





HEY, I BROUGHT YOU
SOME FRESH READING
MATERIAL.

DUDE, THANKS.



WHAT DO THE
DOCS SAY...?

THE ROUND HIT MY SPINE.
I'LL BE GETTING AROUND IN
A WHEELCHAIR WHEN I
FINALLY GET OUT OF
HERE.



SHIT...

DON'T FEEL
BAD FOR ME,
MAN.

I'M STILL
ALIVE.



HEY YOU LIVE IN
SMYRNA. I'M PRETTY
CLOSE. I'LL VISIT WHEN
YOU GET OUT.

SO LONG AS YOU
CAN KEEP ME ROLLING
IN BOOKS AND
NINTENDO GAMES.

WHISTLE!
OVER HERE, FISK!

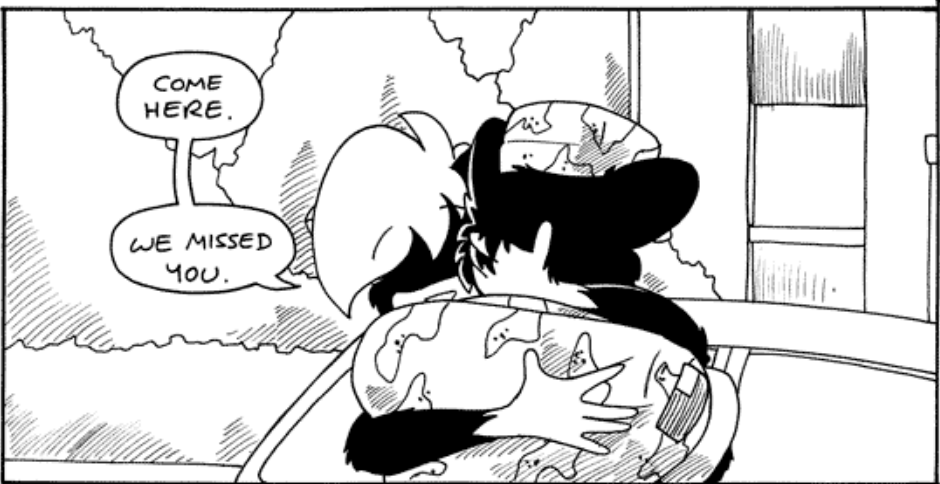



UNLESS YOU WANT
TO WALK ALL THE WAY
HOME FROM HERE!



COME
HERE.


WE MISSED
YOU.






EVERYONE'S WAITING
FOR YOU AT HOME. JUST
ABOUT EVERYONE WAS INVITED.

I HOPE YOU'RE HUNGRY. WE'VE
GOT ABOUT EVERY KIND OF
GRILLSTUFFS YOU CAN
THINK OF!



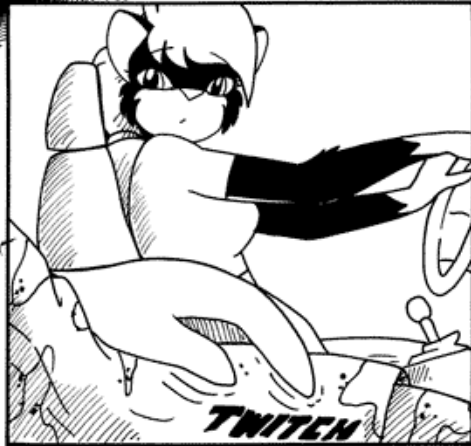
SAM AND MOM ARE THERE,
OF COURSE. THEY'RE HOPING
TO GET MARRIED NOW THAT
YOU'RE HOME FOR A WHILE.

MY BOYFRIEND TOMMY IS THERE,
AND SO IS JESSICA, ROBERT,
ELIZABETH AND HER NEW GUY,
AMY... AND OH YEAH, BETH.



AND I KNOW...
...UM...

Z





YOU'RE HOME.




EVERYONE'S WAITING.



HEH. EVERYONE?

OH H H YEAH.
GET READY FOR
THE BIG
HUG-A-THON.





I'M SO GLAD YOU'RE ALL RIGHT, SON.

I'M JUST GLAD TO BE HOME.



WELCOME HOME.

THANK YOU.




HEY!

HEY!



MMM!

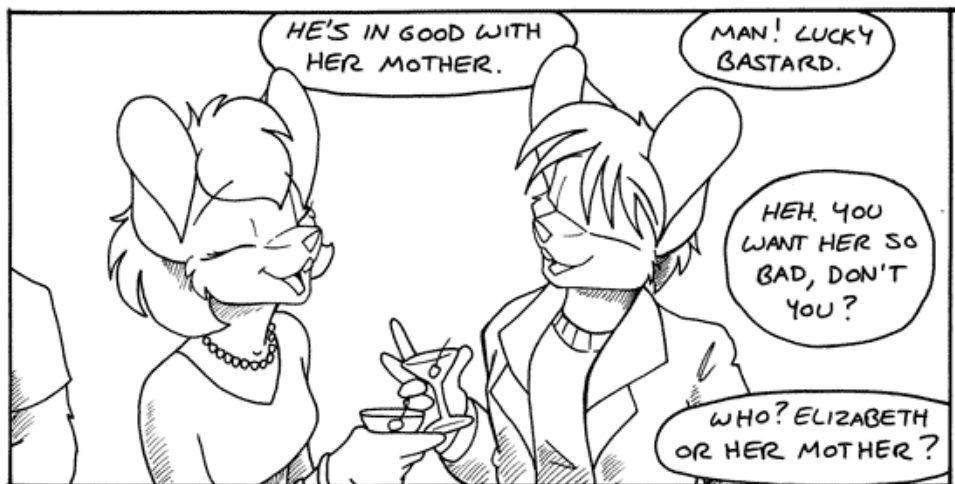
YEEEEK!

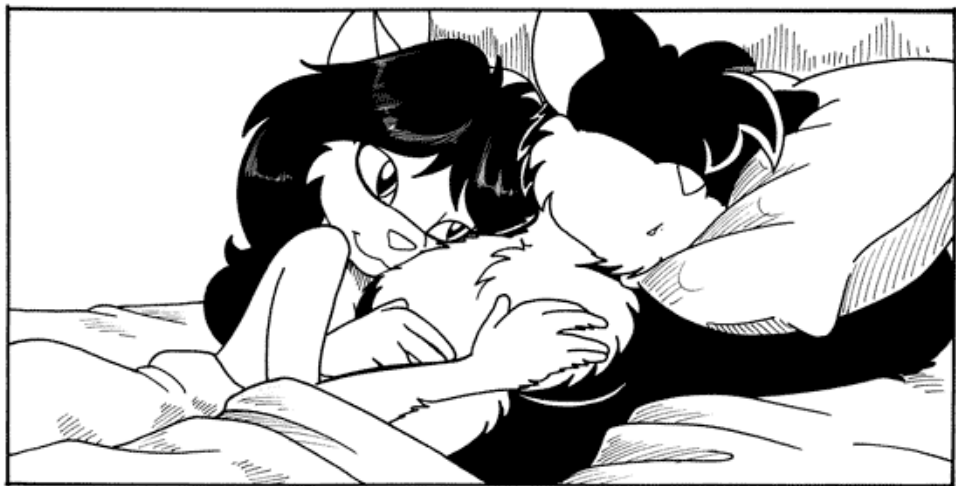
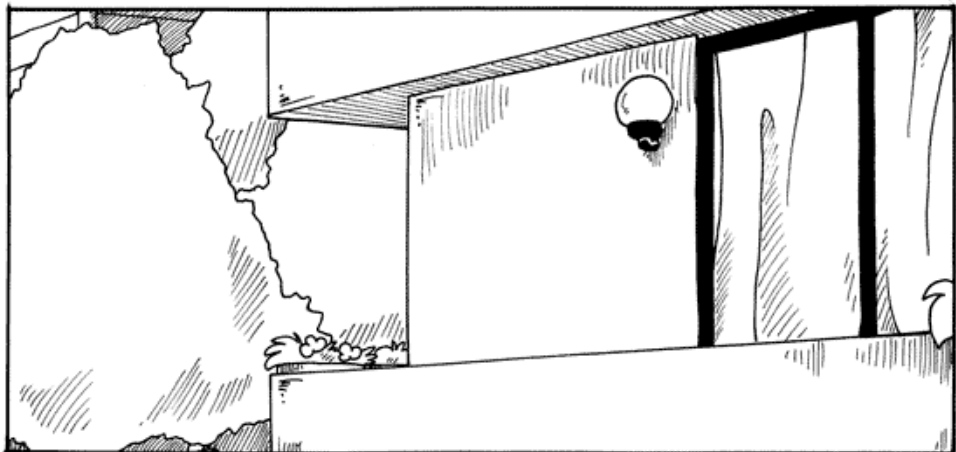


GOODNESS. HOW LONG IS THAT HUG GONNA LAST?

WHAT? WHAT WAS THAT?...









ARE YOU DREAMING
OF SOMETHING BAD?

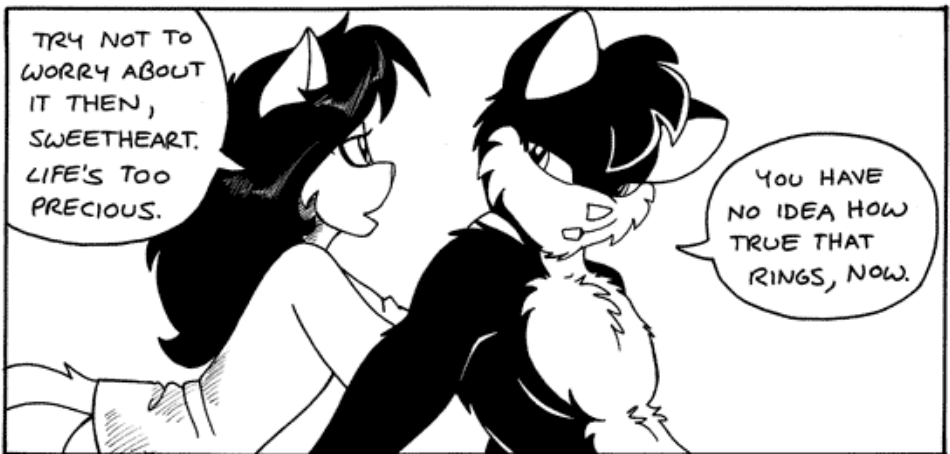
SORT OF. NOTHING
I WOULDN'T DO
AGAIN, THOUGH.



DO YOU FEEL
BAD ABOUT IT?

NO... BUT PART OF
ME THINKS I SHOULD.

MAYBE
THAT'S WHAT'S
BUGGIN' ME.



TRY NOT TO
WORRY ABOUT
IT THEN,
SWEETHEART.
LIFE'S TOO
PRECIOUS.

YOU HAVE
NO IDEA HOW
TRUE THAT
RINGS, NOW.



LIFE'S FRAGILE. I'M MORE DEDICATED TO IT NOW THAN I WAS BEFORE. I WANT TO ENJOY IT...

... AND EVERYTHING IN IT.



BECAUSE YOU SAW PEOPLE DIE?

BECAUSE A FRIEND OF MINE WAS CRIPPLED FOR LIFE AND IT COULD HAVE EASILY BEEN ME.

I KNOW SOME GUYS WHO FEEL GUILTY FOR COMING THROUGH UNSCATHED...

I REALIZED I CAN'T FEEL GUILTY FOR SOMETHING BEYOND MY CONTROL.



I'M GLAD YOU CAME THROUGH OKAY, FISK.




AND I SURE DON'T FEEL GUILTY ABOUT THIS...

YEEK!



IS THIS THE PLACE?

YEAH, I BELIEVE SO.



THIS'LL ONLY TAKE A FEW MINUTES.

I'LL BE HERE.



KNOCK
KNOCK
KNOCK

ENTRE!

40!
CARLOS!



HEY!
COME IN
AND HAVE
A SEAT!



I BROUGHT YOU SOME
NEW MAGAZINES, A VIDEO
GAME, AND A COUPLE OF
BOOKS YOU MIGHT
LIKE.

OH MAN.
THANKS, DUDE.




SO, HOW ARE THINGS
WITH THE V.A.?



DON'T GET ME STARTED...
I CAN'T GET ANSWERS
FROM ANYONE THERE.





ANSWERS? ABOUT
YOUR BACK?

NOT JUST MY
BACK. I'VE
BEEN SLEEPING
TOO MUCH, LATELY.

WELL, THAT
DOESN'T SOUND
BAD...


I'VE NEVER SLEPT FOR TWELVE
HOURS BEFORE. WHEN I WOKE
UP, MY MUSCLES WERE LIKE
LEAD. IT TOOK ME THREE HOURS
TO GET UP.

I ALMOST MISSED MY
APPOINTMENT.

THEY DON'T
KNOW WHY?


THEY DON'T
KNOW SHIT.

YOU PRETTY MUCH CAUGHT
ME ON ONE OF MY GOOD
DAYS.

A black and white comic panel showing two anthropomorphic cats. The cat on the left has dark fur with white markings on its face and chest. The cat on the right has dark fur and large, expressive eyes. They are both looking towards the right.

HOW'D IT GO?

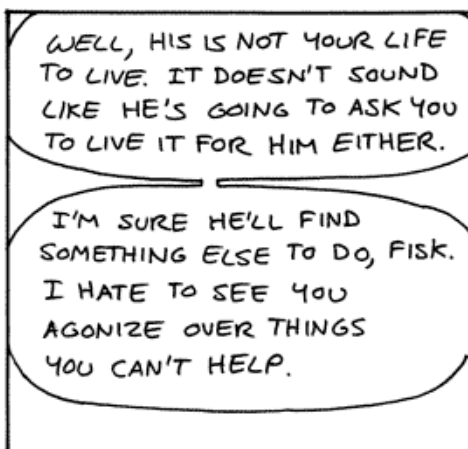
HE'S NOT GOOD.

A close-up of the dark-furred cat's face, looking slightly down and to the right with a thoughtful expression.

I HOPE HE'LL FIND SOMETHING ELSE TO DO. I CAN SEE THE FRUSTRATION IN HIS EYES. HE'S DESPERATE TO BE SELF RELIANT AGAIN...

... IT'S AN AGONIZING SORT OF HELPLESSNESS. I CAN'T HELP BUT SEE HOW HE TRIES TO HIDE IT WHEN I BRING HIM THINGS HE CAN'T JUST GO GET FOR HIMSELF.

AROUND HIM, I FEEL JUST AS HELPLESS, SINCE I CAN'T REALLY DO ANYTHING ABOUT IT.

A close-up of the dark-furred cat's face, looking directly forward with a neutral expression.

WELL, HIS IS NOT YOUR LIFE TO LIVE. IT DOESN'T SOUND LIKE HE'S GOING TO ASK YOU TO LIVE IT FOR HIM EITHER.

I'M SURE HE'LL FIND SOMETHING ELSE TO DO, FISK. I HATE TO SEE YOU AGONIZE OVER THINGS YOU CAN'T HELP.



HEY BETH.

THAT GUY OVER THERE'S CHECKING US OUT.

HE'S CHECKING YOU OUT. I HAVE ENOUGH BOYFRIENDS. I DON'T GIVE OFF SIGNALS.



WHAT DO YOU MEAN?

YOU WEAR YOUR PURSE STRAP ACROSS YOUR CHEST, SO YOUR TITS STAND OUT.

BUT I HAVE NO PURSE. WHICH MEANS I MUST CARRY A WALLET...

...WHICH MEANS...

OH, C'MON! YOU'RE WEARING A TIGHTER SHIRT THAN ME!

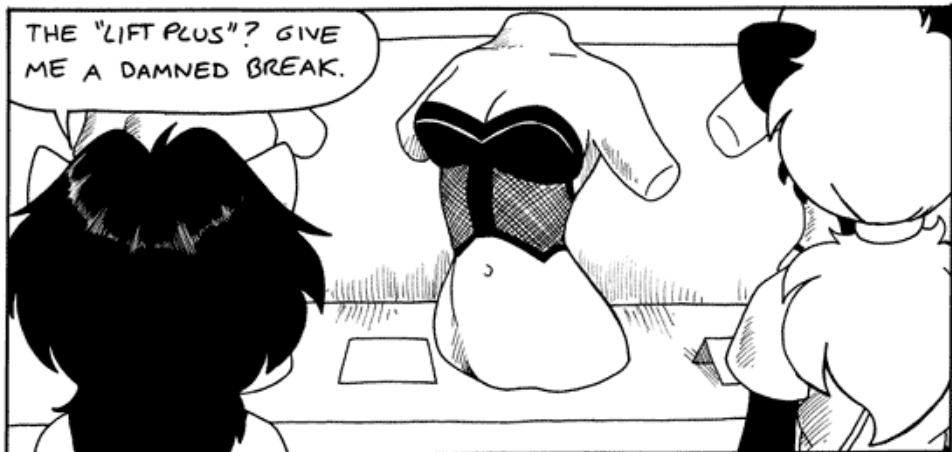



... WHICH MEANS YOU GET CHECKED OUT BY GIRLS.

SHIT. LET ME BORROW YOUR PURSE.

I DON'T WANT TO LOOK LIKE I CARRY A WALLET!



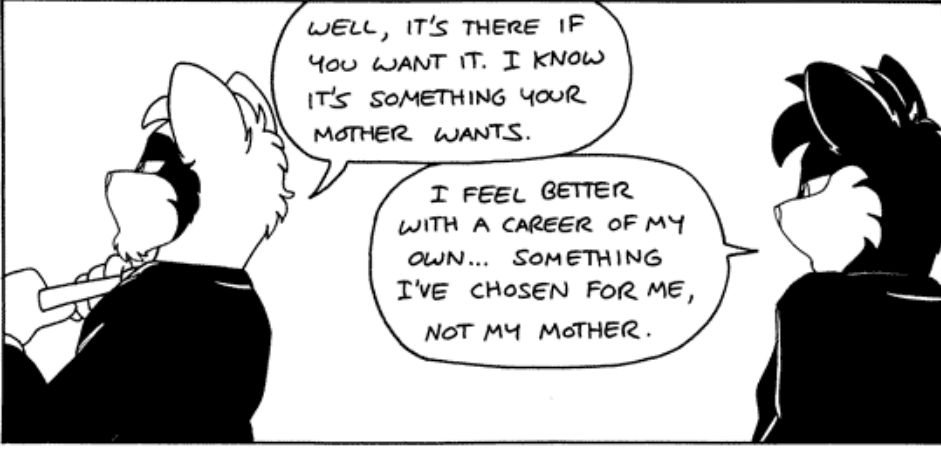




YOU HAVE A JOB AT MY COMPANY
IF YOU WANT IT, FISK.

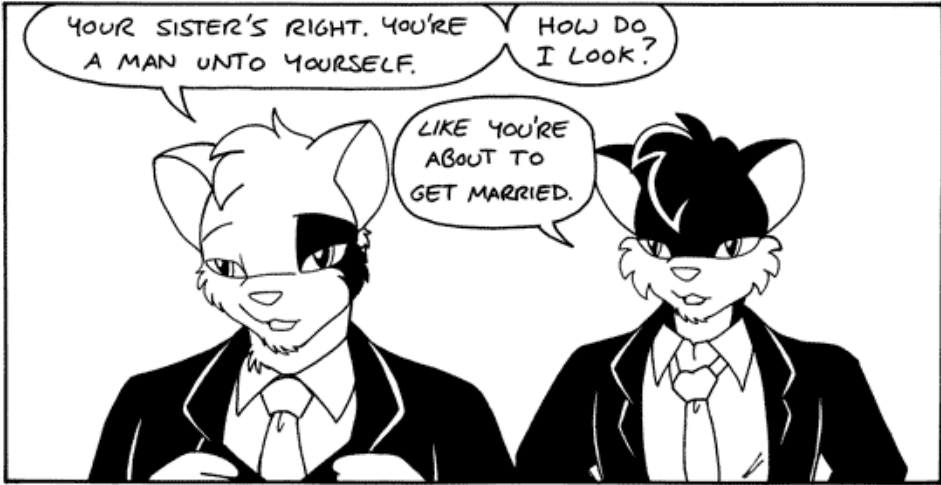
SINCE YOUR
ARMY TERM IS
COMING UP.

THANKS. I
DON'T KNOW IF
IT'S NECESSARY.



WELL, IT'S THERE IF
YOU WANT IT. I KNOW
IT'S SOMETHING YOUR
MOTHER WANTS.

I FEEL BETTER
WITH A CAREER OF MY
OWN... SOMETHING
I'VE CHOSEN FOR ME,
NOT MY MOTHER.



YOUR SISTER'S RIGHT. YOU'RE
A MAN UNTO YOURSELF.

HOW DO
I LOOK?

LIKE YOU'RE
ABOUT TO
GET MARRIED.



HEY, IT'S
COUSIN PERSIA.

HOW LONG
HAS IT
BEEN SINCE
WE'VE SEEN
HER?



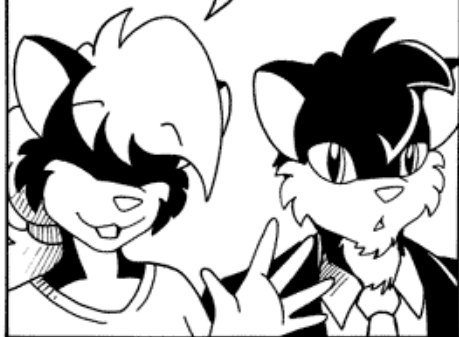
MM?

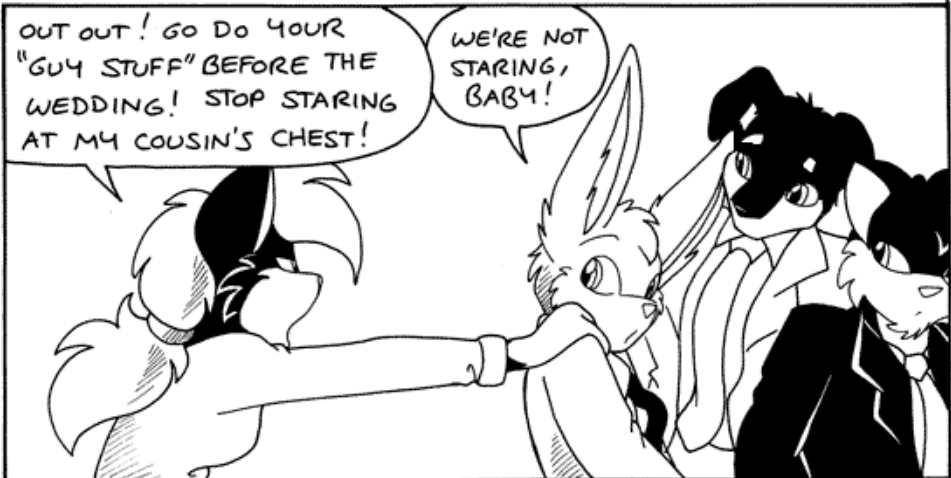


HI, GUYS!




HI, PERSIA! COME
ON OVER!





OUT OUT! GO DO YOUR
"GUY STUFF" BEFORE THE
WEDDING! STOP STARING
AT MY COUSIN'S CHEST!

WE'RE NOT
STARING,
BABY!



SORRY ABOUT
THAT, PERSIA.

IT'S OKAY, LUCY.
I'M USED TO LOOKS.

WRR.

SMEK
SMEK



IT'S NOT EASY BEING A WALKING
BEAUTY-MAGAZINE COVER. SOMETIMES
I WISH I HAD NORMAL, DISTINGUISHING
LITTLE PHYSICAL
FLAWS LIKE
YOU DO.

I DIDN'T MEAN THAT
TO SOUND QUITE THAT WAY.

YOU HAVE A
GOOD LIFE, A
NICE BOYFRIEND...



WHEN YOU'RE REALLY
PRETTY, IT'S ALL PEOPLE
LOOK AT. SOME PEOPLE
AUTOMATICALLY THINK
YOU'RE STUPID.

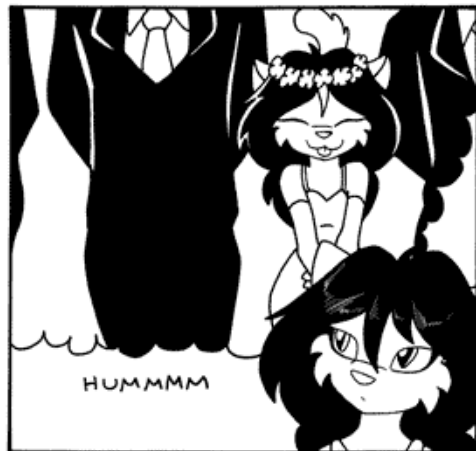
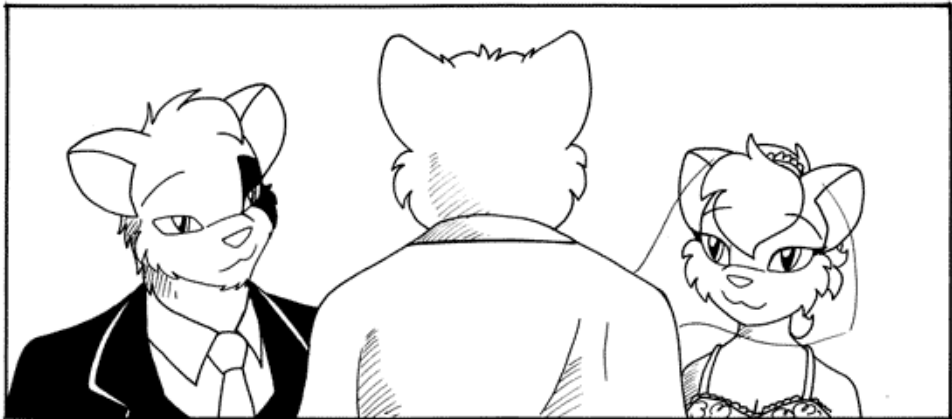
EVERYONE WANTS TO USE YOU. CHILD BEAUTY
PAGEANTS AREN'T FOR KIDS. THEY'RE FOR
MOTHERS. I'VE SEEN GIRLS BREAK DOWN
AND WET THEMSELVES WHILE THEIR MOTHERS
SCOLD THEM FROM OFF-STAGE.




MINE'S THE WORST. SHE WON'T
LET ME DATE, BUT SHE GOES
THROUGH MEN LIKE CRAZY.


MOST LEAVE HER WHEN THEY
FIND OUT WHAT A PSYCHO SHE
IS. I CAN'T WAIT TO LEAVE.








BUT WHY NOT TAKE THE
JOB WITH SAM'S COMPANY?
I'M SURE A RANGER IS
QUALIFIED TO TRAIN POLICE.




IT'S ABOUT HAVING
MY OWN CAREER—
MY OWN GOALS.

I'M GOING
TO RE-ENLIST.
I'VE ALREADY
TOLD HIM.
HE ACCEPTS
IT.

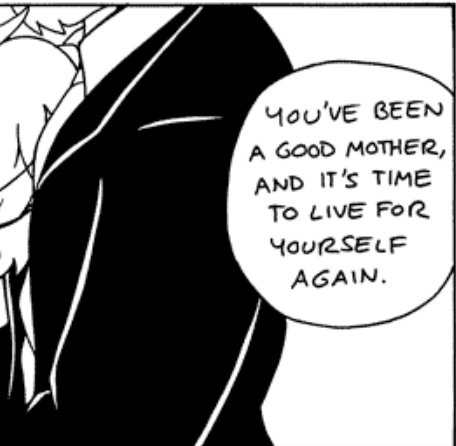


THIS ISN'T ABOUT ME ACCEPTING SAM.
YOU'RE CHOOSING HIM FOR **YOUR**
LIFE AND **YOUR** HAPPINESS.
HE'S NOT MINE TO ACCEPT.

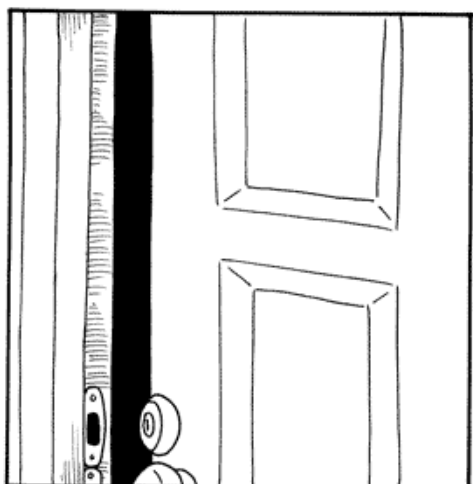
I THINK HE'S A GOOD MAN,
BUT I'M A GROWN PERSON. HE'LL
NEVER BE ABLE TO BE MY
FATHER. THOSE YEARS
ARE GONE.




HE'S YOUR
HUSBAND, NOW.
LOVE HIM AND
BE HAPPY.



YOU'VE BEEN
A GOOD MOTHER,
AND IT'S TIME
TO LIVE FOR
YOURSELF
AGAIN.









WAIT FISK. BEFORE YOU GO, I NEED YOU TO DO ME A FAVOR.

OH, SURE MAN. WHAT IS IT?




GO UPSTAIRS. THE SECOND BEDROOM ON THE RIGHT IS MINE.



Hornady
.38 S&W

THERE'S A GUN IN THE CLOSET, ON THE TOP SHELF. I NEED YOU TO BRING IT TO ME.



MAN, I CAN'T HELP YOU DO THAT.

LOOK AT ME!

I CAN'T GET UP! I HAVE NO ENERGY!
I CAN'T DRIVE! I CAN'T FUCK! I
LIVE ON THE CHARITY OF OTHERS!

I WON'T LIVE
LIKE THIS!

I SAVED
YOUR LIFE!

SAVE IT
AGAIN!

IF YOU WON'T FIGHT FOR A LIFE,
YOU CAN FIGHT FOR YOUR OWN
DEATH! DRAG
YOURSELF
UP THE
STAIRS!

THAT'S NOT A
CHARITY YOU
CAN BEG FROM
ME!

FISK!

