

# COWGIRLS & DINOSAURS

BIG TROUBLE IN LITTLE SPITTLE



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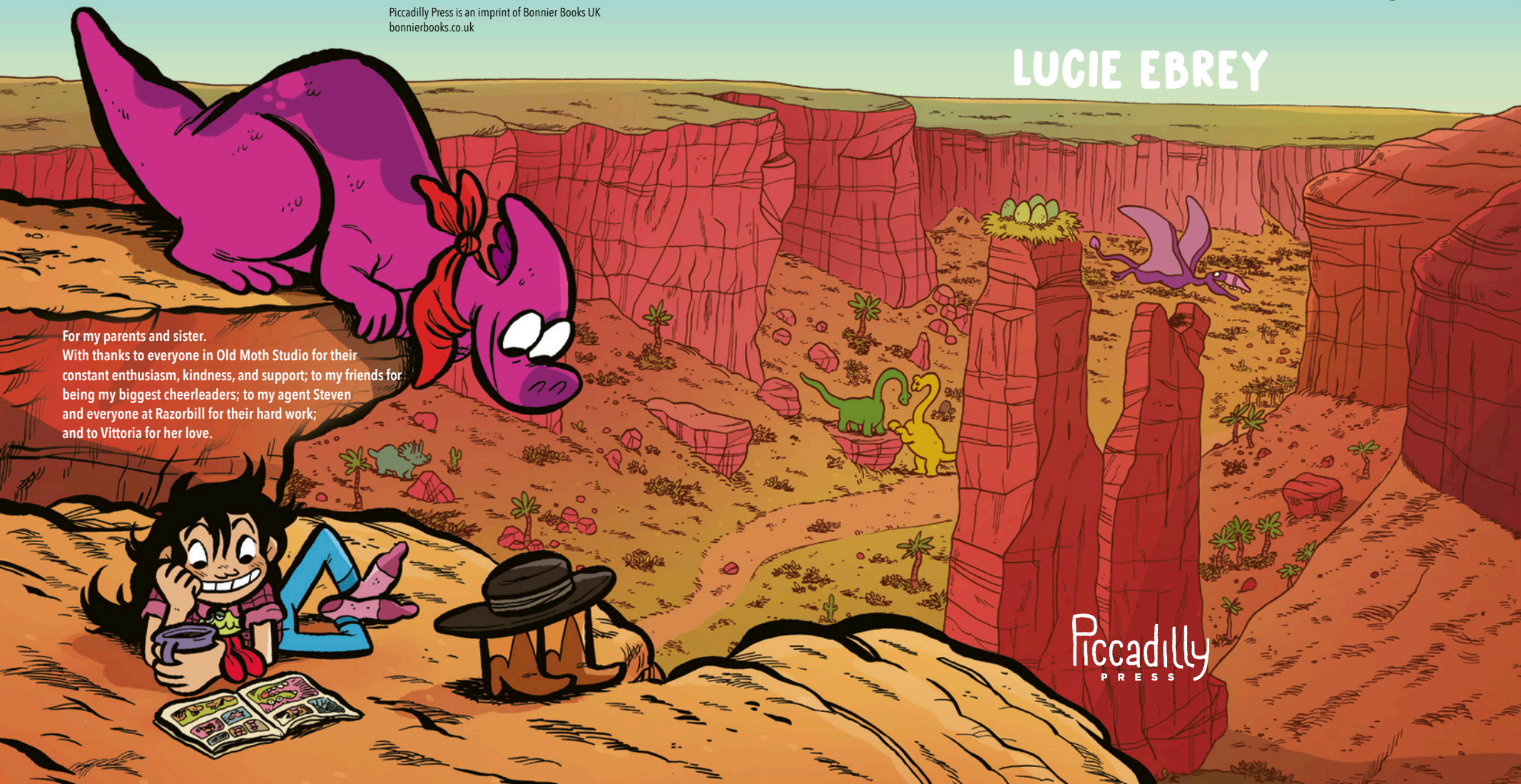
# COWGIRLS &

# DINOSAURS

## BIG TROUBLE IN LITTLE SPITTLE

### LUCIE EBREY

For my parents and sister.  
With thanks to everyone in Old Moth Studio for their  
constant enthusiasm, kindness, and support; to my friends for  
being my biggest cheerleaders; to my agent Steven  
and everyone at Razorbill for their hard work;  
and to Vittoria for her love.



Piccadilly  
PRESS



Millions of years ago ...



A mysterious and dangerous meteor sets its course for a distant planet, stowing away a sinister passenger.

The passenger ached for destruction, for the extinction of all life.





But its aim ...

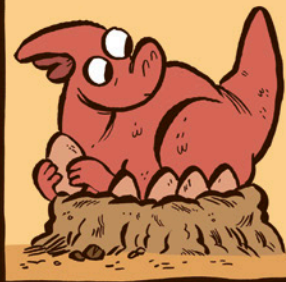
# KRASH!

... was a little off.



And although the impact on the planet's surface resulted in untold destruction ...

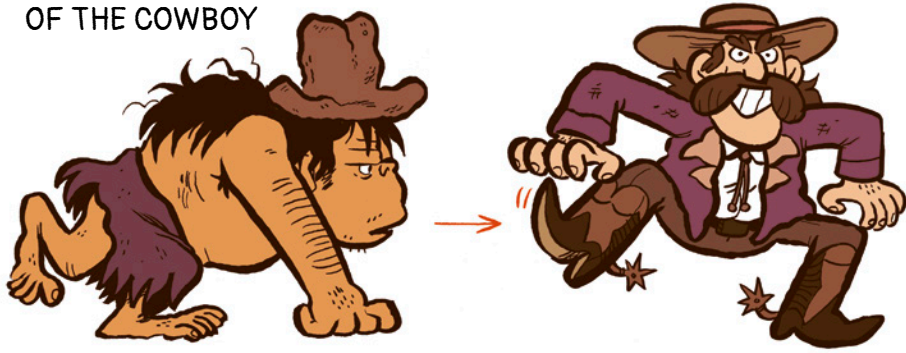
Life prevailed.



And flourished.



# NATURAL EVOLUTION OF THE COWBOY



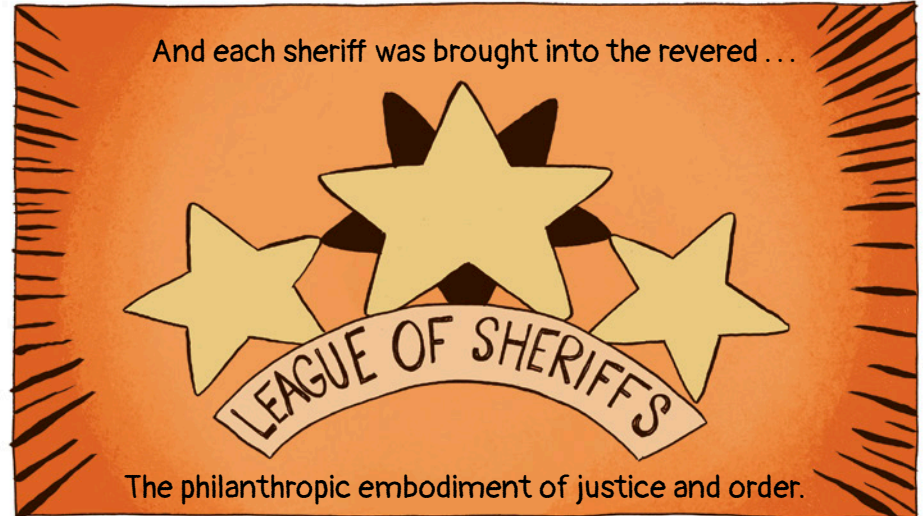
A new rootin' tootin' life-form emerged over thousands upon thousands of years.



And together with the established dinosaurs, they lived side by side with all sorts of critters and creatures, carving a new world in the desolate and dangerous prairie.



Each new town was watched over by a designated sheriff and deputy. Both adored by their communities as keepers of peace and order.



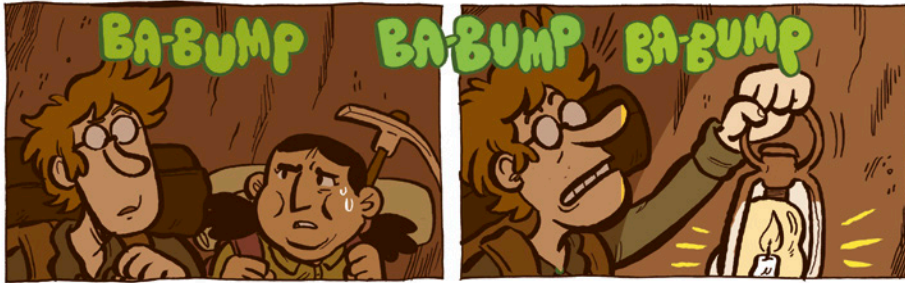
And each sheriff was brought into the revered ...

The philanthropic embodiment of justice and order.

But the League had no idea quite what awaited the prairie when a group of archeologists braved the perils of the desert and made it to the meteor site mountain's peak.



Not soon after they arrived were they haunted by a rhythmic ...



And looking up they found the source

BA-BUMP  
BA-BUMP BA-BUMP

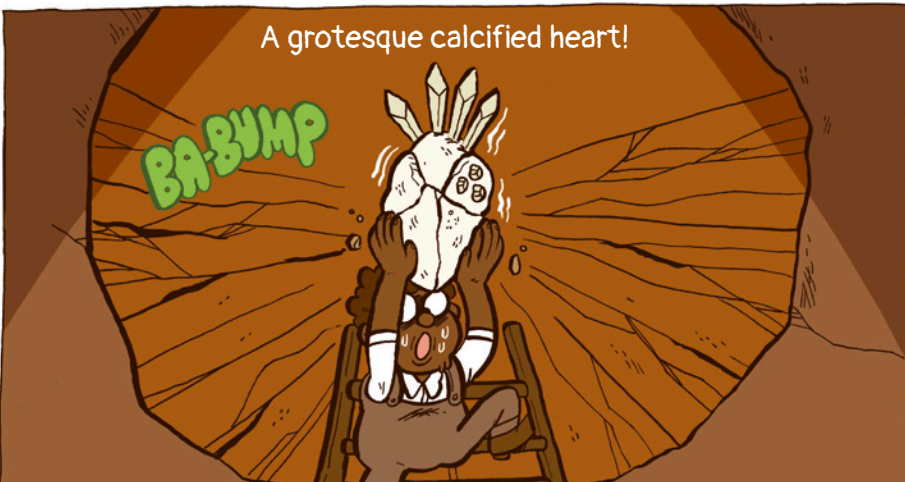
sealed away within the amber-coated meteor itself.

After months of blood, sweat, and more broken pickaxes than they could count ...



... they finally unearthed their prize.

A grotesque calcified heart!



It wasn't long, however, before the researchers began to feel a deeply sinister energy coming from the heart.

Afraid that they'd freed it from what was perhaps its rightful prison, they begged their sheriff to hide it away. He, in turn, brought it to the League for their counsel.



Also sensing the malevolent force emanating from the heart, and afraid of what could happen should they destroy it, the League voted on

what should be done, eventually coming to the unanimous decision to hide it away somewhere nobody would ever think to look.



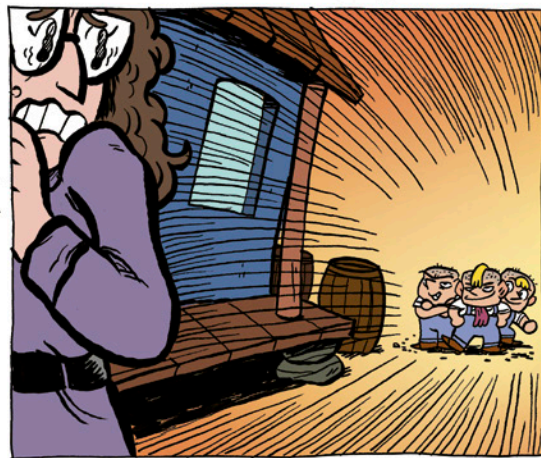


Somewhere unassuming.  
Somewhere out of the way.  
Somewhere like ...

A sleepy town on the far side of the desert where folks minded their manners and said "howdy" to each other on the street.



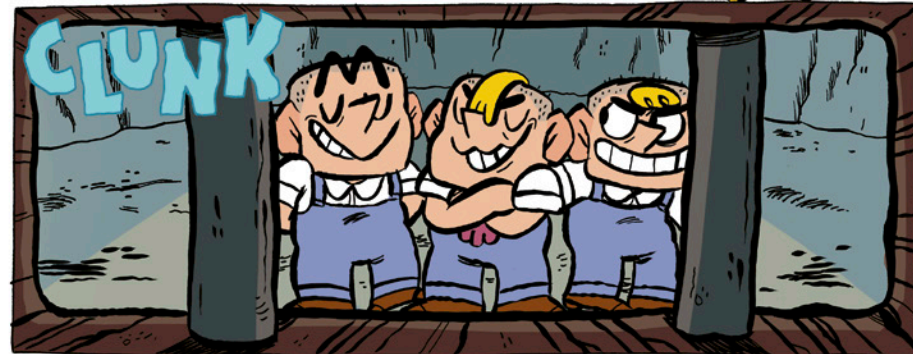
And certainly a town that knew how to handle ...

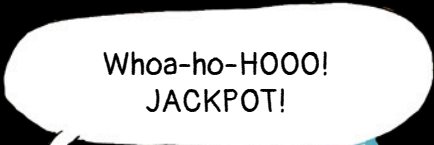
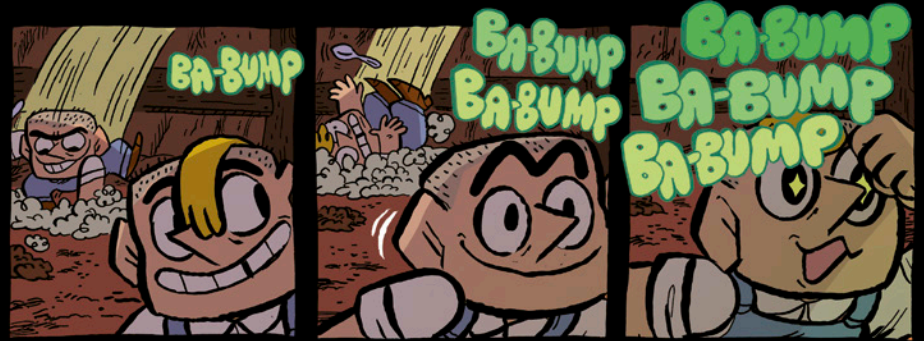


What do ya say, brothers o' mine? Reckon we can shake up this one-horse town?

Oh yeeeah. Watch out!

We're gonna commit sooo many crimes!









Heh heh!



Hmm...

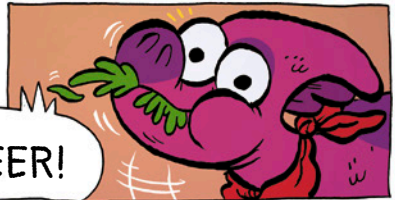


Stylish young feller's shoe. Real fancy. Times three.

There's only one gaggle of bandits who sport identical footwear of such finery.



And they can't be far now.



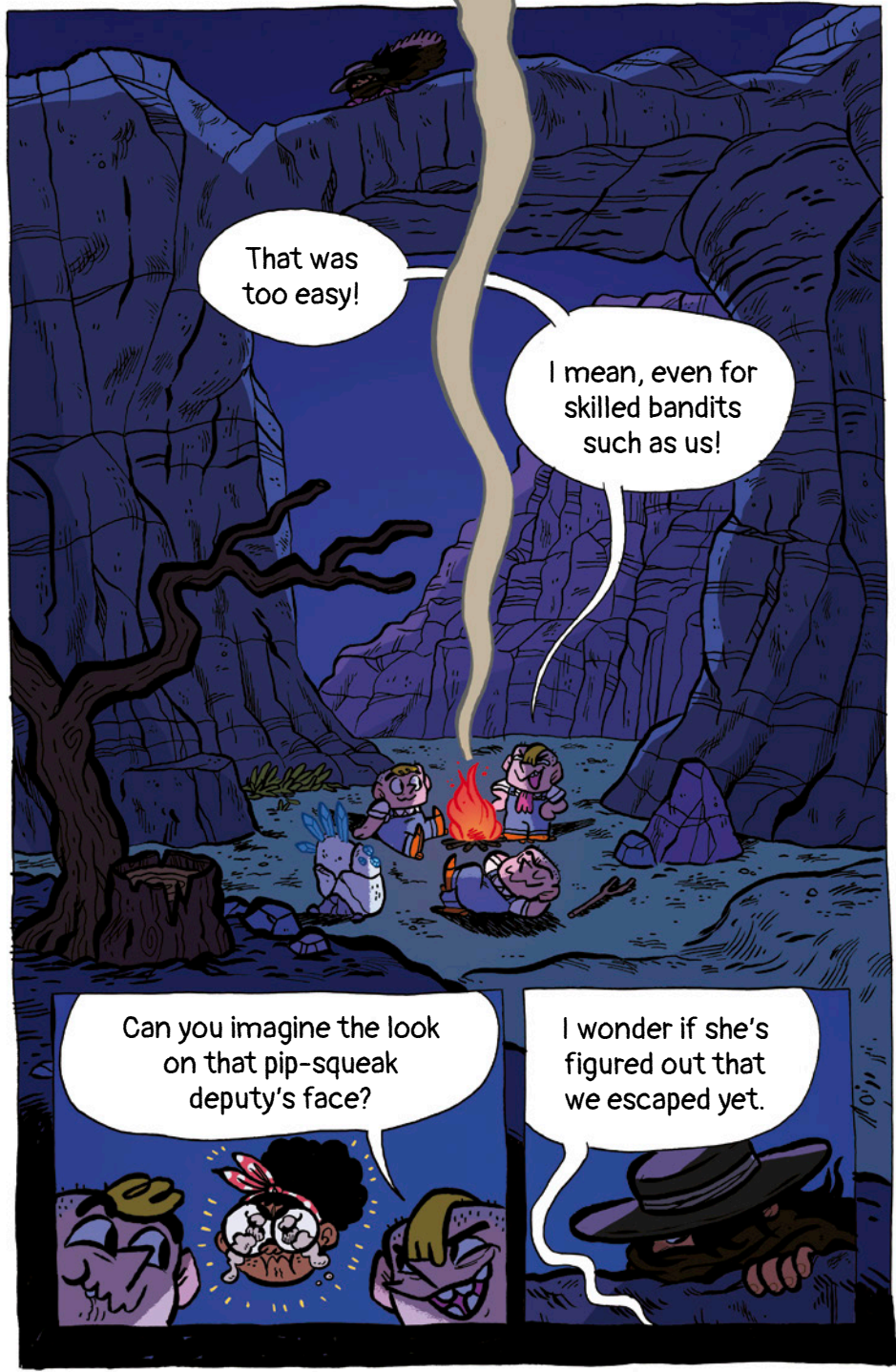
ROOTBEER!



C'mon, pal!



We've got criminals to catch!



That was too easy!

I mean, even for skilled bandits such as us!



Can you imagine the look on that pip-squeak deputy's face?



I wonder if she's figured out that we escaped yet.



And since we "suggested" those sheriffs take a little "vacation," the path is all clear for sis's big plan.

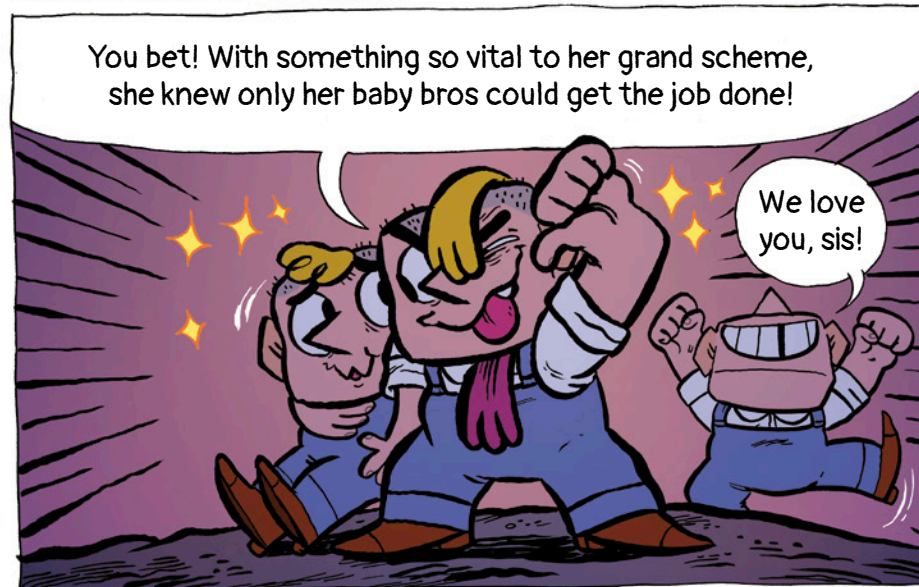


With this thing bein' the key!



D'ya reckon sis'll be proud of us?

It's just lately she's been so—



You bet! With something so vital to her grand scheme, she knew only her baby bros could get the job done!

We love you, sis!



When it's all set in motion, the whole desert is in for a—

**SURPRISE!**



**THE SARSAPARILLA KID**

Cloaked vigilante





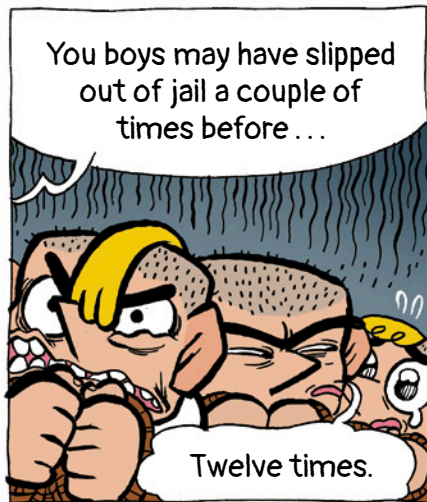
That was too easy!



Are we there yet?



In a hurry to be back behind bars, eh?



You boys may have slipped out of jail a couple of times before ...

Twelve times.



... but when I'm keepin' an eye on you, that won't be happenin' anytime soon!



YEAH!



...  
Yeah ...



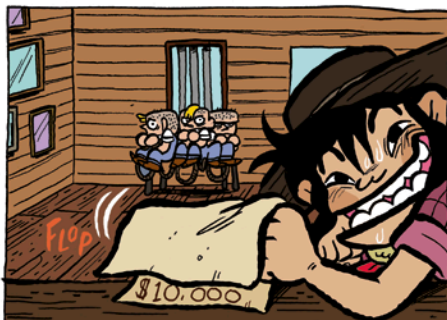
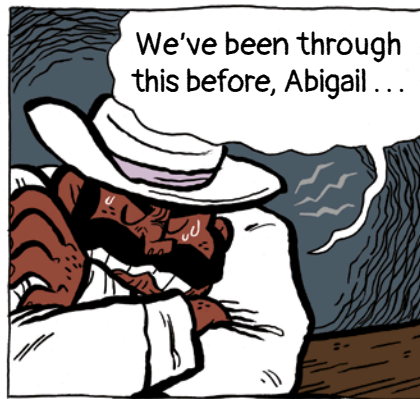
SMECK!

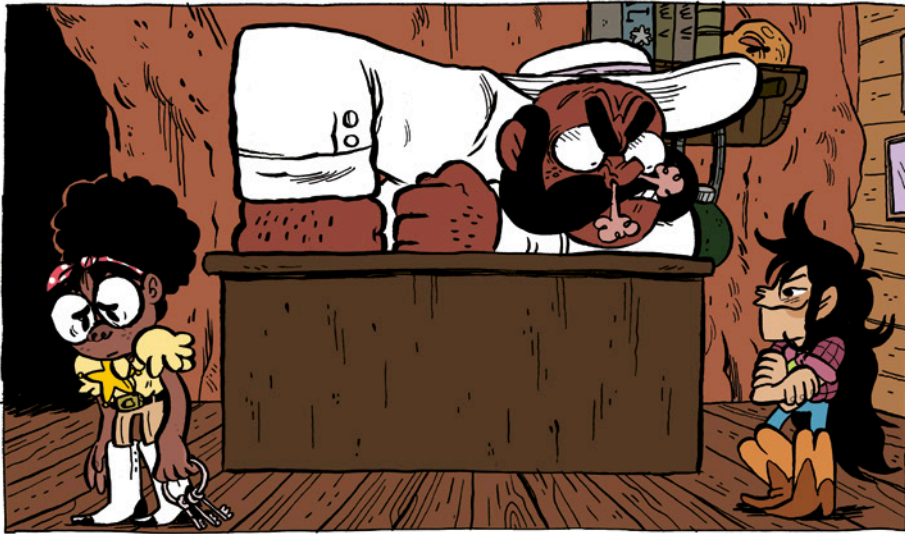
Ha ha, okay, bud.

This is gonna be the day!



The day they finally say "yes"!





I... that is to say ...



... I'm sorry for letting everyone down!



How did they escape?

Oh! Er...

I haven't figured it out just yet. I locked them up tight.

But when I came back with their complimentary inmate tea, they'd somehow dug their way out!



HARUMPH! I would never have taken my eyes off of them. Just sayin'.



And geez, Clementine. TEA? How'd you catch them in the first place? Ask 'em real nice and flutter your eyelashes?



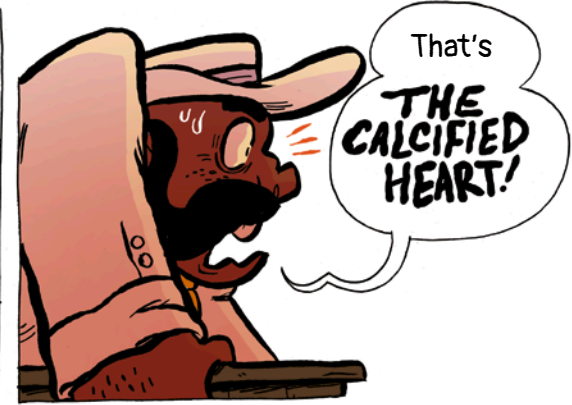
I-I'm firm but fair!

Uh-huh...

And because of your wimpy methods, these clowns were able to slip away.



As well as steal... whatever this is.



That's **THE CALCIFIED HEART!**



I hadn't even noticed it was gone!



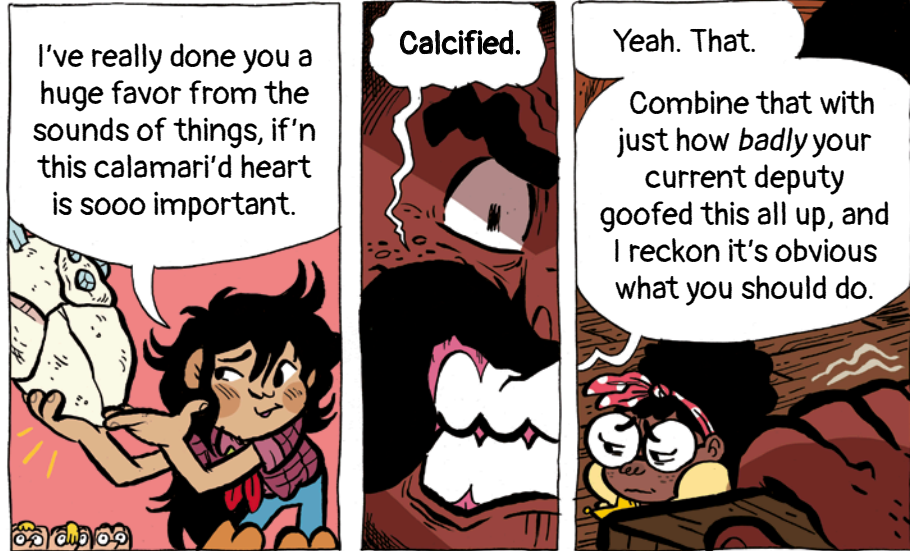
If it had fallen into the wrong hands, then the League would've...



Ahem...

Well, it's back now. If you'll just hand it over to me, I can—

No.



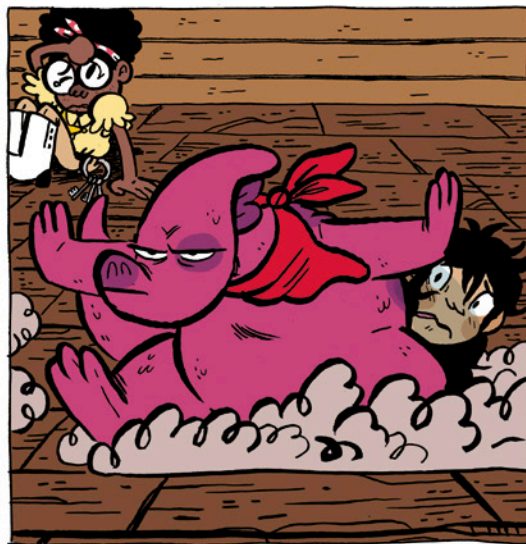
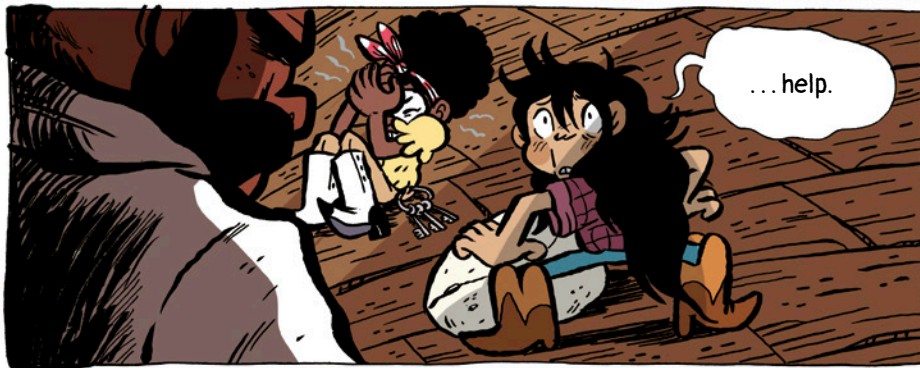


Clementine, I'm so sorry! Let me ...

Oh no.

THUNK

... help.



BAM



A deputy does what they do because it's **right**. Not because they want glory or attention.



You have a lot of potential, Abigail.



You're talented and passionate.



But acting as you do now, you'll never get to where you want to be.



Thank you for your help today. Now get out of my town.









Ah, Sheriff. You're determined that I remain heartless.



I didn't want to have to add a personal touch to this heist.

But...



... you've forced my hand.



You boys best get comfy. I'd wager you're gonna be here a fair while.

YOWCH!



My deputy here will make sure of that.

U-UH-HUH!

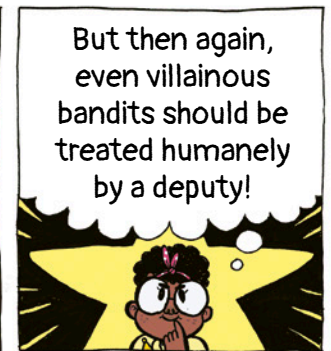
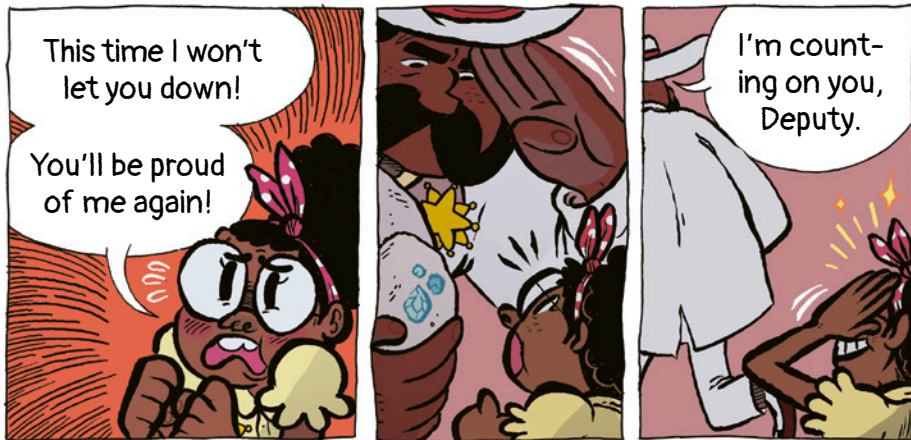


clink



I'm going to give the heart the once-over and make sure those clowns didn't damage it before I hide it away again.

I'll stay on watch, Papa.





WAIT A MINUTE!

How could I be so careless?



Sorry, I forgot to ask if you all wanted milk in your tea or if you're lactose intolerant—



...



No no no NO! Not again!

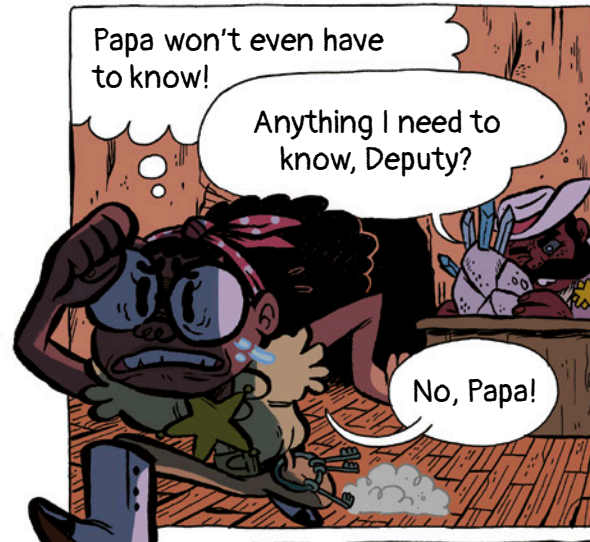


WAIT! If I go round the back of the building, I can intercept them!



This isn't a disaster yet!

I can still fix this!



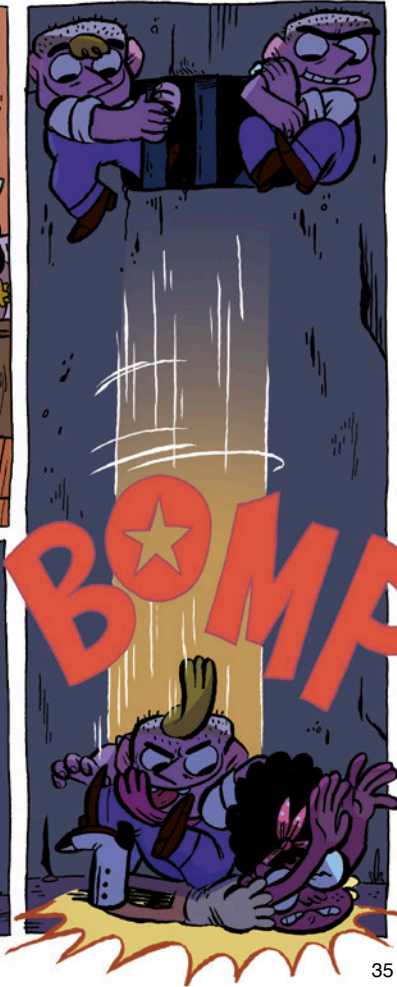
Papa won't even have to know!

Anything I need to know, Deputy?

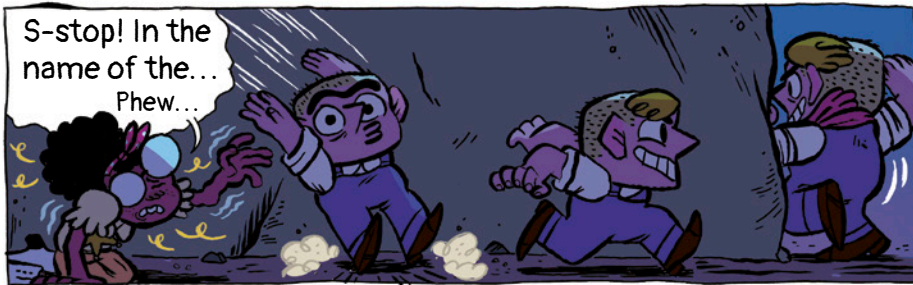
No, Papa!



Huff-puff. No sign of them.



BOMP



S-stop! In the name of the...  
Pheh...



Eh? You notice something suspicious over there, Frankie?



Who's sneakin' around so late at night?



What?

Kids?



Owie ...



I've taken a lot of licks today.



But I refuse to let them get away again!



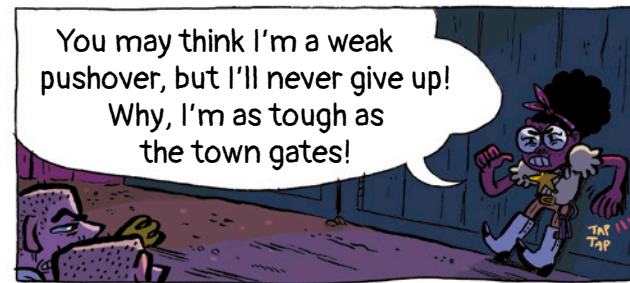
Because I am THE DEPUTY!



Oh, for goodness sake!



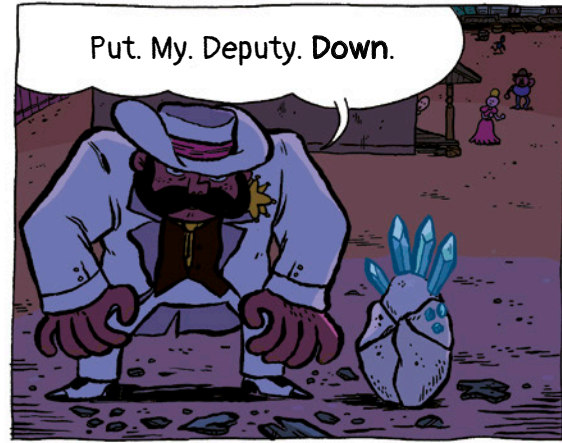
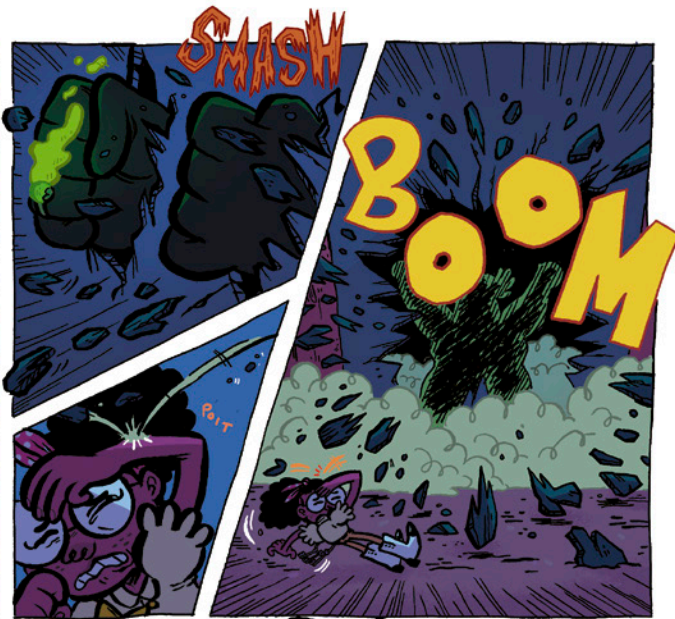
Okay, you've had your fun. But now it's time to come with me, boys. You're not going any farther.

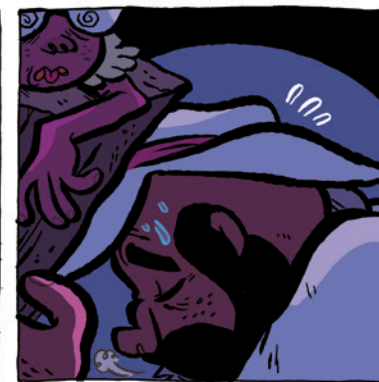


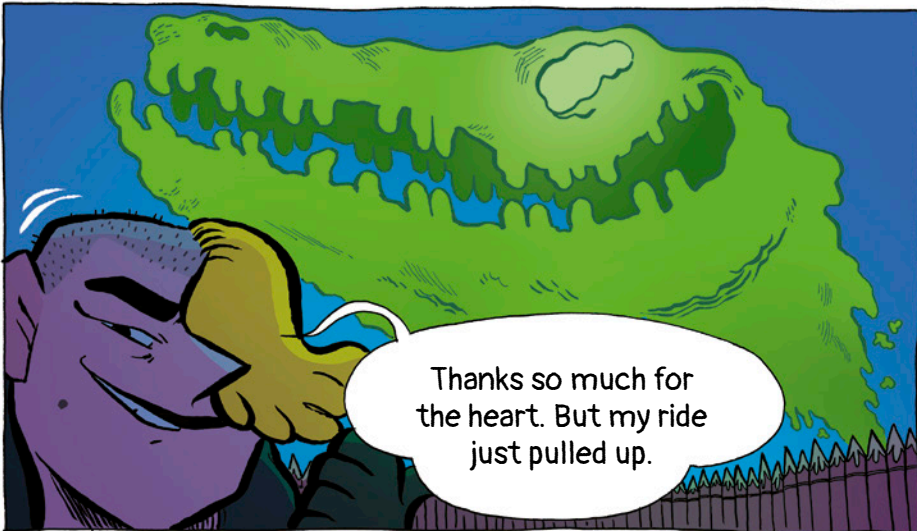
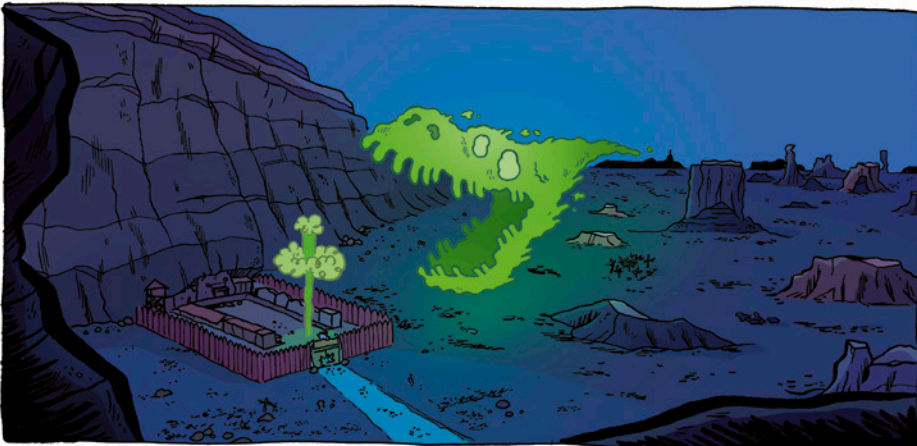
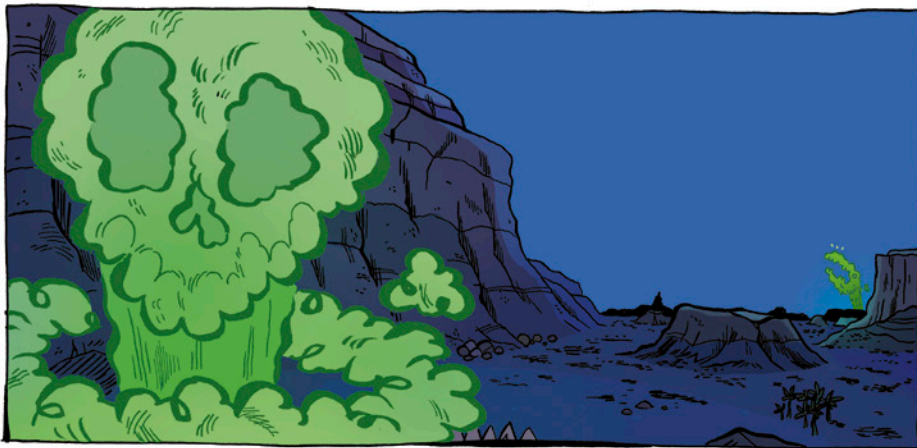
You may think I'm a weak pushover, but I'll never give up!  
Why, I'm as tough as the town gates!



CRASH







Thanks so much for the heart. But my ride just pulled up.



G-goodness.

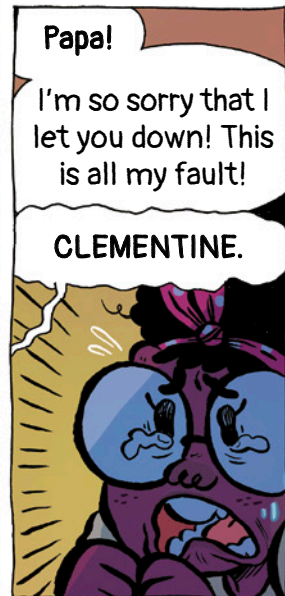


Deputy...

Papa!



You need to get the heart. Run.



Papa!

I'm so sorry that I let you down! This is all my fault!

CLEMENTINE.



This is powerful dinomagik. Who knows what she's planning with the heart.

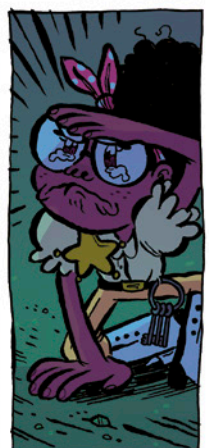


You're the only one who can get help. But you have to go now.

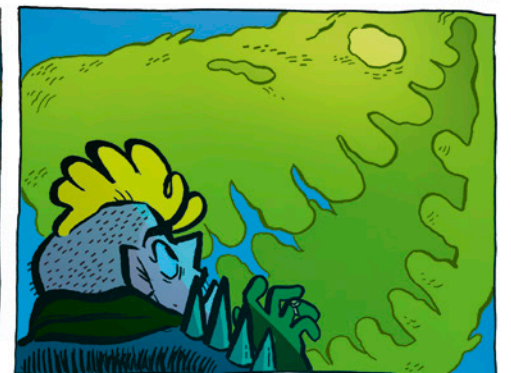
Papa...

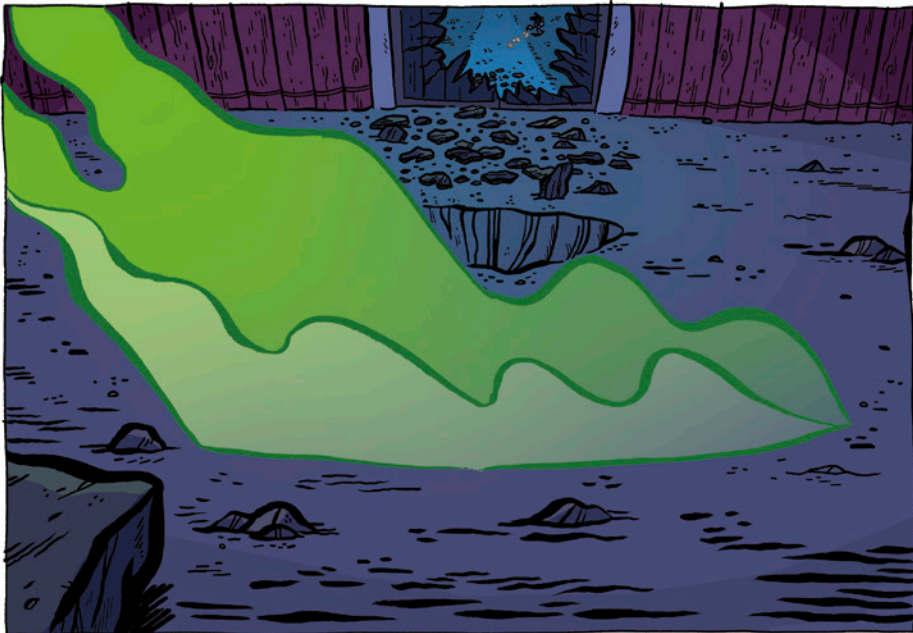
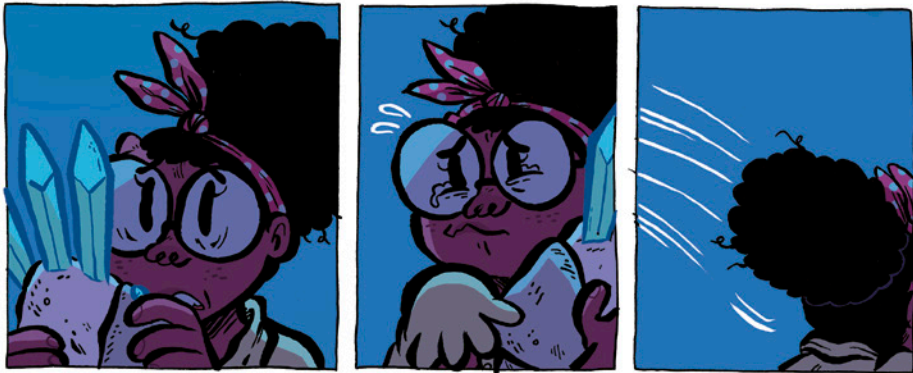


That's an order.









HARUMPH!

Of all the ungrateful, ...back-stabbin', NO-GOOD

RASSUM FRASSUM...

If it weren't for me, that super special heart would be halfway to who knows where!

And this is how they thank me?

Well, heck to 'em!



Rootbeer, old bud, at the crack of dawn, the two of us are gonna up stakes and find a better, more appreciative town praying for a deputy just like me.

Just you wait. I'll bet those Little Spittle losers will realize their mistake and will be cryin' and wailin' my name.

I can almost hear it now ...

ABIGAIL! ABIGAIL! WHERE ARE YOU?





That was sooner than I thought ...



Oh, thank goodness.



It's ... Little Spittle ...

Everyone ... gone!

**KIDNAPPED!**



You ain't makin' a lick of sense.



You're here to make me feel even worse about whappin' you on the head I'll bet!

Well, I already apologized and I ain't doin' it agai—



Great. It's you.



**BONK**



B-Bandit Queen ... She came to town because she wanted—

She wanted to rescue her brothers?

I mean obviously she wanted to—



**NO!**

She wanted the calcified heart! She needs it for ... for SOMETHING! I DON'T KNOW!



Er ... hey, Clementine. What's wrong? You look more nervous than a cat in a room full of rocking chairs. And why d'ya have that?



And now she's stolen everyone.

The whole of Little Spittle.

The wonderful townsfolk.

Our dinos.

And ... Papa ...





They're all gone and ...

and ...

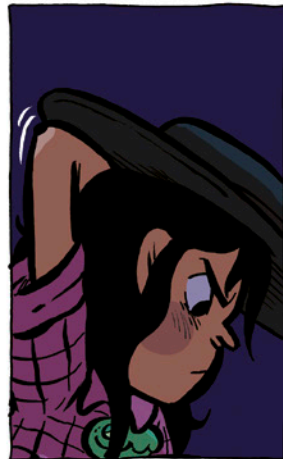
and I couldn't stop it from happening!

sniff sniff

WHUMPF



It's all my fault!



Well, what are you going to do now?



m-me?



Yup.

I mean, you're the deputy and all.

Sounds like a whole lotta ruckus that's none of my business.

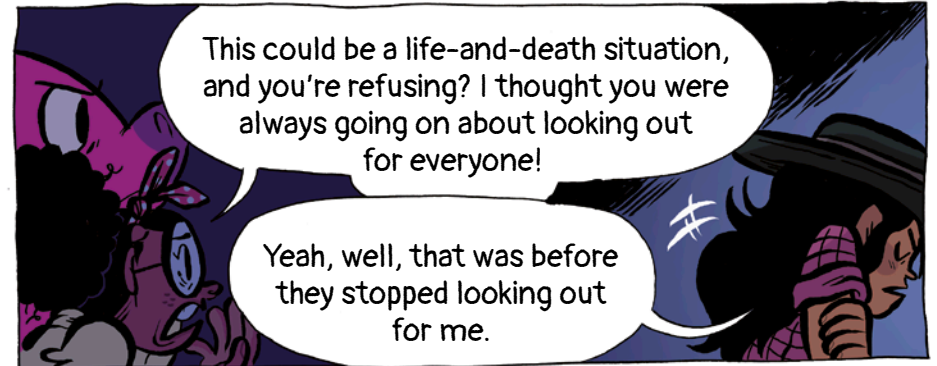


You're not serious, are you?



Oh, I am!

That town treated me like dirt! I say heck to them and the mess they're in!



This could be a life-and-death situation, and you're refusing? I thought you were always going on about looking out for everyone!

Yeah, well, that was before they stopped looking out for me.



I really can't convince you to help?

No, ma'am.



What if...



... what if I gave it to you?





Wait! You don't mean—

My badge.

My role as deputy.

The respect that comes with it.

All of it.



Clementine ...

I ... well ... I ...



**HOWEVER.**  
I only back down as deputy once Little Spittle is saved.

Do we have a deal?



Y-you promise?



A deputy's word is everything.

You better get used to that.



Then ... DEAL!



Abigail, thank you. This means so m—



**KA-CLASP**



Don't thank me just yet, Clementine. We still have a ways to go.



I mean, we don't even know where that... **calibrated** heart is or why Bandit Queen wants it in the first place.



Calcified.

But yes, I suppose you're right. We should start, well, with the heart.



That can wait until morning. We won't be much use worn out. Let's get a night of rest in first.



Ah yes. Good idea. It's...

... it's been quite a day.



You can take my bed.

It's in the wagon.



Oh! Well, thank you, Abigail.

But what about you?

I don't want to be any imposition.



Ehn. Spare me.

I'll sleep under the stars tonight. Looks like a purty one.

If'n anything happens, I'll have Rootbeer with me.



Plus... your... er... head there could use a soft pillow or two, I reckon.



If that's the case, thank you kindly.



I'll see you tomorrow bright and early!

Uh-huh. Yeah. G'night. Or...yeah...

