



MICHAEL AVON DEMING · TAKI SOMA

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THE AFTER REALM™



AVW17

FROM THE CO-CREATOR OF **POWERS**

The
After Realm
Written & Drawn by
**Michael
Avon Oeming**

Colors by
**Taki
Soma**

Letters by
**Shawn
Lee**

Twitter/Insta:
@oeming

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Production Artist: Erika Schnatz

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Ragnarok.

The Apocalypse.



THE YUGA CYCLES.

THE END OF DAYS.



THE COSMIC AGES OF DEATH AND REBIRTH HAVE MANY NAMES AND HAVE TURNED OVER YET AGAIN.

THE DAYS OF GODS AND MEN HAVE DIED.



WORLDS CAUGHT FIRE, AND WE ELVES RETREATED TO OUR REALM...

Elfheim.



IT WAS THE END OF THE WORLD, AND THE BEGINNING OF MY JOURNEY.

OONA!
LOOK, I'VE
LEARNED TO
SPEAK WITH
THE THORNS!

THIS WAS PIKKI...
A CHILD OF THE
TREES AND MY
BEST FRIEND.

I... I
DON'T KNOW
HOW I'M
GOING TO
TELL YOU...

WHAT'S
WRONG?

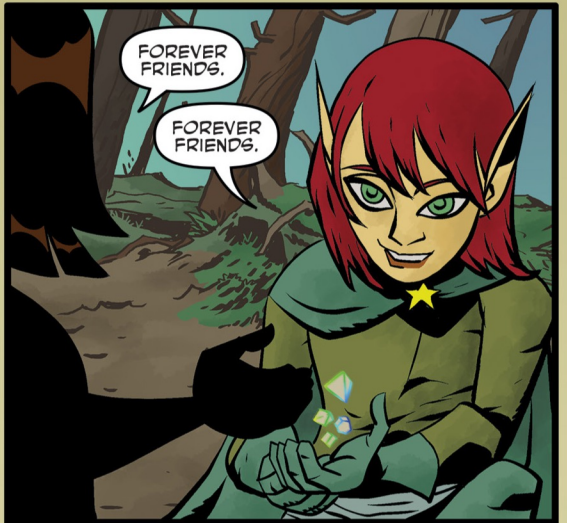
MOTHER
SAID I CAN'T
PLAY WITH YOU
NO MORE.

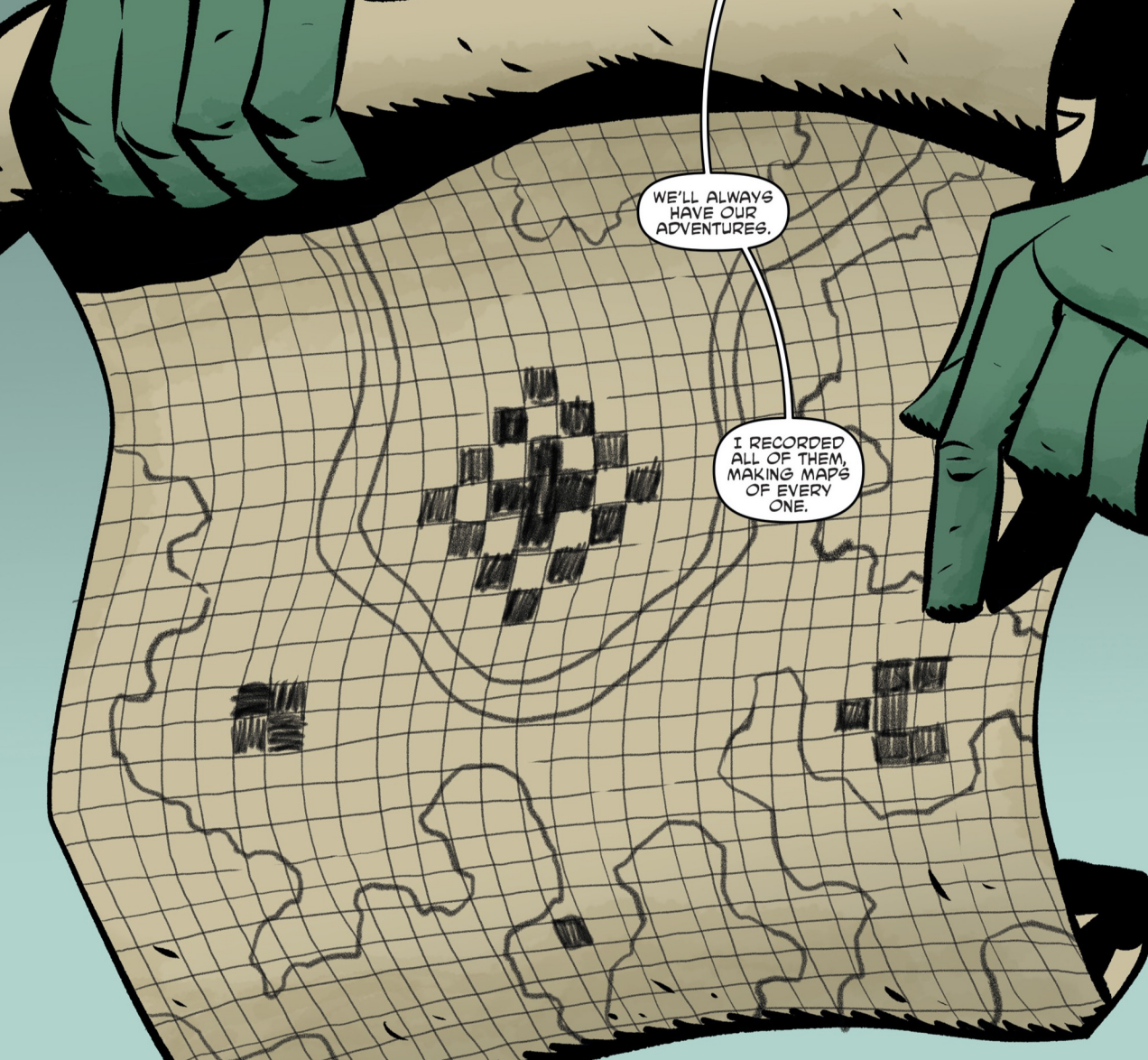
FFT

OH.

HER MAGIC
IS POWERFUL.
THERE IS NO
WAY TO HIDE IT
FROM HER.

SHE ALSO
SAID... *WAR*
IS COMING?





WE'LL ALWAYS HAVE OUR ADVENTURES.

I RECORDED ALL OF THEM, MAKING MAPS OF EVERY ONE.



ONE DAY, WE WILL MAP AND EXPLORE THE NINE REALMS TOGETHER.

PROMISE.



RRGGGRRRGGG

OH NO.



***RUN! IT'S
FENRIS, THE
SUN-EATER!***

***NO
NO NO
NO...***



IT IS FORETOLD THAT FENRIS IS A SIGN--

OF WHAT?

THE END OF THE WORLD!

BAAA!

PIK!!!



POKA!

WHAT'S HAPPENING?

BAAA!

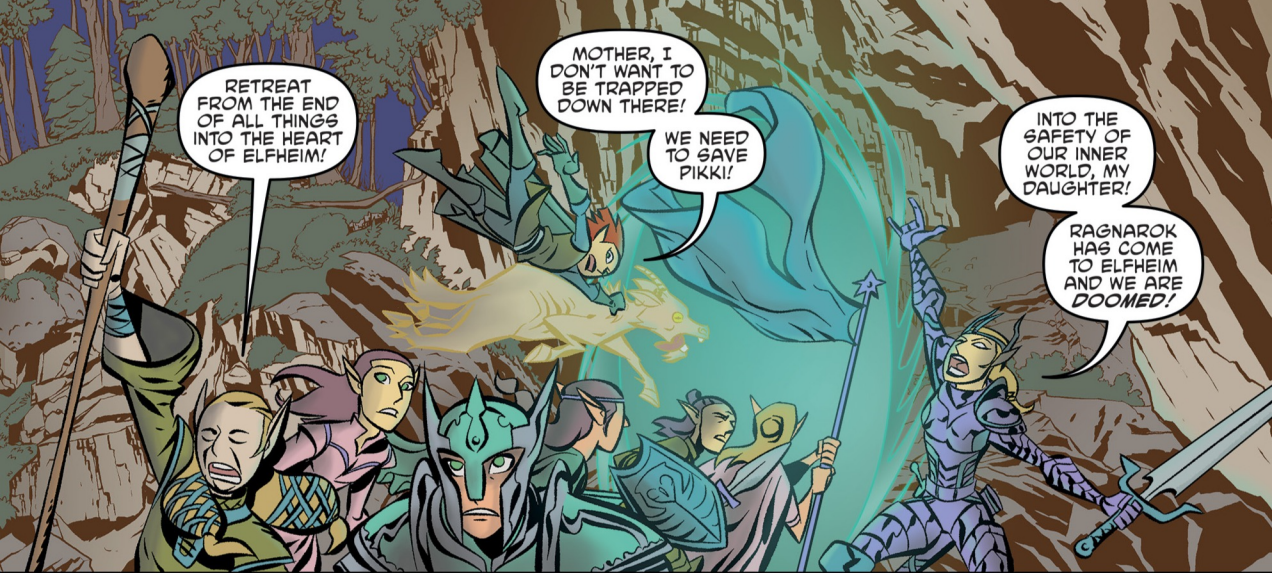


AAAHH!

HELP HIM TOO, POKA!



SAVE MY FRIEND!



RETREAT FROM THE END OF ALL THINGS INTO THE HEART OF ELFHEIM!

MOTHER, I DON'T WANT TO BE TRAPPED DOWN THERE!

WE NEED TO SAVE PIKKI!

INTO THE SAFETY OF OUR INNER WORLD, MY DAUGHTER!

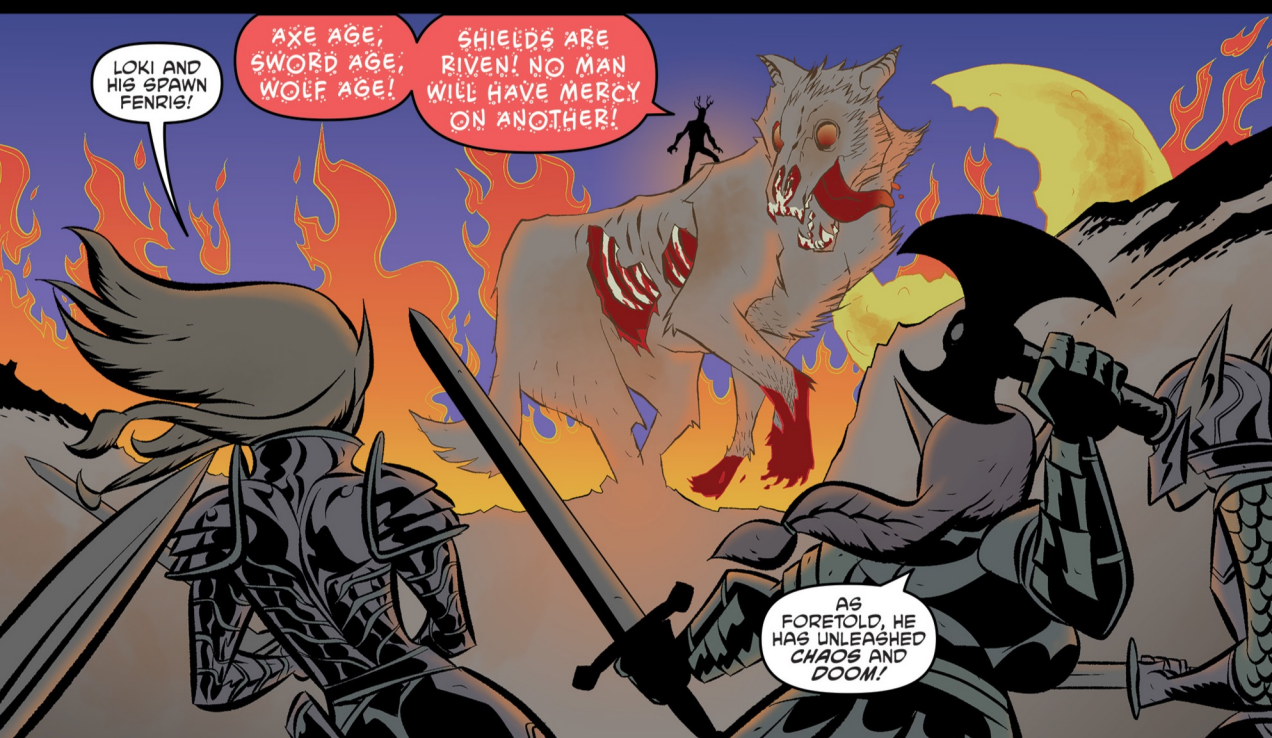
RAGNAROK HAS COME TO ELFHEIM AND WE ARE DOOMED!



WE MUST BAR LOKI AND HIS KIND FROM ENTERING! WE SHALL GRIEVE FOR THE OTHER REALMS ANOTHER DAY, ANWYNN!

TODAY WE FIGHT TO THE DEATH TO SAVE OURS, GRIMHILDRI!

I HAVE SEALED THE WALLS TO OUR STRONGHOLD!




LOKI AND HIS SPAWN FENRIS!

AXE AGE, SWORD AGE, WOLF AGE!

SHIELDS ARE RIVEN! NO MAN WILL HAVE MERCY ON ANOTHER!

AS FORETOLD, HE HAS UNLEASHED CHAOS AND DOOM!



THE BATTLE RAGED FOR YEARS.

AND WHEN IT CAME-- THE SPOILS OF OTHER WORLDS, TROLLS, MEN...

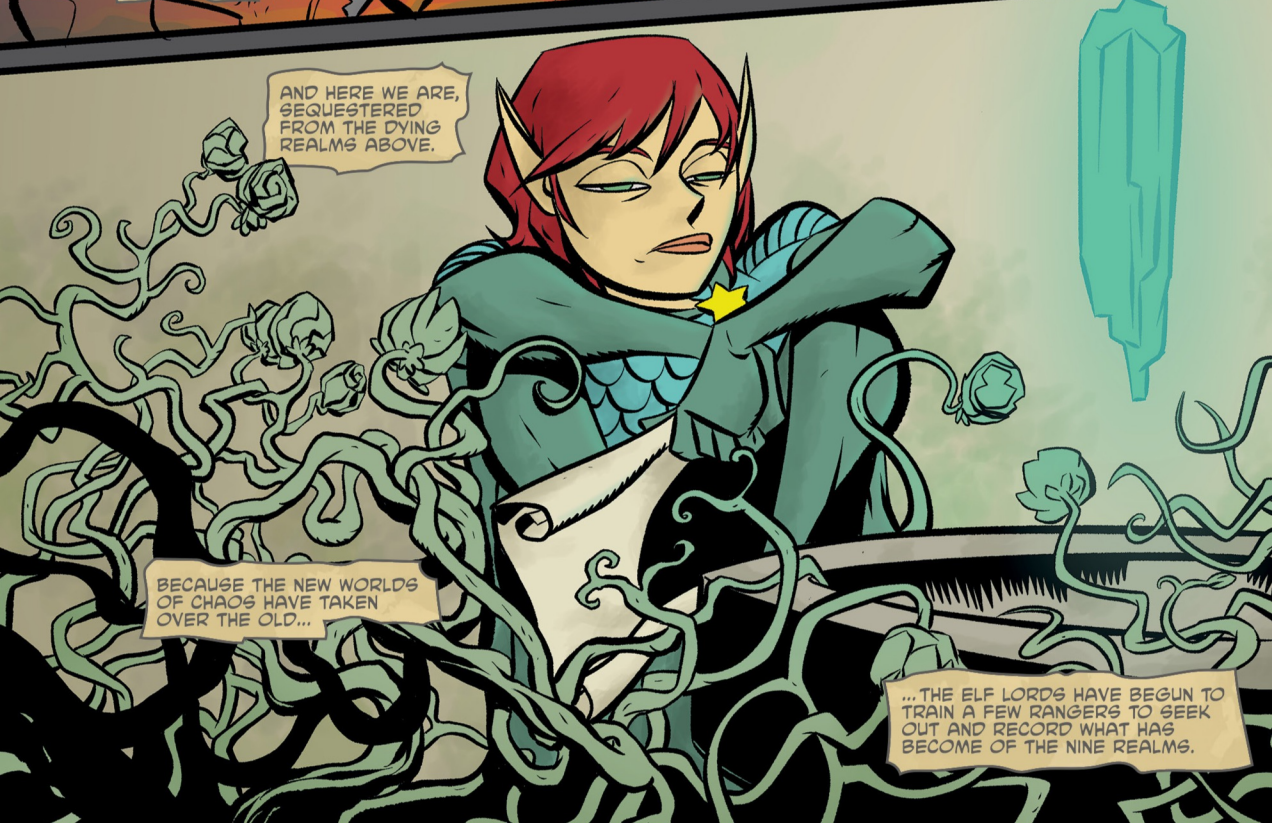
MACHINES OF ABSURD DESTRUCTION--CAME LIKE THE FIRE OF THE SUN.

THE BATTLE ENDED IN ASH.

AND LOKI WAS CAPTURED BY GRIMHILDR AND HER RANGERS...

... ALL OF WHOM GAVE THEIR LIVES.

MY MOTHER ANWYNN AND THE ELDERS IMPRISONED WHAT WAS LEFT OF LOKI AWAY IN THE GAP OF AURGELMIR.



AND HERE WE ARE, SEQUESTERED FROM THE DYING REALMS ABOVE.

BECAUSE THE NEW WORLDS OF CHAOS HAVE TAKEN OVER THE OLD...

...THE ELF LORDS HAVE BEGUN TO TRAIN A FEW RANGERS TO SEEK OUT AND RECORD WHAT HAS BECOME OF THE NINE REALMS.



BUT I'LL NOT BE ONE OF THOSE RANGERS. AS SOON AS MOTHER SEALED US INTO THIS SMALL, HIDDEN POCKET OF ELFHEIM...

...A BOOK OF SPELLS.

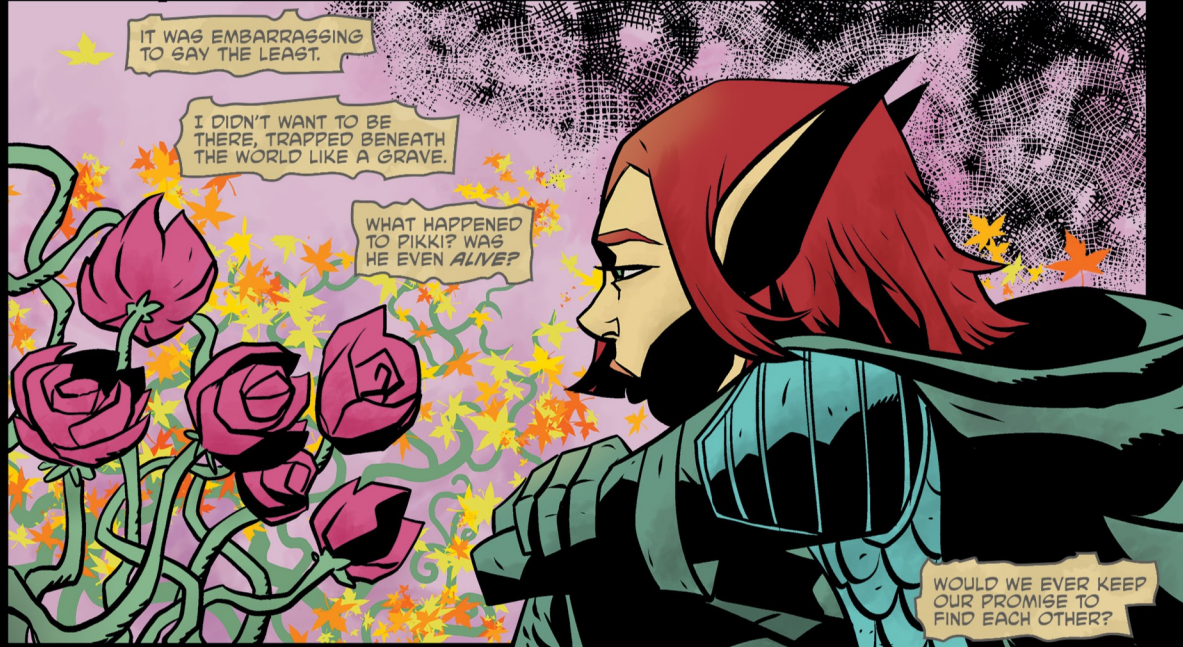


I TRIED TO ESCAPE AND FIND MY PIKKI.



IT DID NOT GO WELL.

AT ALL.



IT WAS EMBARRASSING TO SAY THE LEAST.

I DIDN'T WANT TO BE THERE, TRAPPED BENEATH THE WORLD LIKE A GRAVE.

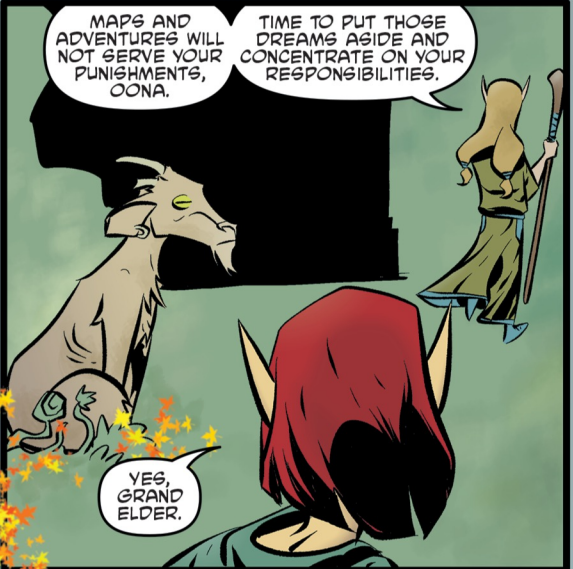
WHAT HAPPENED TO PIKKI? WAS HE EVEN ALIVE?

WOULD WE EVER KEEP OUR PROMISE TO FIND EACH OTHER?



YOU HAVE WORK TO DO, OONA. THE VINES OF MIMIR'S WELL NEED TRIMMING, NOT DAYDREAMS.

SORRY, GRAND ELDER! I WAS CONSULTING MY MAPS FOR VEGETATION I RECORDED FROM MY ADVENTURES ABOVE WITH--



MAPS AND ADVENTURES WILL NOT SERVE YOUR PUNISHMENTS, OONA.

TIME TO PUT THOSE DREAMS ASIDE AND CONCENTRATE ON YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES.

YES, GRAND ELDER.



DO NOT LISTEN TO HIM, KIDDO. THERE IS ALWAYS TIME TO DAY--



DREAM... THESE ARE MAPS OF ELFHAIM ABOVE... DESTROYED.

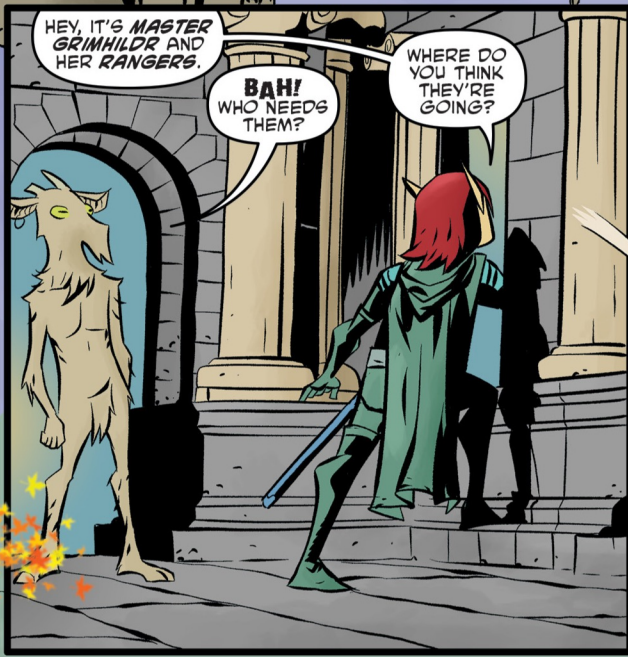
I DOUBT ANY OF THIS STILL EXISTS.

THANKS FOR THE DOWNER, POOKA.



WELL, THE REAL DOWNER IS HOW BAD THIS MAP IS-- I MEAN, YOU REALLY--

THEY WERE A WORK IN PROGRESS, GOAT BREATH! I'LL FINISH THEM WHEN I GET OUT OF HERE.



HEY, IT'S **MASTER GRIMHILDR** AND HER **RANGERS**.

BAH! WHO NEEDS THEM?

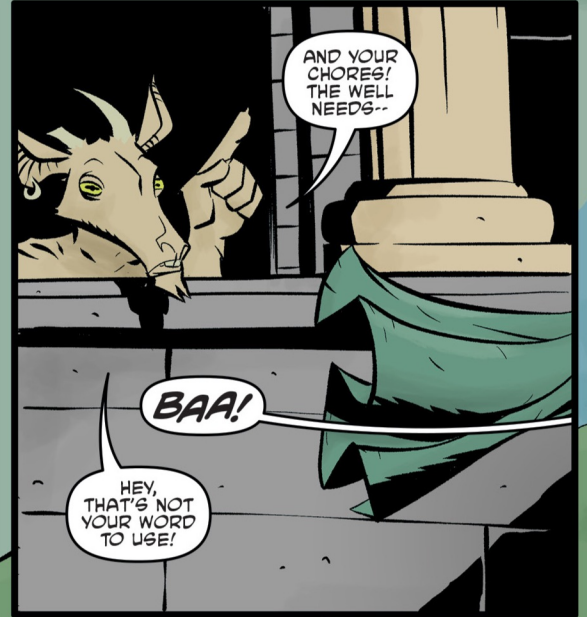
WHERE DO YOU THINK THEY'RE GOING?



MAYBE I SHOULD FOLLOW? THEY COULD BE GETTING INTO SOME ADVENT--



DID YOU NOT HAVE ENOUGH ADVENTURES GETTING KICKED OUT OF THE RANGERS?



AND YOUR CHORES! THE WELL NEEDS--

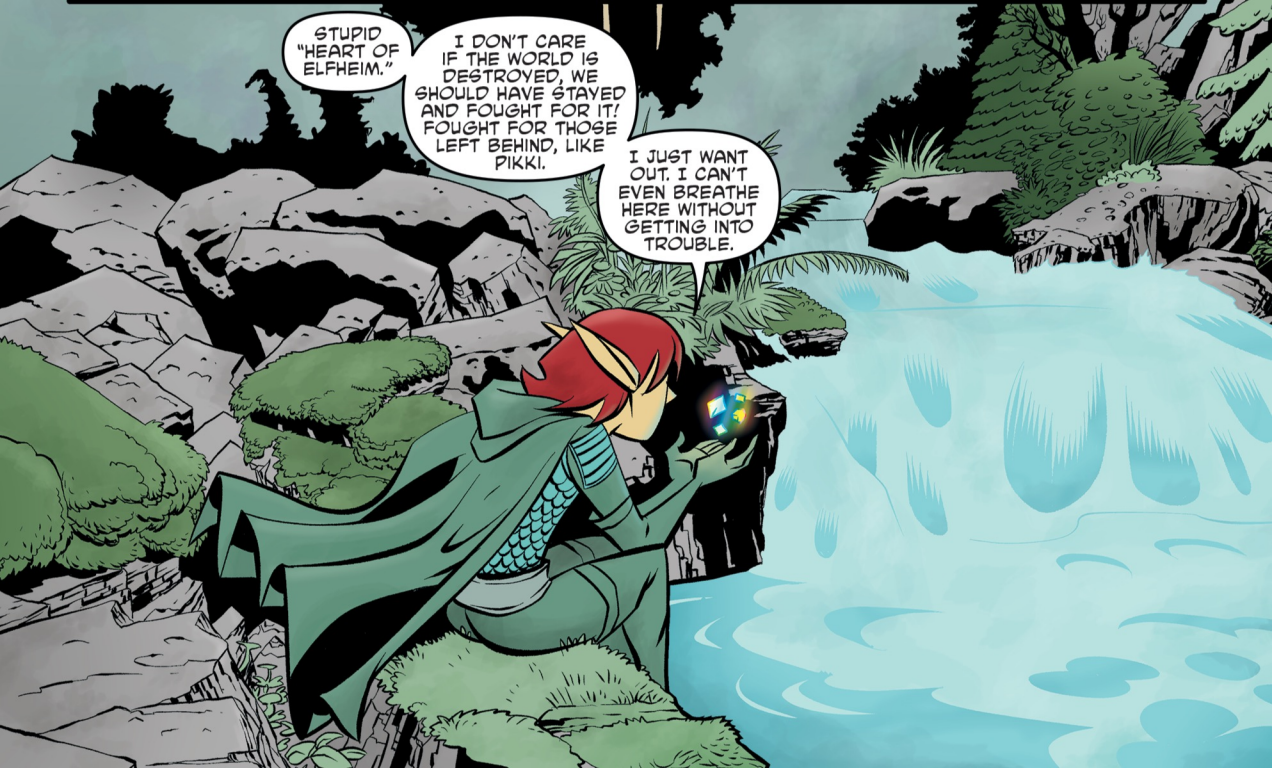
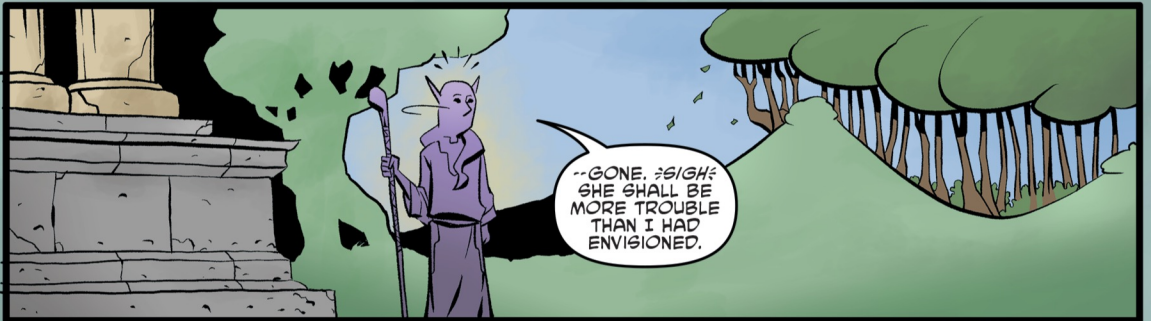
BAA!

HEY, THAT'S NOT YOUR WORD TO USE!



OONA LIGHTFOOT! I TAKE IT YOU ARE SEEKING GARDEN TOOLS TO TRIM THE WELL OF MIMIR?

CROW FARTS!



OUR GREATEST WARRIOR, SHARP AS AN AXE, STRONG AS A SHIELD. YOU NEVER HAD TO GUESS WHERE THINGS STOOD WITH HER.

YOU ARE ALL GOING TO DIE! FENRIS BITES ON YOUR HEELS AND THE DOOM OF SURTR IS BENEATH YOU, YET YOU MOVE LIKE THE SETTING SUN!

I SHOULD KNOW, I HELPED TO BIND FENRIS AND TUGGLED WITH OL' SURTR IN THE THROES OF RANGAROK!

MASTER GRIMILDR WAS ONE OF THE FEW SURVIVING ELVONIC WARRIORS. IT WAS HER BURDEN AND JOY TO TRAIN THE FLEDGLING RANGERS.



"...AND AS I WAS ABOUT TO DELIVER THE FINAL DEATH BLAH-BLAH."

SSSHH!

IT WAS HER WAY OR NO WAY. I LEARNED THAT THE FIRST TIME SHE KICKED ME OUT OF THE RANGERS!

IT WAS A STORY WE HAD ALL HEARD BEFORE.

BUT IF YOU HAD SAVED YOUR PEOPLE FROM RAGNAROK...

I'M SURE YOU WOULD TELL THE STORY MORE THAN A FEW TIMES YOURSELF.

AS I WAS ABOUT TO DELIVER A BLOW THAT COULD *QUELL* THE STORM OF WAR...

...SHIELDS *SPLINTERED* AND *EMBERED!*

SWORDS *BROKE* AND *WEPT!*

ARROWS *RAINED* LIKE *TEARS* FROM THE SKY!

GODS WERE *ASHES* AND *FELL* TO REALMS BELOW!

BRAVE ELVES *STRUCK DOWN* LOKI'S TROLLS, AS SURTR'S FIRE CATS...





...ATTACKED FROM BEHIND AND TORE MY HEAD OPEN!

STEALTH IS A SKILL WE SHALL CONTINUE TO HONE.

RANGERS MUST DO THE TRACKING, NOT BE THE TRACKED!



YOU WILL NEED STEALTH IN THE ICE CAVES OF YMIR. ANY SOUND OF YOUR STEPS SHALL GIVE YOU AWAY TO DANGERS.



BJORSI, WAIT.

YES, MASTER GRIMHILDR?



I BELIEVE IT IS NOTHING, BUT I HAVE HAD SOME DREAMS...

DREAMS?

HOPEFULLY NOT A PREMONITION. CHECK TO SEE THAT LOKI AND THE TROLLS--



--ARE SECURE IN THE CRYSTAL PRISONS OF AURGELMIR WHILE I SEE TO THIS NEXT LESSON.

YOU HAVE ALREADY MASTERED THE SILENT WALK.

THANK YOU, MASTER GRIMHILDR.

KEEP YOUR DISTANCE BEHIND THE BINDING SPELLS AND BE SURE TO AVERT YOUR GAZE FROM HIS EYES!

AYE!

I WOULD LATER REGRET NOT BEING THERE TO HEAR GRIMHILDR'S WARNING.

WHAT ARE WE DOING OUT HERE?

THIS, THIS IS WHERE THE FAERIE LIVED WHEN THEY WERE LIKE GODS, LONG BEFORE WE ELVES.

YES, BUT NOW THEY ARE SAFE AND LIVING AMONG US.

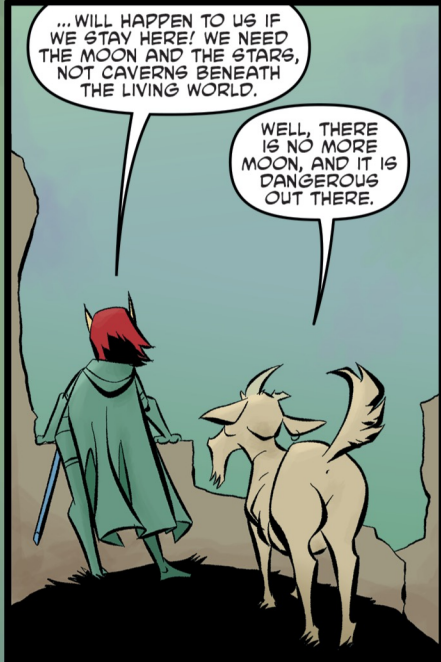


THEY WERE ONCE FREE TO ROAM THE WORLDS, NOW THEIR POWERS ARE DIMINISHED AND SMALL.



THE OTHERS FIND IT COMFORTING HERE, SAFE FROM THE WORLD OUTSIDE.

BUT WHAT HAPPENED TO THE FAERIE...



... WILL HAPPEN TO US IF WE STAY HERE! WE NEED THE MOON AND THE STARS, NOT CAVERNS BENEATH THE LIVING WORLD.

WELL, THERE IS NO MORE MOON, AND IT IS DANGEROUS OUT THERE.



BUT THIS IS NO LIFE, MAYBE FOR THE OTHERS BUT NOT FOR ME. I YEARN TO ESCAPE, POOKA, IT ACTUALLY HURTS ME INSIDE.

ONLY THE RANGERS ARE GETTING OUT, AND THAT WILL BE YEARS FROM NOW. ALSO, YOU KIND OF BLEW IT WITH THE RANGERS--



WAIT! NO, THAT'S IT! I NEED TO GET BACK INTO THE RANGERS! IT'S THE ONLY WAY OUT TO GET BACK TO PIKKI!



I'LL GET BACK INTO THE RANGERS!

OF COURSE.

BUT YOU BLEW IT WHEN YOU TRIED TO ESCAPE ON YOUR OWN. THE PHRASE "BANNED FOR LIFE" WAS UTTERED?

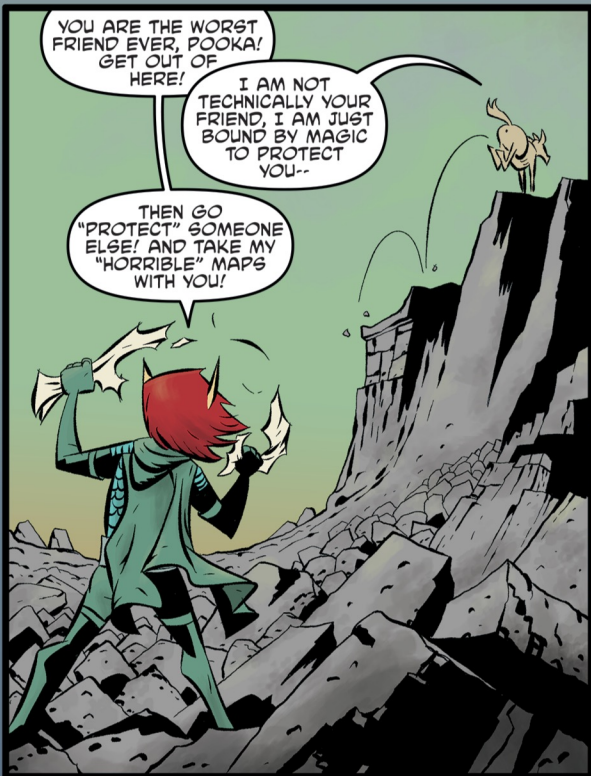


YEA, SO I BLEW IT! LOOK, IF I STICK TO MY CHORES OR DO SOMETHING AWESOME--I DON'T KNOW, SOMETHING--



--MAYBE IF I MAKE A MAP OF THIS PLACE--A GREAT MAP, THE GREATEST MAP THE ELVES HAVE EVER SEEN, THEY WILL HAVE TO LET ME BACK INTO THE RANGERS FOR MY HEROIC MAPPING SKILLS!

ER, MAYBE. BUT I HAVE SEEN YOUR MAPS, THEY ARE NOT EXACTLY... ACCURATE?



YOU ARE THE WORST FRIEND EVER, POOKA! GET OUT OF HERE!

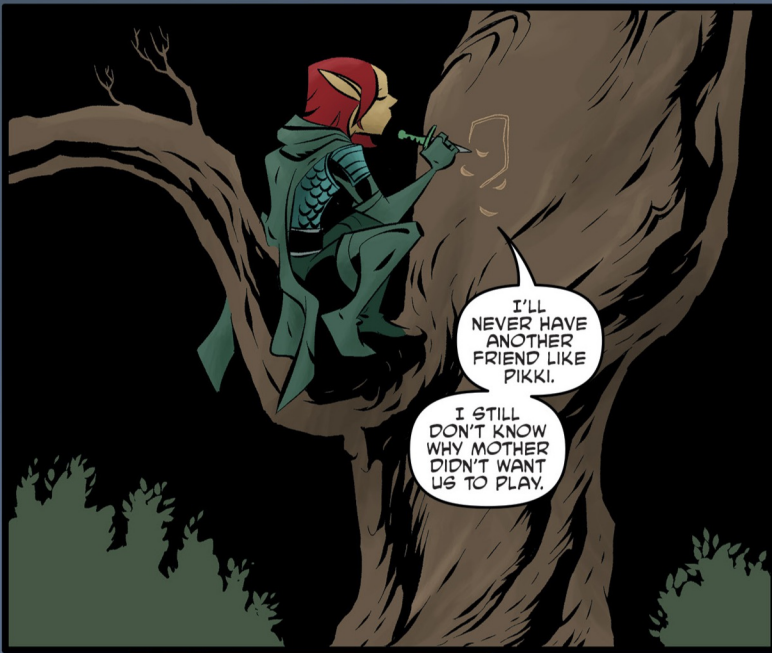
I AM NOT TECHNICALLY YOUR FRIEND, I AM JUST BOUND BY MAGIC TO PROTECT YOU--

THEN GO "PROTECT" SOMEONE ELSE! AND TAKE MY "HORRIBLE" MAPS WITH YOU!



AFTER INSULTING MY ONLY FRIEND, I FOUND MYSELF ONCE AGAIN EXILED TO MY OWN PITY.

AT LEAST THE TREES DON'T TALK BACK...



I'LL NEVER HAVE ANOTHER FRIEND LIKE PIKKI.

I STILL DON'T KNOW WHY MOTHER DIDN'T WANT US TO PLAY.



SHE THINKS SHE KNOWS EVERYTHING!



BUT SHE DOESN'T KNOW WHAT IT'S LIKE TO MISS SOMEONE. TO REALLY MISS SOMEONE.

I JUST WISH THINGS WOULD GO BACK TO BEING NORMAL...

LIKE THE SUN, MOON, STARS, LANDS TO EXPLORE, NEW THINGS TO SEE AND ADVENTURES TO BE HAD.

NOTHING WILL EVER BE THE SAME AGAIN.



MASTER GRIMHILDR DEFEATED LOKI AT RAGNAROK. HE TRIED TO ESCAPE BY TRANSFORMING HIMSELF INTO A BRANCH OF A TWIG.

I AM SURE SHE IS JUST BEING CAREFUL, BUT WHAT IF THE BINDING SPELLS HAVE WEAKENED?

HMMM...



BJORSI MADE THE FINAL RANGER CUT...

...WONDER WHAT HE'S DOING OUT HERE BY HIMSELF?

WHAT IS THAT HUMAN SAYING ABOUT CURIOSITY AND THE CAT?



BJORSI WAS GOOD AT THE SILENT WALK, BUT I WAS EVEN BETTER.

BEFORE I WAS EXPELLED FROM THE RANGERS, NO ONE COULD MATCH ME.

I COULD WALK IN THE SNOW WITHOUT LEAVING A TRACK.



I WAS SO CLOSE TO HIM I COULD TOUCH HIS CAPE AND HE WOULDN'T EVEN KNOW.

WHERE WAS HE GOING?



THERE WASN'T MUCH OUT THIS WAY EXCEPT...

...EXCEPT FOR THE *GREATEST EVIL* IN ALL OF ELPHEIM...



...AND THERE I WAS, AN ARROGANT LITTLE SHOW-OFF.



WHAT COULD GO WRONG?

THIS IS WHERE
WE LOCKED
HIM AWAY.

LOKI, THE TRICKSTER
GOD AND BRINGER
OF CATASTROPHE.

TRAPPED IN THE CRYSTAL
PRISONS, STUCK IN HIS
DISGUISE AS A MISTLETOE
BRANCH, THE VERY THING HE
TRIGGERED RAGNAROK WITH.

I SAW THEM MADE...
THE CRYSTAL
PRISONS AND THE
BINDING SPELL
THAT HELD THEM.



LOKI AND TROLLS, THE LAST OF OUR
WORRIES, TRAPPED HERE WITH US...



...FOREVER.





THE GAP OF AURGELMIR WAS AN OPENING IN THE GROUND...

... THAT LED TO AN OBLIVION BELOW.

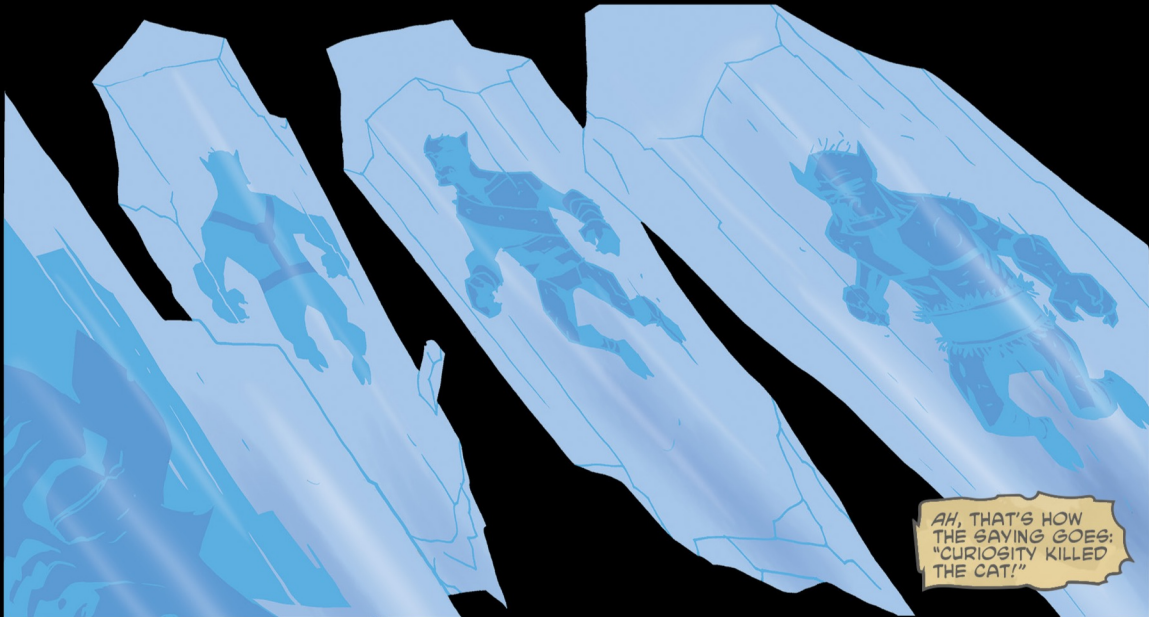
WHY IN ODIN'S EYE IS HE HERE?



THE CRYSTAL PRISONS HAVE BEEN SAFE SINCE THE END OF THE WORLDS.

OR WAS IT?

I HAD TO SEE FOR MYSELF.



AH, THAT'S HOW THE SAYING GOES: "CURIOSITY KILLED THE CAT."



I FEEL EYES ON ME...

...SURELY NOT LOKI?

MASTER SAID NOT TO LOOK DIRECTLY AT HIM...



HEY!

FOOP



OONA! WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

I COULD HAVE KILLED YOU, FOOL!

OH, YOU ARE WAY TOO SLOW FOR THAT!

BJORSI, KIND OF A KNOW-IT-ALL.



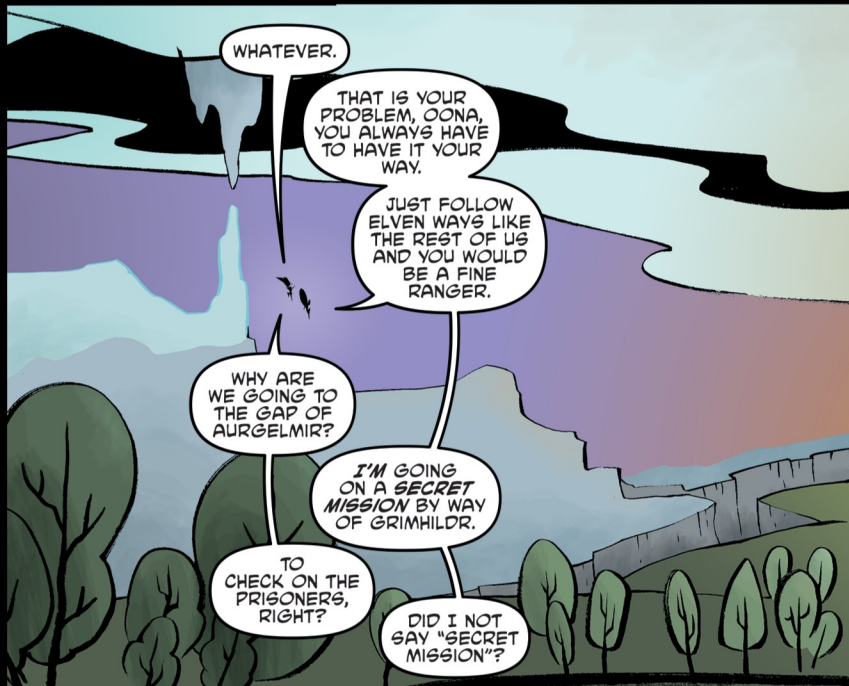
A RANGER LIKE YOU SHOULD KNOW WHEN THEY'RE BEING FOLLOWED.

RANGER IN TRAINING. SORRY YOU DID NOT MAKE THE CUT.

IF BREAKING RULES WERE A SKILL, I'D BE KING OF THE RANGERS. WHERE ARE YOU OFF TO?

"QUEEN" OF RANGERS.

SEE? KNOW-IT-ALL.



WHATEVER.

THAT IS YOUR PROBLEM, OONA, YOU ALWAYS HAVE TO HAVE IT YOUR WAY.

JUST FOLLOW ELVEN WAYS LIKE THE REST OF US AND YOU WOULD BE A FINE RANGER.

WHY ARE WE GOING TO THE GAP OF AURGELMIR?

I'M GOING ON A SECRET MISSION BY WAY OF GRIMHILDR.

TO CHECK ON THE PRISONERS, RIGHT?

DID I NOT SAY "SECRET MISSION"?



NOT MUCH ELSE OUT THIS WAY. I'M COMING WITH.



NOT YOU, JUST ME, OONA.

I'LL TAG ALONG. AFTER ALL, YOU NEVER KNOW WHEN YOU'LL RUN INTO TROUBLE!



YOU ARE TROU--
ACK!



I MEANT LIKE AN ICE GOLEM, SNOW DEMONS OR...

AN OLD TRICK FOR YOU...



... ANY TIME SOMEONE SAYS "NO" TO YOU...

OR AN ESCAPED TROLL!

...CHANGE THE SUBJECT!



OR...



BLOOD SNAKES BENEATH THE SNOW!

SEE? ALREADY TAGGING ALONG AND HE DOESN'T EVEN NOTICE.

FTH



LET'S RACE THERE, FIRST ONE TO TOUCH THE GROUND LOSES!

IT BECOMES A DISTRACTION, THROWS THEM OFF THE TRAIL OF YOUR WANT.



LOSES WHAT?

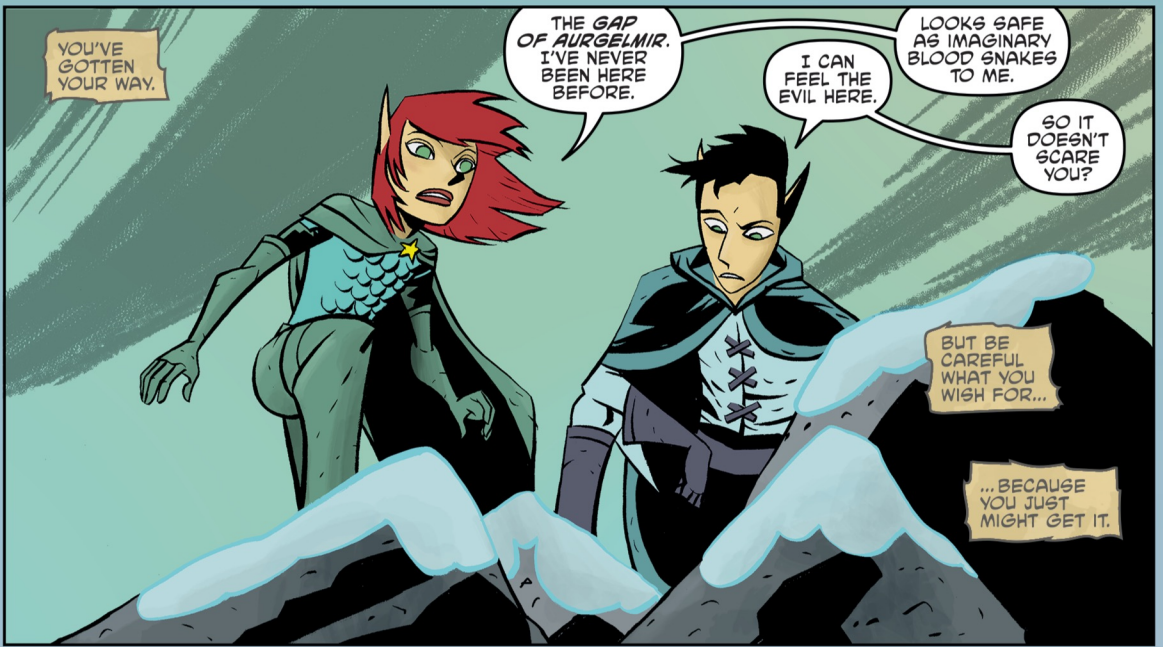
OH I DON'T KNOW, HOW ABOUT--

--DIGNITY?

BRING EXTRA, YOU WILL NEED IT!

OW! NICELY DONE!

AND BEFORE YOU KNOW IT...



YOU'VE GOTTEN YOUR WAY.

THE GAP OF AURGELMIR. I'VE NEVER BEEN HERE BEFORE.

I CAN FEEL THE EVIL HERE.

LOOKS SAFE AS IMAGINARY BLOOD SNAKES TO ME.

SO IT DOESN'T SCARE YOU?

BUT BE CAREFUL WHAT YOU WISH FOR...

...BECAUSE YOU JUST MIGHT GET IT.



NOT AS LONG AS THOSE BINDING SPELLS HOLD...



...GAAH! THERE HE IS. LOKI.

HE LOOKS SMALL FROM HERE.

AVERT YOUR EYES FROM HIS GAZE.



I THANK YOU FOR THE COMPANY. I SHALL LET MASTER GRIMHILDOR KNOW YOU HELPED...

REALLY?

LET US GO AWAY FROM HERE. THE AIR IS ILL HERE.



HEY, DID YOU HEAR...



I SEE YOU, SEEING... ME!



GOONA

AH!
WHO IS
THAT?



WHO
IS IN MY
HEAD?!

'TIS YOUR
DESTINY, YOUR
ESCAPE FROM
THIS PRISON!





HOW CAN YOU TALK TO ME LIKE THIS?

YOUR BLOOD...



...IS LIKE A WINDOW TO ME. THROUGH IT, I CAN SEE INTO YOUR MIND.

AND I CAN SEE WE WANT THE SAME THING... TO ESCAPE ELFHEIM!

I CAN HELP YOU.

THEY CALL YOU THE TRICKSTER GOD FOR A REASON! I CAN'T TRUST YOU!

WELL YES, BUT--





TRUST THAT WE WANT THE SAME THING!

AH!

WHY?

WHY DID I LOOK?

WHY WAS I EVEN TALKING TO HIM?



WHOA! SNAP OUT OF IT!

NGAH! I...



ARE YOU OKAY?

YEA, I'M JUST TIRED I GUESS...



OONA... I WILL ASK MASTER GRIMHILDR WILL GIVE YOU A SECOND CHANCE.



I CANNOT PROMISE SHE WILL...

THANK YOU, BJORS! I CAN'T THANK YOU ENOUGH!



JUST NO MORE TRICKS!

COME ON! I'LL RACE YOU!



SOON WE RETURNED TO REPORT TO--

MASTER GRIMHILDR!

I ASKED YOU TO GO, BJORSI, NOT OONA.

YES MASTER, BUT SHE HELPED--



HOW COULD SHE POSSIBLY HELP?



THERE WERE BLOOD SNAKES UNDER THE SNOW!

I WAS TRACKING ONE AND I SAW BJORSI!--



REALLY?

YEAH, WE HAD TO LEAP FROM TREE TO TREE, COULDN'T TOUCH THE GROUND IN FEAR OF BEING EATEN!

BLOOD SNAKES ARE A REAL THING, EVEN IF OUR ENCOUNTER WASN'T.



IS THIS TRUE?

WE DID NOT TOUCH THE GROUND OR ICE UNTIL WE REACHED AURGELMIR.

UM-HMM.



WELL, AT LEAST THAT PART WAS TRUE.

AND WITH THAT, I WAS GIVEN A SECOND CHANCE TO BE A RANGER.

WHILE I HAD TRULY MASTERED THE SILENT WALK, MAKING IMPROVISED WEAPONS WAS NOT MY STRENGTH.



HOLD ON...

I'LL BE BACK.



I CANNOT BELIEVE YOU LIED LIKE THAT!

TRICKED.

THAT'S WHY YOU WILL NEVER BE A RANGER. YOU ARE TROUBLE, OONA!



I COULD SEE THE BETRAYAL IN HIS EYES. THAT HURT MORE THAN HIS WORDS.

I'M SORRY, BJORSI!

I KNOW I MESSGED UP, BUT I NEED THIS SECOND CHANCE.



WELL, THERE'S NO SECOND CHANCES WITH ME.

YOU ARE NOT ONE OF US, OONA.

GOOD LUCK WITH THAT "SPEAR."





I WAS SO SELF-CENTERED THEN. HOW COULD I NOT SEE HOW MUCH I HURT BJORSI?





I CAN DO WITHOUT YOUR KIND OF HELP-- I HAVE TO DO THIS MYSELF!



GRKKK!

YOU CAN'T CHEAT FOR ME--



OH NO NO NO NO!

COME ON POOKA, THIS IS BAD, THIS IS REAL BAD!



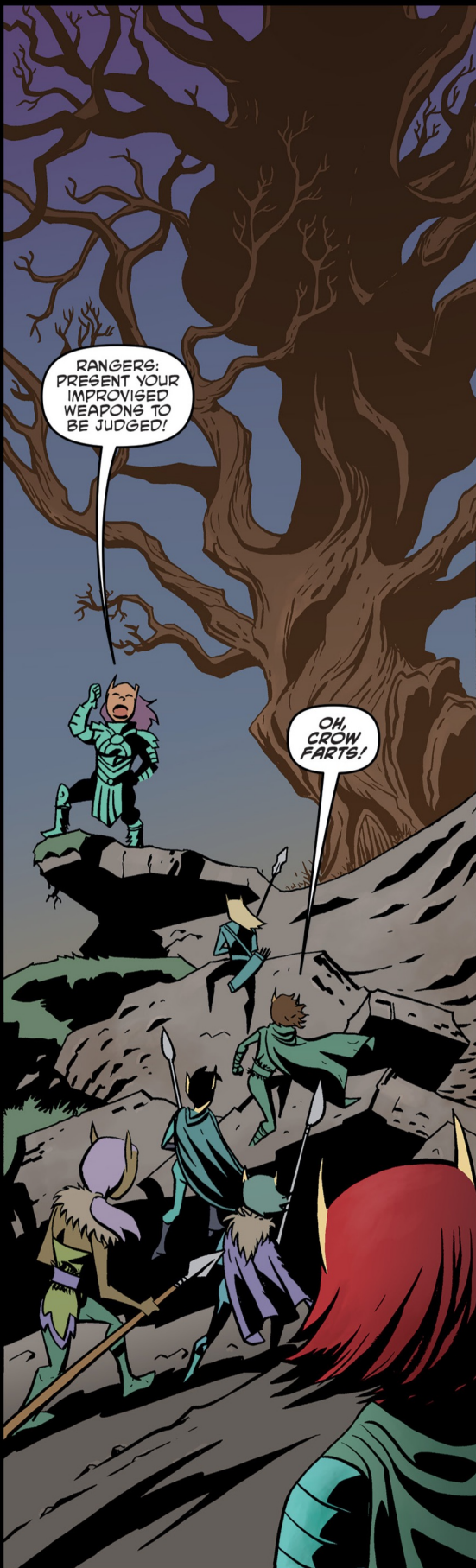
I AM BOUND BY MAGIC TO LOOK OUT FOR YOU, OONA.

THERE YOU GO, KIDDO, NO CHARGE!



WHEN I FIND OUT WHO CURSED ME WITH YOUR PROTECTION, I'M GONNA--

TIME IS UP, RANGERS!



RANGERS:
PRESENT YOUR
IMPROVISED
WEAPONS TO
BE JUDGED!

OH,
CROW
FARTS!



WELL DONE,
BJARTUR.



VERY
POINTY,
DAGFINN.



FOSSA, I
HAVE SEEN
YOU DO
BETTER.



BJORSI,
THAT LOOKS
PERFECT.



FREDA,
FRYA, YOU
SHOULD BE
PROUD.





FAERIE SPIT!
YOU CHEATED
WITH THAT LITTLE
GOAT MAN,
POOKA!



NO,
WAIT, I DIDN'T
WANT HIM TO--
HE'S MAGICALLY
COMPELLED TO
PROTECT ME BUT
SOMETIMES
HE--



POOOKAA!



POOKA!
GET BACK
HERE!

I'M
SORRY!



I CAN'T
CONTROL
HIM!

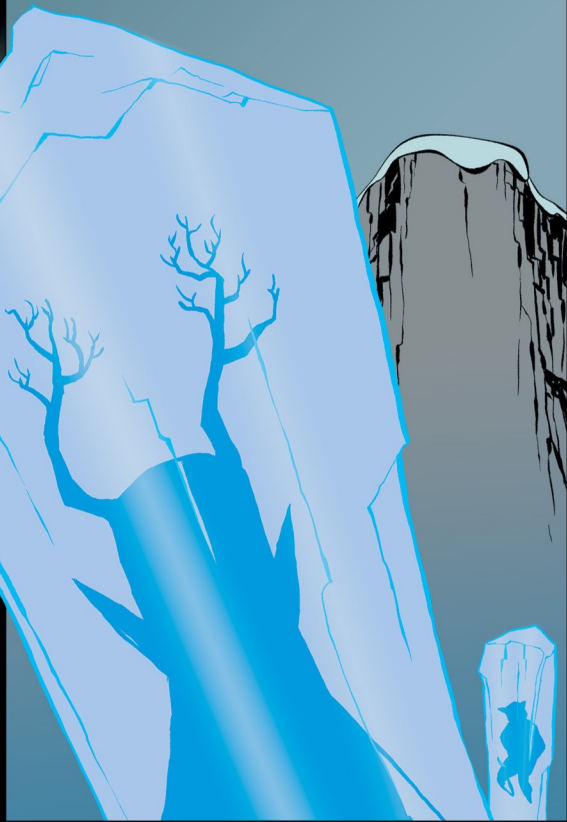


YOU ARE
FOREVER **BANISHED**
FROM THE RANGERS,
OONA LIGHTFOOT--
RUN OFF WITH YOUR
PET AND NEVER
RETURN!

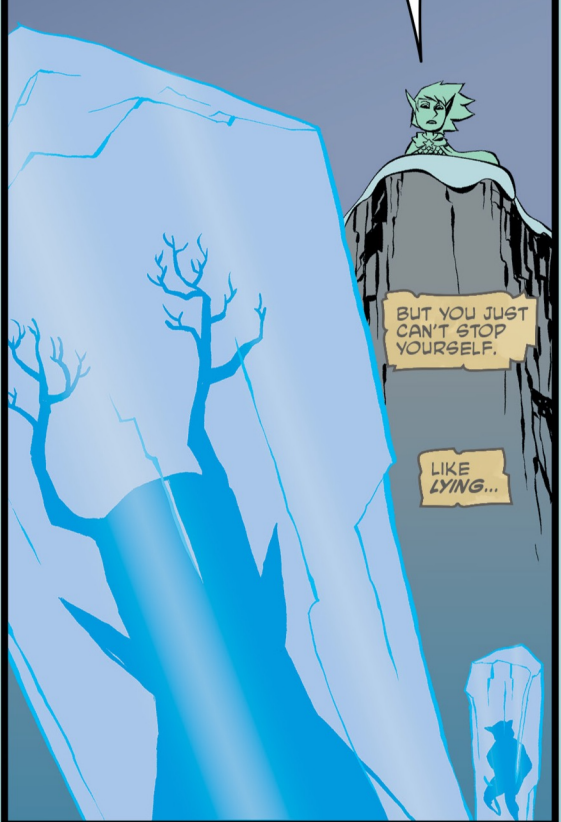
WHAT IS
WRONG
WITH HER?

A
CHEATER
AND **LIAR**.
WHAT A
SHAME.

SOMETIMES YOU KNOW WHAT YOU ARE DOING IS A BAD IDEA...



WHY AM I DOING THIS?



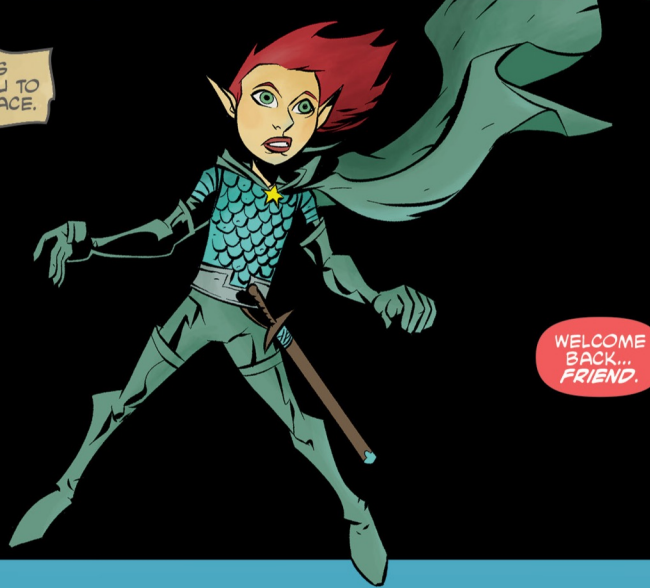
BUT YOU JUST CAN'T STOP YOURSELF.

LIKE LYING...

OKAY LOKI, I--
OH!



...IT ALWAYS BRINGS YOU TO A DARK PLACE.



WELCOME BACK... FRIEND.



WE AREN'T FRIENDS!

WE CAN BE.

WE WON'T, BUT MAYBE WE CAN MAKE A DEAL. LIKE NO ONE GETS HURT.



JUST YOU AND I. WE GET OUT OF HERE THEN GO OUR OWN WAYS.

NOT EVEN MY TROLLHEIM. JUST YOU AND I.



AFTER ALL, THEY WANT REVENGE.

I SEEK FREEDOM FROM THIS PLACE AND TO FIND WHAT HAS BECOME OF MY WIFE SIGNY IN THE REALMS ABOVE.

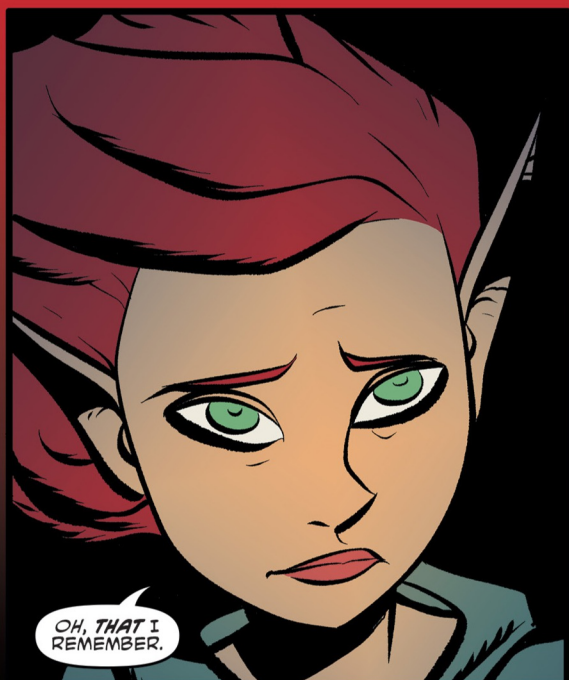


I ALSO SEEK SOMEONE LEFT BEHIND... BY THE WAR YOU STARTED!

EVEN IF I AGREE... I DON'T KNOW A WAY OUT OF HERE. NOT FROM YOUR PRISON OR A WAY OUT OF ELFHEIM'S STRONGHOLD.



I CAN FIND A WAY... THROUGH YOUR MEMORIES. THINK HARD ABOUT THE DAY I WAS CAPTURED.



OH, THAT I REMEMBER.



PARDON MY REACH.

"DON'T LOOK AT HIM IN THE EYES," BJORSI SAID...

OH, I SEE NOW...

DON'T TOUCH ME!

I SHOULD HAVE LISTENED.

AH! CROW FARTS, WHAT WAS I THINKING? GET WHAT I WANT AND PUT EVERYONE IN DANGER?

WAS I GOING TO RELEASE A GREAT EVIL JUST SO I CAN GET OUT?

I HAVE TO GET CONTROL OF MYSELF.

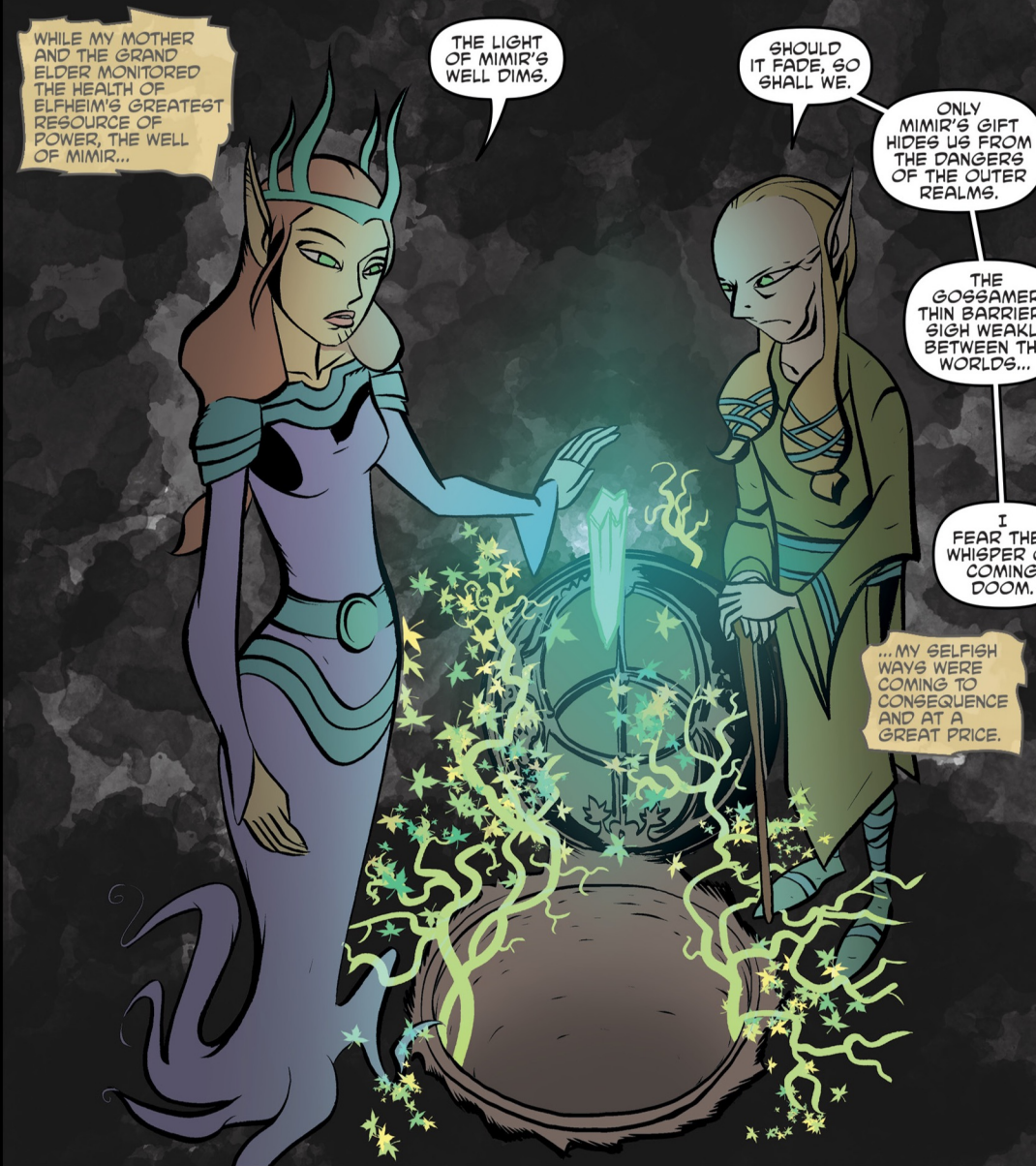
I'M JUST GOING TO CAUSE MORE TROUBLE THAN ANYONE NEEDS IF I KEEP THIS UP. SO STUPID!

BUT I WASN'T STUPID...

I WAS JUST YOUNG AND FULL OF MISTAKES...



... AND I WASN'T FINISHED MAKING THEM.



WHILE MY MOTHER AND THE GRAND ELDER MONITORED THE HEALTH OF ELFHEIM'S GREATEST RESOURCE OF POWER, THE WELL OF MIMIR...

THE LIGHT OF MIMIR'S WELL DIMS.

SHOULD IT FADE, SO SHALL WE.

ONLY MIMIR'S GIFT HIDES US FROM THE DANGERS OF THE OUTER REALMS.

THE GOSSAMER THIN BARRIERS SIGH WEAKLY BETWEEN THE WORLDS...

I FEAR THEY WHISPER OF COMING DOOM.

... MY SELFISH WAYS WERE COMING TO CONSEQUENCE AND AT A GREAT PRICE.



I CAN SEE IT NOW... MY WAY OUT.



I SAW IT IN YOUR EYES,
OONA LIGHTFOOT!
YOUR HALF-TROLL
BLOOD! A SECRET
NOT EVEN YOU KNOW!

WITH MY SPELLS
OVER TROLL-KIN, I
SHALL USE YOUR
HIDDEN THOUGHTS
TO FREE MYSELF
OF THIS PRISON!

I SAW INTO
YOUR MIND,
LITTLE ONE...

...I SEE THE
MAKING OF
THESE CRYSTAL
PRISONS!



THEY SHALL BIND
LOKI NO MORE...



... NOR MY
TROLLHEIM!



THE SEALING OF
THE PRIGON...

... IS THE
WEAKNESS.



ACHILLES HAD
HIS HEEL...



... BALDR HAD
BLIND HODR...



EVEN ELVONIC
BONDS ARE
DESTINED TO DIE!



I JUST NEEDED A
FOOL TO SHOW ME...



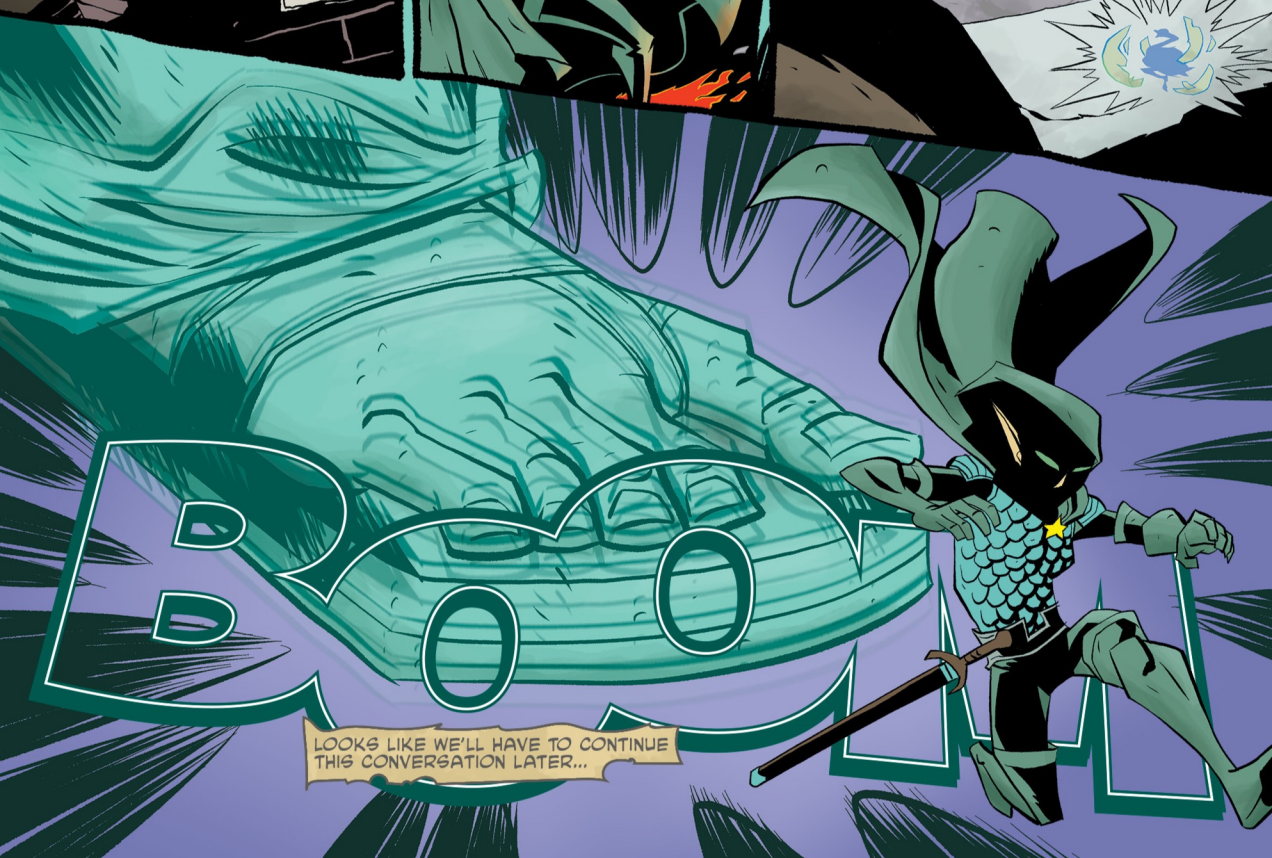
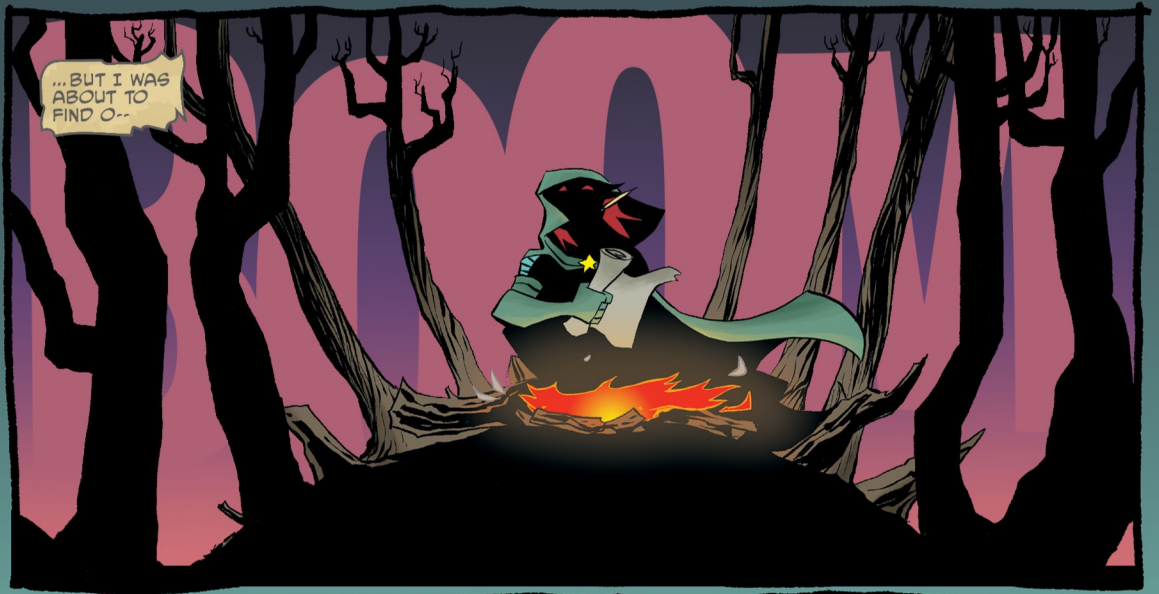
I AM
IN YOUR
DEBT, OONA
LIGHTFOOT!

BREATHE
DEEP, MY
TROLLHEIM, FOR
THE TASTE OF
VENGEANCE IS
IN THE AIR!

FOR WE
SHALL TEAR
ELFHEIM
ASUNDER!

I HAD NO IDEA OF
THE DANGERS MY
SELFISHNESS HAD
UNLEASHED...







I'LL NEED
SOME TIME TO
FIND A SAFE
CAMP AGAIN!



UNTIL THEN, ENJOY
THE WORLD YOU
ARE IN, IT MIGHT
NOT ALWAYS BE
THERE FOR YOU!



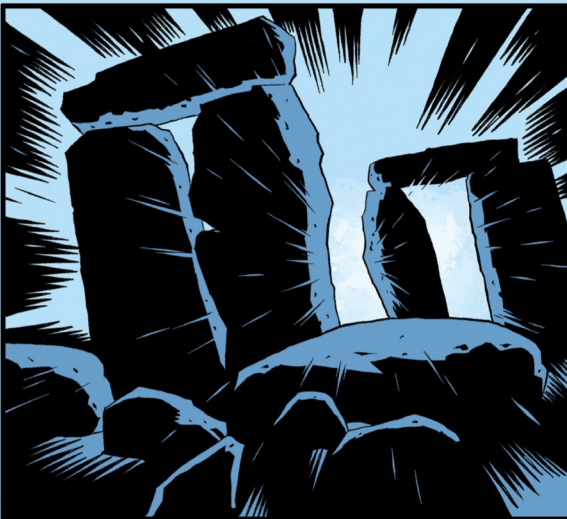
CONTINUED IN
The After Realm
Ragnarok
Quarterly #2!



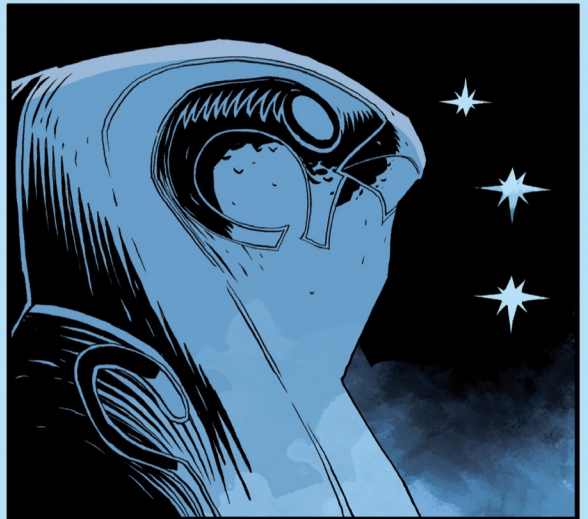
Some influences on

THE AFTER REALM

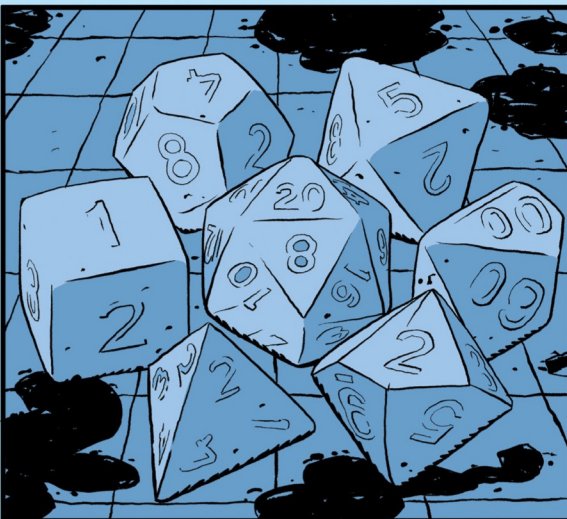
PT 1



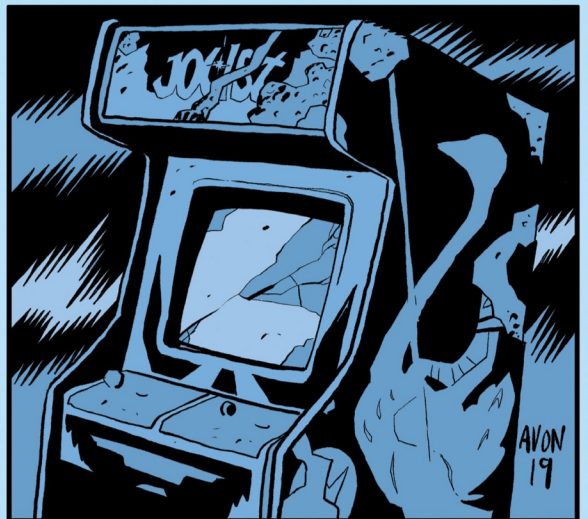
ANCIENT MYSTERIES



MYTHOLOGY



DUNGEONS & DRAGONS

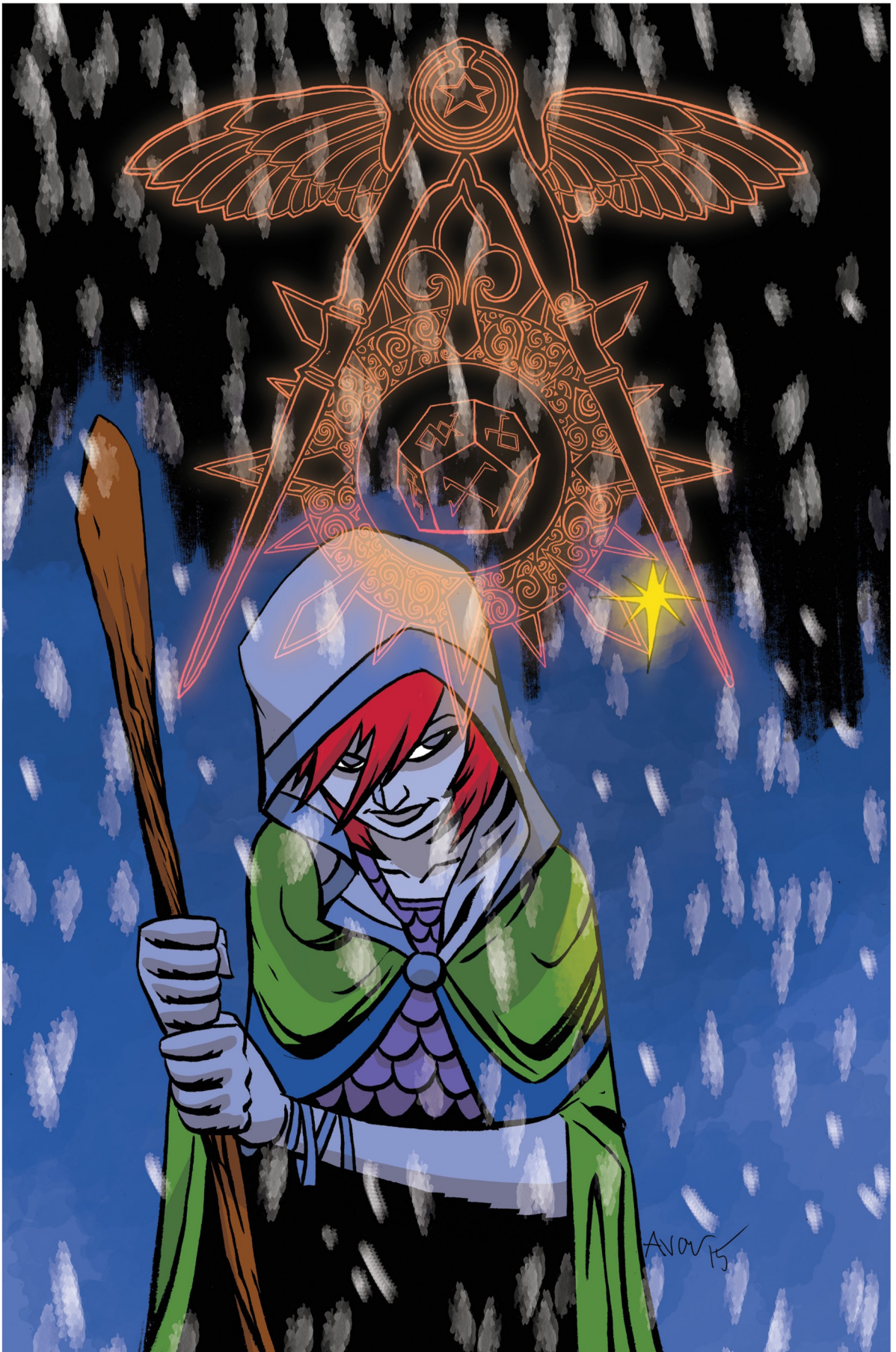


80s ARCADES

The #AfterRealm by Michael Avon Oeming Co-Creator of POWERS

THE AFTER REALM





ANOV 15





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THE AFTER REALM

So... I'm not here.

I'm really never here. Whenever you're talking to me. I'm probably someplace else. Not unlike Homer Simpson and his donuts. Except my donuts are fiction, fantasy, and mythology. Whenever you see a photo of me, I'm not there. Not really. I'm in my head far, far in the back of my mind thinking about rocks, trees, and mountains... Or the line of fog above the streams and waterfalls. Even now as I write this, I've driven out to the mountainsides of Washington State, inspired by the landscape. A good drive is like a portal into what could be.

Here in *The After Realm*, I'm gathering all of my loves and influences from my youth, like favorite but forgotten toys rediscovered left on the floor. As a kid, I'm watching cartoons like *Thundarr the Barbarian* and playing *Dungeons & Dragons* with my one friend who knows how to, Shawn Neely. I'm scraping up some quarters to play *Dragons Lair* and *Joust* at the 7/11 with Shawn and Scott Warner, my childhood best friends. I was never good at video games so these quarters wouldn't last long.. But all of those things, for as much as I thought I loved them, were a mere facilitator to take my mind deeper into my own imagination. It was never about the dice, or role playing, never about the high score or gameplay. It was where it took my mind when I looked at the cover to the *D&D Dungeon Master's Guide* or lose my mind in the *Monster Manual* I probably loved that even more than the game. A few years back, I was at a mall with Brian Bendis and Matt Fraction. We saw both of these books being sold in a flea market style sale in the middle of the place. I scooped them up before Matt got to them. It's the one time I ever felt cooler than Matt!

Where did my mind go when I thought about where the clashing knights in *Joust* came from? What did they believe in that would make them fight on flightless birds over lava? I mean, it made sense to them, so it had to be about something! And frankly trying to figure that out made way more sense than the real world around me. Things were never about what it was about... it was about how it fed my imagination. Even a broken pencil. Many days in grade school, I remember breaking a pencil just so that I could pretend the jagged edge of broken wood and lead were a castle for a little tiny self to climb through.

The first two issues of *The After Realm* are an origin story for Oona Lightfoot. Yes, she is named after Gordon Lightfoot because his music is good daydreaming music, always a story. I want to spend time with Oona so we get to know her quirks, to see what she's made of before facing the larger world... or what's left of it! It will cover the most intense inspirations I have, from the enigma of mythology to aliens and dice rolling fantasy on an Ostrich back.

But as you read these comics, just remember... I'm not there writing and drawing them. I'm with you there in the pages... daydreaming.



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Michael Oeming

www.michaelavonoeming.com

@Oeming

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Shawn Lee

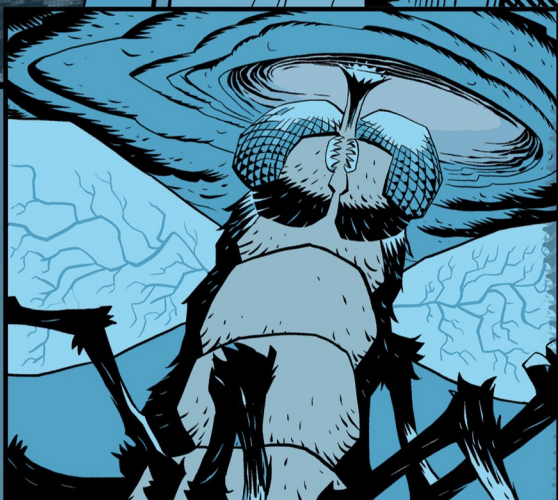
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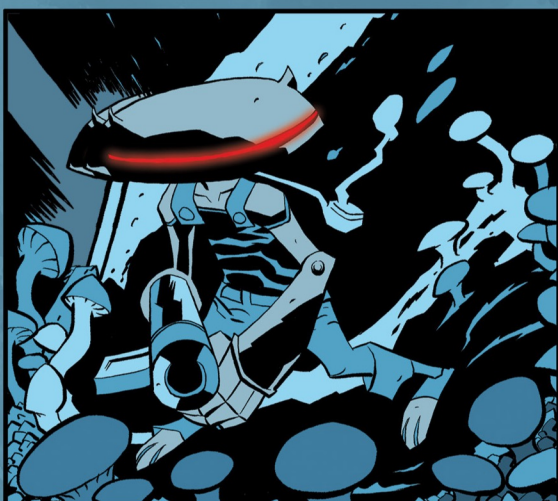
COME BACK FOR TROLLS...



RESURRECTED GODS...



ALIENS...



AND BOUNTY HUNTERS!

**THE
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