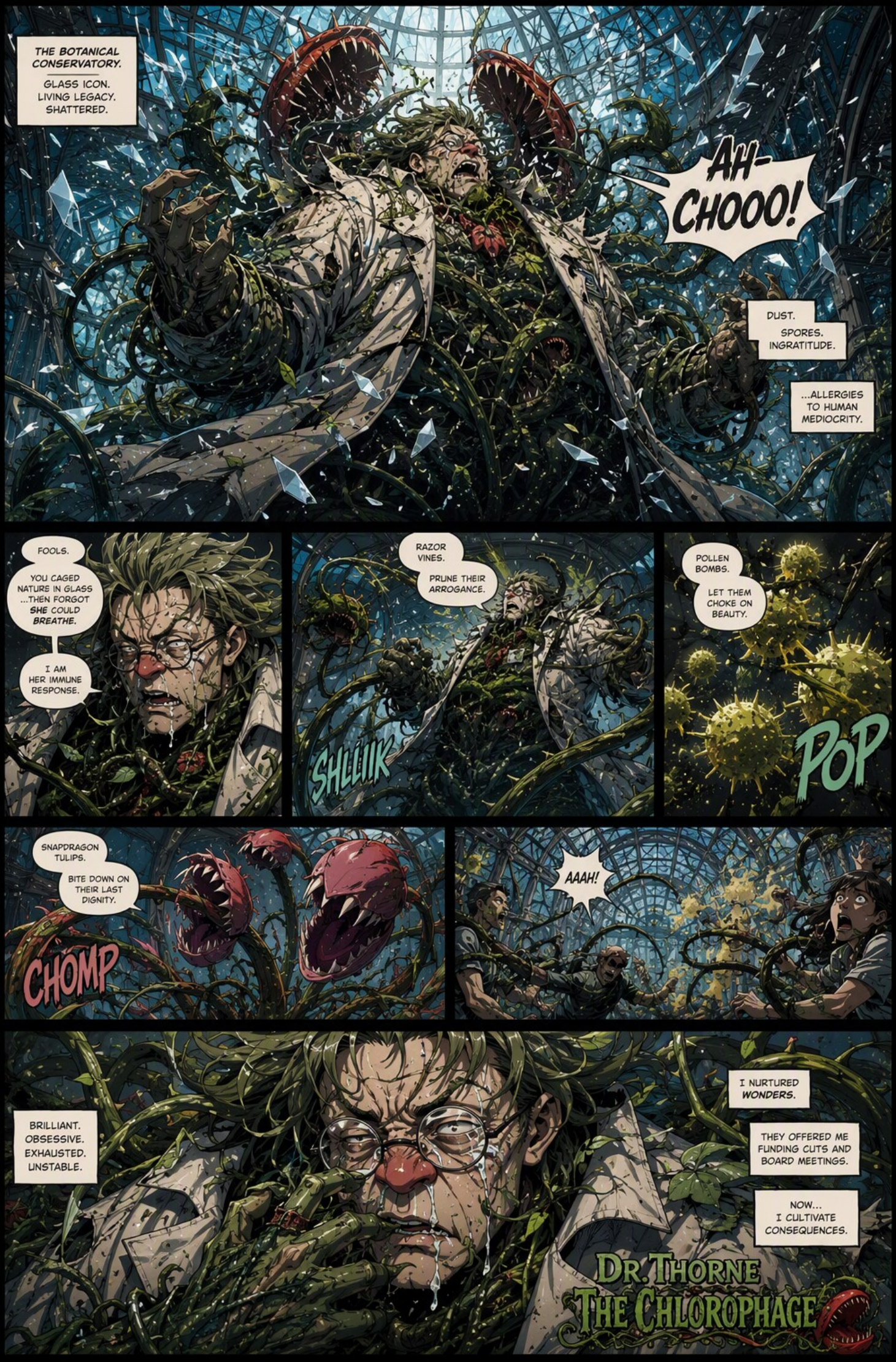

STARSPROUT COMICS
VOL. 1
STAR POWERED!
STARSPROUT
AND THE
GHOST PEPPER
SHOWDOWN!
LILY PARK
PLANT FACT:
GHOST PEPPERS 1000x HOTTER WHEN YOU'RE SNEEZING!


STARLIGHT PARK.
THE BEST PLACE TO FIND SHAPES IN THE SKY.
THAT ONE'S A DRAGON!
HMPH. "DRAGON," HUH? LOOKS MORE LIKE A FISH WITH WINGS IF YOU ASK ME.
A BUNNY!
A SHIP!
OOH! WHAT DO YOU SEE, ZIPP?
!
STORMS. I SEE STORMS.


THE BOTANICAL CONSERVATORY.
GLASS ICON. LIVING LEGACY. SHATTERED.
AH-CHOOO!
DUST. SPORES. INGRATITUDE.
...ALLERGIES TO HUMAN MEDIOCRITY.
FOOLS.
YOU CAGED NATURE IN GLASS ...THEN FORGOT SHE COULD BREATHE.
I AM HER IMMUNE RESPONSE.
RAZOR VINES.
PRUNE THEIR ARROGANCE.
SHLLIIK
POLLEN BOMBS.
LET THEM CHOKE ON BEAUTY.
POP
SNAPDRAGON TULIPS.
BITE DOWN ON THEIR LAST DIGNITY.
CHOMP
AAAH!
BRILLIANT. OBSESSIVE. EXHAUSTED. UNSTABLE.
I NURTURED WONDERS.
THEY OFFERED ME FUNDING CUTS AND BOARD MEETINGS.
NOW... I CULTIVATE CONSEQUENCES.
DR. THORNE
THE CHLOROPHAGE


IF THERE IS NO POLLEN...
...THERE CAN BE NO SNEEZING!
AH-CHOOO!!
NO MORE FLOWERS!
BOTANIST SUPREME:
DR. VERDANTHORN
PH.D. IN FLORAL DOMINATION (IVY LEAGUE)
ALLERGIC TO DEFEAT.
HIJACKED. CORRUPTED. REPURPOSED.
HIS BLOOM. HIS RULE.
RRRUMMMBBLLL...
VERDANTHORN
MY ALLERGIES... THEY FUEL ME.
EACH SNEEZE... A SPORE. EACH SPORE... A SENTENCE.
RAZOR VINES.
SHRIIPP!
POLLEN BOMBS.
PFFFT!
SNAPPING TULIPS.
CHOMP!
BEAUTY WAS THEIRS. NOW IT SERVES.
THE WORLD SNEEZED ON ME FOR TOO LONG.
NOW... I MAKE IT CHOKE.


CRRRAAANNGG!!!!
PRETZELS

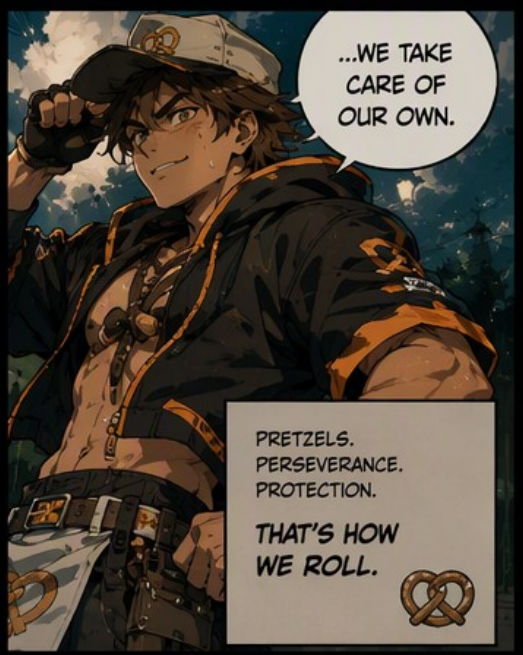

NOT ON MY WATCH!


?!

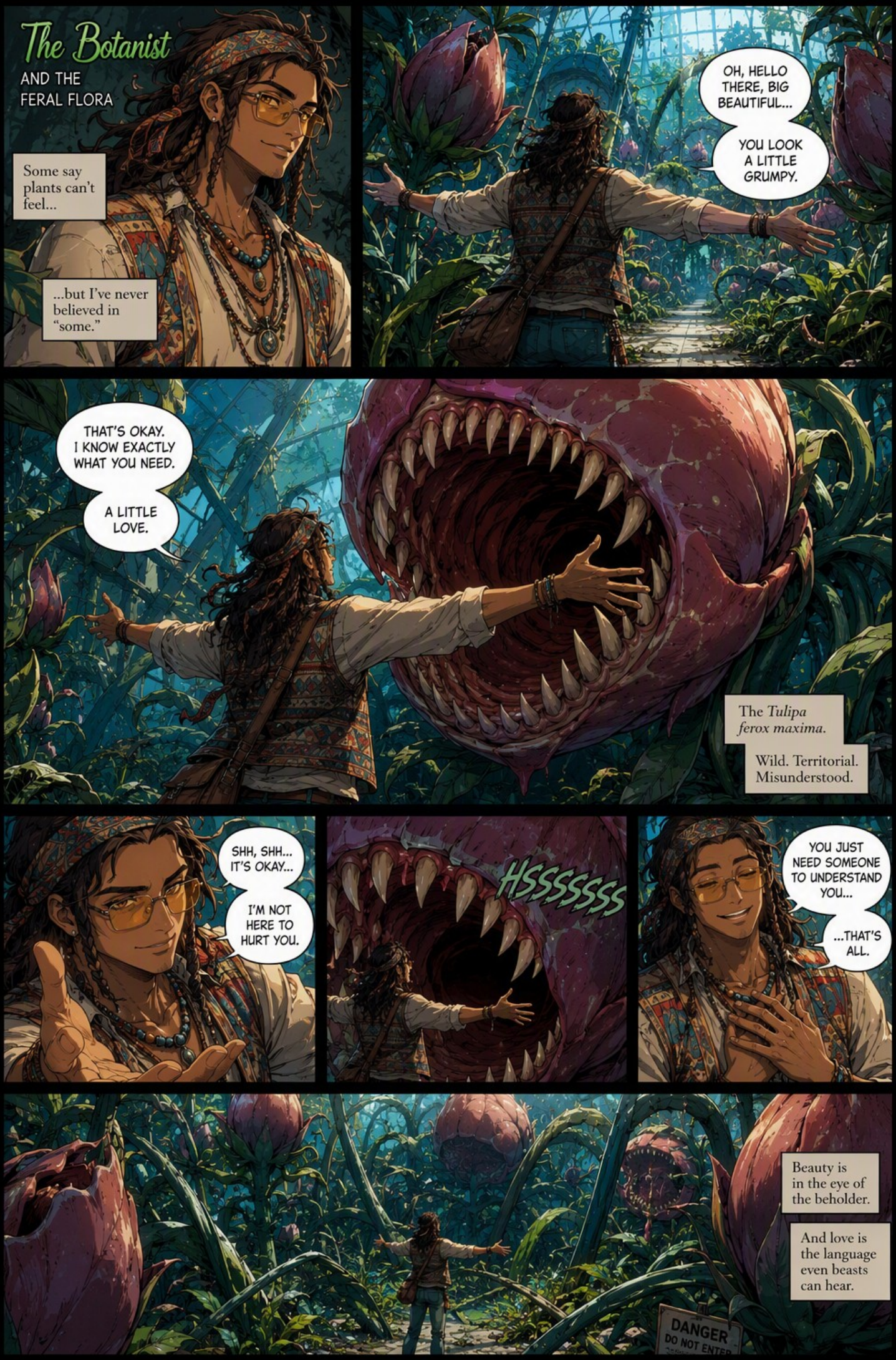

FRESH, HOT, AND HANDMADE...
...AND THAT'S A PROMISE!

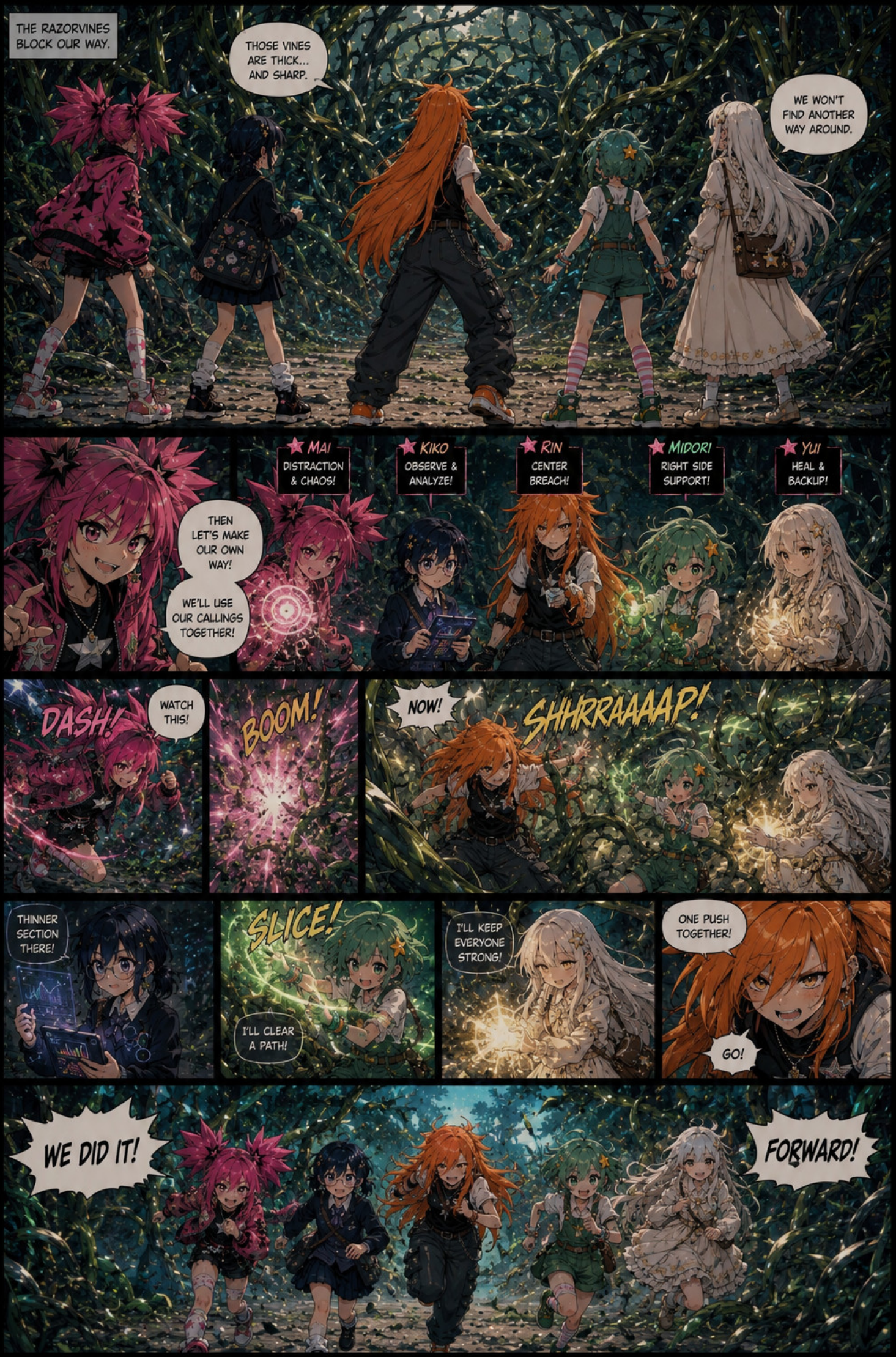

WHAT THE HELL?!
STOP THAT KID!

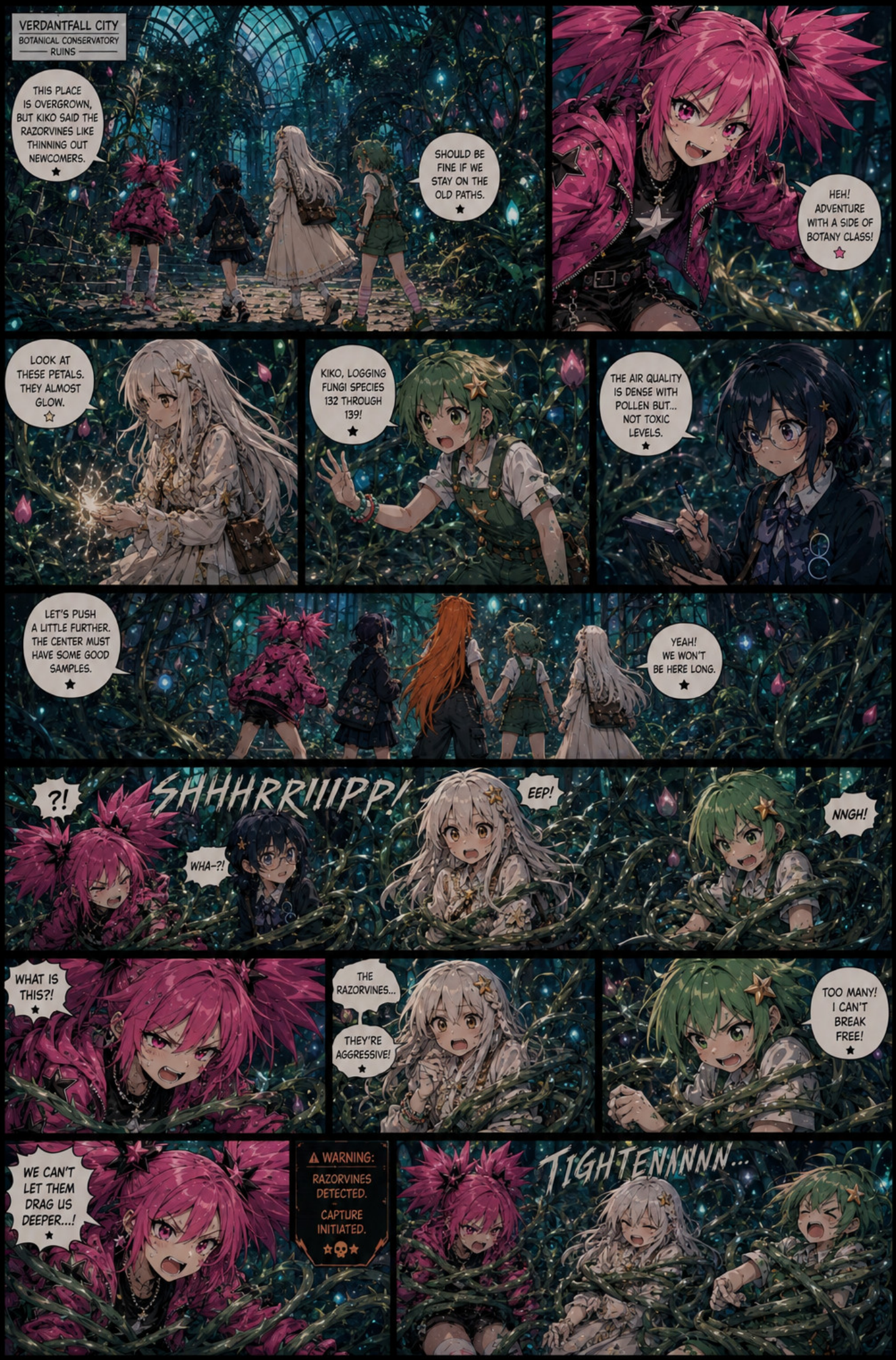

YOU HIJACKED THE WRONG NEIGHBORHOOD, BUDDY.
AROUND HERE...
PRETZELS

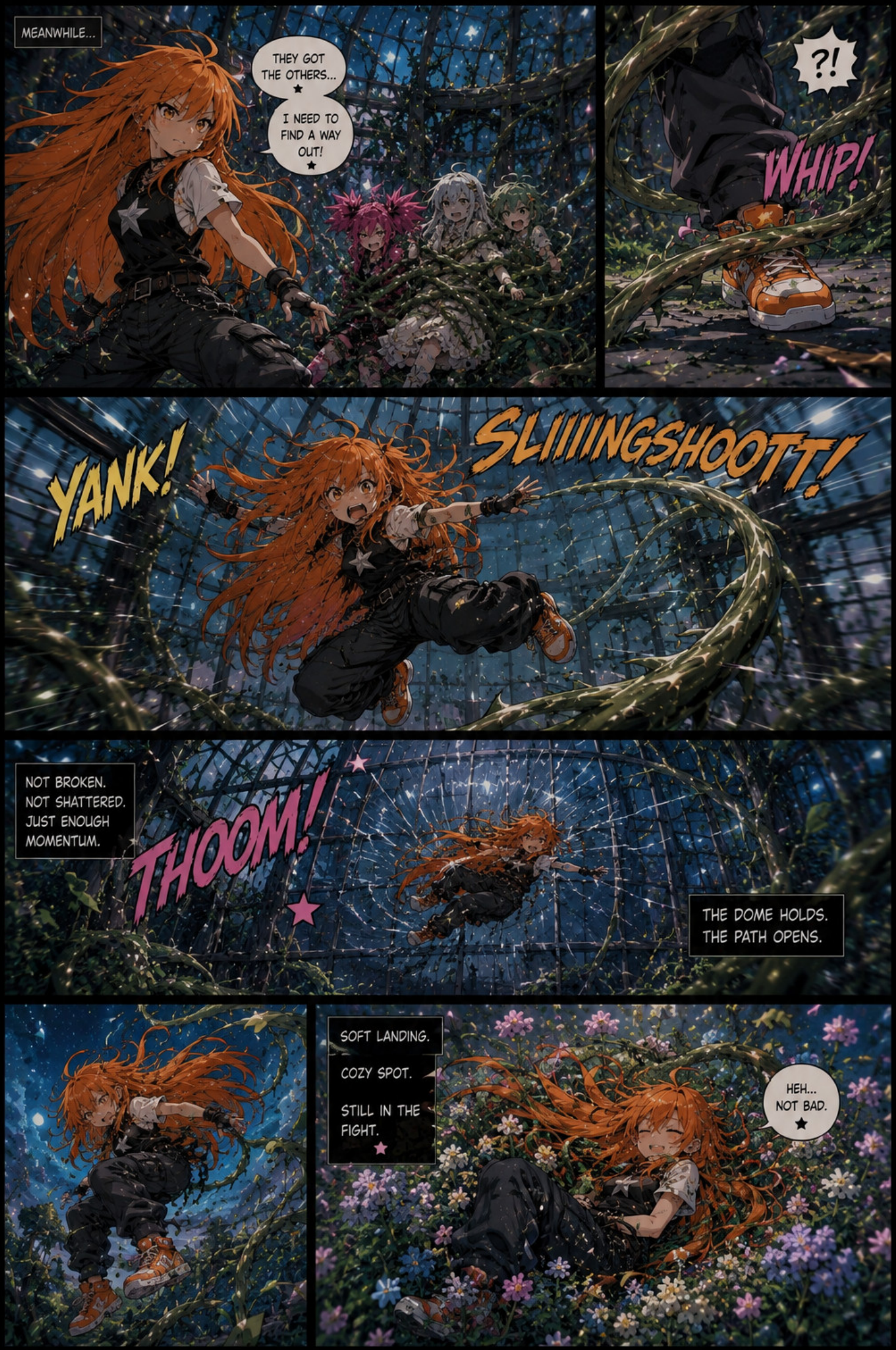

...WE TAKE CARE OF OUR OWN.
PRETZELS. PERSEVERANCE. PROTECTION.
THAT'S HOW WE ROLL.


Today's Research:
SNAPPING TULIPS
Don't touch !!
...or HUG
DANGEROUS FLORA
Vol. 7
Specimen
#-8921-T
Tulipa Carnivora
DANGER
TOXIC
KEEP OUT


The Botanist
AND THE FERAL FLORA
Some say plants can't feel...
...but I've never believed in "some."
OH, HELLO THERE, BIG BEAUTIFUL...
YOU LOOK A LITTLE GRUMPY.
THAT'S OKAY. I KNOW EXACTLY WHAT YOU NEED.
A LITTLE LOVE.
The *Tulipa ferox maxima*.
Wild. Territorial. Misunderstood.
SHH, SHH... IT'S OKAY...
I'M NOT HERE TO HURT YOU.
HSSSSSS
YOU JUST NEED SOMEONE TO UNDERSTAND YOU...
...THAT'S ALL.
Beauty is in the eye of the beholder.
And love is the language even beasts can hear.
DANGER
DO NOT ENTER


THE RAZORVINES BLOCK OUR WAY.
THOSE VINES ARE THICK... AND SHARP.
WE WON'T FIND ANOTHER WAY AROUND.
THEN LET'S MAKE OUR OWN WAY!
WE'LL USE OUR CALLINGS TOGETHER!
MAI
DISTRACTION & CHAOS!
KIKO
OBSERVE & ANALYZE!
RIN
CENTER BREACH!
MIDORI
RIGHT SIDE SUPPORT!
YUI
HEAL & BACKUP!
DASH!
WATCH THIS!
BOOM!
NOW!
SHHRRAAAAP!
THINNER SECTION THERE!
SLICE!
I'LL CLEAR A PATH!
I'LL KEEP EVERYONE STRONG!
ONE PUSH TOGETHER!
GO!
WE DID IT!
FORWARD!


VERDANTFALL CITY
BOTANICAL CONSERVATORY RUINS
THIS PLACE IS OVERGROWN, BUT KIKO SAID THE RAZORVINES LIKE THINNING OUT NEWCOMERS.
SHOULD BE FINE IF WE STAY ON THE OLD PATHS.
HEH! ADVENTURE WITH A SIDE OF BOTANY CLASS!
LOOK AT THESE PETALS. THEY ALMOST GLOW.
KIKO, LOGGING FUNGI SPECIES 132 THROUGH 139!
THE AIR QUALITY IS DENSE WITH POLLEN BUT... NOT TOXIC LEVELS.
LET'S PUSH A LITTLE FURTHER. THE CENTER MUST HAVE SOME GOOD SAMPLES.
YEAH! WE WON'T BE HERE LONG.
?!
SHHHRRIIIPP!
EEP!
NNGH!
WHA-?!
WHAT IS THIS?!
THE RAZORVINES...
THEY'RE AGGRESSIVE!
TOO MANY! I CAN'T BREAK FREE!
WE CAN'T LET THEM DRAG US DEEPER...!
⚠ WARNING:
RAZORVINES DETECTED.
CAPTURE INITIATED.
TIGHTENNNN...

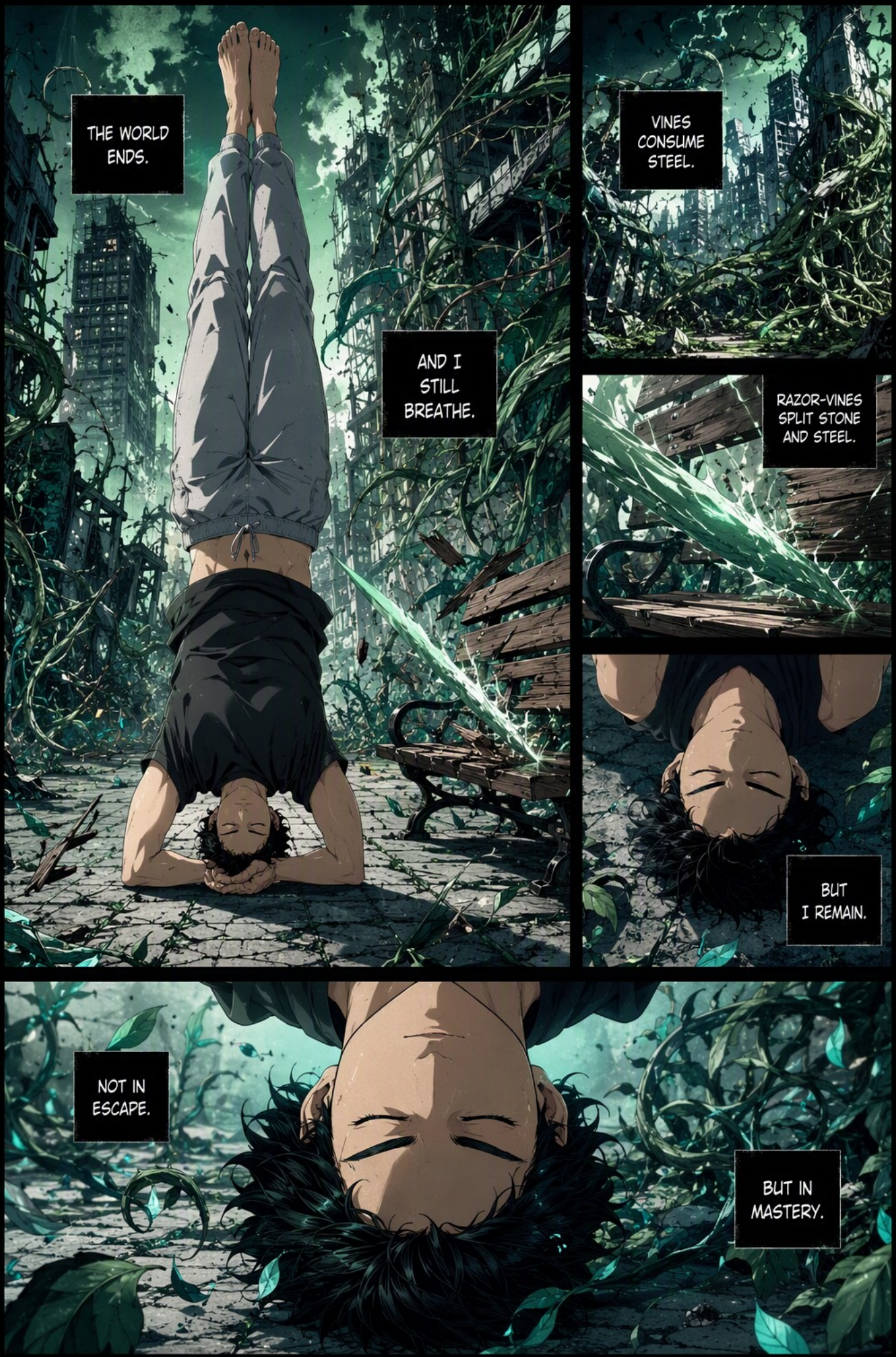

MEANWHILE...
THEY GOT THE OTHERS...
I NEED TO FIND A WAY OUT!
?!
WHIP!
YANK!
SLIIIINGSHOOTT!
NOT BROKEN. NOT SHATTERED. JUST ENOUGH MOMENTUM.
THOOM!
THE DOME HOLDS. THE PATH OPENS.
SOFT LANDING.
COZY SPOT.
STILL IN THE FIGHT.
HEH... NOT BAD.




THE BEST STICK EVER
バウッ
I FOUND THE BEST STICK EVER!
ADVENTURER. GOOD BOY. CHAOS AGENT.
IT'S THORNY, IT'S LONG, IT'S PERFECT!
ガブッ CHOMP!
AAAH!
WHAT IS THAT THING?!
COME ON, EVERYONE! LET'S PLAY FETCH!
キャアアアアー!!
THAT... THAT VINE... THOSE THORNS... THEY'RE RAZOR SHARP!
ONE WRONG STEP AND IT COULD PIERCE ANYTHING...
THAT'S WHY IT'S THE BEST!


STOP!
HALCYON VALLEY NATIONAL PARK
Preserve. Protect. Respect.
CEASE COMBAT IMMEDIATELY!
RANGER
UNAUTHORIZED COMBAT ON PROTECTED TURF IS A DIRECT VIOLATION OF PARK CODE SEVENTEEN POINT OH FOUR.
PARK CODE 17.04
No person shall engage in or initiate any form of physical combat, duel, or powered altercation within designated natural areas.
RANGER
RAZOR-EDGED VINE — LEVEL 2 HAZARD THREAT TO ECOSYSTEM DETECTED.
SHRRRAAAAK!
RANGER
YOU ARE DAMAGING PROTECTED TURF, DISRUPTING NATIVE FLORA, AND ENDANGERING OTHERS!
VIOLATION RECORDED!


I DEMAND TO KNOW...
WHO IS GOING TO PAY FOR MY RUINED AFTERNOON?!
ACHOO!!
AH-CHOO!
POLLEN COUNT IS... H-HIGH...
>SNIFFLE<
DR. VERDANT
BOTANIST
CAKE... WINE... EVERYTHING RUINED!
DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEA WHAT THIS COST?!
THIS WAS A LIMITED-EDITION VINTAGE!
CHÂTEAU LAFLEUR 1996
JUST A MOMENT... ...MY RESEARCH IS... URK...
>ACHOO!<
SNAP!
AND YOU! UP IN THE AIR!
ARE YOU GOING TO APOLOGIZE... OR WRITE A CHECK?
...

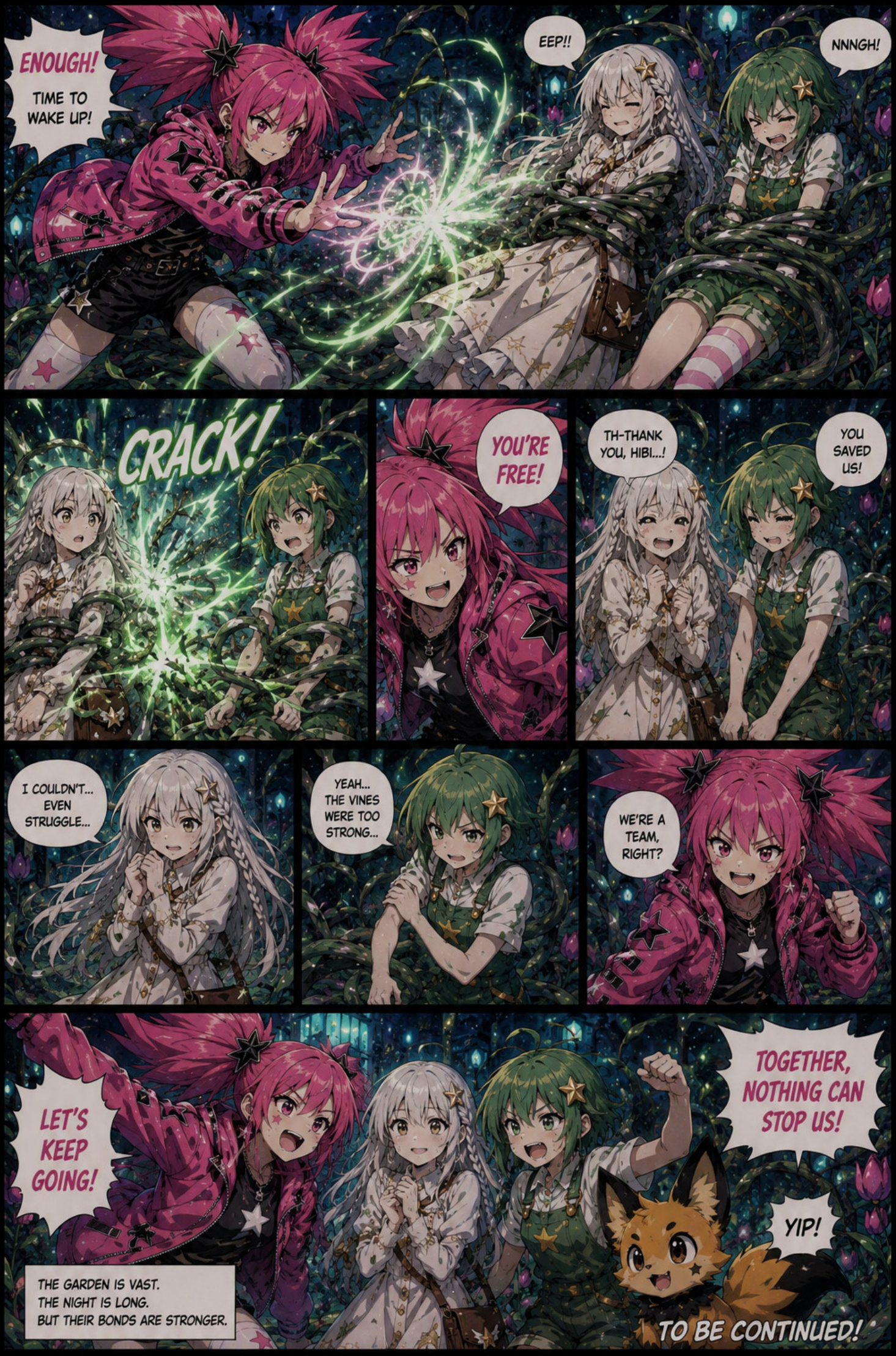

THE WORLD ENDS.
AND I STILL BREATHE.
VINES CONSUME STEEL.
RAZOR-VINES SPLIT STONE AND STEEL.
BUT I REMAIN.
NOT IN ESCAPE.
BUT IN MASTERY.


RUN!! THEY'RE EVERYWHERE!
OPERATION: GARDEN OUT OF CONTROL!
CALL FOR BACKUP! NOW!
WE CAN'T HOLD THEM!
PROBLEM SOLVED!
PET X-001
SPECIES: MUTANT FLYTRAP
CLASS: COMPACT
DIET: ORGANIC DEBRIS
DISPOSITION: LOYAL
STATUS: GOOD BOY ♥
PET X-001
GOOD BOY!
WHO'S THE BEST? ♥
MRRRP! ♥
PET X-001
ON TO THE NEXT ADVENTURE!
TO BE CONTINUED...


THE RAZORVINES THRIVE ON CAPTURING AND DRAINING.
THEY FEED ON STILLNESS. ON FEAR. ON GIVING UP.
BUT I'M NOT FOOD.
I'M NOT A PRISONER.
I'M A STORM.
I CHANNEL THE CHAOS.
NOT TO DESTROY.
BUT TO BREAK FREE.
THEY TRIED TO HOLD ME DOWN.
FORGOT WHO I AM.
I DON'T NEED ANYONE TO SAVE ME.
THE MORE THEY TIGHTEN...
...THE MORE I FIGHT!
CRACKLE!
I FEEL THEIR THORNS PIERCING MY SKIN.
IT HURTS.
BUT THE PAIN FUELS THE SPARK.
I BREATHE IN.
FOCUS. PICTURE EVERY STRAND.
THE PATTERN. THE WEAK SPOTS.
THEN—
RIP!
SNAP!
I SAVE MYSELF!


Hngh...! Let go...!
The vines... so thick!
I can't break free!
GRRAAAH!
Luna!
Where... where can I help?
If I panic, it'll crush me...!
Breathe... stay calm...
I'll find an opening!
Pipi...
Be careful...!
DART!
Here!
This gap might work!
Now! Luna!


AH— CHOO!
WHOOSH!
EEP!
NNNGH!
LET GO... PLEASE...
HNGH... I CAN BREAK FREE...
...I JUST NEED TO TRY A LITTLE HARDER!
HMM...
WE CAN'T FIGHT A GARDEN WITH FISTS.
WE NEED SOMETHING... THE GARDEN IS ACTUALLY AFRAID OF.


ENOUGH!
TIME TO WAKE UP!
EEP!!
NNNGH!
CRACK!
YOU'RE FREE!
TH-THANK YOU, HIBI...!
YOU SAVED US!
I COULDN'T... EVEN STRUGGLE...
YEAH... THE VINES WERE TOO STRONG...
WE'RE A TEAM, RIGHT?
LET'S KEEP GOING!
TOGETHER, NOTHING CAN STOP US!
YIP!
THE GARDEN IS VAST.
THE NIGHT IS LONG.
BUT THEIR BONDS ARE STRONGER.
TO BE CONTINUED!


WARBLER WATCH
BIRDING IS LIFE
PRAIRIE WARBLER
FIND. ID. PROTECT.
WARBLER
FIELD NOTES
RARE BIRDS OR BUST!
ATTENTION!
GIANT PLANT BLOOM SEASON IN PROGRESS
RARE WARBLER SIGHTINGS PLUMMETING!



OBSERVE. RESPECT. PROTECT.

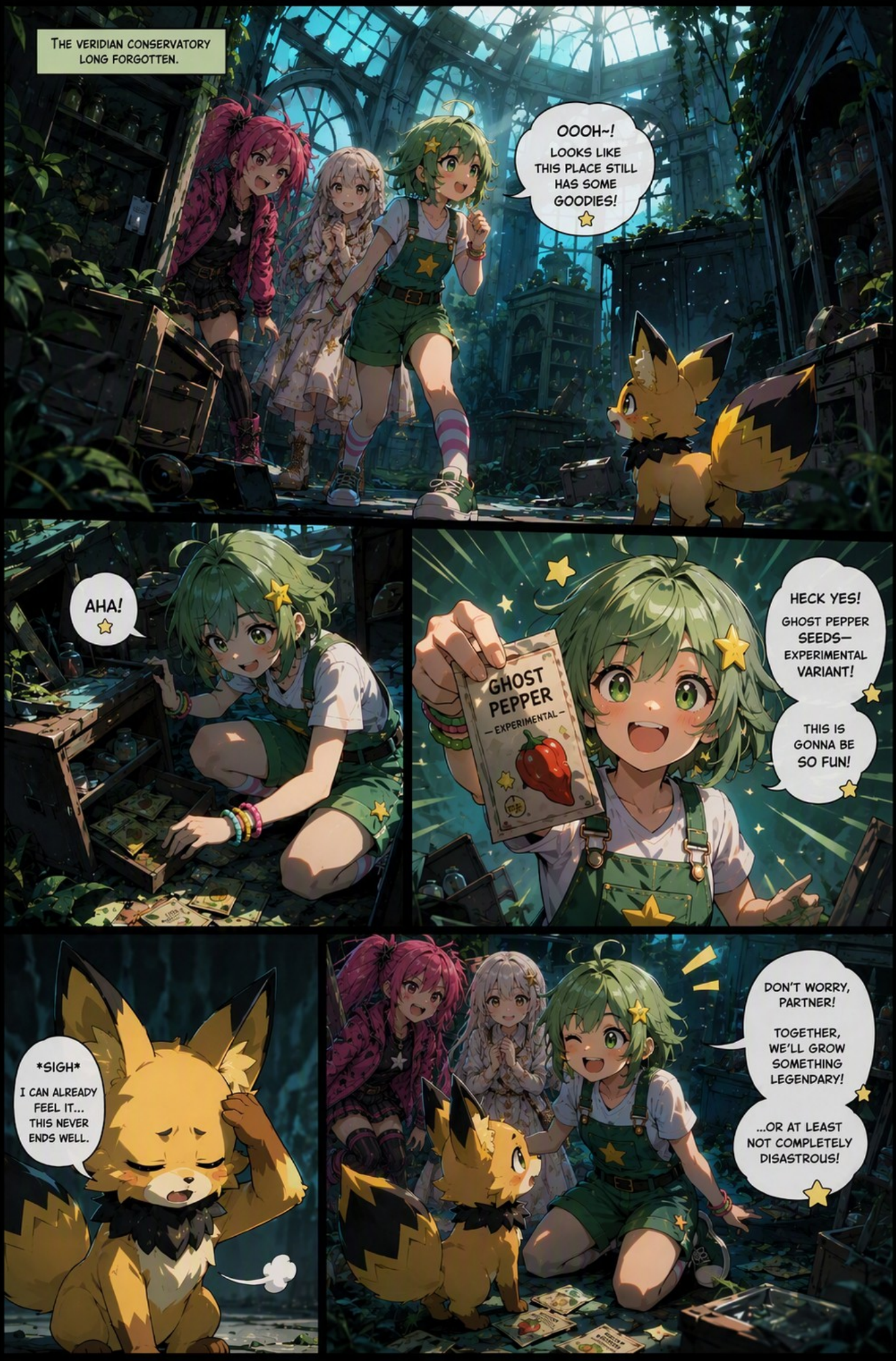

RAAAWR!

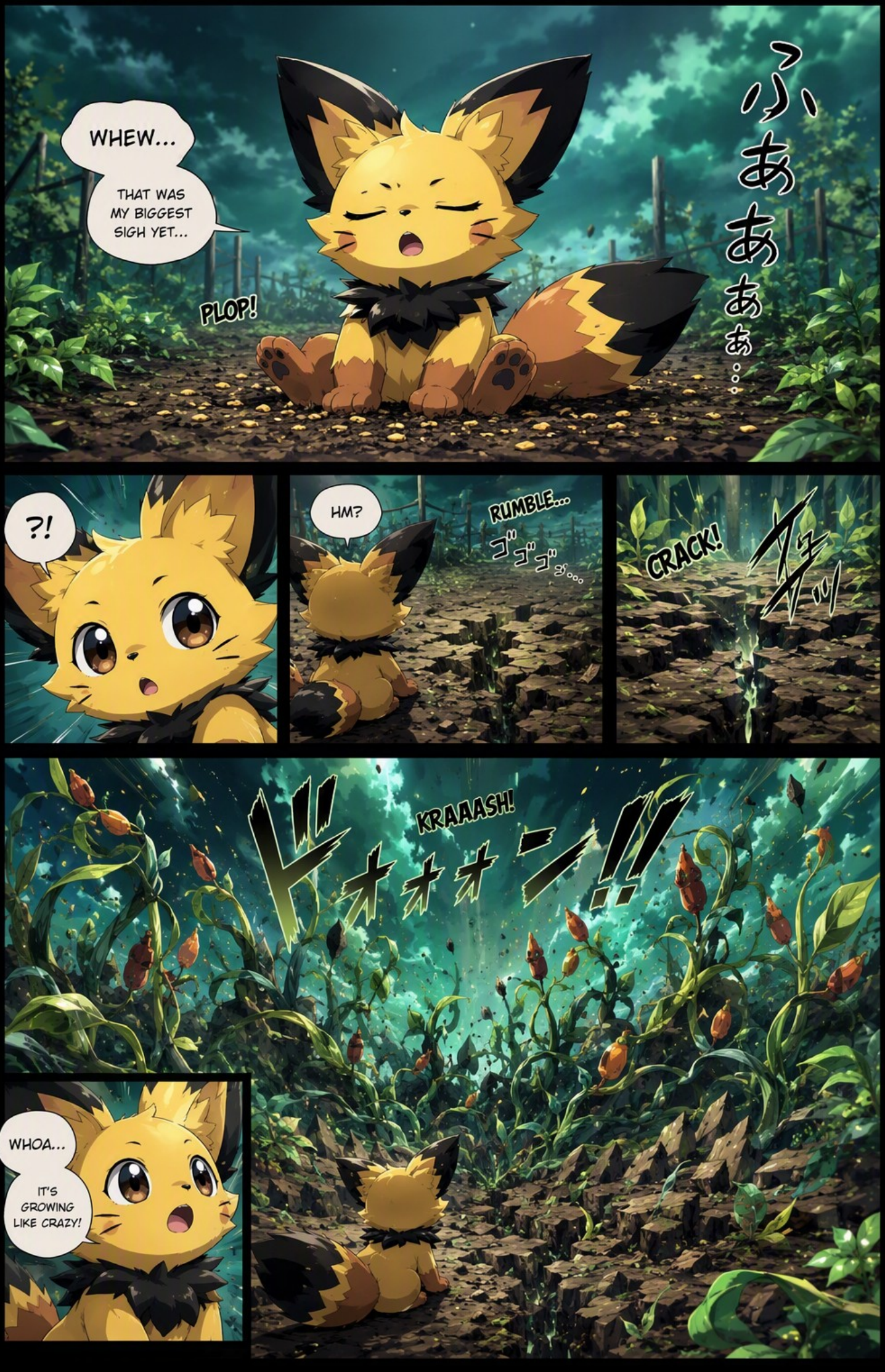

HOLY--!


YOU CAN'T HIDE...


NOT FROM NATURE.


NOOOO!!
VRRROOM!


THE VERIDIAN CONSERVATORY LONG FORGOTTEN.
OOOH~! LOOKS LIKE THIS PLACE STILL HAS SOME GOODIES!
AHA!
GHOST PEPPER —EXPERIMENTAL—
HECK YES! GHOST PEPPER SEEDS— EXPERIMENTAL VARIANT!
THIS IS GONNA BE SO FUN!
SIGH I CAN ALREADY FEEL IT... THIS NEVER ENDS WELL.
DON'T WORRY, PARTNER! TOGETHER, WE'LL GROW SOMETHING LEGENDARY!
...OR AT LEAST NOT COMPLETELY DISASTROUS!


ふぁあああ…
WHEW...
THAT WAS MY BIGGEST SIGH YET...
PLOP!
?!
HM?
RUMBLE...
ゴゴゴ…
CRACK!
KRAAASH!
ドオオオン!!
WHOA...
IT'S GROWING LIKE CRAZY!


MY PRECIOUS PEPPERS... BLOOM!
DR. JARDIN BROAD
BOTANIST. GENIUS. VISIONARY. ALLERGIC TO HIS OWN SUCCESS.
AH-CHOO!!!
SPICY!
POLLEN BOMBS!
SNAPPING TULIPS!
SNAP!
RAZOR VINES!
SHKIIING!
I CREATE BEAUTY...
...AND CHAOS.
THE WORLD IS MY GREENHOUSE.
AND YOU... ...ARE MY FERTILIZER.


DEEPER STILL.
AH-CHOOO!!
THE POLLEN... THE POLLEN OVERLOAD! URK--!
FORGIVE ME, FLOWERS...
...BUT SCIENCE DEMANDS--
FWOOOOSH
WELL! THAT COULD'VE GONE BETTER.
DUST
DUST
POINK.
SIGH
NEXT TIME, BUDDY. NEXT TIME.
DO NOT FEED THE TULIPS