

benediction.

BY MEAGHAN I.

A FINAL FANTASY XIV FANCOMIC

THE BLACK SHROUD
1557, ASTRAL ERA





'M GONNA GET MORE
FIREWOOD, MA.



.... MHM. DON'T
WANDER, NEA.

YES, MA.









I GOTTA GET UP.



IT HURTS SO BAD, BUT I GOTTA GET UP. MA'LL BE LOOKING--



I CAN'T, I CAN'T I CAN'T I CAN'T I CAN'T--





I GOTTA GET UP, I GOTTA
GET UP, I GOTTA

GET UP!

NEA!

-- IF I KEEP LAYING HERE, A
WOLF WILL COME AND THEN
IT'LL-- I'LL

-- IF I DON'T COME BACK,
MA WILL GO LOOKIN' AND
THEN-- SHE'LL--

IF I SCREAM, THE SNAKES
WILL FIND ME, AND THEY'LL--
AND I'LL--

-- IF I DON'T COME BACK, MA AND DA AND
BRAN AND CAM AND PEN WILL LOOK FOR ME
THEN THEY'LL ALL GET LOST AND FALL
DOWN AND THEY'LL-- AND THEY'LL--



-- DIE.



WHY THE TEARS, LITTLE FRIEND?



DID YOU FALL AND HURT YOURSELF?



THUNK

-- OW.



PEACE, PEACE! I MEAN NO HARM!



QUITE THE ARM ON YOU, EH?

LET ME INTRODUCE MYSELF. I'M--



NO! NO MORE ROCKS!



PLEASE! JUST-
JUST LISTEN!

PLEASE NO
MORE ROCKS.

... THE COUNCIL WOULD HAVE
MY HEAD IF I PASSED BY AN
INJURED CHILD AND OFFERED
NO AID.

SO, IF YOU LET ME MEND
YOUR ARM, IT HELPS BOTH
OF US, YES?



... YOU'RE NOT
MAD AT ME?



H-HUH?



... THE WOOD.

MA SAID... FOLKS DIDN'T LIKE IT
WHEN YOU TOOK STUFF. FROM THE
FOREST. SAID IT WAS BAD LUCK.

... BUT THE FIRE WAS REAL LOW.
AND DA WAS SLEEPING, AND MA...
MA'S TIRED.

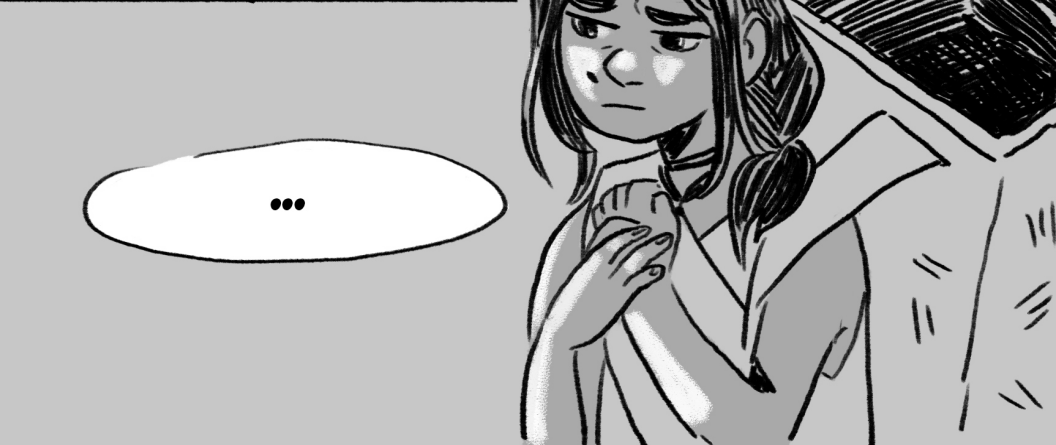


... I SEE.



I AM AN APPRENTICE TO- WELL, I GUESS IT DOESN'T MATTER. IT, AH, IT IS MY-- MY JOB TO LOOK AFTER THOSE WHO ARE HURT, OR LOST. I AM NOT ANGRY YOU TOOK FIREWOOD-- AND I WON'T EVEN TELL ANYONE.

SO IF YOU GIVE ME YOUR HAND, I PROMISE TO MEND IT. AND THEN WE CAN GO LOOK FOR YOUR FATHER AND MOTHER.



...



NEAAAAAaa



... OKAY.

THANK YOU. IT WILL BE JUST A MOMENT...





HOW DID YOU DO THAT? IT FELT WEIRD.

OH, WELL, IT'S... SORT OF COMPLICATED...

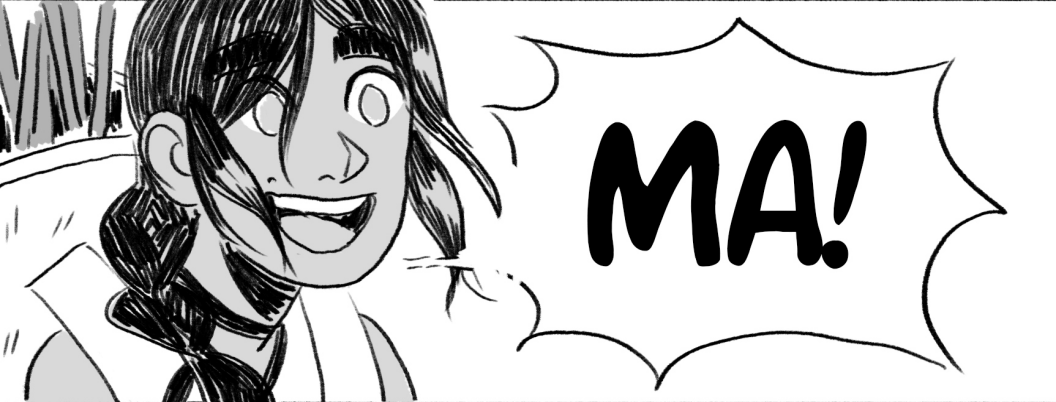
YOU SORT OF REACH IN AND PULL A BIT, AND THEN PUSH OUT-- BUT NOT TOO MUCH...

... THAT DOESN'T MAKE ANY SENSE AT ALL.

HUH.

NEXT, YOU--

NEA?



A young girl with short hair in a bun, wearing a simple tunic, is shown from the chest up. She is holding a large, shallow basket filled with sticks of firewood. She has a slightly nervous or sheepish expression on her face.

I WENT TO GET
FIREWOOD, AN' I WENT
A LITTLE FAR, BUT--

THEN I FELL DOWN
IN A HOLE, AND--

I FELL ON MY WRIST
AND ALL THE FIREWOOD
FELL OUT, AND--

THEN--

A woman with short hair is shown from the chest up, looking towards the girl. She is wearing a simple tunic. The girl is in the foreground, looking up at the woman with a worried expression. The woman's hand is near the girl's head.

NEVER AGAIN.

NEVER LEAVE THE
CAMP AT NIGHT
AGAIN, NEA.

NOT IN THESE WOODS,
NOT ANYWHERE.

The girl is shown from the chest up, looking down with a sad and obedient expression. She is still wearing the same tunic. The woman's hand is still near her head.

... OKAY, MA.



BUT- BUT MA, I MET THIS, UH, THIS LADY, AN' SHE HELPED ME--



NEA, WHAT ARE YOU TALKIN' ABOUT?



THE LADY MA!
OVER--

-- OVER THERE.





... SAYS SHE MET SOMEONE,
IN THE FOREST?

YEAH. LADY WITH
WHITE HAIR, YEA TALL.

THINK IT WAS AN ADDER,
MEANT TO SPEED US OUT?

NAH. LIKE AS NOT, IT WERE
A DREAM, OR SOMESUCH.



END



THANK YOU FOR READING!

FROM THE BOTTOM OF MY HEART, THANK YOU FOR FOLLOWING ALONG AS I STRUGGLED THROUGH THIS COMIC, AND FOR READING IT ALL THE WAY TO THE END! IT MEANS SO MUCH TO ME..

IF I COULD START AGAIN, KNOWING WHAT I KNOW NOW, I WOULD HAVE DONE A LOT OF THINGS DIFFERENTLY.. LIKE NOT SAVING ALL THE PAGES IN 3 HUGE 400+ LAYER .PSDS, OR, OH, I DON'T KNOW, WRITING THE DIALOGUE AHEAD OF TIME..?

BUT I'M PLEASD IT'S DONE NOW, AND I LEARNED A LOT, AND I'M EXCITED TO TELL MORE OF NEA'S STORY. I CAN'T PROMISE WHEN, EXACTLY, THAT WILL BE AVAILABLE TO READ.. BUT SOMEDAY!

THIS TOOK ABOUT ABOUT SIX MONTHS FROM START TO FINISH TO SCRIPT (HA), THUMB, SKETCH, LINE, FLAT, AND FINISH. THE STORY IS QUITE A BIT OLDER, THE MORE REFINED REMNANTS OF SOME ANCIENT NOTES I FOUND FROM 2015. SO, IN A WAY I GUESS IT TOOK MORE LIKE 5 YEARS TO FINISH..

