COVER BY NATALIE HAINES

SONIC THE HEDGEHOG™

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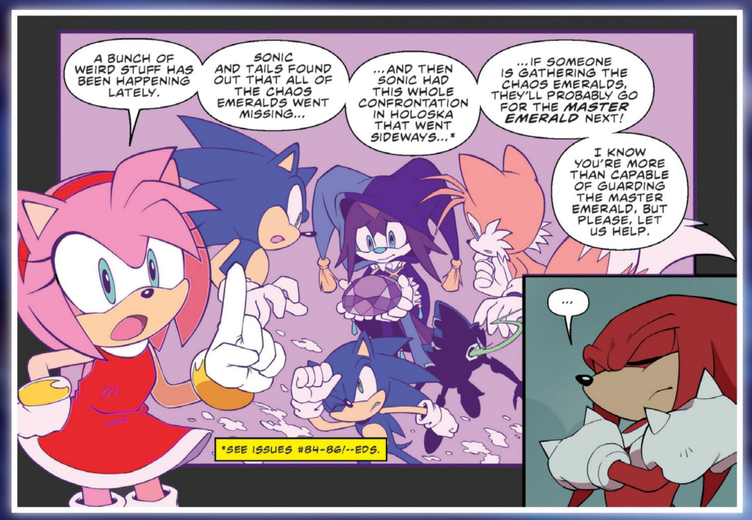
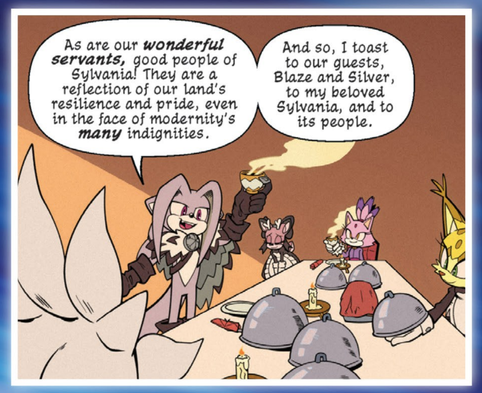
Special thanks to Mai Kiyotaki, Michael Cisneros, Sandra Jo, David Mariotte, Yusuke Sato, Sonic Team, and everyone at Sega for their invaluable assistance.

STORY SO FAR...





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BLAZE THE CAT

FIRE-POWERED PRINCESS.
FRIEND FROM ANOTHER DIMENSION.

SILVER THE HEDGEHOG

YOUNG PSYCHIC HERO.
FRIEND FROM THE FUTURE.

SYLVANIA CASTLE.

...and with a final terrible blow, the dragon was ***slain.*** It's said that the knight claimed the princess' hand, and they lived ***happily ever after.***

A simple story, but sometimes those are the best. Don't you agree?

HMM.

Oh! One moment, my dear Blaze. The ice here is ***treacherous.***

THAT'S REALLY NOT NECESSARY, BLACKWOOD...

I ***insist.*** If you were to slip and injure yourself, I simply could ***not*** forgive myself!

VERY WELL.

You ***honor*** me, Princess.

Wait, not one more step! That's the ***perfect*** spot for my surprise.

AND WHAT MIGHT THIS "SURPRISE" BE?

BOINGGG

This.

BOING BOING BOING

My *favorite* part of the castle.

BOING

This clock was built to tell Sylvania's story. The story of her rulers, each *greater* and more *noble* than the last.

BOING

Guardians of the people, free to live in joyous service to their land.

And the castle standing tall, our stalwart *protector.*

Truly, a beautiful story.

And a beautiful *lie.*

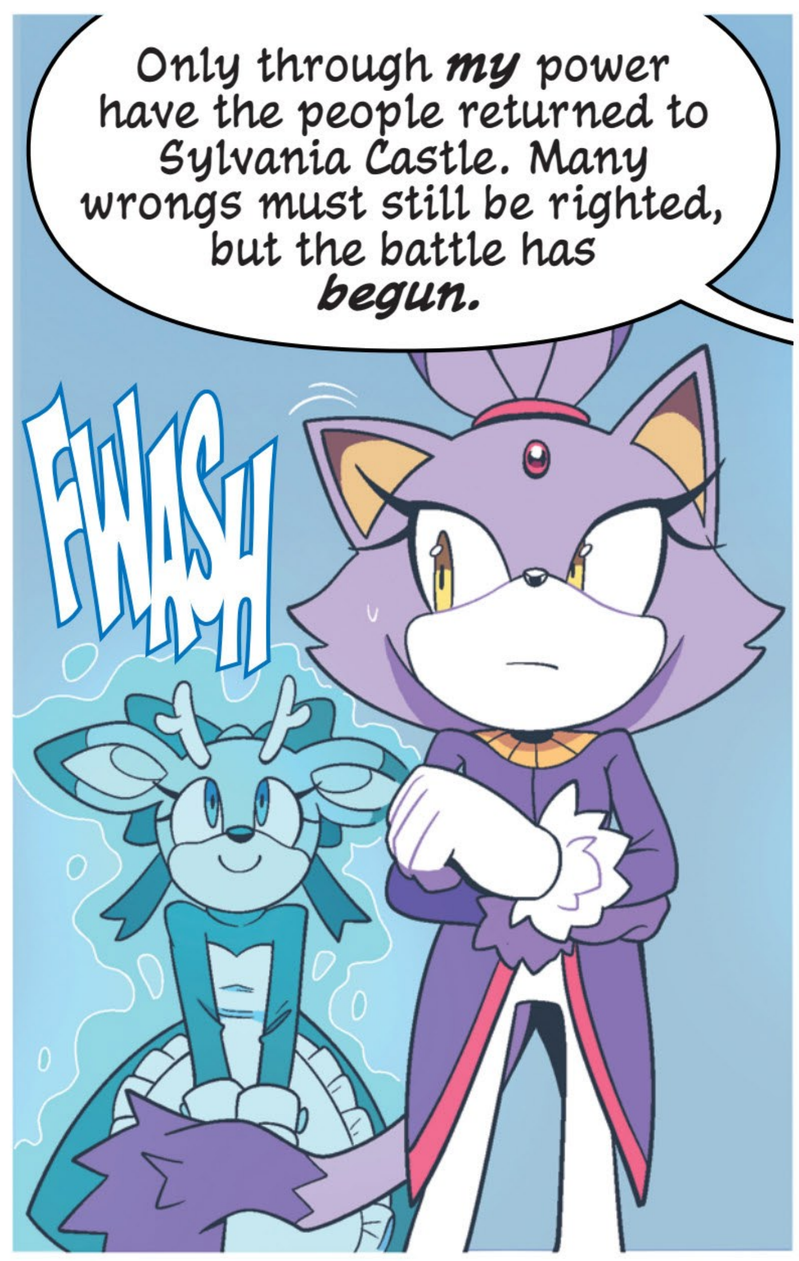
Did you know this castle is only a few generations old?

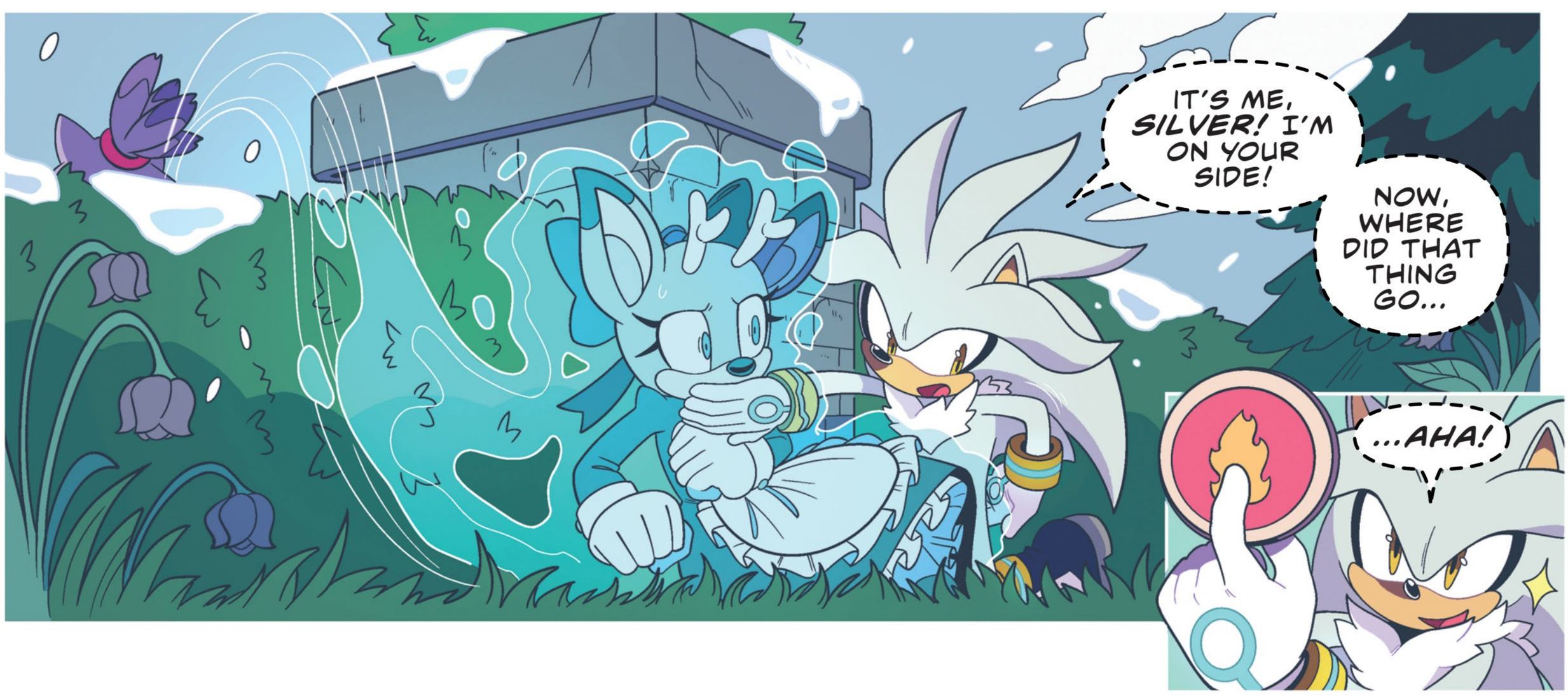
It was my great-grandfather's opus. The only head of our family to not bear the name Blackwood. He was brilliant but... foolish. He tore down the original castle to make way for this one...

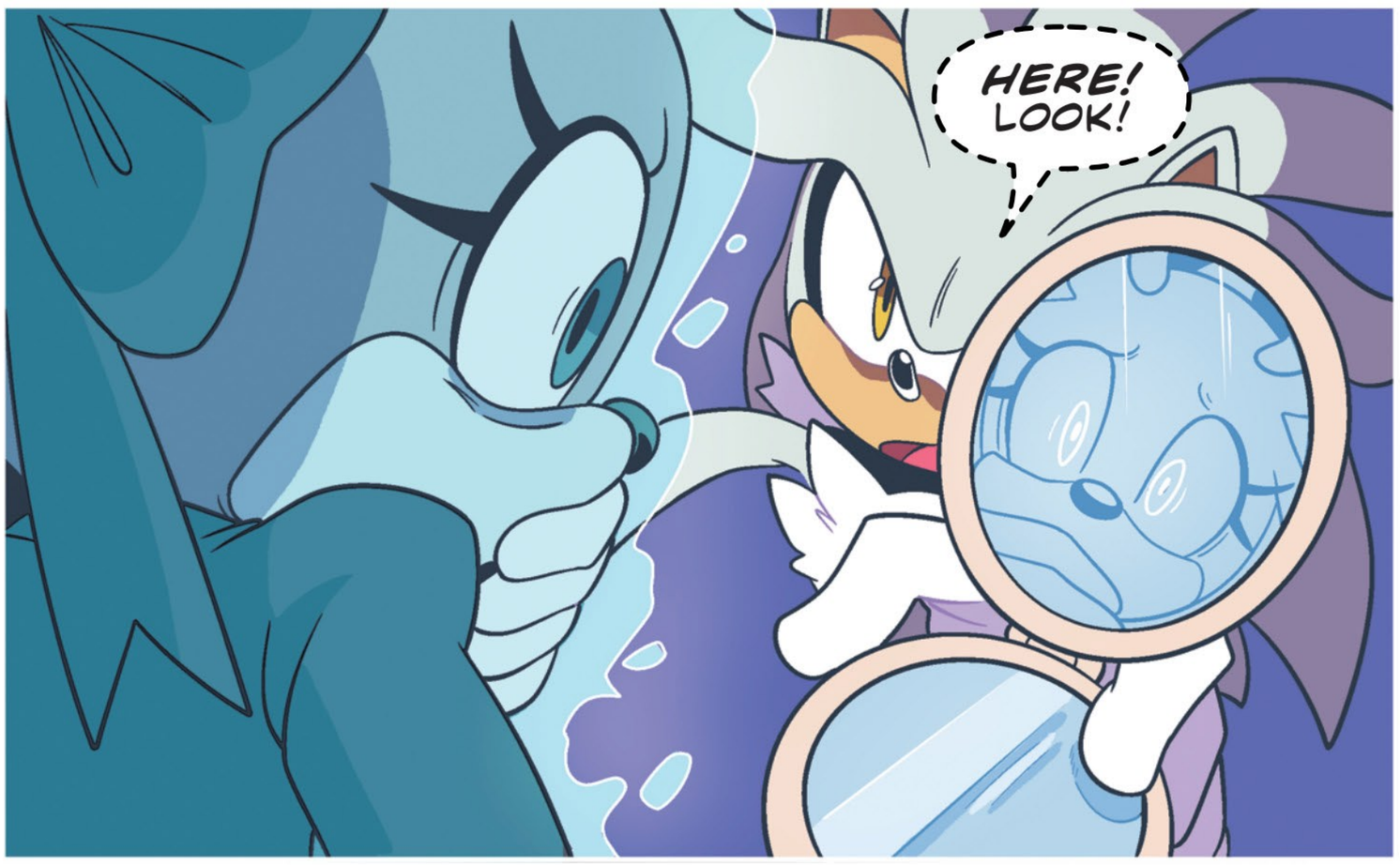
...Naught but the cornerstone remains.

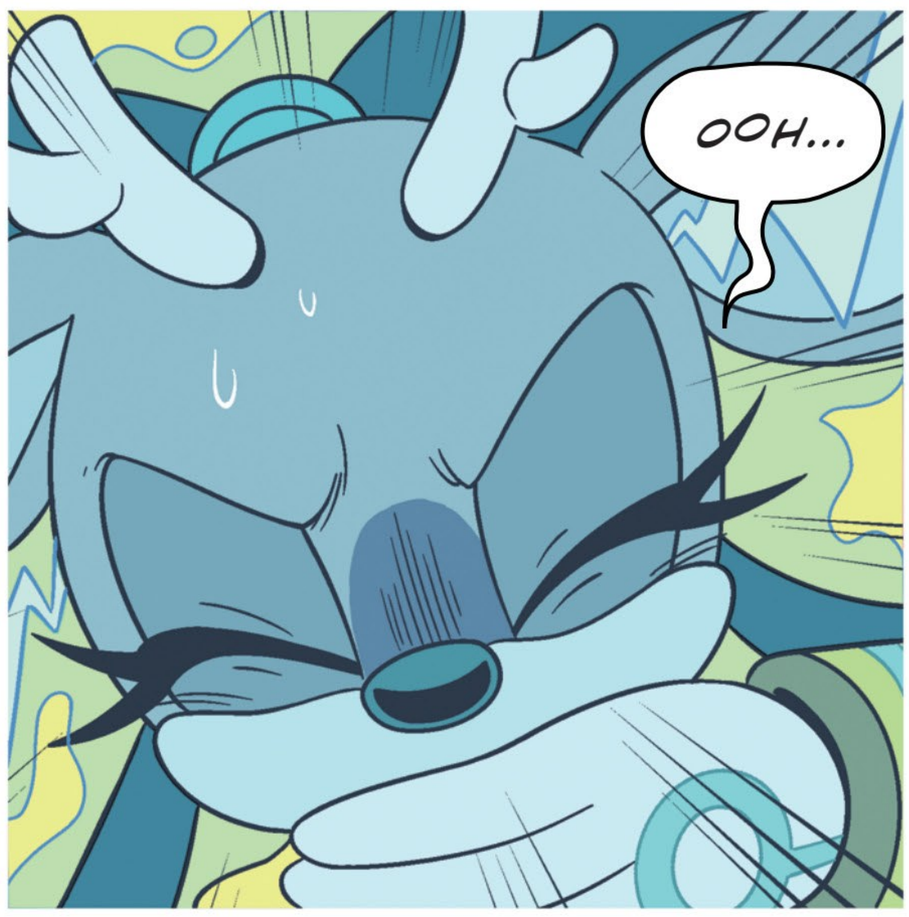
He obsessed over the old stories and sought to honor them through his inventions. He ***buried*** himself in fantasy and fairy tales.

Meanwhile, the hearts of the people drifted ever further from us.

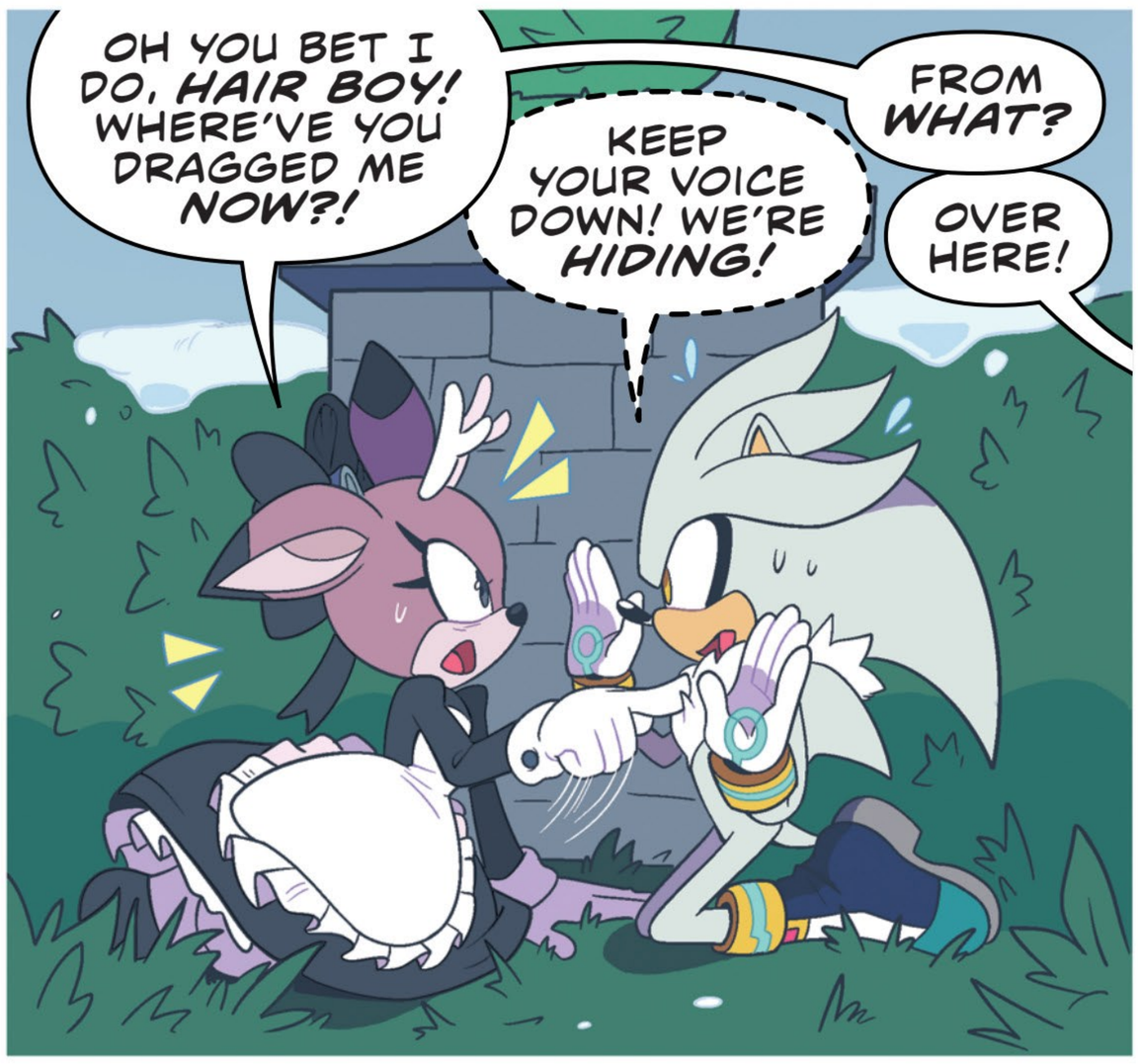


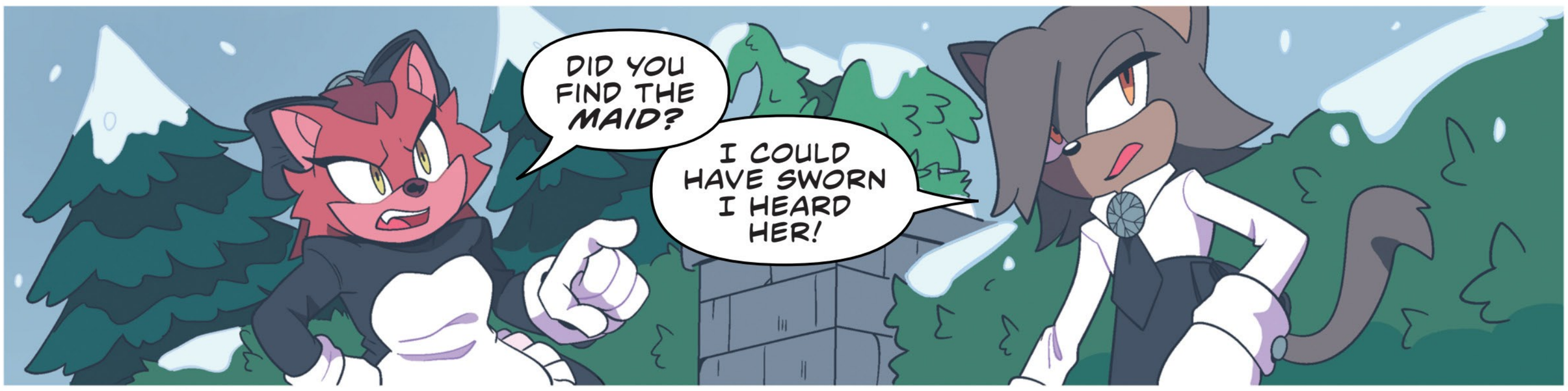


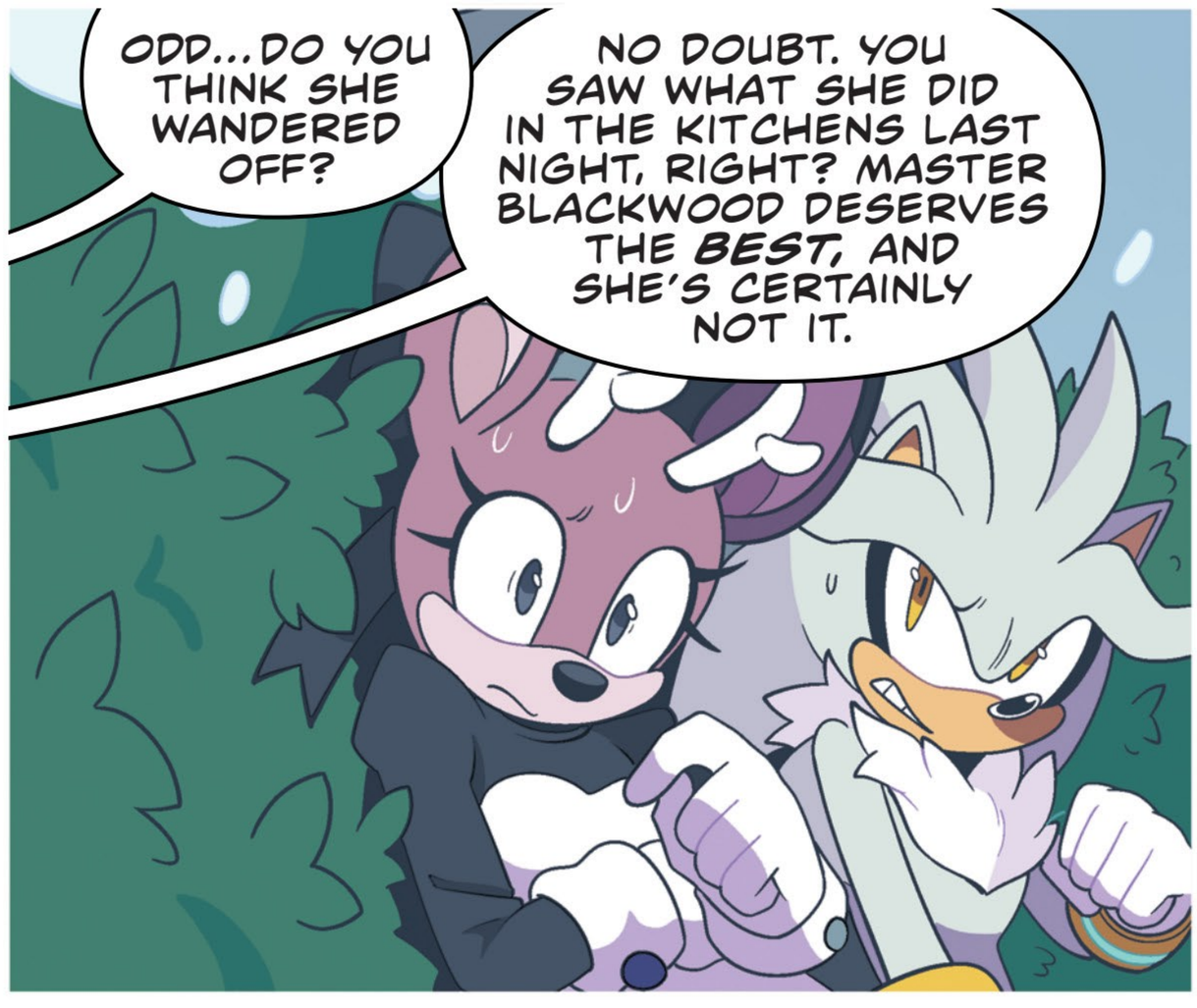

HERE! LOOK!


OOH...

HOW ARE YOU FEELING, DAPPLE? DO YOU REMEMBER ME?


OH YOU BET I DO, HAIR BOY! WHERE'VE YOU DRAGGED ME NOW?!
KEEP YOUR VOICE DOWN! WE'RE HIDING!
FROM WHAT?
OVER HERE!


DID YOU FIND THE MAID?
I COULD HAVE SWORN I HEARD HER!


ODD...DO YOU THINK SHE WANDERED OFF?
NO DOUBT. YOU SAW WHAT SHE DID IN THE KITCHENS LAST NIGHT, RIGHT? MASTER BLACKWOOD DESERVES THE BEST, AND SHE'S CERTAINLY NOT IT.

THOSE GUYS DROPPED ME DOWN AN ELEVATOR SHAFT!
AND THEY'LL PROBABLY TRY IT AGAIN IF THEY CATCH US.

WE'RE AT SYLVANIA CASTLE. MY FRIEND--BLAZE, THAT'S HER OVER THERE--AND I WERE INVITED TO STAY.

SO YOU'RE SOME UPPER-CRUST SNOBS TOO?

NO! WE'RE TRYING TO *HELP!* I TOLD BLAZE ABOUT YOU LAST NIGHT, AND SHE AGREED *SOMETHING'S FISHY.*

"YOU TOLD ME YOU NEEDED TO 'SEE YOURSELF.' WE TOOK THAT LITERALLY.

"BLAZE'S KEEPING BLACKWOOD OCCUPIED WHILE I DO SOME DIGGING."

WHEN I SEE MY REFLECTION, I *REMEMBER...*

SO HOW'D YOU END UP HERE?

THE WHOLE TOWN GOT AN INVITATION TO COME UP TO THE CASTLE FOR A BIG *FEAST.*

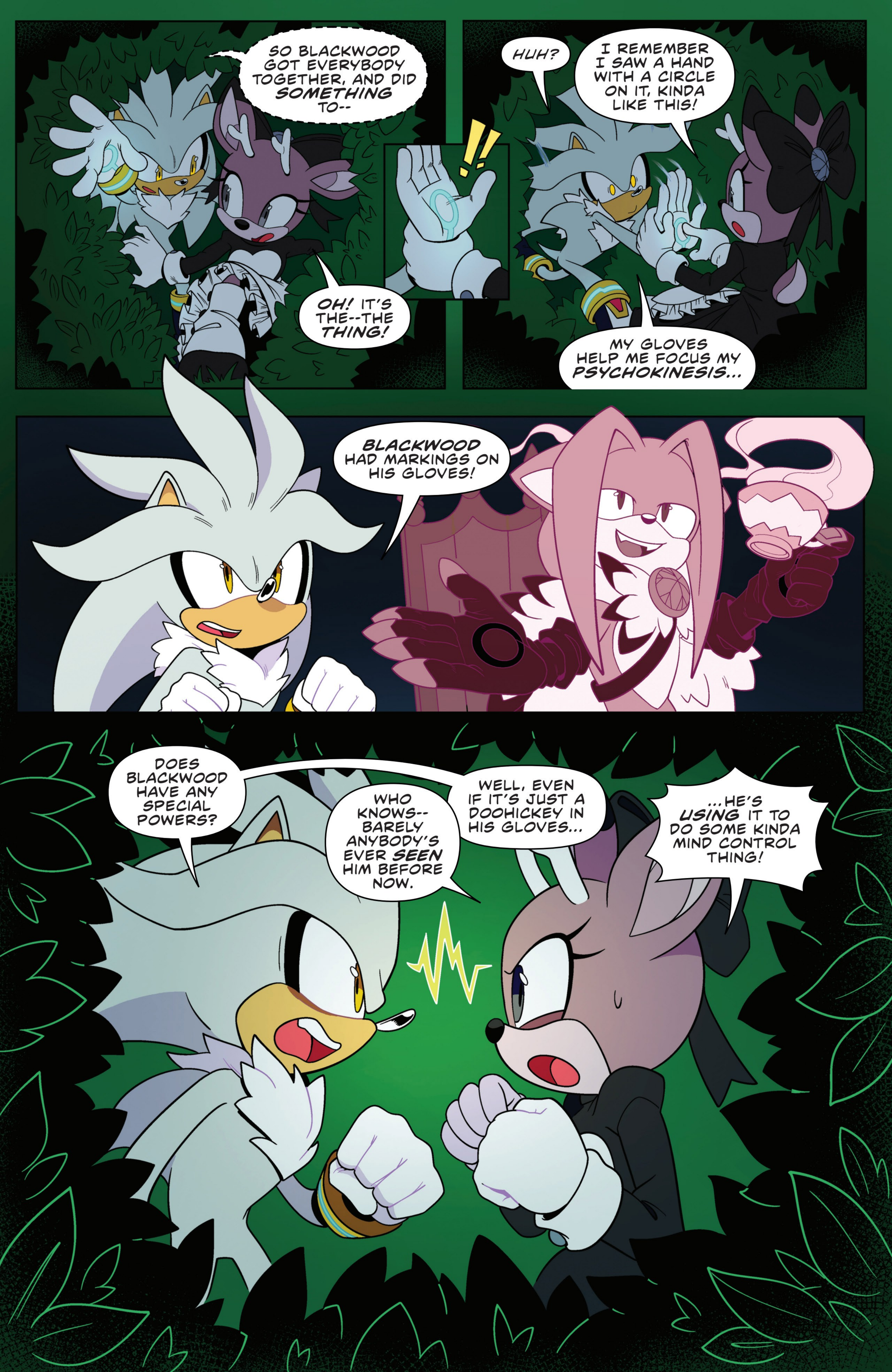
I KNOW. IT SOUNDS SUPER FAKE. THAT'S WHAT EVERYBODY THOUGHT. WAY BACK WHEN, THE BLACKWOOD FAMILY USED TO *PROTECT* FOLKS, BUT THEY'VE BEEN *CREEPS* FOR AS LONG AS I CAN REMEMBER.

BUT I WANTED TO GO, SO MY *AUNTIE LICHEN* BACKED ME UP. SHE'S ALWAYS HAD THIS WAY OF TAKING CHARGE... YOU CAN TRUST HER TO HAVE YOUR BACK, SO WHEN SHE TALKS, FOLKS LISTEN.

MY WHOLE LIFE, NOBODY HAS *EVER* BEEN WELCOME AT THE CASTLE. I THOUGHT THAT MAYBE BLACKWOOD WAS READY TO TURN OVER A NEW LEAF, AND GET TO KNOW US...SO SHOULDN'T WE GIVE HIM A CHANCE?

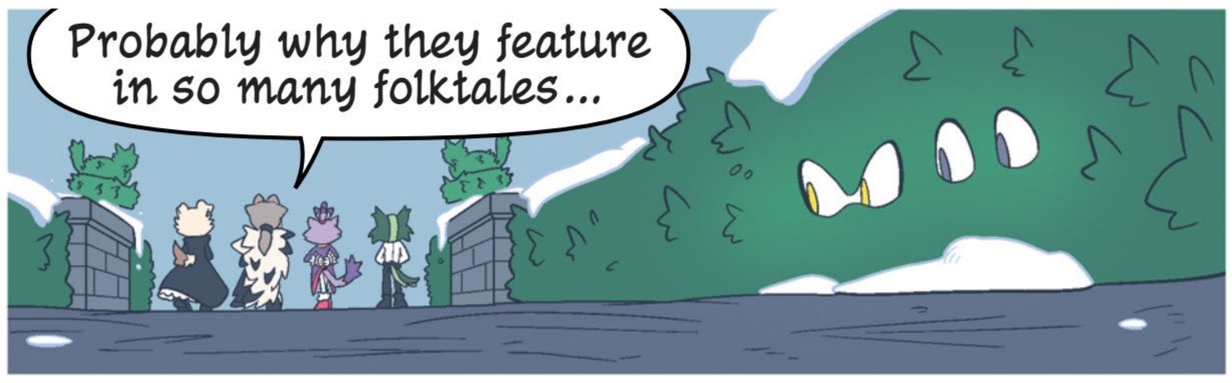
WE WERE LET INSIDE. TAKEN UNDERGROUND. I DON'T *REMEMBER* MUCH AFTER THAT...

...BUT I WAS *DEFINITELY* WRONG ABOUT BLACKWOOD.

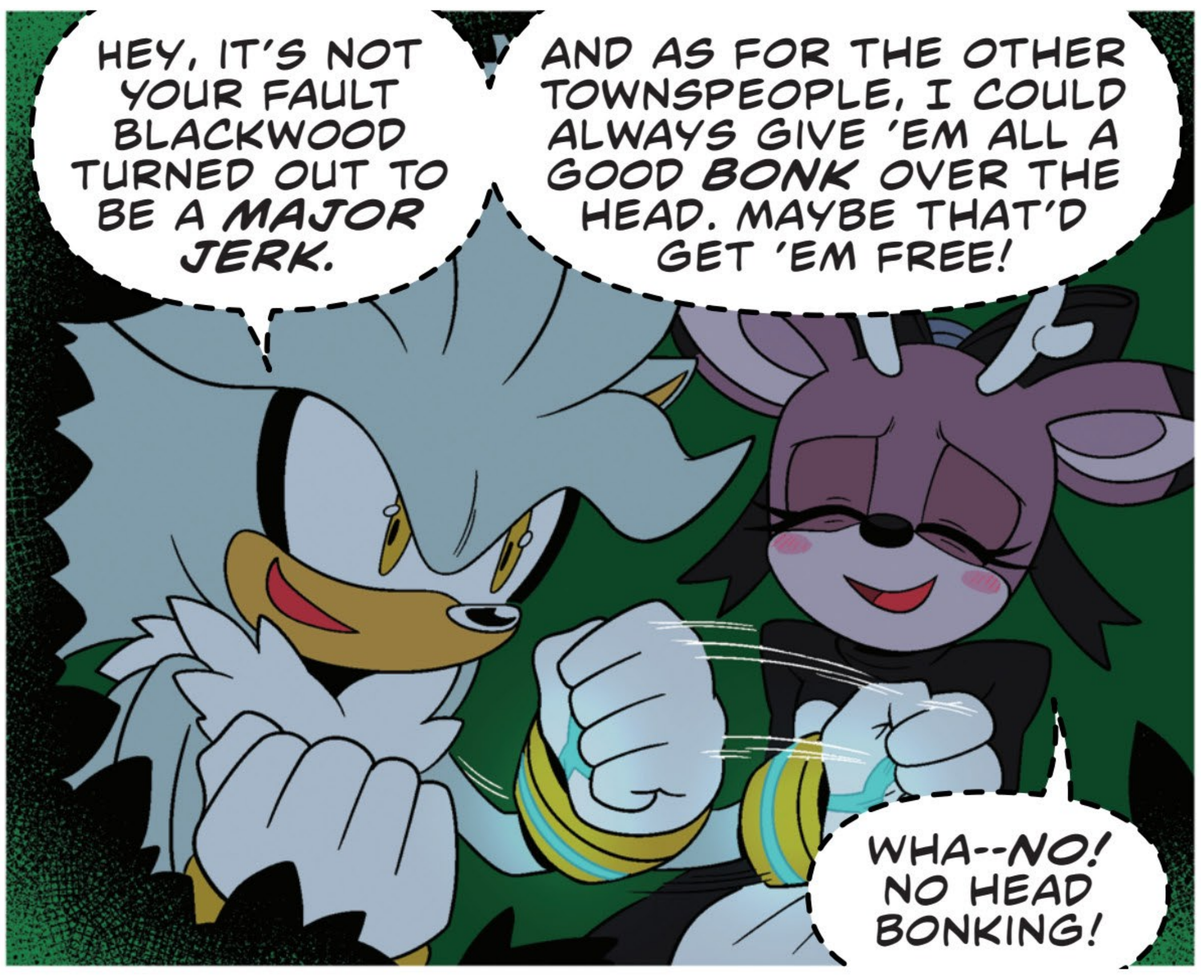

SO BLACKWOOD GOT EVERYBODY TOGETHER, AND DID SOMETHING TO--
OH! IT'S THE--THE THING!
HUH?
I REMEMBER I SAW A HAND WITH A CIRCLE ON IT, KINDA LIKE THIS!
MY GLOVES HELP ME FOCUS MY PSYCHOKINESIS...
BLACKWOOD HAD MARKINGS ON HIS GLOVES!
DOES BLACKWOOD HAVE ANY SPECIAL POWERS?
WHO KNOWS-- BARELY ANYBODY'S EVER SEEN HIM BEFORE NOW.
WELL, EVEN IF IT'S JUST A DOOHICKEY IN HIS GLOVES...
...HE'S USING IT TO DO SOME KINDA MIND CONTROL THING!

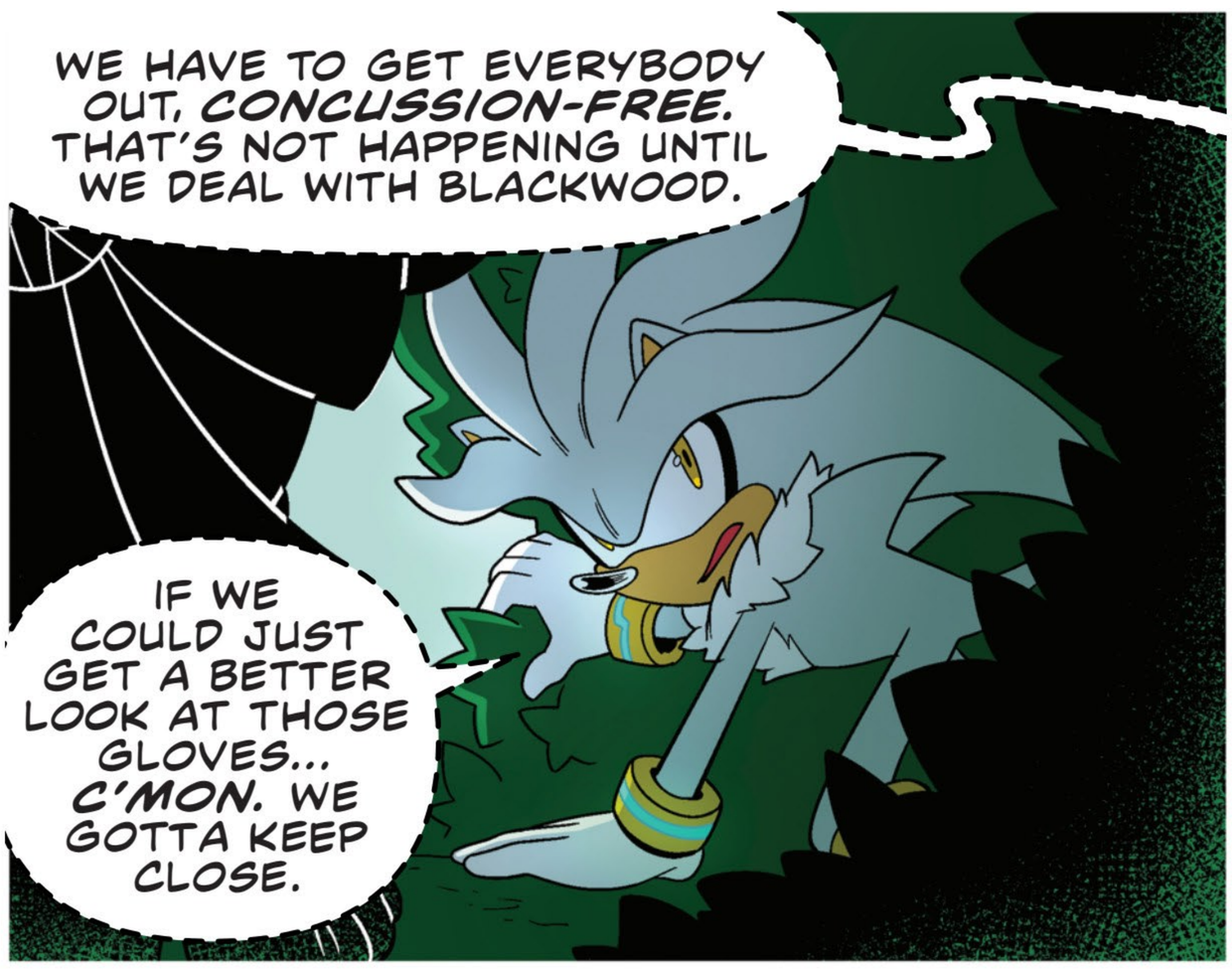
AND THE CONCUSSION YOU GOT PROBABLY WEAKENED HIS--
Do you hear something?

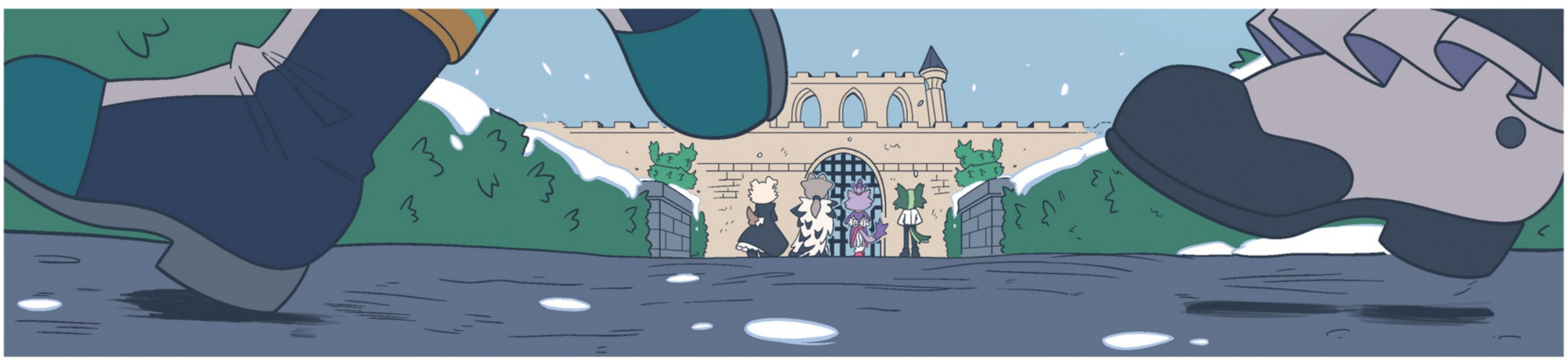
JUST THE BIRDS!
Ah, yes. Did you know, ravens can mimic speech?


Probably why they feature in so many folktales...

THAT WAS TOO CLOSE...
WE STILL HAVE NO IDEA WHAT HE'S CAPABLE OF. IF WE TRY TO FIGHT HIM, WHAT'S HE GONNA DO TO THE OTHERS? TO MY AUNT?
NONE OF THIS WOULD HAVE HAPPENED IF I WASN'T SO NAÏVE...


HEY, IT'S NOT YOUR FAULT BLACKWOOD TURNED OUT TO BE A MAJOR JERK.
AND AS FOR THE OTHER TOWNSPEOPLE, I COULD ALWAYS GIVE 'EM ALL A GOOD BONK OVER THE HEAD. MAYBE THAT'D GET 'EM FREE!
WHA--NO! NO HEAD BONKING!


WE HAVE TO GET EVERYBODY OUT, CONCUSSION-FREE. THAT'S NOT HAPPENING UNTIL WE DEAL WITH BLACKWOOD.
IF WE COULD JUST GET A BETTER LOOK AT THOSE GLOVES... C'MON. WE GOTTA KEEP CLOSE.



Our next stop is a bit more... intimate.

WE'RE LEAVING THE CASTLE?

The best adventures are to be had in the wild.

GRRRIND

THE ICE'S GOT IT STUCK AGAIN. ALL RIGHT, ON THREE. ONE, TWO...

...THREE!

BAM

SCHRRT

WHERE'D THEY GO?

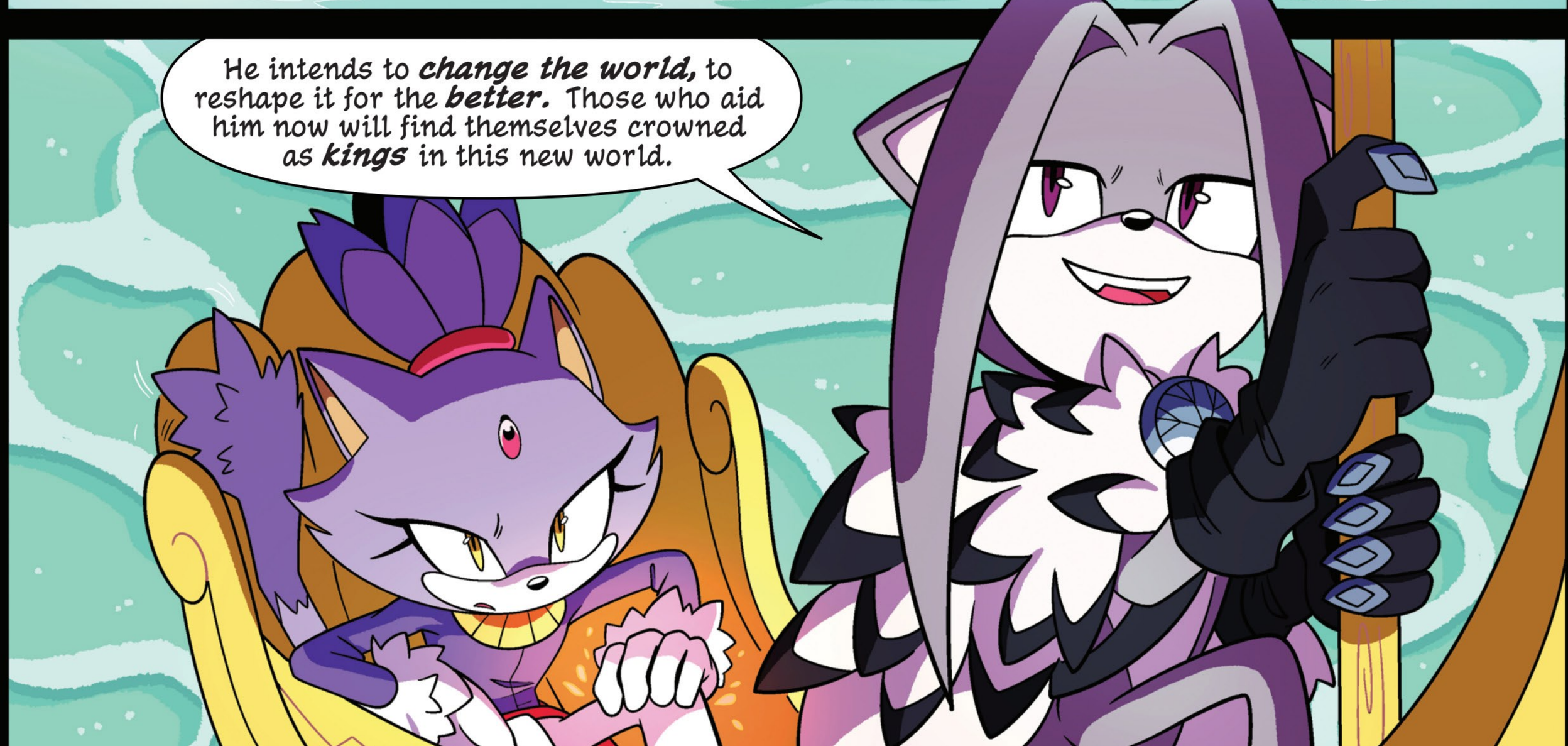
I SWEAR THEY WERE JUST-- HUH?

WHAT HAPPENED *HERE?*

ALL RIGHT, BLAZE!

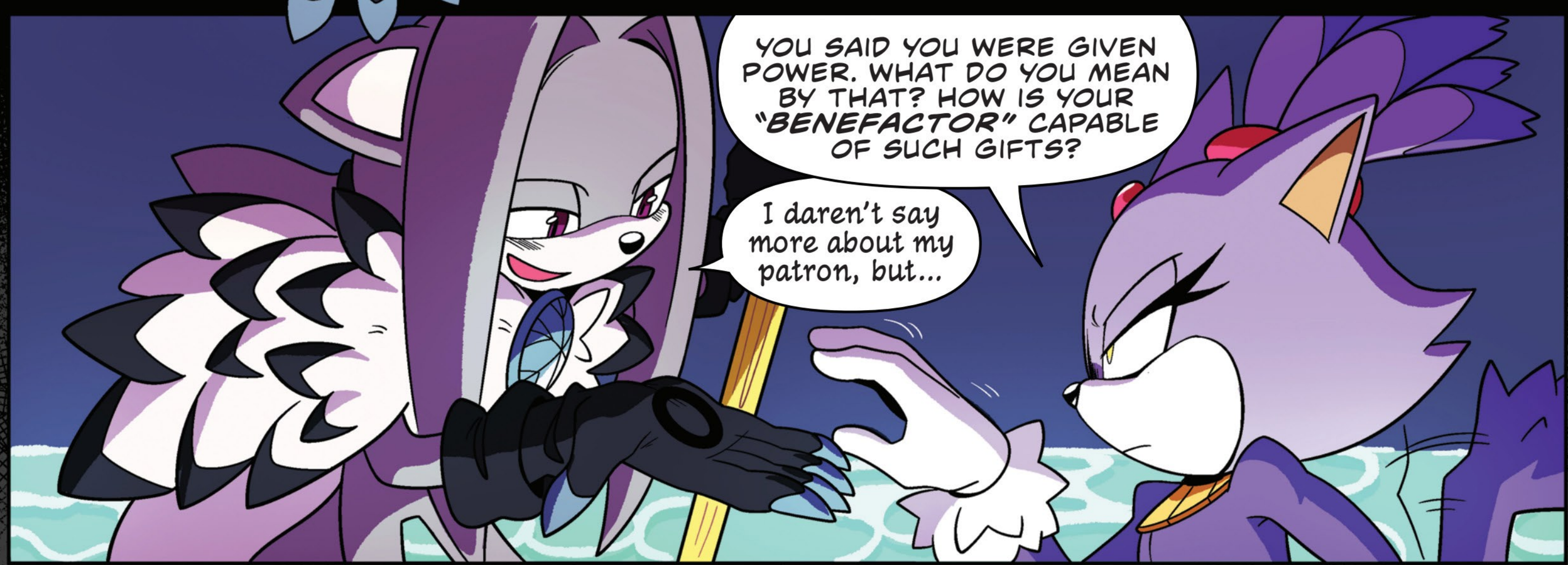
THEY WENT THIS WAY. TRUST ME.
This is one of my favorite places. As a child, I would slip away to explore down here for hours!
You know, my princess, I've never found it so easy to talk with someone before. I will always treasure the time we've shared, as short as it may be.
IT HAS CERTAINLY BEEN... ILLUMINATING.
With that in mind...I have an offer I'd like to present.
I have had the good fortune of being brought under the wing of a certain benefactor...
OH? DO TELL.

I have been furnished with a gift, one of *incredible* power.


He intends to *change the world,* to reshape it for the *better.* Those who aid him now will find themselves crowned as *kings* in this new world.

I imagine such an opportunity would be of interest to your Sol Empire, no? Our two houses, aligned in purpose, could do *amazing* things.

After all, every king needs a *queen.*


YOU SAID YOU WERE GIVEN POWER. WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY THAT? HOW IS YOUR "*BENEFACTOR*" CAPABLE OF SUCH GIFTS?
I daren't say more about my patron, but...

...these gloves were made to channel a certain power--
--one that lets me remind my people where their loyalties lie.
Just one touch, and I had all the subjects I could ever want, eager to serve.
THAT'S IT! QUICK, WE GOTTA DISTRACT HIM, SO--
FWEEET
?!
GRAB
AAH!
YANK
FWOOSH
ENOUGH.

My princess... why?
THE SOL EMPIRE DOES NOT STOOP TO MAKE DEALS WITH PETTY WOULD-BE TYRANTS.
YOU ARE A DISGRACE TO EVERYTHING YOU CLAIM TO STAND FOR. IT IS A RULER'S DUTY TO LIVE FOR THE GOOD OF THEIR SUBJECTS!
I'VE DEDICATED MY LIFE TO THE PROTECTION OF MY PEOPLE. IT'S THE ONLY THING THAT MAKES ME WORTHY OF MY TITLE!
YOU, ON THE OTHER HAND...

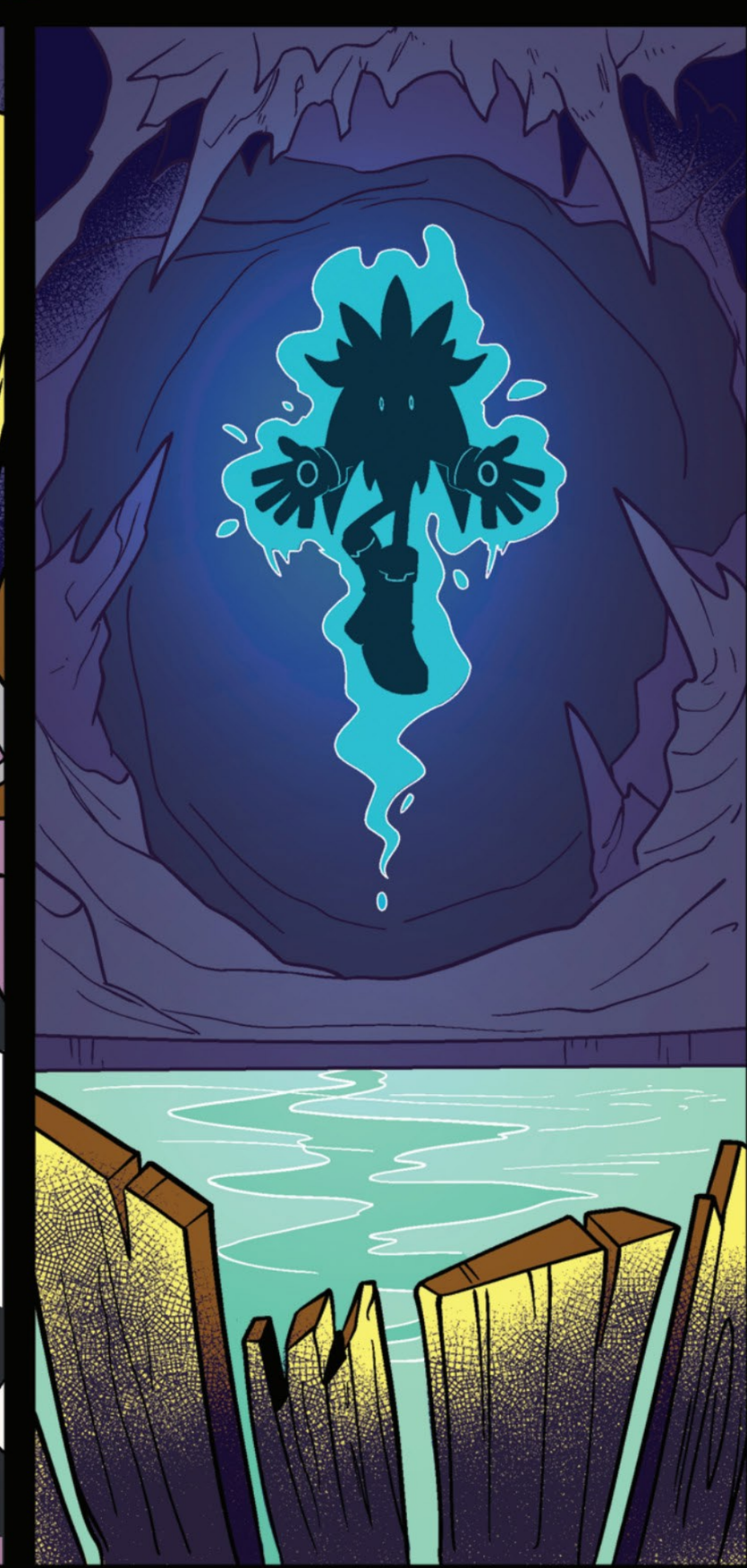
WHOOSH
RRRRAH!
THAT'S IT!
FWASH

I had hoped it would not come to this, truly...

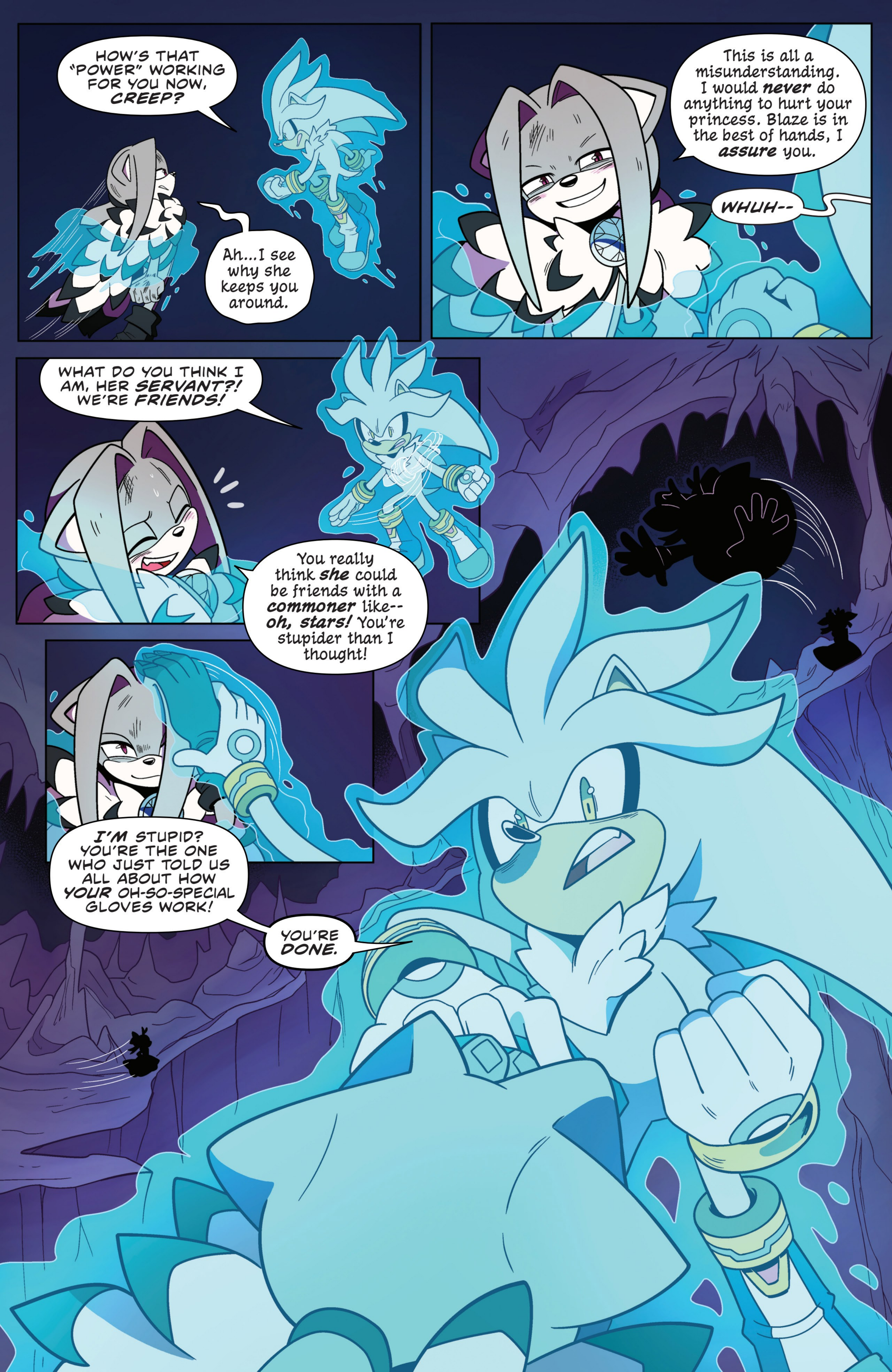
Guh?!
LURCH

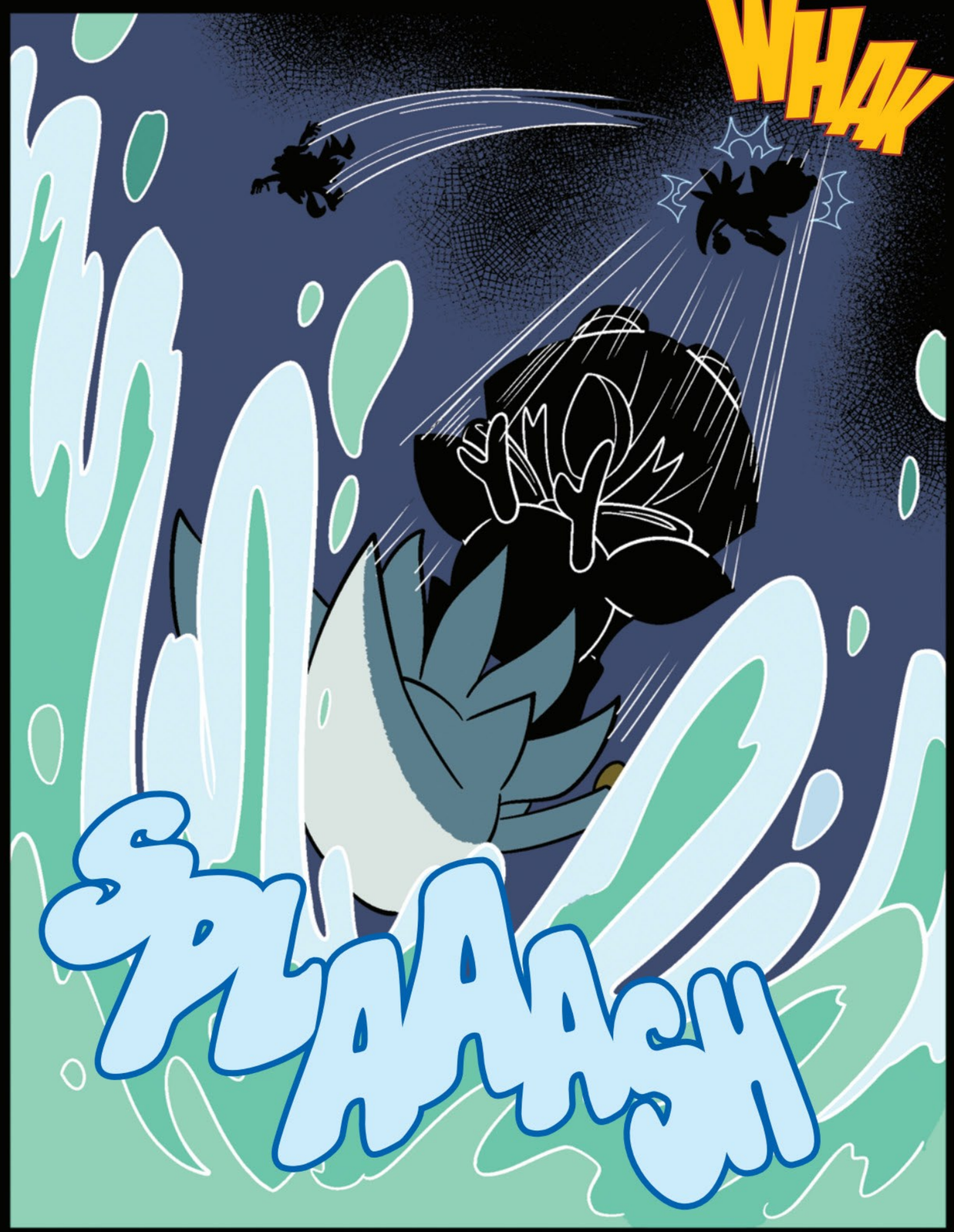
WHAM

What...
Who...



Hrrk!
FWASH


HOW'S THAT "POWER" WORKING FOR YOU NOW, CREEP?
Ah...I see why she keeps you around.
This is all a misunderstanding. I would never do anything to hurt your princess. Blaze is in the best of hands, I assure you.
WHUH--
WHAT DO YOU THINK I AM, HER SERVANT?! WE'RE FRIENDS!
You really think she could be friends with a commoner like--oh, stars! You're stupider than I thought!
I'M STUPID? YOU'RE THE ONE WHO JUST TOLD US ALL ABOUT HOW YOUR OH-SO-SPECIAL GLOVES WORK!
YOU'RE DONE.


WHAK
SPLAAAASH

DAPPLE, WHAT ARE YOU DOING?!
I'M TERRIBLY SORRY, SIR...

...BUT YOU MUSTN'T HURT MASTER BLACKWOOD!

CRAP!
HOLD STILL! I'M NOT GONNA HURT YOU.
FWASH

RRGH...
HE TOOK BLAZE. SHE'D BETTER BE OKAY.
I CAN STILL CATCH 'EM. BETTER MAKE THIS QUICK...
...DOUBLE CRAP.
OKAY, PLAN B! *PLEASE* WORK...
HEY, BLACKWOOD'S GONE! THAT MEANS YOU DON'T HAVE TO FIGHT ME, RIGHT?
WELL, YES, I SUPPOSE...
LET'S JUST TAKE A MINUTE TO *RELAX*. THIS IS A NICE CAVE, HUH? SUCH PRETTY WATER...
FWSHHH
PRETTY, *REFLECTIVE* WATER...
I...
RRGH...
THAT'S IT! REMEMBER, DAPPLE! REMEMBER YOUR TOWN, YOUR FAMILY! *THEY NEED YOU!*

YES! FIGHT IT!
SPLSH
SPLASH

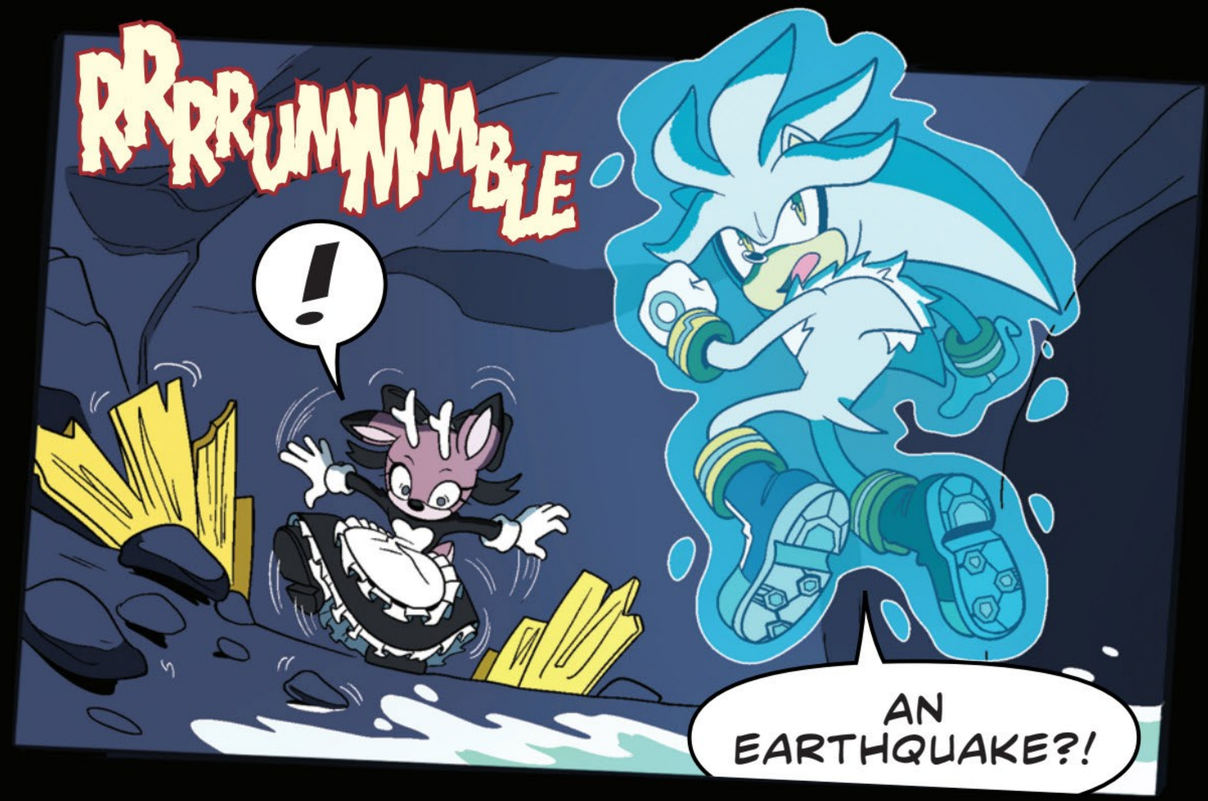
:COUGH: H-HEY, HOW'D I GET IN THE--
BLACKWOOD GOT AWAY, AND HE TOOK BLAZE. I'VE GOTTA GO FIND THEM. YOU SHOULD WAIT--
NO!

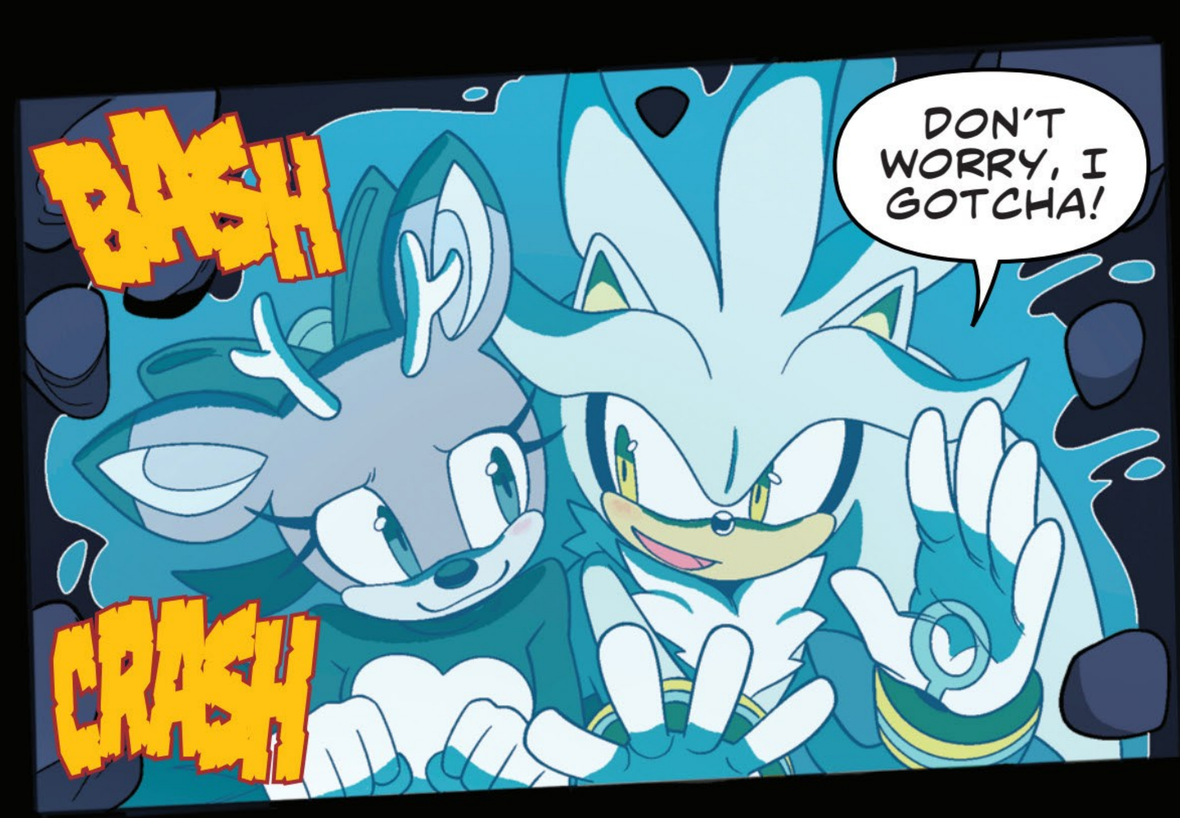
WHATEVER HAPPENS NEXT, I'M COMING WITH YOU.

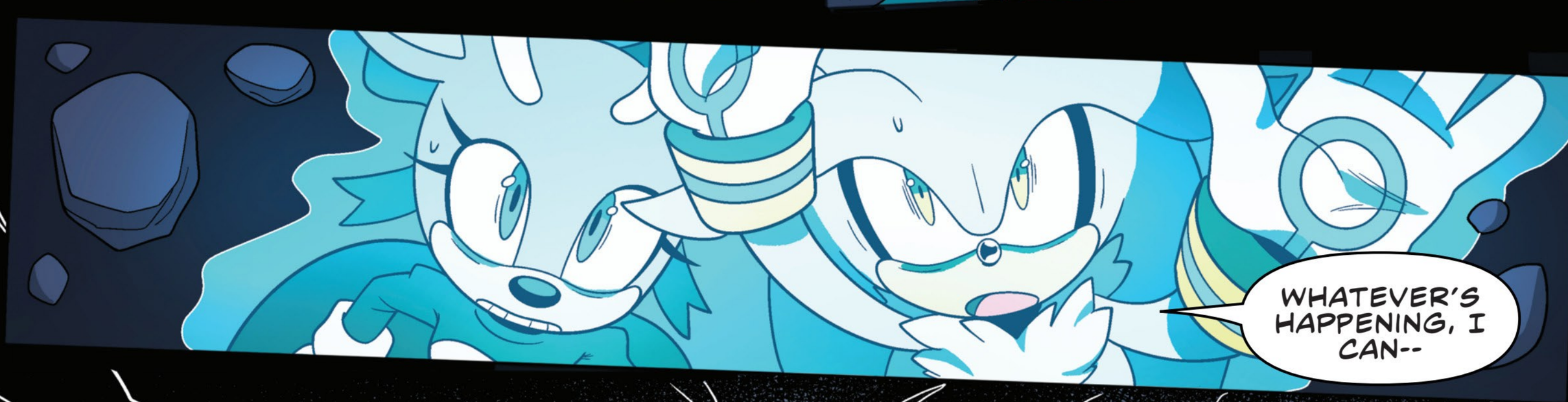
I HELPED GET EVERYONE INTO THIS MESS. I COULD NEVER LOOK THEM IN THE EYES AGAIN IF I DIDN'T HELP GET THEM BACK OUT.
PLUS, I WANT TO PERSONALLY KICK BLACKWOOD'S SKINNY BUTT.

THESE CAVES RUN ALL OVER THE PLACE--THERE'S AN EXIT IN TOWN. IF I WERE THAT WEASEL, I'D TRY TO SNEAK OUT THAT WAY.

I'M DOING THIS, WITH OR WITHOUT YOU... BUT IT'D BE A WHOLE LOT EASIER WITH YOUR HELP.
THEN LET'S GO.
RRRR


RRRRUMMMMBLE
!
AN EARTHQUAKE?!


BASH
CRASH
DON'T WORRY, I GOTCHA!


WHATEVER'S HAPPENING, I CAN--

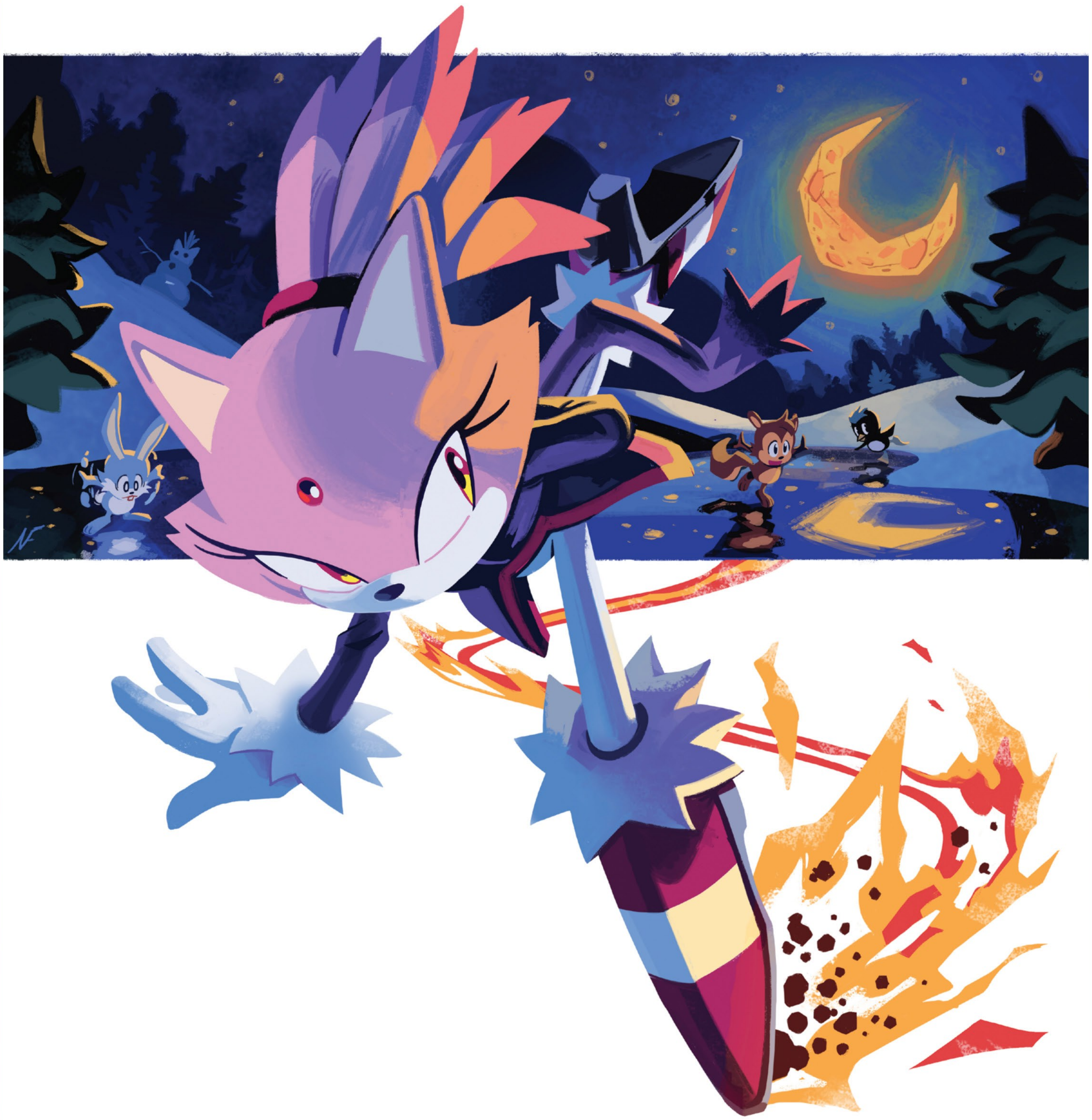
GRRRUMMMMBLE

THOOM
--HANDLE IT!
GRR
NEXT TIME: CLASH in the CASTLE!

NEXT MONTH...

ART BY NATALIE HAINES

ART BY ABBY BULMER



ART BY NATHALIE FOURDRAINE

SONIC LETTERS SQUAD

WELL, WHO SAW THAT COMING? SURE, BLACKWOOD WAS A BIT ODD, BUT A WHOLE MOVING CASTLE?! WHAT OTHER SECRETS ARE HIDING IN THOSE GOTHIC WALLS? AND WILL DAPPLE BE ABLE TO PUSH AWAY THE MIND CONTROL?

YOU'LL NEED TO WAIT UNTIL THE NEXT ISSUE, SINCE RIGHT NOW WE NEED TO EXTEND OUR DEEPEST THANKS TO THE SPOOKTACULAR TEAM WHO MADE IT POSSIBLE —EVAN STANLEY, ALEX FORREST, RIK MACK, IASMIN OMAR ATA, AND ED DUKESHIRE! NOW, LET'S HEAR FROM OUR WONDERFUL SONIC SQUAD!

ART BY JAYDA

My name is Ronya, and I'm a 14-year-old Sonic fan from Turkey!

First of all, thank you so much for creating this amazing comic series. The IDW Sonic comics have inspired me to start working on my own comic series, and they've helped me improve a lot as an artist!

My comics aren't as awesome as yours, but I'm determined to keep learning and maybe one day create official content too!

I especially love how the IDW comics include original characters that aren't in the games — it makes the world feel so alive! And I really appreciate how you give attention to Silver and Blaze; they're my favorite duo!

Thank you again for all your hard work and creativity.

Hi Ronya! First of all, we're sure that your comics are wonderful! What's most important is creating stories true to yourself! Secondly, thank you for all of your kind words! Hopefully you've been enjoying this run focused on Silver and Blaze! We absolutely love them over here in the Sonic team, too! Keep up the hard work!!

ART BY FAYE

AS ALWAYS, THANK YOU, SONIC SQUAD! DON'T FORGET TO SEND YOUR ART AND LETTERS TO **LETTERS@IDWPUBLISHING.COM**, AND MAKE SURE TO MARK THEM: **"OKAY TO PRINT"!** AND JOIN THE IDW SONIC COMICS SQUAD ON FACEBOOK! NEXT MONTH, SILVER AND DAPPLE BATTLE MASTER BLACKWOOD... AND BLAZE BEGINS A FIERY BATTLE!

VIEW FROM THE BACK PAGE

IDW GOES DARK

GOOD HORROR DOESN'T JUST SCARE YOU. IT STICKS WITH YOU...IT HAUNTS YOU.

Whether it's psychological nightmares, shocking gore, or a completely unexpected type of terror, quality horror drills into your brain and refuses to leave. No one is immune from frights. **SONIC** can't outrun it. **GODZILLA** can't smash it. The **TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES** can't beat it. **STAR TREK** can't find a solution. And **BENEATH THE TREES WHERE NOBODY SEES'** Samantha Strong can't... Well, maaaaybe Samantha's the one exception!

The hit horror imprint **IDW DARK** is slithering toward the end of its second year, and this scary line of comics can't be contained. It's spreading fear and darkness across **IDW PUBLISHING**...and no one can escape it.

When Halloween is right around the corner and the spookiest season of the year is underway, how could we possibly resist bringing the eerie experience of **IDW DARK** to the rest of the publishing line?! With **IDW GOES DARK VARIANTS**, we're honoring horror by inviting some of the most talented artists in the comic book industry—like Francesco Francavilla, Damien Worm, Danny Earls, and Morgan Beem—to craft unforgettable scares with 12 haunting variant covers across 12 completely different titles.

From fascinating fear on **STAR TREK: THE LAST STARSHIP #12** to cute chills on **SONIC THE HEDGEHOG #91**, the sinister selection of collectible cover art proudly represents everything that has made **IDW DARK** such a success: an honest love and appreciation for the horror genre and the many ways fear can take shape to leave a lasting impression. Even after you have these covers bagged and boarded and put away in a long box, they'll still linger in your memory. That's good horror.

So don't be afraid—come celebrate the thrills of horror with **IDW GOES DARK**. Just don't give your comic shop a nightmare by forgetting to pre-order!

Gregg Katzman
Senior Publicity Manager

ON SALE SEPTEMBER 30TH