

IDW

#4 • CVR A

ANDERSON
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my LITTLE PONY

FRIENDS FOREVER



ah 2003



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WOW! A MONSTER-PEDIA! I'VE NEVER EVEN HEARD OF A TREE GOBLIN!



THE ONE LISTED ON PAGE 33?

YOU REMEMBER THE PAGE NUMBER? THAT'S IMPRESSIVE EVEN FOR YOU, TWILIGHT! DID YOU AND SHINING ARMOR USE THIS WHEN YOU PLAYED OUBLIETTES AND OGRES?



THAT'S NO GAME MANUAL, SPIKE. THAT'S AN ENCYCLOPEDIA OF REAL MONSTERS... OR AT LEAST, THEY'RE SUPPOSED TO BE REAL.

BUT WE DID MAKE A GAME OUT OF BEING "MONSTER TRACKERS" WHEN WE WERE KIDS.

MY B.B.B.F.F WILL BE SO EXCITED TO SEE THE BOOK AGAIN!

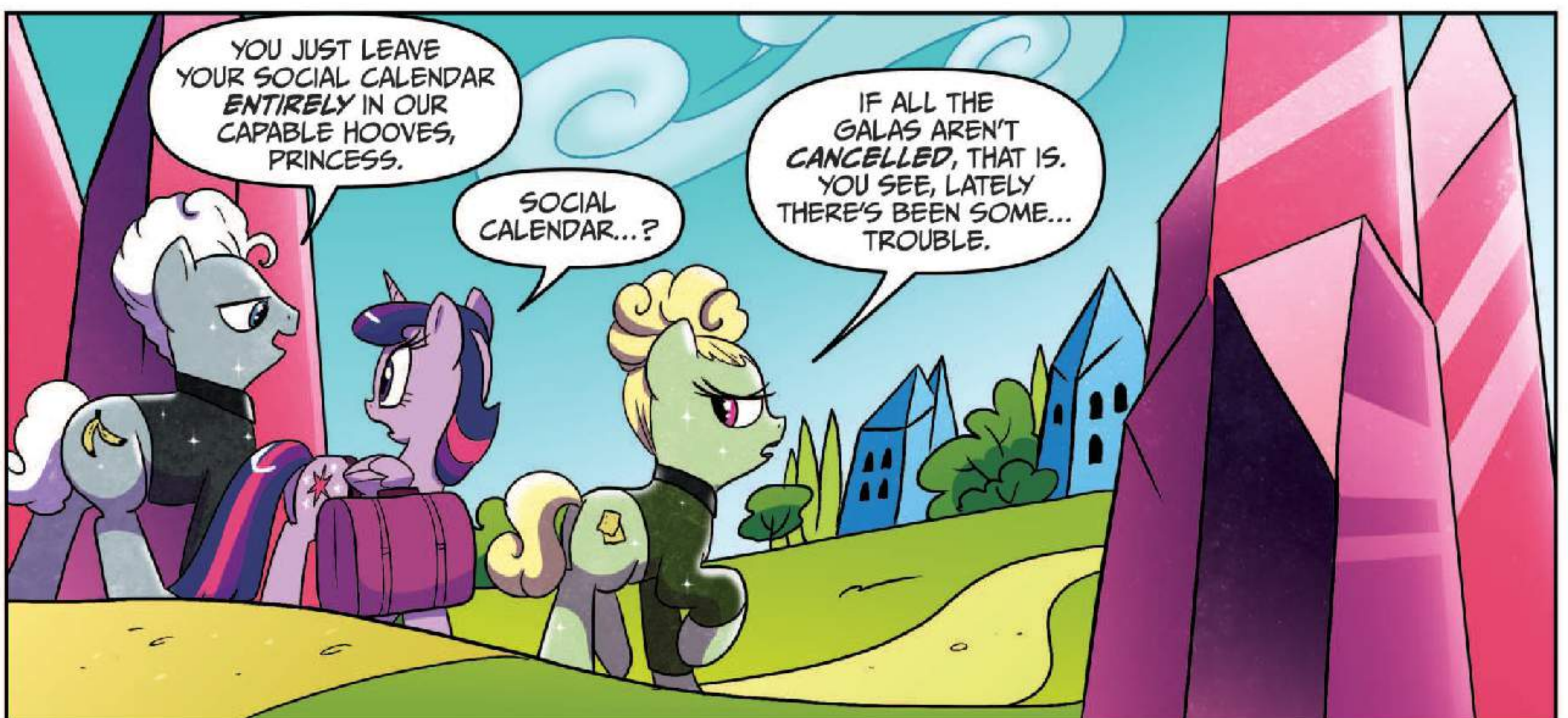


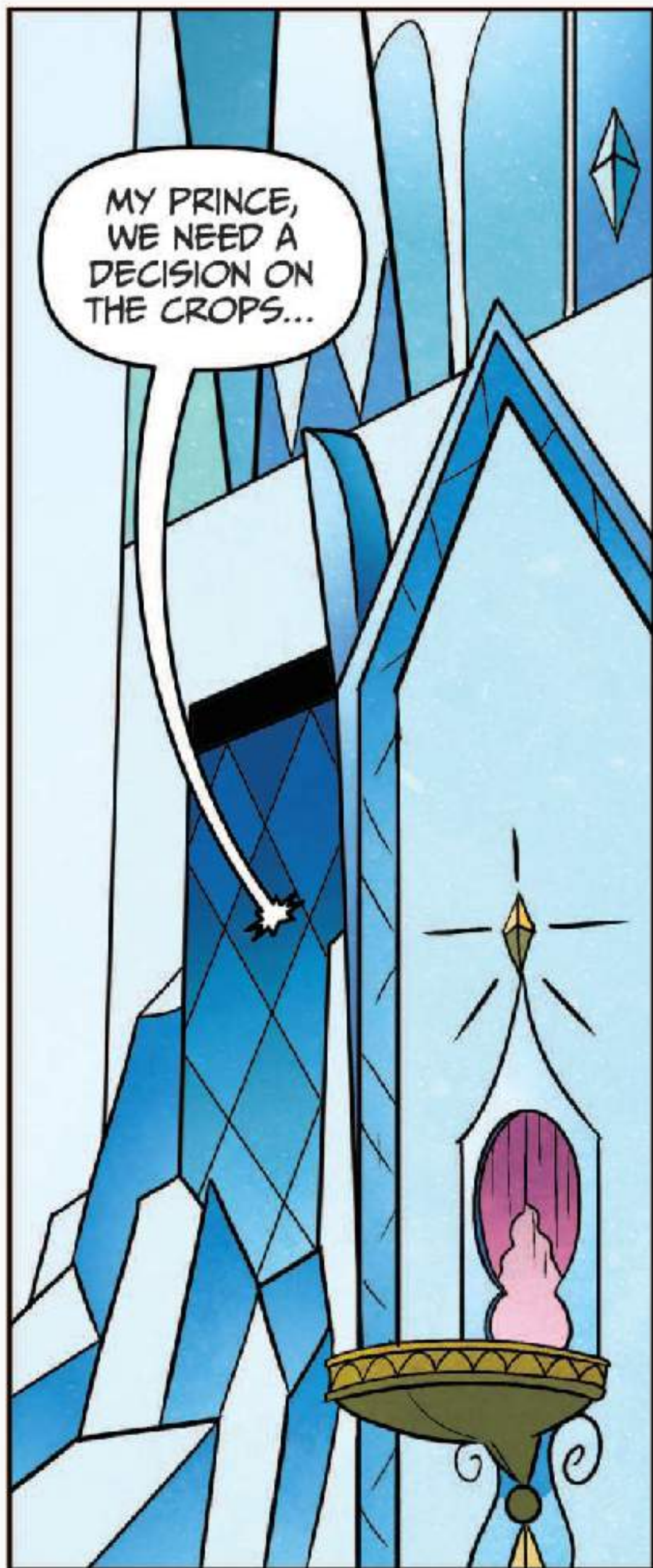
B.B.B... OH, RIGHT, YOUR BIG BROTHER BEST FRIEND FOREVER!

EXACTLY. WITH PRINCESS CADANCE OUT OF TOWN, I'M BETTING WE'LL HAVE LOTS OF QUIET TIME TOGETHER. AND WE HAVE SO MUCH TO CATCH UP ON.



YOU TWO TAKE CARE WHILE I'M GONE. I'VE GOT TO CATCH THE TRAIN TO...







...NAMELY, THE *STRANGE OCCURRENCES* THAT CONTINUE THROUGHOUT THE CASTLE, AND ESPECIALLY IN MY LIBRARY.

OH, NOT THIS AGAIN! HERE WE GO...



LEXICON IS RIGHT! I KEEP HEARING VOICES AND MOANS IN THE HALLWAY AT NIGHT. AND THE PLUMBERS ARE HEARING THINGS, TOO.

IT'S TRUE!

WE KEEP HEARING CHAINS WHEN WE'RE WORKING IN THE LAVATORY!



AND THEN THERE'S THE MATTER OF THE *GLOWING EYES* I'VE SEEN IN THE LIBRARY, RIGHT BEFORE THEY VANISH INTO THIN AIR. AND ALL THE MISSING BOOKS!



I'M SO SORRY TO RAISE THIS DURING YOUR VISIT, PRINCESS CELESTIA.

UH... I'M NOT CELES-

LEX, YOU DID PROMISE TO GET YOUR EYES CHECKED AGAIN, RIGHT?



HOLD ON, BIG BROTHER. LOOK WHAT I BROUGHT!

DOESN'T THIS ALL SOUND FAMILIAR? MOANS IN THE DARK? GLOWING EYES. DRAGGING CHAINS. AND *STEALING BOOKS!*

IT SOUNDS JUST LIKE A *CRYSTAL GHOST-ON PAGE 89!*



TWILIGHT, YOU'RE SCARING THE STAFF! CRYSTAL GHOSTS AREN'T EVEN REAL. THAT'S JUST A LEGEND THAT GOES BACK TO THE DAYS OF KING SOMBRA, HUNDREDS OF MOONS AGO.

LET'S OIL THE DOORS, CHECK THE LOOSE PIPES, AND EVERYONE RELAX, OKAY?

THE MOANS ARE PROBABLY SQUEAKY CASTLE DOORS. AND I BET THE "CHAINS" ARE JUST LOSE PIPES RATTLING. AND THE "MISSING BOOKS"—WELL, THE REST IS PROBABLY OVERACTIVE IMAGINATIONS.

...ACTUALLY, SOME OF THE MONSTERS IN THE BOOK ARE REAL... LIKE THE HYDRA ON THE COVER...



I'M SORRY, TWYLIE. I'M GLAD YOU BROUGHT THE BOOK. IT REMINDS ME OF SOMETHING I WANT TO SHOW YOU, TOO. BUT I HAVE TO DEAL WITH SOME OF THESE OTHER MATTERS FIRST.

YOU WANT TO SETTLE IN, AND I'LL TRY TO STOP BY YOUR ROOM LATER TONIGHT?

OH, SURE... I UNDERSTAND. YOU'VE GOT A KINGDOM TO RUN!



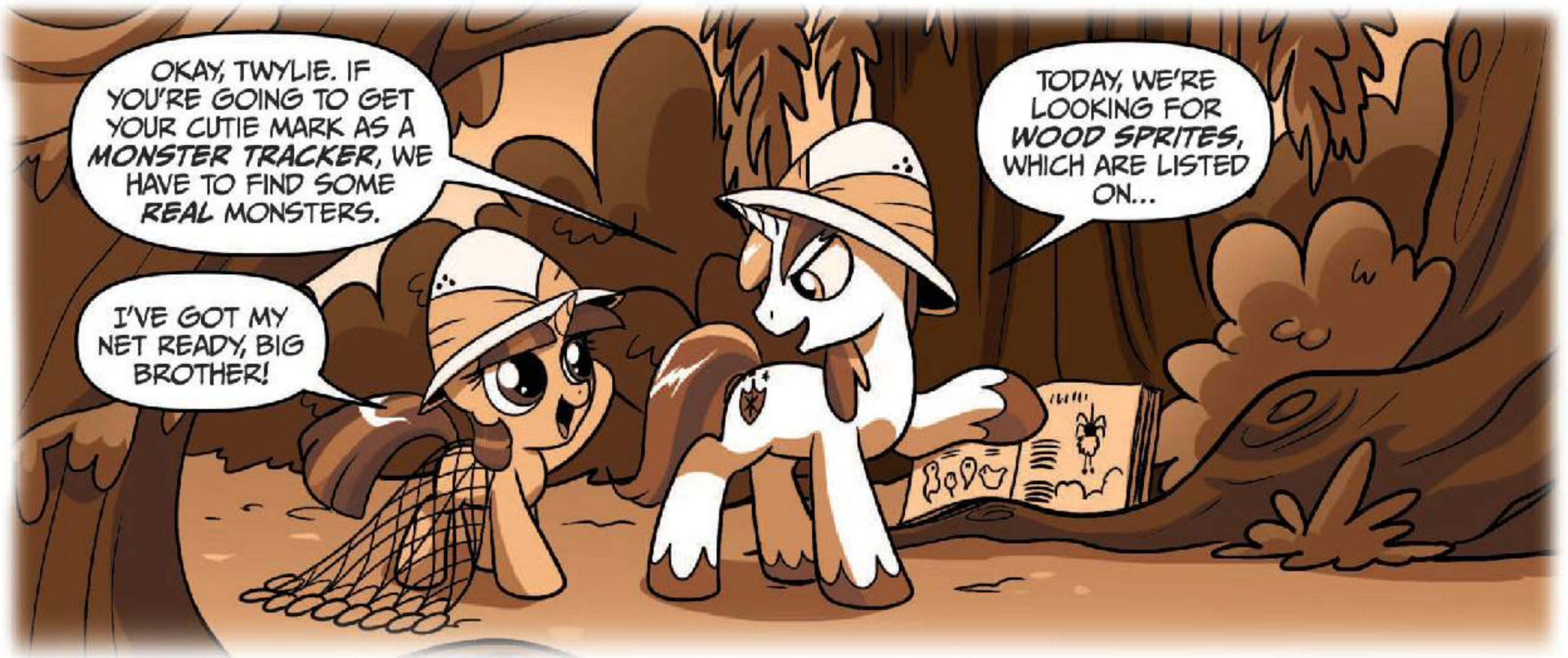
ENOUGH WITH THE SILLY GHOST STORIES. LET'S DISCUSS SOMETHING IMPORTANT, LIKE FLUGELHORNS!



IT'S GETTING PRETTY LATE. I GUESS SHINING ARMOR'S MEETINGS ARE RUNNING REALLY LONG.



HE... WASN'T SO HAPPY TO SEE... THE BOOK ANYWAY...
zzzzzz



OKAY, TWYLIE. IF YOU'RE GOING TO GET YOUR CUTIE MARK AS A MONSTER TRACKER, WE HAVE TO FIND SOME REAL MONSTERS.

I'VE GOT MY NET READY, BIG BROTHER!

TODAY, WE'RE LOOKING FOR WOOD SPRITES, WHICH ARE LISTED ON...



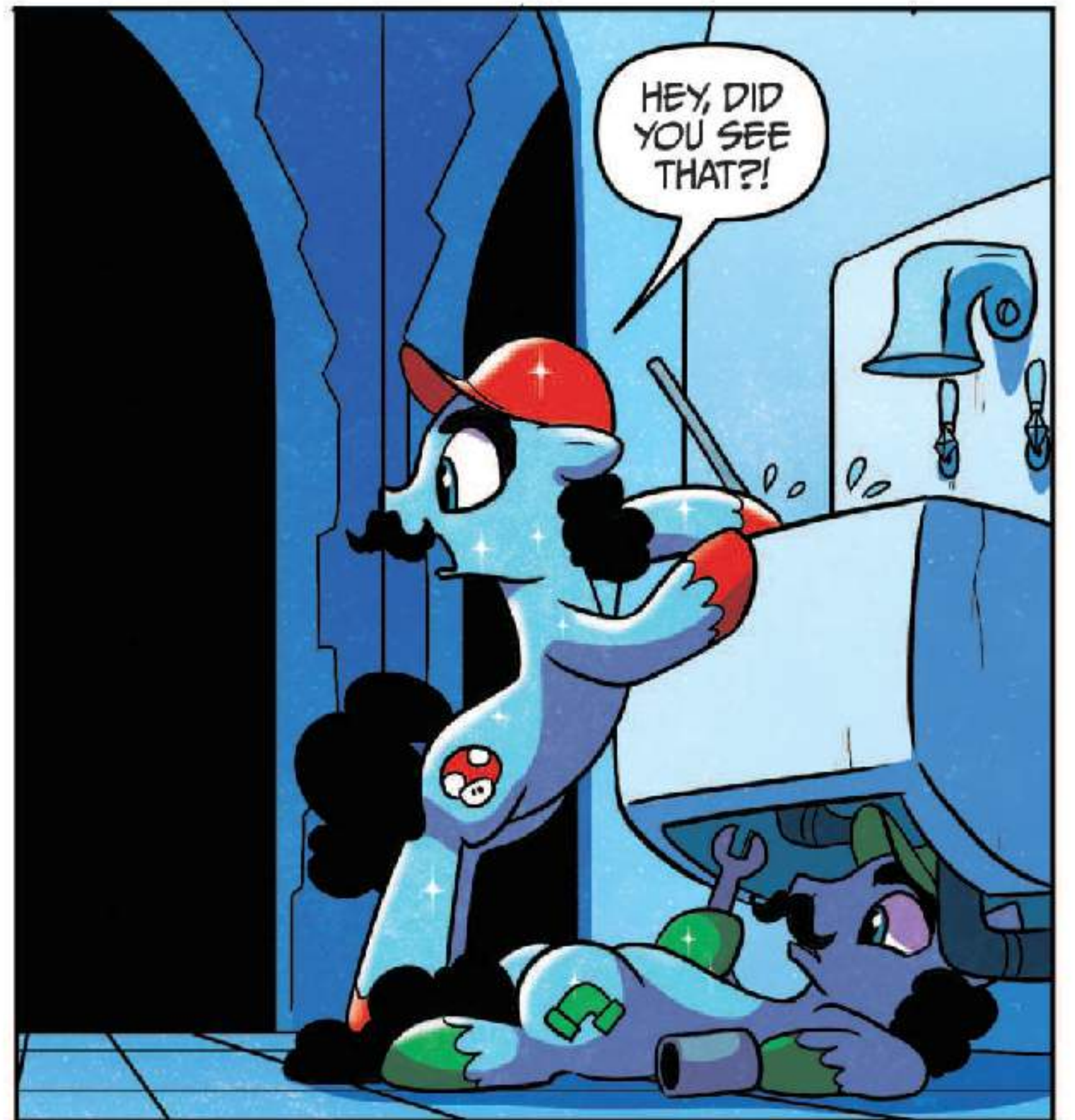
...PAGE 63!

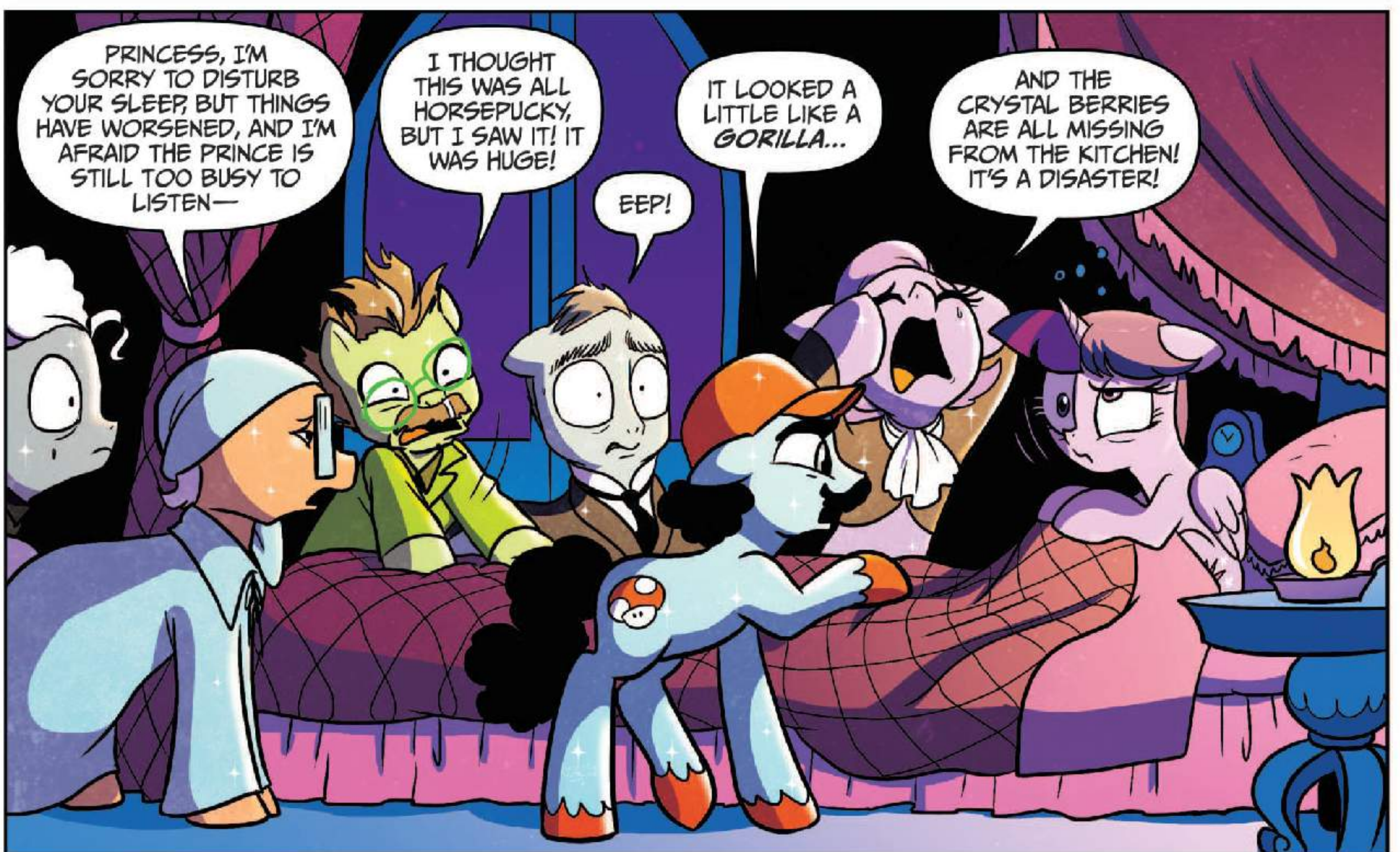
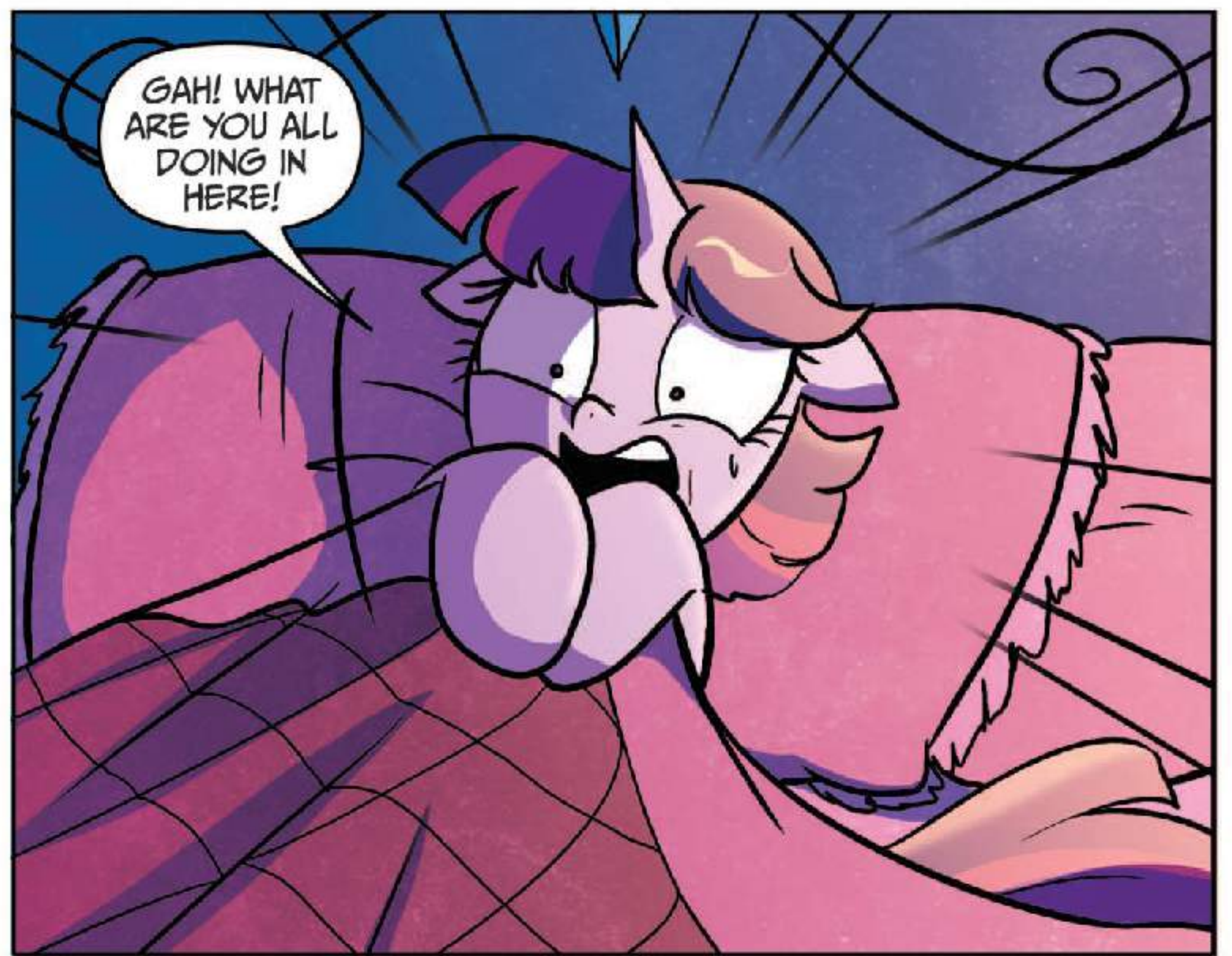


KEEP AN EYE OUT. THE SPRITES CAN BLEND RIGHT INTO TREES.

OF COURSE! I'VE ALMOST GOT THE BOOK MEMORIZED TOO, YOU KNOW.









OKAY, THIS REALLY DOES SOUND LIKE A CRYSTAL GHOST...

...IF THEY'RE REAL.



WHEN THIS GHOST STOLE THE MONSTER-PEDIA, IT MESSED WITH THE WRONG PONY!

IT'S TIME FOR THE MONSTER TRACKERS TO CATCH US A GHOST! LET'S HEAD TO THE CASTLE LIBRARY. WHO'S WITH ME?



CRYSTAL GHOSTS AREN'T IN MY JOB DESCRIPTION!

EEP!

PRINCESS, IF YOU GET KIDNAPPED, MAYBE WE'LL COME AND GET YOU LATER, OKAY?

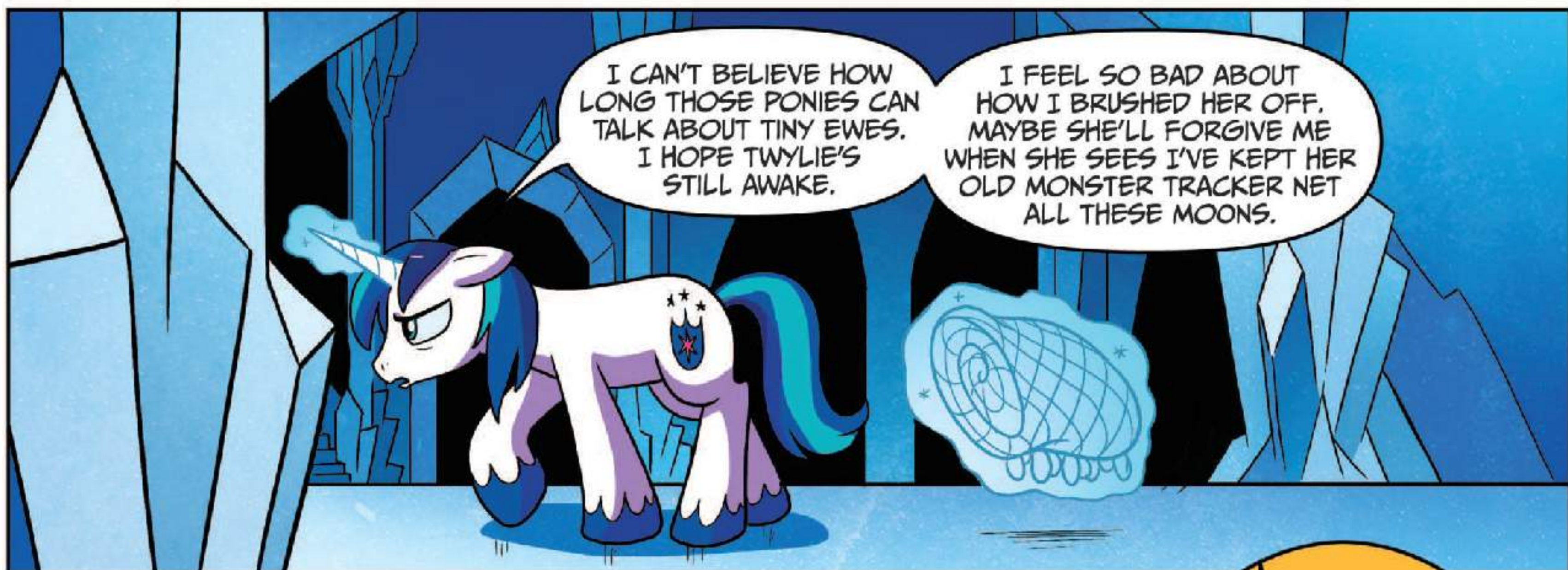


YOU'RE NOT SCARED OF GHOSTS?

SCARED OR NOT, SOMETHING IS STEALING BOOKS...



...AND THEY'RE OVERDUE.



I CAN'T BELIEVE HOW LONG THOSE PONIES CAN TALK ABOUT TINY EWES. I HOPE TWYLIE'S STILL AWAKE.

I FEEL SO BAD ABOUT HOW I BRUSHED HER OFF. MAYBE SHE'LL FORGIVE ME WHEN SHE SEES I'VE KEPT HER OLD MONSTER TRACKER NET ALL THESE MOONS.



HEY, WHY IS EVERYONE RUNNING?!

THE GHOST! IT'S REAL! I SAW IT!

THE PRINCESS IS TRYING TO CATCH IT IN THE LIBRARY!

YOU SAW IT?... OH, NO! TWYLIE THOUGHT I WOULDN'T HELP HER!



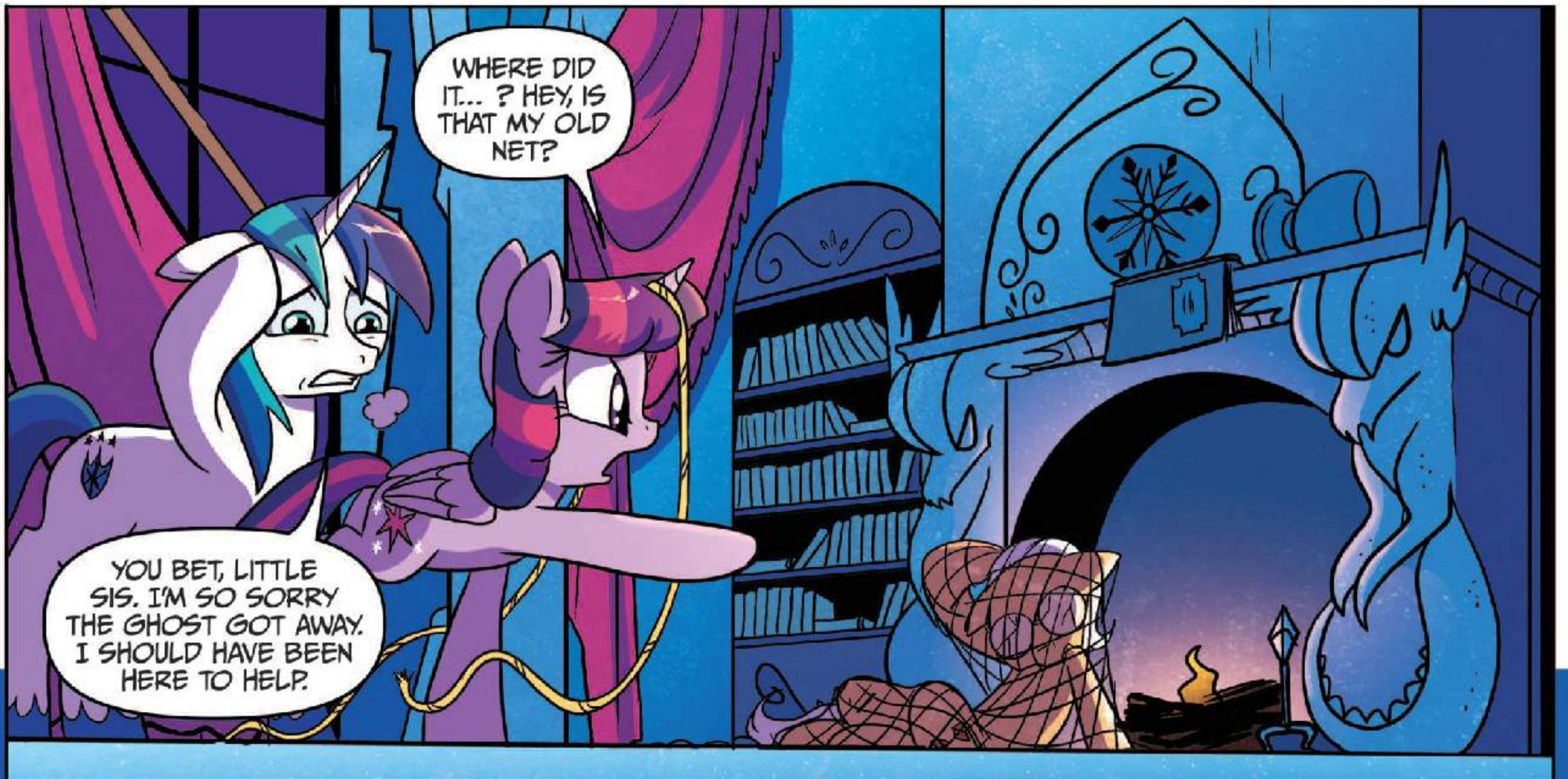
ANY BOOK-STEALING CREATURE CAN'T STAND TO RELEASE A BOOK ONCE THEY HAVE IT, SO WE SHOULD BE ABLE TO CORNER IT.

USING ANOTHER BOOK FOR BAIT SEEMS RATHER RISKY. PERHAPS WE COULD TRY SOMETHING LESS VALUABLE, LIKE A MEMBER OF THE STAFF?



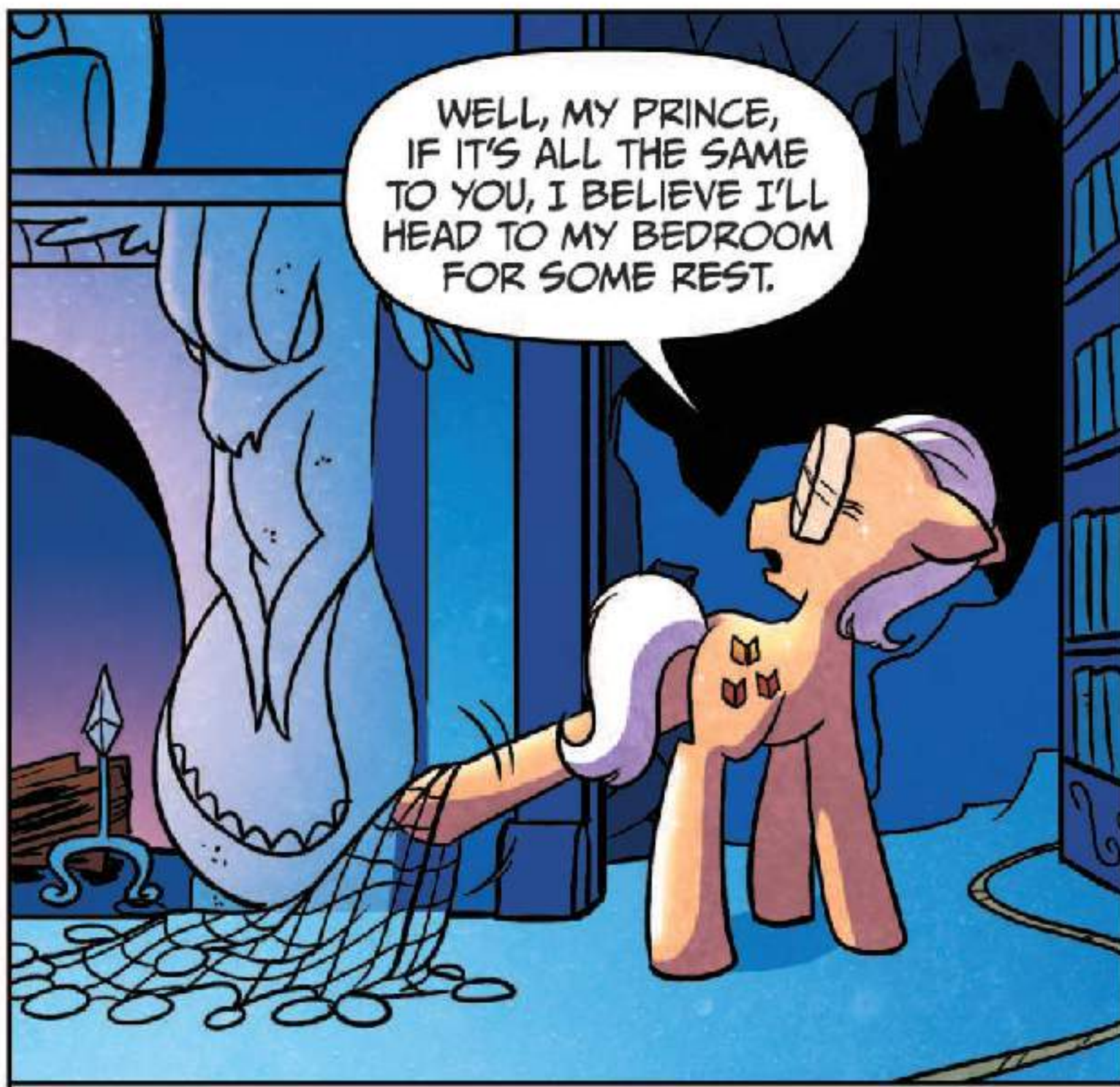
IT'S NOT EVEN ONE OF YOUR BOOKS! I'M USING THE OUBLIETTES MANUAL THAT I BROUGHT WITH—

TWANGG









WELL, MY PRINCE, IF IT'S ALL THE SAME TO YOU, I BELIEVE I'LL HEAD TO MY BEDROOM FOR SOME REST.



HMMM... I SEEM TO HAVE GOTTEN TURNED AROUND. I MUST BE HEADED DOWN TO THE KITCHEN... WILL HAVE TO GO THE BACK WAY, I SUPPOSE.



THIS IS JUST LIKE OLD TIMES... EXCEPT, YOU KNOW, WE MIGHT ACTUALLY CATCH SOMETHING.

HEY, WE SAW A WOOD SPRITE THAT ONE TIME—

OR AN OWL, MORE LIKELY.



BUT, YEAH, IT'S BEEN TOO LONG SINCE WE HAD FUN TOGETHER. I WISH WE LIVED CLOSER.

ME, TOO. IT SEEMS LIKE NOWADAYS I'M ALWAYS BUSY STUDYING OR WRITING A SCROLL REPORT...

...OR WE'RE DEALING WITH SOME CRISIS—



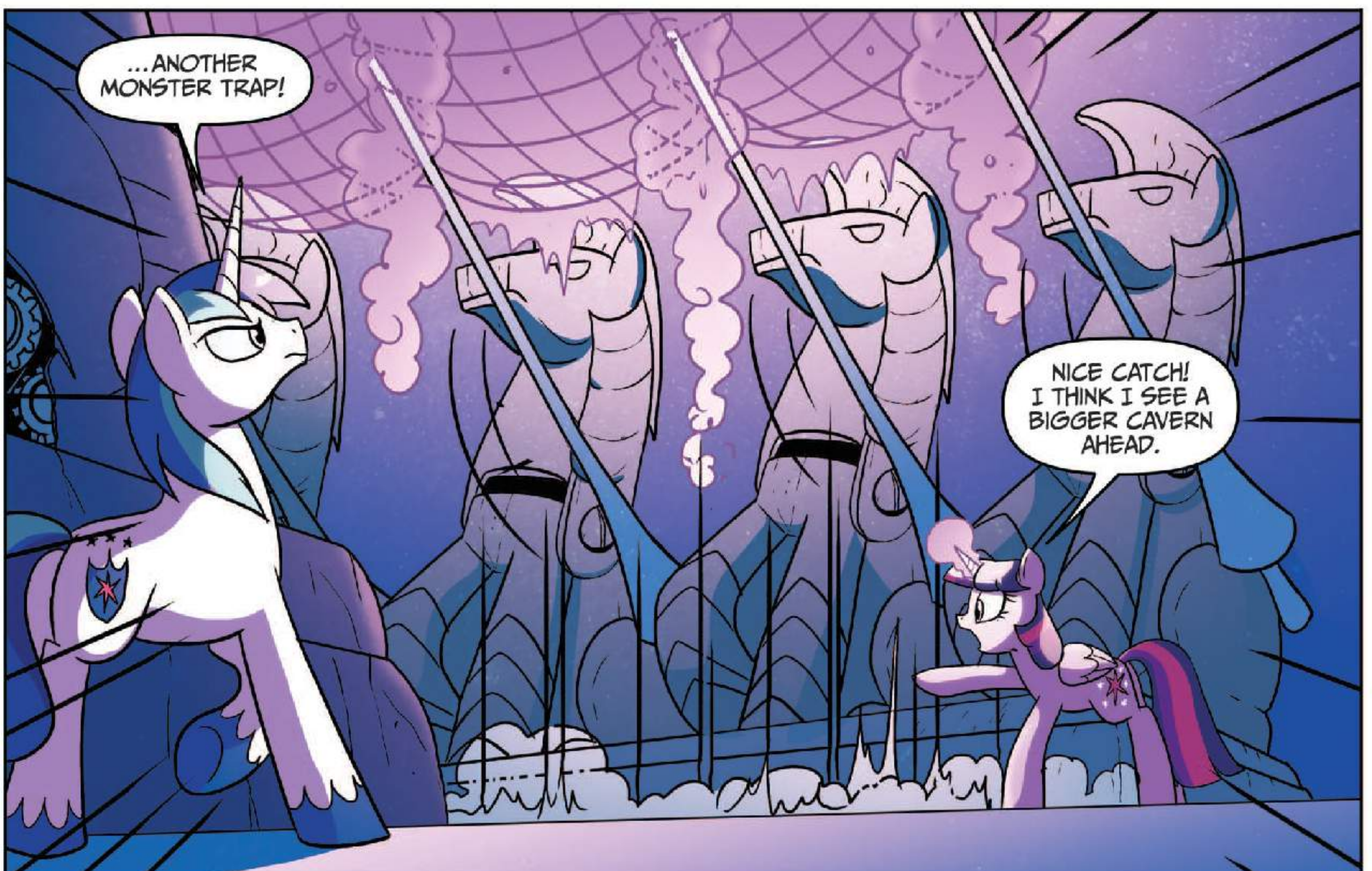
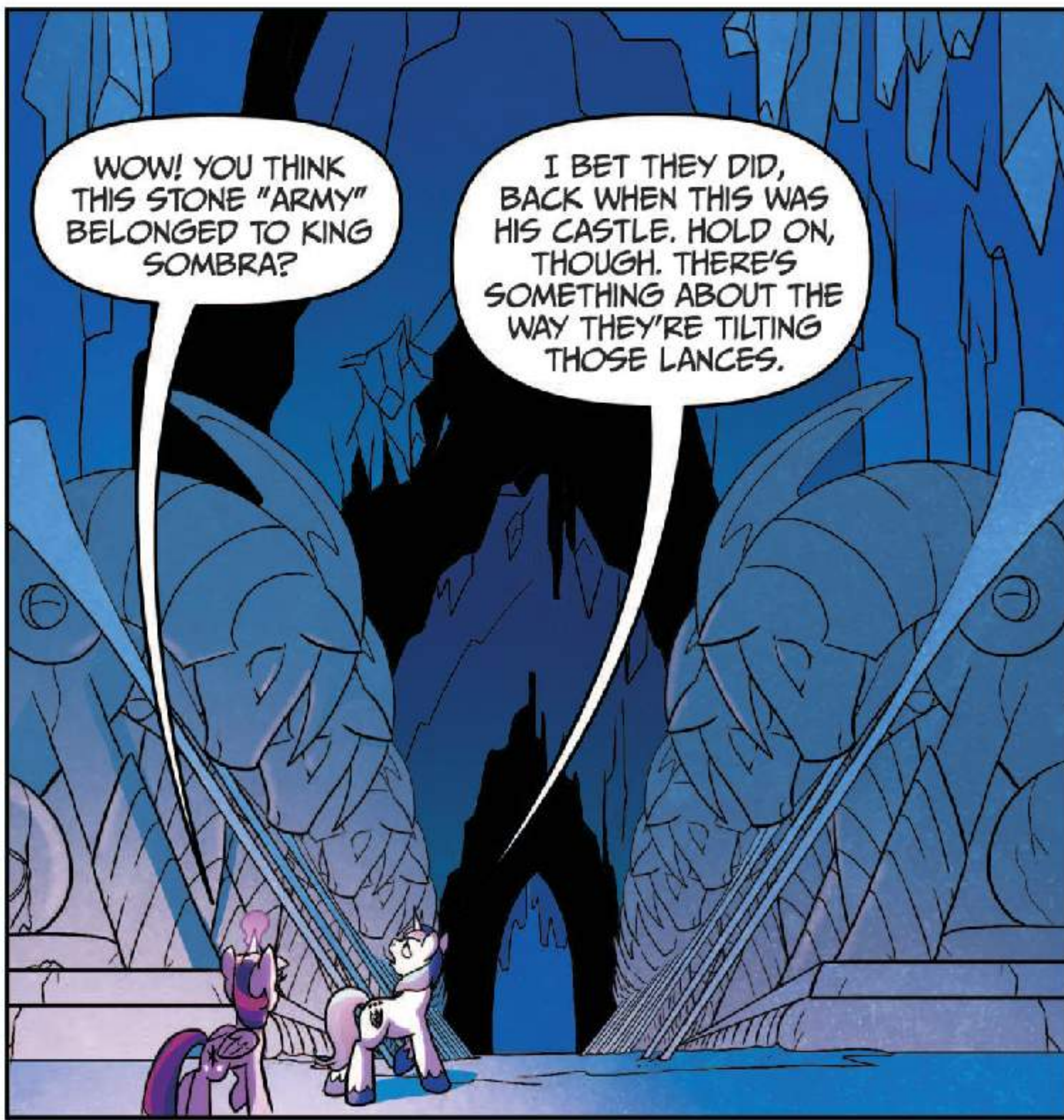
WAIT, BIG BROTHER. DO YOU SEE WHAT I SEE?

YES! SOME OF THOSE COBBLESTONES ARE RAISED. IT—IT LOOKS LIKE A "CAGE DROP" TRAP.



RIGHT! FROM THE MONSTER-PEDIA'S TRAP APPENDIX. IT'S HANGING UP THERE.

BUT THAT'S A MONSTER TRAP. WHY WOULD A MONSTER SET A TRAP... FOR MONSTERS? LET'S KEEP MOVING, BUT WATCH YOUR STEP.





OH, NO! A MAZE OF MADNESS! KING SOMBRA MUST HAVE BUILT THIS LONG AGO TO PROTECT HIS TREASURE. WE'LL NEVER—

NO BIGGIE. FOLLOW ME, B.B.B.FF! I'VE READ "THE PONY'S GUIDE TO MAZES OF MADNESS." TWICE.

WE'LL JUST KEEP OUR HOOF ON THE RIGHT WALL, AND IT WILL EVENTUALLY LEAD US OUT THE OTHER END.



YOU MEMORIZED MAZES OF MADNESS, TOO? IMPRESSIVE. NO WONDER WHY I WAS ALWAYS STRUGGLING TO KEEP UP WITH YOU ON THE MONSTER-PEDIA.

NO WAY! I WAS STRUGGLING TO KEEP UP WITH YOU! I BET THAT'S WHY WE LEARNED SO FAST. WE PUSHED EACH OTHER.



I THINK ABOUT THOSE DAYS ALL THE TIME, YOU KNOW. AND WHAT A GREAT PONY YOU'VE GROWN INTO. I MEAN, YOU'RE AN ALICORN PRINCESS NOW!

NOW I'M BLUSHING. I'M JUST GLAD WE'RE TOGETHER... EVEN IF IT IS IN A MAZE OF MADNESS.



HEY, WE'RE OUT! I CAN HEAR THE CREATURE AHEAD.

I HAVE A HUNCH THIS THING IS GOING TO GUARD ITS BOOKS LIKE A DRAGON GUARDING GEMS. THIS ISN'T GOING TO BE EASY, BUT WE'RE...

MWRRRRRRRR...

SCRITCH
CLATTER
KLANG



...THE MONSTER TRACKERS!

ONE...

TWO...

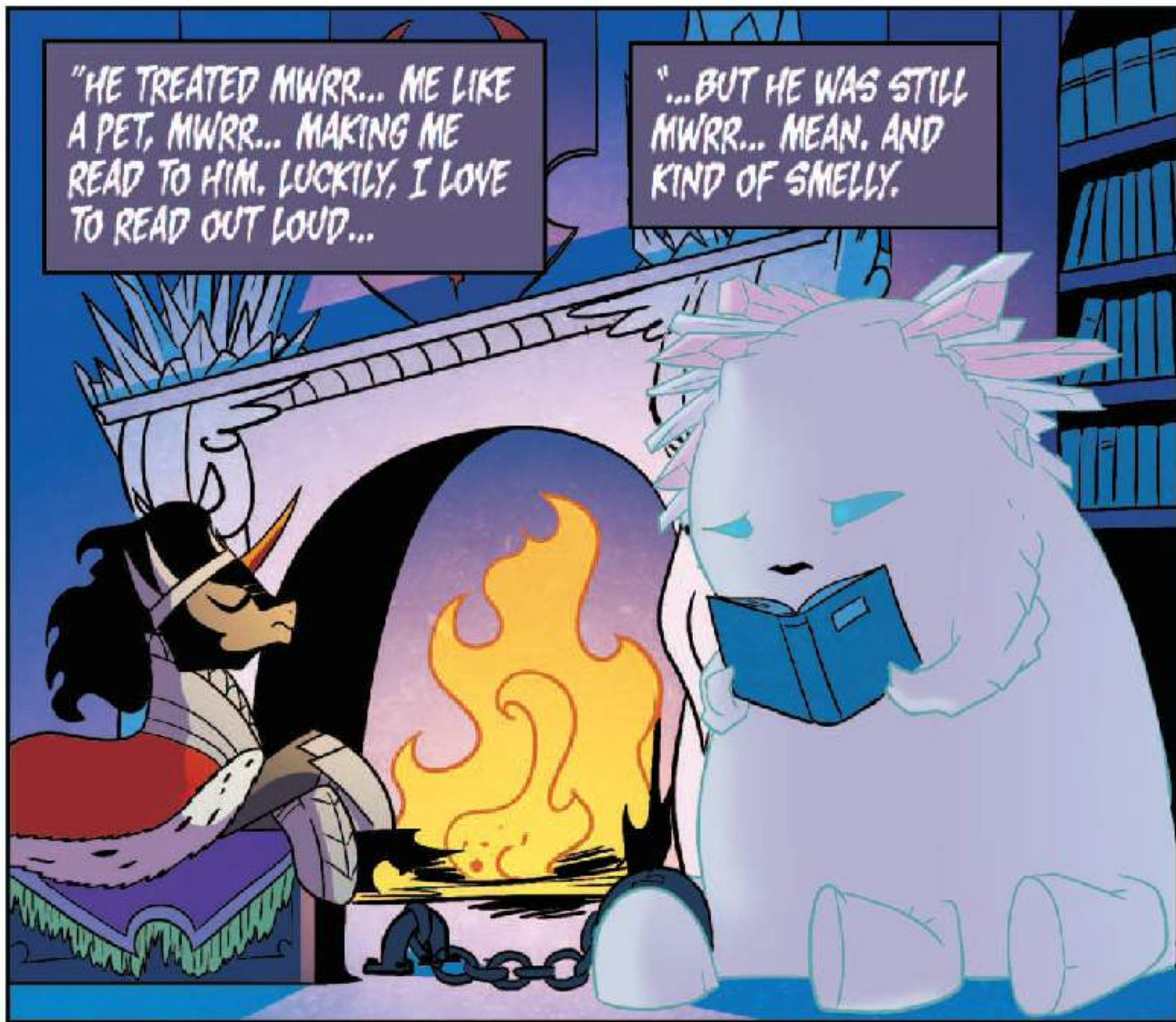


THREE...?

MWRRRRRR-WAH-WAH

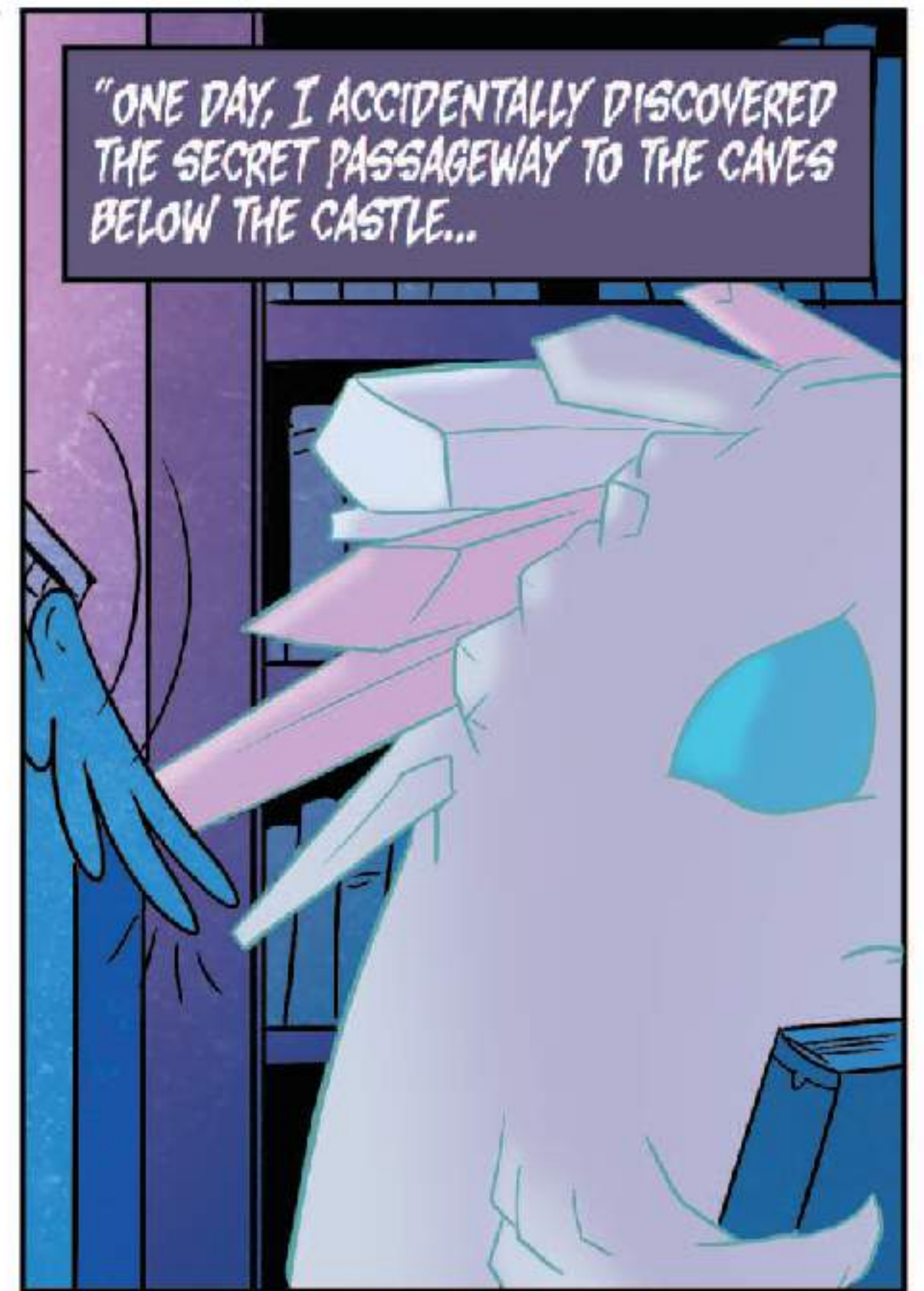
MWRRR-WAH-WAH-WAH-WAH





"HE TREATED MWRR... ME LIKE A PET, MWRR... MAKING ME READ TO HIM. LUCKILY, I LOVE TO READ OUT LOUD..."

"...BUT HE WAS STILL MWRR... MEAN. AND KIND OF SMELLY."



"ONE DAY, I ACCIDENTALLY DISCOVERED THE SECRET PASSAGEWAY TO THE CAVES BELOW THE CASTLE..."



"...AND WITH A PLACE TO HIDE, I SNAPPED MWRR... MY CHAIN AND RAN."



"EVEN WHEN SOMBRA SET THOSE TRAPS DOWN HERE, HE COULDN'T CATCH MWRR... ME AGAIN."

"I LEARNED TO AVOID THEM AND FOUND A WAY THROUGH THE MWRR... MAZE."



I'VE BEEN HIDING EVER SINCE.

I'M SORRY I STOLE THE BOOKS! I ALWAYS RETURNED THEM... EVENTUALLY...



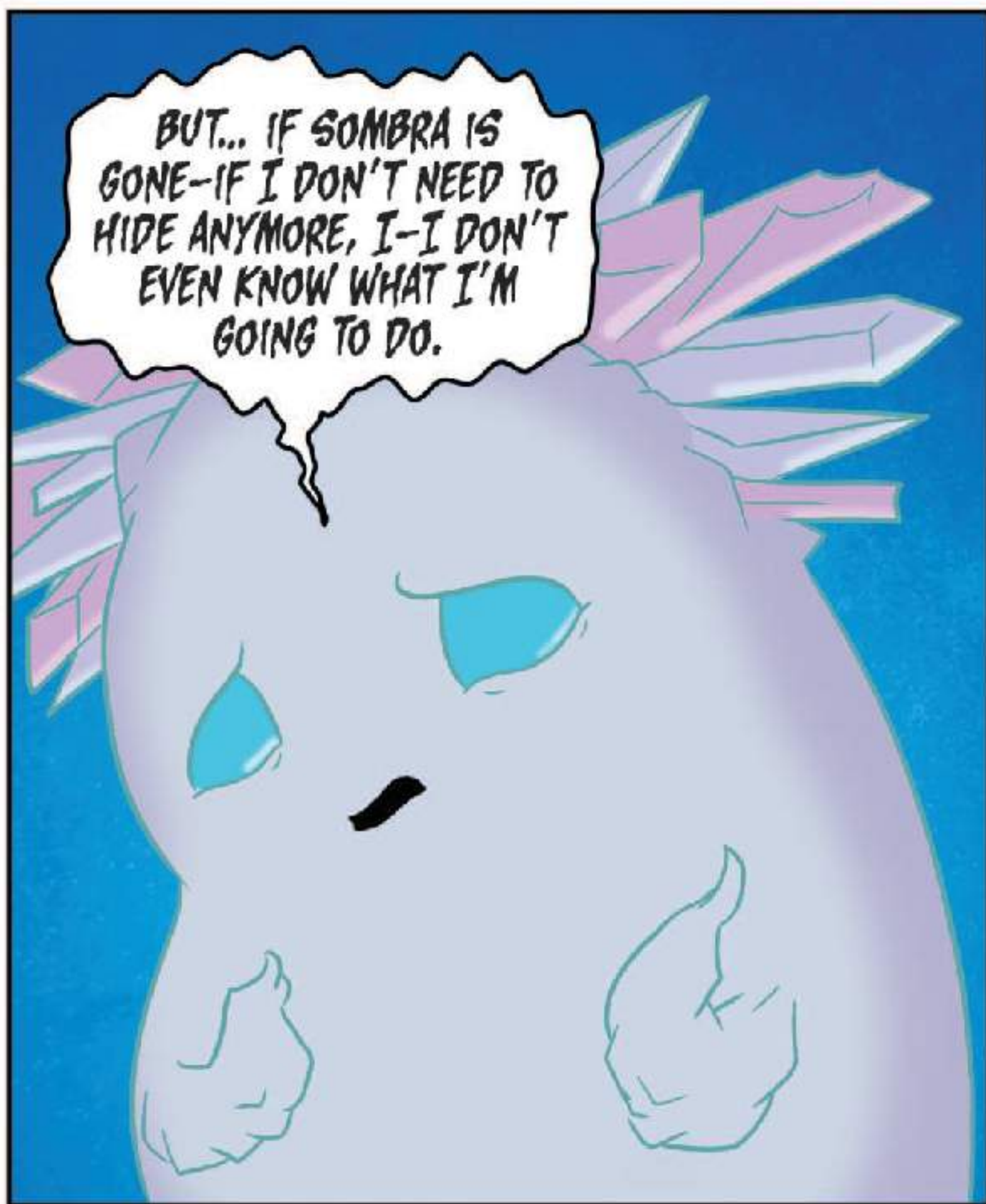
AH, FINALLY!
I REALLY DON'T
REMEMBER THERE
BEING SO MANY TURNS,
GOING THE BACK
WAY.

DON'T
WORRY ABOUT
THE BOOKS...



...I'M JUST
GLAD WE FOUND
YOU—THANKS
TO TWYLIE.

YOU MUST HAVE
BECOME A LEGEND IN
EQUESTRIA DURING THE
THOUSAND MOONS THE CRYSTAL
EMPIRE DISAPPEARED. THOUGH YOU
WERE LISTED UNDER "GHOSTS" IN
OUR MONSTER-PEDIA, I'LL NEED
TO SEND A CORRECTION
TO THE—

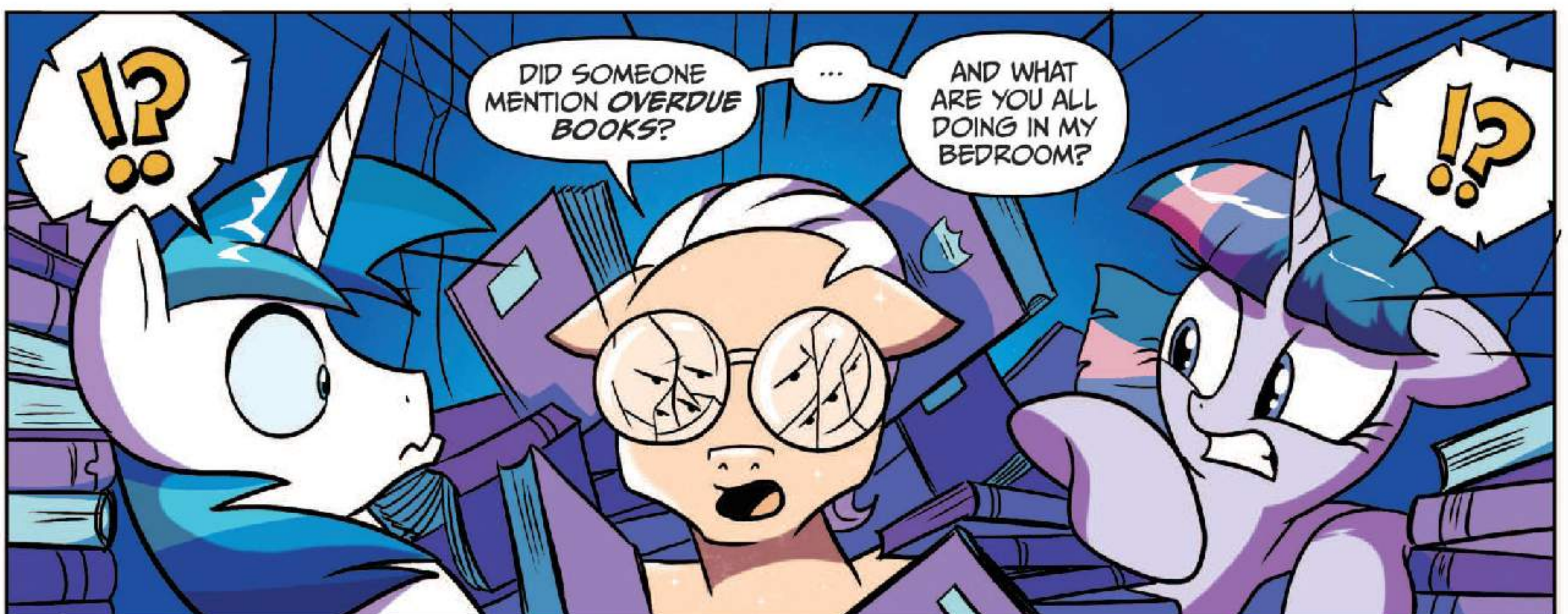


BUT... IF SOMBRA IS
GONE—IF I DON'T NEED TO
HIDE ANYMORE, I—I DON'T
EVEN KNOW WHAT I'M
GOING TO DO.



WE JUST
NEED TO FIND
YOU A JOB!

IT DOES LOOK
LIKE SOMEONE'S
GOING TO NEED TO
RESHELVE A LOT OF
OVERDUE BOOKS.



DID SOMEONE
MENTION *OVERDUE*
BOOKS?

AND WHAT
ARE YOU ALL
DOING IN MY
BEDROOM?

!?

!?

