

RUBY SUN

THE POWER WE SHARE

A RANDOM COMICS ONE-SHOT BY NICHOLAS ALEXANDER BENSON



When Ruby Sun was six years old, her father taught her how to fall. She hated it.



Every lesson ended with Ruby flat on the dojo floor while he calmly told her, 'Again.'



He taught punches, kicks, balance, breathing, and restraint. Falling was different because anybody could be knocked down.



What mattered was knowing what to do next. Ruby always stood, brushed herself off, and charged him again.



The dojo stood in a hardworking neighborhood where the mob demanded protection money from families who already owned little. Ruby's father called it extortion.



When enforcers came to change his mind, he defeated them without cruelty and stood between them and everyone else.



For a few glorious days, Ruby believed one brilliant martial artist had settled everything. Then the mob escalated beyond a fair fight.



Her father did not survive protecting the dojo. Ruby learned that even the strongest guardian could become one terrible point of failure.





Orphaned Ruby survived by performing the only skill she could sell: impossible kicks, flips, balances, and martial-arts forms that stopped crowded markets.



Coins became meals. Applause became confidence. Then strangers began asking how to escape a grab, face someone larger, or protect a friend.

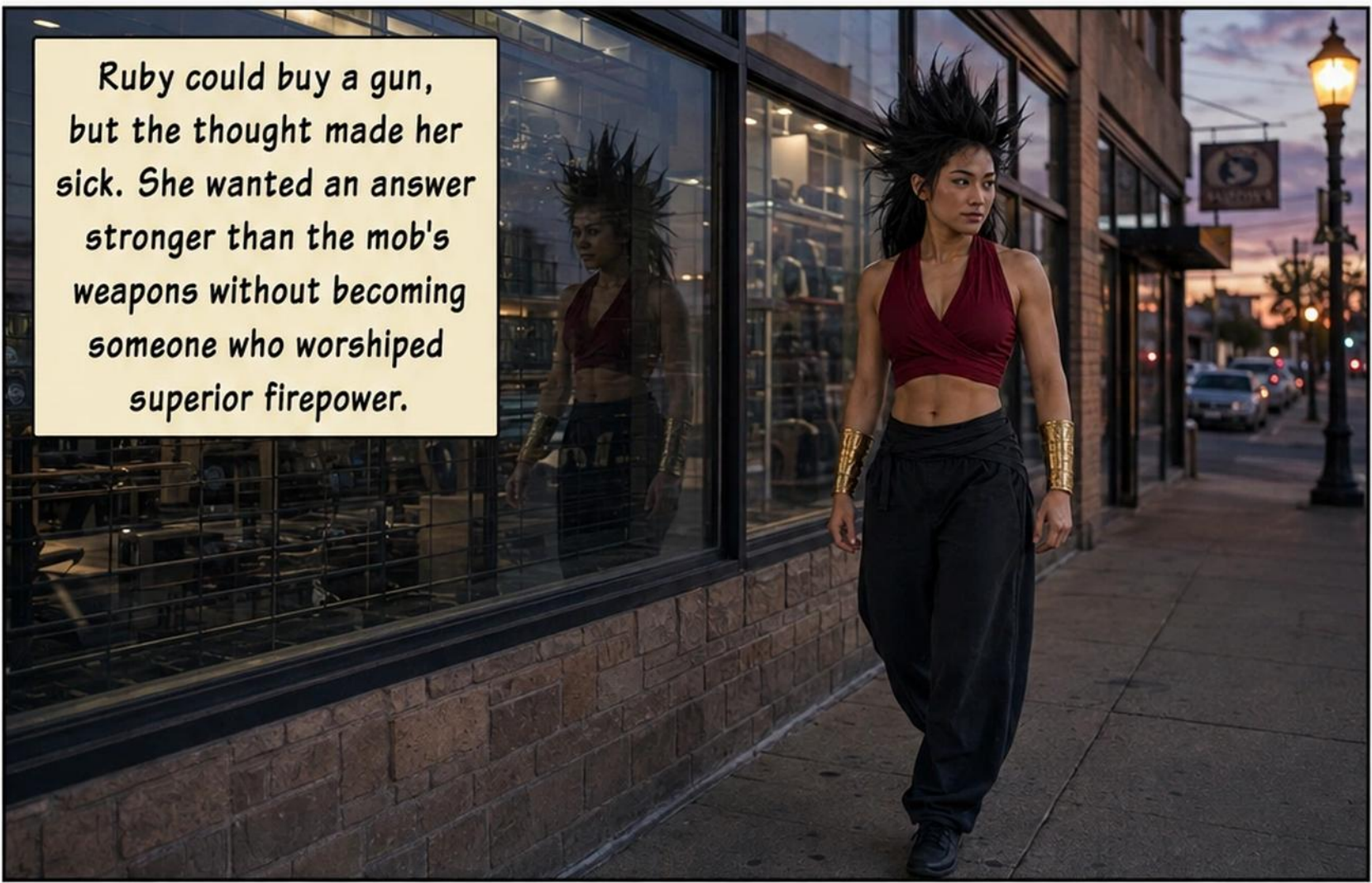


One student became ten, and a family she trained offered her a room. Belonging returned—along with the terror of losing people again.



The mob was extorting her new family too. Ruby stared at her hands and wondered how fists were supposed to stop bullets.

Ruby could buy a gun,
but the thought made her
sick. She wanted an answer
stronger than the mob's
weapons without becoming
someone who worshiped
superior firepower.



She remembered the mountain
that had named her father's dojo
and climbed toward the teacher
hidden inside his old stories.

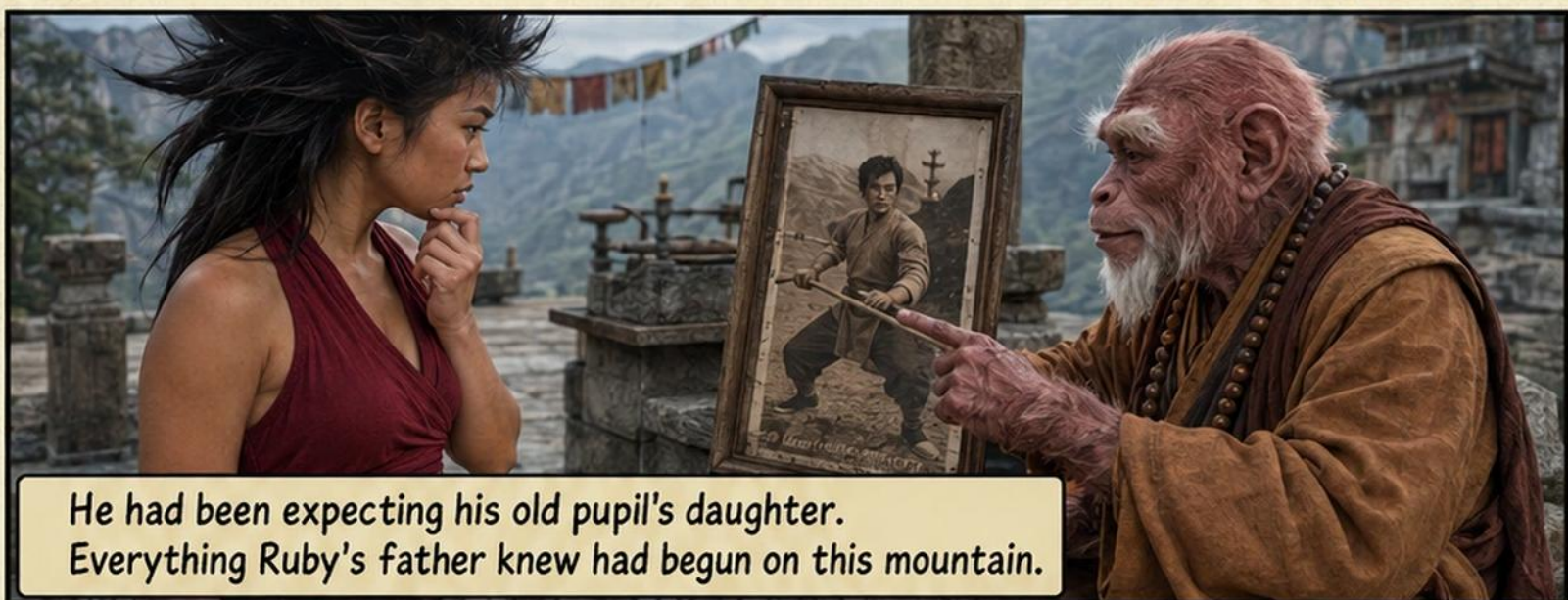


She packed badly, got lost,
ran out of food, and collapsed
above the clouds—still searching
for proof that another kind of
strength existed.

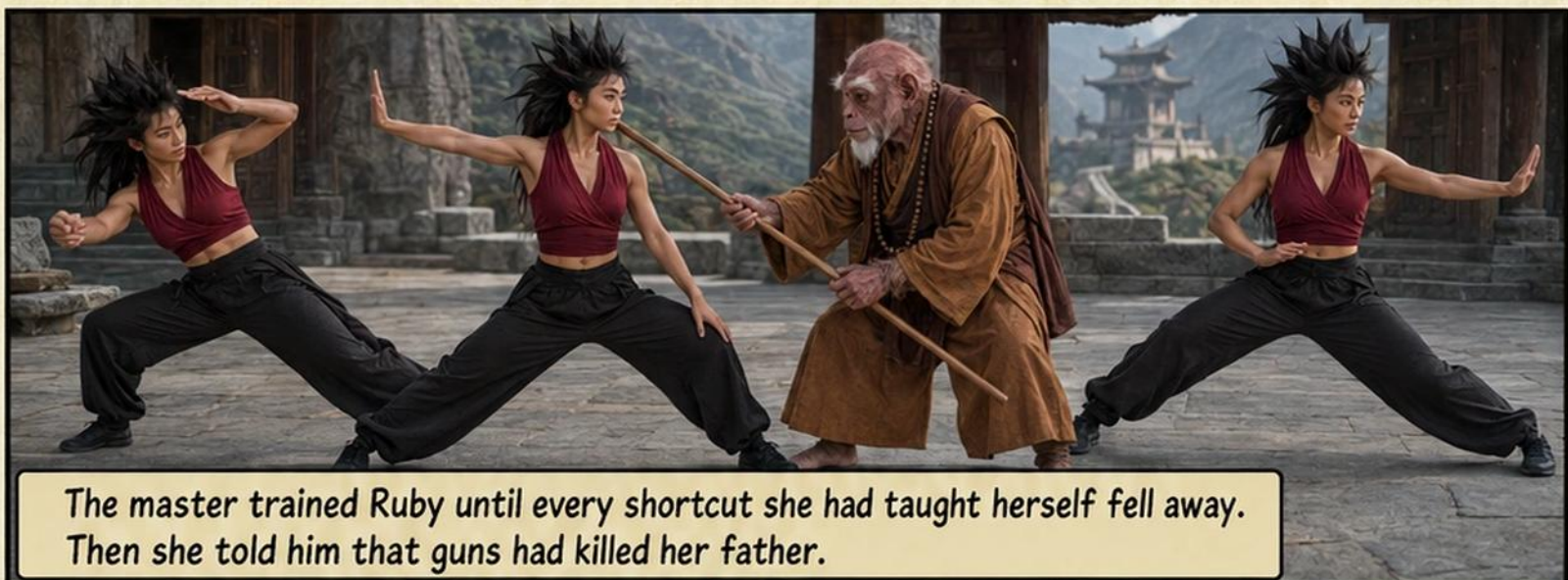




Ruby woke inside a hidden temple, facing an elderly pink-furred monkey master with golden fire dancing around his fingers.



He had been expecting his old pupil's daughter. Everything Ruby's father knew had begun on this mountain.



The master trained Ruby until every shortcut she had taught herself fell away. Then she told him that guns had killed her father.



He revealed the golden bands her father had refused: a supernatural inheritance that could grant speed, agility, a monkey-like form, and living golden flame.

Ruby agreed to wear the bands, but not to depend on them. Martial arts had to remain the foundation beneath supernatural force.



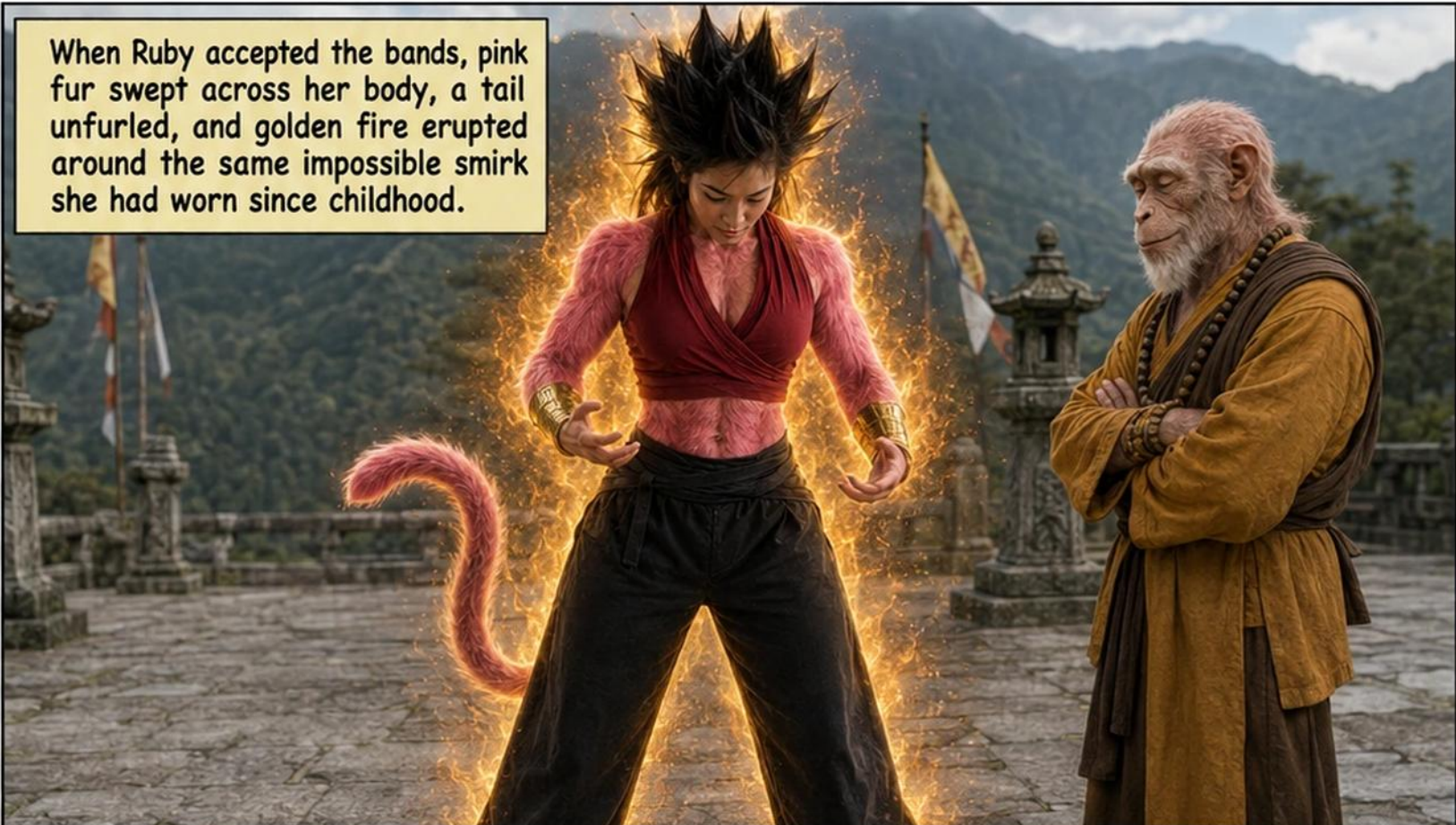
The master warned that weapons and technology would keep evolving. Repeating her father's choices exactly might also repeat his ending.



Ruby answered, "If your power matters so much, why are you sitting on a mountain while people below are suffering?" The master laughed because her challenge carried real wisdom.



When Ruby accepted the bands, pink fur swept across her body, a tail unfurled, and golden fire erupted around the same impossible smirk she had worn since childhood.



Ruby returned and founded a dojo that would never pay protection money. She invited anyone willing to learn.



Store owners, restaurant workers, teenagers, parents, and delivery drivers practiced escaping holds, protecting one another, and refusing to stand alone.



When ordinary technique was not enough, mobsters met a pink-furred woman whose golden fire turned their intimidation into humiliating retreat.



Fear had always been the mob's weapon. Ruby gave it back to them—and stories of her golden bands reached their leader, Vincent Vale.



Vale had never trained or fought for himself. Other people carried out his threats, suffered his risks, and made his power look effortless.



He saw Ruby's bands as the perfect shortcut. Why spend years building discipline when strength could simply be worn?



Vale raided the dojo with overwhelming force. While Ruby protected her students, one of his men trapped a young student in the office.



Given the choice between the bands and her student, Ruby did not hesitate. Her fur, tail, and golden fire vanished as she tossed Vale the power he thought made her whole.





The bands transformed Vale. Pink fur, a wild tail, supernatural muscle, and golden flame convinced him that Ruby had never been anything more than borrowed power.



Vale was faster and stronger, but he had no training. Every motion announced itself, every step surrendered balance, and every burst exposed another mistake.



Ruby could read those mistakes, but she could not match his raw force. She prepared to survive by moving instead of overpowering him.



On the mat, Ruby remembered being six years old beneath wooden beams. The lesson that had survived every loss returned: Again.

Ruby stood. She could not defeat Vale alone, but she was no longer alone. One student stepped beside her, then another, then five more.



Across the dojo, hostages used Ruby's lessons: one escaped a grip, two disarmed a gangster, and a shopkeeper pulled a frightened teenager behind cover.



When Vale attacked one person, someone else created an opening. They scattered from his fire together because they had practiced this.



No individual strike was enough. Together, they redirected his momentum, protected the fallen, and never gave fear time to isolate anyone.



Vale shouted that Ruby was nothing without the bands. She looked at frightened people acting despite fear and answered, 'You still think this is about me.'



Ruby stepped aside. One student redirected Vale's arm, another broke his footing, and Ruby struck his center of balance as three more added their momentum.



Vale crashed onto his back so hard the bands flew free. He became an ordinary man surrounded by people he had spent years convincing were powerless.



Ruby held up the bands and explained: her father was right about skill, her master was right about adaptation, but neither object nor individual was enough. "This is what makes us powerful."



Years later, Ruby's students had become teachers. Dojos opened in community centers, garages, restaurant basements, and city parks.



The mob could threaten one store only to face ten neighboring stores beside it. Defeating Ruby could no longer return everyone else to helplessness.



Ruby still wore the bands and trained as if she might lose them tomorrow. When danger demanded more, pink fur and golden fire still answered.



But her greatest power lived in people who knew how to stand together. Whenever a new student fell, Ruby offered a hand, smiled, and said, 'Again.'

