

*The Art Of*  
**Team Sparks,  
Blast-Off!**

Jeff Chen | Alistair Gilmour | Alex Mintz | Camille Prats

## Foreword

What you're about to look at is a collection of artworks, sketches and doodles. As an artist, I have been inspired by numerous action-packed, dynamic, heartfelt and maybe a little cheesy media genres. Sitting in front of a TV, I'd be enthralled by various Saturday morning cartoons featuring young heroes raring to go on adventures in another world, unique stylized art that shaped the way I draw things to this very day, and numerous entertaining tropes and elements ranging from giant robots to high-octane car chases and martial arts tournaments.

## Acknowledgements

First of all, this artbook project I decided to do on a whim wouldn't become a reality without my advisors, Professors Edward Gutierrez and Adryen Gonzalez, who offered me insight, advice and guidance not only as artists but also professionals since the day I proposed the project to them back in Fall 2022. They inspired me as an artist and showed me the ropes in terms of drawing ever since I became an IMGD Art major.

I also have to thank all of the students who worked alongside me in this project: Alistair Gilmour, Alexandra Mintz and Camille Prats, who are either an MQP team member or an ISP participant. Alistair participated since the incubation of the project, and as MQP teammates I have received good art feedback especially in terms of coloring, which is something he excels at while I still struggle with time to time. He also helped handle quite a few back-end things during the startup of the project, whether it's pre-production, the earliest demo of the book, or all the paperwork and survey forms needed for us to collect feedback. Alexandra's help in the project's writing, assembly and especially pre-production cannot be understated. Without her organizing our spontaneous artwork ideas into a cohesive list of stories and plot points, we wouldn't know what to draw or what our workload is like to begin with. In addition, she took over the page layout and graphic design part of the project, and helped us nail down a book format that could be shown in WPI's PAX East booth. Camille's work as both a production manager and an artist is important to this project as well. Thanks to her joining the team in A-Term, we were able to set up solid deadlines, check-in on every team member's work progress to make sure every gear is running well, and thanks to her handling the management side of things, I get to spend more of my time in the project on actually drawing things. In addition, she pitched in to create some very solid environment and character art for the project during B and C-Term.

Last but not the least, the thought of a concept artbook project wouldn't even come across my head without the artbook MQP project created by past IMGD Art major Janelle Knight, who is an excellent artist and still inspires me to this day. It was the day when I read her artbook Grithjord in Showfest 2022 where I decided to make my own artbook project as refined and polished as hers. Although my work still has a long way to go, I'm glad I chose to spend my MQP time on this passion project that was created on a whim, and I am grateful for all the people who decided to tag along and help me make this silly, cartoony collection of doodles.

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# PROLOGUE

J - Hello! Welcome to the story of how I formed Team Sparks! And saved the Universe with my friends. My story begins like all good stories, and by that I mean with a robot invasion.



E - Hello, Reader, I'm ELS-0037 or Elise!



J - Jet here!

# JET SPARKS

What you see here is whatcha get! I'm Jet Sparks, soon-to-be-greatest-hero with a kick-butt robot arm, but I wasn't always this cool. I used to be a pretty regular kid, with big dreams of becoming a hero, just like my big brother, Jesse!



"I am Jet Sparks, the hero of justice and the kicker of evil butts!"

"Jet always tries to help out, even if he tends to fumble a lot in the process, but his heart is always in the right place" - E



He's basically the culmination of some of my favorite cartoon, comic and video game protagonists, namely characters like Kabuto Koji from Mazinger Z and Sonic the Hedgehog. Small brain, big heart, is full of energy and laughs in the face of danger." - Jeff



## JET'S ROOM



J - This is me in my room, right before that no-good Mr. Zed attacked my home with his robot army!

E - Jet, they don't know who Mr. Zed is yet. Don't worry, Reader, we'll get to that later,


J - C'mon Elise, they don't know who you are yet either, its fine... so there I was, working hard in my room when the robots attacked. They were everywhere! I heard a loud noise coming from my older brother Jesse's room, so I ran over to investigate, and that's where I saw the safe with the arm, which I took and started fighting off the enemy robots!

E - Wait... Did you steal the arm?

J - No... Nu said it was ok, we'll get to him later



# THE QUARRY



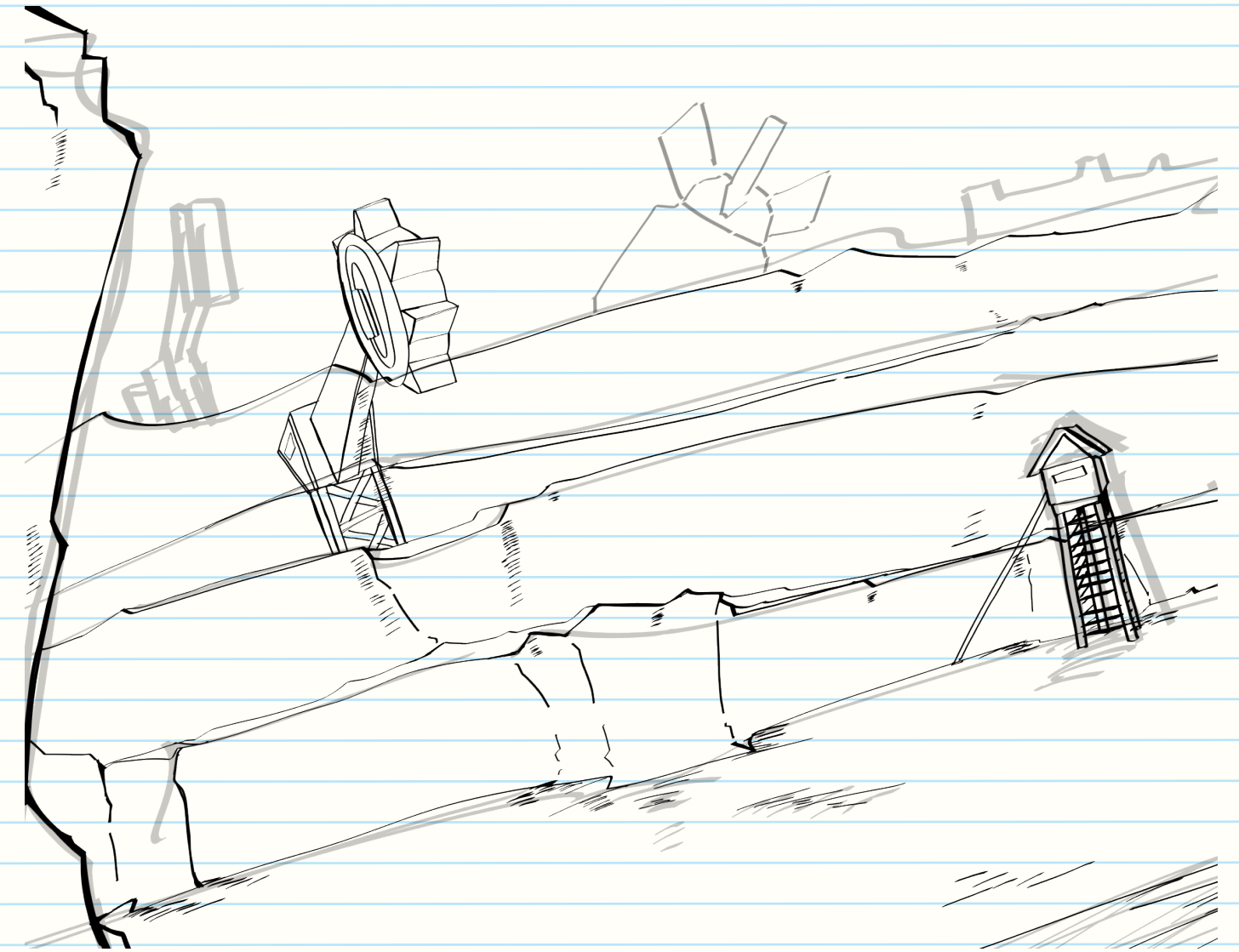
J - Now that I had my robot arm, I was ready to kick some robot butt! For whatever reason, Zed and his ugly robot monsters were off to the abandoned quarry, which makes a sweet arena! I still had no idea why they were there though.

E - Turns out they were trying to find resources to fuel Zed's creations. Those ominously-glowing robot monsters aren't going to build themselves!

J- So they went to the Quarry. Some old abandoned hole in the ground, a hang out for thrill seeking teams and a playground for me to test out my brand new gadgets!



In tokusatsu shows like Kamen Rider, fights often take place in dynamic spaces like warehouses and quarries so that the heroes can pull off tricky stunts. Having Jet's first fight take place in a quarry is a homage to the genre, plus a quarry pit is like the modern equivalent of a colosseum: Big, uninterrupted and perfect for a chaotic brawl. - Jeff





# ROBOT CITY

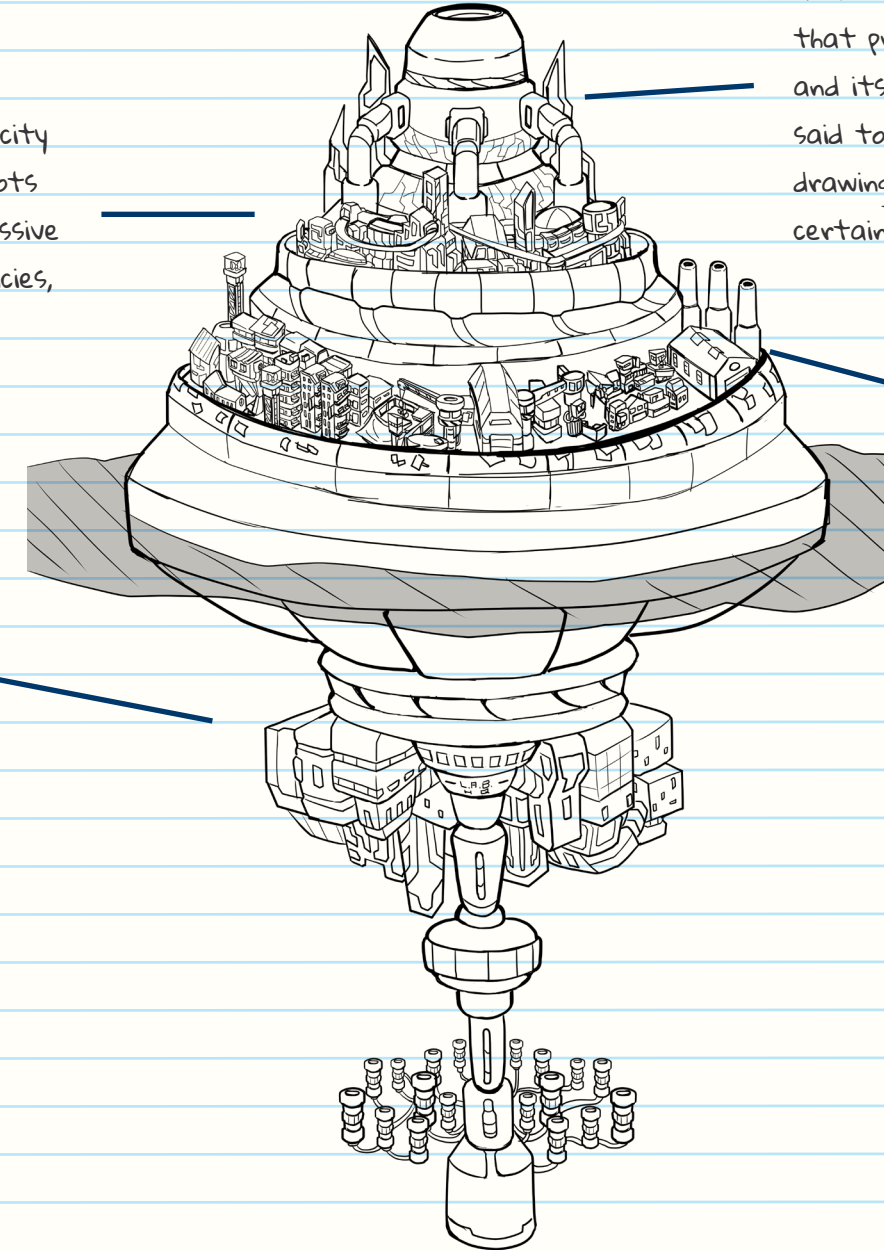


J- Level 2: The middle-class city area where cool high-tech robots live, there's also the city's massive skyscrapers, government agencies, and entertainment areas.

J- As for what's under the city, well, that's really cool but I'll leave it as a surprise for later.

J - Level 3: Where the city's rulers are. It hosts the giant power plant that provides life to the entire city and its inhabitants. The power plant is said to host an infinite energy source, drawing unwanted attention from a certain shady outsider.

J- Level 1: The much less developed slum/factory area that hosts outdated robots built for physical labor. It's also where the Robot Gang's home base is.

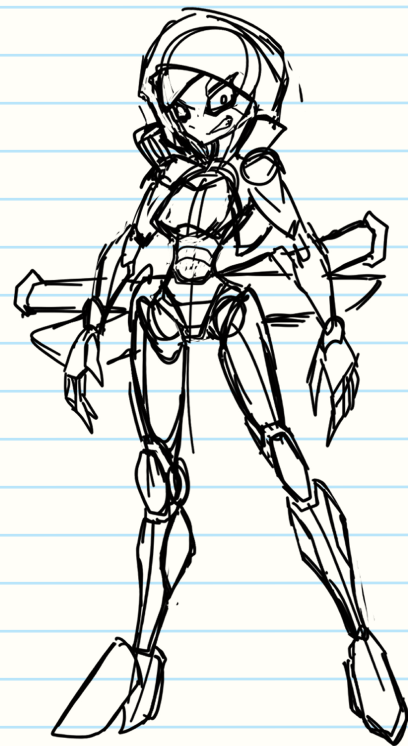


E- You did a good job Jet, you pretty much hit all of it.

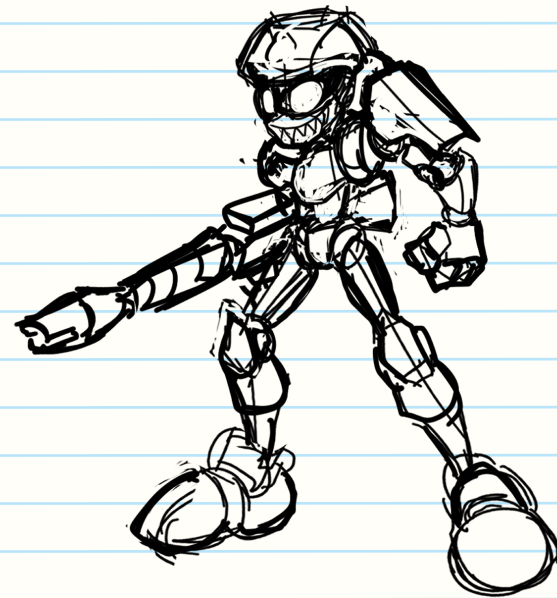


# ROBO GANG

J - So there I was, right?  
Absolutely baffled by this huge  
robot city while Professor NU told  
me to just lay low and wait for his  
crew to find me.

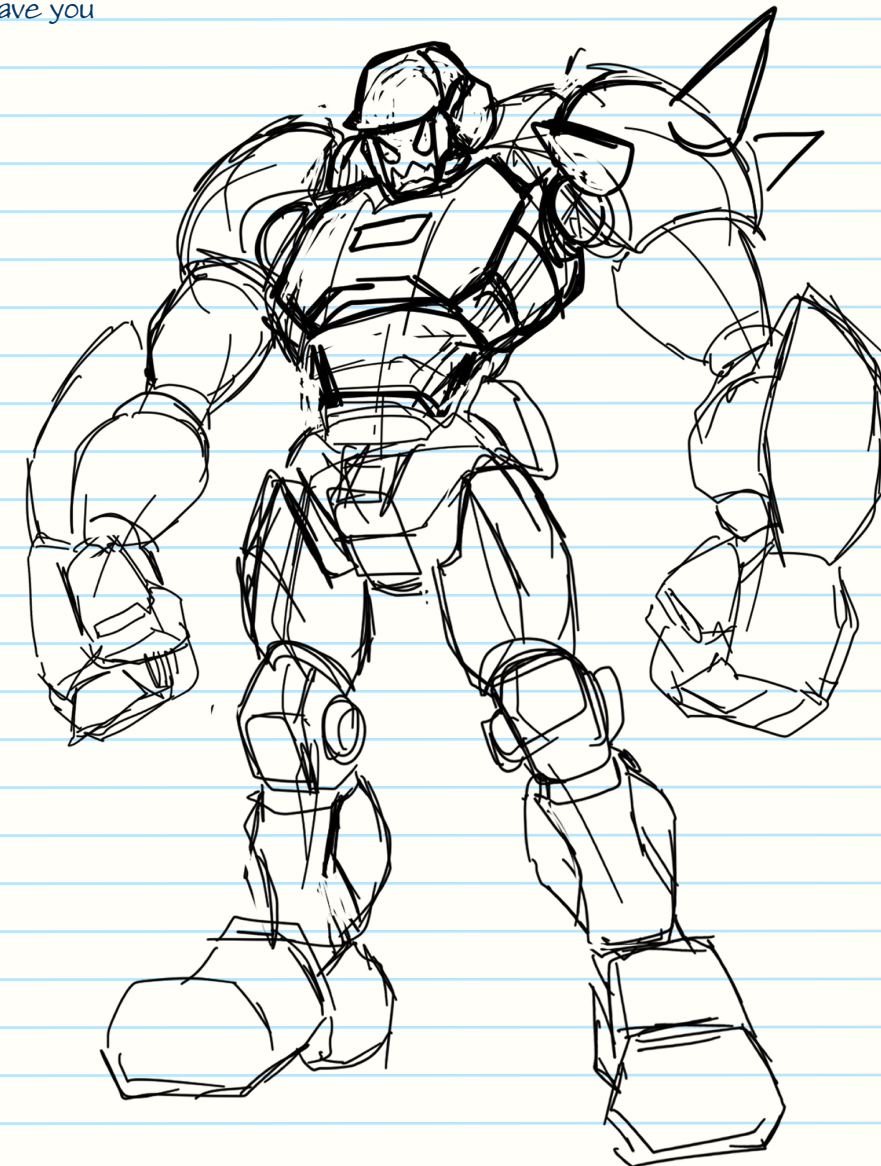


E - Except you did the exact  
opposite.



J - Hey! Cut me some slack. There was  
this robot street gang, terrorizing the  
locals! And if that doesn't mean it's my  
time to shine, I don't know what is!

E - Sure, and then I had to fly in and save you  
from a 10-foot tall combat android.





# ELS-0037

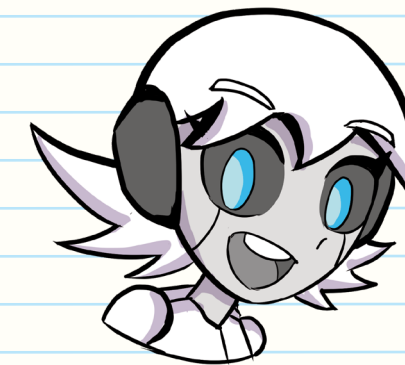
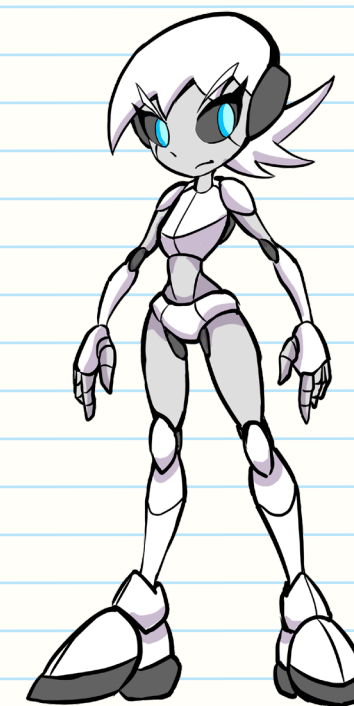
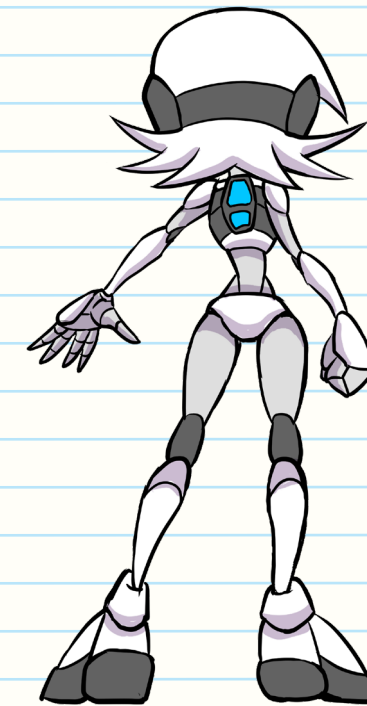
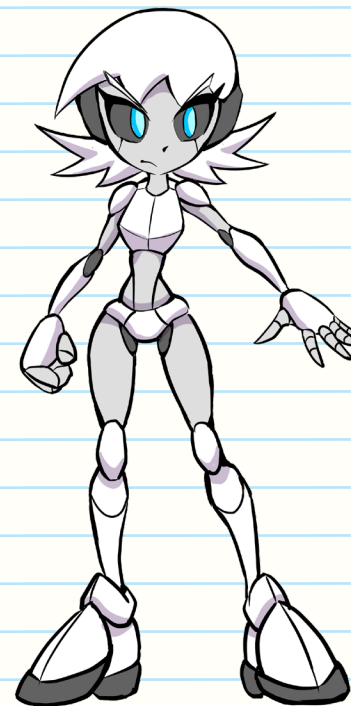
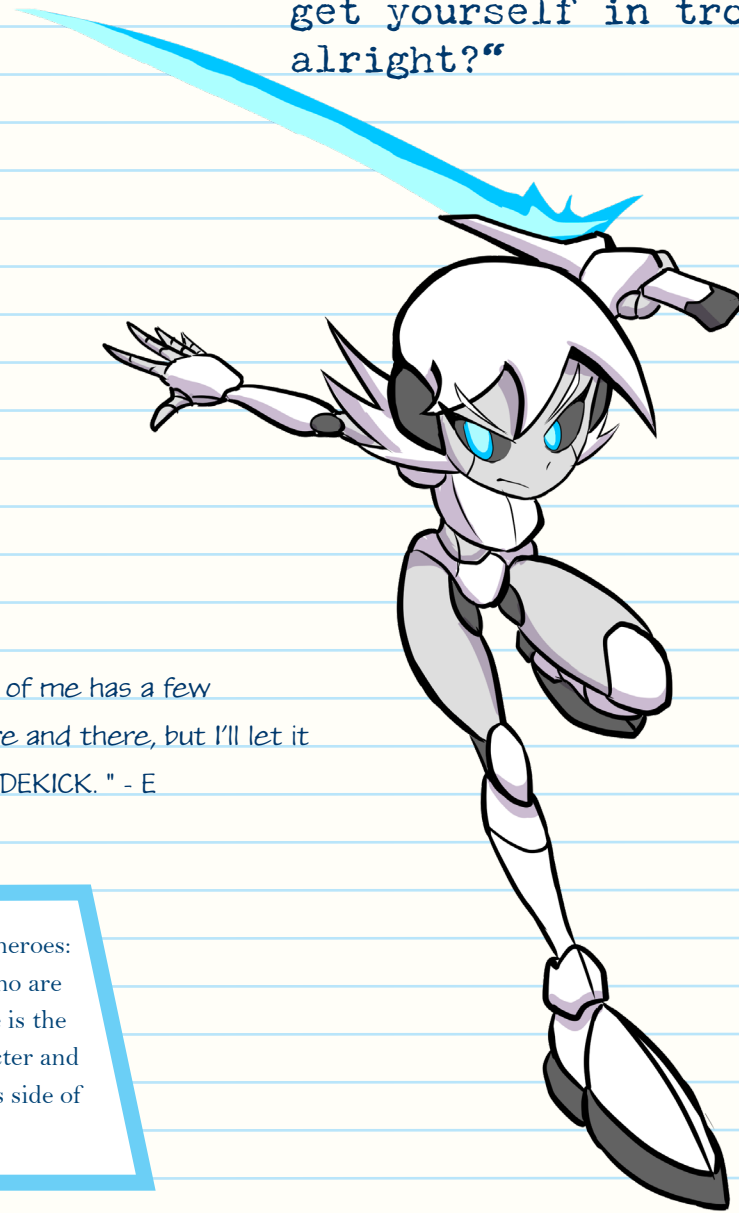
## "ELISE"

"Hey look Elise, its you! Elise is awesome, she's a high-tech combat robot with...a personality sharper than her weapons, Elise is the smart one of the team while I'm the cool one AND the leader! But, she's not completely boring, she can lighten up and crack a joke every once in a while. She is a great teammate, cares for the people around her a lot...even if she doesn't show it. She's also good at making plans... \*whispers\* but will throw a fit if they go wrong!" - J

"Your description of me has a few discrepancies here and there, but I'll let it slide this time, SIDEKICK. " - E

In action/adventure stories you usually get two types of heroes: those who rush headfirst into everything, and those who are calm, collected, and most importantly, responsible. Elise is the responsible one. Her design is a foil to Jet, as her character and actions teach him about the responsibilities and serious side of being heroes. - Jeff

"Just make sure you don't get yourself in trouble, alright?"



# PROFESSOR NU

J- The Professor is a scientist and one of the founders of L.A.B. He's the one who GAVE me the robot arm, though he was trying to contact my brother Jesse. NU has dedicated his life to L.A.B. and ensuring that its technology improves lives, it sure improved mine. He's really smart, but even more of a stick in the mud than Elise, At least she lets me run around the lab with scissors"

E- ... Let is a strong word

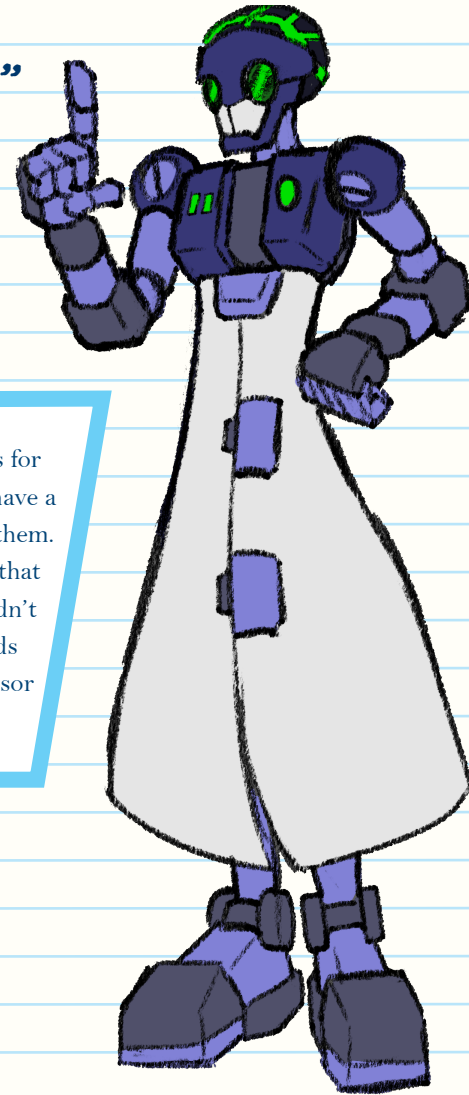
E - Anyways, after that fiasco in the city, we finally made it to L.A.B, which is our headquarters.

J - And it was AWESOME! I've never seen so many cool gadgets, even cooler robots... AND there was a big green hologram of the city!

E - Yeah, yeah, but remember, L.A.B. is where we'll handle all of our "hero" businesses.

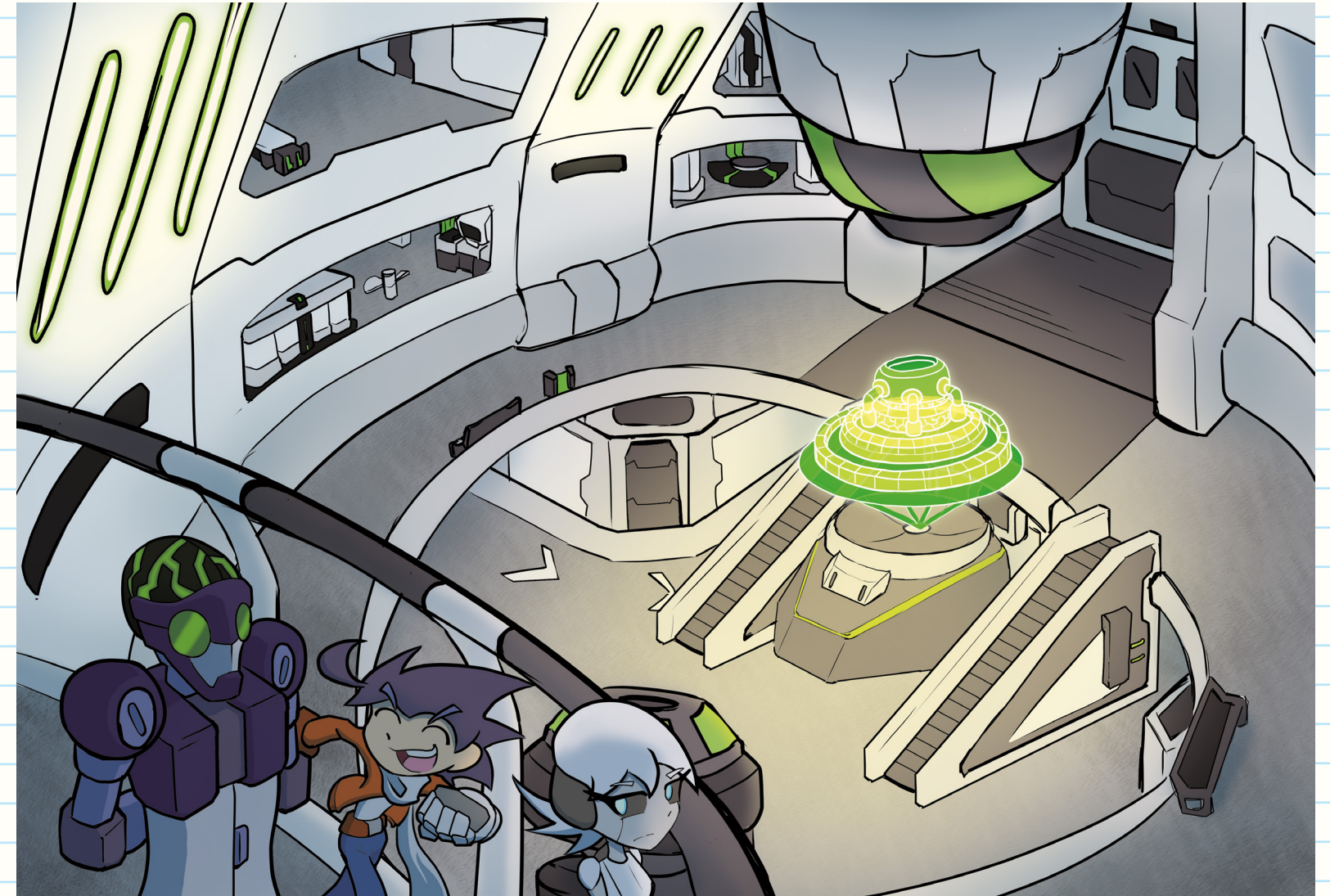
"Welcome to L.A.B!  
I'm glad you made  
it after all the...  
unexpected events."

I made a few evil scientist characters for this project, so it's only right to have a good scientist character to oppose them. Plus, for a high-tech organization that keeps the Robot City safe, it wouldn't be feasible to only have a few kids represent L.A.B., therefore Professor Nu was designed." – Jeff



# L.A.B. HQ

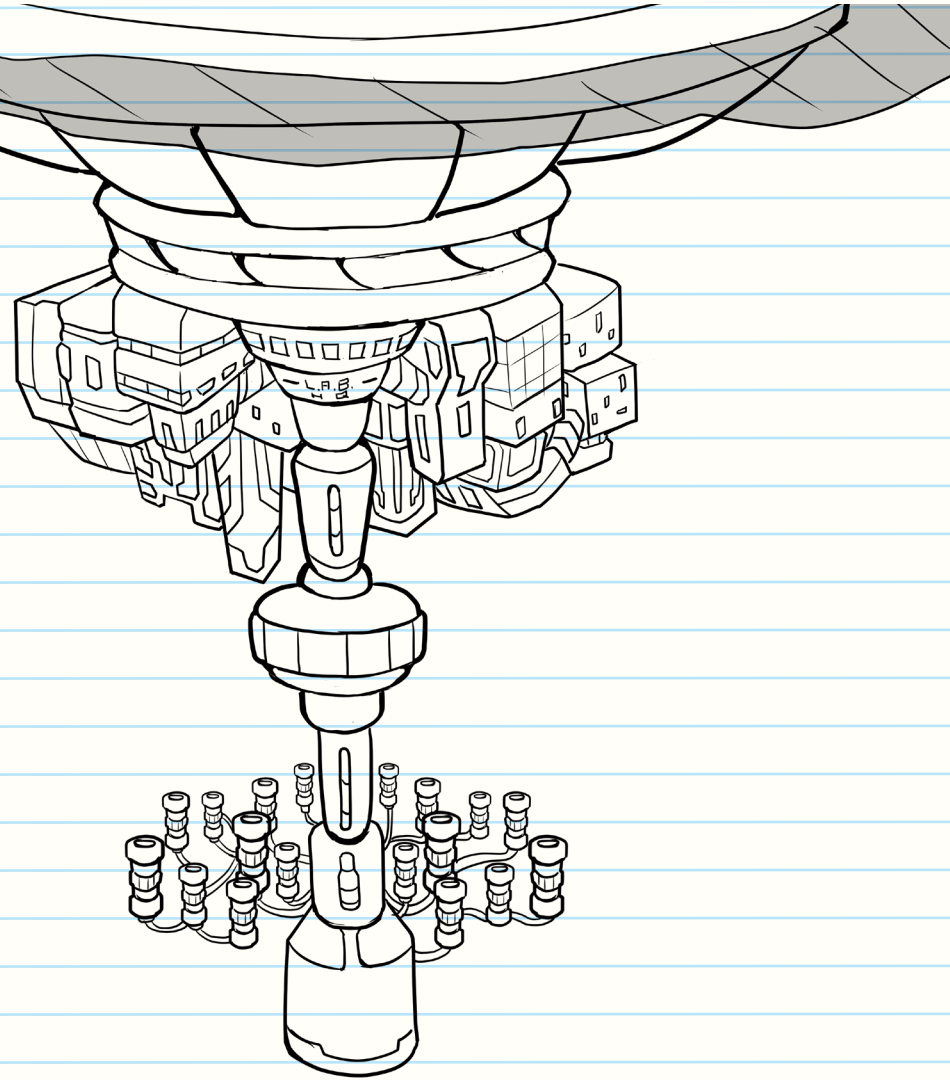
A massive hideout hidden beneath the Robot City. It's the culmination of the Robot City's greatest minds and most courageous agents who are willing to risk their lives to protect the city.





An organization of genius scientists and engineers, special agents, and robot city citizens who dedicate themselves to fighting every threat to the citizens. L.A.B.'s base is built right beneath the Robot City, and houses numerous facilities. After Mr. Zed's arrival caused even more problems, L.A.B. agents are more active than ever.

L.A.B. is inspired by fictional facilities like the SSSP in Ultraman and NERV in Evangelion. As the secret organization that uses its technological prowess and scientific abilities for good, they'll also be the ones providing Jet & Elise with equipment and intel for dealing with Mr. Zed's monsters."  
- Jeff

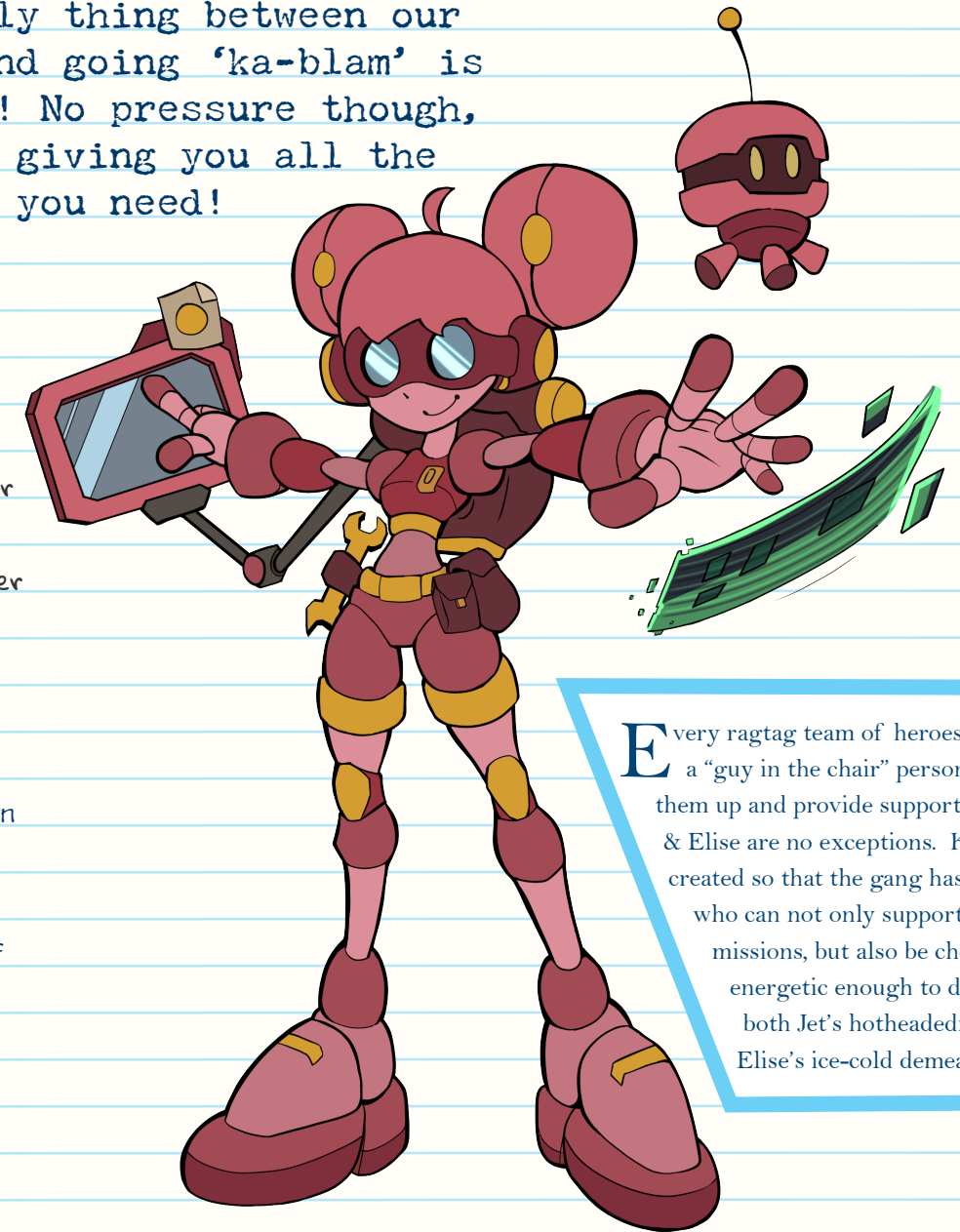


## KT-0013 “KATIE”

“The only thing between our world and going ‘ka-blam’ is you two! No pressure though, I’ll be giving you all the support you need!”

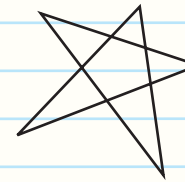
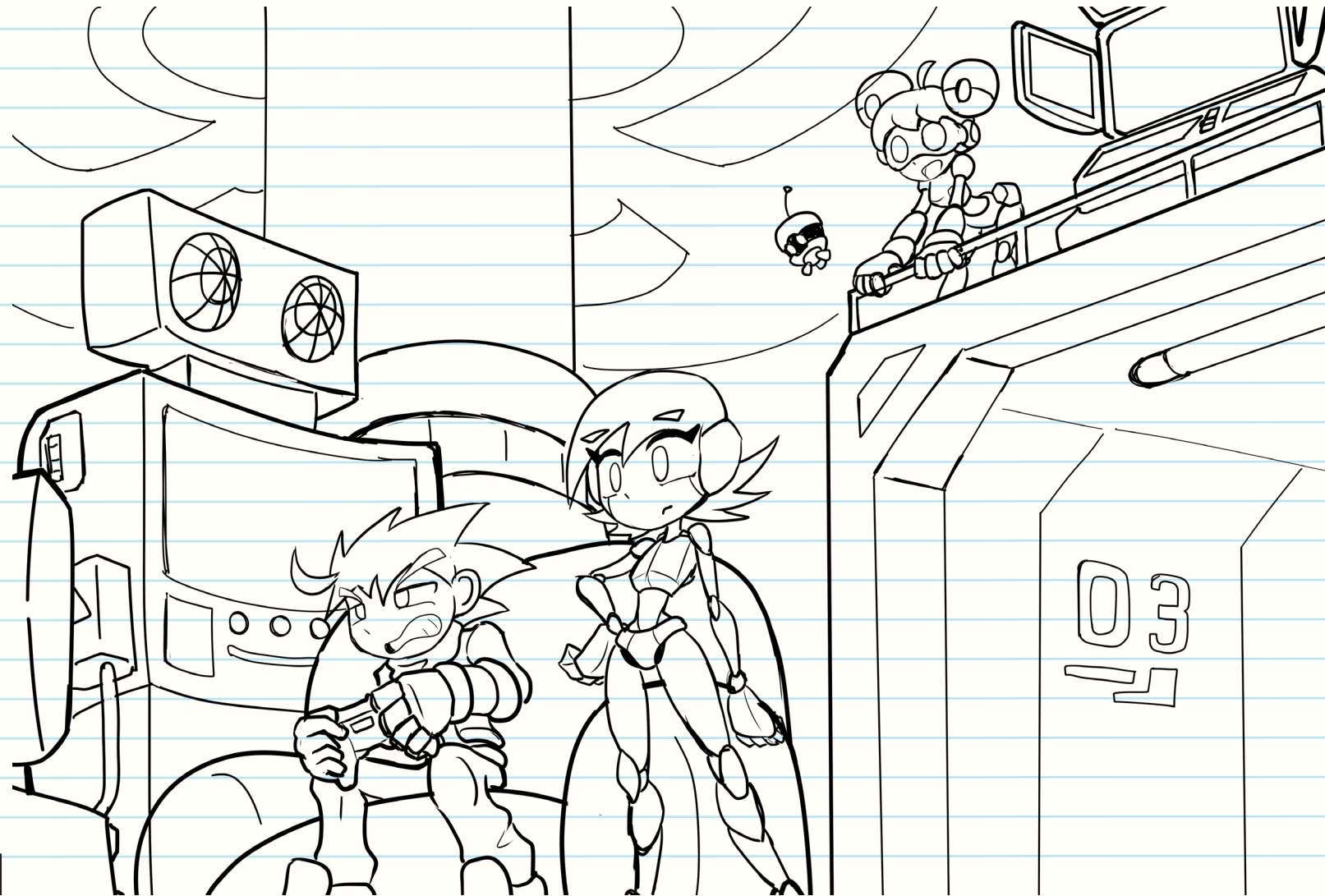
J- Katie is a genius, she's an engineer, mechanic, AND hacker. She's our mission operator and R&D person, so even if a 70-foot tall robot worm were to show up, you can expect her giving us a giant fly swatter when needed.

E- Katie's had my back for as long as we've known each other. Despite our seemingly opposite personalities, she's always there to cheer me up and provide any sort of help. Without her, 60% of my weapons and gadgets wouldn't even exist! I just wish I could be there for her more.



Every ragtag team of heroes needs a “guy in the chair” person to back them up and provide support, and Jet & Elise are no exceptions. Katie was created so that the gang has someone who can not only support them in missions, but also be cheery and energetic enough to deal with both Jet's hotheadedness and Elise's ice-cold demeanor. - Jeff

# THE SQUAD'S HIDEOUT



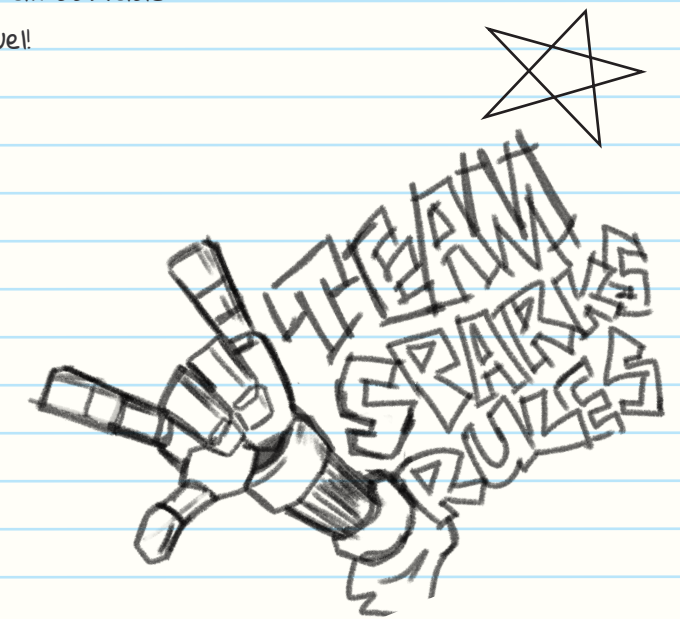
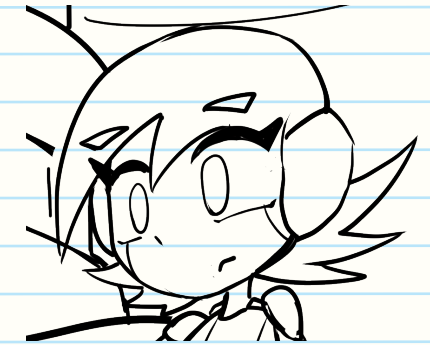
E - So, we made it to L.A.B, and introduced our newest member to our training & hideout quarters, and the first thing he did... Was to sit on a couch and play video games.

J - Hey! In my defense, you don't get to play games made by actual robots.

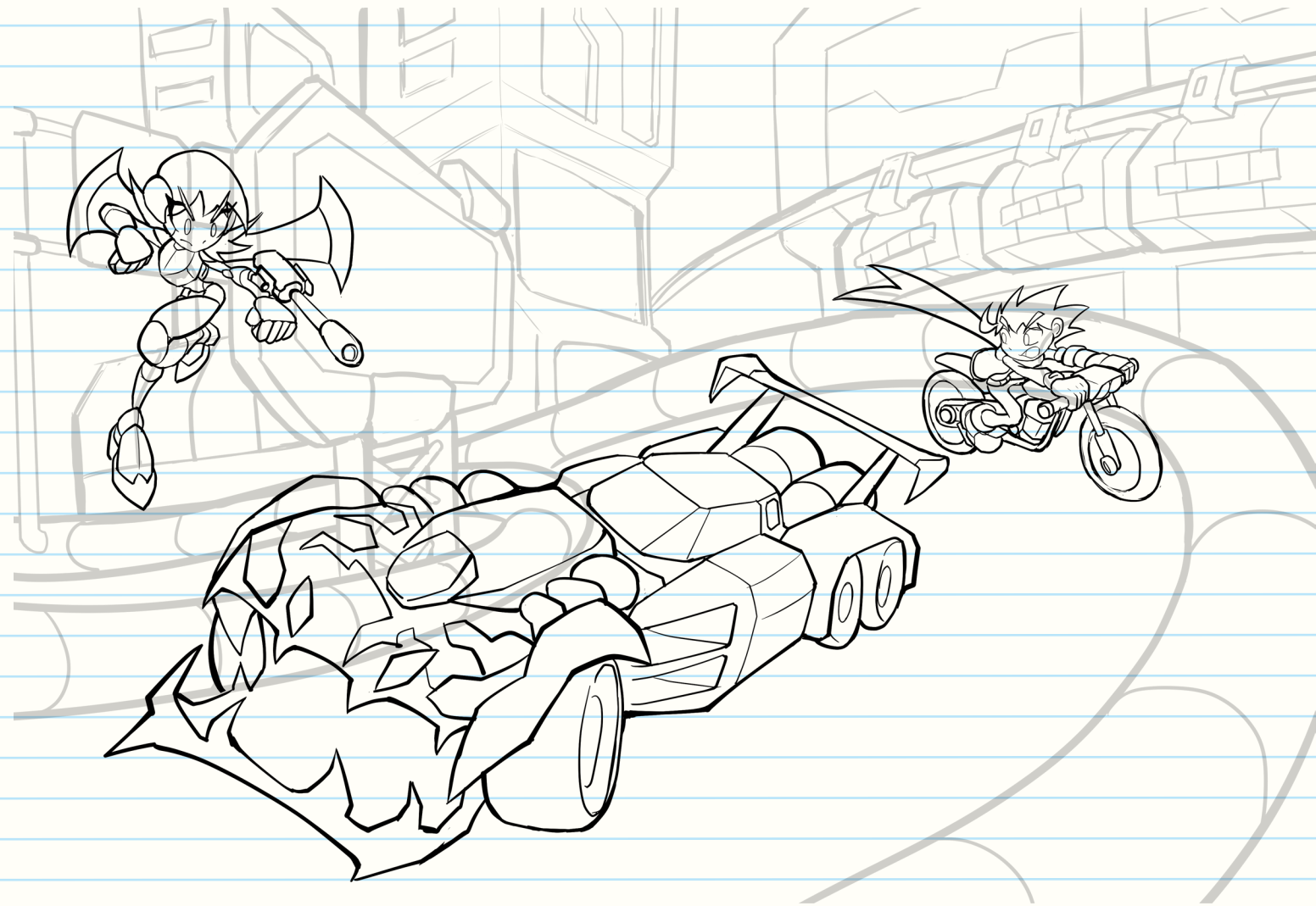
E - Anyways, right after Jet smashes our controller, we got to the training in our hideout!

J - And you were one heck of a coach. I'm gonna have nightmares every time I look at a treadmill or an obstacle course. Plus you almost beat me in a practice duel!

E - Pfft, "almost".



# ROBOT CITY, LEVEL 2

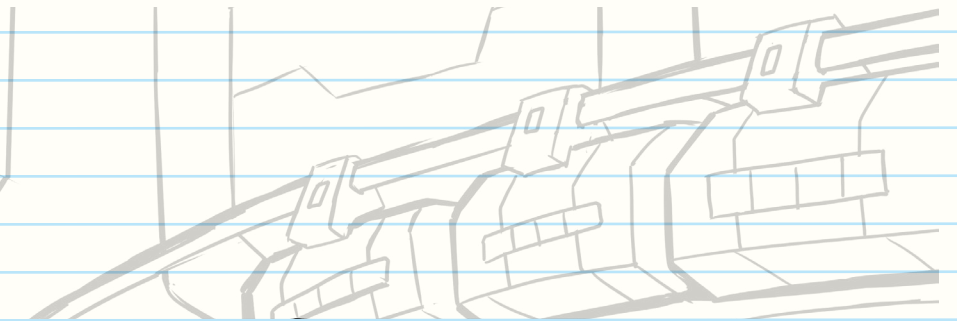


J - Team Sparks' first bout! Me and Elise were sent to chase down a sentient, evil race car modified by Mr. Zed before it wrecks the city.

E - Most importantly, if we don't stop it, it'll run right into the city's power plant and its secrets will fall under Zed's grasp.

J - Any grasp but his, yuck!

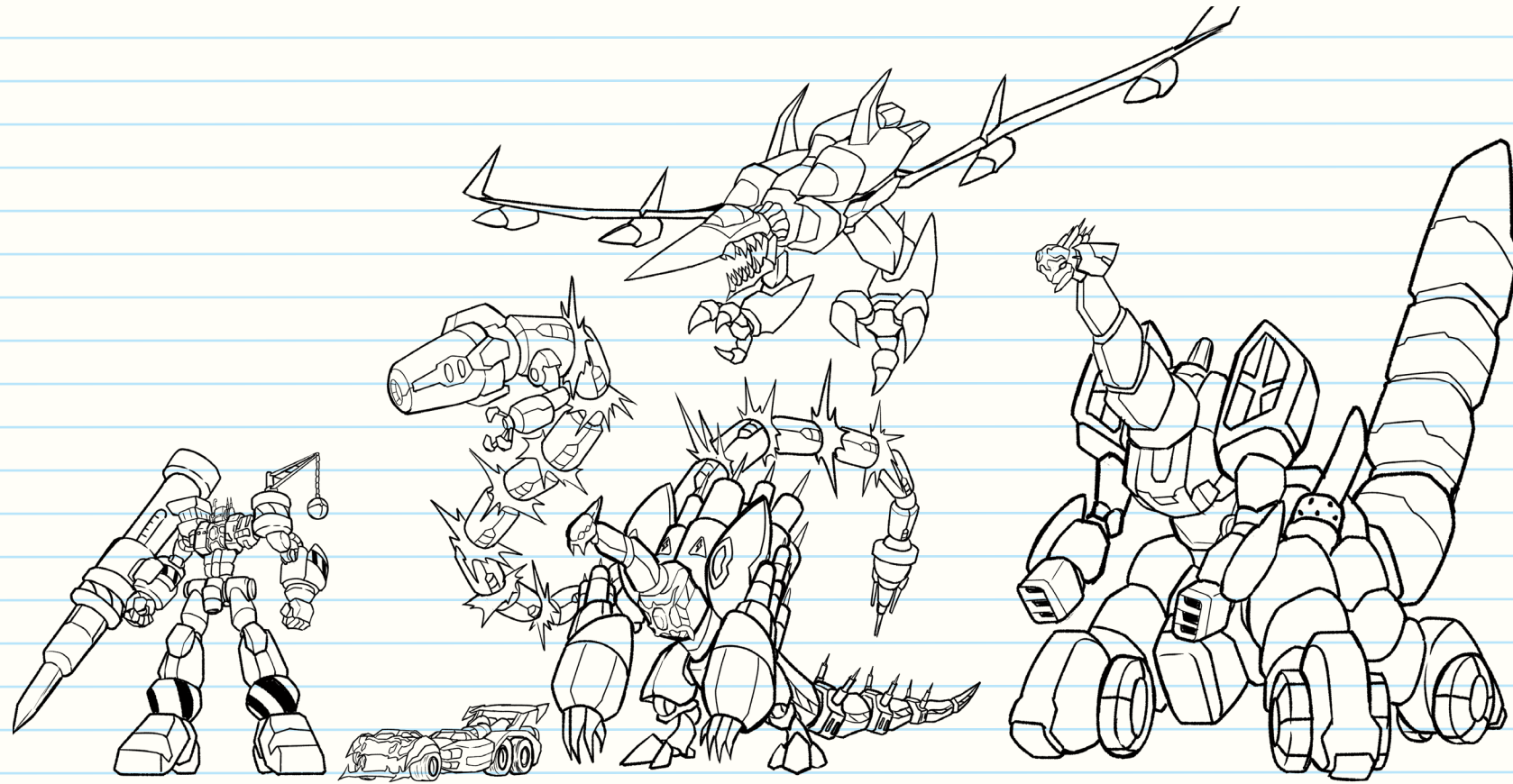
The Robot City is a metropolis ruled by robots and divided into three levels based on the citizens' functionalities. Mr.Zed's robot monsters initiated their first attack on Level 2, where most of the citizens and primary functions of the city resides.



The Robot City is inspired by Cybertron from the Transformers series, especially in terms of a society where everyone's roles are decided by their functionalities. In our case, we want to use the 1st level as an opportunity for Jet to learn that the most important part of being a hero is not beating up bad guys, but helping people in need. – Jeff



# MONSTERS



J - And here's our rogue's gallery in the Robot City!

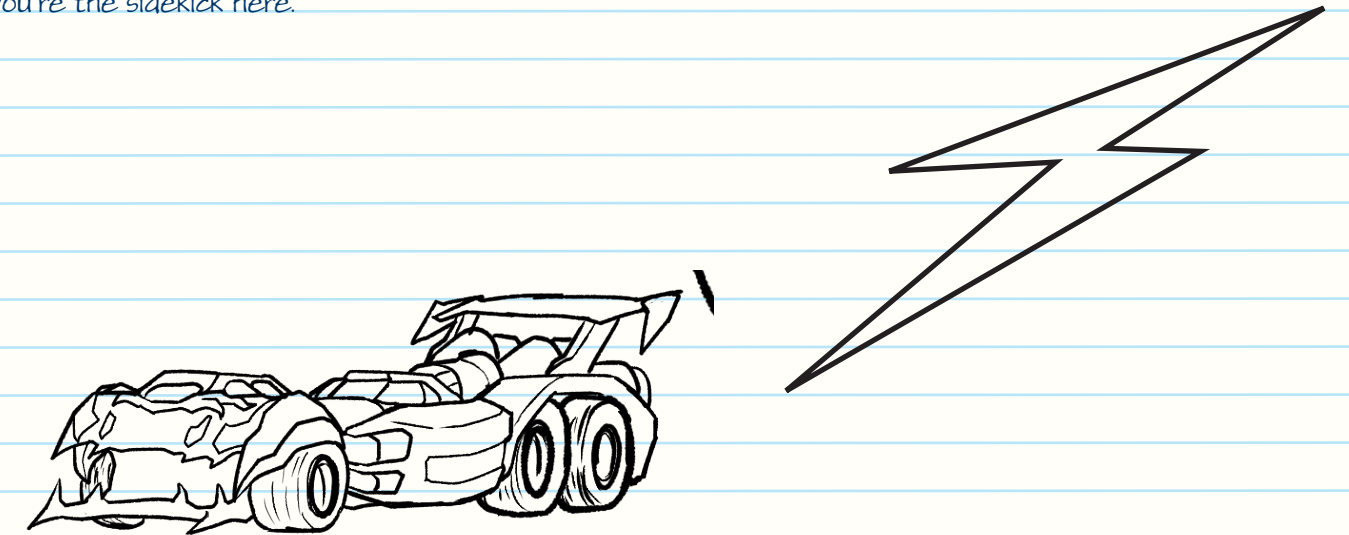
E - There are many words to describe Mr. Zed and his creations, and "elegance" is not one of them.

J - Zed preys on all the machineries in the city, whether it's construction vehicles, trains, or even worse, military-grade weapons such as fighter jets and mobile fortresses.

E - Indeed, thanks to the strange bio-metal he creates, he can use it to control any machine to his own will and turn them into grotesque instruments of destruction!

J - But there's nothing a little thrashing from the mighty Jet Sparks and his trusty sidekick can't fix!

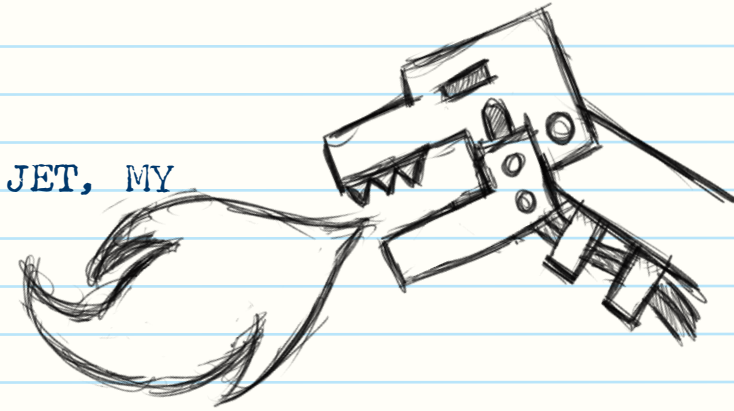
E - For the last time, you're the sidekick here.





# ROBO-JET

"WE FINALLY MEET, JET, MY LOATHSOME COPY."



**R**obot Doppelganger has always been one of my favorite tropes in media, with Metal Sonic from the Sonic series as a prime example. We all know that man's greatest enemy is himself, so the thoughts of Jet dealing with an enemy created to be just like him creates opportunities for all kinds of exciting fights and scenarios. Robo-Jet's story is about him realizing he can be his own person, which is something not a lot of robot doppelgangers think about. - Jeff

J - After we totaled all of Zed's monsters, he pulled one last trick out of his dirty sleeve!

E - Jet, would you like to do the honors and tell them what it is?

J - It was a ROBOT COPY OF ME! I hate that guy. Thinks he can out-Jet me 24/7, with his weapons and abilities just like mine!

E - And worst of all, a personality just like yours too.

J - So we did some extensive research on Robo-Jet...

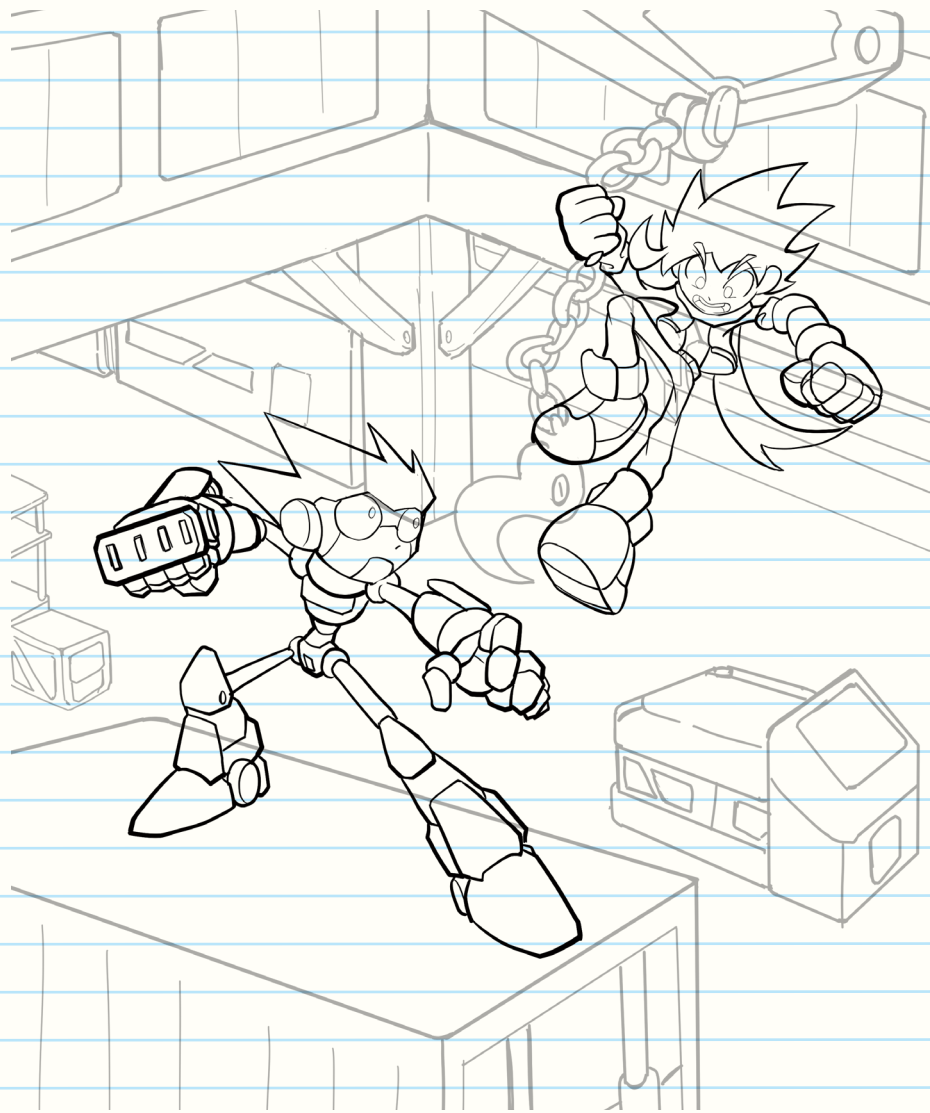
E - By "extensive research" we just asked Jet a bunch of questions about his hyperfixations and pet peeves.

J - Then we figured out where that faker is waiting for me for our duel! So we headed to a warehouse, just like the ones in the Cyber-Ranger TV show!

E - Never change Jet, never change.



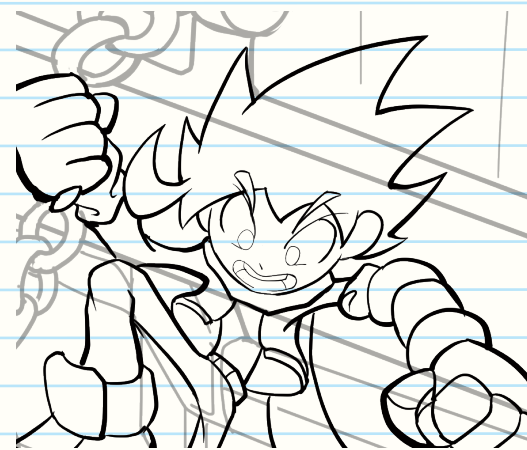
# THE WAREHOUSE



J - We found that faker, but we got ambushed by the same robot gang from before! Turns out they work for Mr. Zed too.

E - But thanks to Robo-Jet's massive ego, I told him if he's any of a fighter, he'd fight the kid one-on-one.

J - And he took the bait! Our fight was glorious, and I triumphed over him by being the better Jet! Hehe.

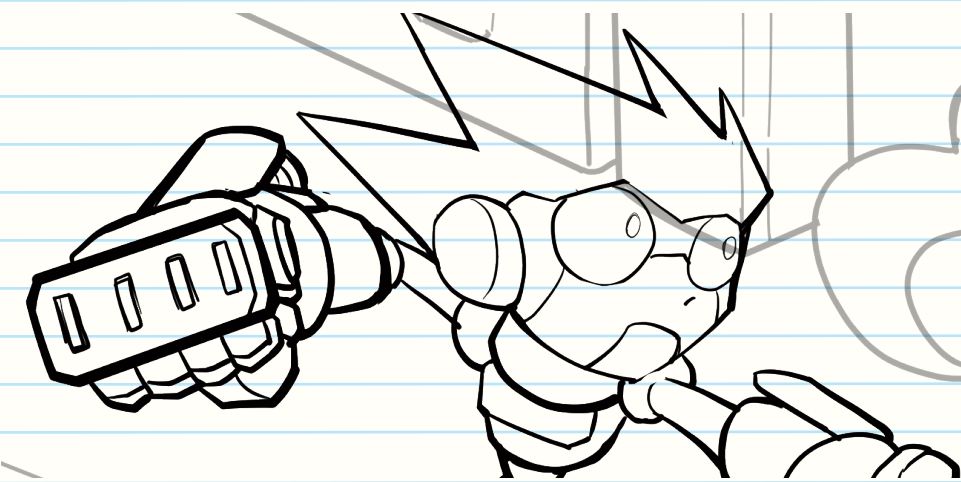


E - Right after our fight with Robo-Jet ended, we found some data in one of his many parts that we totaled... Which was the coordinates to Mr. Zed's laboratory.

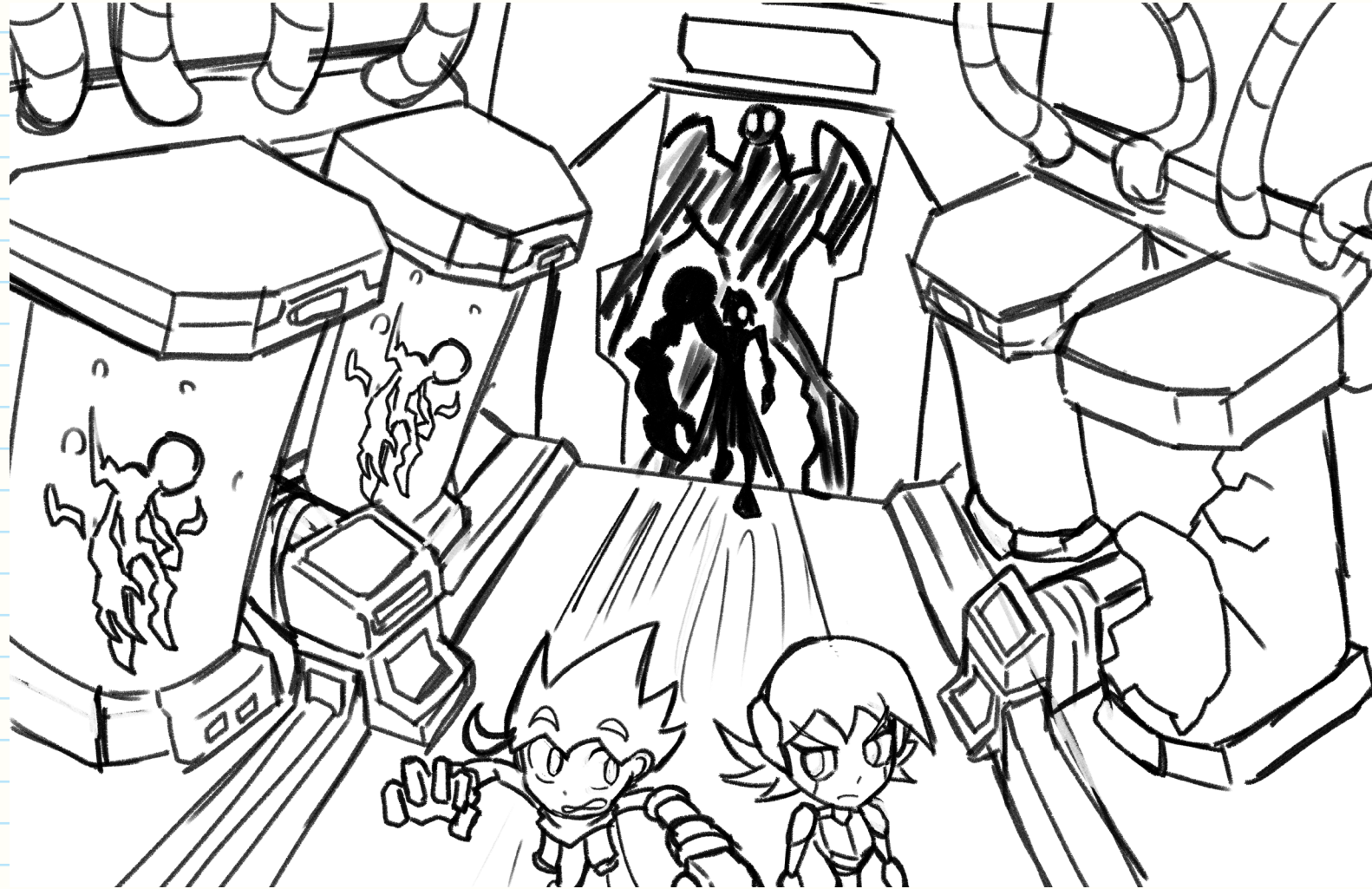
J - And it was the creepiest place I've ever been to! Whole place reeks like my school's chem lab, and there are abducted robot citizens trapped in containers with the bio-metal on them!

E - It was supposed to be a quick operation where we sabotage his operations, but... There was a little complication.

J - Zed walked right in on us, talk about bad timing



## ZED'S LAB



J - There he is! The biggest threat to the Robot City, and the worst example of personal hygiene... Mr. Zed!

E - He was a deranged and terrifying foe. He utilizes this strange bio-metal that was supposedly joint-developed by him and... Someone he only refers to as "Doc". Of course, Reader, you'll get to see her soon too.

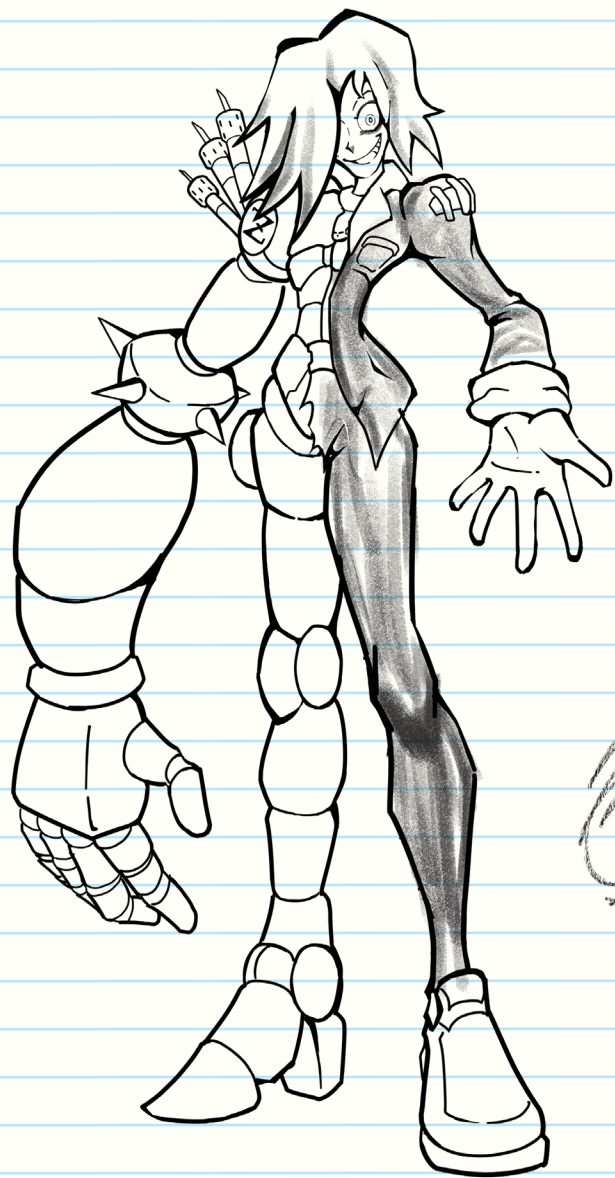
J - And he has a big robot arm, just like me! Except ten times bigger and uglier.

E - He's also obsessed with the idea of "infinite power", so he's been experimenting his bio-metal on machines and robots alike.

J - Before he harms any more innocent people and cause more mayhem, it's up to me and Elise to put an end to him, once and for all!



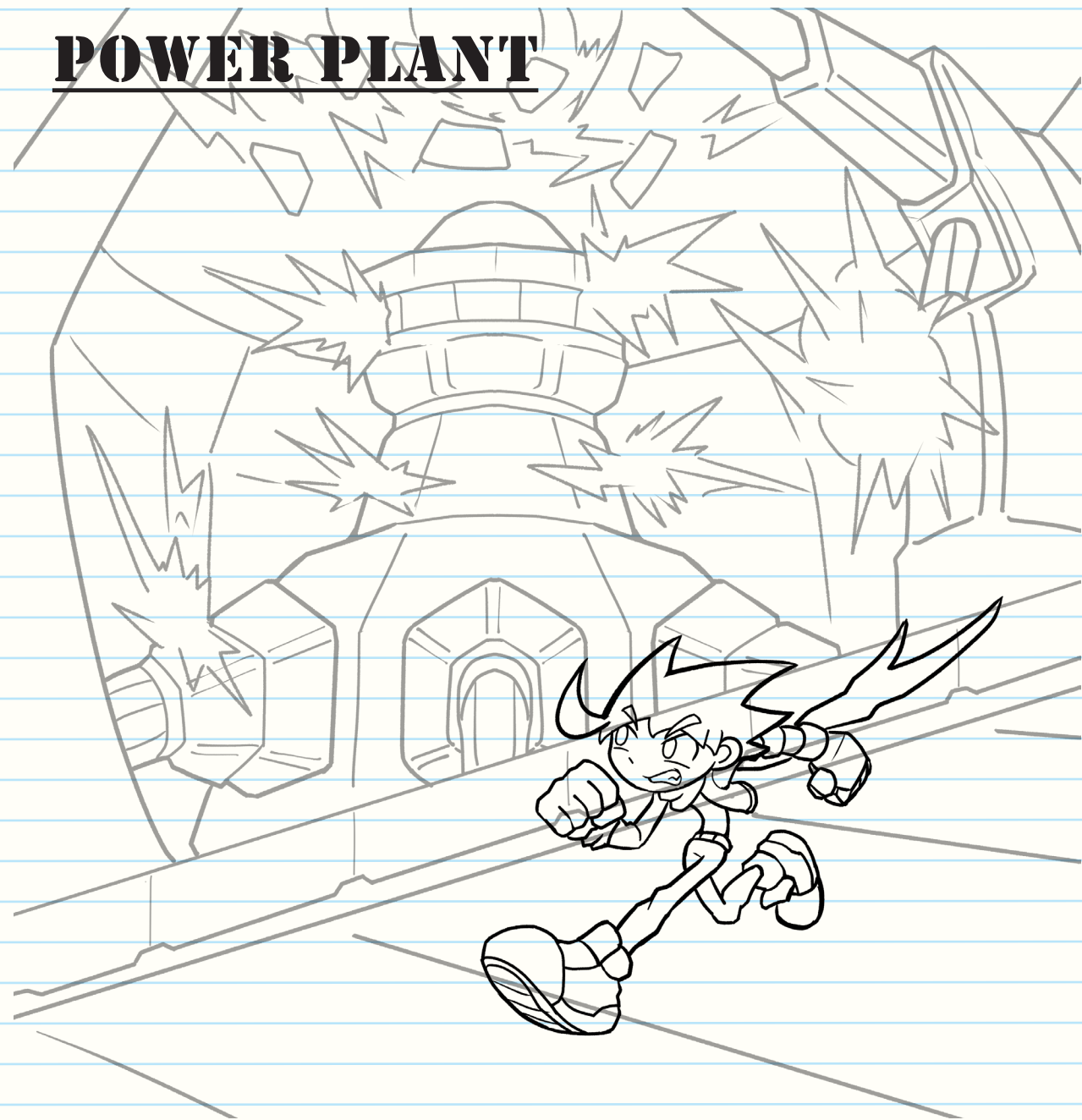
## MR. ZED



"I've found the key to infinite power, and I will not let anyone stand in my way!"



## POWER PLANT



J - So, we almost got Zed back in his lab...

E - Except he made an escape route to the city power plant, planning to blow it up to ash if it means he'll find a rumored "infinite energy" hidden under its remains.

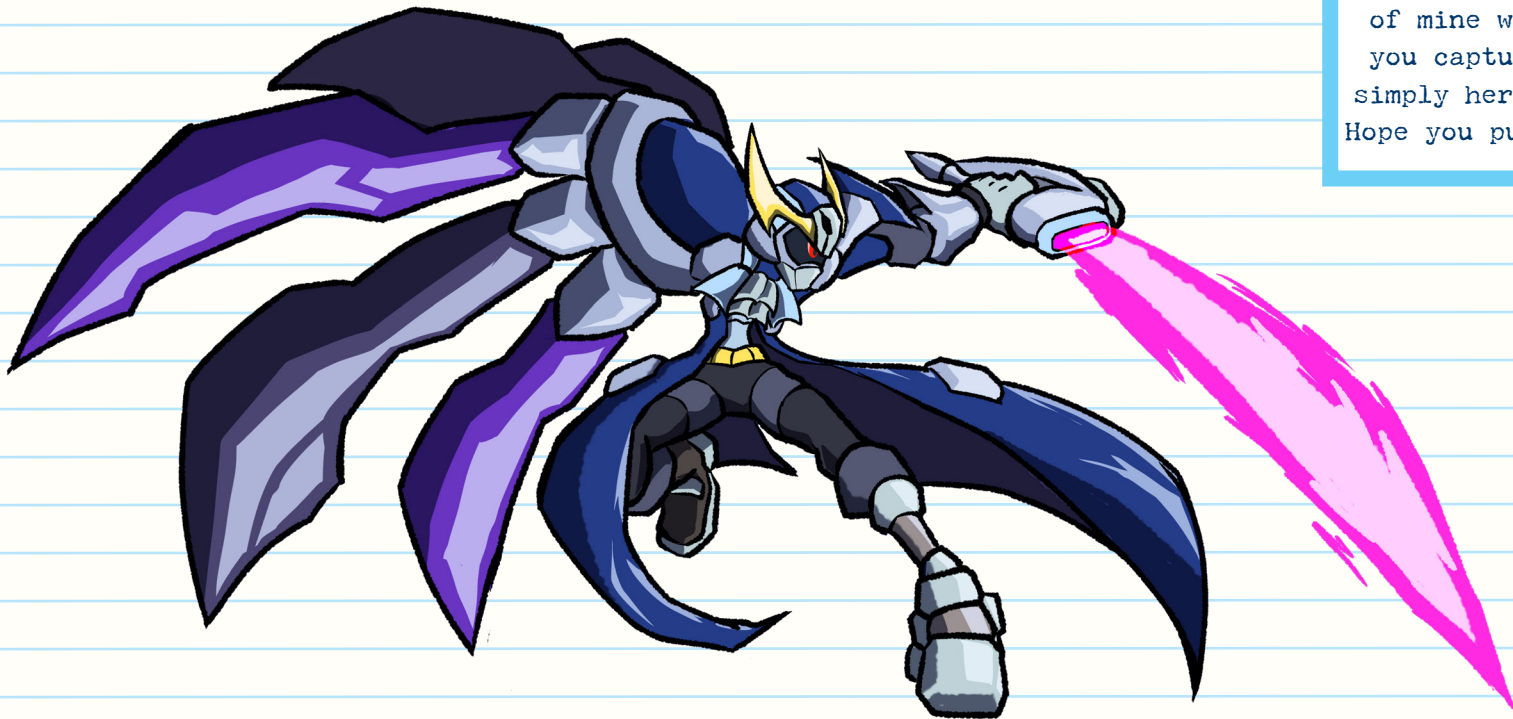
J - But, as you guessed it, he was no match for our teamwork combined!

E - In an act of desperation, Zed blew up the power plant to trap all of us in it forever.

J - And you know what that means: A mad dash against time to escape from an exploding power plant!

# CAPTAIN PHANTOM

"Nice arm, kid, but it won't be enough to stop me!"



Jet: Did you hear that? He said my arm is cool!

Elise: Stay focused, Jet. We don't know what he wants.

Captain Phantom: Oh, nothing much. A client of mine wants both of you captured, and I'm simply here to deliver. Hope you put up a fight.



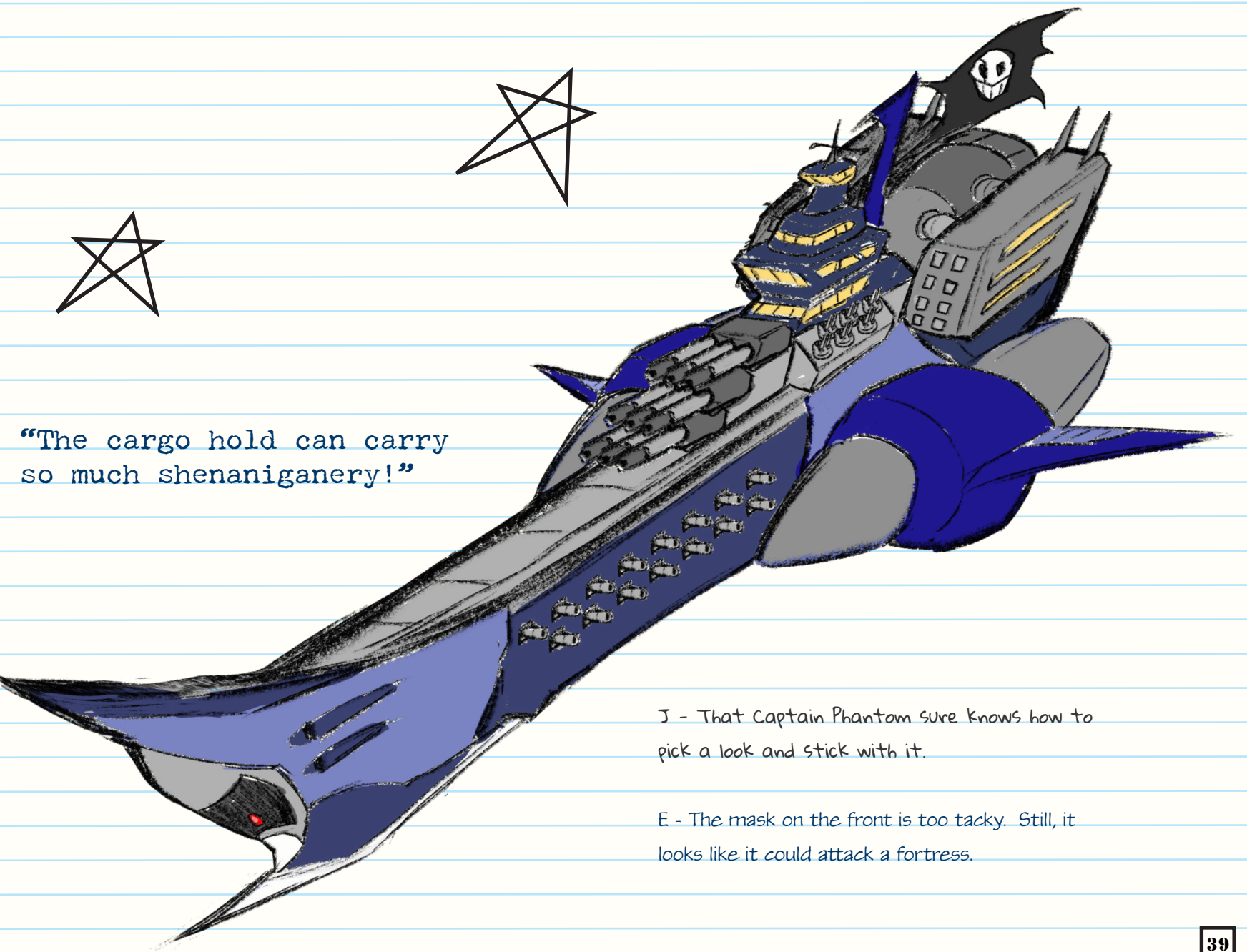
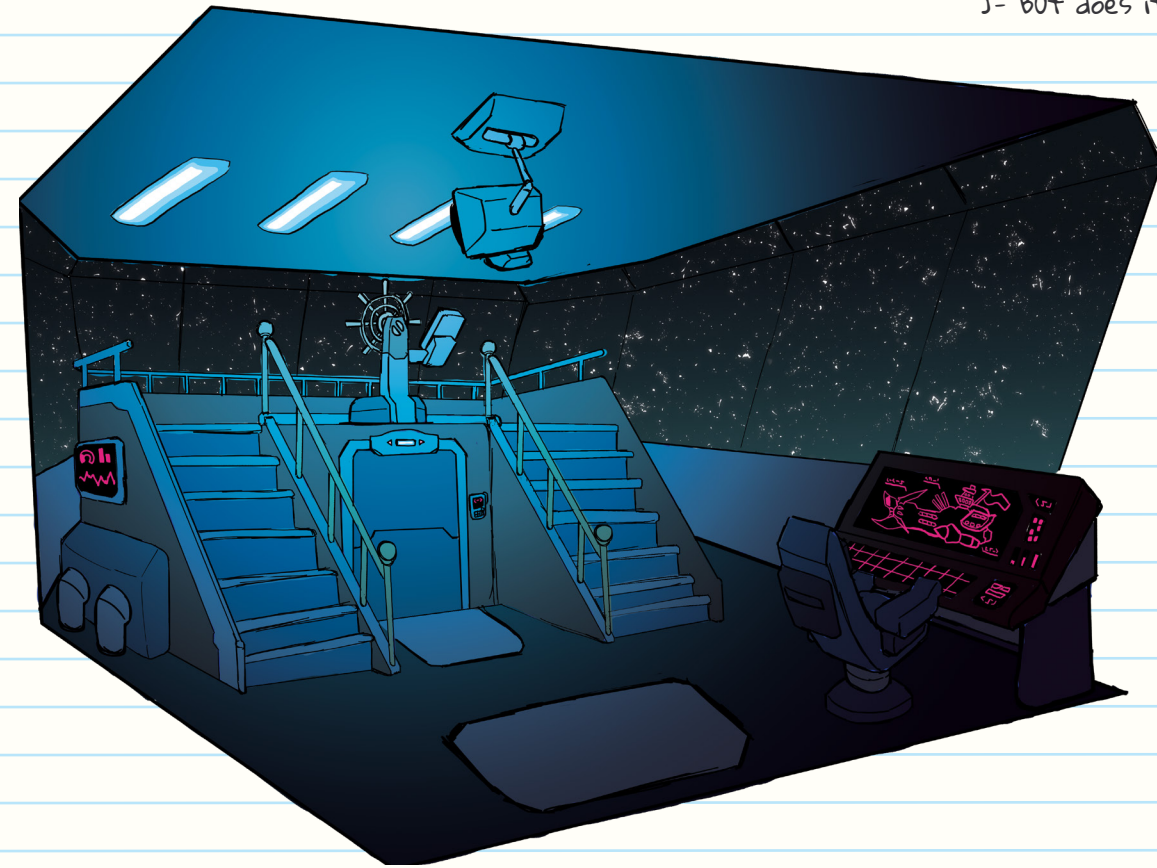


# SPACE PIRATE SHIP

J- Do you think Captain Phantom pilots his ship with spaceship control gizmos or a the wheel of a boat?

E -Most captains usually don't pilot their own ship.

J- But does it have a boat wheel?



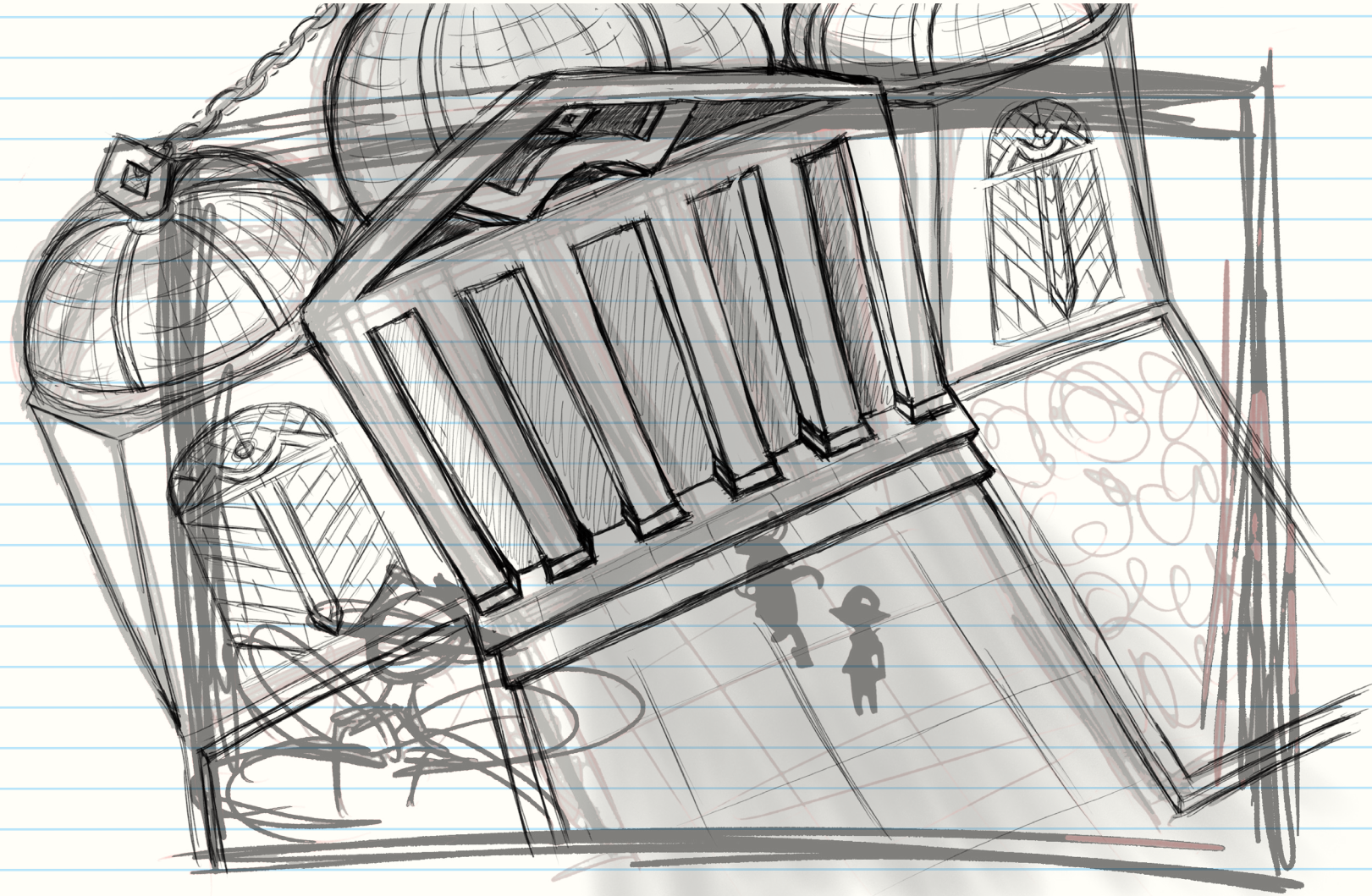
“The cargo hold can carry so much shenaniganery!”

J - That Captain Phantom sure knows how to pick a look and stick with it.

E - The mask on the front is too tacky. Still, it looks like it could attack a fortress.



# FANTASY CITY



# ETLIN ELATION

“Following you Jet?  
Pshht no, I'm following  
adventure!”



J - He was definetely  
following me.

E - It was like having  
two Jets around, what a  
nightmare

## THE FAIRY GODFATHER



“This is my town,  
my territory kid,  
so listen well”

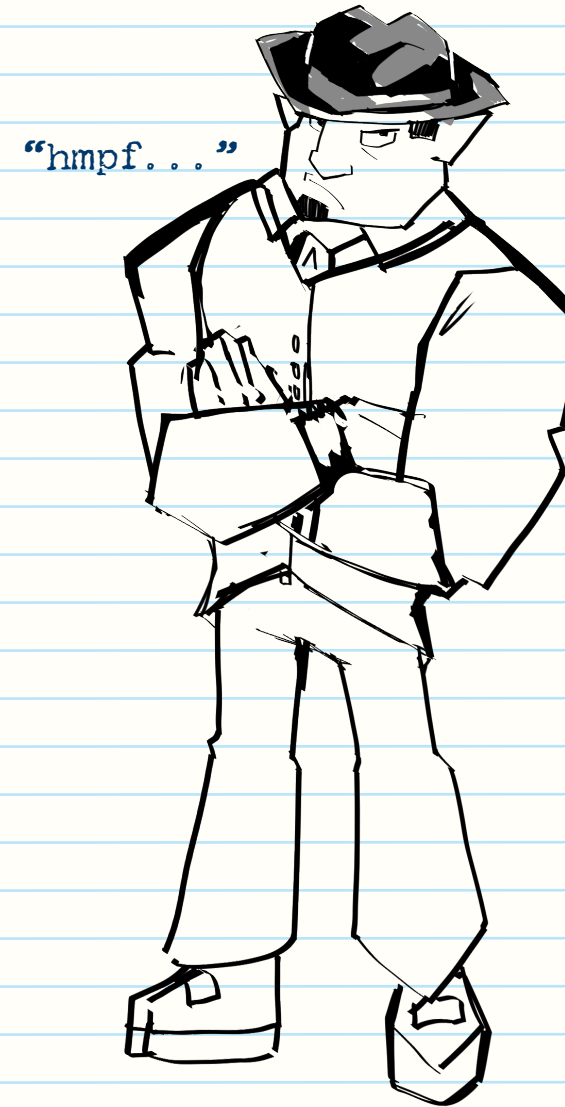
J - The Fairy Godfather was the worst!  
He tried to get me thrown in jail!

E - Having to represent you in court with  
the mafia interference was tough but we  
pulled through thanks to Etlin.

J - And then they kidnapped him!

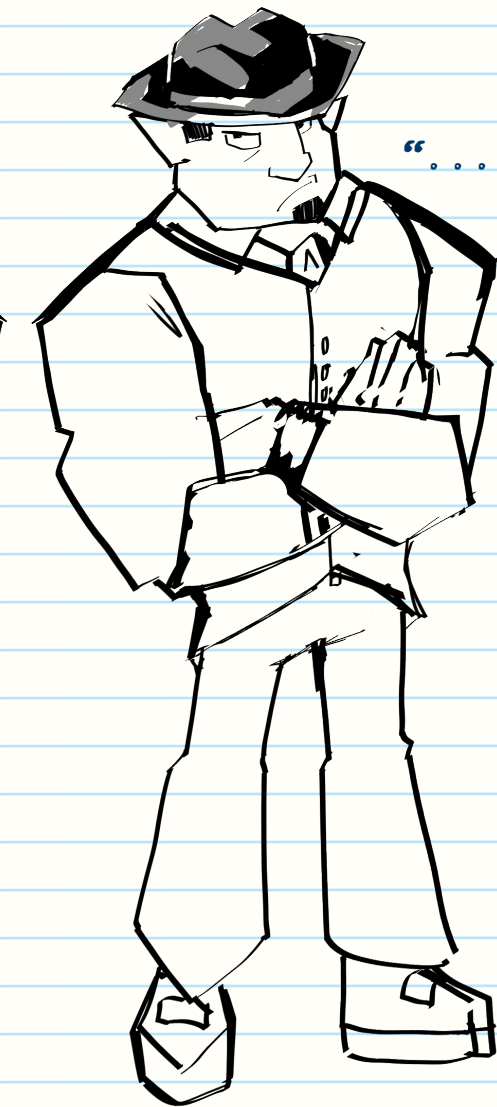
E - Yeah, that fight was terrifying, the  
Doctor appeared and used overrides on me  
forcing me to fight my friends. We were  
able to rescue Etlin but the Doctor and  
Capatain Phantom got away.

## THE LEFT HAND



“hmpf...”

## THE RIGHT HAND



“... hmpf”



# THE DOCTOR

“Aww, you really think you can defeat me. Well then, let me show you just how little control you truly have!”

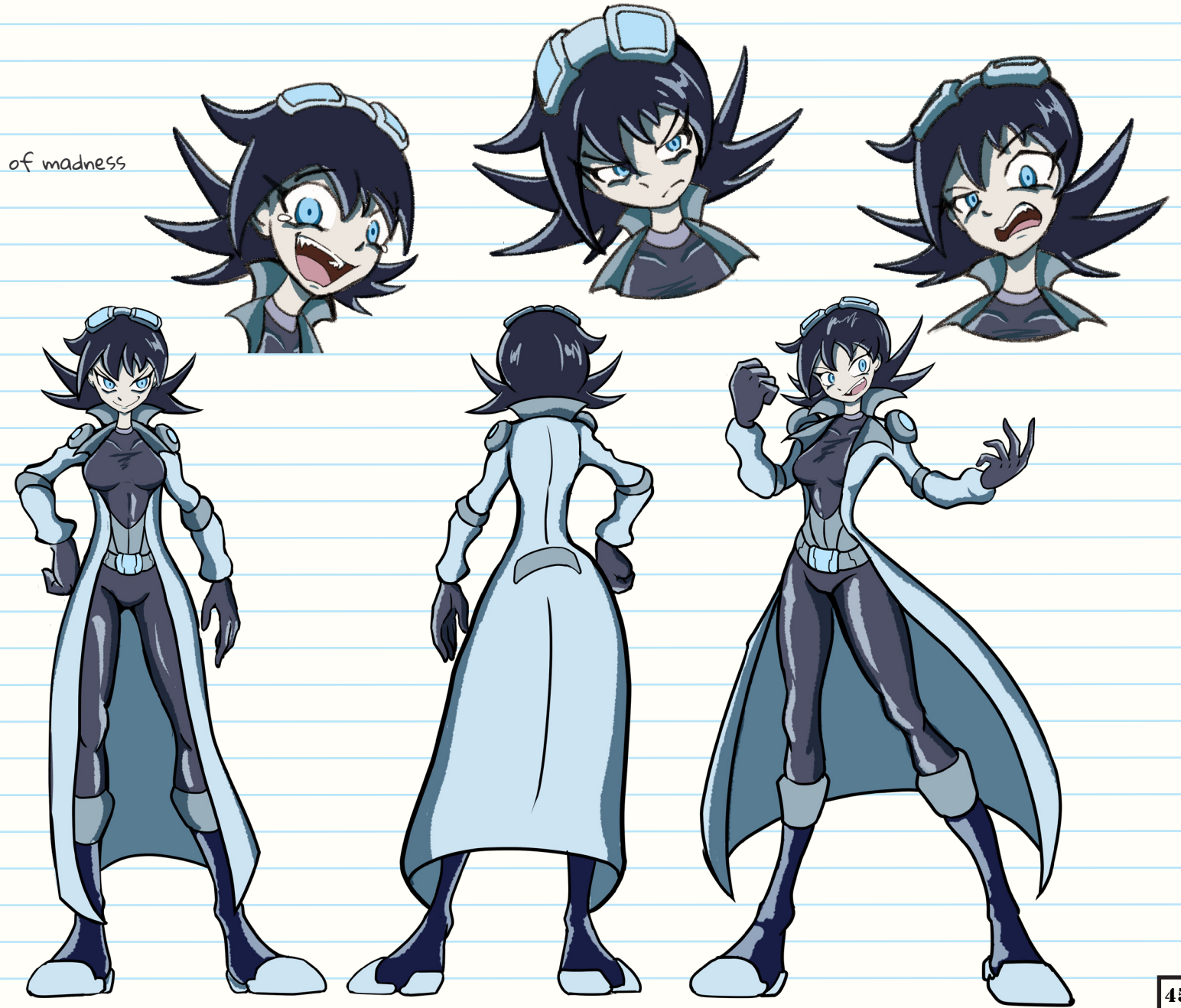


Elise: Jet, get away from me!  
Something is wrong-”

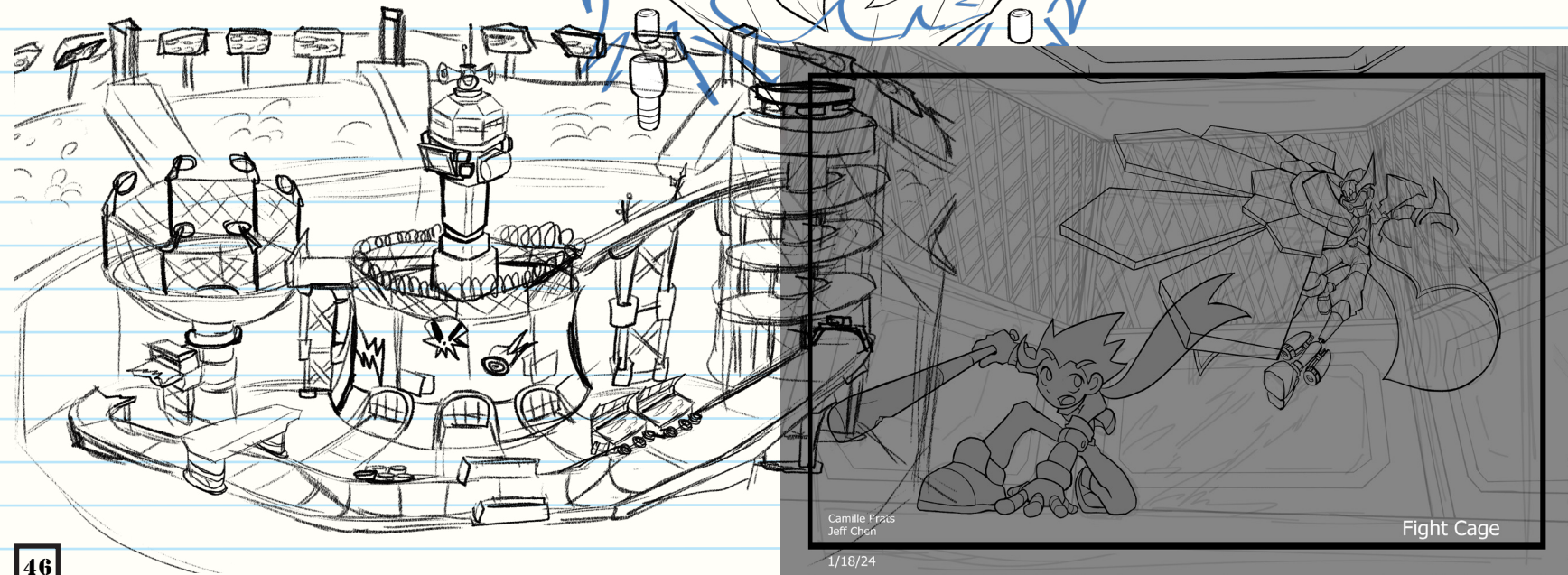
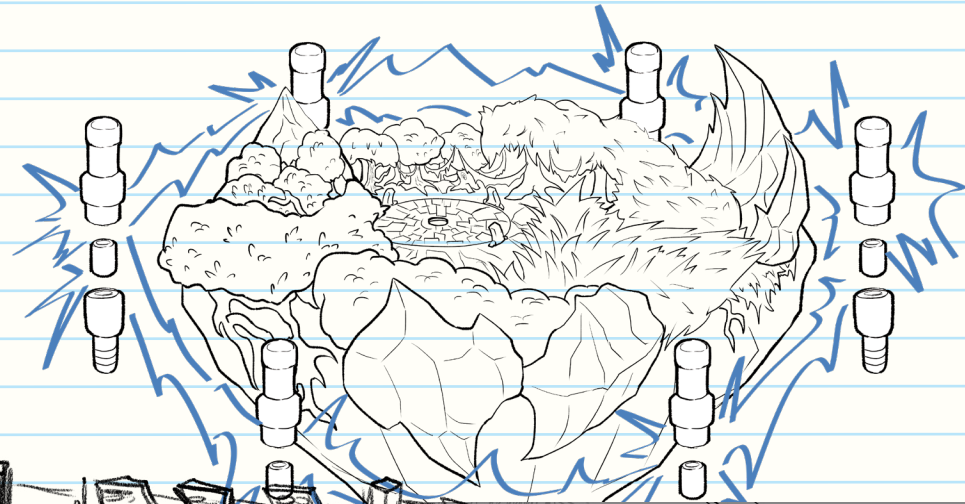
Jet: Wait, what do you mean  
something is wrong?!”

Elise: ... New objective:  
capture Jet.

J- The face of madness



# THE PIRATE GAMES



J - Right after we barely made it out of the Fantasy City, we were told by Captain Phantom there's this Space Pirate Olympic Games!

E - While I'm still trying to figure out why The Doctor was able to take control of my systems.

J - Turns out, Captain Phantom and his Space Pirate buddies are competing against each other for the key to a doomsday weapon, something... something... fortress?

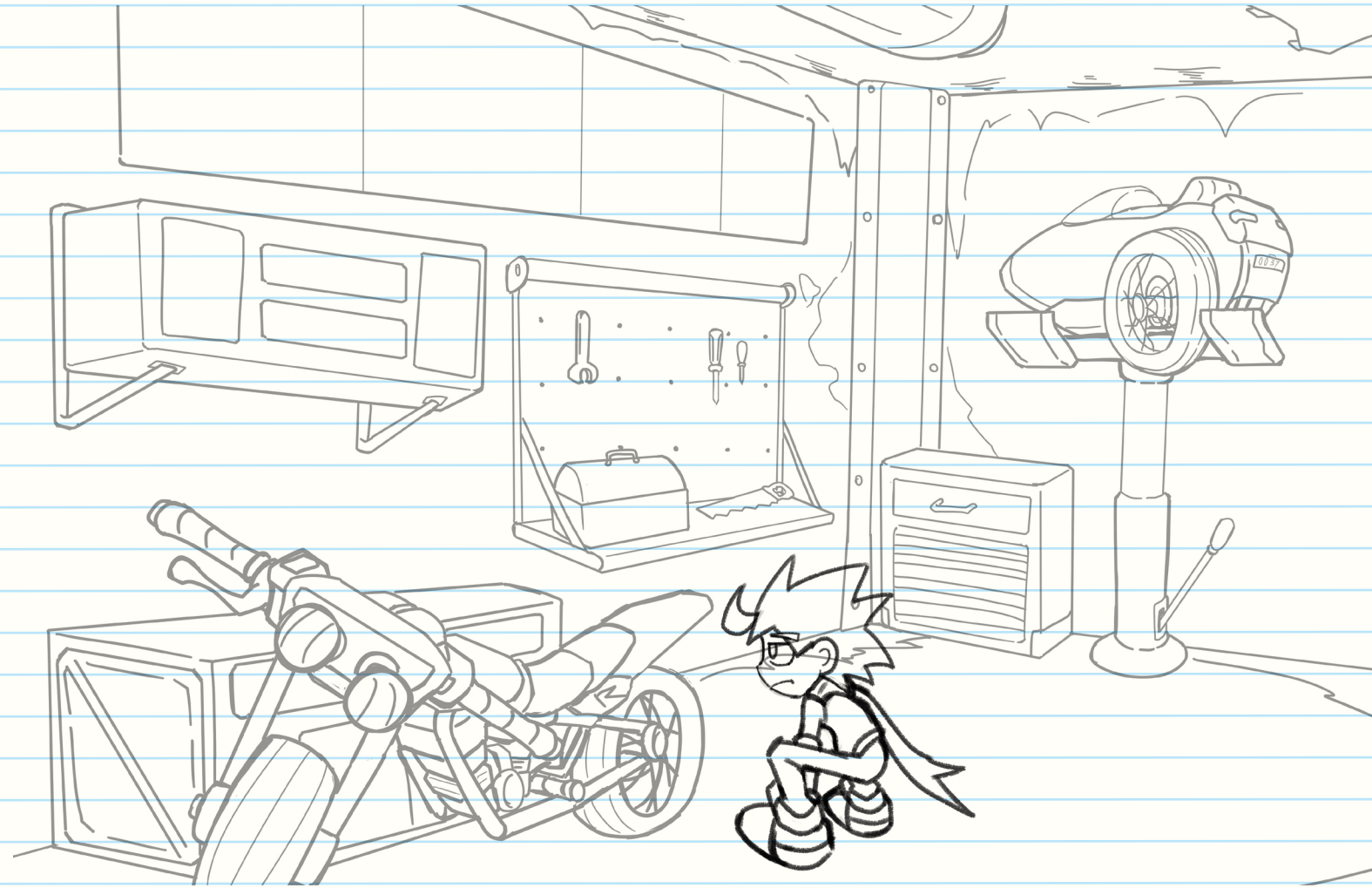
E - The Death Fortress. The name could use some more subtlety, but the point is, The Doctor's got her eyes on it too, and is more than willing to sabotage this game to take it for herself.

J - So, without further ado, we found ourselves a rusty garage near the Games' stadiums, and set up shop for our next battles!

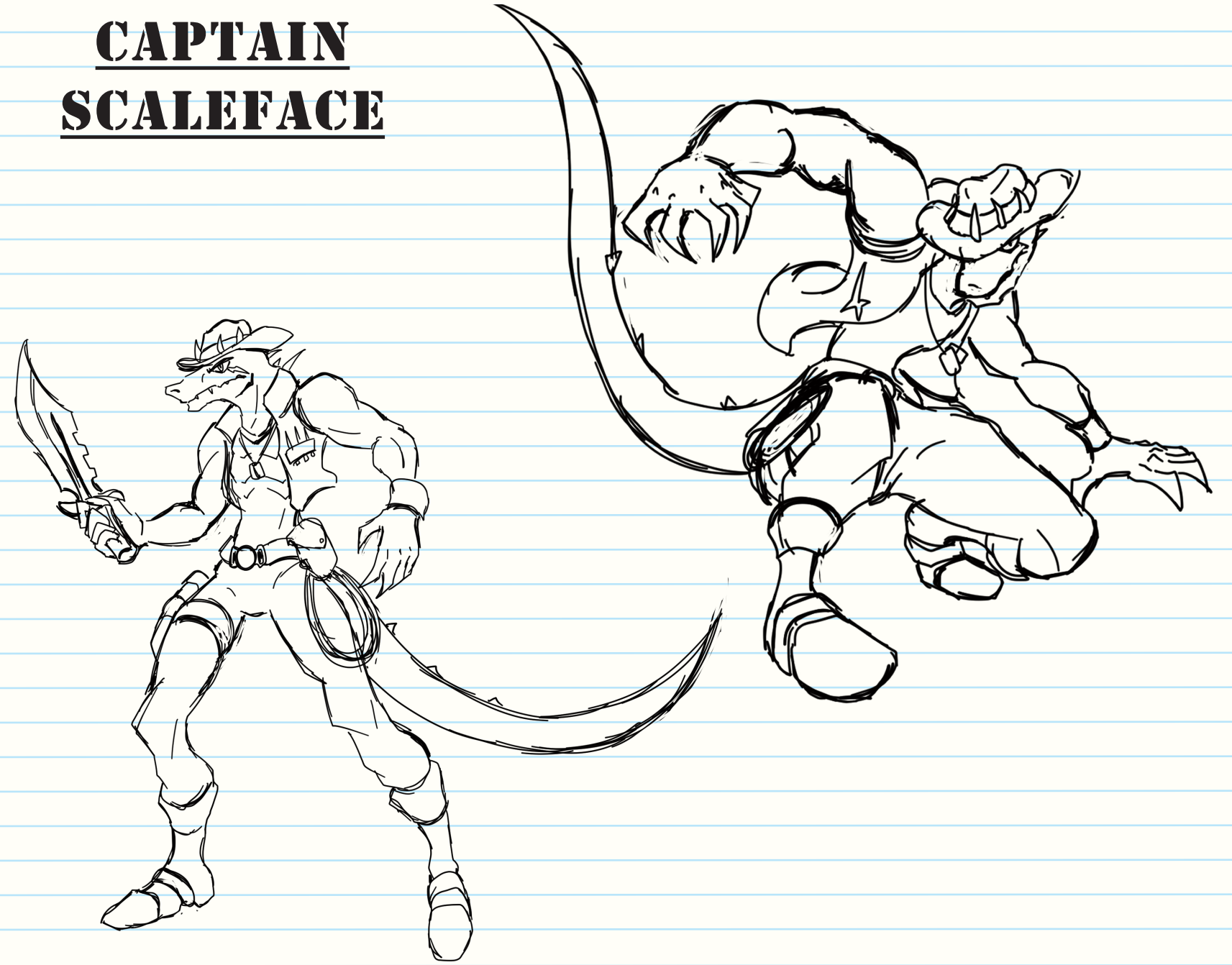




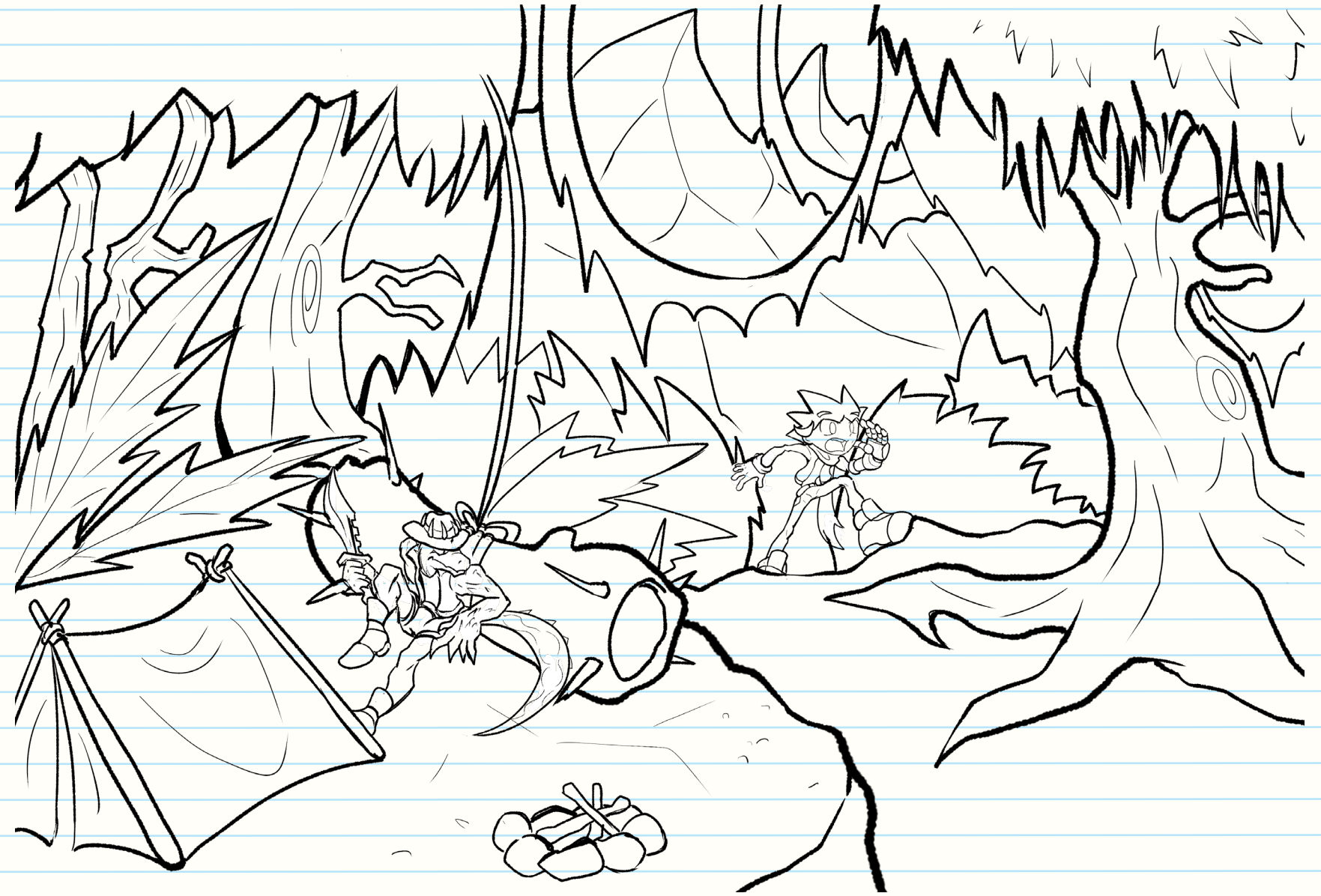
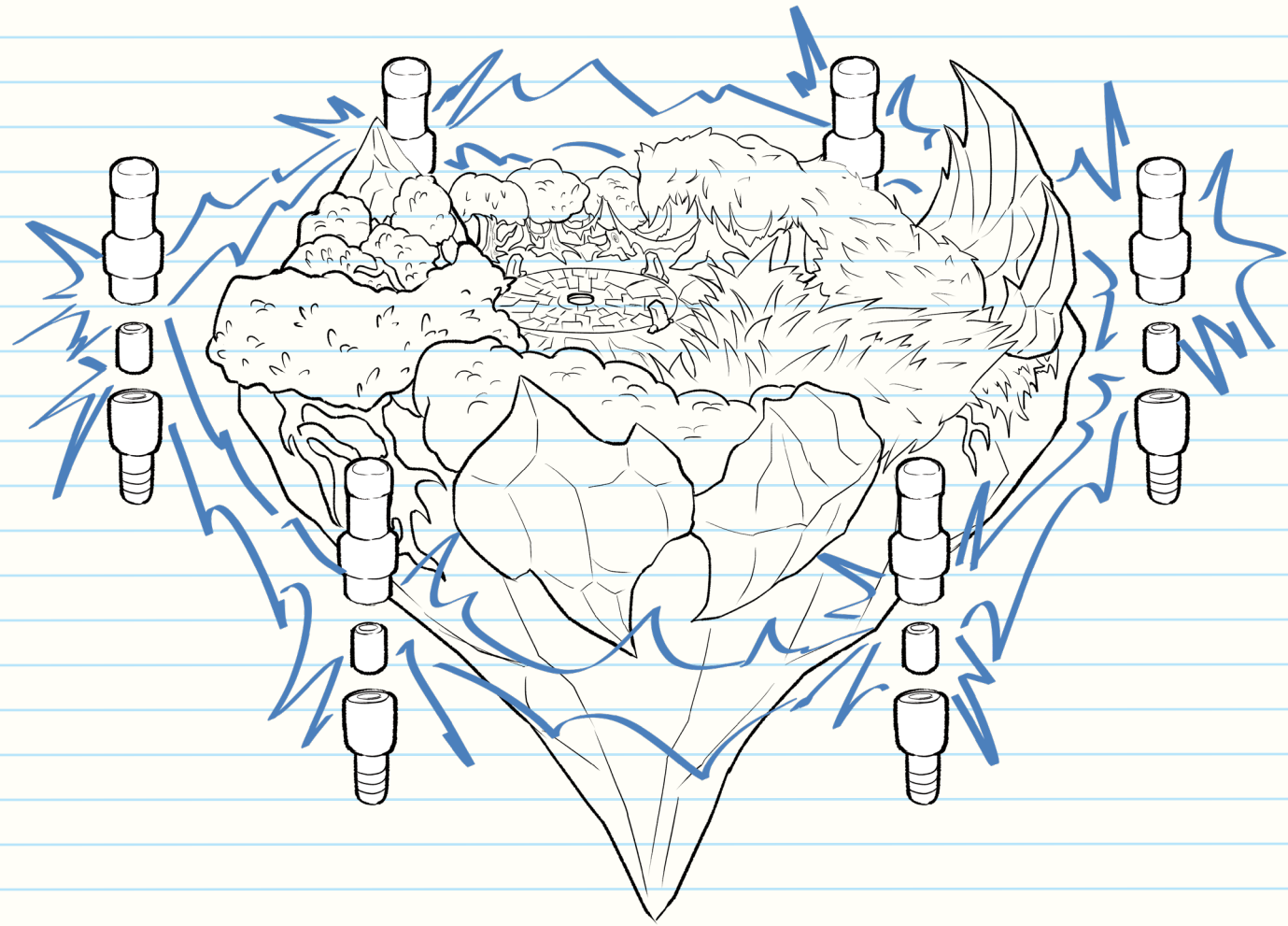
# THE GARAGE



# CAPTAIN SCALEFACE



# JUNGLE ARENA





J - First one of the Space Pirate Games was this Jungle Arena! A bunch of contestants enter, and the last man standing wins!

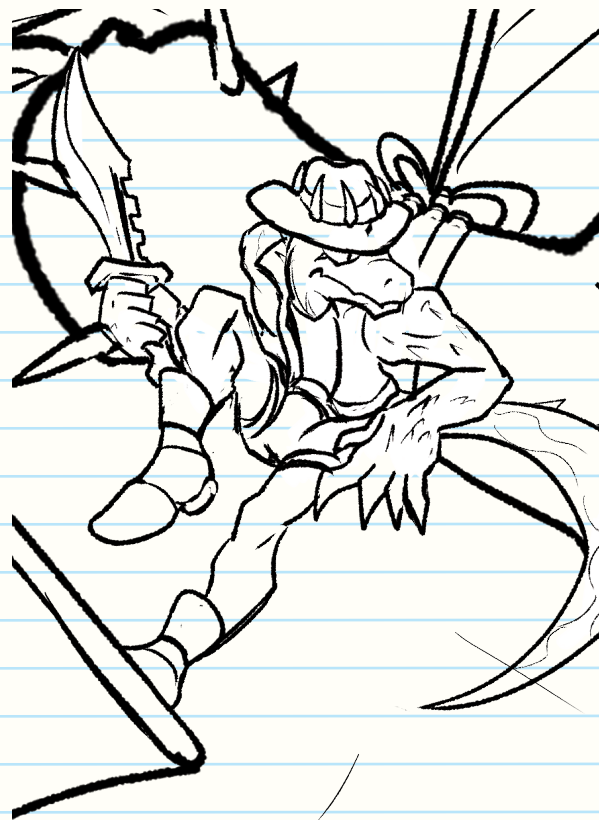
E - The cunning Captain Scaleface runs this contest, and he was a master at survival skills, close-quarters-combat, as well as traps. He's stealthy, patient, always waits for his opponents to make the lightest slip.

J - And one of us may or may not made that slip.

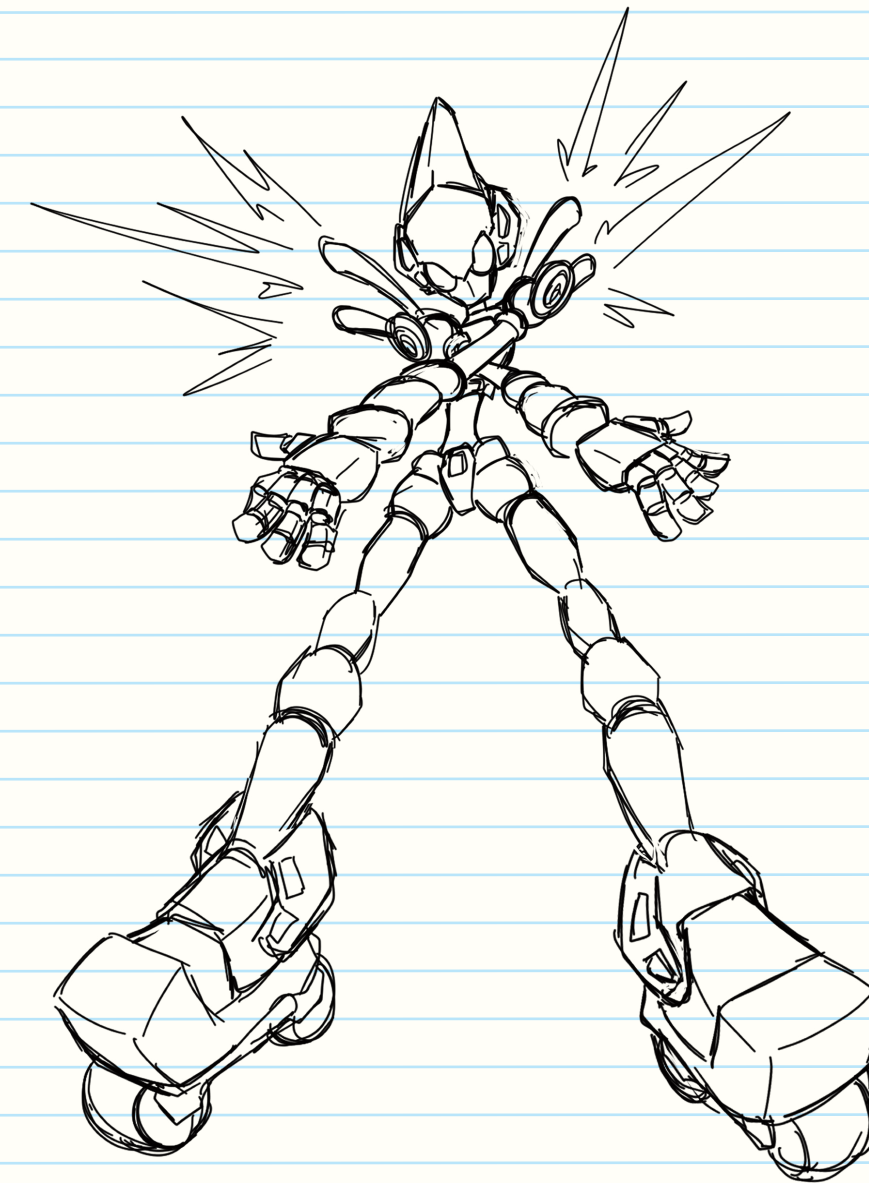
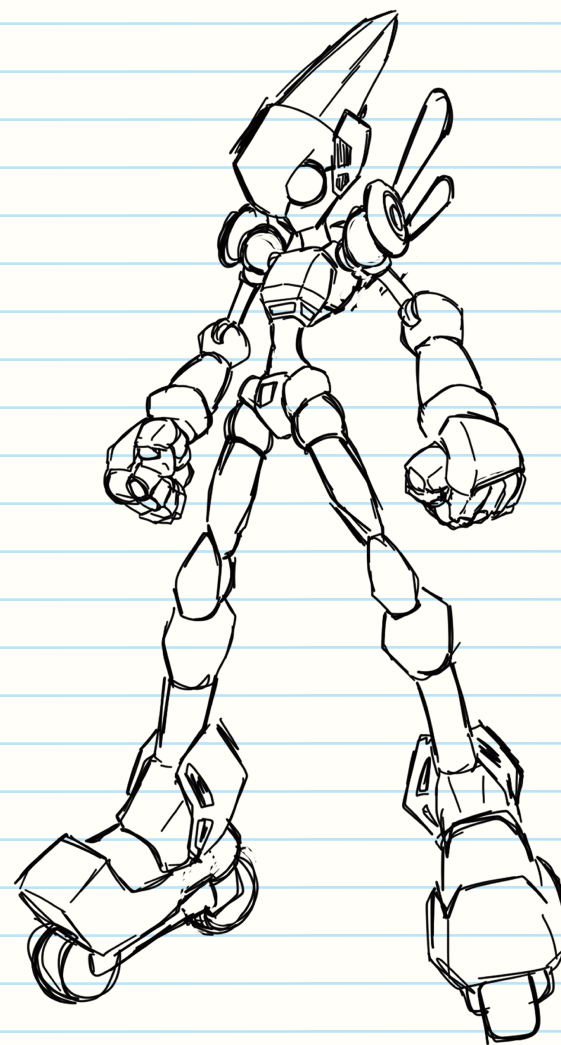
E - You sure did. Stealth and being quiet isn't your strong suit, after all.

J - Yeaaaah, I may or may not yelled your name out too loud when I got lost, and then-BAM! A log trap flew right at me, then-THWIP! I was tied up by a rope trap!

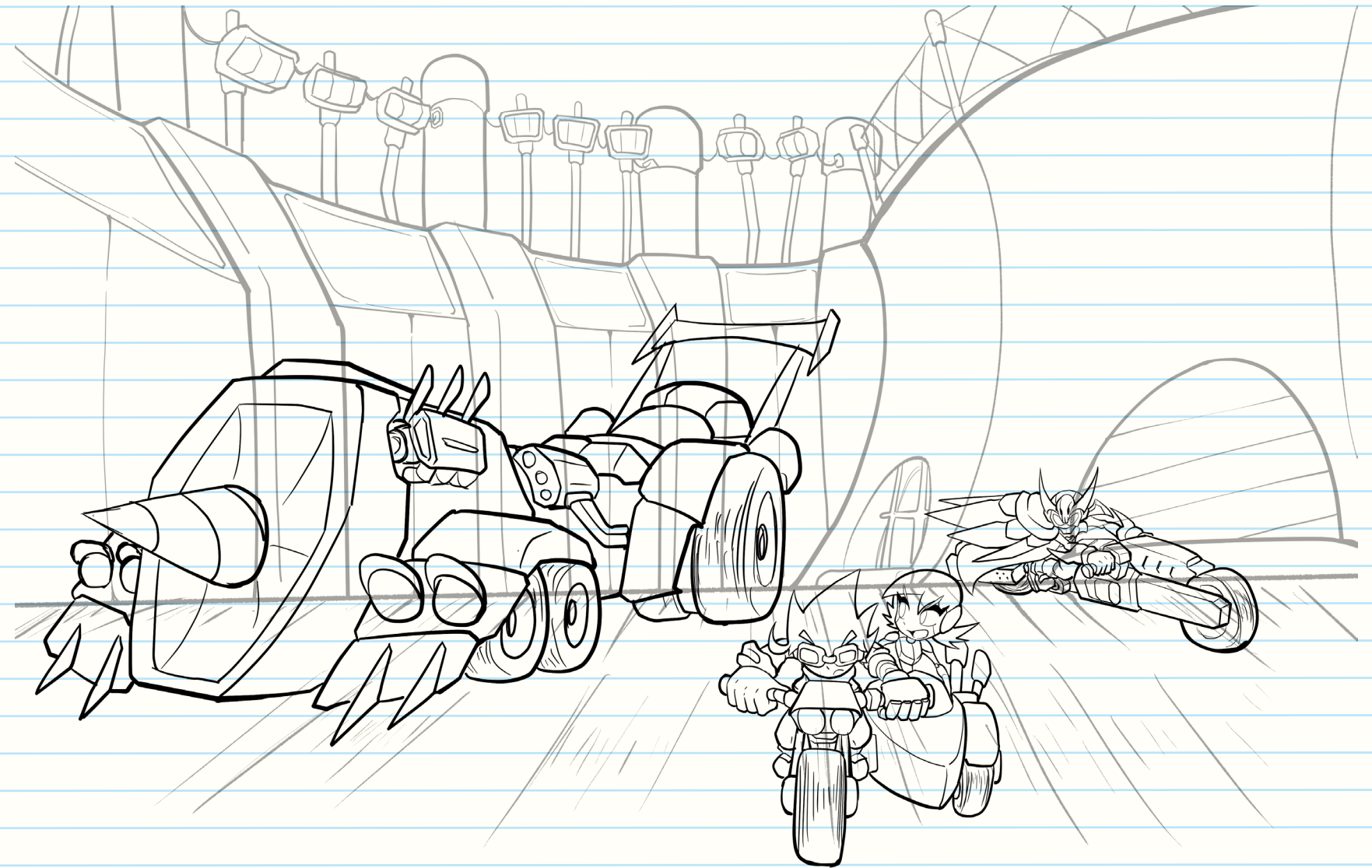
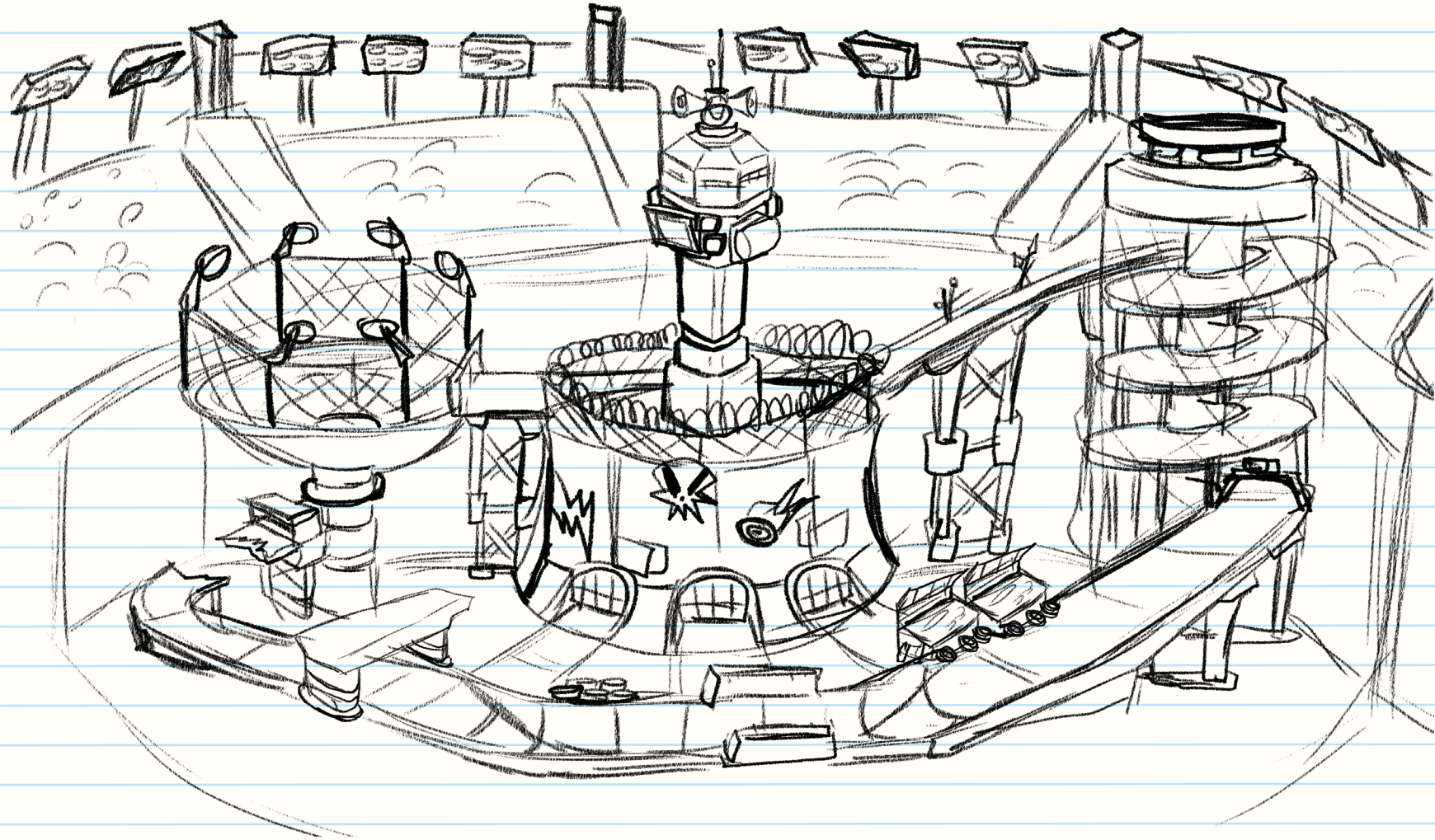
E - Reader, you should've been there to see it. It was embarrassing, but entertaining. But mostly embarrassing.



## CAPTAIN SPEEDBOY



# DEATH RACETRACK





E - There were two more contests, of course.

J - A high-octane Death Race where the contestants race for 1st place in a deadly stadium, and all weapons were allowed!

E - And for the first time in my life, I made a slip-up of my own. I focused too much on stopping our opponents, instead of maintaining our 1st place standing.

J - To make things worse, this Captain Speedboy has a juiced-up monster car! He almost ran us over. I've never seen a kid who speaks more than I do.

E - And as usual, Captain Phantom was there, making it more difficult.

J - Oh boy, he was SCARY during the underground cage fight! We fought one-on-one, but he knew every move of mine, even though I was taught by only Elise and... My big bro Jesse!

E - Not suspicious in the slightest.

J - And Elise had to fight Captain Bonecrusher, who runs the underground cage fights, and is absolutely CRAZY at fighting and wrestling stuff!

E - I sadly had to take another setback, as I was still recovering from the damages to my system done by The Doctor.

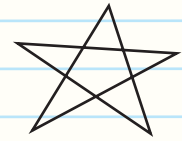
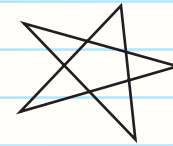
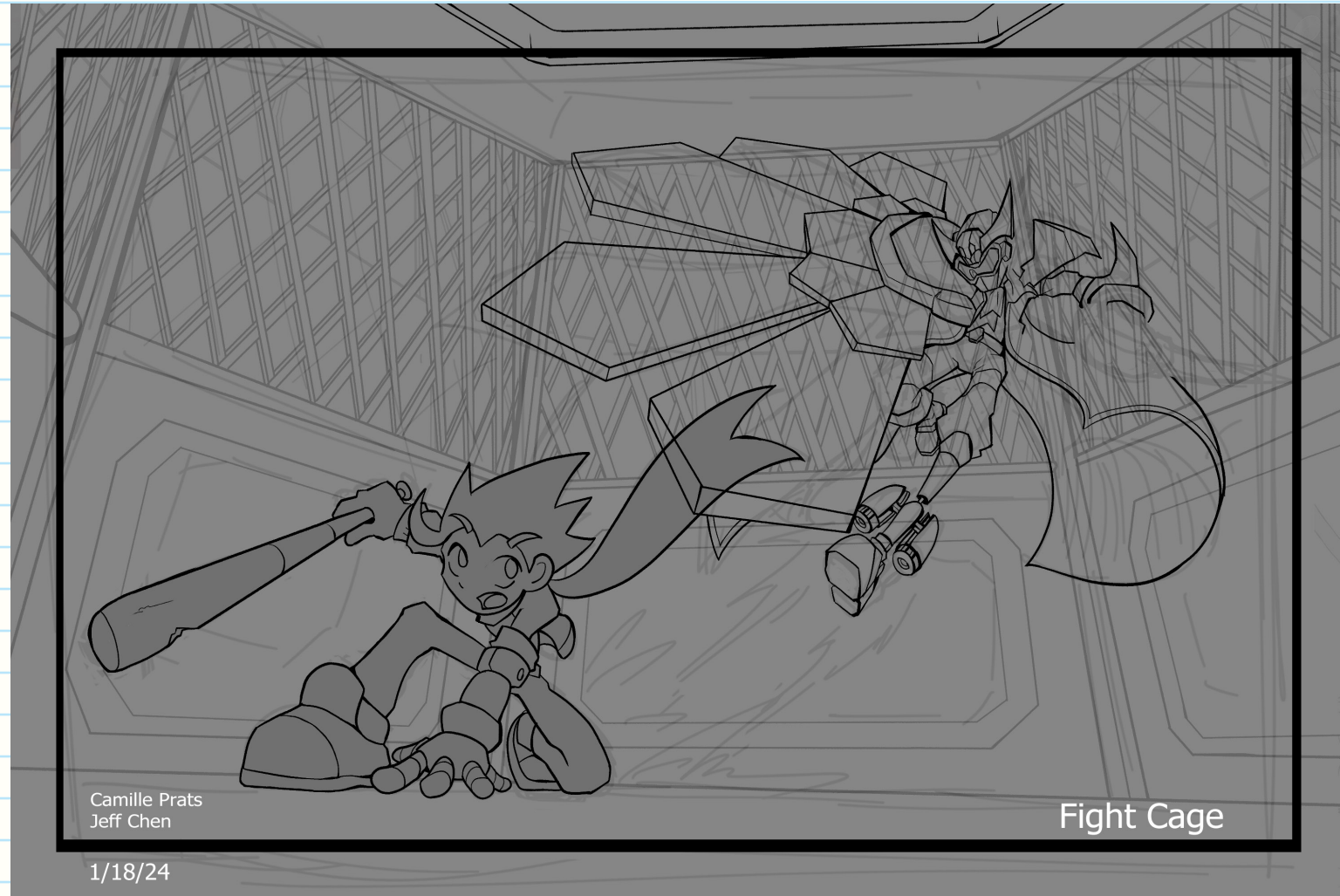


## CAPTAIN BONECRUSHER



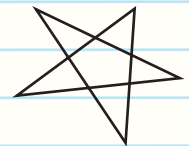
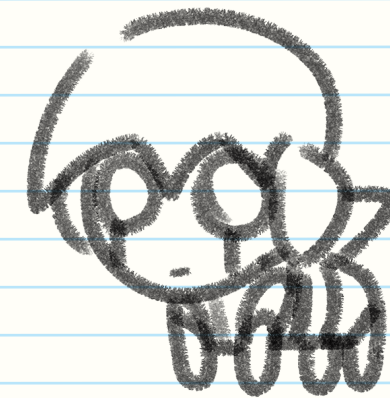


# FIGHT CAGE



E - Unfortunately we lost the Pirate Games to Captain Phantom.

J - But hero's never give up so we just followed him to his next location...





J - And finally, right after our losses at the Space Pirate Games, Captain Phantom won the Games, but only to be told that the key to the Death Fortress is buried in a desert planet...

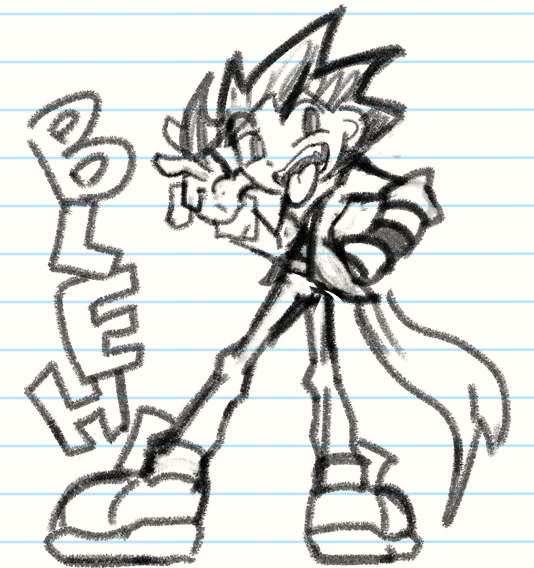
E - Which looks suspiciously similar to one of Jet's Western DVDs.

J - And this time I'm all on my own! Elise had to fix up her systems and do some recon on her own, so for the first time, I had to do the adventuring all by myself.

E - But hey, you got yourself a sheriff badge from the locals!

J - Oh man, don't even get me started on that! So it turns out, the Wild West is being invaded by The Devil and his army! They're looking for a "key to chaos", which is definitely the Death Fortress' car keys. I stood up to those crooks, then the town just... Made me their sheriff!

E - And sheriffing isn't the easiest thing to do, especially for a 16-year-old.







**THE WILD  
WEST**

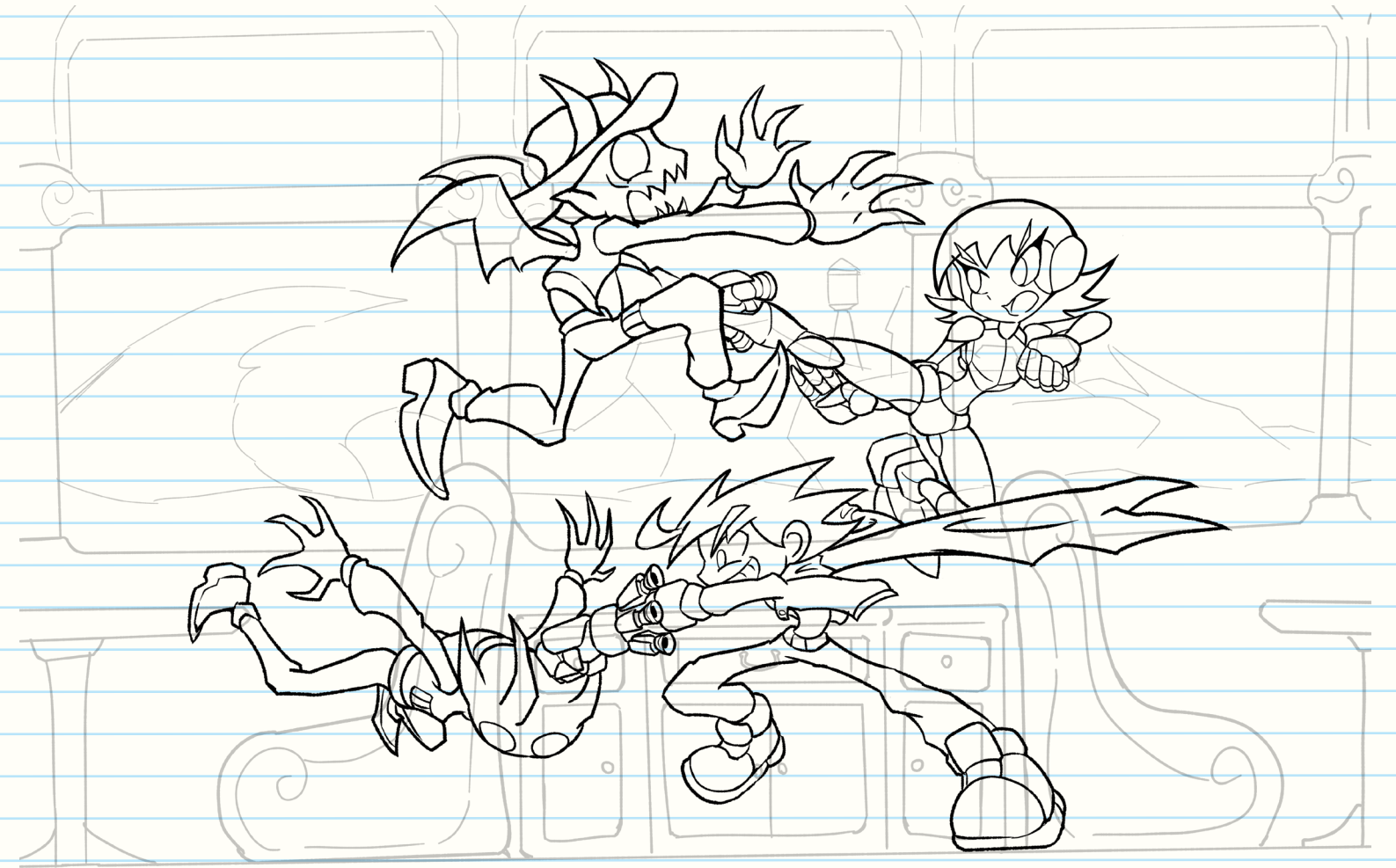


**THE SALOON**

# THE DEVIL

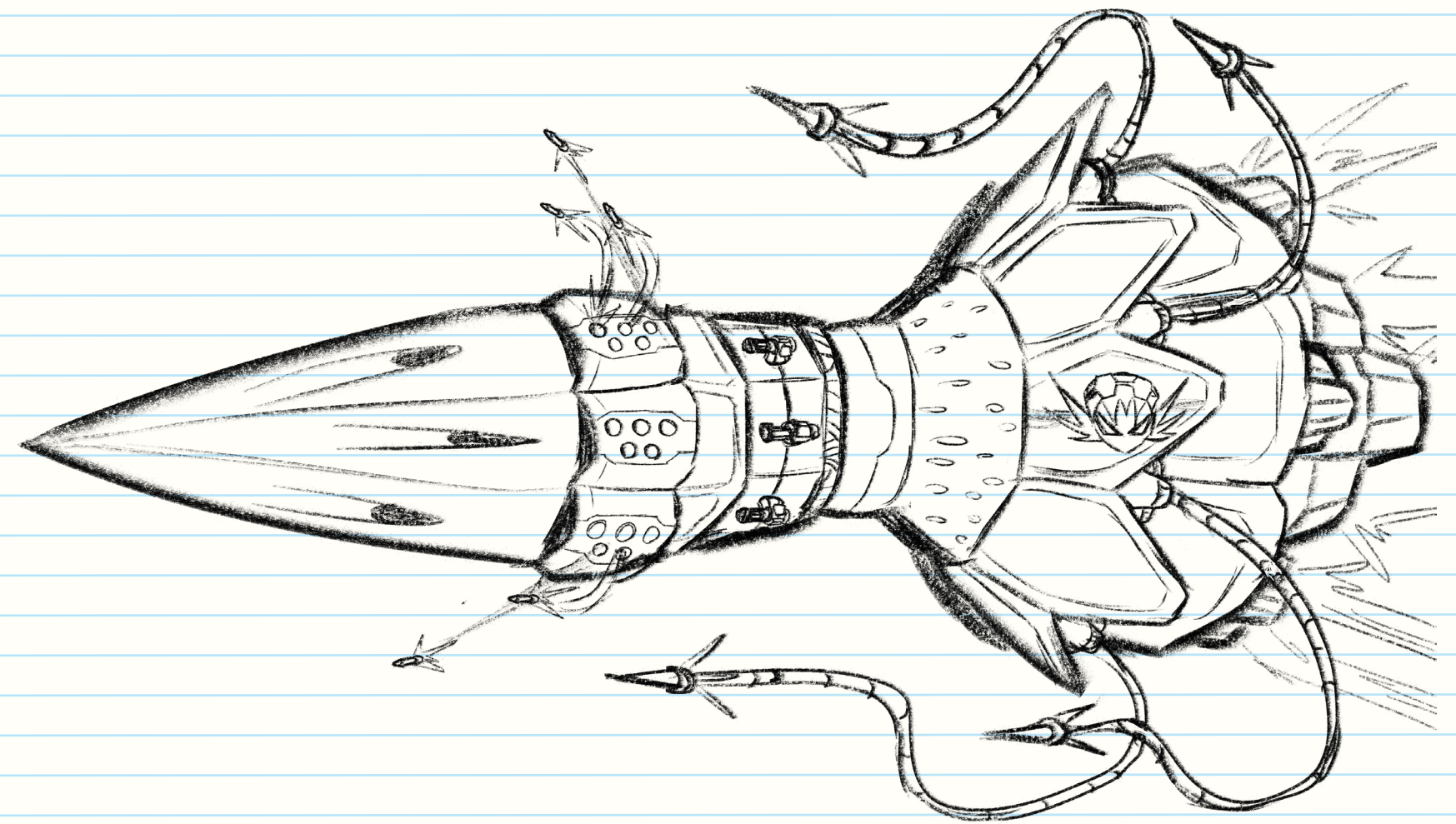


# TRAIN





# DEATH FORTRESS



J - In the end the Doctor wasn't strong enough and Team Sparks won the fight, stopping the Death Fortress once and for all!

# CREDITS

Jeff Chen - Art Lead, Character &  
Environment Artist, Ink & Lineart Artist

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