

THE BEACON TO INDEPENDENT STORYTELLING

CATALYST

IN THIS ISSUE:



Wingless
Comics
AND MORE!

ISSUE 08 - DEC 2022

LAMBERT - MINOR
COOK - RINCON
WEBB - ZUJOVIC

COMICS - PROSE
POETRY - GALLERY
INTERVIEWS - TIPS

LOOK AT IT LIKE THIS:
IT CAN NEVER BE LATER THAN THIS ISSUE

FABIO
SIMÃO
2021
Pencilista

CATALYST

CATALYST MAGAZINE BROUGHT TO YOU BY NEXUS STUDIOS, INC.

Well this is embarrassing.

If you thought the magazine was late before, this literally just pushes the boundaries to the farthest point possible.

The holidays are hectic, and I am a known procrastinator. So there's that. But as a change of pace, I will be starting the next issue literally tomorrow, and shooting for a January 15th re-release. Welcome to all our new subscribers, and thank you to all of you who read this sucker, stories of 50% open rates are told in marketing meetings as myths these days, so I am glad to see that I am producing something people genuinely enjoy.

A lean issue, but some fun stuff ahead, so scroll on and enjoy!

-Dalibor



COVER ARTIST

Baelor (Nightfall 3 Cvr) by FÁBIO SIMÃO

<https://fabiosimaoart.webstarts.com/>

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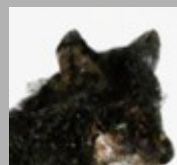
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Note: Amazon links are affiliate links and using them supports this publication.

COMING SOON

Since our featured creators do not have any active projects, here are two I liked in my recommendations:



[Smoke Weed, See The Future](#)



[Knight Graphic Novel](#)



Wingless
Comics

Mer

SPECIAL
PREVIEW
ISSUE #0

BAILLY

LIMA

HUNE



SOME SAY I'M AS OLD AS THE SEA.

BUT I AM THE SEA!

I AM THE SURF AND THE TIDE!
I AM--

--GETTING AHEAD OF MYSELF AS USUAL.





THIS ONE I KNOW.



FINDING SWEETWATER WAS SIMPLE.



I CAN HARDLY BELIEVE WHAT GABE TOLD ME. BUT I KNOW IT'S TRUE.



CYRUS CAME TO RESCUE GABE'S SISTER, ESME. I'M HERE FOR REVENGE.

I WONDERED IF YOU WOULD FIND ME.

WHAT ARE THEY CALLING YOU NOW?

THE NAMELESS WOMAN?

YOU PEOPLE ARE SO BRUTISH.



DOES IT MATTER?

I'M JUST HERE FOR THE GIRL.

AND YOUR HEAD!



THE GIRL IS FINE WHERE SHE IS.

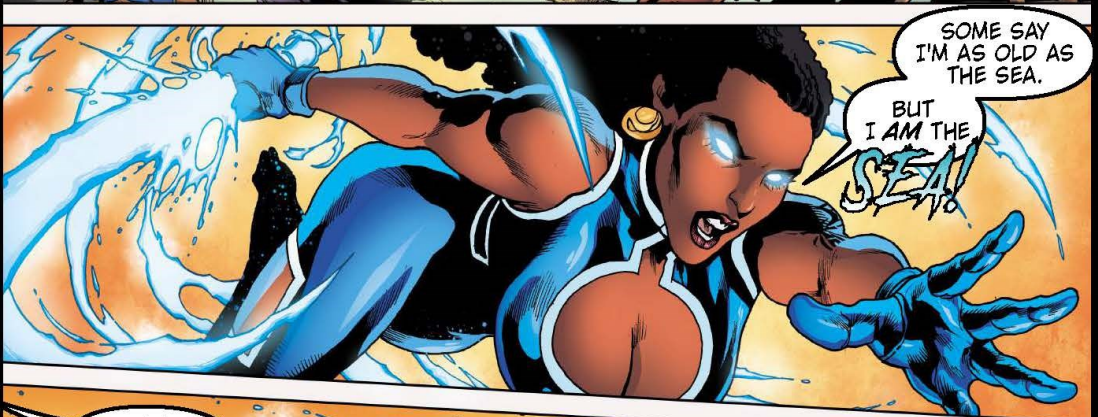


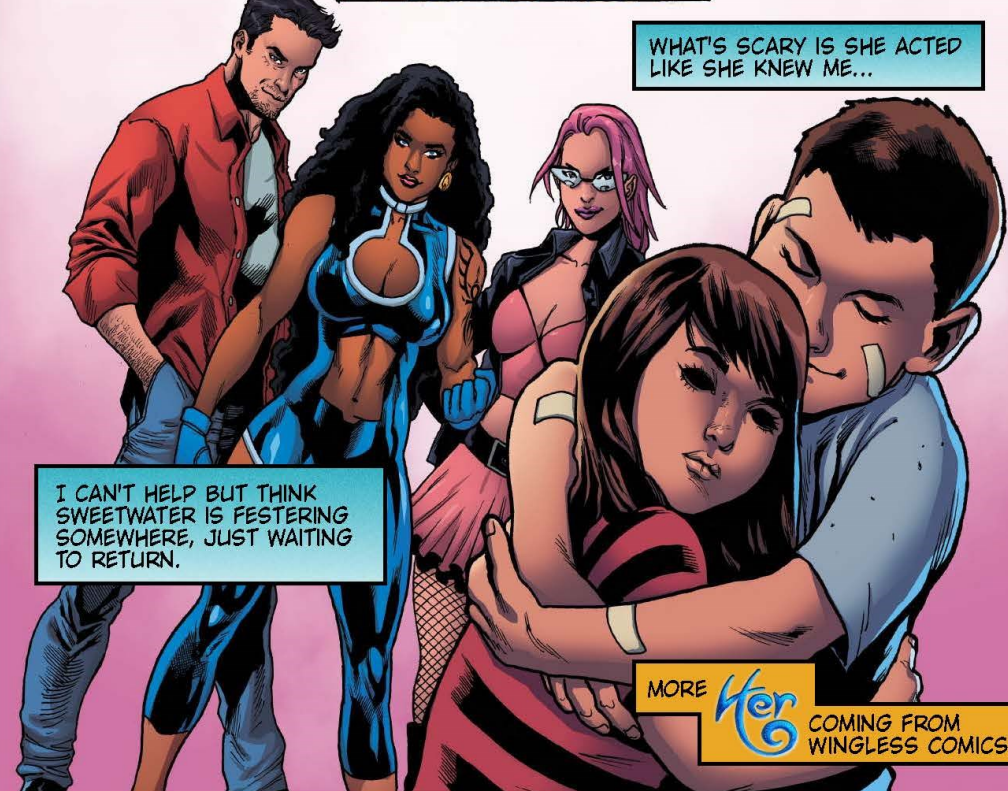
YOU, WITH YOUR SENSE OF ENTITLEMENT.

SUCH UNMITIGATED GALL.









MORE  COMING FROM WINGLESS COMICS.



He is serious when it comes to his business. So serious that he decided to kick off his comic universe with a crossover. Talk about setting the bar high! Let me introduce you to

Brian Lambert

So you put out a couple singles and then just said, "I'm putting out a crossover with cameos from multiple different indie publishers." How'd you make that leap?

For me, it was a natural progression. The world that Justice inhabits, the "Wingverse" has always been a very interconnected place. Producing a crossover has always been a goal of mine as well. I've seen indie creators start a project together, but my mind was always on finishing one. It's been a journey for me to complete a project and feel that it could stand the test of time. The work I did on Nightfall with Constant Hustle and Concept Moon felt as epic to me as any crossover I've read from the mainstream and that's a great feeling to have.



Is storytelling something that's always been part of your life, or have you grown into it?



I started as a novelist in my professional life and I've written comics, coloring books, and stories for as long as I can remember. I've always loved the escape of these epic worlds that are created with a single thought. There are no limits, restrictions, or histories that stop you from creating whatever you want. We don't all get the chance to escape our circumstances, but our minds can always take us somewhere we've never dreamed of. That's always been something I loved and wanted to continue.

With your various projects, would you say your aim is to educate, entertain, or something else entirely?

I think I walk the line of all three. Sometimes I just want a piece of action/adventure that anyone can enjoy. Other times, you can peel back the subtext and I'm saying a bit more than I let on. And on rare occasion, I get on my soapbox. There is a time and place for all those things. It just depends on the mood and what the audience really calls for.



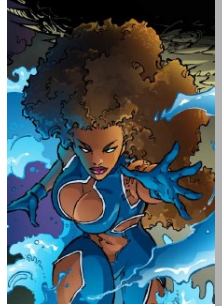
To touch back on that huge crossover, how did you manage to get so many cameos? Was everyone on board from the start, or did you reach out as you wrote the book?



The main three companies were on board from the start. The other cameos throughout are mostly indie creator friends and people I've worked with. I told them that I wanted to add their characters and promised that I would do them... ahem... justice. So, within the narrative of Wingless Comics, any character at any time can pop up, because of how the world itself plays out. I wanted a chance to show off some other really good and really awesome indie properties and I'm lucky enough that I have friends and peers that allowed me to.

Having braved the entire Panini Press out here, what would you say has been the most challenging and most rewarding part of indie publishing?

The most challenging part is communication among creatives. It's challenging because everyone is so passionate about their projects and characters. So, sometimes it's easy to miscommunicate with people. Especially because most communication is now done through text or email; the most rewarding part is being able to produce comics for others when they never really thought they would. There are numerous people who want to get into this field but don't know how. It's been a pleasure heralding them on this path.



So you've had a taste of the work, you've heard from the man himself, the only thing left is to go and buy the comics!

Follow this address—winglessent.com/kickstarter—a new campaign is dropping every few months at least, and you'll have opportunities to pick up everything you've missed!

Also make sure to check out the main site—winglessent.com—where a few free issues await!

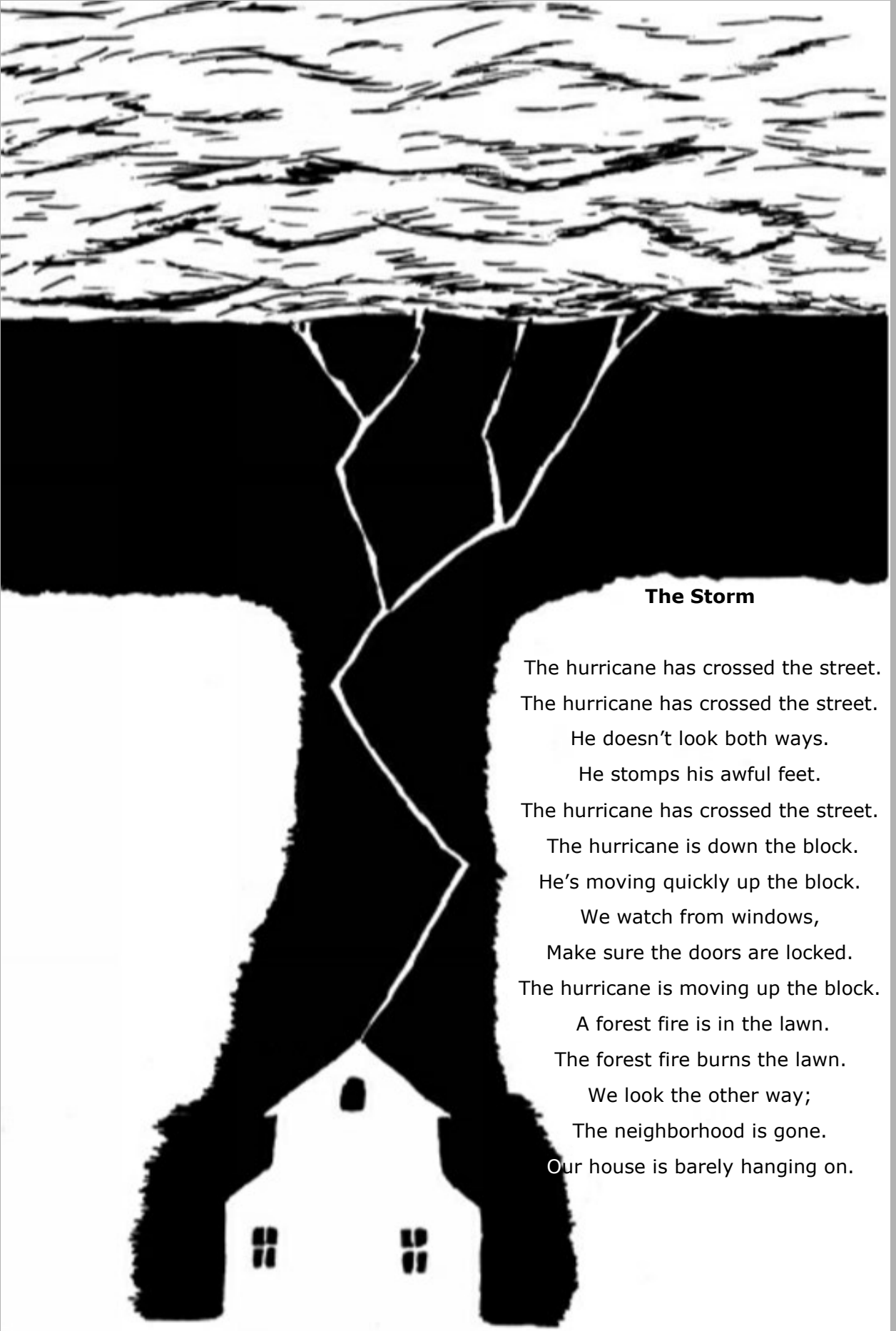
And of course, follow the socials to stay up to date!

IG—[wingless_comics](https://www.instagram.com/wingless_comics)

FB—[winglesscomics](https://www.facebook.com/winglesscomics)

Twitter—[winglessent](https://twitter.com/winglessent)

TikTok—[winglesscomics](https://www.tiktok.com/@winglesscomics)



The Storm

The hurricane has crossed the street.
The hurricane has crossed the street.

He doesn't look both ways.

He stomps his awful feet.

The hurricane has crossed the street.

The hurricane is down the block.

He's moving quickly up the block.

We watch from windows,

Make sure the doors are locked.

The hurricane is moving up the block.

A forest fire is in the lawn.

The forest fire burns the lawn.

We look the other way;

The neighborhood is gone.

Our house is barely hanging on.

Songs to Hold Your Family To

It's not a new beginning
There isn't time for you to cope
It is a poor conclusion
To a story full of hope
There is no way to hurt them
There is no shame that they can feel
The moral ground they stand on
Warp away to the surreal
It's such a deep exhaustion
The weight we're bearing til we break
The load is more than Atlas
Or even Superman could take
But it's not a siren's blare
It's just a little buzz
My pocket is used to all this news
No matter what he does
The longer it takes to feel the rain
Irradiate the air
The slower the dance becomes
And the less we seem to care



Dated Job Listing

Maidenless Knight;
Will Slay for Validation.

A man of many interests, who has recently joined the happily married club! If you want to know about some classy films, head on over to TikTok and make sure to follow author and poet



Nathan Cook

From two lines, to multiple page, this book has a variety of poems and they all hit different corners of the soul. Was this a masterful concoction after years of deep exploration into the human psyche, or did you just follow the muse?



Ha, I appreciate the flattery! The Favoring Wind is a cumulation of some of my favorite poems, going back a little over a decade, with illustrations that I began drawing about a year before publication. The oldest is from a high school romance while the most recent was finished just before the pandemic. When I started curating which pieces to include in the book, the first choice was: what should the volume be about; what's the overarching theme? And I figured why not just... me? And how I feel. If the reader gets to know the book, they get to know me and how I think pretty quickly.

Was there any work before The Favoring Wind that you felt was fit for public consumption?

Nothing quite to this extent, but there were some one-act plays a number of years ago, some short stories that I've submitted to online forums that have long-since shut down, and a number of these poems appeared on forums or on my personal website thefavoringwind.com before finally arriving in this book. There's also an epic poem I finished before publishing this, which I've been querying and editing on and off.

Who would you say has been the greatest influence in terms of your writing?

In terms of poetry, if I had to narrow it down, Shell Silverstein. Behind him, I'd also say Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, Bob Dylan, and Edwin Arlington Robinson.



When you hit a creative roadblock, how do you get past it?

Stealing ideas from somewhere else! Past-Nathan, a song, a movie. Latch onto a wheel that's already rolling and then drive it where you want. Or... responding to a challenge! I'm the kind of person whose ego perks up when asked, "How would

you do this?" How would I express this thought? How would I make that movie? How would I explore that prompt? Well, thank you for asking! When would you like the answer by? *writes furiously*

What's the next project people should be eagerly anticipating?



There are a few works in the pipeline and I'm not sure which I'll finish first. I have a couple of screenplays pretty far into development, a novel (the first in a series) finishing it's second draft, and a novella-length epic poem for children about Halloween and a haunted forest -- my money is on that last one.

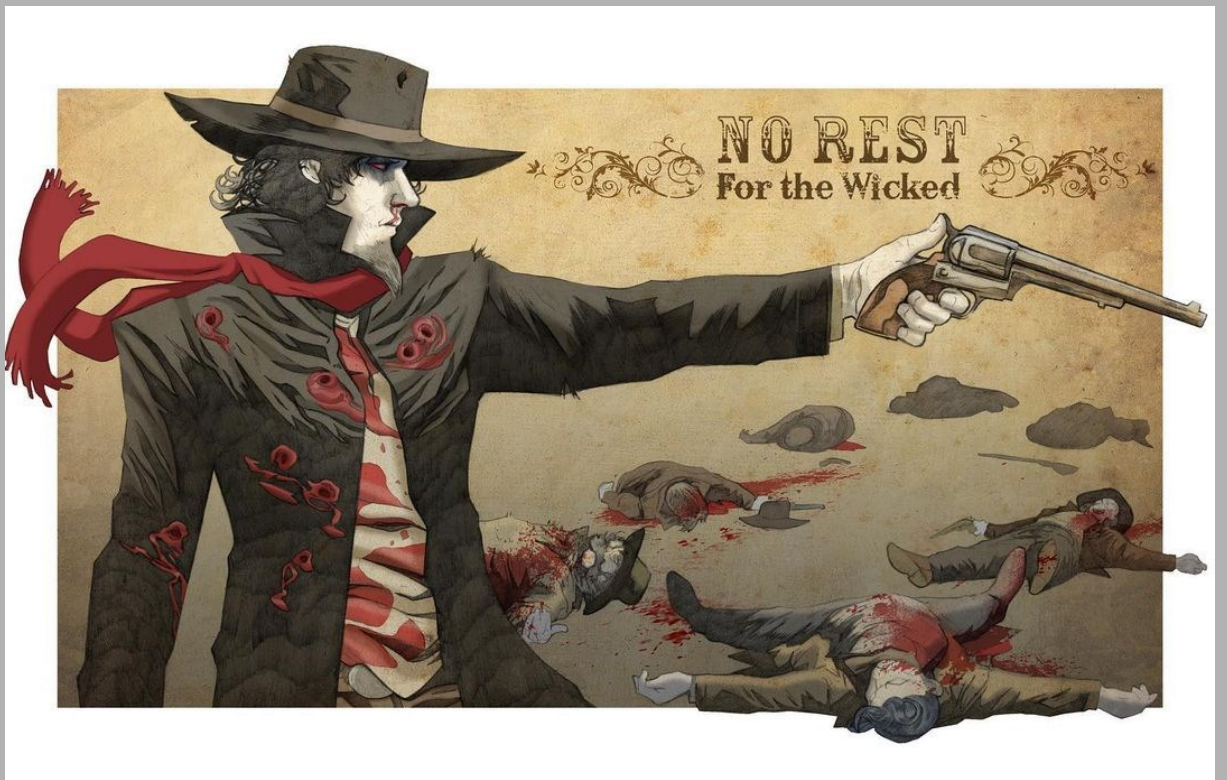
Make sure you check out Nathan's website, and his TikTok, to stay up to date on these upcoming projects. Plus he's got great movie content, too!

GALLERY

Years ago, I went to a convention, and at the end of the last day I was walking around with a few bucks in pocket, staring at \$20 price tags for any prints. Walking by a table with a few guys I'd never seen before, they were offering prints for \$2! I had to pick up a couple. I cherished the pieces but never saw those guys again, until one day I did. On that day I learned about their comic and was reintroduced to the work of

Jake Minor









This sample of a poster for the Minor boys' book No Rest For The Wicked looks even better in person on my wall. I share this art in hopes that those who have been NOT giving Jake a Western or supernatural or fantasy series to draw will COME TO THEIR DAMN SENSES. I'm just saying, a Ghost Rider series by Jake would get my dollars. I don't even read GR.

Follow the socials below, and keep your eyes open for an upcoming FEATURE FILM ADAPTATION of No Rest For The Wicked. I hear from those in the know that it's already wrapped filming. ;)

universe-m.com

[IG—jake_minor_art](#)

[Twitter—jakeminor](#)

All the insanity on Twitter notwithstanding, it's still a great place to engage with fandoms and creators. In one such instance, I was contacted by someone to promote their upcoming Kickstarter. Now as this issue is literally as late as it can possibly be to still have come out THIS quarter, the Kickstarter has completed. However let's still have a chat with Pablo Rincon, the mystery man (Seriously, the one picture of the guy I could find he's wearing a mask) better known on the internet as

Geladaa



Quite honestly, your art and concepts seem to be rather off the beaten path, as they say. What is the driving force behind work? Are you looking to teach, entertain, a bit of both?

I do want to create something I can call "art". By that I mean something that has serious ambition in it, and extends to the consumer respect and responsibilities, namely, the responsibility to be active, to engage the work. I don't want to teach really, but rather show, show something of consequence. Specifically, a vision for the future inspired heavily on the works of Nietzsche. I want to lead people, thru and adventure that is filled with wonder and intense, sincere content, to a place beyond Platonism, a way of thinking that I feel permeates the world and creates immense suffering and mediocrity.



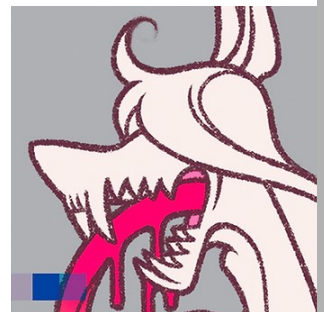
Do you have any influences and if so, who are they and why?



Some big people that have influenced my work and outlook: Nietzsche, a man I consider to likely be the greatest published mind, has provided me with a philosophical space in which to grow. Specifically, I want to think of myself always as primary and develop within me "master morality" a state which should lead into "Superman" a new evolutionary stage for mankind.

John Milton, the famous poet, created in "Paradise Lost" what I consider to be my religion. I think of all of my works as sequels to that epic piece of art.

Daisuke Ishiwatari, a true renaissance man that can draw, compose music and design videogames. The mastermind behind "Guilty Gear" a fighting game that is my favorite cultural product. I consider creating heroes the highest aim of art, and the heroes featured in Guilty Gear are the ones I like the most. They come to life spectacularly thru incredible animation, voiceover work, music and game design. I really want



my works to be exuberant, life-affirming explosions of fantasy, as Guilty Gear is.

What was your first piece that you felt was ready the public, and was it successful?



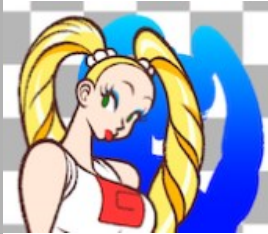
The first piece I released was "Secret Reunion In Carfax Lodge". I was not a smash hit, sadly, but I am very proud of it. I think it could become well known within certain circles in the future, but it is a very strange work, certainly not what you would call "mainstream".

When you begin work on a project, are you seeing a full plot beginning to end and just working to get there, or do you approach it in more of a free-form workflow?

When I begin a project I try to first set up a dream, a general ambition, by writing down references. When that has sufficiently developed I create a structure, a broad arc, and little by little I add detail to it, so that at the end I have a description of what is supposed to happen in each page. I want to go on an adventure myself, so I leave as much ambiguity as possible, as much room to dream and discover as possible.

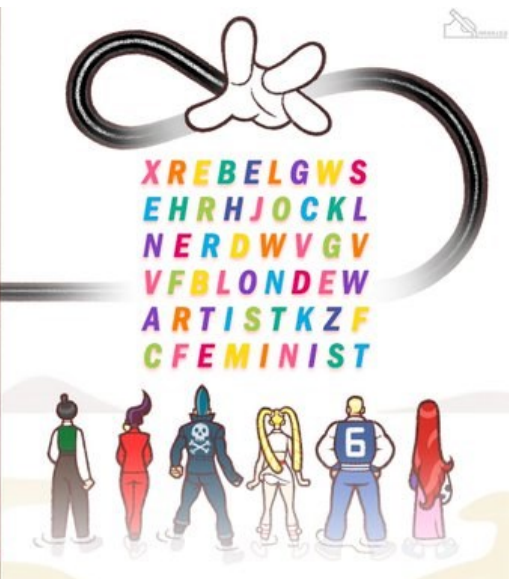
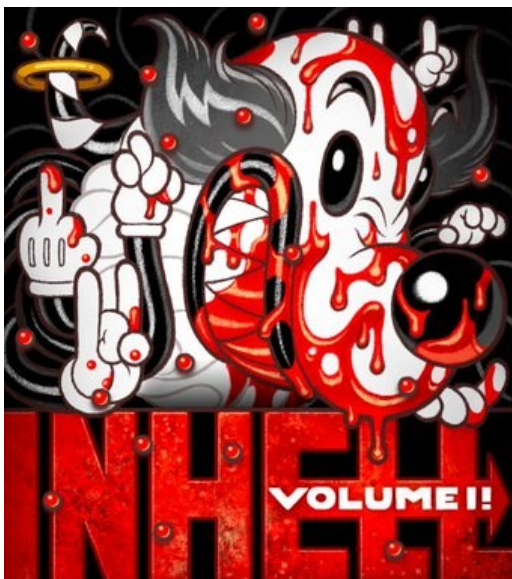


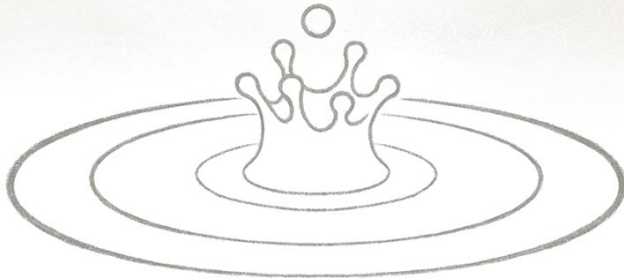
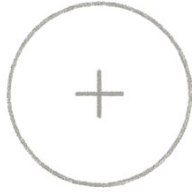
When you hit a roadblock in your work, how do you get over it?

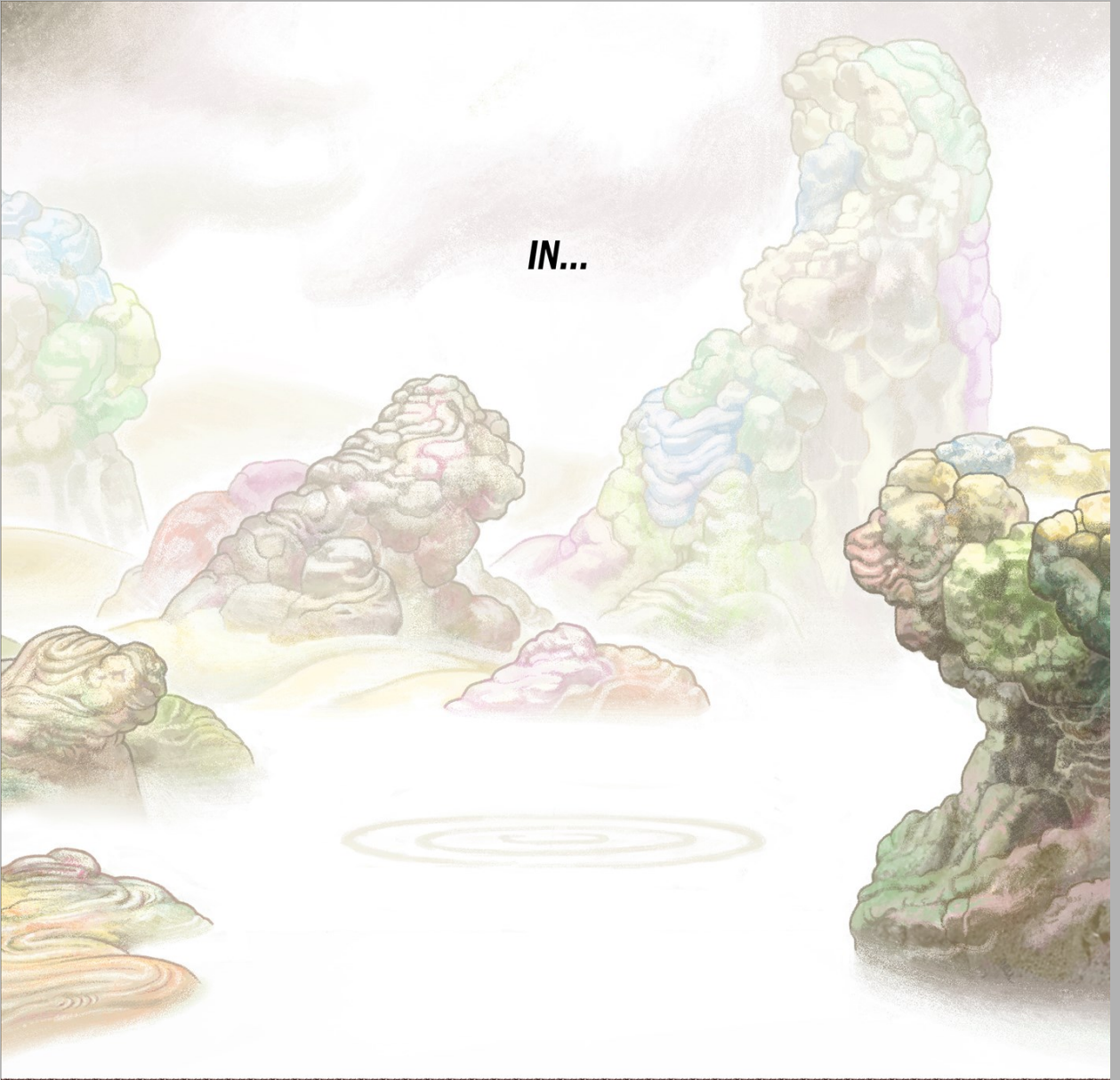


Roadblocks are for me typically amazing. I think that's an original position, but usually I find fixing and unblocking one of them really fun. I just stare at the ceiling and think and think until it's resolved. If the problem is inspiration I listen to music and/or browse around for cool art, there is inspiration online to last many many lifetimes.

Now that we've heard from the creator, let's take a brief look into his work on the next sample pages of his recently-funded series In Hell!

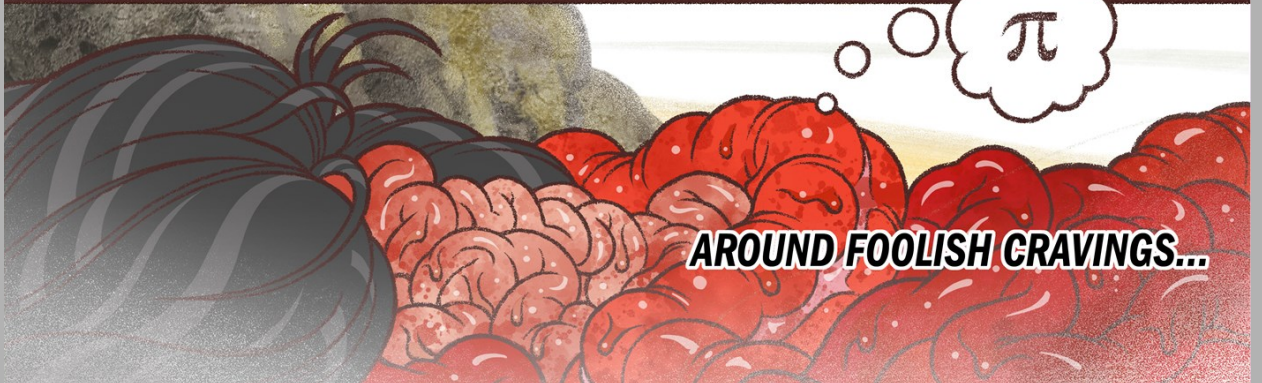
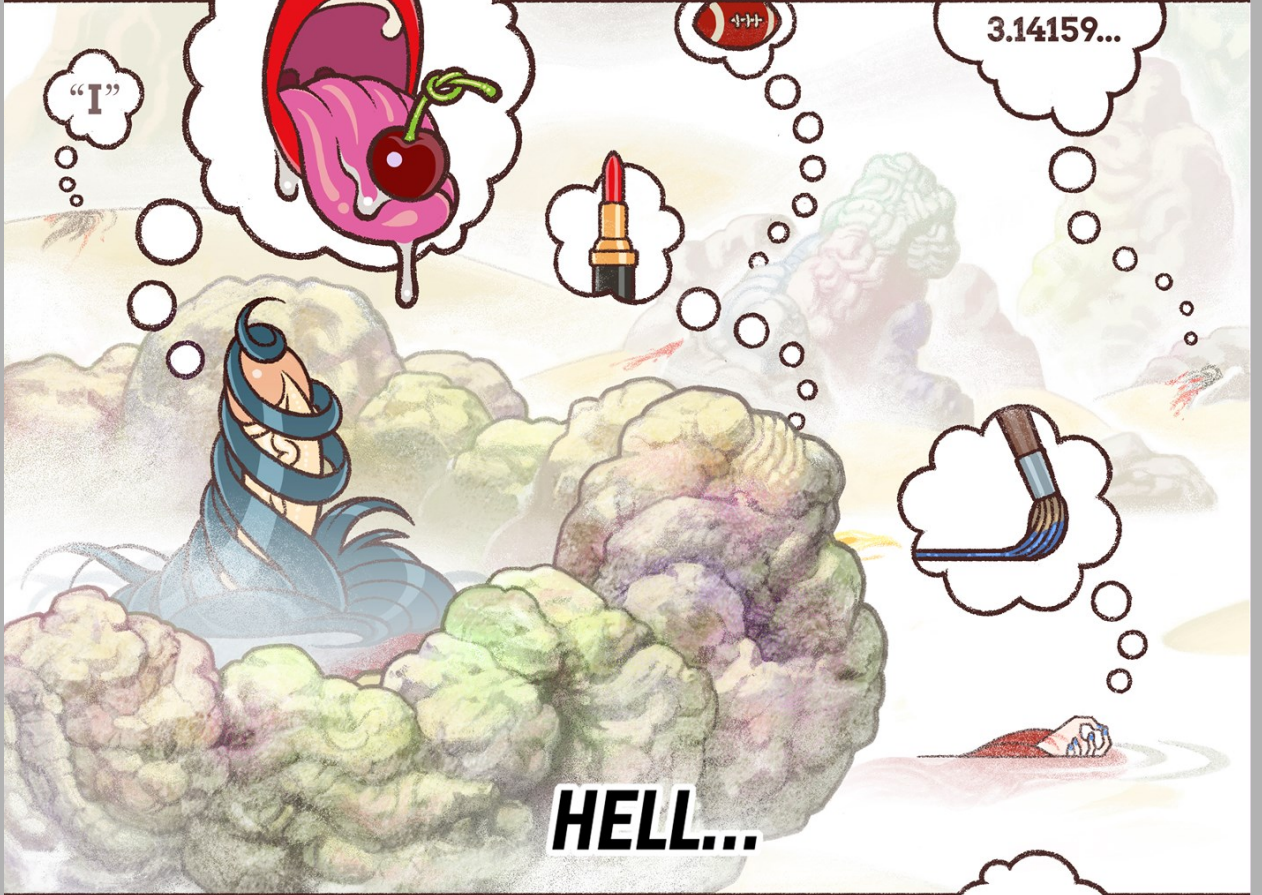
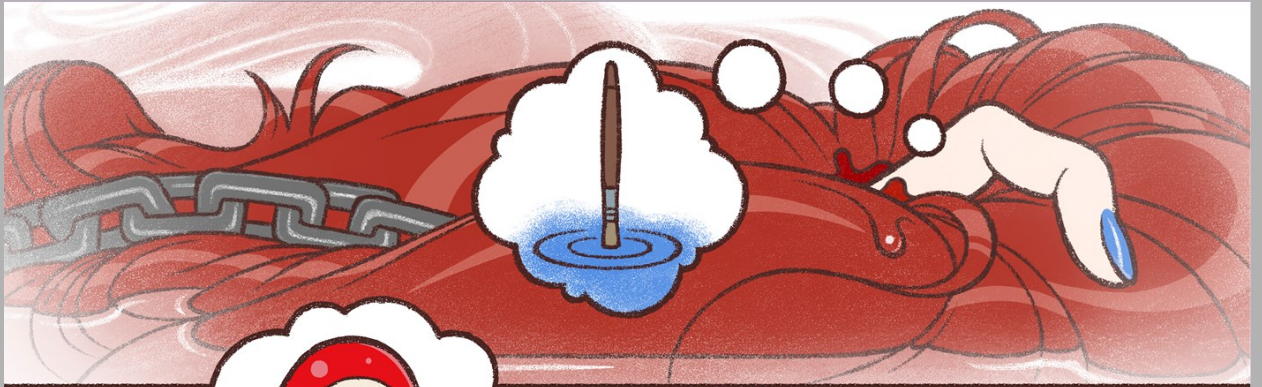


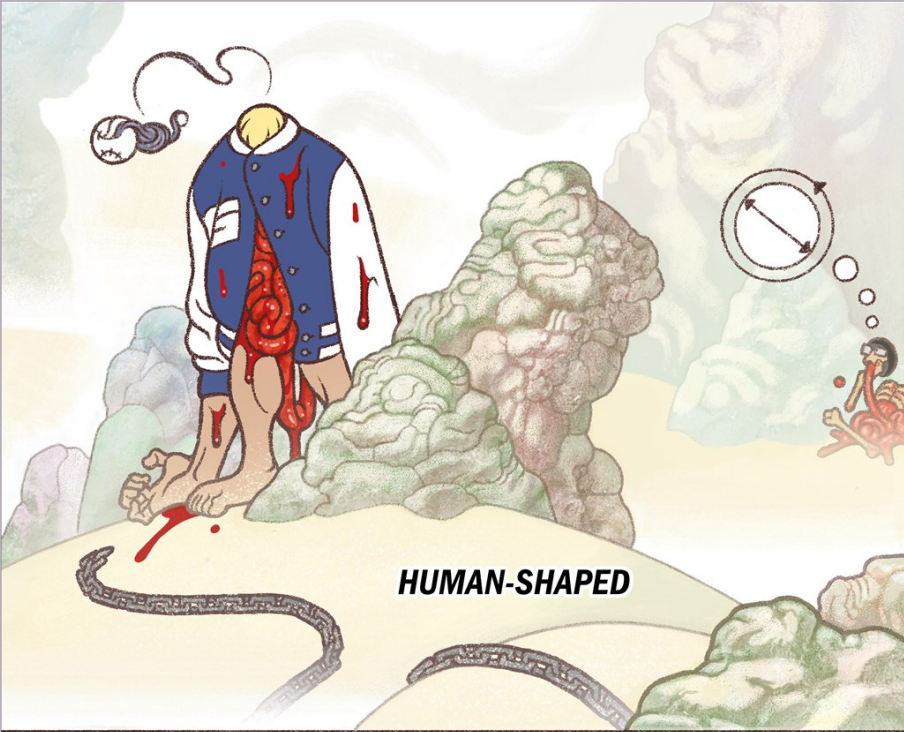




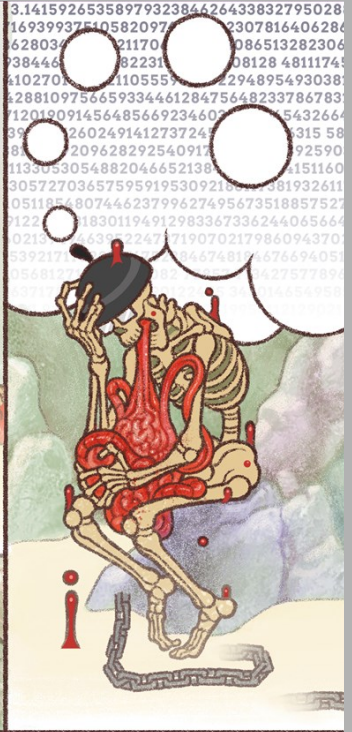
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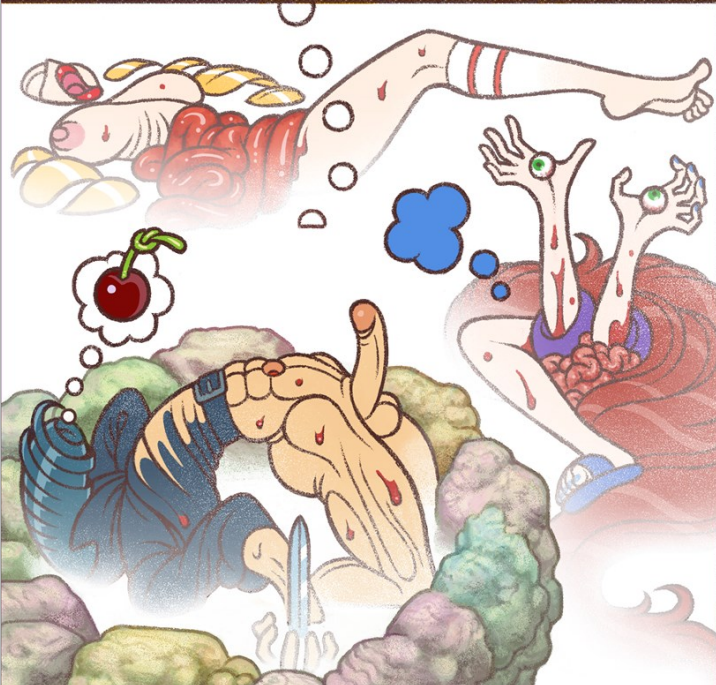




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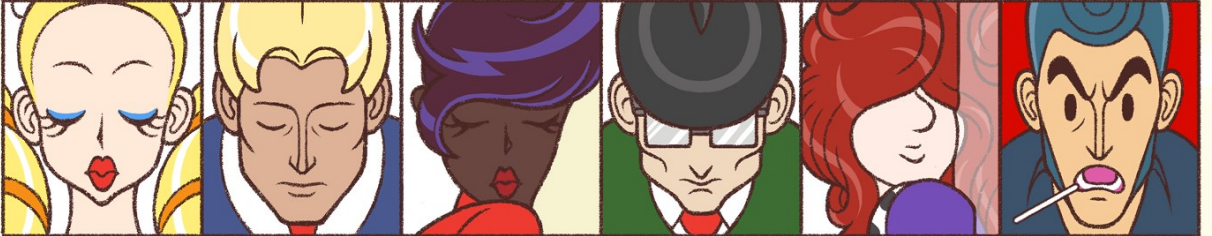
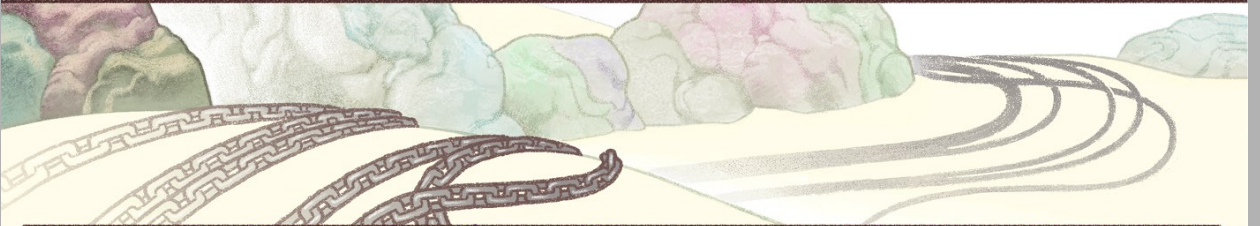
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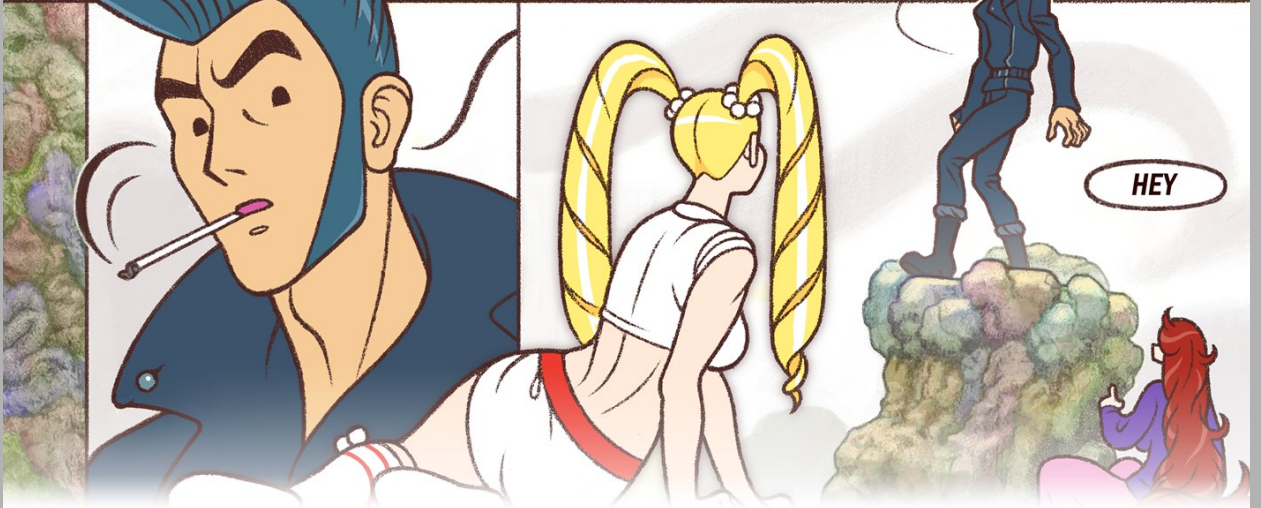
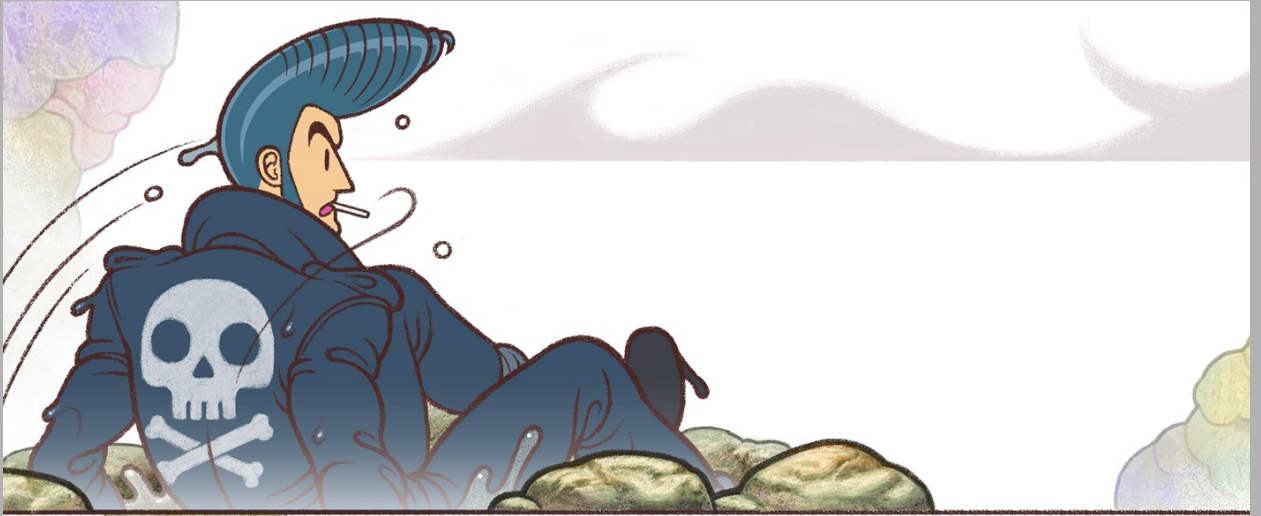


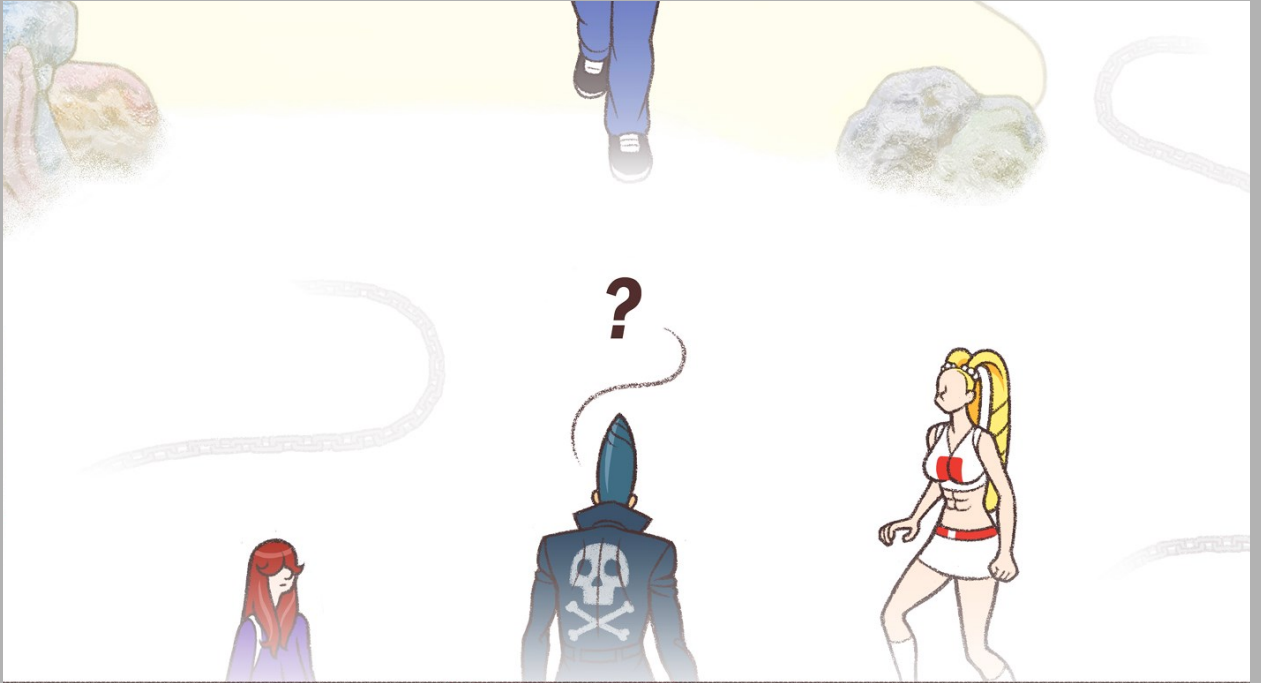
COALESCE...

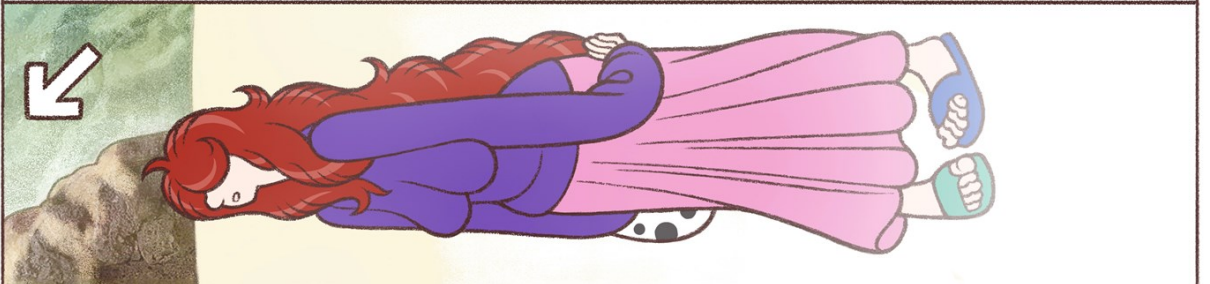
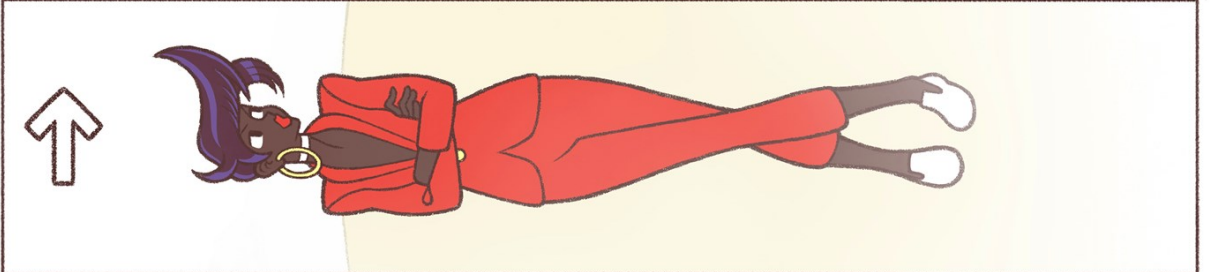
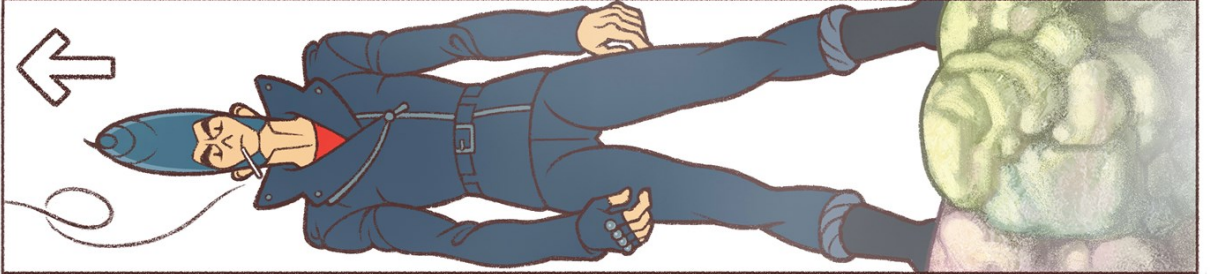
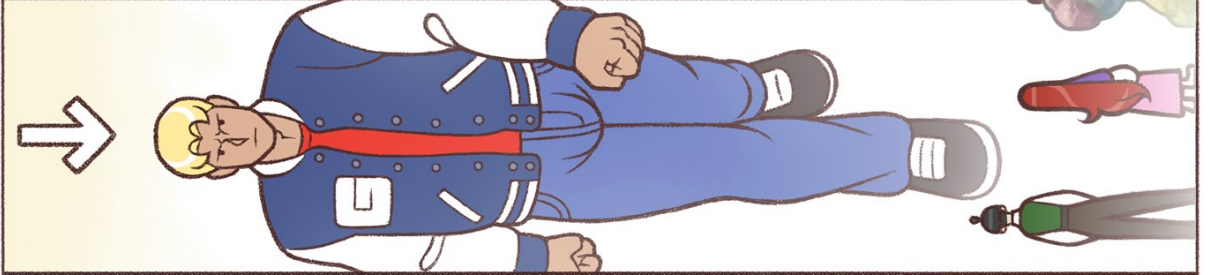
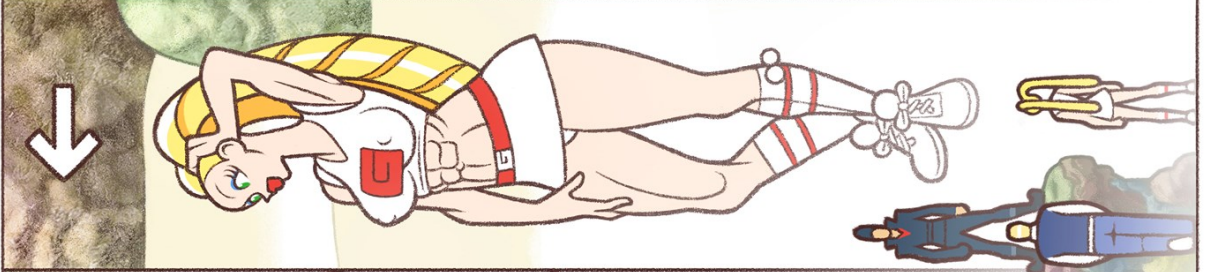
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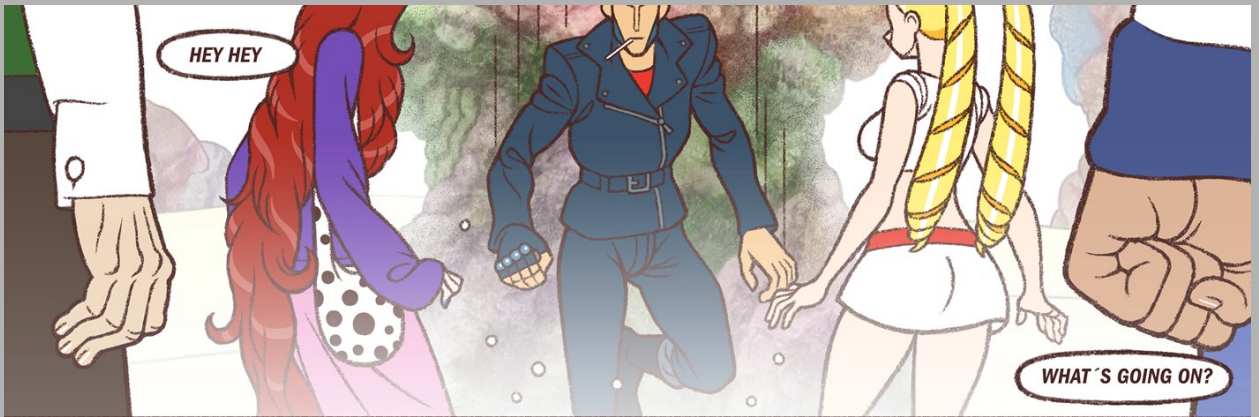
IN HELL: EPISODE I - DE-TEN-TION/CHAPTER ONE; PRIMAL SCENE. IN WHICH HELL WELCOMES WITH OPEN ARMS THE SOULS OF SEVEN YOUTH (+CHAPERONE). YOUR HUMBLE NARRATOR GLEEFULLY INFORMS THE WRETCHED MISCREANTS ABOUT THEIR TRAGIC FATE, WHICH SPURRS THEM ON TO CONFLICT; WITH A HEALTHY HELPING OF INCEST, RAPE AND MURDER; THUS AN EPIC LOVE STORY BEGINS!





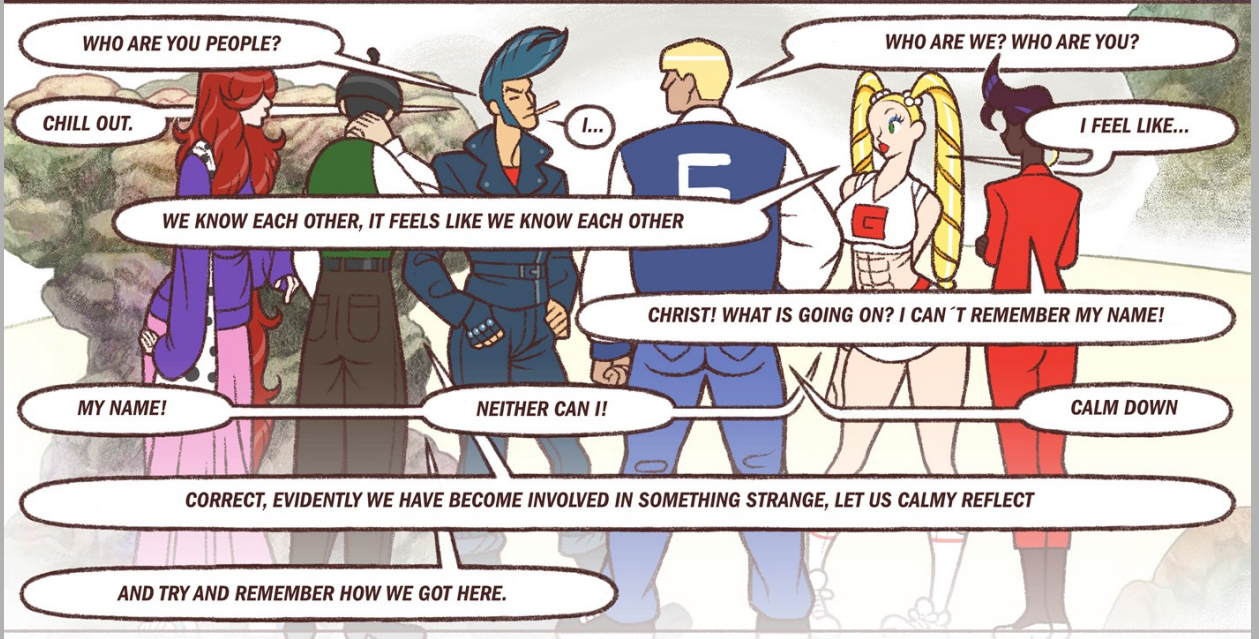






HEY HEY

WHAT'S GOING ON?



WHO ARE YOU PEOPLE?

WHO ARE WE? WHO ARE YOU?

CHILL OUT.

I...

I FEEL LIKE...

WE KNOW EACH OTHER, IT FEELS LIKE WE KNOW EACH OTHER

CHRIST! WHAT IS GOING ON? I CAN'T REMEMBER MY NAME!

MY NAME!

NEITHER CAN I!

CALM DOWN

CORRECT, EVIDENTLY WE HAVE BECOME INVOLVED IN SOMETHING STRANGE, LET US CALMY REFLECT

AND TRY AND REMEMBER HOW WE GOT HERE.



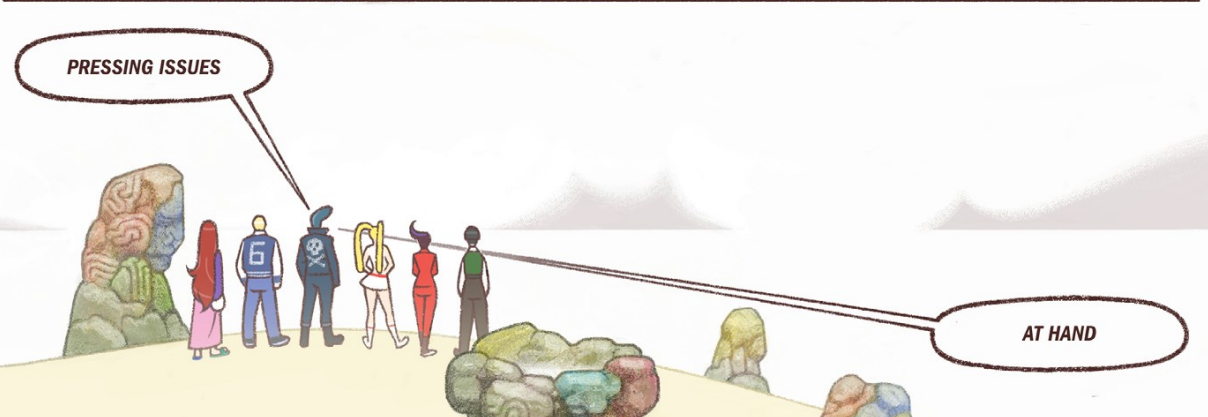
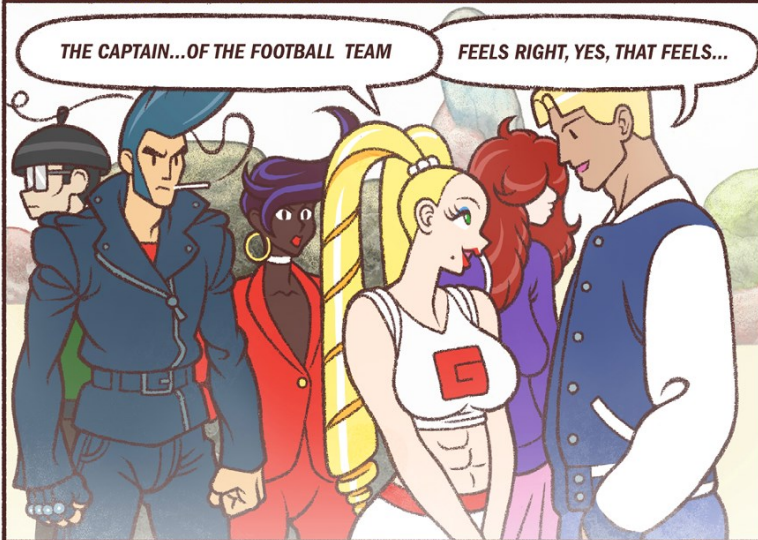
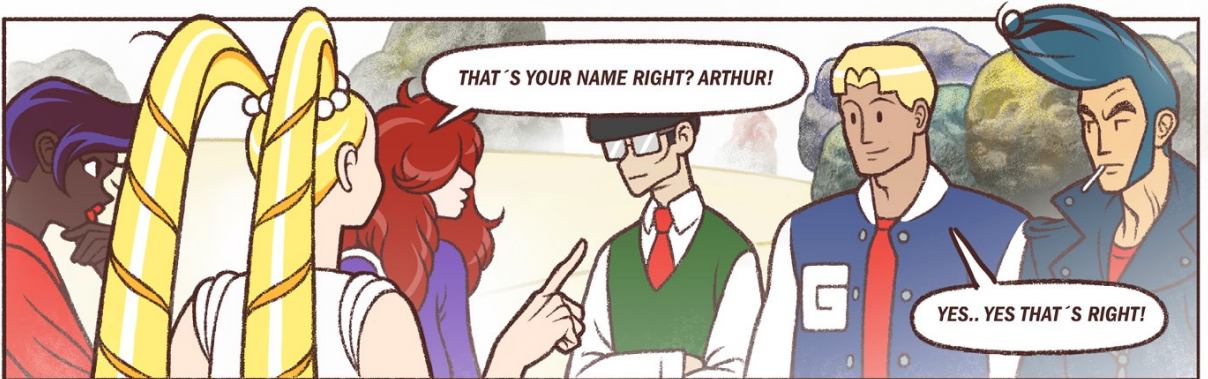
EVERYTHING IS JUMBLED

BUT YOU DO ALL LOOK FAMILIAR



I HAVE IT IN THE TIP OF MY TONGUE...

ARTHUR!



WE ARE...
NOT IN KANSAS ANYMORE, AS
THEY SAY...



DO YOU HEAR THAT?

What the hell ... literally?

Well I'll tell ya I was intrigued to say the least, that I snuck in a pledge during my dry period (Don't tell my wife) and I'll be reading my copy soon. If you're as interested as I was, make sure to keep your eyes on

<https://www.geladaa.com/shop>

(other wild tales available now)

And just because I'm a good guy, here's another preview image to whet your appetite.



Make sure to follow Geladaa across all socials!

IG—[geladaa_comics](#)

Twitter—[GeladaaComics](#)

YT—[geladaas9879](#)

Tumblr—[geladaacomics](#)

When I first talked about Starlite, in an earlier issue of this magazine, there was no online store, and I was shocked by the inability to buy digital copies. In expressing my outrage, I ended up speaking with the creator,



Travis Webb

How did you come up with Starlite?

We use to read a lot of Power Pack. I had generally pitched the idea of Power Pack as former child stars, who were now teenagers, with child star problems. But instead of deconstructing them as comic book super heroes we bring them back into that kind of story.

Not much happened with it. Marvel said it was neat but not the right direction. About ten years later at Burning Man Brett and I were sitting around and he asked if I would be interested in revisiting it with him. I said no.. Then he suggested, since it wasn't Marvel I could go cray cray, and being the jerk I am I said, "only if it can have Space Pirate Cates and Trans-dimensional Spider Wizards" and he said "oh I would love to draw that." and he made me eat my words and write starlite.

I had to bring Greg in after we got a treatment done because it was too crazy and it needed grounding.



When you started the book, did you have a roadmap with a planned end point, or is this a "ride it till the wheels fall off" comic?



I had a concept and some characters. I created an environment then I ran the characters through the environment and hurdles to see how my imagination caused them to react. It was like playing chess against myself. Oddly at first Sara wasn't taking in the story and it took me a while to figure out why. But in the end it unfolded kind of within the concept I had foreseen but even I was surprised with how it ended.

So far, you've only been offering your book through Kickstarter. This is atypical of the indie market. Has that worked for you and your goals in terms of sales and reach?

Of course I wish we did better. ahahah..

But ya, it was a choice after we were unhappy with a few publishers offers. In the end we made more in profit from the first issue than the upfront cash publishers were offering. And we keep making profit and while it is not a lot, it is more than any of my team



has made from a book from a traditional publishing deal. HOWEVER, we lose out on the reach a traditional publisher can bring. We make more with the 3000 books we have sold, sold to a few hundred customers. Where if we had a tradition publisher we would like see the number somewhat inverted. However, we are still very interested in seeking a traditional publisher after we finish, hopefully with a better deal for both parties, a completed book, a fan base and with some momentum that can be attached to there existing market- ing and release engine. Everyone wins.

Besides Starlite, what else are you creating out in the world?

Our team just put out Battle Grapple: Rebel a Sci- ence Fiction wrestling comic. Brett does a lot of coloring for image. Greg has a new book announce- ment coming up. And I am working on a pitch for a new Post-apocalyptic giant-robot romance saga.



Who are your biggest creative influences?

Burl Barer, Leslie Chartis, Masamune Shirow, Rumiko Takahashi, Wendy and Rich- ard Pini, Philip K Dick, Mercer Mayer, H. Beam Piper, Pink Floyd, Crystal Method.

Lots more, but those are most formative.

Now that you've heard the origins, turn the page and read Starlite!

When you're good and hooked, don't forget to follow Starlite across the social medias, and get your own copies of Starlite issues on the [Overcast Comics](#) website!

IG—[starlitecomic](#)

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Now read on!



#1

WEBB SMITH WELDELE

STARLITE



Weldele

STARLITE

ISSUE ONE: "STARBRIGHT"

WRITERS

TRAVIS WEBB AND GREG SMITH

ARTIST

BRETT WELDELE



EDITOR

DAVID MAIR

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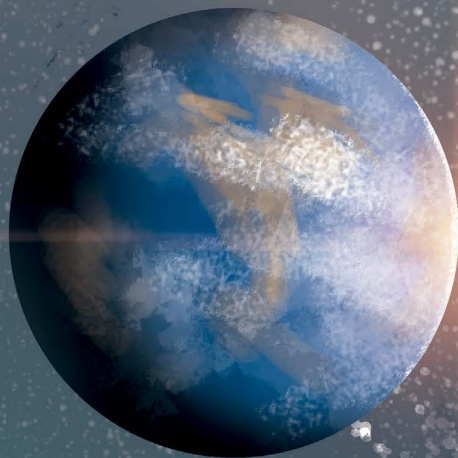
EARTH.

A LONE PLANET ON THE FAR
REACHES OF SPACE...

PRIMITIVE.

ALONE.

WITH LIMITED
RESOURCES.



AND YET...

.... OUR LONE PLANET IS A HOT-SPOT FOR STRANGE ENERGIES, ALIEN INVASIONS AND GALACTIC CHAOS.

WITH ALL THESE INVASIONS AND ACTS OF EXTRAORDINARY EVIL, OUR PLANET IS DEFENDED BY INDIVIDUALS AND TEAMS OF SUPER POWERED PEOPLE, ALIENS, CREATURES AND EVEN SOME CLAIMING TO BE GODS.

AMONG THESE TEAMS THERE HAS BEEN ONE THAT NEVER QUITE FIT.

NEW EPISODES UPLOADED WEEK



LIKE AND SUBSCRIBE 

ROGER BOTELHO'S
LOST AND FOUND

**THE
ULTRA-KIDS.**

UNLIKE THE
SUPER HEROES,
GODS, AND ALIENS
WE HAD COME
TO ACCEPT, THESE
WERE CHILDREN
THRUST INTO THE
REALM OF
HEROES.

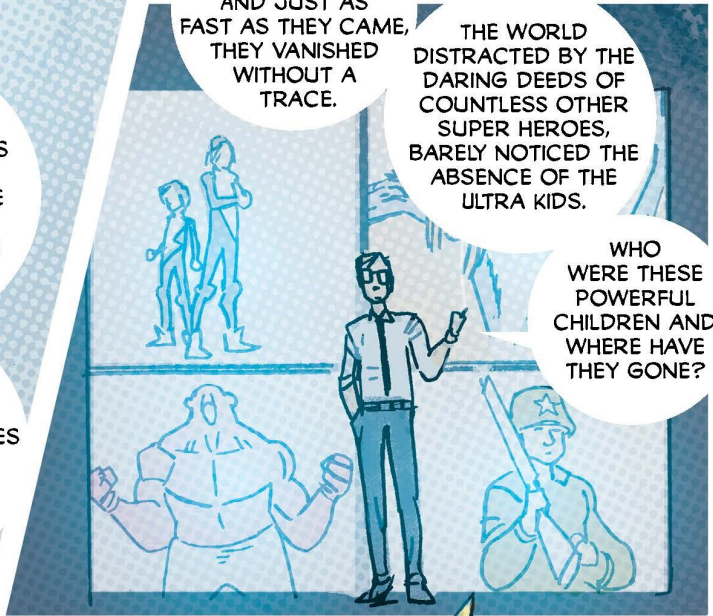
TEN
YEARS AGO,
THIS DUO OF
YOUNG SUPERHEROES
SPLASHED ONTO
THE SCENE WITH
UNBELIEVABLE
POWERS.



AND JUST AS
FAST AS THEY CAME,
THEY VANISHED
WITHOUT A
TRACE.

THE WORLD
DISTRACTED BY THE
DARING DEEDS OF
COUNTLESS OTHER
SUPER HEROES,
BARELY NOTICED THE
ABSENCE OF THE
ULTRA KIDS.

WHO
WERE THESE
POWERFUL
CHILDREN AND
WHERE HAVE
THEY GONE?



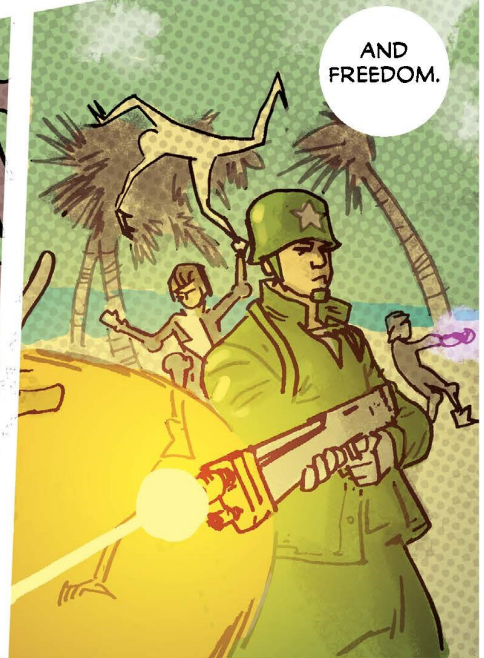
JUSTICE...



LIBERTY...



AND
FREEDOM.



THESE ARE THE PILLARS THAT HEROES STAND UPON.

WHILE THIS HEROIC DUO EMBODIED THOSE PILLARS FOR CHILDREN AROUND THE WORLD...

...*THE ULTRA-KIDS* UNWITTINGLY FUELED A COTTAGE INDUSTRY OF HEADLINES, TOYS, AND COMIC BOOKS THAT OVERSHADOWED THEIR HEROIC DEEDS.

FEEDING THE IMAGINATIONS OF CHILDREN STARVING FOR HEROES THEIR OWN AGE, WHILE PREDATORIAL CORPORATIONS AND MARKETING FIRMS LINED THEIR POCKETS WITH KID'S LUNCH MONEY.



ROGER BOTELHO'S
LOST AND FOUND

IT'S BEEN
TEN YEARS
SINCE WE LAST
HEARD FROM
MIGHTY BOY
AND
THE MELTER.



IF THEY
ARE ALIVE TODAY
THEY WOULD BE
TEENAGERS. WHERE
ARE THEY NOW?
AND WHAT ARE
THEY DOING?



WHY
DID THEY
DISSAPEAR? DID
THEY JUST MOVE ON
FROM THE HERO LIFE
OR WAS IT
SOMETHING MORE
SERIOUS,
SOMETHING MORE
SINISTER?

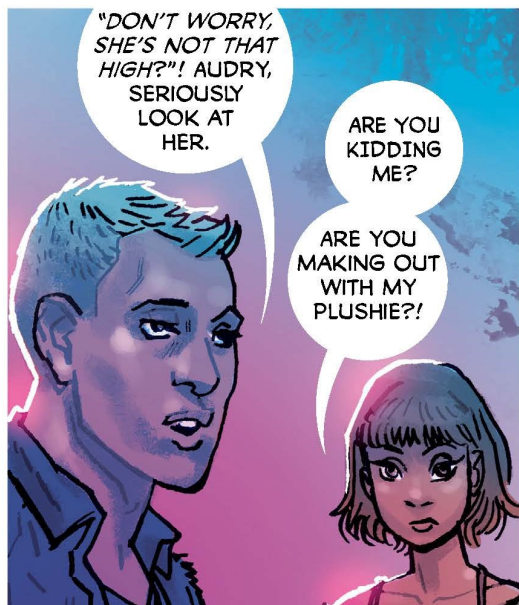
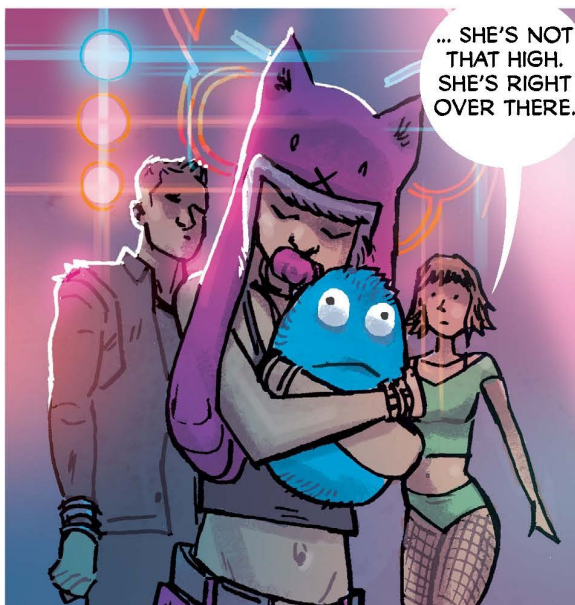
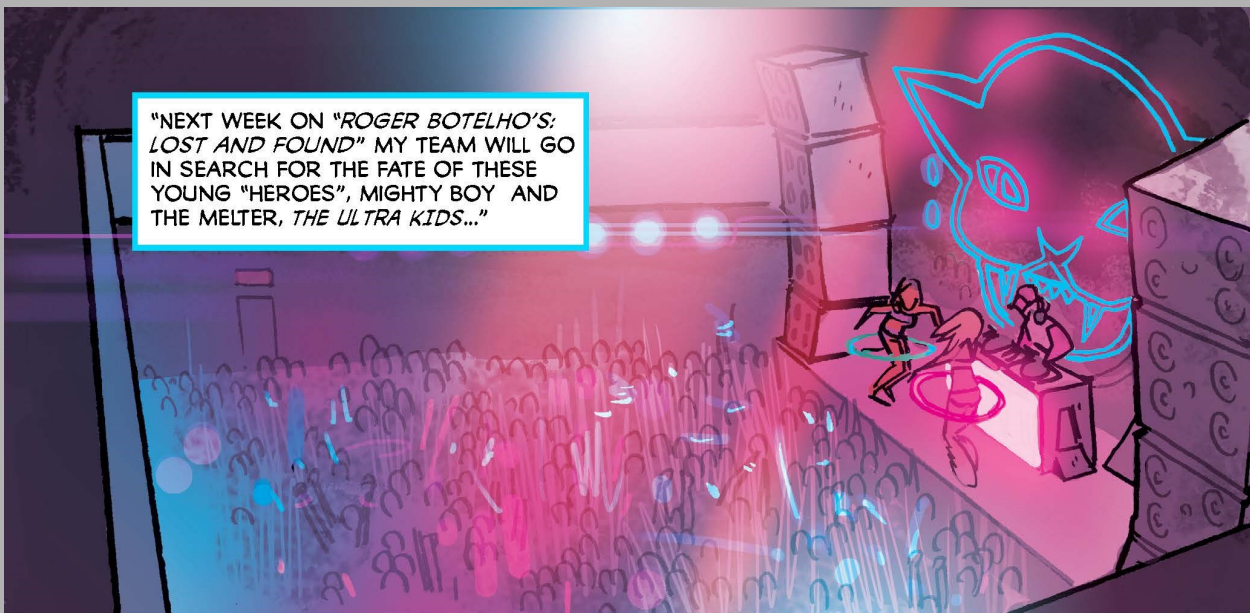
ULTRA KIDS

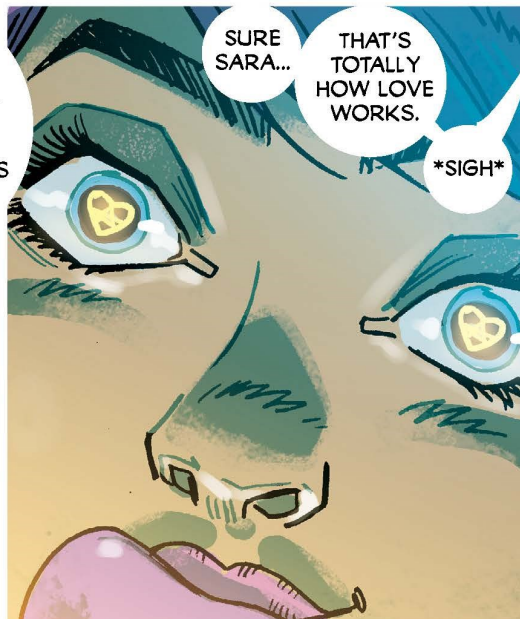
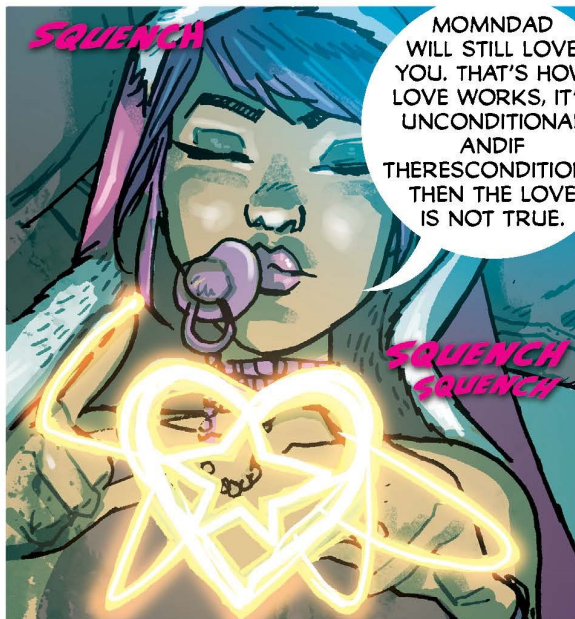
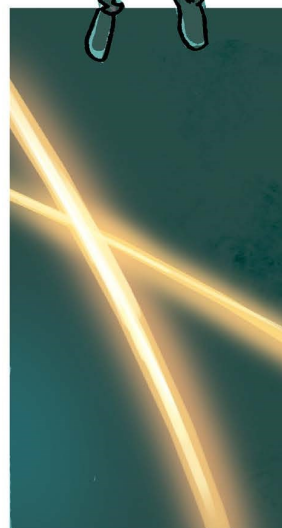


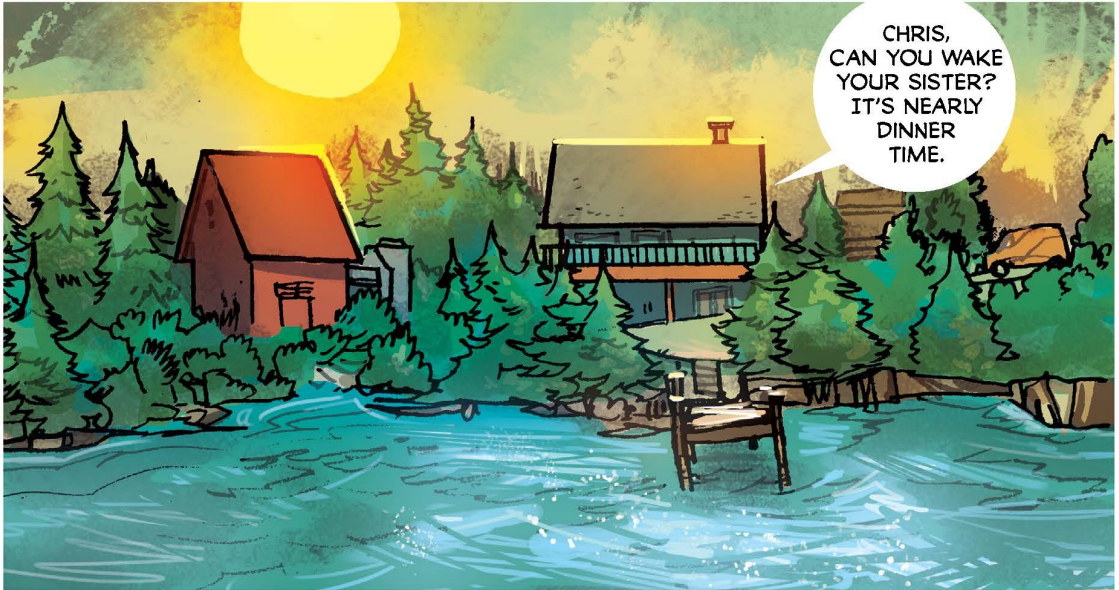
CLICK FOR MORE!

**ROGER BOTELHO'S
LOST AND FOUND**

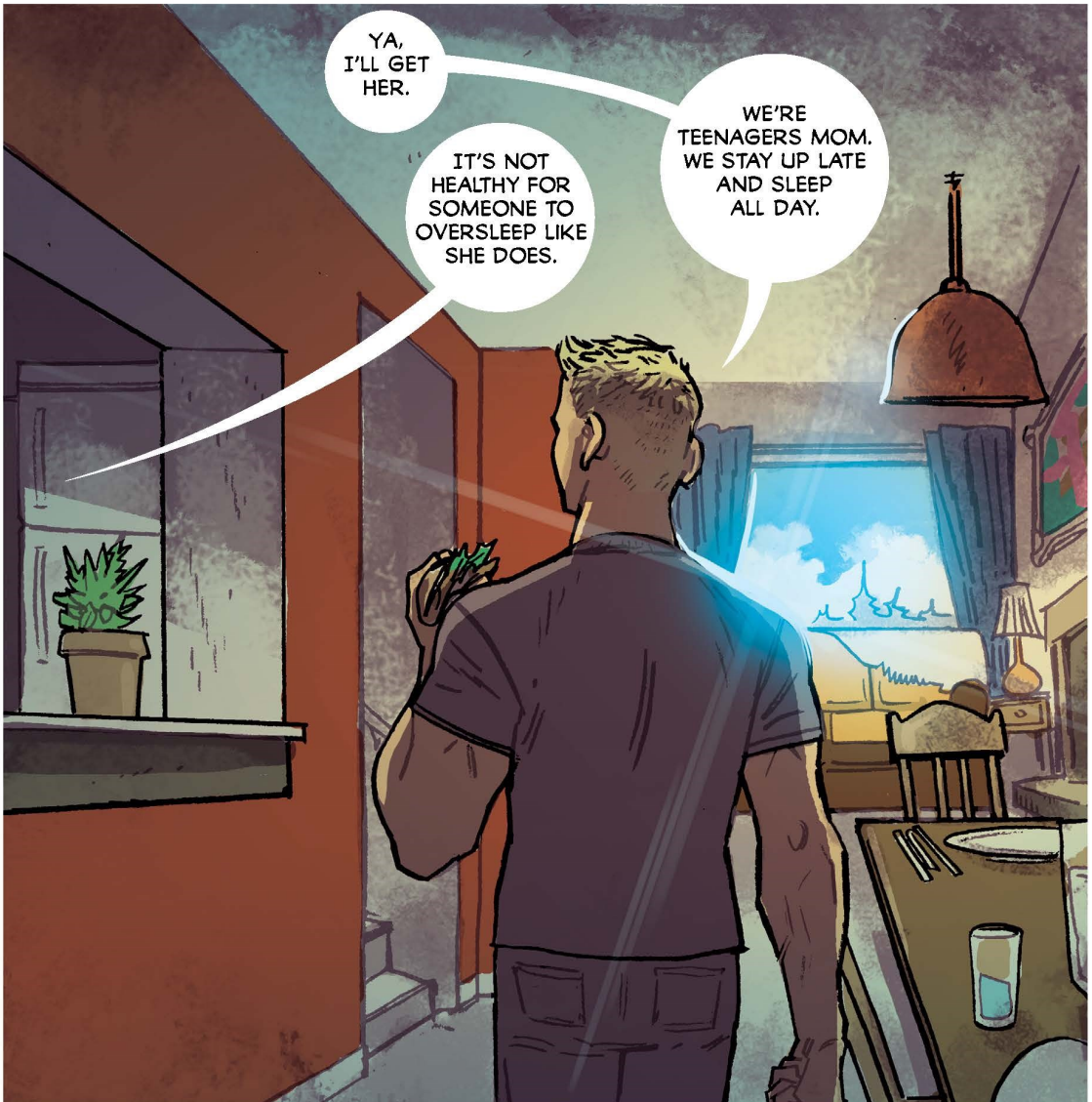
"NEXT WEEK ON 'ROGER BOTELHO'S: LOST AND FOUND' MY TEAM WILL GO IN SEARCH FOR THE FATE OF THESE YOUNG 'HEROES', MIGHTY BOY AND THE MELTER, THE ULTRA KIDS..."







CHRIS,
CAN YOU WAKE
YOUR SISTER?
IT'S NEARLY
DINNER
TIME.



YA,
I'LL GET
HER.

IT'S NOT
HEALTHY FOR
SOMEONE TO
OVERSLEEP LIKE
SHE DOES.

WE'RE
TEENAGERS MOM.
WE STAY UP LATE
AND SLEEP
ALL DAY.



I'M SURE YOU WERE THE SAME AT OUR AGE.

GOD, I HOPE NOT.



IT'S SIX BRAT, MOM SAYS GET OUT OF BED.

WE JUST GOT HOME, GO AWAY.

IT'S SIX PM SARA. LIKE YOU KNOW, AT NIGHT? WHEN PEOPLE EAT DINNER AND START WINDING DOWN.

MY HEAD HURTS. I NEED TO SLEEP.

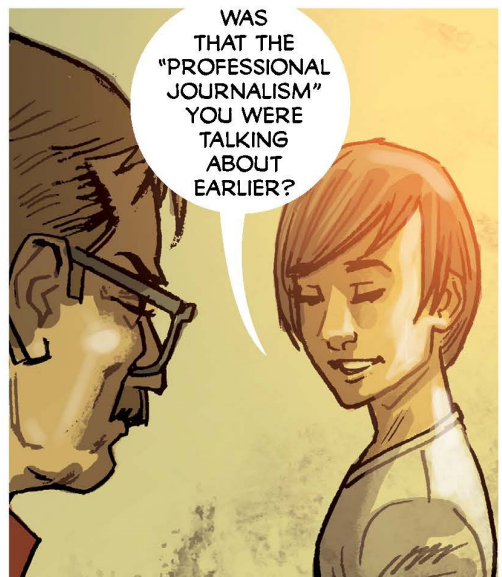
SARA IT'S SIX PM, GET UP, SERIOUSLY!

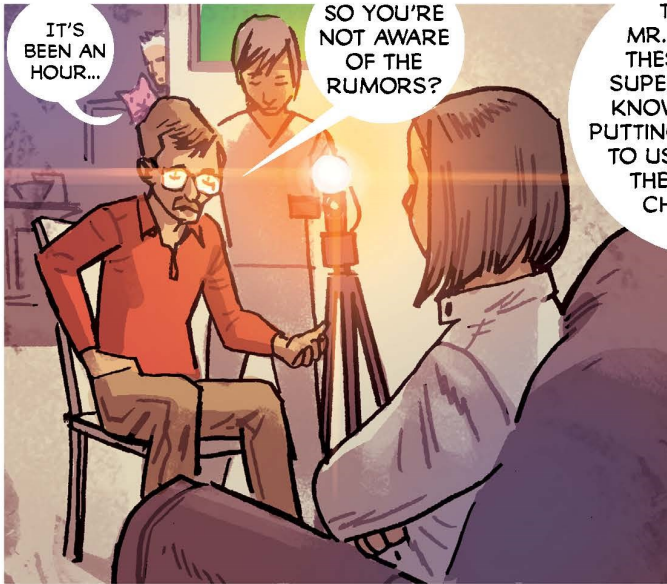
MOM'S PISSED YOU'RE SLEEPING 'TIL DINNER. DAD'S GOING TO BE HOME FROM THE LAB SOON.

AND NEITHER OF THEM ARE GOING TO WANT TO SEE OR SMELL YOU LIKE...



GO AWAY!





IT'S BEEN AN HOUR...

SO YOU'RE NOT AWARE OF THE RUMORS?

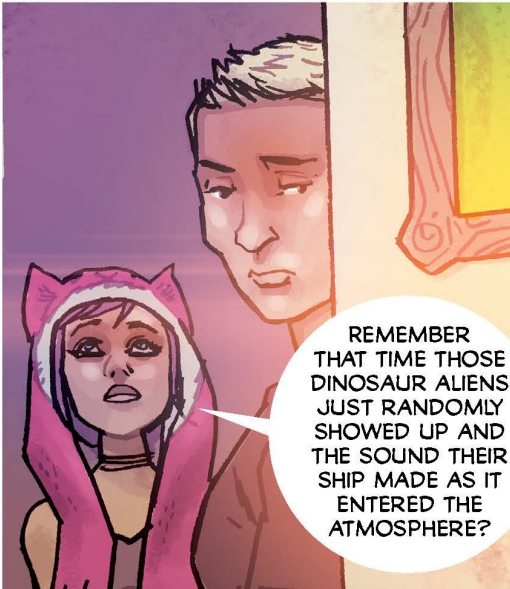
TRUST ME MR. BOTELHO, IF THESE KIDS HAD SUPERPOWERS I'D KNOW, AND I'D BE PUTTING THEIR POWER TO USE BY MAKING THEM DO THEIR CHORES FOR ONCE.



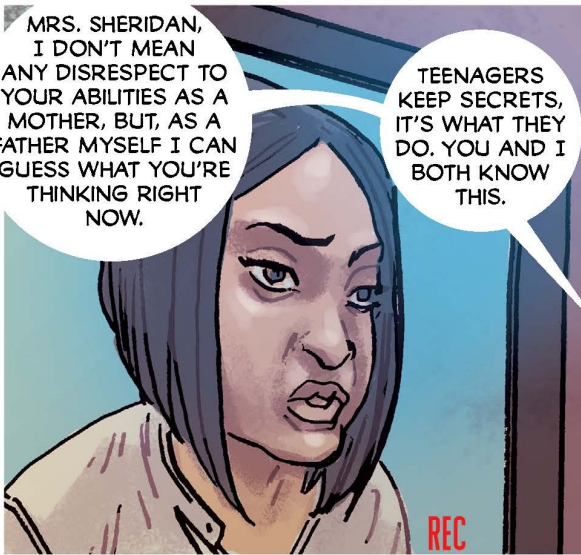
LET ME GET THIS STRAIGHT, YOU HAVE TWO KIDS, ONE MALE, ONE FEMALE...

....AT THE RIGHT AGES.

AND YOU ALL MOVED HERE TO BAINBRIDGE ISLAND FROM NEW YORK TEN YEARS AGO.



REMEMBER THAT TIME THOSE DINOSAUR ALIENS JUST RANDOMLY SHOWED UP AND THE SOUND THEIR SHIP MADE AS IT ENTERED THE ATMOSPHERE?



MRS. SHERIDAN, I DON'T MEAN ANY DISRESPECT TO YOUR ABILITIES AS A MOTHER, BUT, AS A FATHER MYSELF I CAN GUESS WHAT YOU'RE THINKING RIGHT NOW.

TEENAGERS KEEP SECRETS, IT'S WHAT THEY DO. YOU AND I BOTH KNOW THIS.

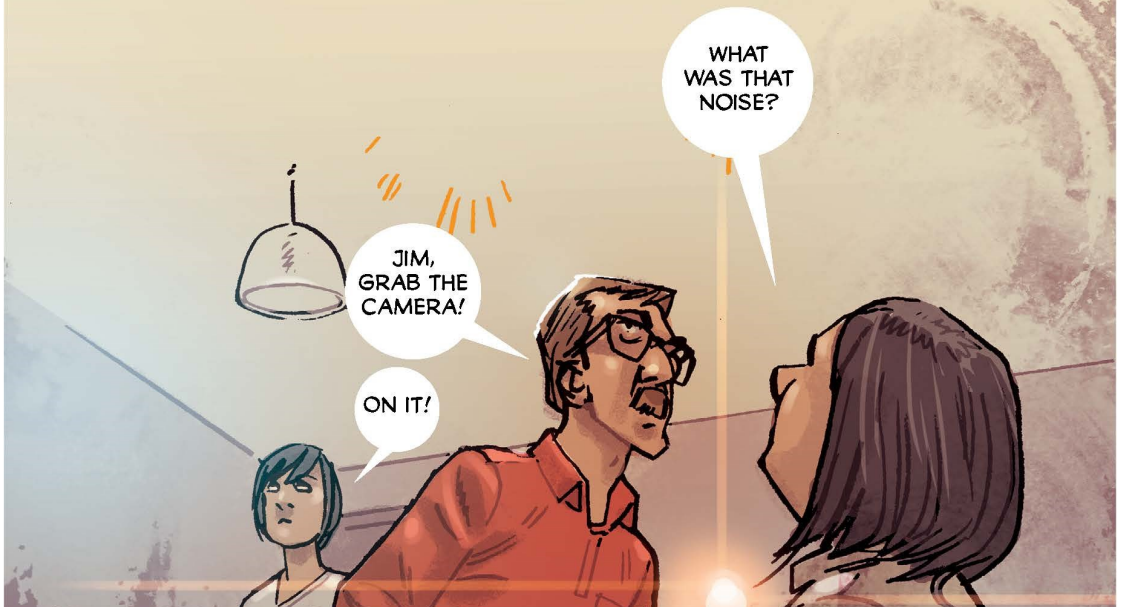


MAYBE... THEY... ARE BACK?



MISTER BOTELHO, I THINK IT'S TIME FOR YOU AND YOUR CONSPIRACY THEORY TABLOID SHOW TO LEAVE.

KUMPTH!



JIM, GRAB THE CAMERA!

ON IT!

WHAT WAS THAT NOISE?





FLURDORRR.
LURRRRES
LESOOO!

DON'T
SHOOT!

WE
SURRENDER.



MOM'S
FAINTED!

SHUT-UP
AND KEEP
SHOOTING!





CHRIS,
HELP!



RRREWWZZZZRRRT!!!

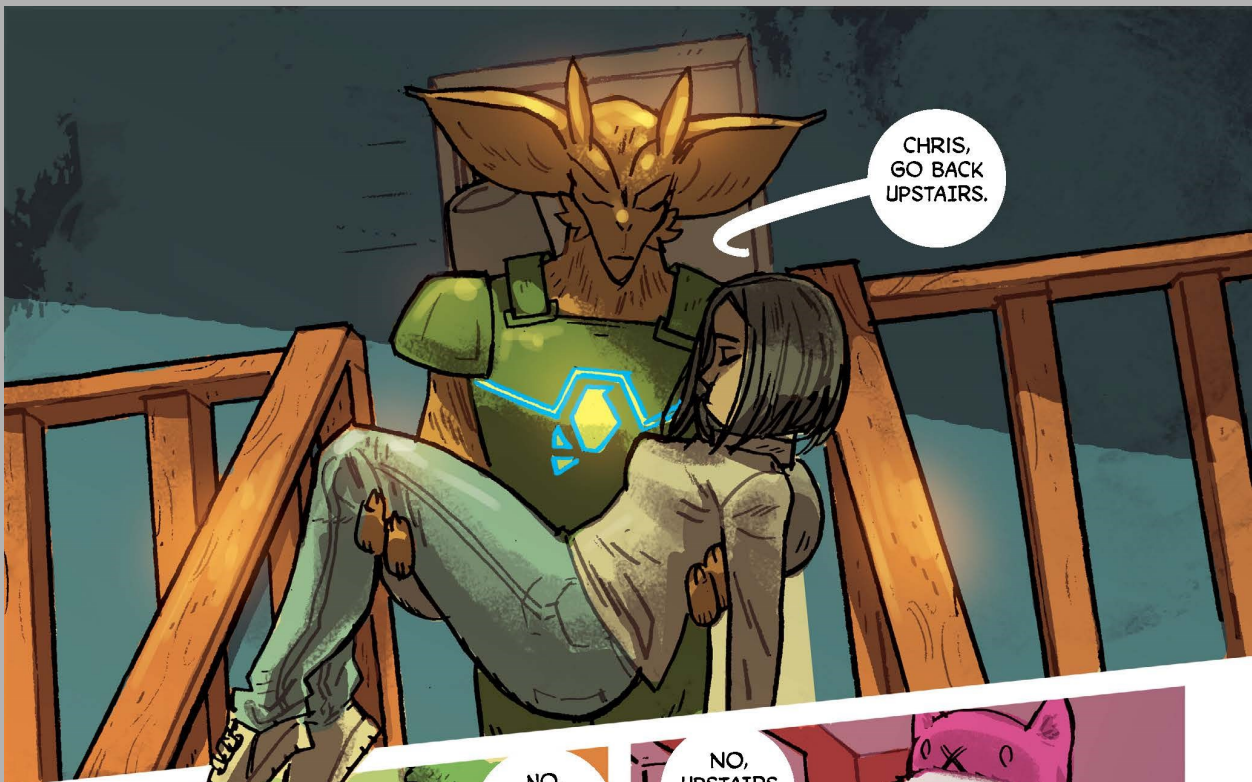


Fuuuuuuuu!!!!



MOM!

LATER!



CHRIS,
GO BACK
UPSTAIRS.

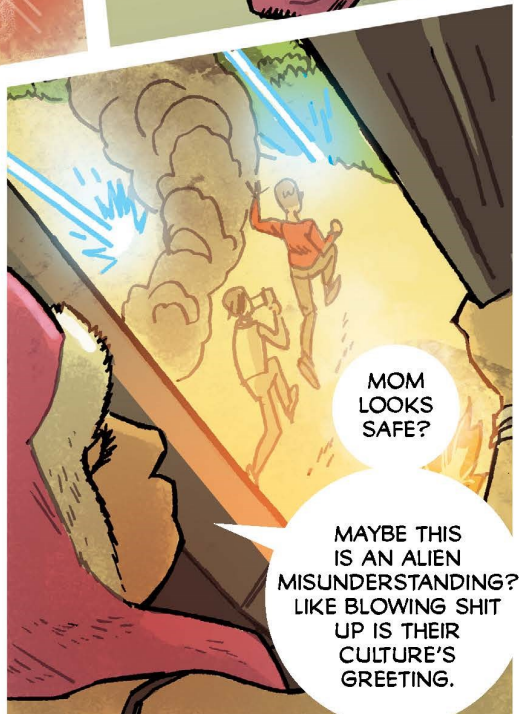


NO,
THE BACK
DOOR!



NO,
UPSTAIRS
DAMNIT!







ALIENS?
ALIENS?
OH MY
GOD.

OH MY
GOD.
OH MY
GO...



SHUT IT.
I NEED TO
THINK.

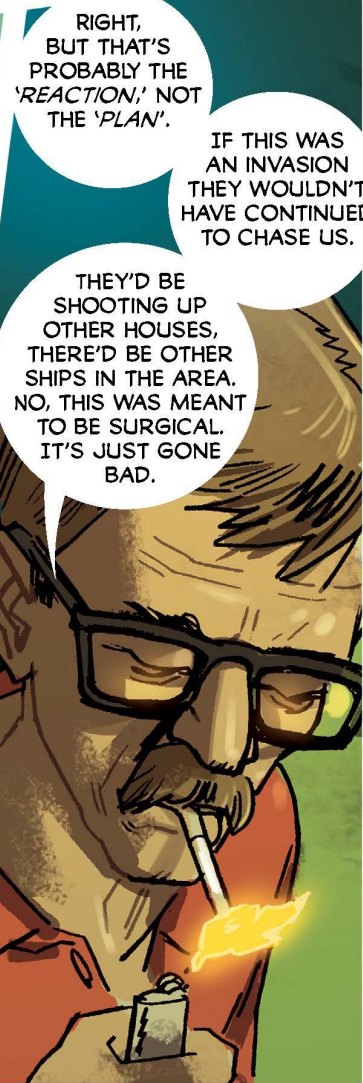


THEY
DIDN'T CHASE
US WHEN
WE RAN.

THEY
DIDN'T KILL
US OR THE
MOTHER.



WHAT
ARE YOU
TALKING ABOUT?
THEY'RE SHOOTING
THAT OTHER SHIP
KILLING ALL THOSE
PEOPLE!

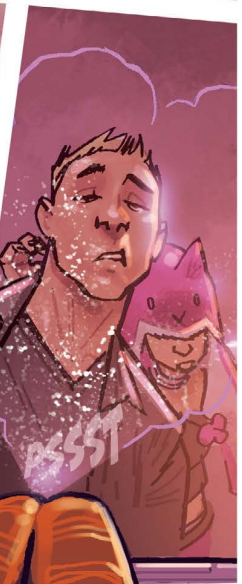
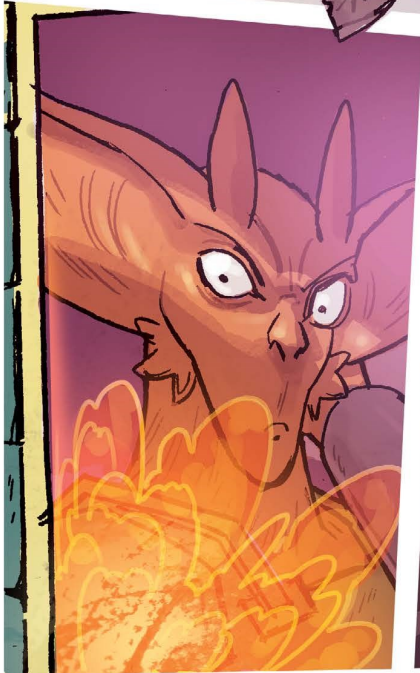


RIGHT,
BUT THAT'S
PROBABLY THE
'REACTION,' NOT
THE 'PLAN'.

IF THIS WAS
AN INVASION
THEY WOULDN'T
HAVE CONTINUED
TO CHASE US.

THEY'D BE
SHOOTING UP
OTHER HOUSES,
THERE'D BE OTHER
SHIPS IN THE AREA.
NO, THIS WAS MEANT
TO BE SURGICAL.
IT'S JUST GONE
BAD.









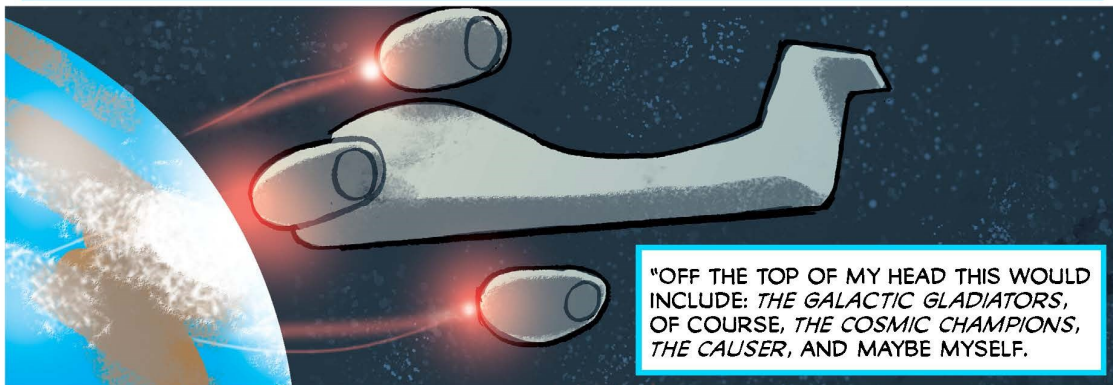


I DON'T
SEE WHAT YOU
ARE GETTING AT
MR. BOTELHO.

THERE ARE
VERY FEW SUPER
HEROES IN THIS WORLD
WHO ARE TRULY SUPER ON
A GALACTIC LEVEL. I CAN
ONLY THINK OF A HANDFUL
OF HEROES THAT I WOULD
CONSIDER WORTHY OF
BEING CONSIDERED ABLE
TO DEFEND EARTH
AGAINST AN ACTUAL
ALIEN THREAT.

CAPTAIN COMMANDER

ROGER BOTELHO'S
LOST AND FOUND



"I WOULD PUT THE DUO OF *THE
ULTRA KIDS* INTO THAT CLASS OF
HERO.

"SO, YOU SEE, JUST BECAUSE
WE HAVEN'T HEARD FROM THEM,
DOESN'T MEAN WE SHOULD
WORRY ABOUT THEM. I'M SURE
THEY CAN TAKE ON ANYTHING THIS
GALAXY CAN THROW AT THEM."

NEXT ISSUE:
TWINKLE TWINKLE LITTLE STAR

**DEUS EX
(THE ARMORY)**

DALIBOR ZUJOVIC

CHAPTER 1

Steve sat in his booth, sipping his coffee. He's been waiting for nearly an hour. He didn't know what exactly he was waiting for, but he'd been coming to the small diner on the corner of his street daily for the past ten months, in anticipation of something that he couldn't quite identify but he was inexplicably sure would happen.

Every day, he arrived at 11 in the morning, ordered two coffees, sat there for exactly one hour, and then went home, leaving the second cup cold and unconsumed. His generous tipping had gotten him recognized by the staff, and now they had his coffee ready by the time he got there. They had asked once or twice about the second cup, but as Steve could never produce an answer, he would just shrug. After a few months, they stopped asking. Each server had their own theory about it, of course. Lucy, his regular waitress, greeted him warmly, and he took his customary spot. She had it set in her mind that he was waiting for a missed connection to show up, and they would go off into the sunset together. Lucy, it should be noted, consumes a significant quantity of romance books and films.

However even Steve wondered about this behavior. He tried not showing up but always felt himself almost compelled to go, as if not even of his own will. He'd read up on psychology and thought for a while he'd just become trapped in some sort of unbeatable OCD impulse. Weeks of therapy brought him no release from the cycle, and even medication could not deter him. Once out of desperation, he got black out drunk in hopes of skipping a day. When he came to, he'd been sitting in the same seat for forty five minutes, and the coffee was starting to sober him up. This was clearly something that was going to happen, whether he wanted it to or not.

Used to the pattern, Lucy prints his receipt a couple minutes before noon, getting ready to ring him out, when the bell above the door rings, and a stranger walks in and sits down in the booth with Steve.

"I would have come sooner, but I prefer my coffee room temperature." The stranger speaks as if they'd been old friends and had agreed to meet for coffee. "Stephen, do you like stories?"

"I suppose I do. Don't have a lot of time for them these days, though." Steve matches his cadence and glances at Lucy for a refill.

"I understand. Today though, you're going to need to make the time. Go ahead and call your boss and tell him you'll be taking the rest of the day off."

Steve pulls out his phone, almost as if in a trance, and complies with the request. He finds his boss in the contact list and next to the phone number taps Call. Seconds later, his boss answers and Steve just cuts to the chase.

"Mike, I gotta take the rest of the day. Something came up. I'll be back in the office tomorrow." He waited for the response, and finished the conversation with "Thanks, Mike. I'll see you in the morning."

"You shouldn't make promises you can't keep."

"I don't. I intend to go to work tomorrow."

"Hmph." The stranger takes a sip of the coffee that turns into a chug, and in seconds, the cup is empty. As if timed, Lucy walks up to the booth.

"I hope you tasted that. Steve, you want to introduce me to your friend?"

"Stephen is a rude one, isn't he? I'm Samuel."

Lucy smiles back as she refills Steve's coffee. "Pleased to meet you, Samuel. I'm Lucy. Can I get you a refill on your coffee?"

"You read my mind. Yes, please, and if I can get a cup of ice, that'd be great."

"Right away." Lucy walks away chipper, happy to see Steve have a companion for coffee. A stillness falls on the booth. Neither man says anything for minutes, until Samuel locks eyes with Steve and starts the conversation.

"Would you care to hear a story?"

"If it explains why I've been coming here at this time every day for almost a year, ordering two coffees, and leaving after an hour - absolutely."

"It does. That and much more. Now this story starts before everything. It begins before the beginning of time and ends before the big bang."

To Be Continued...

This is a story with which I seek to give an answer to infinite questions. It was spawned from trying to explain one mystical weapon's origin, and it in turn has spawned a number of interesting tales. I hope you enjoyed the first chapter and will join me for this ride as I finally tell the tale of The Armory.

NEW HOTNESS

This is a list of indie books I read since the last issue and have loved.



In a future where a Pandemic can strike at any moment and take out vital organs, a miracle cure puts those on the receiving end into mandatory indentured servitude. And on top of all that there's a massive secret!

You can get Duplicant directly from the creator

Twitter: [musingsbycrazed](https://twitter.com/musingsbycrazed)

Matthew Stelle is a well-known social media nerd who goes by Sir Superhero. Between sharing (mostly) highly accurate comic book lore, running multiple social media channels, and going to school, he managed to put together this book—on the surface, a televised competition to help vigilantes with much-needed funding, Power Play is much, much more!



Get it on [Kindle](#)!



Jake can't die. Well, more like he can, but he just comes back. But every time he does, things are just a little different. He's having waking dreams that he's having difficulty distinguishing from reality. I was so intrigued by the first issue that I already ordered the hardcover for myself. You should too!

Buy it on [Kindle](#) or at Villagecomicbooks.com!

"You're The Dancer. You help people."



Raised by her sensei after her parents' death, Mia works by day to become the best possible dancer, and by night to take down evil in her city. How long can she balance those lives?

Get your copy on [Backerkit!](#)

This is another one of those where I just have to say one thing:

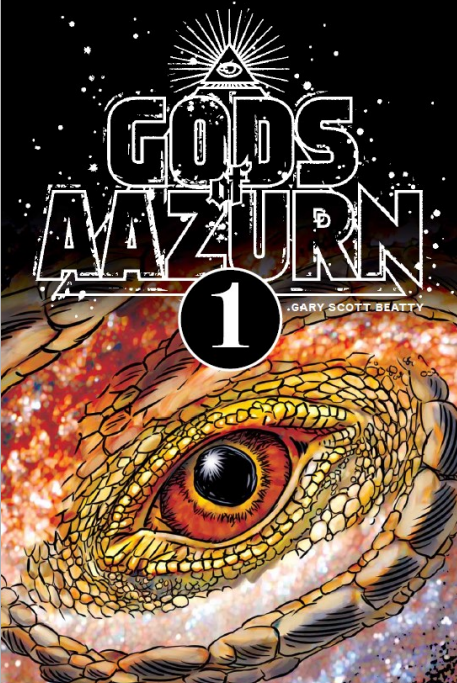
Goal-E is a transforming Zamboni.

Here's the link to buy and donate: [Heroes4Causes](#)



I'm not a big fan of the deep arcane sort of story, but I won't lie, the three short stories in this issue did pull me in. Well written and drawn, this is a fun creepy book, especially if you're a fan of Lovecraft.

Read it on [WebToons!](#)



TIPS 'N' TRICKS

As always, I bring you insight for creators from creators. Three tips from each.

From Brian Lambert,

Never stop creating. The weight of creating gets heavy sometimes. Your mind is going a million miles all the time. But don't let that stop you from doing the thing you're passionate about. And don't let it become so much of a commodity that you lose love for it. Remember why you started and let that be the reason you continue. Also, get an editor. Everyone NEEDS an editor.



From Geladaa,



1-Don't be a wannabe, it's important to learn from others, and very understandable to admire them, but seek to surpass the people you emulate, or at the very least to propose something different from what they created.

2-It's very important to network, to build relationships with others. Money is just a sign that you're integrated into society, so be friend, be charitable if you can, be reciprocal, be trustworthy.

3-Try and create content that's extreme. A mediocre horror film is way more interesting than a mediocre non-horror film (in general). Sex, Violence and Sin are the main rivers love chooses to manifest in, follow them.

From Nathan Cook,

1) Steal. Read old books & watch old movies. They're filled with great & forgotten ideas waiting to be salvaged and repurposed.

2) The phrase, "Write what you know," doesn't mean subject matter. It's talking about feelings. Write about feelings you've had before writing the ones you think you understand. Your reader or audience can tell the difference.

3) Stay playful. Take time every day to play at your work and treat what you're creating with no higher stakes than a blob of playdough. When what you're creating feels too important, it's easy to get too overwhelmed to keep going or, when necessary, too pressured to throw it away.



4) Bonus: The best kind of ambiguity isn't when people interpret things in two strongly opposing ways but when no one knows how to feel about it at all.

From Travis Webb,

1. Find a way to create that works for you. Try methods, mix methods, you don't have to fit a method. And you don't have to use the same method every time. Let the creative project work through the method that suites it and gets it done.

2. Never stop creating, even if it is little things. Keep doing new things, keep making yourself feel amateur. Create things you are unsure about.

3. (This one is just for writers) 90% of all unfinished books don't get published. 😊



And from me, I'd say learn to prioritize. One more round of Apex will never be as rewarding as the feeling of finishing the thing you're working on.

I'll admit that is mostly for me. But it might be useful to you, too.

EDITORIAL

To my fellow creators:

You're about to be the most important thing in creative media.

Your perspective, your unique take on any given concept is about to be what separates creativity from the AI-generated mediocrity that's about to hit the mainstream.

There's a reason "true story" and "5 minute craft" and a dozen other types of YouTube channels succeed. Much of the masses are not discerning in their consumption, so they click and they watch and they are entertained enough to come back. I've been creating on YouTube long enough to have seen a dozen different trend waves come and go. From each one the quality stays around. Usually because it adapts and almost always it adapts to the unique nature of the individual.

Example: There was a time of countless prank channels. That trend died, and the few people left from that era moved to something more uniquely them. Roman Atwood hasn't posted a prank video on his main channel in six years. But he was THE prank guy. Now his content is about his life and his family. His unique perspective. The vlog channel has surpassed the prank channel in subscribers and on top of that he's got half a million subscribers to his podcast channel.

I share that to demonstrate that this AI insurgence into the creative space - whether it be image generators, story generators, or content writers - this trend will die, and I guarantee that no AI will outshine a good story told honestly from a human perspective, and in the comic space told with quality art.

Use the tools to your advantage, get some rough ideas visualized with the image generator to easier sell your concept to an artist. Put some concepts into a story generator to get something rough that you can then build and breathe life to. No matter what they come up with, AI generators can never instill the humanity of the person making the art or telling the story. The best stuff is always something that has a human touch behind it.

No matter what you might think, no matter how many "best case" examples floating around the internet, it's never going to be as good as someone putting in the skill and talent to make it happen. On the next page, you'll see what I got from DALL-E 2 when I typed "cabin in snow with a large black wolf on top digital art" - a piece of chapter art that will be included in the final version of my first novella. It's far from perfect, but as a placeholder to put in my book while I draw one, or get an artist to do the same? It'll do just fine.

Use the tools to start the process then put the work in to make it unique.

Stay frosty.
-Dalibor



DALL-E 2, generated November 16, 2022

Search term: cabin in snow with a large black wolf on top digital art

CREATOR INDEX

The whole point here is to get you the reader to interact with, consume, and ideally spend money with the creators I've spotlighted in this magazine. Below you will find a list of everybody's websites and social media tags. Go buy something you bums!

BRIAN LAMBERT / WINGLESS ENT

www.winglessent.com/

Instagram—[wingless_comics](#)

Facebook—[winglesscomics](#)

Twitter—[winglessent](#)

TikTok—[winglesscomics](#)

NATHAN COOK

www.TheFavoringWind.com

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