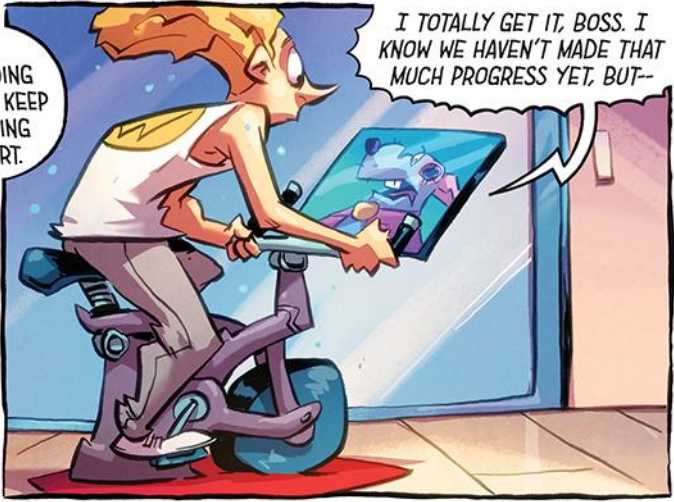




IT'S BEEN YEARS NOW, ROTWALD! THE BOARD IS GOING TO START ASKING QUESTIONS ABOUT THE ALLOCATION OF THE FUNDS I'VE BEEN SECRETLY FUNNELING INTO THIS PROJECT!

OH, AND FINDING MY SON. I KEEP FORGETTING THAT PART.



I TOTALLY GET IT, BOSS. I KNOW WE HAVEN'T MADE THAT MUCH PROGRESS YET, BUT--



SKREEEAWK!



WHAT IN THE @*%\$% IS SHE DOING OVER THERE?!



THAT'S THE "BUT" I WAS READY TO TELL YOU ABOUT. SHE GOT A--

YOU KNOW WHAT, I CAN'T LOOK AT THAT ROTTEN, EMPTY EYE SOCKET OF YOURS ANYMORE. JUST PUT HER ON!



SKREEAWWK!

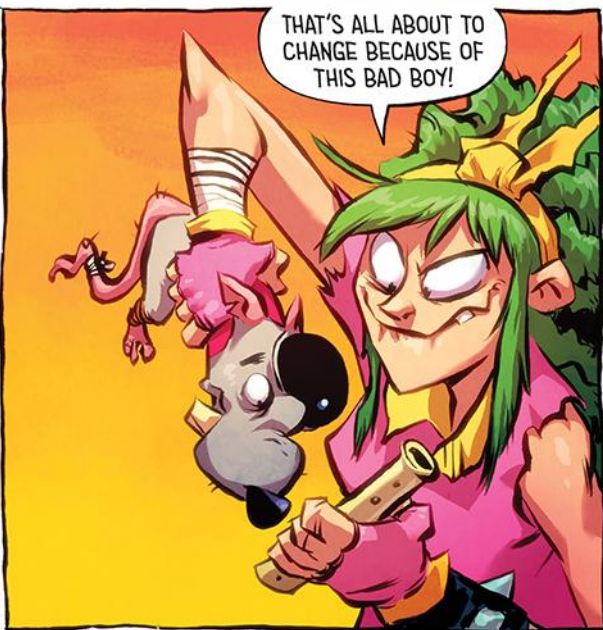
GERT, WIGGINS WANTS TO TALK TO YA!



WHAT?
JUST CHECKING TO SEE HOW THINGS ARE COMING ALONG. YOU KNOW, WONDERING IF YOU'RE ANY CLOSER TO MAKING IT INTO FAIRYLAND PROPER?



LISTEN, YOU LITERALLY SENT A RAT TO KEEP AN EYE ON ME, SO YOU KNOW EXACTLY HOW THE **FLUP** THINGS ARE GOING.



THAT'S ALL ABOUT TO CHANGE BECAUSE OF THIS BAD BOY!



A WHISTLE THAT SOUNDS LIKE ALL LIFE ON THE PLANET SCREAMING IN AGONY AT ONCE?

NO, IT'S A **SKIPPING BIRD CALL**.

AM I SUPPOSED TO KNOW WHAT A **SKIPPING BIRD** IS?



LOOKING LIKE YOU DO, YES, YOU SHOULD. IT'S A BIRD THAT TAKES YOU WHEREVER YOU WANT TO GO AND **SKIPS** ALL THE HARD STUFF. LIKE IN THOSE BOOKS ABOUT HAIRY FEET AND FOOD AND SONGS ABOUT FOOD AND EVIL JEWELRY.

HEY, GERT, IT'S TIME.



SO I CAN TELL THE BOARD--

THAT I HAVE TO GO NOW, BYEEEEEEEEE.



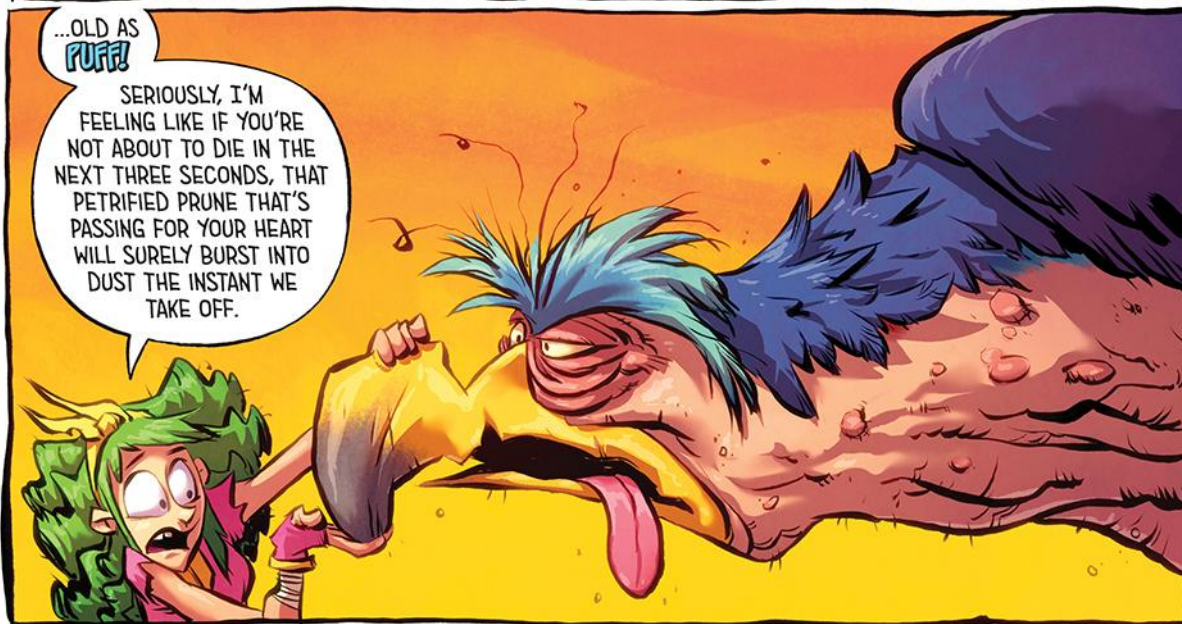
SOMEONE CALLED FOR RIDE?

UM... YEAH, I DID.

ALL RIGHT, CLIMB ON AND TELL ME WHERE-TO.



ARE YOU SURE YOU CAN HANDLE THE JOB? I MEAN, YOU LOOK, I DON'T KNOW...



...OLD AS PUFF!

SERIOUSLY, I'M FEELING LIKE IF YOU'RE NOT ABOUT TO DIE IN THE NEXT THREE SECONDS, THAT PETRIFIED PRUNE THAT'S PASSING FOR YOUR HEART WILL SURELY BURST INTO DUST THE INSTANT WE TAKE OFF.