

NATHAN HAWTHORNE



CHAPTER 4

ARKSONG

OTHER BOOKS IN THE ARKSONG SERIES



ARKSONA

STORY AND ART BY
NATHAN HAWTHORNE

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CHAPTER 4: UNEXPECTED ARRIVALS





YES, CAPTAIN?

SECURE THE SHIP. CLEAN OUT THE CREW.



ALL OF THEM?



YEP! OFF YOU GO!



AND ME?

ROOKIE, YOU STAY HERE.

WE DIDN'T TAKE YOU FROM THE TEMPLE TO FIGHT OUR PERSONAL FIGHTS.

WE'LL PICK YOU UP WHEN WE'RE DONE.





VOLEURNID,
ONE OF A NUMBER
OF CITIES ON
RAFFIRMIR ISLE.



THIS CITY
IS HUGE! AND THE
ENTIRE THING IS BUILT
INTO THE BEDROCK
OF THE ISLE.



I HAVE
ABSOLUTELY
NO IDEA WHERE
TO START.

HEY THERE,
YOUNG 'UN.



OH, HI.

THAT'S QUITE
THE OUTFIT, YOU'RE
HERE FOR THE SHOW
RIGHT?



SHO-?

THEY'RE
ALREADY STARTING!
THIS WAY! THIS WAY!

SOMEWHERE DOWNTOWN...

The Golden Skywhale

SO THERE I AM,
TAKING DOWN SOLDIER
AFTER SOLDIER, BUT THEN
BOOM!
THERE'S AN EXPLOSION!

NOW, I'M NOT
ONE TO LEAVE A
CREWMATE BEHIND,
BUT THE FIRST MATE'S
ON FIRE AND ALL IS
LOST, SO I ORDER
A RETREAT.

WOW!

IMPRESSIVE.

YOU WERE
BRAVE TO FOLLOW
THEM SO FAR
GORDO.

SILLY KIDS
AND THEIR POOR
DECISIONS.

DON'T SAY THINGS
LIKE THAT. SHE WAS
A FINE PIRATE.

NO! SHE
WAS A BRAT WITH A
FANCY SHIP. THEY WERE
LUCKY THEY HAD GORDO
TO HELP THEM.

WELL.
I COULDN'T
JUST LEAVE THEM TO
DIE ON THEIR OWN
COULD I?

AND YET...



...
YOU DID.



L-LIRIKA?!
HOW DID-?
I DIDN'T-!

KEEP YOUR
LIES TO YOURSELF
GORDO.



YOU GUY'S
WANT A REAL
STORY TO TELL
YOUR CREWS?



AS LONG AS YOU
DON'T BREAK ANYTHING
THIS TIME, LIRIKA.



GOTCHA!
SO HERE'S THE TALE
OF A SKY PIRATE WHO
FOUND OUT THE LOCATION
OF A VALUABLE
ARTEFACT.

ON STAGE AT THE CONCERT HALL...



OKAY!
YOU'RE UP!

ERM...

THERE'S SO
MANY PEOPLE.

WHAT
DO I DO?

TELL THEM
YOUR NAME!

UM...
HI, I'M
KELPINA.

TELL THEM
YOUR LIFE
GOAL!

I WISH TO
BRING PEACE
TO THIS TROUBLED
WORLD.

THE LYRICS
ARE PINNED UP
THERE. WHEN I
PLAY, YOU
SING!

A woman with her eyes closed, singing into a microphone. She is wearing a blue and gold outfit with a matching headpiece. The background is dark blue with several large, semi-transparent circles in shades of red, green, and grey.

I DON'T KNOW WHAT'S WRONG,
AND I DON'T KNOW WHAT'S RIGHT.
BUT I KNOW WE'RE BETTER OF TOGETHER
THERE'S NO NEED FOR US TO FUSS OR FIGHT.

HIDDEN IN THE SHADOWY PLACES,
COVERED BY THE THINGS THAT BREAK US DOWN,
I CONCEALED ALL MY FEELINGS,
NOW ITS TIME TO LET THE TRUTH ABOUND.

AND I...
KNOW WITHOUT YOU THERE'S NO MEANING,
TO LIFE...
SO I'LL LET YOU KNOW BECAUSE I'M TIRED
OF WAITING.

NOW'S THE TIME,
TO LET THE TRUTH BE TOLD,
AS THE WORLD GROANS ON,
AND THE DAYS GROW COLD.

NOW'S THE TIME,
FOR A FUTURE SO BRIGHT,
BECAUSE I WANNA LIVE FOREVER,
IN YOUR SHINING LIGHT...

ON THE LYCANIDE...

WHERE ON GAIA IS GORDO?!

DUNNO.

IT'S BEEN ALMOST A WEEK!
WE NEED TO FIND FENG
AND THE CAPTAIN AS
SOON AS POSSIBLE!

ARE YOU
SERIOUS? WE'LL MAKE
SO MUCH MORE MONEY
WITHOUT HER DO-GOODING
AND DETOURS.



WHAT THE-!



WELL,
YOU'RE FIRED.



BOSS!



TAKE
ME TO THE
TRAITORS.

BACK AT THE TAVERN...

OW!

CRACK!

...SO WHILE IN PURSUIT OF THIS ITEM, WE ENCOUNTER BLACK DIVISION.

SO WE START TAKING 'EM OUT!

I DO MY BEST TO PROTECT HIM, BUT TO MY HORROR, GORDO'S RUN OFF WITH MY CREW AND SHIP.

THE PROBLEMS START WHEN MY FIRST MATE, FENG, CATCHES FIRE.

WE GET CAPTURED. BUT NO PRISON CAN HOLD THIS CAPTAIN.

WITHIN A DAY, WE BREAK OUT, STEAL A JET, AND BLOW A HOLE IN THAT DREADNOUGHT OF THEIRS.

OOF!!

CRASH!!!



LATER, ON THE LYCANIDE...

AH! FEELS SO GOOD TO BE BACK ON MY THRONE.

SOME OF THE CREW WHO DIDN'T SIDE WITH GORDO WANT TO COME BACK.

WHAT DID YOU TELL THEM?

THAT WE'D COME BACK FOR THEM WHEN THINGS SETTLED DOWN.

WELL SAID. WERE THEY OKAY WITH IT?

THEY'RE GONNA HAVE TO BE.

I DON'T LIKE LYING FOR YOU. SOME OF THEM ARE TRUSTWORTHY MEN AND WOMEN.

DIDN'T YOU LIKE SOME?

I DID... ALL THE MORE REASON FOR A CHANGE UP!

HMM...



FENG!
DON'T YOU FEEL
LIKE WE'RE FORGETTING
SOMETHIN-

BANG
BANG!
BANG

A VISITOR?
FENG, OPEN THE
HATCH!



KELPIE!
KELPIE!
KELPIE!
WE LOVE YOU!!

YAHHH!!!



AH KELPIE!
YOU FOUND YOUR
WAY HERE. GOOD
JOB!

THUMP



WHERE'VE
YOU BEEN?

DON'T ASK.
CAN WE PLEASE
JUST GO.



HAHA!
SOUNDS LIKE
A GOOD PLAN
TO ME!



START HER UP,
FIRST MATE!



AYE AYE,
CAPTAIN!

VROOOOM!!



HEAR THAT ROAR,
KELPIE? THAT'S THE
SOUND OF A BEAST
WAITING TO BE
UNCAGED!

HUFF...
HUFF...



AND YOU'RE
SWEATING PROFUS-
ELY. IT'S KIND OF
ICKY, Y'KNOW.



SORRY.



HUFF

DRIP



AND DIDN'T
I TELL YOU TO PUT
THAT NECKLACE
AWAY? TEENAGERS
THESE DAYS!

DRIP



SORRY!
SORRY!

HUMM

CLICK

STOP APOLOGISING
AND LISTEN, I'M
TRYING TO PLAN.



IT'S BEEN A ROUGH PATCH. SO BEFORE WE GO ON ANY MORE ADVENTURES, WE SHOULD HEAD BACK TO THE LAB AND GET THE LYCANIDE CHECKED OVER BY THE PROF-

CRASH!

WHAT NOW?!



SOMEONE'S FIRING ON US!



THAT SHIP NEEDS A REAL CAPTAIN!

ARGH, THAT PUNK, GORDO!



KELPIE!

HELP US OUT HERE.



HOW?

IF I FIRE ON THE TOWN, I'LL GET OUTLAWED... AGAIN.

USE YOUR WATER TO STOP HIM.



OK,
JUST LIKE MY
TRAINING.



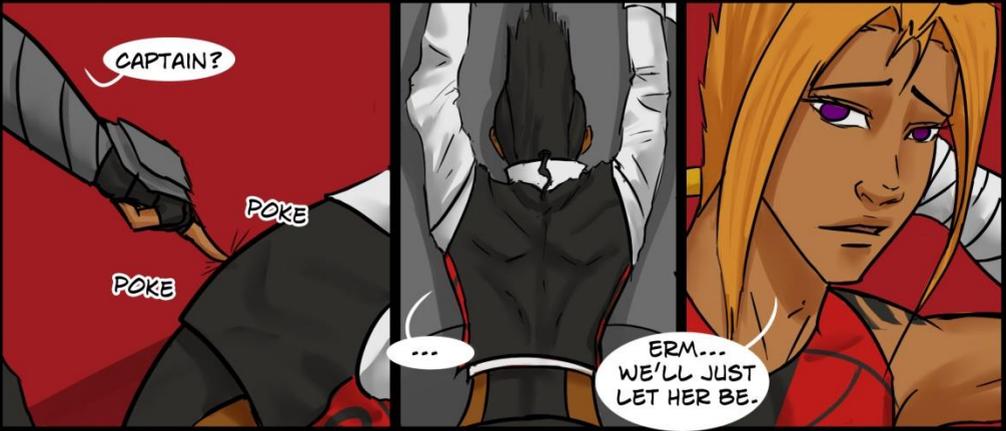
THERE'S THE TARGET.
HERE'S THE WATER.

HERE WE GO!











WHAT I'VE COME TO REALISE IS THAT OUR GIFTS ARE MERELY EXTENSIONS OF OURSELVES.

CREATE A BALL OF POWER.



LIKE THIS? I THINK I'VE GOT IT.

FWOOMP



HMPH. OR NOT.



DON'T FORCE IT. IT SHOULD BE NATURAL.



IDEAS, FEELINGS, MEMORIES. THESE ARE THE KEYS.



ESPECIALLY WHEN THEY RELATE TO AN OUTCOME.

WHAT DO YOU MEAN?

WATCH ME.



THE FLOW OF
A GENTLE WIND.



THE FEELING
OF A SECURE FLOOR
BENEATH YOUR
FEET.



THE SHARP EDGE
OF THE SWORD YOUR
FATHER WORE FOR
ORNAMENTATION.



AH!
LIKE WHEN I
REMEMBERED
DROWNING
TO PUT OUT
MY FIRES!



AN
UNPLEASANT
EXAMPLE, BUT
YOU'RE ON
THE RIGHT
TRACK.

KEEP
PRACTICING.

SOME TIME LATER...



IT'S
DEFINITELY
EASIER NOW.



...AND
IT'S GONE.

HEY, FENG!



SPLASH

THOUGHT
YOU COULD DO
WITH A COOL
DOWN.



HAHAHAHA!





YOU'RE STEAMING LIKE A KETTLE!



THAT COULD BE MY NEW CAREER!



HMM, ON THAT NOTE I'VE GOT A QUESTION.



SLAM!



A-ASK AWAY...



WHY DO YOU STICK AROUND WITH LIRIKA?

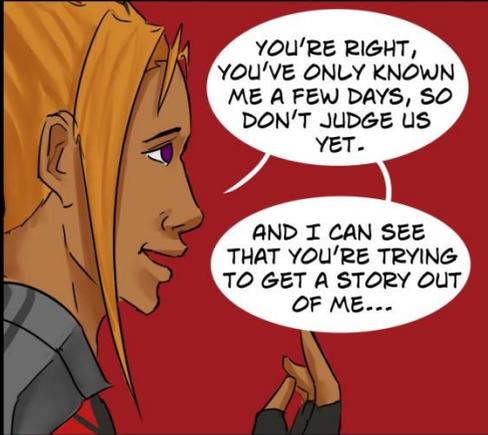


HUH?



I DON'T THINK I UNDERSTAND THE QUESTION.

I'VE ONLY KNOWN YOU A FEW DAYS. BUT YOU'RE MUCH NICER THAN HER. YOU CAN FIGHT, BUT YOU DON'T SEEM LIKE A PIRATE AT ALL!



YOU'RE RIGHT, YOU'VE ONLY KNOWN ME A FEW DAYS, SO DON'T JUDGE US YET.

AND I CAN SEE THAT YOU'RE TRYING TO GET A STORY OUT OF ME...



WELL YOU'RE NOT GONNA GET IT.

AWW.



BUT IN RETURN FOR THE LESSON, I'LL TELL YOU ONE THING.

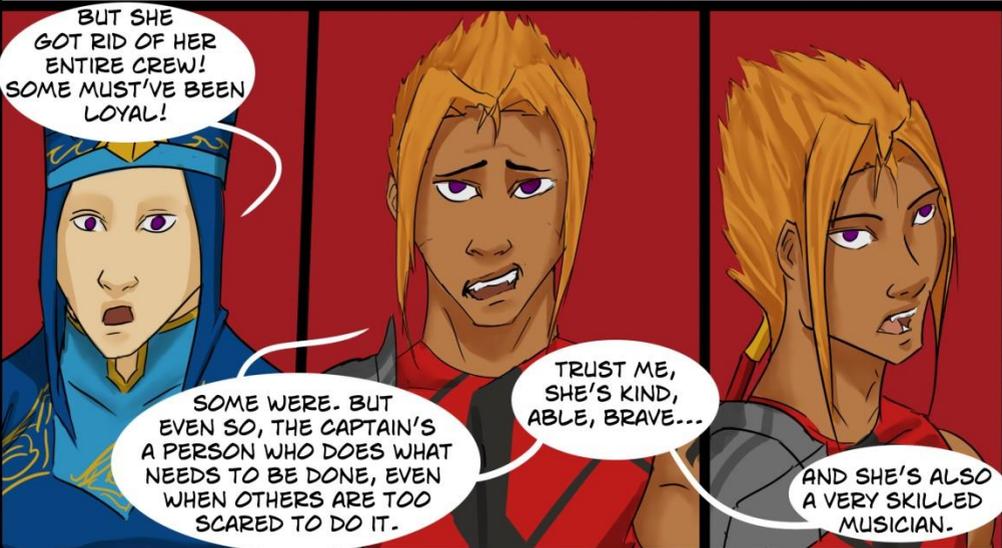
LIRIKA SAVED ME WHEN I WAS YOUNGER. COULD'VE LEFT ME FOR DEAD. MAYBE SHOULD'VE. BUT SHE DIDN'T.



WE'VE BEEN PARTNERS IN CRIME EVER SINCE. I'M SORT OF BOUND TO HER.

SO YOU FEEL LIKE YOU OWE HER?

NOT EXACTLY...



BUT SHE GOT RID OF HER ENTIRE CREW! SOME MUST'VE BEEN LOYAL!

SOME WERE. BUT EVEN SO, THE CAPTAIN'S A PERSON WHO DOES WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE, EVEN WHEN OTHERS ARE TOO SCARED TO DO IT.

TRUST ME, SHE'S KIND, ABLE, BRAVE...

AND SHE'S ALSO A VERY SKILLED MUSICIAN.



I'M NOT
A SKILLED
MUSICIAN.

I AM THE
MOST SKILLED
MUSICIAN.



NOW STOP
SPILLING CREW
SECRETS. WE SHOULD
HAVE A QUICK LOOK
OVER THE SHIP.

RUFFLE

I'M
GOING UP TO
CHECK TREASURE
ROOM 1.



THE MUSIC ROOM?



YEAH, YOU
COMING?

I MIGHT
PRACTICE A BIT
MORE. WANT TO
SEE WHAT KELPIE
TAUGHT ME?



SWOOSH



FWOMPH



NA,
PUT THAT
STUFF AWAY.

HUH?

I DON'T
FEEL UP TO
IT AT THE
MOMENT.

SPLOOSH

WHAT THE?



DID YOU FEEL THAT?

YEAH! WHEN
THE CAPTAIN SPOKE,
MY POWERS STOPPED
WORKING.

BUT HOW?!

THE PROFESSOR...
HE SAID SHE WAS AN ARKKNIGHT,
BUT A DIFFERENT TYPE - A CONDUCTOR.
MAYBE THIS IS WHAT HE MEANT?

SHE CAN CONTROL OUR
POWERS? HOW DOES THAT
EVEN WORK?!



WHO KNOWS?
WHO CARES?
I'M HEADING
UP. NIGHT.



I HOPE
SHE'S OKAY...

KELPIE!
COME WITH ME.



WHERE ARE
WE GOING?



THE SHIP IS
GOING TO BE A
LOT ROOMIER WITH
THE CREW GONE.

YOU'LL BE
STAYING IN MY ROOM,
THE SECOND BEST ROOM
ON THE SHIP.



I NEATENED
IT UP WHILE WE WERE
WAITING FOR YOU.



NICE, BUT IT'S A BIT BARE -AND THAT'S COMING FROM A MONK.

WELL, TO BE HONEST, I DON'T SPEND MUCH TIME HERE.



NOW GET SOME REST, WE MIGHT HAVE A TOUGH DAY TOMORROW.

CLACK

CLACK



WHERE ARE YOU GOING TO SLEEP?

I'M NOT GOING TO. I'LL WATCH THE SKIES IN CASE WE'RE ATTACKED

WHO BY? WE HAVE THE SHIP.

NOT BY THE OLD CREW. WE MIGHT GET ATTACKED BY THE NAVY, SKY WHALES, STORMS, BOUNTY HUNTERS, BLACK DIVISION, NOT TO MENTION OTHER PIRATES WE'VE USED AS TARGET PRACTICE IN THE PAST.



YOU'VE GOT LOTS OF ENEMIES.



I NEVER, CONSIDERED IT, BUT YEAH, I GUESS WE DO.

NOW REST UP, I'LL BE BACK WITH FOOD LATER.



HE'S GONE NOW'S MY CHANCE.



KEKEKEKEK!



CLACK!



SIGH



PHEW- EVEN WITH MY INNATE ARKNIGHT STRENGTH IT'S TOO HEAVY.



A PHOTO?



WAIT A MINUTE!



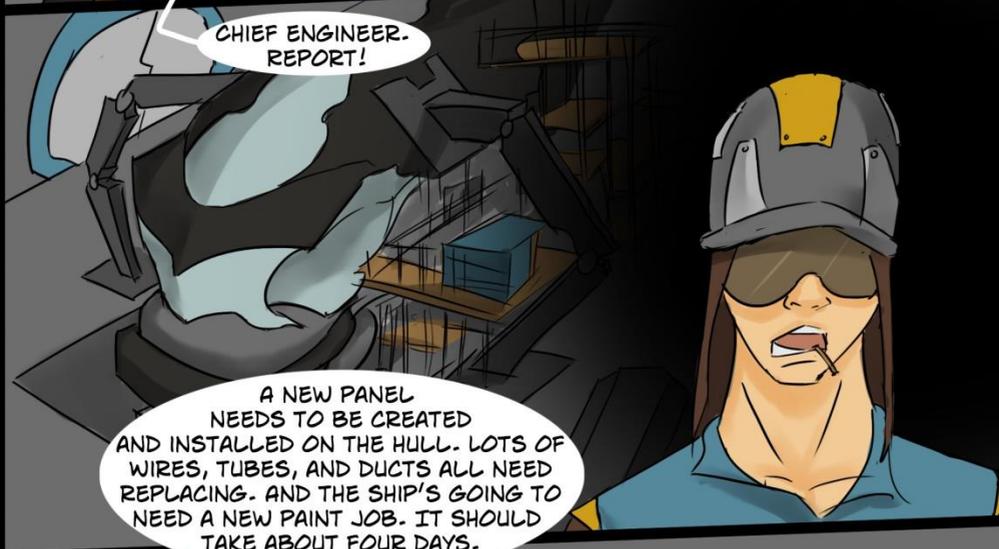
IF THEY
KNEW EACH OTHER
AS KIDS. THEN HOW OLD WAS
SHE WHEN SHE SAVED HIM?
14? 15?



LIRIKA,
REALLY IS
SOMETHING...









SO YOU
ARE TELLING ME
IT IS THOSE ANNOYING
PIRATES WHO HAVE
EXHIBITED ABILITIES,
COMMANDER?

YES, ADMIRAL.
IT WOULD APPEAR
AT LEAST ONE OF THEM
- FENGHUANG - HAS THE
N-GENE.



ADMIRAL!
YOU'RE HERE!

HUNTER RUKHI,
I SEE YOU ARE
WELL.

UGH!!

WHAM!

ARE YOU
HERE TO STAY?
OR JUST FOR
A BIT?

I JUST
CAME TO SEE THE
SHROUD AND YOUR
PROGRESS.

AWW!

I SEE DESPITE
CUWAKE'S FAILINGS,
YOU HAVE SOMETHING
TO SHOW.

OF COURSE!

EURGH.
GROW UP.

HERE'S ONE
OF LIRIKA'S
CREW.

I SEE.
WELL DONE.



TELL ME, PIRATE,
DO YOU KNOW WHO
I AM?

THE WRETCHED
ADMIRAL. DOG OF
THE EMPIRE.

WATCH YOUR TONGUE,
THE QUEEN OF THE SKIES
IS MUCH MORE DANGEROUS
THAN YOUR CAPTAIN.

SILENCE,
COMMANDER.



THIS ONE I
WILL DEAL WITH
MYSELF.

FOOLISH PIRATE.
YOU THINK YOU KNOW
FEAR.



RHIME KRAKENSKOLD

ADMIRAL OF THE IMPERIAL SKY NAVY



TELL ME ALL YOU
KNOW ABOUT LIRIKA AND
WHERE SHE IS HEADED,
AND YOUR LIFE MAY
JUST BE SPARED.

OTHER WORKS BY
NATHAN HAWTHORNE



THE
FALLING WANDERER

NATHAN HAWTHORNE

THE CHRONICLES OF THE NOVUS AEVUM

BY NATHAN HAWTHORNE



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HAWTHORNE GAMES

"I DON'T WANT YOUR RANKS.

I DON'T WANT YOUR PRIVILEGES.

I WANT NOTHING TO DO WITH YOUR ARKNIGHTS."



A NEW STORY BY
NATHAN HAWTHORNE

DUSK 22

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LIRIKA WANTS WHAT'S HERS...

LIRIKA, FENG AND KELPIE MAKE THEIR WAY TO RAFFIRMIR ISLE. THERE THEY HOPE TO FIND THE LYCANIDE IN VOLEURNID CITY, THE PIRATE HAVEN KNOWN BY MANY AS BANDIT'S EYRIE.

WILL LIRIKA BE ABLE TO FIND HER SHIP AND THE TREACHEROUS GORDO? AND WHAT WILL SHE DO WHEN SHE FACES HER FORMER ALLY?

ELSEWHERE IN THE FLOATING CONTINENT, THE BLACK DIVISION LICKS THEIR WOUNDS AND A MYSTERIOUS FIGURE APPEARS.



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