

YOUNG - DARDEN - CARTER  
HUGHES - LEE - PUCKETT  
INTERVIEWS

DEUS EX

RISE OF THE RUNNERS - SEX LIFE: ZERO  
BOLDSAGA - GRENADA'S SHADOW  
AND MORE!

# CATALYST

No.  
**10**



**THE  
BEACON  
TO  
STORYTELLING**

Ruby © &™ Kyrin Silva  
The Quiver Kid © &™ Vince White

# CATALYST

CATALYST MAGAZINE BROUGHT TO YOU BY NEXUS STUDIOS, INC.

## **The cover**

for this issue was inspired by the infamous Wizard issue 10 cover. Infamous because it was an unauthorized crossover of a Marvel character and a character from the independent powerhouse of the era, Image Comics. Liefeld created Shaft, and co-created Cable, so he didn't think it was a big deal. Wizard thought it was awesome and ran with it. I would have ran it too, honestly. Marvel however wasn't having it, but unable to recall the magazine, they forbade Wizard from publishing the image for years. Cover retrospectives would only feature a black rectangle where issue 10's cover should have been for nearly a decade. When I started Catalyst, I took wanted to bring back the best of Wizard, and when looking for a way to make issue 10 stand out, an acquaintance suggested commissioning a special piece of art. I then figured I put money into the first issue to make it special, let's commemorate this one the same way. Using The Indieversity Project guidebook, I sought to match a couple indie characters to the two on that Wizard cover. My ideal choices would have been non-white, and non-male, but there is a surprisingly low quantity of archers in the indie sphere—in the book and otherwise. Still, after a couple stumbles, I found our two stars. Ruby and The Quiver Kid, from Kyrun Silva of Taurus Comics and Vince White of DarkLight Studios, respectively. Learning from history however, I did ask for permission. Fish Lee was absolutely the choice out the gate for the artwork because he'd worked with a bunch of the people in the book and he's a quality artist who is very reliable and respected in the scene. And that rep is deserved! Let me tell you folks, he turned this around in about 6 hours time! The man's a monster, and on top of his own book Green Zone (featured in a previous issue of Catalyst), he's drawing many of your favorite indie characters. You can see more of his work in the Gallery of this issue, along with more interviews in more creative media, some new features, and some slight design changes. Additionally, over the next month, the website will be expanding, with tools to support indie creators, so make sure you visit [TheCatalyst.digital](http://TheCatalyst.digital).




## COVER ARTIST

Fish Lee - @[Mr Fish Comics](https://www.instagram.com/Mr_Fish_Comics)

Ruby is © & ™ Kyrun Silva.

The Quiver Kid is © & ™ Vince White.

Characters used with permission

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This one's pretty packed, so grab a drink and a snack, and enjoy!

-Dalibor

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

# CAMPAIGN CORNER

*For the skimmer types, I wanted to include a quick overview of all the live or upcoming campaigns from our featured creators, former features, and any other indie creators you should be checking out.*

*From Hamza Pečenović, **The Crystal Compass** is **Live Now** and recently upgraded to **HARDCOVERS!***



*The next project coming with work from cover artist Fish Lee—**ATOMIC CHIMP** is **COMING SOON**. Click the link and be notified when it launches!*



*From Kat Calamia's Lifeline Comics, **Like Father, Like Daughter** comes to a "JAW DROPPING finale" and is already **FULLY FUNDED!** Get your copies while it's **LIVE!***



*And if you're reading this after April 2023, check out the **Catalyst Campaign Corner** on the website for the latest campaigns from dope creators!*



***Noticing a particular name in my new followers on Instagram, I followed the appropriate links back to the website for Green Pizza Comics and was pleasantly surprised to see the familiar face of***

## Zach Young

### ***What is Green Pizza Comics, and more specifically what is Sex Life: Zero?***

So Green Pizza Comics is just the indie publisher name I created at random to make things legit. I once drew a green pizza doodle years and years ago and I just decided to use it now. Plus I love pizza. I'm still pretty new to all of this stuff and still trying to get a handle on a lot of it but I didn't want to limit myself to making just one comic hence the creation of Green Pizza. Plan is to leave it open for anything else down the line. I also would like to draw my own short comics, I have tons of material but just gotta get back into drawing.



Sex Life: Zero is the series I'm breaking out with. It's a slice-of-life/fantasy, a caricature of real life, self-deprecating humor. Heartbreak, adulating, growing up, getting old, unrequited love, friendship, family, hope...I'm 34 and I wish I could say I've experienced a thousand wars but the truth is that I just have a big imagination. I think there's so much to laugh about the older you get and I wanted to make something relatable. It's sort of an anthology so you can pick it up and read it out of order, but the series focuses on the main character (Vernon Chiu) and his wacky perspective on things like dating. I realize I'm not winning any fans here with this pitch but I just want to cast a line out there to see if anything hits, mainly for the love of creating. If you like "Man Seeking Woman" (TV series adapted from Simon Rich's book) and "Tear Along The Dotted Line" (adult cartoon adapted from Zero Calcare's books) then you might like Sex Life: Zero. These shows do such an incredible job finding the humor in such hopeless experiences.



### ***Now you already have another series that you've been working on, Deep Theory - how is this different?***

Deep Theory is a complete 180, the total opposite of Sex Life: Zero. Deep Theory is all about the universe and mysterious phenomena. SLZ is a series of quirky adventures with an average guy. I took life so seriously in my teens and into my twenties that adding humor into my life was the best thing that ever happened to me. I used to philosophize and find wisdom in everything, after a while it gets kind of boring and depressing. So that's sort of how I found comedy to be a comfort, a way to laugh about the things

that are mostly out of my control like the way people behave and how society is. Everything is really sad but if you can make social commentary through comedy then you can spark something in people to hopefully change.

***I saw that your first artist on SLZ is a fellow Balkan, Aleksandar Božić SKE, what is it about his art that drew your eye and made you want to work with him?***

SKE's work is phenomenal. I found him in the Connecting Comic Book Writers and Artists group on FB and the work he's done is so versatile but it still reeks of his unique style. I'm a sucker for old comic strip styles (expressive line quality, panel design) and I recently found out he prefers the term "cartoonist," so it was meant to be. But his work can be graphic, detailed, comical, dramatic, light-hearted and heart-warming. I was looking for an artist who looked like they knew what they were doing. Luckily Ske had a pretty extensive portfolio and it was a bonus that his illustrations could tell a story on their own. He's professional and he's been an absolute pleasure to work with.



***Looking forward, is SLZ the only title that will be under the GPC banner, or will there be other titles?***



It would be cool to see more comics. It mainly depends on the stories and ideas. If nothing speaks to me then I don't want to write about it. That's when it becomes a job! But it also depends on funds (how to keep funding the projects) and reception (whether people like it or not). I'd much rather see these stories as TV episodes, it plays out in my head as I write them, and I'm sure you could get some really funny stuff happening when you have other minds (actors and writers) work on it. But funding is a huge thing. So that's partly why I wanted to turn my short

stories into comics is that comics are the perfect medium between film and literature. You can tell a visual story on a budget compared to film where it can cost hundreds of thousands of dollars. Of course, writing is the cheapest way to tell a story, but not a lot of people are willing to pick up a book let alone a short story and invest time into it.

But to answer your question, I'm leaving it open to more titles, but none as of yet. I'm honestly still learning along the way.

Plan is to get this series out for people to read for free. I just want people to enjoy

it first. Then I'll run a Kickstarter in the future to make a trade paperback of the series.

***I have to ask, because I'm greedy and I loved the first issue so much, when's Deep Theory issue 2 coming out?***

Thanks man that means so much. Wes (IG: [wesstclair](#)) is working hard on it. We've all been hitting some speed bumps in our personal lives but it's getting there. We actually just spoke with him and he's finished with the layouts for the issue. He's inked and colored a handful of pages already and we're just waiting on the next batch before we start rolling out the Kickstarter stuff. You can check out updates ([Deep Theory Kickstarter](#)) and previous work on our IG ([deephtheorystudios](#)).



***Zach had a few things to add about Sex Life:Zero.***

I would like to make the series free to read but I'm still in the process of gauging reception. Most of the issues will be free to read for now so read them while you can! Once they're done I'll upload them on my BMAC page. For updates and behind the scenes work on Sex Life: Zero, you can check out my BMAC ([buymeacoffee.com/greenpizzaQ](#)). I'll be posting more in-depth stuff on that page. You'll also see my own work (personal comics, sketchbook drawings/portraits, other fun creations). For general updates you can follow me on IG ([greenpizzacomics](#)) and FB ([Green Pizza Comics](#)).

***That is a satisfactory answer ... for now. I really liked that first issue. And I am equally enjoying the first issue of Sex Life: Zero! Check out a short preview on the next pages along with a few BTS images, then go check out the book on Zach's BMAC page!***

***Zach Young on the internet:***

**[Green Pizza Comics](#)**

**[Facebook](#)**

**[Instagram](#)**

**[BMAC](#)**

**[Deep Theory Studios](#)**

**[Twitter](#)**

**[Instagram](#)**

**[YouTube](#)**

VERNON RECENTLY DISCOVERED TWO THINGS ABOUT HIS LIFE. THE FIRST WAS QUITE REMARKABLE -- IT WAS THAT HIS LIFE WAS SO UNREMARKABLE HE'D EVEN USED THE WORD "MUNDANE" TO DESCRIBE IT. AND AFTER SEARCHING FOR THE DEFINITION OF THE WORD "MUNDANE" ON THE INTERNET, HE CAME ACROSS HIS SECOND DISCOVERY: A TRAVEL VIDEO THAT WOULD SEND HIM ON A DOWNWARD SPIRAL TOWARD THE MEANING OF LIFE...

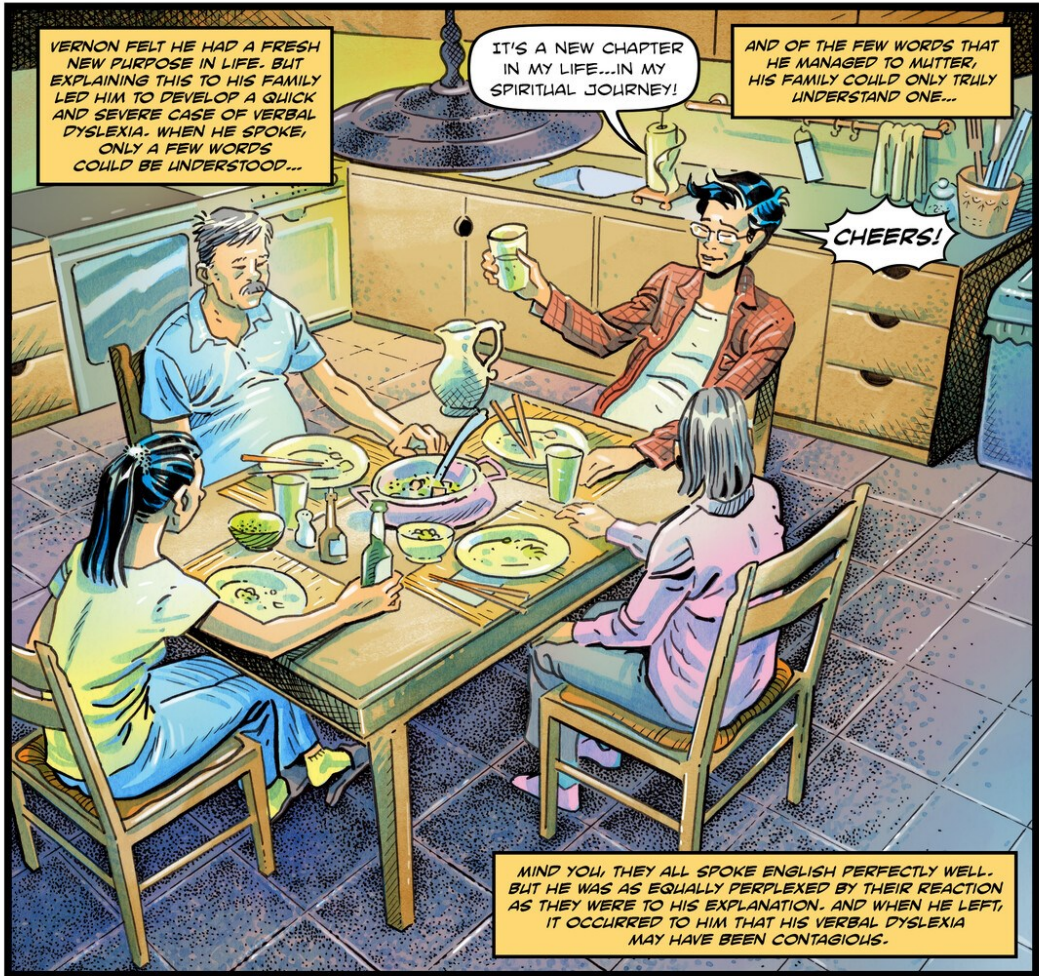


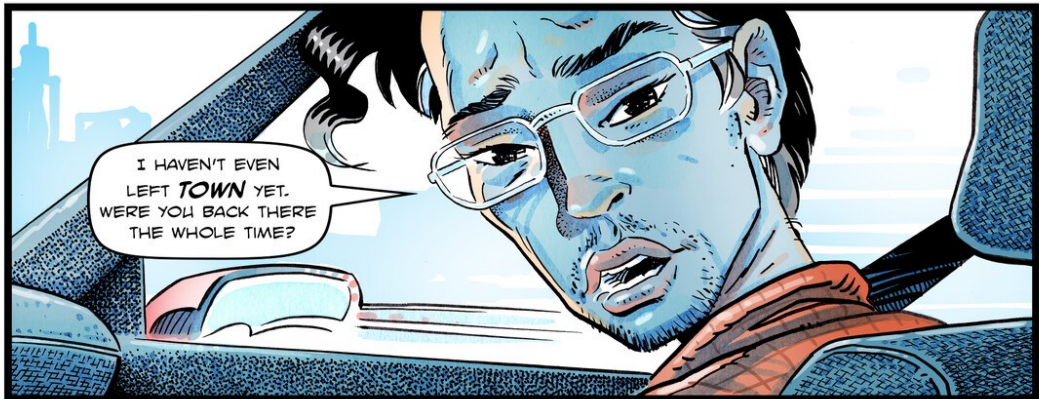
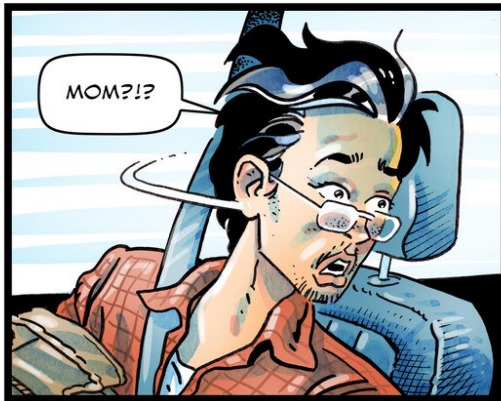
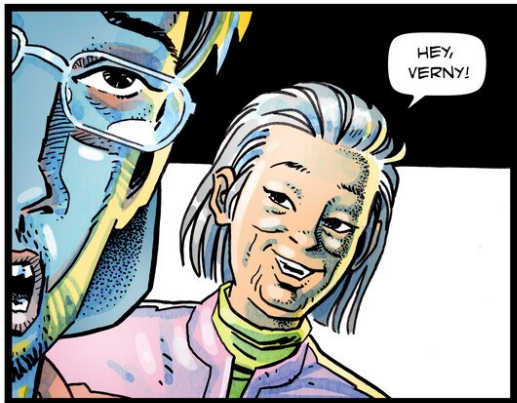
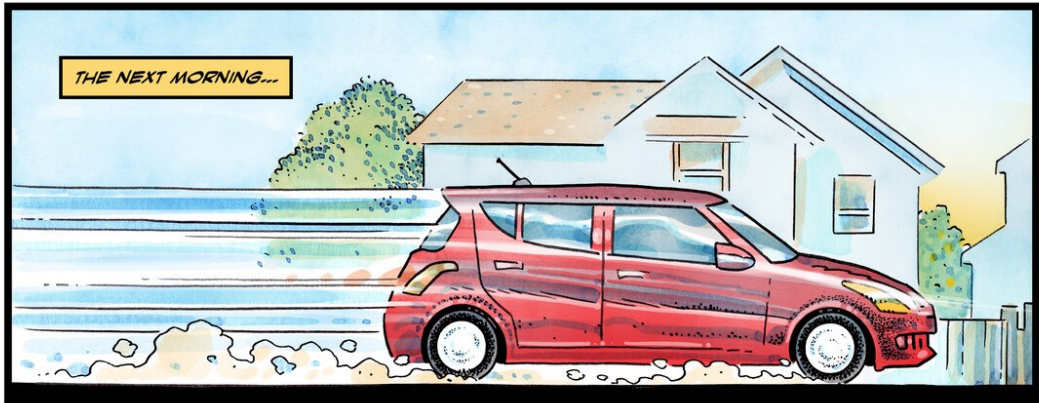
FIFTY-SIX CLICK-BAIT TRAVEL VIDEOS LATER -- AND A COPY OF A NOT-SO-BEST-SELLER TITLED THE GETAWAY: LIVE LIKE A GOD FOR DIRT CHEAP! -- HE QUIT HIS JOB.

VERNON RODE HIS BIKE HOME THINKING ABOUT ALL OF THE THINGS HE WAS NOW FREE TO DO. WHAT SPARKED HIS SUDDEN WANDERLUST A MONTH PRIOR WAS A SPECIFIC VIDEO THAT UNFORTUNATELY LED HIM TO BELIEVE HE COULD LIVE LIKE ROYALTY IN A DEVELOPING COUNTRY FOR NO MORE THAN \$500 A MONTH. IN URUGUAY, HE COULD LIVE LIKE A NOBLEMAN FOR \$300 A MONTH. IN PERU, HE COULD LIVE LIKE A KING FOR \$200 A MONTH. ON A MORE INDIGENOUS ISLAND, HE COULD LIVE LIKE A GOD FOR A FEW BUCKS. HE DECIDED ON A REMOTE TROPICAL ISLAND SOMEWHERE IN BERMUDA, BUT HE FAILED TO READ THE COMMENTS WHICH EXPRESSED HOW MISINFORMATIVE THE CONTENT ACTUALLY WAS.









# THE PROCESS

*I love process art so much, and in this new column, I'll be sharing process art from some of our featured content.*

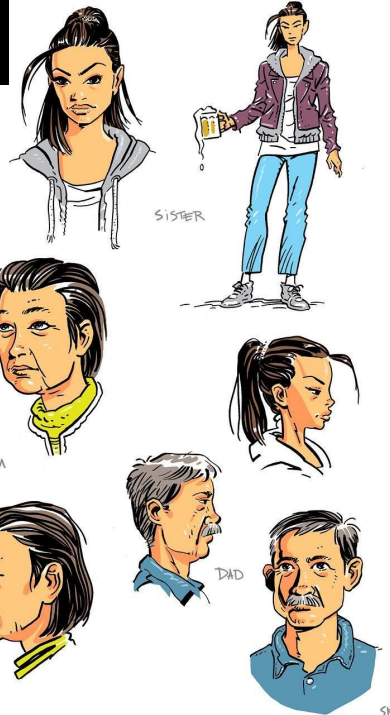
## SEX LIFE: ZERO

Concepts and process art by Aleksandar Božić SKE.



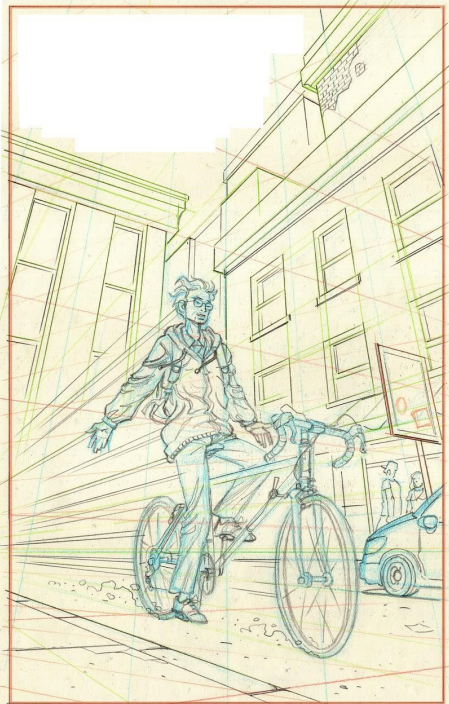
WRITTEN BY ZACH YOUNG  
ART BY ALEKSANDAR BOŽIĆ SKE 2023

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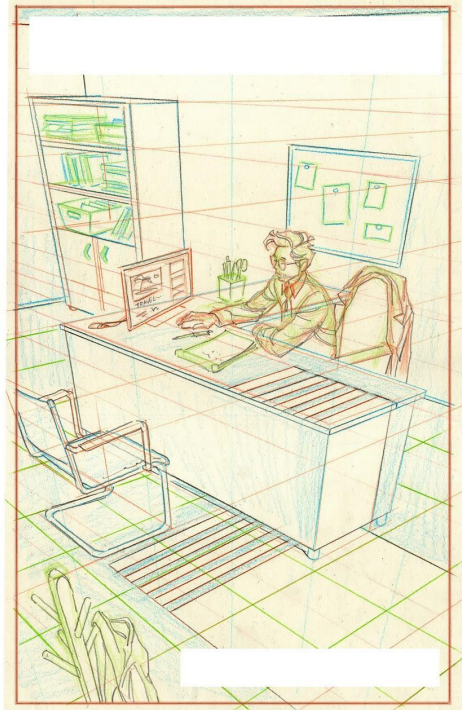


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ART BY ALEKSANDAR BOŽIĆ SKE 2023

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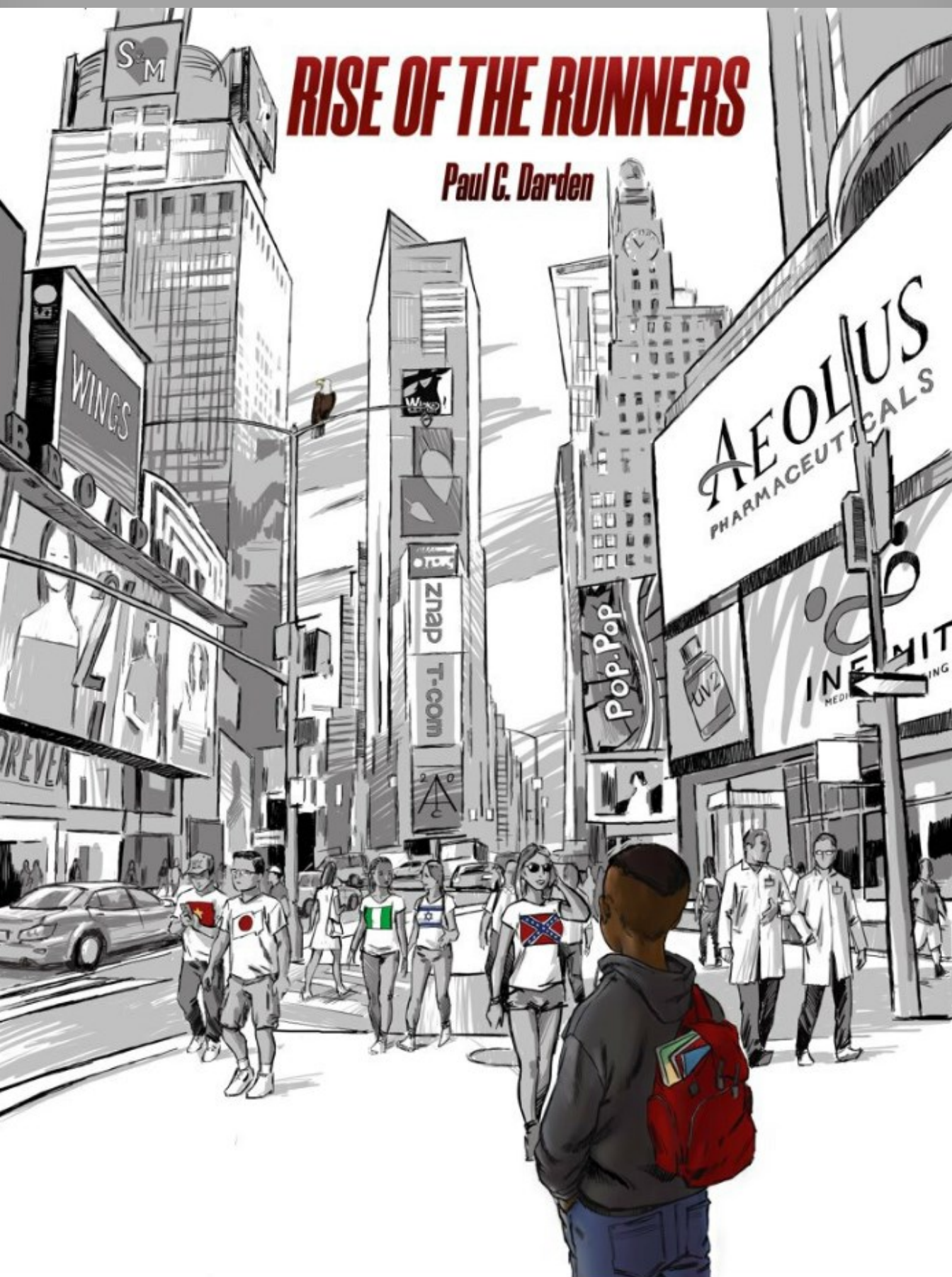
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ART BY ALEKSANDAR BOŽIĆ SKE 2023



WRITTEN BY ZACH YOUNG  
ART BY ALEKSANDAR BOŽIĆ SKE 2023

# RISE OF THE RUNNERS

Paul C. Darden



# Rise of The Runners

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Prequel To: The Freedom Runner

Paul C. Darden



# Chapter 1

## Dark Nights

**I** found myself lost, trapped in my feelings.

Physically free to go wherever I wanted but a prisoner in my own mind, no key to the cell I'm locked in. Questioning life, my existence, and everyone else's. Most days, nothing made sense, and when things were comprehended, it was only through destruction and annihilation. I wanted to run, go somewhere, anywhere there was no one else. No other signs of life, I thought about dying more than I lived. The city of hope and elation inside me was established one kind and loving sentiment at a time. I bottled up all of my emotions until they erupted like a volcano. That burned down the city of hope my parents built within me. In the ashes laid joy, happiness, peace, and any other upbeat, positive emotion. I stopped looking forward to tomorrow because it was my tomorrow that took them from me forever. From the ashes arose a loud voice which spoke to me when I was alone and at night.

"Hello, Duante."

"Who are you?"

"I have many names."

"Tell me one."

"Wouldn't you rather know why I'm here?"

"Why are you here?"

"Because you don't want to be here anymore."

"Here?"

"Yes.... yes... you don't want to be amongst the living."

"I don't."

"No, you don't. You no longer care about life. Why should you care? It no longer cares about you, does it?"

"Life doesn't care for me, and I don't care for it."

"You can show life. You can show them all you don't need them."

"You're right. I don't need them."

"Duante, you can end it all, no more pain, no more tomorrows. No one will miss you."

"I can end the pain."

"Yes, what good is your life now, Duante? Give me your life, and in return, I can give you what you desire most-"

"Duante, Duante baby, wake up. You'll be late for school." My grandmother wakes me up daily. I had an alarm clock. It proved useless because the snooze

button became the only good thing in my life. I would wake up to my grandmother sitting at the edge of my bed. I couldn't tell you how or why she could move on every day, but she did. It didn't motivate me to see her doing so well; it did the opposite. I wanted to live less, and less, the more I realized that she never struggled.

My dad would tell me before he would head out to work, "My superpower is I'm fireproof. What's yours?" Then he would hug and kiss me on my forehead. Next, kiss my mother before he left and say, "I'll be home to save you later." My mother's response was always the same, "You're the only one who has an appointment with me." My father would go to work fighting fires and would always come home. He didn't know how not to come back. He was a firefighter before I was born, and after, it was in his blood to help others. I thought he was fireproof. I believed in his superpower because he always came home, and he is my hero.

My mother would come into my room and ask me, "Why is the surgeon faster than the future Hall of Famer?" "Because the surgeon is a morning person," I'd respond. She would smile, pull the covers off the bed, and tell me to get up. She never wanted me to be late; she was so passionate about education. She would often tell me that, "The color of your skin makes you a perceived threat; being educated makes you a legitimate threat, so be justifiably dangerous." She was the granny Matty product. Mom and dad would tell me stories of granny back in the days. I didn't believe a single one. They made her seem like this young gunslinger who took on this country and won. The stories would make me smile, and I would listen to stories about this powerful Black girl, saving the world, or at least her world.

I manage to get myself out of bed, and most days, I would skip breakfast, never really having an appetite in the morning. I'd grab my things, my grandmother would tell me to smile and go live, and then I'd head to school. I missed months of school, just sitting home trying to figure life out. My dad would tell me, "Running is a great way to clear your head. When you run, you're free." I didn't listen to him; I would sit and do little of anything. Nothing brought me joy. I even stopped playing football. I quit the game that I loved. I abruptly put a halt to building things. I had no desire to invent. Even though I was encouraged to do well, school was problematic. Honor Roll was a joke at best. I had surpassed school, I had an interest in learning, but it all went away. Was I lashing out? I did that, as well. I wasn't unreachable; everyone was always within arm's length; I just never reached back. I was standing close enough to see all the hands extended towards me, offering help but just far enough so they couldn't touch me. That was the mantra I'd adopted and started to live by.

I used to meet up with the fellas, but I avoided them because they would always try to make me feel better. It was always me, Angel, Isaiah, and Michael. We grew up together, our families knew each other, and they all supported me in my dark days. It was my dark nights they tried to protect me from. Angel and I were the only ones who had fathers in our homes, Michael never met his dad, but his mother held it down. Isiah's dad was in the army. He died fighting overseas. His mother does it all. Our families are close, so they always check up on me, and they mean well, but this is a different kind of pain. There was this one teacher, Mr. Harris. He was the only black male teacher I had ever had. He would let me sit in class and never disturbed me, an occasional glance and hand on the shoulder, but that was it. His course was always welcoming, and the darkness would disperse

once I got near his class.

I would often hear Mr. Harris say, "Make a note in my file, write me up if you have to. There's more to teaching than the test. These kids are people with lives."

Other teachers would call my house for trivial things, tell my grandmother that I needed help, recommend people I could talk to, say I was a menace, complain there's something wrong with him. Ms. Davis was from the burbs. She walked quickly to work from her car, always seemed scared to be outside the building, and was fearful of this setting. Ms. Davis was consistently attacking me before entering class, I hated life already, and Ms. Davis amplified everything daily. Sometimes, she didn't say a word. It would be looks before I came to class. Ms. Davis would make comments in class about my future or lack thereof. She told me that I needed medication to "fix" me; she would antagonize other students and me into verbal conflicts.

The day I lost it in class, I sat in my seat and didn't take out my notebook or pen. I just sat there, and I don't remember the full conversation, but Ms. Davis blurted out the phrase, "That's why you'll be just like your criminal father." I was shaking in my seat, the rage I felt. Did she even know my father or me for that matter? Did we have a rapport besides knowing each other's names? I held on to the desk as if it was anchoring me down. This kid Jerry for some reason thought it would be a good idea to repeat what Ms. Davis said. I must have blacked out or something. The very next thing I remember was Mr. Harris's arms wrapped around me, Ms. Davis screaming on her cellphone, Jerry lying on the ground, not moving, desk knocked over, and papers everywhere.

Ms. Wagner, the principal, informed my grandmother I'd be removed from the building for a while. My grandmother wasn't done with me. She still had faith. She would stand by my room at night and pray for me, "God, please ease my baby's pain and help him get through these dark nights. Let him know after every storm the sun comes out." I dreamed of a conversation I had with my dad. I remember running home scared with tears in my eyes. I told him I had witnessed a group of kids beat up and rob another. I wanted to help, but I was afraid.

I told him I wasn't like him. I'm not a hero. I don't have what you have inside me. I just froze. He told me there's a hero inside everyone. The circumstance has to be right, or we have to go through something to bring the hero out. When the moment comes, the hero's step up and spring into action. Then came the dad's hug. I used to hate that hug. I woke up from the dream in a cold sweat. It was one of those dreams where it seems real, and you feel it all. I was ten years old, soon to be eleven, wondering how an omnipotent being wasn't available when I needed him. God didn't exist to me anymore. There were no lights for the darkest nights.

***Read Rise of The Runners FOR FREE on [Amazon Kindle](#) or [Google Play Books](#)!***



***Virtuous Con has proven to be a great place to meet dope creators, so let me introduce you to***

## ***Paul C. Darden***



***For those who do not know, give us the elevator pitch for The Runners world of books.***

The Time Runners series educates youth through literacy by creating engaging historical fiction with characters that look and sound like kids in every American classroom. We expand vocabulary and teach multiple languages while teaching history and introducing people to cultures often left out of books. Students can learn from the past but also pave the way for a brighter future by focusing on what we can change instead of harping on what we can not.



***You're an educator - what are you hoping to teach within the pages of your books?***



Students can learn from the past and pave the way for a brighter future by focusing on what we can change instead of harping on what we can not. Helping expand vocabulary and informing students of the world at large. I hope to teach not just American history but world history through multiple lenses and for students to see the world through the eyes of others. Students can come to their own conclusions about the world as long as it's their opinion rather than someone else's. I hope to get students and people, in general, to think and question as much as possible while truly

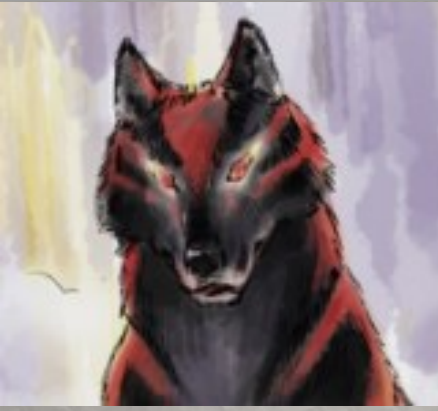
fact-checking. If the facts prove their original thinking wrong, they are not scared to face the truth, no matter how brutal. I also want to build a community and get back to the days where we had differences but were able to get past them and still get along.

***What was your first piece that you felt was ready for public consumption and was it successful?***

I felt the free eBook Rise of The Runners was ready after it went to editing. I was right people have loved it, but I was wrong because I was scammed out of so much money by a fake editor. I can laugh about it now because it is hilarious, but I didn't laugh at it when it happened. I wrestled with if I should "Dumb it down" and then decided, hell nah. I don't dumb things down in the class because that's an easy way out. I felt Rise of The Runners was ready because I had to let it go. I was scared to let it out. Because I didn't know how it would be received, I realized people would love or hate it. Its art.



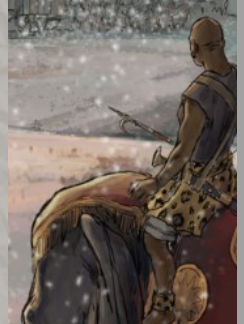
***I'm a process guy, when you set out to write the first book, did you have the whole story planned out to the end, or did you just follow stream of consciousness?***



I had an entire story planned, then it went out the window once i started writing. I stitched it up because the original plan started to expand. I am locked in with planning now because the vision is grand. The plan also changed once I decided to have characters from all over the world speak in their languages. This was insane on my part and recklessly tedious. However, it is worth it when students read in their languages and dialects. They glow with a sense of pride. They feel seen and respected just like they do in my classroom, and that is magic within itself. I have notes and little thoughts all over the place that I had to combine into one document because I have really great ideas for the story written on random things.

***Is there a project that you want to make outside of this series, or even outside of content for education, like just some pure fiction?***

I would love to live-action the Rise of the Runners free books like the marvel Disney series. I would also love to do a project on some badass heroes who happen to be teachers. I want to do something original because that's what we are lacking, and I think I could pull it off.

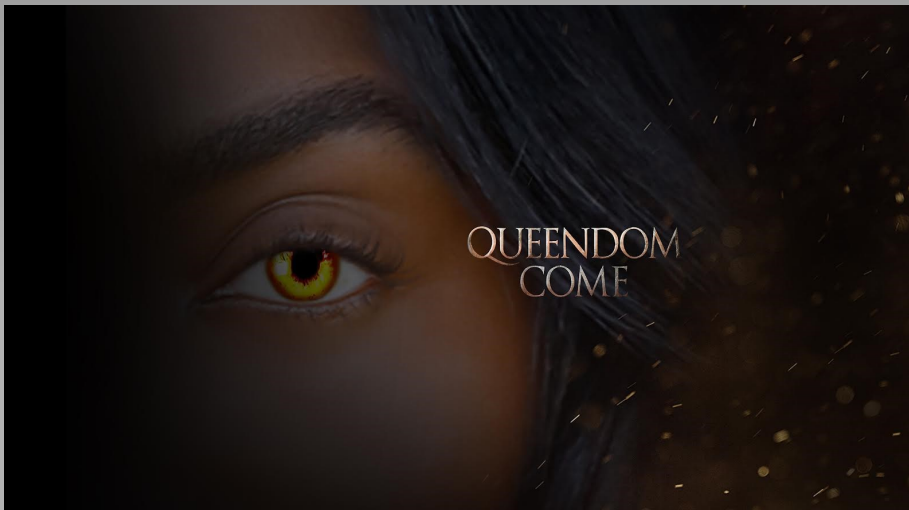


***Live action adaptations and more original content, needless to say, I am on board! The Runners universe of books is already expanding though, with The Oneirology Chronicles starting. The Expectancy Vision and Frozen Sands are already in the works!***

***Read Rise of The Runners FOR FREE on [Amazon Kindle](#) or [Google Play Books](#)!***

***Buy Freedom Runner, posters, and merch directly from [Serious Pens Publishing](#)!***





QUEENDOM  
COME



***Being that this is the 10th issue, I wanted to expand the field of creators I interview, and add features to the magazine, such as this embedded video! Click above to watch the trailer for the upcoming series Queendom Come!***

***In the event that the above video does not work (first time I'm working with embedded video here!) you can watch trailer on [YouTube!](#)***

*Looks fun right? Let's learn more about this project from one of the creators,*

# SARAH JEFFERSON CARTER



*For those who are not familiar, what is Queendom Come?*



Queendom Come is a cross-world/high fantasy series about a young, black woman, Sariya, who is struggling to build the typical American dream life when she soon discovers that she is anything but typical. Her grandmother and a cast of magical characters reveal themselves to be ancient, powerful beings exiled from their world thousands of years ago. They all play parts in guiding and manipulating Sariya as she tries to navigate these two worlds. When she discovers that she is the descendant of royalty and the last remaining key to return them all home, dark forces begin to converge to take her power and her throne.

*You are starting with a live action series, no book, no comic - what is it about video that really appeals to you to tell the stories you want to tell?*

I'm a filmmaker. I've worked in the industry prior to having my twin boys and have worked independently ever since. I also love the combining of mediums particularly music and film. As a musician, music is a huge inspiration for my writing and filmmaking sometimes even being the way I picture, cultivate and execute a scene. I love the marriage of film, sound, the edit, VFX, and music coming together to create a whole new world (a new fantastic point of view).



I love fantasy books and comics! I read every chance I get. And I love the large amounts of black fantasy and sci-fi I've seen on bookshelves these past three years. We are really in a new renaissance for black art in these genres and I buy everything I can get my hands on. I've been working on this project since my short film in 2017. I wanted to see us in fantasy, particularly epic fantasy. Lord of the Rings was a pivotal book for me. But I wanted something new in the film space that didn't just have us as side characters in a white person's tale. I chose live action because we haven't seen it yet. With so many great voices in the book and comic space, this was something I could give to us.

***A big motivating phrase in the video space, especially on YouTube is some variation of "just press record." When you decided to make this, did you sit down and plan out the whole show in fine detail, or just the broad strokes so you can get down to shooting?***



I always want to jump in and get on set, but I knew to build something of worth was going to take time. Good epic fantasy ie: Game of Thrones, Lord of the Rings, The Inheritance Trilogy, Avatar the Last Airbender, is all about world building and for me, the best part about fantasy is world building! I'm still building now as I'm writing session 2! But I first needed to understand the story, characters and the world if I was going to stay with them as a series. What was the magic system? Who were the players and what was their past?

I wrote what I wanted to see. A year later and 10 rewrites in, I had something I didn't have the budget for and had no way of getting money of that magnitude. So, I revamped and rewrote creating the beginning of an endless world to explore. One that will hopefully get behind the camera way more often! So yeah, I guess I went into some pretty fine detail.

***How has production been coming along? Any roadblocks you had to overcome?***

We are currently in post with a release date set for May 11, 2023!! From beginning to end a production is a challenge but a low-no budget production black fantasy show? Roadblocks have been many and almost a daily occurrence since we started in January of 2021. Finding our tribe to make this happen was a huge challenge but throughout this process we have found some lifelong colleges and that alone was worth the hardships. Shooting in LA is also a challenge if you don't have money. All I can say is be kind, bring beer and empty the camera footage before they take the gear! Also, VFX is a beast! A necessity especially on a fantasy show but it has been a huge challenge. Again, finding the right people is 90% of the game.



***What is your hope for this show? Are you keeping it independent permanently, or is a network pickup a preferred path?***

We're open to any path that will get Queendom Come to its audience and make it the best it can be. But our focus is not on Hol-

lywood at the moment. We're highly focused on our audience. My greatest hope is for Queendom Come to find its audience; the only black girl at the ren fair, the blerd in the bookstore, the allies and creatives of all ethnic and cultural backgrounds. I want it to be worlds upon worlds of bipoc content with the audience to back it up!

***High goals, and from what I've seen so far, she's absolutely going to reach them. The trailer looks fun, and y'all caught that she's writing season 2 already? I like to hear that, especially in today's market of cancellations. Make sure you subscribe to [Rhythm and Noise on YouTube](#) and hit that notification bell so you know when the first episode drops!***



***Make sure you're following across all the social media channels as well !***

YouTube - [Rhythm and Noise Productions](#)

Facebook - [Queendom Come Series](#)

Instagram - [QueendomCome Official](#)

TikTok - [QueendomCome Official](#)

# GALLERY

*Fish Lee is a staple in the indie comics community. I knew he got around, but when I was looking for characters to do the cover of this issue, I saw just how many of the universes featured had art by Fish. He nailed the cover, and I wanted to show off some more of his work.*

*Make sure you follow Fish on [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#), and [TikTok](#).*



*The left piece is so freaking great—it tells a whole story. You know so much about the characters and the location without a single box of text, or even color.*

*I absolutely love the sense of scale here. Feels like it's being shot from a Helicopter.*





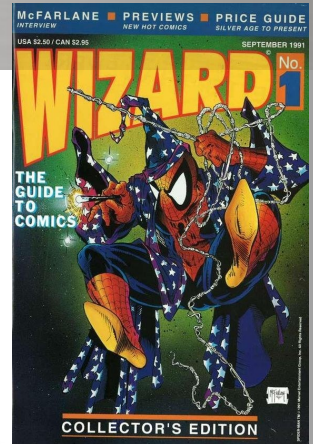
If you haven't yet, you should absolutely go grab his book, *Greenzone: Life in the Blocks*. Available on the [FSK Store!](#)



# HOMIE HOMAGE

*In this new section, I would like to challenge all artists to create sketches of your, or your favorite indie characters, but with a specific caveat: as with this issue's cover, it's gotta be an homage to a Wizard, Overstreet's Fan, or Hero magazine cover. It doesn't have to be a perfect reproduction, but I want to be able to see the inspiration. I'm using this as a little prompt for myself as well, so there will at least be one of these every issue, but I'd love for this to rival the best fan-submitted art section of the era.*

*Mike did the cover for issue 1 of Catalyst, and this pose really felt like something Sissy would attempt. Go easy on me.*



Sissy, Sissiphean Complex © & ™ Mike Emeritz.

# BOLDSAGA

BRAVE ONWARDS LIMIT DESTROYER



Written & Illustrated by  
**EUWARNII HUGHES**

1

**BOLDSAGA**  
BRAVE ONWARDS LIMIT DESTROYER  
CHAPTER 1:  
THE DESTINY GATE



DAYS MAY BE DARK,  
BUT STILL DON'T GIVE UP.  
ALFONSO BOWEN

I dedicate this manga  
to God, my wife Tamara, Rochelle,  
Ewart, Rosalie, Brandon, De'shaun, Derek, Jean, my family, friends

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First published in New York by Great Gale LLC.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places,  
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Published by Great Gale, LLC  
P.O. Box 344  
Poughkeepsie, New York, 12602

[www.greatgale.com](http://www.greatgale.com)



IN AGES PAST,  
GALACTIC WAR  
WAS EVERYWHERE.  
THE WICKED  
**ISITHUNZI (SHADOW)**  
EMPIRE PLUNGED  
MANY PLANETS  
INTO DESPAIR.

DESPITE THIS,  
ONE BRAVE WARRIOR'S  
DESPERATE ACT  
TRIGGERED AN  
**ANCIENT RELIC;**  
TRAPPING THE ENEMY!

HE WAS **SHAKA ZULU,**  
THE FIRST **ANANSI!**  
SPAWNING A NEW AGE,  
HE BECAME KING AND  
CREATED THE  
**AWEZELAN EMPIRE,**  
AT A COST.

SHAKA HID THE RELIC  
AMONG THE STARS  
AND **VANISHED!**  
CENTURIES LATER  
THE ISITHUNZI RETURNED.

THIS NEW AGE  
WILL BE DEFINED  
BY **WHOEVER**  
RECLAIMS THE  
RELIC FIRST...

# BOLDSAGA

BRAVE ONWARDS LIMIT DESTROYER

## CHAPTER 1: THE DESTINY GATE

STORY & ART BY EUWARNII HUGHES

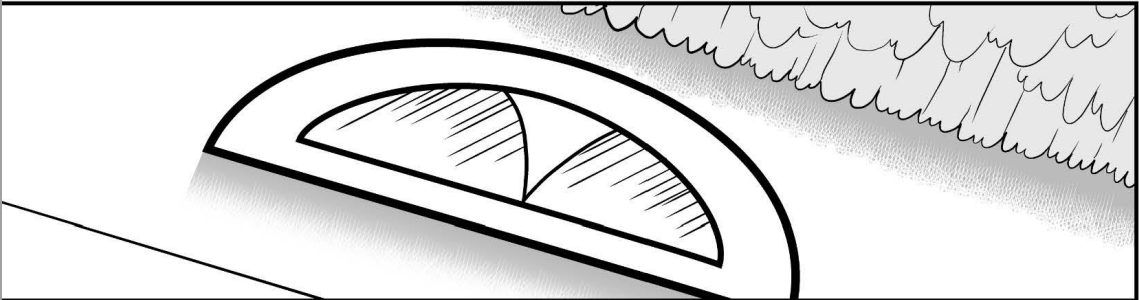




UKUZOLA\* VILLAGE,  
AWEZELA EMPIRE



\*UKUZOLA IS THE XHOSA TERM FOR CALM







MASEGO UMNATHA  
15 YEARS OLD

YES  
SSS  
SSS  
!!!!  
!!!!

BAM

BAM!

KNOCK  
KNOCK

MASEGO!



ONE DAY  
I WILL BE...

KNOCK!  
KNOCK!

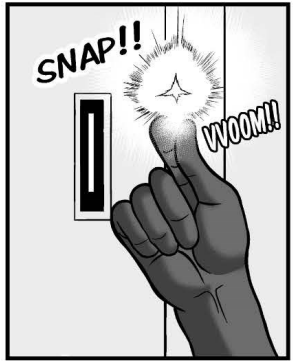
MASEGO!



THE  
NEXT  
ANAN...

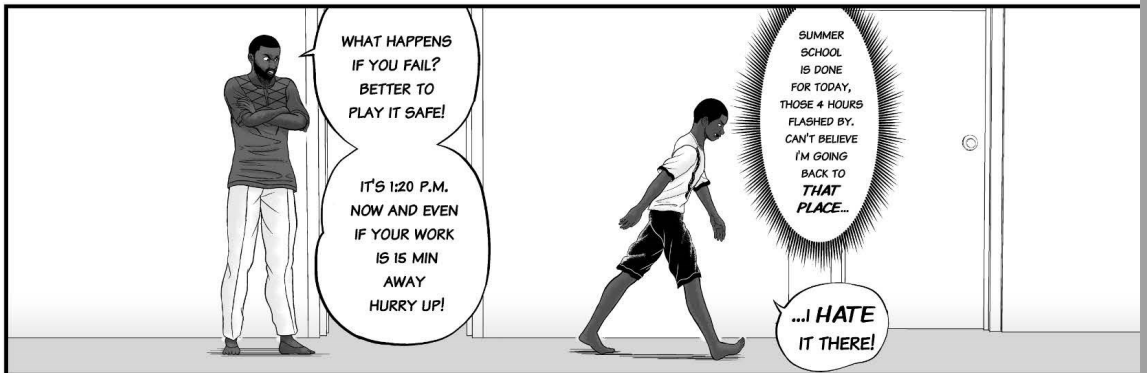
KNOCK!  
KNOCK!  
KNOCK!

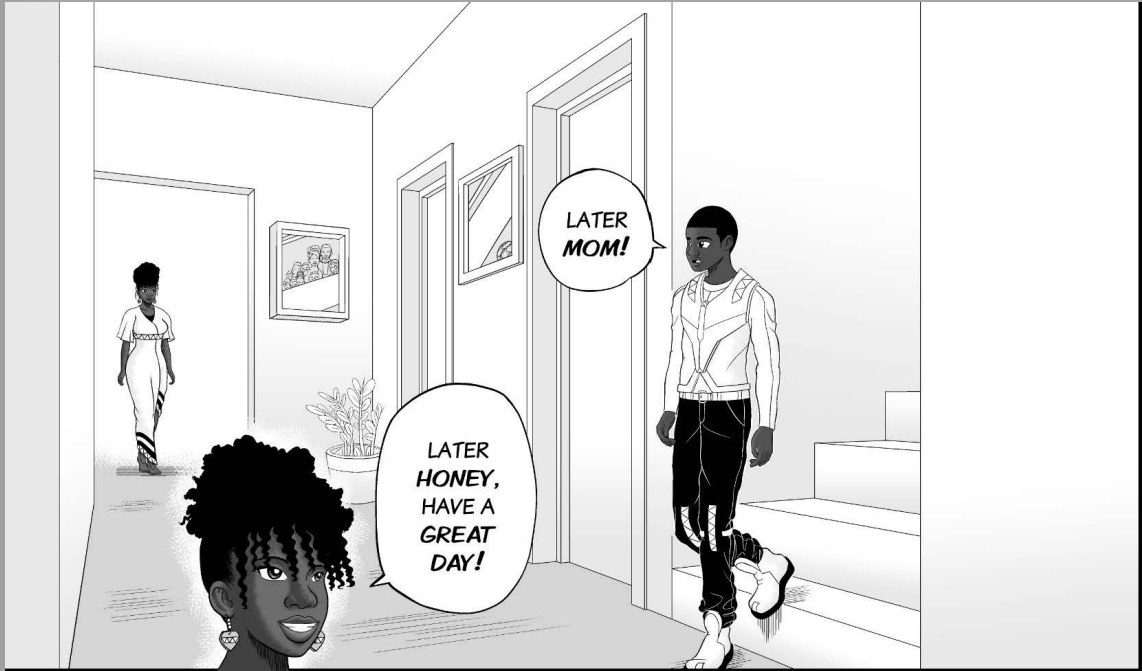
MASS  
SEEE  
GGO!!



**DIDN'T  
YOU  
HEAR  
ME  
CALLING  
YOU  
!!!!**





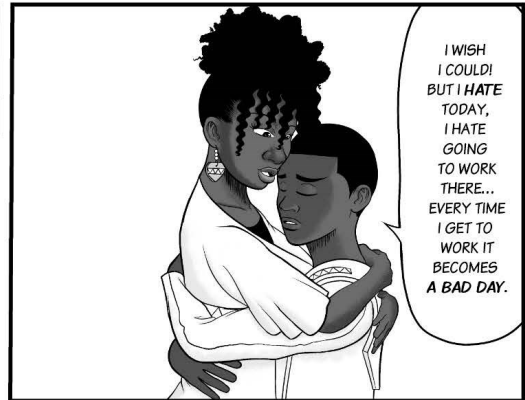


LATER MOM!

LATER HONEY, HAVE A GREAT DAY!



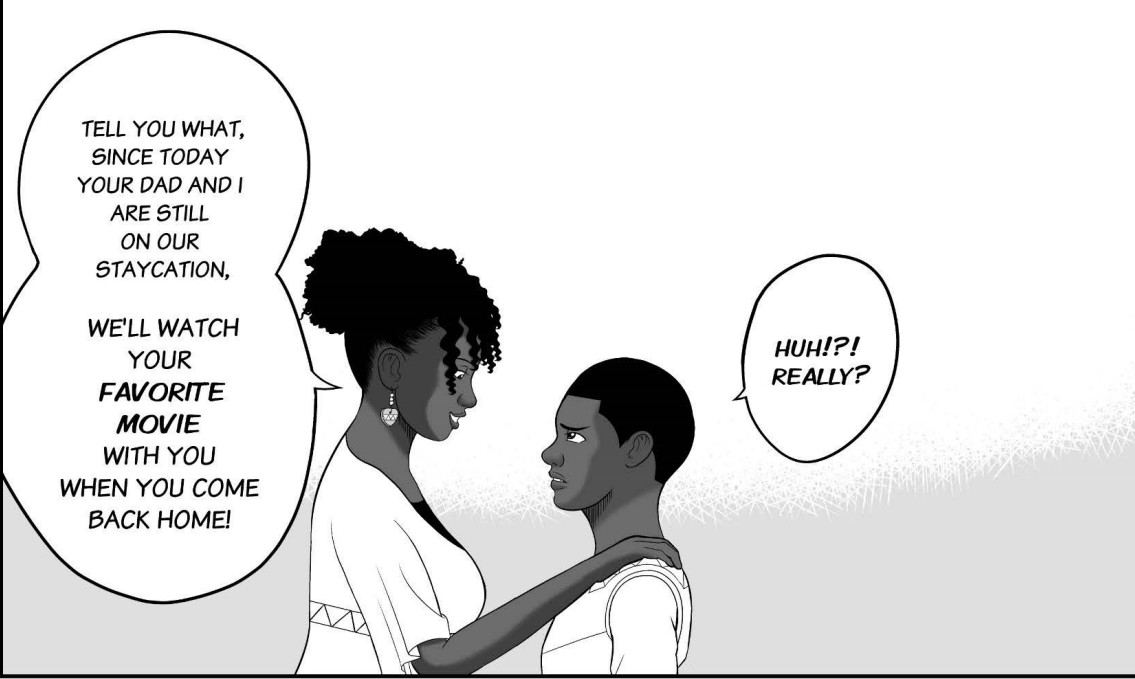
MAKENA UMNATHA



I WISH I COULD! BUT I HATE TODAY, I HATE GOING TO WORK THERE... EVERY TIME I GET TO WORK IT BECOMES A BAD DAY.



THERE AREN'T ANY BAD DAYS, JUST **BAD MOMENTS.** AS LONG AS YOUR BREATHING THERE IS A CHANCE **TO TURN IT AROUND.**



TELL YOU WHAT,  
SINCE TODAY  
YOUR DAD AND I  
ARE STILL  
ON OUR  
STAYCATION,  
  
WE'LL WATCH  
YOUR  
**FAVORITE  
MOVIE**  
WITH YOU  
WHEN YOU COME  
BACK HOME!

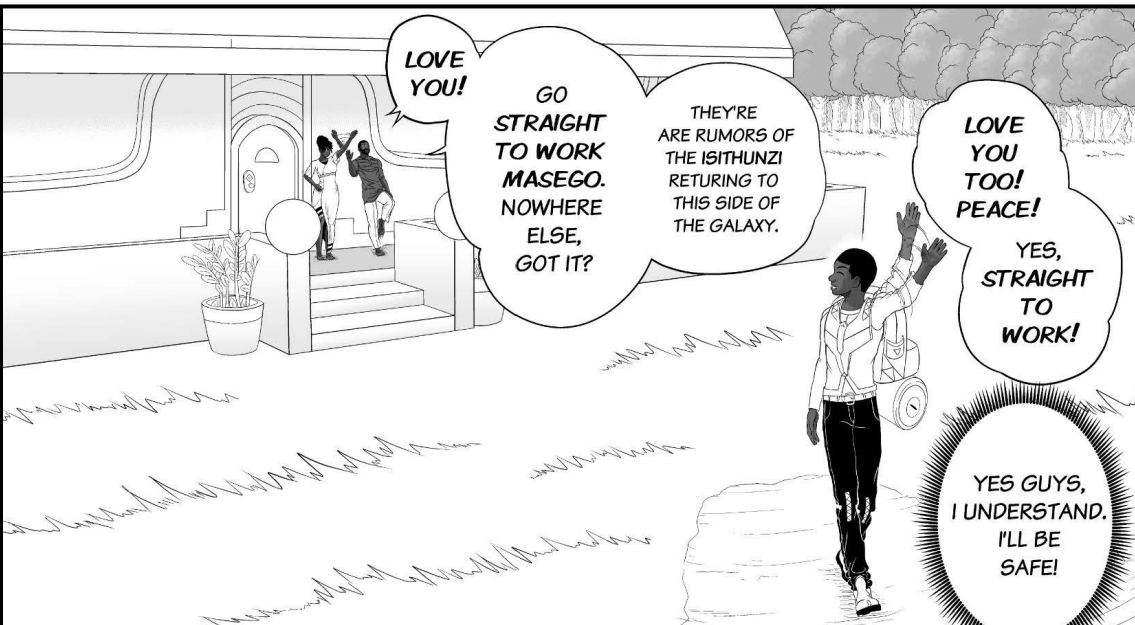
**HUH!?!  
REALLY?**



**HOW'S  
THAT  
SOUND?**



**SOUNDS  
AWESOME!  
CAN'T WAIT!**



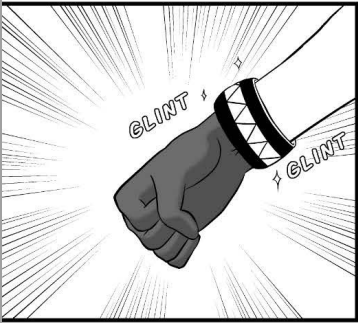
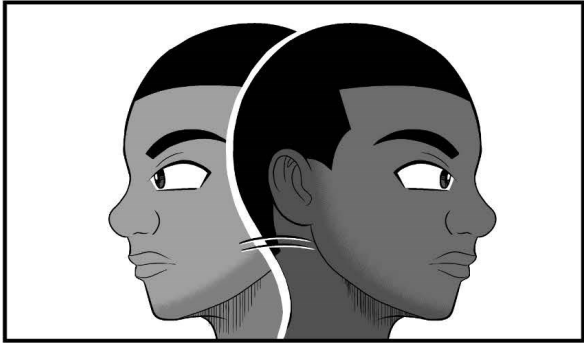
**LOVE  
YOU!**

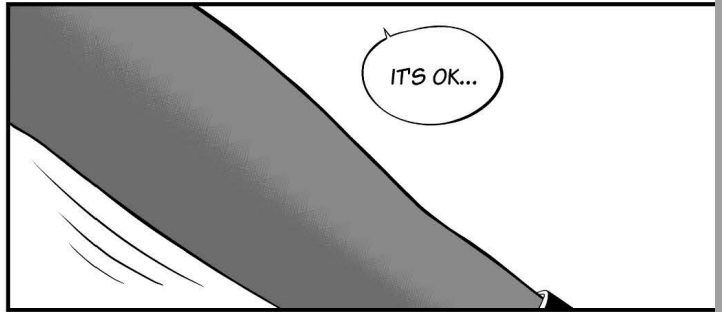
**GO  
STRAIGHT  
TO WORK  
MASEGO.  
NOWHERE  
ELSE,  
GOT IT?**

THEY'RE  
ARE RUMORS OF  
THE ISITHUNZI  
RETURNING TO  
THIS SIDE OF  
THE GALAXY.

**LOVE  
YOU  
TOO!  
PEACE!**  
  
YES,  
STRAIGHT  
TO  
WORK!

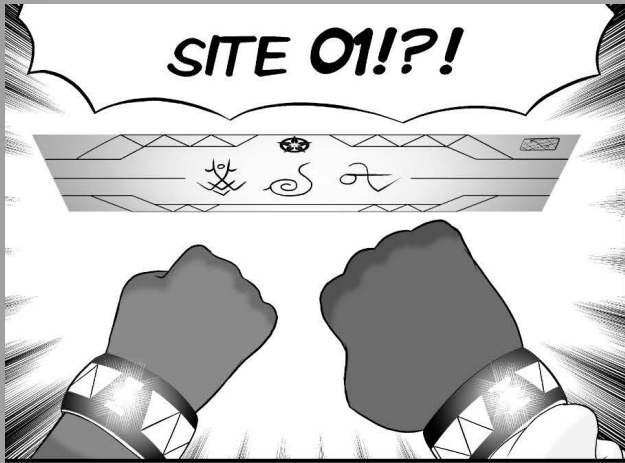
**YES GUYS,  
I UNDERSTAND.  
I'LL BE  
SAFE!**





\*RINGG = RADIANT IDENTIFYING NAVIGATOR & NANO GADGET





THAT'S AWESOME! EVEN THOUGH I'VE GONE BEFORE, I'VE NEVER SEEN YOU THERE?

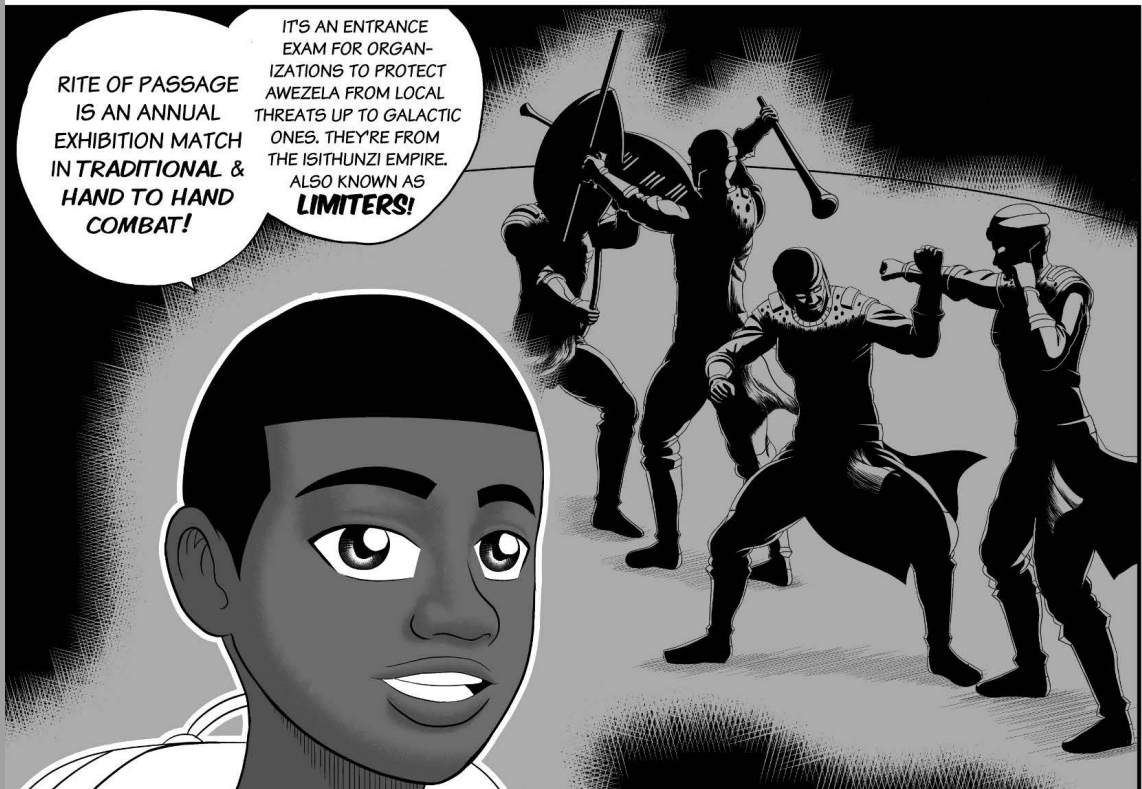


THAT'S CAUSE IT'S MY FIRST TIME! I'M KINDA NERVOUS, I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO EXPECT.



DONT WORRY, IF YOU'VE GOTTEN A RIING YOU'VE GOT GREAT POTENTIAL!

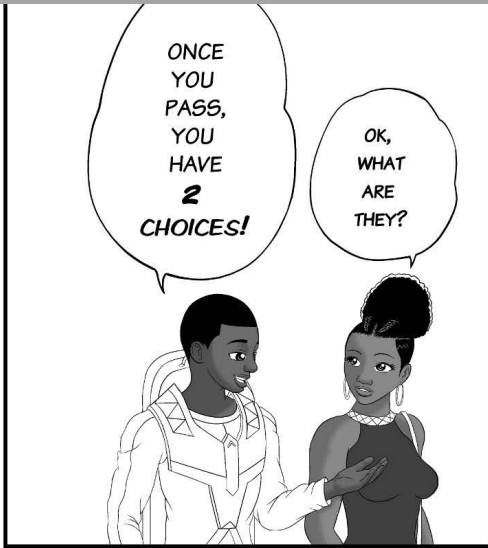
REALLY? OK!



RITE OF PASSAGE IS AN ANNUAL EXHIBITION MATCH IN TRADITIONAL & HAND TO HAND COMBAT!

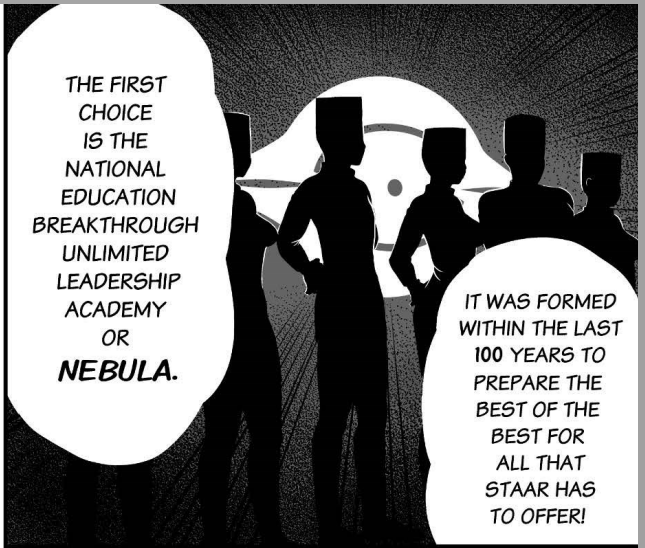
IT'S AN ENTRANCE EXAM FOR ORGANIZATIONS TO PROTECT AWEZELA FROM LOCAL THREATS UP TO GALACTIC ONES. THEY'RE FROM THE ISITHUNZI EMPIRE. ALSO KNOWN AS **LIMITERS!**





ONCE YOU PASS, YOU HAVE **2 CHOICES!**

OK, WHAT ARE THEY?



THE FIRST CHOICE IS THE NATIONAL EDUCATION BREAKTHROUGH UNLIMITED LEADERSHIP ACADEMY OR **NEBULA.**

IT WAS FORMED WITHIN THE LAST 100 YEARS TO PREPARE THE BEST OF THE BEST FOR ALL THAT STAAR HAS TO OFFER!

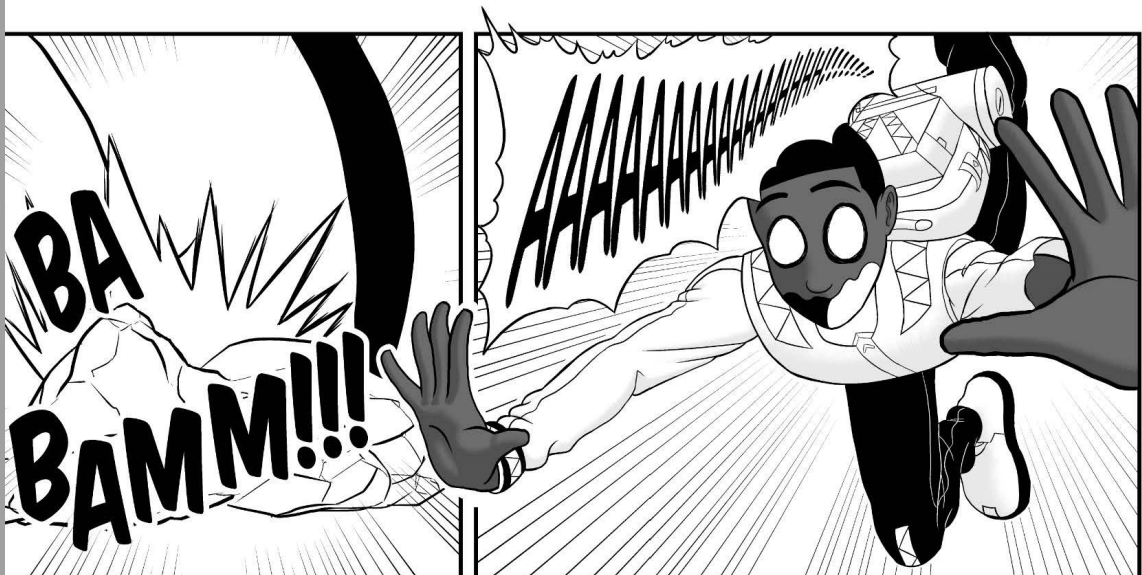
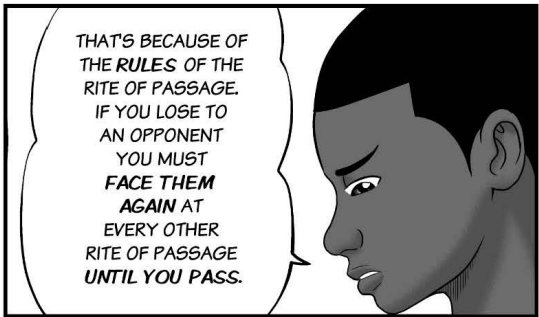
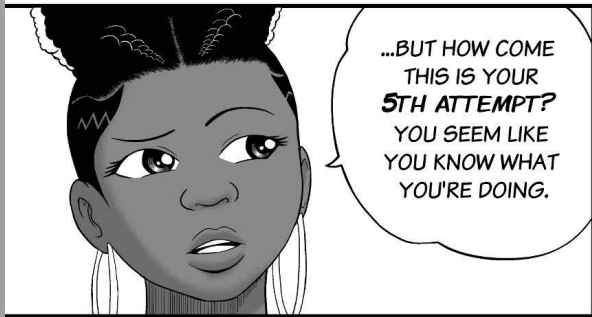
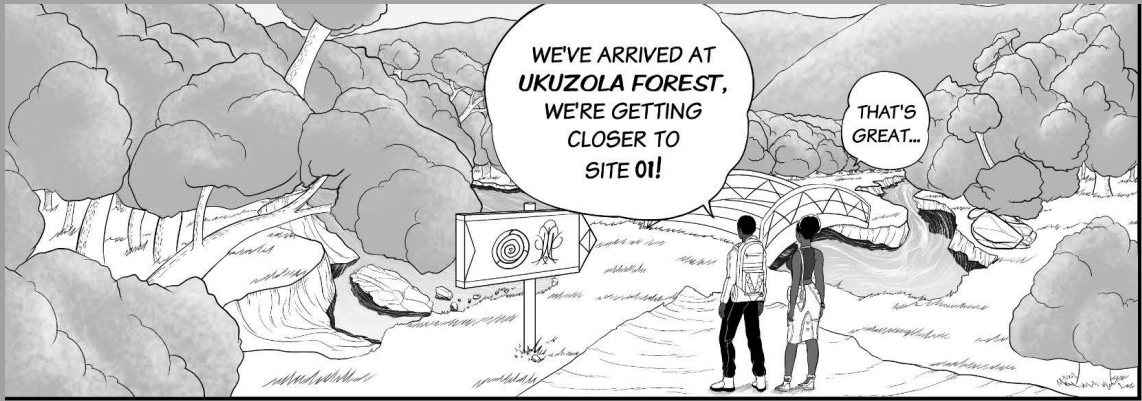


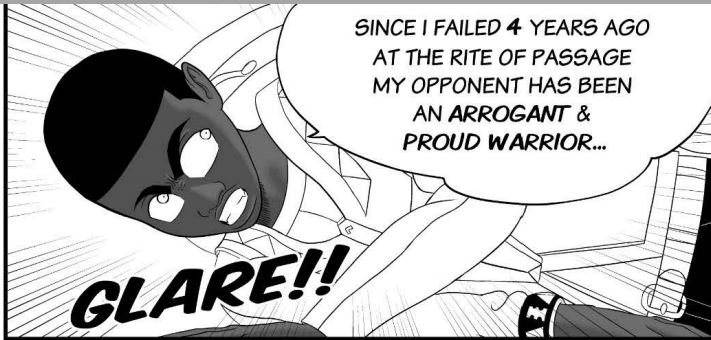
IT'S ONLY AVAILABLE FOR AGES **10-15** SO I AGED OUT. THIS IS... UHH... ACTUALLY **MY 5TH ATTEMPT.**

WOW THAT'S **A LOT!** YOU MUST REALLY WANT TO GET IN!



**MORE THAN ANYTHING!!**  
THE SECOND CHOICE IF YOU PASS IS THE STRATEGIC TACTICAL ASSAULT & ADVANCED RESCUE OR **STAAR.**  
  
AN ELITE ORGANIZATION RESPONSIBLE FOR TRAINING THE BEST WARRIORS THROUGHOUT AWEZELA. IN FACT **EVERY ANANSI** MATRICULATED INTO **STAAR.**  
  
I'VE TRAINED ALL SUMMER & PASSING TODAY GIVES ME CLEAR ACCESS TO **STAAR!!**



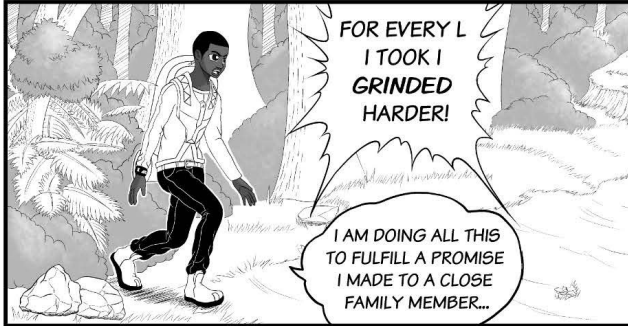


SINCE I FAILED 4 YEARS AGO  
AT THE RITE OF PASSAGE  
MY OPPONENT HAS BEEN  
AN **ARROGANT &  
PROUD WARRIOR...**

**GLARE!!**



THE  
PUGNACIOUS  
**BOIPELO  
ISIBINDI.**



FOR EVERY L  
I TOOK I  
**GRINDED  
HARDER!**

I AM DOING ALL THIS  
TO FULFILL A PROMISE  
I MADE TO A CLOSE  
FAMILY MEMBER...



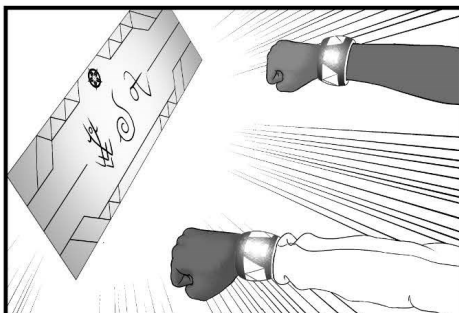
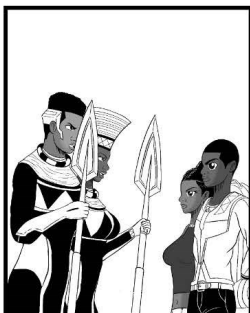
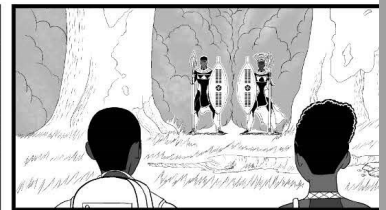
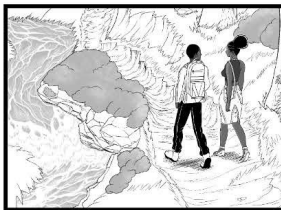
TODAY'S THE DAY  
I GET THE W,  
THAT I WIPE  
THAT  
SMUG LOOK  
OFF HIS  
ANNOYING  
FACE!

YOU GOT THIS!



TODAY'S  
THE DAY  
I **MOVE  
FORWARD  
TOWARDS  
MY DREAM.**

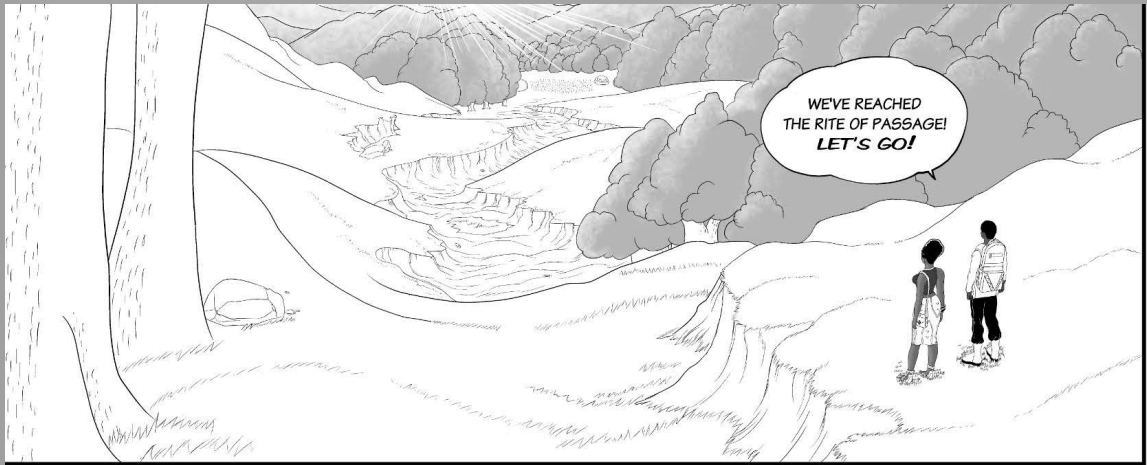
OK,  
I'LL BE  
ROOTING  
FOR YOU.



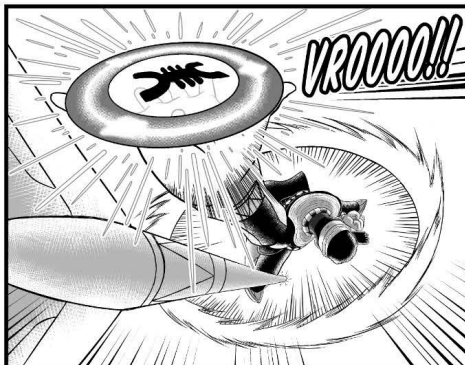
OK SHANI, IT'S  
JUST BEYOND  
THESE BUSHES...

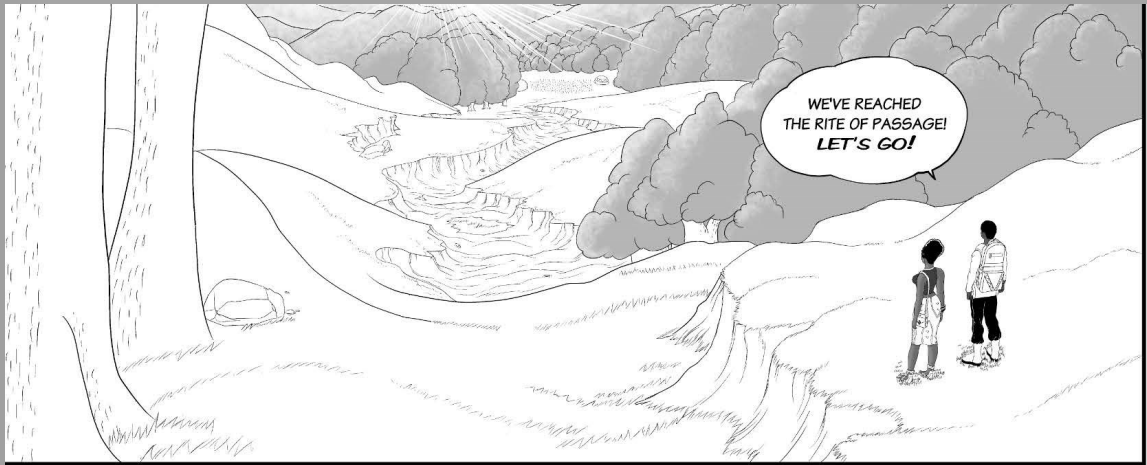
**RUSTLE**

**RUSTLE**

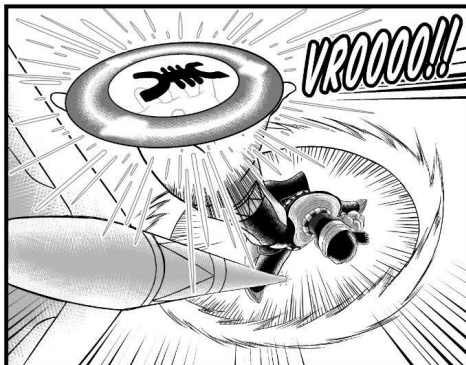


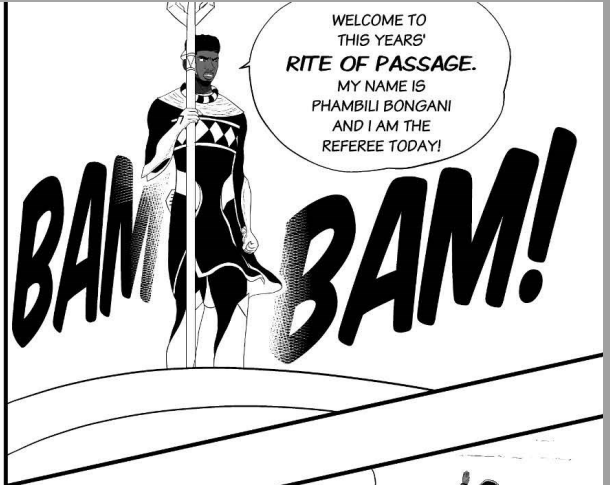
\*EISHI IS A KHOI TERM FOR EXPRESSING EXCLAMATION FROM SUPRISE OR SHOCK.



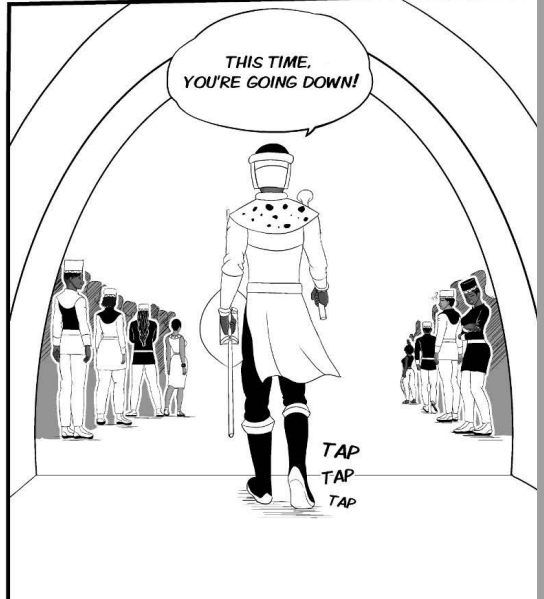
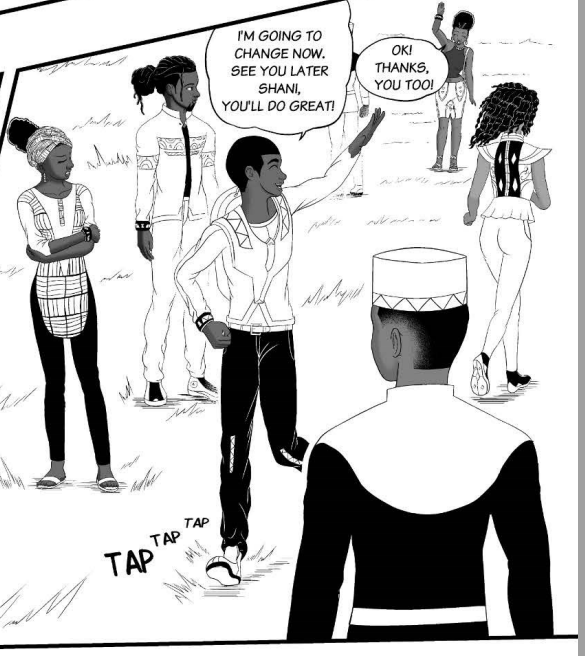


\*EISHI IS A KHOI TERM FOR EXPRESSING EXCLAMATION FROM SUPRISE OR SHOCK.





BRING 120%  
OR  
QUIT NOW!  
FIRST ROUND  
MASEGO  
UMNATHA  
VS.  
BOIPELO  
ISIBINDI!





THERE HE GOES...AGAIN

WHEN WILL HE LEARN.

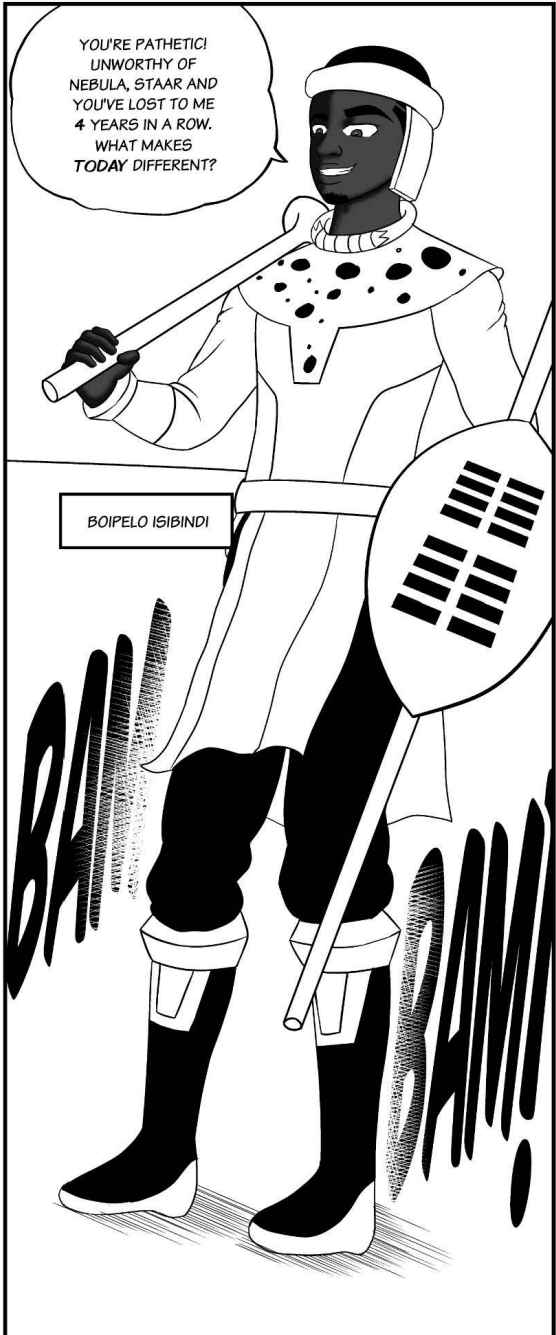
WHO KNOWS.



YOUR WINNING STREAK ENDS HERE!



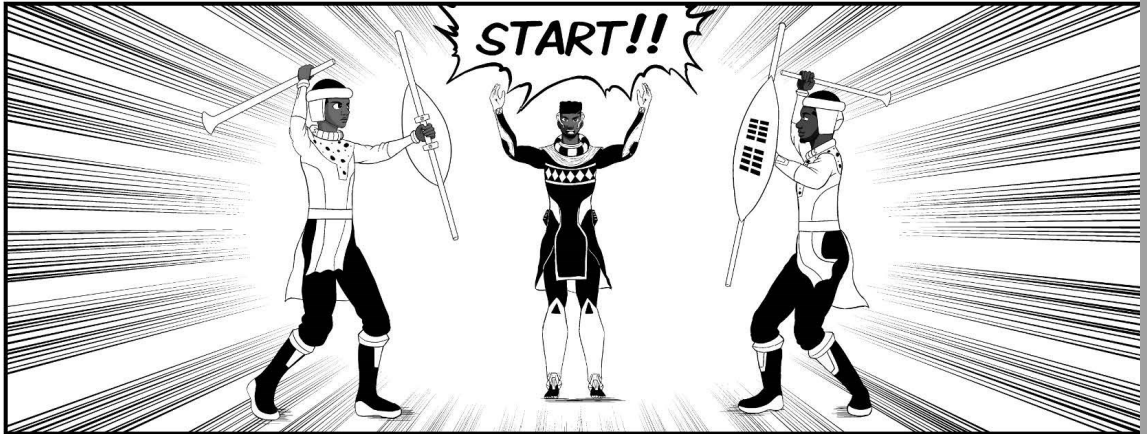
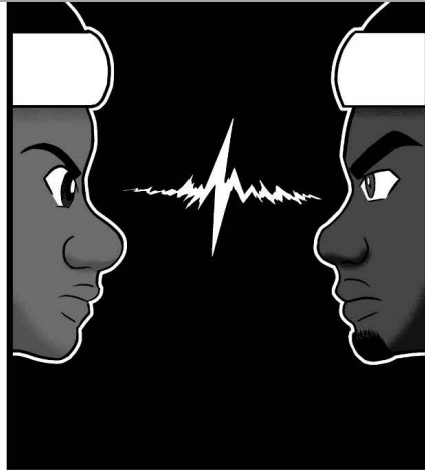
**STOP CAPPIN!!**



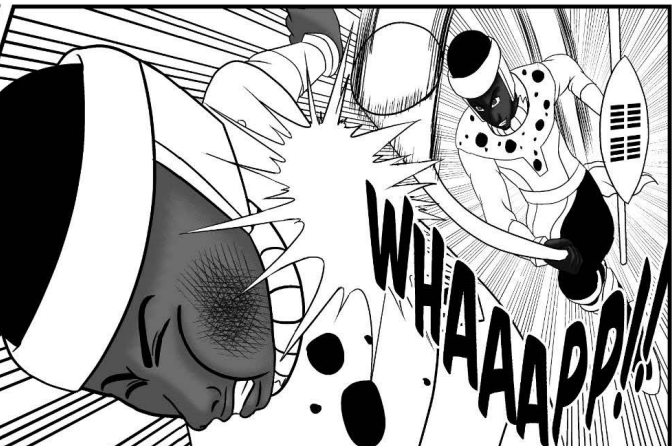
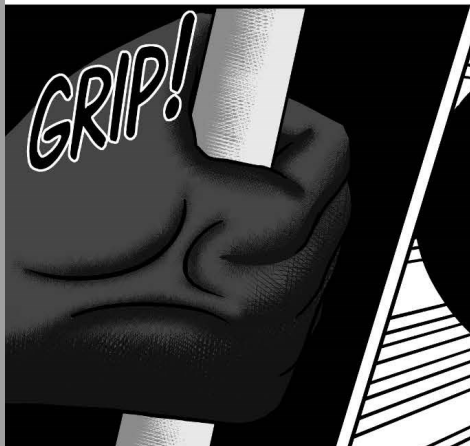
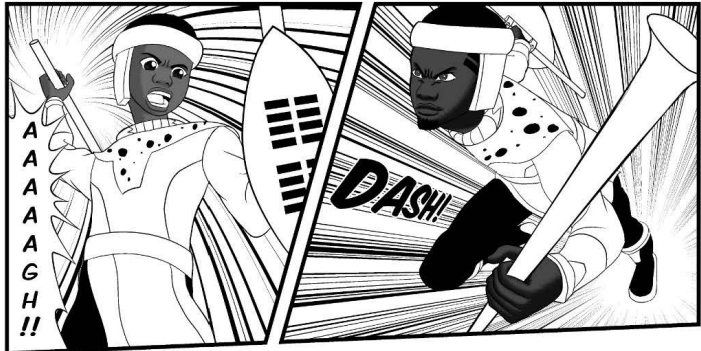
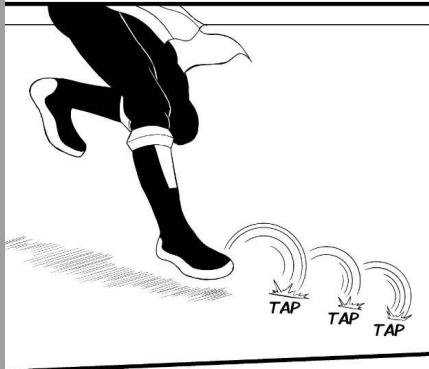
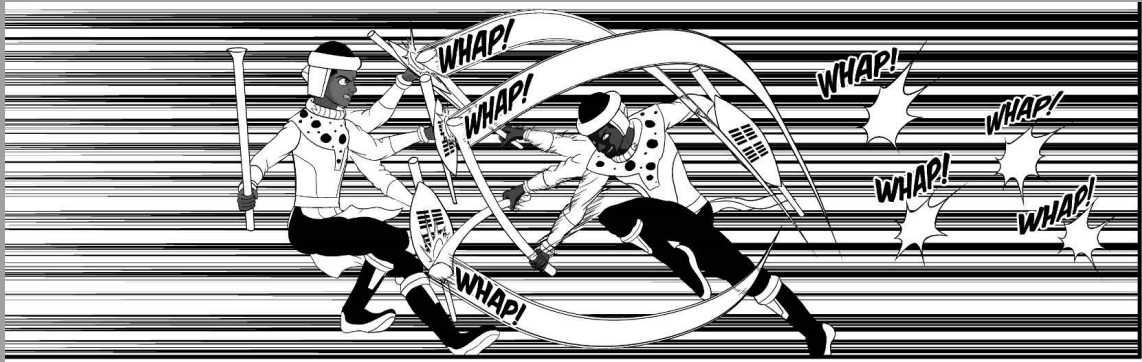
YOU'RE PATHETIC! UNWORTHY OF NEBULA, STAAR AND YOU'VE LOST TO ME 4 YEARS IN A ROW. WHAT MAKES TODAY DIFFERENT?

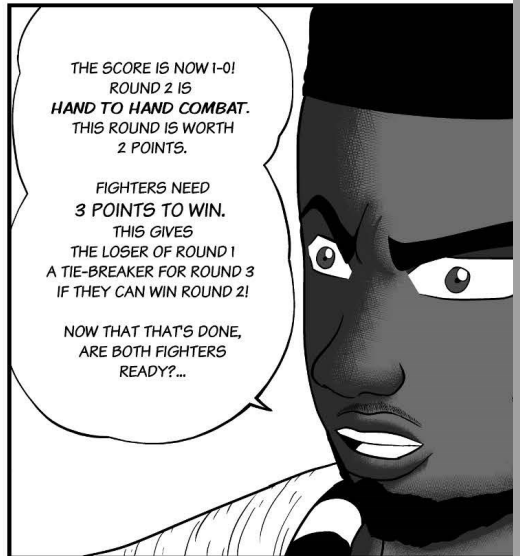
BOIPELO ISIBINDI

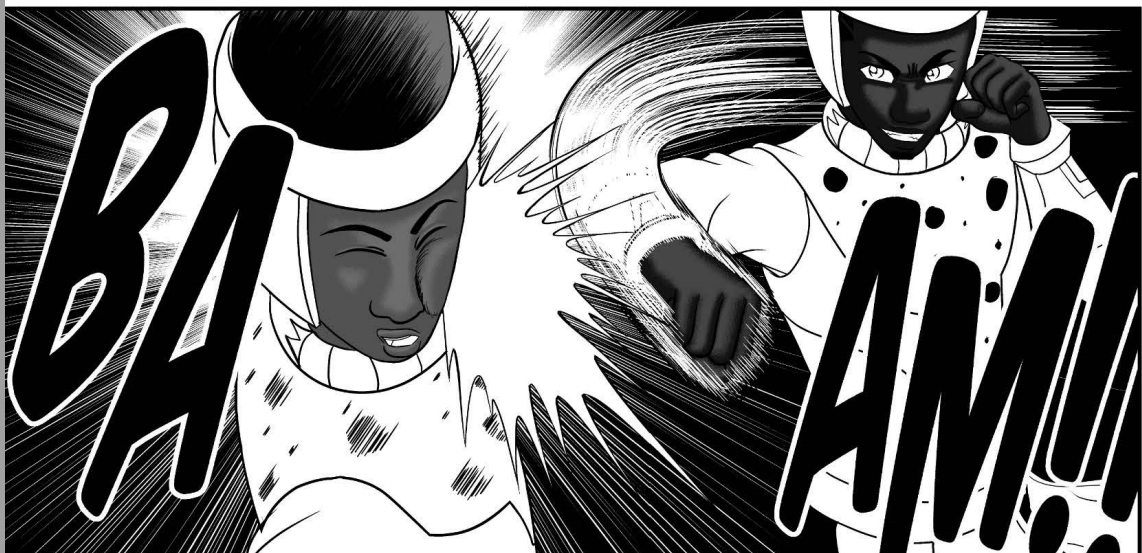
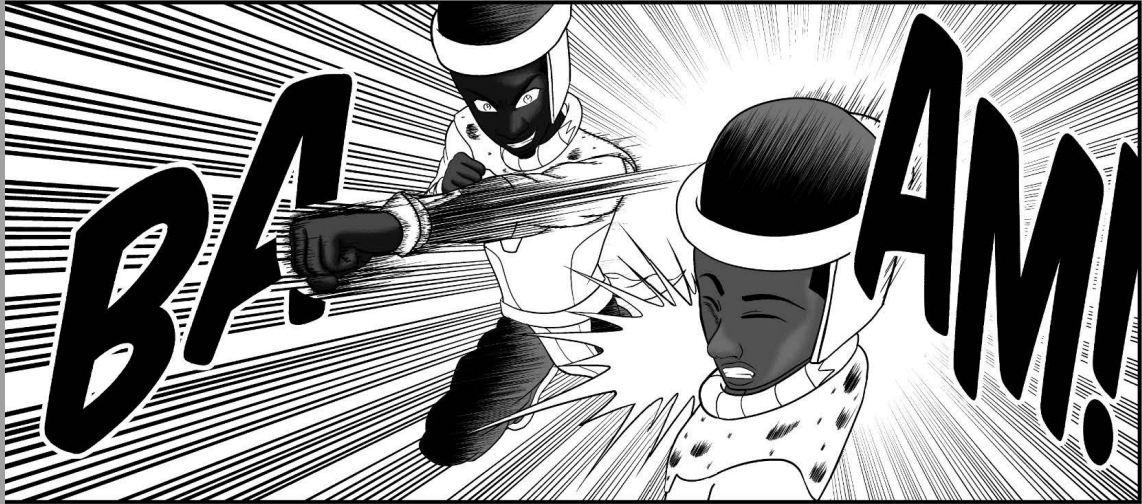
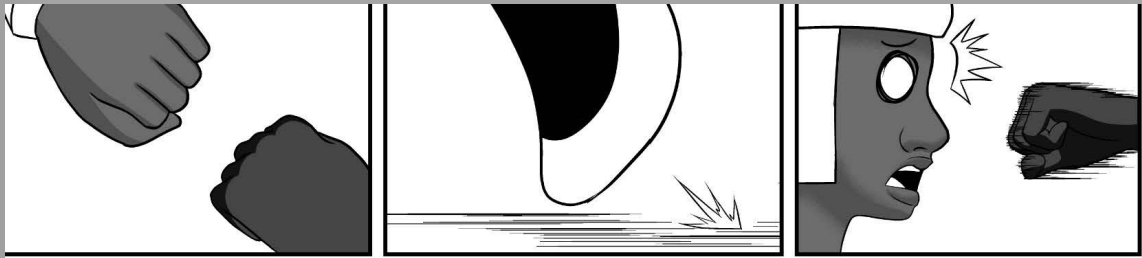


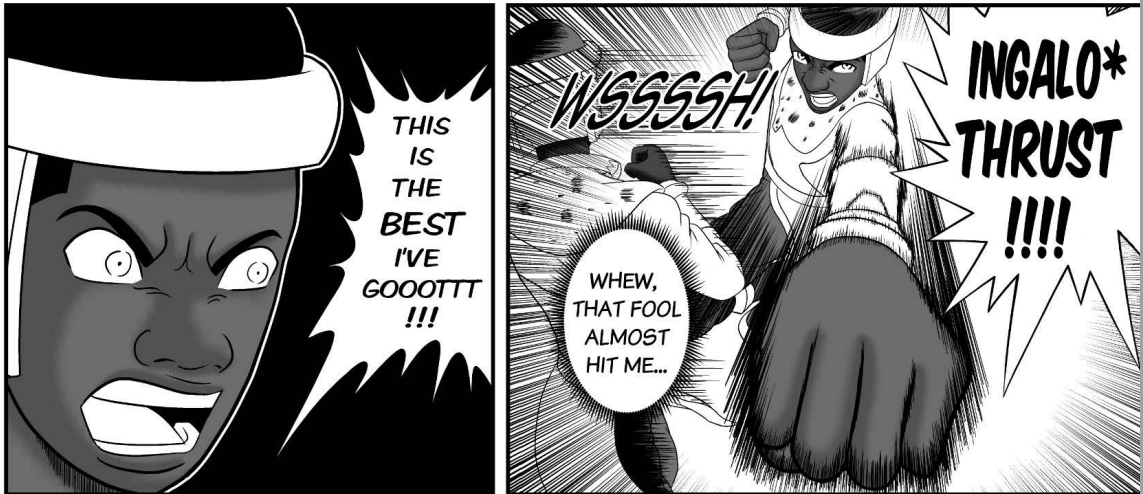
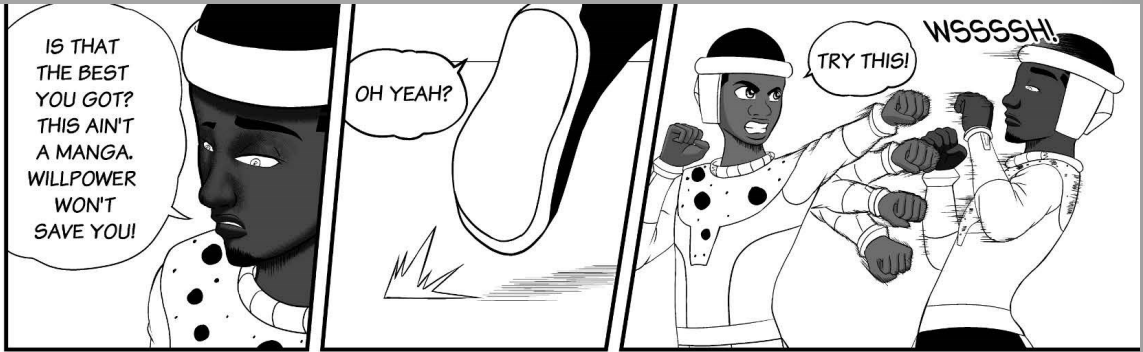












\*INGALO IS THE XHOSA TERM FOR "ARM"





ISIBINDI STYLE:  
PROUD  
IGIZA!!!\*

WHAAA

AM!!!

\*IGIZA IS THE XHOSA TERM FOR "GEYSER"



YAY!!  
CLAP!  
CLAP!

EISH!  
HE MUST BE  
DEVASTATED

CLAP!  
CLAP!  
YESS!

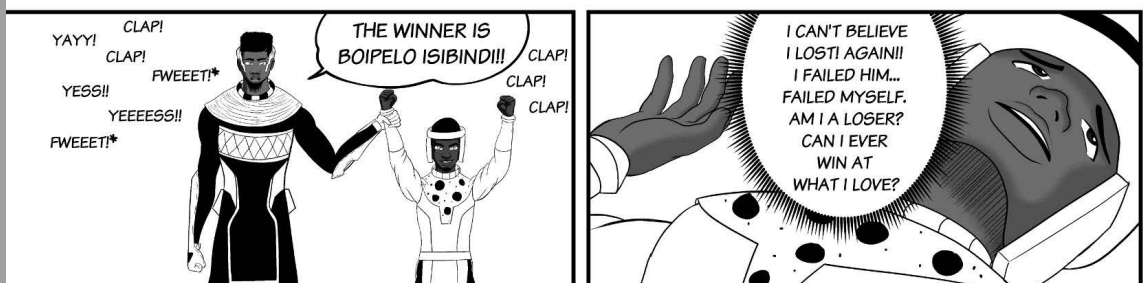
YOUR BEST ISN'T  
GOOD ENOUGH...



...AND  
ONCE AGAIN  
YOU LOSE!  
JUST GIVE UP  
ON YOUR GOAL,  
YOUR LIFE,  
EVERYTHING...

...ALL YOU'LL EVER  
BE IS A **LOSER!**

\*FWEET IS SFX FOR "WHISTLING!"

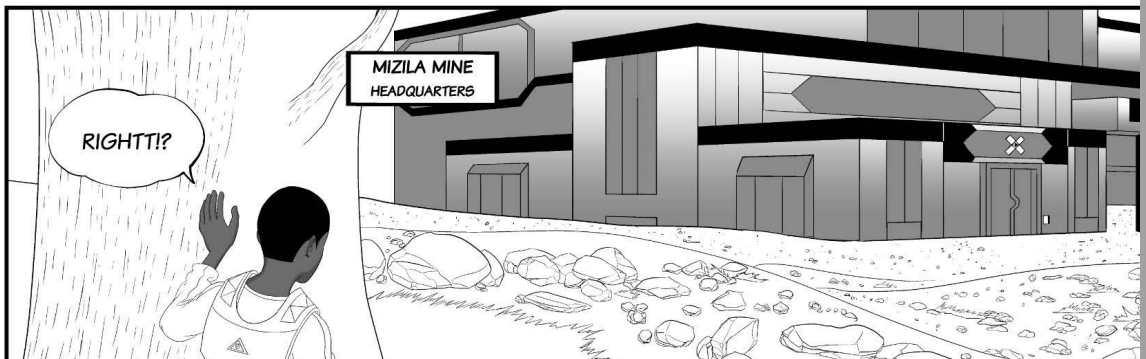
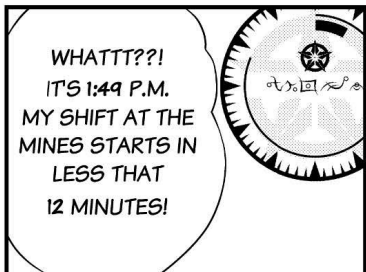
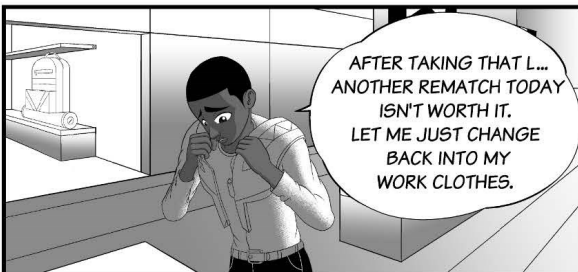
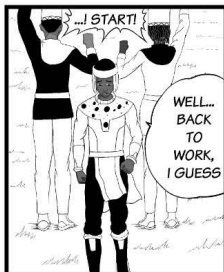
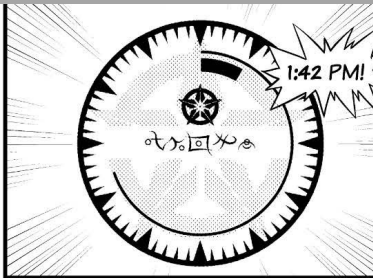


YAY!!  
CLAP!  
CLAP!  
YESS!!  
YEEEESS!!  
FWEET!\*

THE WINNER IS  
BOIPELO ISIBINDI!!!

CLAP!  
CLAP!  
CLAP!

I CAN'T BELIEVE  
I LOST AGAIN!!  
I FAILED HIM...  
FAILED MYSELF.  
AM I A LOSER?  
CAN I EVER  
WIN AT  
WHAT I LOVE?





MR. ENTABENI  
MIZILA MINE BOSS

YOU'RE FINALLY  
HERE!!?!  
YOU'RE OVER  
30 MINUTES  
LATE!!!  
GO AHEAD  
AND FIND  
YOUR MECHA  
DRONE,  
GOPHER.

IT GOT LOST,  
AGAIN!  
IT SHUTDOWN  
AND WON'T  
RESPOND TO  
THE REMOTE  
RESTART.  
GO PICK IT UP  
QUICKLY  
AND REPORT  
BACK  
TO ME!

LATE  
AGAIN!

WHAT A  
LOSER!



ADISA  
ENTABENI

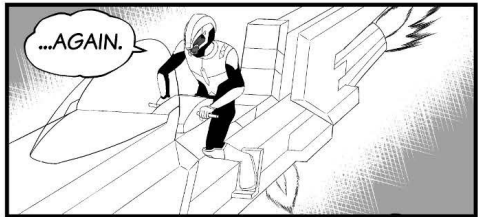
AFIA  
ENTABENI

WHY DOES HE  
EVEN BOTHER  
SHOWING UP!

GLUTTON FOR  
PUNISHMENT  
MAYBE?



HERE WE GO...

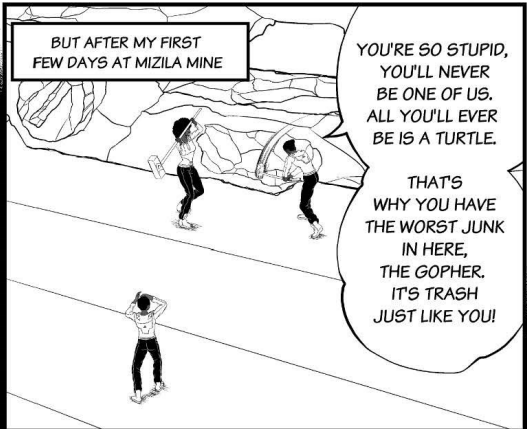


...AGAIN.



IT ALL HAPPENED SO FAST...

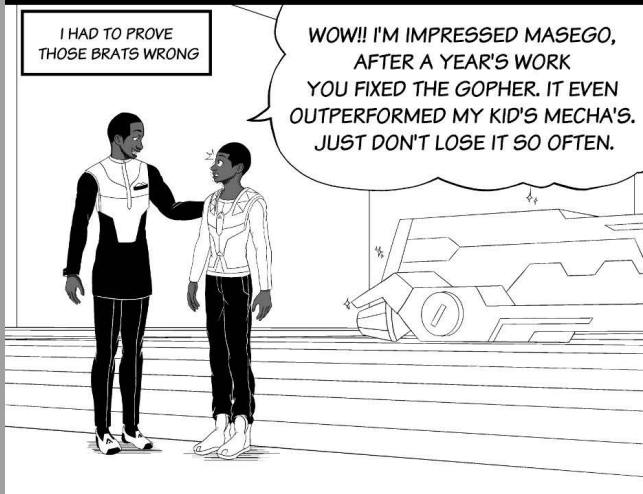
...YOU ALREADY FAILED  
THE RITE OF  
PASSAGE 3 TIMES,  
IT'S NOT FOR YOU.  
WORK AT MIZILA MINE  
INSTEAD. WE INSIST,  
BASED ON YOUR  
GRADES IT'S  
SOMETHING  
YOU CAN EXCEL AT...



BUT AFTER MY FIRST  
FEW DAYS AT MIZILA MINE

YOU'RE SO STUPID,  
YOU'LL NEVER  
BE ONE OF US.  
ALL YOU'LL EVER  
BE IS A TURTLE.

THAT'S  
WHY YOU HAVE  
THE WORST JUNK  
IN HERE,  
THE GOPHER.  
IT'S TRASH  
JUST LIKE YOU!



I HAD TO PROVE  
THOSE BRATS WRONG

WOW!! I'M IMPRESSED MASEGO,  
AFTER A YEAR'S WORK  
YOU FIXED THE GOPHER. IT EVEN  
OUTPERFORMED MY KID'S MECHA'S.  
JUST DON'T LOSE IT SO OFTEN.



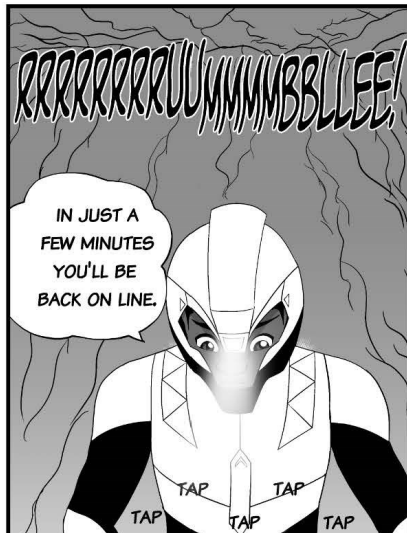
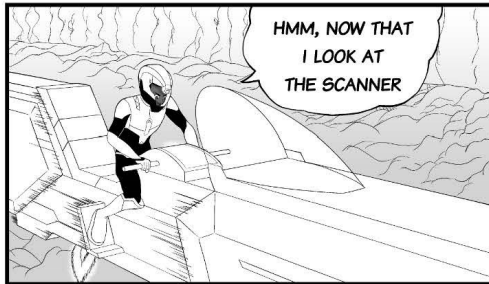
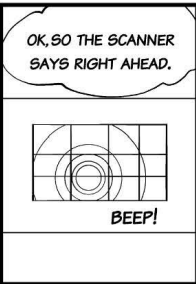
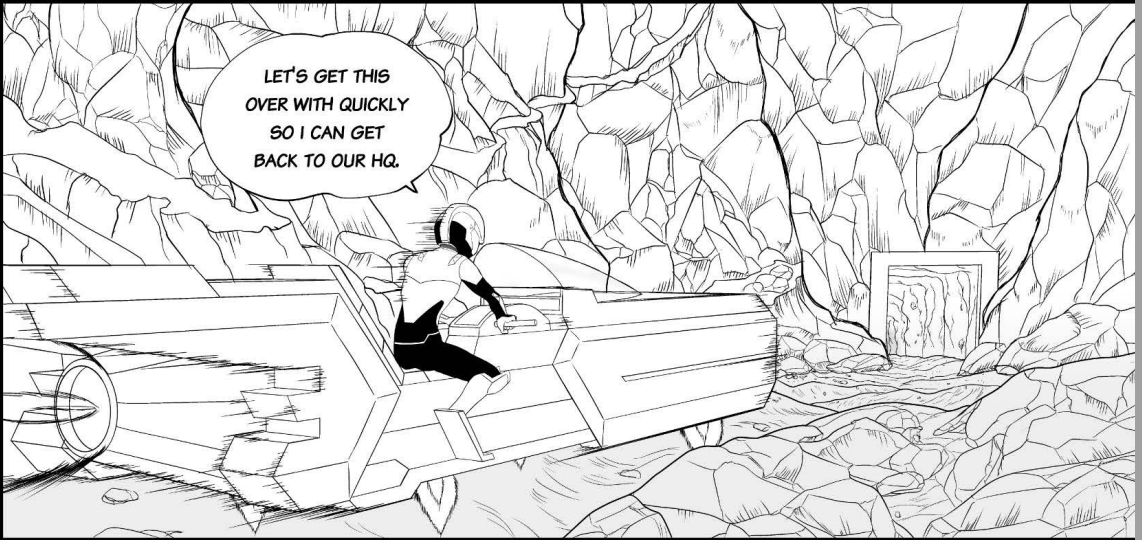
BUT THEN  
THEY DID THIS

WHY CAN'T  
YOU JUST  
STAY IN  
YOUR LANE.  
YOU CAN'T FIX  
GOPHER BETTER  
THAN OUR MECHA'S.  
GOPHER'S MANUAL  
IS TOO COMPLEX,  
1000 PAGES  
LONG!

WE HACKED  
YOUR FILE.  
WE KNOW YOU  
HAVE DYSLEXIA,  
SO WE'LL **FIX**  
GOPHER FOR YOU.  
AND DON'T DREAM  
OF RATTING ON  
US PUNK. WE'RE  
ENTABENI'S!

SYSTEM WARNING: TGN  
FUEL CELL OVERLOAD!  
CRISIS IMMINENT!!!

NOO!  
STOP IT!!







WHAT?!  
THE SPECIAL  
PILLARS TO  
PRESERVE  
STRUCTURAL  
INTEGRITY  
ARE OFFLINE?



EVEN THE  
MINE COMMS  
HAVE NO  
SIGNAL?

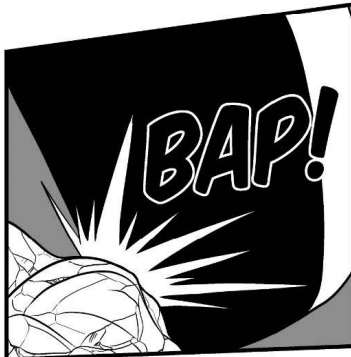
**DODDOP!**



WHERE'S THE  
WAY OUT?

HEY,  
WHOSE  
THAT?

**BAM!**



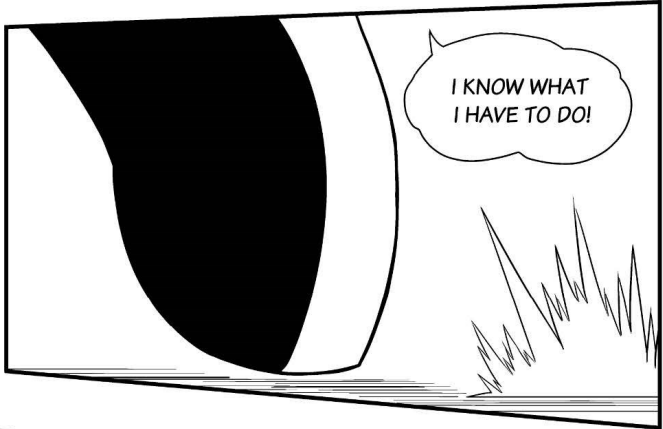
**BAP!**



PLEASE!  
HELLPPP  
MMEEEEEE  
EEEEEE!!!!



WHAT SHOULD  
I DO???  
JUMP ON MY  
EARTHGUSTER  
& SAVE MYSELF  
OR HELP THAT  
RANDOM  
PERSON AND  
WE ESCAPE???



I KNOW WHAT  
I HAVE TO DO!

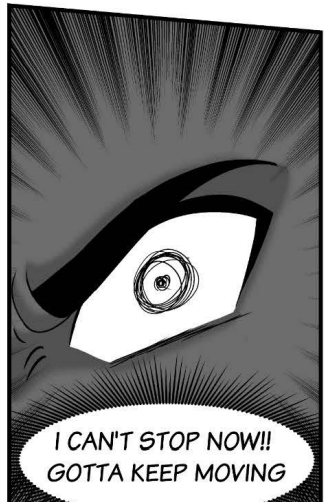


C'MON,  
C'MON!!  
ALMOST  
THERE.  
I CAN  
SEE THE  
EARTH-  
GUSTER.

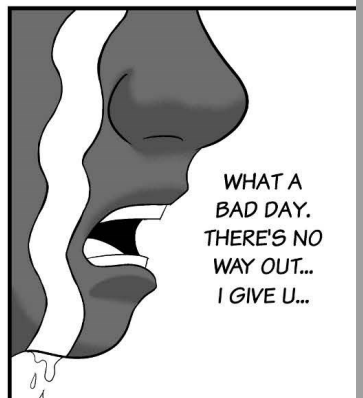
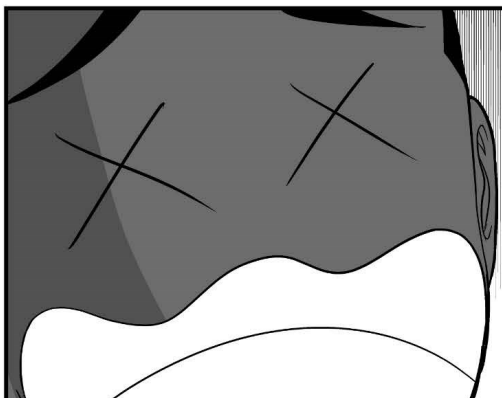
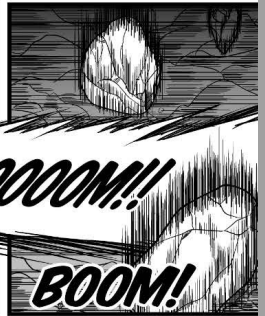
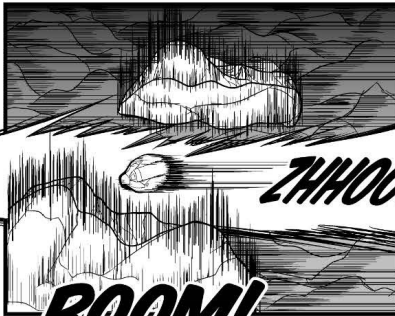
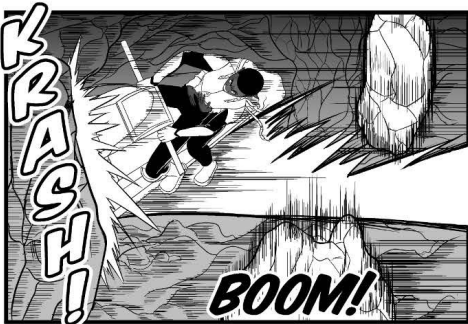
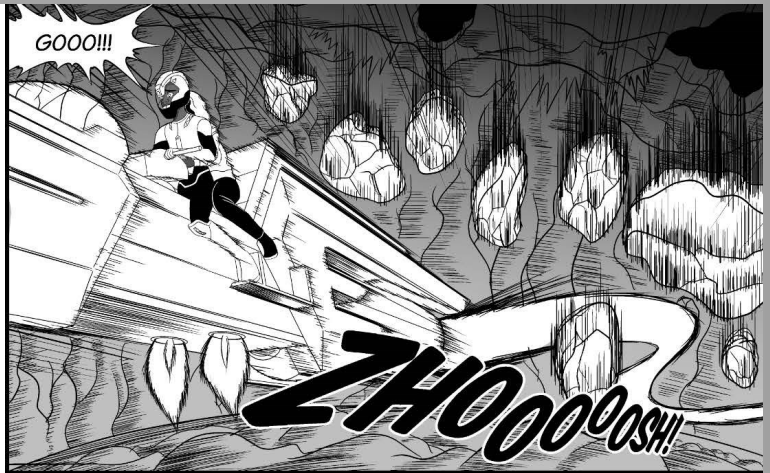


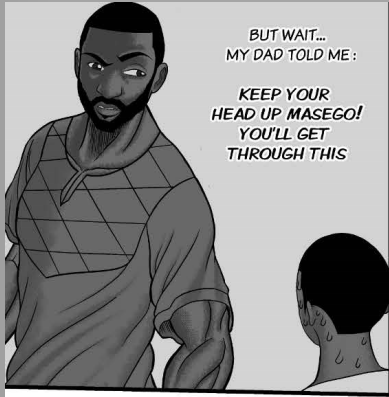
**BAMM!!**

AAAAAAAAAGGHHHHH!!!



I CAN'T STOP NOW!!  
GOTTA KEEP MOVING





BUT WAIT...  
MY DAD TOLD ME:

KEEP YOUR  
HEAD UP MASEGO!  
YOU'LL GET  
THROUGH THIS

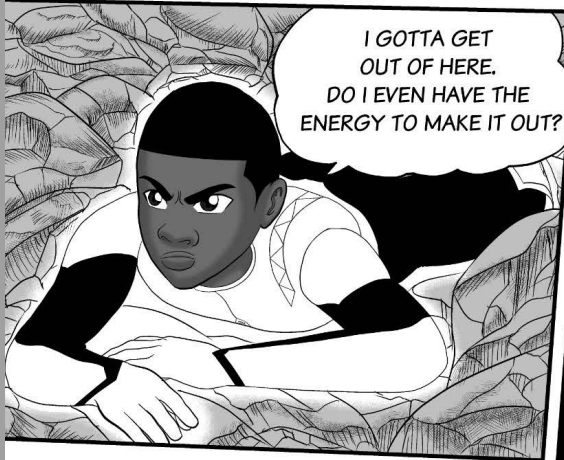


AND MY MOM  
TOLD ME:

THERE  
AREN'T  
ANY  
BAD DAYS  
JUST  
**BAD MOMENTS.**  
AS LONG AS  
YOUR  
BREATHING  
THERE IS A  
CHANCE  
**TO  
TURN IT  
AROUND.**



THANKS GUYS.  
I WON'T  
LET YOU DOWN.  
NOW HOW DO  
I GET OUT??  
HMMM? WHATS THAT?



I GOTTA GET  
OUT OF HERE.  
DO I EVEN HAVE THE  
ENERGY TO MAKE IT OUT?



KEEP  
MOVING  
FORWARD.  
DON'T  
GIVE  
UP!



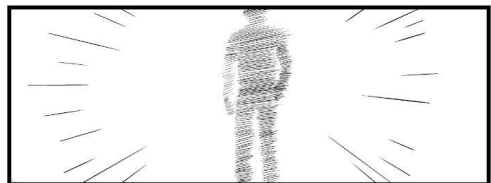
OK I WILL.  
THE LIGHT IS  
GETTING  
BRIGHTER.



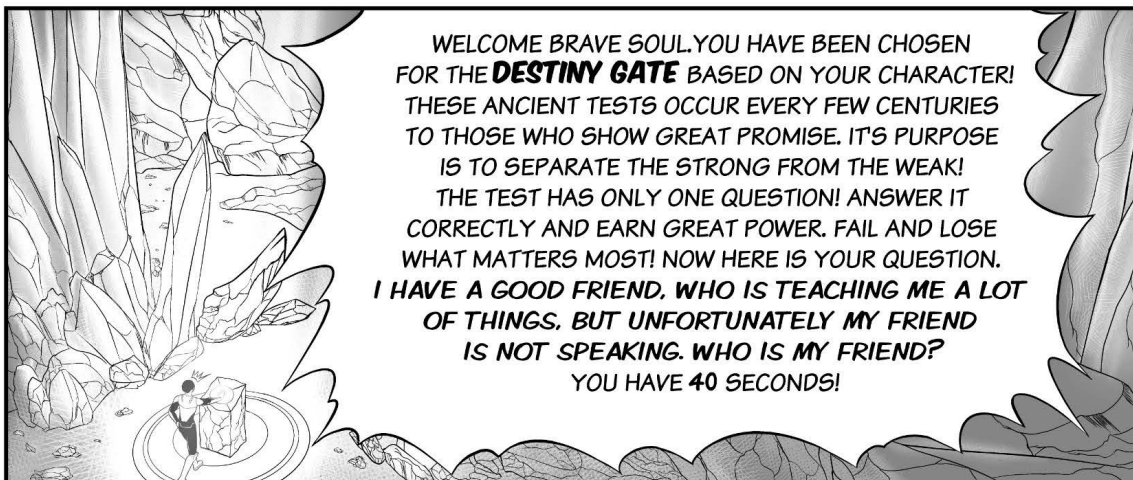
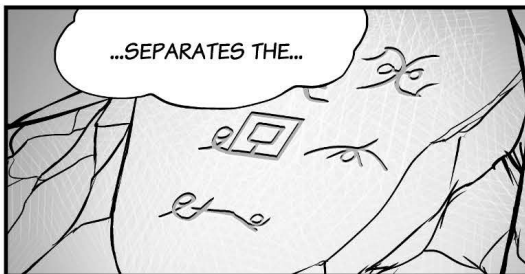
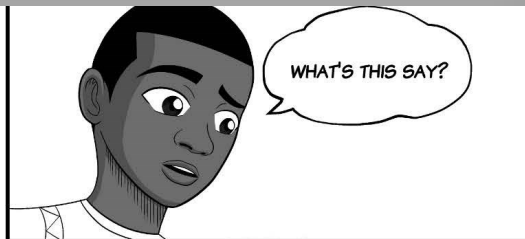
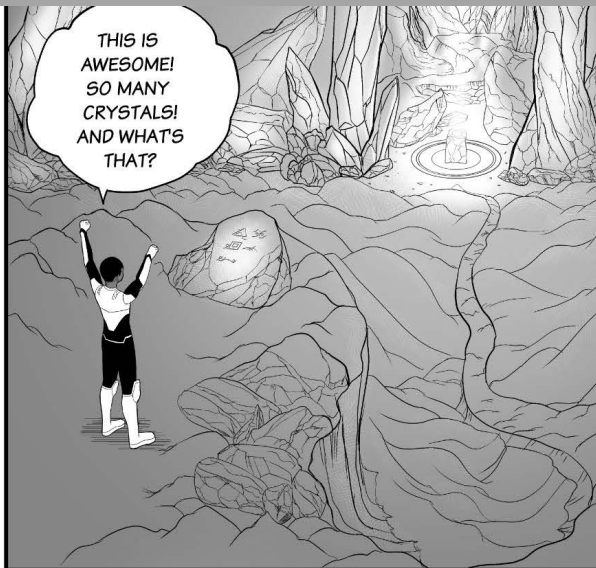
SO THIS IS WHERE  
THE LIGHT IS  
COMING FROM. WOW!



THERE'S  
NO GOING  
BACK NOW.



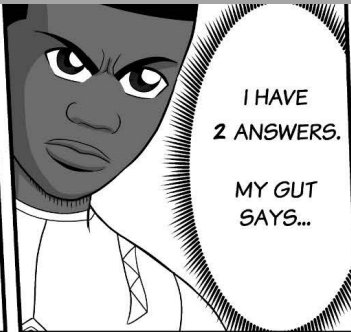
WWHHHAAA....





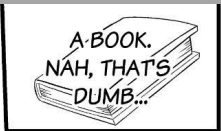
I'VE TAKEN TOO MANY L'S FOR THE DAY & I REFUSE TO TAKE ANOTHER.

10 SECONDS LEFT



I HAVE 2 ANSWERS.

MY GUT SAYS...



3 SECONDS LEFT

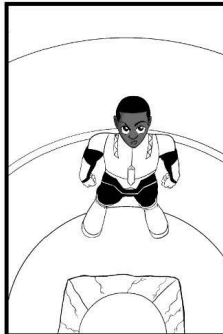
MY MIND SAYS LIFE. WHICH IS IT???



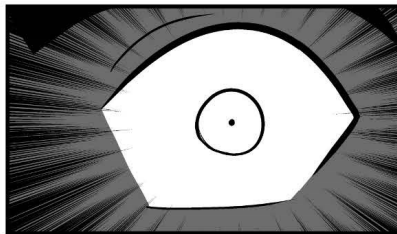
AAGGGH I CAN'T TAKE THIS...

MY ANSWER IS A **BOOK!!**

1 SECOND LEFT



HA HA HA WELL DONE!!!



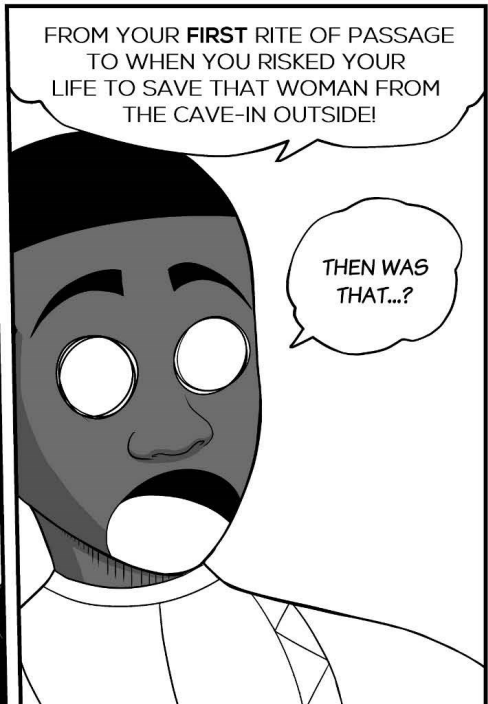
MMMM...WHY DOES THAT HOOD LOOK FAMILIAR?



I'M MASEGO UMNATHA! WHY DO I FEEL LIKE I'VE SEEN YOU BEFORE???

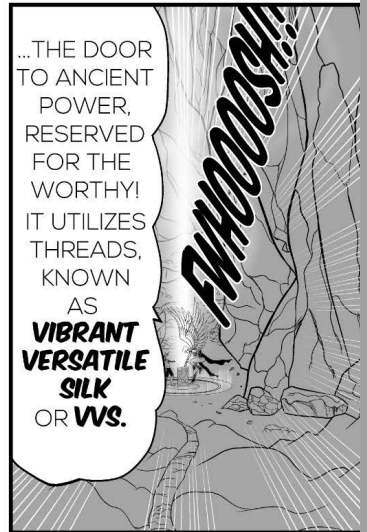
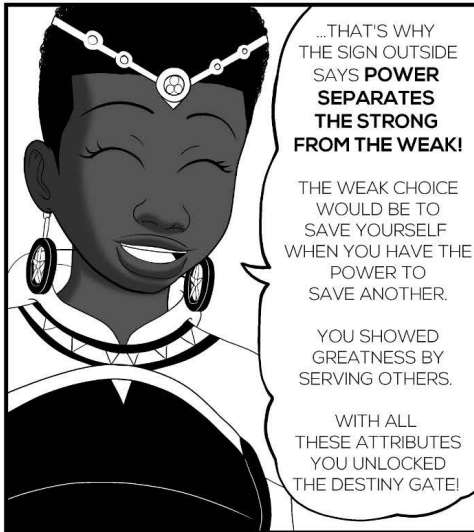
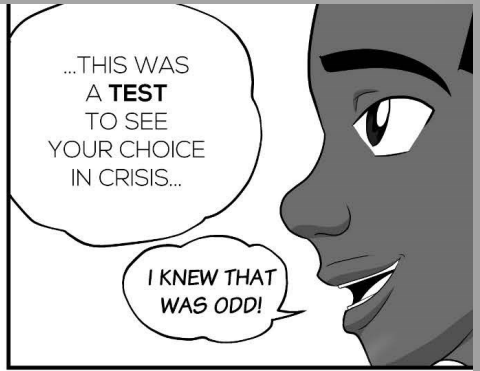
I AM CHINEDU, AN ANGEL & GUARDIAN MESSENGER OF **BABA WA MWANGA!** WHAT IS YOUR NAME?

YOU HAVE, I'VE BEEN MONITORING YOU FOR SOME TIME MASEGO...

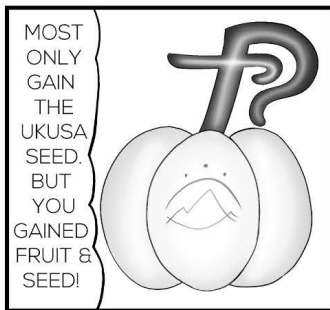
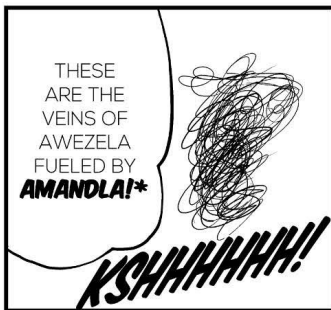


FROM YOUR **FIRST** RITE OF PASSAGE TO WHEN YOU RISKED YOUR LIFE TO SAVE THAT WOMAN FROM THE CAVE-IN OUTSIDE!

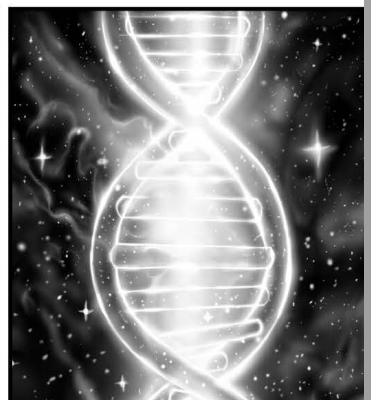
THEN WAS THAT...?



\*UKUSA IS THE XHOSA TERM FOR "DAWN"

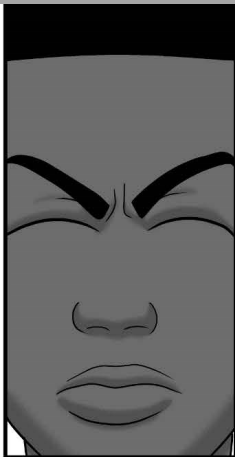


\*AMANDLA IS THE XHOSA TERM FOR "POWER"

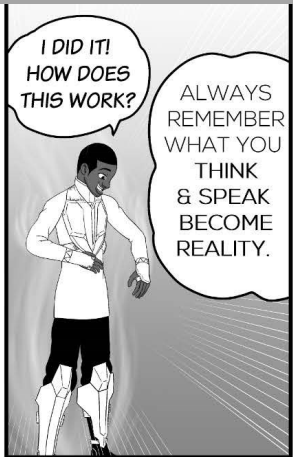




NOW THE NEXT STEP IS TO FOCUS YOUR MIND... ENVISION A PROTECTIVE LAYER OVER YOUR ENTIRE BODY!

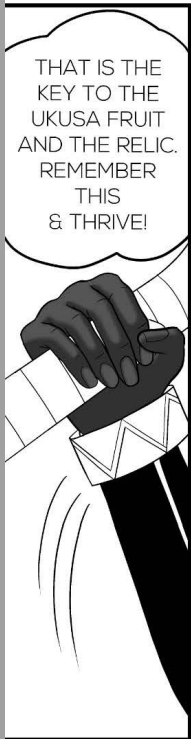


**KSHHHHHH!!!**



I DID IT! HOW DOES THIS WORK?

ALWAYS REMEMBER WHAT YOU THINK & SPEAK BECOME REALITY.



THAT IS THE KEY TO THE UKUSA FRUIT AND THE RELIC. REMEMBER THIS & THRIVE!



**BOOM!!!**



**BW HOOOM!!!**



WAIT, I HAVE SO MANY MORE QUESTIONS...



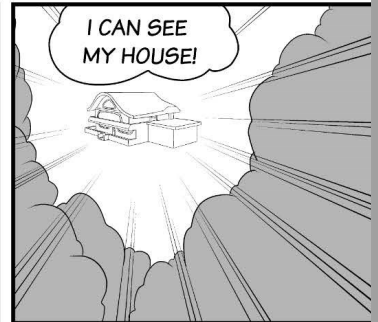
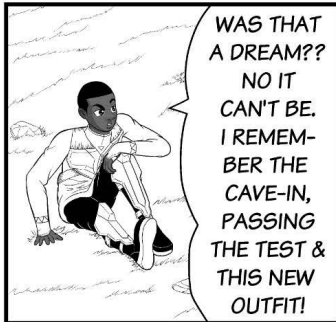
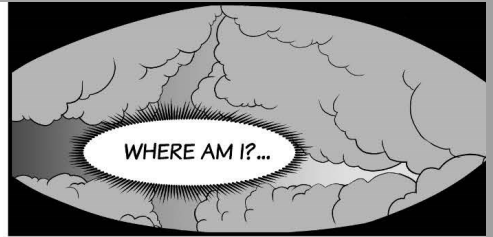
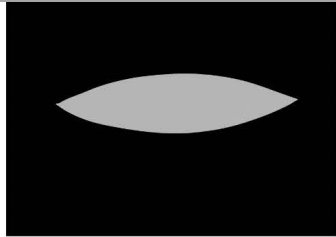
WHERE ARE YOU SENDING ME?! WHAT IF I NEED YOUR HELP?!



FEAR NOT! WE SHALL MEET AGAIN! BRAVE ONWARDS LIMIT DESTROYER!



**VSHHHHHH!!!**







## **MASEGO'S RACE AGAINST TIME**

AFTER FINALLY CONQUERING THE DESTINY GATE MASEGO IS ON CLOUD 9!  
HOWEVER, LIFE FLINGS HIM BACK TO EARTH WHEN HIS PARENTS HOUSE IS ATTACKED.  
CAN HE MAKE IT BACK IN TIME TO RESCUE THEM? WHO STARTED THIS ASSAULT?  
WILL HIS NEWFOUND POWER HELP OR HINDER HIM?

FIND OUT IN THE NEXT EXPLOSIVE CHAPTER OF

**BOLDSAGA**  
BRAVE ONWARDS LIMIT DESTROYER

**Another great conversation had at Virtuous Con, this gentleman has literally written the book on how to write comics! Let's have a chat with**

# Euwarnii Hughes



**For the uninitiated, what is *BOLDSAGA* about and why should people be reading it?**



BOLDSAGA is an Afrofuturism Manga empowering kings and queens to seize greatness! It follows Masego Umnatha, a meek teen unashamed to follow his dreams, to become the next Anansi like his role model, Shaka Zulu. But first he must overcome tests, trials and a rite of passage that leads to a supernatural encounter where he finds out what it truly means to be BOLD! People should read BOLDSAGA if they've ever felt like an underdog. Like life keeps knocking them down, yet they feel it. That burning fire, that voice that wells up from within that screams at the top of it's lungs. You can't stop me, I will win. Doesn't matter how many times I get knocked down, I will win. This is the story of underdogs, RISING!

**I will start this by acknowledging that Manga is Comics and that it's not one or the other. My question is why did you choose the Japanese B&W, longer volume format?**

Yes I agree, Manga are comics, specifically they began as Japanese Style Comics with their own unique flair and systems. I chose Japanese B&W, longer volume form for a few reasons. Firstly, I grew up on superheroes (Batman, Superman, Spider-Man, etc.) but as I grew older I desired different stories from different cultures. This led me to watching DragonBall Z and then Holding One Piece at Barnes & Noble. From that moment I opened the book I fell in love with the story and I decided, even from back then, this is something I want to do. Then I spent from that age (about 8) learning and now creating my own manga series. Secondly I prefer manga, the variety is endless. It centers on heroes, culture, power systems, languages, history and many other topics. In addition the black and white style allows you to focus completely on the art and characters, the contrast is magnificent and lack of colors speeds up the production cycle. Thirdly, I love a good long story. My favorite manga is One Piece and I'm inspired by how Eiichiro Oda has created over 1079 chapters of the same story for about 25 years. That just empowers me to create a great, deep, immersive and impactful manga series!



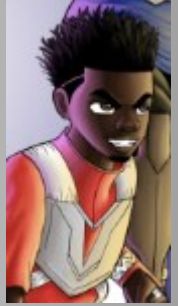


***Is BOLD SAGA your first foray into writing, or is there an early gem that die hards should be scraping eBay for, or even another work not related to BOLD SAGA?***

BOLD SAGA is my first official manga I released as a mangaka (professional manga artist). My other creations were for my local school newspaper or helping my friends. If you can find it on Ebay, that's impressive!

***Who would you say are your biggest influences in comics and why?***

My biggest influences in comics are: Osamu Tezuka, Eiichiro Oda and Akira Toriyama. All three revolutionized manga in their own way and left their mark. They told the story they wanted to in a way that was organic, rich and real to them that the reader can just feel and empathize with.



***Will this be ongoing until you run out of ideas, or is there a planned ending? If so, what's next after BOLD SAGA?***



BOLD SAGA is an ongoing series, I don't know if I'll ever run out of ideas for it though. When you read it you'll see why. I do have an ending planned far in the future, for now I want to give the fans what they are craving. Afrofuturism via Authentic Black Excellence plus manga! There are other Cultures and ethnicities in this story as well, it's just that it centers on African Culture.

***Well you heard it here first, plenty more stories to come, so get your own copy of BOLD SAGA 1 with even more material on Amazon in [paperback](#) or on your [Kindle](#)!!***

***You can also get the entire series [signed](#), along with digital copies and extras directly from the [Great Gale shop](#)!***





# DEUS EX (THE ARMORY)

DALIBOR ZUJOVIC

### CHAPTER 3

"Now that," Samuel says as he puts his fork on a licked-clean plate, "Is some damn good apple pie. I'm glad I picked this place."

"What do you mean, picked?" Steve looks up at Samuel at an angle.

"Long explanation short, time works differently where I'm from. For me, I sent the suggestion ten minutes before I walked in. That ten minutes turned into a year of you feeling like this is where you wanted to be at this time."

"Why not just show up where you knew I would already be? I have a home address."

"And you think you would have given me the same chance to explain as you have here today?" Samuel stares at Steve with his eyebrows raised.

"Yea I'd probably have called the cops."

"Exactly. Now where was I? Oh yes, you were arguing with me about solar storage. This will go much faster if you just take me at my word, Steven."

"You'll forgive my skepticism, I'm still wrapping my head around the existence of Jotuns and relativistic time dilation." Steve's brow is furrowed in frustration, but he waves Samuel on.

"Well, as time went on, advancements in technology jumped and leapt beyond any previously conceived, including the understanding of space and time. I mentioned FTL, but eventually we even got instant transportation. Organic transportation was limited to plant life and the occasional animal, but it created a pretty significant existential crisis in humanity, so that never really took off. After that became stable though, all it took was a small crew on a light ship to jump to a moon or planet, set up a signal receiver, and they could have a habitable building that was pre-built on any of the already-colonized rocks, with food and oxygen stores preloaded. We went from colonizing Mars in ten years to colonizing Ceres in ten months. That's when the family pooled its resources and claimed the whole of Uranus for storage. Nobody was going to live there anyway, the energy requirements to maintain a livable temperature would have been wasteful. We built an orbital habitat, and by way of a handy dandy elevator system and automation, we used that big gray rock as storage for a good long time. We had just expanded to Neptune around the time when I was born, and right around my fifteenth year, extra-universal space was unlocked. As soon as we cracked that, we moved everything from the various places to what eventually would get named The Armory. A place outside of time and space that stores everything that we'd ever collected, and ever would." Samuel pauses and takes a sip of his coffee. "You've been pretty quiet, Steven."

"Oh I'm just taking it all in. I do have one question."

"Go on."

"Want to break down 'extra-universal space' for me just a bit? Because your brief explanation makes it sound like it's a place outside of - well, existence. Benefit of the doubt or not, that's a hard one to swallow."

"Without getting into the full science of it, I'll try. And that's mostly because science is not my thing, cousin Richard first suggested 'super-existence' as he

called it. Basically when FTL was discovered, it was achieved through a high-speed realm unigraphically in sync with our own. It took a long time to master it - specifically to develop technology to counteract the matter acceleration while also utilizing its benefits. A lot of young explorers came back after a few minutes to live out their golden years, but we eventually got it. While that was all happening, Richard asked if one other state of matter existed, why not a second? And through some testing he found this realm where matter had nearly no progression. No natural movement, noticeable passage of time, or anything of the sort. Essentially whatever went there stayed the same as it was when it left, and returned the same. With the first two probes he thought he'd simply failed to send anything to this realm. A third attempt he left for a week to try and account for time dilation, still no change. The fourth probe he considered an insanely high time dilation and left the probe for a year - only ten minutes had passed on its internal clocks, but no degradation of battery power - nothing. As far as the probe was concerned, it had just recorded the time for ten minutes. That's when he suggested that this realm existed but simply did not have a very active state. It was, for all real intents and purposes, a place of eternal stillness. The infinite darkness at the beginning of many religious texts." Samuel took another sip of his coffee. I think the boy's opening up to this, he notes mentally and continues.

"The fifth excursion he sent a beacon so he could always refer to something. This way he was not sending anything blindly - he wanted to explore the same place - if places existed in this realm. Eventually after a great many drones and so much math it would make your head spin, he figured a precise dilation factor of fifty three thousand and six to one. Up until that point the greatest dilation recorded had been four to one in some parts of the universe. Not counting the FTL space, that is. That ratio was much higher in the other direction, but also had so many other factors to consider. With such a high dilation, you could put the sun there and it wouldn't outgrow Earth's orbit for fifty-three trillion years, instead of the one billion it's projected for. For any practical purposes, it was infinite, endless storage. So we began to build. It took him a few tries to get wearables that would maintain our biological functions - did you know that humans need gravity to function properly?"

"I mean I didn't know, but I would have confidently made that guess."

"It makes sense, of course. Well Richard and his teams - he had many by this point - figured out the transport, the environmental and biological systems - and eventually we started visiting, and the family set out to building a warehouse to end all warehouses. Infinite in its scope, we just kept adding to it as time went, and by the end of things - trillions of items stored. And after the end, thousands of our own kin."

"So how did it happen? How did your world end?"

"Ragnarok."

**TO BE CONTINUED**

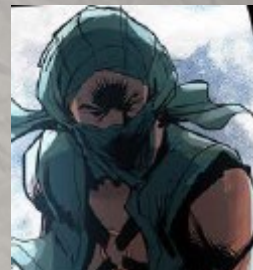
***Lots of great conversations were had at Virtuous con, and among them was definitely my chat with***



# Chris LP

## ***Give me your origin story - what got you into comics and into writing?***

I realized my passion for writing when I was in the third grade. My teacher at the time would continuously insist that I had, " a way with words", and that really lit a fire within me and made me never want to stop doing it. I guess you say that was my catalyst. The idea that I get to craft these new worlds and create these different personalities to live in them, is something that will never get old for me.



## ***What was the first finished piece that you let people see and how was it received?***

The first piece I ever shared was actually a screenplay for a TV pilot. I worked with local actors and conducted a table read...I was extremely nervous but they ended up loving it.

## ***When you started writing Granada's Shadow or RAIN, did you plan out the entire series, or did you just put pen to paper and see where it took you?***

Before I start any story/series, I always visualize the entire plot, world and characters before writing anything down. Knowing who my characters are, is a very important part for me, the decisions they would make, how they speak...etc. Once I feel like I have a good foundation, I allow the visuals in my head to get me excited and motivate me to start the writing process.



## ***When you hit a roadblock in your writing - and let's be honest, we all do - how do you get over it?***



I never force it. The moment I feel a sense of frustration when I'm writing, I immediately pull back. I search for inspiration by watching things that I enjoy, having conversations, playing video games, etc.. Until the light bulb pops back on.

## ***Is there a project that you have in mind that you haven't had a chance to work on yet?***

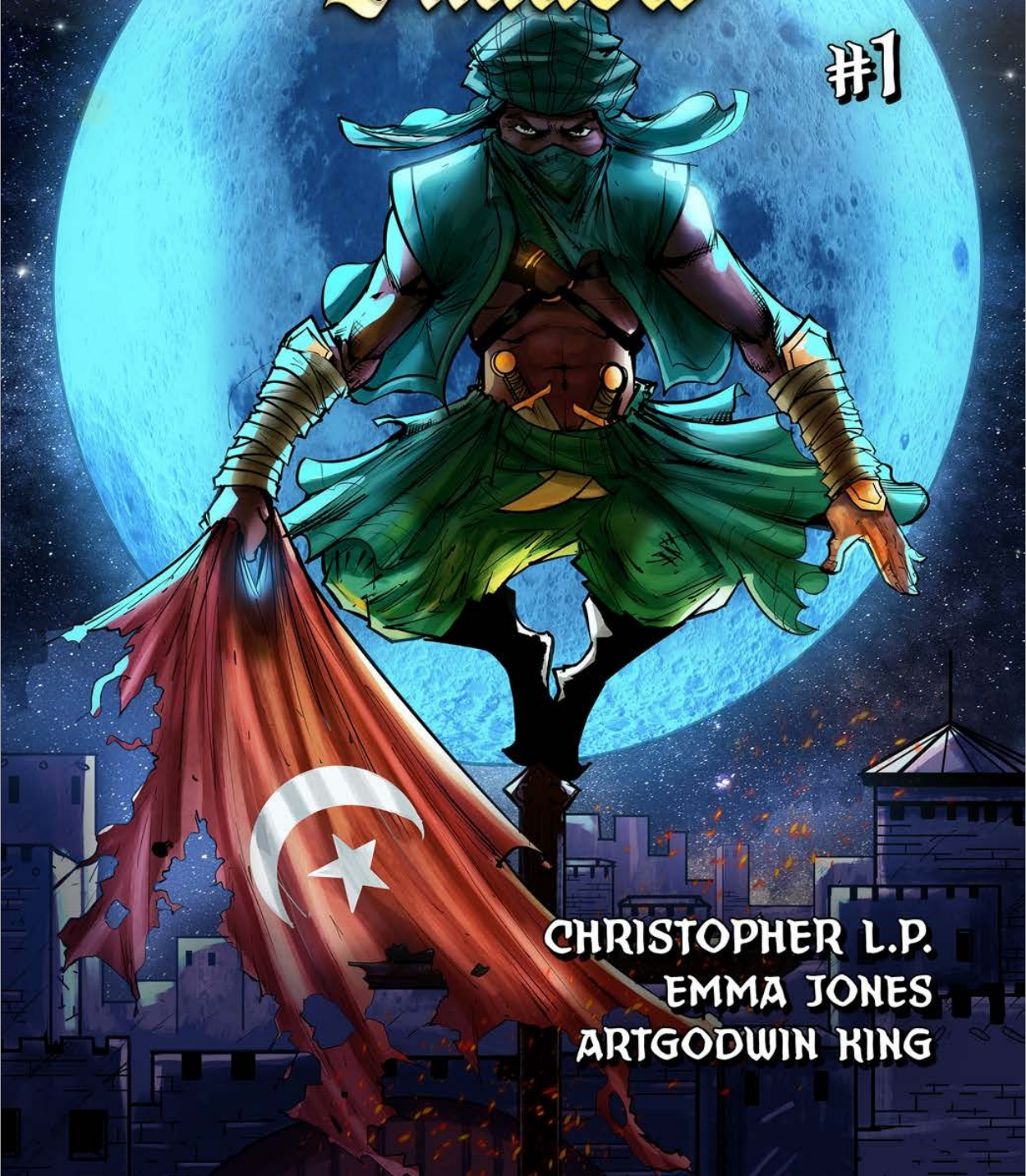
There is! A horror novel. I'm hoping to get started on it this summer.



***Horror is having its renaissance now for sure! While the horror fans wait for that, scroll on to read the first issue of Grenada's Shadow!***

# Granada's Shadow

#1



CHRISTOPHER L.P.  
EMMA JONES  
ARTGODWIN KING



# Granada's Shadow



**ISSUE #1**

**AUTHOR**

**CHRISTOPHER L.P.**

**ARTISTS**

**EMMA JONES  
ARTGODWIN KING**

**LETTERS**

**BORNOY BUHISAN**



THE YEAR IS 1492 AND GRANADA,  
THE LAST STRONGHOLD OF THE  
MOORS IN SPAIN, HAS FALLEN.

SURRENDERING BOTH ITS  
PEOPLE AND CUSTOMS INTO THE  
HANDS OF THE CATHOLIC MONARCHY,  
A CRUCIAL STRIKE TO THE HEART  
OF THE ISLAMIC FAITH.

AS WEARINESS FROM WAR AND  
UNCERTAINTY SETTLES INTO THE  
LAND, A SPARK OF RAGE IGNITES  
WITHIN ONE DISGRUNTLED  
MOORISH SOLDIER.

ONE WHO BELIEVES THAT IN THESE  
TROUBLED TIMES GRANADA NEEDS  
NOT THE LIGHT BUT INSTEAD  
A VENGEFUL SHADOW!



**T**HE MOORISH JEWEL



TELL US  
THE STORY AGAIN,  
GRANDFATHER!

YES,  
PLEASE!



YOU KNOW  
THEY'LL JUST  
PESTER YOU  
ALL NIGHT IF  
YOU DON'T.



ALRIGHT,  
GATHER IN  
CLOSE.



CRACKLE!



THEY SAY  
THAT HE WAS  
BORN IN THE  
SHADOWS OF  
ANDALUSIA!

*OTHERS SAY THAT HE  
HIMSELF IS A SHADOW.*



*NO ONE REALLY KNOWS  
THE TRUTH OF HIS ORIGIN.*





RUN.

≠GASPS≠



YOU JUST EARNED YOURSELF A PAINFUL DEATH!



SHLING!



WOOSH!



SHILT!





I WILL  
END YOU  
DEVIL!



AAARGGHHH!



WOOP!



SHIT!





ALRIGHT, I THINK THAT'S ENOUGH FOR ONE NIGHT. TIME FOR BED.



OH PLEASE JUST A LITTLE LONGER!

PLEASE!



I WANT TO BE LIKE THE SHADOW!

NO ME!

EVERYONE NEEDS THEIR SLEEP EVEN HIM!



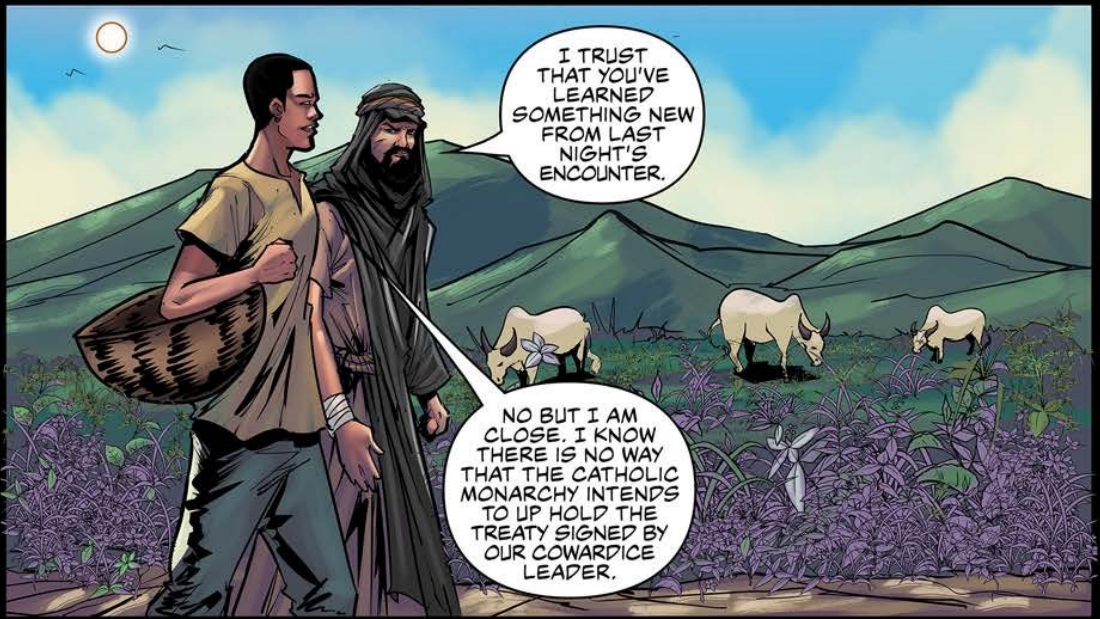
I'M SURE YOUR NIGHT WAS LONG, CONSIDERING THE REPORTS I'VE HEARD ABOUT A GUARD BEING FOUND DEAD.



NEVERTHELESS, WE AGREED THAT YOUR NIGHT WORK WOULD NOT INTERFERE WITH YOUR DAY WORK. NOW ON YOUR FEET, WE'RE GOING INTO TOWN.

=SIGH=





I TRUST THAT YOU'VE LEARNED SOMETHING NEW FROM LAST NIGHT'S ENCOUNTER.

NO BUT I AM CLOSE. I KNOW THERE IS NO WAY THAT THE CATHOLIC MONARCHY INTENDS TO UP HOLD THE TREATY SIGNED BY OUR COWARDICE LEADER.



ENOUGH! I WILL NOT HAVE YOU SPEAK OF *BOABDIL* IN THAT LIGHT. HE MADE THE CHOICE THAT HE FELT WOULD END MOST OF THE BLOODSHED. WE CANNOT LET THE ACTIONS OF A FEW DRUNKEN SOLDIERS, DICTATE OUR OWN. YOU MUST BE SLOW TO STRIKE AND QUICK TO LISTEN. I HAVE FAITH THAT THE TREATY WILL STAND FIRM!



THAT IS WHERE WE DIFFER. I WILL PROVE TO YOU THAT THE TREATY ISN'T WORTH THE INK THAT WAS USED TO SIGN IT.

PERHAPS, BUT UNTIL THEN KEEP YOUR BLADES AT EASE.

**T**HE HEART OF ANDALUSIA













EASY, KILLER.



I'LL HAVE HIS LITTLE HEAD!



THIS SHOULD MORE THAN COVER WHAT HE TOOK.



I'LL TAKE IT FROM HERE.



NOW LETS  
SAY YOU  
AND I MAKE  
A LITTLE  
DEAL.





WHO ARE THEY?

THEY ARE HERE FOR THE QUEEN.



WHAT'S HAPPENING?



NO, IT'S TOO SOON.











THE SPANISH INQUISITION.

TO SOME IT IS AN ORGANIZATION  
BUILT ON THE FOUNDATION OF  
TRUE CHRISTIAN FAITH, DEVOTION  
AND AN ANSWER TO HERESY.

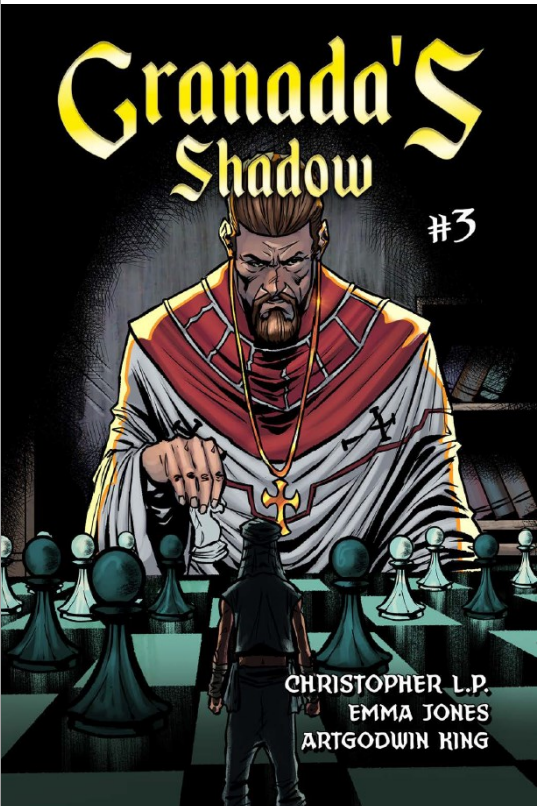
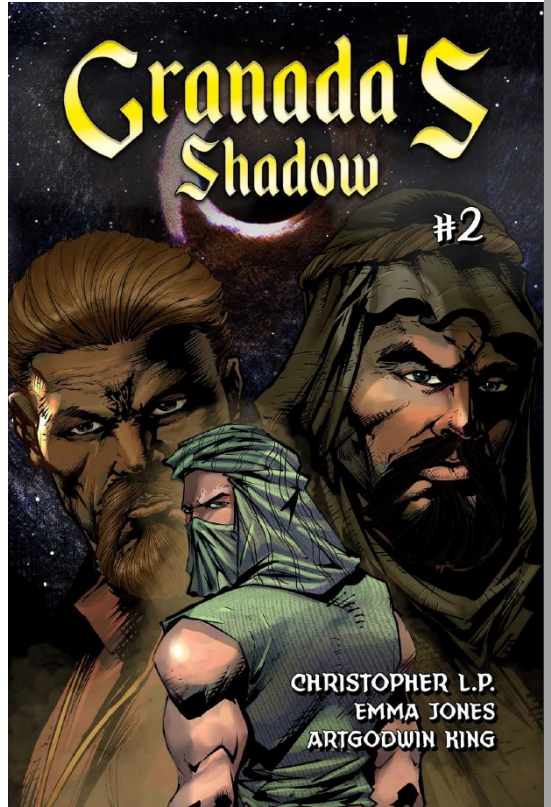
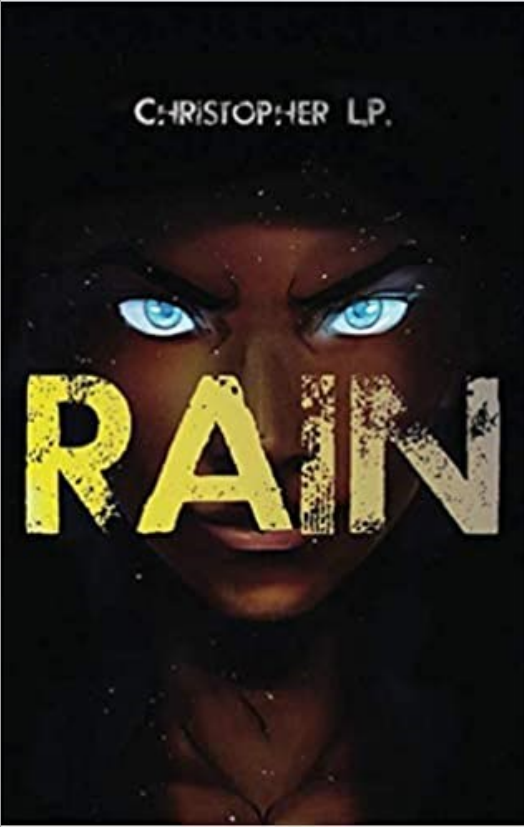
TO OTHERS, IT IS SIMPLY A  
MEANS TO AN END. BE YE WARNED:  
REMOVE YOUR MARKINGS!  
BURN YOUR SCROLLS!  
DENOUNCE YOUR OPPOSING FAITH!

FOR THE INQUISITION IS HERE  
AND ALL WILL KNEEL BEFORE THE  
CROSS OR BE ERADICATED.

**That's fire right? Make sure you check out the rest of the series! You can purchase all four issues now! Check out the link on Chris's [Instabio!](#)**

**If you like the writing, Chris's book RAIN is also available on Amazon:**

**[Paperback](#)—[Kindle](#)—[Audiobook](#)**



# NEW HOTNESS

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



I figured I should read the book whose character I'm paying to have drawn on the cover of my magazine, right?

I love me a fresh take on a classic, and this book has that across the board! Great approaches to all the characters, and a well-told story. I am absolutely sold for more, and honestly more inspired to prioritize reading more of Kyrun's work that I've got in my collection.

Check out Ruby From Planet OZ on the [Taurus Comics store!](#)

Another read for the sake of justifying my spent money, and I'll be damned if it's not good! High action, EXTREMELY high stakes, and so much intrigue that it's got me asking questions that only reading the rest of the Powerverse will answer. Hopefully!

Join me on the [Powerverse store](#) in checking out this and all the related books!



A gifted athlete, a distant scientist father, an accident ... you've heard this story before right?

Wrong.

Drone Slayer X grabs you by the collar on page one and takes you for a ride that ends in tears. And this is just the first chapter! I am all in on this series and will definitely be getting the next issue, which I'm told is coming this year!

Buy your copy on the [Earth Tone Kingdom store!](#)



Wow.

A character-driven story set in a world where coexistence of Lycans and humans is happening without most people knowing.

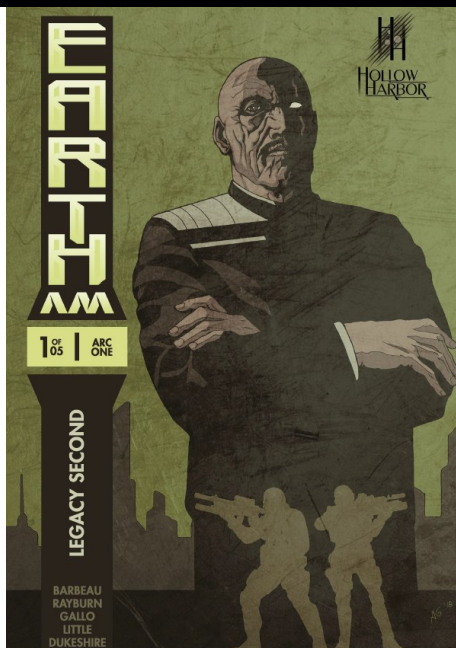
I loved this book. Issue 2 is already available digitally and I literally just tweeted the creator to find out when a collected edition of all 3 volumes will be made because I want this on my shelf. Great art, solid story—love it.

Check out Woodland Creatures #1 and #2 digitally on [Amazon](#), or get physical copies on the creator's [online shop](#)!

Post-apocalyptic? Nah. Post-mutation. A war wages for two hundred years after humanity split into four factions; The Skrytes, Cyborgs, Underaneans, and remaining humans.

Political and military intrigue with an enhanced, yet divided populace. It's a wild ride that's been sitting in my collection for years and I'm glad I finally read it. Jumping on to issue 2 ASAP and then catching up on the other book from the studio—the one that introduced me to them—Tyrants.

Check out Earth AM #1 and #2 on [Amazon](#) and maybe check out [Tyrants](#) as well!!



Yooooooooooooo.

BETRAYAL. Betrayal of the highest order!

And then a secret order?!

Your training will begin soon?

This is the second Seer Nova book I've read and they're batting a thousand for me.

Check out [Seer Nova Comics](#)' entire catalog!

# JUAN'S ONES

**Juan from [Juan Reads Comics](#) will be checking out a new indie #1 every issue and giving us his thoughts!**

## Shi No Kage

Blackbox Comics

"When one of the Seven Samurai is murdered in cold blood. Hachiro finishes his training as one of the Seven Samurai; to kill the beast, monster, or demon that took his Samurai brother from his clan.

Meanwhile, in his departure from his village and his only family (his sister) Hinata. His village is under fire with war."

If you enjoy a well told story of the ancient Samurai. Then this indie comic from [Blackboxcomics.net](#) will most definitely keep you turning the pages of awesome art and a gripping story.

This first issue is at the standard length at 26 pages. The pace and feel of the story is very immersive that you'll want to keep reading and tell your friends about Shi No Kage!

But, what do I know? I'm just a guy that loves reading indie comics.

Review by Juan Cordero

**Check out *Shi no Kage* on the [Blackbox](#) website!**



# TIPS 'N' TRICKS

*Every issue I ask our featured creators to share some tips & tricks for aspiring creators. If you need some motivation or a fresh outlook, read these gems then get back to work ya slacker!*

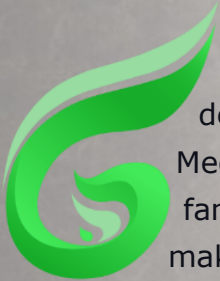
## **Paul Darden:**

Tip one, write every day, no matter how little, just write.  
Two, don't be scared to write in your style. With eight billion people on earth, you have an audience that will find ya work.

Three, you will find so much support from random ass people and people who know you might not support at all, and that is ok. Don't hold a grudge. Keep working and get out they to share your work.



## **Euwarnii Hughes:**



You're one idea away. From changing your life. From creating the comic of your dreams. All it takes is just one idea to step into your destiny.

Mediocrity or Excellence. You only have 2 choices as a creator, your fans will realize this too. So make the story you've always wanted to make

**GREAT  
GALE**

Lastly, Anything is possible. I made BOLDSAGA Ch 1 in the midst of: a mental breakdown, COVID, Losing my grandfather and so many setbacks. So remember, a setback is a setup for a comeback. So come back, fight for your dreams and K.O. your fears!

## **Chris L Puckett:**

Don't overthink things, it leads to procrastination!

Have mental conversations with your characters. Know them inside and out!

Have fun with it! If you're not enjoying yourself, it'll translate in your writing.



*I'm going to throw mine in the mix here. You'll see why when you scroll.*



**Consistency is more important than intensity. You don't have to write the entire script today. It will take how long it will take.**

**Learn from losses, but don't dwell on them. Every experience shapes us going forward. You can choose to let a loss keep you**

***down, or you can use it to propel yourself forward, adapting your approach, now that you know what won't work.***

***Sometimes enjoying a bit of reward first makes the work go easier. If you were going to get ice cream after you finished the chapter, maybe a piece of candy will motivate you to work so that you can get to that ice cream. Work then reward isn't necessarily the only way to get through it.***

***So as you see below, Zach had some stuff to say, so I wanted to give him the space to do so.***

### **Zach Young:**

From what I've experienced so far, it's a slow-cook process. While those on your team are working hard, there's going to be periods where it seems like forever but just have patience and let them get in their zone. Work on everything you can in the meantime. Promotion, scripts, get better at your craft whether it's art or writing, be creative with engagement and use any resources you have to your advantage, but also...be humane and honest, to yourself and others.



Set your team up for success. Lay the work out, be clear, direct, respectful and communicate as frequently as necessary to avoid any major friction in the future. As I've said before, I overthink a lot of things and overthinking can lead you to places you don't wanna go. Just create, give people what they need and stop being so uptight about stuff. In my head I used to think a lot about how I want things to look and from what angle but if you give too much direction, it leaves the artist no room to be creatively free. You work with an artist because you saw something special in their style, not necessarily because they will do whatever you pay them for, that ain't fun! Even if you did direct all the way down to the nose hairs (unless the story calls for it), it'll never come out exactly how you envisioned it. So lighten up, let people run free. As long as the main points get across, that's all that really matters. That's what collaboration is about.

Prioritize the well-being of others over the project's success. In Deep Theory, I've been working with my best friend since middle school. We grew apart over the years (through high school and college) but we came back together to make Deep Theory. We had some rough patches and tough arguments about the project, but in the end we both agreed that friendship was far more important than creative

direction. It's very much like a marriage, although I'm not married, I do know that both parties have to agree on a fundamental value of prioritizing the relationship and from there you can move in any direction you want. There comes a time when you're given the choice to do the right thing or to chuck everyone out the window for your fame and glory. Don't poop in peoples' cereal. Putting people before projects has been a huge lesson for me.

You're going to write stuff that you will fall in love with and often you'll have to scrap certain parts or rewrite the story entirely, especially if you get an editor and he/she makes very good points. If you know your story through and through and it doesn't hit, don't just listen to your editor, listen to your gut. If it doesn't hit then there's something important missing. If you can't find it, take a break and work on other things while you let it marinate. It'll soak up flavors you didn't think of before and you'll come up with something even better. Then you'll look back and be like whoa that other story kind of sucked. One thing our editor recently brought up to us (me and Vish) is that we will never run out of ideas (because we kept bringing up a new idea in place of one that wasn't working). "Do you want to become better writers or do you want to just put what you have out there?" Of course, we want to become better writers and that takes time, lots of rewriting and hard-decision-making. Doesn't mean putting anything out there isn't worth it. That's essentially another way to become a better writer. So there's a balance. Find a balance that works for you.

Last but not least, Chris Moses spoke about "knowing where you want to go" in the last issue of Catalyst. A hundred percent. Make a plan or don't make a plan but always know where you want to go with it and why you're doing it. Everything else will come. But I've found it much easier to jot down small tasks that I need to do for things such as outreach (finding FB groups, sub reddit, other artists and crowd-funding communities), staying active in those groups, posting progress, being transparent, keeping people engaged in some way—all that stuff helps and it's easier when you can go back to your notebook and check where you left off in posting on FB or IG or reddit, otherwise you may get lost in your own timeline and lose motivation because it becomes this big task and now you have to remember all the things you were going to do. So keeping a list of notes and ideas and things you want to do to get yourself out there can make the journey a lot more enjoyable and leave a lot more room for creation as well. Know where you're going, everything else will come naturally.

**Damn.**

**Man came to inspire. And not only is he a featured creator, he's a subscriber! Don't think I didn't catch that reference to the last issue, sir.**



# 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!

Zach Young

[Green Pizza Comics](#)

[Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) - greenpizzacomics

[BMAC](#) - greenpizzaQ

[Deep Theory Studios](#)

Twitter - [deetheorystud1](#)

Instagram - [deetheorystudios](#)

[YouTube](#)

Paul C. Darden

[www.SeriousPensPublishing.com](#)

Facebook—[SeriousPens](#)

Instagram—[SeriousPensPublishing](#)

Twitter—[PensSerious](#)

Sarah Jefferson Carter

[www.sarahjeffersoncarter.com/](#)

Instagram - [SarahJeffersonCarter](#)

YouTube - [Rhythm and Noise Productions](#)

Facebook - [Queendom Come Series](#)

Instagram - [QueendomCome Official](#)

TikTok - [QueendomCome Official](#)

Fish Lee

Instagram - [mr\\_fish\\_comics](#)

Twitter - [MrFishLee](#)

TikTok - [mr.fish.comics](#)

Euwarnii Hughes

[www.GreatGale.com](http://www.GreatGale.com)

[Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#) — GreatGaleCo

Chris LP

[Instabio](#) (links to all work)

Twitter - [christopherlp](#)

Instagram - [christopherlp](#)

TikTok - [GrenadasShadow](#)

DALIBOR ZUJOVIC / NEXUS

[www.nexus.studio](http://www.nexus.studio)

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YouTube/Instagram/Facebook/Twitter— T3GMedia

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