

SubCulture



O M N I B U S

Cast:



Jason is the everyman of our story. He's a fan of comics, video games, and the like, but tends to keep that to himself in mixed company. There are lots of reasons for this—he might be embarrassed about his hobbies or he might not like the stereotype that it projects. He has a dead-end job (in Bart's store), but lacks the enthusiasm and motivation to try to find anything better. He recently bought a new car.



Arthur is the fanboy of all fanboys. He works from home as a computer programmer and troubleshooter and had dedicated his free time to collecting comics, playing videogames, and role-playing. He's a bit lacking on the social skills, but this doesn't stop him from letting everyone know the things that are important to him. He is currently shedding pounds and dating Kim, below.



Noel is the primary female foil of our story. She's confident, headstrong, and incredibly passive aggressive. She's into small press independent comics and is relatively new to the fanboy lifestyle. She works at the Bean Barn, a local mall cafe, but also owns and operates her own art gallery on the side. She can always be counted on for a smart-ass comment.



Skip is a young, headstrong gamer who wears black every day of the week and tends to let his emotions get the best of him on occasion. He loves to play card games and paint miniatures, and he spends virtually every waking moment of his free time (of which he has quite a bit) at Kingdom Comix. He's smarter than he looks, however, and has shocking words of wisdom on occasion.



At only fourteen years of age, **Travis** is the youngest of the Kingdom Comix crew. He brings a refreshing naïveté to the store, but naturally the rest of the gang do their best to take advantage of it. At the rate he is going, he is likely doomed for a life of dorkdom, but he doesn't really care. His mother uses the store as her own personal (and free) babysitting service.



Bart is the owner of Kingdom Comix, and as such, a local hero. Thrice divorced but completely loveable, he's dedicated his life to delivering comics, games, and other sundries to the young and young at heart. His customers kindly forgive his occasional mishap, such as sleeping on one of the back tables or spending a half hour in the store restroom. He's always out to make a buck or two.



Babs is the lone female of the regulars who spend their evenings at the store. She is a role-playing fanatic, and sometimes likes to appear at the table in costume. She's also a LARP-er and a RenFaire junkie, and hosts the occasional cosplay party. She reads virtually every Shoyo Manga in print. Despite her quirks and goofiness, she's arguably the most rational thinker of the crew.



Kim is Arthur's love interest and perhaps a bigger geek than he is. She's an attorney (and apparently a well-paid one given how well her geek-house is stocked) and a hardcore Warworld Online player. She's a tiny, glasses-wearing spark plug, and her and Arthur together make quite the odd couple. She has a brother, Edward, who likes to quote movies.



Miyoko is a tall, skinny, half-Japanese fangirl who is heavily into cosplay of all sorts. She's very good at making costumes, and wins the occasional prize at conventions. She's relatively well-adjusted, and knows how to handle herself when she is the object of too much "attention" at conventions and elsewhere. She is Babs' roommate at the local university. She's also a lesbian.



Larry is the owner of Merlin's Outhouse, a relatively new gaming store that has opened up across town. He's short-tempered, manipulative, and a firm believer in the zero-sum game. In other words, he's kind of a dick. He and Bart, as should come as no surprise, are arch-enemies. But they have more in common than either is willing to admit.



Sunshine is Larry's faithful employee at Merlin's Outhouse. She's a bleached blond, a smoker, and has a full tattoo sleeve on her left arm. She's generally nice, but isn't afraid to use people to get what she wants. She loves games of all sorts, including mind games. A manipulative game with Jason has recently turned into a budding romance, but no one other than Jason really trusts her.

Subculture



MAH
Food
2006
★
STEW

I WAS TIRED OF RED JACKAL'S MONOLOGUE.

WITH ONE PUNCH I ENDED THE BATTLE, AND ONCE AGAIN SAVED COAST CITY FROM DESTRUCTION.





OH, STRONGMAN!
YOU'RE SO DREAMY!

ALL IN A DAY'S WORK, MY
DEAR. I MUST BE EVER-
VIGILANT IF COAST CITY IS TO
REMAIN FREE OF EVIL!



AND NOW, MY DEAR,
I MUST DEPART, FOR
EVIL NEVER SLEEPS.



YOU CAN'T
GO, STRONGMAN.
YOU'RE MY HERO!
SPEND SOME
TIME WITH
ME!



THERE'S NO TIME
FOR THAT MISS. MY
ENHANCED SENSES TELL
ME THERE IS TROUBLE
AFOOT!



ARE YOU
SURE YOU CAN'T BE
PERSUADED TO STAY,
STRONGMAN?



WELL, WHEN YOU PUT
IT *THAT* WAY... I
SUPPOSE I COULD
STAY A SPELL.



THAT'S MORE LIKE IT, NOW LIE BACK AND LET ME PLEASE YOU, JASON.

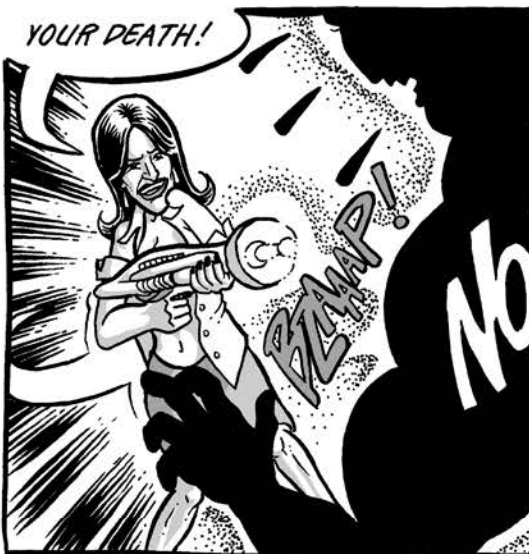


SONS OF HELIOS! SHE KNOWS MY SECRET IDENTITY. BUT HOW? HOW?!



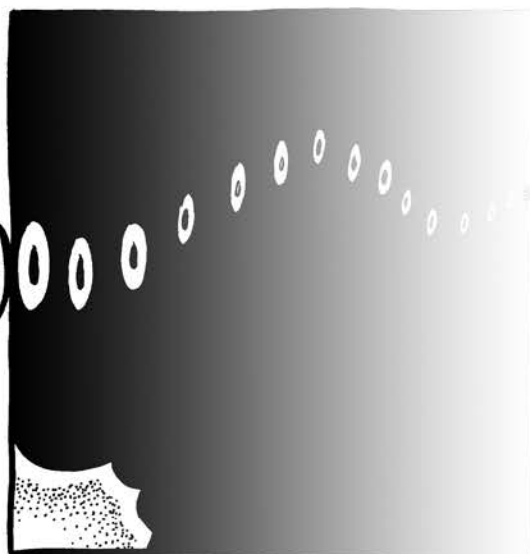
THIS RENDEZVOUS WAS NO ACCIDENT, WOMAN, WHO ARE YOU? WHAT DO YOU WANT?

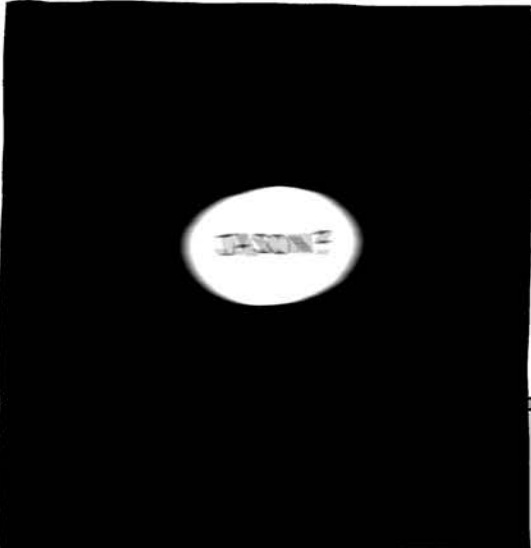
THERE'S ONLY ONE THING I WANT, JASON...



YOUR DEATH!

BZAMP!





JASON?
WAKE UP, DUDE.
YOU'RE HAVING
A NIGHTMARE.



UGH, I'VE GOT
TO STOP READING
EVERYTHING IN MY
STACK BEFORE I GO
TO BED. IT GIVES
ME WEIRD
DREAMS.

TELL ME
ABOUT IT.

I PLAYED *WARWORLD ONLINE* FOR LIKE
NINETEEN HOURS STRAIGHT WHEN YOU WERE
OUT OF TOWN LAST WEEKEND WITH NOTHING
TO KEEP ME GOING BUT *BIG BETTY* SNACK
CAKES AND *DIET HEADRUSH*. I WAS
FIGHTING ORCS IN MY SLEEP
FOR *DAYS!*

YOU DO THAT
EVERY WEEK,
ASSHAT.

TRUE, THAT'S
WHY THE LADIES
DIG ME!

WELL, CRAP. MY ALARM IS ABOUT
TO GO OFF ANYWAY. I MIGHT AS
WELL GET UP AND GET READY FOR
WORK.

OKAY, DUDE.
I'LL BE AT MY
COMPUTER IF YOU
NEED ME.



MIDPARKS MALL, WEDNESDAY.



I HATE MY JOB. IN FACT, THE ONLY REASON I'M STILL AROUND IS THE EMPLOYEE DISCOUNT. ONE OF THESE DAYS I'M FINALLY GOING TO QUIT.

MY BOSS IS A PRICK.



CLINT IS THE TYPE OF PERSON I DISLIKE MOST. THE CUSTOMERS LOVE HIM BECAUSE HE PUTS ON A GOOD SHOW FOR THEM.

♪ HAVE A NICE DAY! ♪



BUT WHEN THE CUSTOMERS ARE GONE, HE REVEALS HIS TRUE COLORS. I REALLY HATE HIM.

YOUR DRAWER IS A MESS! I'VE TOLD YOU TO FACE YOUR BILLS THE SAME WAY! YOU'RE WORTHLESS!

I SHOULD REPORT HIM, BUT IT'S NOT WORTH THE EFFORT.



I BARELY FIND SOLACE DURING LUNCH ANYMORE, BECAUSE THAT VOICE IN MY HEAD JUST TELLS ME I HAVE TO GO BACK TO WORK SOON.



I HATE MY JOB.





WELL, IF YOU MUST PRY, I JUST MOVED HERE FROM CHARLOTTE. I'M SCOUTING THE LOCAL SHOPS. THEY GOT A LOT OF INDIES HERE, WHICH IS GOOD.

SO YOU IN SCHOOL OR SOMETHING?

NO, I'M AN ARTIST. I'M HOPING TO OPEN A GALLERY HERE

WOW, REALLY? WHAT KIND OF ART DO YOU DO?

UGH, NO. BEEN THERE DONE THAT.

ALL KINDS OF THINGS. PAINTING, SCULPTURE, BEADWORK. I DON'T REALLY LIMIT MYSELF TO ONE MEDIUM.

COOL! LET ME KNOW WHEN THINGS ARE UP AND RUNNING. I'D LOVE TO SEE YOUR STUFF.

YEAH, THIS PLACE HAS GOT THE BEST INDIES IN THE STATE--

TRUST ME ON THAT ONE.

HEHE... IT MIGHT NOT BE YOUR BAG, BIG GUY. BUT YOU'RE WELCOME TO IF YOU LIKE.

HEY, GIVE ME A LITTLE CREDIT. I'M A COMIC GEEK-- THE BOTTOM-FEEDERS OF THE ART WORLD-- RIGHT?

HAHA! TOO TRUE. AND SOCIAL MISFITS TO BOOT. YOU'D THINK *THOSE* THREE OVER THERE HAD NEVER SEEN A REAL GIRL BEFORE.

I THINK SKIP HAS A PLASTIC ONE AT HOME SOMEWHERE...

HEY!

ANYWAY, I'VE FOUND A CUTE LITTLE APARTMENT WITH SOME RETAIL SPACE BELOW IT DOWN THE WAY A BIT. I THINK THAT WOULD SUIT ME. MAYBE I CAN GET YOUR MANLY FRIENDS TO HELP ME PAINT THE PLACE.

UH... I'M NOT SURE IF...

\$36.50

DON'T SWEAT IT, FELLA. I'M JUST KIDDING. RELAX. I'M NOT GOING TO BITE YOU!

TELL YOU WHAT, CHAMP. I GOTTA RUN, BUT HERE'S MY NUMBER. WE'LL CONTINUE THIS OVER COFFEE, M'KAY? PLUS YOU CAN SHOW ME AROUND!

UH, SURE. OKAY. THANKS!

I THINK SHE JUST ASKED ME OUT!





HEY, MAN. I THOUGHT YOU WERE GOING TO READ.



EH, I WAS HAVING TROUBLE CONCENTRATING. I THOUGHT I'D DO SOMETHING A LITTLE MORE MINDLESS.

FATALITY 2 IS JUST THE TICKET.

SLAYER JENNY HAS HUGE BOOBS IN THAT GAME!

YOU NEED TO GET OUT MORE, SERIOUSLY.



THE GUYS ARE COMING OVER TO GAME TONIGHT... YOU WANT A PIECE OF THE ACTION?

HMMM... WHY NOT? IT'S BEEN AWHILE SINCE I DUSTED OFF THE DICE. WHO EXACTLY IS COMING?



THE USUAL... SKIP, BABS AND TRAVIS, ALTHOUGH HE CAN ONLY STAY UNTIL TEN-- SCHOOL NIGHT YOU KNOW.

JUST PROMISE ME BABS WON'T SIT NEXT TO ME. SHE SCARES ME A LOT.

DUDE, SHE SO LIKES YOU.

UCK! I JUST THREW UP IN MY MOUTH A LITTLE.



YOU WANNA DUEL A BIT?

I'M FULLY PREPARED TO WHIP YOUR ASS.

CAN I PLAY SLAYER JENNY?

* SIGH * SURE.



LATER.

TRAVIS, AS YOU OPEN THE CHEST, YOU HEAR A LOUD GROWLING SOUND BEHIND YOU. WHAT DO YOU DO?

I SLAY IT WITH MY LONGBOW! NATURAL ZO!

YOU DON'T EVEN KNOW WHAT IT IS, DUDE!

PERHAPS WE SHOULD PARLEY WITH THIS UNSEEN VISITOR. IT COULD BE FRIENDLY.

UM, ARTHUR, WHAT DID I TELL YOU ABOUT OUR SEATING ARRANGEMENT.



EVEN LATER

OKAY. YOU ALL FINALLY ARRIVE AT THE RENDEZVOUS POINT.

SURE ENOUGH, A FEW MINUTES LATER A HORSEMAN APPROACHES YOU, HE WAVES AT YOU AND SMILES AS HE RIDES FORTH.

JEEZE! YOU PULL THIS SHIT EVERY WEEK. I CAN'T TELL YOU THE LAST TIME WE ACTUALLY FINISHED AN ADVENTURE.

OH DEAR. I SUSPECT THAT MEANS THERE WILL BE ANOTHER BOUNTY ON OUR HEADS

YOU IDIOT! HE WAS OUR CONTACT!

THE MAGISTRATE IS NOT GOING TO LIKE THIS.

I SLAY HIM WITH MY LONGBOW! NATURAL ZO! THAT CHUMP IS D-E-D!

HELLO! IS ANYONE LISTENING TO ME?



PAINFULLY LATER

LORD STRONGHEART'S TROOPS HAVE FORMED A PHALANX AND ARE MARCHING EN MASSE TOWARD YOU.

I SLAY HIM WITH MY LONGBOW! NATURAL ZO! CAN I HAVE HIS HORSE?

YOU ARE SUCH A CHEATER! I SAW YOU FILING THAT DIE DOWN IN THE STORE THE OTHER DAY!

PERHAPS THERE IS A WAY TO SMOOTH THIS LITTLE INCIDENT OVER. I'LL APPROACH THE ARMY WHILE WAVING A WHITE FLAG.

THE COMMANDER YELLS AT YOU: "YOU'VE MURDERED YOUR LAST CITIZEN, VILLIANS! PREPARE TO DIE!"

THE GAMING BOARD WILL HEAR ABOUT THIS!

IS THERE ANYONE I CAN SEDUCE?

I'LL BE IN THE OTHER ROOM IF ANY OF YOU NEED ME.