera is on NICOLE and DAVE's side. They are facing each other and they're moved on the right hand-side of the panel. NICOLE's body is wrapped by roots and tendrils. DAVE has a hand on NICOLE's shoulder.

The left hand-side of the panel shows the dining room in partial darkness. PETER is sitting on a stool, he's still reading his newspaper.

DAVE: Nicole?

NICOLE: Sorry, I spaced out. Kira, let's go.

KIRA (off camera): Coming.

LILITH (caption box): Can you tell all of this is fake? In this life, at least. (CINZEL)

Panel 1 bigger than 1/2 page top

NICOLE is sitting next to DAVE in their school's gym. We only see their bodies. NICOLE's body is still wrapped in tendrils.

LILITH (caption box): Why are you staying here? Hollow fantasies won't save you. (CINZEL)

NICOLE (thought bubble): Leave me alone.

Panel 2 detail across panel 1 and 3

The camera zooms in on NICOLE's face. She's brought a hand to her face. Roots are slowly creeping in from the top of the panel.

NICOLE: I'm going to the toilet, be right back.

Panel 3 smaller than 1/2 page bottom

NICOLE is walking away from the gym. She's alone in the corridor, she's enveloped by branches.

LILITH (caption box): Do you understand what's happening? (CINZEL)

Panel 1 full page

NICOLE is standing in the toilet, the water is running. There's a long mirror covering the wall. Nicole stands in front of the mirror, but she doesn't see her reflection. The surface of the mirror is warped to show a vortex.

LILITH: Nicole... (CINZEL)

Panel 2 detail inside panel 1 bottom right (but not in the corner)

The vortex in the mirror has opened up. There's a hand coming out of it. NICOLE's hand is stretched towards the one coming out of the mirror.

LILITH: Are you ready? (CINZEL)

NICOLE: Ready for what?

LILITH: To take a walk. (CINZEL)

Panel 1 1/4 top left

LILITH occupies the frame (top to waist). She's not looking at the camera but is angled away. She has a black curly bob and a mole under her left eye (just like NICOLE). She has her arms crossed under her chest.

NICOLE (off camera): But where are we going?

LILITH: Things with you Morgans are never easy. (CINZEL)

Panel 2 1/4 top right

NICOLE occupies the frame (top to waist). She's not looking at the camera but is angled away. Her arms are stretched forward as if to say: slow down.

NICOLE: Yeah, I've heard that before.

Panel 3 1/2 bottom

NICOLE left and LILITH right are framed full figure. The camera is far away from them. We see the ground they are standing on and the crooked paths rolling behind them.

LILITH: Come with me, things will make sense soon. I promise. (CINZEL)

Panel 1 full page

Close up on NICOLE. She is laying in a hospital bed. She's intubated, her eyes are closed, she's wearing a hospital gown. We need to change her hair, as it needs to be shaved after the surgery.

NICOLE (off camera): Am I dead?

LILITH (off camera): You're definitely trying your best.

15

We will live to fight another day

Kira

Eyland

Later that day

I STILL THINK THIS IS RECKLESS
AND I DON'T THINK IT'LL YIELD
THE RESULTS YOU HOPE FOR.

Noted.

WHAT IF YOU'RE WRONG?

But I'm not.

YOU CAN BE SO ARROGANT
SOMETIMES. DO YOU KNOW THAT?

Don't you mean right? Also,
pot and kettle my friend.

ARE YOU SURE?

As sure as I'll ever be.

Chapter 15 – page 1

All the dialogue in this page is in caption boxes.

Panel 1 1/2 page top

The camera is framing the entrance to the cabin in Eyland, in the background we see the heavy September sky and the sea.

CB: I still think this reckless and i don't think it'll yield the results you hope for. (CINZEL)

KIRA: Noted.

Panel 2 2/3 page bottom left

The camera is in front of KIRA. She is sitting on the rug, her legs are crossed and her elbows rest on her arms.

CB: What if you're wrong? (CINZEL)

KIRA: But I'm not.

CB: You can be so arrogant sometimes. Do you know that? (CINZEL)

KIRA: Don't you mean right? Also, pot and kettle my friend.

Panel 3 1/3 page bottom right

The camera is closer to KIRA, she's framed head to chest. We can see CB behind her. CB has her hands on KIRA's shoulders.

CB: Are you sure? (CINZEL)

KIRA: As sure as I'll ever be.



CHAPTER 15 – page 2

The panels are all irregular. See the storyboard to see the size and how they work together.

Panel 1 top left

Detail, the camera zooms on KIRA's eyes. She looks worried.

KIRA: OK, Nic. Let's do this.

Panel 2 detail.

KIRA holds a vial in the palm of her hand

Panel 3 – top middle (below panel 2) detail.

KIRA closed her hand around the vial.

Panel 4 top right

The camera is farther away from KIRA; she is framed from her head to her chest. She's injecting the contents of the vial.

KIRA (thought bubble): Urgh.. Bitter.

PANEL 5 detail

KIRA is cutting her wrist with the blade of a knife.

KIRA (caption box): Now for the fun part.

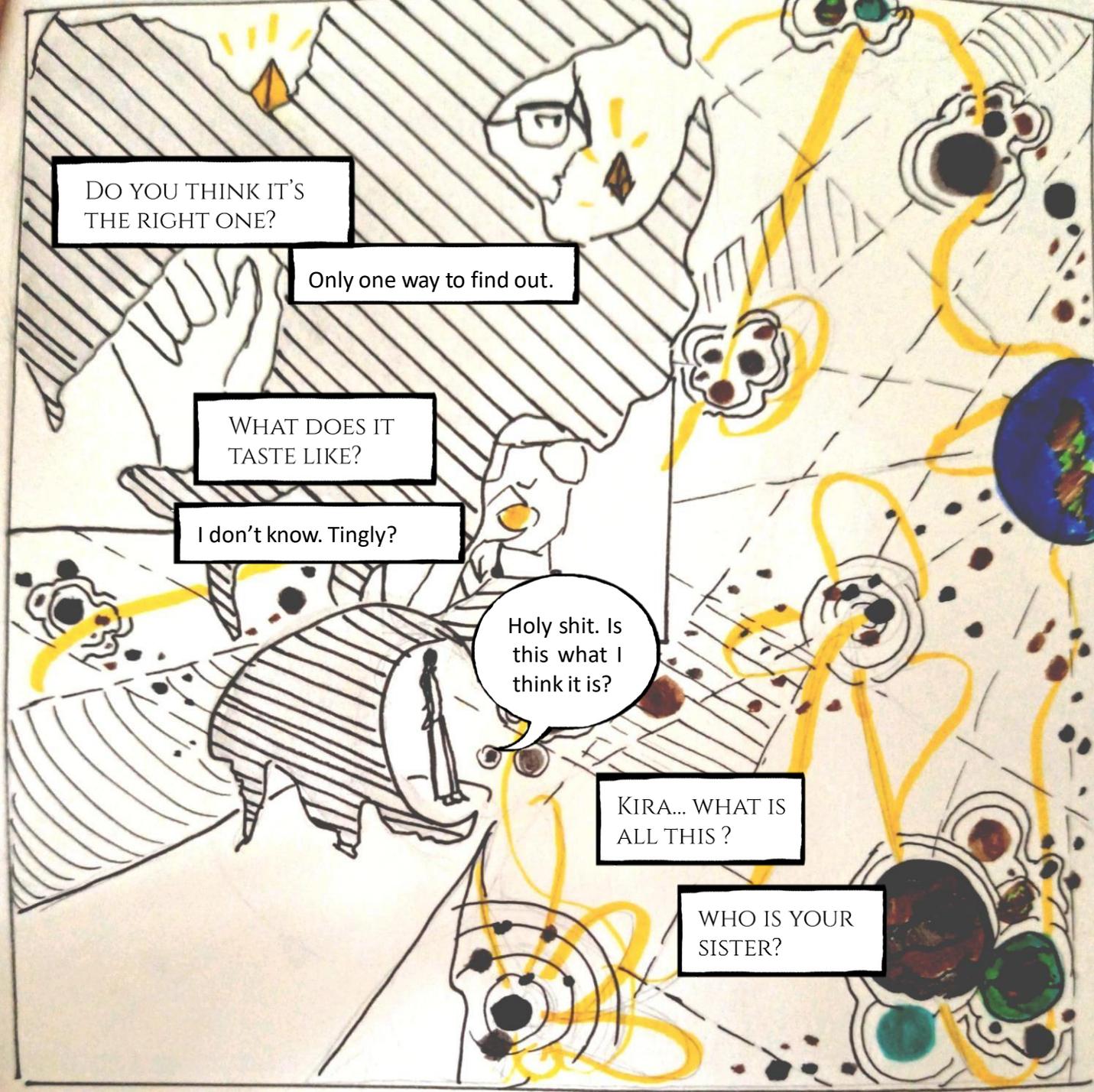
CB: Blood magic is so messy.

Panel 6 bigger than 1/2 bottom.

There's a round cocoon. KIRA is inside it. This cocoon is basically suspended in the void and around the cocoon, the seeds of power, shining brightly, float around in the darkness. KIRA's hand has pierced the cocoon as she tries to get a hold of the seed she needs.

CB: Now focus, you need the right seed. (CINZEL)

KIRA (caption box): Cem? Be quiet. OK universe, work your magic. I need to see what's wrong with my sister.



DO YOU THINK IT'S
THE RIGHT ONE?

Only one way to find out.

WHAT DOES IT
TASTE LIKE?

I don't know. Tingly?

Holy shit. Is
this what I
think it is?

KIRA... WHAT IS
ALL THIS ?

WHO IS YOUR
SISTER?

CHAPTER 15 – page 3

The panels are all irregular. See the storyboard to see the size and how they work together.

Panel 1 top left

The panel is partially covered by the cocoon as it gradually frays. The seed is in KIRA's hand.

CB: Do you think it's the right one? (CINZEL)

KIRA (caption box): Only one way to find out.

CB: What does it taste like? (CINZEL)

KIRA (caption box): I don't know. Tingly?

Panel 2 top middle detail.

The camera is on KIRA's right; we see her profile as she's about to ingest the seed which is floating in front of her.

Panel 3 top middle (below panel 2) detail.

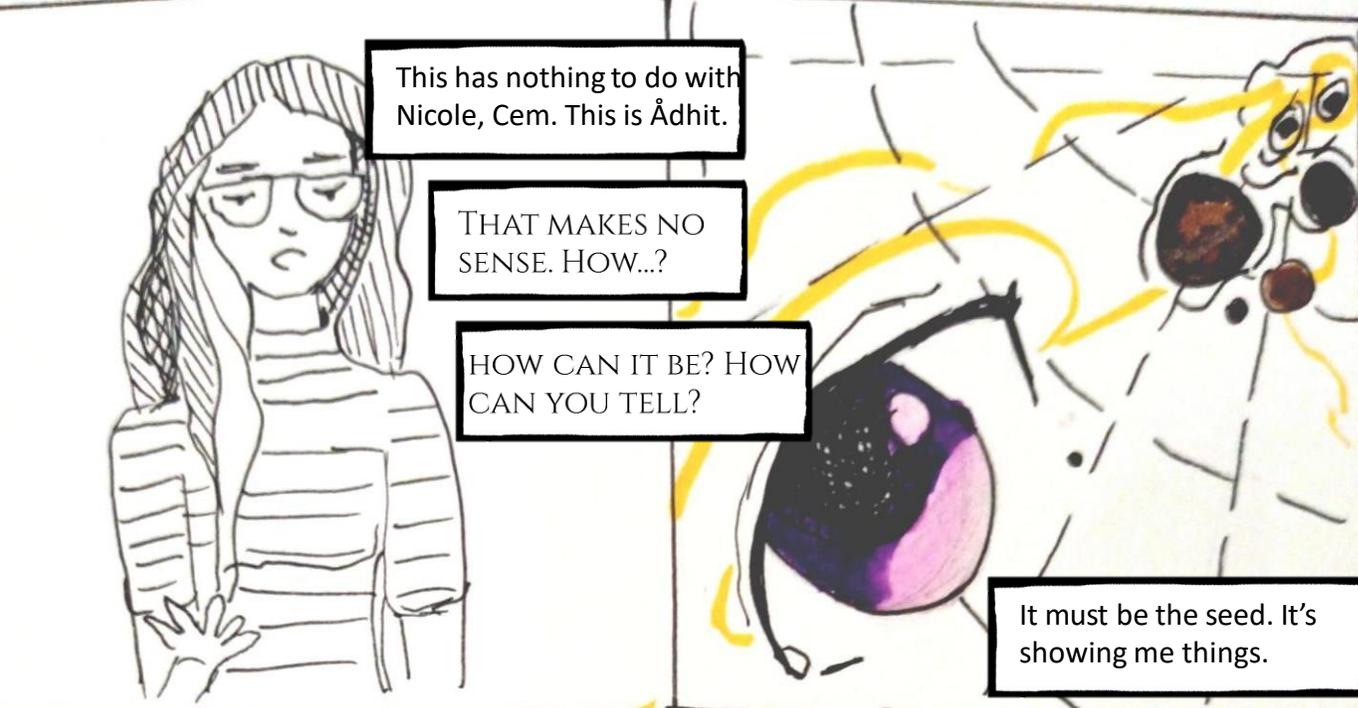
KIRA eats the seed. The camera frames her from the front.

Panel 4 top right and bottom. This panel occupies the rest of the page and it has an L shape.

On the left, KIRA is standing on one of the crooked paths, but the darkness of the void has lifted. The cocoon only covers KIRA's back, but it's quickly disappearing. KIRA sees yellow threads connecting planets.

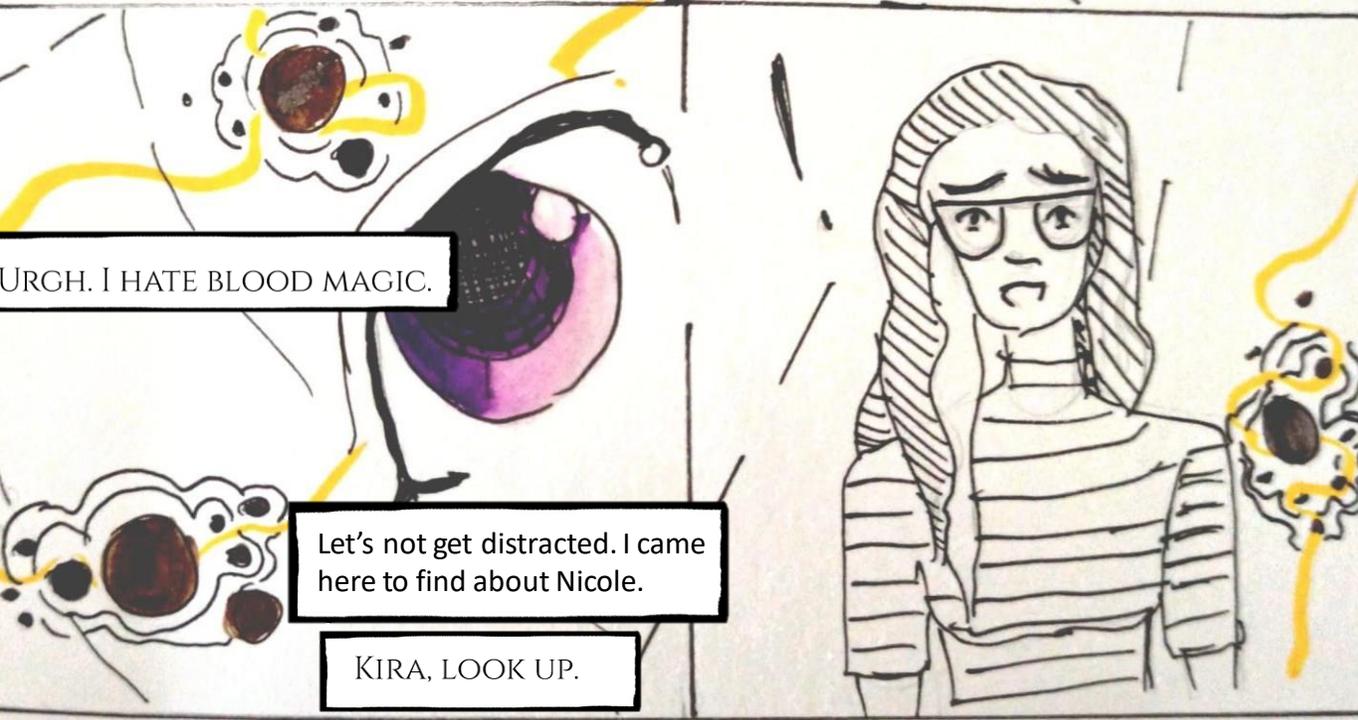
KIRA: Holy shit. Is this what I think it is?

CB: Kira... what is all this ? who is your sister? (CINZEL)



Panel 1 1/4 top left

The camera is framing KIRA from her head to her torso. She has undone her braid, and she has hair in her hand. More hair has gone white. No background. KIRA (caption box): This has nothing to do with Nicole, Cem. This is Ådhit. CB: That makes no sense. How...? how can it be? How can you tell? (CINZEL)



Panel 2 1/4 top right

Details from the previous page, planets huddled together and yellow strands. In the bottom left corner, there's a left purple eye staring at the camera. A mall in the left corner of the eye. KIRA (caption box): It must be the seed. It's showing me things.

Panel 3 1/4bottom left

Details from the previous page, planets huddled together and yellow strands. In the top right corner, there's a right purple eye staring at the camera. CB: Urgh. I hate blood magic. KIRA (caption box): Let's not get distracted. I came here to find about Nicole. CB: Kira, look up. (CINZEL)

Panel 4 1/4 bottom right

The camera is framing KIRA from her head to her torso. She has undone her braid. There's an exclamation mark on her right, she looks alarmed. There are more planets and yellow strands in the background.

Panel 1 full page

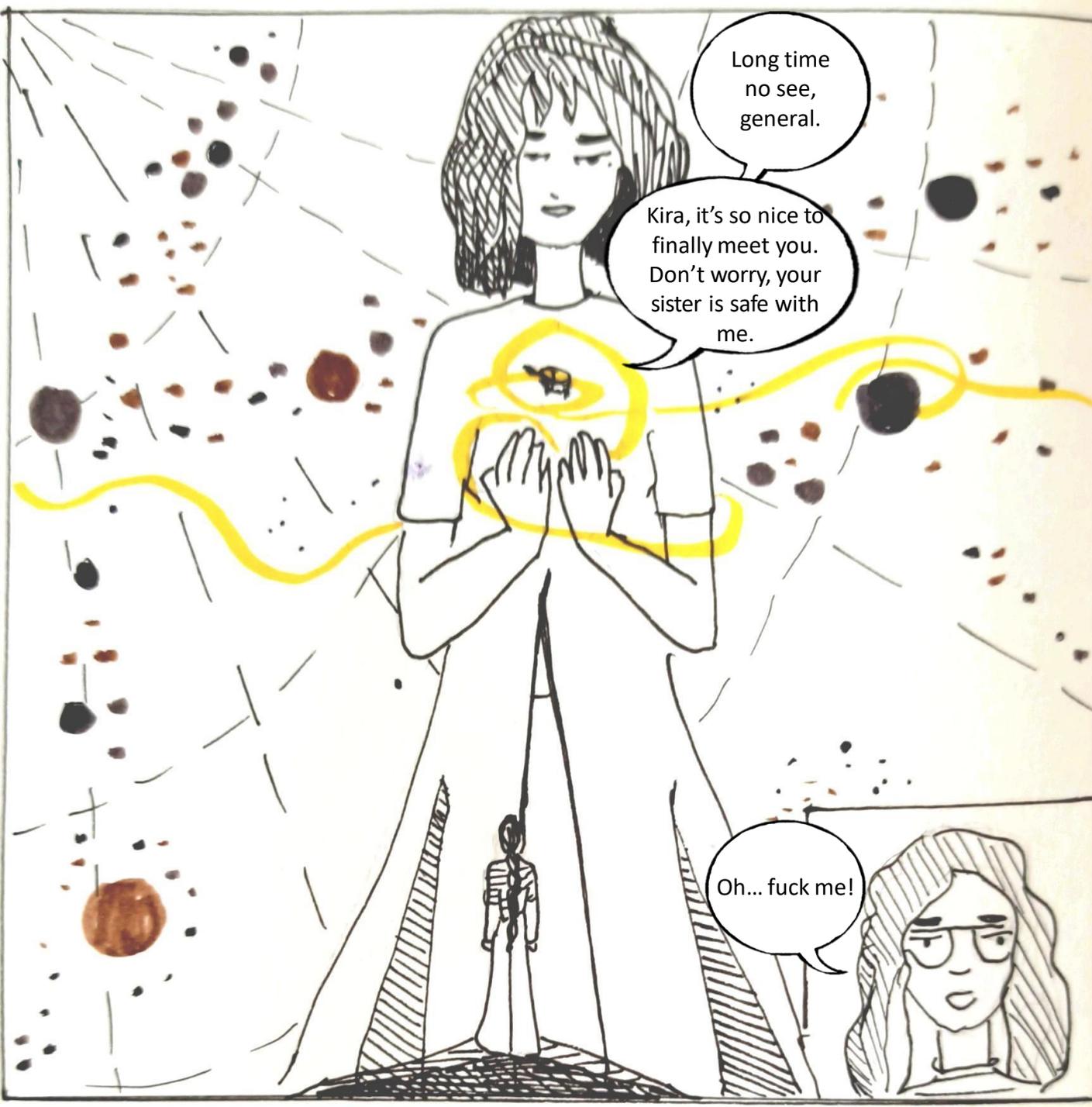
The camera is showing KIRA from the back; she looks dwarfed by an imposing figure. This figure is a tall woman with a wavy, short bob. She has a mole under her left eye. The figure has her hands in front of her and above her hands there is a person floating in foetal position. The unconscious person is connected to the woman by the yellow strand. In the background, we see glimpses from the background in page three, planets and galaxies connected by the strands. **KIRA has her braid done but should be undone (sorry, force of habit drawing with the braid).**

LILITH: Long time no see, general. Kira, it's so nice to finally meet you. Don't worry, your sister is safe with me.

Panel 2 bottom right corner inside panel 1

The camera is on KIRA's face (framed from her head to her neck). She's digesting the shock and the surprise, but looks more composed.

KIRA: Oh... fuck me!



16

We're not in Forest Hill anymore part 2

Nicole

CHAPTER 16 – page 1

All the panels will be rendered in black and purple.

Panel 1 detail inside panel 2 (top left corner).

The camera is looking at NICOLE and NICOLE is looking back, framed head to shoulder.

NICOLE: So, I'm dead.

LILITH: Not for long, I suspect. (CINZEL)

NICOLE: Groan (outside of balloon).

Panel 2 full page

NICOLE and LILITH are walking the crooked paths. They're framed first in the background, then in the middle ground. There's a door in the foreground. It looks just like any other door we have seen on the crooked paths.

LILITH: Open your hand. (CINZEL)

Panel 3 detail inside panel 2 (bottom right but not in the corner)

There's a key in NICOLE's hand.

NICOLE: Let me guess, it's for the door.

LILITH: You catch on quick. (CINZEL)

CHAPTER 16 – page 2

All the panels will be rendered in black and purple.

Panel 1 1/3 in height and length top left

The camera is behind NICOLE. We see her framed head to waist from the back. She's resting her right hand on the door.

NICOLE (though bubble): This feels familiar.

Panel 2 2/3 in length 1/3 height top right

The camera is behind NICOLE and LILITH. They're standing on the threshold. The SILVER LAKE stretches in front of them, hills and woods are on their left and right.

NICOLE: I've been here before.

LILITH: Many people in your family have crossed this threshold. Now come, I'll show you the path. (CINZEL)

Panel 3 rest of the page

The camera is on NICOLE and LILITH's right-hand side. They are walking a path that will take to the MAIN PLAZA. We can see a lot of trees and vegetation in the background.

NICOLE looks uneasy, while LILITH is relaxed.

NICOLE: I'm not sure I'll like it where we're going.

LILITH: What you're remembering and perceiving did not happen to you. (CINZEL)

All the panels will be rendered in black and purple.

Panel 1 1/2 top

The camera is on NICOLE and LILITH's right-hand side. They are walking a path that will take to the MAIN PLAZA. We can see less vegetation and more dilapidated, collapsed buildings in the background. NICOLE looks uneasy, while LILITH is relaxed.

NICOLE: How do you know this place?

LILITH: This place is called Ādhit. It's where I'm from. (CINZEL)

NICOLE (thought bubble): Who are you, mysterious lady?

LILITH: It'll make sense soon, I promise. (CINZEL)

Panel 2 detail across panels 1 and 3

The camera is close to NICOLE's face who look surprise and mildly scared.

NICOLE: How did you do that?

LILITH: chuckle. (CINZEL)

Panel 3 1/2 bottom

The camera is on NICOLE and LILITH's right-hand side. They are walking a path that will take to the MAIN PLAZA. We can see dilapidated, collapsed buildings in the background, just like in CHAPTER 9, page six, panel two. NICOLE looks sassy, while LILITH is chuckling.

NICOLE: Let me guess, it'll make sense soon.

LILITH: chuckle across balloon. You remind me of when I was younger. (CINZEL)

NICOLE: In my hallucinations, the path was always shorter.

All the panels will be rendered in black and purple.

Panel 1 2/3 in length 2/3 height top left

NICOLE and LILITH walk through the four statues of the guardians, two on each side. The camera shows us a bird-view of the last stretch of the path and the MAIN PLAZA. NICOLE and LILITH are seen from above, but the camera is too far to make any distinction.

LILITH: Those were not hallucinations. I mean, they were. They just didn't come from your brain. Do you know the vast majority of the people affected by your same tumour doesn't survive more than a year? (CINZEL)

NICOLE: Oh I know. I wasn't just a patient. I was a case.

Panel 2 1/3 in height and 2/3 length top right

The camera is on LILITH's face. She looks both angry and sad. She's framed head to waist.

LILITH: You were special in a way. (CINZEL)

NICOLE (off camera): That's a stretch.

Panel 3 1/3 in height and length bottom left

The camera is on LILITH's face. She looks both straight ahead at the camera. She's frowning slightly, her eyes are hard, her jaw is set. She's framed from head to waist.

LILITH: Do you know what happens to people like us, Nicole? (CINZEL)

NICOLE (off camera): Like us?

Panel 4 1/3 in height and length bottom middle

The camera is on LILITH's face. She looks straight ahead at the camera. Her frown is deeper, her eyes are hard, her jaw is set. She's framed from head to waist.

LILITH: Children refused by their family, kept out of sight, your existence a source of shame and rage for your siblings and parents? (CINZEL)

Panel 5 1/3 in height and length bottom right

The camera is on LILITH's face. She looks straight ahead at the camera. Her frown is deeper, but now she looks sad. She's framed from head to waist.

NICOLE (off camera): Did you die too?

This page is rectangular. All the panels will be rendered in black and purple.

Panel 1 1/2 page top

The camera is behind LILITH (right) and NICOLE (left). They are standing next to each other now, but there's some space between them (they're framed head to shoulders). In the distance, there are three people. Around them, the buildings of the MAIN PLAZA have all collapsed. Everything is in ruin.

LILITH: I did. (CINZEL)

NICOLE: How?

The space below is occupied by 3 panels, each 1/3 height full length.

Panel 2 1/3 page bottom left

NICOLE (right) and LILITH (left) share the frame. LILITH is looking at NICOLE. They're framed from their head to their chest. There's no background. NICOLE has her arms crossed below her chest. LILITH has her right arm extended towards the camera which frames them from the front. Show NICOLE's nodding (line movements).

LILITH: Do you want to go? (CINZEL)

NICOLE: Nod (outside balloon).

Panel 3 1/3 bottom middle.

NICOLE is framed from her head to her chest. There's no background. NICOLE has her arms crossed below her chest. She looks nervous.

NICOLE: So, tell me about your world.

Panel 4 1/3 bottom right.

LILITH is framed from her head to her chest. There's no background. LILITH looks relaxed. Her arms are behind her back.

LILITH: It wasn't the worst world possible, but pretty close. The power of life and creation belonged only to the Creator. We could manipulate the reality, the elements, the law of physics, all within the limits he had imposed. But then had-ais— (CINZEL)

NICOLE (off camera): Had-ais?

All the panels will be rendered in black and purple.

Panel 1 1/2 page top

The camera is in front of LILITH (left) and NICOLE (right). They are standing next to each other now, but there's some space between them (they're framed from head to shoulders). No background.

LILITH: That's us, our name. Some of us found out we could create life too, some of us could give birth. The Creator didn't like it; it was too much power; we took too much control away from him. (CINZEL)

NICOLE: What can you do?

Panel 2 detail inside panel 1 (bottom right but not in the corner)

The camera is on LILITH; she has an impish smile on her face.

LILITH: Everything. (CINZEL)

Panel 3 1/2 page bottom

The camera is behind LILITH (right) and NICOLE (left). They are standing next to each other now, but there's some space between them (they're framed head to shoulders). They are much closer to the three people. Around them, the buildings of the MAIN PLAZA have all collapsed. Everything is in ruin.

LILITH nudges NICOLE forth.

LILITH: Go ahead, I will be behind you. Remember, there's no need to be scared. (CINZEL)

NICOLE: Who's there?

LILITH: I think you know. (CINZEL)

All the panels will be rendered in black and purple.

Panel 1 detail inside panel 2 top left

The camera frames NICOLE from her head to her shoulders. She looks perplexed.

NICOLE: I thought this place was deserted.

Panel 2 1/2 page top left

The camera is in front of LILITH (left) and NICOLE (right). They are standing next to each other now, but there's some space between them (they're framed from head to shoulders).

NICOLE looks scared. No background.

LILITH: This is just a memory, no need to be scared. (CINZEL)

NICOLE: They can be more painful than reality.

Panel 3 detail inside panel 2 bottom right

The camera frames LILITH from her head to her shoulders. LILITH looks down and she's half-smiling.

Panel 4 1/2 bottom

The camera is behind NICOLE. She's kneeling in front of the three figures. Use the same references as CHAPTER 6, page five, panel one (LILITH flanked by LUCE and ARKTO).

NICOLE: This is you.

Panel 5 detail inside panel 4 bottom right

The camera frames LILITH from her head to her shoulders. She looks serene.

LILITH: It is. Don't you remember? I've died. (CINZEL)

NICOLE (off camera): Why?

All the panels will be rendered in black and purple.

Panel 1 1/4 top left

The camera frames LILITH from her head to her crotch. Her hands are in front of her, on top of the pommel of a sword. She looks serene.

LILITH: To serve a higher purpose. (CINZEL)

Panel 2 rest of the page (L-shape).

The camera is on the side. LILITH is portrayed on the left side of the panel. She's bent forward. She's holding her sword and has stabbed NICOLE with it. LILITH looks determined.

NICOLE is on the right side of the panel. She's standing taller, but she's bent forward because of the sword stabbing her. She looks surprised. She has her hands around the sword, there's blood coating her hands, down her clothes and dribbling down the sword.

LILITH: It's time you do the same. (CINZEL)

17

The Rebels

Kira

Panel 1 1/2 page top

There are three people in front of the camera occupying the frame, their back to the camera. There is no background behind them. MASON is on the left. He's wearing a coat. We can see the back of his head and neck. KIRA is in the middle. She's wearing a jacket and her hood is up. ARIEL is on the right, she's wearing a raincoat, her hood is down. Her hair is spilled over her hood. Both KIRA and ARIEL are smoking. ARIEL and MASON are talking, but KIRA is talking with CB so she doesn't pay attention to what they're saying. MASON and ARIEL: unintelligible.

CB: Are you worried? (CINZEL)

KIRA (caption box): You want to tell me the timing of this meeting isn't suspicious?

CB: Oh no, I think we're in trouble. (CINZEL)

Panel 2 1/2 page bottom

The camera is farther away from the three figures who are walking up the step of a manor (See reference, more details need to be worked into the walls of the manor), there's a person greeting them at the door but KIRA doesn't pay attention to her surrounding because she is talking with CB. MASON and ARIEL: unintelligible.

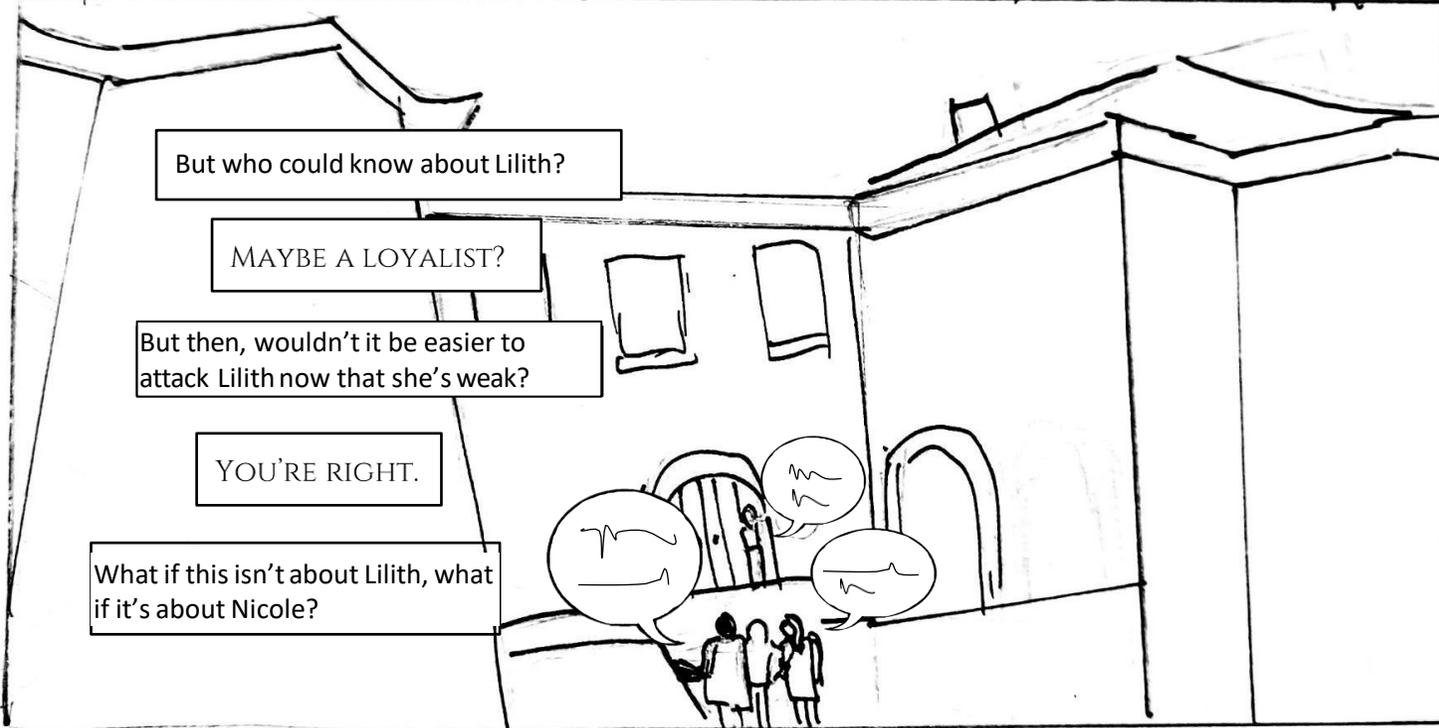
KIRA (caption box): But who could know about Lilith?

CB: Maybe a loyalist? (CINZEL)

KIRA (caption box): But then, wouldn't it be easier to attack Lilith now that she's weak?

CB: You're right. (CINZEL)

KIRA (caption box): What if this isn't about Lilith, what if it's about Nicole?



The next two panels establish the richness of the mansion

Panel 1 1/2 page top

ARIEL and MASON are framed in the distance by the door as they walk up the stairs. They're framed from the side. KIRA is talking with CB. The camera shows us the sitting room.

ARIEL: unintelligible.

CB: I'm not following. (CINZEL)

KIRA (off camera) (caption box) : Sigh... neither am I... honestly, I'm grasping at straws.

CB: I know you trust him, but what about Mason? (CINZEL)

KIRA (off camera) (caption box) : And I know you don't trust him and Hananaet, but how could they know?

CB (off camera): They're more powerful than you think. (CINZEL)

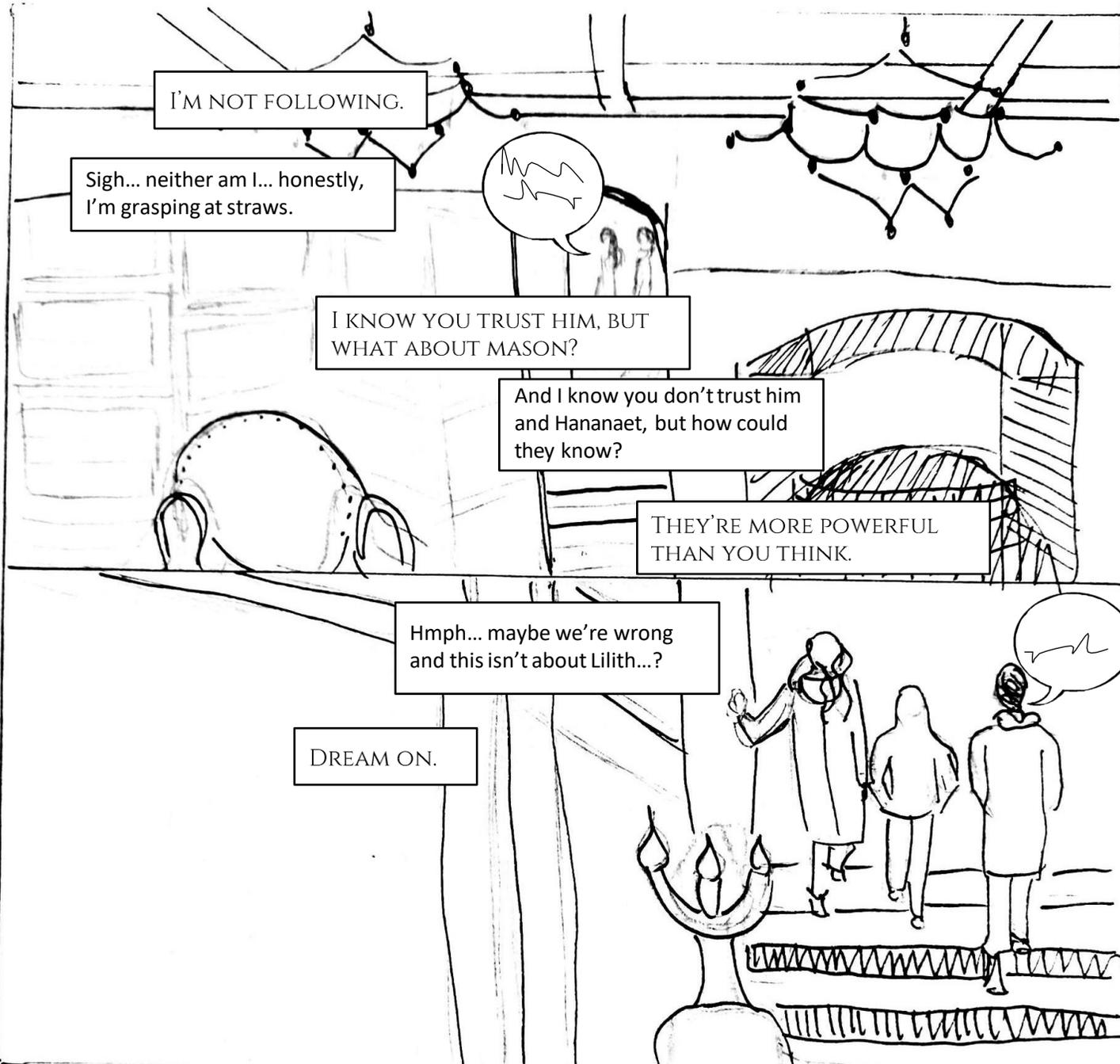
Panel 2 1/2 page bottom

The camera is closer to the three figures who are walking up the stairs to another floor of the mansion (see reference). MASON and ARIEL are still talking, but KIRA doesn't pay attention to her surrounding because she is talking with CB.

MASON: unintelligible.

KIRA (caption box): Hmph... maybe we're wrong and this isn't about Lilith...?

CB: Dream on. (CINZEL)



I'M NOT FOLLOWING.

Sigh... neither am I... honestly, I'm grasping at straws.

~

I KNOW YOU TRUST HIM, BUT WHAT ABOUT MASON?

And I know you don't trust him and Hananaet, but how could they know?

THEY'RE MORE POWERFUL THAN YOU THINK.

Hmph... maybe we're wrong and this isn't about Lilith...?

DREAM ON.

~

Panel 1 detail inside panel 2

The camera frames the shadow of the three figures as they approach the library of the mansion. There are people talking inside.

CB: Ok Kira, we're here. Look alive. (CINZEL)

REBELS: Unintelligible

Panel 2 1/2 rest of the page, L shape.

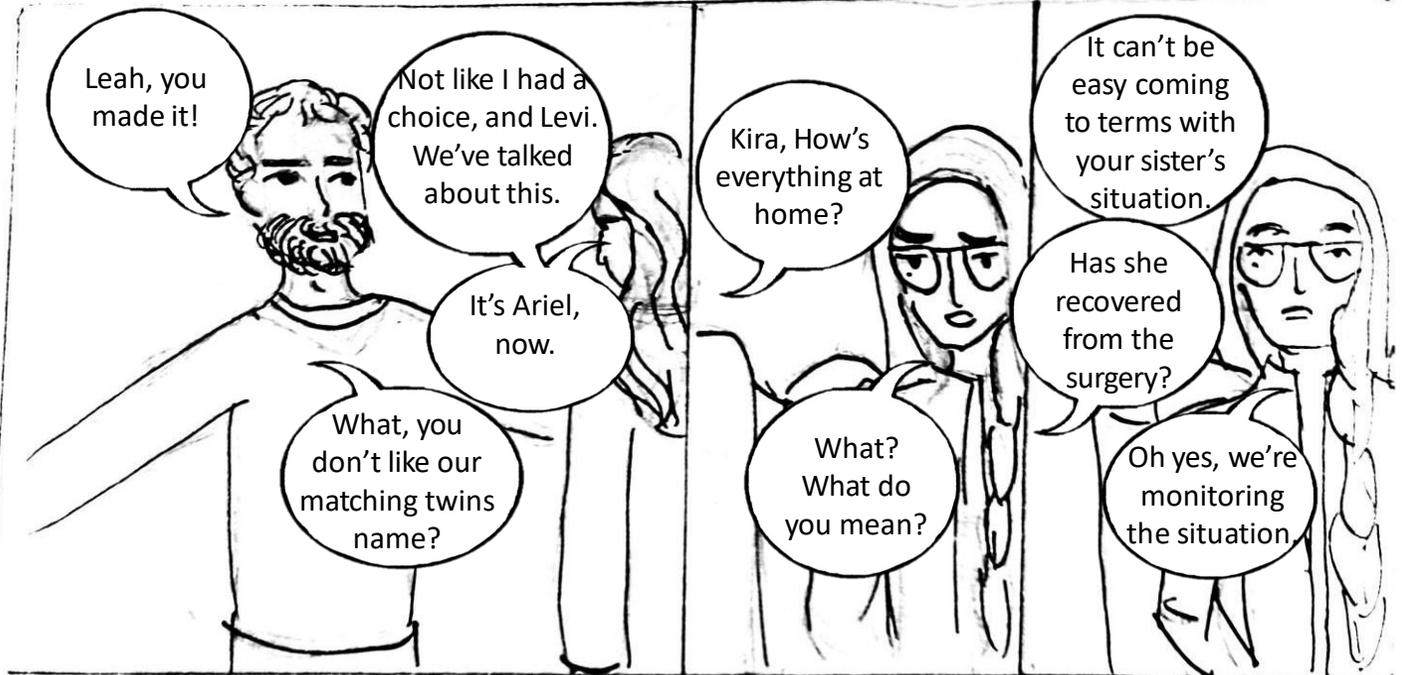
The camera frames a young girl with long hair from the back (it's supposed to be straight and black). There are three people talking on the left they're partially hidden by panel 1. In front of the camera, beyond the young girl, there's a fireplace, above the fireplace there's an old-style, rich people, family portrait. The boy on the right is LEVI (LUCIPHER), the girl on the left is ARIEL (LUMEN). They're twins.

REBELS: Unintelligible

Panel 3 detail inside panel 2

LEVI realises MASON, KIRA, and ARIEL have arrived.





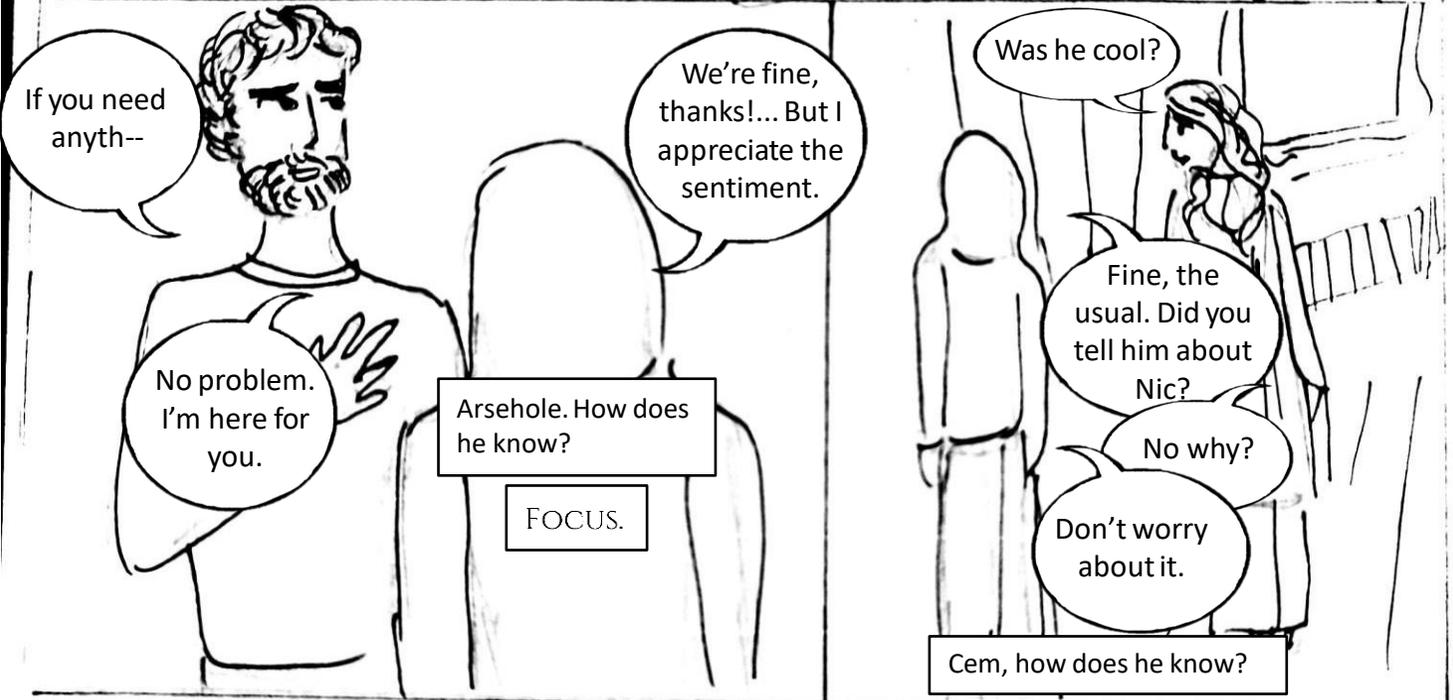
Panel 1 1/4 top left
 LEVI is shown with open arms as he welcomes his sister ARIEL; she looks unimpressed by his good mood. ARIEL is shown at an angle from the back. We only see a sliver of her face as she's also covered by her hair.
 LEVI: Leah, you made it!
 ARIEL: Not like I had a choice, and Levi. We've talked about this. It's Ariel, now.
 LEVI: What, you don't like our matching twins name

Panel 2 1/6 top middle
 The camera frames KIRA head to chest. We only see a detail of LEVI. He has a hand on KIRA' shoulder. She has a look of mistrust on her face.
 LEVI: Kira, How's everything at home?
 KIRA: What? What do you mean?

Panel 3 1/6 top right
 The camera frames KIRA head to chest. We only see a detail of LEVI. He has a hand on KIRA' shoulder. She looks slightly taken aback.
 LEVI: It can't be easy coming to terms with your sister's situation.
 KIRA: Oh yes, we're monitoring the situation.

Panel 4 1/4 bottom left
 The camera is back on LEVI. He's shown with a hand on his heart. KIRA is shown from the back.
 LEVI: If you need anyth—
 KIRA: We're fine, thanks!... But I appreciate the sentiment.
 LEVI: No problem. I'm here for you.
 KIRA (caption box): Arsehole. How does he know?
 CB: Focus. (CINZEL)

Panel 5 1/4 bottom right
 The camera is BEHIND KIRA and ARIEL. ARIEL is indicating a place where they can go sit down.
 ARIEL: Was he cool?
 KIRA: Fine, the usual. Did you tell him about Nic?
 ARIEL: No why?
 KIRA: Don't worry about it.
 KIRA (caption box): Cem, how does he know?



Panel 3 1/6 top right
 The camera frames KIRA head to chest. We only see a detail of LEVI. He has a hand on KIRA' shoulder. She looks slightly taken aback.
 LEVI: It can't be easy coming to terms with your sister's situation.
 KIRA: Oh yes, we're monitoring the situation.

Panel 4 1/4 bottom left
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 KIRA: We're fine, thanks!... But I appreciate the sentiment.
 LEVI: No problem. I'm here for you.
 KIRA (caption box): Arsehole. How does he know?
 CB: Focus. (CINZEL)

Panel 5 1/4 bottom right
 The camera is BEHIND KIRA and ARIEL. ARIEL is indicating a place where they can go sit down.
 ARIEL: Was he cool?
 KIRA: Fine, the usual. Did you tell him about Nic?
 ARIEL: No why?
 KIRA: Don't worry about it.
 KIRA (caption box): Cem, how does he know?

Panel 1 full page

The camera is behind LEVI who's casting a large shadow on the parquet. Next to him, there's his right hand Sue (NEVE). In front of him, seven of the Rebel council sit on the covered sofa. The room is dark behind the sofas. LEVI: Brothers and sisters, it's been a long time, at least in human terms. I'm assuming you've all been wondering the reason for such a sudden and rushed meeting. We've got some news! ARIEL: whisper: Such a drama queen. MASON: whisper: Shhh!



Such a drama queen.

Shhh!

Brothers and sisters, it's been a long time, at least in human terms. I'm assuming you've all been wondering the reason for such a sudden and rushed meeting.

We've got some news!



CHAPTER 17 – page 6

Panel 1 1/4 top left (triangular shape)

The parquet underneath their feet changes, and it looks liquid.

ARIEL (whisper balloon): Special effects, this is new.

MASON (whisper balloon): Ariel, shut up.

Panel 2 1/4 top right (triangular shape)

The floorboards wrap around something. It looks a bit like a vortex.

Panel 3 1/3 bottom left

A tendril wraps around KIRA. She's sitting next to MASON and the camera partially frames them. Neither is fully inside the panel, but we see more of KIRA.

KIRA (thought bubble): This is odd.

Panel 4 2/3 bottom right

KIRA IS framed head to chest. There are images around her, she doesn't know who they belong to or what is happening.

KIRA (thought bubble): Whose memories are these?



Panel 1 smaller than 1/4 top left. It overlaps with panel 2 (panel 1 is on top). A figure emerges from the vortex. GREGON is shown head to chest. GREGON is wearing a raincoat. He looks in his mid-forties with a beard and a bold spot. MASON (whisper balloon): Oh fuck, it's Gregön. ARIEL (whisper balloon): Mason, you know this guy? REBEL: whisper: Shhhh!

Panel 2 bigger than 1/4 top right. It overlaps with panel 1 (panel 1 is on top). LEVI is next to GREGON. GREGON is now framed head to below the crotch. LEVI has his right hand on GREGON's shoulder, but LEVI stands a bit the back. LEVI is taller than GREGON. LEVI: Well, that was quite the entrance. Brothers and sisters, I've lost count of the centuries that we've spent away from home, but now, we might finally head back. REBEL (whisper balloon): What?! Is Lilith-- REBEL (whisper balloon): Shhhh! REBEL (whisper balloon): No way! REBEL (whisper balloon): Does it mean...

Panel 3 1/4 bottom left KIRA is angry at GREGON and LEVI. We see MASON sitting next to KIRA, but he's covered by the balloons. LEVI (off camera): Yes, her whereabouts are still unaccounted for, but Lilith has finally reincarnated. She's back! REBEL (whisper balloon): No way REBEL (whisper balloon): How long has it been? REBEL (whisper balloon): Holy shit! REBEL (whisper balloon): So, it's time?

Panel 4 1/4 bottom right KIRA is alone in the frame. She has tilted her head to the side, she's leaning forward and is resting her forearms on her legs. ARIEL (whisper balloon): Kira... don't. KIRA: And how do you know that she's back? What evidence do you have, Gregön?

Panel 1 1/4 top left

KIRA has stood up from the sofa and has walked towards LEVI and GREGÖN. The camera is behind LEVI and GREGON and is facing KIRA. No background.
KIRA: We're all connected. I can feel every single had-au in this room. I could feel you miles away.

Panel 2 1/4 top right

KIRA is framed head to chest, the right arm is below her chest, her left elbow rests covers the other hand. No background.
KIRA: But Lilith is not on my radar, neither on anyone else's I suspect, least of all Lucifer's. So, I repeat my question, what kind of evidence do you have?

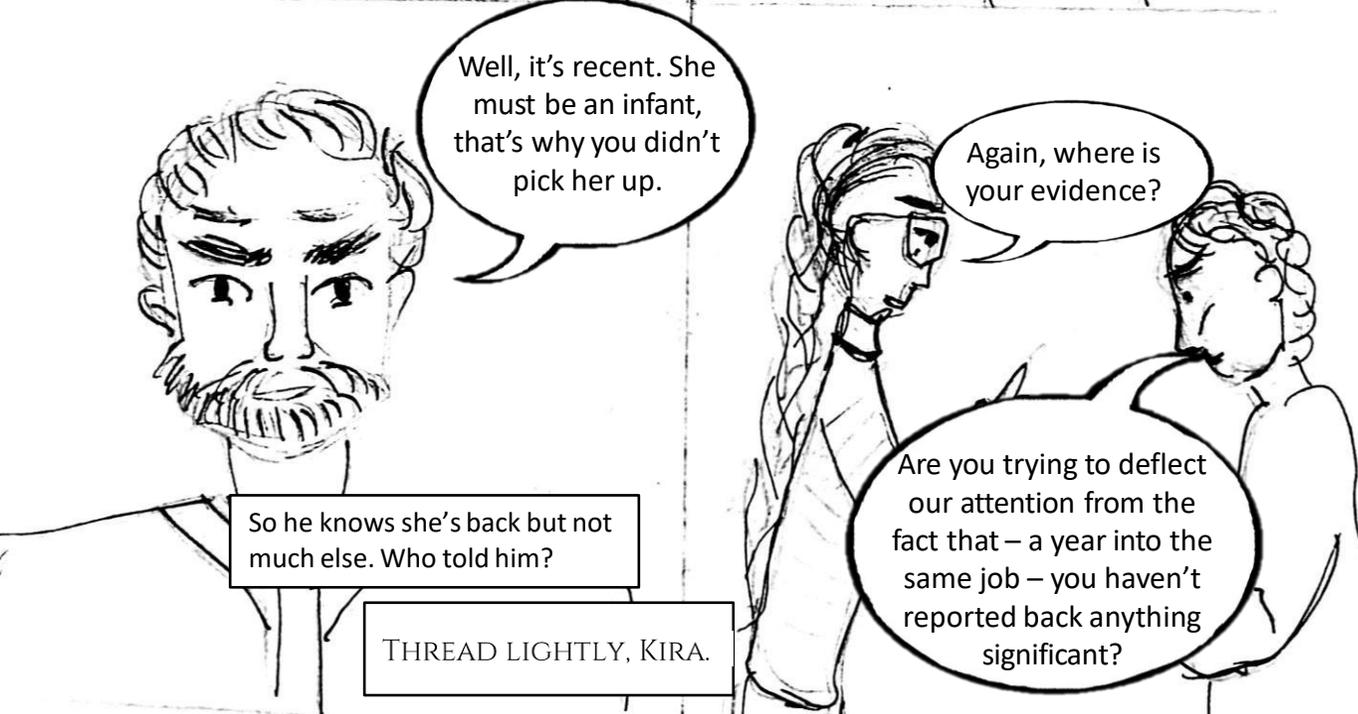
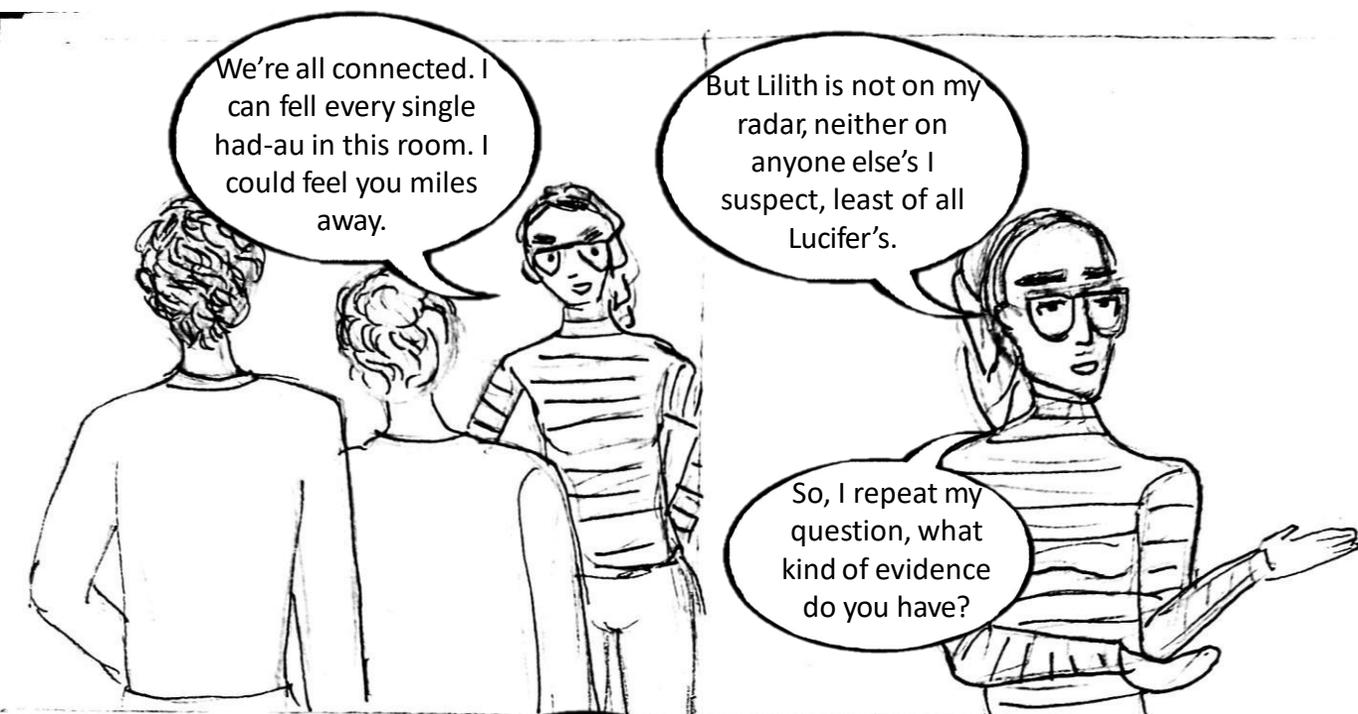
Panel 3 1/4 bottom left

GREGÖN is framed head to shoulders. He looks furious.
GREGÖN: Well, it's recent. She must be an infant, that's why you didn't pick her up.
KIRA (caption box): So he knows she's back but not much else. Who told him?

CB: Thread lightly, Kira. (CINZEL)

Panel 4 1/4 bottom right

The camera is on KIRA and GREGON's side. They're both really angry and talking over each other, gesticulating at each other.
KIRA: Again, where is your evidence?
GREGÖN: Are you trying to deflect our attention from the fact that – a year into the same job – you haven't reported back anything significant?



Panel 1 1/4 top left

KIRA picks up her jacket and leaves. We see the door to the room in the background.

KIRA: Think what you will, at least I'm not a turncloak. I haven't forgotten on which side you started this war, Gregön.

Three bars to show passage of time

Panel 2 three bars to show passage of time + squared box

Detail: all the cigarette butts at KIRA's feet.

ARIEL (off camera): That was quite the show.

KIRA: Piss off Ariel. I'm not in the mood.

Panel 3 1/3 length 1/2 height bottom left

MASON and ARIEL are in the frame. MASON has his back to the camera, while we see ARIEL's profile.

ARIEL: Mason, could you check with my brother that Miss Morgan isn't in too much trouble?

Panel 4 2/3 length 1/2 height bottom right

KIRA and ARIEL are leaning against the car. KIRA is smoking. ARIEL has her arms crossed below her chest.

ARIEL: Now that it's just us... you want to tell me where you've stashed Lilith?

KIRA: I don't know what you're talking about.

ARIEL: Fine, let's keep pretending, then. Just remember Kira, I taught you to smoke and insert tampons. You owe me.



18

Echoes part 3

Luce

The conversation in this chapter is all in CINZEL.

Panel 1 Full page

LUCE and ADAM are framed from the back. They're sitting on the roof of a building. It's night, full moon. They have the hills in front of them.

ADAM: So, tell me more about Earth.

LUCE: Ok, so they've tried to explain this to me, but I've never really got it. Apparently, their world moves and depending where they are, the weather changes. So sometimes it's hot and sometimes it's cold.

ADAM: Fascinating.

LUCE: Wait until you see snow for the first time.

ADAM: Snow?



SO, TELL ME MORE ABOUT EARTH.

OK, SO THEY'VE TRIED TO EXPLAIN THIS TO ME, BUT I'VE NEVER REALLY GOT IT.

APPARENTLY, THEIR WORLD MOVES AND DEPENDING ON WHERE THEY ARE, THE WEATHER CHANGES. SO SOMETIMES IT'S HOT AND SOMETIMES IT'S COLD.

FASCINATING.

WAIT UNTIL YOU SEE SNOW FOR THE FIRST TIME.

SNOW?

Panel 1 1/2 page top

The camera is now facing LUCE and ADAM. They are sitting on a roof. LUCE's legs are spread open while ADAM has his legs against his chest. ADAM looks away from LUCE, he's thoughtful.

LUCE: Yes. It's... well, water, an in-between state. Water, snow, ice.

ADAM: How do you know so much about it?

LUCE: Raphael and I used to travel a lot there. It's a magical place. So... alive. Everything is so... still here.

LUCE (in caption box): The smart thing about Dio's system was that if you didn't look at it too much, you almost believed you were free. He gave us options.

Panel 2 1/4 page bottom left

Close up on LUCE's face. She's trying to soothe ADAM's worries.

LUCE: You'll be safe, won't you?

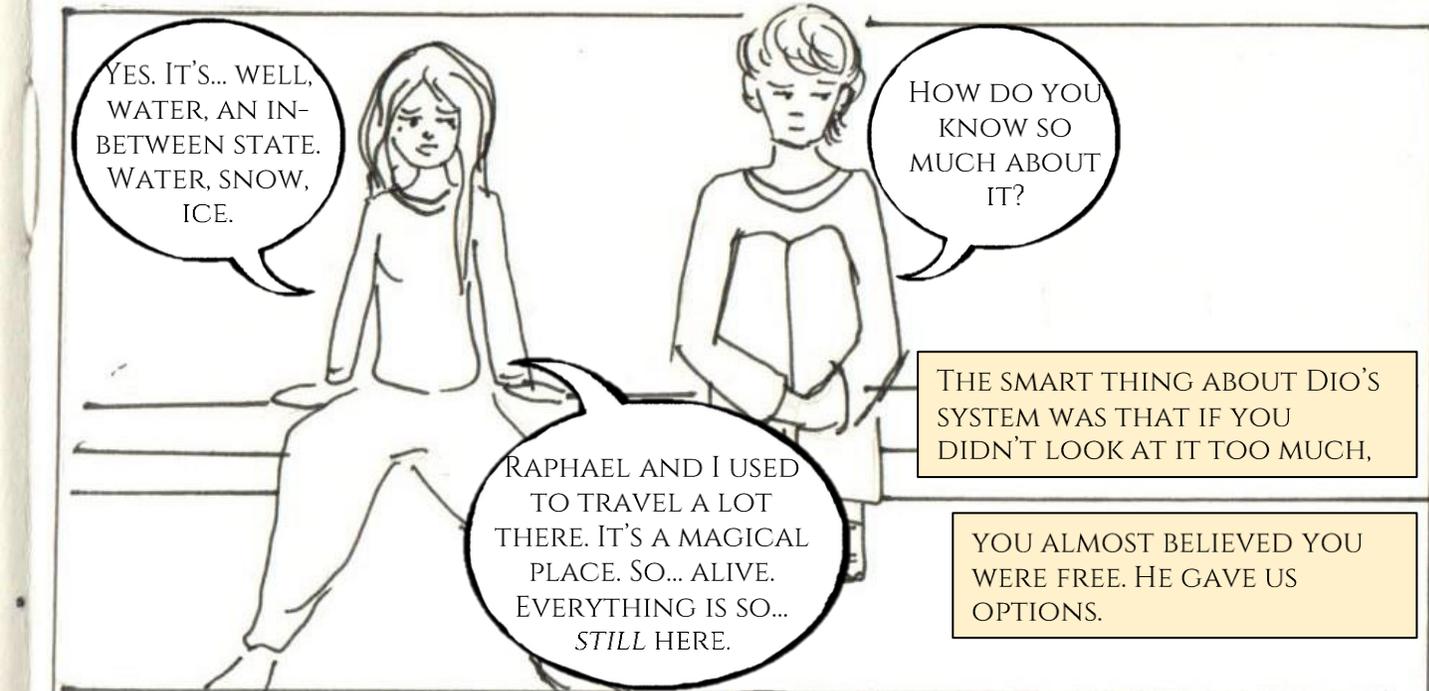
Panel 3 1/4 page bottom right

Close up on ADAM's face. He's arguing against LUCE's choice.

ADAM: Me? I'm more concerned about you. Why didn't you take this job?

We all know Raphael has had his eyes on you since... forever, really.

LUCE (off camera): It's complicated (sigh across balloon).



Panel 1 1/2 page top

The camera is now facing LUCE and ADAM. They are sitting on a roof. LUCE has her legs against her chest. She's looking down, she looks worried. ADAM is looking at LUCE.

LUCE: It's easy to get lost in Raphael's element. It's dark, it goes deep, you can never see the end, it's scary. You'll be fine though, you're Uriel's brightest pupil. If she says you're ready, there's nothing you can't do. Just watch out.

LUCE (in caption box): But I was an anomaly.

Panel 2 1/4 page bottom left

LUCE is framed head to chest, ADAM's hand is on her shoulder.

LUCE: Please don't get killed.

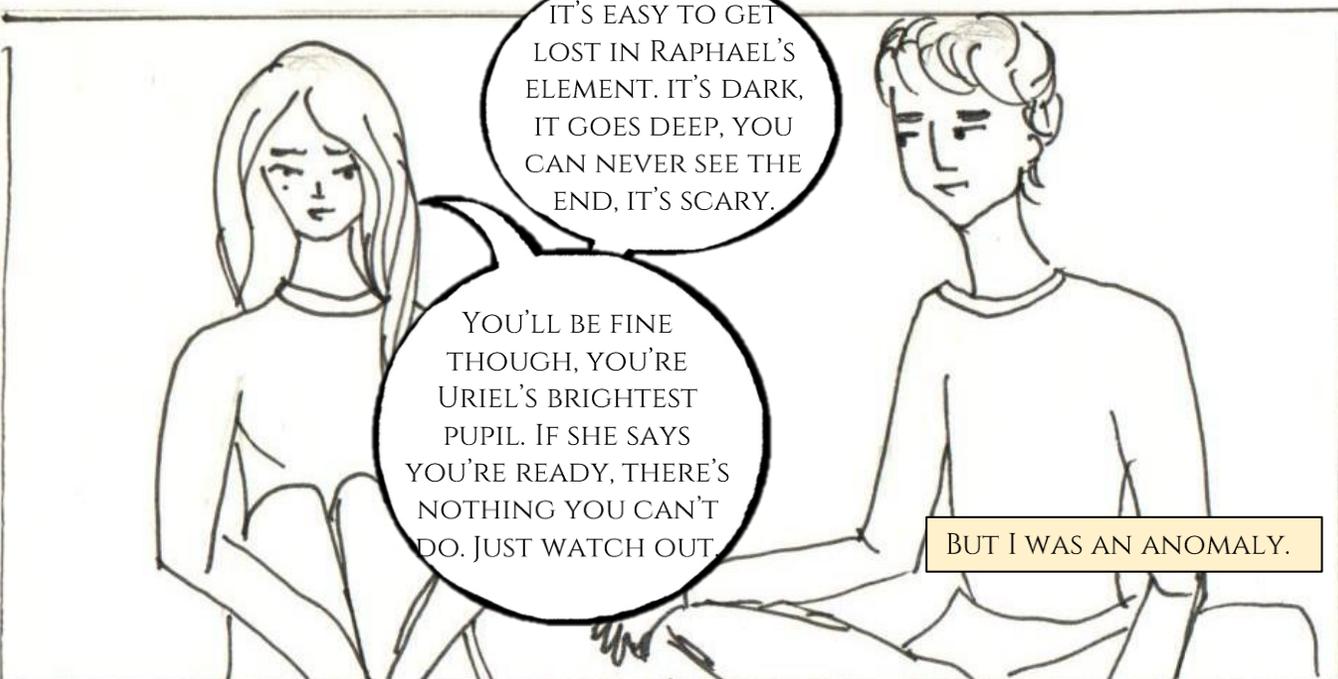
ADAM: same goes for you.

Panel 3 1/4 page bottom right

Close up on ADAM, he's framed head to chest. He's leaning slightly backwards. He's looking up and to his right at LUCE.

ADAM: Will we even remember each other? They say that before you join your squad, Megami makes you forget certain things. Is it true?

LUCE (off camera): I don't know.



IT'S EASY TO GET LOST IN RAPHAEL'S ELEMENT. IT'S DARK, IT GOES DEEP, YOU CAN NEVER SEE THE END, IT'S SCARY.

YOU'LL BE FINE THOUGH, YOU'RE URIEL'S BRIGHTEST PUPIL. IF SHE SAYS YOU'RE READY, THERE'S NOTHING YOU CAN'T DO. JUST WATCH OUT.

BUT I WAS AN ANOMALY.



PLEASE DON'T GET KILLED.

SAME GOES FOR YOU.



WILL WE EVEN REMEMBER EACH OTHER?

I DON'T KNOW.

THEY SAY THAT BEFORE YOU JOIN YOUR SQUAD, MEGAMI MAKES YOU FORGET CERTAIN THINGS. IS IT TRUE?

Panel 1 full page

LUCE and ADAM are framed from the top. They're sitting on the roof of a building. It's night, full moon. ADAM is leaning on the roof, while LUCE is sitting. They're both looking up and they look content.

ADAM: yeah right, I know you do and if you're not telling me, it means it's true.

LUCE: Ok, I'll tell you a secret. If you think about me intensely, she'll let you keep your memories of me.

ADAM: Will you think of me?

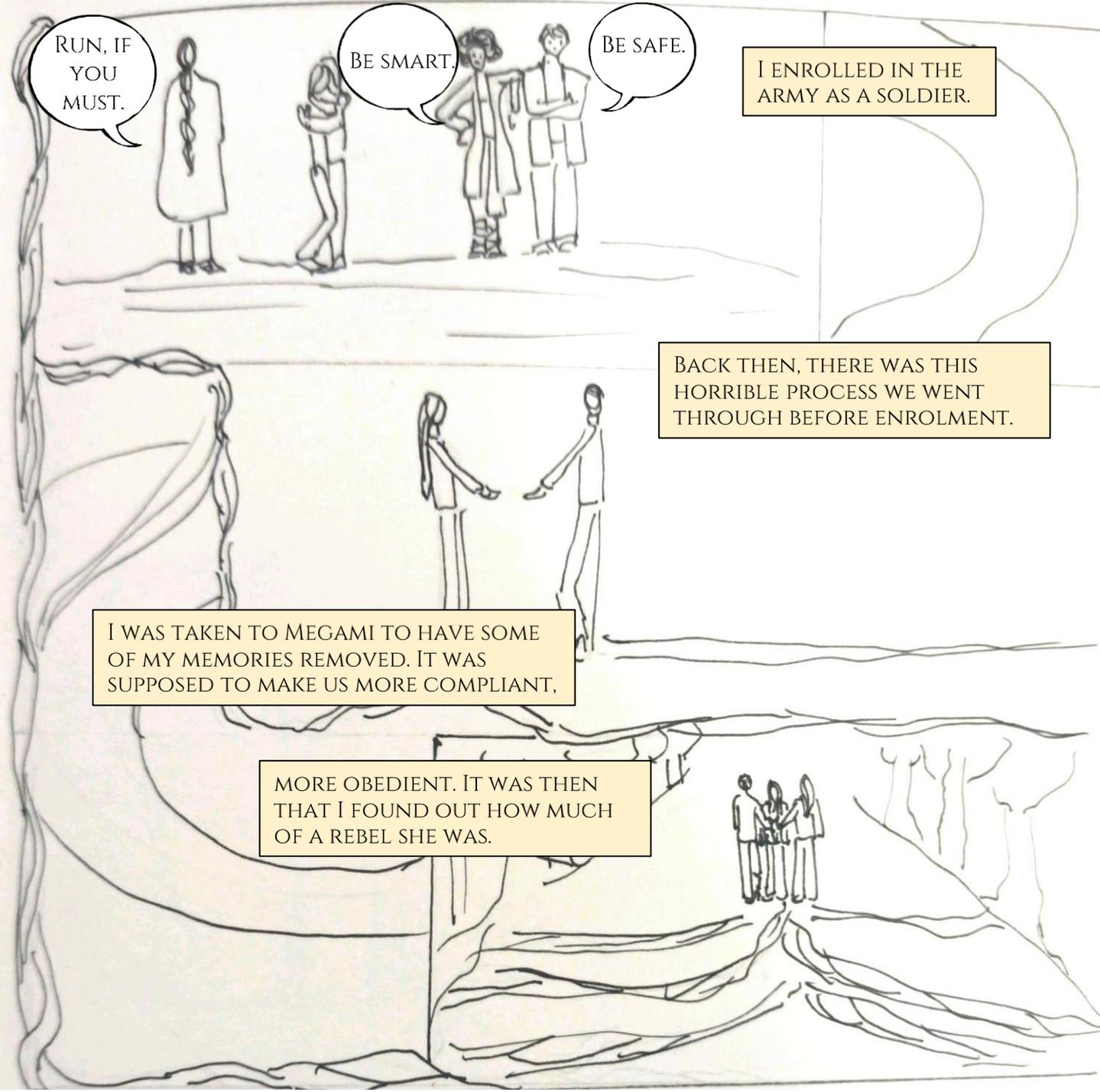
LUCE: I'll try.

ADAM: I'll miss you Lux.

LUCE: I'll miss you too, Adam.

LUCE (in caption box): Dio wanted me to be one thing, the guardians something else. Luckily, I had the chance to refuse both and do my thing.





RUN, IF YOU MUST.

BE SMART.

BE SAFE.

I ENROLLED IN THE ARMY AS A SOLDIER.

BACK THEN, THERE WAS THIS HORRIBLE PROCESS WE WENT THROUGH BEFORE ENROLMENT.

I WAS TAKEN TO MEGAMI TO HAVE SOME OF MY MEMORIES REMOVED. IT WAS SUPPOSED TO MAKE US MORE COMPLIANT,

MORE OBEDIENT. IT WAS THEN THAT I FOUND OUT HOW MUCH OF A REBEL SHE WAS.

CHAPTER 18 – page 5

There's a picture that I would like to use as a background against which we could set the panels, CHAPTER 1, page 1. There are roots developing from the background that frame each panel as they culminate in the final panel.

Panel 1 2/3 top left

The camera shows us five figures from a distance, we can see who they are, but their faces are only hinted. RAPHAEL is standing, back to the camera, on the left. LUCE and URIEL are hugging in the middle. MISSEI and GABRIEL are standing next to each other on the right.

GABRIEL: Be safe.

MISSEI: Be smart.

RAPHAEL: Run, if you must.

LUCE (caption box): I enrolled in the army as a soldier. Back then, there was this horrible process we went through before enrolment.

Panel 2 2/3 middle right

LUCE greets ADAM before she's taken away.

LUCE (caption box): I was taken to Megami to have some of my memories removed. It was supposed to make us more compliant,

Panel 3 2/3 bottom right

LUCE is flanked by two soldiers. They walk down a boulevard. The roots on each side of the panels culminate behind LUCE as if they were her shadow.

LUCE (caption box): More obedient. It was then that I found out how much of a rebel she was.



SHE DIDN'T REMOVE THEM?

WHY?

SHE WAS DOING HER OWN THING.

NEITHER MINE, NOR ANYONE ELSE'S.

GASP!

DO YOU RENOUNCE YOUR NAME? DO YOU SWEAR YOUR POWER TO THE SERVICES OF OUR CAUSE?

YOU DON'T HAVE TO DO THIS!

NOD

Panel 1 2/3 top left

The camera takes the scene from the distance. There's a figure framed by the entrance of a cave. The woman is shown full figure, there's a table behind her.

LILITH (caption box): She didn't remove them?

LUCE (caption box): Neither mine, nor anyone else's.

LILITH (caption box): Why?

LUCE (caption box): She was doing her own thing.

Panel 2 1/3 top right detail

MEGAMI gasps as she's surprised to see LUCE.

MEGAMI: Gasp!

Panel 3 bigger than 1/4 in height bottom left

The camera is on LUCE and MEGAMI's side. They're both shown full-figure but LUCE is kneeling in front of MEGAMI. No background.

MEGAMI: Do you renounce your name? Do you swear your power to the services of our cause?

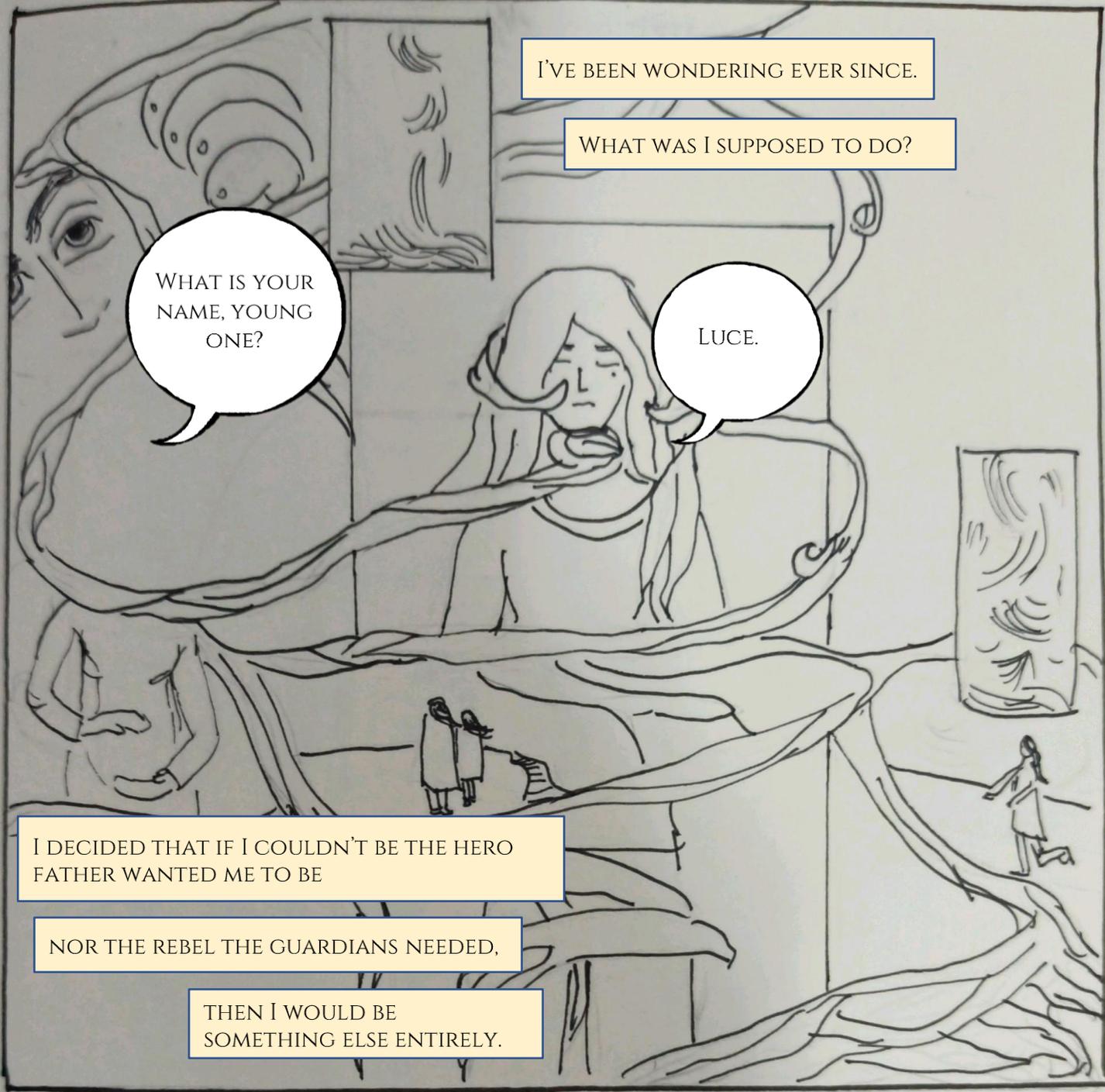
Panel 4 detail across panels 3 and 4

MEGAMI's hand on LUCE's head.

Panel 5 bigger than 1/4 in bottom right

The camera is on LUCE and MEGAMI's side. MEGAMI has her forehead pushed against LUCE's forehead. They're framed head to chest. No background.

MEGAMI (whisper balloon): You don't have to do this!



I'VE BEEN WONDERING EVER SINCE.

WHAT WAS I SUPPOSED TO DO?

WHAT IS YOUR NAME, YOUNG ONE?

LUCE.

I DECIDED THAT IF I COULDN'T BE THE HERO FATHER WANTED ME TO BE

NOR THE REBEL THE GUARDIANS NEEDED,

THEN I WOULD BE SOMETHING ELSE ENTIRELY.

CHAPTER 18 – page 7 – this page is a collection of scenes from LUCE's memories being erased.

Panel 1 full page

KIRA is laying in the middle of the page on top of MEGAMI's bed. Roots are wrapped around different points of LUCE's body. MEGAMI is also shaving LUCE's hair (detail panels at the top and in the middle).

The memories are framed by the roots in order from top to bottom:

1. MEGAMI's interrupted pregnancies,
2. DIO's eyes,
3. MEGAMI's full belly
4. LUCE and RAPHAEL visiting Earth,
5. LUCE running down the crooked paths.

LUCE (caption box): I've been wondering ever since. What was I supposed to do? I decided that if I couldn't be the hero father wanted me to be, nor the rebel the guardians needed, then I would be something else entirely.

MEGAMI (off camera): What is your name, young one?

LUCE: Luce.



WHAT IS YOUR NAME, YOUNG ONE?

WHATEVER PLEASES THE CREATOR.

Panel 1 1/4 page top left

LUCE is sitting on the table. The roots lay limp on each side of her, she's touching her shaved forehead. She. She looks a bit disoriented. MEGAMI (off camera): What is your name, young one?

Panel 2 1/4 top right

Close up on LUCE's face. She is framed head to shoulders and looks drowsy. LUCE: Whatever pleases the creator.

Panel 3 1/3 in height 1/2 length bottom left

The camera is on MEGAMI, she's at an angle. She's framed head to below her knees.

Panel 4 detail across panels 3 and 5

MEGAMI's hand with a note in it.

MEGAMI: Take this. Rysael will know what to do.

Panel 5 2/3 in height 1/2 length bottom right

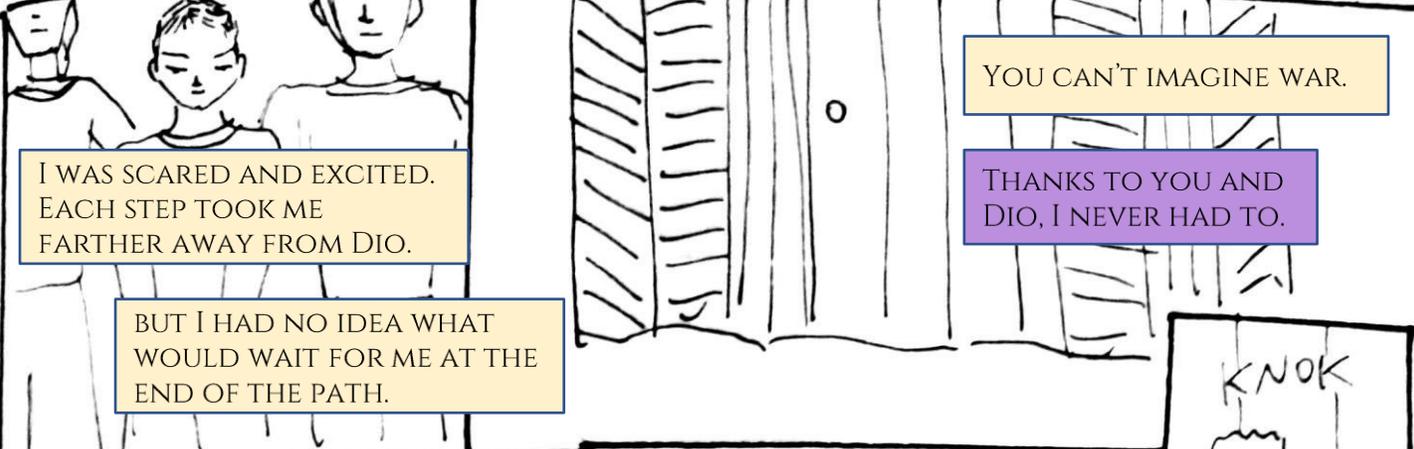
The camera shows LUCE's flanked by the same two soldiers from the back. There framed head to their knees. LUCE is turned towards MEGAMI.

MEGAMI (whisper balloon): Goodbye L, be safe out there



TAKE THIS, RYSAEL WILL KNOW WHAT TO DO.

GOODBYE L, BE SAFE OUT THERE



I WAS SCARED AND EXCITED.
EACH STEP TOOK ME
FARTHER AWAY FROM DIO.

YOU CAN'T IMAGINE WAR.

THANKS TO YOU AND
DIO, I NEVER HAD TO.

BUT I HAD NO IDEA WHAT
WOULD WAIT FOR ME AT THE
END OF THE PATH.



ANOTHER
ONE?

MEGAMI
INSISTED WE
BROUGHT THIS
ONE RIGHT
AWAY.



ARE YOU SURE
ABOUT THIS?

Panel 1 1/3 in height and length top left
KIRA is flanked by the two soldiers, her gaze is cast downwards.
LUCE (caption box): I was scared and excited. Each step took me farther away from Dio. but I had no idea what would wait for me at the end of the path.

Panel 2 1/3 in height 2/3 length top right
The camera frames the door of a cabin
LUCE (caption box): You can't imagine war.
LILITH (caption box): Thanks to you and Dio, I never had to.

Panel 3 detail in the bottom corner, across panels 2 and 5
close up of a hand knocking on a door.

Panel 4 2/3 in height 1/3 length, bottom left
RYSAEL is standing at the door. He's scratching his head. His other hand is in his pocket. Part of his arms is visible, there are tattoos on it.
RYSAEL: Another one?
HAD-AU (off camera): Megami insisted we brought this one right away.

Panel 5 1/3 in height 2/3 length middle right
RYSAEL is holding a note with something scribbled on it.
RYSAEL: Are you sure about this?

Panel 6 1/3 in height 2/3 length bottom right
Close up on RYSAEL's face, he looks perplexed.



Panel 1 2/3 height 1/2 length top left

The camera is behind RYSAEL who has his back to the camera but his face is at an angle, so we see his profile.

RYSAEL: Come in, young one, and close the door behind you

Panel 2 1/3 height 1/2 length, bottom left.

RYSAEL is dragging a chair.

RYSAEL: Did Megs test you?

LUCE (off camera): Megs?

RYSAEL: Megami.

Panel 3 – 1/2 right

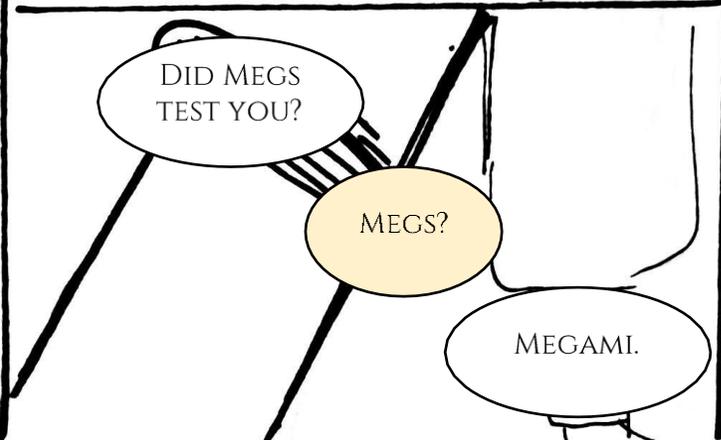
RYSAEL is sitting behind a desk, his elbows rest on the desk. LUCE is sitting in front of him, her back is to the camera.

RYSAEL: What is your name?

Panel 4 – detail inside panel 3

Close up on LUCE's face, she looks apologetic.

LUCE: I... I don't remember



Panel 1 1/4 top left

The camera is on LUCE's right side. No background.
LUCE: What?! How do you know? Who are you?!

Panel 2 1/4 top right

The camera is on RYSAEL's left side. No background.
RYSAEL: Your mother instructed you well. I think I know what she wants me to do with you.

Panel 3 detail across panels 1 and 3

Close up of RYSAEL's eyes. He looks calm but leaves LUCE no space to run to.

Panel 4 detail across panels 2 and 4

Close up of LUCE's eyes. She looks worried and is frowning slightly.

Panel 5 1/4 bottom left

The camera is facing LUCE; she looks preoccupied.
LUCE: And what would that be?

Panel 6 1/4 bottom right

The camera is facing RYSAEL; he looks amused.
RYSAEL: You're not supposed to exist, Luce. And I think Megs wants me to hide you away.



19

Dogs Days Are Over

Nicole & Kira

I won't lie, when I woke up I was relieved and disappointed. The doctors said they'd scooped the whole tumour up but that only left me thinking...

... when would it be back and what would I do then?

It didn't take long, though. And when the cancer did come back... well, it was quite the ride.

Panel 1 1/4 left top corner

NICOLE is shown in her hospital bed post-op. She is talking to DAVE and KIRA, one on either side.

NICOLE (caption box): I won't lie, when i woke up i was relieved and disappointed. the doctors said they'd scooped the whole tumour up but that only left me thinking...

Panel 2 1/4 left right corner

NICOLE is in the wheelchair, LEIGHTON pushing her, KIRA and DAVE on either side of her.

NICOLE (caption box): ... when would it be back and what would i do then?

Panel 3 bottom 1/2 page

NICOLE is shown in her bed, sleeping, dreaming. Two purple eyes dominate the panel at the top, looking the reader straight in the eyes.

NICOLE (caption box): it didn't take long, though. and when the cancer did come back... well, it was quite the ride.





Panel 1 left top corner slightly bigger than 1/4

Water is shown to be floating above the sink

NICOLE (caption box): Everything was weirder. From floating water to...

Panel 2 left right corner slightly smaller than 1/4

NICOLE IS looking at her legs and can see the circulatory system underneath.

NICOLE (caption box) : ... My vision going insane. It was like someone had grabbed the world and turned it inside out.

Panel 3 1/4 bottom left

NICOLE is shown dunking the ball into the hoop.

NICOLE (caption box): And the way I felt, the way my body felt... beyond weird

Panel 4 1/4 bottom right

KIRA (frowning), DAVE, and WILLIAM are looking at NICOLE dunking.

WILLIAM: How did she even...?

DAVE: Kira, no smoking on the court!



In your defence, Nic, who would've ever guessed "millennial vampirish alien" as the cause of their medical recovery?

Yeah, because god forbid I had a break after everything that's been happening to me.

SIGH

There was only one thing left to do, then.

Which was *not* offering emotional support.

I went looking for answers.

You're such an INTJ, Kira.

CRACK

Uriel, guardian of fire, I seek your knowledge. Heed my prayer... and grant me...

CHAPTER 19 – page 3

Panel 1 1/4 top left NICOLE is looking at her trembling hands.

KIRA (caption box): In your defence, who would've ever guessed "millennial vampirish alien" as the cause of their medical recovery?

NICOLE (caption box): Yeah, because god forbid I had a break after everything that's happened to me. Add sigh across the caption box

Panel 2 1/4 top right NICOLE is looking at herself in the mirror but sees two big purple eyes looming over.

KIRA (caption box): There was only one thing left to do, then.

Panel 3 detail across panels 2 and 5

NICOLE punches her reflection in the mirror.

Panels 4 and 5 bottom left and right

Close up on KIRA's closed eyes. KIRA's and NICOLE's caption boxes are staggered so that they look like distinct lines in a scripted dialogue.

NICOLE (caption box): Which was *not* offering emotional support. KIRA (caption box):

I Went looking for answers

NICOLE: You're such an INTJ, Kira.

Panels 4 and 5 bottom left and right

Close up on KIRA's open eye KIRA's and NICOLE's caption boxes are staggered so that they look like distinct lines in a scripted dialogue.

KIRA: Uriel, guardian of fire, I seek your knowledge. Heed my prayer... and grant me...

Panel 1 – Full page

RAPHAEL and URIEL appear in the living room of the cabin. The detail in the middle: the fireplace lights up. RAPHAEL is on the left while URIEL is on the right. They both don similar clothes and slightly different hairstyle.

CEMIRA BAE: This is not your brightest idea. (CINZEL)

KIRA (caption box): We're away past my brightest idea.

KIRA: Raphael? What are you doing here?

URIEL: Well, i think that's a first. Summoning one guardian but getting two. (CINZEL)

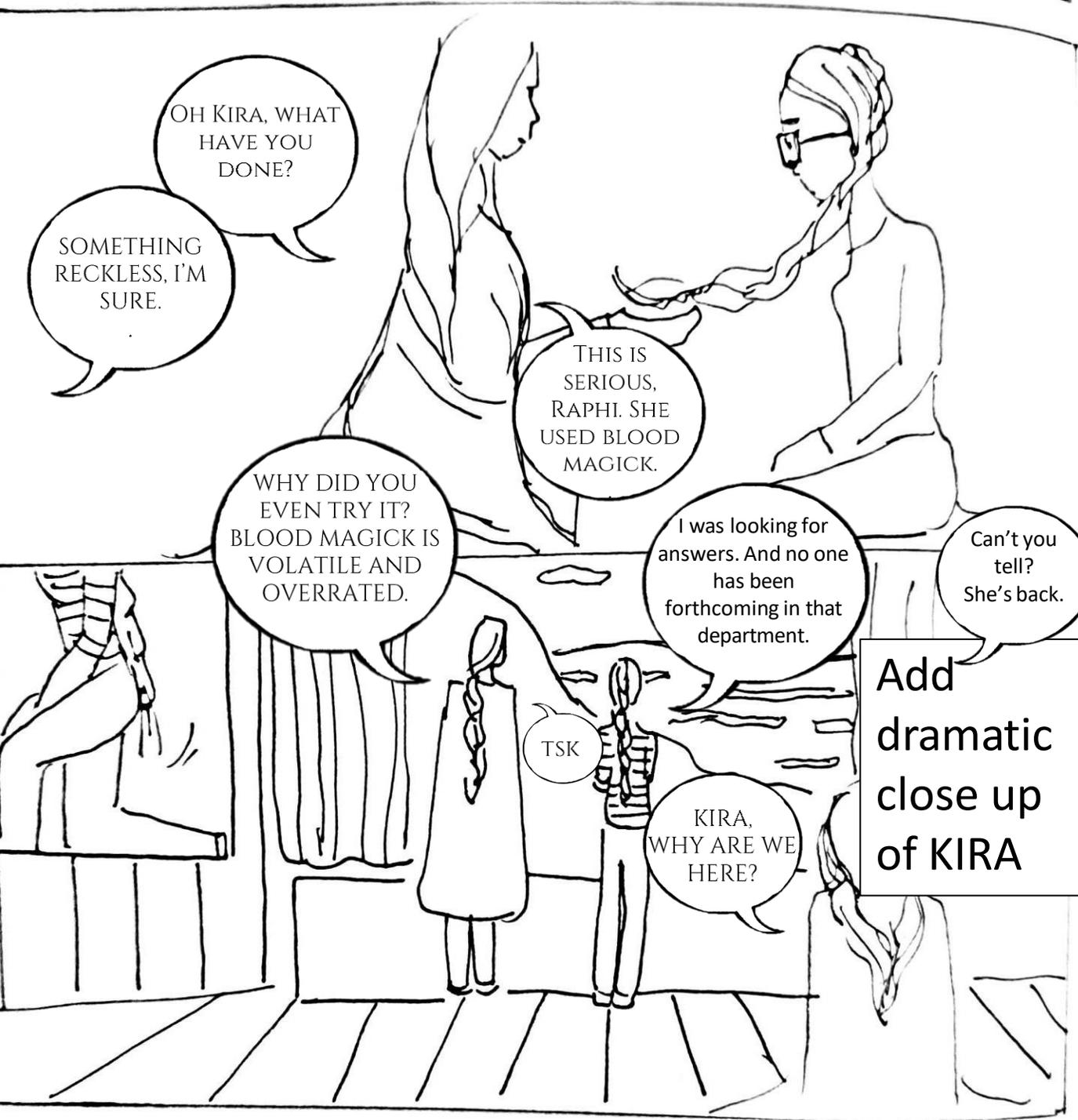


THIS IS NOT YOUR
BRIGHTES IDEA.

We're way past my
brightest idea.

WELL, THAT'S A
FIRST.
SUMMONING
ONE GUARDIAN
BUT GETTING
TWO.

Raphael?!
What are
you doing
here?



OH KIRA, WHAT HAVE YOU DONE?

SOMETHING RECKLESS, I'M SURE.

THIS IS SERIOUS, RAPHI. SHE USED BLOOD MAGICK.

WHY DID YOU EVEN TRY IT? BLOOD MAGICK IS VOLATILE AND OVERRATED.

I was looking for answers. And no one has been forthcoming in that department.

Can't you tell? She's back.

TSK

KIRA, WHY ARE WE HERE?

Add dramatic close up of KIRA

Panel 1 1/2 page top

URIEL gets on the carpet opposite Kira and reaches for her braid. Her hair is at this point half auburn, half white.

URIEL: Oh Kira, what have you done? (CINZEL)

RAPHAEL (off camera): Something reckless, I'm sure. (CINZEL)

URIEL: This is serious, Raphi. She used blood magick. (CINZEL)

Panel 2 – detail

KIRA stands up and walks towards the big window where RAPHAEL is standing.

Panel 3 1/2 page bottom

KIRA and RAPHAEL stand close to each other. KIRA is looking outside the window, while RAPHAEL is slightly turned towards her, URIEL is still sitting down on the carpet

RAPHAEL: Why did you even try it? Blood magic is volatile and overrated (CINZEL)

KIRA: I was looking for answers. And no one has been forthcoming in that Department.

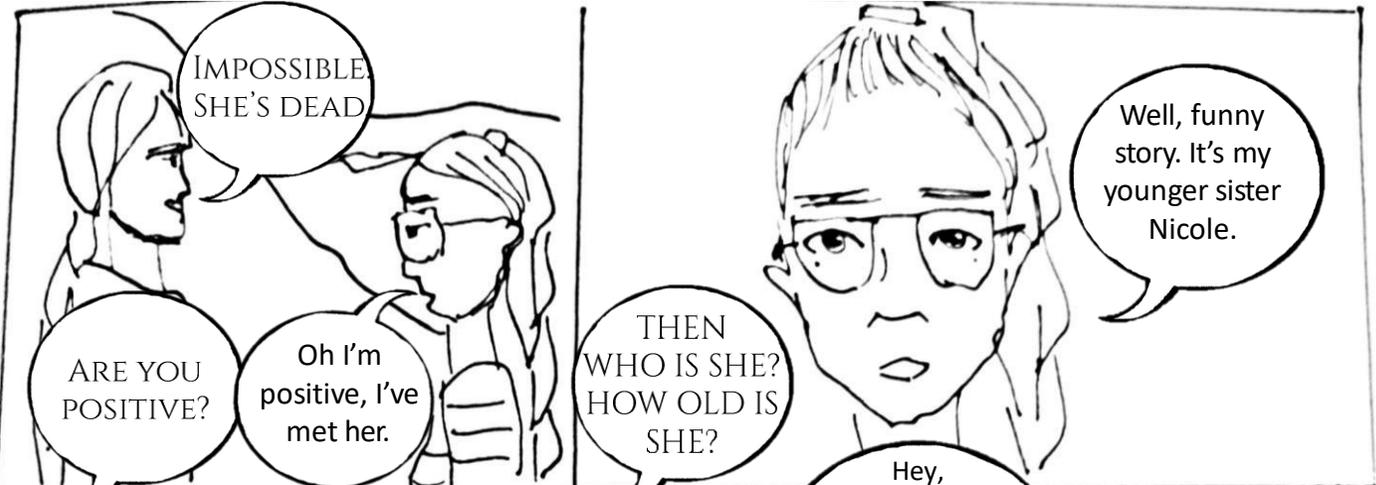
RAPHAEL: Tsk (CINZEL)

URIEL: Kira, why are we here? (CINZEL)

Panel 4 detail

CLOSE UP OF KIRA: head + neck and maybe a bit of shoulders.

KIRA: Can't you tell? She's back.



Panel 1 1/4 page TOP left

URIEL and KIRA are facing each other. In the background, we can see the side of the hill, the sky and the sea. RAPHAEL can't believe what KIRA is telling them so he's frowning deeply.

RAPHAEL: Impossible, she's dead. (CINZEL)

URIEL: (off camera) are you positive? (CINZEL)

KIRA: Oh I'm positive. I've met her.



Panel 2 1/4 top right

CLOSE UP on KIRA. Her facial expression needs to be more on the embarrassed side (see reference picture, but less smiley).

RAPHAEL (off camera): Then who is she? How old is she? (CINZEL)

KIRA: Well, funny story. It's my younger sister Nicole.



Panel 3 1/3 length 1/2 height bottom left

RAPHAEL is shown all the way down to his waist and a little bit farther down (to his crutch). He has a bewildered expression. (see reference pic)

RAPHAEL: How much younger? (CINZEL)

KIRA: (off camera) sigh... she's pretty much my twin. Add sigh across the balloon.

Panel 4 1/3 length 1/2 bottom middle

URIEL is framed head to crutch. She has a bewildered expression. (see reference pic)

URIEL: ...

Panel 5 1/3 length 1/2 bottom right

KIRA is framed head to below her knees. She's worked up. She is standing with her back to the window and the landscape outside. We can see the side of the hill, the sky and the sea.

KIRA: Hey, I had no doing in this. Whoever put Lilith inside Nicole did it for reasons that escape me.



Panel 1 bigger than 1/4 e top left

URIEL and RAPHAEL are facing KIRA In the background, we can see the side of the hill, the sky and the sea. KIRA is trying to explain what is happening. She looks mildly worried but mostly annoyed.

RAPHAEL: Someone put her? I thought this thing worked at birth. (CINZEL)
KIRA: Well, that's the thing. Nicole's been sick for ages, but her tumour never behaved the way it was supposed to do so...
URIEL: So you... what did you do? (CINZEL)



Panel 2 smaller than 1/4 top right

KIRA is scratching her head. The background behind her is barely visible.
KIRA: So, when it seemed like she was about to pass, I went to see what that thing looked like.
URIEL: And it was Lilith. (CINZEL)

Panel 3 bigger than 1/4 bottom left

KIRA and RAPHAEL are facing each other and they're confrontational (squiggly lines in the middle). We can't see any background behind them.

RAPHAEL: And how did you *exactly* see? (CINZEL)
KIRA: I ate a seed, *obviously*.
RAPHAEL: And how much did you pay for that? Five? Seven? Ten years. (CINZEL)

Panel 4 smaller than 1/4 bottom right

KIRA turns sharply away from RAPHAEL.
KIRA: Look, I did what I had to. I'll deal with the changes and everything.

Panel 1 1/2 page top

KIRA is standing facing the reader (back to the window), we can show a hint of landscape. KIRA, URIEL, and RAPHAEL are on a diagonal line with URIEL slightly behind KIRA and RAPHAEL facing the opposite direction.

URIEL: Would you like to re-train, love? Blood magic is unpredictable. You don't know how your powers will interact. (CINZEL)

KIRA: Thanks, but I'd rather send Nicole first.

RAPHAEL: Watch out for her. If Lilith's back, that only means— (CINZEL)

PANEL 2 detail inside panel 3

URIEL's fingers snap

Panel 3 1/2 page bottom

KIRA is standing against the window, the landscape is back into view (Side of the hill, sea, sky). She's leaning against the ledge.

KIRA: Sigh... rude. Add sigh across the balloon.



THAT WAS INTERESTING...

They know, Cem...

They know, who cursed us.

Panel 1 1/4 top left (inside panel 2)

KIRA's leaning against the window. We see her face reflected in the glass. Make sure the face in the reflection of CEMIRA BAE.

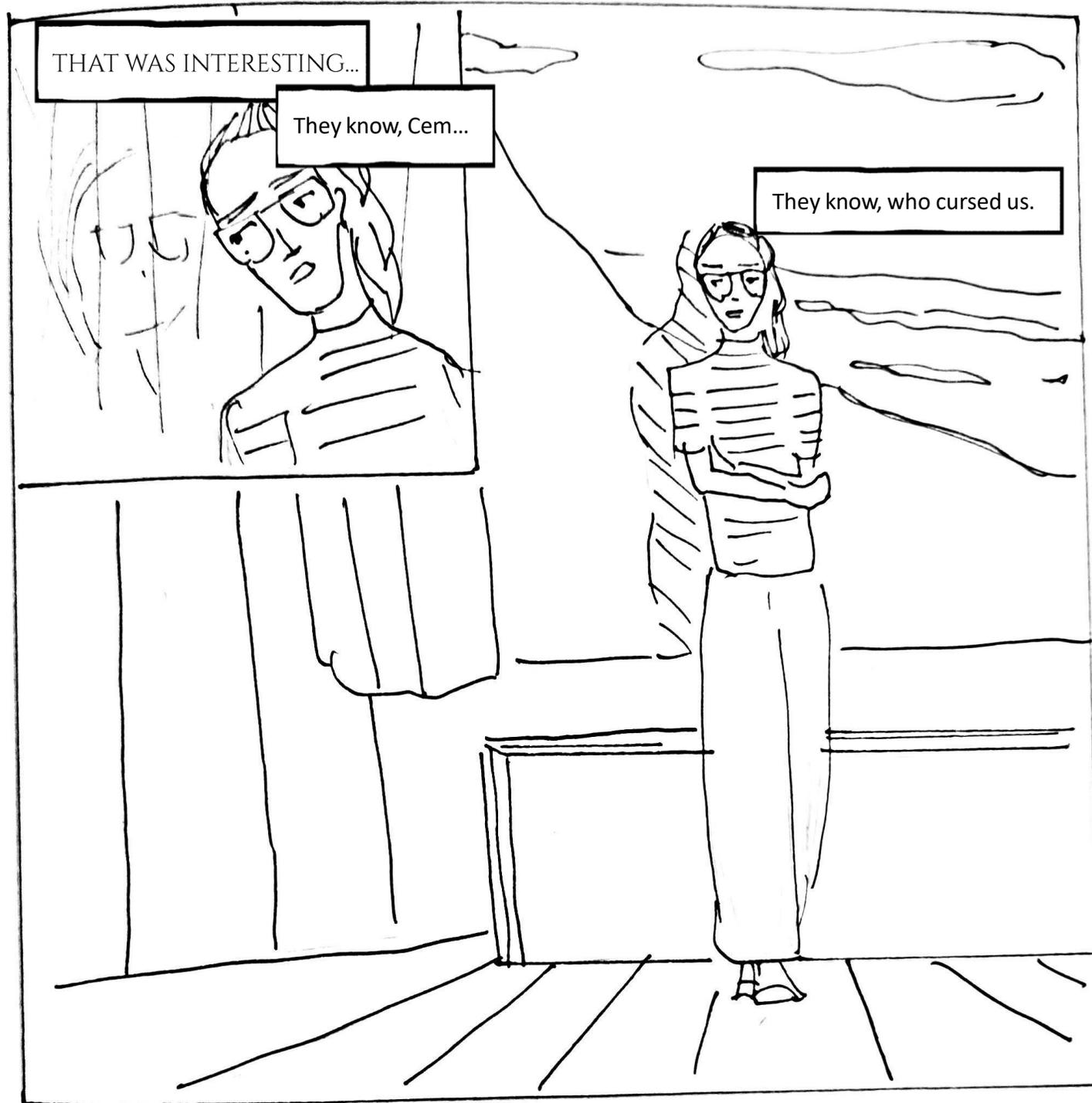
CB: That was interesting. (CINZEL)

KIRA: They know.

Panel 2 full page

KIRA is standing against the window, the landscape is back into view (Side of the hill, sea, sky). She's leaning against the ledge.

KIRA: They know who cursed us.



Panel 1 2/3 in height and length top left

LEIGHTON and KIRA are attracted by the sound of the smashed mirror. They're shown approaching the bathroom. We can also see NICOLE standing in front of the mirror.

KIRA: At least I'd managed to get some answers.

NICOLE: Lucky you. I thought I was going crazy.

LEIGHTON: Nic are you in there? Is everything ok?

NICOLE: Leigh, I think we'd better go to the A&E.

Panel 2 detail small box in the middle

NICOLE bloodied hand.

Panel 3 1/3 in height and length bottom left

LEIGHTON sees NICOLE'S hand and starts freaking out.

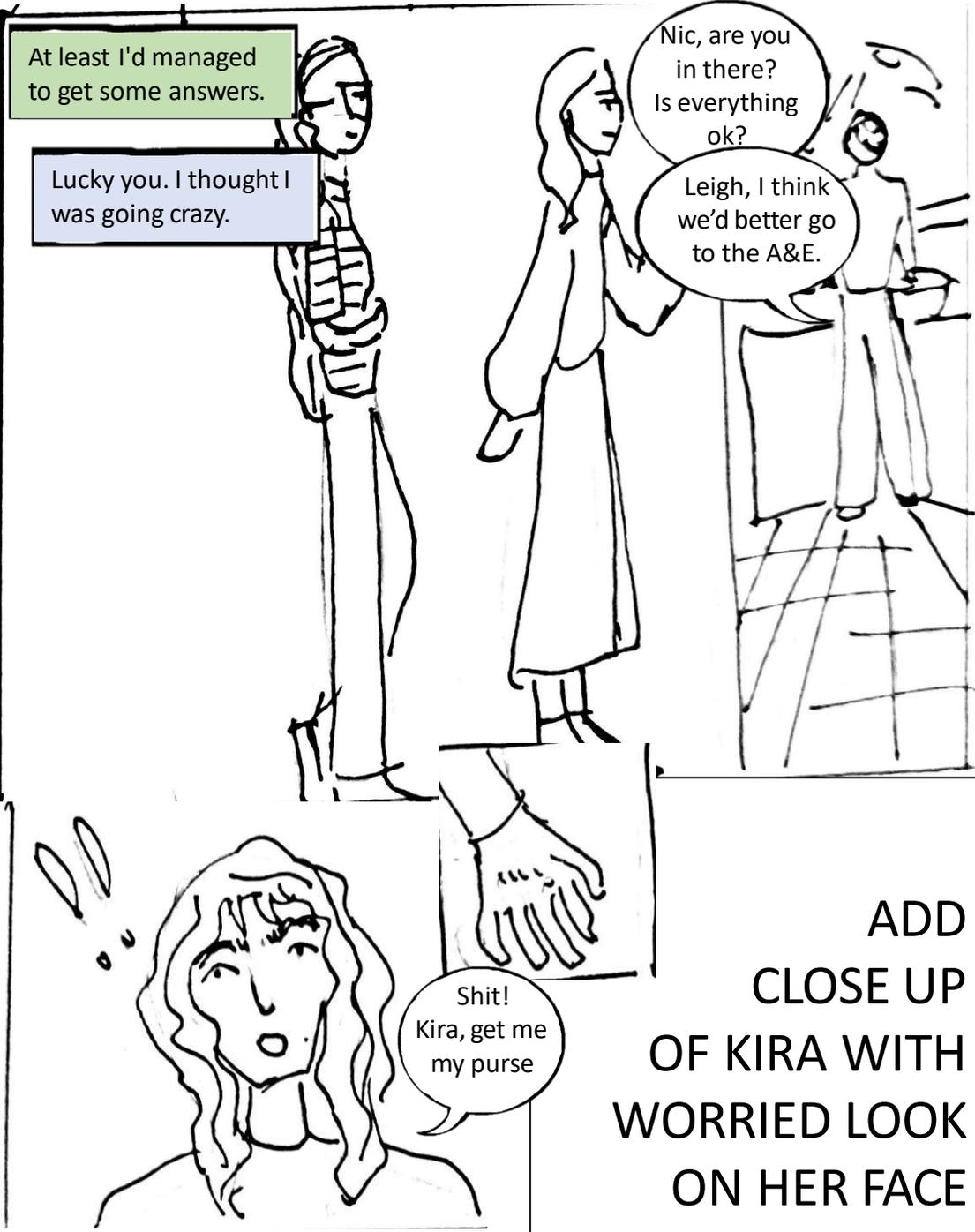
LEIGHTON: Shit. Kira, get me my purse.

Panel 4 1/3 bottom right

KIRA is worried that NICOLE might do something stupid if she hasn't figured out what is happening.

Panel 5 1/3 in height and length bottom left

Add close up of KIRA's worried face.



That was one of the worst car drives I'd ever had. Honestly, I thought I was done for.



I know you've been seeing stuff, hallucinations--

How do you know?

It's a long story. Good news is, you're still healthy. Bad news, someone enlisted you for a war.

CHAPTER 19 – page 11

Panel 1 1/4 top left

NICOLE, LEIGHTON and KIRA are driving to the hospital (YOU NEED TO SWAP NICOLE AND LEIGHTON places). In the background, we see the road and some trees (move trees to the right)

NICOLE (caption box): That was one of the worst car drives I'd ever had. Honestly, I thought I was done for.

Panel 2 1/4 top right

NICOLE and KIRA are waiting for LEIGHTON who's gone to talk with NICOLE's doctor.

KIRA: Nic, look, I know you think you're... that the cancer is back.

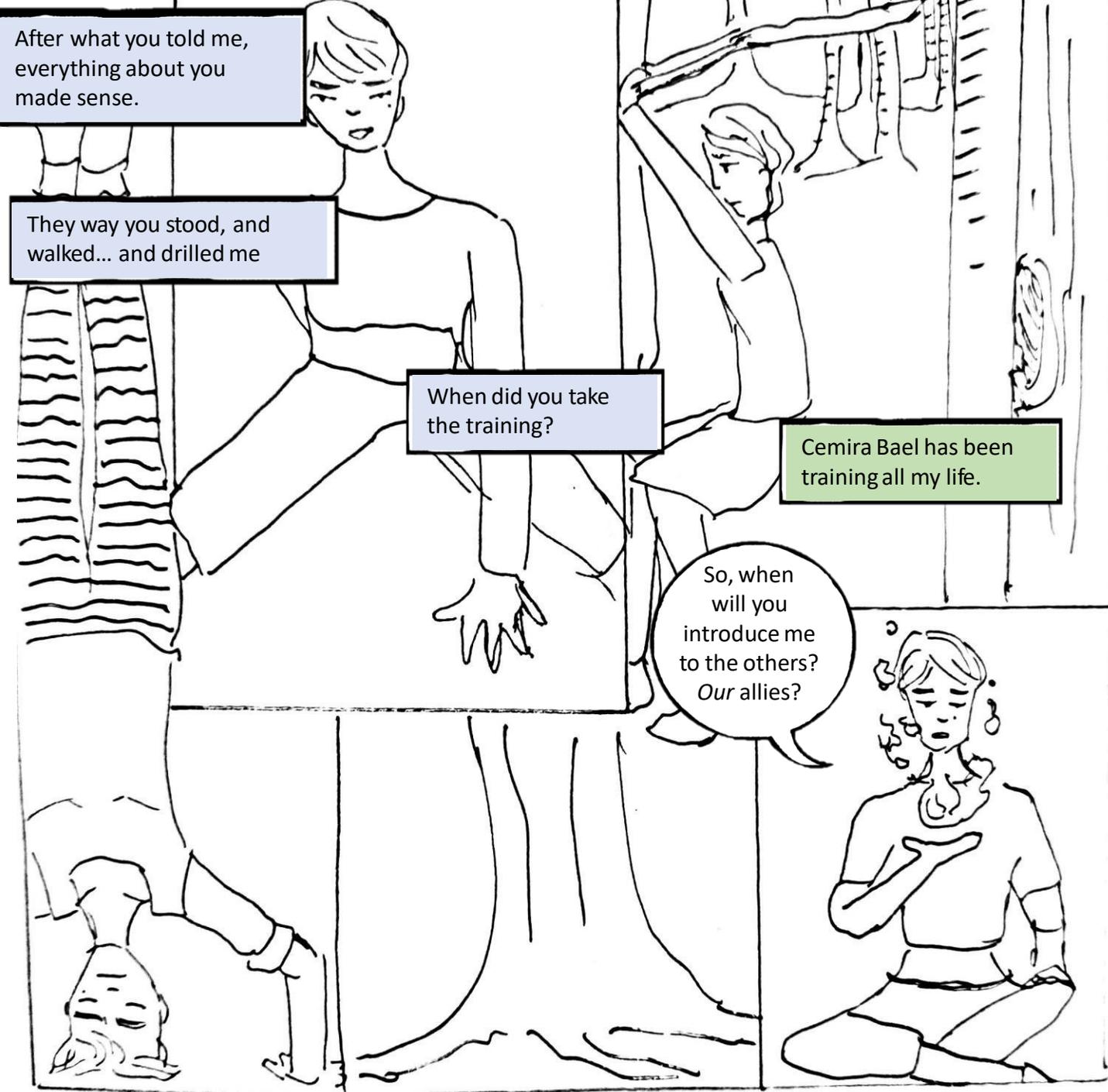
Panel 3 1/2 bottom

Dramatic CLOSE UP of the two twins next to each other.

KIRA: I know you've been seeing stuff, hallucinations--

NICOLE: How do you know?

KIRA: It's a long story. Good news is, you're still healthy. Bad news, someone enlisted you for war.



CHAPTER 19 – page 12

All panels on this page are irregular, see the storyboard for a better understanding.

Panel 1 Thin strip full length (top to bottom)

NICOLE is wearing a tank top above a long-sleeved t-shirt, leggings and sneakers. She's performing a hand-stand

NICOLE (caption box): After what you told me, everything about you made sense. The way you stood and walked.

Panel 2 rectangle

NICOLE is wearing a different outfit (slightly warmer weather). She is wearing a long-sleeved crop top and a pair of leggings. She's performing a one-hand push-up.

NICOLE (caption box): When did you undertake the training?

Panel 3 rectangle

NICOLE is shown with the same outfit as panel 2. She's jumping off of a tree 4

KIRA (caption box): Cemira Bael has been training all my life.

Panel 4 smaller than 1/4 age bottom right

NICOLE is sitting on the ground. She is wearing summer clothes (a short-sleeved top and a pair of shorts). She's manipulating water in her hand.

NICOLE: So when will you introduce me to the others? Our allies

So, when will you introduce me to the others? Our allies?

Cemira Bael has been training all my life.

After what you told me, everything about you made sense.

The way you stood, and walked... and drilled me

When did you take the training?

Panel 1 1/3 length full height left

KIRA is wearing a t-shirt knotted up in front of her, a pair of shorts and a (pair of sneakers). She is leaning against something that is off camera (a tree)

KIRA: When I know that entering a room full of had-ais won't be a mortal threat to you or Lilith.

NICOLE (Off camera): Meaning?

KIRA: Meaning, you can't defend yourself. Yet.

Panel 2 1/6 top middle

NICOLE stands up, we can see a bit of background (some trees)

NICOLE: Oh yeah? Then why don't you teach me?

Panel 3 1/6 top right

KIRA taps her feet against the ground. CLOSE UP on the shoes (see the reference pic)

Panel 4 2/3 height and length bottom

Two spears appear from the ground. In the background, we see the birch forest.

Panel 5 and 6 details

NICOLE (TOP) and KIRA (BOTTOM) each grab one of the spears which turn into swords.

KIRA: You're so impatient, but you know so little. Everything I've showed you is just a couple of letters of the alphabet. There's so much more.

NICOLE: Then show me.





CHAPTER 19 – page 14

This page is a collection of different moments of KIRA and NICOLE training/fighting. No background but gradients of grey.

Panel 1 1/3 full length (top to bottom) left

KIRA is wearing a t-shirt knotted up in front of her, a pair of shorts and a pair of sneakers. She is en garde. Her wooden spear/sword crosses over to the second panel. We need to change KIRA's expression in this panel -> She is grinning (see evil smile as reference).

KIRA: I will.

Panel 2 2/3 top right

NICOLE responds to KIRA's attack but can't hold off for long.

LILITH: She's right, you suck at this. (CINZEL)

NICOLE (caption box): A little support won't hurt, you know. (caption box)

Panel 3 detail

KIRA causes NICOLE to drop her sword.

CB: Maybe ease up a little. (CINZEL)

KIRA (caption box): Is that how you taught me? (caption box)

Panel 4 2/3 bottom right

KIRA is standing above NICOLE with her sword pointed at her.

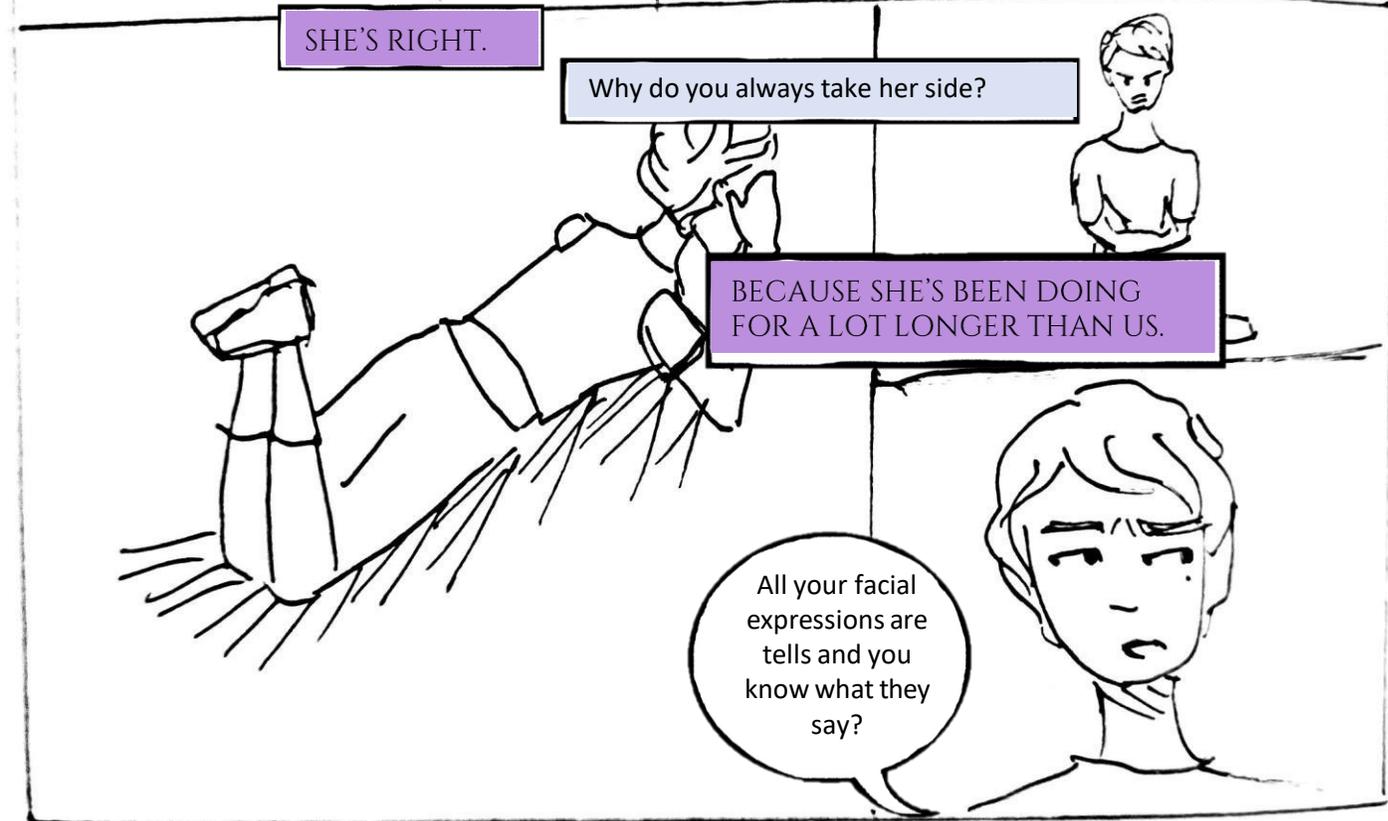
KIRA: You need to get better at this.



Panel 1 1/4 page top left
NICOLE is on the ground spent. POV from above.
NICOLE: Yeah, yeah. You're the queen of fighting.

Panel 2 1/4 page top right
KIRA is sitting cross-legged on the ground. Behind her we can see their house in the distance and the river Bell. She is playing with both her elements summoning FIRE in her hands and roots towards her.
KIRA: I meant when you talk to Lilith. You need to dissimulate better.

Panel 3 2/3 bottom left
NICOLE is laying on her stomach on the ground. She is facing KIRA. We only see her from behind.
LILITH: She's right. (CINZEL)
NICOLE (caption box): Why do you always take her side? (caption box)



Panel 4 1/6 middle right
NICOLE is now sitting on the ground. She is visibly annoyed at what LILITH and KIRA are telling her.
LILITH: Because she's been doing for a lot longer than us. (CINZEL)

Panel 5 1/6 bottom right
CLOSE UP on NICOLE who still looks annoyed but is open to listening to what her sister is saying.
KIRA: All your facial expressions are tells and you know what they say?

Panel 1 1/2 page top

Close up on KIRA (head to shoulders). NO BACKGROUND but a circle of light (halo style) to emphasize her words. She's slightly looking down at NICOLE.

Kira: You're weak. The official guidelines say we *are* our had-ais. You showing them that there's a gap between you two, it's just another weapon in their hands.

Panel 2 1/6 bottom left

Close up on NICOLE (head to shoulders). No background. She is fed up with KIRA's speeches.

NICOLE: What about Lucifer? Isn't he Lilith's soulmate or something? We could talk to him.

Panel 3 1/6 bottom middle

CLOSE UP on KIRA (head to shoulders). No background. She feels pity towards NICOLE and is worried that her naivete might get in the way.

KIRA: Don't be naïve. With those two, it was never about love, just about control and power.

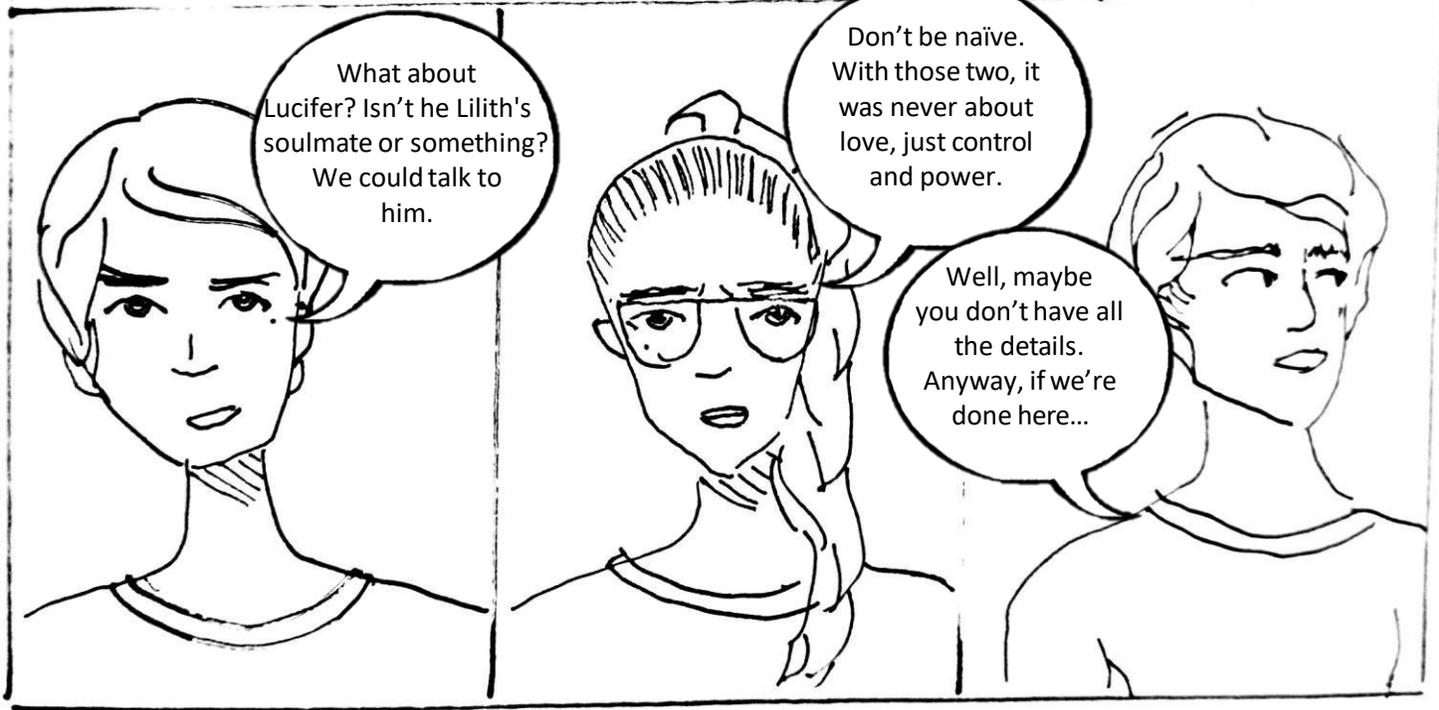
Panel 4 1/6 bottom right

Close up on NICOLE (head to shoulders). No background. NICOLE is turned to the left. The conversation is over for her and she's disengaging.

NICOLE: Well maybe you don't have all the details. Anyway, if we're done here...



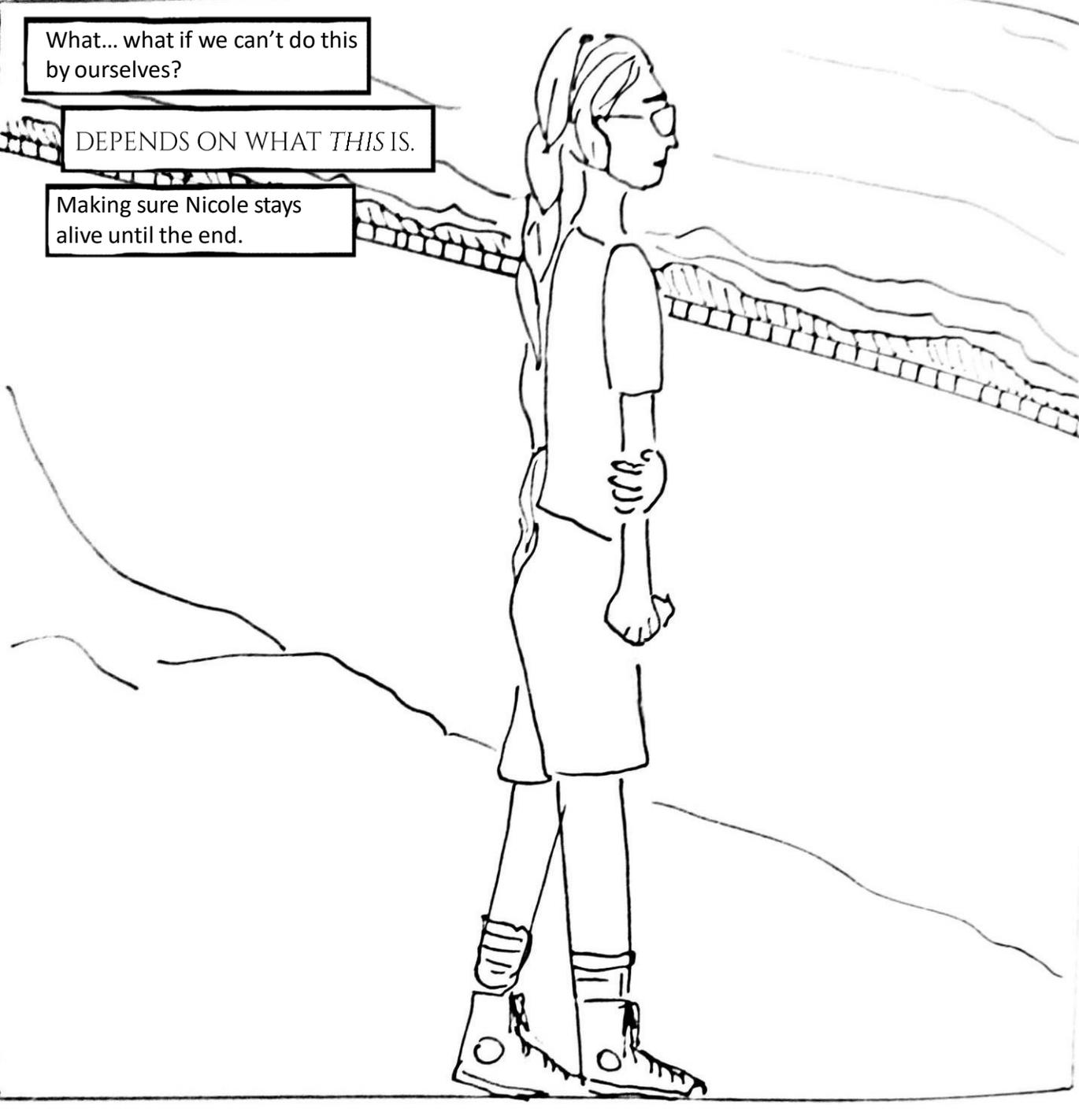
You're weak.
The official guidelines say we *are* our had-ais. You showing them that there's a gap between you and Lilith. It's just another weapon in their hands.



What about Lucifer? Isn't he Lilith's soulmate or something? We could talk to him.

Don't be naïve. With those two, it was never about love, just control and power.

Well, maybe you don't have all the details. Anyway, if we're done here...



Panel 1 – full page

KIRA is still atop the hill, she's looking at NICOLE going down the hill (out of camera). In the background, we can see the rest of the hill and the river Bell. KIRA is standing with one arm wrapped around herself. She looks and feels uncertain.

KIRA (caption box): What... what if we can't do this by ourselves?

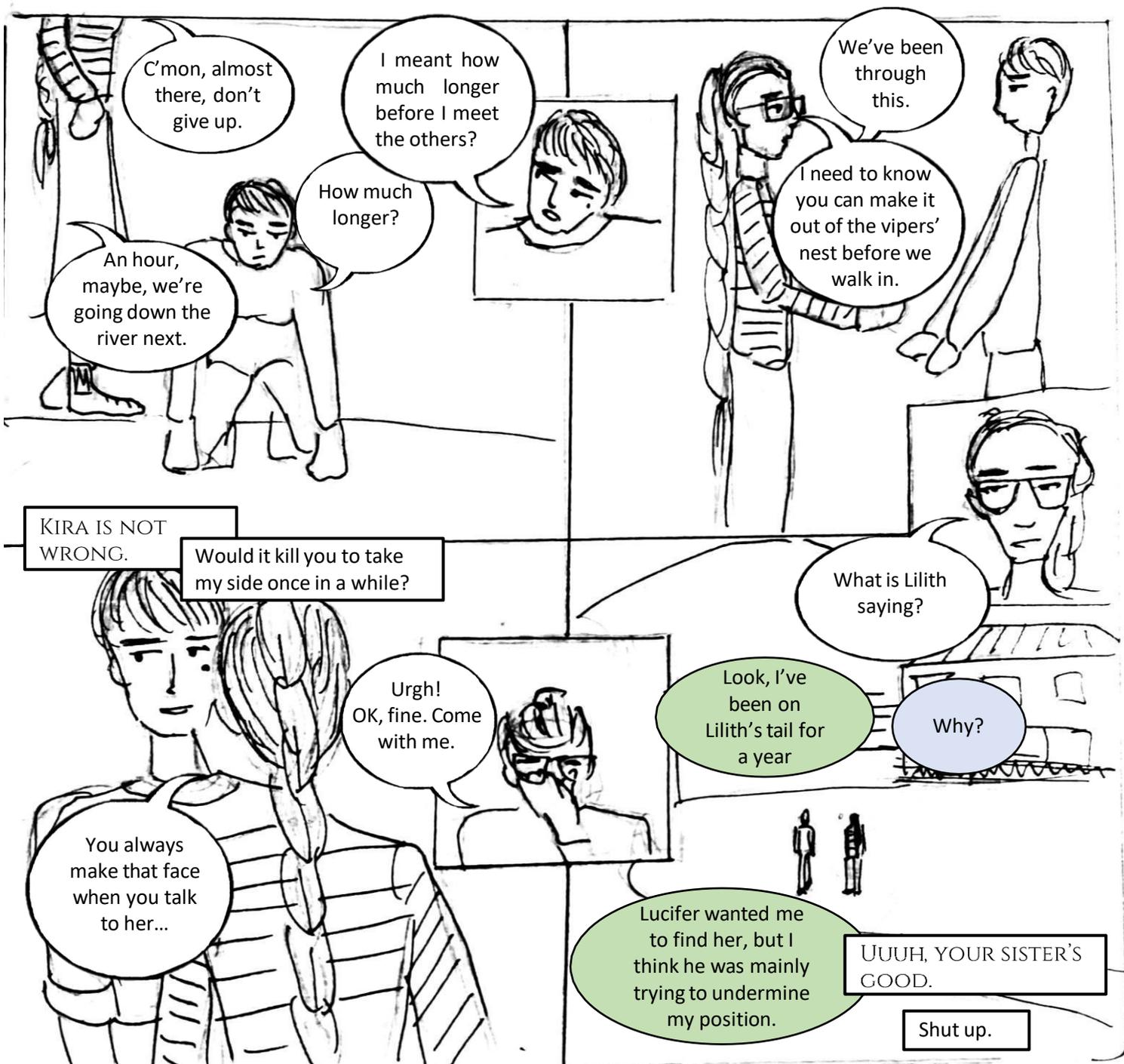
CB: Depends on what *this* is. (CINZEL)

KIRA (caption box) : Making sure Nicole stays alive until the end.

20

A Moment of Truth

*Nicole *



Panel 1 1/4 top left

The camera is on the ground with NICOLE. KIRA is on NICOLE's right side. NICOLE is planking on the ground. KIRA is shown from her feet to her chest.
 KIRA: C'mon, almost there, don't give up.
 NICOLE: How much longer?
 KIRA: An hour, maybe, we're going down the river next.

Panel 2 detail across panels 1 and 3

Close up of NICOLE's face turned towards her sister.
 NICOLE: I meant how much longer before I meet the others?

Panel 3 1/4 top right

The camera is on the twins' side. They're both standing. NICOLE has arms extended towards KIRA. KIRA has her arms bent forward.
 KIRA: We've been through this. I need to know you can make it out of the vipers' nest before we walk in.

Panel 4 detail across panels 3 and 7

Close up of KIRA's face, she's looking at NICOLE and looks unimpressed.
 KIRA: What is Lilith saying?

Panel 5 1/4 bottom left.

The camera is behind KIRA and is facing NICOLE. Both twins are framed from their head to their chest. NICOLE is looking away from KIRA. There is no background.
 LILITH: Kira is not wrong (CINZEL)
 NICOLE (caption box): Would it kill you to take my side once in a while?
 KIRA: You always make that face when you talk to her...

Panel 6 detail across panels 5 and 7

Close up of KIRA's face, she looks frustrated, she's covering face with her hand, her glasses are pushed upwards.
 KIRA: Urgh! OK, fine. Come with me.

Panel 7 1/4 bottom right

NICOLE and KIRA walk downhill towards the house. The hill and the river Bell are in the background. From now all the balloons are colour-coded.
 KIRA: Look, I've been on Lilith's tail for a year
 NICOLE: Why?
 KIRA: Lucifer wanted me to find her, but I think he was mainly trying to undermine my position.
 LILITH: Uuuh, your sister's good (CINZEL).
 NICOLE (caption box): Shut up.

Panel 1 1/4 top left

KIRA and NICOLE are going down the steps to their cellar. KIRA is framed full figure while NICOLE is at the back. We see her feet and part of her legs. NICOLE: But you found me, I mean her... Won't they be happy that she's back?

Panel 2 1/4 top right

The cellar. There is a wall on the left, while the wall at the back is covered by a curtain.

KIRA: Pfft, please. A leader who hasn't shown up in hundreds of years?

NICOLE: OK, I get it.

KIRA: Do you?

Panel 3 1/2 bottom

NICOLE and KIRA stand in front of the wall at the bottom. KIRA on the left, NICOLE on the right. There are flames hovering around them illuminating the spaces between them keeping everything else in the dark.

NICOLE: Wow! What is this?

KIRA: All the clues I've collected over the years. About Lilith's whereabouts.

LILITH: Wow! She almost caught up (Cinzel).

NICOLE: Apparently Lilith is impressed.

Panel 4 detail inside panel 3

KIRA pulls a chord to switch on the light.



Panel 1 detail inside panel 2 top left The curtains are lifting.
KIRA: "Find Lilith or die trying." That was the mission.

Panel 2 rest of the page.
KIRA and NICOLE are standing next to each other. KIRA on the left, NICOLE on the right. The rest of the page is occupied by the retracing roots. The twins are staring at the information KIRA has collected so far. Same information we see in CHAPTER 1, page ten.

NICOLE: How did you do all this?

KIRA: The information or the magic?

NICOLE: The magic. There was nothing and then--

KIRA: It's cool, isn't it? Well, I bent the rules a little.

NICOLE: Shocker.

KIRA: I've used blood magic. to anyone else this looks like a plain wall.

NICOLE: Then, why can I see it?

KIRA: The clue is in the name.

NICOLE: ... Wait, is it because we're related?

KIRA: Yeah





Panel 1 1/4 top left

Close up on NICOEL's surprised face. NO background, but add the darkness and the spotlight in relation to her position. NICOEL is framed head to shoulders.

NICOEL: So, I could affect your magic if I wanted to?

KIRA (off camera): Not quite. Only blood magic.

Panel 2 1/4 top right

The camera is behind the twins again. KIRA is turned towards NICOEL. NICOEL is at an angle. We only see part of her face. In the background, we see part of the clues. The twins are framed head to chest.

KIRA: Look, I know you think I'm being unfair keeping you hidden. But a week after Lilith showed up, Lucifer called in a meeting of the Twelve.

NICOEL: Let me guess, the most trusted ones. Masonry much?

KIRA: Yes, beside the point.

Panel 3 1/4 bottom left

The camera is on the twins' side. We mainly see NICOEL. KIRA is partially hidden by NICOEL. NICOEL has a hand against the wall.

KIRA: That night, Gregön, showed up. He knew Lilith was back. But I think someone tipped him off. No one else, except me, knew about it.

So, my question is —

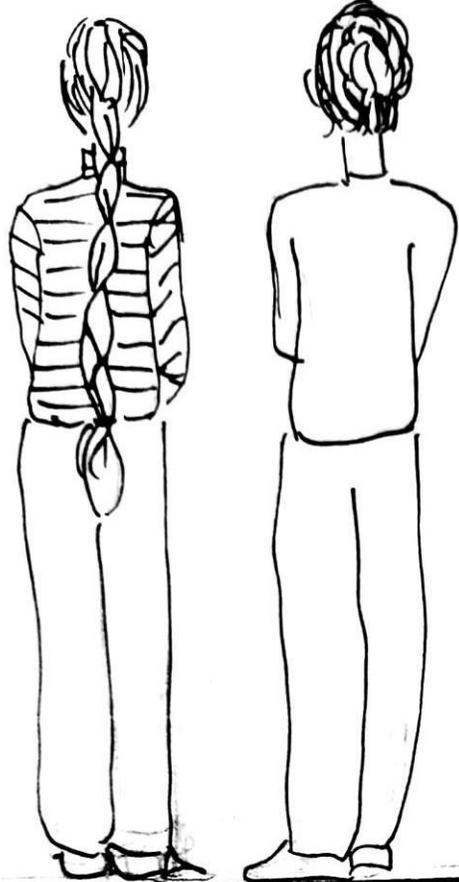
NICOEL: Who ratted me out?

Panel 4 1/4 bottom right

The camera is behind the twins again. KIRA is turned towards NICOEL. NICOEL is at an angle. We only see part of her face. In the background, we see part of the clues. The twins are framed head to chest.

KIRA: Yes and why?

NICOEL: Any idea on who might've been?



I wanted to ask your new soulmate if she had an idea?

...

Now you shut up?

She's being conveniently cagey.

She must have an idea about why she's reincarnated in you.

The timing of this... it can't be a coincidence.

What do you mean?

You were dying, Nic. And Lucifer was way too pushy.

The question is...

Was the person behind this trying to protect you or Lilith?

HAS ANYONE TOLD YOUR SISTER SHE CAN BE TOO SMART FOR HER OWN SAKE?

What are you, a Bond villain?

I think you're onto something.

I thought as much.

Kira, I think it's about time I meet Lucifer.

Panel 1 – full page

The twins are framed from the back, with no background. Space left to accommodate long conversation.

KIRA: I wanted to ask your new soulmate if she had an idea?

LILITH: ... (CINZEL)

NICOLE (caption box): Now you shut up?

NICOLE: She's being conveniently cagey.

KIRA: She must have an idea about why she's reincarnated in you. The timing of this... it can't be a coincidence.

NICOLE: What do you mean?

KIRA: You were dying, Nic. And Lucifer was way too pushy. The question is... Was the person behind this trying to protect you or Lilith?

LILITH: Has anyone told your sister she can be too smart for her own sake? (CINZEL)

NICOLE (caption box): What are you, a Bond villain?

NICOLE: I think you're onto something.

KIRA: I thought as much.

NICOLE: Kira, I think it's about time I meet Lucifer.



It's been three months already. The longer we wait--

I know, the more suspicious we'll seem.

Yes!

Fine, but --

Panel 1 1/2 page top

The camera is framing the twins from the front (they pictured head to waist). KIRA is turned towards NICOLE. The flames illuminate the surrounding space while everything else is shrouded in darkness.

NICOLE: It's been three months already. The longer we wait —

KIRA: I know, the more suspicious we'll seem.

NICOLE: Yes!

KIRA: Fine, but —



Looks like someone's home.

OK, let's go upstairs.

I'll arrange a meeting, but first

I need to take care of a couple of things.

You do you. I trust you.

Panel 2 1/4 bottom left

The camera is framing the twins from the front (they pictured head to waist). They're both looking up. There are noises coming from above.

NICOLE: Looks like someone's home.

KIRA: OK, let's go upstairs.

Panel 3 1/4 bottom right

The camera is framing the twins from the back. They're going up the stairs. NICOLE is framed from her head to her waist. KIRA is ahead and we only see her feet and part of her legs.

KIRA: I'll arrange a meeting, but first I need to take care of a couple of things.

NICOLE: You do you. I trust you.

21

A broken Heart is blind

Kira

All the dialogue in this page is in caption boxes.

Panel 1 1/3 in length full height left

The camera takes the scene from above. KIRA is in the car and is driving.

CB: I'm not his biggest fan, but are you sure about this? (CINZEL)

KIRA: It couldn't have been anyone else.

CB: Someone we haven't considered? (CINZEL)

KIRA: You don't believe that.

CB: I guess I don't. But I know that turning an ally into an enemy is not wise. (CINZEL)

Panel 2 1/3 in length 1/2 height top middle

The car is driving across a bridge into town. The camera takes the scene from outside. We see a bit of the scenery and the landscape. Everything is dark.

KIRA: Also, he shares a connection with Gregön. I saw it that night. I'm not sure whose memories they were, but they have a history.

CB: Just like in Ådhit. (CINZEL)

Panel 3 1/3 in length 1/2 height top right

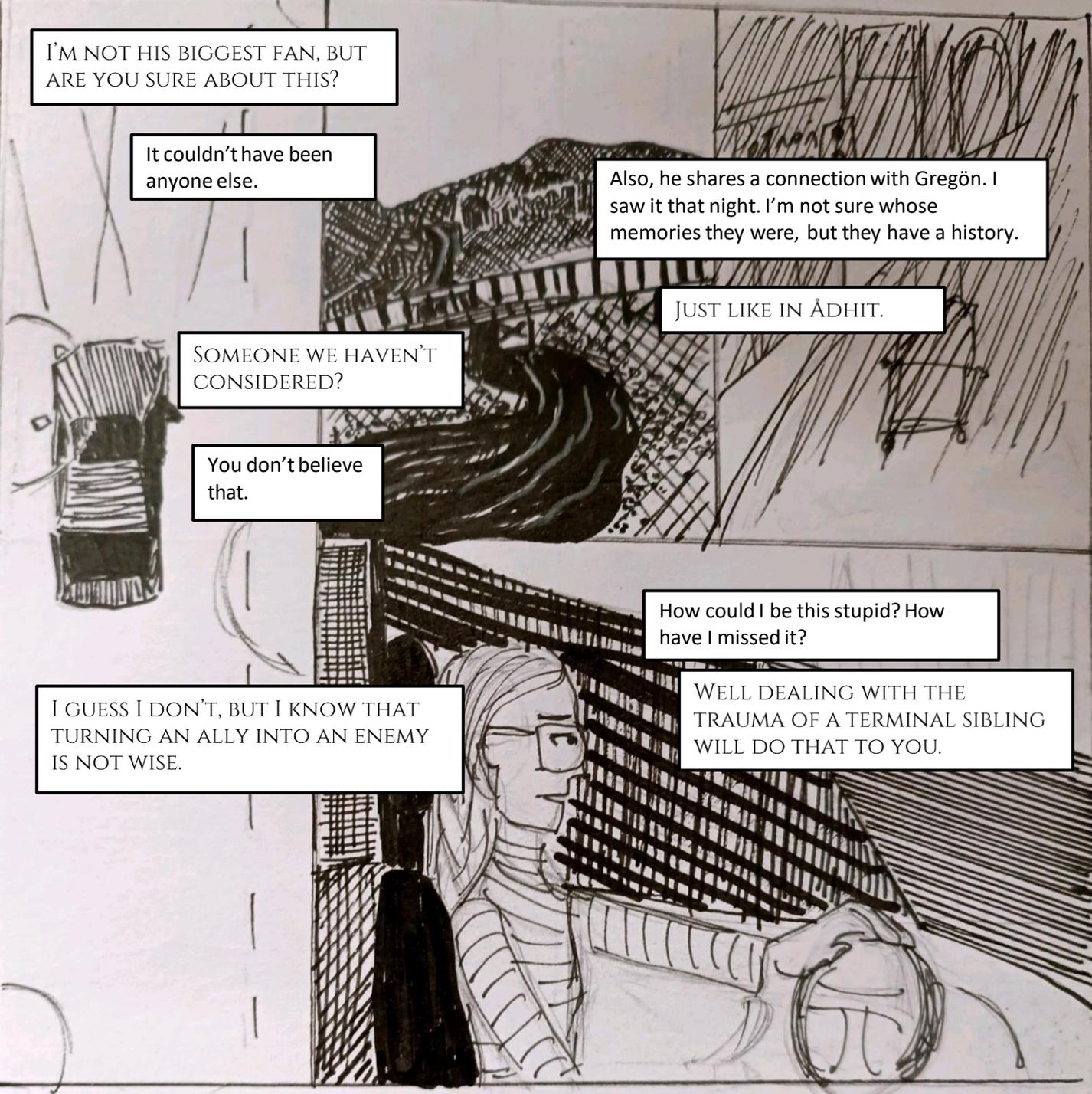
The car is town. The camera takes the scene from outside. We see a bit of the scenery and the landscape. Everything is dark.

Panel 4 1/2 height 2/3 length

The camera is inside the car. KIRA is driving. The camera takes her from the side.

KIRA: How could I be this stupid? How have I missed it?

CB: Well, dealing with trauma of a terminal sibling will do that to you. (CINZEL)



I'M NOT HIS BIGGEST FAN, BUT ARE YOU SURE ABOUT THIS?

It couldn't have been anyone else.

Also, he shares a connection with Gregön. I saw it that night. I'm not sure whose memories they were, but they have a history.

JUST LIKE IN ÅDHIT.

SOMEONE WE HAVEN'T CONSIDERED?

You don't believe that.

I GUESS I DON'T, BUT I KNOW THAT TURNING AN ALLY INTO AN ENEMY IS NOT WISE.

How could I be this stupid? How have I missed it?

WELL DEALING WITH THE TRAUMA OF A TERMINAL SIBLING WILL DO THAT TO YOU.

Panel 1 1/4 top left

The camera is behind KIRA, who is framed from the top of her head to her waist. She is outside someone's house and is knocking. Detail knock knock outside balloon.

KIRA (caption box): When did you develop a sense of humour?

CB: We spend too much time together. (CINZEL)

KIRA (caption box): Couldn't agree more.

Panel 2 1/4 top right

The camera is behind KIRA, who is framed from the top of her head to her waist. She is outside someone's house. MASON has opened the door. He's standing on the threshold.

MASON: Kira, what are you doing here?

KIRA: Hi Mason, sorry for barging in at this hour.

Panel 3 1/4 bottom left

The camera is behind KIRA, who is framed from the top of her head to her waist. She is outside someone's house. MASON has opened the door. KIRA punches him.

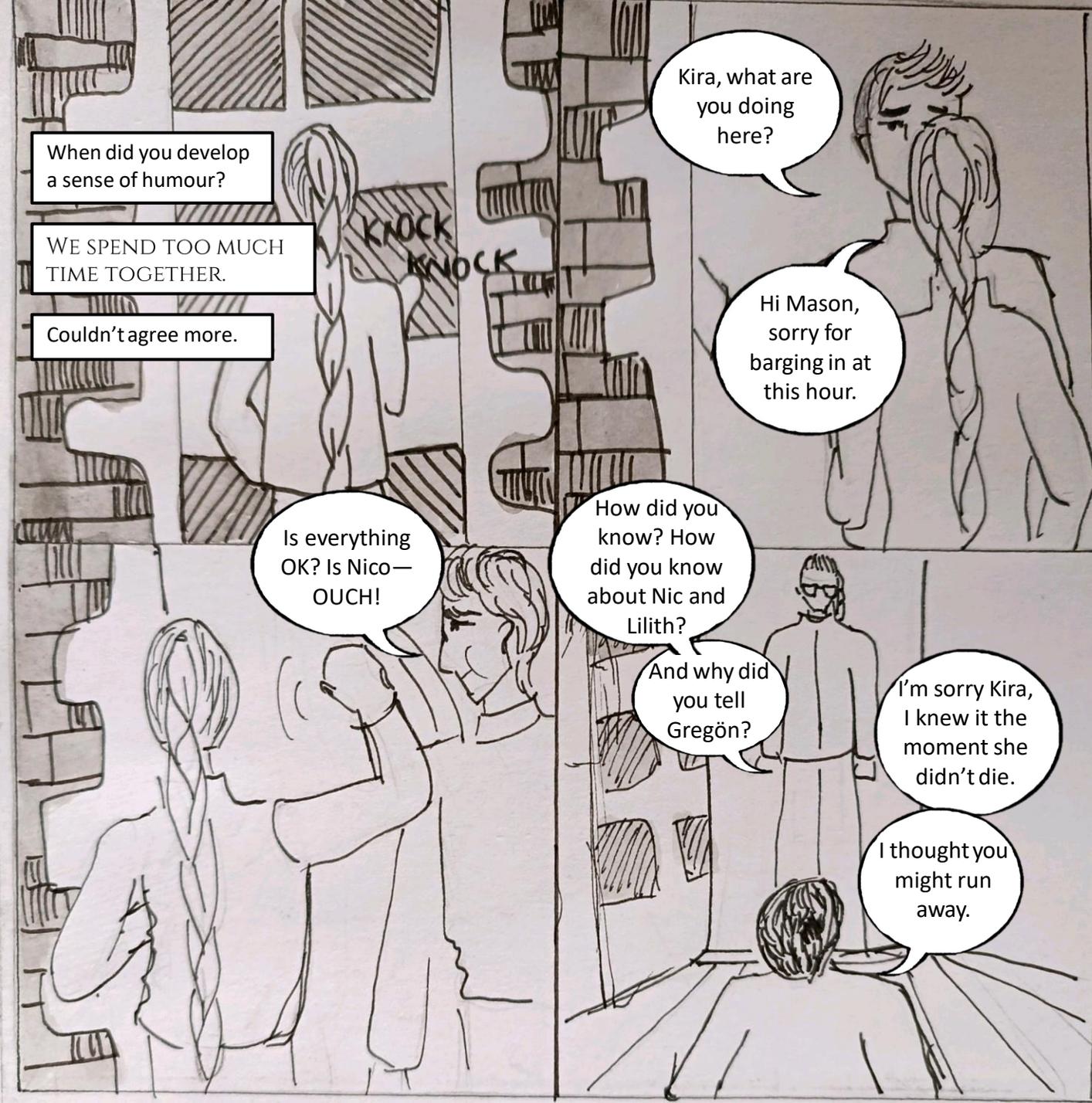
MASON: Is everything OK? Is Nico— OUCH!

Panel 4 1/4 bottom right

The camera is inside the house, almost at ground level. MASON is on the ground. KIRA is towering over him. She is standing on the threshold and is clenching her fists by her side.

KIRA: How did you know? How did you know about Nic and Lilith? And why did you tell Gregön?

MASON: I'm sorry Kira, I knew it the moment she didn't die. I thought you might run away.



When did you develop a sense of humour?

WE SPEND TOO MUCH TIME TOGETHER.

Couldn't agree more.

Is everything OK? Is Nico— OUCH!

How did you know? How did you know about Nic and Lilith?

And why did you tell Gregön?

I'm sorry Kira, I knew it the moment she didn't die.

I thought you might run away.



Kira, I'm sorry!

That night... I saw Mason, I saw what he did...

I hope it was worth it.

Panel 1 1/3 height 2/3 length top left
The camera is in front of KIRA, but we only see her chest. In the background, MASON is still on the floor in his house.
MASON: Kira, I'm sorry!
KIRA: That night... I saw Mason, I saw what he did...



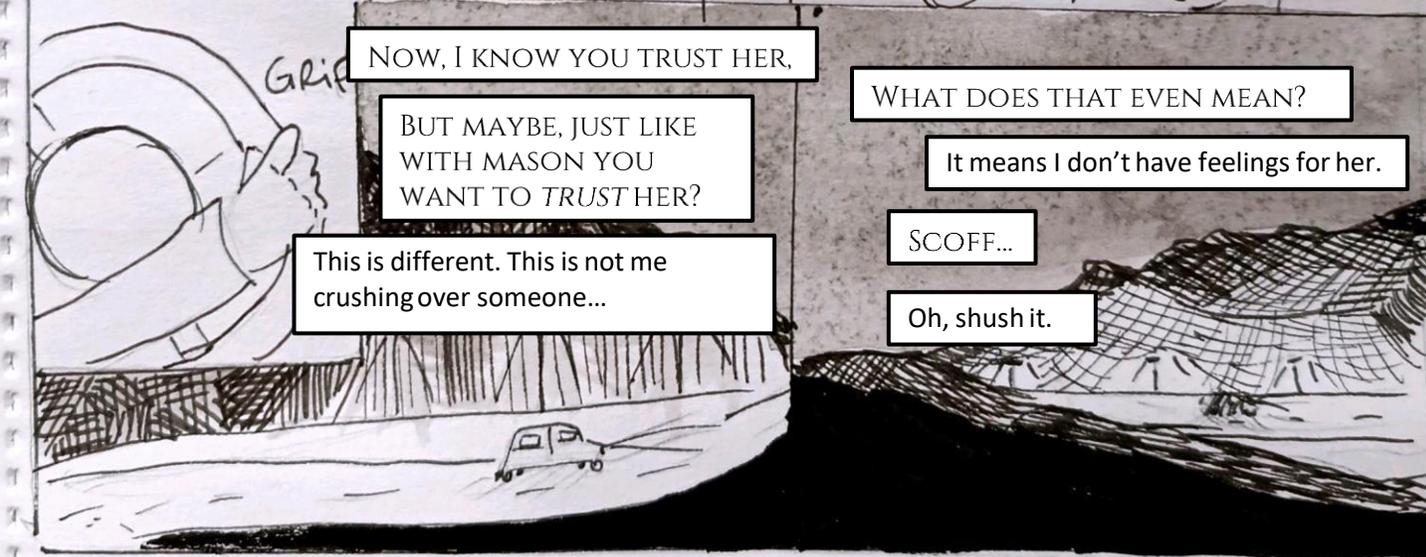
Tic Tic

Nic
leigh wants to know if you're coming for dinner
Busy
Meet me @ the usual bridge 30' it's important

NOW WHAT?

Now we hope my contingency plan works.

Panel 2 1/3 height and length top right
The camera is behind KIRA, who is looking at it (she's looking at MASON). There is no background.
KIRA: I hope it was worth it.



NOW, I KNOW YOU TRUST HER,

BUT MAYBE, JUST LIKE WITH MASON YOU WANT TO TRUST HER?

This is different. This is not me crushing over someone...

WHAT DOES THAT EVEN MEAN?

It means I don't have feelings for her.

SCOFF...

Oh, shush it.

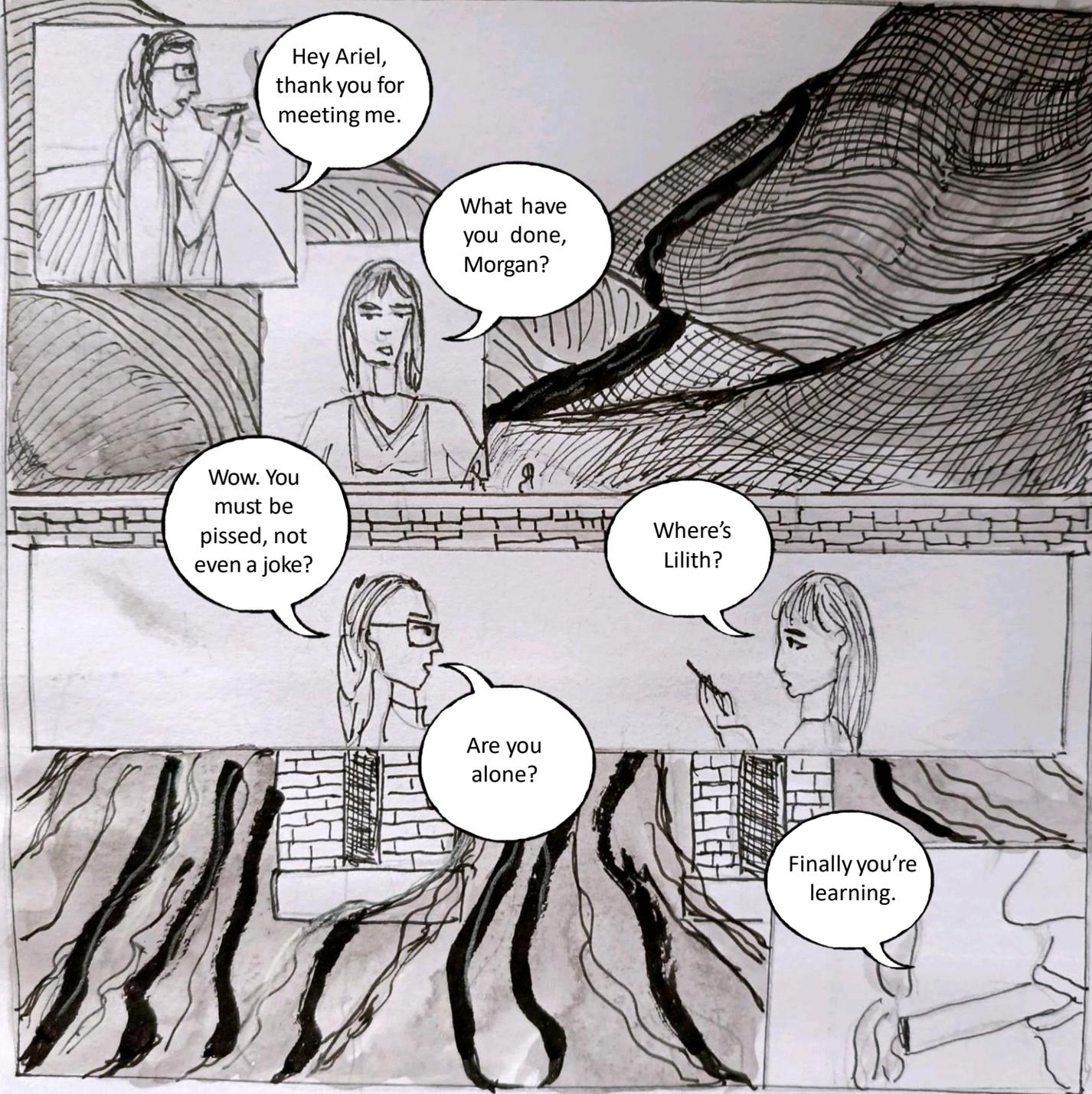
Panel 3 1/6 middle left
The camera frames KIRA's phone and the text messages she's exchanging with NICOLE. (Add element tic tic tic to show she's typing now).
NICOLE: leigh wants to know if you're coming for dinner.
KIRA: Busy
KIRA: Meet me @ the usual bridge 30' it's important

Panel 4 1/6 middle right
The camera is inside the car and frames KIRA from the front. She's frowning and looks angry.
CB: Now what? (CINZEL)
KIRA (caption box): Now we hope my contingency plan works.

Panel 5 detail inside panel 6
KIRA is gripping the steering wheel. Add detail grip next to her hand.

Panel 6 1/3 in height a bigger than 1/2 in length.
The camera is outside the car. KIRA is driving farther away from the town.
CB: Now, I know you trust her, but maybe, just like with Mason you want to trust her?
KIRA (caption box): This is different. This is not me crushing over someone...

Panel 7 1/3 in height smaller than 1/2 in length.
The camera is outside the car. KIRA is driving farther away from the town.
CB: What does that even mean? (CINZEL)
KIRA (caption box): It means I don't have feelings for her.
CB: Scoff? (CINZEL)
KIRA (caption box): Oh, shush it.



Hey Ariel,
thank you for
meeting me.

What have
you done,
Morgan?

Wow. You
must be
pissed, not
even a joke?

Where's
Lilith?

Are you
alone?

Finally you're
learning.

Panel 1 detail inside panel 3 top left corner
The camera is on KIRA's side. She's framed from head to waist, she's smoking.
KIRA: Hey Ariel, thank you for meeting me.

Panel 2 detail below panel 1
The camera is framing ARIEL from the front. She's framed from her head to her chest.
ARIEL: What have you done, Morgan?

Panel 3 full page
KIRA and ARIEL are standing on a bridge. The camera is far away from them and takes in the bridge; the hills rolling behind them and the river flowing in.

Panel 4 a thin strip that separates panel 3 in half (full length)
The camera frames KIRA and ARIEL talking to each other. They are facing each other and the camera frames them from the side. ARIEL is holding a cigarette.
KIRA: Wow. You must be pissed, not even a joke?
ARIEL: Where's Lilith?
KIRA: Are you alone?

Panel 5 detail inside panel 3 bottom right corner
Close up on the cigarette between ARIEL's lips
ARIEL: Finally you're learning.

Panel 1 1/3 height full length top

The camera frames KIRA and ARIEL. KIRA is looking at the camera, ARIEL is looking at KIRA. In the background, we see the hills.

KIRA: The hard way. I need to be sure you didn't come with the chivalry.

ARIEL: Maybe they're hiding in the bushes

KIRA: There's no disturbance in the Force.

ARIEL: Feeling other had-ais... that is a superpower Lumen and I have never developed. Fucking earth power.

Panel 2 1/6 middle left

The camera is framing KIRA who's looking directly at the camera (no background).

KIRA: We're on the same side, you should think about your words' choice.

Panel 3 1/6 middle right

The camera is framing ARIEL who's looking directly at the camera (no background).

ARIEL: Don't be an annoying know-it-all, Morgan. The other had-ais won't play with you. So, shall we talk business?

Panel 4 1/3 height full length bottom

The camera frames KIRA and ARIEL. They are looking at each other. There is no background.

KIRA: That's why I'm here.

ARIEL: Where's Lilith? How old is she? Please tell me she's not a baby.

KIRA: You'll see her in a second, but first—

ARIEL: Don't tell me you were stupid enough to kidnap a child, Morgan.

The hard way. I need to be sure you didn't come with the chivalry.

Maybe they're hiding in the bushes.

There's no disturbance in the Force.

Feeling other had-ais... that is a superpower Lumen and I have never developed.

Fucking earth power.

We're on the same side, you should think about your words' choice.

Don't be an annoying know-it-all, Morgan. The other had-ais won't play with you.

So, shall we talk business?

That's why I'm here.

Where's Lilith? How old is she? Please tell me she's not a baby.

You'll see her in a second, but first--

Don't tell me you were stupid enough to kidnap a child, Morgan.

Panel 1 2/3 height 1/3 length top left

The camera moves away from KIRA and ARIEL to frame a figure that is walking towards them. NICOLE is pretty much covered by the balloons. The balloons are different colours to signal who's talking to whom.

KIRA (off camera): Shut up and let me finish. I need you to remember that I have no idea how this is possible, and the reason I've not come out earlier was because I was looking for an answer.

ARIEL (off camera): OK...

Panel 2 2/3 height 1/3 length top middle

The camera moves away from KIRA and ARIEL to frame a figure that is walking towards them. NICOLE is more visible now. She had her hands in the pocket of her hoodie. She's framed head to waist.

KIRA (off camera): It's OK, you can come out.

Panel 3 2/3 height 1/3 length top right

The camera frames NICOLE, who's looking directly at it. She's framed head to shoulders (no background).

NICOLE: Hi, I'm Nicole. You must be Ariel.

Panel 4 detail across panel 3 and 6

Close up on ARIEL's widened eyes.

ARIEL: Holy shit!

Panel 5 1/3 height and length bottom left

The camera frames ARIEL head to waist. She looks very surprised. She's holding her cigarette. There is no background.

ARIEL: I thought your sister was super sick.

Panel 6 1/3 height 2/3 length bottom right

NICOLE and KIRA are standing side by side, they are looking directly at the camera. There is no background.

KIRA: Now you know why she isn't anymore.



22

The dice was loaded from the start

Nicole



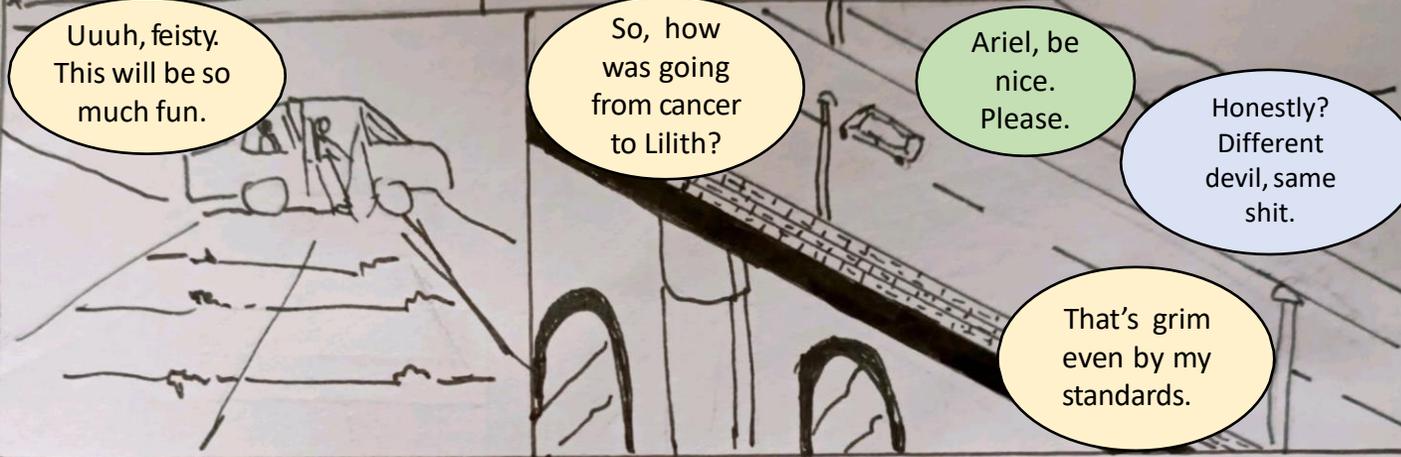
Panel 1 1/3 height and length top left

The camera frames KIRA and NICOLE. They're leaving the house. KIRA is at an angle but is facing the camera. NICOLE has her back to the camera. ARIEL is off camera. In the background, we see the house. One colour for each balloon.

ARIEL (off camera): Good morning, Morgan sisters!

NICOLE: Does she always speak like that?

KIRA: You'll get used to it.



Panel 2 1/3 height 2/3 length top right

The camera frames ARIEL and KIRA together, their back is to the camera. There is no background.

ARIEL (whisper balloon): You know Levi expressly forbade you from coming, right?

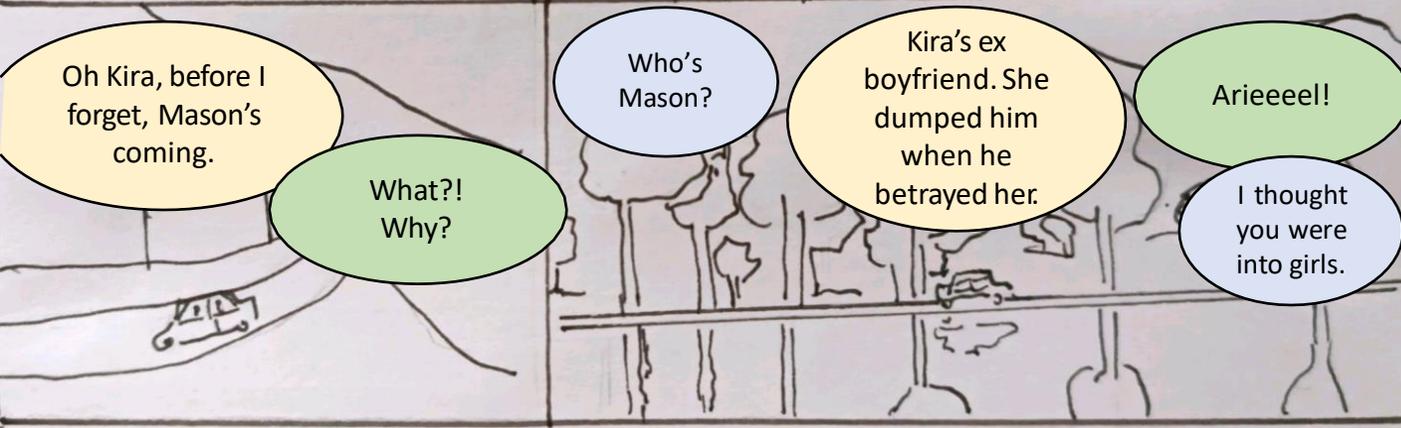
NICOLE (off camera): I asked her to come. If he has a problem with that, I'm more than happy to talk to him.

From this panel: all dialogue off camera

Panel 3 1/3 height and length middle left

The camera is away from the characters. It's at ground-level and shows the three of them getting in the car

ARIEL: Uuuh, feisty. This will be so much fun.



Panel 4 1/3 height 2/3 length middle right

The camera is outside the car and shows the ride from Forest Hill to the mansion.

ARIEL: So, how was going from cancer to Lilith?

KIRA: Ariel, be nice. Please.

NICOLE: Honestly? Different devil, same shit.

Panel 5 1/3 height and length bottom left

The camera is outside the car and shows the ride from Forest Hill to the mansion.

ARIEL: Oh Kira, before I forget, Mason's coming.

KIRA: What?! Why?

Panel 6 1/3 height 2/3 length bottom right

The camera is outside the car and shows the ride from Forest Hill to the mansion.

NICOLE: Who's Mason?

ARIEL: Kira's ex-boyfriend. She dumped him when he betrayed her.

KIRA: Arieeee!

NICOLE: I thought you were into girls.

Does she always speak like that?

You'll get used to it.

You know Levi expressly forbade you from coming, right?

I asked her to come. If he has a problem with that, I'm more than happy to talk to him.

Good morning, Morgan sisters!

Uuuh, feisty. This will be so much fun.

So, how was going from cancer to Lilith?

Ariel, be nice. Please.

Honestly? Different devil, same shit.

That's grim even by my standards.

Oh Kira, before I forget, Mason's coming.

What?! Why?

Who's Mason?

Kira's ex boyfriend. She dumped him when he betrayed her.

Arieeee!

I thought you were into girls.

Most of the panels are of irregular shapes. See storyboard for a better description.

Panel 1 1/3 height full length top

The camera is outside the car; the car is driving up to the mansion. For this panel, all the dialogue is off camera.

ARIEL: Uh, plot-twist! Have I just outed you as bi?

KIRA: Groan!

ARIEL: Isn't it fun to see Kira all flustered?

NICOLE: You're right, that is fun. I wonder why.

ARIEL: I think it's because she's always so anal.

Panel 2 middle left

The camera is inside the car. **Change -> Swap KIRA's and ARIEL's position.** NICOLE is sitting behind KIRA.

KIRA: Can you please stop?

ARIEL: Yes, but only because we've arrived.

Panel 3 middle right

The camera takes the mansion; the walls are covered by ivy, we can't see all of it because a balloon covers it.

Panel 4 rest of the page

The camera frames NICOLE and ARIEL. NICOLE is looking up, ARIEL is looking at NICOLE.

ARIEL has a hand on NICOLE's shoulder.

NICOLE: Wow, you guys must be filthy rich.

ARIEL: Yes, but don't hold it against us. Kira, I'm going in with your sister. Please don't kill anyone in the meantime.

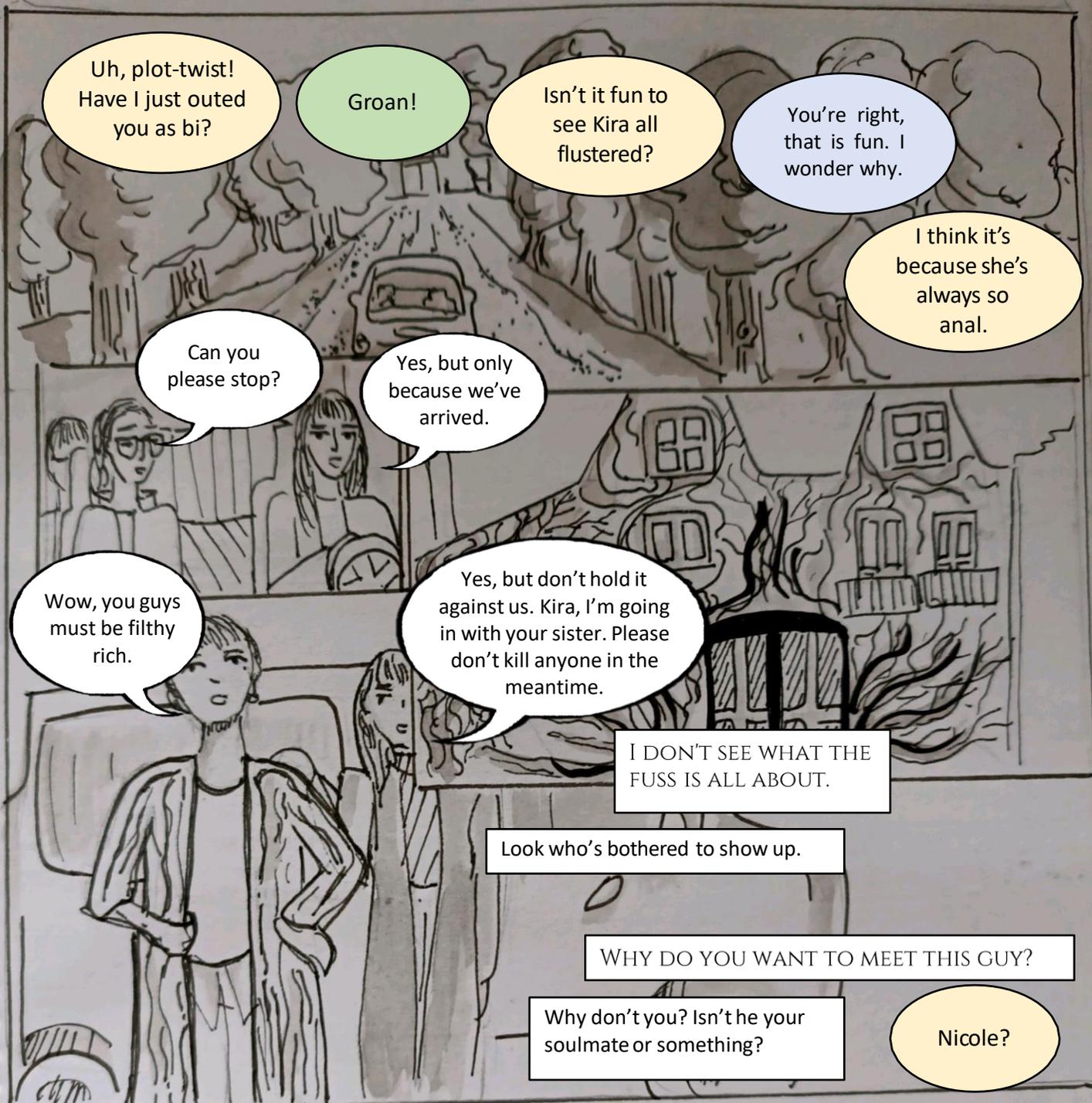
LILITH: I don't see what the fuss is all about. (CINZEL)

NICOLE (caption box): Look who's bothered to show up.

LILITH: Why do you want to meet this guy? (CINZEL)

NICOLE (caption box): Why don't you? Isn't he your soulmate or something?

ARIEL (off camera): Nicole?



Uh, plot-twist!
Have I just outed
you as bi?

Groan!

Isn't it fun to
see Kira all
flustered?

You're right,
that is fun. I
wonder why.

I think it's
because she's
always so
anal.

Can you
please stop?

Yes, but only
because we've
arrived.

Wow, you guys
must be filthy
rich.

Yes, but don't hold it
against us. Kira, I'm going
in with your sister. Please
don't kill anyone in the
meantime.

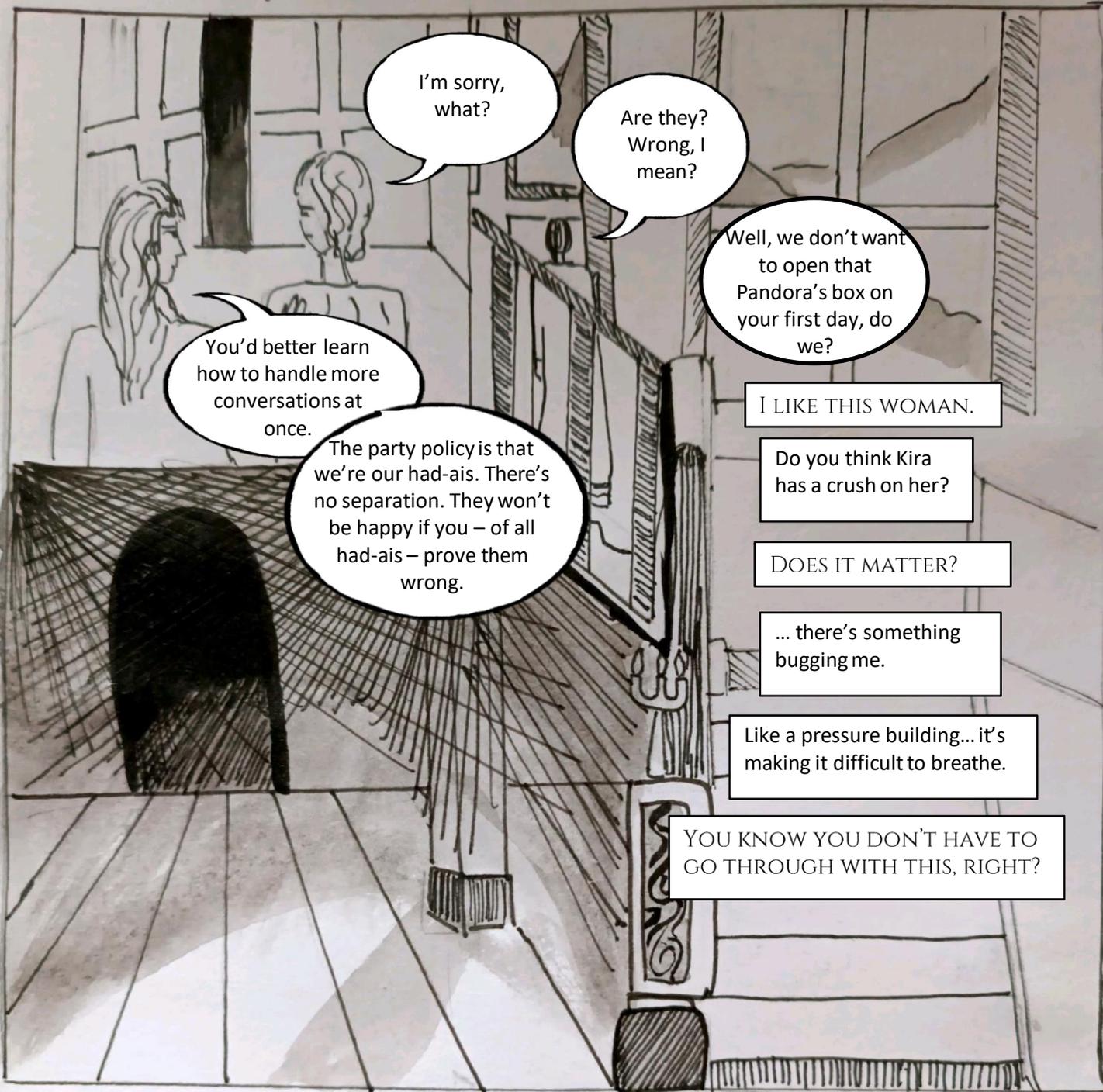
I DON'T SEE WHAT THE
FUSS IS ALL ABOUT.

Look who's bothered to show up.

WHY DO YOU WANT TO MEET THIS GUY?

Why don't you? Isn't he your
soulmate or something?

Nicole?



I'm sorry, what?

Are they? Wrong, I mean?

Well, we don't want to open that Pandora's box on your first day, do we?

You'd better learn how to handle more conversations at once.

The party policy is that we're our had-ais. There's no separation. They won't be happy if you – of all had-ais – prove them wrong.

I LIKE THIS WOMAN.

Do you think Kira has a crush on her?

DOES IT MATTER?

... there's something bugging me.

Like a pressure building... it's making it difficult to breathe.

YOU KNOW YOU DON'T HAVE TO GO THROUGH WITH THIS, RIGHT?

Panel 1 1/4 top left

The camera is behind NICOLE and ARIEL. They are walking towards the entrance of the mansion. The doors are ajar, there is darkness on the other side. ARIEL has a hand on NICOLE's back.

NICOLE: I'm sorry, what?

ARIEL: You'd better learn how to handle more conversations at once. The party policy is that we're our had-ais. There's no separation. They won't be happy if you – of all had-ais – prove them wrong.

Panel 2 rest of the page

ARIEL and NICOLE are inside the Mansion. They're walking to the upper floor. There are large windows at the back. NICOLE is looking at something outside. ARIEL is off camera. In the bottom, left corner of the frame, there is a door. Darkness is on the other side.

NICOLE: Are they? Wrong, I mean?

ARIEL (off camera): Well, we don't want to open that Pandora's box on your first day, do we?

LILITH: I like this woman. (CINZEL)

NICOLE (caption box): Do you think Kira has a crush on her?

LILITH: Does it matter? (CINZEL)

NICOLE (caption box): ... there's something bugging me. Like a pressure building... it's making it difficult to breathe.

LILITH: You know you don't have to go through with this, right? (CINZEL)



My brother is waiting for you.

Before I go, I need to know. Are had-ais and humans the same.

ARE YOU SCARED?

Not scared, no.

Is that Mason?
How old is he?

Yeah, that's him. I think he's in his 30s.

Does he know Kira is barely eighteen?

Lesson number two. Age doesn't bother the likes of us, Nicole Morgan.

That is not the right question to ask.

What question should I ask?

Are you and Lilith the same?
Are Levi and Lucifer the same?

And?

Ask Lilith at the end of today.

What about the second?

I don't have an answer for the first.

Panel 1 detail inside panel 2

The camera is on NICOLE's side. She's looking outside, where the car is parked. In the distance, MASON and KIRA are arguing next to the car.

NICOLE: Is that Mason? How old is he?

ARIEL (off camera): Yeah, that's him. I think he's in his 30s.

NICOLE: Does he know Kira is barely eighteen?

ARIEL (off camera): Lesson number two. Age doesn't bother the likes of us, Nicole Morgan.

Panel 2 1/2 top

NICOLE embodies the camera. ARIEL is showing her the way to go. In the distance, there's a closed door.

ARIEL: My brother is waiting for you.

NICOLE: Before I go, I need to know. Are had-ais and humans the same.

LILITH: Are you scared? (CINZEL)

NICOLE (caption box): Not scared, no.

Panel 3 1/2 bottom

The camera is below NICOLE's chin. She's looking up at the ceiling. The balloons are colour-coded.

ARIEL (off camera): That is not the right question to ask.

NICOLE: What question should I ask?

ARIEL (off camera): Are you and Lilith the same? Are Levi and Lucifer the same?

NICOLE: And?

ARIEL (off camera): I don't have an answer for the first.

NICOLE: What about the second?

ARIEL (off camera): Ask Lilith at the end of today.



Panel 1 1/2 page left

The camera sits at the top of the frame and takes NICOLE from the back. In the distance. LEVI is standing next to a French window (inside) and is looking outside.

NICOLE: Lev– Luc--- Levi?

Panel 2 detail inside panel 3

Close up on LEVI's face; he's beaming.

LEVI: Lilith, my love!

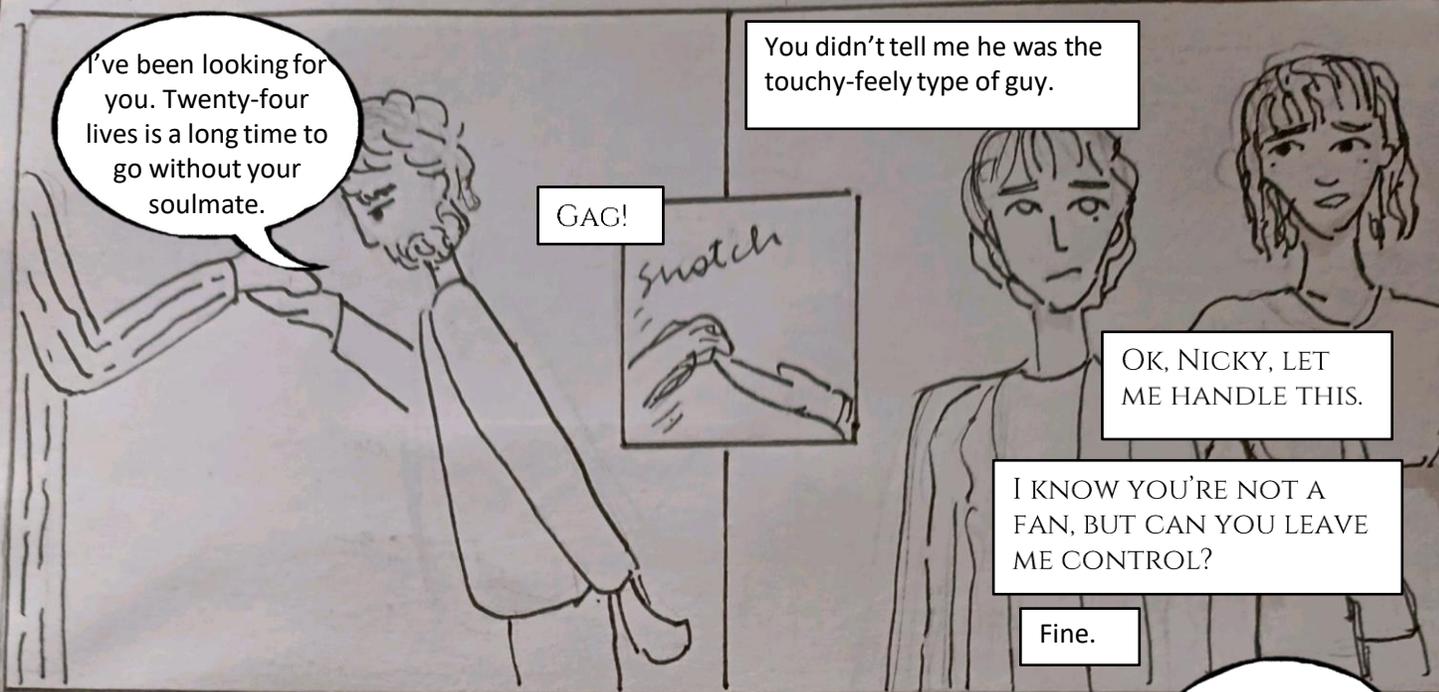
LILITH: Pretentious dick. (CINZEL)

Panel 3 1/2 page right

The camera frames NICOLE and Levi from the side. There is no background.

LEVI: Or do you prefer Nicole?

NICOLE: Nicole is fine. Or Nic.



Panel 1 1/4 top left

The camera frames NICOLE and Levi from the side. There is no background. NICOLE is only partially in the frame. She has her arm extended. LEVI is trying to kiss her hand. LEVI: I've been looking for you. Twenty-four lives is a long time to go without your soulmate.

Panel 2 detail across panels 1 and 3

NICOLE snatches her hand away
LILITH: Gag. (CINZEL)

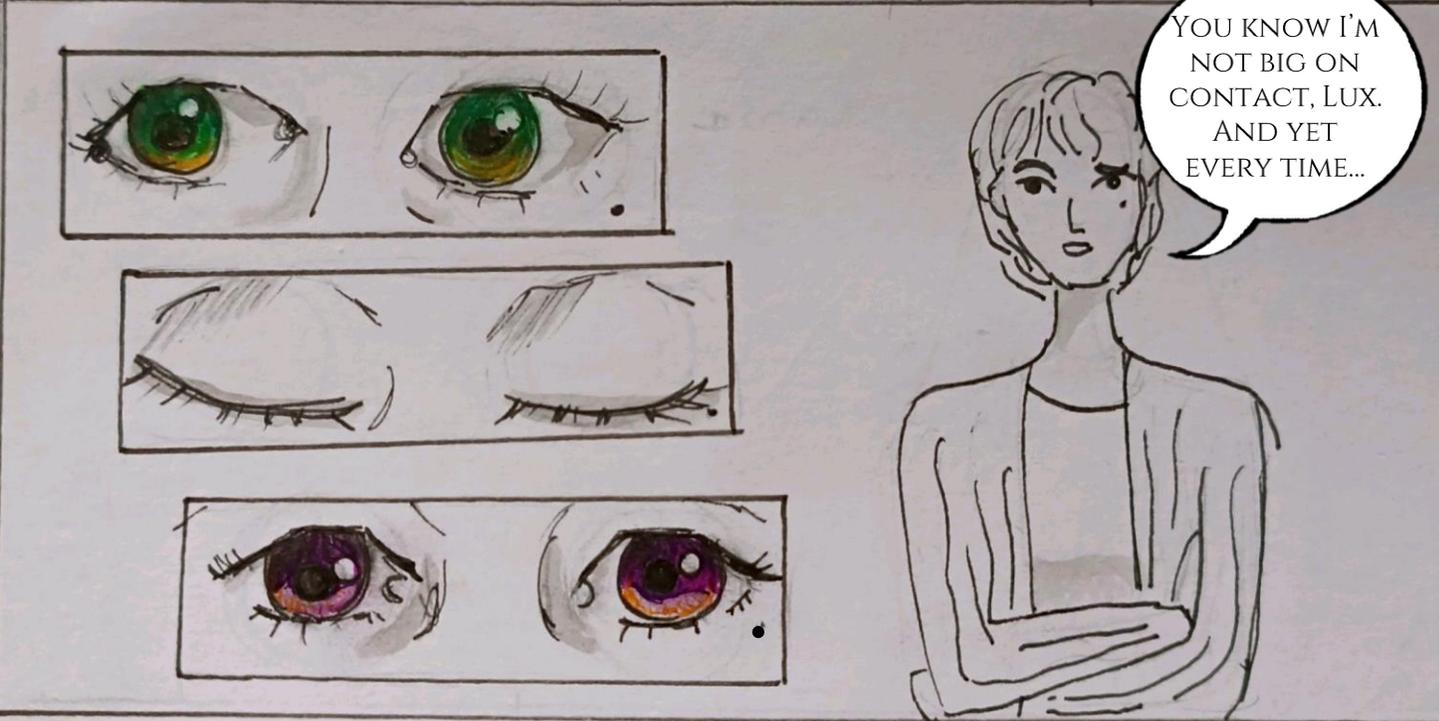
Panel 3 1/4 top right

The camera frames NICOLE. Behind her we see the materialisation of LILITH. LILITH has a hand on NICOLE's shoulder. They're both framed head to waist, there is no background.

NICOLE: You didn't tell me he was the touchy-feely type of guy.

LILITH: OK, Nicky, let me handle this. I know you're not a fan, but can you leave me control? (CINZEL)

NICOLE (caption box): Fine



Panels 4 – 5 – 6 details inside panel 7

They show the transition from NICOLE to LILITH. They are staggered in the bottom half of the panel page one top of the other.

Focus on NICOLE's hazelnut eyes.

Focus on NICOLE's closed eyes.

Focus on LILITH's purple eyes

Panel 7 1/2 page bottom

LILITH in NICOLE's body, she has her arms crossed below her chest. She looks defiant.

LILITH: You know I'm not big on contact, Lux And yet every time... (CINZEL)



Panel 1 1/3 in height and length top left
Close up on LEVI, there is no background.
LEVI: So, it is true. You're back! How are you not a child? Where've you been all this time?



Panel 2 1/3 in height 2/3 length top right
LILITH has turned away from LEVI (who's left his place LUCIPHER). She's looking outside the window. The camera is at a distance and frames them both, LILITH from the back, LUCIPHER from the side.
LUCIPHER: I've been so lonely. (CINZEL)



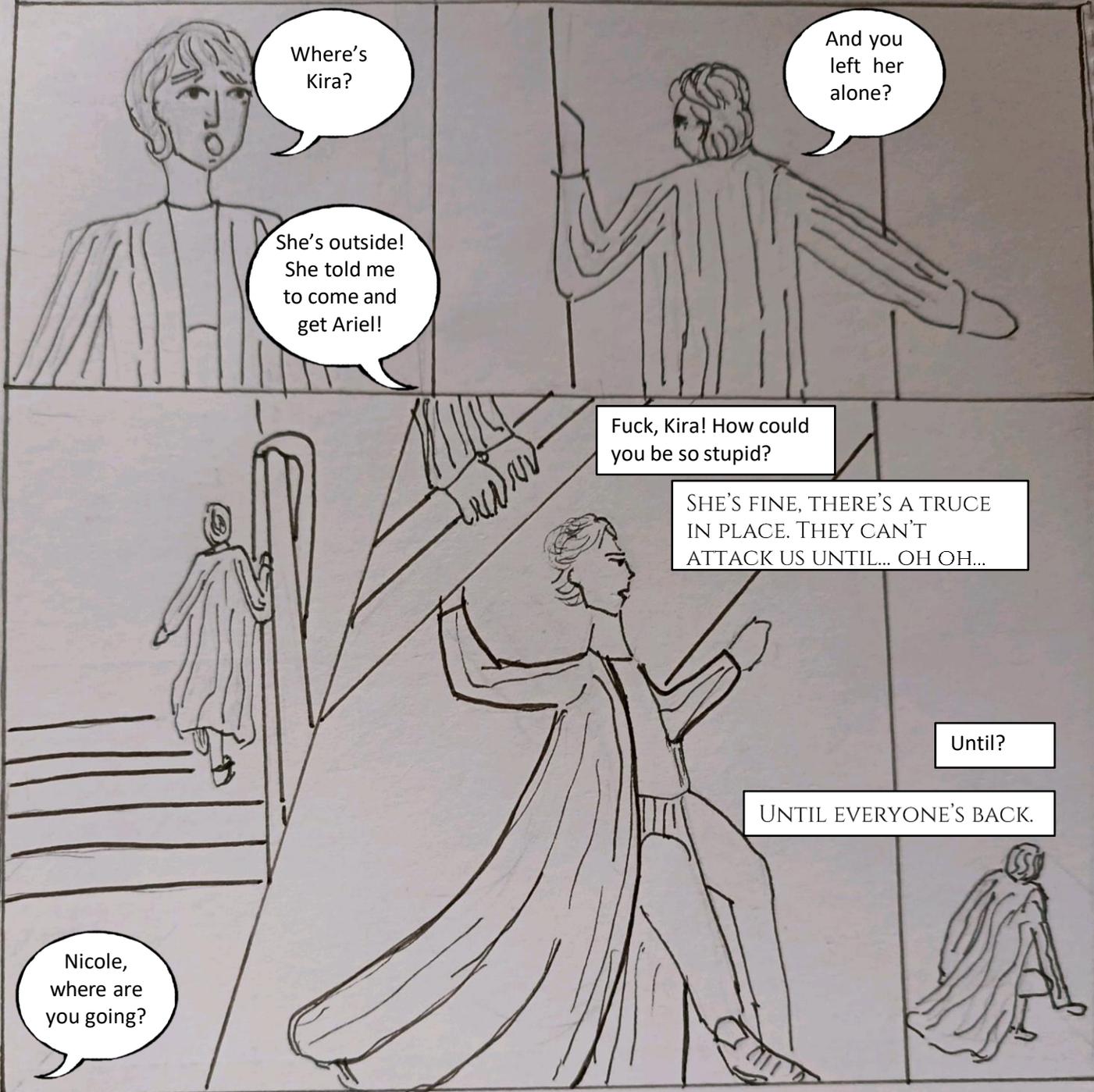
Panel 3 1/3 in height 1/2 length middle left
The camera frames LILITH and LUCIPHER from the back, he has a hand on her shoulder. Minimum background (the edges of the French window).
LUCIPHER: I've missed you my friend.(CINZEL)
LILITH: Do you trust me? (CINZEL)



Panel 4 1/3 in height 1/2 length middle left
The camera frames LILITH and LUCIPHER from the back, he has a hand on her shoulder. They are looking at each other. Minimum background.
NICOLE (caption box): Do I have a choice?

Panel 5 1/3 in height 2/3 length bottom left
LILITH and LUCIPHER are embracing. There is no background.
LILITH: I've missed you too, Lux. (CINZEL)

Panel 6 1/3 in height and length bottom right.
MASON walks in slamming the door, add slam next to do the door.
MASON: There are Loyalists outside!



CHAPTER 22 – page 8

The panels in this page are all irregular, so look at the storyboard to better understand how they relate to each other.

Panel 1 1/3 in height 1/2 length top left

Close up on NICOLE, there is no background.

NICOLE: Where's Kira?

MASON (off camera): She's outside! She told me to come and get Ariel!

Panel 2 1/3 in height 1/2 length top right

The camera is behind NICOLE. She's dashing out of the room.

NICOLE: And you left her alone?

Panel 3 bottom left

NICOLE is rushing down the stairs. The camera is on her back.

LEVI: Nicole, where are you going?

Panel 4 middle

Close up of NICOLE's hands on the stairs banister.

Panel 5 bottom middle

NICOLE jumps down to avoid having to do all the stairs. Minimal background.

NICOLE (caption box): Fuck, Kira! How could you be so stupid?

LILITH: She's fine, there's a truce in place. They can't attack us until... oh oh... .

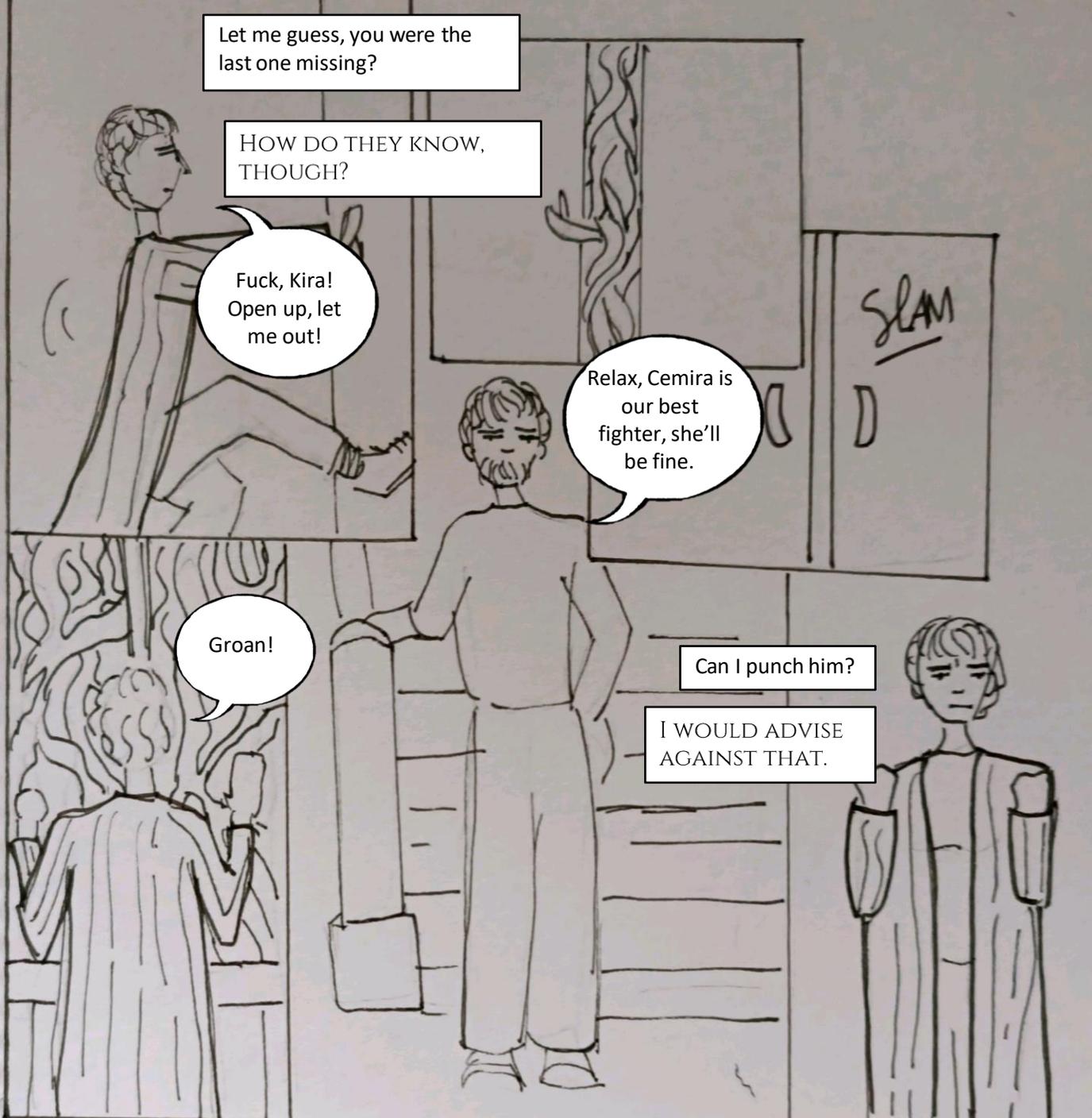
(CINZEL)

Panel 6 bottom right

NICOLE is crouching down. No background.

NICOLE (caption box): Until?

LILITH: Until everyone is back. (CINZEL)



Let me guess, you were the last one missing?

HOW DO THEY KNOW, THOUGH?

Fuck, Kira!
Open up, let me out!

Relax, Cemira is our best fighter, she'll be fine.

SLAM

Groan!

Can I punch him?

I WOULD ADVISE AGAINST THAT.

CHAPTER 22 – page 9

The panels in this page are all irregular, so look at the storyboard to better understand how they relate to each other.

Panel 1 top left

The camera frames NICOLE from the side who's trying to open the door of the mansion. Add movement lines behind her.

NICOLE (caption box): Let me guess, you were the last one missing?

LILITH: How do they know, though? (CINZEL)

NICOLE (Speech balloon): Fuck, Kira! Open up, let me out!

Panel 2 top middle detail

A root summoned by KIRA gets hold of the door handle.

Panel 3 top right detail

The door is closed shut. Add detail slam.

Panel 4 bottom left

NICOLE is framed from the back. She's now looking at the roots that have completely covered the windows.

NICOLE: Groan.

Panel 5 bottom middle

LEVI has come down the stairs. He's framed full figure, he's looking directly at the camera.

LEVI: Relax, Cemira is our best fighter. She'll be fine.

Panel 6 bottom right

NICOLE is facing the camera. She's framed from her head to her knees. She's clenching both her fists. No background.

NICOLE (caption box): Can I punch him?

LILITH: I would advise against that. (CINZEL)

23

The devil amongst us

* Kira*

CHAPTER 23 – page 1

It's raining in this scene, so everyone is wet.

Panel 1 detail top left corner inside panel 2

Detail, frame of KIRA's feet running on uneven terrain.

KIRA (in caption box): So who's the rat?

CB: Really? You want to discuss this now? (CINZEL)

Panel 2 1/2 page top

The camera is facing KIRA; it hovers in front of her, above her. KIRA is running up the hill. There are three people behind her in the distance. In the frame we can see trees close to each other, branches on the ground, the ground is covered by fallen leaves.

KIRA (in caption box): How did they find out?

CB (in caption box): OK, so we're doing this. (CINZEL)

The space below is divided into three parts.

Panel 3 1/3 in length full height bottom left.

The camera is behind KIRA. Her face is turned at an angle to look at the camera. No background, but we see line movements that show she's running.

CB (in caption box): Mason? (CINZEL)

KIRA (in caption box): I see him going to Gregön, but the Loyalists?

Panel 4 2/3 in length full height bottom right

The camera is close to the three figures running after KIRA. THEA (ARKTO), SCOTT (GAOTH), KARL (KRÄHE). THEA is shown nodding at her two allies.

KIRA (in caption box): We need to put some more distance between us and the manor.

LOYALISTS: unintelligible speech.

Top half of the page

Panel 1 1/3 in length full height top left.

The camera is behind KIRA. Her face is turned at an angle to look at the camera. No background, but we see line movements that indicate she's running.

KIRA (in caption box): Where've they gone?

Panel 2 2/3 in length full height top right

The camera is close to one figure running after KIRA. THEA, where SCOTT was, there are leaves floating around. Instead of KARL, there's a black bird flying towards the camera.

CB (in caption box): Kira, watch out! (CINZEL)

Bottom half of the page

Panel 3 1/2 page bottom left

The camera is behind KIRA. Her face is turned to her left side. She has hit a wall of air. Her facial expression shows she's in pain.

KIRA: Ouch.

Panel 4 1/2 page bottom right

There are leaves all around her. KIRA is panting, there's blood coming from her nose.

KIRA (in caption box): Gaoth, shifty bastard.

Panel 1 1/2 page top.

The camera is behind KIRA. She's on the ground, her arms behind her back. Her legs bent (feet on the ground). There are leaves all around her. SCOTT (GAOTH), THEA (ARKTO), KARL (KRÄHE) are standing in front of KIRA. They are standing in the middle of clearing and they're surrounded by the woods.

THEA: Now, that wasn't nice, was it.

Panel 2 detail across panel 1 and 3

The camera is in front of KIRA. KIRA brings a hand to touch the blood coming from her nose.

Panel 3 1/4 bottom left

The camera is in front of KIRA. She's on the ground, her arms behind her back. Her legs bent (feet on the ground). She's panting. There's blood coming from her nose, her left hand is close to it, her face looks impassive.

THEA: I told you not to run.

KIRA: Don't do anything stupid, Thea. There's a truce in place.

THEA: That was true until yesterday.

Panel 4 1/4 bottom right

The camera is in front of KIRA. She's on the ground, her arms behind her back. Her legs bent (feet on the ground). She breathes evenly now. There's blood coming from her nose, she is smiling.

THEA: The moment Lilith walked in--

Panel 1 1/2 page top

The camera is behind KIRA. She's on the ground, her arms behind her back. Her legs bent (feet on the ground). There are leaves all around her. SCOTT (GAOTH), THEA (ARKTO), KARL (KRÄHE) are standing in front of KIRA. They're facing the camera. They are standing in the middle of clearing and they're surrounded by the woods. The ground underneath the LOYALISTS has risen. There are roots behind them that are trying to close in on them.

THEA: Run!

KARL: Shit!

The bottom half of the page is divided unevenly:

Panel 2 1/3 in length full height page bottom left

The camera is above KIRA as she stands up. She's holding a spear in her hand.

Panel 3 2/3 in length full height bottom right

KIRA is in the top left corner of the panel. She's charging forward. SCOTT is in the bottom right corner of the panel and the camera is behind him. He has his hands up.

SCOTT: Shit.

Panel 1 1/2 page top

The camera is behind KIRA, the camera is in the bottom right corner of the panel. She has charged against the LOYALISTS. But they've all moved away and run to the side. KIRA is close to hit the wall of roots.

Panel 2 1/4 bottom left

KIRA walks through a hole in the wall. The camera is behind her, so we see only part of KIRA's body, while the other part is already on the other side of the wall. The wall corresponds with the left edge of the panel

Panel 3 1/4 bottom right.

The camera is below KIRA. She's suspended in mid-air and it looks like she's suffocating. She's holding onto something at her throat, as if it were a pair of invisible hands choking her.
SCOTT: Tell me, genius, how do you grasp at air?

Panel 1 detail inside panel 2 (top left corner).
KIRA snaps her fingers.

Panel 2 1/2 page left

The camera is below KIRA. She's suspended in mid-air and it looks like she's suffocating. She's holding onto something at her throat, as if it were a pair of invisible hands choking her. Thunder comes crashing down.

SCOTT: Aaargh!

CB: That's new. How did you do that? (CINZEL)

KIRA (caption box): Not now, Cem.

Panel 3 1/4 top right

The camera is in the bottom right corner of the panel. KIRA is running in the background, the bird is behind her. SCOTT is in the foreground, kneeling in the mud. He's holding onto his chest. He's wet, but there are also smoke lines wafting off of him.

SCOTT: Go after her!

Panel 4 1/4 bottom right

The camera is behind KIRA. Her face is turned at an angle to look at the camera. She looks in pain. No background, but we see line movements that show she's running.

CB: We need to lose them. (CINZEL)

KIRA (caption box): Don't worry, my plan is already in motion.

Panel 1 1/2 page left

The camera in the bottom right corner of the panel. KIRA is running in the background, LOYALISTS are running in the middle ground, branches and roots are snaking towards the LOYALISTS in the foreground. All around them, the woods and dead leaves on the ground.

Panel 2 1/4 bottom left

The camera is on KIRA's left side. Kira jumps up and gets hold of a tree branch.

Panel 3 1/4 bottom right

The camera is above KIRA. She's climbing up the tree. Her breathing is heavy.

KIRA: pant pant.

Panel 1 1/3 length full height left

The camera is above KIRA. She's sitting in the crook of two branches. The LOYALISTS are at the base of the tree.

THEA: You can't stay up there forever, Kira.

Panel 2 1/3 length full height middle

The camera is above KIRA. She's sitting in the crook of two branches. The LOYALISTS are overwhelmed by the roots and are blocked.

THEA: Fuck you, Morgan.

Panel 3 1/3 length full height right

The camera is in front of KIRA. She's jumped down. Line movements show her descent.

Panel 1 full page

The camera is in front of KIRA. KIRA is in the foreground. She's bleeding from her nose and there's a stain on her left side. In the background, the three LOYALISTS are held down by the roots. The roots are encircling their neck, their wrists, torso, legs, and ankles. SCOTT is trying to wiggle free without succeeding.

SCOTT: I can't transmute.

THEA: Morgan, you coward, you used blood magic to lock us.

CB (caption box): You're a genius. (CINZEL)

KIRA (caption box): I thought you didn't like blood magic.

Panel 2 Detail inside panel 2 (bottom right corner)

KIRA has turned towards the LOYALISTS.

KIRA: Remember, you broke the truce. Fucking loyalists (outside the balloon).

24

Nothing breaks like a heart

Nicole & Kira & Dave

The top part of the page is divided unevenly:

Panel 1 2/3 in length full height top left

NICOLE, ARIEL, and MASON, com bursting through the door. The camera frames them from the front.

Panel 2 1/3 in length full height top right

The camera is behind NICOLE's head; we see her from the back in the foreground (head to shoulders) while KIRA is in the distance walking towards them. She's limping and holding her left side with her right arm and hand.

The bottom part of the page is divided unevenly:

Panel 3 1/3 in length full height bottom left

NICOLE runs towards KIRA. The camera is on NICOLE'S left side.

NICOLE: Kira!

Panel 4 2/3 in length full height bottom right

The camera is on NICOLE'S left side. NICOLE holds KIRA. KIRA has her free arm behind NICOLE's back. In the background, we see the park surrounding the manor and the woods in the distance.

NICOLE: How are you? Are you crazy? Why did—

KIRA: Nicole, I'm fine.

The top part of the page is divided unevenly:

Panel 1 2/3 in length full height top left

The camera is behind KIRA's head. She's partially framed by it. The camera is facing NICOLE who's pushed KIRA back. Nicole has put her hands on KIRA's shoulders. NICOLE is inspecting her sister's injuries.

NICOLE: Fine? You're all scratched up... is that blood?

KIRA: Would you believe me if I told you it's not mine?

Panel 2 detail inside panel 1 bottom right corner

NICOLE lifts the corner of KIRA's top and sees the wound underneath.

NICOLE: Who did this to you?

Panel 3 1/3 in length full height top right

The camera is facing NICOLE, LEVI is behind her. He has a hand on NICOLE's right shoulder. No background, no KIRA.

LEVI: So they really broke the truce.

KIRA (off camera): Words got out. It was the amazing trio.

LEVI: Did Megami send them?

KIRA (off camera): Didn't stop to ask, but they're still tied up in the woods.

The bottom part of the page is divided:

Panel 4 detail inside panel 5 top left corner

Close up on LEVI.

LEVI: Leah, let's go check.

Panel 5 1/2 page bottom

The camera is in the middle of the panel, but there's some distance and takes everyone from the side. KIRA and NICOLE are huddled on the left. NICOLE stands by KIRA with an arm around her shoulders. ARIEL is on the right with her back to the twins. LEVI is closer to the twins and facing them.

LEVI: Kira—

NICOLE: Kira will stay here getting her wounds treated. I'm sure the leader of the Rebels can manage without his second-in-command.

ARIEL (whisper balloon): Feisty.

Panel 6 detail inside panel 5 bottom right corner

Close up on KIRA.

KIRA: Look, you can't just go toe to toe with Levi.

NICOLE (off camera): Watch me.

The top part of the page is divided into thirds:

Panel 1 1/3 in length full height top left

Frontal camera. MASON is framed head to waist. No background. He's left eye is a swollen from KIRA's punch.

MASON: Why don't I look at your sister's wounds?

Panel 2 1/3 in length full height top middle

Frontal camera. NICOLE is framed head to waist. She's looking down at the phone in her hands. No background.

NICOLE: I can do that, thank you.

Text message: Hey, can you come and get us? Please? This is the location. Don't call Leigh.

Panel 3 1/3 in length full height top right

Frontal camera. KIRA is framed head to waist. She is looking to her right, she's still holding her left side.

KIRA: Nicole? What are you doing?

NICOLE (off camera): Calling for help.

Panel 4 1/2 page bottom.

DAVE is sitting at a pub table. The camera frames him from his head to his chest. His elbows and forearms are on the table. He looks a mix between worried and perplexed. He's holding his mobile phone. NOEL is in front of him on the other side of the table. The camera is behind him. We only see part of their profile.

NOEL: Everything OK?

DAVE: My sisters asked me to go pick them up. I think they're trouble.

NOEL: How do you know?

DAVE: Nic wrote please. How do you feel about a drive?

Panel 1 1/3 in height full length top

Show passage of time with three bars. The camera is behind the twins, but it's farther back so we see a lot of the background (road coming up to the manor). NICOLE and KIRA are standing close to a car. DAVE has just got off and has opened the passenger seat for his sisters.

DAVE: What happened?

KIRA: Long story.

NOEL (off camera): Do we need to go to the A&E?

Panel 2 1/3 in height full length middle

The camera is inside the car at the back. NICOLE and KIRA have their back to the camera. DAVE and NOEL are in the front. DAVE is turned towards the back to look at his sister and at the camera.

DAVE: Don't think you can just not tell me what happened.

KIRA: We will. Can we please just go?

NICOLE: You look familiar. Have we met?

NOEL: We have. You kind of died in my arms.

NICOLE: Died? I think you mean passed out.

Panel 3 1/3 in height full length bottom

It's darker outside, almost night. The camera is outside the car. We see the car driving down the same road as CHAPTER 22, page two, panel 6 but in the other direction. All the characters are off camera.

NICOLE: Have you told Leigh?

DAVE: Of course not.

KIRA: Thanks.

Panel 1 1/3 in height full length top

The camera is outside the car. We see the car driving down the same road as CHAPTER 22, page 2, panel 5, but in the other direction. All the characters are off camera.

DAVE: Kira, sure you don't want to stop at the A&E?

KIRA: I'm sure. Nic will tell you when to stop.

DAVE: How did you get injured?

NICOLE: Dave! Can we do this at home?

Panel 1 1/3 in height full length middle

The camera is outside the car. We see the car driving down the same road as CHAPTER 22, page 2, panel 4, but in the other direction. All the characters are off camera.

DAVE: No, because then we get home and then you tell me you can talk because Leigh's there.

KIRA: Dave, I promise, we'll tell you everything.

DAVE: Scoff. You guys suck.

NICOLE: Can you please stop after the bridge?

Panel 1 1/3 in height full length bottom

The camera is outside the car. The car has stopped and the twins are getting off.

NICOLE: We'll be back in 10ish.

Panel 1 1/4 top left

DAVE and NOEL are in the car. The camera is framing DAVE from outside the car window. NOEL is next to him, but we only see part of his profile.

DAVE: This is weird, isn't it?

NOEL: Yes, even by Morgan standards, this is weird.

Panel 2 1/4 top right

The camera frames the twins from the front. They are in the background as they come down a slope (uneven terrain). NICOLE is holding KIRA by her arm as KIRA holds her left side.

NICOLE: Watch your step.

KIRA: What are we going to tell Dave?

NICOLE: The truth.

Panel 3 squared box smaller than 1/4 inside panel 4

There's a small pier that connects the slope to the river. NICOLE helps KIRA get into the water. NICOLE is already in the river, water up to her waist. KIRA is slowly descending.

KIRA: Are you mad?

NICOLE: Kira, have you ever thought that maybe getting more people into this would actually help you?

KIRA: Of course you'd think that.

Panel 4 1/2 page

KIRA is floating in the river. The camera is above her and she's framed full figure. She is only wearing her underwear. Her injury is still bleeding, albeit slowly. NICOLE's hands hover above her abdomen. There's light surrounding KIRA's injury.

NICOLE: Think about it. How lonely have you been in the past two years? You've cut everyone off.

KIRA: Because that's what I was supposed to do.

Layout of the top half of the page

Panel 1 detail inside panel 2 top left corner.

Close up on KIRA's face.

KIRA: There's a system in place to keep the people around me safe.

NICOLE (off camera): Then fuck the system.

Panel 2 1/4 top left

NICOLE's hands move over KIRA's injury. The injury looks smaller.

KIRA: It's not that easy.

NICOLE: Especially when you've been groomed since birth.

Panel 3 1/4 top right

NICOLE's hands move over KIRA's injury. The injury looks even smaller.

KIRA: Grooming is such a strong word.

NICOLE: Not inaccurate, though.

Layout of the bottom half of the page

Panel 4 1/3 in length full height bottom left

NICOLE's hands move over KIRA's injury. The injury is closed.

NICOLE: All I'm saying is that maybe we could do with allies outside of the Rebels. Here, all done.

Panel 5 1/3 in length full height bottom middle

The camera is behind KIRA as she heaves herself up the pier.

NICOLE (off camera): And Dave deserves to know what's been happening.

Panel 6 1/3 in length full height bottom right

The camera is on NICOLE as she gets off the water.

NICOLE: I bet he's felt lonely just as much as we have.

CHAPTER 24 – page 8

Panel 1 full page

Close up of DAVE. Framed head to waist, his arms are crossed.

DAVE: What the fuck?

Panel 1 1/4 top left

Three bars to show passage of time. The car is outside the MORGANS's house. The camera is behind KIRA who is talking to NOEL. It's dark around them.

KIRA: Thank you for that.

NOEL: No problem, text me next time you guys are in a dodgy situation. It's fun.

KIRA: chuckle.

Panel 2 1/4 top right

NICOLE and DAVE walk through the front door.

NICOLE: Is Leigh home?

DAVE: She's at Lizzie's.

NICOLE: Great. Groan outside of balloon.

DAVE: You're not getting out of this.

Panel 3 1/2 bottom

Three bars to show passage of time. NICOLE, DAVE, and KIRA are sitting in the living room. NICOLE and DAVE are on the sofa, KIRA in the armchair. DAVE is in the middle.

DAVE: So... you guys are... witches?

KIRA: Well, there's a word... but they're technically called had-ais.

DAVE: And they come from another world?

KIRA: Yup.

DAVE: And this Lilith was actually Nicole's cancer?

Layout of the top half of the page

Panel 1 1/2 page top

NICOLE, DAVE, and KIRA are sitting in the living room. NICOLE and DAVE are on the sofa, KIRA in the armchair. DAVE is in the middle. NICOLE is speechless. KIRA's holding her head with her left hand.

KIRA: Umpf. I've never thought about it that way.

NICOLE (caption box): Lilith? Was it you the whole time?

LILITH (caption box): Honestly, I don't know.

NICOLE: Oh shit.

Panel 2 detail inside panel 3 left right corner

Noise of the door opening.

Layout of the top half of the page

Panel 3 1/3 length full height bottom left

LEIGHTON and ELIZABETH walk into the living room. The camera frames them from the front, head to knees. LEIGHTON is slightly surprised. ELIZABETH is behind her and she's only partially visible. There's no background.

LEIGHTON: Well, what do we have here?

Panel 4 2/3 length full height bottom right

LEIGHTON and ELIZABETH walk into the dining room. The camera frames them from the back, head to knees. They're on the left side of the panel. DAVE, NICOLE, and KIRA have all stood up to follow them. They are on the right side of the panel.

LEIGHTON: Are you guys hungry? We're ordering Chinese.

DAVE: I could do with some dim sum.

KIRA: Uh yeah, veggie yaki soba for me but, without the eggs.

Panel 5 detail inside panel 4 bottom right corner

DAVE turns around and points a finger at his sister.

DAVE: We're not done yet.

25

Echoes part 4

Luce

CHAPTER 25 – page 1

All the dialogue in this chapter is in CINZEL.

Panel 1 1/3 in height and 2/3 length top left

LUCE is flanked by the two soldiers. The camera frames them from the back. There is a fourth female had-au, she's facing the camera.

LUCE (caption box): I was assigned to the Blackguard, also known as the Blacks. It was an interesting first meeting. They were all seasoned.

Panel 2 squared 1/3 in height full length top right

Close up on EVE's face.

EVE: Hi, I'm Chief.

Panel 3 1/3 height full length middle

The camera takes in the background as LUCE and EVE cross the crooked paths. The first part of the landscape is still Ådhit. The second part is the crooked path. The third part is the world where the blackguard is stationed.

EVE: How many elements can you manipulate?

LUCE: Four.

EVE: Four?! Uhm... you don't see that every day.

LILITH (caption box): And you were as green and they come.

LUCE (caption box): chuckle. The greenest.

Panel 4 1/3 height full length bottom

The camera is behind EVE and LUCE. The former is introducing the latter to the rest of the team. There are different individuals left to right: BELLAMY, DOT, TORRE are well sketched, the others are just hinted at.

LILITH: I bet they welcomed you with open arms.

LUCE: Let's say that I gave them an incentive to accept me.

BELLAMY: She smells of paper and ink.

Panel 5 detail inside panel 4 bottom right corner

Close up on Luce. She is smirking.

Panel 1 detail inside panel 2 top left corner

Close up on Luce. She has her eyes closed, and she is focusing.

LILITH (caption box): I can already imagine.

Panel 2 1/2 page top

The camera is behind EVE and LUCE. There are different individuals left to right: BELLAMY, DOT, TORRE are well sketched, the others are just hinted at. The blacks are looking up as there's a massive wave towering over them. We can also see some trees in the background.

Panel 3 detail inside panel 2 bottom right corner

Close up on Luce. She looks pleased and smug.

Panel 4 1/2 page bottom

The camera is behind LUCE. We only see part of her body as she faces BELLAMY, DOT, TORRE on the ground. They're all wet.

BELLAMY: I guess your skills are passable. But if that's the best you can do —

Panel 5 detail inside panel 4 top left corner

Close up on EVE. She's smiling, her eyes are closed, and she has a finger up.

Panel 6 detail inside panel 4 bottom right corner

Close up on Luce.

EVE: Actually, she manipulates all four elements.

BELLAMY (off camera): Ok, little flower. That *is* impressive.

Panel 1 full page

A collection of moments LUCE shares spends with the Blacks to indicate passage of time.

1 – The Blacks in a line with their backpacks on as they move from camp to camp,

2 – LUCE training with DOT as a healer,

3 – The Black around the campfire having a good time,

4 – LUCE training with BELLAMY in the art of fighting.

5 – LUCE receiving a letter from Ådhit.

LUCE (caption box): The time spent with the Blacks was the best.

LILITH (caption box): It doesn't even feel you were at war.

LUCE (caption box): We weren't. We were sent from world to world to offer support, but true to his word, Rysael had sent me to a garrison that was as removed from the battlefield as possible.

LILITH (caption box): Why do I feel like there's a catch?

LUCE (caption box): chuckle. Because there was one.

Panel 1 squared panel 1/3 in height and length, top left

LUCE is holding a letter. Camera is on the letter and LUCE's hands.

LUCE (caption box): Uriel summoned me back for a special mission.

Panel 2 1/3 in height and 2/3 in length top right

The camera is behind LUCE. She's looking at the rest of the Blacks reading the same letter. BELLAMY and EVE are exchanging a look.

LUCE (caption box): It was a whole big setup.

Panel 3 1/3 height full length middle LUCE locks eyes with EVE.

LUCE: Have you been summoned back to Ådhit too?

EVE: Looks like it. Alright, Blackguard, we have until mid-sun to get ready.

LUCE (thought bubble): But why?

LILITH (caption box): What do you mean?

Panel 4 1/3 height full length bottom

The Blacks travel back on the crooked paths.

BELLAMY: Wow, what is this?

LUCE: First time on the paths?

TORRE: Is this a regular thing for you?

EVE: Shut it!

BELLAMY: Chief, you knew about this?!

LUCE (caption box): How did you travel to Earth?

LILITH (caption box): Is that a trick question to get me to admit to my crimes?

LUCE (caption box): The executioner is already sharpening her sword. We're past that.

Panel 1 full page

The Blacks access Ådhit from the portal that gives on the Silver Lake. They are framed from the back. The frame is occupied by the door. Some Blacks are on the other side of the threshold, some are in the middle, some are on the crooked paths side of the threshold, creating layers.

LILITH (caption box): Well, then... I would feel for the energy around the portal. Sometimes it tasted like electricity on the tip of my tongue. Most times, it felt like the whisper of the wind through a keyhole.

LUCE (caption box): And what did you find on the other side?

LILITH (caption box): The paths.

LUCE (caption box): That's very similar to what happens to me, but do you know that most had-ais simply have the feeling of crossing from one door to the next?

LILITH (caption box): So they don't see the paths? Why?

Panel 1 1/2 page top.

The camera is behind LUCE and is framing the BLACKS frontally. EVE and DOT look pained, BELLAMY is puzzled. The others are occupied by the balloons or are only sketched in the background.

BELLAMY: Who are you, Flower?

LUCE (caption box): It's a matter of blood. If you gave birth or were birthed, the universe looks just a little different to you.

LUCE: I can explain.

Panel 2 1/6 in height 1/3 in length bottom left

LUCE has her back to the camera but has turned to face it.

GABRIEL (off camera): Welcome back, Luce.

LILITH (caption box): Wait...

Panel 3 1/6 in height 2/3 length bottom right

The camera is behind LUCE and is facing the four guardians in front of her. They're all smiling except for RAPHAEL, who has a neutral expression as usual. The Silver Lake is behind them.

LUCE: It's good to see you again.

LILITH (caption box): Am I a born had-au too?

26

Nicole

It couldn't wash the echoes out

CHAPTER 26 – page 1

Panel 1 1/4 page top right

The camera is behind NICOLE as she is standing in front of a door outside a flat
LILITH (caption box): Not a good idea.

Panel 2 across panel 1 and 3

Knock on the door

Panel 3 1/4 page top right

The camera is behind NICOLE as she is standing in front of LEVI. LEVI looks surprised.
NICOLE (caption box): Didn't ask for your opinion.

Panel 4 1/4 page bottom left.

The camera is behind NICOLE as she is standing in front of LEVI. LEVI is smiling.
LEVI: Nicole, hi. I didn't expect to see you.

Panel 5 1/4 page bottom right

The camera is behind LEVI as he is standing in front of NICOLE. NICOLE is looking at him, but she looks awkward.
NICOLE: Hi, I'm sorry for barging in... it's just that... Can I come in? Can we talk?

CHAPTER 26 – page 2

Panel 1 1/4 page top left

LEVI is on the side as NICOLE walks in

LEVI: Of course, come in. What can I do for you?

Panel 2 1/4 page top right

The camera is behind LEVI and NICOLE. NICOLE is behind LEVI.

NICOLE (caption box): Maybe I shouldn't have come... it's awfully rude.

LILITH (caption box): That is not what you should worry about right now.

LEVI: Nicole?

NICOLE: Sorry, yes. I was hoping we could go over what is happening.

Panel 3 1/2 page bottom

The camera is facing NICOLE and LEVI sitting down on a sofa at two different ends. There is no background.

LEVI: Has Kira not helped you?

NICOLE: She has, but a lot of Lilith's memories are filled with you...

Panel 4 detail inside panel 3 bottom right corner

Close up on LEVI. He's smiling, but it's an uneasy smile that is trying to be casual but it's a little bit forceful.

LEVI: Don't you mean your memories?

Panel 1 detail inside panel 2 top left corner

Close up on NICOLE, who looks pensive.

LILITH (caption box): Careful now.

Panel 2 1/3 height full length page top.

The camera is facing NICOLE and LEVI sitting down on a sofa at two different ends. There is no background. NICOLE is looking at the camera while LEVI is looking at her.

NICOLE: It's not that easy. I've lived for eighteen years without Lilith, and maybe she was there the whole time...

LEVI:... I'm sorry, you're right... it's just that no one understands what is happening to you.

Panel 3 1/3 height full length middle.

The camera is facing NICOLE and LEVI sitting down on a sofa at two different ends. There is no background. NICOLE and LEVI are looking at each other.

NICOLE: When I dream, I see things from the past. I catch these glimpses.

Panel 4 1/3 height full length bottom.

The camera is facing NICOLE and LEVI sitting down on a sofa. LEVI is sitting closer to NICOLE. There is no background. NICOLE is looking at the camera while LEVI is looking at her.

LEVI: Am I there? In your dreams?

NICOLE: chuckles. All the time. It's kind of annoying.

LEVI: Wow! You're not mincing words.

NICOLE: chuckles. It's just that... you know everything about Lilith, me. I know nothing about you.

Panel 1 detail inside panel 2 top left corner
Close up on LEVI who looks thoughtful.

Panel 2 2/3 in length 1/3 height page top left.

The camera is facing NICOLE and LEVI sitting down on a sofa. LEVI is sitting closer to NICOLE. LEVI and NICOLE are looking at each other. NICOLE is leaning back to put some distance between herself and LEVI. Her right arm is behind her, her left arm is bent in front of her, her hand is closed in a fist and is raised to her mouth. LEVI is stretching a hand towards her.

LEVI: Do you want me to show you?

NICOLE: I'm not big on physical contact.

Panel 3 1/3 in length 1/3 height top right

Close up on LEVI, who is laughing.

LEVI: I promise I won't bite.

Panel 4 detail inside panel five top left corner

NICOLE's hand rests on top of LEVI's hand.

Panel 5 2/3 in height full length

The camera takes the scene from the front. NICOLE and LEVI are in the middle. Only the portion of the sofa they're sitting on is immediately visible. The rest of the scene fades into blackness as different images are hinted at the edges of the frame.

LEVI: Tell me what you've seen in your dreams.

NICOLE: Lilith's final moments... and you as a child, I think it was you. You had mismatched eyes back then.

LEVI: That's right, a blue and a golden one.

Panel 1 full page rectangular.

NICOLE and LEVI sit in the middle as the memories unfold around them. LEVI holds NICOLE's hand. The sofa has disappeared. As the background of the scene, use the galaxy background we've used for Dio and Luce.

Memories:

- 1 – LUCE telling LILITH and LUCIFER stories as they sit on the ground in the shade of a tree.
- 2 – LUCE leading LILITH and LUCIFER down the crooked paths
- 3 – LILITH and LUCIFER practicing their magick
- 4 – LILITH and LUCIFER sparring
- 5 – LILITH and LUCIFER kissing
- 6 – LILITH and LUCIFER fighting against LOYALISTS

NICOLE: There is so much history and sometimes it feels like I'm drowning.

LEVI: I can only imagine how hard it must be for you.

NICOLE: And sometimes I don't know where Lilith ends and I begin.



Panel 1 1/3 in height and length top left

LEVI is holding NICOLE's hand; his other hand is on NICOLE's face. HE's kissing her forehead. NICOLE looks surprised.

Panel 2 2/3 in length 1/3 in height top right

The camera is facing NICOLE and LEVI sitting down on a sofa. LEVI is sitting closer to NICOLE and he's holding NICOLE's hand; his other hand is on NICOLE's face.

LEVI: Maybe that's not a bad thing. Some people believe that we're separated from our had-ais, but we're one, Nic.

NICOLE: Then, how do you explain--?

LEVI: I don't. Not now.

LILITH: (caption box): How convenient.

Panel 3 detail inside panel 4 top left corner

LEVI: We've reincarnated dozens of times, it's natural to feel disconnected from our life in Ådhit. Give it some time...

LILITH: (caption box): I forgot how good he was.

Panel 4 rest of the page

LEVI: But, Lil, memories are just memories. They're not who we are. Our connection goes past those, but if you need something to ground you, let's do what we used to do when we were kids. Let's practice magick together.

Panel 5 detail inside panel 4 bottom right corner.

Close up on NICOLE, she's smiling tentatively.

NICOLE: OK, yeah. I'd like that.

27

Sister, sister what did they do to you

Kira

Panel 1 2/3 in length 1/3 height top left

KIRA is sitting at a table in a pub. She's on the left side of the panel and the camera is at eye level, framing her from the head to her waist. The table is in the frame. She has a pencil in one hand and a notebook in front of her. In the background, there are other tables while the counter is on the right of the panel (not fully visible)

KIRA (caption box): Why? Why? Why would she go to Levi?

CB (caption box): I don't know. Why do people never listen to sage advice?

KIRA (caption box): You know, an *I told you so* would be less annoying.

Panel 2 1/3 in height and length top right

Close up on KIRA. She's looking at the camera which is framing her from the top.

NOEL (off camera): Look what we have here... aren't you the little Morgan?

Panel 3 2/3 in height and full length

KIRA is sitting at a table in a pub. She's on the left side of the panel and the camera is at eye level, framing her from the head to her waist. Opposite her is NOEL. In the background, there are other tables. KIRA has her arms crossed over her chest.

KIRA: You have your facts wrong. Nicole and I turn 18 tomorrow. Dave is the baby.

NOEL: You and your sister give off similar answer.

Panel 4 detail in the bottom right corner of panel 3

Close up on NOEL who's peeking at KIRA's notebook.

Panel 1 detail in the top left corner of panel 2

Close up on NOEL who's peeking at KIRA's notebook.

NOEL: What have you got there?

Panel 2 1/4 page top left

KIRA slams her hands on her notebook.

KIRA: Have you ever heard of personal boundaries?

NOEL (off camera): Yes, I've been told they're very healthy.

Panel 3 1/4 page top right.

NOEL is on the right side of the panel and the camera is at eye level, framing him from the head to her waist. He's craning his neck.

KIRA (off camera): You're not funny.

NOEL: Now, no need to be hurtful. What is that, a D&D campaign?

Panel 4 detail in the bottom right corner of panel 3

KIRA looks like she's had a eureka moment.

CB (caption box): I don't like where this is going.

Panel 5 1/2 page bottom.

KIRA is sitting at a table in a pub. She's on the left side of the panel and the camera is at eye level, framing her from the head to her waist. Opposite her is NOEL. In the background, there are other tables. KIRA has her elbows on the tables, her fingers are interlaced, and her chin is resting on her fingers. She looks intense, although there's a hint of playfulness in her relaxed mouth.

KIRA: Why? Do you play?

NOEL: Yeah, my mates and I meet every week. I'm the DM.

KIRA: You don't say. Can I pick your brain about something?

CB (caption box): Have you lost your mind?

KIRA (caption box): Hey, Nicole might be right. Maybe it's time I ask for someone else's help.

Three bars to indicate passage of time.

Panel 1 full page divided into three thirds vertically

KIRA walks across the three panels which are set in the beer garden of the pub. NOEL is in the foreground, KIRA is in the middle ground, the beer garden is in the background. KIRA talks and smokes. NOEL is sitting down. He sits squarely in the middle of the middle panel, but we see bits of him in the adjacent panels.

NOEL: Let me get this straight. You have two armies on the battlefield and army A has captured army B's queen.

KIRA: Yup.

NOEL: Is this Risk mixed with chess?

KIRA: Something like that

NOEL: OK. So, Queen B is gone and now the war is on hold? That makes no sense. Army A should storm the castle and end this.

KIRA: That's the thing, though. At the very end of the war, one of us rolled the dice and our bodies got frozen for ages. Our master decided that – before we could all fight again – we all had to roll a twenty if we wanted to play our turn.

NOEL: Wow, that sounds like a super long quest.

KIRA: You have no idea.

NOEL: Where are you at now?

KIRA: Well, for the first time in... forever, we all rolled a freaking twenty.

NOEL: Time for war, then.

Panel 1 2/3 in length 1/3 in height top left

NOEL is on the left side of the panel, KIRA is on the right side of the panel. KIRA is now sitting next to NOEL. Their face is to the camera, behind them, the door to the pubs. NOEL is holding a half pint of beer in his hand (which is pretty much full). In the background behind them, the door to the pub.

NOEL: The person behind this storyline is a genius.

KIRA: Or a sociopath.

Panel 2 1/3 in height and 1/3 in height top right

Close up on KIRA, she's looking at the beer in NOEL's hands. KIRA: Are you sure you won't get in trouble?

Panel 3 full length 1/3 height middle

NOEL is on the left side of the panel, KIRA is on the right side of the panel. KIRA is now sitting next to NOEL. Their face is to the camera, behind them, the door to the pub. NOEL is holding a half pint of beer in his hand (which is pretty much full). He's nodding towards the inside of the pub.

NOEL: Naaa. I have ties with the manager.

KIRA: Girlfriend?

NOEL: Sister. I live with her, actually.

KIRA: I see.

Panel 4 full length 1/3 height bottom.

NOEL is on the left side of the panel, KIRA is on the right side of the panel. KIRA is now sitting next to NOEL. Behind them, the door to the pub. NOEL is holding a pint of beer in his hand. They're looking at each other.

NOEL: Are you not gonna ask?

KIRA: Boundaries. Also... I recognise a puppy-eyed orphan when I see one. Nicole and Dave have the same look.

NOEL: What about you?

Panel 1 2/3 in length 1/3 in height top left

KIRA is sitting next to NOEL, her back to the camera. In the background behind them, the door to the pub.

KIRA: I'm a soldier busy with an endless war, remember? Everyone's an orphan on the battlefield.

NOEL: By the way, have you figured out who activated the curse?

Panel 2 1/3 in height and length top right

Close up on KIRA's face. She has her left hand (cigarette in it) against her mouth.

KIRA: It seemed like a random roll.

Panel 3 1/3 in height and length middle left

Close up on NOEL's face. He looks pensive.

NOEL: Nothing is ever random in a campaign, you know that. You said it was activated after queen B was captured, right?

Panel 4 2/3 in length 1/3 in height middle right

KIRA is sitting next to NOEL, her back to the camera. In the background behind them, the door to the pub.

KIRA: Yeah.

NOEL: Then it was mainly done to protect her. It can't be a coincidence. Don't you think?

CB (caption box): OK, this guy's not bad. (CINZEL).

NOEL: The question is, who would that?

Panel 5 2/3 in length 1/3 in height bottom left

KIRA is sitting next to NOEL, her back to the camera. In the background behind them, the door to the pub.

KIRA: I think I might have an idea. Well, this was fun. But I think I need to head home now.

Panel 6 1/3 in height and length bottom right

Close up on NOEL's face. He looks eager.

NOEL: Let me give you a ride.

Panel 1 1/4 top left

KIRA is looking at the camera and at NOEL. She has her hands on her hips; she looks suspicious. There is no background.

KIRA: Are you sure you're fit to drive?

NOEL: I wouldn't have offered otherwise.

KIRA: Well then, let's go.

Panel 2 1/4 top right

The camera is behind KIRA and NOEL but is facing the person bumping into KIRA. NOEL is pushed against the left side of the panel. KIRA is next to him. She's looking at him and she's smiling. A woman bumps into KIRA.

NOEL: And if you get a free spot...

KIRA: You want to join the— ouch!

GEMMA: Ouch!

Panel 3 1/2 bottom

The camera is behind KIRA and NOEL but is facing GEMMA. GEMMA and KIRA are looking at each other. There's a man next to GEMMA. GEMMA looks awkward. There is no background.

GEMMA: Kira! Hi, long time no see.

KIRA: Gemma, hi.

GEMMA: How long have you been in Forest Hill?

KIRA: A few months.

GEMMA: I see... How's your family? How's Nic—

KIRA: She's well. Thank you.

GEMMA: Well, you still have my number... I hope. Call me. We should catch up.

Kira: Of course.

Panel 1 2/3 in length 1/3 in height top left

NOEL is on the left side of the panel, KIRA is on the right side of the panel. They're next to each other and they're outside the pub.

NOEL: Wow, that was brutal. I won't ask you if she's your ex because... boundaries.

KIRA: Glad to see you're learning.

Panel 2 1/3 in height and 1/3 in height top right

Close up on NOEL. He looks amused.

NOEL: But she's totally your ex! She looks old, though.

KIRA (off camera): chuckle.

Panel 3 2/3 in length 1/3 in height middle left

KIRA and NOEL are in the car. The camera is in front of them as they put their seat belt on.

KIRA: Well, she's a bit older.

NOEL: Where did you guys meet—oh my god, was she your teacher?

Panel 4 1/3 in height and 1/3 in height middle right

Close up on KIRA. She looks amused and a bit puzzled.

KIRA: Wait, are you smart?

Panel 5 full length 1/3 height bottom.

The camera is far away, and it shows the road from Forest Hill to the Morgan's house that runs alongside the river BELL. The balloons are colour-coded.

NOEL: Hey that's offensive. But, yes, I'm the full package.

KIRA: Funny and smart.

NOEL: Don't forget handsome.

KIRA: Did your sister tell you that?

NOEL: Burn after burn.

KIRA: I'm the fiery type.

Panel 1 2/3 length 1/3 height top left

The camera is inside the car and in the distance we see the Morgan's house. There are people outside the door (NICOLE, DAVE and two police officers). There's also a police car parked outside in the driveway.

KIRA: What is going on?

Panel 2 1/3 length 1/3 height top right

Close up on KIRA. She's rushed out of the car.

Panel 3 rest of the page.

The camera is behind KIRA, who's in front of NICOLE. DAVE is behind NICOLE. He has his face in his hands.

NICOLE: Kira, it's Leigh. She was in an accident. She's at the hospital.

28

Cold hearts

Nicole & Kira & Dave

Panel 1 full page rectangular

The camera is in front of the five characters. In this order: CHARLOTTE, KIRA, DAVE, NICOLE, TONY. CHARLOTTE and TONY are looking in two different directions. NICOLE is staring at her feet, Dave has his face in his hands. KIRA is looking ahead in the camera. She has her hands in the pockets of her jacket. NICOLE is looking to her left. Both NICOLE and KIRA have a hand on DAVE's back.

Panel 1 1/3 in height full length top

DAVE turns towards NICOLE and UNCLE TONY. The three of them are all framed in the panel in the same position as the previous page.

DAVE: When will they let us see her?

NICOLE: Soon.

Panel 2 detail inside Panel 3 top left corner

Close up on DAVE's face. He's turned towards KIRA.

DAVE: Where are you going?

KIRA (off camera): I'll be back soon.

Panel 3 1/3 in height 2/3 length middle left

The camera follows KIRA. It's on her side. She's framed head to chest. She's walking with a hand in her back pocket. In the background, we see hospital personnel walking, doors to different rooms.

DAVE (off camera): What if they come for us?

KIRA: I'll find you.

Panel 4 1/3 length and height middle right

The camera is behind KIRA. KIRA is pushing the door open.

Panel 5 1/3 height full length bottom

The camera is in front of KIRA. She is outside, it's raining, the door is ajar. KIRA has slid down the floor. She's looking up, and she's smoking. She has her phone in her other hand.

KIRA: Hey.

Panel 1 1/3 height full length top

The camera is in front of KIRA. She is outside, it's raining, the door is ajar. KIRA has slid down the floor. She's looking up, and she's smoking. She has her phone in her other hand. Her cigarette hand is in her hair (she's still smoking).

ARIEL (from the phone): Kira? Are you OK?

KIRA (thought bubble): Why did I call?

Panel 2 1/3 height full length middle

The camera is in front of KIRA. She is outside, it's raining, the door is ajar. KIRA has slid down the floor. She has her face in her cigarette hand (she's still smoking). She has her phone in her other hand.

ARIEL (from the phone): Is everything OK?

KIRA: No.

Panel 3 1/3 height full length bottom

The camera is in front of KIRA. She is outside, it's raining, the door is ajar. KIRA has slid down the floor. She has her face in her cigarette hand (she's still smoking). She has her phone in her other hand.

ARIEL (from the phone): Kira, you're making me worry. Are you in trouble?

KIRA: I'm at the hospital, Leighton was--

Panel 1 detail inside Panel 2 top left corner

Close up on KIRA's face. She's looking towards the open door.

NICOLE (off camera): They're taking us to see Leigh. You coming?

Panel 2 1/2 page top.

The camera is in front of KIRA. She is outside, it's raining, the door is ajar. NICOLE is on the other side of the door. KIRA has slid down the floor. She is looking at NICOLE. She has her phone in her other hand.

KIRA: I'm sorry Ariel, I've got to go. I'll call you later.

ARIEL (over the phone): Kira wait—

Panel 3 1/4 page bottom left

NICOLE and KIRA are walking side by side. The camera is behind them. NICOLE has her arm around KIRA's shoulders. KIRA is covering her face with her hand. In the background, we see the hospital.

KIRA: Why didn't see it coming, Nic? We dreamt of mum, dad. I dreamt of you...

NICOLE: I don't know.

Panel 4 1/4 page bottom right

NICOLE and KIRA are walking side by side. The camera is behind them. NICOLE has her arm around KIRA's shoulders. KIRA is covering her face with her hand. DAVE is in the distance.

NICOLE: Do you need a minute?

KIRA: I'm fine.

Panel 1 1/3 height full length top

The camera is on the side taking the characters from the side.. TONY and CHARLOTTE are walking ahead in the background, DAVE is behind them, hands in his pockets, head hanging low. NICOLE and KIRA are walking behind him. Background noise.

Panel 2 1/3 height full length middle

The camera is on the side. TONY and CHARLOTTE are walking ahead in the background, DAVE is behind them, hands in his pockets, head hanging low. NICOLE and KIRA are walking behind him. Background noise.

Panel 3 1/3 height full length bottom

CHARLOTTE has turned towards her nieces and nephew. The camera is facing her. TONY is next to her and has his back to the camera.

CHARLOTE: Kids, you don't need to come in if you don't want to.

Panel 1 full page.

The camera is at the far end of the morgue, taking LEIGHTONS's body from her head to her feet. The body is covered by a sheet. The five characters are facing the camera as they spill into the morgue.

Panel 2 detail inside panel 1 in the bottom right corner.

Close up on CHARLOTTE. She's looking to the side as someone has caught her attention.

Panel 1 1/4 page top left

CHARLOTTE and TONY have their back is to the camera as they're about to leave the room. Their face is turned towards their nieces and nephew.

CHARLOTTE: Kids, we need a minute to talk to the police, but we're just outside.

Panel 2 1/4 page top right.

The camera is facing KIRA, DAVE, and NICOLE. They're shown nodding.

TONY (off camera): Are you sure you want to stay here by yourself?

Panel 3 1/2 page bottom.

The camera is above LEIGHTON's body. The only visible part of her body is her face, which is bruised because of the accident. KIRA is at her head, NICOLE on her right, DAVE on her left. The balloons inside the panel are filled with unintelligible conversation from outside.

Panel 1 1/4 page top left.

The camera is above KIRA and LEIGHTON. KIRA has her hands in LEIGHTON's hair, she's trying to comb it using her fingers.

NICOLE (off camera): I can't fucking believe this.

Panel 2 1/4 page top right

The camera is above KIRA and LEIGHTON but closer to LEIGHTON's hair. KIRA has her hands in LEIGHTON's hair. She's trying to comb it using her fingers, but she has stopped.

DAVE (off camera): It's like...

Panel 3 1/4 page bottom left.

The camera is really close to LEIGHTON's hair and KIRA's hand.

NICOLE (off camera): Like what?

Panel 4 detail across panel 3 and 5

KIRA has a knife in her hand. The camera is on her hand and the knife.

DAVE (off camera): Never mind...

Panel 5 1/4 page bottom right

The camera is between KIRA and LEIGHTON and is framing KIRA cutting a lock of LEIGHTON's hair.

NICOLE (off camera): Out with it.

DAVE (off camera): Can you just— just leave me be.

NICOLE (off camera): Kira, where did you get that knife?

Panel 1 1/3 height and length top left.

The camera is in front of KIRA. She's holding LEIGHTON's hair in front of her.

KIRA: I have it with me all the time. Dave, has Leigh ever died her hair?

DAVE: Not that I can remember. Why?

Panel 2 1/3 height 2/3 length top right

The camera is behind but very close to the lock of LEIGHTON's hair in KIRA's hand (we can partially see her hand at the top/in the middle of the panel). NICOLE is on the right, DAVE is on the left.

KIRA: What colour does this look to you?

DAVE: White?

NICOLE: Silver.

Panel 3 2/3 in height 1/3 in length bottom left

The camera and the scene are the same as panel 2 but, the two sides are separated so that NICOLE and DAVE each have their own panel. DAVE is shrugging

DAVE: Why are you obsessing over this, Kira?

NICOLE (off camera): Holy shit, is it like your silver?

KIRA (off camera): It looks like it, doesn't it?

Panel 4 2/3 in height 2/3 in length bottom right

The camera and the scene are the same as panel 2, but the two sides are separated so that NICOLE and DAVE each have their own panel. NICOLE is scrunching her eyes to see better.

DAVE (off camera): So? Half of your hair is the same colour.

KIRA (off camera): Exactly. My hair was discoloured when I practiced blood magick.

Panel 1 full page

KIRA, DAVE, and NICOLE are facing the camera. The camera is resting on LEIGHTON's body and looking up. KIRA is in the middle, DAVE is on her left and NICOLE is on her right. They've all got pretty close and they're looking at LEIGHTON's hair.

NICOLE: Does it mean that Leigh was involved with magick and had-ais?

DAVE: That can't be right.

KIRA: And yet...

29

Hollow

Nicole & Kira

CHAPTER 29 – page 1 – start drawing NICOLE with longer hair

Panel 1 – full page rectangular

Long shot of the pub filled with people. The camera sits in the top left corner of the panel and takes in everyone who's come to celebrate LEIGHTON. The MORGAN SIBLINGS are framed in the bottom right corner of the panel as they make their way to the beer garden.

SPEECH BALOON: a mix of unintelligible and random words (to place across the page).

... tragedy... those poor kids

... was it an accident?

... I'm not sure...

Condolences.

Panel 1 1/2 page top

The three MORGAN SIBLINGS are sitting on a wooden table and are facing the camera. They're all wearing black but NICOLE and KIRA (on the LEFT and RIGHT of the frame respectively) are more casual, jeans and t-shirt. DAVE, in the middle, is wearing a suit and a tie. Their faces are to the camera, but they're all looking at the glass shot in front of them. They all have an arm extended towards the middle of the panel. Behind them, the doors to the pub.

KIRA, NICOLE, DAVE: To Leighton.

Panel 2 1/2 page bottom

The three MORGAN SIBLINGS are sitting on a wooden table. They're all drinking from the glass shot. Behind them, the doors to the pub.

KIRA: Bottoms up.

Panel 1 1/3 panel in height and length top left

KIRA stands up. The camera is looking at her (framed head to halfway her legs). No background.

KIRA: I'm out of here. You guys coming?

Panel 2 1/3 panel in height and 2/3 in length top right

The MORGAN SIBLINGS snake through the crowd. They're on the left side of the panel near the door and a dotted bee line behind them.

NICOLE: We're going, uncle.

Panel 3 1/3 panel in height full length middle

The three MORGAN SIBLINGS are walking down the road. The pub is in the distance in the background. The camera frames them head to feet. They're all wearing black but NICOLE and KIRA (on the LEFT and RIGHT of the frame respectively) are more casual, jeans and t-shirt. DAVE, in the middle, is wearing a suit and a tie.

DAVE: Why am I the only one wearing a suit?

NICOLE: Why didn't you go with your usual clothes?

DAVE: To show respect.

KIRA: Like it matters now.

Panel 3 1/3 panel in height full length bottom

The three MORGAN SIBLINGS are walking down the road, the hills and the river are in the distance in the background. The camera frames them head to feet. They're all wearing black but NICOLE and KIRA (on the LEFT and RIGHT of the frame respectively) are more casual, jeans and t-shirt. DAVE, in the middle, is wearing a suit and a tie.

NICOLE: Are we going home?

KIRA: Yes.

DAVE: I'm going to the gym... Do you wanna come?

NICOLE: Yeah. I don't want to head back yet. Kira, you joining us?

KIRA: Thanks but no. I need quiet.

Panel 1 1/3 panel in height and half length top left

The camera is on the side. KIRA is turned towards the left side of the panel. The river and the hills are in the background.

KIRA: See you guys later.

Panel 2 1/3 panel in height and half length top right

The camera is on the side. NICOLE and DAVE are turned towards the right side of the panel. The river and the hills are in the background.

NICOLE: Sure.

EVERYONE (balloon across panels 1 and 2): Be safe.

Panel 3 1/3 panel in height full length middle

KIRA is shown making her way to the house. Camera is away, and it shows the background.

Panel 4 1/3 panel in height full length bottom

NICOLE and DAVE are shown making their way to the gym. Camera is away, and it shows the background.

Panel 1 full page.

KIRA roams the house and sees different details of LEIGHTON's absence in different small panels across the page.

- LEIGHTON's coat at the entrance.
- LEIGHTON's study's doors are ajar
- KIRA in LEIGHTON's bedroom. The slippers at the feet of the bed.

Panel 1 1/4 page top left

The camera is at ground level looking up and is looking at KIRA. KIRA is sitting on the floor, the door is closed behind her. She has the heel of her hands pushed against her eyes.

Panel 2 1/4 page top right

The camera is at eye level looking directly at NICOLE and DAVE. They framed head to shoulders and they're looking up.

LILITH: Something's off. (CINZEL)

Panel 3 1/4 page bottom left

KIRA is looking directly into the camera. The camera is much closer, it's framing KIRA's head and neck. She looks surprised and slightly scared. Her hands are away from her eyes, but still close to her face.

Panel 4 1/4 page bottom right

NICOLE is looking directly into the camera while DAVE is looking up. The camera is much closer, it's framing NICOLE's head and neck. NICOLE looks angry. DAVE is not fully in the frame.

NICOLE and KIRA conjoint balloon across panels: What the fuck are you doing here?

Panel 1 1/3 in height full length top

There are three women standing at the entrance of the gym.

LILITH: Fucking Loyalists. (CINZEL)

NICOLE (caption box): what do we do?

LILITH: We fight. (CINZEL)

Panel 2 1/3 in height full length middle

LEIGHTON is sitting on the bed. The camera is behind KIRA, we see part of her outline and all of LEIGHTON. KIRA calls on CB but CB doesn't answer.

KIRA (caption box): Do you see her?

KIRA: Is this a pocket universe?

Panel 3 1/3 in length and height bottom left

The three LOYALISTS are framed together

Panel 4 1/3 in length and height, bottom right

LEIGHTON is framed head to shoulders

Balloon across panels 3 and 4: We need to talk.

Panel 1 1/4 top left

KIRA and LEIGHTON are in the room. The camera frames them from the side. KIRA is sitting on the left-side of the panel against the door. LEIGHTON is sitting on the bed on the right side of the panel. LEIGHTON's bedroom is in the background. KIRA's side is bright and illuminated, LEIGHTON's side is shrouded in darkness. KIRA: What are you doing here?

LEIGHTON: Magick. (CINZEL)

Panel2 detail across panel 1 and 3

Close up on LEIGHTON's jazz hands.

Panel 3 1/4 top right.

KIRA and LEIGHTON are in the room. The camera frames them from the side. KIRA is sitting on the left-side of the panel against the door. LEIGHTON is sitting on the bed on the right side of the panel. LEIGHTON's bedroom is in the background. KIRA's side is bright and illuminated, LEIGHTON's side is shrouded in darkness. KIRA: Why are you here, Leigh?

LEIGHTON: Yes, why am I here? You summoned me. (CINZEL)

KIRA: Then how about some answers?

LEIGHTON: Shoot. (CINZEL)

KIRA: Were you involved with had-ais and blood magic?

Panel 4 1/2 page bottom

The camera frames the scene from the side. The LOYALISTS are standing on the left-side of the panel. NICOLE and DAVE are standing on the right side of the panel. The gym and the hoop are in the background. The hoop is in the middle of the scene. The LOYALISTS involved in the scene are two women and a girl. The woman in the middle is FELL, behind FELL on the left ELAIR.

MERCAEL stands next to FELL on the right

FELL: Word: around here is that the truce is over. NICOLE

(whisper balloon): Run, go get Kira.

NICOLE: Well yeah, your side came after one of ours like the cowards you are.

DAVE (whisper balloon): But if I stay here—

NICOLE (whisper balloon): You become a target.

Panel 1 1/4 top left

The camera is behind DAVE and NICOLE. DAVE has a hand on NICOLE's shoulder.

DAVE: I'll be back as soon as I can.

Panel 2 1/4 top right

The camera is on NICOLE's shoulder. We see DAVE running on the right side of the panel and the LOYALISTS are sprinting towards him.

ELAIR: Get him!

Panel 3 1/4 bottom left

The camera is facing NICOLE and is behind the LOYALISTS' back. There are roots coming out of NICOLE's hands that have wrapped the LOYALISTS' feet.

NICOLE: Don't get distracted.

Panel 4 1/4 bottom right

The camera is framing NICOLE head to shoulders. Sweat is beading her hairline.

LILITH: Let's be smart here. Between the three of them, they have access to all four elements. (CINZEL)

NICOLE (caption box): We've got my water and your air.

LILITH: Which don't interact well. (CINZEL)

NICOLE (caption box): We need Kira.

LILITH: Let's hope your brother gets her on time (CINZEL)

Panel 1 1/3 in height full length top

The camera is on DAVE's left side. DAVE is running, there's no background, only line movements. In one hand, he holds his phone.

DAVE: C'mon Kira, pick up.

Panel 2 1/3 in height full length middle left

The panel is cut into two to show both KIRA and LEIGHTON facing the camera. KIRA is depicted clearly as she's in the illuminated side. LEIGHTON is still in darkness, we see her hair which looks long and straight, and her eyes which are purple.

LEIGHTON: C'mon Kira, you're playing the game wrong.

KIRA: Why did Lilith reincarnate in Nicole? Why her? Why now?

LEIGHTON: To save her. (CINZEL)

KIRA: Lilith or Nicole?

Panel 3 detail across panels 2 and 4

Close up on LEIGHTON, still shrouded in darkness. She shrugs.

LEIGHTON: Both. (CINZEL)

Panel 4 1/3 in height full length top

KIRA and LEIGHTON are in the room. The camera frames them from the side. KIRA is sitting on the left-side of the panel against the door. LEIGHTON is sitting on the bed on the right side of the panel. LEIGHTON's bedroom is in the background. KIRA's side is bright and illuminated, LEIGHTON's side is shrouded in darkness.

KIRA: Where has Lilith been all this time?

LEIGHTON: Here, there. (CINZEL)

KIRA: When did you use blood magic?

LEIGHTON: You're missing the point, Kira. Add sigh across the balloon. (CINZEL)

Panel 1 1/3 in height full length top

The camera is on DAVE's left side. DAVE is running, there's no background, only line movements. Tears are streaming down his face.

DAVE: Noel, I need a massive favour. Meet me at the house.

Panel 2 rest of the page.

KIRA and LEIGHTON are in the room. The camera frames them from the side. KIRA is sitting on the left-side of the panel against the door. LEIGHTON is now kneeling in front of KIRA. Head to shoulders, she's in darkness; waist to feet, she's in the light. The line that cuts light from darkness is slanted.

KIRA: I'm not interested in your point. Even now, the only thing I want from you is the truth. Why did you use blood magick?

LEIGHTON: Sigh... I'm sorry, but it doesn't work like that. (CINZEL)

Panel 3 detail in the middle of the panel.

Close up on KIRA, she's smirking.

KIRA: I thought you were done disappointing me.

LEIGHTON: You've always set the bar too high. First for yourself, then for the people around you. (CINZEL)

Panel 1 1/2 page top

The camera is behind NICOLE, ground level looking up. NICOLE has assumed a fighting stance. The LOYALISTS are in front of her. The gym is in the background.

FELL: We're not here to fight you in that way.

Panel 2 detail inside panel 1 bottom right corner

FELL nods towards ELAIR.

FELL: Show her.

LILITH: Watch out, that one uses blood magick. (CINZEL)

Panel 3 1/4 bottom left

The camera is behind NICOLE, ground level looking up. NICOLE is being overwhelmed by roots that, from the ground up, are enveloping her.

Panel 4 1/4 bottom right

Black panel.

NICOLE (caption box): Oh fuck, now what?

LILITH: Now we wait to see what she's prepared. (CINZEL)

NICOLE (caption box): What do you mean?

LILITH: She basically creates mazes in your head and you get lost forever. (CINZEL)

NICOLE (caption box): Not grim at all.

Panel 1 1/2 page top

The camera is in the middle of the panel. It frames LEIGHTON head to shoulders. She looks like her usual.

LEIGHTON: Hey Nicky.

NICOLE (off camera): Oh fuck.

LILITH: Oh shit. (CINZEL)

Panel 2 1/2 page bottom

The camera is in the middle of the panel. It frames LEIGHTON head to shoulders. Her eyes are wide and purple, her hair is straight and silver.

KIRA (off camera): You're not Leighton.

LUCE: I am and yet, I'm not. (CINZEL)

KIRA (off camera): You're her had-au.

Panel 3 detail inside panel 4

Close up on a fist knocking on the door. KNOCK, KNOCK, KNOCK, KNOCK

Panel 1 1/4 page top left

The camera is in the middle of the panel. It frames LEIGHTON head to shoulders. She looks like her usual. No background.

LEIGHTON: Nicole, I need you to listen to me.

NICOLE (off camera): No I don't, you're dead. Leave me alone.

Panel 2 1/4 page top right

The camera is in the middle of the panel. It frames NICOLE crouching on the floor, her hands on her ears. LEIGHTON is down with her, a hand on her shoulder.

LEIGHTON: Please, there isn't much time.

Panel 3 1/2 page bottom

The camera is in the middle of the panel. It frames LEIGHTON head to shoulders. She looks like her usual. No background.

LEIGHTON: You need to know this. Don't trust Lucifer ever. And remember, Dio's not the enemy. She's on your side together with some other Loyalists too.

Panel 1 1/4 page top left

The camera is behind KIRA as she goes down the stairs.

KIRA: I'm coming.

CB: Where have you been? You were there one moment and then puff. (CINZEL)

KIRA (caption box): I'll tell you in a second... something feels weird.

CB: Loyalists! They're around. (CINZEL)

Panel 2 1/4 page top right

The camera is behind KIRA as she opens the doors and NOEL is on the other side and looks hurried.

NOEL: Dave sent me here to pick you up. He's in the car. Something happened at the gym.

KIRA: Let's go.

Panel 3 1/2 page bottom.

The camera is in the middle of the panel on the side. It frames NICOLE crouching on the floor, LEIGHTON is down with her a hand on her shoulder. No background.

NICOLE: How do you know this stuff?

LEIGHTON: You have to trust the people that have the least to gain from you. Trust Kira, not Cemira Bael. Trust the humans, not the had-ais.

NICOLE: Kira's right, you're involved too.

LEIGHTON: Do you think it's by chance? Reincarnations are surgical. Think about how much magick our family holds.

Panel 1 1/4 page top left.

The camera is inside the car embodied by NOEL. KIRA is looking at him. Behind her, we see the car window.

KIRA: Where do you think you're going?

DAVE: Inside with you.

KIRA: I don't think so. Go back to the pub and find a woman, Ariel. Tell her I need her help.

Panel 2 1/4 page top right

The camera is behind KIRA. She's running towards the entrance of the gym.

Panel 3 1/4 page bottom left.

The camera frames the action from behind KIRA. KIRA is in the gym, she's facing the LOYALISTS who are in the distance. NICOLE is out of sight.

Panel 4 1/4 page bottom right.

The camera is below KIRA, so we see her from her waist up. She is framed head to waist, her palms are facing upwards, there's lightning dancing in the palms of her hands.

KIRA: Get away from her.

Panel 1 1/4 page top left.

The camera is facing LEIGHTON while NICOLE is off camera. LEIGHTON is holding her head (she's hidden by her hands) and is muttering something, but NICOLE doesn't catch all her words.

NICOLE: Leigh? What's wrong?

Panel 2 1/4 page top right.

The camera is above LEIGHTON who's looking up now. Her hair has grown longer and straighter. Her pupils are purple.

LILITH: We've got to go! (CINZEL)

NICOLE (caption box): Where? We're stuck in my head!

NICOLE: What is happening?

Panel 3 1/2 bottom

The camera is behind KIRA, on the ground looking up. KIRA has unleashed her thunders and the LOYALISTS are being electrocuted. KIRA is in the foreground, her legs are wide and her arms are extended as she shoots out the thunders. The LOYALISTS are in the middle ground. NICOLE is in the background. Her body is suspended in mid-air as roots have taken hold of her.

Panel 1 1/4 page top left.

The camera is facing LUCE. She's framed head to shoulder. She looks sad and like she's crying.

LUCE: Why did you kill me? Everything I did... (CINZEL)

Panel 2 1/4 page top right.

The camera is facing LUCE. She's framed from head to shoulder. She looks sad and like she's crying. She looks like she's melting away. One of her arms/ hands is extended towards the camera.

LUCE: I did it for you, Lilith... (CINZEL)

NICOLE: Lilith, who is she? Do you know her?

LILITH: Nicole, focus! We need to get out of here! (CINZEL)

KIRA (off camera): Nicky! C'mon wake up!

Panel 3 1/4 page bottom left.

The camera is above the twins. KIRA is holding NICOLE in her arms. DAVE is on her left. KIRA and Dave have their back to the camera, NICOLE is facing the camera.

NICOLE: Kira, Dave... I've had the strangest dream.

Panel 4 1/4 page bottom right.

The camera is facing DAVE and KIRA next to each other who sigh relieved.

Panel 1 1/4 page top left.

The camera is facing the three MORGAN SIBLINGS as they come out of the gym, DAVE is on NICOLE'S right, KIRA on NICOLE'S left. They're holding her from one arm each. The camera is also behind two people. ARIEL and NOEL are approaching the twins.

Panel 2 1/4 page top right

Close up on KIRA's face, we can only see part of NICOLE's face.

KIRA: Ariel there's a mess inside to clean up. Noel, I know we've already asked a lot of you, but could you give us a ride home?

Panel 3 1/4 page bottom left.

The MORGANS and NOEL are in NOEL's car. ARIEL is outside KIRA's car window.

ARIEL: Are you OK?

KIRA: No, I'm not OK. Two attacks in two weeks? I thought Levi had sorted things out.

ARIEL: I'll talk to him. Go home and rest.

Panel 4 1/4 bottom right.

The camera is just outside the car facing KIRA and NOEL frontally.

NOEL: So, are you guys witches or something?

KIRA: Or something.

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The ghosts have come to steal the light
out of your eyes

Nicole & Kira & Dave

Panel 1 1/2 page top

The camera sits in the middle of the panel. The three MORGAN SIBLINGS are in LEIGHTON's study. They are going over her stuff. DAVE is standing on the side of the panel, in front of a cabinet. He has a diary in his hands. NICOLE is in the middle of the panel, sitting on the ground, legs crossed, elbows resting on her knees, head resting on her hands, looking at a notebook in her lap. KIRA is hidden behind the desk so we don't see her.

KIRA: Ah ah! I think I found something.

Panel 2 1/4 page bottom left

The camera sits in the middle of the panel looking up at the three siblings. KIRA is in the middle of the panel. DAVE is on the left of the panel, NICOLE is on the right of the panel. The siblings are looking down at a box that KIRA has found.

DAVE: What is it?

Panel 3 detail across panels 2 and 4

Close up on the top of the box. There's a needle sticking out from the top.

Panel 4 1/4 page bottom right

The camera sits in the middle of the panel looking up at the three siblings. KIRA is in the middle of the panel. DAVE is on the left of the panel, NICOLE is on the right of the panel. The siblings are looking down at a box that KIRA has found. KIRA stings her finger on the needle.

KIRA: I don't know, but there's one way to find out.

Panel 5 detail in the bottom right corner of panel 4

Close up on the top of the box, KIRA's finger is still on top of it. There's a clicking noise.

Panel 1 1/4 page top left

The camera is above the box, there is a notebook inside it.

KIRA: What is that?

DAVE: I haven't seen this in such a long time.

Panel 2 1/4 page top tight

The camera sits in the middle of the panel looking up at the three siblings. DAVE is on the left of the panel. He's holding the notebook open. KIRA and NICOLE are more on the right panel and look puzzled at DAVE.

KIRA: You know what this is?

DAVE: Sure, it's the collection of fairytales Leigh used to tell us.

Panel 3 1/4 bottom left page

The camera is above the notebook as DAVE is leafing through the pages.

DAVE: Don't you remember? She used to come up with these wild stories. The Greedy King, the Girl and the Key. Look.

Panel 4 1/4 bottom right page

The camera is facing KIRA from the bottom of the panel. She's holding onto the notebook and she looks surprised.

Panel 5 detail inside panel 4 in the right bottom corner.

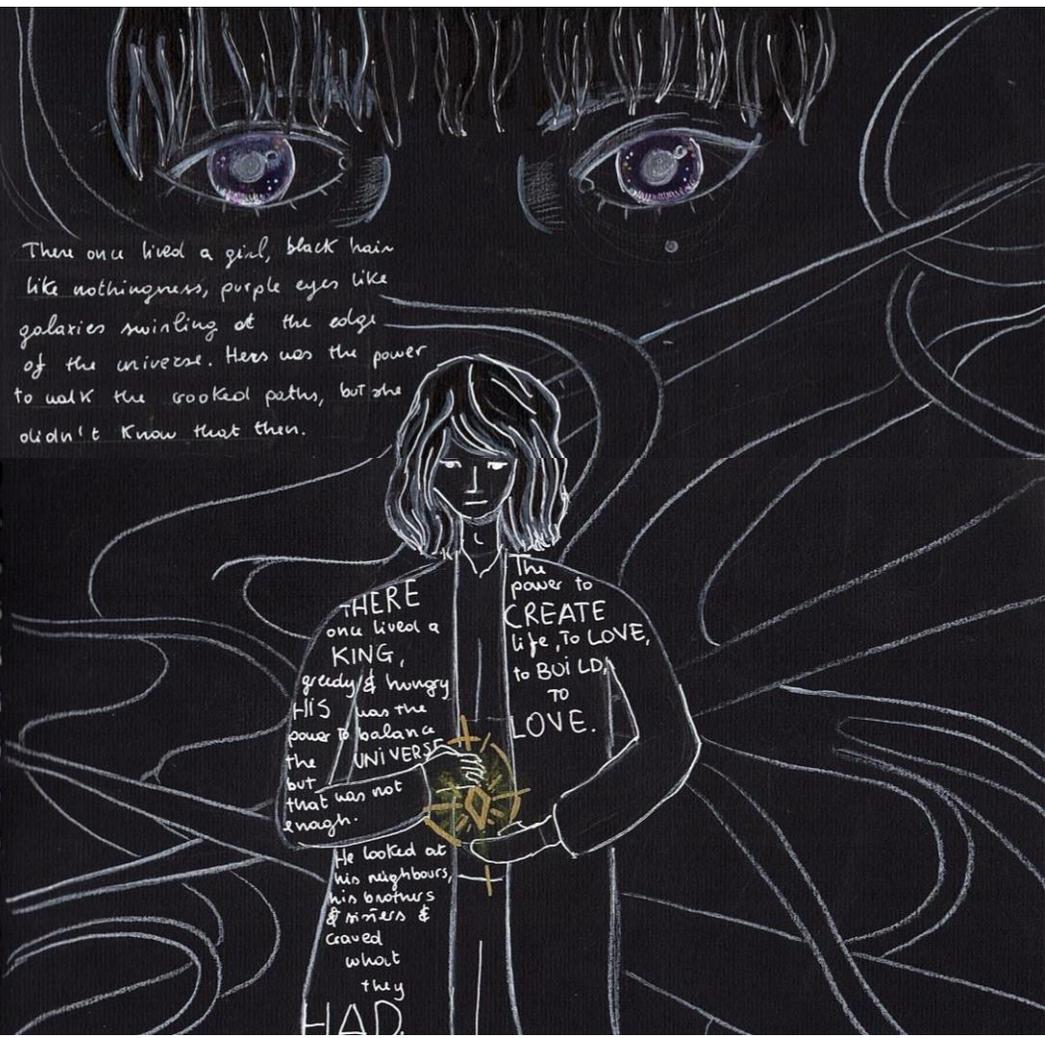
Close up on DAVE's finger as he taps onto a black page of the notebook.

DAVE: See?

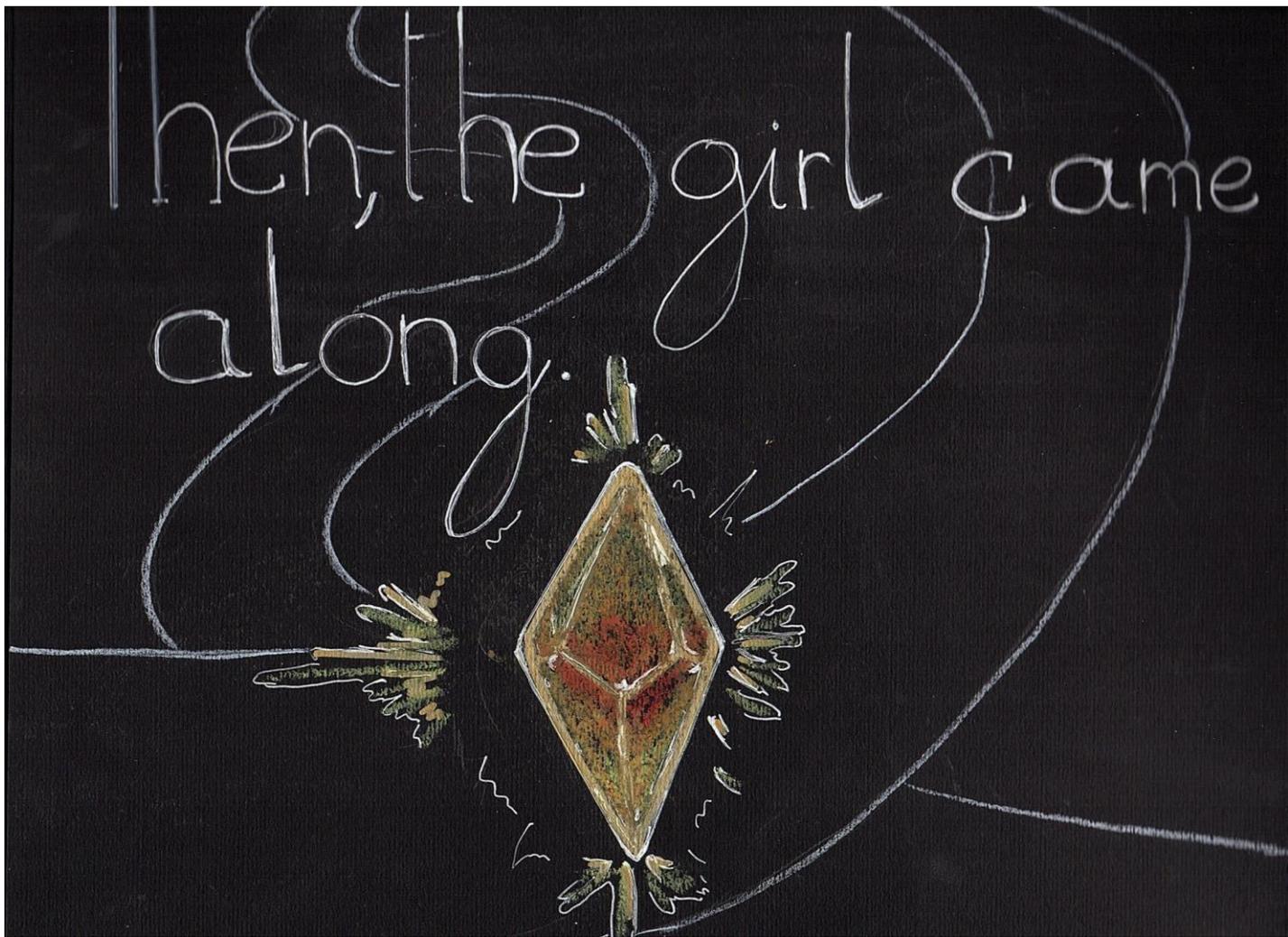
Panel 1 full page

The camera shows the notebook in KIRA's hands. The pages are black. KIRA reads, but then the reader is transported in the story.

KIRA: There once lived a girl, black hair like nothingness...

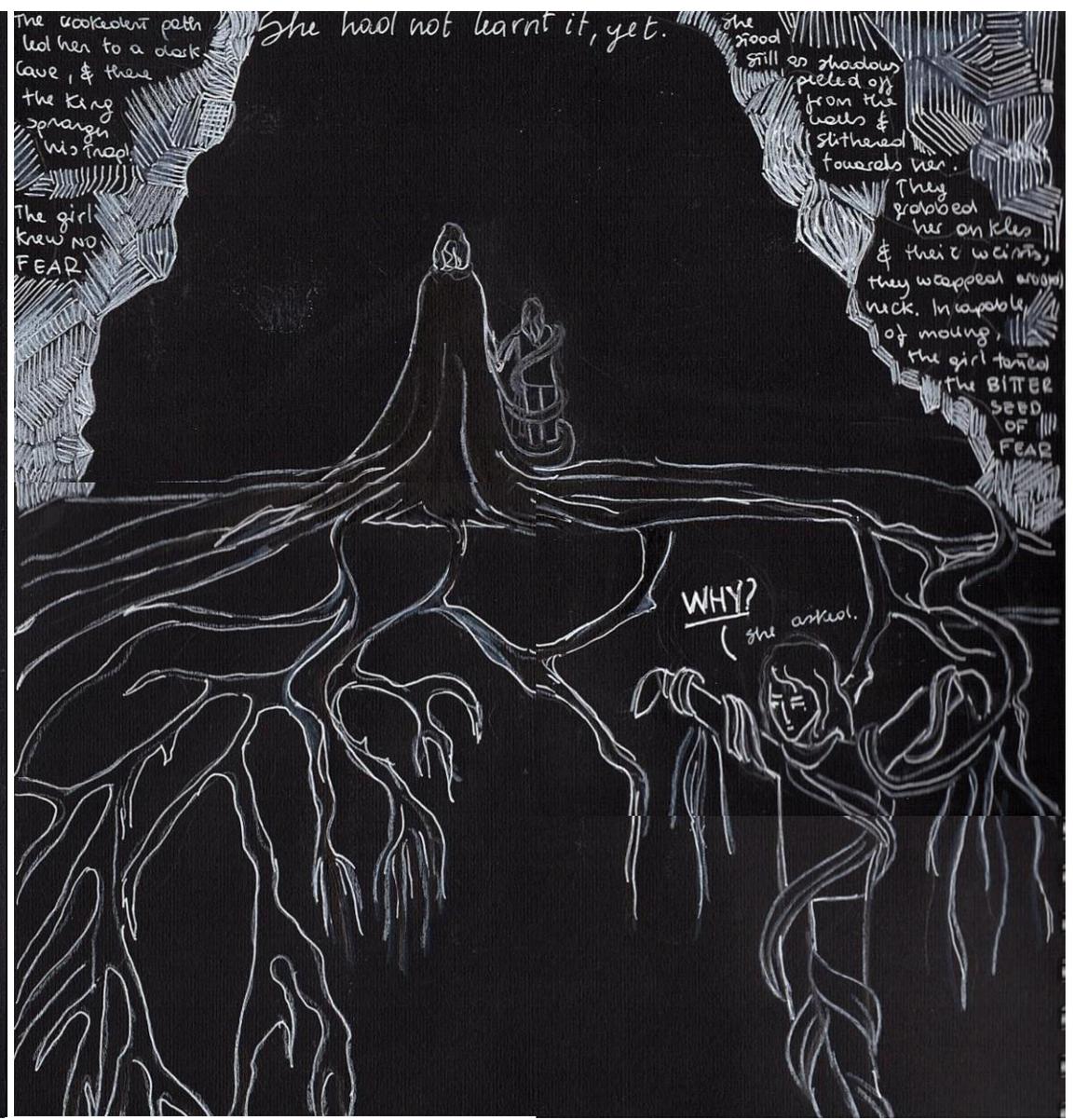
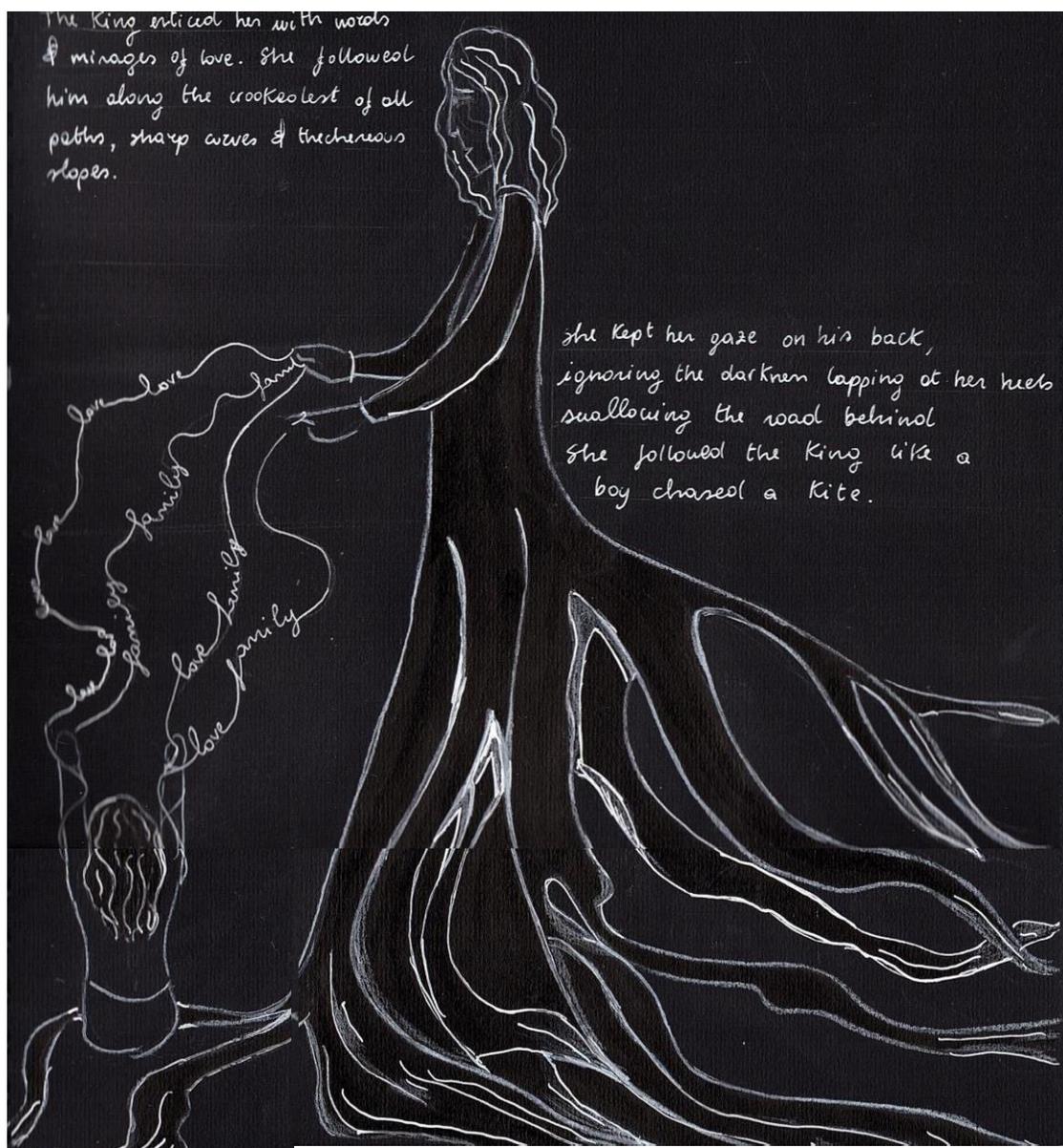


There once lived a girl, black hair like nothingness and purple eyes like galaxies swirling at the edges of the universe. Hers was the power to walk the crooked paths, but she didn't know that then.



There once lived a king, greedy and hungry. His was the power to balance the universe but that was not enough. He looked at his neighbours, his brothers and sisters, and craved what they had. The power to create life, to love, to build, to leave.

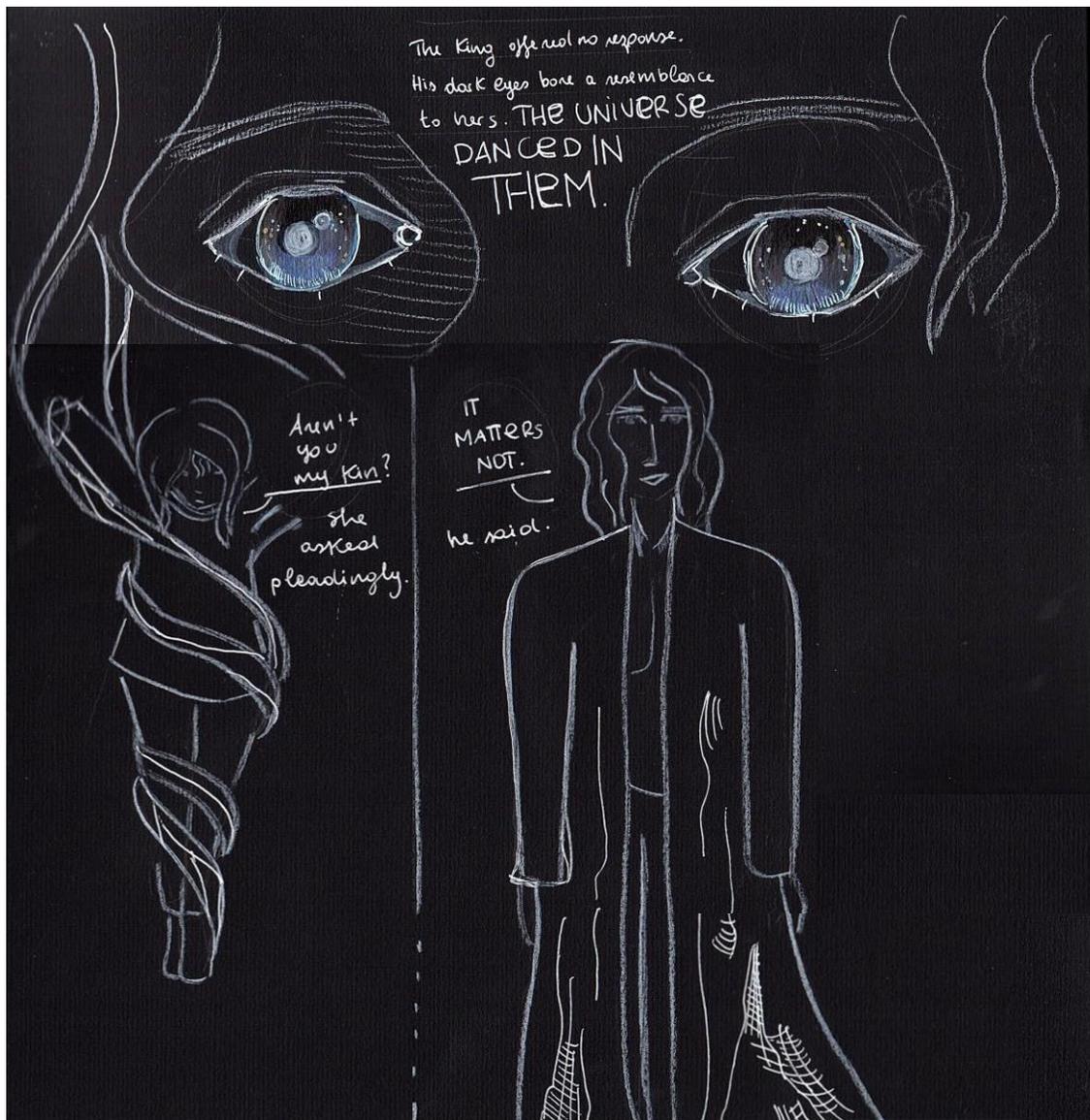
Then, the girl came along.



The king enticed her with words and mirages of love. She followed him along the crookedest of all paths, sharp curves and treacherous slopes; she kept her gaze on his back and ignored the darkness lapping at her heels swallowing the road behind. She followed the king like a boy chased a kite.

The crookedest path led her to a dark cave and there, the King sprang his trap. Rock walls surrounded the girl on three sides and a gate closed the way she'd come from. The girl knew no fear, she had not learnt it yet. She stood still as shadows peeled off from the walls and slithered towards her. They grabbed her ankles and her wrists, they wrapped themselves around her neck. Incapable of moving, the girl tasted the bitter seed of fear.

"Why?" she asked.



The King offered no response.
His dark eyes bore a resemblance
to hers. THE UNIVERSE
DANCED IN
THEM.

Aren't
you
my kin?
she
asked
pleadingly.

IT
MATTERS
NOT.
he said.

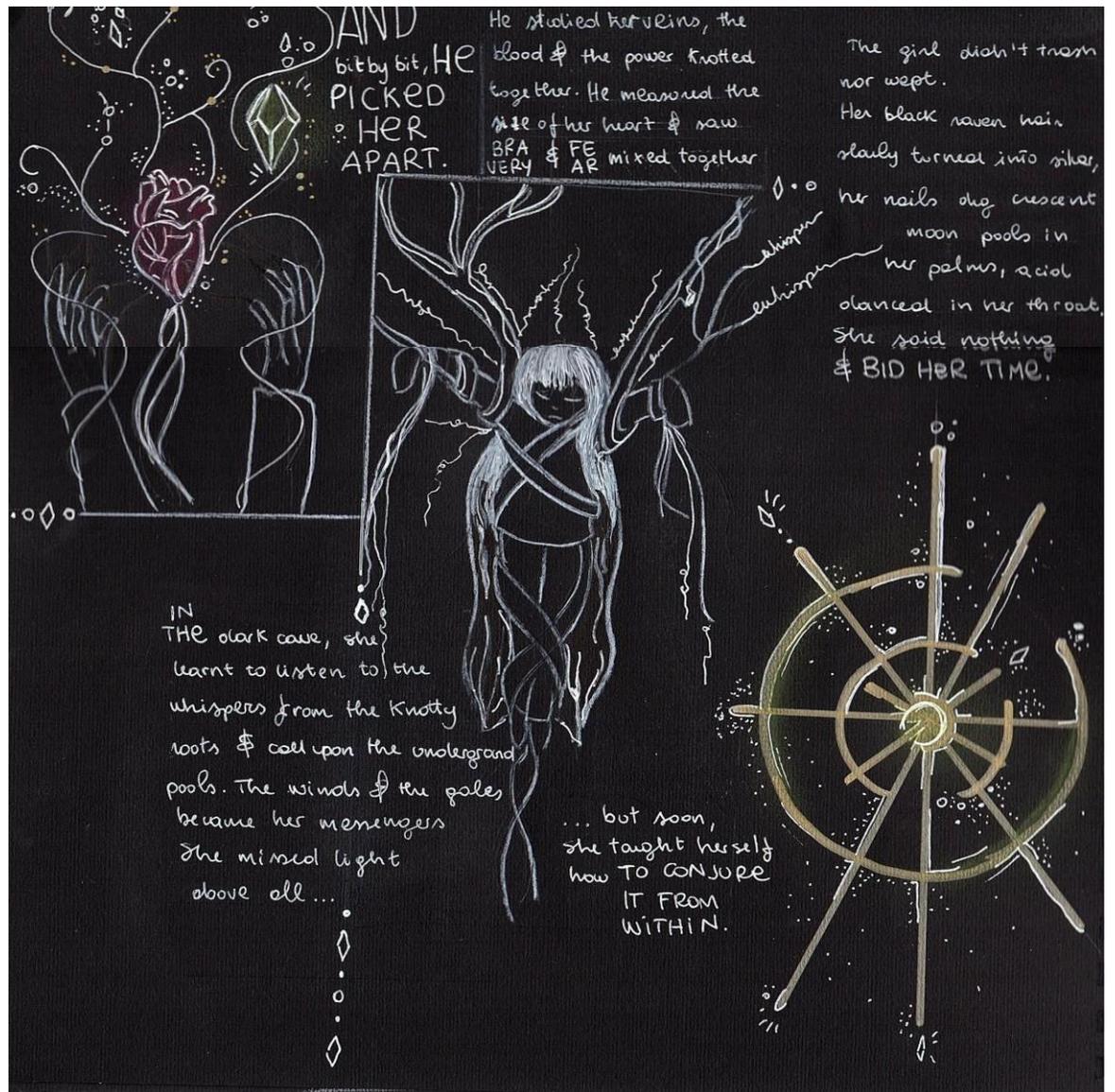
The king offered no response. His dark eyes bore a resemblance to hers, the universe danced in them.

"Aren't you my kin?" she asked pleadingly.

"It matters not." He said.

And bit by bit, he picked her apart. He studied her veins, the blood and the power knotted together. He measured the size of her heart and saw bravery and fear entangled together. The girl did not thrash nor wept. Her black raven hair slowly turned into silver, her nails dug crescent moon pools in her palms, acid danced in her throat. She said nothing and bid her time

In the dark cave, she learnt to listen to the whispers from the knotty roots and call upon the underground pools. The winds and the gales became her messengers. She missed light above all, but soon she taught herself how to conjure it from within.



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She said nothing
& BID HER TIME.

IN
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whispers from the knotty
roots & call upon the underground
pools. The winds & the gales
became her messengers.
She missed light
above all...

... but soon,
she taught herself
how TO CONJURE
IT FROM
WITHIN.

In the dark cave, she learnt to listen to the whispers from the knotty roots and call upon the underground pools. The winds and the gales became her messengers. She missed light above all, but soon she taught herself how to conjure it from within.

The light grew bigger & turned into a fire;
the fire grew stronger & turned into a lady.
The edges of her presence were blurred,
but her eyes danced like red coals in the night.
"Who are you?"
the girl croaked.

A KEY.



Travel wide & deep, travel
the crooked
paths & tell
my story.

Why won't
you leave?

The girl had
not known LOVE,
only FEAR.

They're not
the same.
There are worlds beyond
this cave, light on the
other side of darkness.

He's
my
maker.

The Key nodded & left.
The girl's story
travelled far. Many asked
"Why didn't she leave
when she could?",
not understanding
that wasn't the
right question. ◊



The light grew bigger and turned into a fire; the fire grew stronger and turned into a lady. The edges of her presence were blurred but her eyes danced like red coals in the night.

"Who are you?" the girl croaked.

"A key."

When the key offered her freedom, the girl refused the offer but made a request.

"Travel wide and deep, travel the crooked paths and tell my story. Don't let people forget me or else I'll be killed."

"Why won't you leave?" the key asked.

The girl had not known love, only fear.

"They're not the same," the key objected. "There are worlds beyond this cave, light on the other side of darkness."

"He's my maker."

The key nodded and left.

Her story travelled far. Many asked "why didn't she leave when she could?", not understanding that's not the right question.

Panel 1 1/2 page top

The camera is in the middle of the panel at eye-level with the MORGAN SIBLINGS. DAVE is on the left of the panel. He's looking down at the notebook. KIRA is the middle and she's looking right at the camera. NICOLE is on the right of the panel and she's looking down at something in the box.

DAVE: Yup, just how Leigh used to tell it.

KIRA: This is about Ådhit.

CB: But who's the little girl?

NICOLE: Looks like there's something else.

Panel 2 1/4 bottom left

Camera on top of a smaller notebook, open in NICOLE's hands.

NICOLE: Are these poems?

Panel 3 1/4 bottom left

DAVE and KIRA are close to each other as NICOLE shows them the notebook.

KIRA: These are spells.

DAVE: She was a witch?

KIRA: No, I think she walked with a had-au like us, but maybe she didn't have powers of her own.

Panel 1 1/2 page top

The camera is in the middle of the panel at eye-level with the MORGAN SIBLINGS. DAVE is on the left of the panel. He's looking at KIRA, hie back to the camera. KIRA is the middle and she looks pensive, she's turned to the right. NICOLE is on the right of the panel and she's looking at KIRA, her back to the camera.

DAVE: This is getting so confusing.

KIRA: Ok, so both Nic and I saw Leighton and the silver-haired had-au that, most likely, walked with Leigh.

NICOLE: Besides, Leigh knew too much. She said to trust Dio and referred to her as a *she*.

KIRA: But had-ais have always referred to Dio as a *he*.

DAVE: But you guys are talking about Leigh as if she were alive when it was just a dream.

KIRA: It's not that simple.

Panel 2 1/2 page bottom

The camera is in the middle of the panel at eye-level with the MORGAN SIBLINGS. DAVE is on the left of the panel. He's looking at KIRA, back to the camera. KIRA is the middle and she looks pensive. She's turned to the left. NICOLE is on the right of the panel and she's looking at KIRA, back to the camera.

KIRA: And now these fairy-tales.

NICOLE: Do you think the greedy king from the story is Dio?

KIRA: It definitely fits the profile. But who's the girl?

DAVE: Sigh. Isn't she his daughter?

Panel 1 full page

Close up on KIRA's face. She has a eureka face.

KIRA: Holy shit, you're right. Dio had a daughter. She must've been as powerful as he was.

NICOLE: Where is she now?

KIRA: Probably dead with Leigh.

CB: Is she the one who cursed us?

KIRA (caption box): It must be.

31

Echoes part 5

Luce

All the dialogue in this chapter is in CINZEL

Panel 1 1/2 page top

The camera is on the side. The GUARDIANS are walking along the Silver Lake, LUCE, EVE, and BELLAMY are following behind. In the background, we see the landscape.

LUCE (caption box): Before the third generation of had-ais came along, there was this habit in the army. You were tied to your cadre. Where they went, you went and vice versa.

LILITH (caption box): Why? That makes no sense.

LUCE (caption box): Not if Dio was trying to prevent had-ais' defections to other worlds.

LILITH (caption box): I see... Then why undo the bond?

LUCE (caption box): Why, do you think?

Panel 2 Detail inside panel 2 bottom right.

Close up on LUCE who looks surprised.

Panel 3 1/2 page bottom

The camera is on the side. LUCE is on the left side of the panel, MEGAMI is on the right side of the panel, both in the foreground. The four guardians are between the two women, in the middle ground, while the woods are in the background. EVE and BELLAMY are off camera.

LUCE: M—Megami? What are you doing here?

MEGAMI: It's good to see you Luce.

All the dialogue in this chapter is in CINZEL

Panel 1 detail inside panel 2 top left corner

Close up on LUCE, she looks confused as she looks left and right (Add line movements to both sides of her head).

LUCE: Why are we meeting here?

EVE (off camera): So, this is one of those, isn't it?

Panel 2 1/4 page top left

The camera is facing EVE as she looks into it. EVE is in the frame, head to knees, her left arm is bent, her hand resting on her hip; her right arm is bent making a V, her hand is active.

LUCE: One of those what?

EVE: One of those off-the-book missions?

Panel 3 1/4 page top right

LUCE, RAPHAEL and EVE form a triangle. LUCE is in the middle and has her back to the camera. EVE is on the left side of the panel, RAPHAEL on the right side of the panel, they're both framed from the side.

LILITH (caption box): Was that the catch?

LUCE (caption box): Pretty much.

LUCE: What off-the-book mission?

RAPHAEL: You never told her?

Panel 3 1/2 page bottom

LUCE, RAPHAEL and EVE form a triangle. LUCE is in the middle and has her back to the camera. EVE is on the left side of the panel, RAPHAEL on the right side of the panel. They're both framed from the side. The three other guardians on the RAPHAEL's side.

LUCE: Can you please talk to me? What off-the-book mission?

RAPHAEL: You're about to find out.

URIEL: Luce, Adam is missing.

LUCE: How is that even possible?

RAPHAEL: We need you to find him?

LUCE: W-what? H-h-how? Why m-me?

All the dialogue in this chapter is in CINZEL

Panel 1 inside panel 2

Close up on GABRIEL's face. He looks concerned.

GABRIEL: Luce, darling, look at me. Breathe.

Panel 2 1/2 panel top

The camera is behind GABRIEL framing the scene from the right corner of the panel. GABRIEL has his back to the camera. He's cradling LUCE's cheek in his palm. LUCE looks like she's having a panic attack.

LILITH (caption box): They wanted you to do their dirty work.

LUCE (caption box): Pretty much.

GABRIEL: Luce, Adam was sent to Earth to negotiate with Neil and Myra but he's been missing.

LUCE: Negotiate what?

RAPHAEL: Not important right now. We can't find him.

Panel 3 1/2 panel bottom

The camera is behind GABRIEL framing the scene from the right corner of the panel. GABRIEL has his back to the camera. His hand is on her shoulder. LUCE looks like she's confused.

LUCE: Why do you think I can?

RAPHAEL: Because if you try hard enough you can feel all the had-ais in the immediate vicinity and even farther away, can't you?

LUCE: H-h-how do you know all of this?

Panel 4 detail inside panel 3 in the bottom right corner

Close up on EVE's face who has partially covered her face with her hand.

EVE: Fuck, you're Dio's daughter, aren't you?

LILITH (caption box): How did she get to that conclusion? I mean, most of Raphael's pupil can do that. That's a well-known fact—

LUCE: Yes, but *how many* can they actually sense?

All the dialogue in this chapter is in CINZEL

Panel 1 full page

The camera frames LUCE and LILITH from the side. LUCE is on the left side of the panel, still sitting on the roots she conjured. LILITH is standing in her cell, both her arms are active.

The cell barrier cuts the panel into two sides. The balloons are located across the line.

LUCE: ...

LILITH: ...

LUCE: How many can *you* feel?

LILITH: This is madness...

LUCE: Scared of the truth?

LILITH: Aren't you?

LUCE: Never. You can feel them too, can't you? Maybe dots or flames hovering on the edge of your consciousness.

All the dialogue in this chapter is in CINZEL

Panel 1 1/2 page top

The camera frames LUCE and LILITH from the side. LUCE is on the left side of the panel, still sitting on the roots she conjured. LILITH is standing in her cell, she has her arms crossed below her breasts. The cell barrier cuts the panel into two sides. The balloons are located across the line.

LUCE: What does that make you??

LILITH: sigh..

LUCE: Why don't you try leave your cell?

LILITH: I can't. Blood magick binds me.

LUCE: Whose blood?

LILITH: ...

LUCE: The truth is within grasp, Lilith.

LILITH: The truths you and Dio offer are usually lies.

LUCE: Dio and I are the same, rebel queen. Now, leave your cell.

Panel 2 detail inside panel 1 bottom right corner

Close up on LILITH. She looks startled.

Panel 3 1/2 in height 1/3 in length bottom left

The camera is on the side. LILITH is close to the barrier that separates her from LUCE.

LILITH: What if this is a trick?

LUCE (off camera): What's the worst that could happen? You die a little earlier than scheduled.

Panel 3 1/2 in height 2/3 in length bottom right

The camera is frontal. In the background we see the cell, in the foreground LILITH is stepping out of the cell. The passage is signalled by how the light hits her. The part of her still in the cell is darker than the part emerging.

CHAPTER 31 – page 6 (All the dialogue in this chapter is in CINZEL)

Panel 1 1/2 page top

The camera is in front of LILITH. She looks like she has realised the truth.

LUCE (off camera): Welcome home, sister.

LILITH: This makes no sense.

LUCE (off camera): Unless...

LILITH: We share blood.

LUCE (off camera): Now, you can run – which I'd advise you against it – or you could stay for the end of the story.

LILITH: Both seem like terrible options.

Panel 2 1/2 page top bottom

Both LILITH and LUCE have their backs to the camera. LILITH is in the foreground and looks at LUCE walking away from her, but LUCE has turned her head to look at LILITH.

LUCE: Sleep well. See you tomorrow, sister.

32

Broken halves, broken pieces

Nicole

Trigger warning: the following chapter contains topics such as sexual violence and trauma that some readers may find upsetting.

Reader's discretion is advised.

Panel 1 1/4 top left

The camera sits in the middle of the panel. NICOLE is shown from the back as she knocks on someone's door. Detail KNOCK KNOCK

LILITH: Why are you here? (CINZEL)

NICOLE (caption box): None of your business.

LILITH: He can't give you what you're looking for. (CINZEL)

NICOLE (caption box): Because you know me so well.

Panel 2 1/4 page top right

LEVI opens the door and embraces NICOLE.

LILITH: Yeah, I do. I've been nested here for months. I see you. (Cinzel)

LEVI: Hey, are you OK?

NICOLE: No. Can I please stay here?

LEVI: Of course, love.

Panel 3 detail inside panel 4 top left corner

LEVI holds NICOLE's crying face in his hands. Close up on NICOLE's face, streaked by tears.

LEVI (off camera): I've got you.

Panel 4 1/2 page

NICOLE and LEVI have their backs to the camera as they walk inside the apartment.

LEVI: You can stay as long as you want. Do you want to tell me what happened?

LILITH: This is not a safe place. (CINZEL)

Panel 1 full length 1/3 height top

NICOLE and LEVI are sitting on the sofa. NICOLE has her legs crossed, her elbows are resting on her knees, her face is hidden inside her hands. LEVI is sitting on the right side of the panel. He has a hand on NICOLE's left shoulder. He's not fully framed in the panel. We only see part of his face. No Background.

NICOLE: I found out things about my family...

LILITH: Please don't tell him. (CINZEL)

NICOLE: Secrets... and it's brought up a lot of unresolved feelings.

Panel 2 full length 1/3 height middle

NICOLE and LEVI are sitting on the sofa. NICOLE has her legs crossed, her elbows are resting on her knees, her face is hidden inside her hands. LEVI is sitting on the right side of the panel. He has a hand on NICOLE's left shoulder. He's not fully framed in the panel. We only see part of his face. No Background.

LEVI: Families can be...

NICOLE: A fucking pain...

LEVI: chuckle across the balloon. I was about to say complicated.

Panel 3 full length 1/3 height bottom

NICOLE and LEVI are sitting on the sofa. NICOLE has her legs crossed, her elbows are resting on her knees, her face is hidden inside her hands. LEVI is sitting on the right side of the panel. He has a hand on NICOLE's left shoulder. He's not fully framed in the panel. We only see part of his face. No Background.

LEVI: Maybe it's not a bad thing.

NICOLE: How can you say that?

Panel 1 1/4 page top left

Both NICOLE and LEVI are in the frame, much closer to each other. LEVI's arms is extended towards NICOLE's lap.

LEVI: I've tried really hard not to push you, because this is new, but you can't deny there's a resonance between us... I mean our magick.

LILITH: Don't fall for it. (CINZEL)

LEVI: Whenever we practise, there's...

Panel 2 detail across panels 1 and 2 Close up on

LEVI grabbing NICOLE's hand.

NICOLE: A spark.

LEVI: So you *have* felt it.

Panel 3 1/4 page bottom left

The camera takes LEVI and NICOLE from the side. LEVI is holding NICOLE's face between his hands.

LEVI: Back then, we used to be everything to each other.

NICOLE (caption box): Is that true?

LILITH: Unfortunately. (CINZEL)

LEVI: You were my home, and I was yours.

LILITH: Why are you feeling all tingling? (CINZEL)

Panel 4 1/4 page bottom right

NICOLE embodies the camera. LEVI is looking directly at the camera. He looks earnest.

LEVI: Please, let me show you.

CHAPTER 32 – page 4 this page is a collection of fragmented panels

Panel 1 top left

LEVI holds NICOLE's face as he kisses her.

Panel 2 top middle

LEVI holds NICOLE's face as he kisses her. NICOLE's arms are around him. The kiss deepens.

Panel 3 top right

LEVI kisses NICOLE's neck.

Panel 4 middle left

Detail, LEVI pushes NICOLE back on the sofa.

Panel 5 middle right

LEVI is on top of NICOLE and they continue kissing.

Panel 6 – 7 – 8 bottom left – middle – right

Different stages of LEVI removing NICOLE's clothes.

Panel 1 top left 1/3 in height and length

The camera is behind NICOLE's head and is framing LEVI as he's on top of her. He's elevated as his arms are stretched to keep him up.

LEVI: Are you on the pill?

NICOLE: No, actually Lev--

LEVI: Don't worry, I'll be safe.

Page 2 top middle 1/3 in height and length

Close up on NICOLE's face as she looks up.

LILITH: What does that even mean? Why are you not saying anything? (CINZEL)

NICOLE (thought bubble): What's the point?

Page 3 top right 1/3 in height and length

Close up on LEVI's face

LEVI: Just relax and you'll enjoy this.

NICOLE: (caption box): Maybe I can just lose myself...

The following scenes are not in panels but float in the rest of the page.

LEVI on top of NICOLE

LUCIFER on top of LILITH

LILITH fighting against LUCIFER

LUCIFER's hand covers LILITH's mouth

The following scenes are not in panels but float in the rest of the page.

- LEVI kissing NICOLE
- NICOLE's as she looks in pain
- NICOLE: Levi, stop... get off, please...
- CLOSE up of LILITH's bruises.
- Close up of LEVI on top of NICOLE
- LEVI: I'm almost there... hold on.

Mirror images of LEVI on top of NICOLE and LUCIFER spooning a terrified LILITH.

Panel 1 bottom right 1/3 in height and length

Close up on NICOLE's face, she's hiding her face behind her arm.

NICOLE (thought bubble): ... Fuck

CHAPTER 32 – page 7

Three bars to indicate passage of time.

Panel 1 1/4 page top left

The camera is in the middle of the panel. NICOLE is in her bedroom in the darkness. She's hugging her legs.

Panel 2 1/4 page top right

The camera is in the middle of the panel. KIRA walks in the bedroom and turns on the light.

KIRA: I didn't know you were back.

NICOLE (off camera): Yeah..

Panel 3 1/4 page bottom left

The camera is in the middle of the panel. KIRA sits down on NICOLE's bed.

KIRA: Are you OK?

Panel 4 1/4 page bottom right

The camera is in the middle of the panel. NICOLE is looking at the camera. Her face resting on her knees.

NICOLE: I think I did something stupid.

33

The Long way Home

*Nicole & Kira & Dave *

Trigger warning: the following chapter contains discussion of topics such as sexual violence that some readers may find upsetting.

Reader's discretion is advised.

Panel 1 1/2 page top

The camera is in the middle of the panel. The camera faces the three MORGAN SIBLINGS who are sitting down in a hospital corridor. KIRA and DAVE are flanking NICOLE. KIRA is on NICOLE's left and is looking to the left. DAVE is on NICOLE's right and is looking to the right. NICOLE is in the middle. She's resting her neck against the wall behind her and looking up.

NICOLE (mutter): There was no need to come here...

KIRA: What?

NICOLE: Nothing.

Panel 2 1/4 page bottom left

The camera is in the middle of the panel. DAVE looks at his watch. It's 4.15.

DAVE: What time was the appointment?

KIRA (off camera): Four.

DOCTOR (off camera): Morgan?

Panel 3 1/4 page bottom right.

The camera is at eye level. NICOLE stands up and walks to her left. KIRA and DAVE are partially visible. NICOLE is framed from her waist to her feet.

NICOLE: I'll be back.

DAVE: We'll be here.

Panel 1 1/2 page top

The camera is in the middle of the panel. The camera faces the two MORGAN SIBLINGS who are sitting down in a hospital corridor. KIRA and DAVE are both looking up.

DAVE: Kira, who is this guy?

KIRA: Why? What will you do? Avenge your sister's honour?

DAVE: What? No! I'll beat him until he bleeds.

KIRA: Scoff. Sure, you might be big and muscular, but he's got magick.

Panel 2 1/2 page bottom

The camera is on NICOLE's left side. She's sitting on a stool. The doctor is sitting in front of her on another stool. Behind the doctor, there's a desk (pushed on the left side of the panel). In the background, there's a bed. NICOLE is looking at the floor, the doctor is looking at NICOLE.

DOCTOR: Would you like to tell me why you're here?

NICOLE: My sister overreacted.

DOCTOR: I see. You didn't want to come?

NICOLE: ...

DOCTOR: Nicole, can you tell me why your sister overreacted?

NICOLE: I went to see this guy, and we had... sex.

DOCTOR: Did you consent?

Panel 1 1/2 page top

The camera is in the middle of the panel. The camera faces the two MORGAN SIBLINGS who are sitting down in a hospital corridor. KIRA is looking up. DAVE is leaning forward, his forearms are resting on his legs. His head is hanging low.

KIRA: This is the first time I don't know what she's thinking.

DAVE: She must be scared. Maybe even feel guilty. KIRA: Why would she feel guilty?

DAVE: Didn't you hear what she said last night?

Panel 2 1/2 page bottom

The camera is on NICOLE's left side. She's sitting on a stool. The doctor is sitting in front of her on another stool. Behind the doctor, there's a desk (pushed on the left side of the panel). In the background, there's a bed. NICOLE is looking at the floor, the doctor is looking at NICOLE.

DOCTOR: Did you enthusiastically consent?

NICOLE: I guess...

Panel 3 detail inside panel 2, on the right side but not in the bottom corner. NICOLE is frowning trying to remember.

NICOLE: I don't remember, actually.

DOCTOR: Nicole... were protections involved?

NICOLE: No.

DOCTOR: When was your last period?

Panel 1 1/2 page top

The camera is in the middle of the panel. The camera faces the two MORGAN SIBLINGS who are sitting down in a hospital corridor. KIRA is looking up. DAVE is leaning forward, his forearms are resting on his legs. He's looking at KIRA.

DAVE: She said she was sorry and should've listened to you.

KIRA: ...

Panel 2 1/2 page bottom

The camera is on NICOLE's left side. She's sitting on a stool. The doctor is sitting in front of her on another stool. Behind the doctor there's a desk (pushed on the left side of the panel). In the background, there's a bed. NICOLE is looking at the floor, the doctor is looking at NICOLE.

DOCTOR: I think the best course of action is for us to visit you and to run some tests. How does that sound?

NICOLE: OK.

DOCTOR: You can get changed behind the panels. There's a gown for you.

Panel 1 1/2 page top

The camera is in the middle of the panel. The camera faces the two MORGAN SIBLINGS who are sitting down in a hospital corridor. KIRA is looking up. DAVE is leaning back, his arms are crossed and he's looking at KIRA.

KIRA: Maybe we should just leave.

DAVE: What?

KIRA: Yeah, think about it. Wouldn't it be better to pack things up and go?

DAVE: What about Charlie and Tony?

KIRA: They'll survive without us. They might even get their life back.

Panel 2 1/2 page bottom

The camera is still in the same position. NICOLE is on the bed while the doctor is sitting in front of her. We see the DOCTOR's back but not NICOLE.

DOCTOR: Let me know as soon as you feel any pain or discomfort.

NICOLE: OK.

Panel 3 detail inside panel 2, on the right side but not in the bottom corner.

The camera is above NICOLE. She's covering her face with her arm.

Panel 1 1/2 page top

The camera is in the middle of the panel. The camera faces the two MORGAN SIBLINGS who are sitting down in a hospital corridor. KIRA is looking up, but she's covering her face with one hand, the other arm is extended towards DAVE. DAVE is sitting back, but he's facing KIRA. His right arm extended to hold KIRA's hand.

DAVE: Running is not the solution. Cutting our ties with our family is the worst thing we could do.

KIRA: You're probably right. But how do I protect you guys?

Panel 2 detail inside panel 1, on the right side but not in the bottom corner.

Close up DAVE holding KIRA's hand.

DAVE: We grow stronger together.

Panel 3 1/2 page bottom

The camera is on NICOLE's left side. She's getting dressed behind the screen. The doctor is sitting at the desk (pushed on the left side of the panel). In the background, there's a bed.

DOCTOR: We'll have your results ready in a week time. There are low chances of you being pregnant given the timeline of your periods, but I would recommend taking a test ten days from now.

NICOLE: I will, thank you.

DOCTOR: Nicole... I would like to refer you to one of our therapist to tal—

NICOLE: I'm fine, thank you.

Panel 3 detail inside panel 2, on the right side but not in the bottom corner.

The camera is framing NICOLE head to shoulders. She looks stern, almost angry.

NICOLE: Is there anything else? Can I go?

DOCTOR (off camera): You can. Contact us again if you need to.

NICOLE: I will, thank you.

Three bars to show passage of time.

Panel 1 full page.

NICOLE, KIRA, and DAVE are in NOEL's car and are driving home. KIRA is driving, NICOLE has her head and arm outside the car window. DAVE is sitting on the same side as NICOLE and is looking out. The camera is facing NICOLE and DAVE. NICOLE looks absent.

Lyrics are spilling out of the radio and car.

Maybeeee I don't really wanna knooooow

How your garden grows

'Cause I just wanna fly

Panel 1 full page.

Scenes from the previous night and LILITH's experience are mingled together.

Lyrics

Lately, did you ever feel the pain

In the morning rain

As it soaks you to the bone?

Maybe I just wanna fly

Wanna live, I don't wanna die

Maybe I just wanna breathe

Maybe I just don't believe

Maybe you're the same as me

We see things they'll never see

You and I are gonna live forever

Panel 2 detail inside panel 1 bottom right corner

NICOLE is covering her face with one of her hands.

NICOLE (caption box): Why didn't you tell me?

LILITH: ... I don't know. (CINZEL)

This page can be split into two if the dialogue is too much for one page.

Panel 1 full page rectangular.

Black background, LILITH and NICOLE are two white outlines laying on the ground facing each other, both in foetal position.

NICOLE (caption box): Did you not trust me?

LILITH: Every time I tried to warn you about Lucifer, you didn't listen. I wasn't sure you would've this time either. (CINZEL)

NICOLE (caption box): I'm sorry... I've been a shitty friend.

LILITH: Why are you apologising?... you're hurting too. (CINZEL)

NICOLE (caption box): My pain doesn't cancel yours... you're right, I should've listened.

LILITH: I should've been more honest, I guess... (CINZEL)

NICOLE (caption box): Have you ever told anyone?

LILITH: Nope. (CINZEL)

NICOLE (caption box): Why?

LILITH: Because he was the luminous leader and I... I thought he was the best I could get... (CINZEL)

NICOLE (caption box): Who made you think that?

LILITH: My family left me and neglected me, Nic, I came up with the thinking all on my own... (CINZEL)

NICOLE (caption box): No one deserves that kind of– actually that is not love, Lil. That is violence.

LILITH: Yes it is. It took *me* centuries to understand that... (CINZEL)

NICOLE (caption box): I see your point.

LILITH: Do you? (CINZEL)

NICOLE (caption box): Yeah, I do. And I'm sorry for not listening... I'll do better.

LILITH: Nicole? Are we really friends? (CINZEL)

NICOLE (caption box): Better, we're soulmates, but without the romantic bullshit attached to it. And from now on, honesty is the word.

LILITH: Then there's something else I need to tell you. (CINZEL)

Three bars to show passage of time.

Panel 1 and 2 1/4 each top left and right

KIRA is outside MASON's house (same scenes as CHAPTER 21, page 2, panels 1 and 2).

MASON: Kira? What's wrong? Please tell me you're not here to punch me again.

Panel 3 1/4 bottom left

The camera is on KIRA's left side; she looks defeated. Her hands are clenched by her side. MASON looks surprised. MASON is on the left side of the panel, KIRA on the right side of the panel.

KIRA: This is on you too, you know? If you hadn't forced my hand by going to Gregön...

Panel 4 1/4 bottom right

The camera is behind KIRA and is facing MASON. MASON looks confused and annoyed.

MASON: What are you talking about?

Panel 1 1/4 page top left

The camera is on KIRA's left side; she looks angry. Her hands are clenched by her side. MASON looks surprised. MASON is on the left side of the panel, KIRA on the right side of the panel.

KIRA: Did you know of Lucifer's past? Did you know he abused Lilith? Did Hana tell you?

MASON: That's not—

KIRA: Possible? Oooh I assure you it is. Why did you get the information to Levi? Why couldn't you let me handle this?

Panel 2 1/4 page top right

The camera is on KIRA's left side; she looks angry. Her hands are clenched by her side. MASON looks surprised. MASON is on the left side of the panel, KIRA on the right side of the panel.

MASON: Kira, what happened? Is Nicole OK?

Panel 3 detail inside panel 2 bottom right corner

Close up on KIRA's disgusted face.

KIRA: No. She's not OK.

Panel 4 1/4 page bottom left

The camera is on KIRA's left side; she is crouching down on the floor and she's facing MASON who's stumbled back and is now sitting on the staircase at the entrance. He's holding a hand to his mouth.

MASON: I didn't know... how could I know?

KIRA: Because Lucifer and Levi are all about power!

MASON: Kira, you have to believe me...

KIRA: I believe you. You didn't do this... but why did you have to help?

Panel 1 1/4 page top left

The camera is behind KIRA. She's a dark silhouette in the night. She's approaching the house when DAVE comes running out of the house.

CB: That might not have been your most strategic move. (CINZEL)

KIRA (caption box): Yeah, well.. I'll see how I feel about it tomorrow.

DAVE: Kira!

Panel 2 1/4 page top right

The camera is on DAVE's left side. He's huffing. He has a letter in his hand.

KIRA: Please don't tell me there's a new crisis.

DAVE: It's Nicole, she's run away. Read.

Panel 3 1/2 page bottom

Close up on KIRA. She's looking directly at the camera with wide eyes.

KIRA: What?

34

In the woods

Nicole

Panel 1 detail inside panel 2 top left corner

Close up on NICOLE's thumb up.

NICOLE (letter): Dear Dave and Kira, I'm sorry. I thought I could do this.

Panel 2 1/3 in height full length top

The camera is in the right bottom corner and shows NICOLE from a distance as she's backing away; her face to the camera. She's framed from her head to her waist and in the background we see hills.

LILITH: Are you sure this is a good idea? (CINZEL)

NICOLE (caption box): Running or hitchhiking?

LILITH: Both. (CINZEL)

NICOLE (letter): Lately I've been thinking a lot about what's happening.

Panel 3 1/3 in height full length middle

The camera is in the right bottom corner of the panel and shows NICOLE bending over a car window, and in the background we see hills.

NICOLE (letter): My thoughts are jumbled up together and I don't know what to make of all this. Of our family, of all these secrets.

Panel 4 1/3 in height full length bottom

The camera is on the right side of the panel and shows NICOLE inside the car. She's looking out the car window, the wind is messing up her hair. She looks peaceful. There's the hint of a smile.

NICOLE (letter): When I was trapped in that bloody maze, Leigh said some things about our family about *the power we held*. And I'm supposed to be this all-powerful being, only a step short of a goddess, but all I feel is... small, and like I want to cry all the time.

Panel 1 1/3 in height and length top left

Welcome to Scotland motorway sign.

NICOLE (letter): I need to regroup.

Panel 2 1/3 in height 2/3 length top right

The camera takes the landscape from afar as NICOLE is now on foot.

NICOLE (letter): Maybe I'm running away. I don't know... I'm not sure I can do anything else.

Panel 3 1/3 in height full length middle

The camera is in the top right corner and shows NICOLE hiking up a hill. She's deep in the woods.

NICOLE (letter): We were never taught how to *stay*.

Panel 4 1/3 in height full length bottom

The camera is on in the middle of the panel and shows NICOLE in front of a cabin surrounded by trees,

NICOLE (letter): I'll be back, I promise. But I need to become strong, first, on my own.

CHAPTER 34 page 3

All the fragmented panels show NICOLE taking care and charge of the house. 2/3 of the page in height full length top

1 – NICOLE turns the light on

2 – NICOLE dusts off the furniture

3 – NICOLE makes the bed

4– NICOLE stocks up the pantry

5 – NICOLE wipes off her sweat.

NICOLE (letter): I love you. Even though sometimes we can't stand each other, I love you.

Panel 6 1/3 in height full length bottom

The camera is on in the middle of the panel and shows NICOLE sitting cross-legged on a rug in the middle of the panel.

LILITH: Ready to do this? (CINZEL)

NICOLE (caption box): Ready.

Panel 1 full page

The camera is behind NICOLE, she is in the foreground in the middle of the panel. URIEL and MISSEI on her left, RAPHAEL and GABRIEL on her right. There is no background, only darkness behind them.

GABRIEL: Nicole Morgan, are you ready to train? (CINZEL)

35

I'm done with my graceless heart

Leighton

Panel 1 full page

The camera sits in the middle of the panel. LEIGHTON and Elizabeth are looking at something outside the window. Their back is to the camera. LEIGHTON is resting her head on ELIZABETH's shoulders. LEIGHTON is on the left, ELIZABETH on the right. The light is coming from the window. In the background, we see buildings from the town.

ELIZABETH: Are you serious?

Panel 1 full page

The camera sits in the middle of the panel. LEIGHTON and Elizabeth are looking at something outside the window. Their face is to the camera. LEIGHTON is resting her head on ELIZABETH's shoulders. LEIGHTON has her legs crossed on the bed and is holding her mother's engagement ring between her fingers. ELIZABETH is looking at her with widened eyes. In the background we see ELIZABETH's bedroom.

LEIGHTON: Deadly serious.

ELIZABETH: Is this a proposal?

Panel 1 1/4 page top left

The camera sits in the middle of the panel. LEIGHTON is looking to her right at ELIZABETH. She rests her head on her hand. She's smiling, but she also looks sad.

LEIGHTON: You know I would've married you years ago.

ELIZABETH: Leigh, we've talked about this.

Panel 2 1/4 page top right.

The camera sits in the middle of the panel. ELIZABETH and LEIGHTON are facing the camera. ELIZABETH's bedroom is in the background. They're facing each other, their bodies at an angle. ELIZABETH is holding onto the ring. LEIGHTON has a lock of ELIZABETH's hair wrapped around her finger.

LEIGHTON: I just want you to know that I love you. A lot. Way too much.

ELIZABETH: Why are you telling me this? What did you do?

Panel 3 1/2 height 2/3 length bottom left

The camera takes the scene from the back at a lower angle. The camera is framing the bed where LEIGHTON has fallen onto. She's laughing, her hands on her face. ELIZABETH is sitting on the bed, her back to the camera but her face to LEIGHTON.

LEIGHTON: You always think the worst of me. Why?

ELIZABETH: Because I know you, my love.

Panel 4 1/2 height 1/3 length bottom right.

The camera frames LEIGHTON and ELIZABETH from the side as they kiss.

ELIZABETH: Now, how long before you have to go?

LEIGHTON: I'm in no rush.

Panel 1 1/2 top

LEIGHTON and ELIZABETH are on the bed. The camera is almost at floor level looking up. ELIZABETH is on top of the LEIGHTON as she kisses her. There are three bars below to indicate passage of time.

Panel 2 1/2 bottom.

The camera sits on LEIGHTON's car as she kisses ELIZABETH before leaving the house.

LUCE: I know what you're trying to do (CINZEL).

Panel 1 1/3 height full length top

LEIGHTON drives across Forest Hill. She embodies the camera; we see the different parts of the town seen so far in the graphic novel.

LUCE (caption box): You're making a mistake (CINZEL).

Panel 2 1/3 height full length middle

LEIGHTON drives across Forest Hill. She embodies the camera; we see the different parts of the town seen so far in the graphic novel.

LEIGHTON (caption box): I'm sorry I have to hurt you to do this.

LUCE (caption box): You can't trust Lilith (CINZEL).

Panel 3 1/3 height full length bottom

LEIGHTON drives across Forest Hill. She embodies the camera; we see the different parts of the town seen so far in the graphic novel.

LEIGHTON (caption box): She saved Nicole, Luce.

LUCE Yes, but the costs... (CINZEL).

Panel 1 1/3 height full length top

LEIGHTON has arrived at the bridge that crosses over the Bellamy and The Devil's trail rivers. LEIGHTON embodies the camera. She's gripping the stirring wheel. There's a wall on her left.

LEIGHTON (caption box): Yes... the price is high, but this is what I should've done in the first place.

LUCE: Sacrifice your life for hers?! (CINZEL).

LEIGHTON (caption box): No, the right thing.

Panel 2 1/3 in height 1/2 length middle left.

Detail LEIGHTON puts the cars in reverse.

Panel 3 1/3 in height 1/2 length middle right.

The camera is outside the car. LEIGHTON has her arms stretched, she's gripping the steering wheel, her jaw is set.

LEIGHTON (caption box): A life for a life.

Panel 4 1/3 in height 1/2 length bottom left.

Detail LEIGHTON pushes on the gas.

Panel 5 1/3 in height 1/2 length bottom right.

Detail LEIGHTON stirs to the left.

LEIGHTON (caption box): I'm sorry Lux.

Panel 1 – full page

The camera is at the bottom of the panel. The car has gone over the bridge and is falling into the pit below. LEIGHTON is looking at the camera, her eyes are closed, tears are streaming down her face.