

Divina

“We mounted up, the first and I the second,
Till I beheld through a round aperture
Some of the beauteous things that Heaven doth bear;

Thence we came forth to rebehold the stars.”

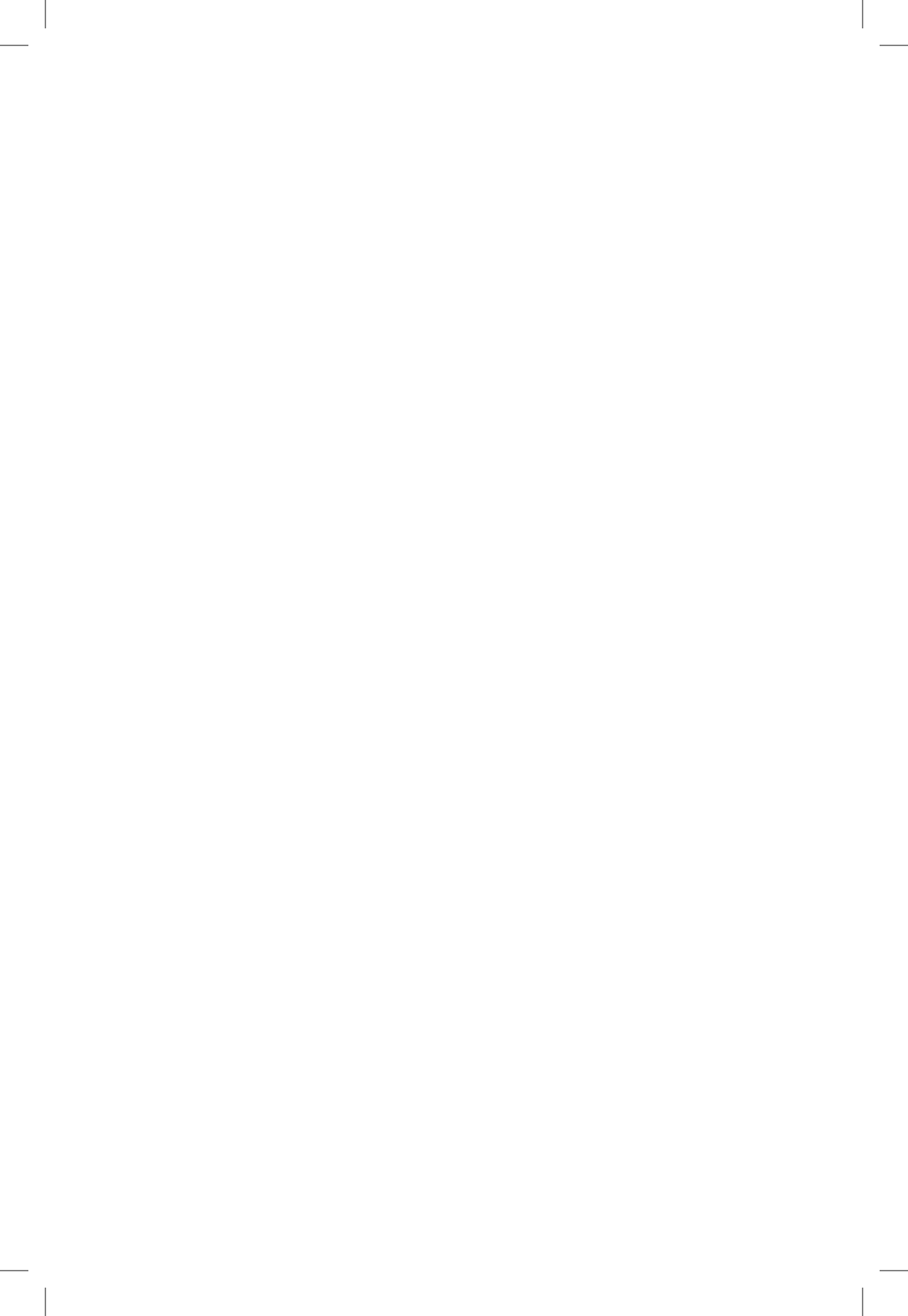
—Dante Alighieri, *The Divine Comedy*

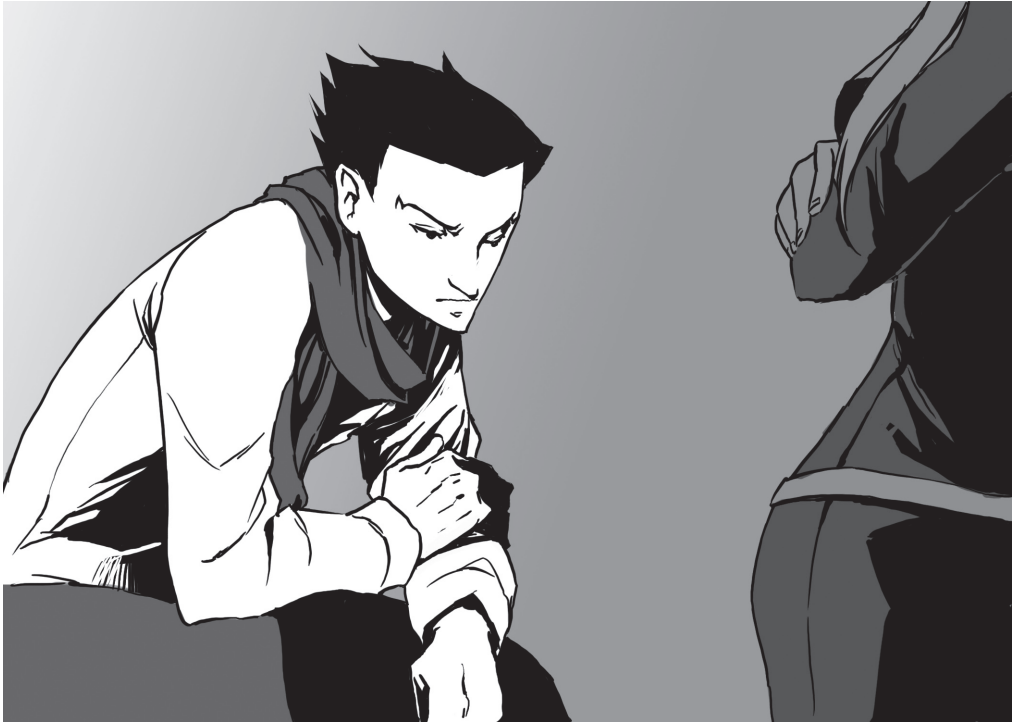


The Fraudulent

“Man-like it is to fall into sin; fiend-like it is to dwell therein.”

—Henry Wordsworth Longfellow





“Honour among thieves, or something like that. It’s not so bad.”

“Thieves, yes. Honor, no,” Phoenix snorted. “I don’t want to be don. I want to be a lawyer. A defense attorney like you.” Phoenix looked up at Mia unwaveringly. “There’s someone I need to help.”

Not like me, Mia thought. “And what does your father think of that?”

“‘No son of mine is gonna be some kinda self-righteous upholder of the law.’ Really, Mia. I hate him, sometimes,” Phoenix said haughtily. “I don’t ever want to be like him.”

Mia slowly averted her eyes from him. “Well, we can’t all be what we want to be,” she said, putting a hand on her magatama.



Phoenix caught sight of Edgeworth walking in their direction as he and Mia were leaving the courtroom. Edgeworth was impossible to miss, really; pale hair, lavish suit, stick firmly up ass. Phoenix half-listened as Mia reminded him not to say anything to the paparazzi outside.

“Waltzing in and out of the courthouse with your disgusting pet lawyer,” Edgeworth spoke as he passed, just loud enough for Phoenix and Mia to hear. “I don’t know why I ever expected anything else from you, Wright.”

Phoenix froze for a second, then turned and watched as Edgeworth stalked into a courtroom. Beside Phoenix, Mia also paused.

“At least he remembers who you are,” she murmured. Phoenix felt short of breath, even as the surprise disappeared from his face.



It was all over the news, of course. "Prosecutor Accused of Murder" and "Ace Prosecutor's Unsavory Past Comes to Light." A1, front page everywhere.

A lifetime ago, Phoenix had wanted to be a lawyer. At least he now had other resources at his disposal. Phoenix would offer Mia's services if he didn't already know that Edgeworth wouldn't accept them. Phoenix would call Mia first and ask her to find an attorney who was willing to represent Edgeworth, one who wasn't publicly associated with the mafia.

Maybe Kristoph would take on this case; he owed Phoenix a favour. Maya would help him find some information on this Manfred von Karma.

And maybe, if none of that worked out... Phoenix fidgeted with Shelly's calling card. Phoenix knew he owed Edgeworth that much, at least.

There was honour among thieves, after all.

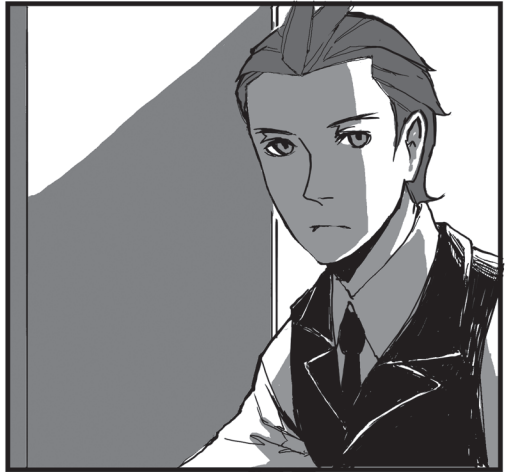
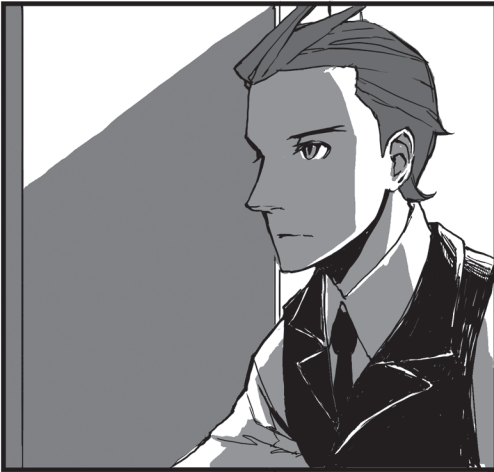


The Violent

“Here we must think through to the fundamentals and push away all sentimental weakness: living itself is essentially appropriation from and wounding and overpowering strangers and weaker men, oppression, hardness, imposing one’s own forms, annexing, and at the very least, in its mildest actions, exploitation — but why should we always use these precise words, which have from ancient times carried the stamp of a slanderous purpose?”

—Nietzsche
Beyond Good and Evil, s.259





When Apollo finally entered
the room, it was a mess.



Or at least, the
far wall and the
couch that was
pushed up against
it were.



He walked towards the figure slumped indifferently on a sofa, one arm draped across the back, the other absently attempting to sweep the smoke away.



"Apollo," the man said thoughtfully, "do you remember the drug deal that was supposed to take place last month?"

Apollo stopped next to the man and nodded. The time and location of the exchange had somehow been leaked, and the entire operation had been busted.





"And," the man continued, "the deal that was supposed to take place the month before?"

Apollo nodded again.

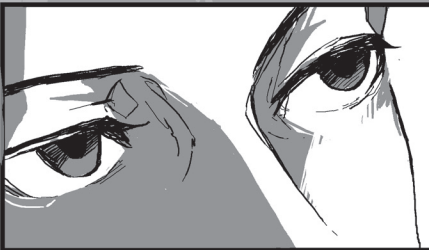


The man took a drag of his cigarette and exhaled, watching the tendril of smoke as it

twisted

and curled

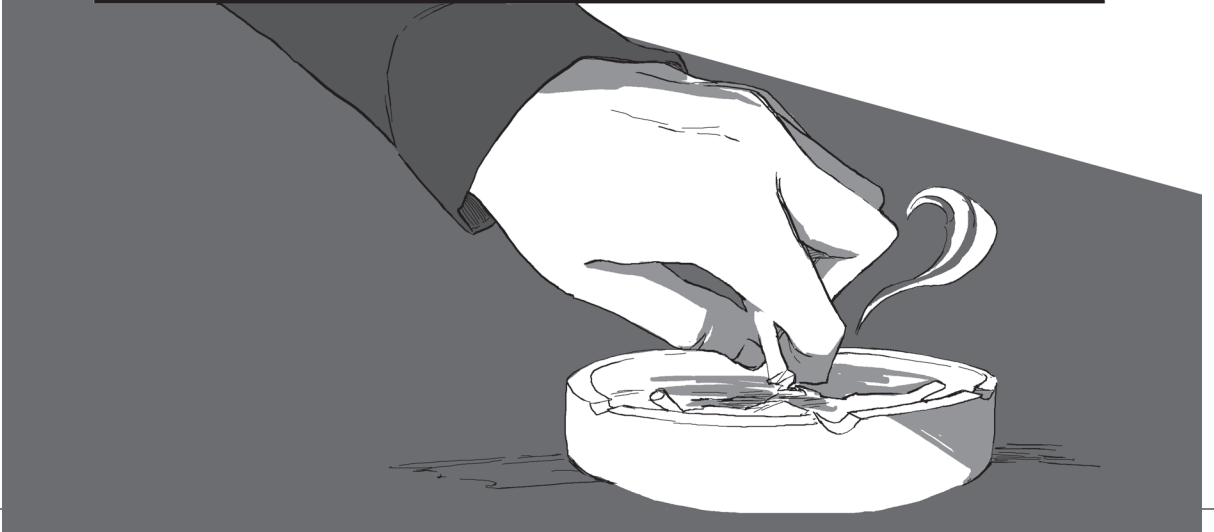
before joining the blue haze that hung over the room.



"Do you know," he asked, "how much money we've lost, not being able to go through with those exchanges?"



Apollo shook his head, and the man leaned forward to put his cigarette out in the ash tray before him.





He stood up
slowly and
straightened
his suit.

"Find out and tell
me," he said.
"And take care of
that for me."





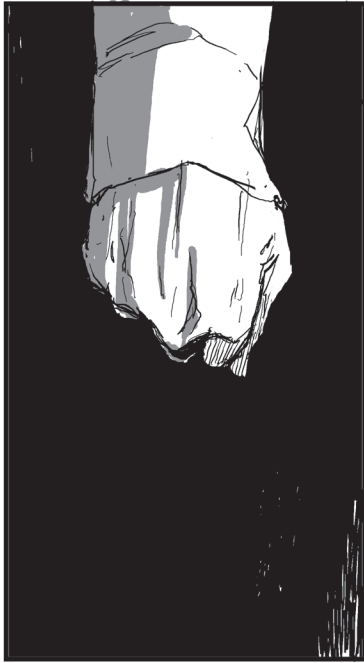
Apollo didn't watch as his boss strode leisurely towards the door.

The man paused in front of it before calling back.



"Tell the boys we got the mole.
I'm sorry, Apollo."

Apollo pretended
not to hear the
last part.



"Yes, Mr.
Wright."



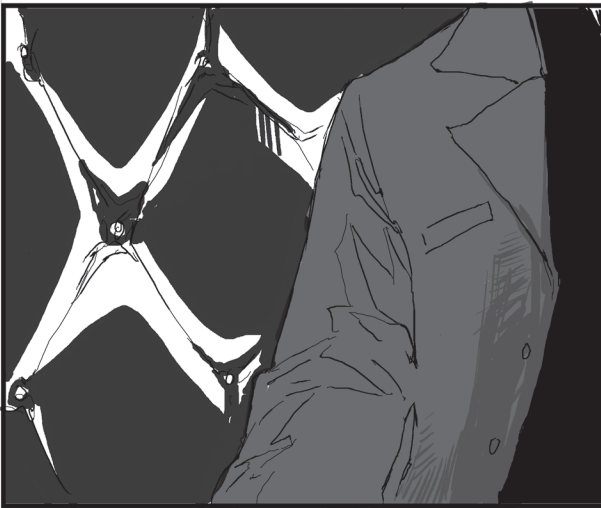
His gaze lingered on the opposite wall as the man
left the room and closed the door behind him.



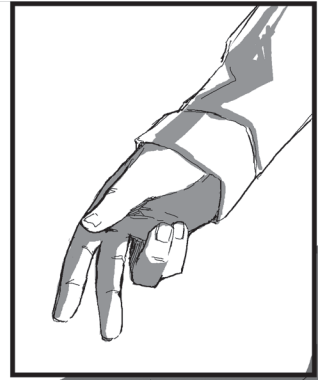
He finally
approached
the body
after a few
minutes,



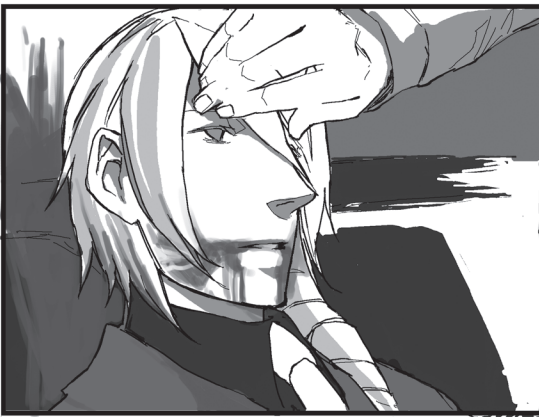
almost
afraid



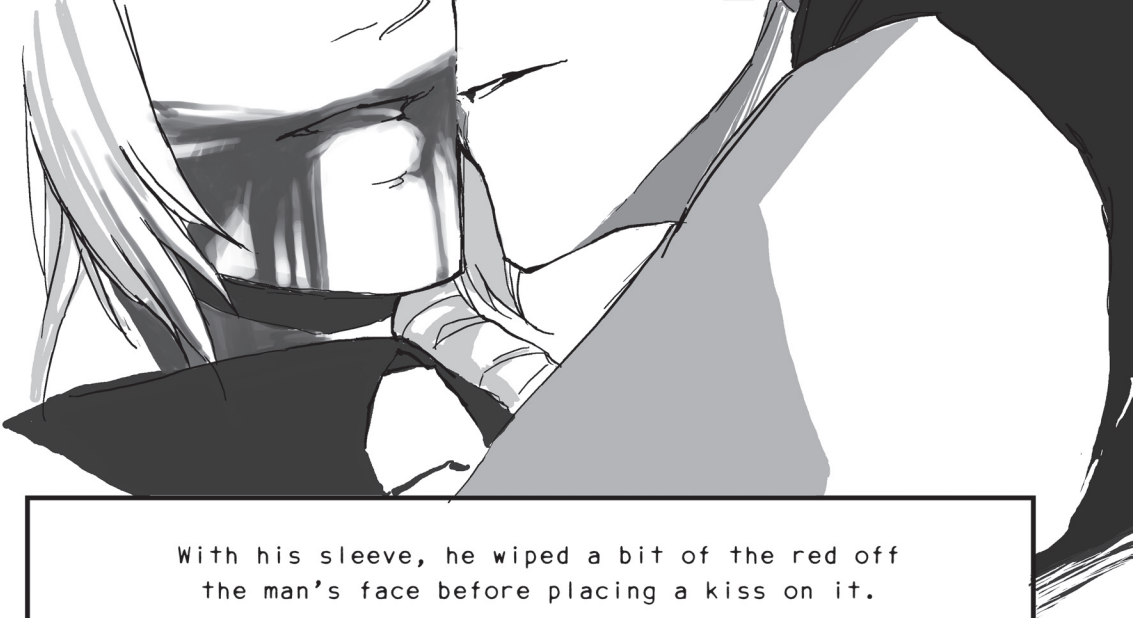
to look
directly
at it.



He stroked the soft blonde hair,
already sticky with blood,



and brushed the lids clodsd
over its blue eyes.



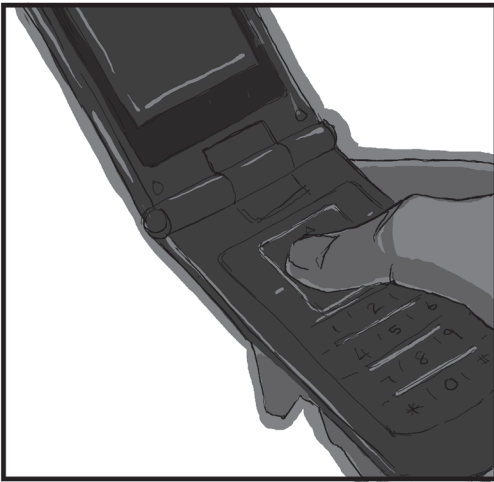
With his sleeve, he wiped a bit of the red off the man's face before placing a kiss on it.



He closed his own eyes and sighed: he knew it had been too good to be true.



When he text-messaged the guys, all it said was:



“Bring the gas and the lighter.”



The Avaricious

“There is no greater sorrow
Than to be mindful of the happy time
In misery.”

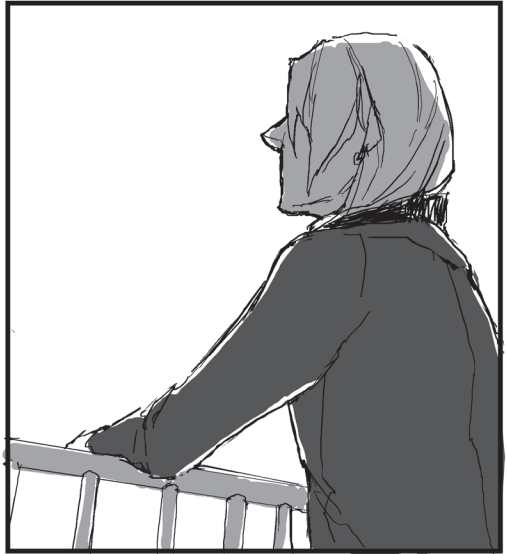
—Dante Alighieri, *The Divine Comedy*



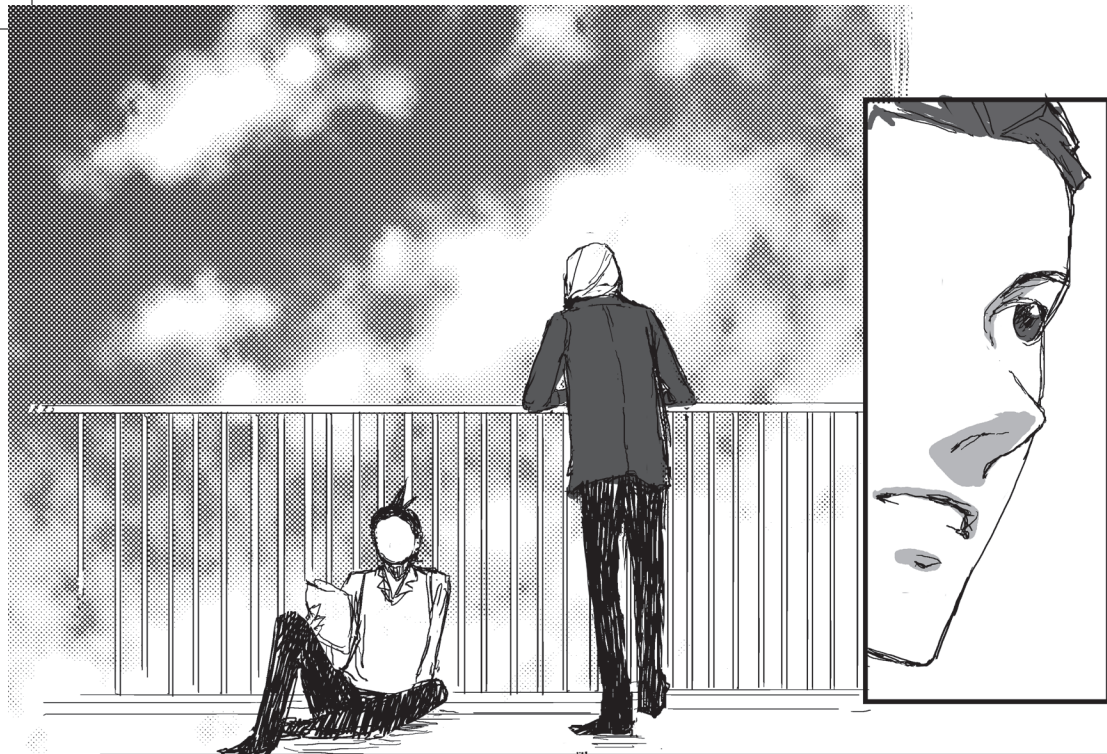
"Don't you just
hate this sometimes,
Herr Forehead?"



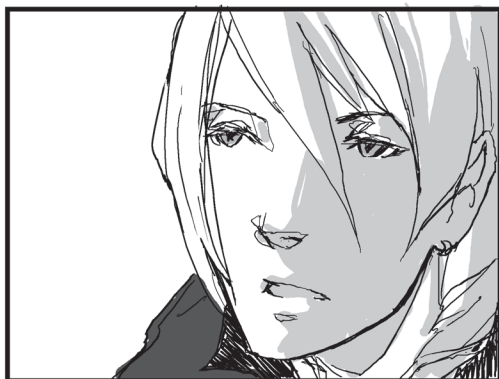
He asked Apollo,
one day, out of
the blue.



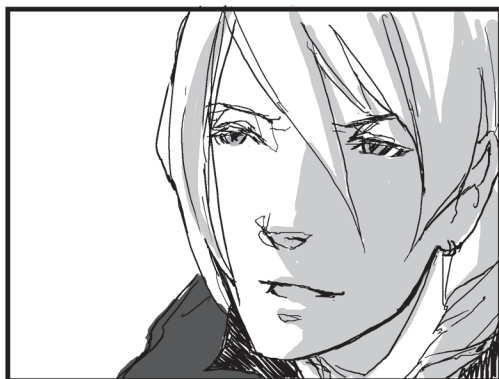
Apollo glanced up, surprised at the
vehemence in the man's voice.



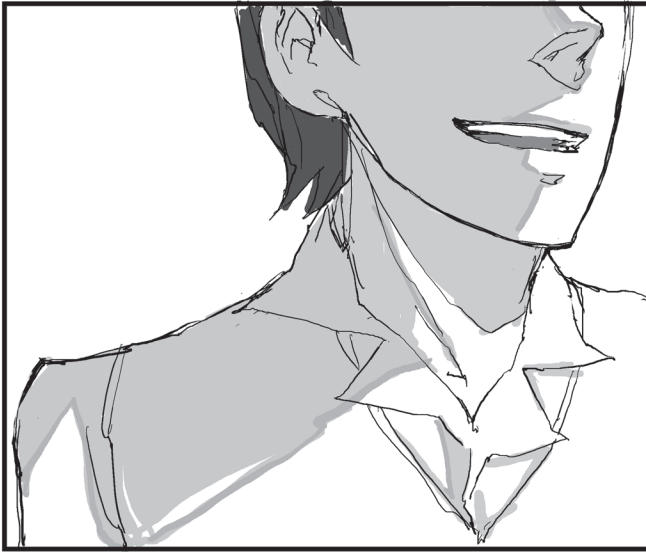
"What's to hate?" Apollo asked, even though he knew perfectly well.



"The stakes, the risk, always having to look over my shoulder, never knowing who to trust, never trusting anyone..."

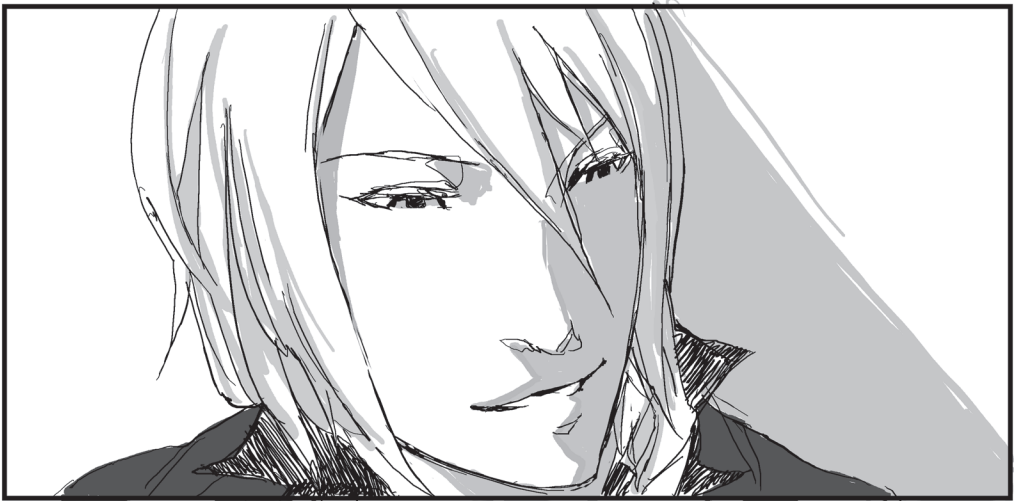


"And the lying. Always having to lie."



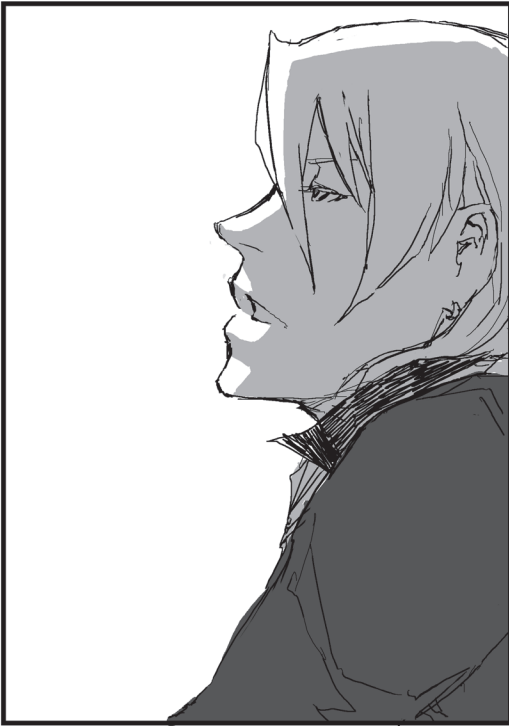
Apollo grinned at that and leaned back against the railing.

"You, a liar? I'd never have imagined."



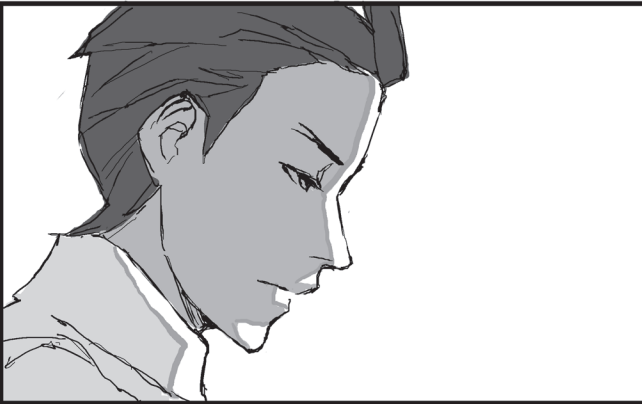
Klavier smiled back at him.

"Ja, I'm a liar. I lie about everything."



He turned back to
the sky.

"I hate living like this.
Don't you?"



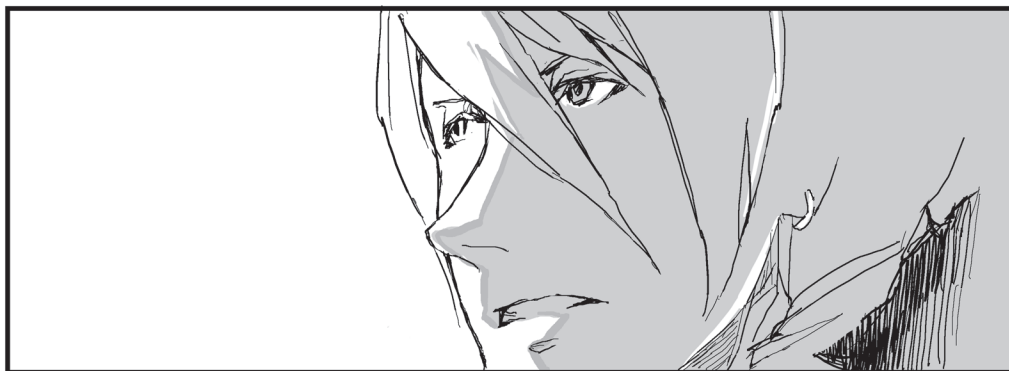
Yes, Apollo
thought.

"I can't say.
I've never lived
any other way."

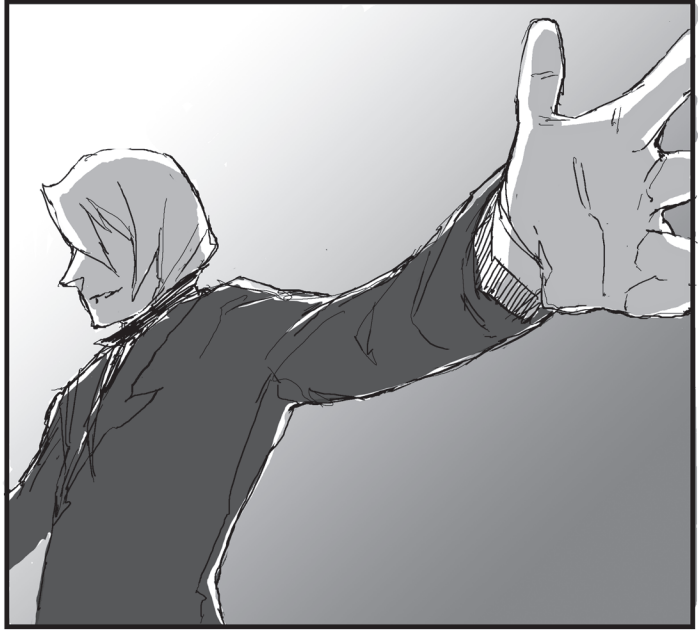
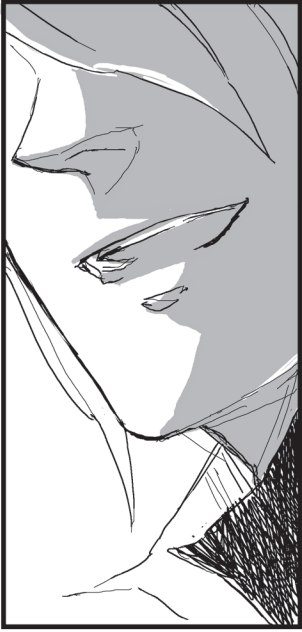




Klavier turned slightly to watch him
and said nothing for a while.

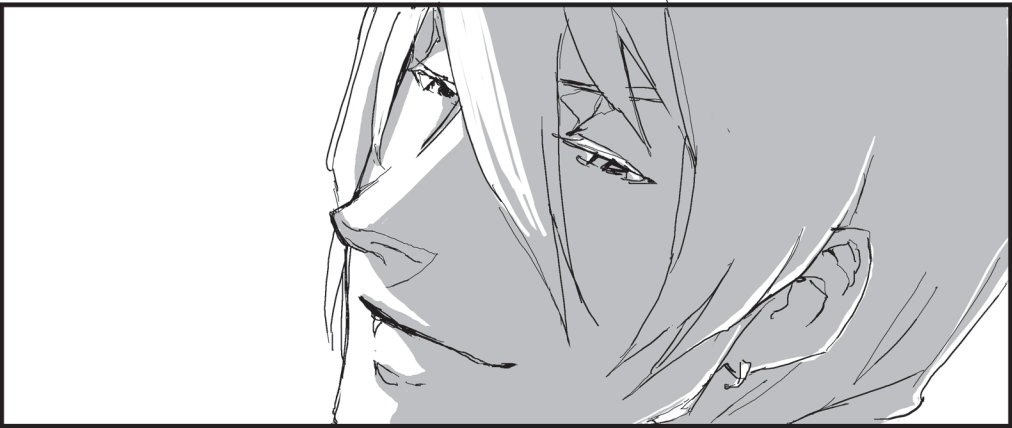


“Then you need to,”
he said finally.



"I'm getting out of here someday,"

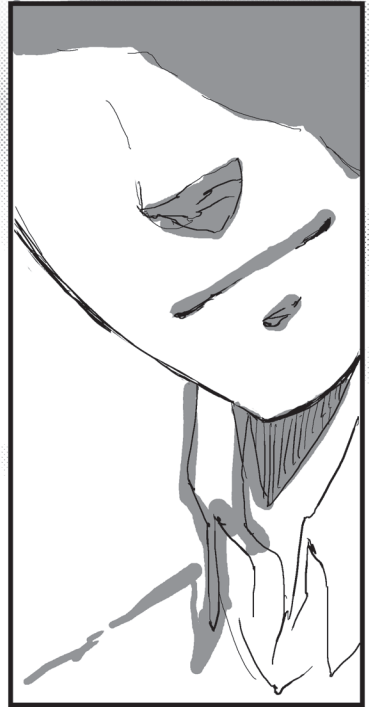
he said, throwing his arms out in a grandiose, sweeping gesture.



Apollo had to suppress the faint urge to wipe that infuriatingly smug smile off his face.



"And, you'll come with me. We'll
leave all this behind together."



Apollo smiled despite himself.

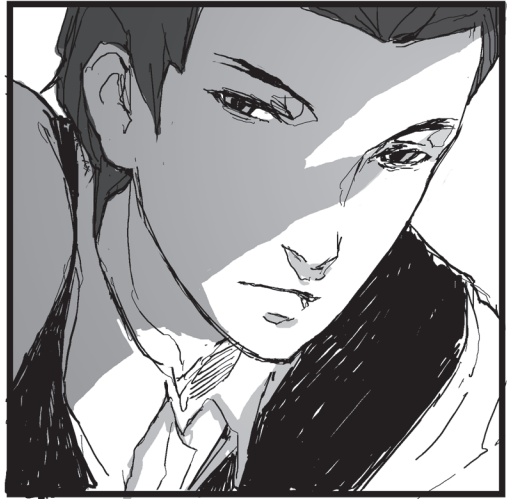
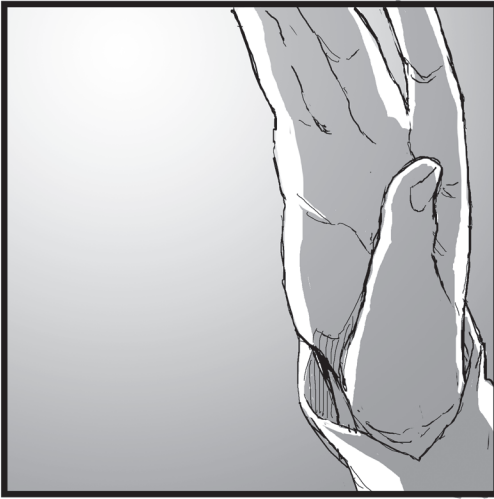
Klavier was young and handsome and charismatic, with hope and optimism where Apollo had only resignation.



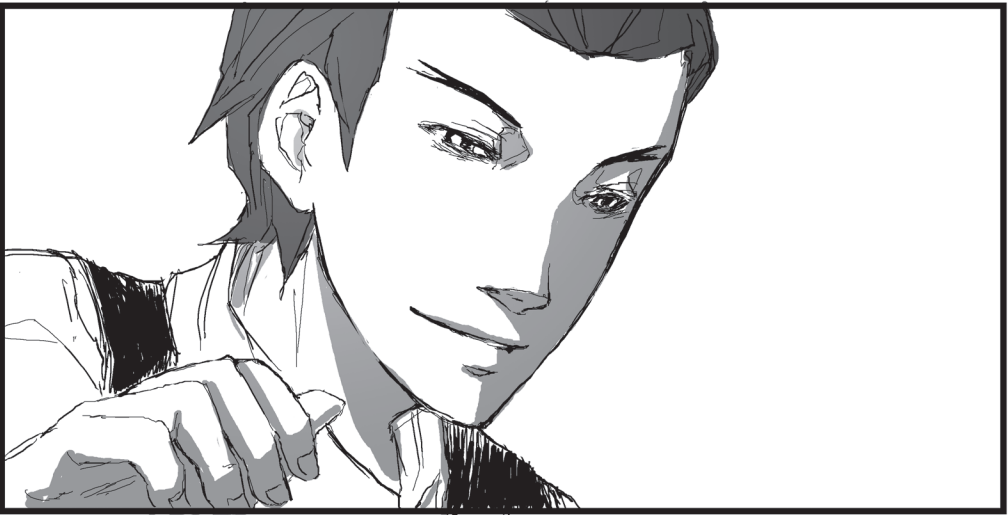
Looking at him was a bit like
admiring a work of art or a rock star.

Apollo hadn't believed a
single word he'd said.





Looking at him had been a bit like
admiring a work of art or a rock star,
and nothing more.



"You, a liar? I'd never have imagined."



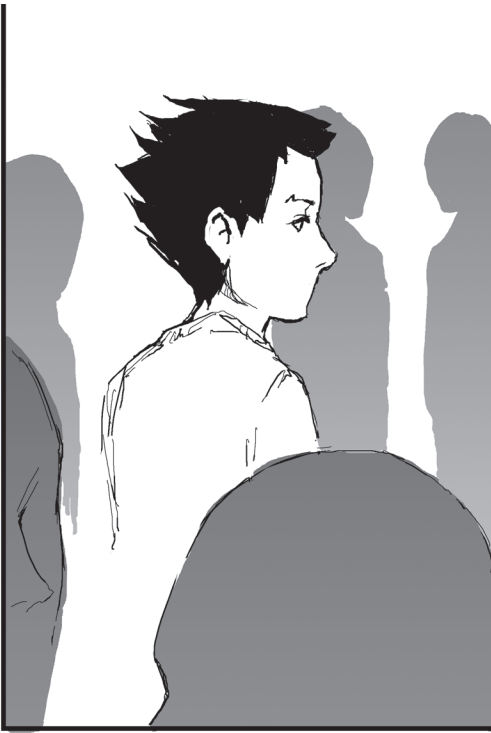


The Manque

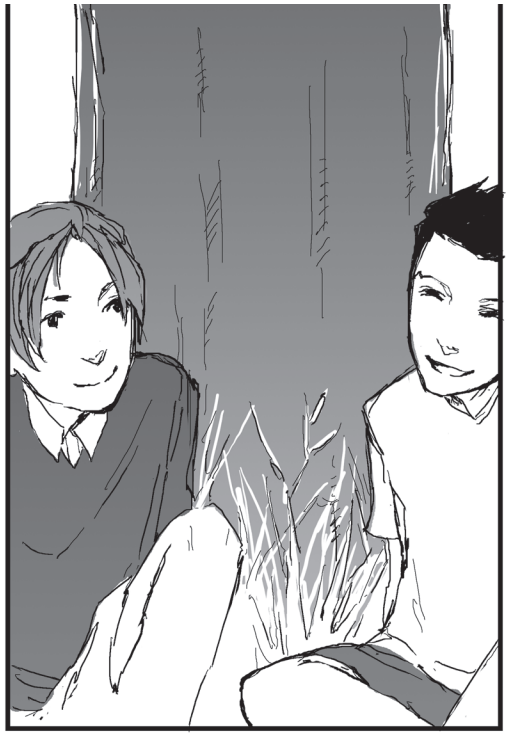
“If the present world go astray, the cause is in you,
in you it is to be sought.”

— Dante Alighieri, *The Divine Comedy*





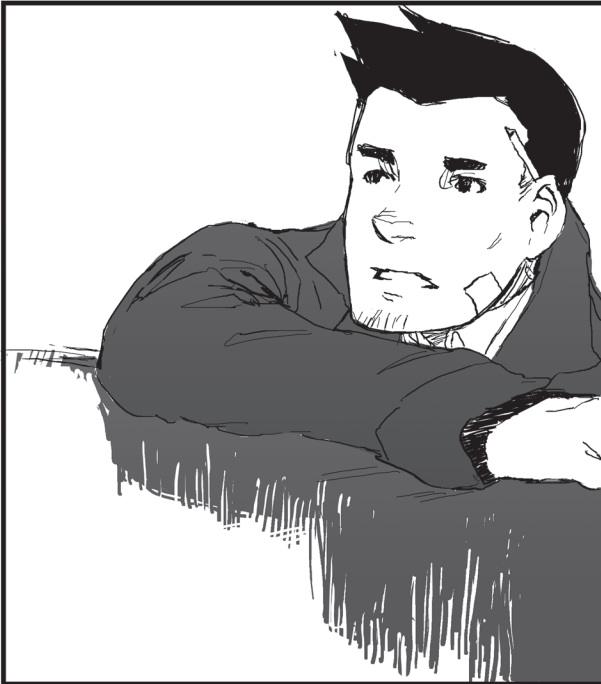
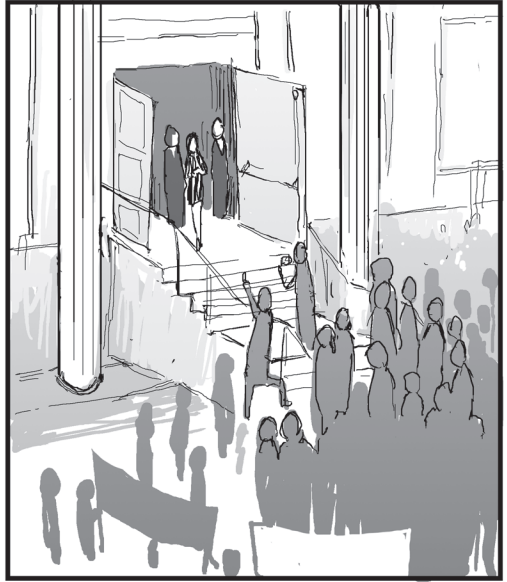
When Miles was in fourth grade, there was a boy whom everyone whispered about. Rumours circulated about his family -- that he came from a background of thieves and liars and arsonists.



When Miles got to know him, he was surprised to find that the boy was honest and infectiously optimistic. Miles dismissed the rumors and made a promise with him, one that only kids could think of making. The promise that they would always do the right thing and protect the innocent.

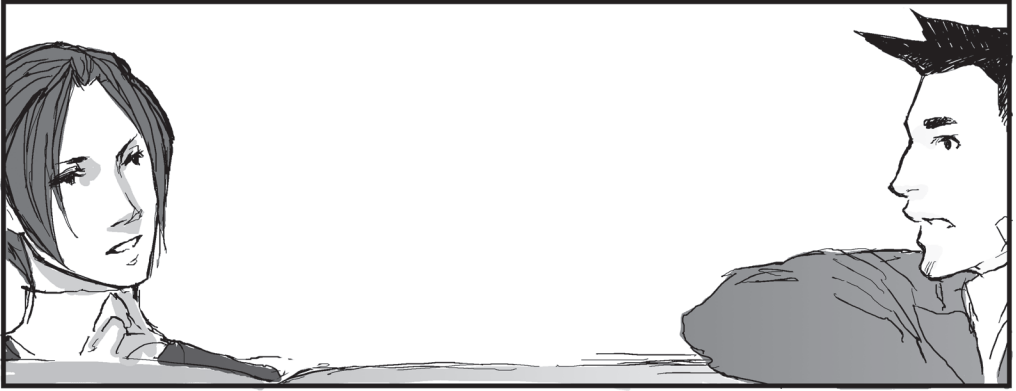
When Miles went to Germany to study prosecution, ignoring the dull guilt that shadowed everything he did became part of the curriculum.

The first time Miles saw Phoenix after his return from Germany, it was outside of the courthouse, in the midst of a mob of reporters and protesters.



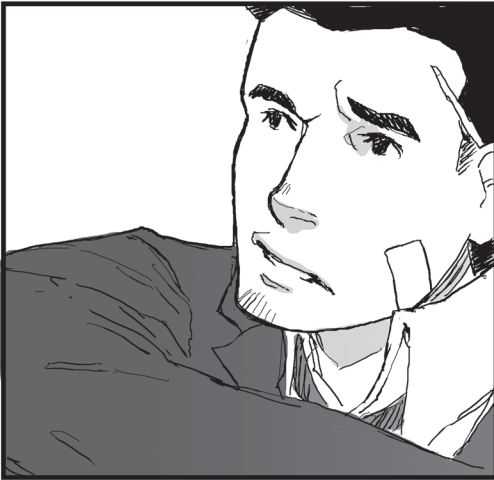
“He’s been acquitted again,” the detective accompanying Miles remarked.

“Multiple counts of fraud, drug trafficking and murder. They couldn’t even find a single witness to testify against him.”



“Who?”

Detective Gumshoe looked at Miles with surprise. “You don’t know him?”

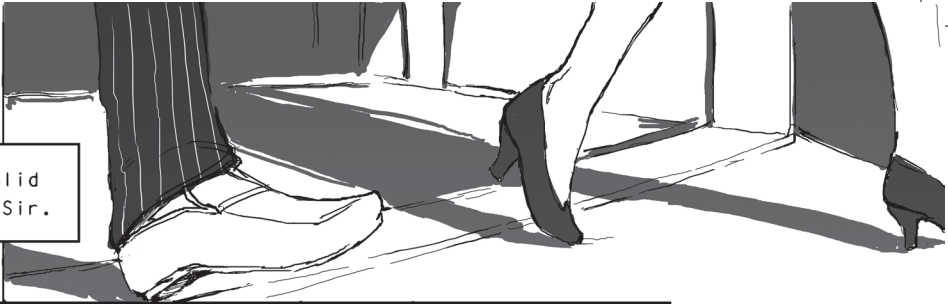


“I guess you will, soon enough.”

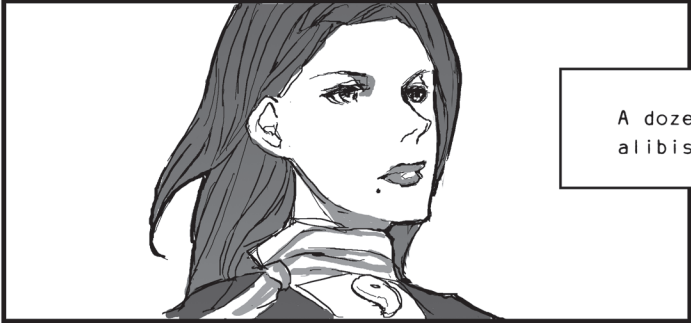
The detective looked thoughtful as he continued, “It’s pretty much an open secret that he’s behind all the organized crime around these parts.”

Miles watched the police try to keep the reporters at bay.

“They can’t get him on anything?”



"No solid
proof, Sir.



A dozen
alibis,



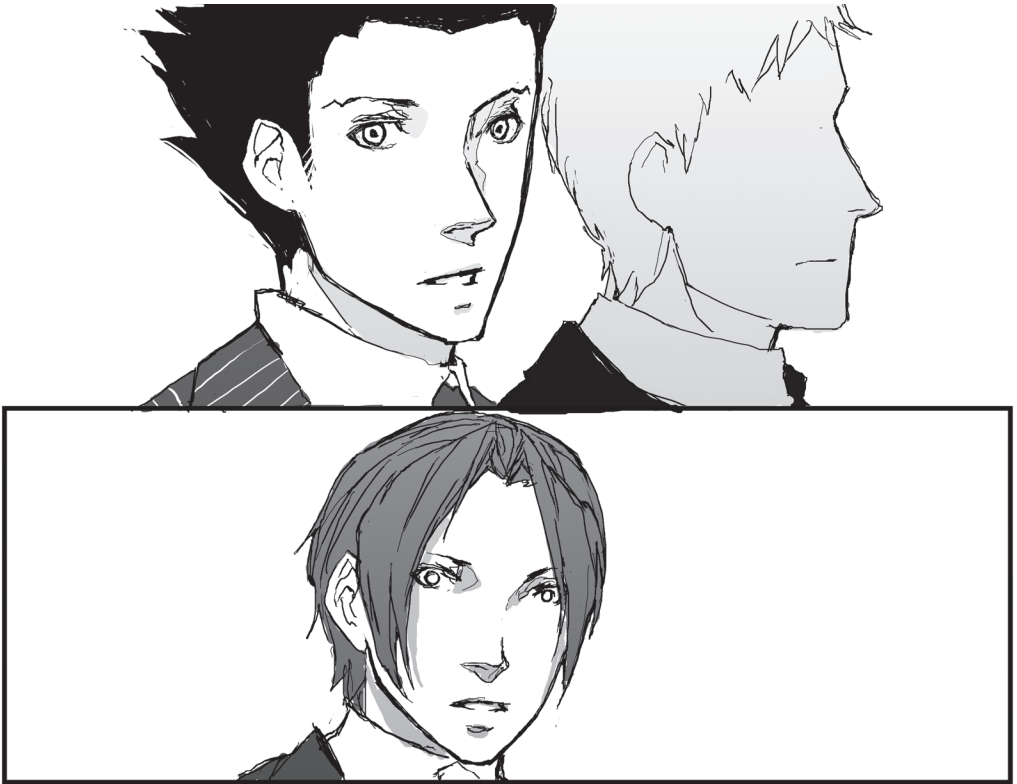
dropping
witnesses,



disappearing
evidence...



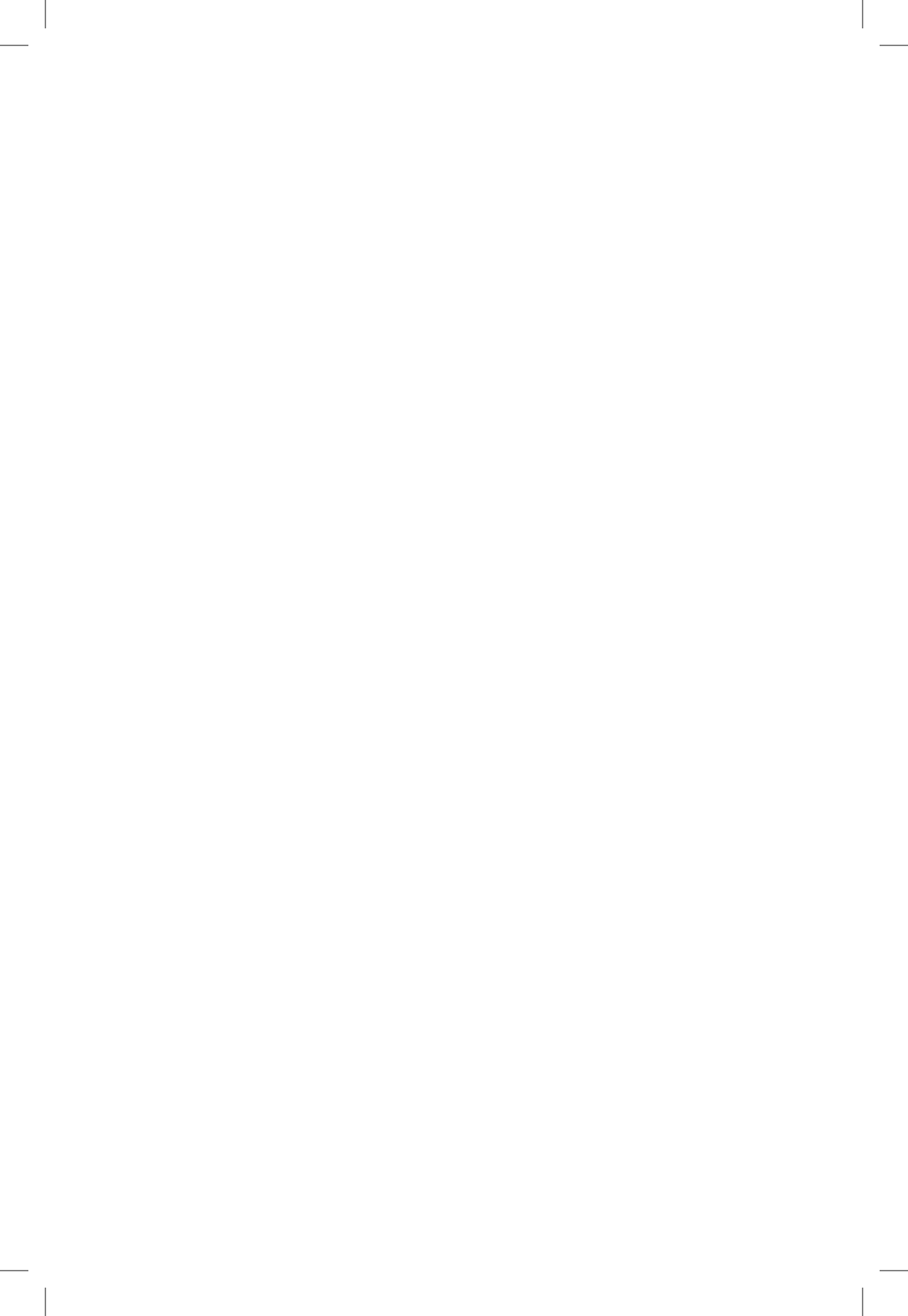
you name it."



Miles remembered the boy from fourth grade. The man's eyes didn't shine like they had. The surprise was gone the next second, and then the man was just looking through Miles like he wasn't there.



Miles felt torn between disappointment and relief.



The Wrathful

“Beauty and anguish walking hand in hand
The downward slope to death.”

—Alfred, Lord Tennyson,
A Dream of Fair Women



When the phone rang, it was a strained sound.

Miles listened numbly as Detective Gumshoe told him the big news of the day.

Tip-off. Arson. A mole killed. Wright's group.

Edgeworth went slightly rigid in his chair.

"They got Klavier Gavin, Sir."

"Attorney Gavin's brother?"

"That's right, Sir."

"A true shame. Do they have evidence against Wright?"

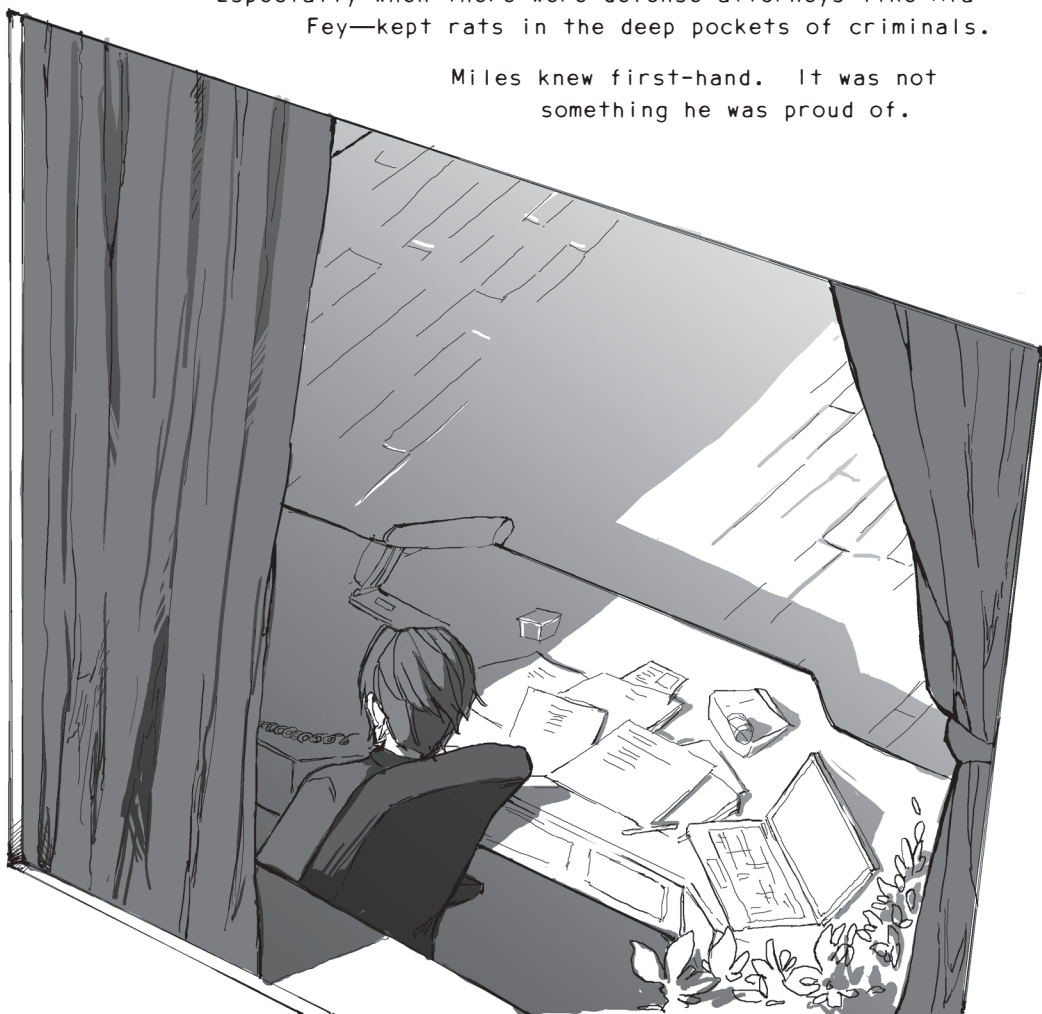
"Solid-rock, Sir. They've already brought him in."

"...Thank you, Detective. Good day."

Even if there were evidence against Wright, Miles knew it would take a lot of work to get him in court and keep him there.

Especially when there were defense attorneys like Mia Fey—kept rats in the deep pockets of criminals.

Miles knew first-hand. It was not something he was proud of.





The Cormorant

“The darkest places in hell are reserved for those who maintain their neutrality in times of moral crisis.”

—Dante Alighieri, *The Divine Comedy*





“Hello, Mr. Edgeworth. Mia Fey,
Defense Attorney. I’ll be defending
you for this trial.”

The chains linking his wrists and ankles had
felt so heavy. Heavier than anything he’d felt
in court.

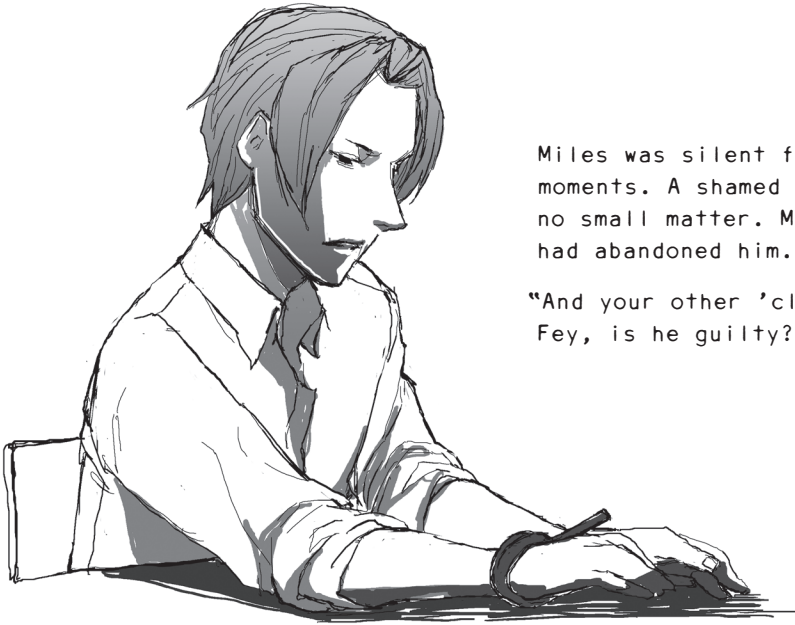
“I didn’t request you.”

“No, you didn’t, sir. An outside friend has offered support.”

“I don’t have any ‘outside friends’.”

At one time, that thought had been something to be proud of.
The inconvenient thing about friends, Miles had thought, is
that they often find you and not the other way around.

“Sir, my client believes you are not guilty. Because of this,
you are also my client now, and it is my job to prove you are
not guilty.”



Miles was silent for a few moments. A shamed prosecutor was no small matter. Many 'friends' had abandoned him.

"And your other 'client', Miss Fey, is he guilty?"

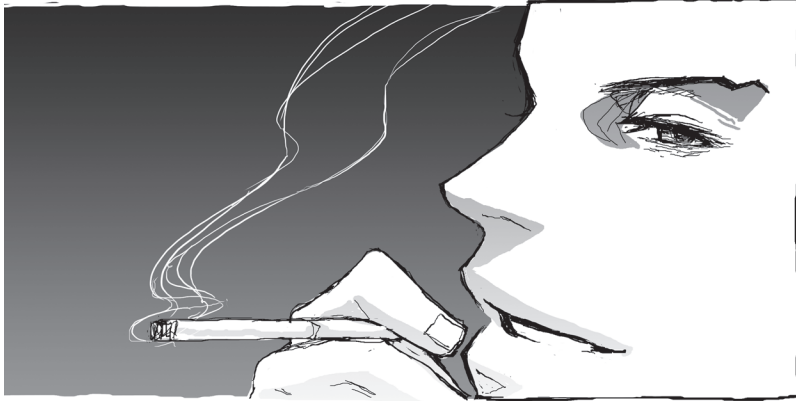
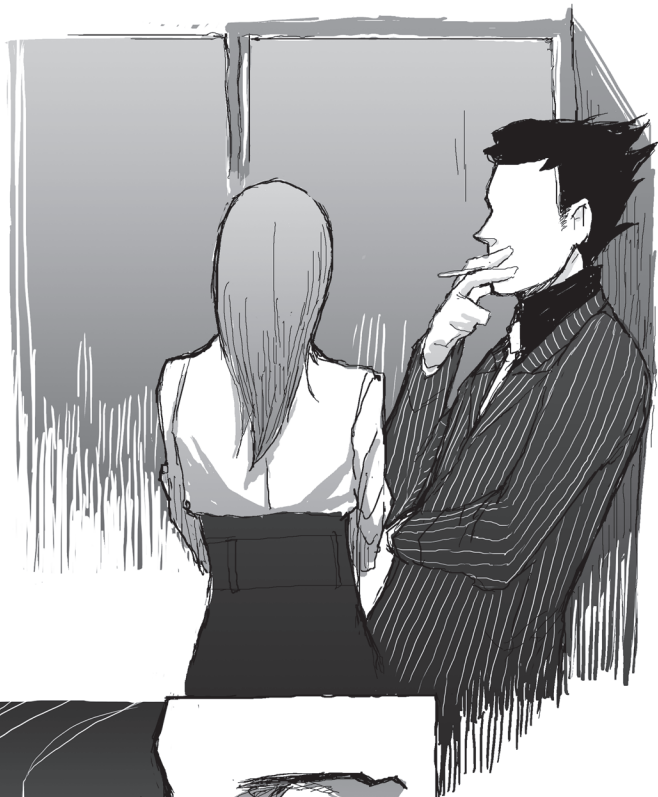
"My client wishes for your release. Whether he is guilty of anything or whether this makes him guilty is of no relevance to the matter at hand. Please rest up and I will be back tomorrow to go over your case."

Because he had no choice, Miles cooperated with the woman. But Miles hated the fact that she was his best option, that Wright was his best option.

The day before his trial, Mia Fey came to go over everything one last time.



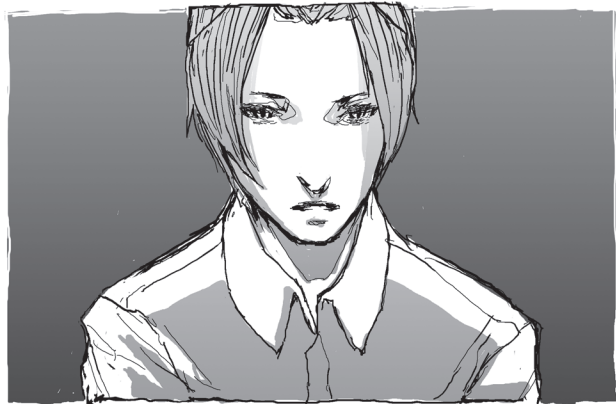
As the woman attorney was leaving, Miles saw another figure behind her, leaning against the wall.



Miles watched as Wright raised a cigarette to his mouth and breathed in the fumes.

“Hello, Edgeworth.”

“...Wright.”





The Desireful

“When falsehood stands for truth,
truth likewise becomes false,
Where naught be made to aught,
aught changes into naught.”

— Cao Xueqin,
Dream of the Red Chamber



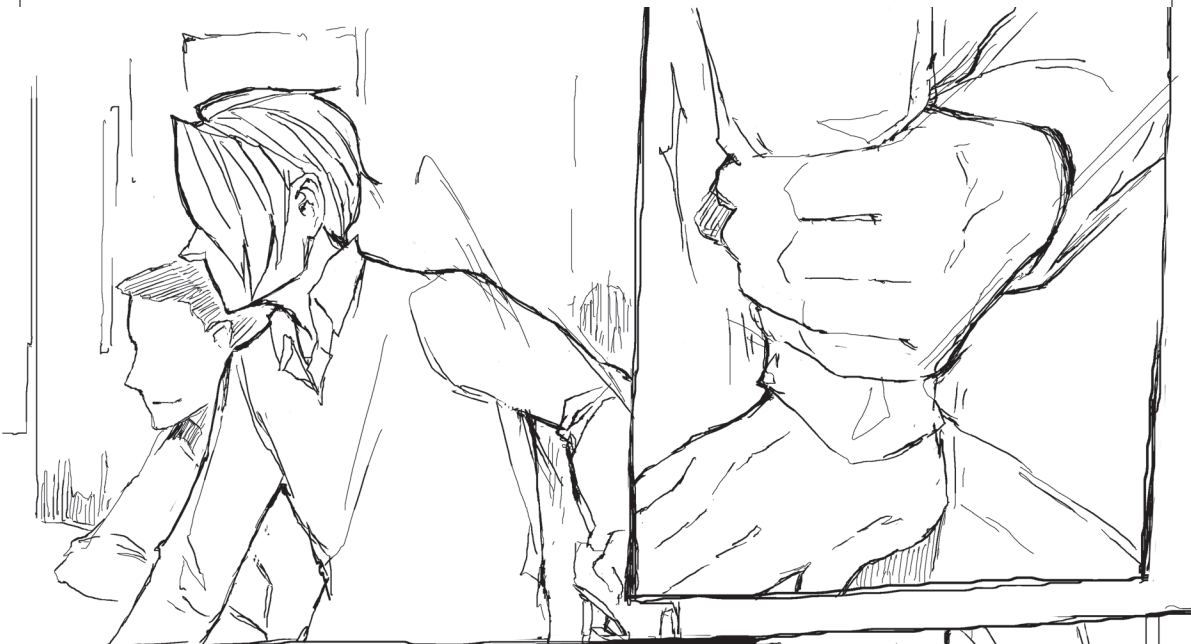
Hello,
Edgeworth.



...WRIGHT.

Congratulations on
the trial last week.

Mia was tough,
wasn't she?



Steady,
Edgeworth.

Why don't I buy
you a drink, and
we wax nostalgic?

After all,
victory calls for
celebration.



I HAVE ONLY A FEW
THINGS I'D LIKE TO SAY
TO YOU, WRIGHT, AND
THEY ALL COME IN THE
FORM OF MIRANDA
RIGHTS.



Is that any way to treat an old friend?

One that got you out of a murder charge, no less.

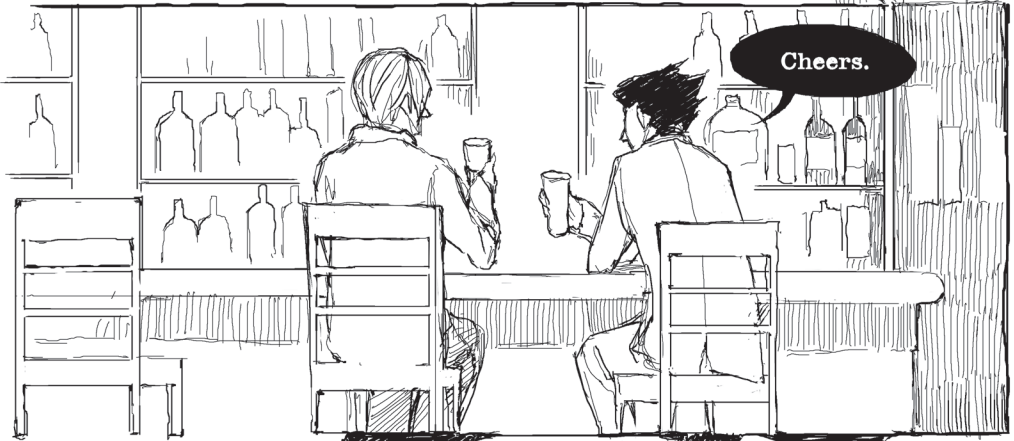
I HAVE NO RECOLLECTION OF ASKING YOU OR YOUR DISGUSTING PET FOR HELP.

HA HA HA

HA HA HA
#

Disgusting? But, aren't you one to talk,

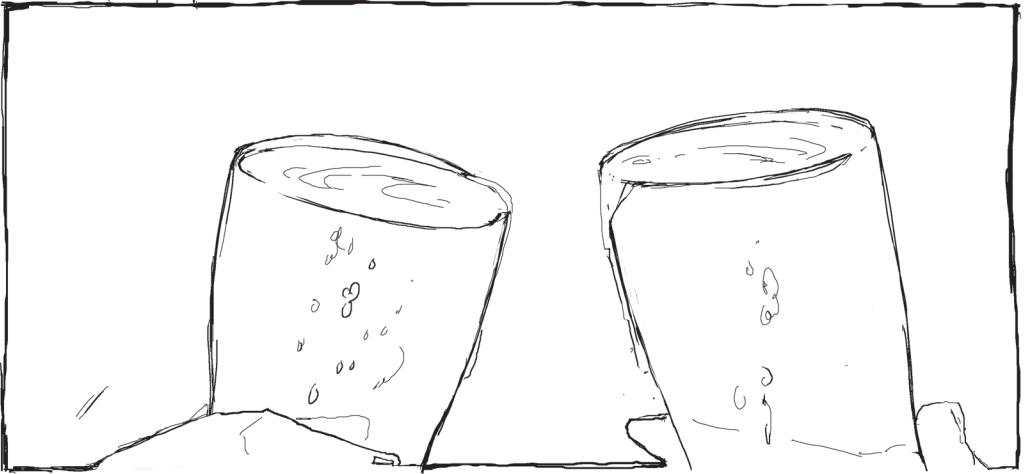
"Demon Prosecutor"?



To broken promises.

The only kind that are real.





...TO BROKEN
PROMISES.



The Heretical

“He stopped crying. You have replaced him as it were. The tears of the world are a constant quantity. For each one who begins to weep somewhere else another stops. The same is true of the laugh.”

—Samuel Beckett, *Waiting for Godot*





Miles went in to work early. He pulled his latest case file and went over it twice. He was on his third time and nearing noon when the phone rang.



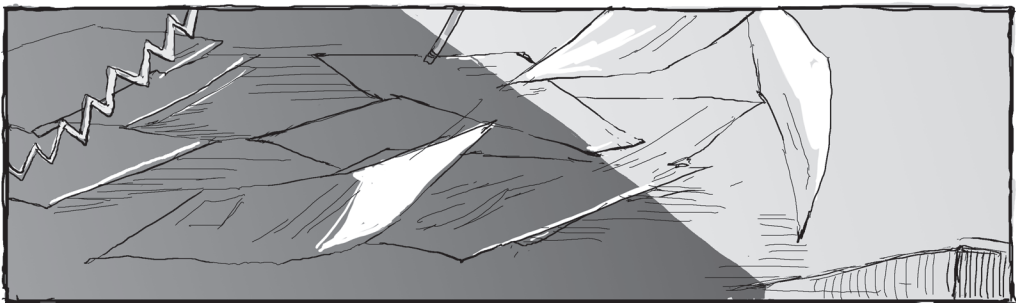
"This is Edgeworth."

"Hello, Edgeworth."

Miles dropped the case file he had been reviewing and watched the papers splay smoothly across his desk.

"You didn't have to leave that quickly the other morning, you know. Was it the smoking?"

"I had work," Edgeworth forced himself to say. He had smelled the Goddamn smoke for days afterwards, despite dumping everything he had been wearing into the wash immediately.



"Wright. Aren't you in the detention center?"

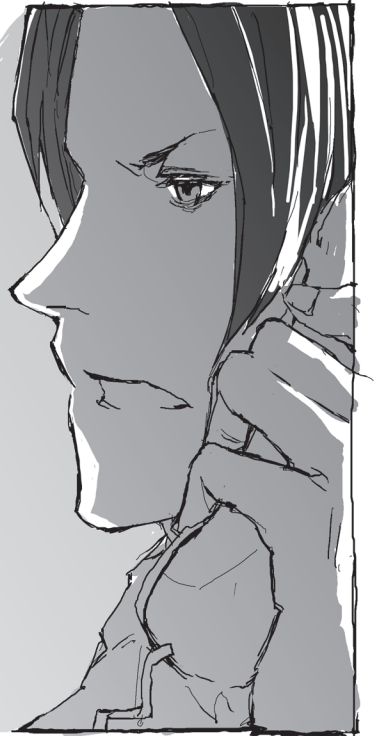
"It would appear so. It's not so nice, being on the inside."

"I advice you to get off the phone and prepare. You aren't getting off clean this time."

"So I've heard. What was it? A 'cut-clean case, Pal,' as the good detective said?"

"Wright, why did you call me?"

"I asked to call my lawyer. I have a right to consultation from my attorney, you know."



Even on the phone, Miles felt that something was off. Wright wasn't anxious in the least. Even a man like he should have been fearful of the sentence he'd receive.



"I'm a prosecutor, Wright. Stop playing and call that Mia Fey pet of yours."

A few moments of silence stretched between them, and finally, Wright laughed.

"That stick up your ass never moves, does it, Edgeworth? What's a little fun before I die?"

You know I'm guilty.

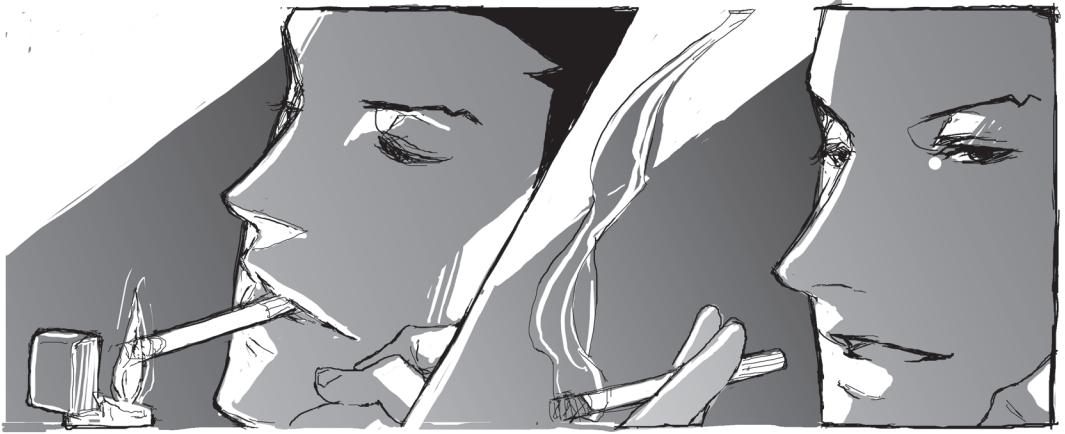
But it had to be done, for his sake."

Miles took a sharp intake of breath.

"For... Apollo Justice, your young henchman?"

"Henchman? Do they still say that? He's more like a 'replacement,' really. Do you have a fancy word for that too? Honestly, did you think I adopt children off the streets for fun?"

Miles clenched his jaw and waited.

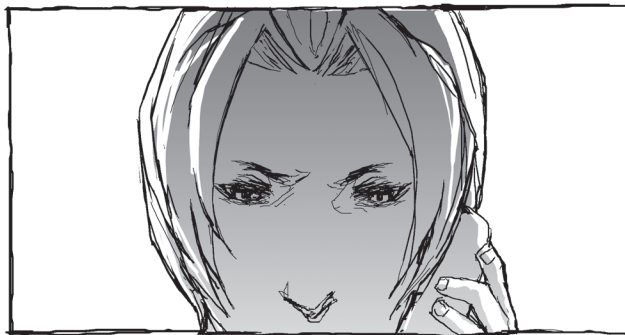
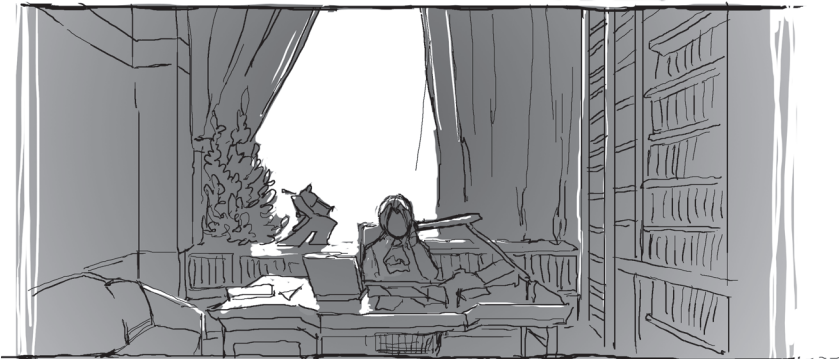


"I'd known about Gavin for a while. But Apollo liked him, so I kept him around. It's a shame that he turned out to be what he was."

Miles heard Wright take a drag of his cigarette.

"And a greater shame that he chose the wrong person to trust. After all, 'sorry' doesn't cut it when you're locked up in prison."

Miles said nothing for a few moments.



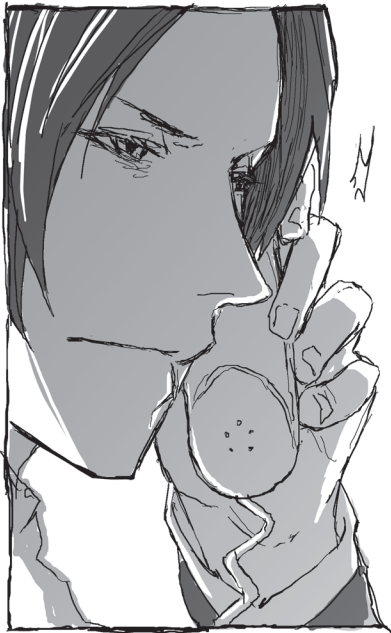
"And you? Have you learned the same lesson the hard way?"

Wright's voice was surprisingly light when he replied.



"Oh, of course not, Miles.

I've never trusted anyone."



Miles flinched at the mention of his own name.

"Except for you. I trust you."

"Wright..."

"I trust you to keep our promise."





The click of the receiver on the other end of the line echoed in Miles' head.

He looked outside.



The weather had gone from undecided to menacing. It was the lunch hour. The head prosecutor would be in her office.



The Traitorous

“I wept not, so to stone within I grew.”

— Dante Alighieri, *The Divine Comedy*



GOOD EVENING,
PROSECUTOR EDGEWORTH.

I'VE HEARD A LOT
ABOUT YOU.

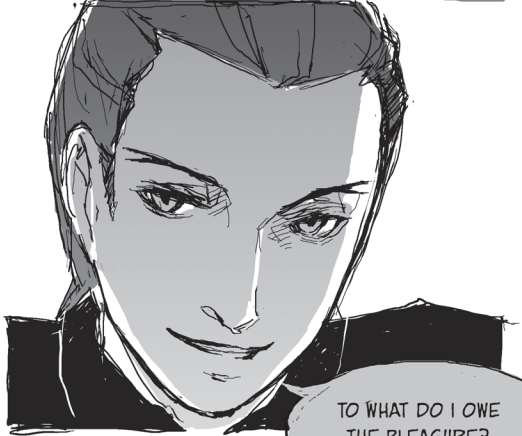
Wright hadn't
been lying.

Justice took over
for him almost
right away.

It was a young man who
sat on the throne that
Wright had dirtied with
crime for years.



HELLO,
MR. JUSTICE.



TO WHAT DO I OWE
THE PLEASURE?



TO THE FIFTEEN
COUNTS OF FRAUD AND
SIX COUNTS OF MURDER,
YOU'VE COLLECTED SO FAR,
I BELIEVE.

YOU'RE EVEN
MORE EFFICIENT THAN
WRIGHT WAS.

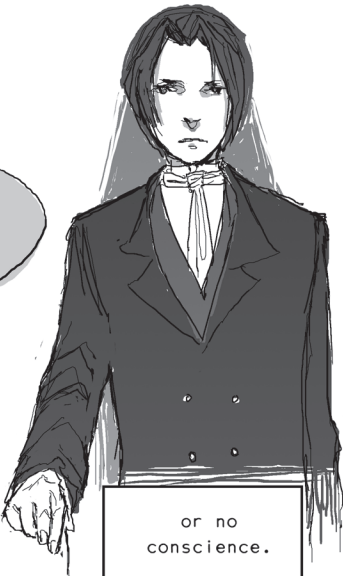


Justice's smile never wavered, and Miles noted that was something that required much practice,

THOSE AREN'T COUNTS, MR. EDGEWORTH.

JUST ACCUSATIONS.

YOU HAVE NOTHING ON ME.



or no conscience.

DARYAN CRESCEND.

HE'D WORKED UNDER WRIGHT FOR LONGER THAN I KNOW.

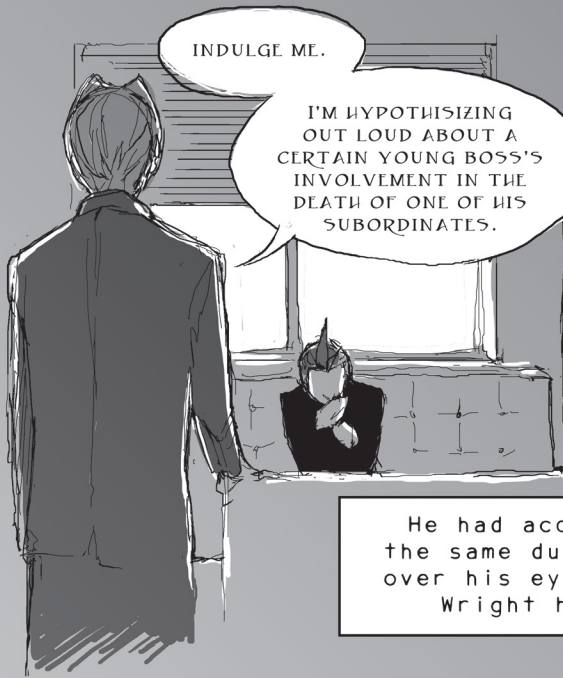
WHY DID YOU DO AWAY WITH HIM?



KINDLY WATCH WHERE YOU POINT THAT FINGER, MR. EDGEWORTH.

YOU CAN'T PROVE I'VE DONE ANYTHING TO DARYAN.





INDULGE ME.

I'M HYPOTHESIZING OUT LOUD ABOUT A CERTAIN YOUNG BOSS'S INVOLVEMENT IN THE DEATH OF ONE OF HIS SUBORDINATES.

He had acquired the same dull film over his eyes that Wright had.



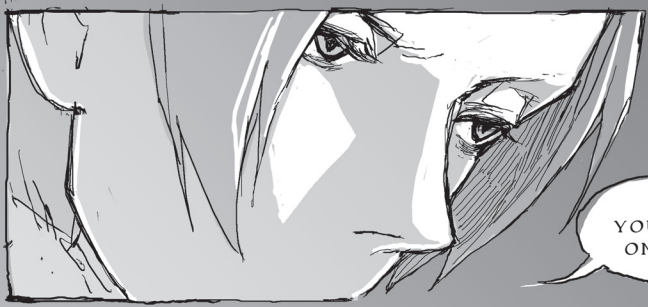
IN THAT CASE,

I'D PROBABLY TELL NO ONE IN PARTICULAR THAT THIS BOSS HAD DOUBTS ABOUT THE LOYALTY OF HIS SUBORDINATE.

BUSINESS TRANSACTIONS GONE WRONG,

FOUL PLAY,

JOBS LEFT UNDONE.



YOU KILLED HIM ON A HUNCH?



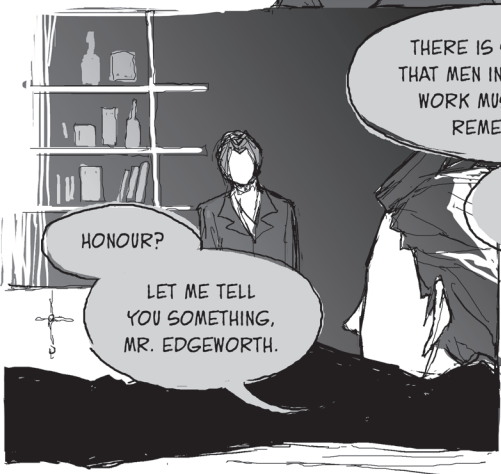
HUNCHES ARE THE THINGS YOU GET WHEN TRUST GOES BAD.

HYPOTHETICALLY, I'D SAY THAT THIS SUBORDINATE HAD BEEN ROTTEN.

THEN YOU MUST BE FULL OF HUNCHES, JUSTICE.

BUSINESS TRANSACTIONS GO WRONG REGULARLY WHEN CRIMINALS ARE INVOLVED.

WHO ARE YOU TO SAY THAT ONE OF YOUR THIEVES IS MORE HONOURABLE THAN ANOTHER?



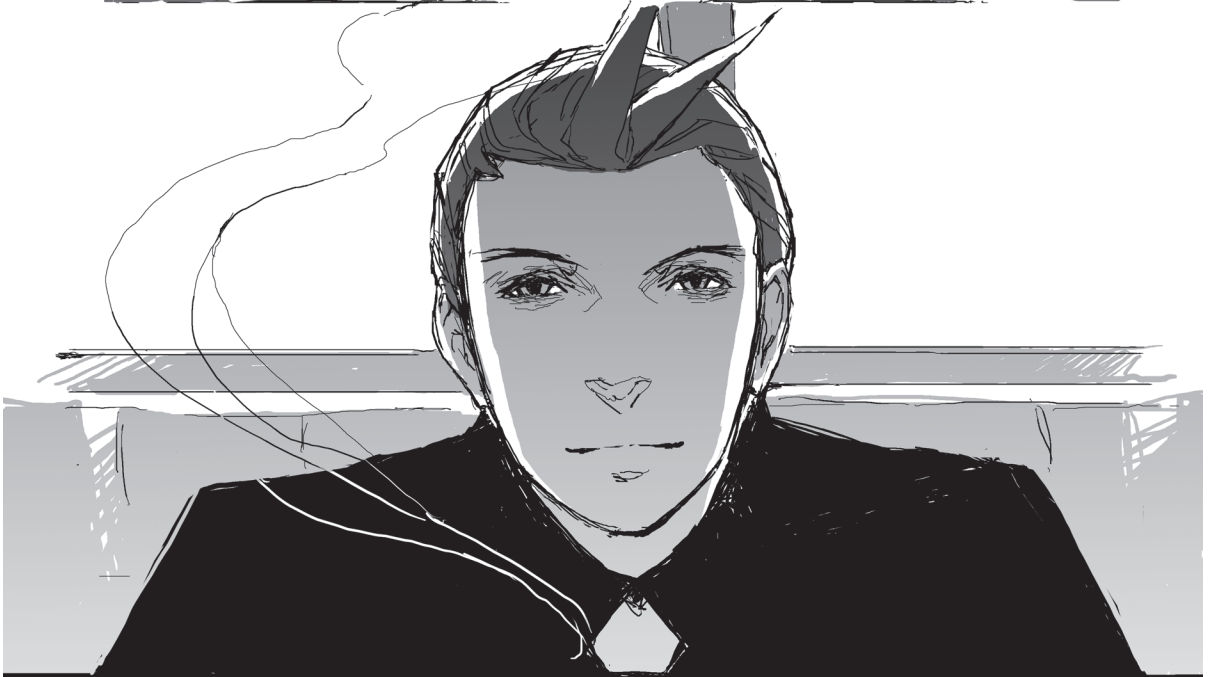
HONOUR?
LET ME TELL YOU SOMETHING, MR. EDGEWORTH.

THERE IS SOMETHING THAT MEN IN MY LINE OF WORK MUST ALWAYS REMEMBER,

NO MATTER WHO THEY ARE

OR WHERE THEY STAND.





THERE IS NO
HONOUR AMONG
THIEVES.



Afterword

N: Hi all, autobrig here, and in case you have no idea, that's mostly Schumie and Nu, and for this book, Nyang as well.

S: We'd like to thank you all for reading this comic and supporting our fantasies of Ace Attorney characters in mafia suits.

N: The story spawned from Nyang making me draw a series of Ace Attorney Mafia AU fanarts in exchange for a fic, which happens to be the first chapter of this book, and the whole thing grew into this monster.

She eventually decided to wash her hands of this weirdness, but still stuck around for consultation on how to make it better (more gay).

S: And thus her sins were passed on to us, so that they could mutate even further into this story.

N: What little semblance of plot this book was supposed to have was tossed to the wind in favor of suits and angst. Everyone likes suits and angst, right?

S: If you don't, you're not a proper human being, and please fix that as quickly as possible.

N: This story was supposed to have two pairings, Miles/Phoenix and Apollo/Klavier. Somehow, only one of those pairings really came through. The other will just have to settle as having lots of UST... unless you have a good imagination.

S: What's UST... "something" sexual tension?

N: Unresolved.

S: What? It looks resolved enough to me. The tension, not the story.

N: Well... we just have to apologize for not having sexytiem then. And if we ever decide to do another AU, we'll try not to kill off half the cast.

S: ...Yeah. That's not as fun though, unless they have sex.

N: ...Yep.

S: Anyway, thank you to the peanut gallery, once again, for your unnecessary remarks and suggestions. But most of all, sincere thanks to you, the readers, for supporting us and our crazy whims.

Nyang: I was not responsible for killing off half the main cast and therefore any chances of a sequel and/or a lucrative movie deal. At least it's gay(er) now.

Automata Brigade
(Nu, Schumie, Nyang)

