

SECRET ORIGINS OF THE TIDALWAVE UNIVERSE

VOLUME FOUR



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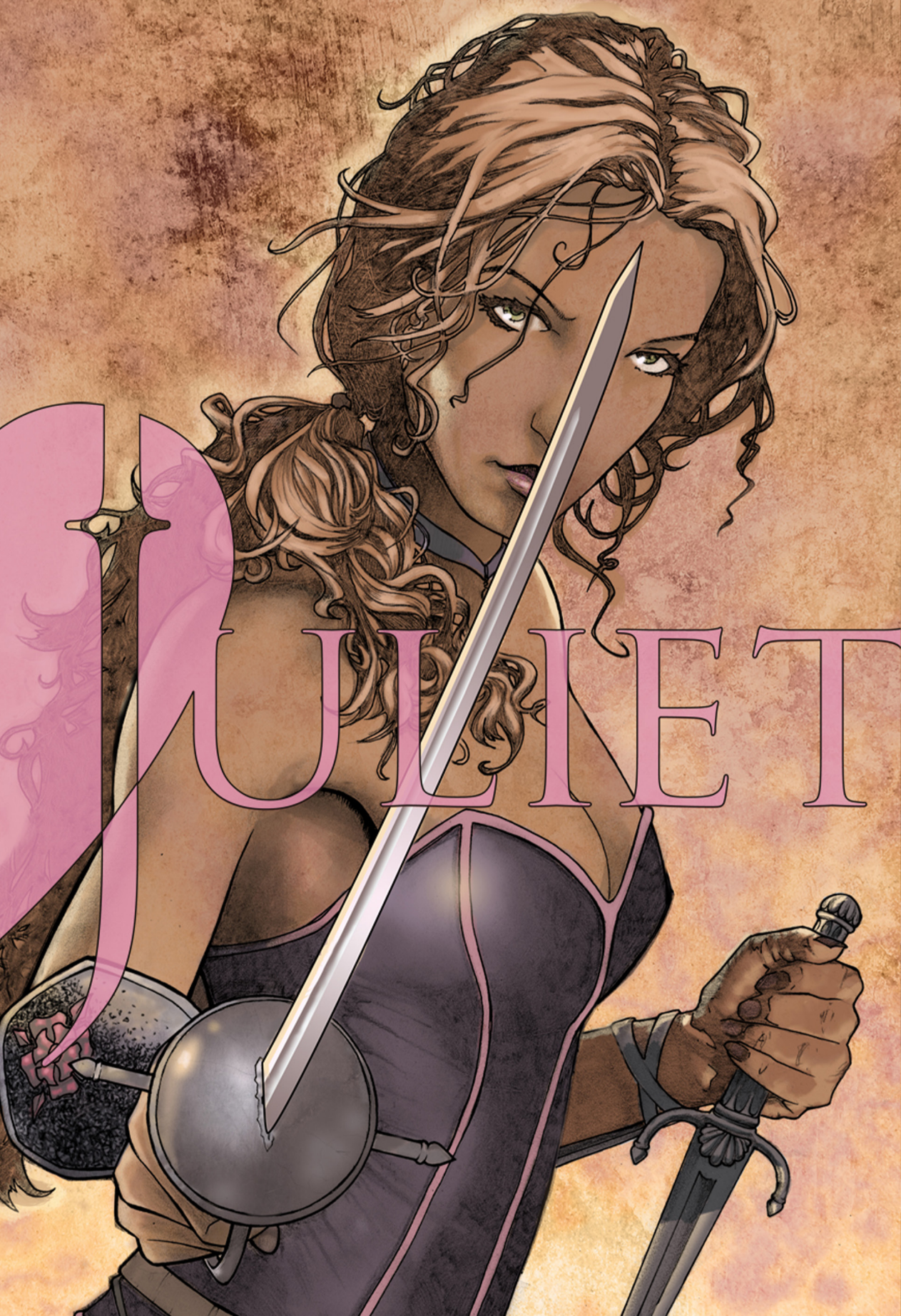
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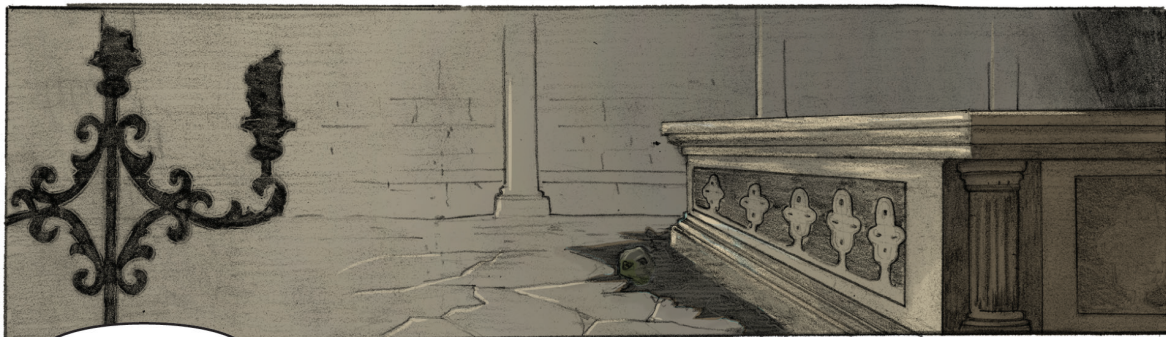
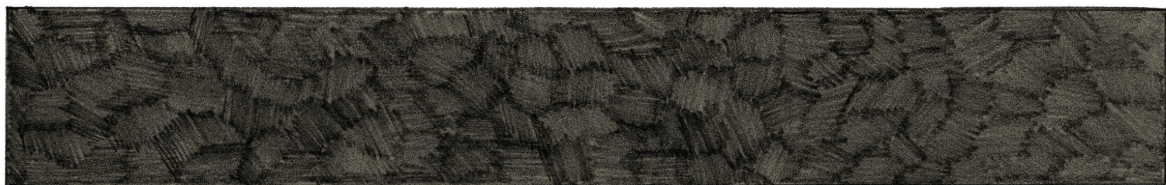
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MURDER



«WHAT?
WHERE AM I?»*

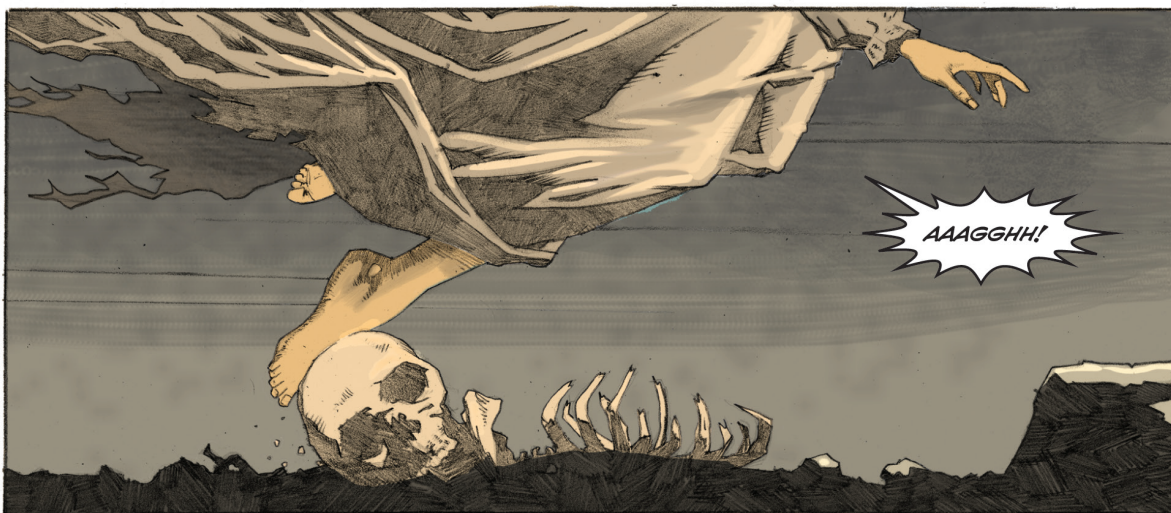


*RENAISSANCE ERA ITALIAN

«A CRYPT?
AM I DEAD?»



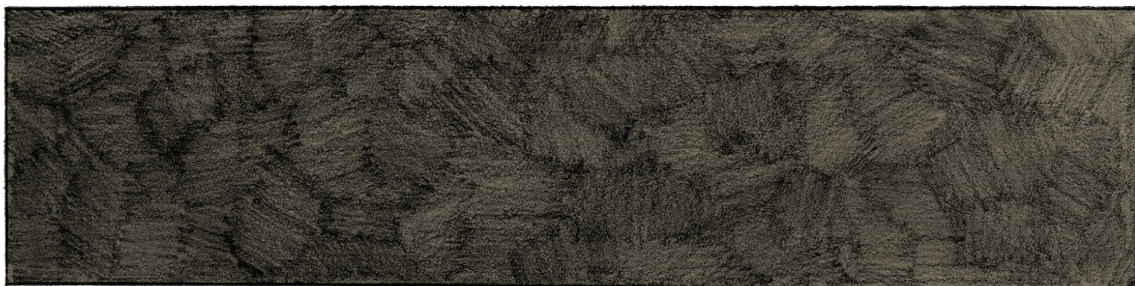
«WHAT HELL
AM I IN?»

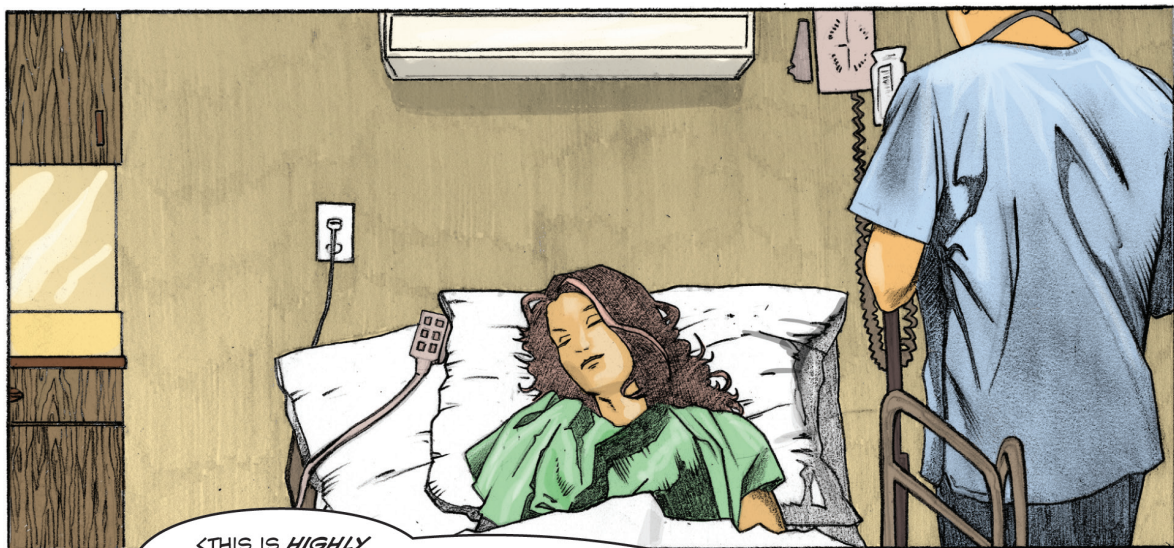


AAAGGHH!

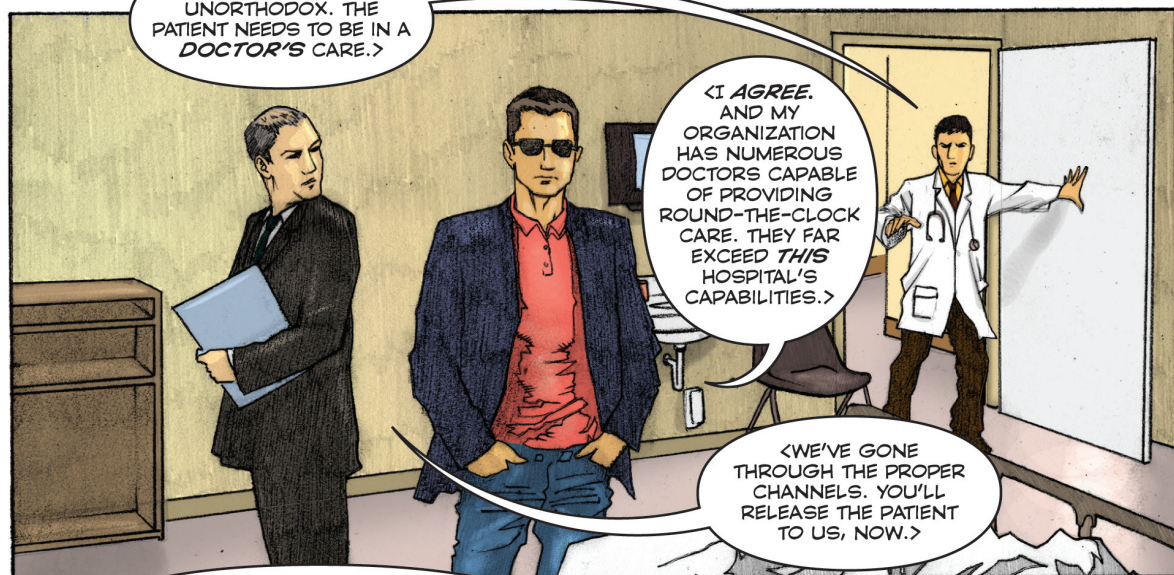


<<PLEASE!
RELEASE ME!>>





<THIS IS *HIGHLY* UNORTHODOX. THE PATIENT NEEDS TO BE IN A DOCTOR'S CARE.>



<I AGREE. AND MY ORGANIZATION HAS NUMEROUS DOCTORS CAPABLE OF PROVIDING ROUND-THE-CLOCK CARE. THEY FAR EXCEED *THIS* HOSPITAL'S CAPABILITIES.>

<WE'VE GONE THROUGH THE PROPER CHANNELS. YOU'LL RELEASE THE PATIENT TO US, NOW.>



<I DON'T CARE *WHO* YOU TALKED TO, I WILL DO NO SUCH THING AND THERE IS *NO* GOVERNMENT BUREAUCRAT WHO WILL CHANGE MY MIND.>



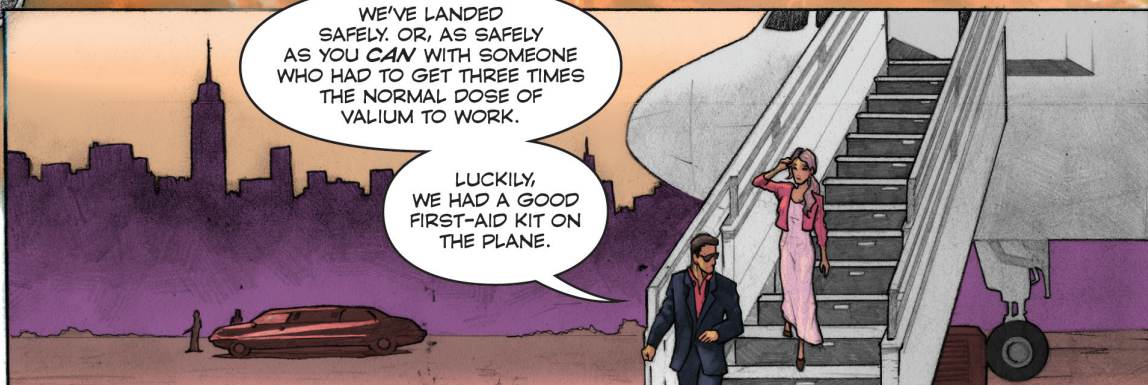
<I THINK *THIS* WILL CHANGE YOUR MIND.>

<THIS IS FROM THE PRESIDENTE DEL CONSIGLIO DEI MINISTRI. HOW...?>



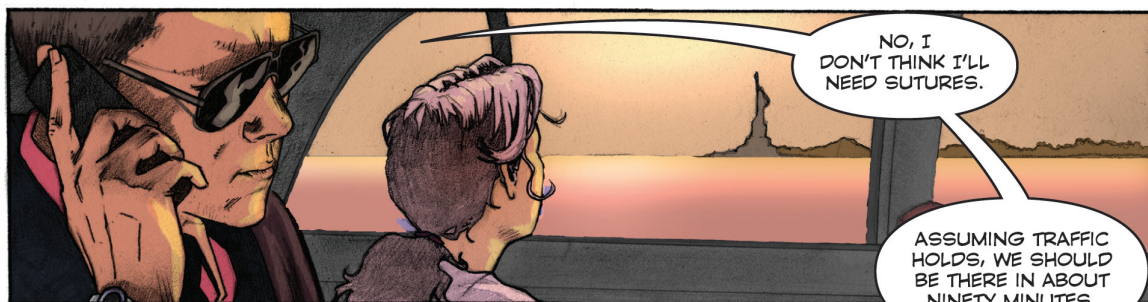
WE'VE LANDED SAFELY. OR, AS SAFELY AS YOU *CAN* WITH SOMEONE WHO HAD TO GET THREE TIMES THE NORMAL DOSE OF VALIUM TO WORK.

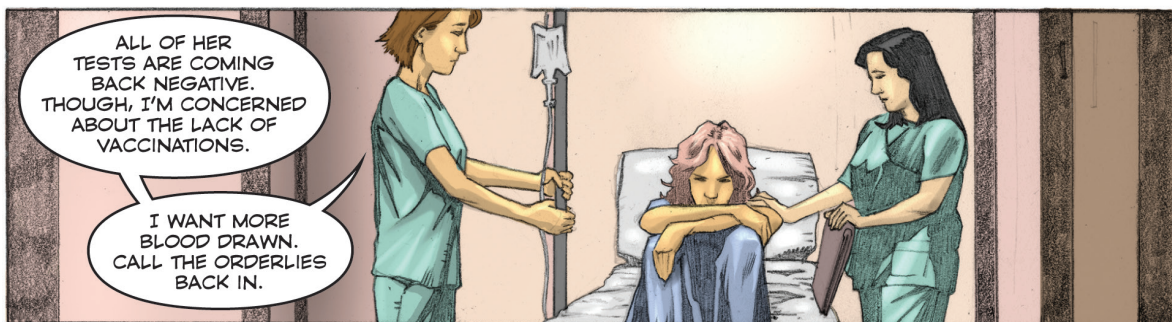
LUCKILY, WE HAD A GOOD FIRST-AID KIT ON THE PLANE.



NO, I DON'T THINK I'LL NEED SUTURES.

ASSUMING TRAFFIC HOLDS, WE SHOULD BE THERE IN ABOUT NINETY MINUTES.





ALL OF HER TESTS ARE COMING BACK NEGATIVE. THOUGH, I'M CONCERNED ABOUT THE LACK OF VACCINATIONS.

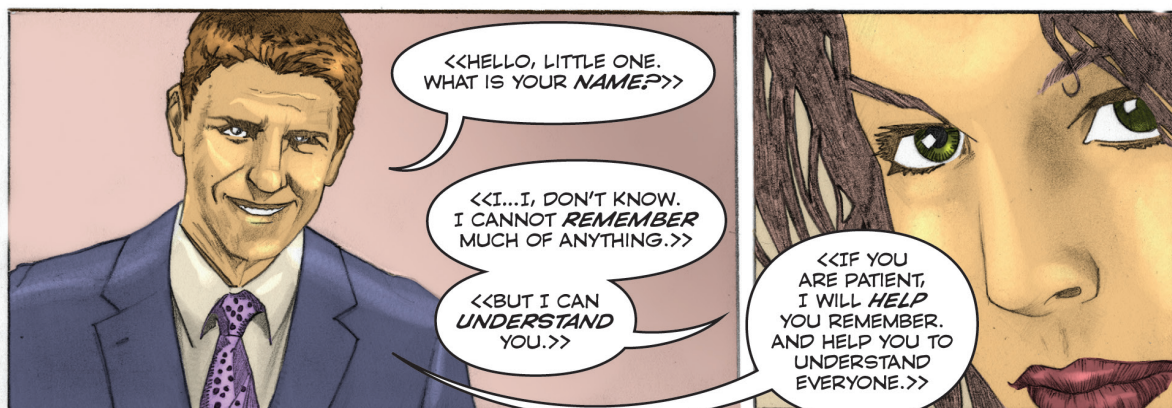
I WANT MORE BLOOD DRAWN. CALL THE ORDERLIES BACK IN.



I CAN'T IMAGINE WHY YOU'D NEED THE ORDERLIES, FOR SUCH A SMALL GIRL DR. CARLSON.

I'M SURE SHE'LL COOPERATE.

I'M SORRY MR. LAURENCE. THE STAFF, AND I, ARE NOT FLUENT IN *ITALIAN*.



<<HELLO, LITTLE ONE. WHAT IS YOUR NAME?>>

<<I...I, DON'T KNOW. I CANNOT **REMEMBER** MUCH OF ANYTHING.>>

<<BUT I CAN **UNDERSTAND** YOU.>>

<<IF YOU ARE PATIENT, I WILL **HELP** YOU REMEMBER. AND HELP YOU TO UNDERSTAND EVERYONE.>>



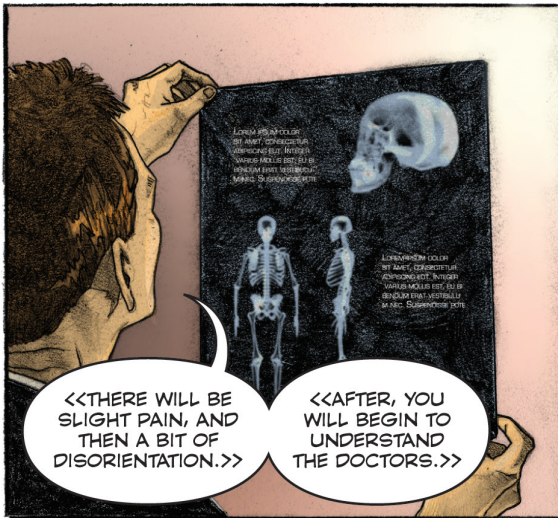
YOU UNDERSTAND WHAT SHE'S SAYING? *HOW?* THE DOCTORS IN *ITALY* COULDN'T UNDERSTAND HER.

IT'S JUST A DIALECT. I'VE SPENT SOME TIME IN VERONA AND GRASP ENOUGH OF IT.

HOW *IS* SHE, DOCTOR?

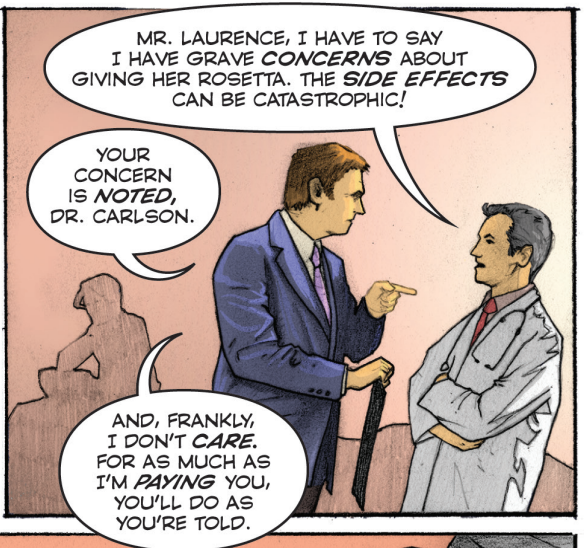
OTHER THAN SOME DEHYDRATION, SHE'S IN *PERFECT HEALTH*. ALMOST INHUMANLY HEALTHY.

EXCELLENT. PREPARE THE *ROSETTA SERUM*.



<<THERE WILL BE SLIGHT PAIN, AND THEN A BIT OF DISORIENTATION.>>

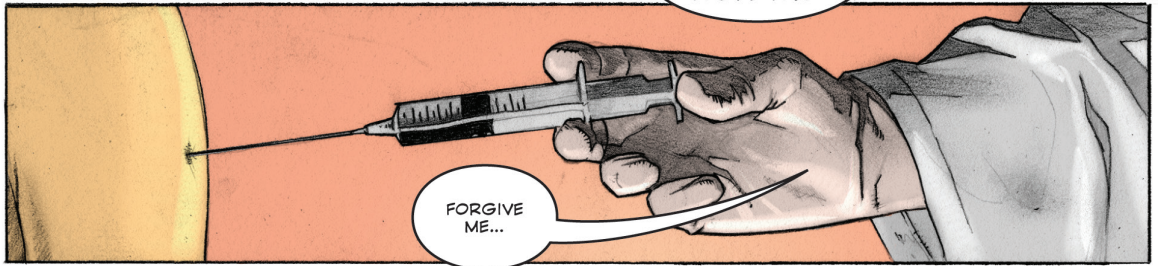
<<AFTER, YOU WILL BEGIN TO UNDERSTAND THE DOCTORS.>>



MR. LAURENCE, I HAVE TO SAY I HAVE GRAVE CONCERNS ABOUT GIVING HER ROSETTA. THE *SIDE EFFECTS* CAN BE CATASTROPHIC!

YOUR CONCERN IS *NOTED*, DR. CARLSON.

AND, FRANKLY, I DON'T *CARE*. FOR AS MUCH AS I'M *PAYING* YOU, YOU'LL DO AS YOU'RE TOLD.



FORGIVE ME...

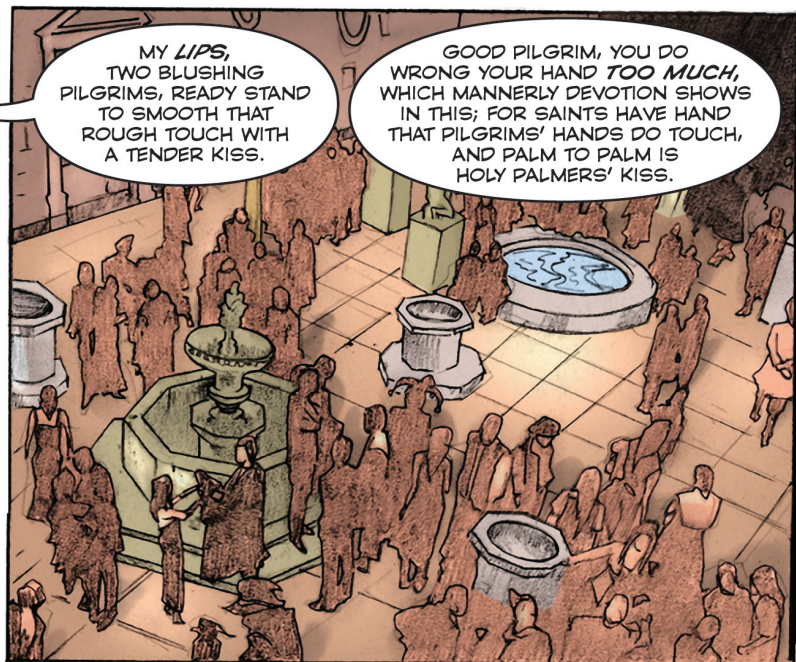


<<YOU SEEP THAT WASN'T SO BAD, WAS IT?>>





IF I PROFANE WITH MY UNWORTHIEST *HAND* THIS HOLY SHRINE, THE GENTLE FINE IS THIS:



MY *LIPS*, TWO BLUSHING PILGRIMS, READY STAND TO SMOOTH THAT ROUGH TOUCH WITH A TENDER KISS.

GOOD PILGRIM, YOU DO WRONG YOUR HAND *TOO MUCH*, WHICH MANNERLY DEVOTION SHOWS IN THIS; FOR SAINTS HAVE HAND THAT PILGRIMS' HANDS DO TOUCH, AND PALM TO PALM IS HOLY PALMERS' KISS.



HAVE NOT SAINTS LIPS, AND HOLY PALMERS *TOO?*

AY, PILGRIM, LIPS THAT THEY MUCH USE IN PRAYER.

O, THEN, DEAR SAINT, LET LIPS DON WHAT HANDS DO; THEY PRAY, GRANT THOU, LEST *FAITH* TURN TO *DESPAIR*.



SAINTS DO NOT MOVE, THOUGH GRANT FOR PRAYERS SAKE.

THEN MOVE NOT, WHILE MY PRAYER'S EFFECT I TAKE. THUS FROM MY LIPS, BY *YOURS*, MY SIN IS PURGED.

