



I'M HAVING A HARDER TIME TAKING THINGS ON BLIND FAITH. THE THINGS I'VE BEEN TAUGHT AS A CHILD AREN'T LEADING TO A LIFE I WANT.



SO MANY OF OUR DECISIONS IN THIS LIFE COME DOWN TO A CHOICE BETWEEN HAPPINESS NOW, AND HAPPINESS IN HEAVEN. WE—



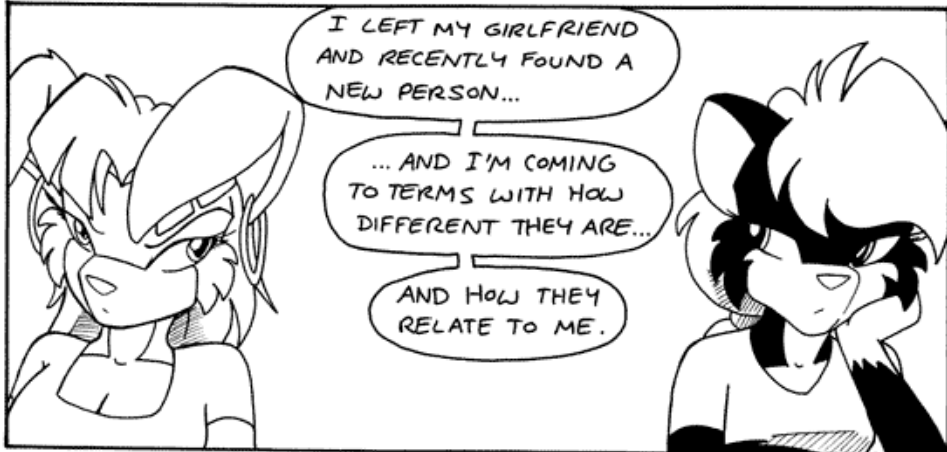
I'M HAVING A HARD TIME TAKING HEAVEN ON FAITH. SHOULD I TAKE IT BASED ON THE REVERENCE OF OTHERS? THIRD HAND ACCOUNTS OF MIRACLES? THERE ARE THINGS I KNOW ARE VERIFIABLE, RIGHT HERE, IN FRONT OF ME...



... AND HEAVEN ISN'T ONE OF THOSE THINGS.

TOMMY, HAS SOMETHING SIGNIFICANT HAPPENED TO BRING THESE THOUGHTS ABOUT SO SUDDENLY?





IT'S REALLY THE LAST THING ON MY MIND WHEN I'M WITH HER. IT'S LIKE I DON'T NEED ANY ASSURANCES TO FEEL GOOD.



SO MANY GIRLS SEEM ARTIFICIAL. SHE FEELS GENUINE. SHE DOESN'T FISH FOR WORSHIP OR COMPLIMENT.



SHE'S NEITHER DEMANDING NOR COMPROMISING. IT'S HARD FOR ME TO EXPLAIN THAT... SHE DOESN'T SEEM TO NEED A SPIRITUAL PROMISE TO TAKE SOLACE IN, OR TO FIND HAPPINESS.



SHE JUST SOMEHOW FINDS IT IN LIFE.

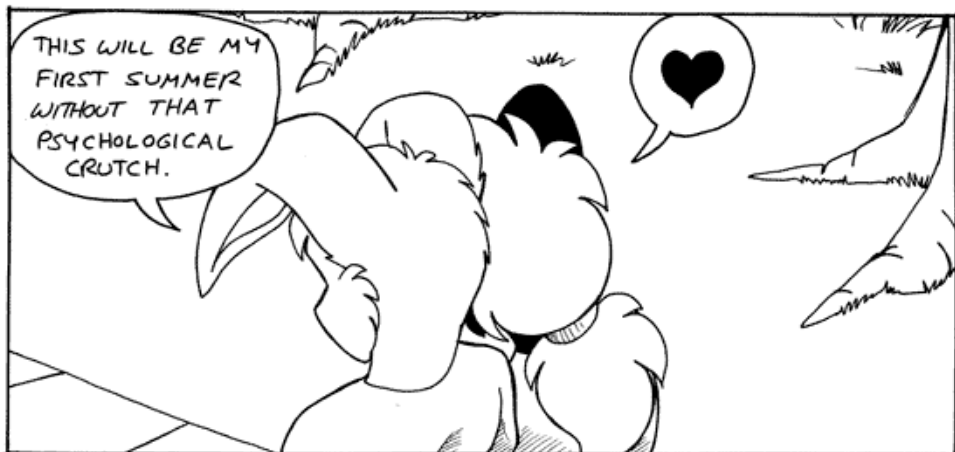
AND IT'S VERY CONTAGIOUS.

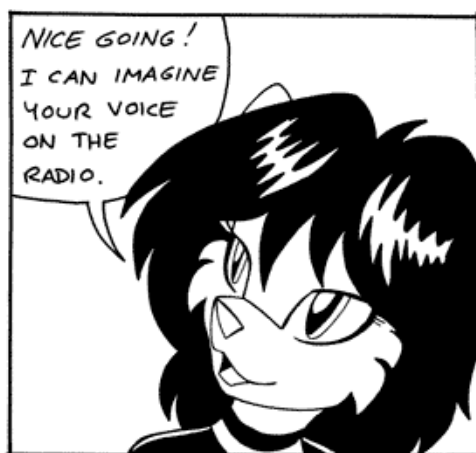
I THINK AS YOU ASSOCIATE WITH A WOMAN WHO'S ONLY INVESTED IN THIS EARTH, YOUR OWN REGARD FOR GOD AND HEAVEN WILL DIMINISH OVER TIME, JUST FROM A LACK OF REMINDER OR EMPHASIS.



KEEP IN MIND THE OPTION OF CHOOSING NEITHER. THERE ARE A LOT OF WOMEN WHO ARE GOOD FOR YOU BOTH MATERIALLY AND SPIRITUALLY.











WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO THIS SUMMER?

BE WITH MY FOLKS. GET A JOB FOR THE SUMMER.


SAVE MONEY.




YOUR PARENTS LIVE IN ALPHARETTA. THAT'S NOT TOO FAR FROM MY MOTHER.



GOOD. I'LL VISIT WHEN WE HAVE FREE WEEKENDS. AND WHEN YOU GET BORED FROM ALL THOSE NEWS MAGAZINES.

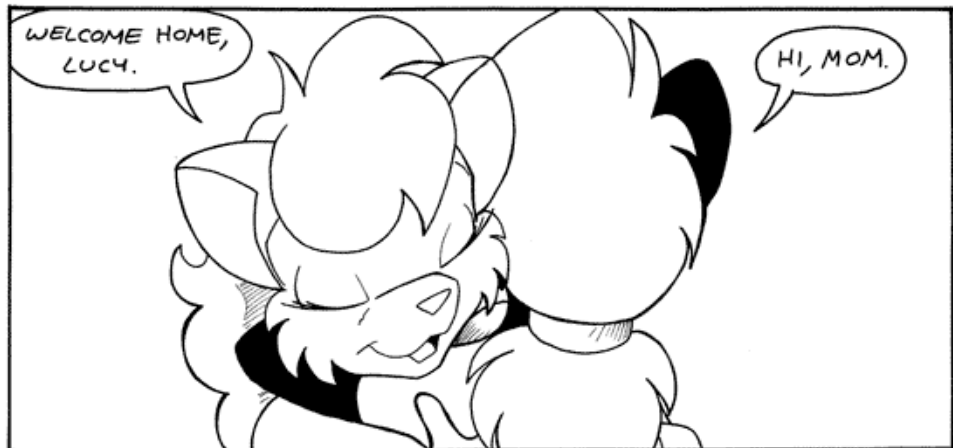


I'M ALREADY BORED WITH THIS ONE. IT'S NOT REALLY NEWS AS MUCH AS IT IS A SENSATIONALIST RAG.



SINCE WHEN DIDN'T YOU LIKE SENSATIONALISM?

YOU KNOW WHAT I ME--*NNNN*...



WELCOME HOME,  
LUCY.

HI, MOM.

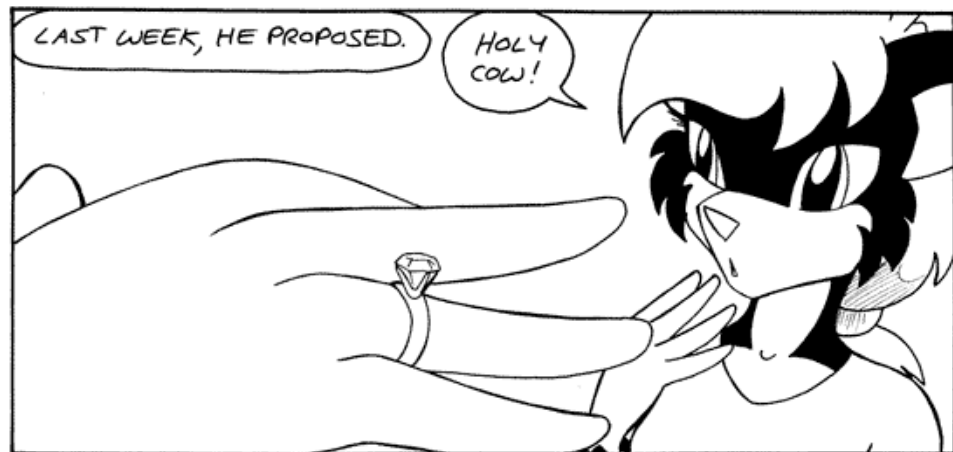


HOW'S SCHOOL?

DIFFICULT, BUT  
I LIKE IT.

HOW ARE YOU  
AND SAM?

I WAITED UNTIL  
YOU GOT HOME  
TO TELL YOU...

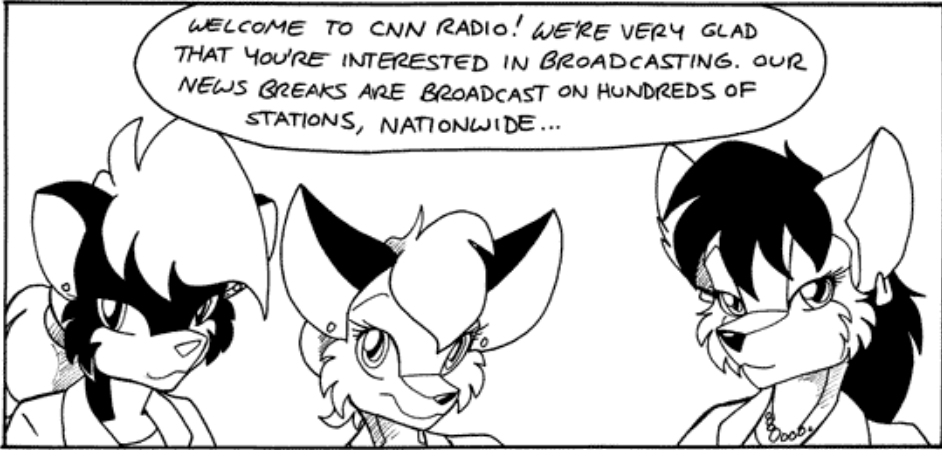


LAST WEEK, HE PROPOSED.


HOLY  
COW!









WELCOME TO CNN RADIO! WE'RE VERY GLAD THAT YOU'RE INTERESTED IN BROADCASTING. OUR NEWS BREAKS ARE BROADCAST ON HUNDREDS OF STATIONS, NATIONWIDE...



... AND ONCE YOU CLEAR ORIENTATION, YOU'LL BEGIN PRACTICE ON OUR LATE-NIGHT BREAK SLOTS.



NOW IT IS TRUE, THIS IS A BIT OF A COMPETITION. AFTER A MONTH OF ROTATING, WE'LL PICK ONE OF YOU TO EMPLOY.



SO GET ACQUAINTED WITH ONE ANOTHER, LUCY BLACK, CINDY SOUTHSIDE, AND D'ANNA DIRKLAND.



HEY LUCY! YOU LOOK A LITTLE... TIRED.

YEAH, IT'S THE HOURS.

I HAVE TO BE UP FROM MIDNIGHT TO SIX, READING NEWS EVERY HALF HOUR.

I HAVE TO WORK WITH A PERKY GIRL WHO THINKS THE PUN IS THE FINAL WORD IN COMEDY, EVEN WHEN NO ONE LAUGHS.

AND A DRAMA QUEEN WHO THINKS NEWS IS ONLY A SPRINGBOARD FOR EMBELLISHMENT.



DIDN'T GET MUCH SLEEP? YOU LOOK POSITIVELY CAT-ATONIC!

YOU CALL THIS NEWS!? HOW ARE YOU GOING TO GRAB PEOPLE WITH THIS?



JUST FUCKING READ IT.



WELL, AT LEAST THE COMPETITION IS EASY?

ONE WOULD THINK...

SO HOW IS EVERYTHING AT THE PORN STORE?



WELL, THE UP-SIDE IS I CAN WEAR ANYTHING I WANT.



I HAVE TO DEAL WITH THE SHAMED.

IT'S FOR MY MOTHER-IN-LAW.



THE SHAMELESS...

IF THIS WERE ANY BIGGER IT'D BE A TRAFFIC CONE!



...AND THOSE WHO ARE WILLING VECTORS FOR IT.

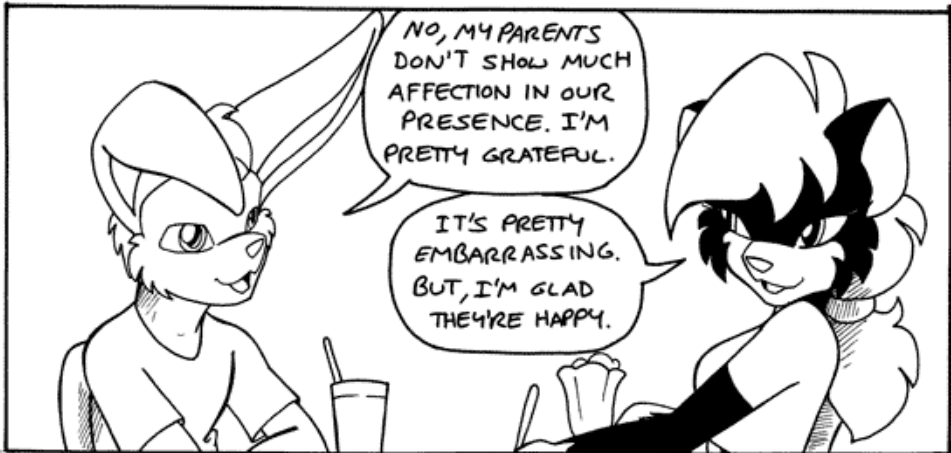
EXCUSE MEEEE...

DO YOU HAVE THIS ONE IN "TRANSLUCENT"?









NO, MY PARENTS DON'T SHOW MUCH AFFECTION IN OUR PRESENCE. I'M PRETTY GRATEFUL.

IT'S PRETTY EMBARRASSING. BUT, I'M GLAD THEY'RE HAPPY.



HOW'S THE INTERNSHIP? YOU LOOK LIKE YOU'VE ADJUSTED TO THE HOURS.



THE HOURS DON'T BOTHER ME ANYMORE. IT'S THE OFFICE POLITICS THAT'S STARTING TO WEAR.

OH?



THE NEWS IS CRAZY. YOU'D BE AMAZED AT HOW MUCH COMES IN AND HOW WE SHAPE ITS IMPORTANCE BY WHAT WE RUN OR DON'T.



ISRAELI TROOPS CONTINUE TO OCCUPY THE LEBANESE TOWN OF TYRE... I GUESS THEY'RE REALLY GOING TO FLATTEN TYRE...



THE PUNS I CAN TOLERATE. BUT I THINK THE OTHER GIRL IS SEEING THE NIGHT MANAGER.



NORMALLY, I WOULDN'T REALLY CARE, EXCEPT IT'S GIVING HER TREMENDOUS EDITORIAL LEEJAY, WITH NO ONE FROM THE DAY SHIFTS THERE TO KNOW OR CARE.

DANNA, WHY ARE WE STILL LEADING INTO THE BROTHER'S TESTIMONY IN THE COP-SHOOTS-BOY STORY?



WE'RE KEEPING IT RELEVANT.

BUT IT ISN'T RELEVANT. THE BROTHER WAS PROVEN WRONG AND NO ONE ELSE IS RUNNING IT.



NO ONE CAN PROVE IT ISN'T TRUE, AND IT'S THE DIRECTION WE WANT TO TAKE THE STORY.



BUT YOU'VE LEFT OUT THE MENTION OF HIS CREDIBILITY!  
IT'S ALMOST LIKE LYING ABOUT A STORY!

IT'S NOT A "LIE", LUCY. IT'S JUST AN "OMISSION". WE DON'T HAVE TIME TO MENTION EVERYTHING, AND WE HAVE TO KEEP THE STORY INTERESTING.

IT'S SIMPLE, LUCY: WHATEVER WE THINK OF THE NEWS, THE LISTENERS WANT TO BE INFORMED AND ENTERTAINED. THAT MEANS REAL LIFE IS COMPETING WITH MUSIC, BOOKS, AND MOVIES.

COPS KILLING KIDS ISN'T AS COMPETATIVE UNLESS THE COP IS POSSIBLY WRONG.

WHAT ABOUT THE POOR COP!?

IT'S ONE MAN, LUCY! WE'VE GOT A WHOLE COMPANY TO THINK ABOUT!

START TAKING YOUR CAREER A LITTLE MORE SERIOUSLY.



TO MAKE MATTERS WORSE, I FOUND OUT SHE WAS BEING CONSIDERED FOR HIRE OVER ME.

YOU'RE BOTH VERY GOOD. FROM THE STANDPOINT OF SKILL I'D SAY YOU WERE EQUAL.

BUT?

D'ANNA HAS, WHAT WE CALL, A MORE "COSMOPOLITAN" VOICE. THERE IS A GENERAL BIAS AGAINST THE SOUTHERN ACCENT IN NATIONAL BROADCASTING.

I'D LIKE TO STEER YOU TOWARD WSB, OUR LOCAL AFFILIATE. THEY'RE FAR MORE OPEN TO THE "LOCAL FLAVOR".

THAT'S PRETTY STRANGE. YOUR ACCENT ISN'T THAT STRONG.

WELL, I GUESS THERE'S "JUST ENOUGH" TO FORM A BIAS.



I SUPPOSE WORKING FOR A LOCAL STATION WOULDN'T BE SO BAD.

SO, WHAT WILL YOU DO?

WELL, I'D HATE TO SEE YOU GIVE UP SO EASILY.

WELL, I COULD TRY TO MITIGATE MY ACCENT, BUT...

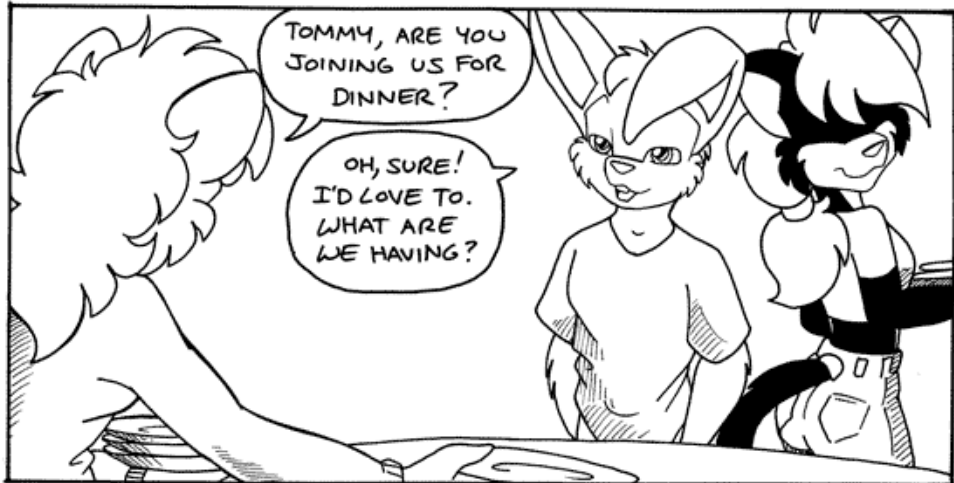
HEH, NO. THAT'S NOT WHAT I MEANT.

I MEAN, YOU'RE ACCEPTING THEIR TERMS.

IF THEY'RE GOING TO MAKE A DECISION, THEY SHOULD MAKE IT WITH THEIR EYES WIDE OPEN. THEY SHOULD KNOW AS MUCH ABOUT THIS OTHER WOMAN AS POSSIBLE.

YOU'RE GOING TO BE A JOURNALIST, RIGHT?

CONSIDER IT "PRACTICE".



TOMMY, ARE YOU JOINING US FOR DINNER?

OH, SURE!  
I'D LOVE TO.  
WHAT ARE WE HAVING?



WE'RE HAVING BBQ CHICKEN WITH CORNBREAD, COLLARD GREENS, FRIED OKRA, BAKED SWEET POTATO, BUTTERMILK BISCUITS, AND SWEET POTATO PIE.



LET ME CALL MY FOLKS AND LET THEM KNOW.



HE'S KIND OF CUTE.

THANK YOU.

WHAT'S HIS MAJOR?

PHYSICS.

WOW! HE'S SMART?

YEAH.

ARE YOU...?

MM-HM.

CAN HE...?

OH YEAH.

OH SHH! HE'S COMING BACK...

HEY, MOM. I'M OVER AT LUCY'S MOTHER'S HOUSE.

YOU ARE?

YEAH, I'M STAYING FOR DINNER.

SON, WHY ARE YOU DOING THIS TO YOUR MOTHER?



I'M NOT DOING ANYTHING TO YOU.

HOW LONG DO YOU INSIST ON DATING THAT GIRL?

HER NAME IS LUCY, AND... WELL, IT'S NONE OF YOUR BUSINESS.

I DIDN'T STOP BEING YOUR MOTHER JUST BECAUSE YOU TURNED 20, YOUNG MAN!



I DIDN'T SAY YOU WEREN'T MY MOTHER. I SAID WHO I DATE IS NONE OF YOUR BUSINESS.

YOUNG MAN...

LOOK, I HAVE TO GO. WE'RE SACRIFICING A GOAT TO SATAN, BEFORE DINNER.

TOMMY, DON'T MAKE FUN OF ME!

BYE.

DID YOU HEAR THAT, HAROLD?  
DO YOU KNOW WHAT YOUR SON IS  
BECOMING? DO YOU KNOW WHO  
HE'S DATING?

HM? WHU--?  
IS HE GAY?

CLIK



FOR THE LAST TIME, HE'S **NOT** GAY!  
HE'S DATING SOME ATHEIST GIRL HE  
MET IN COLLEGE, AND IT'S TURNING  
HIM AGAINST HIS FAMILY!

OH.



BING  
DONG

WHO  
COULD  
THAT BE?

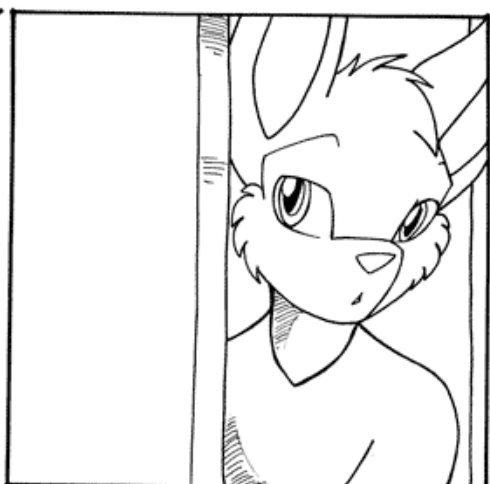
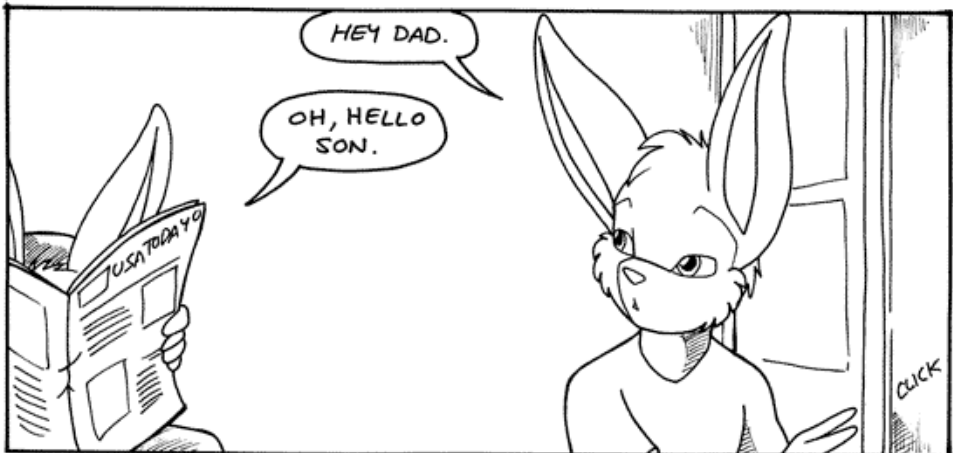


RACHEL!?

HELLO,  
MRS. PETERSON.

IS TOMMY  
HOME?

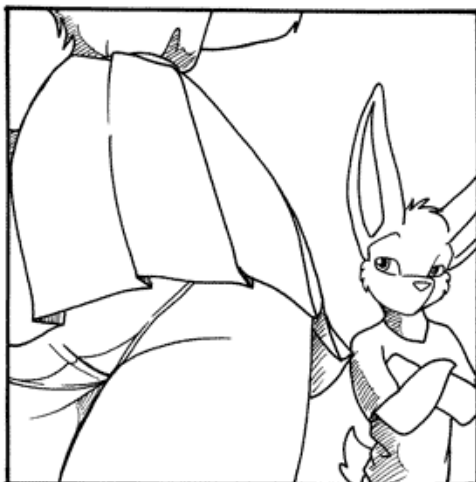




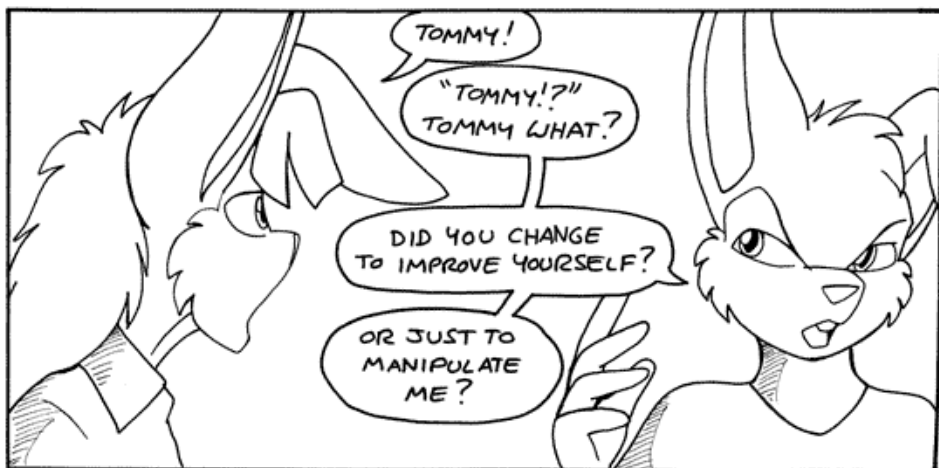


TOMMY, I KNOW YOU HAVE EVERY RIGHT TO BE UPSET, BUT I COULDN'T GO ON WITHOUT TELLING YOU HOW I'VE FELT SINCE. I FEEL AWFUL.

I WANT YOU TO KNOW THAT I'VE CHANGED SO MUCH! FOR THE BETTER!



WELL, GOOD FOR YOU.

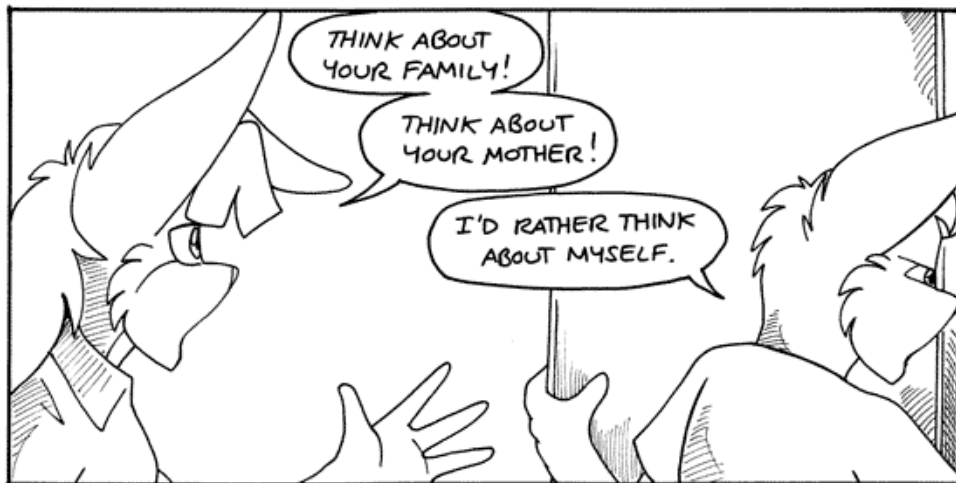


TOMMY!

"TOMMY!?"  
TOMMY WHAT?

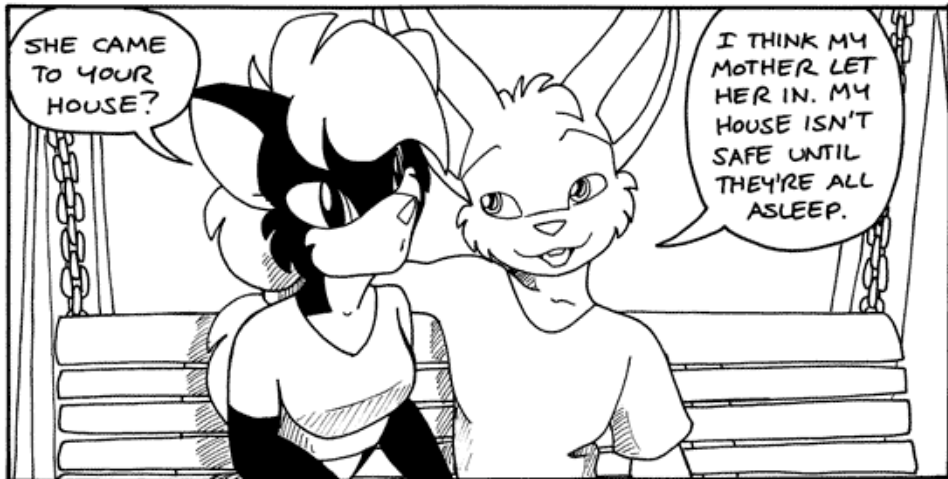
DID YOU CHANGE TO IMPROVE YOURSELF?

OR JUST TO MANIPULATE ME?









SHE CAME  
TO YOUR  
HOUSE?

I THINK MY  
MOTHER LET  
HER IN. MY  
HOUSE ISN'T  
SAFE UNTIL  
THEY'RE ALL  
ASLEEP.



YOU'RE TAKING IT VERY WELL. I  
CAN'T IMAGINE BEING THAT ANGRY  
WITH MY MOTHER.



WELL, I CAN'T SAY THERE WASN'T  
JUST A LITTLE SATISFACTION IN  
TELLING HER TO GO TO HELL.



HEH. I'M  
GLAD YOU CAME  
OVER. I NEEDED  
A BREAK FROM  
MY RESEARCH.

HOW'S THAT  
GOING,  
ANYHOW?

IT GOES FRIGHTENINGLY WELL. I'M FINDING OUT ALL KINDS OF SICK THINGS FROM WHEN SHE WAS WRITING IN COLLEGE.



SHE GOT A PROFESSOR CANNED AFTER DIGGING UP SOME BOGUS SEXUAL MISCONDUCT CHARGES ON HIM.



HIS CAREER WAS RUINED THE POLICE AND THE UNIVERSITY INVESTIGATED HIM AND FOUND NO EVIDENCE OF MISCONDUCT.

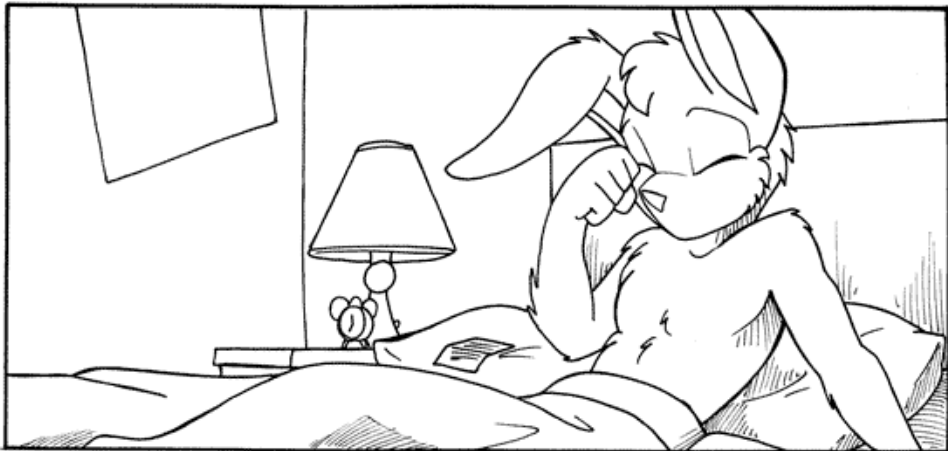


BUT THE STORY WAS ALREADY OUT. SHE HAD ALREADY GRADUATED BY THE TIME IT WAS OVER AND HE'D ALREADY MISSED A YEAR OF WORK.



HER WHOLE CAREER IS BASED ON SMEAR. THERE WAS AN ADULT CLUB IN NEW YORK THAT SHE COVERED, AND WROTE A STORY ABOUT SANCTIONED RAPE... A YEAR LATER IT WAS DISCOVERED THAT SHE HERSELF WAS KICKED OUT OF IT FOR THROWING A TANTRUM AND DISREGARDING THE RULES. BUT HER STORY'S DAMAGE WAS ALREADY DONE.







GO HAVE SOME COFFEE AND RELAX. I'M GOING TO FINISH LOOKING THIS OVER.



THANK YOU, SIR.

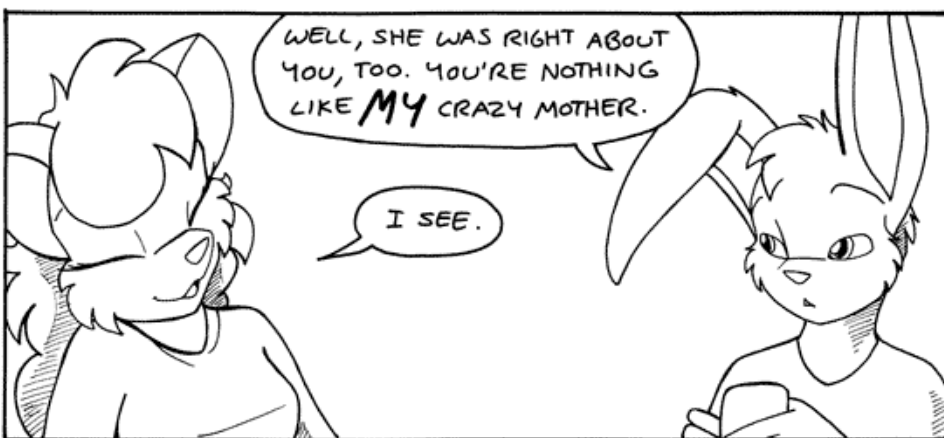
NO, LUCY.



THANK YOURSELF.











I'M HOME!



HOW'D IT GO?



THEY GAVE HER THE BROADCASTING JOB, AND MOVED ME TO REPORTING!



CONGRATULATIONS, HONEY.

GOOD JOB.

THANK YOU.

**END**