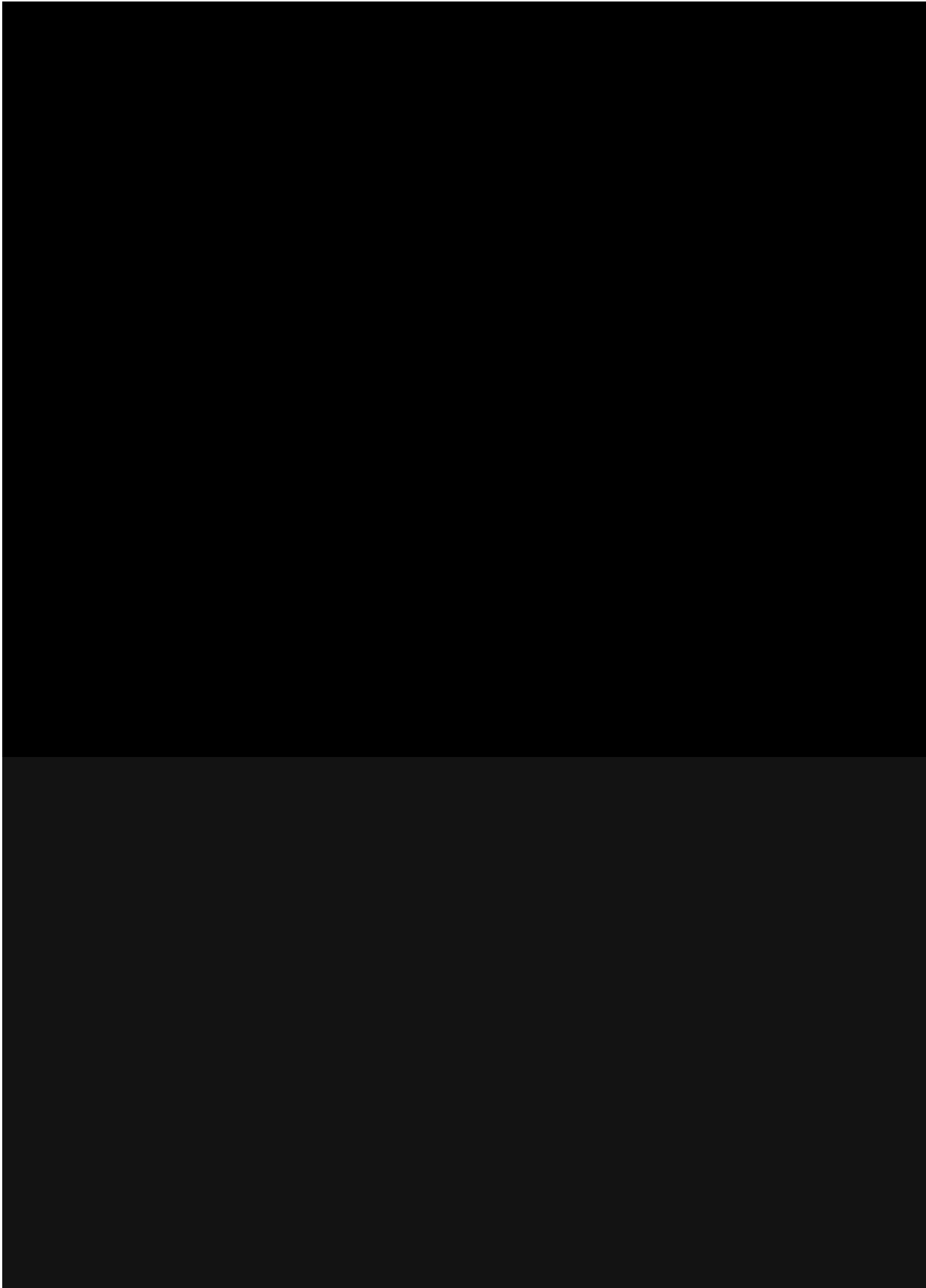
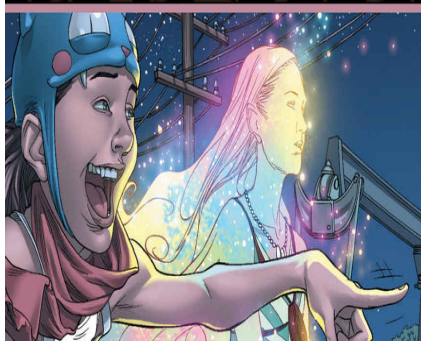


MARVEL

RUNAWAYS

LIVE FAST





NEW BEGINNINGS!

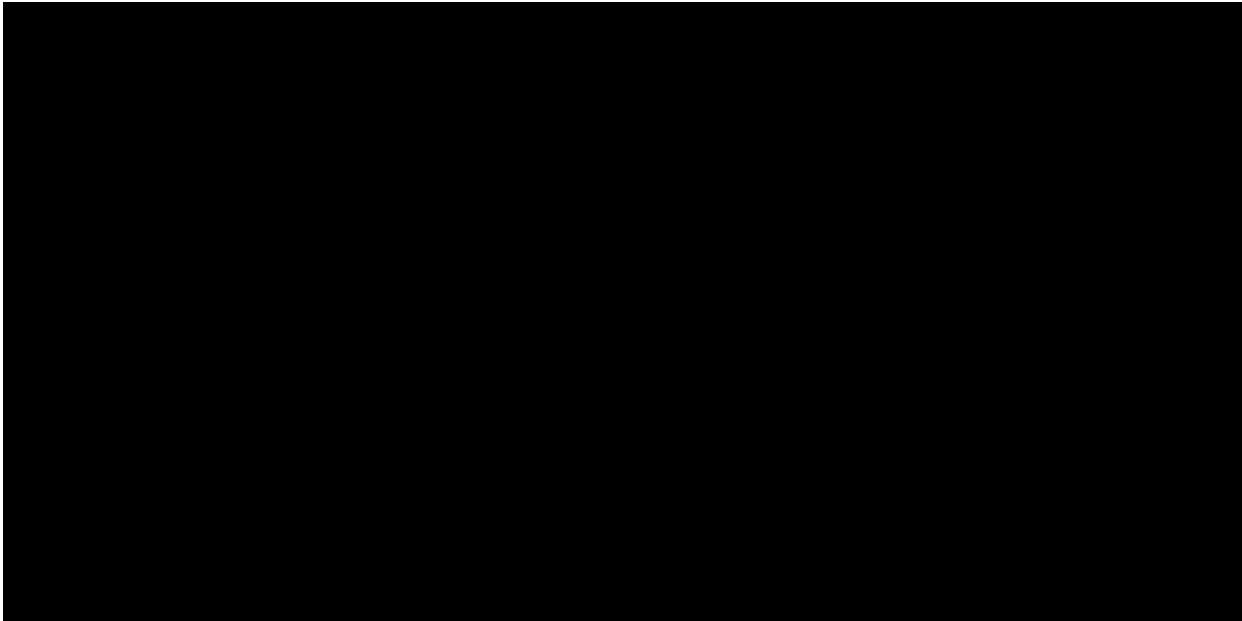
The Runaways say good-bye to the past, and make hard decisions about their future. Plus: Still reeling from the events of *Civil War: Young Avengers/Runaways*, the teenage heroes must now confront a horrific enemy who threatens to tear the team apart!

Collecting *Runaways* #19-24 (2006) — written by **Brian K. Vaughan**, and illustrated by **Adrian Alphona** and **Mike Norton**.

MARVEL

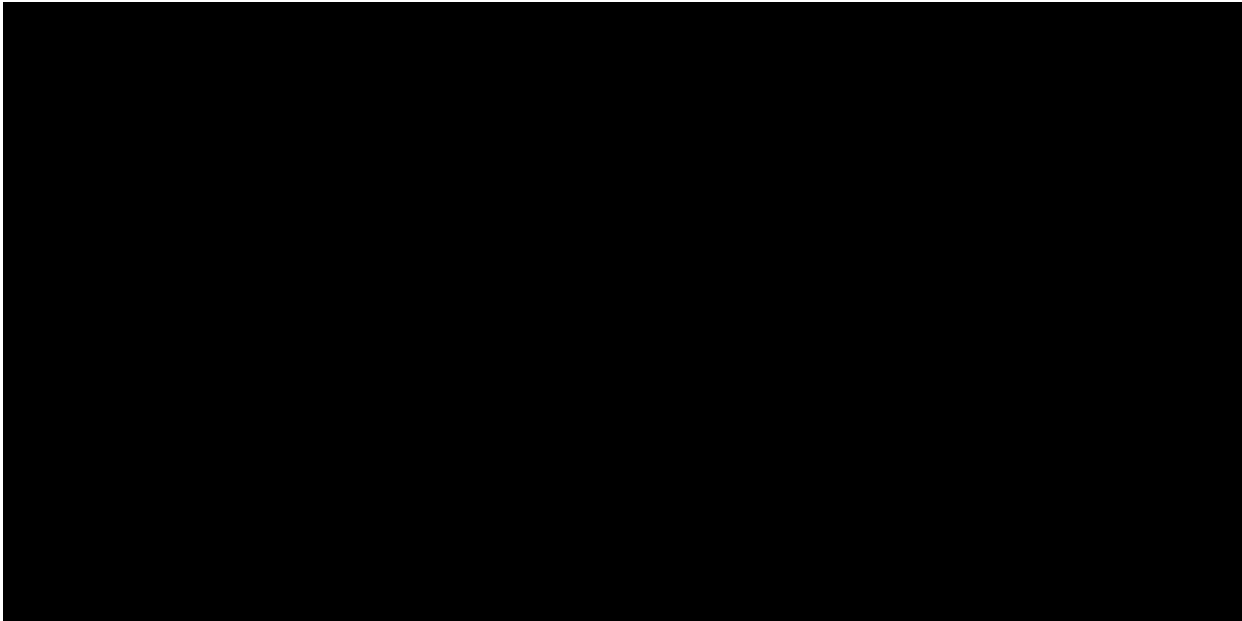
AGES 12 AND UP











THE RUNAWAYS



NICO MINORU
Daughter of
Dark Wizards



CHASE STEIN
Son of
Mad Scientists



MOLLY HAYES
Daughter of
Evil Mutants



VICTOR MANCHA
Son of a
Killer Robot



KAROLINA DEAN
Daughter of
Alien Invaders



XAVIN
Child of
Shape-shifting
Shuttle Artists



OLD LACE
Genetically
Engineered
Dinosaur

PREVIOUSLY IN RUNAWAYS:

At some point in their lives, all kids think they have the most evil parents in the world, but Nico Minoru and her friends really did.

Discovering that they were the children of a group of super-villains known as The Pride, the teenagers stole weapons and resources from these criminals, before running away from home and eventually defeating their parents. But that was just the beginning. Together, the teenage runaways now hope to atone for their parents' crimes by taking on the new threats trying to fill The Pride's void.

After a ferocious battle with an all-new Pride led by a temporally displaced Geoffrey Wilder (father of the late Alex Wilder, the Runaways' traitorous leader), Gert Yorkes died in the arms of her boyfriend. With her final breath, Gert "willed" control of her telepathic dinosaur to Chase Stein, just before the devastated young man stole a decoder ring and Wilder's copy of the Abstract, a mystical tome containing powerful secrets.

DEAD MEANS DEAD

chapter one

Brian K. Vaughan
Writer

Mike Norton
Penciler

Craig Yeung
Inker

Christina Strain
Colorist

Jacob Chabot
Production

**C.B. Cebulski &
MacKenzie Cadenhead**
Special Thanks

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Assistant Editors

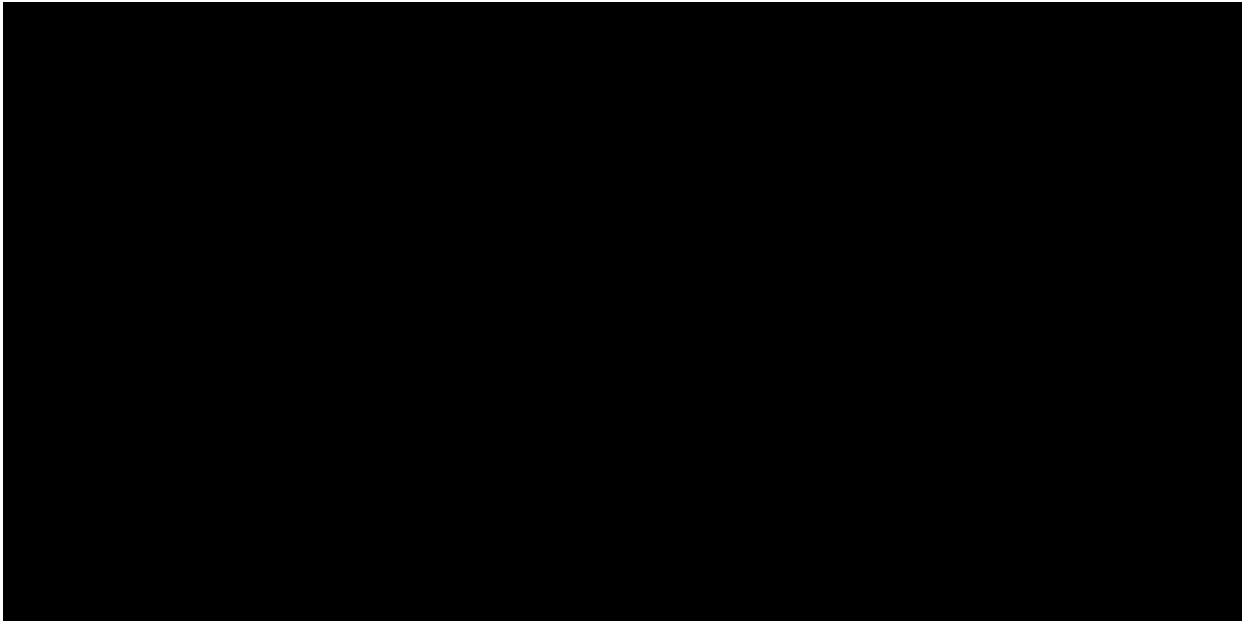
Nick Lowe
Editor

RUNAWAYS created by Vaughan & Alphonse

Dan Buckley
Publisher

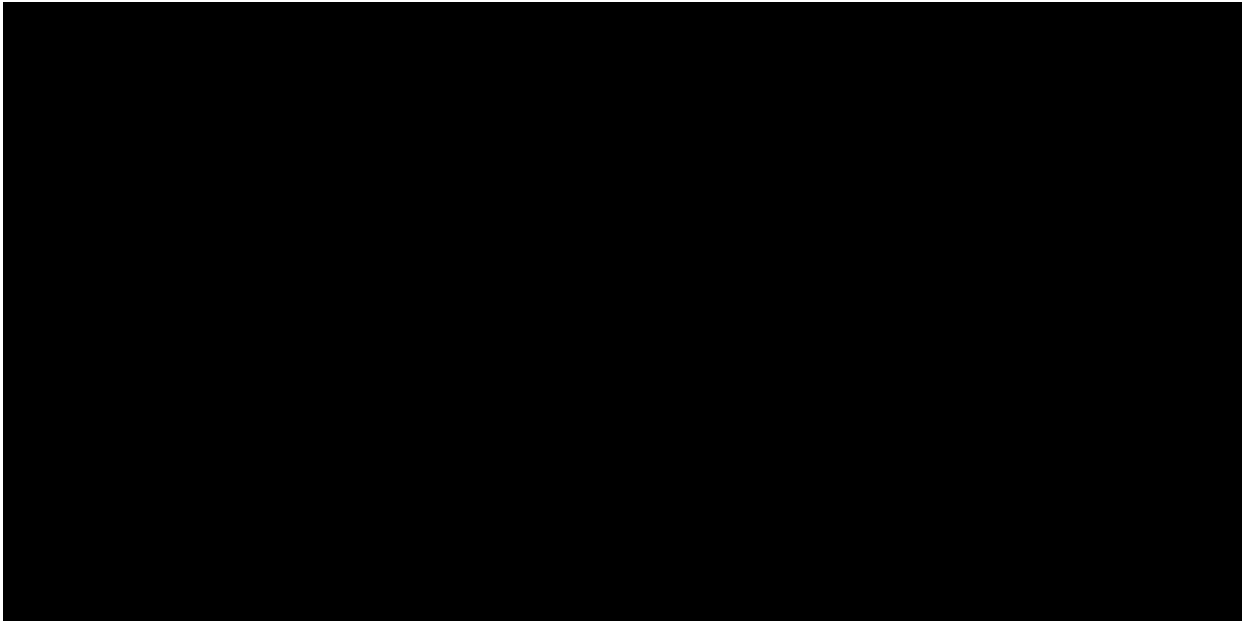
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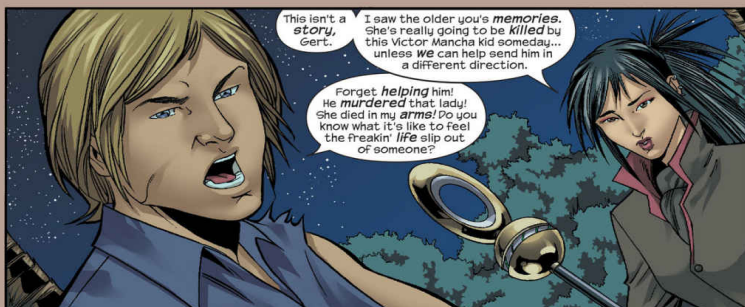
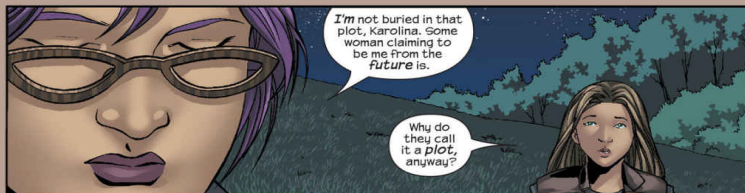




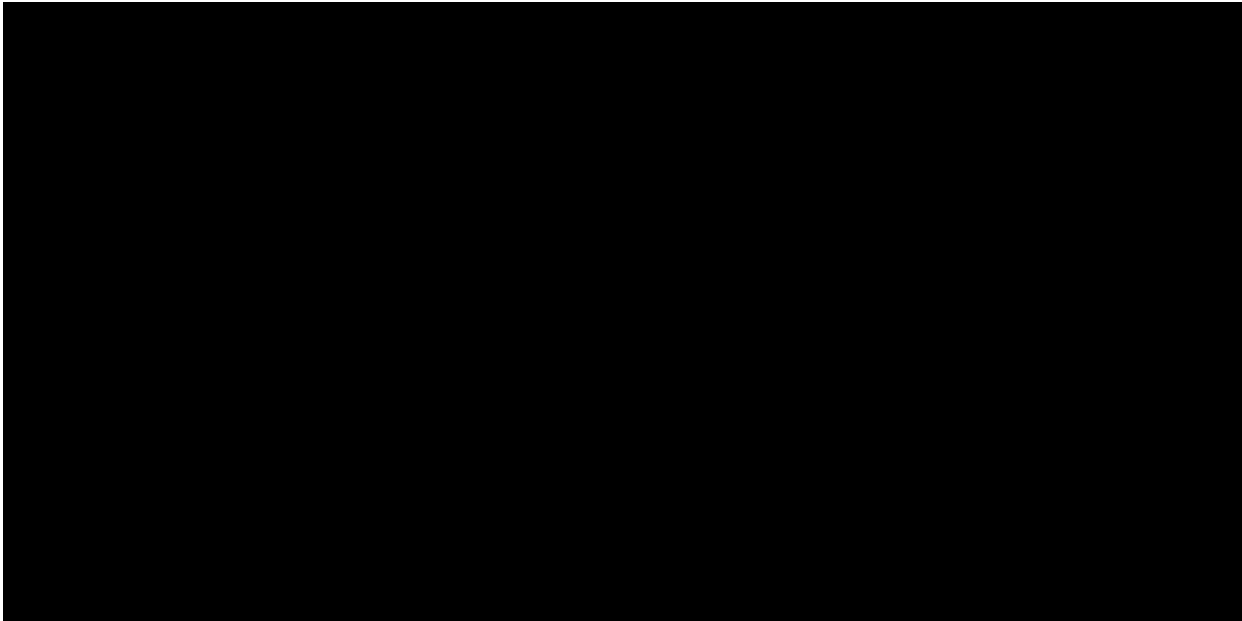














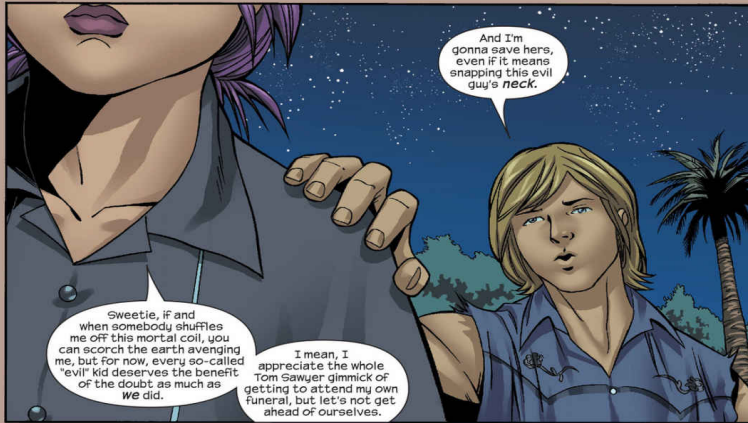
Yeah,
Chase.
I do.



Before the last battle
with our parents, you
mean? When Chase
almost *drowned*?

I *did* drown,
Karolina... but
Gert brought
me back.

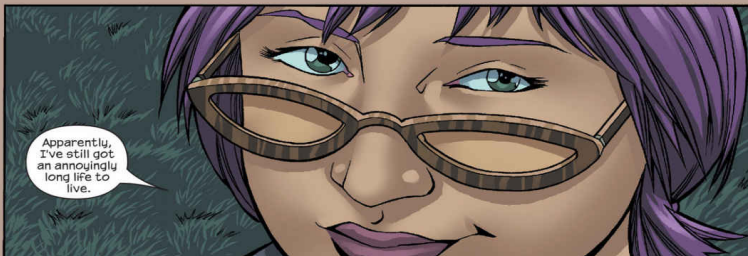
She
saved my
life.



And I'm
gonna save hers,
even if it means
snapping this evil
guy's *neck*.

Sweetie, if and
when somebody shuffles
me off this mortal coil, you
can scorch the earth avenging
me, but for now, every so-called
"evil" kid deserves the benefit
of the doubt as much as
we did.

I mean, I
appreciate the whole
Tom Sawyer gimmick of
getting to attend my own
funeral, but let's not get
ahead of ourselves.



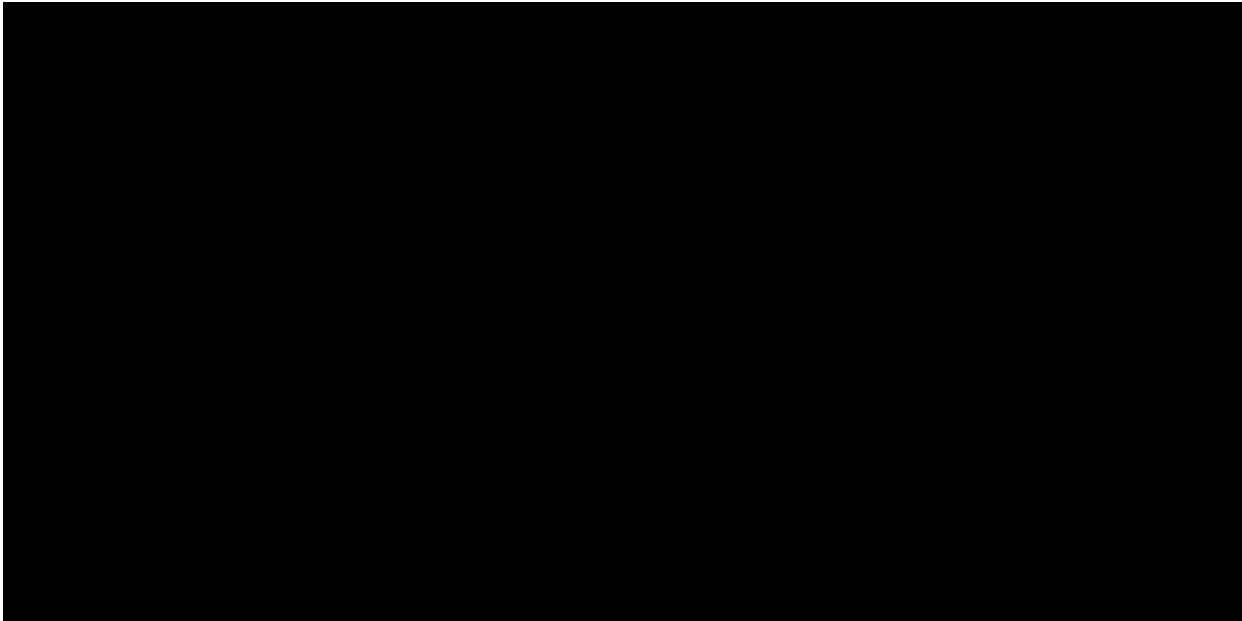
Apparently,
I've still got
an annoyingly
long life to
live.













What does *that* mean?



Geoffrey Wilder kills Gert, and what do I do?

The same thing I *always* do when I'm scared and confused... run into the arms of the nearest warm body.

Hey, I came to you. I initiated this, Nico. And I didn't do it because I was scared, I did it because I... I mean... I think you're really...



It doesn't change the fact that this was *cheap*.

We're supposed to be mourning our *friend*.

No, Gert would want us to remember her by living life to the fullest.

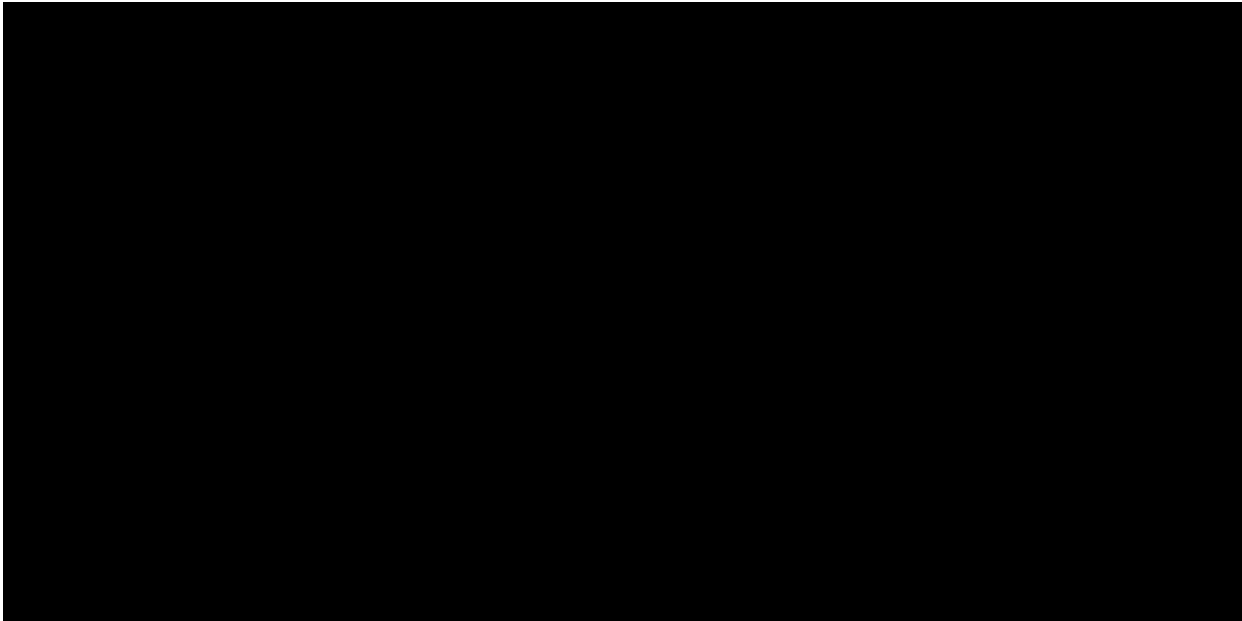


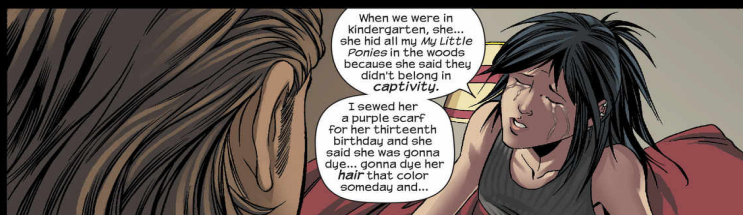
How the @##*% would *you* know what she'd want?

Why, because "Kid Ultron" is part *machine*?

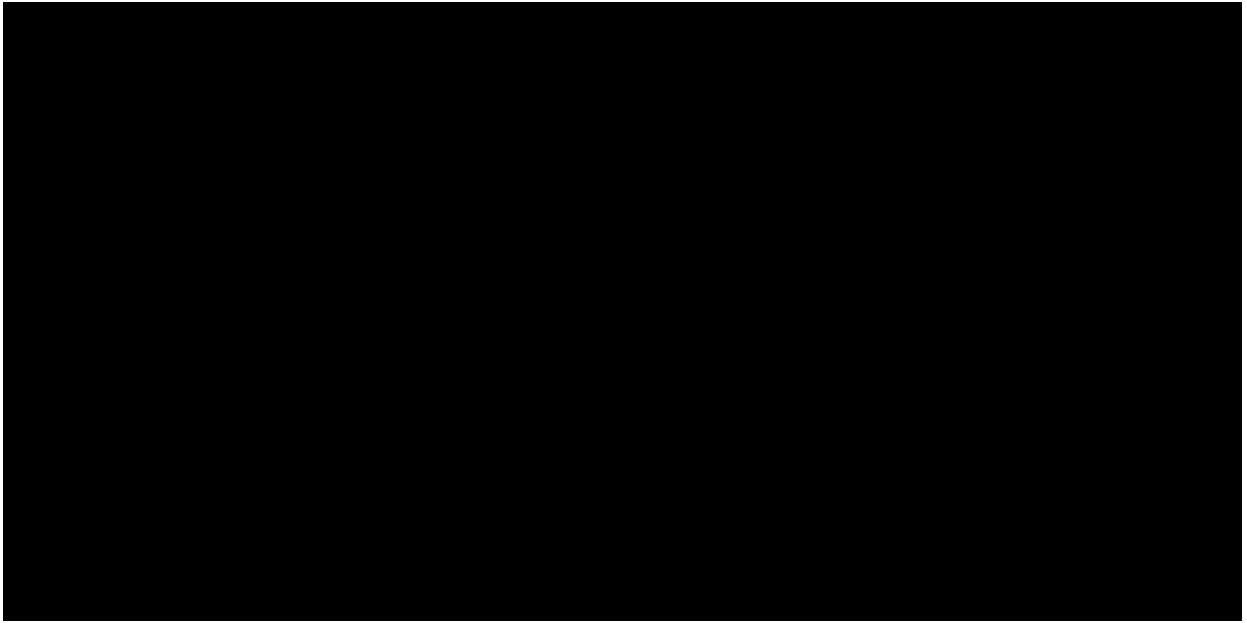
You think I can't *feel*?

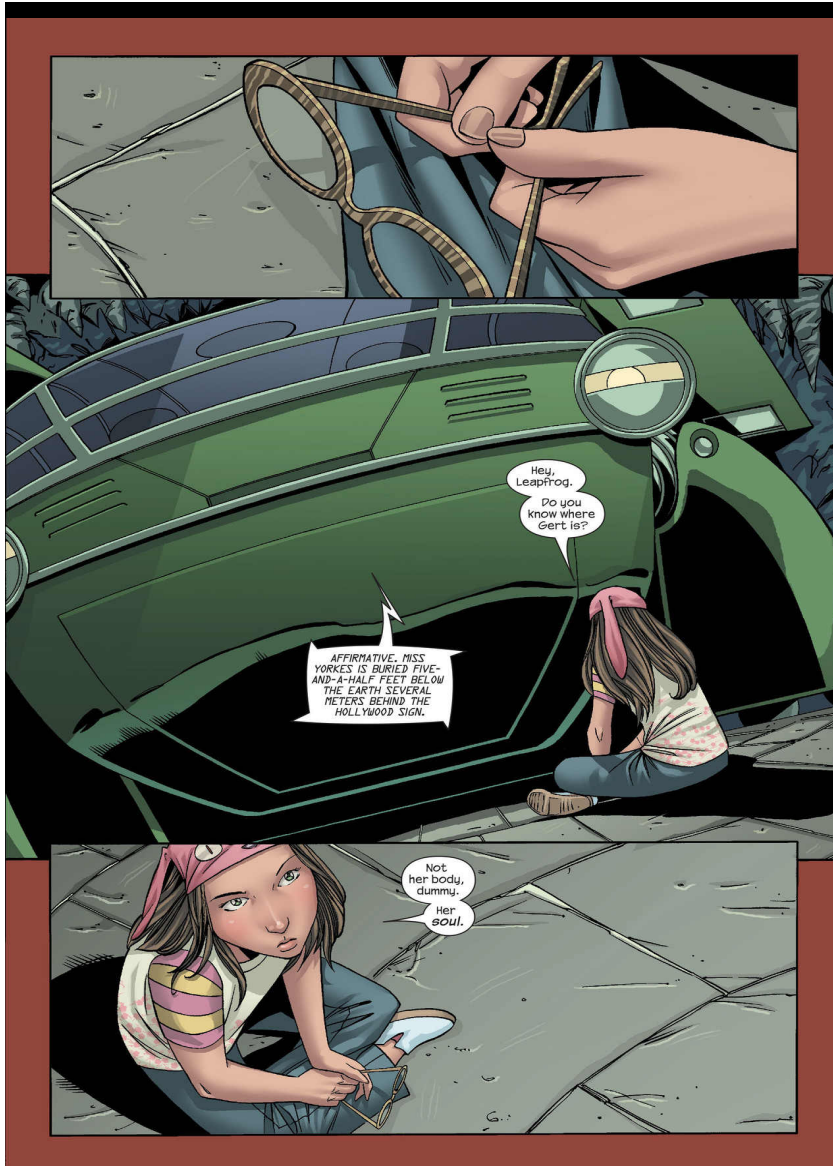




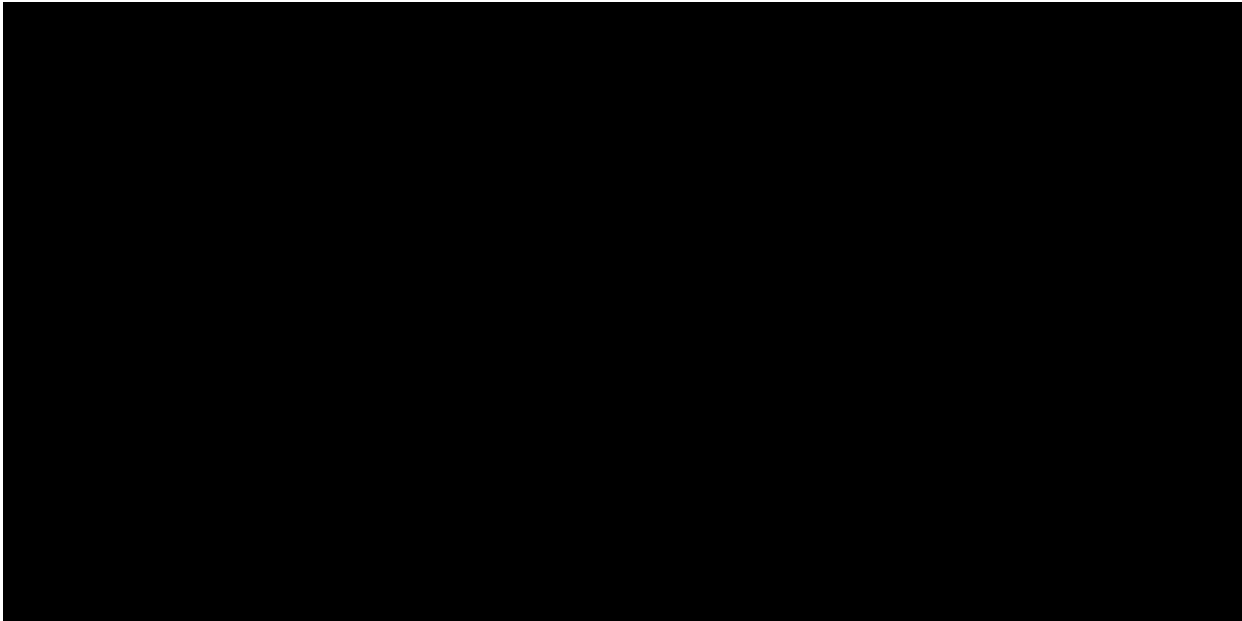


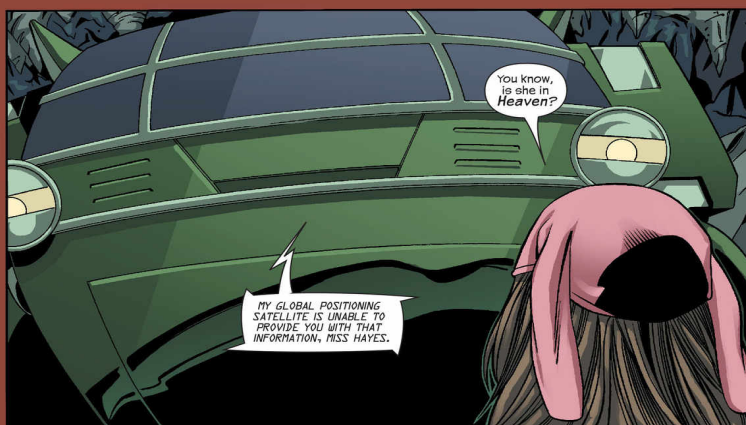




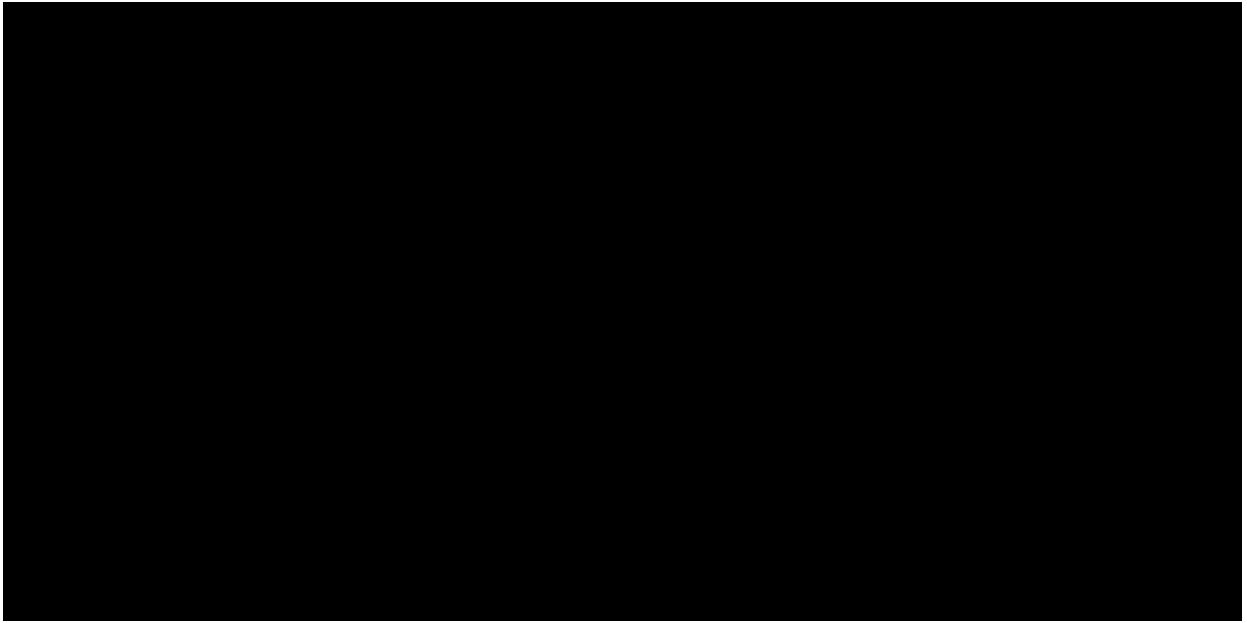






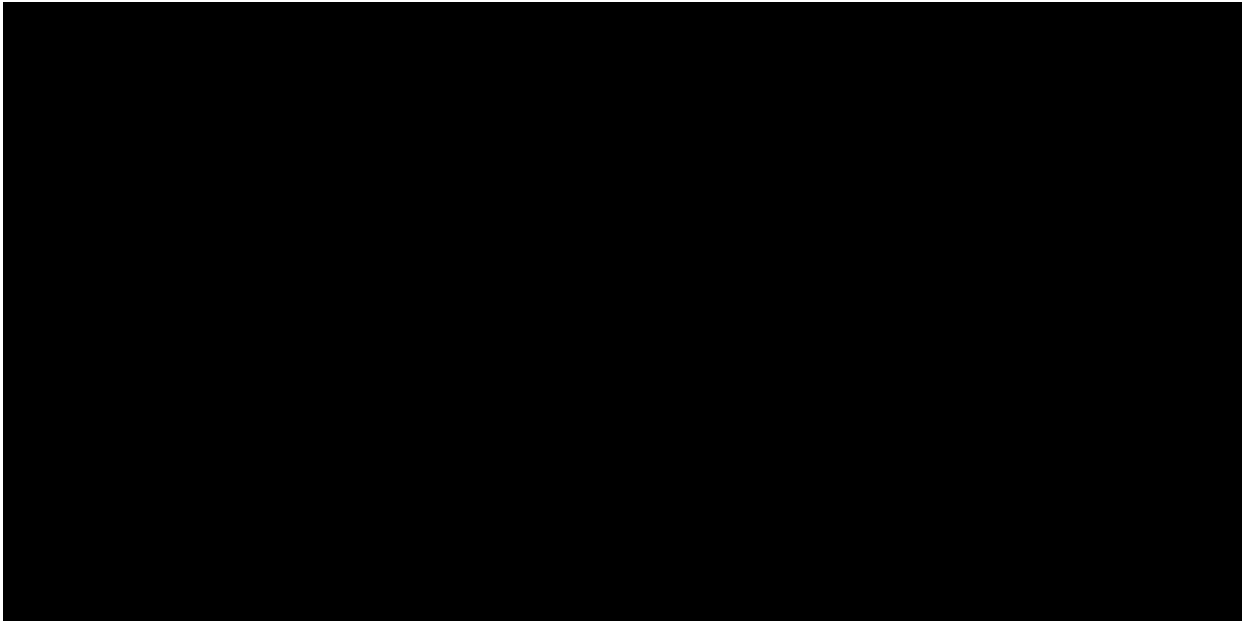






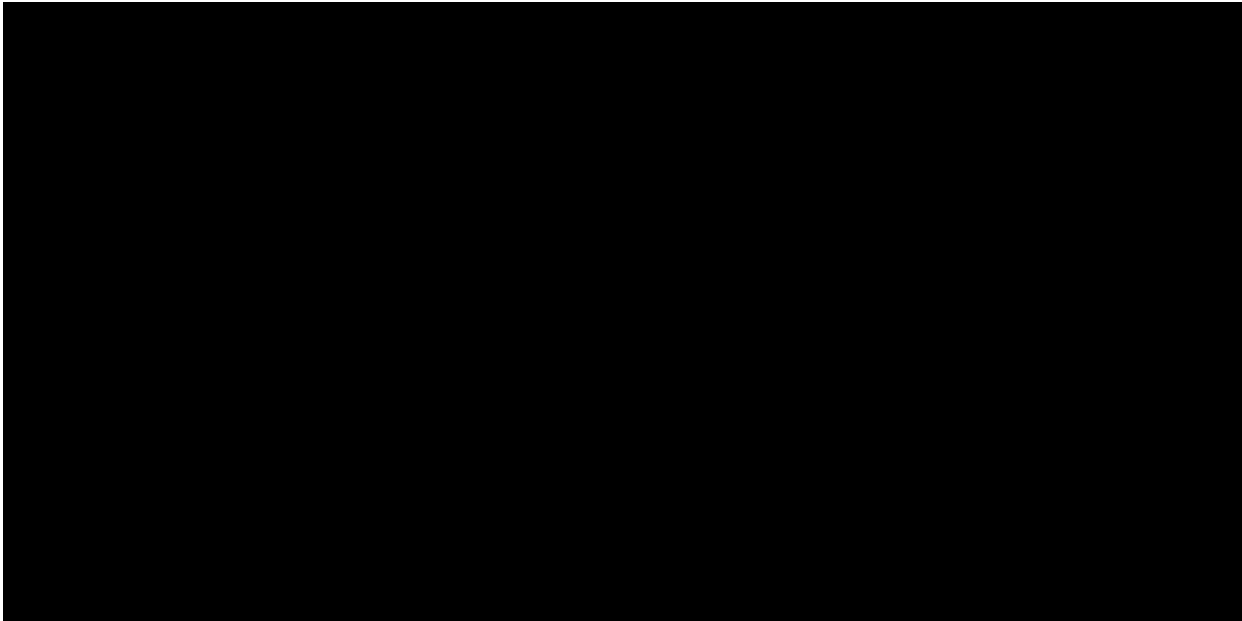












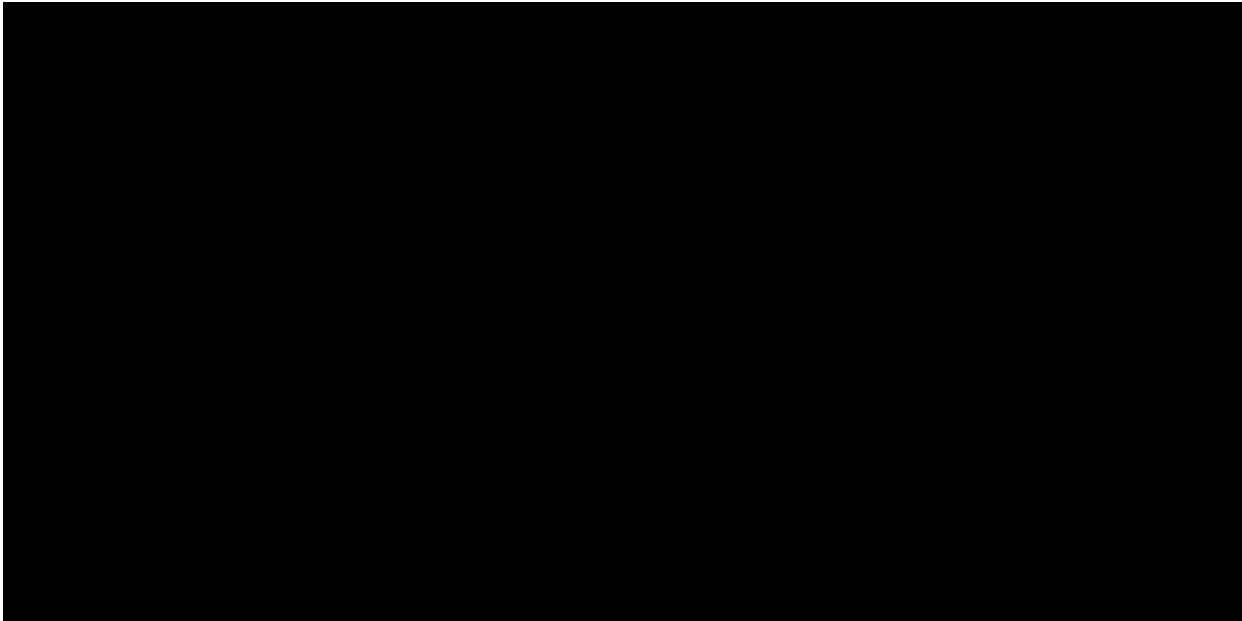






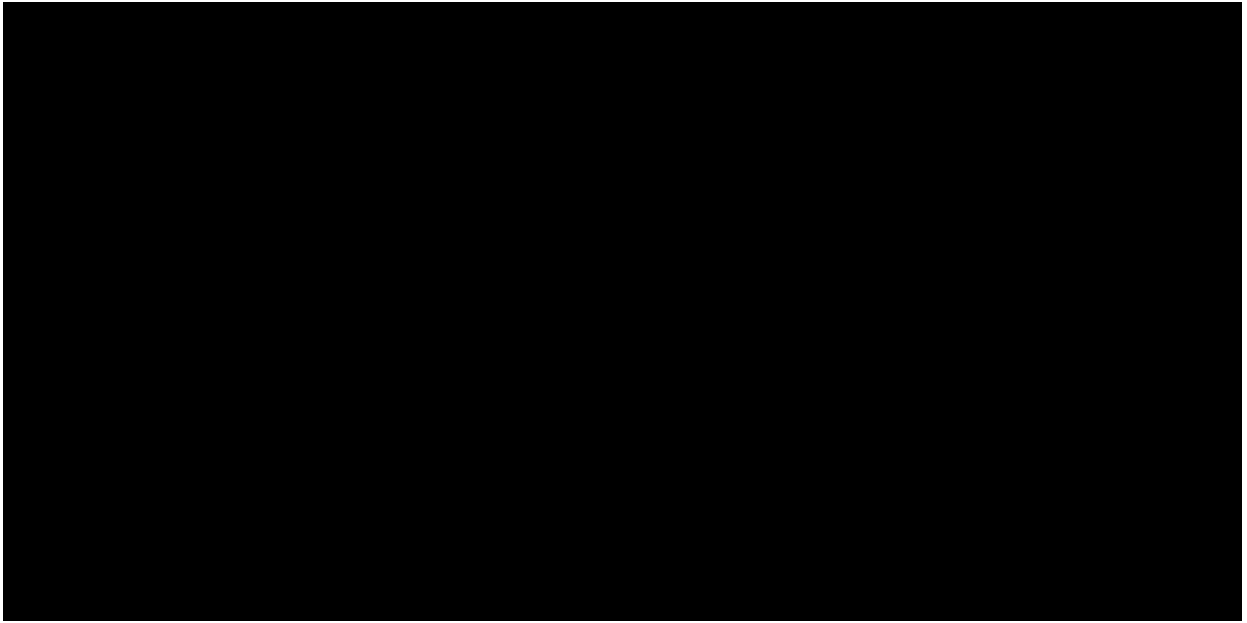














Come back
and I'll shotgun
the both of
you!

This town's
gone straight to
the handbasket,
huh, old-timer?



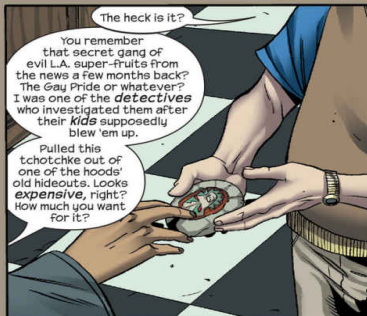
No respect, no
responsibility.

Angeles used
to be the crown
jewel of Cal, but these
kids have turned it into
worthless *crap*.

I know,
that's why
I left the
force.



But not
before I
took this.

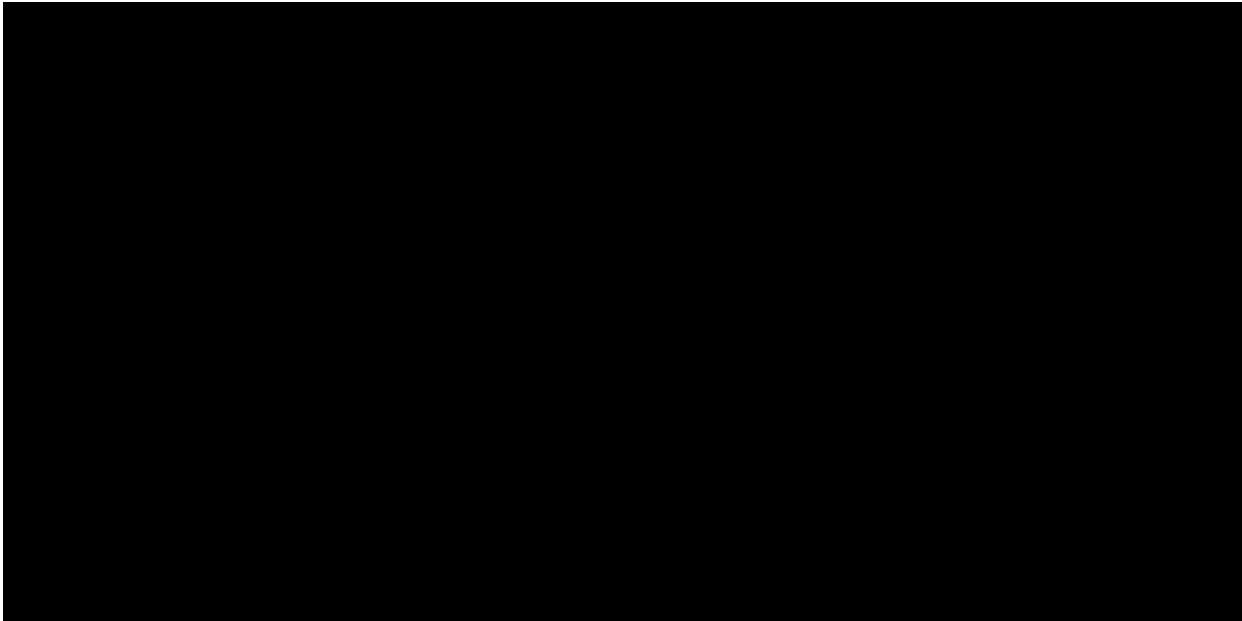


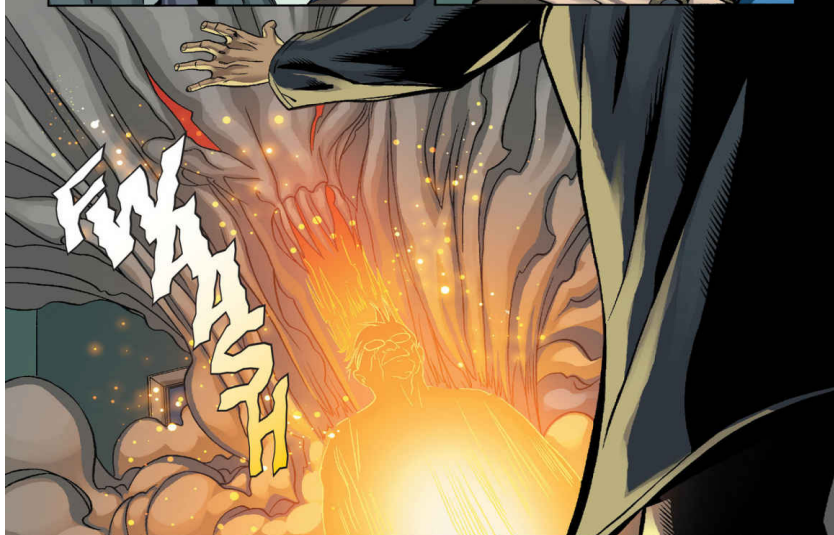
The heck is it?

You remember
that secret gang of
evil L.A. super-fruits from
the news a few months back?
The Gay Pride or whatever?
I was one of the *detectives*
who investigated them after
their *kids* supposedly
blew 'em up.

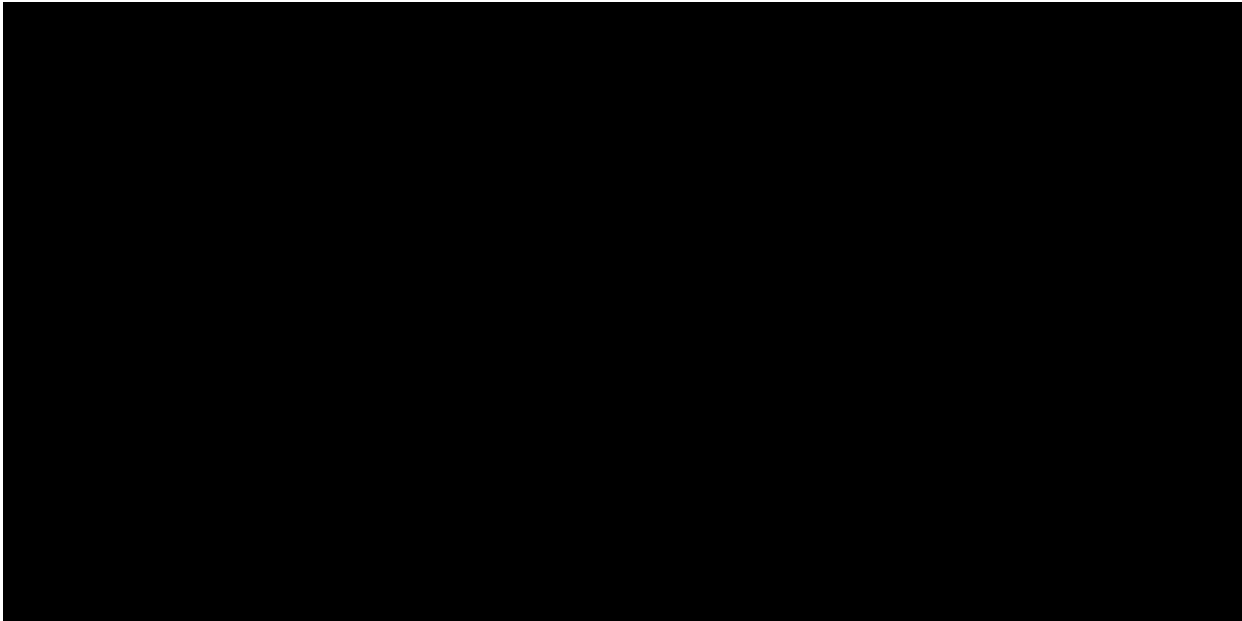
Pulled this
tchotchke out of
one of the hoods'
old hideouts. Looks
expensive, right?
How much you want
for it?





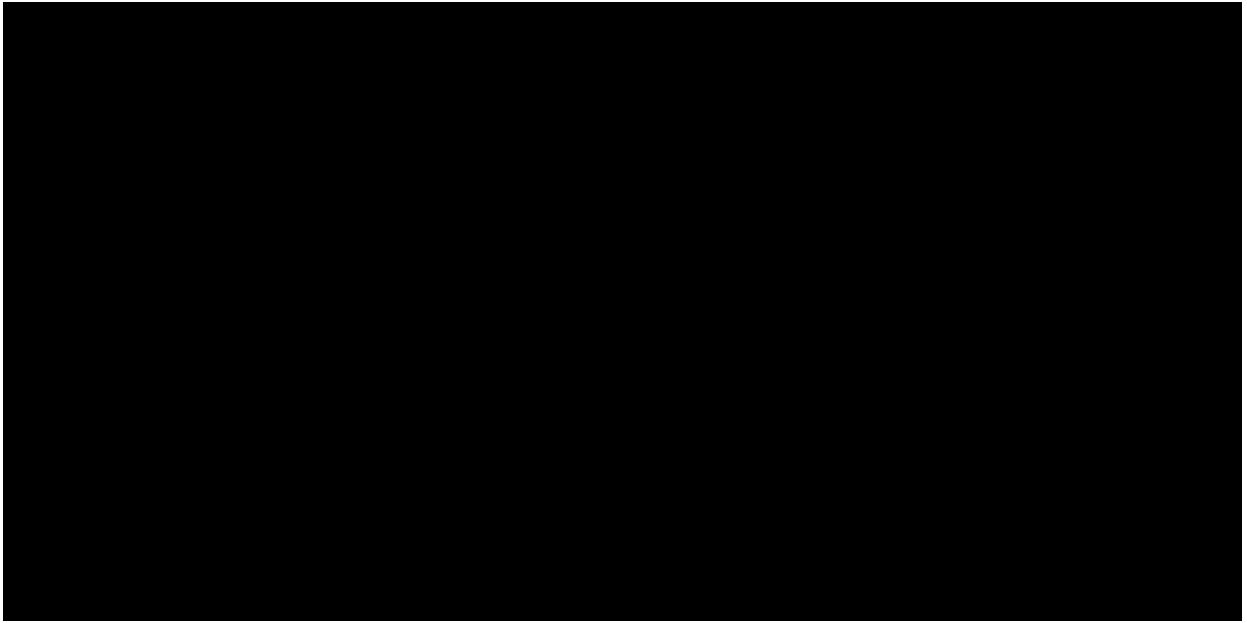






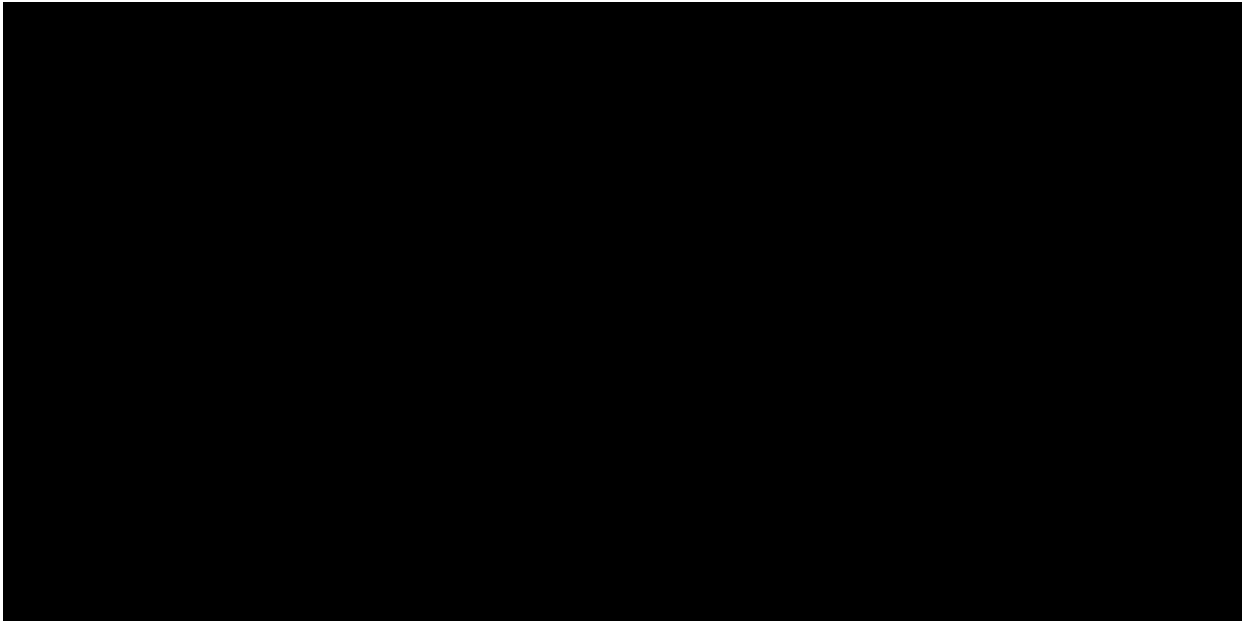






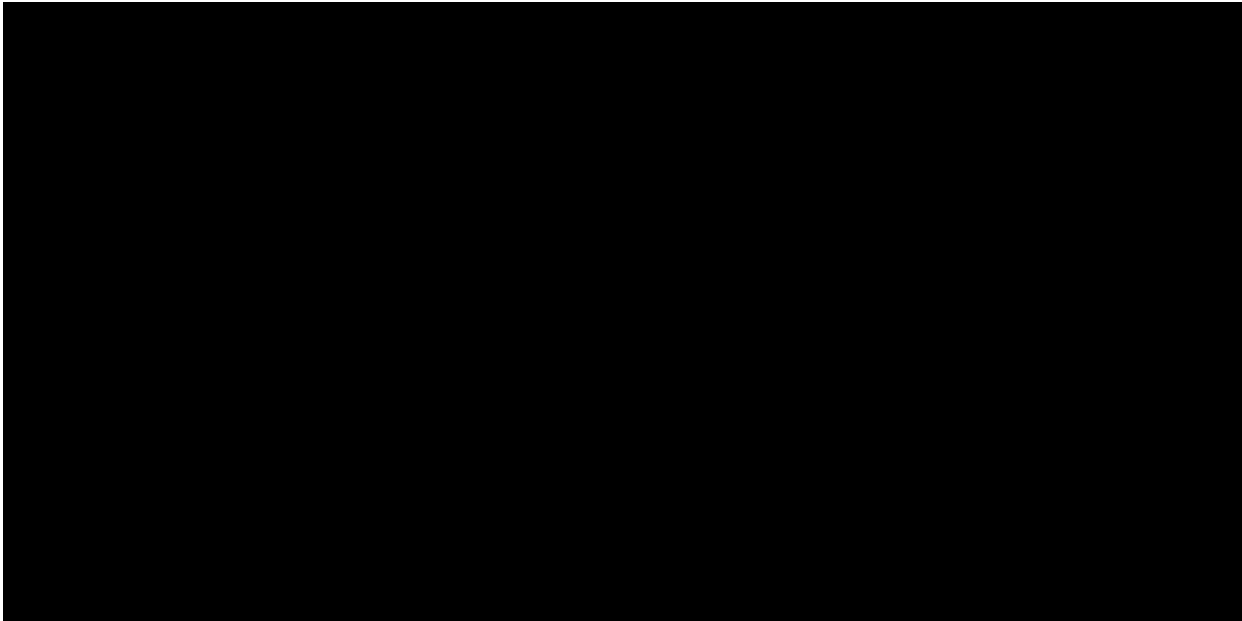


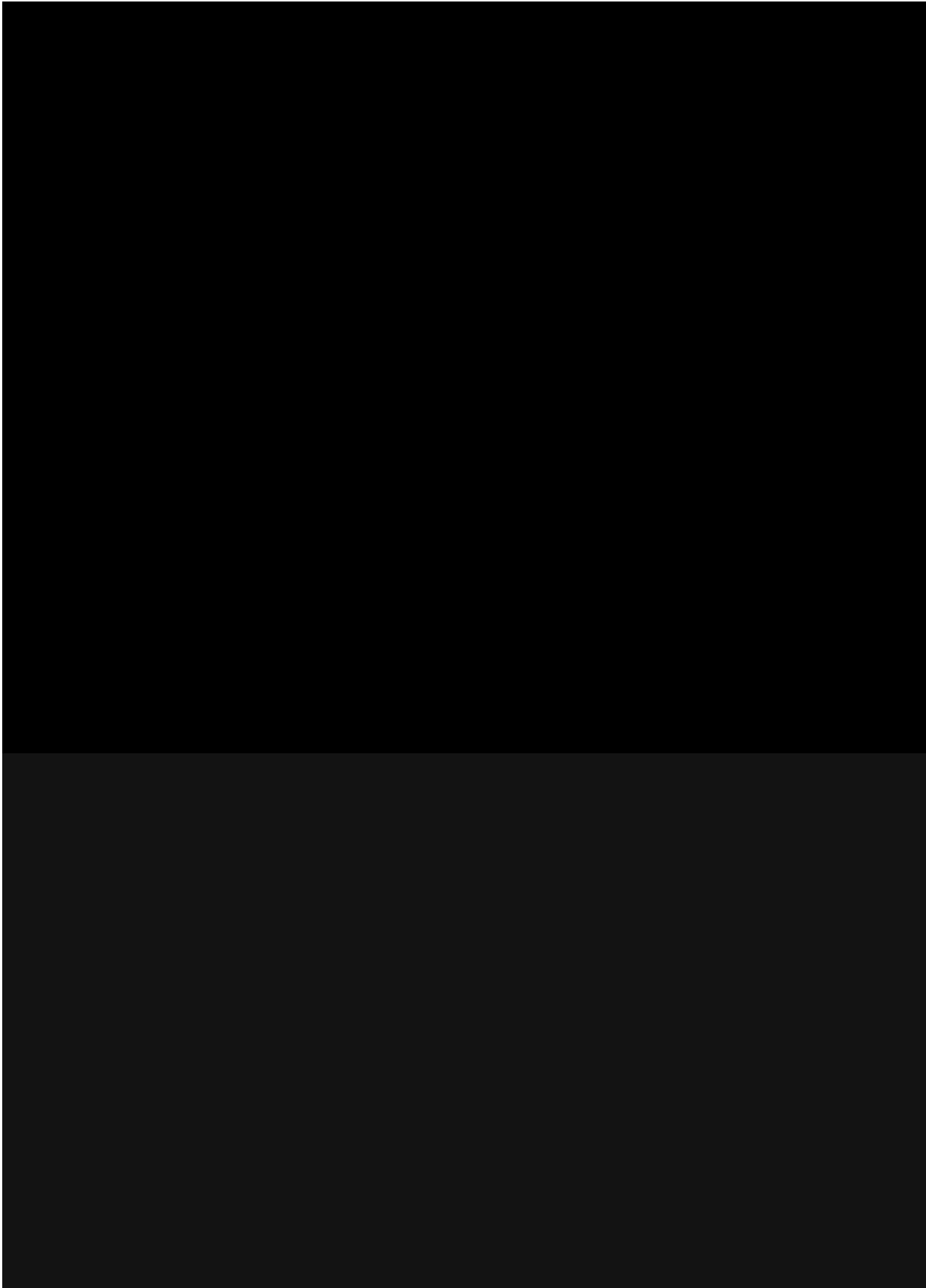










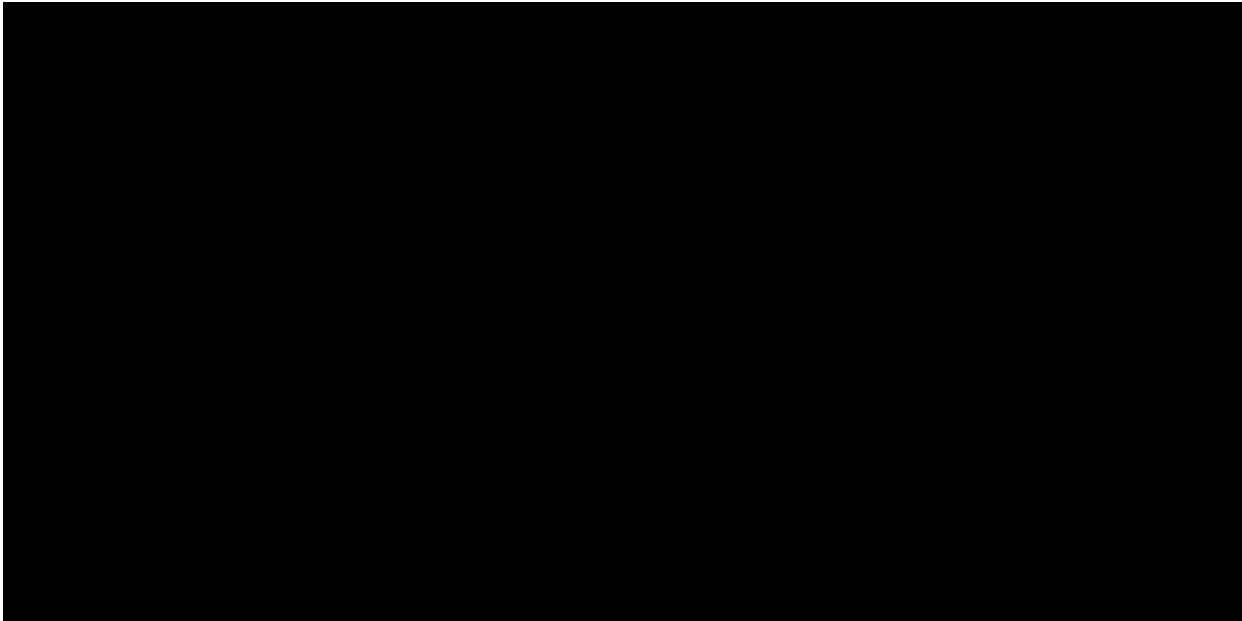






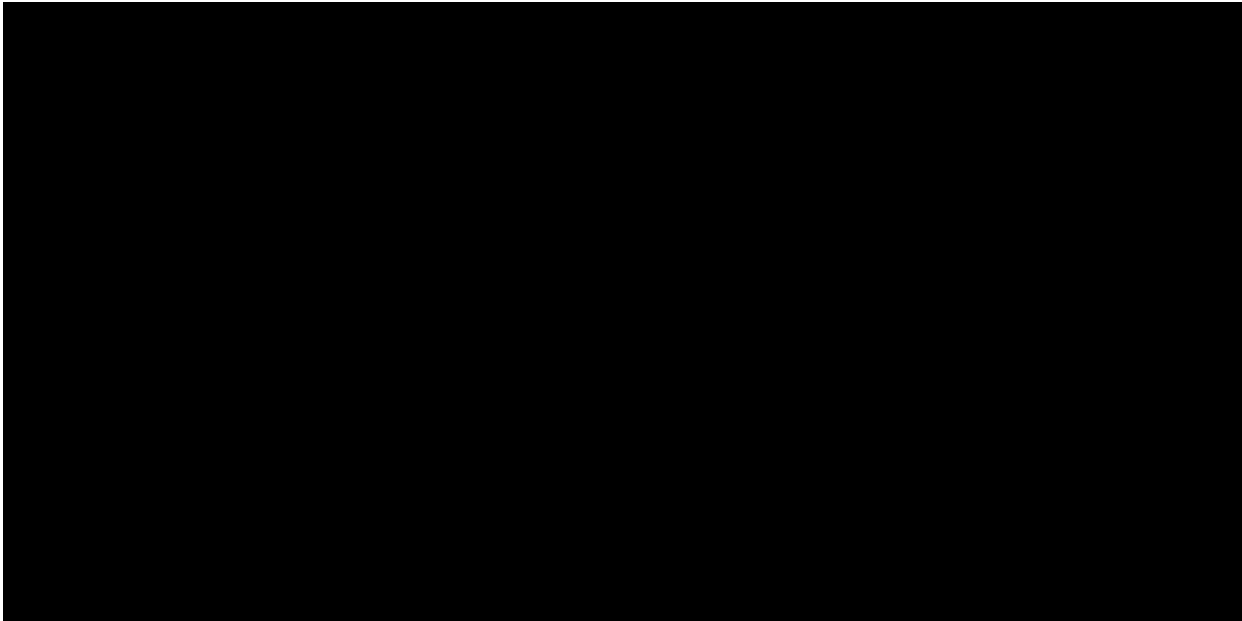












STREET TEAM

Greetings, BkV and everybody on the Street Team!

First off, I love, love, LOVE this book! Great job on the writing, the art, the absolutely fantastic coloring, the lettering...even the editing! I've been on board since the last issue of "season one" (afterwards, I bought the three digests to read the whole story), and I gotta tell ya it's only been getting better throughout season two! Kudos to all of you!

Second, I have to say that I was hoping against hope that it wouldn't be Nico (who is my favorite Runaway) who got killed, but it was foreshadowed, so I had a feeling it'd happen. Nevertheless, I hope that the ending to #17 is a fake-out (and I think it is, although that's just a gut feeling). Please, please, please let her live, Mr. Vaughan! Heck, let 'em all live! The truth is, I think every character is cool and they all have unique personalities, from Chase's street smarts to Gert's sarcasm and Molly's innocence. The only one I don't like is the Skrull. I just hate Skrulls. It's an irrational hatred, I know, especially since they're not real and all, but I figured I'd just hate on somebody in this e-mail. ;)

Finally, did I mention how great it was to see Karolina reunited with the team?

Anyway, thank you for doing great work on this book (hope it stays around a very long time), and I wish you continued success!

Albert "Keona" Tang
Honolulu, HI

Thanks, Albert! Nico was indeed spared, but that doesn't mean that she (or any of the Runaways) is safe. All I can say is that if and when another of our kids dies, we won't be nice enough to warn you about it ahead of time like we did before the untimely passing of poor Gert.

Hey guys,

I'm a Brazilian RUNAWAYS fan. The title really hasn't been given the proper respect here, but I have my ways to keep reading this amazing piece of narrative art. I mean, we all know how much BkV can be a freakin' genius, but I never suspected he could be that good at writing extremely realistic and authentic teenagers, and especially their dialogue, which is so good. Dialogue is as good as genius-master Joss Whedon (whose suggestions led me to look for RUNAWAYS. Thanks, Joss!). I'm here also to thank you, Brian, and your wonderful staff, especially the astonishing penciler, Adrian Alphona. He is so one of the biggest (if not the biggest) standout artists in comics today.

By the way, I'm the greatest Molly fan around! How cool would it be to have her starring in her own

THE HOT SEAT

WITH THIS SUMMER MOVIE SEASON OVER AND FORGOTTEN, WHICH FILM ARE YOU MOST LOOKING FORWARD TO IN THE SUMMER OF 2007?

BRIAN: Any chance Joss Whedon's *Wonder Woman* will be out by then? If not, put me down for the *Simpsons* flick. Be nice to see the show's best writers back with the characters.

MIKE: As far as I'm concerned, there are no other movies out in 2007 besides *Spider-Man 3*. Unless there's another *Garfield* sequel coming out. Is there another *Garfield* sequel coming out?

CRAIG: *Spidey*, *Pirates*, *FF*, *Transformers*, and *Spy Hunter* too.

CHRISTINA STRAIN: 28 Weeks Later!

RANDY GENTILE: *Spidey 3* and I'm not sure if it's coming out in the summer or not, but *Grind House*...the new Quentin Tarantino and Robert Rodriguez flick.

SEAN: *Transformers*, sucka. Giant robots, plus Michael Bay, plus Shia LaBeouf, you can't go wrong!

NICK: *Spider-Man 3*, no question. I fell in love with the teaser trailer, but it won't return my calls.

miniseries, or one-shot?? She's the coolest! So cute, I want her to be my own!

Keep up the good work!

Marcos Damata

Much appreciated, Marcos. Adrian really is one of the best artists working today. But while Mr. Alphona takes a much-deserved break for three issues, I'm thrilled to be joined by Mike Norton, who some of you may know from his work on Marvel's excellent *GRAVITY*. How about Mike's crazy double-page spread this ish?

Dear Runaways Team,

This message--"thanks"--is going to everybody, BkV, Adrian, Craig, Christina and every last person who has had a hand in making RUNAWAYS one of the best books on the market today and ever.

I've been reading this book since the first "season" and it has always been at the top of my read pile whenever it comes out.

Issue 18, from the superb cover to the last page, was magnificent. This book is one of the only comic books that has brought a tear to my eye. The coloring on the page with Gert in Chase's arms was genius.

RUNAWAYS will not be the same without Gert, or Chase, and Old Lace for that matter. However, I'm very eager to see what is in store for

my favorite group of super-powered runaway teens! Keep up the amazing work!

P.S.: Since Gert never told Chase she loves him, like the future Gert never did, there's still a chance she'll come back! Right?

Chris Harnick

Sorry, Chris. Dead means dead.

Runaways Team,

I'm curious. If Chase had killed Alex's father, would things have turned out better for the Runaways? If he was dead, and Alex never had been born, one of two things could have happened. First option is Alex would never have existed to show the other Runaways the evil ways of the Pride. So, they'd all still be ignorantly happy and Gert would be ignorantly alive. The second option is without Alex's father the Pride never would have formed, none of the bad stuff would happen and Gert would be alive. I guess that's why Chase is an idiot.

Jeff
Westerville, Ohio

Well, Jeff, the Pride had already been formed in the era that younger Geoffrey Wilder came from, so if Chase had killed him, the Pride still would have been able to continue their plans to destroy all life on the planet, and Alex never would have been born to assemble the group that ultimately stopped them and saved the world. So maybe Chase isn't the idiot you think he is. More on that next issue...

-BKV

NEXT ISSUE:



Nathan Cosby
Assistant Editor

Nick Lowe
Editor

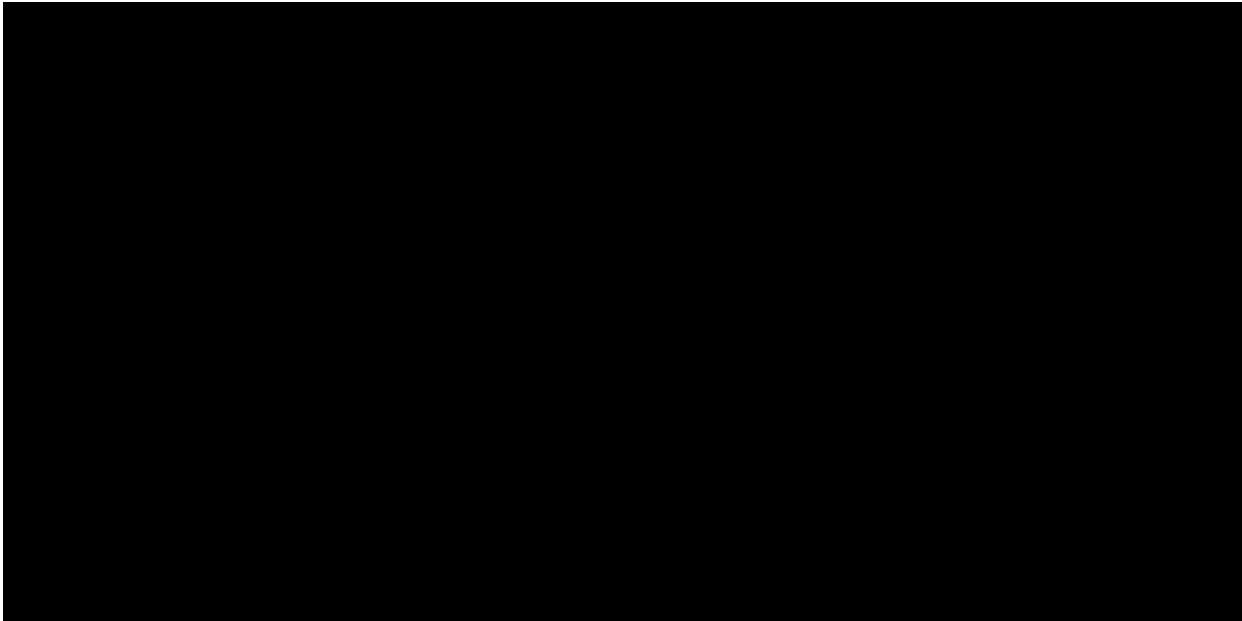
Joe Quesada
Chief

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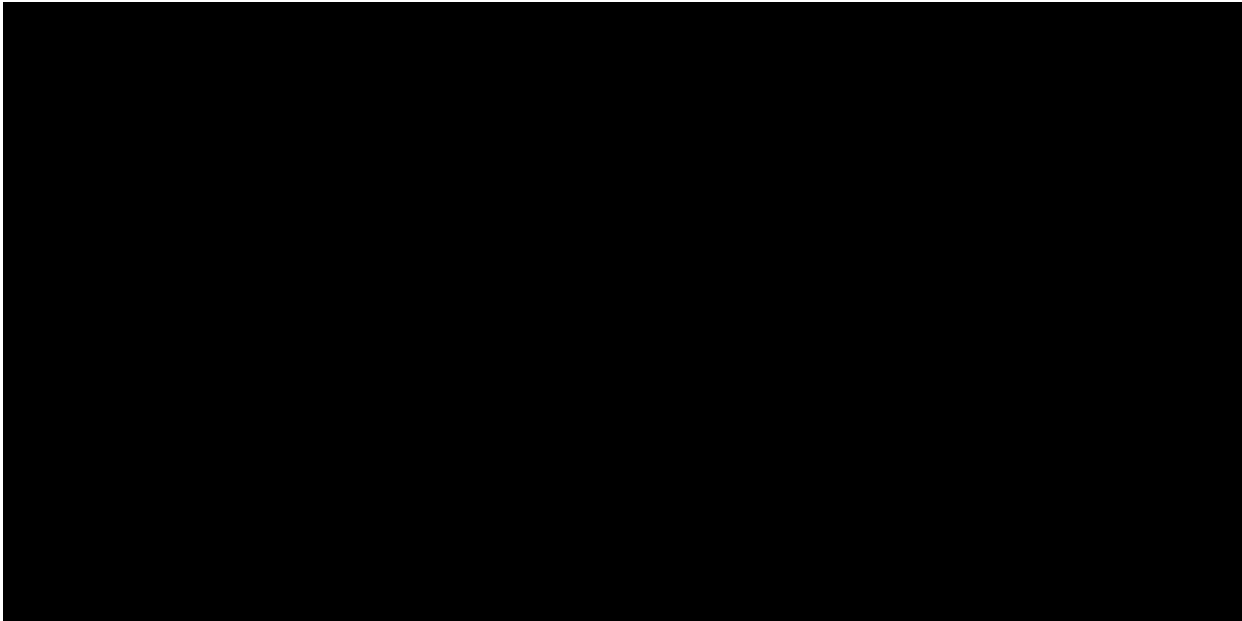
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VAUGHAN
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STRAIN

RUNAWAYS

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THE RUNAWAYS



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Daughter of
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After a ferocious battle with an all-new Pride led by a temporally displaced Geoffrey Wilder, Gert Yorkes died in the arms of her boyfriend. With her final breath, Gert "willed" control of her telepathic dinosaur to Chase Stein, just before the devastated young man stole a decoder ring and Wilder's copy of the Abstract, a mystical tome containing powerful secrets. While the Runaways confront a hideous monster created by a magical artifact that once belonged to Nico's late parents, Chase recruits a former member of the disbanded Pride for his secret campaign.

DEAD MEANS DEAD

chapter two

Brian K. Vaughan
Writer

Christina Strain
Colorist

Virtual Calligraphy's
Randy Gentile
Letterer

Joe Quesada
Chief

Nick Lowe
Editor

Mike Norton
Penciler

Rich Ginter
Production

Jo Chen
Cover Artist

RUNAWAYS created by **Vaughan & Alphonse**

Craig Yeung
Inker

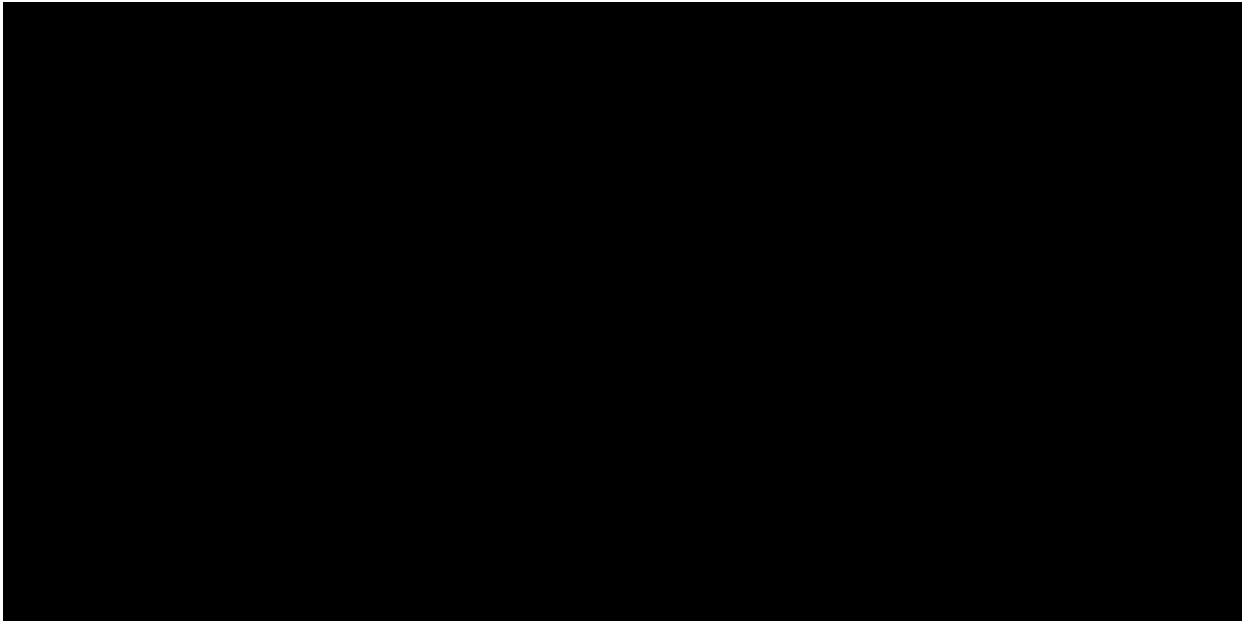
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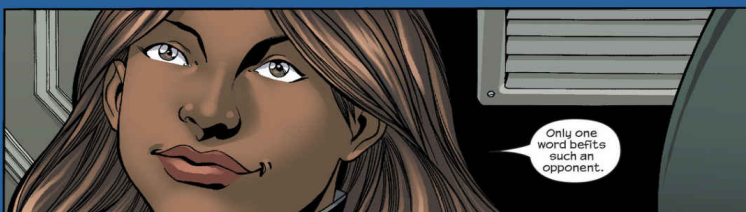
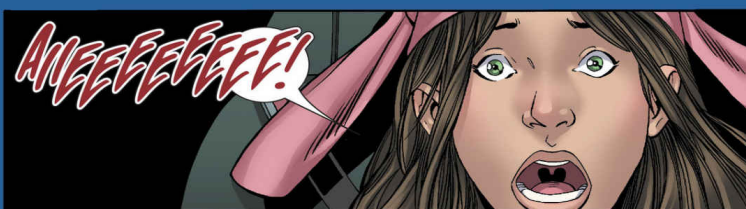
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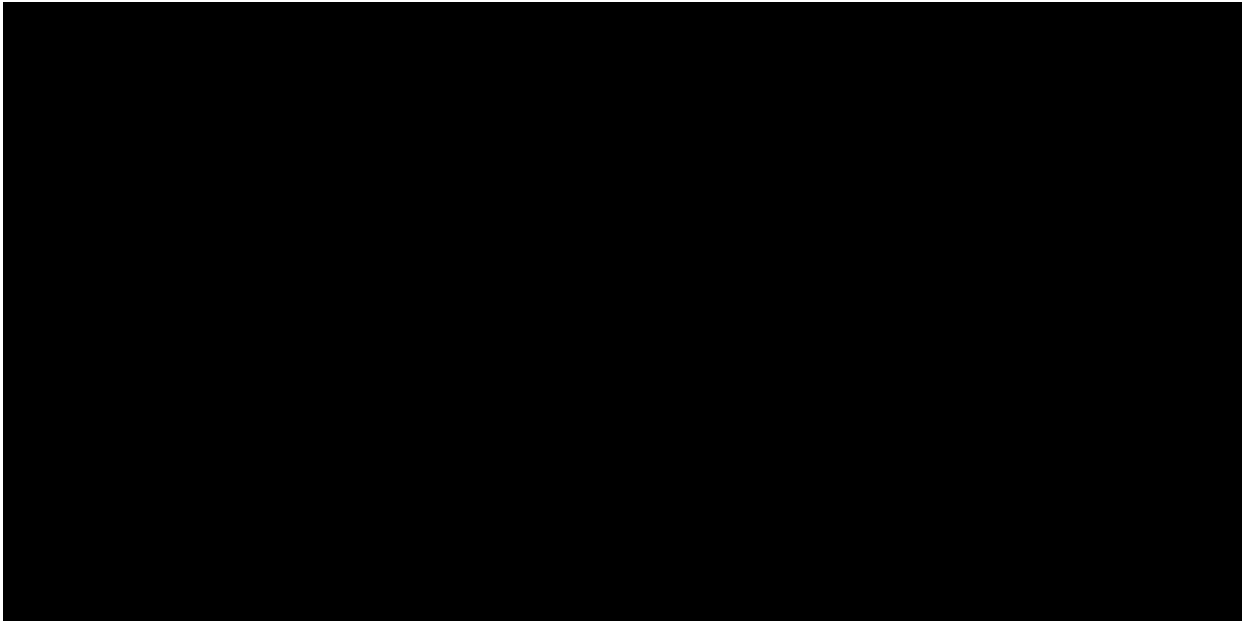
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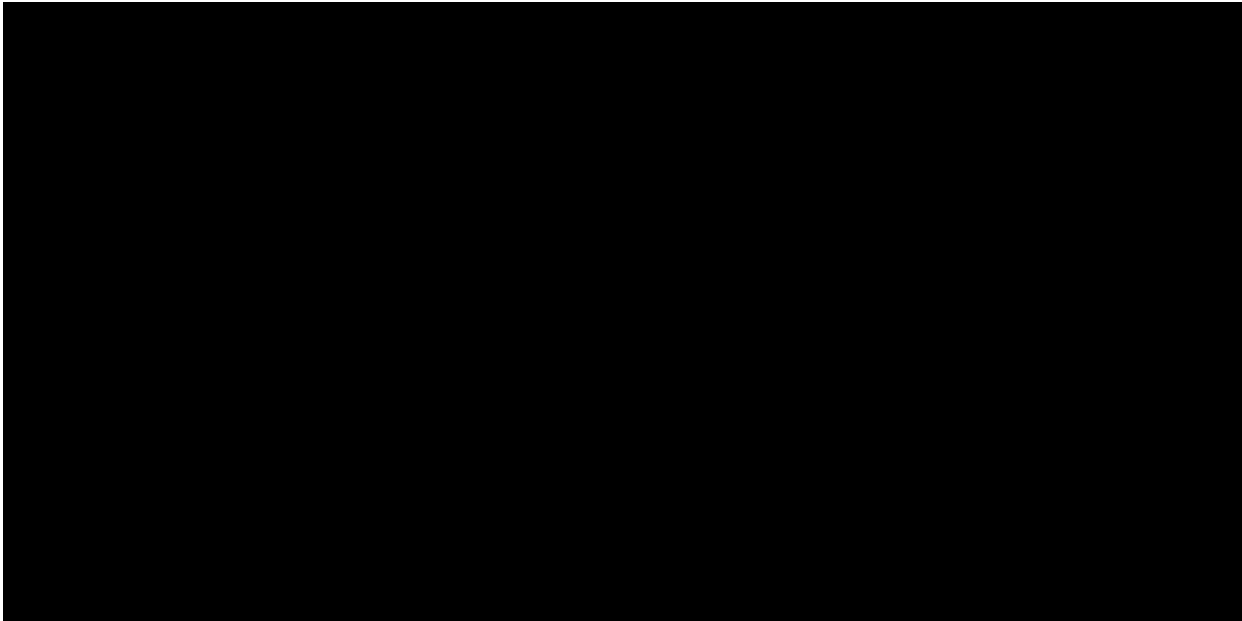














No, opposite of outstanding! We fight C-list jewel thieves in bad costumes, not... not city eaters!

VRRRRRR!



The Leapfrog's cloak is on the Fritz again, and I don't know how to sweet-talk it back online like Chase used to. What do I do?

What do you think, Victor?

Leave this thing for the Avengers! Or the Fantastic Four! Hell, if it eats the X-Men, it'll be doing us a favor!



We can't retreat!

Xavin's kind of right, Nico. This thing is wrecking every building built in the last twenty years!

New York is hours away, and we're pretty much the only super-help this coast has got, right? Even those Excelsior basketcases have been missing in action since--

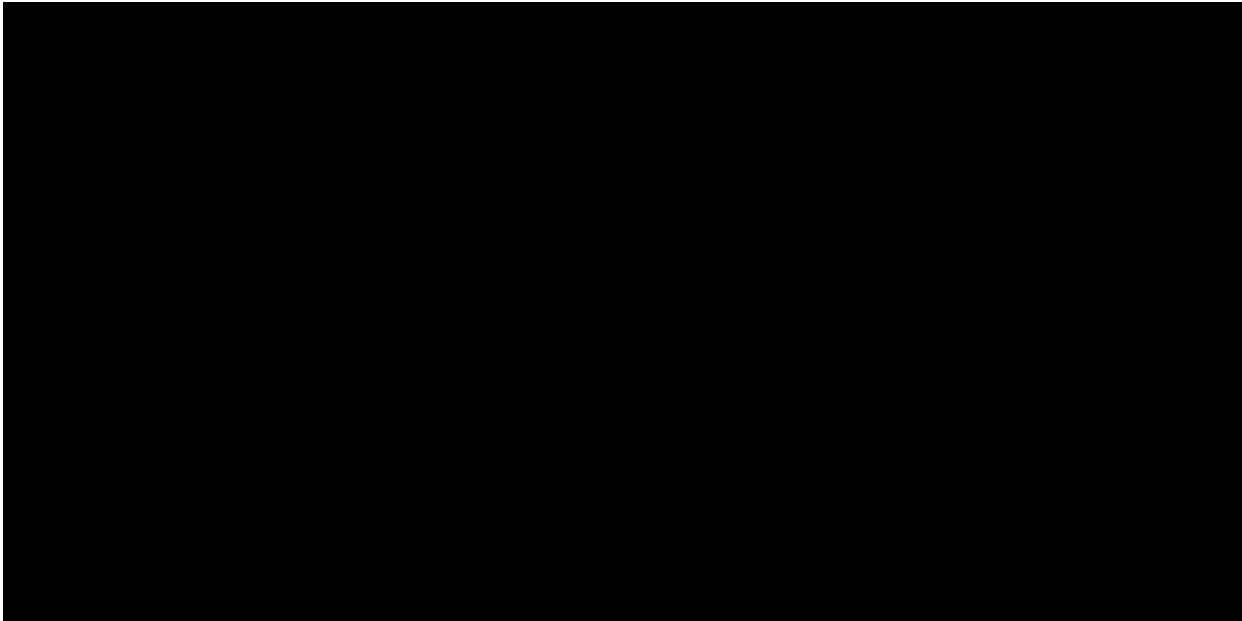
Oh noes!

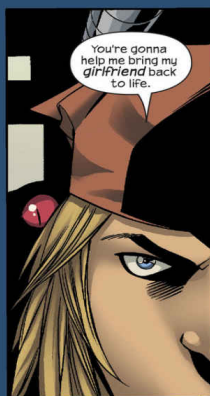




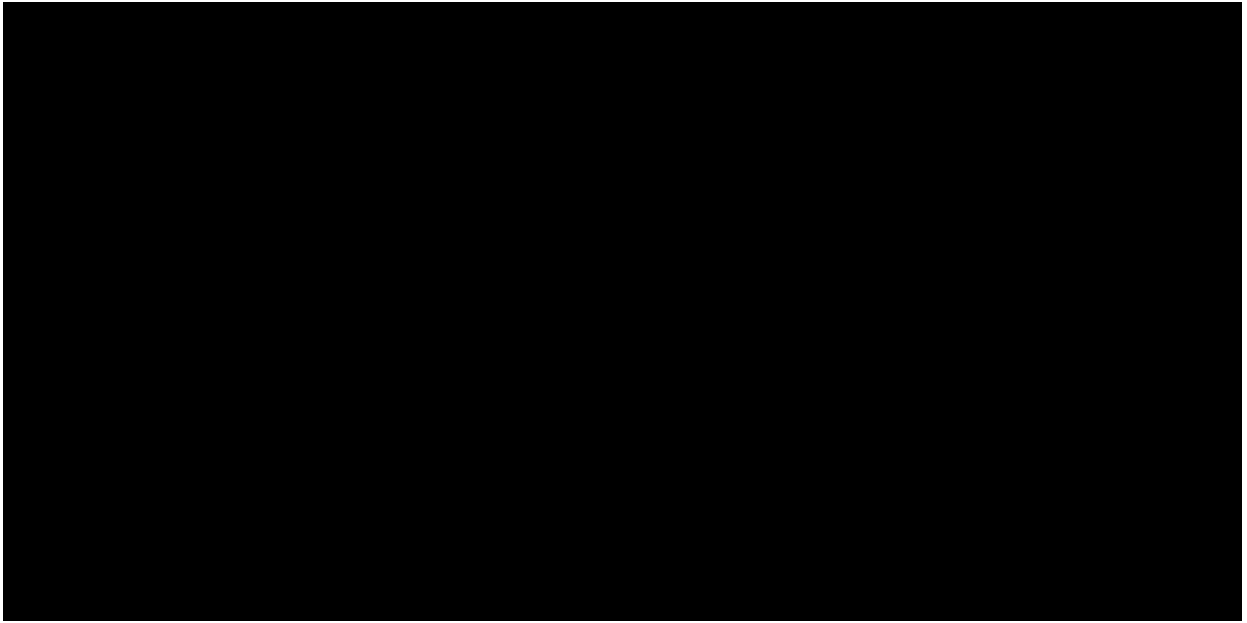






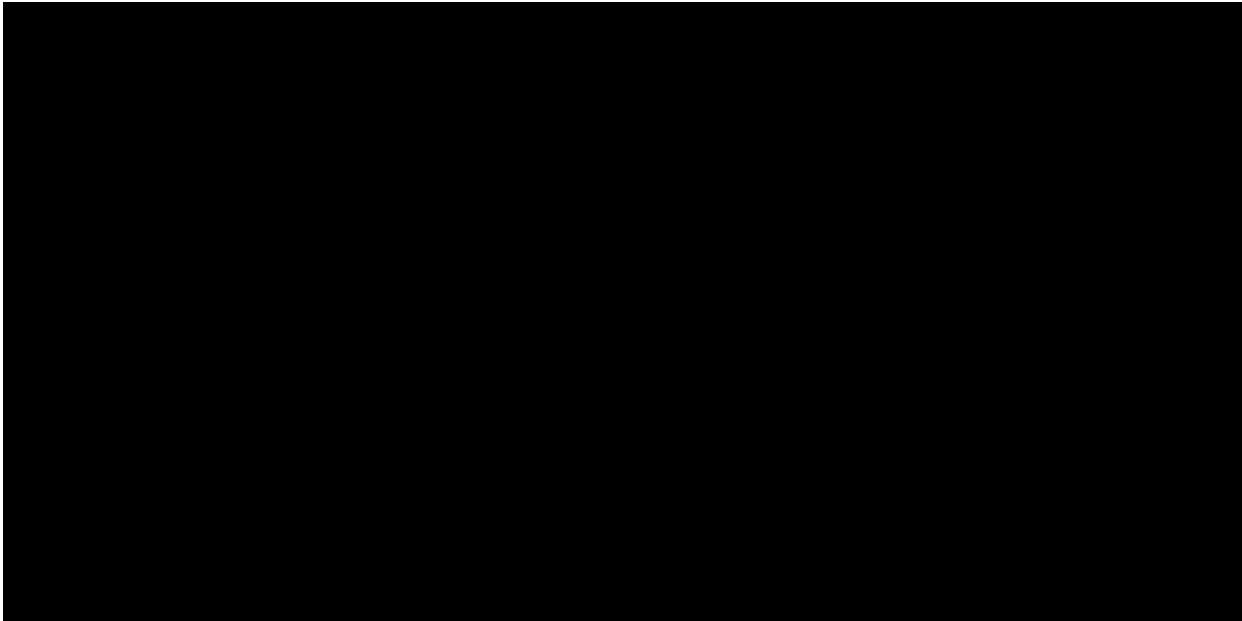






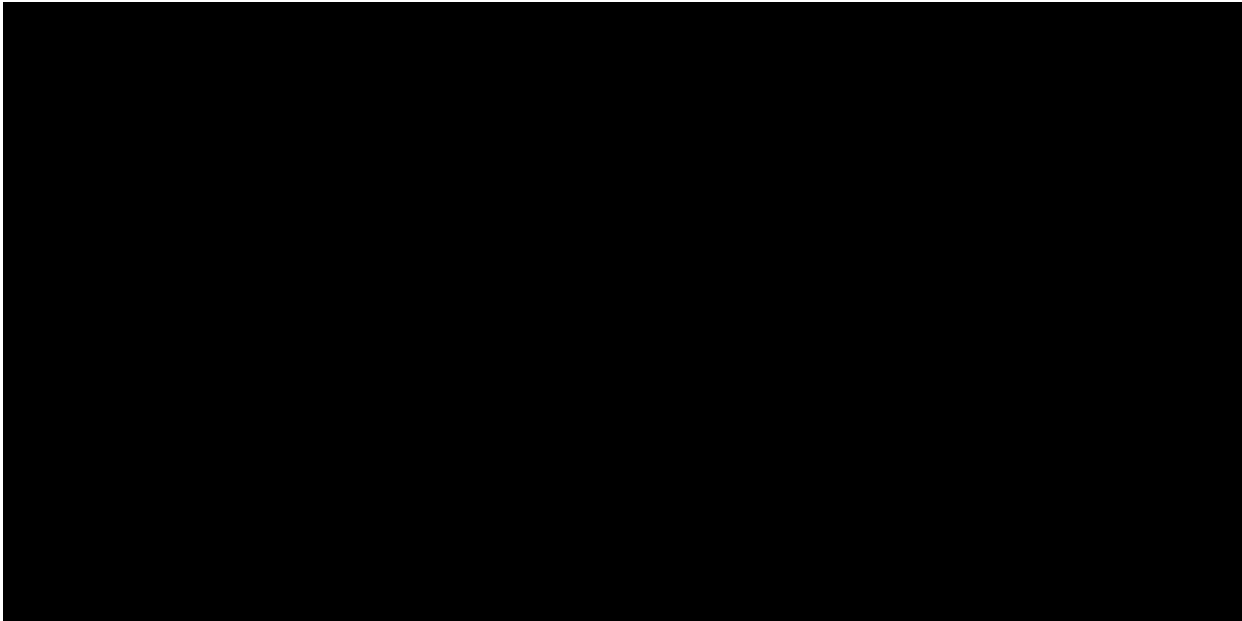














Is everyone
still in one
piece?

I think my
magnetic
field slowed
our descent
some.



Wrong, automaton.

It was *my*
invisible shield
that saved us
from the crash's
full impact.

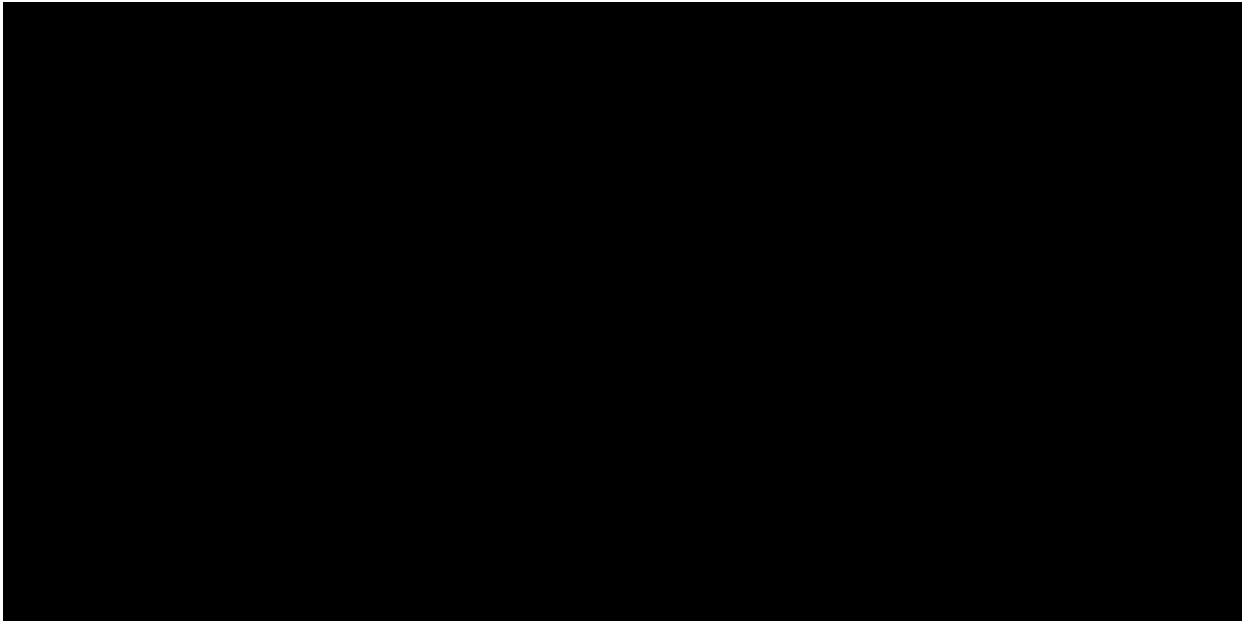


If you can
make a force field,
She-Male, why didn't
you put it around us
before that thing
riccised one of
our frog legs?!

Save it, kids.
We have to abandon
ship before Too Tall
walks this way and
flattens us.

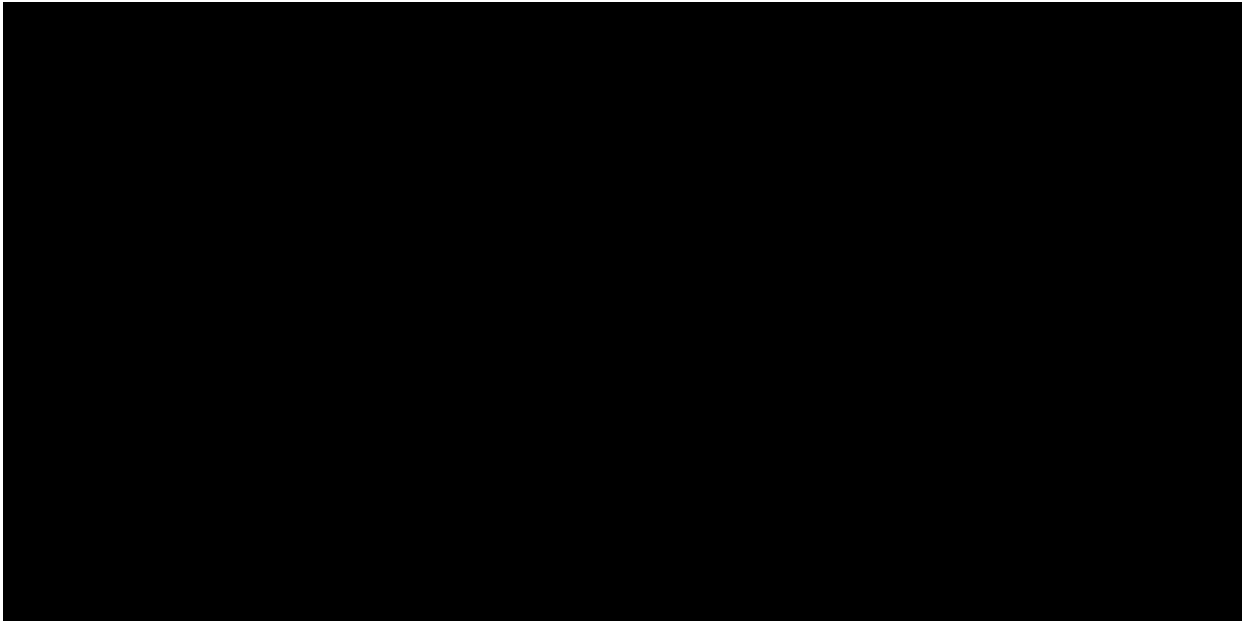
KROOM
KROOM
KROOM





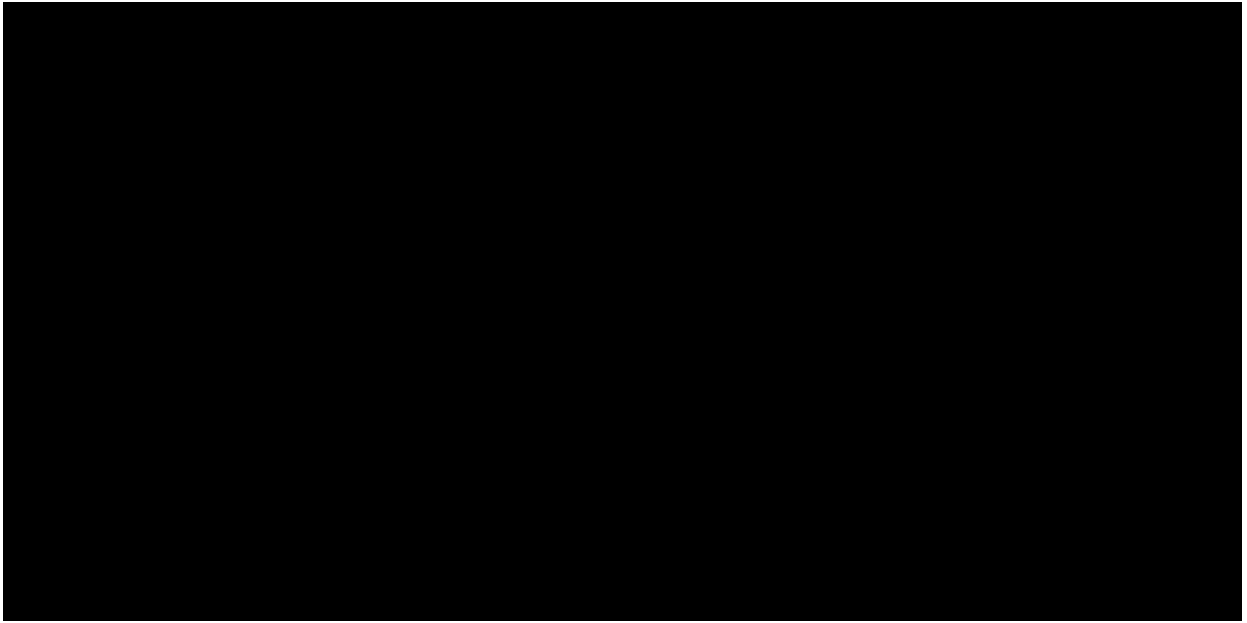








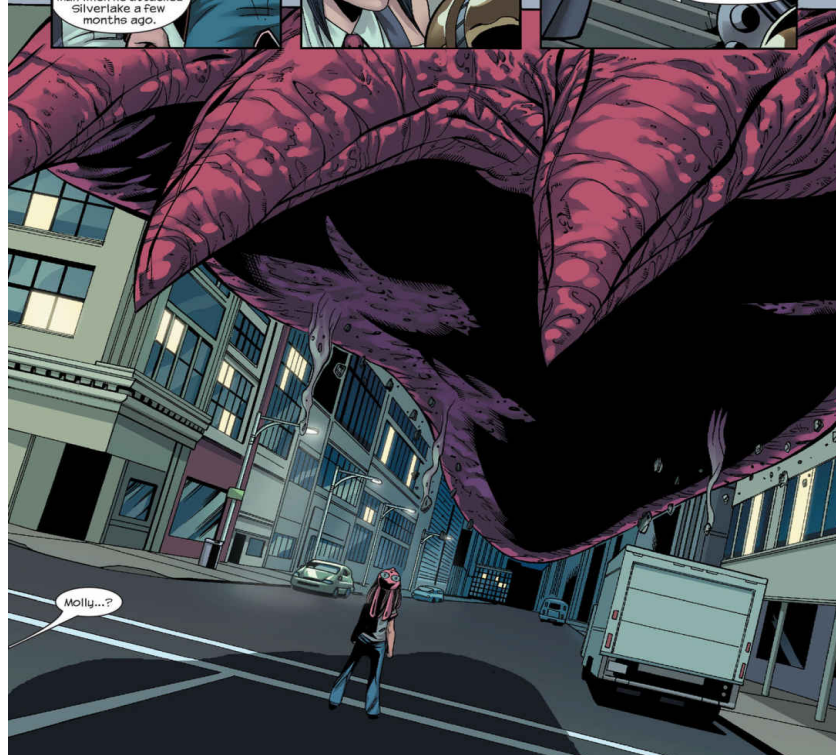




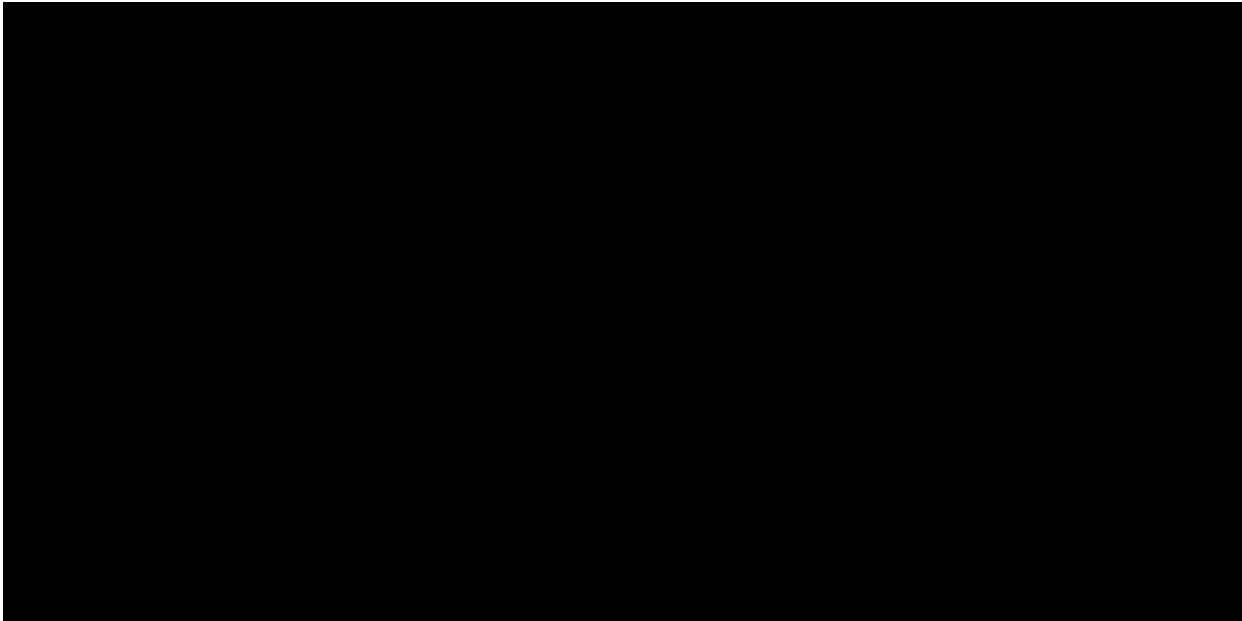














--with Governor Schwarzenegger calling for mandatory evacuation of the downtown area, while National Guard forces formulate a plan to contain the apparent super-weapon of mass destruction--



Guess that explains why no one is paying attention to the hatchback with the *dinosaur* in it.

Don't worry, radio always exaggerates stuff.

Just another night in L.A.



Chase, can I ask you a question? When you were little, what did you want to be when you grew up?

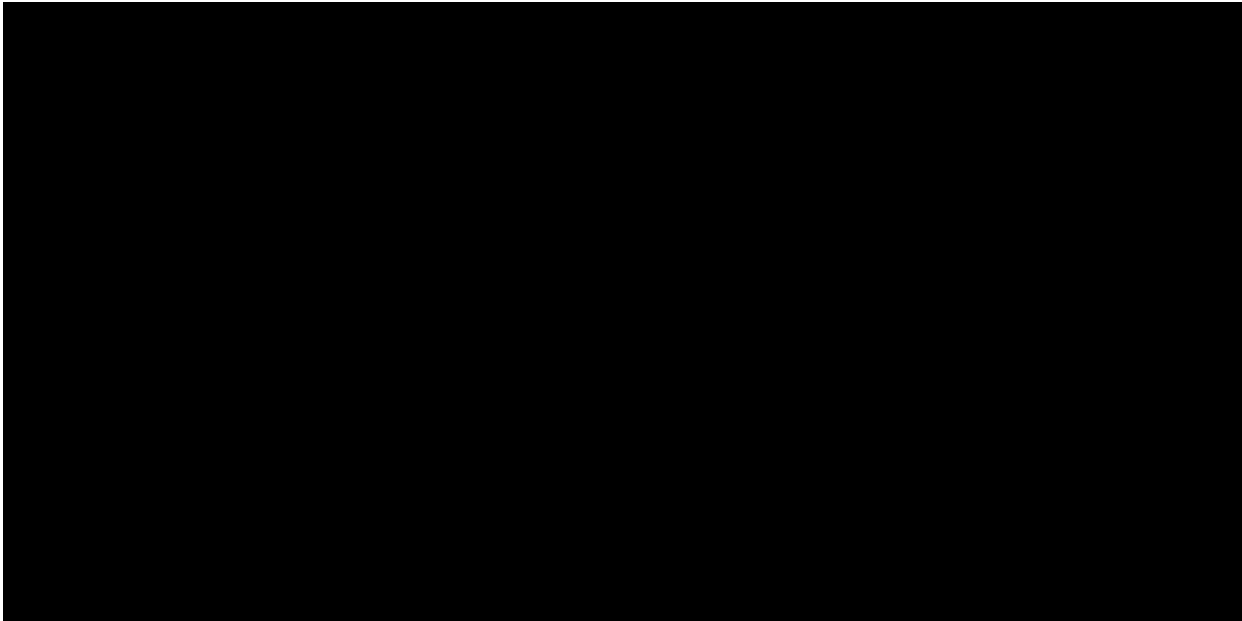
I don't know, bounty hunter or something. What do you care?

You remember that old super hero, Mockingbird? When I was a girl, I dreamed of being just like her someday. But instead, I got duped into becoming a *villain*.



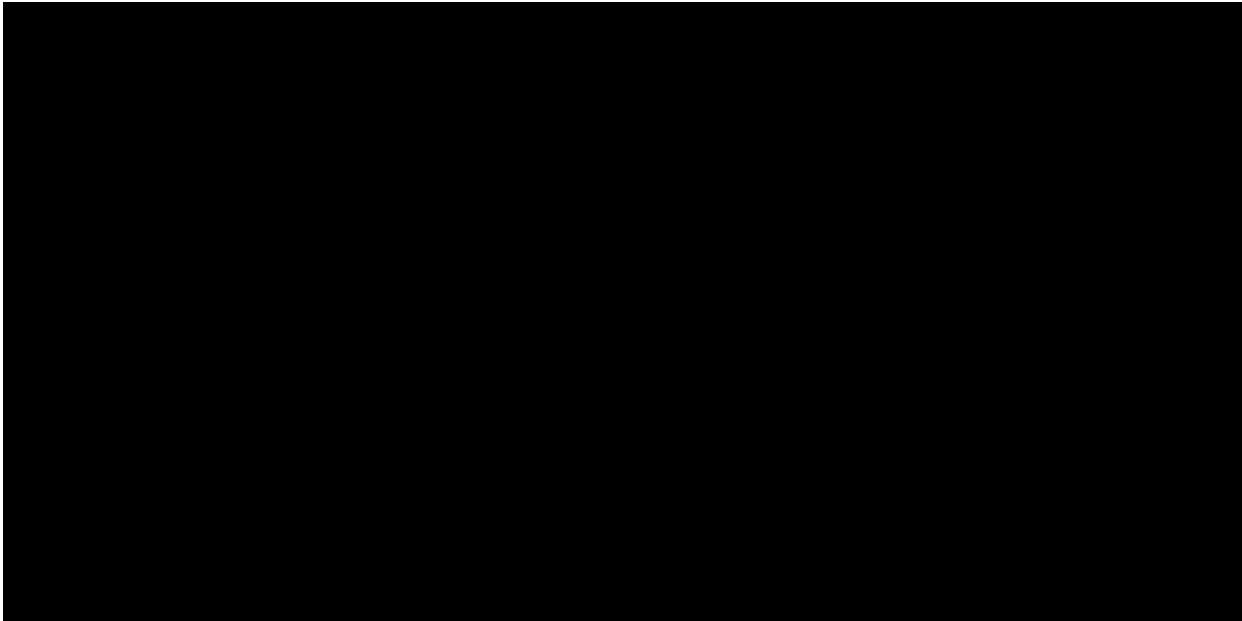
You see what I'm getting at, right?





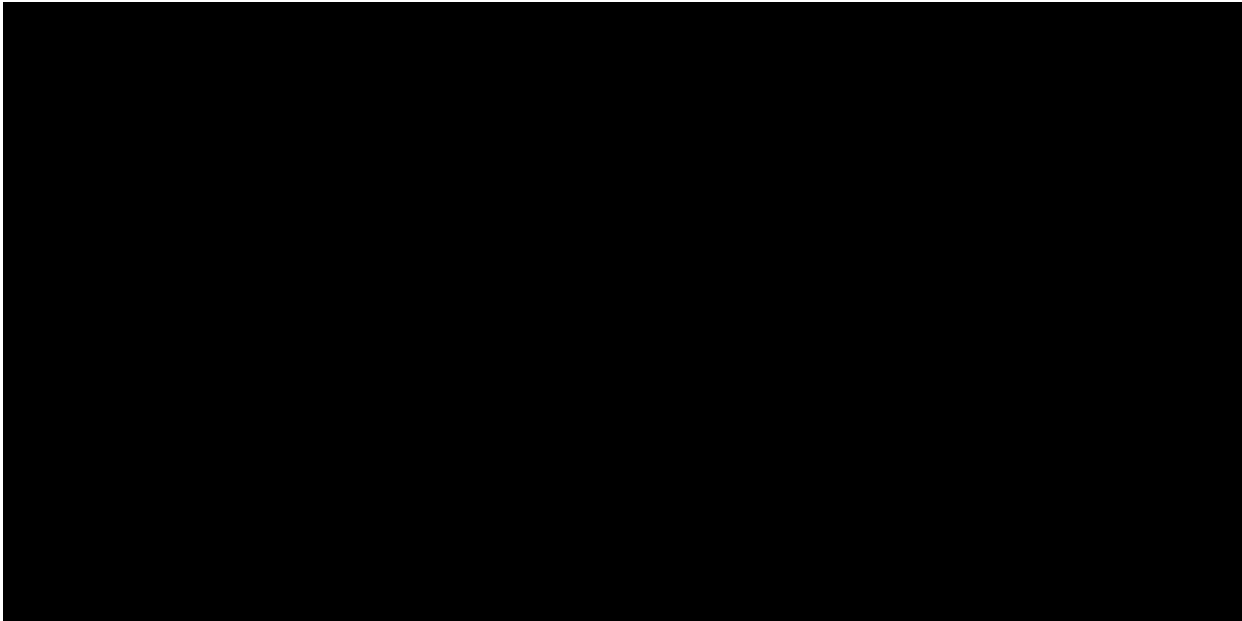






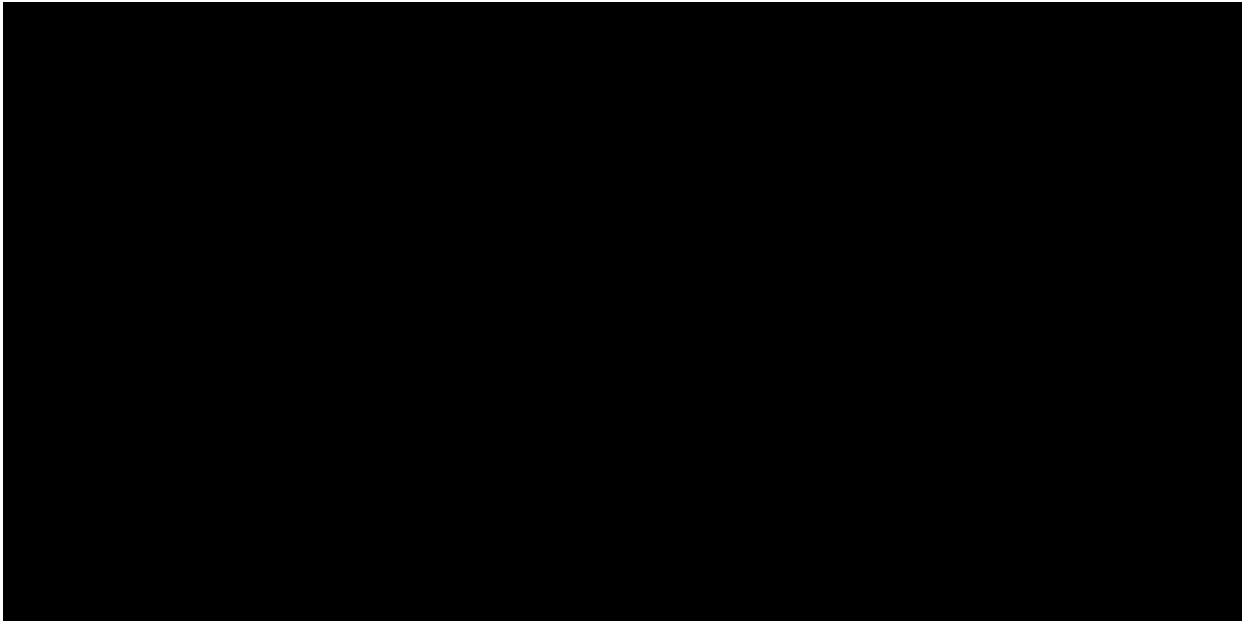


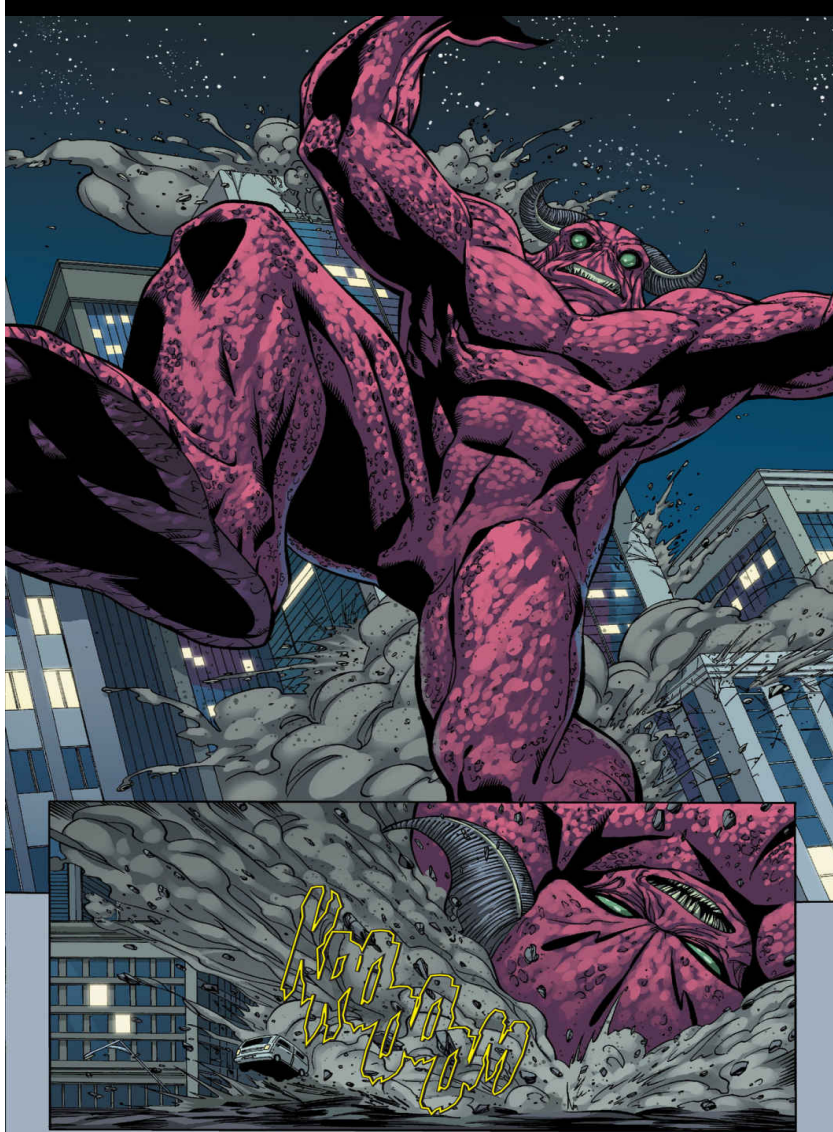




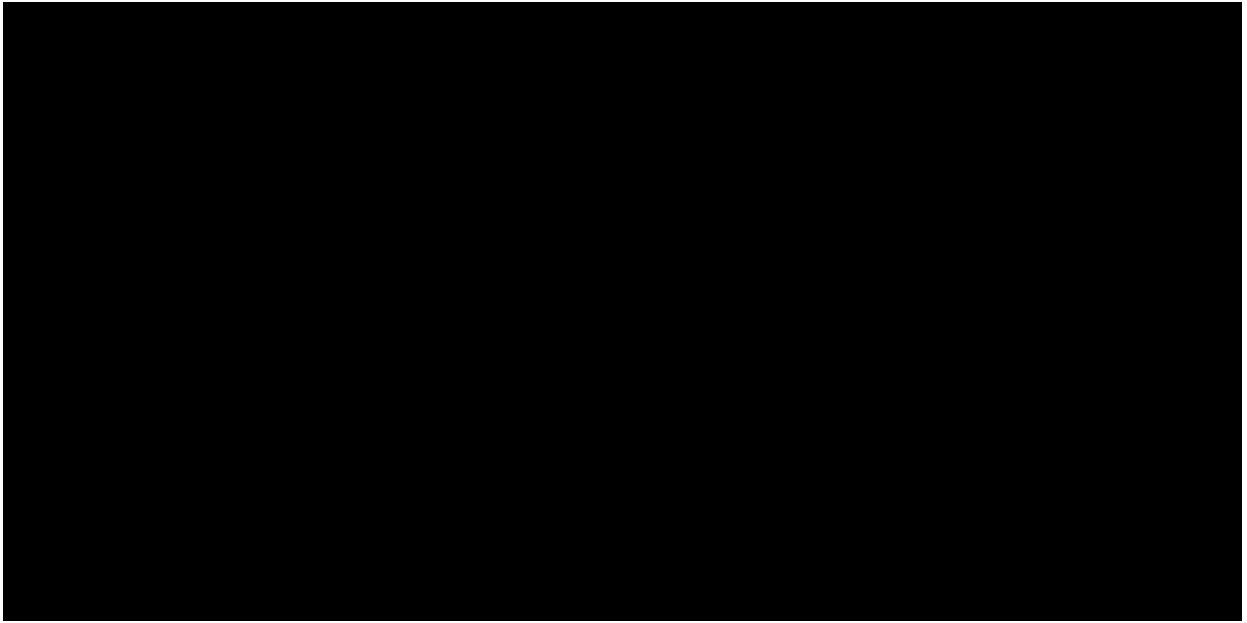






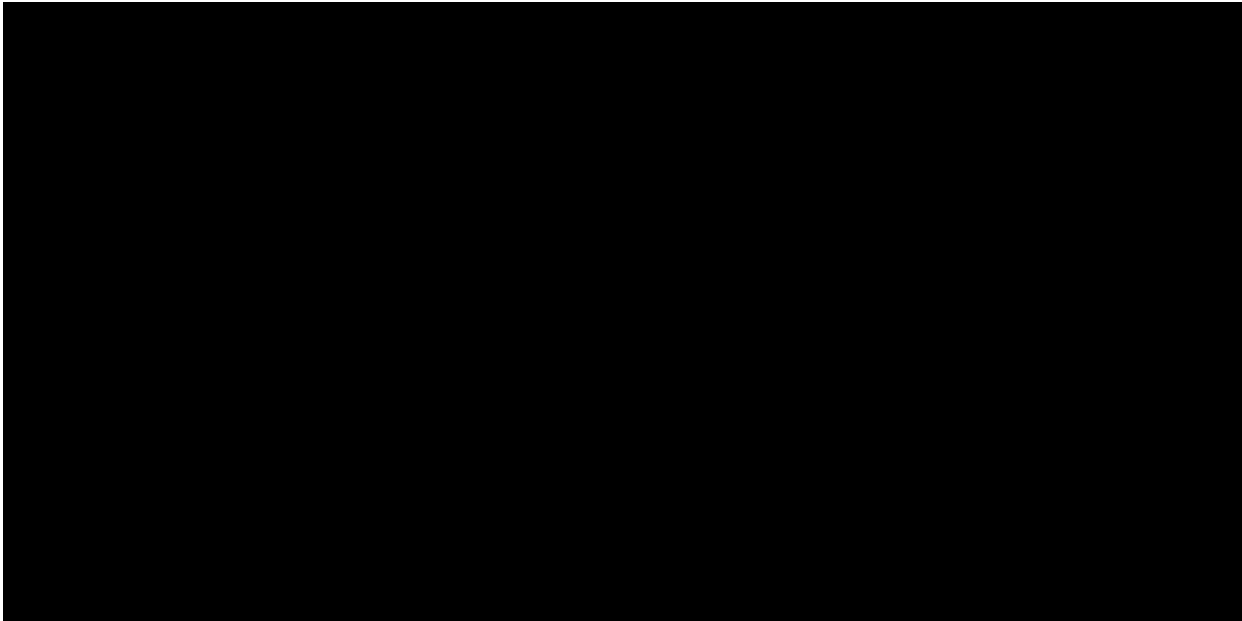


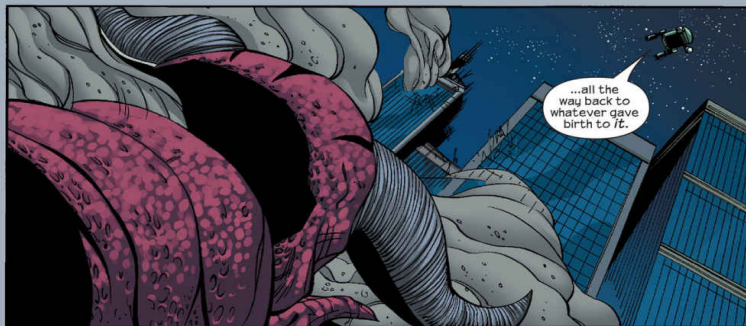










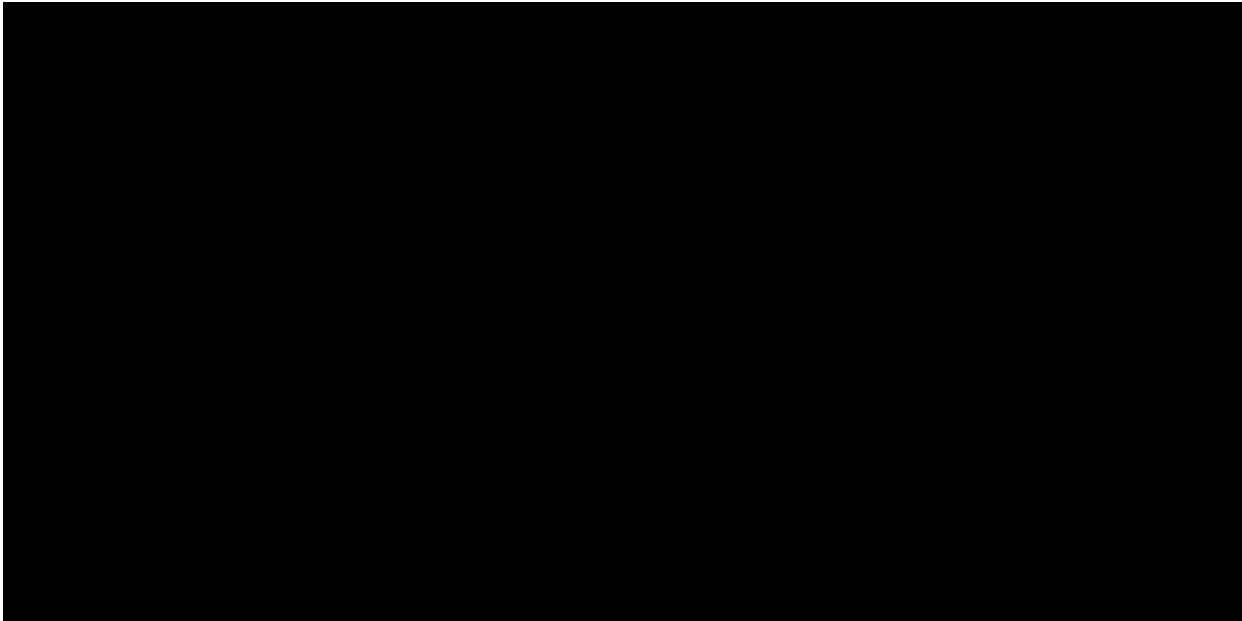






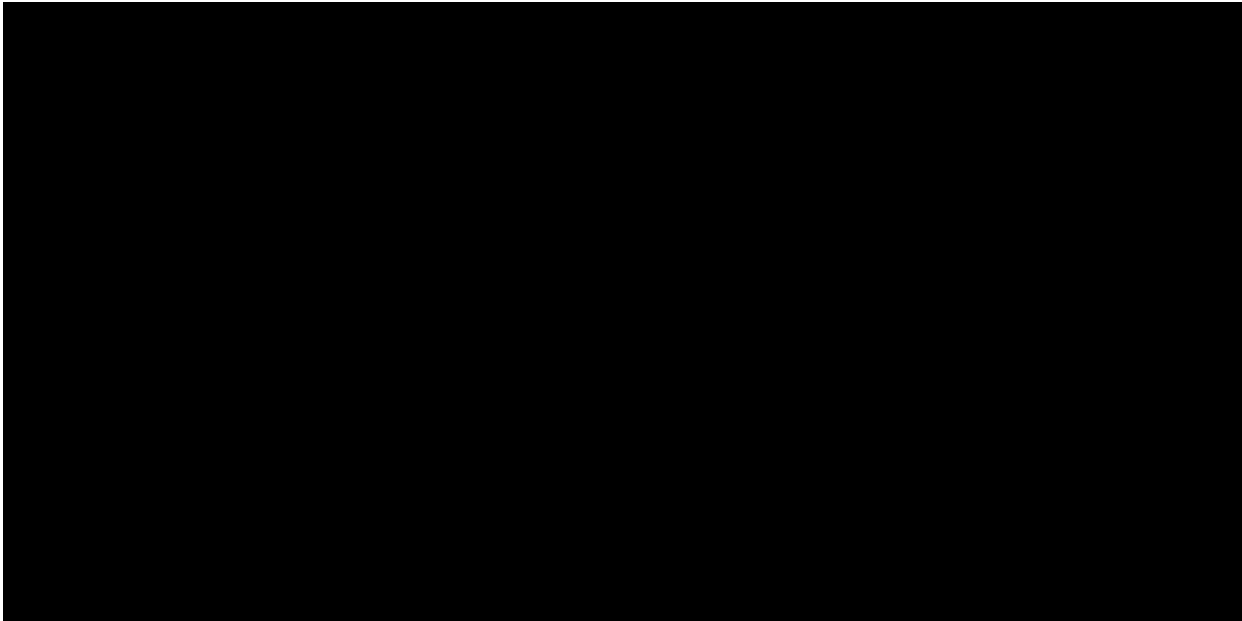






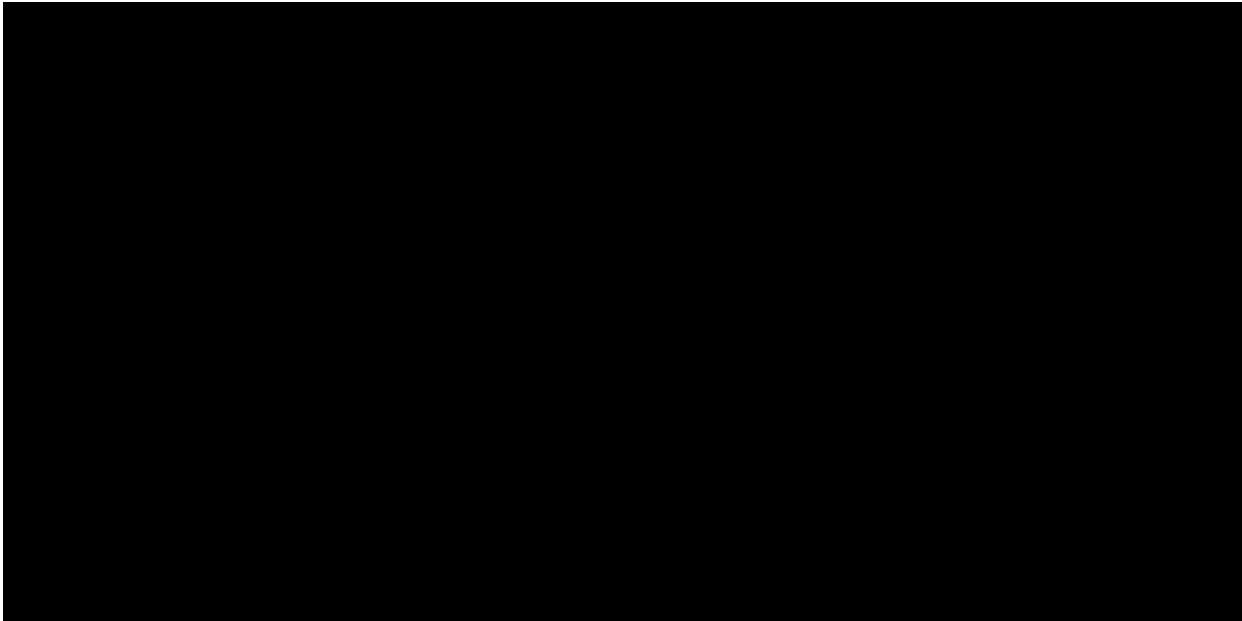












STREET TEAM

Hey Street Team,
I'll keep it simple...Xavin steps up!!! Victor rocks! Karolina's still hot! Molly's well...Molly! Nico is still "the man"! Gert is a hero. Chase is gonna kick @\$\$!!!! And BKV and Adrian Rule!!!

Peace out!
Jonny Cruz

Nico is the man? And you thought Xavin was confused about gender...

Dear Runaways,
Denials: She's not really dead. Her parents were time-travelers, so she is just time-traveled away, and that was just a mannequin that er...died in Chase's arms. But she's totally not dead, no way.

Anger: You are a murderer, and a very BAD MAN! How would you like it if some writer just went and killed off your favorite character? Not very much, I think.

Bargaining: Okay, so if I buy multiple copies of all your other books, and all your friends' books, and any other books you like, if you just bring her BACK! Please, please, please!

Depression: I'm just never getting attached to another character again. What's the point?

Acceptance: Ah well, Joss Whedon kills off beloved characters all the time, so I guess there has to be some purpose for it. Maybe she'll come back as a ghost.

Susan Taitel

Thanks, Susan, but don't hold your breath for Gert the Grumpy Ghost. (Although I kinda liked typing that.)

Hi Mr. Vaughan,

Having read RUNAWAYS #18, I knew that I finally wanted to write in. I have two things to say, one praiseful, the other...less so. People are probably going to criticize you for Gert's death. They're going to say it was just another sensationalized event, used to amp up sales...a strategy that the industry's mainstream employs with unfortunate frequency. In this case, however, I think they're wrong. I was extremely impressed by how well you handled everything; I thought it was some of your best writing. I'm looking forward to seeing what this means to the other kids, particularly Chase and Victor. I foresee some real fantastic storytelling.

I do have one thing I want to mention, as I said, in a somewhat less glowing fashion.

I'm extremely happy that you've brought back Karolina. She's been my favorite Runaway since the first issue. However, I'm increasingly bothered by the relationship you've put her in. Karolina is, from every bit of evidence

THE HOT SEAT

IT'S BACK TO SCHOOL TIME, KIDS! WHAT WAS YOUR LEAST FAVORITE CLASS IN SCHOOL?

BRIAN: I write comic books for a living. How could the answer not be phys ed?

MIKE: Math or anything with math in it (chemistry, physics, etc.) Numbers make my head hurt. Good thing I draw pictures for a living.

CRAIG: Art! Haha! Just kidding. Um, probably French cause I wasn't very good at it. I've forgotten most of it, but my dad always told me to remember one phrase. "Voulez-vous d'ance?"

CHRISTINA: AP History. I had an evil teacher who resented having to live and teach in Korea and spent most of the class telling us how much she resented having to live and teach in Korea...That's about all I remember from that class...Oh and she had some crazy, sexy obsession with Thomas Jefferson because he was a redhead. She was weird.

RANDY: An economics class my senior year in high school. I actually packed my book bag with gym clothes so I'd have something soft to sleep on.

SEAN: Ironically enough, I hated English. It was the class I always did the worst in. Formal reading and writing ain't my forte.

NICK: My least favorite class in school was science (especially with Miss Buyansky, unless she's reading this. If she IS reading this, then I LOVED science).

you've given us, not bisexual. She's a lesbian. And far be it from me to be critical of a character with flexible sexuality or gender, but the more I read, the more I think that Xavin really is neither. His claim of being Karolina's "blushing bride" rings quite false; he seems to clearly identify himself as male, and always presents himself as such before changing to suit her.

I would be a skeptic about her feelings in any case; I've never liked such quick and easy declarations of love between characters. If anything, I'd think that Karolina's feelings for Xavin are an infatuation born of twofold relief: relief in her ability to be with a "woman," and in her freedom to be her alien self. Never mind the fact that she's a teenager in her first relationship. So while I can understand these factors being sufficient, and the fact that their marriage saved billions of lives...things are different now.

I'm hoping that you're not just setting them up to be a happy so-called "lesbian" couple. I hope that these issues will be addressed. (Not to mention the issues which I feel

still stand between her and Nico. That situation always felt somewhat abruptly unfinished to me.) Karolina is one of the best queer characters in current comics, and I would hope that you will follow through with her, that this isn't thrown away on a simplistic and false-feeling solution. At the very least, I'd like to know what you think about my concerns.

The quality of your writing in the past suggests that you wouldn't cop out, but you know how paranoid fans are. For the record, I'm a queer woman myself, so I'll admit to having some personal bias to add to the mix.

Sorry, that was kind of long. At any rate, RUNAWAYS remains one of the best books out there, and absolutely the top of Marvel's current output.

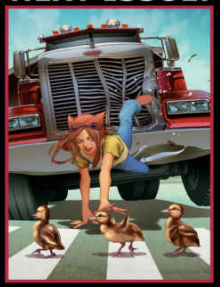
Allie

Northampton, MA

Wow, that was fantastic, Allie. I absolutely understand your concerns, but I always prefer to let our book speak for itself than to explain or defend it here, so let me just assure you that many of your questions will be addressed in upcoming issues. As far back as our very first story, I like to think that, while we've been telling fun all-ages adventures about telepathic dinosaurs and decoder rings, our book has also been subtly dealing with gender, sexuality and the lack of storybook romances in the complex lives of teenagers, and I hope that kind of layered storytelling will always be a part of RUNAWAYS.

-BKV

NEXT ISSUE:



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Assistant Editor

Nick Lowe
Editor

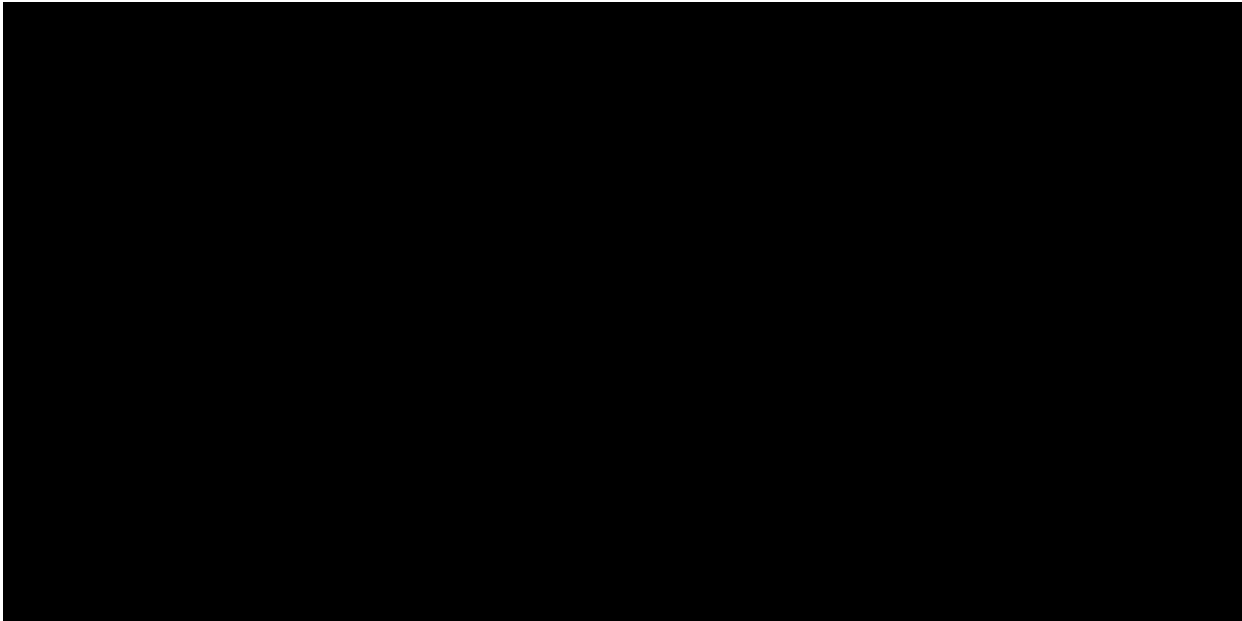
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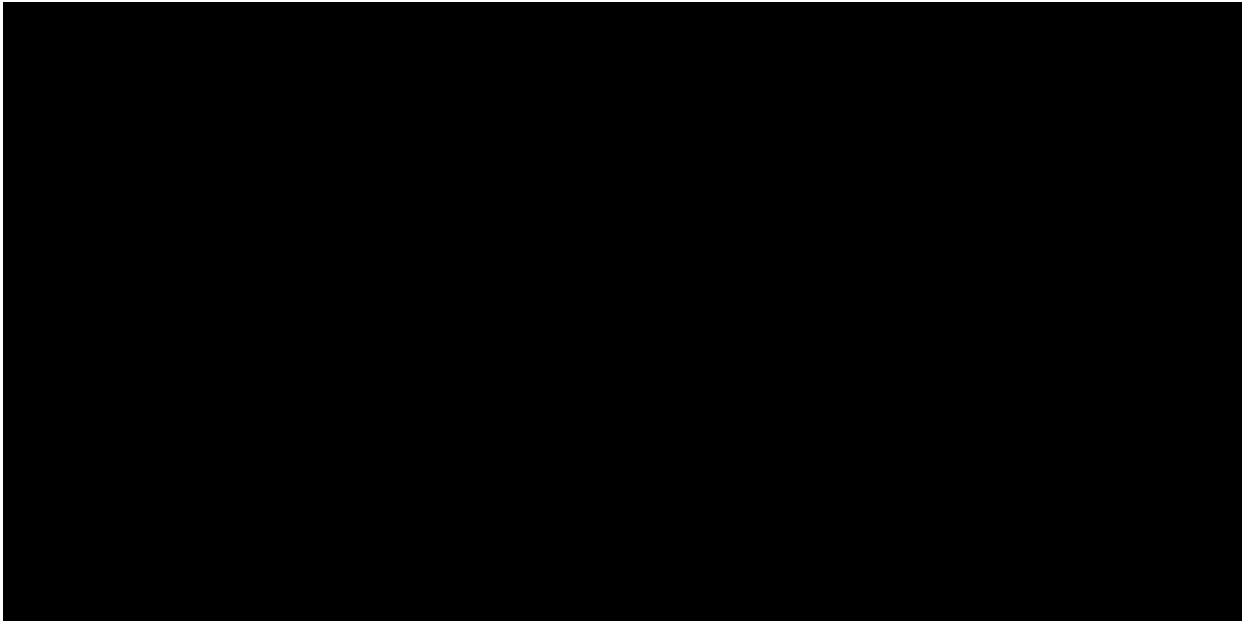
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After a ferocious battle with an all-new Pride led by a temporally displaced Geoffrey Wilder, Gert Yorkes died in the arms of her boyfriend. With her final breath, Gert "willed" control of her telepathic dinosaur to Chase Stein, just before the devastated young man stole a decoder ring and Wilder's copy of the Abstract, a mystical tome containing ancient secrets. While Nico and her teammates confront a hideous monster terrorizing Los Angeles, Chase takes a former member of the disbanded Pride to meet the Gibborim, mythical giants who gave the Runaways' parents their power.

DEAD MEANS DEAD

conclusion

Brian K. Vaughan
Writer

Mike Norton
Penciler

Craig Yeung
Inker

Christina Strain
Colorist

Rich Ginter
Production

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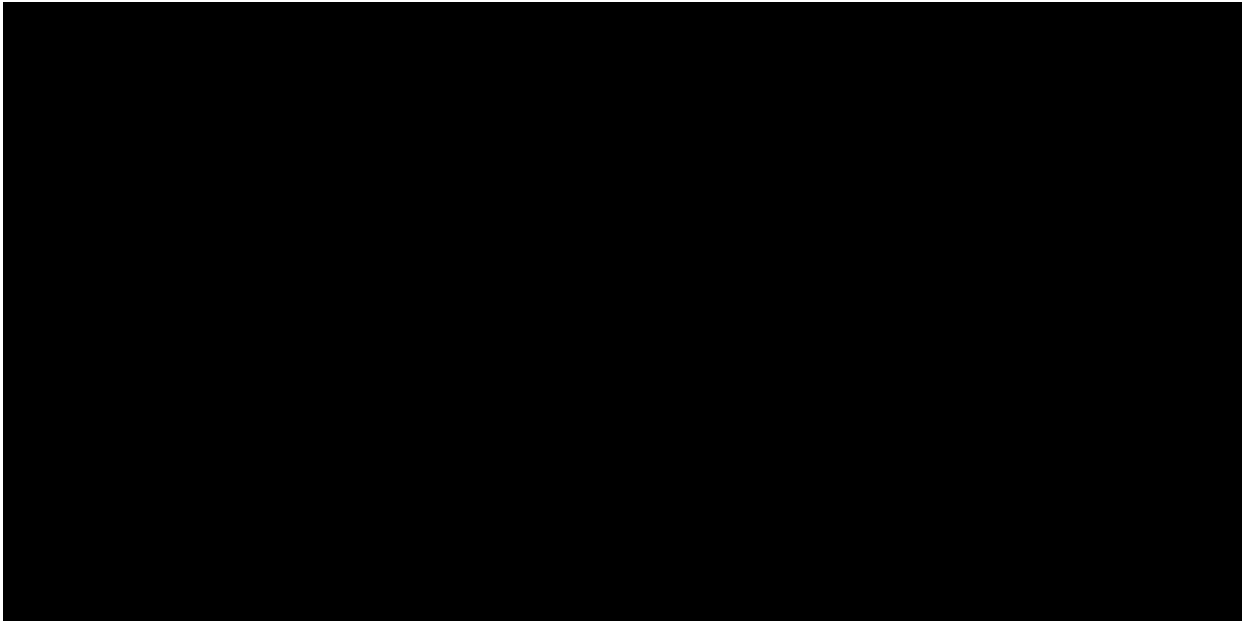
Nick Lowe
Editor

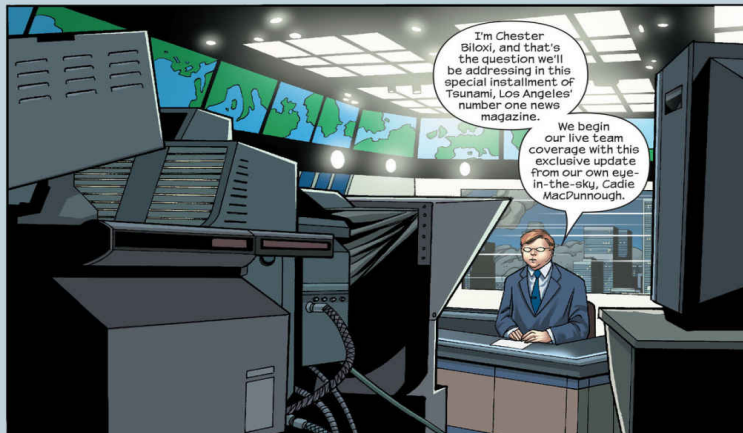
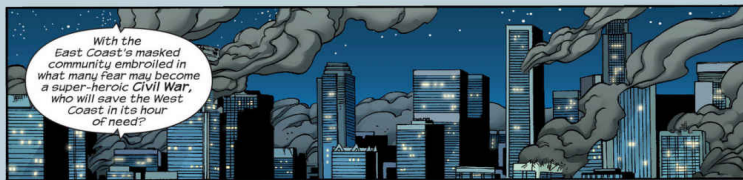
RUNAWAYS created by Vaughan & Alphonse

Dan Buckley
Publisher

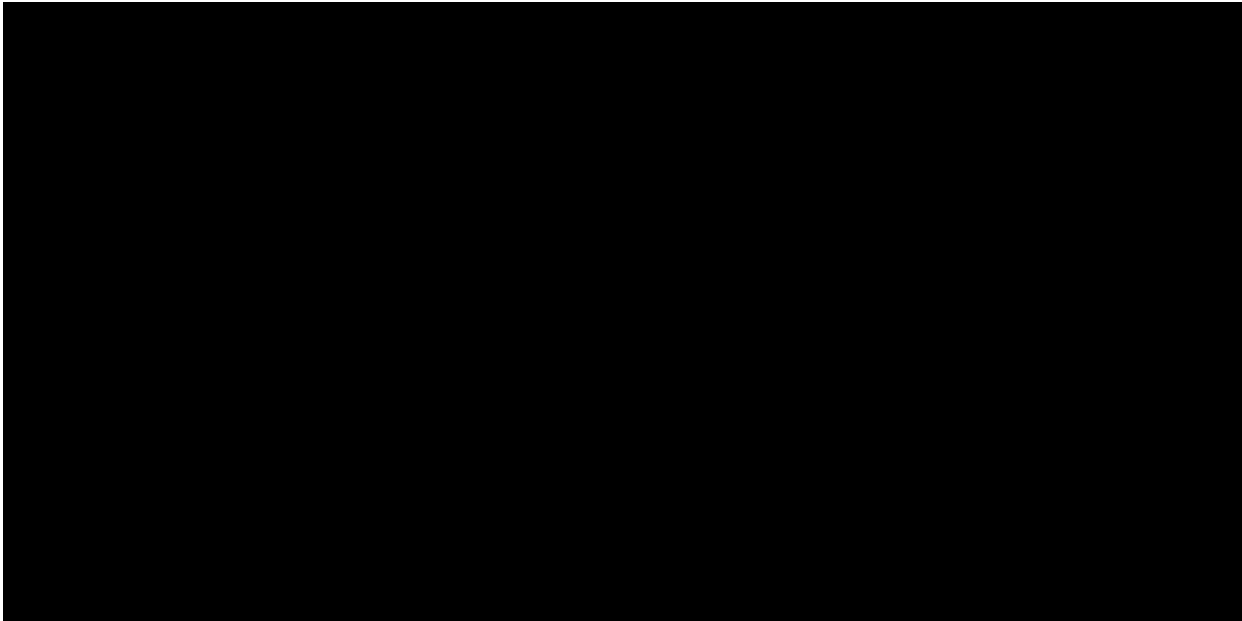
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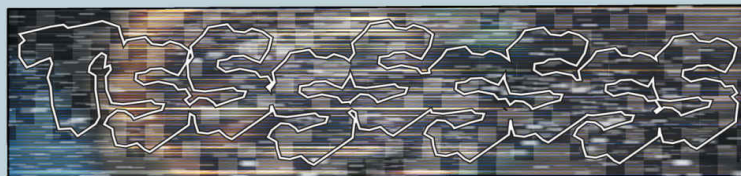
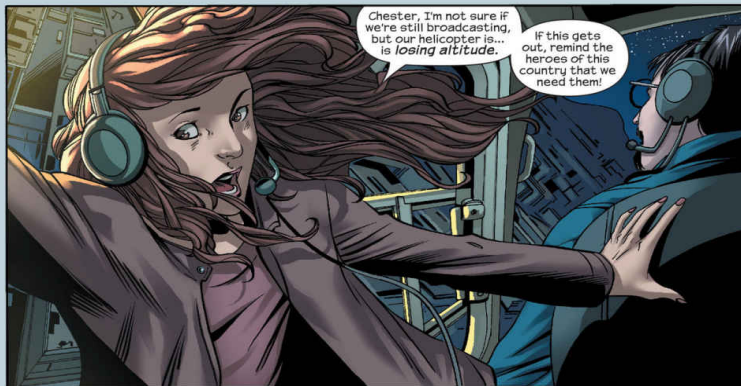
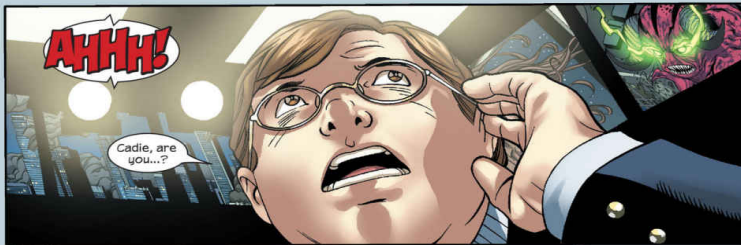




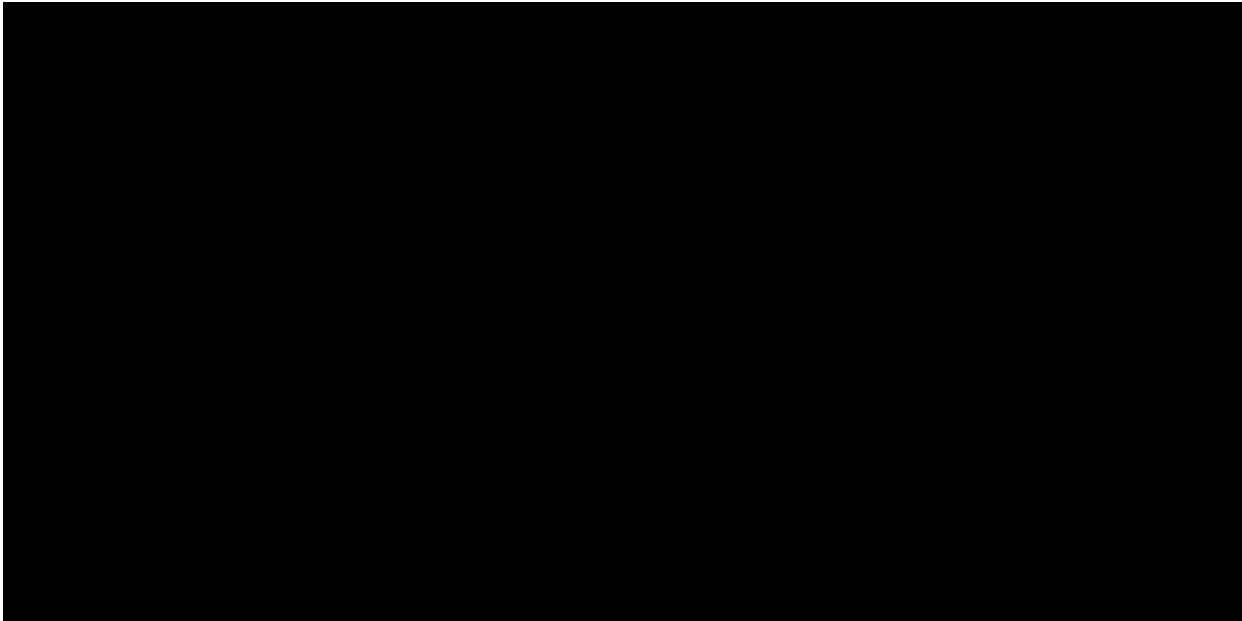






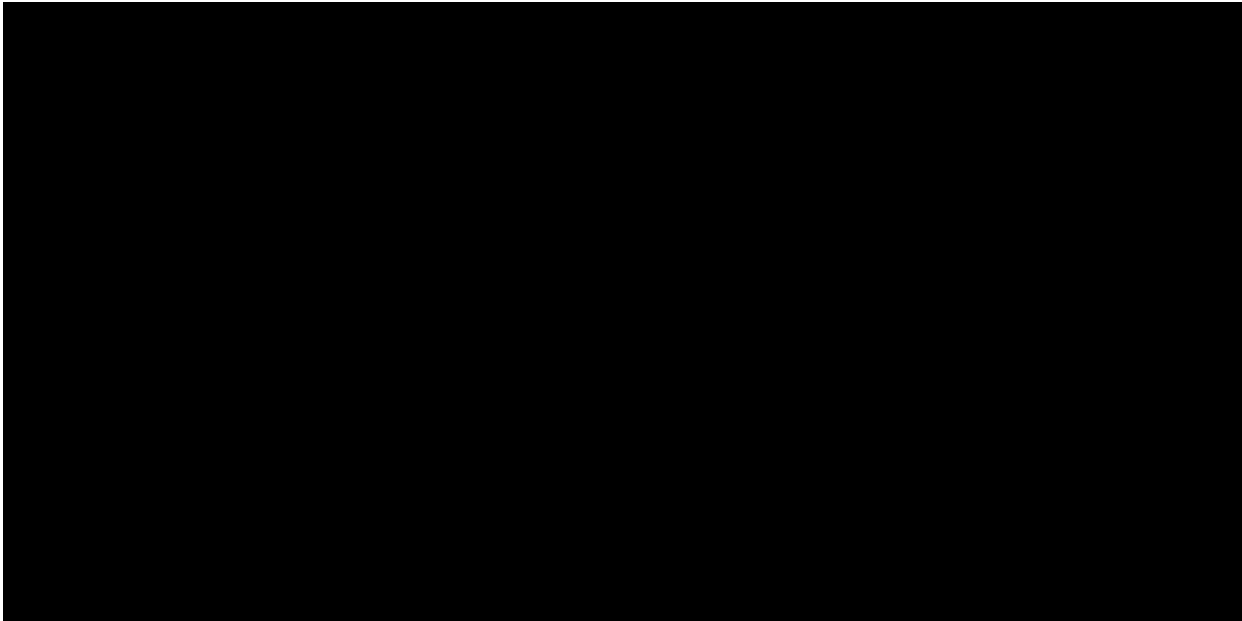






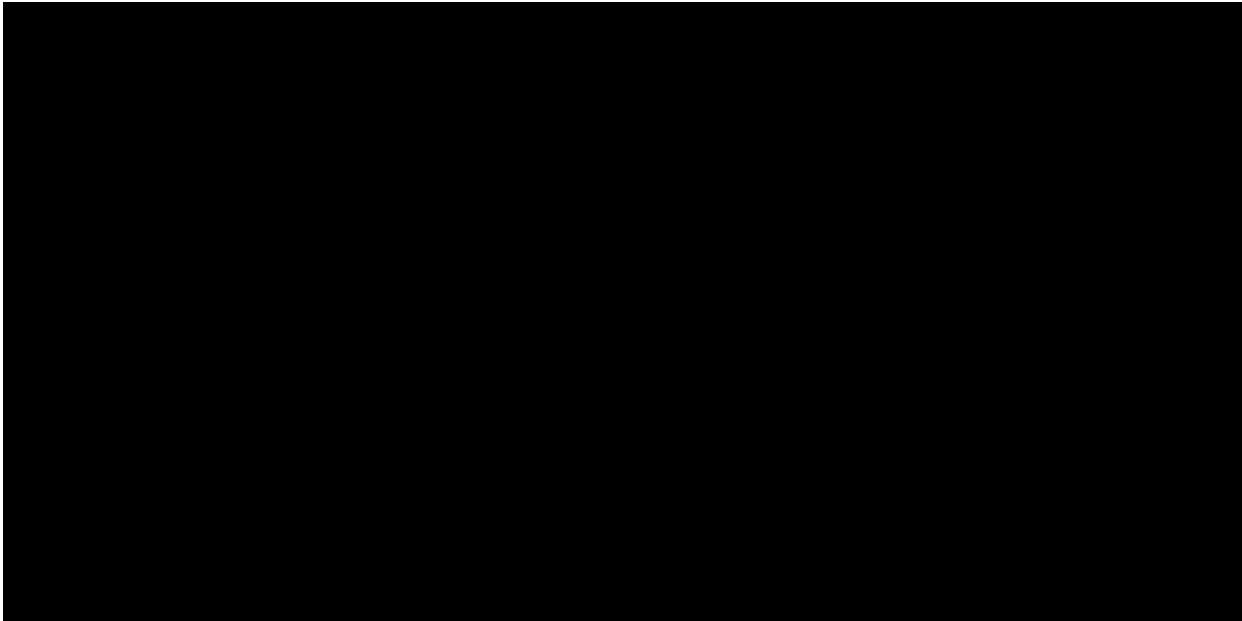


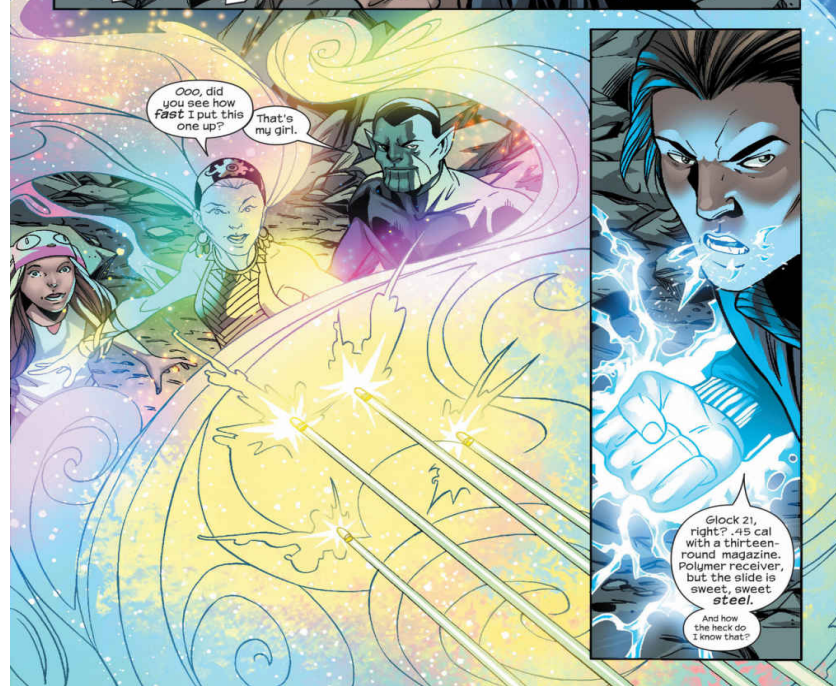




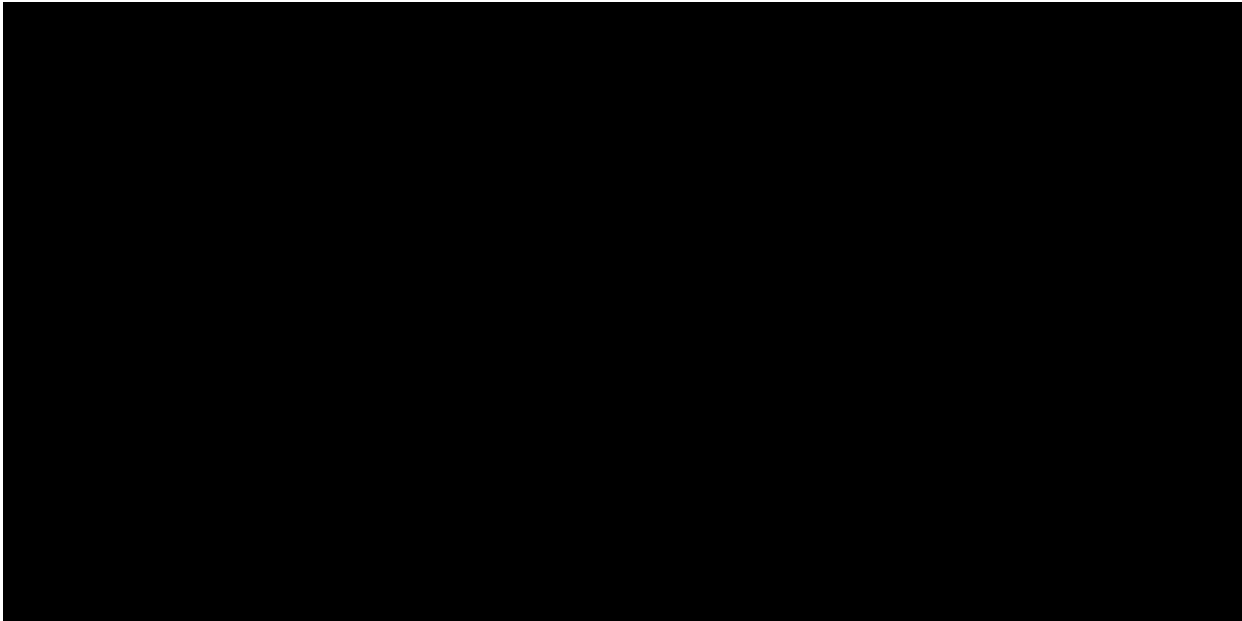














Give me one reason why I shouldn't turn your ugly facial hair into mealworms.

you got no right to hurt me! I used to be a cop!

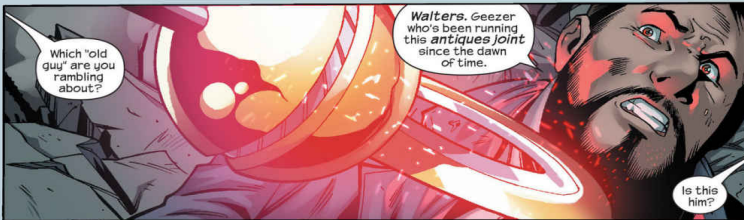
Is that why you opened fire on unarmed teenagers?



Gotta love the L.A.P.D.

It's not my fault!

I didn't turn the old guy into that monster; the magical doodad I nicked from one of your evil folks did!

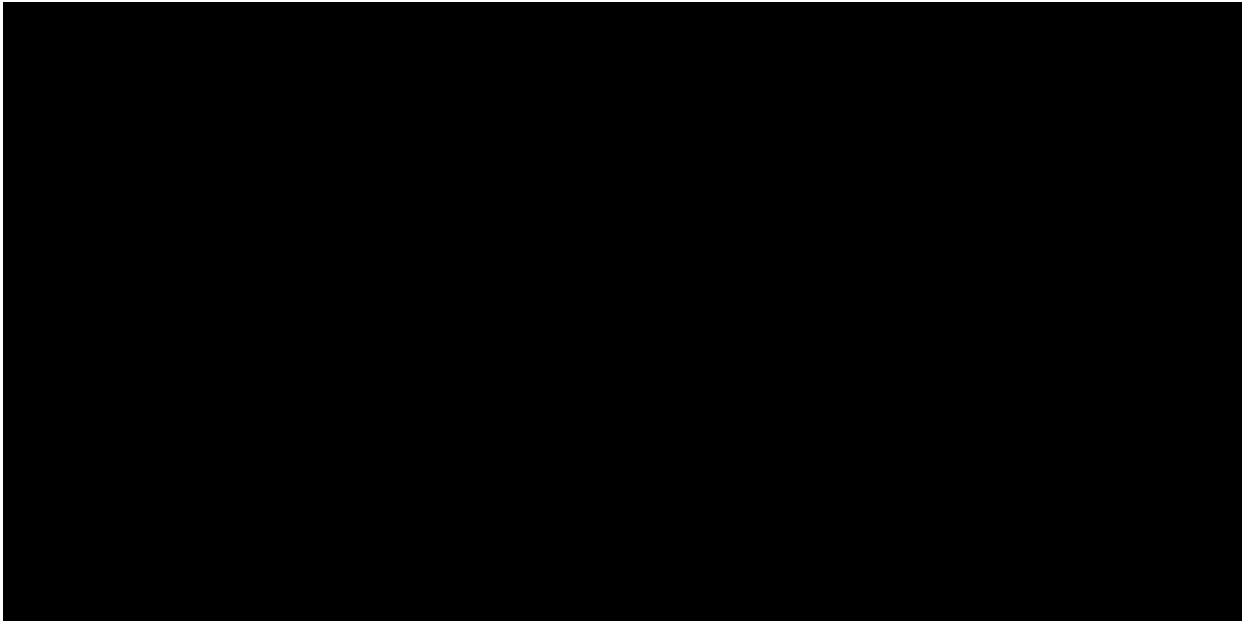


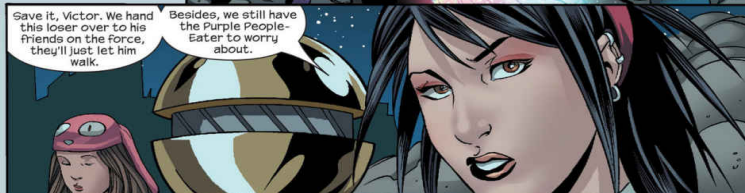
Which "old guy" are you rambling about?

Walters. Geezer who's been running this *antiques joint* since the dawn of time.

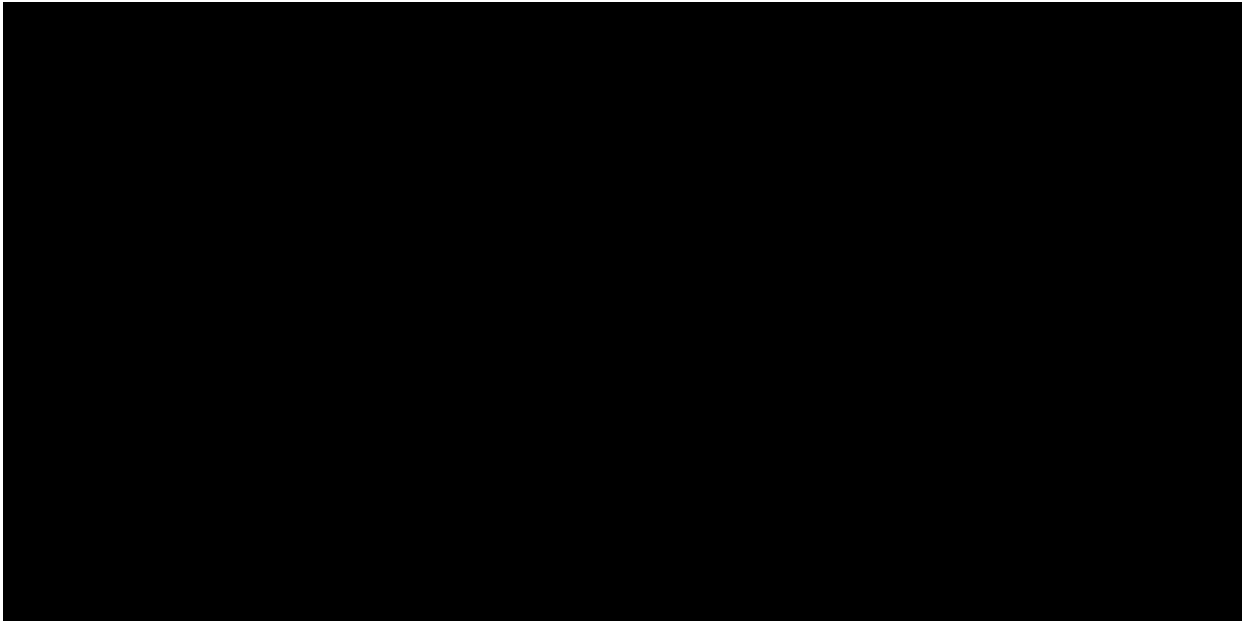
Is this him?













IF GOD'S
LAUGHED, KNOW
THAT WE WOULD BE
DOING SO NOW.

OF WHAT
USE ARE THOSE
TRINKETS TO
US, BOY?

I don't care
if you shoot milk
out your oversized
schnoz, just
give me back my
girlfriend.

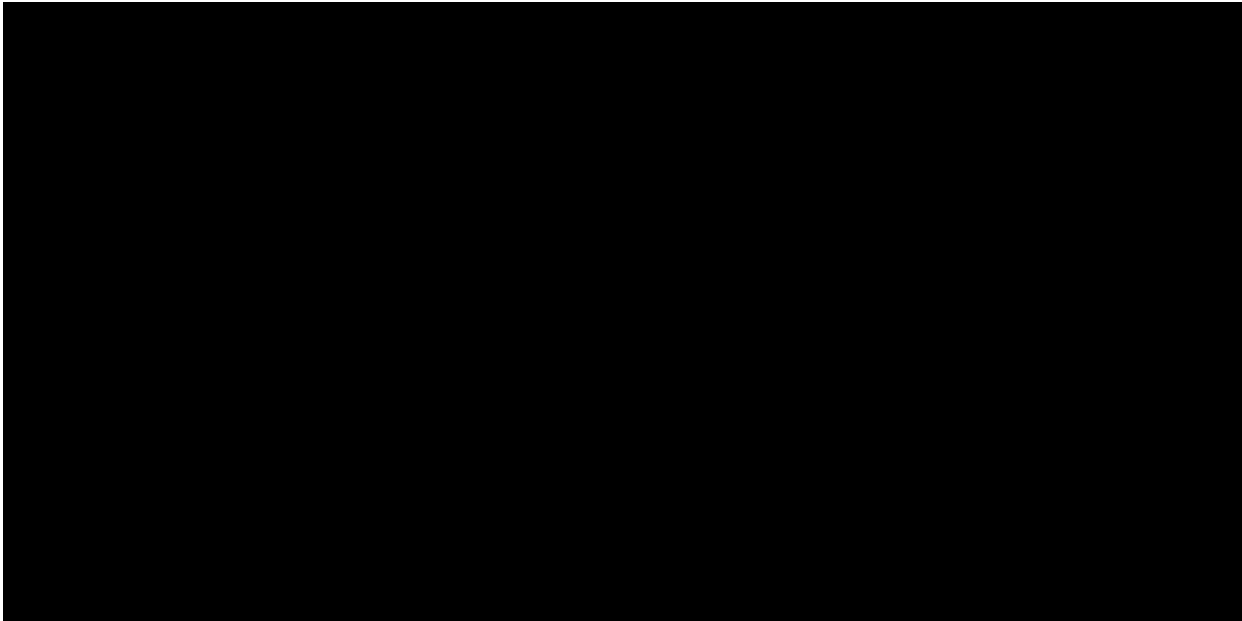
I told you, I'm not
here empty-handed.
I brought you some
of the weapons you
gave to our psycho
parents.

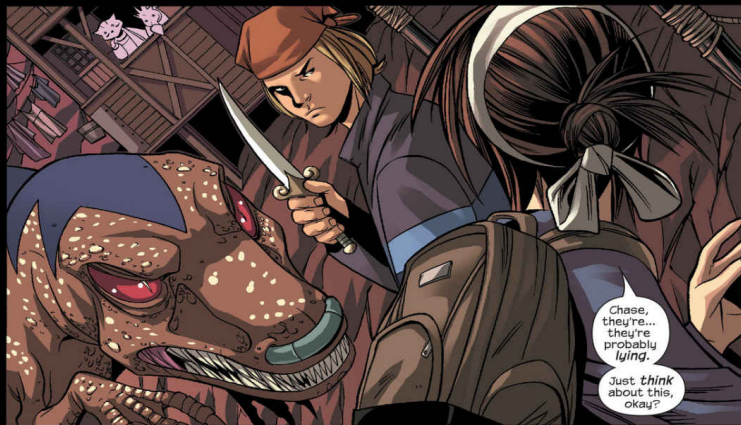
This can't
be happening this
can't be happening
this can't be--

If you freaks had
any *real* power, I figure
you would have wasted
me already for sending you
back to this lame excuse
for a dimension in the
first place.

Still, you
raise Gert from
the *dead*, maybe I'll
fork over the tools
you need to *free*
yourselves.





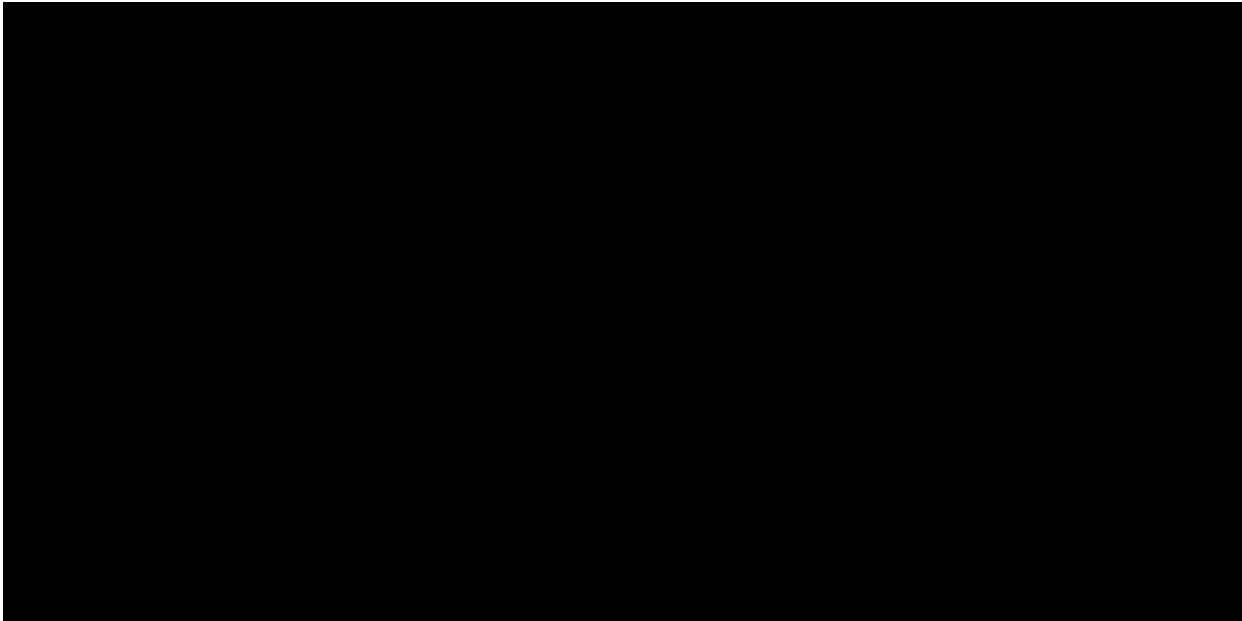






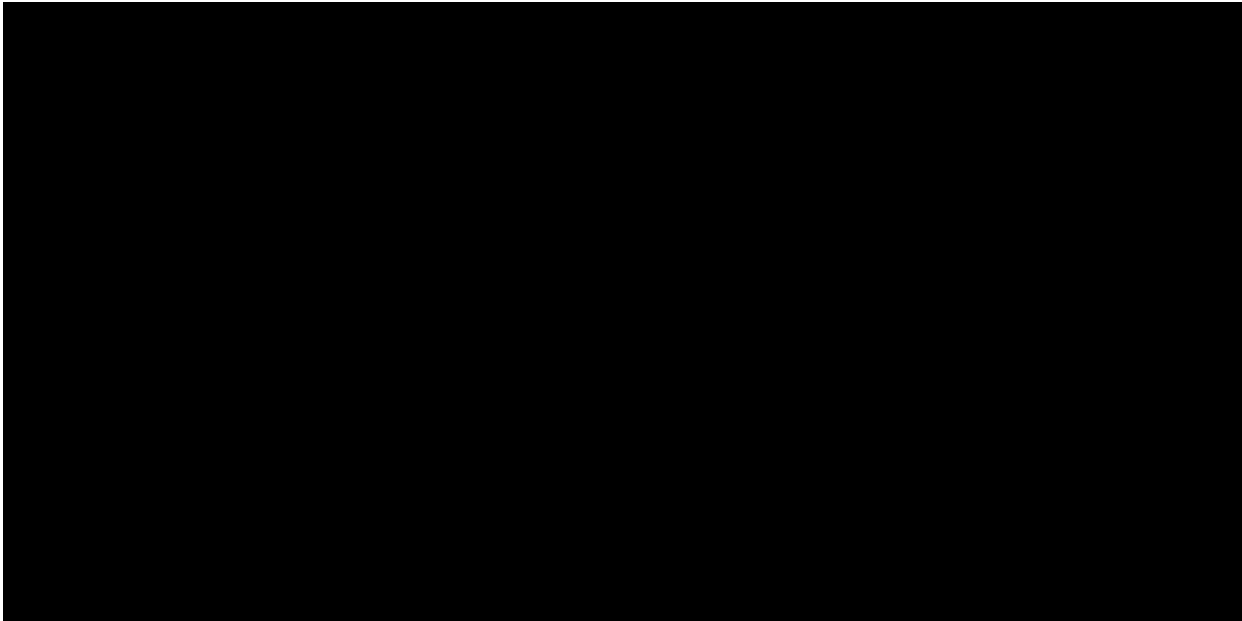


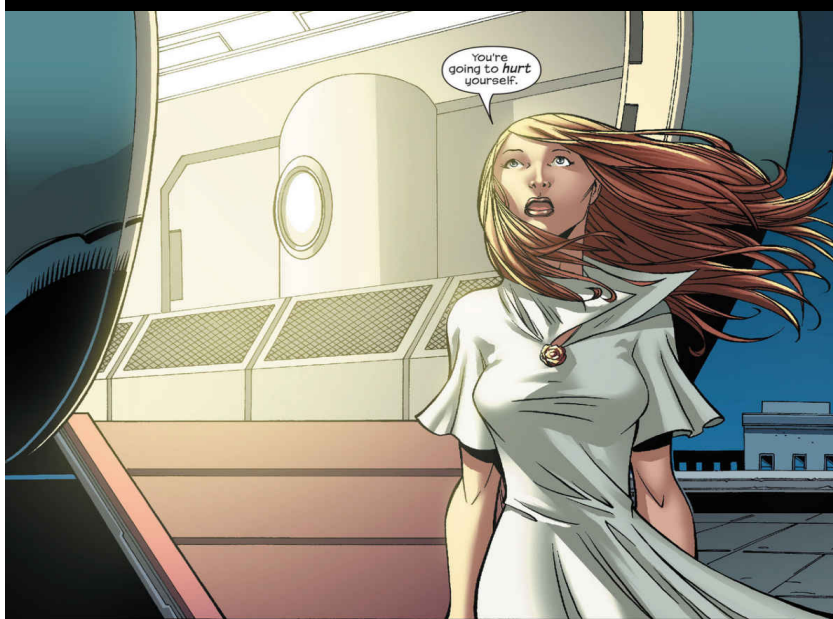




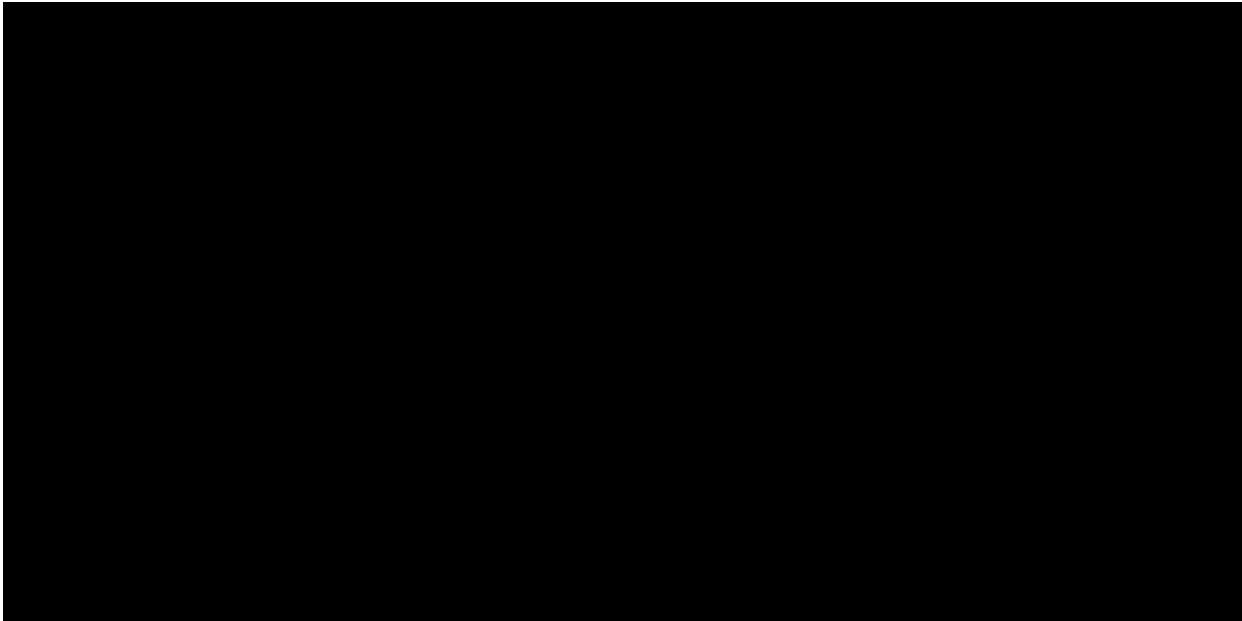














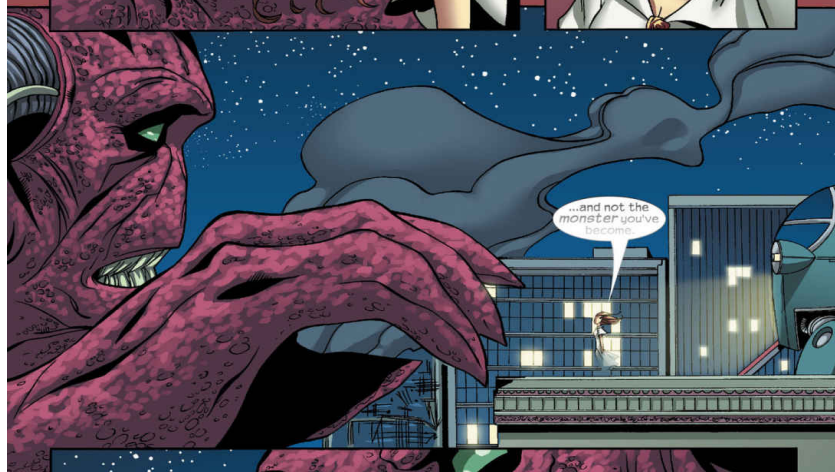
You can live
in the past all
you want, you can
even try to shake
the hands of time until
yesterday becomes
today...

...but none
of that will
bring me back
to you.



The only
way the dead
live on is through
the people they
leave behind.

I have to
go now, but if you
miss the way things
were, then be the
kind, gentle man I
fell for all those
years ago...

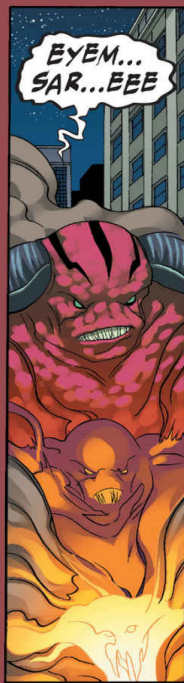


...and not the
monster you've
become.

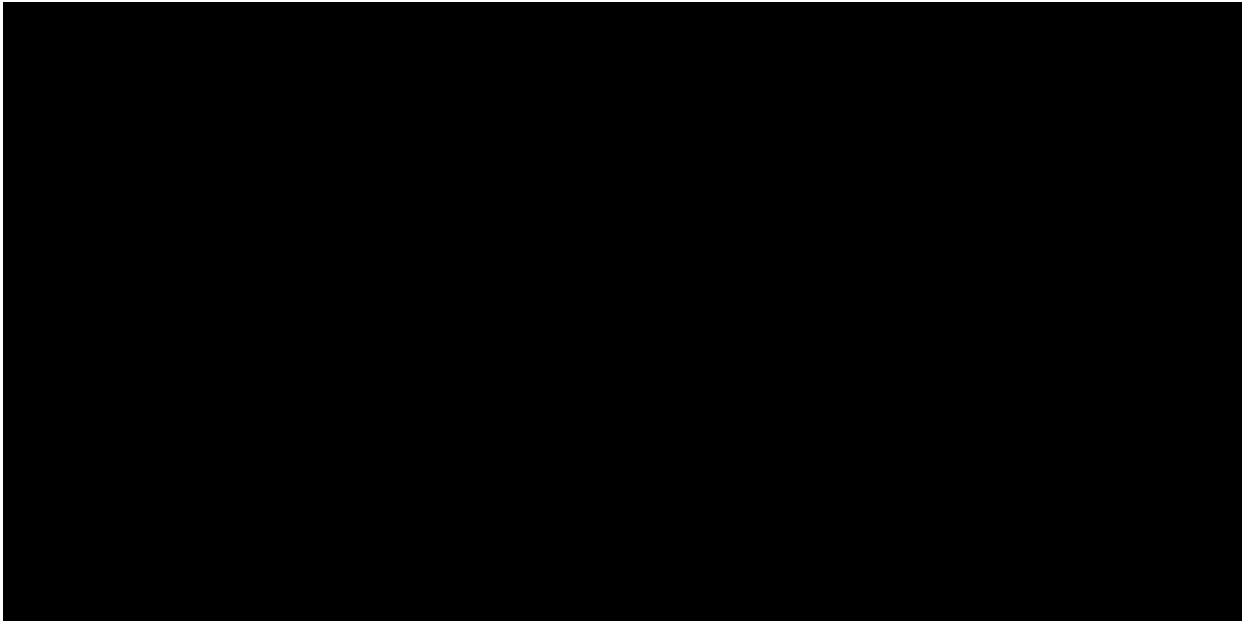


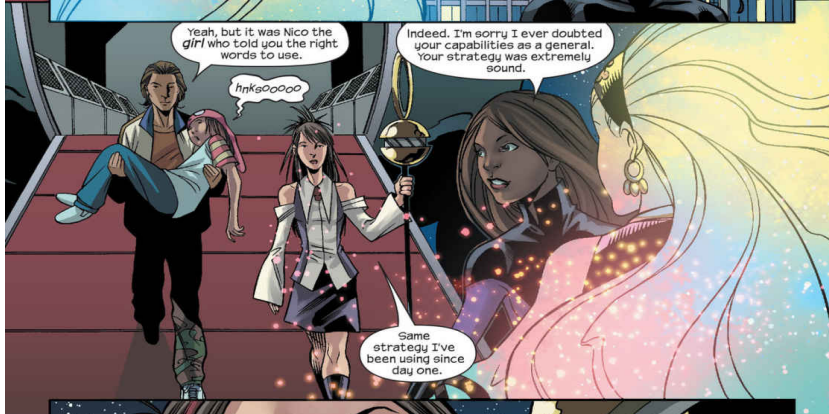
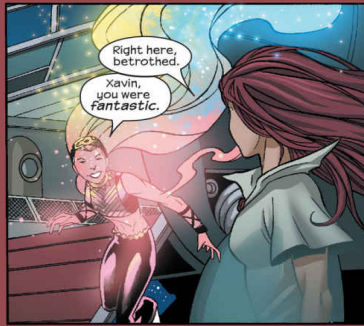




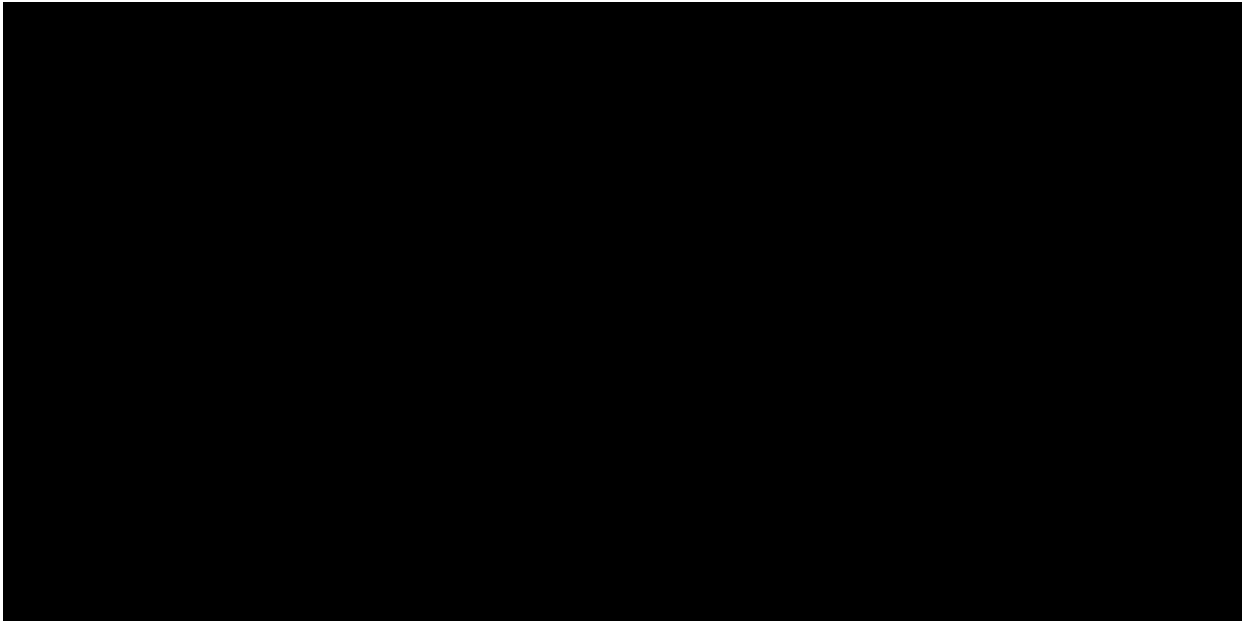






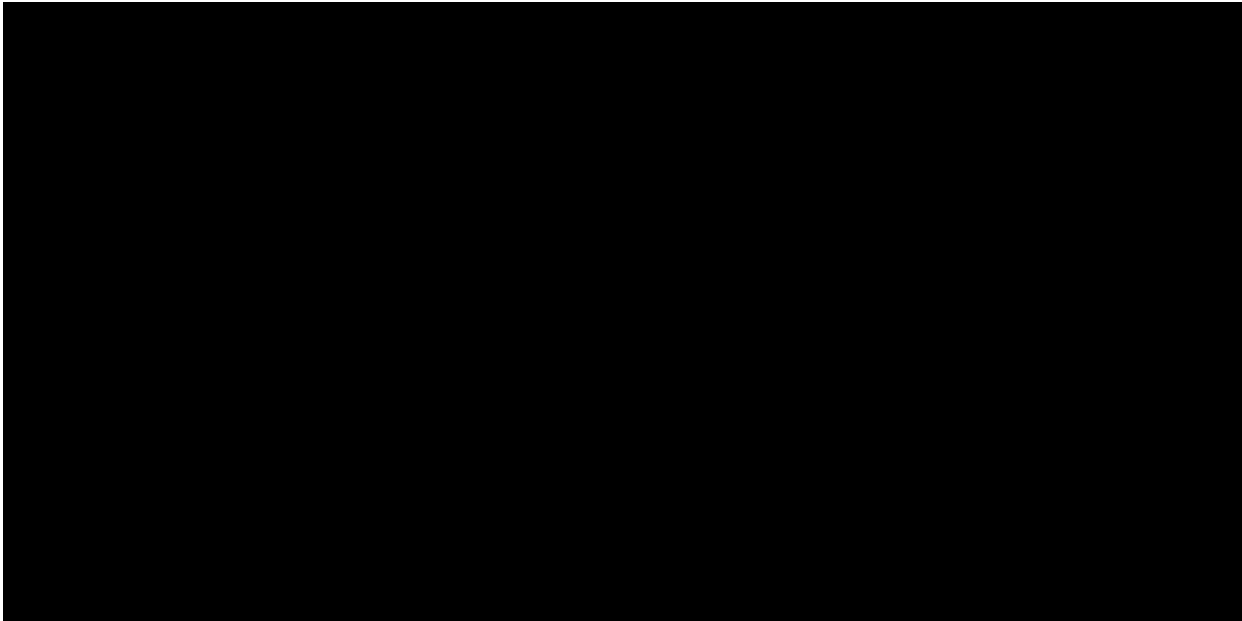


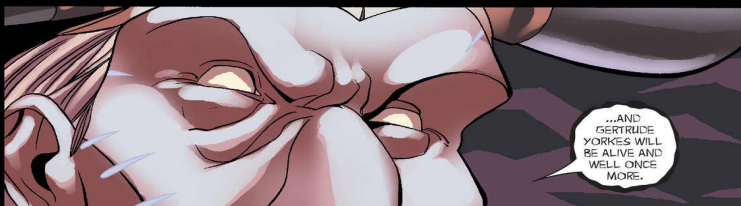






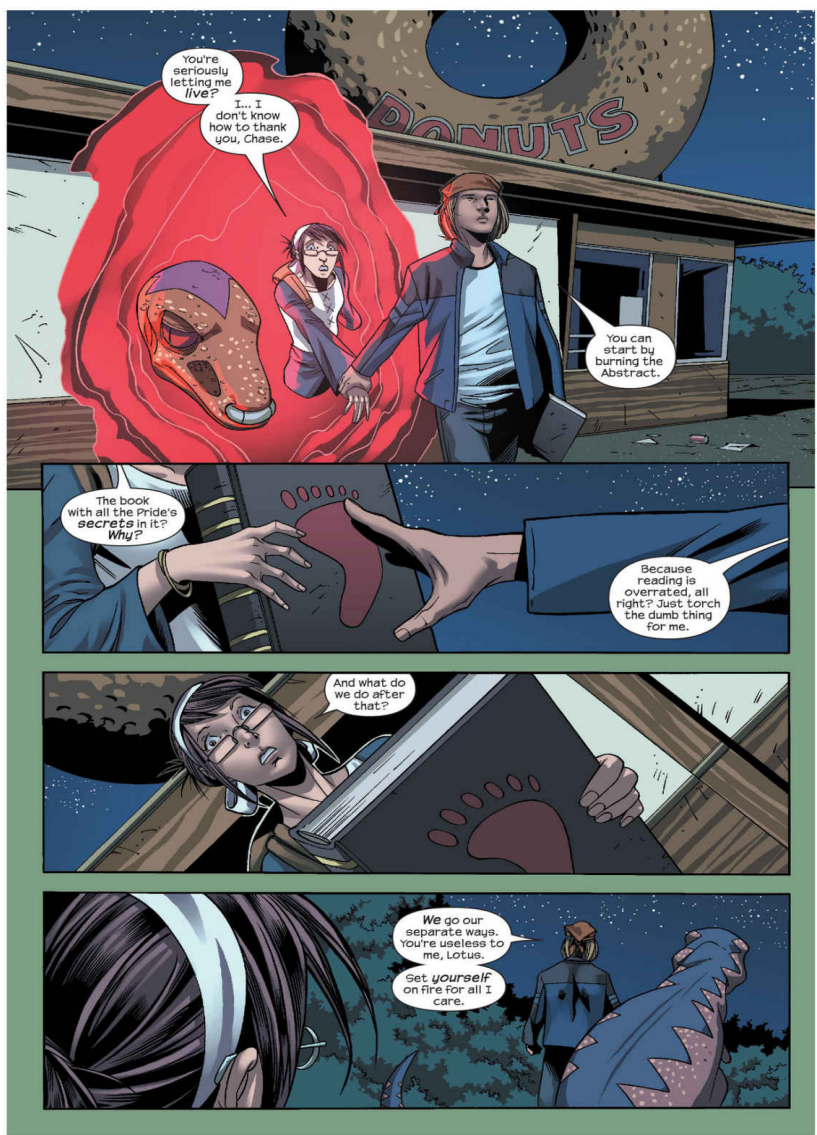




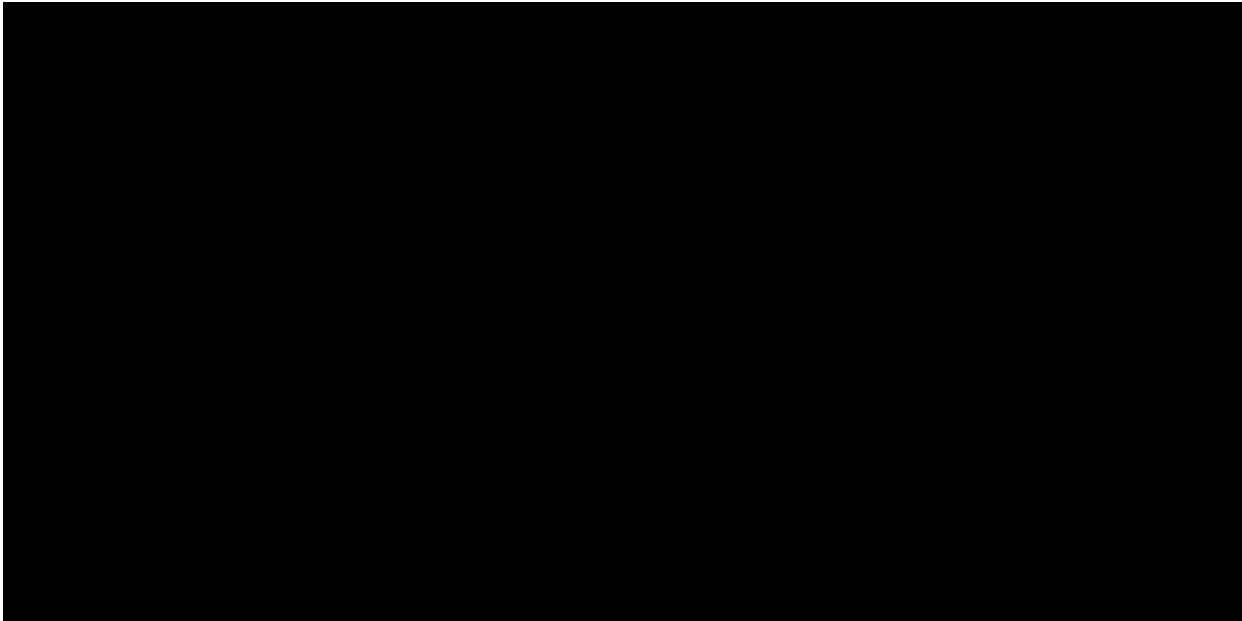












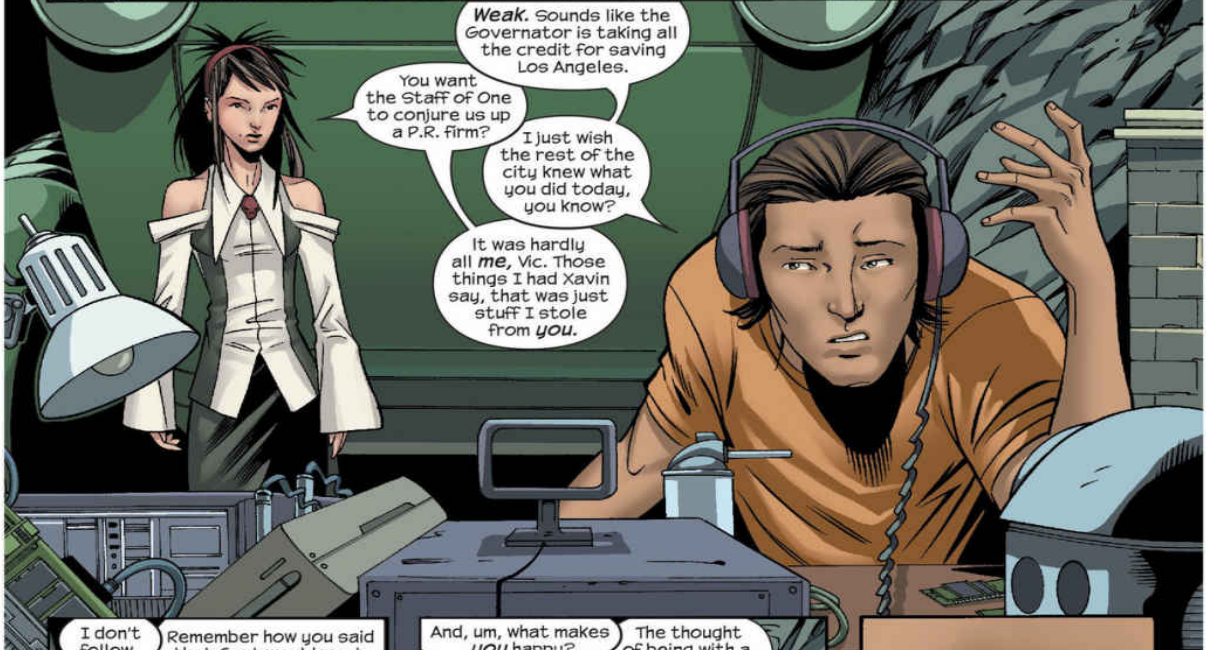


Weak. Sounds like the Governor is taking all the credit for saving Los Angeles.

You want the Staff of One to conjure us up a P.R. firm?

I just wish the rest of the city knew what you did today, you know?

It was hardly all *me*, Vic. Those things I had Xavin say, that was just stuff I stole from *you*.



I don't follow.

Remember how you said that Gert would want us to celebrate her life instead of just mourning her death? You were right. She would want us to be *happy*.

And, um, what makes *you* happy?

The thought of being with a genuinely *good* guy for the first time in my life.

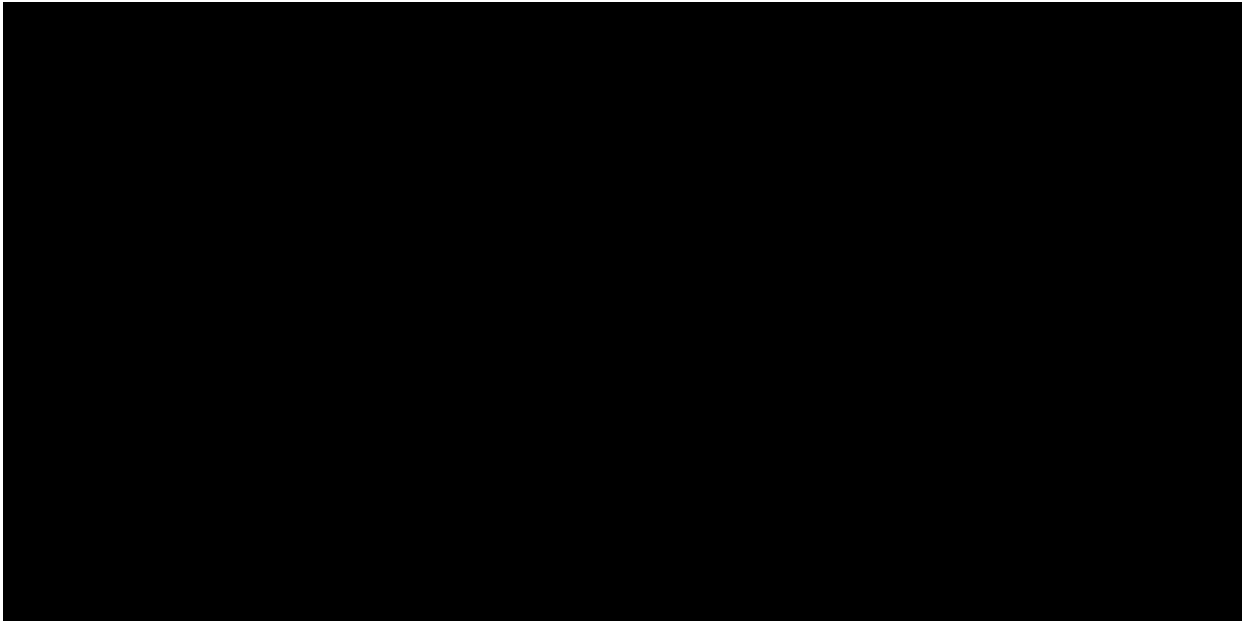
What makes you think *I'm* good?



Because you're so very bad at *this*.

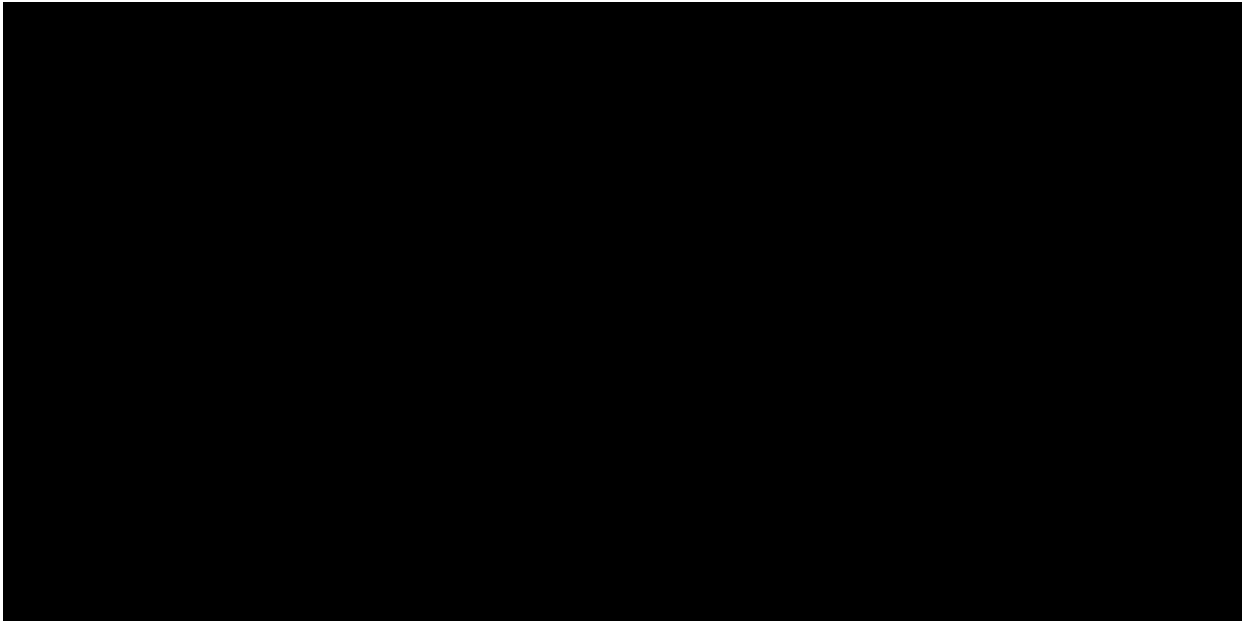






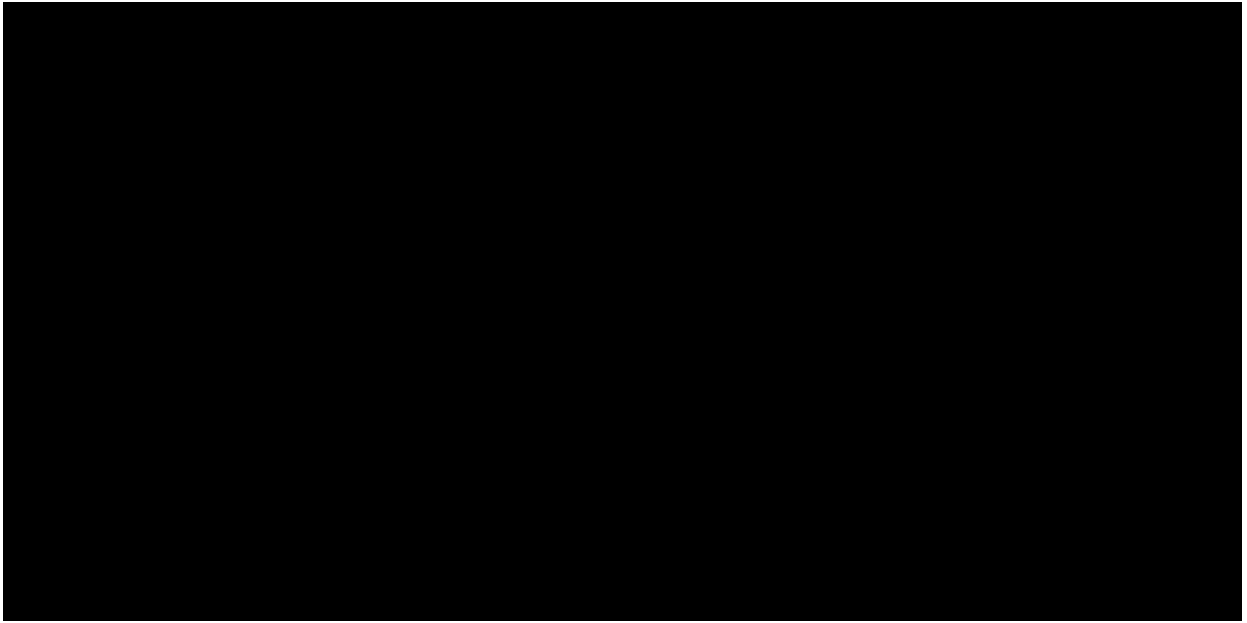












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After a ferocious battle with a temporally displaced Geoffrey Wilder, Gert Yorkes died in the arms of her boyfriend. With her final breath, she "willed" control of her telepathic dinosaur to Chase Stein, before the devastated young man stole a decoder ring and Wilder's copy of the Abstract. Chase soon visits the Gibborim, mythical giants who gave the Runaways' parents their power, and learns that Gert can be resurrected if Chase sacrifices an innocent soul. Ultimately, Chase refuses, and returns with Old Lace to the Hostel. But the giants' words still echo in his mind...

LIVE FAST

part one

Brian K. Vaughan
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Penciler

Craig Yeung
Inker

Christina Strain
Colorist

Brad Johansen
Production

**C.B. Cebulski &
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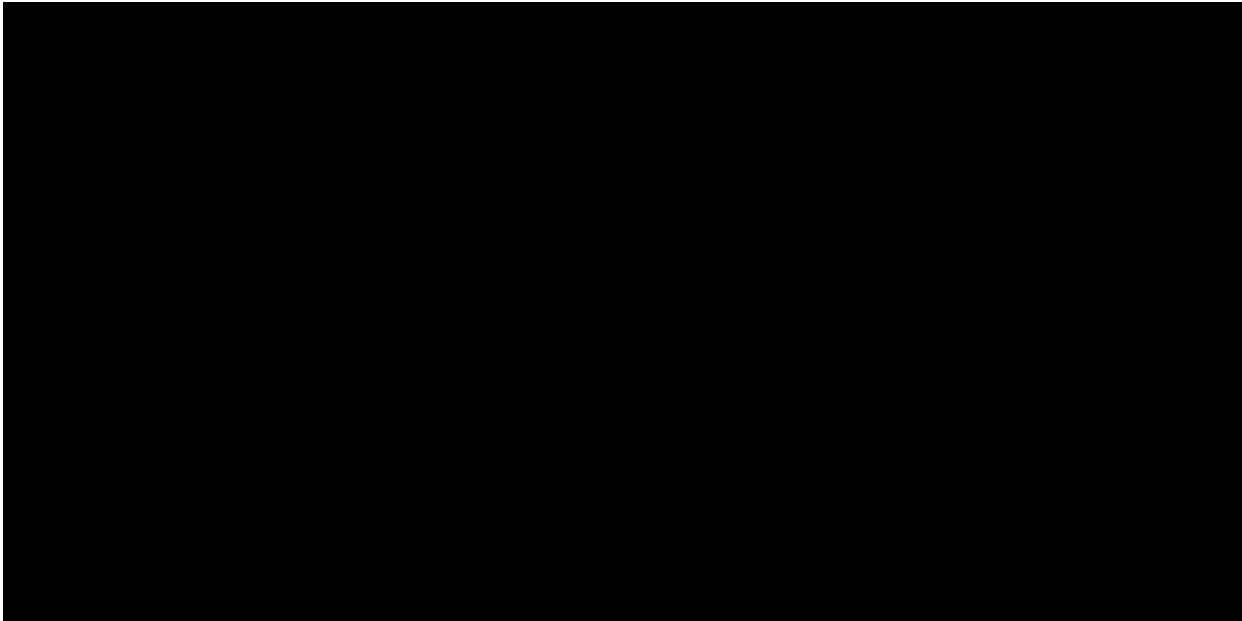
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Werewoofs!
Cowboy
werewoofs!

This town
is so out of
ideas.



Mosey on out of here,
children. This ain't a
showdown you'll walk
away from.

Okay then,
according to our
parents' records, the
Silver Bullet Gang here
was a posse of lycanthrope
hunters who were attacked
by the very things they
were hunting back in
the Wild West.

My psychotic mom
and dad ran them out
of L.A. a few years ago,
but I guess these guys
must have heard about
The Pride's untimely
departure.

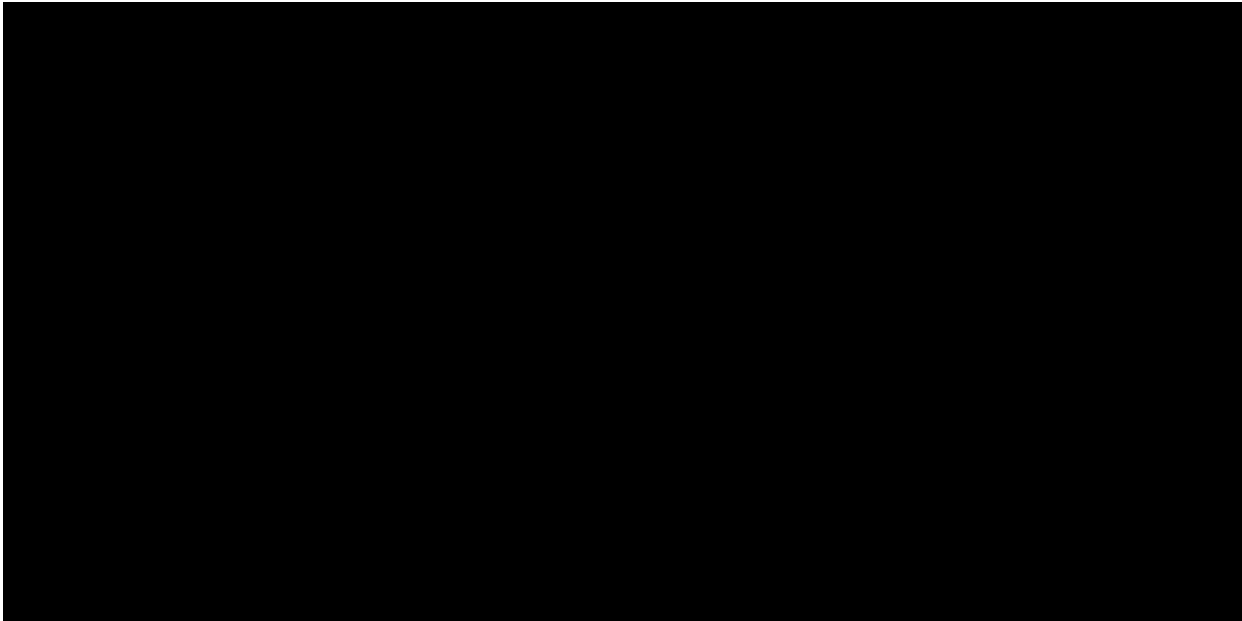
How is this
happening, Nico?
It's not even a full
moon tonight!



Your moon is
always full,
android.

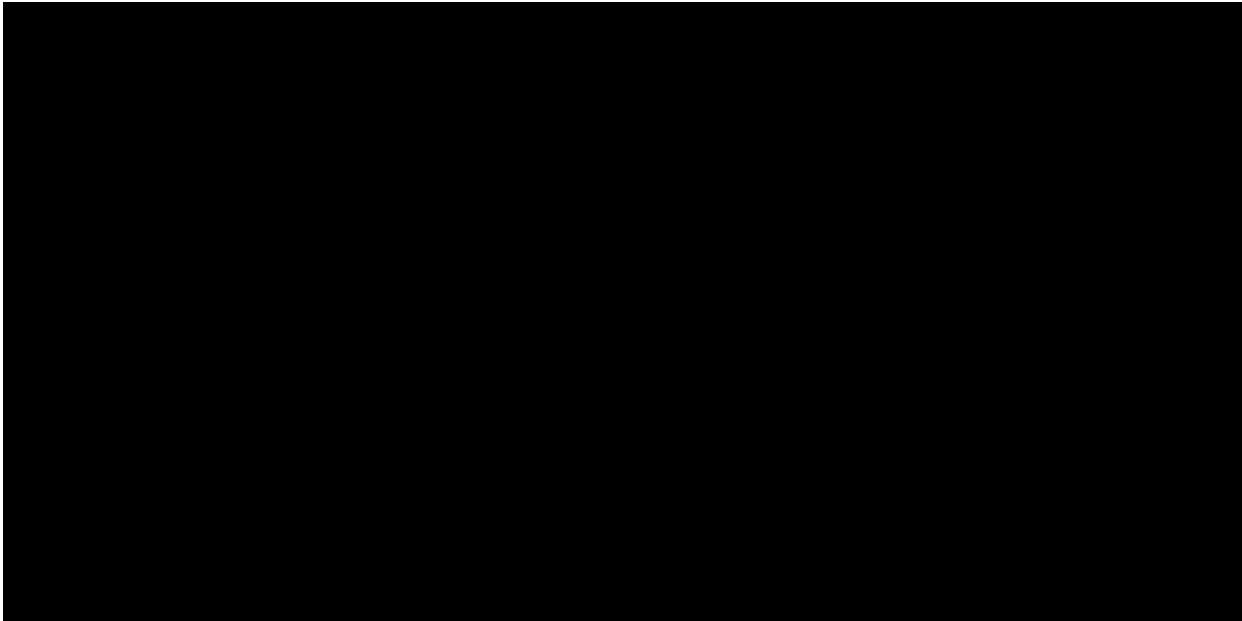
You Earthlings have
such woefully limited
perspective.





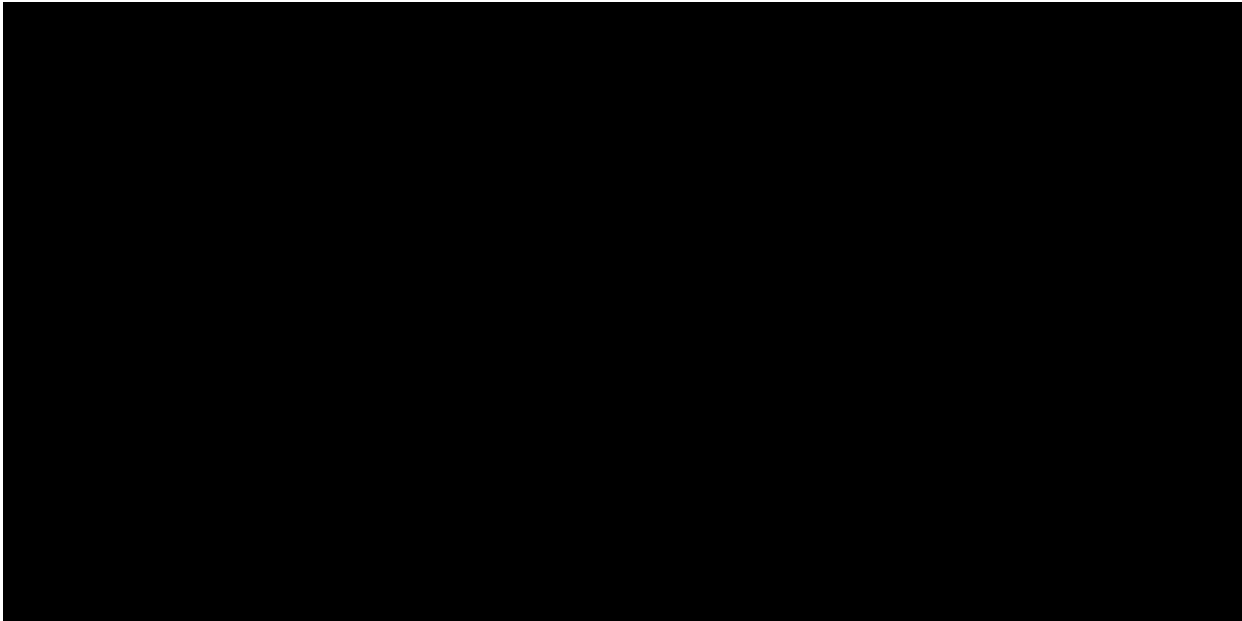






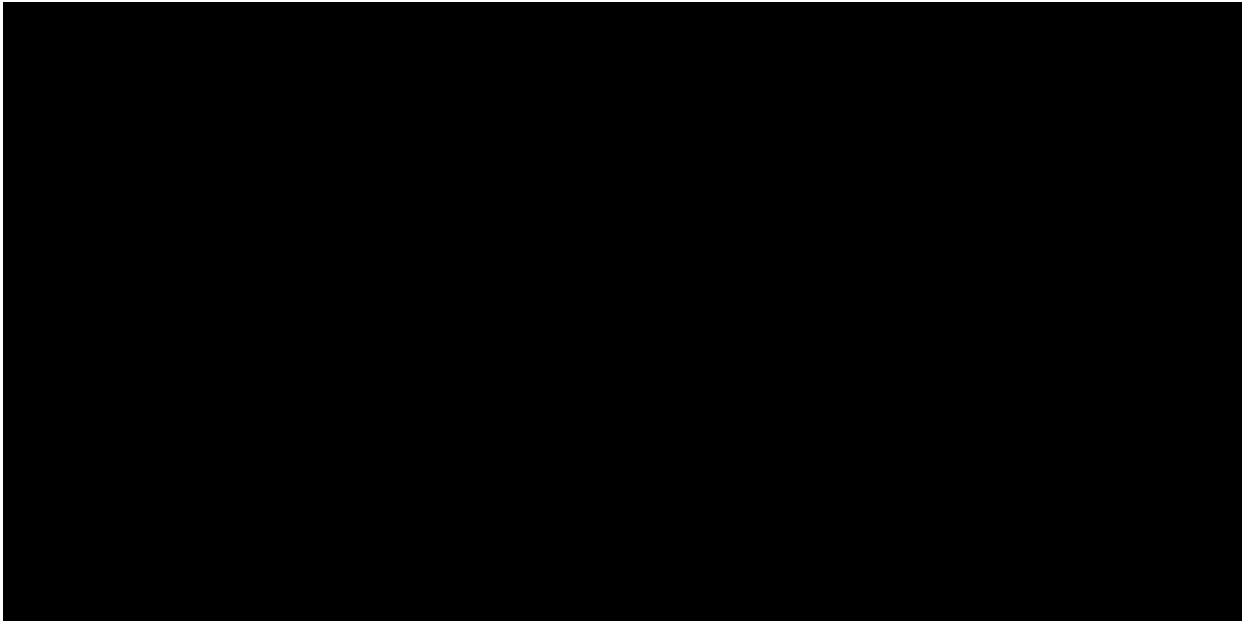


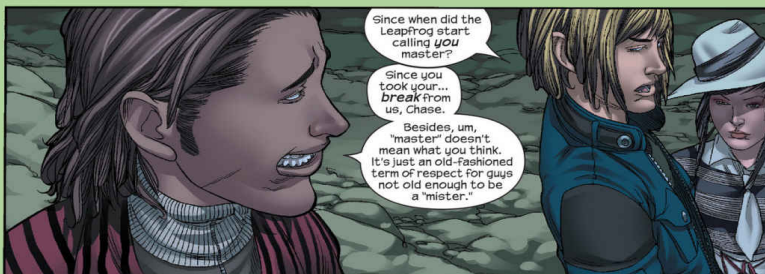
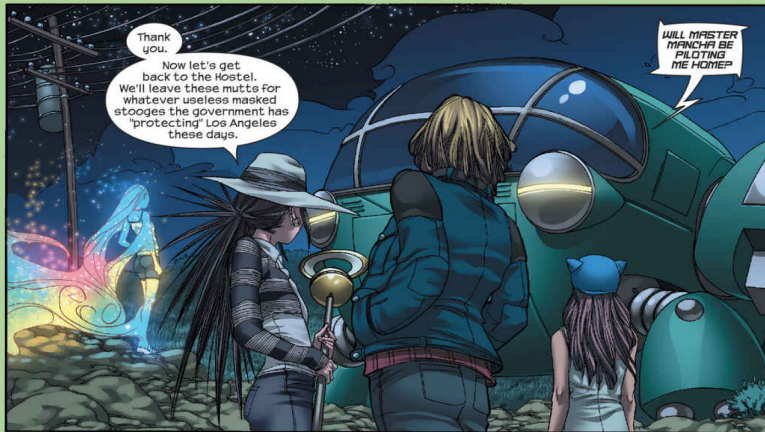




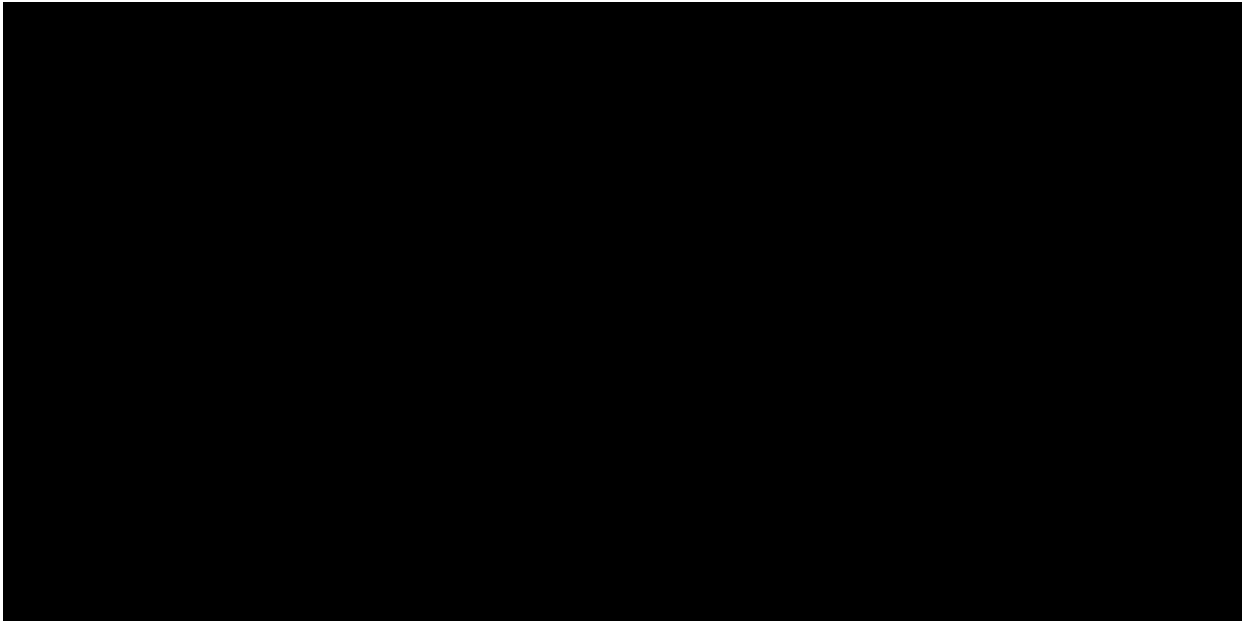










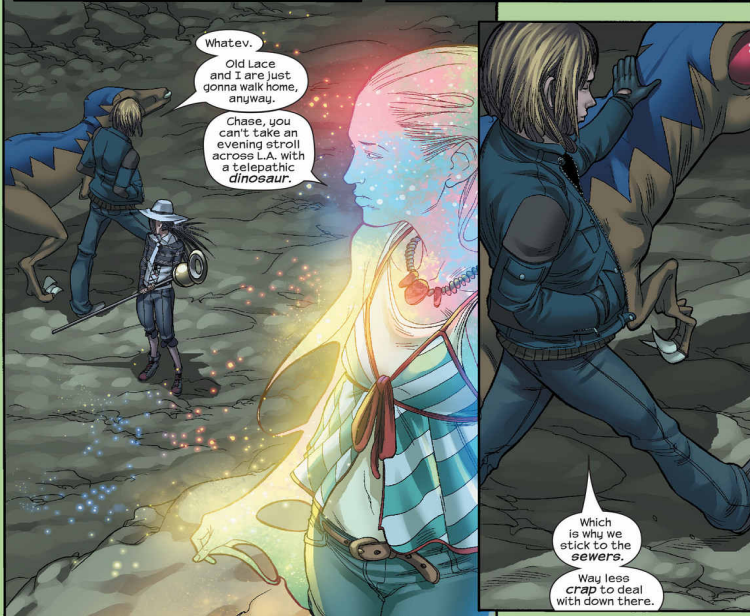




HE IS
CORRECT.
MR. STEIN.



Don't you
ever call
me that.



Whatever.

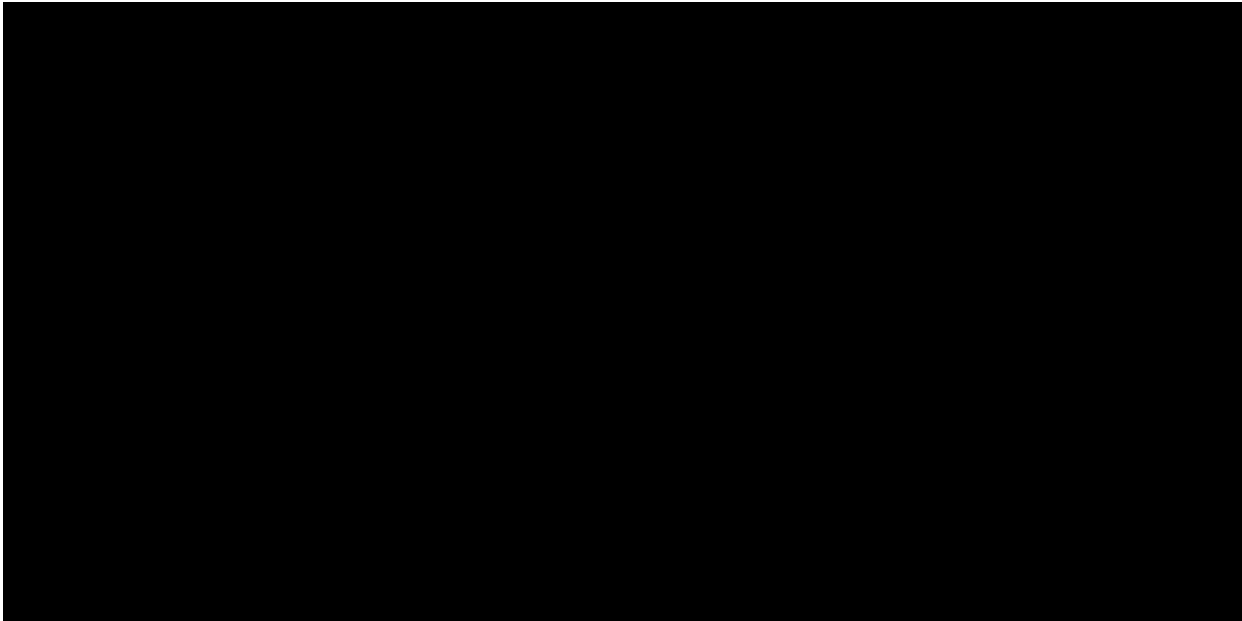
Old Lace
and I are just
gonna walk home,
anyway.

Chase, you
can't take an
evening stroll
across L.A. with
a telepathic
dinosaur.

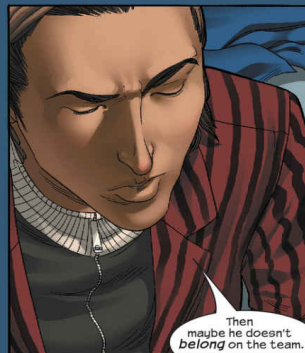
Which
is why we
stick to the
sewers.

Way less
crap to deal
with down there.



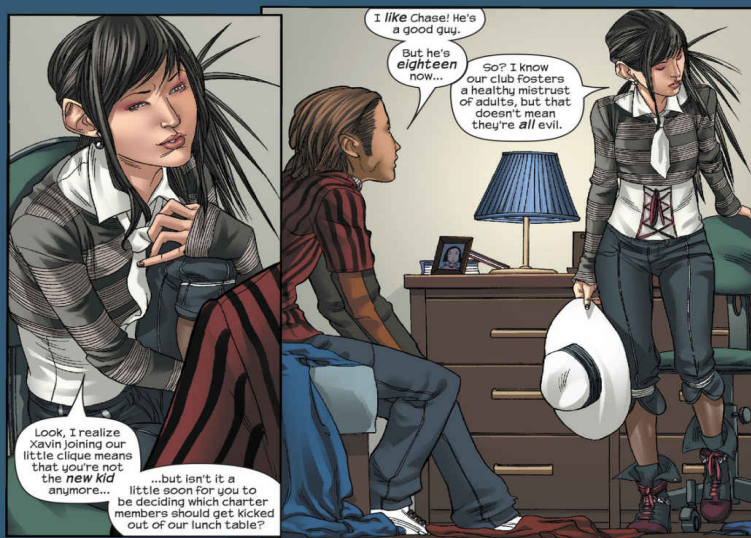


The La Brea Tar Pits
Forty-nine Minutes Later

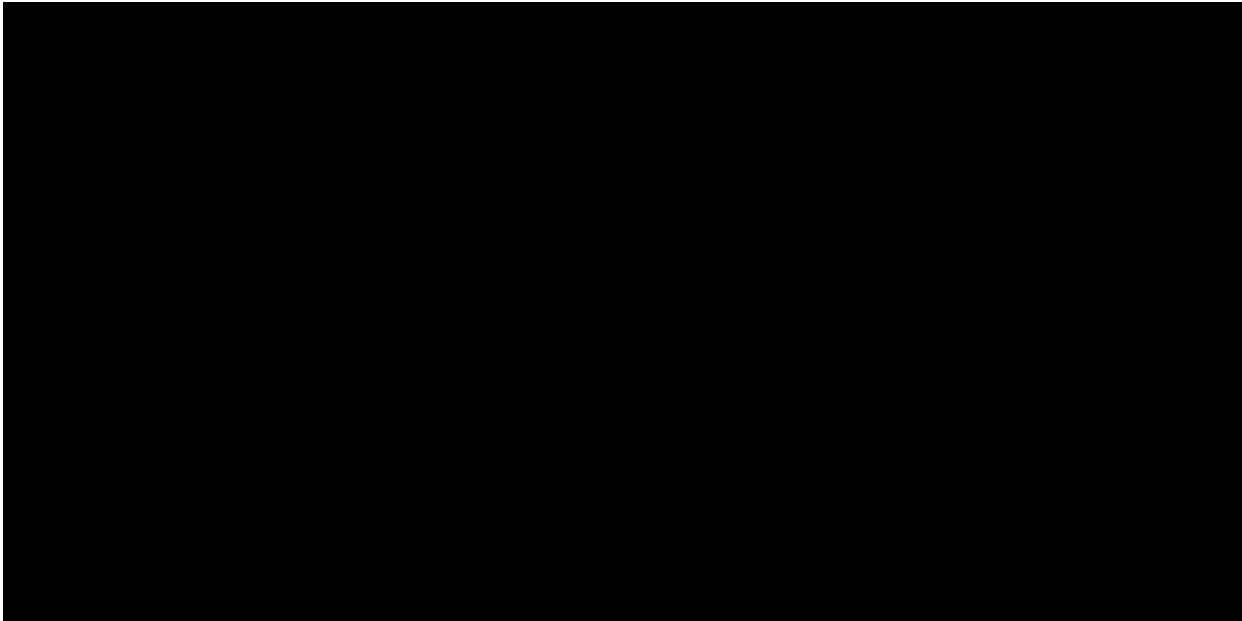


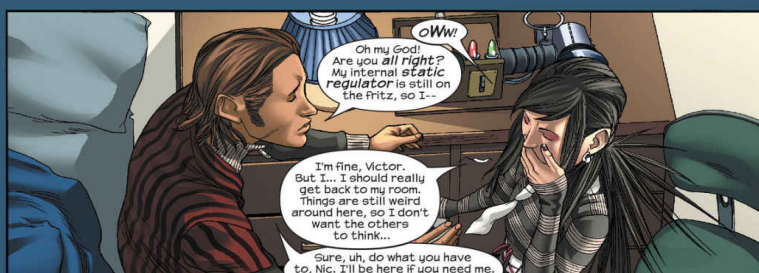
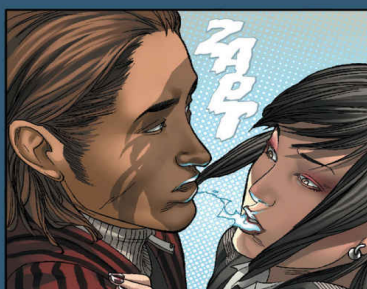




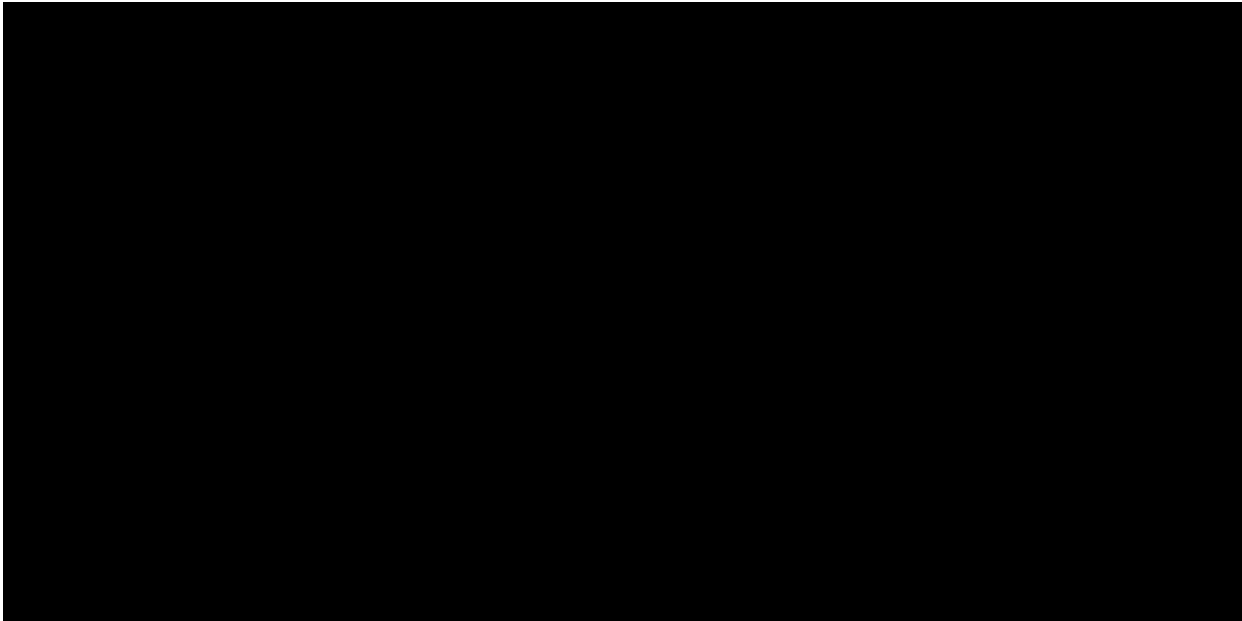


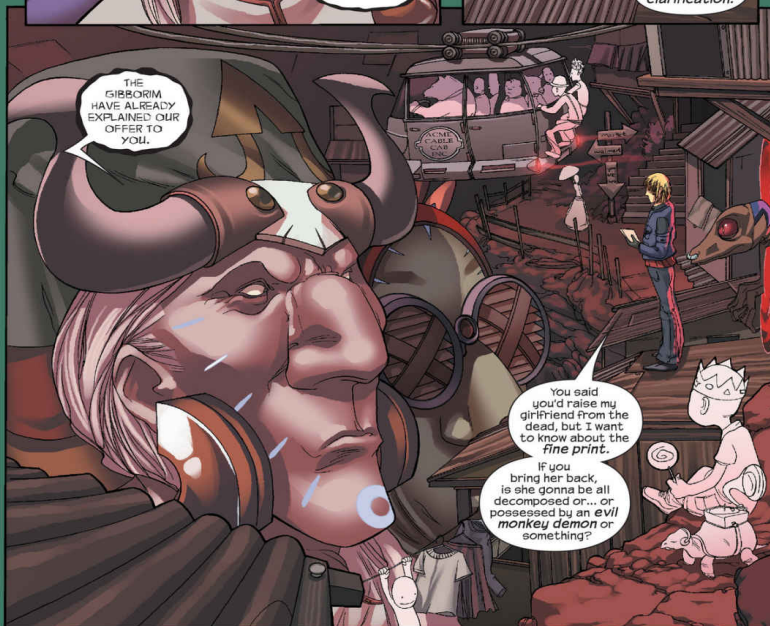




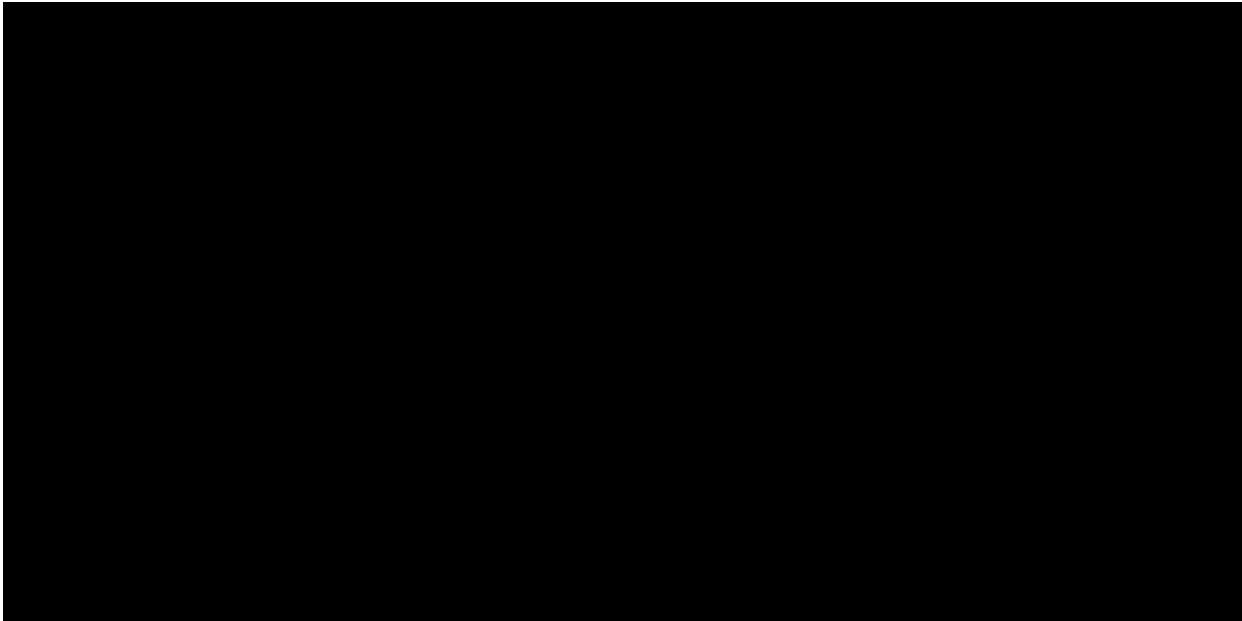














WE WILL RETURN GERTRUDE YORKES TO YOU EXACTLY AS SHE WAS THE MOMENT BEFORE SHE RECEIVED HER FATAL INJURY...

...BUT ONLY IF YOU FIRST BRINGS US A SACRIFICE OF ONE INNOCENT SOUL.

Let's say I *did* score you somebody matching that description. You'd, what... *eat* them?



WE WOULD DO MORE THAN THAT.

WE WOULD SUCK EVERY LAST DROP OF REALITY FROM THEIR MARROW, AND BY THE TIME WE WERE FINISHED, NO ONE ON THIS PLANET WOULD EVEN REMEMBER THAT THEY ONCE LIVED.



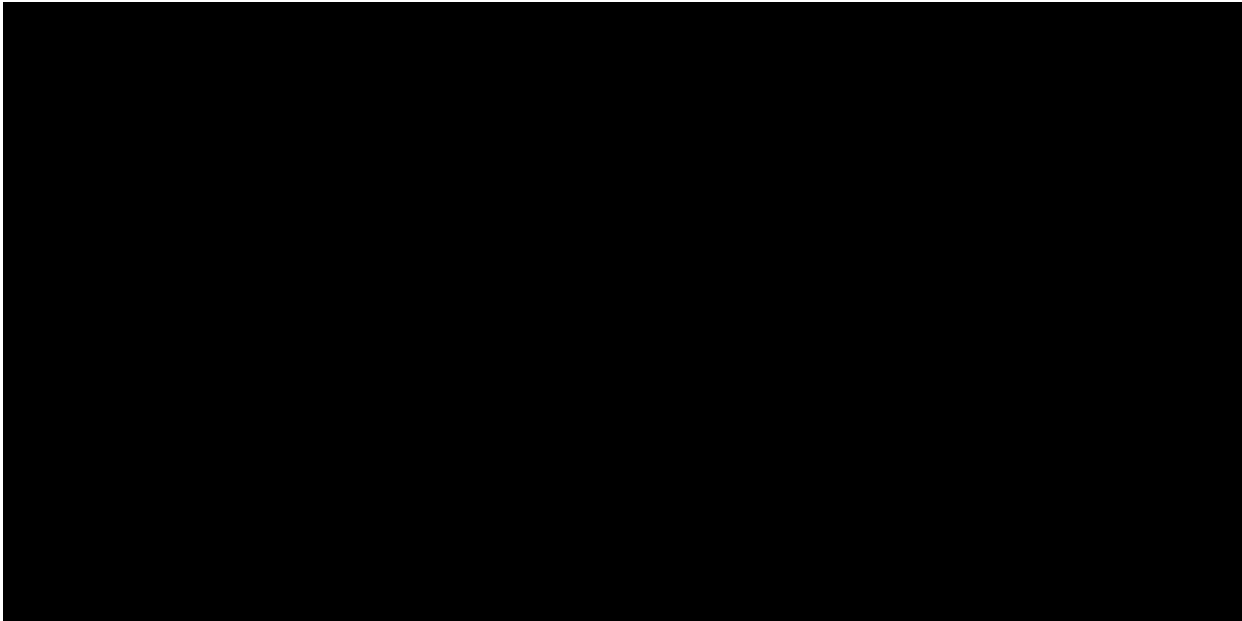
So you wouldn't just kill them, you'd write them out of existence?

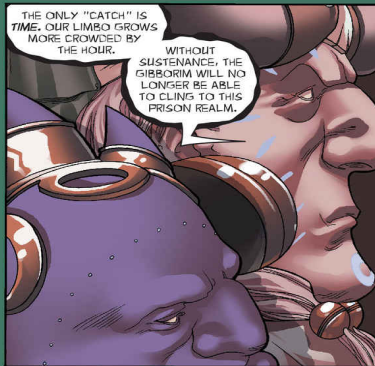
Like they were never even *born*?



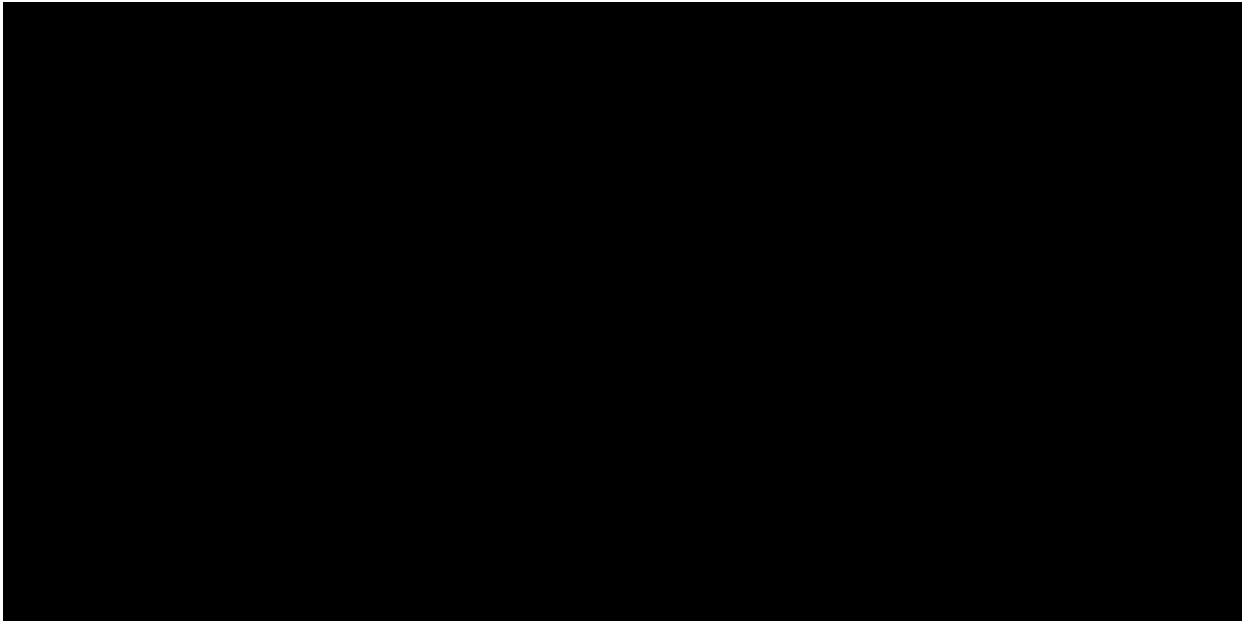
Sounds like the *perfect crime*.
What's the catch?





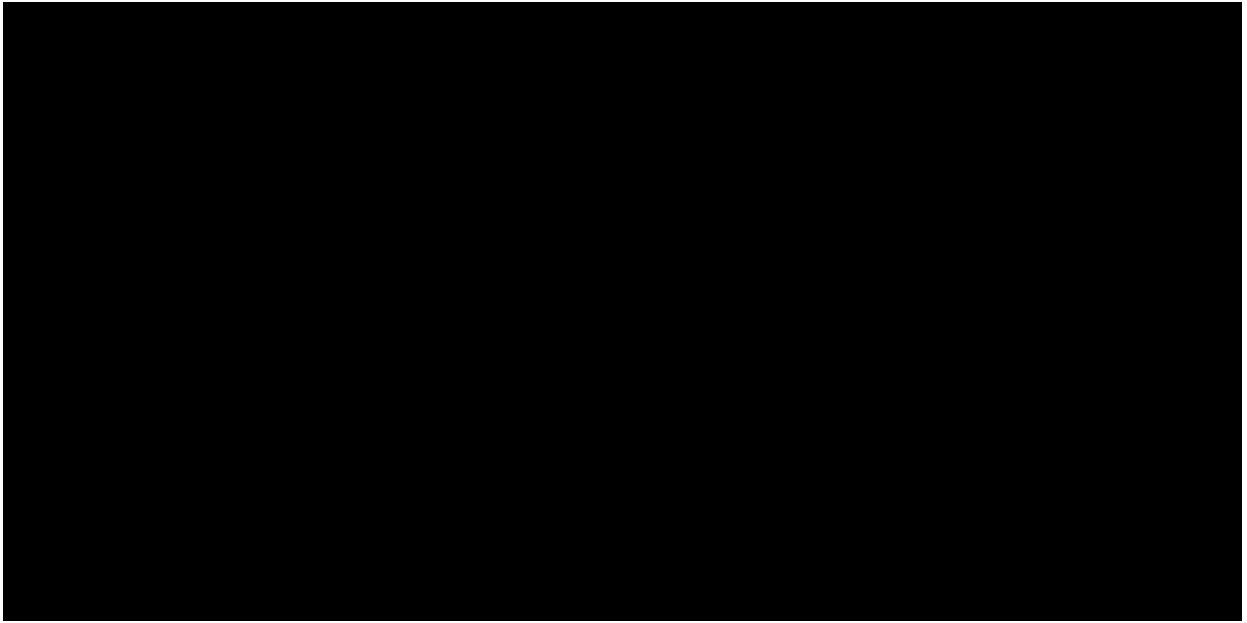


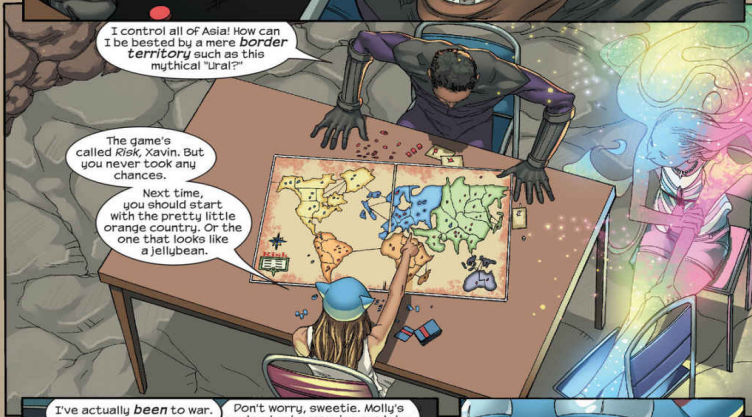




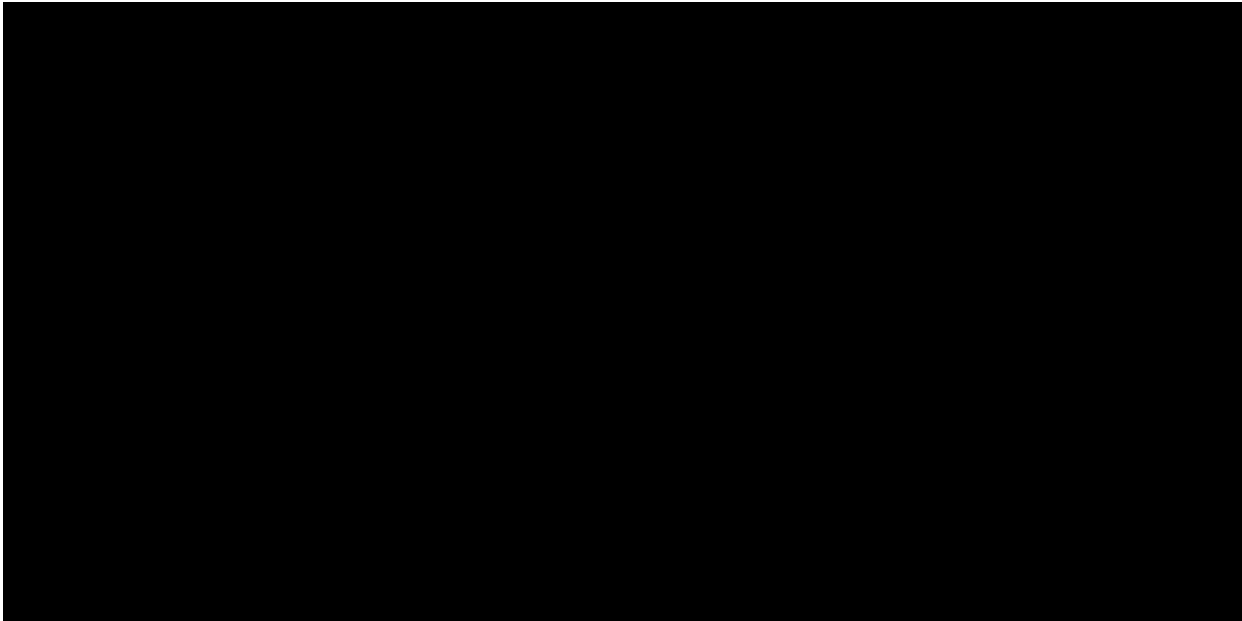












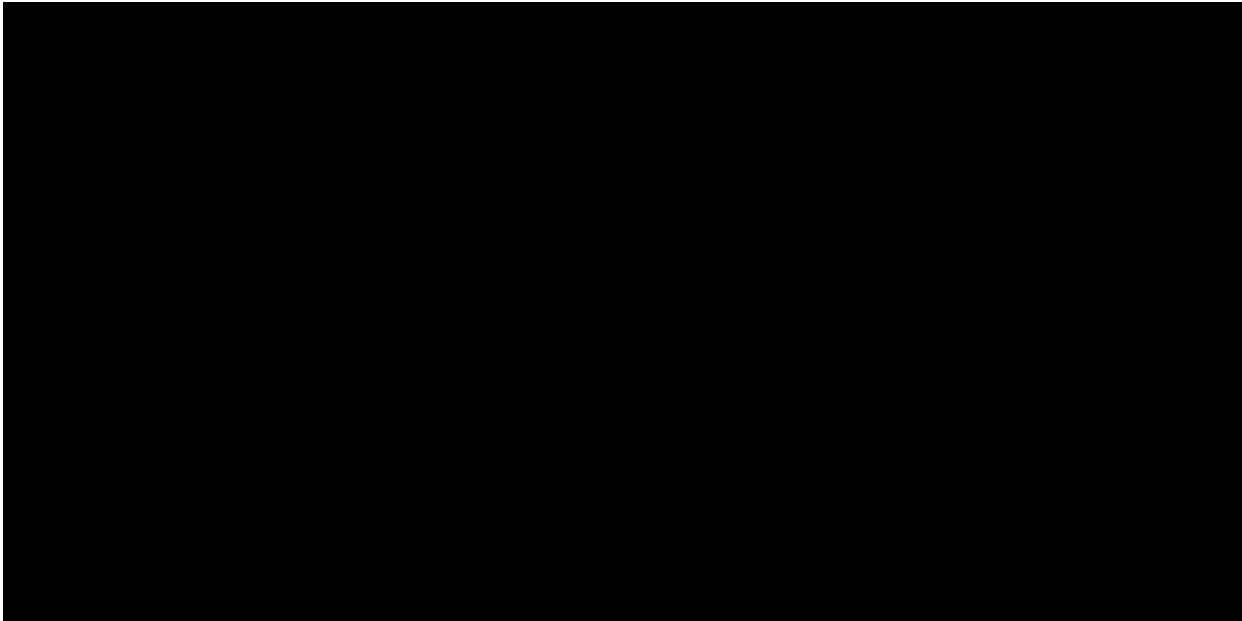






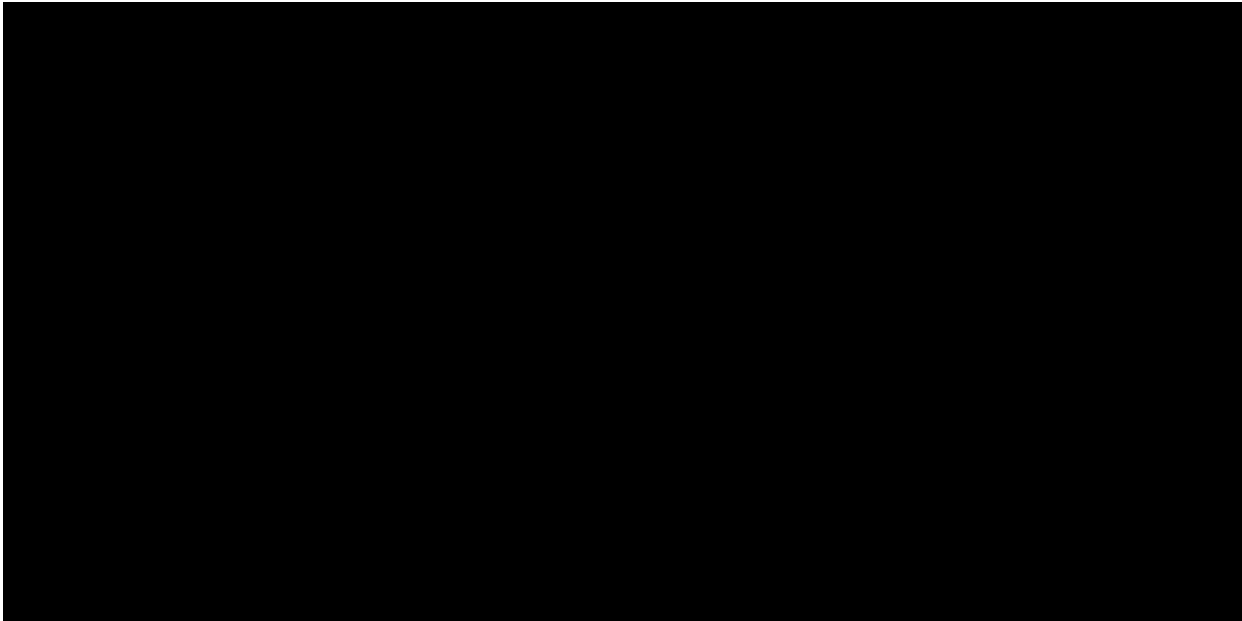






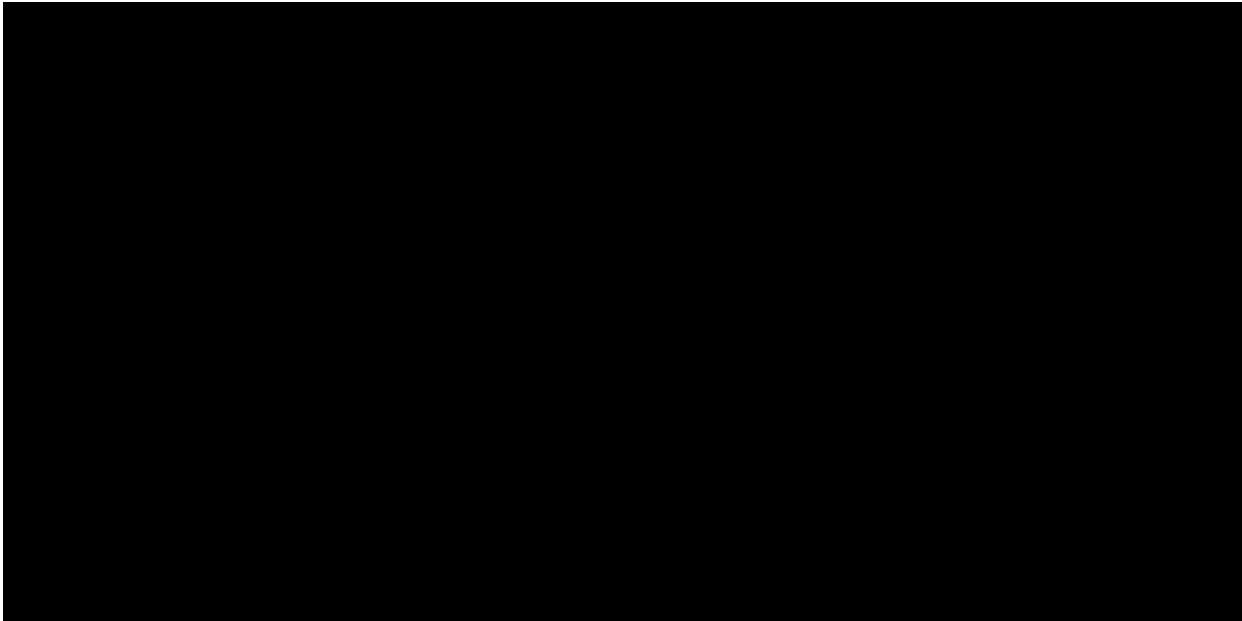






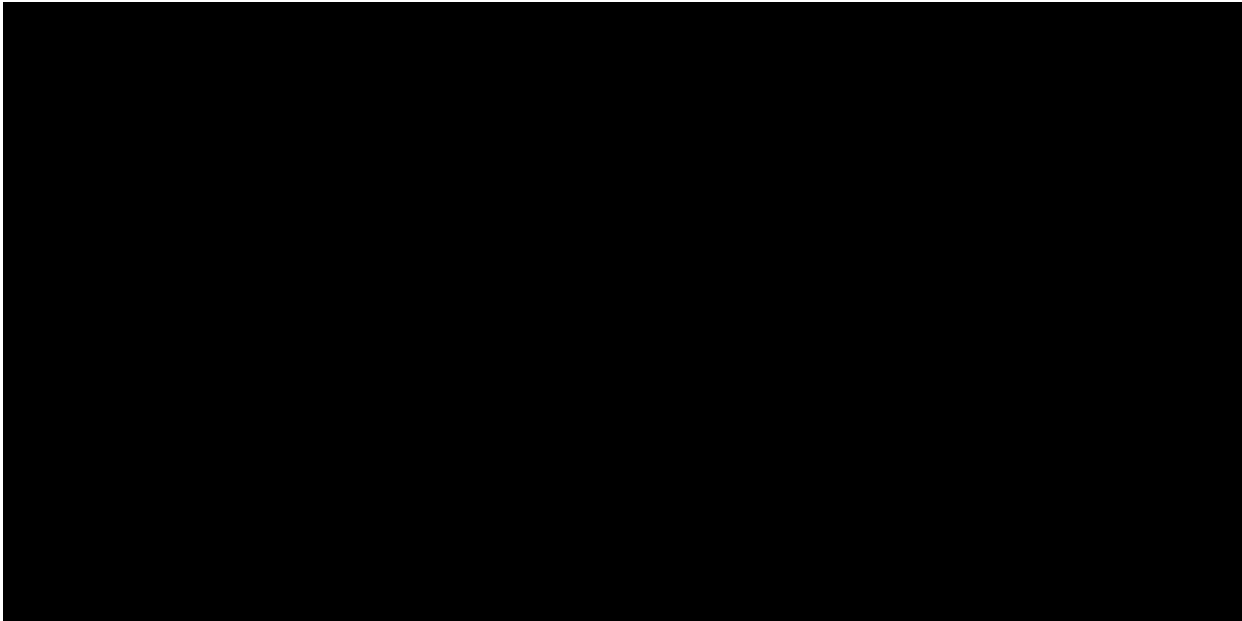


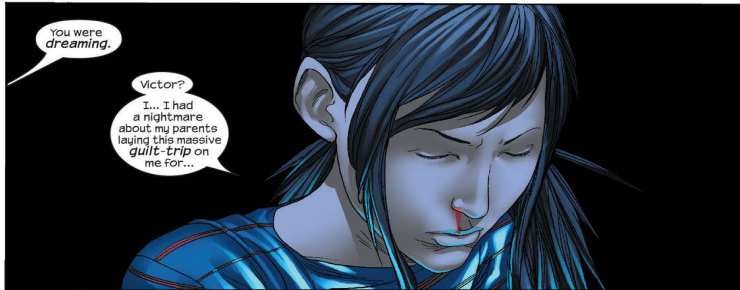




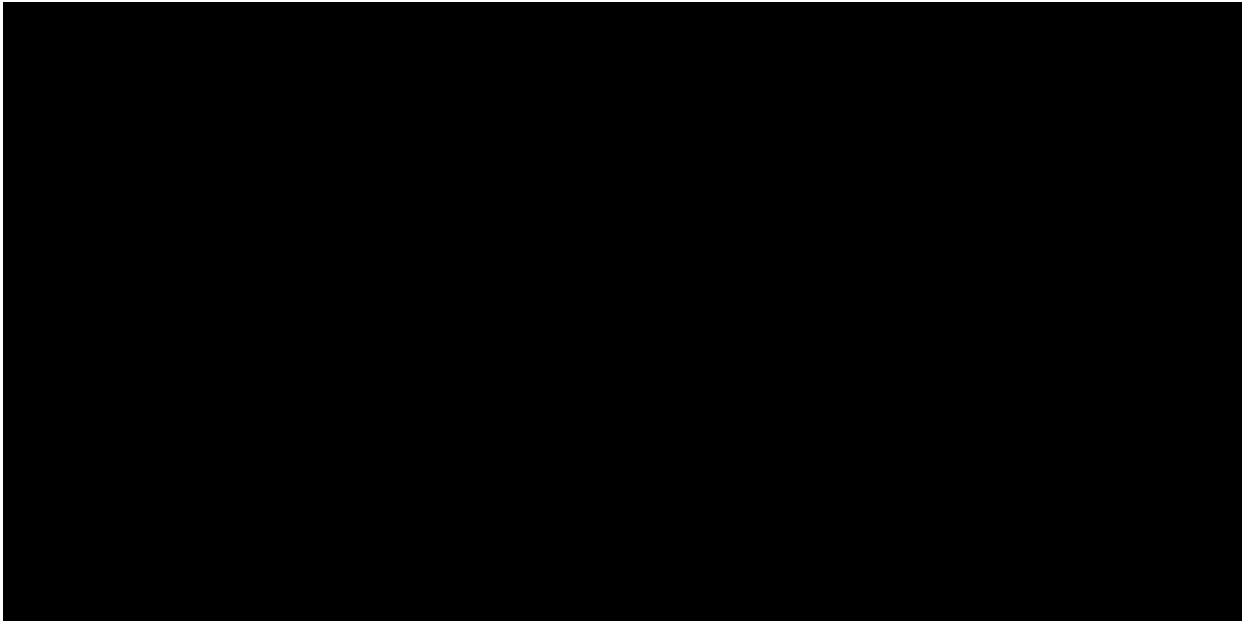








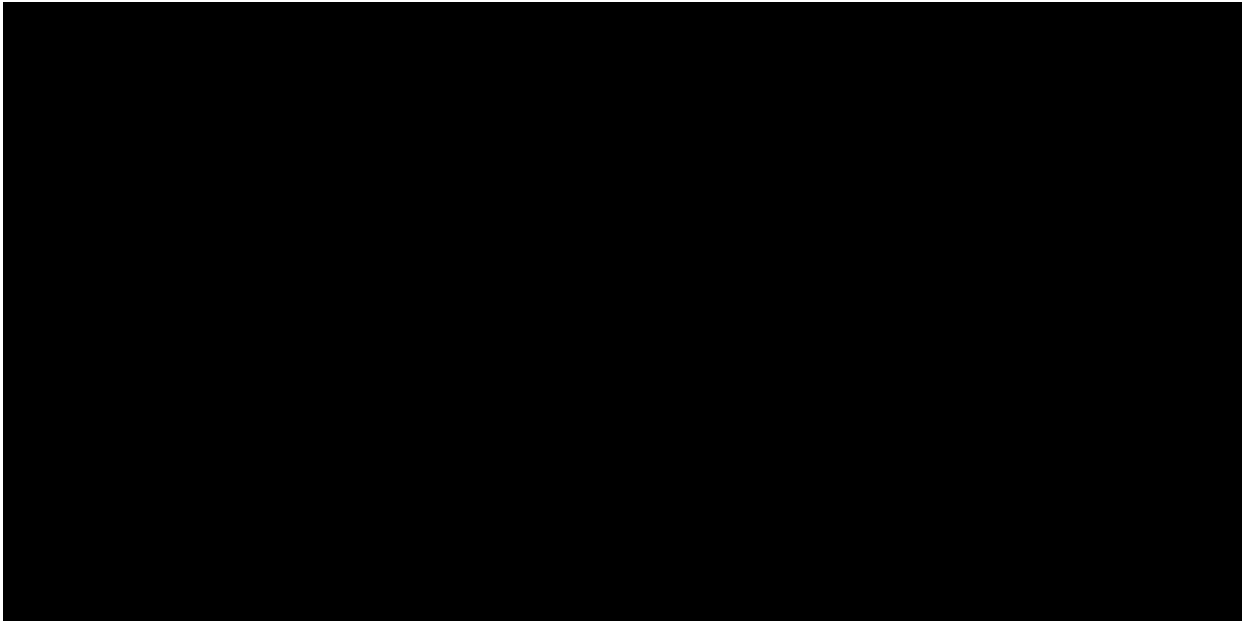






To Be Continued...

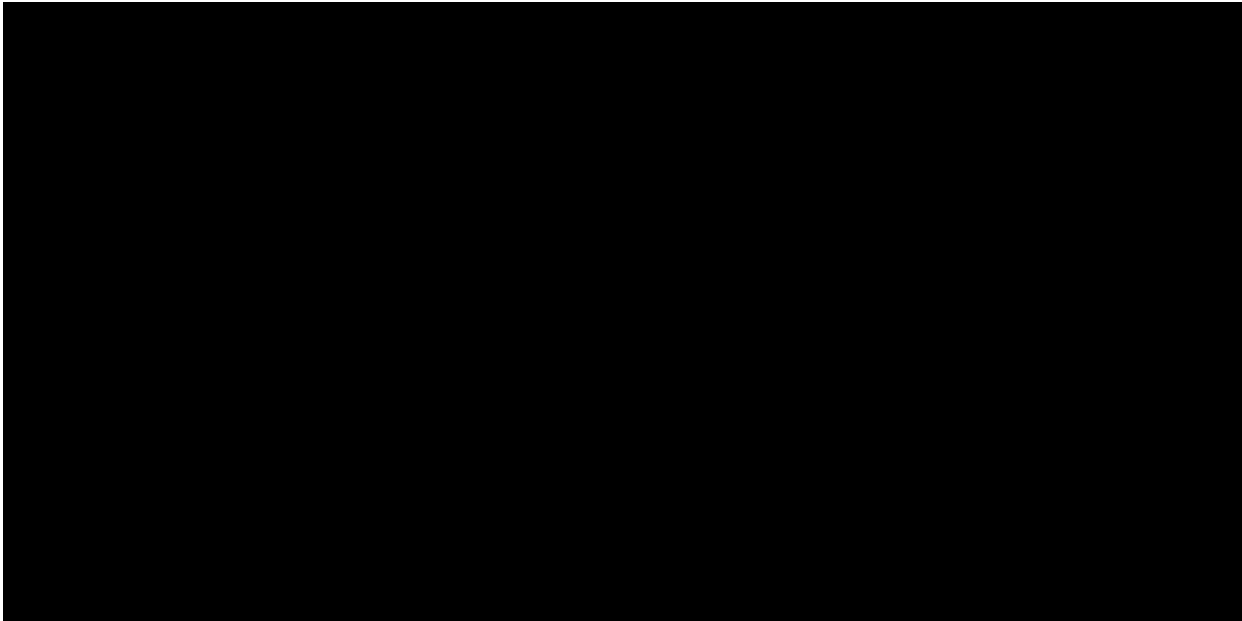




NEXT ISSUE:







MARVEL
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VAUGHAN
ALPHONA
YEUNG
STRAIN

RUNAWAYS



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THE RUNAWAYS



NICO MINORU
Daughter of
Dark Wizards



CHASE STEIN
Son of
Mad Scientists



MOLLY HAYES
Daughter of
Evil Mutants



VICTOR MANCHA
Son of a
Killer Robot



KAROLINA DEAN
Daughter of
Alien Invaders



XAVIN
Child of
Shape-shifting
Skull Warriors



OLD LACE
Genetically
Engineered
Dinosaur

PREVIOUSLY IN RUNAWAYS:

At some point in their lives, all kids think they have the most evil parents in the world, but Nico Minoru and her friends really did.

Discovering that they were the children of a group of super-villains known as The Pride, the teenagers stole weapons and resources from these criminals, before running away from home and eventually defeating their parents. But that was just the beginning. Together, the teenage runaways now hope to atone for their parents' crimes by taking on the new threats trying to fill The Pride's void.

After a ferocious battle with a temporally displaced Geoffrey Wilder, Gert Yorkes died in the arms of her boyfriend. With her final breath, she "willed" control of her telepathic dinosaur to Chase Stein, before the devastated young man stole a decoder ring and Wilder's copy of the Abstract. Chase soon visits the Gibborim, mythical giants who gave the Runaways' parents their power, and learns that Gert can be resurrected if Chase sacrifices an innocent soul. Armed with a few pages torn from the Abstract, Chase and Old Lace return to the Hostel, where they tie up a frightened Nico, and steal the sorceress' powerful Staff of One...

LIVE FAST

part two

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Randy Gentile
Letterer

Joe Quesada
Chief

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Craig Yeung
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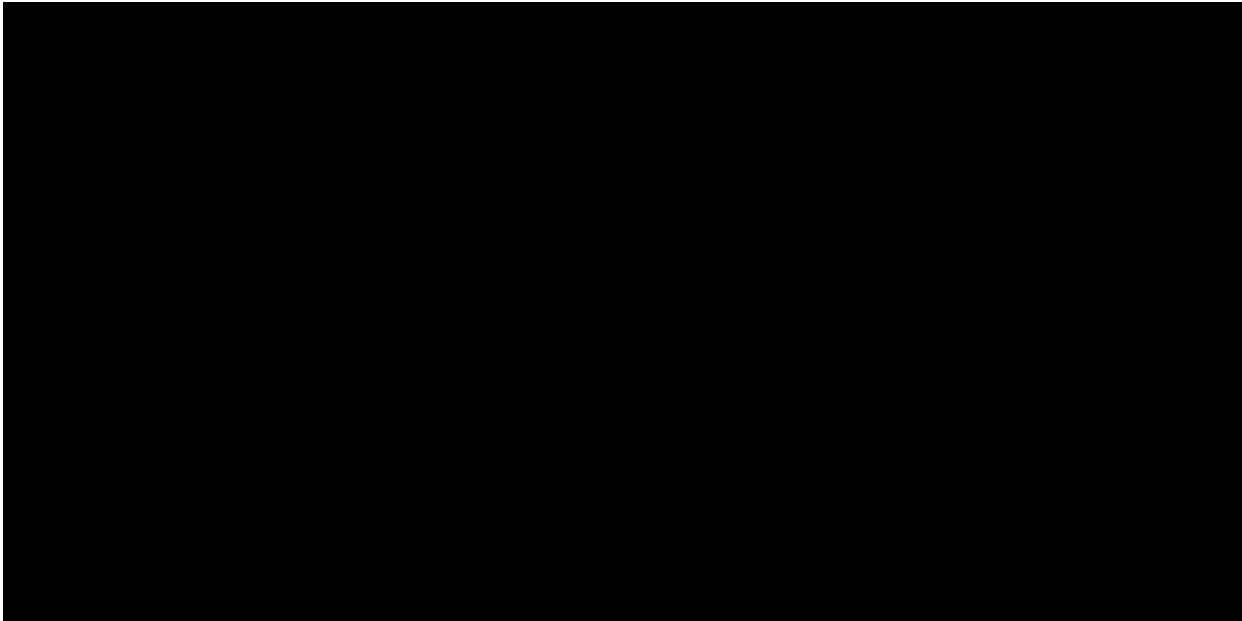
C.B. Cebulski &
MacKenzie Cadenehead
Special Thanks

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Dan Buckley
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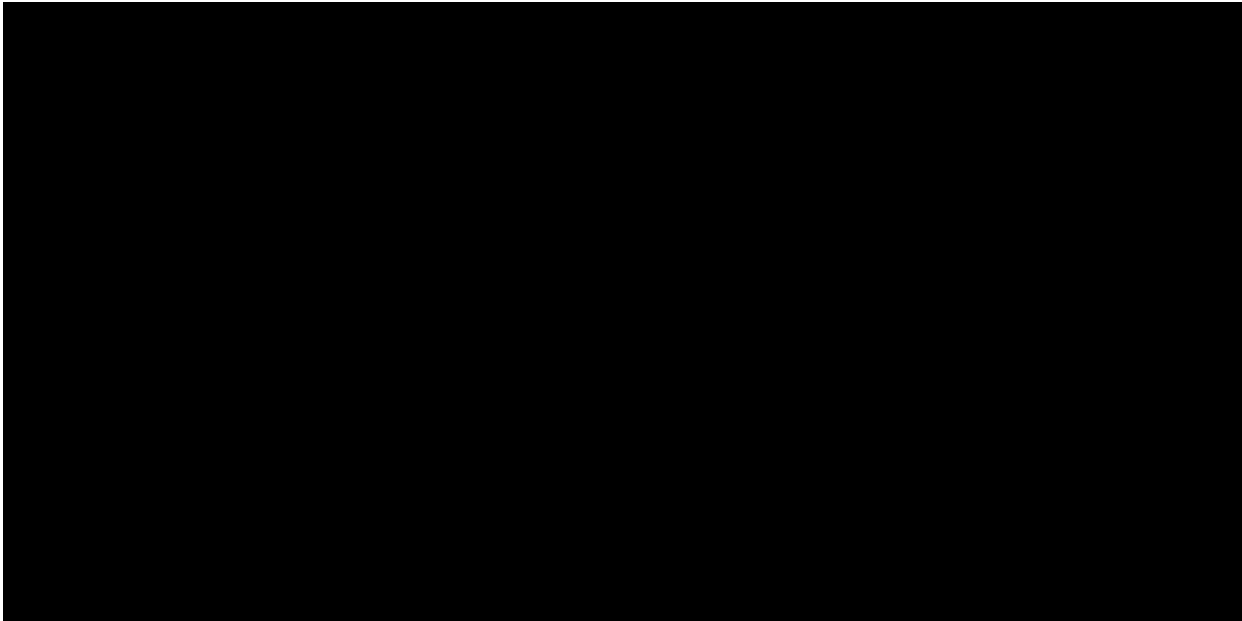
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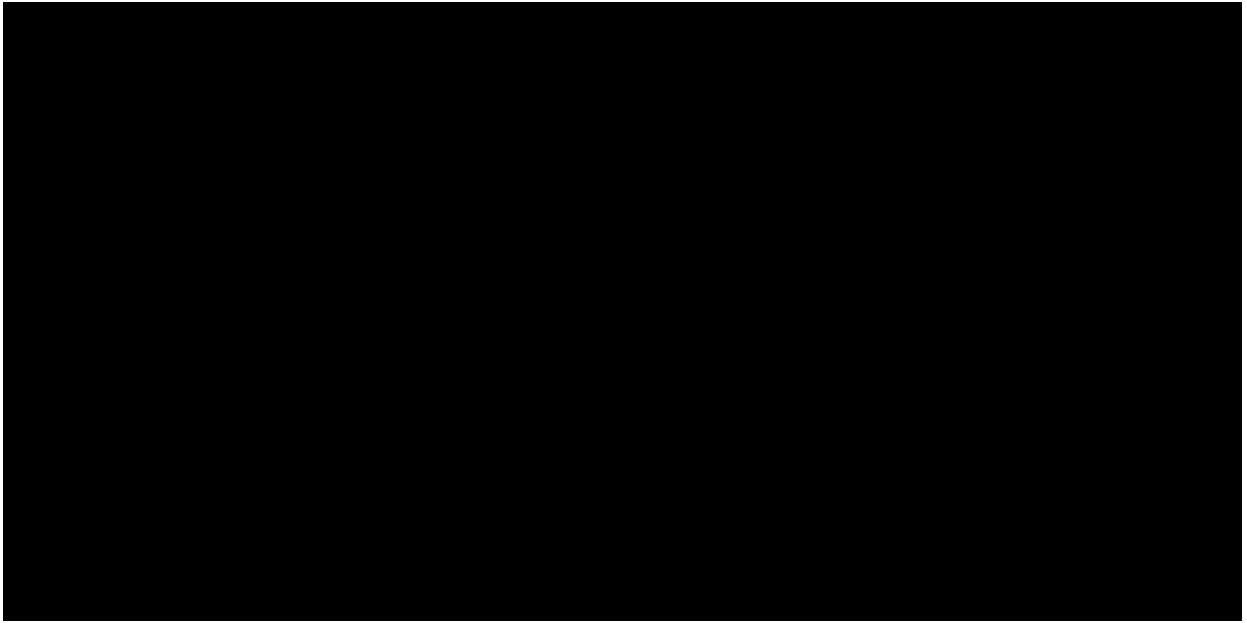


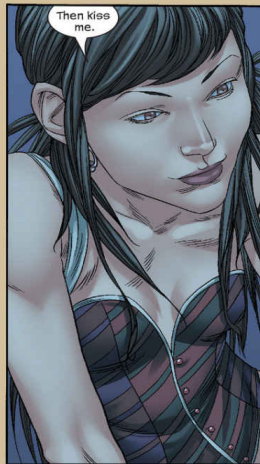




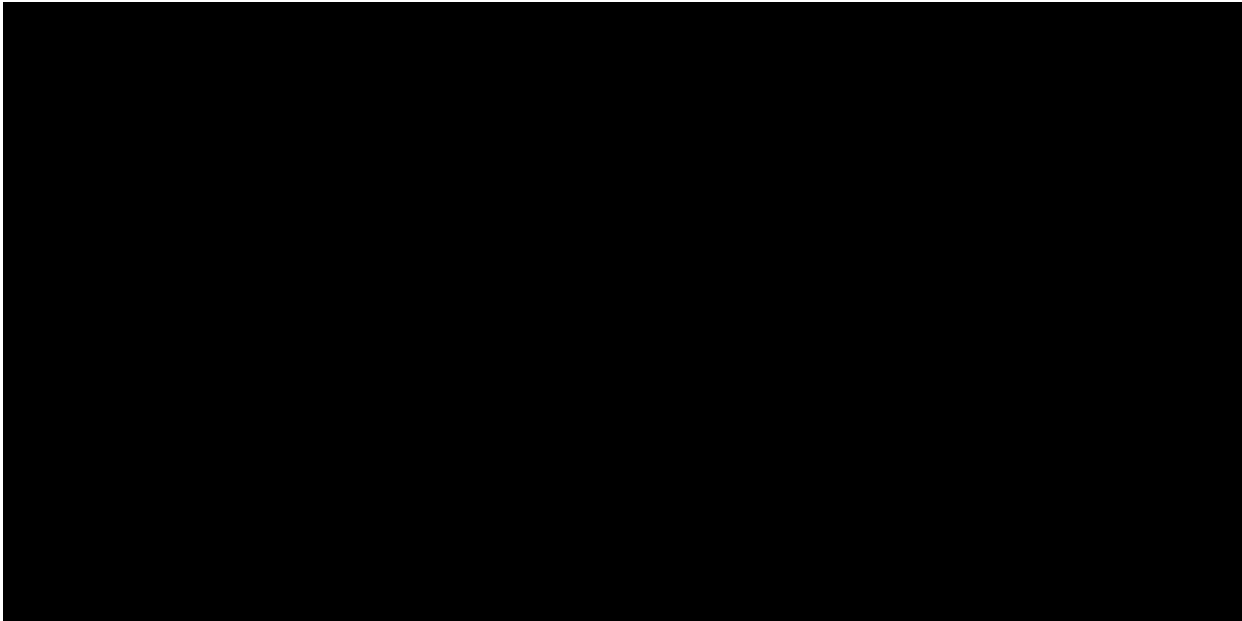


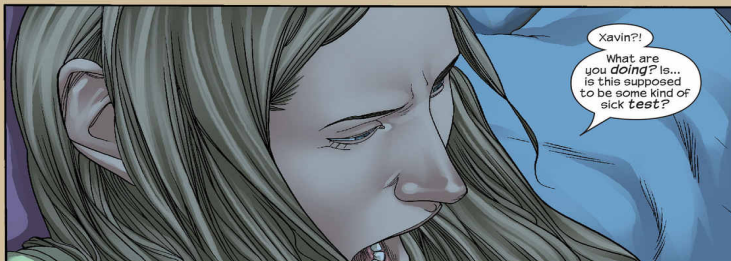
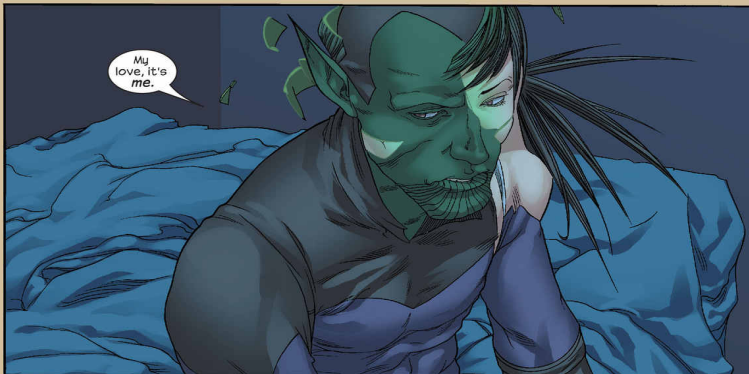




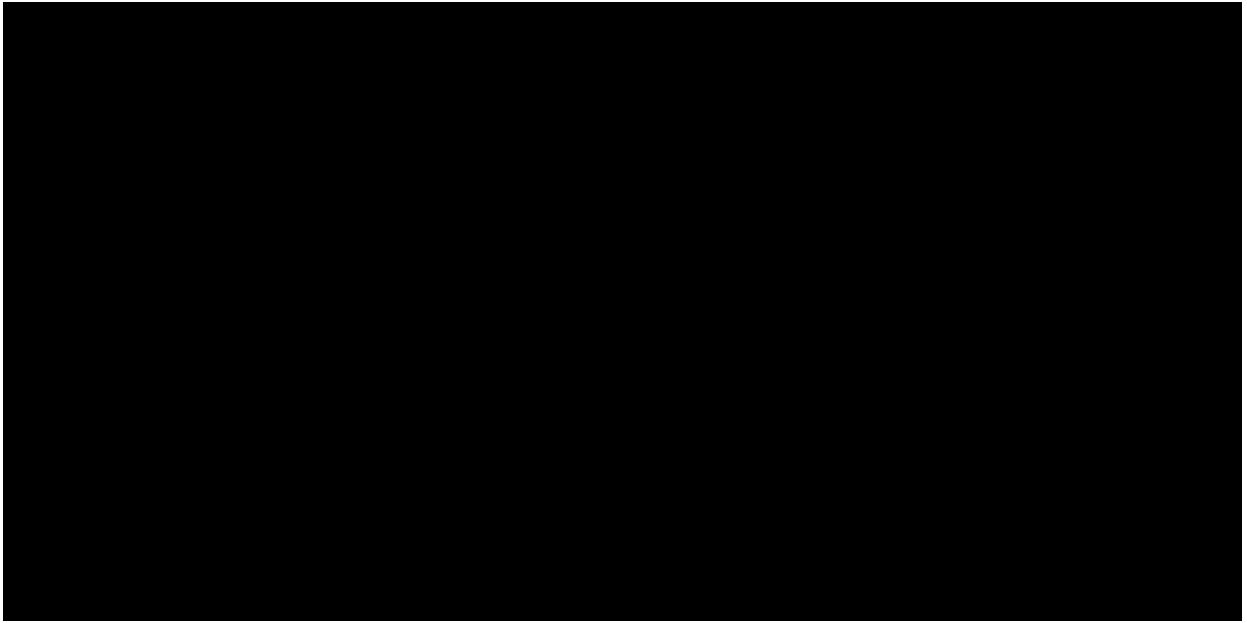


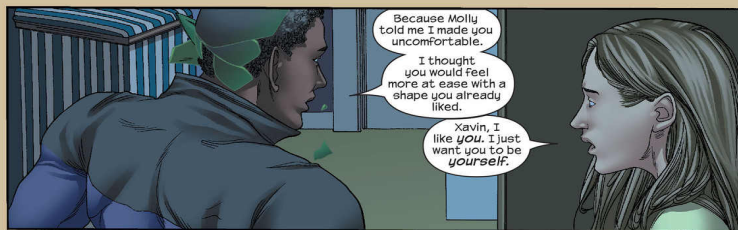




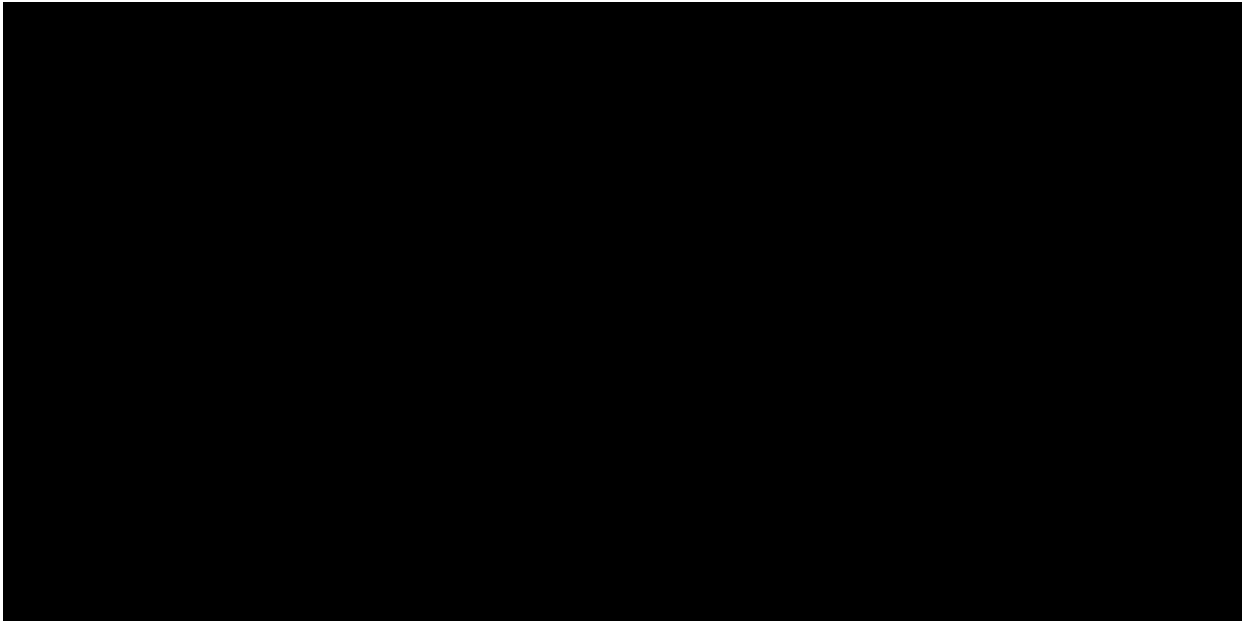


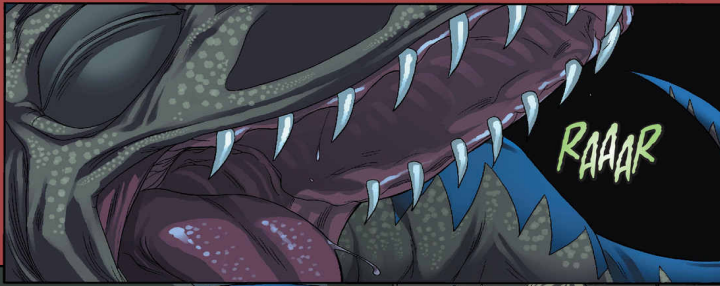




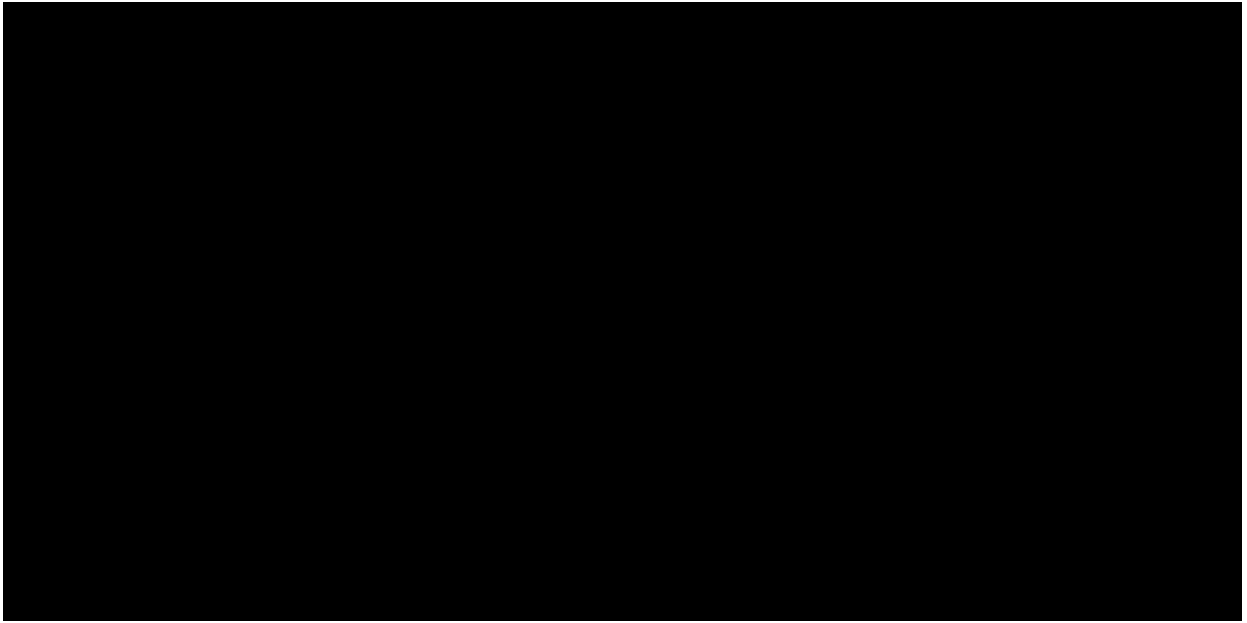








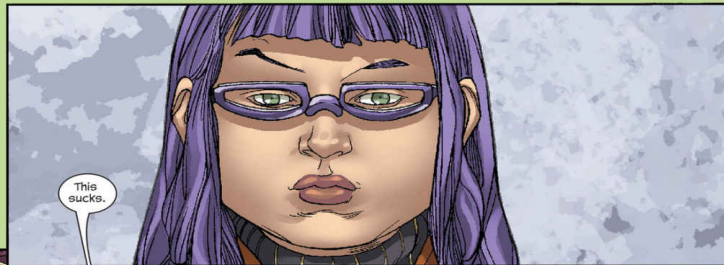




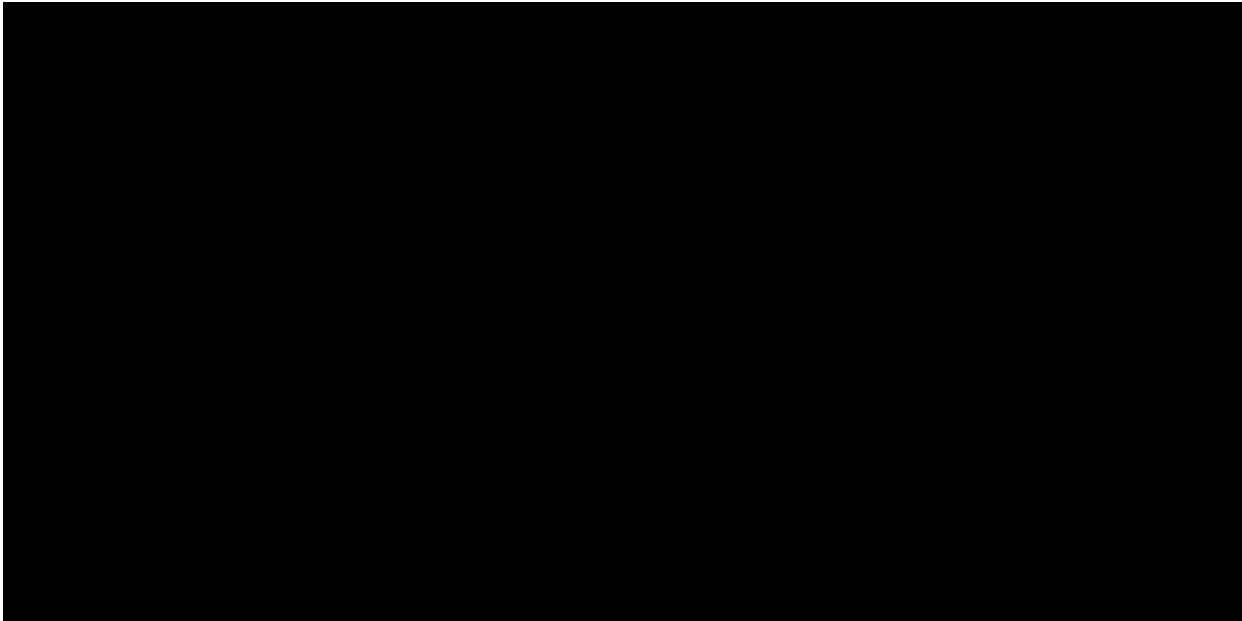






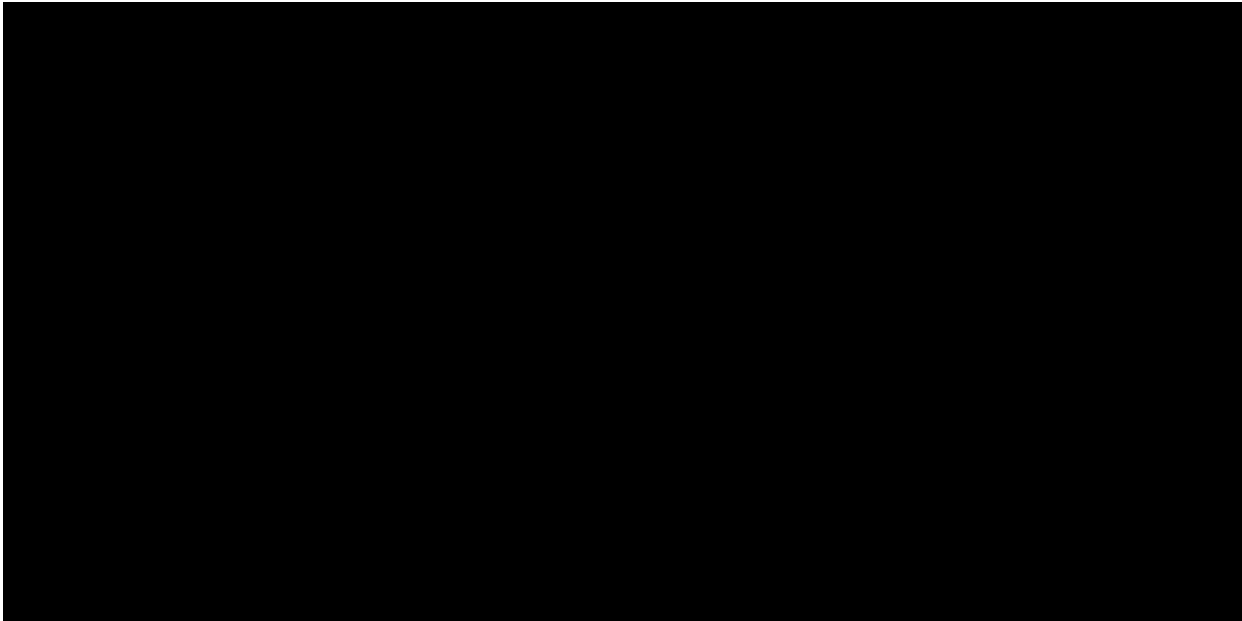


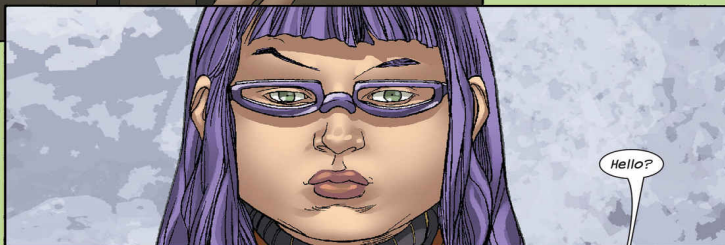
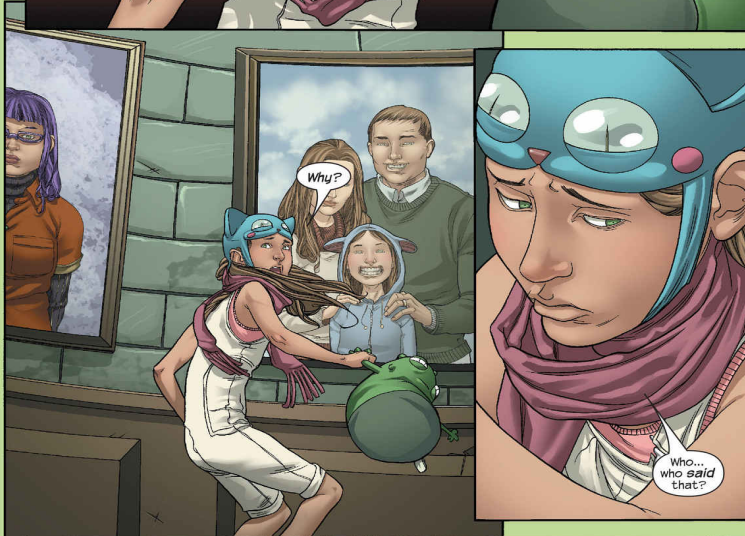
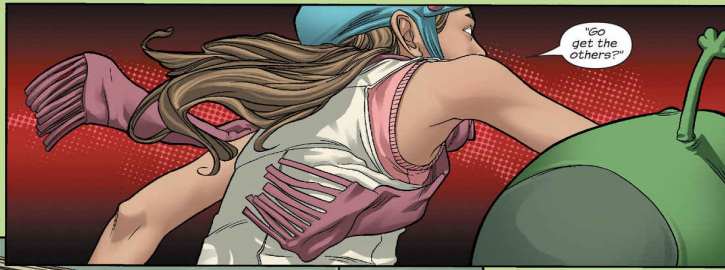




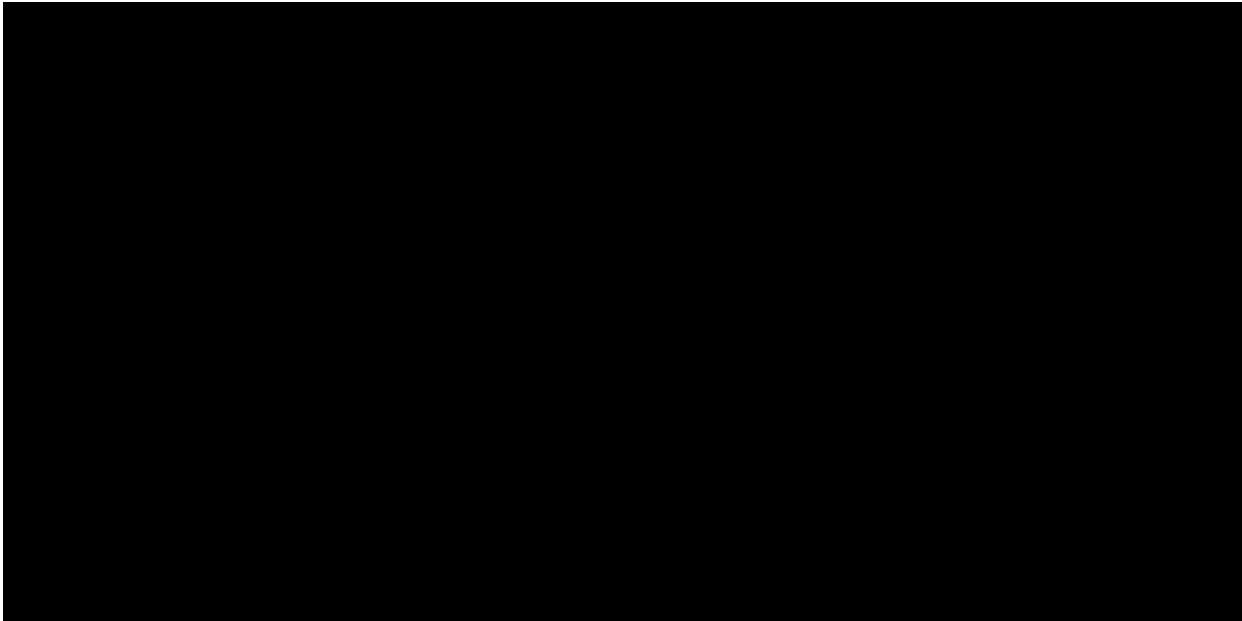






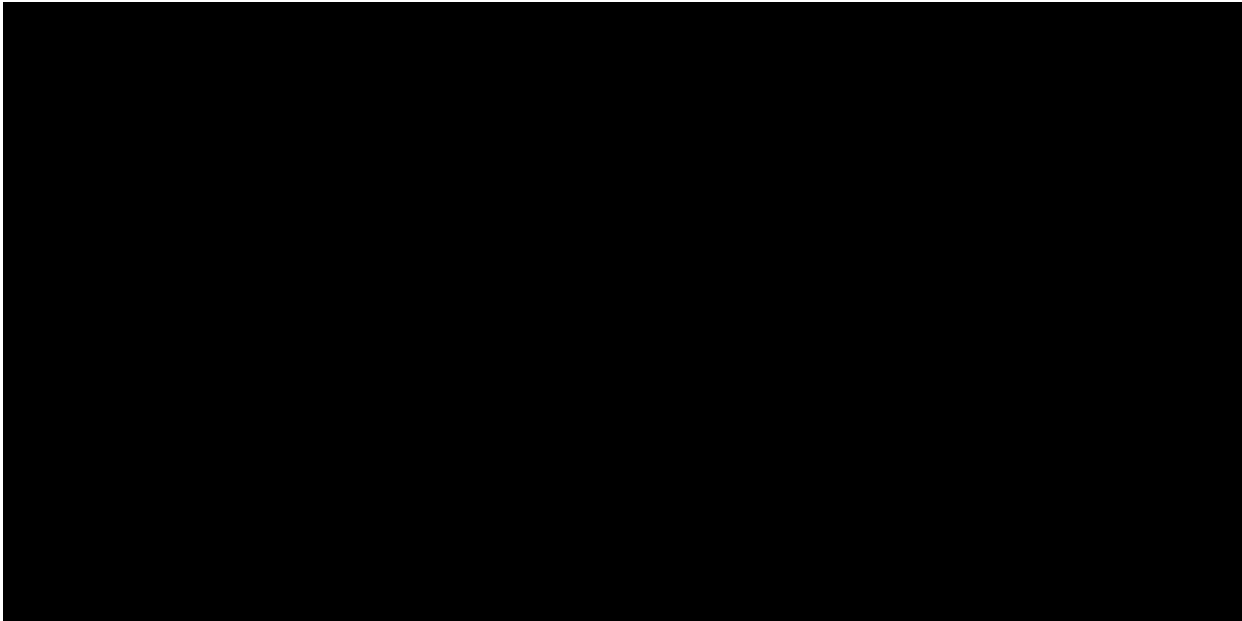


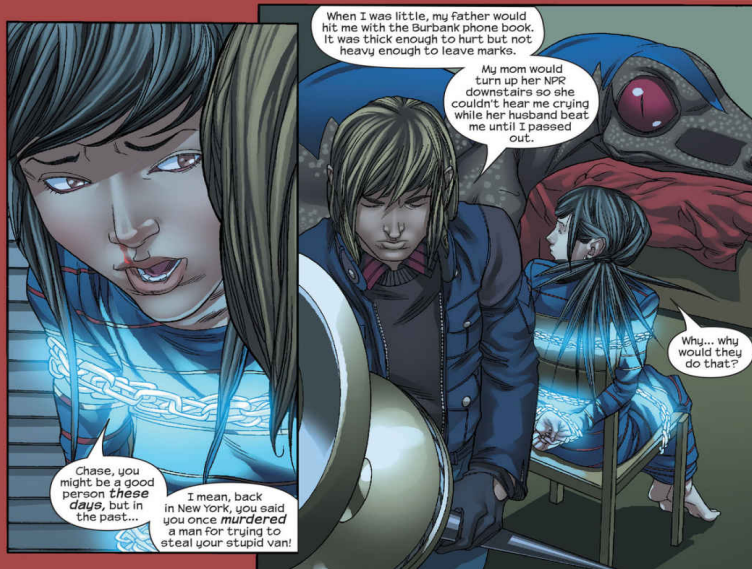




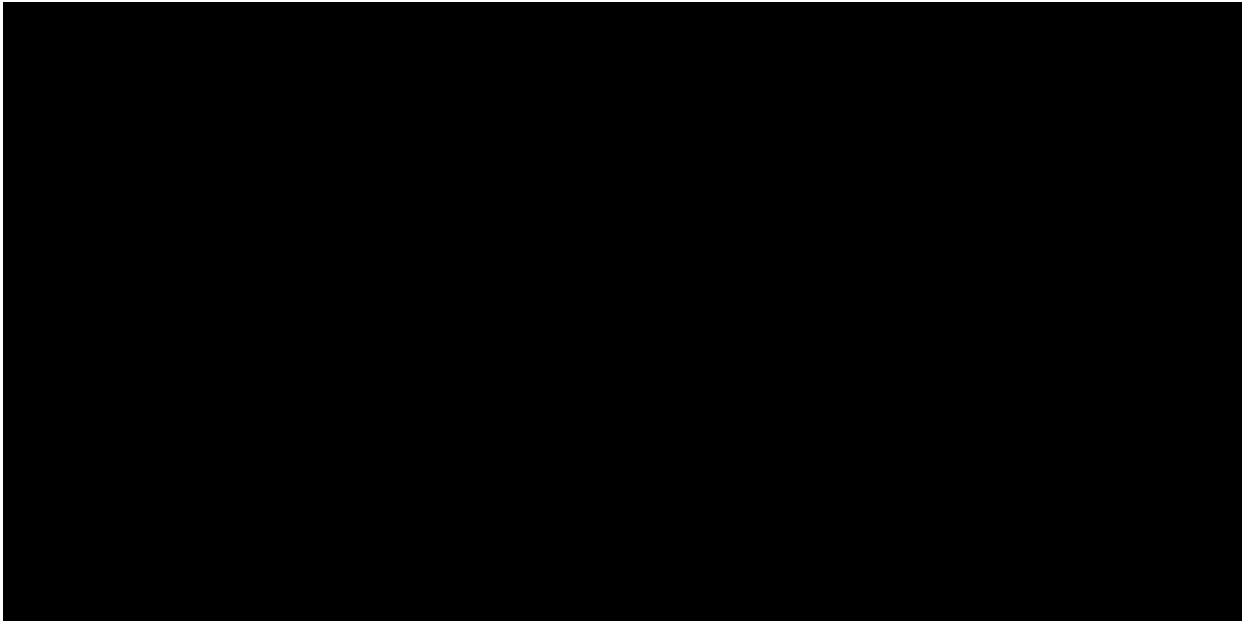


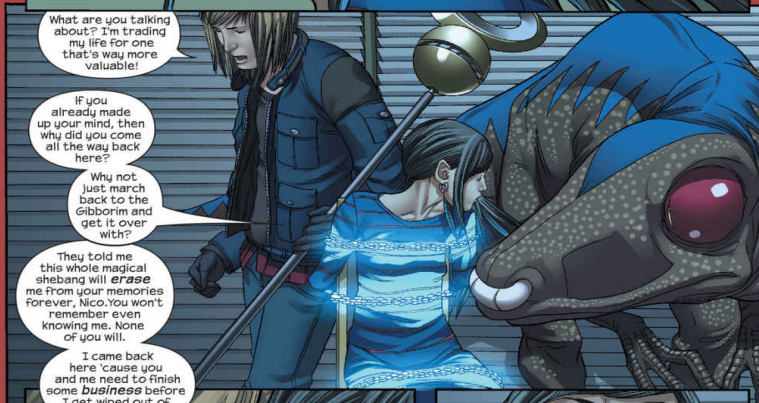




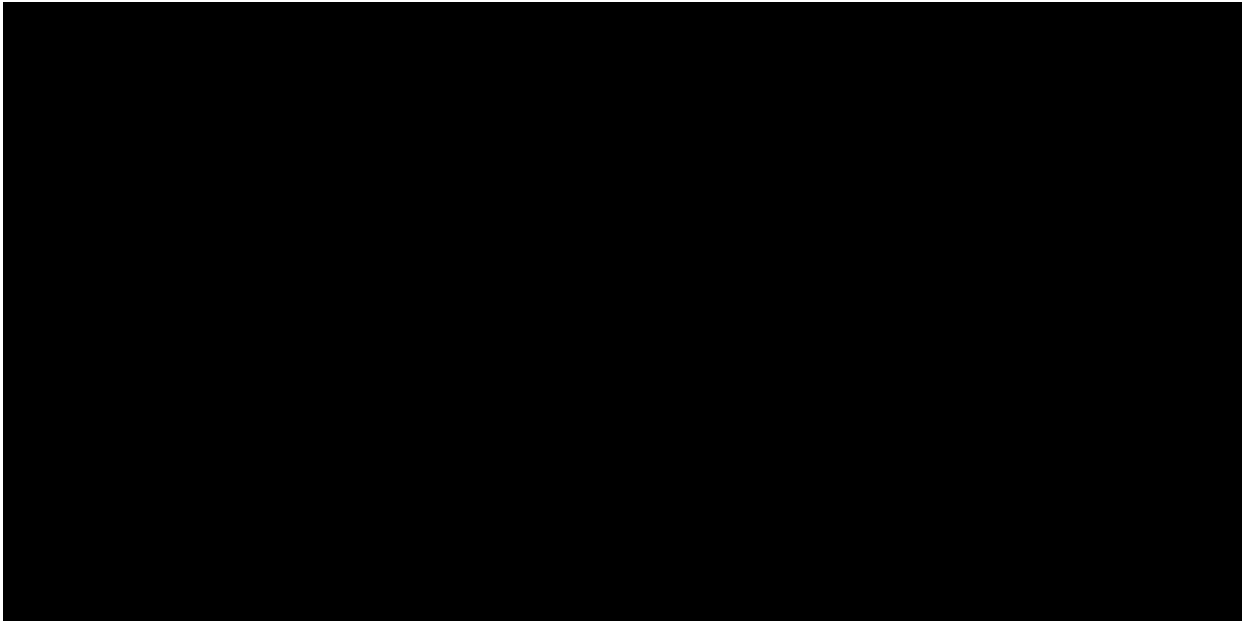






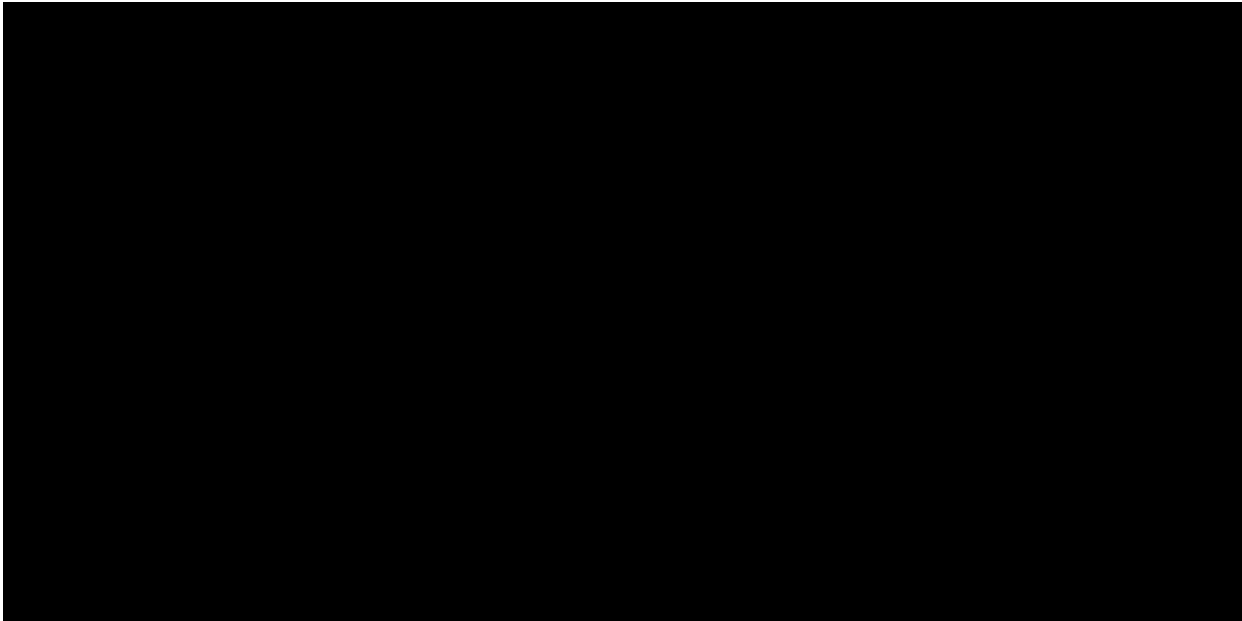














Evening, Mancha.

Can we do easy on the whole "girlfriend" thing, Victor? I'm still trying to figure out...

Hey, why am I whispering?



I have no clue what's going on here, but if your pet so much as sniffs my crotch, I will move her from endangered to *extinct*, understood?



Can I ask you something? You believe in God, right? Do you think He can do anything?

Of... of course.

Then could He make a sandwich so big, even He couldn't finish it?

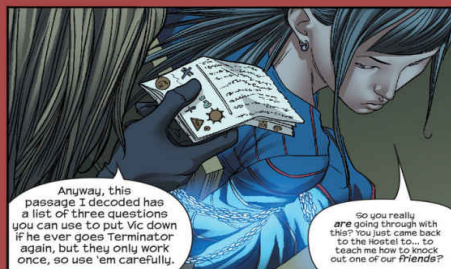


Well, I mean... I guess... let's see...

01100111011
0111101100100

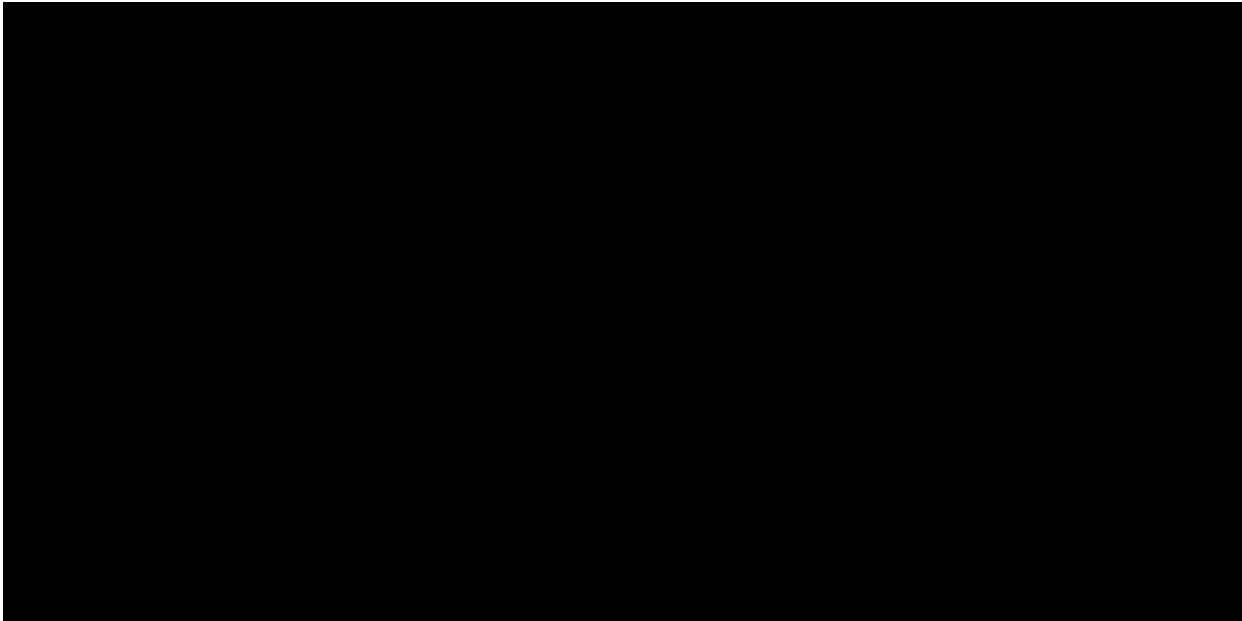






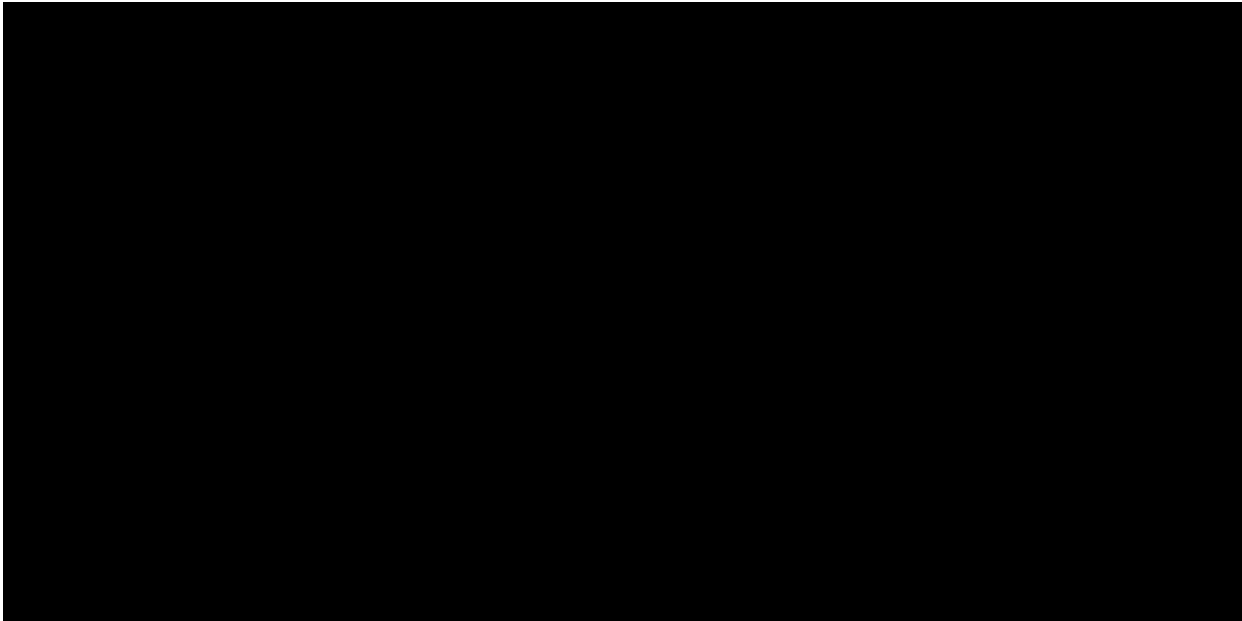
So you really are going through with this? You just came back to the hotel to... to teach me how to knock out one of our friends?

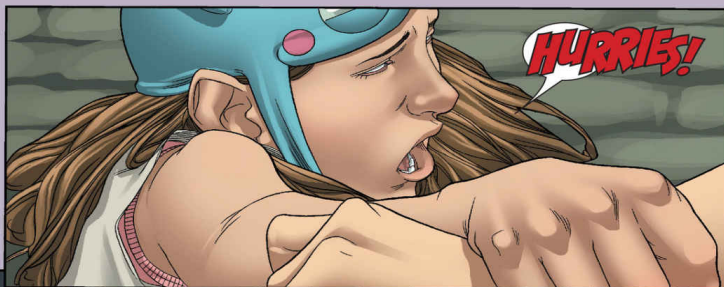




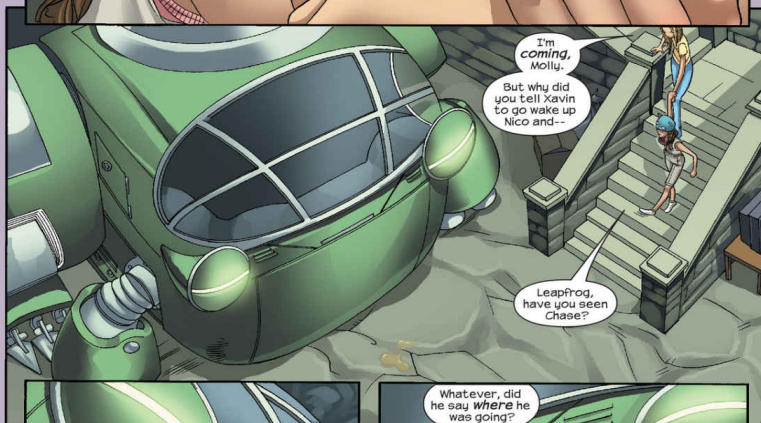








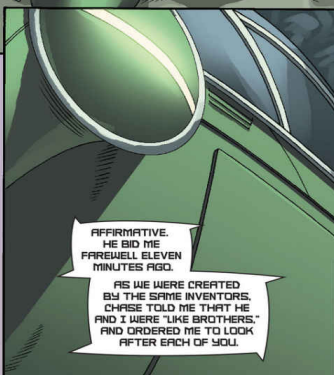
HURRIES!



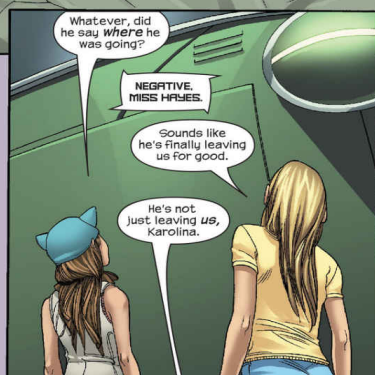
I'm coming, Molly.

But why did you tell Xavin to go wake up Nico and--

Leapfrog, have you seen Chase?



AFFIRMATIVE. HE BID ME FAREWELL ELEVEN MINUTES AGO.
AS WE WERE CREATED BY THE SAME INVENTORS, CHASE TOLD ME THAT HE AND I WERE "LIKE BROTHERS," AND ORDERED ME TO LOOK AFTER EACH OF YOU.



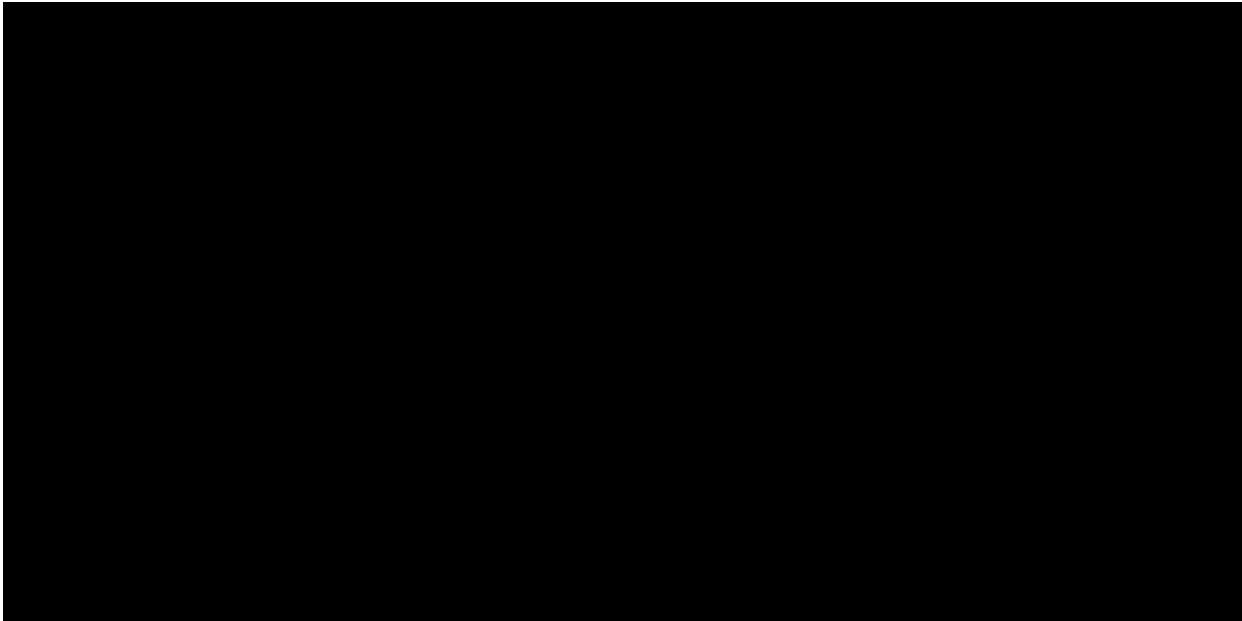
Whatever, did he say *where* he was going?

NEGATIVE, MISS HAJES.

Sounds like he's finally leaving us for good.

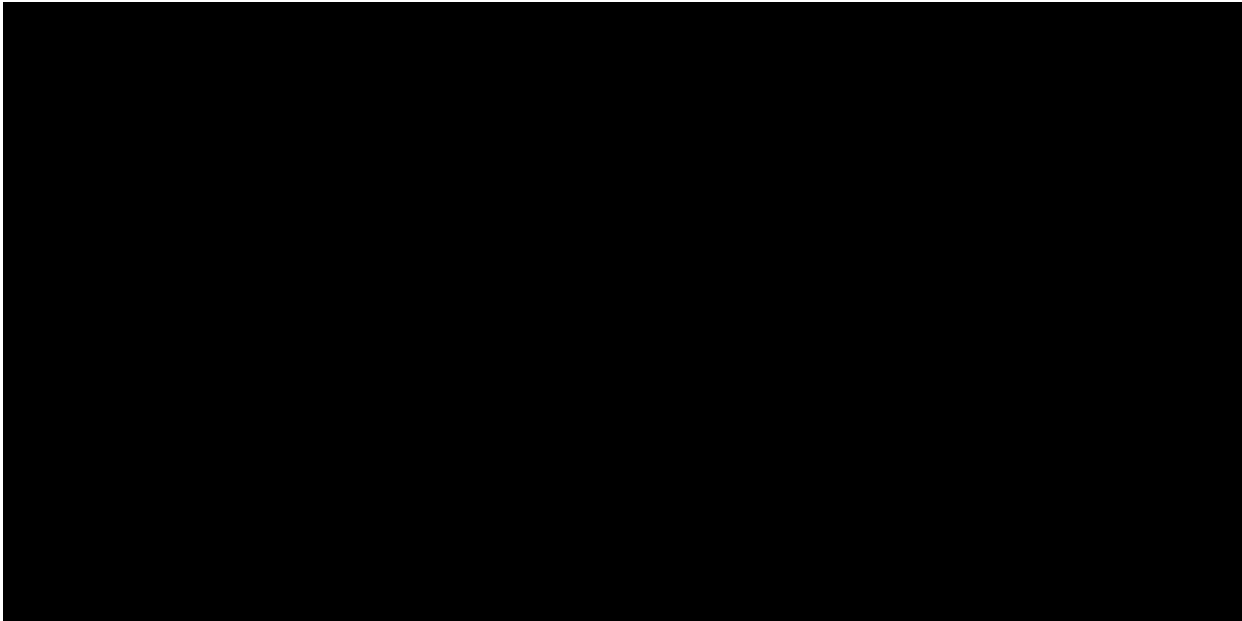
He's not just leaving *us*, Karolina.

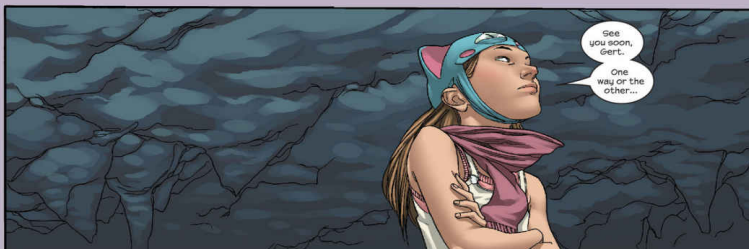
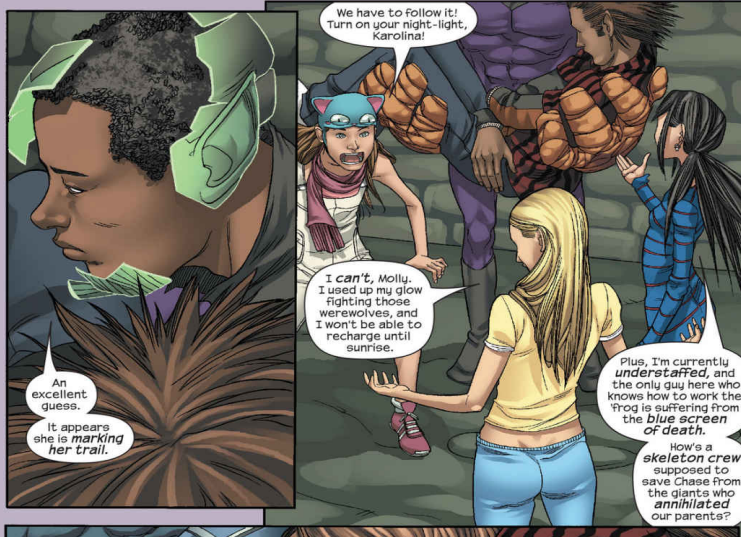




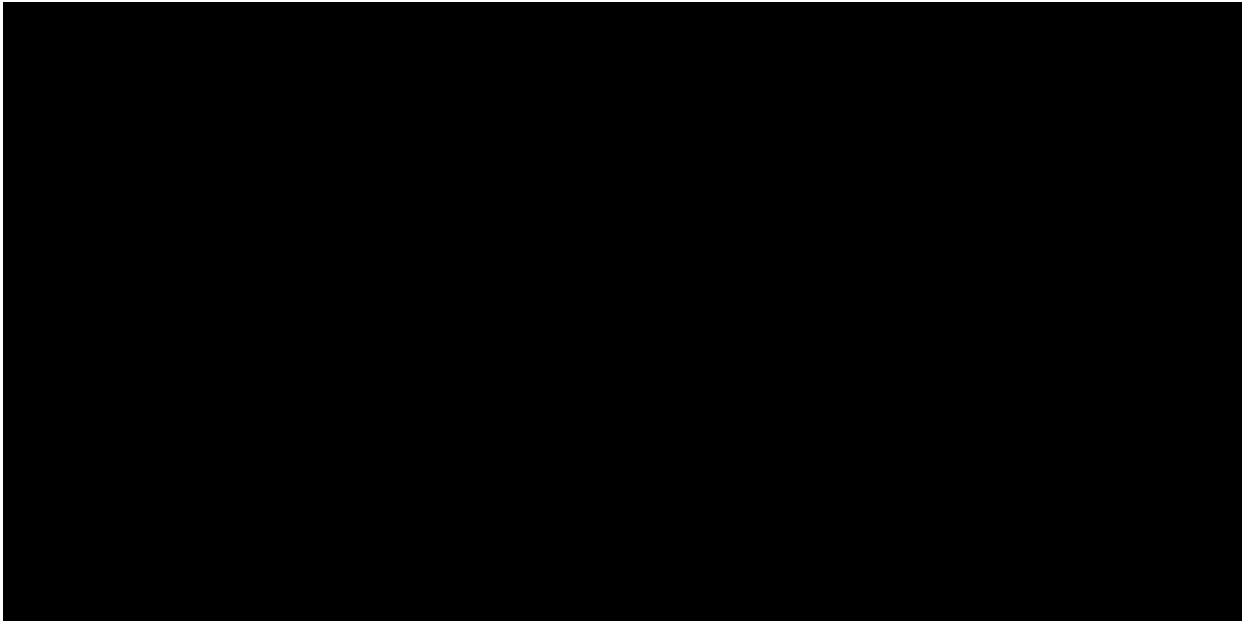






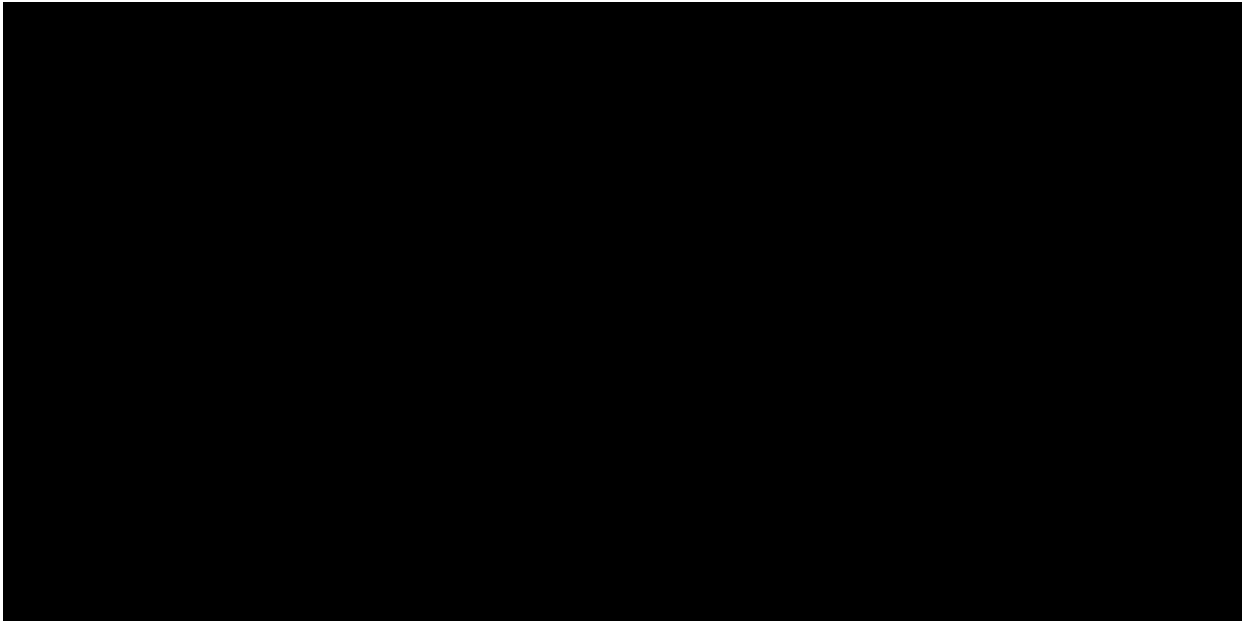








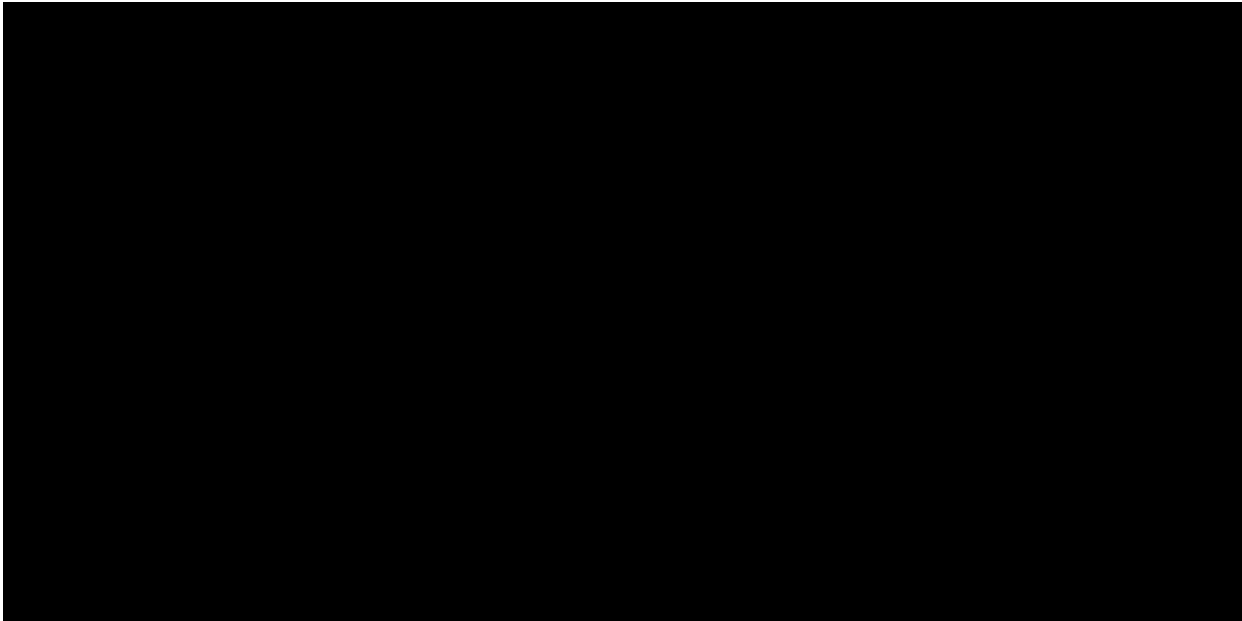






To Be Concluded...





STREET TEAM

To the ever-loving Street Team,

I don't know exactly what to say, so I'll say this: RUNAWAYS is the best comic ever. Ever ever. Better than WATCHMEN, better than MAUS, better than SANDMAN, better than anything. RUNAWAYS is the only comic I actually COLLECT (buying two copies of every issue: one for safekeeping and one for lending out, all the digests, and all the hardcovers) and I can say that I've never made a better investment. RUNAWAYS began towards the end of my sophomore year of high school, and as friendships came and went, relationships bloomed and fizzled, and years flew by, I knew that there were six people (sometimes seven, sometimes five) and a dinosaur that I could always turn to if things got too bad. I was there when they ran away and when they were betrayed (I called it at issue 8!). I was with them when they stopped running and when they ran again. And I found new friends with them as old ones were lost. These were not characters, these were people as real as the teens I went to school with every day. These were not plot lines, these were experiences that each person feels every day. These were not words on a page, these were the feelings that defined our generation. The RUNAWAYS creative team created a world that I wanted to go to every day, not just once a month.

And then they said they were leaving. Not everyone, mind you. Alex and Christina decided to stay! But Brian and Adrian were off to do better things (and what exactly will those be?), and the fates of a group of runaways was left undecided. The new team announcement of Joss Whedon and Michael Ryan literally made me cry and dance for joy, but there was still that bitter feeling that the people who defined my friends would be leaving them. Would Nico be as edgy without Adrian's unconventional pencils? Would Molly be as adorable without Brian's pen to guide her? What about Chase? Karolina? Victor? Xavin? Old Lace? And then it hit me:

If there's one thing RUNAWAYS has taught me, it is that parents are evil. Brian and Adrian are Runaways' parents. Therefore, these two leaving should not be construed as a negative, because by the transitive property, they are more than likely evil as well. So good riddance! Bring on Joss and Michael, and let's see if they can bring more love and passion to my favorite group of friends than their evil birth parents ever did. All I know is that as long as the Runaways are running, I'll be running with them.

Until my pride & joy stop living fast,
Oliver Sava

This is the first time that being called "evil" has made my day, Oliver, so thanks.

Dear Street Team:
I loved the latest arc of RUNAWAYS. The art was something new but it fit really well. All the characters got their own bit of screen time and was well written. But my favorite part of all was Molly getting the caffeine burst. I would make it one of my top 3 Molly moments and she is

THE HOT SEAT

ARE YOUR PARENTS EVIL?

BRIAN: Though I named Alex's parents after my own, Geoffrey and Catherine Vaughan are pretty much the opposite of evil... unless that's all just an act.

ADRIAN: They could be reading this, so I'm gonna go with a "no."

CRAIG: Well my dad's name is Xavier and he runs the Illuminati. ILLUMINATI!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!
<gets dragged off into the loony bin>

CHRISTINA: From what I hear... I'm lucky I survived my childhood. Good thing I've never been innocent!!

RANDY: My dad voted for Bush, does that count?

DANIEL: If it means I get to ride around in a Leapfrog with a telepathic dinosaur, I sure hope my parents are evil!

NICK: I don't think so, although my dad does sing a song about pumpkin pie and punching people in the eye on Thanksgiving.

my favorite character in all of comics. Ranks right up there with retailiating when Xavin wrecked her cereal and when she tried to reinstate her nickname as Princess Powerful. I look forward to this next arc even though it will be the last for the series creators. Welcome to the new writer and artist and all the best to you BKV and Adrian. I am sure your next work will be going on the pull list of my LCS!

SpiderPete

Much appreciated, SP. The great Mike Norton really made that "caffeine injection" moment shine, huh?

Dear RUNAWAYS Writing Crew,

As a devilishly handsome autobot, does Victor Mancha have a soul? And if so, is it a tasty innocent Gibborin preferred soul of yummy sacrificial potential?

Marissa L.
from UCLA

Excellent question, Marissa. Stay tuned...

Dear Marvel:

The end to RUNAWAYS #22 was chilling in its implications. If Chase is thinking that Nico being erased from existence means that Gert will never be angry with him because Nico kissed him, I'd like him to keep two things in mind:

1. What happened to Sunnydale when Cordelia wished (in front of Anyanka), that Buffy had never come there, on BUFFY THE VAMPIRE SLAYER.

2. Being friends with Nico has had an impact on his life and those of his friends, including Gert. What will they all be like if they've never known Nico Minoru?

Nice reference to W.W. [William Wyman] Jacobs' "The Monkey's Paw", by the way. It showed that Chase has been giving the matter some thought, but not enough.

Ann Nichols
Sierra Vista, AZ

Thanks, Ann! I'll be sure to pass along your concerns to young Mister Stein.

Street Team,
I just wanted to write to thank you for putting out such a great book. RUNAWAYS is my favourite book out there at the moment. It was one of the first series I picked up when I started reading comics and I enjoy it as much now as I did then. As well as having one of the best opening splash pages I've ever seen (who doesn't love hilariously dressed werewolves?), issue 22's ending left me stunned. It will be a shame to see BKV and Adrian leave, but you can't go wrong with Whedon.

Thanks,
Paul O'Regan
Cork

Yeah, Adrian is pretty much the master of design and... wait, did you say Joss Whedon? The guy who wrote ROSEANNE? Crap, I told Marvel I wanted Wil Wheaton, beloved STAR TREK child star and celebrity blogger! Somebody's gonna get fired for this...

Keep running (lame Wil Wheaton jokes into the ground),
BKV

NEXT ISSUE:



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Assistant Editor

Nick Lowe
Editor

Joe Quesada
Chief

E-MAIL: Xoffice@marvel.com (MARK EMAIL "OKAY TO PRINT")

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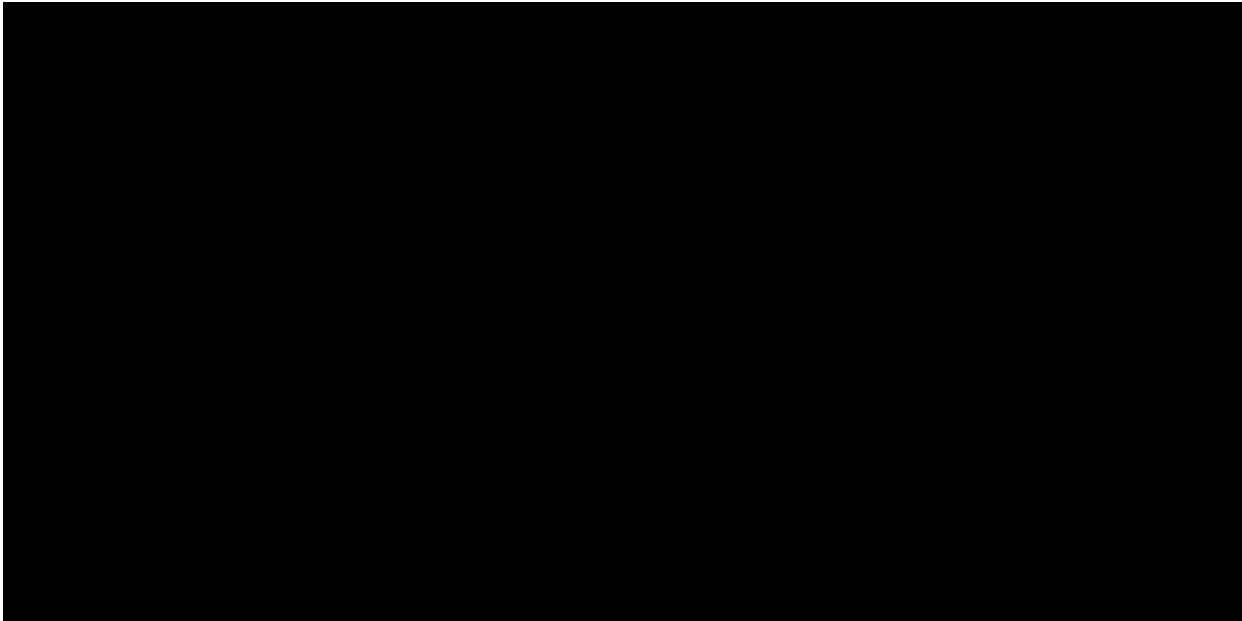
VAUGHAN
ALPHONA
YEUNG
STRAIN

RUNAWAYS



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THE RUNAWAYS



NICO MINORU
Daughter of
Dark Wizards



CHASE STEIN
Son of
Mad Scientists



MOLLY HAYES
Daughter of
Evil Mutants



VICTOR MANCHA
Son of a
Killer Robot



KAROLINA DEAN
Daughter of
Alien Invaders



XAVIN
Child of
Shape-shifting
Skrull Warriors



OLD LACE
Genetically
Engineered
Dinosaur

PREVIOUSLY IN RUNAWAYS:

At some point in their lives, all kids think they have the most evil parents in the world, but Nico Minoru and her friends really did.

Discovering that they were the children of a group of super-villains known as The Pride, the teenagers stole weapons and resources from these criminals, before running away from home and eventually defeating their parents. But that was just the beginning. Together, the teenage runaways now hope to atone for their parents' crimes by taking on the new threats trying to fill The Pride's void.

After a ferocious battle with a temporally displaced Geoffrey Wilder, Gert Yorkes died in the arms of her boyfriend. With her final breath, she "willed" control of her telepathic dinosaur to Chase Stein, before the devastated young man stole a decoder ring and Wilder's copy of the Abstract. Chase soon visits the Gibborim, mythical giants who gave the Runaways' parents their power, and learns that Gert can be resurrected if Chase sacrifices an innocent soul. Returning to the Hostel one last time, Chase steals Nico's powerful Staff of One, incapacitates the cyborg Victor, and decides who he's going to sacrifice... *himself*.

LIVE FAST

The End

Brian K. Vaughan
Writer

Adrian Alphona
Penciler

Craig Yeung
Inker

Christina Strain
Colorist

Kate Levin
Production

C.B. Cebulski &
MacKenzie Cadenhead
Special Thanks

Virtual Calligraphy's
Randy Gentile
Letterer

Joe Quesada
Chief

Jo Chen
Cover Artist

Daniel Ketchum
Assistant Editor

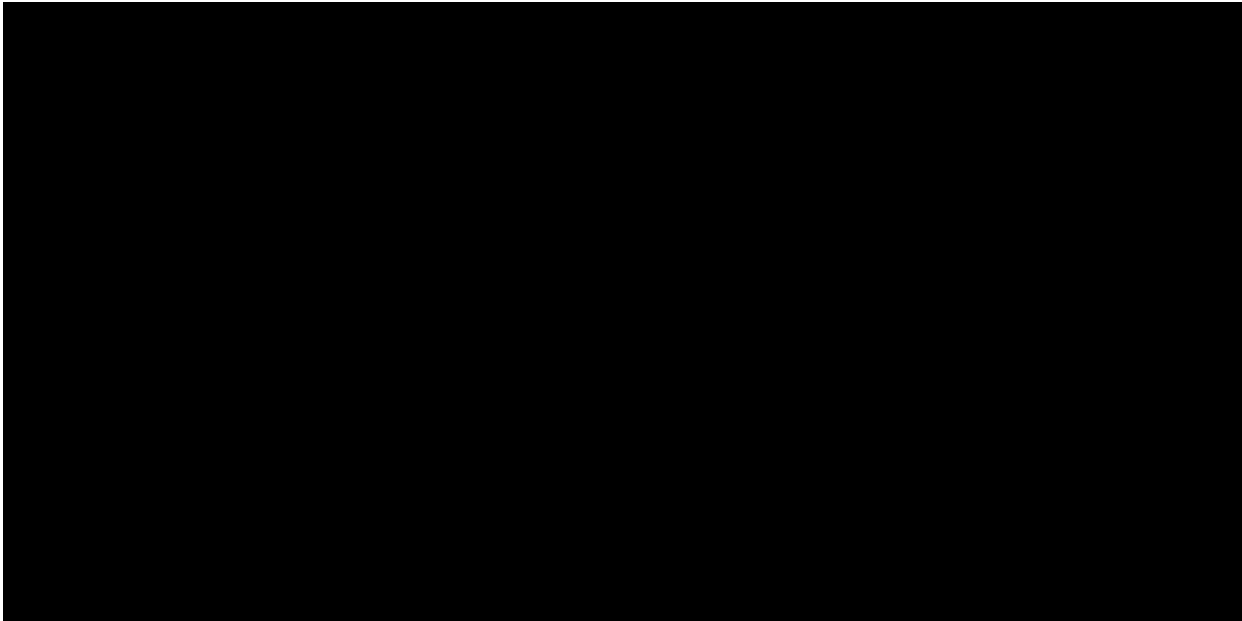
Nick Lowe
Editor

RUNAWAYS created by Vaughan & Alphona

Dan Buckley
Publisher

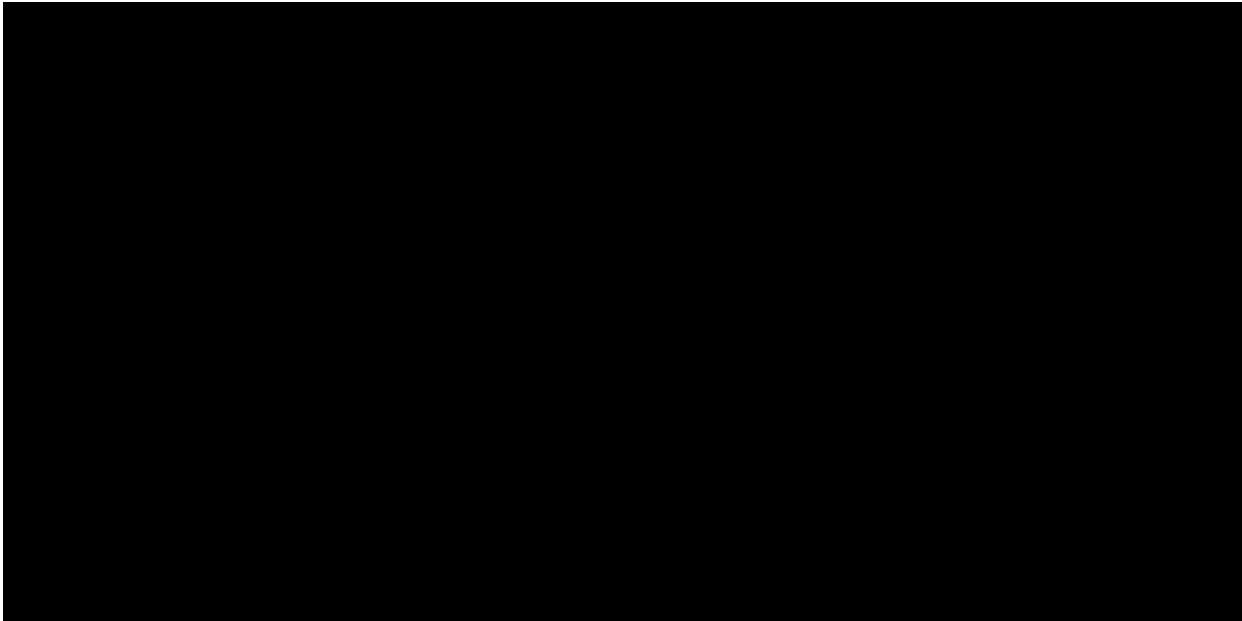
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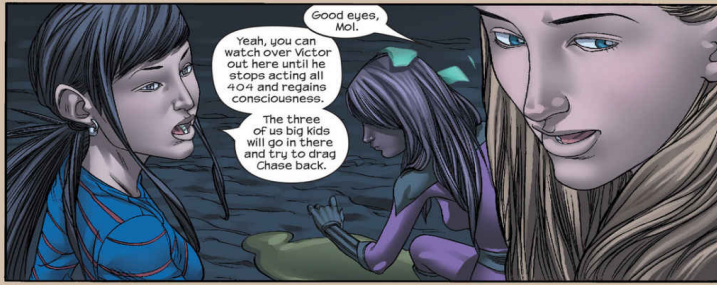




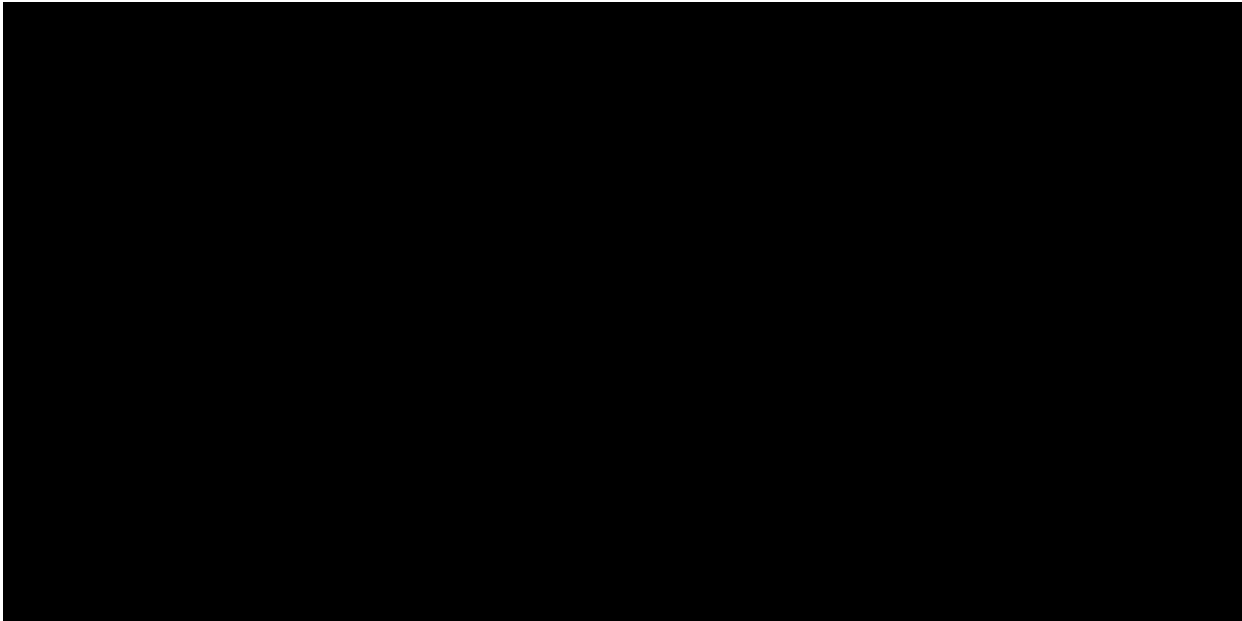






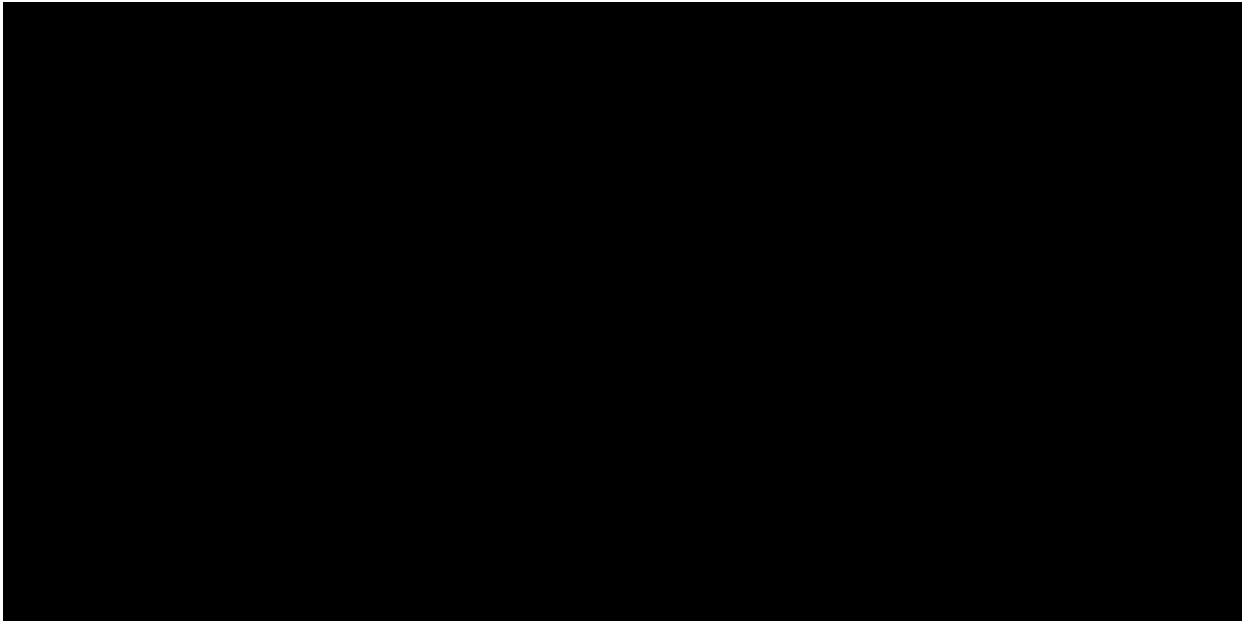






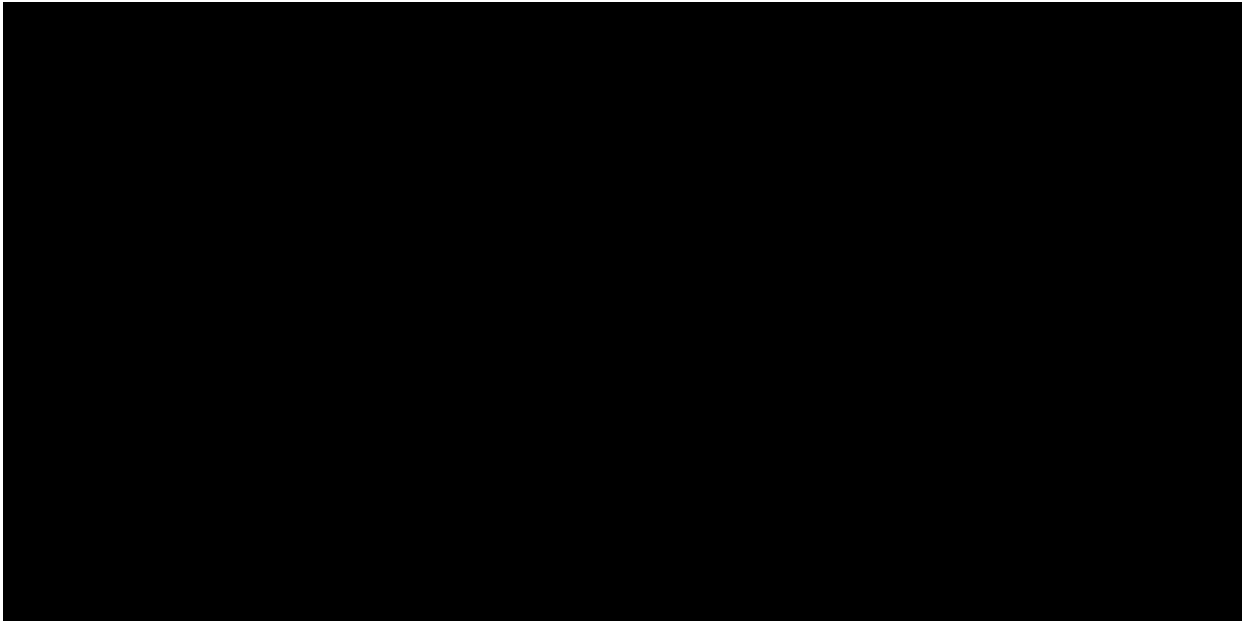


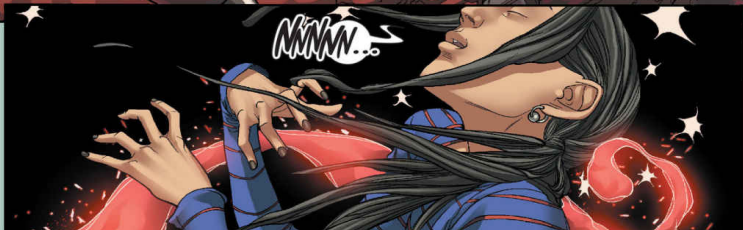




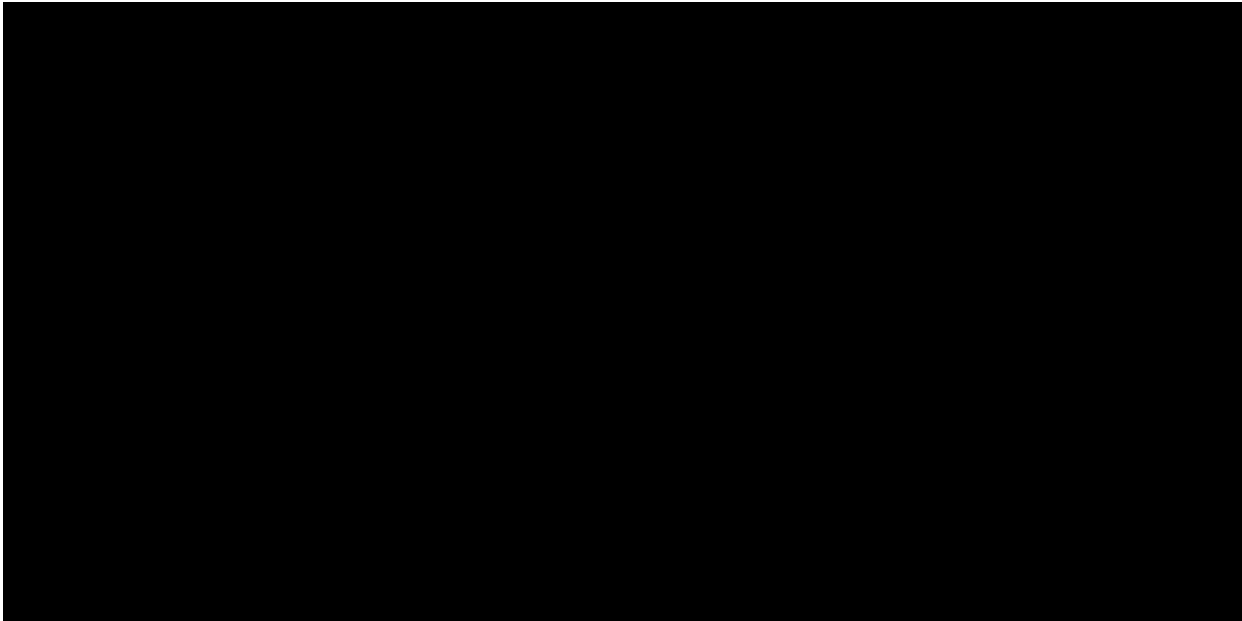


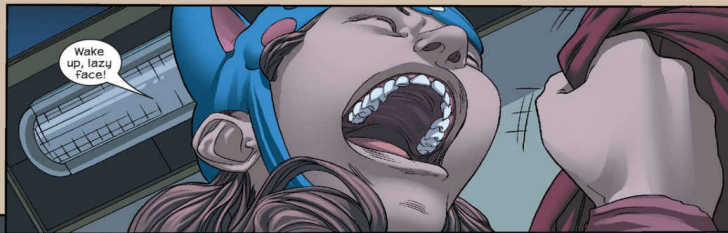






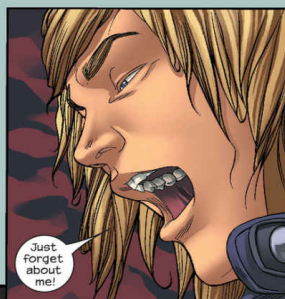




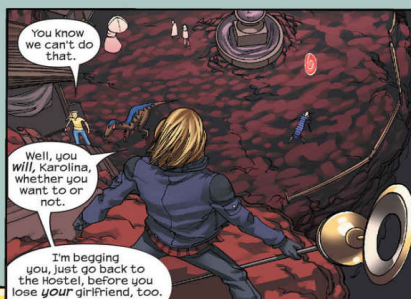








Just forget about me!



You know we can't do that.

Well, you *will*, Karolina, whether you want to or not.

I'm begging you, just go back to the Hostel, before you lose *your* girlfriend, too.



UNCLEAN WRETCH! EARTH IS A SACRED TEMPLE! WHAT GIVES AN OUTSIDER LIKE *YOU* THE RIGHT TO SULLY OUR HOLY FATHER'S PLANET?

I'm afraid your words are lost on me. Where I come from, we find religion obscenely boring.



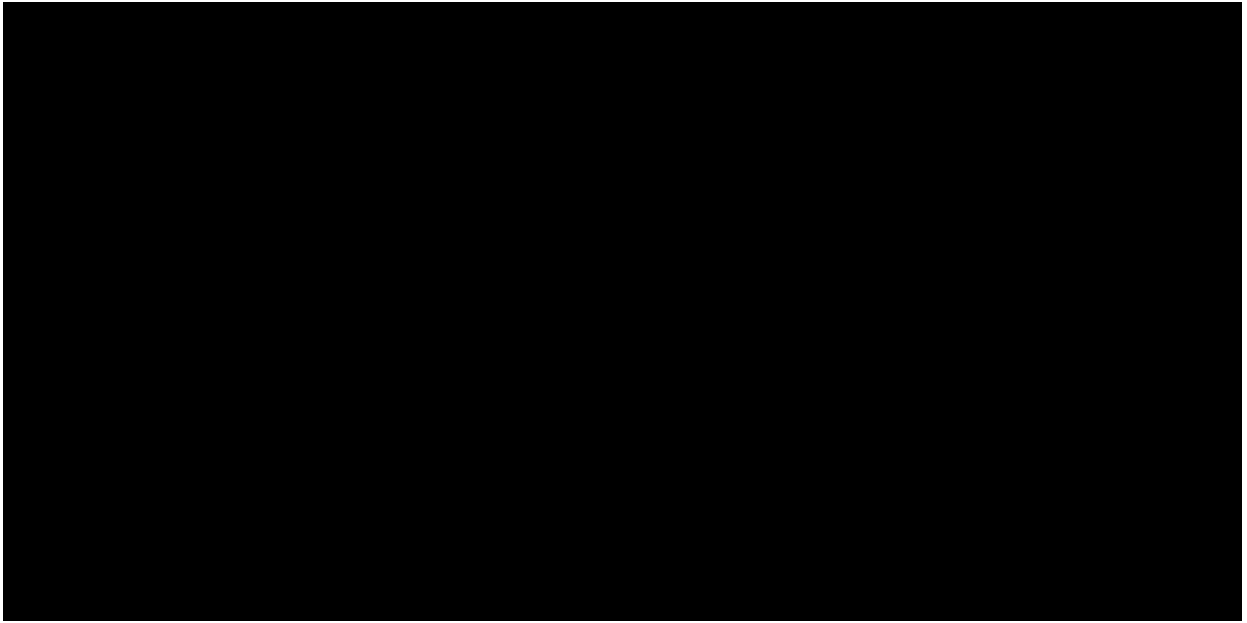
THEN YOU SHALL KNOW HOW IT FEELS TO *TRULY* BURN.











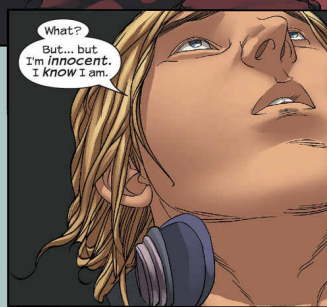


Stop it!
You hurt anyone
else and our
deal is off!

WE NEED
OUR OFFERING
NOW, CHASE
STEIN.

It's me,
all right! I'm
giving you
my soul!

THAT IS
UNACCEPTABLE.



What?
But... but
I'm innocent.
I know I am.



PERHAPS, BUT YOU WOULD
NO LONGER BE IF YOU
DELIBERATELY CHOSE TO
FORFEIT YOUR OWN
LIFE.

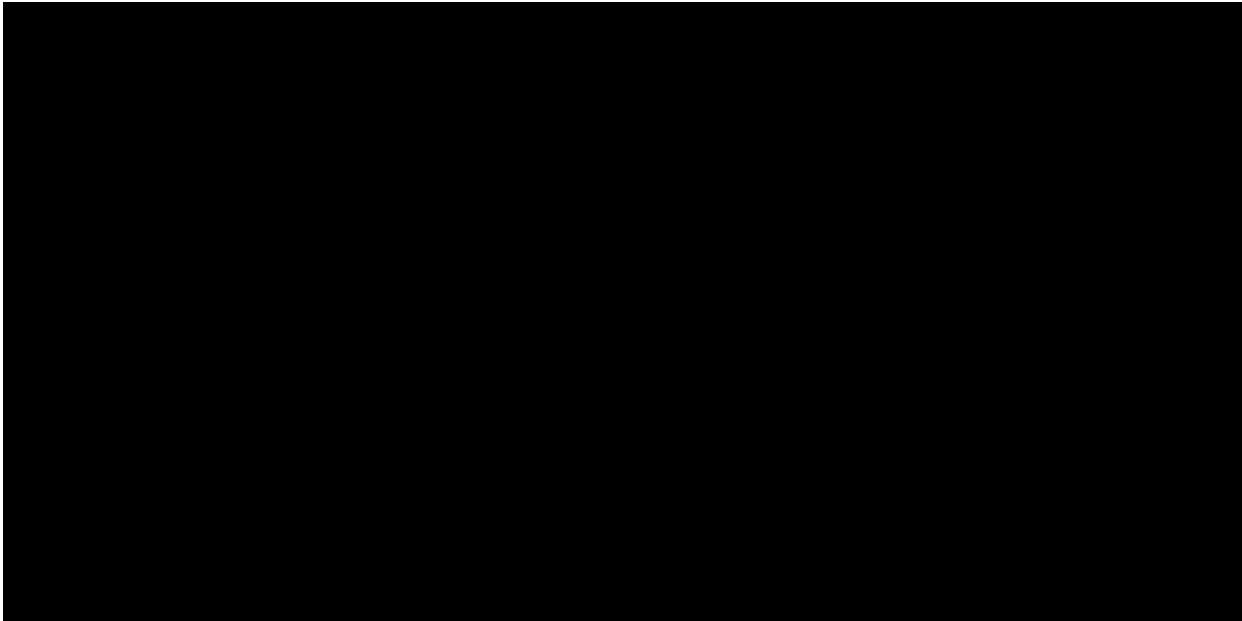
OUR SACRIFICE MUST BE
AN UNWILLING PARTICIPANT
IN ORDER FOR THEIR BLOOD
TO NOURISH THE
GIBBORIM...

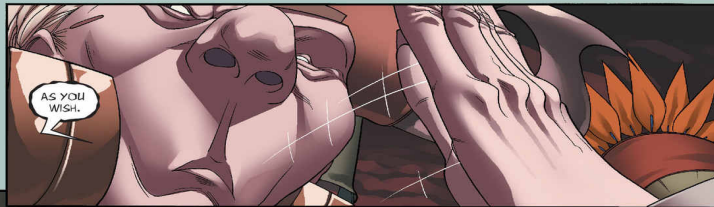


...A SACRIFICE
LIKE THE MINORU
GIRL.

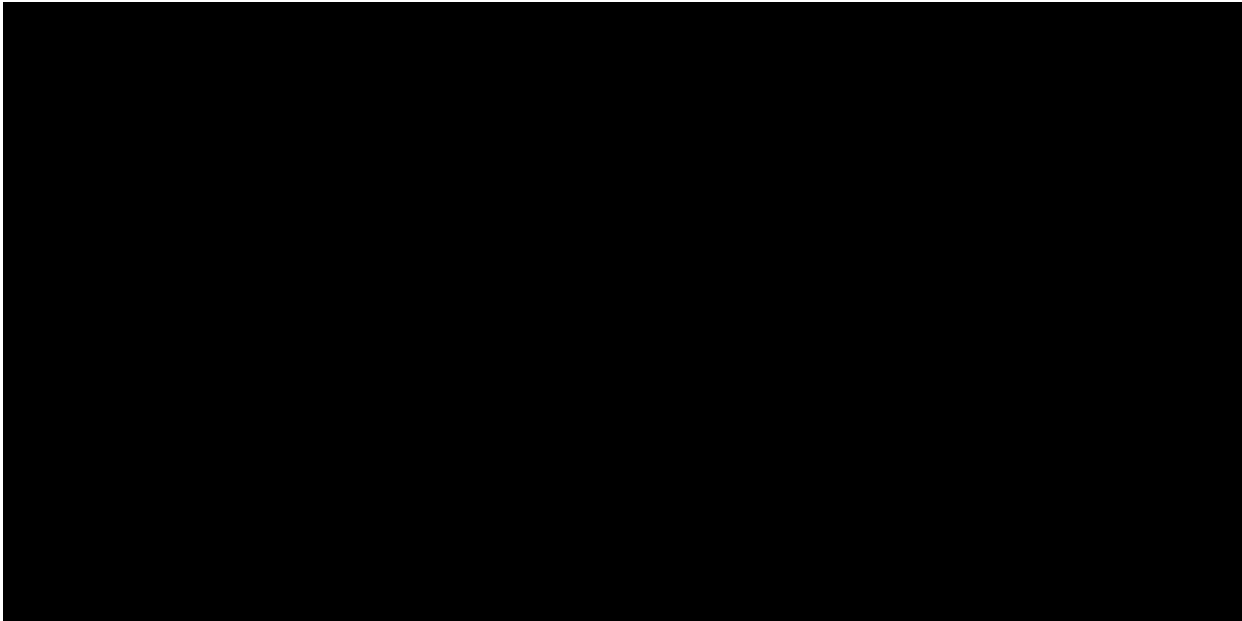
Over
my dead
#**%*ing
body.





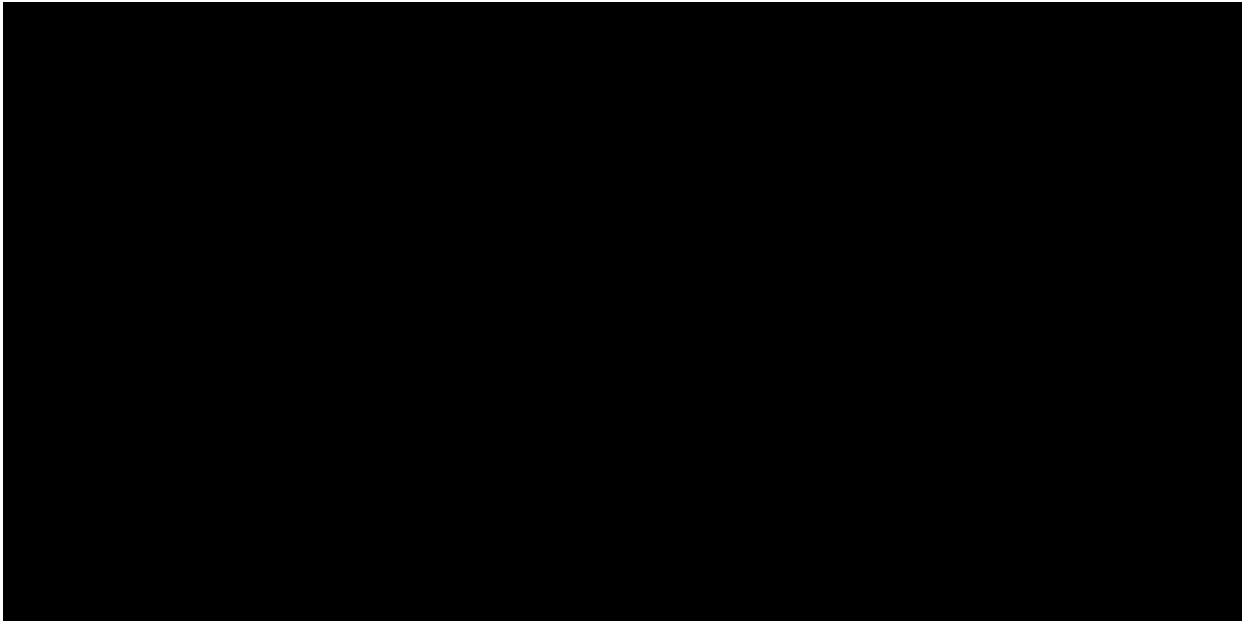






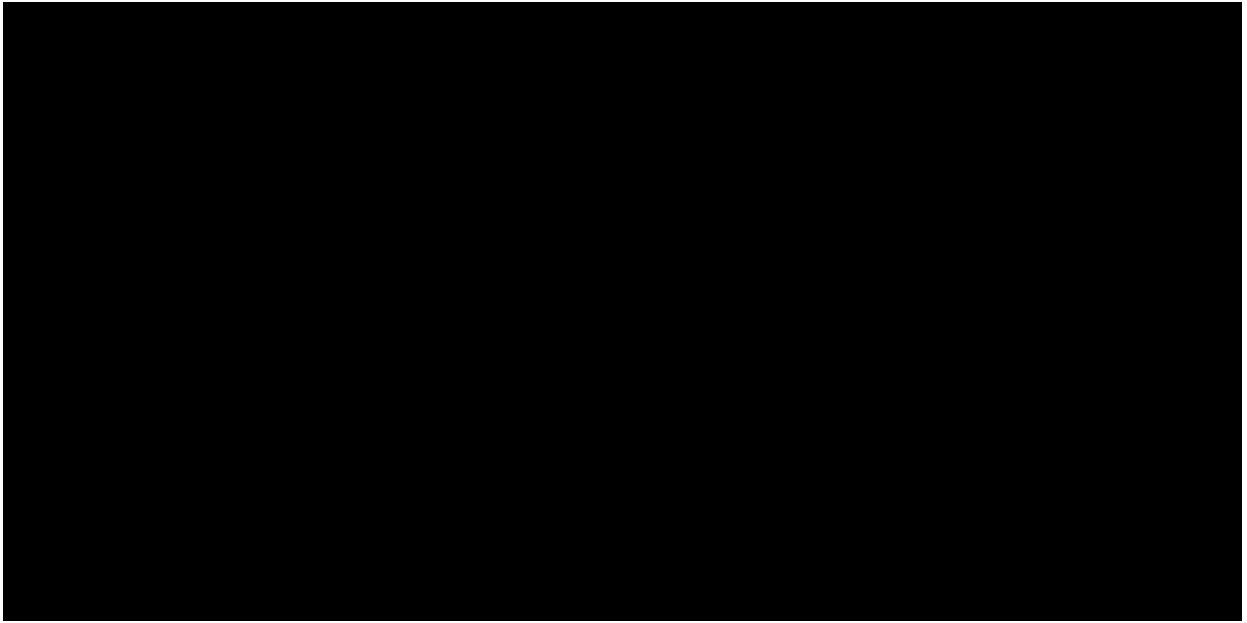






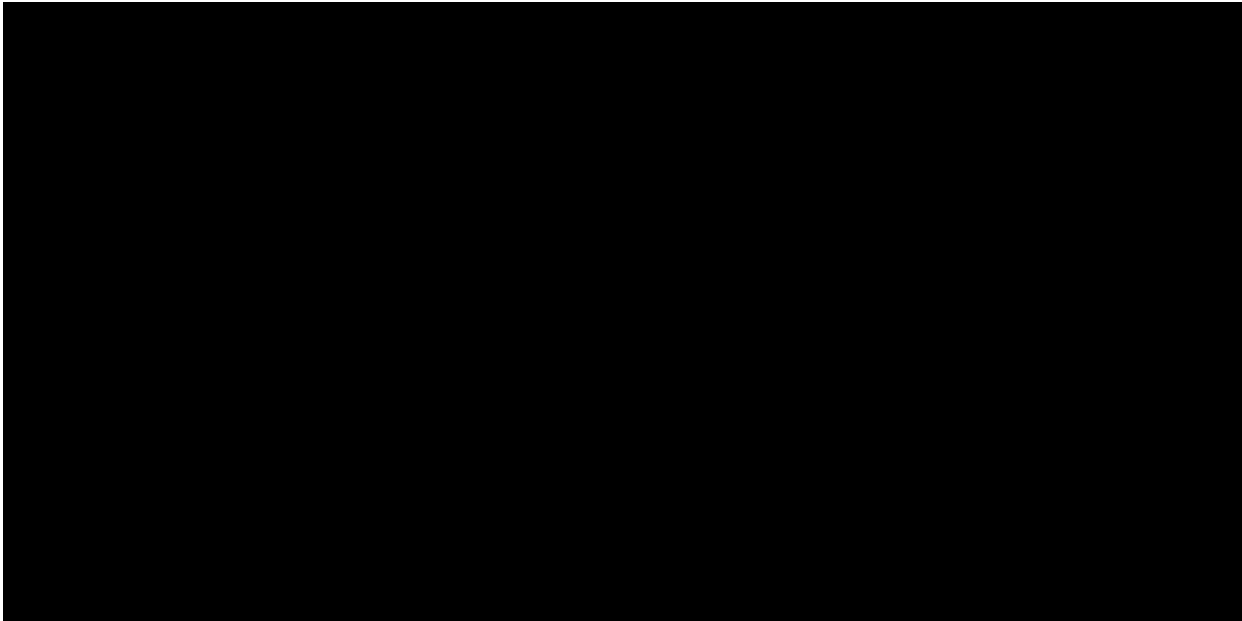


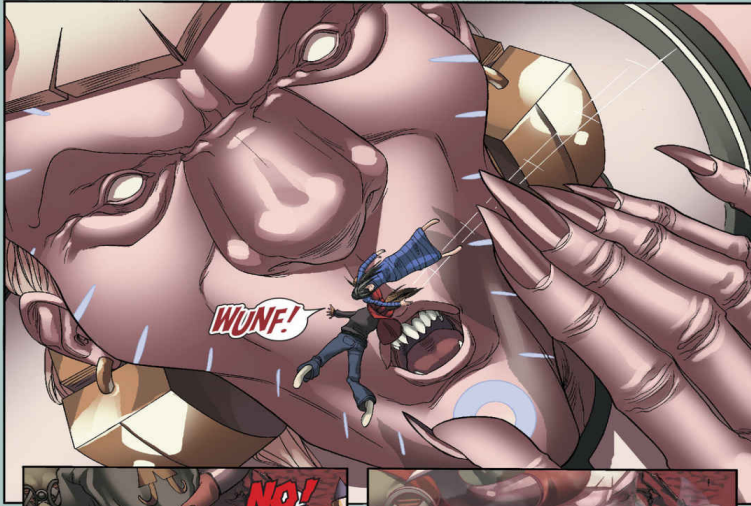










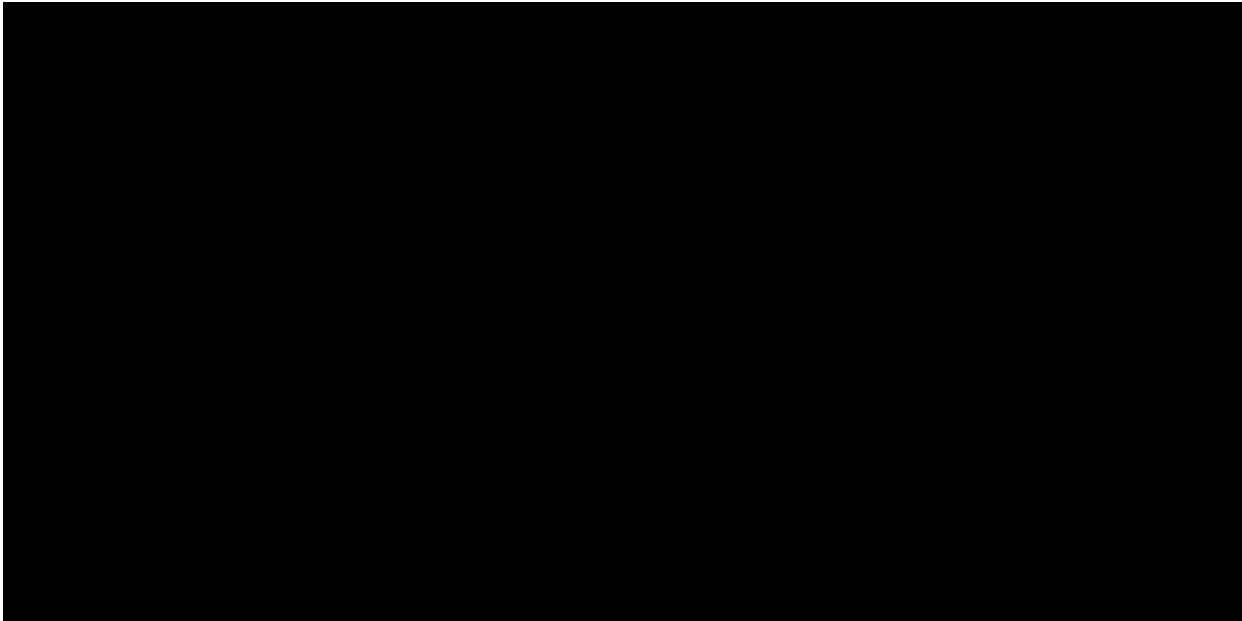


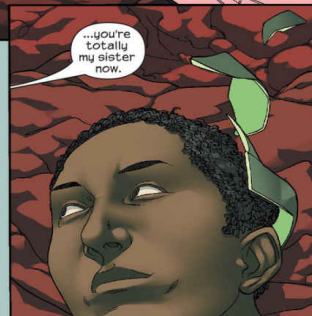




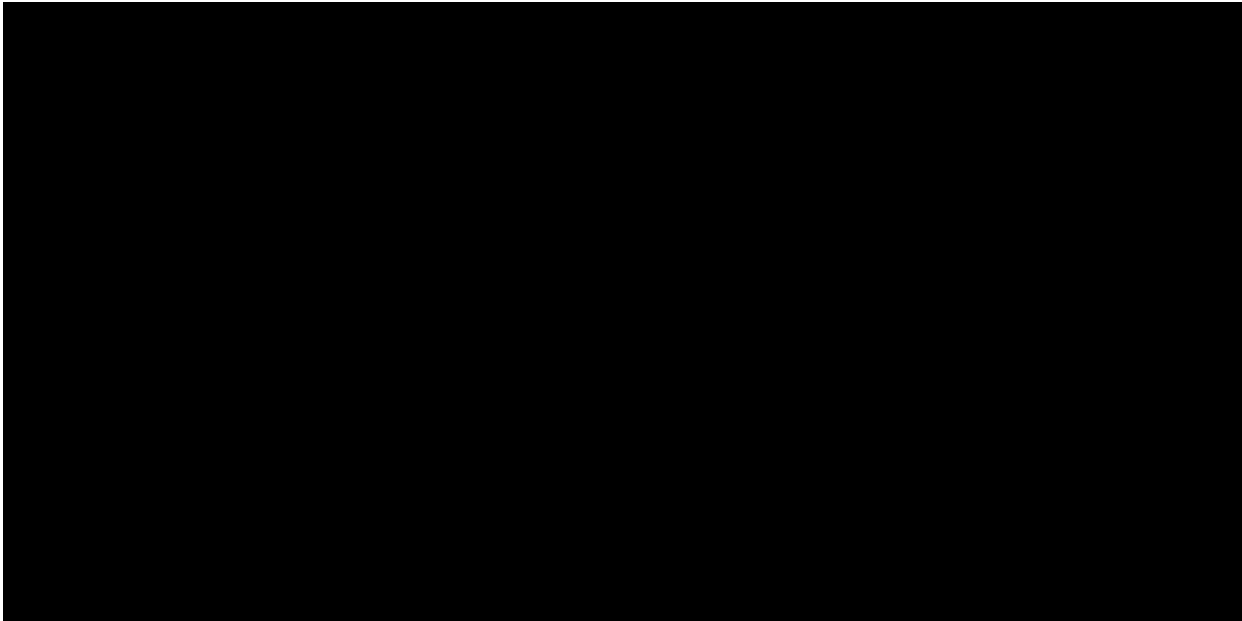


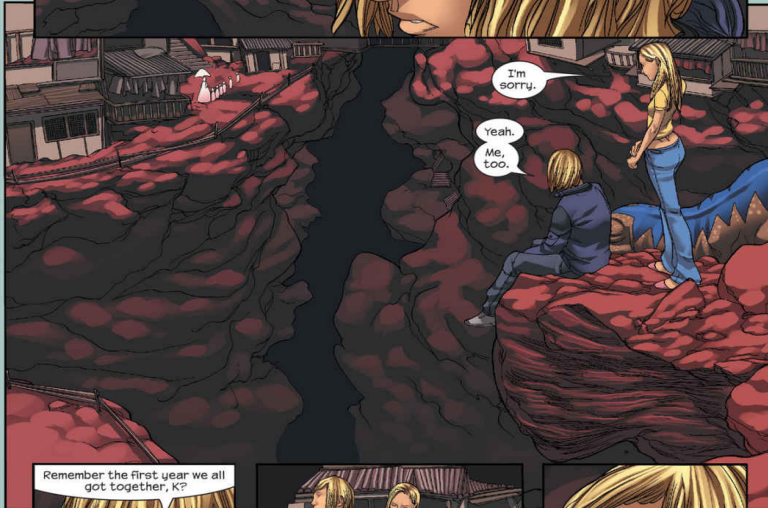








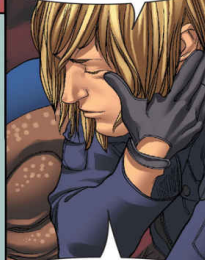




I'm sorry.

Yeah. Me, too.

Remember the first year we all got together, K?



When we hid in Alex's basement and watched R-rated movies on cable, and Gert told us what all the dirty jokes meant, even though she was wrong half the time?



Why can't it still be like that? How come we didn't get to have crazy-long childhoods like every other spoiled brat in this country?

Hm. What do you think *Gert* wanted?

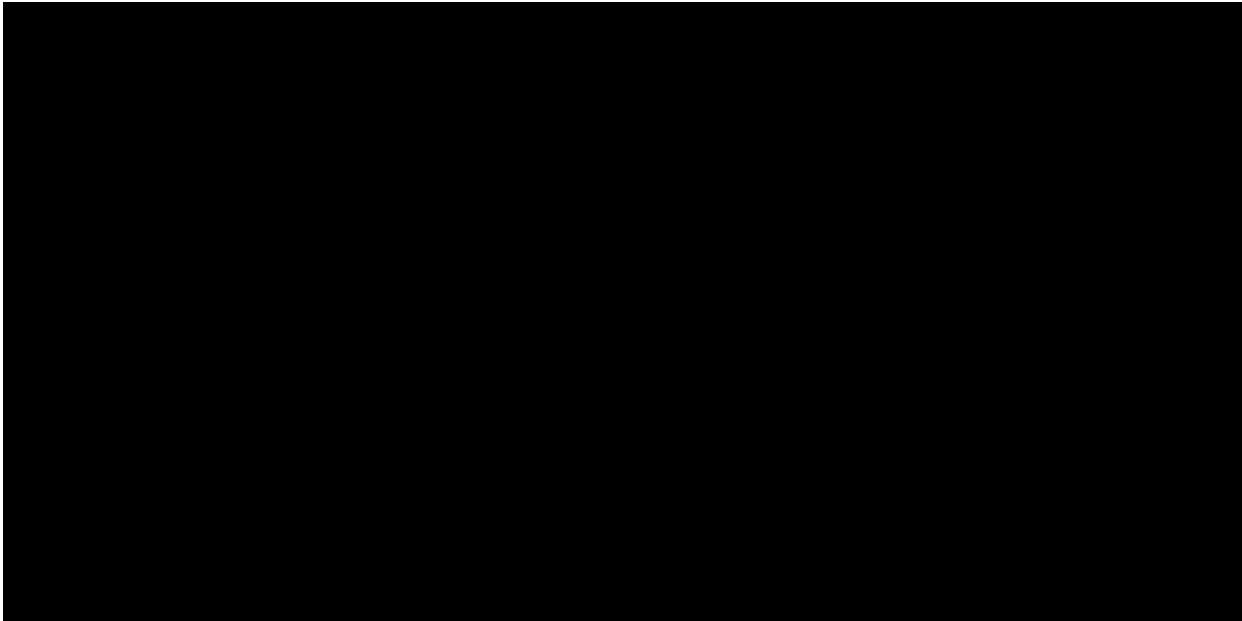
Gert used to say that kids spend their lives wanting to be adults, and adults spend their lives wanting to be kids.

I don't know.



She just spent her life living.

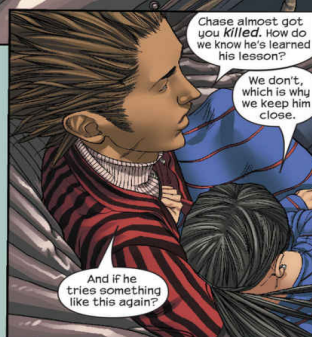






So he stays on the team?
Even though he's a *grownup* now?

He's *growing* up, Victor. There's a difference.



Chase almost got you *killed*. How do we know he's learned his lesson?

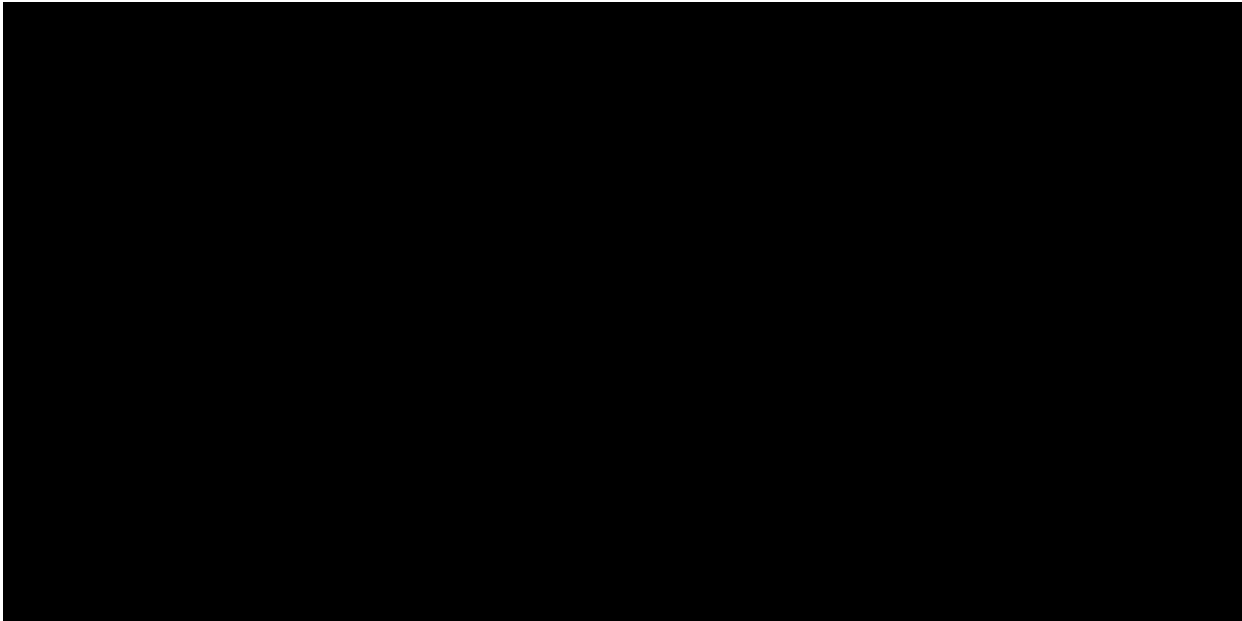
We don't, which is why we keep him close.

And if he tries something like this again?



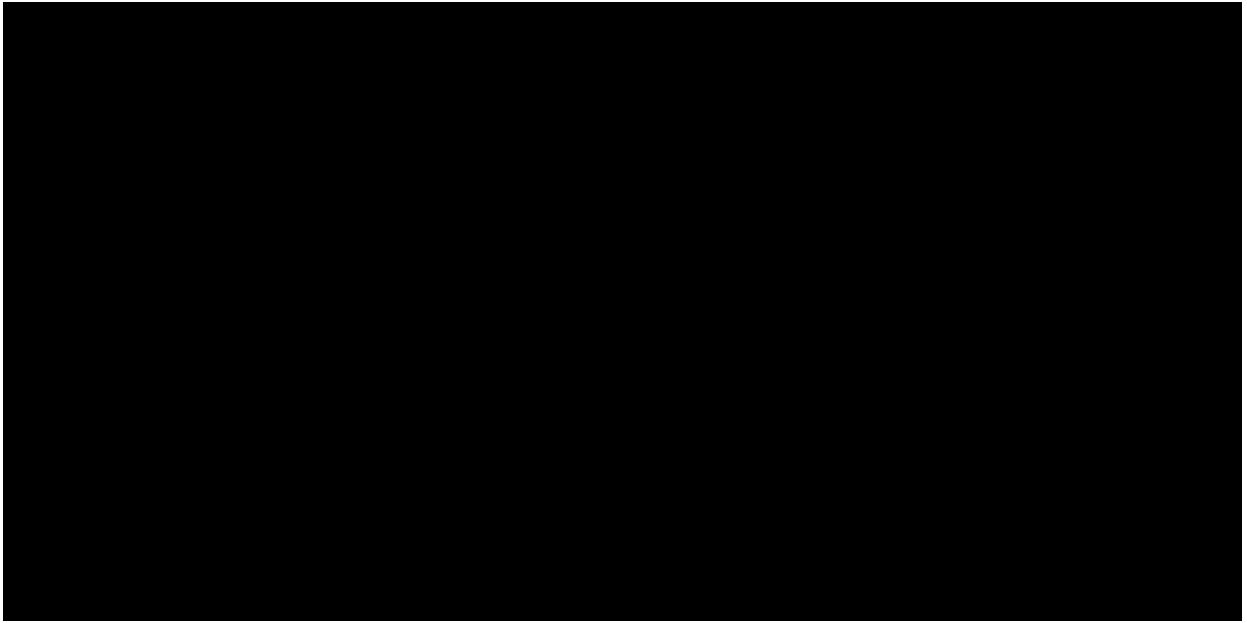
We rip his damn heart out.





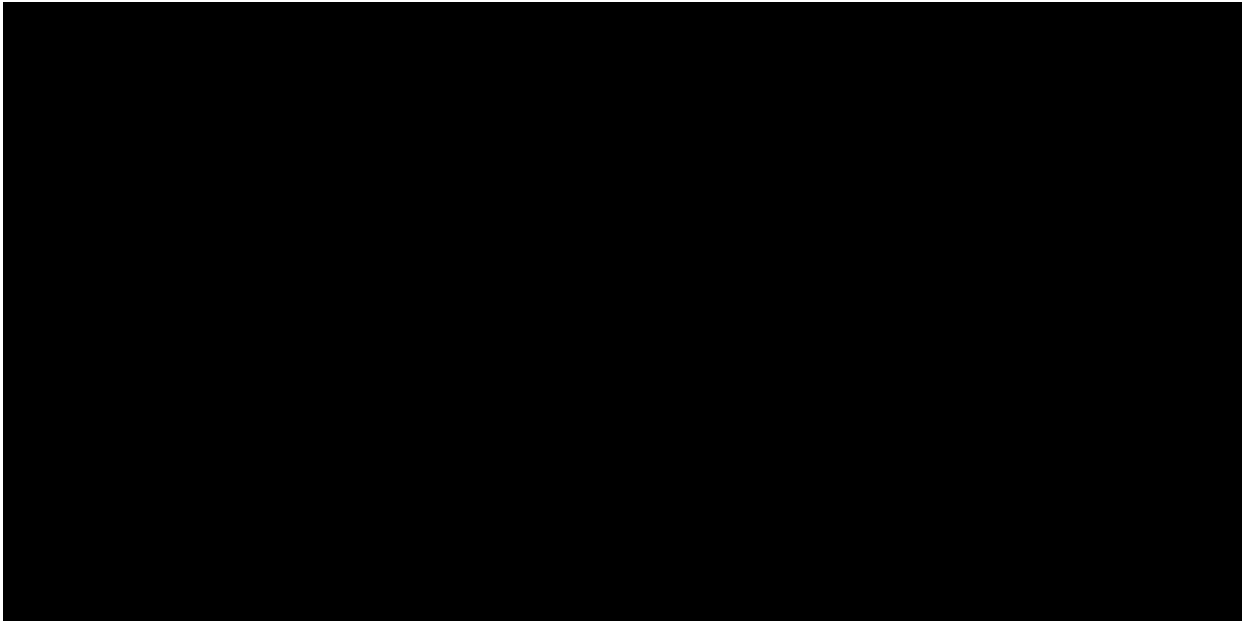


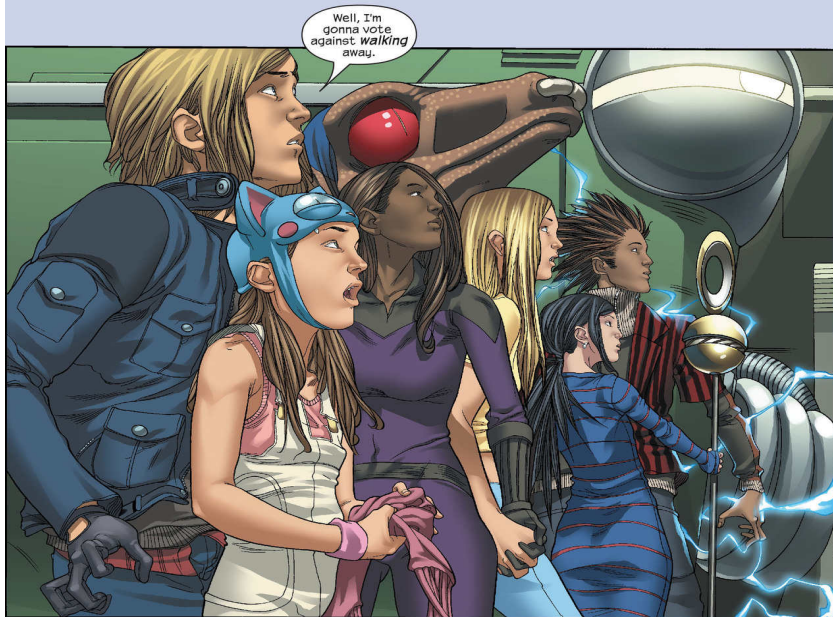




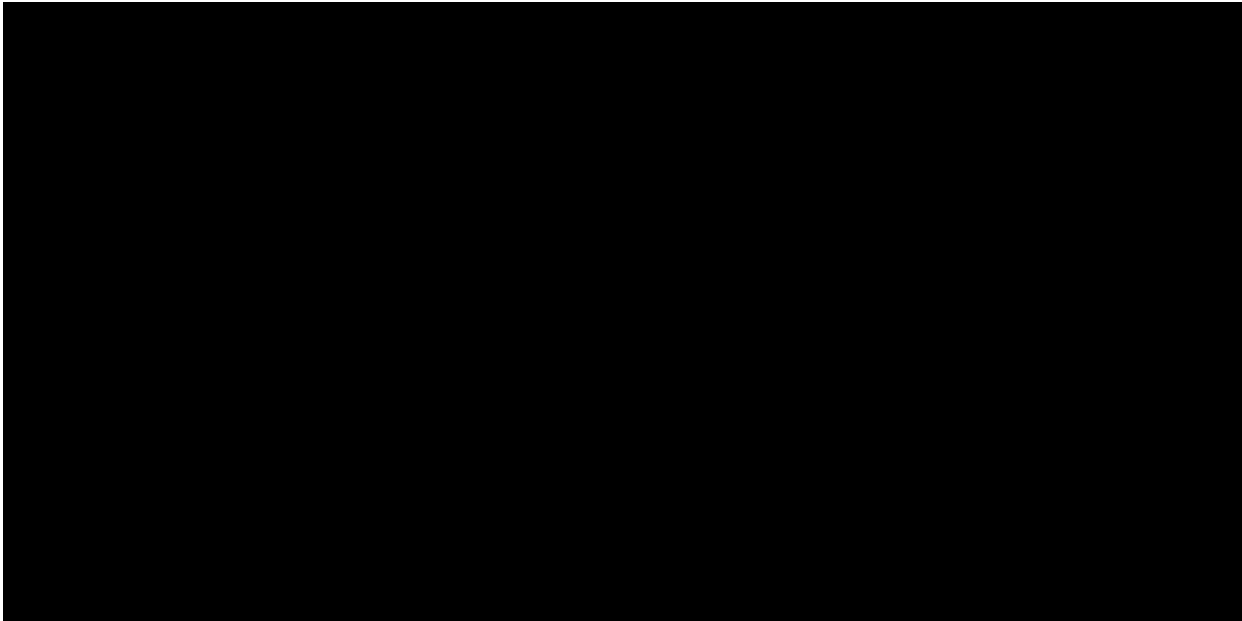


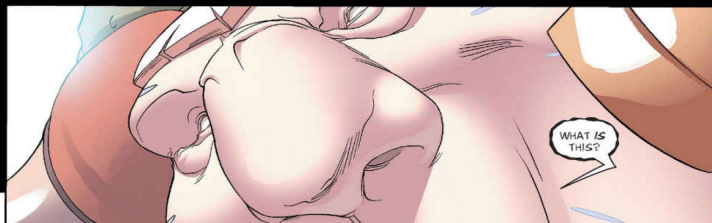






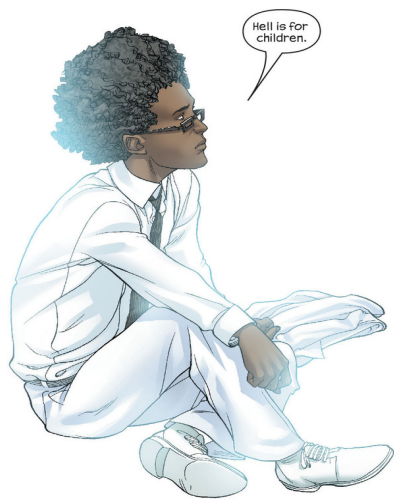






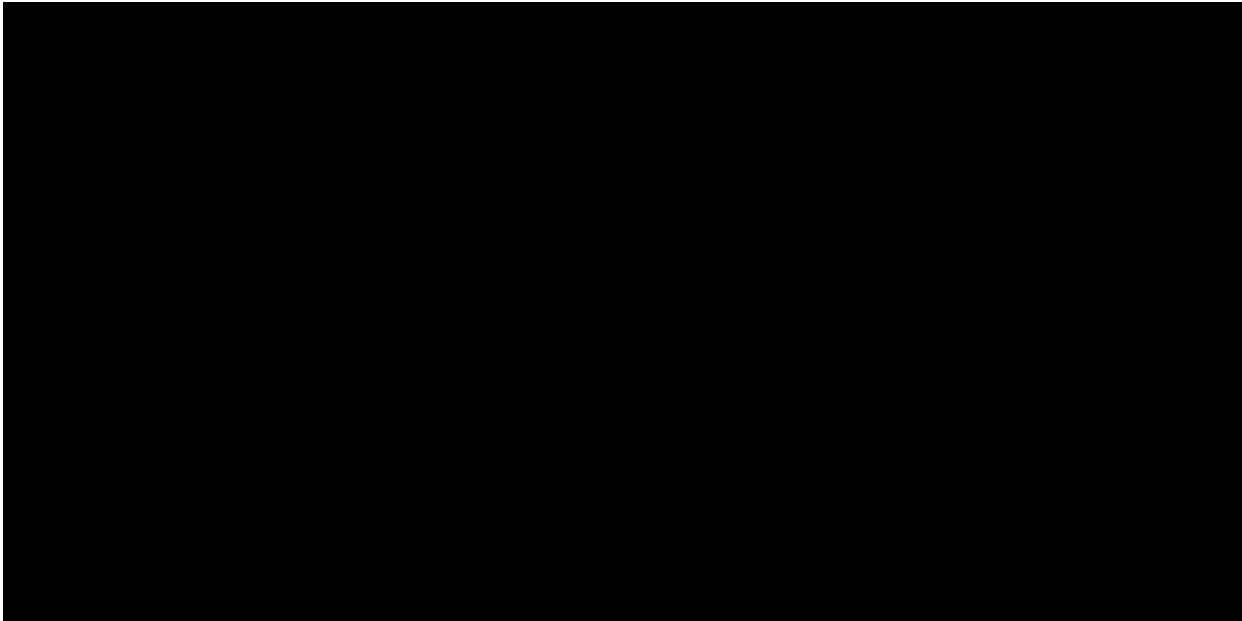






Hell is for
children.





STREET TEAM

WHERE DO YOU SEE THE RUNAWAYS IN 10 YEARS?

BRIAN: In ten years, a perpetually 12-year-old Molly will be leading an entirely new group of Runaways, in adventures written and drawn by two young creators who loved the book way back in 2007.

ADRIAN: I like Craig's approach to this question and answered in the form of a mock solicit blurb:

"Four months after Glorious Leader Schwarzenheimer declares war on any country with more than a bucket of oil, the Runaways -- whose number now consists of veteran Molly, a mischievous trio of half-Mexican/half-Japanese robots, an unpredictable Indian fellow named Raj from down the street, Wolverine, a beached whale, that big-headed old lady from issue 13, and maybe a Security Daemon in search of the meaning of life -- now find themselves in the midst of a civil war. But where does Captain North-American-Union stand? The Runaways will soon find out!

The giant-sized issue will be the first comic written and drawn by ROBOTS!!

Christina will still be on colors."

CRAIG: Ten years from now the race of beings known as *Homo superior* has taken over the world and rules it with an iron fist. Those that oppose them are unceremoniously executed whether they are mutants, aliens, humans or dinosaurs. A runaway team of rebels named "Y Generation," led by Molly Hayes, stands defiant against

THE HOT SEAT

this new regime to bring freedom back to the world. Join us for this action-packed, double-sized 150th issue of RUNAWAYS as Molly and her runaways face off against an old nemesis from the original team! Rollback Y2K price of only \$2.99.

CHRISTINA: At the rate we're going, they'll all be dead, except for Molly. RUNAWAYS will become a new book all about Molly and her sidekick Wolverine, called "PRINCESS POWERFUL."

And I'll be coloring it. :D

RANDY: Ten years from now the Runaways will be a group of ragtag letterers on the run from 20-balloon pages and sound effects like BATHROOM!! Will they escape? And if so, where will they go? And if they keep running who will decide if "Boom!" is spelled with two "oo's or three...or more...and if it is more, how many are too many? Why is "klack!" spelled with a "k" instead of a "c"? Until these questions are answered, the Runaways will keep on running...

DANIEL: NEW RUNAWAYS #187. Telepathic dinosaur in space?! When our favorite band of wayward teens runs away from Earth--to escape uninhabitable conditions due to global warming--and into trouble with Galactus, it's up to Old Lace to save the day! But who will aid her in defeating the Devourer of Worlds? Enter Lockheed! Lockjaw! Dark Phoenix! And Falcon's falcon!

NICK: ALL-NEW, ALL-DIFFERENT, RUNAWAYS! Alex Wilder is back and he's taking the team he helped form

in a different direction! With the rest of the team forming the Really-New Avengers West Coast, Alex has recruited only the best of the best for THE RUNAWAYS! Pick up issue #250 with the best Runaways lineup yet: The recently resurrected Arsenic! Kitty Rasputin! The Inhuman Torch! And Captain America! Bad guys run! THE RUNAWAYS run faster.



Craig Yeung's
cover for
RUNAWAYS
#150

Note from Editor:

Well, here it is. The end of an era. With this issue, co-creators Brian K. Vaughan and Adrian Alphona (as well as inker Craig Yeung) say goodbye to the Runaways.

One thing you should know about this creative team. In the four-and-a-half years I've been working in comics, I've never seen a more closely-knit group. Working on this book is unlike any book I've worked on. In fact, it never felt like work. It felt like friends having fun. That's because it basically is just friends having fun. And these friends have created the best new characters to hit the Marvel U in 10 years. (Take that, Young Avengers!)

I've known Brian since I was 10-years old. I think I've read every comic he's written since the Ka-Zar annual he worked on way back when. Brian is the most professional and consistent writer in comics. For real. His grasp on character is incredible, his gift for the cliffhanger is second to none and he's always got a surprise up his sleeve (did anyone see that last page coming?). He's the easiest person to edit because it takes so little editing. You will be missed, Brian.

Adrian Alphona has become one of the best young artists in the business in the last five years. If you look back on RUNAWAYS, you can see his work develop like crazy. His vision, his design and his story-telling are unique and top of the line. And if the last five years are any indication of where his art will continue to go, we'll all be lucky to see it.

Craig Yeung is the glue that keeps this book together. He made impossible deadlines and the pages STILL looked beautiful. All competitors for "Nicest Guy in Comics" better watch out for Craig.

Christina Strain rocks hard, plain and simple. Her amazing coloring, boundless energy and general charm makes it hard to let her go. So we won't. She's sticking around! So, no goodbye for her.

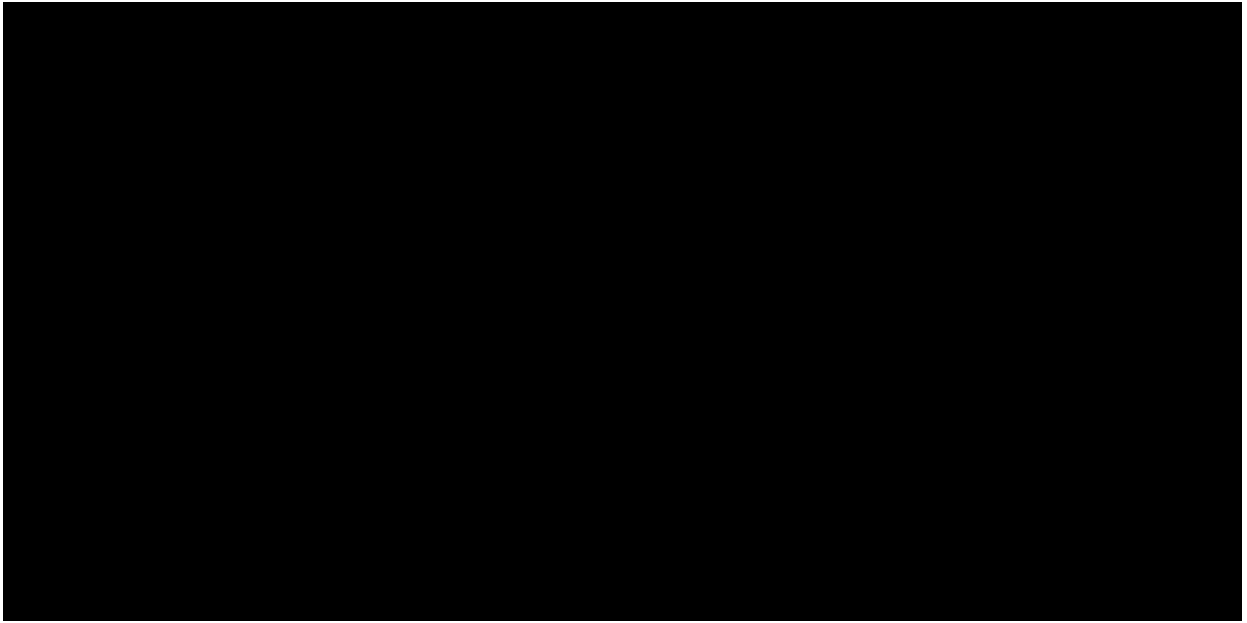
You have been a witness to one of the coolest books in comic history. In April, you get to see the Runaways go in a different direction courtesy of RUNAWAYS' #1 fan, Joss Whedon (heard of him?) and rising star Michael Ryan (NEW EXCALIBUR, NEW X-MEN). I've read the first scripts and seen a bunch of Michael Ryan goodness, so let me be the first to tell you that you won't be disappointed.

- Nick



Here's a sneak Peek
of Runaways #25!

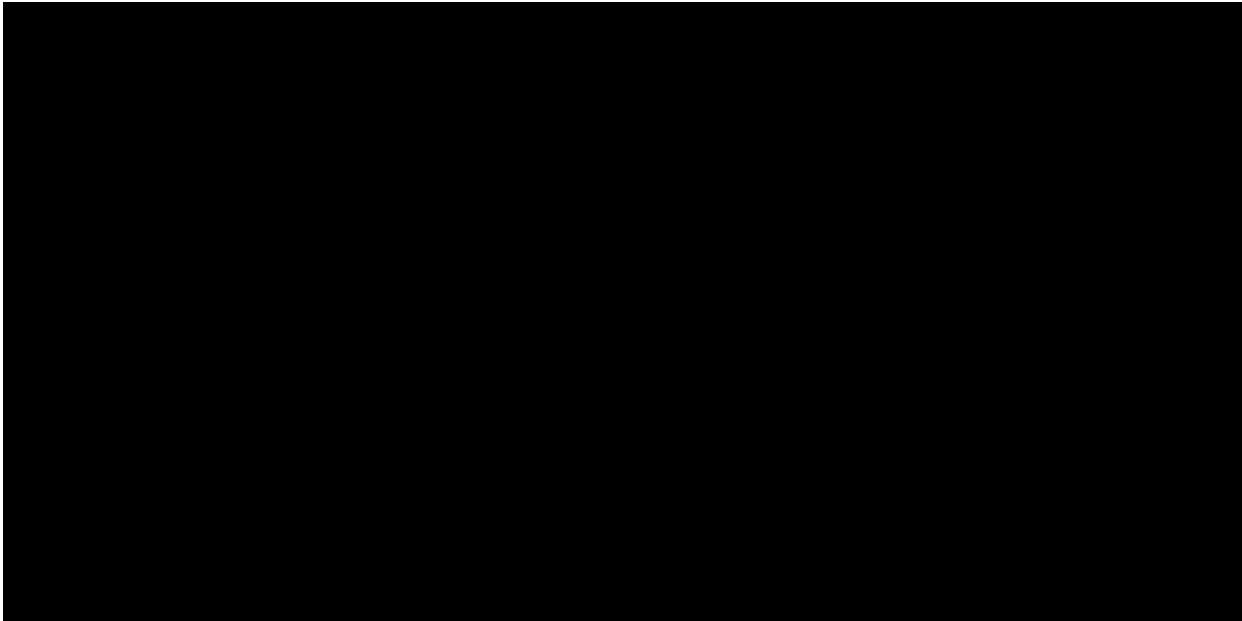




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