

FROM THE FILES OF ROBIN HARPER - EPISODE 2:


HEART GUARDIANS

PART 1:
THE SHADOW

Six Years Ago...

Sorry
I'm late!

How are
you guys
holding
up?

A character with blonde hair, wearing a white and orange outfit, is aiming a glowing yellow bow in a city street. The bow is held horizontally, and a bright light emanates from the arrowhead. The character is looking forward with a determined expression. The background shows a city street with buildings and a street lamp.

*Could be better,
this monster just
doesn't want to
stay down!*

*It's weird,
we've defeated
it about nine
times now...*

*...but it keeps
on pulling itself
back together
again.*






We've tried everything, but nothing seems to stick!

But now that you're here, we can combine our powers into a unified strike.

That did the trick the last time we had this much trouble.





That strike worked last time because it's overkill!

With that attack, it's often not the magical blast itself that finishes off a creature...

...rather it's because you've just consumed nearly all of the ambient magical energy in the area to power that attack.

The very wild energy that these mosters need to power their defenses and sustain themselves.

Well if that's
the case, let's quit
messing around
with the little stuff
and just go big
right away!



Which we
could have done
an hour ago if you
had shown up
when the rest
of us did!



I'm sorry,
but I had
class!

A class where
my Prof has been
really been getting
on my case about
how much of it I've
missed already!




Aren't the
lives we save
more important
than a stupid
class?

And
isn't this like,
your third
program?

Just pick a
degree and
finish it
already!





I'm sorry, but not everyone has a clear idea of the career they want right after high school...

Besides, I figured the four of you could handle this.

Like, when was the last time we had this much trouble with a monster...

...and it took all five of us together to defeat it?

Last
September
I think.





And that
monster was
nowhere near as
annoying as
this one!

So let's
dispell this
creature and get
the hell out
of here!



Alright
everyone...

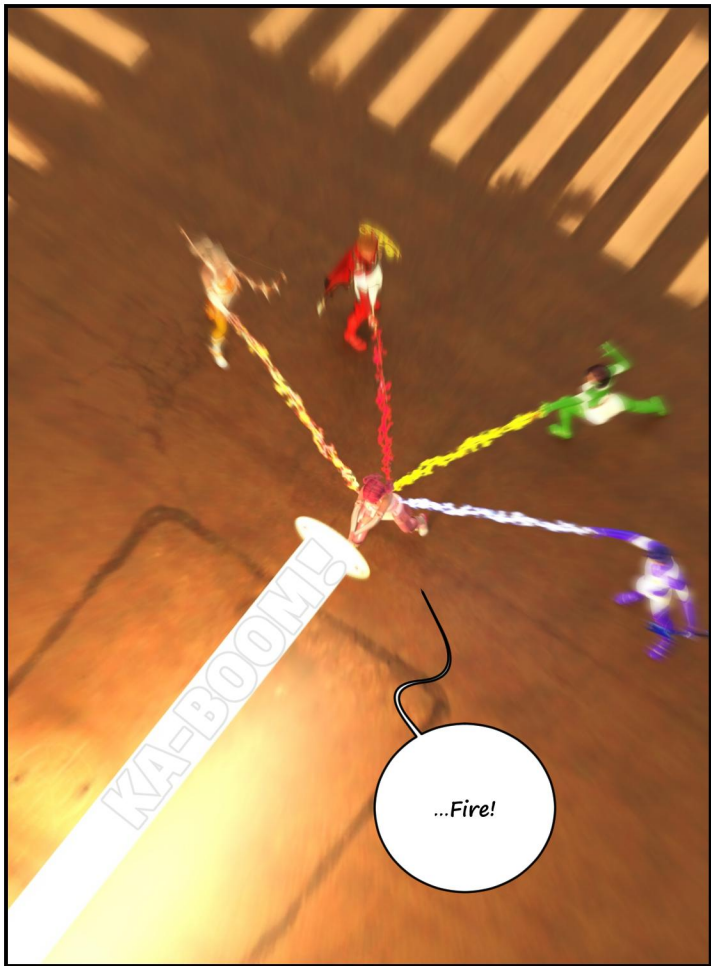
...on my
mark...















BOOM!



Did...
did we
get it?





I think
so...

...in all
our previous
attempts, it
would be growing
back by now...

...but this time
it looks like
there isn't any-
thing left for it
to grow back
from...



A VALID
HYPOTHESIS...

...BUT A
TOUCH OFF
THE MARK.

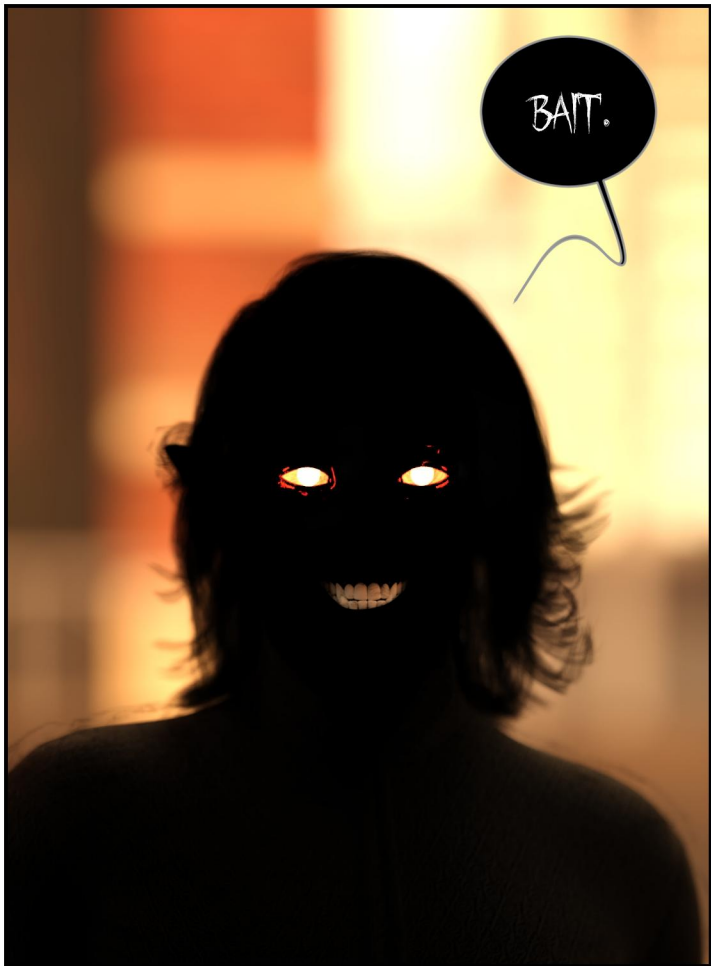
A person wearing a long, black, form-fitting dress and black boots is walking on a beach. The background is a warm, golden sunset over the ocean. The person is seen from the side, walking away from the viewer.

YOU'VE
INDEED KILLED
IT...

JUST LIKE
THE PREVIOUS
NINE TIMES...

...BUT I HAVE
NO NEED TO
RESURRECT IT
NOW...

...NOT AFTER
IT HAS FINALLY
FINISHED SERVING
ITS PURPOSE...





Everyone!

Defensive
positions!

A character's legs are shown from the waist down, wearing white pants with a gold belt and green armor pieces on the thighs and lower legs. The character is wearing green sandals with gold straps. A black cat is walking on the brown floor to the right. A speech bubble is positioned to the left of the character's legs.

No...

...run...





...Run!



RUN...?

...OH SILLY
CAT...

...IT'S FAR
TOO LATE
FOR THAT.

THEY COULD
NEVER OUTFRUM
ME.

THUNK!

A close-up, comic book-style illustration of a young man with short, wavy blue hair. He has a wide-eyed, shouting expression with his mouth open, showing his teeth. He is wearing a white turtleneck under a blue and white suit jacket. A white, jagged speech bubble with a black outline is positioned above his head, containing the word "AMY!" in bold, black, sans-serif capital letters. The background is a soft, out-of-focus warm light, suggesting an indoor setting with a lamp or window light source.

AMY!

A woman with dark hair, wearing a white and green superhero suit, stands in a city street at dusk. She is looking down with a sad expression. The background shows a city street with buildings and a crosswalk. Three speech bubbles are connected by a black line to her, containing text.


OH DON'T BE
SO UPSET...

...SHE DIED
INSTANTLY...

...AND
DIDN'T FEEL
A THING...

I'M NOT A
MONSTER
YOU KNOW...

THUNK!



No... no...
no...!

...this
can't be
happening!

...this
can't be
real!

A woman in a black dress with glowing red eyes is walking on a street at night. The background is a blurred city street with warm lights. Three speech bubbles are connected to her by lines.

OH BUT THIS
IS HAPPENING...

...THIS IS
REAL.

...BUT HAVE
NO FEAR LITTLE
LAMB...

A character wearing a white and orange suit is lying on their back on a dark surface. A thick black beam of light strikes the character's back. The background is a blurred outdoor setting with a fence and a building with orange and white stripes.

IT WILL ALL
BE OVER SOON!

THUNK!

Amy...?

...Rick...?

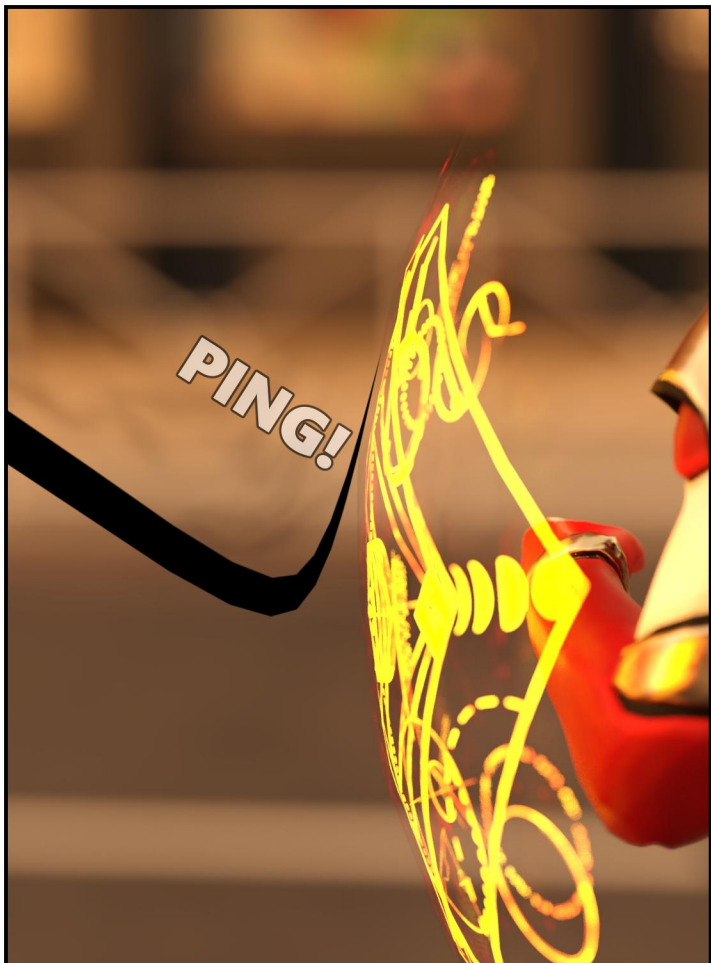
...Stacy?





OH STOP
WIMPERING AND
FACE YOUR DEATH
WITH COURAGE!

PING!






OH
INTERESTING...

...THAT SHOULD
HAVE PIERCED
THE BOTH OF
YOU...

Mark!?

Those
were my
friends
asshole!





Simon!
What's taking
you so long?
Teleport Cass
out of here!

What the
hell do you
think I've been
trying to do
this whole
time?

The
spell isn't
working!

He's blocking
me somehow!



Cass.

I need
you to fly
out of here...

...as fast
as you
can...

...and don't
look back!

What!?

No!

I'm not
leaving
you!

I can't
lose you
too!



Cass...

...please...

...my fate
was sealed
the moment
this trap was
sprung...

...please
let me die
knowing that
you got out
safely...





Mark...

Please...
...don't do
this...

...fly away
with me...

...we can
escape
together!

Cass...
...you know
we can't.

Please
go...



Mark...

...I love
you...

I love
you too...





A person with long, dark hair is shown from the chest up, mostly in silhouette. Their eyes are glowing with a bright red light, and they have a wide, toothy smile. The background is a blurred city street at night, with warm lights from buildings and street lamps. Two speech bubbles are positioned above the person's head, connected by thin lines.

WELL, AT
LEAST HE DIED
WITH THE FOOLISH
BELIEF THAT YOU
MIGHT LIVE.

ALTHOUGH HE
NEVER WAS GOING
TO GIVE YOU MUCH OF
A HEAD START TO
BEGIN WITH.

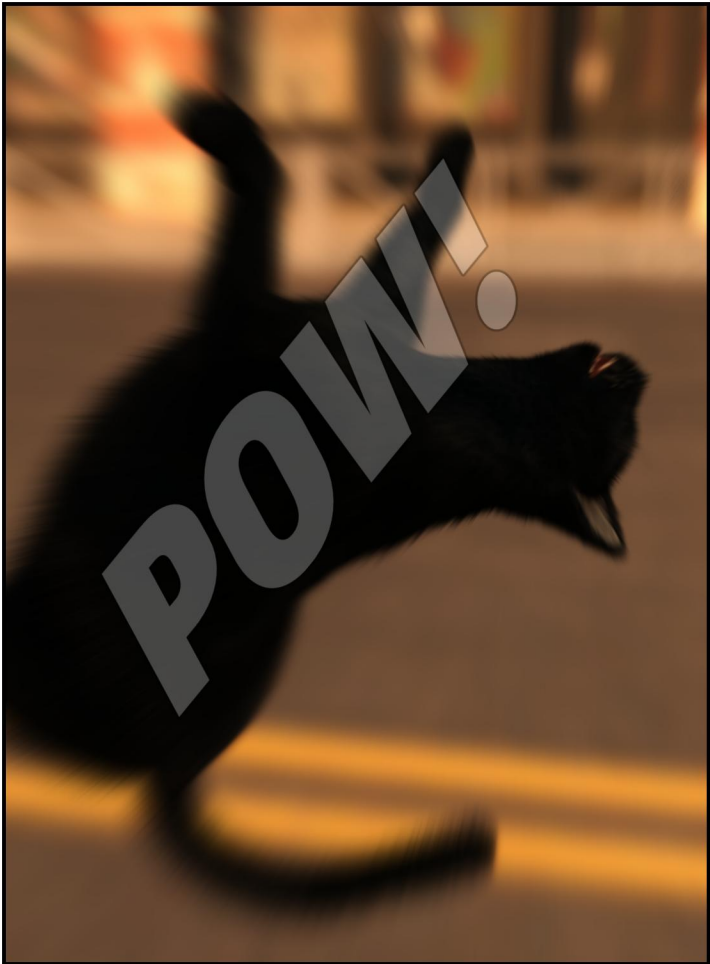


BUT CRY NO
MORE LITTLE
LAMB...

...FOR YOUR
SUFFERING IS
NOW AT AN
END!



NO!



YOU
TOO!?

THE BOY I
UNDERSTAND...



...BUT WHY
WOULD YOU RISK
YOUR LIFE FOR SOME
MERE LIVESTOCK?

AS FAR AS I
CAN TELL, SHE
IS NOT A
CHANGELING...

...AND THE QUEEN
OF NIGHT AND THE
LORD OF THE GOLDEN
THRONE WOULD HAVE YOUR
MASTER'S HEAD IF HE DARED
TOUCH EITHER OF THEIR
HIDDEN PRINCES.

AND WHILE I
WOULDN'T PUT
SUCH A TRICK
PAST THE QUEEN
OF NIGHT...

...THIS GIRL
DEFINITELY
ISN'T A PRINCE IN
DISGUISE...

NO...

...THIS GIRL
IS SIMPLY AN
ORDINARY
HUMAN.

SHE HAS NO
POWER BEYOND
WHAT YOU HAVE
GIVEN HER.

THERE IS
NOTHING SPECIAL
ABOUT HER.



SO WHY
CAT?

WHY DO
YOU CARE
ABOUT THIS
GIRL...?



Because
he's my
friend.

A character with long, wavy pink hair is shown from the chest down, wearing a pink bikini top and matching bottoms. She has pale, metallic-looking skin and is wearing pink ribbons on her wrists and ankles. She is holding a black cat with a gold star on its chest. A speech bubble is positioned in the upper left corner.

CATS DON'T
HAVE FRIENDS.
THEY HAVE
SERVANTS.



Then maybe
you don't know
cats as well as
you think
you do...





HMMM...

BE GRATEFUL
GIRL...

...I'VE
DECIDED TO
SPARE YOU.

KILLING YOU
WOULD ONLY RESULT
IN THIS CAT'S MASTER
RECRUITING MORE SHEEP
TO REPLACE THE
LOT OF YOU.

WHICH WOULD
UNDO ALL OF MY
WORK TODAY.





NO. IT WOULD
BE BETTER TO
LEAVE YOU ALIVE
AND ALLOW YOU TO
CONTINUE YOUR
WORK.

JUST NOT
AS WELL AS
YOU HAD
BEFORE.

YES... A
BROKEN SHEEP
DOG IS FAR MORE
USEFUL TO ME THAN A
BAND OF INEXPERIENCED
YET OVERREAGER
PUPPIES.



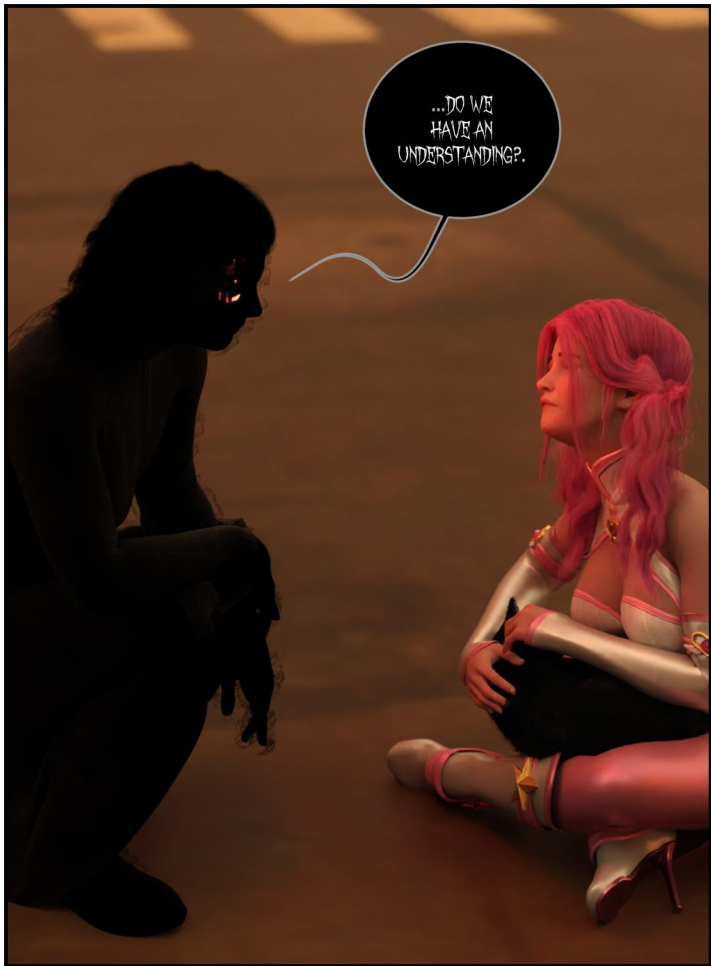
BUT MAKE
NO MISTAKE
GIRL...

...YOUR LIFE
BELONGS TO
ME NOW...

...SO IF YOU
ATTEMPT TO
RECRUIT ANY
NEW COMPANIONS
INTO SERVICE TO
ASSIST YOU...



...I WILL MAKE
YOU WATCH AS
I TEAR THEM LIMB
FROM LIMB.







AND LET THE
CAT KNOW OF OUR
NEW ARRANGEMENT
WHEN HE WAKES.

I IMAGINE
HE WILL TRY TO
RUN HIS MASTER
FOR HELP.

BUT IT
WILL DO HIM
LITTLE GOOD.

AS LONG AS THE
SHEEP PRODUCE,
THE LORD SHEPHERD
CARES LITTLE FOR
HIS FLOCK.

A woman with long, vibrant pink hair is sitting on the ground in the foreground, her back to the camera. She is wearing a bright pink tank top and denim jeans. In the background, a woman in a dark coat and skirt is walking away, her figure rendered as a silhouette against the warm, golden light of a sunset. The scene is set on a city street with cars and a building in the background. A speech bubble is positioned in the upper right corner.

AND NOW
LOOK AT WHERE
THAT CARELESSNESS
HAS GOTTEN US...

Oh my god!
There's a girl
laying on the
road!

Hey idiot!
Don't sit in
the middle of
the road!

Wait, there's
not just one!

There's
multiple
people!

She's not
breathing!

Someone
call 911!

Did anyone see
what happened?

Was it a hit
and run?

This one isn't
breathing either!

Does anyone
know first
aid!?

Hold on, the
girl sitting over
here is still alive!

I think she's
in shock!