

THE ARCHMAGE

• RETURNS AFTER •

4000

• YEARS •

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~ 72 ~

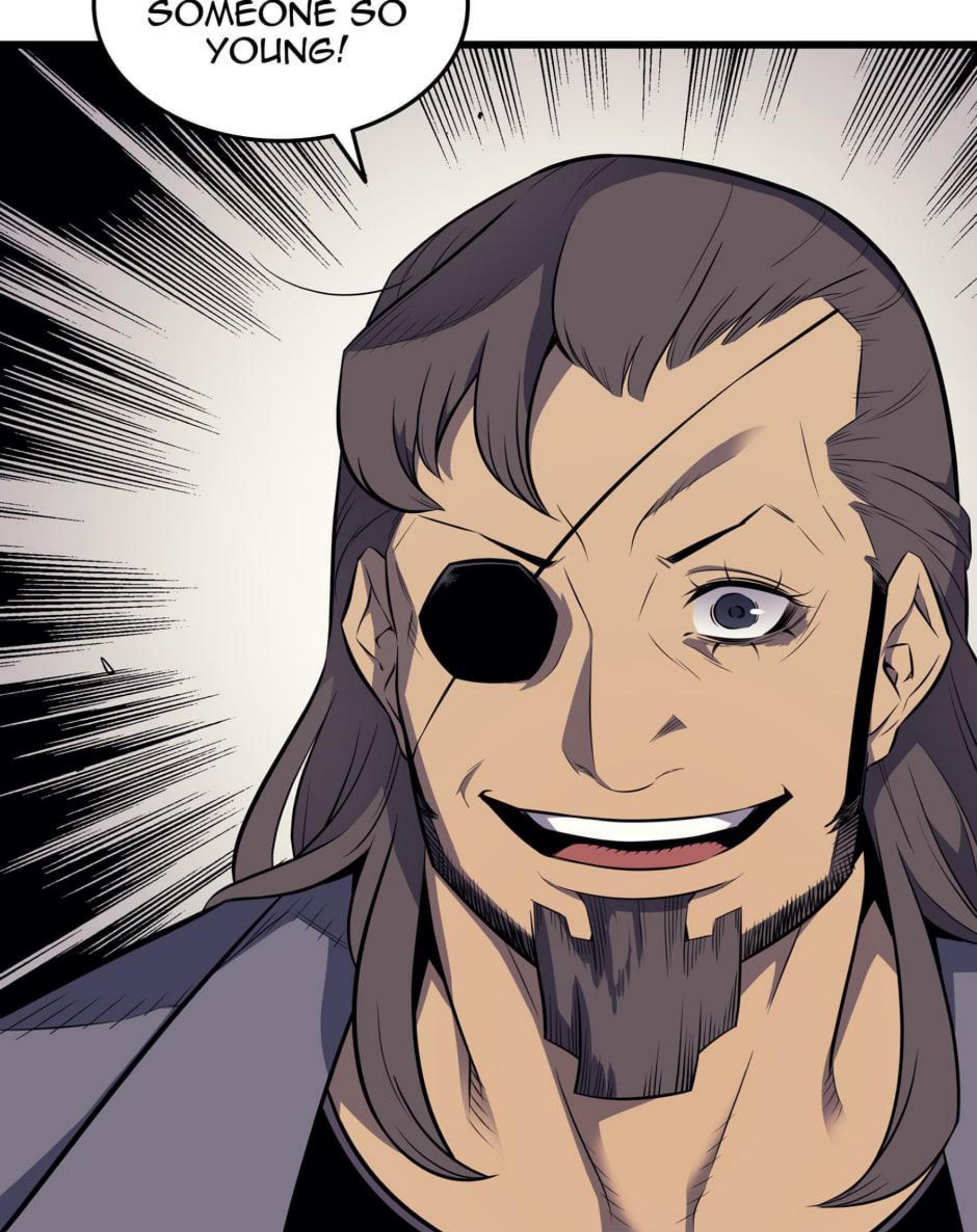
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WELL,
DAMN SON!

NOT BAD FOR
A MAGE

SOMEONE SO
YOUNG!





THE NAME'S
DUMKI. YOU WITH
ANY MERC GROUP
YET, KID?

I DON'T
PLAN ON JOINING
ANY GROUPS
FOR NOW.

YOU SEEM TO
BE IN AN AWFUL
RUSH TO ADVANCE
IN RANK. WHY
IS THAT?

STAGGER

HE SAYS
HE WANTS TO TAKE
THE JOB REQUEST TO
ESCORT THE MERCHANTS
TO CEINAL'S FOREST

TO REINALS FOREST.

HMM?
OF ALL TIMES,
NOW...?

IS THERE
SOME SORT OF
A PROBLEM...?



NAH... I RECKON
YOU SHOULD BE
MORE THAN ENOUGH
TO BE QUALIFIED TO
TAKE ON THAT
REQUEST.

I'LL TELL
THE CLIENTS
ABOUT YA.

?

CHATTER

HEY, DID YOU HEAR?

APPARENTLY,
COUNT ISAKA MIGHT
BE STEPPING DOWN
AS THE MASTER OF
THE 5TH MAGIC
TOWER!

CHATTER

REALLY?
WHY?

CHATTER



WHO KNOWS?!
I ONLY HEARD THIS
FROM A FRIEND OF
MINE WHO WORKS
THERE...

CHATTER

CHATTER

NOW THAT
I THINK ABOUT IT,
HE SEEMED TO BE
RESIDING IN HIS
MANSION FOR
A LONG TIME
NOW.

HAS IT
BEEN TWO
MONTHS?

CHATTER

YEAH, THERE'S
NO WAY A TOWER
MASTER WOULD BE
AWAY FROM HIS
TOWER FOR THAT
LONG.

I'D BE
SURPRISED IF HE
HASN'T ALREADY
BEEN FIRED FROM
HIS POST.



WHY HELLO
THERE!

THE HELL?



I'M A BIT NEW TO
THIS SIDE OF THE WORLD
SO I'M TRYING TO LEARN
MORE ABOUT THIS LINE
OF WORK...

IF YOU
DON'T MIND,
COULD I ASK FOR
SOME TIPS FROM
YOU?

HUH? WHO
THE HELL TOLD
YOU TO SIT

THERE?

IN RETURN, ALL
THE BOOZE AND
FOOD IS ON ME!

EXCUSE ME,
I'D LIKE TO ORDER
SOME MORE FOOD

SOME MORE FOOD
AND BEER!!



HMPH!

LOOKS LIKE
YOU AT LEAST KNOW
PROPER ETIQUETTE
AROUND THIS LINE
OF WORK.





I ACTUALLY
WANT TO SIGN
UP AS A GUARD
AT THE BLAKE
HOUSE.

HIC

THAT'S NOT BAD!
THEIR SALARY IS
PRETTY NICE, AND
IT'S A STABLE
JOB...

BWAHAHA!

THERE'S ALSO A
BUNCH OF PRETTY
GIRLS WORKING THERE
TOO. IT'S A JOB
BLESSED BY
GODS!

HEHE...

THAT SO?





HAVE YOU HEARD
ANYTHING ABOUT THE
BLAKE HOUSE
RECENTLY?

I'D LIKE
TO KNOW MORE
ABOUT THEM. EVEN
IF IT'S ANYTHING
MINOR...

NOW THAT I
THINK ABOUT IT...

MY FRIEND
MENTIONED THAT
HE SAW SEVERAL
CARRIAGES ENTERING
THE MANSION...

WHAT'S GO



WHAT'S SO
SPECIAL ABOUT
THAT? IT'S COMMON
FOR HUGE MANSIONS LIKE
THAT TO HAVE PROVISION
CARRIAGES GOING IN
AND OUT ALL
THE TIME.

THAT'S THE
WEIRD PART
ABOUT IT.

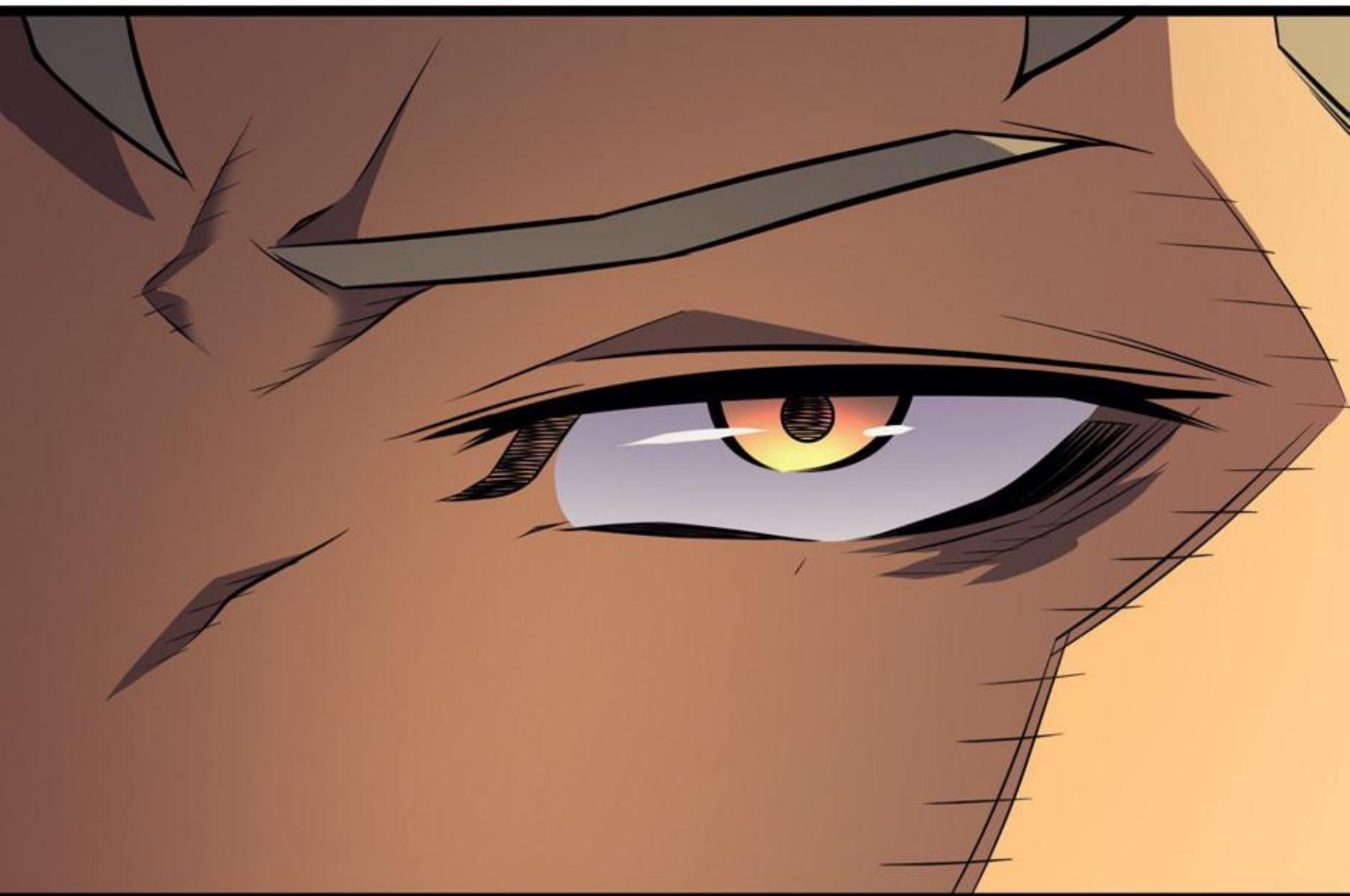


THERE WERE
FAR TOO MANY
CARRIAGES FOR
THEM TO ALL BE
PROVISIONS.



AND HE SAID
THAT HE HEARD
VOICES COMING
FROM THEM
CARRIAGES.

HE SAID IT
SOUNDED LIKE
SCREAMS WERE
COMING FROM
INSIDE...



BWAHAHA!!
THAT'S A JUICY
HORROR STORY,
ISN'T IT?

EVERY NOBLE
HOUSE NEEDS
AT LEAST ONE OF
THEM ASSOCIATED
TO THEIR NAME,
RIGHT?!

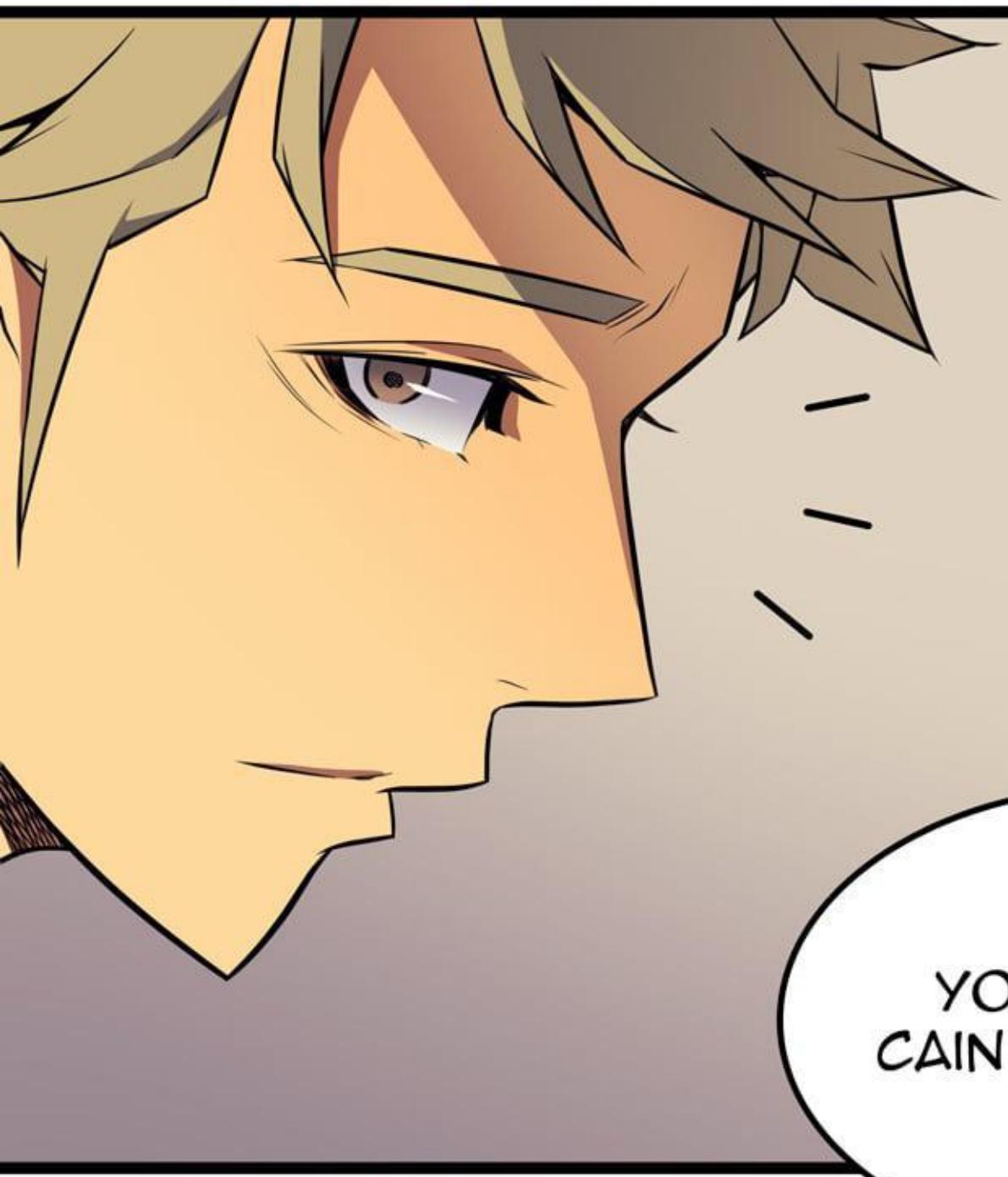
HAHAHA!!





LIVE
SACRIFICES...?

IT CAN'T BE...



YOU MUST BE
CAIN RICKSTONE?

I'M ALCONE,
THE ONE LEADING THE
ESCORT GROUP FROM
HERE TO THE REINALS
FOREST.





I HEARD
FROM DUMKI.

HE SAID
YOU'RE AN
EXTREMELY
POWERFUL
MAGE?



AND FROM
MY EXPERIENCE,
DUMKI IS THE KIND
OF BASTARD WHO IS
VERY PICKY ABOUT
COMPLIMENTING
PEOPLE... SO I'M
EXPECTING A LOT
FROM YOU, KID!

HAHAHA!



IT MIGHT BE A
SIMPLE ESCORT
MISSION BUT YOU
SHOULDN'T LET
YOUR GUARD
DOWN.

THE GROUP THAT
WAS HEADED FOR
THE REINALS FOREST
LAST MONTH GOT
ANNIHILATED...



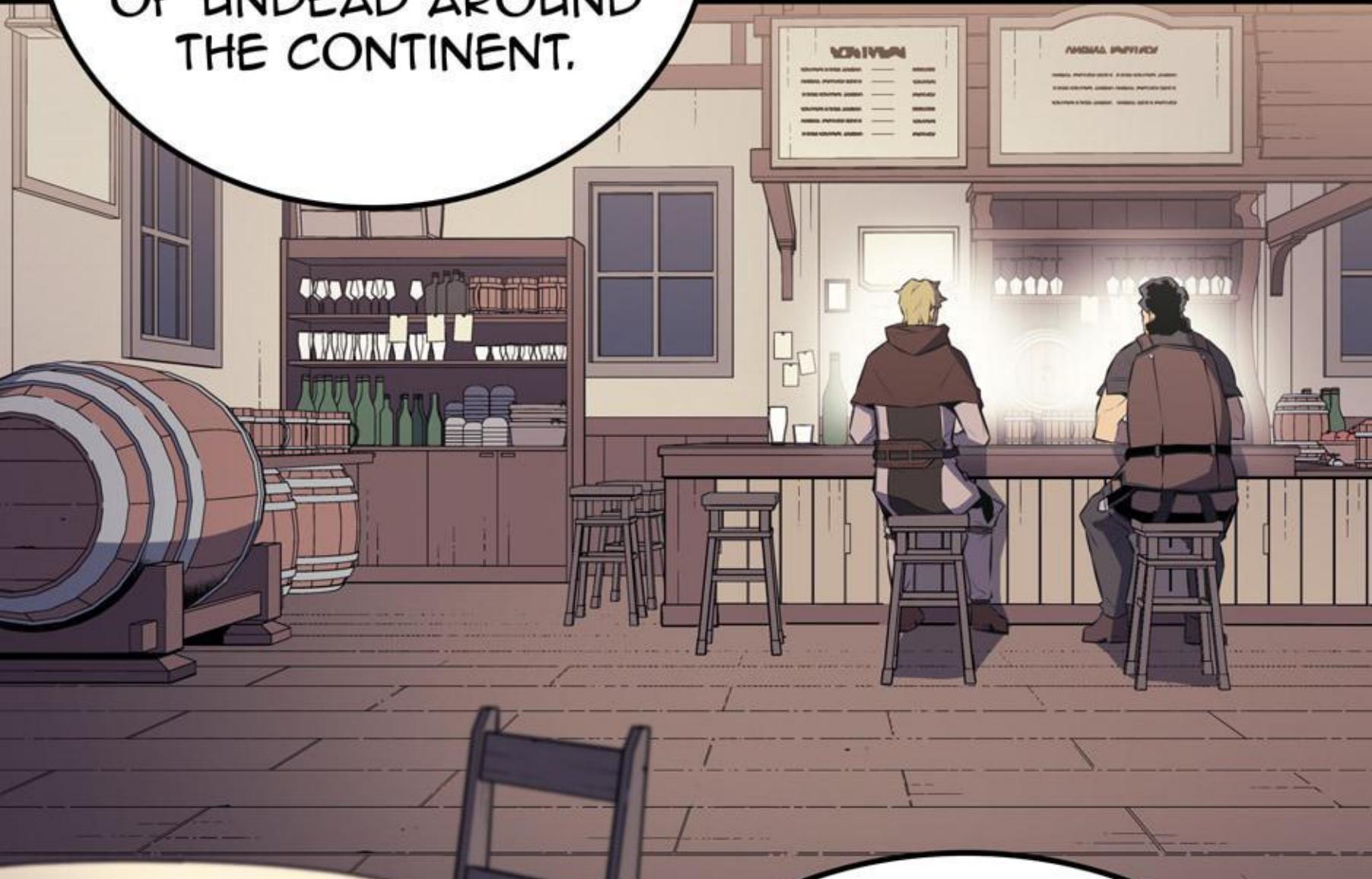
THEY DID?!
BUT WHO WOULD
DO SUCH A
THING...?!



THE UNDEAD.



I KEEP
HEARING THAT THERE
ARE MORE AND MORE
FREQUENT SIGHTINGS
OF UNDEAD AROUND
THE CONTINENT.



THOUGH IT'S
STRANGE SINCE
THE UNDEAD AREN'T
THE TYPE THAT WOULD

WORK WITH OTHER
RACES...

IN ANY
CASE, THIS IS
FOREBODING
NEWS FOR
MERC'S LIKE
US.

COME TO
THINK OF IT...

**IT WAS QUITE BIZARRE
TO RUN INTO ONE BACK
THEN TOO...**





**THE UNDEAD ARE USUALLY THE
TYPE OF BEINGS THAT ONLY ACT
BASED ON THEIR HATRED FOR THE
LIVING BUT THAT GUY WAS
SENTIENT...**



**THERE'S NO
USE THINKING
ABOUT IT NOW**

ABOUT IT NOW...

**I'LL JUST
FOCUS ON THE
TASKS AT HAND.**

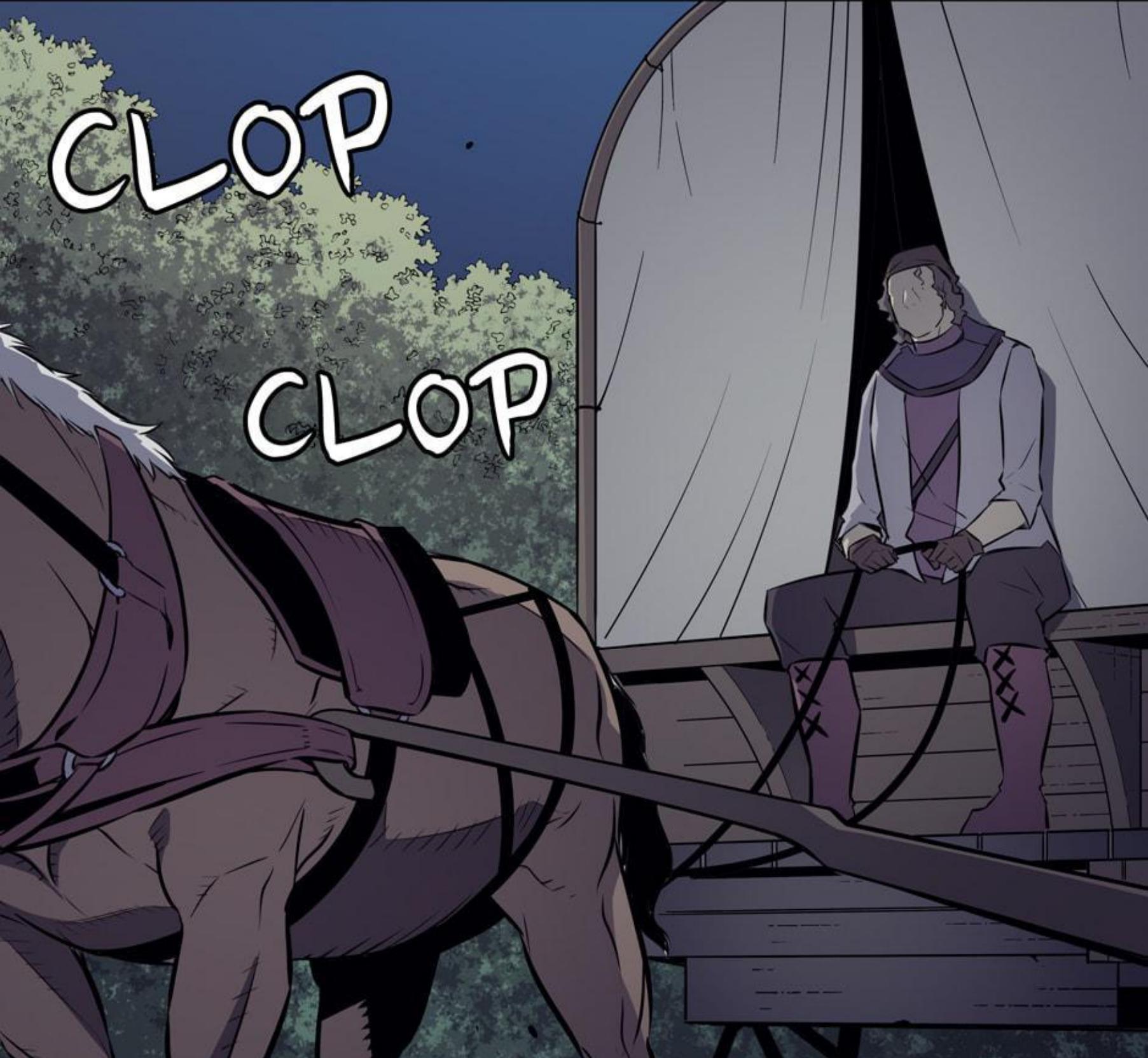
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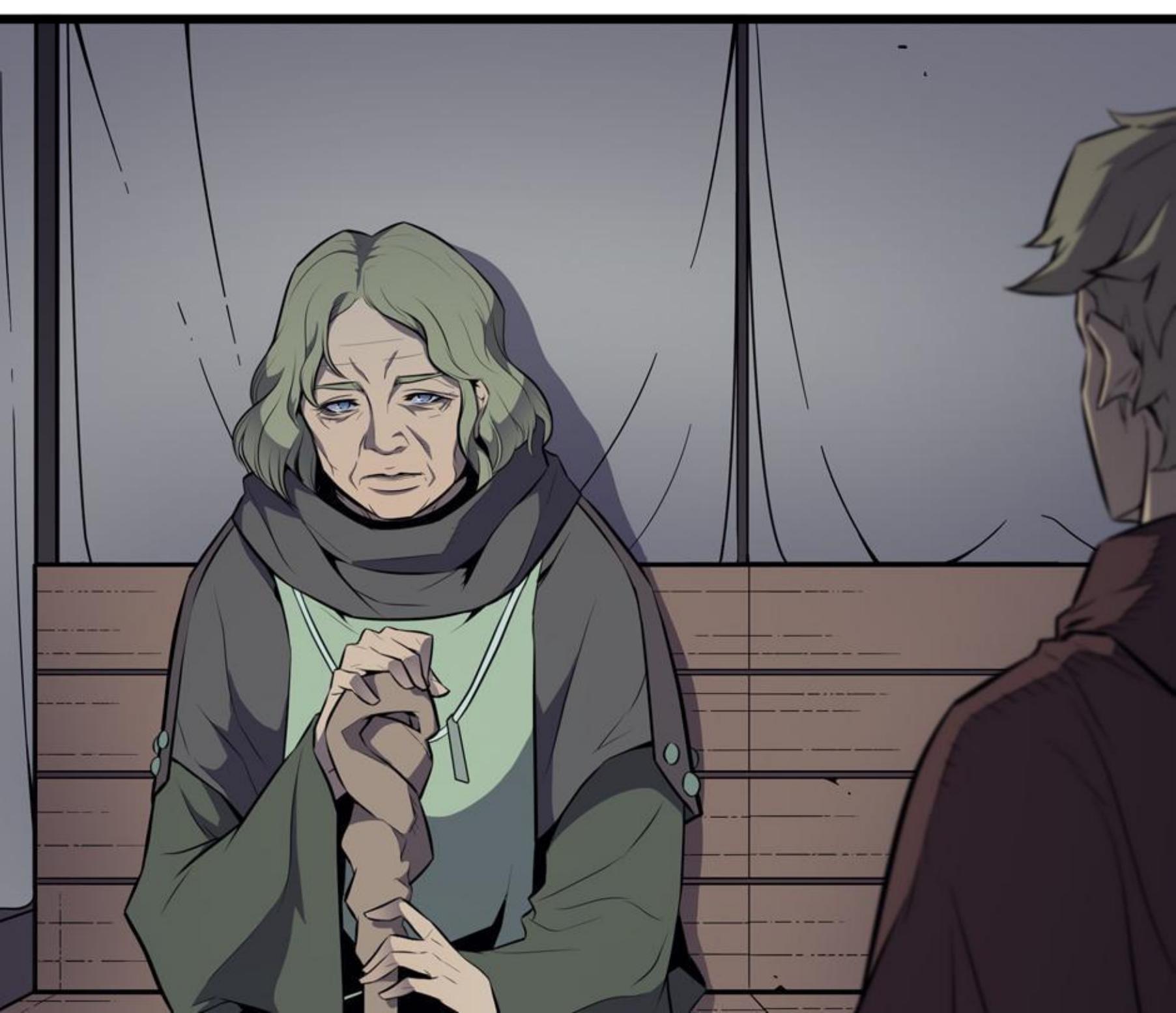


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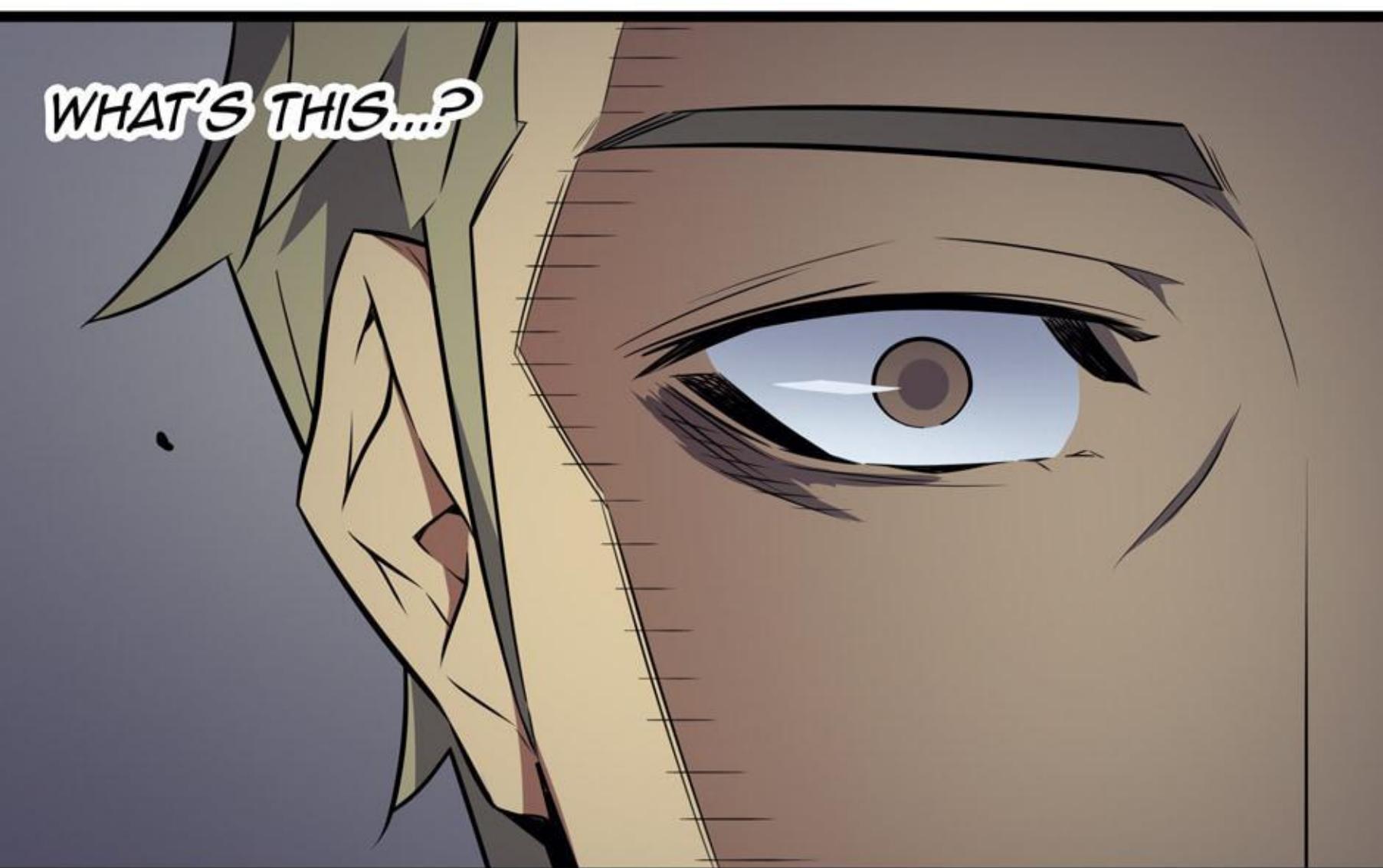
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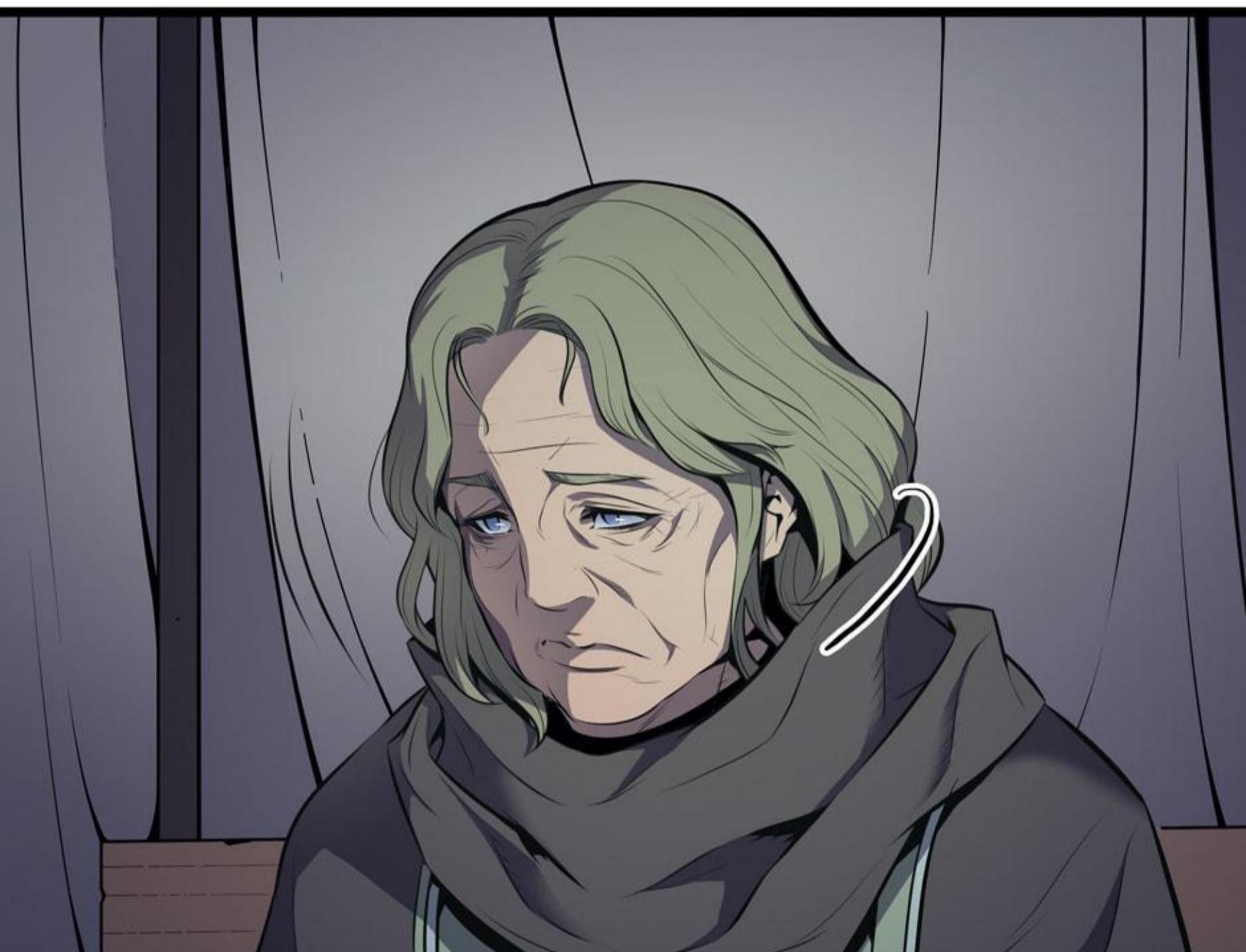






WHAT'S THIS...?





WELL...
I MEAN, WE
ALL HAVE OUR
REASONS,
I GUESS.

CLOP

CLOP



HEY, CAIN!
HOW ARE YOU
FEELING?

CLOP

X

CLOP

I'M FEELING
ALRIGHT, CAPTAIN
ALCONE!



YOU SHOULD REST
UP WHILE YOU CAN. ONCE
WE ENTER THE FOREST,
IT'LL BE SHOWTIME.

CLOP

BY THE WAY,
WHO IS THAT OLD
WOMAN?

CLOP

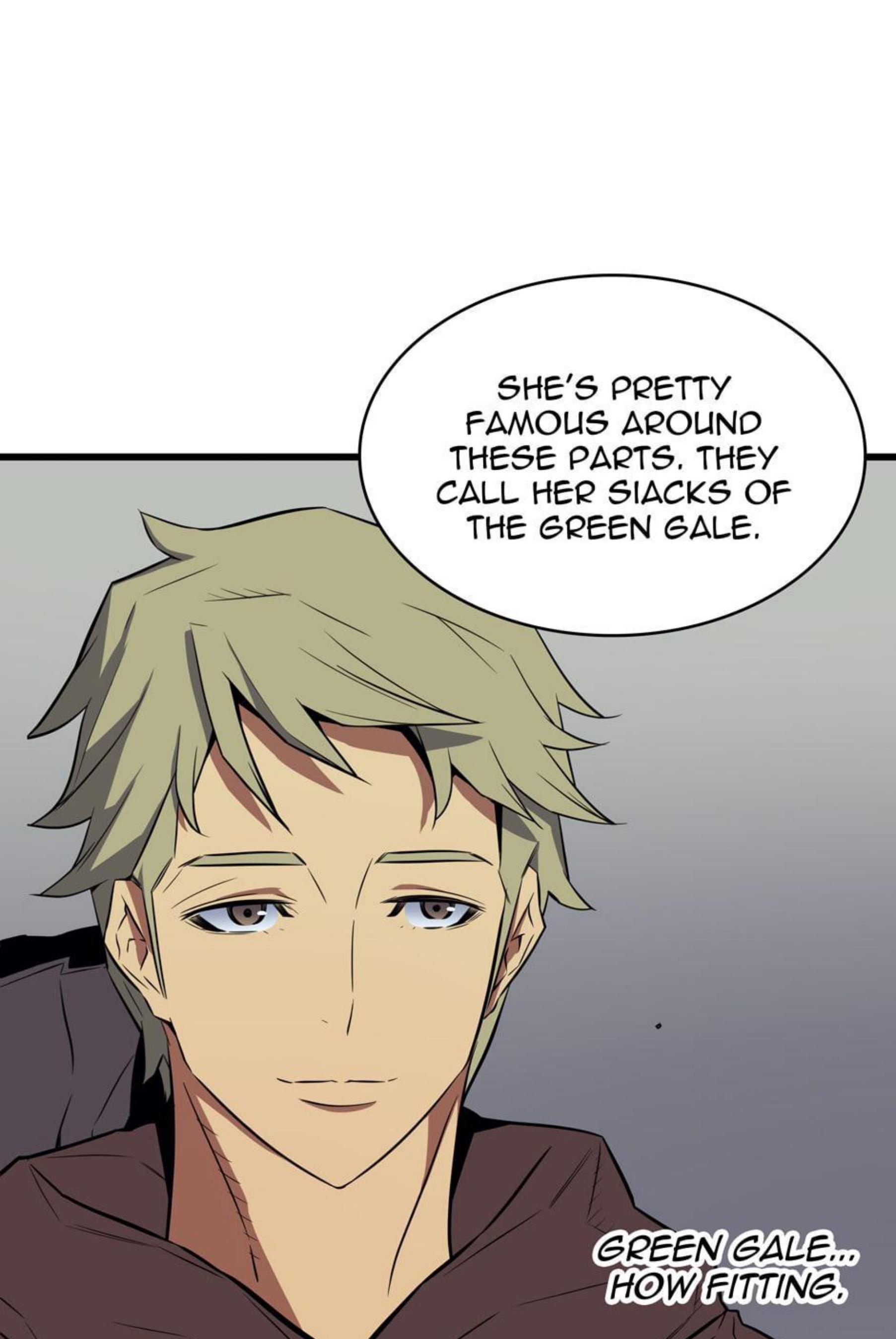
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OH, SHE'S
A TIER 5 MAGE
LIKE YOU.

HER NAME IS
SIACKS, AN A-RANK
MERCENARY.



SHE'S PRETTY
FAMOUS AROUND
THESE PARTS. THEY
CALL HER SIACKS OF
THE GREEN GALE.

GREEN GALE...
HOW FITTING,







EXCUSE
ME, YOUNG MAN.
CAN I ASK YOU
SOMETHING?







MY NAME
IS SIACKS.

I BELIEVE
YOUR NAME WAS...
CAIN RICKSTONE?



I HOPE YOU
DON'T MIND HAVING
AN ELDER DISTURB
YOUR MEAL...

PFFT!



HM?

IS SOMETHING
WRONG?



NO, IT'S
NOTHING. PLEASE
CONTINUE.



ARE YOU
PERHAPS AN
ELEMENTAL
SHAMAN?





I SENSE A VERY
UNIQUE ENERGY
RADIATING FROM
WITHIN YOU.



AM I TO
BELIEVE THAT YOU
ARE A SHAMAN
YOURSELF?

HMM...
I GUESS
YOU COULD
SAY THAT.

GLUG

GLUG



IT'S TRUE THAT
I MADE A CONTRACT
WITH AN ELEMENTAL, BUT
I'M NO ELEMENTAL
SHAMAN.



SO CAN YOU
EXPLAIN TO ME
HOW YOU NOTICED
THE PRESENCE OF
MY ELEMENTAL?

BECAUSE,
OF COURSE, AN
ORDINARY PERSON
WOULDN'T HAVE
NOTICED THAT...



OH...

TH-THAT'S...!



WELL...
YOU DON'T HAVE
TO TELL ME IF YOU
DON'T WANT TO.



I'M ACTUALLY
MORE CURIOUS ABOUT
SOMETHING ELSE...

WHY DID YOU
SIGN UP FOR THIS
MISSION?



SIGHTINGS OF
UNDEAD AROUND
PEINAI'S FOREST ARE



REINDEER FOREST ARE
A HIGHLY UNUSUAL
OCCURRENCE,
YOU SEE...

THEY'VE NOT BEEN
SIGHTED IN THESE
FORESTS FOR THE
PAST THOUSAND
YEARS.



YOU SPEAK AS
THOUGH YOU'VE
LIVED A THOUSAND
YEARS YOURSELF.

PEET!

AH...!

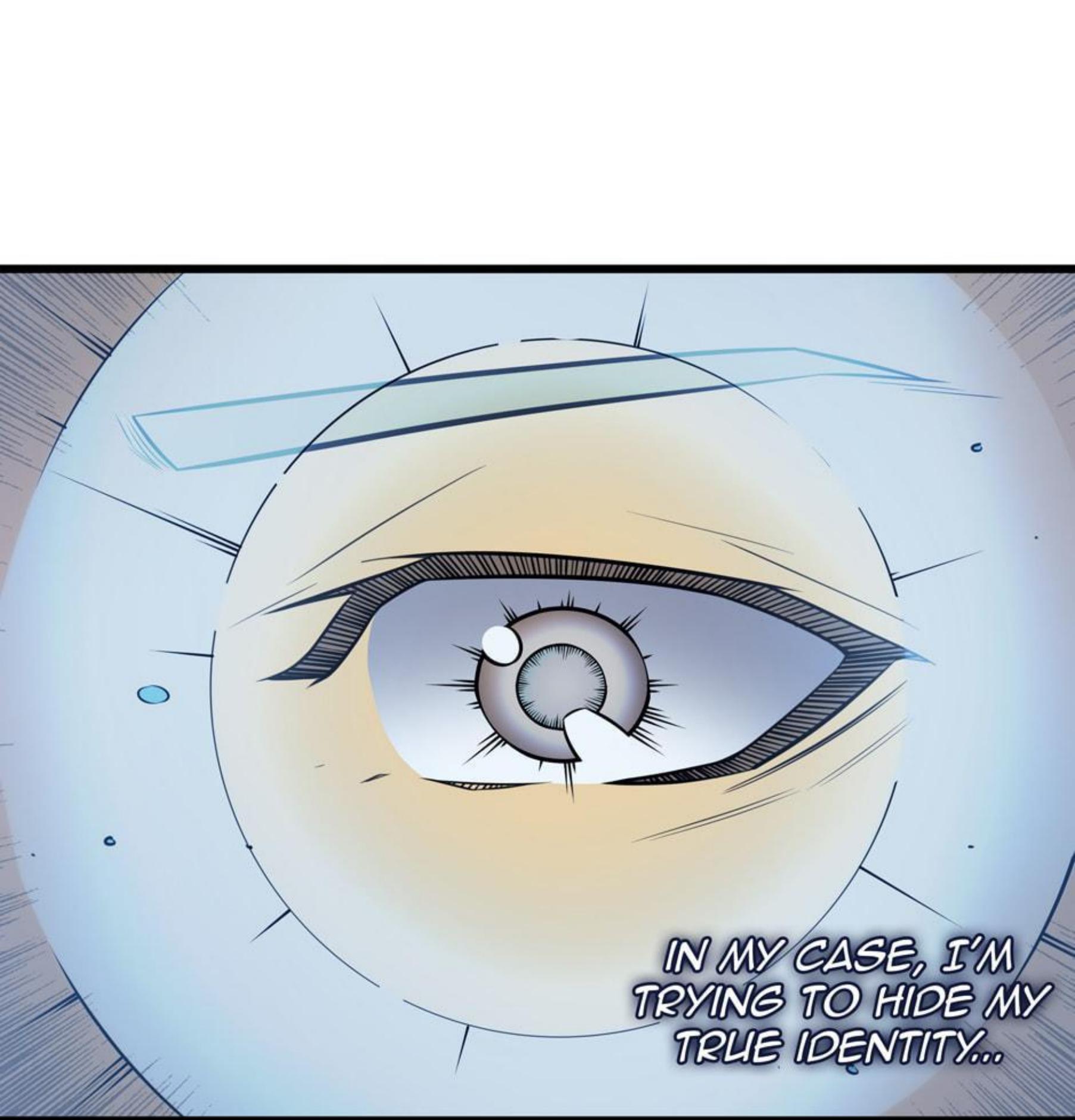
PLEASE
CONTINUE YOUR
MEAL OR IT WILL
GO COLD.



THE REASON WHY
PEOPLE USE ILLUSIONS TO
DISGUISE THEMSELVES...



...IS PRECISELY BECAUSE
THEY HAVE SOMETHING THEY
WANT TO HIDE.



**IN MY CASE, I'M
TRYING TO HIDE MY
TRUE IDENTITY...**

AND YOU, SIACKS...





WHAT ARE YOU TRYING TO HIDE?