



THE INVENTOR

BOOK ONE



OPPFINNEREN – FØRSTE BOK
Jakten på evighetsmaskinen

Utgitt av Egmont Kids Media Nordic AS, Oslo 2021
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Trykk ved Egmont Global Supply
Denne utgivelsen er støttet av Norsk kulturråd.

ISBN: 978-82-429-6525-7

Første opplag

LARS HENRIK ERIKSEN
THE INVENTOR



THE HUNT FOR THE
INFINITY MACHINE

CHAPTER 1

THE APPLE NEVER FALLS
FAR FROM THE TREE



NOTHING LASTS
FOREVER.

MOUNTAINS CRUMBLE TO
DUST. GREAT KINGS DIE.
FRIENDSHIPS END.

HOWEVER, FOR A GOOD LONG
WHILE, IN THE LITTLE VILLAGE
OF *MATA-MATA*, IT FELT LIKE
TIME STOOD STILL ...





... BUT I ALWAYS WISHED SOMETHING **MORE** WOULD HAPPEN HERE.



MY GRAMPA ONCE TOLD ME:



"IF **CHANGE** IS WHAT YOU WANT ..."



"... YOU HAVE TO MAKE IT **YOURSELF.**"

THERE!
DONE AT LAST!



KNOCK KNOCK!

COBALT,
BREAKFAST
TIME!

OH!



CLICK!

HANG ON!



WH-WHAT MAKES YOU SAY THAT?



MAYBE THE JUNK FAIRY SNUCK IN?

A LIKELY STORY.

I'D SAY YOU SAT UP LAST NIGHT MAKING THIS.



YES, BUT NOW YOU'VE ALREADY SEEN IT.



ARE YOU STARTING EARLY TODAY?

UM GNG TMF GRMFPS!

WHAT? SWALLOW YOUR FOOD AND TRY AGAIN.



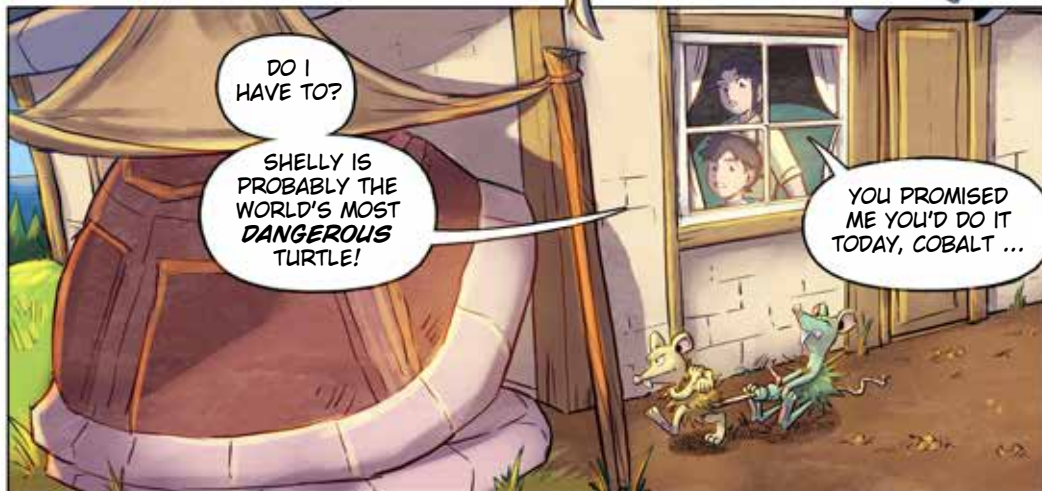


I'M GOING OVER TO GRAMPA'S!

I WANT TO SHOW HIM MY NEW INVENTION BEFORE SCHOOL STARTS!



THAT'S FINE, BUT FEED *SHELLY* AND *SKALDER* BEFORE YOU GO!



DO I HAVE TO?

SHELLY IS PROBABLY THE WORLD'S MOST DANGEROUS TURTLE!

YOU PROMISED ME YOU'D DO IT TODAY, COBALT ...



... OTHERWISE I WON'T HAVE TIME TO UNTANGLE THE FISHNETS BEFORE WE TAKE THE BOAT OUT.

OK, BUT DON'T BLAME ME WHEN SHE GOES TOTALLY NUTS.



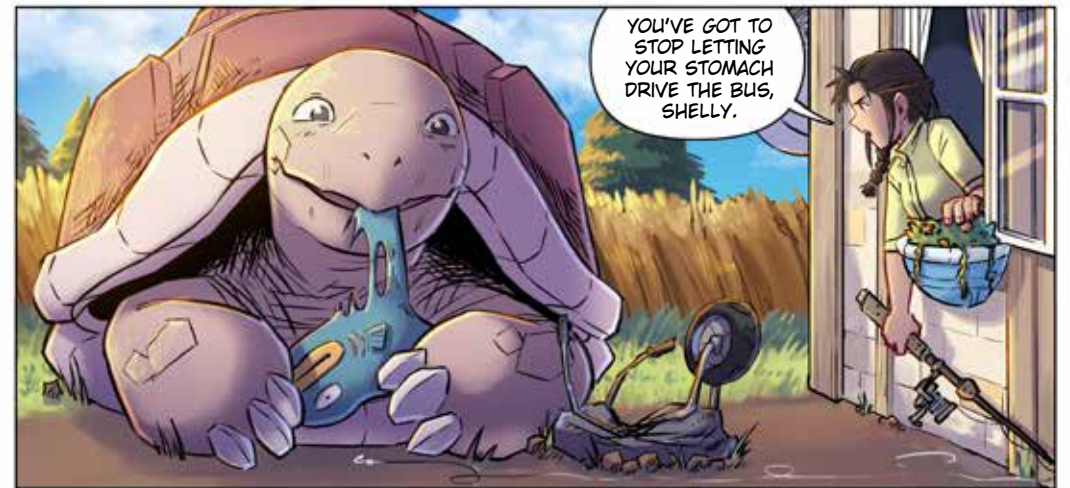
I'M SURE IT'LL BE FINE.

REMEMBER TO SAY HI TO GRAMPA FOR ME.

YEAH, YEAH.

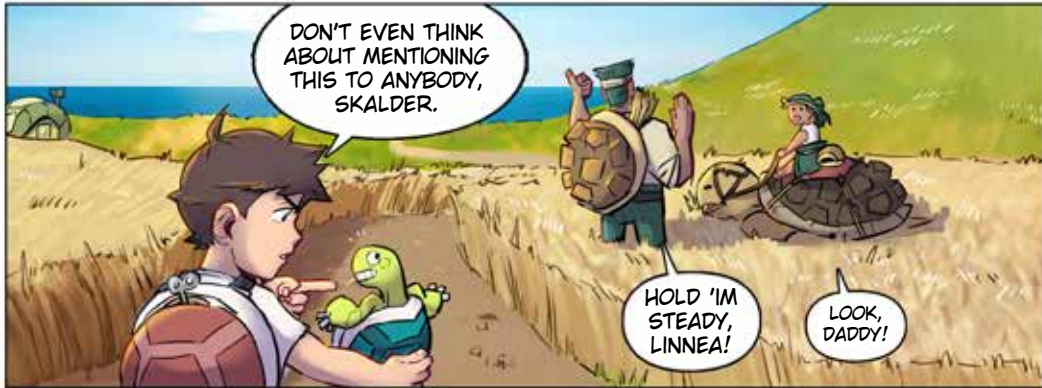








DANG!
IT'S NOT MY FAULT TURTLES ARE SO TERRIBLY VIOLENT!



DON'T EVEN THINK ABOUT MENTIONING THIS TO ANYBODY, SKALDER.

HOLD 'IM STEADY, LINNEA!
LOOK, DADDY!



HM?
IT'S COBALT!



HI, LINNEA!
AND GOOD MORNING TO YOU, MAYOR BARLIND!
YOU'RE A RARE SIGHT THIS EARLY IN THE MORNING!

GOING TO ALFRED'S WORKSHOP BEFORE SCHOOL STARTS?



YUP! I'M GONNA SHOW GRAMPA MY INVENTION!

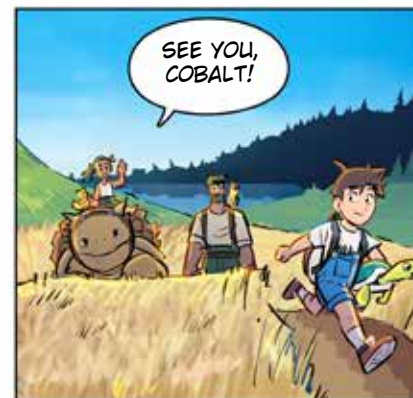
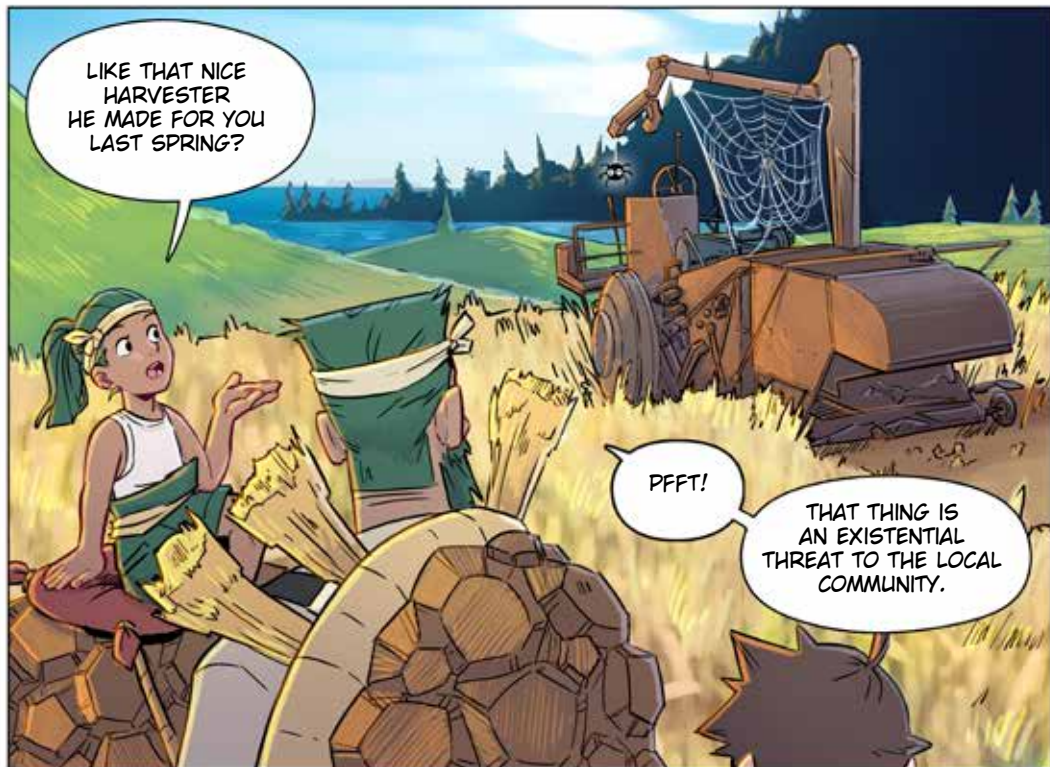


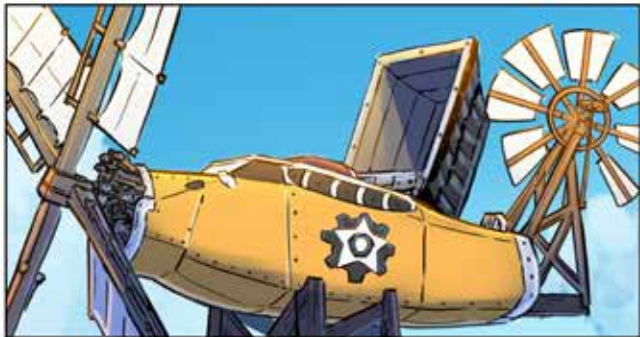
YOU CAN COME ALONG, IF YOU WANT!
OOOH! CAN I REALLY?
WAIT A SECOND, KIDS.

THOSE GIZMOS THAT ALFRED MAKES MIGHT BE FUN ...



... BUT THEY CAN ALSO BE VERY DANGEROUS!
NEITHER OF YOU SHOULD BE SPENDING SO MUCH TIME OVER THERE.
NOW YOU'RE JUST BEING DUMB, DAD!
ALFRED HELPS YOU WITH ALL KINDS OF STUFF!





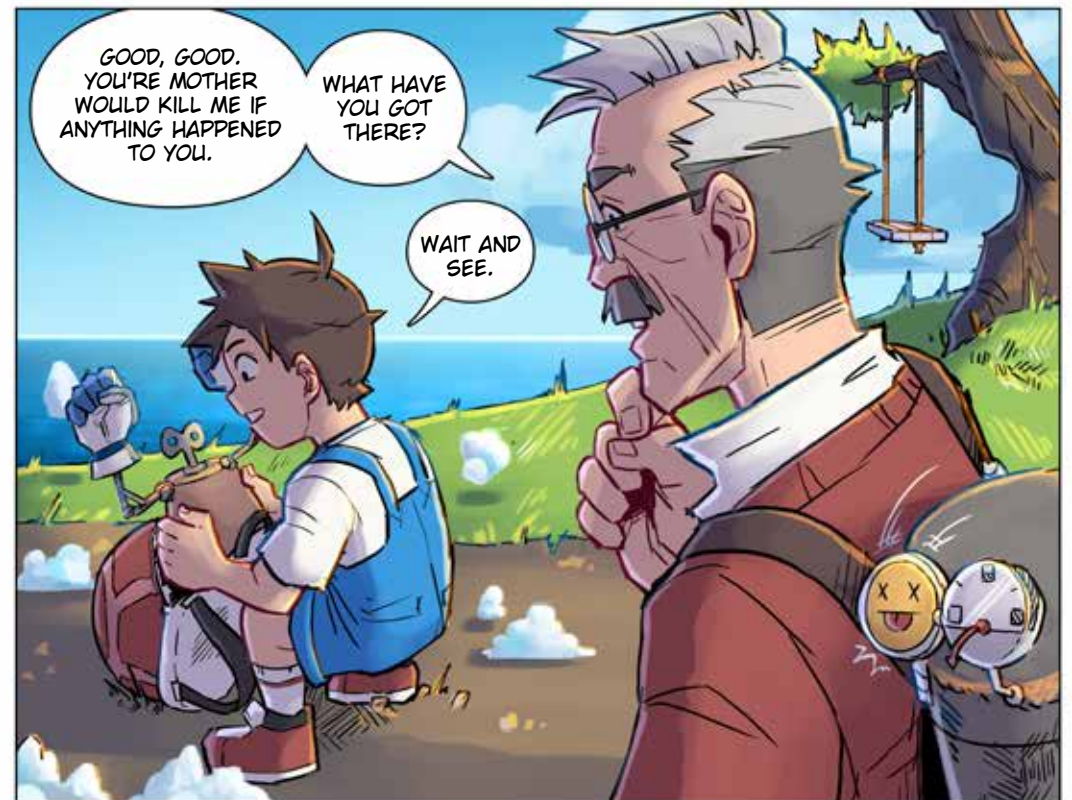
I'VE GOT SOMETHING TO SHOW YOU!

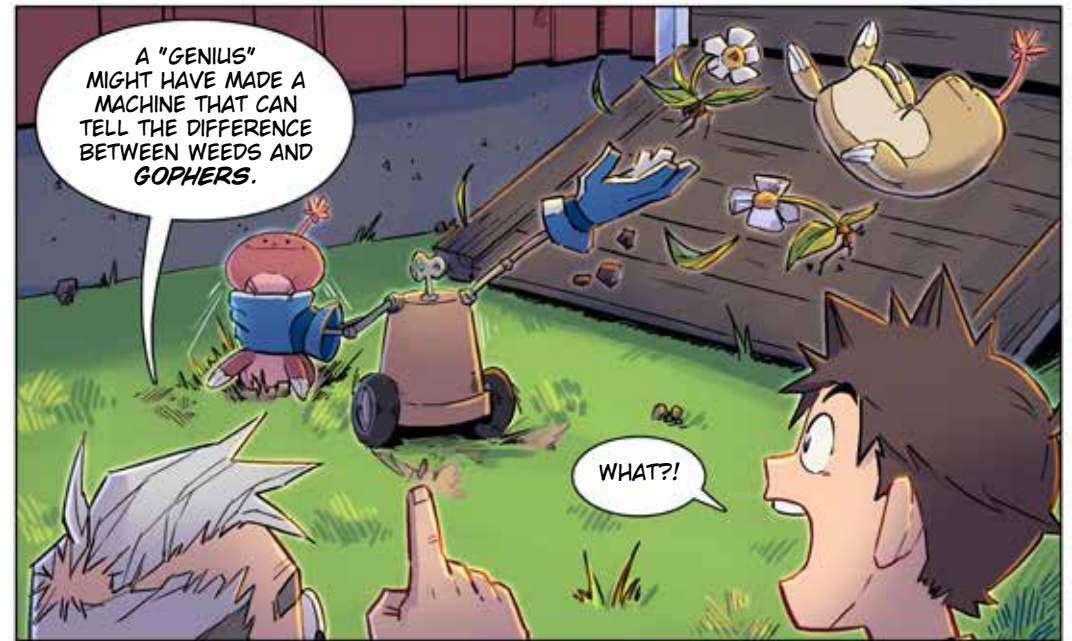
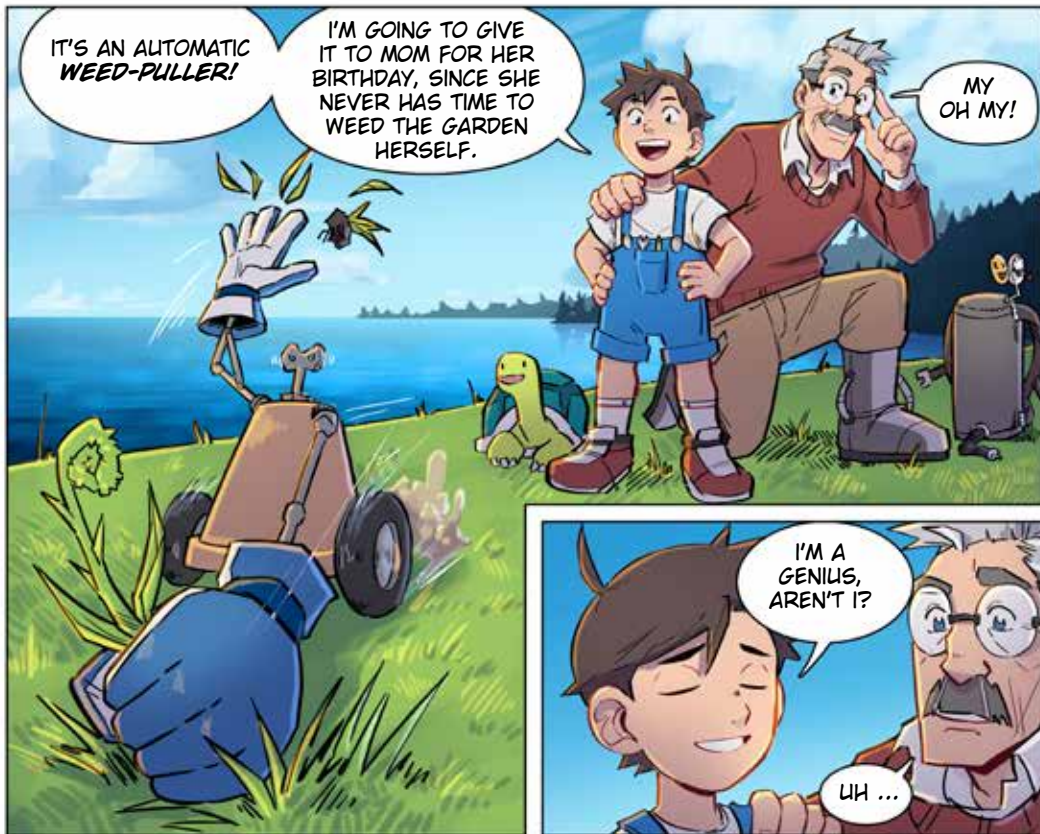
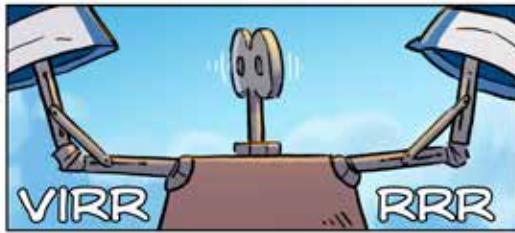


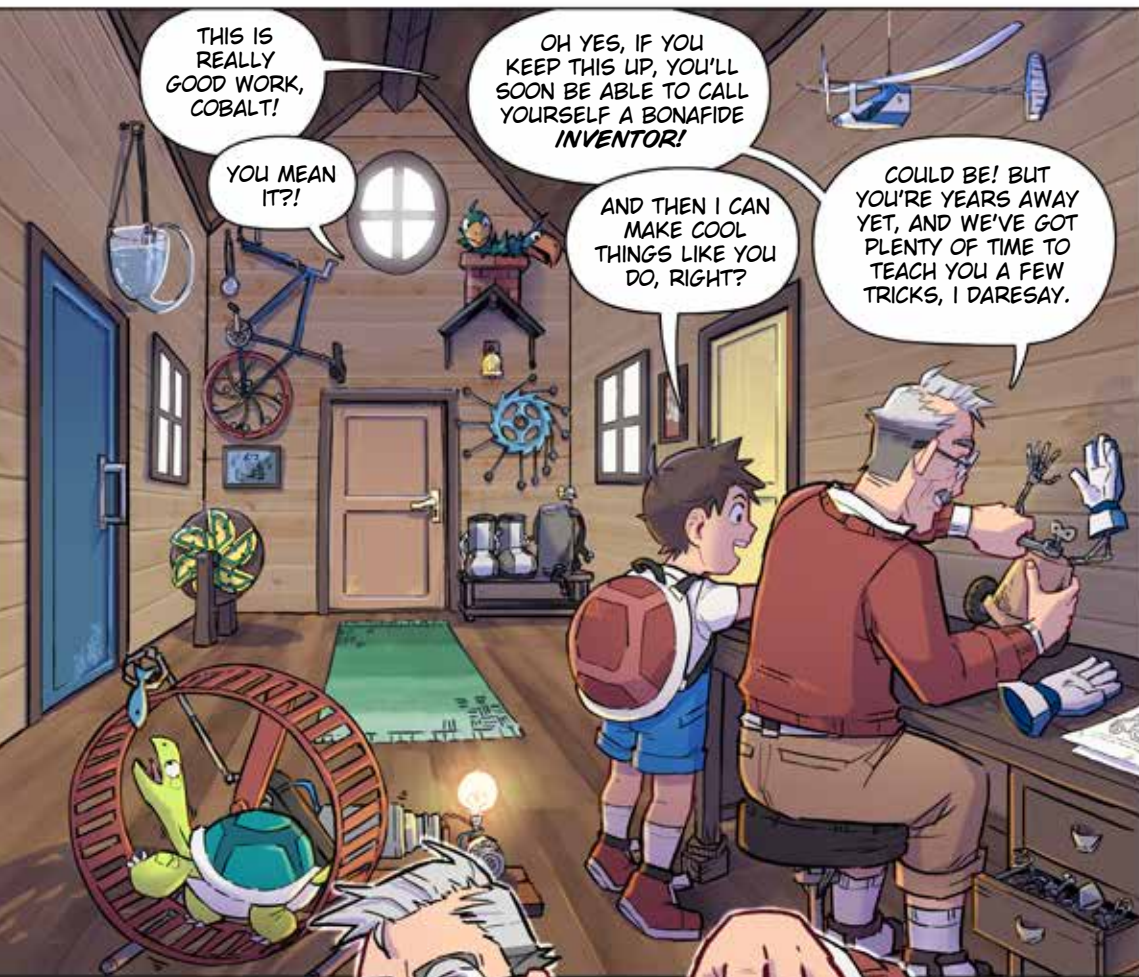
I'M COMING DOWN.



WHA?!







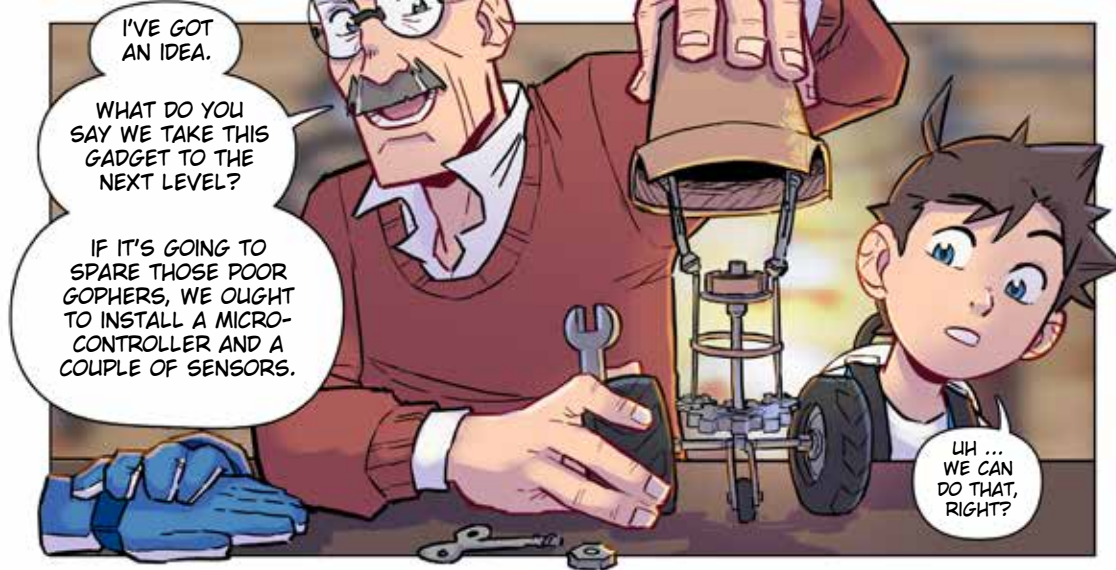
THIS IS REALLY GOOD WORK, COBALT!

YOU MEAN IT?!

OH YES, IF YOU KEEP THIS UP, YOU'LL SOON BE ABLE TO CALL YOURSELF A BONAFIDE INVENTOR!

AND THEN I CAN MAKE COOL THINGS LIKE YOU DO, RIGHT?

COULD BE! BUT YOU'RE YEARS AWAY YET, AND WE'VE GOT PLENTY OF TIME TO TEACH YOU A FEW TRICKS, I DARESAY.



I'VE GOT AN IDEA.

WHAT DO YOU SAY WE TAKE THIS GADGET TO THE NEXT LEVEL?

IF IT'S GOING TO SPARE THOSE POOR GOPHERS, WE OUGHT TO INSTALL A MICRO-CONTROLLER AND A COUPLE OF SENSORS.

UH ... WE CAN DO THAT, RIGHT?



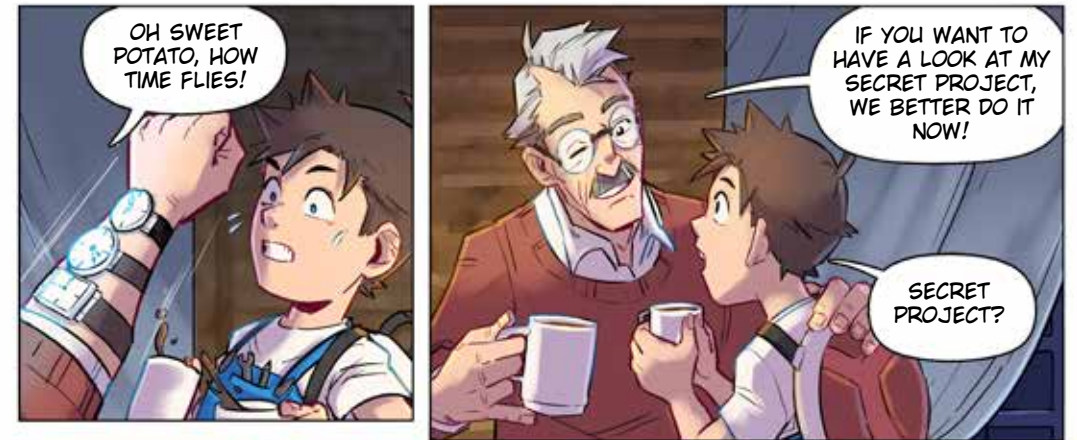
HM ...

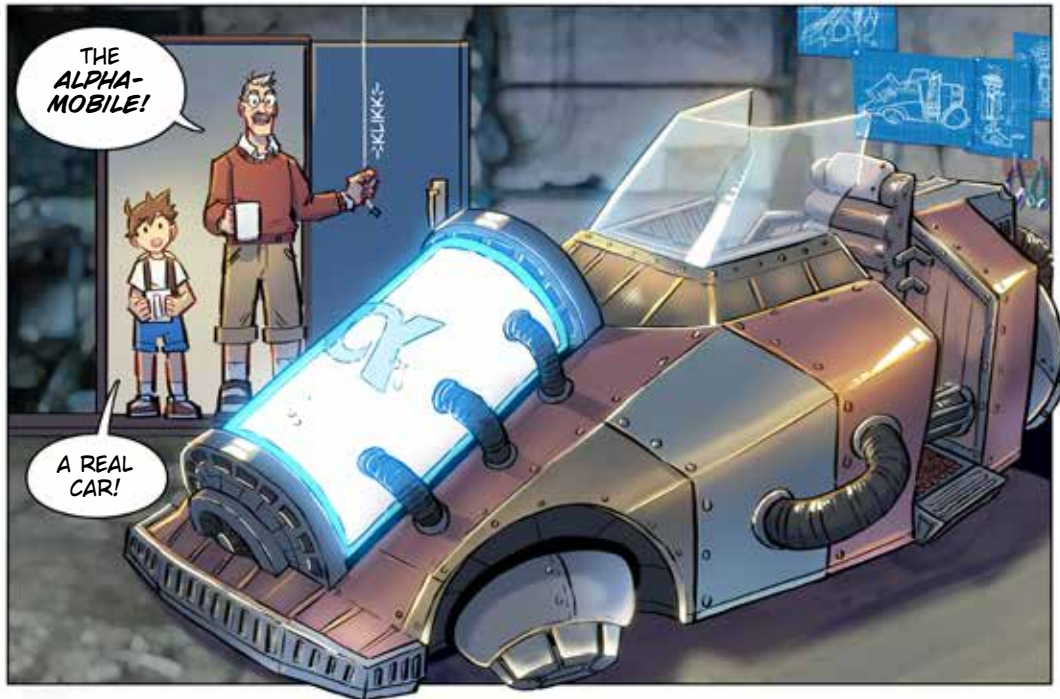


MAYBE YOU CAN MAKE US A COUPLE CUPS OF COFFEE WHILE I PONDER THE POSSIBILITIES?

TWO CUPS OF COFFEE COMING UP!

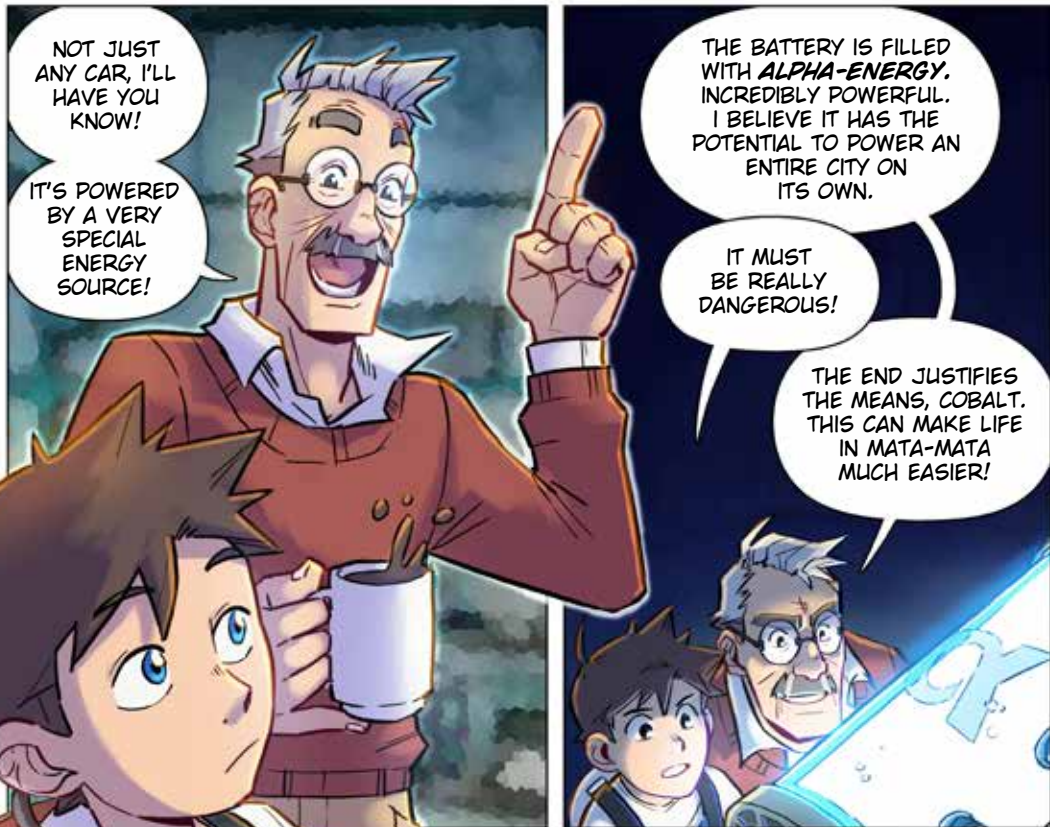






THE ALPHA-MOBILE!

A REAL CAR!



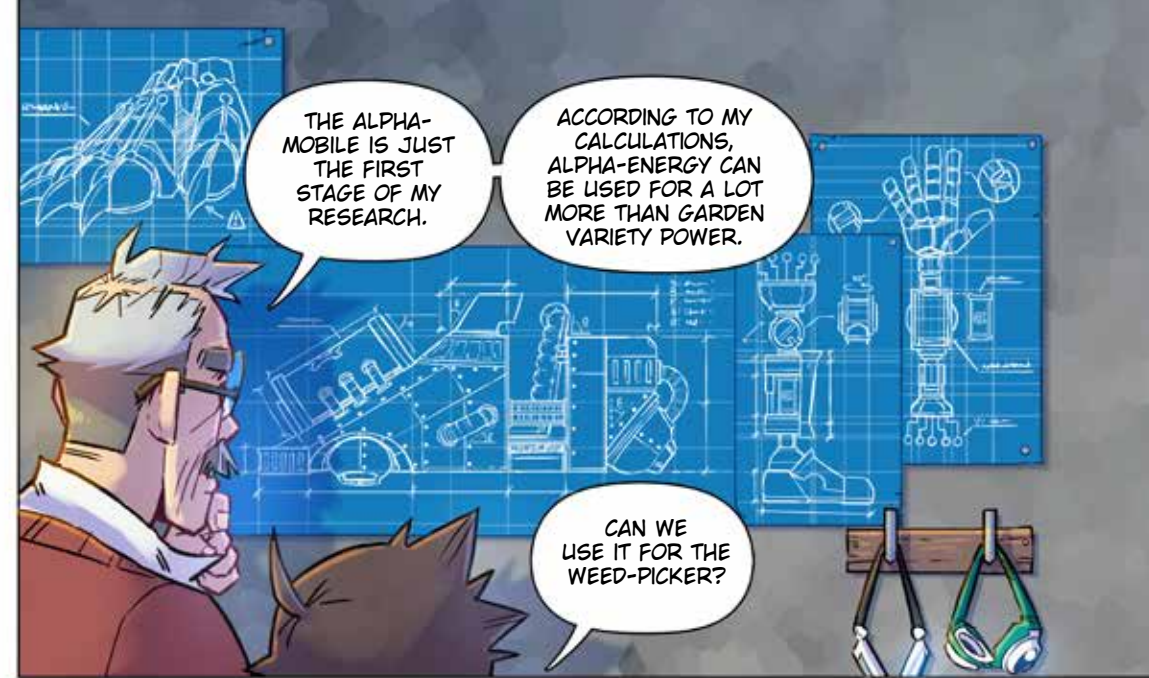
NOT JUST ANY CAR, I'LL HAVE YOU KNOW!

IT'S POWERED BY A VERY SPECIAL ENERGY SOURCE!

THE BATTERY IS FILLED WITH ALPHA-ENERGY. INCREDIBLY POWERFUL. I BELIEVE IT HAS THE POTENTIAL TO POWER AN ENTIRE CITY ON ITS OWN.

IT MUST BE REALLY DANGEROUS!

THE END JUSTIFIES THE MEANS, COBALT. THIS CAN MAKE LIFE IN MATA-MATA MUCH EASIER!



THE ALPHA-MOBILE IS JUST THE FIRST STAGE OF MY RESEARCH.

ACCORDING TO MY CALCULATIONS, ALPHA-ENERGY CAN BE USED FOR A LOT MORE THAN GARDEN VARIETY POWER.

CAN WE USE IT FOR THE WEED-PICKER?



POSSIBLY. BUT FIRST, WE HAVE TO TEST THE CAR!

PUT THESE ON.



WHAT'S UP WITH THE GOGGLES?

JUST TO BE ON THE SAFE SIDE.

STEP BACK A LITTLE, COBALT. THIS MIGHT MAKE A BIG BOOM.





FANTASTIC!
IT WORKS!

OPEN THE
GARAGE DOOR!
WE'LL TAKE HER
FOR A TEST
DRIVE!



O...OK!

KLONK!

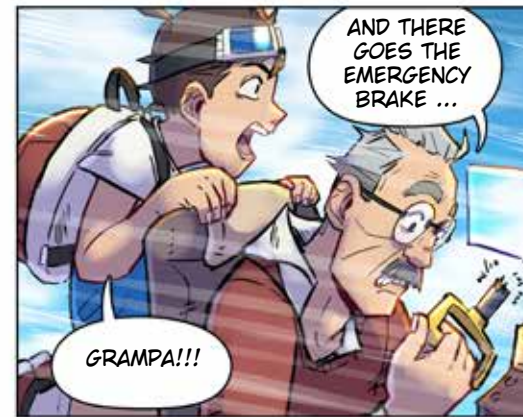


HANG ON
TIGHT!



WE'RE
FLYING!

WOO-
HOO!





CHOFF!



WHAT IN THE WORLD ..?



WHAT THE HECK ARE YOU PEOPLE DOING?



ALL MY LAUNDRY IS COVERED IN DIRT!

WHO IS THE *PRIZE IDIOT* THAT HUNG UP THEIR LAUNDRY IN THE MIDDLE OF THE ROAD?

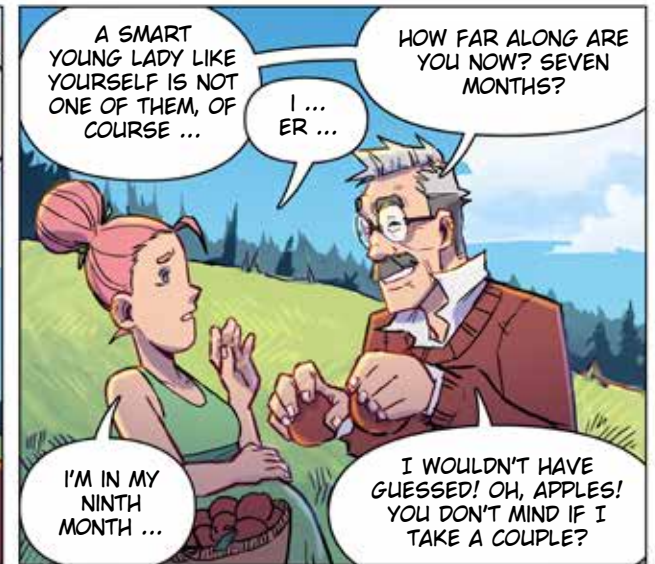
SOMEONE COULD HAVE BEEN KILLED!



OH, WHY, HELLO, PUMILA!

APOLOGIES FOR THE OUTBURST. SOME PEOPLE ARE JUST SO TERRIBLY IRRESPONSIBLE!

HI ALFRED, I ...



A SMART YOUNG LADY LIKE YOURSELF IS NOT ONE OF THEM, OF COURSE ...

HOW FAR ALONG ARE YOU NOW? SEVEN MONTHS?

I ... ER ...

I'M IN MY NINTH MONTH ...

I WOULDN'T HAVE GUESSED! OH, APPLES! YOU DON'T MIND IF I TAKE A COUPLE?



THE ALPHA-MOBILE HAS A REESERVE-ENGINE, SO NO HARM DONE.

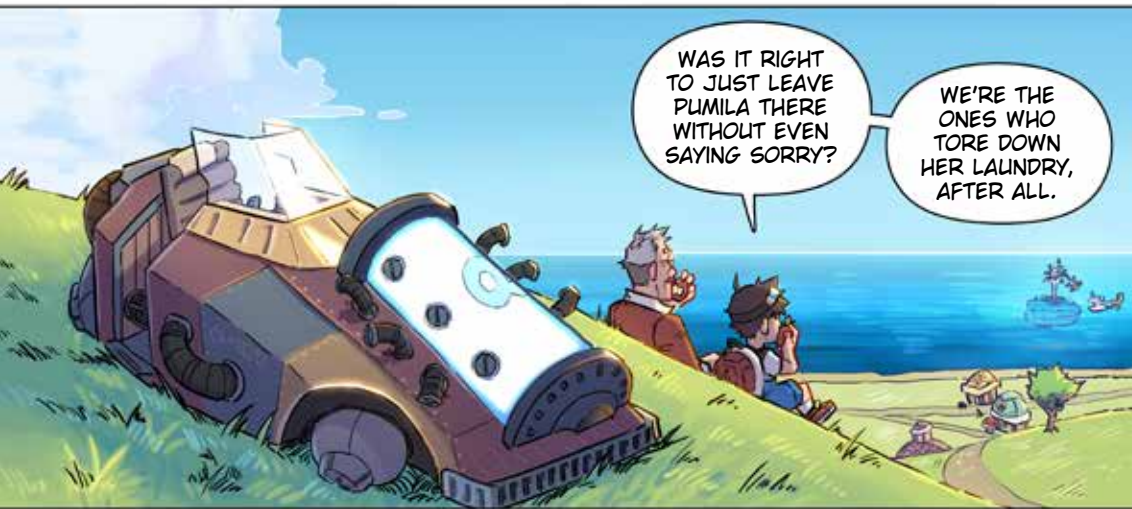
HAVE A LOVELY REST OF THE DAY, PUMILA!

COUGH! SPLUTTER!

POP!



GRNCH!



WAS IT RIGHT TO JUST LEAVE PUMILA THERE WITHOUT EVEN SAYING SORRY?

WE'RE THE ONES WHO TORE DOWN HER LAUNDRY, AFTER ALL.



YOU DON'T NEED TO FEEL GUILTY, COBALT.

NOBODY GOT HURT AND WE GOT A COUPLE OF DELICIOUS APPLES TO BOOT. WIN, WIN!

SOMETIMES IT'S JUST ALL ABOUT HOW YOU CHOOSE TO USE YOUR TIME.



AND YOU COULDN'T POSSIBLY MAKE SCHOOL ON TIME IF WE'D HELPED HER WITH HER CLOTHES!



HM ...



YOU KNOW, COBALT ... I'VE BEEN THINKING ABOUT HOW BEST TO USE **MY OWN TIME** GOING FORWARD.

I'D LIKE ONE LAST ADVENTURE BEFORE I TAKE MY FINAL BOW.

HAVE I EVER TOLD YOU THE LEGEND OF THE INFINITY MACHINE?

RRRRRRRRRRRIING!



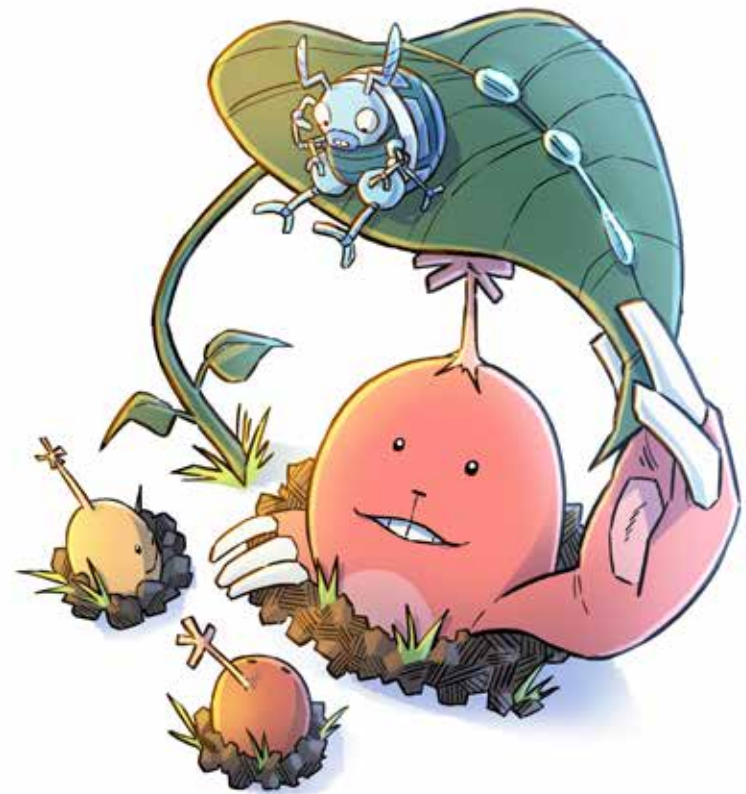
OOOPS, TIME FOR YOU TO GO! COME BACK TO THE WORKSHOP AFTERWARD AND WE'LL FINISH UP THE WEED-PICKER TOGETHER!

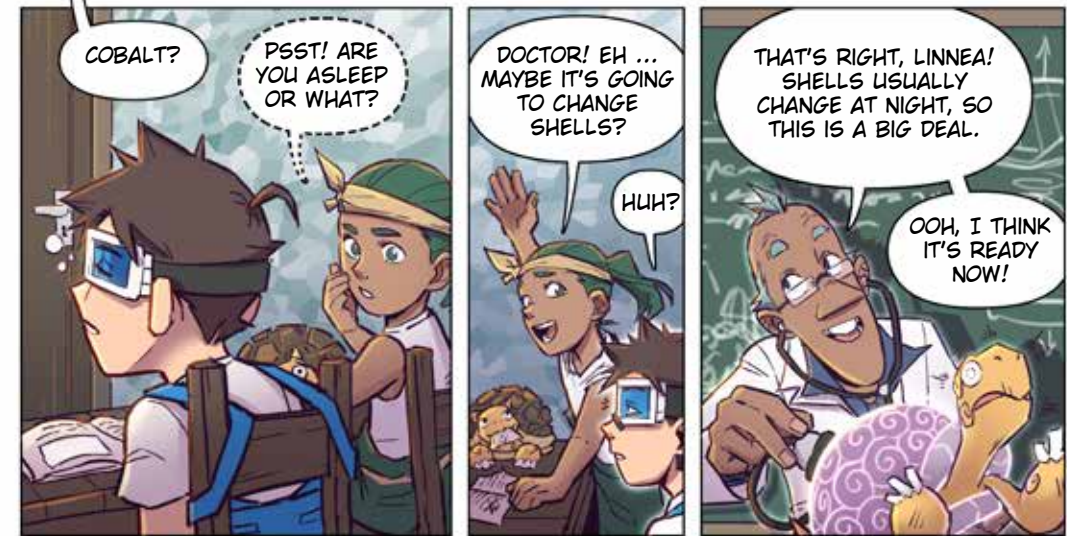
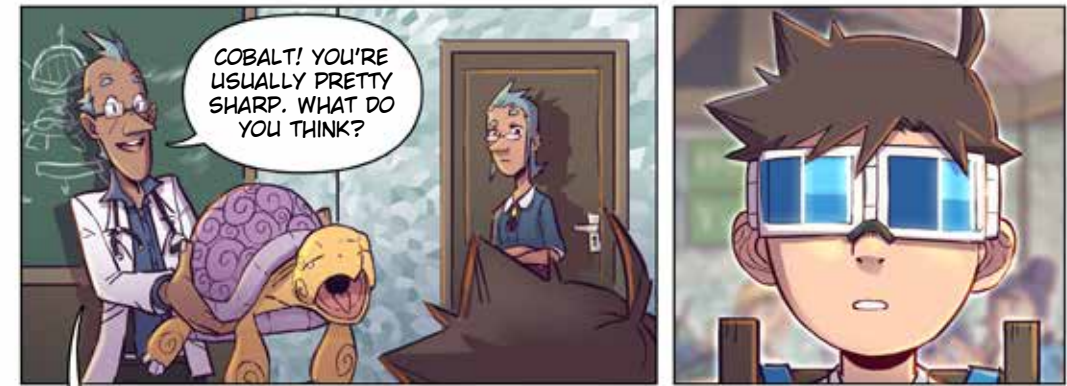
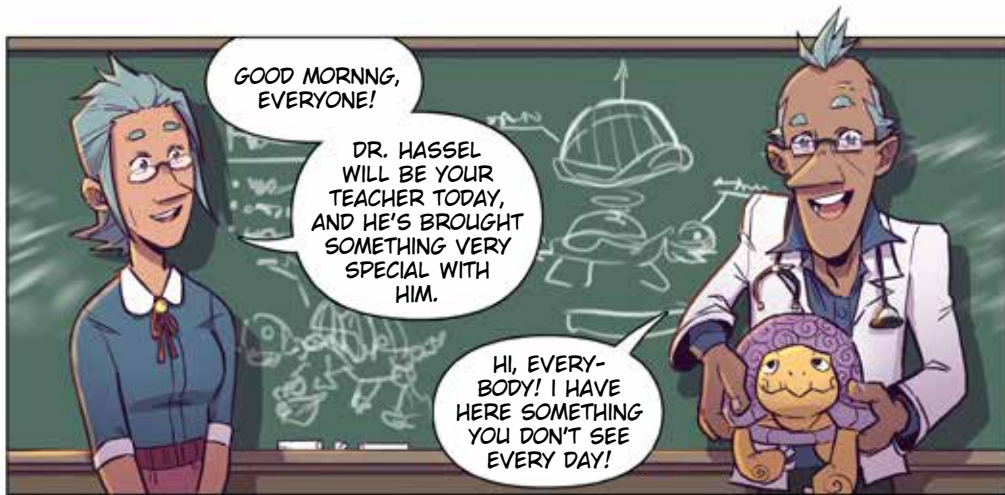
OK! SEE YOU LATER!

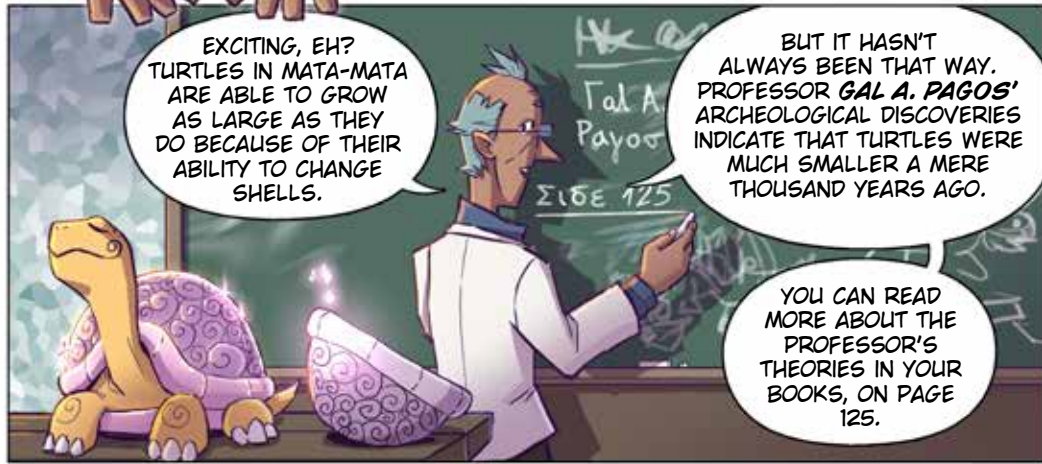


CHAPTER 2

ACCIDENTS RARELY HAPPEN
BY THEMSELVES









I WANT TO BE AN INVENTOR!

WELL, WE SURE WON'T HAVE TIME TO PLAY TOGETHER ANYMORE.



WHAT IF WE CAN'T EVEN BE FRIENDS?

OH, IS THAT WHAT YOU MEANT?



PINKY-SWEAR!



LINNEA, WE'LL BE FRIENDS FOREVER.

IF YOU WANT.



OK ... FRIENDS FOREVER.



WHAT ARE YOU TWO COOKING UP?



HI THERE!

ALMA, BIRK AND ASK!

WHAT NOW?



YOU GUYS ARE SO CLUTE TOGETHER!

MAYBE THEY'RE GOING TO KISS?

SHEESH, YOU GUYS ARE DUMB! COME ON, COBALT, LET'S GO!

I THINK THEY'RE SWEET-HEARTS.

HUH? WE'RE JUST FRIENDS.



BUT LINNEA, I'M GOING OVER TO GRAMPA'S!

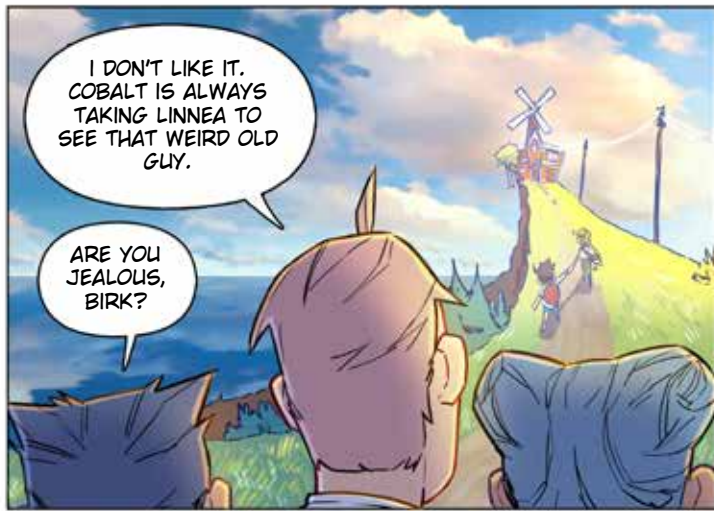
YOU DIDN'T GET PERMISSION TO GO THERE TODAY!

SO WHAT? WHEN DID YOU START CARING ABOUT RULES?



DAD WILL NEVER FIND OUT ANYWAY.

GRAMPA COGG KNOWS HOW TO KEEP A SECRET.



I DON'T LIKE IT. COBALT IS ALWAYS TAKING LINNEA TO SEE THAT WEIRD OLD GUY.

ARE YOU JEALOUS, BIRK?



ARE YOU A NUMBSKULL, ASK? GRAMPA COGG IS TOTALLY WACKO!

EASY, IT WAS JUST A JOKE!



WHY DON'T WE JUST FOLLOW THEM?

->PLIPP<-



I DON'T WANT TO SNOOP AROUND IF IT STARTS RAINING.

->PLOPP<-

ME NEITHER.



WIMPS.



YOU SEE THOSE EMPTY SHELLS? I HAE A WATERTIGHT PLAN.

OH YEAH! YOU'RE A GENIUS, ALMA!



RAIN AND SUN AT THE SAME TIME? WHAT'S NEXT?

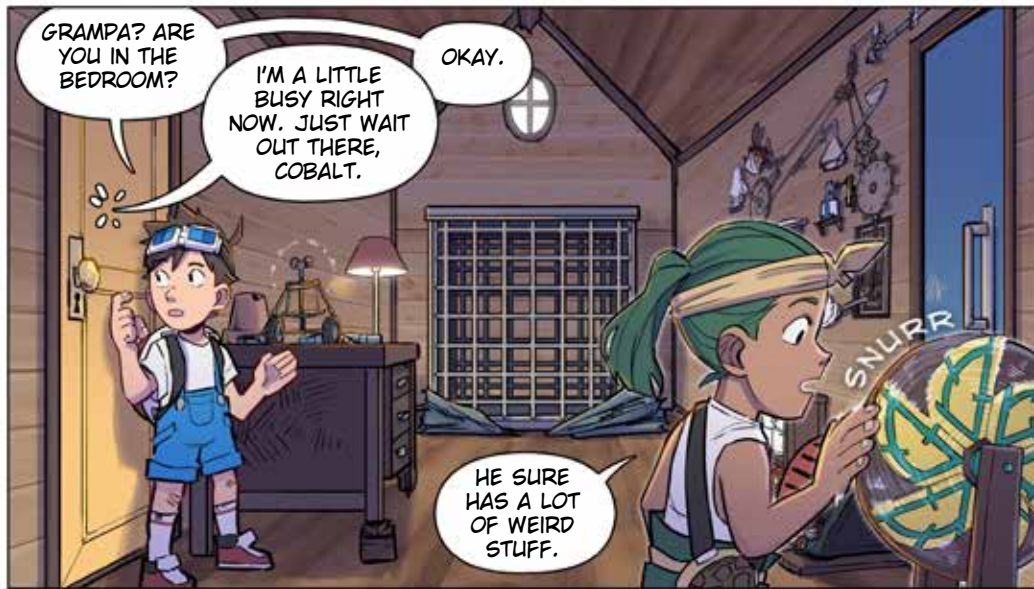
FISH ON LAND?

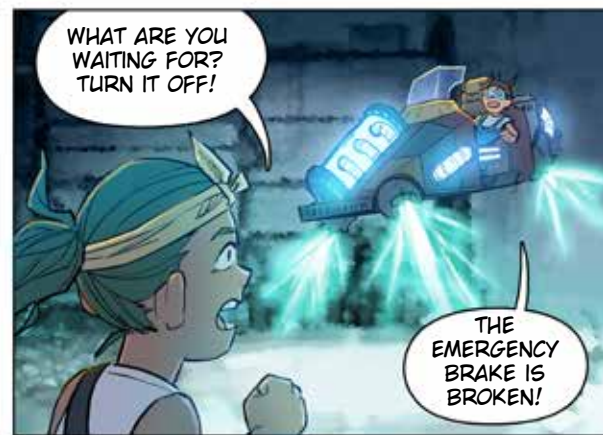
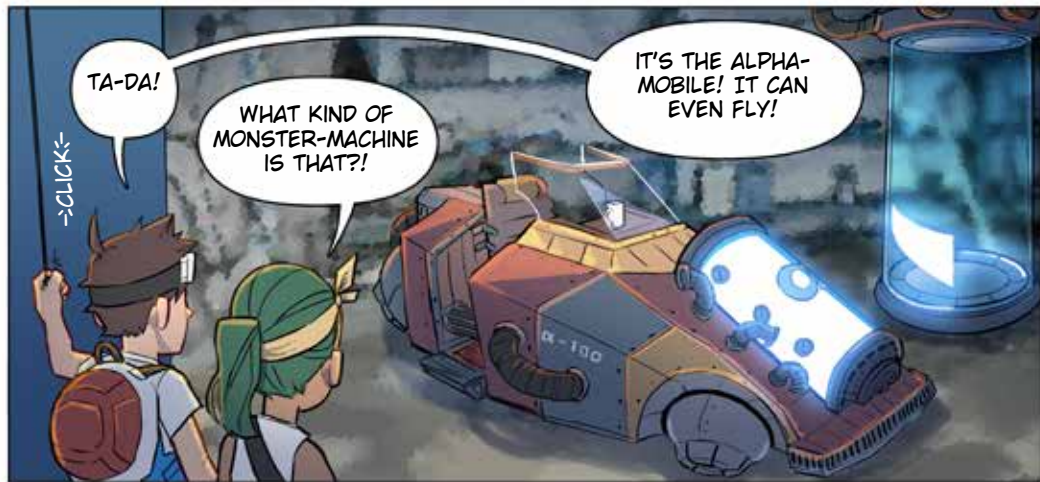
MAYBE WE'LL SEE A RAINBOW!



HELLO! I'M DONE WITH SCHOOL!

ARE YOU READY TO FINISH THE WEED-PICKER?

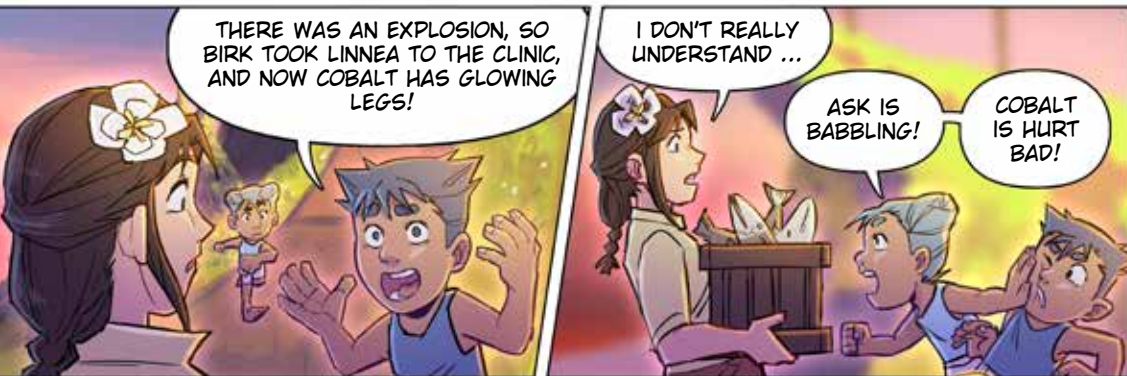


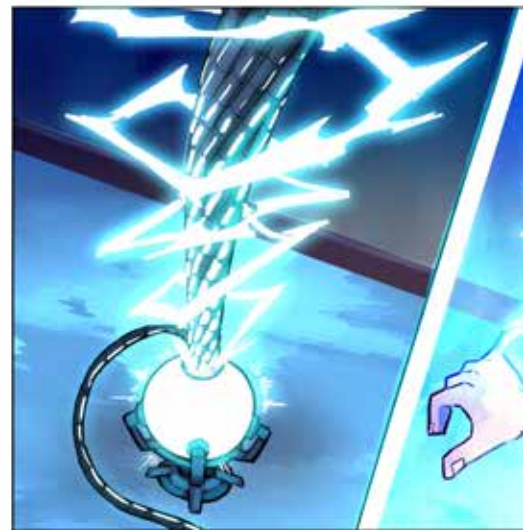














DAD!!!
WHAT HAVE
YOU DONE THIS
TIME?!



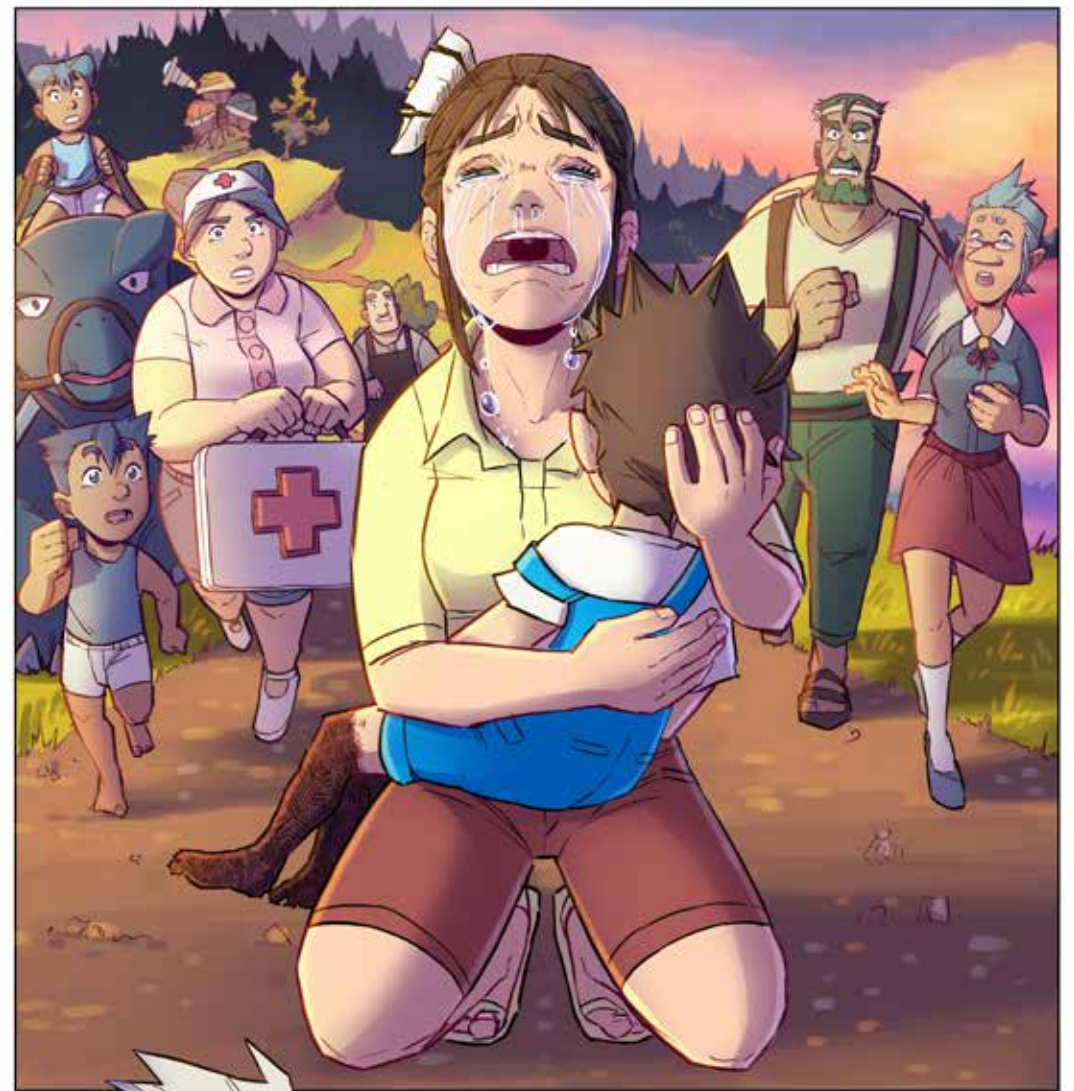
IF THIS IS A
JOKE, IT'S REALLY
NOT FUNNY!

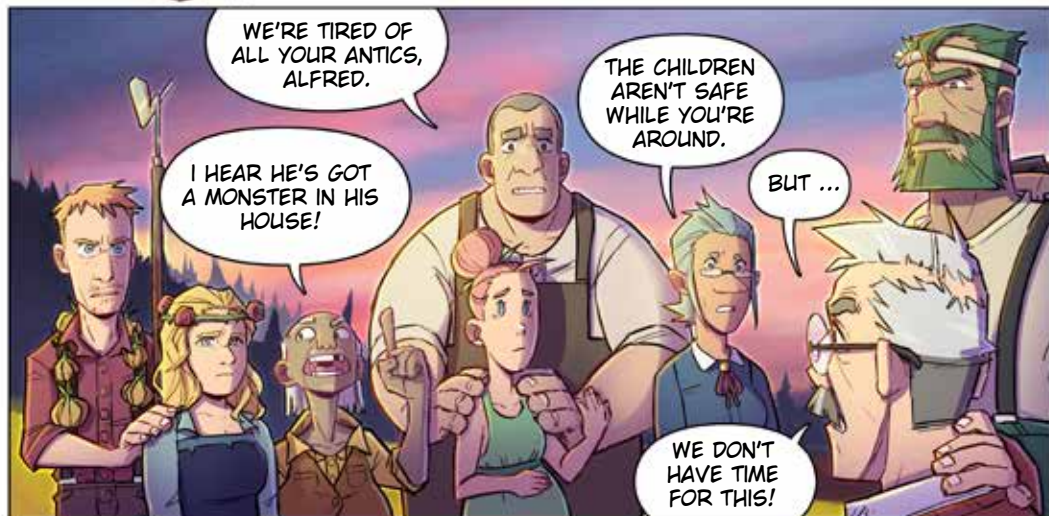


MAGNOLIA,
I ...

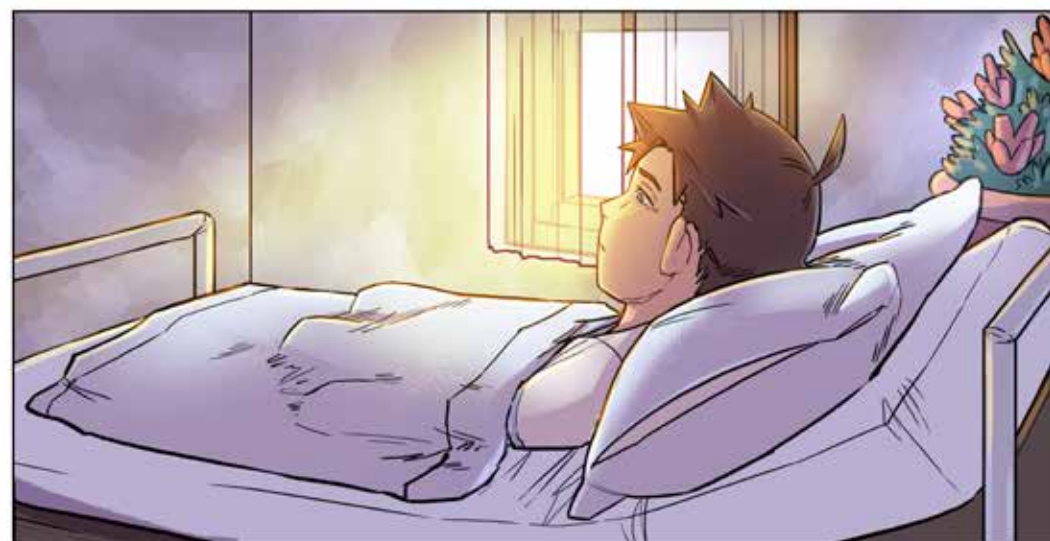


... I'M SO
SORRY.

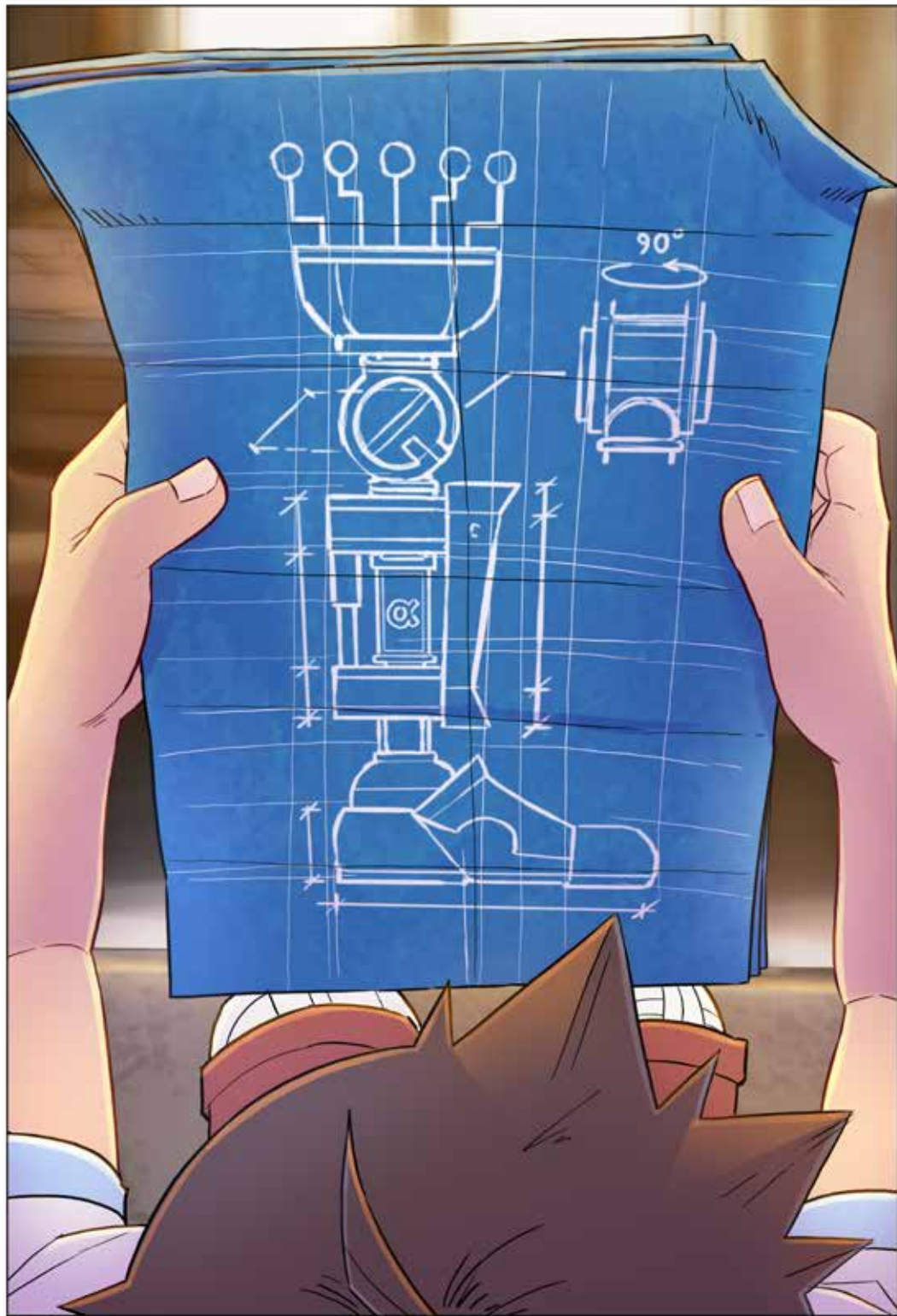












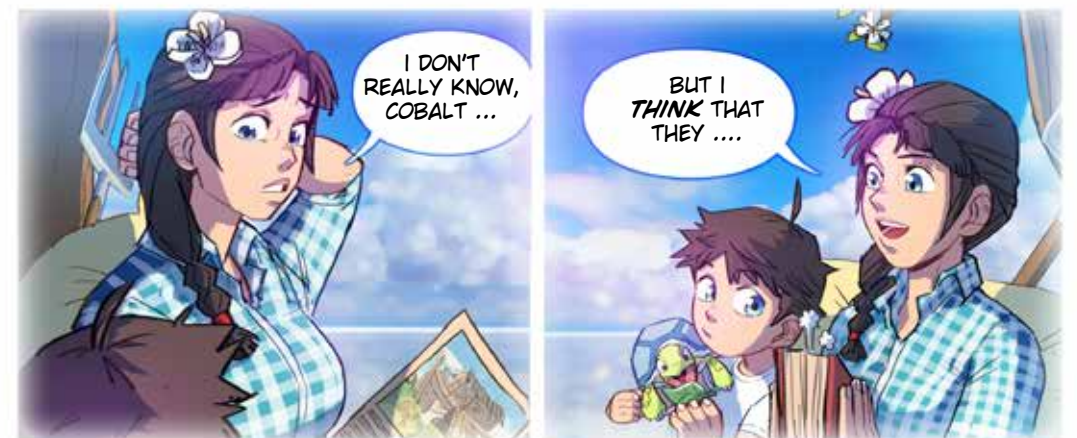
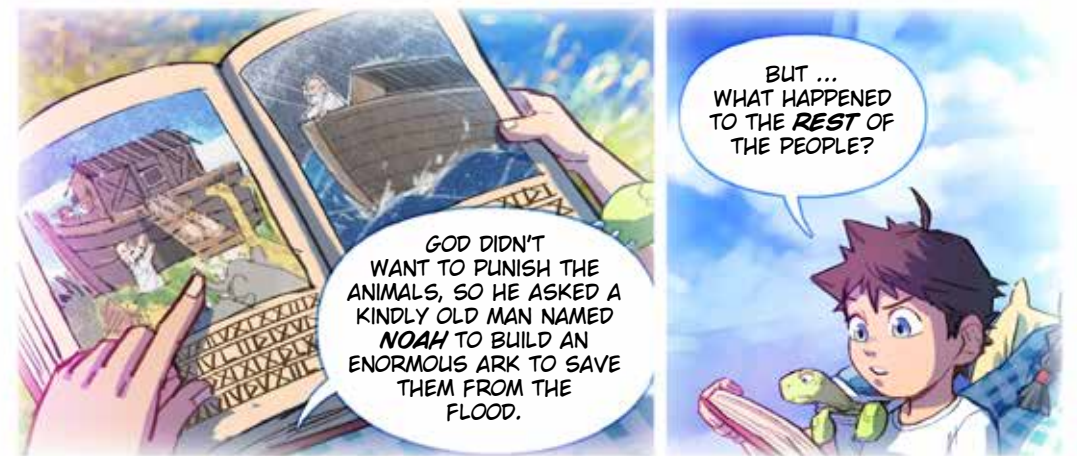
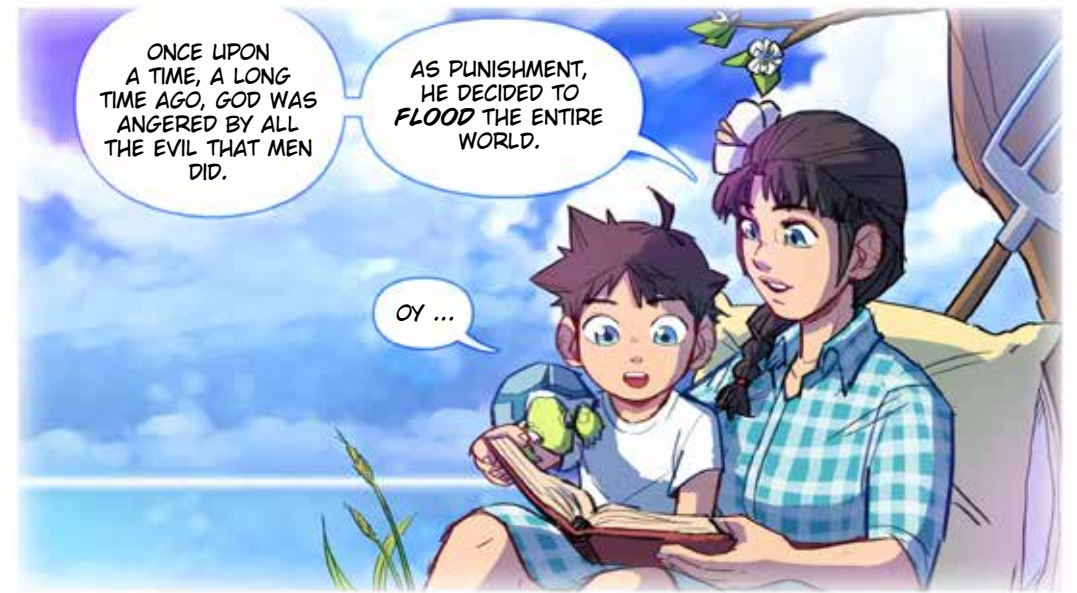
CHAPTER 3

WISDOM FROM PAIN





COBALT,
HAVE YOU HEARD
THE STORY OF
NOAH'S ARK?





... TICKLED EACH OTHER TO DEATH!



STOP! STOP! I CAN'T BREATHE!



WHERE DID SKALDER GO?



OH! HOW DID HE GET ALL THE WAY DOWN THERE?



HE'S YOUR RESPONSIBILITY NOW, SO THIS TIME YOU'LL HAVE TO FETCH HIM YOURSELF.

YEAH, YEAH!



TAKE GOOD CARE OF SKALDER FROM NOW ON! IMAGINE IF HE DISAPPEARED!



RELAX! I'VE GOT IT ALL UNDER CONTROL!



ALL UNDER CONTROL. RIGHT.



YOU MUSTN'T RUN OFF LIKE THAT!



THERE! THAT'S BETTER.



HUH?















'MORNING, COBALT!

PACKAGE FOR YOU!

KICK!

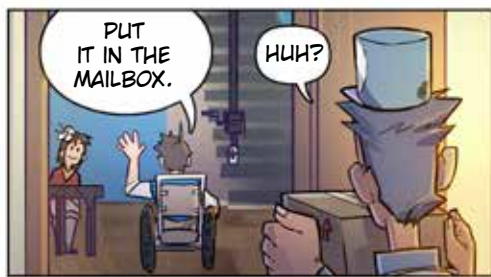


ASK!

HOW DO YOU LIKE THE NEW JOB?

YOU KNOW WHAT THEY SAY - 'TIS BETTER TO GIVE THAN TO RECEIVE!

... SO HERE YOU GO!



PUT IT IN THE MAILBOX.

HUH?



IN THE MAILBOX?



WELL, THE THING IS ...

IT'S A BIT SMALL.

WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR?



THE PACKAGE IS TOO BIG! WHY CAN'T I JUST DELIVER IT TO YOU AT THE DOOR?

SIZE DOESN'T MATTER!

JUST STUFF IT IN!



UH ... OKAY?

SPLAP!

SPRONG!



A FLOUNDER ...





THANKS, ASK!

SEE YOU LATER!

WHOA!

YEAH, I'VE GOT TO GET GOING. THE MAIL NEEDS DELIVERING!

ΒΑΣΑΡΑ



ARE YOU EXCITED, SKALDER?



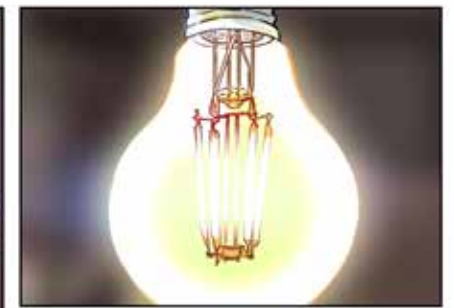
THE BATTERY CAPSULES HAVE FINALLY ARRIVED!

I SPECIAL-ORDERED THEM TO BE COMPATIBLE WITH GRAMPA'S DESIGNS.

AND THAT MEANS ...



...TODAY WE CAN FINISH THE ROBOT LEGS!





I HEAR WHAT YOU'RE SAYING BUT ... DO WE REALLY **NEED** ALL THAT POWER?

ΒΙΒΛΙΟΤΕΚ

ΜαταΜατα
Ρωδησο

Βακερ



DO YOU EXPECT ME TO TOAST MY BREAD BY HAND?

IT'S SO SAD AND DARK WITHOUT LIGHTS ON INSIDE.

I CAN'T WATCH TV.

FOOD WILL SPOIL WITHOUT REFRIDGERATION!

A LOT OF THE EQUIPMENT AT THE CLINIC WON'T FUNCTION AT ALL WITHOUT ELECTRICITY ...

WE DON'T HAVE A TV, HONEY.

OH YEAH.

WE HAVE TO FIGURE THIS OUT, BARLIND.

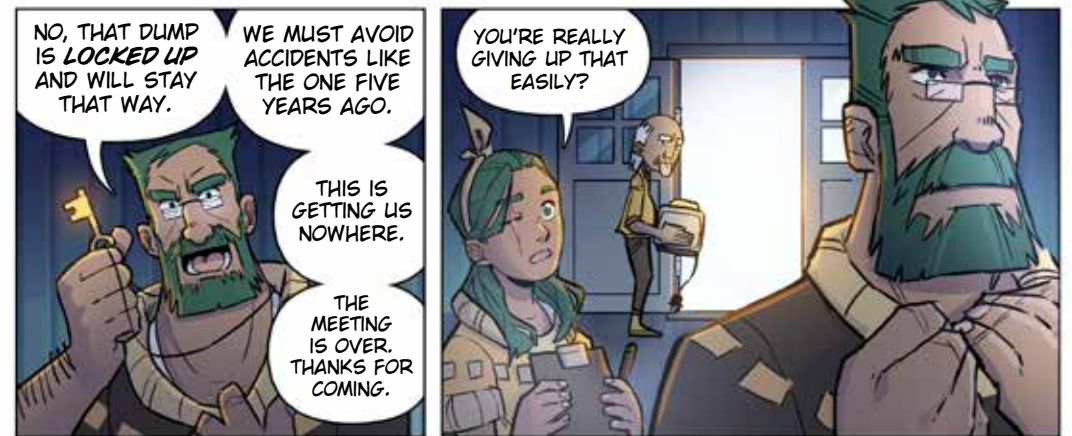


YOU HAVE ROOT CELLARS, DON'T YOU? PUT YOUR FOOD THERE.

IF YOU NEED LIGHT AND HEAT, USE YOUR FIREPLACE.

WE GOT ALONG FINE BEFORE WE HAD POWER, AND WE'LL MANAGE FINE WITHOUT IT, NOW THAT IT'S GONE.

HOW ABOUT WE LOOK FOR A SOLUTION AT ALFRED'S HOUSE?



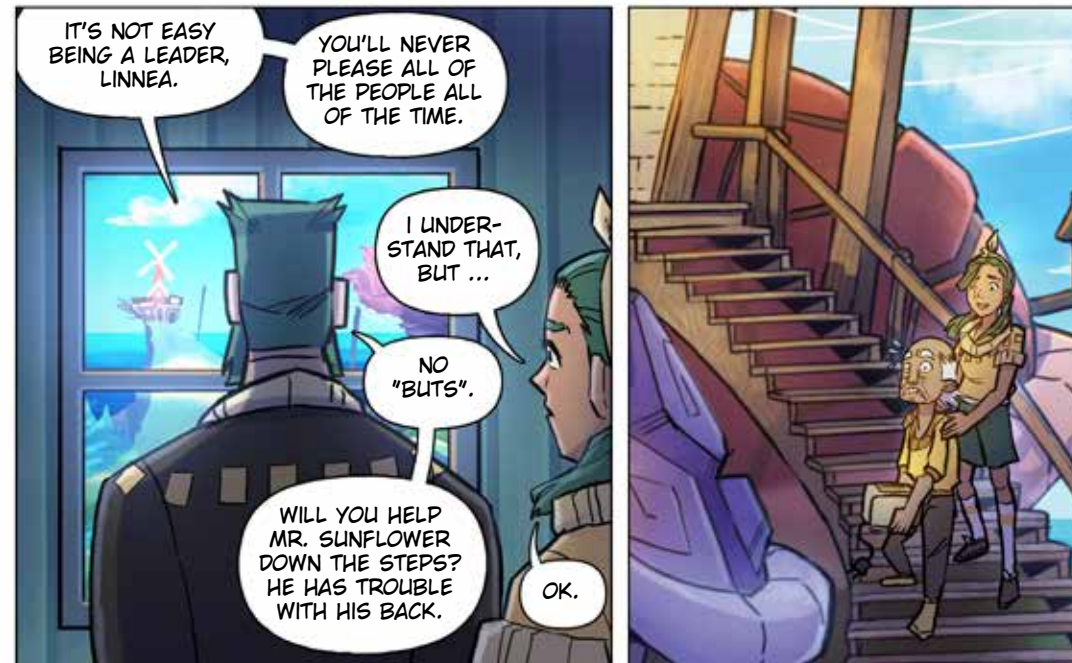
NO, THAT DUMP IS LOCKED UP AND WILL STAY THAT WAY.

WE MUST AVOID ACCIDENTS LIKE THE ONE FIVE YEARS AGO.

YOU'RE REALLY GIVING UP THAT EASILY?

THIS IS GETTING US NOWHERE.

THE MEETING IS OVER. THANKS FOR COMING.



IT'S NOT EASY BEING A LEADER, LINNEA.

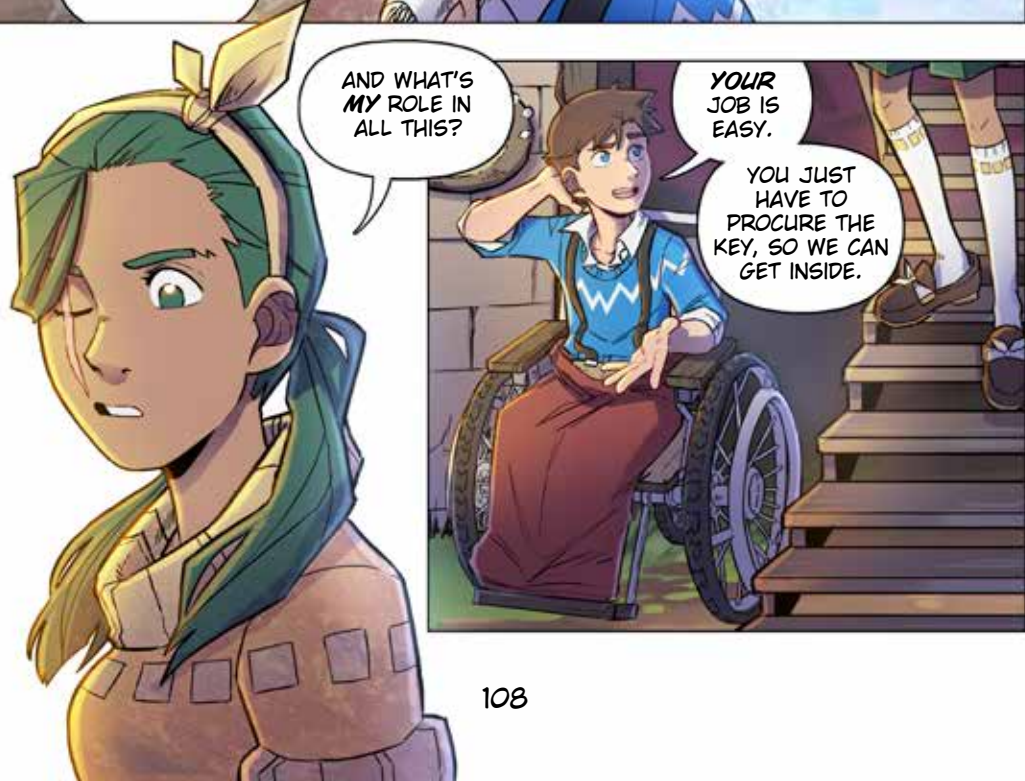
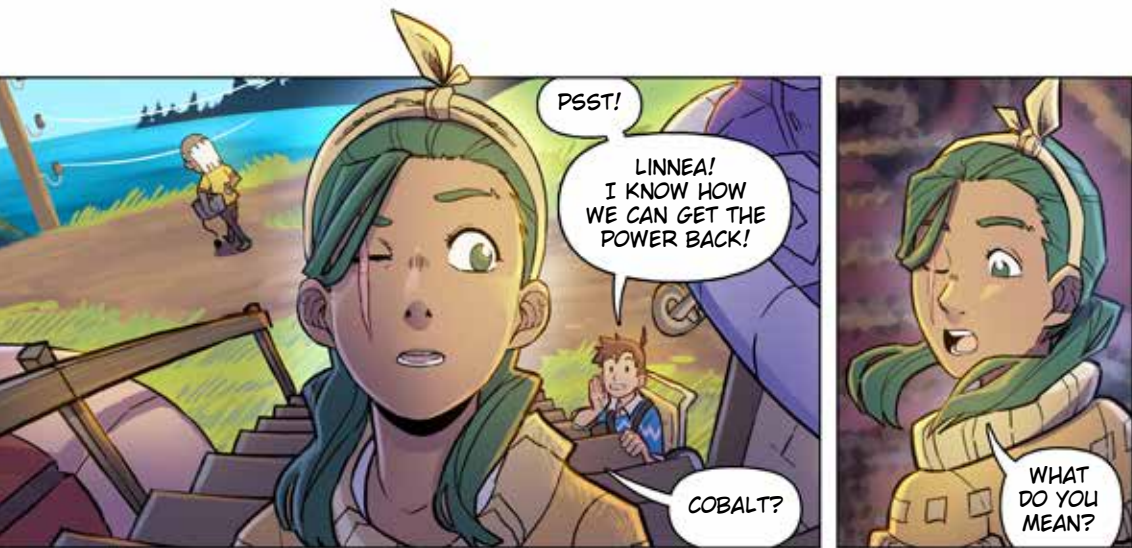
YOU'LL NEVER PLEASE ALL OF THE PEOPLE ALL OF THE TIME.

I UNDERSTAND THAT, BUT ...

NO "BUTS".

WILL YOU HELP MR. SUNFLOWER DOWN THE STEPS? HE HAS TROUBLE WITH HIS BACK.

OK.



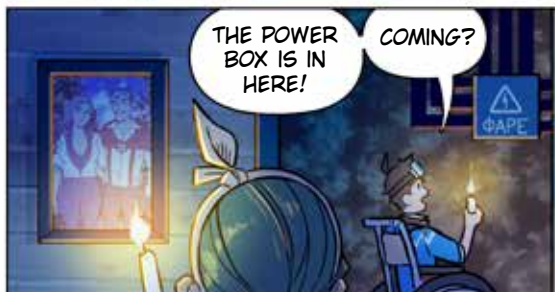
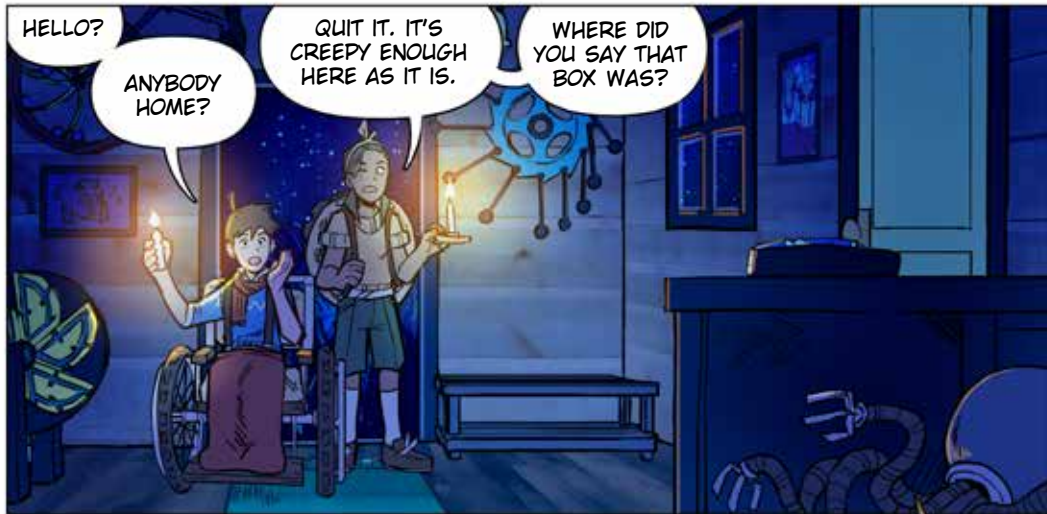
CHAPTER 4

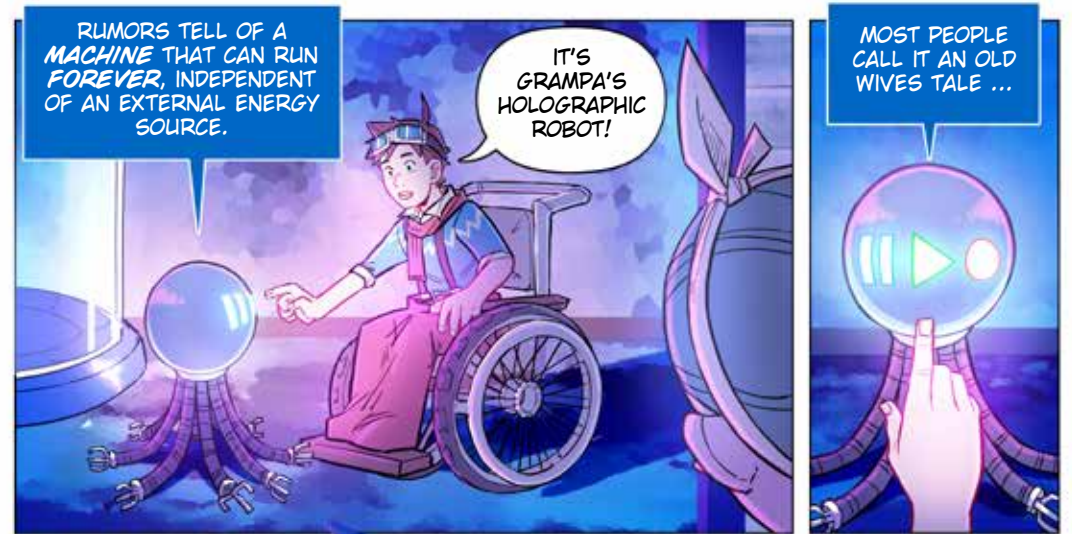
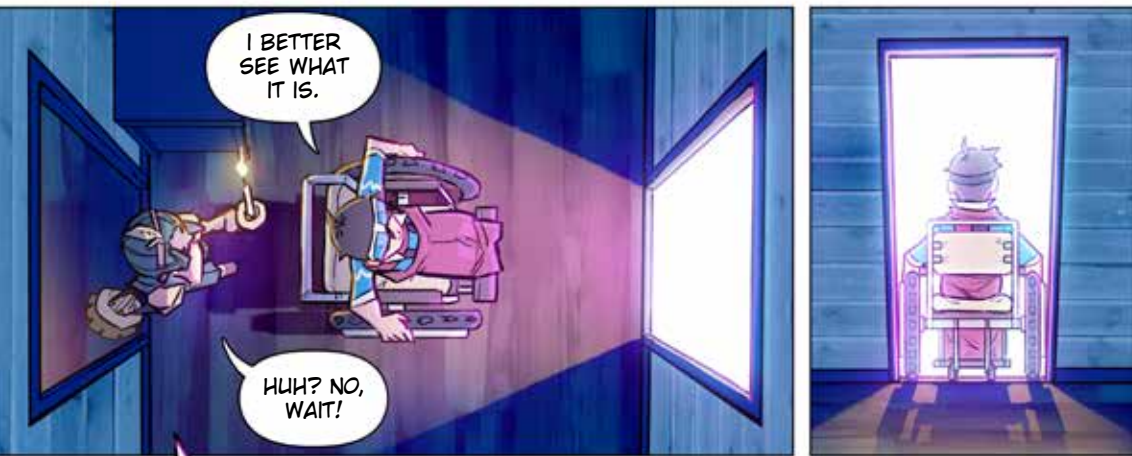
BY VIRTUE OF NECESSITY











... THE INFINITY MACHINE!

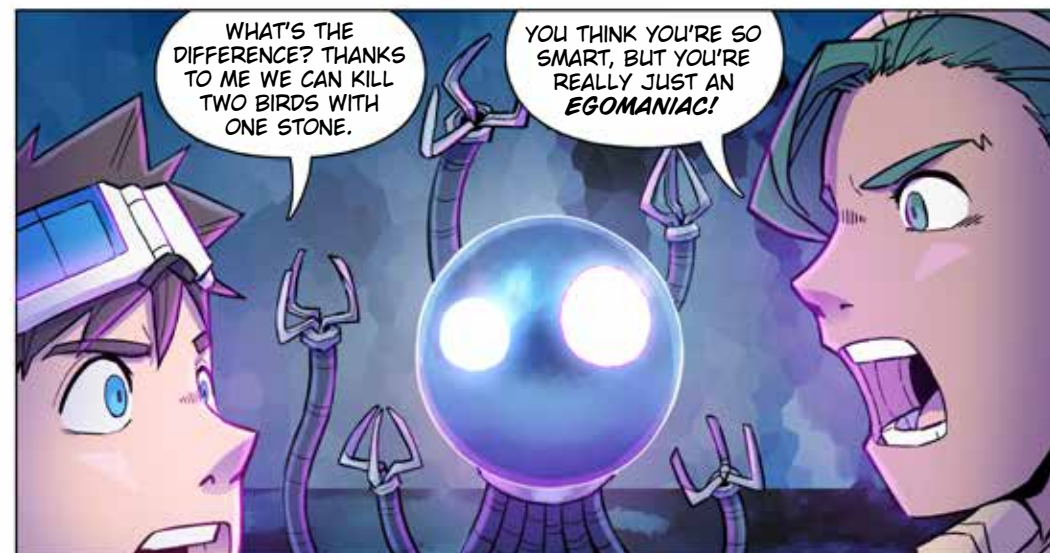
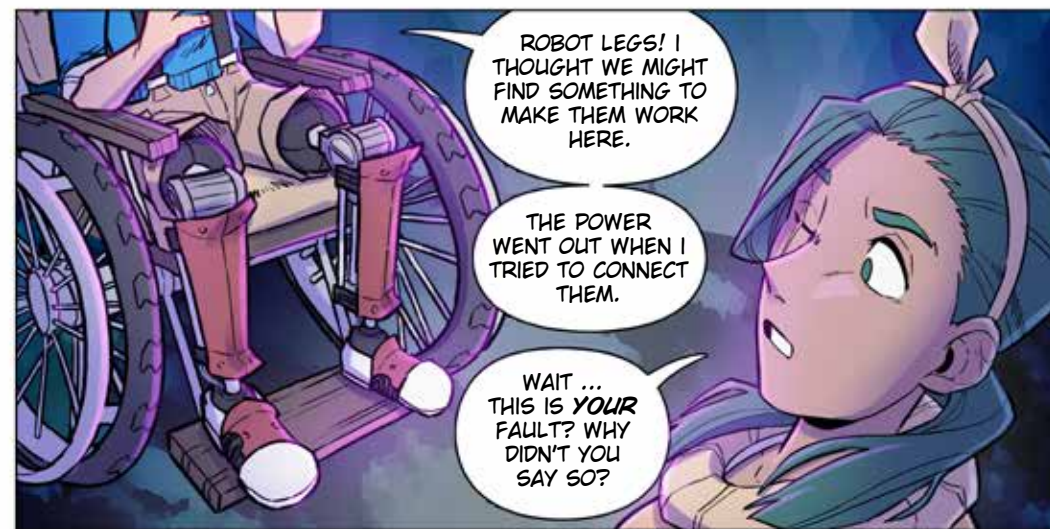
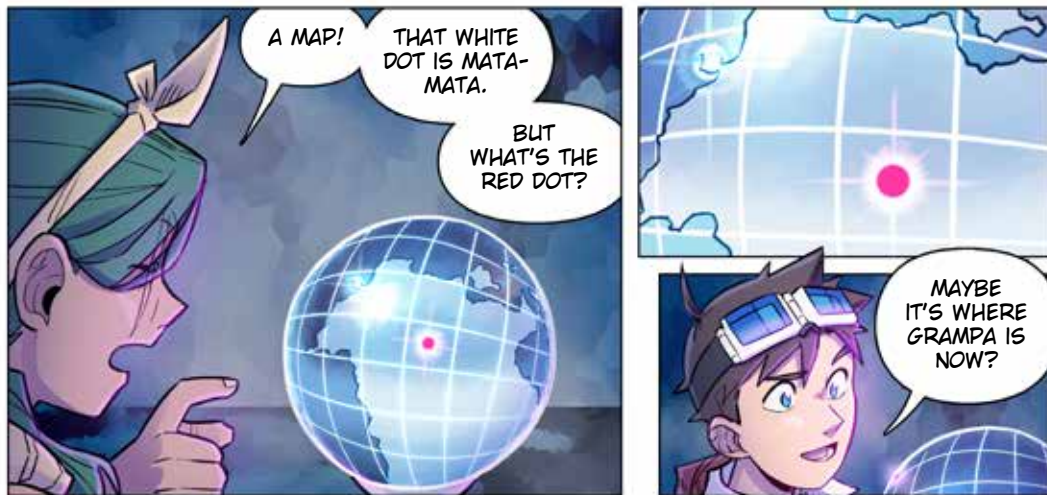
AT LAST!

SUCH A MACHINE COULD DOUBTLESS BE USED TO SOLVE INNUMERABLE WORLD PROBLEMS!

BUT THE INVENTORS HAVE MORE *PERSONAL* PLANS AND DESIRES.

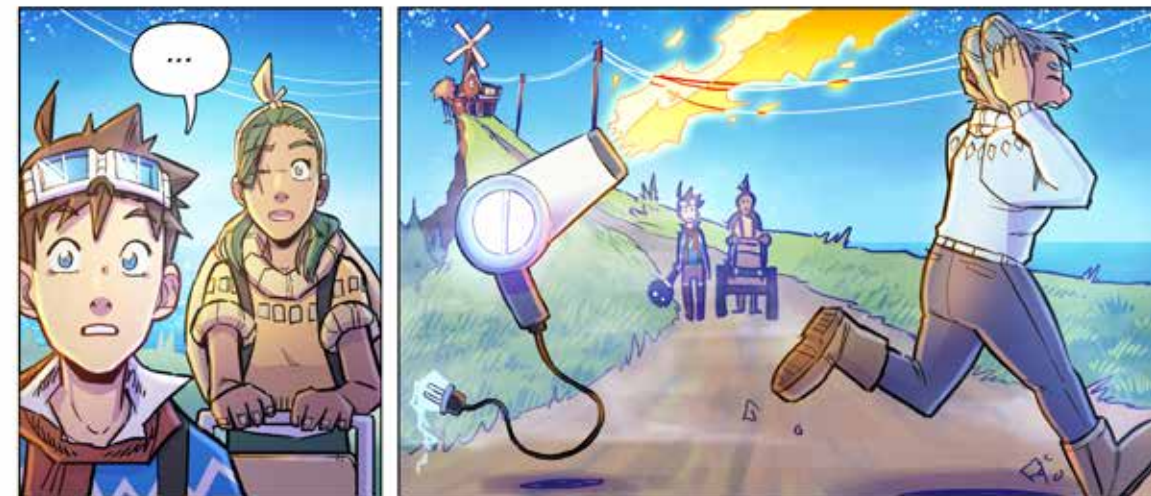
















THIS MAP SHOWS WHERE GRAMPA IS!

LINNEA AND I CAN GO GET HIM, AND THEN HE'LL FIX **EVERYTHING!**

WHAT?!

WE CAN PACK AND LEAVE RIGHT AWAY!

WE DIDN'T TALK ABOUT **THAT ...!**



LINNEA **STAYS** HERE. SHE'LL HELP OUT IN THE TOWN.

BUT **YOU** CAN GO AHEAD AND FIND ALFRED.

AND AFTER HE'S CLEANED UP THIS MESS ...

... HE CAN **GET LOST AGAIN!**



GET LOST ... AGAIN.



DO YOU HAVE EVERYTHING?

FOOD? WARM CLOTHES? UNDERWEAR?

YEAH, YEAH.

AND YOU'RE ABSOLUTELY **SURE** YOU DON'T WANT ME TO COME WITH?

I HAVE TO DO THIS ON MY OWN, MOM.

OK ...



IMAGINE! YOU'RE ON YOUR FEET AGAIN.

YOUR GRAMPA SHOULD SEE YOU NOW.

AND HE WILL ... SOON!

THE TRIP CAN'T POSSIBLY TAKE MORE THAN A FEW DAYS.

TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF!

YOU TOO!



COBALT!
WAIT!



LINNEA?
I THOUGHT YOU HAD
TO STAY BEHIND IN
MATA-MATA!



I JUST
WANTED TO
SAY SAFE
TRAVELS...

... AND THANKS
FOR TAKING THE
BLAME BEFORE.

THAT
WAS NICE
OF YOU.

OH ...
ISN'T THAT
JUST WHAT
FRIENDS DO?

REMEMBER
OUR PINKY-
SWEAR!



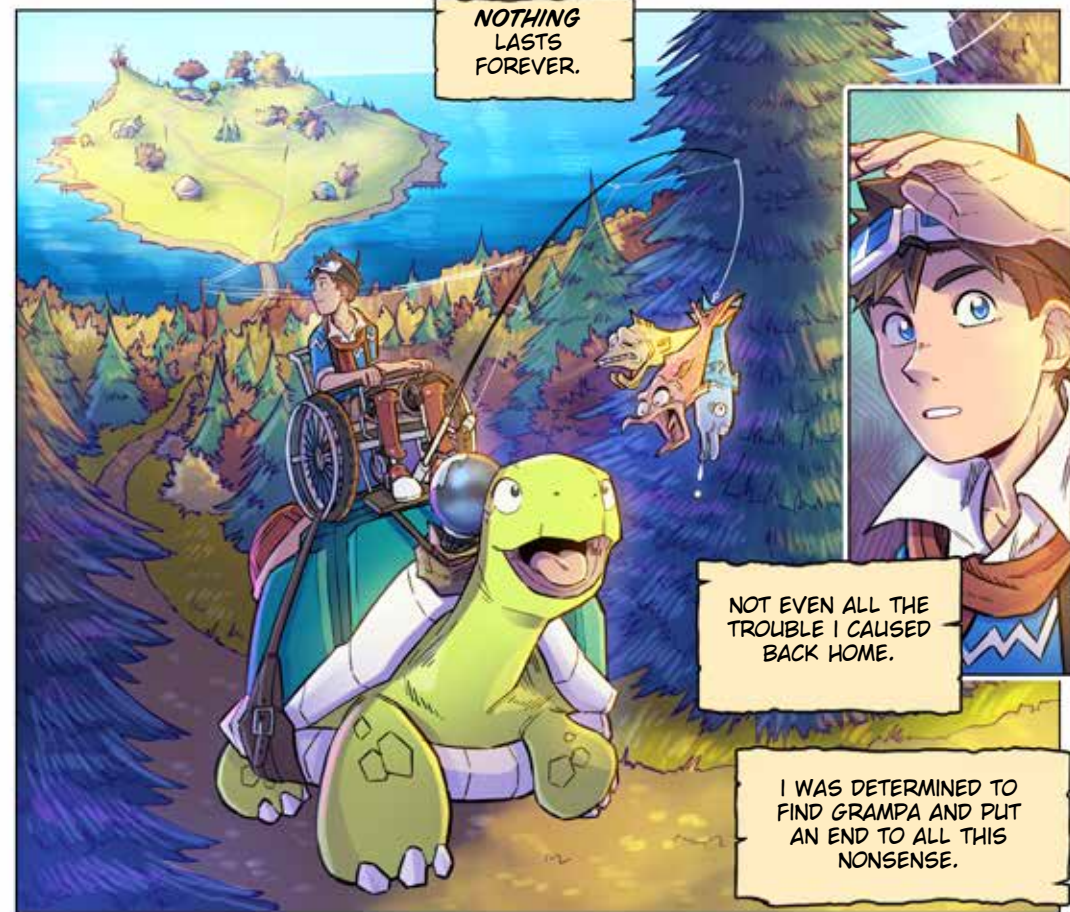
YEAH.
FRIENDS?



FRIENDS.



FOREVER.



NOTHING
LASTS
FOREVER.



NOT EVEN ALL THE
TROUBLE I CAUSED
BACK HOME.

I WAS DETERMINED TO
FIND GRAMPA AND PUT
AN END TO ALL THIS
NONSENSE.

A young man with a prosthetic right arm is riding a green dinosaur in a wheelchair. The dinosaur is carrying a globe on its back. The man is wearing a blue shirt, a brown scarf, and a headlamp. The landscape is vibrant with yellow and orange foliage, green trees, and mountains in the background. A pink dragon-like creature is flying in the sky. A utility pole and power lines are visible on the right side of the image.

BUT WHAT I
DIDN'T KNOW ...



... WAS THAT THE
JOURNEY AHEAD OF
ME WOULD PRESENT
FAR GREATER
CHALLENGES.



AUTHOR'S AFTERWORD

Telling stories through drawings is something I find absolutely compelling, and **The Inventor** is the kind of story I've always wanted to tell. It started out as not much more than a few sketches of a little boy about to embark on a great adventure with his giant turtle. In time, this vague idea developed into Cobalt Cogg, the village of Mata-Mata and all of its inhabitants.

This development could never have happened without all the support I've received from family and friends, which I am eternally grateful for. There are also a few people I'd like to single out for some extra attention:

Tonje Tornes and **Tormod Løking**, my editors at Egmont. Their engagement and encouragement to take my ideas to the limit has really propelled this project in the right direction.

Odin Helgheim, the creator of *Ragnarok*. To have this kind of sparring partner to bounce ideas off of has been invaluable. Not just anyone can sit around for hours discussing how to make flames from a living hair dryer look good.

Working on this book series is a joy, and I hope that after reading **The Hunt for the Infinity Machine**, you're just as excited as me to find out where the journey goes from here.

Lars H. Erikson



SKETCHES

THE HUNT FOR THE INFINITY MACHINE





