

# Courtney VOLUME ONE Crumrin



The Night Things

— ❖ — TED NAIFEH — ❖ —



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VOLUME ONE  
Crumrin

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## The Night Things

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*To Magic, for helping awaken my imagination, and to Ron,  
for telling me of the Night Things.*





# A Few Words About Children, Nightmares, And Outcasts

Childhood is a much darker world than most adults care to remember. If anything, childhood is even more full of terror and passion than life becomes after a few decades spent killing off brain cells. Small children are straight outta nature, all id, tribal survivalists to the core. They drive the weak away from the village, instinctively hating those who are different, ugly, or slow. Sure, they're preoccupied with stockpiling toys instead of guns, but the principle is always the same. Behind the big shiny eyes and dimples is *The Lord of the Flies*, ticking and buzzing. We learn sweetness and the ability to sit still later on in order to fit into society and get grown-up things like jobs and apartments and girl- or boyfriends, things that seem yucky and boring until the moment we're ready for them. Among the byproducts that boil off and are lost in the process of growing up are simplicity, lots of dreams, and a huge amount of fear.

Children understand fear. But there are also childhood terrors that go even deeper than the social torture experienced daily in every grammar school in the world. One of the worst nightmares I ever had seemed to be trying to explain the bedtime fears that all kids go through. While I was asleep, my brain told me a story about children and their common, silly childhood fears: the dark, the bogeyman, the creature in the closet, the monster under the bed. The stuff we learn to laugh at and later humor and comfort in our own children. Then I saw the human predators, the real-life monsters such as serial killers and child murderers, and their helpless prey. My mind suggested that it was the terror suffered by these victims that, via some kind of collective unconscious, shows up as the *Thing at the Foot of the Bed*. That even the most sheltered kid lovingly tucked in every night somehow knows about these very real bogeymen and feels the horror of the unlucky ones, the ones who got caught. At 4 a.m. I woke up screaming and sat with all the lights on and my back to the wall until the watery winter sun came up. I'd never been so glad to be an adult before.

Strangely enough, despite all of the more or less real terrors they contend with on a daily and nightly basis, children love to be scared, love to be grossed out, love, above all, to be shocked.

The only children's stories that are truly classic, timeless, and beloved are also subversively honest about life's ugliness. Kids experience reality on a much simpler level than adults, and don't buy stories that are too sugary. They're realists in the sense that they know there's much more to reality than what we see around us every day or what we learn in school. There almost has to be a tragic, a bitter, or a vicious edge to the story, or they know it for the load of bull it is. Mark Twain, Roald Dahl, and Judy Blume, three of the all-time best-loved children's authors, knew this. Their books are often banned from schools and libraries because of parents' need to believe that children are innocent of pain and cruelty and can be protected from knowledge about the darkness of human nature.

I grew up on those and other great authors, whose books gave me a glimpse at life's beautiful and horrible truths. Now that I'm an adult, at least in the sense that I have to pay taxes and worry about gingivitis, I see that I'm a part of the diaspora of kids that was driven from the village, for various reasons, and spent adolescence observing it all from the outside. We've formed our own tribes, and as far as I can see, we, the geeks, won. We're smarter, we're independent, we're more courageous, and we value each other more than the kids who fit in without effort, blending in and never really getting to know themselves. I only wish I could tell my little sister, who's about Courtney's age, and rapidly moving from the unicorn stage to the moody poetry stage and reading everything she can get her hands on, to hang in there. Sure, it'll be a rough eight or ten years, but at the end of it, she'll be a conscious, brilliant, confident woman with a loving, like-minded community and her own unique style. It's worth the pain you feel now. Trust me. And grown-up geekboys do make the best partners. I should know.

Actually, come to think of it, that doesn't sound particularly comforting—eight years is a lifetime to a kid. And of course, you can't tell kids anything.

—KELLY CRUMRIN, FALL 2002

*Kelly Crumrin is a freelance writer who lives in San Francisco and would head the campaign to elect Emperor Norton as president if only he weren't so dead.*



CAREFUL NOW.

OLD PROFESSOR CRUMRIN DON'T TAKE KINDLY TO YOUNGSTERS GALLY-VANTIN' IN 'IS BACK-YARD.



I SEE EVERTHIN' WHAT GOES ON 'ROUND 'ERE.

I'M THE NEIGHBORHOOD'S OLDEST RESIDENT.

NAME'S BUTTERWORM.



I SAW CRUMRIN HOUSE BUILT.

IT WERE THE FIRST HOUSE IN 'ILLSBOROUGH, BEFORE IT BECOME A POSH NEIGHBORHOOD FULL 'A SPOILT LITTLE BRATS.



I HEAR 'EM TALKIN', THE LITTLE DEVILS.

HEAR ALL THEM NASTY RUMORS. AX MURDERS IN THE ATTIC.

THAT LAD MICHAEL JACKSON COMING OUT EVERY YEAR TO GET HIS NOSE FIXED UP.

THEY LIVE IN MORTAL TERROR O' THE OLD PLACE, BLESS 'EM.



I'LL TELL YEH THIS FER NOTHIN'.

ALL THEM RUMORS?

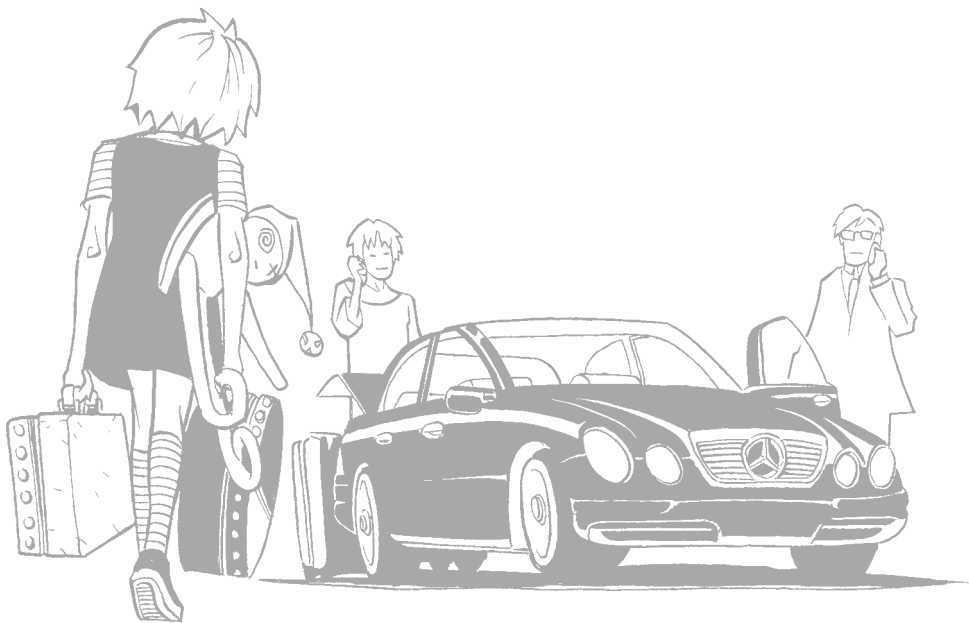


COMPARED WITH WHAT REALLY GOES ON IN THERE, ALL THAT'S JUST A SPLASH IN THE KIDDIE-POOL.



# Chapter One

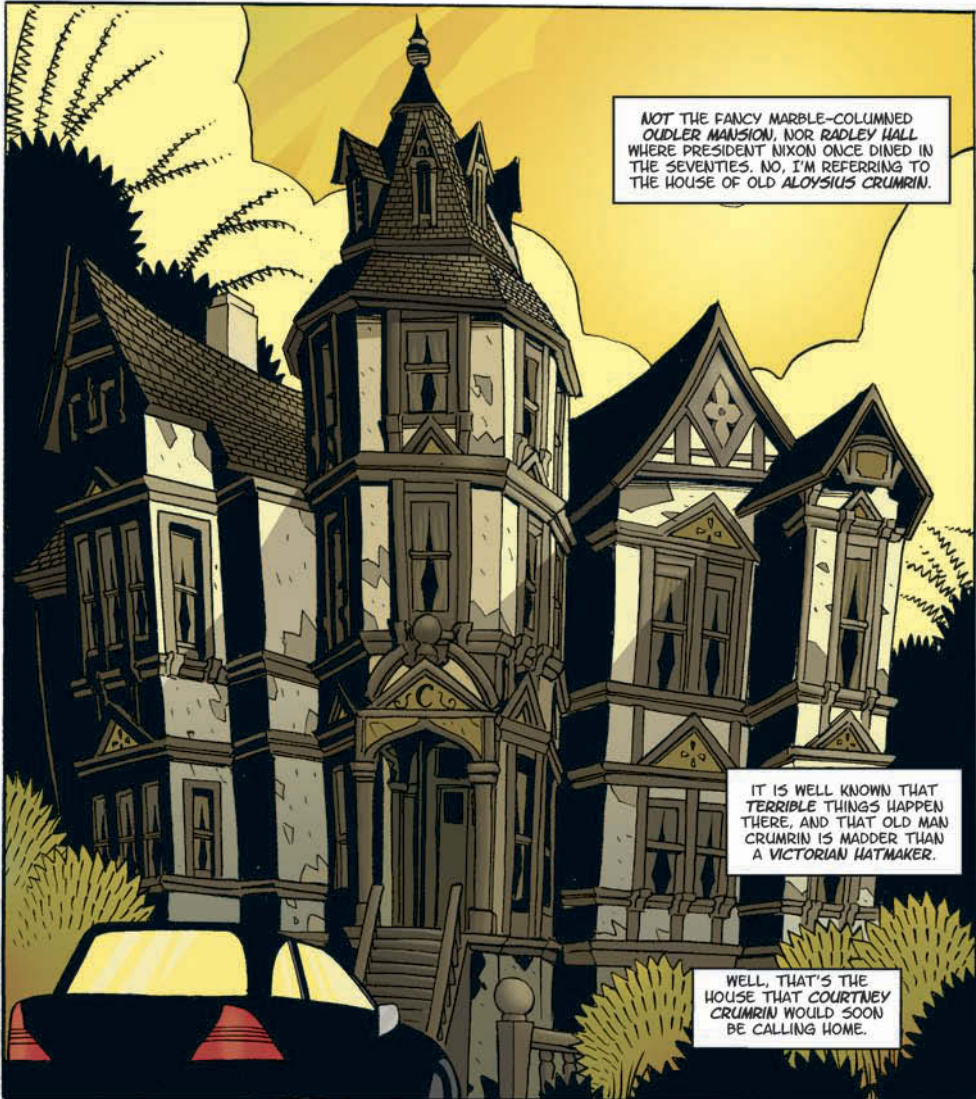






DO YOU KNOW THAT **LITTLE BOROUGH** OUTSIDE THE CITY, THE ONE WITH ALL THE BIG MANSIONS AND TREES?

DO YOU KNOW THAT **ONE HOUSE**, THE MOST TALKED ABOUT HOUSE IN THE WHOLE NEIGHBORHOOD?



**NOT** THE FANCY MARBLE-COLUMNED **OULDLER MANSION**, NOR **RADLEY HALL** WHERE PRESIDENT NIXON ONCE DINED IN THE SEVENTIES. NO, I'M REFERRING TO THE HOUSE OF OLD **ALOYSIUS CRUMRIN**.

IT IS WELL KNOWN THAT **TERRIBLE THINGS** HAPPEN THERE, AND THAT OLD MAN **CRUMRIN** IS Madder THAN A VICTORIAN HATMAKER.

WELL, THAT'S THE HOUSE THAT **COURTNEY CRUMRIN** WOULD SOON BE CALLING HOME.

UNCLE ALOYSIUS WAS GETTING ON IN YEARS, AND WOULD SOON NEED LOOKING AFTER.



...AND COURTNEY'S PARENTS WERE RUNNING OUT OF CREDIT CARDS, SO THE CHANCE TO LIVE RENT-FREE IN A WEALTHY SUBURB WAS TOO GOOD TO PASS UP.



SHE HAD BEEN TO THE HOUSE BEFORE AS A YOUNG CHILD.

HER MEMORIES OF IT WERE NOT PLEASANT ONES.

THE DISREPAIR AND GENERAL GLOOM OF THE PLACE ONLY ADDED TO HER APPREHENSION.



THE LOWER FLOORS ARE YOURS...

BUT DON'T YOU DARE STICK YOUR NOSES IN MY PRIVATE CHAMBERS.

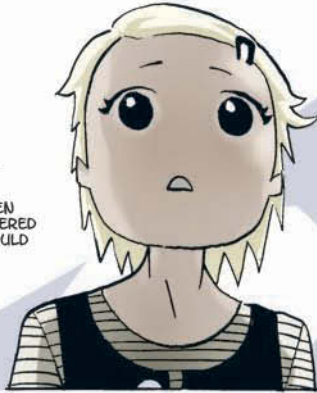


HE SHOT HER A WITHERING GAZE WITH HIS TERRIBLE EYES.

WOULD YOU CARE FOR SOME HOT COCOA?

NO, THANK YOU, SIR.

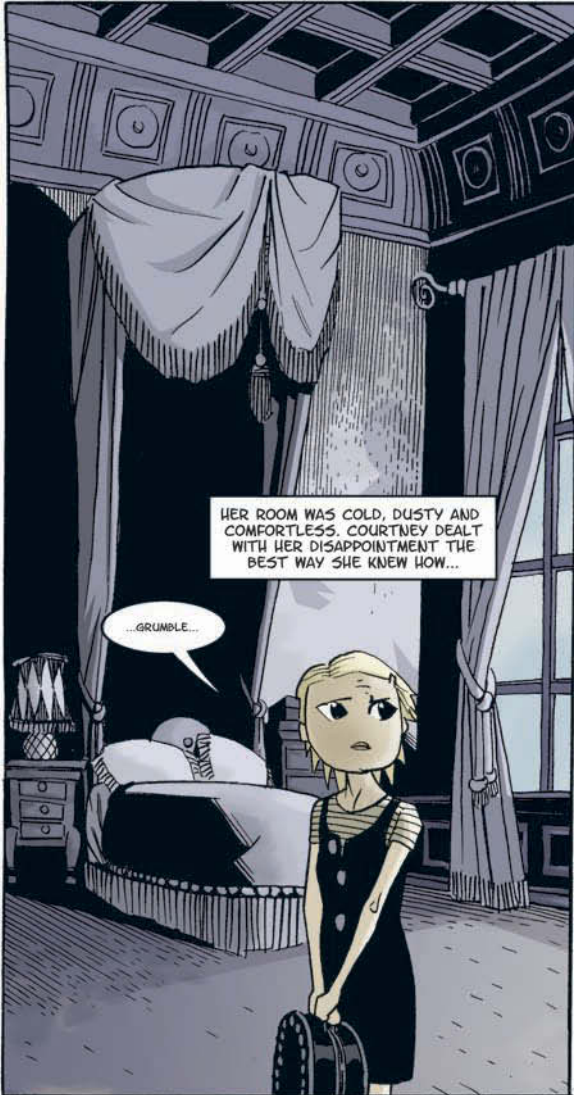
UNCLE ALOYSIUS WAS EVEN NAUSTIER THAN SHE REMEMBERED HIM, WITH A FACE THAT WOULD CURDLE NEW MILK.



THE PROSPECT OF LIVING UNDER HIS ROOF BEGAN TO SINK IN THEN, AND COURTNEY'S STOMACH TURNED TO ICEWATER.

"I MUST HAVE BEEN REALLY ROTTEN IN MY PREVIOUS LIFE," THOUGHT COURTNEY.

"MAYBE A GYM TEACHER."



HER ROOM WAS COLD, DUSTY AND UNCOMFORTABLE. COURTNEY DEALT WITH HER DISAPPOINTMENT THE BEST WAY SHE KNEW HOW...

...GRUMBLE...



IT WAS DIFFICULT TO SLEEP, FOR THE COVERS SMELLED OF AGE, AND THE HOUSE'S TIMBERS EMITTED STRANGE CREAKS AND GROANS.

BUT MORE ALARMING BY FAR WAS THE SOUND OF SOMETHING STIRRING AT THE FOOT OF HER BED.



AT FIRST SHE COULDN'T REMEMBER WHERE SHE WAS.



CONFUSED THOUGHTS STRUGGLED IN HER SLEEPY MIND TO EXPLAIN WHAT SHE WAS SEEING.

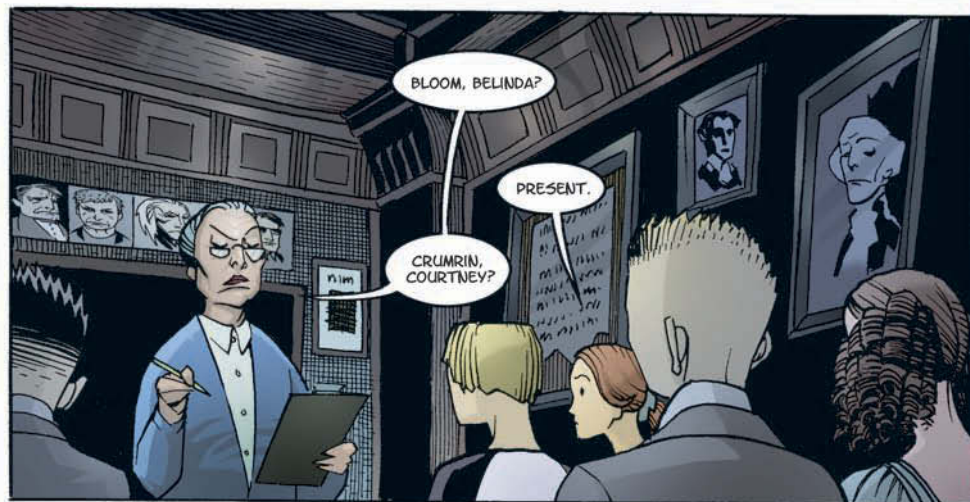


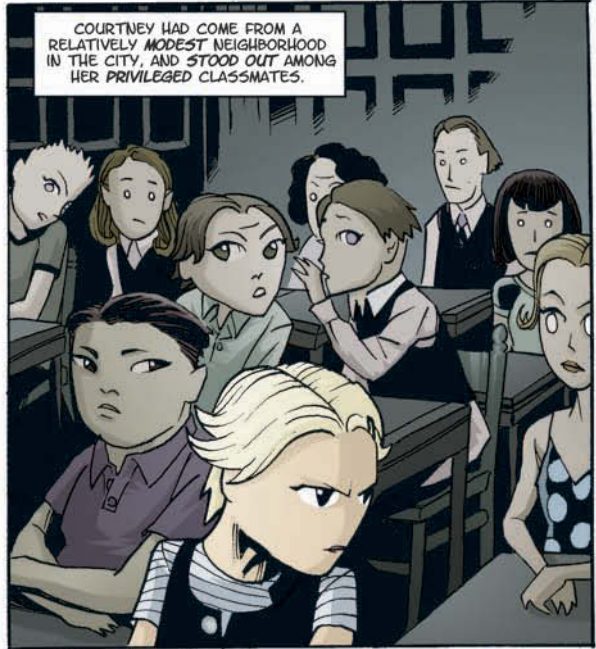
IT WASN'T TILL SHE HAD THE LIGHT ON THAT ICY PANIC BEGAN TO TAKE HOLD.



NEEDLESS TO SAY, SHE DIDN'T CLOSE HER EYES AGAIN ALL NIGHT. WOULD YOU?

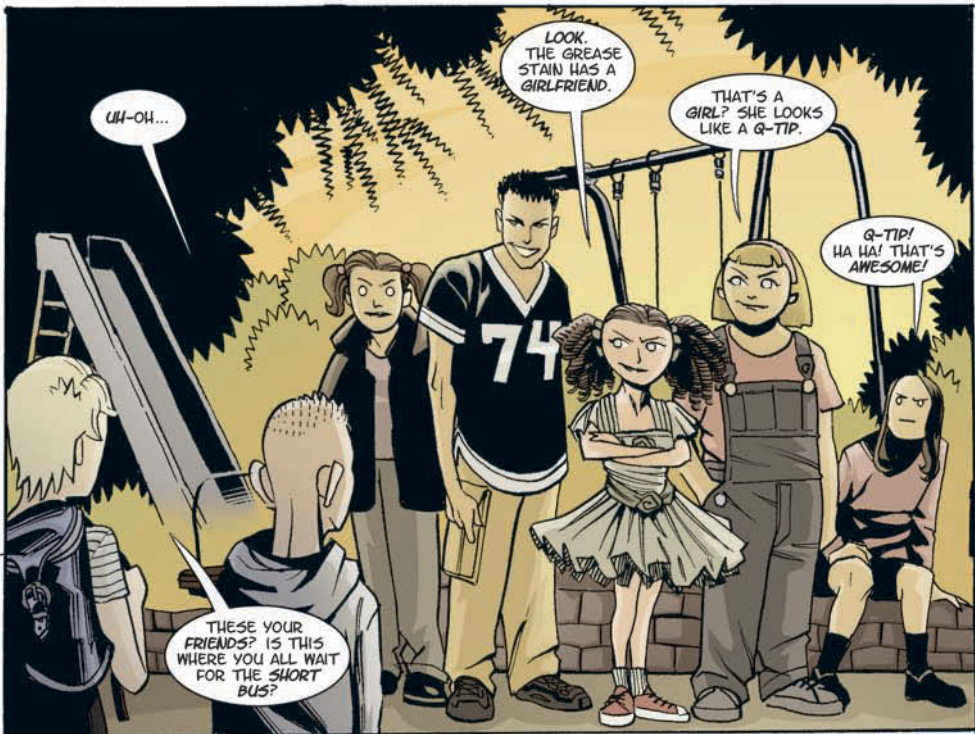
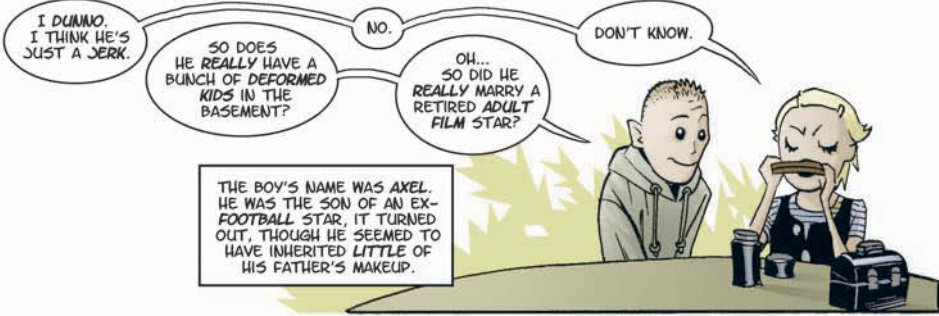


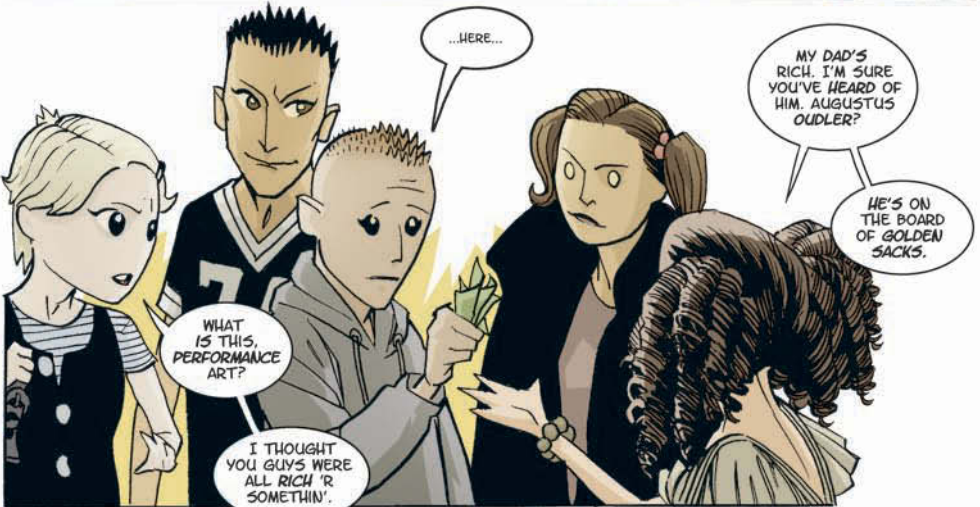
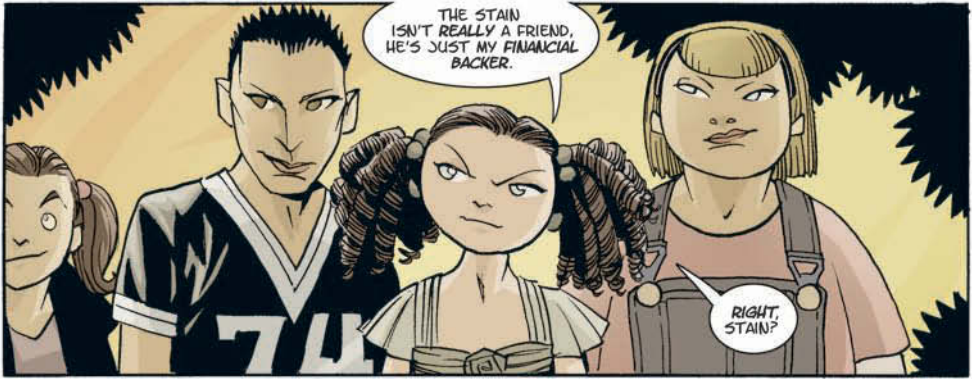


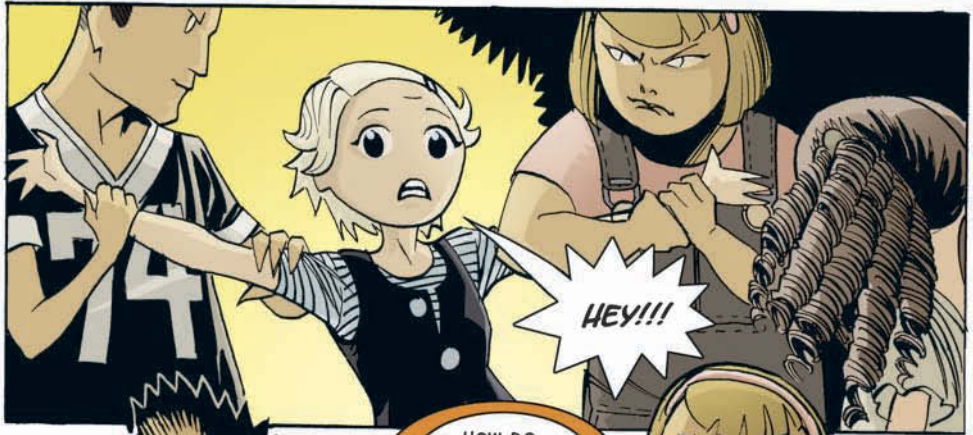


THAT FACT AND HER LAST NAME WERE ENOUGH TO GUARANTEE A ROUGH INTRODUCTION.











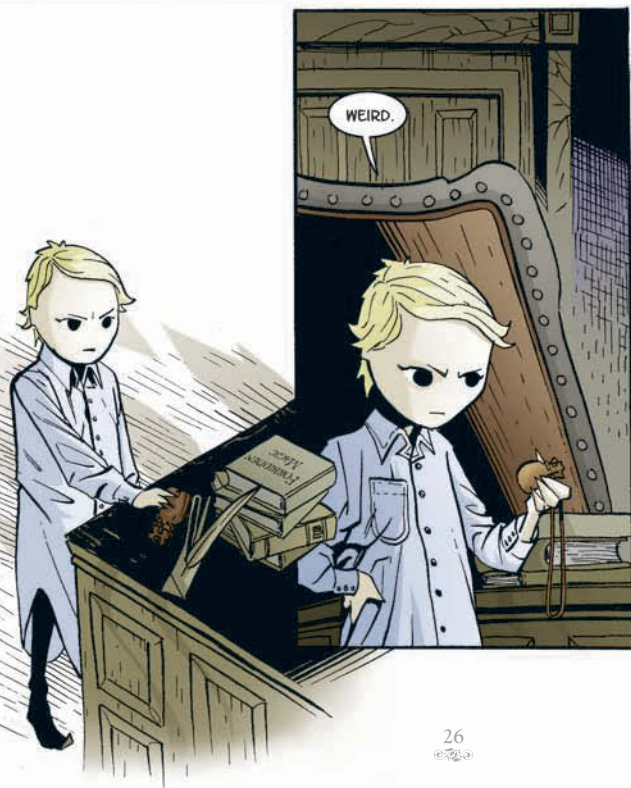
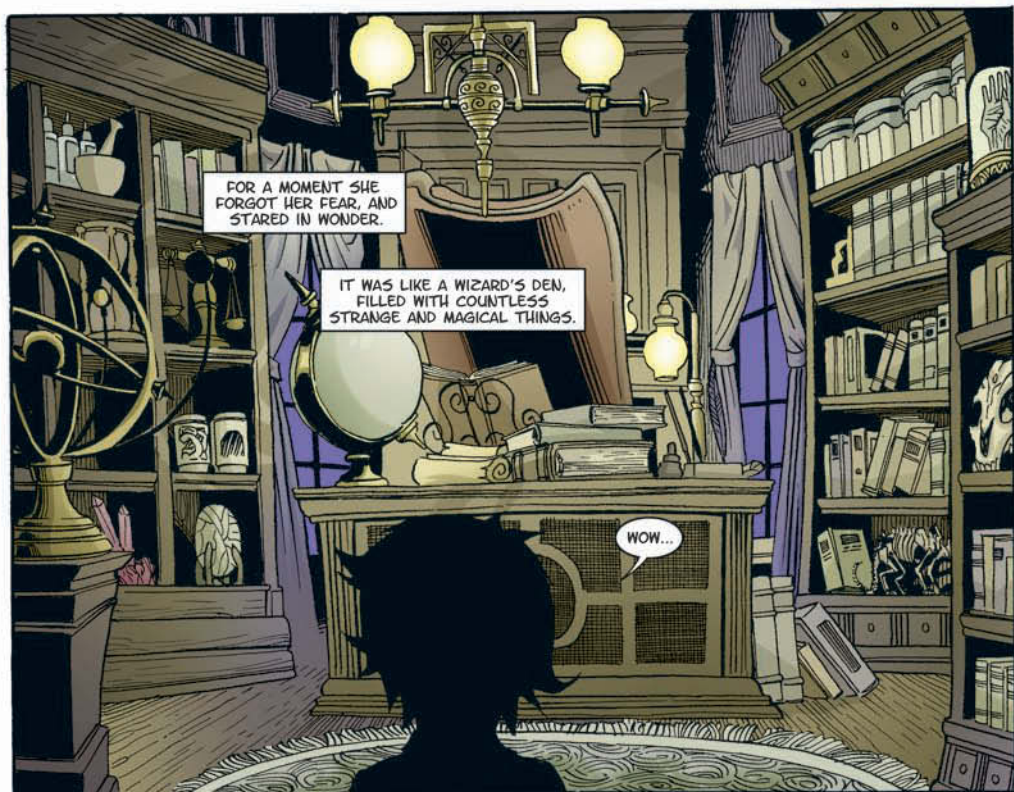




THAT NIGHT, COURTNEY AGAIN FOUND HERSELF UNABLE TO SLEEP. SHE WANDERED THE STILL, QUIET HALLS, FILLED WITH A NAMELESS DREAD.





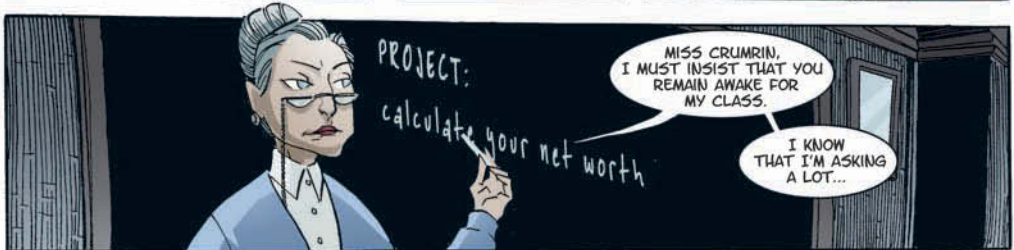


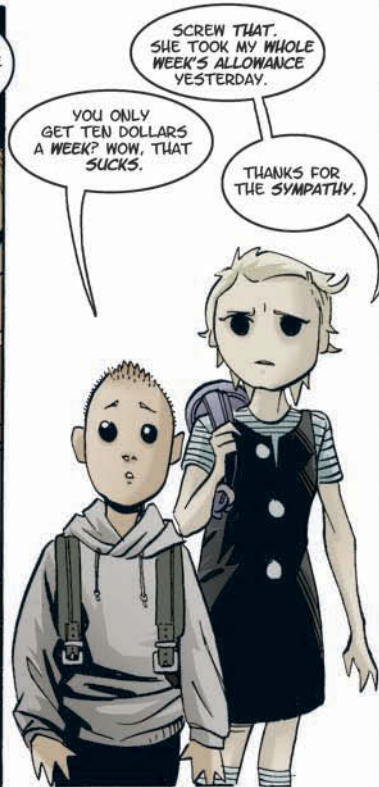
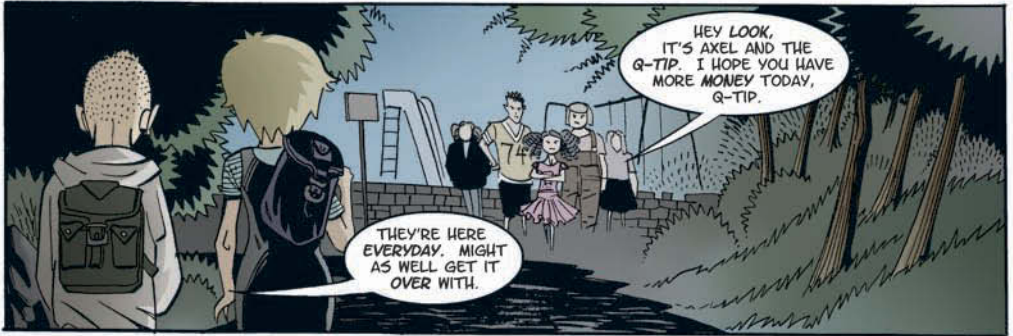


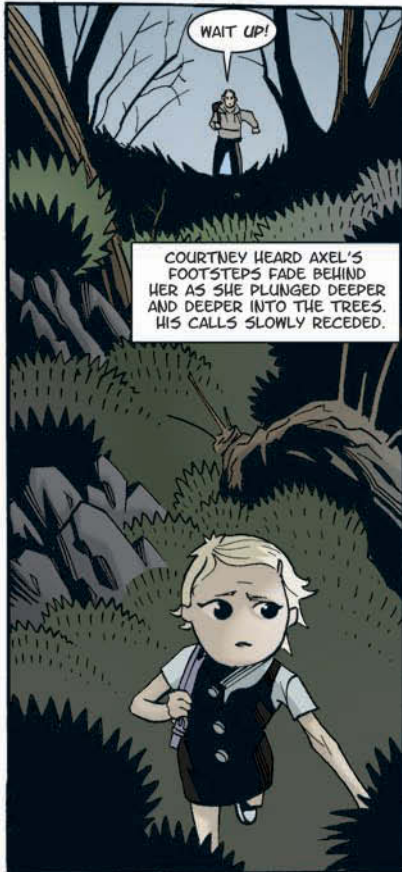
TO COURTNEY'S WONDER AND RELIEF, THE OLD MAN'S EXPRESSION SOFTENED.

THIS HOUSE TAKES SOME GETTING USED TO. I'LL TAKE YOU BACK TO YOUR ROOM.

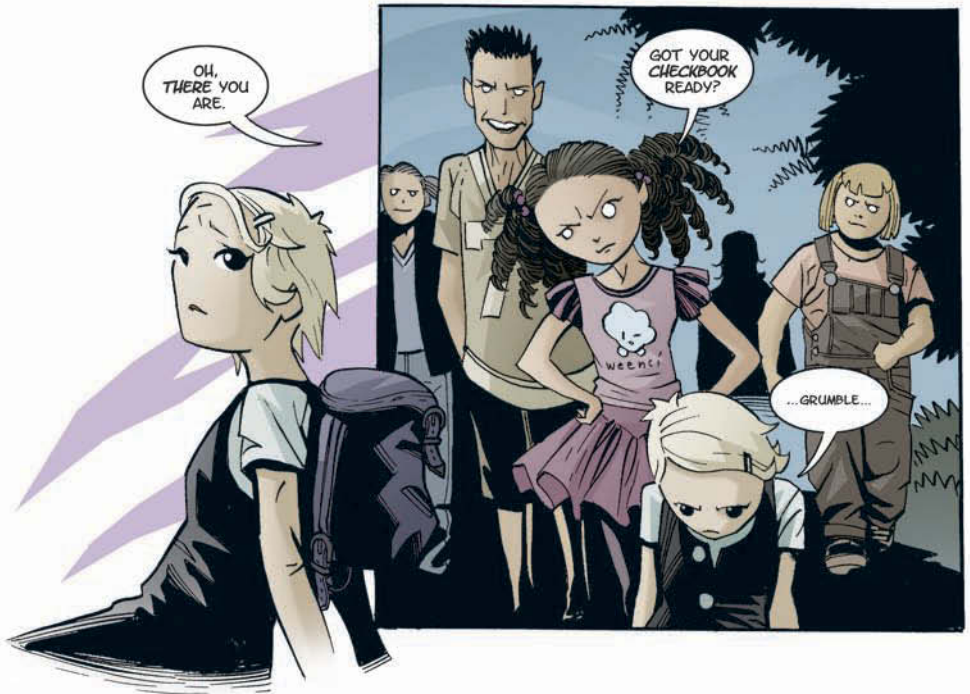














WE DIDN'T RAISE OUR LITTLE GIRL TO GET INTO FIGHTS.

THIS IS A DECENT NEIGHBORHOOD. DO YOU WANT TO MAKE US LOOK BAD?



AT LEAST TRY TO GET ALONG WITH THE OTHER KIDS.

DON'T EMBARRASS US. THOSE KIDS HAVE IMPORTANT PARENTS.









AXEL WAS NEVER SEEN BY ANYONE IN HILLSBOROUGH AGAIN. I'M SORRY TO SAY THAT NO ONE MISSED HIM ALL THAT MUCH.

AFTER ALL, COURTNEY HAD HER OWN PROBLEMS TO DEAL WITH.

OH, WHAT A FINE JACKET Y'VE GOT THERE, MR. BUTTERWORM.



WHY THANK'EE, MR. BUTTERWORM. IT COME OFF A PERFEK'LY TOOTHsome LITTLE FELLER.

'OW DELIGHTFUL, MR. BUTTERWORM. AND WHERE BE THIS LITTLE FELLER NOW?

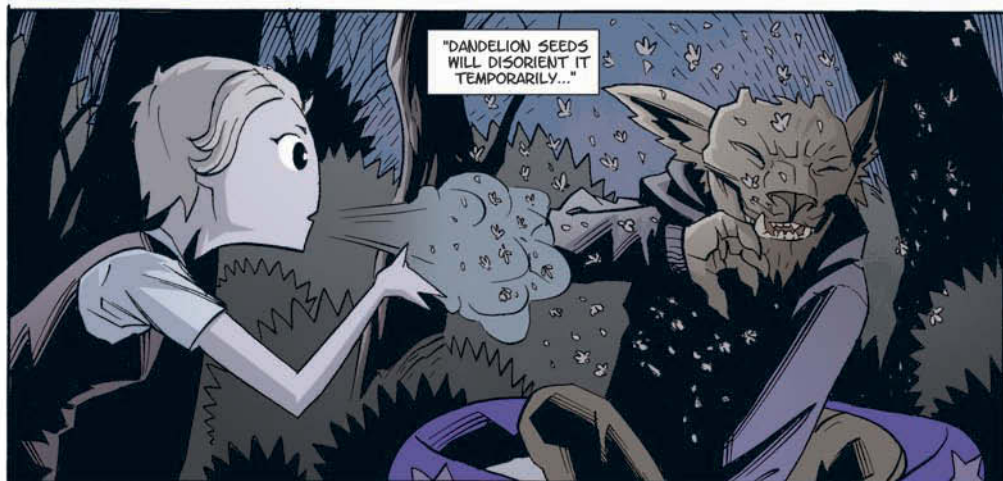


**BUURRRRUP!**

I COULDN'T RIGHTLY TELL, MR. BUTTERWORM. P'RAPS ON HIS WAY TO ME LOWER INTESTINES.

EHEM!





"...UNTIL YOU CAN SECURELY BIND IT IN COLD IRON."

YE JUST THINK Y'RE ALL KINDSA CLEVER, DONT YE, MISSY?



I JUST DO MY HOMEWORK.



SEE YA.

YE LITTLE MONSTER! I'LL EAT YER FACE OFF!



LET ME OUT!



BUT THAT WASN'T THE END OF THE ESSAY.

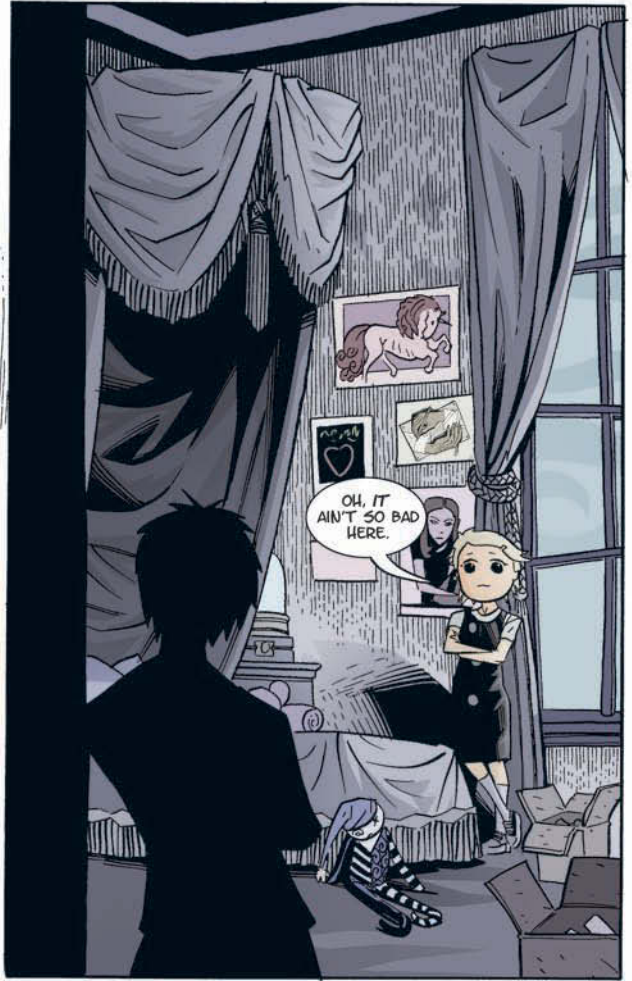


"YOU MUST THEN WAIT FOR THREE DAYS AND THREE NIGHTS, AND RETURN AT DUSK ON THE FOURTH DAY."



Y-Y-YOU AG-GAIN...







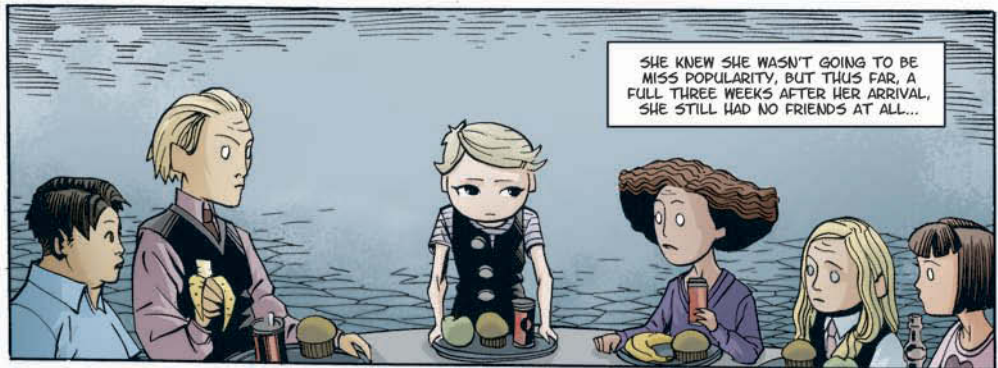




# Chapter Two







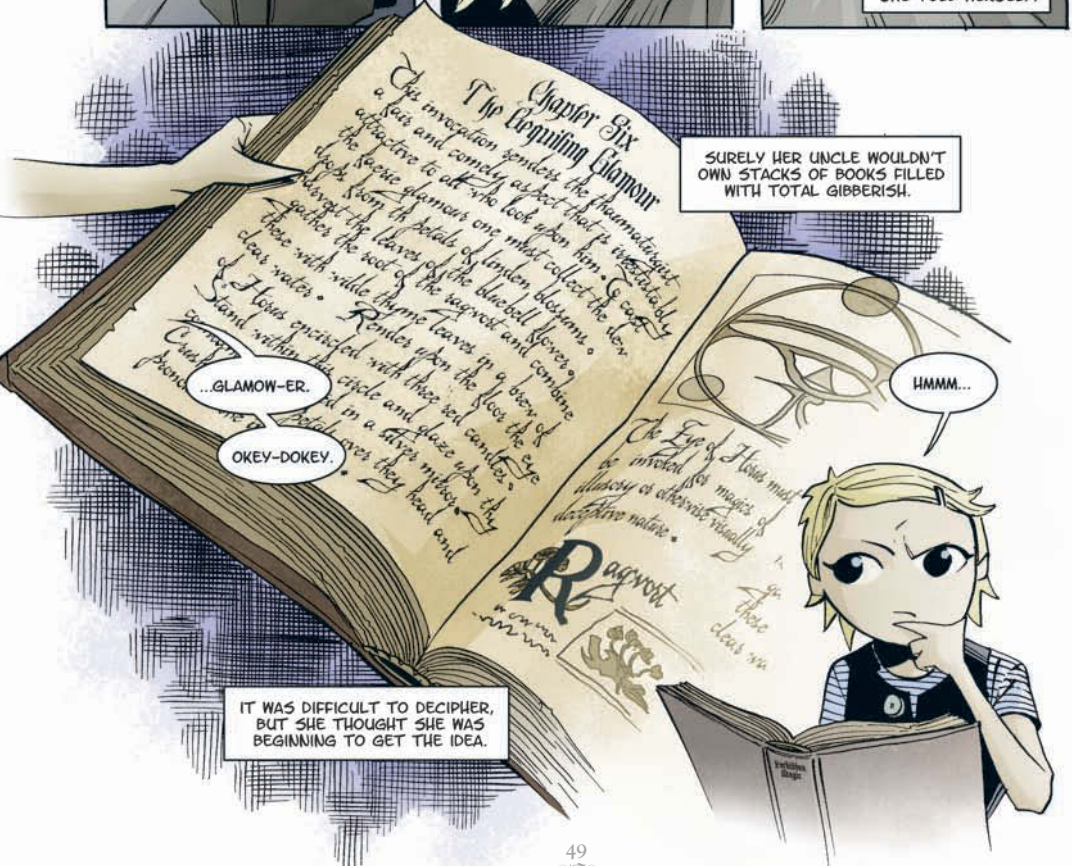




IF MORE OR LESS  
INCOMPREHENSIBLE.



BUT IT MUST  
MEAN SOMETHING,  
SHE TOLD HERSELF.



SURELY HER UNCLE WOULDN'T  
OWN STACKS OF BOOKS FILLED  
WITH TOTAL GIBBERISH.

...GLAMOW-ER.

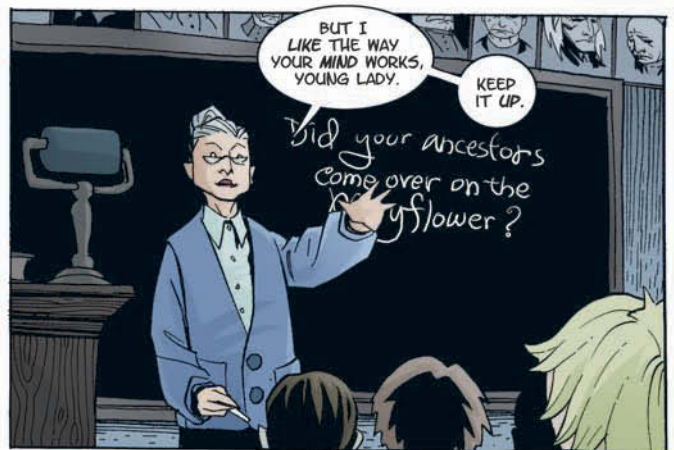
OKEY-DOKEY.

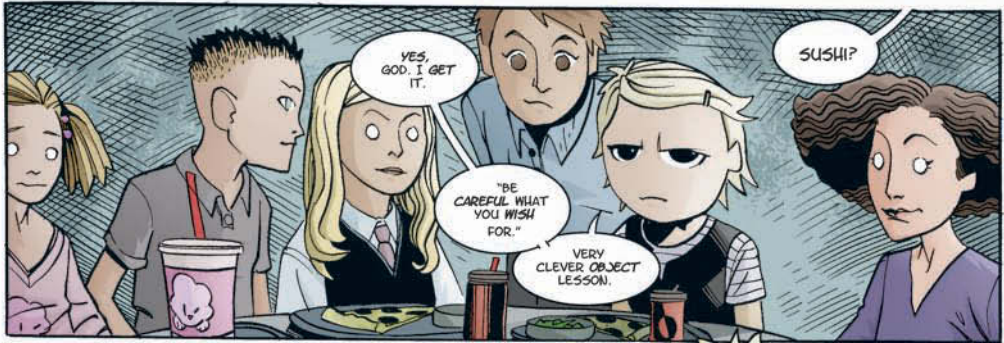
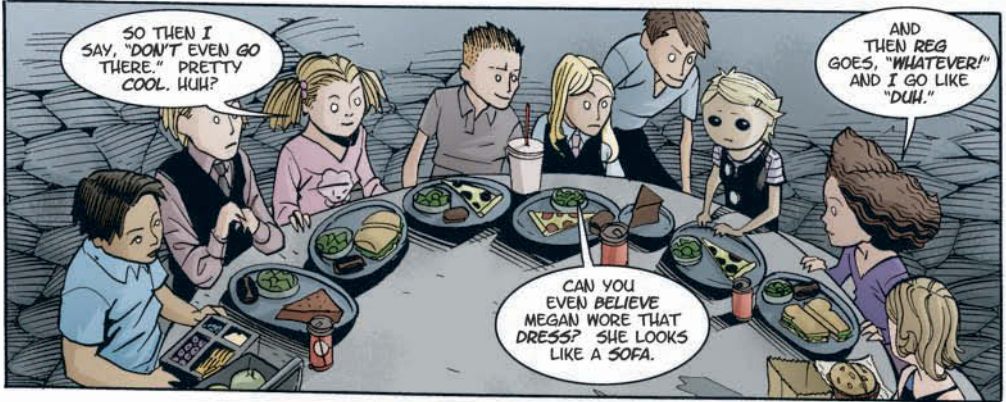
HMMM...

IT WAS DIFFICULT TO DECIPHER,  
BUT SHE THOUGHT SHE WAS  
BEGINNING TO GET THE IDEA.

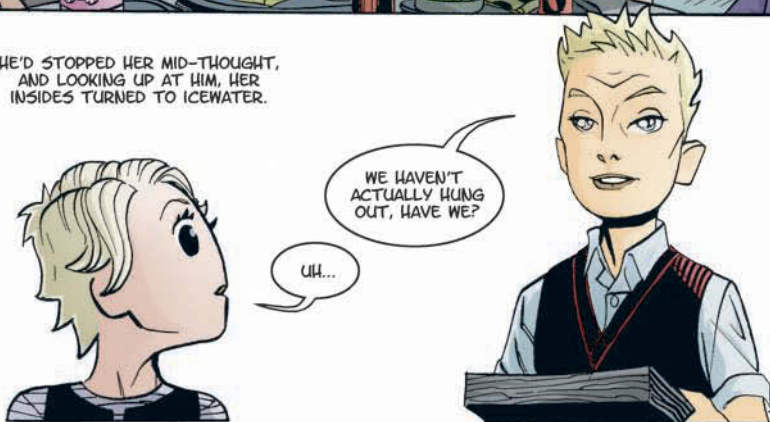


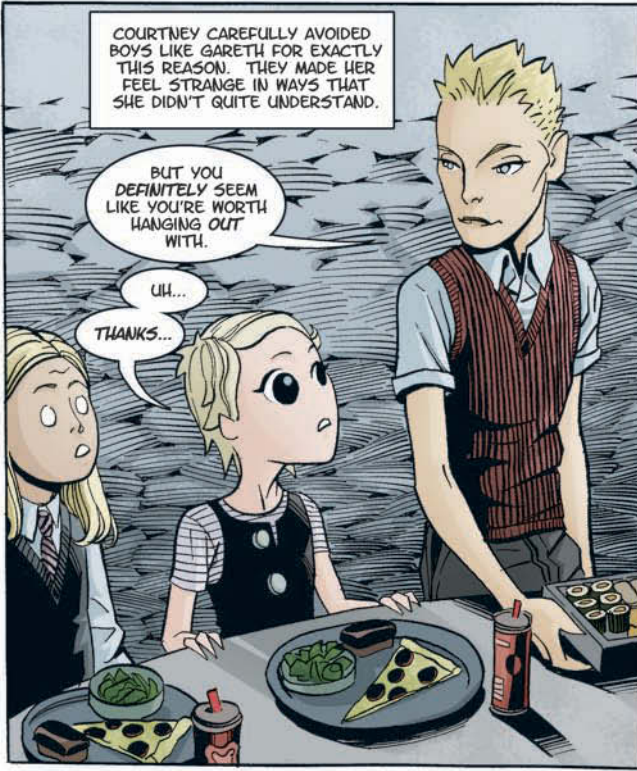






HE'D STOPPED HER MID-THOUGHT, AND LOOKING UP AT HIM, HER INSIDES TURNED TO ICEWATER.





# Smedley Hoohah Ice Cream Parlor

GOOD ICE CREAM.

IT'S OKAY. THE BEST ICE CREAM COMES FROM A PLACE IN THE CITY.

EVER BEEN?

YEAH, I USED TO—

MY DAD WON'T LET ME GO EITHER. HE HAS HIS P.A. DRIVE OUT THERE AND PICK IT UP.

THAT MUST BE...

HE'S THE CEO OF THIS REALLY BIG SOFTWARE COMPANY.

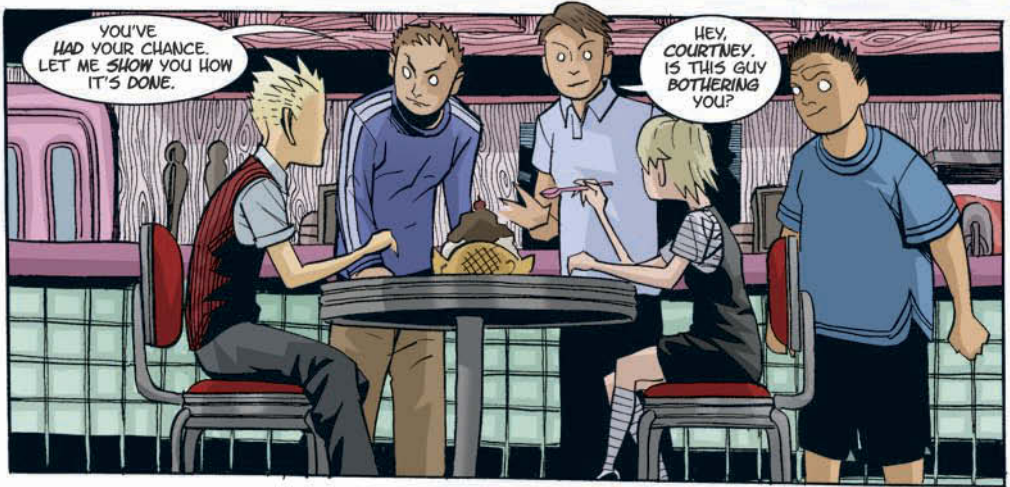
HE WAS BROUGHT IN TO MAKE THE COMPANY SALEABLE, AND THEN WHEN THEY GET SOLD HE'LL GET A HUGE BONUS.

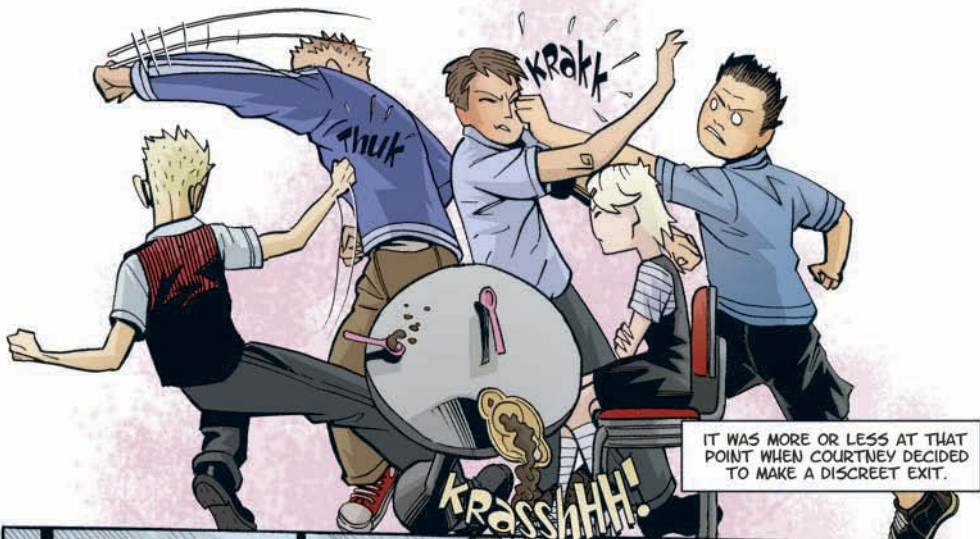
THAT'S WHAT HE DOES.

GREAT.

HE PROMISED ME A MERCURY MOUNTAINEER FOR MY SIXTEENTH BIRTHDAY. THAT'S A REALLY COOL SUV.

UH-HUH...





IT WAS MORE OR LESS AT THAT POINT WHEN COURTNEY DECIDED TO MAKE A DISCREET EXIT.



WOW, THEY'RE TRASHING THE PLACE.

BY NOW HER NEWFOUND POPULARITY HAD GROWN STALE. SHE DECIDED THE BEST COURSE OF ACTION WAS TO AVOID PEOPLE UNTIL SHE COULD FIGURE OUT A WAY TO REMOVE THE SPELL.

HEY, THERE SHE GOES.

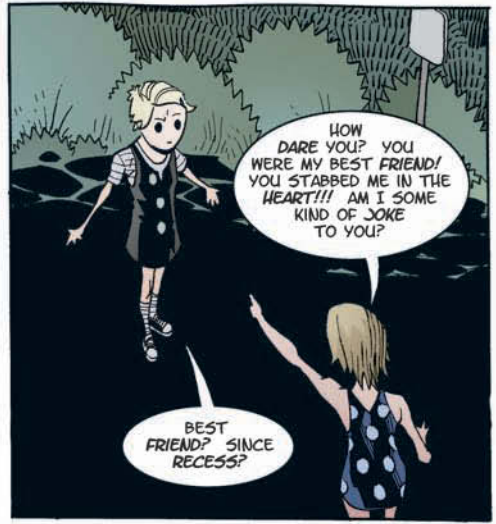
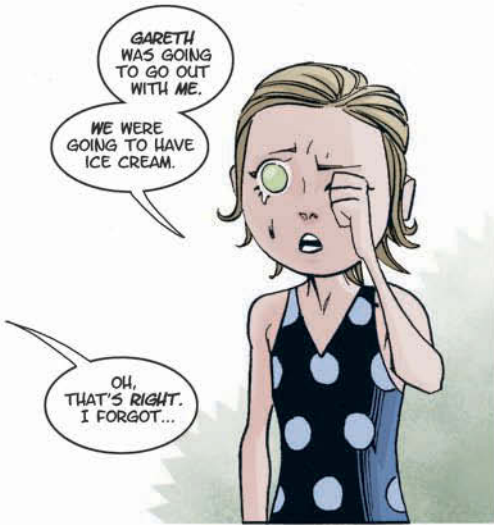


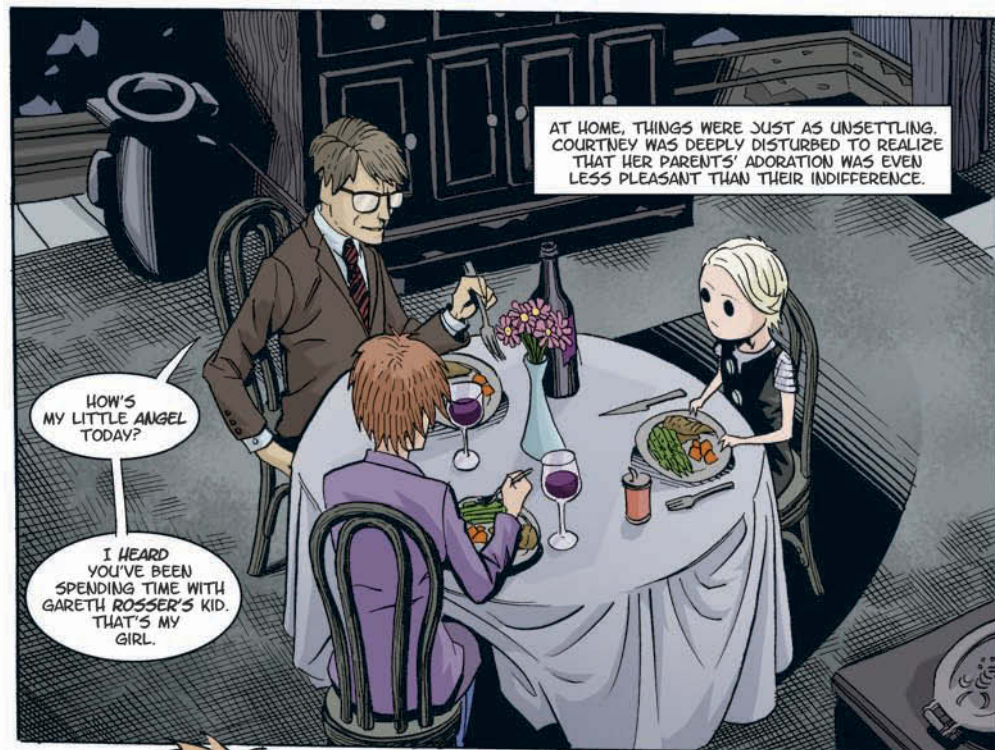
COURTNEY, WE WERE FRIENDS.

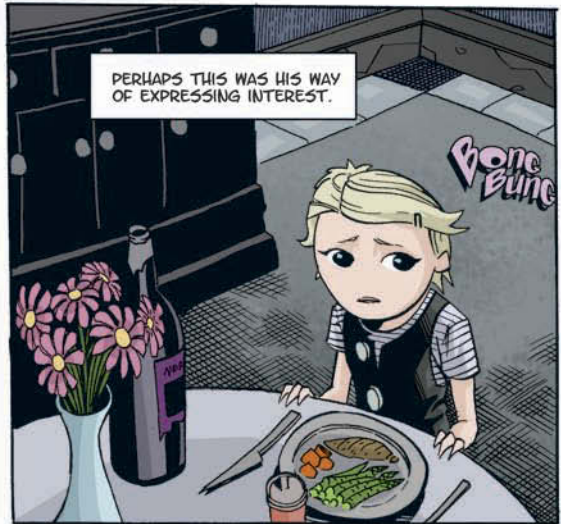


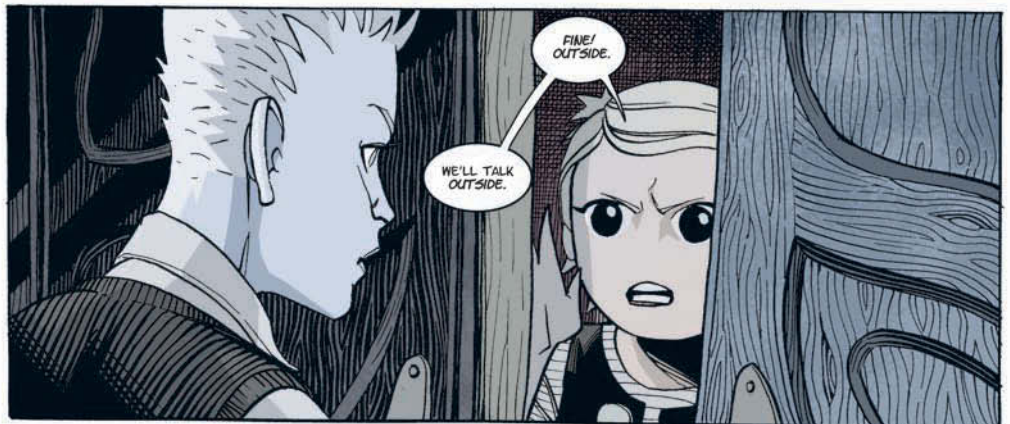
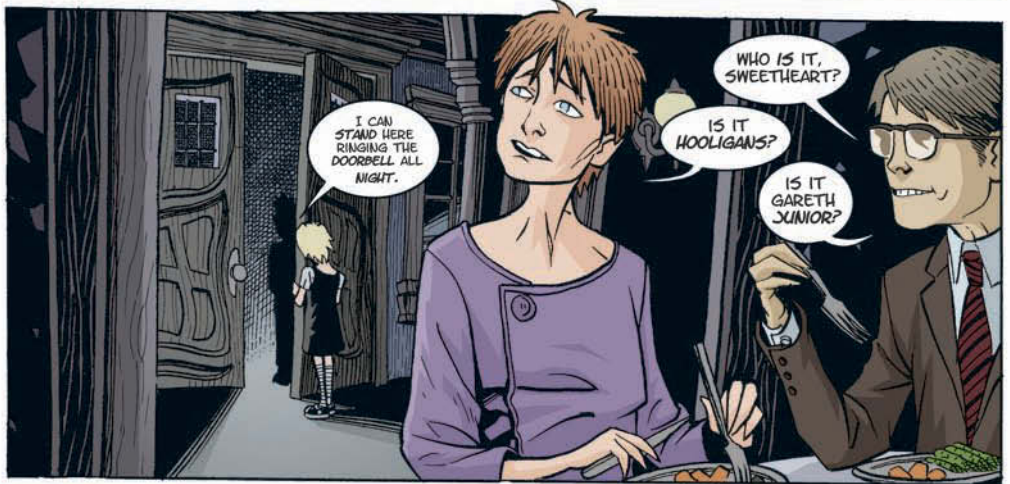
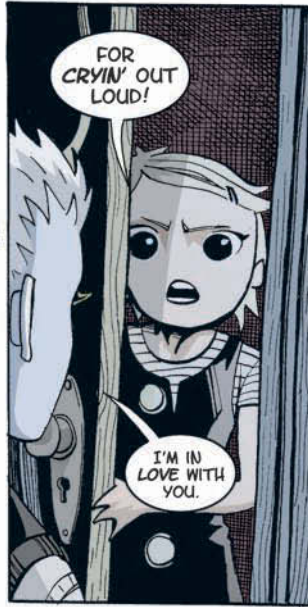
NOT... ..REALLY...

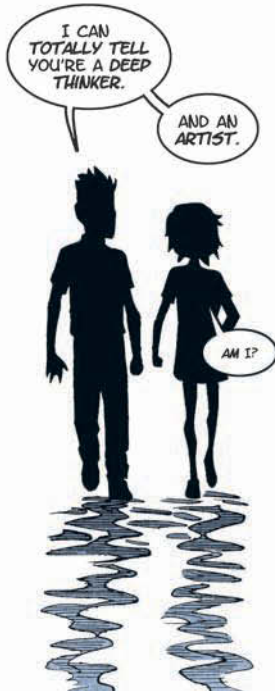
HOW COULD YOU DO THIS TO ME?

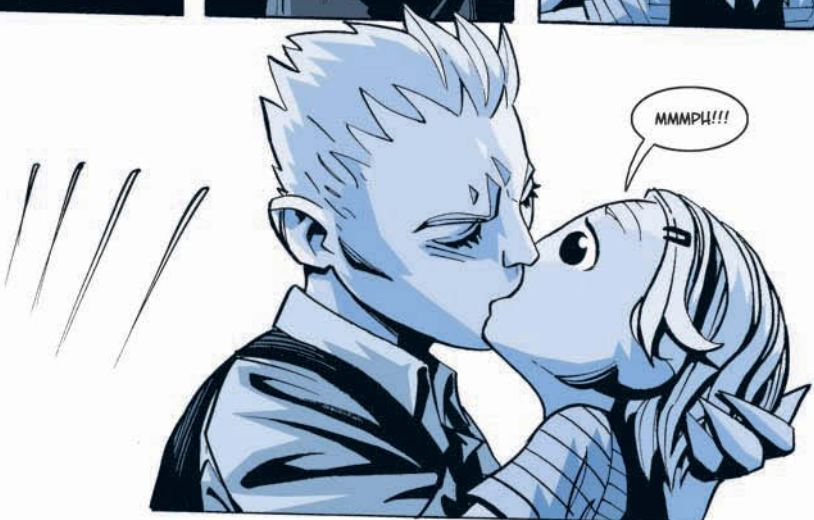


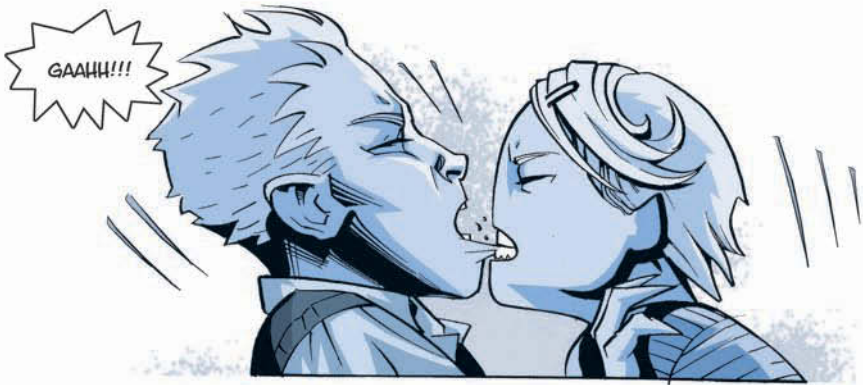






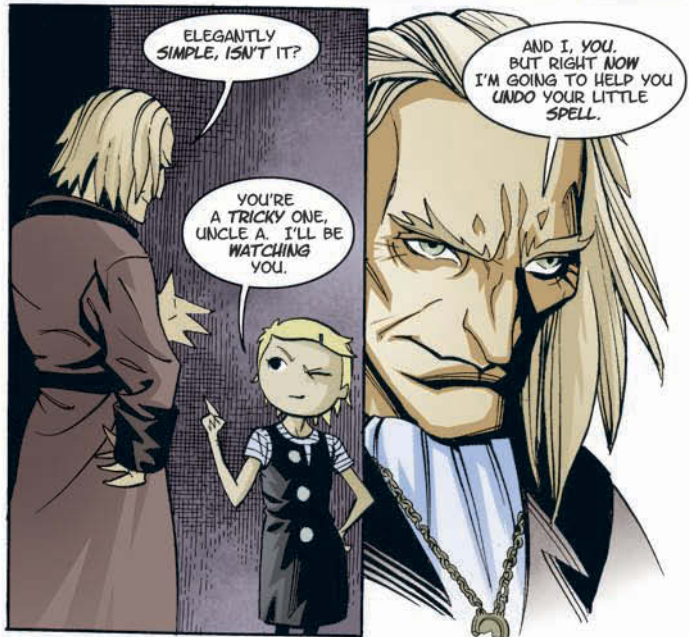














THEY GATHERED INGREDIENTS AND ALOYSIUS TAUGHT COURTNEY THE PROPER INCANTATION, PATIENTLY CORRECTING HER WHEN SHE MISPRONOUNCED THE WORDS.

SINCE COURTNEY HAD CAST THE SPELL TWICE, SHE NEEDED TO CAST THE COUNTER-SPELL A SECOND TIME AS WELL.

SHADOWS LO' BENEATH THE MOON, ATTEND THIS UNCOUTH SOUL, STRIP AWAY ILL-GOTTEN GRACE, AND TRUTH TAKE ITS TOLL.



BETTER DO ONE MORE TO MAKE SURE.

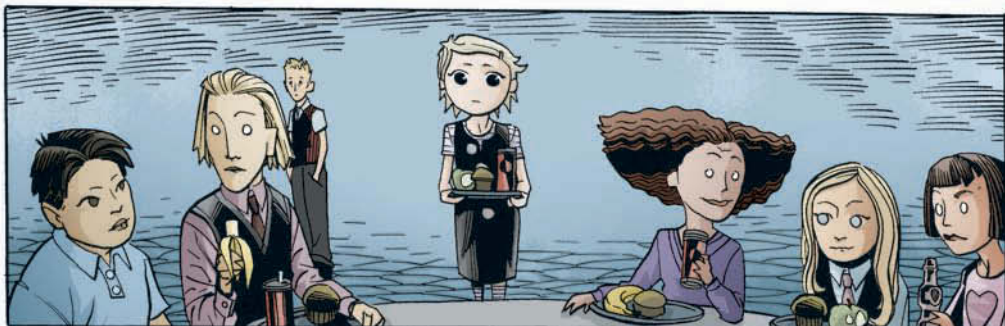
I WOULDN'T.

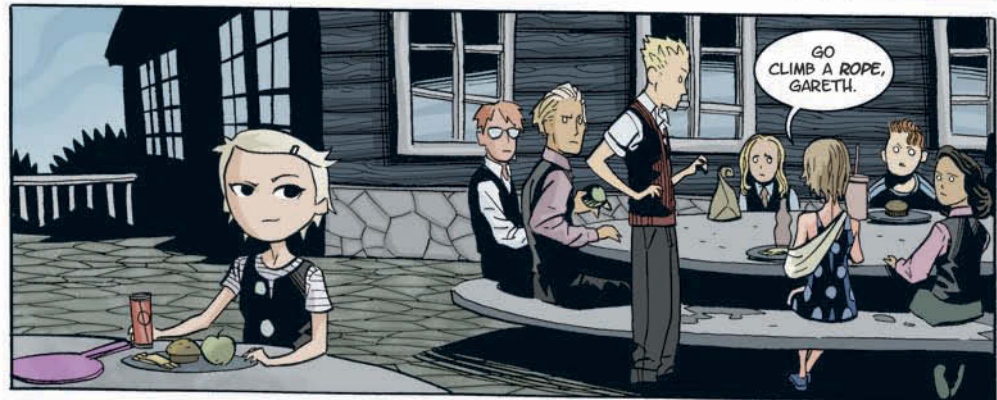


TO CAST A COUNTER-SPELL WHERE THERE'S NO SPELL WOULD HAVE THE OPPOSITE EFFECT.



OH, REALLY?



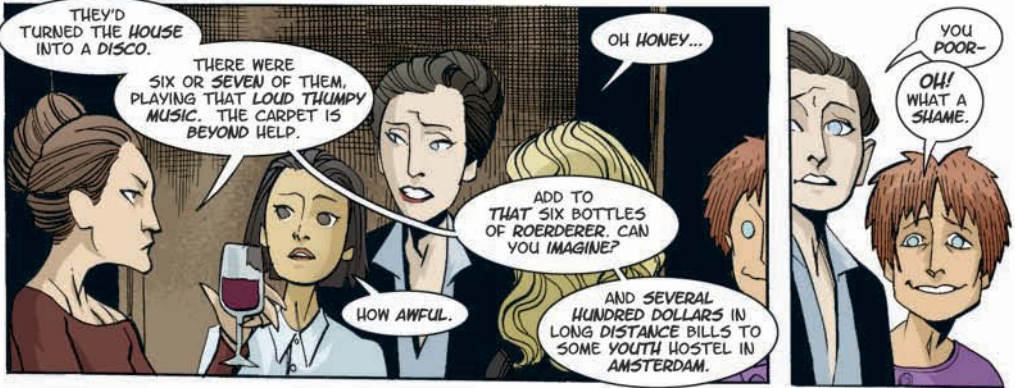


# Chapter Three

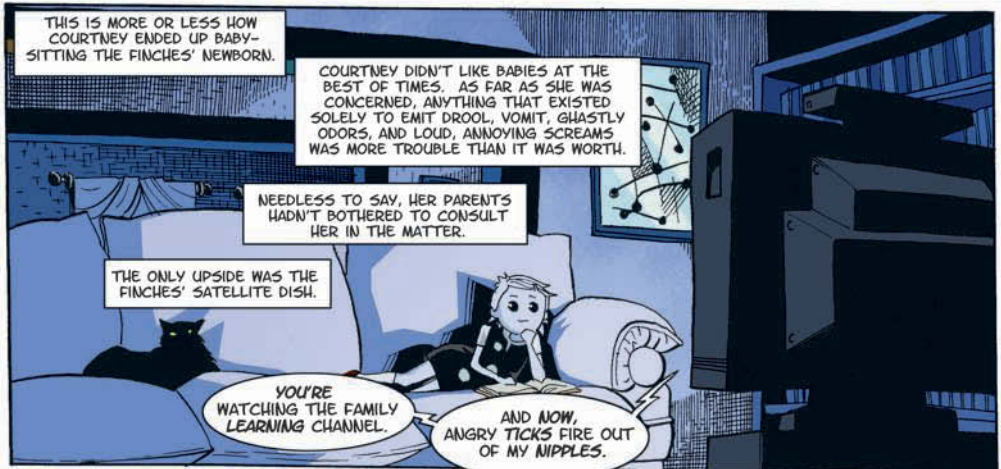




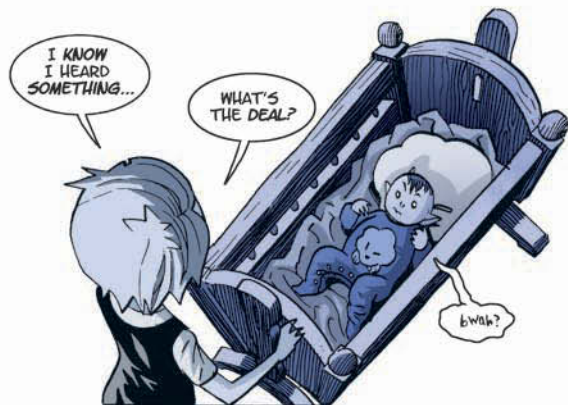


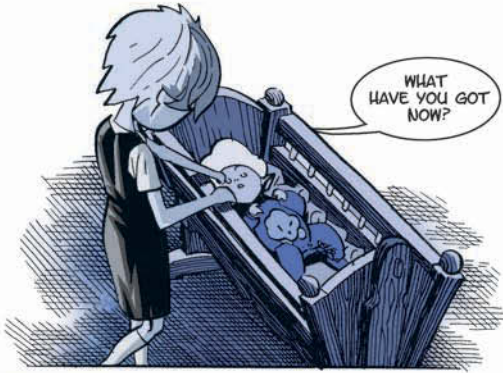














THAT USUALLY SCARES THE BEJEEZUS OUT OF LITTLE GIRLS.

I'M GONNA GO OUT ON A LIMB AND GUESS YOU'RE NOT ACTUALLY A BABY.

WHAT TIPPED YOU OFF, TOOTS?



FOR ONE THING, YOU SMELL EVEN WORSE THAN A HUMAN INFANT.

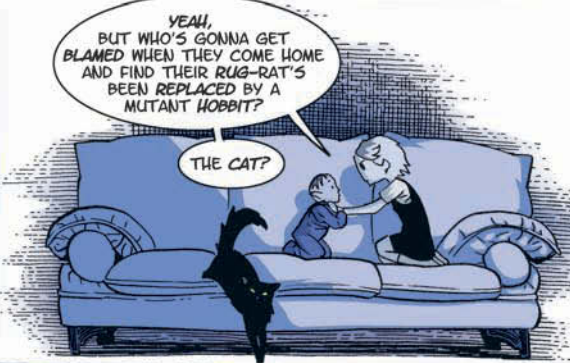
WHISKEY ALWAYS GIVES ME THE WIND...



WHERE'S THE REAL BABY?!



WHAT DO YOU CARE? IT'S NOT YOUR KID.



YEAH, BUT WHO'S GONNA GET BLAMED WHEN THEY COME HOME AND FIND THEIR RUG-RAT'S BEEN REPLACED BY A MUTANT HOBBIT?

THE CAT?



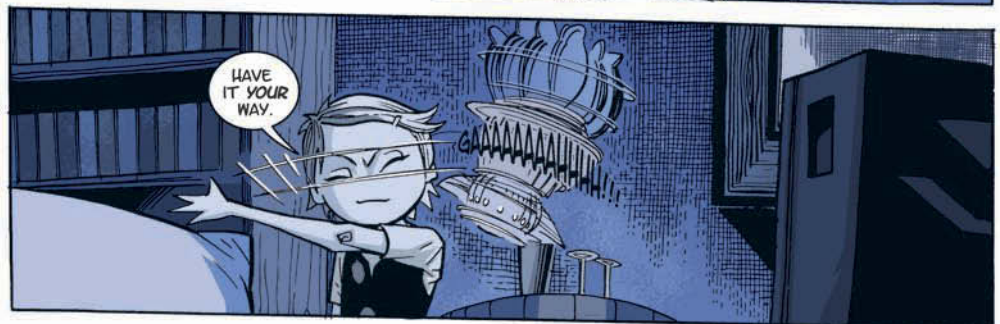
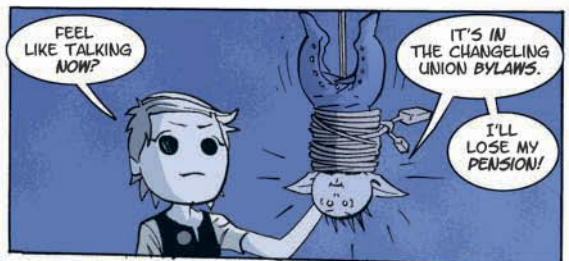
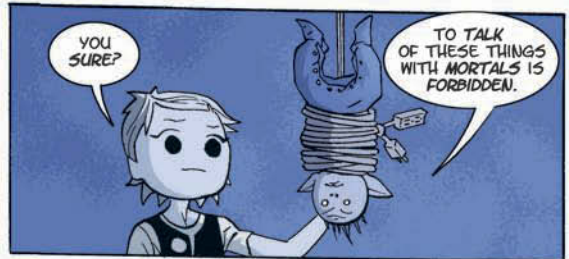
HE'S LONG GONE, SWEETHEART. YOU'RE TOO--

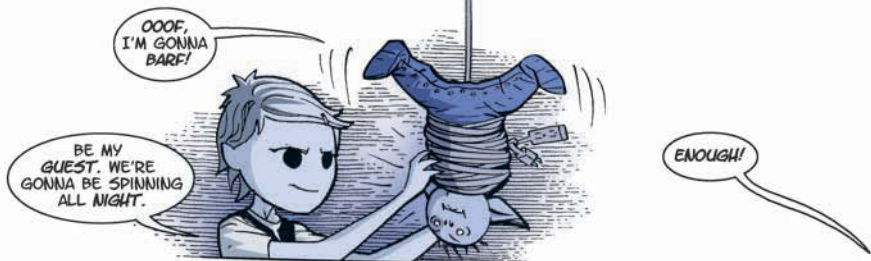


FOR THIS I'M MISSING THE POWER PUFF GIRLS!









OOOF,  
I'M GONNA  
BARF!

BE MY  
GUEST. WE'RE  
GONNA BE SPINNING  
ALL NIGHT.

ENOUGH!



WHO SAID  
THAT!?!

WHO'S  
THERE?



I'LL  
TELL YOU  
WHERE THEY  
TOOK THE CHILD,  
IF THAT'S WHAT IT  
TAKES TO GET  
SOME PEACE  
IN THIS HOUSE.



...HUH?



GONNA BE  
ONE OF THOSE NIGHTS,  
I GUESS.

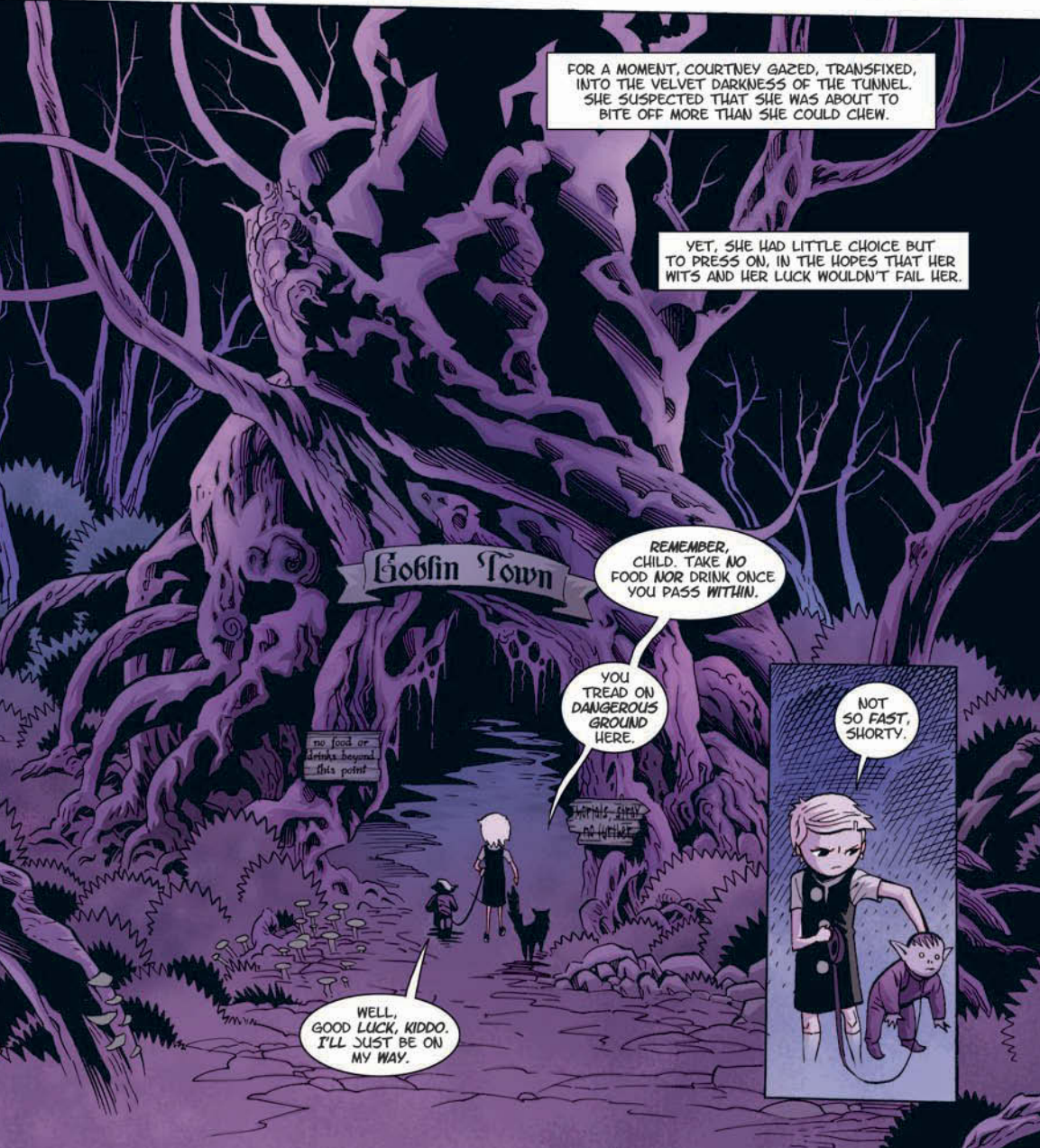
SO, BOO,  
YOU WERE FILLING ME  
IN ON THIS MUNCHKIN'S  
LITTLE DEAL?

IT'S AN  
ANCIENT PRACTICE.  
A CHANGELING TAKES  
THE PLACE OF THE  
STOLEN CHILD.

USUALLY  
THE PARENTS ARE  
NEVER THE  
WISER.

GREAT.  
GIVE AWAY THE  
WHOLE SHOW, WHY  
DON'T YOU.





FOR A MOMENT, COURTNEY GAZED, TRANSFIXED, INTO THE VELVET DARKNESS OF THE TUNNEL. SHE SUSPECTED THAT SHE WAS ABOUT TO BITE OFF MORE THAN SHE COULD CHEW.

YET, SHE HAD LITTLE CHOICE BUT TO PRESS ON, IN THE HOPES THAT HER WITS AND HER LUCK WOULDN'T FAIL HER.


REMEMBER, CHILD. TAKE NO FOOD NOR DRINK ONCE YOU PASS WITHIN.

YOU TREAD ON DANGEROUS GROUND HERE.




WELL, GOOD LUCK, KIDDO. I'LL JUST BE ON MY WAY.





SOON COURTNEY  
COULD NO LONGER  
RECALL WHICH WAY  
THEY HAD COME.



SHE BEGAN TO  
SUSPECT THE  
CHANGELING WAS  
LEADING HER  
ASTRAY.


THIS  
BETTER NOT TAKE  
MUCH LONGER,  
PIPSQUEAK.



WE'RE  
ALMOST  
THERE.

WHERE?

THE DARK  
MARKET.



AS HE SPOKE, THE TUNNEL OPENED OUT,  
AND COURTNEY FOUND HERSELF BREATHLESS,  
LOOKING UPON A CITY OF NIGHT THINGS.

OH BOY.

SHE SAW STRANGE OUTLANDISH  
CREATURES EVERYWHERE, SHOUTING  
AND LAUGHING IN UNEARTHLY VOICES.

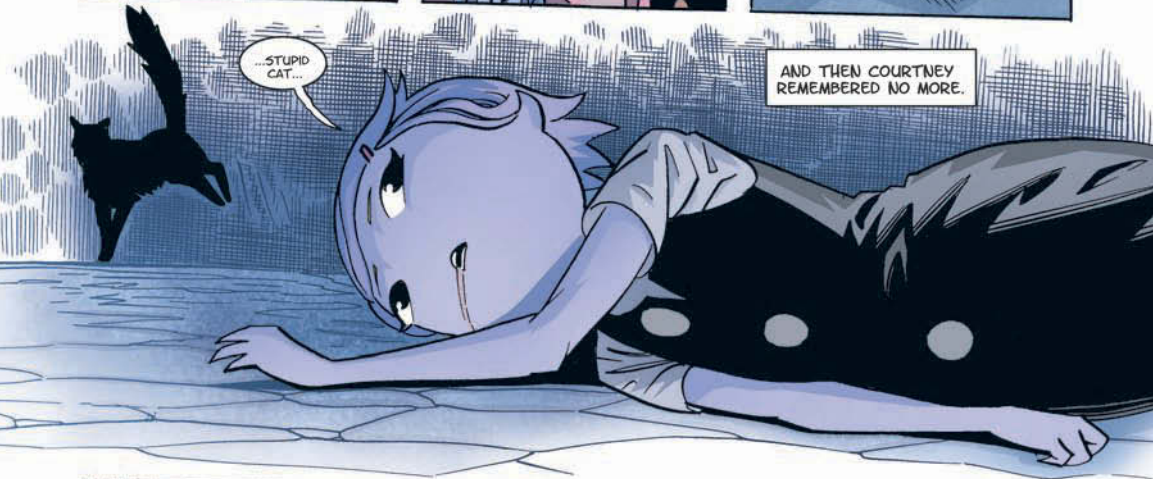


THE SCENT OF MAGICAL FRUIT AND SPICES ASSAILED HER NOSTRILS, AND THE BRILLIANT LANTERNS DAZZLED HER EYES. SHE BEGAN TO GROW DIZZY.











COURTNEY STARED OUT FROM HER CAGE AT THE GATHERED BIDDERS. THEY WERE GRIM AND MYSTERIOUS, AND SHE UNHAPPILY CONTEMPLATED WHAT THEY MIGHT HAVE IN MIND FOR HER.

NO ONE BIDS FIFTY? HOW ABOUT FORTY? FORTY SOVEREIGNS FOR THE MAIDEN.

THEN SHE SAW BOO AGAIN.

IF NO ONE TAKES HER, WE'LL BE FORCED TO THROW HER INTO THE MARL PIT FOR OLD RAWHEAD AND BLOODY BONES.



FORTY SOVEREIGNS SAVE THIS POOR WRETCH FROM A GHASTLY FATE.

SON OF A...



DO I HEAR FORTY?

SUDDENLY, EVERYTHING BECAME CLEAR. THE NEFARIOUS ANIMAL HAD TRICKED COURTNEY, LURING HER DOWN INTO GOBLIN TOWN FOR SOME DREAD PURPOSE.



FORTY SOVEREIGNS. I HAVE FORTY, DO I HEAR FIFTY?



FIFTY.

I HAVE FIFTY, DO I HEAR SIXTY?



SIXTY, HIS LORDSHIP BIDS SIXTY.

SEVENTY, THE LADY BIDS SEVENTY.

COURTNEY WANTED TO SCREAM, SHOUT INSULTS AT THE AUCTIONEER, ANYTHING TO STOP WHAT WAS HAPPENING. BUT HER SHOCK AND DISORIENTATION RENDERED HER QUITE INCAPABLE OF ACTION.



EIGHTY FROM HIS LORDSHIP. NINETY FROM HER DREADFULNESS. DO I HEAR ONE HUNDRED?

NINETY. GOING ONCE. TWICE.

ALL SHE COULD DO WAS WATCH IN MUTE HORROR AS HER FATE WAS DECIDED BY LIVING NIGHTMARES.



ONE HUNDRED. THANK YOU, SIR.



YOU SET ME UP, DIDN'T YOU?

I DID WARN YOU, MADAM.

GOBLIN TOWN IS NO PLACE FOR MORTALS.



WHAT I GET FOR TRUSTING A TALKING CAT.

PERHAPS...



AS THEY PULLED AWAY AND DROVE OFF INTO THE DARK TUNNELS, THE FULL HORROR OF HER SITUATION SWEEPED OVER COURTNEY.

IT'S JUST... NOT FAIR.



AFTER A TIME, THE CARRIAGE SLOWED TO A HALT, AND ITS SOLE OCCUPANT STEPPED OUT.

OH CRAP.

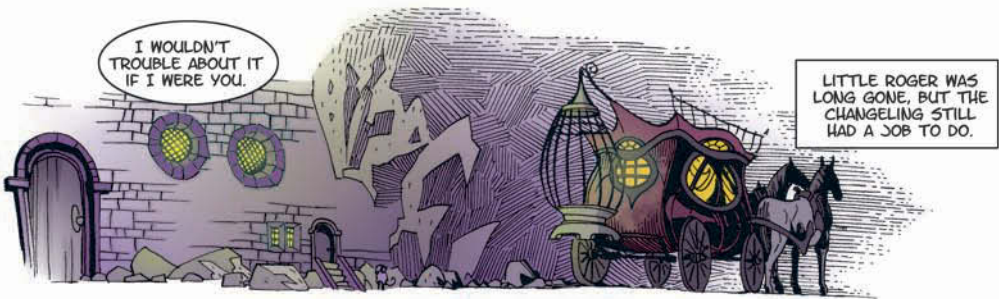


AS COURTNEY'S CAPTOR APPROACHED, HER TERROR BECAME WILD PANIC. SHE REALIZED NOW THAT NOTHING SHORT OF A MIRACLE COULD SAVE HER.

UNCLE A, WHERE ARE YOU?

I NEED SOME HELP HERE.





I WOULDN'T TROUBLE ABOUT IT IF I WERE YOU.

LITTLE ROGER WAS LONG GONE, BUT THE CHANGELING STILL HAD A JOB TO DO.



THEY FOUND HIM AT A LOCAL ALEHOUSE, GAMBLING AWAY THE MONEY HE'D MADE SELLING COURTNEY.

WOO HOO! BOYS, LOOKS LIKE MY LUCK IS FINALLY CHANGING....

EHEM!



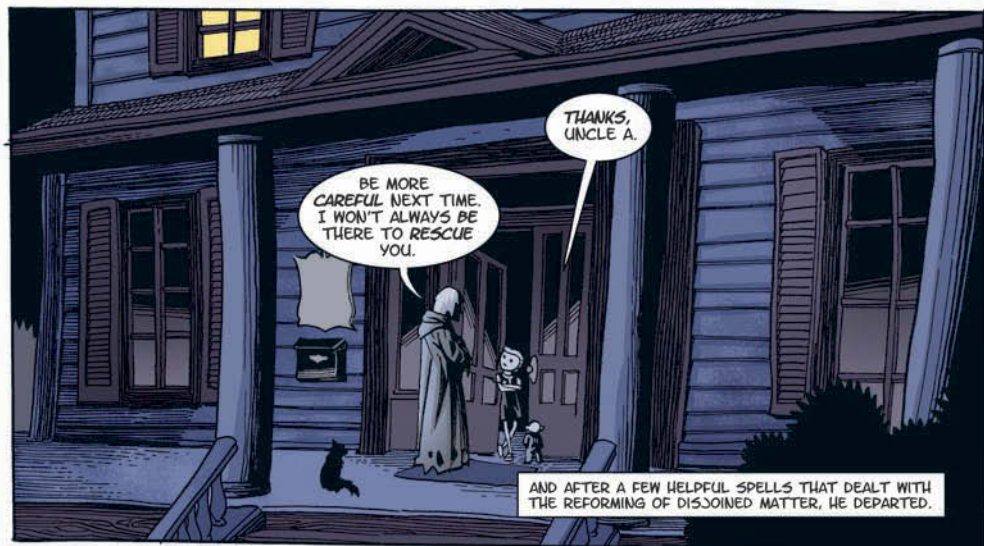
REMEMBER ME?

OH BUGGER!



ULTIMATELY THEY PERSUADED HIM TO RETURN TO HIS DUTIES.

IT'S JUST NOT FAIR.



BE MORE CAREFUL NEXT TIME. I WON'T ALWAYS BE THERE TO RESCUE YOU.

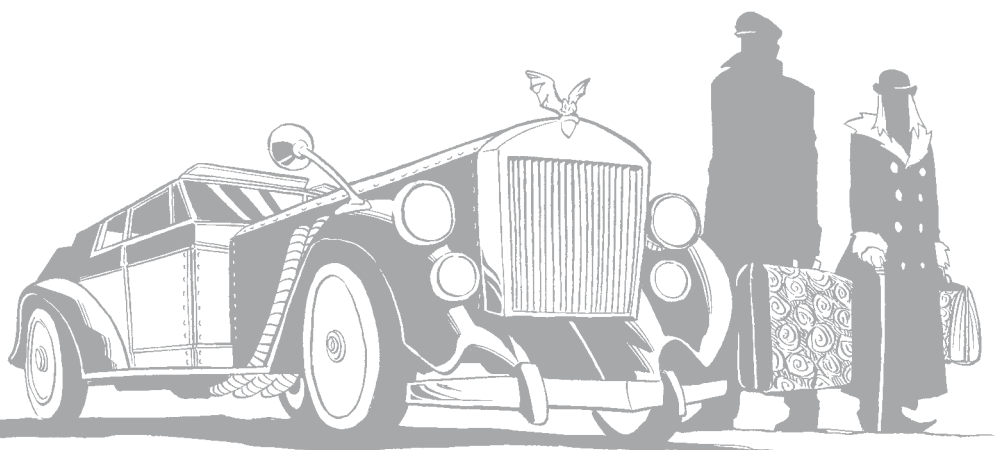
THANKS, UNCLE A.

AND AFTER A FEW HELPFUL SPELLS THAT DEALT WITH THE REFORMING OF DISJOINED MATTER, HE DEPARTED.

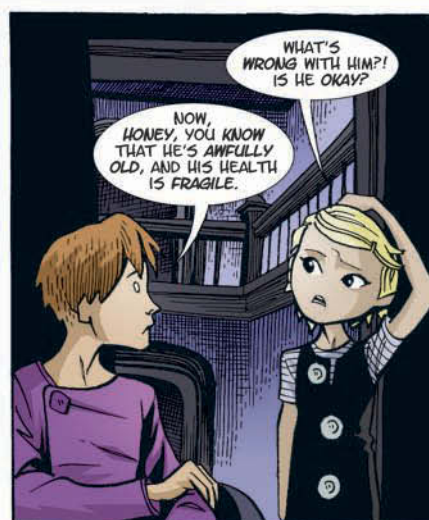
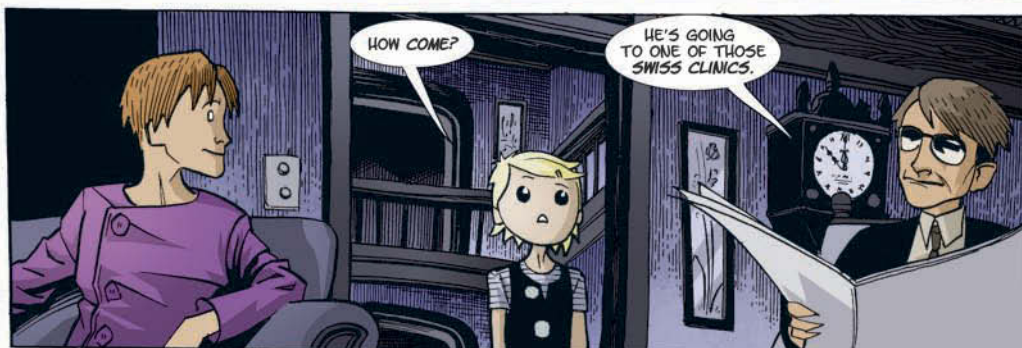
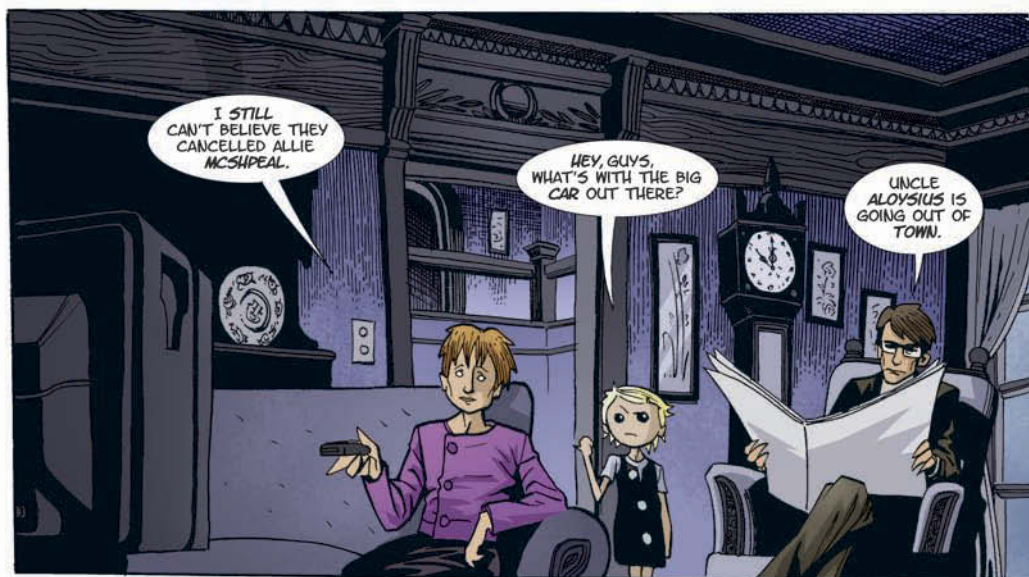


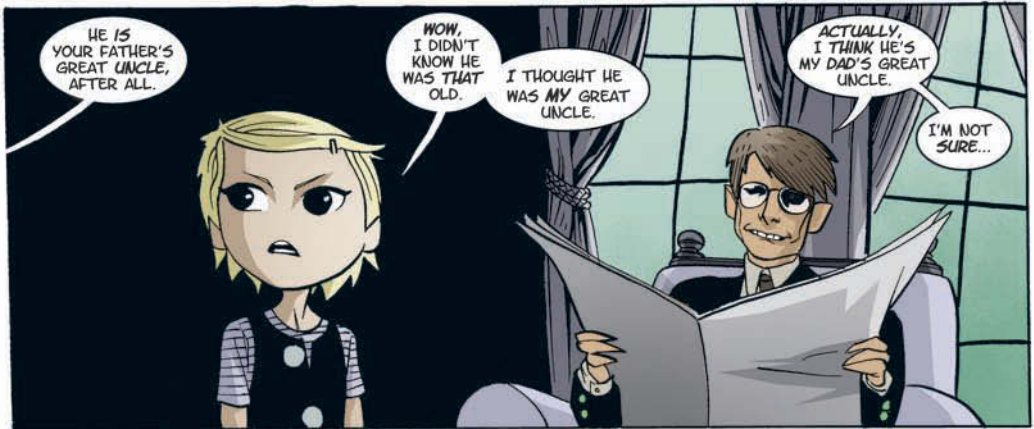
# Chapter Four

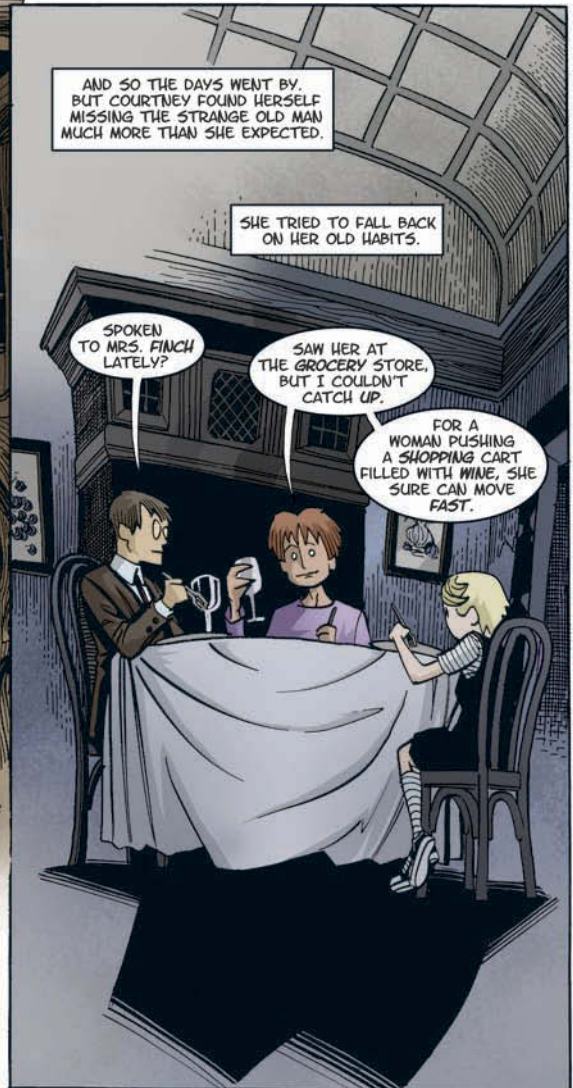










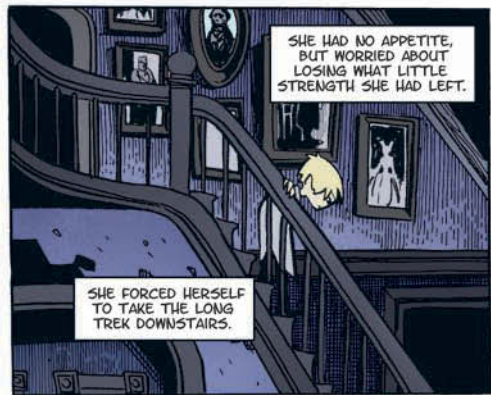
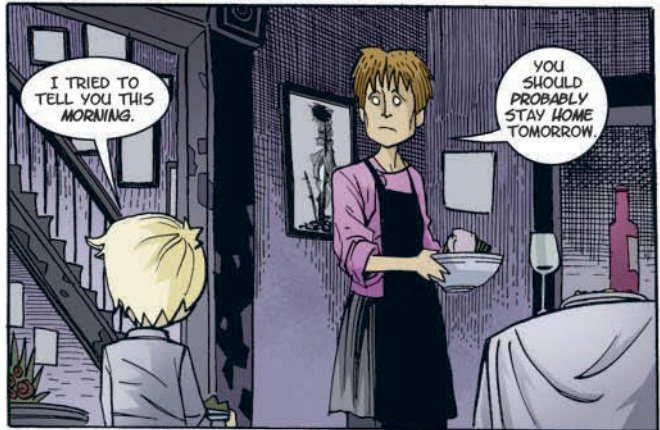






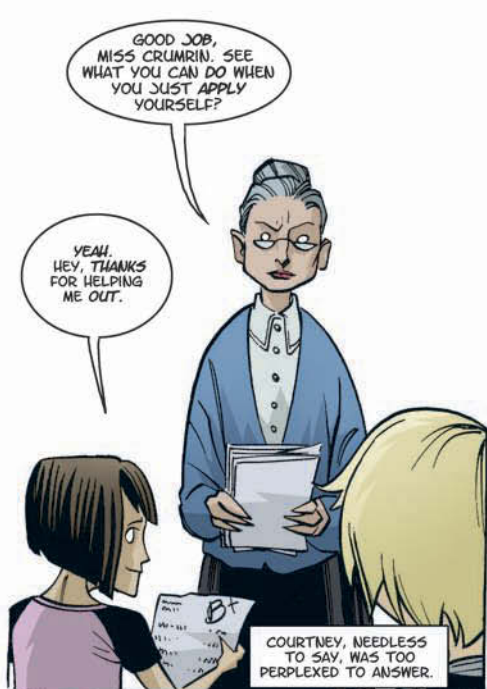


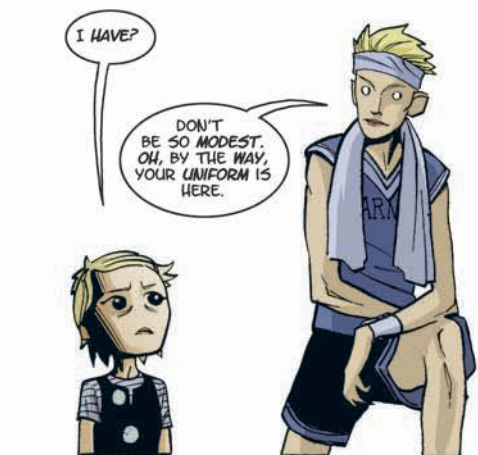




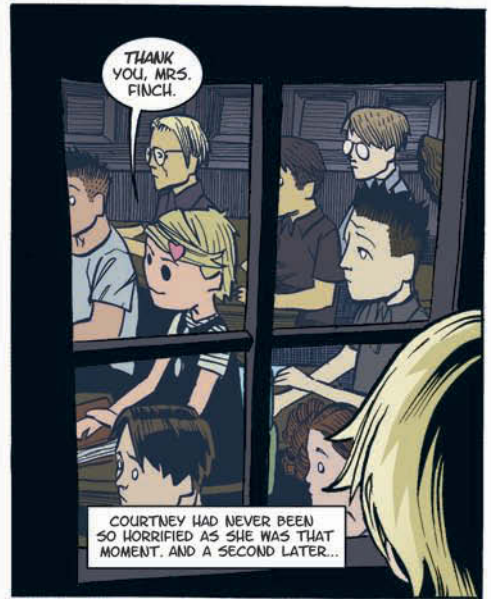


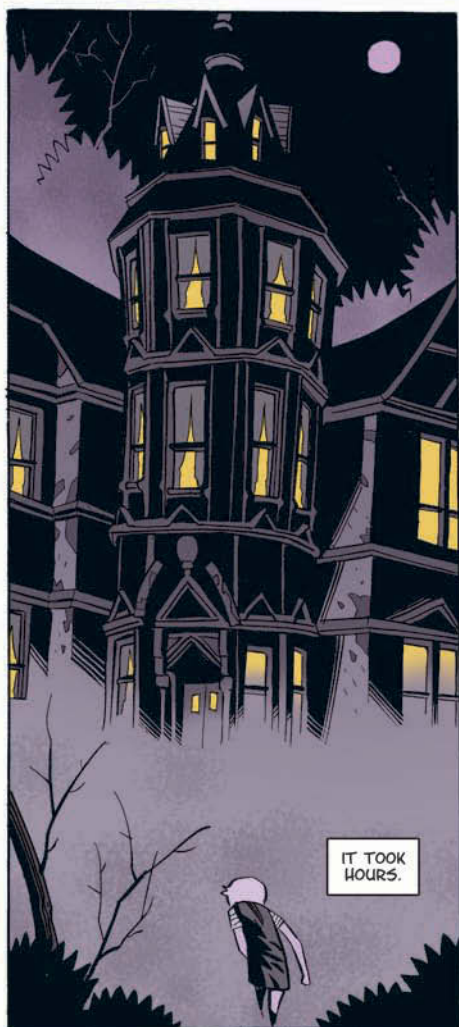




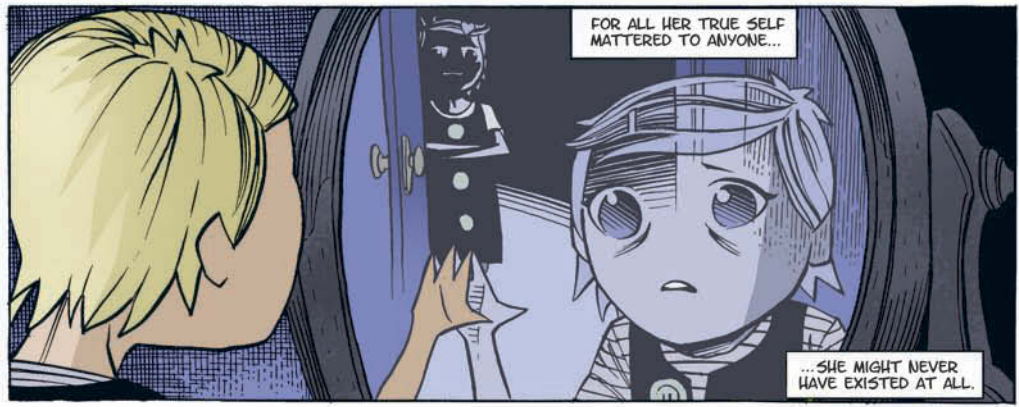
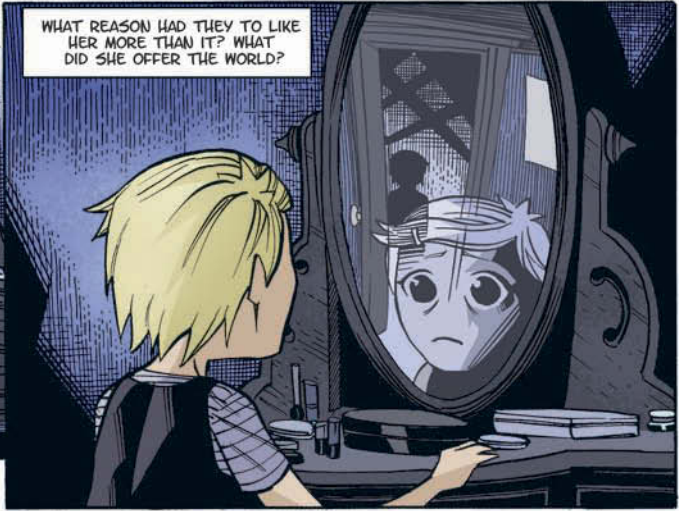
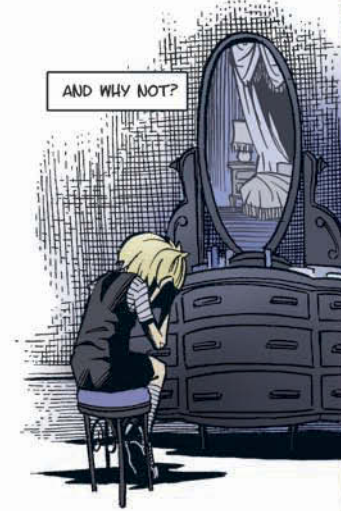




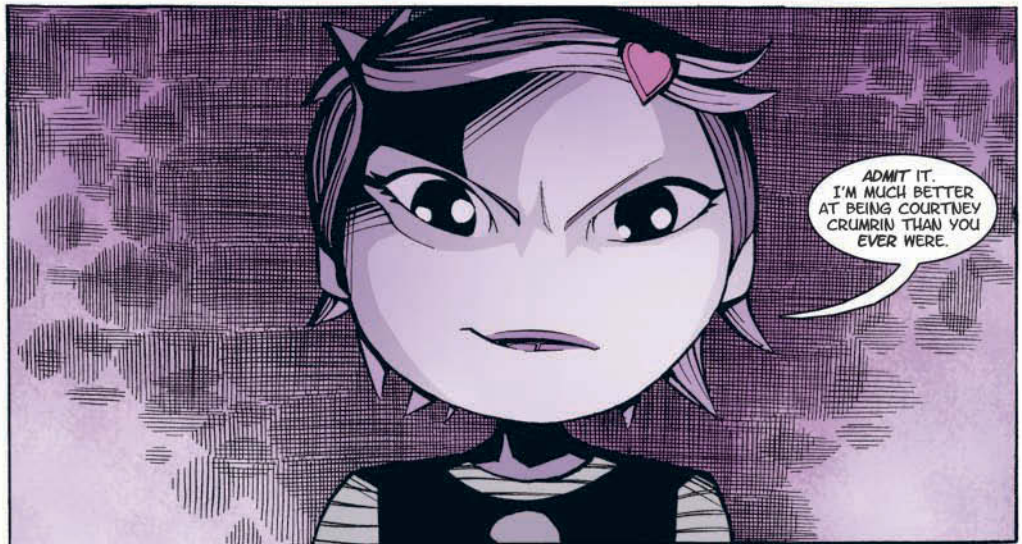


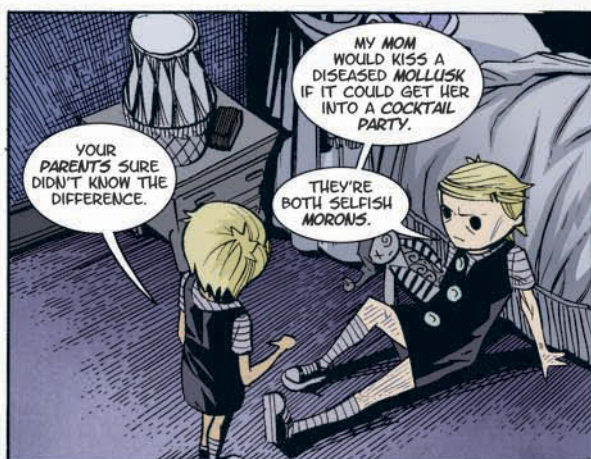


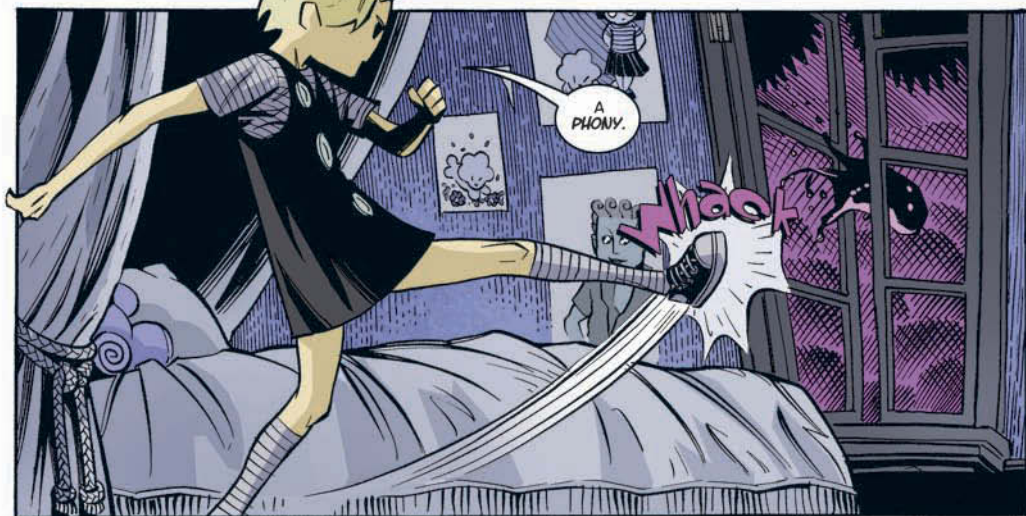


















YEH STILL HANGIN' ABOUT?



WELL, THAT'S THE STORY A' HOW YOUNG COURTNEY COME TO LIVE IN CRUMRIN HOUSE.



SHE AND OL' MAN CRUMRIN ARE THICK AS THIEVES NOW. NEVER THOUGHT A LITTLE BRAT LIKE 'ER COULD MELT 'IS ICY HEART.

THOUGH 'E TRIES TO KEEP 'ER AWAY FROM CERTAIN BOOKS.



'ER FOLKS'RE STILL TRYIN' TE BE ALL POSH, FIT IN WITH THE NEIGHBORHOOD GENTRY.

BLEAGH!

MARK YEH, THEY THINK "BOURGEOIS" IS A BEDROOM.



BUT EVERYONE'S TUCKED IN THERE ALL COZY NOW, BLESS 'EM.



A'COURSE, IT WON'T LAST. NOT IN THIS NEIGHBORHOOD. THERE'RE BAD THINGS LURKIN' ABOUT.

WORSE EVEN THEN ME.



SO IF YEH COME BACK THIS WAY, WATCH YER STEP.

YEH AIN'T SEEN NOTHING YET.

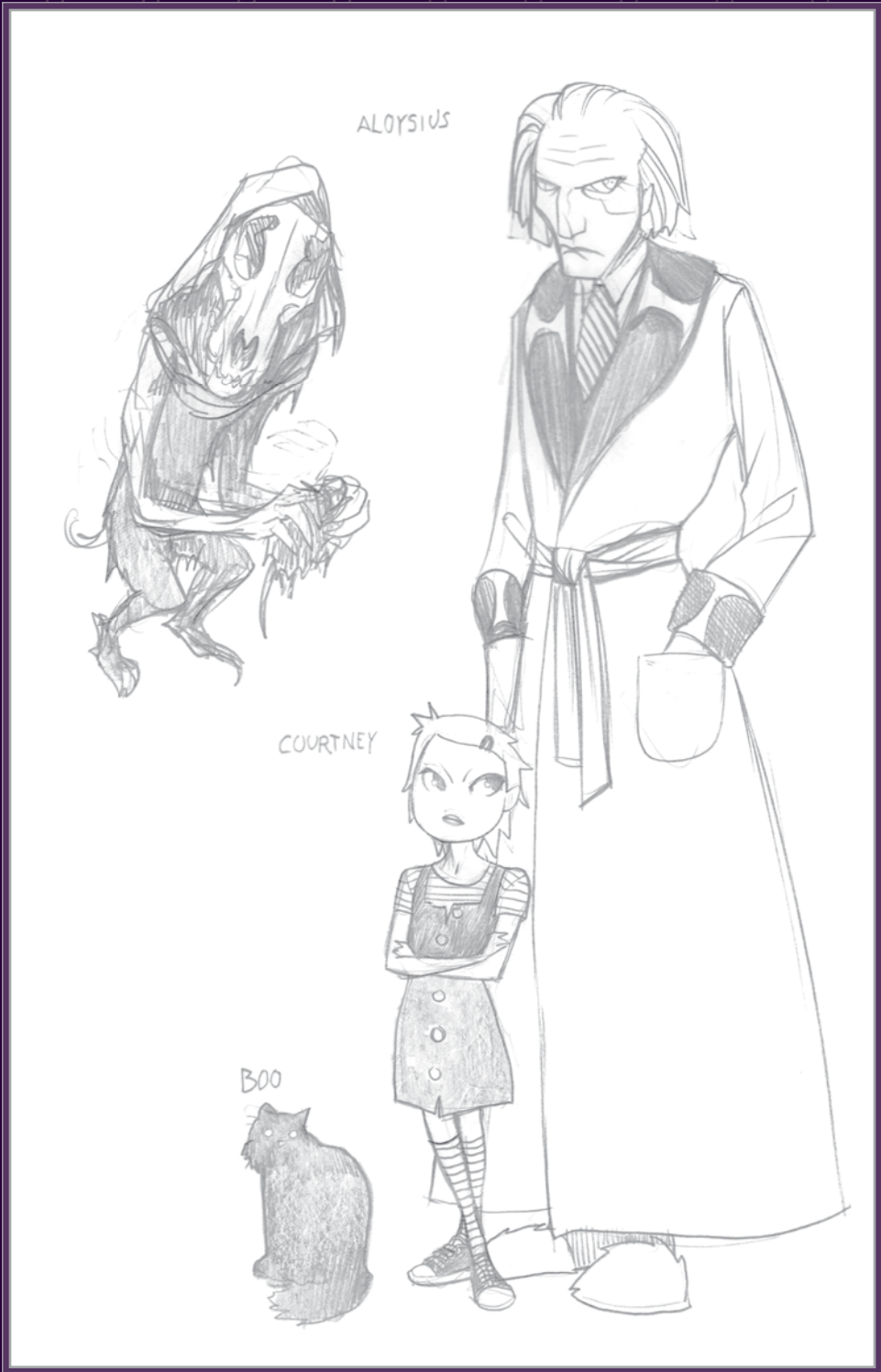


# Courtney VOLUME ONE Crumrin

## The Night Things

*Bonus Material & Cover Gallery*





Initial character sketches for *Courtney Crumrin and the Night Things*.

NIGHT THINGS



THE WUG



Gritch



MUH



MR NOG



Courtney  
CRUMRIN



WENDEL







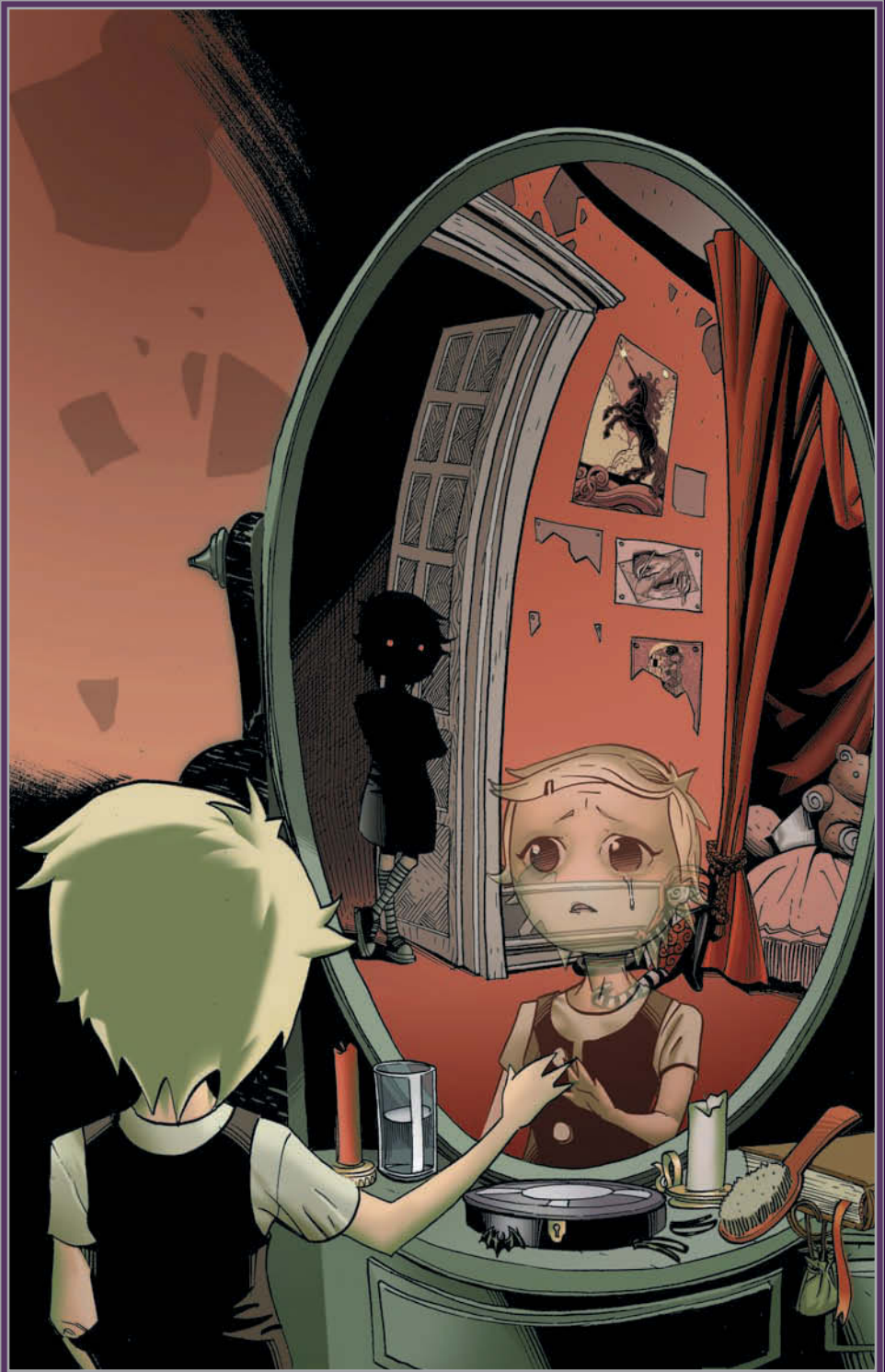
Cover for Issue 1 of *Courtney Crumrin and the Night Things*.



Cover for Issue 2 of *Courtney Crumrin and the Night Things*.



Cover for Issue 3 of *Courtney Crumrin and the Night Things*.



Cover for Issue 4 of *Courtney Crumrin and the Night Things*.

## — ✦ TED NAIFEH ✦ —

Ted Naifeh first appeared in the independent comics scene in 1999 as the artist for *Gloomcookie*, the goth romance comic he co-created with Serena Valentino for SLG Publishing. After a successful run, Ted decided to strike out on his own, writing and drawing *Courtney Crumrin and the Night Things*, a spooky children's fantasy series about a grumpy little girl and her adventures with her Warlock uncle.

Nominated for an Eisner Award for best limited series, *Courtney Crumrin's* success paved the way for *Polly and the Pirates*, another children's book, this time about a prim and proper girl kidnapped by pirates convinced she was the daughter of their long-lost queen.

Over the next few years, Ted wrote four volumes of *Courtney Crumrin*, plus a spin off book about her uncle. He also co-created *How Loathsome* with Tristan Crane, and illustrated two volumes of the videogame tie-in comic *Death Junior* with screenwriter Gary Whitta. More recently, he illustrated *The Good Neighbors*, a three volume graphic novel series written by *New York Times* best-selling author Holly Black, published by Scholastic.

In 2011, Ted wrote the sequel to *Polly and the Pirates*, and illustrated several *Batman* short stories for DC Comics. He is currently writing and illustrating the ongoing *Courtney Crumrin* series, which will celebrate its 10th year in 2012.

Ted lives in San Francisco, because he likes dreary weather.



# Courtney COMING SOON Crumrin

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*—Jhonen Vasquez, creator of Invader Zim and Squee*

# Courtney VOLUME ONE Crumrin

## The Night Things

Courtney Crumrin grumbles about everything, but now she's really got something to grumble over. Having run out of credit cards, her parents are moving to the wealthy suburb of Hillsborough, to live rent-free with their creepy old uncle Aloysius. Courtney is now an outcast among her rich, snobby classmates. And if that weren't bad enough, the musty, decrepit old mansion that she now calls home is occupied by stranger creatures than just her parents or Uncle Aloysius.

They crawl about the house, just out of sight. They crunch bones in the corner. They climb up on the bed and watch Courtney while she sleeps. Mom and Dad don't notice them, but Uncle Aloysius calls them the Night Things.



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