

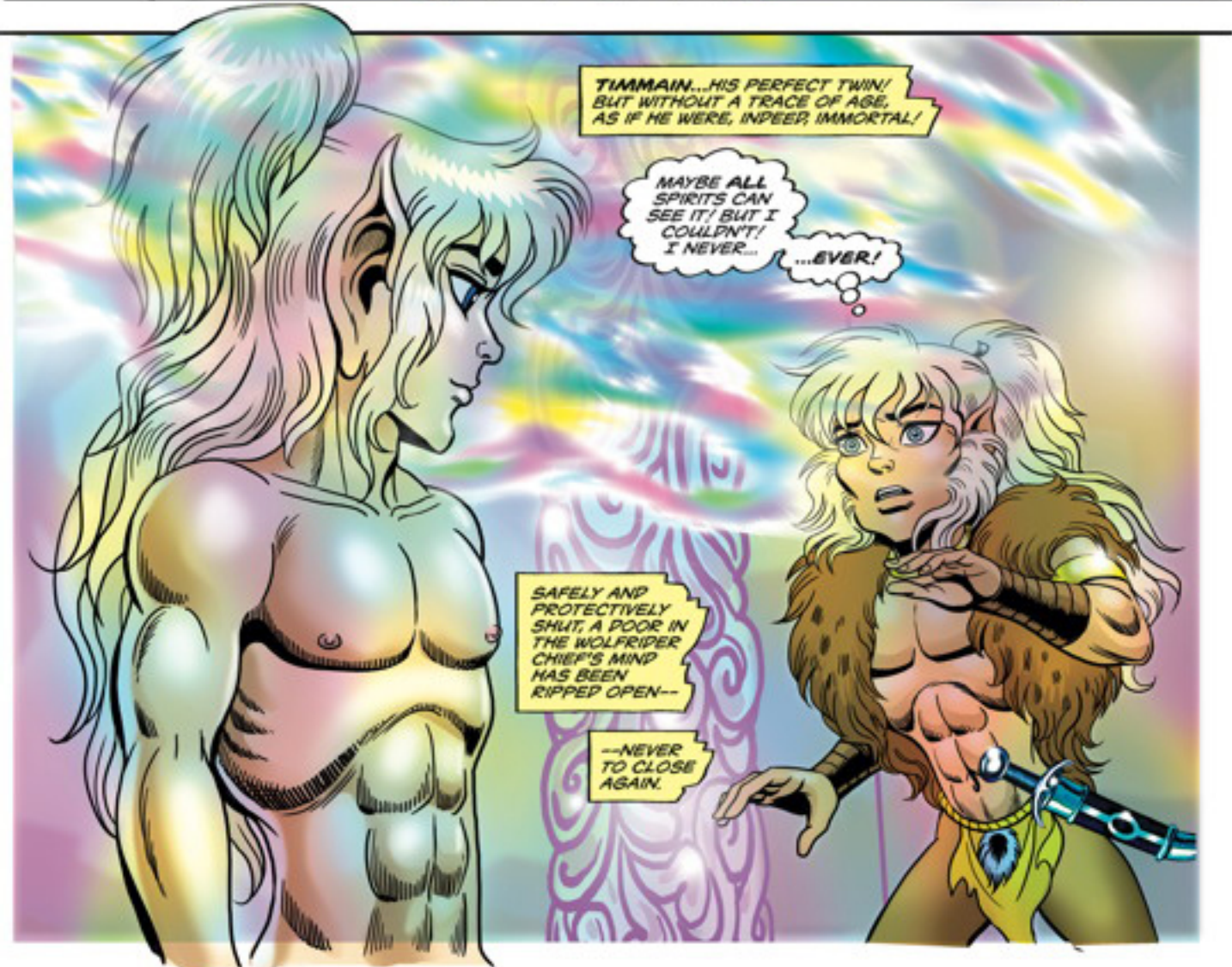


HA HA HA HA HA

I'LL SEE YOUR SWEET BODY IN THE PALACE NEXT TIME I VISIT!

FINALLY, CUTTER COMPREHENDS SLAIN KAHV'S CRYPTIC JEST.

!!! SHE COULD SEE IT WITH HER SPIRIT EYES!



TIMMAIN... HIS PERFECT TWIN! BUT WITHOUT A TRACE OF AGE, AS IF HE WERE, INDEED, IMMORTAL!

MAYBE ALL SPIRITS CAN SEE IT! BUT I COULDN'T! I NEVER... ..EVER!

SAFELY AND PROTECTIVELY SHUT, A POOR IN THE WOLFRIDER CHIEF'S MIND HAS BEEN RIPPED OPEN--

--NEVER TO CLOSE AGAIN.

GENTLY, SIMPLY, THE CUTTER-SHAPED HIGH ONE EXPLAINS...



WHEN THE TROLLS CAPTURED TIMMAIN'S WOLF SELF AND THREW HER INTO THE PIT--

--SHE WAS DIMLY AWARE OF A DARK PLACE SHE COULD NOT ESCAPE.

THEY FED HER LITTLE, SHE GREW PULL... BEGAN TO DIE.

SOME PART OF HER NEEDED FREEDOM TO CONTINUE THE LEARNING.

SO HER SPIRIT "WENT OUT"...

...DRAWN TO WHAT IT WAS MOST LIKE--

--HER MANY-TIMES-GREAT-GRANDCHILDREN, THE WOLFRIDERS!

AT THE MOMENT OF RECOGNITION'S FULFILLMENT, TIMMAIN'S SPIRIT SPLIT INTO TWIN FLAMES.

THE PART OF TIMMAIN THAT IS TAM ENTERED... TOOK ON FLESH AND BONE--



WE HAVE MADE A CUE, BELOVED, WHO IS ALL WE ARE... AND MORE!



--AND BECAME CUTTER, BLOOD OF TEN CHIEFS!

WOLF-TIMMAIN LANGUISHED IN THE PIT, NOT KNOWING OF HIM...



...NOT KNOWING HIS FIRST, GREAT QUEST FELT HER WILL TO LIVE... UNTIL HE FOUND AND WOKE HER!

SINCE THEN, WHAT TAM-CUTTER HAS KNOWN, FELT, AND DONE, TIMMAIN HAS KNOWN, FELT, AND DONE.

TWO BODIES, TWO BEATING HEARTS, BUT ONE MIND FULL OF MEMORY PICTURES...

RAYEK'S TEACHING WORDS FROM LONG AGO...

BLEND ONE CANDLE FLAME WITH ANOTHER--



--AND YOU REALIZE THEY NEVER WERE, NEVER COULD BE, ANYTHING BUT ONE.

ANY FIRE IS ALL FIRE, AND ANY SPIRIT IS ALL SPIRIT... FOREVER!



AND EQUALLY PROFOUND WORDS SAID TO LEETAH BY YOUNG CUTTER.

LOOK... TWO HANDFULS OF WATER--



--BECOME ONE.

THAT'S HOW WE ARE MEANT TO BE... ONE... FOREVER!

THROUGH RECOGNITION, WOLFRIPE'S SHARE THEIR SOUL NAMES.



SOME ARE BLESSED WITH SUCH LOVE--

--THEIR VERY SOULS BLEND AS ONE, BUT WE ARE ONE!

A SINGLE BEING LIKE NO OTHER AMONG OUR KIND!





WHILE TIMMAIN DWELLS IN THE PALACE AND REAPS THE SCROLL OF COLORS, TAM IS IN THE WORLD LEAPING...LOVING...TAKING CHANCES...TAKING WOUNDS...FEELING TIME PASS...ENPURING...

...EVEN THROUGH HIS LONG SLEEP, TAM-CUTTER TAUGHT TIMMAIN.

DOES LEETAH KNOW?



SHE KNOWS TAM. OUR BELOVED LIFEMATE RECOGNIZED TAM, BY JOINING HER SKIN WITH CUTTER'S--

--SHE BIRTHED THE BENDER OF "THE CALL"--

--AND THE CHIEFTESS OF "THE WAY."



AND... SKYWISE?

OUR SOUL'S BROTHER FAHR ALSO RECOGNIZED TAM, BUT ONLY BY JOINING SKINS WITH TIMMAIN--

--MAY HIS UNSPOKEN YEARNING FOR A CHILD OF RECOGNITION BE ANSWERED!



AND THAT SPECIAL JOINING, OF ALL TIMMAIN AND FAHR HAVE ALREADY SAVORED OR MIGHT SAVOR--

--IS UP TO HIM.

THIS IS ME, ME...IF I WERE A SHE... AND A HIGH ONE!



NOT...
"grr"

--YOU ARE!

RRAAALUGGH!