

elindon

Chapter 8



Content Warning:
Blood, Vomit





Rrrgh.

Rrrrrrrrff.

Wakey,
wakey.

Aaaah, my
teeth hurt...

And I can't
move my...

...What?



Hey.

YOU!

You're
that guy from
the highway!

Awww, ya
remembered me.
How sweet.

What's going
on? What WAS that
back there? What
did you do?

Where
are you
taking me?!

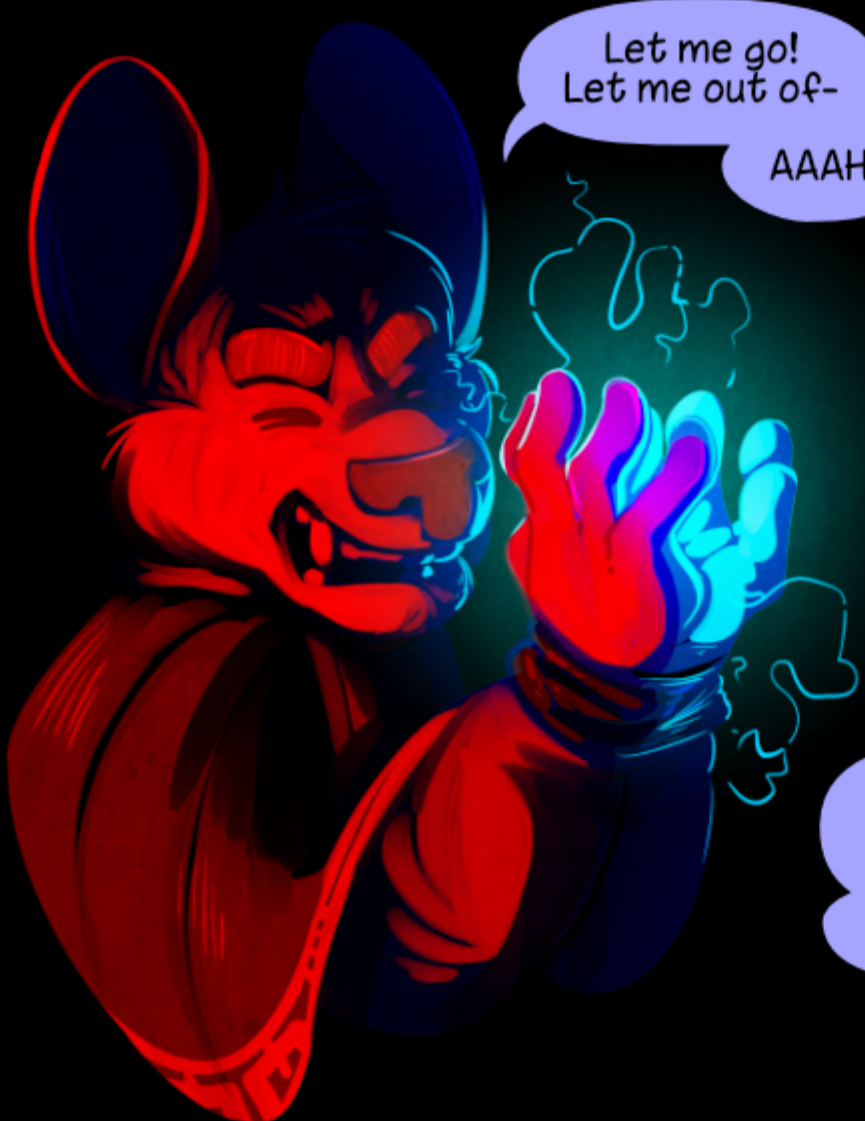
WHY?!

I'm only gonna
say this once,
cradle boy.

YOU are the one
what's tied up.

YOU'LL be the
one answerin'
questions.





Let me go!
Let me out of-
AAAH!

Nuh-uh.
That's wire.
No unstitchin'
that.

But-
But I didn't
have anything to
do with this!

Oh, but ya
did. Trekkin'
with that little
blue freak for
miles. We
saw.

...You're the
ones who blew
up the caravan.
You're Thieves.



Yep, we are.

And no, we didn't.
That was
probably your
blue friend.

He... but he's
dead. The army
shot him.

You didn't
turn us in,
so this is...

A rescue.

Rescue?



Yeah,
right.

Thieves
don't rescue
people.

Yeah.
We don't.



Uuugh...

Ashley?

Oh my God, you're alive!

It doesn't feel that way.

What's this about Blue?

Don't you remember?

El Indon. Blue killed lots of people. Then he got shot. And these guys kidnapped us.

...No, that's all a blur.

The last thing I recall is...



...staring into this jewel. It was so bright...

Wait, you still have it? That thing almost killed you!

Yeah, I was gonna ask about that next. What's the deal with those gems?

I don't know!

Blue just gave it to her!

Uh huh, I figured ya'd say somethin' like that. Doesn't matter.

I'm not the one ya need to convince.





Are you gonna kill us?

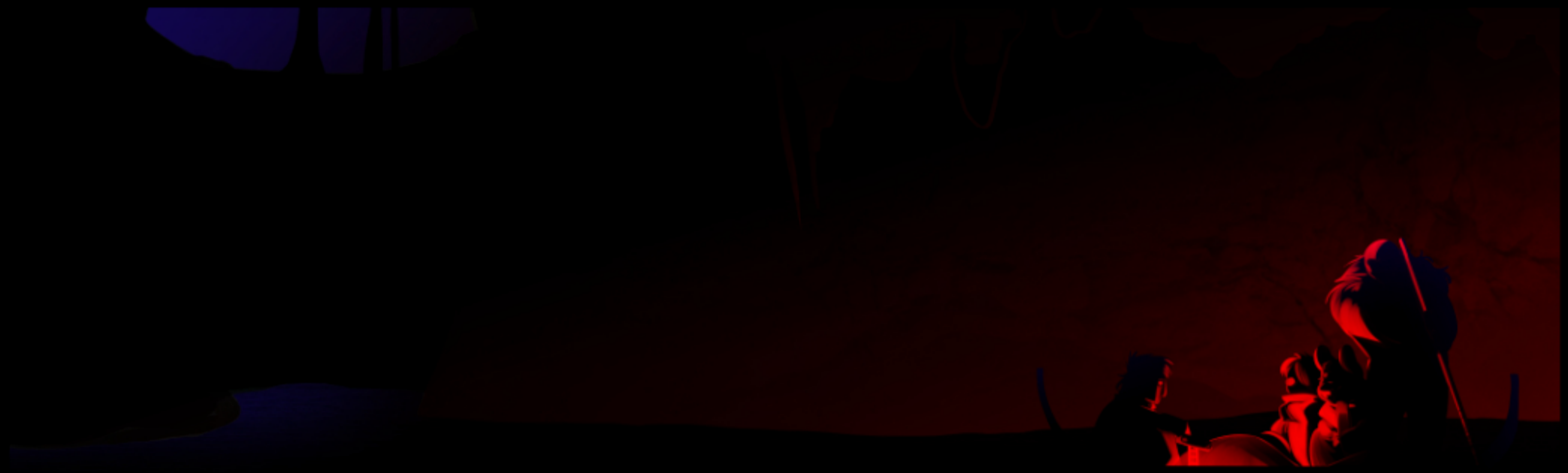
What did we say about questions?

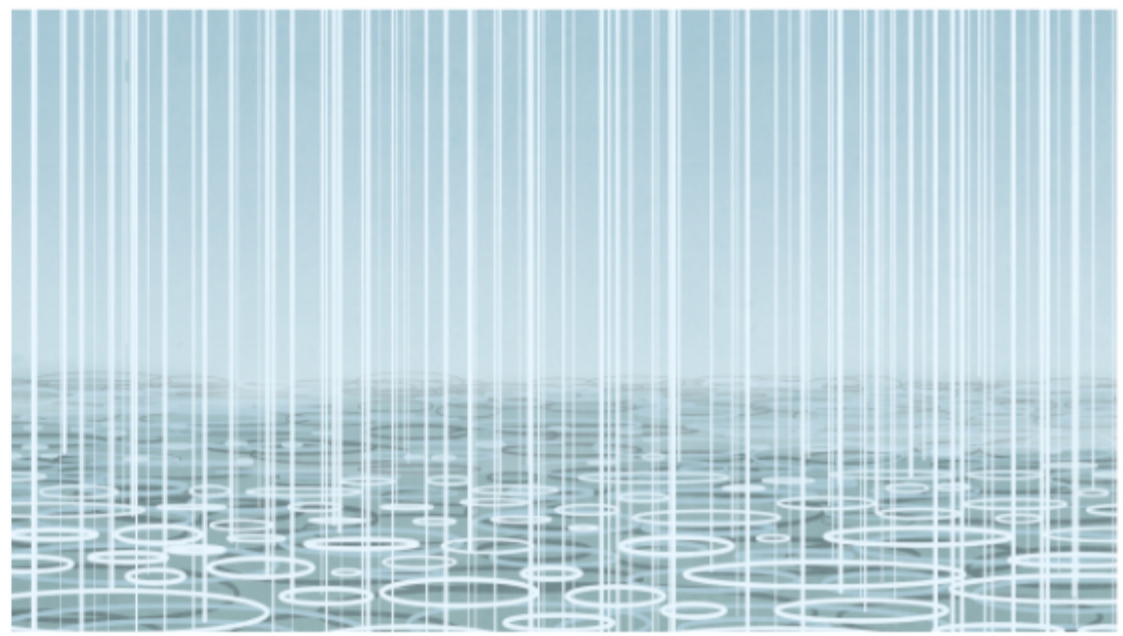
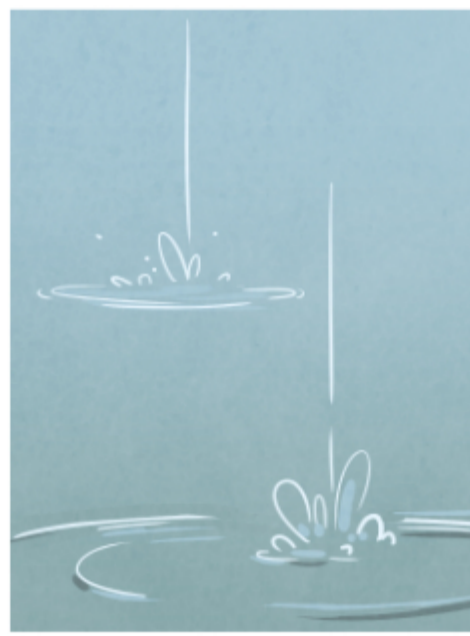


Dinner and breakfast.

It's all you get for the next hundred miles, so eat up.









Thank you.
He can ... he's
very sensitive.

Yeah,
ain't nothin'.
Now walk.

I don't
suppose you'd
pull my hood
up for me?

S'pose I
wouldn't.

Still,
though.

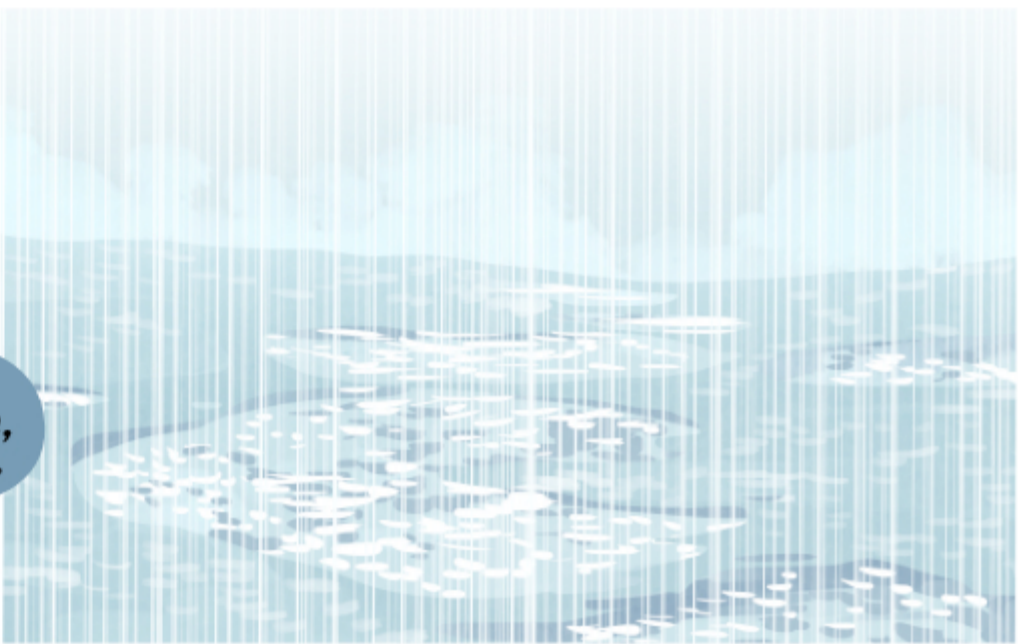
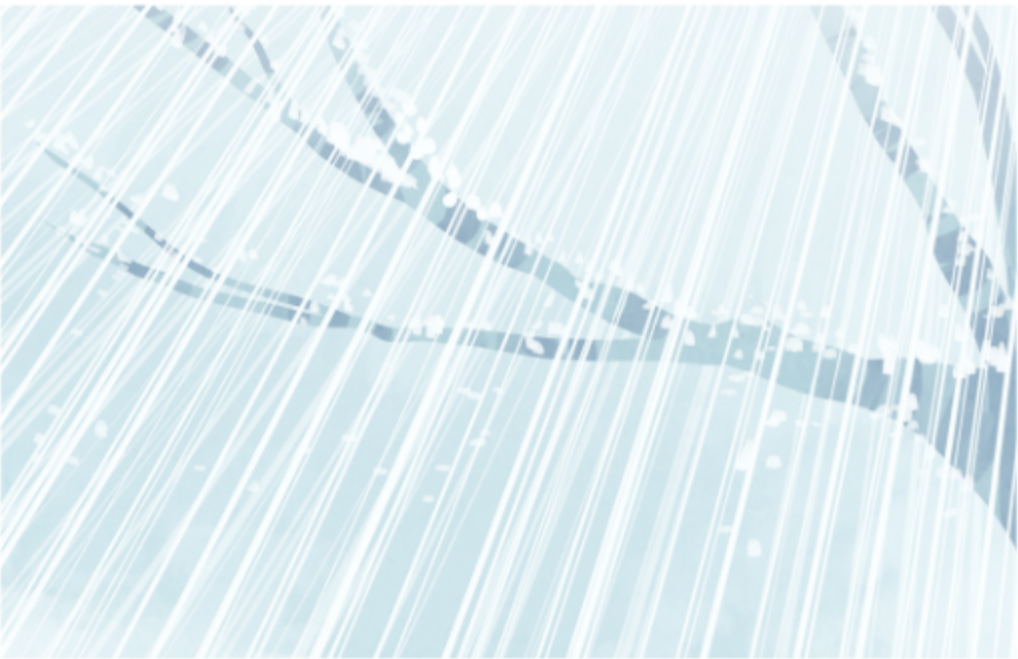
Pretty
considerate,
for a Thief.

Hush.

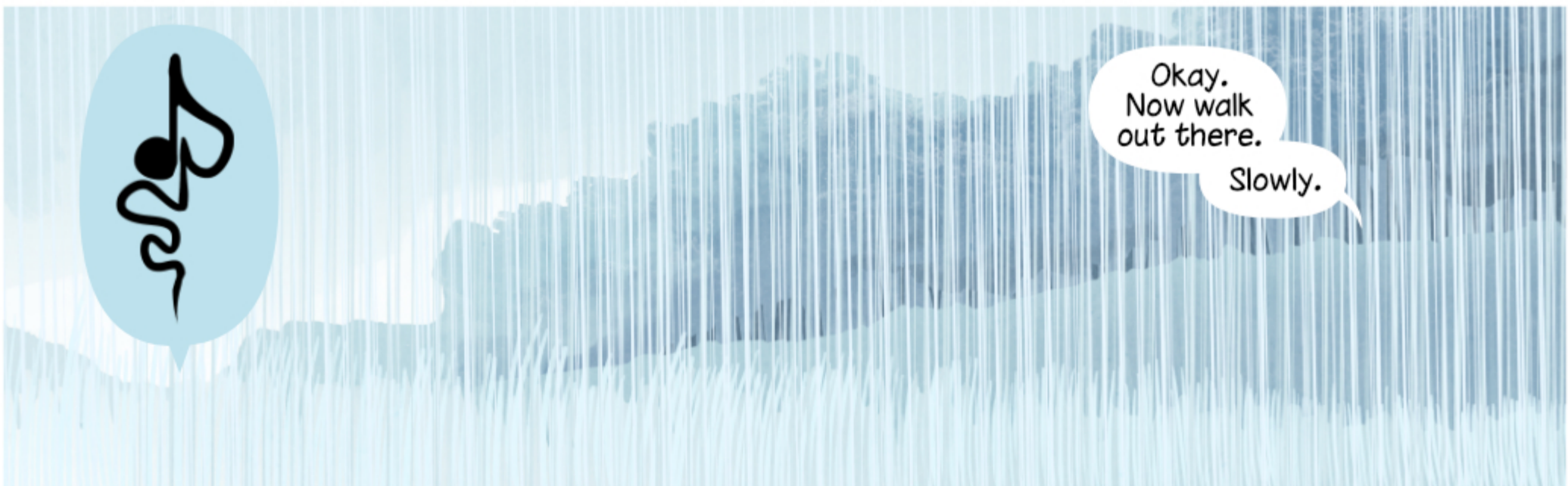
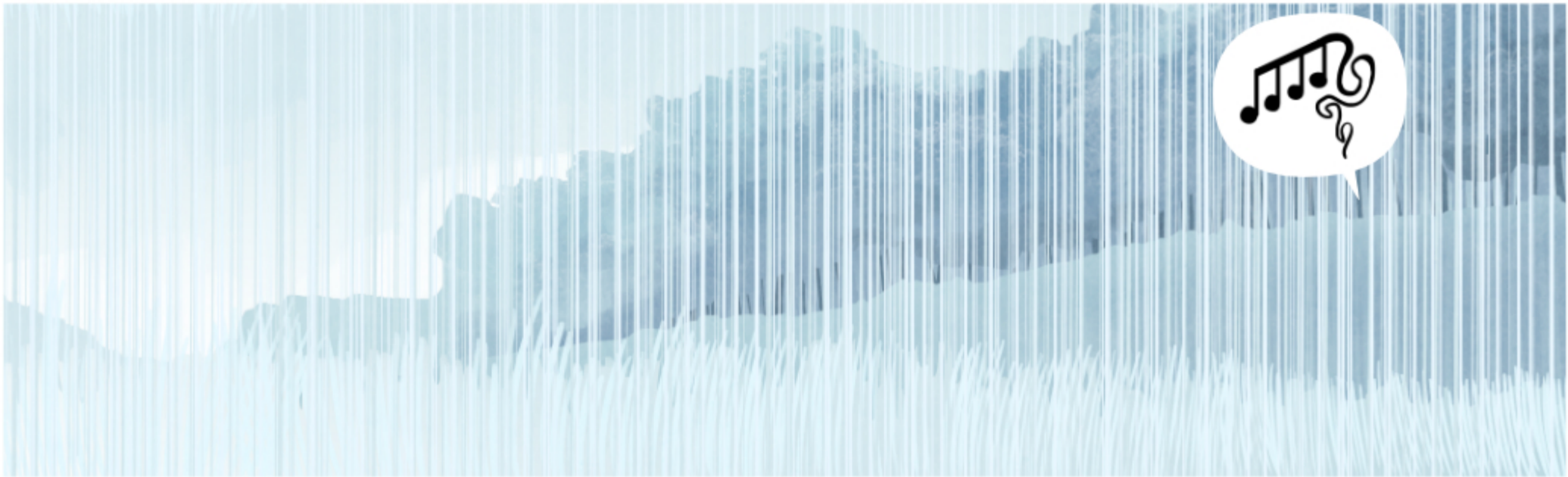
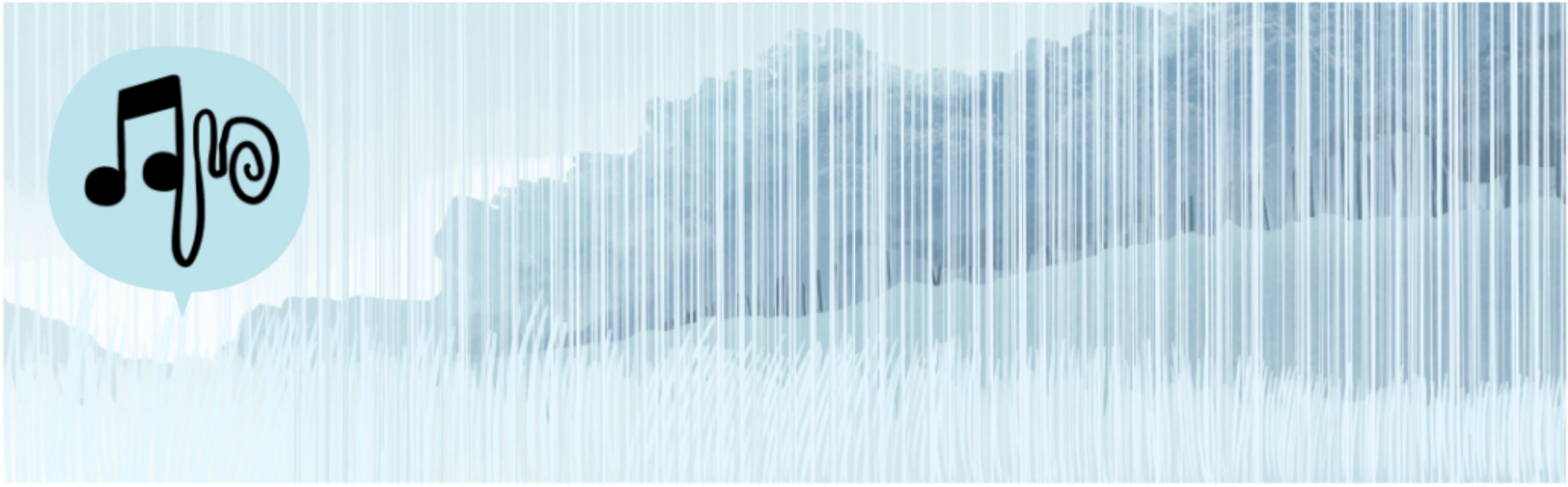
I'm only saying,
you guys send
some mixed
messages.

Is this a
rescue, or a
kidnapping,
or what?

It'll be a
burial, if
you don't
listen.



Now hush,
this next part
is delicate.





Patch?

Yeah?

Do you think they're gonna kill us?

I dunno. Can't trust anything a Thief says.

What are your hands tied with?

Um, wire. Why?

Damn. Mine too. I can't quite Weave it.

Really?



Do you think you can untie me? While they can't see our hands.

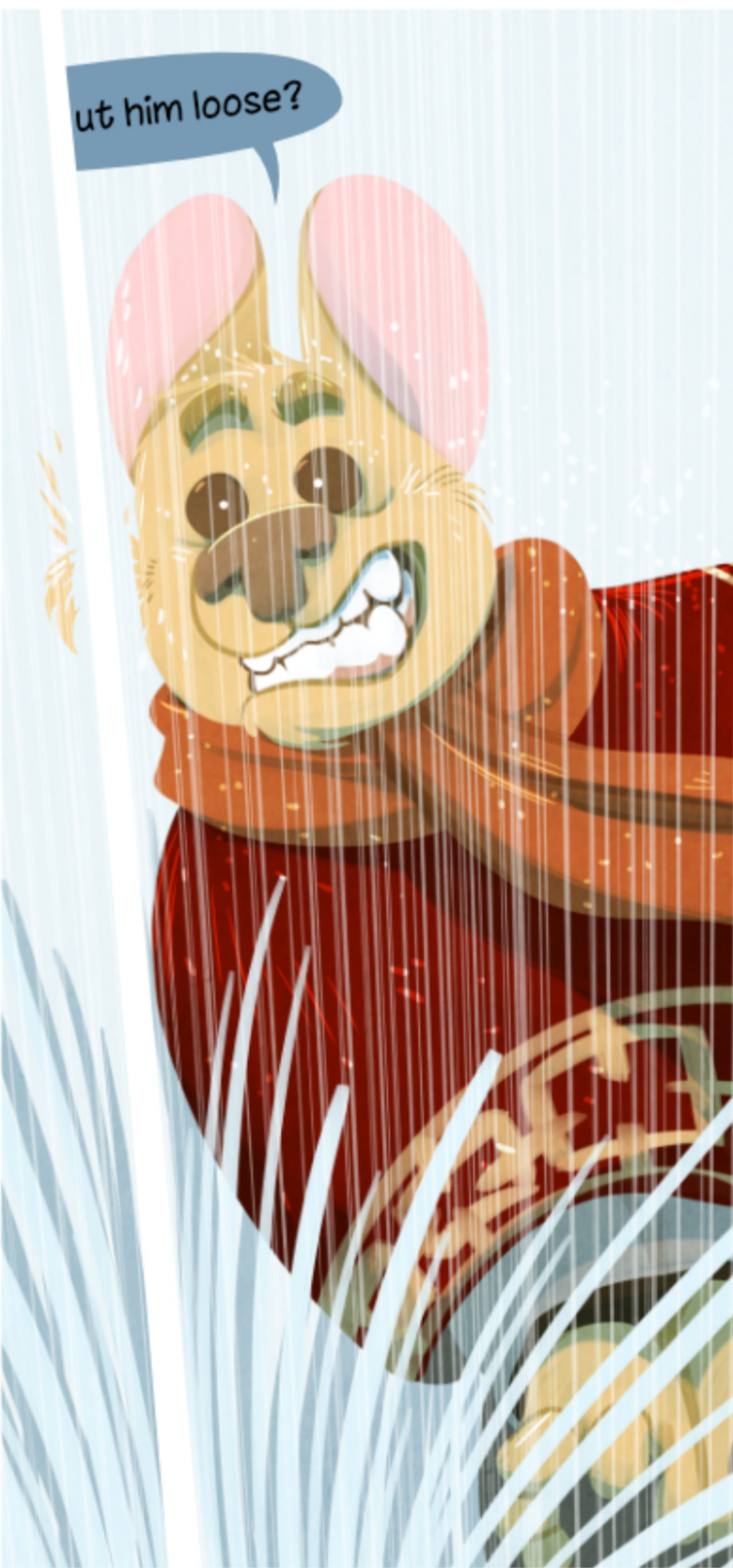
But - but then what? They still have Roth.

And I have no idea where we are...

We'd be lost in this rain.

Yeah, well, I'd rather be lost and free.

As for Roth, we might have to c



ut him loose?





Howdy.

Did I hear
sum'thin bout
untyin' hands
n'escapin'?

Nuh-uh.

Nope.

Not at all.

FOUR!!

I whistled
FOUR notes!
Four people!



You could've
killed a prisoner,
Gavin! You jumpy
bastard!

Aw, hell.
Good thing
I'm sharper
n that.

ARE
YOU?!

Hey, bygones
is bygones.

Glad yer
both back.

Y'all best
head inside,
'fore ya git
wetter.



You have a... nice... house...?

Thanks.

Not that you earned any of it, of cour-

Okay. Furball.

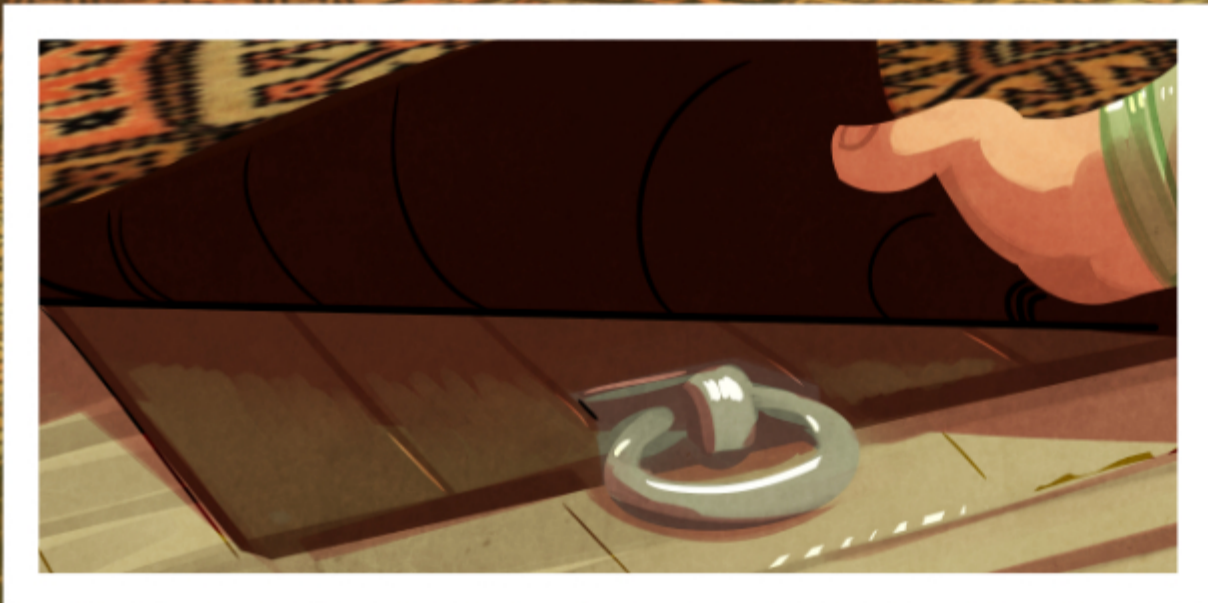
What's yer name again?

Patch.

Patch. Buddy.

Ya seriously need to shut up for this.

Down here. Both of ya.





Watch the steps.

And don't speak till yer spoken to.



Hmm...

You two
don't seem like
you're about to
show me a pile of
cantaloupe-sized
rubies.

And that

is

a

problem.



Oh my God...

...look at all of this stuff!

Guildspeople made all of this...
...and it's sto-

st-
sto-



STOOAARK!!!



Ugh, you zealots are all so touchy.

And you're lucky that floor is tiled.

Th-this...

קָאָרְטֵרְאָלְקֵרְזֵרְ

Yeah, yeah, I've heard it.

You people and your chants.



Masterpieces...
Hundreds of people's work...

Who are you?

How could you do this?



"Nix?"

That's me.

"...robbery, larceny...
...jailbreak...?"

Yep, all the
good stuff.

And an eight
hundred thousand
dollar bounty.

Highest in
the country, I
might add.

My boys
sent me a letter,
saying they'd found
a bunch of large,
shiny jewels, all
very exciting.

And then
they brought me
two putzes.

So...



...Ken.

Yes Boss.

Explain
this.

Symon's
idea.

Oh, was it, now?

Symon.

Yes Boss?

Explain
this.

I, uh...





Symon's right, Boss. We did rescue these two.

Rescued them from where?

From El Indon.

And what, exactly, happened at El Indon...?



...Oh, an awkward silence happened? Fascinating. I don't care.

Boss, it's not like...

It's hard to explain...



I barely even believe it. There were hundreds, or thousands of people...

Dead. Dying.

And these two were in the middle of it all.

We couldn't just leave without...

And these two were with a blue thing that was passin' out jewels all over!

And the treasure we were after, it just...

And there was this big bright wall!

It just burned up! Fried people on the spot!

And he turned into dust!

And the stars went out!

And-

Symon.

Yeah Boss?

What the hell are you talking about?



Boss, a lot of people died, and the treasure killed 'em.

And now we're here.

...Ken?



Yeah, that's about the size of it.

So there was a... massacre? In the holy city?



Massacre's a good word for it.

Okay...

And these two were involved.



You.

Name and Trade.

Patch. Tailor. I didn't kill anybody.

Uh huh.



You.

Ashley. Kindler.

I didn't kill anybody, and I'd really like to not be dumped in a latrine.

We'll see about that.



You're both going to tell me everything that happened.

And

leave

nothing

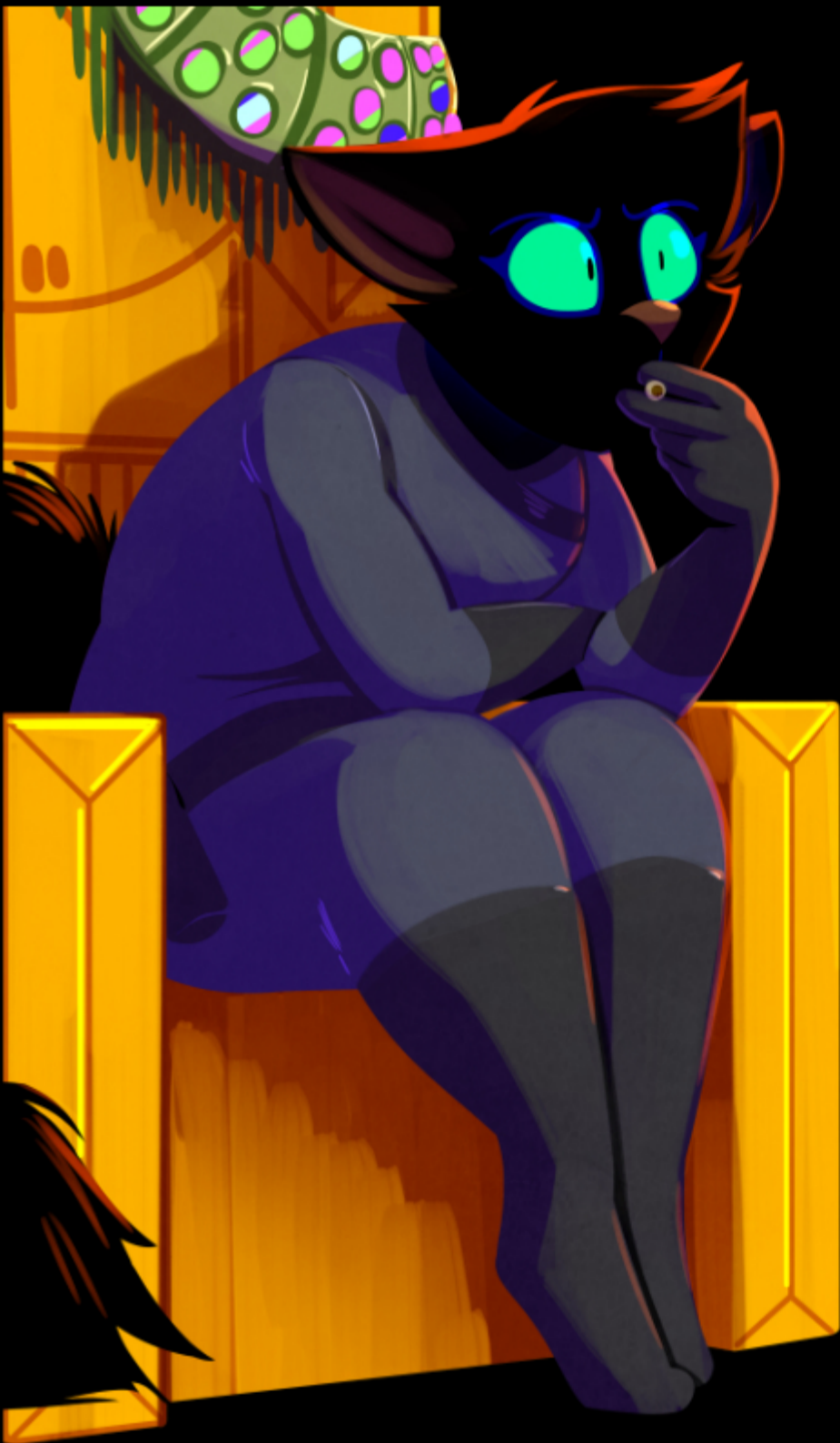
out.



And then, uh...

And then the Jewel zapped her in the forehead, and she passed out.

Yeah, I guess I passed out.



Okay.



And all of that is true?

Yes, Boss.

Well, I'll be more damned than usual.

What do you want us to do with them?

Latrine?



No, skip the latrine idea.

oh thank god

These two are our only link to...

...whatever is coming next. It'll be big.

We'll need to keep them here with us.

Cancel our plans.

Lock the pantry, of course.

They can sleep in the attic.

Oh, that's...

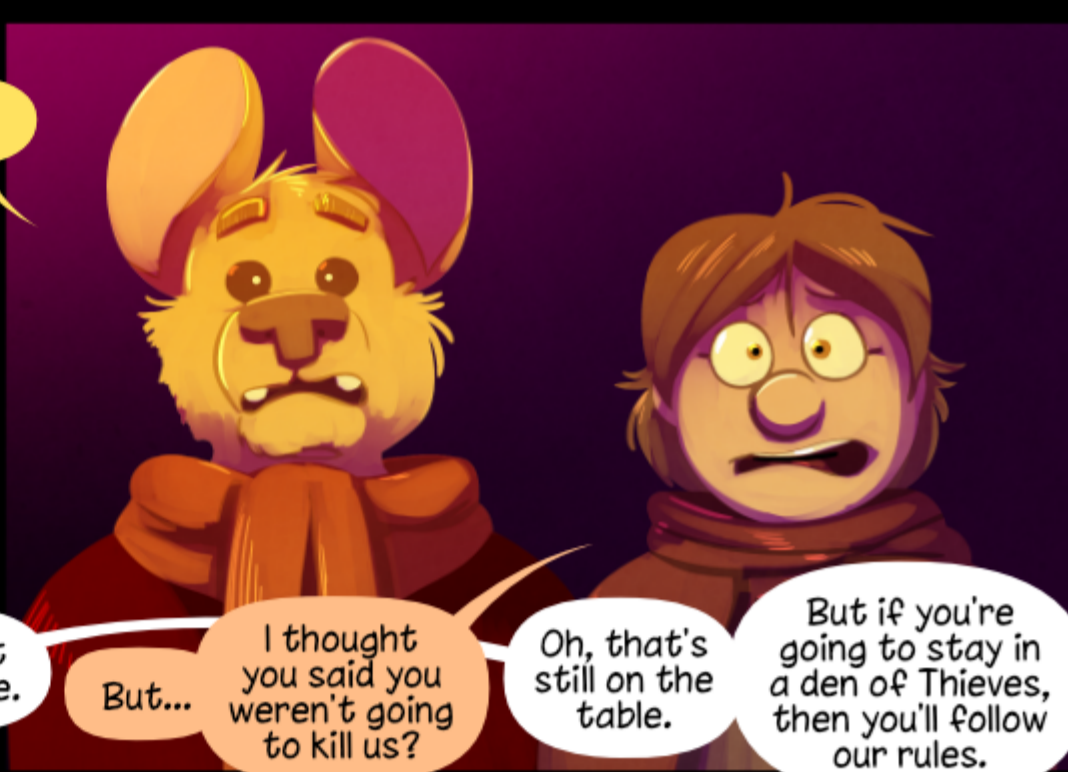
...very hospitable of you, but...

...we really need to get back to El Indon.



"Get back?"

And do what?
Do, uh...
You think your Apprenticeships are going to start back up, like nothing went wrong? Not after that.
Not after coming into our house and receiving our hospitality.



You can't just leave.

But...

I thought you said you weren't going to kill us?

Oh, that's still on the table.

But if you're going to stay in a den of Thieves, then you'll follow our rules.



And the first rule: THIEVES ONLY!

You JOIN us, or DIE!

WHAT?!

You can't be serious!

Can't I?

We're not criminals!

We can't give up on our Guilds! Or our Trades!

I don't care what you do, or don't do, with your Trades!

Unless you join, we can't trust you.

That's INSANE!

We CAN'T do that!

Please, we're grateful! We won't tell anyone about your hideout!

But you're asking us to commit-

No! I'm NOT asking you.

Join, or die. Those are the only options.



Kid, the Boss is being more generous than usual.

You call that generous?!

To throw away my Apprenticeship like an old rag?!

You can't trap us like this!

The Guilds will look for us, the army-

The Guilds won't trust each other's stories.

The Throne wanted your blue friend, and they'll know you were with him at Debrandt.

And the only people who can vouch for you are Thieves.

Believe me, no one is going to give you any help that doesn't involve handcuffs.



Even if I let you go, what would happen to you?

The Throne's already searching through El Indon. You'd be handed in to the nearest commandant.

Months of interrogation in a prison cell.

Cereal and water, for every meal.

You...

You can't keep me here. I was so close to-

To dying.

My offer stands.

It's the only one you'll get.





That's not true!

They'll listen to us, we're Tradespeople, same as they are!

The Throne can't just decide that we're murderers!

There are laws about this!

...Right? I mean...

...our families are going to wonder...



I'll do it.

We... what?

Patch?

Patch, NO! You can't!



They're right. We're stuck.

NO!

You can't GIVE UP!

You wanted to be a Weaver!

I'll be a Thief AND a Weaver, if I want!

You'll be a HERETIC?!



I...

I don't...

I don't...

have...

...anything else.



I'm sorry, I didn't mean... I mean, I don't...

There's nothing I can say to...



gulp



I'll...

I'm...

I'm in, too.



HAH! Just like that?

So much for zealotry, eh?

Don't get the wrong idea. I won't give up my Trade.

And I'm not killing anyone, or stealing anything.

Heh. I guess we don't have rules requiring it.

But Thievery is tough if all you do is ask nicely.

And it'll be even harder on your family. The double shame of being a heretic AND a poor Thief?

My family will understand. Even if the Guild doesn't.





Outright denial!

A classic.

And it means we have an accord! You two start your training first thing tomorrow.

And speaking of back-breaking work...



Boys.



Yes Boss?

These two will be YOUR Apprentices and YOUR responsibilities.

Make their cots, wash their clothes, ration their food, put a padlock on the attic door.

Keep me updated.

Uh, but shouldn't Tara and Radhika be doing the chores?



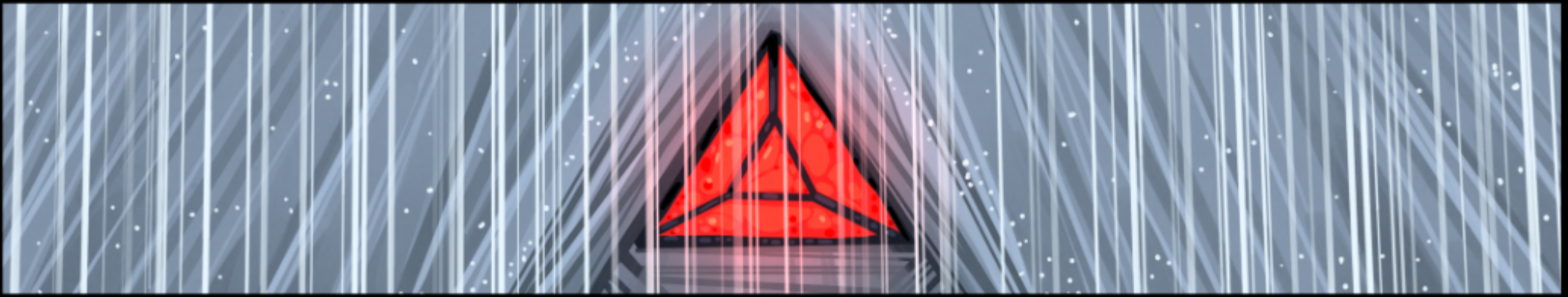
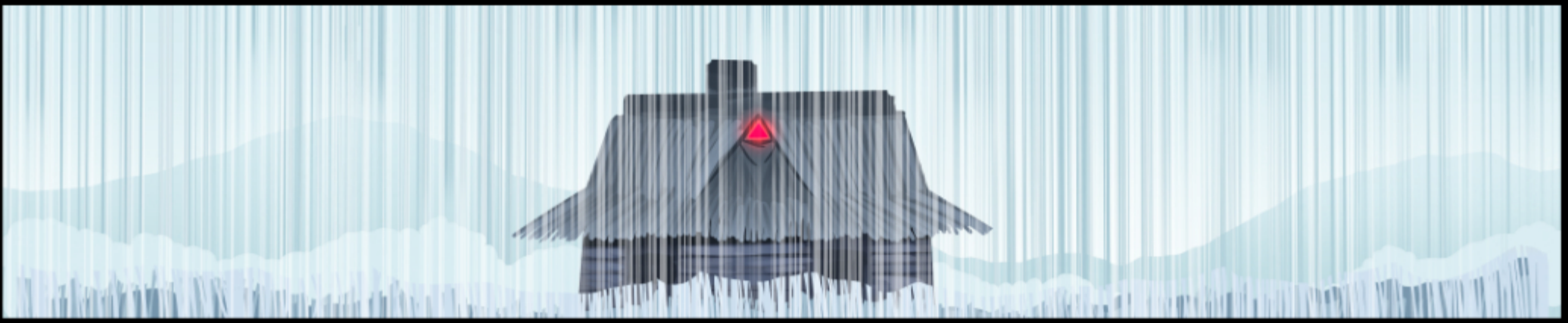
Quite right, Symon. How silly of me.

I must have been blinded and dazzled by the gleam of all those rubies that you hauled in.

So you'll be chopping the firewood, too.

Now, all of you, upstairs.

I have a lot of letters to write.

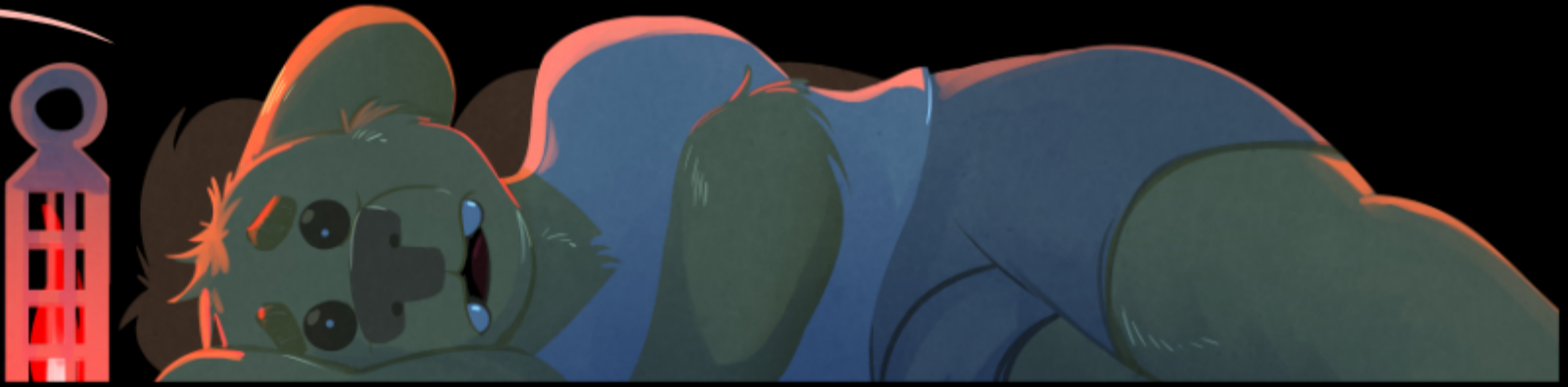


Patch?

Yeah?

I'm scared.

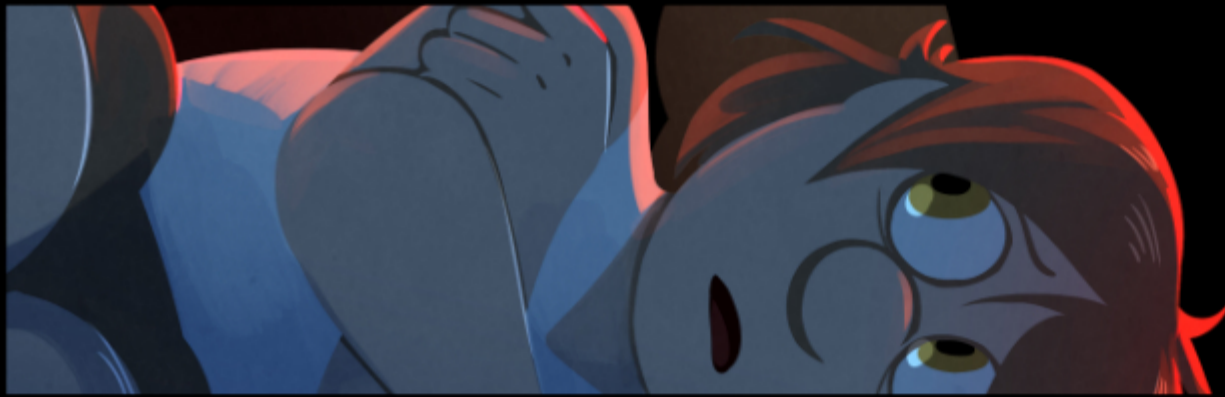
Me too.





What's happening to us?

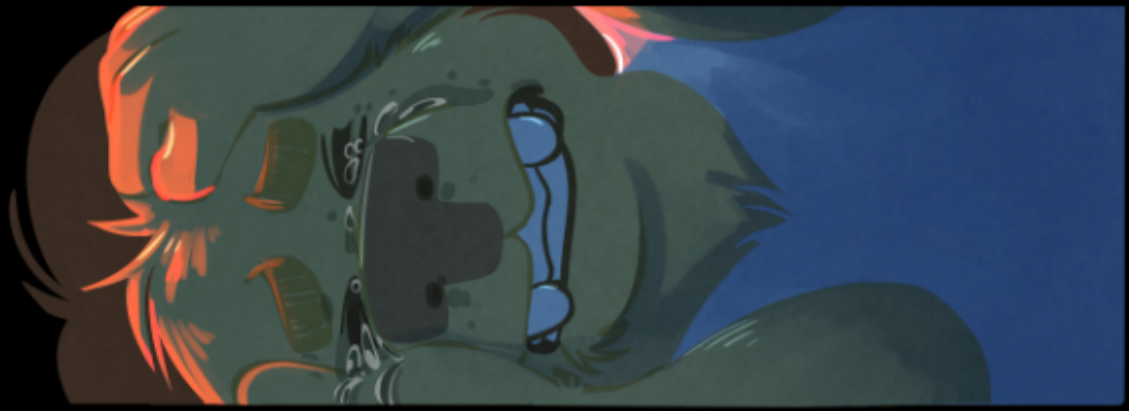
I don't...
I don't know...



Patch?

hhhgh
gguh
blgh huh
guh

huhhah buh
bgh
ggbbh
aah bhuh





elindon

is made possible by the following Patrons:

Aaron Rohde • Adept Omega • AfShyia • Alain • Alan Lewis • Alarm Frog • Alex Bordo • Alex Shrub • Alex-Ash Wolfe • Alexander Harris • Allen • Alstor • Aly Dal • Amaruk • Amber • Ampyluxe • Andee Siepman • Andrew Montagne • Angela Quinton • Anhedral • AnthroSnep • Aode (Lion) • Arkson • Art • ArtRaccoon • Ash Cinder • Ashley • Asmo • AstroOtter • Austin Bottorff • Avian Alpha • Aylor • B-ride • baidarka • Barcah • Bear • Pixel • BeastLover • Bend • Bennie • berwyn • BigGreenWolfe • binaryfox • Bjørn • Blackfang108 • Blackspots • Blarg • Bobcat • Boomer Spacely • BovineMage • BowieBarks • Briar • Briggs Buckingham • Buddy Goodboy • Busterdrag • Caleb Rogers • Calvin • Caudle • Chakat Thriceborn • Charles • Chiron Rocket III • Chris Bennett • Chris Fox • CHRIS ORTEGO • Chris Smith • Chuckles • Clayburn • Clover Arizona • Cooner • CoreyDog • Coriander • Coyotecanuck • Craig Lashbrook • Crash Dragon • Crimson • Crow Rogers • Piper Ridley • Cynosura • Damian Lee • Oliver • Damo • Dan Moody • Daniel K • Dark End • DarkOverord • Darkfang of the Eternal Night • Darsen McPanda • Daylen • Dean Fox • DeerlyBLOved • Deko Puma • DeltVar • Derick Thomas • Despia • the feathers • Digitized Flamboyancy • Dispregio • Dissonant Dragon • Djscratchjack • DocFGeek • Donald Deeley • Dorenrab Sildano • Draggy • DragonBerry • Dragonuy3 • Drowse • Ebni • Elena Kotka • emarl • Eric Olsen • EVEprosper • Everett White • Flake • Flann • Floyd Freeman • Foxinuptheplace • FoxyDude • Free Spirit • Frostbite Gator • FrostyDragon • Fuzz Wolf • Garrett Howell • Garth Sanders • Garudina • Gavin Jenkins • Geemo • Giza White Mage • Lux • Goldquiver • Goliath Wildcat • graypaw • GrayZephyr • Greendrag13 • Hans • Harley Watson • Heather Weather • hillbillyinablimp • HuldraTigress • Humblewolf • Huskydog • Hydro Lancer • idfailure • IMLXH • Inkblot Fox • IrisSpectra • Isaac Shepherd • Isabelle Mason • Jack • Jacket • Jacob Vaughn • Jaded Fox • Jake Curry • Jake Henders • Jake Soot • Jakebe • Jane Wick • Jeff Bowman • Jeff Rinkenberger • Jeri • Jessica Anderton • Jimmies • Jodock • Joel Kreissman • John Davison • Jonathan Yee • Juniper LaLonde • Kafzeil • Kaji Aldewolf • Kanab farsen • Kaoru • Kavaeric • khr • Kidd • KingDead • Kio • KNUCKLEBONE • Koda • Korin • korppuhiiri • krhainos • Kshwr • Kubrowlas • Landon Collins • Leah St. Clair • Lew • LilFluff • Blake Ledet • loglow • Lorxus an actual fox on the internet • Louis Bruce Nuttall • Lucarijoe • Luis Chavez Guzman • Lunostophiles • Lux (no shoutouts!) • Madeline Urman • Madison Scott-Clary • Maid to Sass • MajinKoba • Mara Stripes • Maria Maz • Marion Lavey • Markus • Maro • Martini • MattTheSpratt • Matty B • Max Wolf • Metasine • Michael • Michael "Neon Noble" Nicolosi • mightyferret • Mike • MilesMokoto • Minotaur Magi • Mishka • MojaveRedfox • Mokabur • Morgan Desmond • mu • Mut • Mutterwolf • Myuphrid • Myxomatosis • Nak • namerou • Nat Kavaloski • Naux • Naz • Nekona • Nellycat • NeoGeoKitsune • Nevith Wolf • newdarkcloud • Nicholas Demuth • Nicholas Hoyt • Nick Fernandez • Nieto • Nighthawke • Nikolas R • Nitrofox • NiyaShy • Noah Fields • Noblekuma • NogitsuneGabe • Nopast • Nouv • odstwingman • Othello • Oxley • Pablo Barrionuevo Muñoz • Pafka • palace • Paul (Chiron) • Paula Braydi • Peachy Fennec • Phantom • Placeholder • Possumpai • Professor Scritch • Pyradox • Quad Bolden • Quebecoiswolf • Quilly • Quinn the Fox • Rabid Raccoon • Ragg Topp • Rainer Fenixhart • Ranakanth • Raster • Razzalith • Rebbly the Wolfy • Red • Reddawn7744 • RegalRegex • Rei Moonwuff • RenWuff • Riley • RiotVision • Rob D. • Robby McBobby • Gwen "RomeTwin" Romer • Roosky • Ross C. • Rourkie • RSF1090 • Ryan • Sam Fernandez • Sam wolf • Sasha Belmont • Satorui • Schwarz Crow • Samson Z • SCP_1471 • Scruffapone • Seafox • Sean Thomas • Selconar Walker • Serge • Setsune Wave • Sewer Gator • Sewk • Sf_mason • shimmergloom • Shougo Amakusa • ShrimpyShiro • SINISTAR • Sir Wuffleton • Snekinabox • snowcanine • SnowShoe • Snucher • Some loser called Jab • SonicFox5000 • SpadeSkunk • Sparkizeil Lefzer • Sperry • Springpaw • Stamp • Starhound • StarkKnights • Stuart Keith • Sunpup • Supplesee • SurfaceToAssMissile • Tai Jones • Taldren • Tanaki • Techokami • Tekk • Temporal Walker • TetsuKnife • That1WeirdKid • ThatOneCanadianZebra • The Ryd Renegade • Amethyst Ravenhurst • TheL_mix • Thomas Beaudoin • TeeJabs • Timothy Flanagan • Timothy I Towers • Timovsky • Tombfyre • Topsider • Tower Lachesism • Trace Andrade • Travis Arnold • Tsuragao • Tyler Furlong • Tyler Peterson • Ulfra Wolfe • Ursa Ursine • Vera Lycaon • Victor Waite • Victoria • Vilkoviak • Weathervane • Wendiwolf • Wild Space Saga • Will Dritt-McCown • Willow • Wolf In A Barrel • WolfAmaril • Wolfinator • Worstestdragon • Xenon Fiber • yeensywingy • Yoakim Davies • ZaffyTaffy • Zappshot • Zarky • Zeropro • Zipler