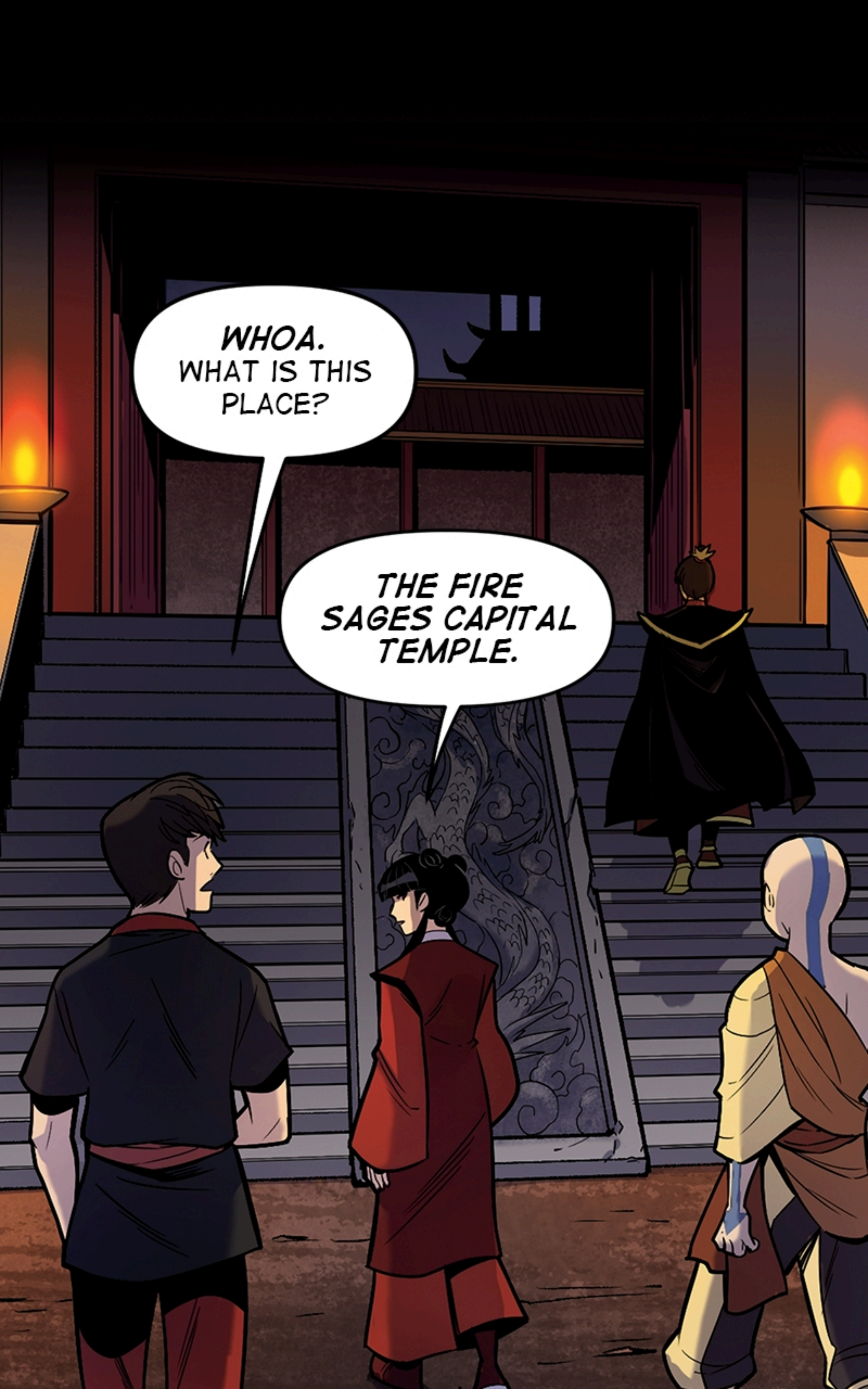




A comic book panel depicting the entrance to the Fire Sages Capital Temple. In the foreground, three characters are standing on a dirt path. On the left, a young man with dark hair, wearing a dark blue tunic with a red sash and red leggings, looks towards the temple. In the center, a young woman with dark hair in a bun, wearing a red robe, also looks towards the temple. On the right, a bald man with a blue stripe on his forehead, wearing a yellow robe with a brown sash, is walking away from the viewer towards the temple. In the background, a large, dark, multi-tiered temple structure with a traditional East Asian architectural style is visible. The entrance is framed by red pillars. Two large, glowing orange lanterns are positioned on either side of the entrance. A wide set of stone steps leads up to the temple. Two speech bubbles are present: one from the man on the left and one from the woman in the center.

WHOA.
WHAT IS THIS
PLACE?

*THE FIRE
SAGES CAPITAL
TEMPLE.*



YOU'VE BEEN
HERE BEFORE,
MAI?

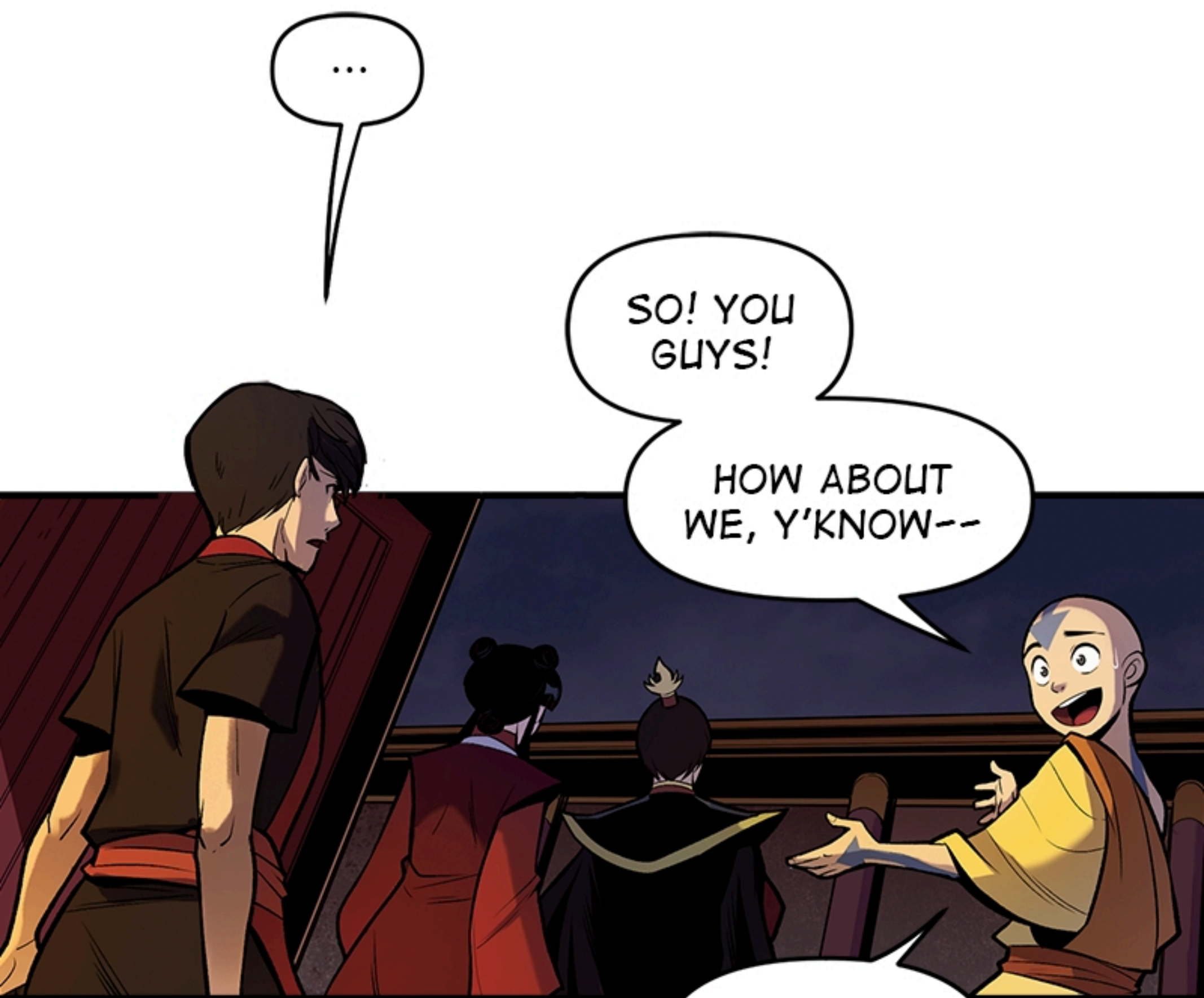




ONCE. AN *EX*
THOUGHT IT'D BE
ROMANTIC TO SHARE
A MEAL OVER THE *BURIAL*
SITE OF HIS ANCESTORS.



AND HE WAS
RIGHT. IT *WAS*
ROMANTIC.



...

SO! YOU
GUYS!

HOW ABOUT
WE, Y'KNOW--

GET
GOING ON
THE, UH--

WHATEVER
IT IS WE CAME
HERE TO DO?!

A comic book panel set at night. In the foreground, Fire Lord Ozai, an elderly man with a long white beard and a red turban, holds a wooden staff. He is looking towards the left. Behind him stand two younger men: Prince Zuko on the left, wearing a dark blue and gold Fire Nation uniform with a small crown, and Avatar Aang on the right, wearing his traditional orange and white robes. They are standing in front of a dark wooden building. Two speech bubbles are present: one from Aang and one from Ozai.

*GREAT
SAGE SHYU!*

FIRE
LORD! AVATAR!
WHAT A PLEASANT
SURPRISE!



SO GOOD
TO SEE YOU
AGAIN, SHYU!



I'M SORRY
IT'S BEEN SO
LONG SINCE MY
LAST VISIT.

THINGS
HAVE BEEN
BUSY.



YOU KNOW WHAT
FIRE SAGE KAJA USED
TO SAY--THE **BUSIER** WE
ARE, THE MORE ATTENTION
WE MUST PAY TO OUR
INTERIOR LIFE.

TRUE,
BUT--

MY BROTHER
SAGES AND I RECENTLY
REVIVED A COUPLE OF OLD

REVIVED A COUPLE OF OLD
PRACTICES THAT MAY BE
OF INTEREST TO YOU!

IN FACT,
I'M TEACHING A
NEW **MEDITATION**
CLASS THAT--

I'D LOVE
TO HEAR MORE,
SHYU-- I SWEAR--

BUT RIGHT NOW,
MY FRIENDS AND
I NEED TO GET INTO
THE **DRAGONBONE**
CATACOMBS.





≡SIGH≡ OF
COURSE.

DOES THE
FIRE LORD VISIT
OFTEN?

SURE.
SOMETIMES FOR
THE *VIEW*, SOMETIMES
FOR THE *DUSTY OLD*
SCROLLS IN THE
CATACOMBS.

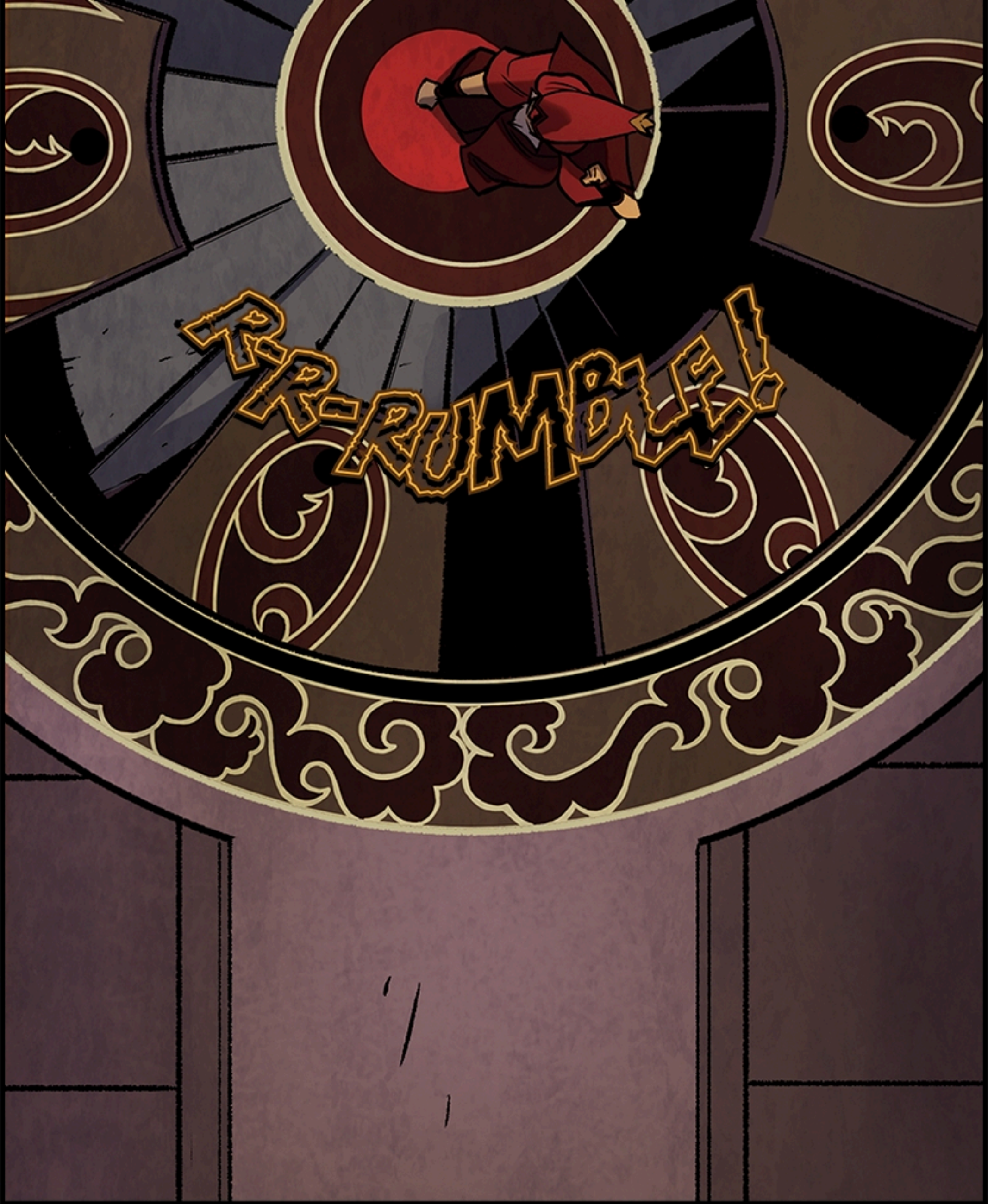


NEVER FOR
MY *MEDITATION*
CLASSES.











[Redacted text]

[Redacted text]





SO HE HAS
HIS HAND IN THE
JAR, AND I HEAR HIM
WHISPER, "*I SHOULDN'T
BE DOING THIS!*"

BUT HE
STILL TAKES THE
COOKIE! *HA HA!*





EARLIER
TODAY, I MET A
FATHER WHOSE SON
WAS TAKEN.

OH, NO! WHAT
HAPPENED?

YOU KNOW
WHAT? WE AGREED
I WOULDN'T BRING MY
TROUBLES FROM
WORK--



SHHH!

DO
YOU HEAR
THAT?



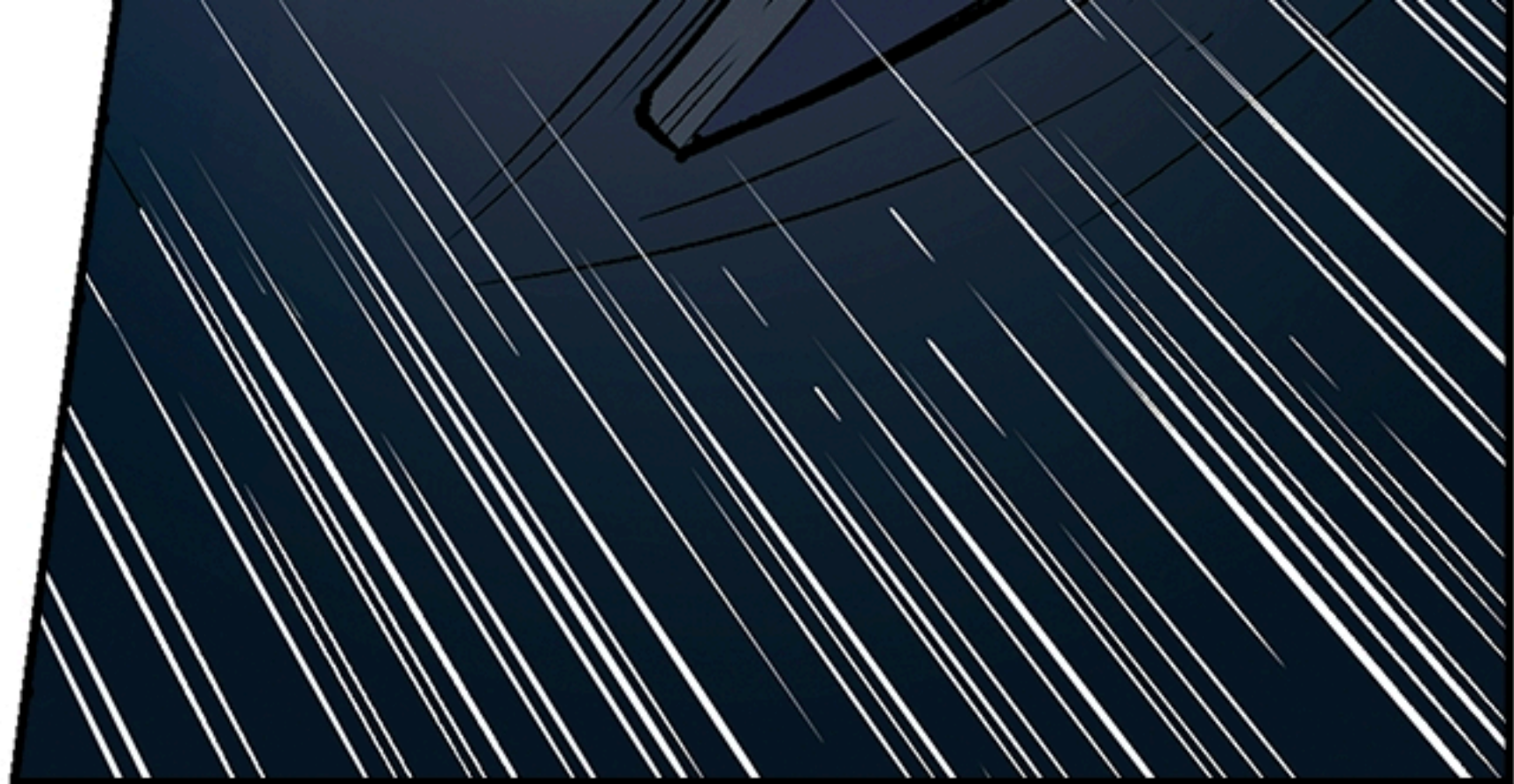
FOOTSTEPS,
COMING FROM
GLURI'S ROOM!



I'M SURE IT'S
NOTHING, HONEY!
HE PROBABLY JUST GOT
UP FOR A DRINK
OF WATER!







*THE
KEMURIKAGE!*





RELEASE MY
SON! *NOW!*



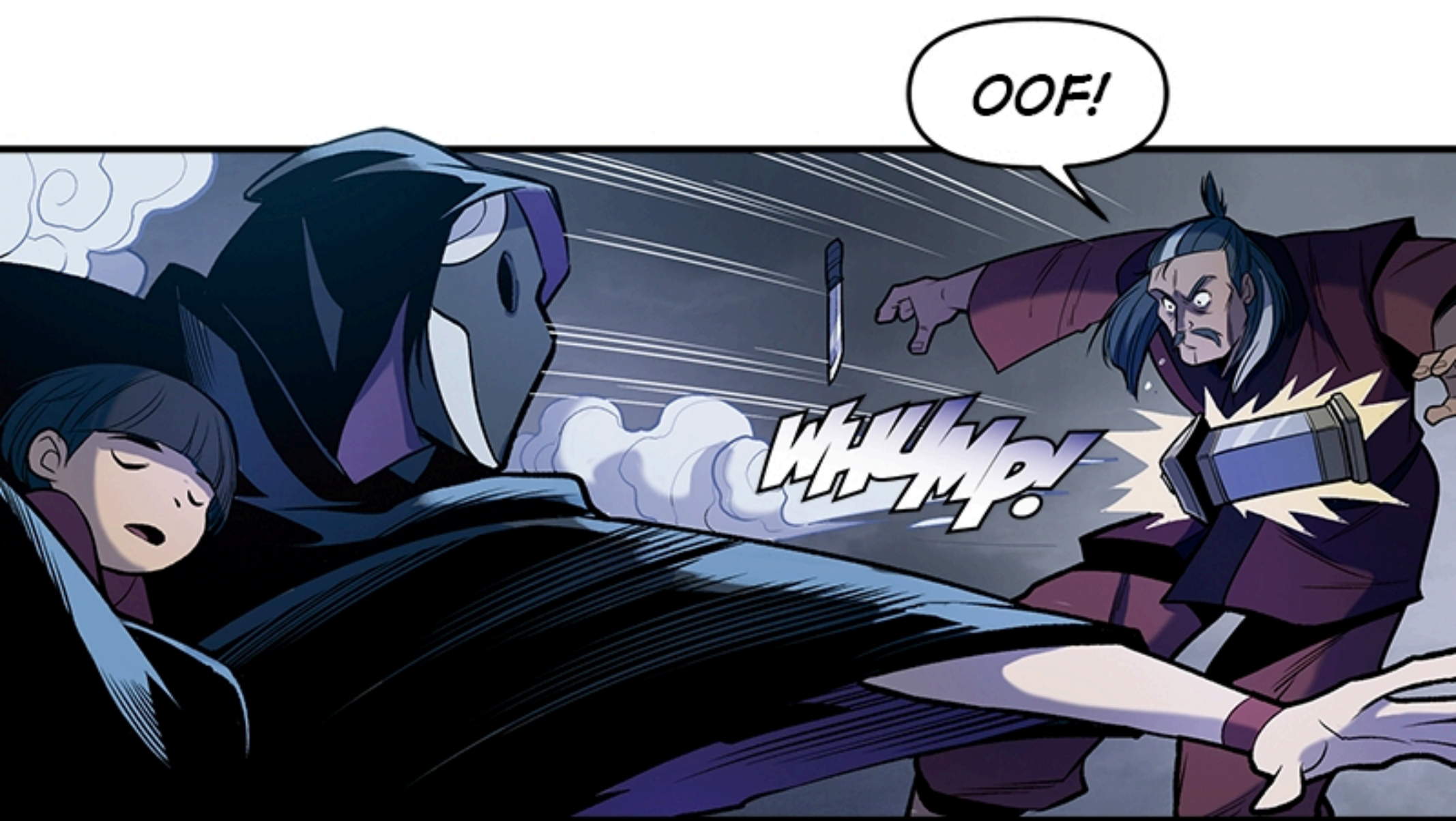
*YOU HEARD
THE MAN!*













⇒COUGH!⇐
COME BACK!
⇒COUGH!⇐



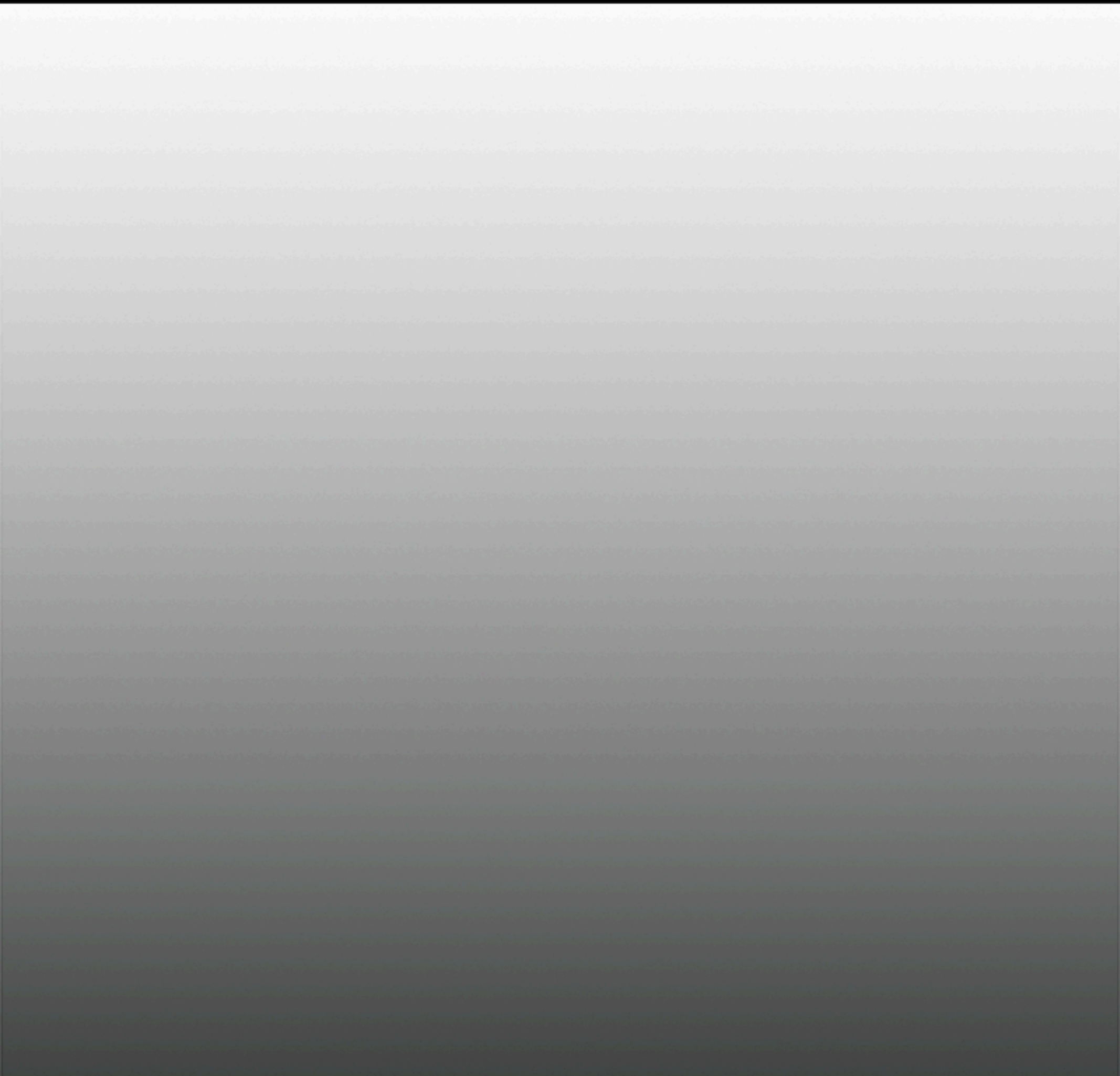
⇒COUGH!⇐



⇒COUGH!⇐
⇒COUGH!⇐
⇒COUGH!⇐

NO...







SO THIS
IS WHERE THE
FIRE LORDS ARE
BURIED?

YES.

RESERVE
A PLACE FOR
YOURSELF YET?

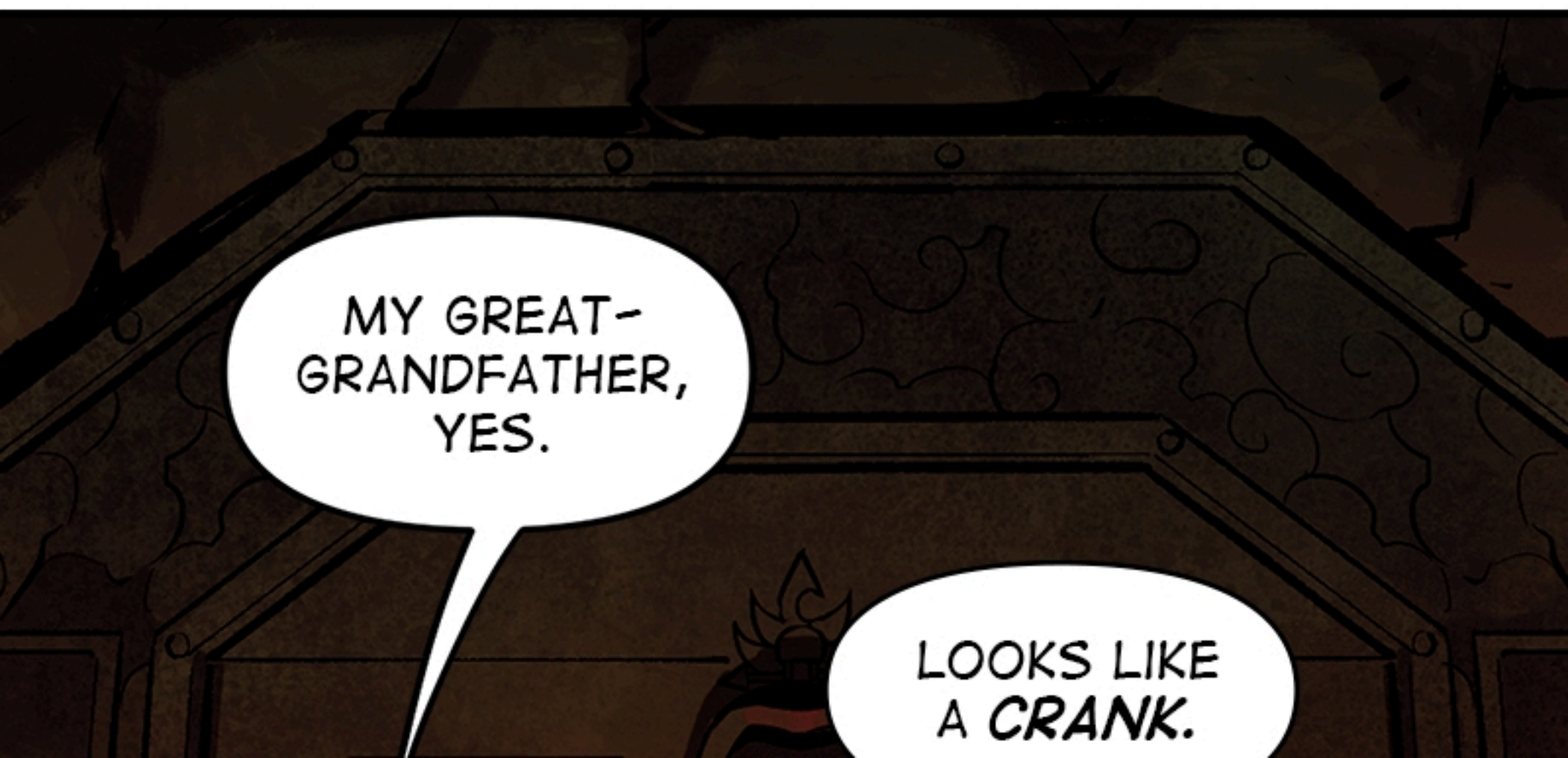
A vertical comic panel showing Zuko and Katara. Zuko, in his Fire Nation robes, holds a flame in his right hand. Katara, in her Water Tribe robes, stands before him. The background features large stone faces.

WHAT'S
THAT SUPPOSED
TO MEAN?

IT'S JUST
A QUESTION,
ZUKO.



IS THIS
SUPPOSED TO
BE *FIRE LORD*
SOZIN?



MY GREAT-
GRANDFATHER,
YES.

LOOKS LIKE
A *CRANK*.

CRANKINESS
RUNS IN THE
FAMILY.

SO HOW'S
THIS VISIT GONNA
HELP US, ZUKO?



LOOK AT THIS. THIS
MURAL ILLUSTRATES
THE HISTORY OF THE FIRE
NATION, INCLUDING ITS
MYTHS AND LEGENDS.



OH,
YEAH!

BUT IT
ALL STOPS

ALL STOPS
HERE!

WHEN SOZIN
CAME TO POWER, HE
ORDERED THE REST OF THIS
CORRIDOR **SEALED OFF**, AS
IF FIRE NATION HISTORY
BEGAN WITH *HIM*.





WHY DIDN'T
HE JUST HAVE IT
DESTROYED?

HE WANTED
ACCESS, JUST IN
CASE. YOU CAN STILL
LEARN FROM THE *PAST*,
EVEN IF YOU OFFICIALLY
DENY ITS EXISTENCE.



I'M GUESSING WE'LL
FIND A CLUE ABOUT
THE *KEMURIKAGE*
BEHIND THAT WALL.



YOU KNOW,
THERE'S SOMETHING
JUST LIKE THIS IN THE
SAGES' TEMPLE ON
CRESCENT ISLAND!



ZUKO, IF YOU
AND I SEND *FIRE*
BLASTS INTO EACH OF
THE DRAGONS' MOUTHS,
THE WHOLE THING WILL

THE WHOLE THING WILL
OPEN RIGHT UP!

WORTH
A TRY.



READY WHEN
YOU ARE!

YOU
MIGHT WANT TO
STAND BACK.



WE'RE FINE,
THANKS.

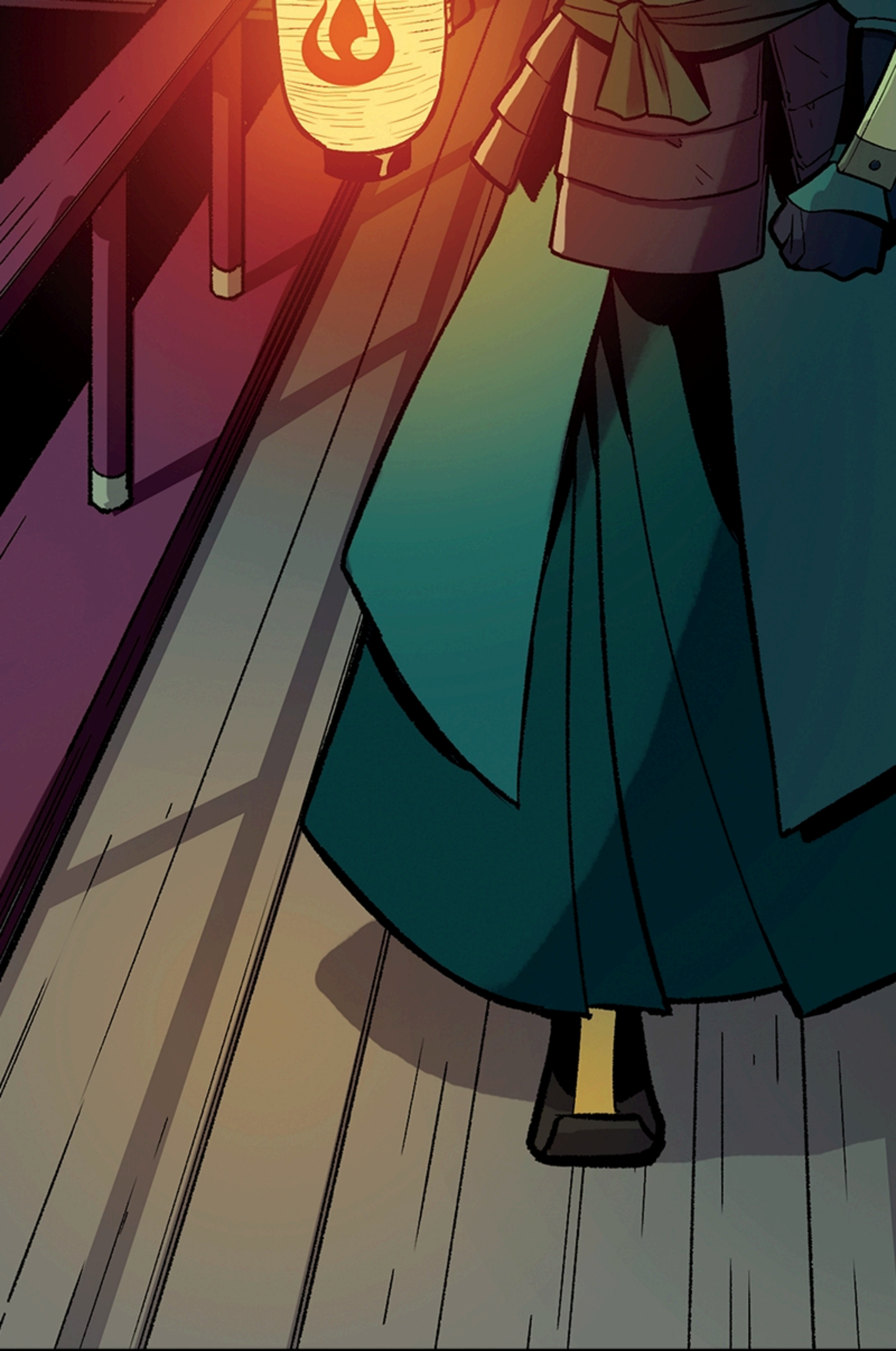




**SUKI!
SUKI!**

**DID
Y'HEAR?!**

**MORE
DARK SPIRITS
ARE POPPING UP
ALL OVER THE CITY!
WE GOTTA DO
SOMETHING!**



NOT YET. WE'LL
WAIT UNTIL ZUKO
GETS BACK.

HE AND AANG ARE
TRYING TO FIGURE
SOMETHING OUT.

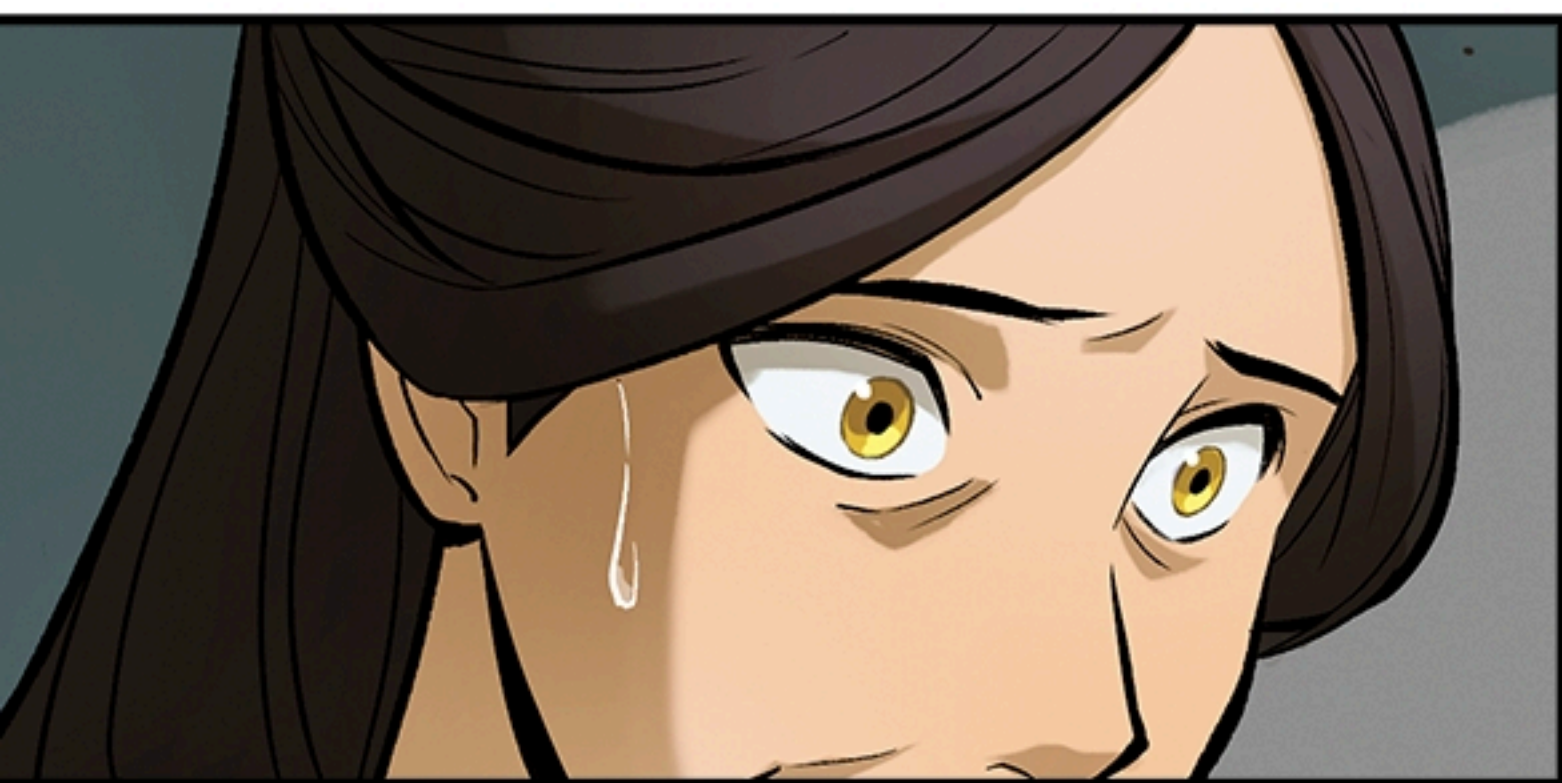


BUT WHAT IF
WHAT HAPPENED
TO **MAI'S LITTLE
BROTHER** HAPPENS TO
SOMEONE ELSE?



LET'S
JUST GIVE
THEM A LITTLE
MORE *TIME*.







WHERE'S *KIYI*?!
WHY AREN'T YOU
WITH HER?!





SHE'S SLEEPING
IN THE OTHER
ROOM!



URSA, WHAT'S
WRONG?

I HAVE
THE *WORST*
FEELING--!



OH, YOU'RE
SAFE...

THANK
GOODNESS
YOU'RE **SAFE...**









NOTHING.

*HUH. MAYBE IF
WE GIVE IT ONE
MORE TRY--*

*YOU'VE GIVEN
IT, LIKE, **TWENTY
TRIES** ALREADY!
MY TURN.*

I DIDN'T
KNOW YOU COULD
FIREBEND, KEI LO.



I CAN'T.
MAI, CAN I
BORROW FOUR OF
YOUR THROWING
KNIVES?



IF YOU TWO HAD
TAKEN THE TIME TO
STUDY THE DRAGONS--
INSTEAD OF JUST
BLASTING AWAY--

YOU WOULD'VE
NOTICED THAT THE
LOCKING MECHANISMS
AREN'T LOCATED IN THE
DRAGONS MOUTHS.



WAIT, YOU'RE
GONNA PICK THE
DRAGONS ***NOSES?***
THAT SEEMS AWFULLY
DISRESPECTFUL.

NOT TO
MENTION
GROSS.

BABE, CAN
YOU HELP ME
OUT HERE?

SURE.

"BABE"?



BADE ?

YOU'RE NOT
REALLY ONE TO
TALK, AANG.



JUST HOLD
THIS *HERE*--

--AND

THIS *HERE*.



GIVE EACH
A COUNTER-
CLOCKWISE
TWIST--











YOU WERE
RIGHT, ZUKO! THE
MURAL KEEPS
GOING!

T'M IMPRESSED

I'M IMPRESSED.
ANY OTHER **CRIMINAL
TALENTS** I DON'T
KNOW ABOUT?



STICK AROUND.
MAYBE YOU'LL
FIND OUT.







LIKANO,
FORGIVE ME FOR
NOT BELIEVING YOU.
THE KEMURIKAGE--

THEY'VE
TAKEN YOUR
SON, HAVEN'T
THEY?





AND ACCORDING
TO MY OFFICERS,
HE WASN'T THE
ONLY ONE.

WITHIN THE
LAST FEW HOURS,
THERE'S BEEN A RASH
OF KIDNAPPINGS.



AND ZUKO'S
RESPONSE?



I WENT
TO THE ROYAL
PALACE JUST BEFORE
COMING HERE...

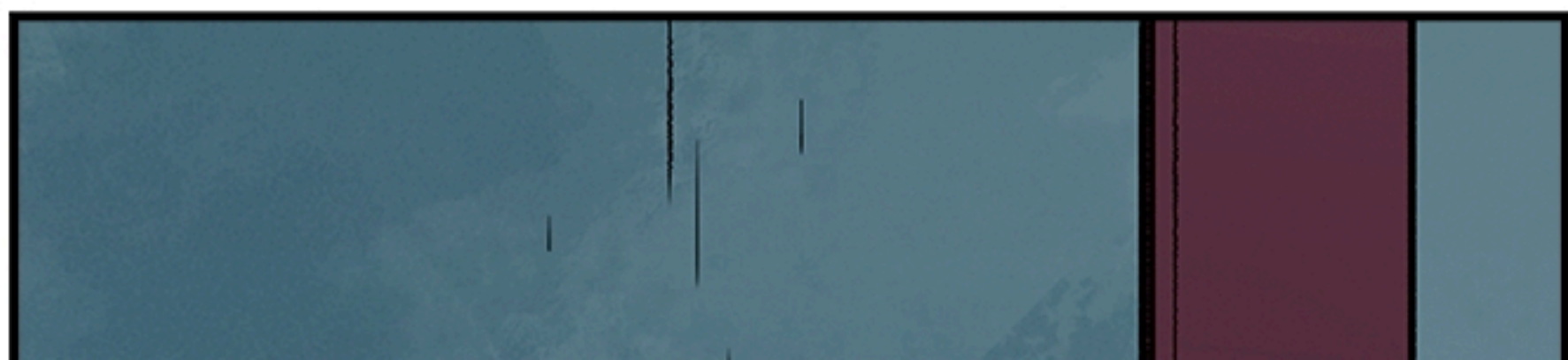
HE'S NOWHERE
TO BE *FOUND*.



YOU WERE
RIGHT. WE CANNOT
WAIT FOR THE
FIRE LORD.

FOR THE
SAKE OF OUR
CHILDREN--





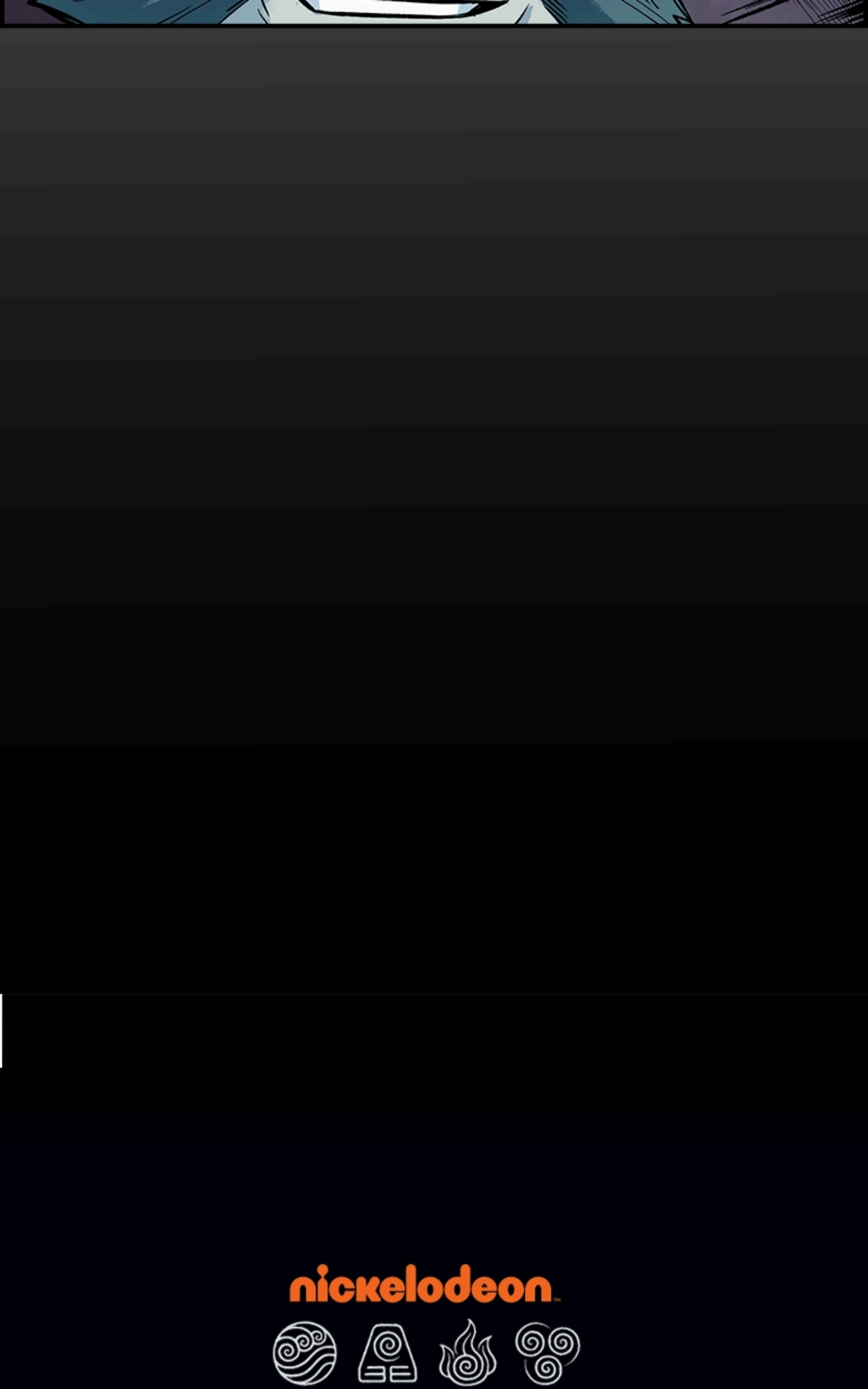
--WE MUST
ACT NOW.





AND I KNOW
JUST HOW TO
GET ***STARTED.***





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AVATAR

THE LAST AIRBENDER™

SMOKE AND SHADOW

Created by
BRYAN KONIETZKO
MICHAEL DANTE DIMARTINO

Script
GENE LUEN YANG

Art
GURIHIRU

Lettering
MICHAEL HEISLER

Publisher
MIKE RICHARDSON

Designer
SARAH TERRY

Editor
RACHEL ROBERTS

Assistant Editor
JENNY BLENK

Digital Art Technician
SAMANTHA HUMMER

Reformatting and Typesetting
KISAI ENTERTAINMENT

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KATHLEEN TOWNSEND

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