



#206

GOLD DIGGER

FRED PERRY



Visit Fred Perry online at
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GOLD DIGGER

STORY AND ART BY
FRED PERRY

EDITED BY
DOUG DLIN
WES HARTMAN

PRESIDENT
Joe Dunn

PUBLISHING MANAGER
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GD200fanmail@gmail.com

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"HOLD NORTH AND AND
NORTHWEST AS THE PLAINS
YIELD TO THE FAR HILLS."

"BEHOLD THE *CHITTERING
HILLS*, CAPITAL OF THE
CHIPMUNKS ON JADE, TO
THE RIGHT, YOUR FINAL
LANDMARK..."

"...BRIANNA'S HOMESTEAD
AND ORCHARD LIE ONE-
QUARTER MILE HENCE THE
LAST OF THE ENCHANTED
RODENT DALES."

GUH...

GREAT...
I'M LOST.

THANKS FOR
THE DIRECTIONS,
MOM!!!

I KNEW I SHOULD
HAVE ASKED DAD
FOR A MAGIC GPS
OR SOMETHING!



WAIT...

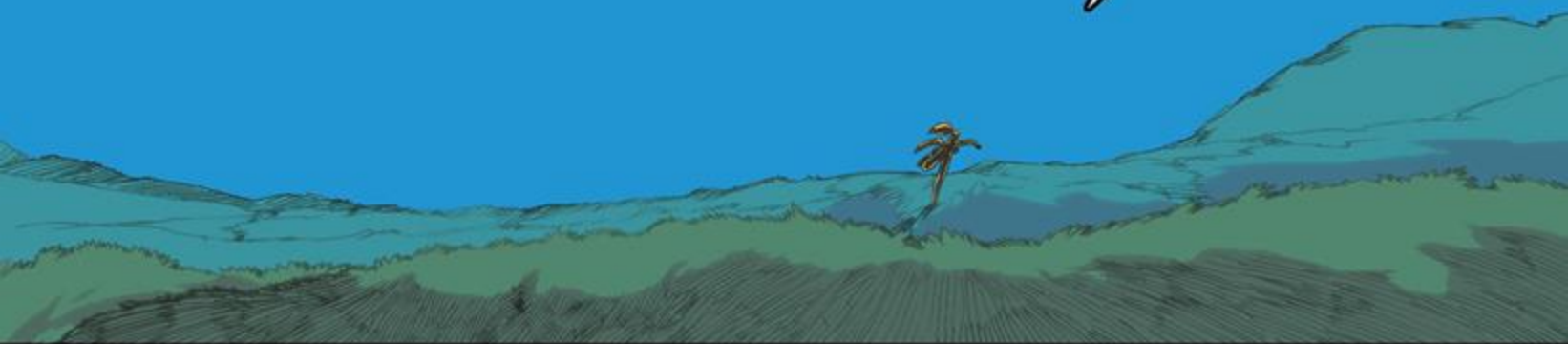
WAIT A
MINUTE...

FAINT SOUNDS
OF SQUEAKIN'
FROM THAT
HILL!

PLUS...

...I SMELL CORDITE!

AND CHIPMUNKS!!!



"CUTE AND FLUFFY
PROTECTED BY
HIGH-CALIBER
ORDNANCE..."

"BRIANNA'S
DEFINITELY IN THE
NEIGHBORHOOD!"

ZAN...
TELL EVERYBODY TO
REMAIN ABSOLUTELY
STILL!

I'M THE
BAIT HERE.



I'M THE ONLY ONE
WHO NEEDS TO BE
OUT OF COVER
AND--

ZAN! GET
BACK!!!



WHAT DO
YOU THINK
YOU'RE...

MONSTERS
PLANNING TO
TRICK US,
BRIANNA...

ONE MONSTER
IN THE OPEN...

...ONE HIDDEN IN
BUSHES, WAITING
TO POUNCE!

ZAN WILL
DRAW IT
OUT FOR
YOU!



NO, ZAN!!!
GET BACK!
WE'LL BRING
IN OUR BACK-
UP--







ZAN!!!

GET CLEAR!!!
TEAM CHUBBY CHEEKS
WILL COVER YOU!!!



TEAM C.C.!!!
LAY DOWN
SUPPRESSION
NUTS!

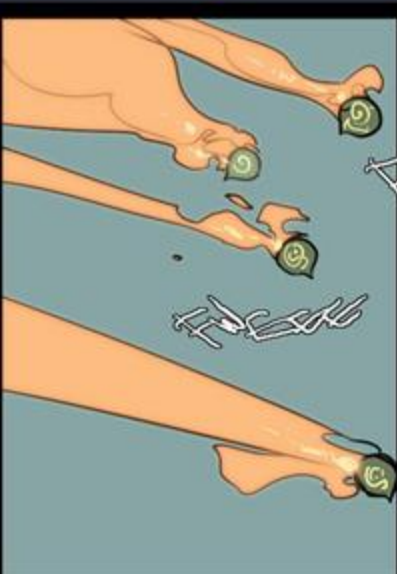


CheeChee

Fwoosh

Foom

CheeChee!



Kabon

Fwoosh

Hucham

KKRAACH!!!





WAA!!

SQUEE...



FLUFFERNUMS!
NO!!!

HMM!

MUHUUUUUUUU!!

YOU--YOU
BASTARD!!!

LETTING YOUR
PAL TAKE ALL THE
LUMPS WHILE YOU
SNATCHED A
HOSTAGE!!!

MUHUUUUUU!!



GRRRN!
GRRN!
GRRN!

YOU...YOU WANT
ME TO DROP MY
WEAPON!?

YUHUU

MUH-- MUHUUUUUU!!

SQUEEE!



SQUEEE BEEEE!!

YOU
DIRTY--







OH, DON'T
EVEN HOWL
LIKE YOU DIDN'T
DESERVE
THAT!!!

YOU AIN'T HUNGRY! YOU
AIN'T SCARED, AND THIS
AIN'T YOUR TERRITORY!!!

YOU'RE JUST MAD
'CAUSE I'M SPOILIN'
YOUR "HAPPY MURDER
FUN TIME"!

AND YOU KNOW YOU
CAN'T BEAT ME!!!

SO CARRY YOUR
@\$\$ BACK TO
THE MIST WHERE
YOU CAME FR--

RRROO



Back!

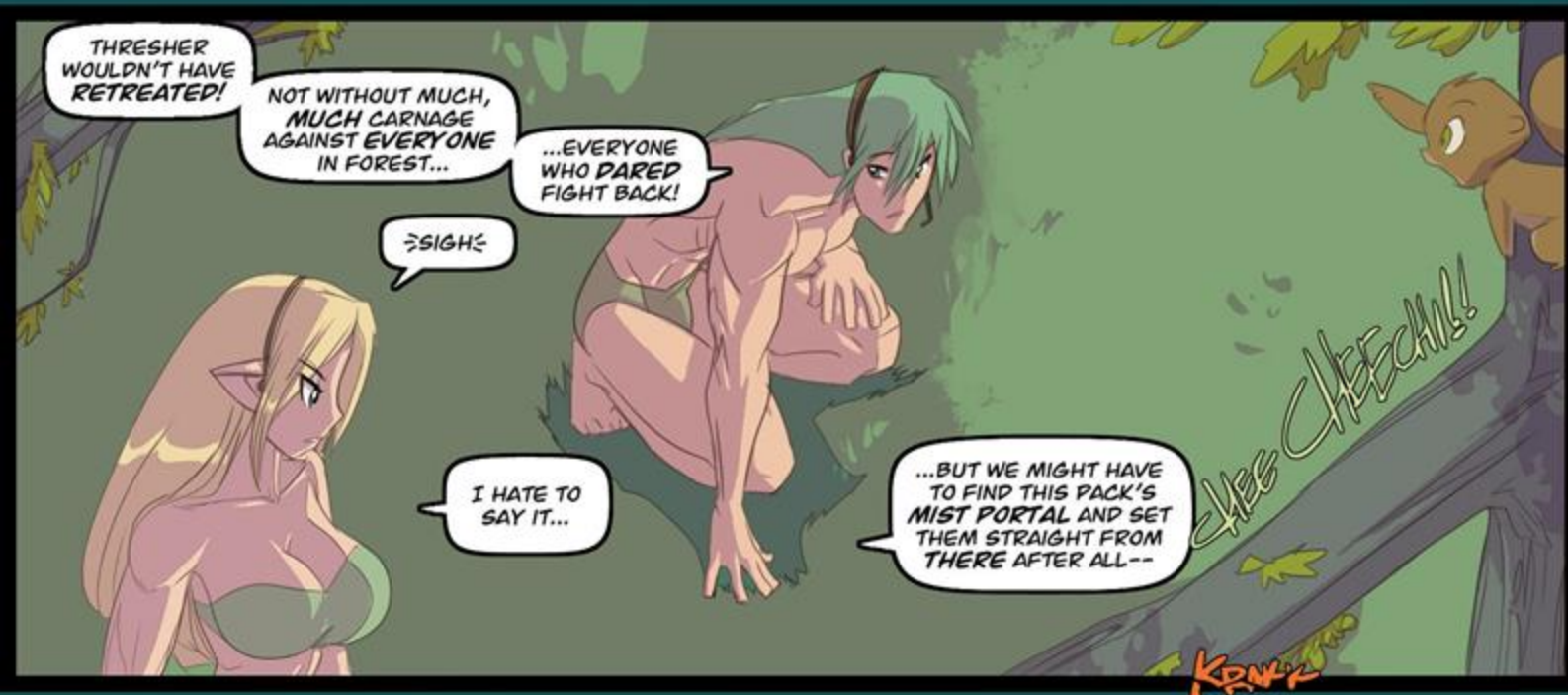
CHUUUU...

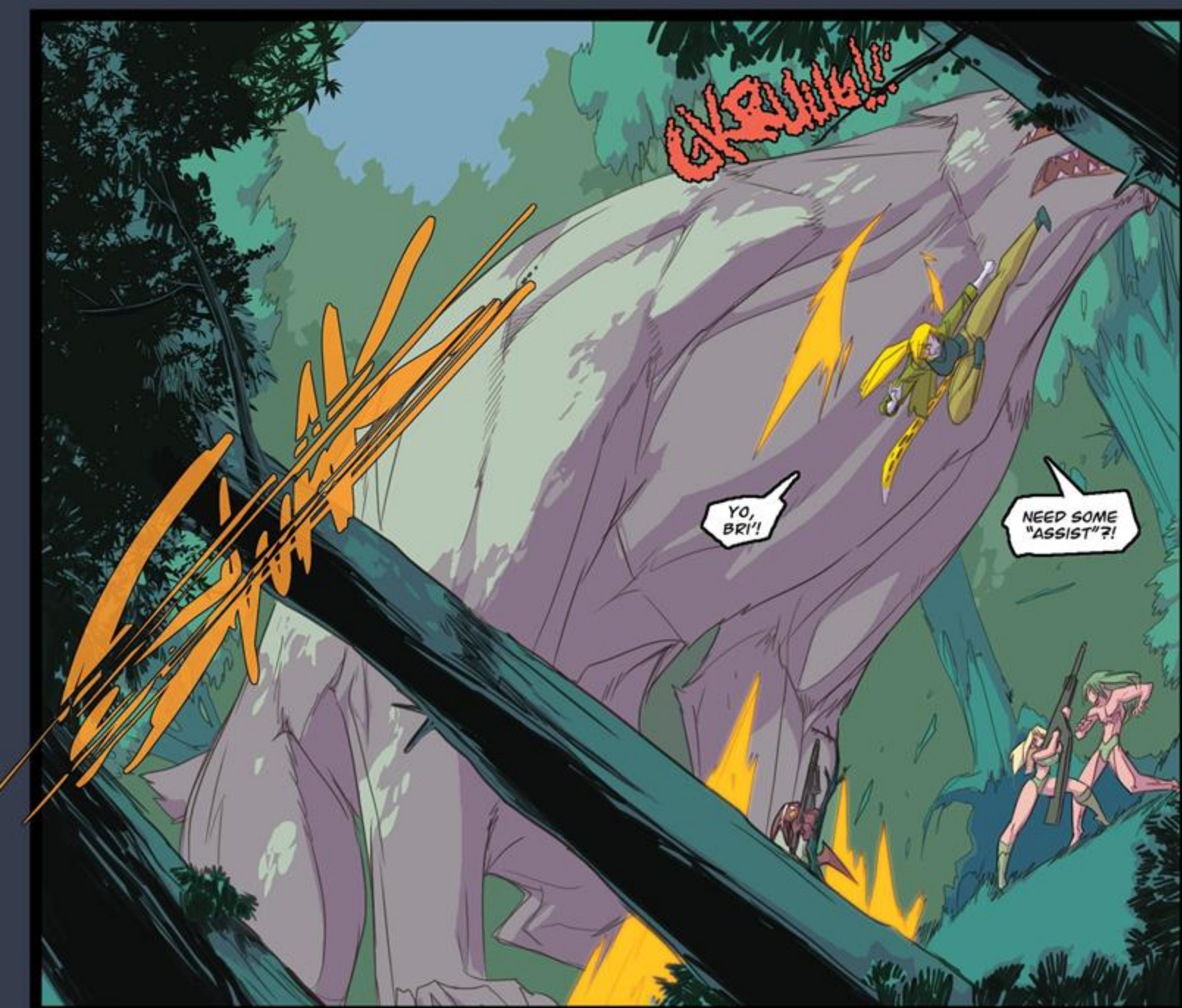
SHOOTY-CHU!

NICE SHOT!

BUT I WAS
HOPING TO
CONVINCE IT
TO GO BACK...

... BACK TO
WARN ALL THE
REST OF THE
MIST MONSTERS
AWAY FROM
THIS REGION!





KRAPOW!!!

YO,
BRI'!

NEED SOME
"ASSIST"?!



BRIT'!!!

ALL RIGHT!

DIGGERS SISTER
TAG TEAM IN THE
HIZZY!

I'LL ZONE 'EM!
YOU RUSH THAT
SHUTDOWN!!!



BUT BE
CAREFUL
WITH THAT
ONE! HE'S A
BAD@\$\$!

KRAPOW!!!

WHOA!!!

NOT EVEN
FAZED?

THIS
MUTHER-
SUCKER CAN
TAKE A HIT!!!

KRAPOW!!!

KRAPOW!!!

I BETTER KICK
IT UP A NO--



BRIT'!!!

OH, THIS IS
REAL NOW,
"PALE"!

INVADE MY
NEIGHBORHOOD?!

MUG MY
SISTER?!



I'M ABOUT
TO WHUP
THAT A--







CRAP!

PALE GOT AWAY!

AND HE TOOK HIS PALS!!!

CRAP!



BRIT'?

I-I'M OKAY...
JUST SCRATCHED...
MANGLED...

NOTHING I CAN'T
REGENERATE IF I
SIT STILL FOR A
WHILE...

UGN!

KNOCKED THE
TUNA RIGHT
OUTTA ME,
THOUGH!

I'VE GOTTA CHECK
THE AREA!

STAY PUT FOR
THE MEDICS!

FOR THE
WHAT?



TEAM CHUBBY
CHEEKS!

SEND UP
SQUAD TWO'S
COMBAT
MEDICS!!!

TREAT FOR
SLASH
WOUNDS!



WHAT...
IN...
THE WORLD!?!?!?

EVERYONE ELSE,
KEEP ON HIGH
ALERT AND STAY
FROSTY!!!





EVERYONE
STAY ON
ALERT!

WITH PALE
ALPHA AROUND,
ANYTHING
COULD BE
UP!

BRIANNA!

ZAN SEES
PALE
MONSTER
MOVING
WEST!



DRIVING
INJURED
PACK INTO
MISTED
TERRITORY!

BUT HOW DID
THE PACK
MOVE SO FAR
AWAY SO
QUICKLY!?!?

GOOD
EYES,
ZAN!!!

WE
NEEDED
THAT
INTEL!



LISTEN UP,
TEAM.

OUR MISSION IS TO
MAKE SURE THOSE
BULLIES DON'T COME
BACK AND TERRORIZE
THE NEIGHBORHOOD
AGAIN!

ZAN, YOU
AND BRIT'
COME WITH
ME.

SHOOTY,
YOU'RE IN
CHARGE OF
DEFENSE!

~ NINJA
GA-CHUNK!
CHUNK!

BRIANNA? WE
NEED TO TALK
FOR A SEC.



HM?
WHAT'S UP,
BRITANNY?

I THINK IT WOULD
BE BETTER IF
YOU REMAINED
BEHIND.

ZAN AND I
CAN HANDLE
THE BULLIES!

BUT YOU?

BRIANNA,
YOU'RE TWO
MONTHS
PREGNANT
WITH YOUR
AND ZAN'S
CHILD!

YOU NEED
TO TAKE IT
EASY...

...AND PUT UP
THE ARMOR
AND GUNS...

...UNTIL YOUR
BABY IS IN
COLLEGE.





WHAT THE HECK ARE YOU TALKIN' 'BOUT, SIS?!!

YOU'RE "MOMMA BRIANNA" NOW!!!

YOU GOTTA START ACTING WITH MORE RESPONSIBILITY! MORE CONSIDERATION!

YOU GOTTA THINK ABOUT EVERYTHING YOU DO AND ABOUT WHAT COULD HURT YOUR BABY!!!



JUST LOOK AT HOW CARELESS YOU'RE BEING ALREADY!

JUST LOOK AT SHOOTY-CHU!!!



HE OBVIOUSLY LOOKS AT YOU AS HIS "MOMMY"...

...YOU'VE OBVIOUSLY ADOPTED HIM...

...AND YOU'VE OBVIOUSLY ARMED HIM FOR BATTLE!

IS THIS WHAT YOU'RE GONNA DO WITH YOUR OWN BABY?!!



ONE: SHOOTY-CHU IS A CRACK SHOT!

A SUPER-TALENTED SUPER-SNIPER!

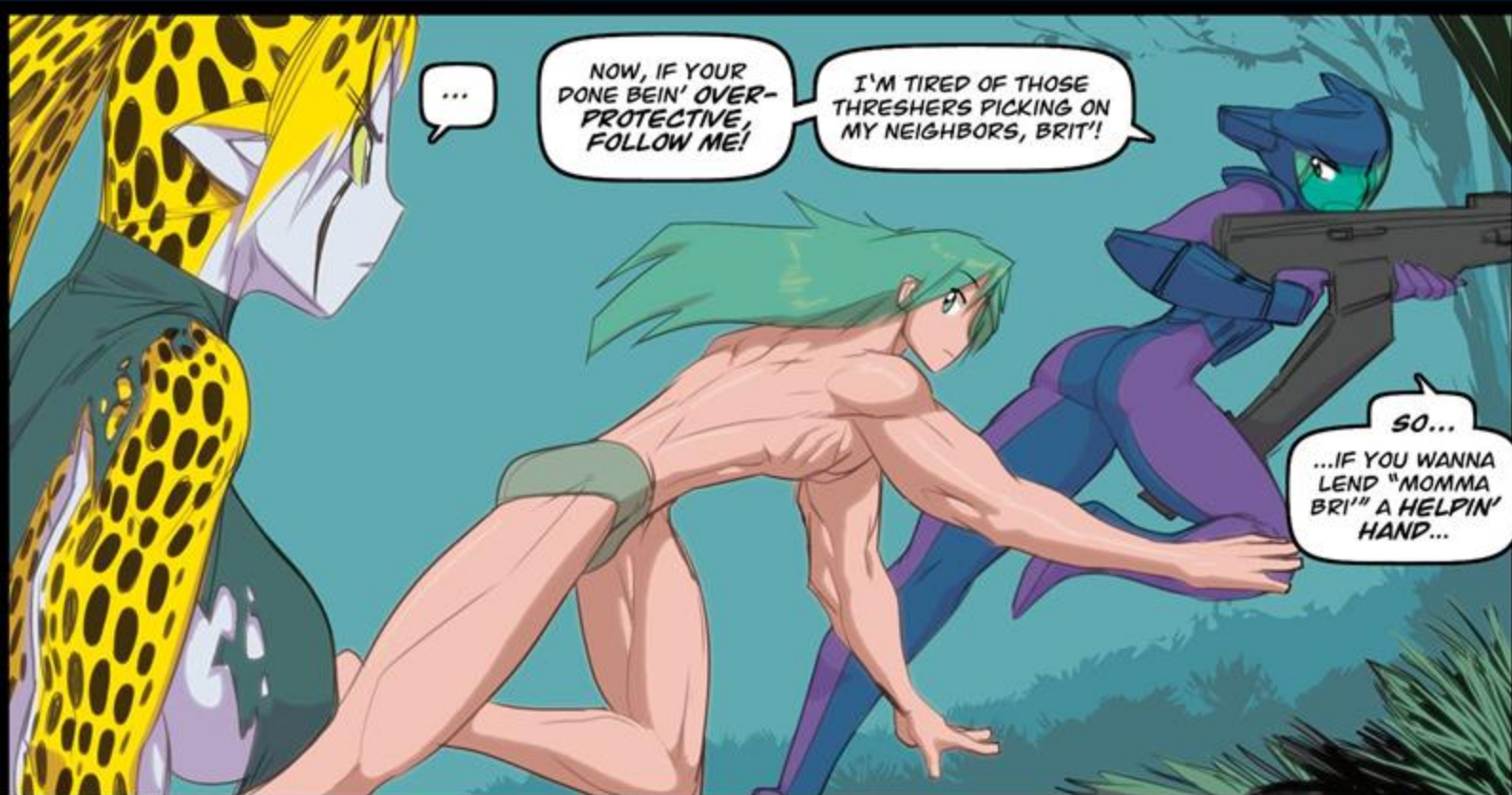
TWO: HE'S THREE YEARS OLD... THAT'S TWELVE IN "THUNDER BUNNY" YEARS! NOT A BABY!!!

(WELL... ADMITTEDLY, THAT'S A BAD ARGUMENT... BUT!)

THREE: THE BADDIES AROUND HERE THINK HELPLESS TARGETS ARE THE MOST FUN TO MURDER!!!

FOUR: IF MY CHILDREN DEMONSTRATE THE SAME SKILL, DISCIPLINE AND MENTAL TOUGHNESS AS SHOOTY-CHU TO DEFEND THEMSELVES FROM SADISTIC MONSTERS ON THE LOOSE?

YOU'RE PURN RIGHT I'M GONNA ARM AND TRAIN THEM!



...

NOW, IF YOUR DONE BEIN' OVER-PROTECTIVE, FOLLOW ME!

I'M TIRED OF THOSE THRESHERS PICKING ON MY NEIGHBORS, BRIT'!

SO...

...IF YOU WANNA LEND "MOMMA BRI" A HELPIN' HAND...

"...HELP HER
KICK SOME BIG
OL' FREAKY
MONSTERY
PATOOTIES!"

HMPH!
LOOK AT
THAT!

ONCE AGAIN, YOUR
"AGENTS" RETURN
WITH THEIR CRAVEN,
SCORCHED TAILS
TUCKED!

YOU'RE NOT HOLDING
UP YOUR END OF THE
BARGAIN, VLAD!



EXASPERATING...
FRUSTRATING!

I'VE MADE YOUR PACK
THE **STRONGEST** IN
THE REALM OF JADE!



YOU CANNOT TIRE...
YOUR BODIES ARE NIGH-
INDESTRUCTIBLE!

I'VE MADE YOU
REVENANTS!

ZOMBIES
OF THE
HIGHEST
QUALITY!

SOULS OF
THE VILEST
DARKNESS!



AND YET, YOU'RE
GETTING YOUR @\$\$ES
HANDLED TO YOU BY A
FOREST FULL OF FUZZ-
HUGGIES AND
GULLYFLUFFS!!!

IT'S NOT
LOOKING
GOOD,
VLADIMIR!



IF YOUR MINIONS
CANNOT SOW DISCORD
AND CHAOS IN THE
SENTIENT FORESTS OF
JADE-REALM, OUR
PLANS FALL SHORT!

I CANNOT USE THE
RAGE OF THE FOREST
IN A MASS REAPING
ENCHANTMENT TO
DESTABILIZE THE
REGION!

I CANNOT WEAKEN
THE POWERS OF THE
LOCAL AUTHORITIES...

...AND SO THEIR HOLD
ON YOUR IMPRISONED
LADY-LOVE...

...VAMPIRE QUEEN
NATASHA VOLSTOV...

...REMAINS
INTACT!



YOU WEAKLINGS
HAVE TRIED MY
PATIENCE LONG
ENOUGH!

YOU'VE LOST THE
PRIVELEGE TO
INDULGE IN YOUR
INNATE CRUELTY!

FROM NOW ON,
UNDER COVER
OF NIGHT...

MAKE THEM
YOUR ZOMBIES.

SHUT UP AND
LISTEN, DOGS!

...YOU WILL USE YOUR
REVENANT POWERS AND
BEGIN INFECTING
OTHER ANIMALS.

INFEST THE
FOREST FROM
THE SHADOWS
LIKE THE
COWARDS
YOU...



...ARE.

THRESHER
HEARING IS
QUITE SHARP!

SOMEONE
APPROACHES.



LOOKS LIKE THOSE "CUTE,
FLUFFY DEFENDERS"
HAVE DECIDED TO TAKE
THE OFFENSIVE, VLAD.

...INDEED.

I DON'T KNOW
ABOUT YOU...BUT
I SMELL HEROES
ON THE RISE!

...INDEED,
SERPENTUS.



GO, YOU FOOLS!

FINISH THE TASKS I
SET BEFORE YOU!

KILL!

AND WITH
THAT, I TAKE
MY LEAVE.

I'M STILL
RECOVERING
FOR MY LAST
RUN-IN WITH
HEROES.

AND I'M IN NO
CONDITION TO
DO BATTLE.

LET ME KNOW
HOW THIS
TURNS OUT.



ACTUALLY...

I THINK I'LL...
LEAVE THIS TO
MY SUBORDINATES
AS WELL.

...INDEED.



"A BATTLE HERE AND
NOW SERVES NONE OF
MY INTERESTS!"

THIS IS THE
MIST WALL?

IT LOOKS LIKE A
PARKED TORNADO!!

HOW DO WE
GET IN!?

ZAN? ANY
CLUES?

MONSTERS' TRAIL
SHOWS CAREFUL..
SINGLE FILE
STEPS.

LIKE MONSTERS
KNOW ONLY ONE
PATH EXISTS!



WAIT...YOU MEAN
THIS SUCKER HAS
A DOORWAY OR
TUNNEL?
A PASSAGE?

FOREST DRYADS
TEACH ZAN
ABOUT MISTS.
BEFORE, MONSTER
MISTS ONLY COME
ONCE A YEAR AND
ONLY STAY FOR
SHORT TIME.

BUT THESE
DAYS...

WAIT!
FOUND IT!!!

THIS PART HAS
NO WIND!

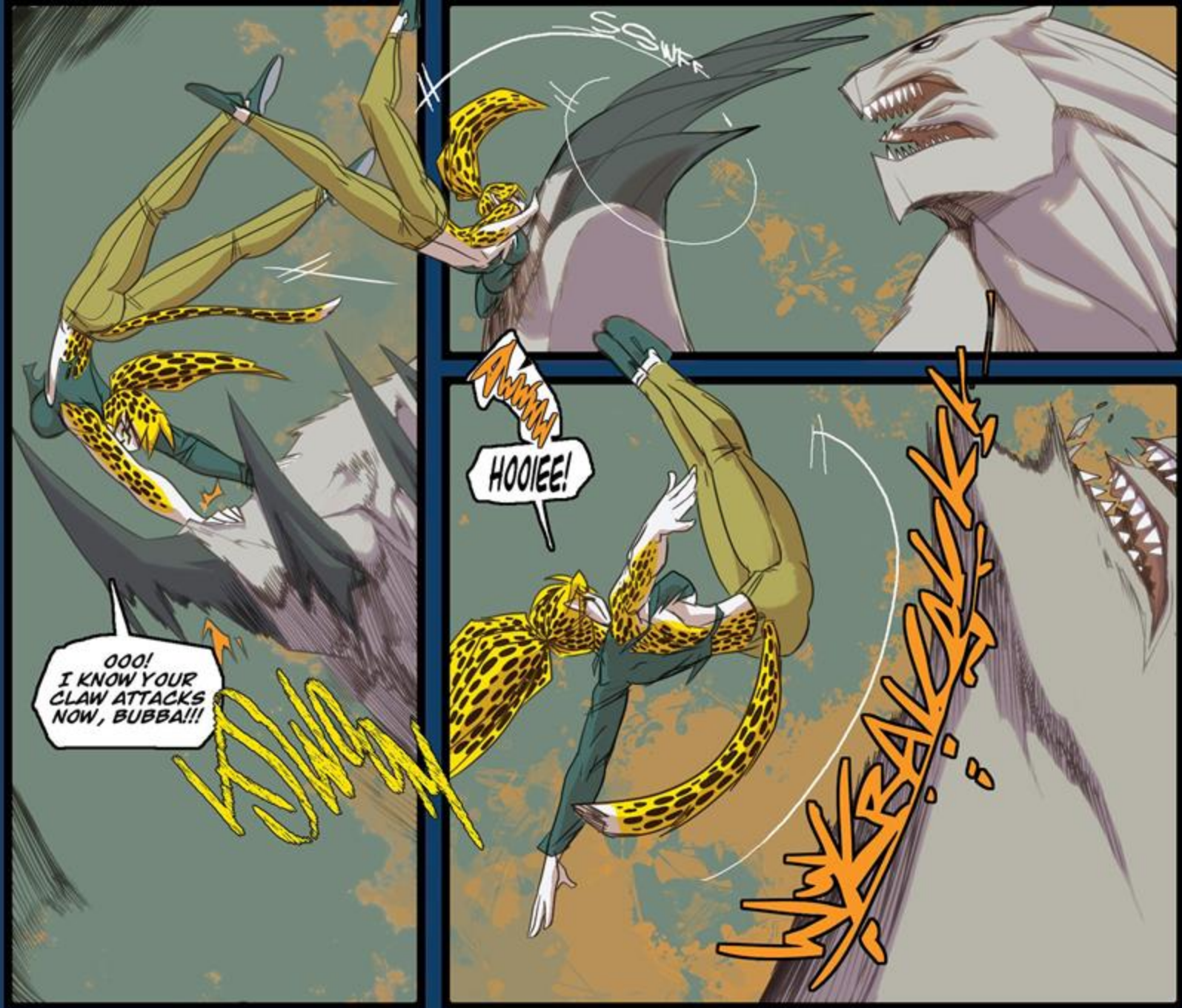


THIS PART
LEADS INTO
MIST!



WAAAAA
WAAAAA

ZAN!



000!
I KNOW YOUR
CLAW ATTACKS
NOW, BUBBA!!!

HOOIEE!



WHOA!!

THAT STILL
DIDN'T HURT!?!

THAT WAS A GRADE-
A CHEETAH KICK!!!



?!?

Kelpy!

Huckpam



More fantastic feedback from our readers this month. Thank you one and all, and keep 'em coming!

Oh gads, this is so wonderful! We so very, very rarely get to see Julia caught with her foot in her mouth. It's easy to see where Gina gets it now. Seems rather like the Daughters of Angia's fatal flaw is more distrust in their daughters' judgments.

As to were-rats, I hope we get to see more of them eventually. They've inspired a couple of my characters, including one you did a pic for back last year, and a rogue/paladin undead-hunter of mine who is a wererat. (Managed to play her in a PBEM for about a year without letting on to the other players that she wasn't just a human rogue....and did it without breaking the paladin code. Was awesome.)

That said, I'm also hoping to see more of Tanya. I still have this idea of her kids and Brit's eventually meeting and becoming friends, much to the parents' chagrins. Actually... the same pic with my wererat for *CoH* that you did for me had a character that was conceived as a child of Tanya and Ranma's. I know it's highly unlikely, given that if Tanya had a kid at this point, they'd have to be much younger than Tiff...well, unless there's stuff going on that we don't know about.

Still, the thought is amusing.

I'm ranting a bit here. Anyway, these episodic things are a great idea, I'm really getting some solid looks at characters I didn't know much about before, such as Zan.

As always, thanks for the hard work at giving us these things.

Luke Green

Hmmmm. I haven't done a story with Lydia, Moisha and Romeo in a long, long time! Thanks for the idea, Luke!

I just re-read issue 105, and as I looked at the part where Sleake gets chastised for criticizing Gina, I realized that Sleake had a point, because I'm pretty sure Gina isn't into archaeology to help the scientific community.

I mean, think about it. Gina believes treasure-hunters and opportunists are "@\$\$holes", but she has no qualms about keeping the treasure she finds for herself, and the profits she gets from archaeology are large enough that her sister Brittany can casually spend millions of dollars on shopping trips. She claims the treasure is just a bonus and she's mainly there for history, but I'm certain that she just keeps the majority of the information she finds for herself or her inner circle of super-scientists and adventurers. If she didn't, then I'm sure Sleake would have known more about her when they first met. I mean, is it public knowledge that Gina not only discovered El Dorado, but found out it was full of alien cat-people who had waged war against Atlantis? Do ancient historians know that the Greek gods and titans were fighting over who had the best coffee?

This leads me into my next point: Gina could advance the world by, like, 1000 years in a week if she wanted to. She's invented teleporters that reach to other dimensions, flying cars that don't let out emissions, and matter-food converters. She could use her universal translator to destroy all social barriers. If she wanted, she could

probably do research into Brittany's healing factor and revolutionize the medical industry. In fact, I recall that in one issue, she cured cancer, and it was never brought up again. My point in all this: Gina could do all that and more, but she apparently decided that the best way to serve the scientific community would be to keep all this technology for herself and her friends so they can continue to search for historical macguffins.

I'm serious about that macguffin thing. There was one time where Gina traded the Infinity Pearl, an object that literally gives limitless energy, for a key that would let her explore the pyramids, a key that didn't survive to the end of the issue. And she didn't think it was a dumb move until she needed the pearl years later.

To summarize, I don't think Gina is an archaeologist for science, but to satisfy her own want for adventure.

Jamar Baggs

First: The "Millions" is actually a very small percentage of the value of her finds, as most honorariums are.

Do you know how much the "mundane" artifacts and treasures are worth? \$28 MILLION for a SINGLE Roman statue, "Artemis and Stag!" Had Gina discovered it, she'd have gotten 10% as an honorarium. Gina does keep the dangerous stuff from public museums, but she could've been a billionaire if she'd decided to sell instead of donate to museums for small-percentage honorariums.

Second: A LOT of folks could have advanced the world 1000 years in a week without Gina and her fantastic discoveries. Did you know that in REAL LIFE, diesel engines were designed to run on cooking oil? That we could have hydrogen-burning cars today? Tesla told us that we could have electricity generated from radio waves in much the same way we snatch sound and pictures from them. Why haven't we looked into that?

Gina can't advance any society that still profits from technology based on Ford's first internal combustion engine. From a society that wants to charge large profits from 80-year-old power line technology. Instead, Gina and the Explorer's Society exist as a sort of scholastic Justice League. The technology and discoveries are public domain, but esoteric in implementation—except for the cure to cancer that comes from gamma radiation bombardments. That one is widely known, but only useful for Incredible Hulk-style situations.

Third: She still has that key. It works on all Saurian locks. She used it in issue 200. For all intents and purposes, the Infinity Pearl was an infinite AA battery. Until you need something that can work as a quasi-dimensional sparkplug, it's not as useful as it seems.

Dear Fred,

I've been a fan of your comic for a long time. While I may have discovered it around issue #77, I think, it hasn't stopped me from enjoying each and every issue I've gotten my hands upon. I have to admit that your comics are my #1 reason for going to the comic store.