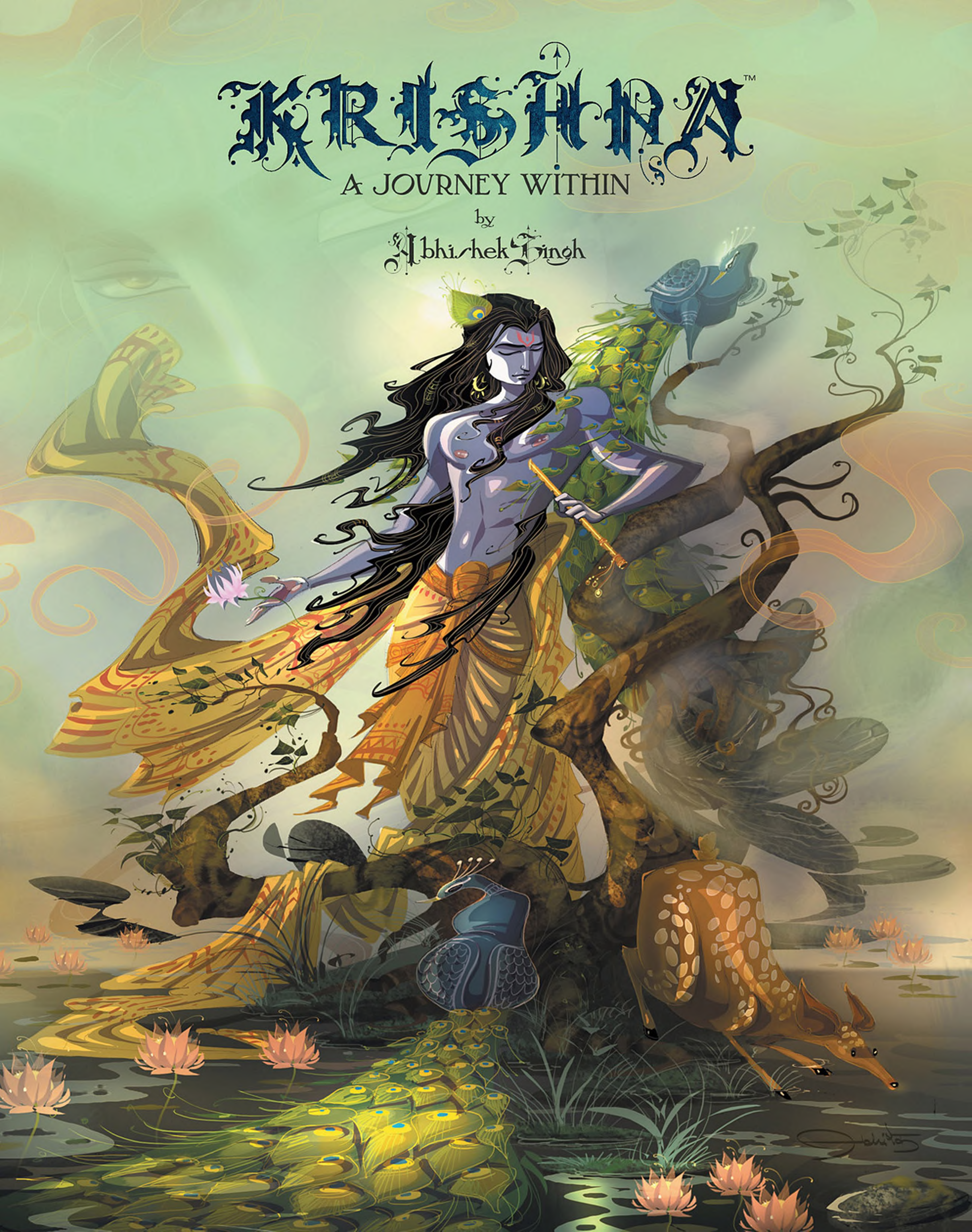


# KRISHNA™

A JOURNEY WITHIN

by  
Abhishek Singh





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Written & Illustrated by

Abhishek Singh

Edited by

ARJUN RAJ NIRULA

Lettering by

NILESH S. MAHADIK

Design & Logo by

DEV KABIR MALIK

Special thanks to

ERIC STEPHENSON

&

SHEKHAR KAPUR





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#### **KRISHNA: A JOURNEY WITHIN.**

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for my Godparents  
NALIN and RENOO



my parents  
NARESH, TRIPTI and VIDHYUT











WHEN THE WIND WHISPERED  
THE LAMENT OF THE SKY  
WITH THE FLOWERS I SANG.





WHEN UNREMEMBERED DREAMS  
STOOD STILL IN SILENCE...



...I, LIKE A SWAN, CARRIED  
THEM ON MY WINGS.

IT'S BEEN MORE THAN  
A CENTURY AND I FINALLY  
AWAIT AN END TO MY JOURNEY.

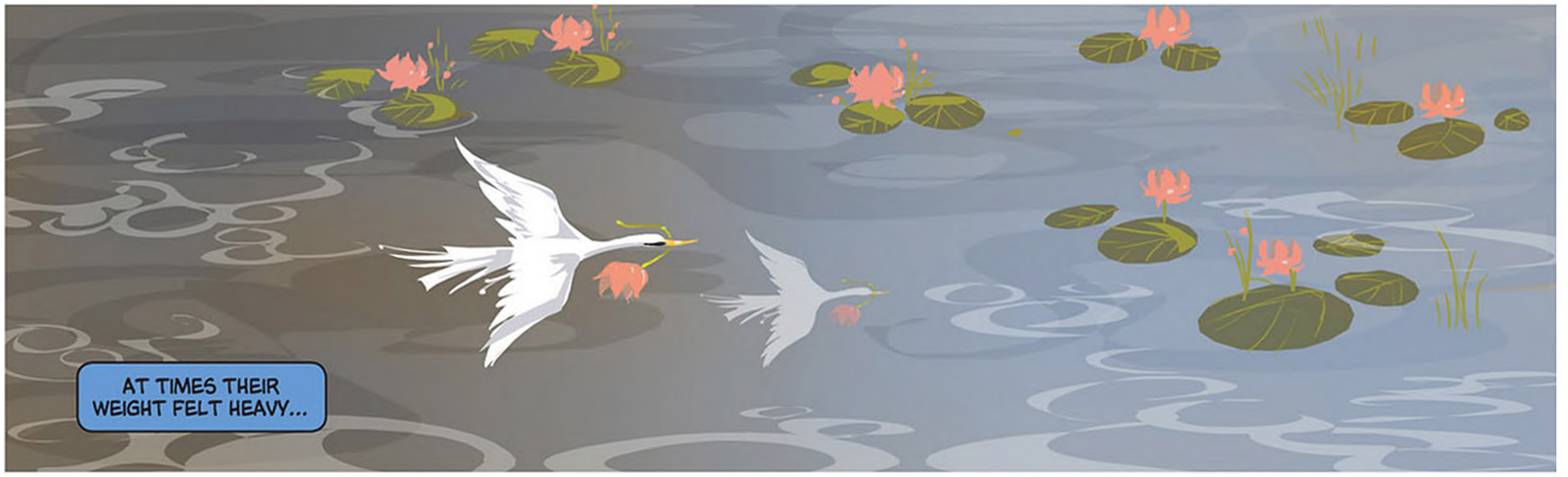


WHY DO WE EXIST?

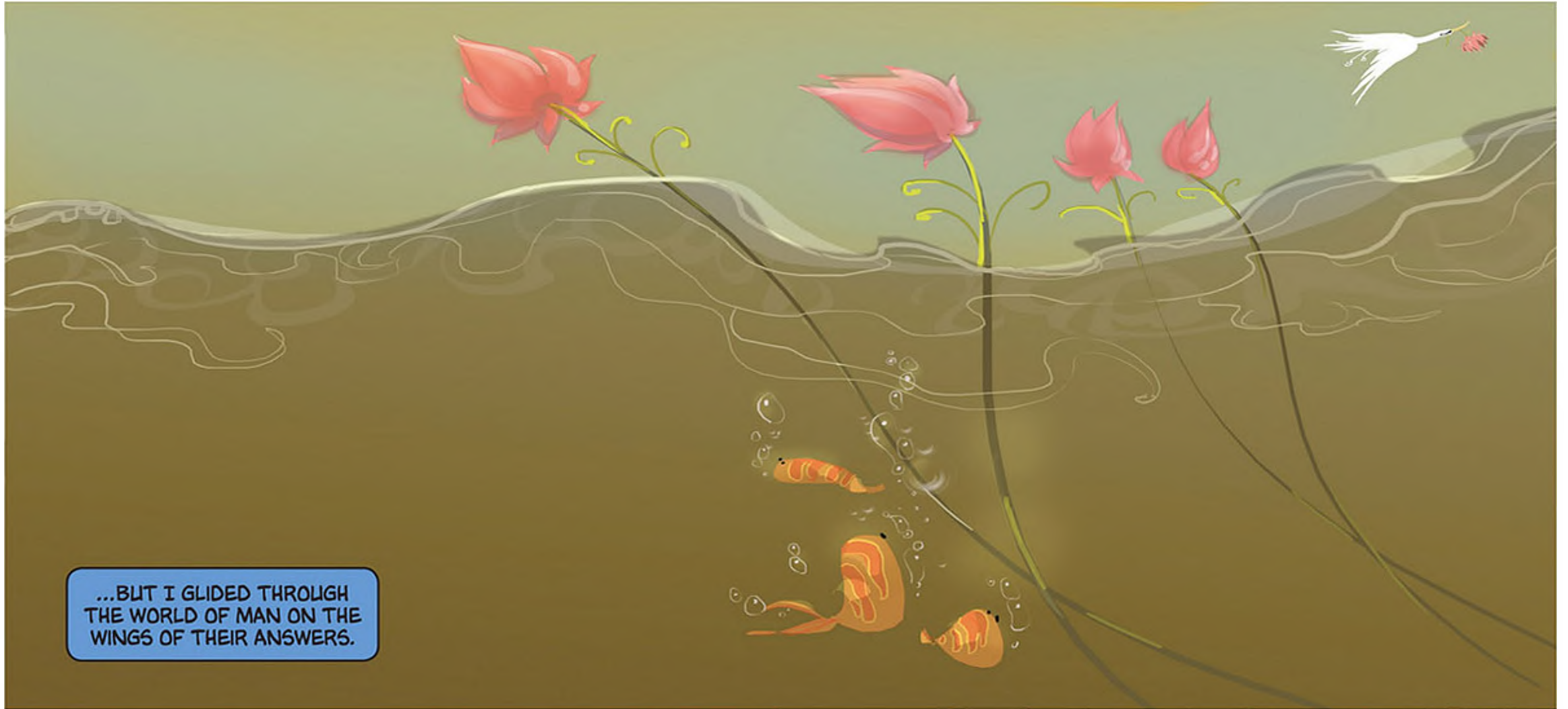
WHAT DO WE DESIRE?

LIFE AND ITS  
MANY QUESTIONS.





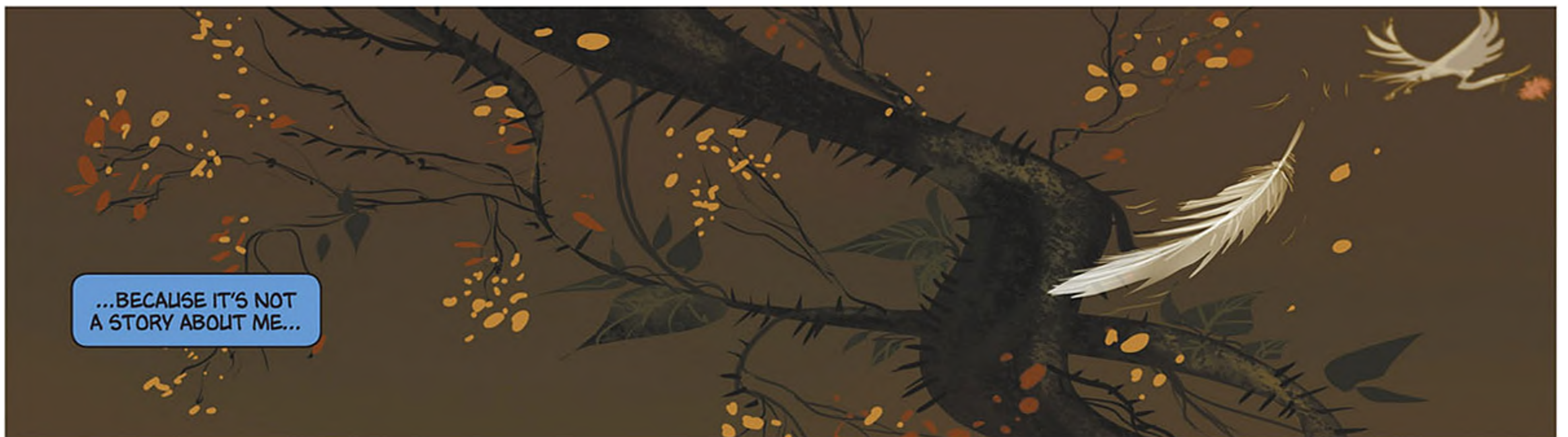
AT TIMES THEIR WEIGHT FELT HEAVY...



...BUT I GLIDED THROUGH THE WORLD OF MAN ON THE WINGS OF THEIR ANSWERS.



MY STORY IS THE WAY OF LIFE...



...BECAUSE IT'S NOT A STORY ABOUT ME...



...IT'S A STORY  
ABOUT...



...HOPE.





A LIFE WITHOUT PURPOSE IS  
LIKE A MIND WITHOUT ANY...



...DREAMS.



LISTEN TO THE  
FALLING PETALS...

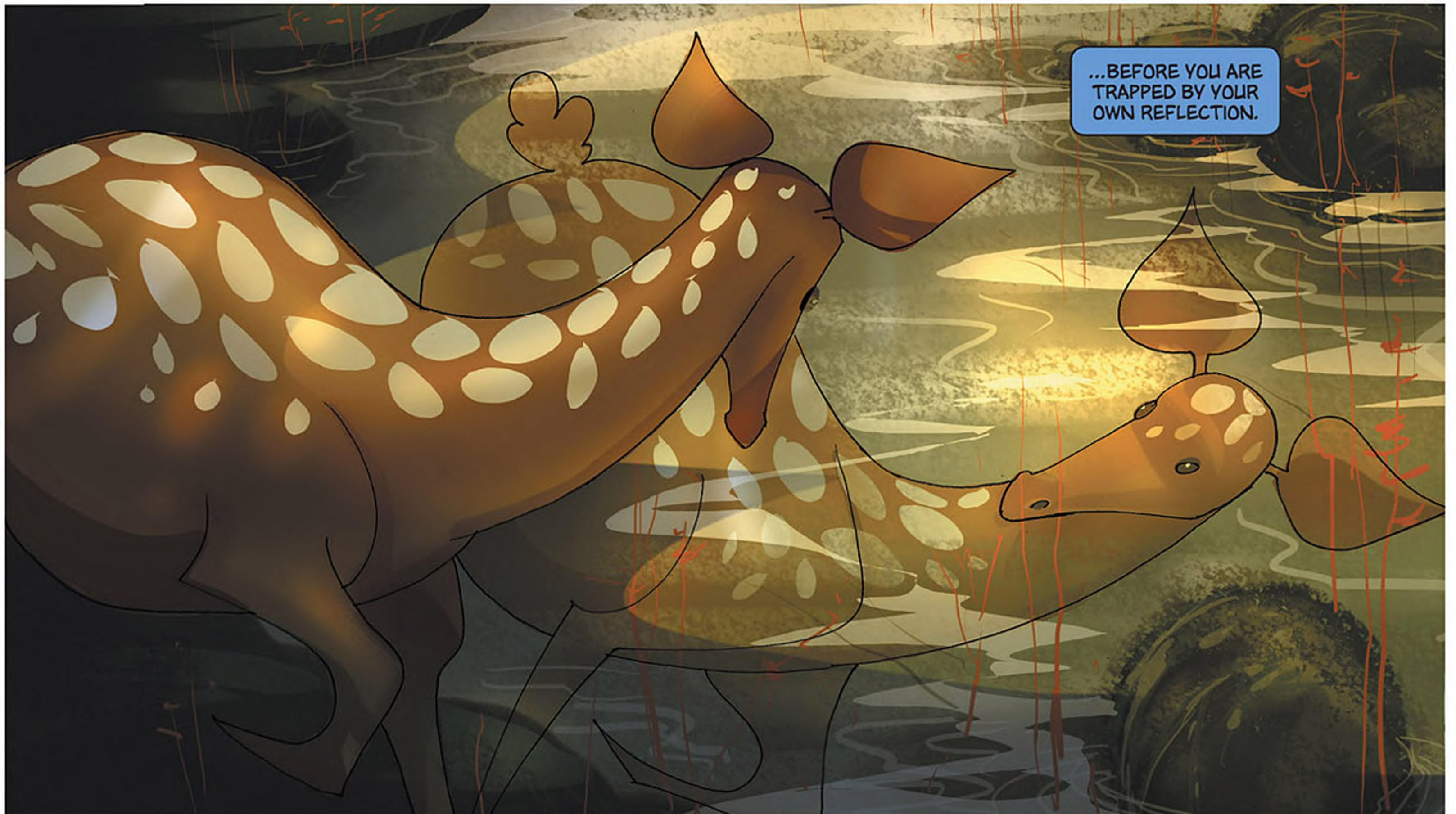




...THEY SPEAK OF  
LOST DREAMS...



...URGING YOU  
TO FIND THEM..



...BEFORE YOU ARE  
TRAPPED BY YOUR  
OWN REFLECTION.

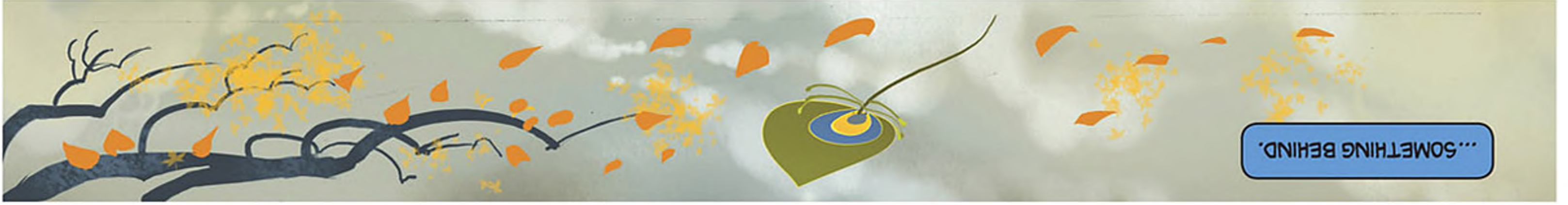




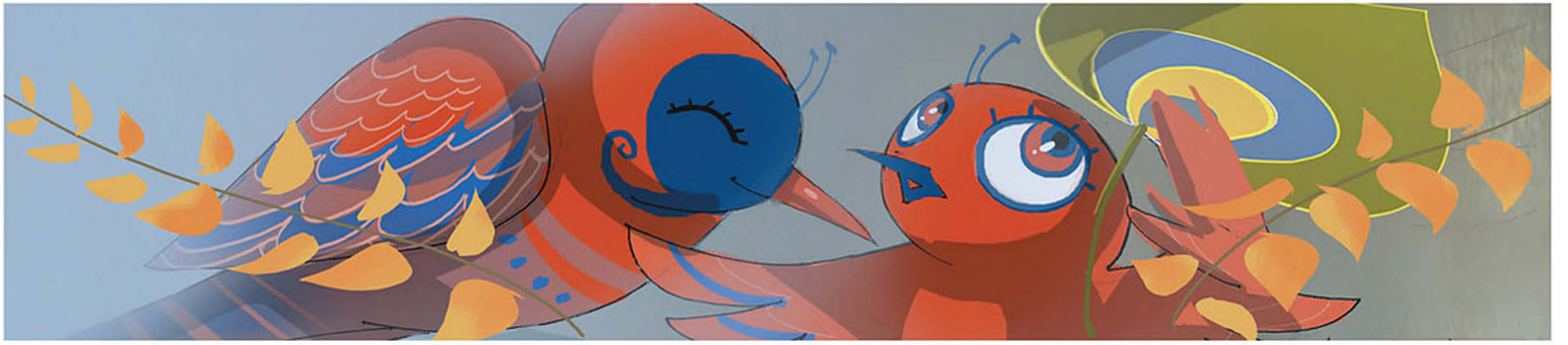
BEFORE YOU ARE  
FORGOTTEN.

BEFORE YOU FADE.









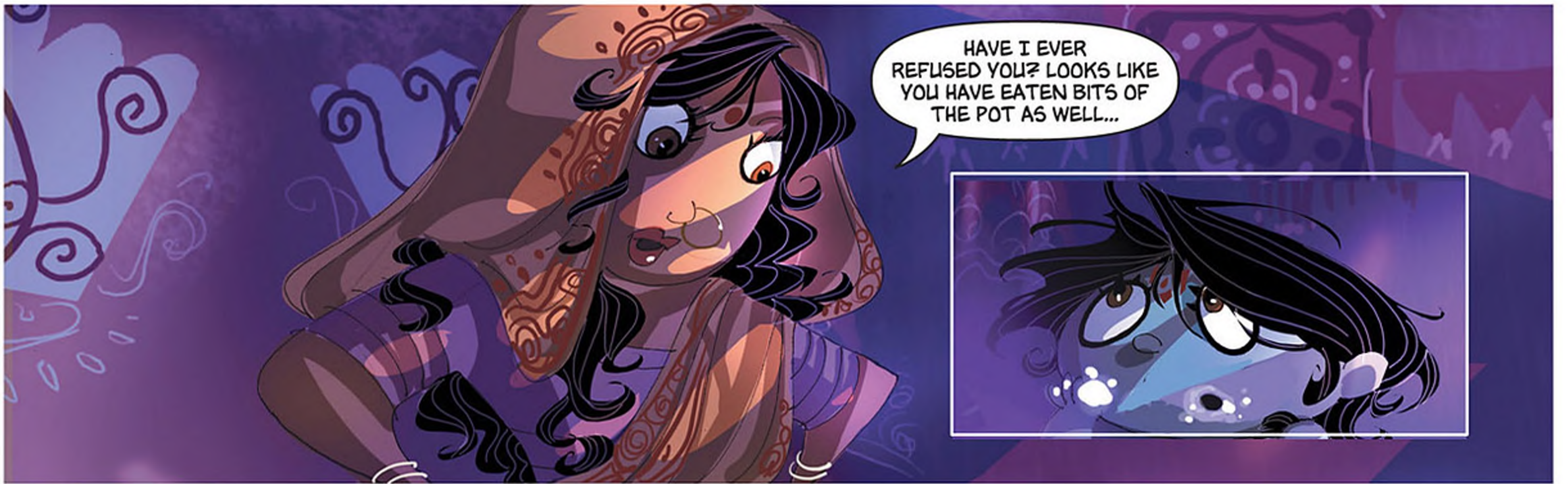




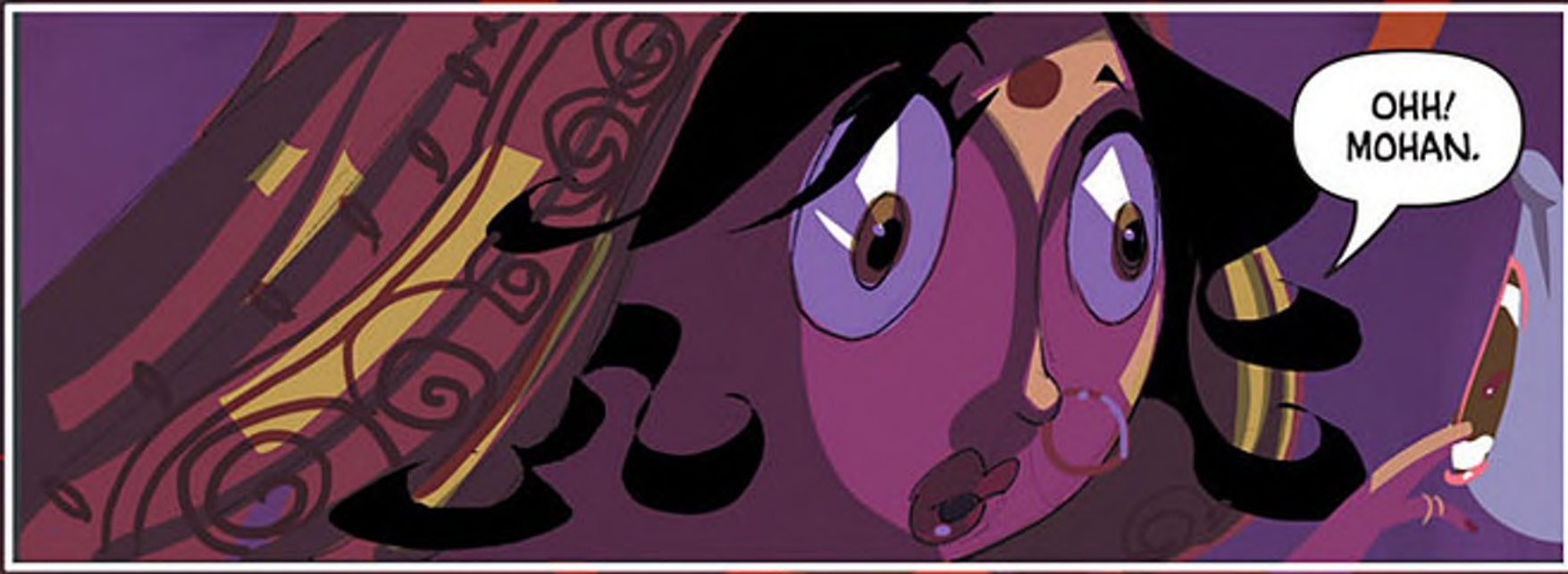
















WHEEL OF LIFE.

POWER.

TRUTH.

KNOWLEDGE.

I AM INFINITE.

I AM TIME.

I AM SRI.\*

I AM...





...YOUR MOHAN,  
MAA.



I LOVE THE  
SWEET SMELL OF  
MORNINGS IN MY...









THE DAWN OF MY CHILDHOOD WAS  
NESTLED IN A CRADLE OF DREAMS.



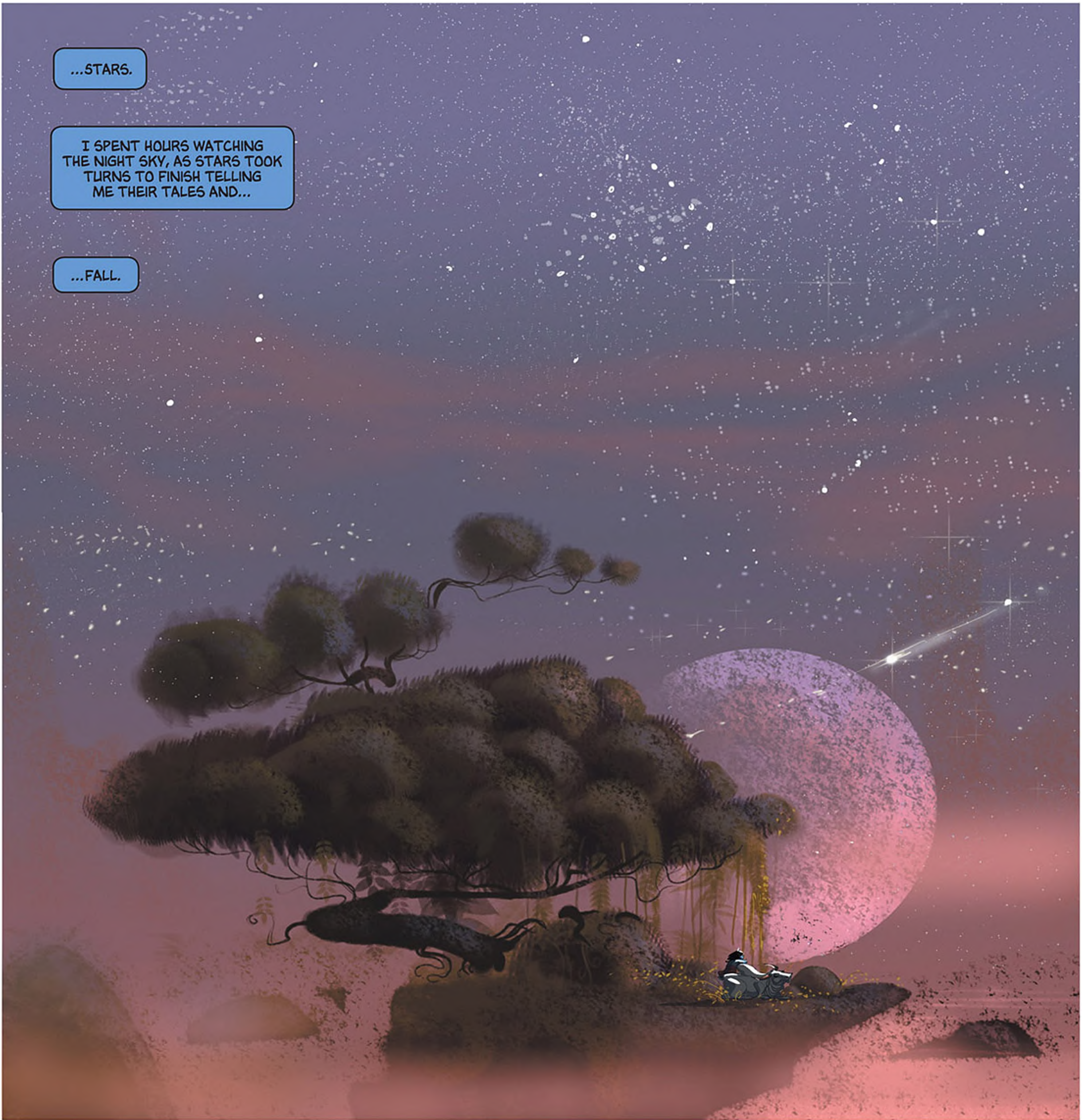
IT WAS SUSPENDED BETWEEN  
A UNIVERSE OF FLOWERS AND...



...STARS.

I SPENT HOURS WATCHING  
THE NIGHT SKY, AS STARS TOOK  
TURNS TO FINISH TELLING  
ME THEIR TALES AND...

...FALL.





EVERY MORNING WE TOOK  
OUR COWS TO THE BANKS  
OF THE YAMUNA.\*

LOOKING AFTER  
THEM WAS OUR  
FOREMOST DUTY.





MY VRINDAVAN WAS...

...A LAND OF MILK  
AND HAPPINESS.

A LAND OF HARMONY  
BETWEEN NATURE  
AND MAN.

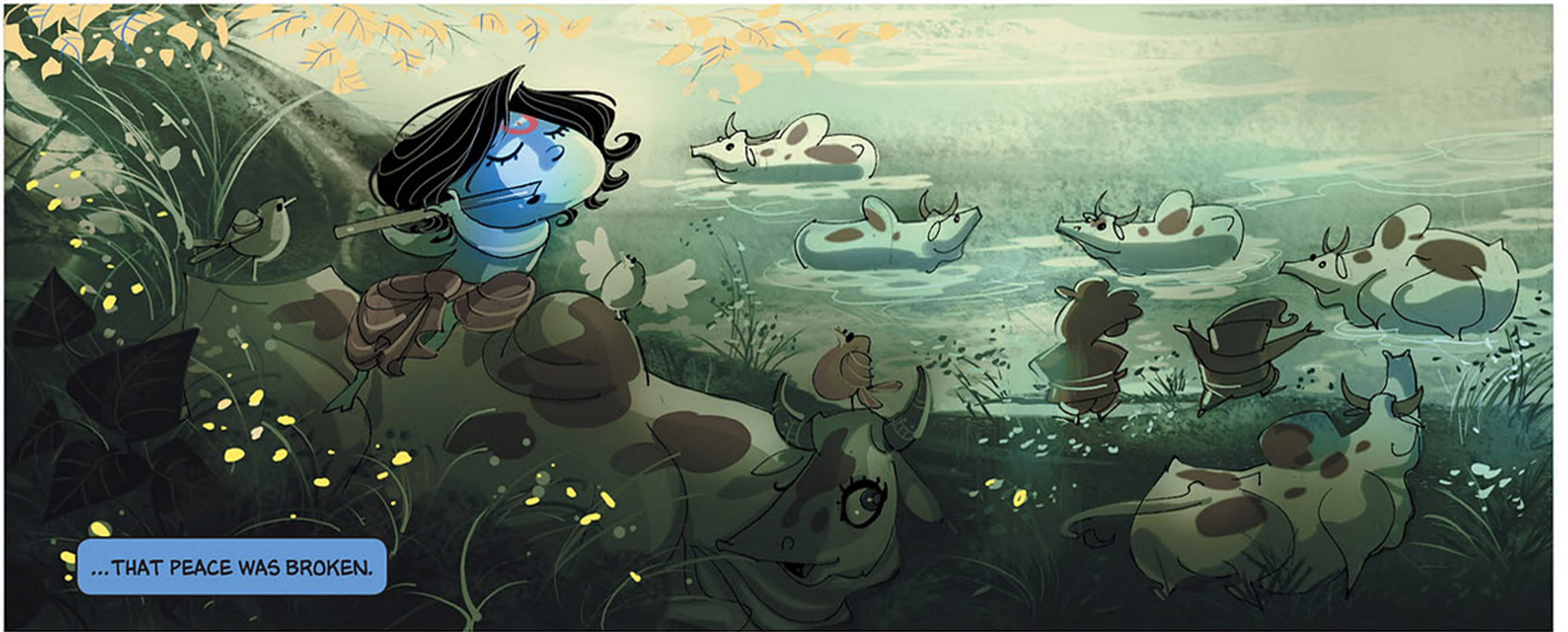
A LAND  
OF PEACE.







BUT ONE SUCH MORNING...

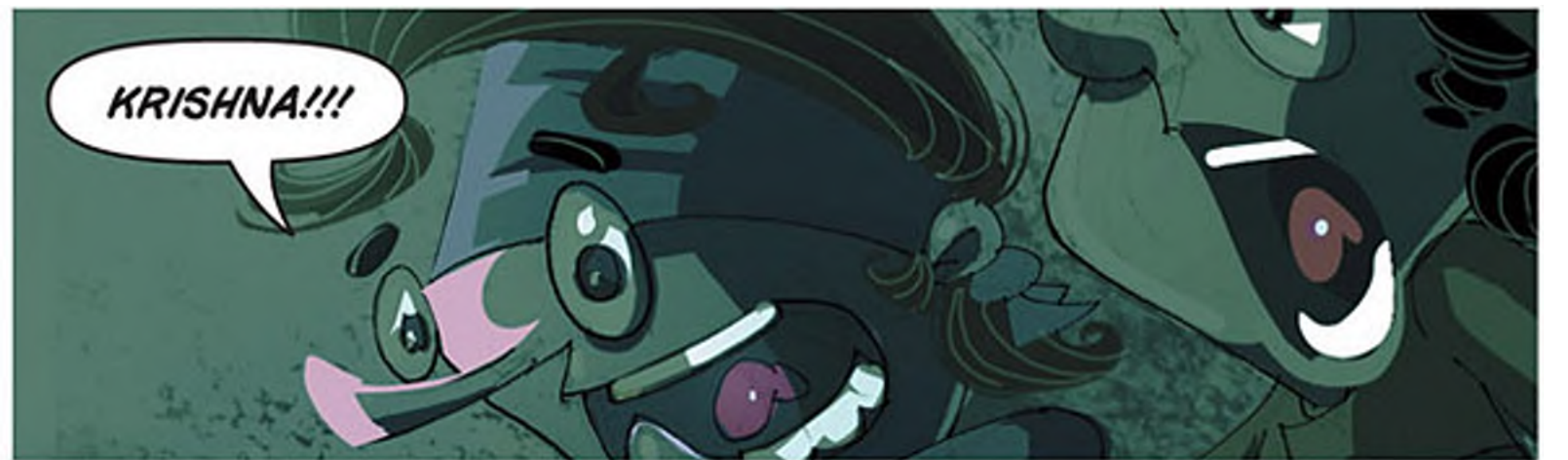


... THAT PEACE WAS BROKEN.



THE COWS ARE DROWNING!

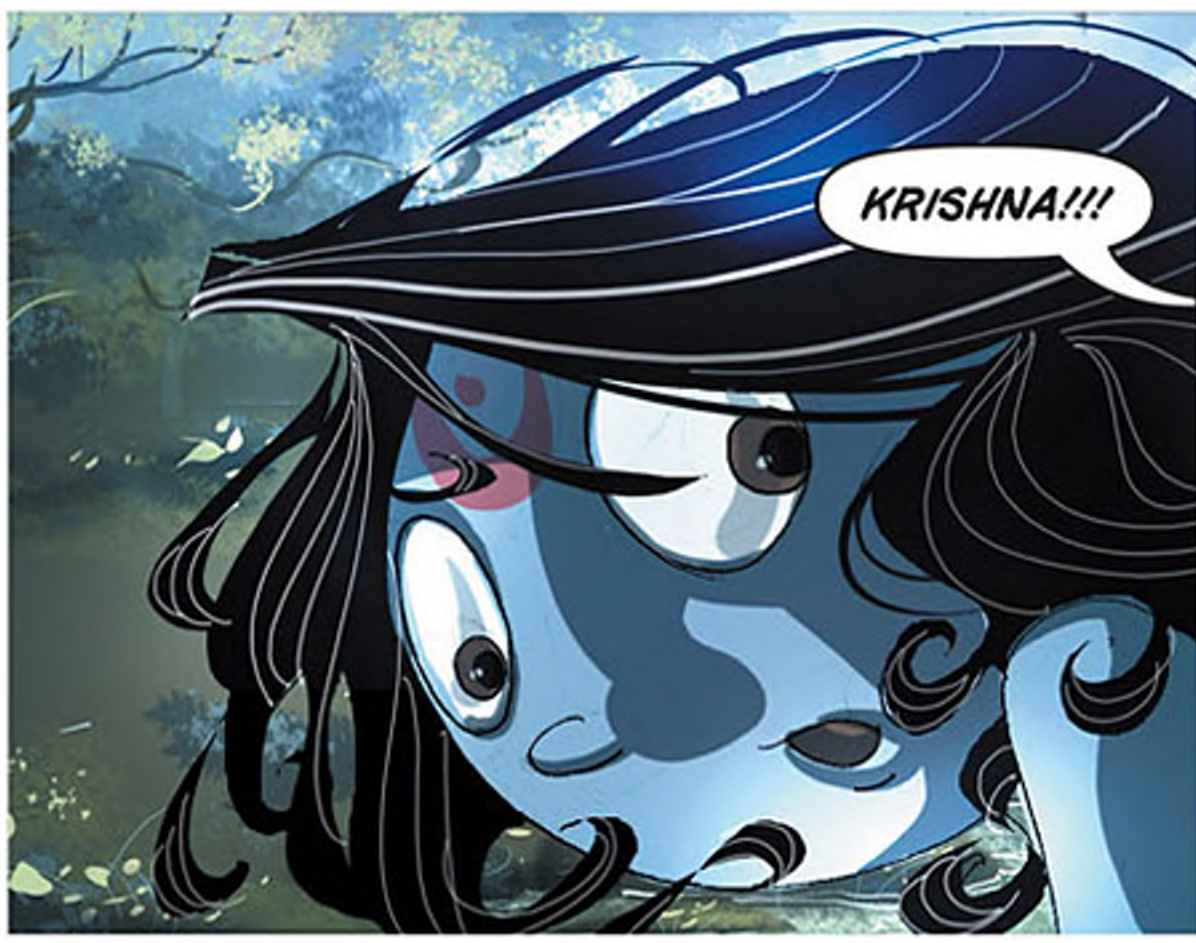
WHAT'S HAPPENING?



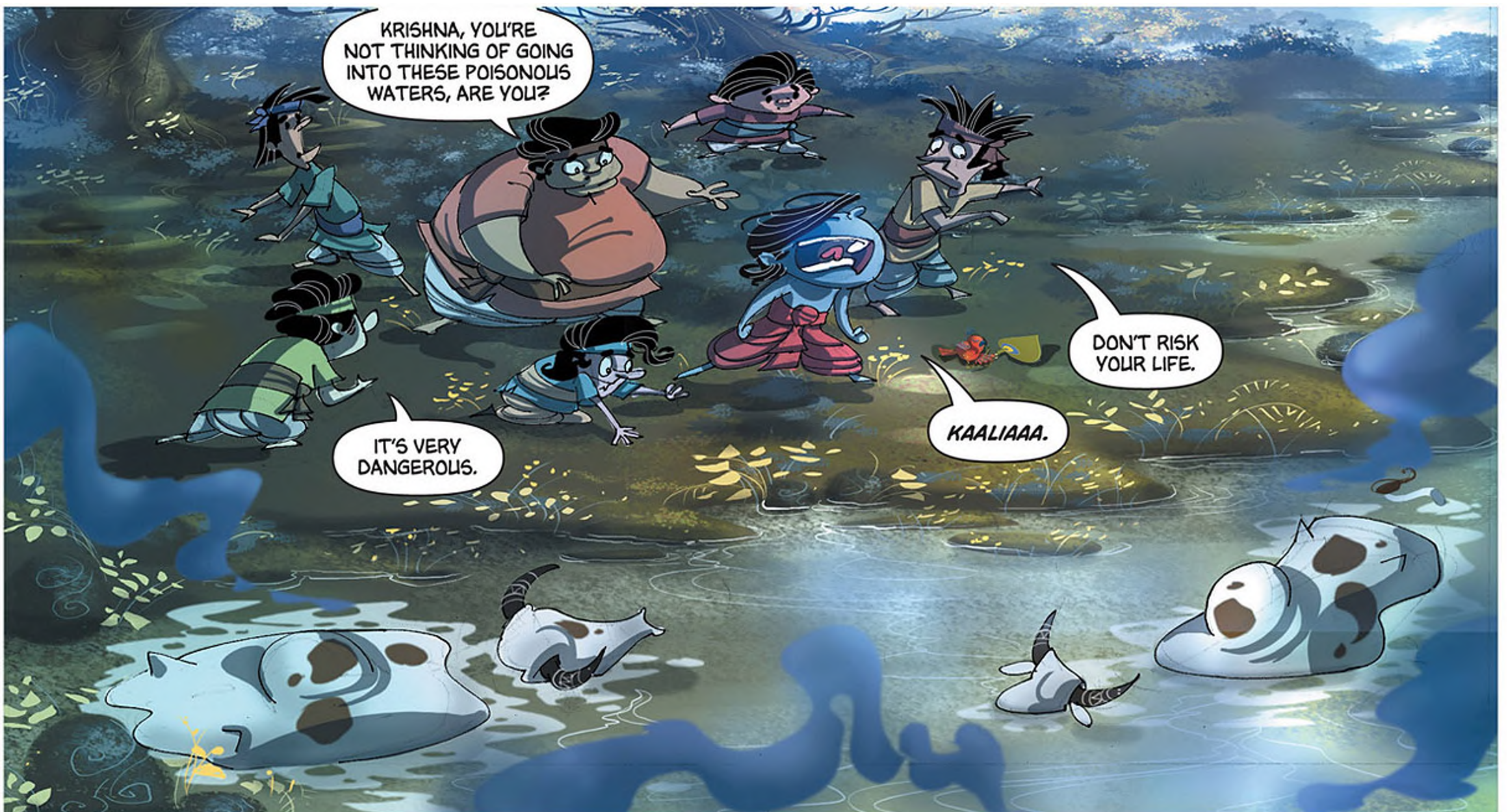
KRISHNA!!!















KALIAAAAAAAA

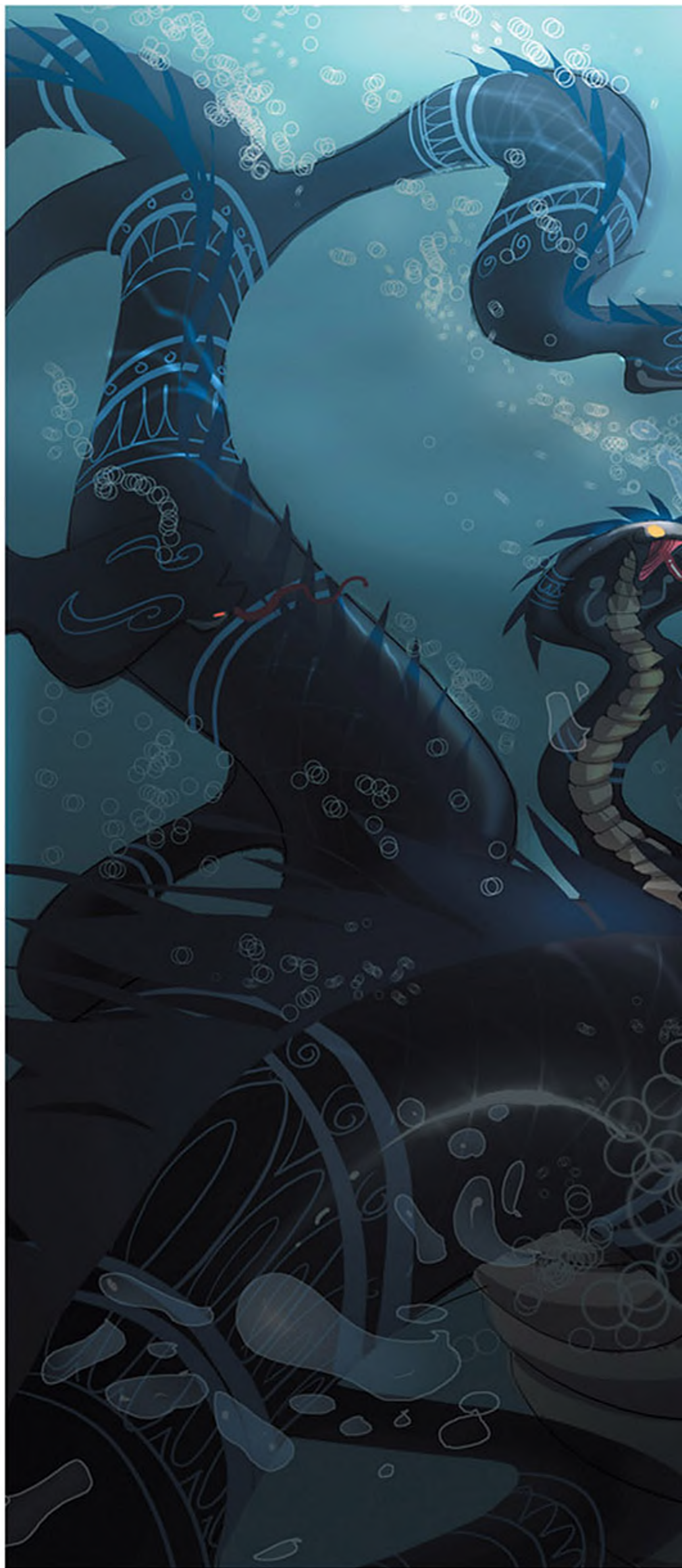
WHO IS CALLING MY NAME?

HISS... HISS...



DON'T WORRY, I'LL BE BACK.









OOPS! HE'S MUCH LARGER THAN I THOUGHT.

Hisss...

















IT'S BEEN A WHILE SINCE SOMEONE WANTED TO PLAY WITH ME.

I CAN ALREADY TASTE YOU.

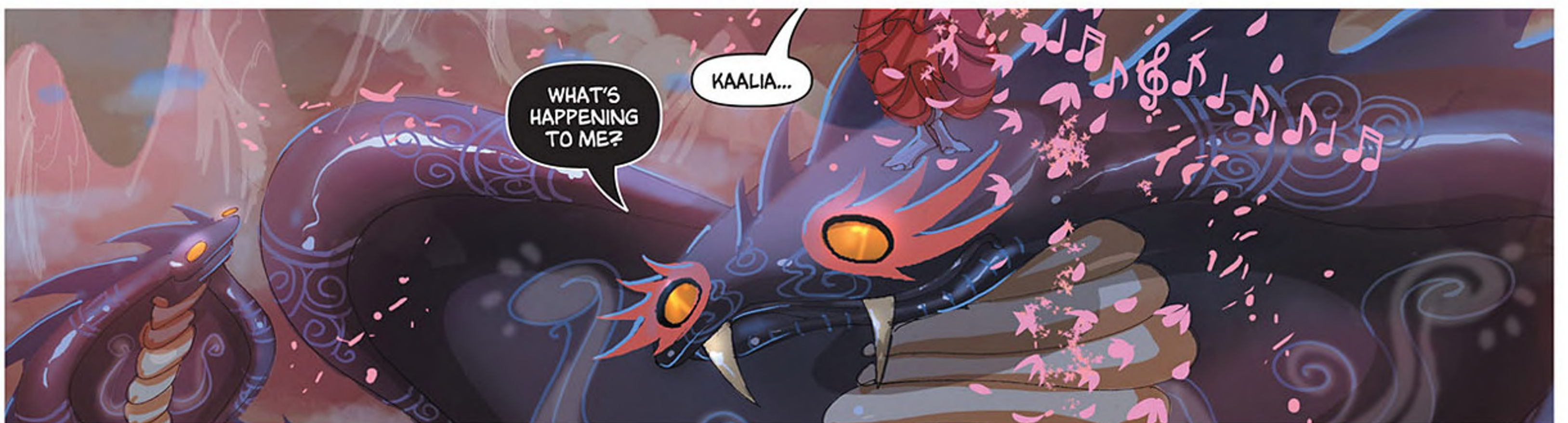
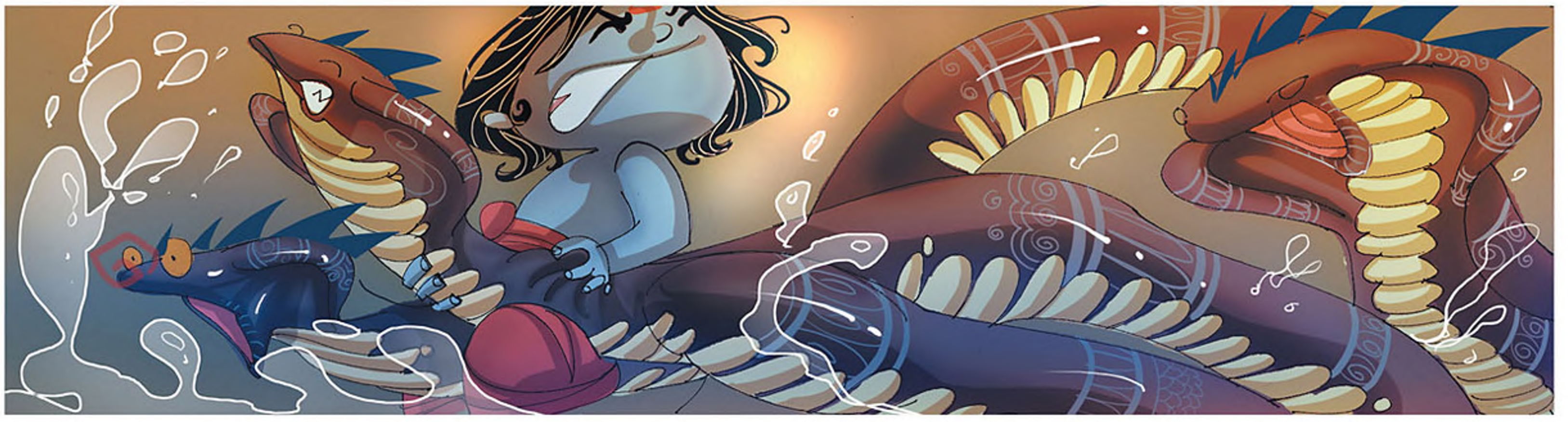
HISSSS...



I'VE NEVER SEEN ANYTHING LIKE THIS BEFORE.

THAT MONSTER IS AS BIG AS A MOUNTAIN, HOW DID HE MANAGE TO LIVE IN SUCH A SMALL POND?









AM I DREAMING?

...LISTEN TO ME KAALIA.





TO BE VENOMOUS  
IS IN YOUR NATURE.

TO BE EVIL,  
IS NOT.

GO TO THE SEA.



LIVE FREELY.

LIVE HAPPILY.





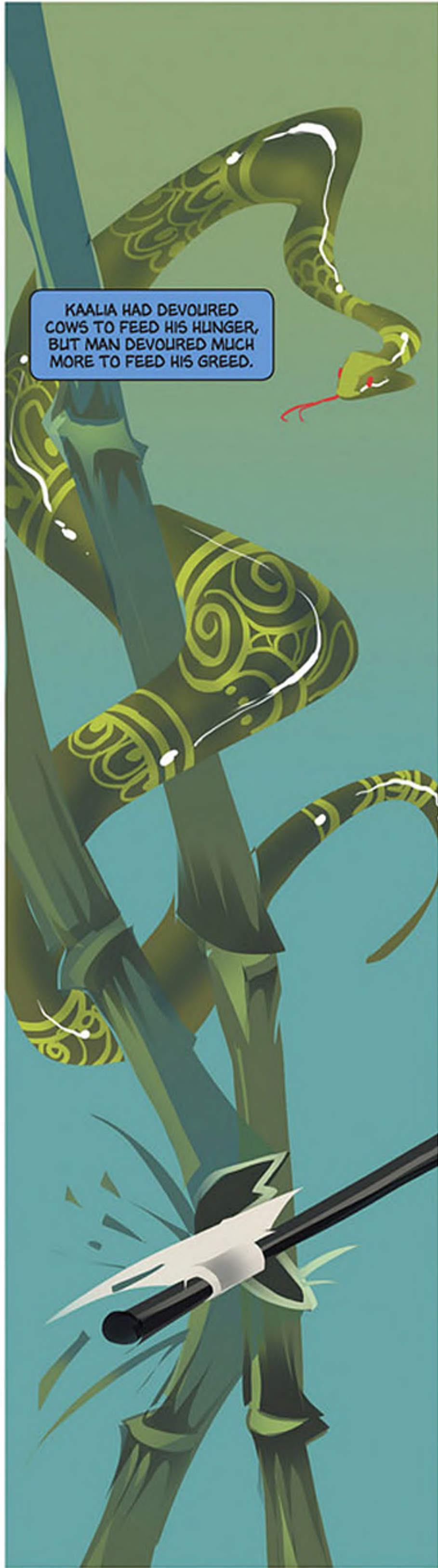
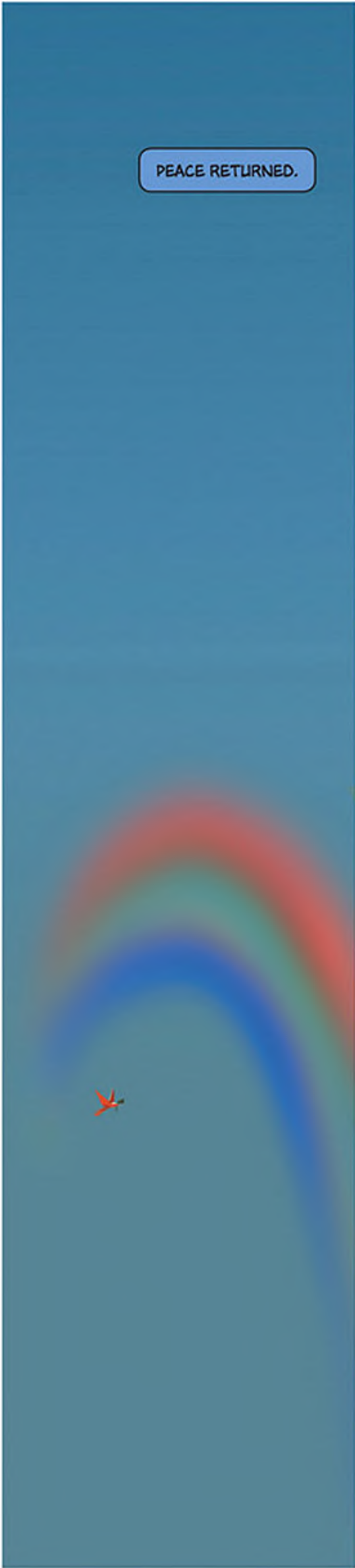




PEACE RETURNED.

KAALIA HAD DEVoured COWS TO FEED HIS HUNGER, BUT MAN DEVoured MUCH MORE TO FEED HIS GREED.

THE NATURE OF MAN HAS ALWAYS BEEN MORE COMPLICATED THAN THAT OF A SERPENT.





SOON THE TUNES  
I PLAYED TO THEM...





... WOULD BE LOST  
IN THOSE DAYS OF  
INNOCENCE.



THE GAME OF  
DUALITY HAD BEGUN.

GOOD AND EVIL.


LOVE AND HATE.













THE FORCES OF  
LIFE COEXIST...

...INTERNALLY AND  
EXTERNALLY IN A...



...DELICATE BALANCE...



...BUT THE SEEKERS OF TRUTH  
NEVER HAVE IT THAT EASY.

THE CONSPIRATORS OF  
CHAOS ARE ALWAYS AT PLAY.





THE FIRST FACE  
OF EVIL WAS...



...KING KAMSA.



MY UNCLE.



BROTHER TO  
MY MOTHER...





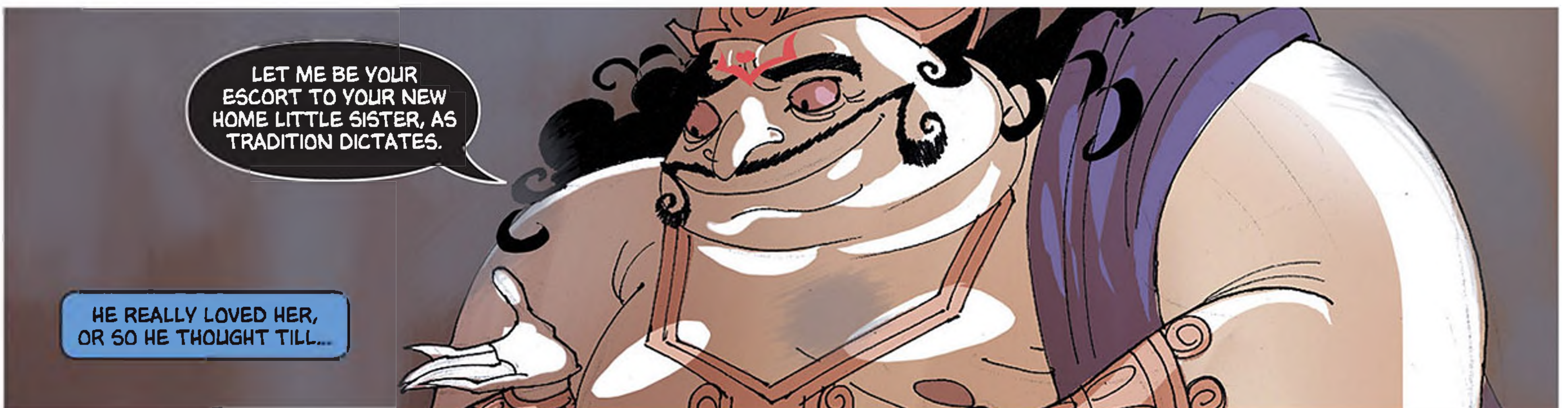
...DEVAKI.

BROTHER, MEET  
VASUDEVA, THE MAN  
I LOVE.

HOW WONDERFUL!  
LEAVE THE ARRANGEMENTS  
TO ME. MATHURA WOULD NEVER  
HAVE SEEN SUCH A GRAND  
CEREMONY.



HE MARRIED THEM.



LET ME BE YOUR  
ESCORT TO YOUR NEW  
HOME LITTLE SISTER, AS  
TRADITION DICTATES.

HE REALLY LOVED HER,  
OR SO HE THOUGHT TILL...



...YOGMAYA\* DESCENDED FROM THE SKY.

KAMSA, YOU FOOL! THIS IS THE BEGINNING OF YOUR END...DEVAKI'S EIGHTH CHILD IS COMING FOR YOU.



KAMSA LOST HIS MIND AND IMPRISONED BOTH MY PARENTS.

NO, PLEASE DON'T, I'LL... I'LL...

...I WILL GIVE YOU OUR EIGHTH CHILD.







WHAT? WHAT DID YOU SAY???

I PROMISE, I'LL GIVE YOU OUR EIGHTH CHILD.

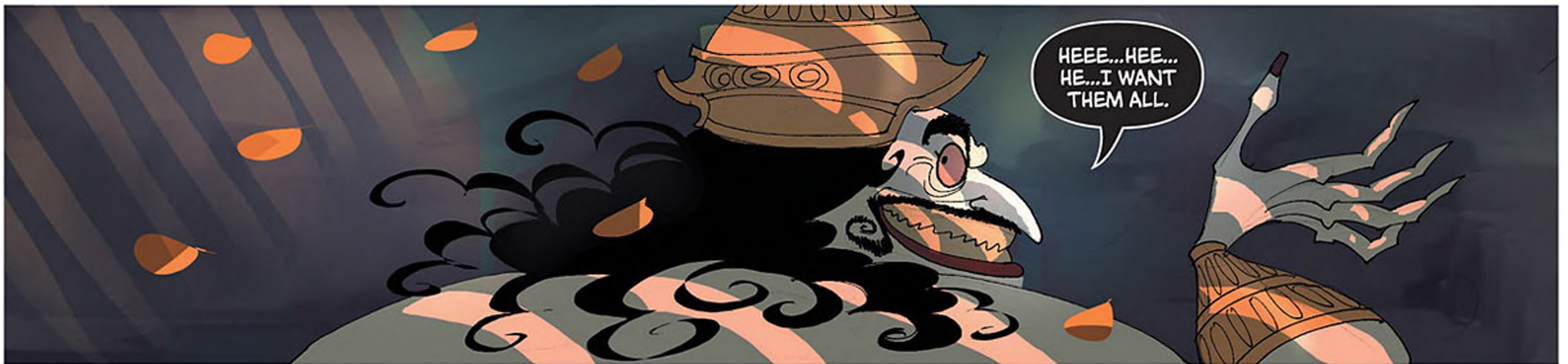
PLEASE DON'T HARM DEVAKI.



EIGHT.



JUST LIKE YOUR BABIES.



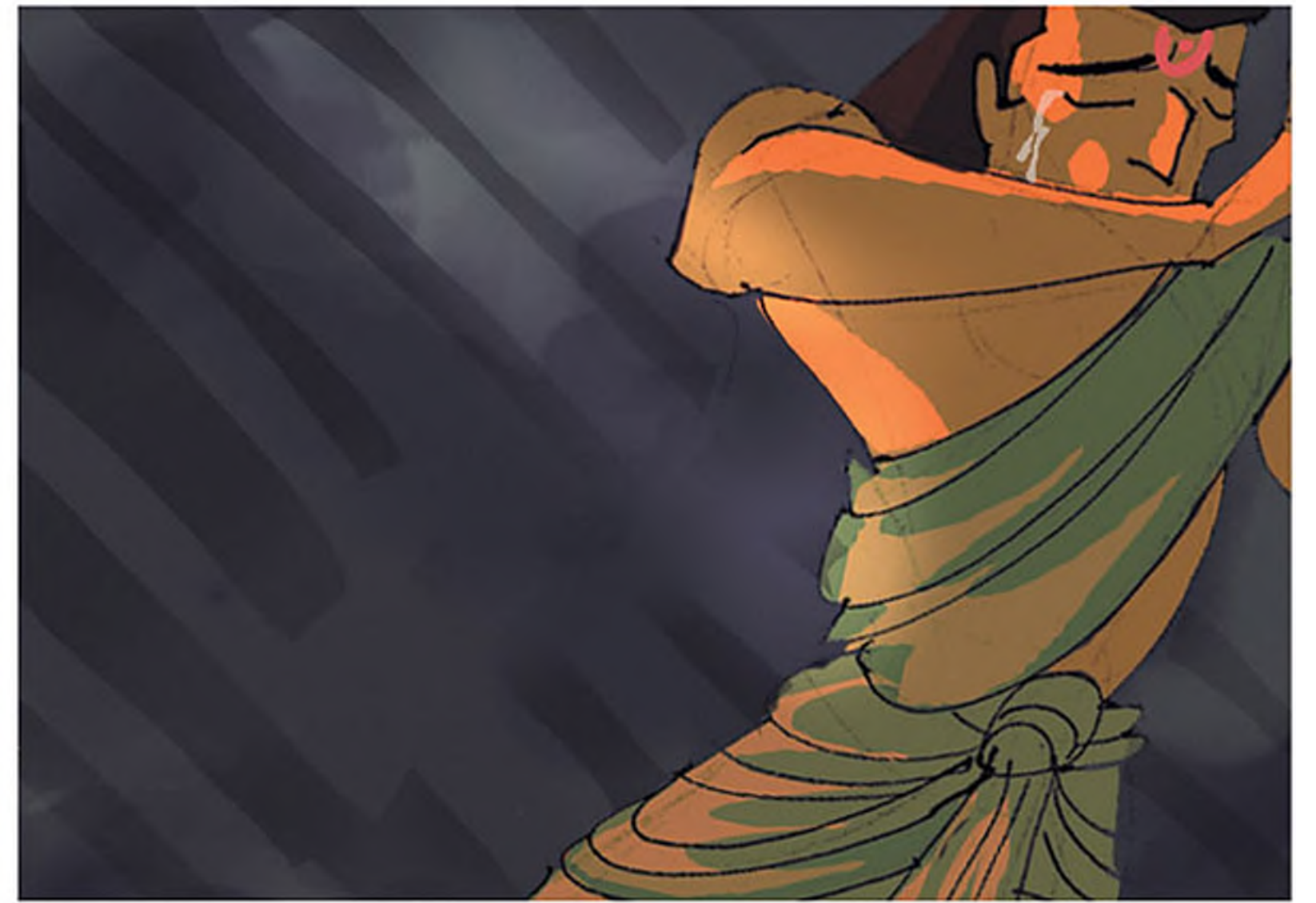
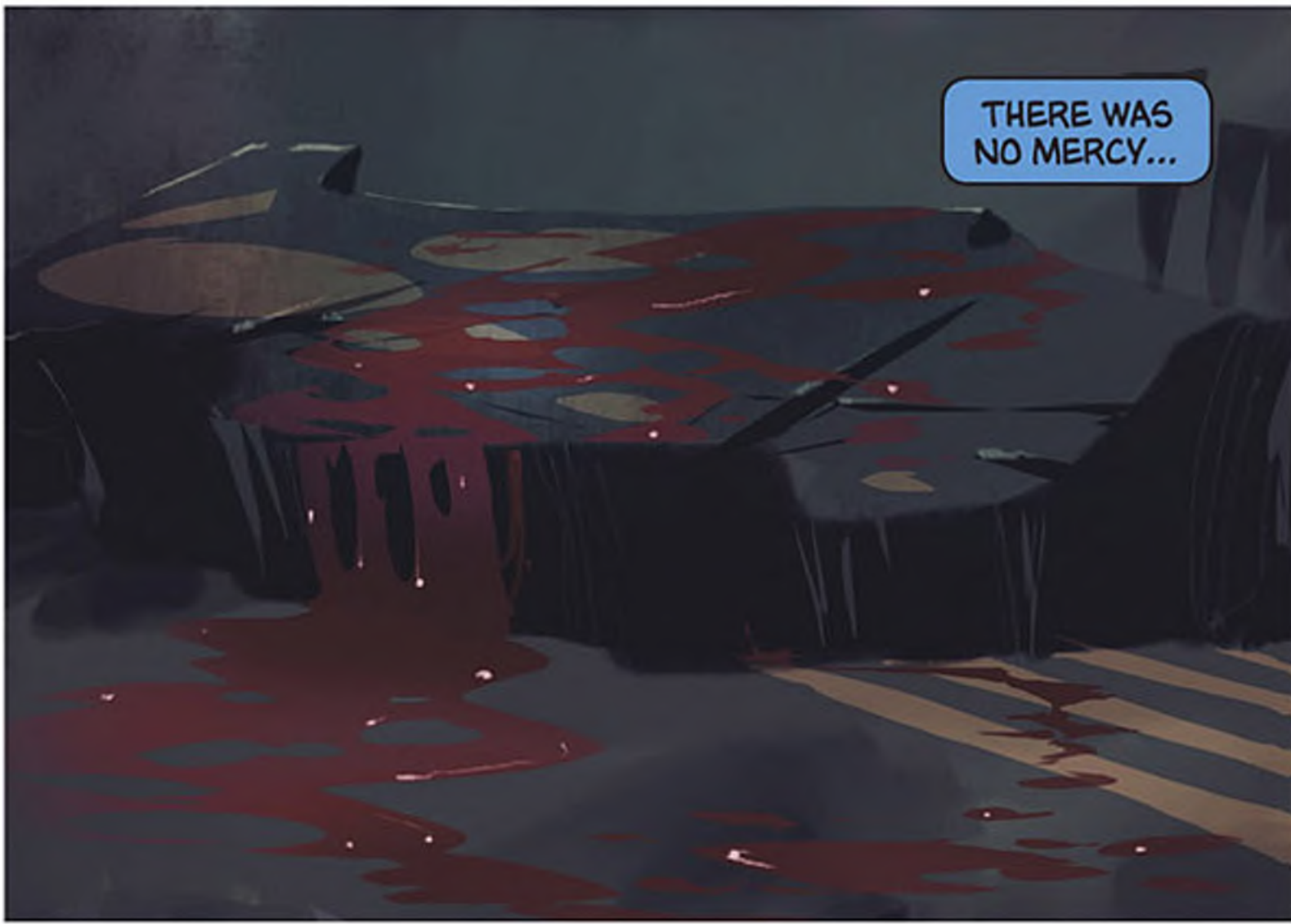
HEEE...HEE... HE...I WANT THEM ALL.



AND SO IT BEGAN.



THERE WAS  
NO MERCY...



...EVEN THOUGH MY  
MOTHER BEGGED.





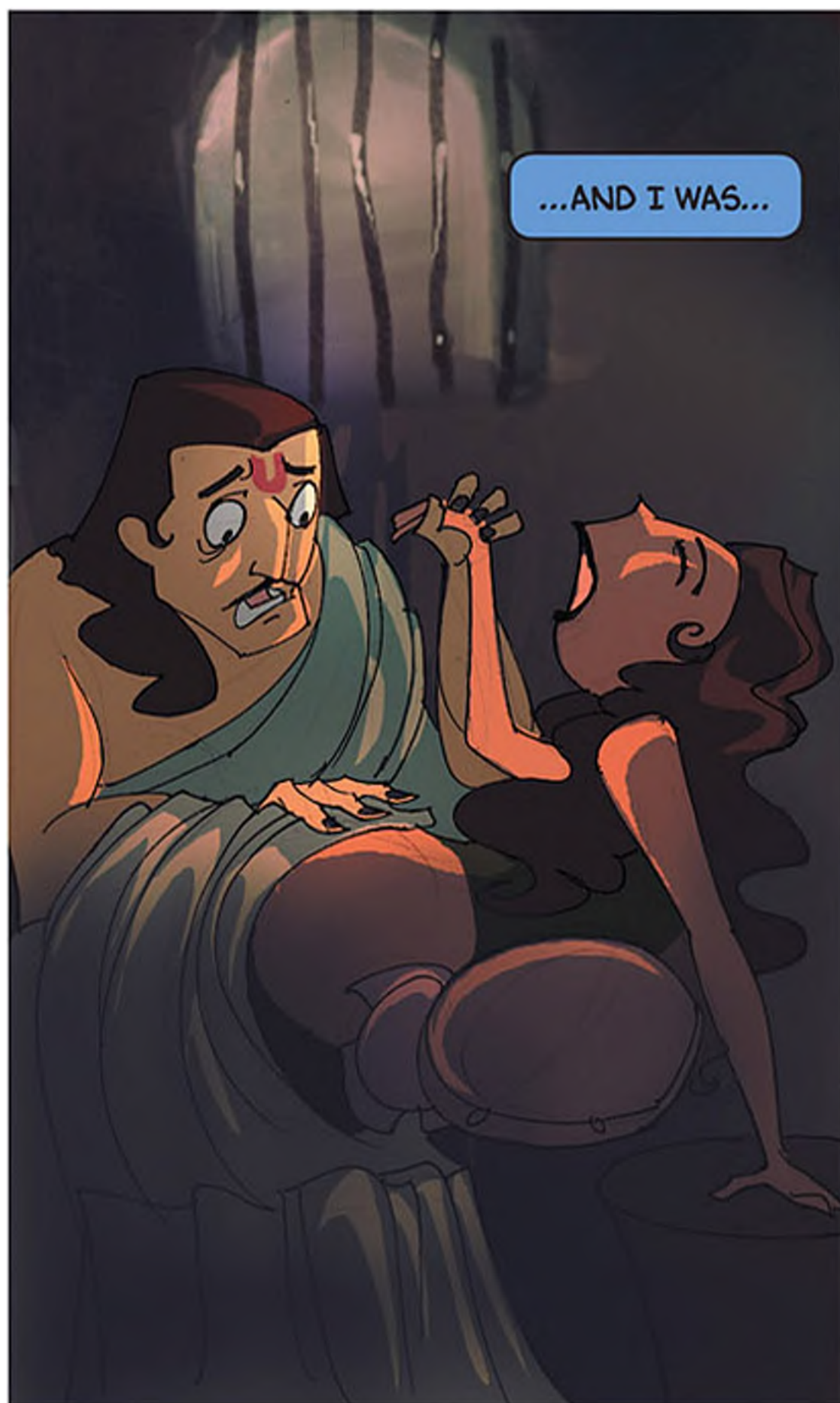
DRUNK ON HIS BLOOD  
LUST KAMSA THOUGHT  
HE HAD WON...



...BUT THE  
PROPHECY HAD  
BEEN FORETOLD...



...AND I WAS...



...BORN.





THE LIGHT OF...



...HOPE.



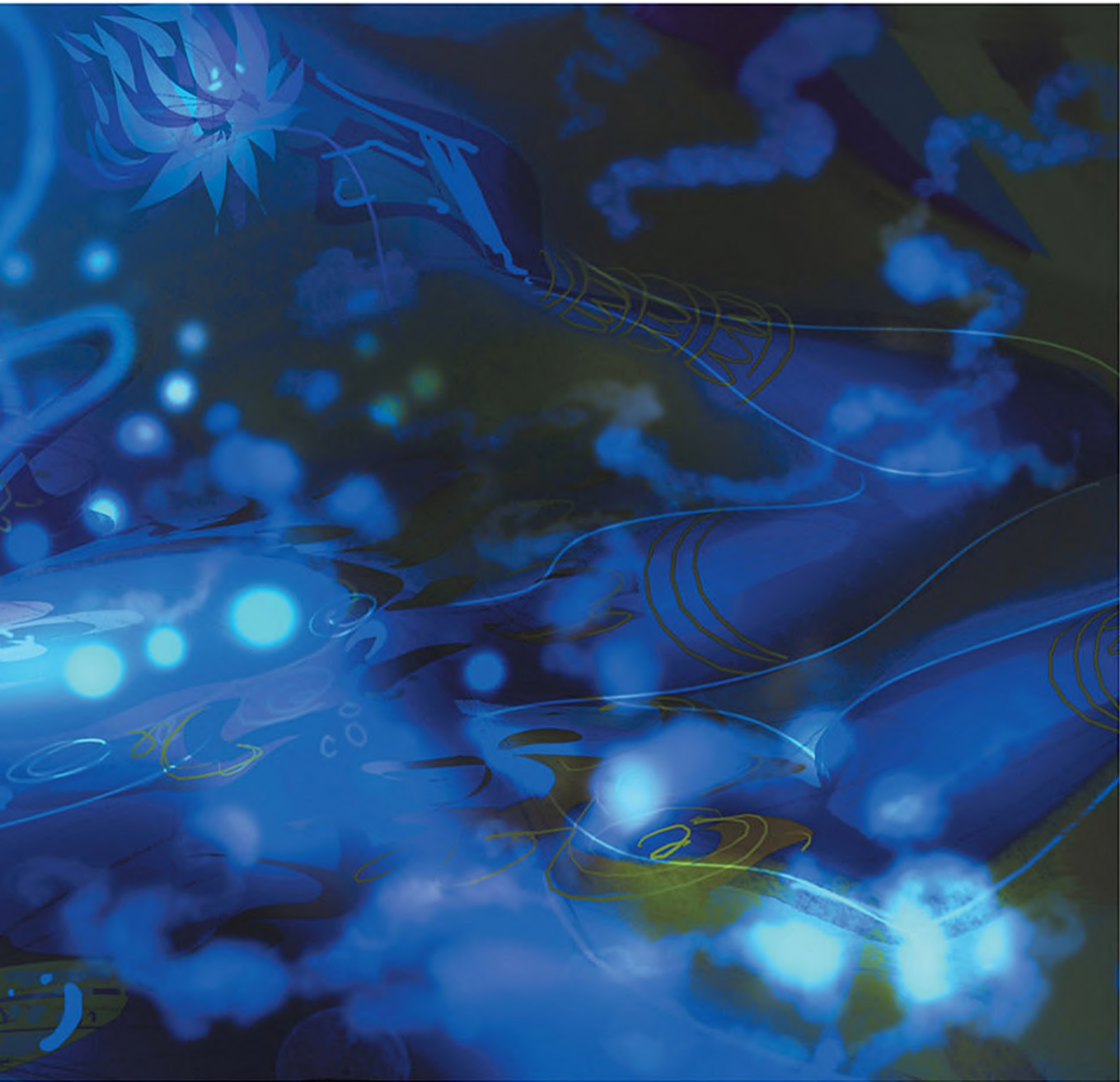


I VISITED MY FATHER  
IN HIS DREAMS.



I ASKED HIM TO  
TAKE ME TO HIS FRIEND  
NANDA, IN VRINDAVAN...





...AND...



...EXCHANGE ME FOR HIS  
NEWLY BORN DAUGHTER.





THE PRISON GATES OPENED AND I PUT THE GUARDS TO SLEEP.



WE BRAVED THE TEMPEST TOGETHER, FATHER AND SON.



ANANTA\* APPEARED AND SHELTERED US...



...AND FATHER MADE THE EXCHANGE.







KAMSA CAME,  
LIKE CLOCKWORK...



...BUT THIS WAS  
NO ORDINARY CHILD.



YOUR SLAYER...  
**KRISHNA...**  
IS BORN.

YOU WILL  
FACE HIM IN TIME  
TO COME.



KR...KRI...  
KRIS...



I DON'T  
FEAR HIM.



**KRISHNA.**





TIME FLEW BY HAPPILY IN VRINDAVAN WITH FATHER NANDA, MOTHER YASHODA...



...AND BROTHER BALARAMA.

I LOVE THIS PLACE...

I COULD STAY HERE FOREVER.

JUST LOOK AT THOSE BIRDS...

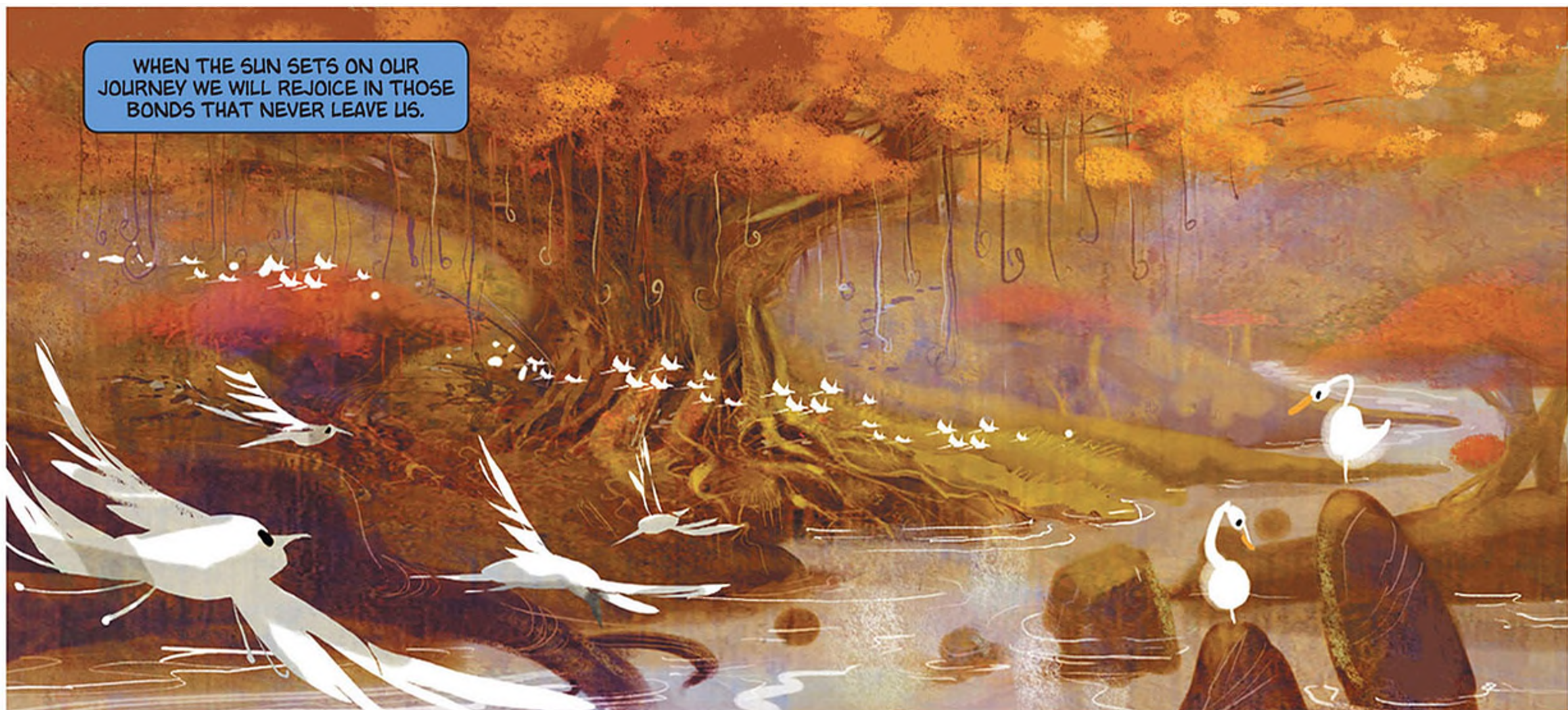
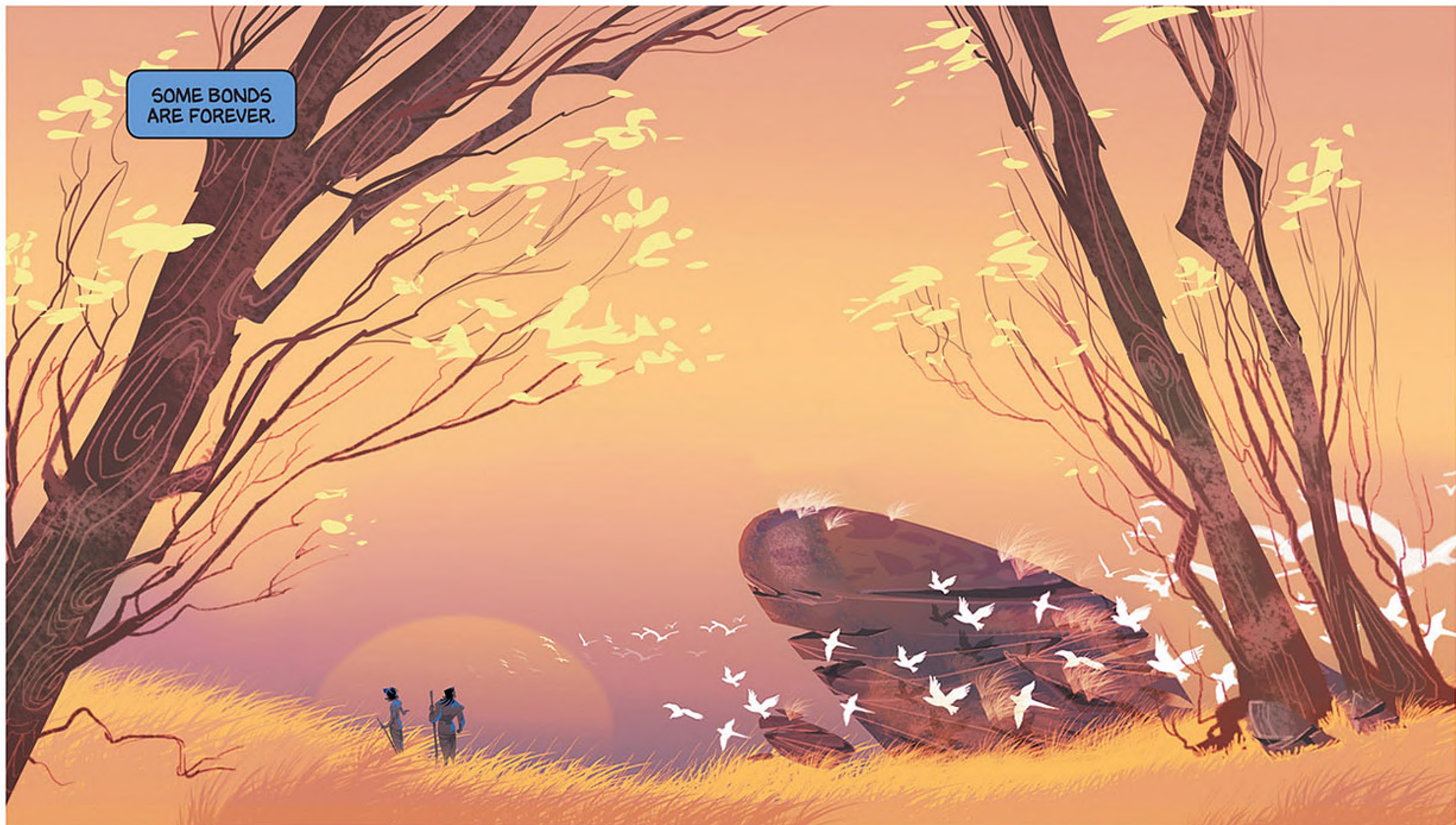
ONE DAY WE TOO WILL FLY TOWARDS THE SETTING SUN...

LEAVING PEOPLE AND PLACES BEHIND.



NOTHING IS FOREVER.









BALARAMA AND  
I WERE INSEPARABLE...



...TILL THE DAY OUR  
TIME IN VRINDAVAN  
CAME TO A CLOSE.





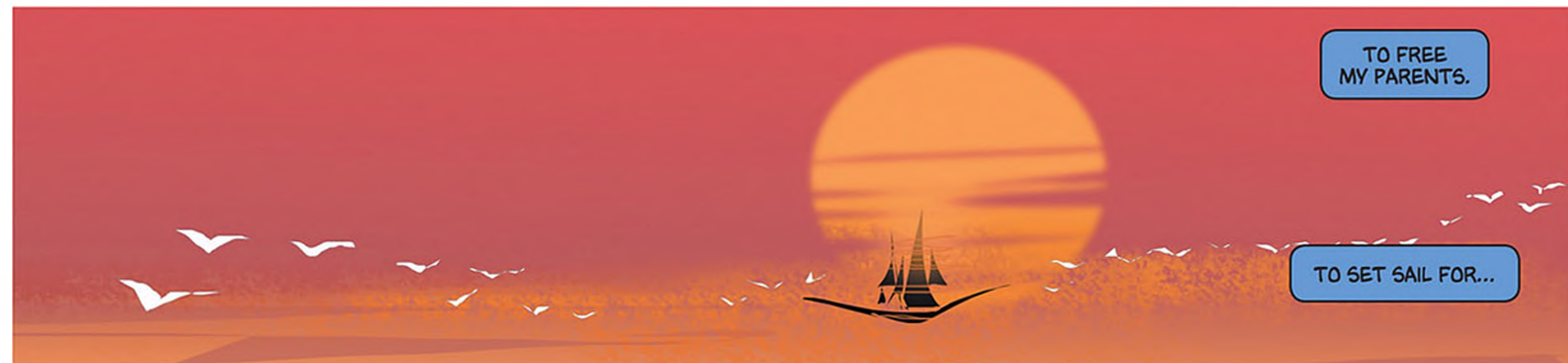
AKRUR, AN ENVOY OF KAMSA, CAME TO INVITE THE TWO OF US, TO A CELEBRATION BEING HELD IN MATHURA.



I HAD WAITED FOR THIS DAY...



... TO PUT AN END TO KAMSA'S CRUEL REIGN.

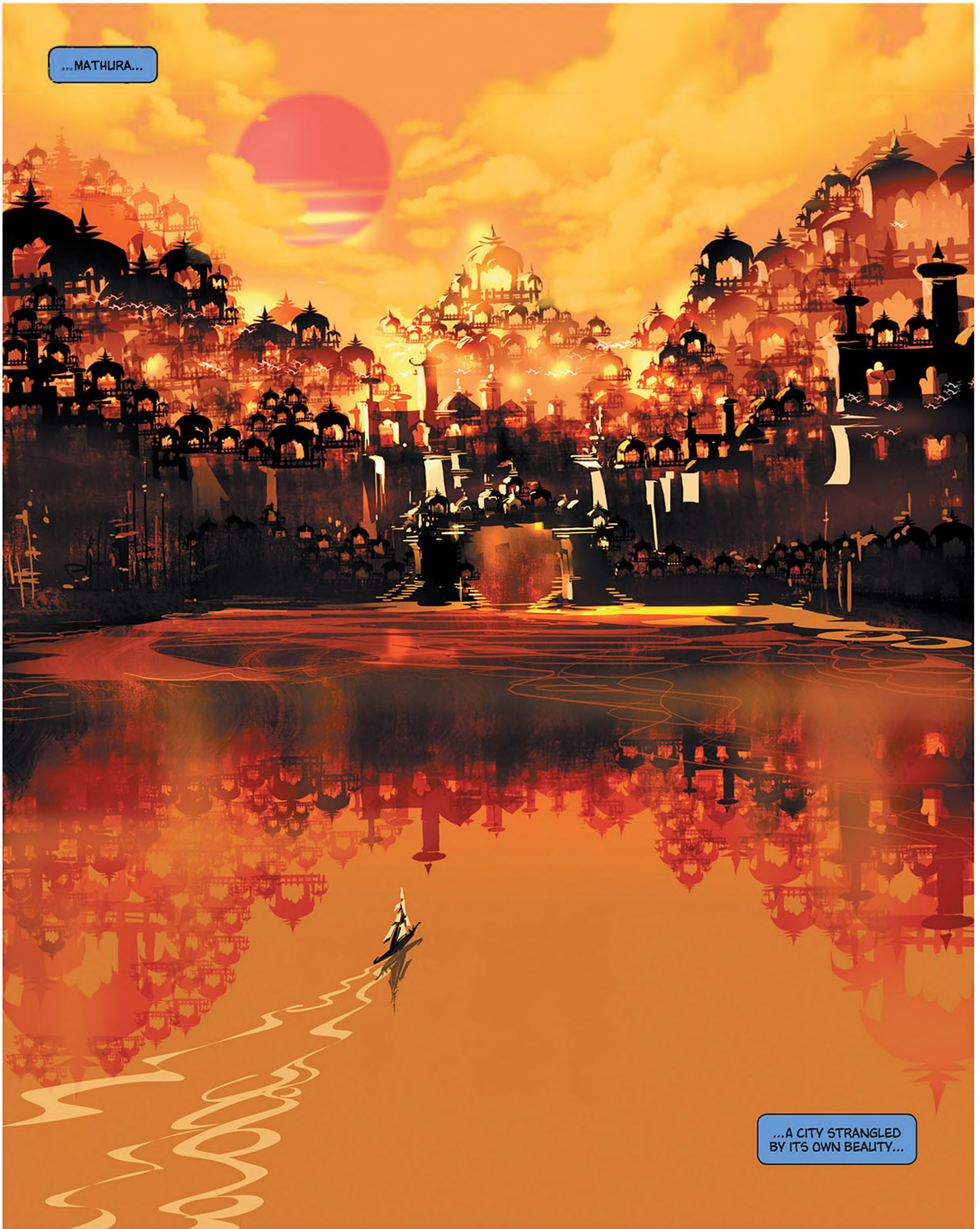


TO FREE MY PARENTS.

TO SET SAIL FOR...



MATHURA...



...A CITY STRANGLER BY ITS OWN BEAUTY...



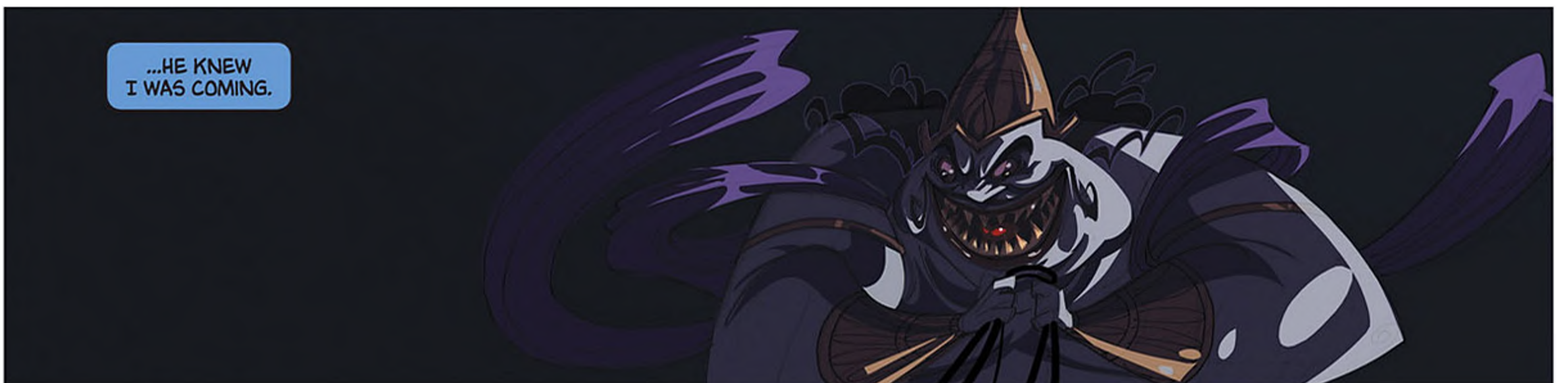
...AND SUFFOCATED  
BY A MAD MAN.



OUT ON A HUNT...

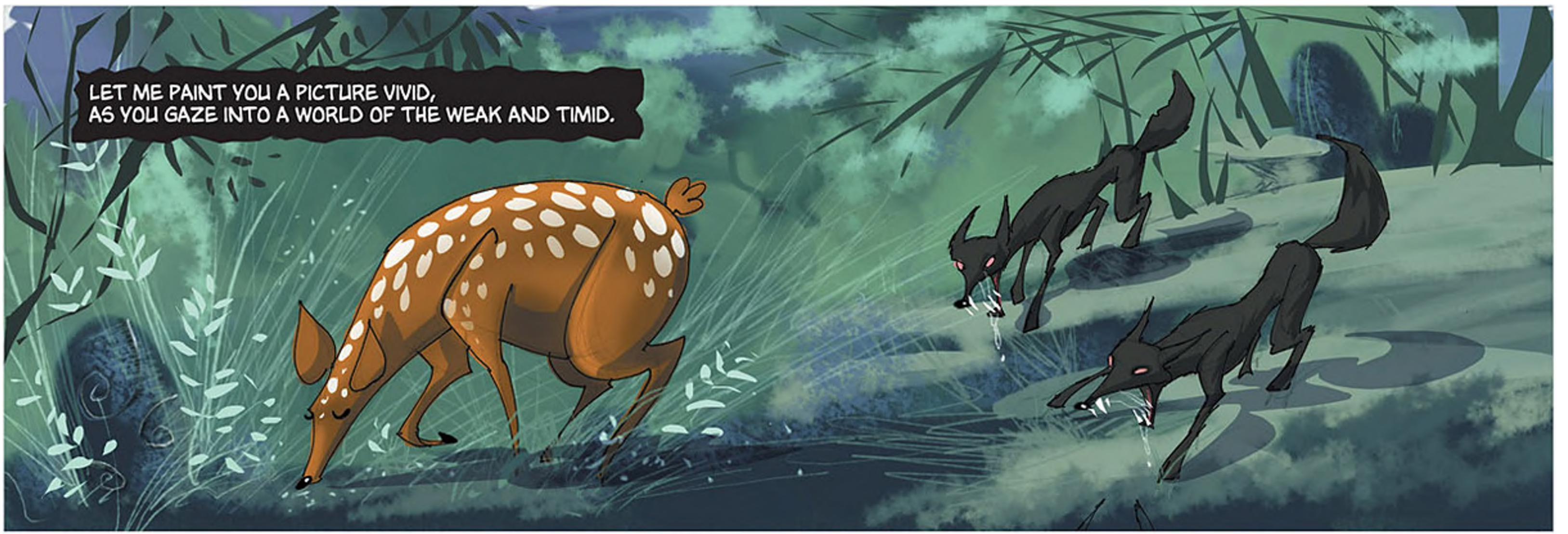


...HE KNEW  
I WAS COMING.

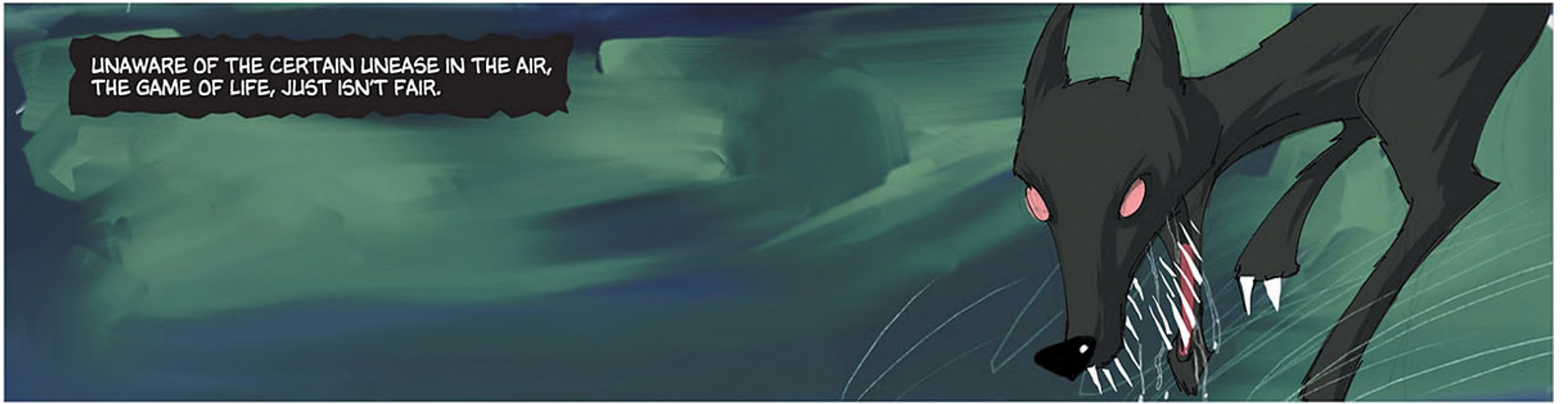




LET ME PAINT YOU A PICTURE VIVID,  
AS YOU GAZE INTO A WORLD OF THE WEAK AND TIMID.



UNAWARE OF THE CERTAIN LINEAGE IN THE AIR,  
THE GAME OF LIFE, JUST ISN'T FAIR.



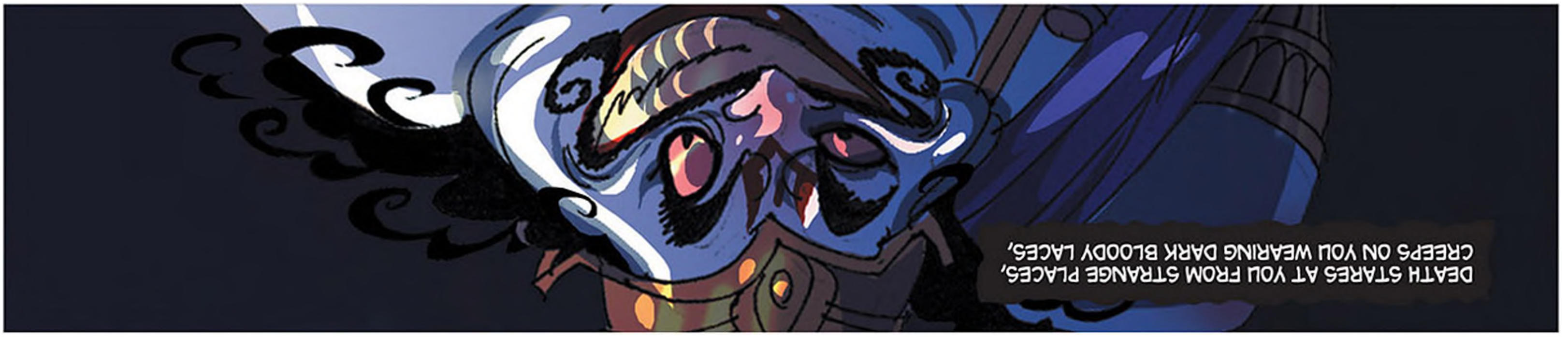
SCARED YOU RUN FASTER, FASTER THAN FAST,  
YOU KNOW YOU'LL HAVE LOST, IF YOU COME LAST.



YOU LEAD THE CHASE WITH A HOPELESS HEART,  
TRAPPED IN PREMONITION, YOU PLAY YOUR PART.







DEATH STARES AT YOU FROM STRANGE PLACES,  
CREEPS ON YOU WEARING DARK BLOODY LACES,



HA...HA... YELLOW BELLED FOOL...  
WHAT DOES HE KNOW?



A STRIPED ANGEL STEPS IN TO FIGHT FOR YOUR CAUSE,  
BIG AND STRONG HE TRIES TO PUT A PAUSE.





AND AFTER YOU DIE AT THE TIP OF THIS ARROW,  
I PROMISE TO SUCK OUT YOUR THICK DELICIOUS MARROW.



DEATH SO DECEITFUL,  
DEATH LOOMING DARK,



WHAT BROUGHT YOU TOGETHER,  
NOW RIPS YOU APART.







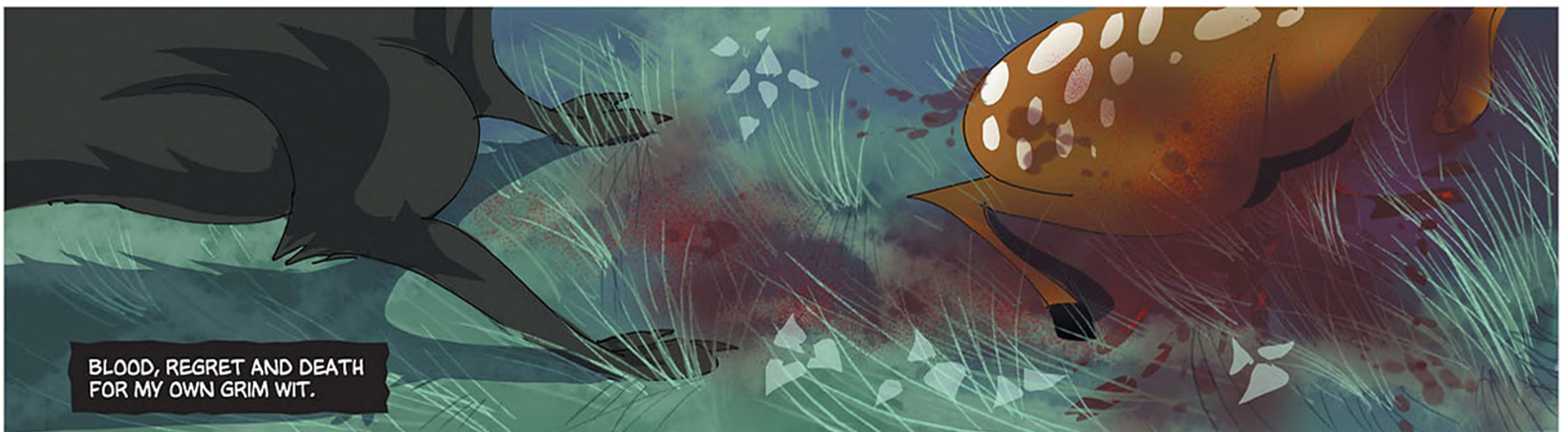
THE CHASE CONTINUES  
AND THE MEEK STILL RUN,



WHERE ELSE COULD YOU  
FIND SO MUCH SADISTIC FUN?



I TAILOR MY HUNTS TO  
FIT MY MALICIOUS GRIT,



BLOOD, REGRET AND DEATH  
FOR MY OWN GRIM WIT.



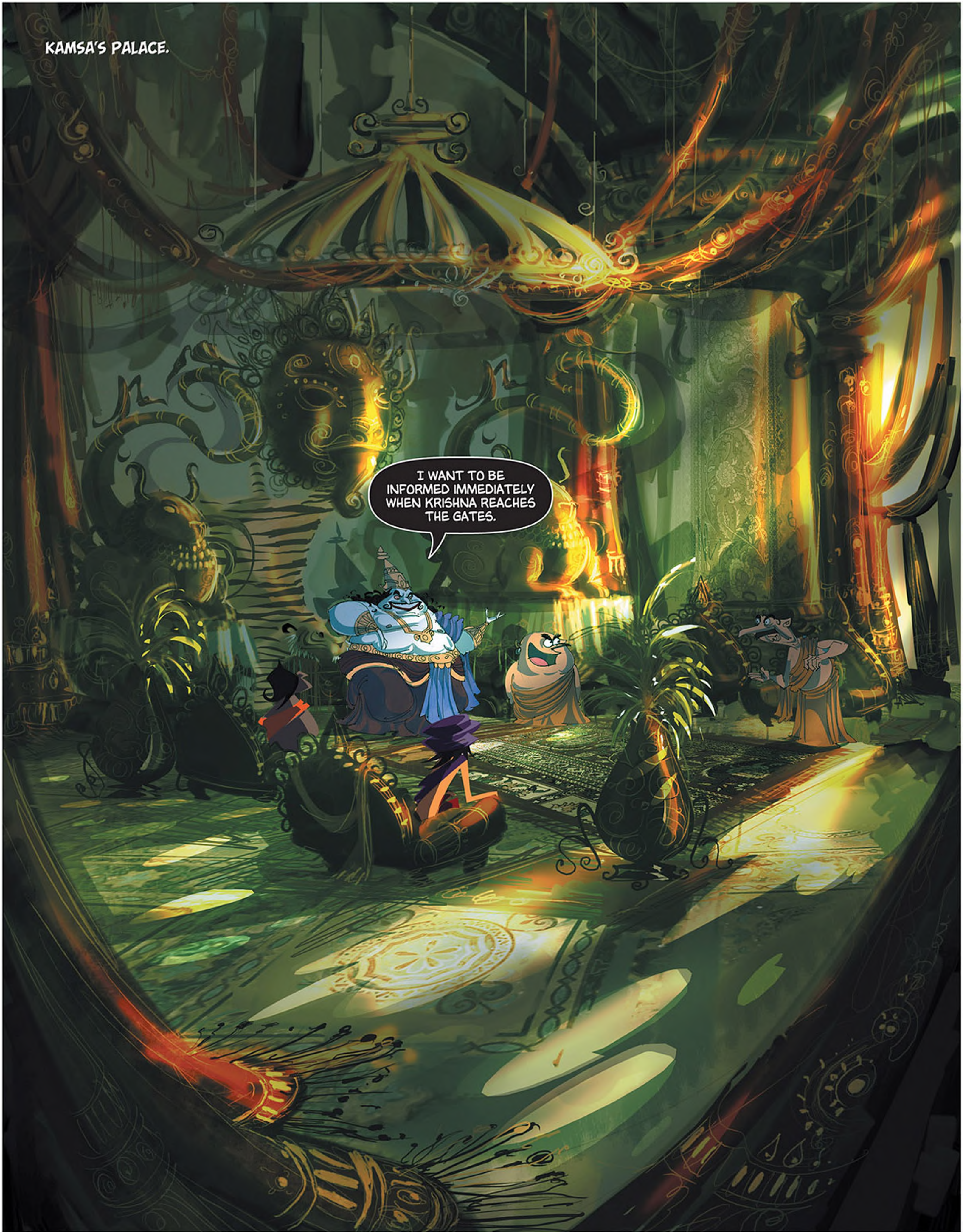






KAMSA'S PALACE.

I WANT TO BE INFORMED IMMEDIATELY WHEN KRISHNA REACHES THE GATES.







THIS EIGHTH CHILD OF DEVAKI WILL SOON BE JOINING YOU MY FRIEND.



I WILL SHOW...



...YOGMAYA...



...WHO IS THE  
BEGINNING...



...OF WHOSE  
END.





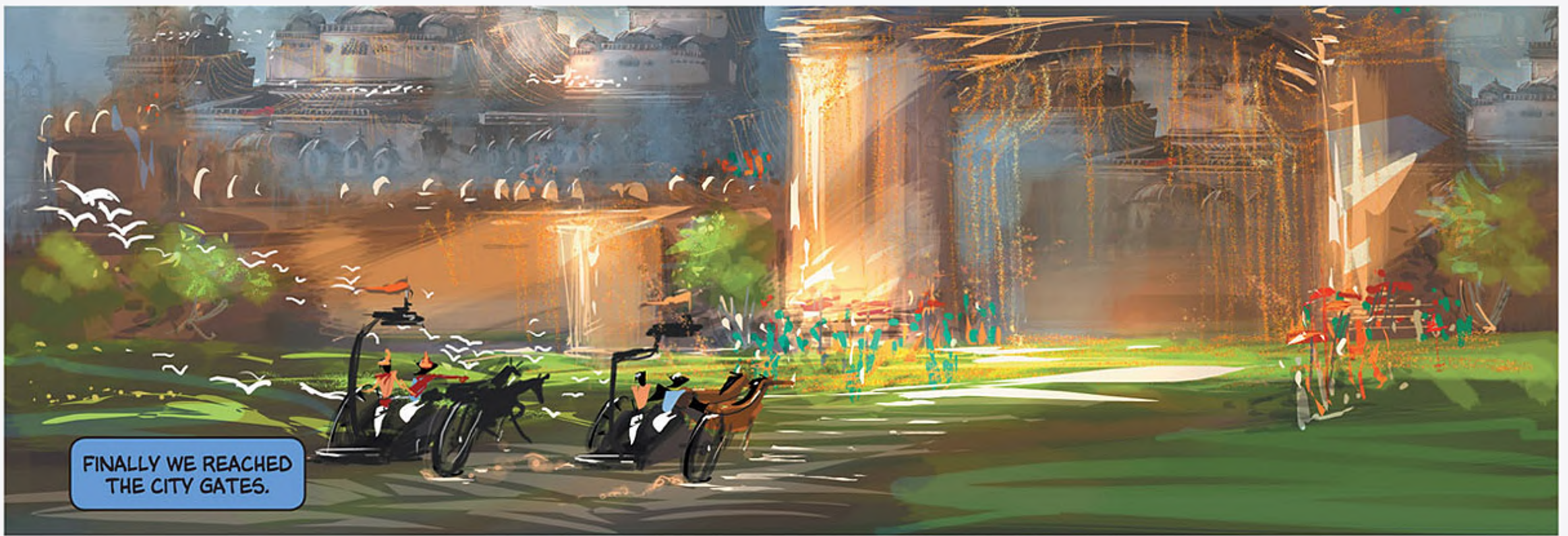


YOUR MAJESTY!  
KRISHNA HAS REACHED  
THE GATES.

TO THE  
ARENA.







FINALLY WE REACHED  
THE CITY GATES.



GRIEF-STRIKEN SOULS  
WORE THE MISERY OF THEIR  
TORTURE ON THEIR...



...FACES.



JUST LIKE KIVALAYAPIDA, THE  
ELEPHANT AT THE GATES, WHO  
WORE ON HIS FACE THE TORTURE  
OF HIS SLEEPLESS NIGHTS...  
AT THE HANDS OF KAMSA.





AS HE WAS MADE TO CHARGE TOWARDS ME...



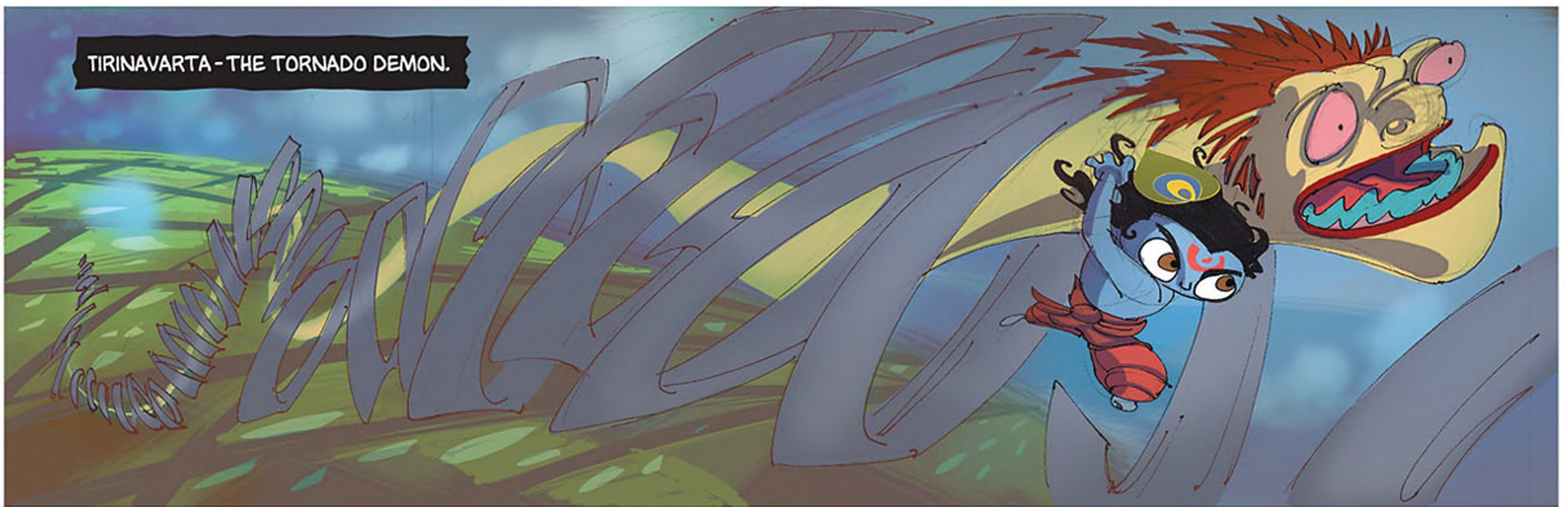
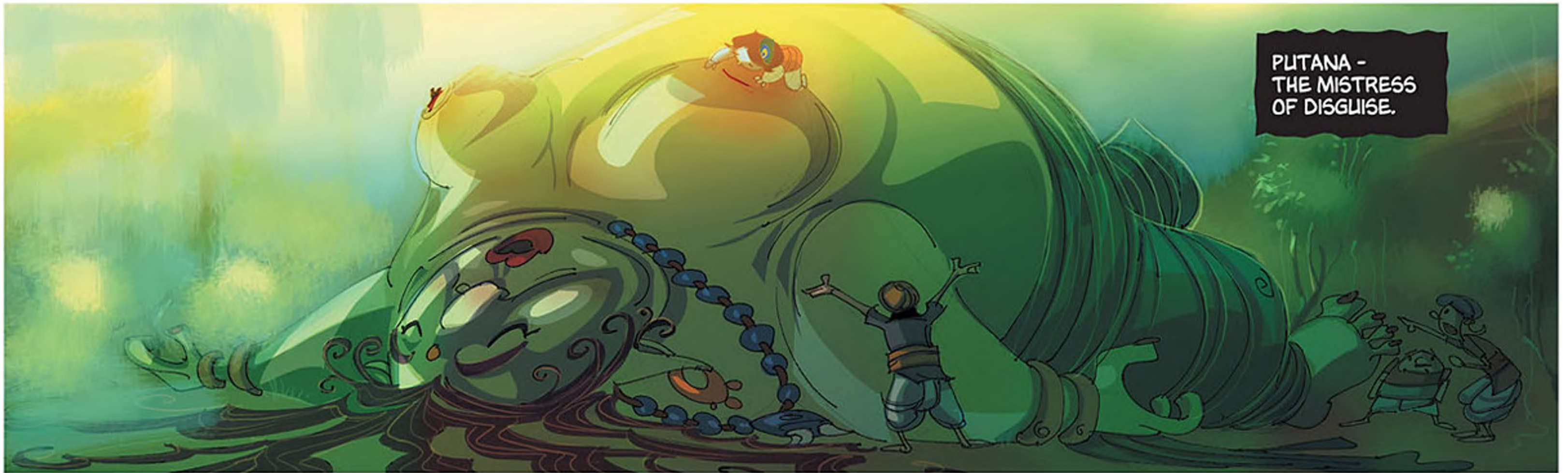
...I GAVE HIM THE GIFT...



...OF SLEEP.











BAKASURA - THE CRANE DEMON.



KESHI - THE HORSE DEMON.



AGHASURA - THE SHAPE SHIFTING SERPENT DEMON.



THEY ALL FAILED ME, BUT TODAY I WILL SEE HIM...



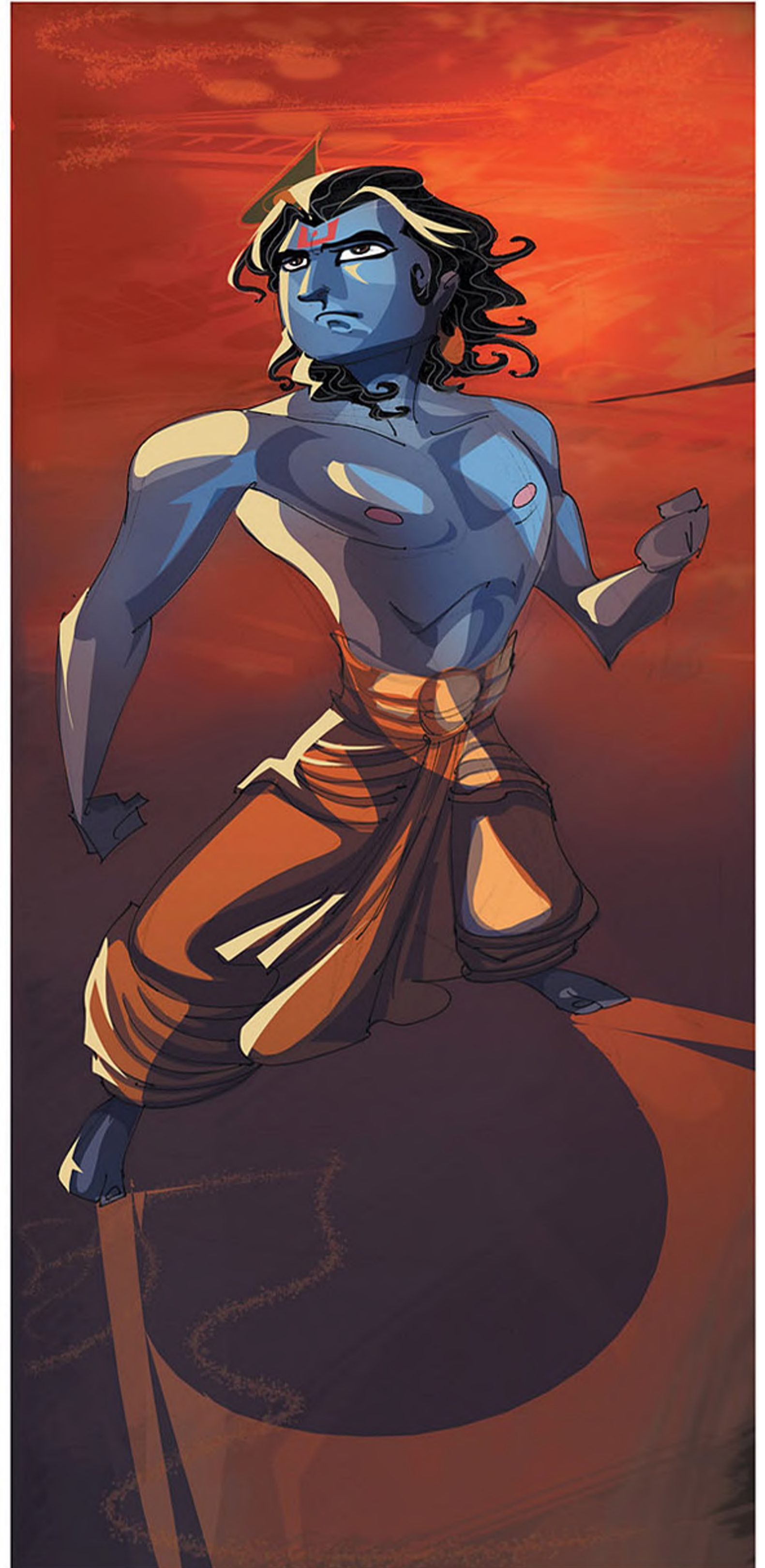
...DEAD.



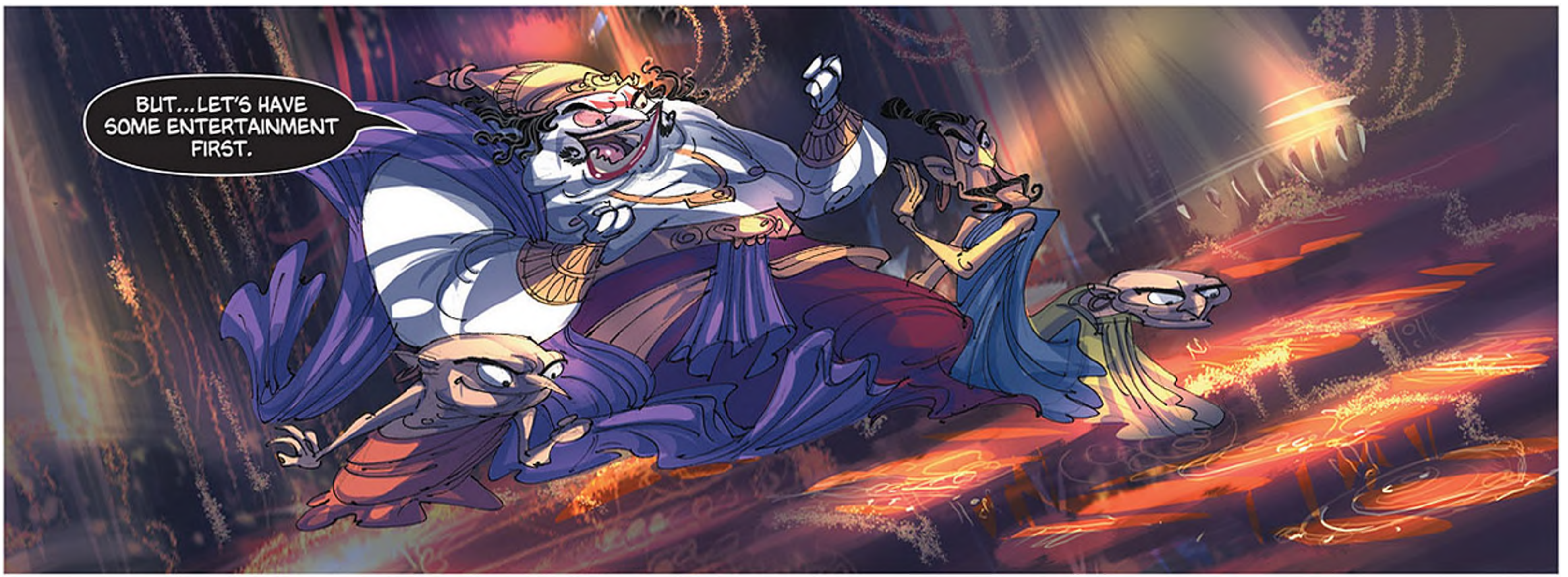
CROWDS GATHERED  
AS WE REACHED  
THE ARENA.



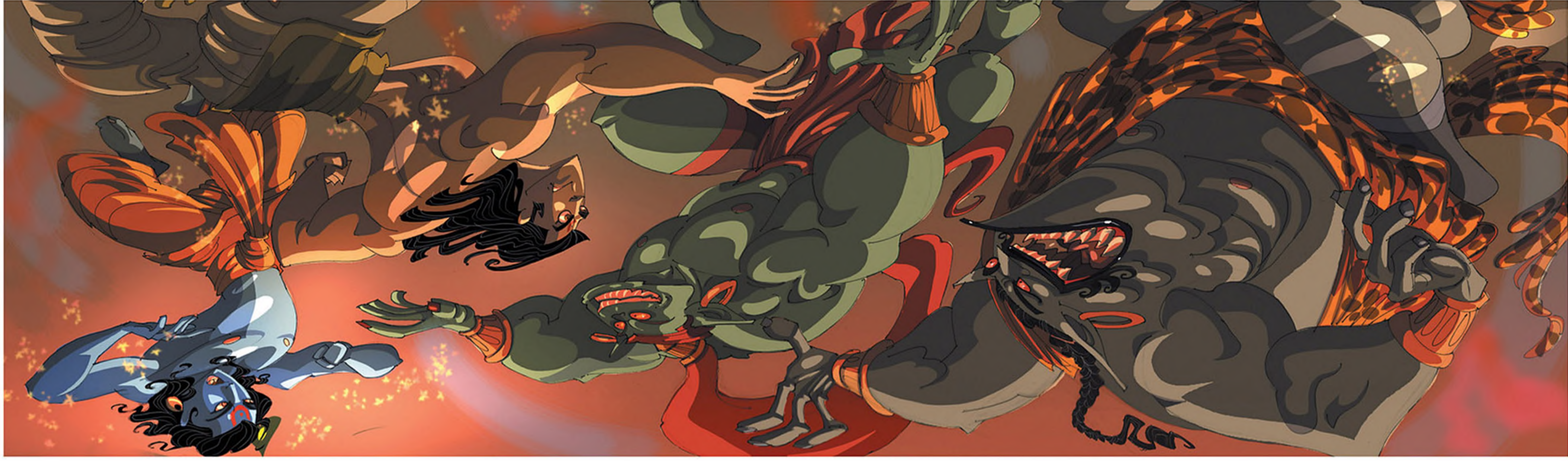








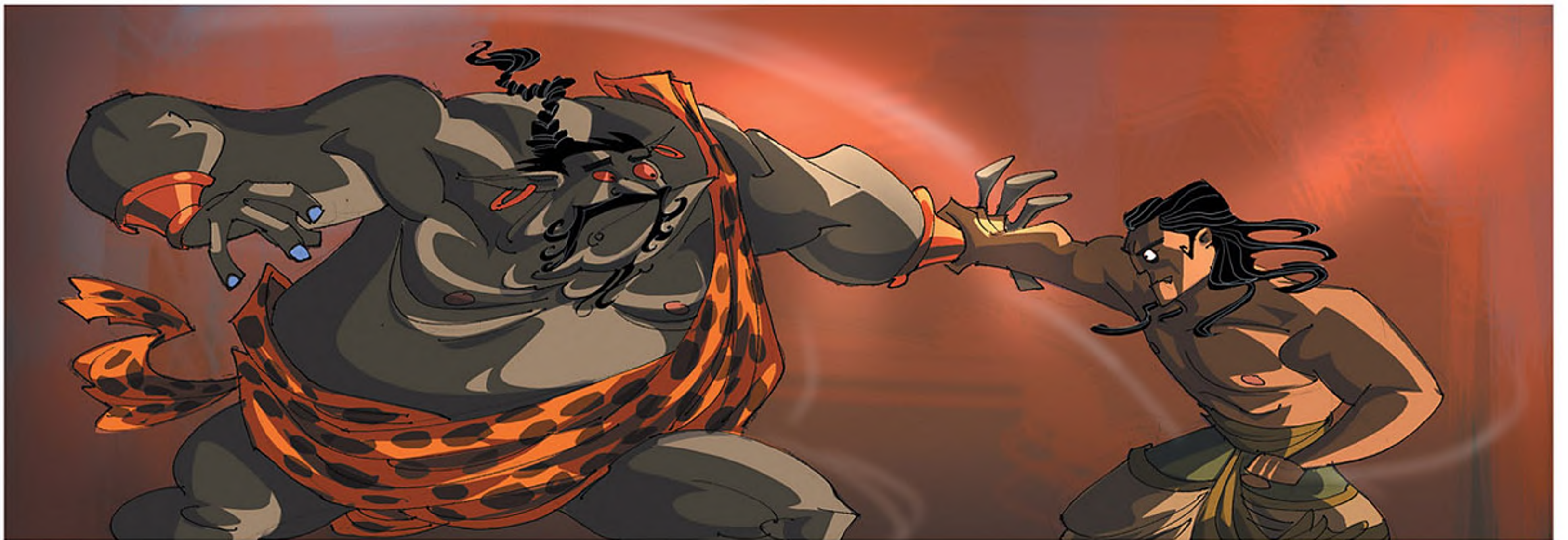
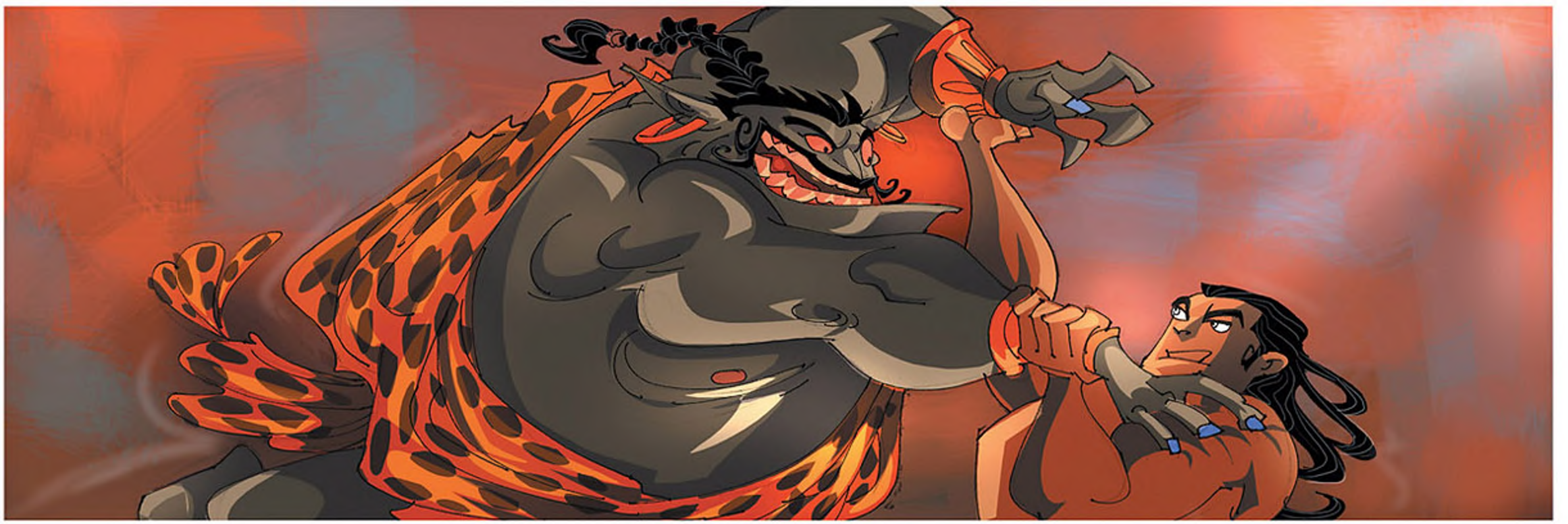




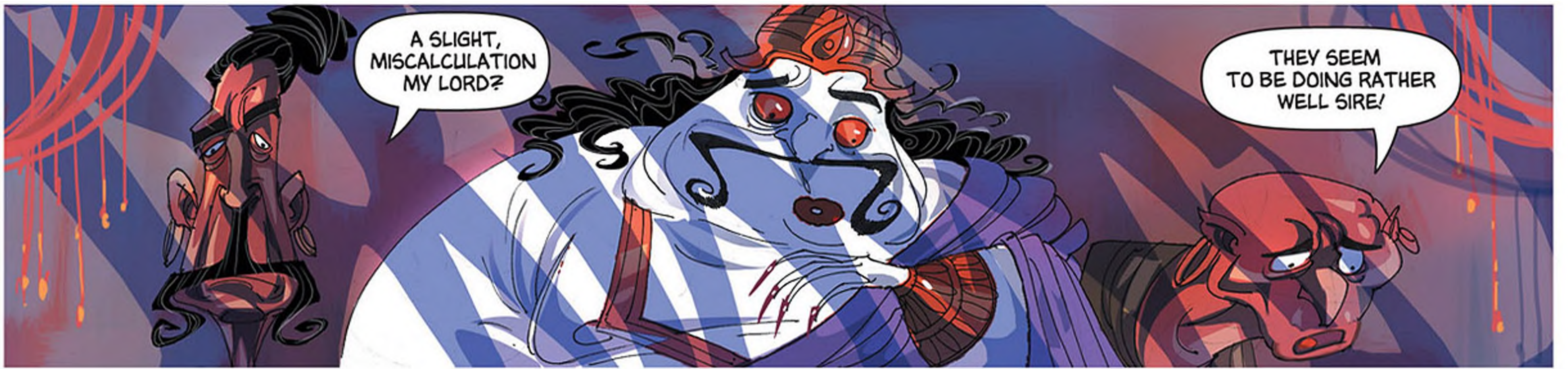




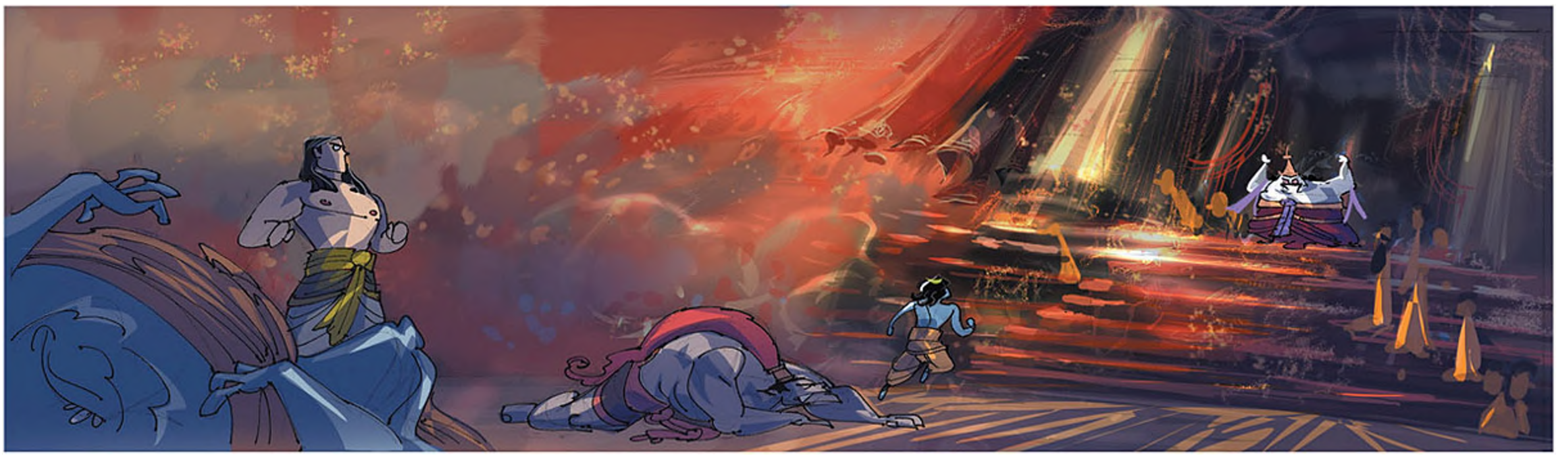












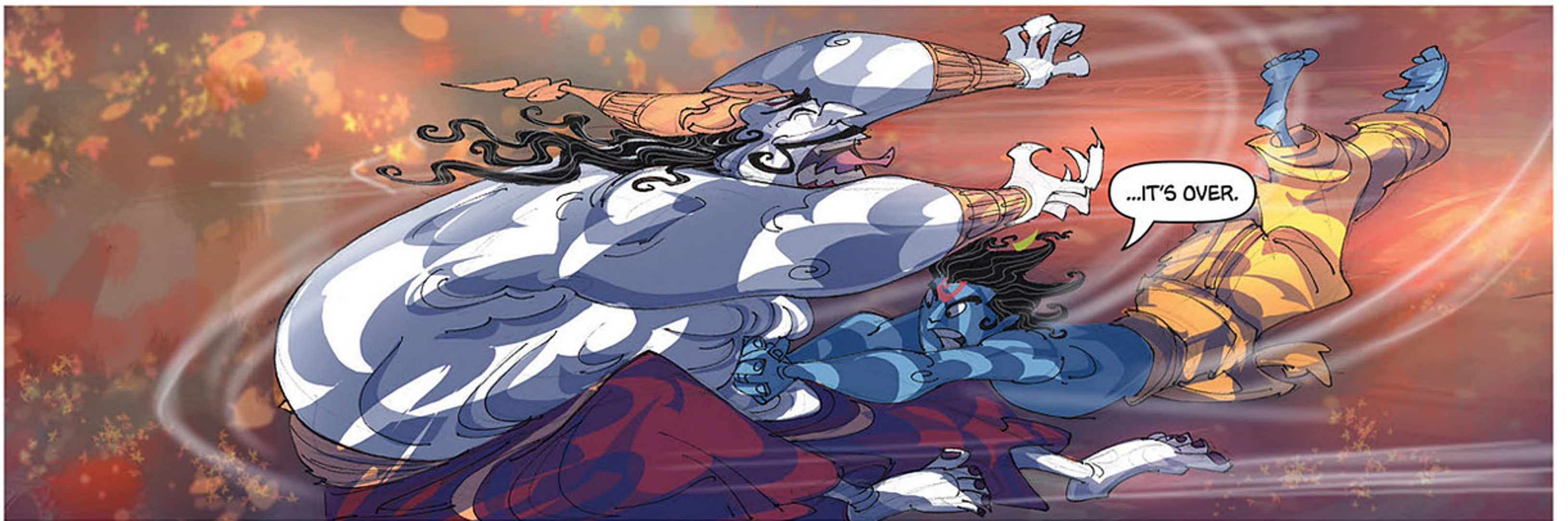
FETCH MY SISTER.  
I DON'T WANT HER TO  
MISS WATCHING ME SPLIT  
OPEN HIS HEAD...



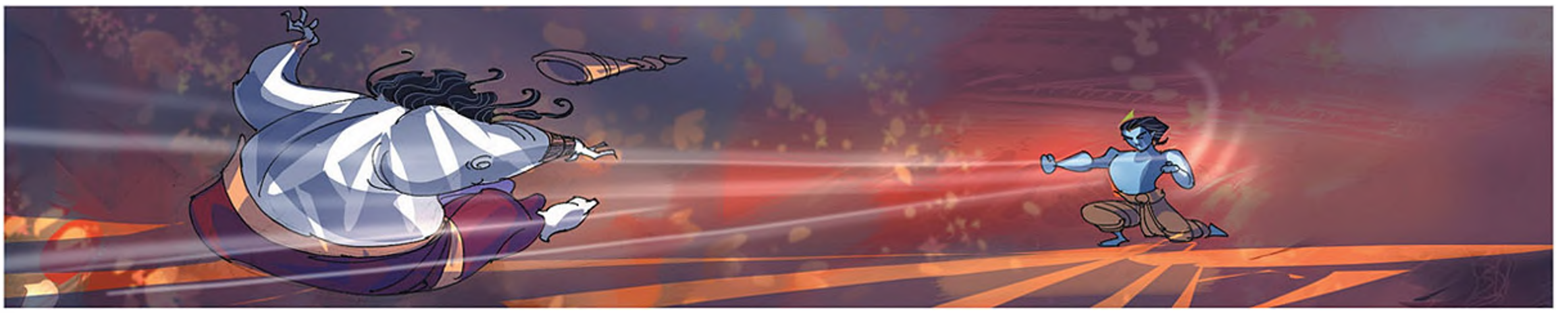
...LIKE I DID  
TO ALL HER OTHER  
CHILDREN.



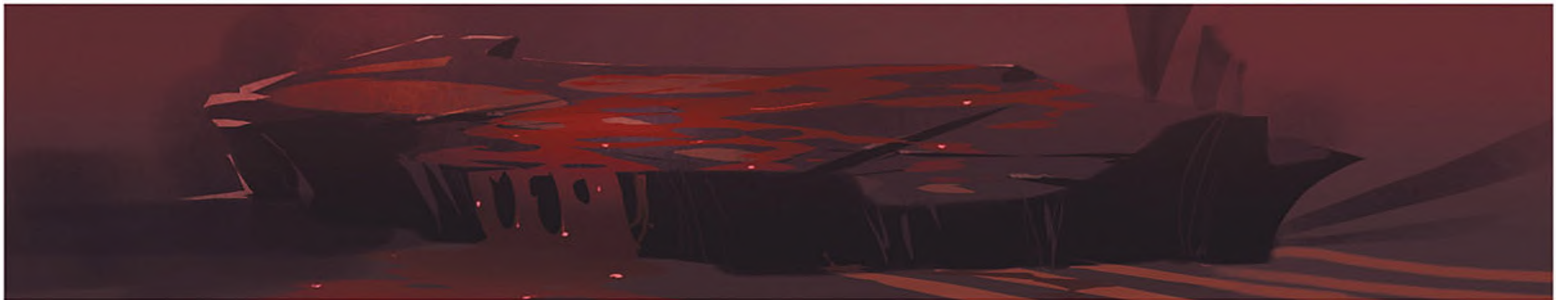
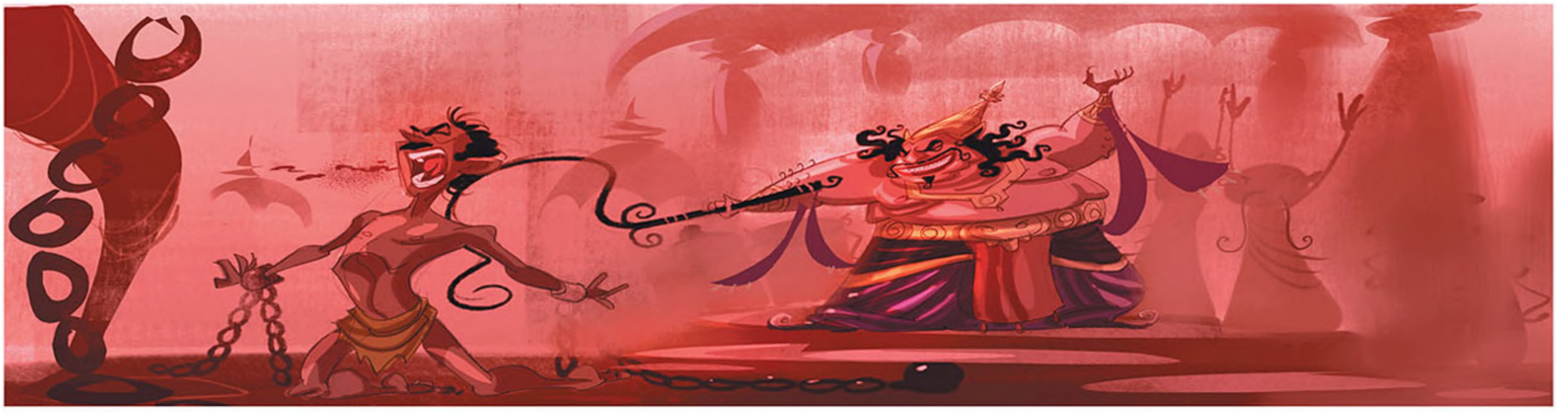


















NOT EVEN ME.



KAMSA IS DEAD.



THE CITY FINALLY  
EXHALES WITH  
A SIGH OF RELIEF.







BUT I KNEW WHAT WAS TO COME.



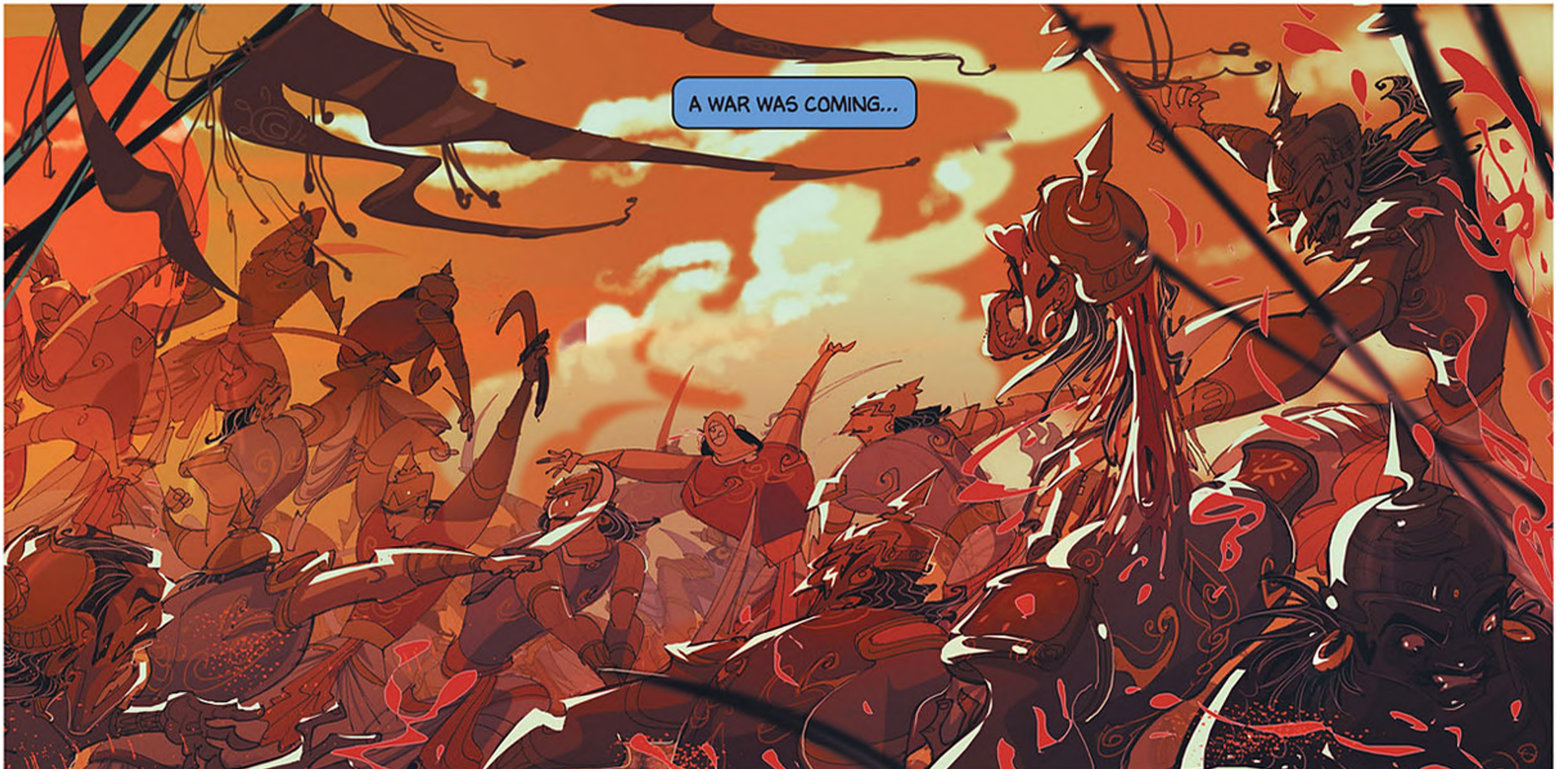
AS LONG AS GREED LIVED...



...IN ANY ONE OF US...



...SO WOULD KAMSA.



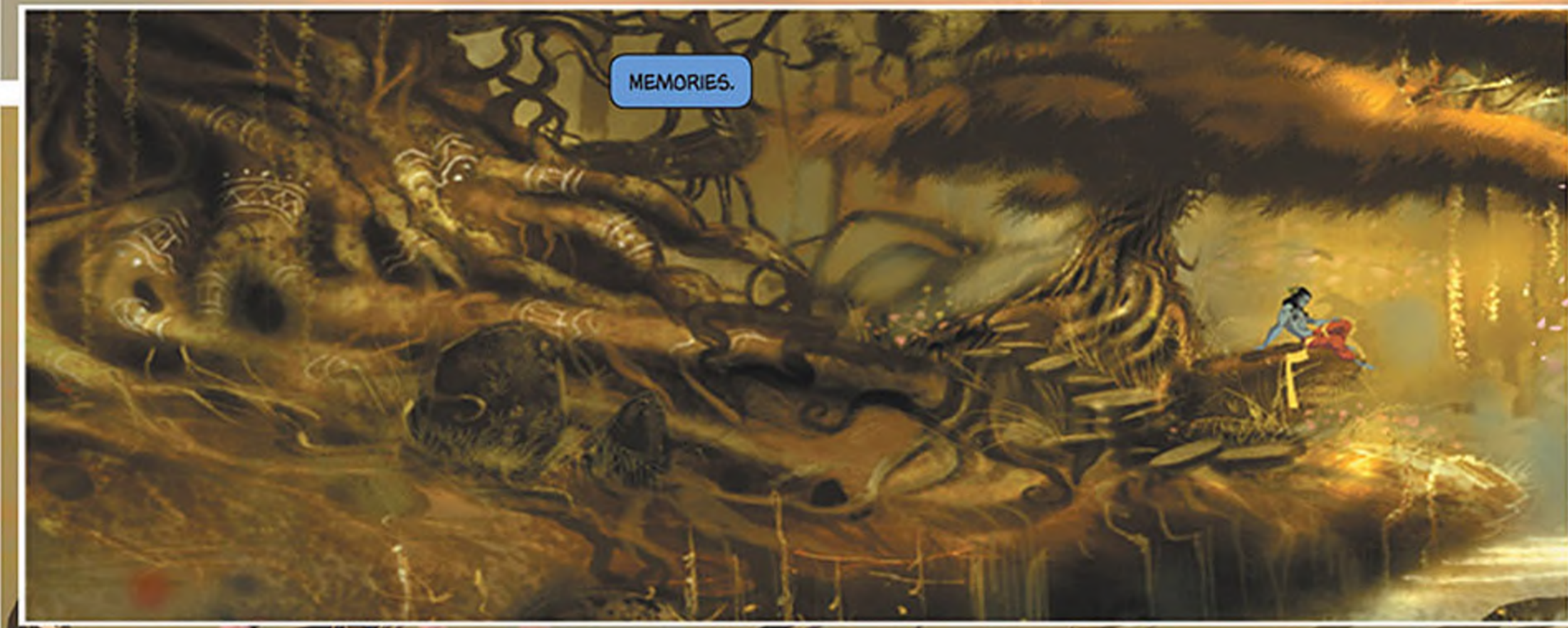
A WAR WAS COMING...



...BUT FOR NOW  
THERE WAS PEACE.



MEMORIES.







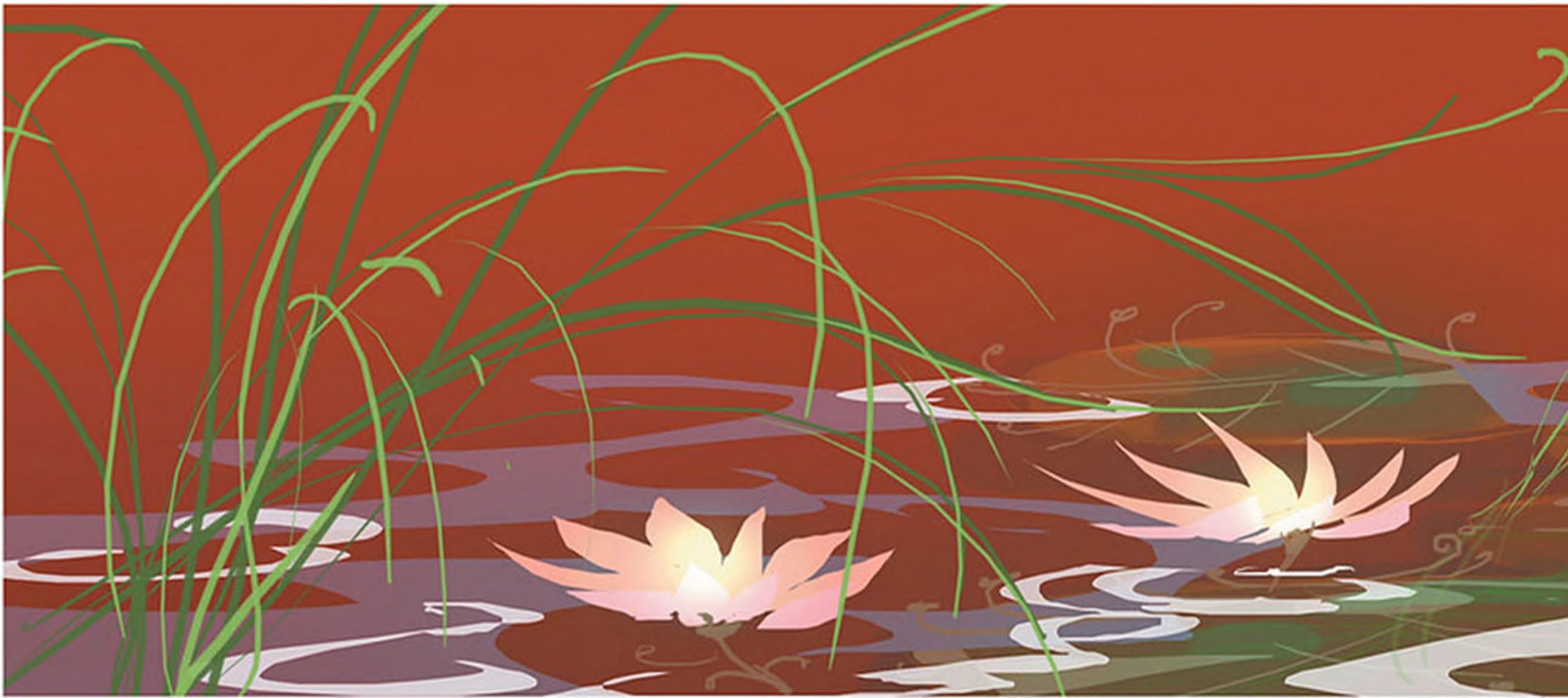
SOME THAT WE ARE HAPPY  
TO SEE FADE ALONG THE  
HORIZON OF MELANCHOLY...



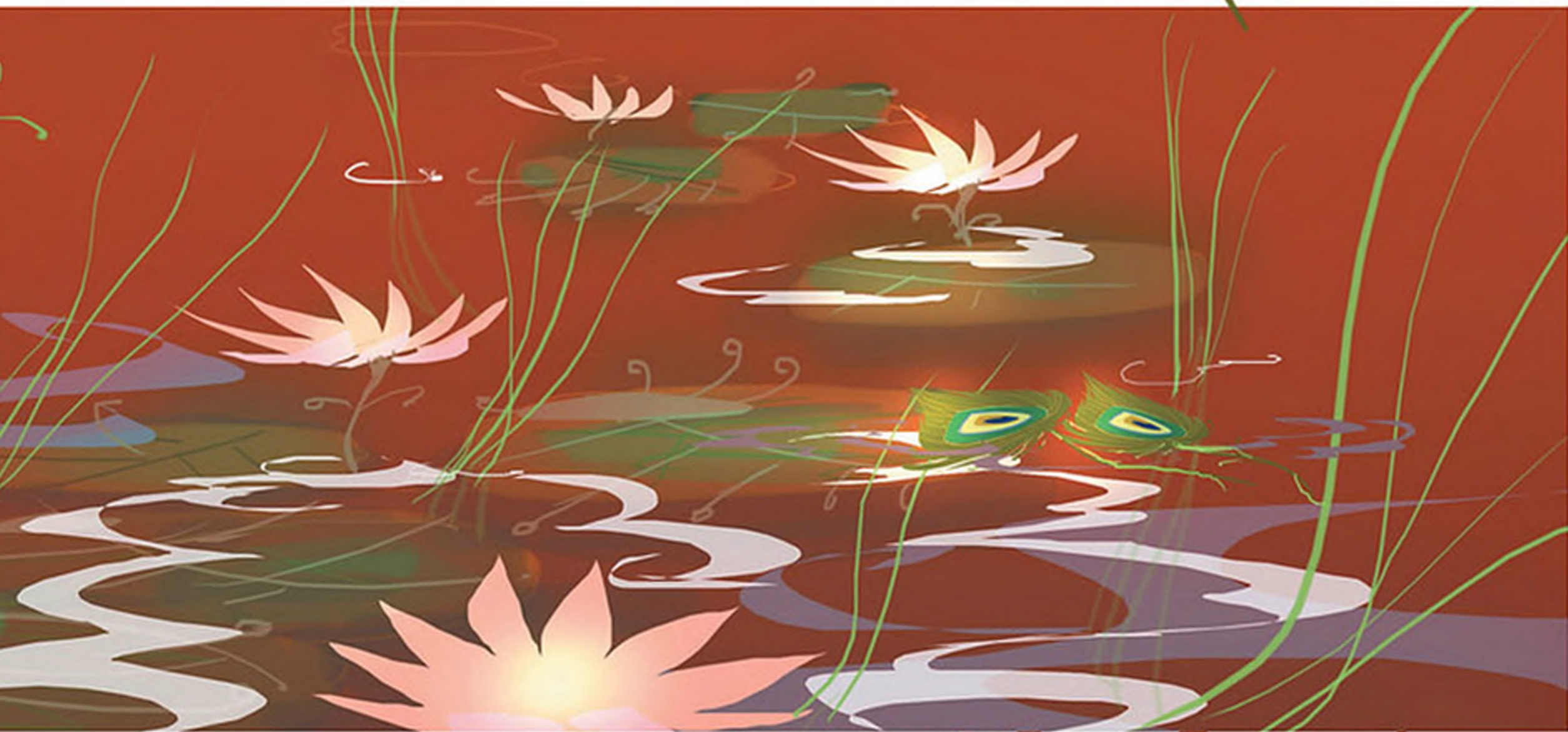
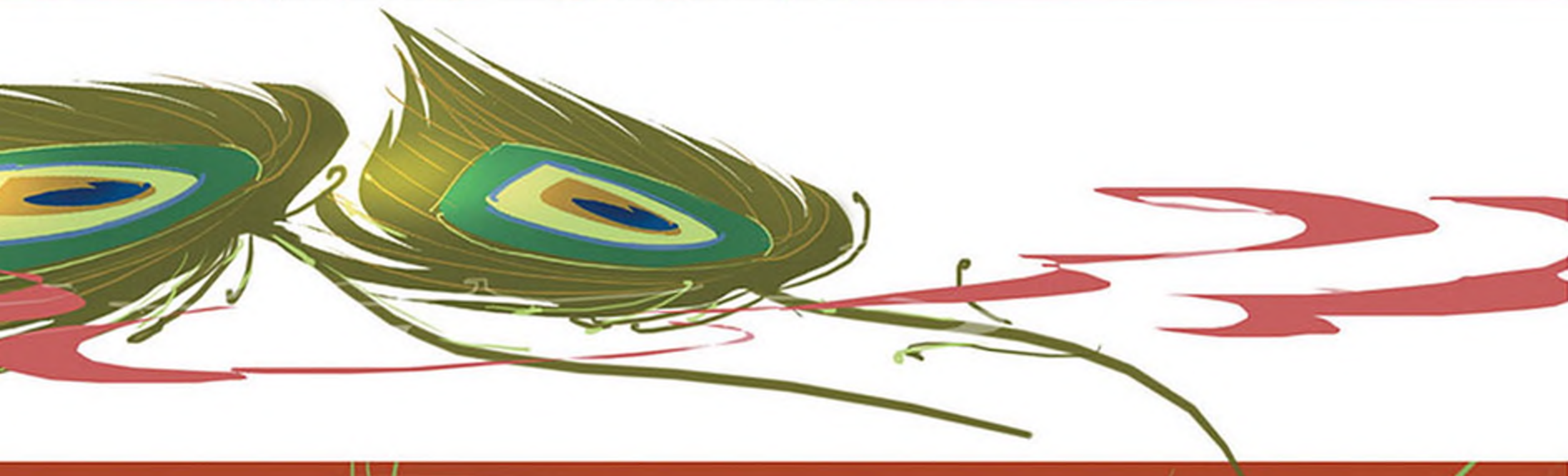
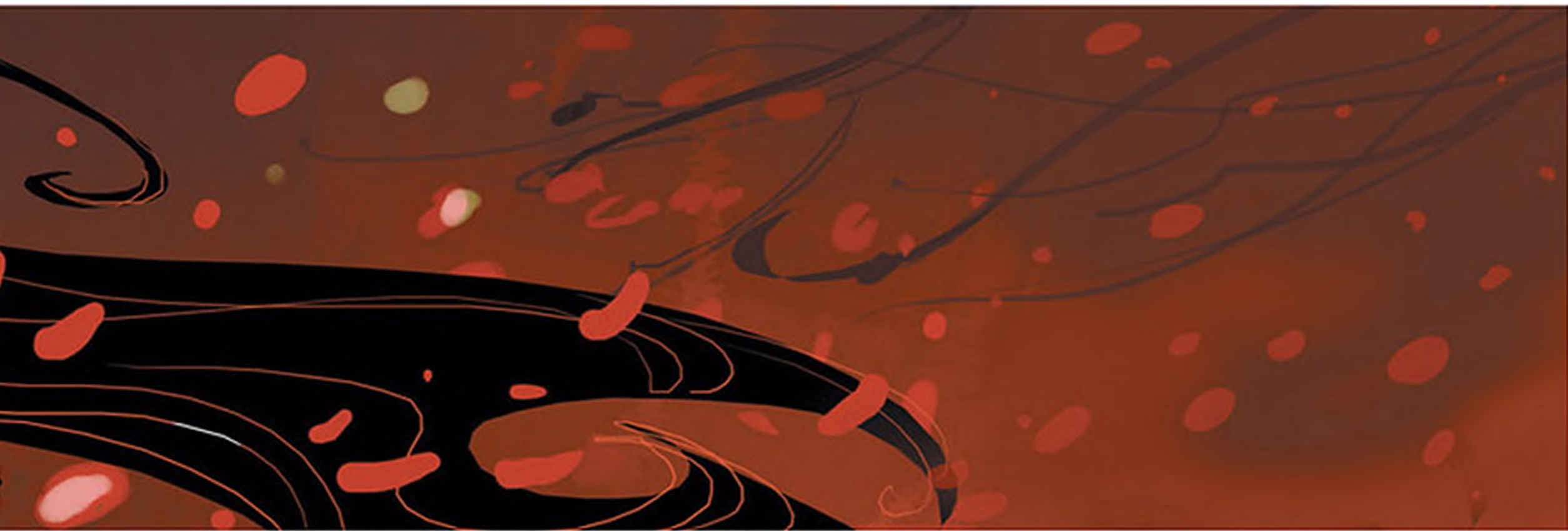
...AND SOME WHICH GLOW  
BRIGHTER THAN THE  
EXUBERANCE OF THE SUN.

IN-BETWEEN LIFE AND  
DEATH THERE PLAYS  
A BEAUTIFUL INTERLUDE OF...











RADHA...







...MY LOVE.

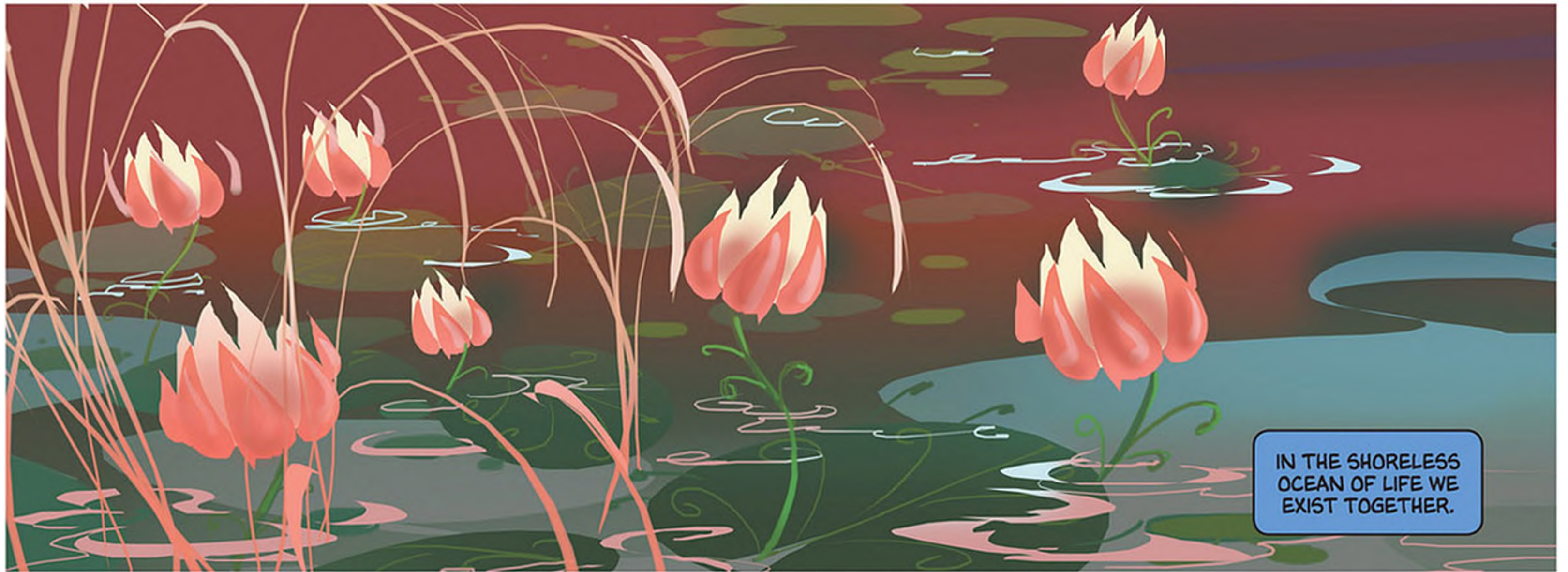




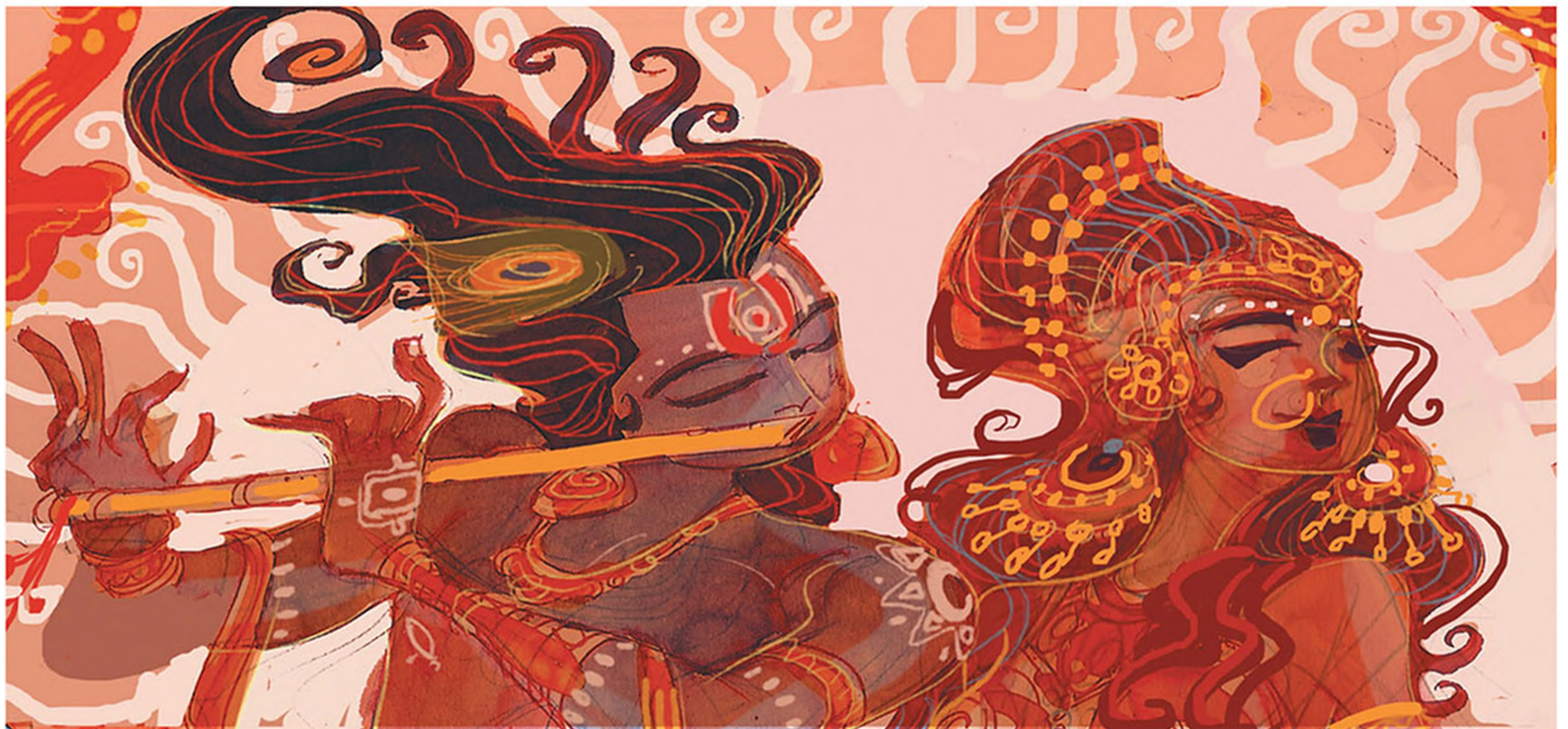




...YOUR SONG OF CREATION.



IN THE SHORELESS OCEAN OF LIFE WE EXIST TOGETHER.







PURUSHA\*

PRAKRITI\*

RAAS\* IS OUR EMBRACE.



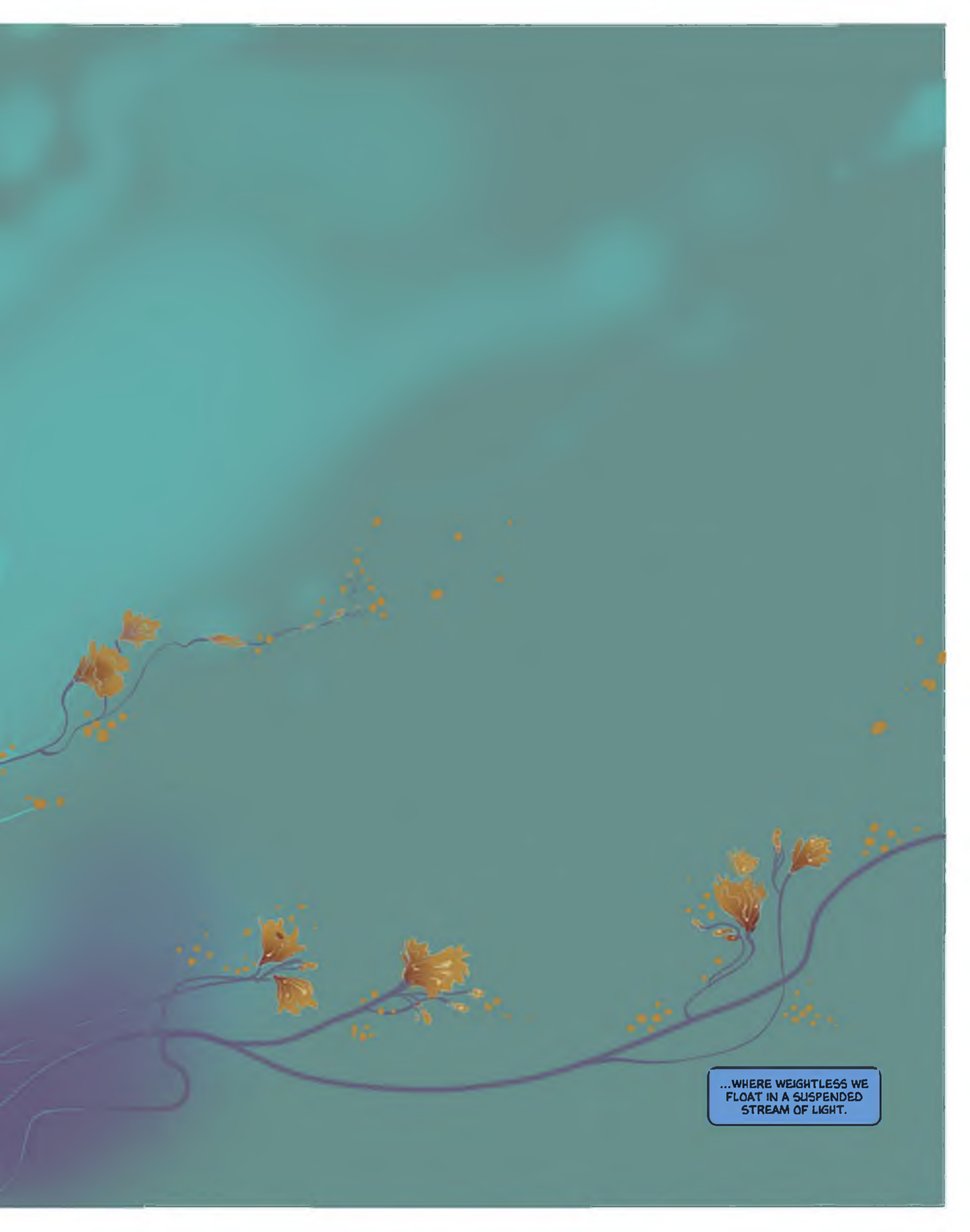
THE DIVINE DANCE  
OF OPPOSITES...











...WHERE WEIGHTLESS WE  
FLOAT IN A SUSPENDED  
STREAM OF LIGHT.





JUST AS IF WE WERE  
STUCK IN THAT MOMENT  
IN OUR DREAMS...



...BEFORE  
WAKEFULNESS.







OH KRISHNA! WAS THAT REALLY US?



OH LOOK!



IS IT TRUE THAT THE WORLD RESTS UPON A TORTOISE?

HE LOOKS SO WEAK AND OLD.



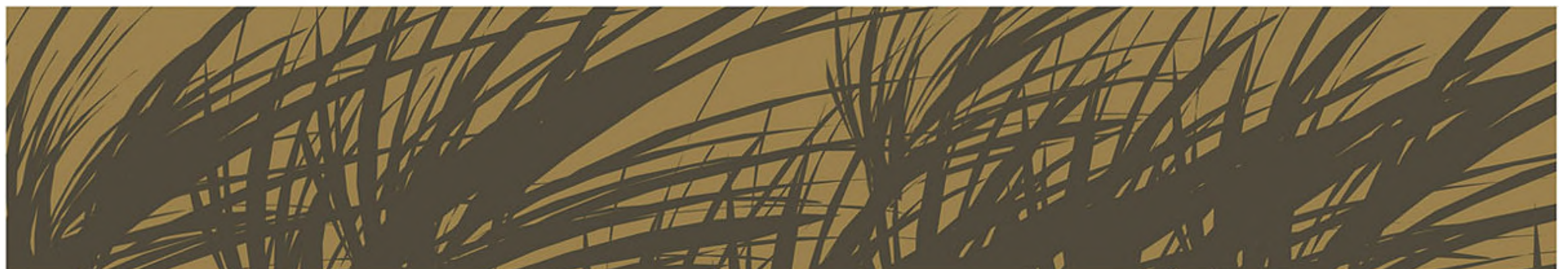
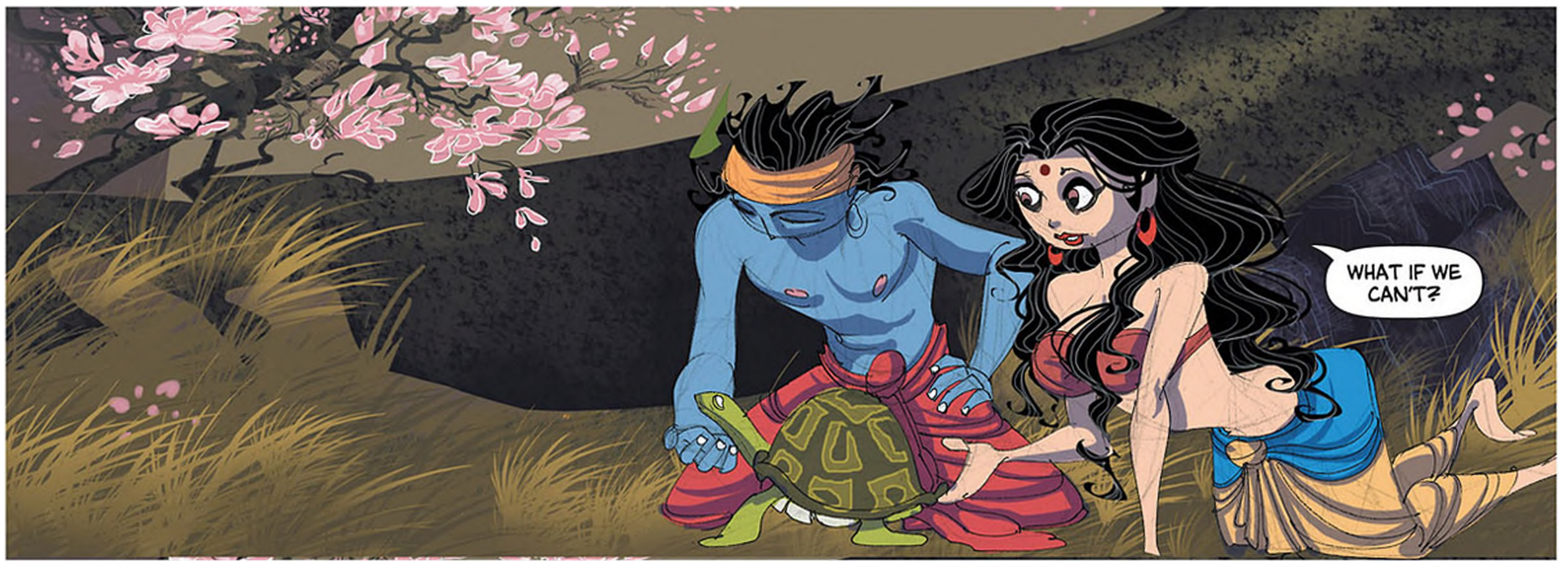




THE TORTOISE IS A  
SYMBOL OF HARMONY BETWEEN  
THE FIVE SENSES. IF YOU LEARN TO  
CONTROL THEM AND NOT LET THEM  
CONTROL YOU, THEN YOU WILL  
LIVE A LONG LIFE LIKE HIM.











WE BASKED IN THE SHADOWS  
OF THE MOONLIGHT FOR HOURS...

...HOLDING EACH OTHER  
AS IF THIS MOMENT WOULD  
NEVER COME AGAIN...

...AND IT  
NEVER DID.







TIME.


IT WITHERS US ALL.

IT TURNS OUR SMILES INTO OUR FEARS AND...



...OUR AMBITION INTO OUR FALL.



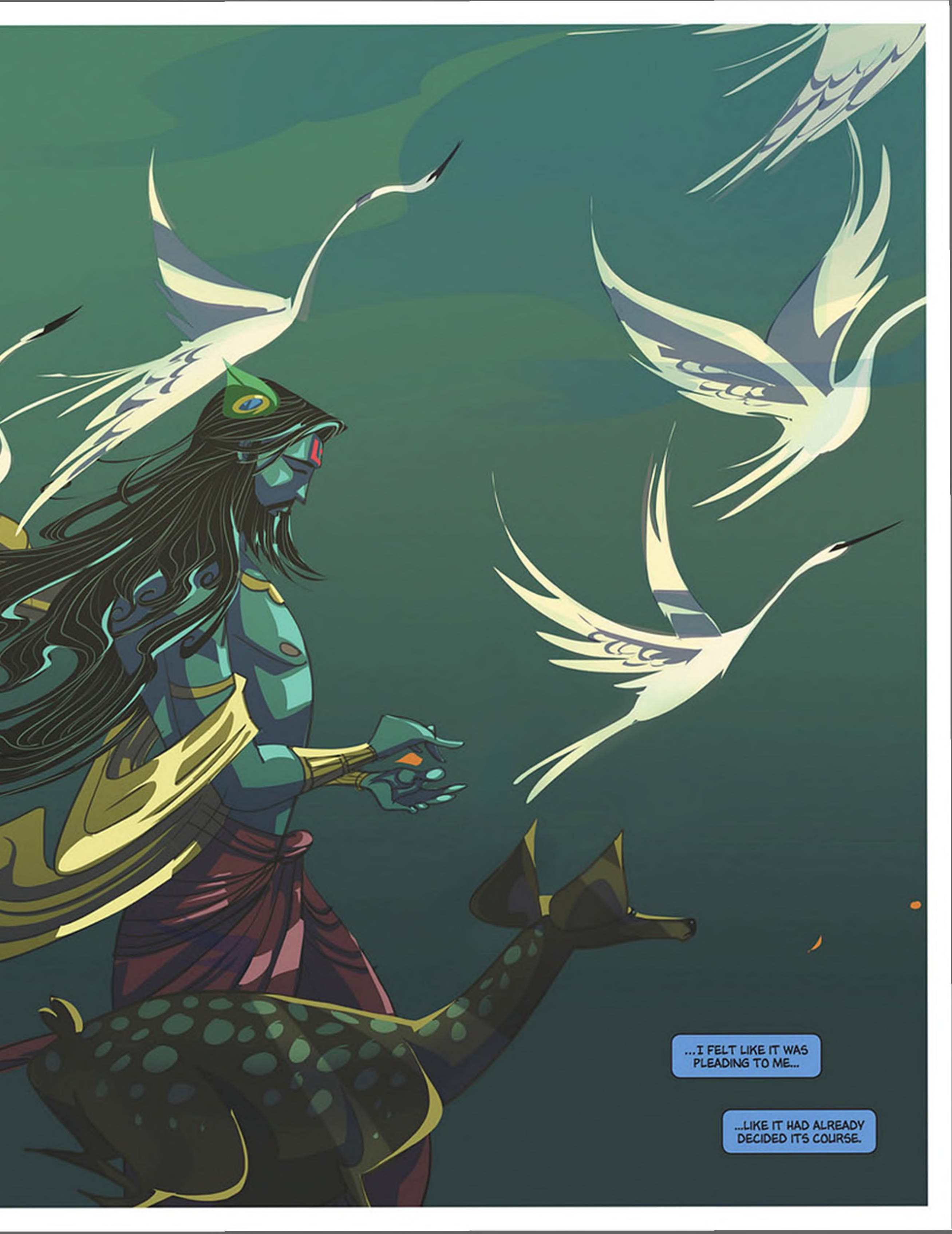


I TRIED HOLDING ON  
TO A FLOATING LEAF.

FREE, YET IT  
WAS CAGED.

SWIRLING IN BETWEEN  
MY TWO PALMS...

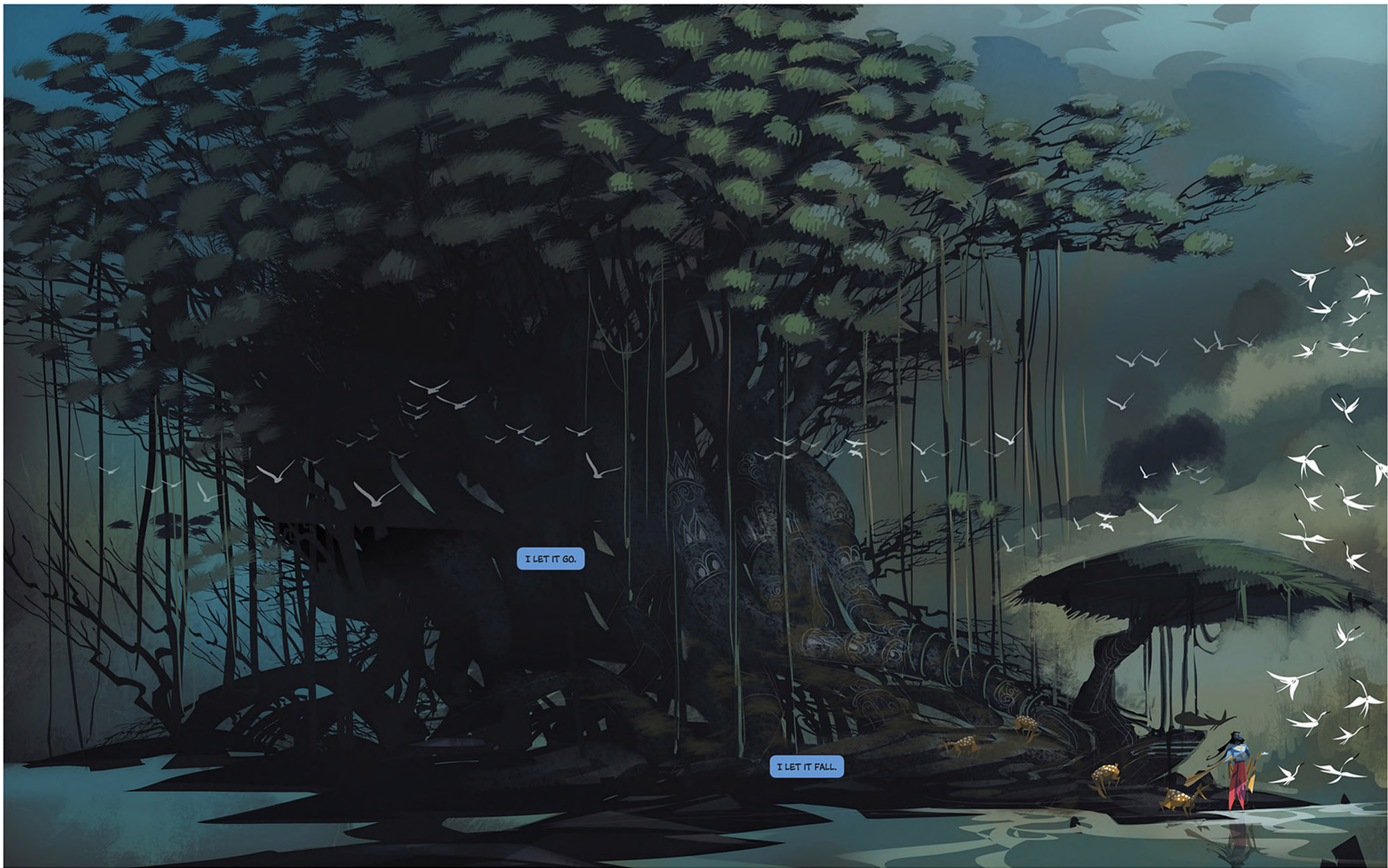




...I FELT LIKE IT WAS  
PLEADING TO ME...

...LIKE IT HAD ALREADY  
DECIDED ITS COURSE.





I LET IT GO.

I LET IT FALL.





HASTINAPUR.

A KINGDOM WHERE PEACE  
WAS WON BY WAR.



BLIND KING DHRITARASHTRA  
RULED AFTER THE DEATH OF  
HIS YOUNGER BROTHER PANDU.

PANDU WAS SURVIVED  
BY HIS TWO WIVES  
AND FIVE SONS.

DHRITARASHTRA WAS BORN  
A HUNDRED CHILDREN BY HIS  
BEAUTIFUL WIFE GANDHARI.

THE ELDEST DURYODHANA  
ALREADY SAW HIMSELF AS KING.

O WISE  
ONE, I COME  
IN PEACE.

THE PANDAVAS  
ARE BACK FROM EXILE AND  
I'M HERE TO NEGOTIATE  
FOR THEM.





NEGOTIATE?  
THE TERMS FOR  
A NEW GAME?

WHAT DO THEY HAVE  
TO LOSE NOW? ANOTHER  
FOURTEEN YEARS IN THE FOREST?  
I DID NOT KNOW THAT THEY  
LOVED THE WILDERNESS  
SO MUCH.

SHAKUNI...  
WE ALL KNOW  
HOW YOU WON  
THAT GAME...



...HOW YOU COMPELLED  
YUDHISTHIRA\* TO GAMBLE  
AWAY HIS BROTHERS.



HIS WIFE.

THE DEPRAVITY OF THE KAURAV\* COURT TO WATCH THE RAVAGING OF A WOMAN'S HONOR WILL FOREVER STAIN THE GLORY OF HASTINAPUR.



AS PER THE TERMS OF THAT CONTEST, THE PANDAVAS WENT INTO EXILE...















JUST THINK ABOUT WHAT I'M SAYING.



IMAGINE WHAT COULD BE ACCOMPLISHED IF YOU BOTH STOOD UNITED.



THAT IS ALL I ASK.

YOU'VE SPOKEN ENOUGH.

FATHER, DO NOT STRESS YOUR OLD LUNGS, I SHALL SPEAK FOR YOU.

BUT...









WE ARE WARRIORS.

WAGING WAR IS WHAT WE DO.


WE LIVE TO DIE.



WHAT RIGHTFUL CLAIM DO YOU TALK ABOUT?

DIDN'T HE LOSE IT ALL IN THAT GAME OF DICE?





HIS WIFE.

HIS BROTHERS.

HIS KINGDOM.

HIS HONOR.

WHOSE TRUTH?

HIS TRUTH.





YOU ARE  
BLINDED BY YOUR  
EGO.



GIVE THE PANDAVAS  
FIVE VILLAGES, JUST FIVE...  
AND AVOID THE WAR.



FIVE...

...HA...HA...  
FIVE VILLAGES...

...DO YOU SEE  
THE SHARP TIP OF THIS  
KNIFE, KRISHNA?



I REFUSE  
TO GIVE THEM EVEN  
THIS MUCH LAND.





BE REASONABLE,  
DURYODHANA.

DON'T FALL  
FOR HIS GLIB WORDS  
GRANDFATHER... HE'S NO  
PEACEMAKER, HE'S  
A STRATEGIST.



HE'S PAINTING  
ME AS THE VILLAIN  
OF THIS STORY.

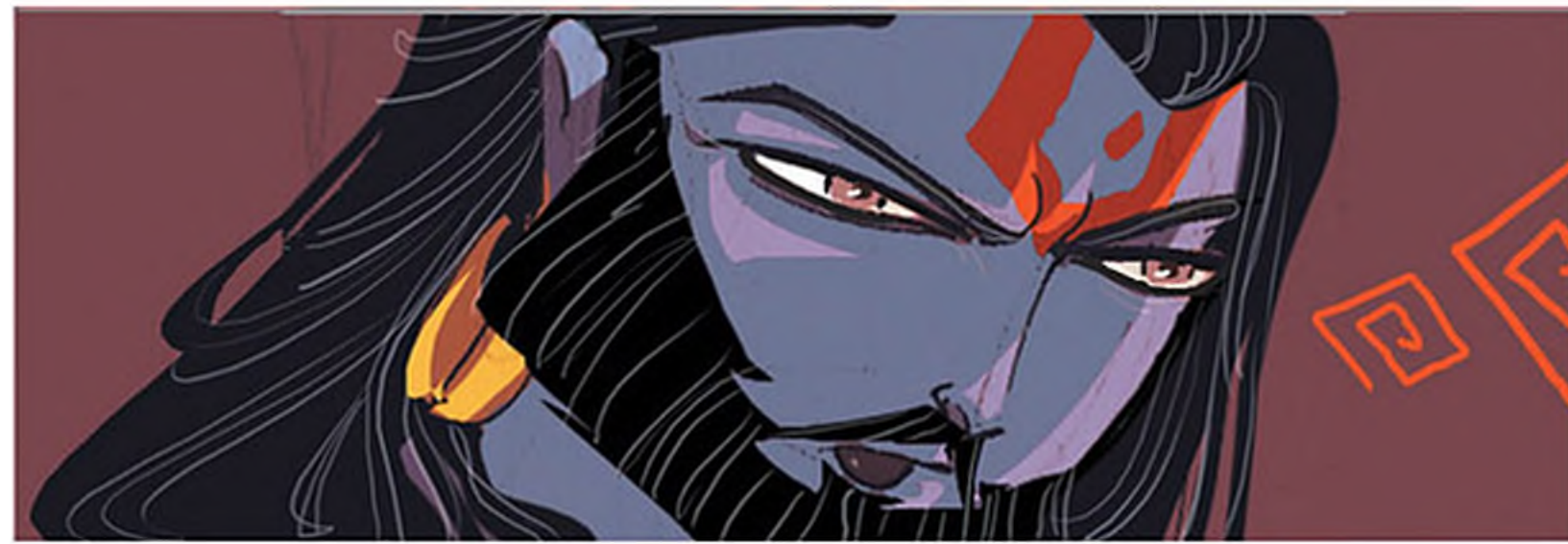
I WANTED TO PROVE  
MYSELF AT THE HELM OF THE  
THRONE BUT NOW I WILL DO IT AT  
THE HELM OF MY CHARIOT.



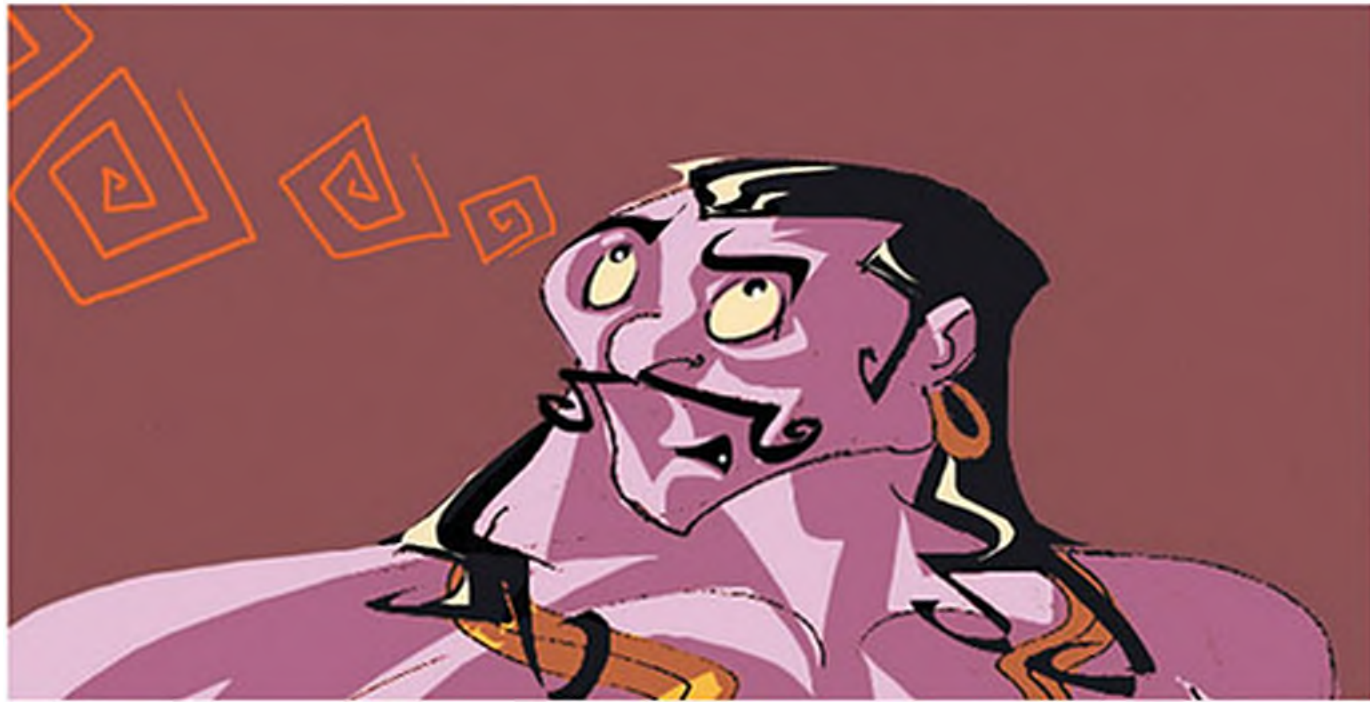
DO YOU  
KNOW WHAT YOU  
ARE SAYING?

GIVE ME  
MY WAR!

















SOON I WAS WITH THE PANDAVAS.

...AND HE DIDN'T LISTEN.

IF BLOOD IS WHAT HE WANTS, IT IS BLOOD THAT HE SHALL GET.



ARJUNA, WHAT'S THE MATTER?

BHEEM, LET'S GO BRIEF THE GENERALS.



WHY COULDN'T HE HAVE JUST LISTENED?



THE RESULTS OF OUR ACTIONS ARE OUT OF OUR CONTROL.





DRAUPADI...



...A ROSE AMONGST THORNS.



HER HONOR WOULD BE RECLAIMED AT THE COST OF SO MUCH BLOOD.





I WENT  
TO SEE HER.

SHE WAS MARRIED TO ALL FIVE  
BROTHERS IN A POLITICAL ALLIANCE,  
TO ENSURE THE LOYALTY OF HER  
FATHER'S ARMY TO THEM.

HER HEART BELONGED TO  
ARJUNA ALONE, THE ARCHER  
WHO SINGLE-HANDEDLY  
DEFEATED ALL SUITORS.

THEY  
FIGHT FOR YOU  
TOMORROW.











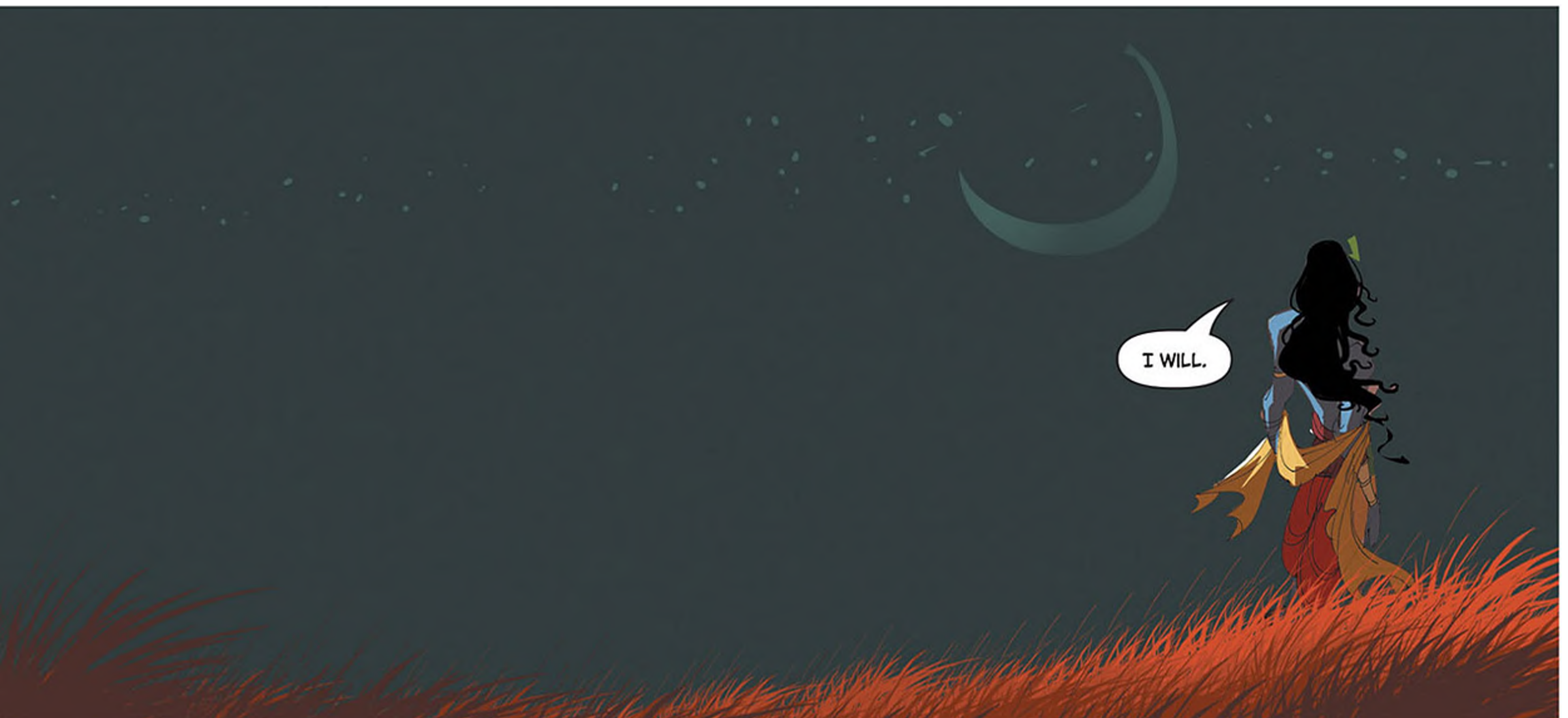
I CAN'T WAIT TO WASH AWAY THE STIFLING STENCH OF MY DISGRACE... WITH KAURAV BLOOD.



I STILL CAN'T BELIEVE THAT MY HUSBANDS JUST STOOD THERE AND WATCHED.

YOU KNOW HOW IT HAUNTS THEM.



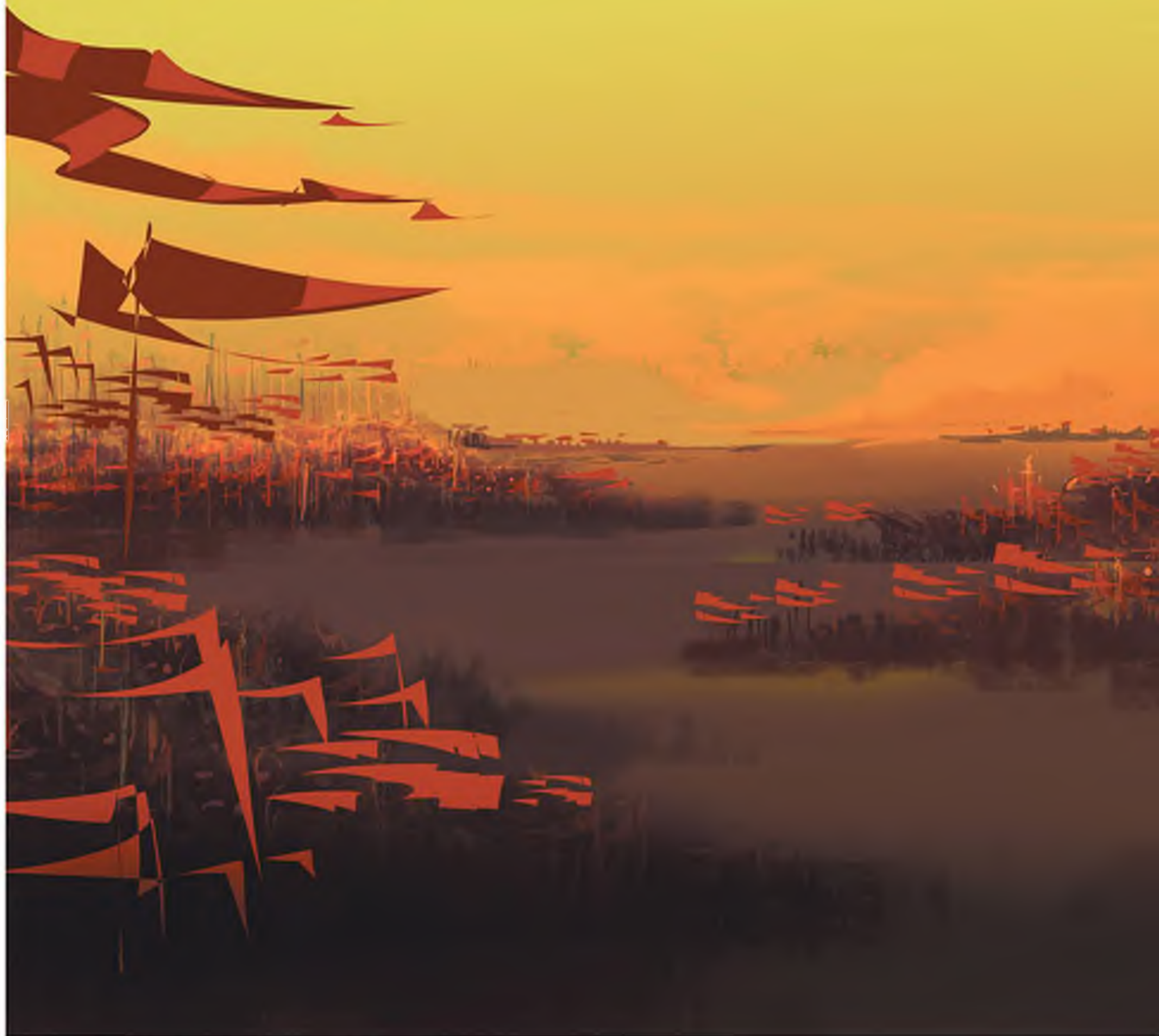




THE DAY OF  
THE GREAT WAR.

THE SUN WAS RELUCTANT  
TO RISE, FOR HE KNEW  
WHAT WAS TO UNFOLD.

ANYONE WHO COULD  
WIELD A WEAPON STOOD  
ON THE BATTLEFIELD OF...









... KURUKSHETRA.\*

THE PANDAVAS WERE  
LED BY BHEEM.

HE HAD TRAINED HIS  
SMALLER ARMY HARD AND  
THEY WERE NOW PROUD  
TO WEAR THEIR SCARS.







BHEESHMA, THE ELDEST IN THE LINE OF KING KURU, WAS GENERAL TO THE KAURAV ARMY. THIS GRANDFATHERLY FIGURE HAD RECEIVED A BOON TO CHOOSE THE MOMENT OF HIS OWN DEATH, PAID FOR BY HIS PROMISE TO NEVER SIRE HIS OWN CHILDREN.



I PLAYED THE PART OF A WEAPONLESS CHARIOTEER TO MY BELOVED ARJUNA.

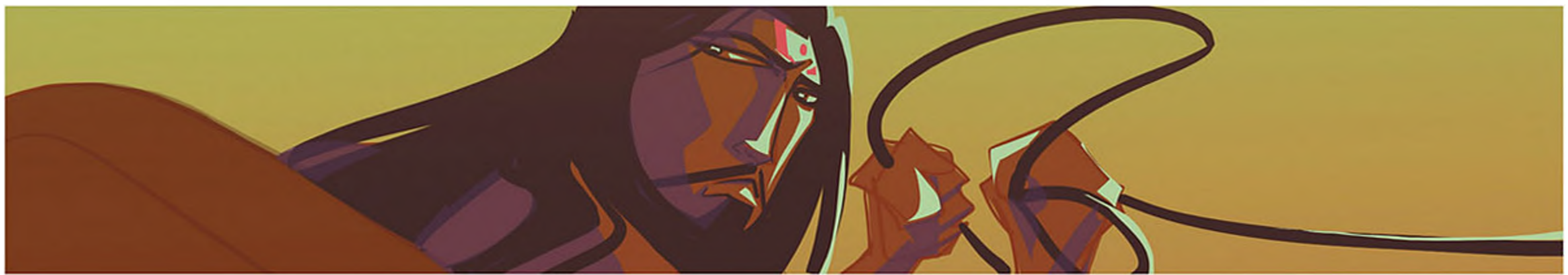




ANXIETY HADN'T LEFT ARJUNA YET.

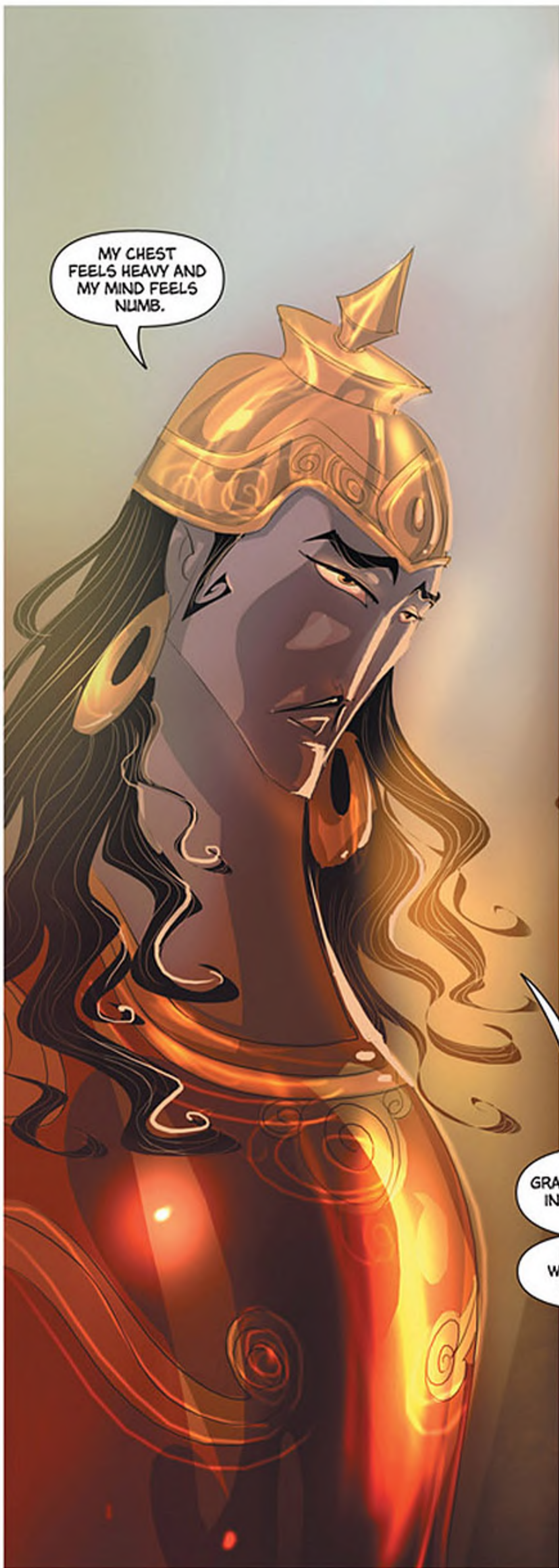


TAKE ME TO THE CENTER OF THE BATTLEFIELD.

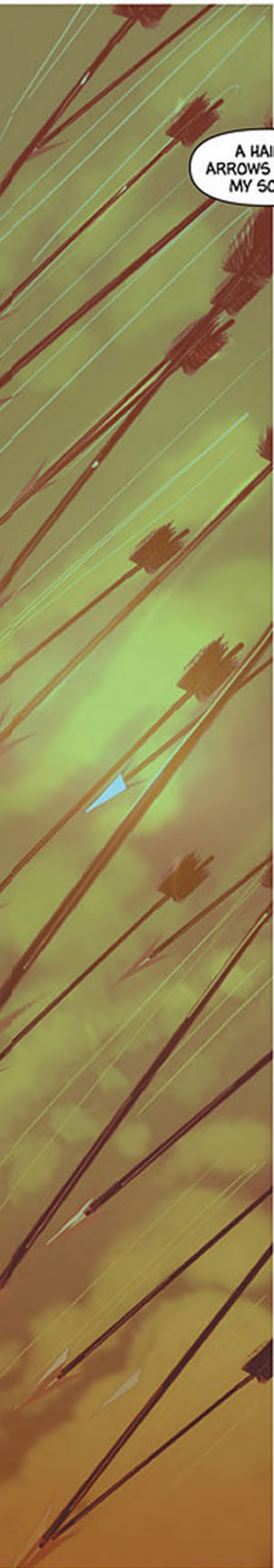


I WANT TO SEE BOTH SIDES ONE LAST TIME.









A HAIL OF  
ARROWS SHREDS  
MY SOUL...

...WHEN...WHEN...  
I THINK OF TAKING  
THESE...



...LIVES.

ARJUNA...

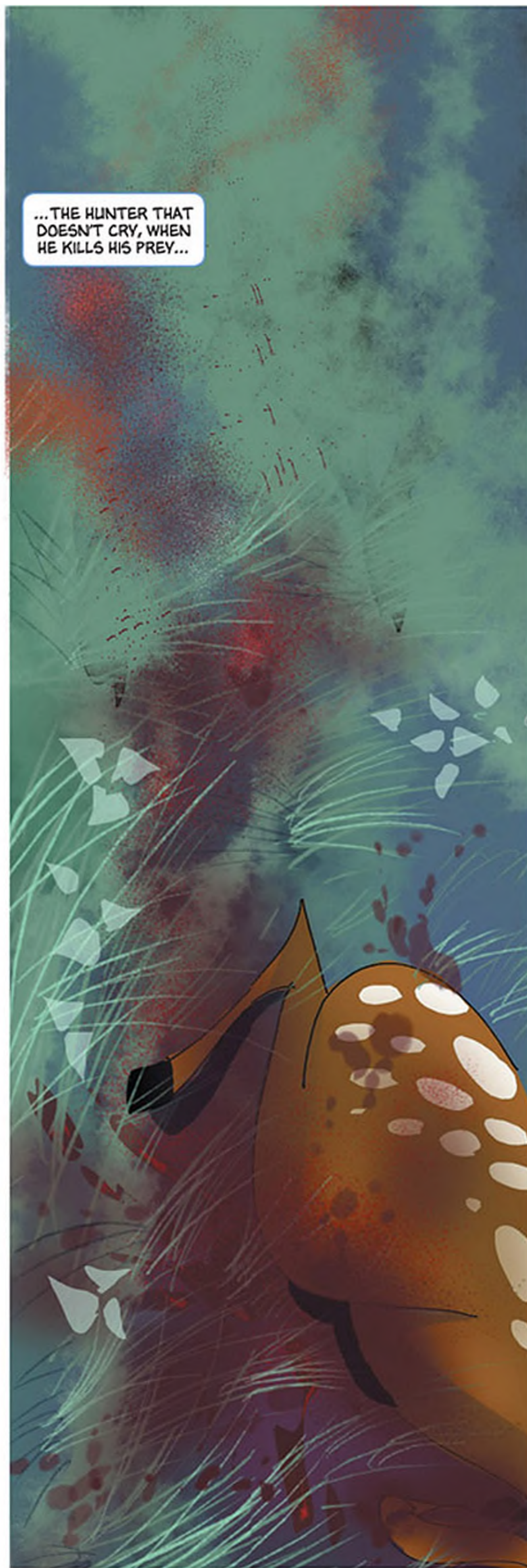




...BE LIKE THE TREE THAT DOES NOT MOURN THE FALLING OF THE AUTUMN LEAF.



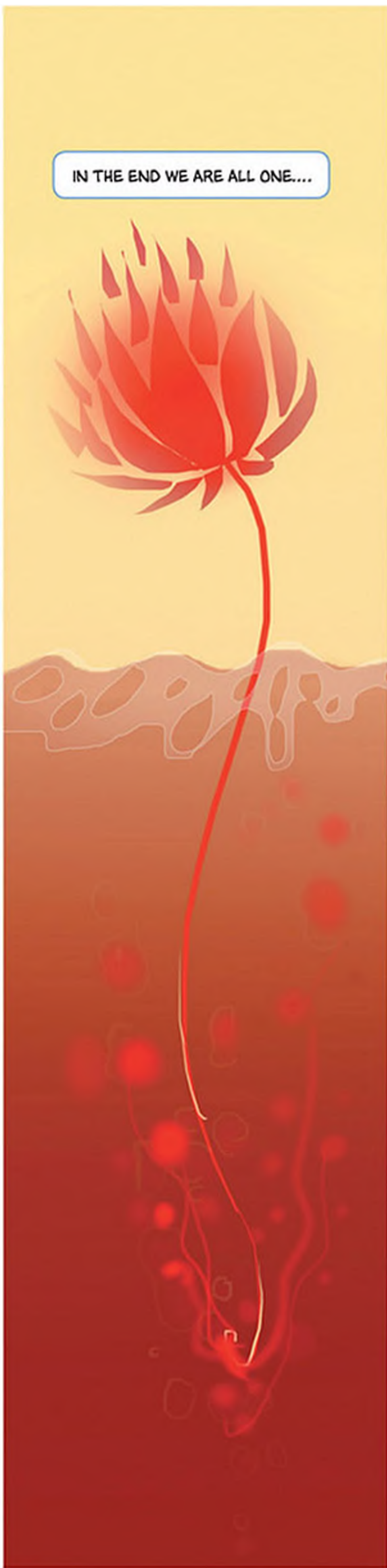
BE LIKE...



... THE HUNTER THAT DOESN'T CRY, WHEN HE KILLS HIS PREY...



...OR THE WARRIOR THAT DOESN'T SHOW FEAR, WHEN FACING BATTLE.



IN THE END WE ARE ALL ONE...





...LIKE WE WERE IN THE BEGINNING.

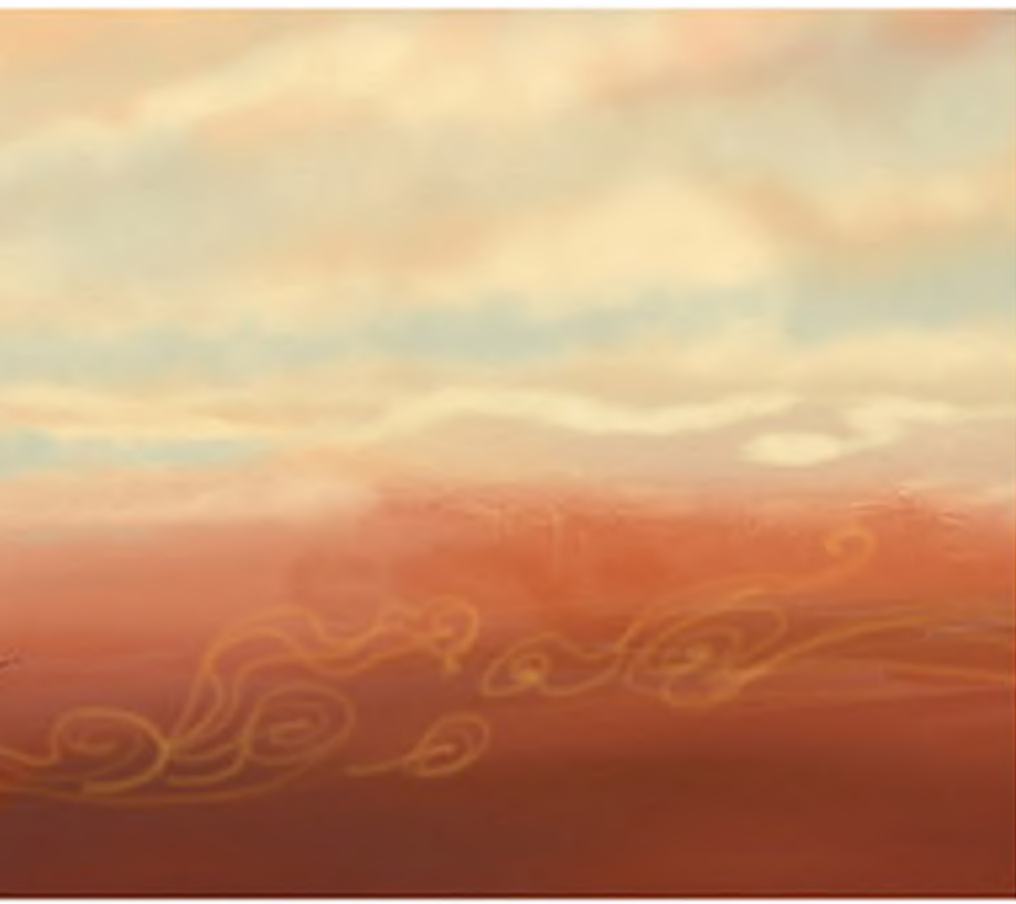


WHAT IS LIFE THEN KRISHNA?


WHAT IS ITS PURPOSE?











CLOSE YOUR EYES.  
BREATHE EASY.  
LOOK WITHIN.

THE FAINT FLICKERING  
LIGHT YOU SEE BEING ENVELOPED  
BY GROWING LOOMING DARKNESS,  
IS YOUR SPIRIT BEING SHACKLED  
BY IGNORANCE.

FIGHT IT.









THIS SHAKTI INSIDE YOU IS  
TRANSCENDENTAL ENERGY,  
ALSO KNOWN AS ATMAN.\*

NEITHER CREATED  
NOR DESTROYED...

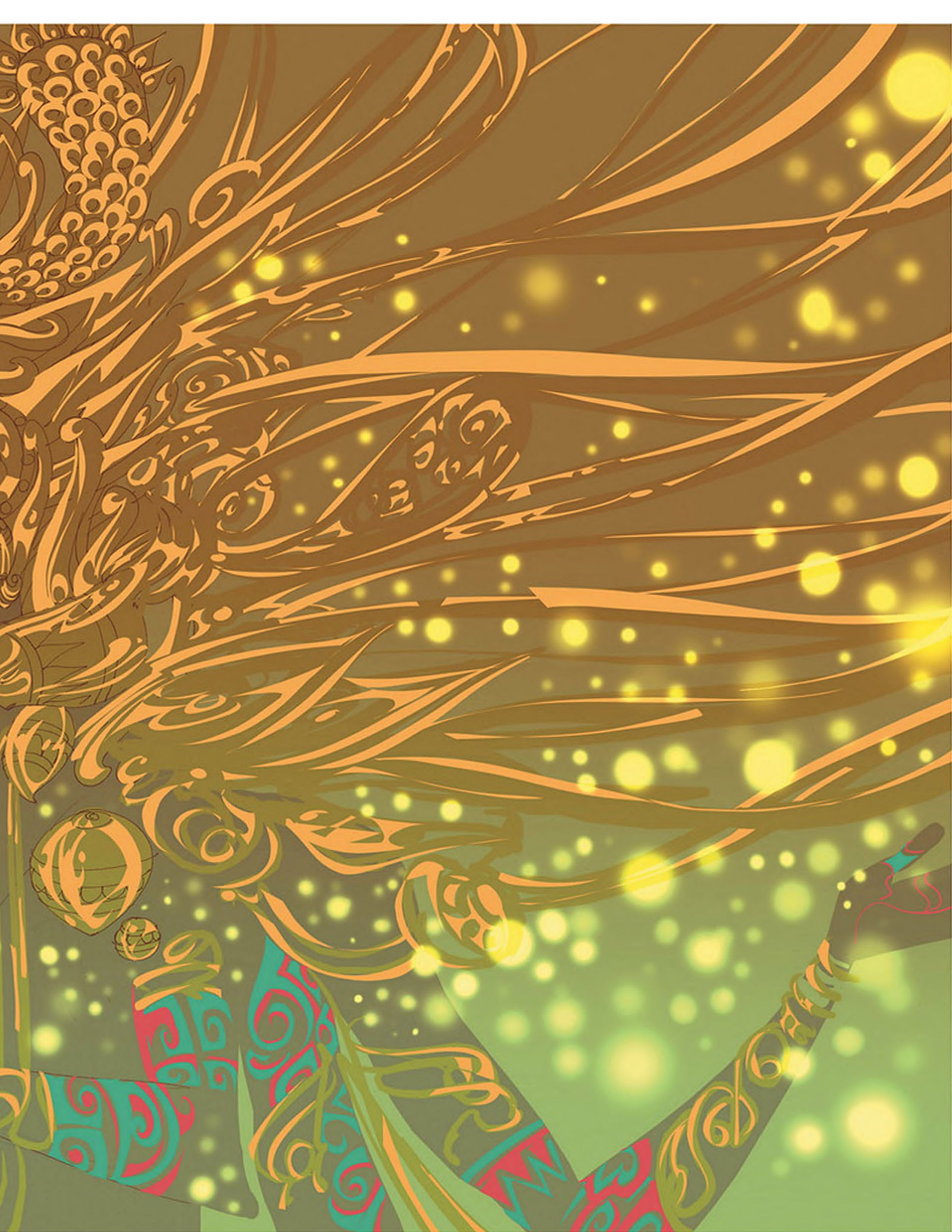
...IT PERMEATES THROUGH  
EVERY ATOM IN EXISTENCE...

...CYCLING THROUGH MANY  
BODIES IN ITS SEARCH  
FOR THE PARAMATMAN.\*

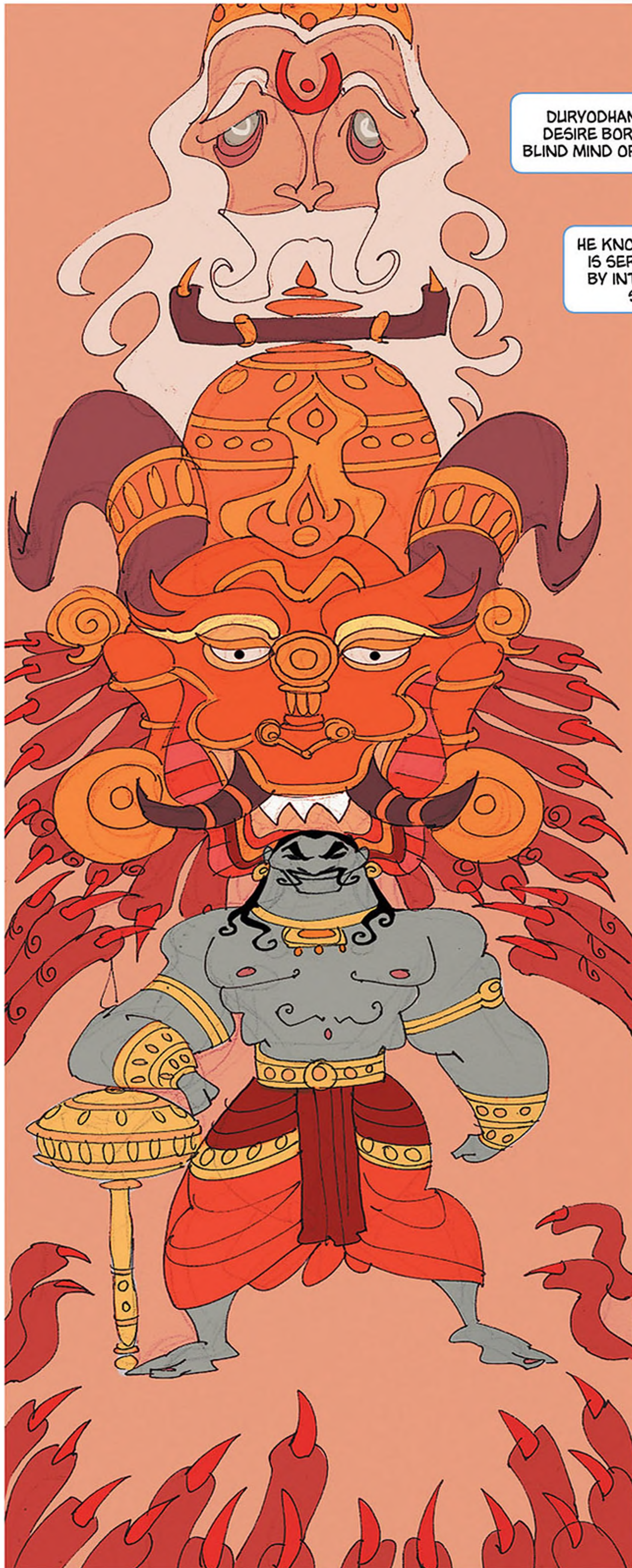
WHEN YOU ARE ABLE  
TO OPEN YOUR MIND  
AND SEE THIS SHAKTI...

...YOU WILL NOT  
AGONIZE OVER DEATH.









DURYODHANA IS MATERIAL  
DESIRE BORNE OUT OF THE  
BLIND MIND OF DHRITARASHTRA.

HE KNOWS THAT HIS KINGDOM  
IS SERIOUSLY THREATENED  
BY INTELLIGENCE... BY THE  
SONS OF PANDU.



BHEESHMA IS THE EGO,  
THE PALE SHADOW  
OF THE ATMAN.





DRONA IS HABIT.

KARNA IS ATTACHMENT...

...ATTACHMENT TO DESIRE.



YUDHISTHIRA AS ETHER EXCLUDES DIVINE CALM.

BHEEM AS AIR LINKS BODY AND SOUL.

SAHDEV AS EARTH IS FIRM.

NAKUL AS WATER IS FLUID...

...AND YOU, ARJUNA, ARE FIRE.





I AM PARAMATMAN...

... THE SUPREME  
CONSCIOUSNESS  
INTO WHICH THE ATMAN  
SEEKS SALVATION.

I'VE JOURNEYED SEVERAL  
TIMES THROUGH THIS  
MATERIAL UNIVERSE.

THROUGH ME THE WORLD  
HAS EVOLVED AND INTO  
ME IT WILL DISSOLVE.





MY FIRST AVATAR\* WAS MATSYA, THE GIANT FISH, WHO SAVED MAN FROM THE BIG FLOOD.



THEN I WAS KURMA, THE COSMIC TURTLE, ON WHOSE BACK THE OCEAN WAS CHURNED.

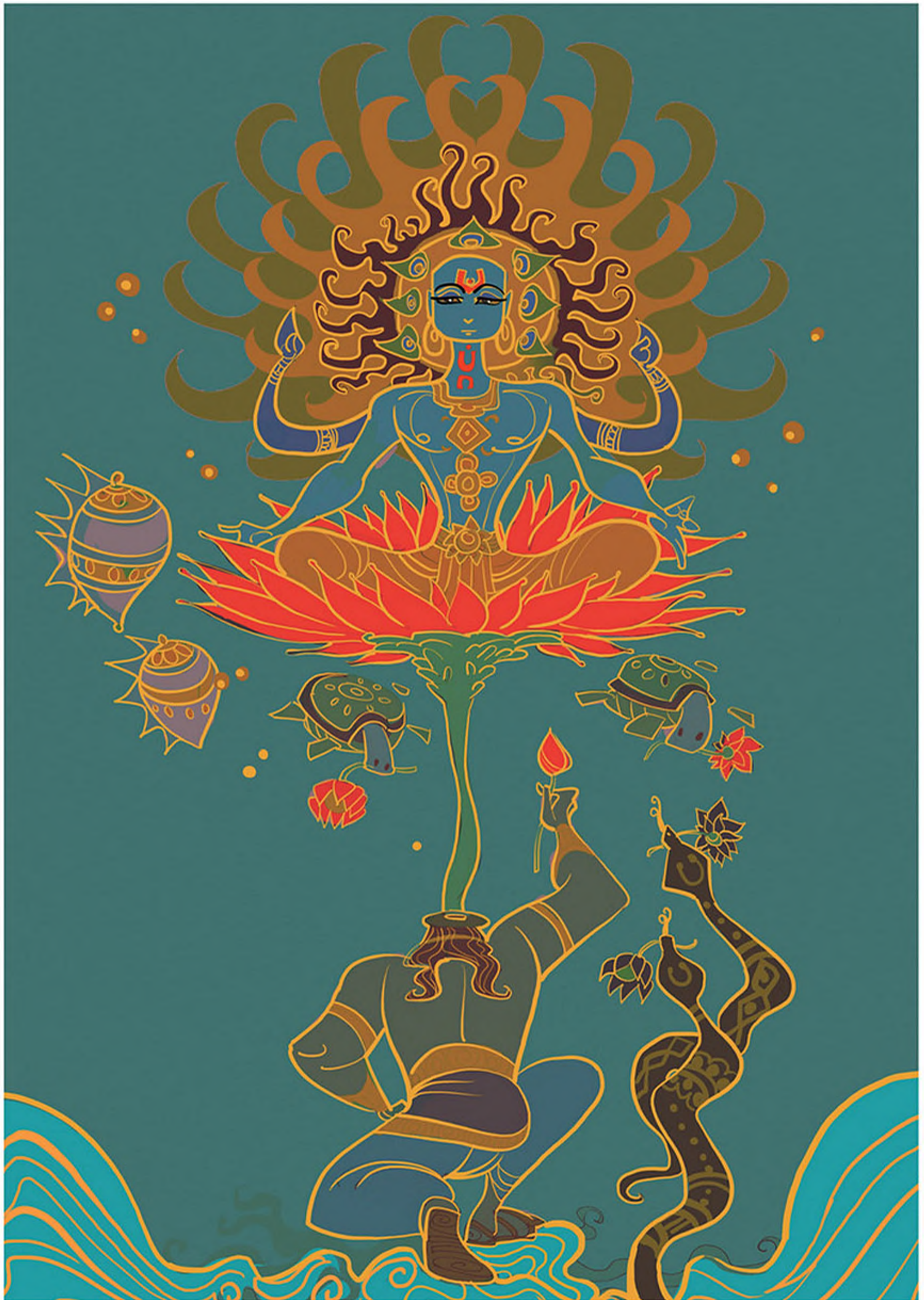


AS VARAHA, THE WILD BOAR, I SLAYED THE DEMON HIRANYAKSHA AND BROUGHT EARTH BACK TO ITS ORBIT ON MY TUSKS.

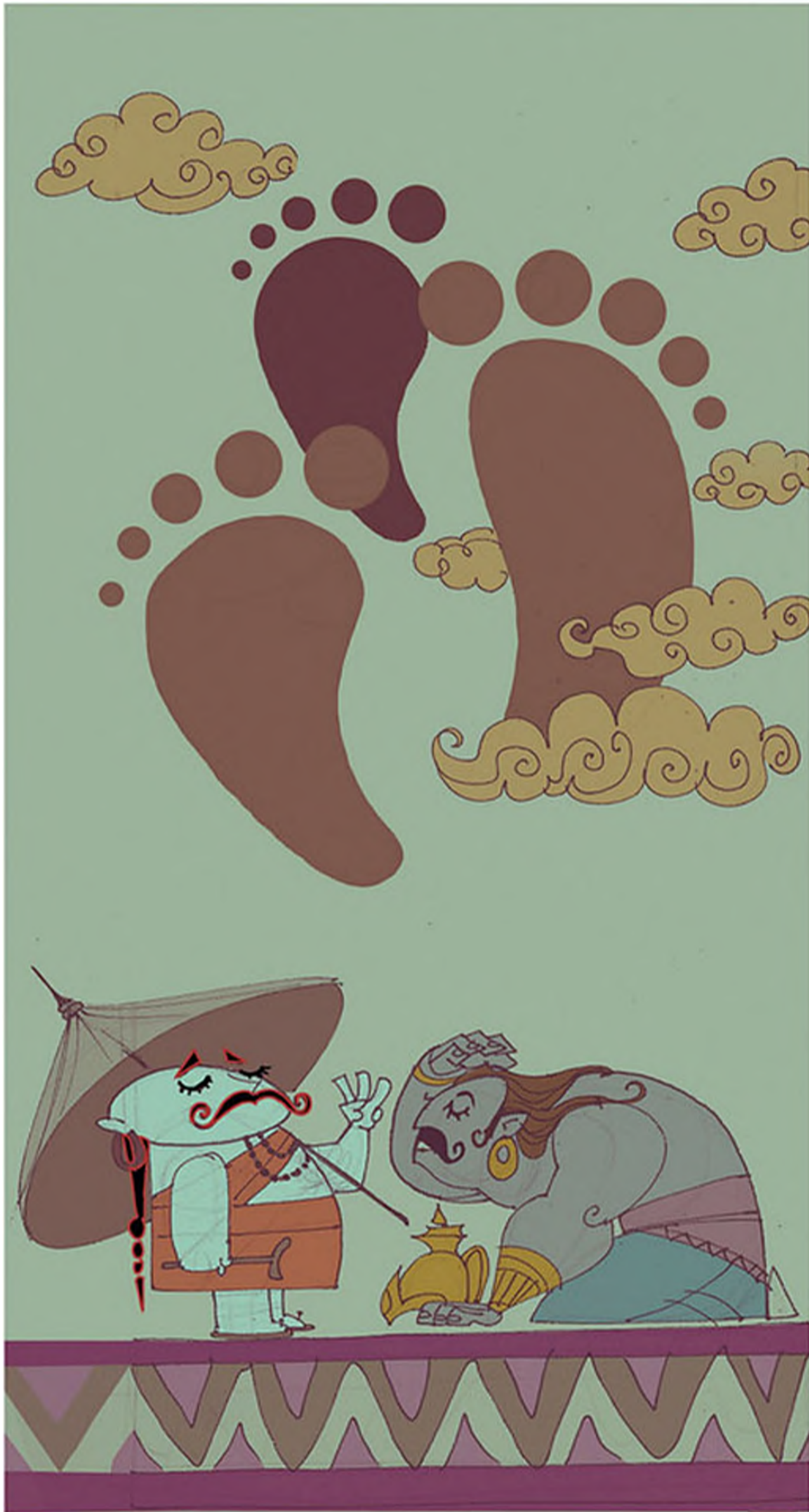


AS NARASIMHA, THE COMPASSIONATE PROTECTOR, I STOPPED THE TYRANNY OF THE DEMON HIRANYAKASHIPI.









I MEASURED THE THREE  
LOKAS IN THREE STEPS  
AS VAMANA, THE DWARF.



I BECAME THE FIRST  
MARTIAL ASCETIC  
AS PARASHURAMA.





AS RAMA THE WARRIOR PRINCE, YOUR ANCESTOR, I RID TIME OF THE DARKNESS OF RAVANA...





...AND NOW I'M HERE  
AS THE EIGHTH EPOCH.

I'M HERE TO  
RESTORE DHARMA.





I WILL COME  
AGAIN IN THE FUTURE  
AS BUDDHA...



...AND FINALLY  
AS KALKI THE  
DESTROYER.



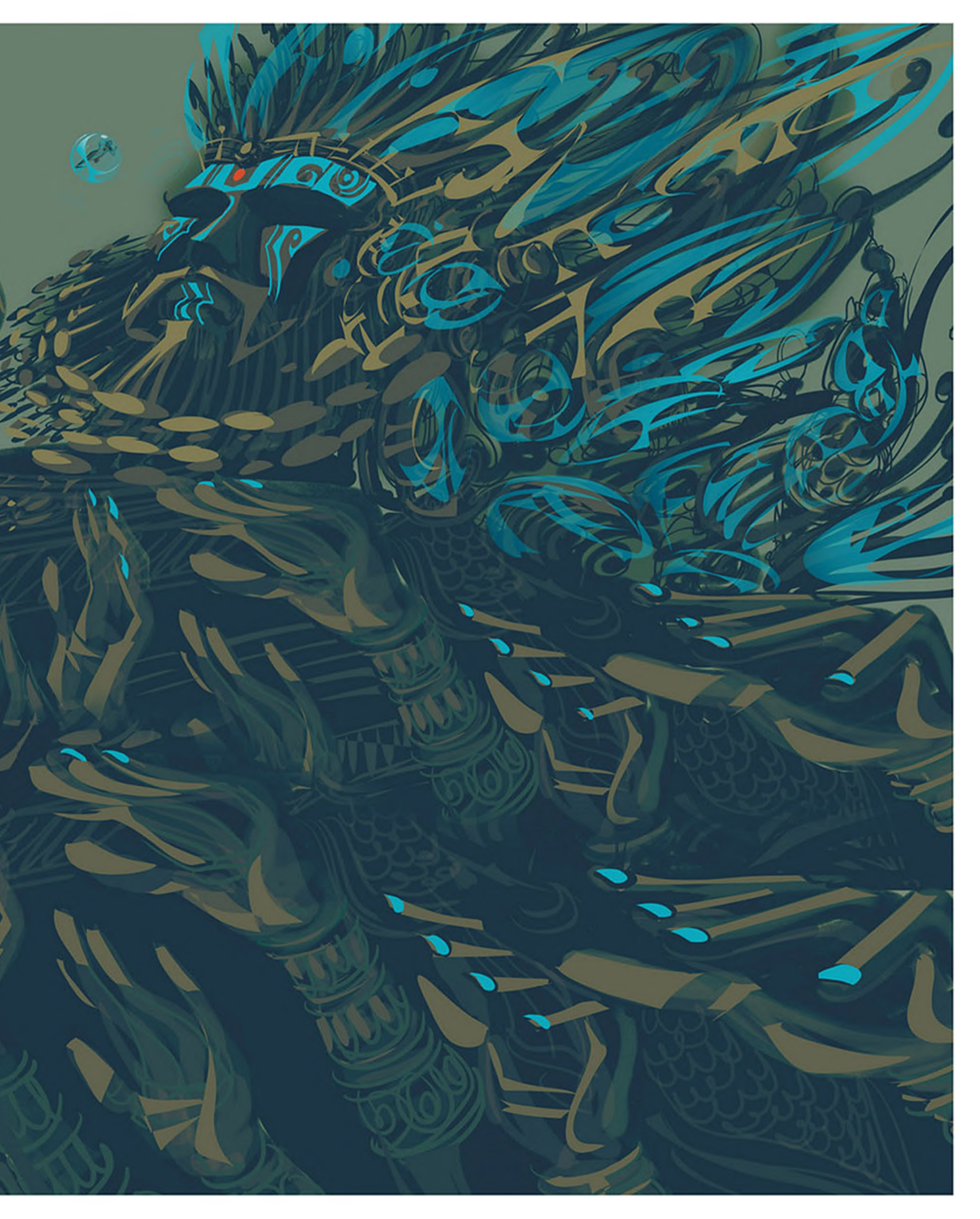


I AM FORMLESS  
AND I AM FORM.

I AM INFINITE  
AND I AM SHUNYA.\*

I AM THE CREATOR  
AND I AM HIS CREATION.







OM\* IS THE COSMIC  
SOUND OF MY BREATH,  
WHICH CAUSES CREATION.

I MANIFEST...

...PRAKRITI.\*

...MAYA.\*







...MAHABHUTAS.\*

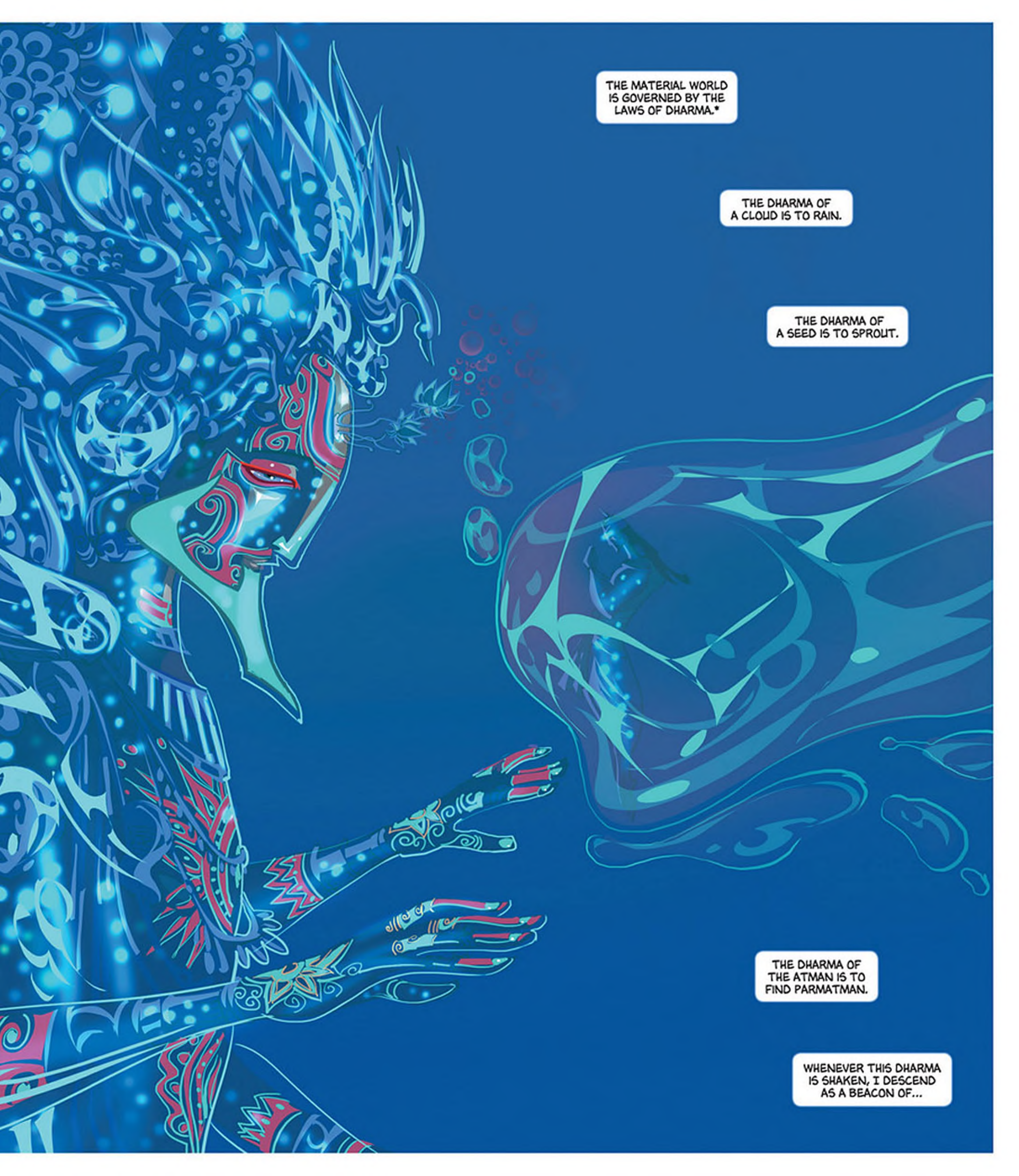
...JIVA.\*

...TRIGUNA.\*









THE MATERIAL WORLD  
IS GOVERNED BY THE  
LAWS OF DHARMA.\*

THE DHARMA OF  
A CLOUD IS TO RAIN.

THE DHARMA OF  
A SEED IS TO SPROUT.

THE DHARMA OF  
THE ATMAN IS TO  
FIND PARAMTMAN.

WHENEVER THIS DHARMA  
IS SHAKEN, I DESCEND  
AS A BEACON OF...





...HOPE.



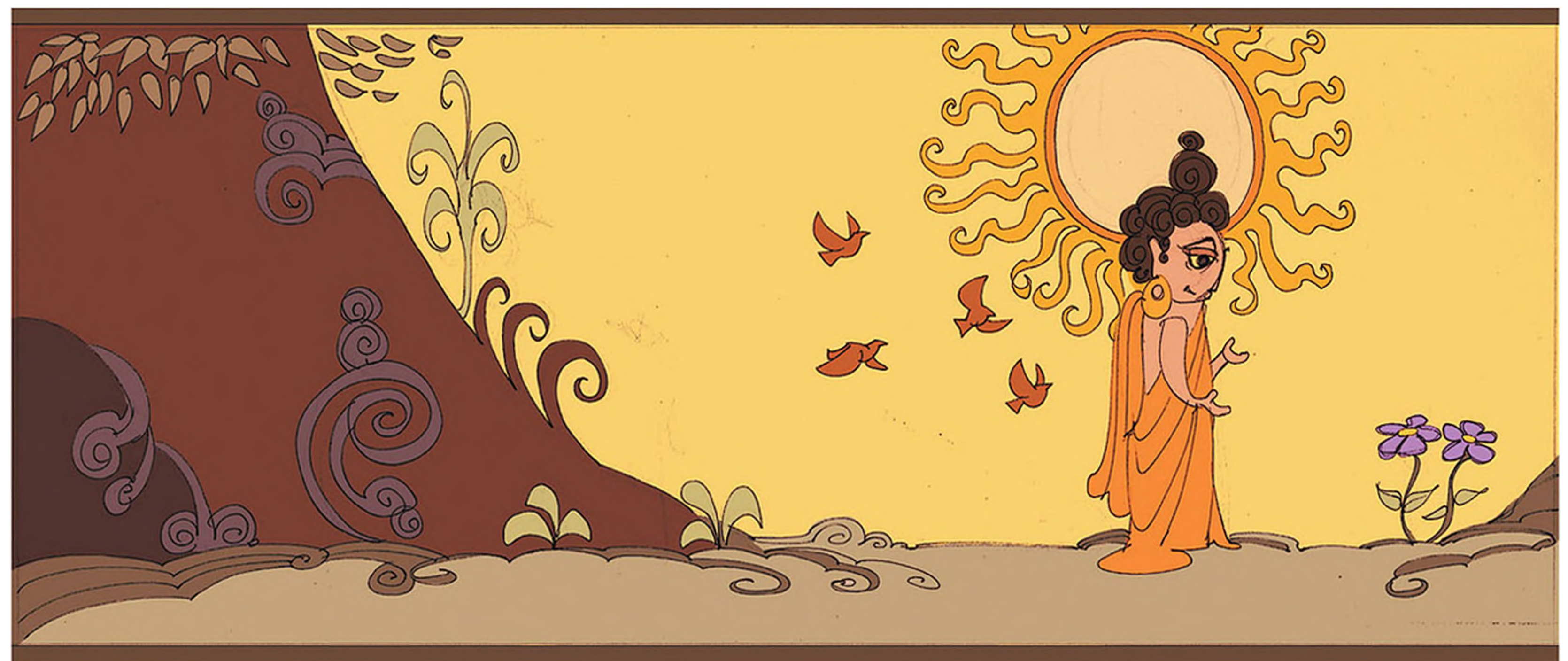










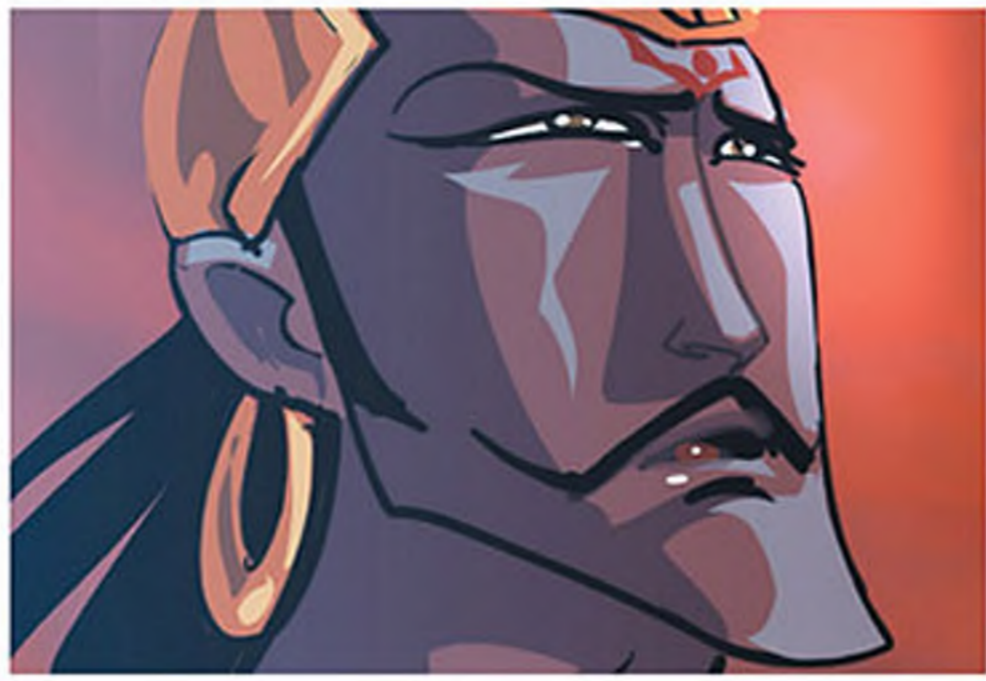




HOPE.







MY MIND IS OPEN...  
I AM READY.









AND NOW WHEN HIS ANXIETY WAS GONE...

...WE DOVE INTO BATTLE...

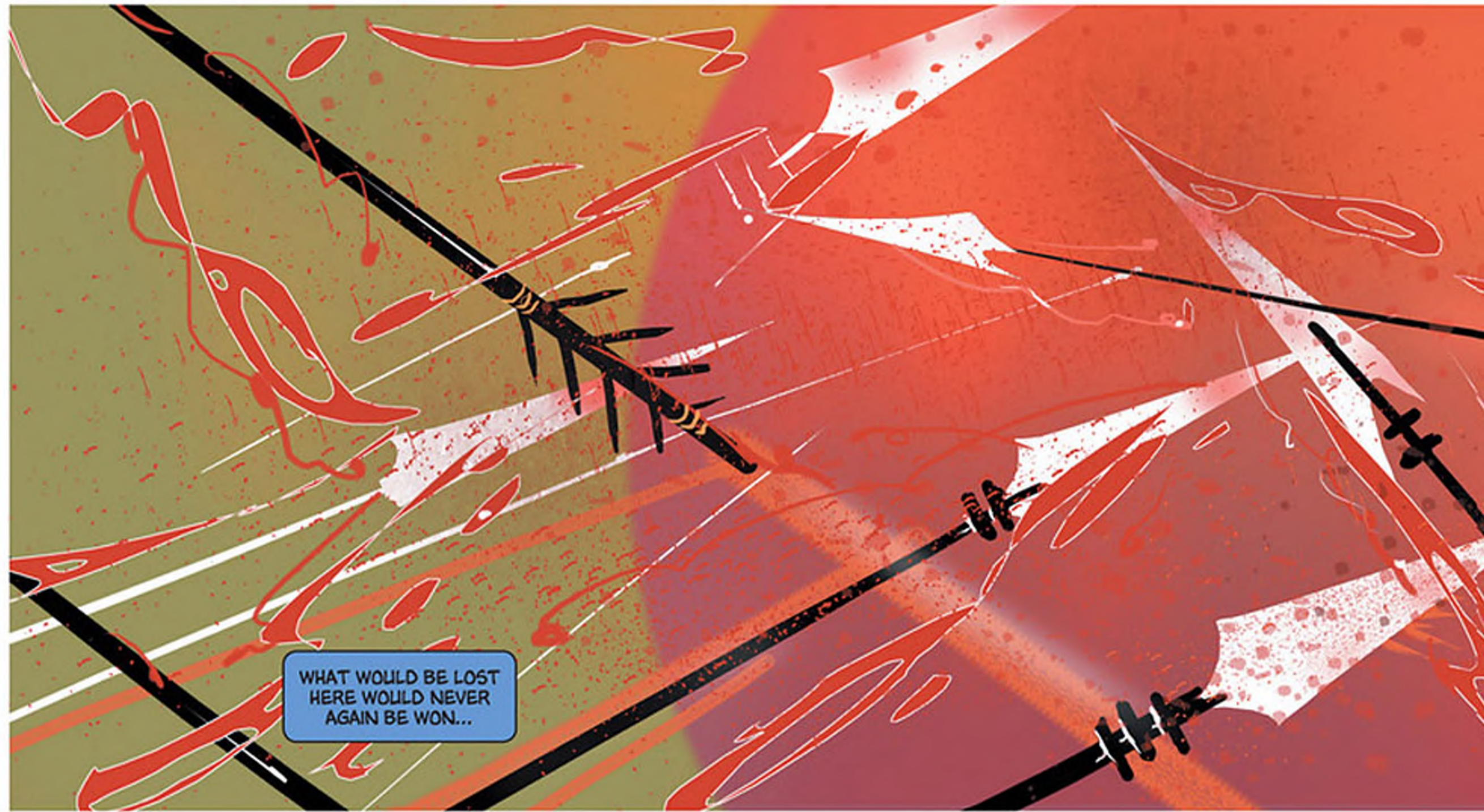
...**MAHABHARATA**  
THE GREAT WAR.



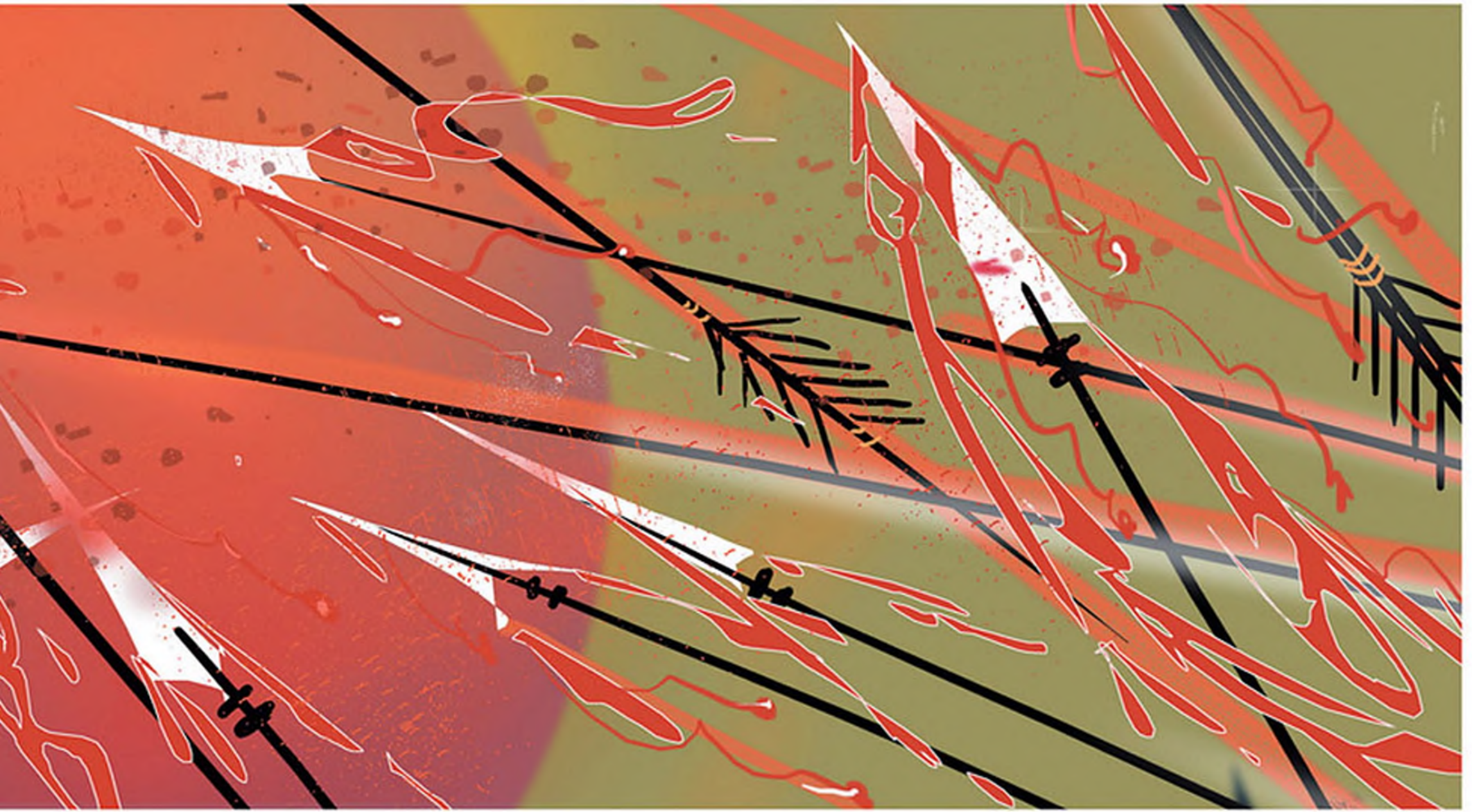








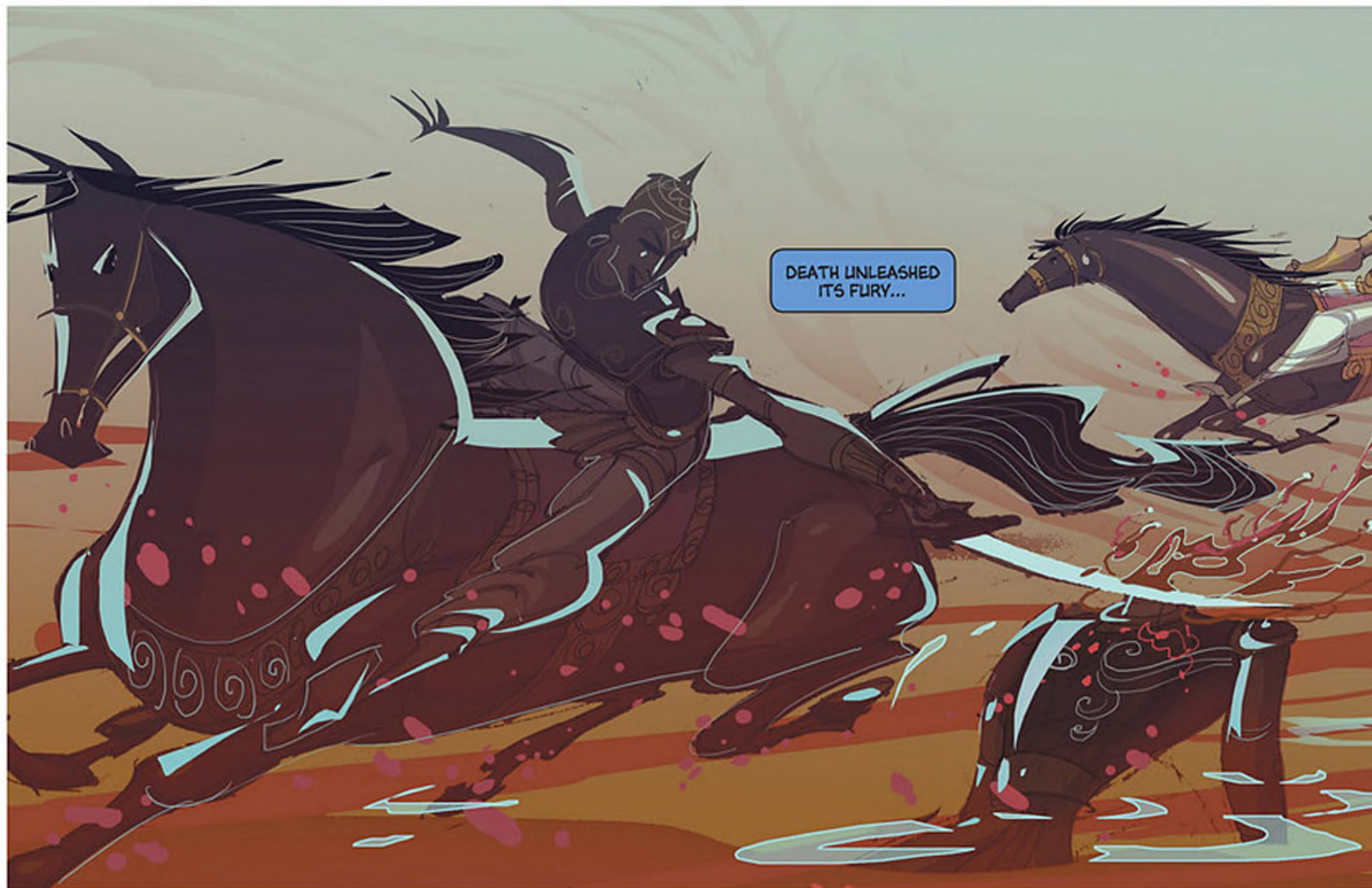




...AND WHAT WOULD BE WON HERE  
WOULD NEVER AGAIN BE LOST.







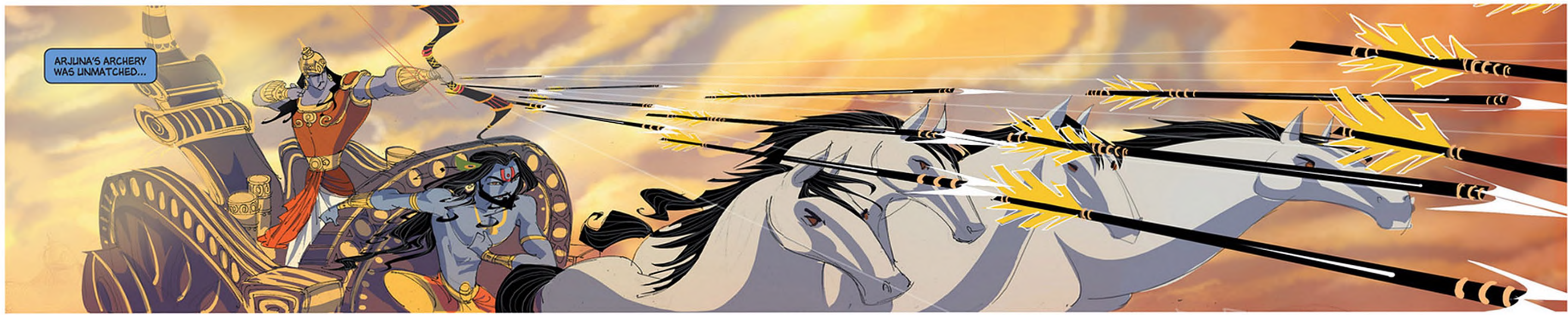
DEATH UNLEASHED  
ITS FURY...



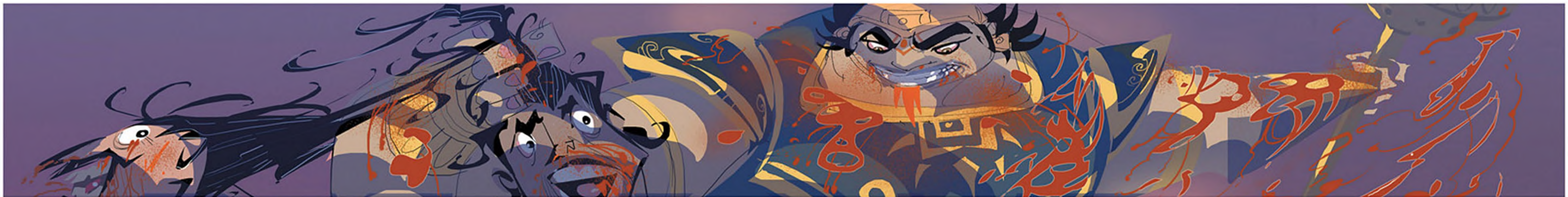
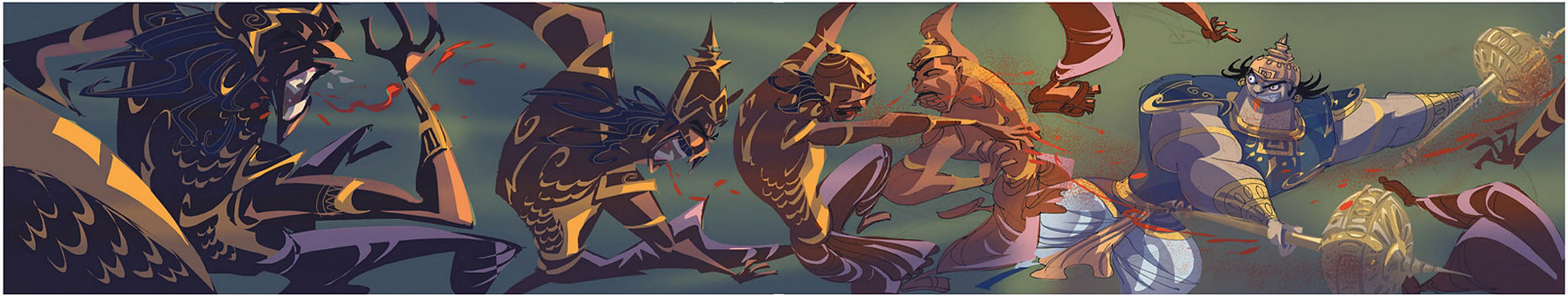






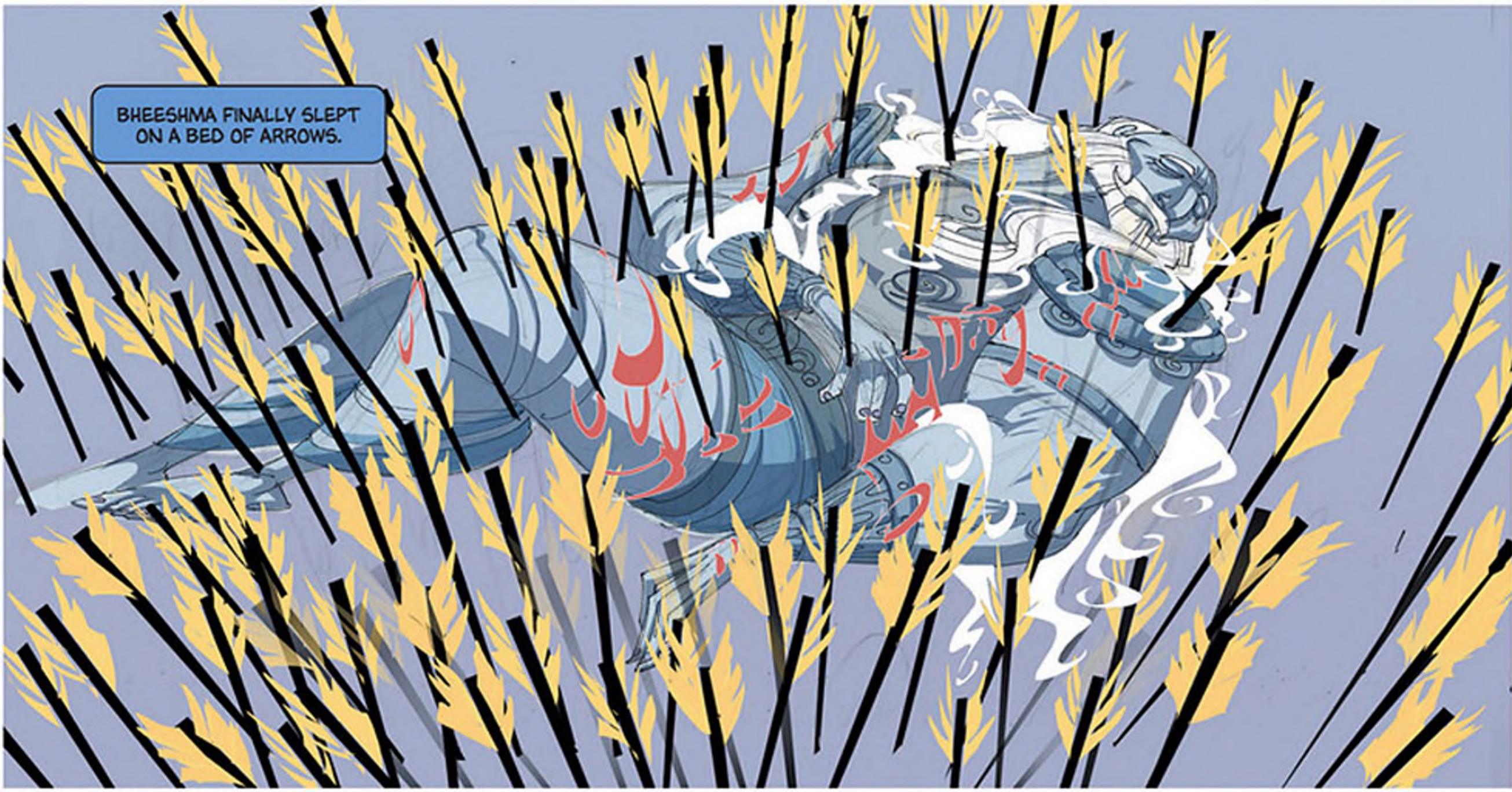








BHEESHMA FINALLY SLEPT ON A BED OF ARROWS.



DRONA WAS TRICKED INTO DEATH...







...JUST AS HE HAD TRICKED ABHIMANYU, ARJUNA'S SON.



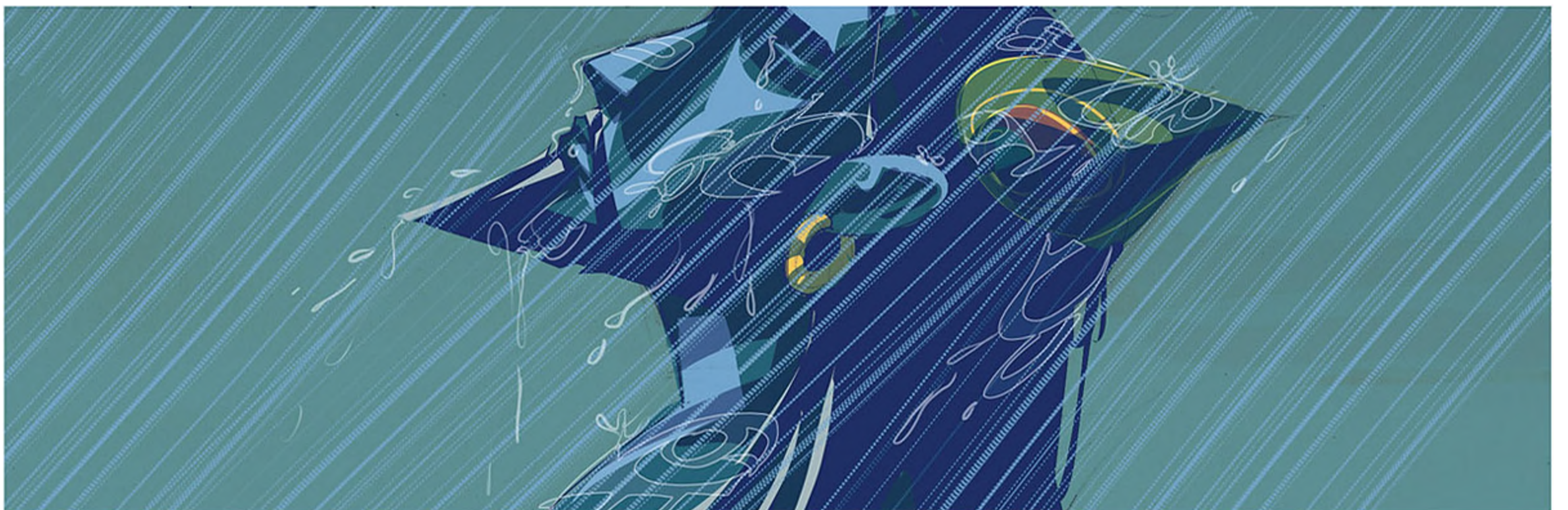
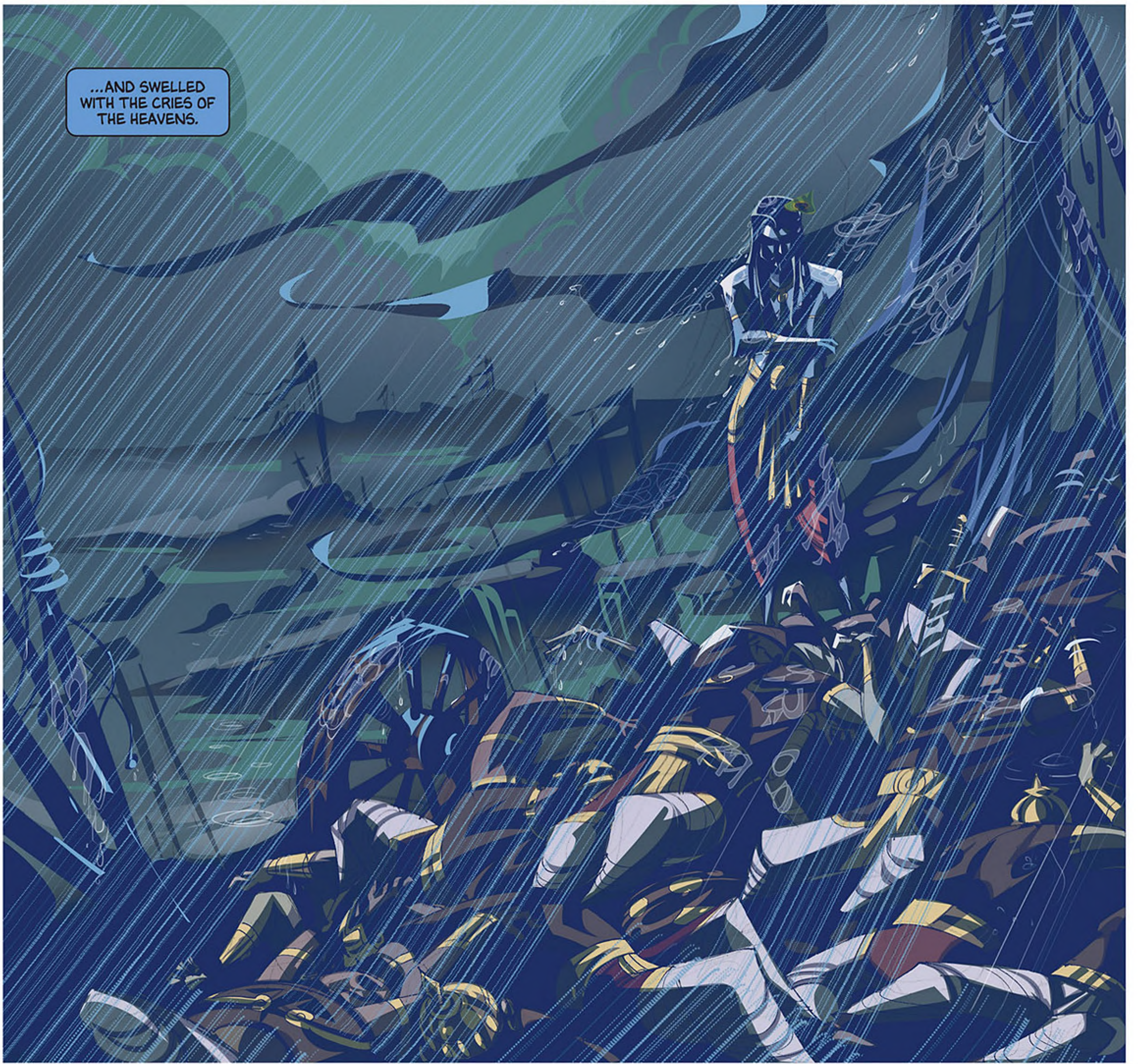
DRAUPADI WAS AVENGED WHEN BHEEM RIPPED OUT DUSHASANA'S ARMS.



RIVERS OF BLOOD FLOWED...



...AND SWELLED  
WITH THE CRIES OF  
THE HEAVENS.







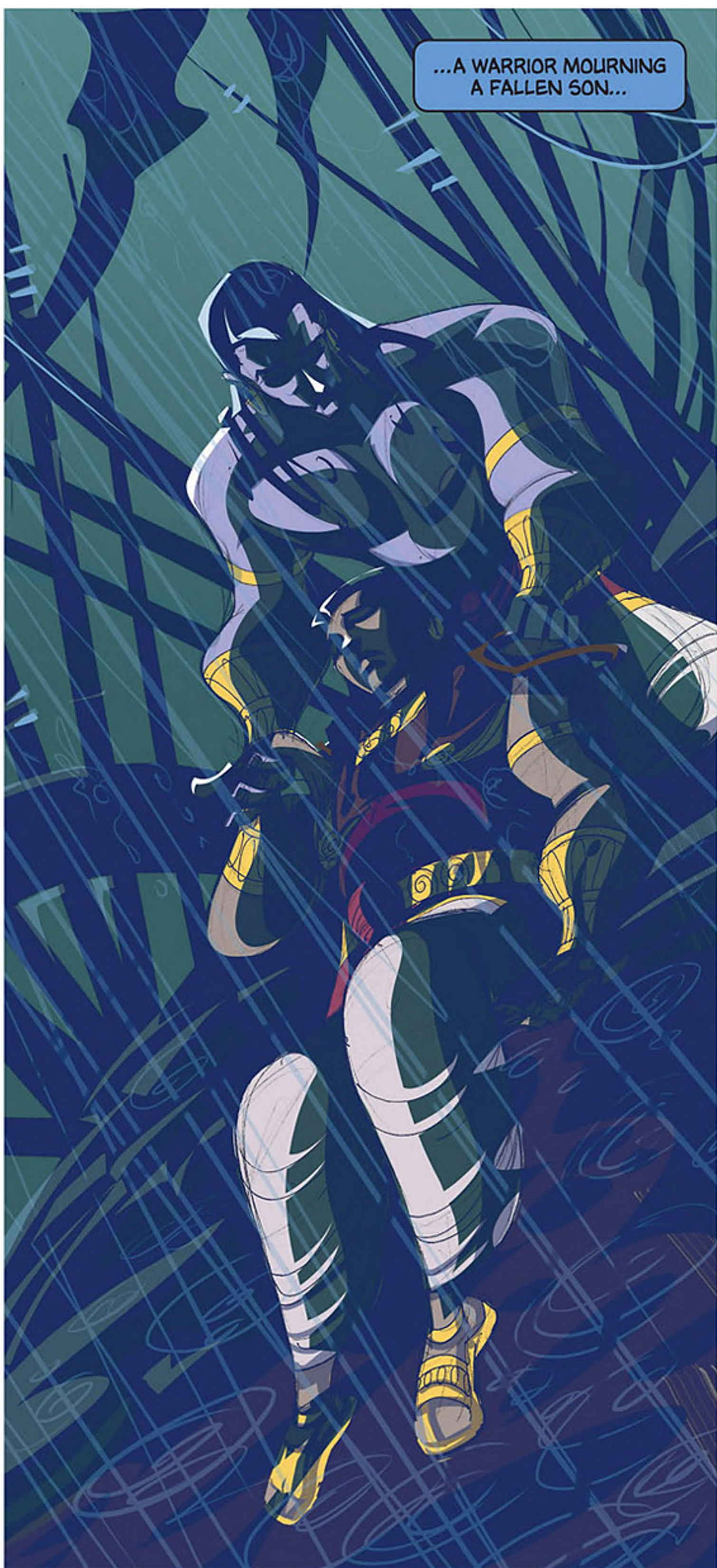
THE RAIN DID NOT MAKE  
ANY DISTINCTION...



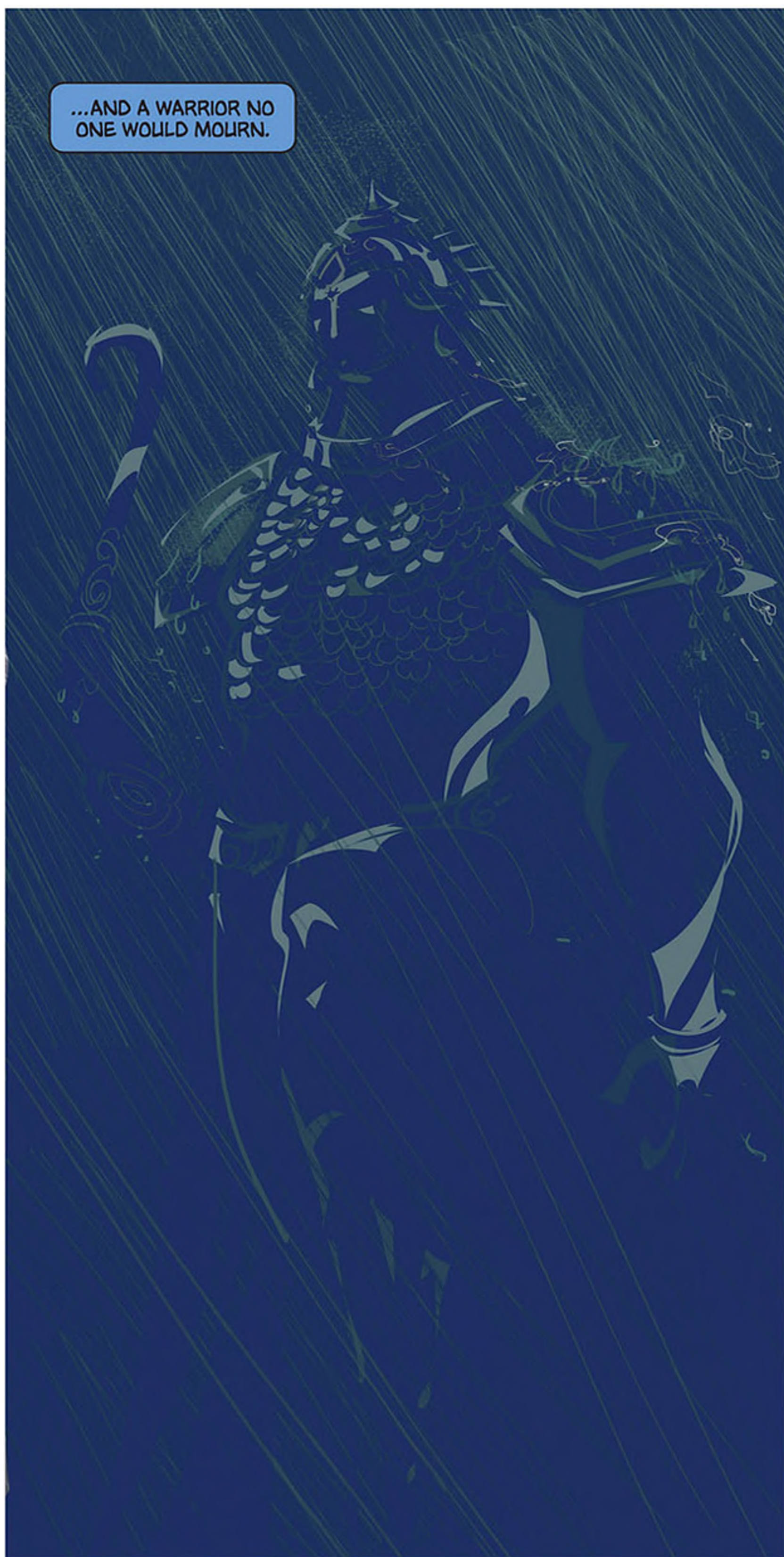
...IT SHOWED  
NO FAVOR...

...DRENCHING  
EQUALLY...



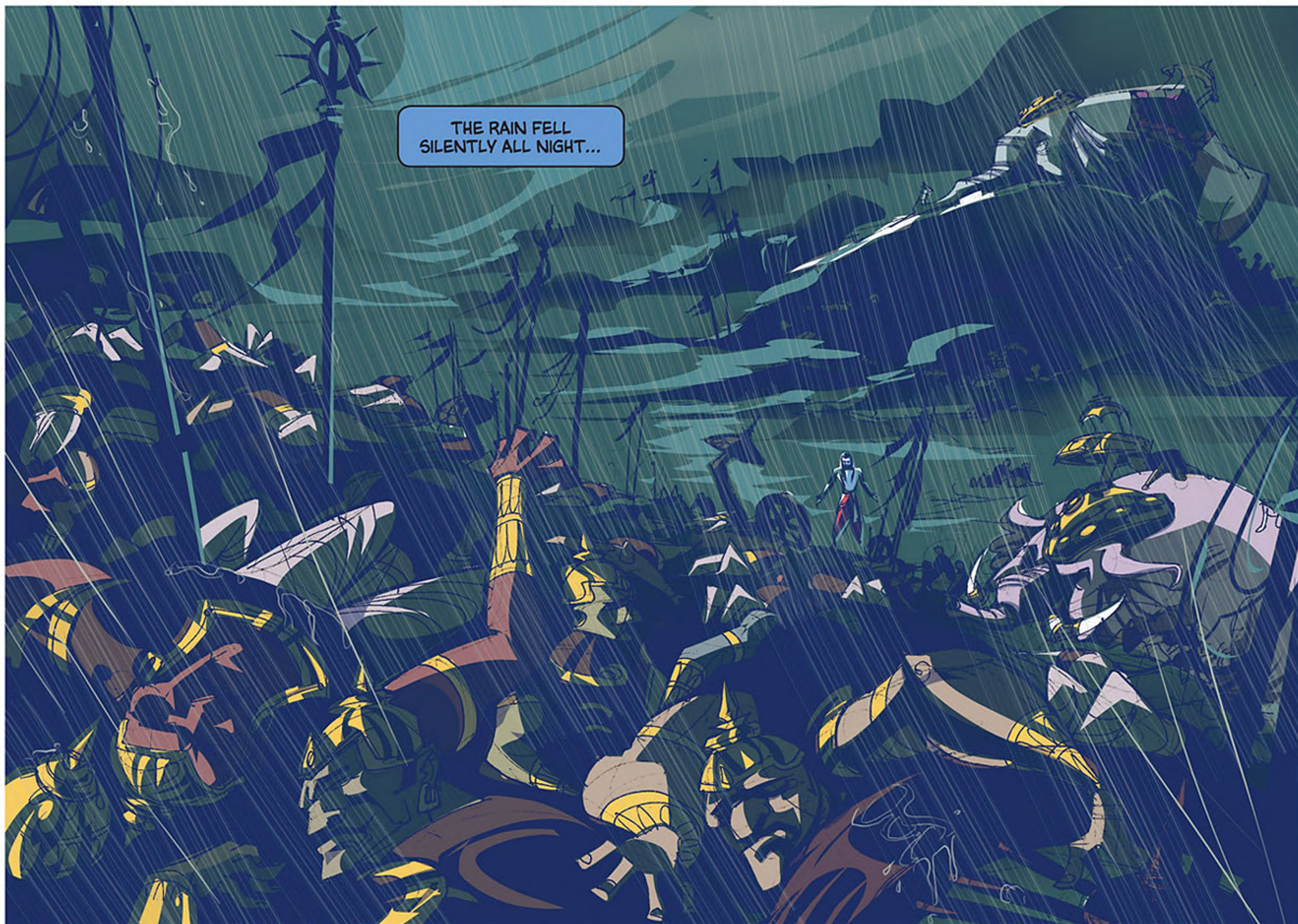


...A WARRIOR MOURNING  
A FALLEN SON...

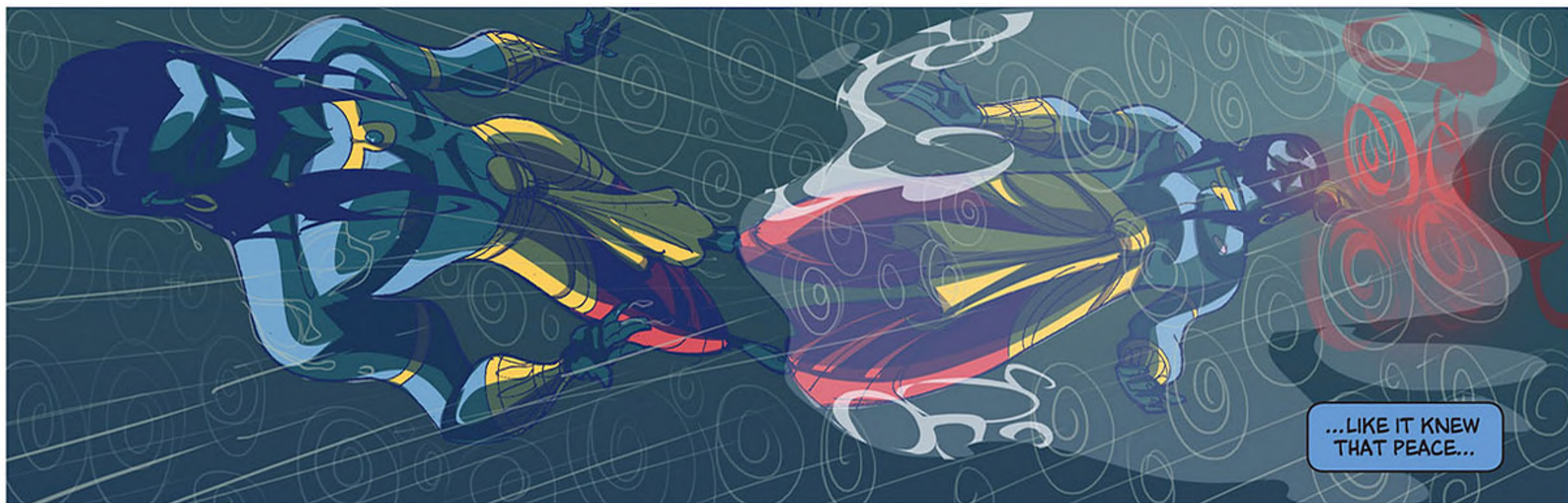


...AND A WARRIOR NO  
ONE WOULD MOURN.

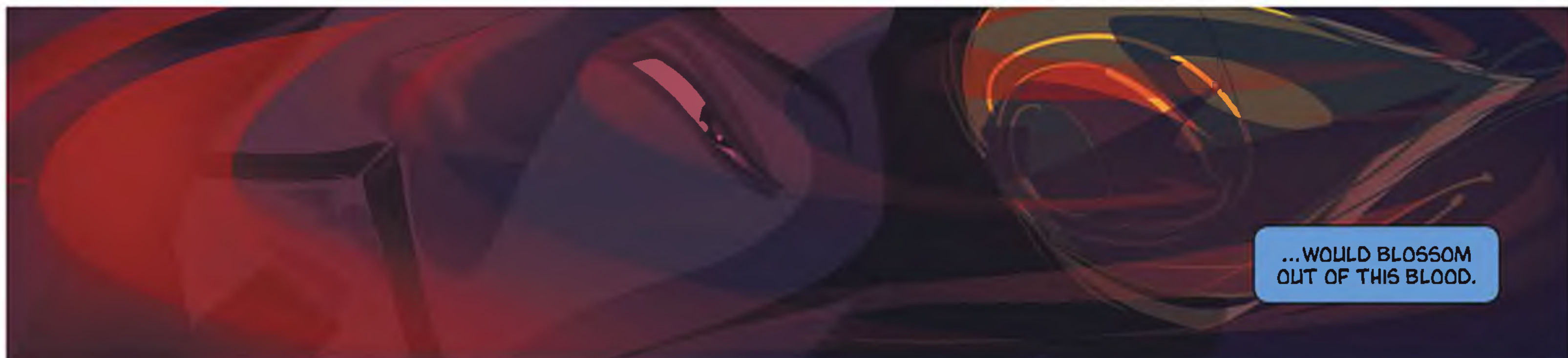




THE RAIN FELL  
SILENTLY ALL NIGHT...



...LIKE IT KNEW  
THAT PEACE...



... WOULD BLOSSOM  
OUT OF THIS BLOOD.











KARNA HAD LIVED HIS LIFE ALONE, MORE ALONE THAN MOST.

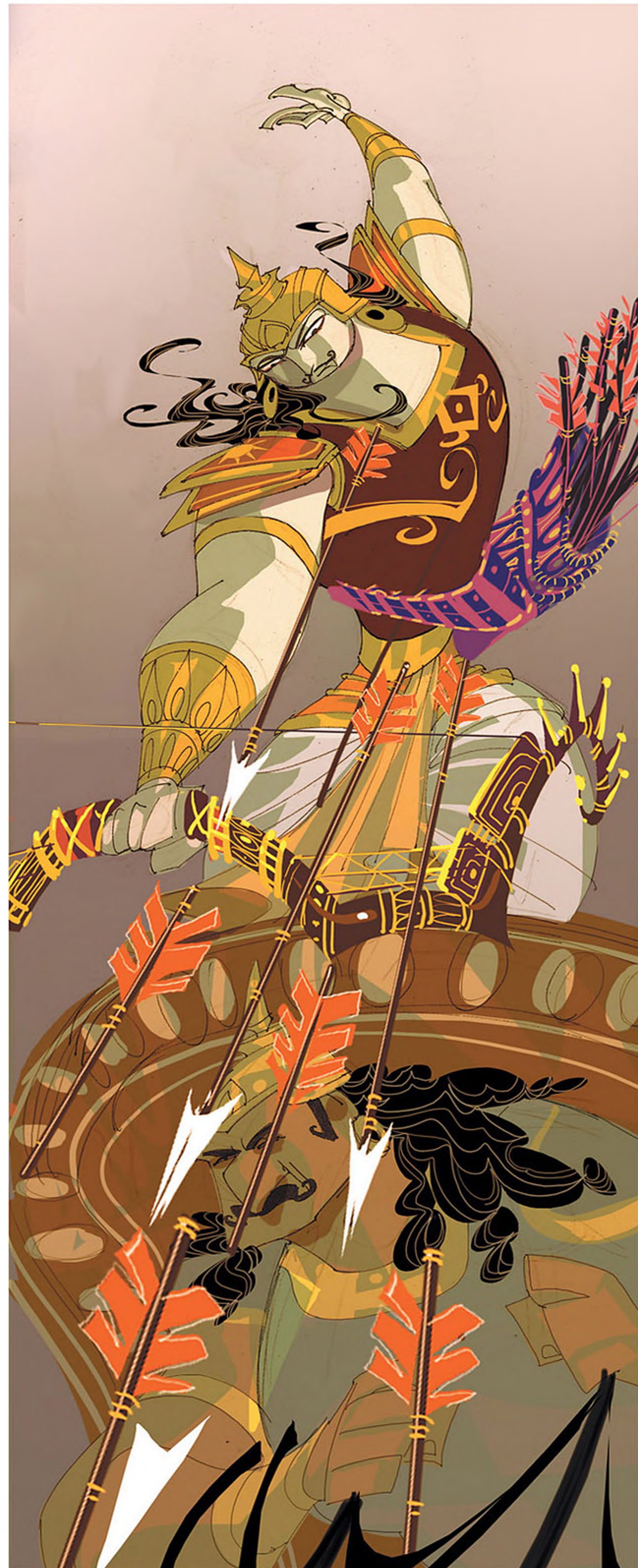
HE KNEW HE WAS ARJUNA'S BROTHER.



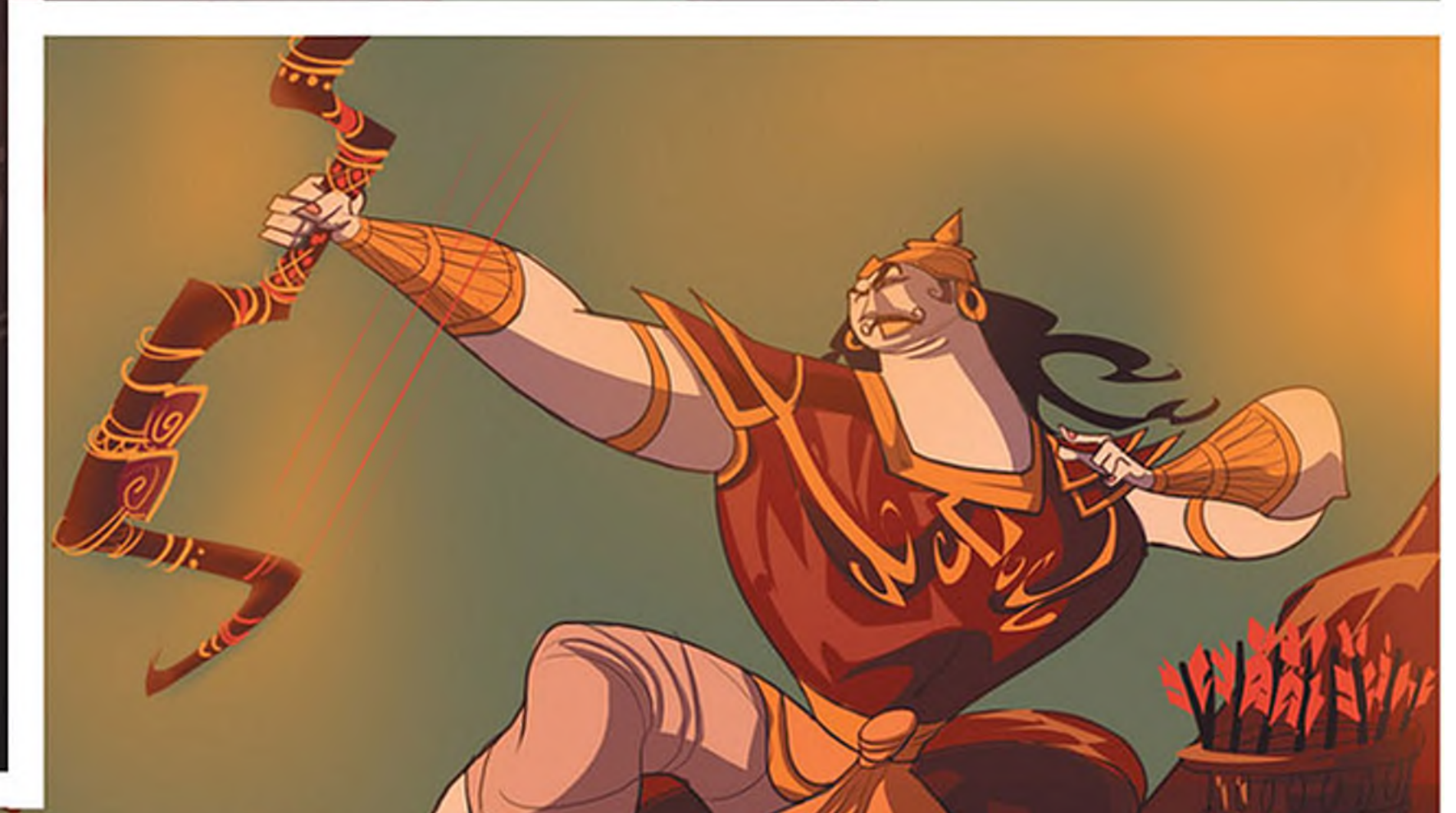
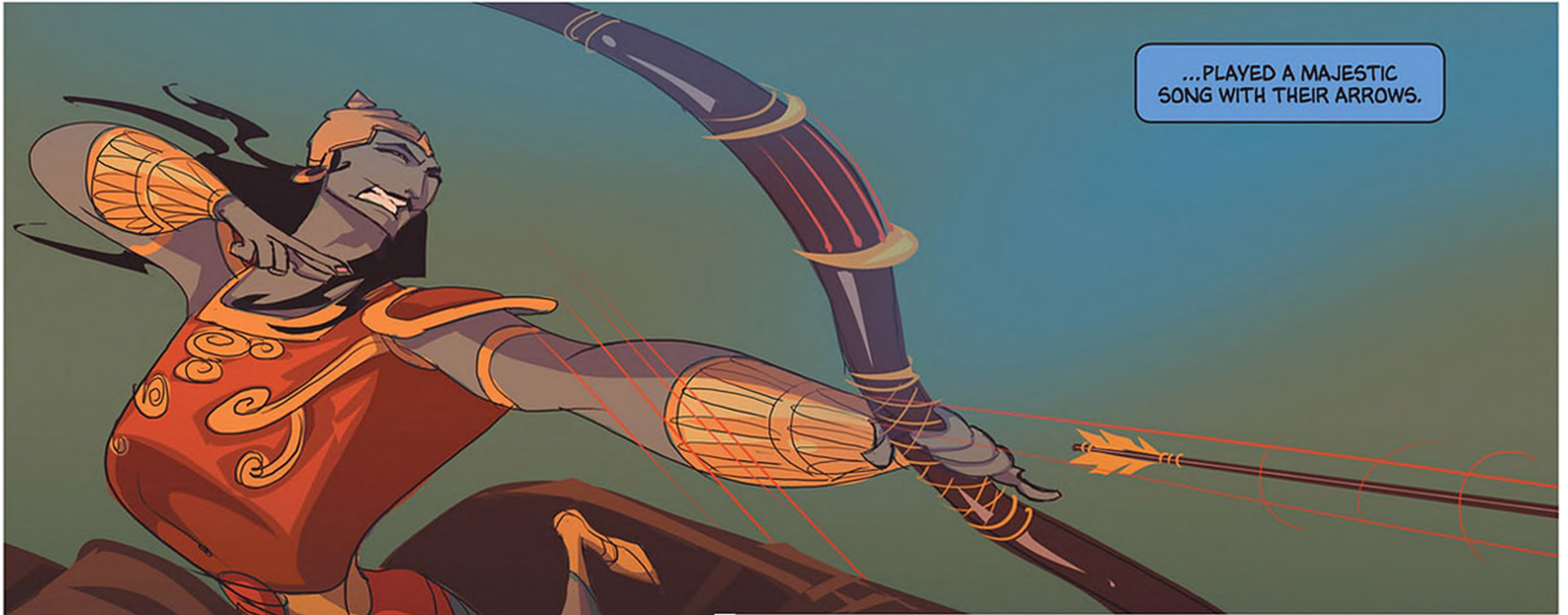
ABANDONED AT BIRTH BY AN ASHAMED MOTHER...

...HIS HEART WAS NOT REALLY IN THIS FIGHT, YET HE LIVED UP TO HIS REPUTATION.











THEY MIRRORED  
EACH OTHER.







THEY FOUGHT LIKE GODS.

KARNA KNEW THAT ONLY ARJUNA COULD HAVE MATCHED HIM IN BATTLE.

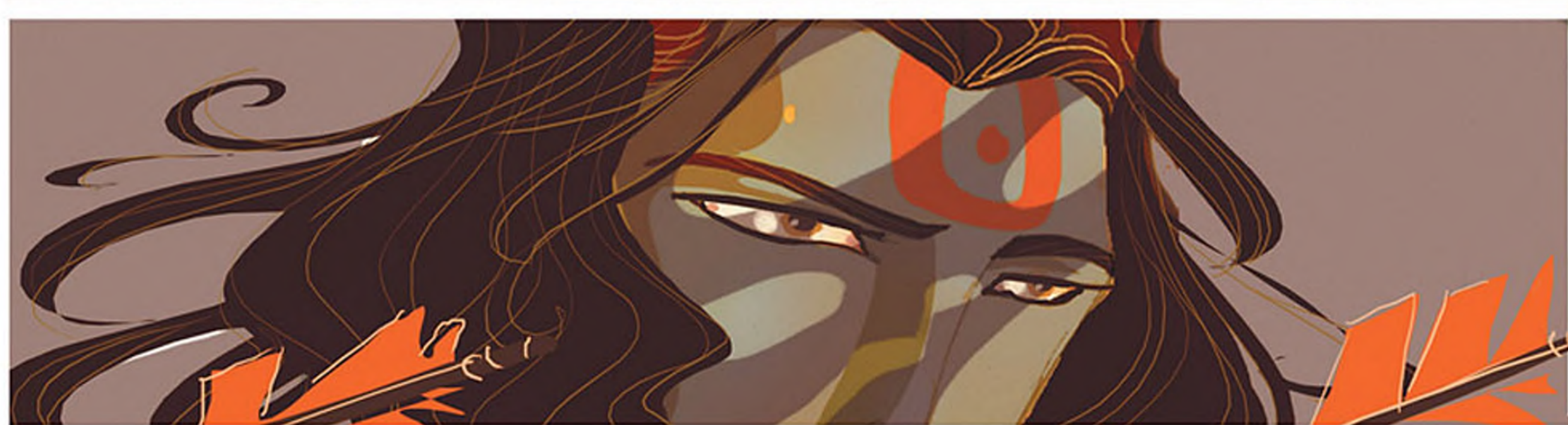
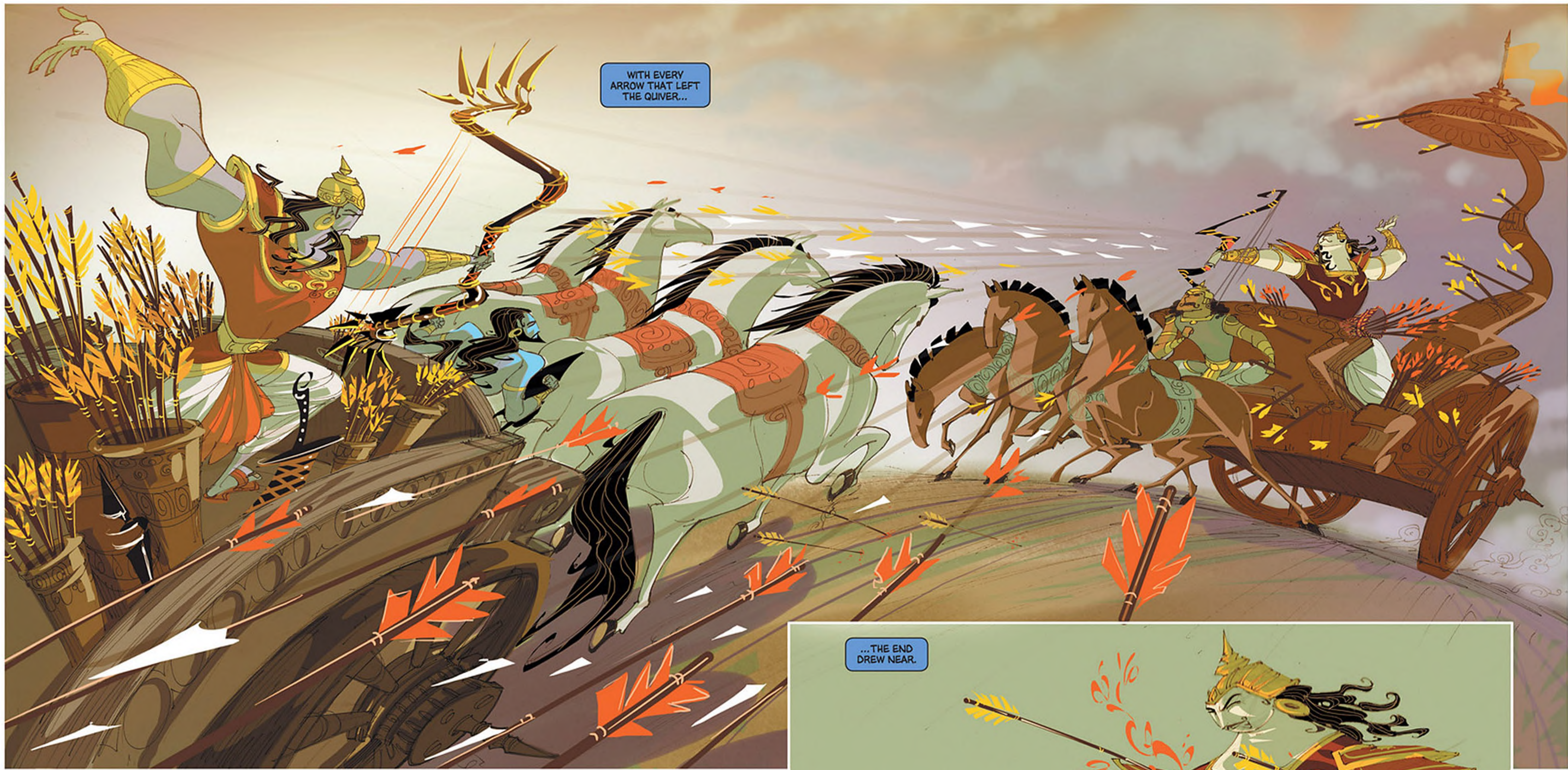


EVEN THOUGH HE FOUGHT WITHOUT HIS DIVINE ARMOR THAT DAY...



...HE WAS STILL ABLE TO PIERCE ARJUNA'S GUARD.

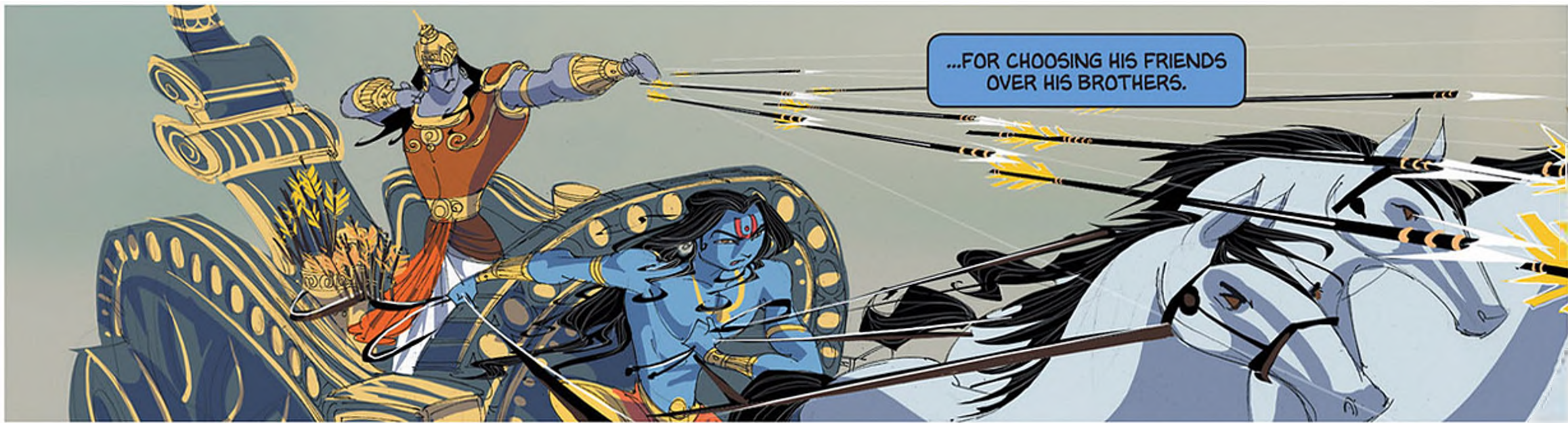








THERE WAS A PRICE THAT  
KARNA WOULD HAVE TO PAY...



...FOR CHOOSING HIS FRIENDS  
OVER HIS BROTHERS.



AS THE WHEEL OF HIS CHARIOT  
GOT STUCK IN THE EARTH...

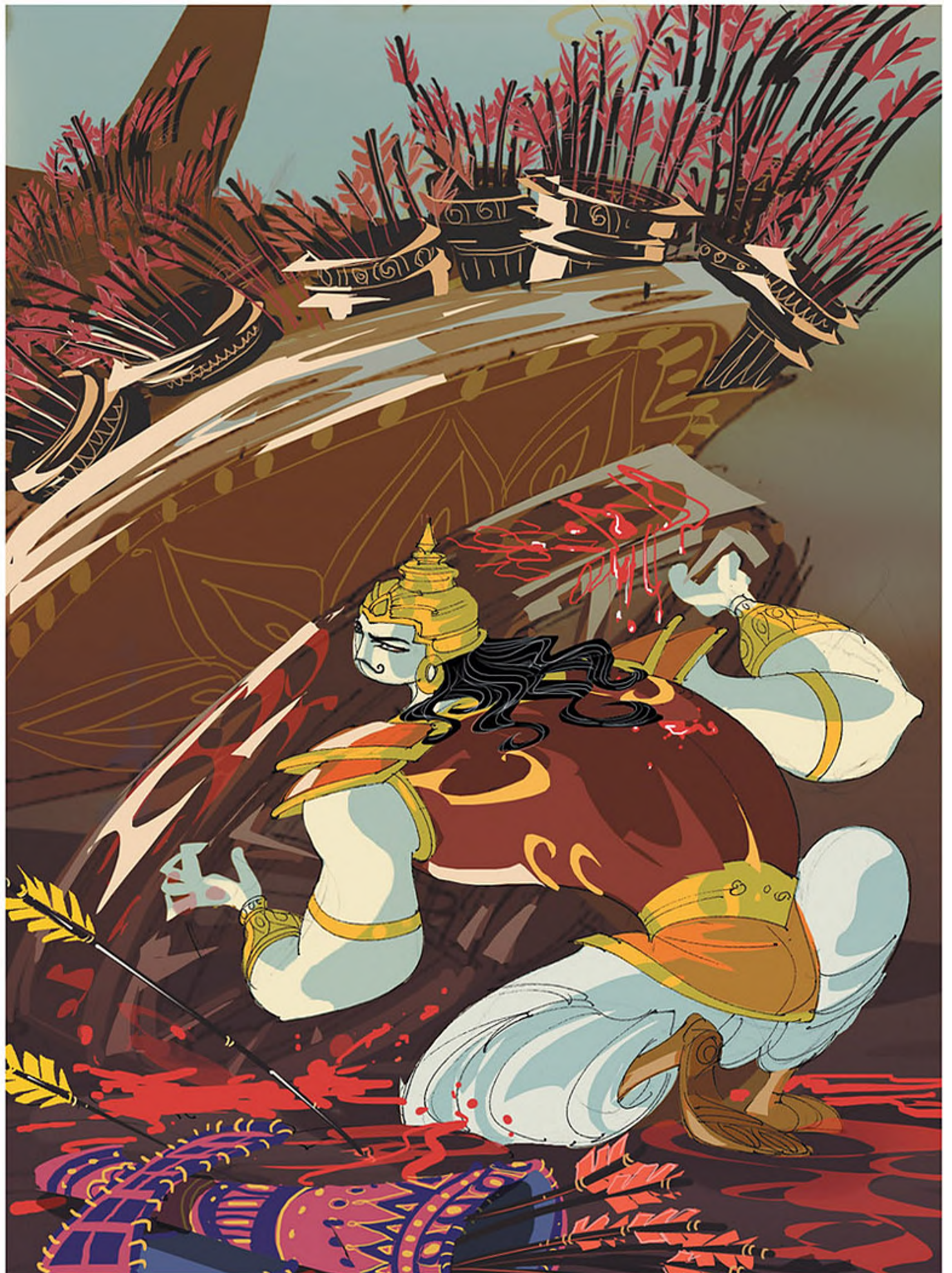




...HE WAS ABANDONED  
ONE LAST TIME.



ARJUNA.



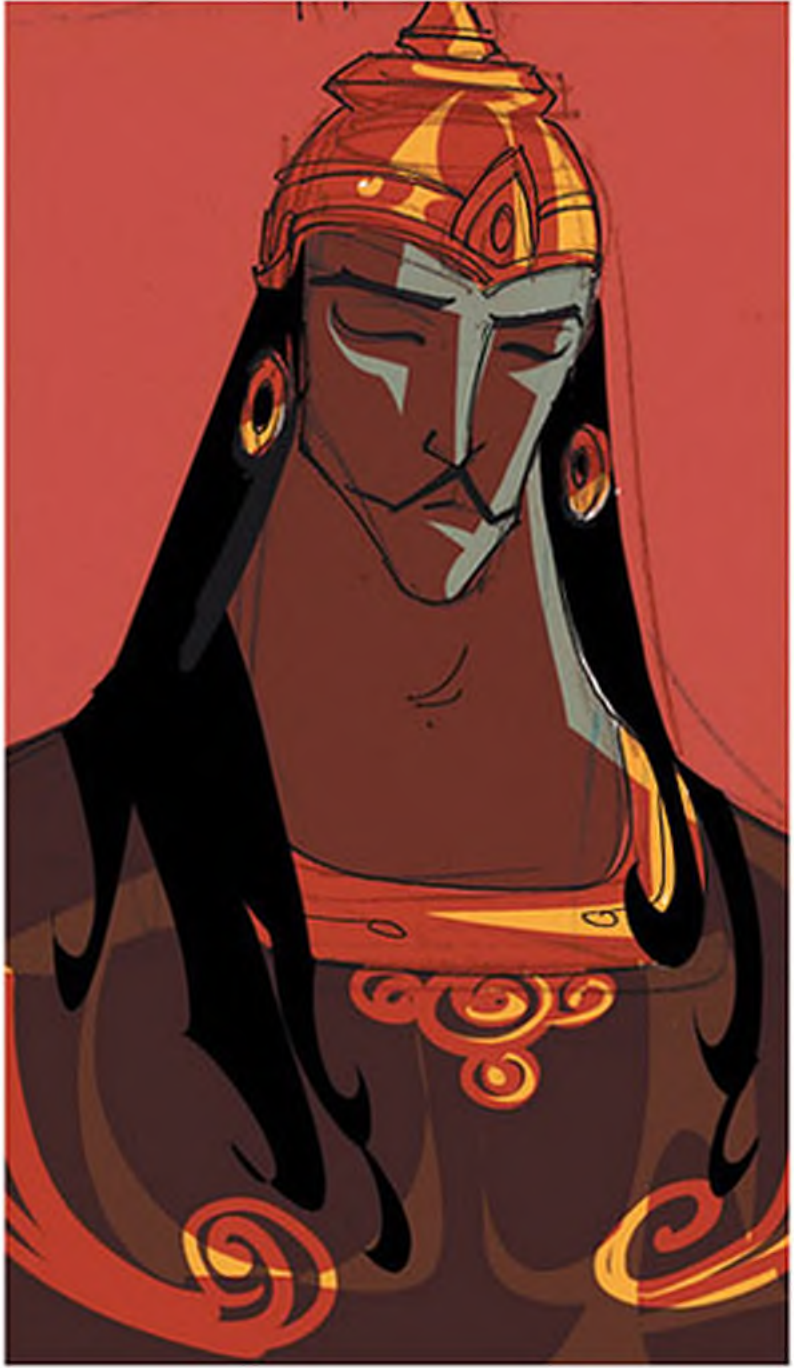






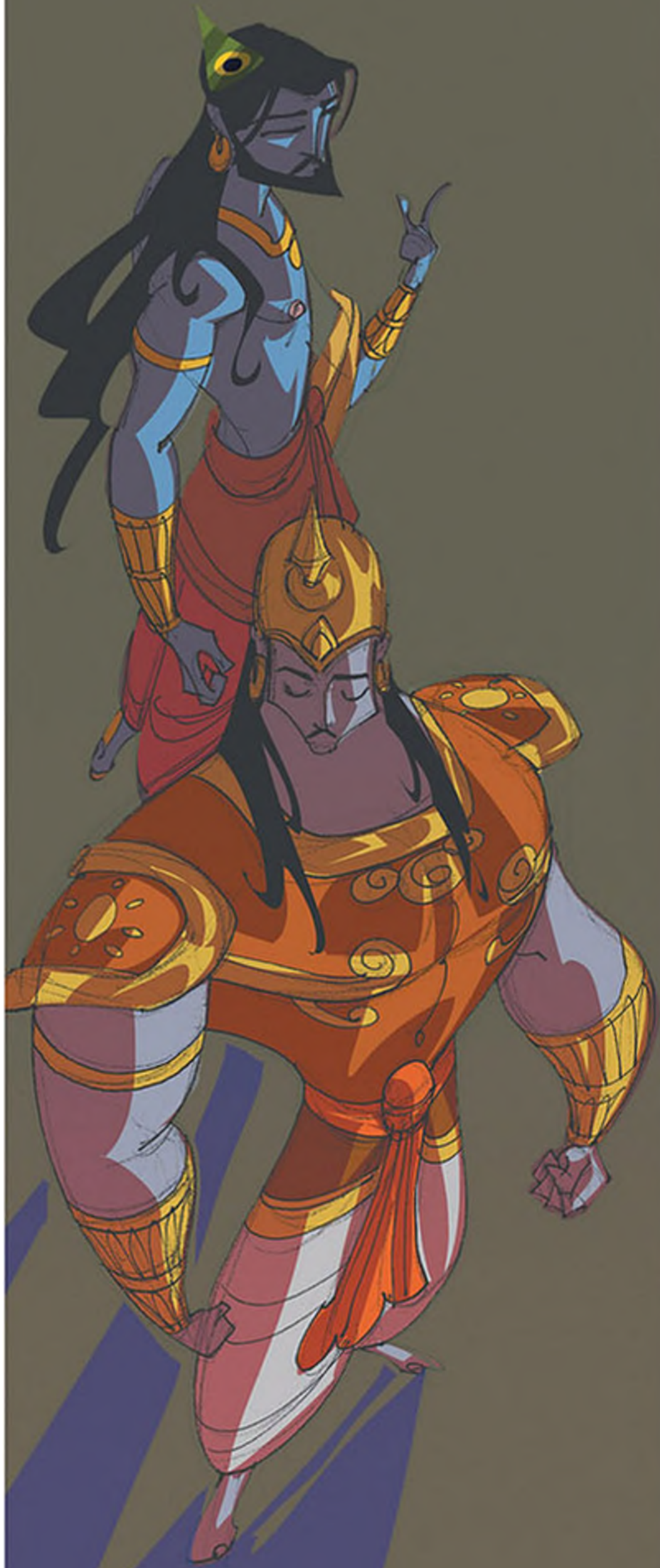








I TOLD ARJUNA  
THAT KARNA WAS  
HIS BROTHER.



BOTH THE ARMIES  
MOURNED TOGETHER.

THE SUN HAD SET  
ON THE WAR FOR ME...



... BUT I COULDN'T LET IT SET  
ON AN ABANDONED KARNA.



AS THE FLAMES THAT WERE TO CARRY  
HIM TO THE LAND OF LIGHT, WHERE THE  
SUN NEVER SETS, LEAPT UP TO RECLAIM  
THE SELFLESS ONE AS THEIR OWN...



... THE WAR WAS  
FINALLY OVER  
EXCEPT FOR...













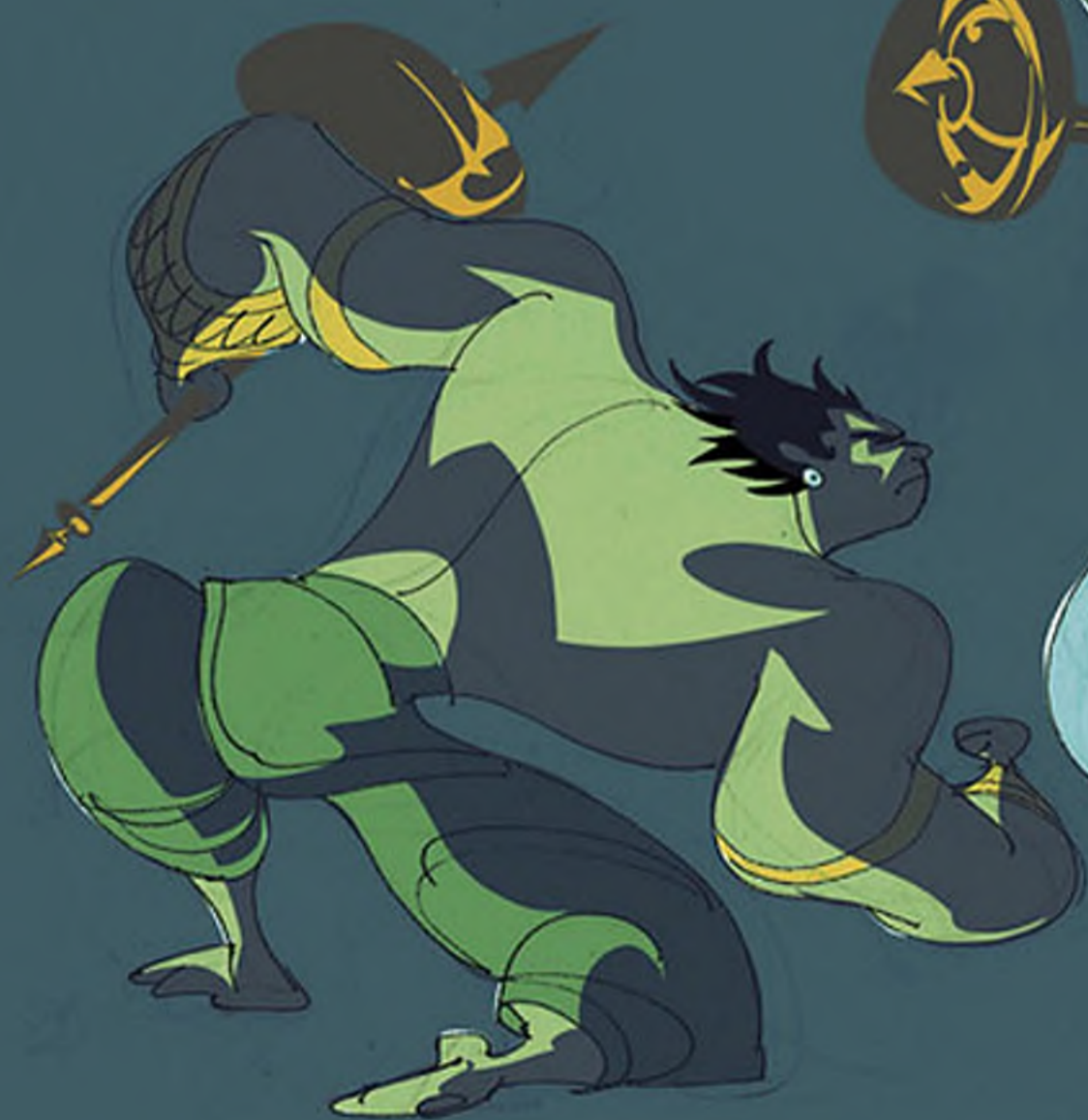


THE FINAL BATTLE.

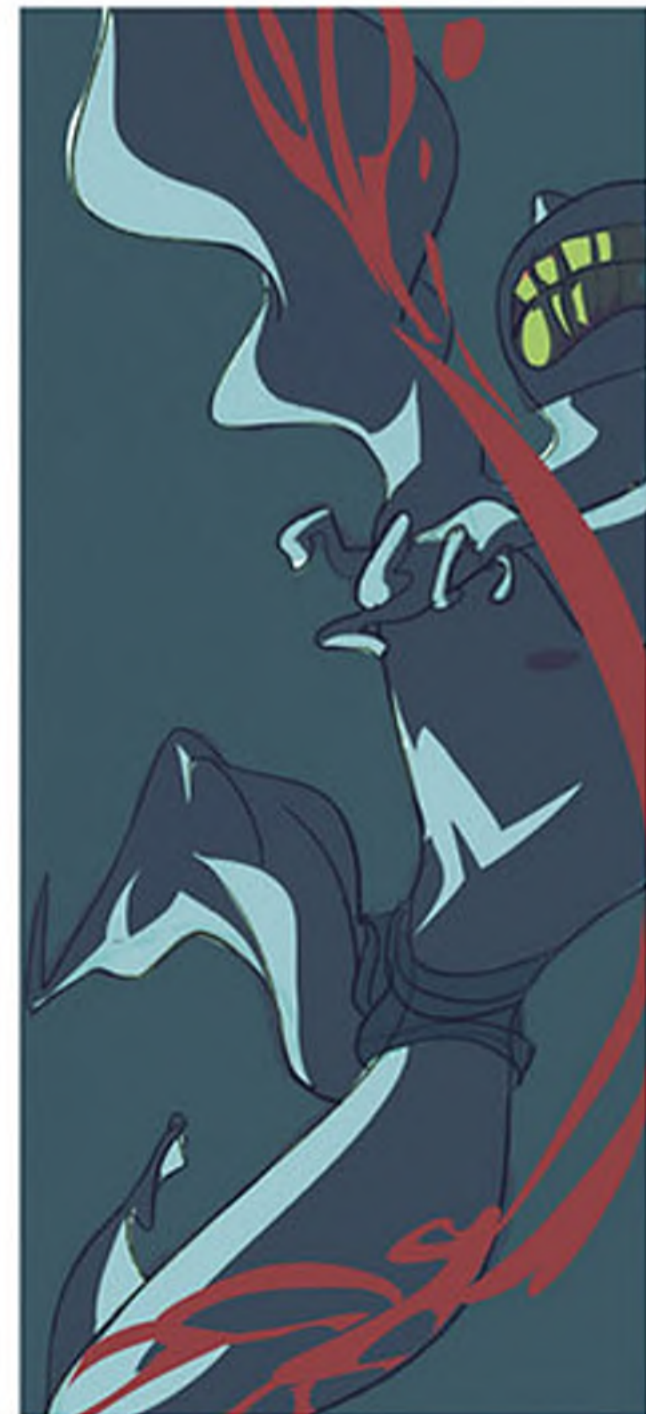
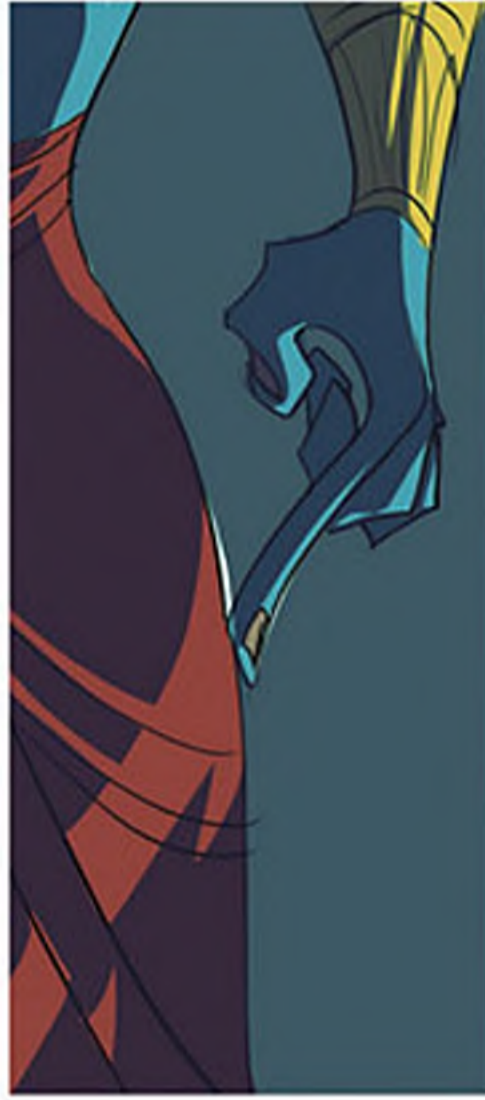




STRENGTH  
VERSUS AGILITY.



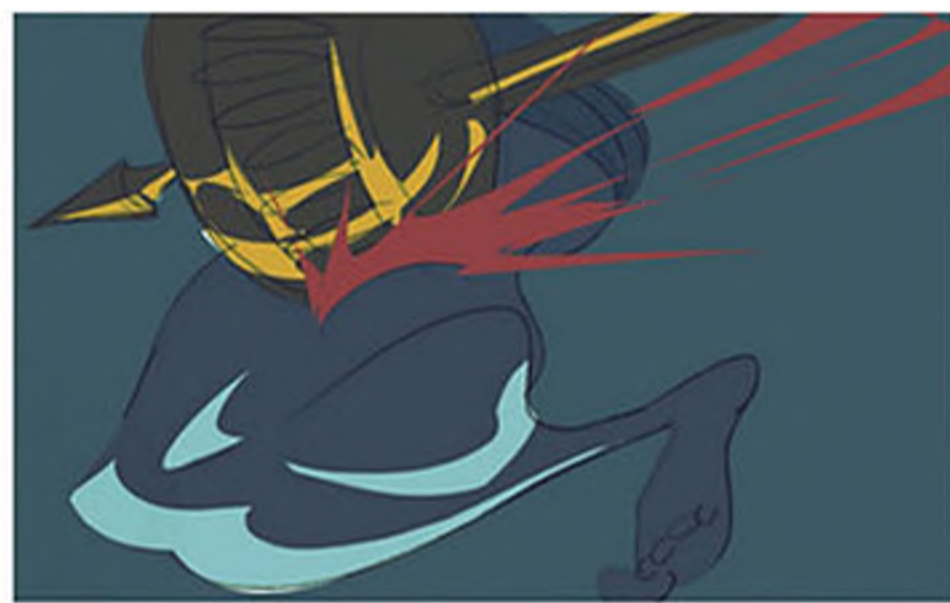
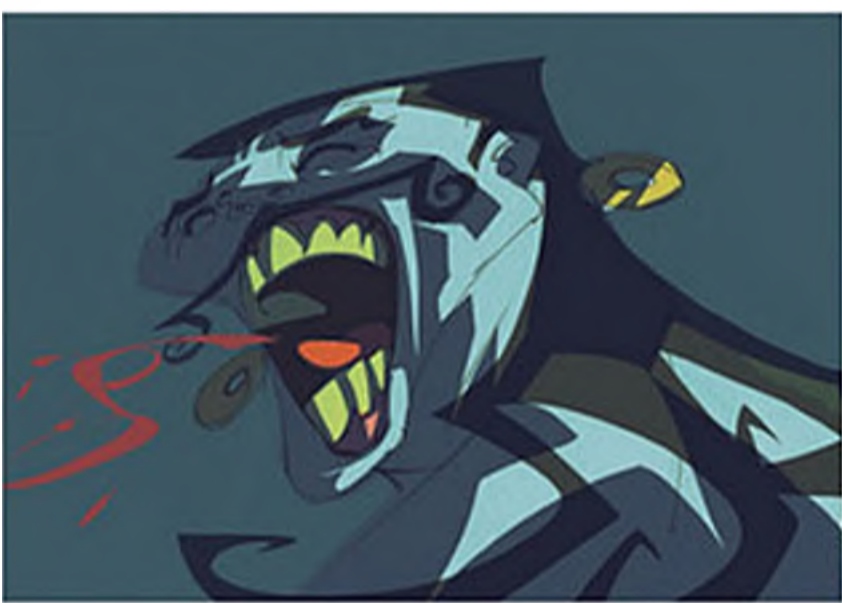








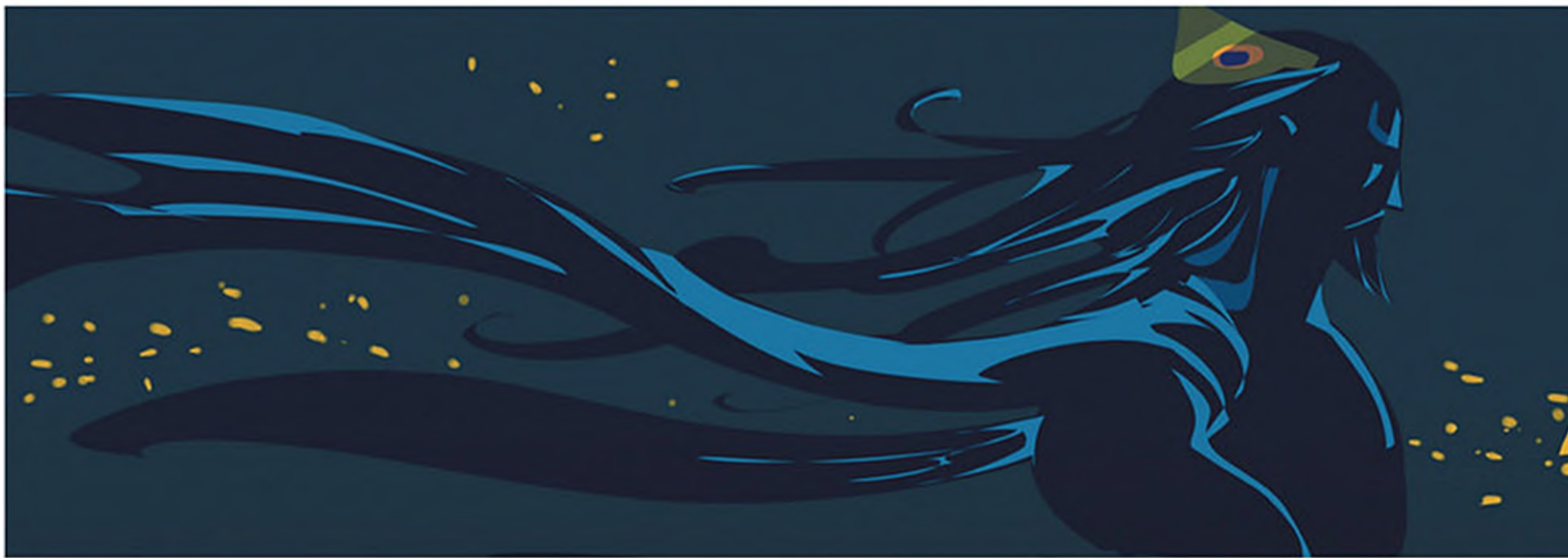
THE SAME THIGH ON WHICH HE HAD TRIED TO SEAT DRAUPADI IN THE MIDDLE OF THE ROYAL COURT.



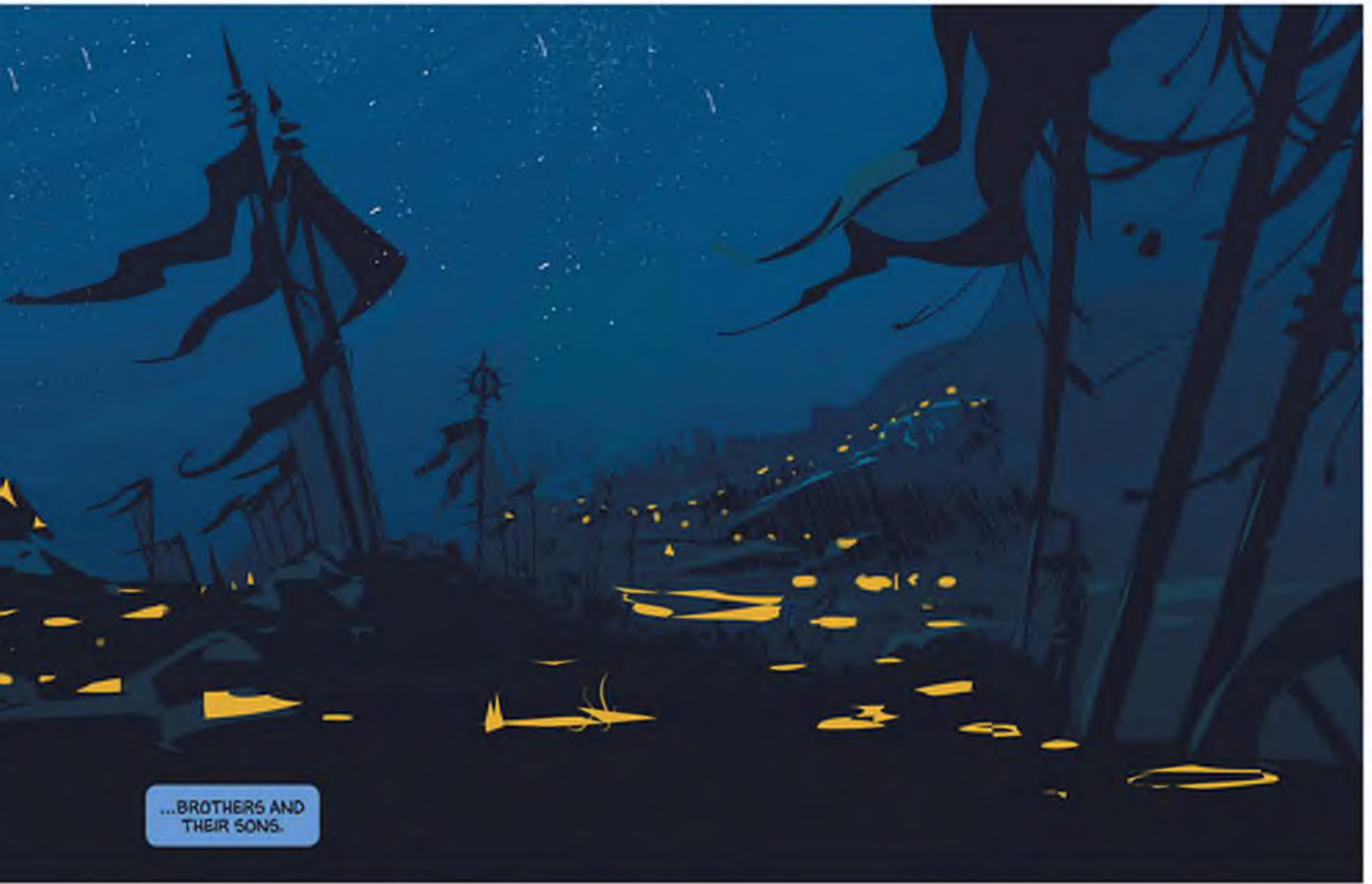
THE PANDAVAS WON.

THIS GIFT OF VICTORY WAS WRAPPED IN THE BLOOD OF THEIR...





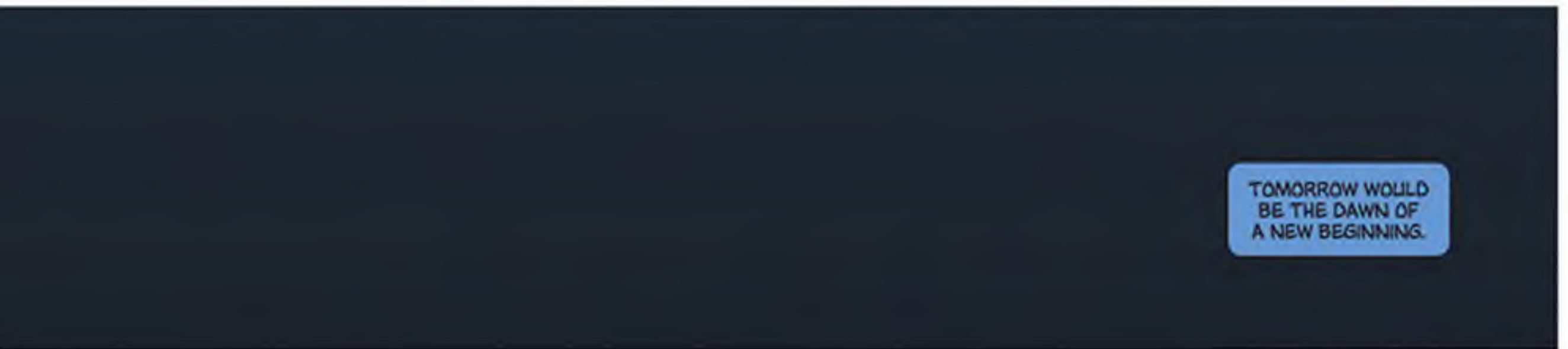




...BROTHERS AND  
THEIR SONS.



THEIR BURNING PYRES EQUALLED  
THE STARS OF A CLEAR NIGHT.

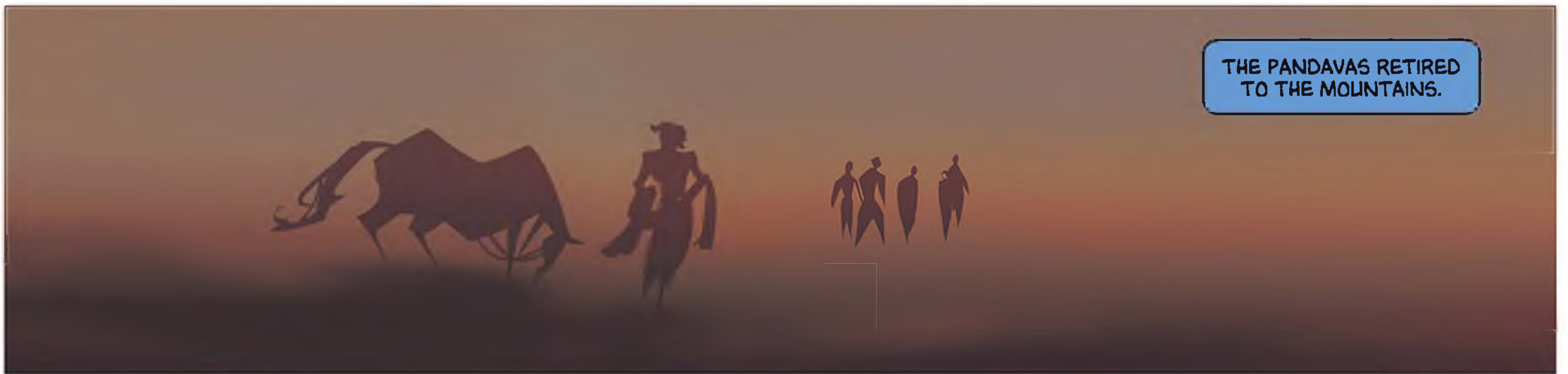


TOMORROW WOULD  
BE THE DAWN OF  
A NEW BEGINNING.

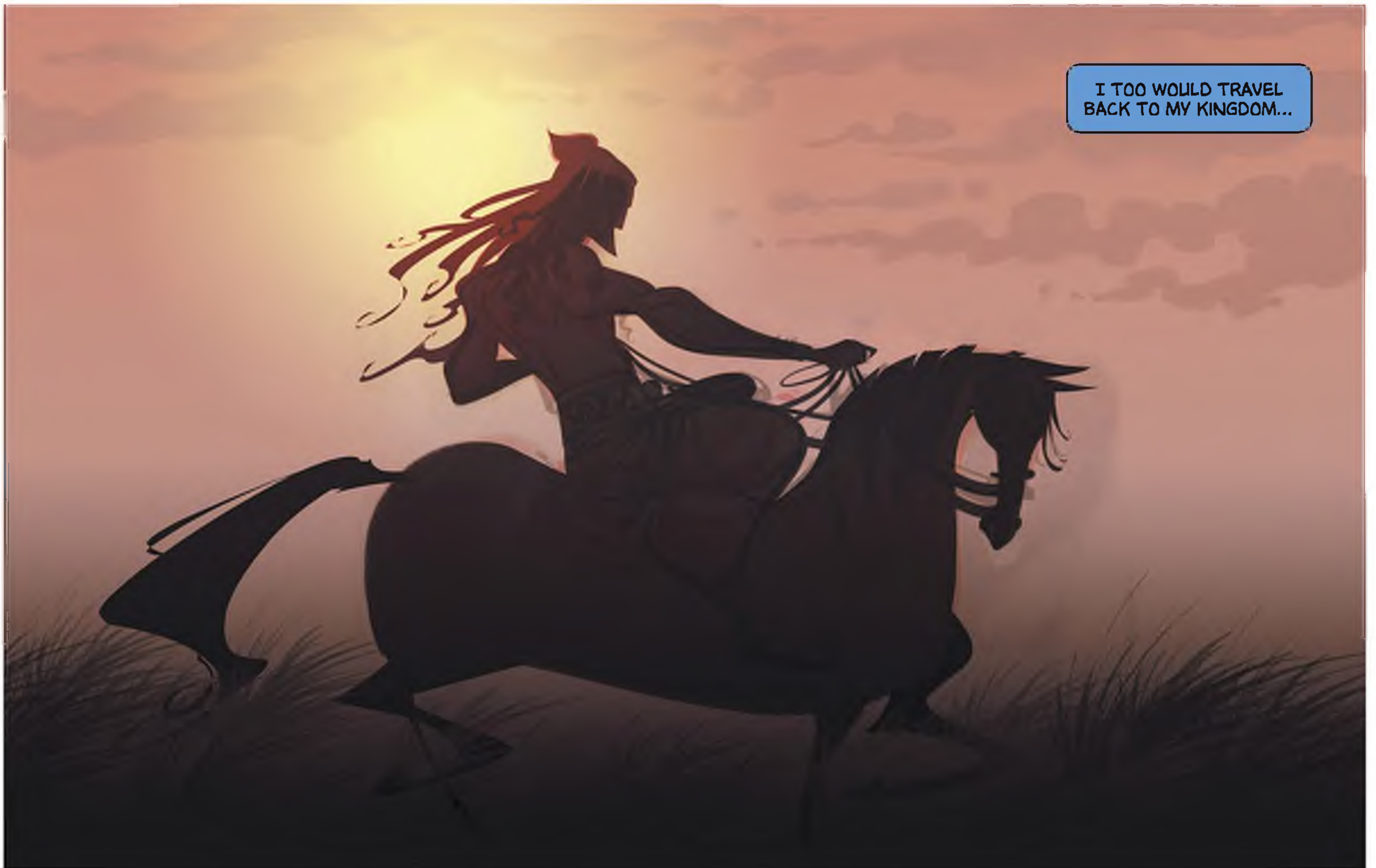




THE PANDAVAS RETIRED  
TO THE MOUNTAINS.



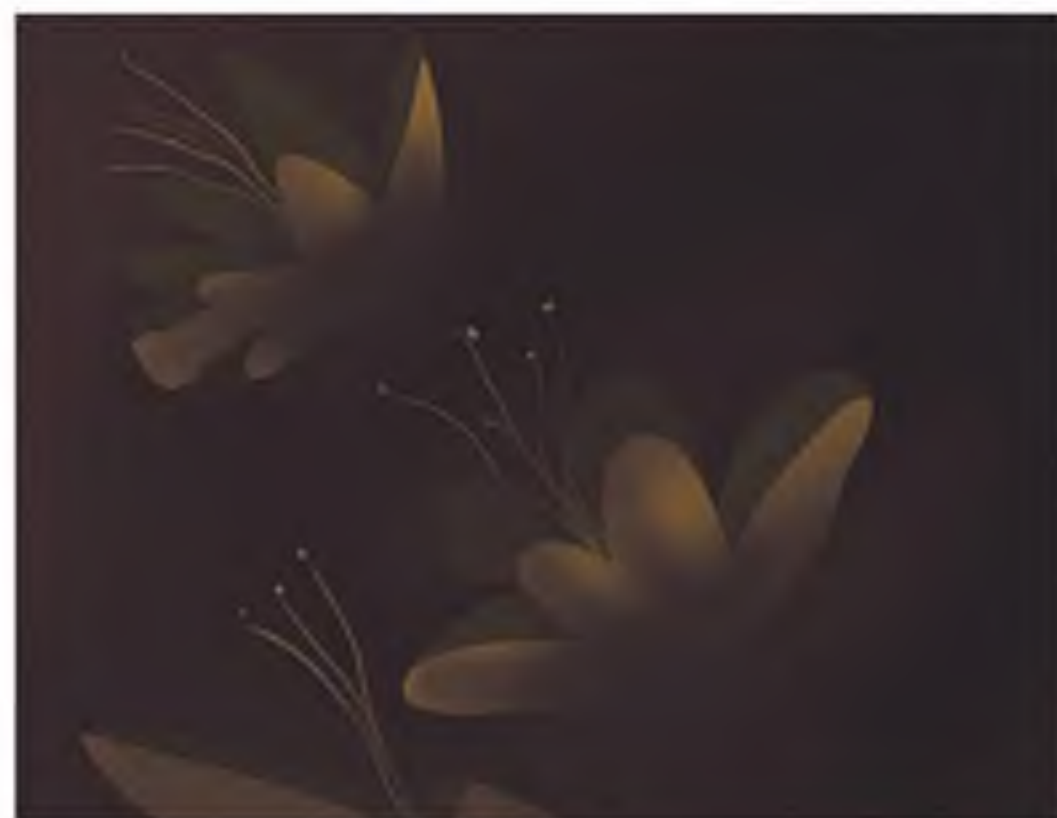
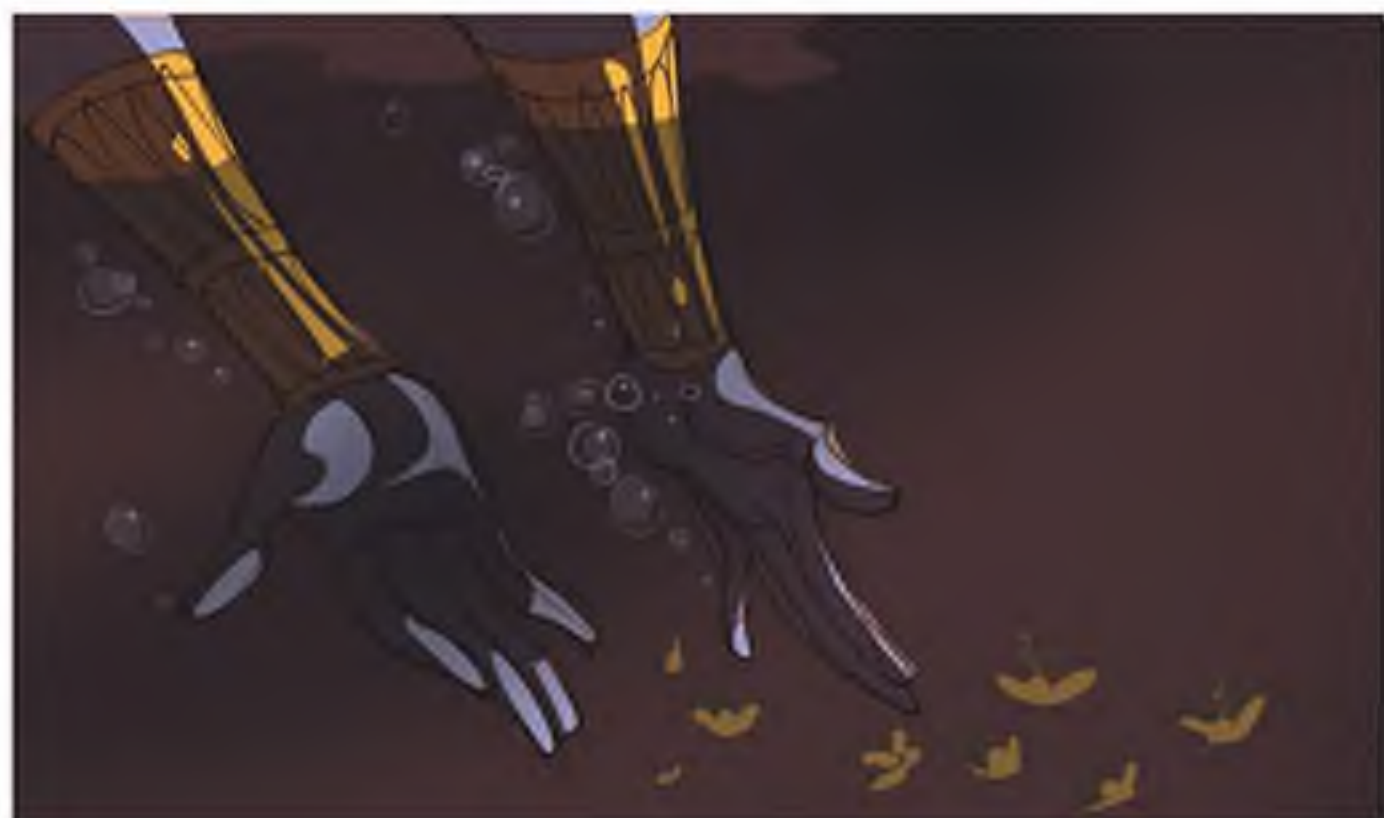
I TOO WOULD TRAVEL  
BACK TO MY KINGDOM...







... THINKING HOW THINGS  
FADE AWAY IN THE BEAUTY  
OF THEIR EXISTENCE...











...NOT KNOWING THAT  
ONE DAY, I WOULD BE  
LOOKING AT MY LIFE...



...THROUGH  
HEAVEN'S EYES.



WILL MY JOURNEY ENDURE  
THE TEST OF TIME?





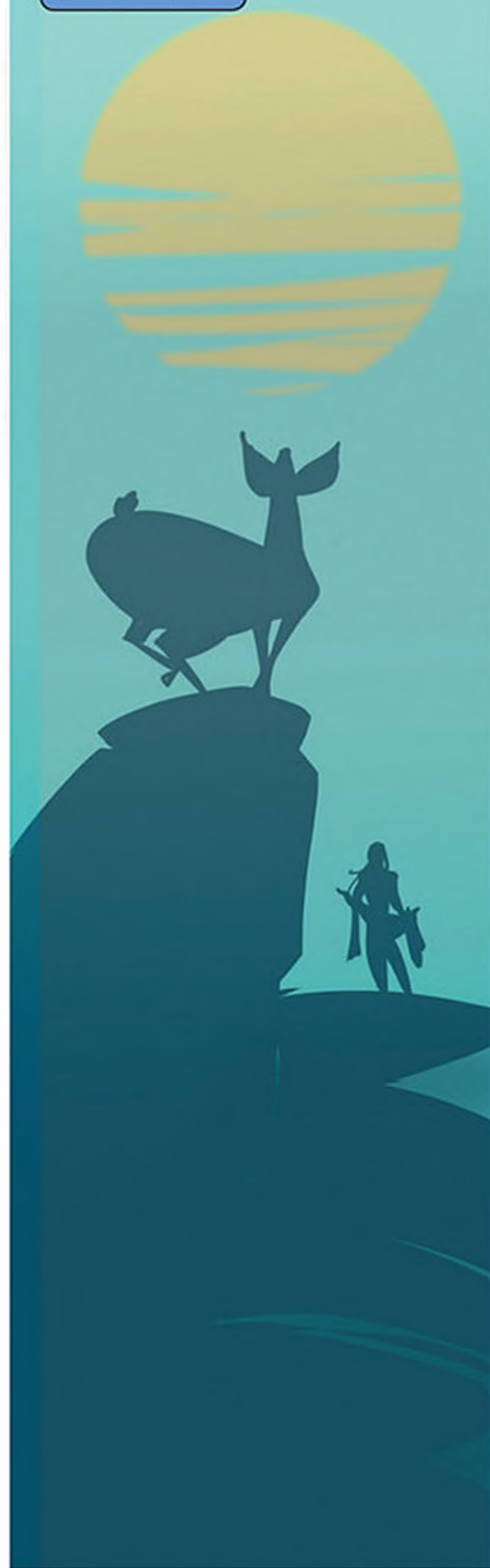
WILL IT BLOOM LIKE A SOLITARY  
FLOWER ON A WITHERING TREE?



AND WHEN MY  
SONG PLAYS...



...WILL ANYONE BE  
THERE TO LISTEN?





WHERE LIES THE OCEAN  
THAT BIRTHS THE SUN?



WHERE LIES THE EARTH ON  
WHICH THE RAIN FALLS FREE...



...LIKE LOVE TO A HEART?

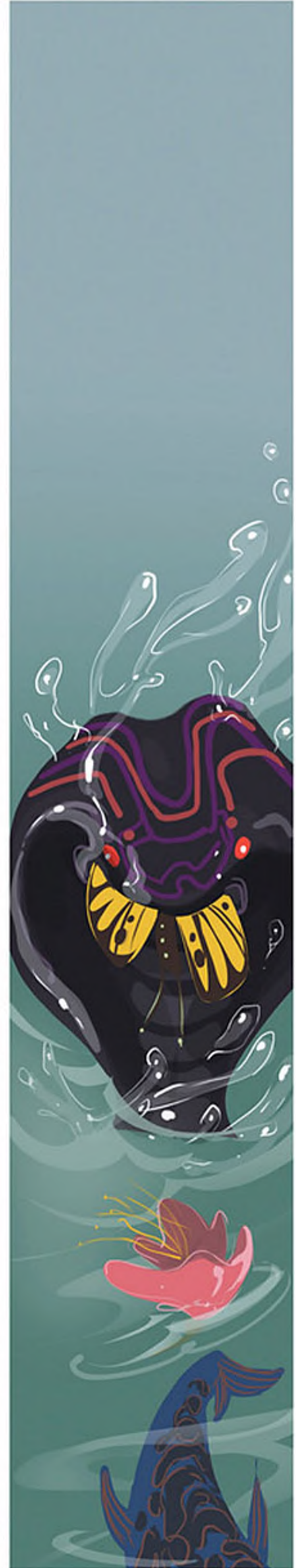
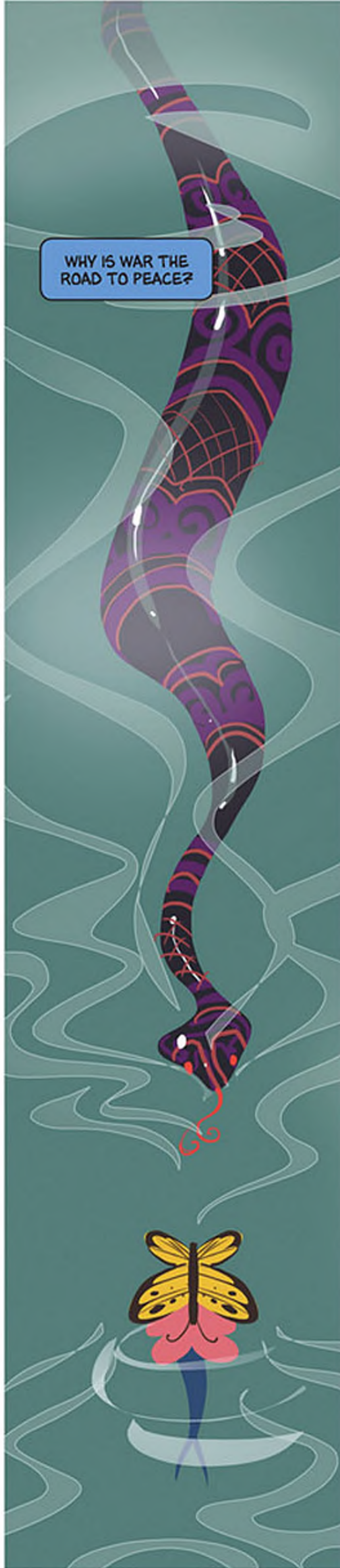




WHY DOES GREED  
MAKE US BLIND?

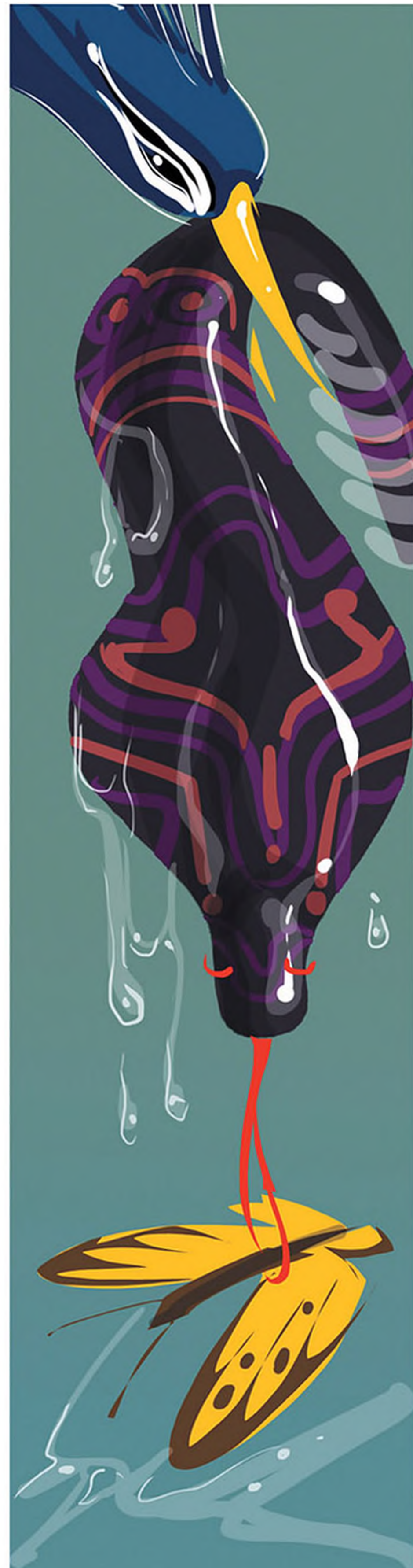


WHY IS WAR THE  
ROAD TO PEACE?



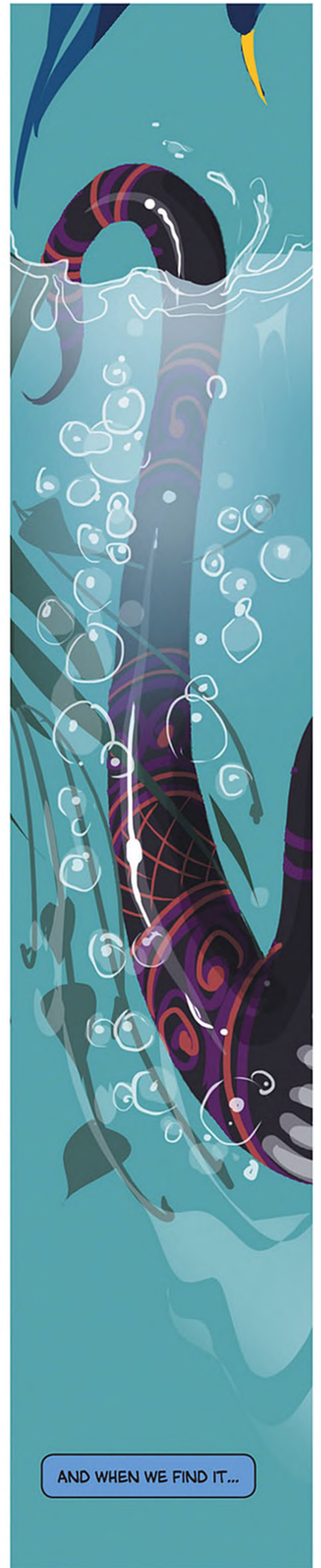
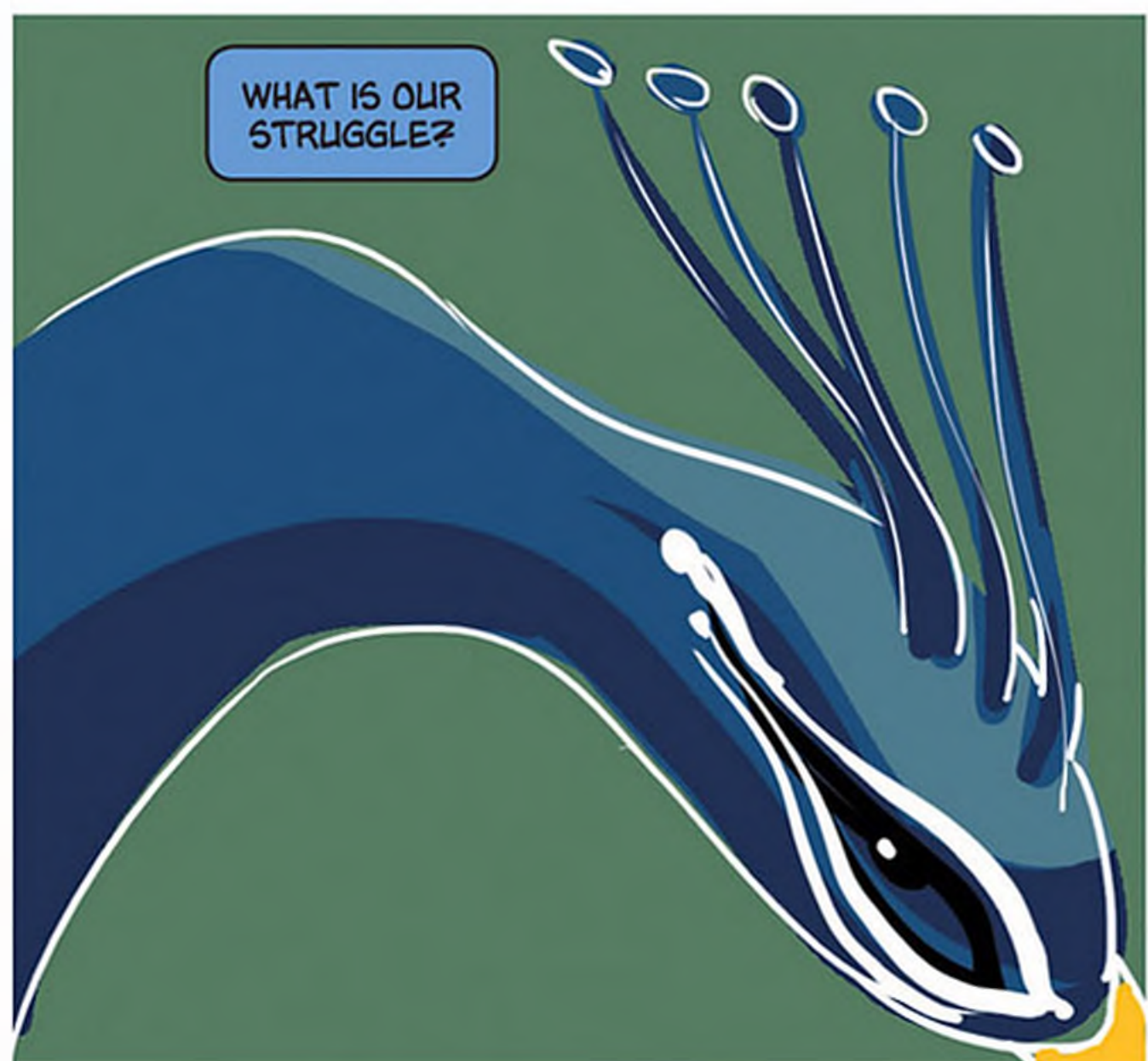


DO WE DESIRE  
JUST TO EXIST?



OR DO WE EXIST  
JUST TO DESIRE?













OR...



...ARE WE WARRING  
WITH OURSELVES?



LIFE...



...IS TO TRANSFORM...



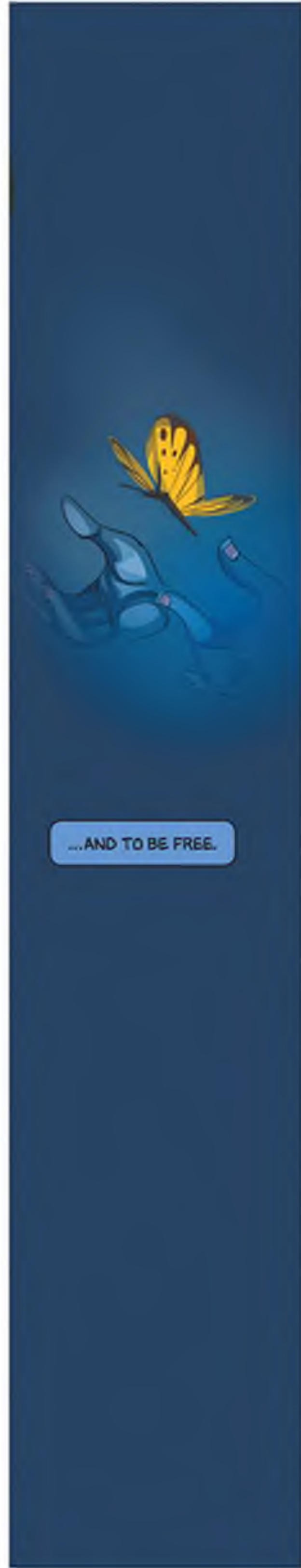
...IS TO TRANSCEND...





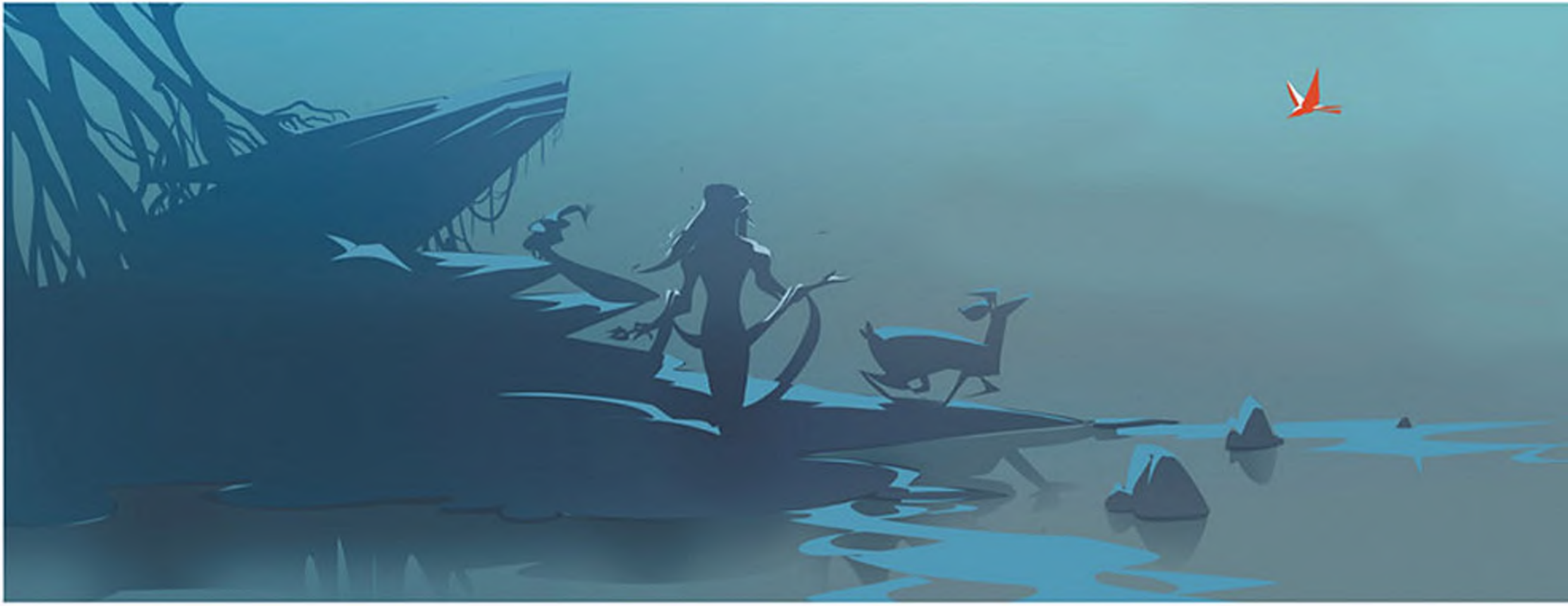


...IS TO DREAM...



...AND TO BE FREE.









...TO OLD FRIENDS.



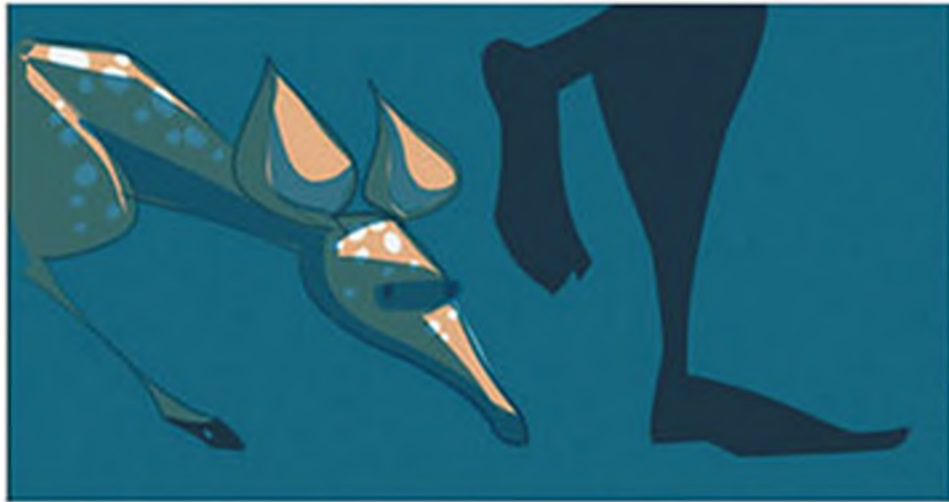
TO THANK THEM  
FOR THEIR GIFTS.







MY TIME HAS COME...



... TO FINALLY LET GO.

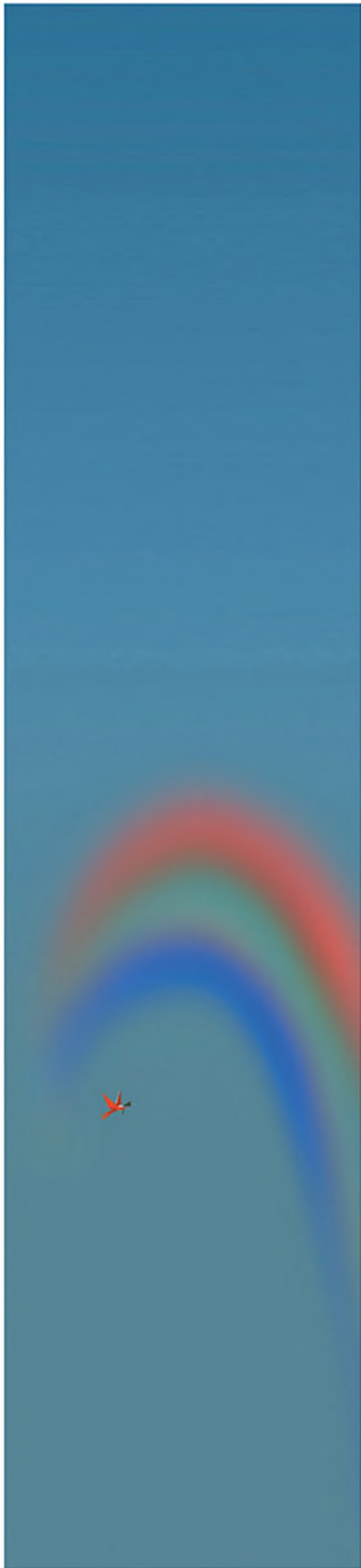








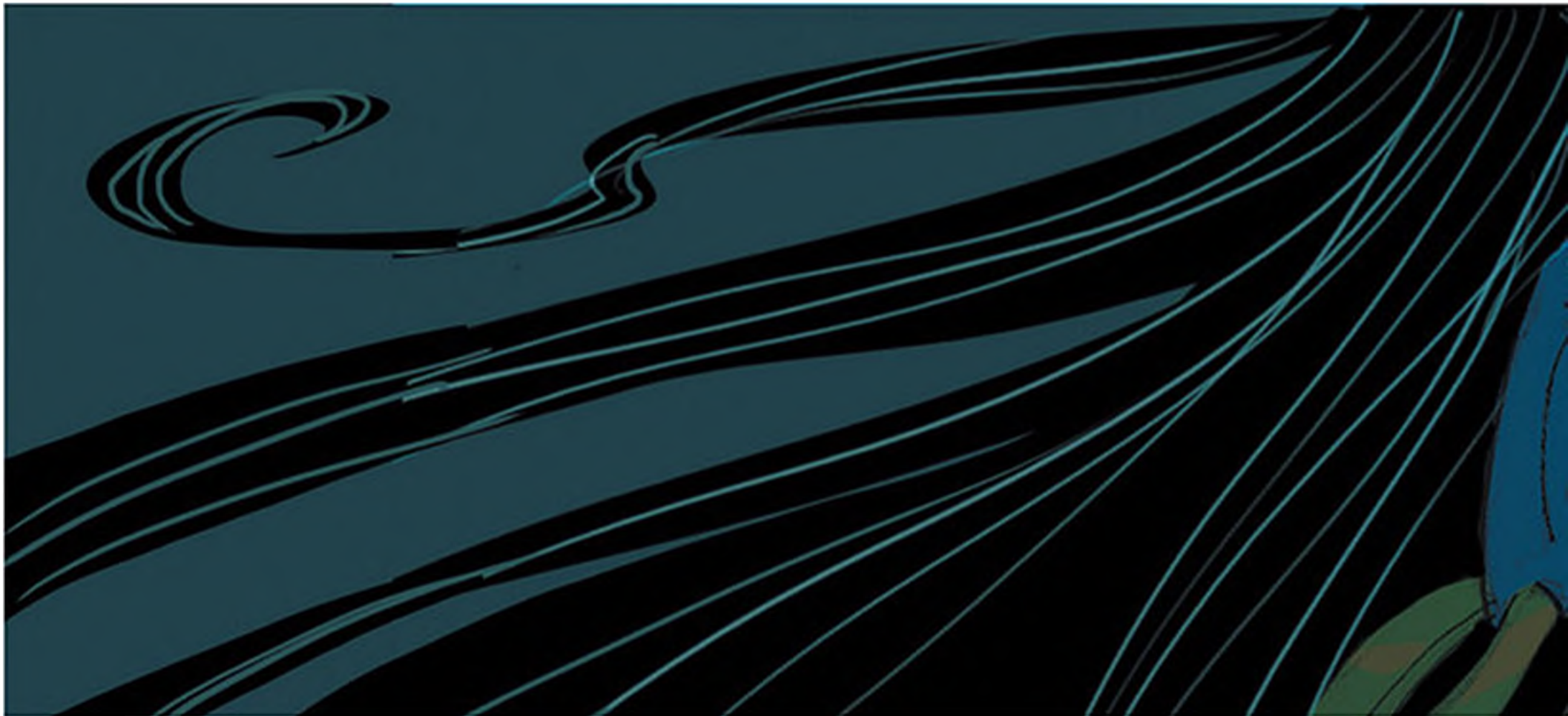




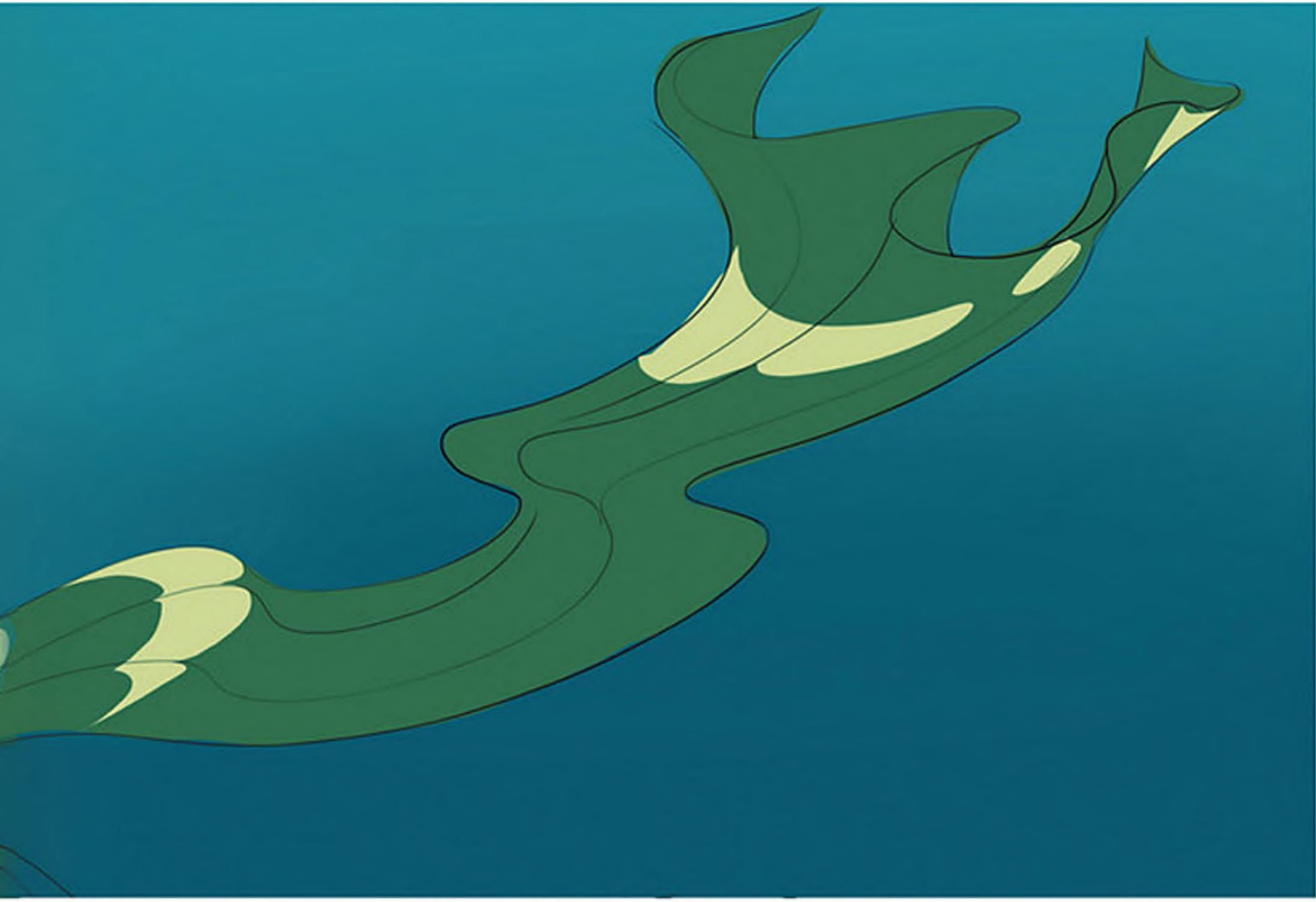




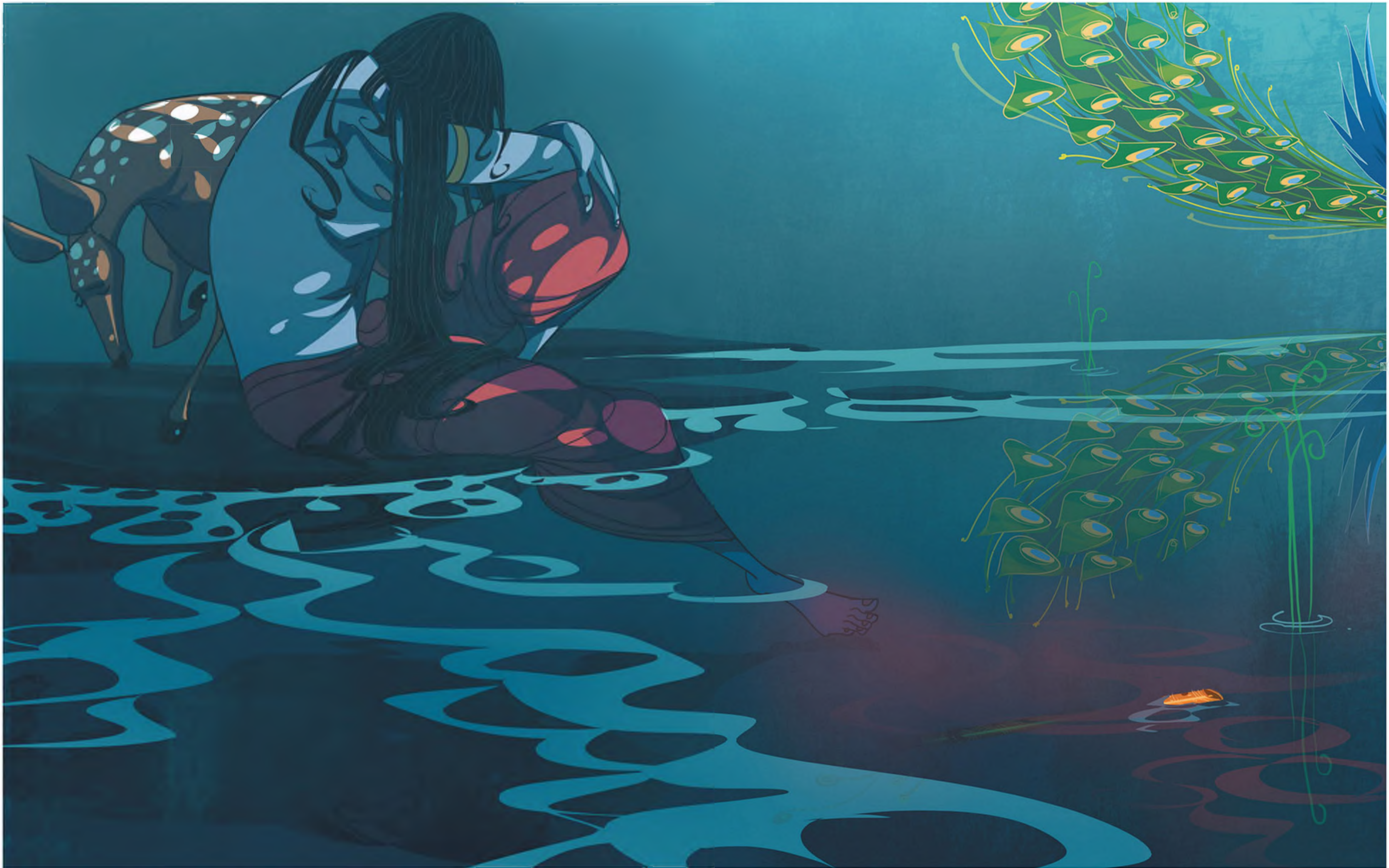
...AND FOR THE JOURNEY  
THAT I AM ABOUT TO TAKE.







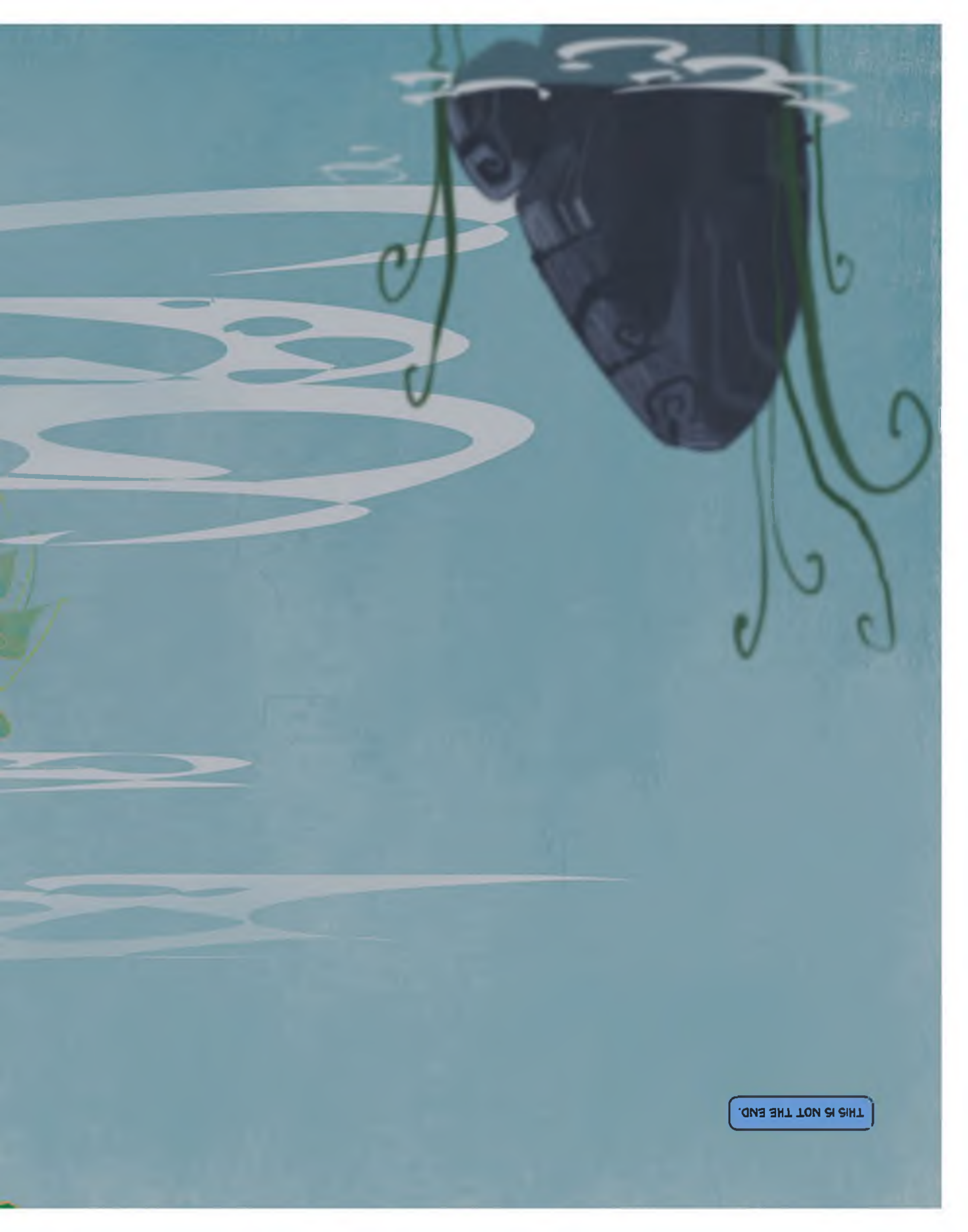








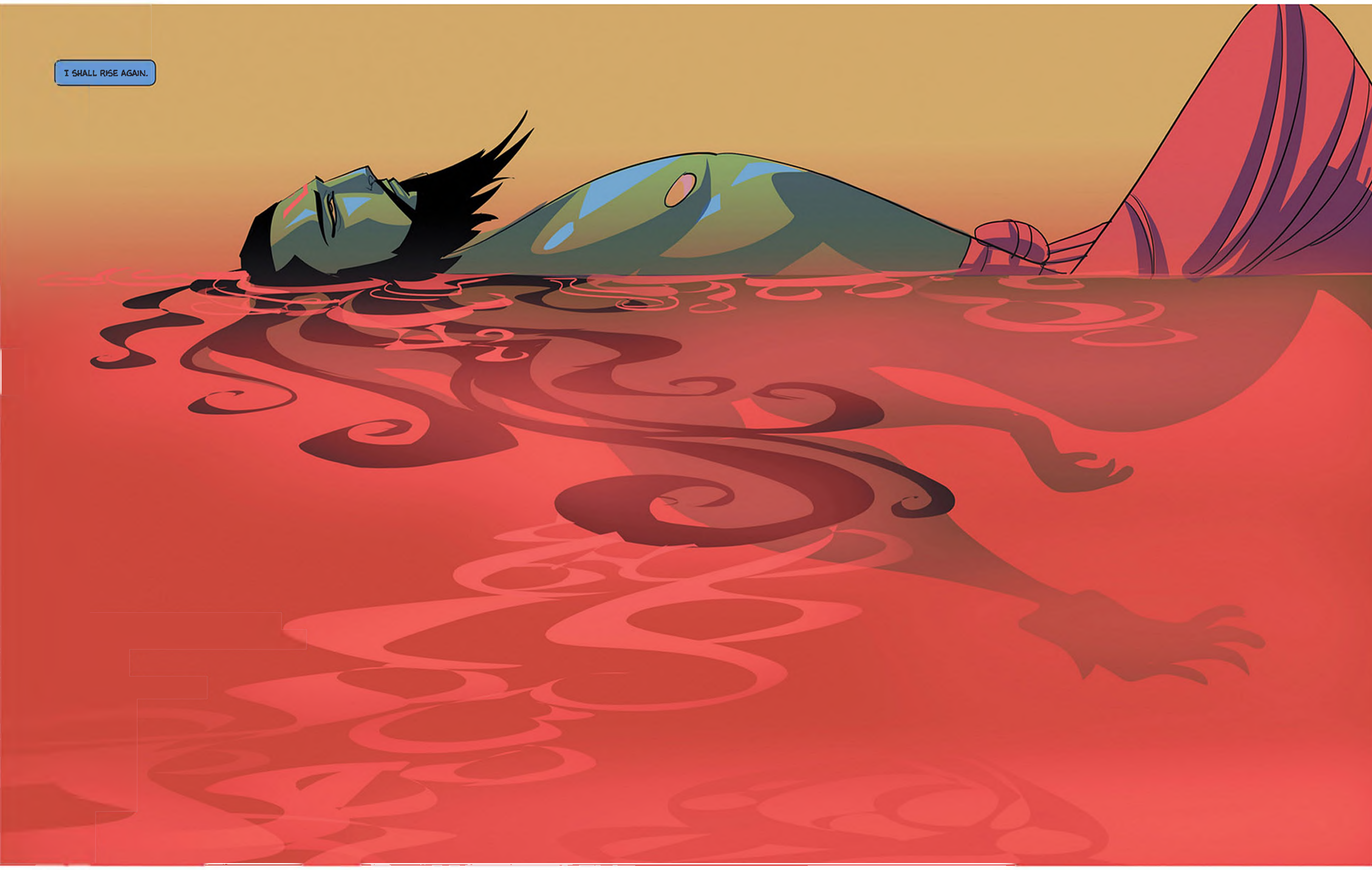




THIS IS NOT THE END.

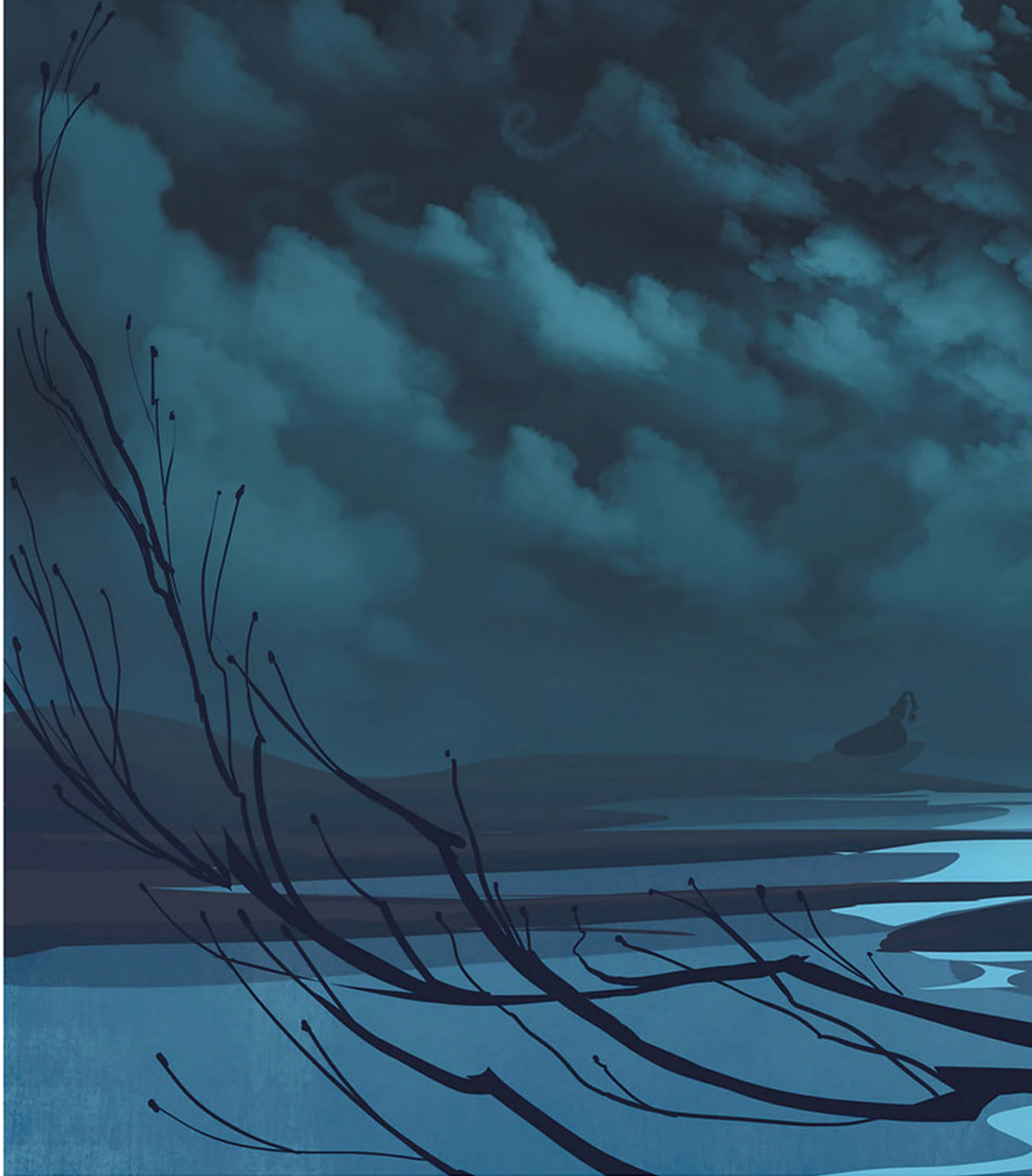


I SHALL RISE AGAIN.





I SHALL FOREVER LIVE...











...IN HEARTS FULL OF LOVE.

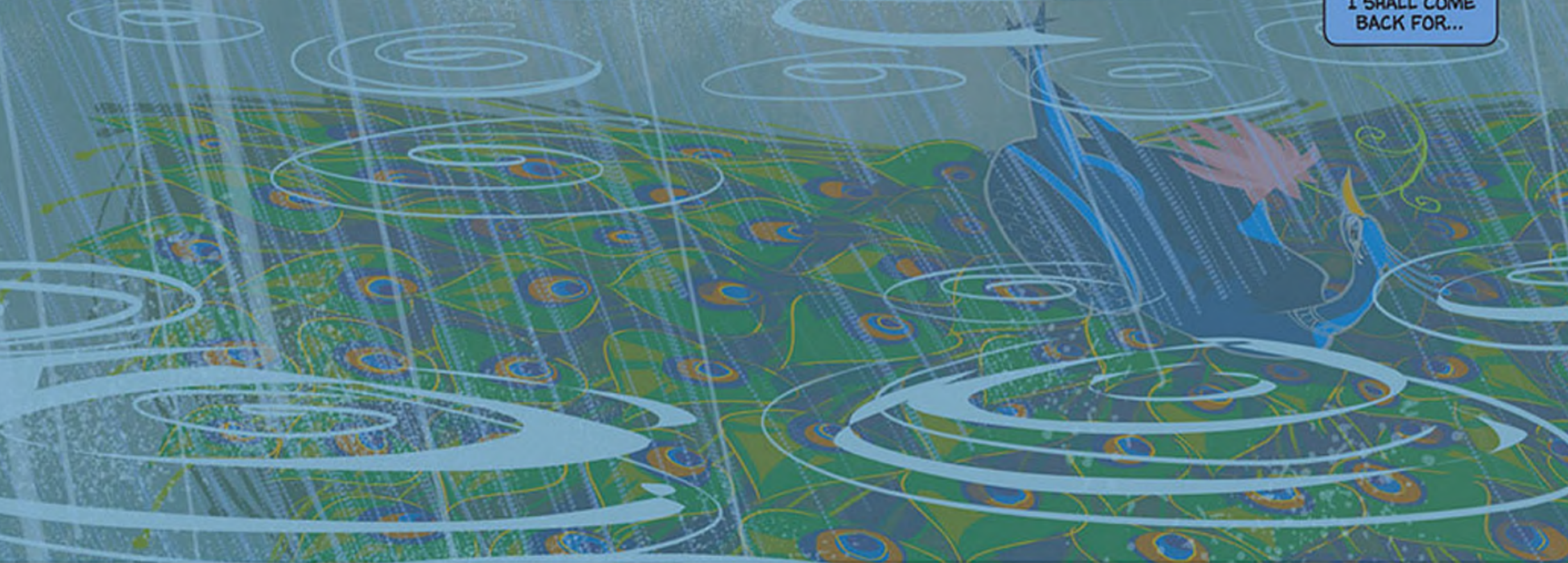
I SHALL COME  
BACK AGAIN...



... TO DANCE  
IN THE RAIN.



I SHALL COME  
BACK FOR...





...HOPE.

The End



# AFTERWORD

*“There’s something charming embedded in the intricate design of this universe which keeps corresponding with us. It imbues in us a sense of wonder, making us collect thoughts both abandoned and celebrated, making us tell stories.”*

I would like to believe that this book has been an attempt to know what I have always known, but never really knew - an attempt to find Krishna, the wonder he was and continues to be.

Thank you everyone who made it possible for me to take the first few steps.



*Abhishek Singh*

ABHISHEK SINGH  
NEW DELHI  
MARCH, 2012



# ❧ ACKNOWLEDGMENTS ❧

The two texts that were foremost in inspiring the philosophical grounding of this book, that guided me as reference markers, both theologically and symbolically, were the translations and commentaries on the *Bhagavad-Gita* written by Paramahansa Yogananda and by A C Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada. I am sincerely grateful to them for providing me the light and a path to Krishna.

*I also give heartfelt thanks to*

Arjun, without you none of this would have been possible. Thank you for your friendship, and for editing this book with so much love.

Eric, at Image, who not only responded promptly but supported me with all of his patience. I have always considered Image as the rock-and-roll act of comic books and my creative rebellion could not have found a better place. A big thank you to everyone at Image.

Dev, for agreeing to design the book and the logo. It has been an honor and I could not have asked for more.

Rashmi, for all her patience.

Nilesh, our super-boy, for lettering this book and for meeting the deadlines each time.

Nalin Uncle, for all the insights & blessings.

Renoo Aunty, for sharing her visions and for all the love.

Divvy, my sister for all the great conversations.

Apernit, my brother for all the music and for keeping me company.

Vijay and Dipika, for all the inspiration, love and delicious home cooked food.

Claudia, for sharing her sense of adventure and wonder.

Uttam, for being an elder brother and for always cracking a joke when I needed it the most.

Alok, for all the walks and friendship.

Ntasha, for making sure that I went out once in a while.

Chewang, for preparing midnight snacks.

Saurabh and Nidhi, for their love and affection.

Prashant and Deepanshu, for their friendship.

Aloke Shetty, for his awesome company.

Vikram, for all his encouragement and for being a brother.

Mukesh, for being a constant source of inspiration.

Sharad, Suresh and Gotham, for their encouragement of me and my art on Ramayana 3392AD.

Sanjay Ji, for giving a kid the chance to live out a dream as an artist in Raj Comics.

Somnath, Rakesh and Arun, for their much appreciated help.


My grandparents Shanti, Krishna and Girvar, for all their stories.

My moms Tripti and Vidhyut, for all the sacrifices they have made so that I could become the artist I am.

My best friend my DAD, who took me on his shoulders to all the art competitions. I cannot thank you enough.

And, above all, my gratitude to Krishna for letting me tell his story, and to whom any expression of thanks will always be woefully and incomparably inadequate.





## EDITOR'S NOTE

It defies logic to think that what began as an innocuous discussion with Abhishek Singh over a long distance phone call reached this creative turn where I have the privilege of editing his book. That long distance meeting, seemingly a lifetime ago, was the second time I met Abhishek. My first introduction to him was through his artwork in the graphic novel Ramayana 3392AD, on a sleepy Virgin Airways flight from London to Delhi.

From that moment I became a fan of his work. As his images conversed with me I felt I already knew him. I am happy to say that this dialogue continues today in person and in the realm of collaborative creative thought. Over the past few years as I have gotten to know Abhishek Singh, the man hiding behind the brush, I am continually surprised by his honest and spontaneous approach to his work, his extraordinarily untiring passion for art, and his humility.

One of the most striking things I observed about Abhishek in his creative process has been his rare ability to wear the hat of penciller, inker and writer all at the same time with effortless ease and expertise. This hugely gifted man was driven by his focused meditations on Krishna. In pursuit of his vision, he gave up existing, and offered, financially rewarding career opportunities to start work on his graphic novel on Krishna. That was three long and arduous years ago.

In those three years Abhishek has evolved both as an artist and as a storyteller by being steeped in the mammoth undertaking of retelling a visually engaging story of Krishna. The result is this distillation of all the research material that was accessible to us in telling the story of one of the greatest of historical figures of all time.

Krishna's pastimes are innumerable, and if in the reading of this book we have entertained you while adding to your perception about Krishna, then our mission would have been accomplished.

*Enjoy!*

ARJUN RAJ NIRULA  
NEW DELHI  
MARCH 2012





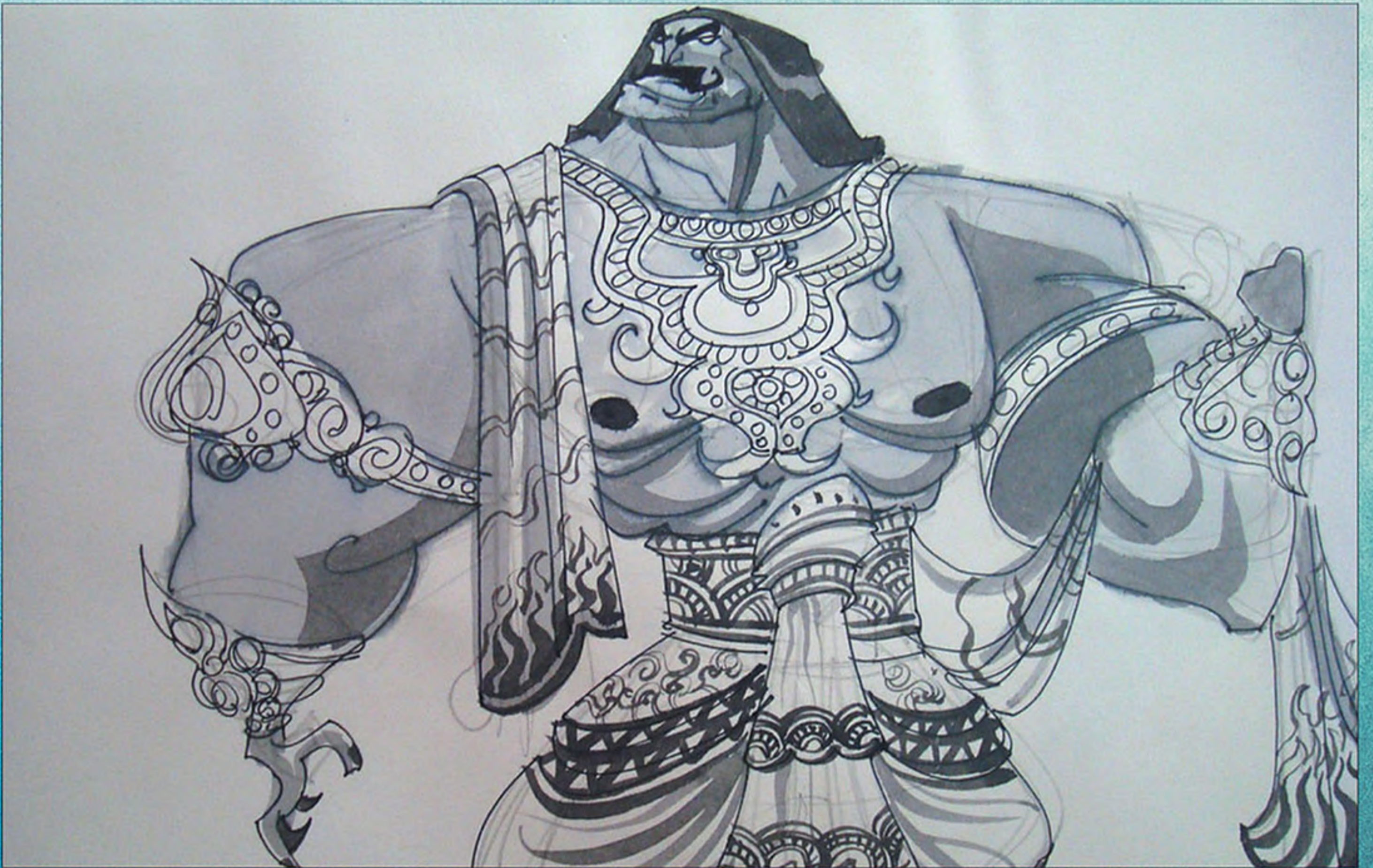








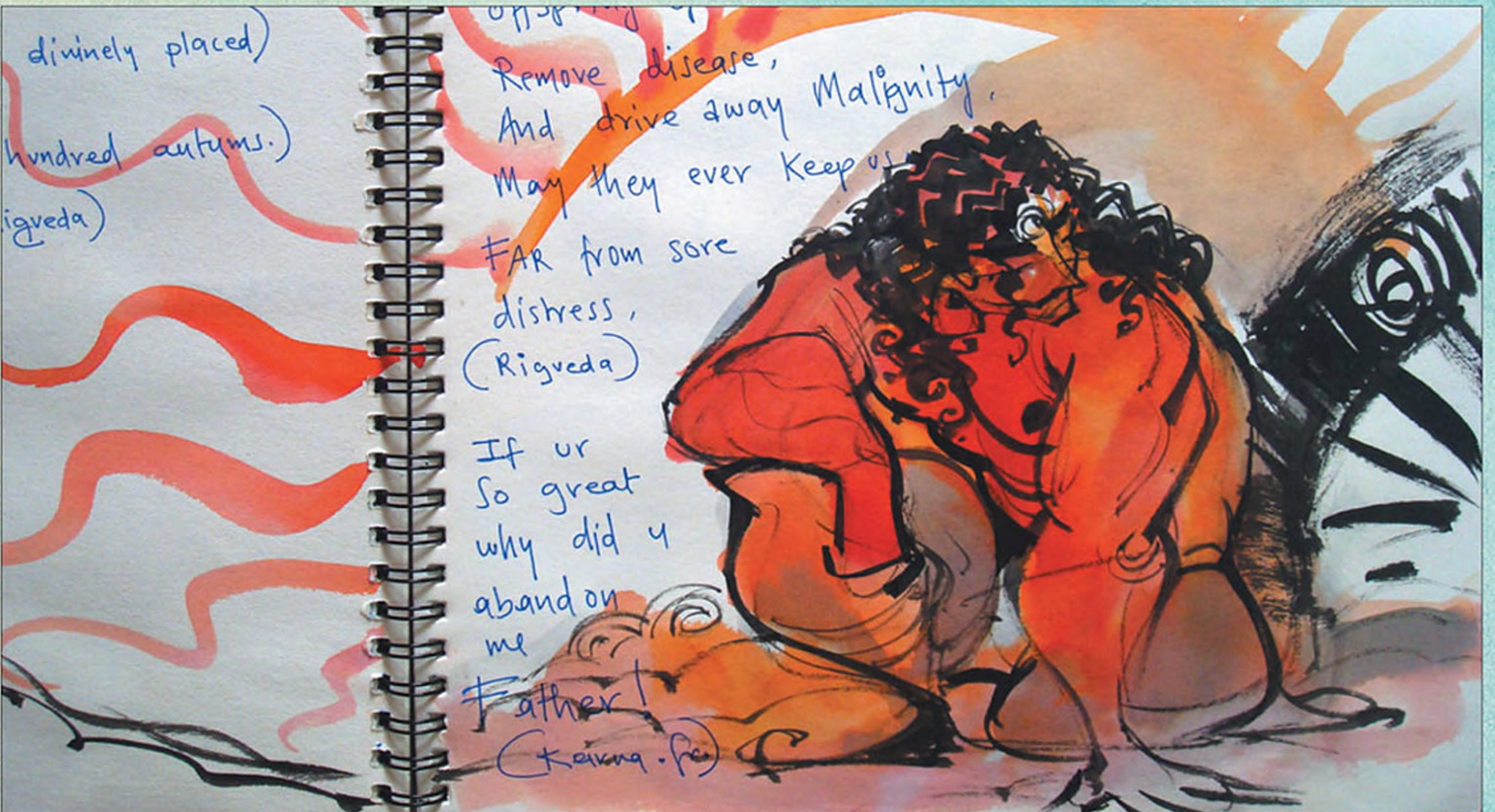
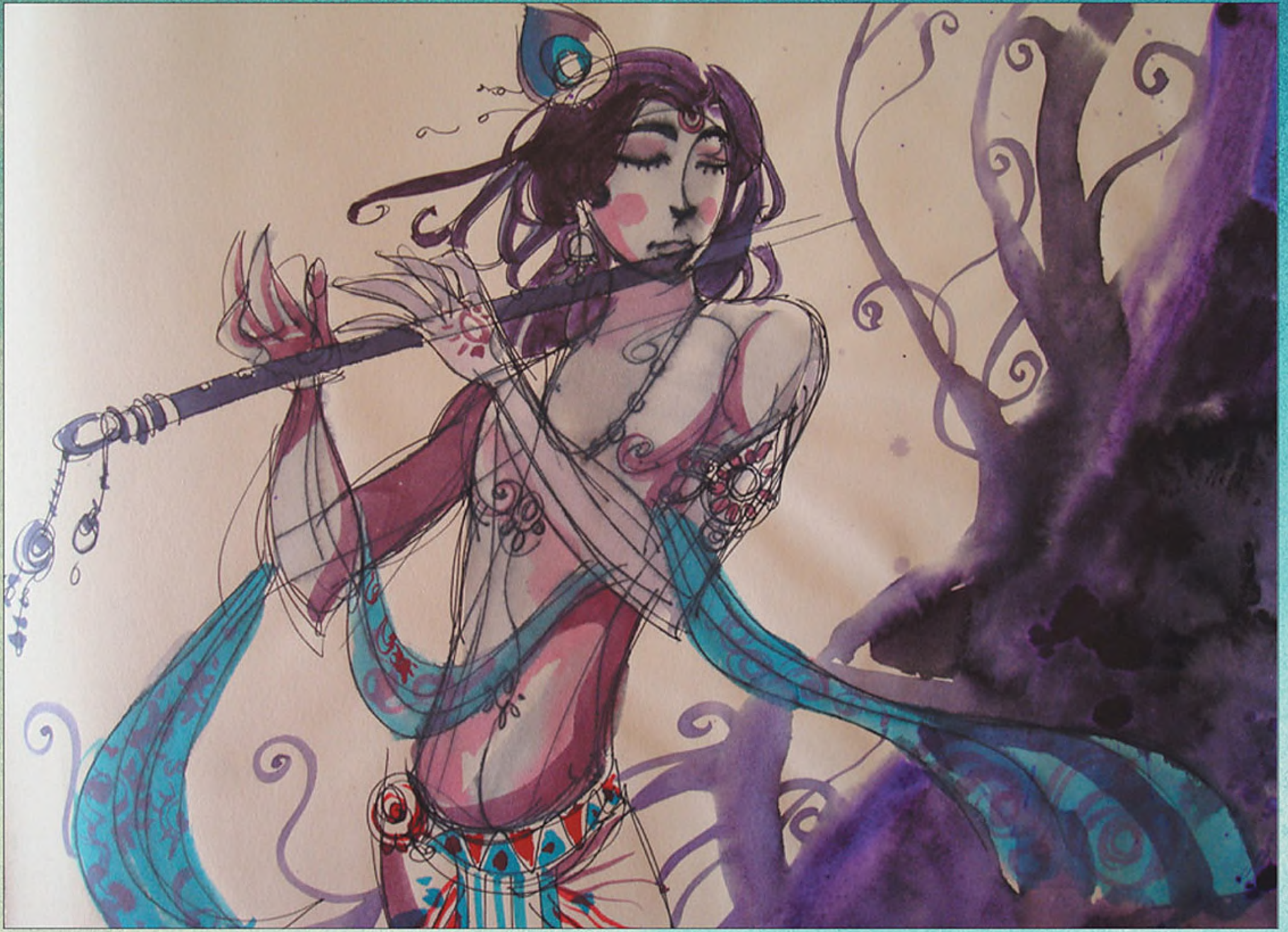










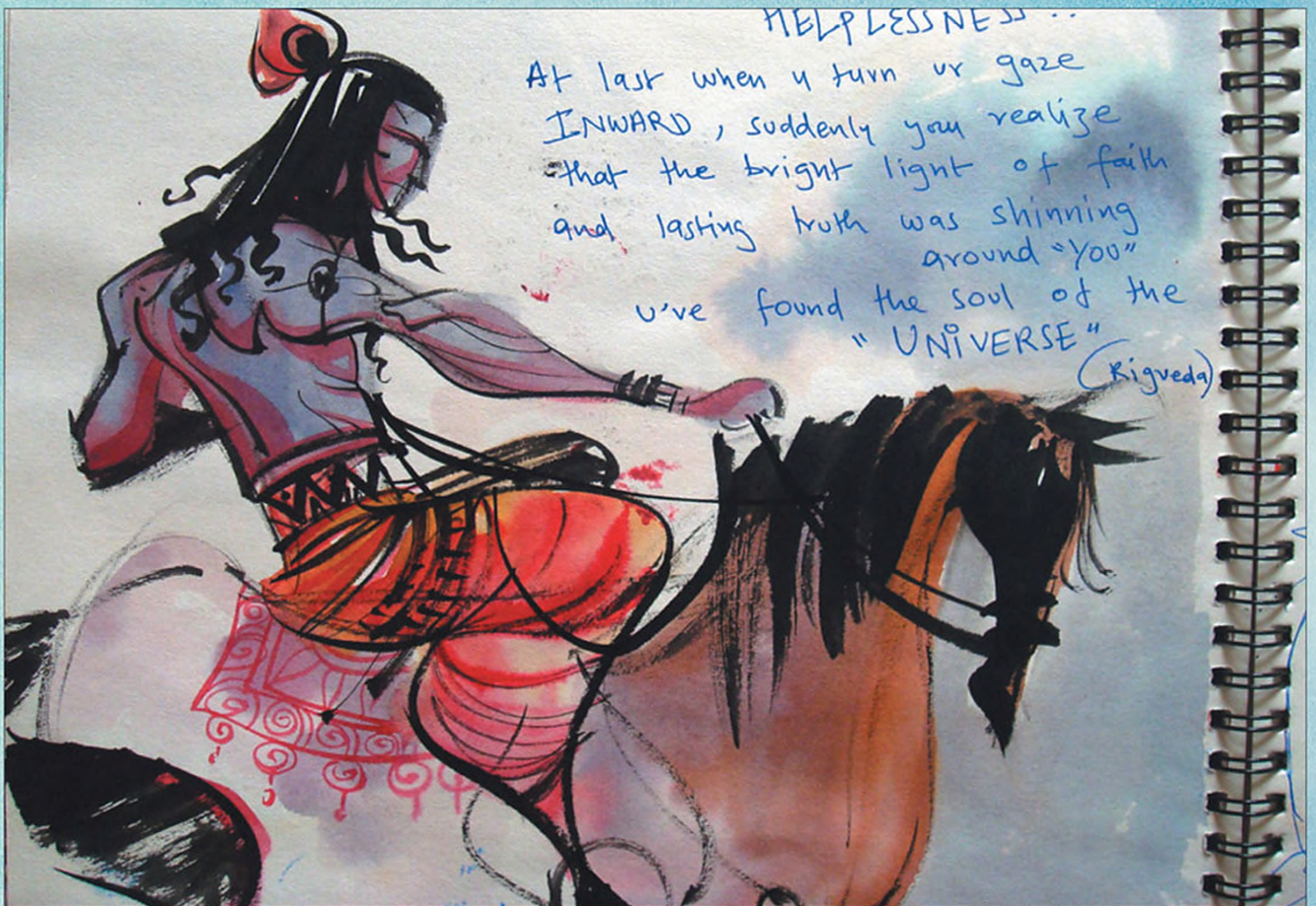


divinely placed)  
 hundred autums.)  
 (Rigveda)

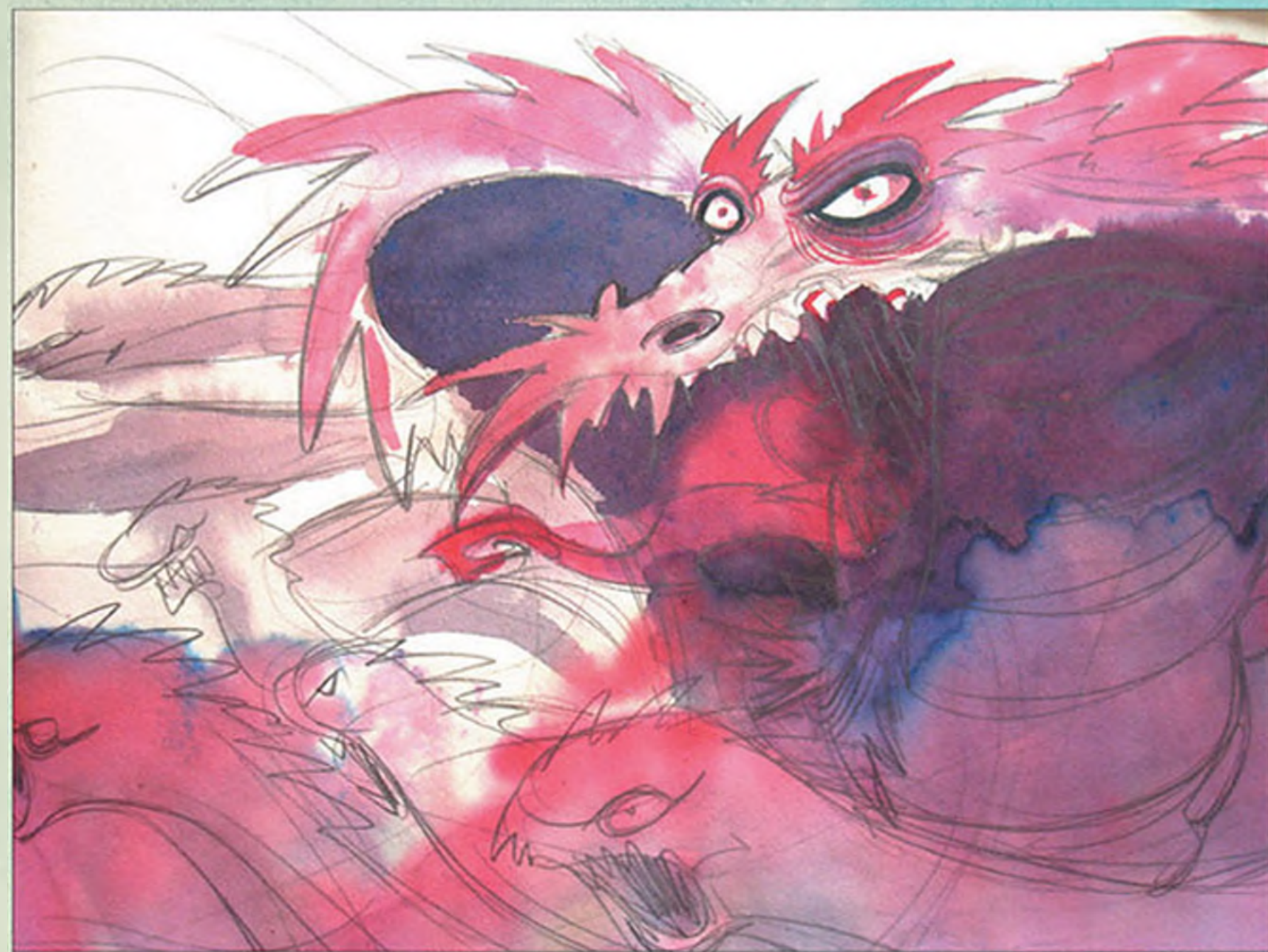
Remove disease,  
 And drive away Malignity,  
 May they ever keep us  
 FAR from sore  
 distress,  
 (Rigveda)

If ur  
 So great  
 why did u  
 abandon  
 me  
 Father!  
 (Karna - fr)









patricio de la  
he one who rules the kingdom is the one with the sharper TEETH



























Malicious fantasy.

यत्प्रत्यस्तारशेषमाया विषेशं  
पत्यरूप प्रत्यप्राम्यमानम ।  
सत्यज्ञानानन्द मानन्दरूप ॥  
ब्रह्माद्रित यत्तदेवमात्मि ।

I am that brahman,  
which is like the sky,  
without a beginning or an end.

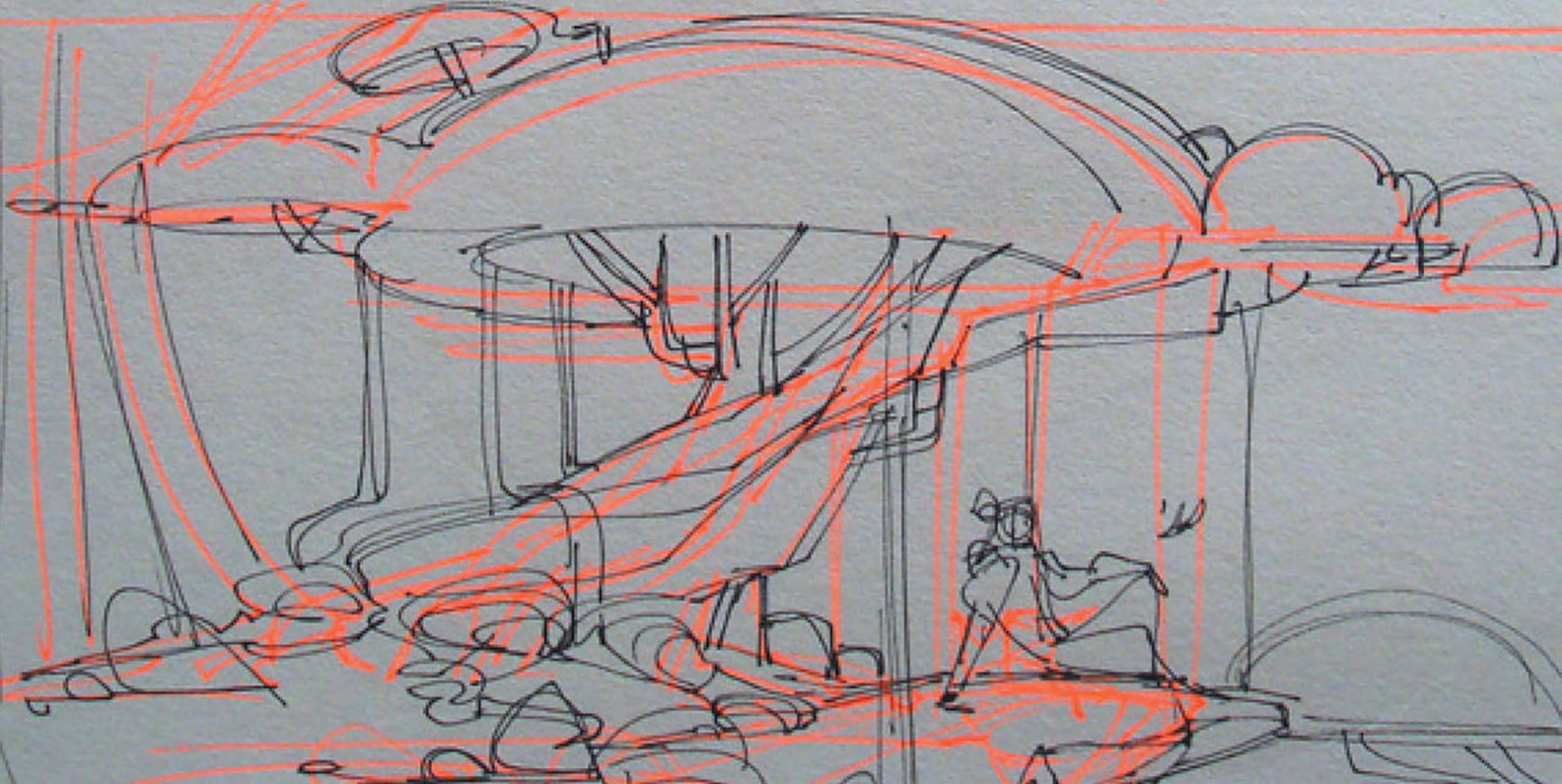
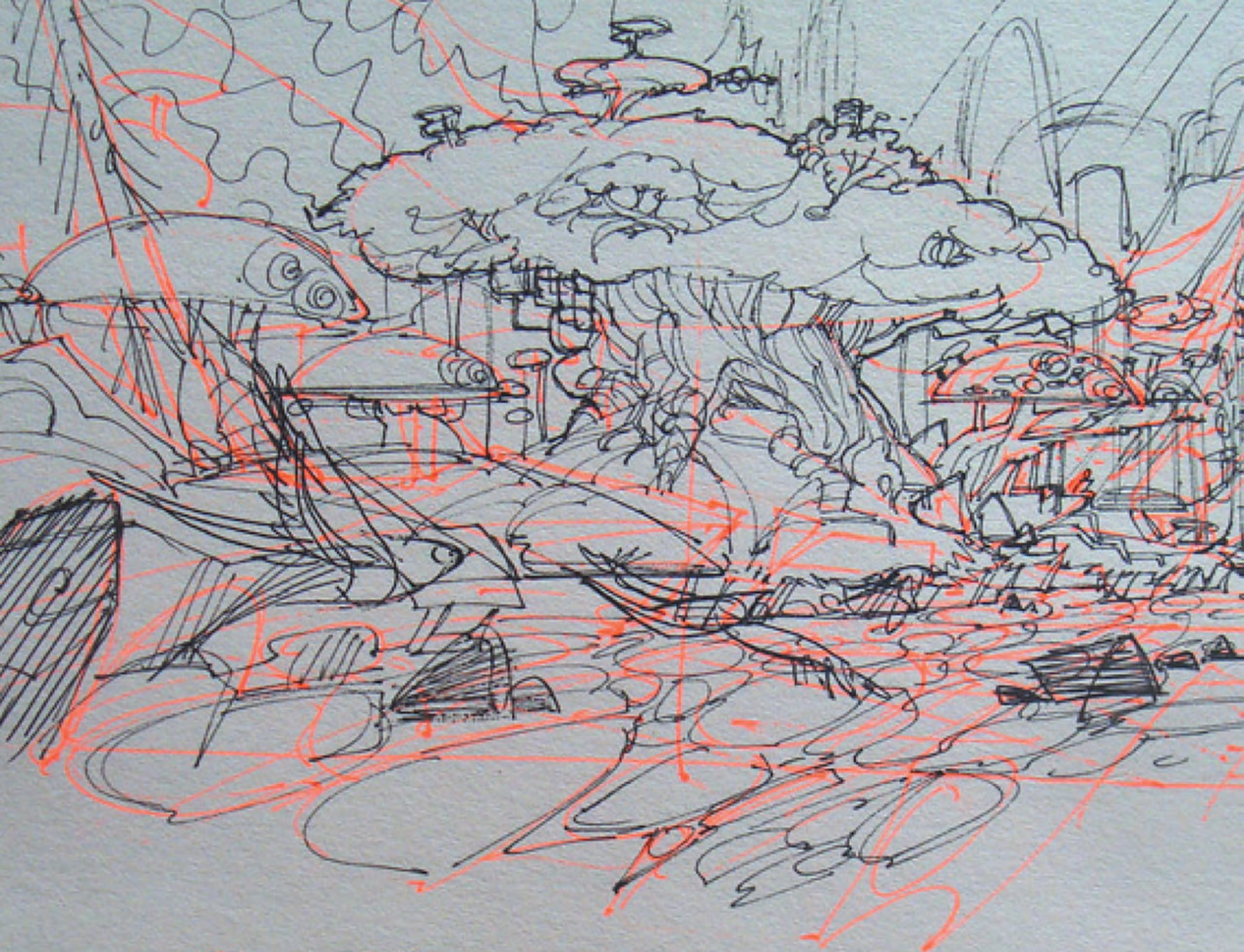
Asti matram.  
(अस्ति मातृमः)

It exists.

(Tantra Yoga / Citta)









is it true that the world balances on a back of a tortoise?

Arjun: A tortoise is a metaphor for your five senses, the world actually rests on your senses and ~~is~~ by controlling them in the right means we channelise the world in the right direction, if we get a grip over our senses we can make better choices and create a path to tortoise, and that way, a tortoise.

6

7

8

use this page show yashada move

10

what Krishna will calculate that also along with the 'Moksha' - how we fight world

window takes a breath

Arjun nostalgic places and questions with Krishna:

Sandhya. Calcutta's family

Arjun's lotus

The one who rules the kingdom, is the one with the sharper teeth. people say they live under fear. isn't fear protection, a shade from the unwanted light, haven't we been doing that all our lives, travelling far from light.

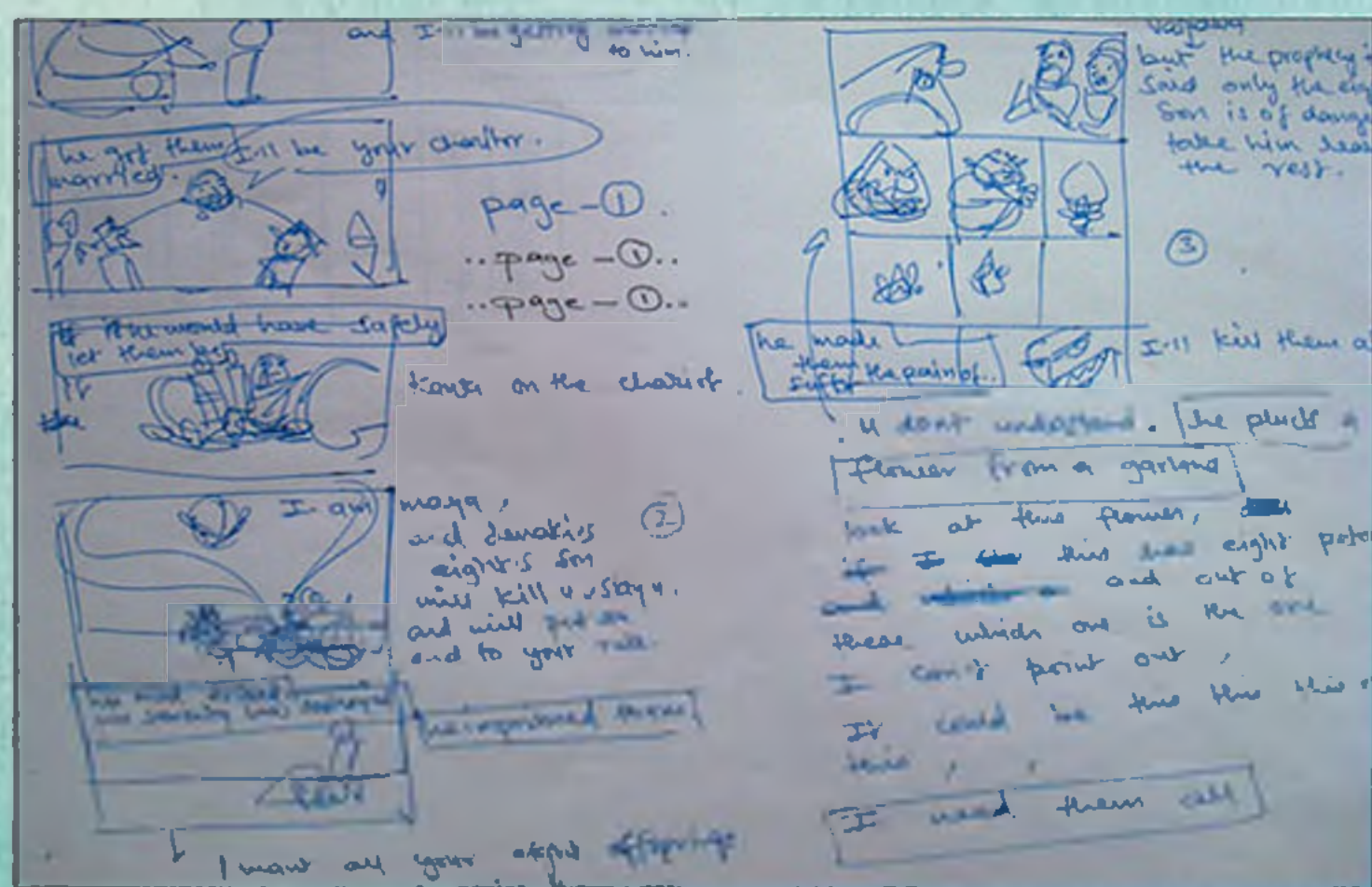
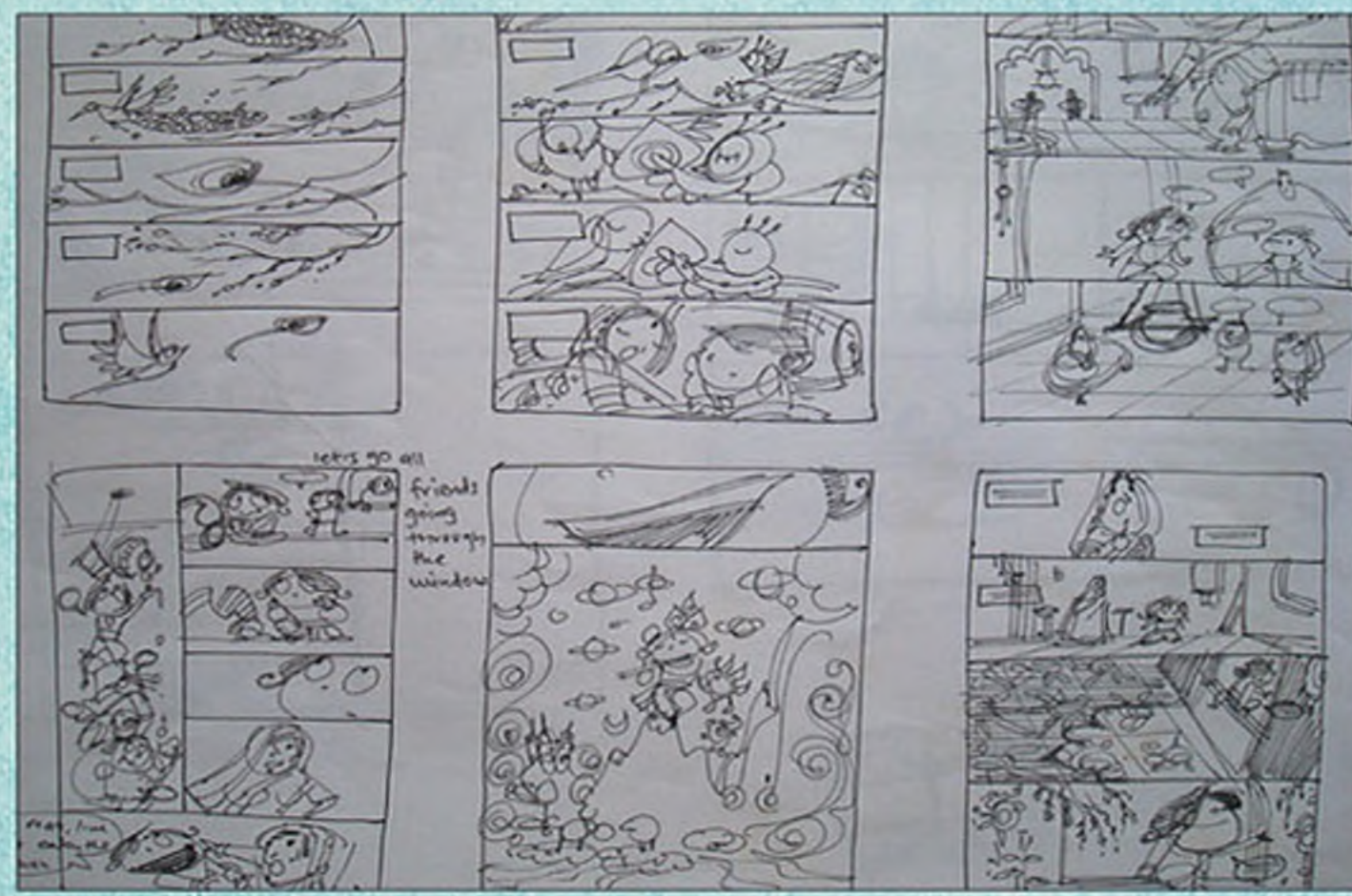
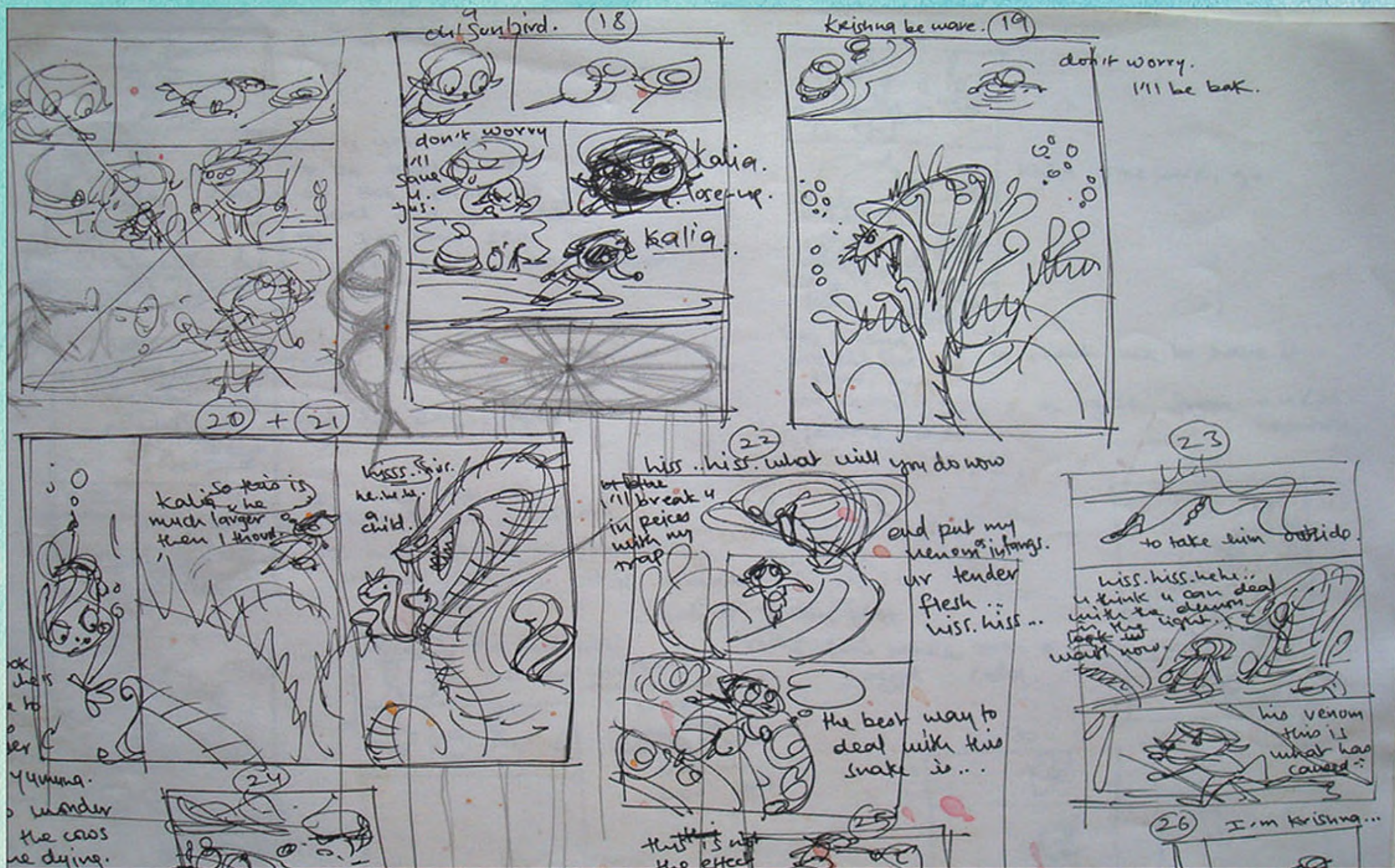
we could have lived in the open sun, so why did we build palaces, cause it's in our nature to ~~want~~ ~~from~~ so.

only if there is fear no people will live calmly, as not everyone knows what to do with freedom, only a king knows, only me and I am a good king, I think, I guess. he.. he.. he. I am the best king actually, cause I am the one

with the sharper teeth.

Krishna has reached the main door, Mahavay, and he's fighting the elephant.



















# BIOGRAPHY

ABHISHEK SINGH is an artist, graphic novelist and animation film designer/director. His works include Ramayana 3392AD (Virgin Comics), Kali and Shiva (India Authentic Series by Virgin Comics) and various animation feature-length projects. He currently lives in New Delhi, India and is completing works for his second solo art show – “DhyanaShakti” with The Nirula Family Art Trust. His works can be viewed at [www.abhisheksinghart.com](http://www.abhisheksinghart.com).







# GLOSSARY

**Makhhhan** - butter.

**Matkee** - earthen pot.

**Mohan** - He who enchants, a name synonymous to Krishna.

**Sri** - He who illuminates with his radiance, Master of all.

**Yamuna** - a tributary that flows into the holy river Ganges.

**Kaalìa** - was a poisonous snake (*Naga*) that lived in the waters of the holy Yamuna. Vedic texts describe that water for four leagues boiled and bubbled all around him and no living being could come close and live, except for a solitary Kadamba (*Neolamarckia cadamba*) tree.

**Yogmaya** - sister to Lord Krishna (*Bhagavata Purana*), an incarnation of Vishnu, a manifestation of the spiritual potency in an illusory material form.

**Ananta** - also known as Ananta Shesha, Adishesha or Sheshanaga is the king of all serpents (*Nagas*), a primal being of creation (*Bhagavata Purana*) and thus also an incarnation of Vishnu. It is said that Vishnu rests on him, and that he carries all the planets on his hoods from which he continuously sings the various glories of Vishnu. His name also indicates that he is infinite and he is all that remains, with reference to being able to exist beyond the destruction of creation.



**Purusha** - man (masculine), the centre of consciousness.

**Prakriti** - nature (feminine), the source of all material existence.

**Rasa** - devotional rapture, a theological concept based around the Krishna specific *Bhakti* tradition.

“*Raso Vai Sab*” - Truly, the Lord is Rasa. (*Brahma Sutras*).

*Rupa Goswami* of the Chaitanya traditions articulates Rasa as - “the soul’s particular relationship with the Divinity in devotional love.”

**Yudhisthira** - eldest son to King Pandu. His younger brothers are Bheem and Arjuna from the same mother Kunti and Nakul and Sahdev from King Pandu’s second wife Madri. Collectively they are referred to as the Pandavas.

**Kaurav** - though the direct translation refers to all descendants of King Kuru, in this instance it is used to restrict the reference to the representation of the elder line of King Kuru – the line of Dhritarashtra.

**Kurukshetra** - the battlefield where the Great War takes place, the land of the Kurus, symbolic psychic plane where a yogi battles his mind.

**Atman** - Soul, the True Self.

**Parmatman** - Absolute Soul, Supersoul, Supreme Soul.

**Avatar** -

Krishna refers to his 10 incarnations also known as the *Dasavatara*. In his description of these incarnations it is interesting to note, as observed by British geneticist and evolutionary biologist J B S Haldane, that the stories of the *Dasavatara*s are a true sequential depiction of evolution.

**Shunya** - null/void/nothingness

**Om** - the cosmic vibration/sound of creation.

**Prakriti** - nature, manifested reality.

**Gunas** - the operational principles of tendency - *Rajas*, *Sattva* and *Tamas* representing the trinity of Creation (Brahma), Preservation (Vishnu) and Destruction (Shiva).

**Maya** - illusion, the dream of duality.

**Jiva** - the immortal essence of a living organism, which survives physical death.

**Mahabhutas** - the five elements and their included qualitative attributes and associated body parts.

*Akasha* (space) - *Shabda* (sound) - ear

*Vayu* (air) - *Sparsha* (feeling) - skin

*Agni* (fire) - *Rupa* (appearance/color) - eye

*Jal* (water) - *Rasa* (taste) - tongue

*Prithvi* (earth) - *Gandha* (smell) - nose

**Dharma** - Natural Law; that which upholds, maintains and/or supports the regulatory order of the universe, the universal principle of law, order, harmony, all in all truth, pure reality.









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MYTHOLOGY  
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RATED **E** / EVERYONE