

## PART 7 LESSONS

“It is...known by all fr... farmers the need of the fe...fol...” Adora narrowed her eyes trying to decipher the word that was resisting her.

“Fallow” Catra replied bored.

“Don't tell me! I'll never learn if you always give me the answer!” exclaimed Adora, irritated.

“Well, you could have chosen an easier book to practice with. Who in the world chooses to learn how to read with treatise on agriculture?”

They had been focused on Adora's reading lesson all morning. After a couple of weeks of intensive study of the alphabet and the letter's phonetics, Adora had felt confident enough to put her newly acquired knowledge into practice, and decided that since she was going to start reading, what better than a book on agriculture to learn new techniques to apply in the fields when she returned to the village. Two birds with one stone. But her plans weren't going exactly as she would have liked.

Adora continued muttering through her teeth as Catra returned from the bookshelf with a new volume, this time much slimmer, and placed it in front of her.

“Try this one for now” she said.

Adora looked at the cover and realized it was a book of legends. Children's fairytales. She snorted indignantly.

“Really? Fairytales? I don't have time to waste on children's books. This way is going to be much more slower.” she complained.

Despite her words, she opened the book and began to leaf through it. The illustrations were impressive, and although she had initially thought it would be too easy, she realized she didn't understand half the words. She cleared her throat uncomfortably. She wasn't going to tell Catra that. Over her dead body.

Catra watched her with an amused expression. Since Adora had arrived at the castle, her daily life had been turned upside down. It was hard to be bored with her; she always had a story to tell, whether it was about her days working in the fields, or about her best friends, Glimmer and Bow. Catra sometimes felt as if she had known them all her life. And if it wasn't stories about her village or her friends, her incessant chatter and excitement over each new mystery she unraveled in the castle made Catra realize how incredibly lonely she had felt these past few years. Her smile softened as she watched Adora; despite her complaints, she had begun to read one of her favorite stories. The book she had selected had special meaning for her; it was the one her mother had read to her before bedtime.

Adora was having trouble with one of the words again, so she decided to give her a hand this time instead of telling her the answer directly.

“Let me see,” Catra said, leaning against the desk beside her.

She looked over her shoulder to read the passage that was giving her trouble. She noticed how Adora gasped, surprised at her sudden closeness, and she couldn't help but half-smile. She pretended not to notice her disturbance and pulled her cheek a little closer to hers, just enough to feel her breathing quicken against her own neck. A whiplash shook her stomach, a mixture of hunger and something else; something she didn't want to name. She took a deep breath for a



moment, scared the beast might wake up, but managed to control herself. She turned her head slightly to look at Adora only to find that she was watching her as well. They were barely separated by a whisper.

Adora held her breath as she noticed Catra leaning over her shoulder to help her. She felt the blood rushing to her cheeks and her pulse quickening. She didn't even consider that it might be dangerous if Catra suddenly lost control and lunged for her neck. All she could think of was the soft brush of her hair against her flushed cheek. The vampire shifted her position to face her, leaving her lips only inches from hers. Adora averted her gaze downward for a moment, to her mouth; to those fangs she could still feel sinking into her skin. She moistened her lips instinctively. Catra half-opened her mouth as if to say something, and Adora leaned forward almost without realizing it, their mouths about to touch.

"Adora..." Catra whispered. Her breath caressed her cheeks and ruffled the strands of hair that had scaped her ponytail and fell across her forehead.

"Mmmh?" Adora answered distracted.

Her mind was completely blank. All the words she had learned in the last few weeks had suddenly flown out of her head. Her pulse raced with anticipation. She was about to take the initiative and seal the space that separated them....

"Concentrate, you dork" Catra said suddenly, breaking the spell.

The vampire smirked and strightened up. Adora could feel her ears burning with embarrassment. Damn stuck-up princess.

"The word is "ecstatic,"" she said with some derision as she gave her a sidelong glance. It only made Adora blush even more.

The vampire then headed for the library door as her tail waved elegantly behind her. Adora couldn't help but follow her with her eyes. She hated not being in control of the situation, a feeling that seemed more and more common since her arrival at the castle. Ever since she met Catra.

"I'm going to rest for a while. Don't get too exhausted with your "practices", golden girl. Remember this afternoon it's our turn to ckeck the D18 shelf," she said as she walked away.

"I know, you don't need to remind me," Adora mumbled in annoyance.

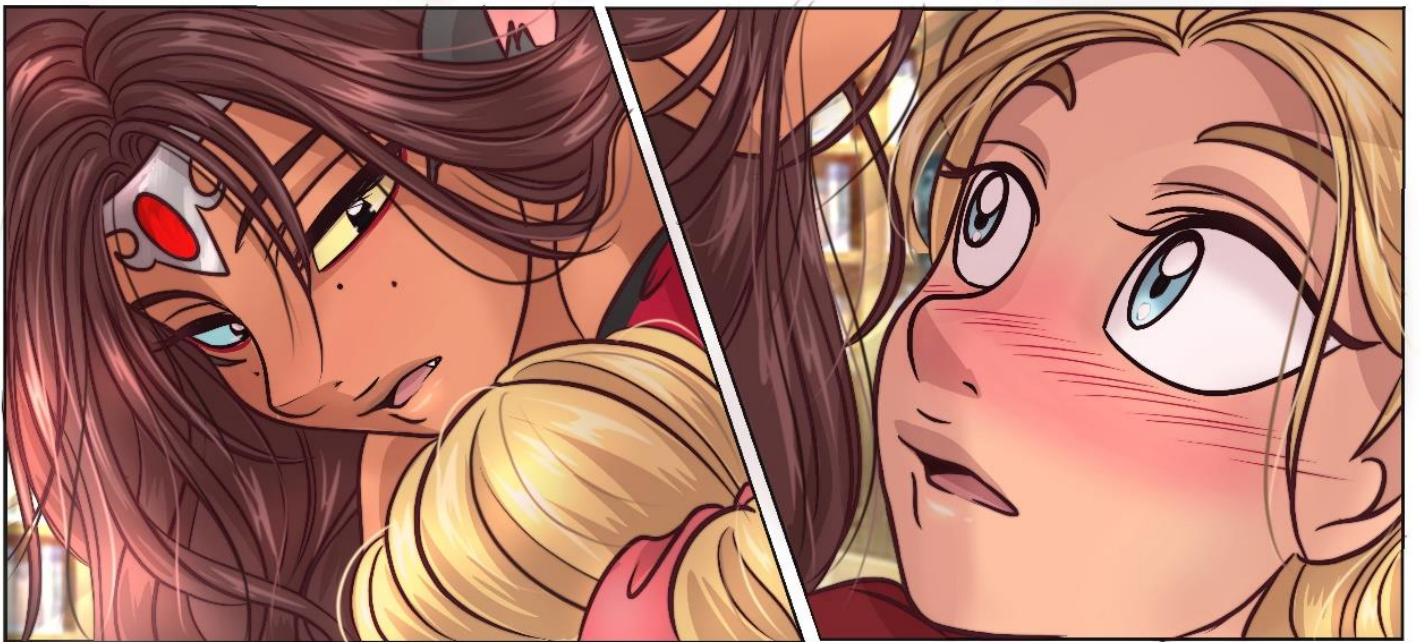
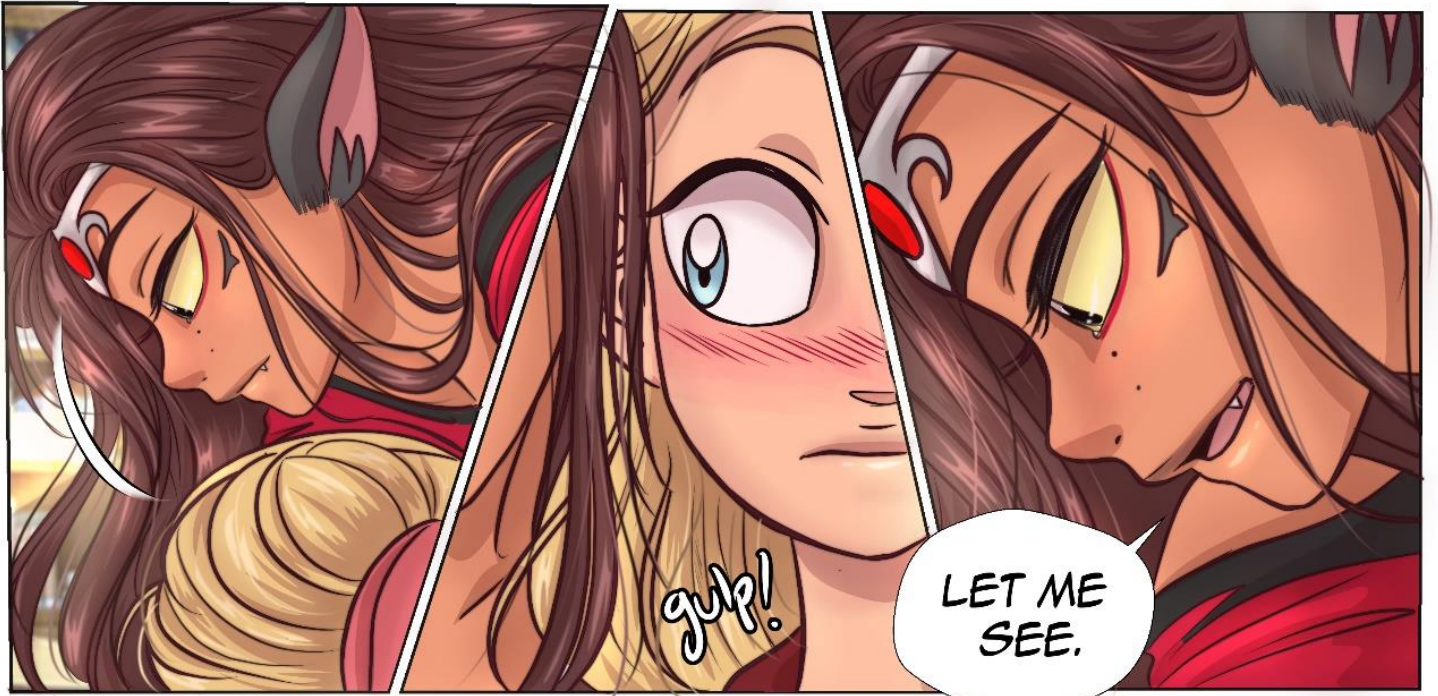
"Just in case. You seem very... distracted lately," the vampire replied.

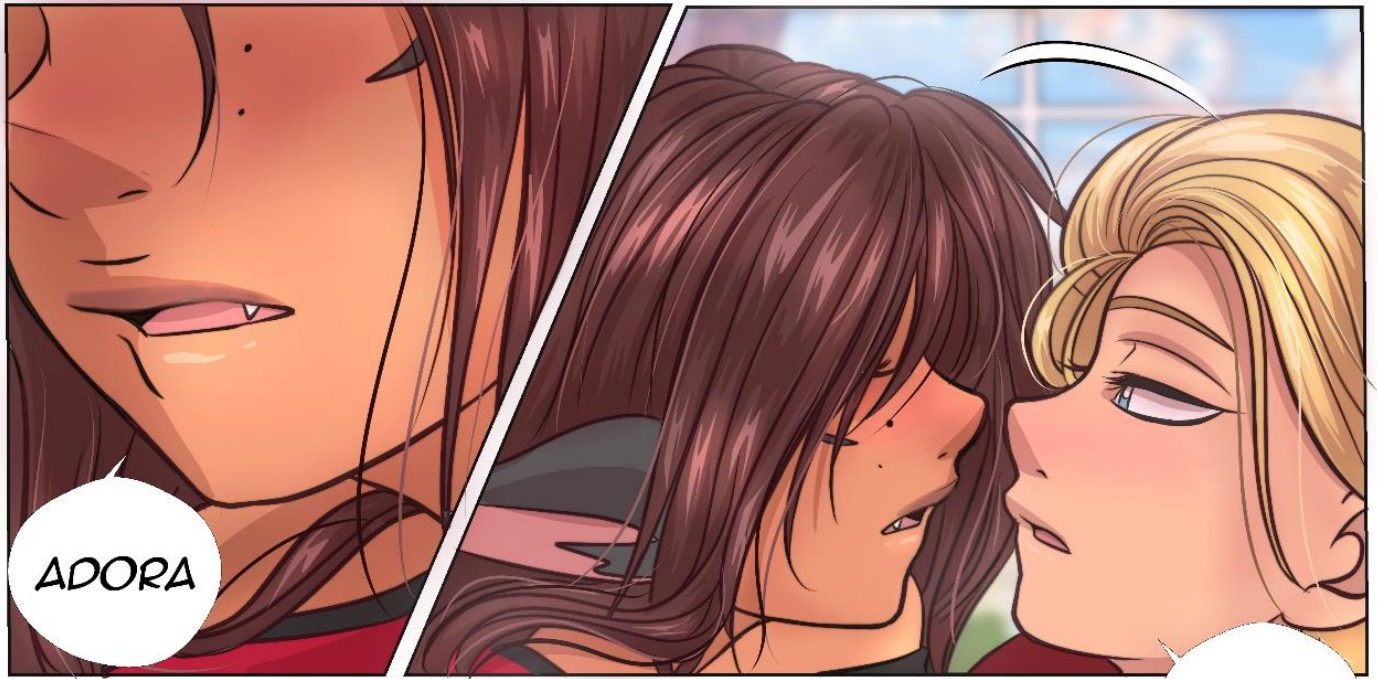
Adora opened her mouth to reply, but Catra chose that momento to turn and look at her. Her expression was sweet, which was rare for her, and it made Adora forget all about the curt retort she had prepared. She'd been at a loss for words far too often lately.

"Wait for me in your room, I'll come and get you." she said.

After this, she opened the door and left, leaving Adora with her confused thoughts immersed in a sea of books.

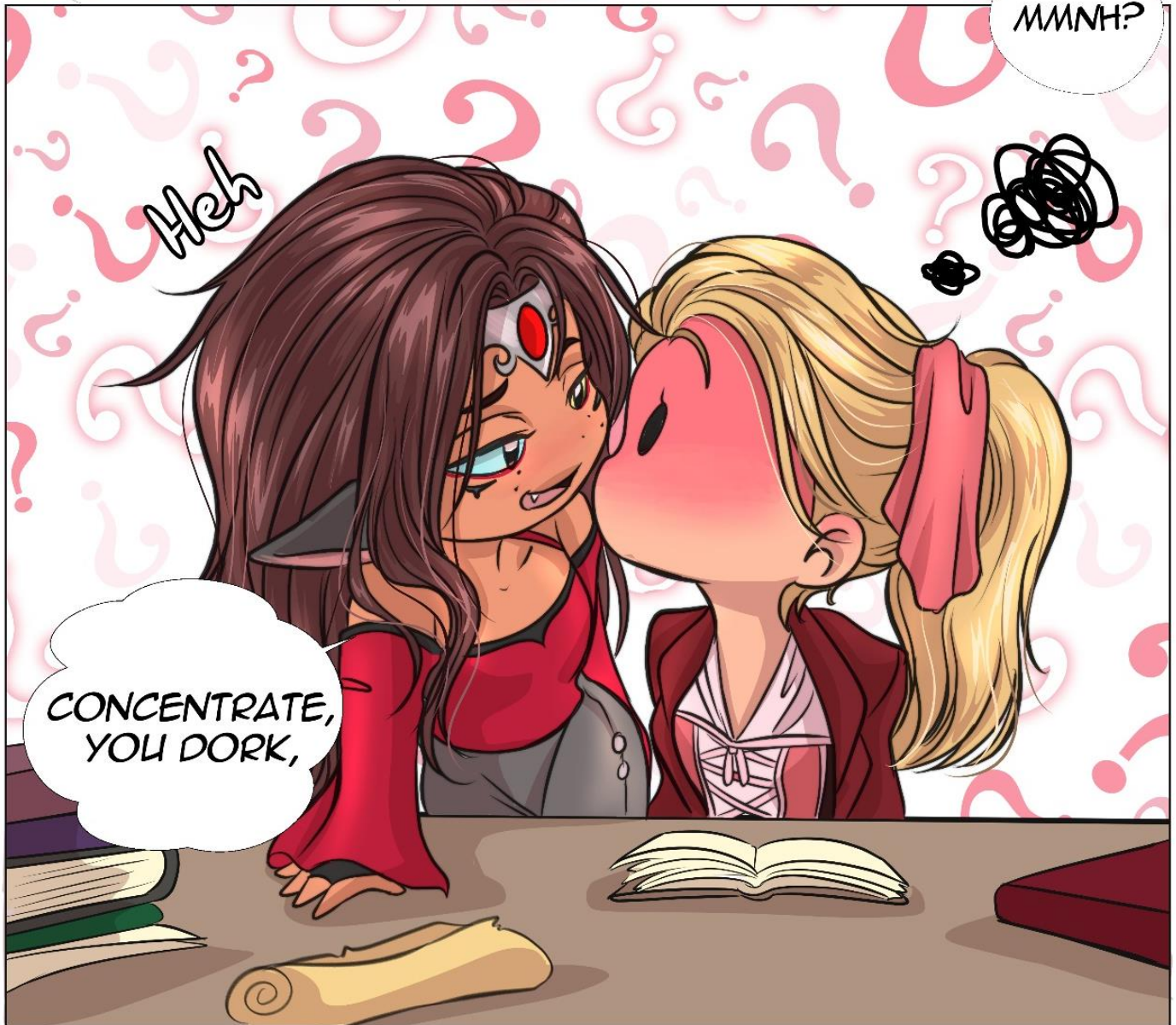






ADORA

MMNH?



Heh

CONCENTRATE,  
YOU DORK,

MMNH?