



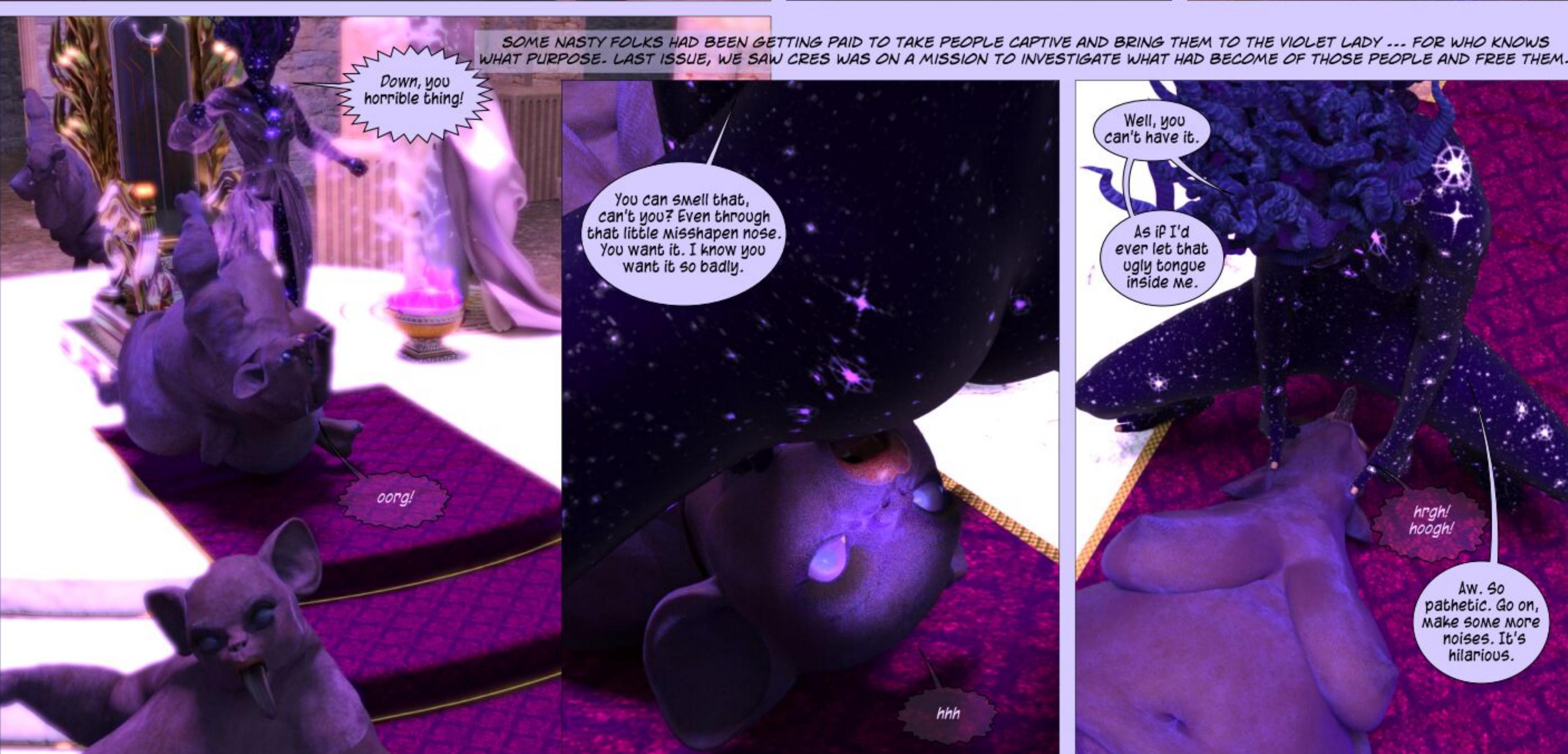
THE CAMP SITE OF THE ROVERS, A PERIPATETIC BAND OF ADVENTURERS.



ELSEWHERE IN THE YARDS...

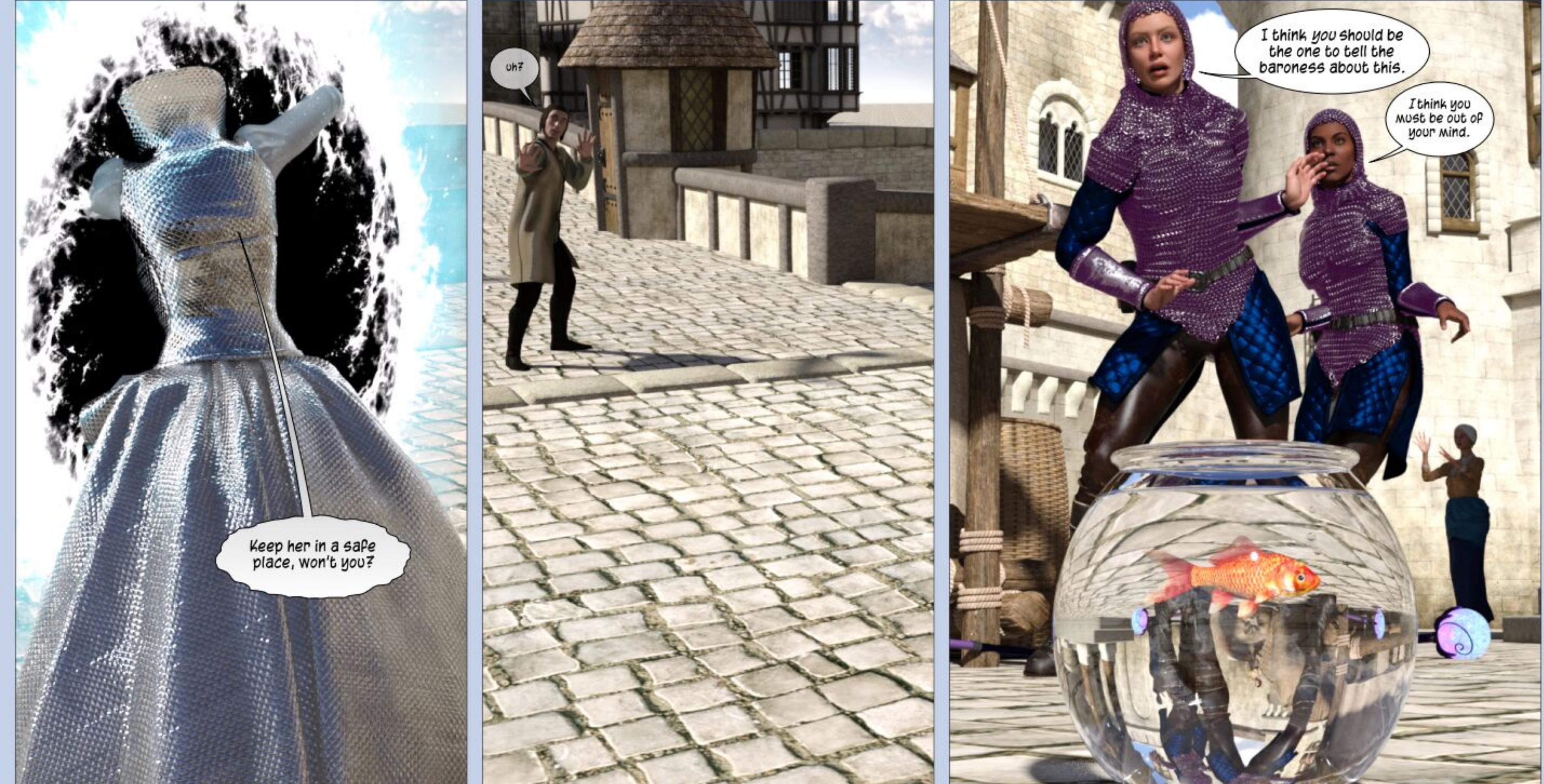
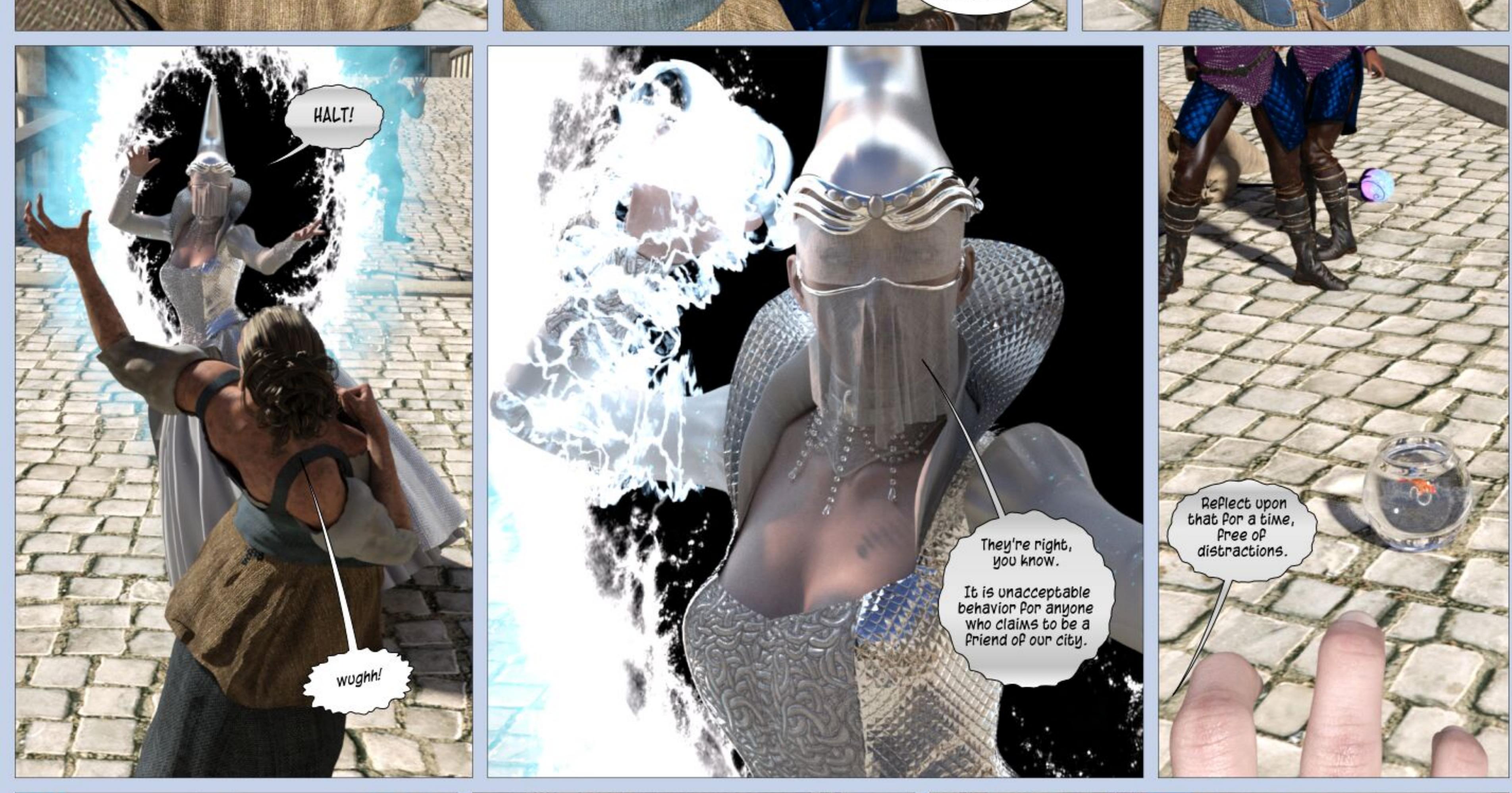


THIS PERSON IS CALLED BY SEVERAL NAMES, BUT THE MOST COMMONLY HEARD ONE IS THE VIOLET LADY.



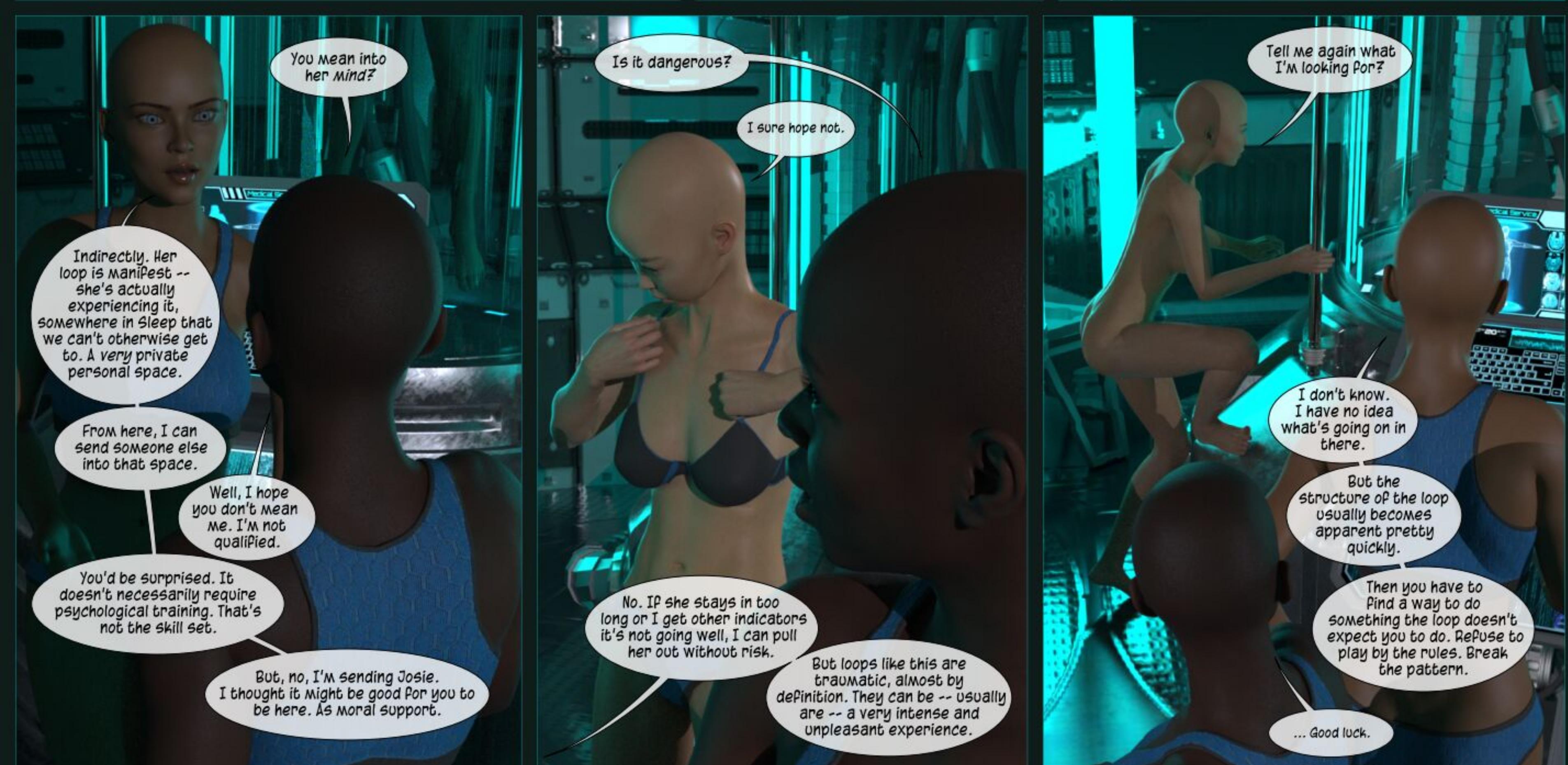
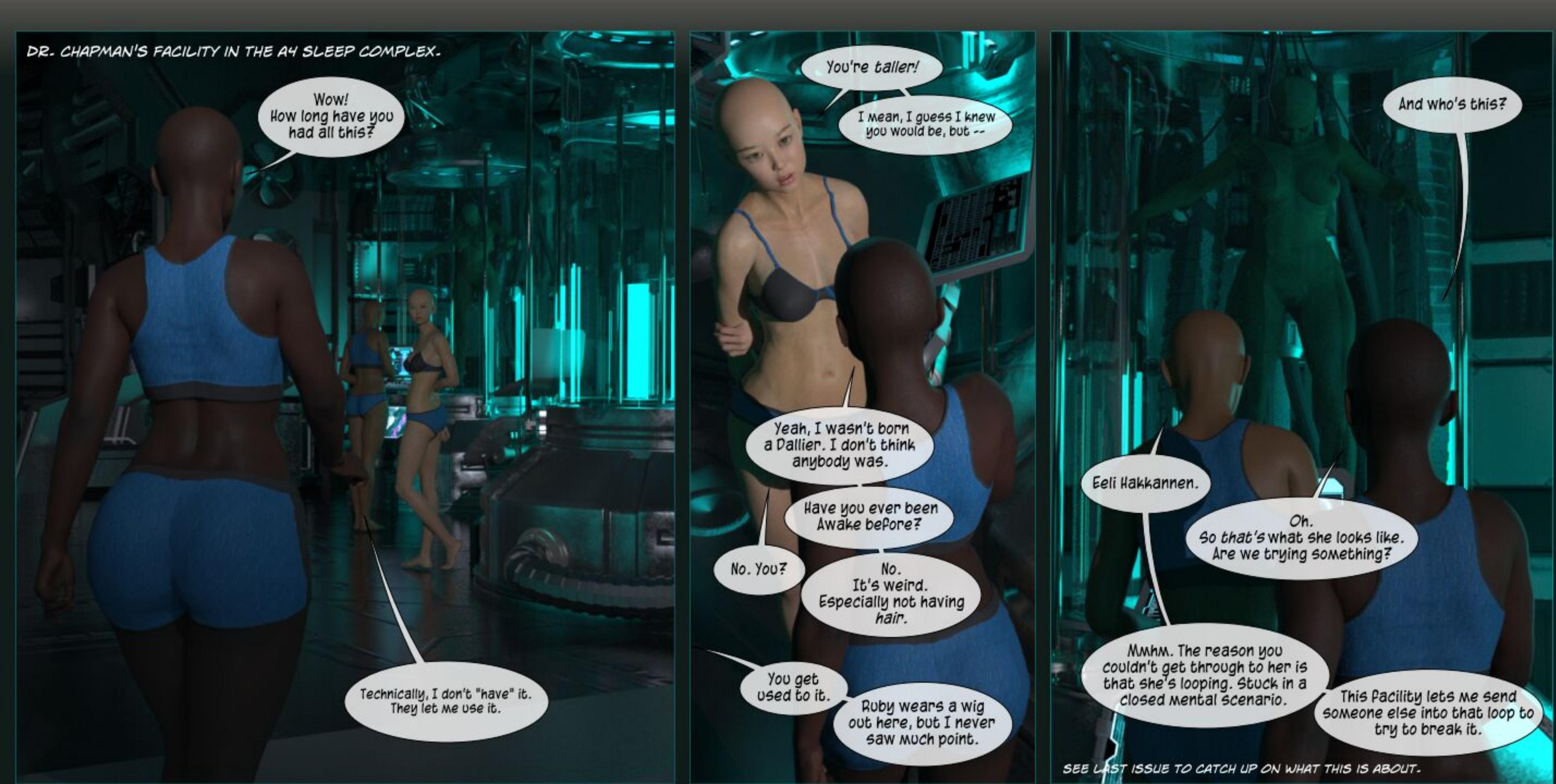
MEANWHILE, MUCH FURTHER SOUTH, A VERY SMALL EXPEDITIONARY FORCE IS MAKING ITS WAY ACROSS THE HOT SWAMP.

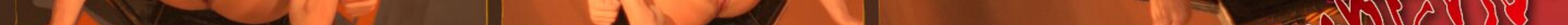
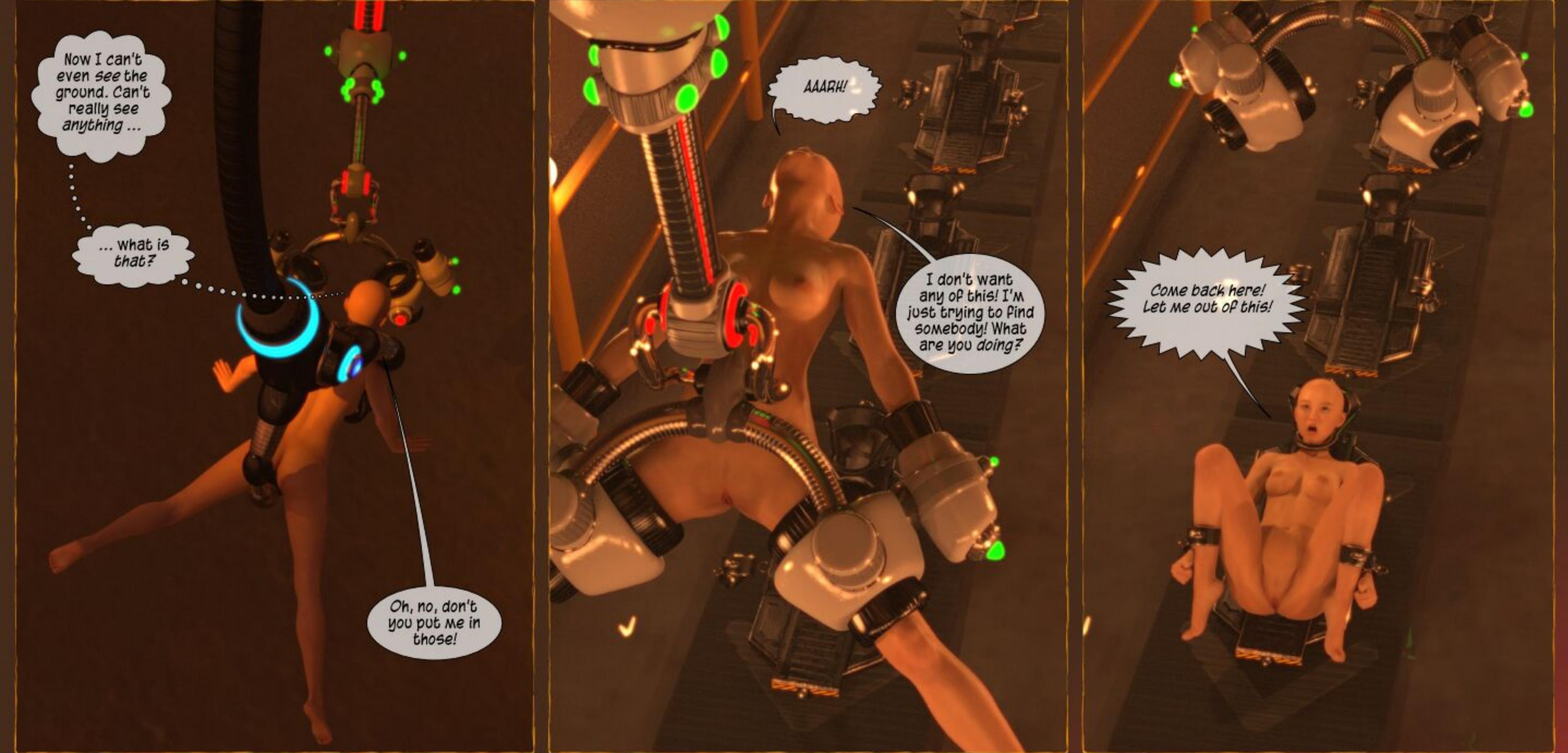


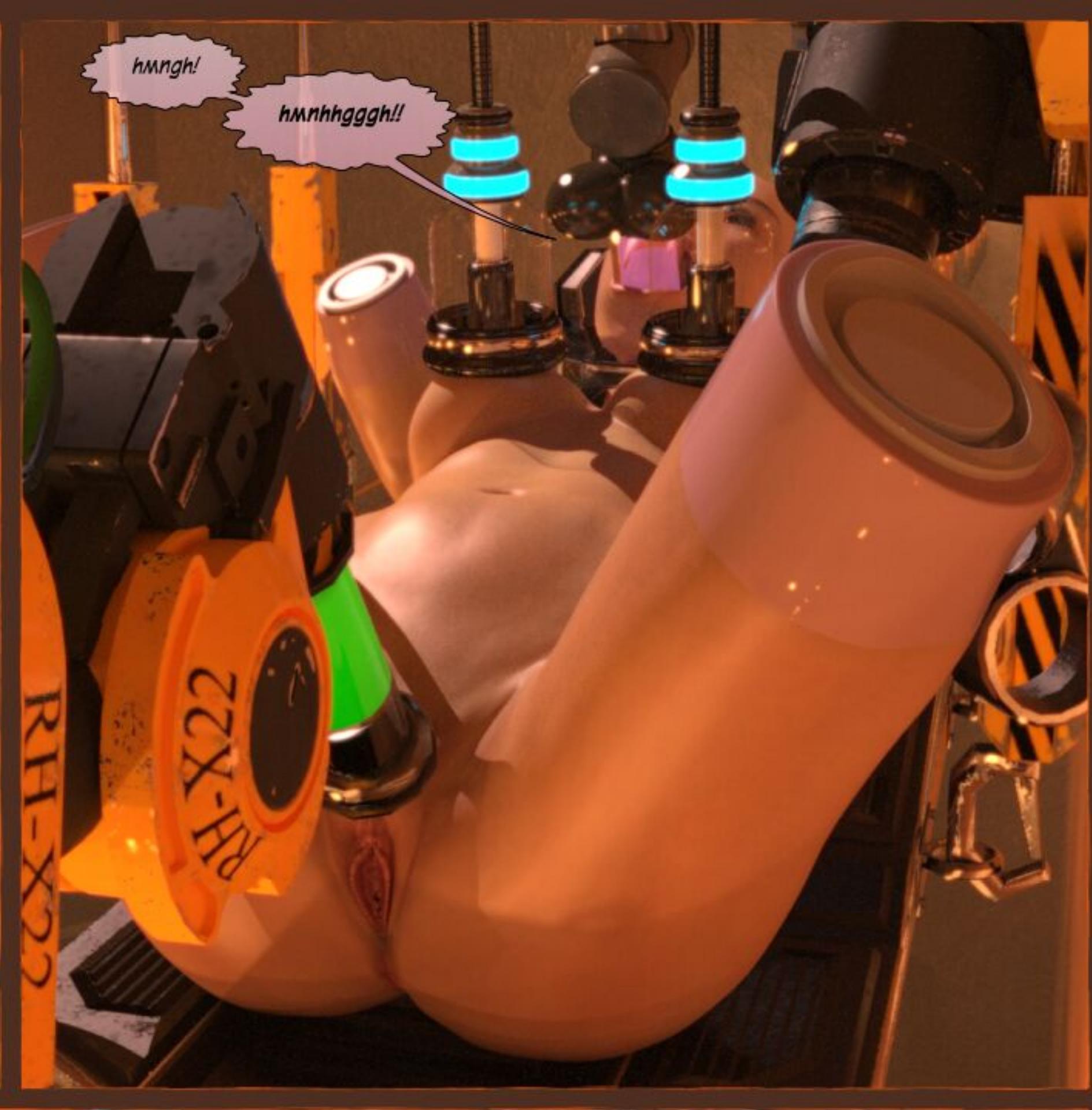
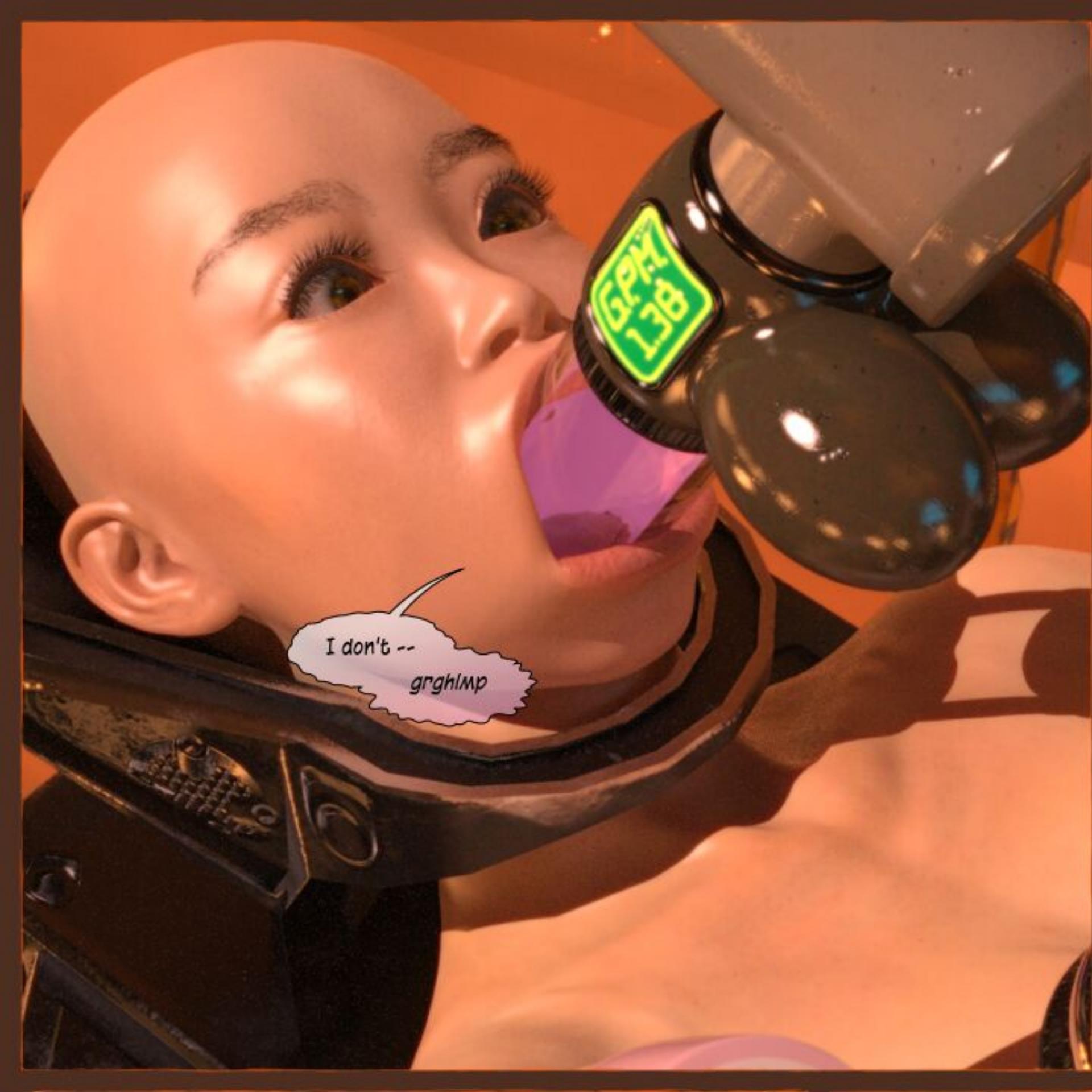


HIGHPOINT, WHERE HONOR AND VIOLET ARE ON A DIPLOMATIC MISSION ...

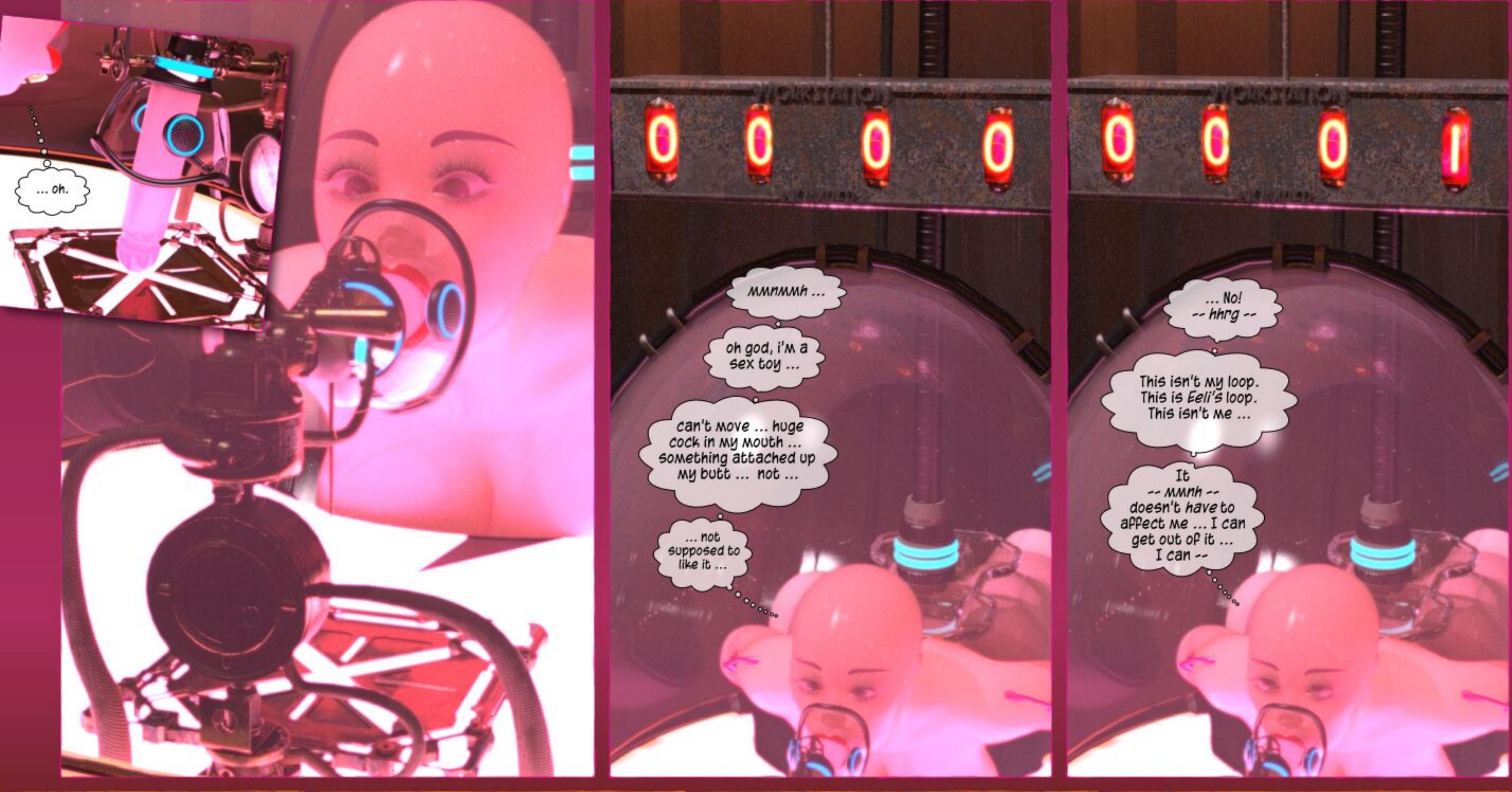








Stop sawin' me, would you?
I'm tryin' to help you.
I won't promise not to offer her to cu...

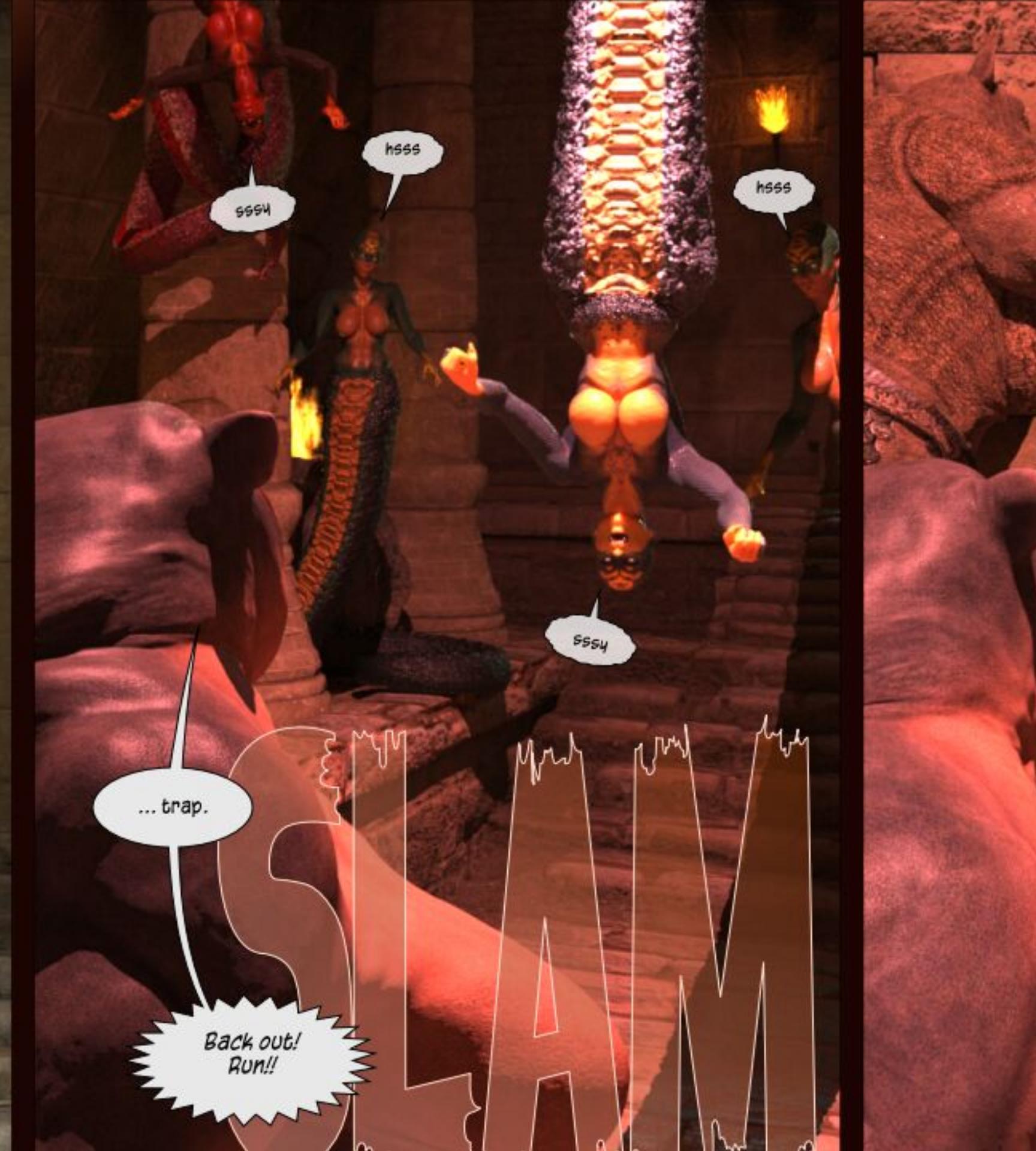




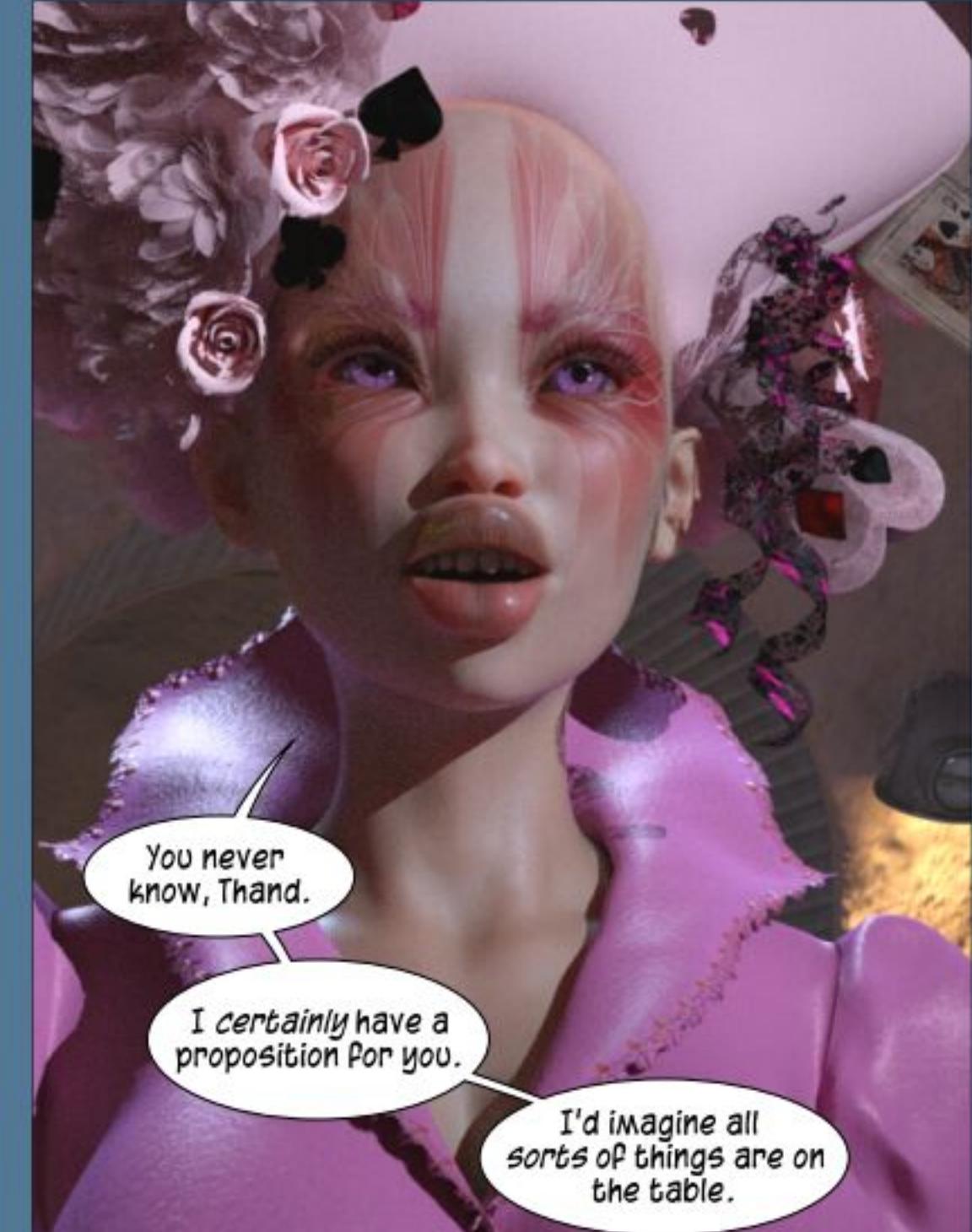
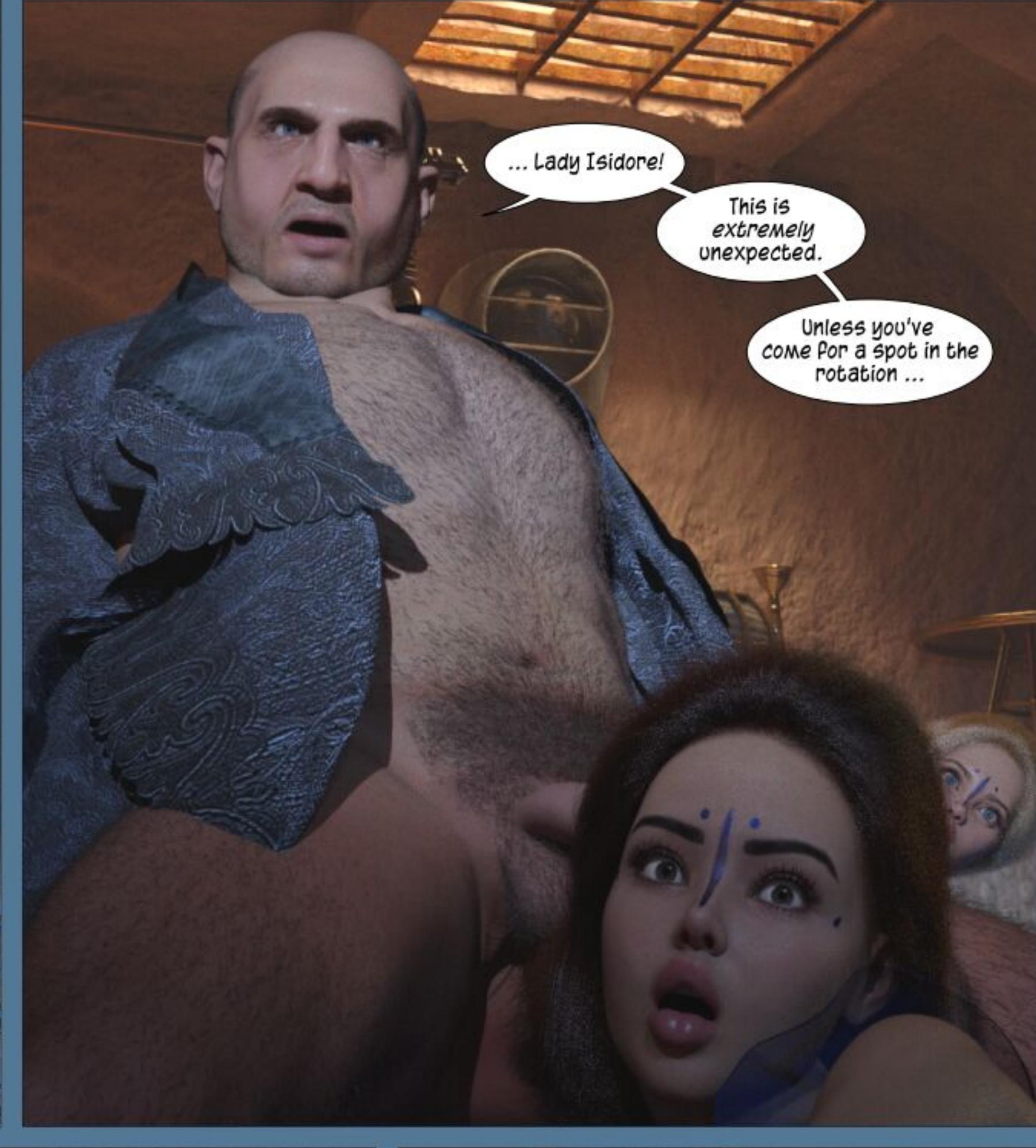
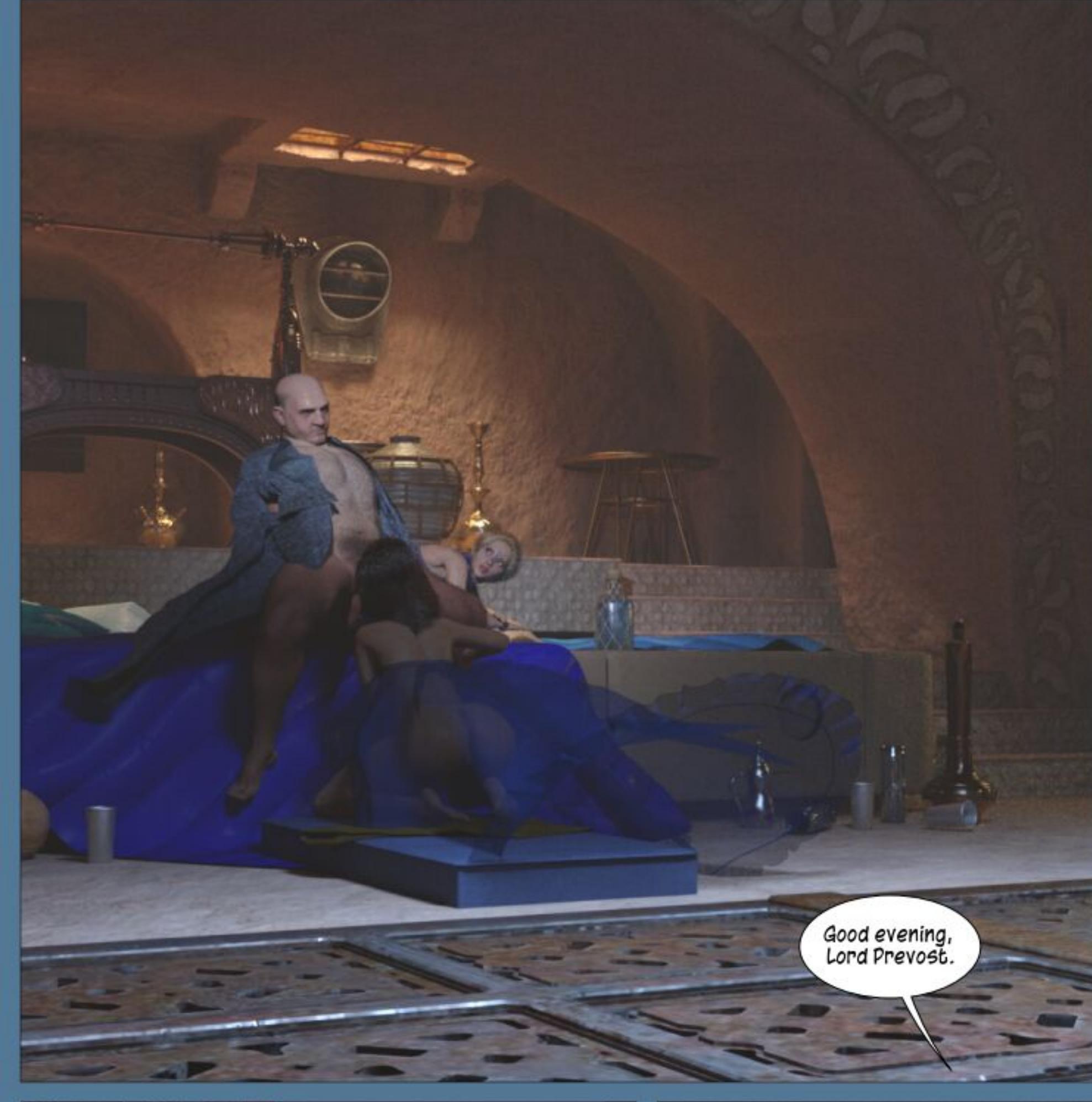


BACK TO THE YARDS, WHERE OUR EXPEDITION IS ...



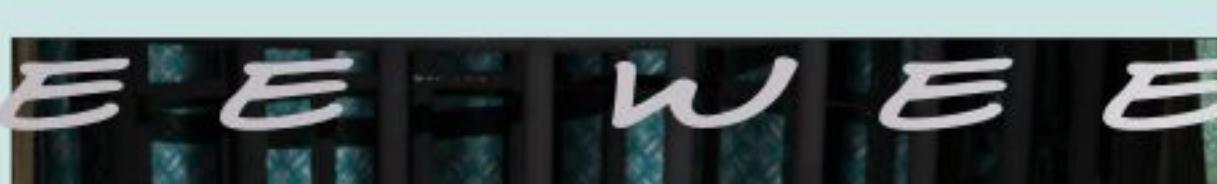






THREE WEEKS LATER

GRAYTOWER, THE YARDS.





I figured you'd rather be a bat. You were sad. Don't blame you. It's got to be pretty rotten to be a grimlin if you have a brain.

Never saw a grimlin get their head back before. I didn't know that could happen.



But you're right, this is much better. Thank you again.

What's your name? I'm Cres.

Pleek.

IN THE COBRA QUEEN'S SANCTUM ...



With the swamp devolved, our border is safe ... the Gaja will never do anything about it ... my subjects and I are free to relax and enjoy life ...

... and to think, after all these years, the secret was just to capture one little wisp ...



'Course it doesn't help that she doesn't trust anybody ... she wouldn't be talking now, except she thinks I'm pried to the eyeballs on her venom ...



Now let's see if I can get close enough to find out what this is all about.

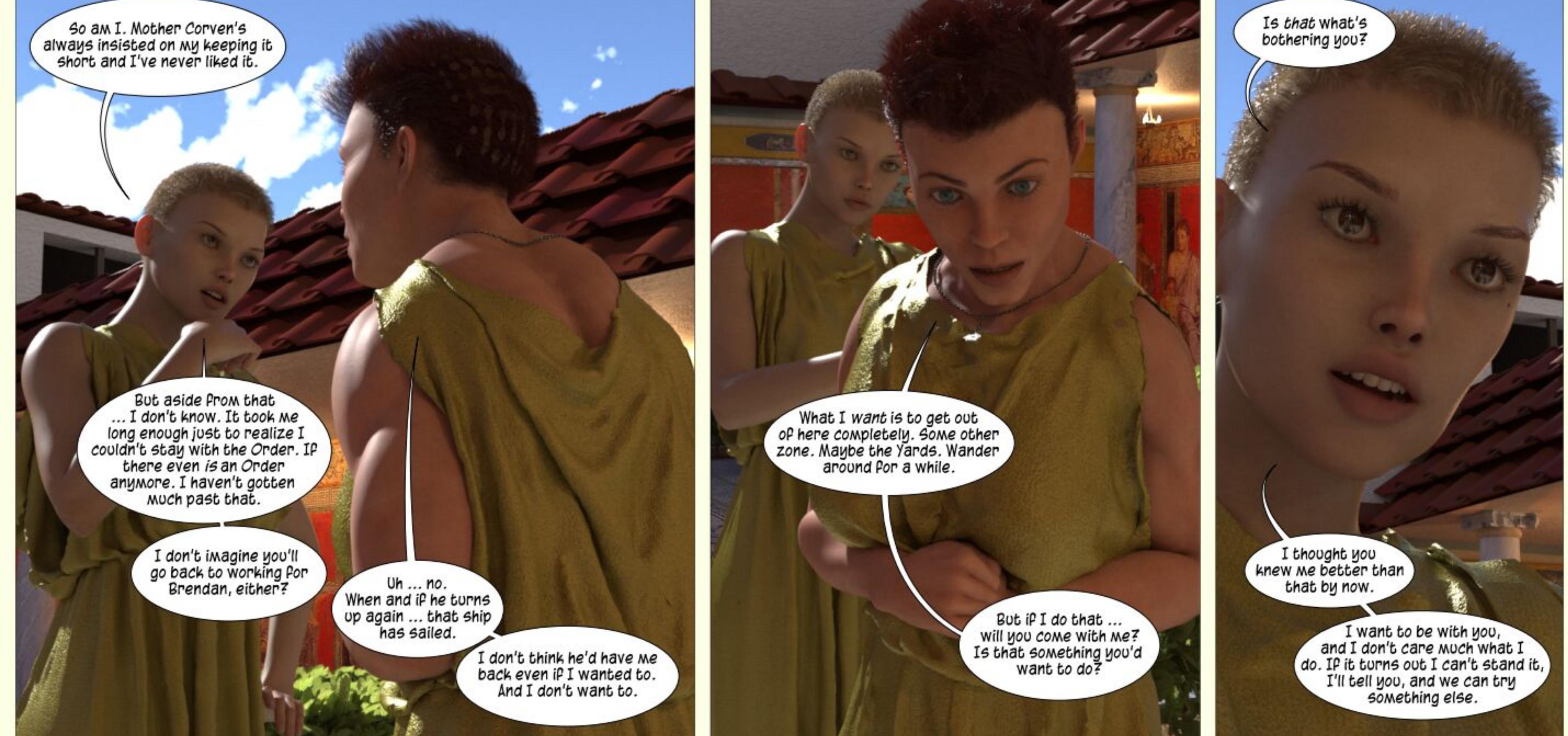


Wish you were big enough to just bite ... wouldn't have to do this the hard way ...



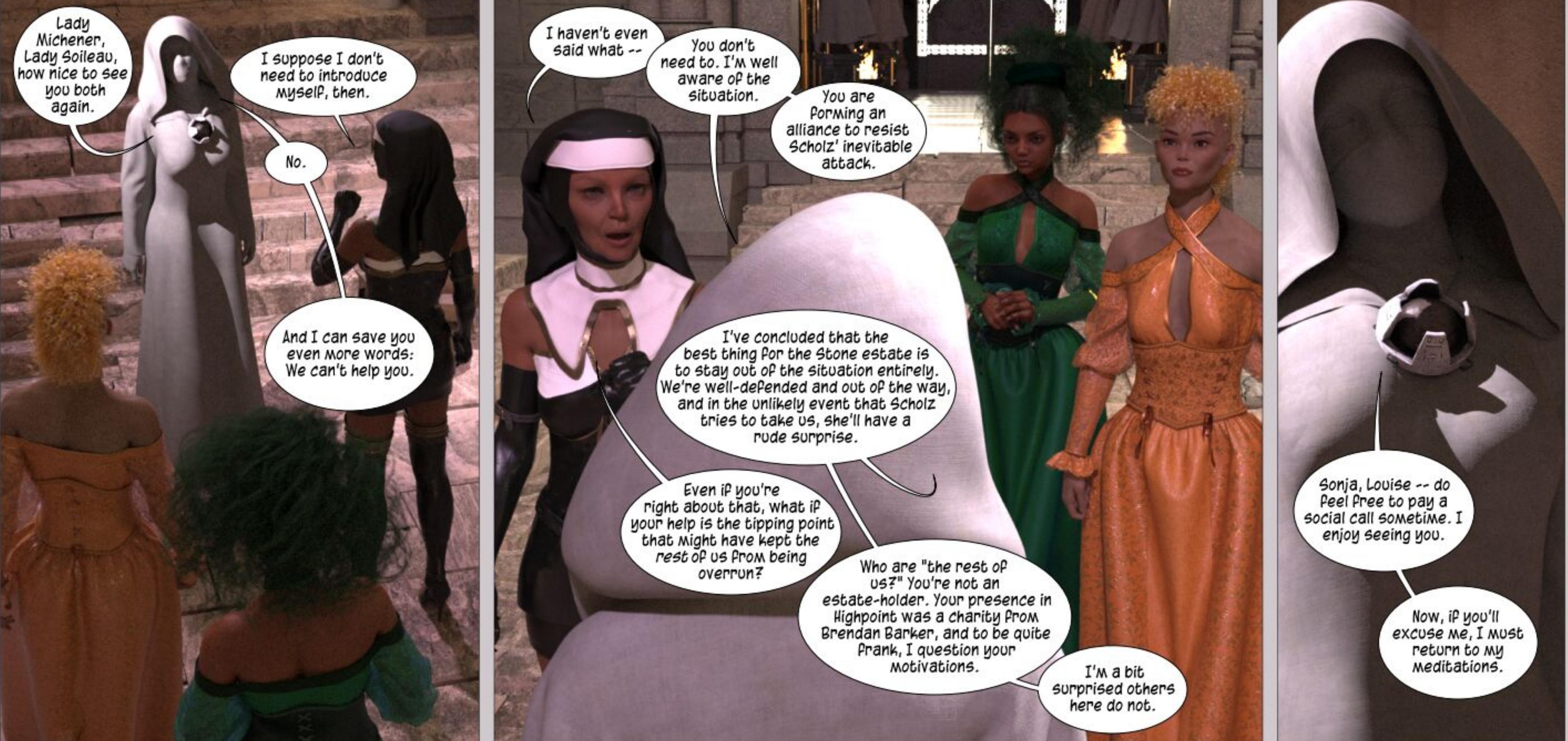
Mistress?

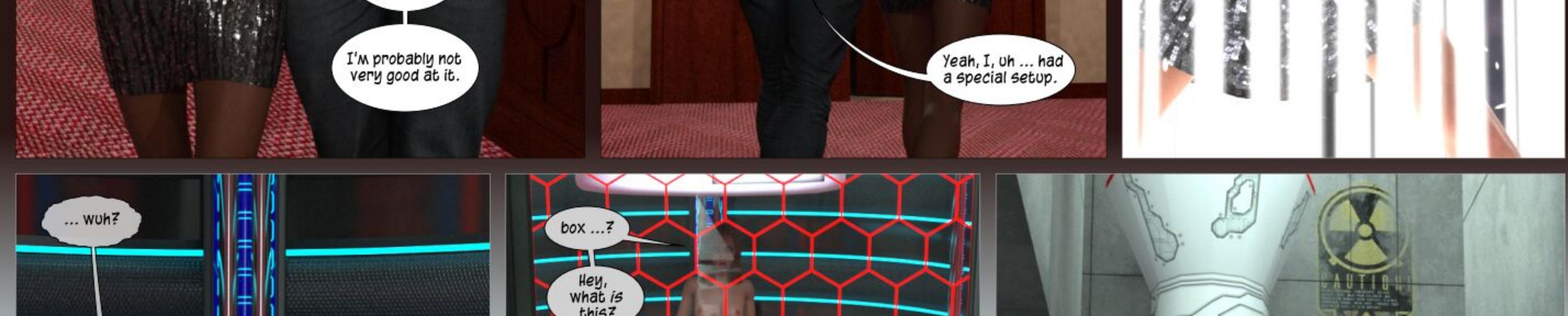
Damn it, pliss, what?

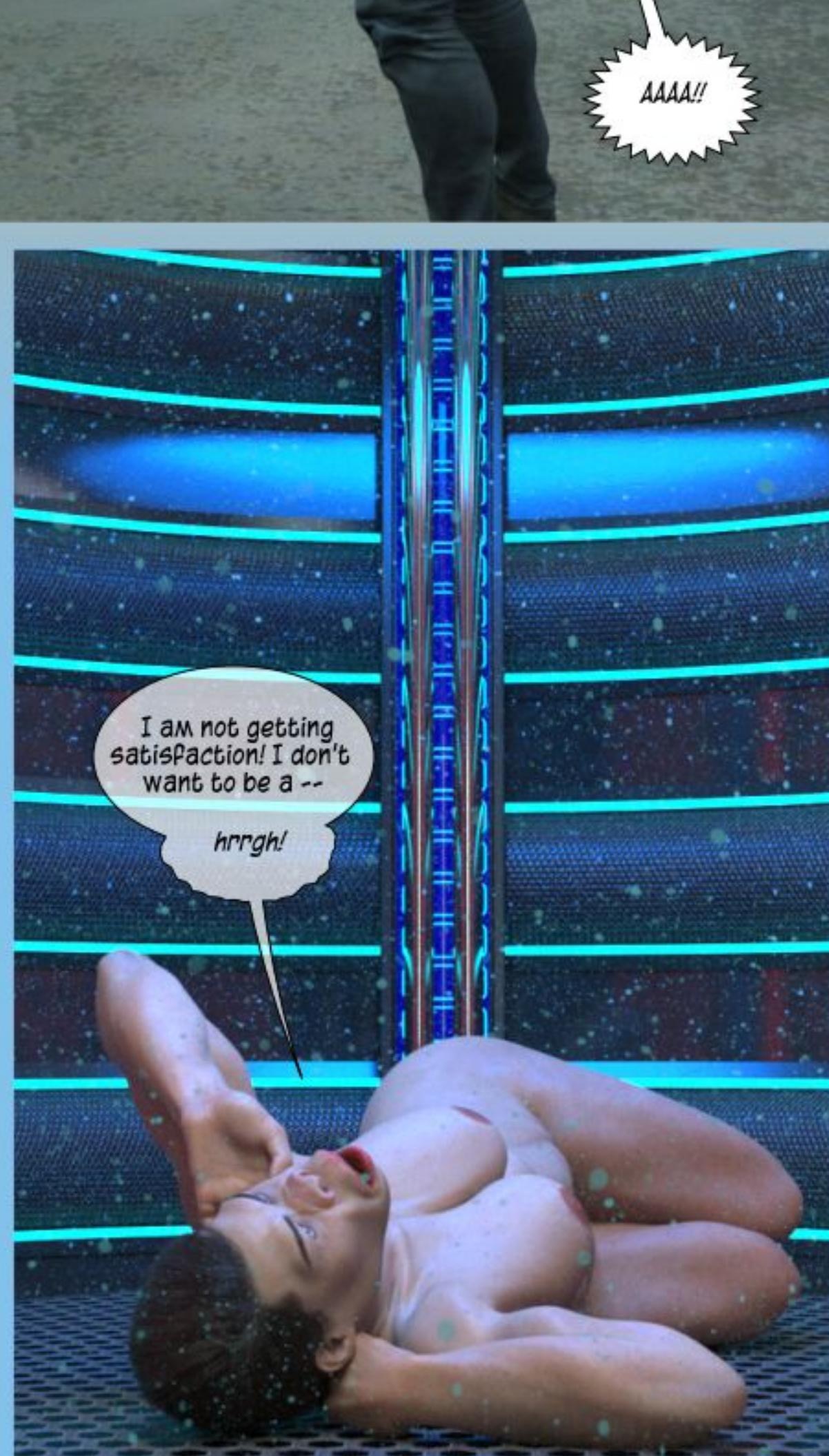
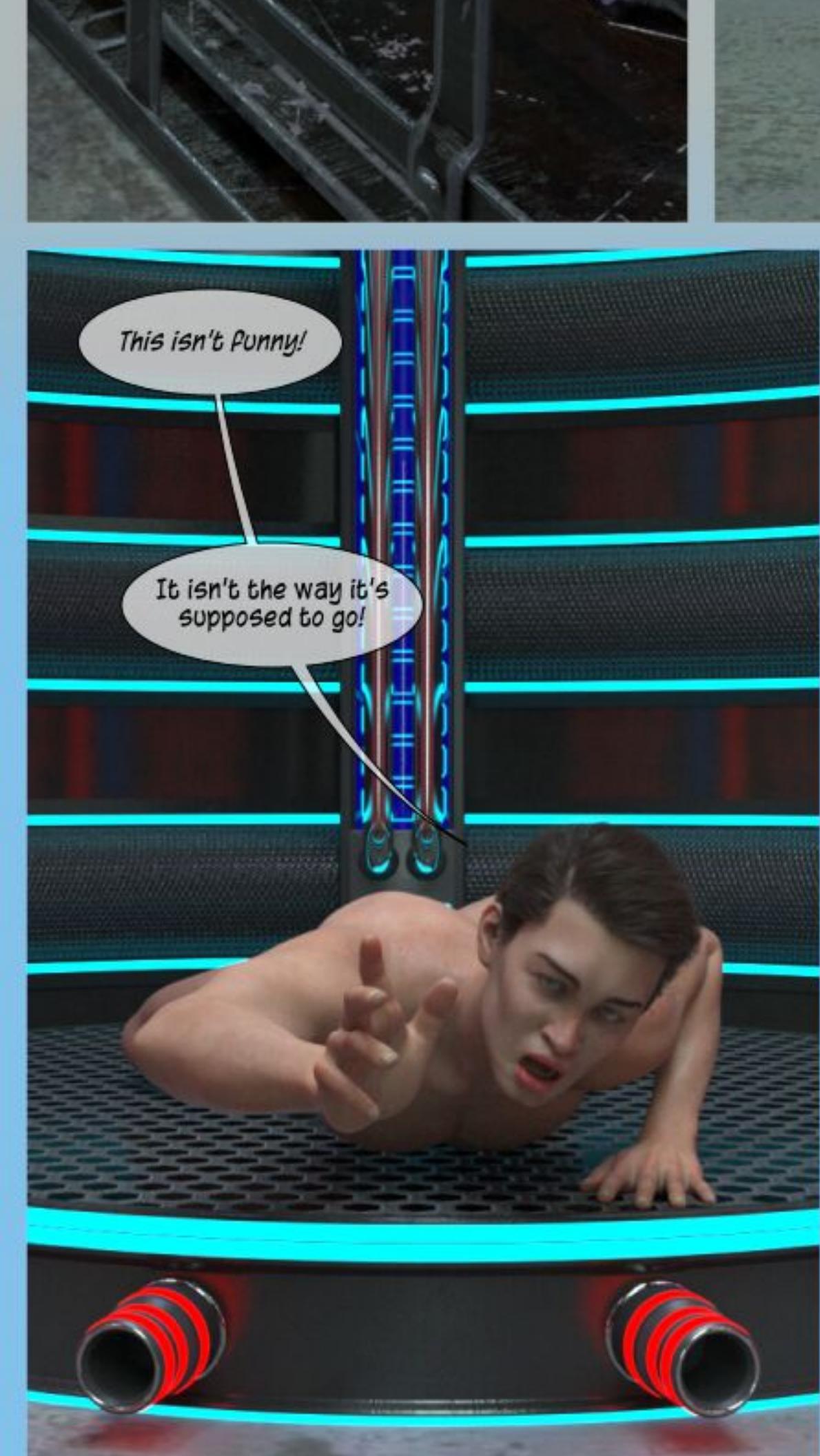
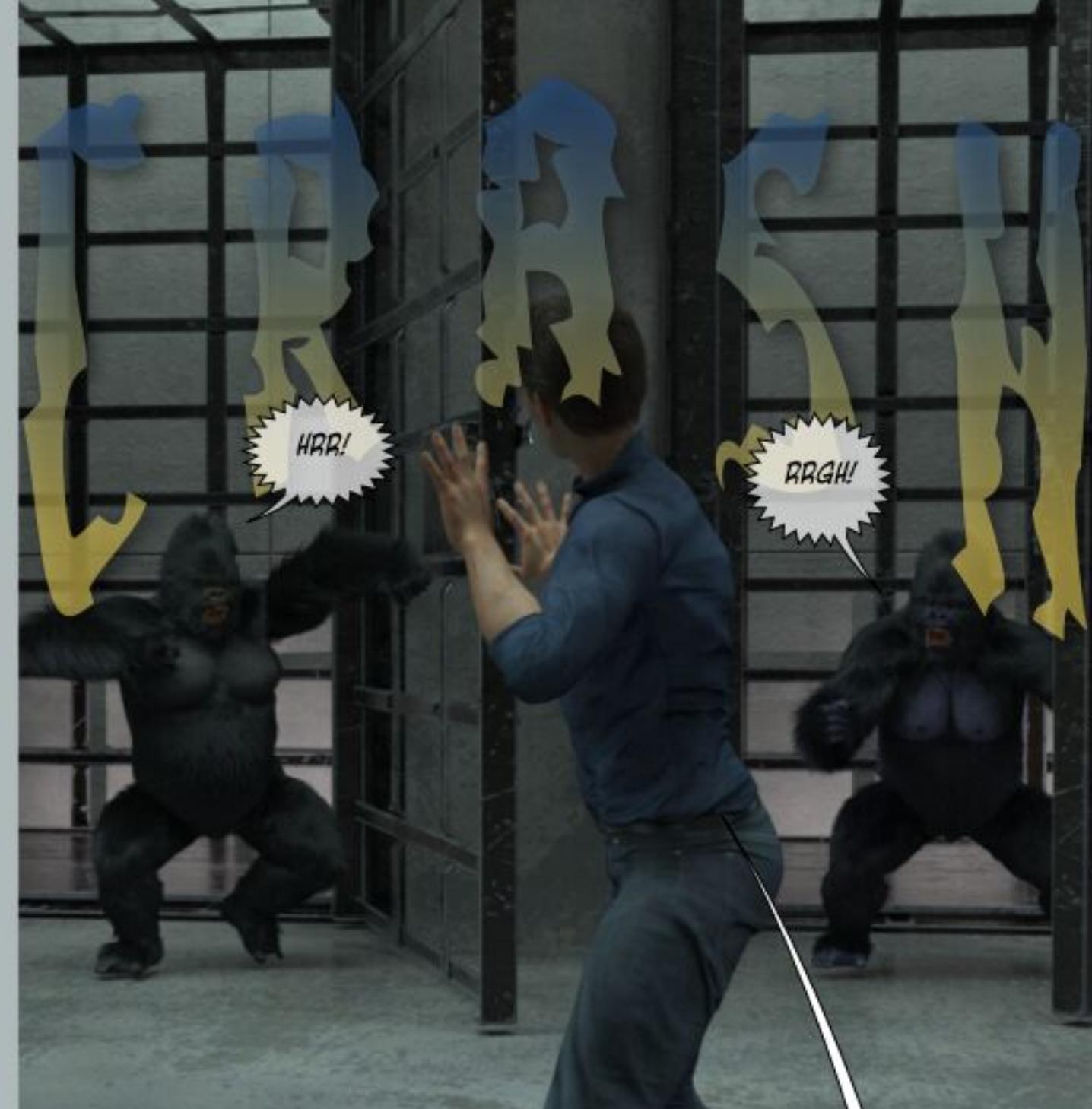
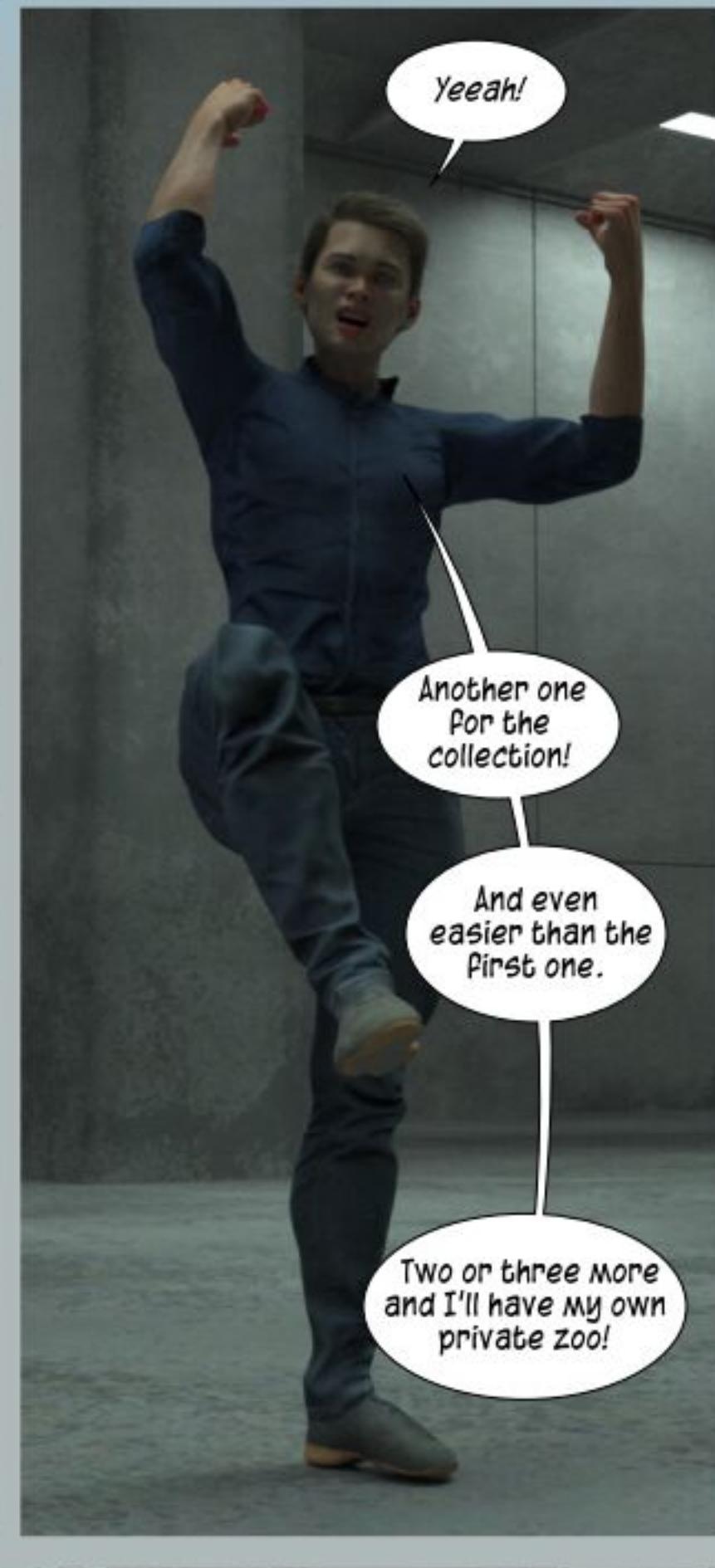
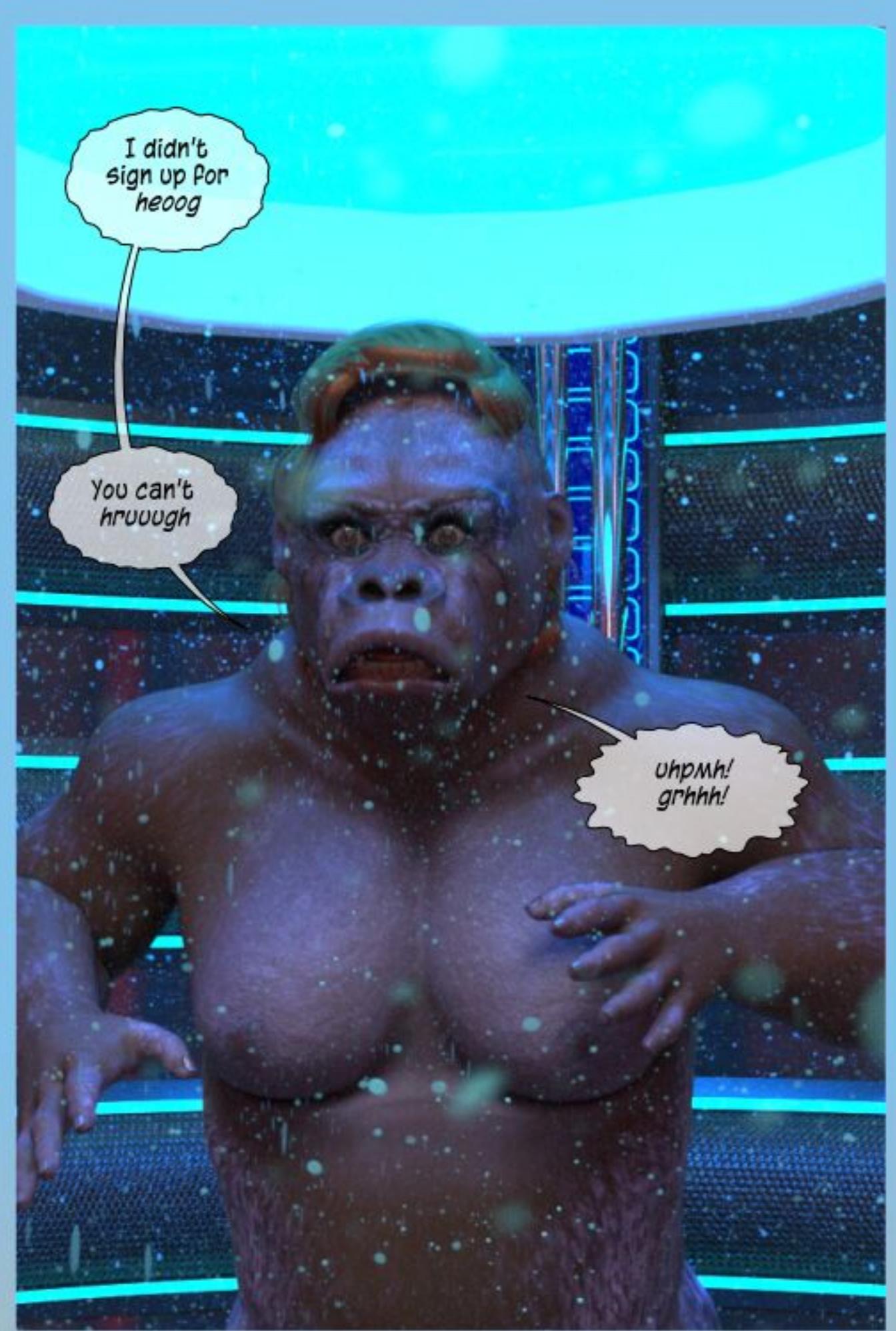


BACK TO THE YARDS, WHERE CHELLE AND THE COBRA QUEEN ARE HAVING A POSTCOITAL NAP ...











THREE WEEKS LATER

THE YARDS.



MEANWHILE, IN GRAYTOWER ...



SOMEWHERE IN THE HILL COUNTRY.

Come on, Thru!

Gella ...
-- hpp --

We lost them.
They're way behind us.

That's not it, hamhead!

Those trolls are headed straight for this village.
We have to warn them.

Don't hear any yelling ... I guess that's good ... Means they have no idea what's coming their way though ...

... or, OK, strike that.

We've got to get her out of that --

Wait!!

gurb!

The one inside's done, so if there aren't any more, that leaves this one here and the one you just spat on.

Good. Make another circle to see if there's anybody you missed.

You goblins, I think, annoy me more than any of the others.

You want to be monsters ... but not really.

You sort of want to be orcs, but you won't go the distance, because you also want to be cute.

You can't be a monster and cute.

I'm going to help you out. You're going to be a real monster now. You're going to be a troll, and serve me. How does that sound?

Mglrh!

Oh, I'm sorry. Let me wipe off your face.

Are you kidding?
I don't want to be a troll!
Trolls are ugly and dumb!

Well, that's true.

But if you don't want to be a troll, I'll have to change you into something even uglier and dumber.

But --

I ... uh ...

That sounds like a "yes."

... wuuuh!

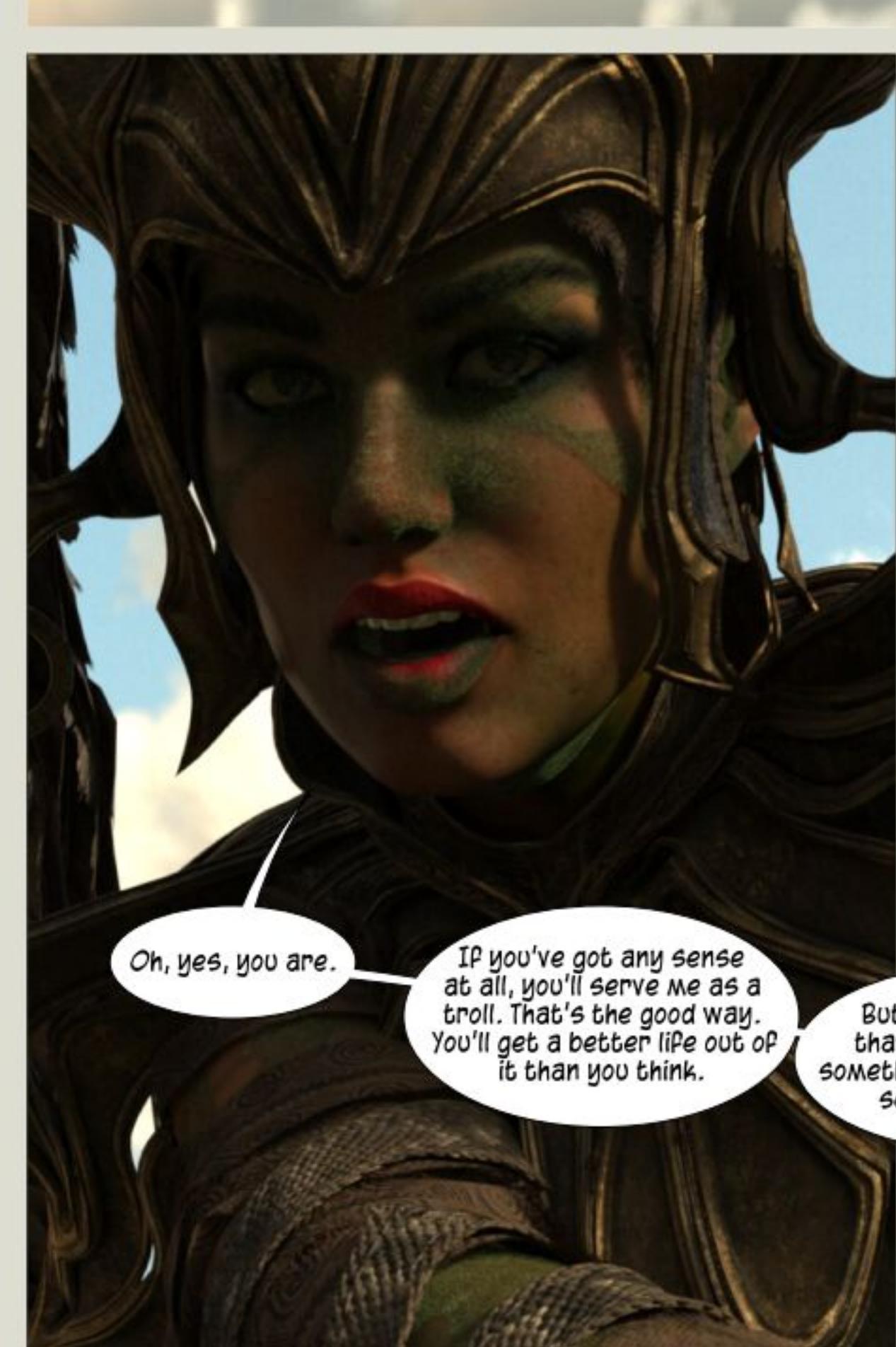
See, you've made it all the way up to 'orc' already. Why do you goblins like to be tiny, anyway? Isn't it better to be enormous?

HUURAH!!

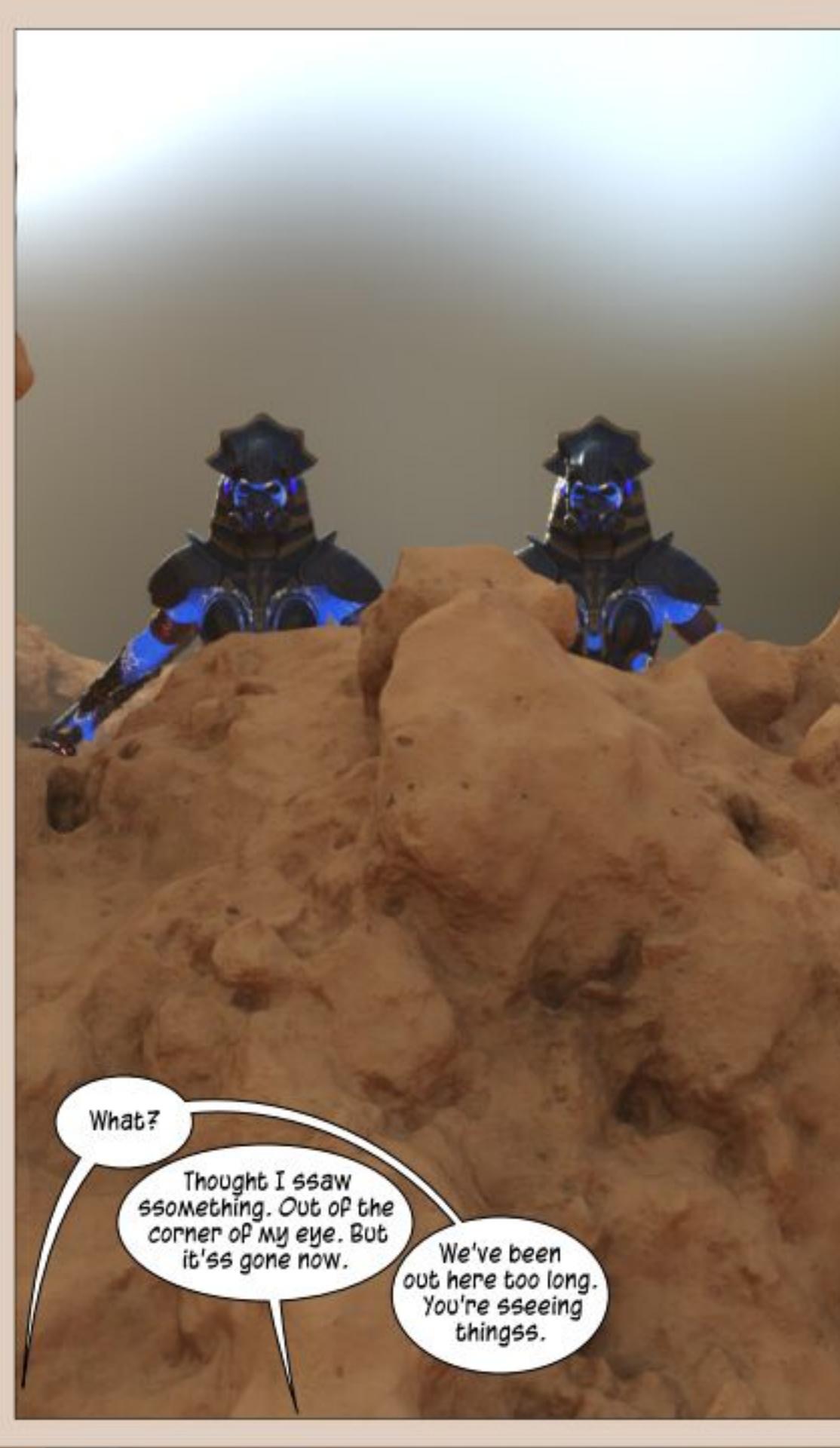
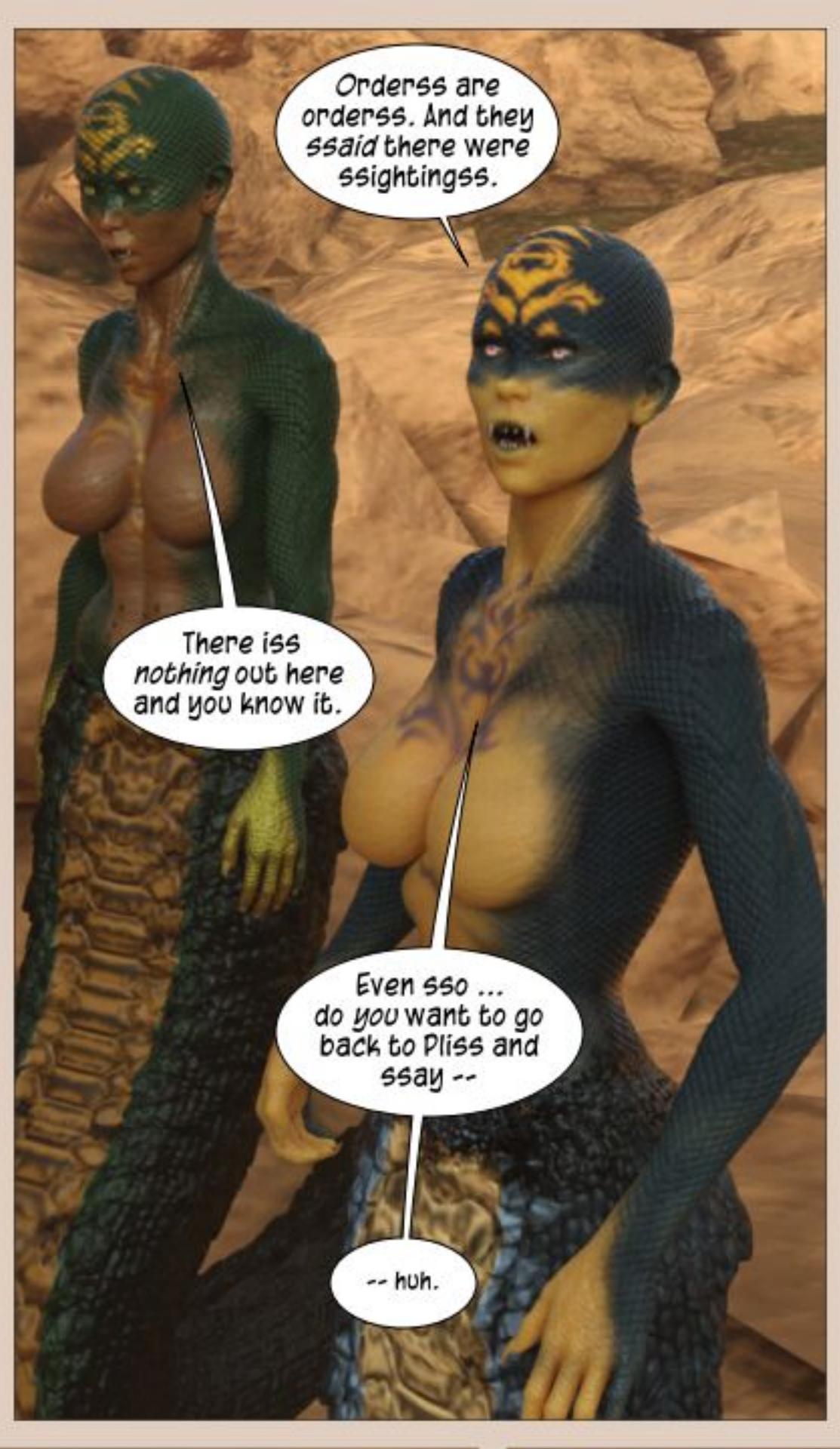
Oh, don't worry. It won't matter to you in a second.

HUURAH?

There we go.
Stand up and wait over there with the other recruits. We'll get you outfitted shortly.



FAR SOUTH OF THE PREVIOUS SCENE,
IN THE DESERT ...



THE VIOLET LADY'S CASTLE.





BACK TO THE YARDS ...



IN THE COBRA QUEEN'S TEMPLE
(OR PALACE, OR WHATEVER IT IS.)

Look, it's what she wants. Are you going to argue with her?

No!
But where are we going to get the people? We've run out of places to recruit ...

Pliss!!

We're being attacked! Some people I don't --

rrraughh!

Everyone get to the inner court! Barricade yourselves!

I have to go tell the mistresses!

YOW!

