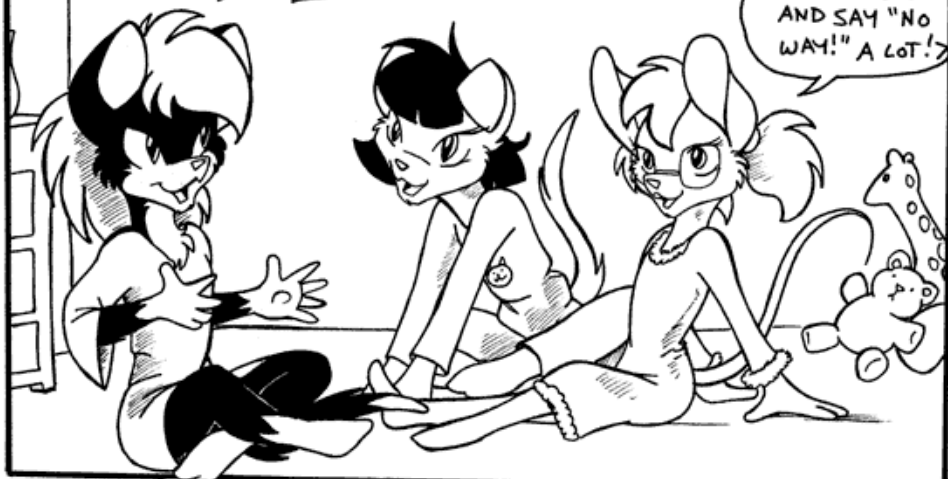


<OKAY! LETS TALK ABOUT
SOME MINDLESS GIRL CRAP!>

<I WAS JUST GOING
TO SUGGEST THAT!>

<I'LL GIGGLE
AND SAY "NO
WAY!" A LOT!>



⇒ KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK ⇒

?

WHAT WAS THAT?
THE FRONT
DOOR...

THIS LATE?



WHERE'S YOUR MOM?

ASLEEP.

I SUPPOSE
WE SHOULD
GET IT.

READY?

READY.











MOM, I NEED SOME OF YOUR EXPERTISE FOR A SECOND.

How FLATTERING.



I NEED TO ATTRACT BOYS. THEY SEEM TO IGNORE ME, AND I NEED TO KNOW HOW TO CHANGE THAT.



IT'S PRETTY SIMPLE, HONEY. GIRLS GROW UP A LITTLE FASTER AT YOUR AGE, AND MOST BOYS ARE STILL ACTING LIKE LITTLE BOYS. YOU

JUST NEED TO BE A LITTLE PATIENT, AND THEY'LL CATCH UP.



I WAS THINKING OF A NEW WARDROBE AND HAIRSTYLE.

YOU SHOULD WORK TO DEVELOPE CHARM, CARING, AND PERSONALITY.



THOSE ARE SUCH NEBULOUS, INTANGIBLE QUALITIES, MOM.

YOU'LL DEVELOPE MORE "TANGIBLE" QUALITIES IN A FEW YEARS.

THIS IS YOUR TREEHOUSE?

YEAH. IT WAS HERE WHEN MY MOM BOUGHT THE HOUSE.



I'VE NEVER MET A BOY WITH HIS OWN HOUSE, BEFORE.

WELL, I'VE NEVER MET A GIRL NAMED SHANIKWA, BEFORE.

DO YOU MIND IF I JUST CALL YOU "NIKKI"?

OKAY.

NEAT. YOU GOT LIGHTS AND STUFF..

WELL, WE FIXED IT UP NICE.

THIS IS A GOOD PLACE TO HAVE SEX.

THEN I-WHAT!?



TAKE OFF YOUR CLOTHES.

HEY!

I THINK I WAS TOO YOUNG FOR THAT.

TSK.

I THINK THIS MOST PIVOTAL MOMENT OF MY LIFE WAS SUPPOSED TO HAPPEN IN A PINK BEDROOM ON A GIGANTIC CANOPY BED WITH FRILLY PILLOWS...

GIGGLE
YOU'RE SILLY.

SOMEONE'S CALLING YOUR NAME. IS THAT YOUR DAD?

HMMP--!

SHH! HE MIGHT HEAR!

WON'T YOU GET IN TROUBLE?

NOT IF I STAY HERE FOR NOW.

AND IF YOU TELL HIM I'M HERE I'LL HAVE TO SOCK YOU IN THE MOUTH!

UM...

WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN? YOU NEVER MISS DINNER.

I WAS IN THE TREEHOUSE.

KISSING AGAIN?

WELL, LOTS MORE THAN KISSING, ACTUALLY.

≡GASPE FISK! YOU'RE ONLY TEN!

CALM DOWN. SHE'S ELEVEN. IT'S OKAY.

THAT DOESN'T MAKE IT OKAY!

OH. HM. SEEMED A BIT COOLER THAT WAY, THOUGH...

WHAT IS THAT SMELL? YOU SMELL LIKE COCO-BUTTER AND CAESAR SALAD.

OH. THAT'S SHANIKWA.

SNIFF

YOU BETTER GET A SHOWER BEFORE MOM HAS A FIT!

SNIFF

BLINK

KNOK KNOK



OH,
HELLO.



HI.

CAN FISK PLEASE
COME OUTSIDE?

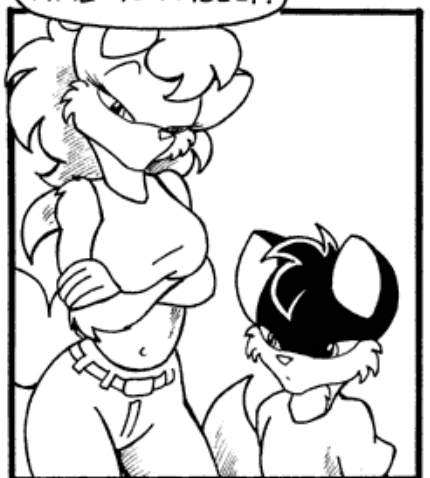


HM, I THOUGHT
HE WAS
ALREADY
OUTSIDE.
I HAVEN'T
SEEN HIM
SINCE
MORNING.



IS SHE
GONE?





WHAT!?



NOW, MOM. REMEMBER WHEN YOU TOLD ME YOU WERE A LITTLE GIRL AND YOU AND YOUR FRIENDS WOULD USE THE "N" WORD, BECAUSE YOU GREW UP THAT WAY, AND WAS NEVER TAUGHT TO THINK DIFFERENTLY?



THEN YOU LATER LEARNED IT WAS DEROGATORY, WRONG, AND HURTFUL AND YOU STOPPED USING IT. SO IF YOU THINK THIS IS WRONG, NOW, MAYBE YOU JUST NEED TO STEP INTO THE '80S.



WHEN I USED THAT WORD, I WAS A DUMB LITTLE GIRL. I STOPPED USING IT BECAUSE I EVENTUALLY GREW UP...



... AND YOU'RE A DUMB LITTLE BOY THAT'S FIXIN' TO DO A LOT OF GROWIN'!

OH SHIT!





I WOULDN'T LET IT BECOME A TERRIBLE SOURCE OF WORRY MS. BLACK. SEXUAL BEHAVIOR AMONG CHILDREN SO YOUNG IS MORE COMMON THAN WE THINK. I WOULD TAKE THE TIME TO EXPLAIN TO FISK THE PROPER VALUES TO ASSOCIATE WITH SUCH A MATURE ACT, AND TRY TO ALLEVIATE ANY PSYCHO-SEXUAL CONDITIONING BEFORE IT TAKES ROOT.

OUR PATHS OF SEXUAL DEVELOPMENT, EXPLORATION, AND BEHAVIORS HELP DEFINE OUR ATTITUDES

ABOUT IT. IF THIS IS DISRUPTED OR ACCELERATED, WE COULD WALK AWAY WITH SKEWED VALUES THAT MAKE IT HARDER TO RELATE TO OTHERS AS WE AGE.

HMP.

MUCH MORE OF MY CONCERN LIES WITH THE GIRL. WHILE SOME YOUNG GIRLS EXHIBIT AGGRESSIVE SEXUAL FLIRTING... FORWARDNESS OF INTENTIONS AND A WILLINGNESS TO INITIATE INTERCOURSE AT THAT AGE IS EXTREMELY UNUSUAL.


SUCH BEHAVIOR SEEMS TO INDICATE ADVANCED STAGES OF REGULAR SEXUAL ABUSE FROM A FIGURE OF AUTHORITY, OR A BENEFACTOR. IN

SUCH CASES, THE CHILD ASSOCIATES LOVE AND AFFECTION WITH SEXUAL ACTS. I WOULD MAKE SURE FISK DOESN'T GO NEAR HER HOUSE OR HER PARENTS.

I THINK IT WOULD HELP IF I LOOKED DEEPER INTO HER SITUATION.

MEANWHILE I'D LIKE TO SCHEDULE SOME MORE APPOINTMENTS WITH FISK TO ASSESS WHAT HE'S GOING THROUGH...





HELLO?


MS. BLACK, THIS IS DR. HOLLINGS. I'VE GOT SOME VERY VERY IMPORTANT NEWS. DO YOU HAVE A MOMENT?

SURE. I WAS JUST DOING THE DISHES.

I'VE BEEN TALKING TO THE FBI.

THE FBI?


YEAH...



THEY CHECKED OUT NIKKI'S PARENTS ON OUR REQUEST AND SUSPECT THAT HER FATHER IS ACTUALLY MUHAMMED

AL AZIZ, WANTED FOR THREE COUNTS OF MURDER, INCLUDING A COP, AND ONE COUNT OF RAPE. HE'S BEEN ON THEIR MOST WANTED LIST SINCE 1968.


CLINK



THEY'RE GOING TO GO GET HIM, SATURDAY. THIS IS WHERE YOU COME IN.

THEY WANT THE LITTLE GIRL COAXED OUT BEFORE THEY MOVE IN...

...




SHEILA... DO YOU THINK YOU...

HELLO? ARE YOU THERE?




IS MY LIFE JUST A BIG LIGHTNING ROD FOR DRAMA !?



HEY KIDS, I THINK
WE SHOULD SPEND SATURDAY
AT FUN CHARLIE'S


OOO! YEAH!

CHEW
CHEW
CHEW



FISK, YOU CAN INVITE YOUR
LITTLE GIRLFRIEND IF SHE
WANTS TO GO.


I THOUGHT
I COULDN'T
SEE HER.



I THINK AS LONG
AS YOU'RE
SUPERVISED,
IT'LL BE OKAY.



HMM. I DON'T KNOW. IT
MIGHT NOT BE HER KIND
OF PLACE. I DON'T KNOW
IF HER PARENTS WILL GIVE
HER
ANY
MONEY...



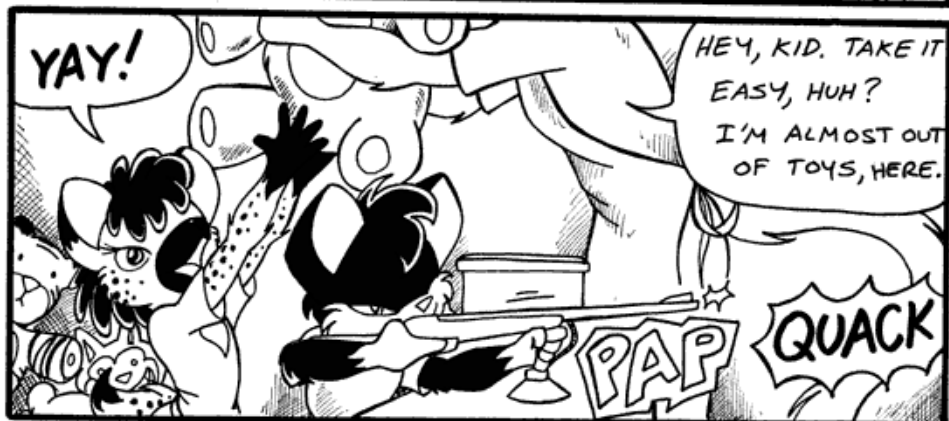
FISK, JUST INVITE THE
LITTLE URCHIN, OKAY?

HEY! WHAT
ABOUT ONE OF
MY FRIENDS?



I'LL BE HERE, KIDS. TRY TO STAY IN SIGHT AND MEET HERE IN AN HOUR!

OKAY!



YAY!

HEY, KID. TAKE IT EASY, HUH? I'M ALMOST OUT OF TOYS, HERE.

QUACK



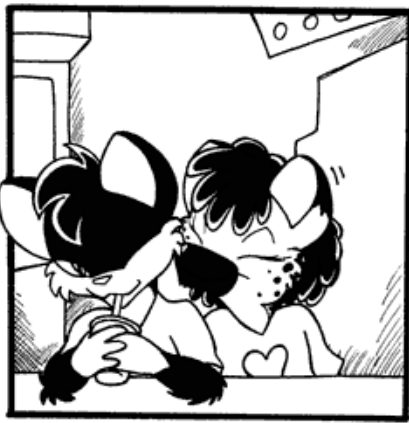
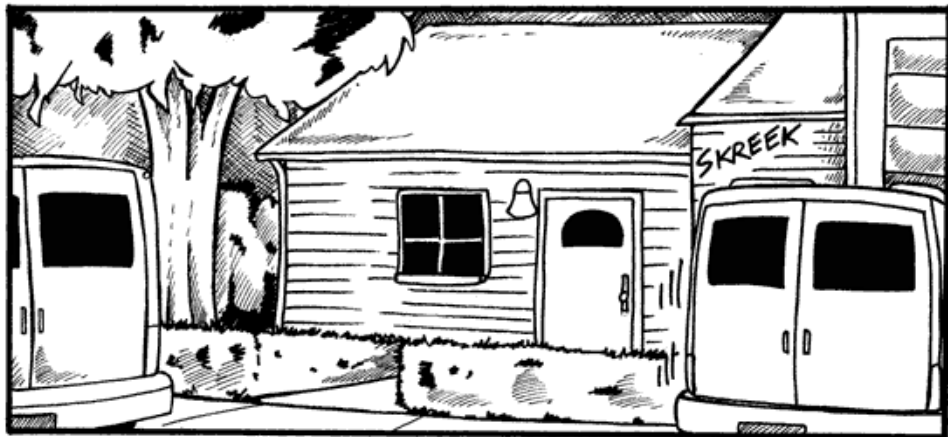
HM. I HOPE THIS ISN'T THE QUIET BEFORE THE STORM.

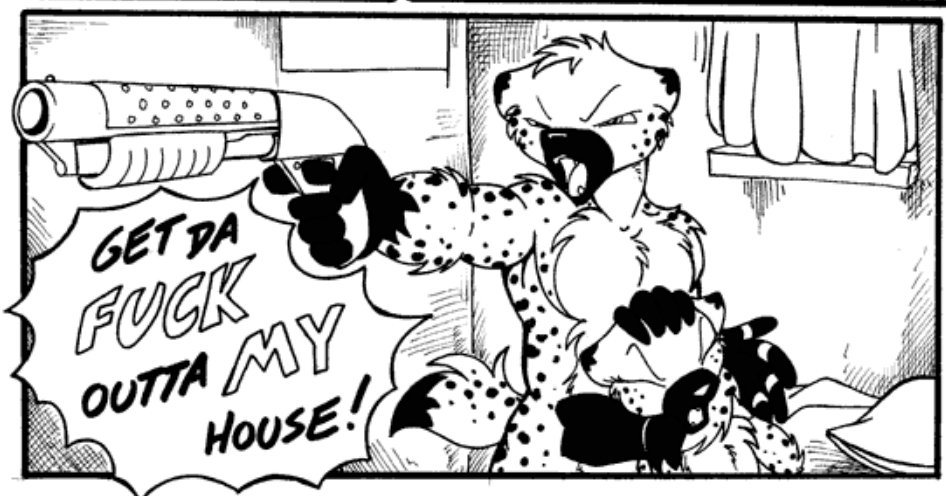
SIGH. AT LEAST I HAVE SOME TIME TO RELAX.



AHH, I SEE I'M NOT THE ONLY ONE WITH CUB-SITTING DUTY TODAY...

STUPID ME.







BEDROOM! WE
GOT HIM!


IS HE DEAD?

YOU OKAY,
TED?
CAN'T HEAR...

PRETTY
SURE.
GET THE
GIRL SOME
CLOTHES








WE'VE GOT TO GO FIND
YOU A NEW HOME.

UMMM...

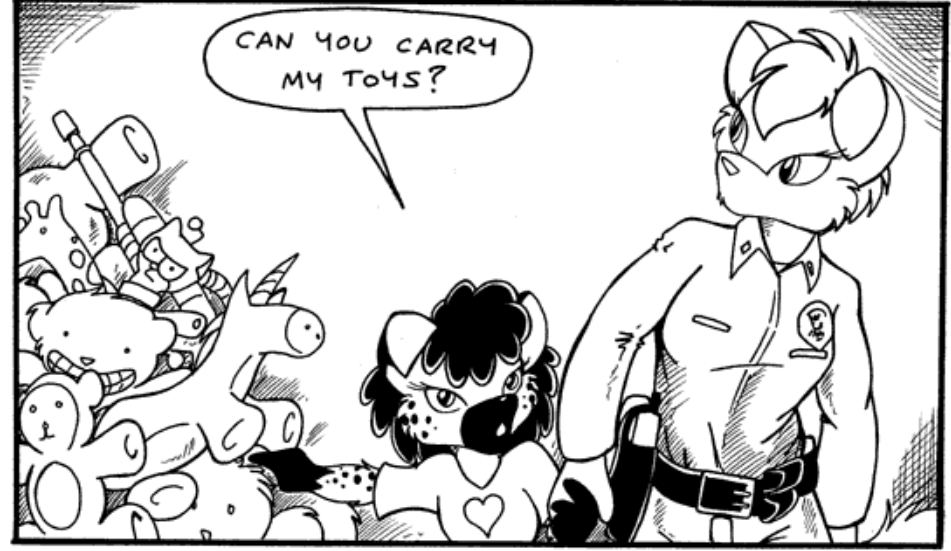


FISK'S MOTHER IS
ALREADY TAKING
CARE OF TWO
KITTENS.

CAN I STILL SEE FISK?

IF YOU LIVE CLOSE ENOUGH.
THERE ARE LOTS OF ADULTS
WHO WANT A PUP TO RAISE,
AND THEY WON'T HURT YOU.

OH.



CAN YOU CARRY
MY TOYS?

HER FATHER DID THAT TO HER?

IT'S POSSIBLE. I'M SORRY, FISK.

I CAN'T IMAGINE A PARENT BEING A CRIMINAL. ADULT AUTHORITY SEEMS SO QUESTIONABLE.

MOST OF US JUST DO OUR BEST, HONEY...

I JUST-

AH! THERE YOU ARE!

I WAS JUST ABOUT TO LEAVE AND I WAS WONDERING IF YOU'D -

HEY! HEY YOU!

I'M TALKING TO HER, ALRIGHT?

DON'T BE A RUDE BASTARD.

SHE DOESN'T SEEM INTERESTED, ANYWAY. SO JUST GET LOST, OKAY!?

GRUMBLE... LITTLE BRAT...

WHERE WAS I?

OUR CONCERN ISN'T A TRIVIAL MATTER. WE'RE NOT TRYING TO BE OVER-BEARING OR CONDESCENDING...

I KNOW. THE WHOLE THING IS JUST A BIT FRUSTRATING...



I DON'T FEEL LIKE A VICTIM OF "ABUSE", AS MUCH AS JUST A STEPPING STONE IN SOMEONE ELSE'S ABUSED LIFE.



YOU TELL ME THAT ALL HER AFFECTIONS ARE A PRODUCT OF HER ABUSE, THAT SHE COPEd WITH A LACK OF CONTROL IN HER OWN LIFE BY TAKING CONTROL OF SOMEONE ELSE'S. MINE. I THOUGHT THAT, AT LEAST IF HER OVERBEARING NATURE BECAME EXHAUSTING AT TIMES, IT WAS...

... FLATTERING? BEING NOTHING BUT A COPING VALVE ISN'T ALL THAT GOOD FEELING.

KNOWING WHAT YOU ACTUALLY WANT OUT OF THE WHOLE ORDEAL MIGHT HELP YOU OVERCOME IT, OR AT LEAST UNDERSTAND IT.



WHAT I WANT? I'D LIKE TO MEET HER AGAIN, WHEN SHE'S BETTER. I'D LIKE TO KNOW THE KIND OF PERSON SHE IS WITHOUT ALL THE SCARS. IT MIGHT BE A PART OF HER FOREVER, THOUGH... MAYBE I JUST DON'T WANT TO THINK I COULD BE USED AND FORGOTTEN SO EASILY.

I GUESS I DON'T LIKE NOT KNOWING IF THERE WILL BE A HAPPY ENDING... OR NOT.



END