

YOUNG LADY, COME OUT HERE THIS MINUTE, OR I'LL-I'LL...

I'LL HAVE YOU OVER MY KNEE!

I'M NOT SURE THE THREAT IS AS EFFECTIVE IF YOU ARE NOT PHYSICALLY PRESENT, SIR.

I'M WELL AWARE OF THAT, NANNY...

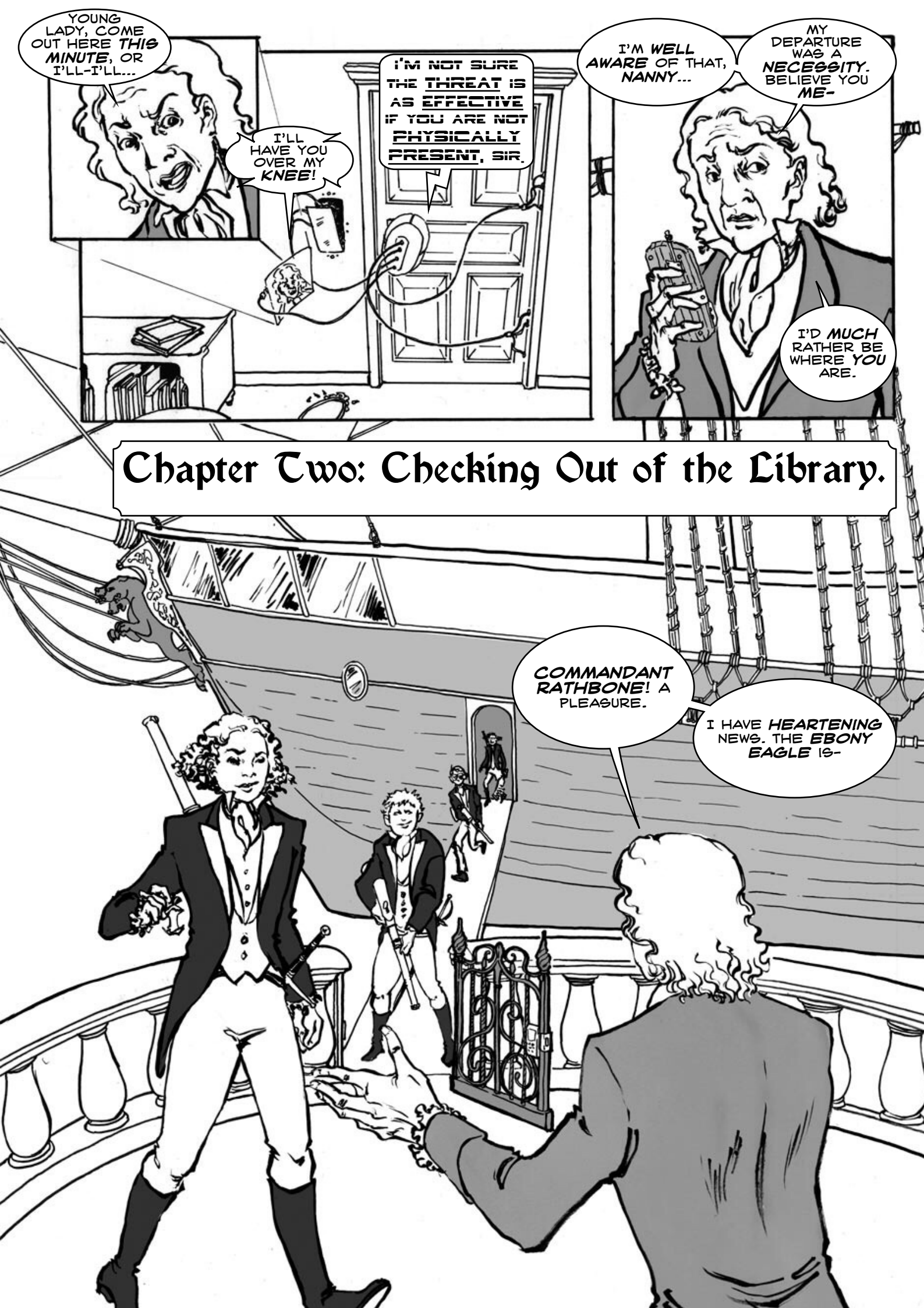
MY DEPARTURE WAS A NECESSITY. BELIEVE YOU ME-

I'D MUCH RATHER BE WHERE YOU ARE.

Chapter Two: Checking Out of the Library.

COMMANDANT RATHBONE! A PLEASURE.

I HAVE HEARTENING NEWS. THE EBONY EAGLE IS-





AFTER YEARS OF GIVING BEST TO THE EBONY EAGLE, THE HOUR IS AT HAND. OUR QUARRY IS WOUNDED AND GONE TO GROUND.

PREPARE YOUR WEAPONS AND MUSTER IN THE DINING ROOM.



FORGIVE MY DISBELIEF THAT A MAN WHO HAS ELUDED THE COUNTRY'S BEST MEN FOR YEARS WAS FELLED BY A LIBRARIAN.

I BEAR THE SEAL OF THE LORD CHAMBERLAIN HIMSELF. THAT IS MORE THAN ENOUGH TO OVERRIDE YOUR QUAIN PROCEDURES.

COMMANDANT, EXCUSE ME, BUT...STATION PROTOCOL IS THAT MATTERS OF SECURITY ARE THE PURVIEW OF THE RESIDENT OFFICER, WHICH IN THIS CASE IS, WELL...*AHEM*

IF YOU'D CARE TO ACCOMPANY ME TO MY SITUATION ROOM, THE SECURITY FOOTAGE IS QUITE CONVINCING, AND-



BESIDES, "SIR" HUMPHREY-

WE BOTH KNOW YOU COULD NEVER TRULY BE MY SUPERIOR.

...



SIR, LET ME REASSURE YOU ...



SHE IS EXACTLY WHERE I WOULD EXPECT.



THE ARCHIVE, AS PROMISED! TOLD YOU IT WAS EASY.



YEAH...*OOF*... PIECE OF CAKE...

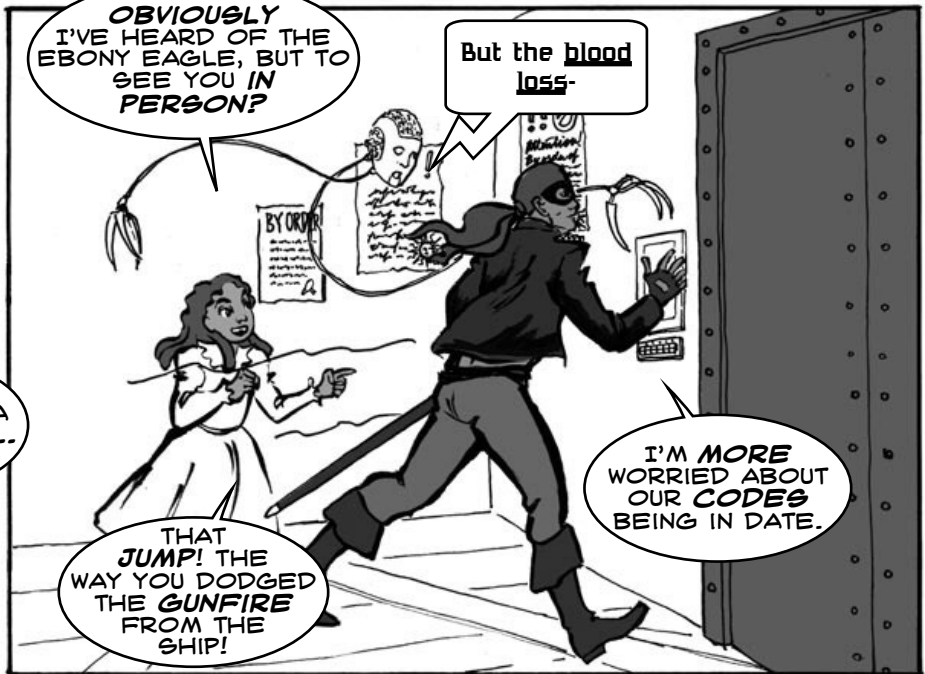
Careful, sir...your stitches!



A REAL ADVENTURE! I CAN'T WAIT TO TELL NANNY. DO YOU DO THIS SORT OF THING A LOT? I BET YOU DO. HOW EXCITING!

I do wish you would stay, still!

IT'S JUST A SCRATCH...



OBVIOUSLY I'VE HEARD OF THE EBONY EAGLE, BUT TO SEE YOU IN PERSON?

But the blood loss-

THAT JUMP! THE WAY YOU DODGED THE GUNFIRE FROM THE SHIP!

I'M MORE WORRIED ABOUT OUR CODES BEING IN DATE.



SO WHAT'S THE PLAN?

DEAL WITH LITTLE MISS CHATTERBOX, WON'T YOU?



Thank you so much for your kind assistance, dear, but now we must part ways.

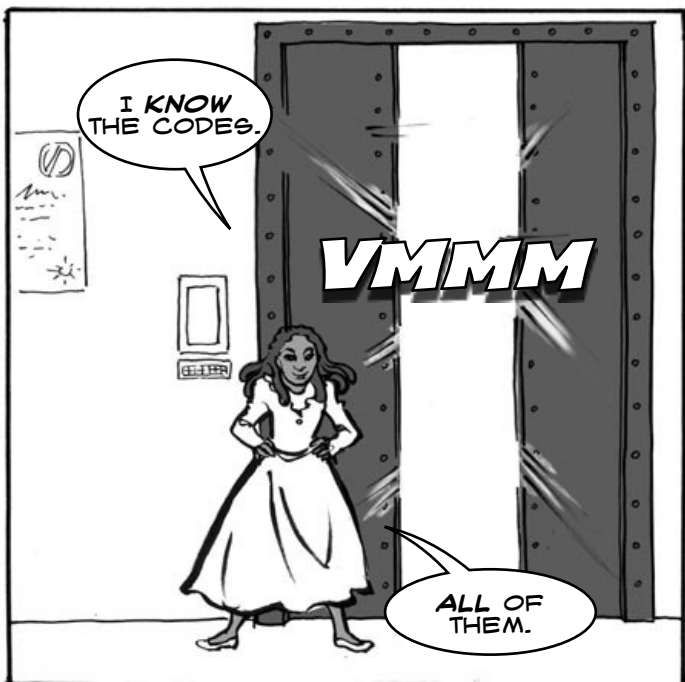
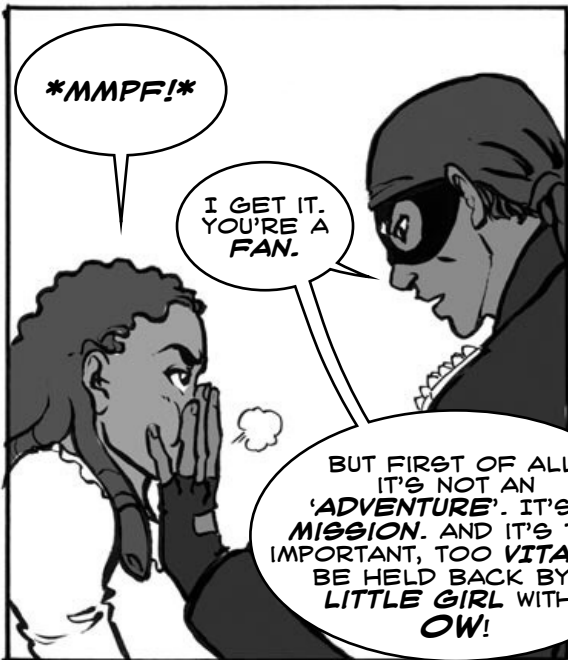
BUT-

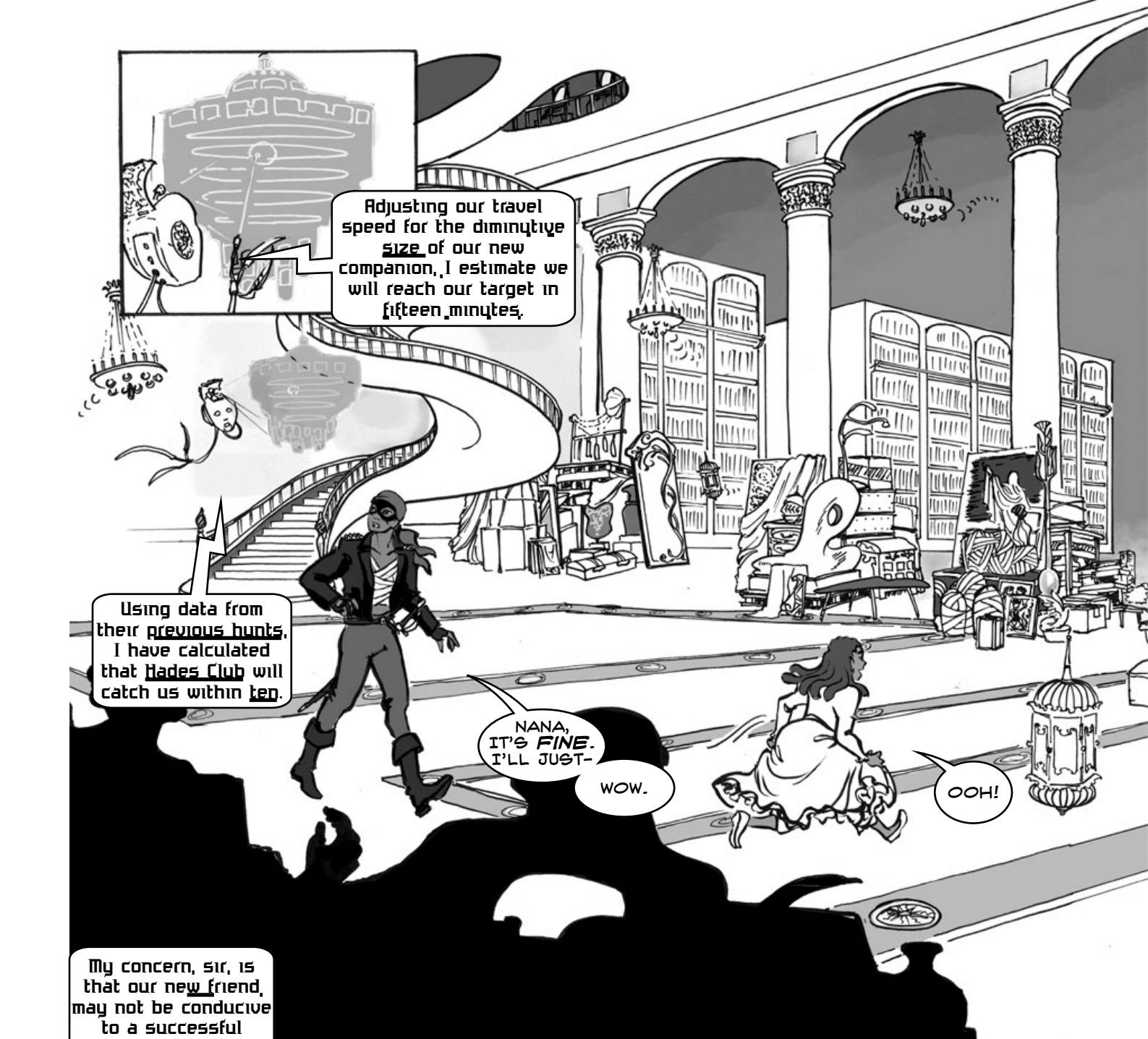
Our bargain was that you lead us to the archive in exchange for removing evidence of your misdemeanours.



We shall uphold our side, I assure you. But-

DAMMIT!





Adjusting our travel speed for the diminutive size of our new companion, I estimate we will reach our target in fifteen minutes.

Using data from their previous hunts, I have calculated that Hades Club will catch us within ten.

NANA, IT'S FINE. I'LL JUST-

WOW.

OOH!

My concern, sir, is that our new friend, may not be conducive to a successful mission.

WHAT? YES, I CAN HELP!

WHAT ARE WE LOOKING FOR?

HEY! MY DAD MAY BE A TOTAL SQUARE-
Young lady, do not underestimate what he is capable of-

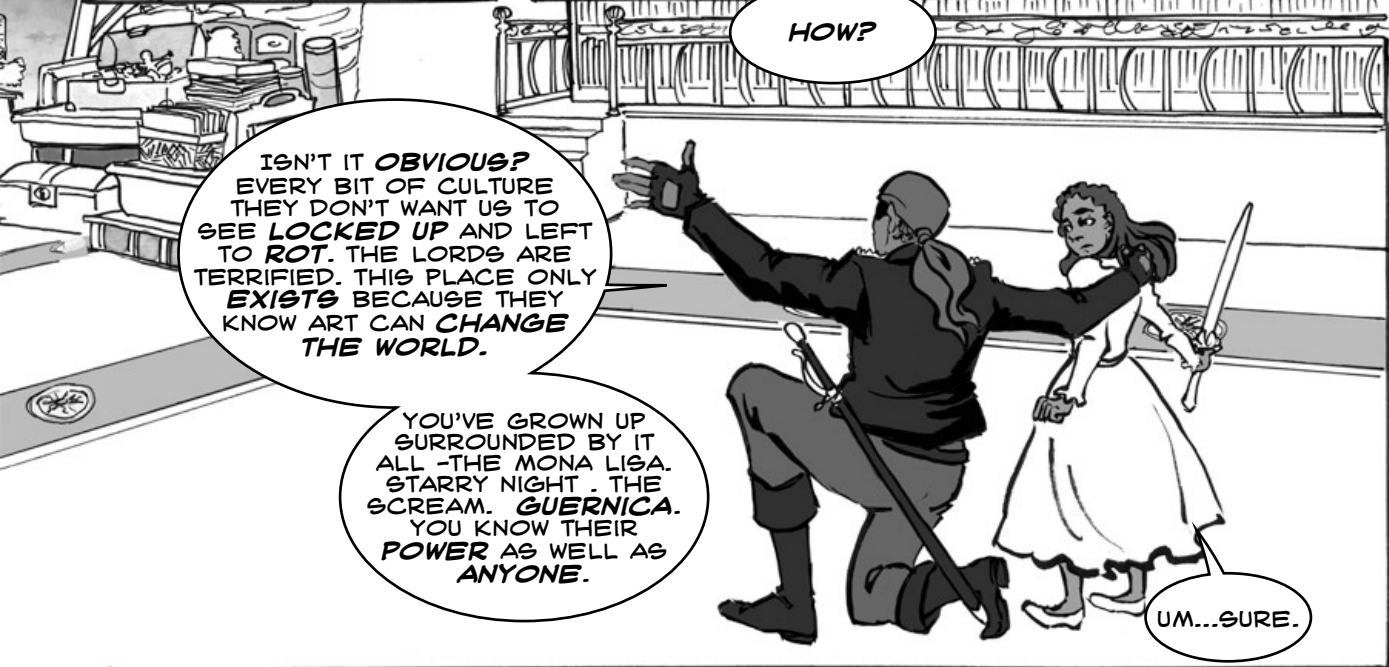
COME ON, NANA. SHE CLEARLY KNOWS THE PLACE LIKE THE BACK OF HER HAND. SHE CAN PROBABLY HELP FIND IT FASTER.

But can she be trusted?

Perhaps the overeager apple doesn't fall far from the traitorous tree?

NOT EVERYONE ENDS UP LIKE THEIR FATHER, NANA...

BUT HE'S NO TRAITOR!
JUST SHOW HER...





YES, SIR. I UNDERSTAND. I WILL SPEAK TO THEM AT **ONCE**.



HOW DOES IT **FEEL**, GUPPY?

WARM AND WET...

QUITE THE **INITIATION** THIS'LL BE, EH, **PRIMROSE**? GETTING A **CRACK** AT THE **EBONY EAGLE**, FIRST GO?

MY BLOODING WAS A **QUARRY** WHO WROTE **GODAWFUL POETRY**. I'D HAVE **KILLED** FOR IT TO BE A **HOSTIS PUBLICUS!**



YOU NEVER FORGET YOUR **FIRST TIME**.

I HAVE!

HA!



HARK YOUR **CASTING ORDERS**.



TWO NOSING COUPLES FOR THIS, LADS. **GUPPY** AND **PRIMROSE**, **GISSING** AND **MOUNT**.

SOAMES, SINGH. WAIT WITH ME IN CASE THE **EAGLE** **DOUBLES** BACK.



WHEN YOU FIND HIM, GIVE **TONGUE** TO YOUR LOCATION AND **HOLD HARD**. WE'LL COME AND **SECURE** THE PRISONER FOR-

BY **GIS, RATHBONE!**



AGAIN?

SHOVE!

WE'RE HERE TO **KILL**, NOT BE **CHECKED** AT THE LAST **SECOND!**

SCRAPE



THAT CHARLIE SCARRED ME!

I WANT HIS MASK ABOVE MY MANTLE.

CRASH!



WE HAVE A NEW QUARRY. AN...ARTIFACT OF INTEREST. I'M SENDING YOU DETAILS NOW.

WE CANNOT DRAW BLANK ON THIS ONE. HIS LORDSHIP'S ORDERS.



COME ON, OLD CHAP. THERE'S ALWAYS NEXT TIME.

THE CHASE IS THE CHASE.

ALL ON?
TALLY HO, THEN!



MIND WHEN THE LORD CHAMBERLAIN HAD HOLD OF THAT PAINTER?



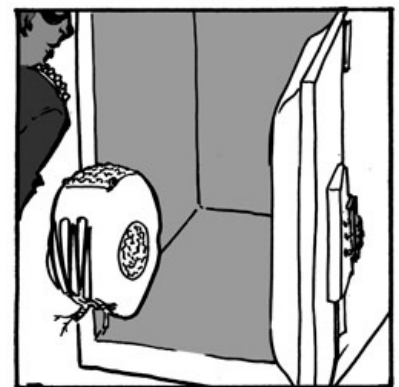
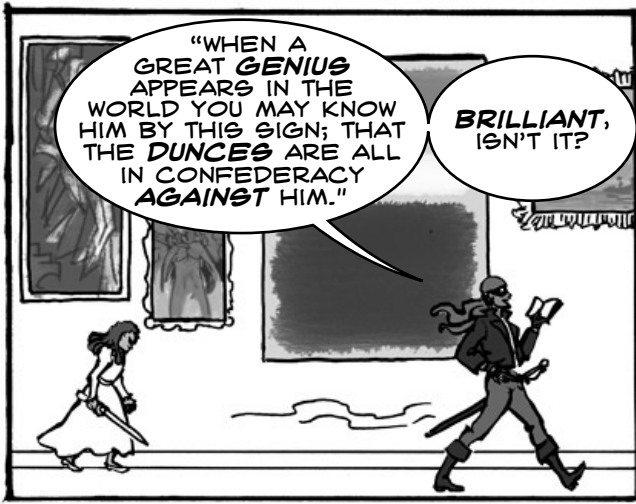
OPENED HIS VEINS WITH A RAZOR, GAVE HIM A BRUSH-

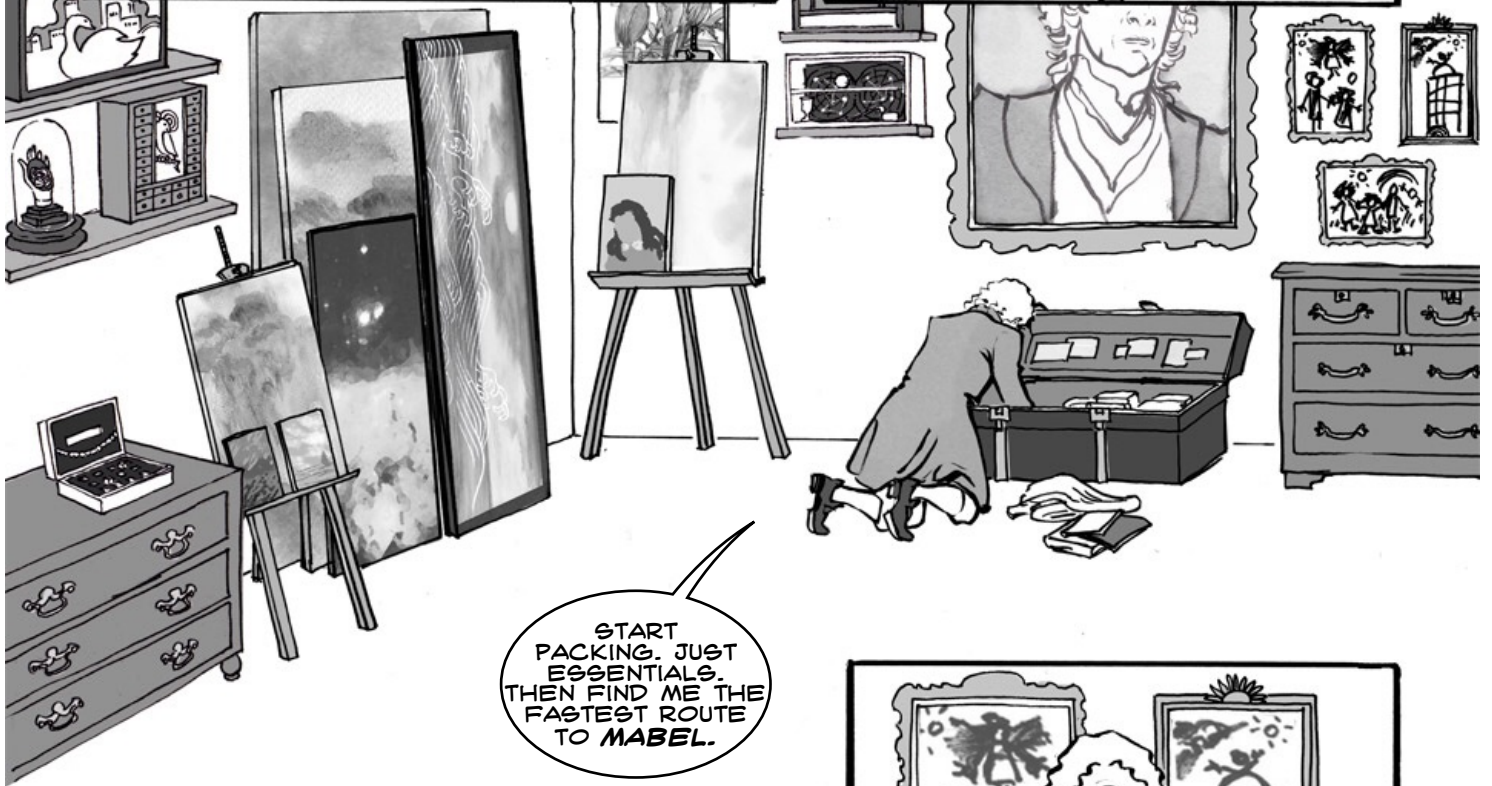
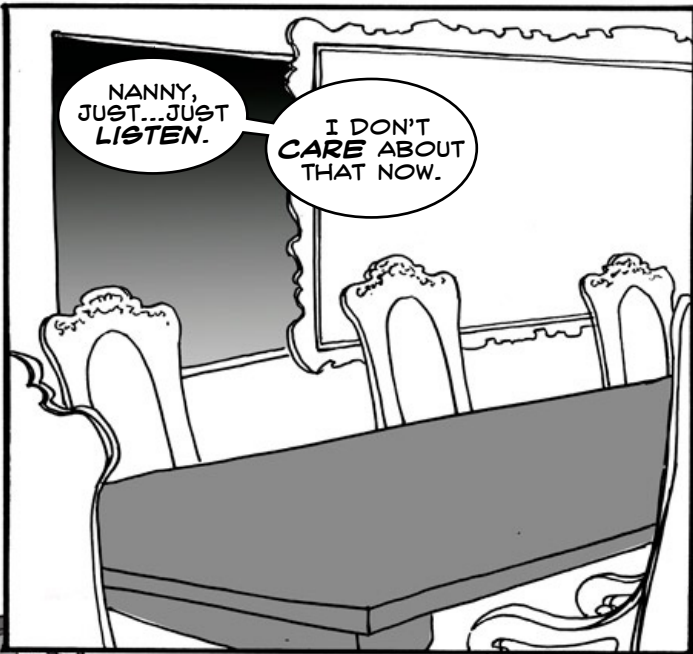


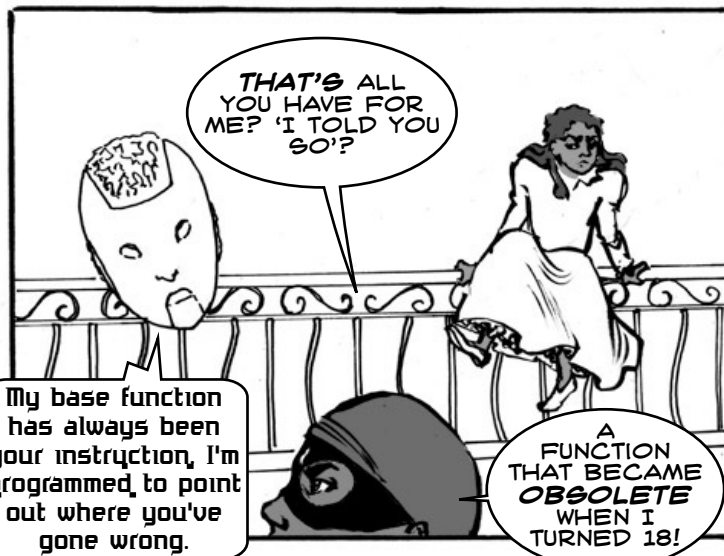
THEN MADE HIM PAINT HIS PORTRAIT IN BLOOD UNTIL HE-

SLAM!







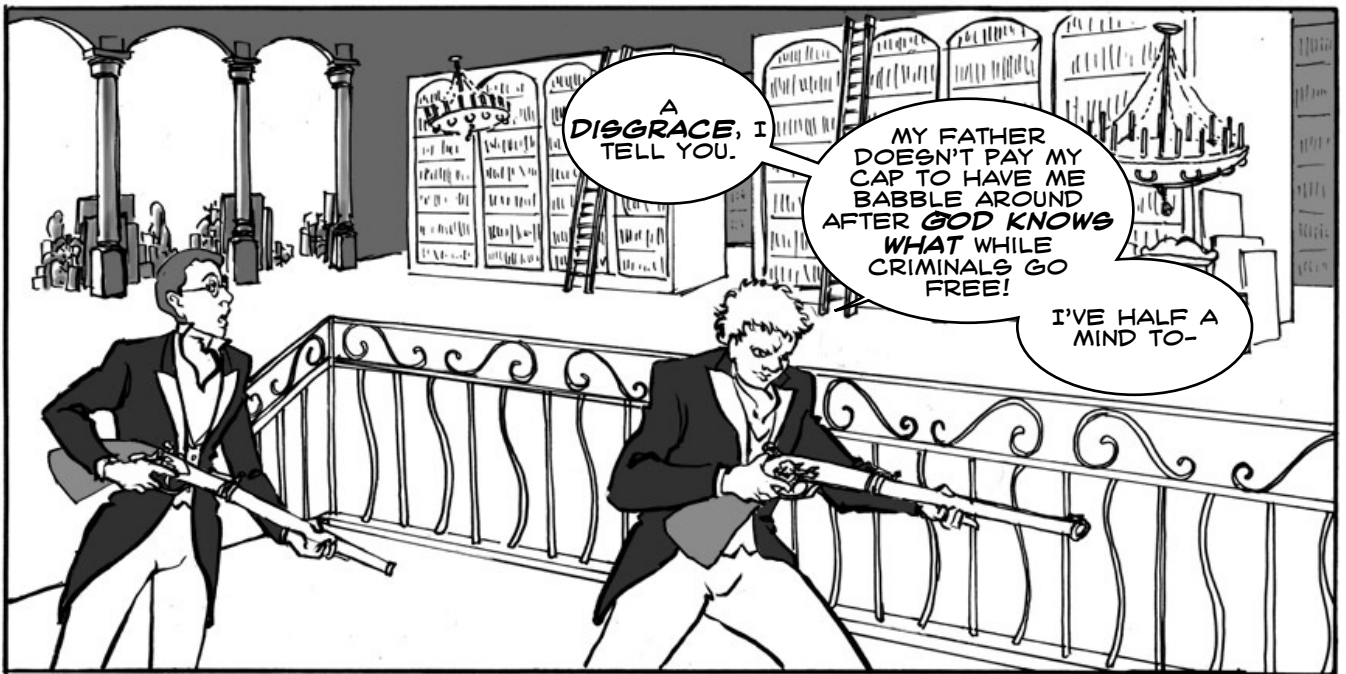


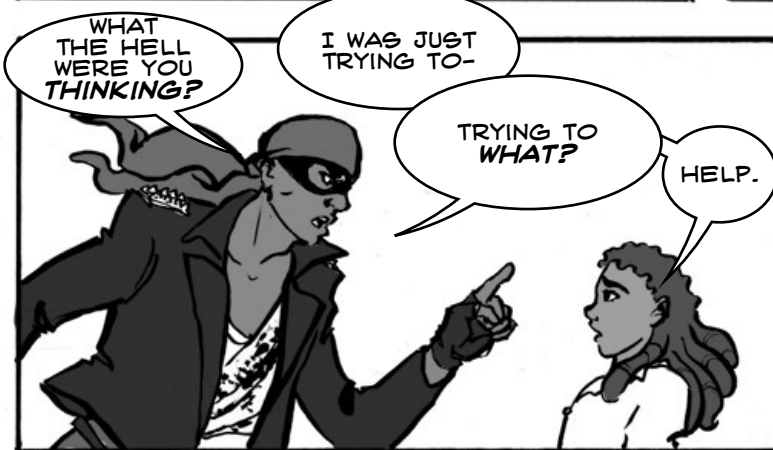
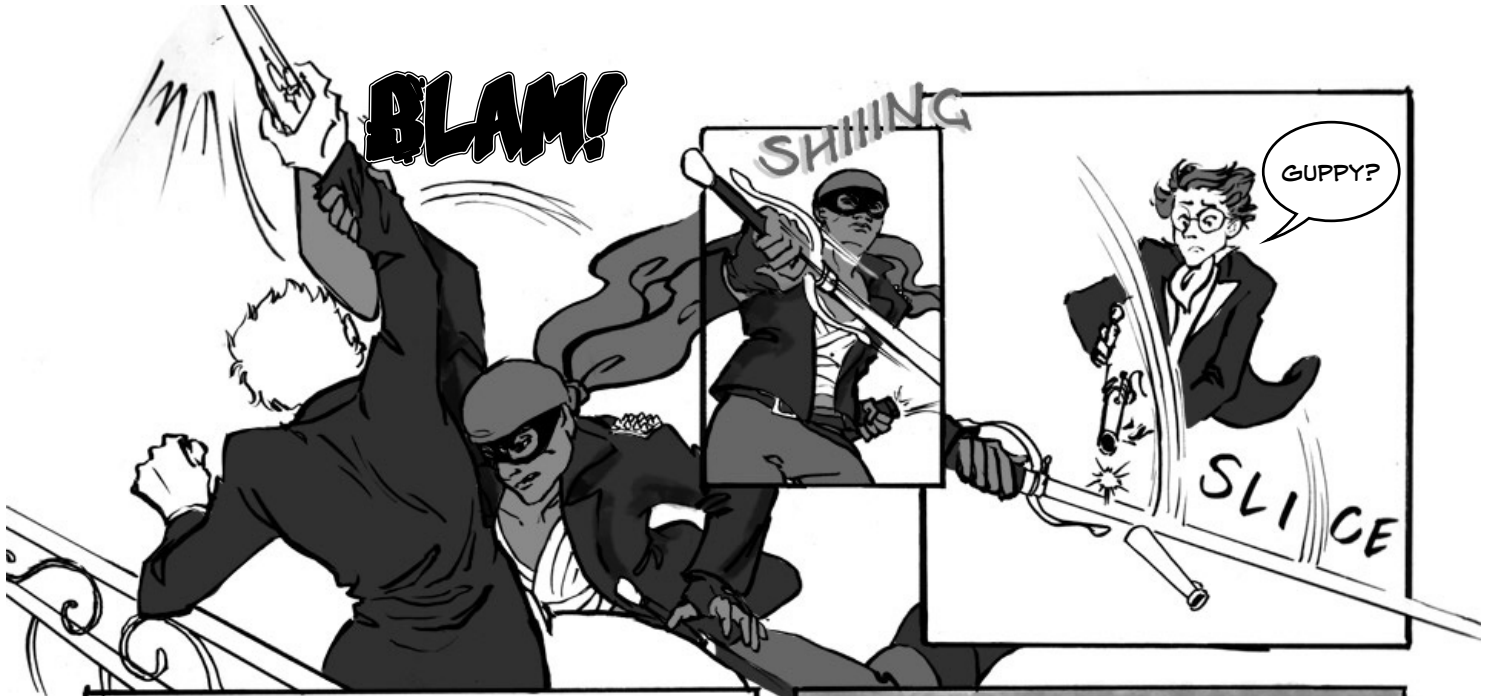
My base function has always been your instruction, I'm programmed to point out where you've gone wrong.

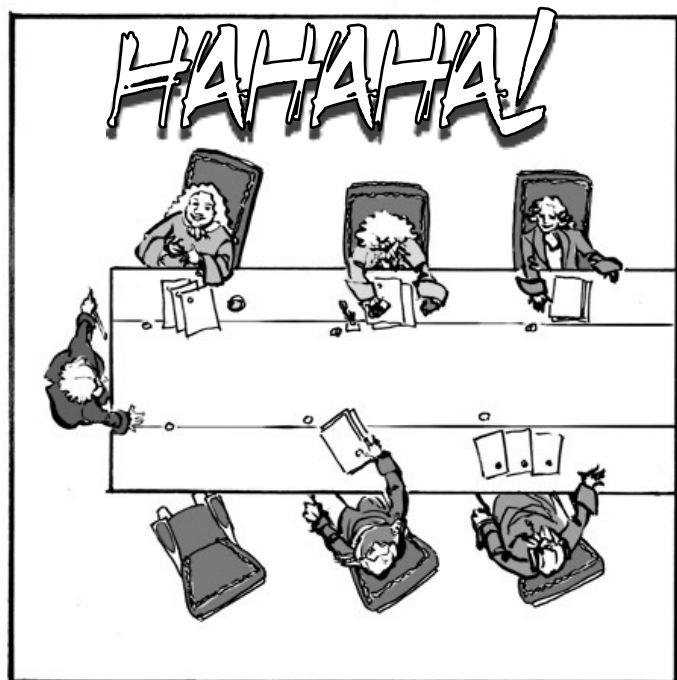


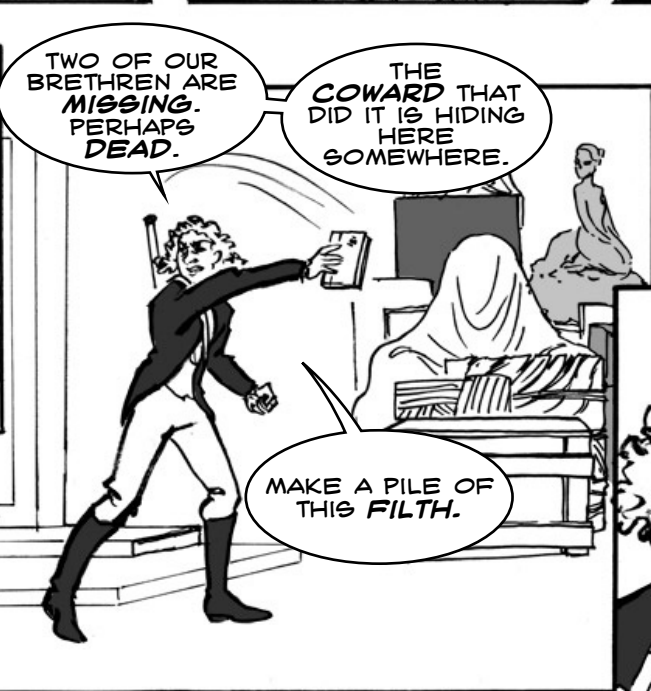
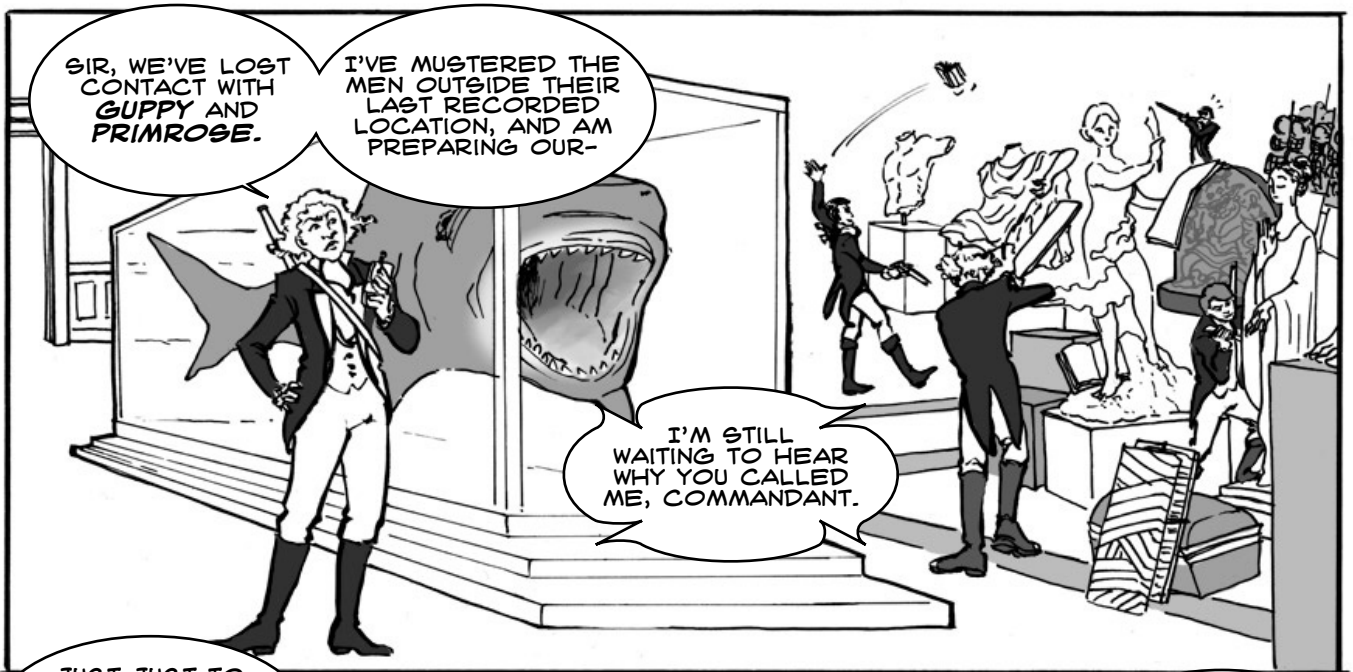
DON'T MAKE ME REGRET SAVING YOU.

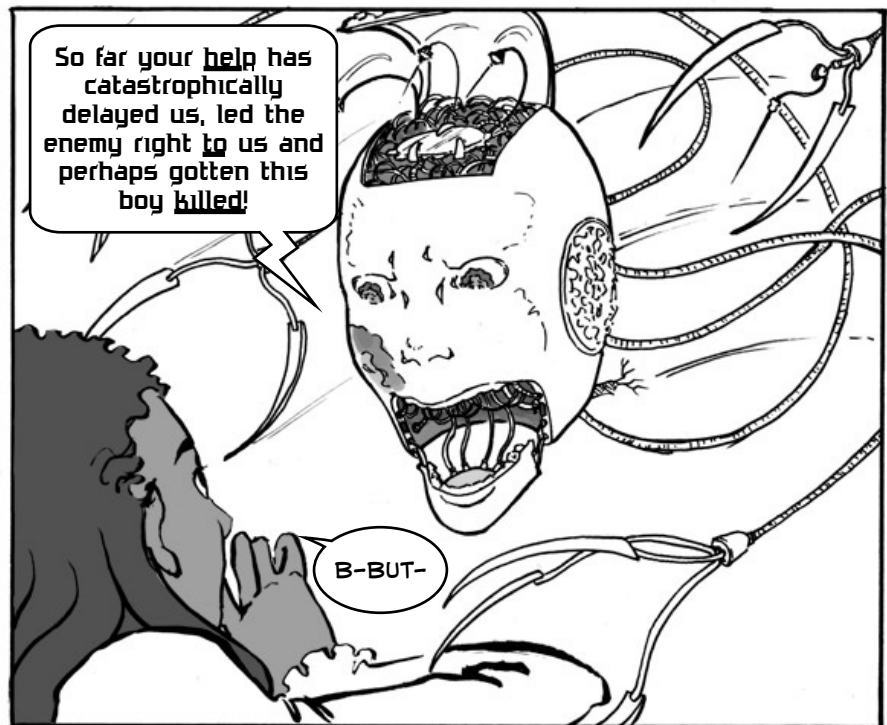
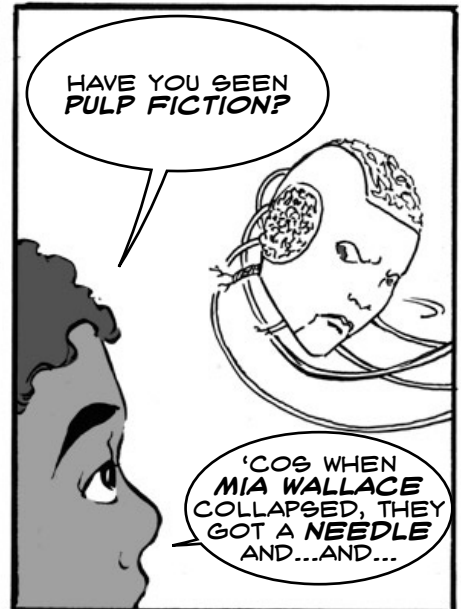




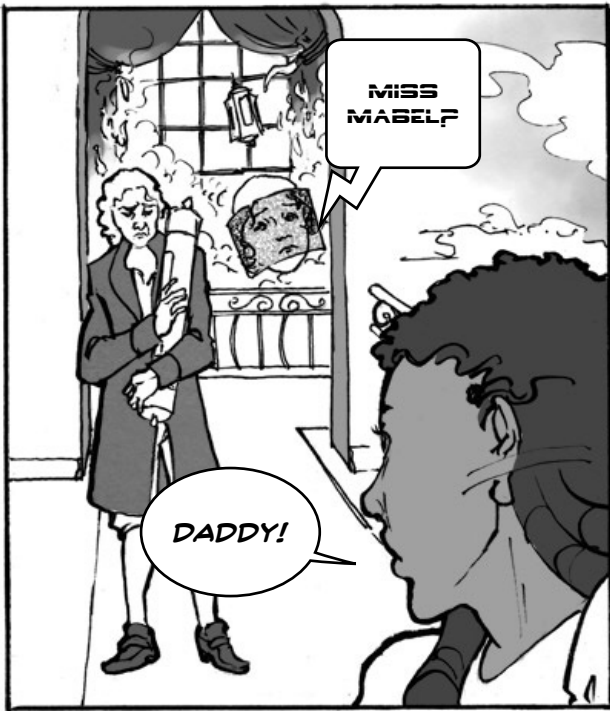






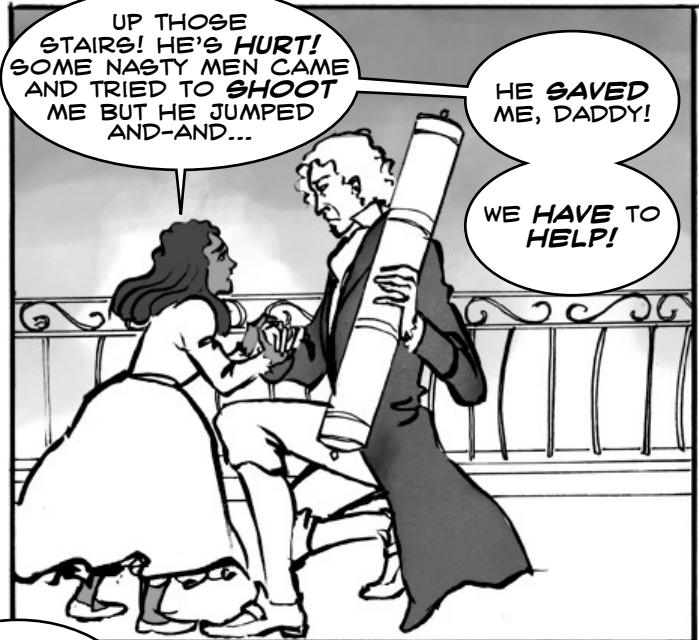








THE EAGLE!?
HE'S
HERE?



UP THOSE
STAIRS! HE'S HURT!
SOME NASTY MEN CAME
AND TRIED TO SHOOT
ME BUT HE JUMPED
AND-AND...

HE SAVED
ME, DADDY!

WE HAVE TO
HELP!



HAIL
COMMANDANT
RATHBONE AND
TELL HIM WE HAVE
THE EBONY
EAGLE AT OUR
MERCY.



PERHAPS
WE CAN YET
BARGAIN OUR
WAY OUT OF
THIS.

WHAT!? NO,
THAT'S NOT-

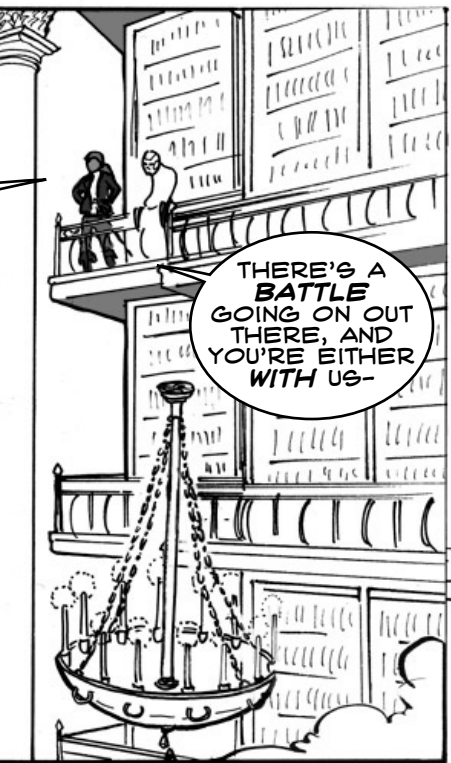
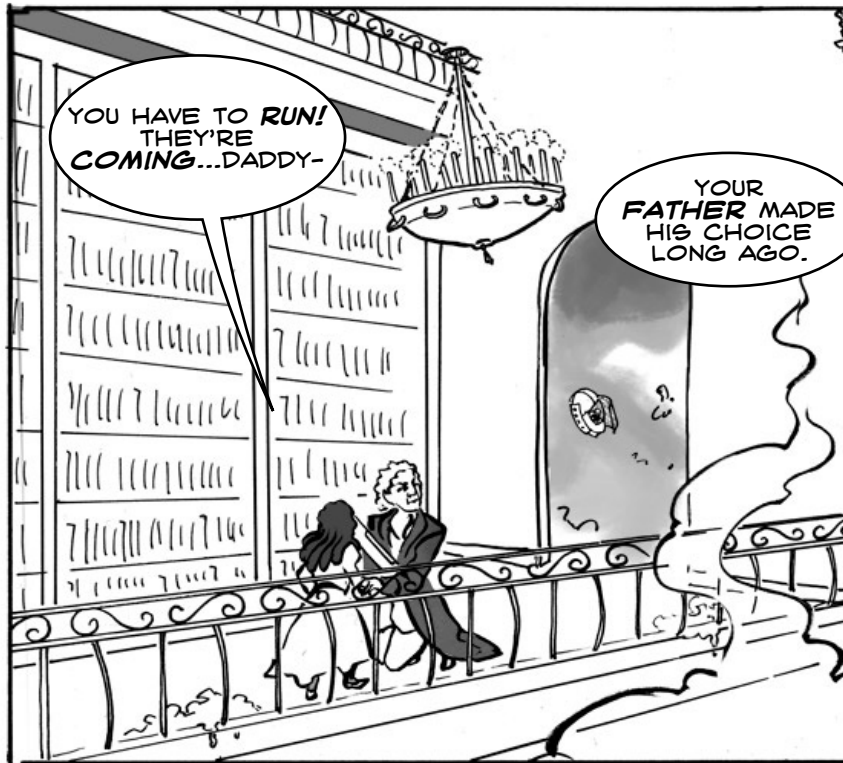
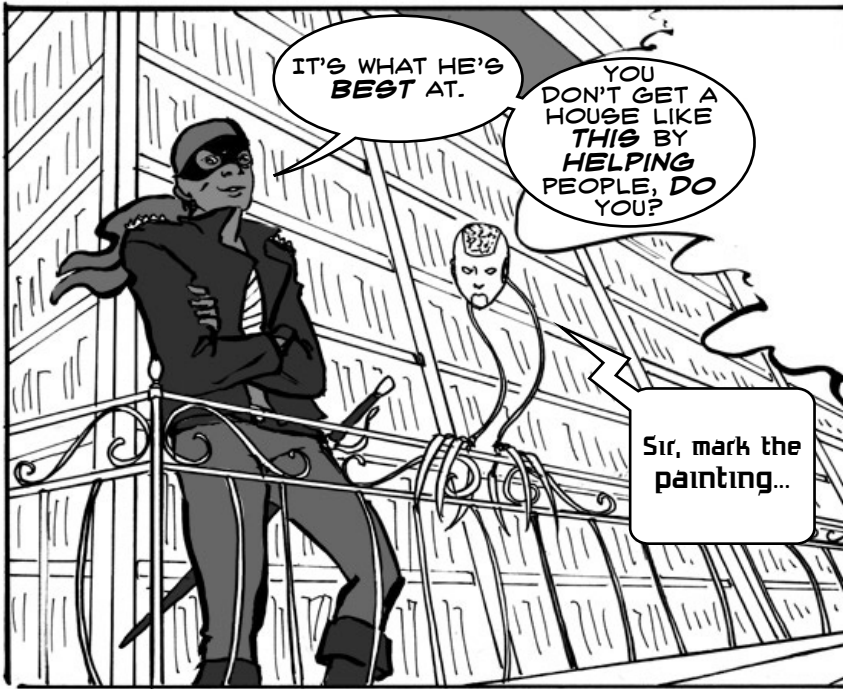


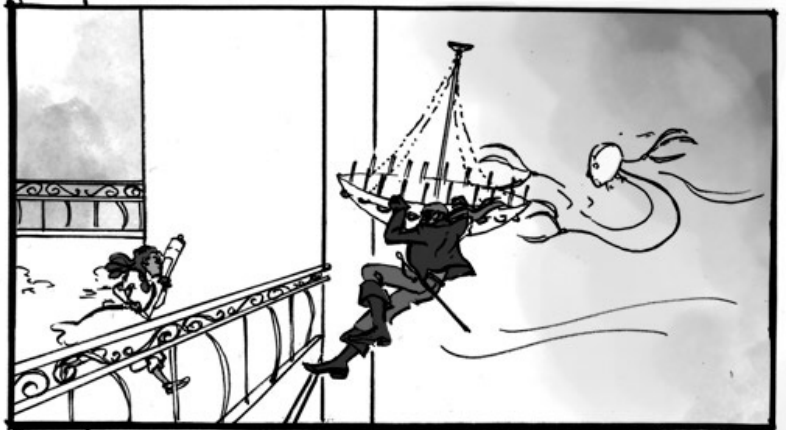
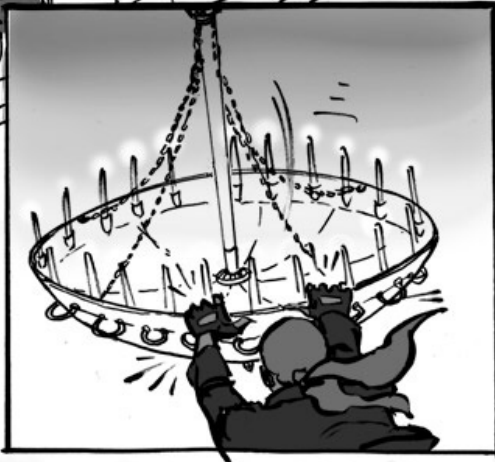
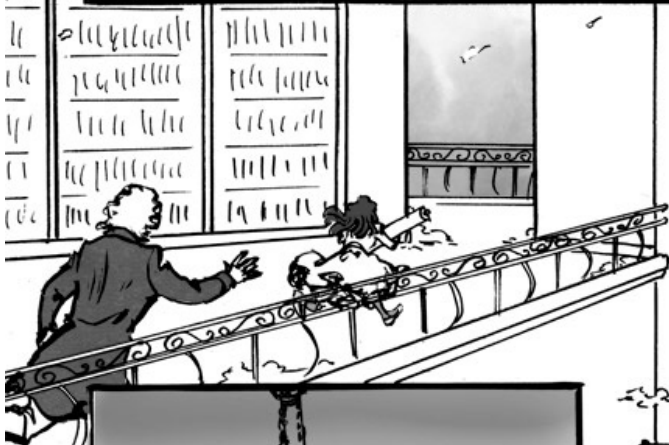
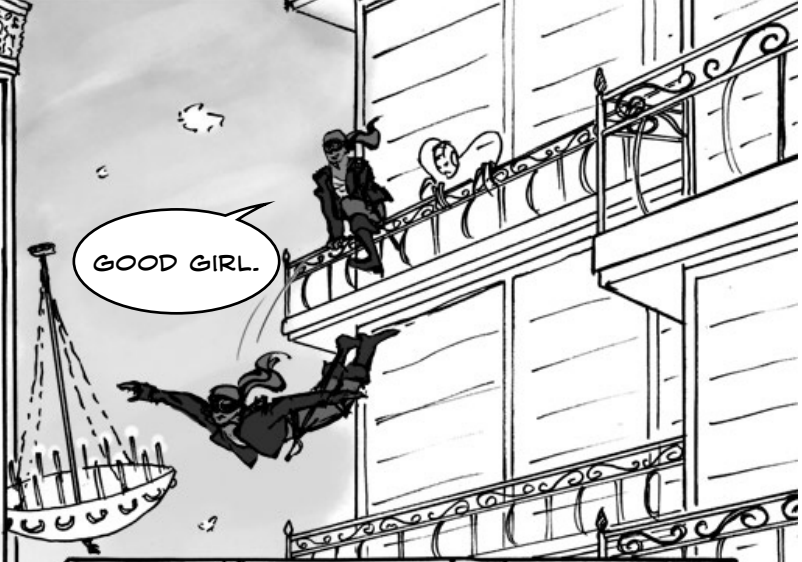
THIS IS THE
BEST HAND TO
PLAY.

THIS WAY WE
GET TO SAVE OUR
HOME!

HE MEANS SAVE
HIS OWN SKIN.











To be continued...