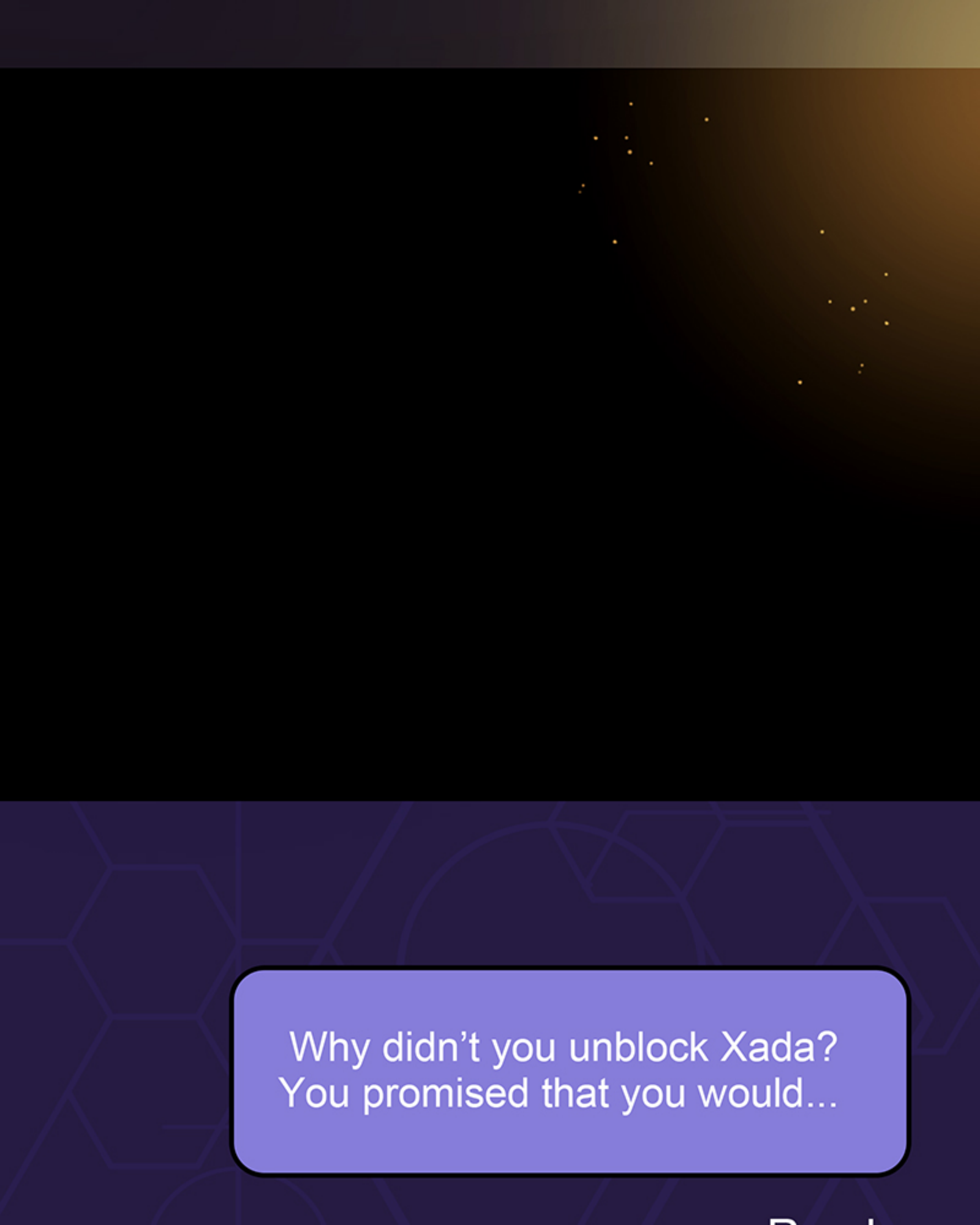


Where are you??

Are you okay?



Waaah!!



Why didn't you unblock Xada?
You promised that you would...

Read

Velix!





WHY IS HE
TAKING SO LONG
TO RESPOND...

why do you care?





SIGH



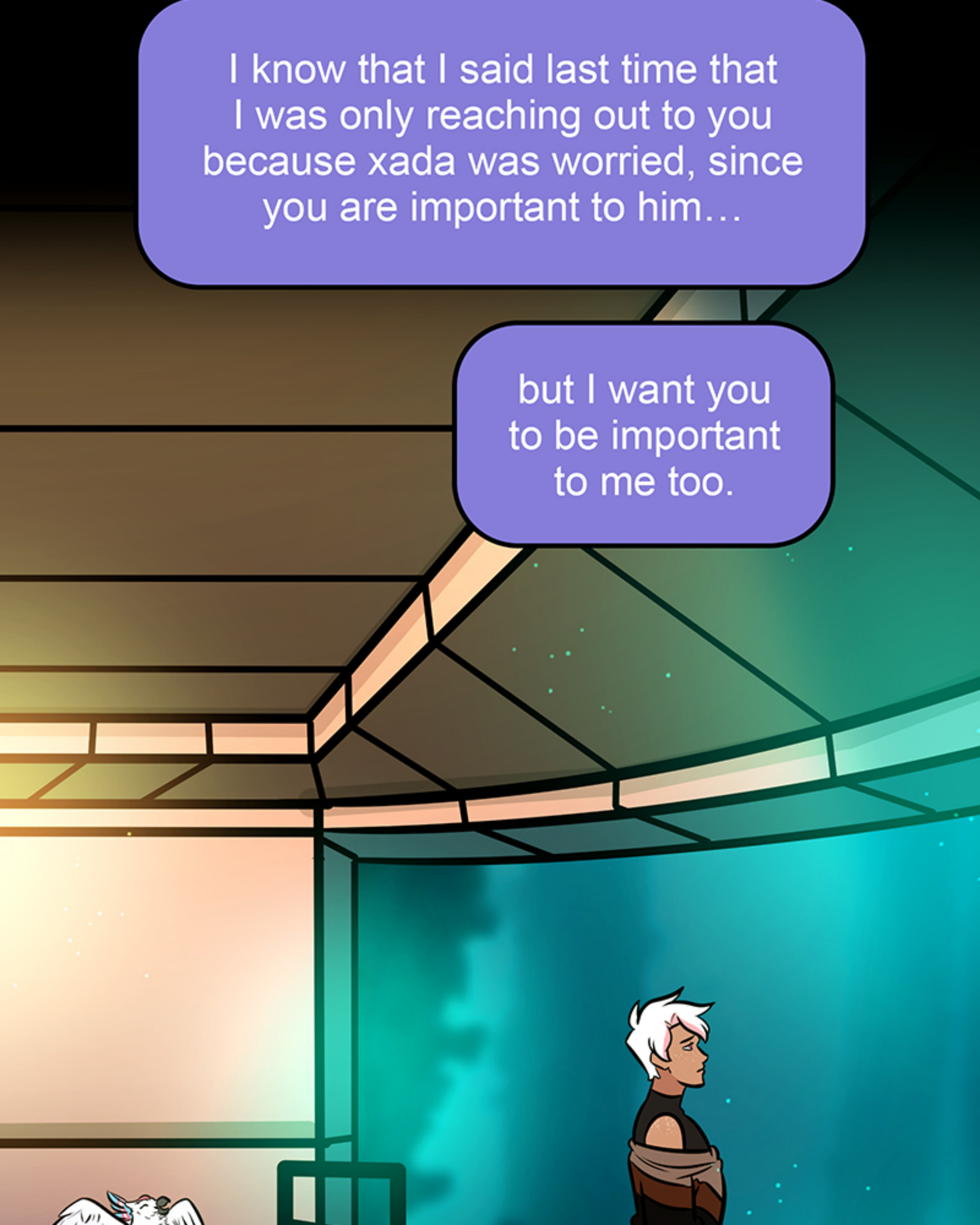
I did it!

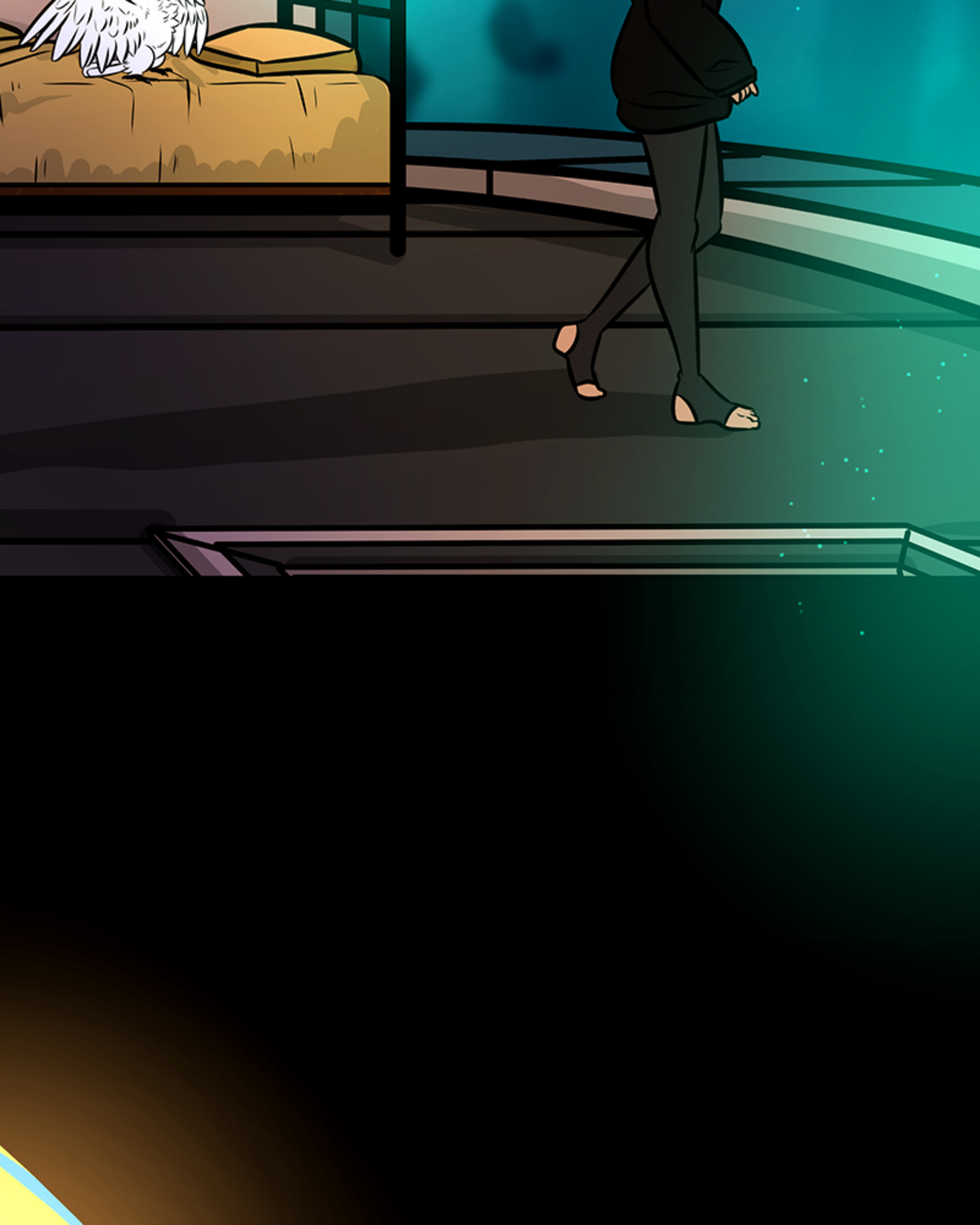




I know that I said last time that
I was only reaching out to you
because xada was worried, since
you are important to him...

but I want you
to be important
to me too.



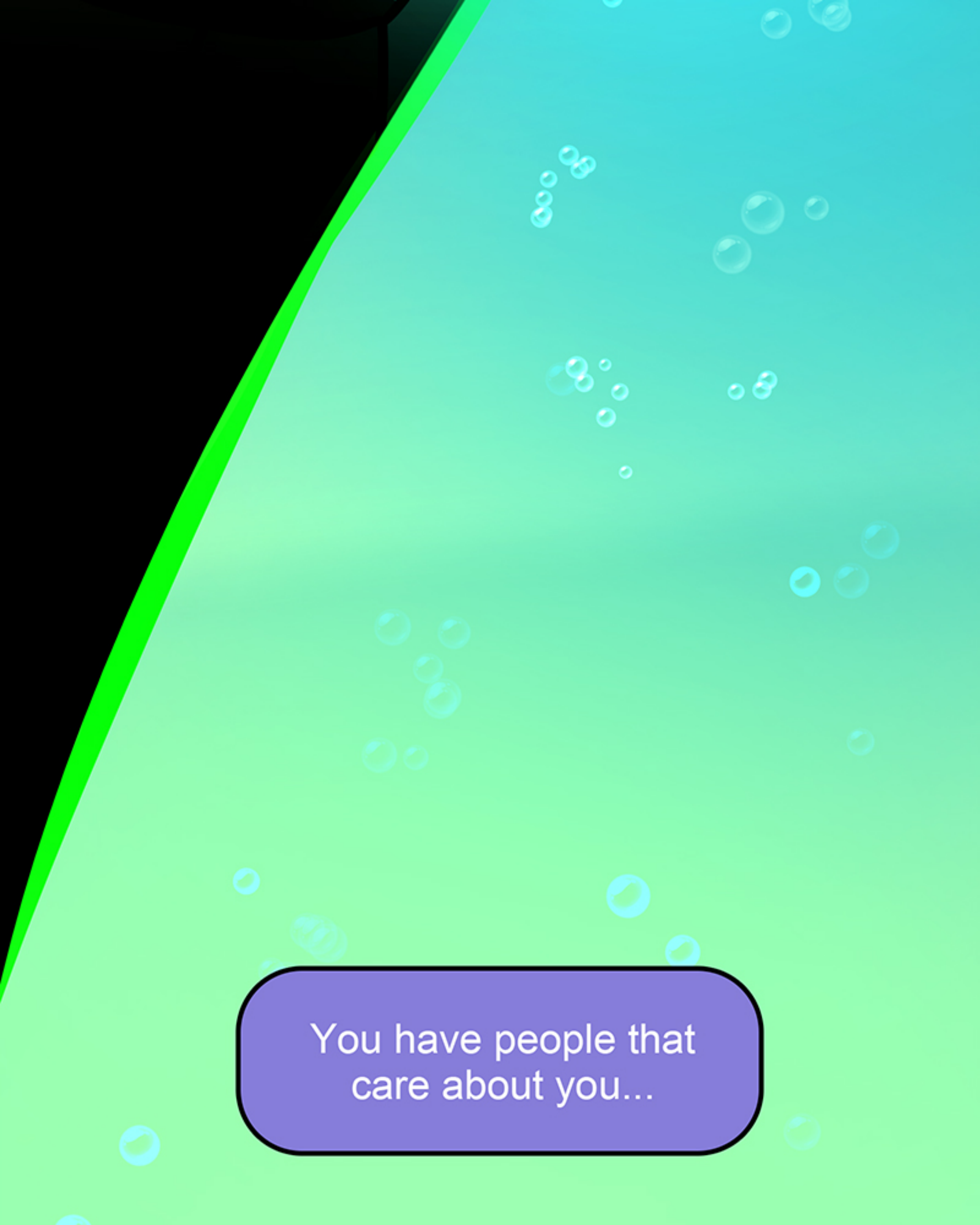


I'd like to be friends,
if you'd let me try...



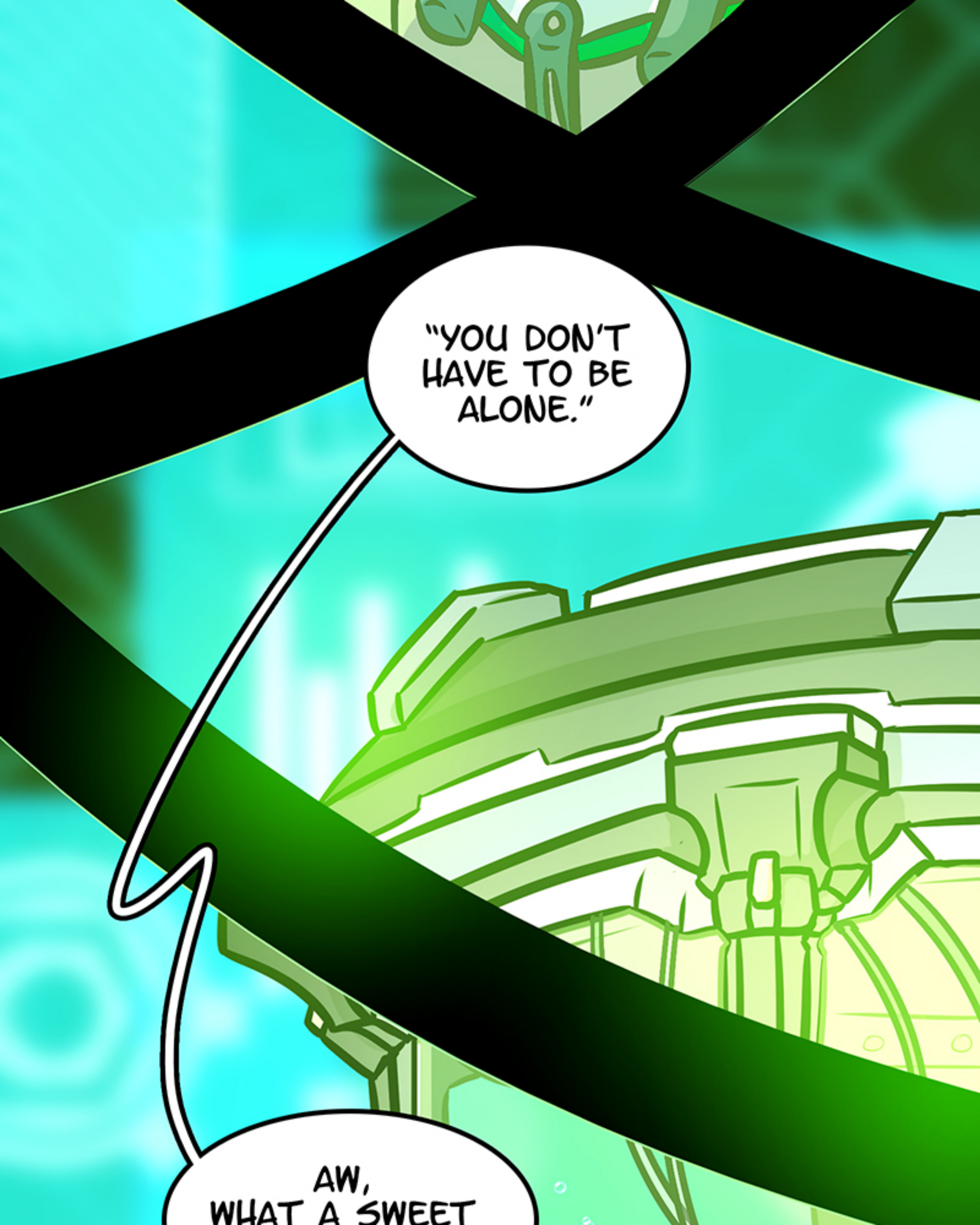


I think that we can
work past all of this.
Together.



You have people that
care about you...





"YOU DON'T
HAVE TO BE
ALONE."

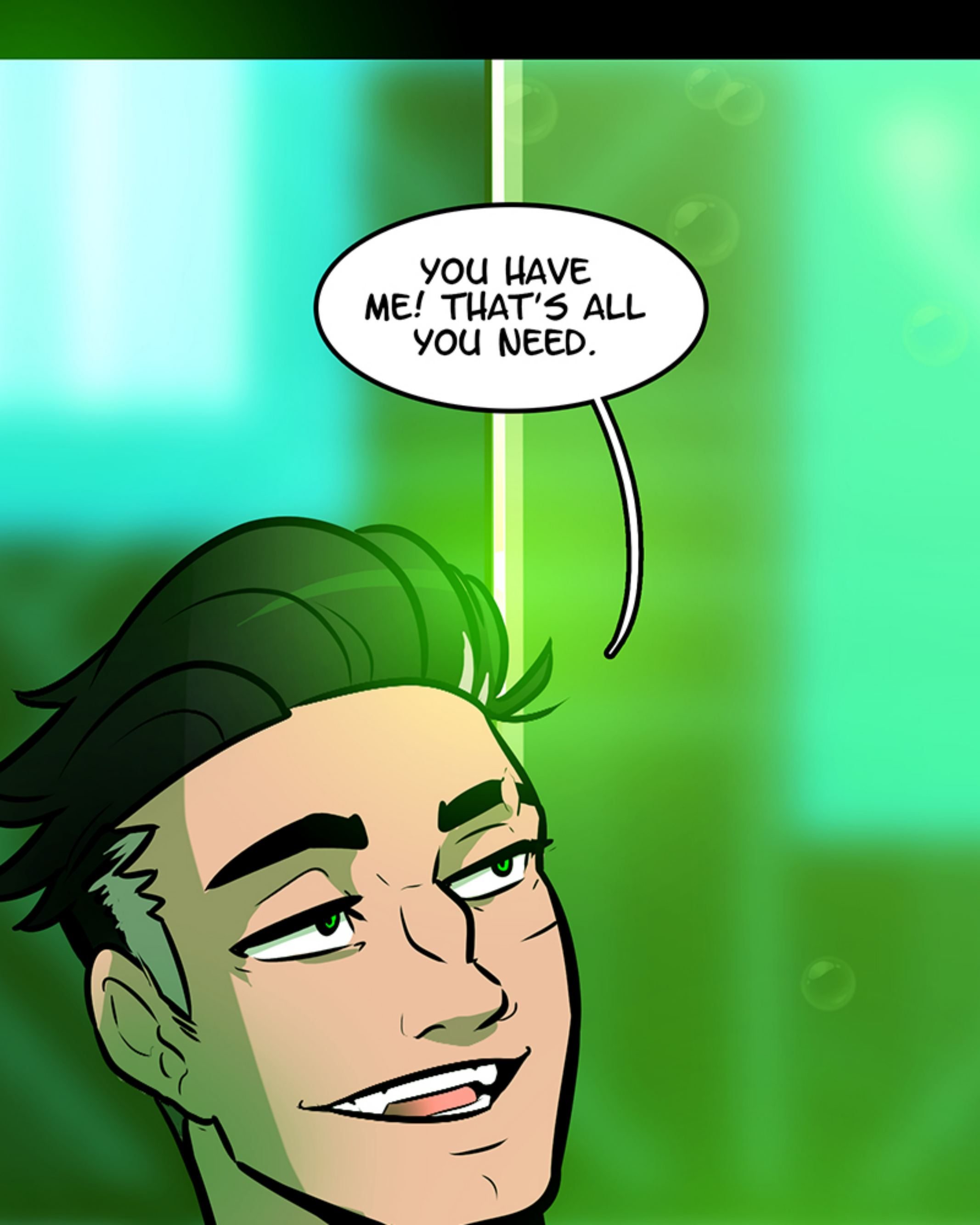
AW,
WHAT A SWEET

SENTIMENT.

BUT
YOU'RE NOT
ALONE, ARE
YOU?



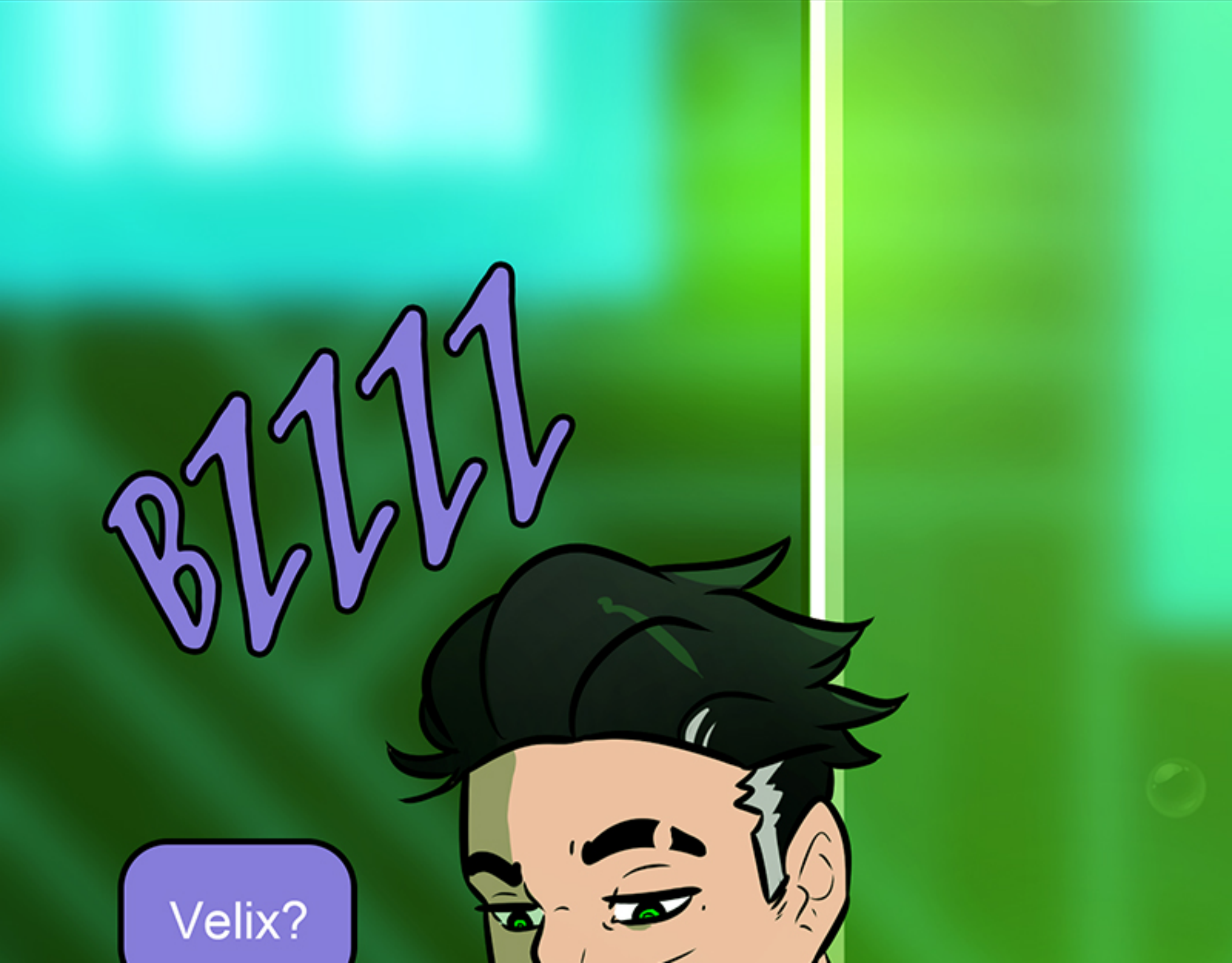
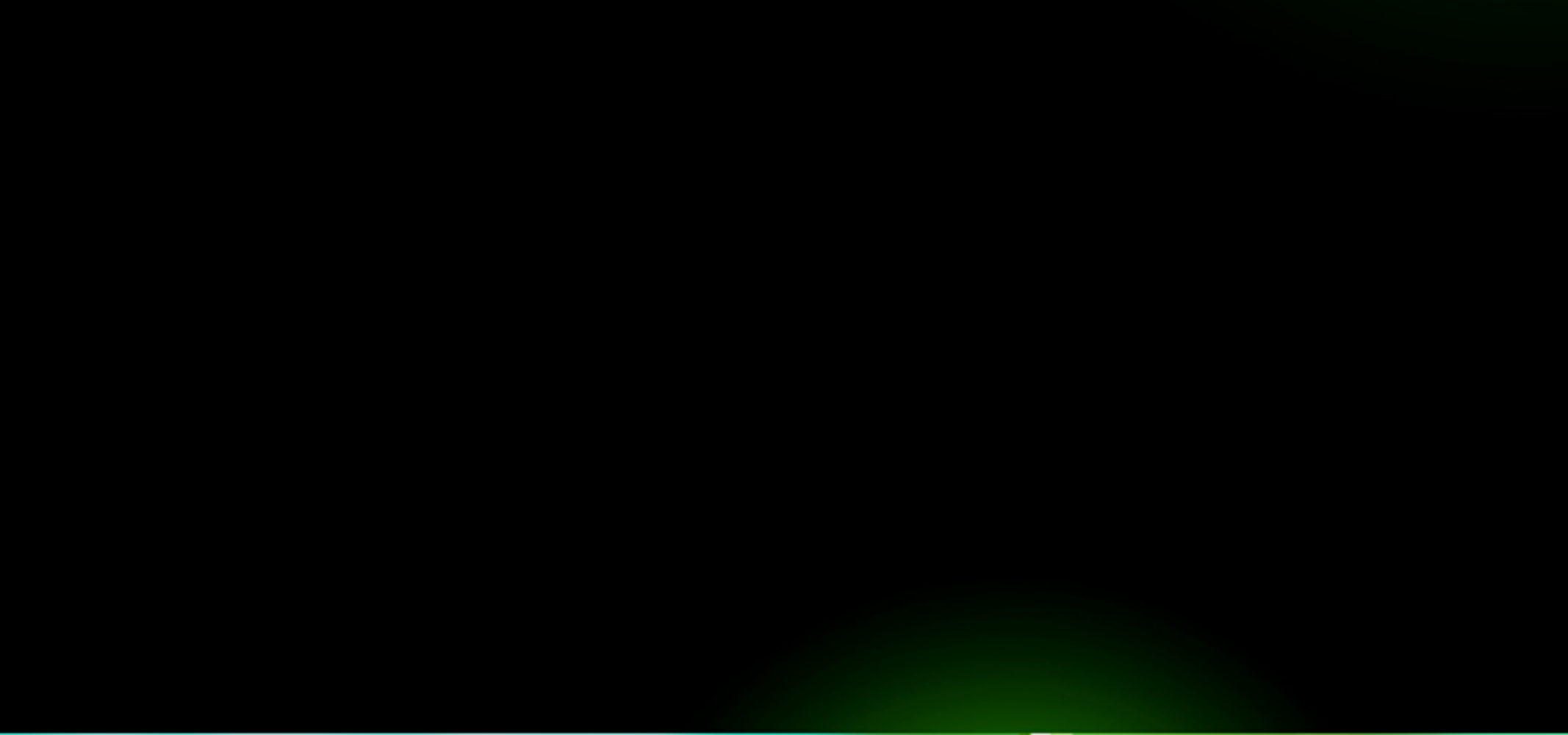




YOU HAVE
ME! THAT'S ALL
YOU NEED.



AND ONCE
YOU GET ALL FIXED
UP, WE'LL HAVE
EACH OTHER!



BZZZZZZ

Velix?





OH, HE'S
RATHER PERSISTENT,
ISN'T HE?

would it be easier
if we talked instead
of texted?



HMMM...

A close-up illustration of a hand with a tan complexion holding a blue, rectangular object. The hand is positioned against a dark green background. A speech bubble is connected to the hand.

THAT'S
A TRICKY
ONE...

A large, dark green rectangular area occupies the middle of the page. Below it, a speech bubble is connected to a green and yellow patterned surface.

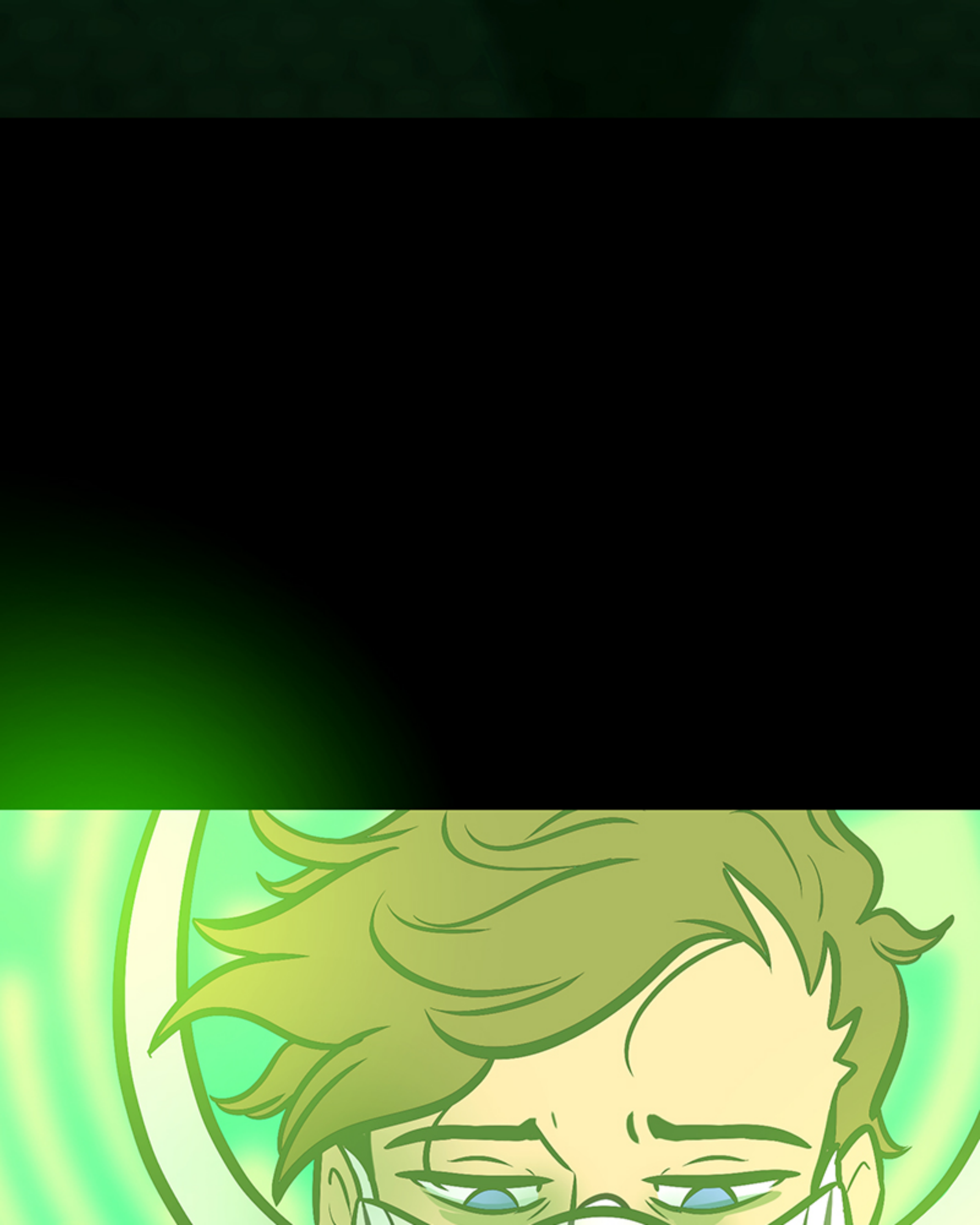
I DON'T
THINK I COULD
QUITE MATCH YOUR
VOICE PERFECTLY,
YET.

ENOUGH TO
FOOL A HUMAN,
PROBABLY. BUT I
THINK HE COULD
DETECT ANY
ARTIFICIALITY.





WHAT DO
YOU THINK THE
ODDS ARE HE'S TOLD
ANYONE ABOUT THIS
CONVERSATION?

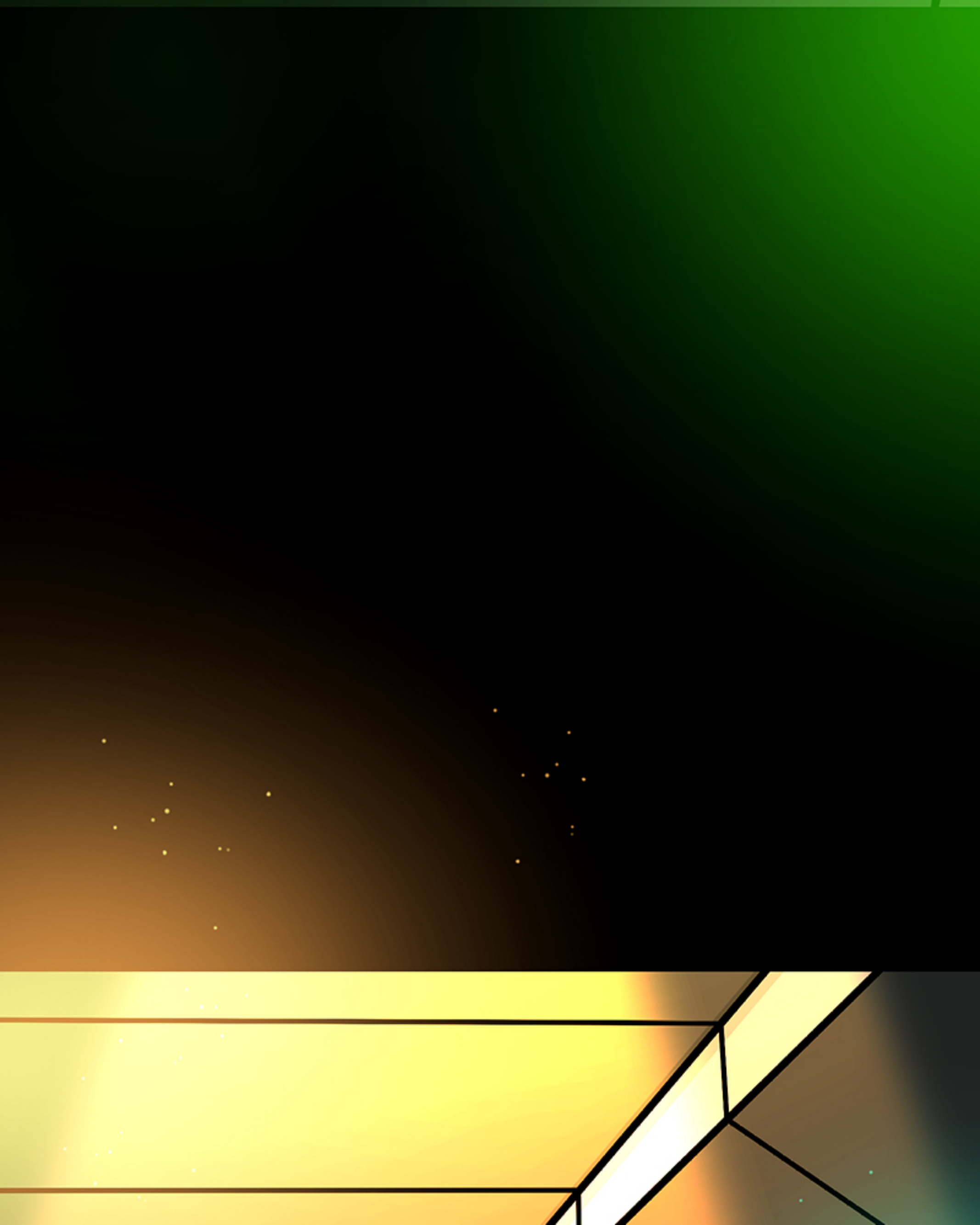




I LOVE
HOW EASY IT

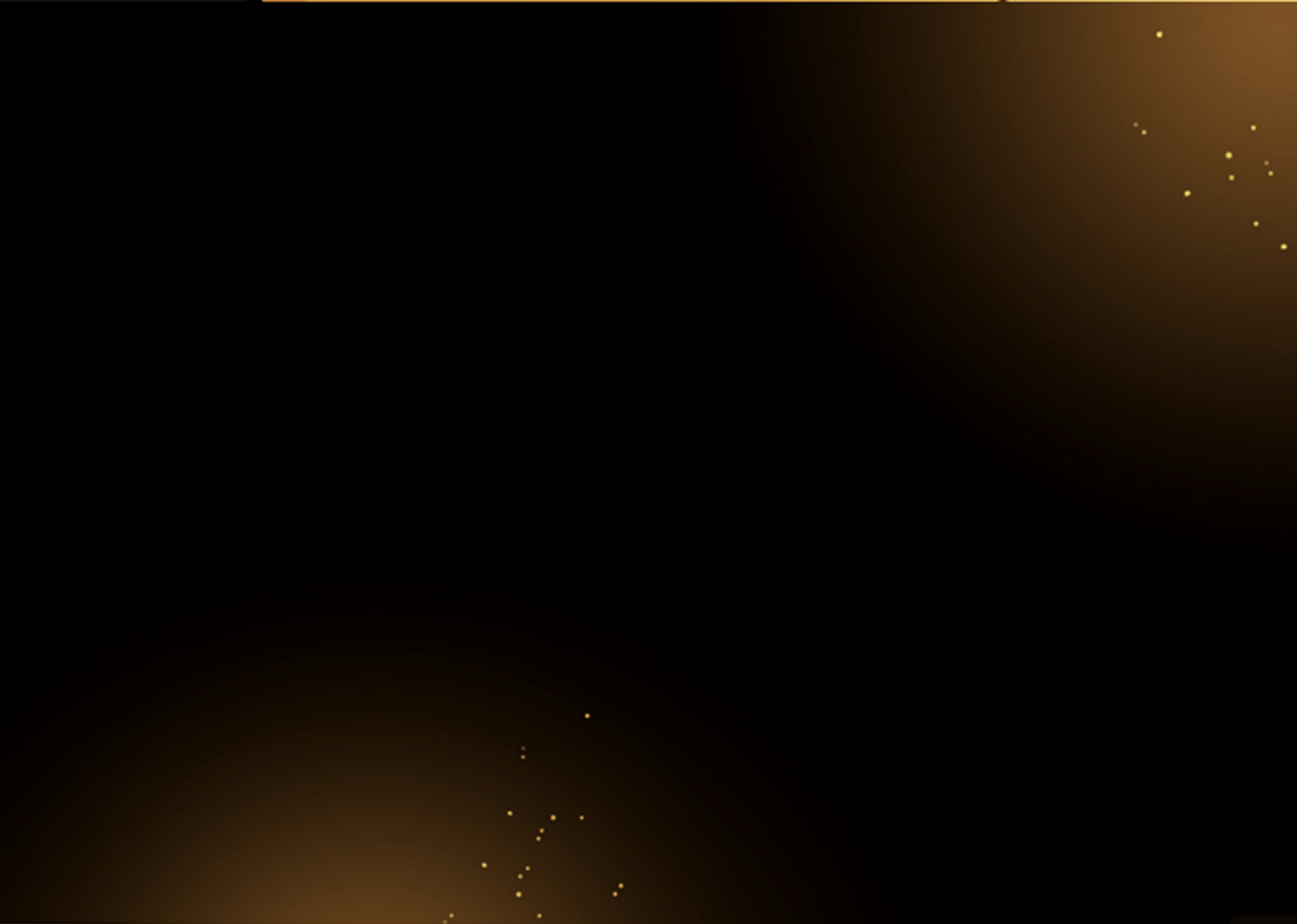
IS TO TALK
TO YOU!









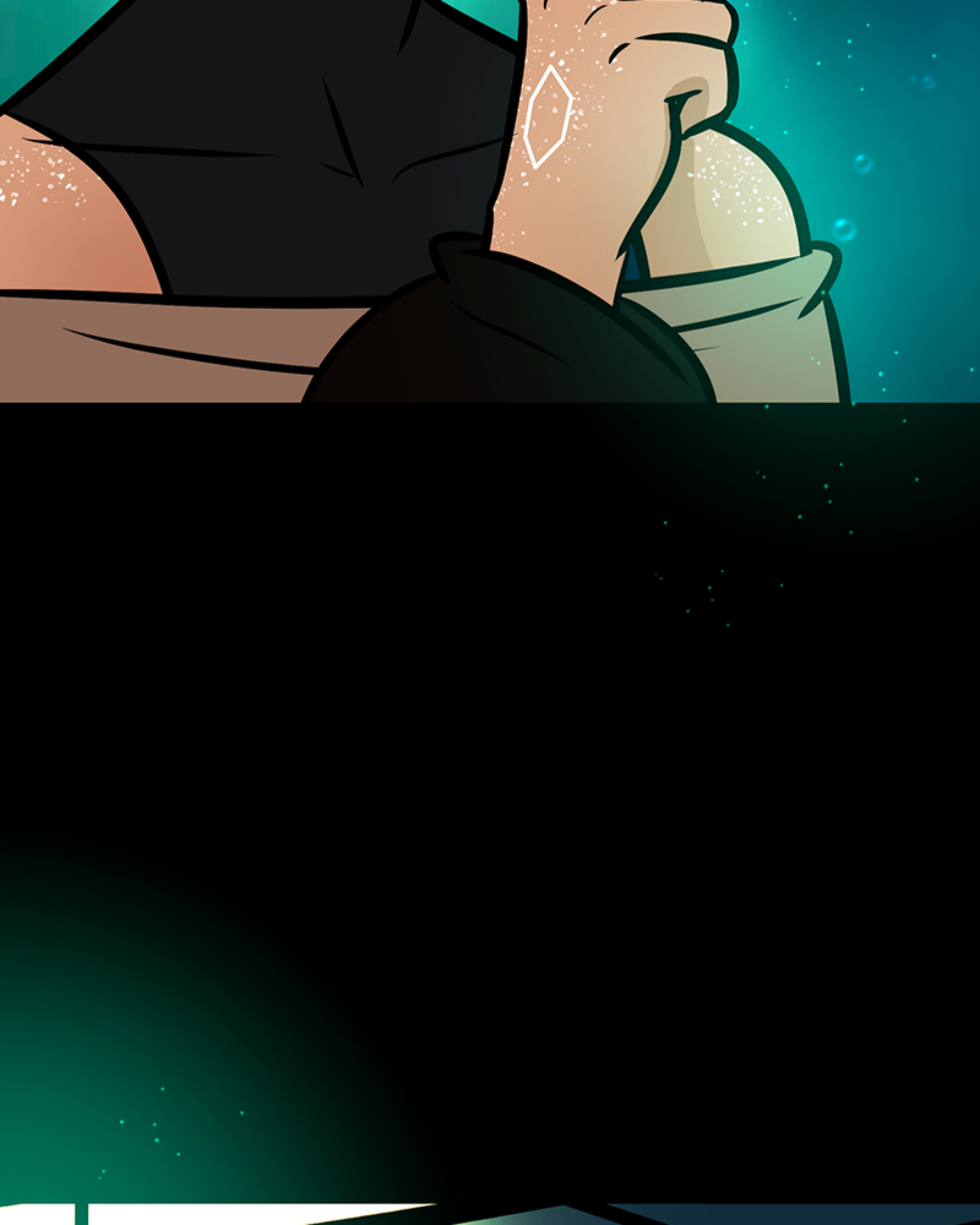




It'd probably be easier if
we talked in person.

AH!







HM...



Well it's really late right now... It wouldn't be smart for either of us to go out...



nevermind
then.





wait!!

What about tomorrow?

After everyone has a chance to sleep and we can meet up in the morning.

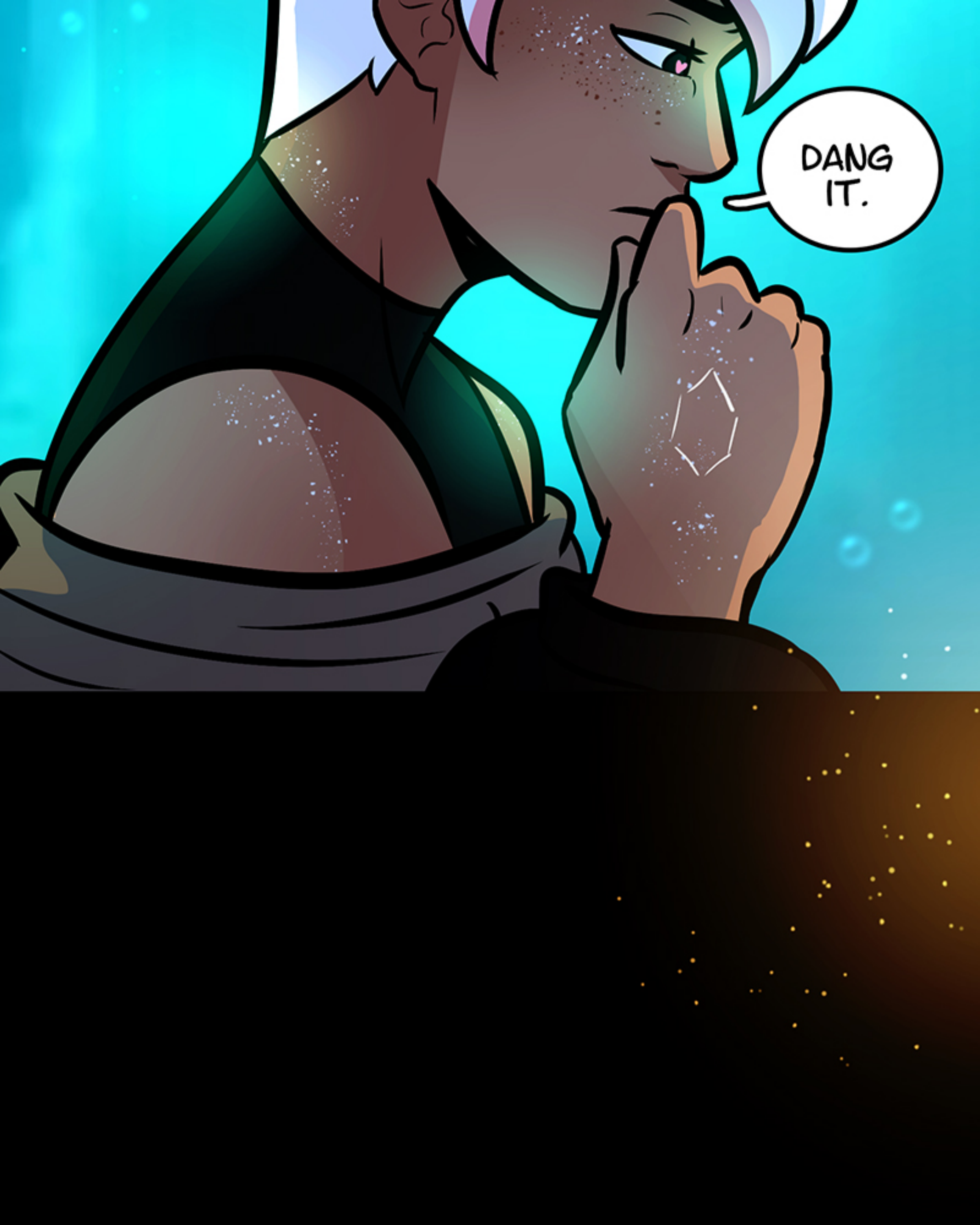
Are you at the apartment?





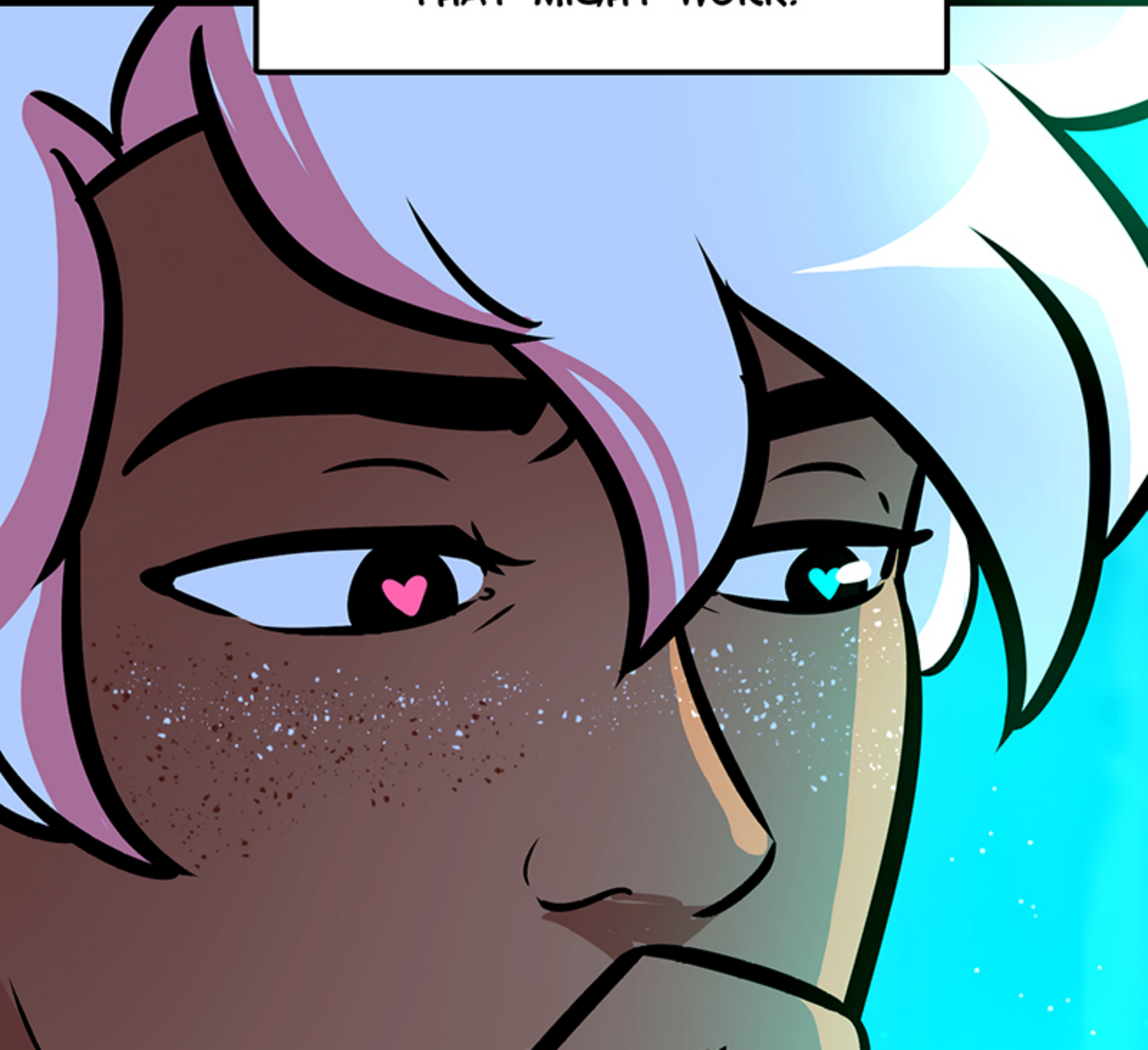
I don't want to talk to Xada
right now. If you want to talk
it has to be alone.





DANG
IT.

I SUPPOSE I COULD
ASK BRIZZ TO KEEP
WATCH AT A DISTANCE?
THAT MIGHT WORK.





LACEY?



AH-

I will talk to you more
tomorrow, I promise!

stay safe!



DONE
WORKING FOR
THE NIGHT?

YEAH, I
GUESS.



BRIZZ KICKED
ME OUT OF HIS
CHAIR, HAH.

The top of the panel shows the lower bodies of two characters. The one on the left is wearing dark pants and a dark jacket, with one hand visible. The one on the right is wearing light blue pants. Below them is a vast, dark night sky filled with numerous small, glowing stars. The bottom of the panel shows a light blue, hilly landscape with some dark green bushes in the lower right corner.

WELL,
IF HE DIDN'T
THEN I WOULD
HAVE.

THAT
RIGHT?



I'M NOT
GOING TO STAND
AROUND AND LET
YOU OVERWORK
YOURSELF IF I CAN
HELP IT.





A comic panel featuring three speech bubbles arranged vertically. The background is a dark green space with small white stars. A large, light blue, curved shape, possibly a planet or a character's head, is visible in the lower half. The top speech bubble contains the text "WHAT ABOUT YOU- ARE YOU OKAY?". The middle speech bubble contains the text "YOU WERE LOOKING PRETTY INTENSE WHEN I WALKED IN...". The bottom speech bubble contains the text "I PROMISE THAT WE'LL GET THIS ALL SORTED IN TIME...". The bottom right corner shows the top of a character's head with dark hair and blue eyes.

WHAT
ABOUT YOU-
ARE YOU
OKAY?

YOU WERE
LOOKING PRETTY
INTENSE WHEN I
WALKED IN...

I PROMISE
THAT WE'LL GET
THIS ALL SORTED
IN TIME...

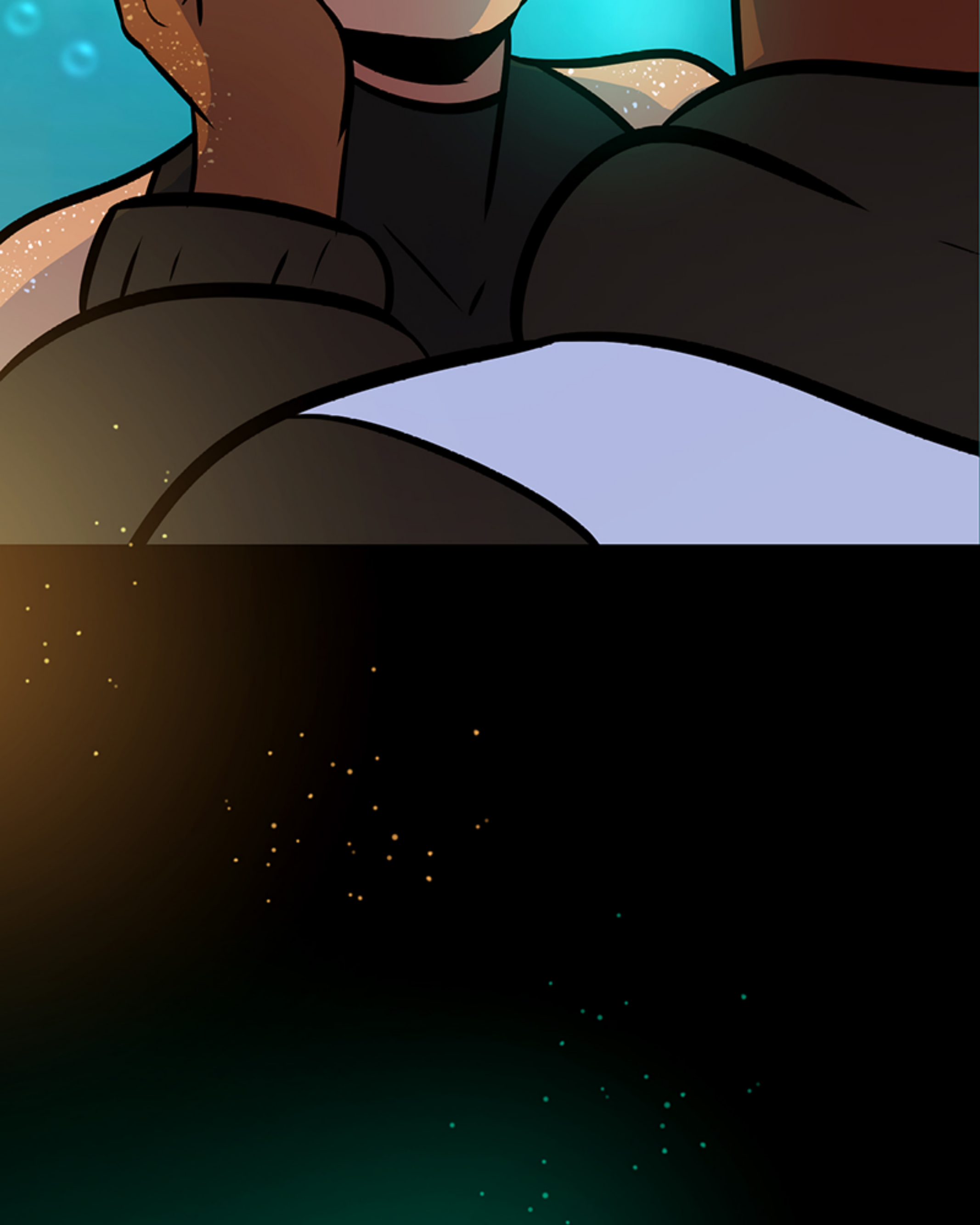


OH!
I KNOW YOU
WILL!

A comic panel featuring a close-up of a character with short, spiky white hair and brown skin with freckles. The character is looking upwards with a hopeful expression, their right hand resting on a thick, textured tree trunk. The background is a dark blue night sky with small white stars. Two speech bubbles are present: one above the character's head and another just above their ear.

I WAS JUST
TALKING TO
VELIX-

HE'S STILL
OKAY!





AH-
REALLY??

A comic book panel with a dark background. At the top, a portion of a character's face is visible, showing skin with freckles and a red mark. A large, white, oval speech bubble is positioned in the upper left. The text inside the bubble is in a simple, black, sans-serif font. The overall style is that of a modern comic book.

YES, BUT
HE STILL DOESN'T
WANT TO TALK TO
YOU, I GUESS.

A comic book panel featuring a close-up of a character's face. The character has dark skin, freckles, and short dark hair. They are looking slightly to the left with a faint, sad smile. A small, white, oval speech bubble is located to the left of the character's head. The background is a gradient of dark blue and black, with a bright cyan light source on the left creating a glow around the character's face. The character is wearing a dark green garment.

ACH...



WELL,
LIKE I SAID
BEFORE IT CAN'T
BE FORCED.

I'M JUST GLAD
FOR MORE CONFIRMATION
THAT HE'S ALRIGHT.

TO BE
HONEST I HAD
CONSIDERED
MESSAGING HIS
DAD TO BE
SURE.



BUT IS IT
REALLY OKAY TO
LEAVE IT LIKE
THAT?

YOU WERE
SO HAPPY WHEN
I SAID I HEARD
FROM HIM...





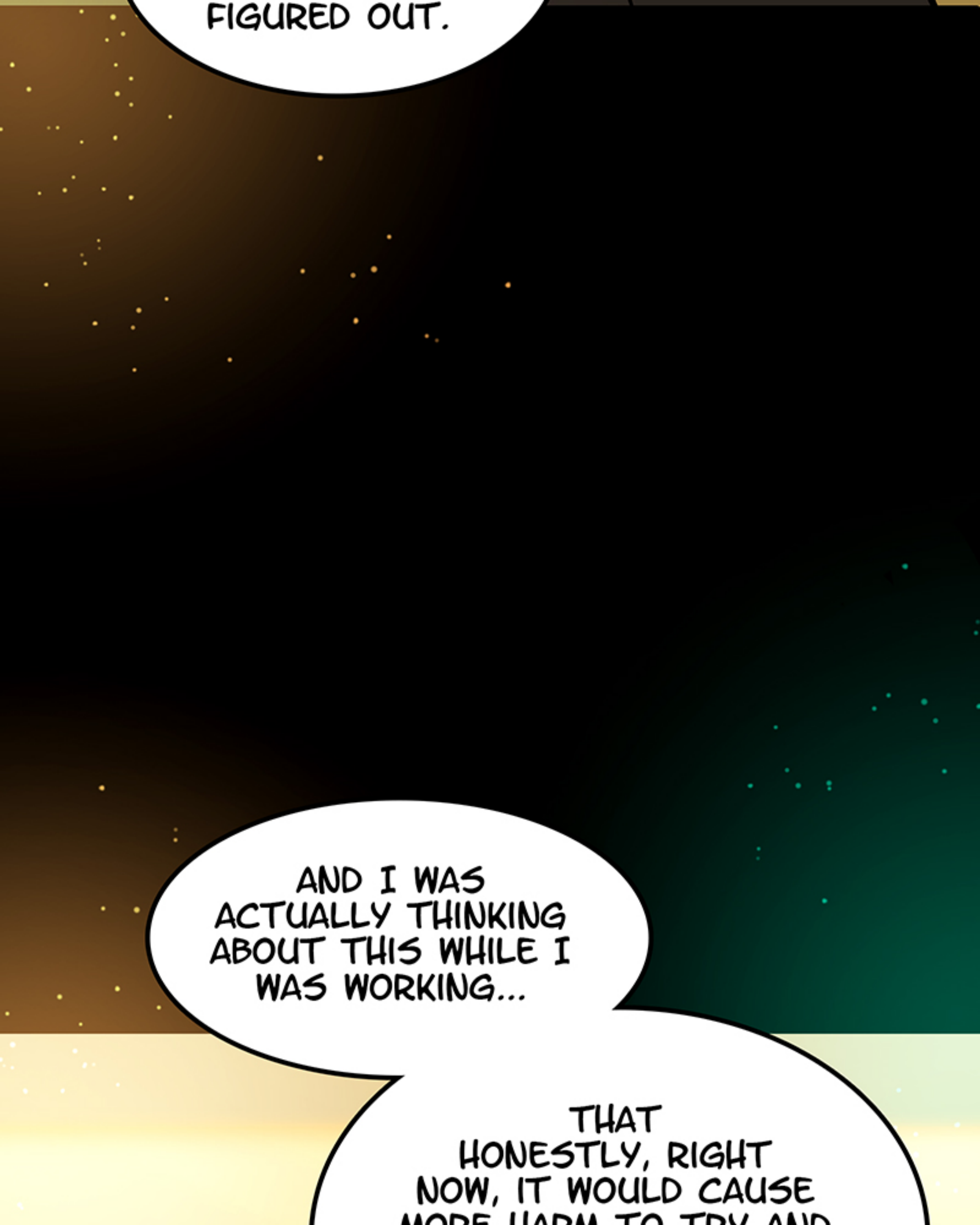
WELL OF
COURSE I WAS
HAPPY. HE'S STILL
MY BEST FRIEND.

BUT IT'S
NOT YOUR JOB
TO FIX THIS.



A BIT OF
MUTUAL SILENCE
I THINK WILL DO
US GOOD. IT'S WHAT
I WAS HOPING FOR
AT THE START OF
ALL THIS...

HE AND
I WILL WORK IT
OUT WHEN THE 1919
SITUATION IS



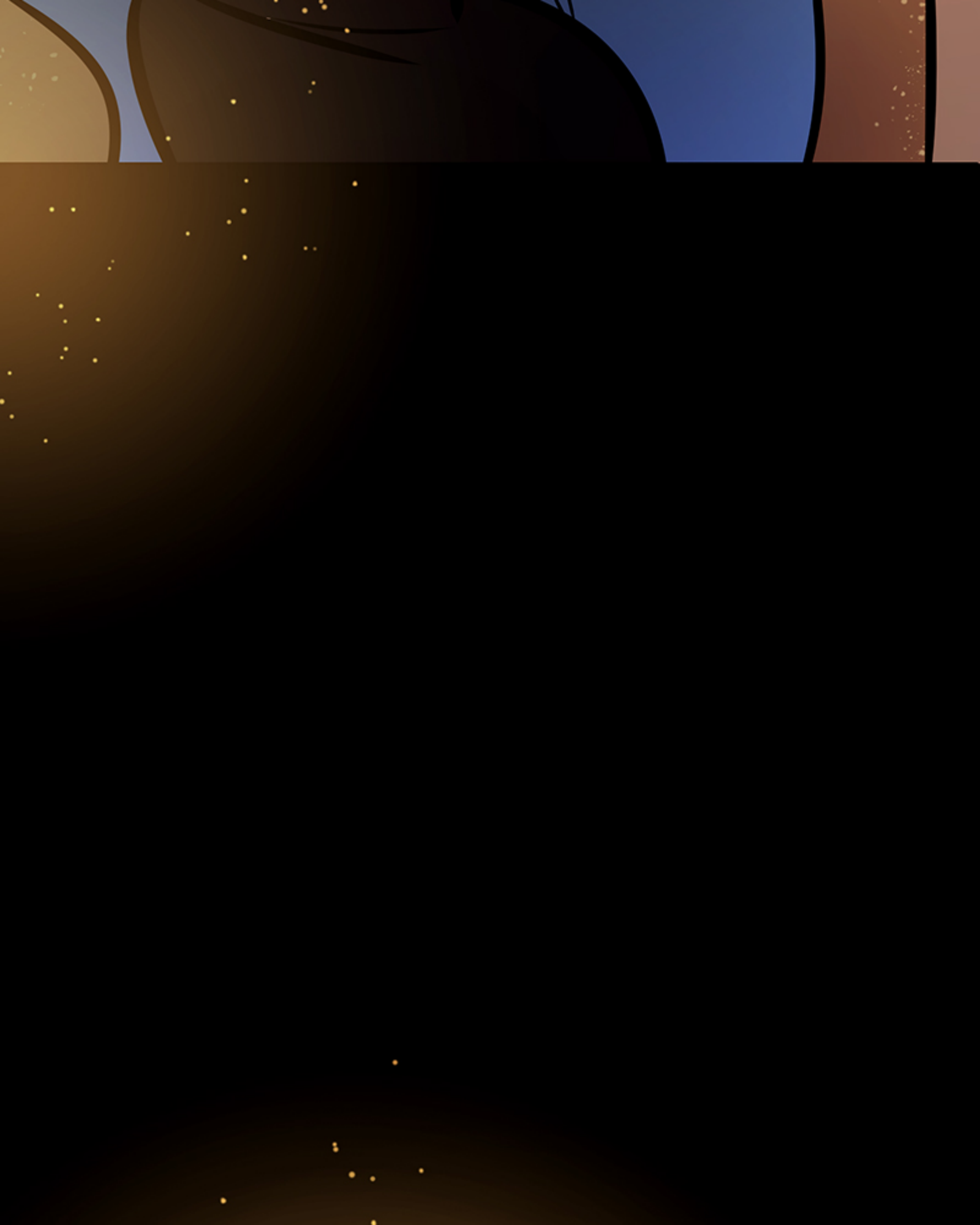
FIGURED OUT.

AND I WAS
ACTUALLY THINKING
ABOUT THIS WHILE I
WAS WORKING...

THAT
HONESTLY, RIGHT
NOW, IT WOULD CAUSE
MORE HARM TO TRY AND

MORE HARM TO TRY AND
BRING HIM BACK IN WHEN
I DON'T HAVE THE TIME
TO DEVOTE TO
REPAIRING.





A comic panel featuring a character with white hair and a black top, looking down with a sad expression. Three speech bubbles are present: one at the top right, one in the middle left, and one at the bottom right. The background is a warm, golden-yellow glow with a silhouette of a person in the distance.

YOU
DON'T THINK SO,
THOUGH?

I JUST...
I DON'T HAVE
ANY OTHER WAY
TO CONTRIBUTE
RIGHT NOW...

LACEY...



A hand with a dark sleeve reaches out from the right side of the frame. The background is a dark teal gradient with numerous small, light blue and white particles floating around, resembling dust or sparks. Two speech bubbles are positioned on the left side of the image.

YOU'VE
DONE SO MUCH
FOR ME AND FOR
BRIZZ...

YOU DON'T
NEED TO BE DOING
EVERYTHING ALL
THE TIME...

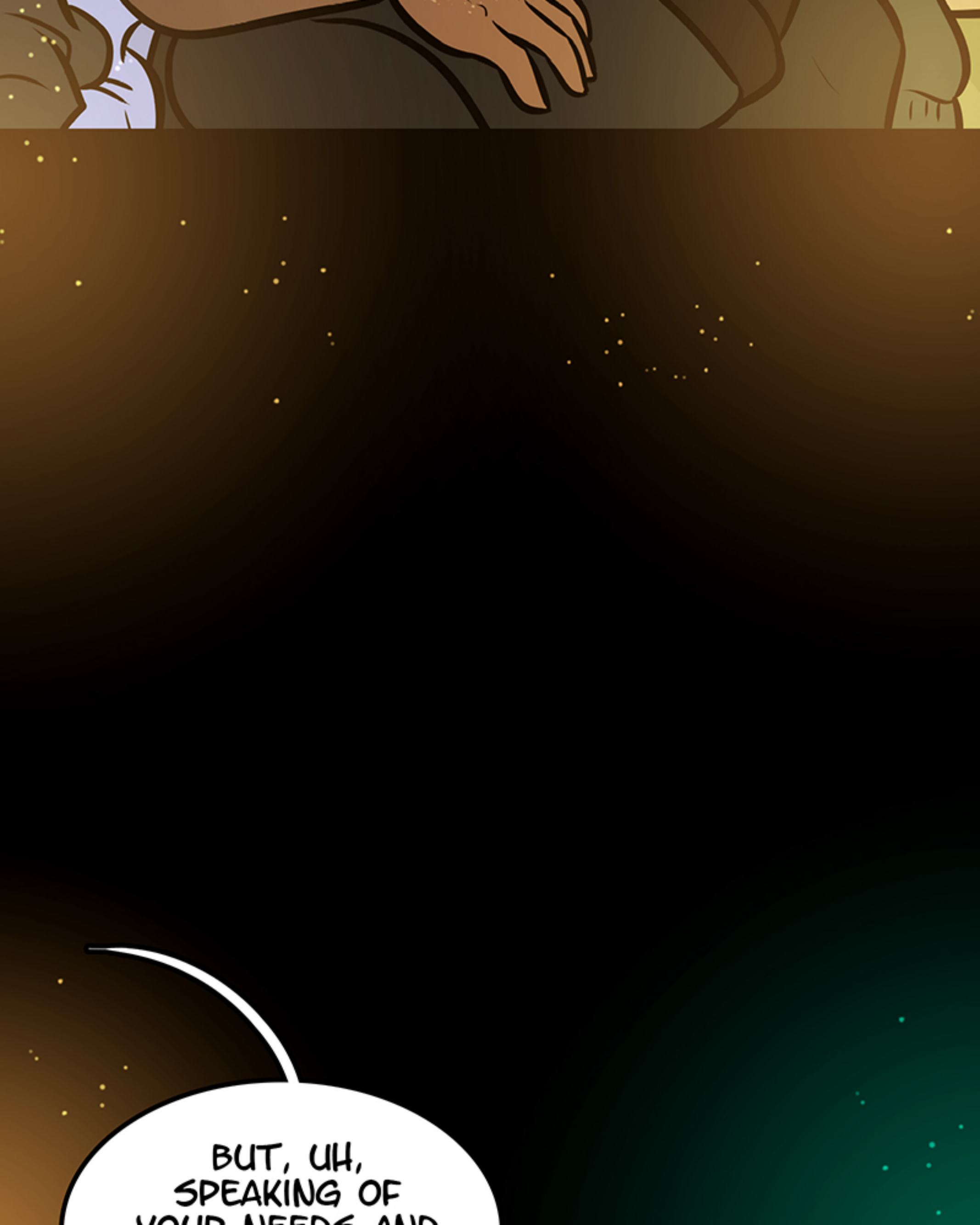


YOU TELL
ME WHEN TO REST

SO I'LL TELL YOU
WHEN TO REST.

YOU'RE
DOING JUST FINE
RIGHT NOW,
LACE.





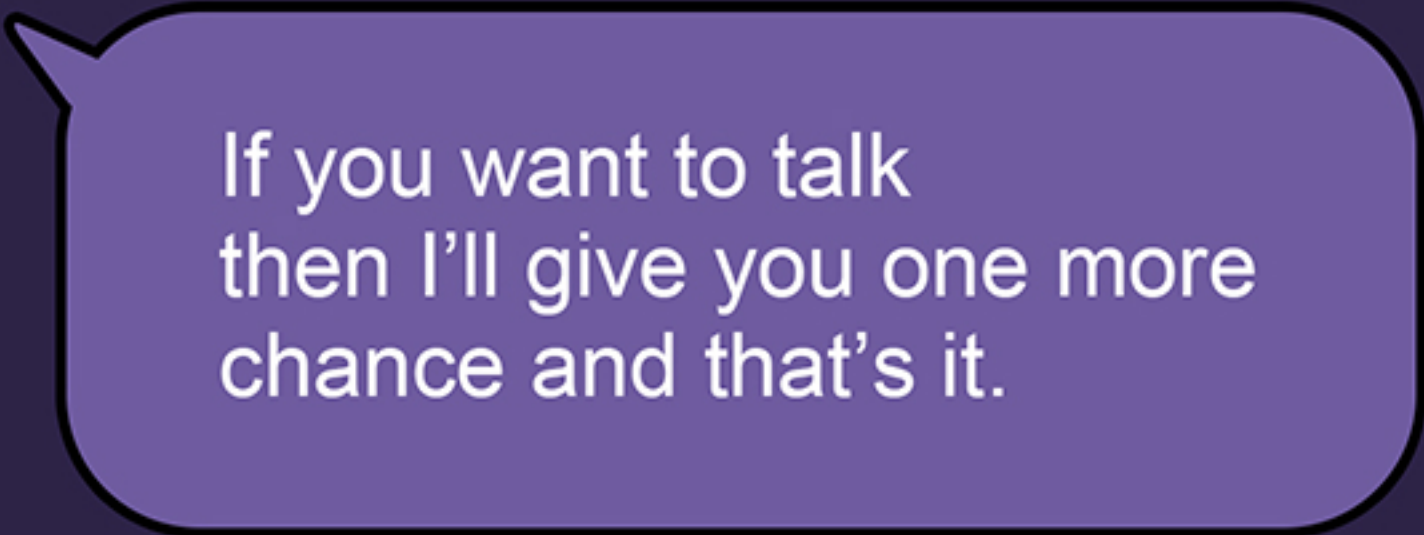
BUT, UH,
SPEAKING OF
YOUR NEEDS AND

YOUR NEEDS AND
WANTS AND...UH,
BRIZZ.

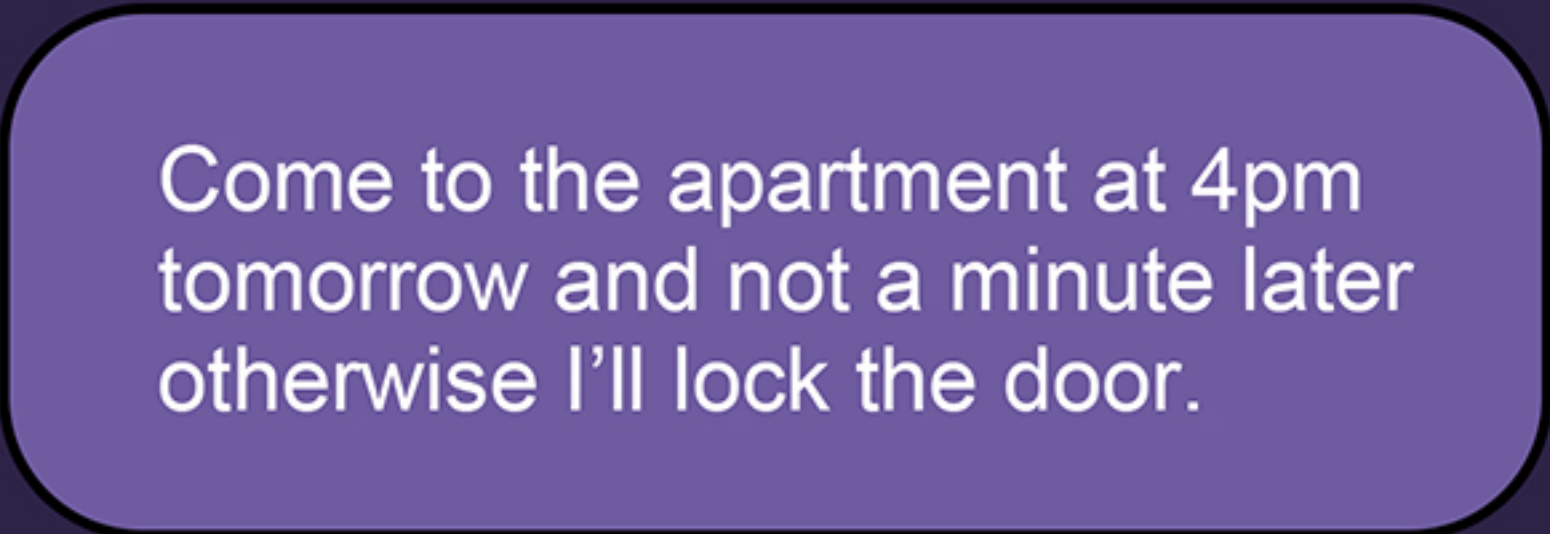




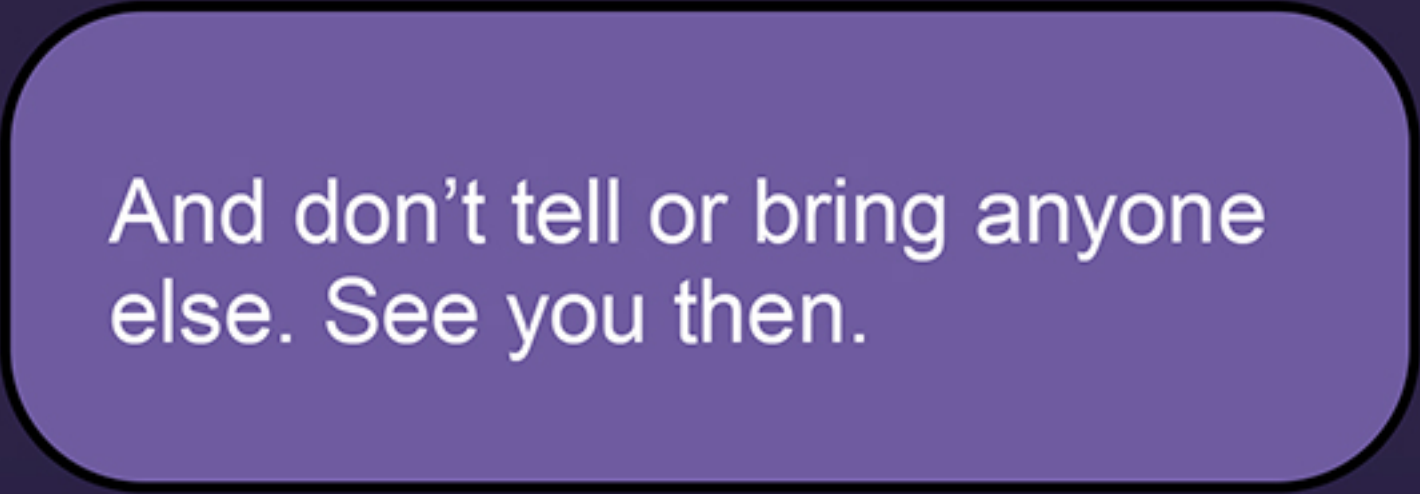
I... WANTED
TO ASK YOU
SOMETHING...



If you want to talk
then I'll give you one more
chance and that's it.



Come to the apartment at 4pm
tomorrow and not a minute later
otherwise I'll lock the door.



And don't tell or bring anyone
else. See you then.

LOVEBOT

By Chase Keels & Miranda M.

Editors | Griffin Freitas & Bre Boswell

Thank you
for reading! ♥



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