

GIRL GENIUS[®]

ELECTRONIC EDITION



VOLUME ONE

AGATHA HETERODYNE AND THE BEETLEBURG CLANK





Agatha Heterodyne
and the

BEETLEBURG CLANK

A Gaslamp Fantasy
with
ADVENTURE, ROMANCE & MAD SCIENCE

GIRL GENIUS®

BY PHIL & KAJA FOGLIO

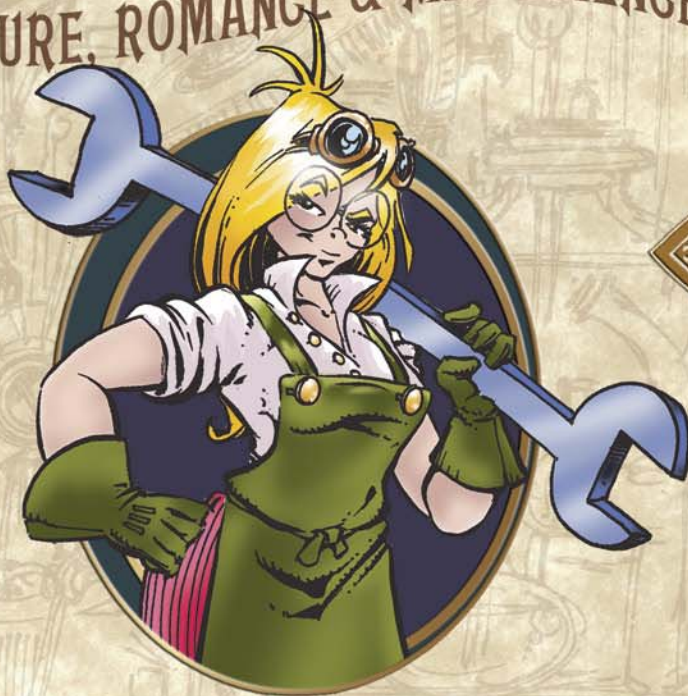
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AGATHA HETERODYNE

THE BEETLEBURG CLANK

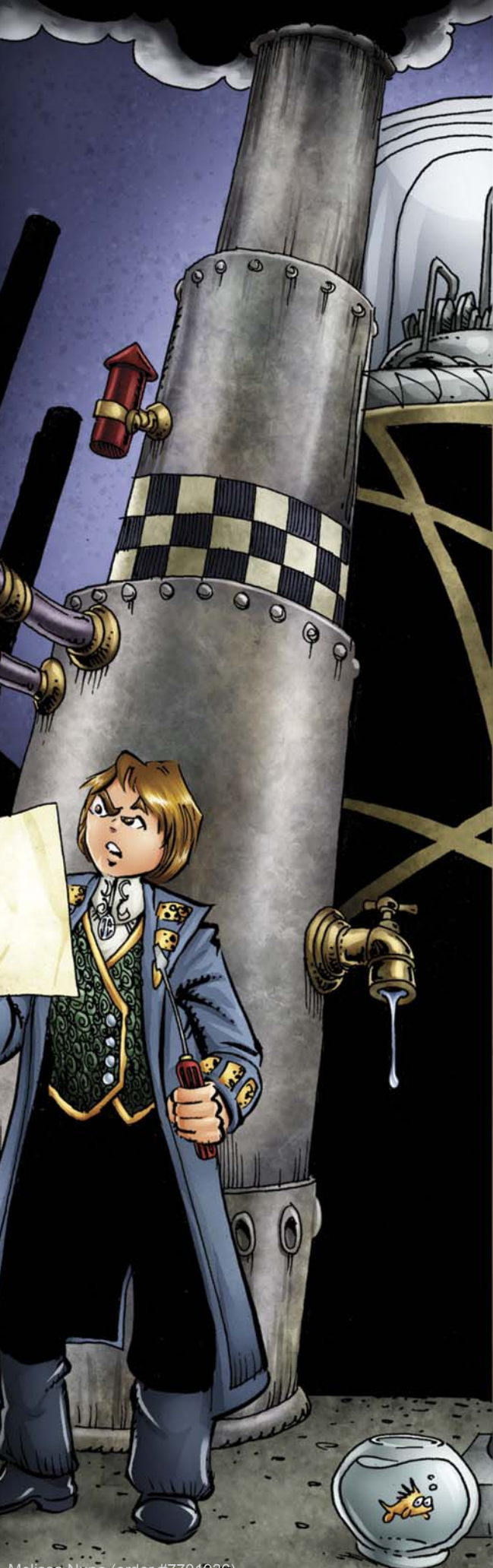
A Gaslamp Fantasy
with

ADVENTURE, ROMANCE & MAD SCIENCE



Story by Kaja & Phil Foglio
Pencils by Phil Foglio • Inks by Brian Snoddy
Colors by Cheyenne Wright





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Story by Phil & Kaja Foglio. Pencils by Phil Foglio. Inks by Brian Snoddy. Colors by Cheyenne Wright (main story) and Laurie E. Smith (Electric Coffin). Airship City illustration colored by Mark McNabb. Cover colored by Kaja Foglio. Logos, Lettering, Artist Bullying & Book Design by Kaja. Fonts mostly by Comiercraft—www.comicbookfonts.com. Invaluable art assistance by Cheyenne Wright, Savannah Goodwin and Alice Bentley.

Most of the material in this collection was originally published in black-and-white in the Girl Genius comic book issues 1-3, and later in black-and-white as the *Girl Genius Collection Volume One*.

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This book is dedicated to the Girl Genius discussion group on *Yahoo*, who makes us feel loved, forgives us when a book is late, and never lets a mistake pass unnoticed. Argh.

KAJA FOGLIO

Professor Foglio first became aware of the power of Creative History while listening to the excuses of fellow students who had failed to produce their homework. Her doctoral work brought scientific recognition to the long hidden canis operisphagus, or "homework-eating dog" which, as we now know, infests most of our major schools and universities. She first became interested in the history of the Heterodyne family during the infamous "Nymphenburg Pudding Incident" when she was mistaken for Agatha by an angry mob of dessert chefs from whom she barely escaped. Her subsequent research has earned her the grudging acclaim and jealous rivalry of many of her academic colleagues. She enjoys exotic travel (as long as nobody is trying to kill her), harpsichord music and airship racing.

PHIL FOGLIO

Professor Foglio spends most of his time in the field collecting legends, folksongs, anecdotes and gossip relating to the gifted and their effects on village society and "folk science." This is a bit odd, as he was originally hired by Transylvania Polygnostic to teach modern dance. He first became interested in Heterodyne stories while doing research on simple automatons and was actually present when Agatha unleashed her "Battle Circus" upon Baron Wulfenbach. Through subsequent research, bribery and wild speculation, the professor has managed to fill in a great many of the narrative gaps in the life of Agatha Heterodyne. He enjoys entomology, botany, kite flying, and, in moderation, modern dance.

BRIAN SNÖDDY

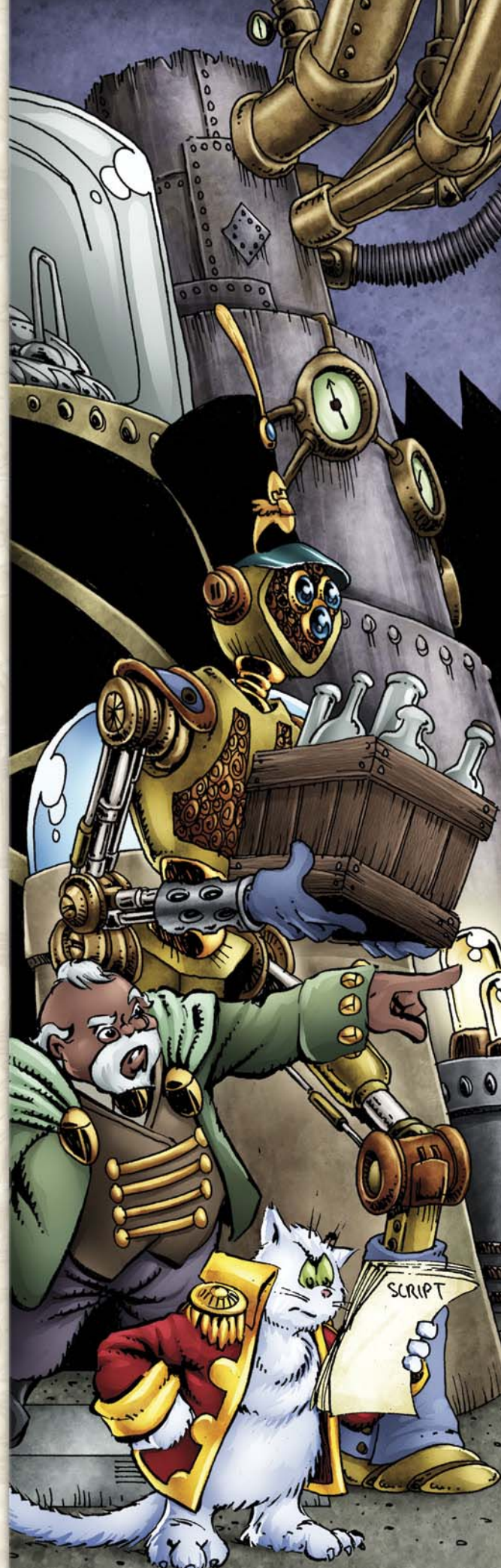
Professor Snoddy is TPU's resident Zombie Master. His introductory class Revenant Control and Ethics (If Any) is well-attended and has a long waiting list. He was brought on board the Girl Genius project when Professors Foglio and Foglio realized that their proposed research might actually involve a certain amount of danger in the field, and that an army of zombie servants couldn't hurt. Hurt them, at any rate. Professor Snoddy is responsible for the gorgeous linework throughout the main story, for which we thank him most gratefully.

LAURIE E. SMITH

Professor Smith was one of the last travellers to return from the Americas before all contact with the continent was cut off. She has devoted her years at Transylvania Polygnostic to the study of an unusual type of snail thought to be found only within a fifty yard radius of the faculty lounge (the one with the really GOOD coffee) but was persuaded to abandon her primary work long enough to join the Girl Genius research team. Her beautiful color work on the short story at the end of this book is greatly appreciated, as is her willingness to finish it even in the face of a hideous mystery flu later determined to be caused by snails in her coffee. Her dedication is an ornament to the profession.

CHEYENNE WRIGHT

Professor Wright spent his last sabbatical captaining the light airship: *Queen Bang's Revenge*. Although he claims it was "merely a pleasure cruise," the University board is investigating the fact that the Dept. of Very Nearly True History is able to publish Vol. I of Girl Genius in full color, despite having had no budget for the last six years. Also, they claim: "He never even sent us a postcard."





Transylvania Polygnostic University students¹ who read sensationalistic novels when they should be studying or conducting important research will all be familiar with the exploits of the legendary Agatha Heterodyne.

We, in the Department of Irrefutably True History, have long felt that the life of this exceptional person is worthy of attention of a more scholarly nature. Thus, as an aid to students taking our new series of courses, we are pleased to offer the following textbook in an easy-to-follow pictorial format.

Unscrupulous foreign publishers, concerned only with profit, have distorted the historical facts concerning Agatha Heterodyne, her family, and her associates to the point that the narrative contained within this account will no doubt be entirely new to the majority of readers. We trust you will consider these differences in story with the gravity that befits intelligent students who know what is good for them and agree that we, as experts, are the final authority on these matters.² You'll know it's true because we, your instructors, say so.

These courses and their associated textbooks are based upon our meticulous research of the last ten years, in which we gratefully acknowledge the aid of the Department of Alternate Realities and Temporal Uncertainty. Here you will find the actual, factual account of what happened in the early years of Agatha Heterodyne's career, starting from the lowest point in her life—her final day as a student here at Transylvania Polygnostic.

Thanks to the support we receive from the current administration at TPU, our students are hereby authorized to peruse these texts during other, less interesting classes (such as Prof. Strout's Theoretical Potential of Pickled Herring as a Low-Cost Power Source lectures). In exchange you are expected to maintain good grades, curb your monsters and not blow up school property if you can possibly avoid it.

And finally, students, remember—your future arch-nemeses are out there somewhere, studying hard. Don't make it easy for them.

—Professors Foglio & Foglio
Department of Irrefutably True History
Transylvania Polygnostic University

¹ And faculty—you know who you are.

² Occasional guesswork and narrative license have been applied in cases where facts were uncertain or where documented occurrences would have been more amusing if only they had happened in some other way. Other than that, it's all true. We swear.



This is a story about Science. Or Magic.
Or possibly both.

There have always been those with the Spark-people who seem to be able to tinker with the laws of physics as we know them. This sort of person can be the worst of evil mad scientists or a tremendous force for Good.

The last members of the great house Heterodyne stood as the models against which all other heroes of their time were measured. With a collection of like-minded companions, they travelled the globe negotiating peace, stopping monsters and shutting down doomsday devices. Their exploits were the stuff of legends.

And then they disappeared. Our story begins some years later.

Prologue

NOW, THIS ISN'T A *HETERODYNE STORY* LIKE YOUR MAMA TELLS YOU WHEN SHE TUCKS YOU INTO BED AT NIGHT...

WELL, NOT EXACTLY.

OH, WE ALL KNOW THEY'RE OUT THERE SOMEWHERE, FIGHTING THE GOOD FIGHT, BUT RIGHT HERE AND RIGHT NOW, THE *HETERODYNE BOYS* ARE GONE. THEIR LANDS ARE OVERRUN, THEIR MACHINES DESTROYED, THEIR SERVANTS SCATTERED, AND NOTHING REMAINS BUT THEIR NAME.





KK-CRAK!!

Zzt

LIKE THAT?!

THAT?
THAT?
THAT?



KA
SAURBI

SON
TS

Zzt

Zzt







OBVIOUSLY
LOOKING FOR A
DESERVING PAIR OF
SOLDIERS-OF-FORTUNE
TO *HELP* ALONG
THEIR WAY.

AYE, WELL,
THAT'S US.

SHE MUST KNOW
THAT *YOU*
JUST SPENT OUR
LAST GROAT ON THIS
SWILL YOU CALL
BOOZE.

HI, SWEETIE.
SPARE SOME
CHANGE?

NO
CLANKS
→



OH, SHE CAN
SPARE MORE THAN
CHANGE...LET'S HAVE
A LOOK AT THAT NICE
JEWELRY!

NO!



HOLD ON,
OMAR,
YOU'RE—

HEY!



UH-OH!

WHOO!

OW!!



THAT HURT.



AND I'M NOT GOING TO TAKE-

WHACK!

THAT KIND OF CRAP-

WHACK!

FROM A LOUSY CIVILIAN-



WHOA! STOP!
YOU'RE OUT OF LINE,
SERGEANT!

SAYS WHO?
I'M GONNA—

NO!

DON'T YOU
REMEMBER
WHAT THEY DO TO
PEOPLE IN THIS
TOWN?

DO YOU
WANT TO WIND
UP IN ONE
OF THOSE BIG
JARS?!

UH...
OH.



OKAY BABE,
WHEN CHARITY IS
SO GENEROUSLY
OFFERED—

HOW CAN
WE SAY
NO?

SNAP!

WHA—
NO!

BYE,
DOLL.

OH!

KICK!



YOU'RE A
TRUE
PHILANTHROPIST!

YOU ARE
SUCH A
JERK.

MY
LOCKET!
HELP!
THIEF!

YOU SWINE! I'LL...I'LL
REPORT THIS! DR. BEETLE'S
CLANKS WILL COME AFTER
YOU! THEY'LL FIND YOU AND
THEY'LL PUT YOU IN A JAR IN
UNIVERSITY SQUARE TO
ROT!

AND I'LL COME EVERY
SINGLE DAY WHILE YOU
BAKE IN THE SUN AND
STARVE AND CLAW AT THE GLASS
AND SCREAM AS YOU—

DIE SLOWLY
LIKE THE MISERABLE
RATS YOU ARE!



AAAAAAGGHH!
OWN! OW!
OW! OW!



SEVEN?!
OH NO!
OH NO! I'M
LATE!

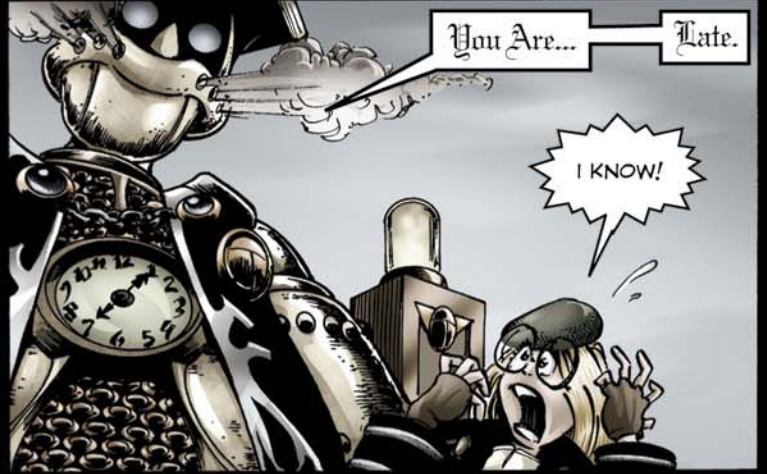
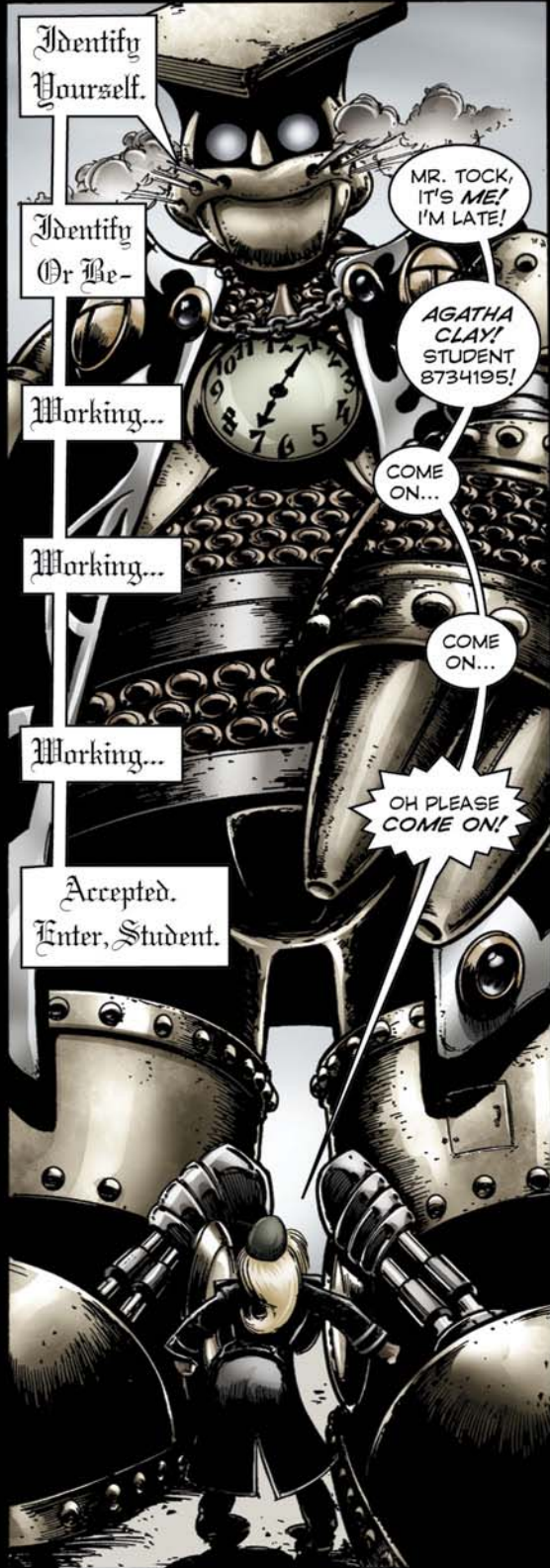


OW!
A-HAHHH!
AAHH!

HAAHHHH!
(sob)
AAHH!



BONG BONG BONG BONG BONG BONG BONG





You Are Late.

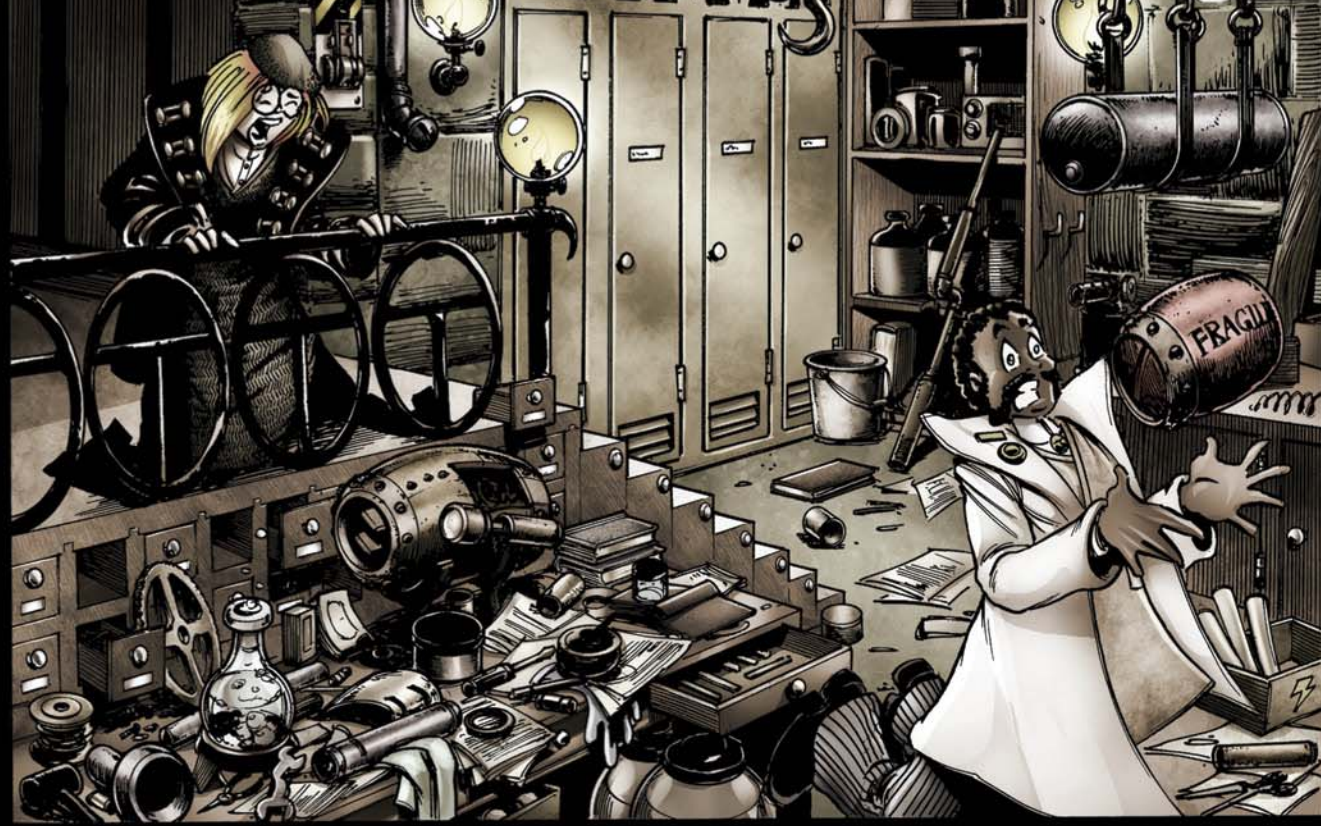
I KNOW!

THAT'S AGATHA CLAY. SHE'S ALWAYS LIKE THAT. THERE'S JUST SOMETHING... **WRONG** WITH HER.

OH, THAT'S HER? PITY.

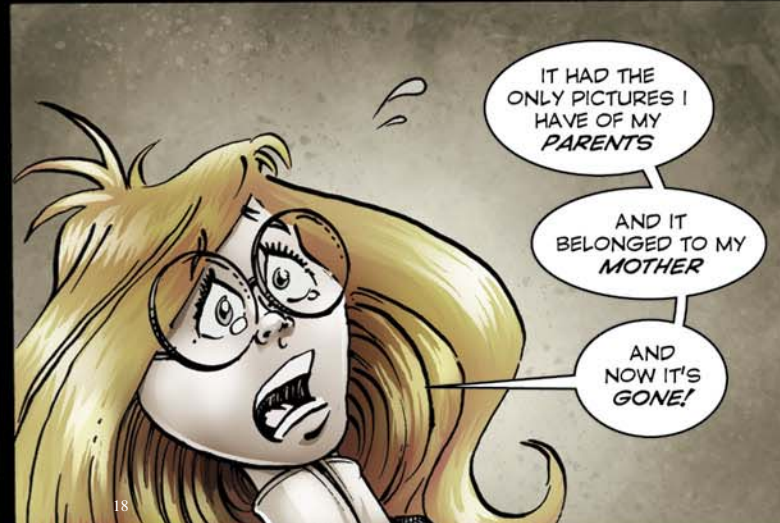
MADMOISELLE CLAY? YOU'RE LATE.

I KNOWOOOWW!



YOU'RE ONLY A LITTLE LATE—

MY LOCKET! OH, DOCTOR, THEY STOLE MY LOCKET!



IT HAD THE ONLY PICTURES I HAVE OF MY PARENTS

AND IT BELONGED TO MY MOTHER

AND NOW IT'S GONE!



I DIDN'T KNOW THAT. YOU NEVER—

MY UNCLE GAVE IT TO ME BEFORE HE WENT AWAY.

HE MADE ME PROMISE TO NEVER TAKE IT OFF!



AND NOW IT'S GONE!

AND HE'LL BE DISAPPOINTED IN ME AGAIN AND HE'LL...

HE'LL NEVER COME BACK. BECAUSE...

BECAUSE I'M STUPID AND... AND DAMAGED!



WHY? WHY CAN'T I DO ANYTHING RIGHT?

WHAT'S WRONG WITH MEEEE?

AGATHA! MON DIEU!

AH—AGATHA! I FOUND YOUR LATEST MACHINE!



OUI. YOUR LITTLE CLANK. DOES IT WORK?

MY MACHINE?

I...I DON'T KNOW.



I...I WANTED TO SHOW IT TO YOU BEFORE I SHOWED IT TO THE MASTER.

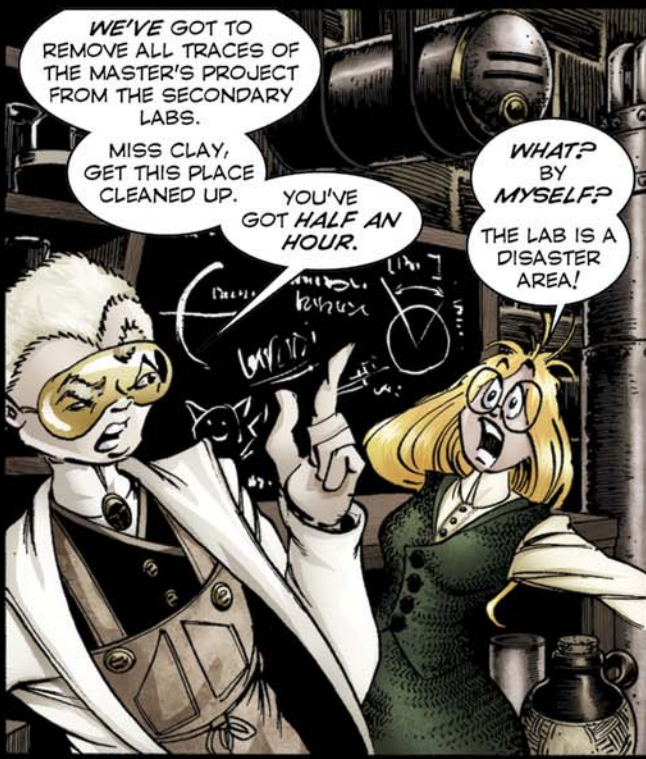
OH, GOOD IDEA. WE DON'T WANT TO WASTE HIS TIME.

LET'S SEE IT, HMP?



ALL RIGHT...

CLIK



WE'VE GOT TO REMOVE ALL TRACES OF THE MASTER'S PROJECT FROM THE SECONDARY LABS.

MISS CLAY, GET THIS PLACE CLEANED UP.

YOU'VE GOT HALF AN HOUR.

WHAT? BY MYSELF?

THE LAB IS A DISASTER AREA!



DON'T BE IMPERTINENT WITH ME, MISS CLAY.

THE MASTER MAY DERIVE SOME TWISTED AMUSEMENT FROM YOUR PATHETIC ANTICS,

BUT IF THIS LAB IS ANYTHING LESS THAN SPOTLESS,

YOU'LL SEE HOW PATIENT BARON WULFENBACH IS WITH INCOMPETENTS.

NOW MOVE!

EEP!



MERLOT... THERE'S NO NEED TO FRIGHTEN THE GIRL...

LISTEN. THE MASTER'S LITTLE PET MAY ACTUALLY PROVE USEFUL FOR ONCE.

WITH HER CRASHING AROUND,

PERHAPS THE BARON WILL NOT LOOK TOO CLOSELY AT THE REST OF US.

UNDERSTAND?

HALF AN HOUR?! HOW CAN I POSSIBLY...



STORAGE



TWENTY-NINE MINUTES LATER...

HAVE WE FORGOTTEN ANYTHING?

SSH— WE'VE DONE THE BEST WE CAN.

THIS WHOLE PROJECT IS A MISTAKE JUST WAITING TO DESTROY EVERYTHING WE'VE—

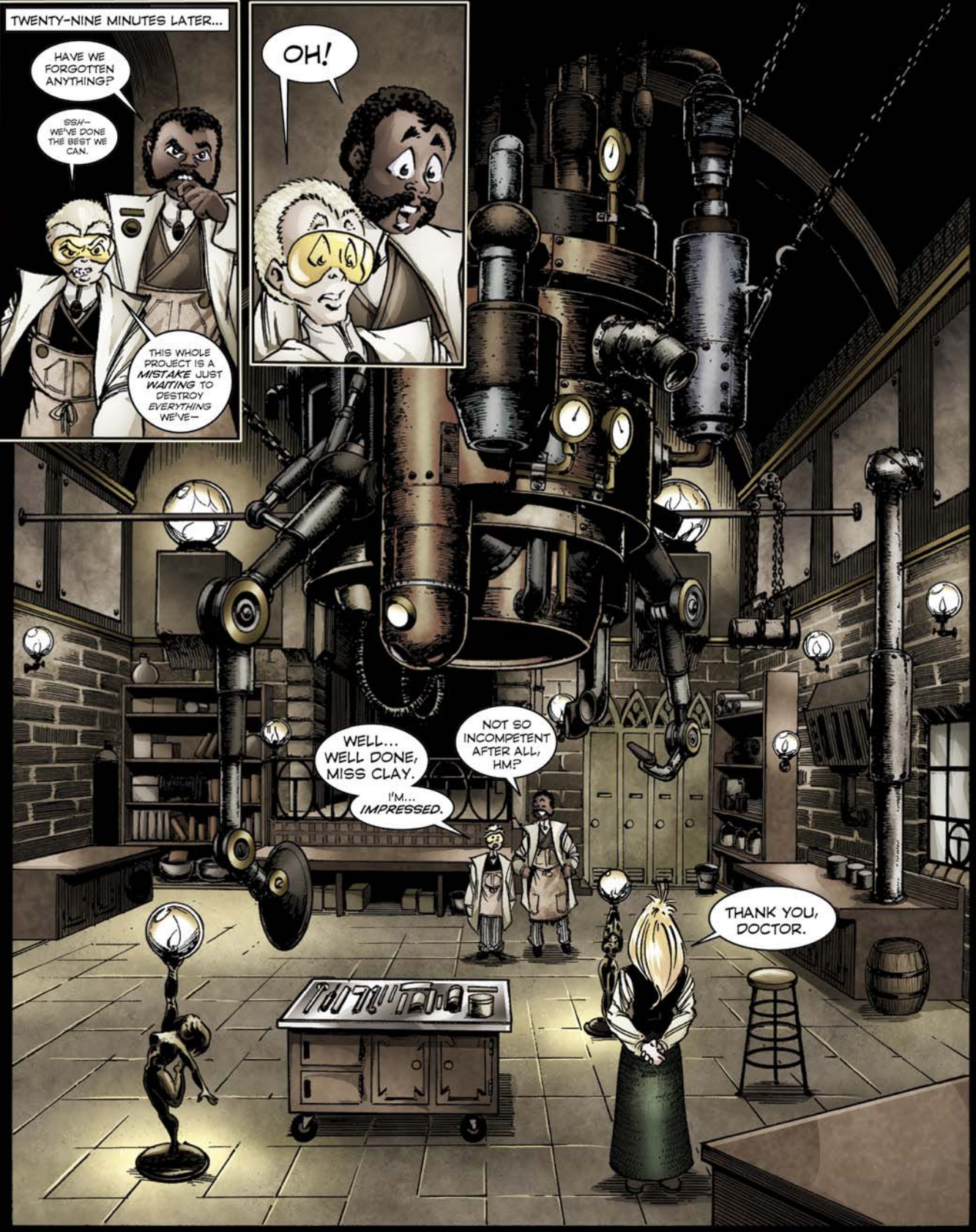
OH!

WELL... WELL DONE, MISS CLAY.

I'M... IMPRESSED.

NOT SO INCOMPETENT AFTER ALL, HMP?

THANK YOU, DOCTOR.



NO VON MOVE!



*DIS IS
HYU ONLY
VARNING!*

THANK YOU,
UNIT COMMANDER,
STAND AT EASE.

YAH,
HERR
BARON.

*BLAST IT,
KLAUS,
YOU'RE TOO
EARLY!*

I TOLD
YOU—

YOU HAVE HAD
PLENTY OF TIME,
BEETLE.

WHO ARE
THESE
PEOPLE?





DR. SILAS MERLOT, MY SECOND-IN-COMMAND.

AH. I READ YOUR LATEST REPORT WITH INTEREST.

I AM HONORED, HERR BARON.



DR. HUGO GLASSVITCH, MY CHIEF OF RESEARCH.

WELCOME, HERR BARON.



AND THIS IS OUR LAB ASSISTANT, MISS CLAY.

NOW, THE MACHINE...



MISS CLAY!

WHERE IS YOUR LOCKET?



IT...IT WAS STOLEN, SIR. THERE WAS AN ELECTRICAL ANOMALY OF SOME SORT

AND I WAS ACCOSTED WHILE TRYING TO GET AWAY.

ACCOSTED? STOLEN?!

IN MY CITY?!

OH, NO! THIS IS TERRIBLE! TERRIBLE!



I'M FEELING BETTER, SIR, I—

SHH. NO! YOU'RE OBVIOUSLY DISTRAUGHT, MY DEAR.

I WANT YOU TO GO HOME.

YES. GO HOME AND HAVE A NICE LIE DOWN—

AND I'LL HAVE THE WATCH FIND YOUR LOCKET AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE!

WAIT!



YOU ACTUALLY SAW THE EVENT?

YES, HERR BARON.

I WAS RIGHT IN THE MIDDLE OF IT.

STAY. I MIGHT HAVE QUESTIONS FOR YOU LATER.

NO!



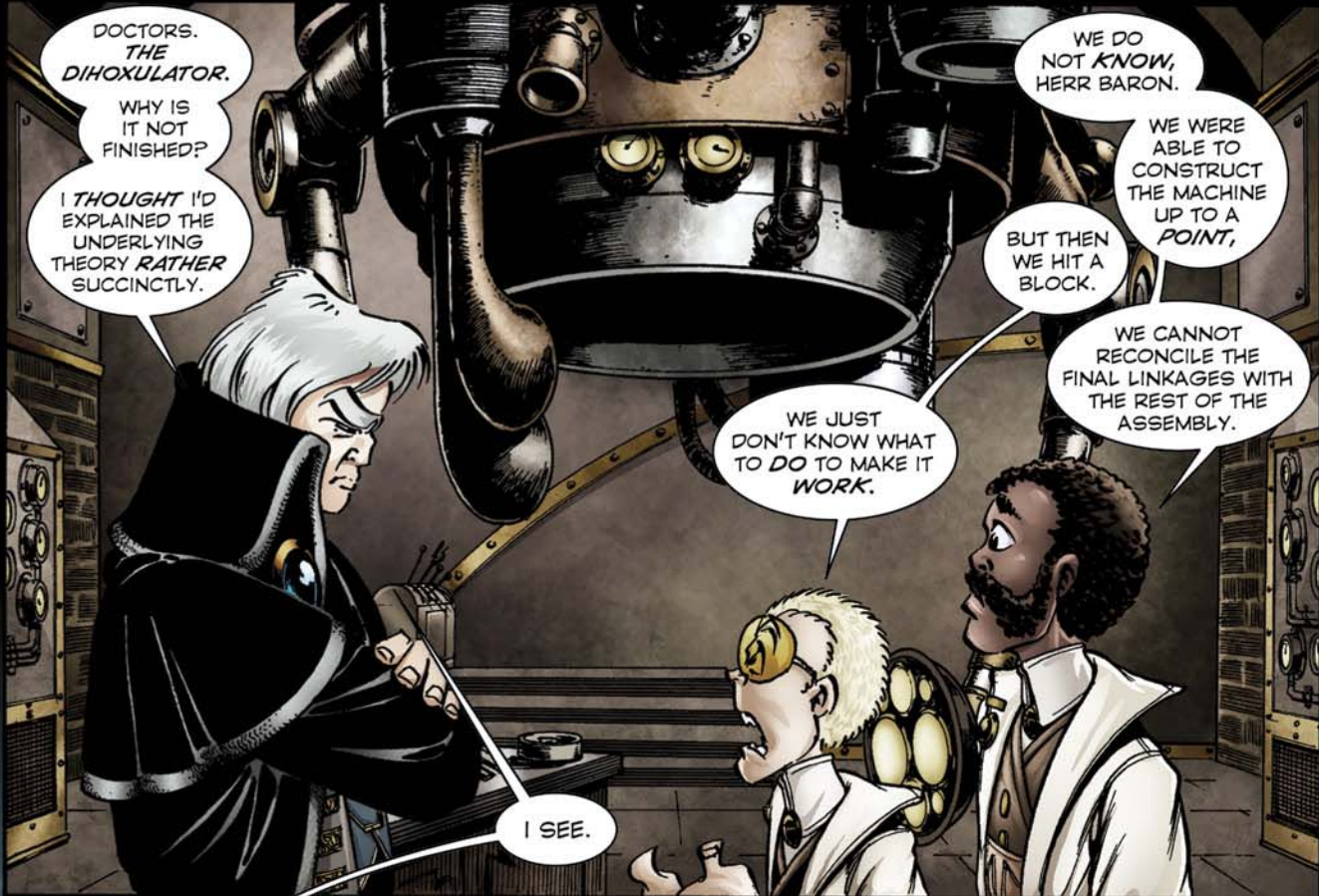
KLAUS, THIS POOR GIRL HAS HAD A TERRIBLE SHOCK! YOU MUST LET HER GO HOME!

MASTER, PLEASE! I'M ALL RIGHT. REALLY.

I'M TRULY IMPRESSED BY YOUR CONCERN FOR YOUR PEOPLE, BEETLE,

BUT THE YOUNG LADY APPEARS STABLE.

LET US GET DOWN TO BUSINESS.



DOCTORS. THE DIHOXULATOR.

WHY IS IT NOT FINISHED?

I THOUGHT I'D EXPLAINED THE UNDERLYING THEORY RATHER SUCCINCTLY.

WE DO NOT KNOW, HERR BARON.

WE WERE ABLE TO CONSTRUCT THE MACHINE UP TO A POINT,

BUT THEN WE HIT A BLOCK.

WE CANNOT RECONCILE THE FINAL LINKAGES WITH THE REST OF THE ASSEMBLY.

WE JUST DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO TO MAKE IT WORK.

I SEE.



GILGAMESH?

YES, FATHER?



CAN YOU WORK OUT THE PROBLEMS WITH THIS DEVICE TONIGHT?

I CAN TRY, FATHER. IF YOU'D EXPLAIN THE THEORY?

THE BASIC IDEA IS TO PROMOTE SECONDARY OXIDATION...

MERLOT, WE'RE DOOMED!

WE'VE ACCOMPLISHED NOTHING!

THEY'LL SHIP US TO THE WAXWORKS!

...OF COURSE. THE BARON KNOWS WE DON'T HAVE THE SPARK.

WE WEREN'T EXPECTED TO FINISH THIS.

IT'S A TEST.

THEN WE'RE FAILING!

NOT US, GLASSVITCH, HIS SON!

"GILGAMESH WULFENBACH IS THE BARON'S ONLY HEIR.

I'VE HEARD RUMORS THAT THE BARON IS TESTING HIM, TRYING TO DETERMINE IF THE SPARK BURNS AS BRIGHTLY IN HIM AS IT DOES IN HIS SIRE."



"AND IF IT DOES NOT?"



DIS IS BARON WULFENBACH, SVEETHOT!

HE VILL BREAK HIM DOWN FOR PARTS AND TRY AGAIN!



MON DIEU!

YES, RATHER COMFORTING TO KNOW THERE'S SOMEONE WHOSE LIFE SUCKS MORE THAN YOURS, EHP?



MISS CLAY!

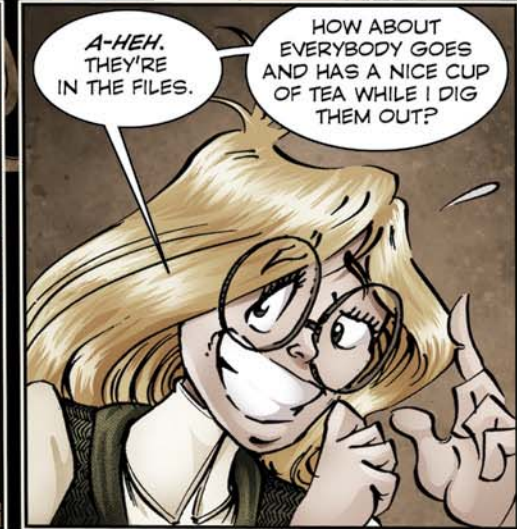
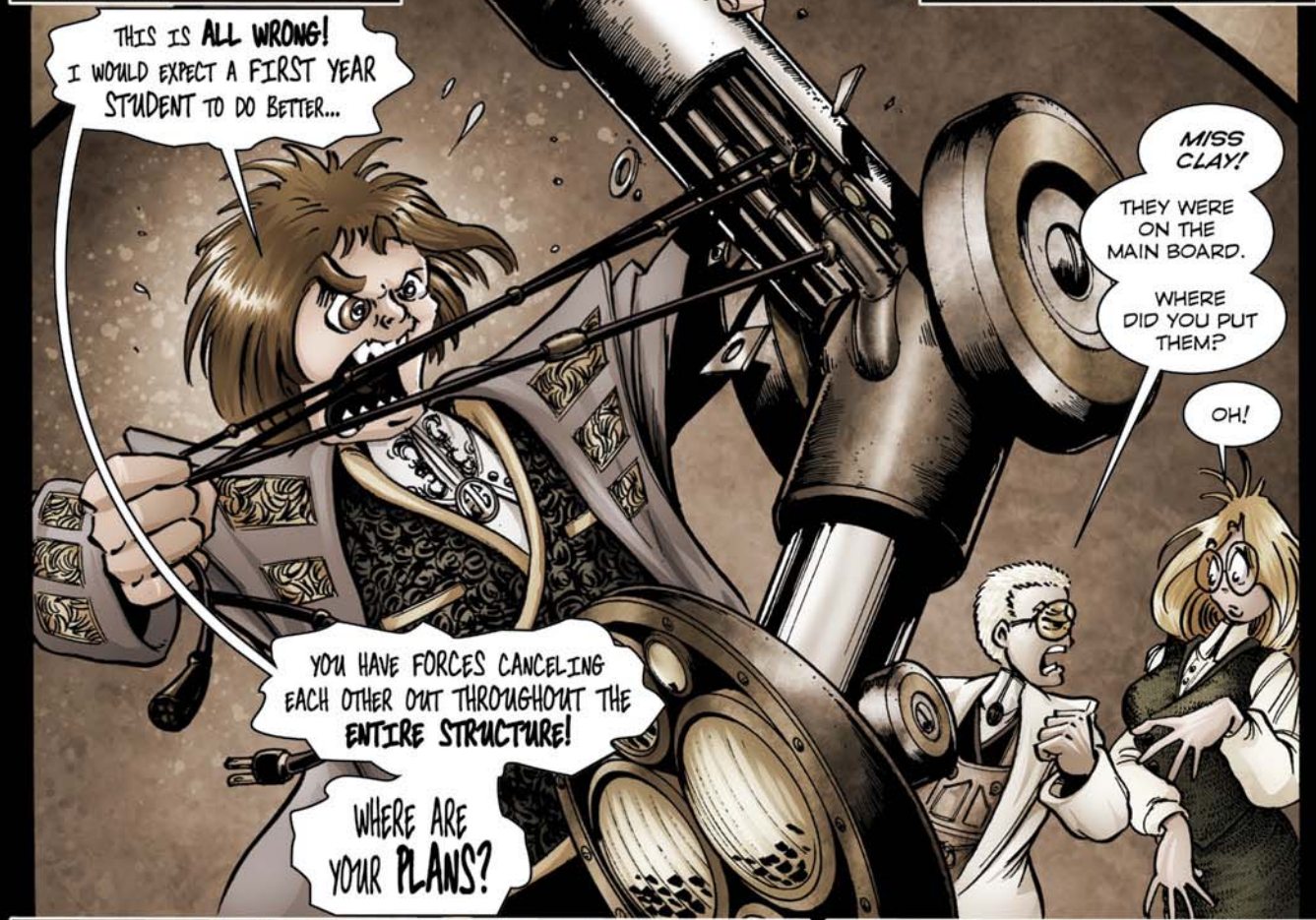
STOP THAT INFERNAL HUMMING!

HAH?! I...I'M SORRY, DOCTOR,

BUT I WAS LISTENING TO THE BARON, AND SOMETHING....

SOMETHING ISN'T RIGHT, AND—

SILENCE!



BAH!
I'LL GET THEM
MYSELF!

I'M SURE YOUR
PITIFUL FILING SYSTEM
WILL BE SIMPLE—

NOOOO!

ENOUGH...

RRRRRR!



MASTER GILGAMESH!

HOLD.

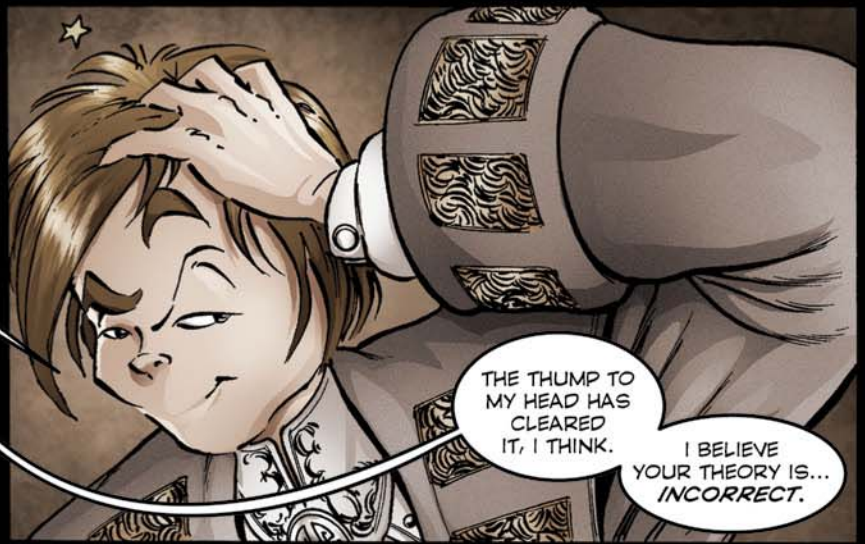
THAT'S THE WORST FILING SYSTEM I'VE EVER SEEN.



BEETLE, THIS SLOPPINESS IS INTOLERABLE.

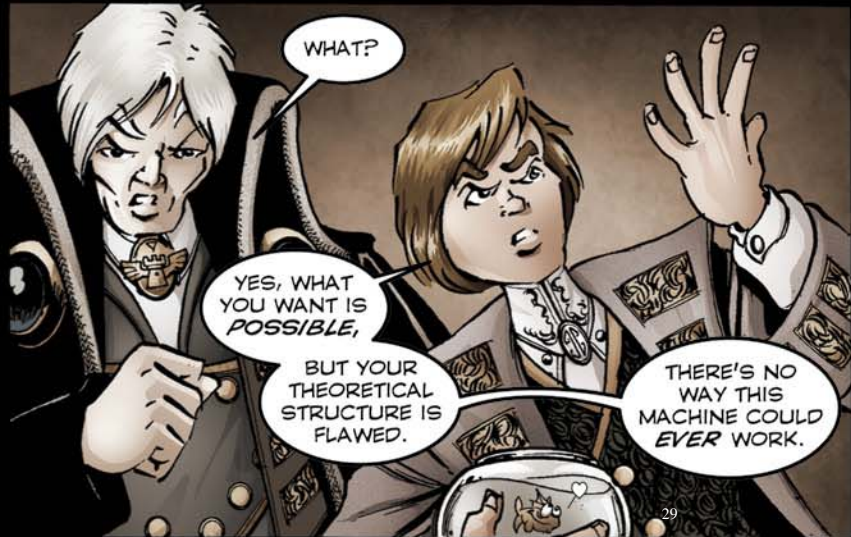
HAVE THESE PEOPLE—

NO, FATHER, WAIT.



THE THUMP TO MY HEAD HAS CLEARED IT, I THINK.

I BELIEVE YOUR THEORY IS... INCORRECT.



WHAT?

YES, WHAT YOU WANT IS POSSIBLE,

BUT YOUR THEORETICAL STRUCTURE IS FLAWED.

THERE'S NO WAY THIS MACHINE COULD EVER WORK.

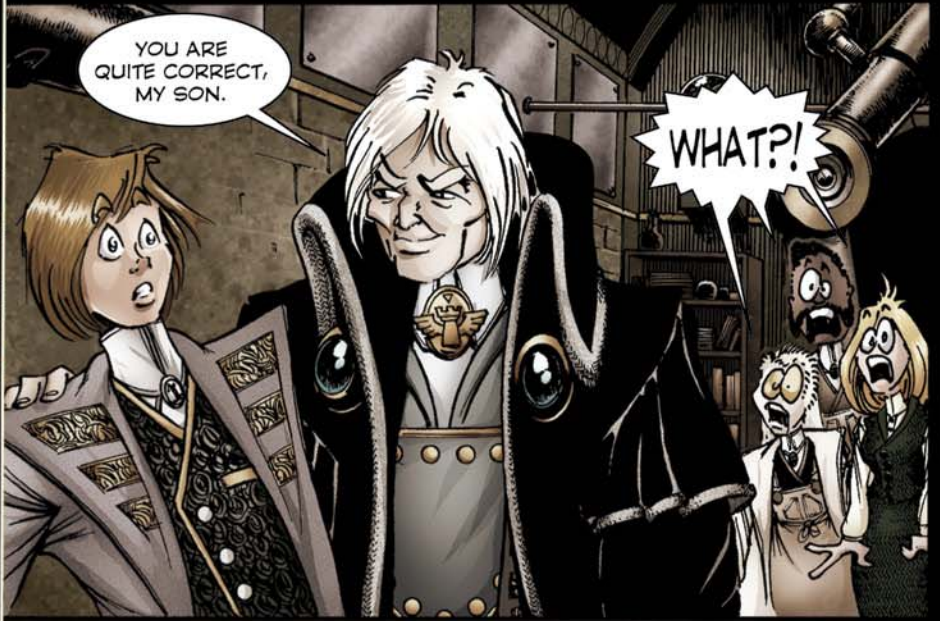


THINK CAREFULLY, BOY.

YOU'RE SAYING THAT I AM WRONG?!



...yes.



YOU ARE QUITE CORRECT, MY SON.

WHAT?!



ANOTHER TEST, FATHER?

I AM BEGINNING TO FIND THIS TIREISOME.



IT IS MUCH LIKE RAISING CHILDREN THEN.

BUT I PERSEVERE FOR THE MOMENT.



THANK YOU, DOCTORS.

YOU WILL RECEIVE NEW ASSIGNMENTS TOMORROW.

THIS WAS ALL FOR NOTHING? BUT THEY WORKED SO HARD!



FOR THREE MONTHS WE HAVE TOILED ON THIS MONSTROSITY!

FOR NOTHING?!

WE WERE SIMPLY... WINDOW DRESSING.

I SEE. NOW I UNDERSTAND.



WHAT? YOU'RE THE ONE WHO'S ALWAYS GOING ON ABOUT HOW LITTLE TIME WE HAVE FOR OUR OWN WORK.

OH, YES—BUT NOW I UNDERSTAND WHY THE GREAT DR. BEETLE COULDN'T BE BOTHERED TO WORK ON THIS OH-SO-IMPORTANT ASSIGNMENT.

UNLIKE WE MERE MORTALS, HE HAD REAL WORK TO DO.

MERLOT! I DON'T LIKE YOUR ATTITUDE!

DO NOT OPEN UNTIL XMAS

**ONE
RULE,
BEETLE.**

I MADE
ONE RULE
WHEN I LEFT YOU
THIS CITY.

"REPORT
ALL UNUSUAL
DISCOVERIES. DEVICES
OF *THE OTHER* ARE TO
BE TURNED OVER
IMMEDIATELY."

YOU
AGREED.

A
PLEDGE MADE
UNDER DURESS IS
WORTHLESS,
WULFENBACH!

YOU
THREATENED
MY CITY, MY
UNIVERSITY—

I'D HAVE
AGREED TO
ANYTHING!

YOU
WERE IN
CONTROL
THEN.

AND
NOW?

CRAKK!!

GROOOOOANN..

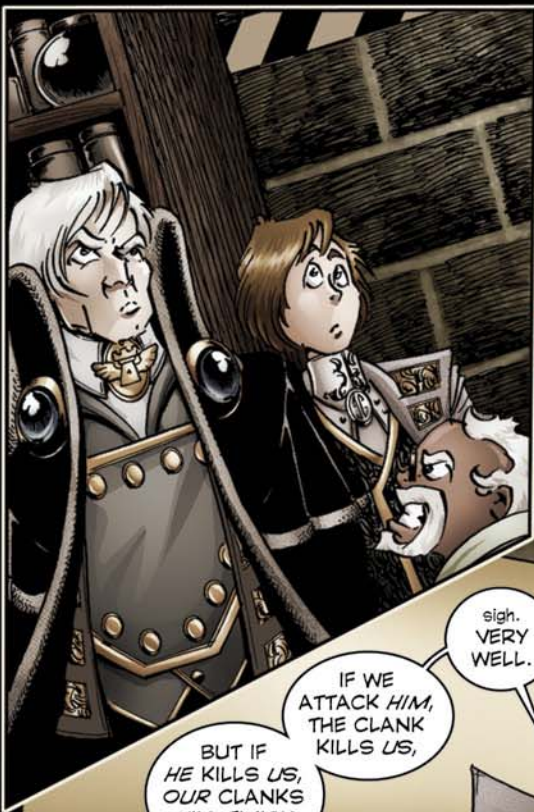




**DO NOT
MOVE.**

NOW I
AM IN
CONTROL!
**BWA-
HA-
HA!**

WHAT DO
YOU THINK OF
THAT?!



YES, GIL, WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THAT?

THIS IS ANOTHER TEST?!

NO, NO- HE'S QUITE SERIOUS.

BUT I AM INTERESTED IN YOUR ANALYSIS.

ARE YOU JOKING?!

HEY!



sigh. VERY WELL.

IF WE ATTACK HIM, THE CLANK KILLS US,

BUT IF HE KILLS US, OUR CLANKS WILL FINISH HIM.

AN APPARENT STANDOFF.

OH SHUT UP BEFORE YOU EMBARRASS YOURSELF ANY FURTHER.

sput- WHAT?!

BEING A SHORT MAN, HE PLACES TOO MUCH IMPORTANCE ON SIZE-

CORRECT! NOW-



I'M NOT THAT SHORT!

THUS THE USE OF ONE SLOW, UNWIELDY BUT IMPRESSIVELY LARGE CLANK,

INSTEAD OF SURPRISING US WITH A SQUAD OF THE FASTER BUT SMALLER UNITS SURROUNDING THE BUILDING.

AND EXCUSE ME, BUT I DO STILL HAVE THE DROP ON YOU...

A VIABLE STRATEGY PERHAPS- IF WE'D COME ALONE.



HE HAS THUS "PUT ALL OF HIS EGGS IN ONE BASKET," CONFIDENT THAT HE COULD CONTAIN OUR GROUP.

AS I HAVE!



BOOM!

WHAT?!



CEASE FIRE!

DEM-DOT VOS EASY.

MY-MY CLANKS!

YES, THE BEST SELF-CONTAINED FIGHTING MACHINES ON THE PLANET—

WHEN THEY WERE NEW.

TIME MARCHES ON, BEETLE. YOU REMAINED BEHIND.

WELL, BY NOW THE CITY SHOULD BE SECURE—



THIS IS AN INVASION?! BLAST IT, KLAUS, THIS IS MY CITY—!

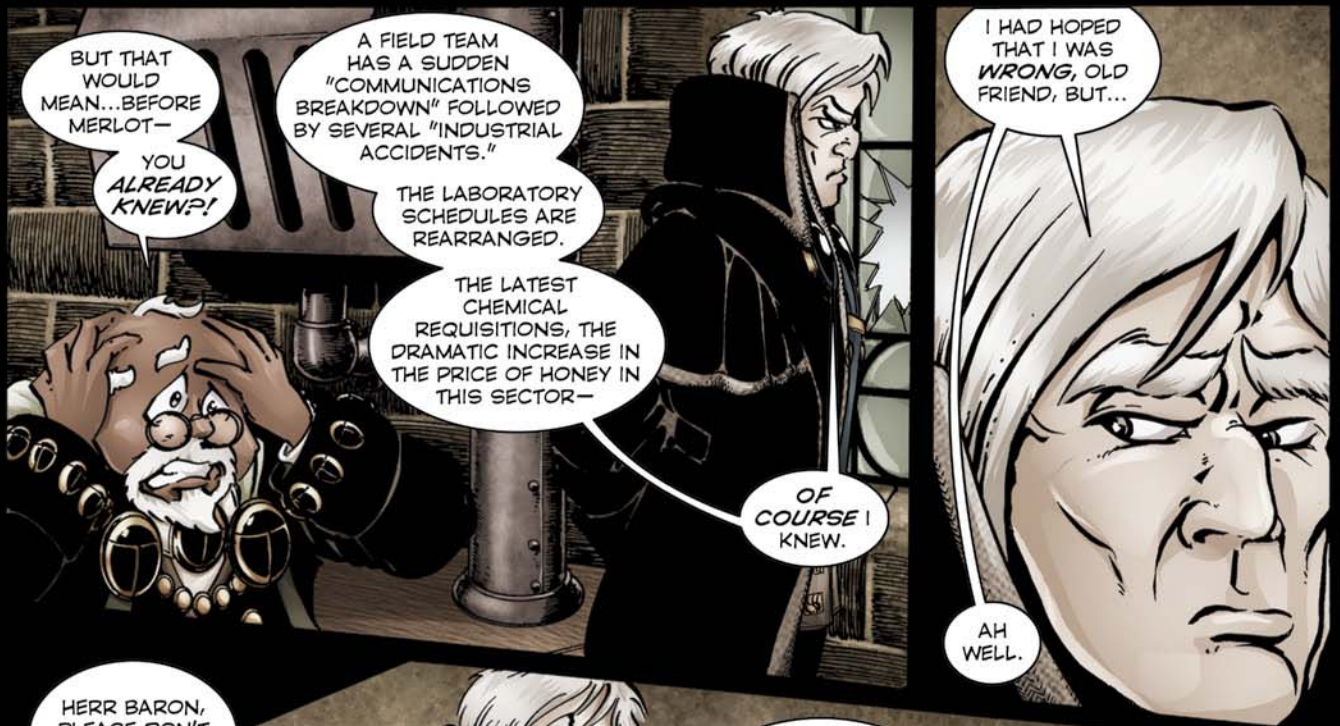
WRONG.

BUT... BUT WHY?

IT BECAME MY CITY YEARS AGO. I MERELY LET YOU ADMINISTER IT.

WITHHOLDING A HIVE ENGINE ISN'T ENOUGH?

The Switch



BUT THAT WOULD MEAN...BEFORE MERLOT—

YOU ALREADY KNEW?!

A FIELD TEAM HAS A SUDDEN "COMMUNICATIONS BREAKDOWN" FOLLOWED BY SEVERAL "INDUSTRIAL ACCIDENTS."

THE LABORATORY SCHEDULES ARE REARRANGED.

THE LATEST CHEMICAL REQUISITIONS, THE DRAMATIC INCREASE IN THE PRICE OF MONEY IN THIS SECTOR—

OF COURSE I KNEW.

I HAD HOPED THAT I WAS **WRONG**, OLD FRIEND, BUT...

AH WELL.



HERR BARON, PLEASE DON'T KILL HIM! WE NEED HIM!

WHERE DO THEY GET THESE IDEAS?

BEETLE, THE LOYALTY OF THE REST OF YOUR PEOPLE DOES YOU CREDIT.

THEY CAN REST ASSURED THAT I HAVE NO INTENTION OF KILLING YOU.

INDEED, I HAVE USE FOR YOU—

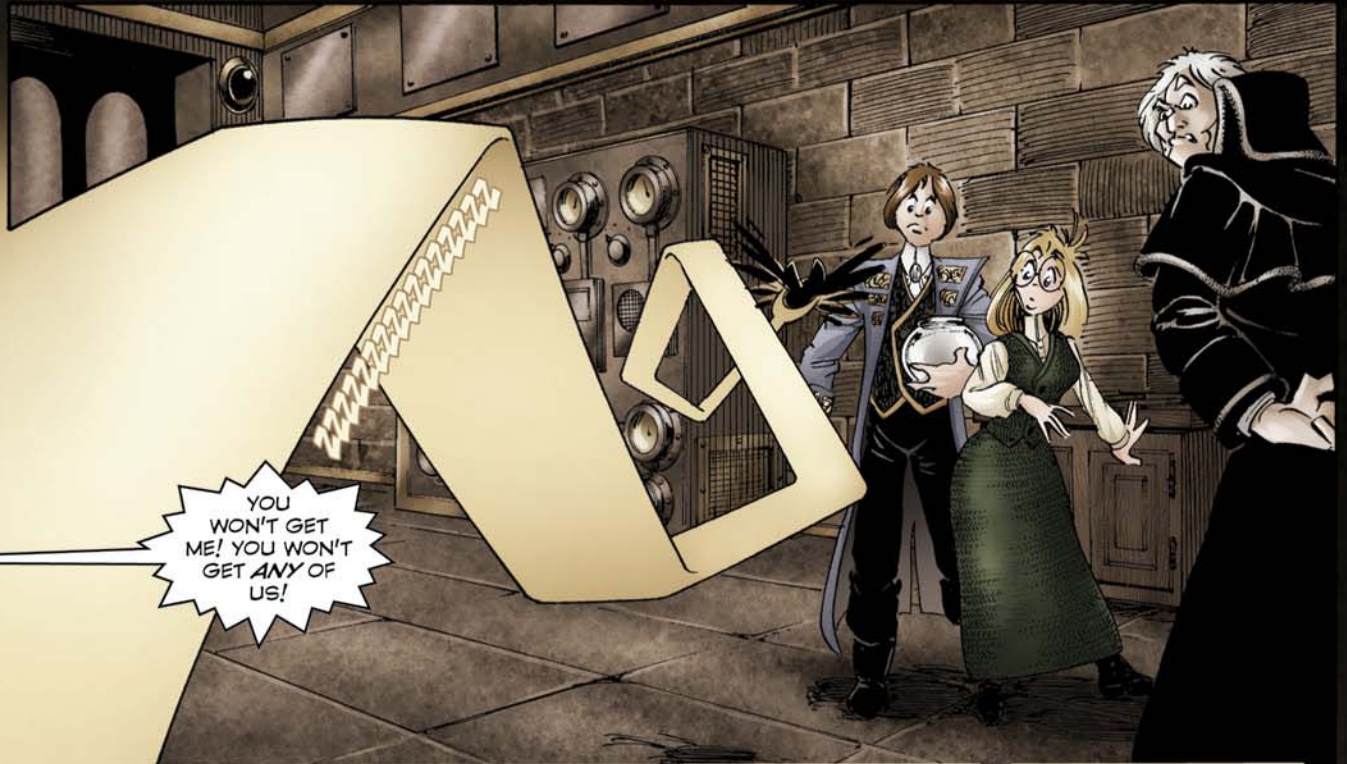
NO!



I'LL NEVER SUBMIT TO THAT! NEVER!

DEM!

NO! DON'T HURT HIM!



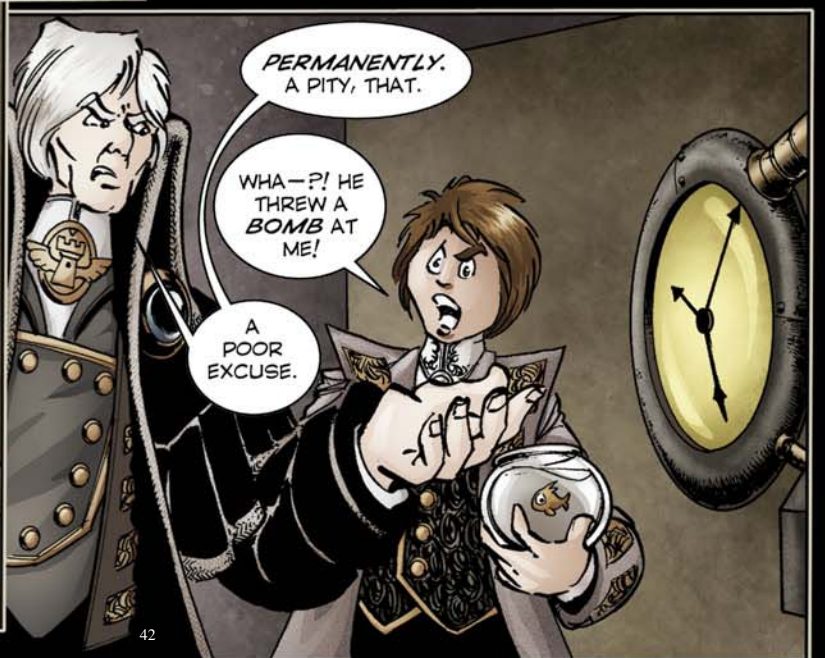
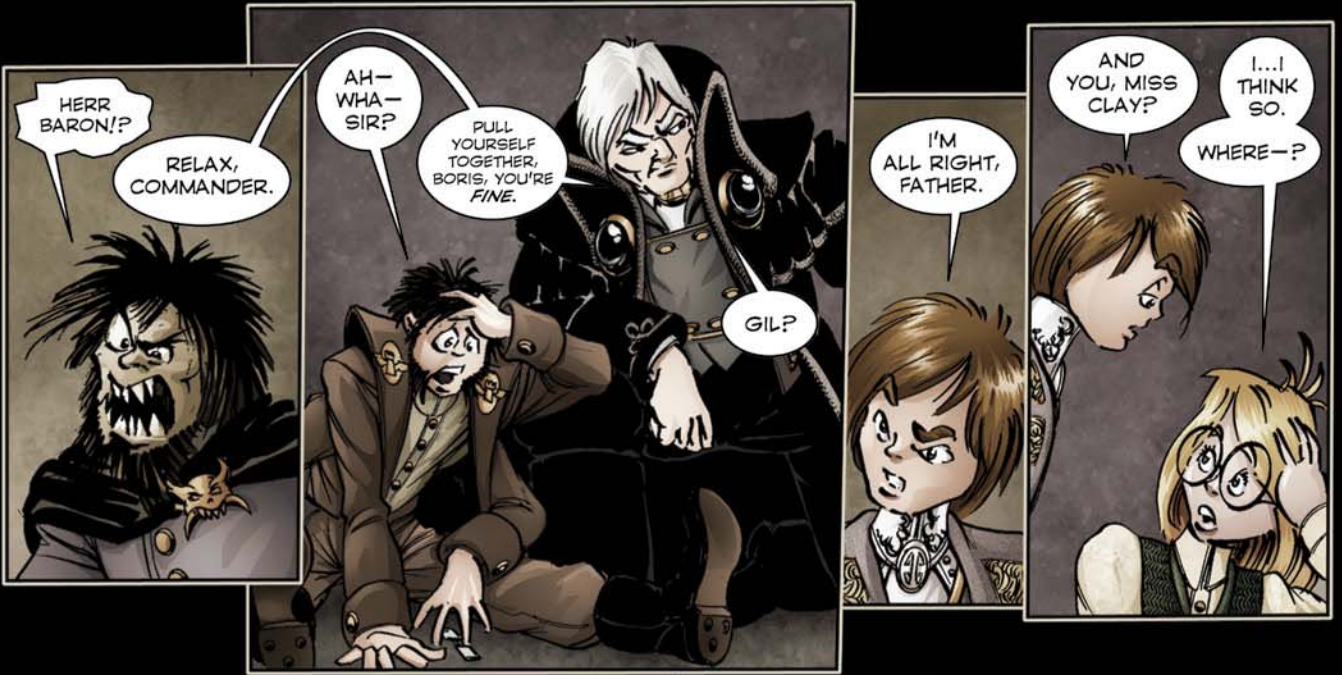
YOU
WON'T GET
ME! YOU WON'T
GET ANY OF
US!



NO!
I-!









POOR EXCUSE?!

HE THREW A BOMB AT ME!

HEY, I VON'T SAY HE VAS SHTUPID,

BUT I HAIN'T FINDIN' A WHOLE LOT OV BRAINS AROUND HERE!

CAN WE LEAVE, HERR BARON? MY FEET ARE STICKING TO THE FLOOR.

HOW DARE YOU!



HOW DARE YOU!

AH—

VELL—

BUT—



YOU MURDER ONE OF THE GREATEST SCIENTISTS IN EUROPE AND YOU'RE TREATING IT LIKE A KITCHEN ACCIDENT?!

BUT— HE THREW...

A BOMB AT ME...

OH, NEVER MIND...



THE PEOPLE OF THIS CITY LOVED HIM!

WHEN THEY FIND OUT HOW YOU—



AAAAAAHHH!
NO! NOT NOW!
OW! OW!
OWWWW!



FORGIVE HER, HERR BARON, SHE...

SHE HAS THESE ATTACKS WHEN SHE GETS UPSET.

PATHETIC.

THAT DOESN'T MAKE HER WRONG, FATHER.

(sob) MY HEAD! (sob) YOU PEOPLE ARE SO HORRIBLE!



HMM...THE POPULACE *IS* SOMETIMES A PROBLEM...

POSSIBLY NOT, HERR BARON.



VERY FEW PEOPLE ACTUALLY *SAW* DR. BEETLE ON A REGULAR—
HURK!



I *DESPISE* TRAITORS.



I CONSIDER BEETLE'S DEATH TO BE *YOUR* FAULT.

I AM *VERY* ANNOYED.

WITHOUT YOUR THEATRICALS I MIGHT HAVE SALVAGED HIM.

SO NOW, I'M GOING TO PUT *YOU* IN CHARGE.



I...I DON'T UNDERSTAND, HERR BARON.

YOU'LL OVERSEE EVERYTHING. THE CITY, THE COLLEGE, THE LANDS—

BUT... BUT...

EVERYTHING.



AND THE FIRST TIME YOU MAKE A MISTAKE...I'M SHIPPING YOU TO CASTLE HETERODYNE.

NO! ALL I WANTED—

WHAT YOU WANTED IS IRRELEVANT.

NOW, I WANT DR. BEETLE LYING IN STATE—FOR VIEWING—BY MIDNIGHT,

WITH A HERO'S FUNERAL TO BE HELD THE DAY AFTER TOMORROW.



BUT...MY WORK...I JUST WANTED TO...DO SOMETHING IMPORTANT...

HE WAS TRYING TO TURN CHALK INTO CHEESE.

HAW! NO VAY—REALLY?



THAT'S RIGHT!

AND I'M GOING TO DO ONE GOOD THING TODAY. MISS CLAY—GET OUT!

YOU'RE BANNED FROM THIS UNIVERSITY FOREVER!

WHAT?! BUT I'M A GOOD STUDENT!

I KNOW I HAVE TROUBLE SOMETIMES, BUT I WORK REALLY HARD!

YOU CAN'T JUST...



OF COURSE I CAN! HAVEN'T YOU HEARD?

I'M IN CHARGE NOW!



IT MAY BE FOR THE BEST, AGATHA.

WITHOUT DR. BEETLE'S PROTECTION, I DOUBT YOU'D LIKE IT HERE.

NO!

BUT... HOW WILL I—?

I'LL COME AND SEE YOU, I PROMISE,

BUT I THINK YOU'D BETTER LEAVE.





HALT.

ALL CITIZENS ARE TO STAY OFF THE STREET UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE.

GEEP!



HOY! SHE'S VIT ME!

YES SIR.



AAAAH!

VOTS DE MATTA, GURL?

THEY SENT YOU OUT TO EAT ME!



WAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA

HY EM NOT GUN EATCHU.



AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA

ONLESS DOTS DE ONLY VAY TO SHOT HYU OP!

...



NOW VERE HYU LIFFP MOOF!



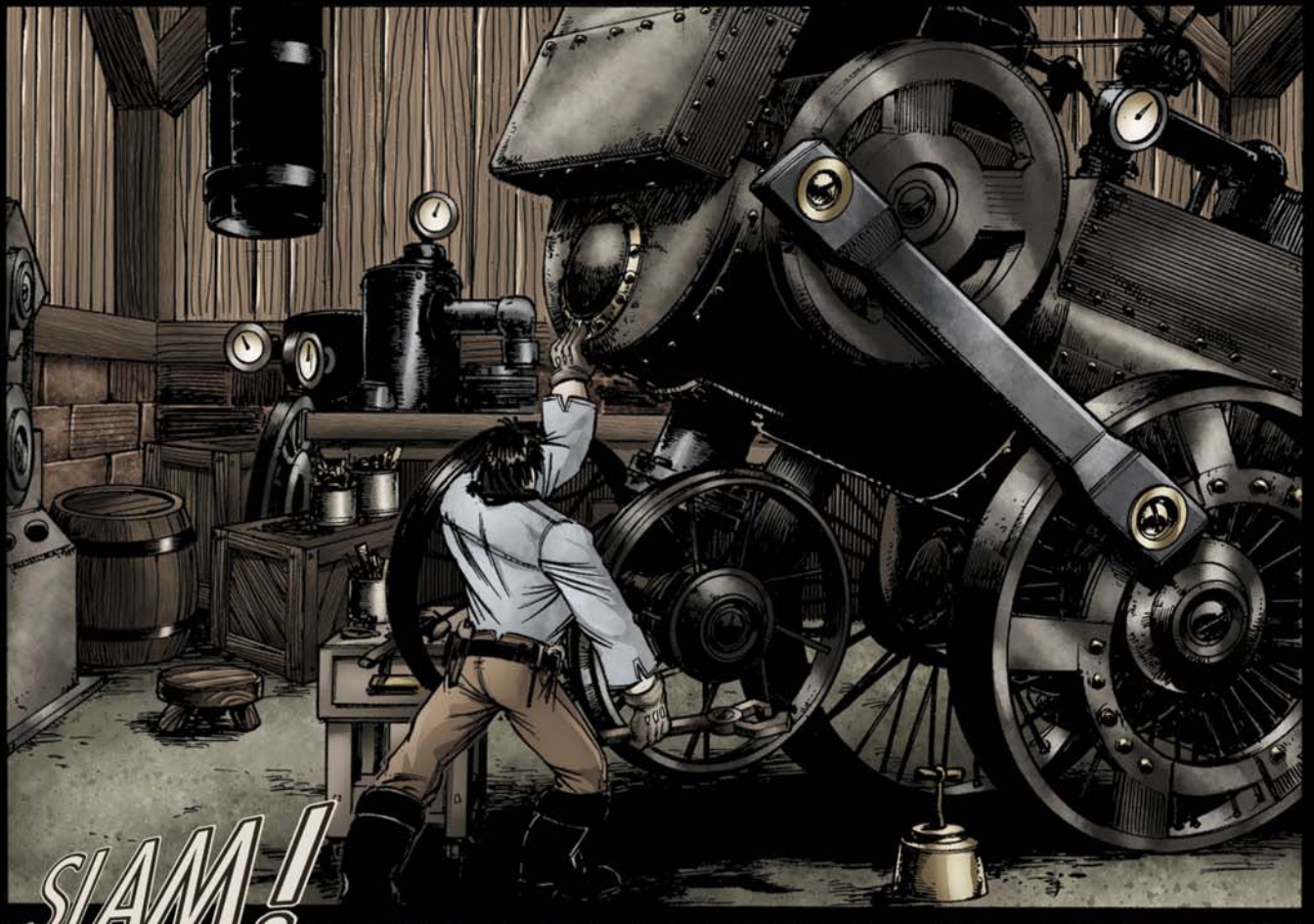
SOON...

DIS IT? NOW SHTAY DERE!



-TCH. DOOMED.





SLAM!



OH, ADAM!

I'VE HAD THE MOST AWFUL DAY IN EXISTENCE!



-sob- DR. BEETLE IS DEAD!

AND I WAS ROBBED!

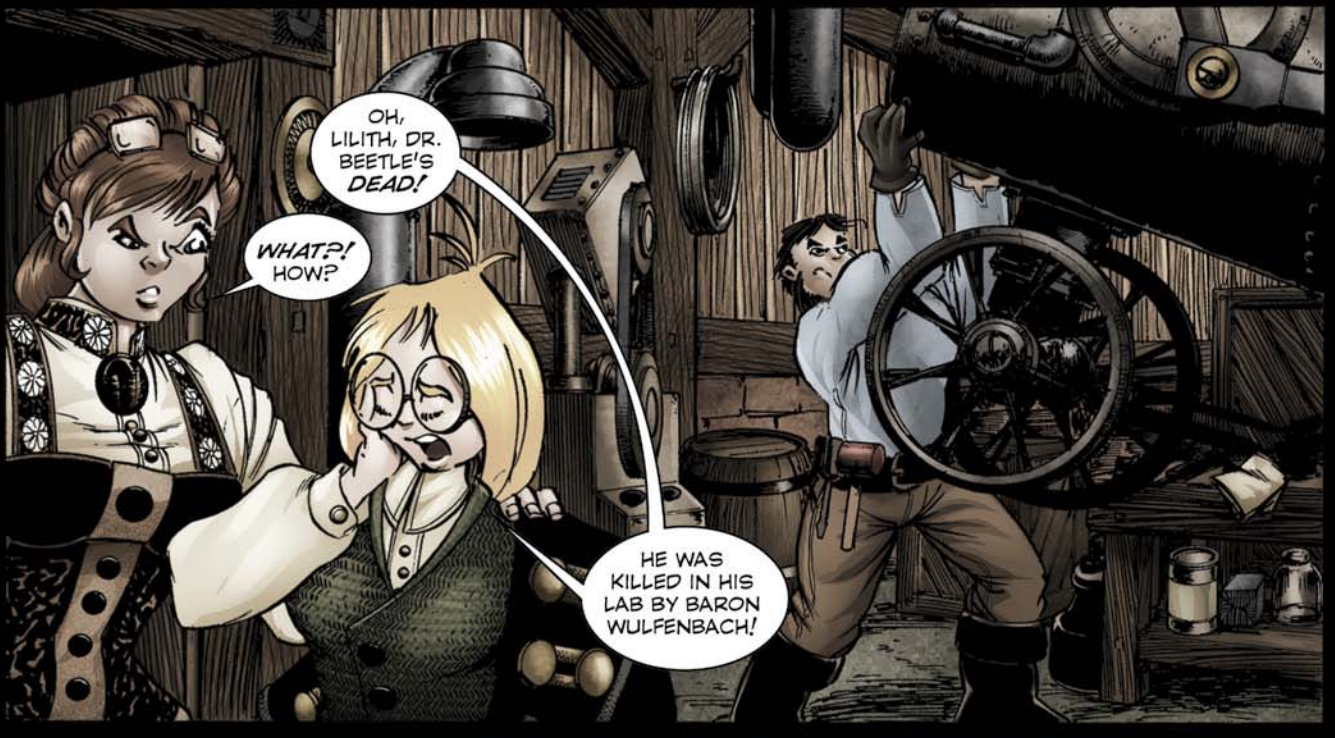
-sob- AND I'M NOT ALLOWED BACK IN THE UNIVERSITY! EVER!

cree-ak-k-k-k

I CAN'T THINK OF ANYTHING THAT COULD MAKE IT WORSE!

WHAT IS ALL THE NOISE OUT HERE?

AGATHA? WHAT'S WRONG, CHILD? COME HERE.



OH, LILITH, DR. BEETLE'S DEAD!

WHAT?! HOW?

HE WAS KILLED IN HIS LAB BY BARON WULFENBACH!



WULFENBACH?! HERE?!

YES, HE'S TAKEN THE TOWN.

YOU DIDN'T NOTICE?!

WHAMM!!!



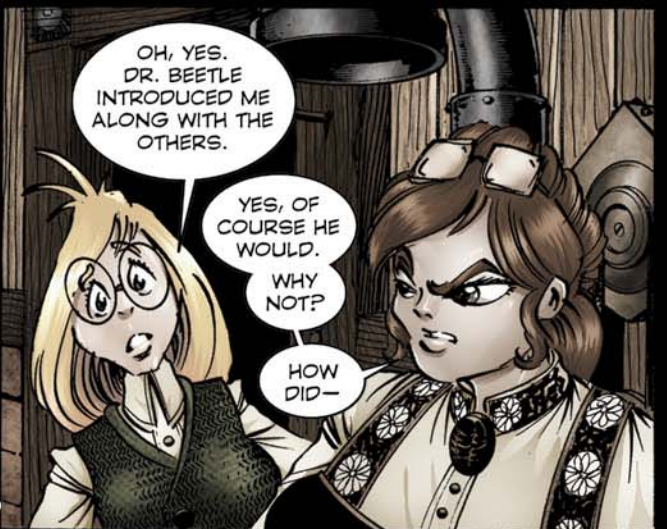
I'VE BEEN CANNING ALL MORNING—

KLAUS WULFENBACH! ARE YOU SURE?!

LILITH, I WAS RIGHT THERE.

I SAW HIM!

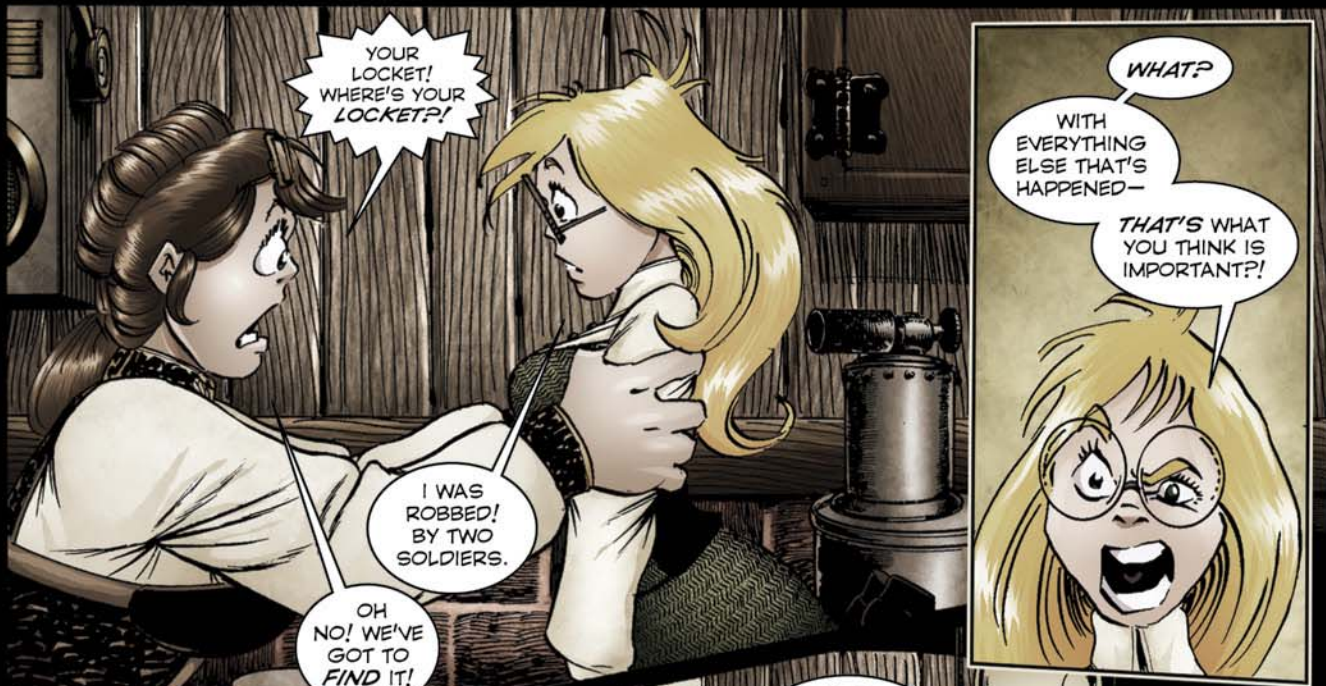
DID HE SEE YOU?



OH, YES. DR. BEETLE INTRODUCED ME ALONG WITH THE OTHERS.

YES, OF COURSE HE WOULD. WHY NOT?

HOW DID—



YOUR LOCKET!
WHERE'S YOUR LOCKET?!

I WAS ROBBED!
BY TWO SOLDIERS.

OH NO!
WE'VE GOT TO FIND IT!



WHAT?
WITH EVERYTHING ELSE THAT'S HAPPENED—

THAT'S WHAT YOU THINK IS IMPORTANT?!



YOUR UNCLE WAS VERY CLEAR. YOU MUST ALWAYS WEAR—

DR. BEETLE IS DEAD!



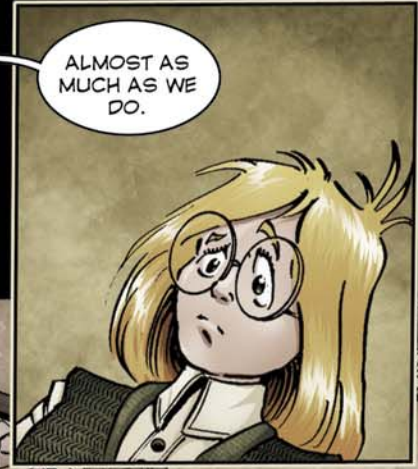
AGATHA, WHEN YOUR UNCLE LEFT YOU WITH US, HE TOLD US THINGS WE'D NEED TO KNOW IF—

IF HE DIDN'T COME BACK!

WELL IT'S BEEN ELEVEN YEARS!

MAYBE...MAYBE HE...HE NEVER MEANT TO COME BACK!

THUMP!



AGATHA—
YOUR UNCLE
LOVES YOU
VERY MUCH.

ALMOST AS
MUCH AS WE
DO.



NOW.
YOU MUST
PACK—

LIGHTLY, BUT
TAKE EVERYTHING
IMPORTANT, AND BE
READY TO LEAVE AT
DAWN.

WE'RE
LEAVING
TOWN?

BUT
THE SHOP!
THE HOUSE!
YOUR
CANNING!

IT
CAN'T BE
HELPED.

IF
WULFENBACH
IS HERE, WE'VE
GOT TO LEAVE.



ADAM
AND I WILL CHECK
THE PAWNSHOPS
AND JEWELERS.

TONIGHT WE'LL
TALK TO MASTER
WULPEN AND SEE IF
YOUR LOCKET IS AT THE
THIEVES' MARKET.

THE
CLANKS ARE
ENFORCING A
CURFEW.

REALLY?

IT'LL BE
LIKE OLD
TIMES THEN.

WE'D
BETTER
CHANGE.

YOU
GET TO
PACKING.

OKAY.
BE
CAREFUL.

CONFOUND
THE MASTER!

WE'RE
NOT
EQUIPPED
TO DEAL WITH
THIS.

WHERE
IS HE?!

ELEVEN
YEARS!



BUT I DON'T WANT TO LEAVE!

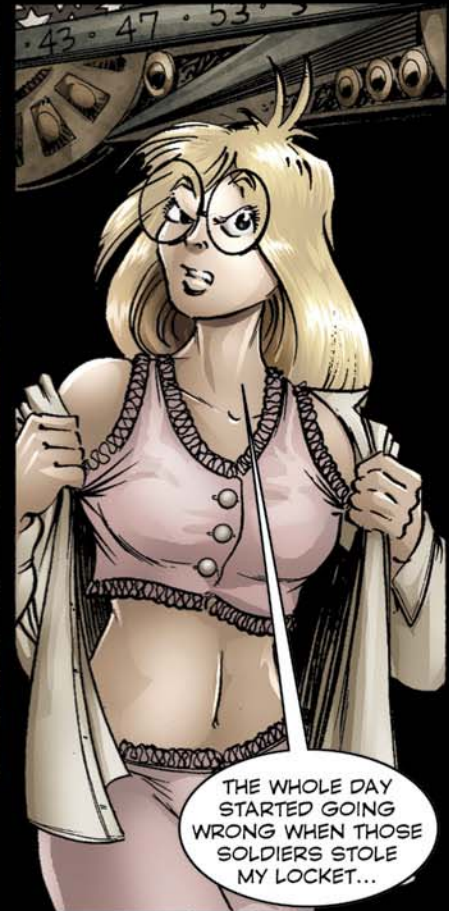
I HATED THE WAY UNCLE BARRY KEPT US MOVING.



WELL, NO USE WHINING...

URGH. I FEEL A LITTLE FUNNY.

MAYBE I'LL TAKE A NAP BEFORE I PACK.



THE WHOLE DAY STARTED GOING WRONG WHEN THOSE SOLDIERS STOLE MY LOCKET...



SEWER RATS...

WISH I COULD GET MY HANDS ON...
...ZZZZZ...

EARLY THE NEXT MORNING...

PLEASE, HERR DOCTOR, CAN'T YOU HELP HIM?

WHAT'S WRONG WITH HIM?

I DON'T KNOW. I'VE NEVER SEEN ANYTHING LIKE THIS.

HE SHOULD BE IN A HOSPITAL!

OH NO. I SAW ENOUGH OF THEM IN THE WAR.

I DON'T MEAN ONE OF THOSE BUTCHER-SHOP FIELD HOSPITALS.

OURS IS FULLY EQUIPPED AND YOUR BROTHER NEEDS IT. RIGHT AWAY.

BUT I CAN'T SEE ANYTHING WRONG WITH HIM!

YES—NO FEVER, NO CHILLS, NO RESPIRATORY PROBLEMS, NO SWEATING, NO CONVULSIONS—

BUT IT'S...LIKE HE'S SHUTTING DOWN. LIKE A MACHINE WITHOUT COAL!

ACH, OMAR, YOU'RE A JERK, BUT YOU'RE ALL I HAVE LEFT. FIGHT IT!

HOW LONG HAS HE BEEN LIKE THIS? DAYS? WEEKS?

HE...HE STARTED TO FEEL DIZZY, UM...BEFORE TWELVE HUNDRED, AND GOT MORE AND MORE DISORIENTED.

HE COLLAPSED AROUND FIFTEEN.

TOWARD THE END HE HAD TROUBLE TALKING, AND I...I THINK HE DIDN'T EVEN KNOW WHO I WAS.

HE PASSED OUT AROUND SUNDOWN.

THAT QUICKLY? DIOS! HOW DO YOU FEEL?

ME? OKAY, I GUESS. WHY?



I'M TRYING TO DECIDE IF YOU'RE CONTAGIOUS,

OR IF I SHOULD HAVE YOU MOVED TO THE HOSPITAL.

WHAT? ME?

LISTEN, VON ZINZER, WAS IT? THIS COULD BE SOME SORT OF PLAGUE.



PLAGUE?!

I HOPE NOT, BUT...WHERE DO YOU WORK?



NOWHERE. WE JUST HIT TOWN YESTERDAY.

MM. HOPEFULLY YOU PICKED IT UP OUTSIDE THEN. FIND ANYTHING ODD? EAT ANYTHING UNUSUAL?

NO, WE—



NNNNRRGH!

HAAAAHHGHHHHH...

OMAR?

OMAR!



THAT'S IT. I'M SORRY.

OH, OMAR!



TINK!



WHAT—? OH. THIS.

I'M SURE IT GAVE HIM SOME COMFORT.

NOW, I'M AFRAID I MUST GO.



LISTEN UP, SOLDIER. I'M CONFINING YOU TO THIS ROOM.

I'LL HAVE A MEDICAL DISPOSAL SQUAD HERE FOR YOUR COMRADE WITHIN THE HOUR.

YOU CAN RELAX, DR. BEETLE DOESN'T PERMIT UNAUTHORIZED RESURRECTIONISTS IN THIS TOWN.

YOU'LL BE FED AND EXAMINED FOR THE NEXT WEEK, AND THEN YOU'LL BE FREE TO GO.

SO SIT TIGHT, SOLDIER, AND WE'LL DO OUR BEST.



CLIK

RECKON OMAR AND ME HAVE SEEN YOUR "BEST."



YOU IDIOT!

YOUR LAST ACT ON EARTH IS TO STEAL FROM A TOWNIE?!

AND I'M STUCK HERE, JUST WAITING FOR HER TO REPORT US—



STUCK LIKE A SITTING DUCK!



WHAT THE... WHAT WAS THAT?!

spak!



HUH. THIS LOCKET HAD SOME SORT OF MECHANISM INSIDE IT.

TOO COMPLICATED TO BE A WATCH.

I'VE NEVER SEEN ANYTHING LIKE THIS.

WHAT DID IT DO?!



DAUGHTER OF THUNDER...



THIS THING KILLED OMAR!

THERE'S NO PLAGUE!

YEAH, HE STARTED ACTING STRANGE AFTER THAT GIRL—



THE GIRL! SHE WAS WEARING IT AND IT WASN'T KILLING HER.

SHE MUST HAVE... TURNED IT ON SOMEHOW.

SHE KNEW IT'D DO FOR HIM, THE BLACK-HEARTED—

WAIT! WASN'T THERE—



A LABEL! YES!

"IF FOUND, RETURN TO AGATHA CLAY, CLAY MECHANICAL, FORGE STREET, BEETLEBURG. REWARD!"

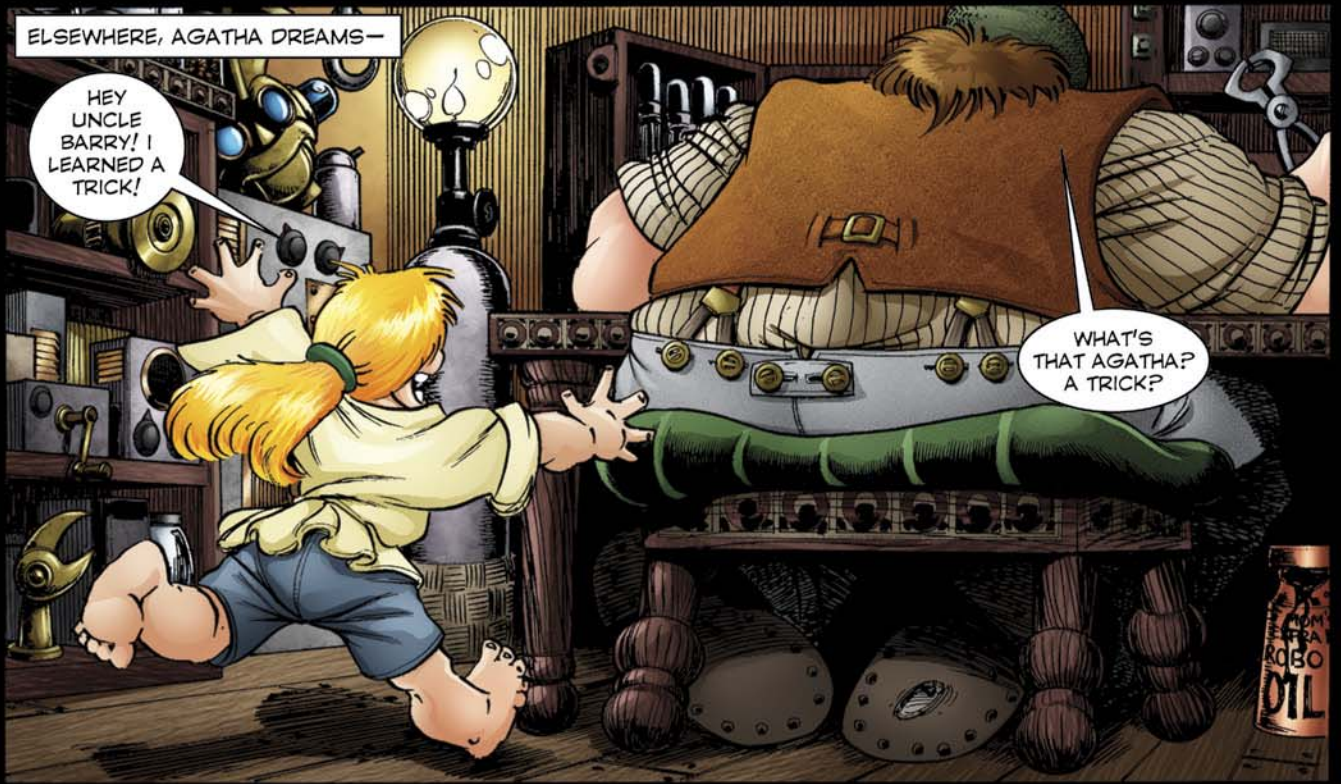


A REWARD, HUH? I'LL GIVE HER A REWARD A'RIGHT, AND SHE'LL MAKE NO REPORTS WHEN I'M DONE WITH HER.

ELSEWHERE, AGATHA DREAMS—

HEY
UNCLE
BARRY! I
LEARNED A
TRICK!

WHAT'S
THAT AGATHA?
A TRICK?



UH-HUH.
YOU KNOW HOW
WHEN YOU'RE TRYIN'
TO THINK AN' THERE'S
NOISE AN' STUFF
BOTHERIN' YOU?

WELL I
FOUND OUT I CAN
MAKE OTHER NOISES IN
MY HEAD, AN IT MAKES THE
BOTHERIN' NOISE STOP,
AND THEN I CAN THINK
REAL GOOD!

LISTEN!



YOU...
YOU'RE...
NO! AGATHA!

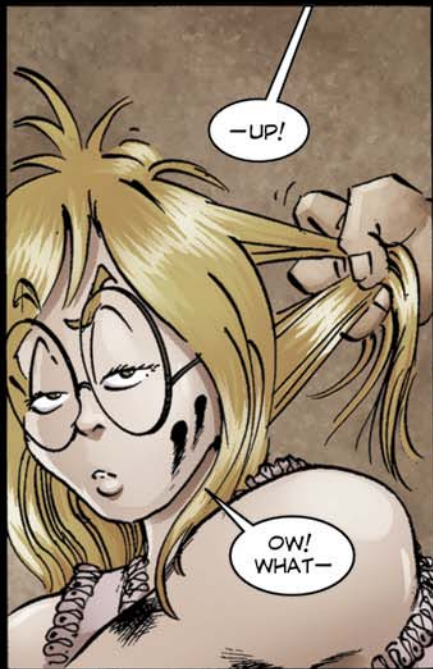
YOU'RE
ONLY FIVE
YEARS OLD!

YOU'VE
GOT TO STOP!
YOU'RE TOO
YOUNG!

I...!
DON'T
KNOW WHAT
TO DO!

WHA—?







TURN OFF ALL DEVKES

WHAT'S HAPPENING?

TURNIPS & RUS!

ELECTRO
MERTIA
SCOPE
MK III

OIL

MEANWHILE—



WELL
WELL WELL.

THIS IS
INTERESTING.



BORIS?

NOT ONE OF OURS, HERR BARON. NOT FROM OUTSIDE THE TOWN.

HM. PURPOSE?

IT HAS CAUSED SOME MINOR DAMAGE, BUT I BELIEVE THAT TO BE UNINTENTIONAL.

IT APPEARS TO BE LOOKING FOR SOMEONE.

REALLY?

ALLOW ME TO DEMONSTRATE. SERGEANT? GO UP TO IT.

VOT? ME?



YES, YOU. GO UP TO IT.

I DON'T TAKE SHTUPID ORDERS FROM YOU.

I DON'T GIVE THEM. NOW GO DO SOMETHING USEFUL.

HO! SO I CAN SQUISH YOU DEN, HEY, BUGMAN?



BORIS—IS IT SAFE?

I HONESTLY BELIEVE SO, HERR BARON.

GOOD. SERGEANT? CARRY ON.

YAH, HERR BARON.



...vun uf dese days ve gunt spend a few hours breakin' you arms you—

OH, HELP. I-HEF-BEEN-CEPTURED-BY-A-CLENK. HELP. HELP.



HOKAY, GET ON VIT IT...



CHAKK!

HOY!

FWAAH!



YOU SCHTUPID—OOF!

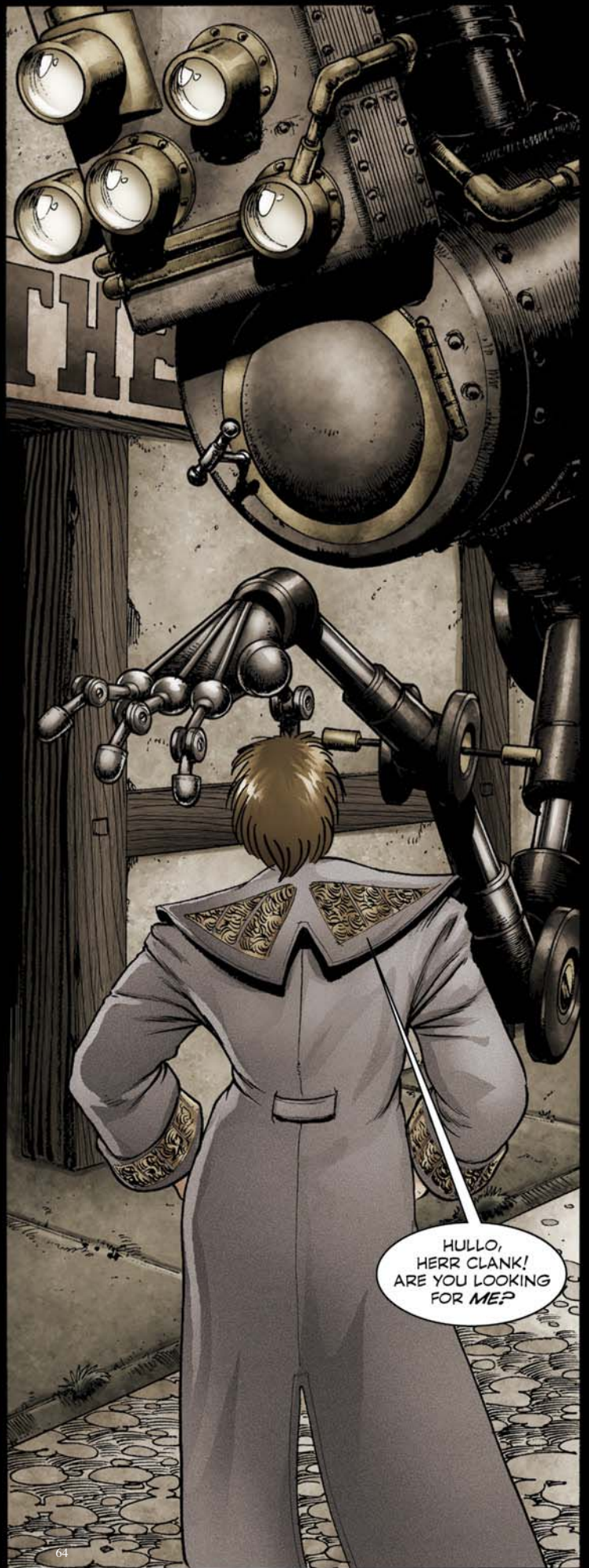
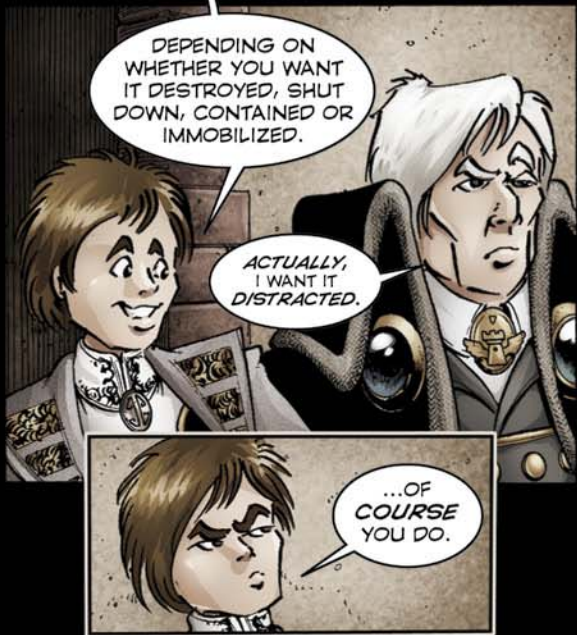
WHUMP!



YOU SEE, HERR BARON, ENTERTAINING, BUT HARMLESS.

YOU IS SCHATUPID! DOT TING COULD BE LOOKINK FOR HENNYBODY!

AND VEN IT FIND DEM—DEN YOU GOTTS TROUBLE!

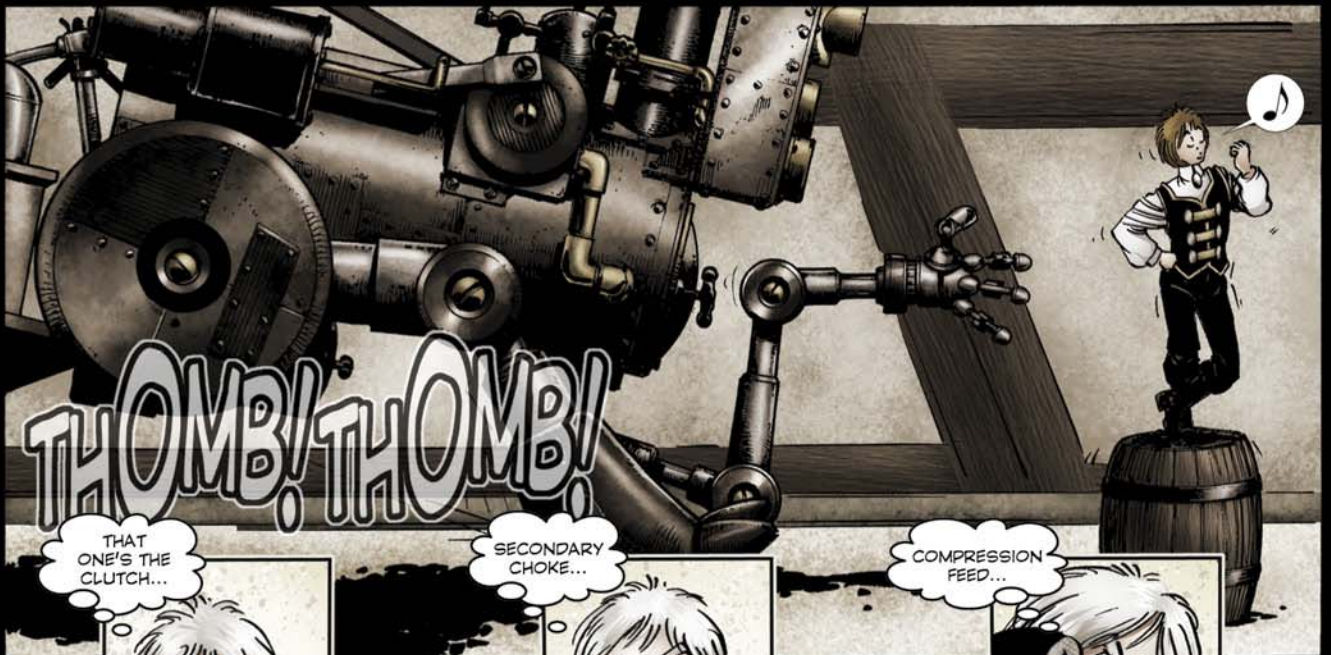




CLINK!

HO!
YOU'LL HAVE
TO DO BETTER
THAN THAT!

THOMB! THOMB! THOMB!



THOMB! THOMB!

THAT ONE'S THE CLUTCH...

SECONDARY CHOKE...

COMPRESSION FEED...



SMASH!



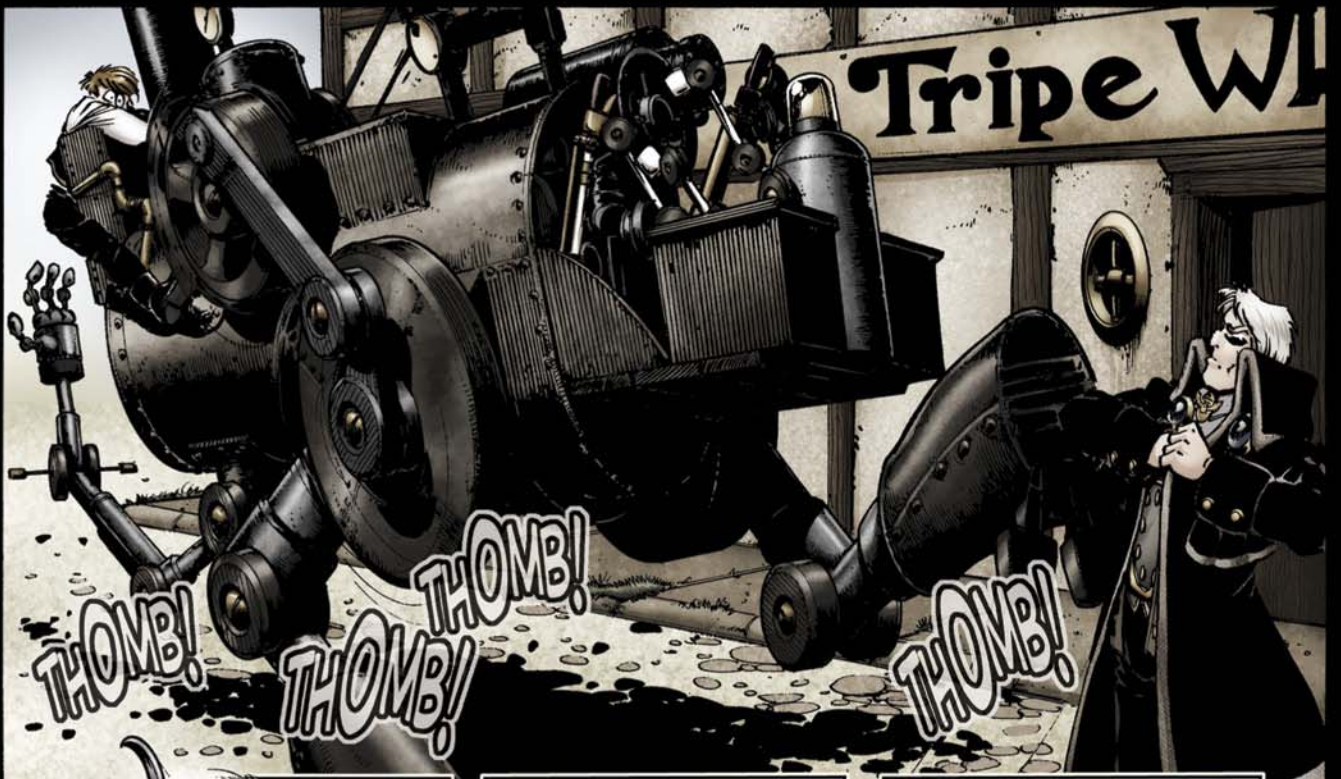
DOINK!



ANY TIME, FATHER!

AH... THAT'S IT!





THOMB!
THOMB!
THOMB!

THOMB!



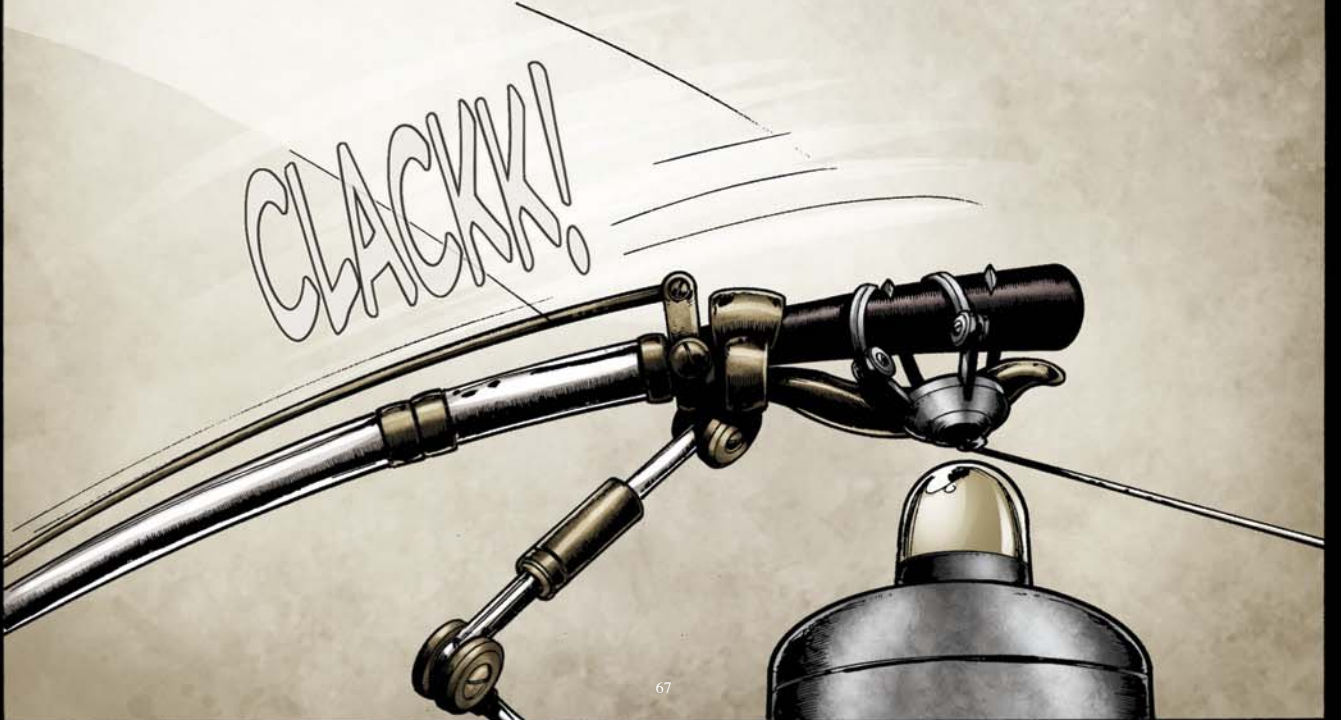
POF!



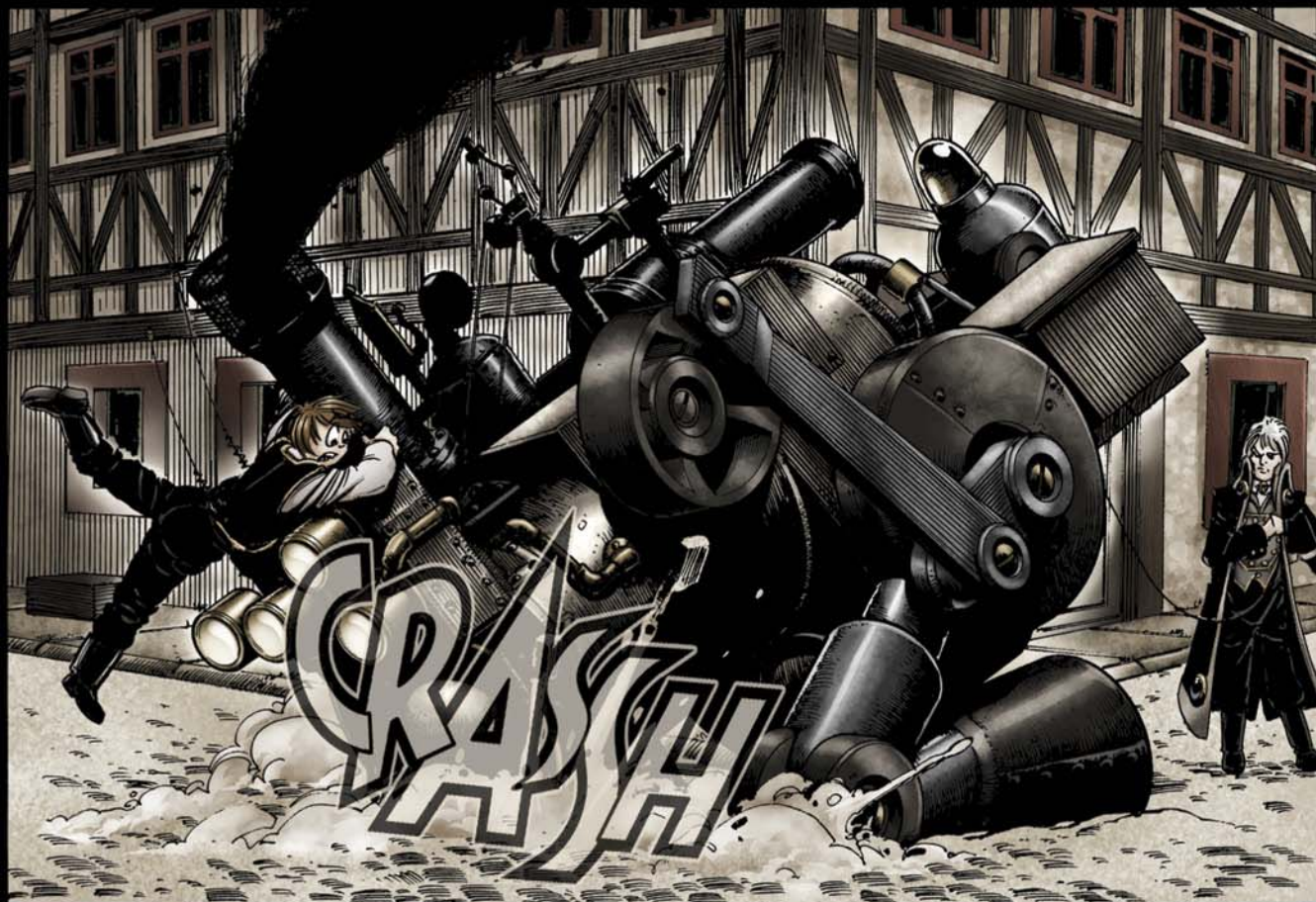
SNA-A-KIT!



TUG!



CLACK!



WELL DONE, FATHER!

LACKWIT!
HOW DARE YOU
PUT YOURSELF AT
RISK!



YOU
OR I MAY VERY
WELL BE THIS
DEVICE'S
QUARRY!

I NEEDED A
DISTRACTION,
NOT A
SACRIFICE!



THAT'S
WHAT THE
JÄGERMONSTERS
ARE FOR!

A PITY
WE CAN'T
USE THEM
ALL.

AH-GO
KEES AN
HOCTOPOOS.

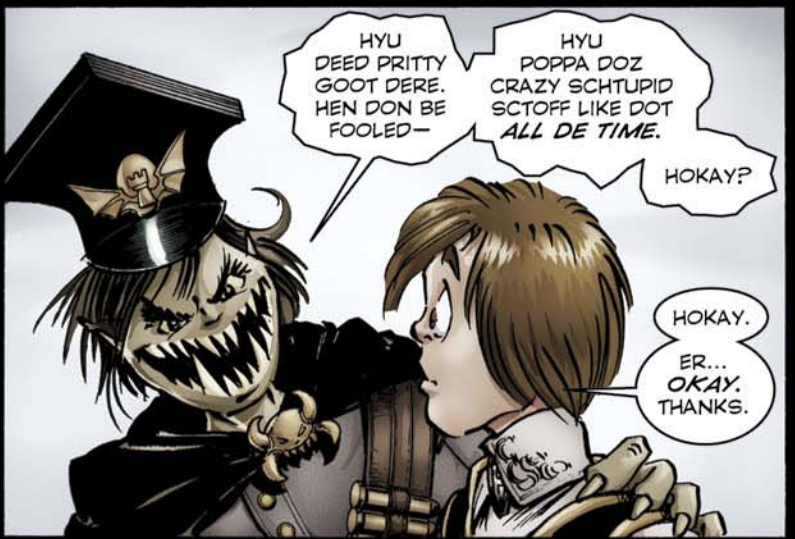
OH
VAIT, HYU
MAMA ALREADY
DEED!

heh.



NOW.
LET'S SEE...
INTERESTING...

HEY—
KEEP.

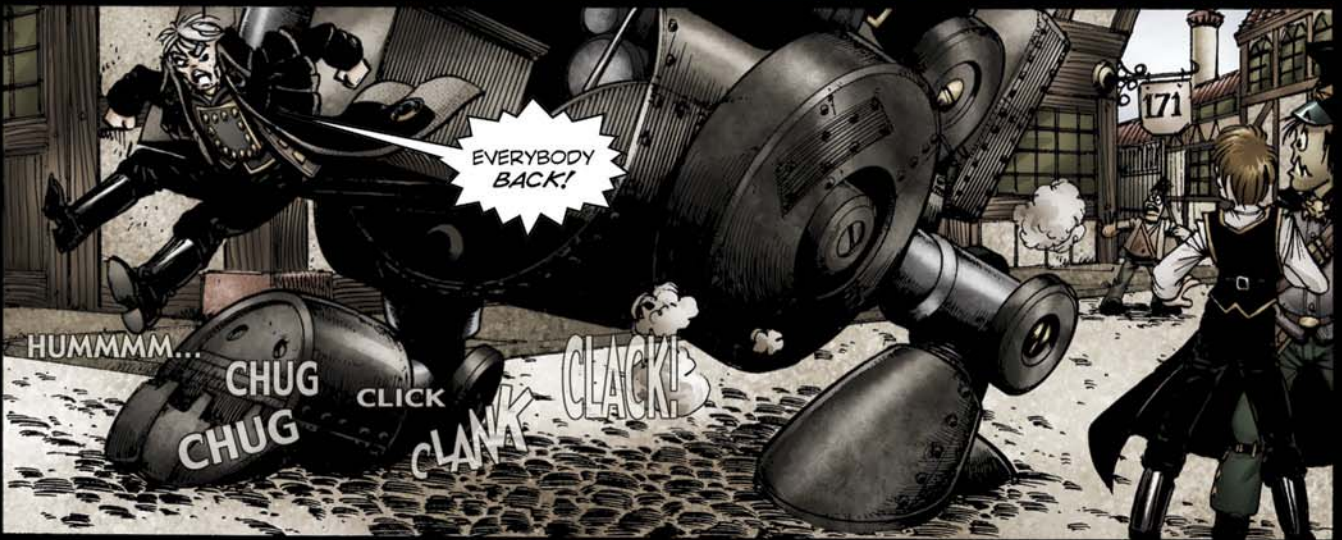


HYU
DEED PRITTY
GOOT DERE.
HEN DON BE
FOOLED—

HYU
POPPA DOZ
CRAZY SCHATUPID
SCTOFF LIKE DOT
ALL DE TIME.

HOKAY?

HOKAY.
ER...
OKAY.
THANKS.



EVERYBODY
BACK!

HUMMMM...

CHUG
CHUG

CLICK

CLANK

CLACK!



SERGEANT!
PREPARE SOME
C-BOMBS!

FIRST
PATROL—
FOLLOW THAT
CLANK!

THOMB!
THOMB!
THOMB!



WE HUNT!

WHAT DID YOU DO, FATHER?

THE DEVICE WAS SET TO FIND SOMEONE AND BRING THEM "HOME."

I SIMPLY REVERSED THE TASK ORDER. NOW LET'S RUN!



TELL ME WHAT WE'LL FIND.

EVERYTHING DOES NOT HAVE TO BE A TEST.

LIFE IS A TEST! NOW ANSWER!

31



IT'S NOT ONE OF BEETLE'S—IT'S TOO CRUDE.

MAYBE A STUDENT, OR A YOUNGER PROFESSOR.



NO. ANYBODY AT THE UNIVERSITY WOULD HAVE ACCESS TO BETTER MATERIALS. THE CONSTRUCTION SCREAMS INEXPERIENCE.

AND SINCE THERE HAVE BEEN NO NEW SPARKS IN THIS AREA FOR SEVERAL YEARS...

THIS COULD BE A BREAKTHROUGH! A NEW SPARK!

AND I WANT HIM!

MAYBE BEETLE WAS HIDING HIM.



NO-THE PRELIMINARY STAGES OF A BREAKTHROUGH ARE EXTREMELY DIFFICULT TO DISGUISE.

BEETLE COULDN'T EVEN HIDE THE HIVE ENGINE. A NEW SPARK WOULD HAVE BEEN NEAR IMPOSSIBLE.

UNLESS HE'D KNOWN THAT THIS PARTICULAR PERSON WOULD BREAK THROUGH, AND ISOLATED HIM BEFOREHAND.

THAT IS UNLIKELY.

EVEN I HAVE YET TO DEVELOP A SURE TEST FOR POTENTIAL.

WHAT ELSE CAN YOU TELL ME?



SO IT WASN'T CONSTRUCTED AT THE UNIVERSITY. THEN A FOUNDRY OR MACHINE SHOP.

ONLY THEY'D HAVE THE NECESSARY TOOLS. ...BUT IF HE'S A NEWCOMER...

SHOPS CAN BE RENTED.

WHAT ABOUT THE MAN HIMSELF?



HE'S BEEN WRONGED BY SOMEONE. SOMEONE HE CAN'T TOUCH THROUGH NORMAL CHANNELS. MOST LIKELY, US.

YES!







FINALLY WAKING UP, EH?

OW!
MY HEAD!
OW. OW.



I'LL SMACK YOU AGAIN UNLESS YOU TELL ME WHAT YOU DID HERE.

I WOKE YOU UP. OW.

NO. NO—WHY DID YOU BRING ME TO THE SHOP?

WHY DID YOU TRASH THE PLACE?

WHAT? I DID NOT!

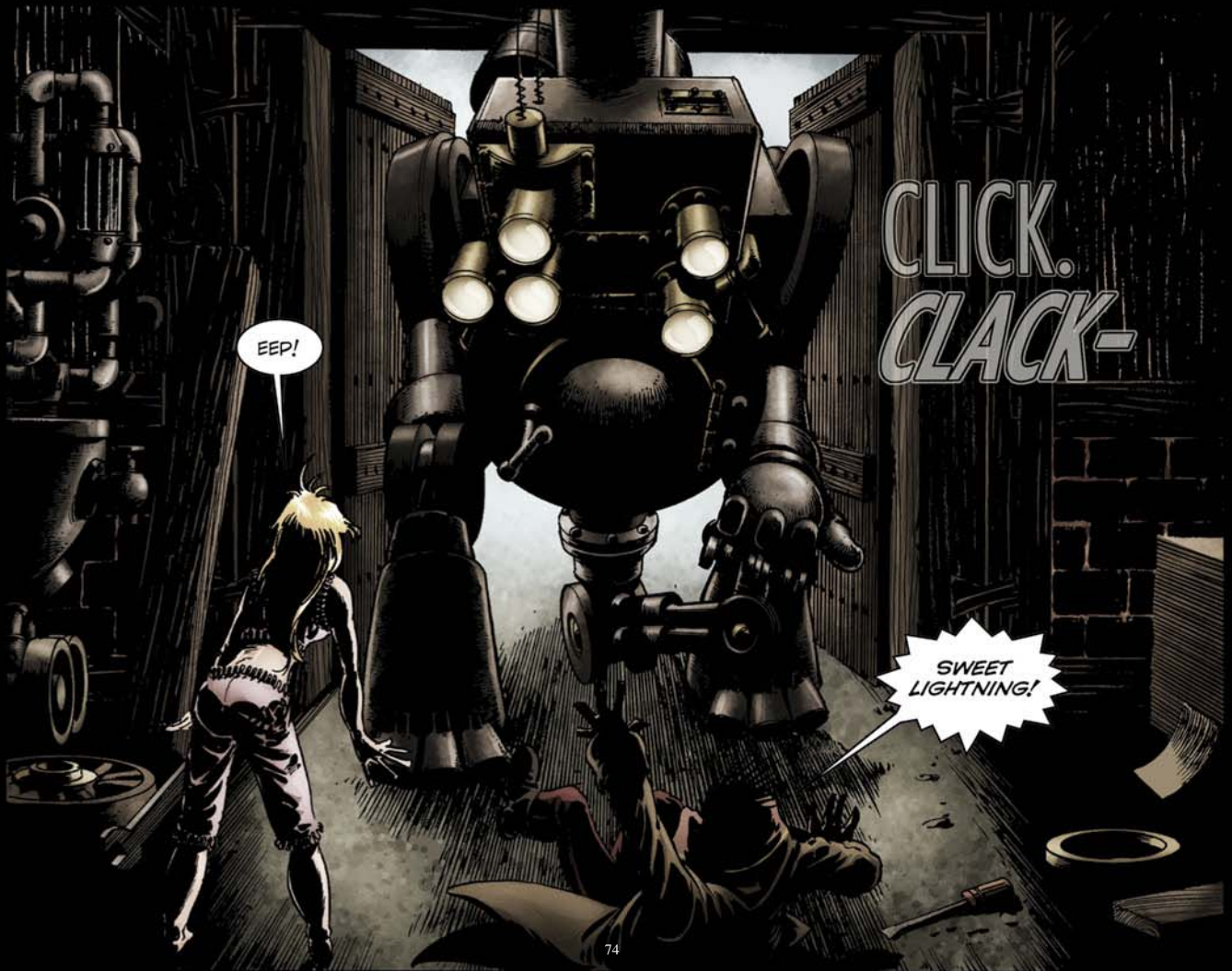
YOU WERE ALREADY HERE ASLEEP AND THE PLACE WAS ALREADY TRASHED WHEN I GOT HERE.

EVEN THE DOOR WAS OPEN.



THEN WHO—?

CLANK!!



EEP!

CLICK.
CLACK-

SWEET LIGHTNING!







IT ALL FALLS INTO PLACE.

THE GIRL WAS TRULY UPSET AT BEETLE'S DEATH.

HER SOLDIER LOVER HAD RECENTLY RETURNED HOME, AND HE BUILT THIS CLANK FOR HER.

LOVER?!



WHAT— YOU THINK THAT UNDERWEAR IS APPROPRIATE GARB FOR A MACHINE SHOP?!

HEEHEEHEE!

OH. UM...

SNORT!

RED FIRE BOY, WHAT KIND OF YOUNG WOMEN DID YOU ASSOCIATE WITH AT SCHOOL?

FATHER!



VERY WELL, WHAT WOULD YOU DO NOW?

IDEALLY, TALK TO THEM, BUT WHAT WITH THE C-GAS WE MUST ASSUME THEY'LL BE OUT FOR AT LEAST THIRTY-SIX HOURS,

SO... EXAMINE THE CLANK?



NO, NO, NO! YOU MUST GET YOUR PRIORITIES STRAIGHT.

EXAMINING THE CLANK IS IMPORTANT, BUT IT CAN WAIT.

WHAT IS MISSING HERE? THIS FELLOW IS STILL TRAVELSTAINED.

THE SHOP IS NOT RUN BY THE GIRL...

THE OWNER! THE CLAYS, WHERE ARE THEY?

EXACTLY. THEY'LL TELL YOU MUCH. YOU MUST FIND THEM.



THAT SHOULD BE EASY ENOUGH.

YES, NO DOUBT.

THE CLANK WILL BE TRANSPORTED TO THE UNIVERSITY, AND YOUR NEW SPARK—

—BOTH OF THEM WILL RETURN WITH US TO CASTLE WULFENBACH.



THE GIRL AS WELL?

YES, YES.

IF THEY ARE INDEED LOVERS, SHE'LL BE AN ADDITIONAL LEVER.

IF SHE IS MERELY AN EXHIBITIONIST, WE'LL SEND HER BACK.

HER PARENTS MIGHT NOT LIKE THAT.



THEY'LL TAKE HER BACK ANYWAY.

THAT'S NOT WHAT I MEANT.

FATHER, WHAT'S WRONG? YOU SEEM... DISAPPOINTED.

I AM. I WAS HOPING FOR SOMETHING... INTERESTING.

ALL WE HAVE HERE IS A SORDID LITTLE TALE OF REVENGE AND MANIPULATION.

STILL, HE IS A NEW SPARK. HE WILL BE USEFUL IN MY RESEARCH.

NOW—THIS IS FORTUITOUS, BUT HARDLY URGENT.

I MUST FINISH CONSOLIDATING THE TAKEOVER OF THE TOWN.

I'M SURE YOU CAN FINISH UP HERE ON YOUR OWN.

I WILL ASSIGN YOU TWO—

I WILL GO BY MYSELF. LET THE PEOPLE SEE THAT I CAN.

HOKAY, HERR BARON.



OH THANK YOU, SIR. YES, I'M SURE THAT EVEN I CAN DEAL WITH *THIS*. sigh.

HEY, DERE AIN'T NOBODY ELSE HERE. AN' IT SCHMELLS FONNY.



"FUNNY?"

LIKE HOW?

LIKE...LIKE MACHINES OR ZUMTING?

D'PIPPLE WHO LIFF HERE. DEY SCHMELL FONNY

WELL THEY ARE MECHANICS.

IZ MORE DAN DAT...



DOES SHE SMELL FUNNY?

snort snort



SHE SCHMELLS GOOOT.

ALL RIGHT, I—

HY MEAN, REALLY GOOT.

YES, YES, THAT'S QUITE ENOUGH!

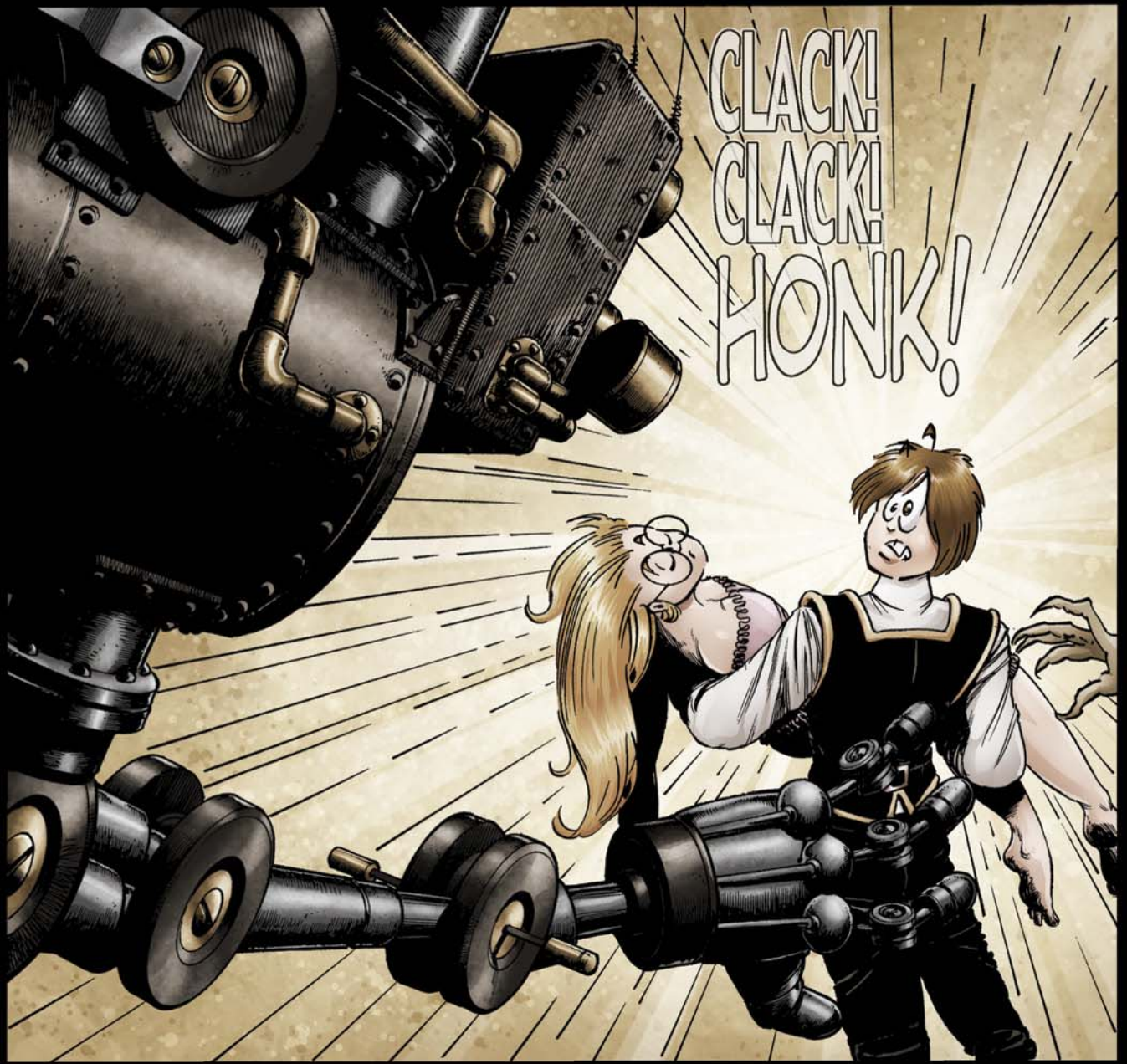


MM-MM-MMMM...

HEY! VE FOUND A VAGON!

VERY GOOD. LOAD THEM UP.





CLACK!
CLACK!
HONK!



MOVE!

HOOG!

SSSNAP-ACK

RWHAM!!

CLANKS!
CONTAIN IT!

K-BLANG!

THE
CONTROL
UNIT IS—

CHA-BONNG!

STEND
BECK!



THE
CONTROL
UNIT ON THE
BACK!

YOU
MUST—

HOY!
GOT'CHA!

VATCH
DIS!



VOP!

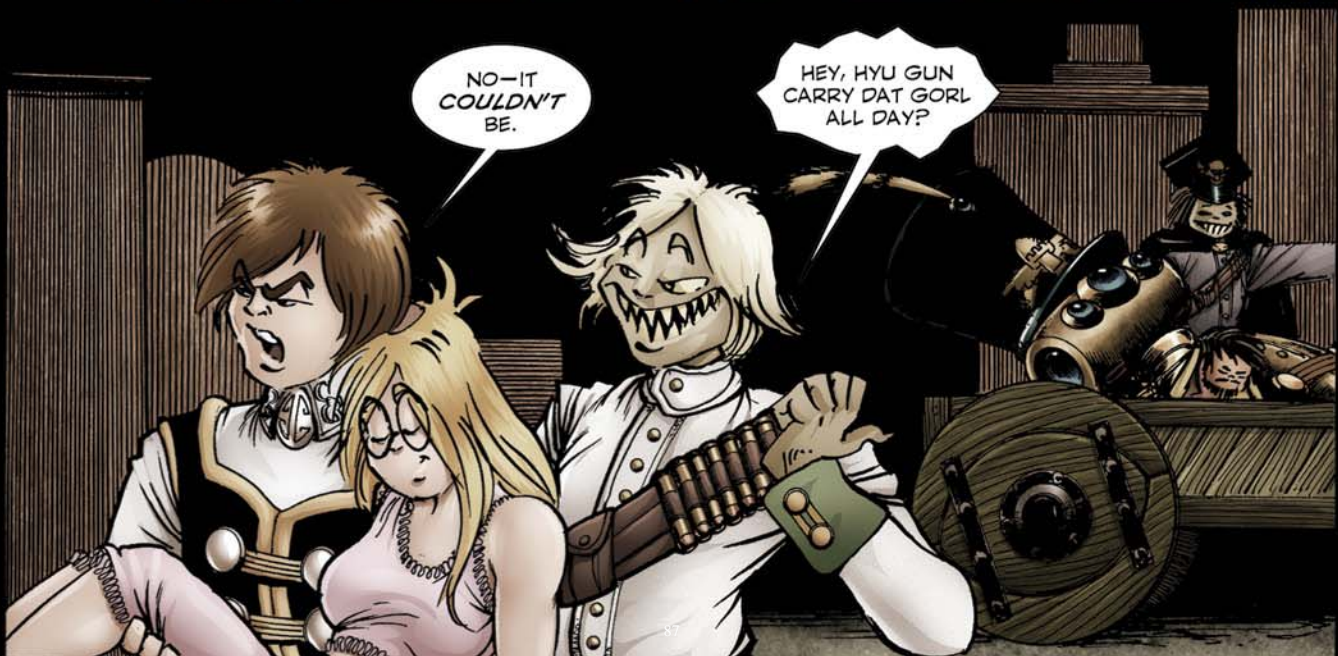


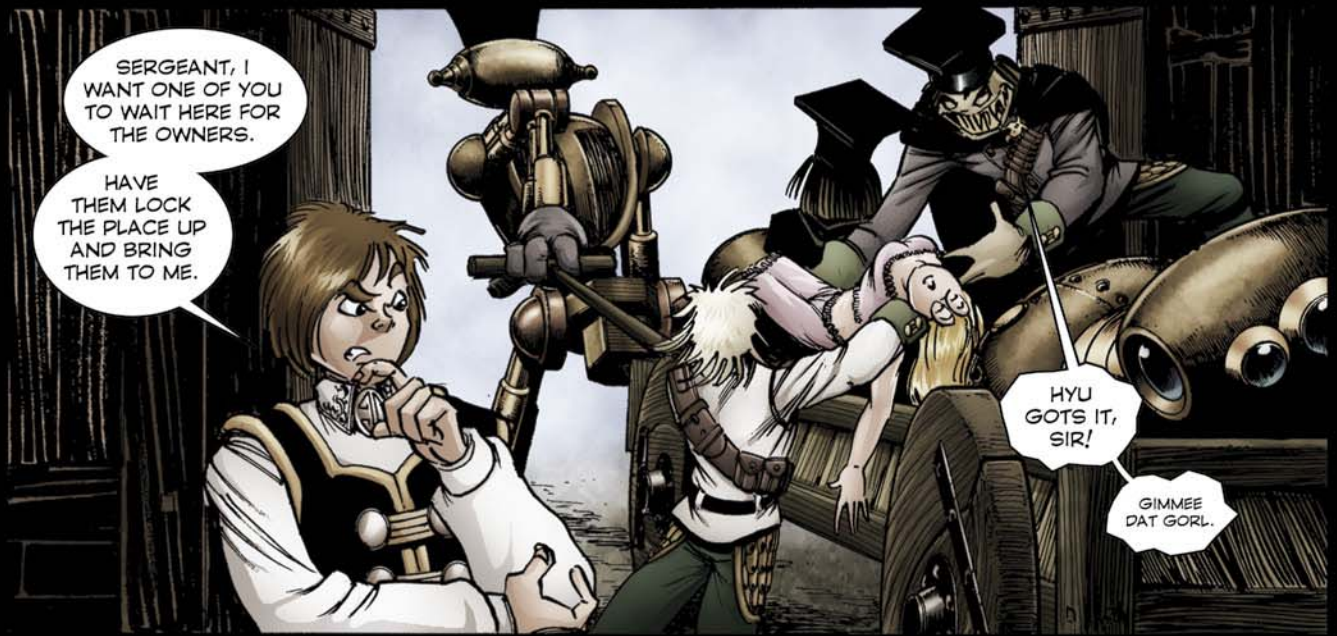
—NOT
DESTROY
...IT...WE...

...NEVER
MIND.







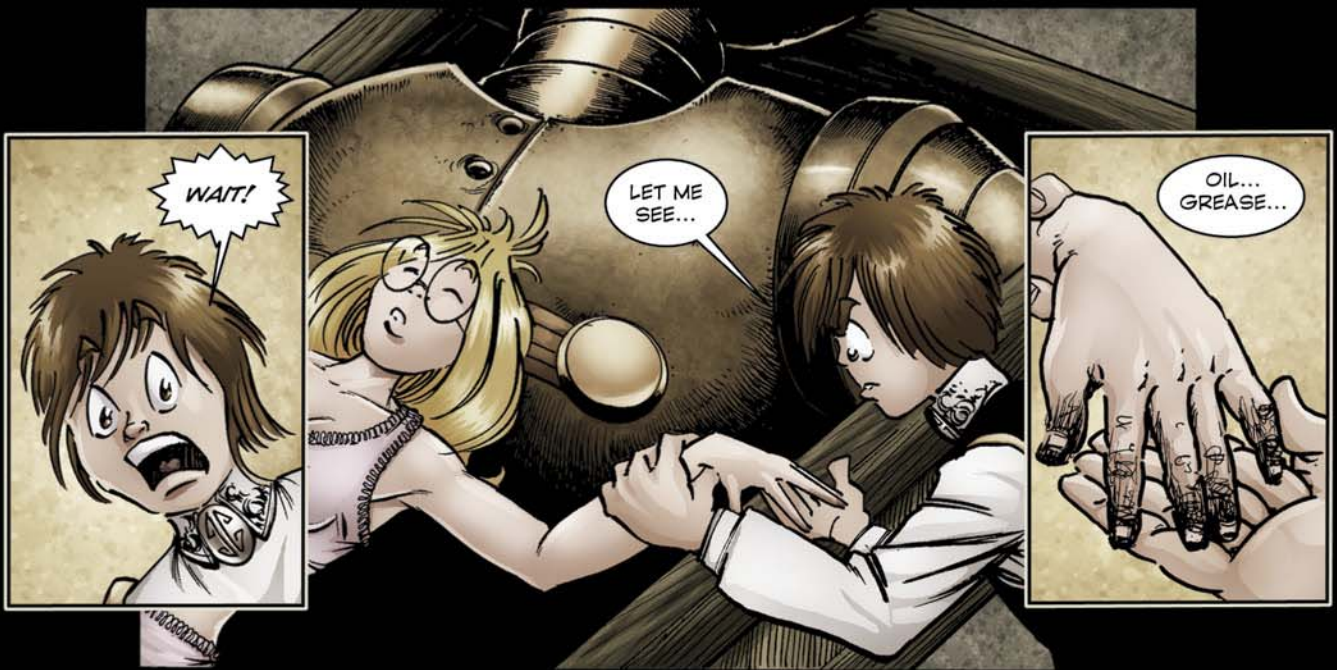


SERGEANT, I WANT ONE OF YOU TO WAIT HERE FOR THE OWNERS.

HAVE THEM LOCK THE PLACE UP AND BRING THEM TO ME.

HYU GOTS IT, SIR!

GIMMEE DAT GORL.



WAIT!

LET ME SEE...



OIL... GREASE...



AND YOU?



CLEAN. I SEE.

ALL RIGHT, TAKE THEM AWAY.

TAKE THEM BOTH AWAY.

TO BE CONTINUED IN:

GIRL GENIUS Book Two

AGATHA HETERODYNE

THE AIRSHIP CITY



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Hmph.
IF I'M SO **SMART**,
WHY DON'T I HAVE
SOMEBODY TO DO THIS
FOR ME?

IT'S **YOUR**
HYPOTHESIS,
SO **YOU** DIG
HIM UP.

YOU'RE
LUCKY I'M
EVEN **OUT** ON A
NIGHT LIKE THIS.



I
APPRECIATE IT.
SO—WAS I
RIGHT?

YES—THE
CHAINS YOU FOUND
GO ALL THE WAY TO A
SMALL DEVICE AT THE
TOP OF THAT TREE.



THAT'S WHAT I
THOUGHT. A SIMPLE
LIGHTNING
ATTRACTOR.

LOOK
HERE.

HEY! THOSE
CHAINS ATTACH TO
THE **COFFIN!**

IT'S A **WEIRD**
LOOKING THING,
ISN'T IT?

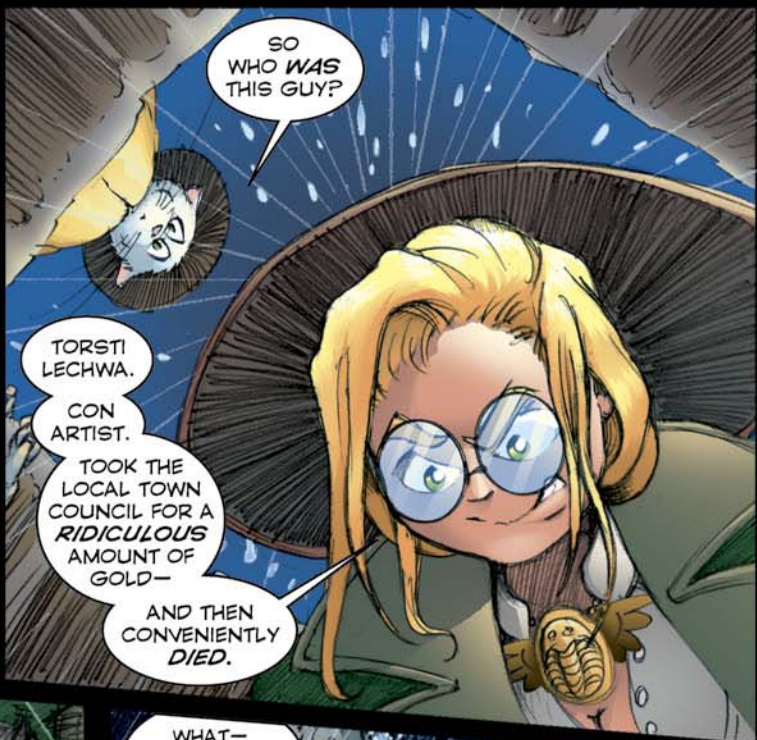
UH-HUH. AND
NOTICE IT'S A
METAL COFFIN.



IT'S BASIC RESURRECTIONIST APPARATUS.

URF.

HAND ME THE BAG.



SO WHO WAS THIS GUY?

TORSTI LECHWA.

CON ARTIST.

TOOK THE LOCAL TOWN COUNCIL FOR A RIDICULOUS AMOUNT OF GOLD—

AND THEN CONVENIENTLY DIED.



WHAT OFF?

THE DOCTOR SAID "HEART ATTACK" BECAUSE THERE WASN'T ANYTHING OBVIOUS.

HM. COSMIC JUSTICE?

okay... that's that.

MAYBE, BUT THEY CAN'T FIND THE GOLD.



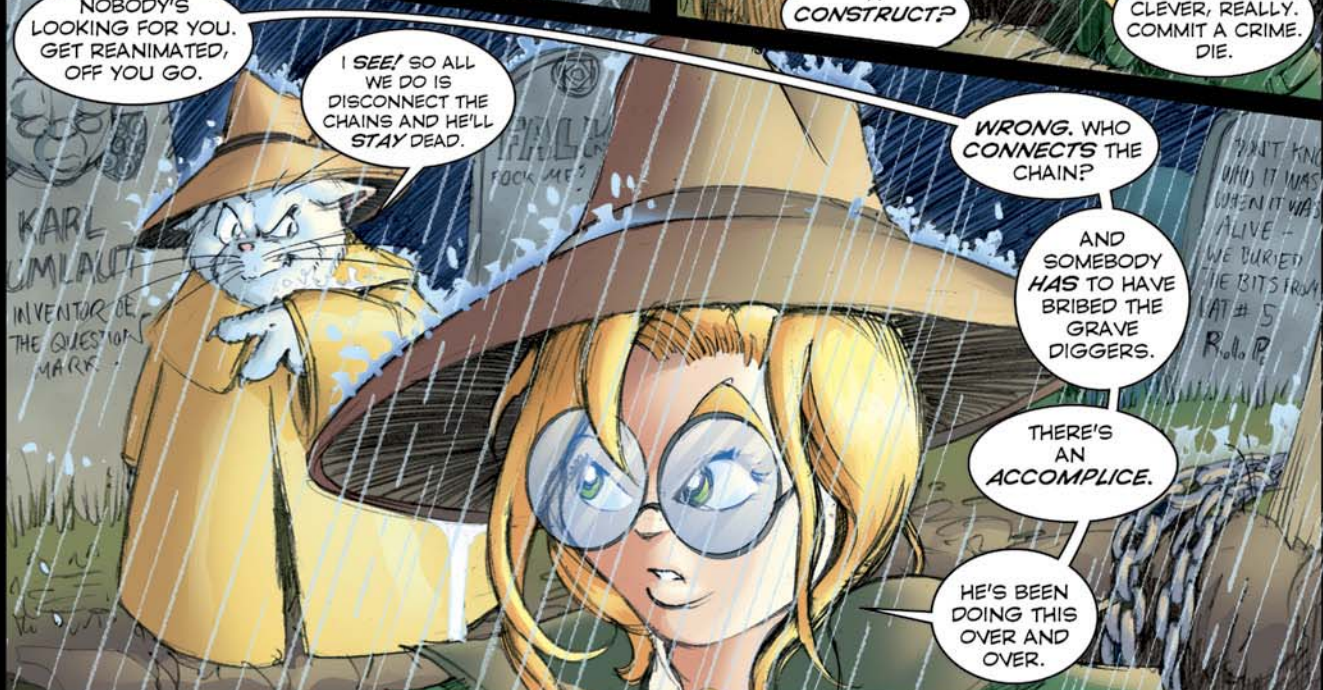
WHAT— YOU THINK HE TOOK IT WITH HIM?

I DON'T THINK HE REALLY WENT.

HE'S A CONSTRUCT.

A CONSTRUCT?

IT'S VERY CLEVER, REALLY. COMMIT A CRIME. DIE.



NOBODY'S LOOKING FOR YOU. GET REANIMATED, OFF YOU GO.

I SEE! SO ALL WE DO IS DISCONNECT THE CHAINS AND HE'LL STAY DEAD.

WRONG. WHO CONNECTS THE CHAIN?

AND SOMEBODY HAS TO HAVE BRIBED THE GRAVE DIGGERS.

THERE'S AN ACCOMPLICE.

HE'S BEEN DOING THIS OVER AND OVER.



ACTUALLY, WE TAKE TURNS.



I'M VERY IMPRESSED...BUT IT'S GOT TO STOP.



THAT'S EASY FOR YOU TO SAY.

WE'RE ALL CONSTRUCTS.
ALL OF US ABANDONED WHEN OUR CREATORS GOT BORED WITH US OR DIED.

THIS IS HOW WE LIVE.



YES, BUT FOR HOW MUCH LONGER?

ALL OF YOU NEED REPAIRS—SOON IT'LL BE OBVIOUS THAT YOU'RE CONSTRUCTS.

EVEN TO THE PEOPLE IN THESE REMOTE VILLAGES WHO'VE ONLY HEARD OF SUCH THINGS.

TRY SCAMMING THEM THEN.



FURTHERMORE, YOU'RE REPEATING YOURSELVES. WHY DO YOU THINK I'M HERE?

I'VE FOLLOWED YOUR TRAIL FOR THE LAST FIVE TOWNS, AND YOU'VE USED A SIMILAR SCAM EVERY TIME.

PEOPLE ARE STARTING TO COMPARE NOTES.



SHE'S RIGHT. ALL THESE RESURRECTIONS...I CAN FEEL THINGS COMING LOOSE INSIDE.

WHAT'S OUR CHOICE?! WE'RE CONSTRUCTS! ROGUE CONSTRUCTS!

WHAT CAN WE DO?!



YOU COULD WORK FOR ME.



LISTEN. I'M AGATHA HETERODYNE.

IT'S TRUE. YOU WERE ABANDONED. THAT'S NOT RIGHT.

BUT THAT'S WHAT I DO. I TRY TO FIX THINGS LIKE THIS.

LET ME HELP YOU. YOU'RE OBVIOUSLY SMART.

WORK WITH ME TO—



NO.

HEY!

WHAT ARE YOU—

YOU'RE JUST ANOTHER LYING MADGIRL.

WE DON'T NEED YOU. WE DON'T WANT YOU.

THE STORM IS GROWING STRONGER.



THE LIGHTNING WILL HIT SOON.

I CAN FEEL IT.



AND WHEN IT COMES...

YOU'LL FRY.



AND THIS IS WHAT ALL OF YOU WANT?



YES!



NO!

ZON—IF IT'S REALLY HER...SHE COULD HELP US.

ANYWAY, I DON'T LIKE THIS!

WE'VE NEVER KILLED ANYONE!



WEAKLINGS!

SINCE WHEN DID ANYONE WITH THE SPARK HELP ANYONE BUT THEMSELVES?

THEY ALL DESERVE TO DIE!



ZAP!

KRACK!

YIEEE!

YES!



EEEEOUCH! THAT ALWAYS SMARTS.



I CUT THE CHAIN, ZON—AND DIVERTED THE LIGHTNING TO THESE BATTERIES.

NOW WILL YOU PLEASE LISTEN TO REASON?





...uuuhhh...

GARON?

LUILLA?

TORSTIP!

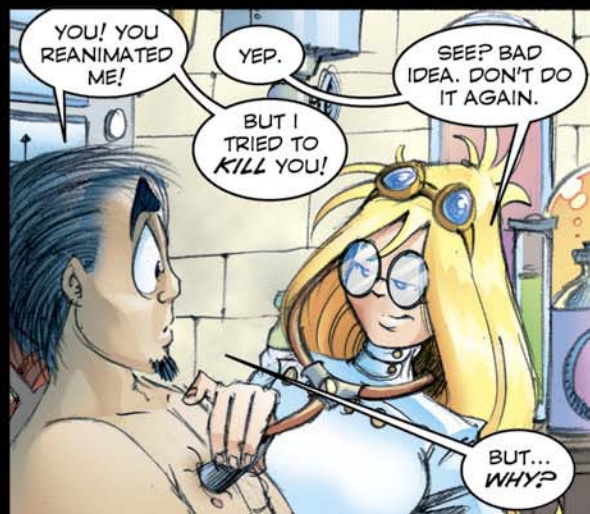
HE'S ALIVE!

HEY, ZON. HOW DO YOU FEEL?



GOOD. REALLY GOOD.

EXCELLENT!



YOU! YOU REANIMATED ME!

YEP.

BUT I TRIED TO KILL YOU!

SEEP BAD IDEA. DON'T DO IT AGAIN.

BUT... WHY?



YOU WERE ABANDONED ONCE. THAT WAS WRONG.

I CAME TO OFFER YOU ANOTHER WAY. IF YOU LEAVE NOW, IT'S YOUR CHOICE...



BUT I COULD REALLY USE YOUR HELP.



AND SO NEXT TIME—

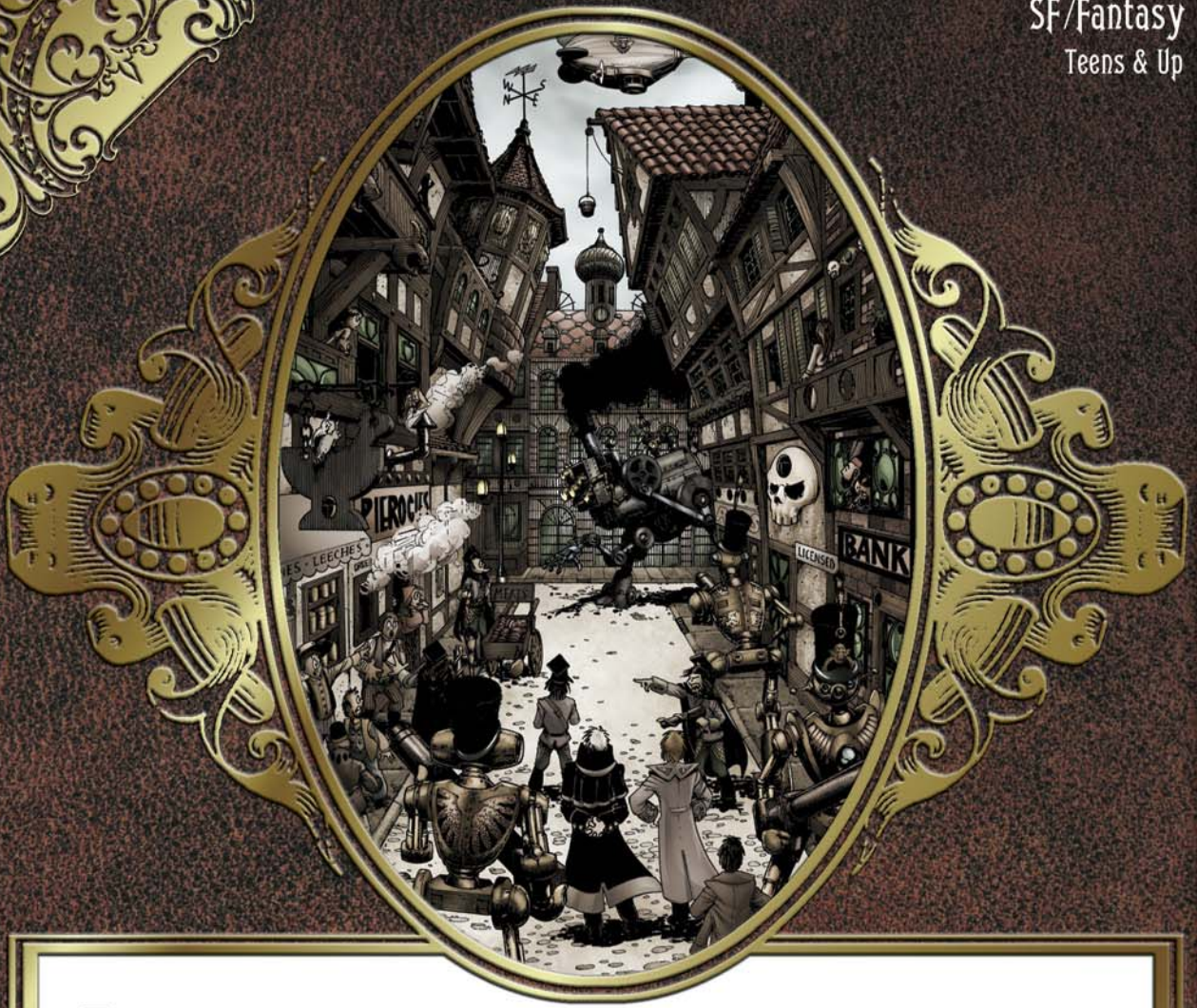
YOU CERTAINLY COULD!

AND YET I'M STILL THE ONE DOING THE DIGGING.

DON'T LOOK AT ME, MADGIRL.

IT'S YOUR ADVENTURE.

Girl Genius Book One
SF/Fantasy
Teens & Up



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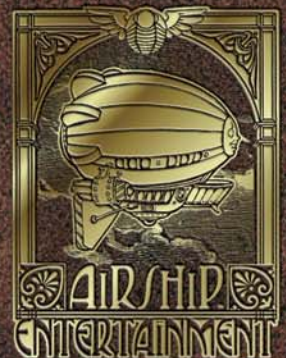
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