

LUCY, I NEED YOU
TO DO ME A FAVOR.

DOES IT INVOLVE
KNEEING YOU IN THE
BALLS?

CAN YOU SLIP THIS NOTE TO CINDY IN
YOUR GYM CLASS, TOMMOROW?

OOO! DOES MY BROTHER HAVE
♥ A GRUSH? ♥

YES.

CAN YOU AT LEAST
PRETEND TO BE
EMBARASSED? FOR
MY SAKE!?

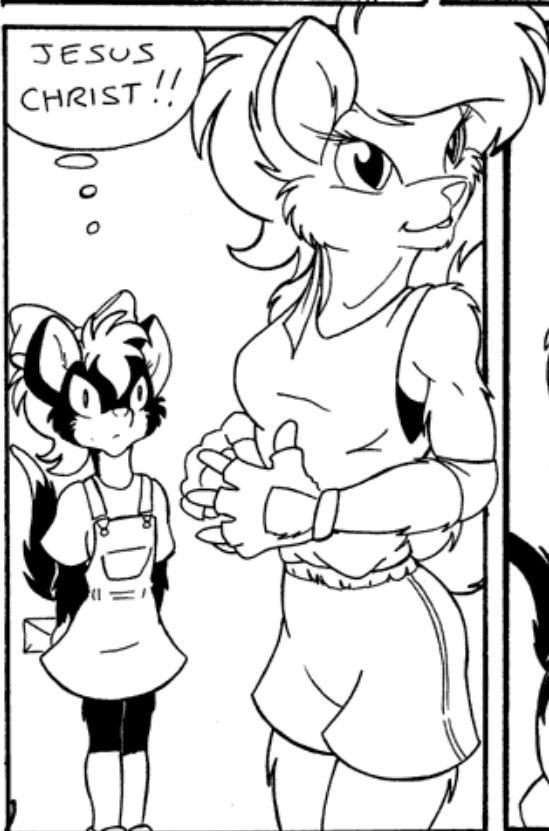
I WISH BOYS WOULD
WRITE ME CUTE LOVE
NOTES...



CINDY'S SO POPULAR, SHE
PROBABLY GETS HUNDREDS
OF THESE. WHAT'S SHE GOT
THAT I CAN'T COMPETE
WITH?



JESUS
CHRIST!!



THANKS FOR ILLUSTRATING
IT SO OLATANTLY.

ANYTIME.

I'LL BET.





HEY, CINDY...

HI, LUCY!

I'M SUPPOSED TO GIVE—

JUST A MINUTE, OKAY?

VACANT



HOW DOES SHE GET A BODY LIKE THAT? MAYBE SHE'S HELD BACK, OR MAYBE IT'S ALL THE HORMONES IN CAFETERIA MILK...

OCCUPIED



BMAP

HUFFE
HUFFS

TP-P-P
PUPPPPP...



...PPPPMMP
PUPPP...

-INCH - INCH -

SHE WHAT?! SHE DID NOT! YOU'RE TRYING TO RUIN MY FANTASY!

SHE DID! I COULDN'T DELIVER THE NOTE!

==SIGH==
ALRIGHT, JUST GIVE ME THE NOTE BACK.

HEE
HEE
UMMM...

THIS WOULD BE THE MOMENT WHERE YOU WOULD RETURN THE NOTE TO ME.

THE NOTE! RIGHT!
IT'S... AH... YEAH...
...SOMEWHERE...

I
THINK...

YOU LOST MY NOTE!!

I MUST HAVE DROPPED IT
AS I RAN AWAY FROM
GROUND ZERO!


WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL?
IF SOMEONE FINDS IT
THEY'LL KNOW IT'S FOR
HER.

IT DOESN'T HAVE
HER NAME ON IT
'CAUSE YOU'RE SUP-
POSED TO DELIVER
IT!

WELL, THE JANITOR
WILL PROBABLY FIND
IT ON THE FLOOR
AND THROW IT AWAY.


"... WITH A YERRRRNING HEART, I CLOSE
THIS LETTER. HOPEFULLY YOURS,
FISK!"

AAWWWWWWW!




HEY, LITTLE GUY! SOMEONE TOLD ME THAT YOUR CUTE NOTE WAS MEANT FOR ME?

YEAH...




AWW... ANY GIRL WOULD JUST ADORE HAVING A SMART, SWEET, CUTE, ROMANTIC LITTLE SWEET-HEART, LIKE YOU. AS FOR ME, YOU SEE THAT BIG 8th GRADER THERE?


UH, YEAH...



SEE, HE'S BIG, MEATY, PLAYS FOOTBALL, AND IS WAY TOO THICK AND STUPID TO BE A THREAT TO MY PERCEIVED FEMALE INTELLECTUAL SUPERIORITY. HE DOESN'T CHALLENGE ME, OR DO NICE THINGS THAT I HAVE TO RECIPROCATE. TO PLEASE HIM, I JUST GIGGLE STUPIDLY, SHRUG MY SHOULDERS, AND LET HIM FUCK MY BRAINS OUT.



THANKS FOR FEEDING MY DITZ EGO!
CIAO!



MOM, WHAT DOES "FUCK MY BRAINS OUT" MEAN?

YOU! I TOLD YOU TO STAY AWAY FROM MY DAUGHTER! COME ALONG! OUT! OUT! OH-DUBYA-TEE, OUT!



YOU FRESH LITTLE CREEP! IF I CATCH YOU NEAR JENNY AGAIN, I'LL CALL YOUR MOTHER!



AND STAY OUT OF THAT TREE NEXT TO HER WINDOW!


WHAP!

GEEZ!

SLAM!


FEMALE BRAINS MUST GET SMALLER AS THEIR HIPS GET BIGGER...






HEY! WHY ARE YOU HOGGING THE POOL? I THOUGHT YOU WERE SPENDING THE DAY WITH JENNY?

GOT KICKED OUT.



HER MOTHER THREW A CONIPTION WHEN SHE FIGURED I WAS USING THE TREE TO GET TO JENNY'S WINDOW.



YOU KNOW, FISK, YOU SHOULD WORK ON IMPRESSING HER PARENTS. I READ IN CHURCH, THAT WHEN DAVID WANTED ONE OF KING SAUL'S DAUGHTERS, SAUL ORDERED DAVID TO PRODUCE THE FORESKINS OF 100 SLAIN PHILLISTINES, HOPING DAVID WOULD BE KILLED. DAVID LOVED HIS WOMAN SO MUCH, HE PRESENTED SAUL WITH 200 FORESKINS! HE GOT THE GIRL.



WHAT THE HELL IS A FORESKIN?

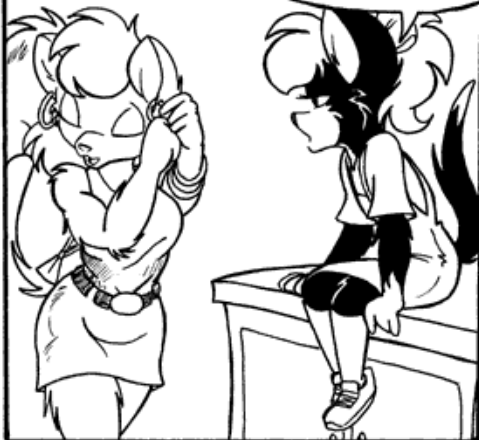
THAT'S NOT THE POINT...

help!

LUCY, WHERE'S
YOUR BROTHER?

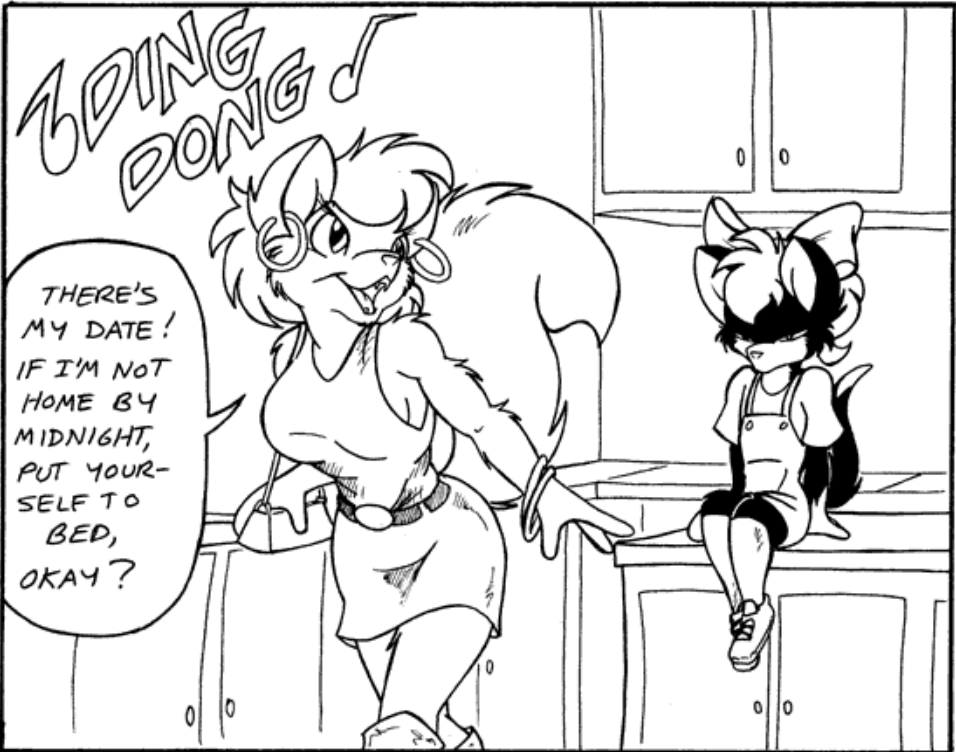
HEY, MOM.
I THINK HE'S
OUT TRYING TO
FIND A WAY TO
IMPRESS
JENNY'S PARENTS.

THAT CRAZY BOY. HE'S
GOING TO WASTE HIS
WHOLE LIFE CHASING
GIRLS. I THINK HE
GETS HIS PROWLING
FROM YOUR FATHER.



BONG
DONG!

THERE'S
MY DATE!
IF I'M NOT
HOME BY
MIDNIGHT,
PUT YOUR-
SELF TO
BED,
OKAY?





FISK! WHERE DID YOU GET... THOSE!!?

COOL, HUH?

NO.

THEY'RE JUST SHREDDED PIG SKINS I GOT FROM THE BUTCHER SHOP. I HEARD JENNY'S DAD COMPLAINING ABOUT LAWYERS, SO I'M GOING TO TELL HIM THESE ARE THEIR FORESKINS.

THOSE STRAY DOGS SURE LOOK IMPRESSED.

AH! DAMN! QUICK! RUN HOME AND GET MY BB GUN!

BARK!

RRRRRRR

ROWF!

GRRRRR!

BRRRRING!

HMPH... LET
IT RING...


I CAN'T,
IT MIGHT
BE MY
KIDS...

HELLO? HI, LUCY!

WHAT!?! DOG
ATTACK!?!

HOSPITAL?!!


RABIES!?!



FISK'S HAD ALL HIS SHOTS AS A PRECAUTION, AND THE LAD'S GOING TO BE FINE.

THANK YOU, DOCTOR. THIS YOUNG MAN'S IN A LOT OF TROUBLE.

WHAT'D I DO!?



LUCY TOLD ME ABOUT YOUR LITTLE HAIRBRAINED STUNT WITH A WAGON FULL OF PORK. YOU RUINED A VERY NICE EVENING FOR YOUR MOTHER, AND DON'T YOU LAY YOUR EARS AT ME WHEN I'M TALKING!

I'LL HAVE YOU KNOW, THOSE WERE THE FORESKINS OF SLAIN LAWYERS. I WAS ON MY WAY TO IMPRESS JENNY'S DAD WITH THEM WHEN I WAS AMBUSHED.

I CAN WRITE YOU A REFERAL TO A GOOD CHILD PSYCHOLOGIST...

GOD, YOU PEOPLE...



FISK, HONEY, I'M GOING TO SPEND THE DAY WITH FRIENDS. THERE'S SEVERAL PHONE NUMBERS ON THE FRIDGE IF YOU NEED ME.



OKAY, MOM.




WHERE'S LUCY?

STILL ASLEEP.


MUNCH



SAVE HER SOME CEREAL, OKAY?




HEY, LUCY! I ATE ALL THE CEREAL, BUT I GOT YOU A PEAR AND HALF A POP-TART AND...



WHOA. YOU LOOK ROUGH.

I FEEL SICK.



SICK!? YOU CAN'T BE SICK! MOM'S GOING TO BE GONE ALL DAY!

LUCKY FOR YOU, I WANT TO BE A DOCTOR WHEN I GROW UP!

YOU STAY AWAY FROM ME.

KEEP SWAP!!

I BET I CAN FIGURE OUT
WHAT DISEASE YOU HAVE, OTHER
THAN JUST GIRL GERMS.

MWEH.

I THINK YOU MAY HAVE
SYPHILIS.

WHAT'S
THAT?

WHOA... MAMBE NOT.

GIMME
THAT!

GOT SOME ORANGE JUICE?

YEAH, MOM. I GOT IT.

GO TO MY MEDICINE CABINET AND YOU SHOULD FIND SOME STORE BRAND DECONGESTANT.

WHAT DO THEY LOOK LIKE?

THEY'RE RED CAPSULES.

I'VE GOT SOME INSIDE A LITTLE ROUND CALENDAR.

NO, HONEY. PUT THOSE BACK.

OKAY, GOT SOME.

GIVE HER ONE AND LET HER SLEEP THEY'LL MAKE HER DROWSY.

OKAY.

FUCK.

M M M M M M...

HEY, BABY. I'M BACK.
HOW'S LUCY?

STILL ASLEEP.

RUSTLE
RUSTLE

I'M GOING
TO CHECK ON
HER.

EEEEEEEEE!

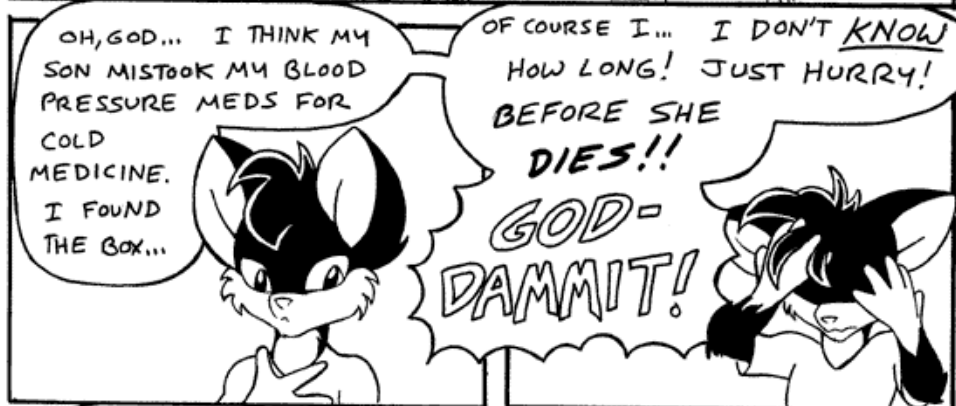
I KIND OF
LIKE DRAWING
MOM.

YOU DON'T
SAY...



SHE'S OUT COLD!
HER HEART BEAT IS
VERY FAINT!

GET SOMEONE
HERE, FAST!



OH, GOD... I THINK MY
SON MISTOOK MY BLOOD
PRESSURE MEDS FOR
COLD
MEDICINE.
I FOUND
THE BOX...

OF COURSE I... I DON'T KNOW
HOW LONG! JUST HURRY!


BEFORE SHE
DIES!!

**GOD-
DAMMIT!**



I CAN'T STAY
CALM! SHE'S
FUCKING
DYING!
WHAT?

OKAY... N-NO, HER
EARS ARE STILL PINK.
IT FEELS LIKE
SHE'S BREATHING
BUT IT'S SHALLOW...
JESUS CHRIST.



SHE'S STABLE, FOR NOW. IF SHE
KEEPS DOING WELL, I THINK SHE'LL
BE OKAY, BUT WE JUST DON'T
KNOW.

WE'RE ON
OUR WAY.

O-O-KAY.




I'M S-SORRY...
SHOKEE

SH-SH-SHH. MAMA
SHOULD HAVE BEEN
HOME, BABY.



LET'S GO TO
THE HOSPITAL.





I'M HERE TO CHECK ON LUCY BLACK.

HOW YOU SPELL IT?

HOW DO YOU SPELL "BLACK"?

YES, M'RM, THAT'S WHAT AH AXED.

BEE...
ELL...
AA...
SEE...
KAY...

MMMM YIS. THE LITTLE GIRL. SHE'S IN INTENSIVE CARE, BEAN' WATCHED. WE CAIN'T LET JUS' ANYBODY SEE HER.

JUST ANYBODY? I'M HER MOTHER. WHAT DO I LOOK LIKE?

ËSIGHË
DON'T ANSWER THAT.

MMMMM-HM.

WE CAN GO SEE LUCY,
NOW, FISK.

I DON'T
KNOW.

SHIFF I MESSED
UP SO BAD. I'VE
NEVER FELT THIS
HORRIBLE IN MY LIFE
AND I DON'T WANT TO
FEEL WORSE. I
SHOULD BE THE ONE
DYING...

...I'M THE ONE
WHO SCREWED UP,
NOT LUCY.

LOOK, FISK. LOOK AT
ME...

I WAS CARRYING YOU AND LUCY WHEN
YOUR FATHER DIED. IT WAS A HARD
DECISION TO BRING YOU INTO THIS WORLD
AFTER THAT, AGAINST A LOT OF ADVICE AND
PRESSURE. I FOUGHT
HARD TO RAISE
YOU AND I'M NOT
GOING TO LOSE A
KITTEN TONIGHT.
NOT LUCY, NOT
YOU...

THIS IS NOT YOUR FAULT. SHE'S
MY LITTLE GIRL AND MY
RESPONSIBILITY. SHE'S NOT
DEAD, SHE'S IN THE HOSPITAL
AND YOU'VE GOT TO BE
STRONG, KITTEN...

YOU'RE THE ONLY MAN IN
THIS FAMILY AND LUCY NEEDS
YOUR STRENGTH. I DON'T
CARE WHAT THOSE FEMINIST
BITCHES TEACH YOU AT
SCHOOL, STRENGTH MEANS
A HELL OF A LOT...





I'M NOT THE BEST KID. I RARELY COME FORWARD AND TALK TO YOU, AND I CAN UNDERSTAND IF YOU THINK IT'S ONLY

IF I WANT SOMETHING.



I DON'T WANT TO BE VAIN, OR COME TO YOU BECAUSE I FEEL GUILTY. UP UNTIL NOW, I'VE JUST BEEN A FOOLISH LITTLE KID. I DON'T KNOW HOW TO PROVE MY SINCERITY, OTHER

TO ASK FOR A MOMENT OF TRUST, AND I'LL TRUST YOUR JUDGEMENT NO MATTER HOW IT TURNS...



IT'D BE TOO EASY TO BEG FOR MYSELF, BECAUSE I FEEL GUILTY, AND I WANT ALL THIS PAIN TO GO AWAY. I DON'T CARE WHAT I GO THROUGH ANYMORE, AND I WON'T BOTHER YOU WITH THE SELFISH WISHES OF ANOTHER FOOLISH SINNER. THERE ARE PEOPLE WITH REAL PROBLEMS, LIKE LUCY. LUCY DOESN'T DESERVE TO DIE. SHE NEVER MESSED UP. I'M NOT THE BEST BROTHER, BUT I NEVER REALIZED HOW MUCH I WOULD MISS HER. NOT BECAUSE OF GUILT, OR FEAR OF BEING PUNISHED... BUT...



... I REALIZE I LOVE MY SISTER SO MUCH.



FISK, WHY ARE YOU CRYING?

S-SHUT UP, I'M TRYING TO PRAY.



WHOA! HOW SICK
WAS I?

LUCY!

E EK!

C'MEER...


WAS IT
THAT
BAD?

I DON'T WANT TO
TALK ABOUT IT,
NOW.



FISK, MOM
TOLD ME
WHAT
HAPPENED.

AH..




DON'T FEEL BAD. I THINK YOU'RE
A GOOD BROTHER FOR BEING THERE.

SCRITCHIE

SCRITCHIE

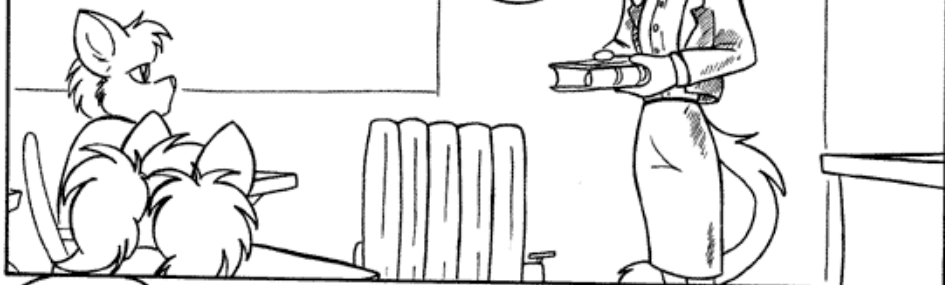
MMM.



WERE YOU REALLY ALL WORRIED
AND CRYING AND STUFF?

AHEM...
NOT SO LOUD.

GOOD MORNING, CLASS.
BEAR WITH ME, THIS MORNING. I'M
RATHER TIRED. I WAS UP ALL
NIGHT WATCHING THE DEMOCRATIC
NATIONAL CONVENTION.



I THINK
OUR GEORGIA
BOY IS
GOING TO
DO IT, AGAIN!
IF HE LOSES,
I COULD
JUST DIE!



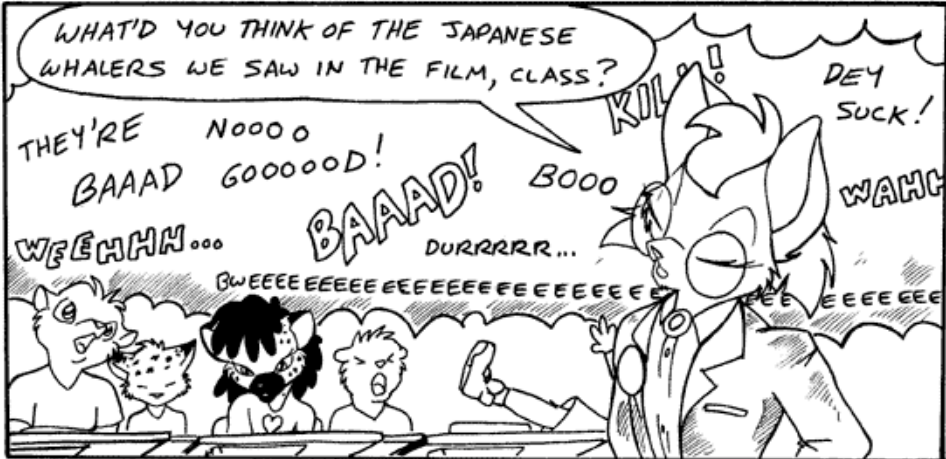
YEESH.
DON'T DO
US ANY
FAVORS...



STARTING THE
MORNING OFF
EARLY,
FISK?

PRINCIPAL
LONGFELLOW





WHAT'D YOU THINK OF THE JAPANESE WHALERS WE SAW IN THE FILM, CLASS?

THEY'RE NOOOO BAAAD GOOOOOD!

WEEHHH... BAAAD! DURRRRR... B000

KILL! DEY SUCK! WANG

WE'VE GOING TO WRITE THE LARGEST JAPANESE WHALING COMPANY, AS A CLASS, AND TELL THEM WHAT WE THINK. THIS WILL BE A FINE CLASS ACTIVITY, SO PLEASE TAKE IT SERIOUSLY...



DEAR JAPANESE WHALER FOLKS,

MY TEACHER KEEPS SAYING THAT AMERICA IS BAD, AND WE SHOULD LOOK TO OTHERS FOR LEADERSHIP AND DIVERSITY

SHE HAS OUR CLASS SAYING THAT YOU SUCK.

I THINK WHALING SOUNDS NEAT. DO YOU USE EVERY PART? LIKE THE INDIANS?

WHAT DO YOU DO WITH THE FACE? I BET YOU COULD FEED AN AFRICAN COUNTRY FOR A YEAR FROM ONE BIG-ASS WHALE

WHAT DOES WHALE TASTE LIKE? I

'HEM!





BRING

HELLO?

HELLO. IS THIS SHEILA BLACK?

THIS IS SHE.

THIS IS EUNICE BEDBUTTER, FISK'S TEACHER.

OH, HI.



I'D LIKE TO ARRANGE A MEETING TO DISCUSS FISK'S CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR.

OH, DEAR. WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?



DING!



HE'S NOT TAKING HIS ASSIGNMENTS SERIOUSLY, AND I HAVE PAPER AFTER PAPER OF HIS, WHERE HE MAKES SARCASTIC REMARKS ON HIS ASSIGNMENTS.

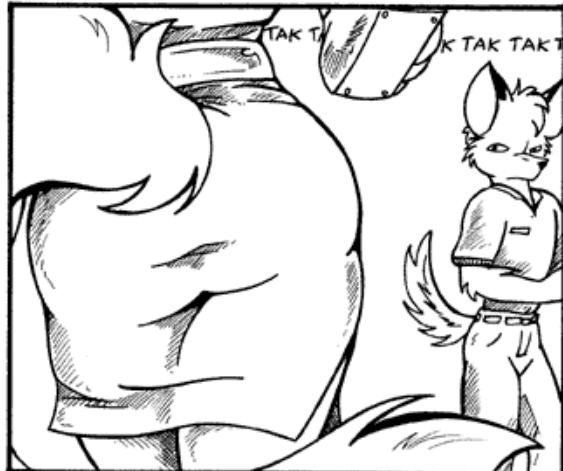
ARE YOU SUPRISED BY THIS?

WELL... NO, BUT...

I WASN'T AWARE...

THEN PERHAPS I'LL SEE YOU THIS AFTERNOON?



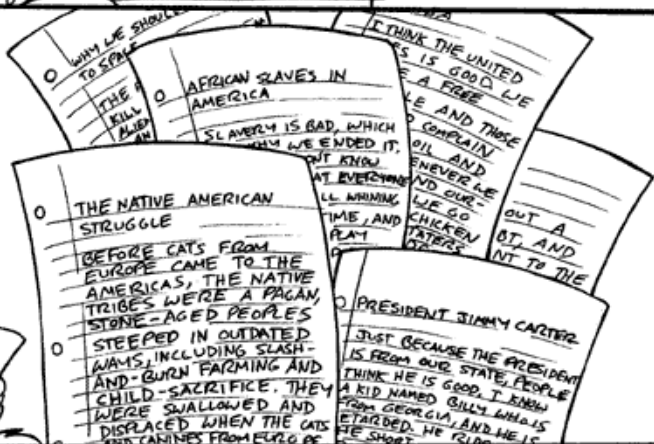


TAK TAK





HMMM...



HONESTLY, MRS. BED BUTTER, I DON'T SEE ANYTHING HERE BUT OPINIONS STEMMING FROM SOME KIND OF SICK POLITICAL INDOCTRINATION.

I DON'T SEE HOW HIS VIEWS CONFLICT WITH HIS ACADEMIC STUDIES. I FIND THIS WHOLE ORDEAL A BIG WASTE OF MY TIME, AND I THINK I'LL BE GOING.

MS. BLACK! WE HAVE A SOCIAL CONTRACT AS TEACHERS AND WOMEN TO HELP OUR CHILDREN DEVELOPE A SOCIAL AWARENESS AND ATTITUDE BEFITTING

A MORE ENLIGHTENED CULTURE. IT'S NOT 1950, ANY-MORE.

ESPECIALLY THESE YOUNG MEN. THEIR OUT-LOOK MUST BE TEMPERED SO GIRLS WON'T HAVE TO DRESS LIKE THEIR MOTHERS AND ADVANCE THROUGH LIFE BY THEIR BACKSIDES.

BLINK



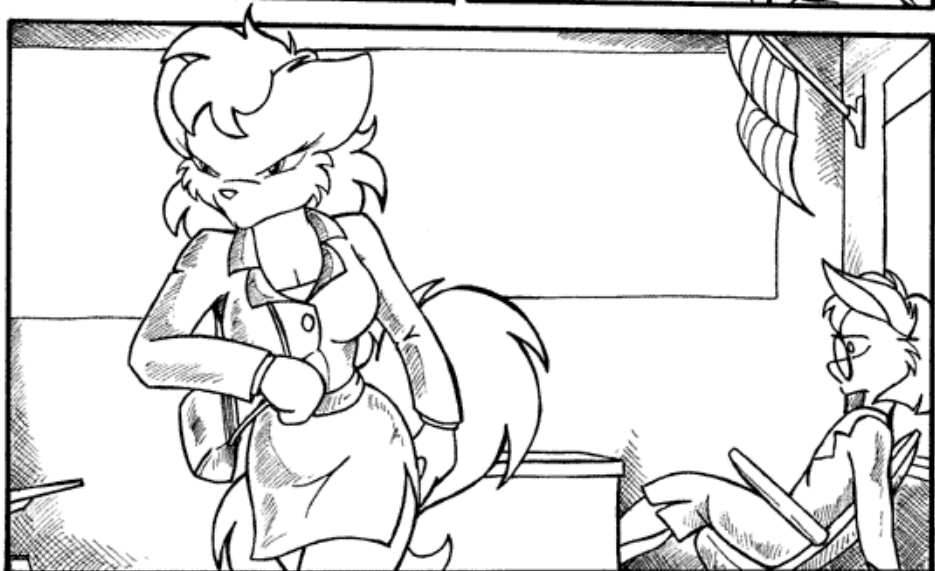
I BEG YOUR PARDON! I DON'T GIVE A FUCK ABOUT YOUR SOCIAL ENGINEERING PROJECTS, BUT DON'T DARE INSULT HOW I LOOK OR LIVE!

MS. BLACK-
SHUT UP!

YOU'LL TEACH FISK MATH, SCIENCE, AND REAL HISTORY! IF HE CHEWS GUM OR TALKS IN CLASS, TELL ME AND I'LL BEAT HIS LITTLE ASS, MYSELF! BUT DON'T WASTE MY TIME WITH CRAP LIKE THIS!

I HAVE TO GO HOME AND FINISH BAKING FOR MY KIDS. AFTER I SEND THEM TO BED, I MAY JUST INVITE A MAN OVER, FEED HIM, TOO, AND GIVE HIM SUCH A HARD ORGASM, HE WON'T BE ABLE TO WALK 'TIL MORNING.

BECAUSE I'M A WOMAN! AND IT'S MY FUCKING RIGHT!



TAK TAK TAK TA

AH! MS. BLACK!

WHAT.

I OVERHEARD YOUR MEETING WITH BEDBUTTER, AND AS THE PRINCIPLE, I WANT TO APOLOGIZE FOR THE SCHOOL. I HATE SEEING PARENTS ANGRY.

MMM...

I HAVE TO ASK. WAS THE ORGASM REMARK NECESSARY?

WOULD THAT BE APPROPRIATE?

NO? YOU'RE OBVIOUSLY NOT MARRIED.

WHY? INTERESTED?

AH. YOU'RE SHARP. DIVORCED.

THANKS FOR THE APOLOGY, BUT I MUST BE GETTING HOME. OTHERWISE, I'D LOVE TO CHAT FURTHER, MISTER...

RIGHT...

LONGFELLOW.



MOM, DON'T LISTEN TO MRS. BEDBUTTER. SHE HATES ME BECAUSE I DON'T LIKE JIMMY CARTER, AND SHE'S ALWAYS STACKING THE DECK AGAINST ME...



I WOULDN'T WORRY ABOUT HER ANYMORE, SWEETIE. DINNER WILL BE READY IN FIFTEEN MINUTES.

OH.

PRINCIPLE LONGFELLOW CALLED.

OH?

SIX TIMES.



BEDTIME'S AT EIGHT TONIGHT, KIDS!

BLINK!

BLINK!

WHAT THE HELL?!

THESE EVENTS ARE RELATED, SOMEHOW.

DON'T TAKE THIS THE WRONG WAY, HARVE. I DIDN'T EXPECT THESE KINDS OF NIGHTS FROM MY KIDS' SCHOOL PRINCIPAL. IT'S BEEN A VERY

EXTRAVAGANT WEEK.

WELL, I'M SINGLE AND HAVE ALL MY ASSETS INTACT. DESPITE THE DIVORCE, I'M NOT EXACTLY SCRAPING.



I'M JUST A COUNTRY GIRL. YOU'LL RUN THE RISK OF SPOILING ME.

ON THE CONTRARY. I FEEL LIKE I'M THE ONE BEING SPOILED.

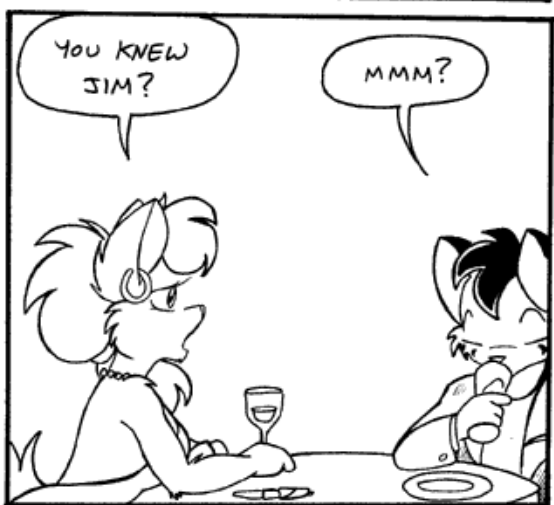
YOU'RE LAYING IT ON THICK. I HAVEN'T BLUSHED IN YEARS.

YOUR HUSBAND WAS RIGHT. IT'S WHEN YOU'RE THE MOST BEAUTIFUL.



YOU KNEW JIM?

MMM?



WE WERE IN THE SAME UNIT DURING THE WAR. I DIDN'T MENTION IT SOONER BECAUSE I DIDN'T KNOW IF YOU WANTED TO GO INTO IT.

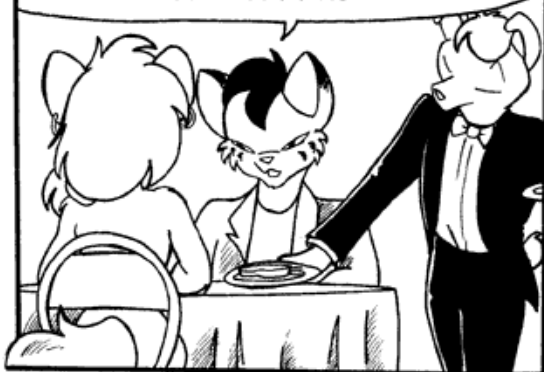


OH MY GOD...
WHAT WAS IT LIKE?

FROM DAY TO DAY IT WAS JUST SURVIVAL. WE WERE ALL WRAPPED UP IN THINKING WE COULD DIE THE NEXT TIME OUT, SO WE LIVED EACH MINUTE LIKE IT COULD BE ONE OF THE LAST ONES...



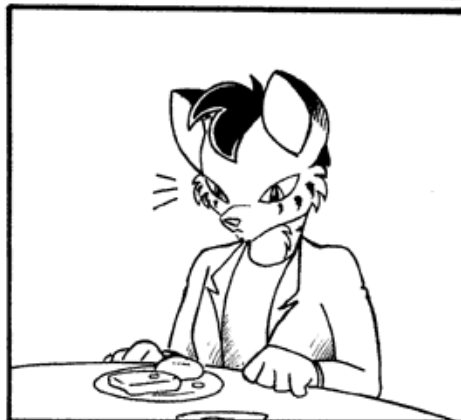
VIETNAM WENT IN CYCLES, BACK AND FORTH BETWEEN DUTY, AND TRYING TO DISTRACT OURSELVES FROM IT BY LOSING OURSELVES IN DRINKING, WOMEN, AND PRANKS.




WELL, I GUESS JIM NEVER HAD TO LOSE HIMSELF IN WOMEN.



THIS IS WHERE YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO BE RE-ASSURING.







HARVE! YOU'RE NOT SERIOUS!
JIM WAS LIKE THAT?

SHEILA...

I DIDN'T WANT IT TO
GO IN THIS DIRECTION, BUT
I DON'T THINK IT'D BE
HEALTHY TO
LIE TO
YOU.



IT WAS ALMOST NINE YEARS AGO. I CAN'T SAY
JIM WOULDN'T HAVE MADE A GREAT FATHER IF
HE'D MADE IT HOME...



I THINK I NEED TO
GO HOME, FOR NOW.
I'VE GOT A LOT OF
THINKING TO DO...
THANK YOU.

THIRD ARMY FORCES COMMAND,
GENERAL BECK'S OFFICE.

UM... I WAS
LOOKING FOR
GENERAL
KELSO.

HE NO LONGER
WORKS AT THIS
OFFICE. WOULD
YOU LIKE HIS
NEW
NUMBER?

OKAY. ALL RIGHT...
THANK YOU.

SCRIBBLE
NOTESCRIBBLES

≧RING≦ ≧RING≦ ≧RING≦

≧CLICK≦ CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY,
OPERATIONS DIVISION.

UH... I'M TRYING TO
TALK TO GEN- I MEAN,
ROBERT KELSO. HIS
OLD OFFICE
GAVE ME THIS
NUMBER...

MAY I ASK
WHO'S
CALLING?

SHEILA BLACK.
I'M AN OLD FRIEND.

ONE
MOMENT.

≧CLICK≦ SHEILA?

GENERAL!

HEH.
NOT ANYMORE...

I KIND OF HAVE A SILLY QUESTION. IT'S THE REASON I CALLED...

DON'T BE SILLY. ASK.

WAS JIM... FAITHFUL, DURING HIS TIME OVERSEAS?

OF COURSE HE WAS. I CAN VOUCH FOR THAT, PERSONALLY.

ROB, PLEASE DON'T HOLD BACK. I HAVE TO KNOW WHO I CAN TRUST.

YOU'RE LIKE FAMILY, SHEILA. I'D NEVER LIE TO YOU. WHO TOLD YOU THIS?

SOMEONE WHO WAS IN JIM'S UNIT, THAT I'VE BEEN SEEING. HARVEY LONGFELLOW. I THINK HE WAS A SERGEANT.

I NEVER HAD A "LONGFELLOW" UNDER MY COMMAND...

TABBY COLORS? BLACK HAIR? ARE YOU SURE?

I WAS ONLY A MAJOR, THEN. WE HAD VERY SMALL UNITS IN OUR TYPES OF... .. OPERATIONS. I CAN ASSURE YOU I REMEMBER EVERY MAN IN MY UNIT.

JESUS...

LOOK, I'VE GOT A MEETING AT THE CDC THIS WEEK-END, SO I'LL BE FLYING DOWN. IF YOU'D LIKE TO HAVE LUNCH, WE CAN DISCUSS THIS IN MORE DETAIL.



ROB! IT'S
GOOD TO SEE
YOU! HOW
WAS YOUR
FLIGHT?

UNEVENTFUL.

HOW ARE THE KIDS?

HARDER TO KEEP
UP WITH EVERY DAY.

I'M REALLY GLAD YOU DECIDED
TO HAVE THEM. YOU'VE EARNED
A LOT OF OUR
RESPECT...

THE MORE
I THOUGHT,
THE LESS
OF A REAL
CHOICE
THERE WAS.

MOST THINGS
IN LIFE ARE
LIKE THAT...

HOW LONG HAVE YOU
BEEN SEEING LONGFELLOW?

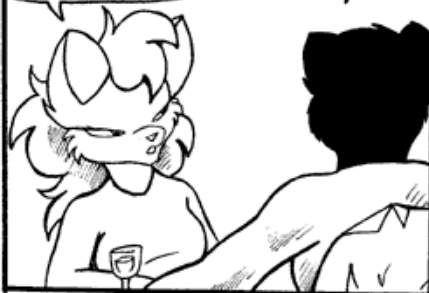
JUST A BIT OVER
A WEEK.

WHY DO YOU
ASK?

WE CAN
DISCUSS IT
OVER LUNCH.

I PULLED LONGFELLOW'S FILE FOR YOU...

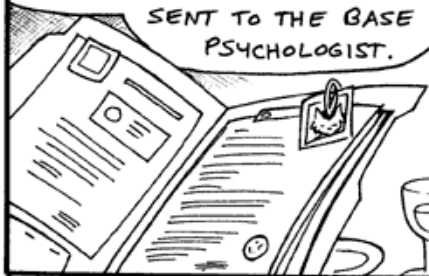
YOU HAVE IT?



IF THIS IS THE SAME PERSON, BASED ON YOUR DESCRIPTION, HE NEVER GOT CLOSE TO VIETNAM. HE SPENT A SHORT MILITARY LIFE AT A SUPPLY DEPOT IN OKINAWA.



HE WAS IN FOR TWO YEARS BEFORE BEING DISCHARGED ON RAW TERMS WITH THE ARMY. REPORTS FROM HIS C.O. COMPLAINED ABOUT FRATERNIZING AGGRESSIVELY. HE WAS ALMOST SENT TO THE BASE PSYCHOLOGIST.



DAMMIT...



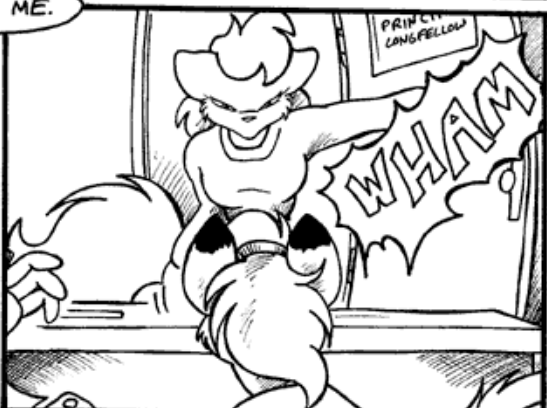
THAT SON OF A BITCH... WHAT DOES HE GAIN BY LYING TO ME ABOUT JIM!?



I CAN ONLY SPECULATE, IF HE DESTROYS THE MEMORIES OF YOUR HUSBAND, HE HAS AN EASIER TIME FILLING IN.

ONE FORM OF PREDATION IS TO WOUND AND WAIT...





JESUS, SHEILA, THIS IS NOT HOW IT LOOKS—

I DON'T CARE. WE'RE THROUGH.

OKINAWA!? A GODDAMMED SUPPLY DEPOT!!? YOU

LIED TO ME!

WHAT?

WHAT? WHO SAID THAT?

DON'T EVEN!
DON'T FUCKING LIE AGAIN!

...

I KNOW MY DAMNED SOURCES!
I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU WERE THINKING, BUT DON'T YOU DARE TALK THAT KIND OF SHIT ABOUT JIM, AGAIN! DON'T CALL ME! DON'T COME NEAR ME! AND STAY AWAY FROM MY KITTENS!



SHEILA, I REALLY NEED TO TALK TO YOU. PLEASE LET ME IN...



WYANT! SHE'S ALWAYS WYANT!!

WYANT! NEVER, NEVER WYANT!!

CANNING A TIME NOT TRUE! YOU TO KNOW THE BEST--

BULLSHIT! NOT AN EXPERT! TALK WYANT... OR ANY WYANT... HAHAHA...

NMM...

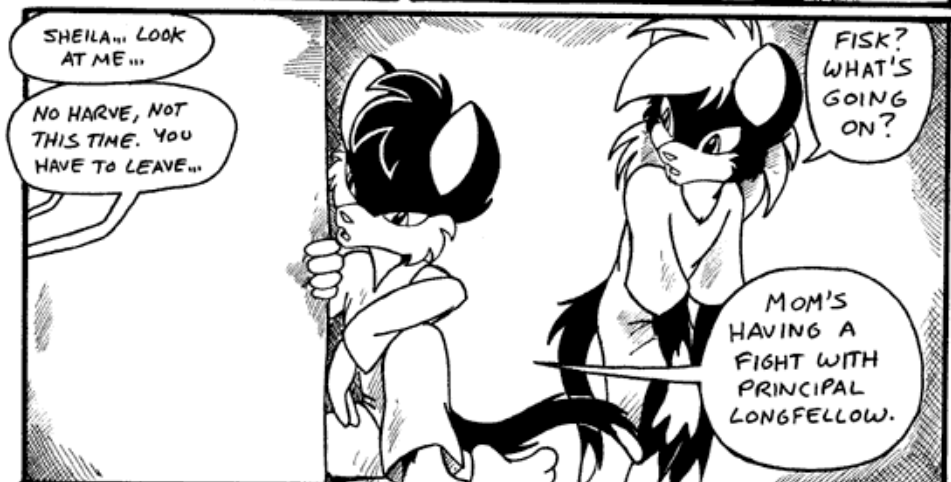
RUB RUB

YOU CAN'T CLING TO YOUR PAST IF YOU WANT YOUR CHILDREN TO HAVE A FUTURE!

WITH WHAT? YOU!?! WHILE YOU'RE NOT GETTING BLOWN AT WORK!?!?

I TOLD YOU IF YOU'D LET ME EXPL--

I'M NOT A GOD-DAMMED IDIOT, HARVE!



SHEILA... LOOK AT ME...

NO HARVE, NOT THIS TIME. YOU HAVE TO LEAVE...

FISK? WHAT'S GOING ON?

MOM'S HAVING A FIGHT WITH PRINCIPAL LONGFELLOW.

SHEILA, DON'T DO THIS TO ME.
YOU'RE THE MOST BEAUTIFUL WOMAN
I'VE EVER MET...

ERK



LET GO!

BLINK

SHEILA!



I SAID -

GOD-DAMMIT! DON'T MAKE ME
GET ROUGH!

MAYBE
THAT'S HOW
YOU WA-

FISK! WE NEED
TO CALL THE
POLICE!

AIEE-!

NO!
NO!

POLICE!?! MY ASS!

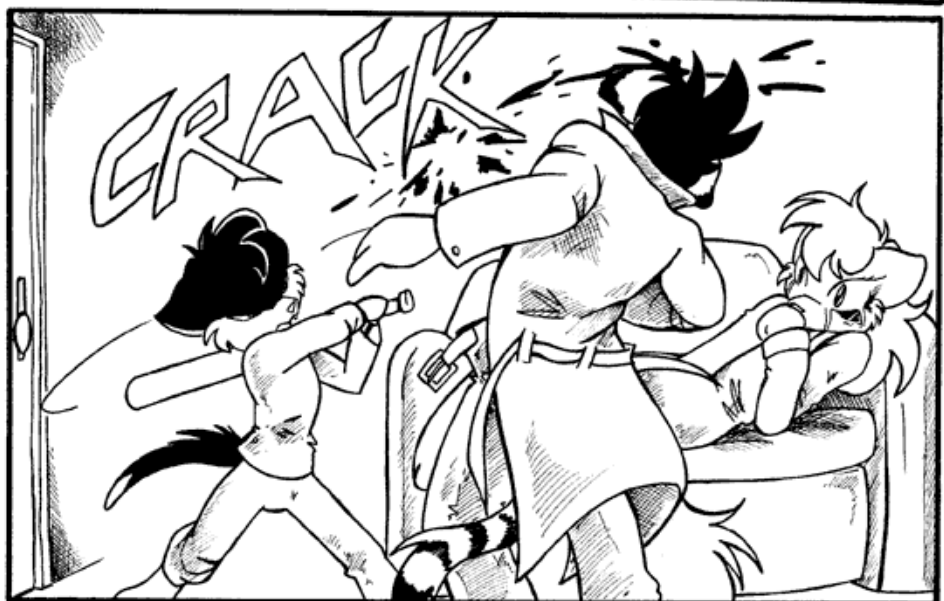
FISK!




IF YOU START TO SCREAM
YOU CAN SAY GOODBYE TO
THIS GORGEOUS FACE...

OHH... GOD
NO...


NING... YOU'RE AS DELIGHTFUL
AS HUFFE TAKEN AS MOST ARE,
WILLING...






BROKEN JAW AND NOSE,
MILD CONCUSSION. HE'LL LIVE

THANKS, BILL.




THE MOTHER'S GOING TO THE
HOSPITAL IN MY CAR. YOU GOT
ROOM IN YOURS FOR THE KIDS?

SURE
THING.




HEY, FISK. YOU DID A GOOD
JOB, BUDDY. WE'VE GOT TO
GET YOU KITTENS TO THE
HOSPITAL.

OKAY.



I WANT YOU TO GIVE THIS
TO YOUR MOTHER. IT'S THE
CARD OF SOMEONE YOU
SHOULD
SEE.

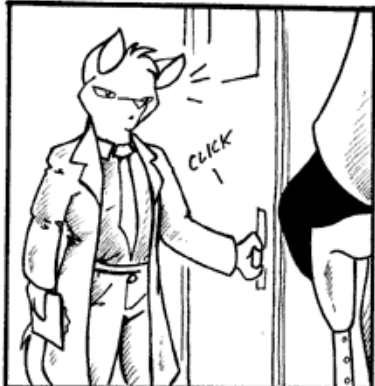


COME ON. WE'VE GOT
TO GET YOU TO THE
HOSPITAL.

YOU'RE HEALING WELL, MR. LONGFELLOW. YOU'LL BE READY FOR SURGERY IN A FEW DAYS.

MM.

GET SOME REST. THE NURSE WILL BE IN IN AN HOUR WITH YOUR FEED TUBE.



HOW'S OUR PATIENT, DOCTOR?

HE'S ALL YOURS. I'LL START THE PAPERWORK.

RISE AND SHINE, MR. LONGFELLOW...

MM?

YOUR SURGERY HAS BEEN PUSHED AHEAD OF SCHEDULE...

MS. BLACK, THE D.A. OF COBB COUNTY INTENDS TO GET A CONVICTION, AND ENSURE THAT MISTAH LONGFELLOW SERVES LONG, HARD TIME. I THINK OUR MEDICAL EVIDENCE WILL BE ENOUGH. I WOULDN'T WORRY ABOUT YOU OR FISK NEEDIN' TO TEST-

B.R.I.N.G.!

EXCUSE ME...

BAUMGARDNER'S OFFICE.
MM-HM... YES...

WHAT?

YOU'RE KIDDING...
ALL RIGHT, THANK YOU.

WELL, WE'RE GOING TO BE FORTUNATE ENOUGH TO NOT NEED A TRIAL...

How?

LONGFELLOW DIED. MENINGITIS CONTRACTED DURING RECONSTRUCTIVE SURGERY...

FISK, YOU'RE HERE BECAUSE WHAT YOU SAW, AND WHAT YOU DID, CAN PLACE A VERY LARGE EMOTIONAL WEIGHT ON A GROWING CHILD'S MIND. WE CAN'T HELP YOU WORK PAST IT IF YOU STAY CLOSED UP...

YOU REALLY WANT TO KNOW HOW I FEEL ?

I DIDN'T FREEZE, OR PAUSE, I JUST LET MY BRAIN AND BODY DO WHAT I WANTED. WHEN THE BAT CONNECTED WITH HIS HEAD, IT FELT GOOD. I TOOK CONTROL OF A WILD SITUATION, AND IT WAS RIGHT.

ADULTS ARE ALWAYS TELLING ME THAT VIOLENCE SOLVES NOTHING...

WELL, LIFE'S NOT SO SIMPLE. MY MOTHER TELLS ME IT'S IMPORTANT TO BE A MAN. SOMETIMES THAT MEANS STANDING UP AND DEFENDING WHAT'S RIGHT, AND THAT CAN BE VIOLENT. SO, I REALIZE, BEING A MAN ISN'T ABOUT JUST HAVING STRENGTH, IT'S ABOUT JUDGEMENT, AND HOW TO ACT TOWARD EACH SITUATION...

PRINCIPAL LONGFELLOW IS DEAD. I KNOW INSIDE I'M SUPPOSED TO FEEL BAD, BUT I DON'T. I FEEL NOTHING. I JUST HOPE MY FEELINGS DON'T MEAN I'M

GOING TO BE IN TROUBLE.

MMM...



MOM? MOM? MOM! MOM? MOM^{ooo}
MOM!?! MOMMMMMMM... MOM? MOTHER?
MOM? MOM-MOM-MOM! HELLO
MOMMMMM^{ooo} MOM! MOM! MOM!?!

I WONDER IF SHE
CAN DO THAT UNTIL
HER VOICE GIVES...

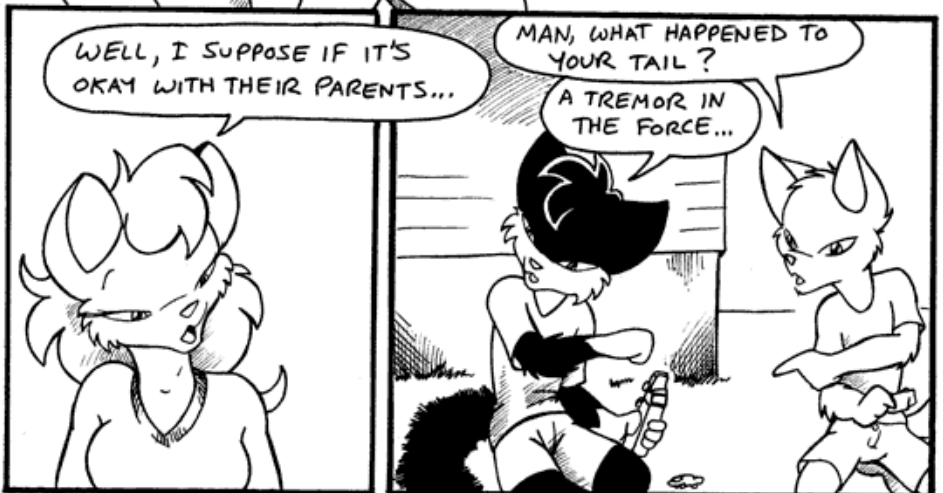


YES... DEAR?

MOM?

WHAT?

CAN ELIZABETH AND
LYDIA SPEND THE
NIGHT?



WELL, I SUPPOSE IF IT'S
OKAY WITH THEIR PARENTS...

MAN, WHAT HAPPENED TO
YOUR TAIL?

A TREMOR IN
THE FORCE...

<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?

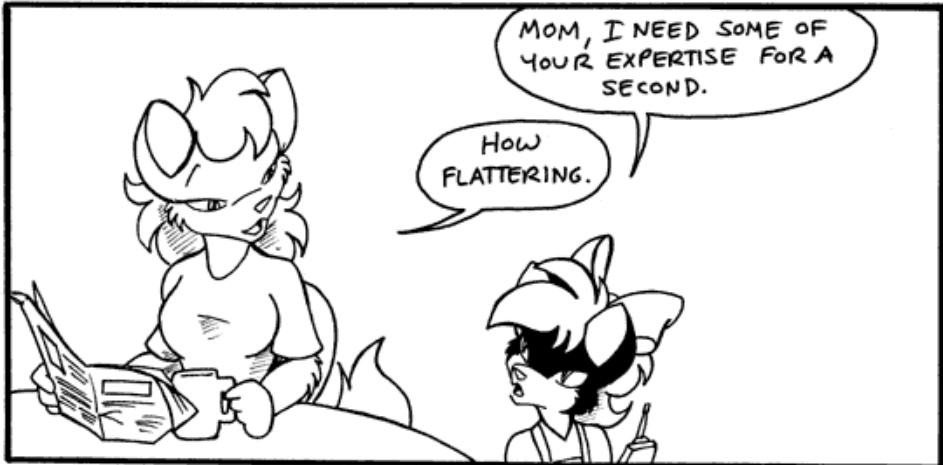
READY.











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!

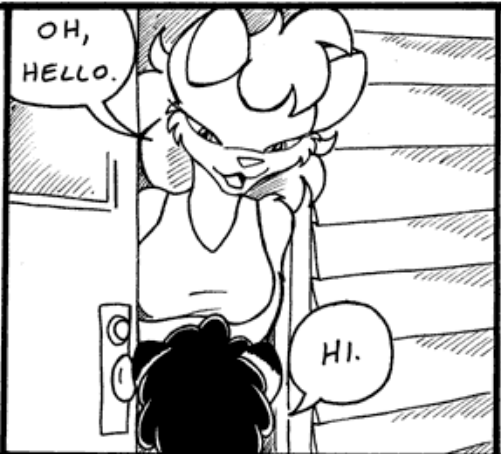
SNIFF

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?





FISK! WHAT ARE YOU DOING IN THE TRASH!?

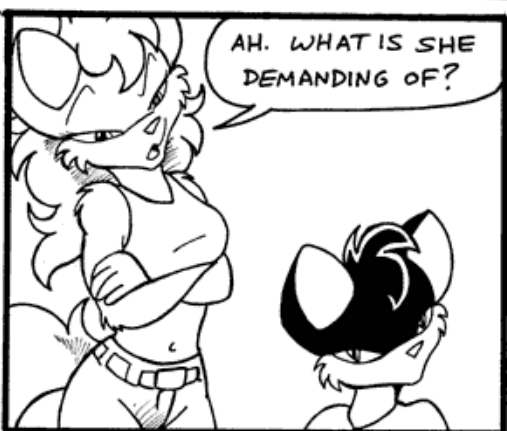
I GOTTA HIDE FROM NIKKI, SOMETIMES.

BRUSH
BRUSH



WHY IS THAT?

SHE'S ALL OVER ME, AND QUITE DEMANDING. I NEED SOME TIME TO MYSELF.



AH. WHAT IS SHE DEMANDING OF?



LITTLE KITTENS WHO LIE TO THEIR MOTHERS DON'T GO TO HEAVEN.

I HAVEN'T LIED, YET.

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...



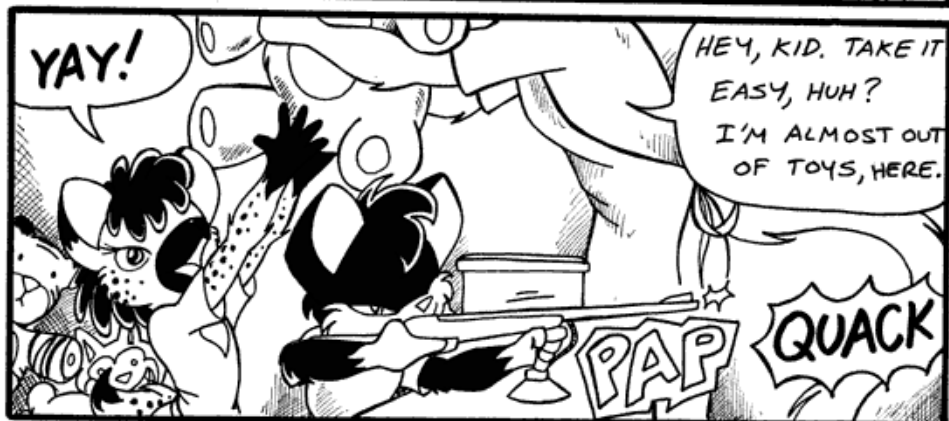
FISK, JUST INVITE THE LITTLE URCHIN, OKAY?

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



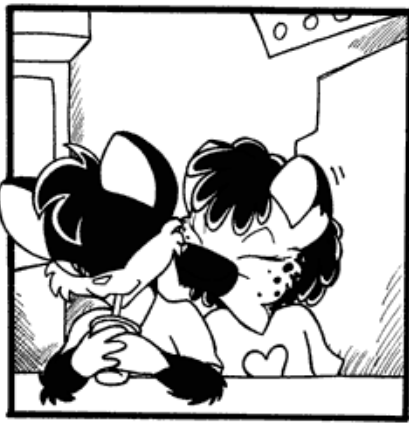
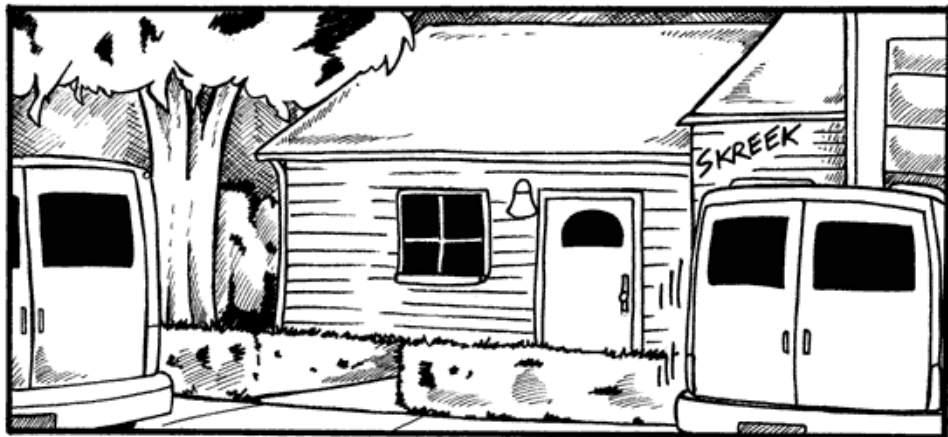
HM. I HOPE THIS ISN'T THE QUIET BEFORE THE STORM.

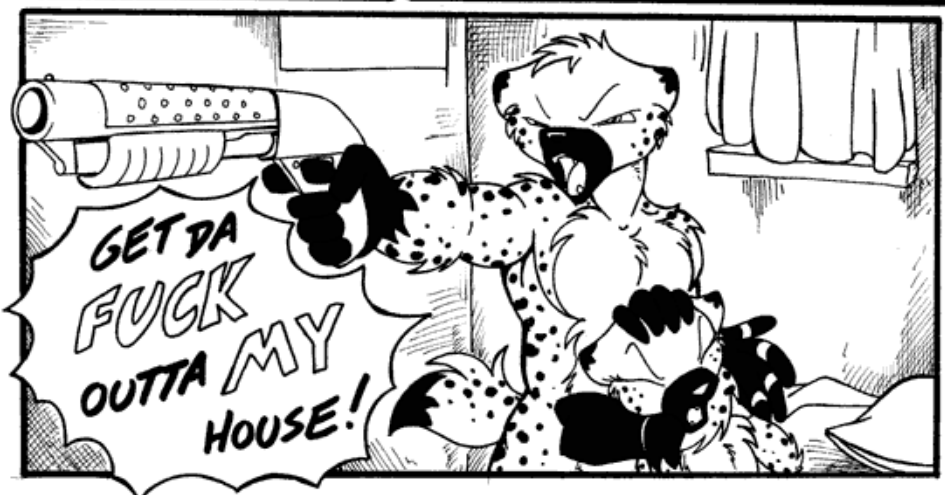
SIGH.
AT LEAST I HAVE SOME TIME TO RELAX.



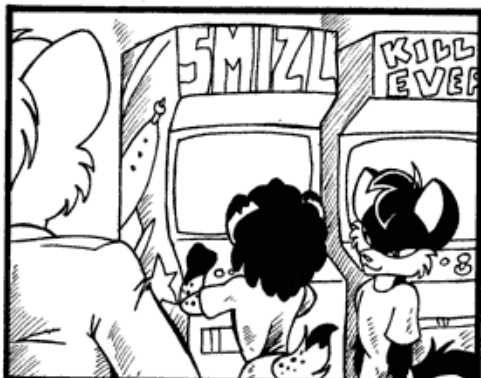
AHH, I SEE I'M NOT THE ONLY ONE WITH CUB-SITTING DUTY TODAY...


STUPID ME.












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

UMMM...

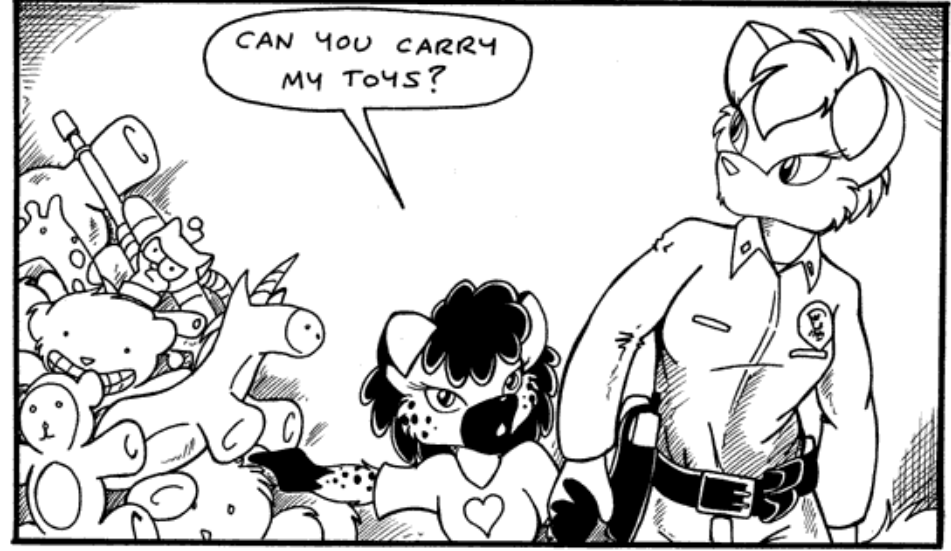


FISK'S MOTHER IS
ALREADY TAKING
CARE OF TWO
KITTENS.

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.



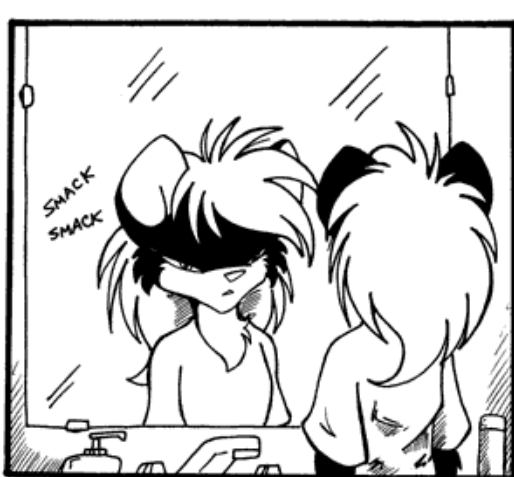
WHAT I WANT? I'D LIKE TO MEET HER AGAIN, WHEN SHE'S BETTER. I'D LIKE TO KNOW THE KIND OF PERSON SHE IS WITHOUT ALL THE SCARS. IT MIGHT BE A PART OF HER FOREVER, THOUGH... MAYBE I JUST DON'T WANT TO THINK I COULD BE USED AND FORGOTTEN SO EASILY.

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



END





I NEVER THOUGHT I'D BE EXCITED TO GO TO SCHOOL. THE SUMMER WAS GOOD TO ME, AND I'M ARMED WITH A NEW WARDROBE.



I GOT RID OF THAT CRUMMY BOW. IT MADE ME LOOK TOO MUCH LIKE A LITTLE GIRL, WHICH I'M NOT ANYMORE.

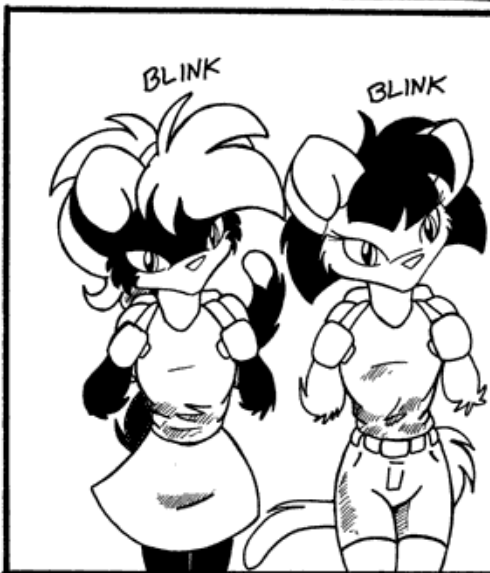
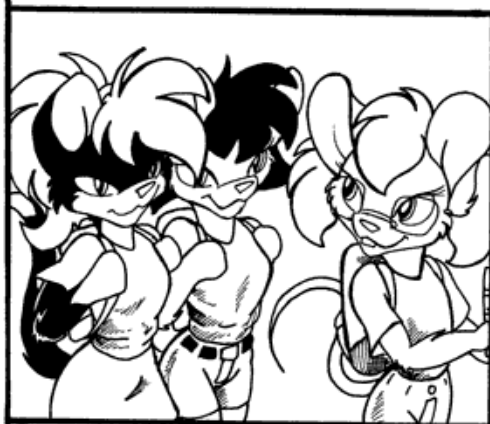


THERE'S SO MUCH I NEED TO DO. I NEED TO START WEARING EARRINGS, MAYBE SOME TIGHT SKIRTS, BIG PUNKY BELTS LIKE CINDY LAUPER...



AND SOME LOWWWW CUT SHIRTS TO SHOW OFF MY SWEET NEW BOY MAGNETS! AREN'T THEY NICE?







ELIZABETH?

SORRY ABOUT THAT, LUCY.

WHAT'S WRONG?



PAH! LOOK AT YOU!

YOU'RE AWESOME.
LOOK AT ME!
I'M GOING
TO BE AN
AWKWARD
GEEK FOR
THE REST OF
MY LIFE!

IT'S THE SEVENTH GRADE!

EVERYONE AROUND
ME IS TURNING
BEAUTIFUL AND
HOOKING UP!



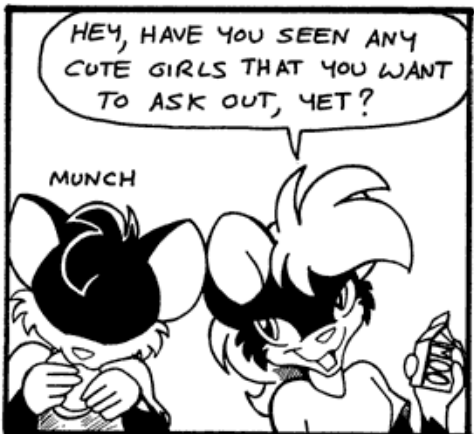
HEY, MY MOTHER
SAYS THERE'S SOME-
ONE FOR EVERYONE.

YAH. I COULD WAIT 'TIL
I'M EIGHTEEN AND MY MOM
WILL HOOK ME UP WITH
SOME NERDY PHD...

I CAN HEAR HER NOW: "BUT
HONEY, HE'S A DOCTAH!" NEVER
MIND HE'S FIVE-ONE AND
OWNS SIX FERRETS, MOTHER!
"WHAT!? YA DON'T WANT
TO MARRY A POOR HUCKLEBERRY!"
AND THEN...


A black and white comic panel showing two anthropomorphic cats. The cat on the left has dark fur with a white chest and is looking towards the other cat. The cat on the right has lighter fur with a white chest and is looking back. They are both wearing simple t-shirts.

HI, FISK!


A black and white comic panel showing the same two anthropomorphic cats. The cat on the right is holding a small bottle or can. The cat on the left is looking at the other one.

HEY, HAVE YOU SEEN ANY CUTE GIRLS THAT YOU WANT TO ASK OUT, YET?


MUNCH

A black and white comic panel showing the two anthropomorphic cats. The cat on the right is speaking and has its mouth open.


'CAUSE IF NOT, SEE, I KNOW SOMEONE...

A black and white comic panel showing the two anthropomorphic cats. The cat on the right is speaking and has its mouth open.

IT WOULD KIND OF BE DOING ME A FAVOR, IN A WAY, TOO...

A black and white comic panel showing the two anthropomorphic cats. The cat on the right is speaking and has its mouth open.

IN SUMMARY...
... YOU HAVE TO ASK ELIZABETH WACHSMAN OUT ON A DATE.

A black and white comic panel showing the two anthropomorphic cats. The cat on the right is speaking and has its mouth open.

IS THIS A "THE FREE WORLD WILL PERISH, OTHERWISE" KIND OF HAVE-TO, OR A "MY SISTER WILL PITCH A FUSS, OTHERWISE" KIND OF HAVE-TO?

YOU KNOW WHAT I MEAN!

NO. I WON'T DO IT.
IT'S OUT OF THE QUESTION.

WHY NOT?

DO I HAVE TO SPELL IT OUT? IS
IT REALLY THAT HARD TO GET?
LISTEN HERE FOR A SECOND
AND SEE IF YOU CAN WRAP
YOUR GIRL BRAIN
AROUND THIS...

ONE, SHE TALKS TO YOU ABOUT IT,
THEN YOUR BROTHER ASKS HER
OUT SHORTLY THEREAFTER. VERY
OBVIOUS WHAT'S GOING ON. TWO,

I HAVE A HARD TIME
SHOWING AFFECTION
TO PEOPLE I
LIKE, MUCH LESS
FAKING IT FOR
THOSE I DON'T
CARE ABOUT.


AND LASTLY, IT WILL EVENTUALLY
ALL COME TO A HEAD. I CAN'T
DATE HER FOREVER, AND SHE'LL
FIND OUT THE TRUTH, AND SHE'LL
BE MORE CRUSHED THAN

EVER, AND YOU'LL
FEEL LIKE SHIT AND
I'LL FEEL LIKE
SHIT...

THERE WILL BE A LOT OF
WAILING AND GNASHING OF
TEETH, AND IT WILL ALL
END IN TEARS! YOU MARK
MY WORDS!

EITHER YOU DO THIS FOR ME,
OR MOM FINDS OUT WHAT
REALLY HAPPENED TO HER
LAWN GNOME.

YOU FOUL
WENCH...




HEY, ELIZABETH.


AHEM

OH, HI
FISK.


I WANTED TO,
LIKE, ASK YOU
SOMETHING...



I WAS THINKING OF CATCHING
"HAPPY TREE FRIENDS" AT
THE THEATER, THIS WEEK-
END...



... AND, YOU KNOW, IT SUCKS TO
SEE MOVIES ALONE...



SO... IF YOU'RE NOT
BUSY, I'D LIKE TO GO
WITH YOU THIS WEEKEND.
WHAT DO YOU
SAY?



NO.

AH, OKAY I—
WAIT... NO? WHAT
DO YOU MEAN,
NO?!

SORRY, FISK. IT'S JUST A LITTLE STRANGE. DID YOUR SISTER PUT YOU UP TO THIS?



NO WAY!

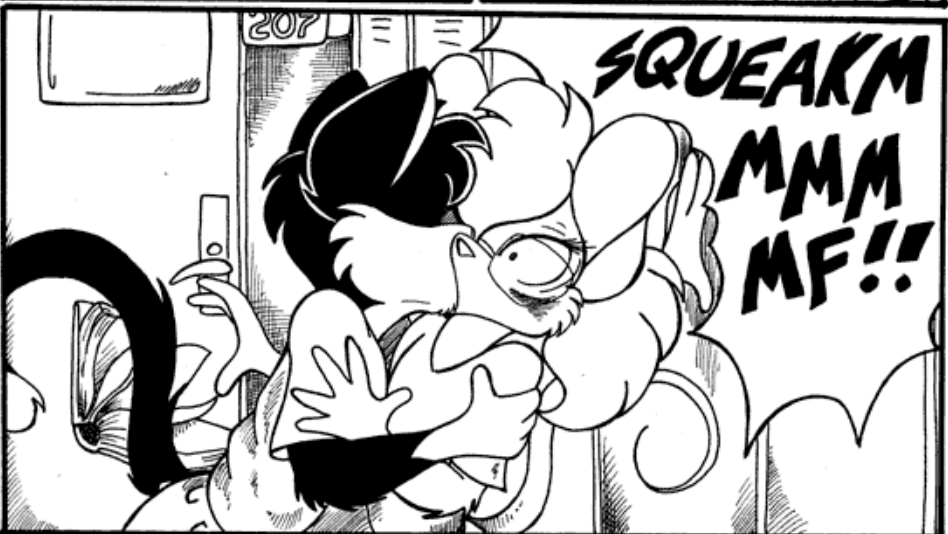
IF YOU'RE TRYING TO MAKE ME FEEL BETTER, I APPRECIATE IT, BUT I'M NOT DENSE. I CAN'T SEE MYSELF AS YOUR TYPE AT ALL.



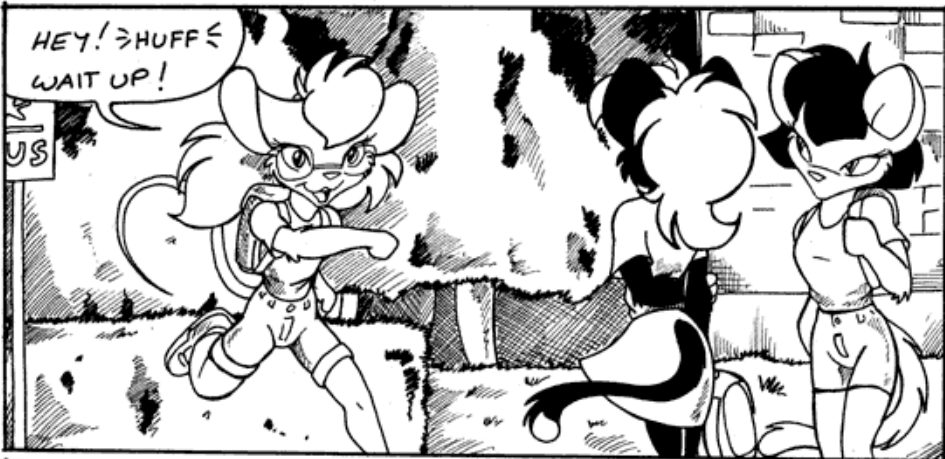
ARE YOU KIDDING? WHY WOULD I WANT TO DATE A DITZ? YOU'RE SHARP AS A TACK AND YOU HAVE A CUTE FACE.



YOU'RE SWEET, FISK, BUT IT IS KIND OF SCARY. HOW CAN I BELIEVE YOU?



SQUEAKM
MMM
MF!!



HEY! >HUFF<
WAIT UP!



SORRY. GOT PULLED
ASIDE... >HUFF<



ARE YOU
GOING TO FUN
CHARLIE'S WITH
US THIS
WEEKEND?



OOO... NO. I HAVE
A DATE THAT DAY.

A DATE!?
WITH WHO?



WITH
FISK.

WHOA...



WHAT?

YOU KNOW WHAT
HE DID WITH THAT
HYENA GIRL...

OH
DEAR.



HMM. I'VE NEVER BEEN ON A "TRADITIONAL" KIND OF DATE BEFORE. I NEVER THOUGHT IT'D BE WITH ELIZABETH...

SHE SEEMS NICE EVEN IF SHE'S NOT "HOT."



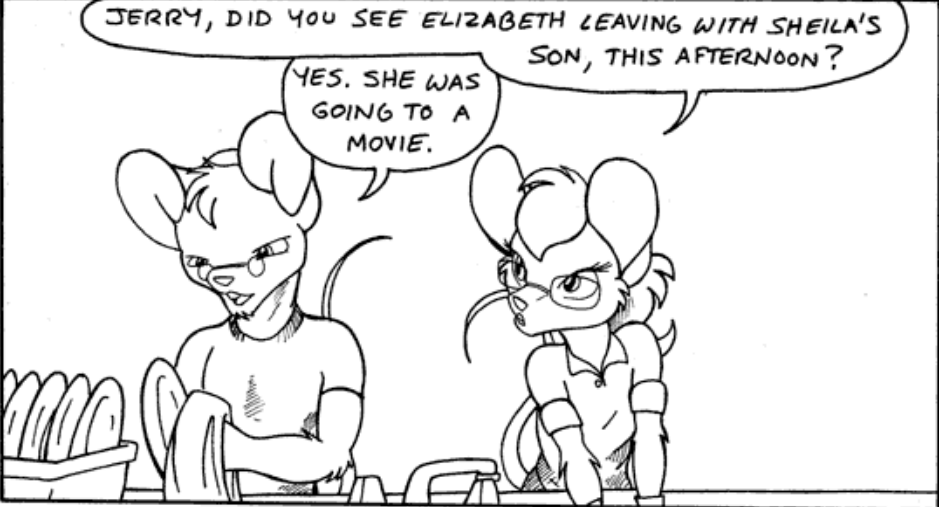
STILL, I HATE DOING THIS ON SOME FALSE PRETENSE. NONE-THELESS, THOSE THINGS I TOLD HER WERE TRUE, AND SHE KISSES WELL ENOUGH. MAYBE IF I CAN REALLY FALL FOR HER, IT WON'T

BE SO MUCH OF A LIE.



HI, FISK!
I'M
READY
TO GO!

WHOA.




JERRY, DID YOU SEE ELIZABETH LEAVING WITH SHEILA'S SON, THIS AFTERNOON?

YES. SHE WAS GOING TO A MOVIE.




IS THAT A GOOD IDEA? ARE WE GOING TO LET HER DATE BOYS WHO AREN'T JEWISH?

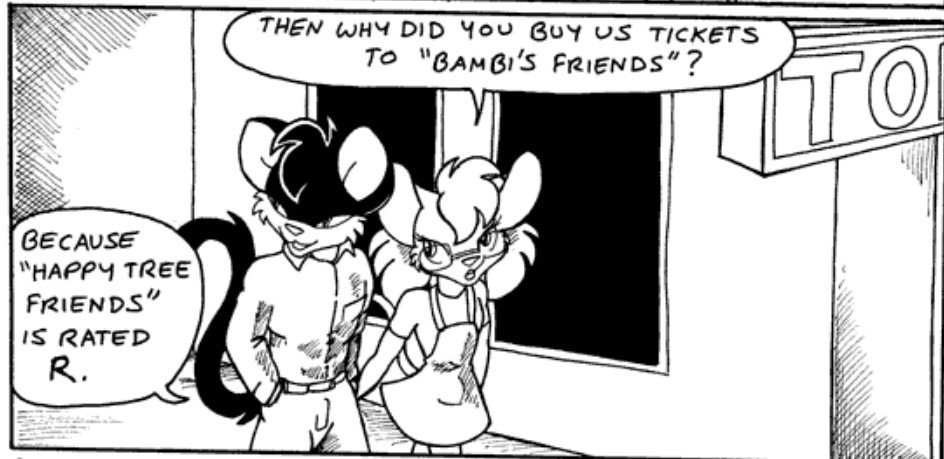


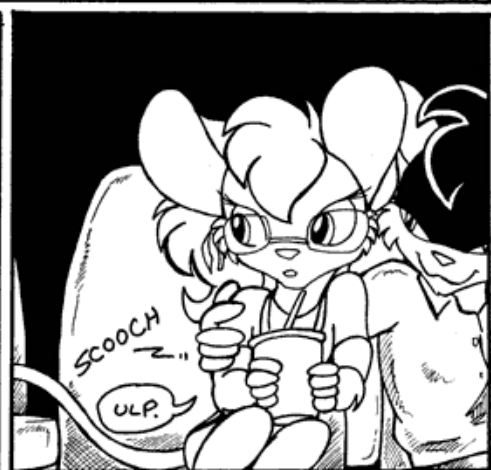
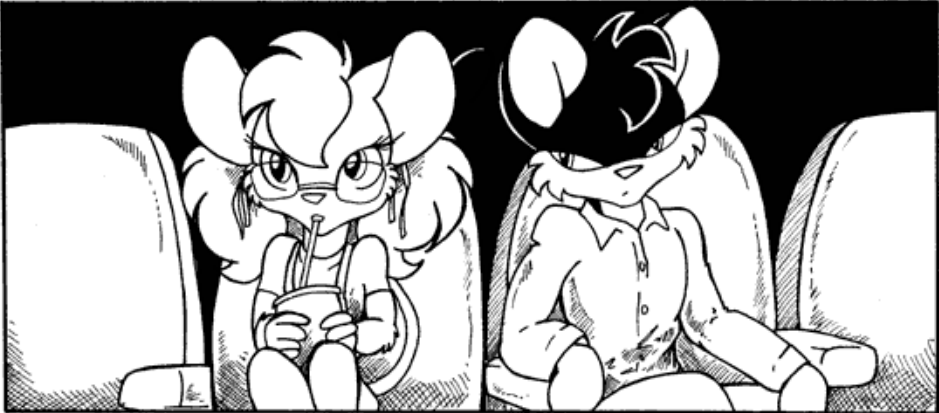
KELLY, THEY'RE GOING TO SEE A MOVIE. THEY'RE NOT GOING TO GO GET MARRIED.

SHE COULD STAND TO HAVE FUN WHILE SHE IS STILL A CHILD.



BESIDES, SHE SEEMS TO LIKE HIM. IF WE FORBID HER FROM SEEING HIM, HE WILL SEEM MORE ENTICING. THEN, SHE WILL ELOPE WHEN SHE IS SIXTEEN, AND THEY WILL LIVE IN A TRAILER WITH NO WHEELS IN LUMPKIN COUNTY, WITH CHICKENS.





AND THEN THE SHARK BIT
HER HEAD **CLEAN** OFF!

THIS LEVEL OF CARTOON
VIOLENCE HAS SPARKED
SOME KIND OF GIDDY,
VISCERAL FEELING
I'VE NEVER FELT FROM
A FORM OF ENTERTAIN-
MENT MEDIA...

YEAH, I WAS JUST
THINKING THE SAME
THING.

I'M HOME.
THANK
YOU.

YOU'RE WELCOME.

KISS

NEXT WEEKEND, YOU'RE
INVITED TO DINNER. MY
PARENTS WOULD LIKE TO
MEET YOU.

OKAY.

GOODNIGHT!

WAIT...
PARENTS?

BING
BONG



HEY, LUCY.



FISK! WHAT
ARE YOU DOING
HERE?

I AM HERE TO HAVE DINNER
WITH THE WACHSMANS. WHAT,
MAY I ASK, ARE YOU DOING
HERE?



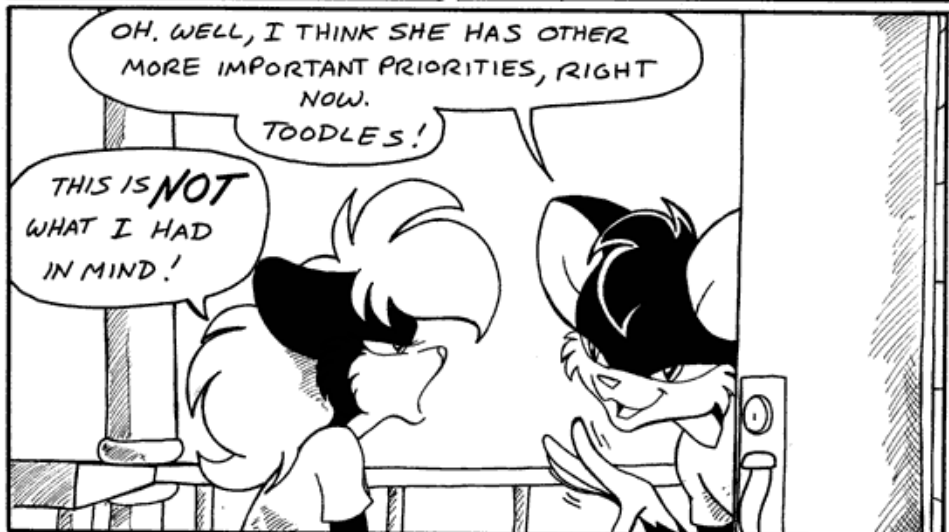
SHE'S SUPPOSED TO BE ON OUR
POOL TEAM AT FUN CHARLIE'S,
YOU KNOW, LIKE... EVERY
SATURDAY!



OH. WELL, I THINK SHE HAS OTHER
MORE IMPORTANT PRIORITIES, RIGHT
NOW.

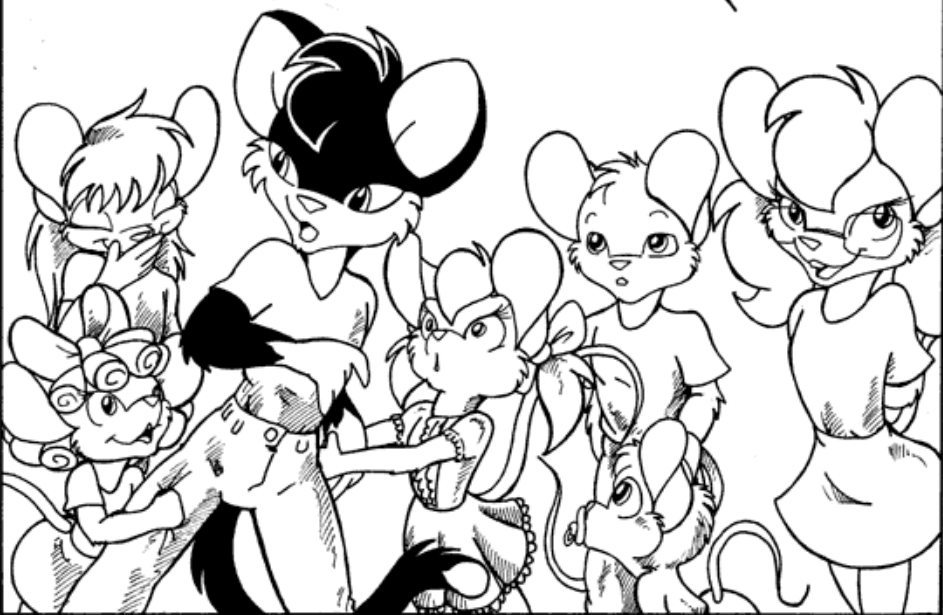
TOODLES!

THIS IS **NOT**
WHAT I HAD
IN MIND!



ERM... HOW MANY
SISTERS DO YOU HAVE?

TSK.
ONLY THREE!



GIRLS! LEAVE THAT POOR
TOM ALONE! RUN ALONG!
INTO THE
KITCHEN!

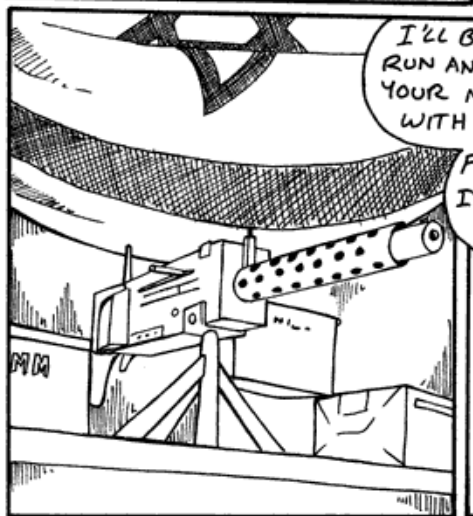
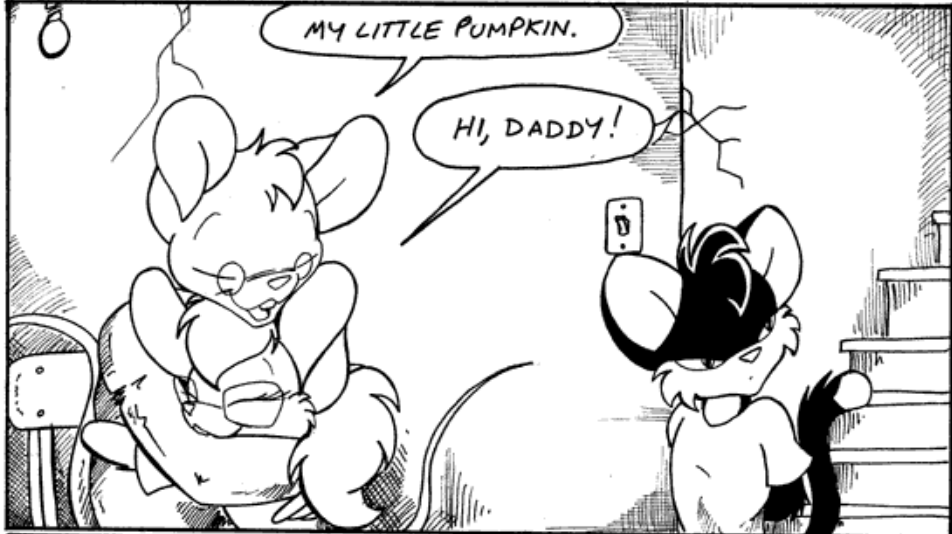
CLAP
CLAP

EEEE!

IS DADDY IN THE BASEMENT?

YES HE IS. YOU CAN GO
SEE HIM. I THINK I HAVE
ENOUGH HELP IN THE
KITCHEN.







YOU LIKE LOOKING AT THE GUNS? YOU KNOW WHAT KIND OF GUN THIS IS?

UM... AN OLD GUN?



IT'S MORE THAN AN OLD GUN. LOOK AT IT, IT'S A COLLECTION OF CRAFTED PARTS COMING TOGETHER TO CREATE A POWERFUL INSTRUMENT.




THIS GUN IS LIKE A RELATIONSHIP. YOU ARE THE WOOD AND SHE IS THE METAL. WITHOUT ONE ANOTHER, YOU DON'T WORK. YOU FORGE EACH OTHER TO ACCOMMODATE THE NEEDS OF THE RELATIONSHIP'S COMPONENTS. YOU ARE DESIGNED TO CERTAIN TOLERANCES. YOU CAN ENDURE EXTREMES FOR SHORT PERIODS, BUT TOO MUCH HARSH WEATHER, OR ROUGH TREATMENT, AND THE WOOD CRACKS, WARPS, AND TURNS GNARLED AND BITTER. IF YOU TRY TO PUT TOO MUCH POWER THROUGH THE CHAMBER, THE METAL MAY STRESS AND FORM FRACTURES. FORCING IT TO DO THINGS FOR WHICH IT IS NOT DESIGNED WILL CAUSE THE METAL TO WEAKEN SLOWLY, THE DANGER BUILDING OVER TIME THROUGH REPEATED MISUSE...



... AND POW! IT EXPLODES IN YOUR FACE!



THE BLAST CAN EVEN KILL YOU...



SO, I ASKED OUT ONE OF MY SISTER'S FRIENDS...

OH?


YEAH. SHE'S REAL SWEET
AND FAIRLY NORMAL.

WHEW!


REALLY.



SHE'S FROM A HUGE JEWISH FAMILY.
IT'S INTERESTING TO SEE HOW A COMPLETE
FAMILY BEHAVES TOGETHER.




HER FATHER IS VERY
COOL, EVEN IF HE
LOOKS LIKE A
BANKER. HE'S
INVITED ME TO GO
SHOOTING WITH HIM
AND HIS SON, IF MY
MOTHER ALLOWS.



IT'S GOOD FOR YOU TO HAVE
A POSITIVE MALE INFLUENCE
IN YOUR LIFE. YOU NEED TO
SEE AND EXPERIENCE HEALTHY,
NORMAL LIVES, AND REALIZE

THAT YOUR
EXPERIENCE
WITH NIKKI
WASN'T THE
IDEAL.



YEAH... I DON'T THINK I CAN
DO THOSE THINGS I DID WITH
NIKKI, TO ELIZABETH. THAT'D
FEEL KIND OF LIKE ... PISSING
IN FRONT OF A NUN...

FISK! YOU HAVE TO STOP SEEING ELIZABETH...

HELL NO. SHE'S NICE.

TRY TO UNDERSTAND MY POSITION, AS A GIRL... PLEASE! I JUST WANTED TO MAKE HER FEEL BETTER, NOT TO HAVE MY BROTHER DATING ONE OF MY BEST FRIENDS! WE RARELY SEE HER! WE CAN'T EVEN GOSSIP!

I THOUGHT YOU DIDN'T EVEN REALLY LIKE HER!

SHE'S AN AWESOME KISSER, AND SHE MAKES THESE CUTE SQUEAKING NOISES WHEN YOU SUCK ON HER NECK. HER TONGUE-

AAUGH!

SPARE ME! JESUS! GOD!

DON'T MAKE ME USE THE HEAVY ARTILLERY!

WHA-?

MOM'S CIVIL WAR COMMEMORATIVE ROBERT E. LEE LAWN GNOME!

GOD-DAMMIT!

GO AHEAD AND TELL MOM,
YOU HEARTLESS BITCH! I'LL
TAKE THE HEAT!



IT CAN'T LAST, FISK! I'VE
WATCHED ENOUGH TV TO KNOW
HOW TEEN ROMANCE ENDS.
IT'LL BE EASIER NOW.



I TOLD YOU THIS WOULD
HAPPEN! YOU TOLD ME
TO ASK HER OUT IN THE
FIRST PLACE!




AW **FUCK!** UM... PERHAPS
I SHOULD HANDLE
THIS, FISK...






FISK, I KNOW HOW TO TALK TO HER!

YOU'VE MESSSED UP ENOUGH! STAY OUT!



BUT WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO SAY TO HER?



IT IS MY FAULT, ULTIMATELY. I LET MYSELF BE PRESSURED INTO SOMETHING DISHONEST. I THINK SHE NEEDS TO HEAR THE TRUTH, NOW.





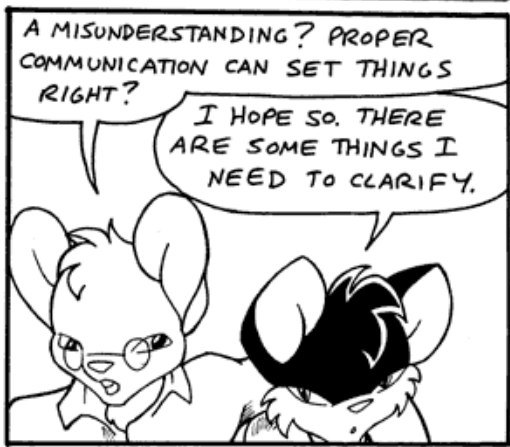
HELLO, FISK.

HELLO, SIR. I WAS WONDERING IF ELIZABETH WAS AVAILABLE?



SHE WENT TO HER ROOM, UPSET. SOMETHING'S WRONG?

A LITTLE.



A MISUNDERSTANDING? PROPER COMMUNICATION CAN SET THINGS RIGHT?

I HOPE SO. THERE ARE SOME THINGS I NEED TO CLARIFY.

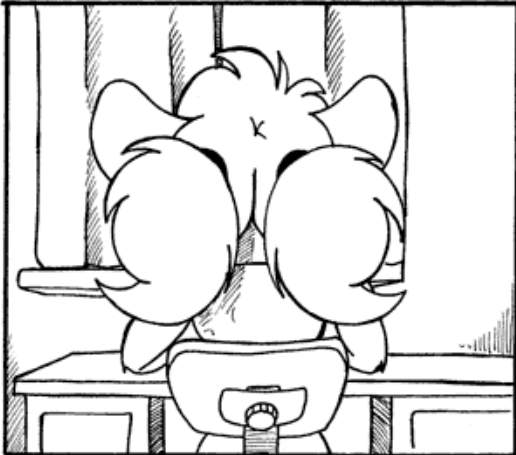


YOU LIKE HER, RIGHT?

VERY MUCH.

EXPLAIN EVERYTHING TO HER. SHE'S A SMART GIRL.

CREEK



CLICK




WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE? YOU LIED TO ME.






I'M REALLY NOT GOOD WITH WORDS. I HAVE TO TRY AT LEAST... BECAUSE IT'S IMPORTANT.



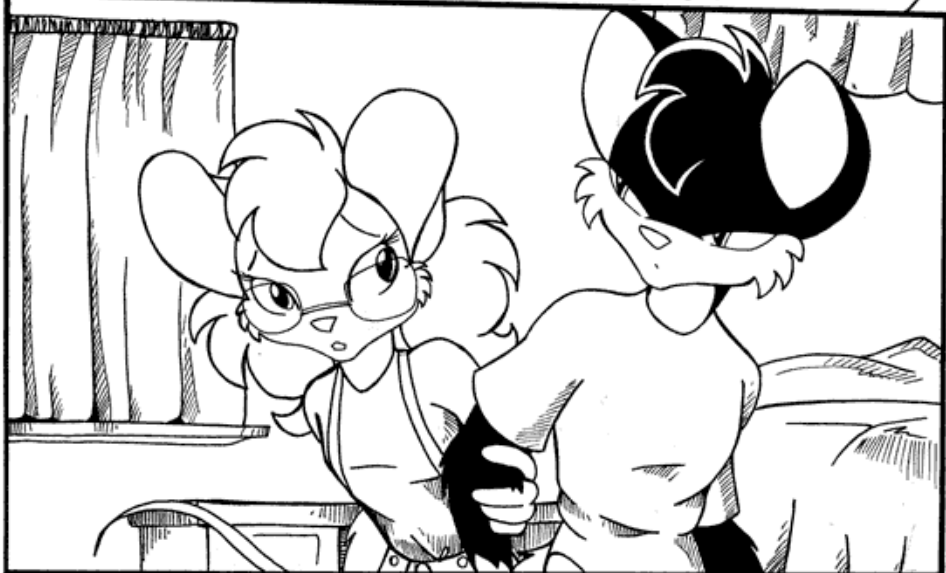
YOU HAVE TO KNOW THE TRUTH. LUCY WANTED TO SET US UP, AND I GOT PRESSURED INTO IT.


BUT, THAT'S NOT ALL OF IT...



WHEN WE WERE TALKING IN THE HALLWAY, I REALIZED EVERYTHING I WAS SAYING WAS TRUE. MOST BOYS JUST LOOK FOR SOMETHING PRETTY. I GUESS I MAY HAVE GOTTEN BURNED OUT ON PURELY PHYSICAL GIRLS WHEN I WAS WITH NIKKI... I DIDN'T KNOW HOW NICE IT'D BE TO HAVE A GIRL AS A FRIEND.


I'M SORRY I LIED, INITIALLY. IF YOU WANT TO KEEP HATING ME, I'LL UNDERSTAND AND I'LL LET YOU BE. BUT, I HAVE TO LET YOU KNOW THAT I REALLY FELL FOR YOU... ... BEFORE I GO.






IS FISK JOINING US FOR DINNER, AGAIN?

I DIDN'T THINK SO. WHY DO YOU ASK?




I SAW HIM GO UPSTAIRS.



YES, BUT I DIDN'T SEE HIM LEAVE.

YES. HE WENT UPSTAIRS TO SPEAK TO ELIZABETH ABOUT SOMETHING.



HE'S BEEN UP THERE FOR FORTY MINUTES!



RIGHT. OKAY. I'LL GO CHECK.




THAT'S MY AUNT. SHE LIVES IN NEW YORK WITH AN APARTMENT FULL OF FERRETS AND A LITTLE WIMP FOR A HUSBAND. SHE HATES MY DAD.


I THINK A FAMILY THIS BIG WOULD BE MOSTLY EMBARRASSING.




I THINK IT'S NICE TO HAVE HISTORY. THAT'S MY MOTHER'S FATHER. HE DIED FIGHTING THE EGYPTIANS.



YOUR DAD DIED FIGHTING, RIGHT? IF HE WERE ALIVE YOU'D BE MORE PROUD THAN EMBARRASSED.



YOU KNOW... I HAVEN'T REALLY THOUGHT — ELIZABETH?



DINNER'S ALMOST READY. FISK CAN JOIN US IF HE'D LIKE.

OKAY!



HOW'D IT GO?

IT WENT OKAY.



ARE YOU STILL GOING OUT?

WE'RE GOOD FRIENDS. "KISSING FRIENDS".




YOU DON'T SOUND HAPPY.

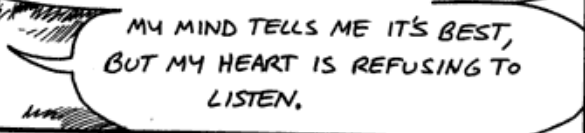


IT'S HARD TO EXPLAIN.







PART OF WHAT YOU SAID WAS TRUE. WE'RE SMART ENOUGH TO SEE IT. WE CAN LOOK FORWARD AND SEE THE INEVITABILITY OF A BREAK-UP SIMPLY BECAUSE THERE'S NO POSSIBILITY OF A "NEXT STEP" FOUR, FIVE, OR TEN YEARS FROM NOW. SHE'S PERFECT IN EVERY WAY EXCEPT FOR THAT. HER PARENTS ARE JUST CONVINCED WE'LL RUN OUR COURSE AND GROW APART. SO, WE'VE AGREED ON A CLOSE FRIENDSHIP.




MY MIND TELLS ME IT'S BEST, BUT MY HEART IS REFUSING TO LISTEN.




YOU LIKE HER THAT MUCH?




I WISH I COULD CHANGE HOW I FEEL. IT JUST FEELS WORSE THAT SHE SEEMS PERFECTLY FINE WITH IT.



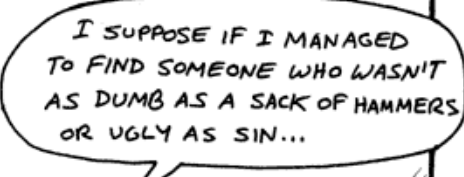
YOU CAN'T JUST ENJOY WHAT YOU HAVE WHILE YOU HAVE IT?



NOT WHILE I'M JUST WAITING FOR A MOUSE TO COME AND TAKE HER AND TAKE MY GUTS OUT.



YOU'LL PROBABLY FIND SOMEONE BEFORE SHE DOES, ANYHOW.



I SUPPOSE IF I MANAGED TO FIND SOMEONE WHO WASN'T AS DUMB AS A SACK OF HAMMERS OR UGLY AS SIN...

SIGH...



END

WIRRRRRRRR LOOK AT THIS MESS! RRRRRRR

BEEP
BEEPLE

MY GRACIOUS!

PUT ON A SWEATER!

SCHLORP

W THIS PLACE LOOKS LIKE THE WRECK OF THE HESPERAS! RRRRRRR

RRR-W
RRR
...RRRR



WHAT'S WITH ALL THE SPASTIC CLEANING, MOM?

WE'RE HAVING COMPANY.

WHO?



THE KELSOS ARE STOPPING OVER FOR THE NIGHT ON THEIR WAY TO FLORIDA.



WHO?



THEY'RE OLD FRIENDS OF MINE AND YOUR FATHER'S. THEY HELPED ME A LOT WHEN HE DIED.



OH. DO THEY SLEEP EARLY?



YES. THE STEREO WILL BE PLAYED AT A TOLERABLE LEVEL, PLEASE.

≧SIGH≦
ALL RIGHT.

IF MADONNA'S HALF AS TALENTED AS YOU CLAIM, YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO ENJOY HER AT A REASONABLE, INDOOR VOLUME AS WELL.

FINE.



COME IN, YOU TWO!
HOW WAS YOUR
TRIP?

GLAD IT'S
NEARLY OVER!



HOW ABOUT YOU, MM?
DOING OKAY?



HANGING IN
THERE, MIMI.

AND THE KITTENS? I HAVEN'T SEEN
THEM SINCE THEY WERE THIS BIG.



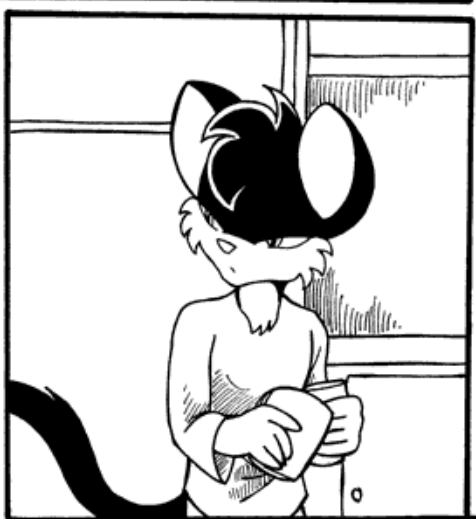
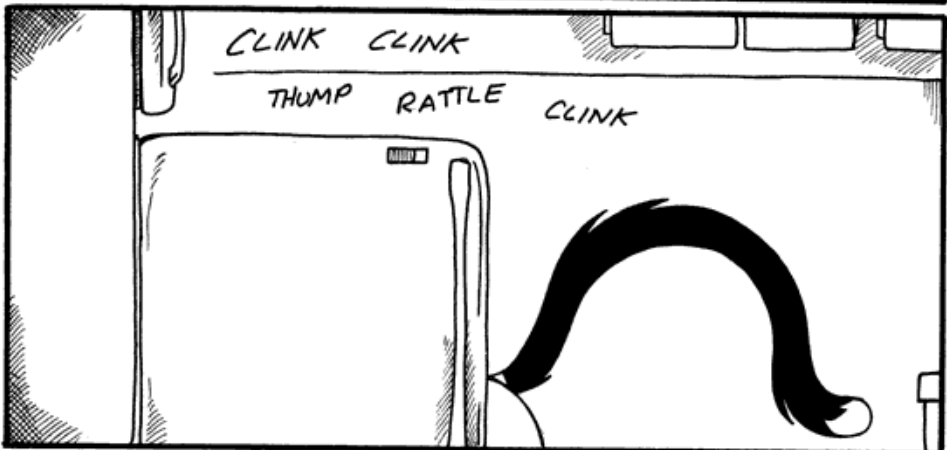
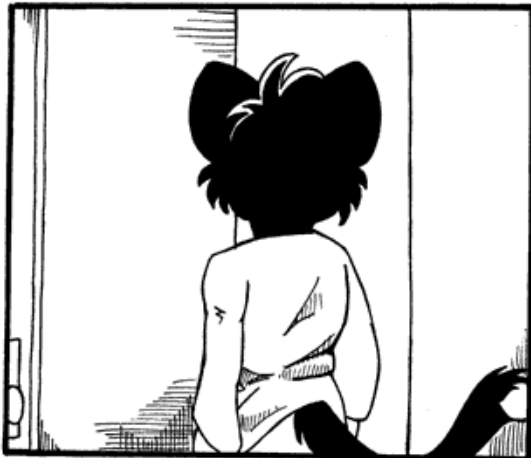
GROWING LIKE
WEEDS!


¿GASP¿ IS THAT FISK? HE
LOOKS JUST LIKE HIS FATHER!



I SURE REMEMBER
THOSE EYES.








YOU PLAY CHESS
BY YOURSELF?

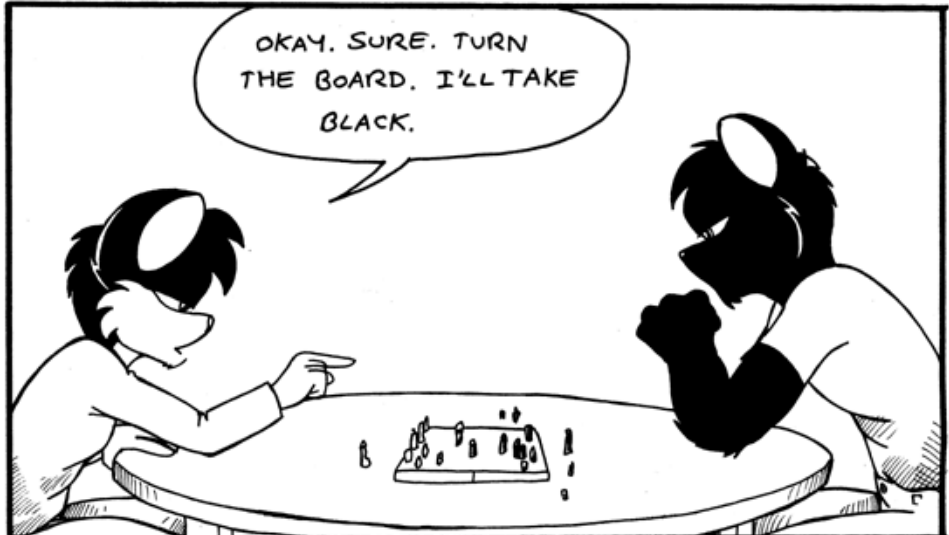
WHEN THERE'S
NO ONE ELSE
AROUND.



I USED TO PLAY WHEN I WAS
YOUNGER, BUT IT'S BEEN A
FEW YEARS.

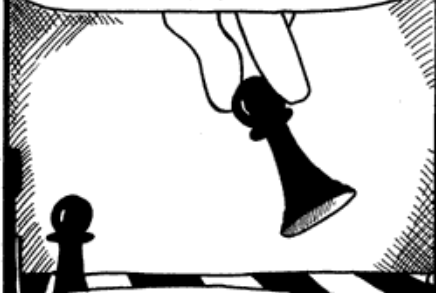


WELL, IF YOU'RE
NOT TOO BUSY, PULL
UP A CHAIR AND
TAKE A SIDE?
WE'LL SEE WHAT
YOU'VE GOT.



OKAY. SURE. TURN
THE BOARD. I'LL TAKE
BLACK.

WHY'D YOU CHOOSE BLACK, FISK?



NOT SURE. IT ALWAYS STRUCK ME AS A SNEAKY COLOR.

IT'S TRADITIONALLY ASSOCIATED WITH EVIL, OR THE BAD SIDE OF A FIGHT.



I DON'T THINK THE BLACK PIECES SEE IT THAT WAY. I DON'T THINK ANY SIDE FIGHTS FOR WHAT THEY THINK IS WRONG. I THINK IT'S JUST A CLASH OF DIFFERENCES...


WHY CLASH, THEN?

...
I THINK WHEN IDEAS ENTER INTO COMPETITION, THEY HAVE TO RESOLVE DOMINANCE. I GUESS THE ONLY TRULY "BAD" IDEA IS ONE THAT TAKES AWAY SELF

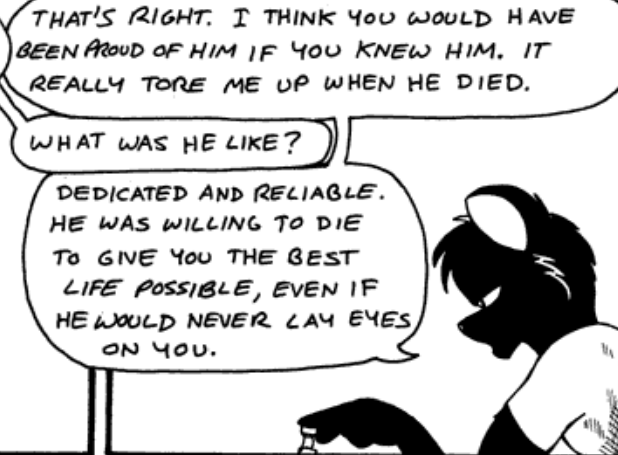
DETERMINATION.

THAT'S A PRETTY STARTLING CONCLUSION FROM SUCH A YOUNG MAN, FISK. VERY INTERESTING.





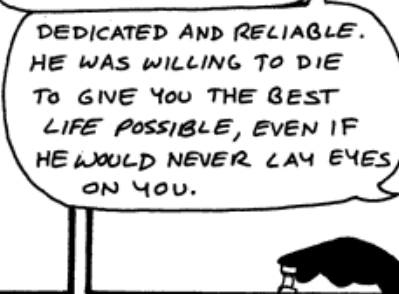
MOM SAID YOU
KNEW MY DAD DURING
THE WAR.




THAT'S RIGHT. I THINK YOU WOULD HAVE
BEEN PROUD OF HIM IF YOU KNEW HIM. IT
REALLY TORE ME UP WHEN HE DIED.




WHAT WAS HE LIKE?



DEDICATED AND RELIABLE.
HE WAS WILLING TO DIE
TO GIVE YOU THE BEST
LIFE POSSIBLE, EVEN IF
HE WOULD NEVER LAY EYES
ON YOU.



WAS IT WORTH IT?




WHAT'S THAT?



VIETNAM.




...




I'VE BEEN ALL OVER THE WORLD AND I'VE SEEN A LOT OF STRIFE. I SEE HOW PEOPLE LIVE IN OTHER COUNTRIES, AND SO DID YOUR FATHER. OUTSIDE OF THE AMERICAN SPHERE OF INFLUENCE, WHEREVER WE RETREAT, WHEREVER WE DON'T EXTEND OUR

PROTECTION, I'VE SEEN PEOPLE SUFFER. I LOOK AT WHAT YOU HAVE, HERE, WITH A NICE HOUSE, WARM SHEETS, PLENTY OF FOOD, NO FEAR OF SOCIETY CRUMBLING AROUND YOUR EARS. YOU HAVE A MOTHER AND A SISTER WHO LOVE YOU DEARLY, A FAMILY THAT SOME WOULD LOVE TO BE A PART OF.

YOUR FATHER DIED TO SECURE THIS FOR YOU, FISK. IF HE HADN'T, SOMEONE ELSE'S FATHER WOULD HAVE HAD TO...



THE COLD WAR IS AN ELABORATE GAME OF CHESS. WE FIGHT OVER IMPORTANT SQUARES, AND FOR DOMINANCE OVER SQUARES WE DON'T OCCUPY. IT'S NOT ENOUGH TO JUST CASTLE YOUR KING WHILE YOUR ENEMIES MASS AGAINST YOU. WE FIGHT TO HOLD THEM, DISRUPT THEM, AND BLEED THEM OF RESOURCES IN THE HOPES THAT SOMEDAY YOU, OR YOUR CHILDREN, WILL NOT HAVE TO FACE THE THREAT OF COMMUNIST HEGEMONY. SO, WAS VIETNAM WORTH IT?



WE LEARNED A LOT FROM THAT CONFLICT. WE'VE LEARNED THINGS THAT WILL ENSURE THEY'LL PAY DEARLY FOR THEIR VICTORY THERE. ONLY THE FUTURE WILL SHOW THE RESULTS OF OUR RESOLVE.

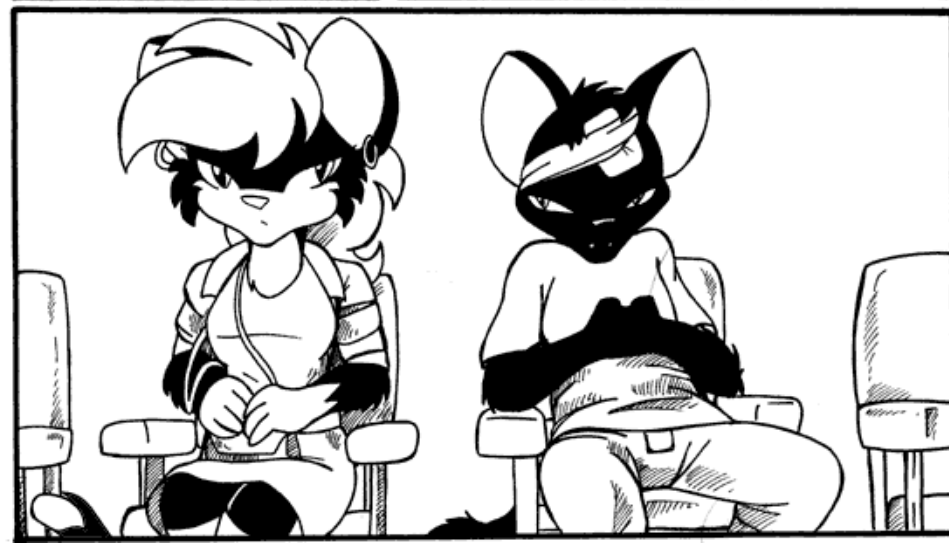
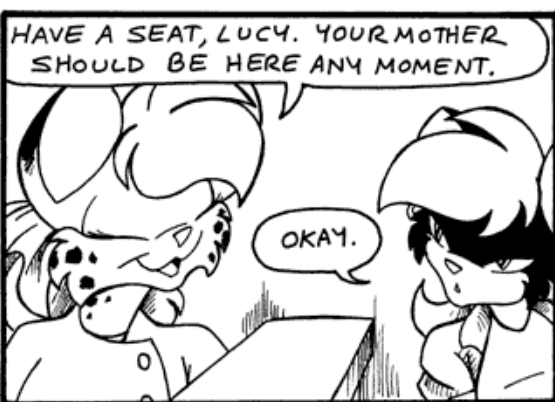
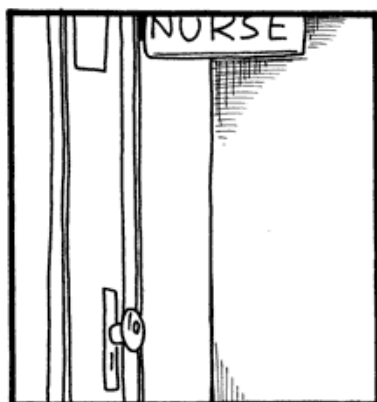
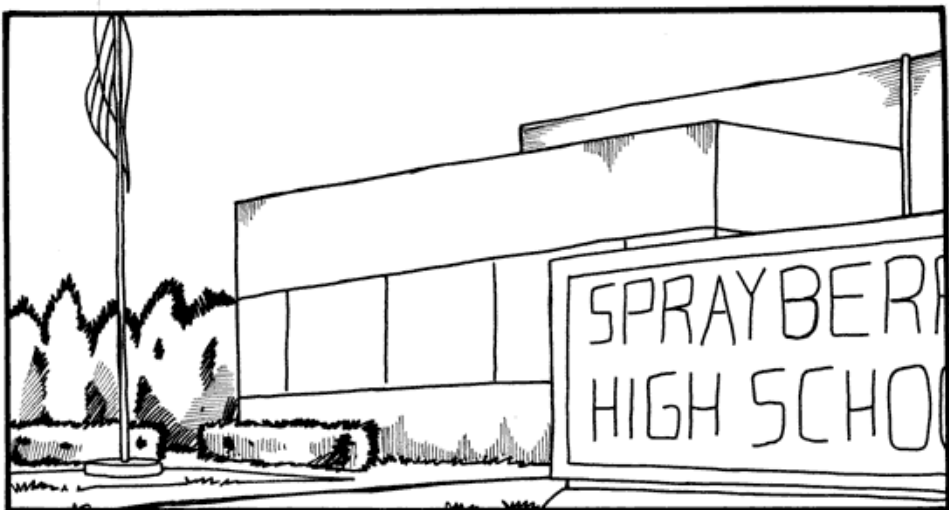
HOPEFULLY, IN THE END, WE'LL BE THE ONES SAYING...

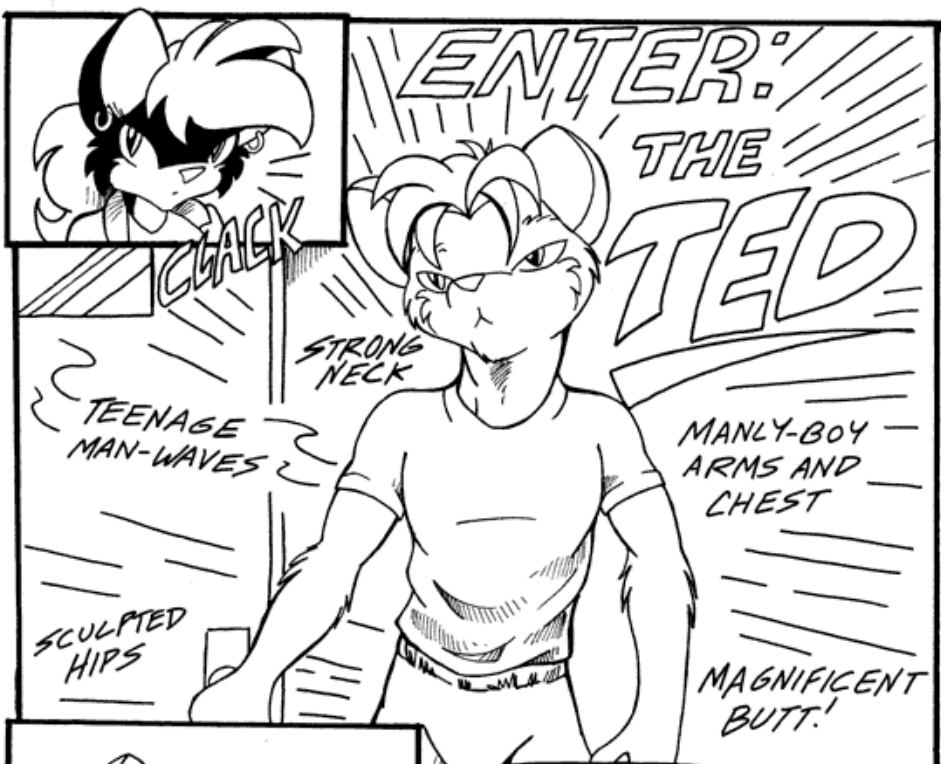
"CHECKMATE!"

DANG!

THAT WAS A GOOD GAME, FISK. YOU'LL MAKE A GOOD CHESS PLAYER, SOME DAY.

END

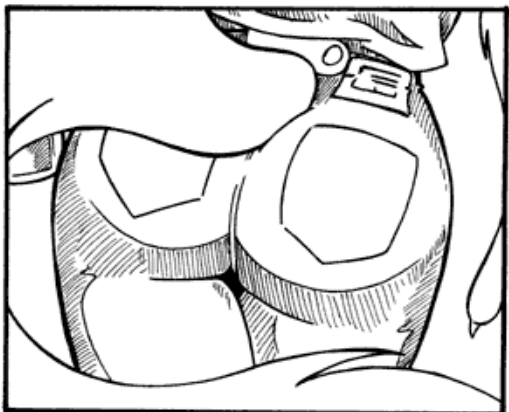




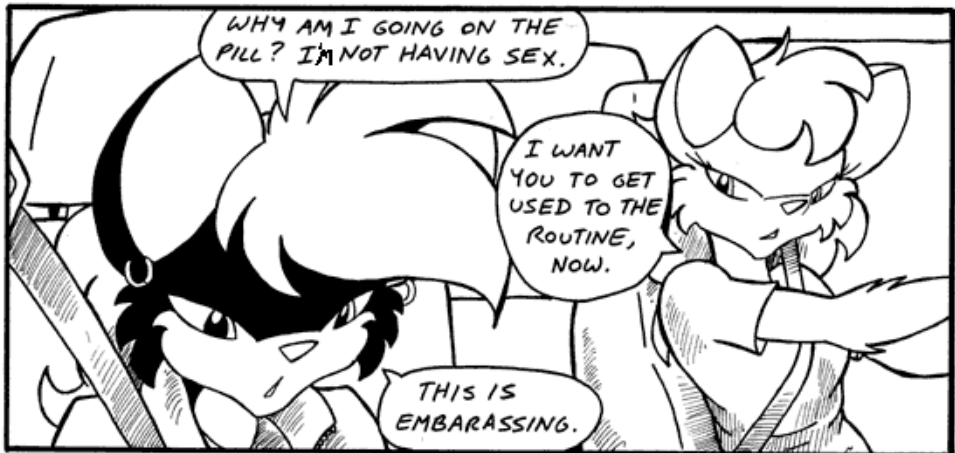
HEY, NURSE. I SPRAINED MY WRIST
WRESTLING DOWN A WILD BOAR THAT
WANDERED ONTO THE FOOTBALL FIELD
DURING PRACTICE. COACH SENT ME
HERE TO GET A BRACE.

OH-KAY!
SIT DOWN!











BRRRING!



HELLO?

HELLO. IS LUCY AVAILABLE?

SHE'S IN THE SHOWER RIGHT NOW.



AH. WELL, COULD YOU TELL HER TED STEPHENS CALLED.

YOU SOUND CLOSE TO RAY STEPHENS. ARE YOU RELATED?

NO, DUDE. JUST TELL HER—

YOU CALLED, RIGHT, RAY STEPHENS. SHOULD SHE CALL YOU BACK?

SURE, LET ME GIVE YOU MY NUMBER...



WAIT... DID YOU SAY I WAS RAY STEPHENS?

NO, TED STEPHENS. WITH A "V"?

NO NO. A "PH"... WAIT, WHAT'S IT MATTER?



NEVERMIND. JUST LET ME HAVE YOUR NUMBER, RAY, AND I'LL GIVE IT TO HER WHEN SHE GETS OUT.

DUDE...



ONLY WHEN I'M DANCIN' CAN I FEEL THIS FREEEE



AT NIGHT
I LOCK THE
DOORS,
WHERE NO
ONE ELSE
CAN
SEE-EE



I'M TIRED OF DANCIN' HERE
ALL BY MY SE-ELF



TO-NIGHT I WANNA DANCE WITH
SOME-ONE-ELLY




FISK! DON'T YOU
KNOCK!?











SORRY IT TOOK A WHILE. MY MOTHER WAS SPAZZING A LITTLE.


OH?



BECAUSE YOU'RE SIXTEEN, SHE'S GOT THIS WHOLE PARANOID OUTLOOK ABOUT ME.



FFT. MY BROTHER COULD GO OUT WITH A GAY MONKEY AND SHE WOULDN'T CARE.




SHE USED TO DATE GUYS ALL THE TIME WHEN WE WERE YOUNGER.

OH HO!
REALLY?




DAMN! THAT WAS FUN! WE SHOULD GO DANCING EVERY WEEKEND.

YOU LOOK EXHAUSTED.




OH. BY THIS HOUR I'M USUALLY UM... ASLEEP...

DO YOU NEED TO GO TO SLEEP?




I... MIGHT...

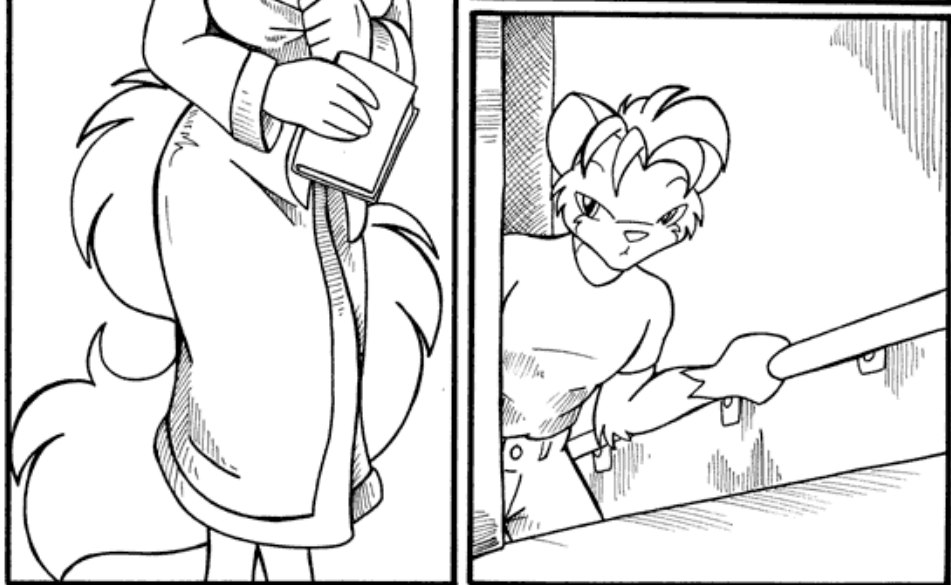
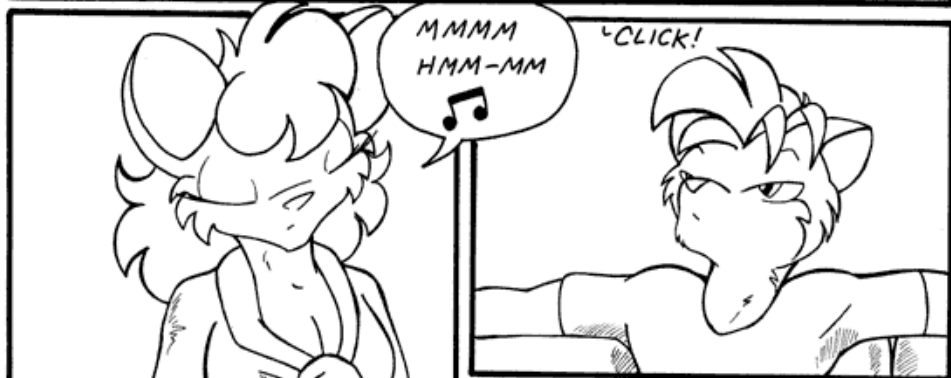
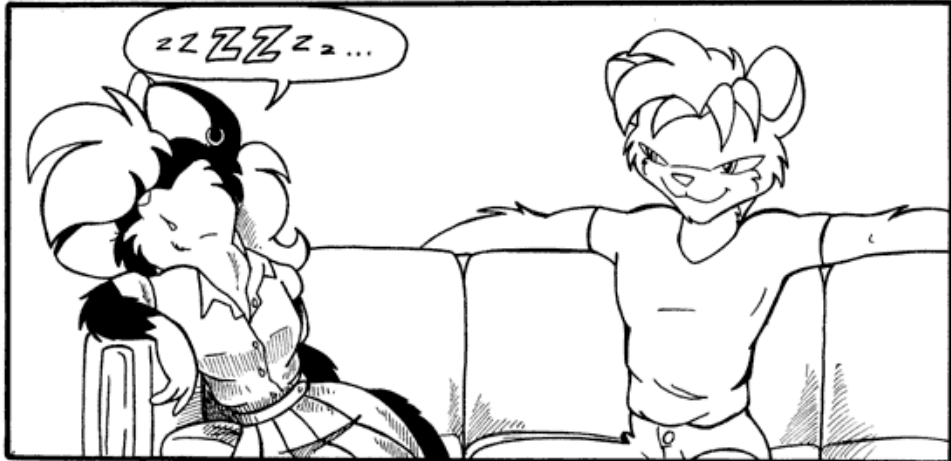
SHOULD I SAY GOODNIGHT?

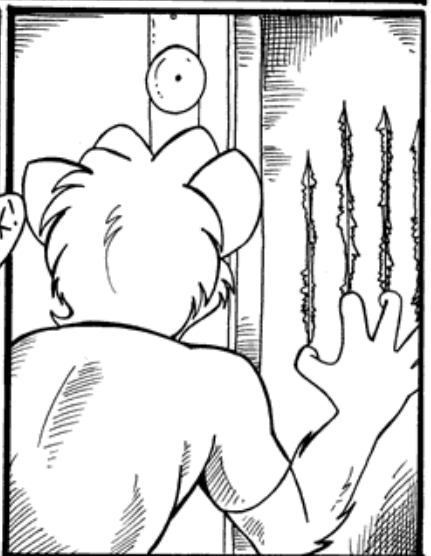


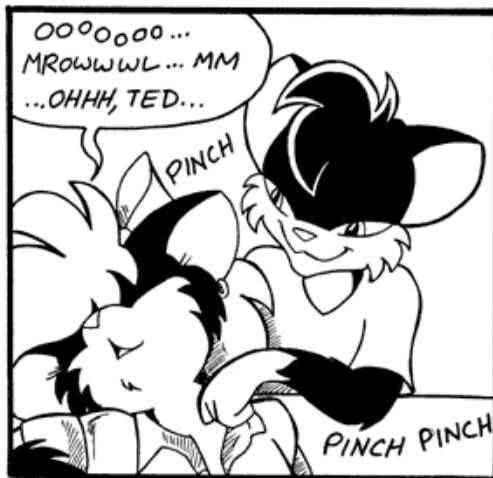
I G-MMP... MMM...



UMM... DO YOU WANT TO COME INSIDE FOR A BIT? EVERYONE'S PROBABLY ASLEEP.







IT'S NOT FUNNY, YOU
LITTLE ASSHOLE!

THE LOOK
ON YOUR
FACE WAS!

TED! SORRY!
I FELL ASLEEP.

OH, IT'S OKAY.
I WAS UPSTAIRS
LOOKING FOR THE
BATHROOM.

HEE...

WHEW...

FISK WAS
JUST BEING
A JUVENILE
DICK.

FISK'S
GOING TO
BED.



LUCY'S GOING TO A SLUMBER PARTY TONIGHT. HER BROTHER'S

SPENDING THE NIGHT WITH HIS FRIENDS...



SHEILA BLACK WILL BE ALL ALONE WHEN I SHOW UP TO

LAY ON THE BOYISH CHARM.

HOW DO I LOOK?



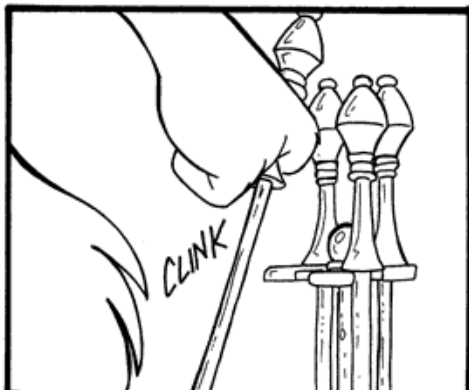
HOMOSEXUAL.

OH, FUCK YOU. WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT WOMEN, ANYWAY.



AHHH...

DING DONG

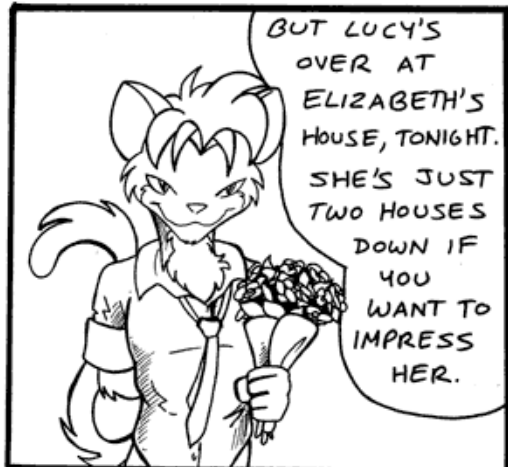


WHO IN THE-
OH! OH MY...
HEE!



OH DEAR!
TED!

DON'T
YOU
JUST
LOOK
CHARMING!



BUT LUCY'S
OVER AT
ELIZABETH'S
HOUSE, TONIGHT.
SHE'S JUST
TWO HOUSES
DOWN IF
YOU
WANT TO
IMPRESS
HER.



OH I SEE. MISS BLACK, IT'S
NOT EASY FOR ME TO TELL YOU
HOW GRATEFUL
I AM FOR YOU
ALLOWING
LUCY TO GO
OUT WITH
ME.

YOU'RE AN AWESOME, STRONG
WOMAN AND I THINK LUCY IS
LUCKY TO HAVE YOU AS A MOTHER.



I THINK YOU
DESERVE
THESE,
SHEILA.

OH!



SO, I WOULD LIKE TO
SHOW MY APPRECIATION
BY TREATING YOU TO
DINNER, SOMETIME.

MMM.

DINNER WITH LUCY AND I?
THAT'S AN AMAZING GESTURE,
TED.

I ... HAD MY
HEART ON
SPEAKING WITH
YOU OVER
DINNER...
ALONE PERHAPS.

ALONE ? IS SOMETHING
IMPORTANT ON
YOUR
MIND,
TED?

YOU KNOW WHAT IT'S LIKE TO
BE YOUNG AND UNSURE... IT'S
HARD TO EXPRESS
HOW I FEEL...

TED... ARE YOU ASKING ME
OUT ON A DATE ?

OH!

OH, YEAH.



TED, YOU'RE ASKING ME TO BE A BAD MOTHER. I RAISED LUCY AGAINST A LOT OF TOUGH ODDS. I BUILT A RELATIONSHIP WITH HER AND SHE TRUSTS ME AS SOMEONE WHO'S BEEN THROUGH LIFE AHEAD OF HER AND IS LOOKING OUT FOR HER...

YOU'RE ASKING ME TO BETRAY HER FOR A DATE WITH HER BOYFRIEND AND A CHANCE AT SOME SIXTEEN YEAR OLD PIECE OF DICK!?



W-



...YEAH?

GET OFF MY PROPERTY!



WHAT THE HELL!? HOW COULD YOU DO S-SOMETHING SO SICK AND SLIMY!!? JESUS T-TED!

CHRIST, I DON'T NEED ALL THIS EMOTIONAL BULLSHIT, RIGHT NOW!

YOU THINK I'M AFRAID OF YOU GETTING UPSET!?


FRESHMAN BITCHES LIKE YOU ARE A DIME PER DOZEN. NOW GET OFF MY CASE.




END









I CAN'T BELIEVE I MADE
OUT WITH HIM! SICK JOCK
FUCKER... HOW CAN A
GUY BE THAT
WAY...



MAYBE HE'S
RIGHT. I'M
JUST A
DIME PER
DOZEN.
ANOTHER
STUPID GIRL
WHO'LL DO
ANYTHING.



YOU KNOW
WHAT I
MEAN?



I DON'T THINK YOU'RE
JUST ANOTHER DUMB
GIRL. I ONLY HAVE
ONE TWIN, YOU KNOW.

WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY THAT?



WHAT I MEAN IS NO ONE EXPECTS YOU TO BE PERFECT OR HAVE FLAWLESS JUDGEMENT. BUT YOU'RE NOT JUST ANY GIRL. YOU'RE MY SISTER, AND I THINK I KNOW YOU BETTER THAN SOME FUCKING JOCK.



I HATE TO SEE YOU LIKE THIS. EVER SINCE YOU ALMOST DIED WHEN WE WERE NINE I'VE FELT MORE LIKE YOUR OLDER BROTHER THAN YOUR TWIN.



I THINK TED KNOWS HOW BADLY HE HURT YOU, BUT SOMETIMES OUR PRIDE IS TOUGHER THAN OUR SENSE OF HONOR. YOU'LL GET OVER ALL THIS IN TIME AND YOU'LL BE A BETTER JUDGE OF OTHERS AS A RESULT.


I'LL DO WHAT I CAN TO HELP YOU FEEL BETTER UNTIL THEN, THOUGH.

YOU WILL?




WILL YOU GO SHOPPING WITH ME, TOMMOROW?





HOW DOES THE MALL HELP?

MALLS ARE MAGICAL. THEY'RE BIG BUFFETS OF SHOPPING THERAPY.




WOULDN'T YOU RATHER GO SHOPPING WITH ELIZABETH?

NO. SHE'S NOT A GUY.




I NEED A NEW SET OF OUTFITS. NOTHING'S MORE HEALING THAN FEELING BEAUTIFUL AND WANTED. YOU'RE A GUY, SO YOU KNOW WHAT GUYS LIKE. I NEED YOUR INPUT.



I LOVE ELIZABETH AS A DEAR FRIEND, BUT HER CHOICE IN CLOTHING IS JUST... WELL...

SO NOT ME.



GUYS LOVE GIRLS WHO PLAY ARCADE GAMES.

COME ON...



THIS IS THE PERFECT PLACE TO START.

NO, I'M NOT A PROSTITUTE Boutique

OUTSTANDING.



YOU CAN TELL THESE ARE QUALITY CLOTHES BY THE PRICES.



THIS ONE HAS RIPS IN IT, IF I WORE IT, YOU COULD SEE MY BRA.




DO YOU THINK A BLACK BRA WOULD LOOK BETTER UNDER IT? BECAUSE IF SO I'D HAVE TO BUY ONE. FISK?




OH CHRIST, FISK.






HOW'D YOU AFFORD ALL THAT ON YOUR ALLOWANCE?

WELL, FISK HELPED A LITTLE. HE THOUGHT I NEEDED IT MORE THAN HE DID.




AWWW! WHAT A LITTLE HERO!

YEAH.



WHAT... IS THIS?

UM. THONG UNDERWEAR.



SO PEOPLE DON'T SEE PANTY LINES ON MY BUTT WHEN I WEAR TIGHT SKIRTS.

TIGHT SKIRTS!?



FISK DID THAT?!
WHAT AN AWESOME
BROTHER!

I GUESS.

WE CAN'T EVEN GET MY BROTHER
TO DO THE DISHES WHEN IT'S
HIS TURN.



YOUR BROTHER'S SUCH A
SWEET GUY!

IT'S TOO
BAD HE'S
NOT A
MOUSE.



YEAH.
THAT'S TOO
BAD.









CHRIST. WHAT THE HELL'S GOTTEN INTO ME?

CLINK!

CLINK!

MUNCH

HOW COULD I KISS MY OWN BROTHER? AM I TURNING INTO SOME KIND OF HICK? A TRASHY REDNECK? CAN I

HELP IT HE'S THE ONLY GUY WHO HASN'T BEEN A PIECE OF CRAP TO ME?

IT WAS NICE, THOUGH. BUT DAMMIT, YOU CAN'T FALL IN LOVE WITH YOUR OWN BROTHER.

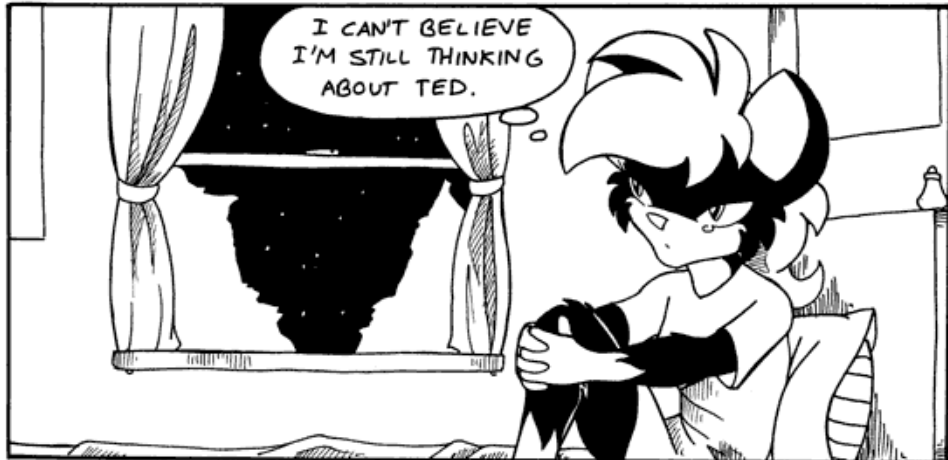
NO, NO. I WON'T.

I CAN'T. I SHOULDN'T EVEN BE HAVING THIS DISCUSSION WITH MYSELF.

HMMM. FISK IS ALWAYS SO PENSIVE. LOOK AT HIM OVER THERE, SO QUIET. I WONDER IF HE'S THINKING ABOUT THIS? I WISH I COULD GET INTO

HIS HEAD AND FIND OUT.

MMM.
POTATOES.



I CAN'T BELIEVE
I'M STILL THINKING
ABOUT TED.



AT LEAST TOMMOROW'S SUNDAY.
SO WHO CARES IF I CAN'T
SLEEP.



I NEED SOMEONE TO HOLD.
HOW AM I EVER GOING TO
TRUST ANOTHER GUY FOR THAT
THOUGH...



MAYBE I CAN GO TALK TO FISK, AGAIN.
HE'S PROBABLY TRYING TO SLEEP.

I'VE BEEN TAKING A
LOT OF HIS TIME, THOUGH.
I HATE TO IMPOSE SO
MUCH.

GO AHEAD. SLIP OFF TO FISK'S ROOM. YOU KNOW HOW THAT TURNED OUT THE LAST TIME.



THAT'S NOT WHY SHE WANTS TO GO! LUCY JUST NEEDS TO KNOW SOMEONE CARES!



SHE'S THOUGHT ABOUT IT! NO DENYING!

SO WILL A HEADACHE BUT WE STILL TAKE ASPIRIN!

LIVE A LITTLE!

SHE'S STILL IN PAIN! THOSE THOUGHTS WILL FADE.

MAKING OUT IS WAY DIFFERENT FROM ASPIRIN!

NOT WITH HER BROTHER!



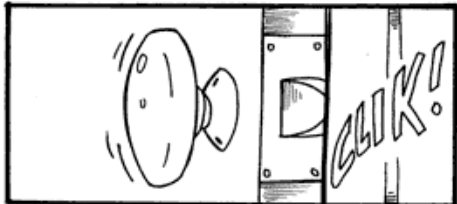
WHAT WILL BE IS WHAT SHE WILL KNOW HAS BEEN DONE.

WHAT?

SHAH..

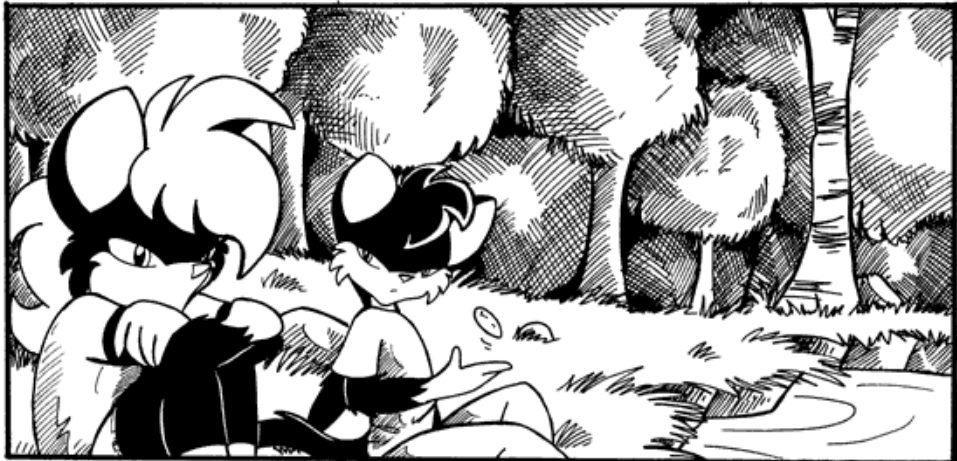
COP OUT.











THAT WAS
WRONG, HUH?



WRONG BY US?



I DON'T KNOW. I GUESS IT FEELS
THAT WAY. WE DID SOMETHING
THAT WE HAVE TO KEEP A SECRET.



WHAT KIND OF FEELINGS
DO YOU HAVE FOR ME? EVEN
IF I WASN'T YOUR SISTER?



AFTER THE WHOLE THING WITH NIKKI, I WASN'T SURE IF I FELT FLATTERED OR JUST USED.

AT SOME POINT I WAS KIND OF AVOIDING HER. I DIDN'T KNOW WHY, THEN. BUT EVEN THOUGH THE SEX FELT GOOD, I STARTED TO DISLIKE IT.



I REALIZED WHY, LONG AFTER THE FACT. EVERYONE WAS SAYING HER AFFECTIONS WERE JUST A SYMPTOM OF HER ABUSE. SEX WAS A MANIFESTATION OF THAT SYMPTOM.

I FELT LIKE I WAS JUST SOMEONE'S HABIT...



I REALIZED I WANTED HER TO CARE FOR ME LIKE I STARTED TO CARE FOR HER, BUT EVERY DAY SHE JUST WANTED TO PULL ME ON TOP OF HER. THERE WAS NOTHING THERE BUT EMPTY SEX.



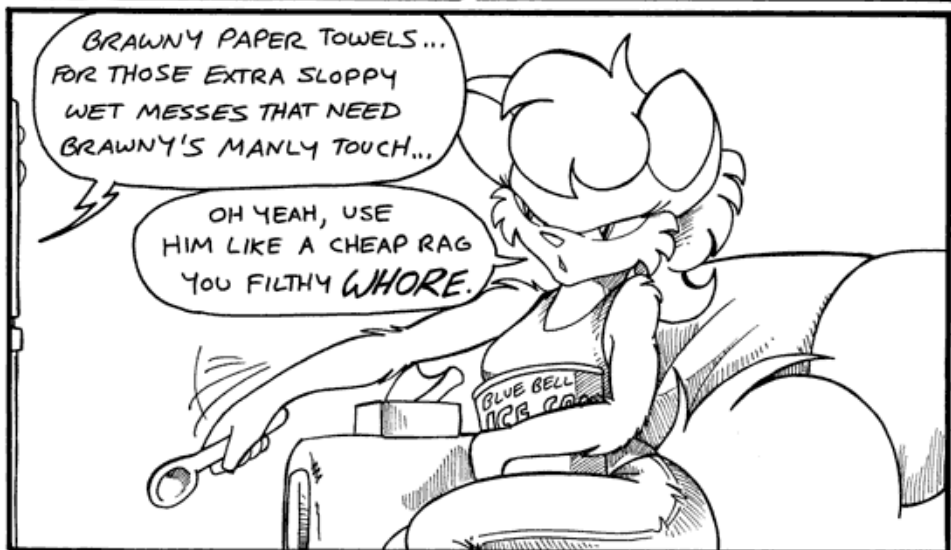
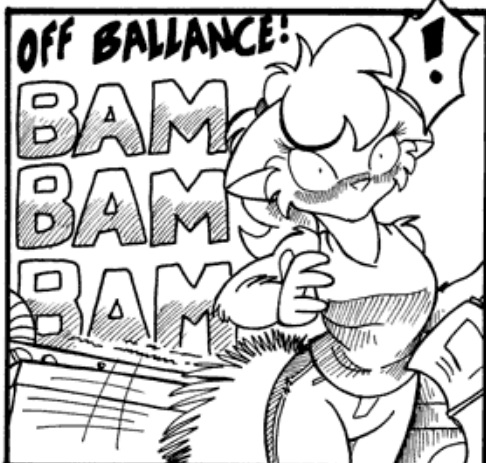
I CARED FOR YOU WHEN YOU ALMOST DIED. WHEN TED BROKE YOUR HEART AND YOU CAME TO MY ROOM... I CARED THEN. IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT, THE SEX... JUST HAPPENED... SO EASILY WITH SOMEONE I CARED SO MUCH FOR. AND YOU LET ME.




I DON'T WANT YOU TO FEEL HOW NIKKI MADE ME FEEL. I DON'T WANT YOU TO THINK I DON'T REALLY LOVE YOU. SEX OR NOT.












I THINK I'M LOSING MY MIND, KELLY.

OH?

I'M SO TENSE. I YELLED AT FISK YESTERDAY, FOR HARDLY ANY REASON.




YOU SPEND ALL DAY IN THAT HOUSE, LATELY. I KNOW I'D GET A BAD CASE OF CABIN FEVER.

MAYBE YOU NEED A VACATION?


OR A MAN.

OH! SINCE YOU PUT IT *THAT* WAY! HOW LONG HAS IT BEEN, DEAR?




SINCE HARVE...

OH MY GOD!




ARE YOU NERVOUS
ABOUT DATING AGAIN?

SORT OF. I GUESS
I'M AFRAID THE
INVESTMENT WON'T
YIELD A GOOD
RETURN,
YOU KNOW?




I'M NOT
YOUNG
ANYMORE.
EVERY YEAR
IT GETS A
LITTLE HARDER
TO STAY IN
SHAPE. I
CAN'T WASTE
TIME FROM
MAN TO
MAN.



AND WHAT IF
ONE OF THEM
TURNS OUT
TO BE ...

YOU KNOW...

A CREEP.



I KNOW A FEW
TRUSTWORTHY BACHELORS.
LETS GET YOU
HOOKED UP!

OH...





GOOD MORNING, SAM.



RAKE
RAKE



OH, GOOD MORNING,
SHEILA.

UM... HI.



KELLY TELLS ME YOU
GIVE PERSONAL SELF
DEFENSE AND FIREARM
INSTRUCTION AS A SIDE
BUSINESS.

THAT'S
RIGHT.

I'M LOOKING FOR
SOMETHING LIKE
THAT.



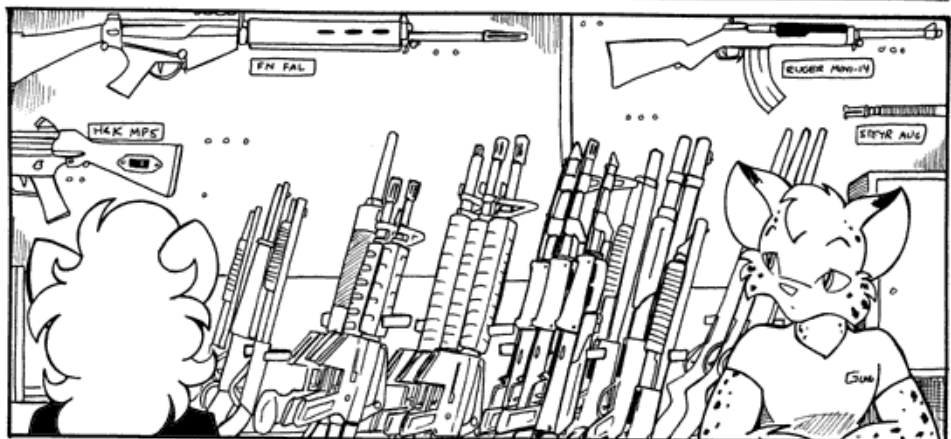
WELL, THAT'S A BIG RESPONSIBILITY.
IT'S NOT SOMETHING TO TAKE
LIGHTLY...



... BUT... WELL, I DON'T KNOW
IF THIS IS THE BEST PLACE TO
TALK IT OVER. I'LL BE AT

DAVE'S
GUNROOM
AFTER 3
TOMMOROW
IF YOU'RE
STILL
SERIOUS.





I SUPPOSE THE FIRST THING I SHOULD ASK IS WHY YOU'RE INTERESTED IN THIS?

WELL...

FIVE YEARS AGO... I WAS RAPED. IT WAS IN MY OWN HOUSE. MY SON WOKED UP AND STOPPED IT WITH A BAT...

I DON'T EVER WANT TO FEEL THAT HELPLESS AGAIN.

I'M SORRY.

IT'S ALL RIGHT. IT WAS A LONG TIME AGO. BUT I HAVEN'T DATED SINCE. AND...

... I REALIZE I HAVE A SECURITY AND A TRUST CONCERN.

IF YOU WERE IN A SIMILAR SITUATION AGAIN, COULD YOU BRING YOURSELF TO USE DEADLY FORCE?

I DON'T THINK I'D HAVE A PROBLEM.

JUST LIKE WE
PRACTICED.
JUST KEEP
YOUR SIGHTS
LINED UP ON
THE TARGET
AND FOLLOW
THROUGH
WITH THE
TRIGGER.



DON'T ANTICIPATE
THE SHOT AND JUST
STAY FOCUSED ON
THOSE SIGHTS...



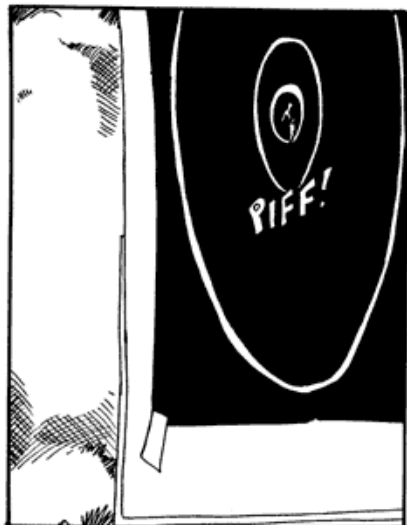
BLAM!



GOOD. GO AHEAD AND SHOOT
OUT THE REST OF THE CHAMBERS.



PIFF!



YELL AT HIM!

ATTRACT ATTENTION!

STOP! STOP RIGHT THERE!

FIRE!

BLAM BLAM

CLICK

RELOAD!

CLACK

BLAM

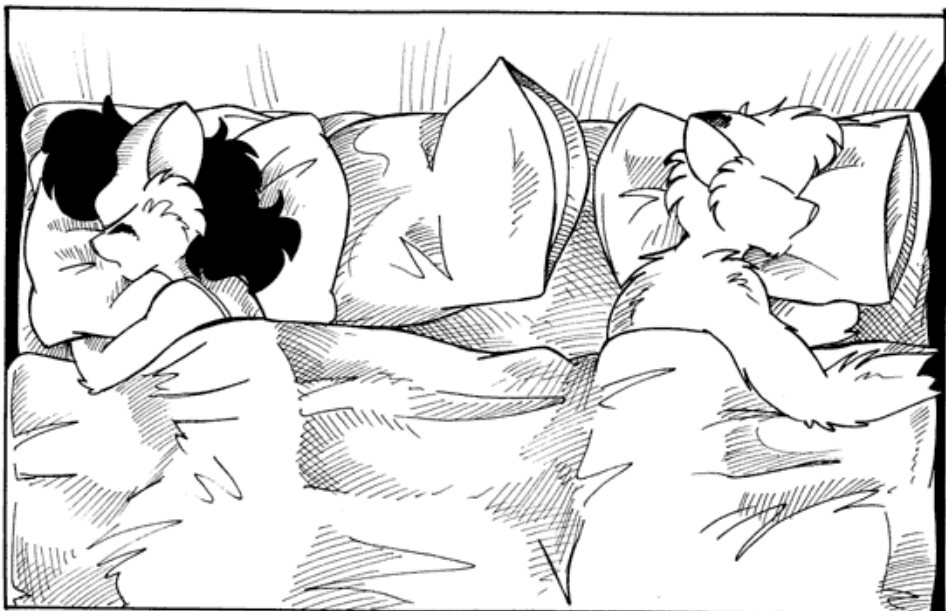
OUTSTANDING.

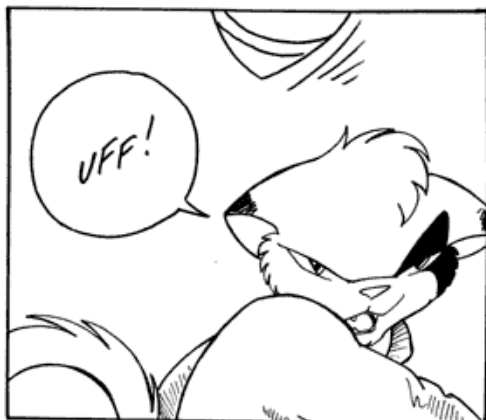
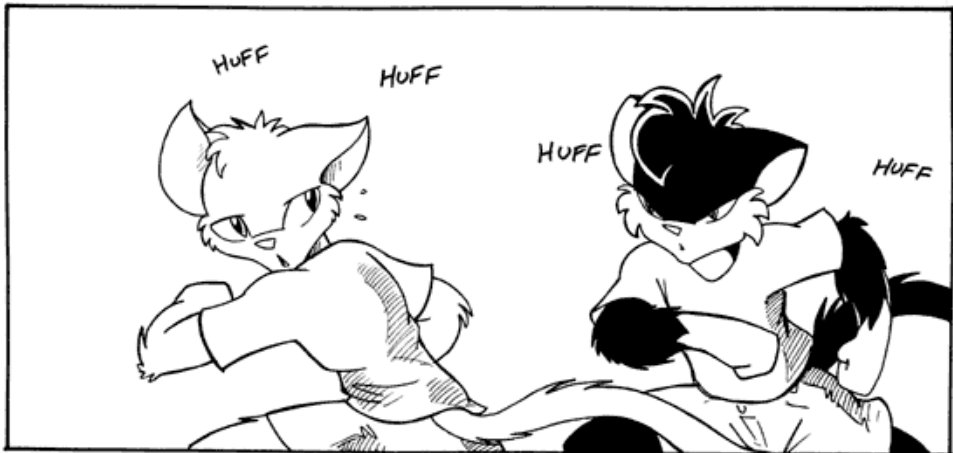


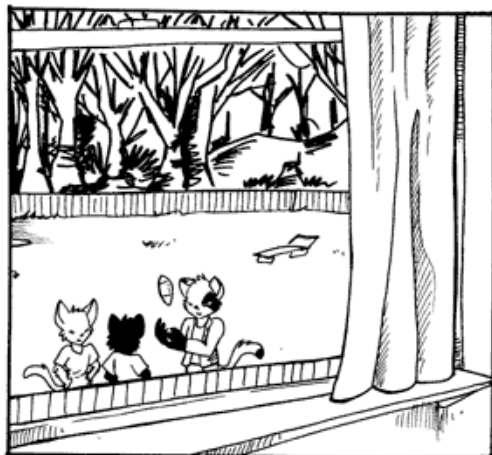


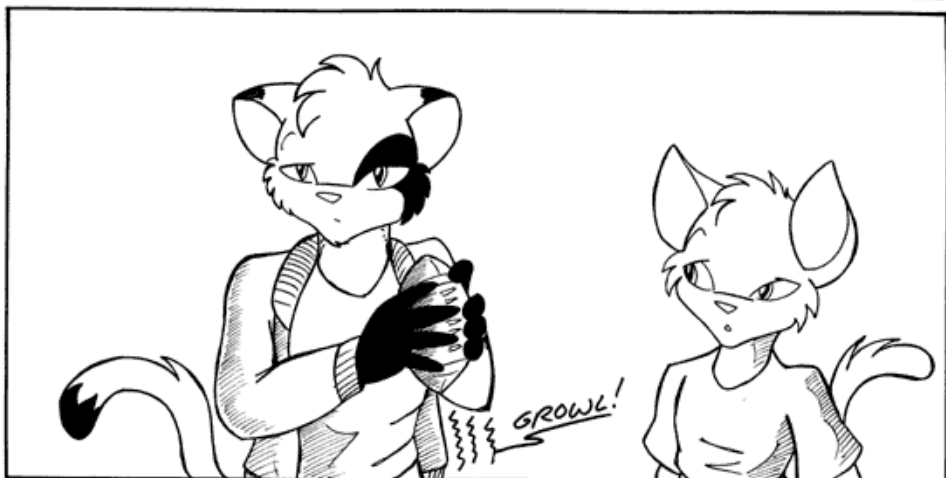
YOUR DINNER'S IN THE FRIDGE. RYAN AND I ALREADY ATE.

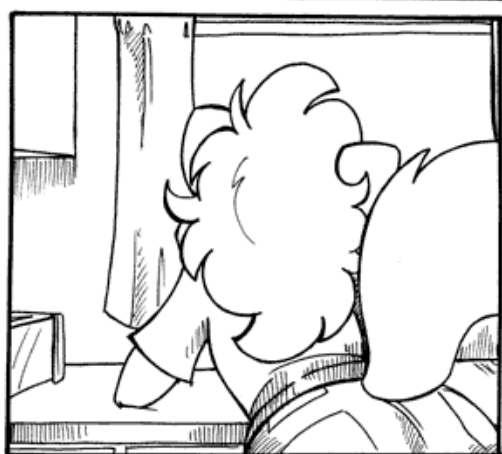
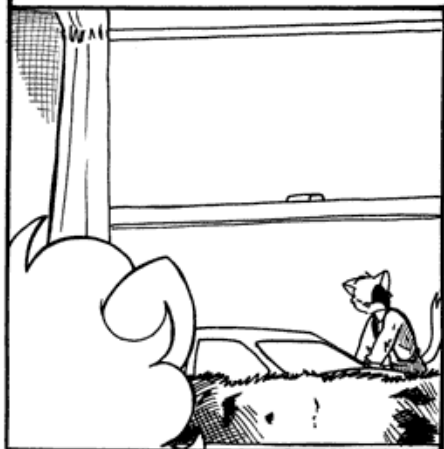
OKAY.
THANKS.

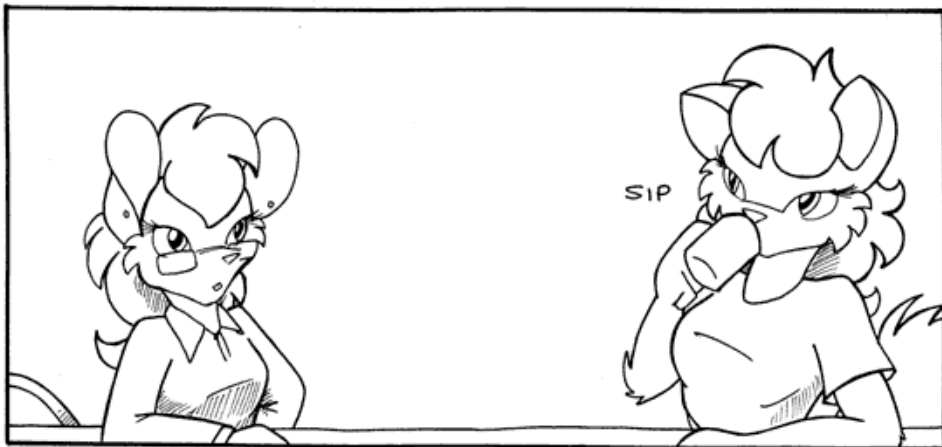


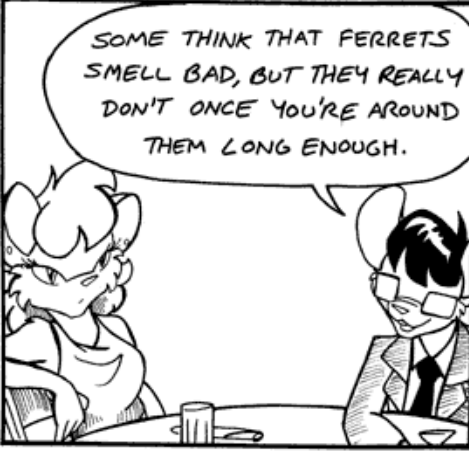














SOME THINK THAT FERRETS
SMELL BAD, BUT THEY REALLY
DON'T ONCE YOU'RE AROUND
THEM LONG ENOUGH.




KELLY TELLS ME YOU LIKE
SOLDIERS. I HAVE A COLLECTION
OF VIETNAMESE HANDS UNDER
GLASS AT HOME...




PANT PANT PANT PANT PANT PANT PANT PANT PANT PANT

YOU GONNA FINISH THAT?

NOT
ANYMORE.

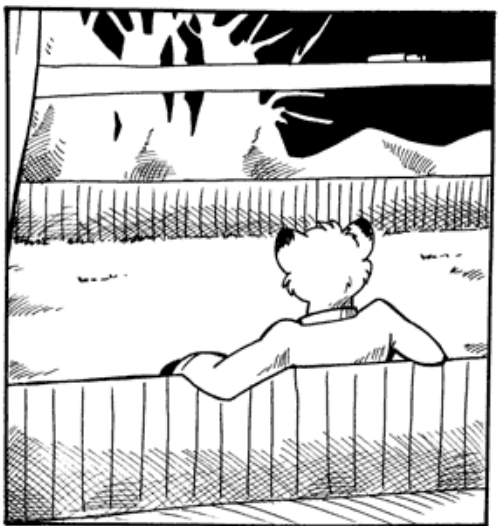



CAN I CALL YOU
WHITE CHOCOLATE?




WHAT? YOU
DIDN'T LIKE HIM,
EITHER?






A black and white comic panel showing Sheila on the left, looking towards Sam on the right. She has her arms crossed and a serious expression. Sam is looking back at her.


SAM? IT'S TWO
IN THE MORNING.
WHAT ARE YOU
DOING?

A black and white comic panel showing Sam on the left and Sheila on the right. Sam is looking towards Sheila.


HEY SHEILA. JUST HAVING
A HARD TIME SLEEPING.

A black and white comic panel showing Sam and Sheila in conversation. Sam is on the left, looking towards Sheila on the right.


I HEARD YOU
FIGHTING, TONIGHT.

A black and white comic panel showing Sheila on the left and Sam on the right. Sheila is looking towards Sam.


YEAH, SORRY. IT'S BEEN
A PRETTY BAD MONTH.
IT'LL PROBABLY GET
BETTER.

A black and white comic panel showing a close-up of Sam's face. He has a thoughtful expression.


IT ALWAYS DOES. I
JUST USUALLY NEED SOME
TIME ALONE. TO THINK.
TO CALM DOWN.

A black and white comic panel showing a close-up of Sheila's face. She is looking slightly to the side.

AS LONG AS I DON'T SAY OR
DO ANYTHING RASH, IT'LL BE
FINE.

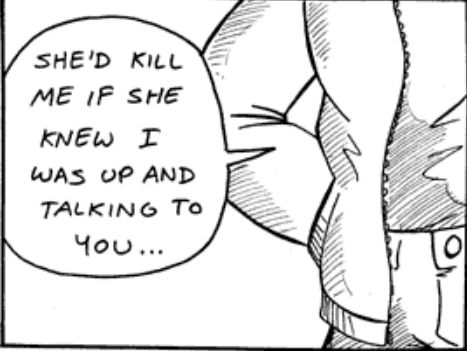


THERE'S JUST SO MUCH THAT SETS HER OFF. I WALK ON EGG-SHELLS. SHE HATES MY JOB. SHE HATES MY HOURS.




WE DISAGREE ON HOW TO RAISE RYAN. SHE'S ACCUSED ME OF HAVING AFFAIRS.


BUT, WE HANG IN THERE FOR RYAN.



SHE'D KILL ME IF SHE KNEW I WAS UP AND TALKING TO YOU...

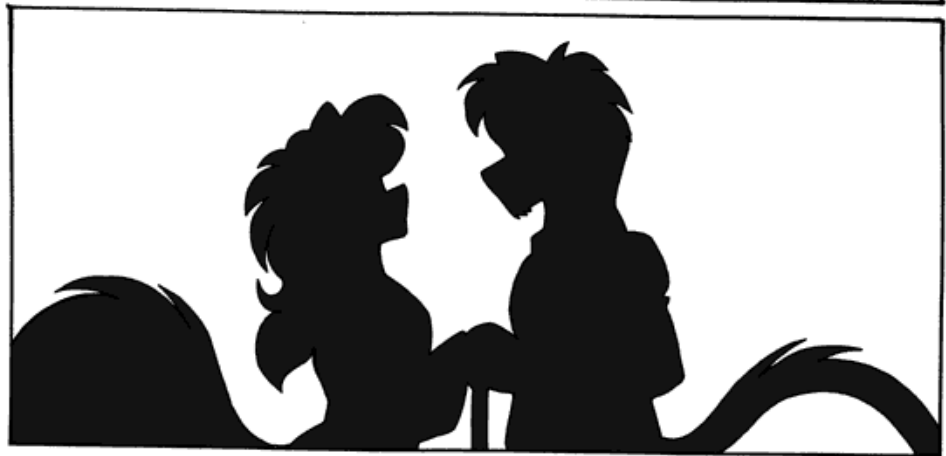
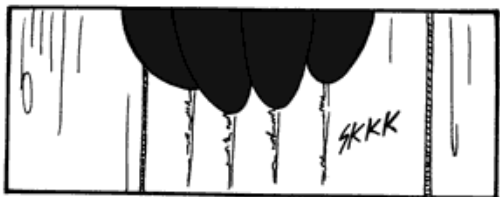
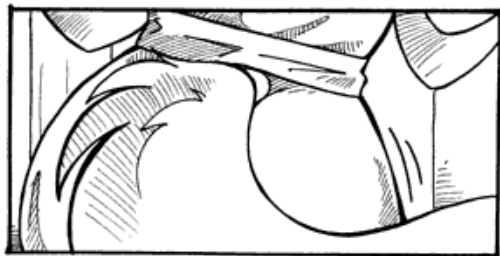


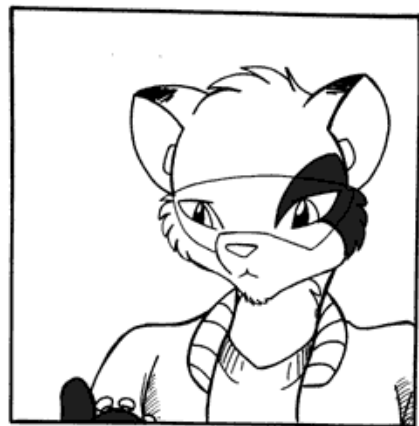
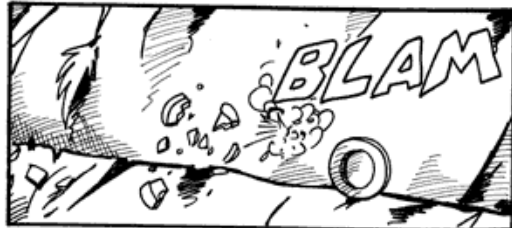
IN FACT, I SHOULD HEAD IN SOON, IN CASE SHE WAKES UP.



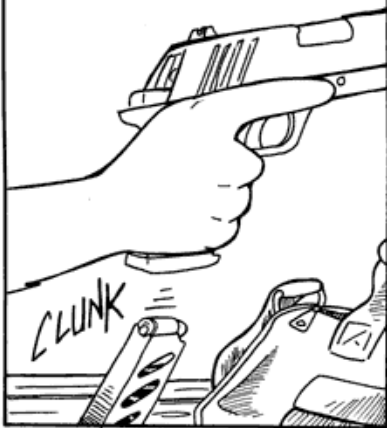
WELL, IF IT MATTERS TO YOU... I THINK YOU'RE A GOOD MAN AND A GOOD FATHER.







HOME TROUBLES?



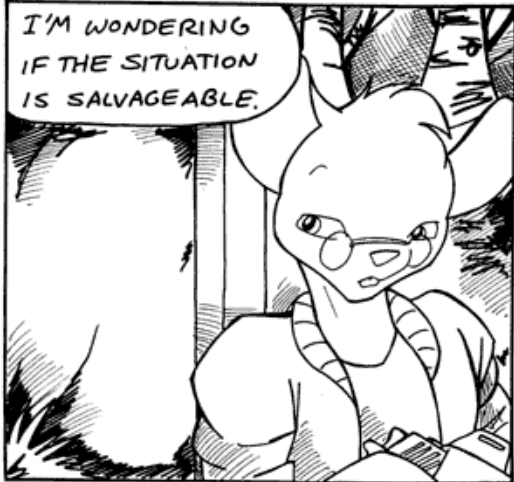
I GUESS IT'S OBVIOUS. IT'S BEEN PRETTY BAD LATELY.



I'M GETTING TIRED OF IT, JERRY. IT'S GOTTEN TO THE POINT WHERE THE IRRATIONAL AND PARANOID DELUSIONS ARE THE NORM. I MISS THE AFFECTIONATE WOMAN I MARRIED.

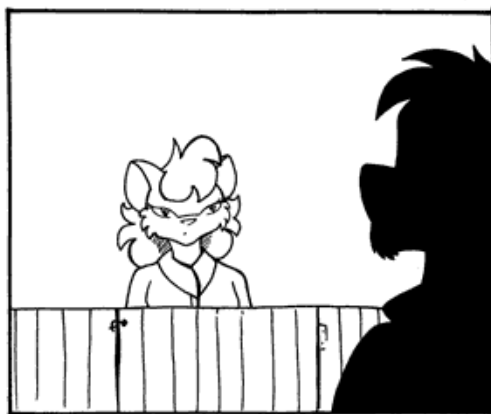
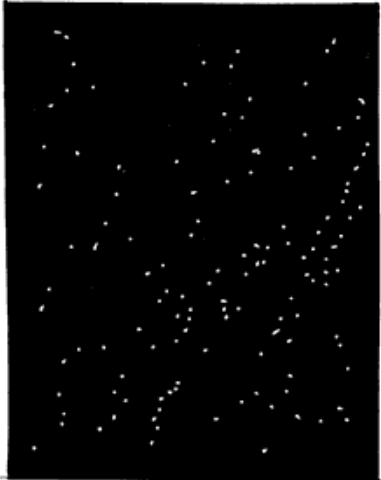


I'M WONDERING IF THE SITUATION IS SALVAGEABLE.



WELL, WHATEVER YOU DO, KEEP RYAN IN MIND. YOUR KIDS ARE YOUR GREATEST RESPONSIBILITY. DON'T BLOW IT.





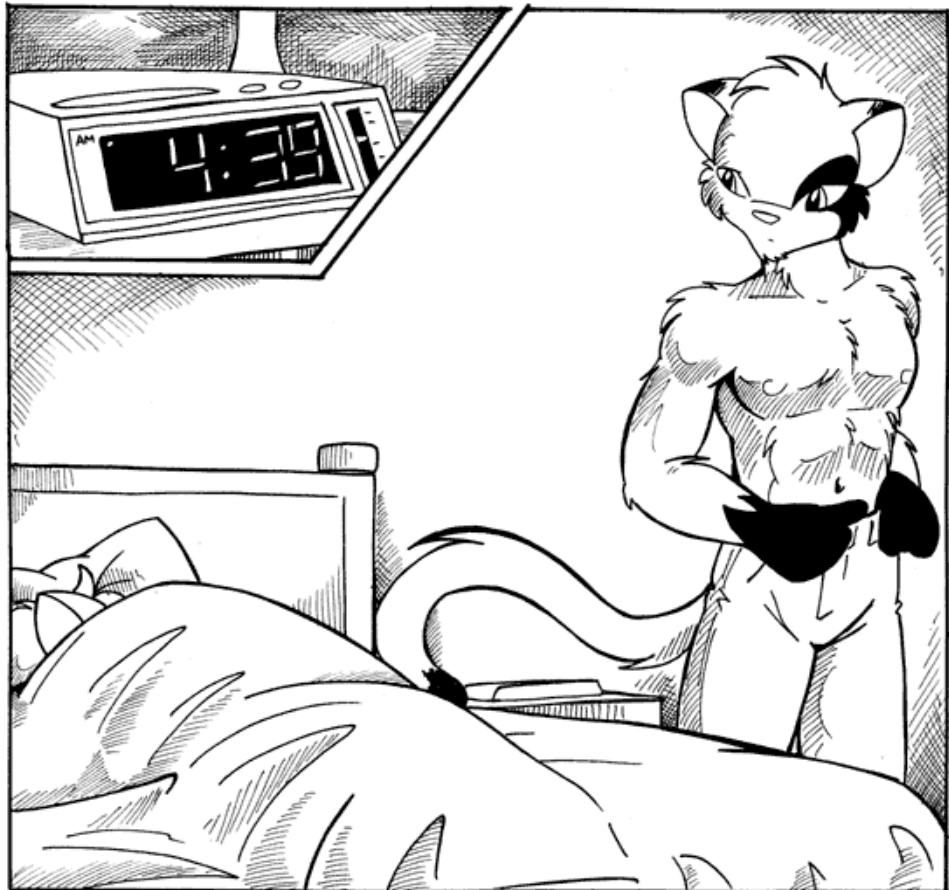
IT'S COLD OUT HERE.

SHEILA...

IF YOU
NEED
TO BE
AWAY...

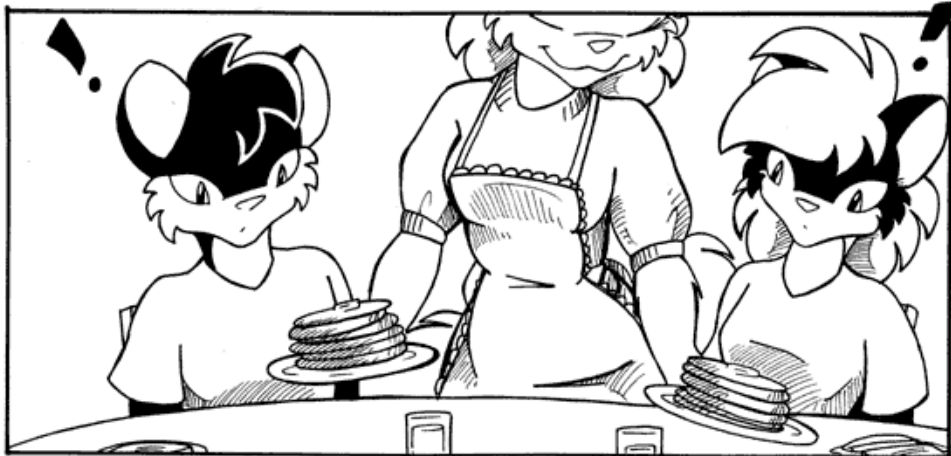
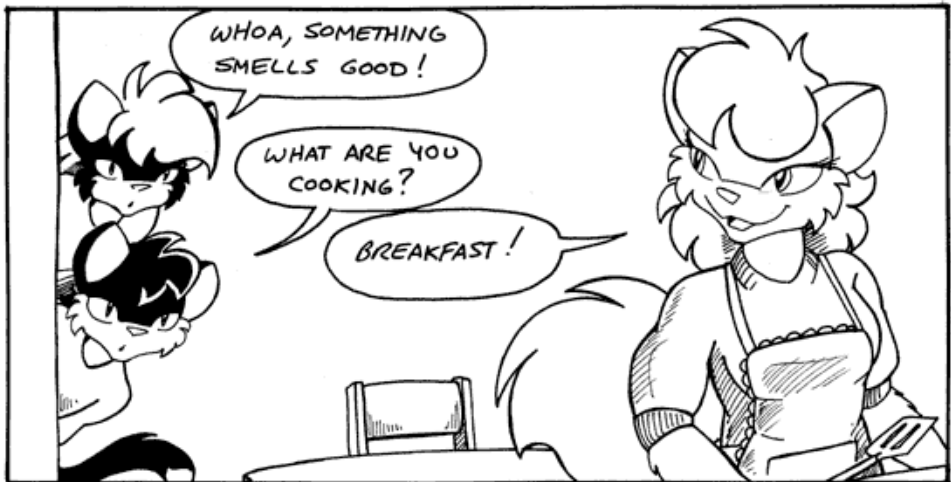
AT LEAST
COME IN
OUT OF THE
COLD.



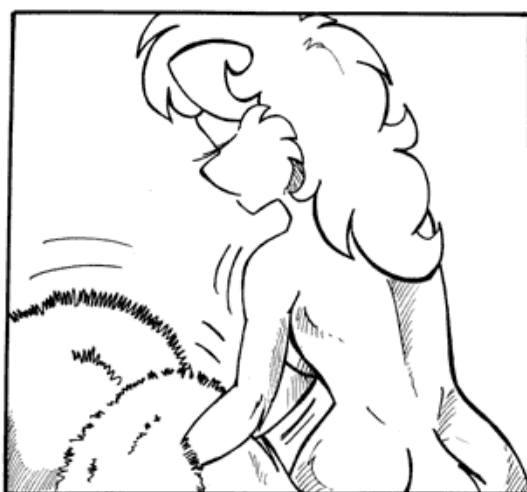
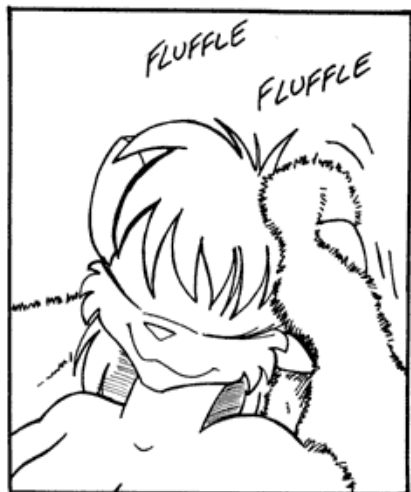


I KNOW YOU
UNDERSTAND WHY
I CAN'T STAY.


ZzMMRWWW...








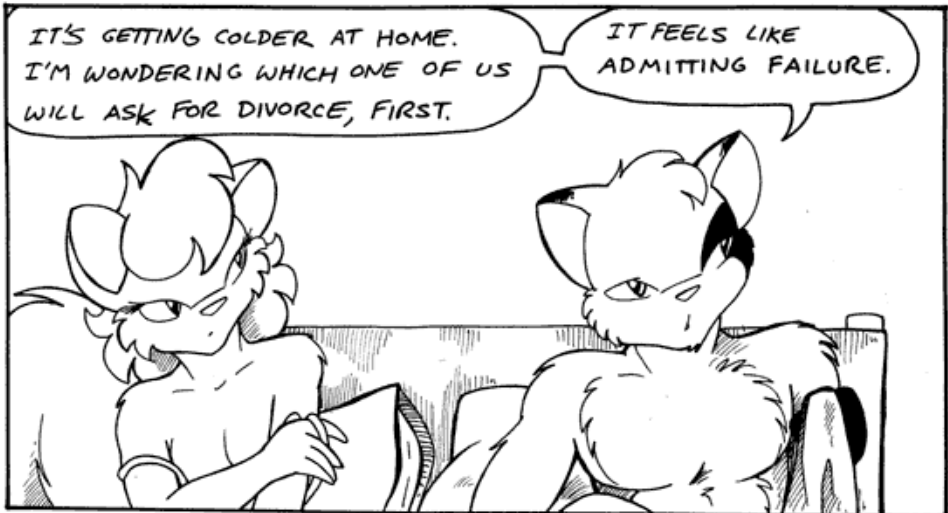




MMM. YOU'RE
PENSIVE.




OH, JUST THINKING ABOUT
THE FAMILY. THE FUTURE...




IT'S GETTING COLDER AT HOME.
I'M WONDERING WHICH ONE OF US
WILL ASK FOR DIVORCE, FIRST.

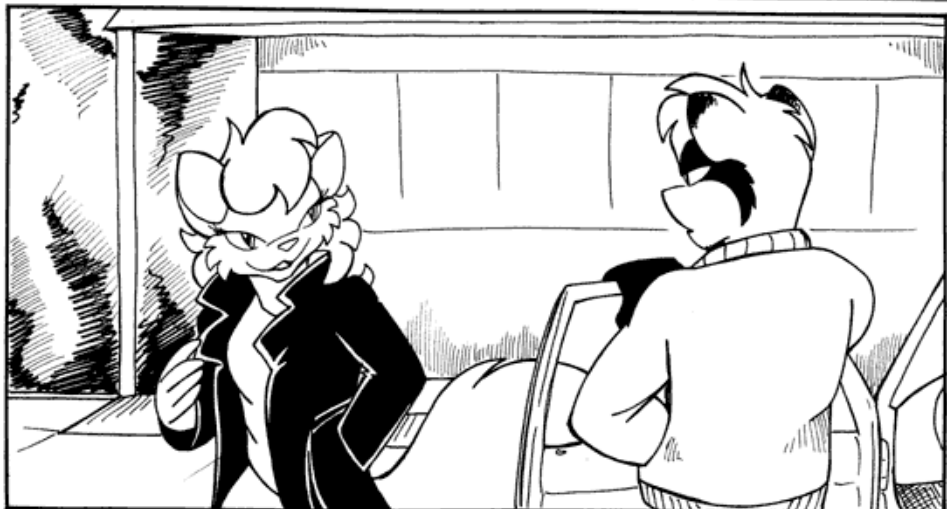
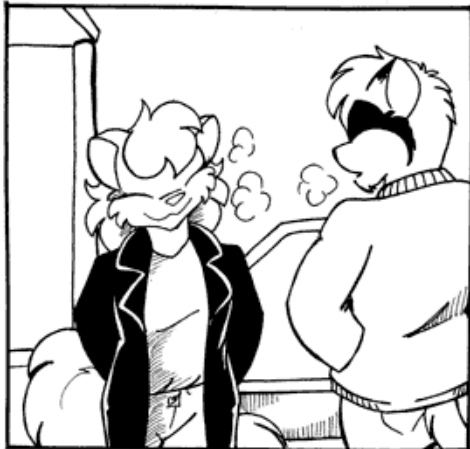
IT FEELS LIKE
ADMITTING FAILURE.

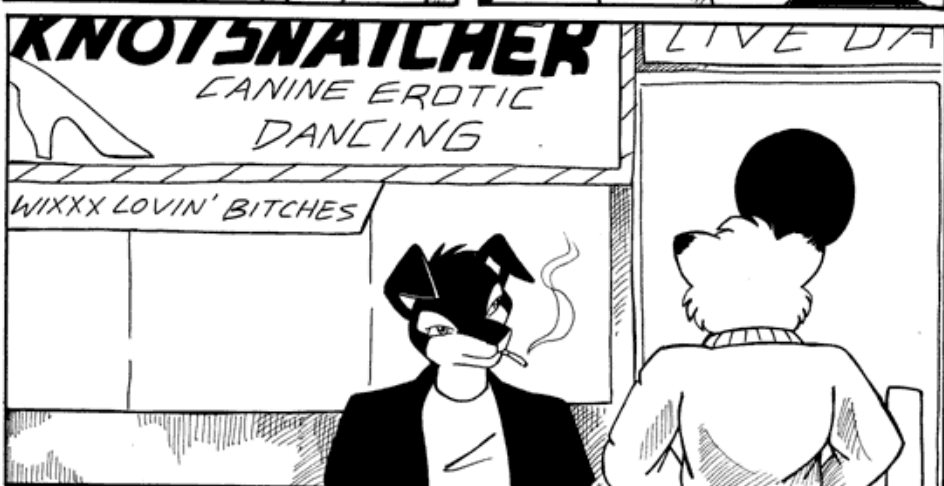


HOW DOES THAT MAKE
YOU FEEL ABOUT US?



YOU'RE THE ONLY THING
THAT KEEPS ME GOING.







HEY! OFFICER TOBS!
HOW LONG'S IT BEEN?

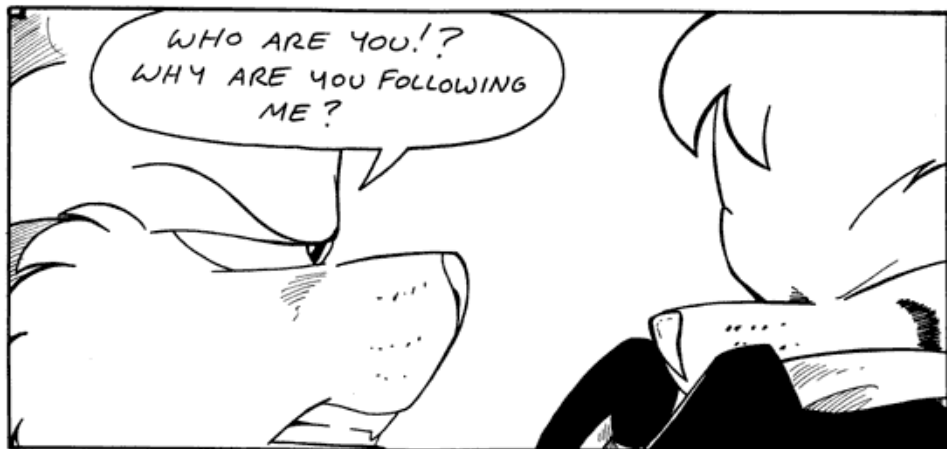
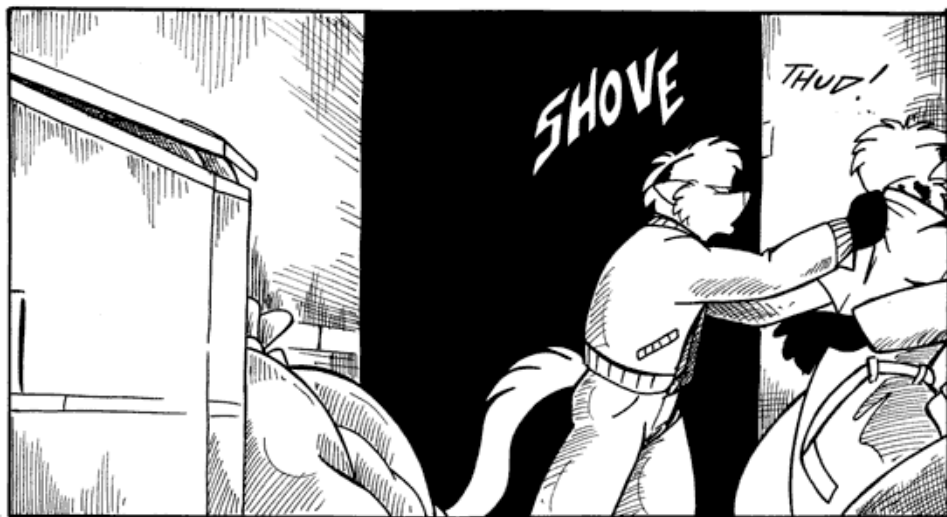
I'M NOT A
DETECTIVE
ANYMORE,
SEDRICK.

FINALLY
LEAVE THE
OL' LADY?

'CAUSE I
KNOW SOME
FINE CAT-
LEANIN' BITCHES—

NAW! I'M BEING
FOLLOWED. I
JUST NEED TO
SLIP OUT THE
BACK.







YOU CAN TALK OR YOU
CAN LEAVE HERE IN
AN AMBULANCE!

WHOA! HEY,
I'M JUST YOUR
ORDINARY P.I.!




PRIVATE INVESTIGATOR?



YOU THINK SHEILA BLACK IS
THE ONLY WOMAN INTERESTED
IN HOW YOU SPEND YOUR
SPARE TIME?




I'VE GOT NOTHIN' AGAINST YOU, MAN.
IT'S JUST MY JOB TO MAKE IT EASY
FOR YOUR WIFE'S LAWYER.



NOT SO FAST.
GIVE ME YOUR
CAMERA.

GIVE IT A REST.
IT'S TOO LATE.



I'VE ALREADY MET WITH YOUR WIFE
THIS MORNING. SHE KNOWS EVERYTHING.
ALL I'M DOING NOW IS BUILDING HER
LAWYER'S CASE.

I'D WORRY MORE ABOUT
GETTING YOUR LIFE TOGETHER
INSTEAD OF ROUGHING ME UP.

WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT GETTING FISK AND I LEARNER'S PERMITS, THIS YEAR?

I'VE BEEN TRYING NOT TO.



AWW, C'MON.

CLIK CLIK CLIK

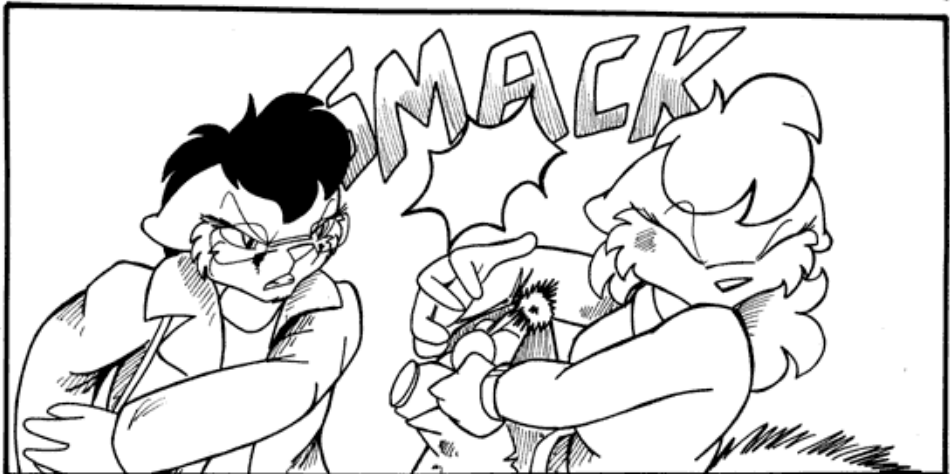
CLIK C

WE'LL SEE, HONEY.



IF IT HELPS, I'M A LITTLE MORE WORRIED ABOUT YOUR BROTHER DRIVING...







I GOT SOME
BAD NEWS TODAY,
FISK.

WHAT'S UP?



MY MOM SAYS SHE'S
LEAVING MY DAD.

SHE WANTS TO
TAKE ME BACK
UP TO BOSTON
WITH HER.

BOSTON!?
WHAT THE HELL
FOR? YOU
CAN'T LIVE WITH
YOUR DAD?

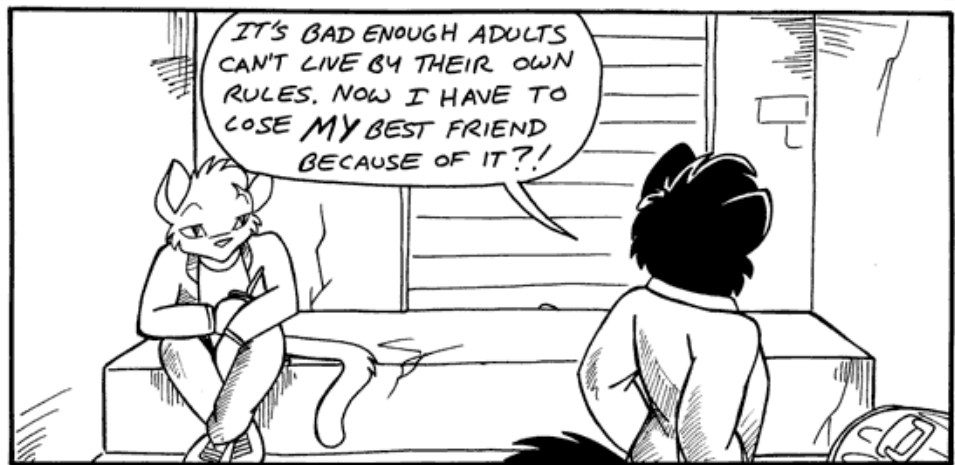


WELL, SHE'LL GET CUSTODY.
IT'S NOT AN EVEN SPLIT SINCE
SHE CAUGHT MY DAD CHEATING
ON HER...

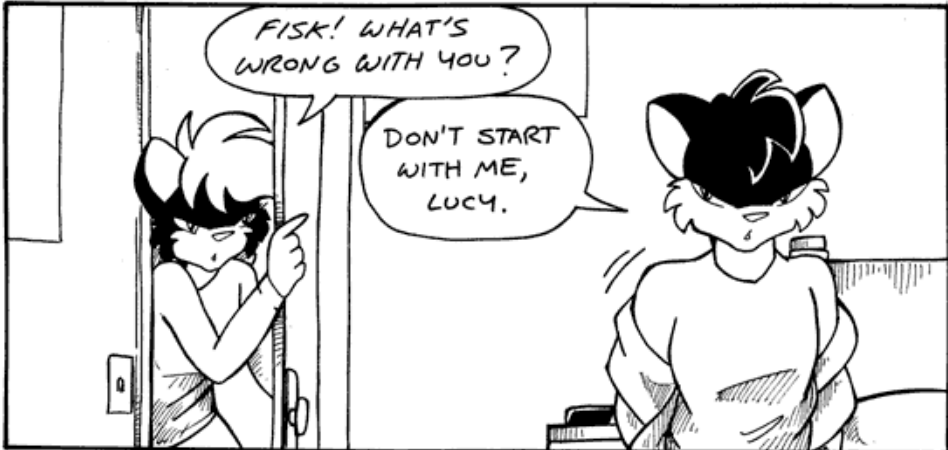
SHIT.

... WITH
YOUR MOM.

THIS IS *NO*
TIME FOR
JOKES LIKE
THAT!







FISK! WHAT'S WRONG WITH YOU?

DON'T START WITH ME, LUCY.



YOU'RE THAT UPSET OVER WHAT SHE DID?

YES. I'M LOSING MY BEST FRIEND AS A RESULT.

HOW COULD SHE KNOW THAT WOULD HAPPEN? EVERYONE MAKES MISTAKES.



NO, LUCY. A "MISTAKE" IS WHEN YOU FUCK UP A MATH PROBLEM AT SCHOOL!

THERE'S TOO MUCH EFFORT AND PLANNING THAT GOES INTO HAVING AN AFFAIR TO CALL IT A "MISTAKE"!



... BUT SHE'S YOUR MOTHER. OUR FRIENDS WILL COME AND GO OUR WHOLE LIVES BUT WE'LL ONLY EVER HAVE HER AS A MOTHER.

AND NO MATTER HOW MUCH OF A GRUDGE YOU TRY TO HOLD, YOU HAVE TO DEAL WITH HER AS LONG AS YOU LIVE HERE!

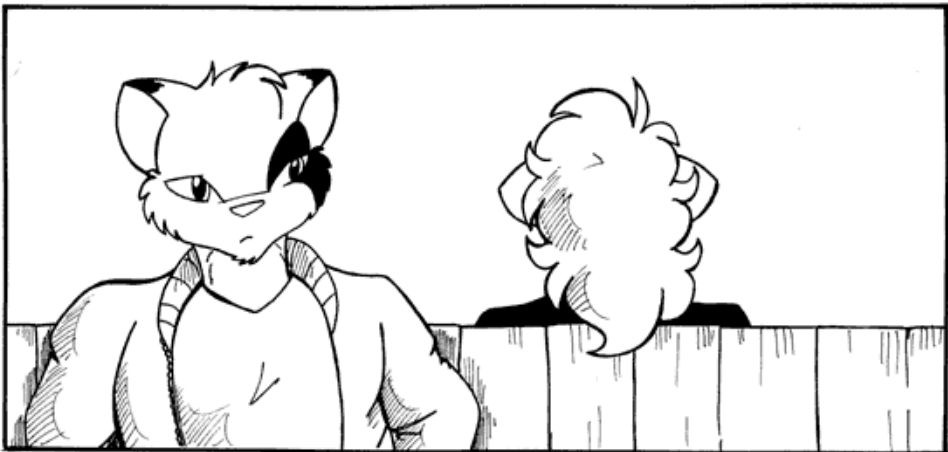


BUT IF YOU JUST CAN'T, MAYBE YOU'LL ENJOY THE FACT THAT SHE'S DOWN THERE HURTING OVER WHAT SHE DID FAR MORE THAN YOU EVER WILL!




SLAM!






WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO?

I'M NOT GOING TO LEAVE.




I WON'T BE ABLE TO AFFORD
THE HOUSE WHEN OUR ASSETS
ARE SPLIT.

I'LL HAVE
TO MOVE.




YOU COULD STAY
WITH ME.




I WISH IT
WAS THAT
EASY.

IT'S NOT?



YOU HAVE TO THINK OF YOUR
CHILDREN FIRST. FISK HATES
ME RIGHT NOW. WORK WITH HIM
BEFORE THRUSTING AN AWKWARD
SITUATION ON HIM.



I'LL GET A PLACE NEAR BY.
I WON'T GO FAR, I PROMISE.

IT'LL WORK IF WE WORK
FOR IT. LETS NOT BE ANY
MORE RASH THAN WE HAVE
BEEN.



LUCY, WHERE'S
YOUR BROTHER?

I THINK HE WENT TO
THE ATTIC. HE GOES UP
THERE TO THINK.



IS HE STILL
UPSET?


I DON'T KNOW.
HE MOSTLY LOOKED
PENSIVE.



END









YOU HAVEN'T SEEN ANYONE SINCE TED. IS THAT WHAT THIS IS ABOUT?


NO. IT'S NOT ABOUT TED.



I GUESS I'M JUST... CONTENT.




CONTENT IS FOR OLD FOLKS!
YOU GOTTA LIVE, BABY!
EVEN ELIZABETH IS GOIN' TO THE DANCE!




YOU ARE?

WELL, MY MOM'S MAKING ME GO WITH MARVIN LIPSCHITZ.



OH MY.


PLEASE, I NEED AS MANY OF MY FRIENDS THERE TO TAKE THE EDGE OFF...



HEY DUDE.


HEY LARRY.

HAVE YOU
SEEN ELISE
TODAY?




YEAH, WHY?

I'M GOING TO
ASK HER TO
THE DANCE.

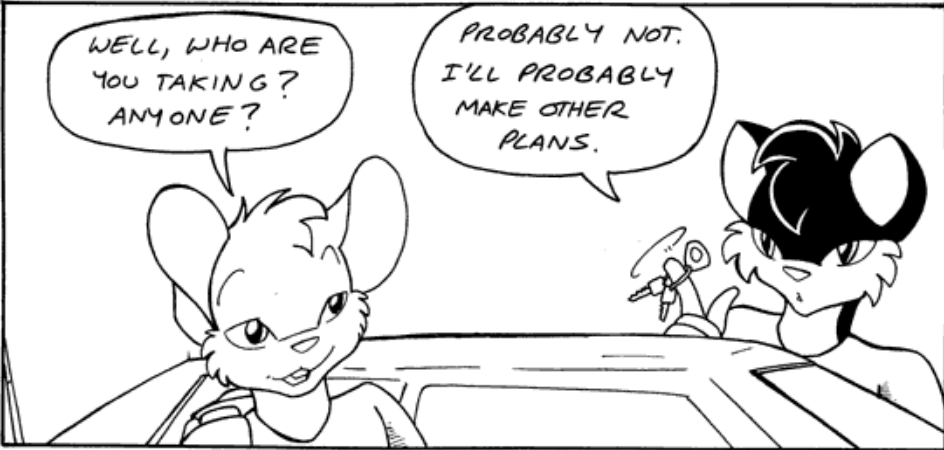


UM. WELL, I SAW HER
CAVORTING IN THE ARMS OF
BIFF SEYMORE.




YES. BUT I'VE SEEN ENOUGH
MOVIES TO KNOW HE'S A
CHEATING, ABUSIVE JOCK, AND
SHE WILL EVENTUALLY FALL
FOR MY NERDLY CHARM.

BRILLIANT
PLAN.

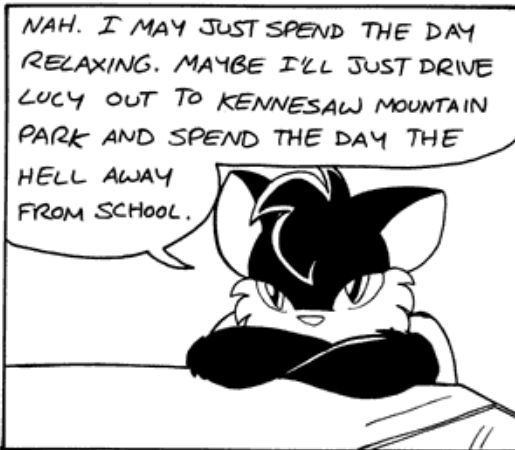


WELL, WHO ARE YOU TAKING? ANYONE?

PROBABLY NOT. I'LL PROBABLY MAKE OTHER PLANS.




WHY NOT, MAN? YOU COULD PROBABLY DANCE WITH MY SISTER... HELP HER DEAL WITH HER GEEKY DATE.



NAH. I MAY JUST SPEND THE DAY RELAXING. MAYBE I'LL JUST DRIVE LUCY OUT TO KENNESAW MOUNTAIN PARK AND SPEND THE DAY THE HELL AWAY FROM SCHOOL.




YOU SURE GET ALONG REAL WELL WITH YOUR SISTER. ME AND ELIZABETH JUST FIGHT A LOT. IT'S LIKE YOU LIVE WITH YOUR BEST FRIEND.




MAYBE IT'S DIFFERENT BECAUSE WE'RE TWINS.




OH CRAP!
IT'S HER!



OH SHIT! AND SHE'S
WALKING RIGHT UP TO
YOUR CAR!



WHAT'S WRONG? I
THOUGHT YOU WANTED
TO TALK TO HER.

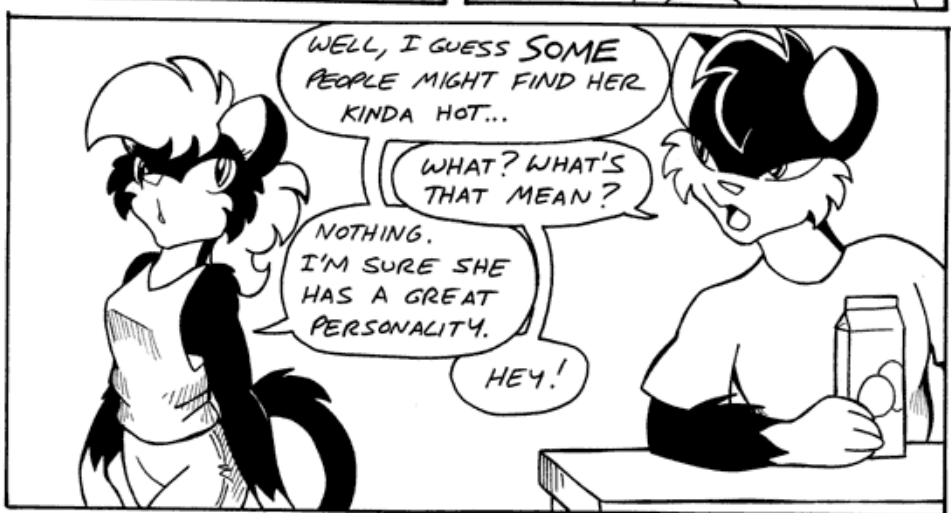


I'M NOT READY! TALK TO
HER FOR ME! STALL HER!




DUDE...











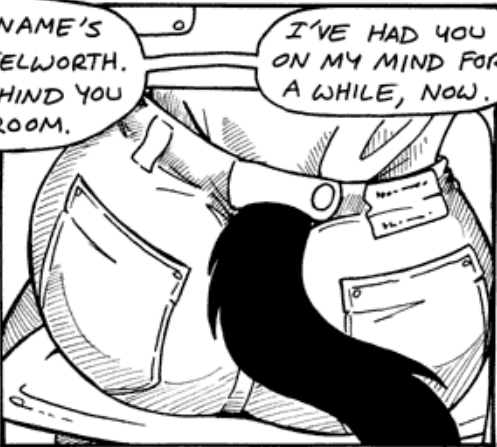
UM. I'M OKAY.

I'M SO GLAD I CAUGHT UP WITH YOU, TODAY!

I'VE BEEN MEANING TO TALK TO YOU.




OH, REALLY?




YEAH. MY NAME'S RANDY STEELWORTH. I SIT BEHIND YOU IN HOMEROOM.

I'VE HAD YOU ON MY MIND FOR A WHILE, NOW.



LOOK, I DON'T NORMALLY DO THIS, BUT... I'M LOOKIN' FOR A DATE TO THE HALLOWEEN DANCE...



AND YOU'RE QUIET BUT A SWEET LADY. I JUST HAVE A GOOD FEELING INSIDE WHEN I THINK ABOUT YOU. I'D LIKE TO TAKE YOU TO THE DANCE.

OH!
WELL...



HEY, SMILEY.

WHAT?

YOU HAVE
A "LOOK"
ON YOUR
FACE.



SOME BOY
ASKED HER
TO THE DANCE.

NOT "SOME BOY".

IT'S RANDY STEELWORTH!

A HANDSOME
WEASEL BOY
WITH A DREAMY
AUSTRALIAN
ACCENT, CUTE
EYES, AND
HE SMELLS
LIKE... UM...



WHO EVER HEARD OF A WEASEL
FROM AUSTRALIA? AND HE SMELLS
LIKE HE DOESN'T BATHE! HE SEEMS
KINDA FAKE,
LUCY.

WELL, I'M
SORRY HE'S
NO MARVIN
LIPSCHITZ.

ELIZABETH TOLD ME YOU GOT A DATE TO THE DANCE.

YEAH! RANDY JUST ASKED ME RIGHT OUT OF THE BLUE!

REALLY?

I THOUGHT HE WAS DATING ANDREA?

I DIDN'T KNOW THEY BROKE UP.

WELL, OBVIOUSLY. I SUPPOSE. ANYWAY, I FIGURED SINCE YOU WERE GOING, I'D GO AHEAD AND SAY "YES".

IT DOESN'T HURT THAT HE'S DREAMY AS HELL, EITHER!


PSHHH... YEAH.

WHAT WAS THAT!?

WHAT?

WAS THAT JEALOUSY?


NO!



I JUST DON'T KNOW
IF HE'S TRUSTWORTHY.

OH PLEASE! YOU GOT A DATE WITH
A GIRL YOU'VE
NEVER MET!

WHAT DO
YOU
EXPECT
FROM
ME!?



DO YOU THINK I CAN'T JUDGE
PEOPLE ON MY OWN? DO YOU
THINK I'M GOING TO NEED
YOUR HELP ALL THE TIME?!




I HAVE TO STAY HOME WHILE
YOU GO OUT ON SOCIALS WITH
GIRLS? I'M SUPPOSED TO HOPE
MY BIG BROTHER WILL COME
HOME AND PROTECT ME FROM
ALL THE BIG BAD
BOYS IN THE
WORLD? IF I'M
LUCKY, HE MIGHT
SNEAK OVER
IN THE MIDDLE
OF THE NIGHT
AND DICK ME!



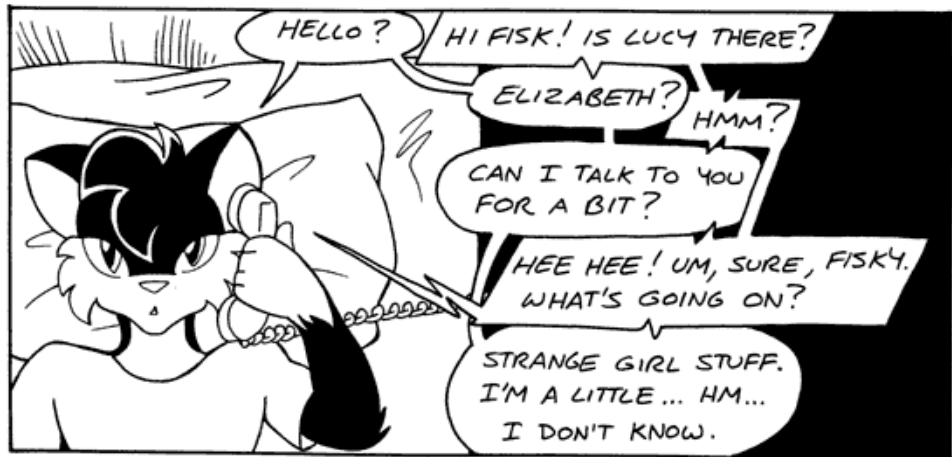
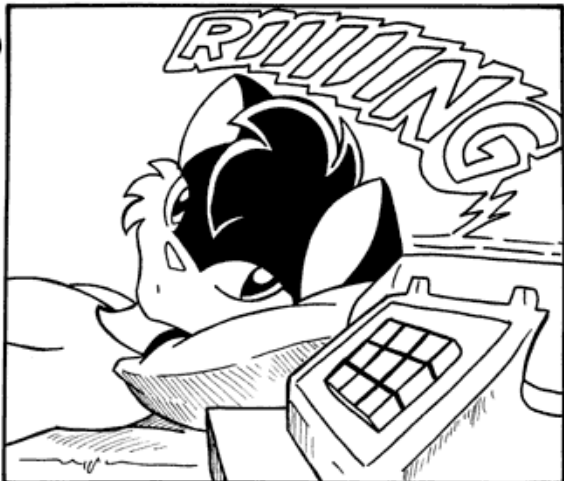
IS THAT WHAT IT
IS TO YOU!?
A DICKING!?



WHAT IS IT
TO YOU, FISK?
YOU GRAB A
DATE WITHOUT
THINKING OF
ME! BECAUSE
SHE MIGHT BE
HOT!



LUCY—
SO KEEP YOUR REMARKS
TO YOURSELF AND LET
ME GET ON WITH MY
LIFE, LIKE YOU HAVE!





I SHOULDN'T
REALLY SAY.

WHAT HAPPENED?



I THINK I TOOK HER FOR
GRANTED AND I FEEL LIKE
SHIT.



HOW?

I TOOK ON A DATE TO
THE DANCE WITHOUT
THINKING OF HER.

HMM...



HOW DO YOU FEEL
ABOUT MARISSA?

I HAVEN'T
MET HER, YET.
I JUST
THOUGHT IT'D
BE A FUN
THING TO
DO.



WHAT DO YOU
THINK I SHOULD
DO?

BEG FOR
FORGIVENESS.





MOM! DID I
GET ANY
CALLS?

NO!
BUT YOU
GOT A
DELIVERY!



HOLY...



My lady,

*The cool breeze spills over me from
the peacefully rhythmic waves of
the ocean. The air is warm
and welcoming like the touch
of your paw in mine, the
memory still fresh in my mind like
it only happened seconds ago.*

*I'm honored to have you with
and your graceful presence is always
welcome on my beach.*

*From my heart,
Bandy*



TWITCH
2

MARVIN CALLED TODAY,
ELIZABETH.

REALLY? DID
YOU TELL HIM
I'D **MARRY** HIM
TOO?

ELIZABETH!
HE'S A NICE
BOY!

YEAH, YOU
DON'T HAVE TO
DATE HIM.


I WOULD!
HE'S A
SMART BOY!

OH, SMART IS SO HOT, MOTHER!
DON'T YOU KNOW ANY GOOD
BOYS THAT PLAY STREET
FOOTBALL, OR JUST LOOK
REASONABLY ATTRACTIVE !?

WHEN YOU'RE OLDER, YOU'RE
GOING TO LEARN THAT ALL
THAT OTHER STUFF ISN'T NEARLY
AS IMPORTANT AS SUCCESS
AND INTELLIGENCE.

I SHOULD HAVE NEVER STOPPED
SEEING FISK.


JUST GIVE MARVIN
A CHANCE, SWEETHEART.



THANKS FOR TAKING ME SHOPPING!


DON'T MENTION IT.

I'VE STILL GOT
TO FIND OUT
WHAT TO WEAR
FOR HALLOWEEN.




IT'S MY FAVORITE HOLIDAY! BUT
I GUESS THAT'S NORMAL WHEN
YOU'RE A WICCAN.


MY SISTER'S FAVORITE
HOLIDAY IS CHRISTMAS.



I TRY TO TELL HER IT'S SO
COMMERCIALIZED AND IT JUST
GETS WORSE EVERY YEAR.
BUT SHE'S YOUR USUAL PREPPY
BUBBLE-HEAD SHEEP WHO
BUYS INTO IT
ALL...



OH, WAIT! WE GOTTA STOP BY
SPENCER'S! I'VE BEEN MEANING
TO BUY ONE OF THEIR CEREMONIAL
WICCAN BLADES!



OR I COULD JUST SWERVE
IN FRONT OF THAT SEM!
AND END IT ALL...



I WAS TALKING TO ANDREA. SHE'S UNDER THE IMPRESSION THAT RANDY IS HER BOYFRIEND.



WELL, WHAT IF HE'S LYING? TO THE BOTH OF YOU?

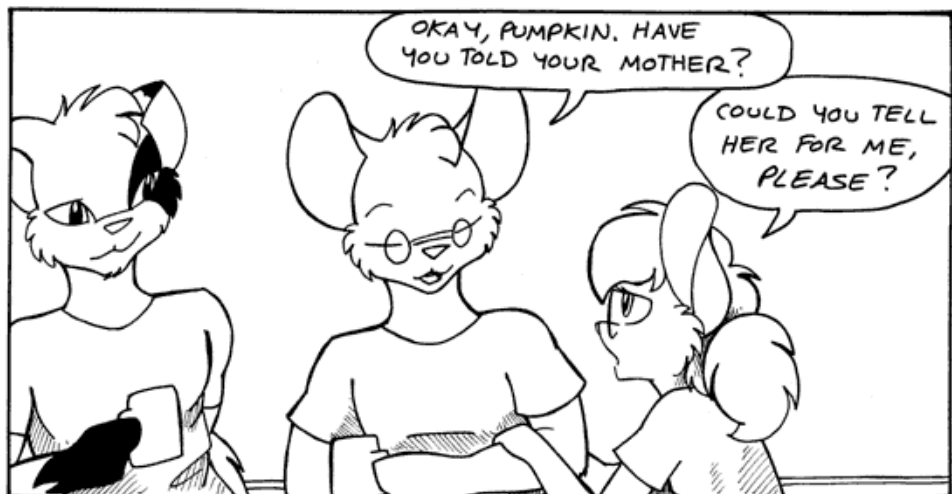
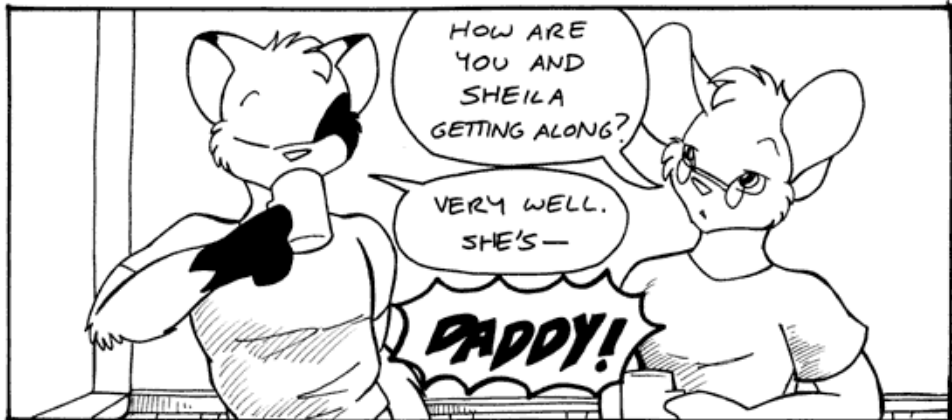


WHAT IF SHE'S LYING!?! WHAT IS YOUR PROBLEM WITH RANDY? DO YOU HAVE TO TRY TO RUIN MY GOOD TIME!?!









BEFORE THE DANCE...

CRUIKEY!
LOOKIN'
HOT.

SLICK

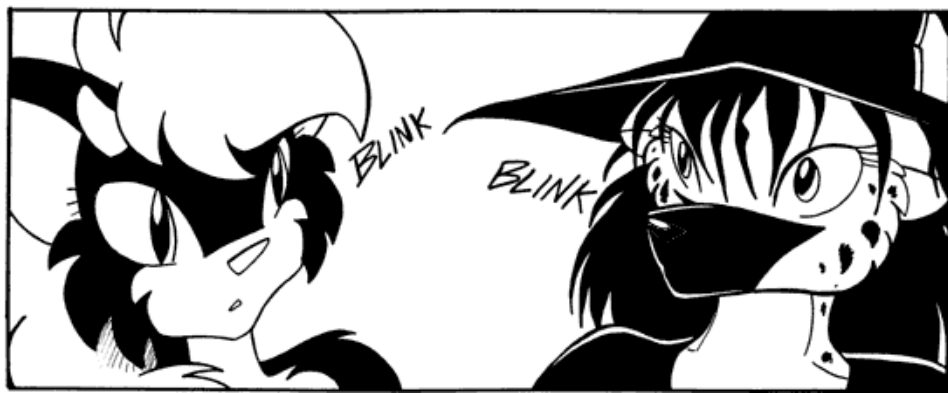
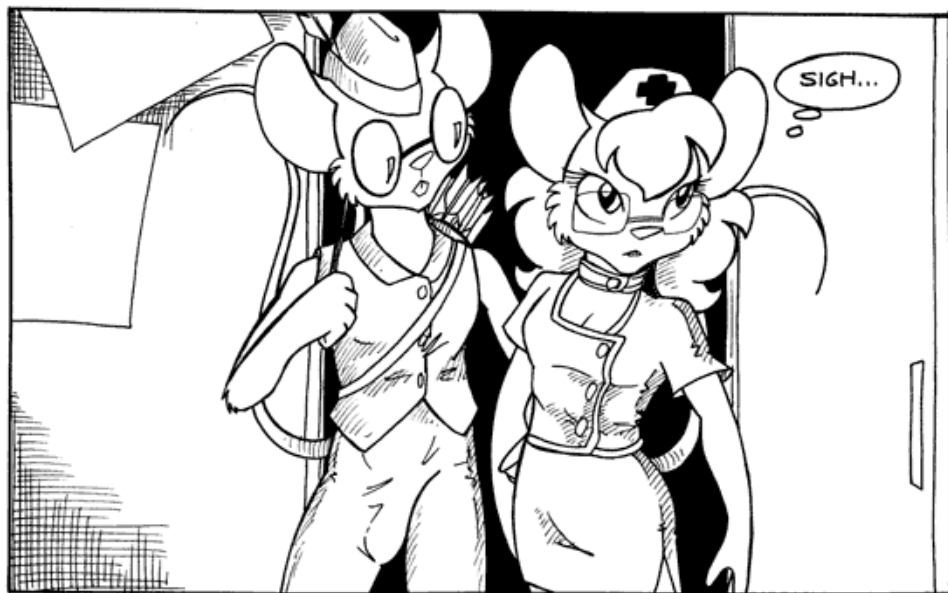
SLICK

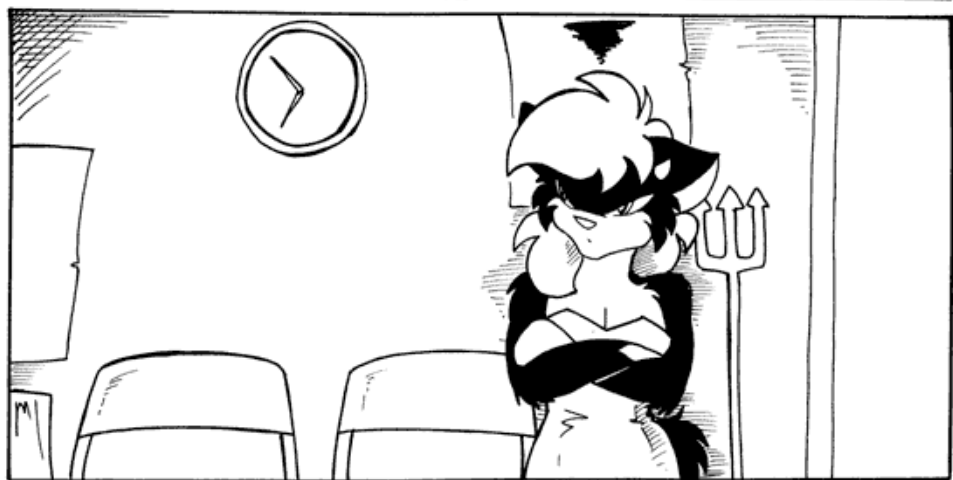
TUG

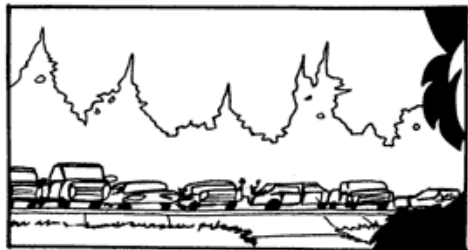
SPROING!


POSITIVELY STUNNING...













YOU TOLD ME YOU WERE GOING TO YOUR MOTHER'S PARTY!

I WAS! I WANTED YOU TO BE THERE, BUT YOU SAID...



WHAT? I COULDN'T MAKE IT, SO YOU TAKE SOME OTHER GIRL!? BEHIND MY BACK!? I KNEW I'D FIND YOU HERE, RANDY!



CRUIKEY, LOVE! SHE WANTED TO GO WITH ME! IT'S ONLY FOR ONE NIGHT, JUST TO MAKE HER HAPPY...



IS THAT HER?



CRUIKEY...

WHAT IS YOUR PROBLEM?

GET OVER HIM,
ALREADY!

MY
PROBLEM?!



WHAT HAVE YOU TOLD
HER, RANDY!?



DAMMIT!



I'M GOING INSIDE, YA'LL
WORK THIS OUT BETWEEN
YOURSELVES.





I'M GOING TO SLIP INTO THE HALLWAY AND GRAB SOMETHING FROM MY LOCKER.



WHERE'S FISK GOING? DAMN. THIS IS MY CHANCE...



BE BOLD.
BE FORWARD.



C'MERE KITTYY!





DAMN. WHERE IS FISK?
I REALLY NEED HIM, NOW...



GASP!



MMMM...



GOD-DAMNIT!



WHAT WAS THAT? WAS
THAT LUCY?

UHH...





BOYS. GODDAMNED BOYS.

DO THEY THINK WITH THEIR
BRAINS AT ALL? OR JUST
THEIR FUCKING DICKS!?

I SWEAR. LIFE'S JUST
BECOMING ONE BIG CRUEL
JOKE.



WHAT IS FISK DOING KISSING ELIZABETH?
WHY DO I HAVE TO HAVE EVERY
FORM OF SUPPORT AND COMFORT RIPPED
AWAY FROM ME?

IS ANDREA TRYING TO PULL
RANDY BACK TO HER? OR IS HE
A HUGE LYING JERK? DAMN...



OH, HE'S A JERK
ALRIGHT.

MARISSA?



HE'S REALLY A GREAT GUY WHEN YOU'RE WITH HIM. HE CAN SAY ALL THE RIGHT THINGS, AND MAKE YOU FEEL LIKE THE MOST SPECIAL GIRL IN THE WORLD.



IF YOU DON'T MIND HIM SEEING OTHERS, I SUPPOSE HE'D BE PERFECT. IF YOU DON'T MIND LETTING HIM CHEAT ON ANDREA WITH YOU.



WAIT. YOU DATED RANDY?



HE WAS MY FIRST BOYFRIEND WHEN I WAS A FRESHMAN. HE'S BEEN UP TO THE SAME STUNTS AS LONG AS I'VE KNOWN HIM.




IT'S PROBABLY WHY I'M NOW A LESBIAN.



SO, I UNDERSTAND WHAT YOU'RE GOING THROUGH...


WAIT A MINUTE !!





WHAT ABOUT FISK!?!?
YOU WENT TO THE DANCE
WITH HIM!


I KNEW RANDY WOULD
HURT YOU, TONIGHT. IS
THIS WHAT I GET FOR
TRYING TO HELP?



DID YOU GO OUT WITH FISK JUST
TO GET TO **ME!**?

WHAT IF HE
HAD REAL
FEELINGS
FOR
YOU!?

OH I DOUBT IT,
LUCY. GUYS
DON'T HAVE
THE KINDS OF
FEELINGS
WE DO.



I FEEL LIKE THE ONLY PERSON
NOT JUGGLING MULTIPLE PEOPLE,
OR HAVING ULTERIOR MOTIVES,
OR PULLING SOME WEIRD-ASS
STUNT!



LUCY! WAIT!
NO! FUCK OFF! I'M
WALKING HOME!
ALONE!





KIDS,
I'M SPENDING HALLOWEEN
NIGHT WITH MR. TOBS. YOU
CAN CALL ME AT 867-8310
IF YOU NEED ANYTHING. I
WILL SEE YOU TOMMOROW
AND BE GOOD!
LOVE,
MOM





OKAY, OKAY. CALM DOWN.
TELL ME WHAT HAPPENED.



WELL, I WAS UPSET ABOUT RANDY
NOT SHOWING UP ON TIME WHEN
I RAN INTO HIM AND ANDREA IN
THE PARKING LOT, FIGHTING.



I THINK HE'S
BEEN LYING
TO HER. I
LEFT PRETTY
UPSET AND
WENT TO
WALK HOME.

RANDY CAUGHT UP WITH ME
ON THE ROAD. HE EXPLAINED
HOW HE AND ANDREA HAD
RECONCILED THINGS...



HE WANTED TO MAKE MY EVENING
RIGHT, AGAIN. HE WENT ALL OUT,
PUTTING SO MUCH EFFORT INTO MY
HAPPINESS THAT NIGHT. I FELT
REALLY APPRECIATED...

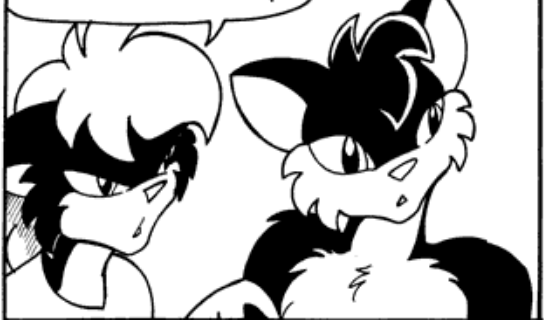


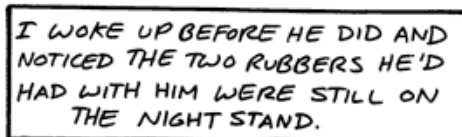
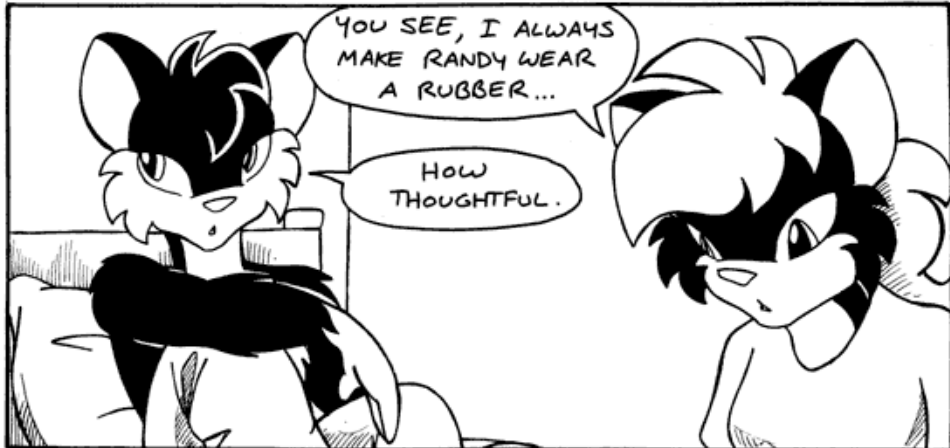
I ENDED UP SPENDING
THE NIGHT AT HIS HOME,
SLIPPING IN AFTER HIS
PARENTS WERE ASLEEP.



MY GOD! HE RIPS OUT GIRLS' HEARTS
AND STILL GETS LAID? MAN, HE
MUST BE THE "'TANG WHISPERER"
OR SOMETHING...

I'M NOT FINISHED!





THAT SELFISH JERK! CAN YOU BELIEVE THAT!?



THAT DOES SINK TO A NEW LOW LEVEL OF PURE SLIME. I GUESS IT'S A GOOD THING YOU'RE ON THE PILL.



HE DOESN'T KNOW THAT!

OKAY, OKAY!
WHAT DO YOU NEED MY HELP WITH?



HE COULD HAVE GIVEN ME SOMETHING WORSE THAN KITTENS!

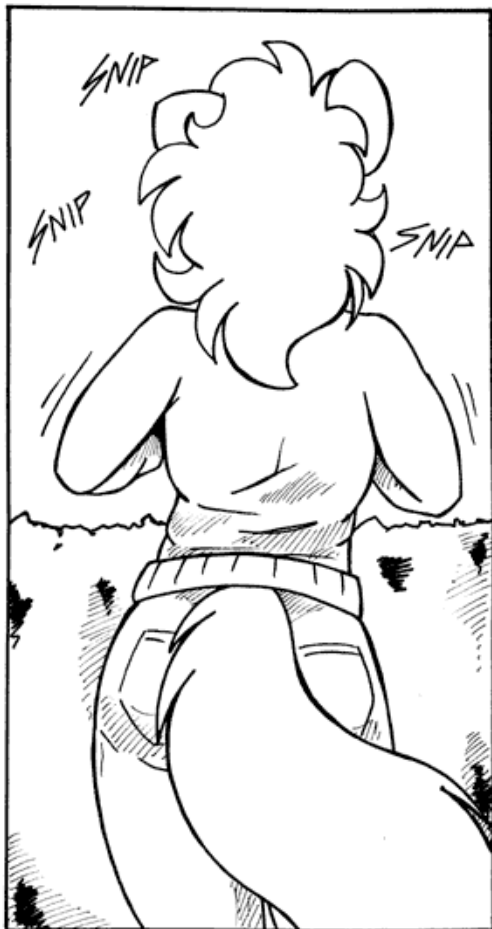
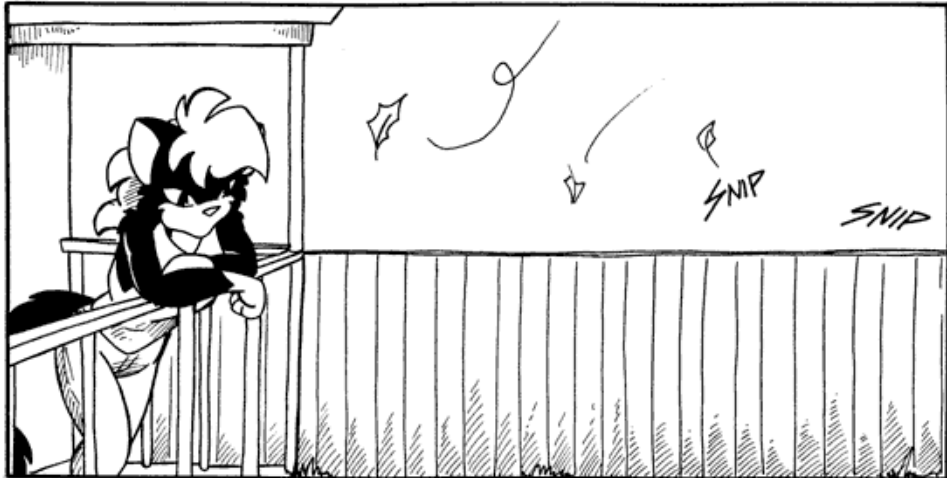
ER...



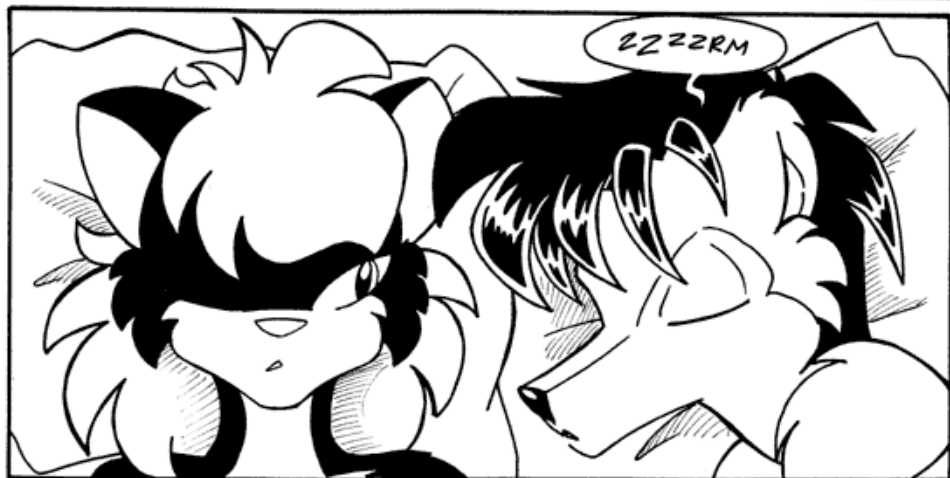
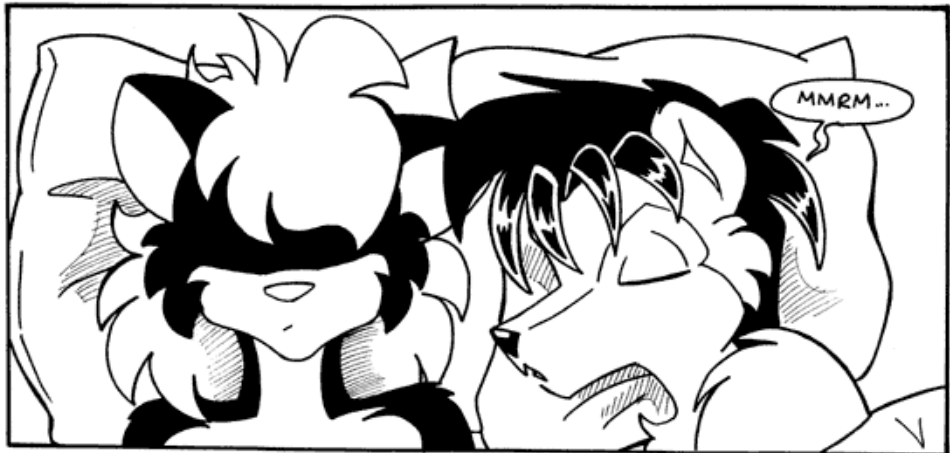
YOU NEED TO TAKE ME TO DR. VALISK, AND NOT TELL MOM...













I GOT THAT LITTLE FUCK! I GOT HIM TO SLEEP, CUT IT OFF AND GOT IT RIGHT HERE!



FUCKING AWESOME!



THAT BETTER NOT BE WHAT I THINK IT IS!

WHAT?




IT'S JUST HIS HAIR.






FEELING BETTER?

I GUESS.





IT'S JUST NOT FAIR, I GUESS. I GET THIS HORRIBLE, KNOTTED FEELING IN MY BELLY WHEN I THINK OF YOU WITH MARISSA OR ELIZABETH.



I WOULDN'T EVEN HAVE LOOKED AT RANDY IF I WASN'T SO SEALOUS. BUT IT ISN'T FAIR.

NOT TO ME. NOT TO YOU.

DO YOU KNOW WHAT IT'S LIKE TO BE IN LOVE WITH SOMEONE YOU CAN NEVER HAVE?



I THINK SO.



LUCY, I SAW
WHAT YOU DID
TO RANDY.

HE'S LUCKY
THAT'S ALL I
CUT OFF.



HE'S REALLY UPSET. HE WEARS
A HAT ALL THE TIME NOW,
EVEN TO BED. I DON'T GET
THE IMPRESSION HE HATES
YOU, THOUGH...

IF IT
MAKES
YOU
FEEL
BETTER.



I KNOW. HE LEFT A MESSAGE ON OUR
ANSWERING MACHINE OF HIM SINGING
"ALWAYS SOMETHING THERE TO REMIND
ME", AND MY **MOM** HEARD IT!



WAIT... ARE YOU
STILL GOING OUT
WITH THAT CORNY
SHITHEAD?

LOOK, HE'S A GREAT PERSON
WHEN HE'S NOT ACTING OUT. I
THINK, IN THE END, HE MAY
CHANGE. IT'LL BE A LOT
BETTER WHEN
HE DOES.

I GOTTA
GO.



* SIGH *



END

HOW'S THIS LOOK?
DO YOU LIKE?

I GOT IT FOR
SPRING BREAK.

HOLY
CRAP!

WHAT? IS
THAT GOOD
OR BAD?

I THINK IT'LL
LOOK REAL
GOOD BEING
RETURNED
TO THE
STORE.

MOM'S NOT
GOING TO LET
YOU WEAR THAT
TWO-PIECE TO
FLORIDA.

OH MAN.
I DIDN'T THINK
ABOUT THAT.

DOES IT LOOK
NICE, THOUGH?

"NICE" ISN'T
THE FIRST WORD
TO COME TO
MY MIND.

KIDS? I'M SORRY, BUT YOU WON'T BE ABLE TO GO TO FLORIDA NEXT WEEK.



WHAT?! WHY NOT?



YOUR GRANDFATHER'S DYING. THEY'RE NOT SURE HE'S GOING TO MAKE IT THROUGH NEXT WEEK.

WE'RE ALL GOING TO VIRGINIA.



MY WHOLE FAMILY WILL BE THERE.

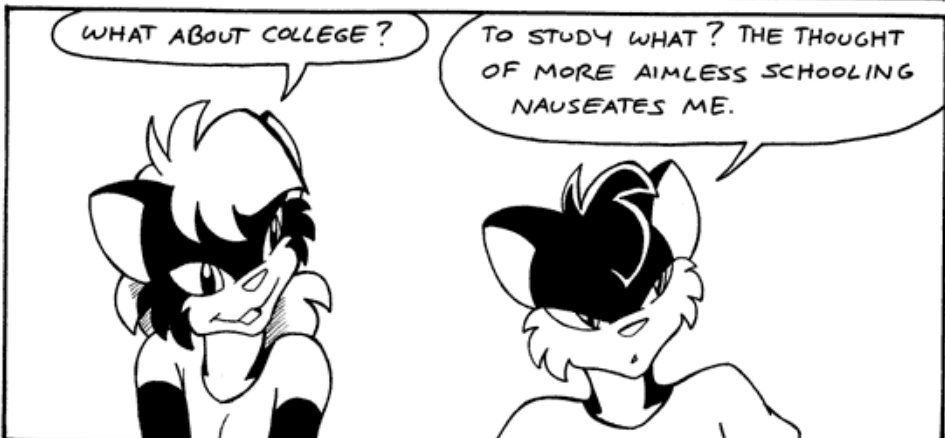
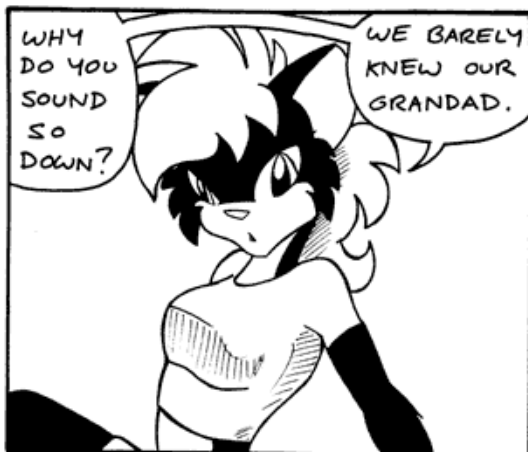
OH NO...

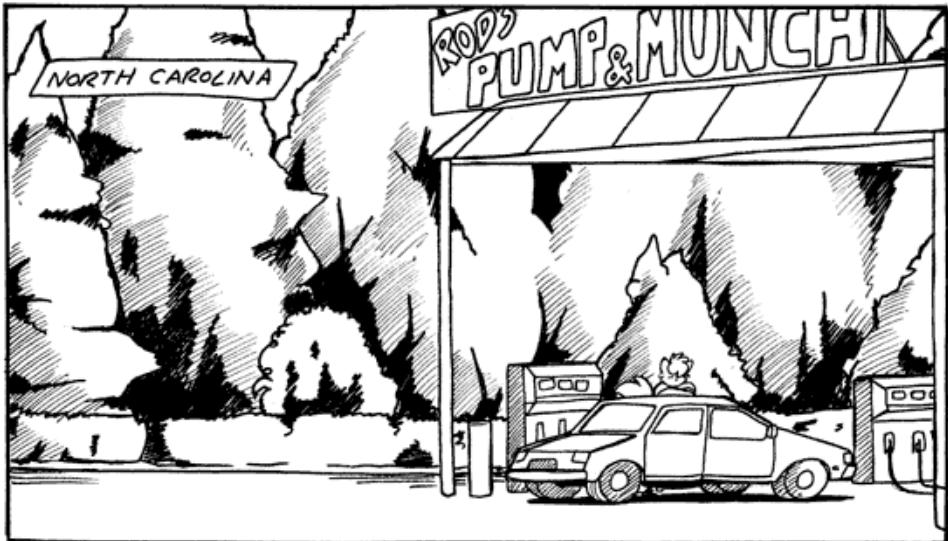


BESIDES, I WOULDN'T LET YOU OUT OF THE HOUSE WITH THAT BIKINI.

AW MAN...

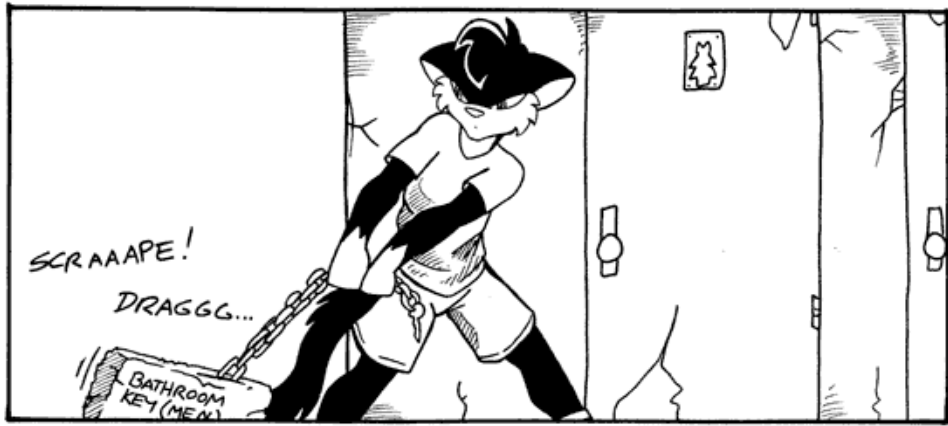






NORTH CAROLINA

ROD'S PUMP & MUNCH



SCRAAPE!

DRAGGG...

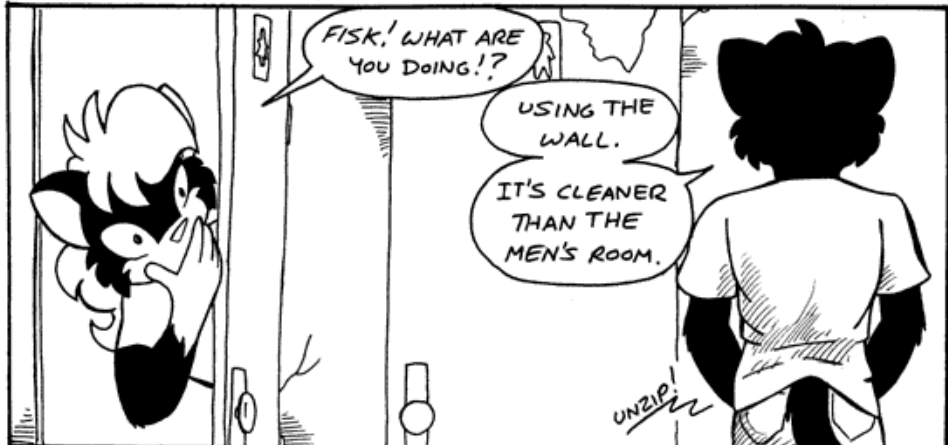
BATHROOM KEY (MEN)



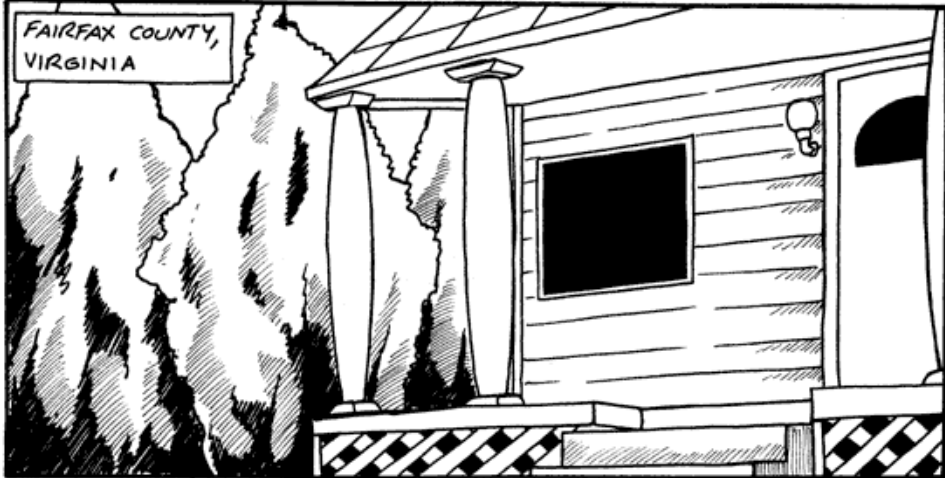
HOLY ...



AW, NO FUCKING WAY!



FAIRFAX COUNTY,
VIRGINIA



OOOOO...



SHEILA! SHEILA! OH,
IT'S SO GOOD TO SEE YOU,
CHILD!



HI, MOM.

I'M GLAD YOU
COULD MAKE IT,
HONEY.



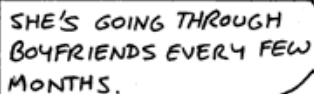
OH MY! THE TWINS HAVE GROWN! I
BET THAT YOUNG MAN IS BEATING
THE GIRLS OFF WITH A STICK!

OH YEAH. AS OFTEN
AS POSSIBLE.

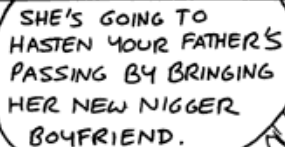
FISK!





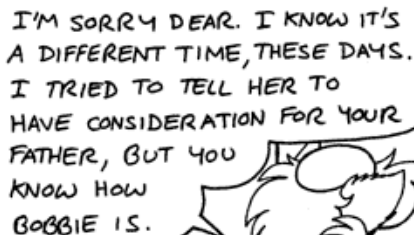


SHE'S GOING THROUGH
BOYFRIENDS EVERY FEW
MONTHS.

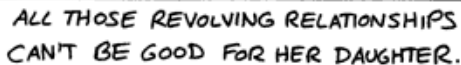


SHE'S GOING TO
HASTEN YOUR FATHER'S
PASSING BY BRINGING
HER NEW NIGGER
BOYFRIEND.

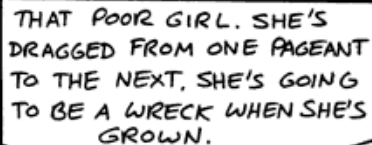
MOM!
YOUR
LANGUAGE!



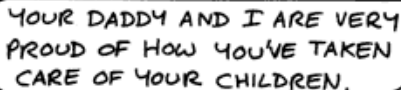
I'M SORRY DEAR. I KNOW IT'S
A DIFFERENT TIME, THESE DAYS.
I TRIED TO TELL HER TO
HAVE CONSIDERATION FOR YOUR
FATHER, BUT YOU
KNOW HOW
BOBBIE IS.



ALL THOSE REVOLVING RELATIONSHIPS
CAN'T BE GOOD FOR HER DAUGHTER.




THAT POOR GIRL. SHE'S
DRAGGED FROM ONE PAGEANT
TO THE NEXT. SHE'S GOING
TO BE A WRECK WHEN SHE'S
GROWN.




YOUR DADDY AND I ARE VERY
PROUD OF HOW YOU'VE TAKEN
CARE OF YOUR CHILDREN.






OH, BLESS ME! THOSE MUST
BE SHEILA'S TWINS!




PERSIA! COME UP AND MEET
YOUR COUSINS!


COMING, MOTHER!



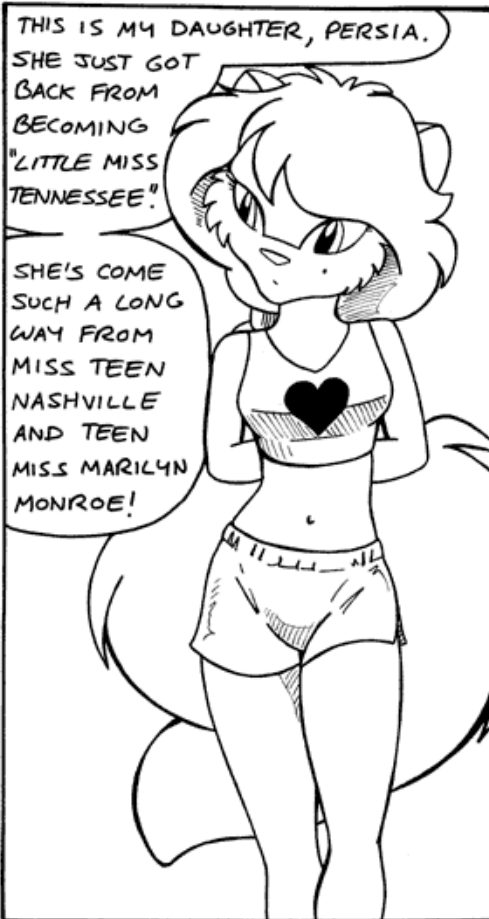
YOU REALLY GREW TO BE A HANDSOME YOUNG
MAN! I REMEMBER WHEN YOU WERE
NO BIGGER THAN A LOAF OF BANANA
BREAD!



YOU REALLY DO LOOK
SO MUCH LIKE YOUR
DADDY!



I'LL BET YOUR GIRL
BACK IN GEORGIA
REALLY MISSES YOU!





SO DO YOU LISTEN TO MUSIC?

NOT MUCH.


HAVE A
BOYFRIEND?

NO.

HOBBIES?

I DONT
HAVE LOTS
OF TIME FOR
THAT STUFF.


WHY
NOT?



I HAVE TO WAKE UP BEFORE SUNRISE EVERY DAY TO WORK ON MY HAIR AND MAKE SURE MY FUR IS COMBED AND TRIMMED PERFECTLY. OTHERWISE, IT GROWS OUT PUFFY.


MOST PHOTO SHOOTS LAST ALL DAY. IT CAN TAKE EIGHT HOURS TO DO SEVERAL HUNDRED PHOTOS SO THEY CAN USE MAYBE TWO.

MY MOTHER SAYS BOYS WILL ONLY TAKE AWAY FROM MY MODELLING TIME AND THEY ONLY WANT ONE THING.



MODELLING IS SO TOUGH. WHEN I'M OLD ENOUGH, I'M GOING TO RUN TO L.A. AND BECOME AN ACTRESS.

MMM...



I DON'T THINK I COULD TAKE THAT. I WOULDN'T WANT TO TRADE HAVING FUN FOR BEING PRETTIER.





SEE, BOYS.
THIS IS WHAT WE
CALL TESTOSTERONE
POISONING.



THIS PLACE IS GREAT!
C'MON, WE GOT TIME
FOR A SWIM!

EEK!
FISK!



YOU DICK! YOU'RE GOING TO
GET MY CLOTHES WET!

ELBOW




THERE'S TOWELS
IN THE CAR.
WE'LL BE DRY
BY DINNER.










COME ON. TIM JUST COULDN'T HANDLE ALL MY NEEDS.


TIM COULDN'T HANDLE FINDING OUT HE WASN'T PERSIA'S DADDY.



OH GIVE IT A REST, SHEILA! YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT IT'S LIKE TO BE TRAPPED IN A MARRIAGE FOR **YEARS**! IF JIM HAD MADE IT HOME YOU'D HAVE EVENTUALLY STRAYED TOO!




BULLSHIT! DON'T YOU FUCKING **DARE** ...



TAKE IT FROM SOMEONE WHO'S BEEN THERE, LITTLE SIS'. DON'T TELL ME YOU'VE NEVER SEEN

A SITUATION WHERE YOUR STRICT MORAL CODES DON'T APPLY!



ARE THEY FIGHTING?

THEY'VE BEEN FIGHTING SINCE THEY COULD TALK.

I'M NOT GOING TO DRAG THIS OUT FURTHER. LET'S JUST BRING THE KIDS IN AND HAVE DINNER.



I CAUGHT A TURTLE.



WHAT'S WRONG?

EH HEH... NOTHING!



LOOK AT YOU! YOUR
HAIR IS A MESS!
AND YOUR FUR!
DID YOU WALLER
IN A MUD PUDDLE!?

DON'T GIVE ME THAT
LOOK, YOUNG LADY!
GET! GET UPSTAIRS!
NOW! GET UP THERE
AND WASH UP!



I HAD **FUN**, MOTHER! OR
DON'T YOU **CARE!**?

WHAT **ELSE** DID
YOU DO!?



WERE YOU HALF DRESSED
WITH THAT BOY!?

NO!

YOU CONTROL
YOURSELF, YOUNG
LADY!

NO BOYS UNTIL
YOU'RE MARRIED
AND **I'M DEAD!**

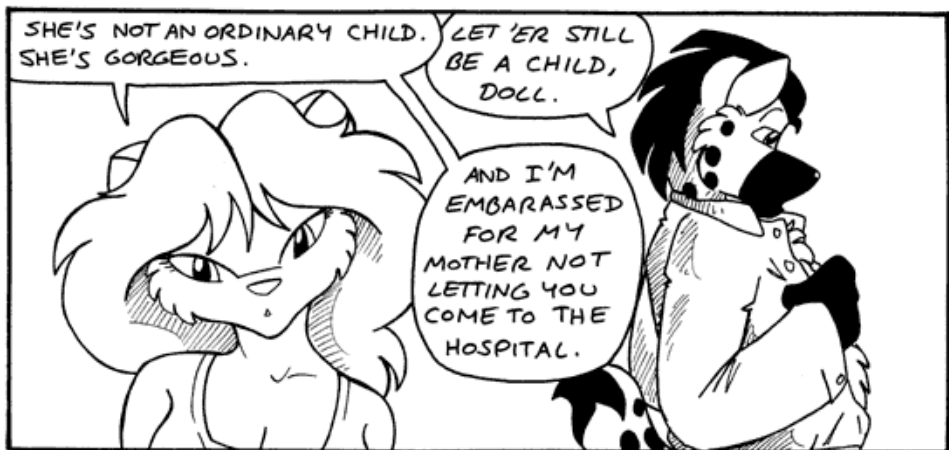
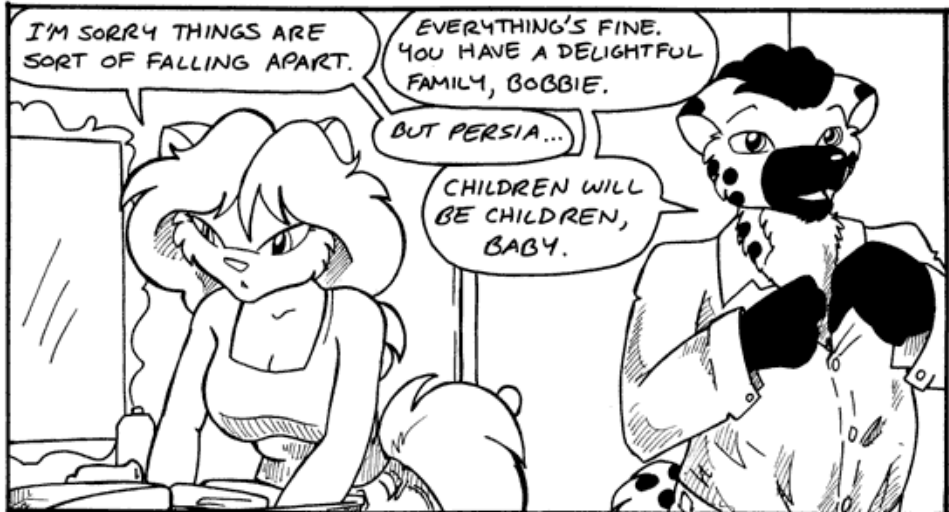


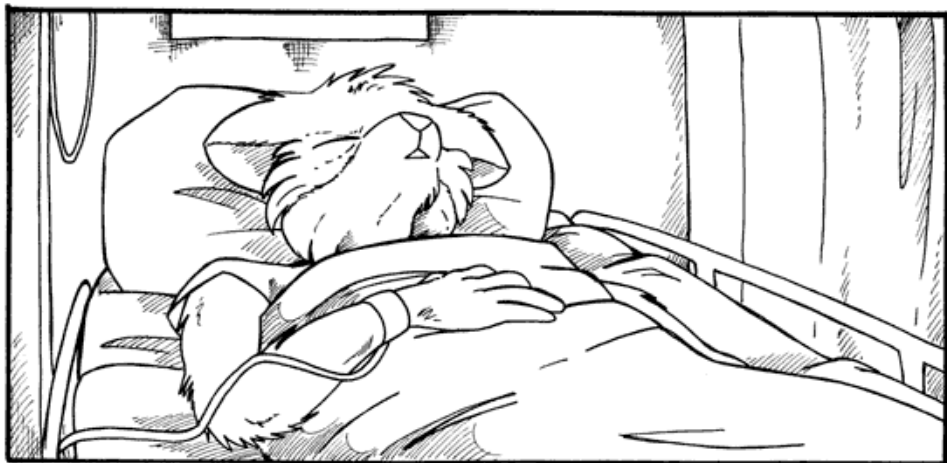
DON'T WORRY! I'M **NOTHING**
LIKE YOU, MOTHER!

YOU SHARP TONGUED LITTLE-!

DOES OUR WHOLE FAMILY
HAVE WEIRDNESS IN IT?







YOUR GIRLS ARE HERE TO SEE YOU, HONEY. THEY BROUGHT YOUR GRANDCHILDREN.



HEH. WHAT HAVE I UNLEASHED ON THE WORLD?



YOU GO THROUGH LIFE...

AND IN THE END... YOU WONDER IF YOU DID RIGHT.



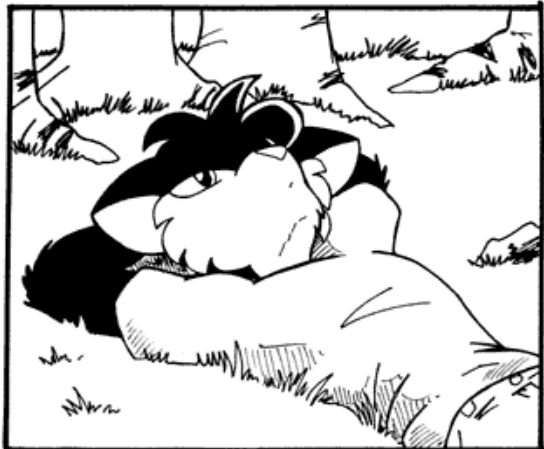
THEN YOU SEE THESE... BEAUTIFUL FACES.

AND YOU KNOW YOU CAN SAY...



... YOUR LIFE WAS WORTH IT. YOU CAN BE CONTENT.





LIKE WHAT? LIKE, WHAT I'M GOING TO DO. HOW TO MAKE MYSELF WORTH IT.

WORTH IT FOR ALL THE PEOPLE THAT DID SO MUCH TO MAKE SURE I HAVE WHAT I HAVE.



I HAVE NO IDEA WHAT WOULD BE A "GOOD" OR "BAD" DECISION FOR THAT. I FEEL LIKE A LEAF IN THE WIND, JUST BUMBLING ALONG FOR THE RIDE.



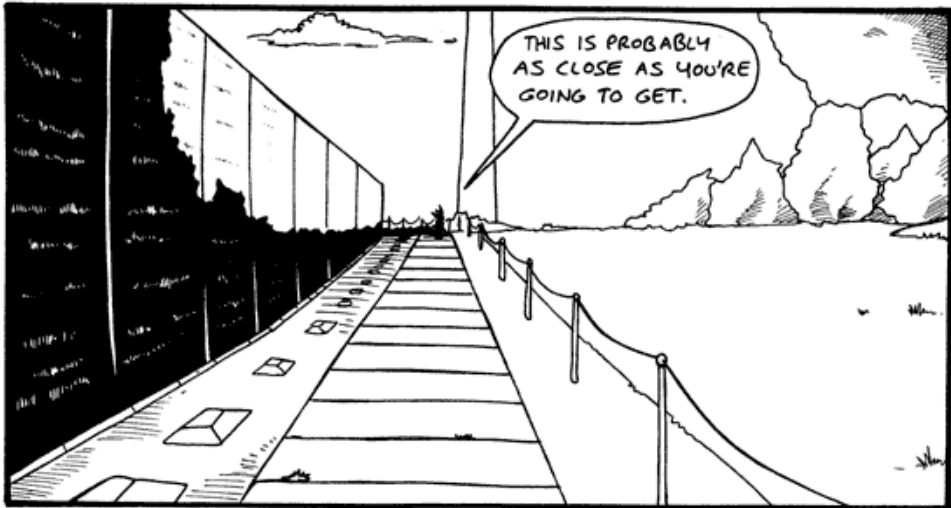
I WANT TO TALK TO DAD. JUST ONCE. BUT ALL I HAVE OF HIM IS SOME NEBULOUS IDEAL. I DON'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT HIM AS A PERSON. MAYBE I'M JUST STRIVING FOR AN IDEAL, INSTEAD OF...



... SOMETHING...



THIS IS PROBABLY AS CLOSE AS YOU'RE GOING TO GET.





AC B AARON · JAME
AL · DOUG L ABEN
BERLIN · EDWARD J
K A ABRAMS · TEL
L ADAMS · EUGEN
S · JAMES C BLACK ·
BROWN · BENJAM
N D COCHRAN · LOU
COLBAIN · HAROLD
N · ADAM V DEVEREA



WELCOME BACK!
YOU MISSED A GREAT TIME
IN FLORIDA!

DON'T
REMIND
ME!

LOOK! I GOT
INTO EMORY!

KICK
ASS!

WHAT ARE YOU AND
FSK DOING AFTER
HIGH SCHOOL?

WITH MY GRADES? PROBABLY
UGA. I THINK FSK'S
UNDECIDED...

HE JUST NEEDS TO FIND HIS CALLING.
LIKE ... MALE STRIPPER...

...ANCHORMAN...

...POOL BOY...

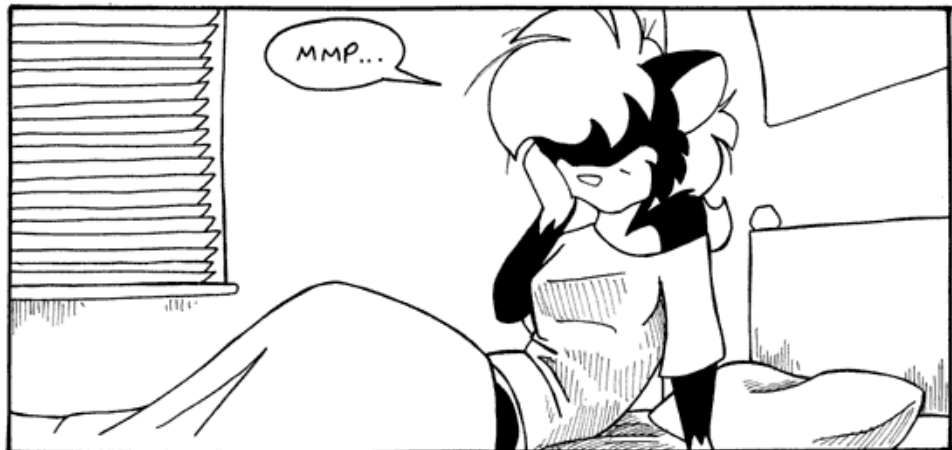
...LION TAMER...

ACTUALLY, I WAS THINKING
OF GOING INTO THE ARMY
FOR A LITTLE WHILE.

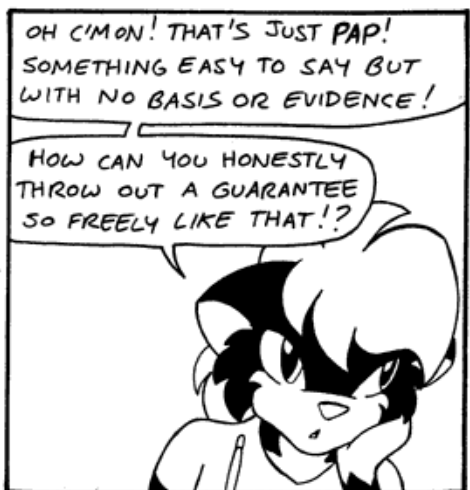
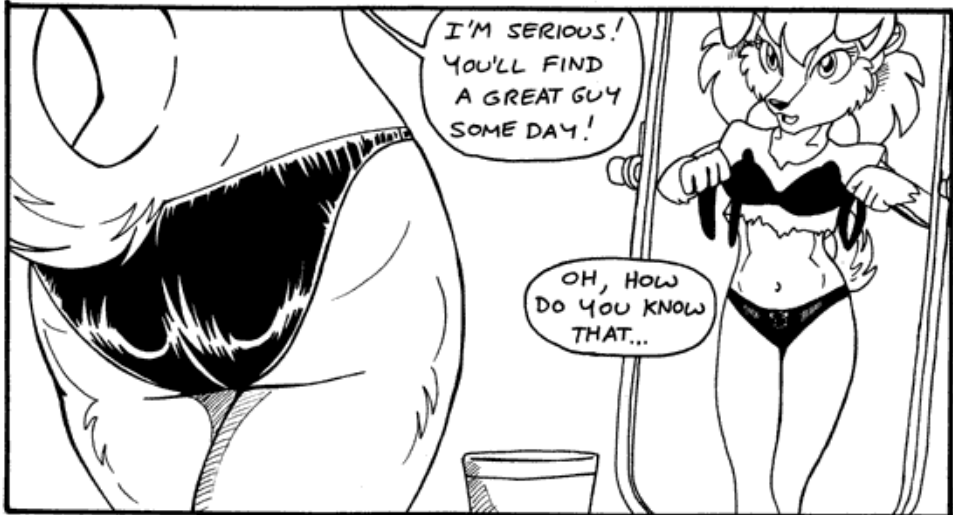
THE
ARMY ?











WELCOME TO THE VIC PRELL PSYCHIC CONNECTION.
I'M YOUR HOST, VIC PRELL, OHHH YEAH...
DO YOU BELIEVE IN THE SOUL-MATE CONNECTION?
WHERE IS THAT SPECIAL SOMEONE? FIND OUT
ABOUT THAT ONE PERSON WHO CAN TURN
IT ALL AROUND FOR YOU... HERE... ON
THE VIC PRELL PSYCHIC CONNECTION.



HELLO, TERRELL AT UGA. YOU'RE CALLING THE VIC PRELL PSYCHIC CONNECTION, AND YOU WANT TO FIND THAT SPECIAL SOMEONE OUT THERE, DON'T YA?

YEAH, VIC.

YES, MMM TERRELL, I'M GETTING A PICTURE OF YOUR SOUL-MATE, NOW. I SEE SOMEONE WHO'S SENSITIVE, ROMANTIC, AND SOMEONE JUST ... JUST RIGHT FOR YOU, TERRELL.

HIS NAME IS RUSTY COCKBURN AND HE LIVES RIGHT HERE IN ATHENS, GEORGIA...

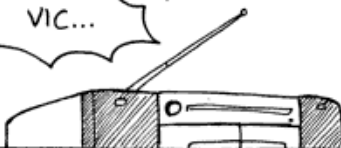
No... VIC...

... HE'S GOT HANDSOME, HAZEL EYES AND A CHARMING SMILE...

VIC, I'M STRAIGHT, VIC...

... AND HE'S CURRENTLY A COOK AT THE CRACKER BARREL COUNTRY BUFFET...

VIC...



THIS IS LUCY IN ATHENS, GEORGIA. HELLO, LUCY. WELCOME TO THE VIC PRELL PSYCHIC CONNECTION. LUCY... ARE YOU HOPING TO FIND THAT SPECIAL SOMEONE?

UM, SURE...

DO YOU BELIEVE IN THE SOUL MATE CONCEPT, LUCY?

I GUESS...

HAVE YOU EVER BEEN IN LOVE, LUCY?

YEAH.

YOU WANT THAT WONDERFUL FEELING, AGAIN, DON'T YOU?

SURE.

I'M GETTING A PICTURE OF YOUR SOUL MATE, NOW. OH, HE'S A CHARMING MAN, LUCY. YOU'RE A LUCKY WOMAN.

OH YEAH?

HIS NAME IS OTTO BALDINGER. HE'S SIX FOOT ONE, AND HE LOVES LONG WALKS AND ROMANTIC DINNERS. HE'S CURRENTLY LOOKING

FORWARD TO A BIG PROMOTION TO LEAD CASHIER OF THE HIGHWAY 310 PIGGLY WIGGLY.

NOW, LUCY, IF YOU WANT TO HOLD ON THE LINE, WE CAN GIVE YOU OTTO'S PHONE NUMBER AND—

CLICK!



I GOT MY FIRST BOYFRIEND
WHEN I WAS A JUNIOR.

JASON WAS A GREAT
BOY. WE WENT TOGETHER
SO WELL, LIKE WE WERE
MADE FOR EACH OTHER.



ALL MY SKEPTICISMS
ABOUT LOVE MELTED
WHEN I FINALLY HAD
SOME OF MY OWN.

I DIDN'T KNOW HE WAS SICK
WHEN I FELL IN LOVE.

THE MOST FULFILLING AND
WONDERFUL EXPERIENCE I'VE
EVER HAD ONLY
LASTED THREE
MONTHS.



HE HAD AN AGGRESSIVE FORM
OF LYMPHOMA THAT EVENTUALLY
TOOK HIS LIFE.





I SEE IT THIS WAY. YOU TAKE EVERY RELATIONSHIP YOU SEE, AND NOTE HOW IT ALWAYS STARTS OUT SO GOOD AND PERFECT.

BUT AFTER THREE MONTHS THINGS GET A LITTLE WORN. YOU START NOTICING THINGS ABOUT EACH OTHER THAT YOU DIDN'T BEFORE.

THINGS YOU HAVE TO "TOLERATE".



BUT JASON DIED WHEN HE WAS PERFECT TO ME. WHO ELSE IS GOING TO COMPARE TO THAT?

GUYS COME AND GO...




I SEE RELATIONSHIPS GO SOUR OVER TIME. I SEE THEM END AND BAD MEMORIES LINGER...

WHY SHOULD I PUT UP WITH THAT? MY MEMORIES OF JASON ARE PERFECT.



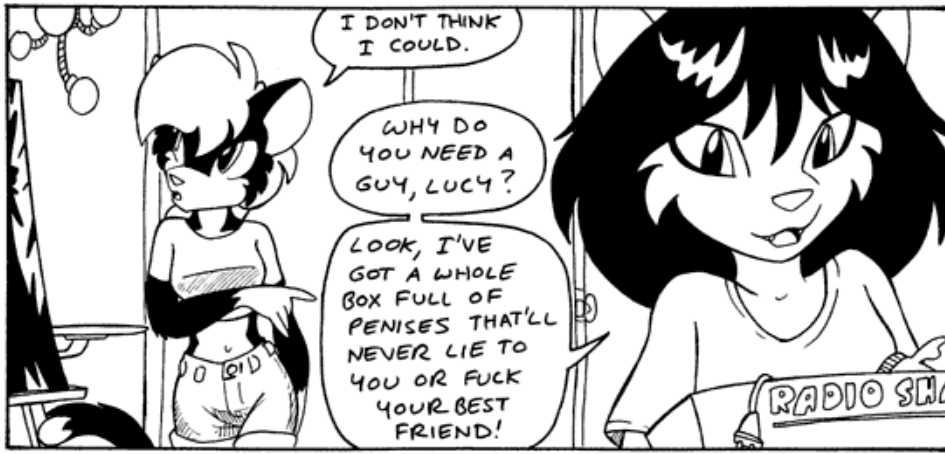
SO YOU AVOID RELATIONSHIPS SO YOU DON'T HAVE TO SUFFER HATING SOMEONE WHEN IT FALLS APART?

THAT'S ONE WAY TO PUT IT.



DON'T YOU EVER MISS JUST BEING WITH A GUY, THOUGH? HOW DO YOU TOLERATE LONELINESS?


YOU GET USED TO IT.




I DON'T THINK I COULD.

WHY DO YOU NEED A GUY, LUCY?

LOOK, I'VE GOT A WHOLE BOX FULL OF PENISES THAT'LL NEVER LIE TO YOU OR FUCK YOUR BEST FRIEND!



I GOT CAT ONES, OTTER ONES, DOG ONES, HYENA ONES, AND OHH... MY FAVORITE ...



CTHULU!



HEY, AMY. YOU GOT ANOTHER LETTER.

THANKS! JUST PUT IT ON THE DRESSER.

NINETEEN

WHO'S "THE INKFOX"?

A SECRET ADMIRER!

HE WRITES EVERY WEEK! I GOTTA FIND OUT WHO HE IS!!

ROLL

ROLL

EEEEEEEEEE!!

WHAT ABOUT ANDRE ?

ANDRE CAN GO TO HELL. DO YOU KNOW WHAT HE DID ?

WHAT?

PSSSH!

HE PUT HIS HAND BETWEEN MY LEGS WHEN WE WERE MAKING OUT.

OHH...

HE WENT TO CHURCH WITH ME ALL THAT TIME JUST TO TRY TO HAVE SEX!

HE FAKED HIS FEELINGS!

YOU'RE BETTER OFF WITHOUT A GUY, LUCY. YOU DON'T KNOW WHO YOU CAN TRUST.





LOOK AT THIS.
WHAT?

THIS THING IN YOUR HAIR!
COMBINE THIS WITH THE WAY
YOU STAND AND MOVE
YOUR ARMS, AND
THOSE CLOTHES! YOU
LOOK LIKE A TOTAL
CLOSET LESBIAN!

YOU'RE PROBABLY
SCARING OFF ANY
GUY WHO MIGHT BE
INTERESTED!



WHAT!?! I DO **NOT**-

TOTALLY
DO.

TODAY'S TOMBOY
IS TOMMOROW'S LINDA
HAMILTON.

HOLD RIGHT THERE!
I HAVE SOME SKIRTS
YOU CAN TRY! THEY
WON'T BITE!

TUCK YOUR
ELBOWS IN.

LEGS
TOGETHER.

HA! THAT'S BETTER!

YOU LOOK LIKE A
HOT TEACHER OR
SOMETHING!

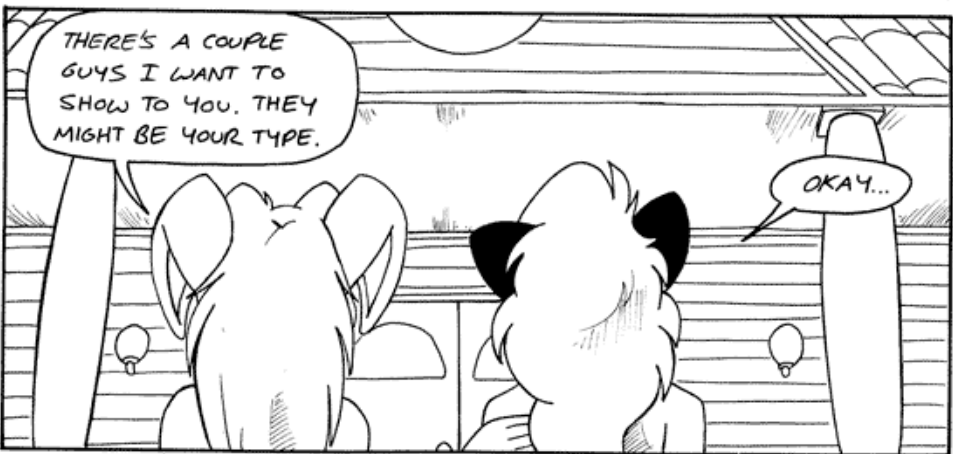
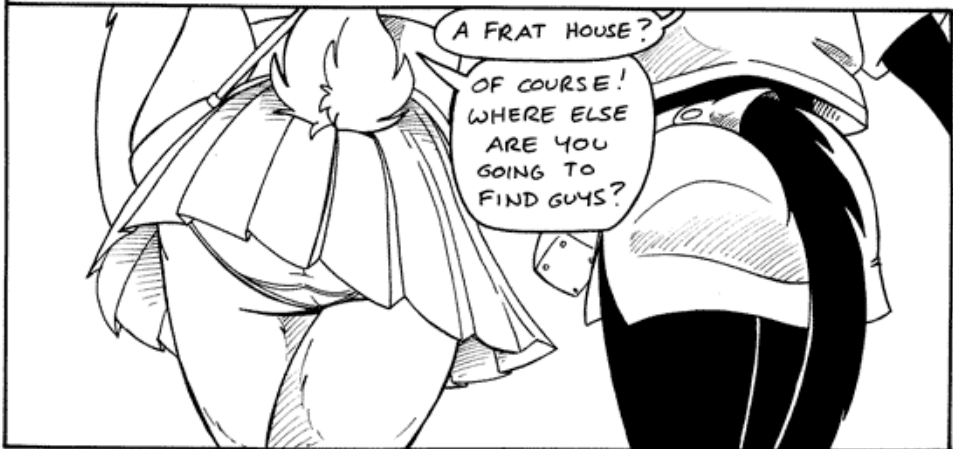
ISN'T THIS
YOUR
BOYFRIEND'S
JACKET?

YEAH, BUT DON'T
WORRY. HE WON'T
BE AT THIS PARTY!

HE'S NOT? YOU'RE
GOING WITHOUT
HIM?

HEY, I LOVE TOMMY. SOMEDAY, I'LL MARRY
HIM AND GIVE HIM LOTS OF LITTLE
BUNNIES. BUT IT DOESN'T MEAN I'LL
STOP HAVING FUN!

I SEE...



C'MERE C'MERE C'MERE.
LOOK OVER THERE.



JEFF'S GOT HIS WELCOME MAT
OUT TONIGHT. HE'S GOT THAT WARM
AND SENSITIVE EXTERIOR COVERING
UP A POUNDING SEX MACHINE INSIDE.



THAT CUTE OTTER BOY IS
JOHNATHAN. IF YOU LIKE A BOY
WITH A SENSE OF HUMOR, HE'S
FOR YOU! IF YOU CAN GET
INTO HIS WHOLE SEX
OBSESSION...

I DON'T KNOW IF THAT'D BE A
PROBLEM FOR YOU OR NOT, BUT YOU
CAN SAVE A LOT ON BIRTH CONTROL...



TREY IS GOOD FOR A ROMP
ONCE IN A WHILE. IF YOU'RE
INTO DUDES LIKE HIM...



BECAUSE A LITTLE MANDINGO
IS GOOD ONCE IN A WHILE,
RIGHT?

A LITTLE
WHAT?



AND THERE'S - OH MY GOD!
THAT'S TOMMY! SHIT!



WHAT IS HE DOING HERE!?
DAMN! I'M GONNA SLIP OFF
QUICK! DON'T TELL HIM I'M
HERE IF HE SEES YOU,
OKAY?



WHY DO YOU
ASK THAT?

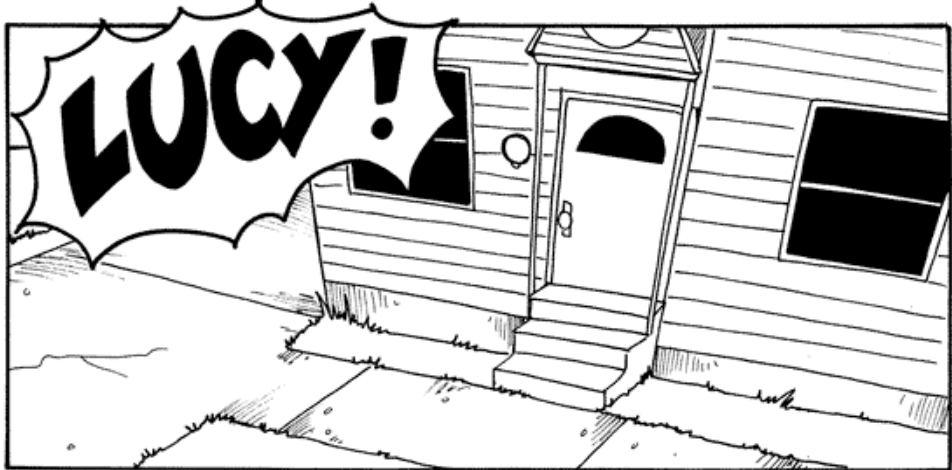
WELL, YOU TWO
SEEM SO DIFFERENT.

WE MET AT CHURCH WHEN WE WERE
IN HIGH SCHOOL. I DON'T THINK
WE'RE THAT DIFFERENT. I
THINK PEOPLE
JUST
JUDGE
HER BY
HOW SHE
DRESSES.

SOMETIMES I WISH SHE WASN'T
SO BUSY. BUT THERE'LL BE MORE
TIME AFTER SCHOOL.

SO... UH... YOU WANT
TO GO INTO THE WOODS AND
MAKE OUT?

WHAT?



YOU BACKSTABBING
CUNT!

WHOA! HEY!

BACK OFF
JESSICA! SHE
GAVE TOMMY
HEAD
LAST NIGHT!

HOW
DO YOU
KNOW?



HE FELT SO GUILTY ABOUT IT
THAT HE CONFESSED!

WELL, YOU'VE BEEN
CHEATING ON HIM
FOR YEARS...



THAT'S NOT THE POINT!

WHAT IS, THEN?

STRETCH
⚡

HOW COULD YOU **DO** THAT!?

WELL, IT WAS A LOT LIKE WHISTLING, EXCEPT YOU DON'T PUSH AIR OUT...

THIS IS **NOT** A JOKE!
HE'S A VIRGIN! HE'S NEVER HAD ANYTHING LIKE THAT AND HE FIRST GETS IT FROM YOU!?

YEAH, HE DID SEEM TO BE **REALLY** PENT UP...

YOU BETTER WIPE THAT SMUG SMILE OFF YOUR FACE...

HEY YOU SET YOUR RELATIONSHIP TO A GAUDY STANDARD!
ALL I DID WAS TREAT IT BY THOSE STANDARDS!



WHY IS LUCY
CLEANING THE
GUEST ROOM?

HER BROTHER
JUST FINISHED SOME
TRAINING OR SOMETHING
AND HE'S GOT SOME
LEAVE TIME.

FLUFF

HE'S VISITING?

JUST FOR
A FEW
DAYS.

YOU KNOW
HIM?

FROM
HIGH
SCHOOL!

LUCY HAS
A BROTHER?

APPARENTLY.

IS HE
CUTE?

HE WAS WHEN I SAW
HIM IN HIGH SCHOOL.

OH... OH...

HE'S IN
THE ARMY,
NOW.

I BET
ALL THAT
RUNNING
HAS GIVEN
HIM A NICE
TIGHT BUTT...

OUT! OUT! OUT! YOU NOSEY
LITTLE HENS!!

EEEK!

PIFF!









AND IF I CHOOSE TO MAKE
IT MY BURDEN ?



I MET
THIS GUY.

HE'S REALLY
DISARMINGLY
INNOCENT, BUT
ATTACHED TO
HIS LYING,
CHEATING
GIRLFRIEND.



MY FRUSTRATIONS ARE
COMPOUNDED WITH YOU
BEING HERE.

YOU KNOW
HOW I
FEEL
ABOUT
YOU.



I'VE BEEN LOOKING FOR YOU
IN THE FORM OF OTHER
GUYS.

BUT, I WANT
YOU TO KNOW
I DON'T THINK
THIS WILL
GET ANY
BETTER IF WE...

... IF I ...

... GIVE IN.

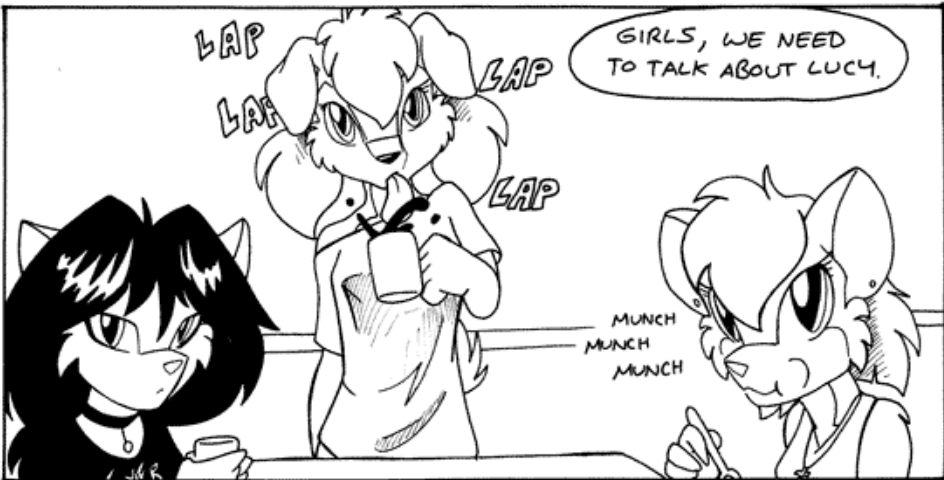


LUCY, I'M NOT GOING TO
LET YOU USE WHATEVER
FEELINGS I MIGHT HAVE
AS AN EXCUSE NOT TO
PURSUE HAPPINESS.

I DIDN'T THINK ABOUT
IT THAT WAY.

GO AFTER THIS GUY
IF IT'LL MAKE YOU HAPPY.
IT'D PROBABLY BE BETTER
FOR HIM, TOO, BY THE
SOUND OF IT.





HAVE YOU NOTICED HOW MUCH HAPPIER LUCY IS WITH HER BROTHER HERE?

LAP
LAP
LAP
LAP
LAP
LAP
LAP




WE'RE NOT TALKING ABOUT ORDINARY KINDS OF HAPPY. THIS IS A HAPPY "GLOW"! IT'S A VERY UNIQUE GLOW. YOU MAY BECOME FAMILIAR WITH THIS GLOW SOMEDAY. IN YOUR CASE, WHEN YOU'RE MARRIED.



THAT SLEEPY, BOW-LEGGED GLOW JESSICA GETS AFTER ROBERT SPENDS THE NIGHT?






DON'T YOU SEE?
SHE SMILES **ALL** THE
TIME NOW! SHE CLEANS!
SHE BAKES!

SHE **LOOKS** LIKE
SHE'S IN **LOVE**!

DON'T YOU GET IT!?




HER **BROTHER** IS STICKING
IT TO HER!



I'M IN LOVE
WITH A GUY I
CAN NEVER
HAVE FOR
LIFE.

I WANT
THAT IN
SOMEONE
I CAN.



OH **PLEASE**...

SERIOUSLY, RACHEL.
NOT EVERYONE'S
JUST LIKE YOU.

HEY!

WHAT DO YOU CARE?

WHAT?

WHAT DO YOU CARE?

YOU CHEAT ON TOMMY.
YOU FUCK OTHER GIRLS' BOYFRIENDS.
YOU'RE FUCKING ONE OF YOUR PROFESSORS...

THAT'S DIFFERENT!

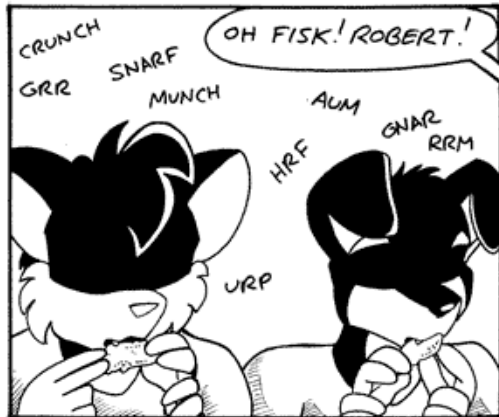
I DON'T EXPECT A MOPEY, DEATH-OBSSESSED GOTH TO UNDERSTAND HOW HEALTHY YOUNG WOMEN HAVE NEEDS...

AS LONG AS THEY AREN'T "NEEDS" TO THEIR BROTHERS OR YOUR BOYFRIEND?

IT'S **WRONG!** YOU KNOW IT AND YOU'RE JUST BEING OBNOXIOUS! I'LL PROVE WHAT SHE'S DOING!

IS SHE REALLY WORTH A FIFTH OF THE RENT?

WRR



HUFF

HUFF

HUFF



HEY! GOT ROOM FOR COMPANY?

SURE.

HUFF

PANT

I THINK YOUR SISTER IS GOING TO ASK OUT RACHEL'S BOYFRIEND.



HHH

HFF



THAT'S WHO SHE WAS TALKING ABOUT...

WELL, TOMMY'S A NICE GUY... BUT...

I SHOULD WARN YOU ABOUT RACHEL.



LUCY AND I LOVE EACH OTHER
VERY MUCH.

BUT
WE'RE
NOT
HAVING
SEX.

YOU'RE A GOOD FRIEND FOR
WARNING US.

THANKS...

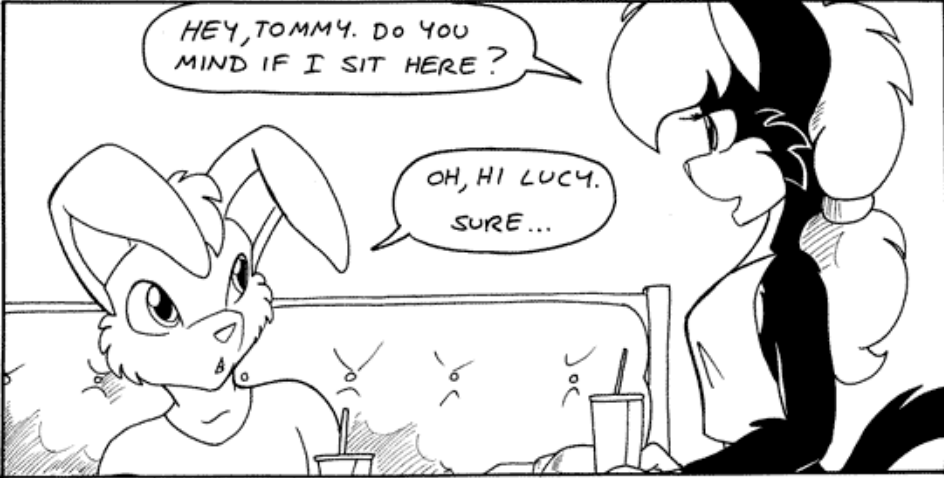
YOU SOUND PRETTY BRIGHT. DOES
THE ARMY REALLY SAP YOU OF
YOUR MIND AND TURN YOU INTO
AN UNTHINKING DRONE?

IT DOESN'T SAP THE MIND.
IT GIVES IT INCREDIBLE
FOCUS.

BESIDES, YOU'RE PRETTY CHEERY
FOR A BLACK-CLAD GOTH.

I LIKE THE
COLOR!

BUMP




HEY, TOMMY. DO YOU MIND IF I SIT HERE?

OH, HI LUCY. SURE...




I HOPE I'M NOT MAKING YOU FEEL UNCOMFORTABLE.



NO, NOT REALLY.

I'VE JUST BEEN THINKING A LOT.

ABOUT MY LIFE, MY FAITH, AND RACHEL.



SHE'S SLEEPING AROUND, ISN'T SHE?



YEAH...

THAT'S WHAT I THOUGHT.



SO WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO?

I DON'T KNOW.

MY FAMILY IS CATHOLIC, AND I WAS RAISED NEVER TO GIVE UP ON RELATIONSHIPS EASILY.



WE PLANNED ON GETTING MARRIED AFTER COLLEGE. WE'RE NOT, YET, BUT WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE IN BEING MARRIED AND HAVING A COMMITMENT TO BE EVENTUALLY? WHAT DOES GOD SEE IN A CEREMONY THAT HE DOESN'T SEE IN OUR HEARTS? DESPITE WHAT SHE'S DONE, WOULD I BE WRONG FOR LEAVING HER?

BUT CAN I ENTER INTO SOMETHING WHERE I'M USED AND LIED TO? HOW CAN I BE OBLIGATED TO MISERY?

THE ANSWER IS CLEAR, BUT I DON'T KNOW WHY IT'S SUCH A HARD CHOICE TO MAKE.

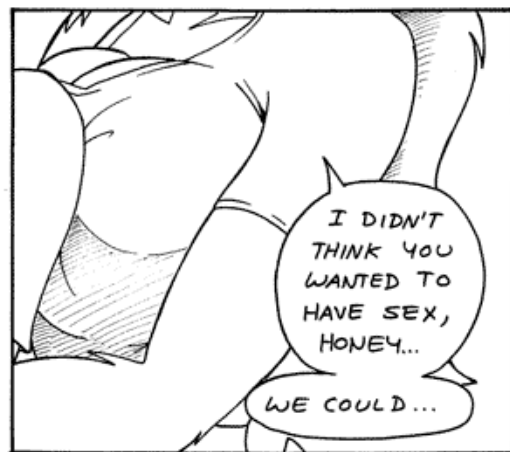


ARE YOU SCARED OF HER?

A LITTLE...

SHE'S INTIMIDATING. I GUESS THAT'S WHY, I'VE HAD A HARD TIME COMING TO TERMS WITH THE TRUTH.

EVEN THOUGH I'VE ALWAYS SUSPECTED IT... I GUESS I NEVER ACTED, BECAUSE ADMITTING THE TRUTH MEANT I WOULD HAVE TO TAKE SOME FRIGHTENING ACTION.



THIS ISN'T ABOUT YOUR LOVE. IT'S ABOUT MINE.

IT IS CONDITIONAL.
IF IT WASN'T
IT WOULDN'T
MATTER WHO
YOU WERE.
IT WOULDN'T
BE EARNED.
IT WOULD
JUST BE "HAD!"

HOW CAN TRUE LOVE BE
CONDITIONAL!?

YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO
LOVE THE PERSON
FOR WHO
THEY ARE
INSIDE!

I'M SUPPOSED TO LOVE SOME IMAGINARY,
INVISIBLE VERSION OF YOU, THAT **ISN'T**
A LYING, CHEATING SLUT!?! GOODBYE!

YOU'LL **NEVER**
GET ANOTHER GIRL
LIKE ME, TOMMY.

I HOPE
NOT!

TOMMY, WAIT! I'M NOT DONE
TALKING ABOUT THIS! TOMMY!?!
THOSE OTHER GUYS DON'T
LOVE ME!

HEY! WE LOVE
YOU, BABY!

HA HA!
YEAH!

SHUT UP.



HEY LUCY.



TOMMY! HAVE
A SEAT.

THANKS. I
FINALLY WENT
THROUGH WITH IT.

OH?

I BROKE IT OFF WITH RACHEL.
I'M STILL NOT SURE HOW I FEEL.
I'M SURPRISED SHE CARED
ENOUGH
THAT SHE
BEGGED
ME NOT
TO GO.



I'M SORRY.

SHE'S GOT ATHLETES AND MUSCLEHEADS WHO
STARE AT HER TITS... WHY DOES SHE WANT
TO KEEP HER CLAWS IN **ME**?

BECAUSE YOU'RE
STABLE. I GUESS
THERE'S ALSO AN
INSTINCTIVE REACTION
TO BEING REJECTED...



MAYBE IT'S MY FAULT. MAYBE IF I'D AGREED TO HAVE SEX AND LIFT WEIGHTS...

IT'S STILL ABOUT HER CHARACTER.

SHE'D HAVE EVERY RIGHT TO FIND ANOTHER BOYFRIEND, BUT NOT TO LIE.



BESIDES, I DOUBT I'D BE ALL THAT GOOD AT IT, THE FIRST TIME.



YOU SHOULD GET IN PRACTICE BEFORE YOUR HONEYMOON.



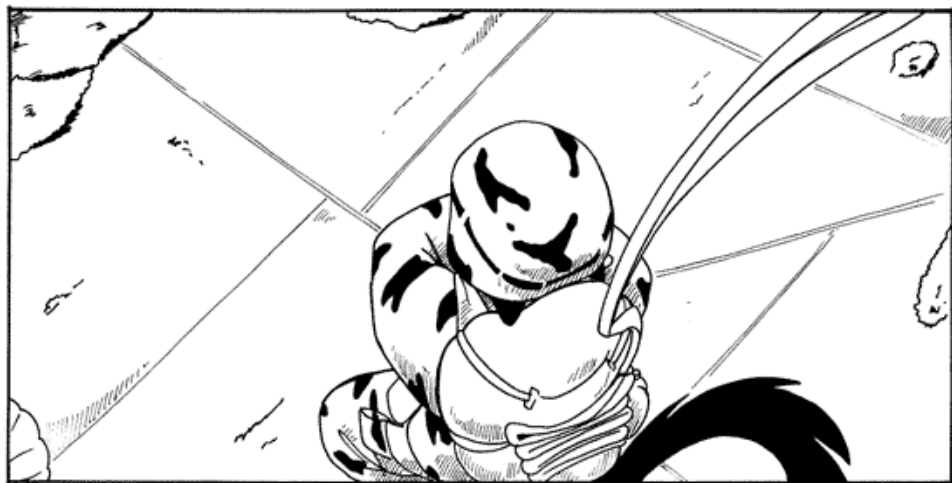
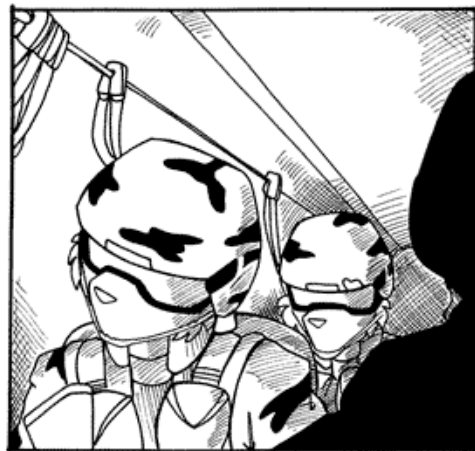
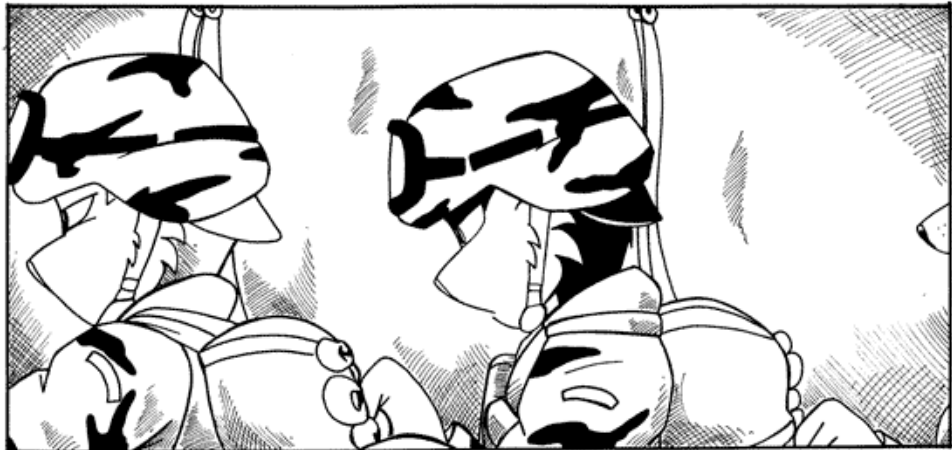
I'M NERVOUS.

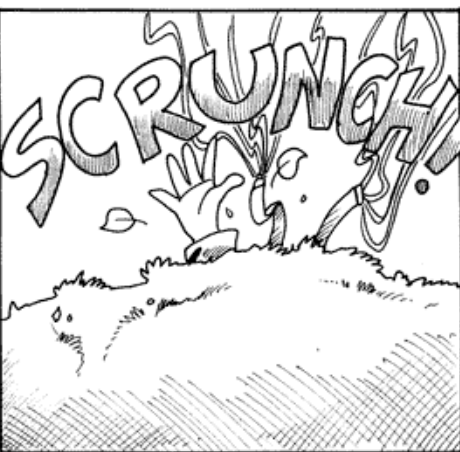
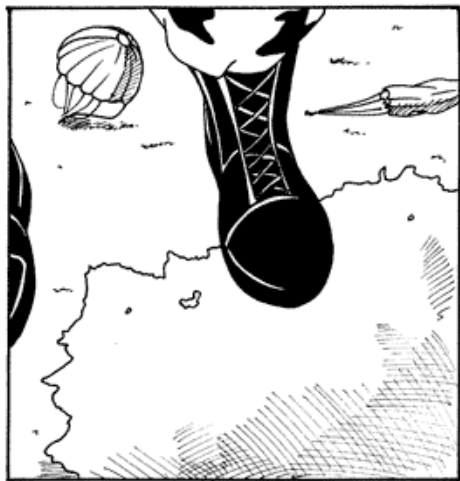
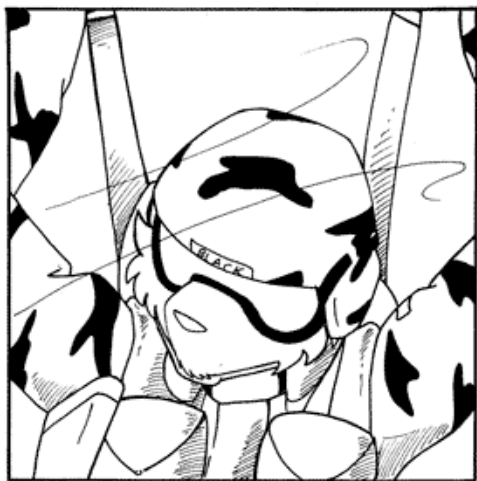
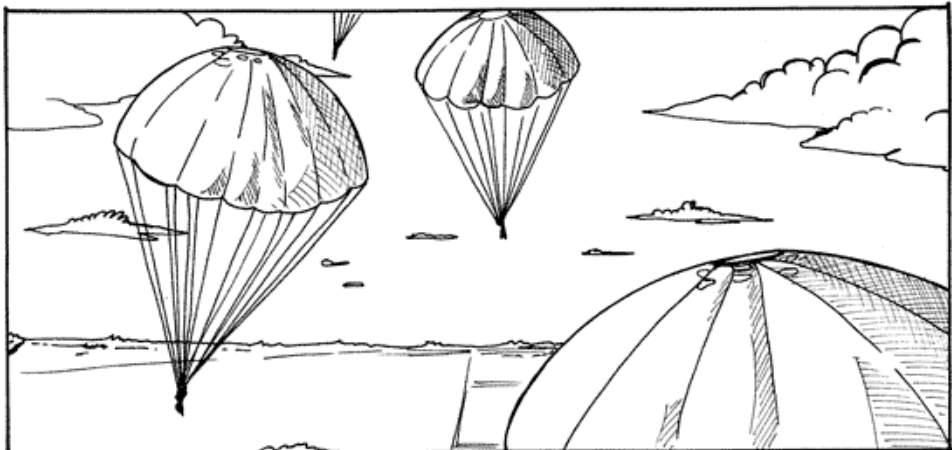
COME HOME WITH ME. I'LL TEACH YOU WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW.



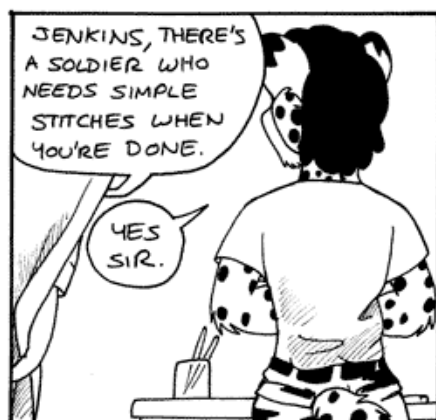


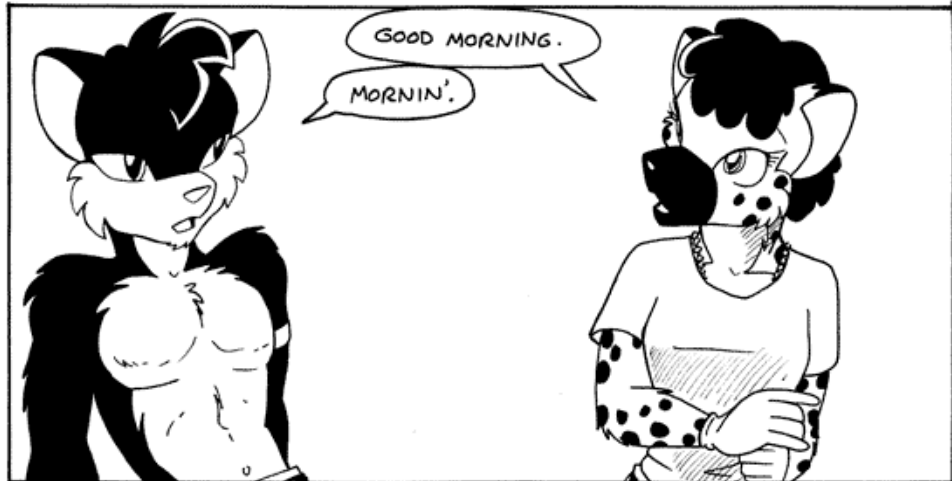
END














LITTLE FISKY BLACK! HOLY SHIT! YOU'RE ALL GROWN UP! AND YOU'RE A RANGER!

GOD HELP US!



HELLO, NIKKI.




JUMPING OUT OF AIRPLANES.


WHAT WOULD YOUR POOR MOTHER SAY?



I'M GLAD TO SEE YOU'RE OKAY. YOU SEEM TO HAVE DONE WELL.




YOU DO YOUR BEST WITH THE HAND YOU'RE DEALT.




BUT, MY FOSTER MOTHER TOLD ME IT ISN'T THE CARDS WE'RE DEALT, BUT HOW WE PLAY THEM.


I GUESS YOU PLAYED THEM WELL?



WELL... HOLD STILL... I HAD A LOT OF HELP. I WAS FORTUNATE ENOUGH TO BE ADOPTED...



... WHAT LITTLE TIME I SPENT IN STATE CARE PREPARED ME FOR WHATEVER THE ARMY COULD THROW AT ME.



MY FOSTER PARENTS WERE GOOD PEOPLE.

THEY ADOPTED A LOT OF CHILDREN. I THINK IT WAS PART OF THEIR CHARITY MISSION. THEY WERE MOTIVATED TO USE THEIR WEALTH THIS WAY.

THEY HAD QUITE A LOT OF ADOPTED KIDS. I GREW UP AROUND OTHER DISPLACED KIDS, KIDS FROM POOR FAMILIES, KIDS FROM POOR COUNTRIES...



...AN AWFUL LOT OF GIRLS FROM CHINA.

THEY HIRED TUTORS TO HOME SCHOOL US. ALL THE OTHER KIDS WERE SO SMART.



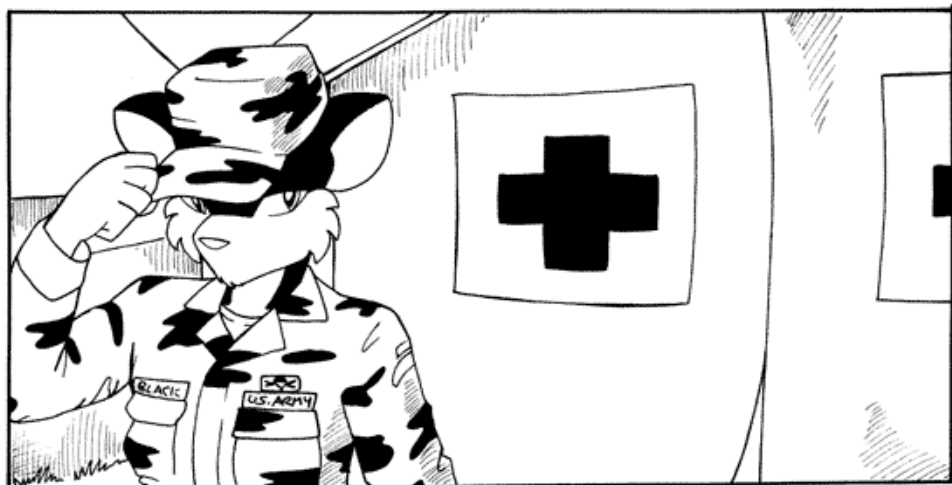
I FELT QUITE OUT OF PLACE!

IT WAS SO DIFFERENT FROM WHAT I THOUGHT WAS "NORMAL" IN A FAMILY. IT ALL CAME CRASHING DOWN ON ME IN AN EPIPHANY I WASN'T READY TO HANDLE.









HEY, DID YOU GET
THAT WOUND ALL
PATCHED UP?



FOR THE MOST
PART, YEAH.





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—



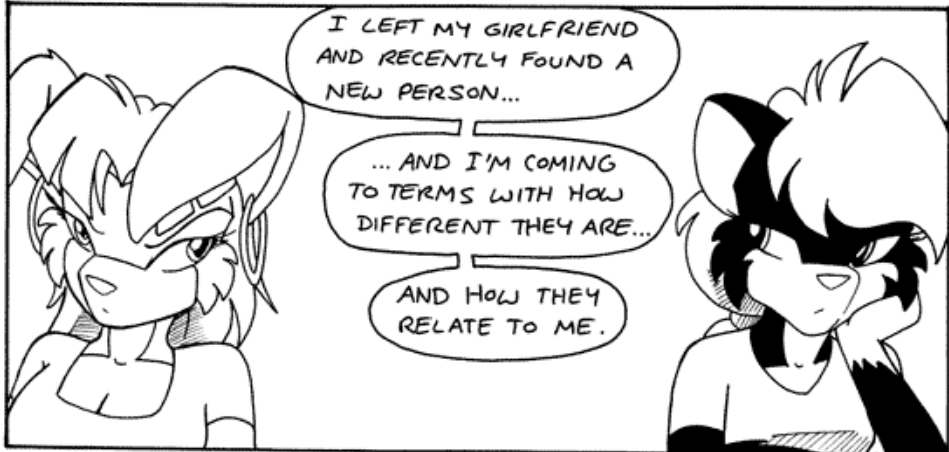
I'M HAVING A HARD TIME TAKING HEAVEN ON FAITH. SHOULD I TAKE IT BASED ON THE REVERENCE OF OTHERS? THIRD HAND ACCOUNTS OF MIRACLES? THERE ARE THINGS I KNOW ARE VERIFIABLE, RIGHT HERE, IN FRONT OF ME...



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

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

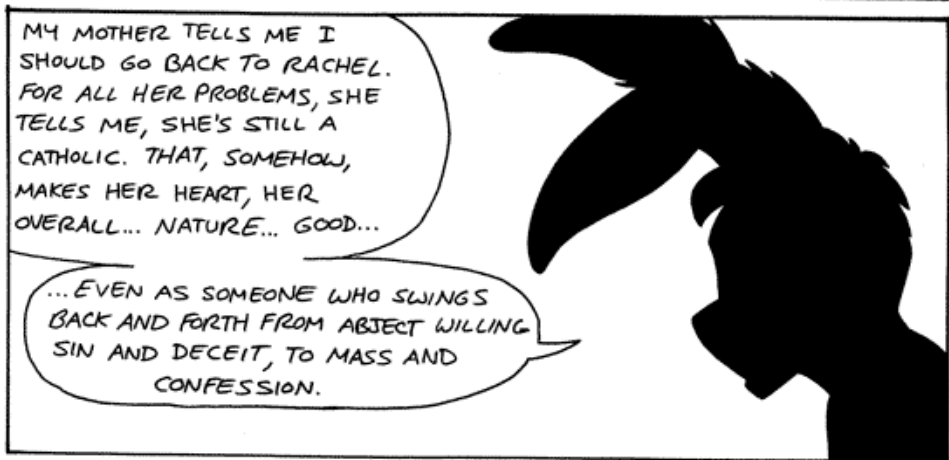




I LEFT MY GIRLFRIEND
AND RECENTLY FOUND A
NEW PERSON...

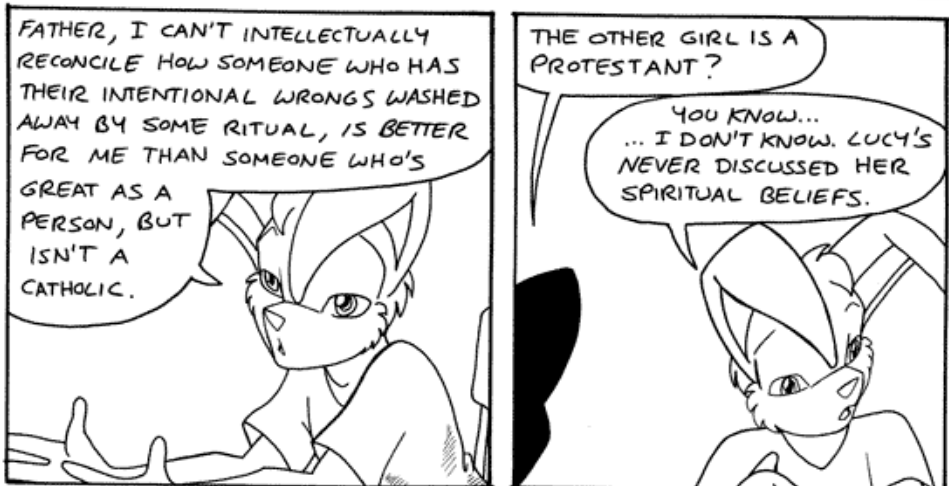
... AND I'M COMING
TO TERMS WITH HOW
DIFFERENT THEY ARE...

AND HOW THEY
RELATE TO ME.



MY MOTHER TELLS ME I
SHOULD GO BACK TO RACHEL.
FOR ALL HER PROBLEMS, SHE
TELLS ME, SHE'S STILL A
CATHOLIC. THAT, SOMEHOW,
MAKES HER HEART, HER
OVERALL... NATURE... GOOD...

... EVEN AS SOMEONE WHO SWINGS
BACK AND FORTH FROM ABJECT WILLING
SIN AND DECEIT, TO MASS AND
CONFESSION.



FATHER, I CAN'T INTELLECTUALLY
RECONCILE HOW SOMEONE WHO HAS
THEIR INTENTIONAL WRONGS WASHED
AWAY BY SOME RITUAL, IS BETTER
FOR ME THAN SOMEONE WHO'S
GREAT AS A
PERSON, BUT
ISN'T A
CATHOLIC.

THE OTHER GIRL IS A
PROTESTANT?

YOU KNOW...
... I DON'T KNOW. LUCY'S
NEVER DISCUSSED HER
SPIRITUAL BELIEFS.

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.

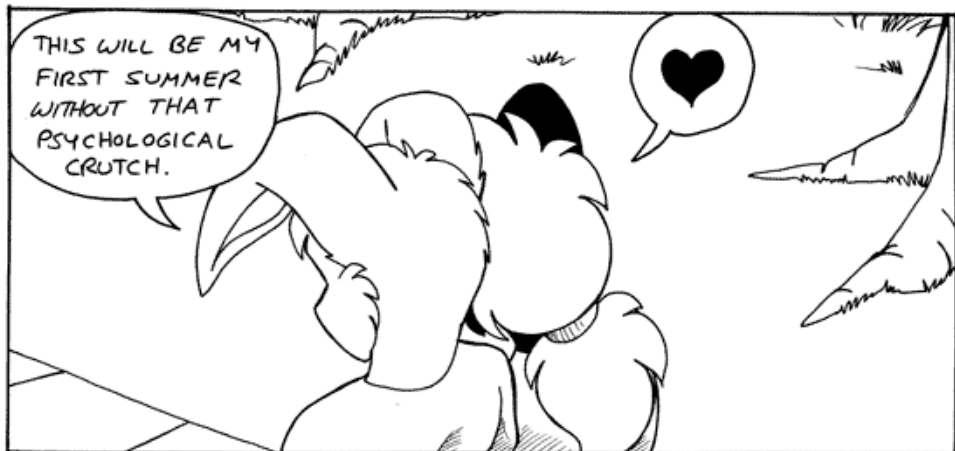
AND IT'S VERY CONTAGIOUS.

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.

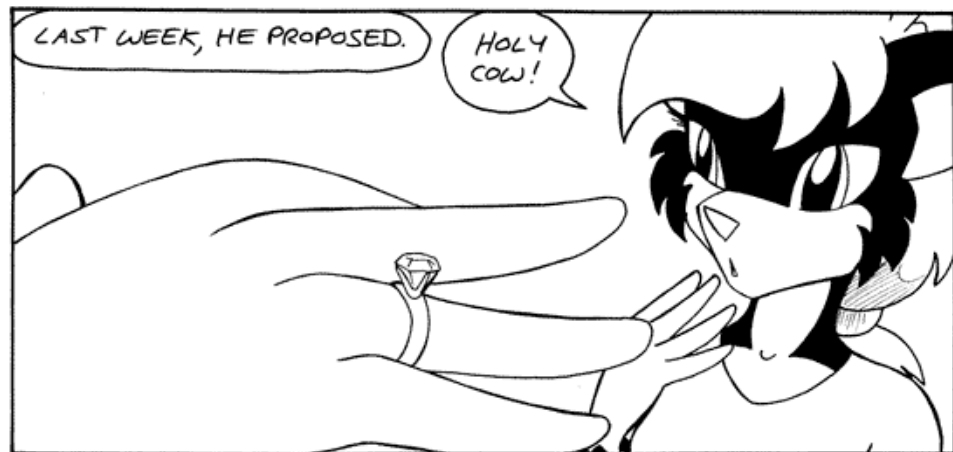
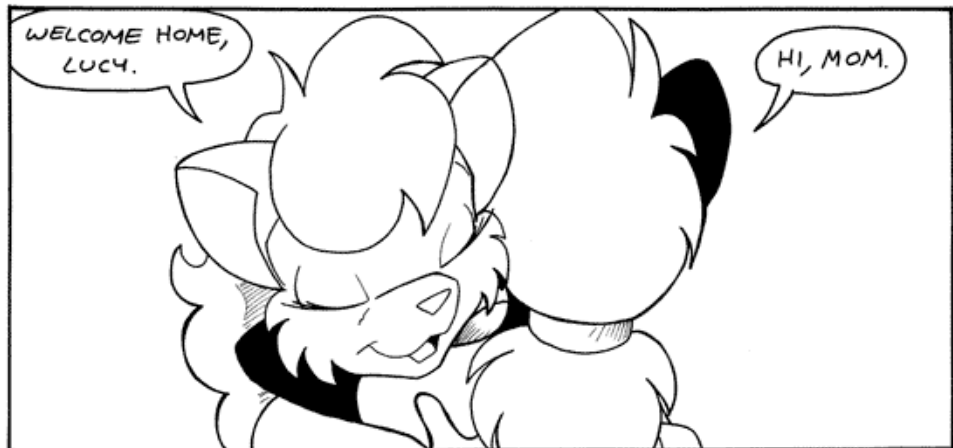


I'M ALREADY BORED WITH THIS ONE. IT'S NOT REALLY NEWS AS MUCH AS IT IS A SENSATIONALIST RAG.

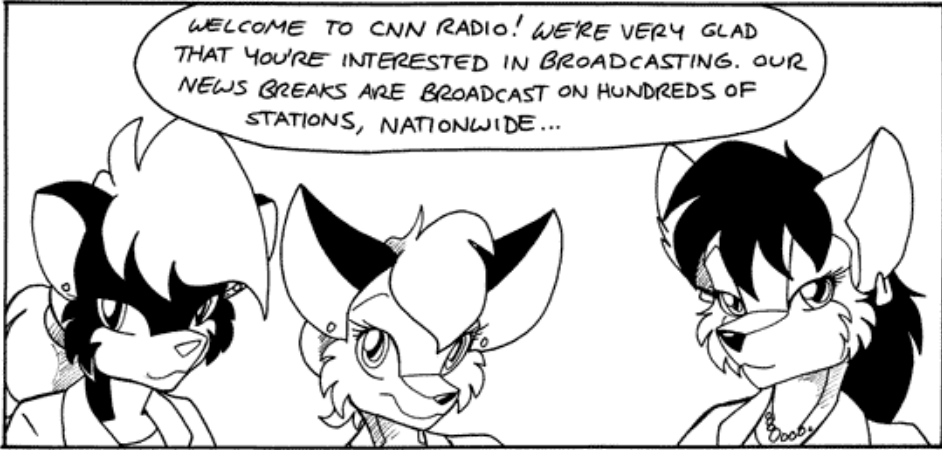


SINCE WHEN DIDN'T YOU LIKE SENSATIONALISM?


YOU KNOW WHAT I ME--*N/A*...









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"?







OH! YOU'RE HOME EARLY!

MM-HM. COOKS DELICIOUS.



WELL, THANK YOU - EEEE!

MMMM.



EEE! YOU ANIMAL!

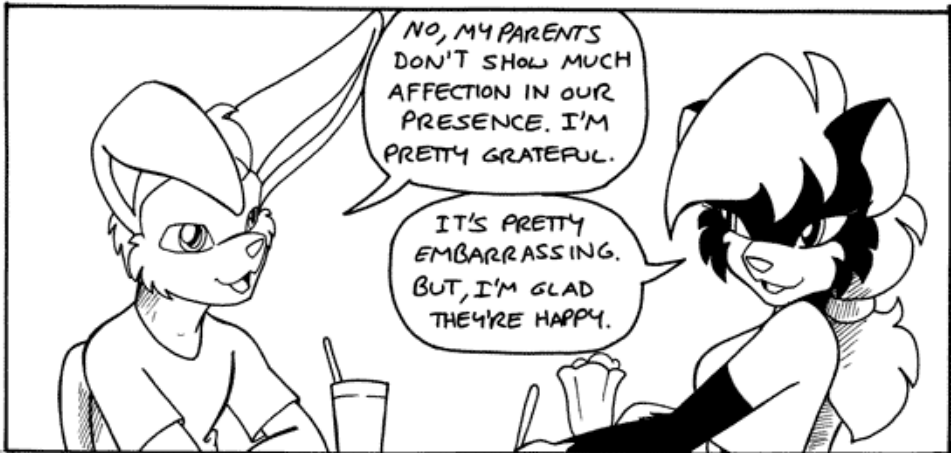
RRR! HAHAHEE!

BEEP
GOOP



HEY, TOMMY? DO YOU WANT TO DO SOMETHING, TODAY? I HAVE THIS URGE TO LEAVE THE HOUSE.





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...

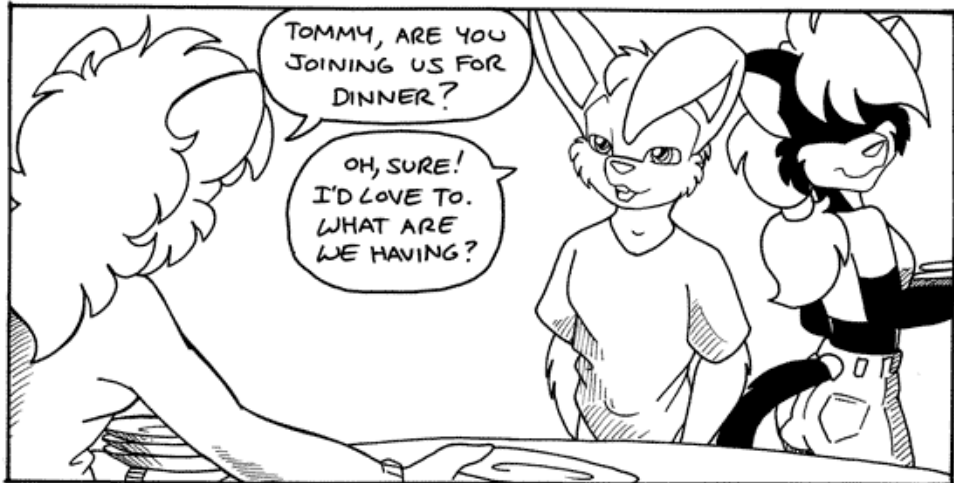
HEH, NO. THAT'S NOT WHAT I MEANT.

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?

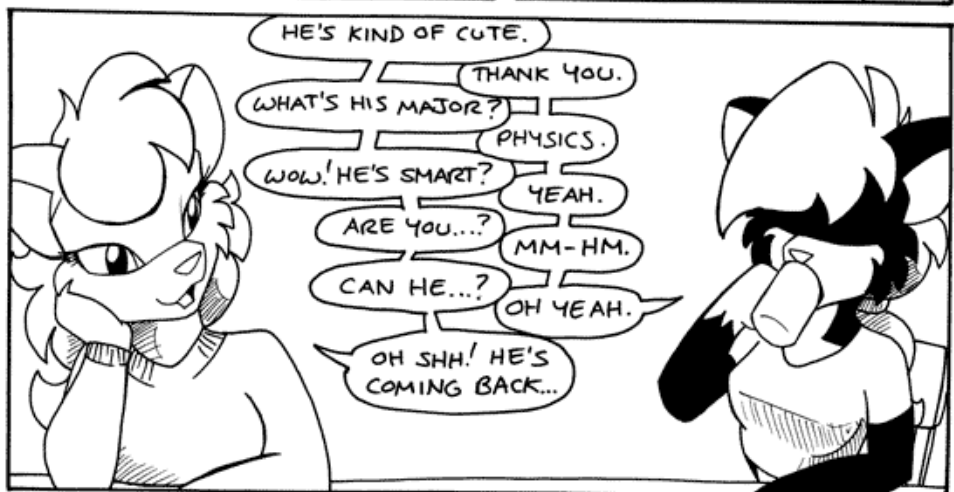
OH, SURE!
I'D LOVE TO.
WHAT ARE WE HAVING?



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?

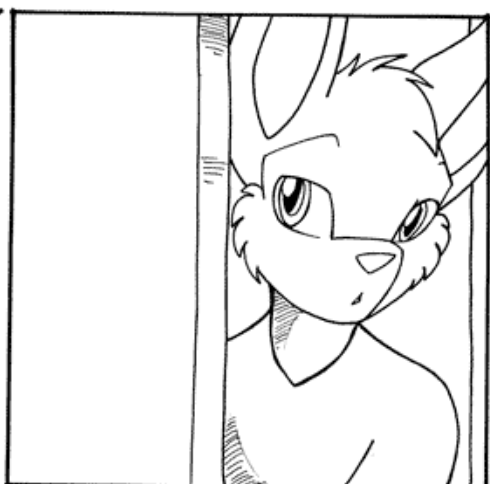
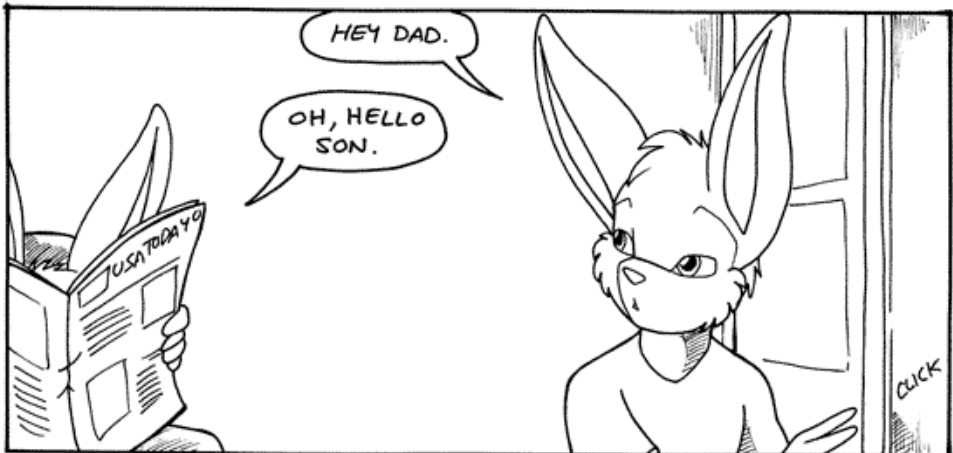


RACHEL!?

HELLO,
MRS. PETERSON.

IS TOMMY
HOME?

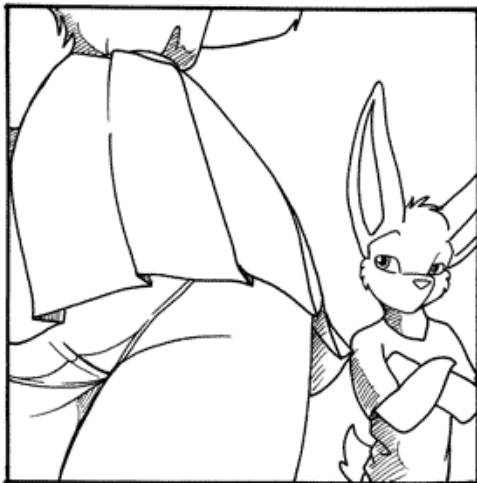




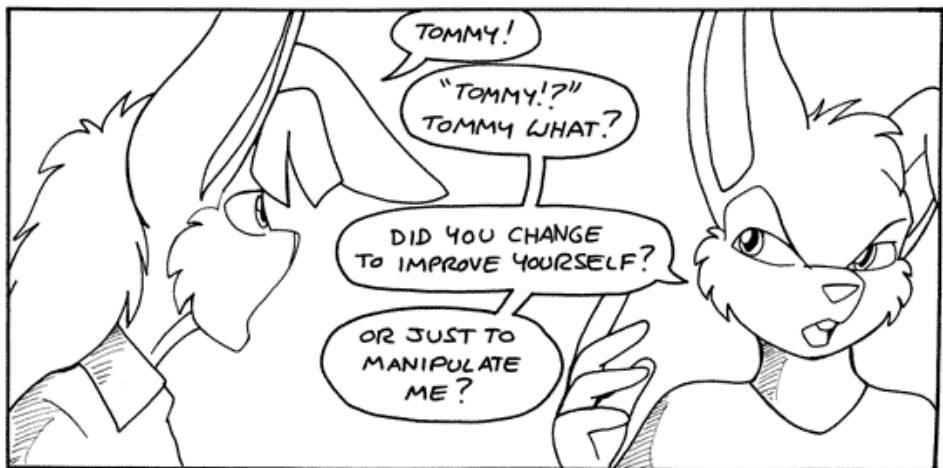


TOMMY, I KNOW YOU HAVE EVERY RIGHT TO BE UPSET, BUT I COULDN'T GO ON WITHOUT TELLING YOU HOW I'VE FELT SINCE. I FEEL AWFUL.

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



WELL, GOOD FOR YOU.



TOMMY!

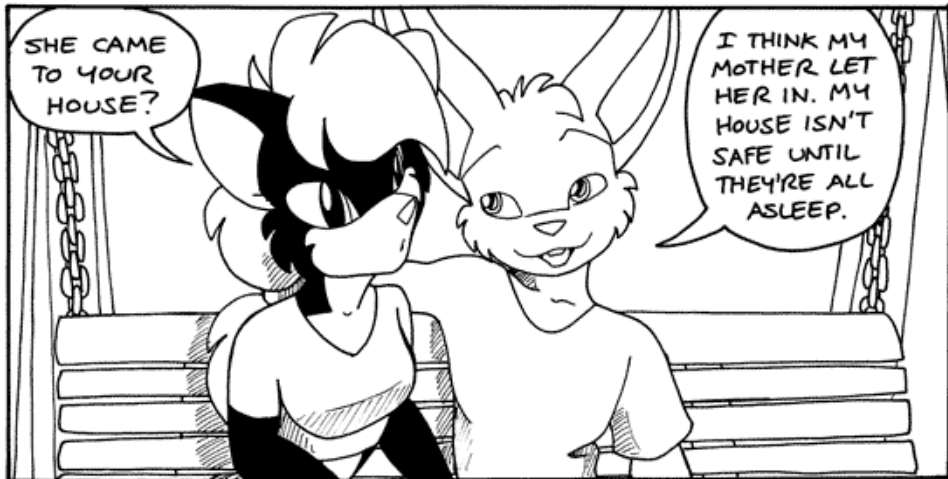
"TOMMY!?"
TOMMY WHAT?

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.

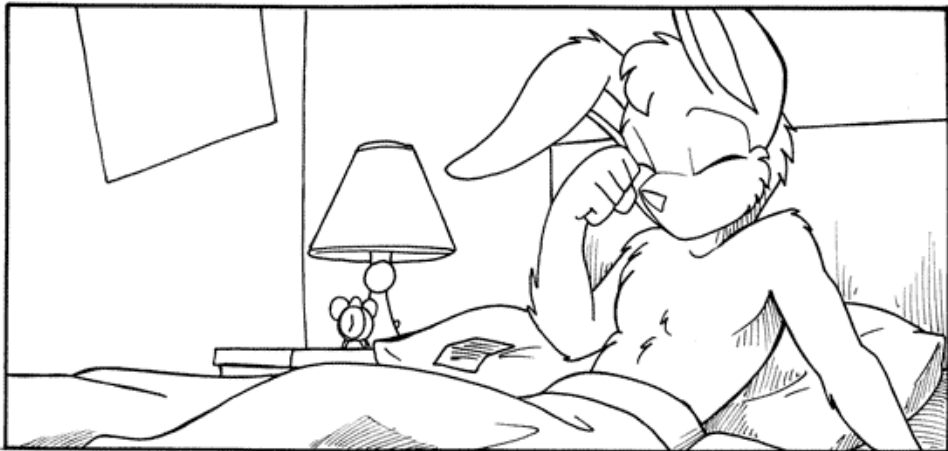


BUT THE STORY WAS ALREADY OUT. SHE HAD ALREADY GRADUATED BY THE TIME IT WAS OVER AND HE'D ALREADY MISSED A YEAR OF WORK.



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.







YOU FOUND AND ORGANIZED ALL THIS OVER THE WEEKEND?

YES. THERE ARE REFERENCES IN THE BACK, WITH NUMBERS YOU CAN USE TO -

IT'S OKAY, LUCY. YOU SOLD ME.



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



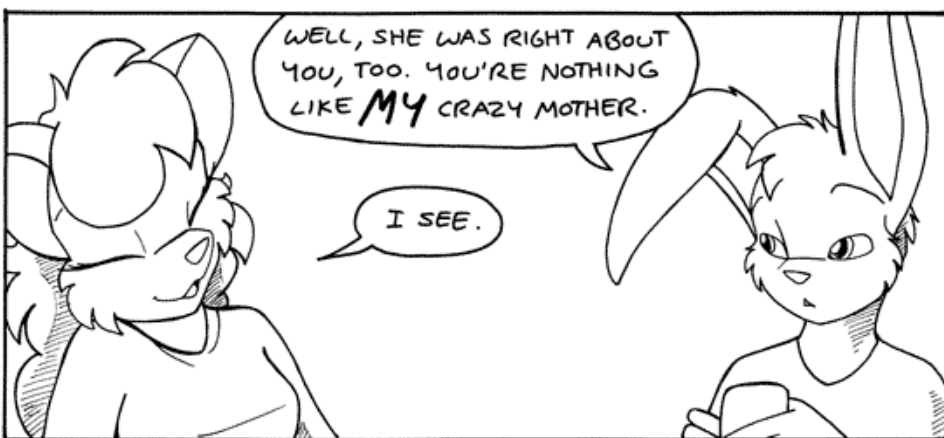
THANK YOU, SIR.

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




SO, WHAT ARE YOU GUYS GOING TO DO AFTER THE ARMY?


I HADN'T ACTUALLY THOUGHT ABOUT IT. WHY?




THE BERLIN WALL'S COMING DOWN. HOW MUCH LONGER DO YOU THINK THEY'LL NEED US?



I DON'T KNOW. I THINK THERE'LL ALWAYS BE A NEED FOR SOLDIERS.




MAYBE FOR BORN KILLERS LIKE FISK, BUT FOR US SOFTER GUYS...



OH DON'T START THAT "BORN KILLER" SHIT, AGAIN, CARLOS.

LITTLE FISK?
A KILLER?




OKAY, SO SOME MARINE RECON
HARD ASSES CAME DOWN HERE
TO TRAIN AGAINST THE RANGERS...

BE CAREFUL...


AND FISK'S
SQUAD IS GETTING
HAMMERED...

THIS IS HOW
MYTHS START.



MOST OF US ARE BEEPING WHEN FISK ROUNDS
UP OUR AMMO AND STARTS TO CRAWL AROUND
THE ADVANCING MARINES, LIKE A HERO.

IT WASN'T
HEROIC. I
HAD NOTHING
TO LOSE!



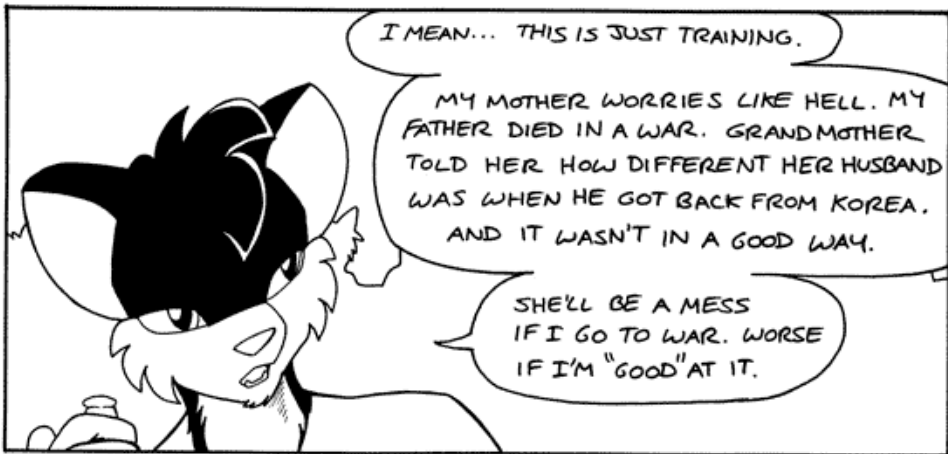
WHEN WE FOUND HIM
AFTERWARD, EVERYONE
WAS BEEPING EXCEPT
HIM.

DUDE, I
WAS LUCKY.

BEEP
BEEP
BEEP

BEEP
BEEP
BEEP

BEEP
BEEP
BEEP



1918



1944



1953



1968



1990



WHAT'S A GUY GOT TO DO FOR A HAPPY ENDING AROUND HERE?

THERE'S AN AIR FORCE BASE OVER YONDER.





WE KNOW WHAT YOU'RE THINKING!

ARE THESE MUTANT TERMITES?

AND WHY ARE THEY TALKING?

WE HAVE IMPORTANT THINGS TO SAY!
THAT'S WHY!

88

I AM MOHAMMED, AND THAT IS MY BROTHER, MOHAMMED.

WE ARE SUN SPIDERS!
OR CAMEL SPIDERS
IF YOU PREFER.

BUT WE'RE NOT REALLY SPIDERS AT ALL!

WE WON'T BITE YOU!

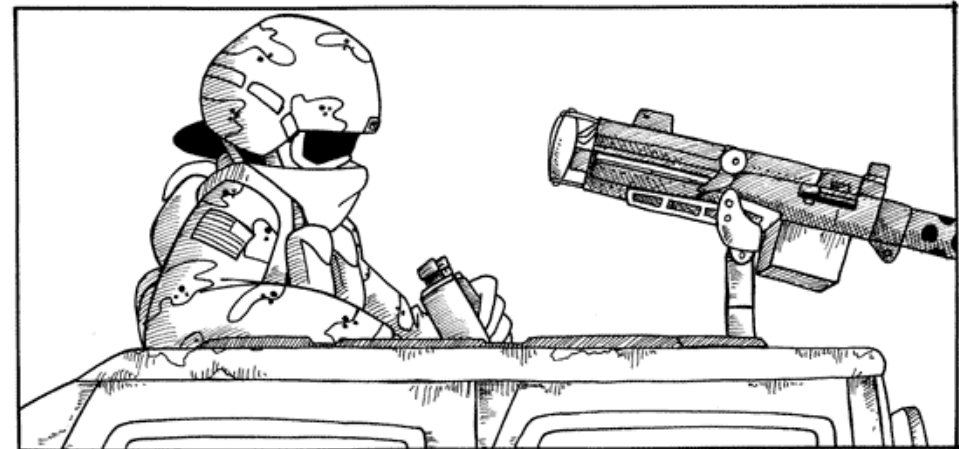
WHAT DID YOU HAVE TO SAY?

YOU HAVE TO WAKE UP!

WHY?

BECAUSE IT'S YOUR WATCH.

BLINK
BLINK





HELLOOO?

LUCY? IT'S ME!

FISK!?

YEAH, WE'RE IN A REARWARD AREA AND I THOUGHT I'D CALL. HOW'RE YOU AND MOM?



OH! WE'RE JUST FINE! MOM'S OUT WITH SAM RIGHT NOW... WHAT'S IT LIKE OVER THERE?

IT REALLY SUCKS. THEY'VE OUTLAWED FUN, SO WE JUST SPEND TIME ON BASE WHEN WE'RE NOT OUT WORKIN'. OTHER THAN THAT, IT'S SWELTERINGLY HOT.

IS THAT FISK?
HOW IS HE?



SPEAKING OF HOT REARWARD AREAS, BETH IS HERE IF YOU WANT TO TALK TO HER.

PSSH!

HEY FISK! YOU POOR THING!
I MISS YOU SO MUCH, YOU KNOW.
YOU BETTER GET HOME OKAY.



MAN, YOU MUST BE BLUE AS
HELL DOWN THERE... TSK...



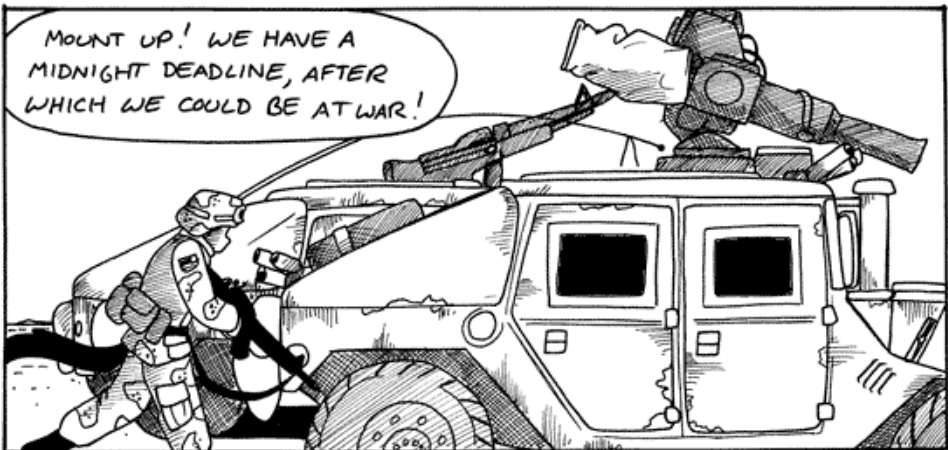
...I'LL TAKE REAL GOOD CARE
OF YOU WHEN YOU GET HOME...



OH YEAH... EVERYTHING YOU
WANT AND— HOLD ON A SECOND.



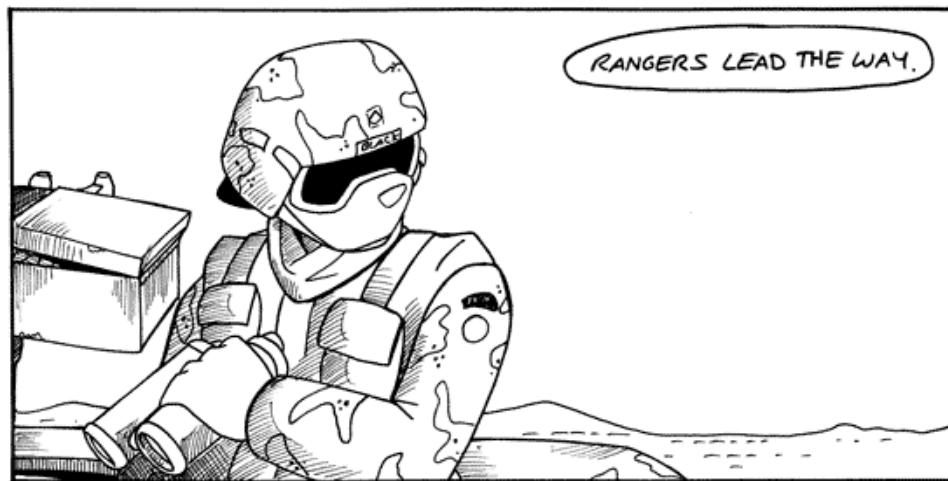
MOUNT UP! WE HAVE A MIDNIGHT DEADLINE, AFTER WHICH WE COULD BE AT WAR!

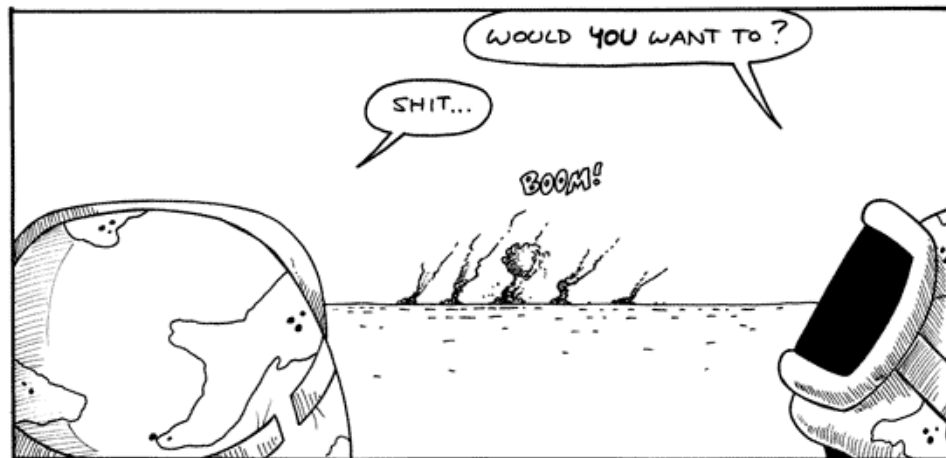
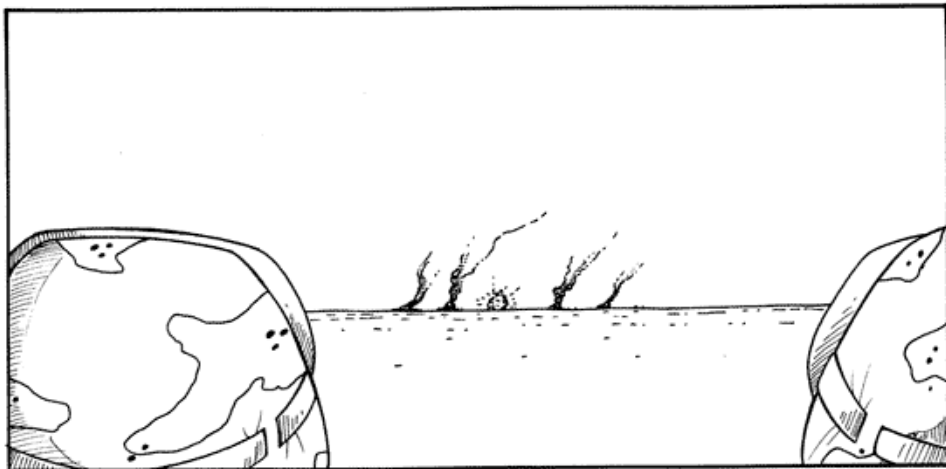


OUR NEXT STOP IS THE IRAQ BORDER. YOU ARE THE EYES OF THE ARMY. ANYTHING YOU SEE YOU REPORT. YOU WILL VERIFY AIR INTELLIGENCE AT A MOMENTS NOTICE...



RANGERS LEAD THE WAY.





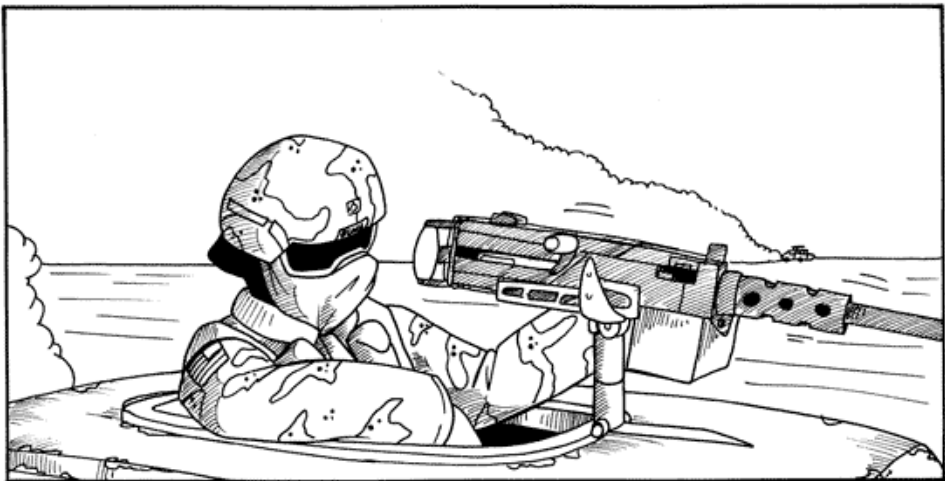
TORES! WAKE UP BLACK AND
GET HIM ON THAT FIFTY.

GET UP, KILLER!



WE'RE GOING AHEAD OF 4th I.D. BUT
THERE'S A DOWN MEDIVAC AND WE'RE
BEING DIVERTED.

GET ON THE
FIFTY.



...GUARD THE CRASH
SITE UNTIL THE MAIN
COLUMN REACHES
YOU...

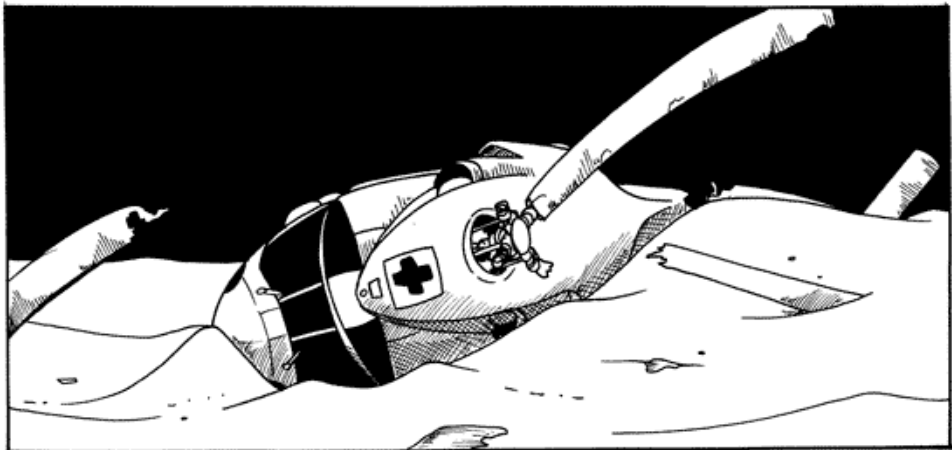
AIR ELEMENTS ARE
IN THE AREA. OVER.

ROGER.

THERE ARE TO
BE NO TROPHIES
IN BAGHDAD,
CAPTAIN.

YES, SIR.





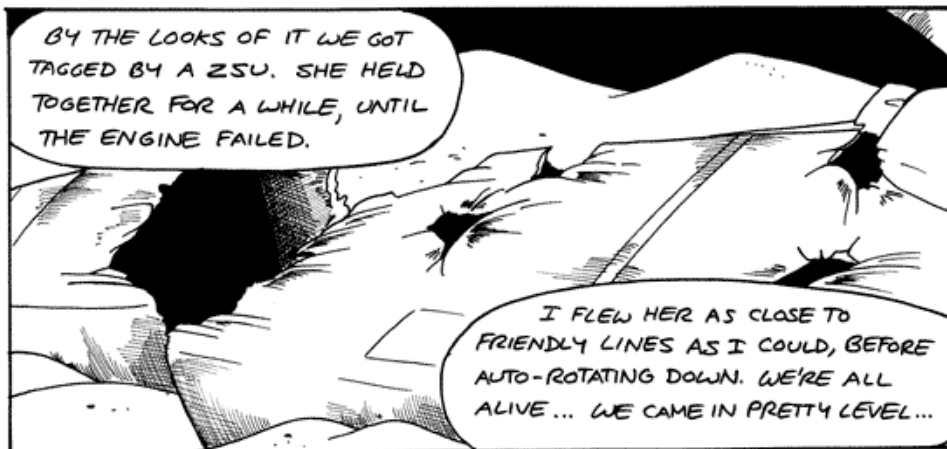
WHAT HAPPENED, CAPTAIN?



WE WERE ON ROUTE TO A GROUP SNEAKIN' AROUND NORTH OF HERE WHEN WE FLEW OVER A REPUBLICAN GUARD UNIT NO ONE TOLD US ABOUT...

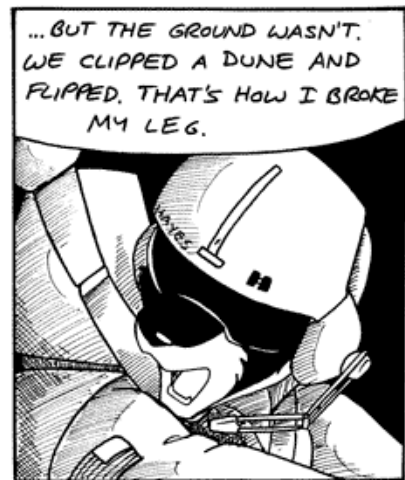


BY THE LOOKS OF IT WE GOT TAGGED BY A ZSU. SHE HELD TOGETHER FOR A WHILE, UNTIL THE ENGINE FAILED.



I FLEW HER AS CLOSE TO FRIENDLY LINES AS I COULD, BEFORE AUTO-ROTATING DOWN. WE'RE ALL ALIVE ... WE CAME IN PRETTY LEVEL...

... BUT THE GROUND WASN'T. WE CLIPPED A DUNE AND FLIPPED. THAT'S HOW I BROKE MY LEG.

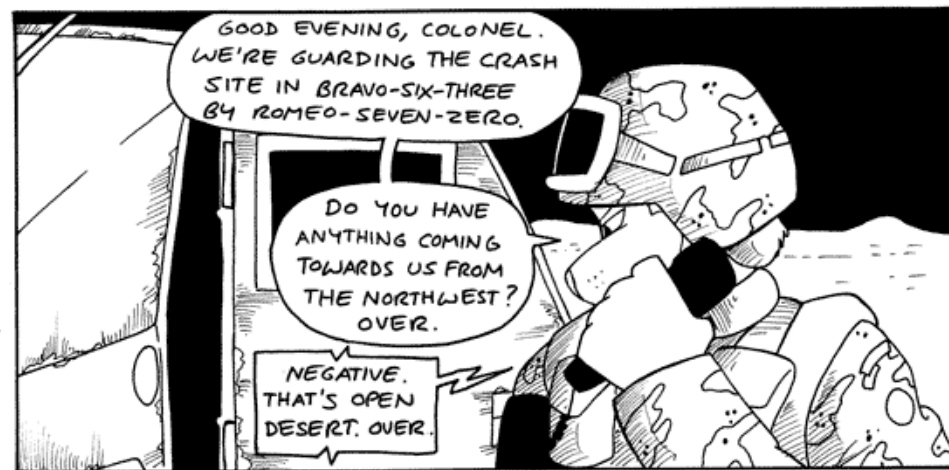
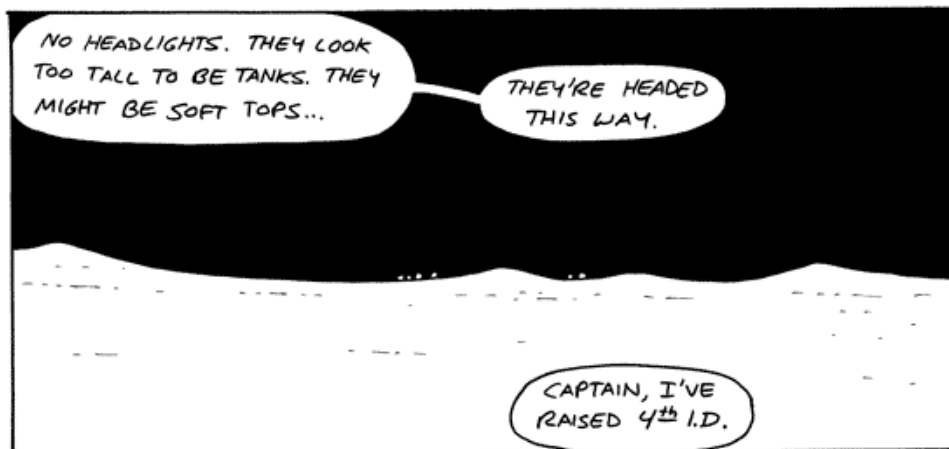


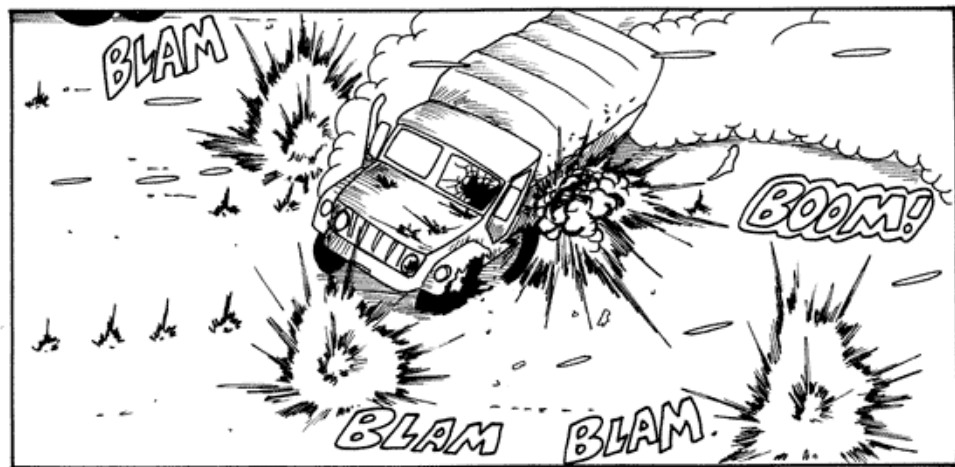
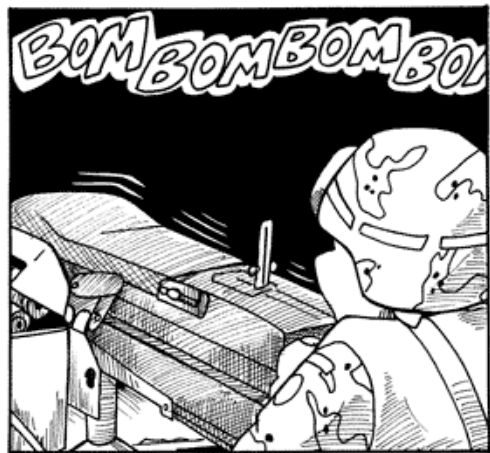
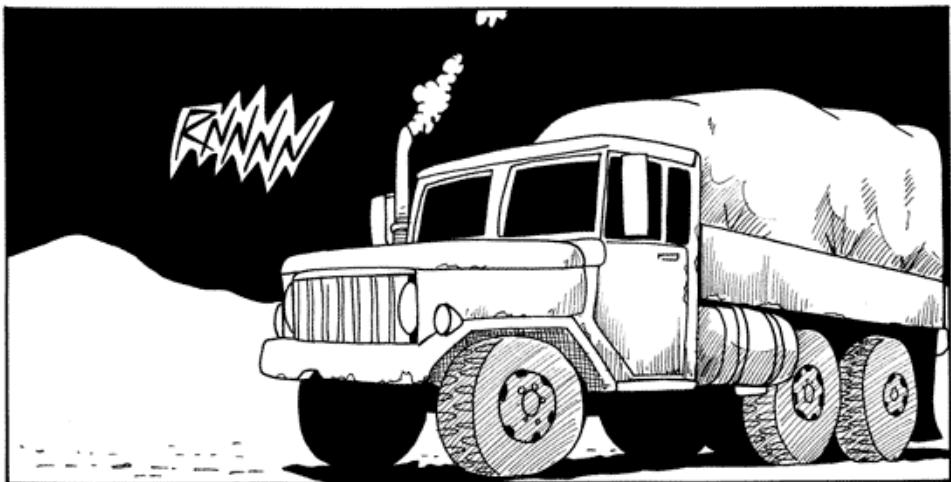
THERE'S A GUARD UNIT NEARBY?

MAYBE FIFTEEN KILKS NORTHEAST...

ABOUT A BATTALION IN SIZE...







BAMBAMBAMBAM! BAMB

TATATAT

TATATAT



BOOM!



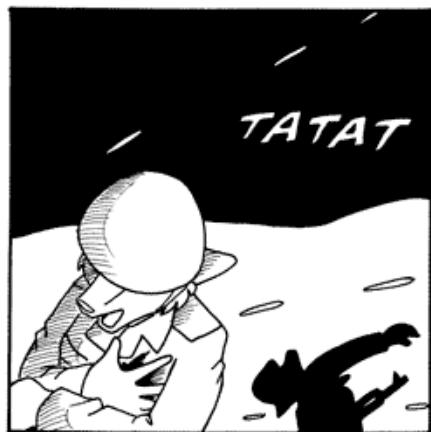
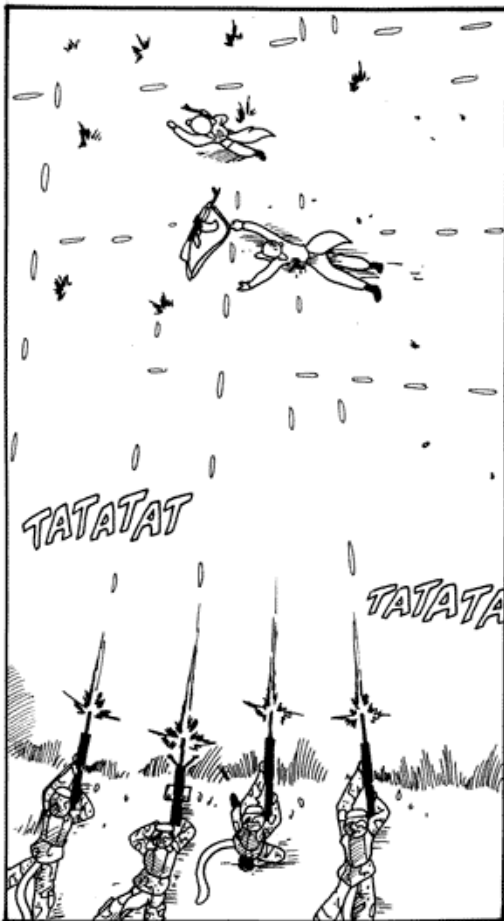
BAMBAMBAM



SWAP!

THUP!





GYM

HAVE YOU HEARD FROM FISK, LATELY?

I HEARD FROM HIM BEFORE THE GROUND WAR STARTED. HE SAID THEY WERE ALL PUMPED UP AND READY.

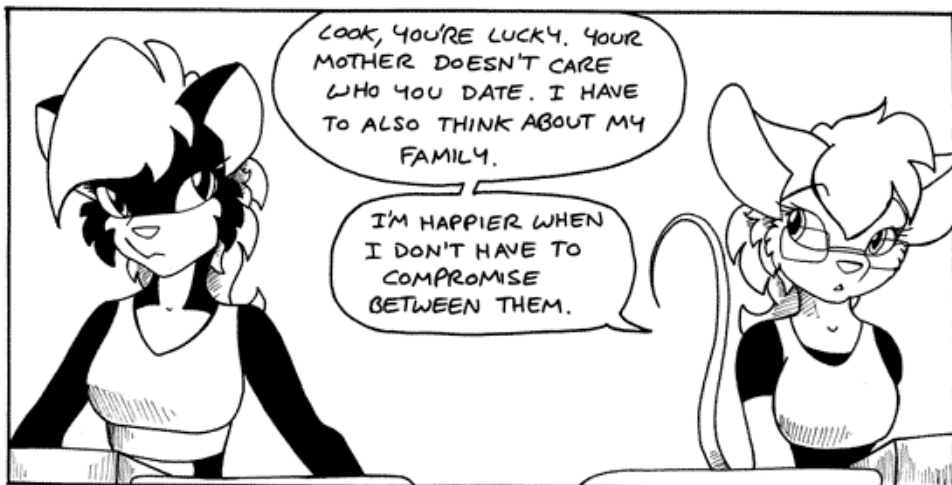
WELL, HOPEFULLY HE COMES HOME OKAY.

BETH WOULD BE HAPPY FOR THAT.

OHOOH, IS IT BETH NOW?

WAIT WHAT? WHAT WAS THAT? WAS THAT... JEALOUSY?

NO!





I'M GLAD THINGS SEEM TO BE GOING WELL OVER THERE.

YEAH. THE IRAQI ARMY IS FOLDING LIKE A HOUSE OF CARDS.



WHAT DO YOU THINK HE'S GOING TO DO WHEN HE LEAVES THE ARMY?

YOU KNOW... I HAVE NO IDEA. I CAN'T THINK OF ANYTHING HE'S SHOWN INTEREST IN...



MOM'S GETTING MARRIED WHEN HE GETS BACK. SAM WAS MENTIONING OPENINGS IN HIS COMPANY.

SOUNDS PROMISING!

I DON'T THINK I COULD WORK FOR FAMILY, THOUGH.

SHIT SHIT SHIT...

WHAT DO YA GOT THERE?

THERE'S A BMP
NOSING AROUND OUT
THERE.

PART OF A COLUMN?

YEAH. HE'S JUST
SITTIN' THERE...

THINK THEY KNOW
ABOUT THE CRASH?

MOTHERFUCKER.

THAT'S A T-72 BEHIND IT!

I KNOW WHAT THE
FUCK IT IS, TORES!
GET YOUR ASS ON
THAT RADIO!

THERE'S NOTHING ON
THE RADIO! WE'RE
BEING JAMMED!

THEY KNOW
ABOUT THE
CRASH SITE!



HIT THE GAS,
WILCOTT!



KEEP ON THAT
RADIO, TORES!



GET TO THE CRASH
SITE, NOW! WE'VE
GOT TO TELL THE
OTHERS!



STAY ON THE
RADIO, TORES! IF
WE DON'T GET AIR
SUPPORT, WE'RE
FUCKED.



RISE AND SHINE!
SHIT'S ABOUT TO HIT
THE FAN!



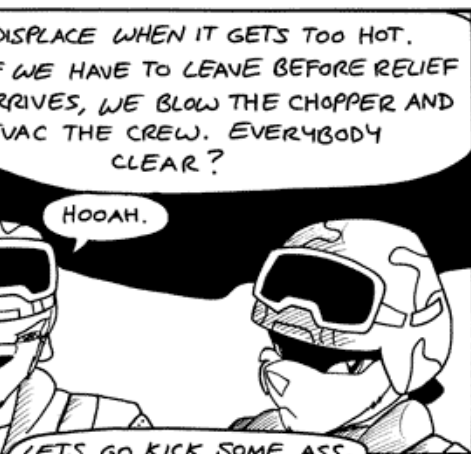
MORTAR TEAMS, HIT THEM AND
KEEP THEIR TANKS BUTTONED UP.



HIT THEM ON MY SIGNAL. WE'LL
GIVE THEM SO MUCH THEY'LL
THINK THEY'VE RUN INTO A
WHOLE FUCKING DIVISION.



GRENADES AND LAWS FOR
THE BMPs. HEAVY GUNS
FOR INFANTRY, AND BE
SURE TO RUN INTER-
FERENCE FOR THE TOW
LAUNCHERS.

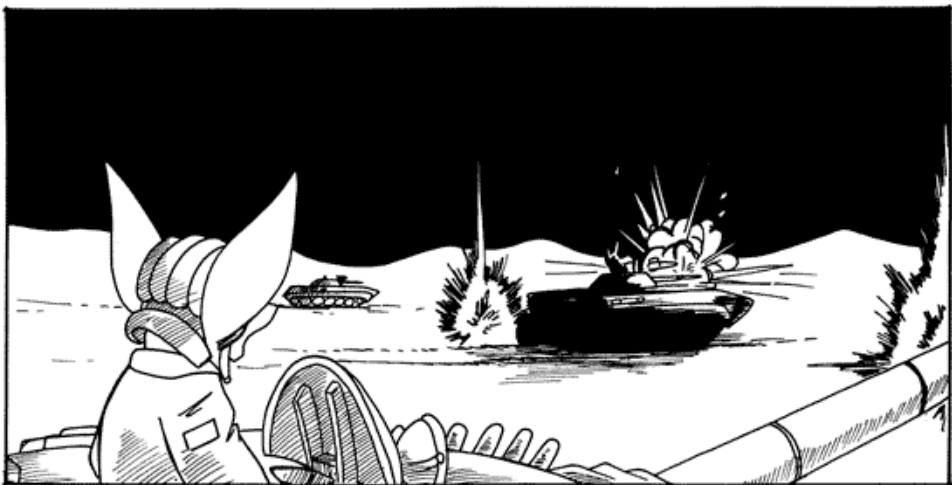
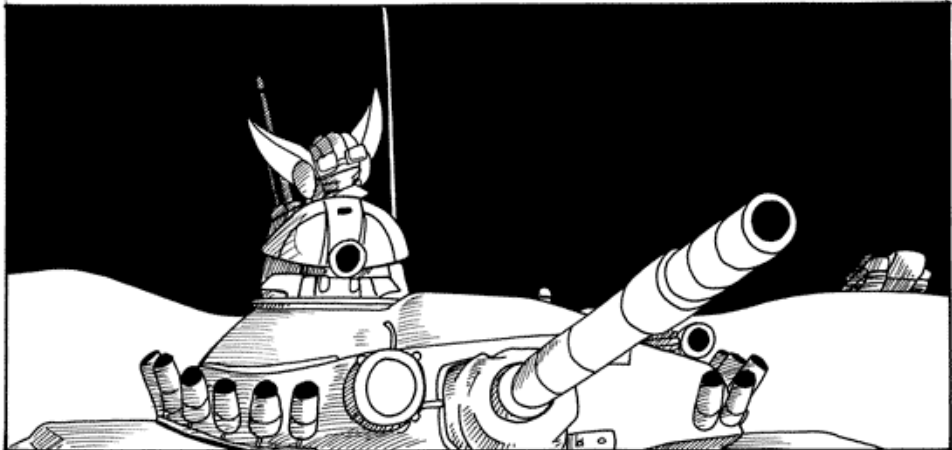


DISPLACE WHEN IT GETS TOO HOT.
IF WE HAVE TO LEAVE BEFORE RELIEF
ARRIVES, WE BLOW THE CHOPPER AND
EVAC THE CREW. EVERYBODY
CLEAR?

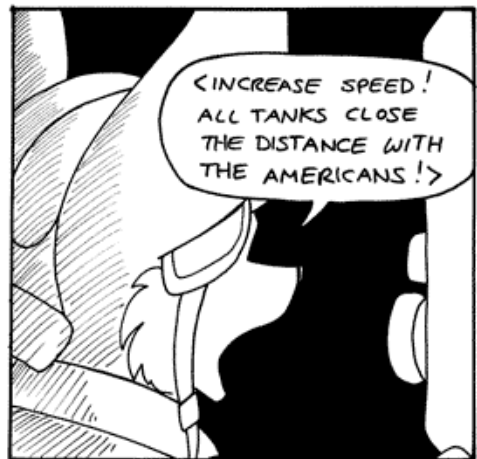
HOOAH,
SIR.

HOOAH.

LETS GO KICK SOME ASS.



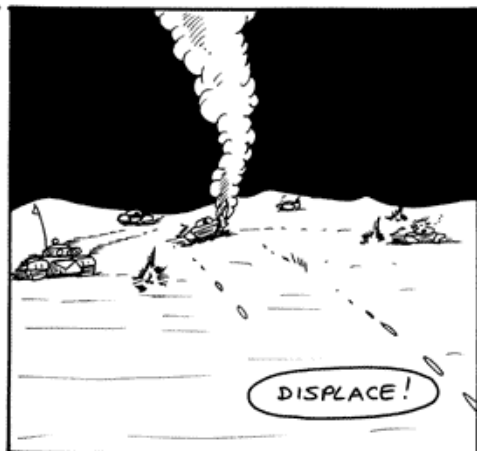
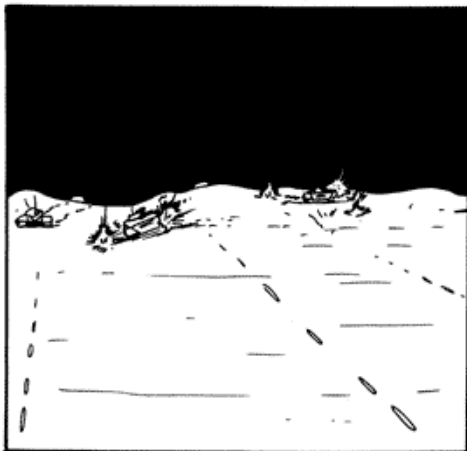
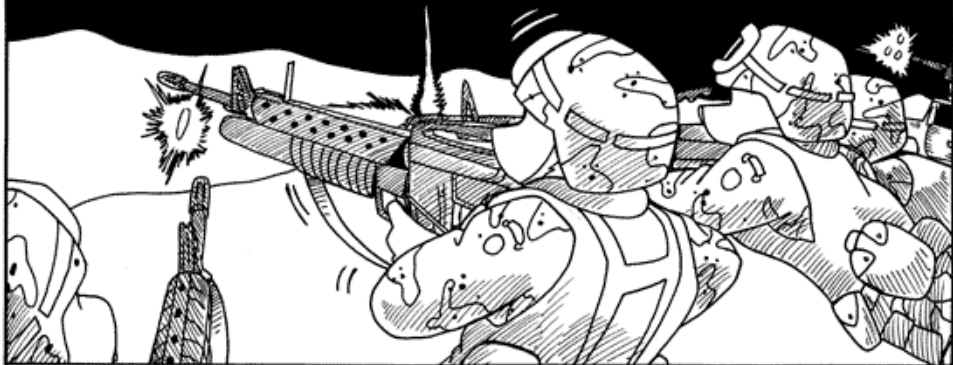
<MORTAR
FIRE!>



<INCREASE SPEED!
ALL TANKS CLOSE
THE DISTANCE WITH
THE AMERICANS!>

THEY'RE SPEEDIN' UP!

OPEN FIRE!

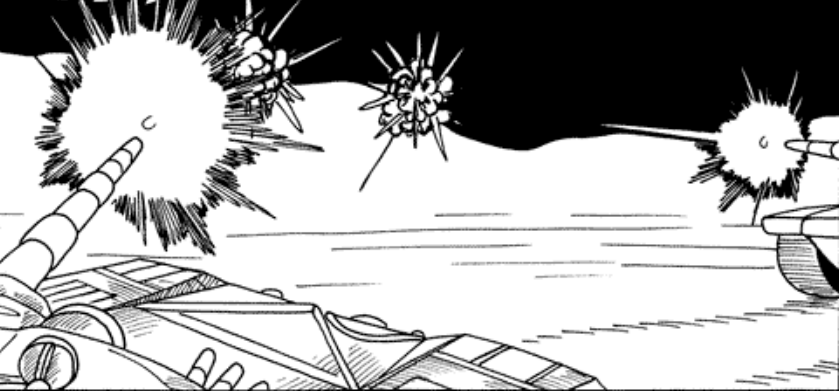


<ON THE RIDGELINE!
QUICKLY!>

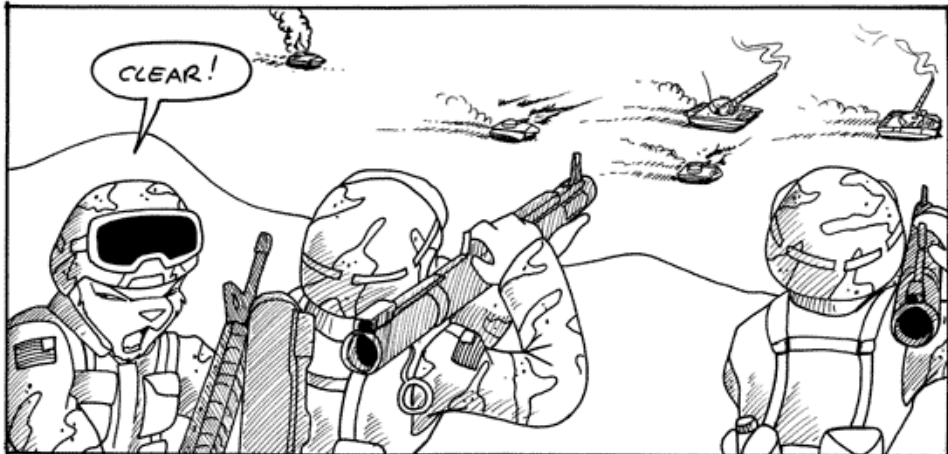
<FRAG
LOADED!>

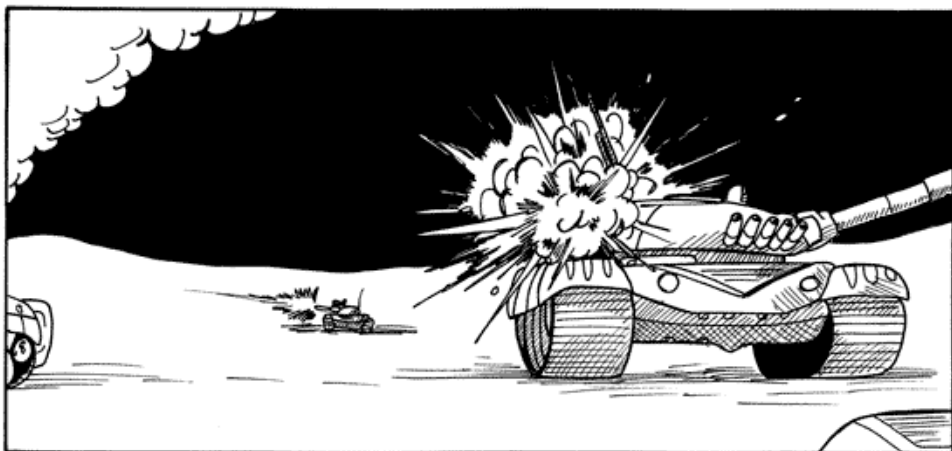
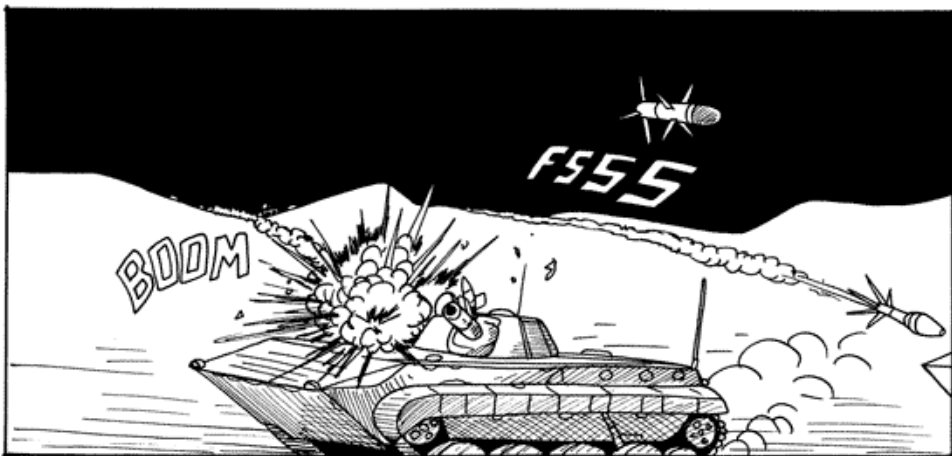
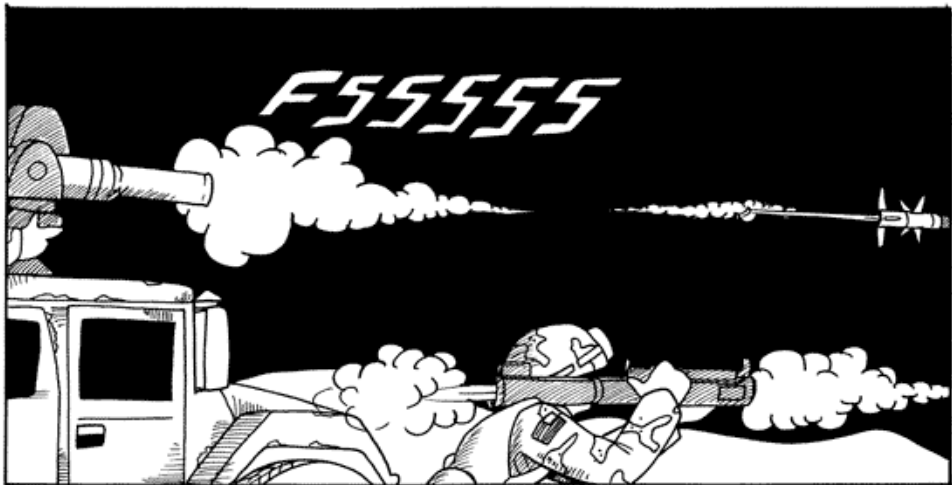
<FIRE!>

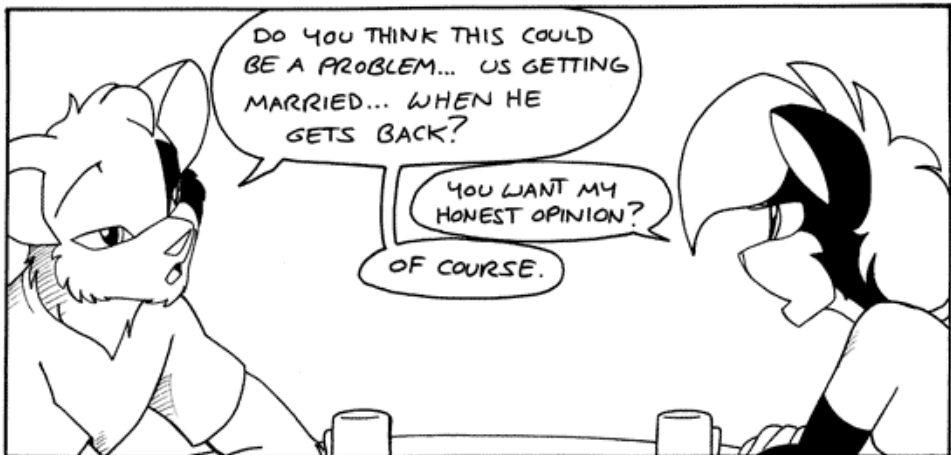
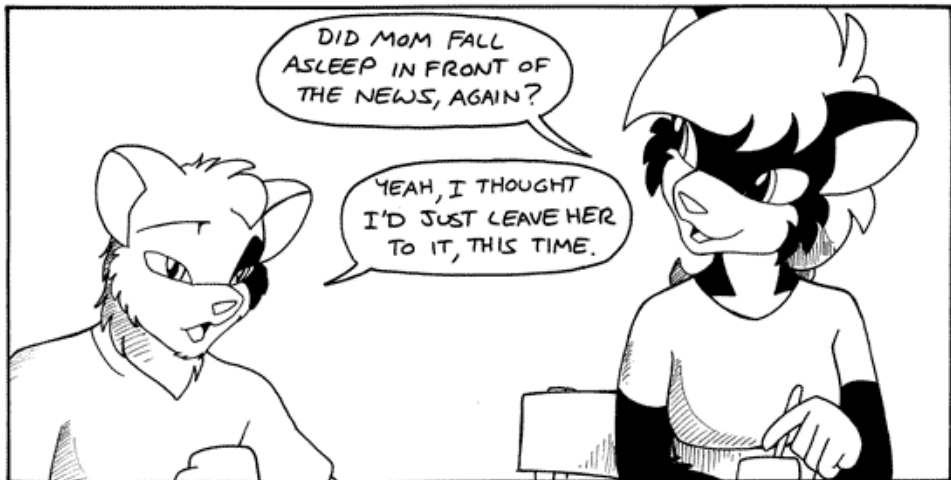
BOOM




CLEAR!











PEOPLE CHANGE. FISK WAS YOUNGER AND LESS WISE AT THAT AGE. I REALLY DON'T THINK HE'D STAND IN THE WAY OF HIS MOTHER'S HAPPINESS.

BESIDES, HE'S AN ADULT, NOW. HE HAS HIS OWN LIFE AND HE DOESN'T RUN HIS DECISIONS BY OTHERS.



YOU KNOW HOW IT IS WHEN YOU MAKE DECISIONS WITH A CONSIDERATION FOR EVERYONE OTHER THAN YOURSELF. EVERYONE THINKS YOU'RE SINCERE AND THEY'RE LIED TO... AND YOU'RE MISERABLE... NOBODY WINS.

YOU KNEW YOU WEREN'T OBLIGATED TO YOUR WIFE'S IDEA OF MARRIAGE WHEN YOU LEFT HER. YOU'RE NOT OBLIGATED TO ME OR MY BROTHER, NOW.



DID YOUR MOTHER TEACH YOU THAT?

NO... MY BOYFRIEND.

HE'S HAD TO MAKE SOME TOUGH CALLS HIS FAMILY WASN'T TOO HAPPY WITH.

YOUR MOTHER TELLS ME
YOU'RE CONFIDENT HE'LL BE
FINE.

THE WAY THINGS
ARE GOING OVER
THERE, NOW?


OH YEAH.

HE'LL BE FINE.

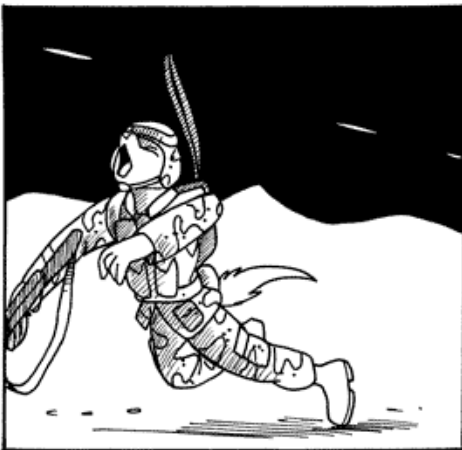
GNN

BOOM!

CRASH




GET OUT OF
THERE! GET TO
THE CRASH SITE!





IT'S GONE THROUGH
THE RADIO...

LOAD HIM
UP! WE'RE
GETTING OUT
OF HERE!

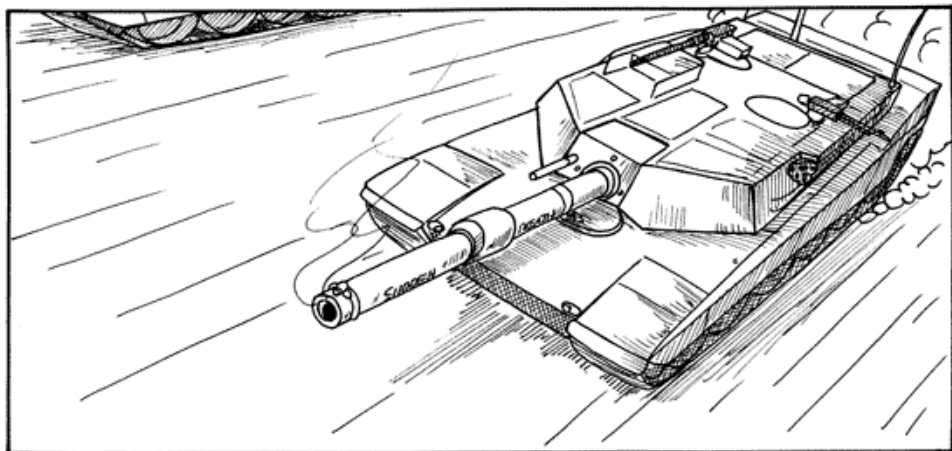
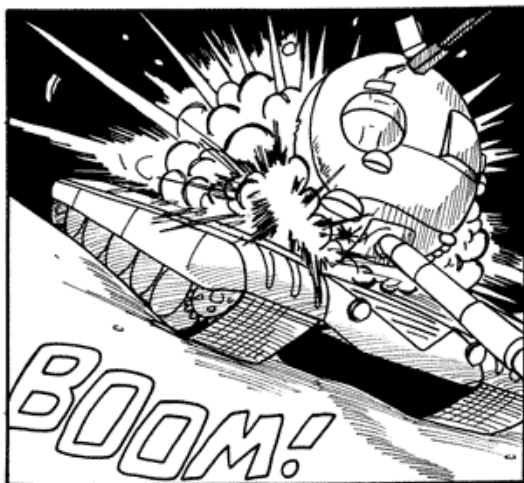
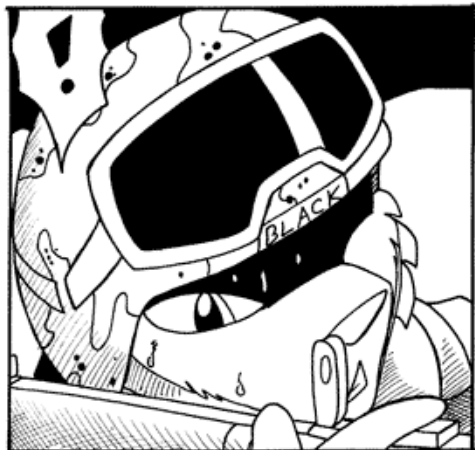
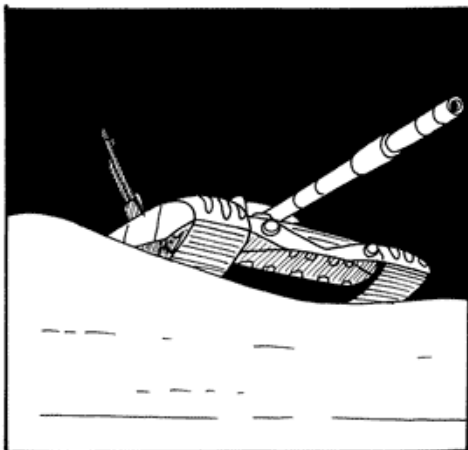


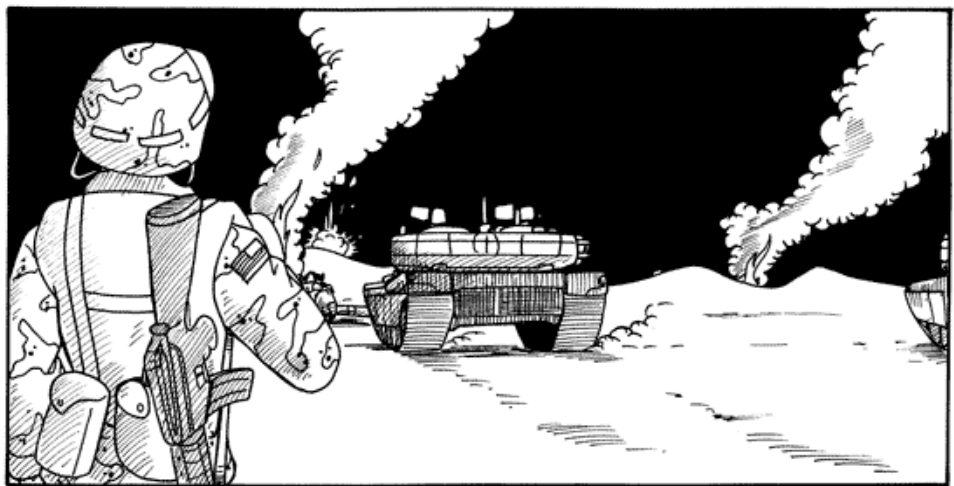
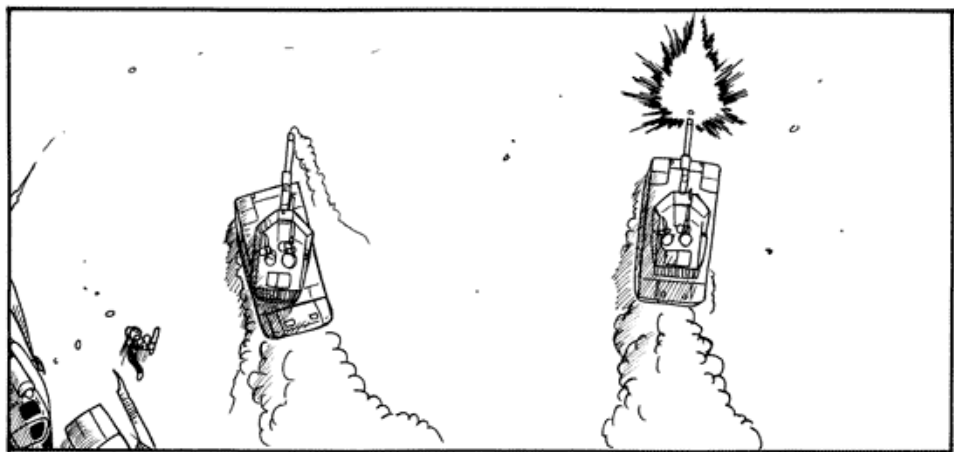
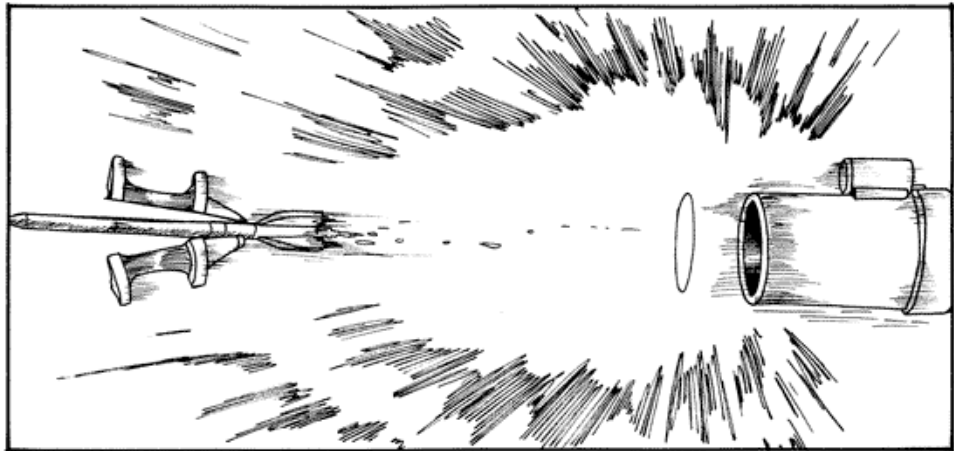
THEY'RE ABOUT TO CLEAR
THE LAST RIDGE! GET
READY TO BLOW THE
CHOPPER!




TAKE THE
LAST LAW,
BLACK!


MAKE IT COUNT
AND TAKE THE
LAST HUM-VEE
OUT OF HERE!








DEAR LUCY,
WE'LL BE COMING HOME SOON.
THE WAR IS OVER AND WE'RE
VERY HAPPY. WE ONLY HAVE
A FEW MORE WEEKS TO HELP
STRAIGHTEN THINGS OUT, BUT
IT ISN'T PARTICULARLY
DANGEROUS WORK, NOT
LIKE FIGHTING A BATTLE.



BATTLE IS A STRANGE EXPERIENCE.
WE PLAN BY INTELLECT, FIGHT ON
TRAINING AND INSTINCT, AND ONLY
AFTERWARDS FEEL UNNERVED
BY REALIZING OUR SURVIVAL IS
OFTEN ONLY GRANTED BY CHANCE.
I HAVEN'T INCLUDED THESE THOUGHTS
IN MY LETTER TO MOM.
SHE WOULD ONLY
WORRY USELESSLY.



I DON'T KNOW WHAT I WANT TO
DO WHEN MY SERVICE IS UP, AND
I'M HOPING BEING AT HOME AND
AROUND MY OLD FRIENDS WILL
HELP ME. I MISS YOU AND MOM
VERY MUCH, AND I CAN'T WAIT
TO SEE YOU.

LOVE,
FISK

END





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!

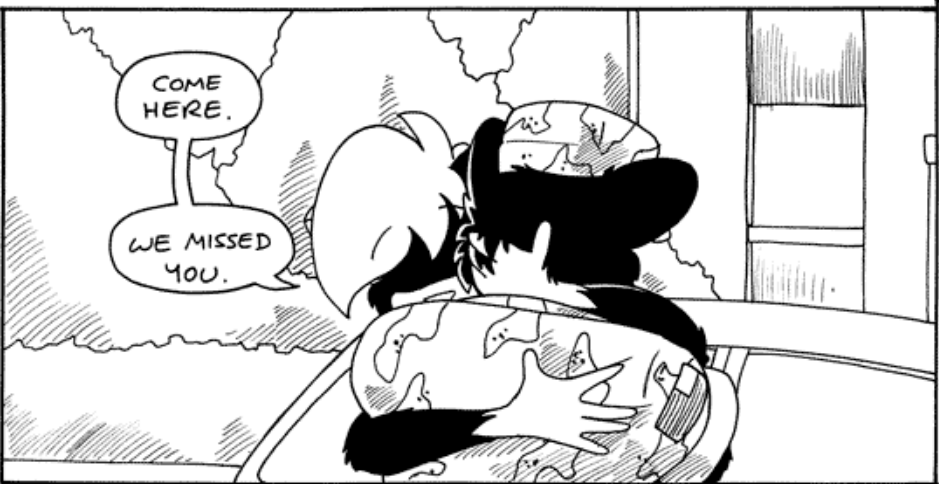



UNLESS YOU WANT
TO WALK ALL THE WAY
HOME FROM HERE!



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!



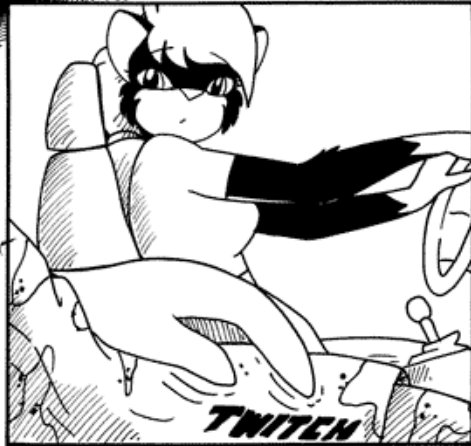
SAM AND MOM ARE THERE,
OF COURSE. THEY'RE HOPING
TO GET MARRIED NOW THAT
YOU'RE HOME FOR A WHILE.

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







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

I'M JUST GLAD TO BE HOME.



WELCOME HOME.

THANK YOU.




HEY!

HEY!



MMM!

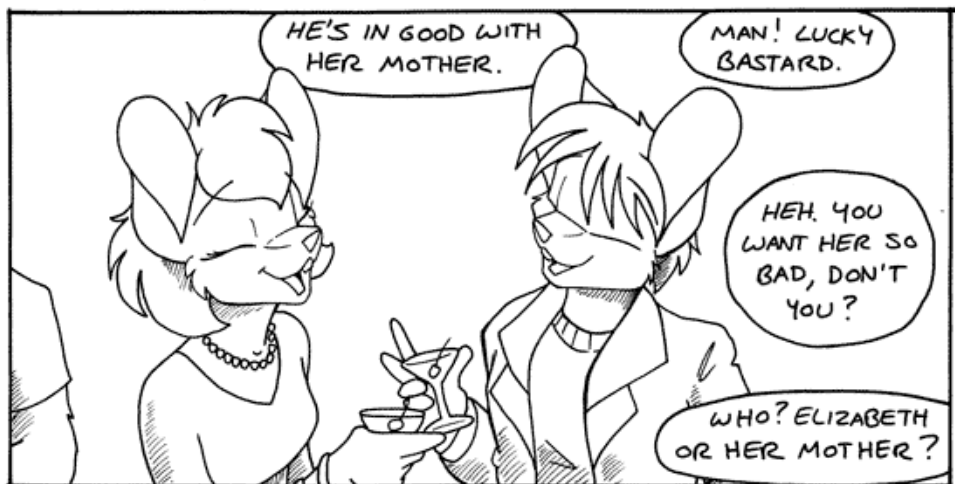
YEEEEK!

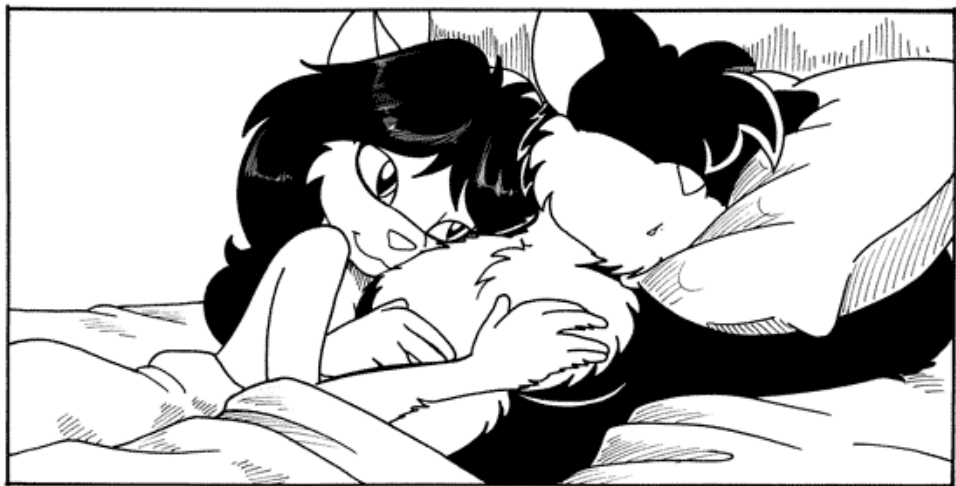
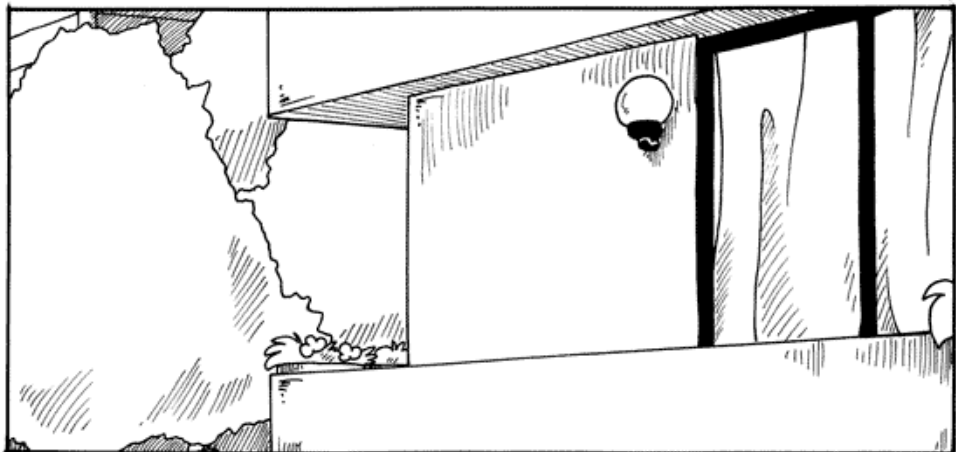


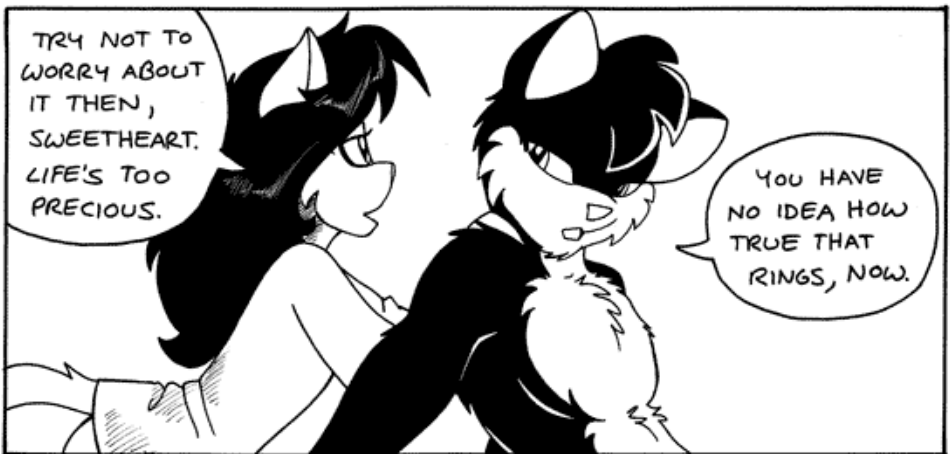
GOODNESS. HOW LONG IS THAT HUG GONNA LAST?

WHAT? WHAT WAS THAT?...











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.

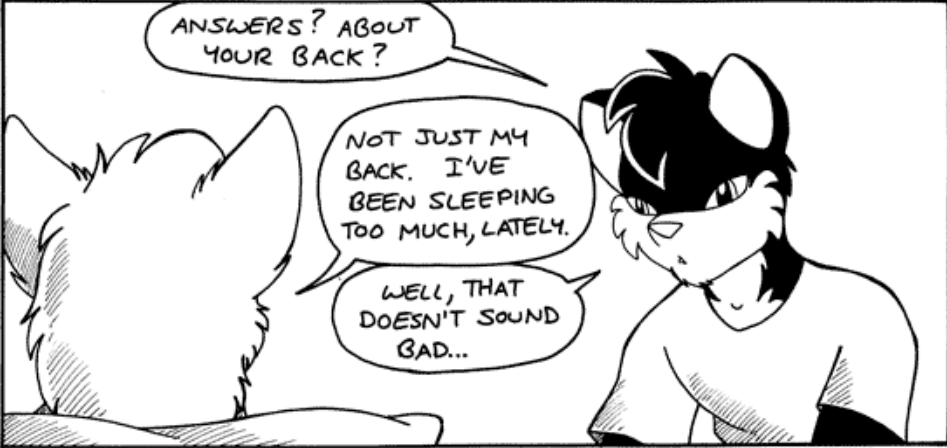


SO, HOW ARE THINGS
WITH THE V.A.?



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?

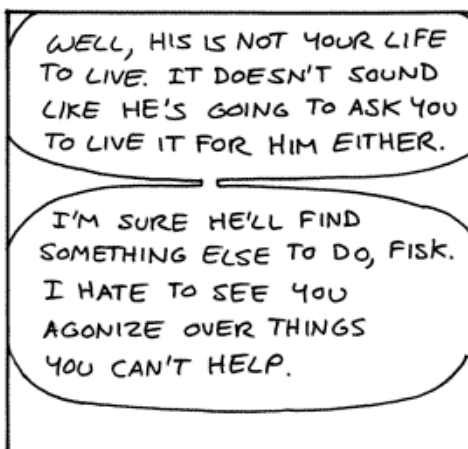
HE'S NOT GOOD.

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!

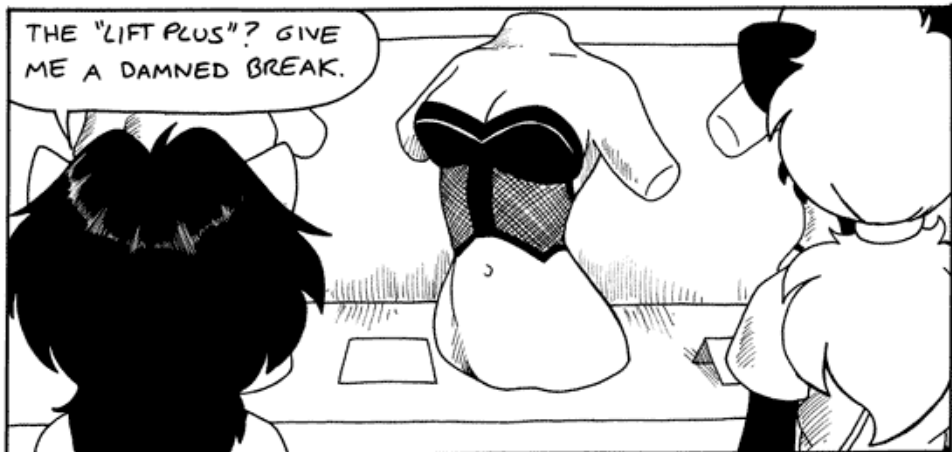



... WHICH MEANS YOU GET CHECKED OUT BY GIRLS.

SHIT. LET ME BORROW YOUR PURSE.

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



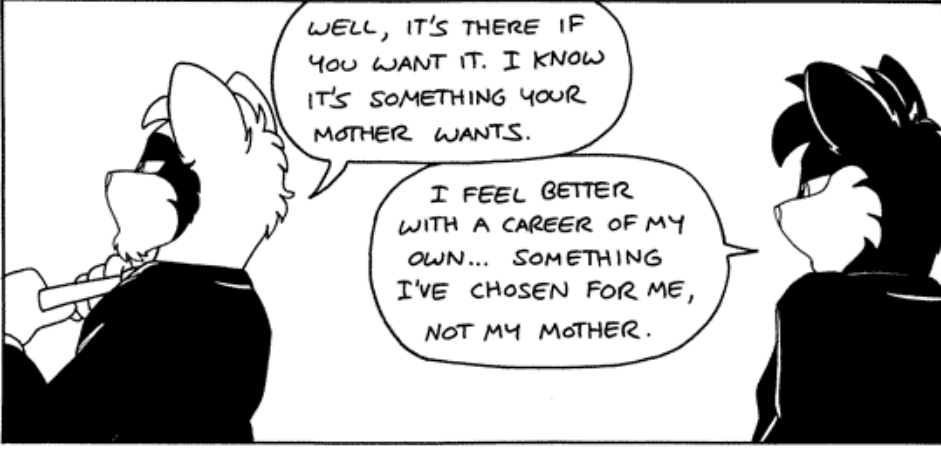




YOU HAVE A JOB AT MY COMPANY
IF YOU WANT IT, FISK.

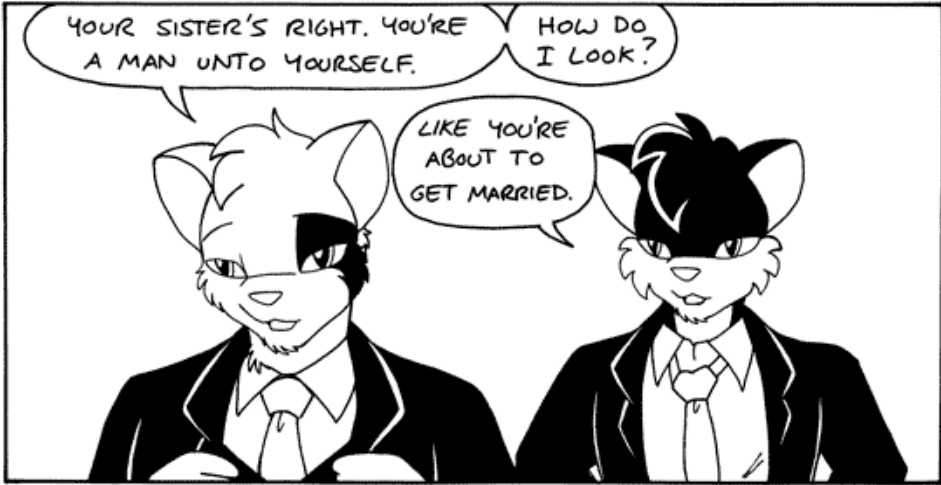
SINCE YOUR
ARMY TERM IS
COMING UP.

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?



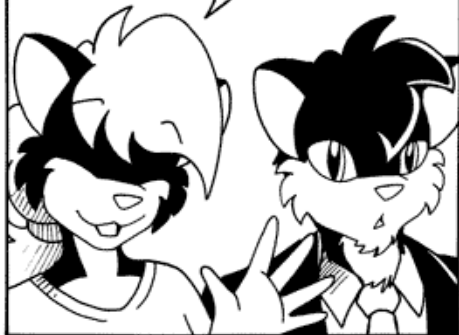
MM?

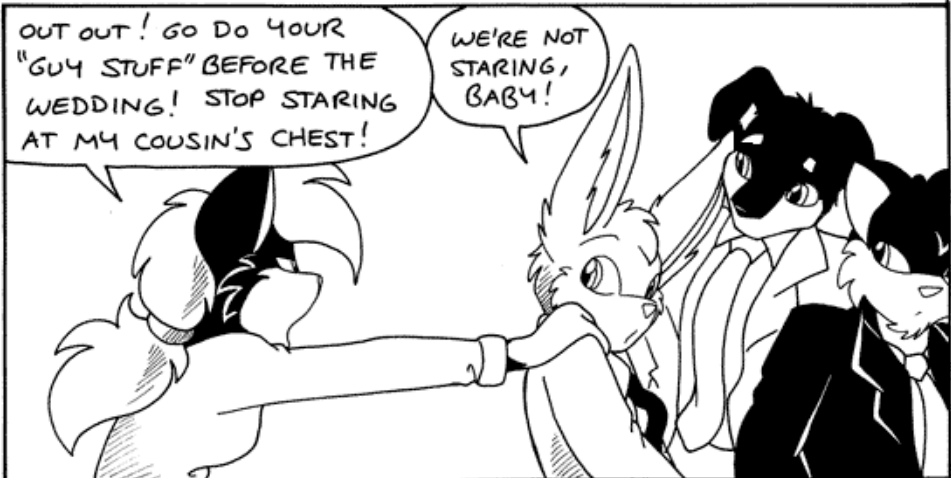


HI, GUYS!




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.

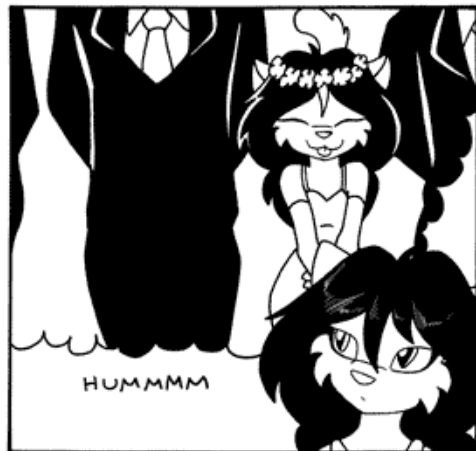
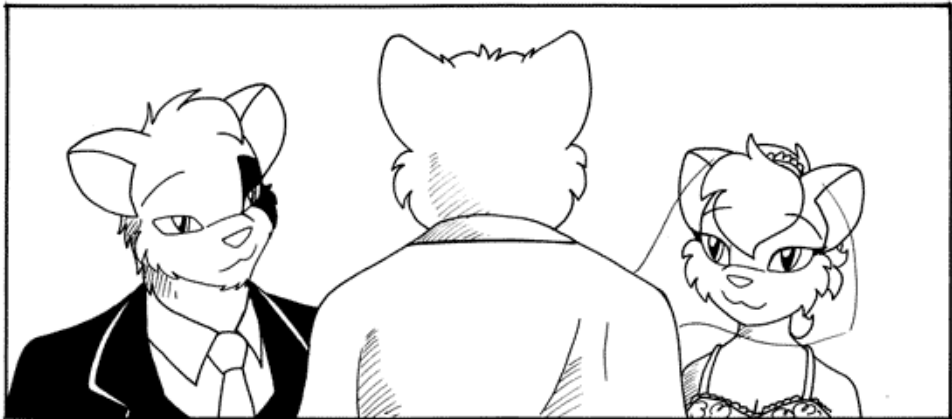
EVERYONE WANTS TO USE YOU. CHILD BEAUTY
PAGEANTS AREN'T FOR KIDS. THEY'RE FOR
MOTHERS. I'VE SEEN GIRLS BREAK DOWN
AND WET THEMSELVES WHILE THEIR MOTHERS
SCOLD THEM FROM OFF-STAGE.




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.

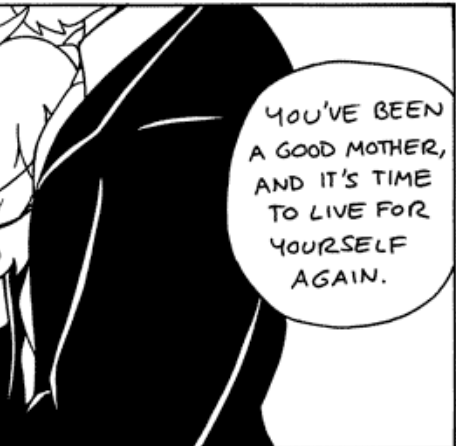


THIS ISN'T ABOUT ME ACCEPTING SAM.
YOU'RE CHOOSING HIM FOR **YOUR**
LIFE AND **YOUR** HAPPINESS.
HE'S NOT MINE TO ACCEPT.

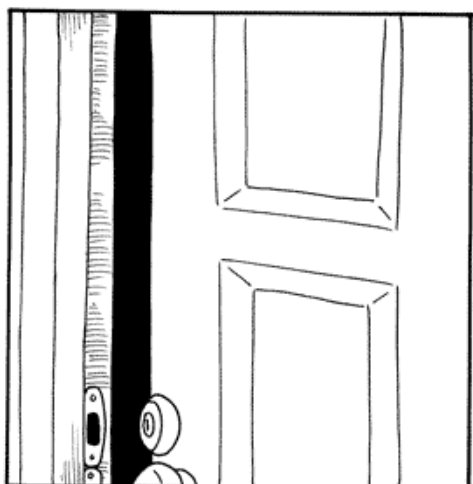
I THINK HE'S A GOOD MAN,
BUT I'M A GROWN PERSON. HE'LL
NEVER BE ABLE TO BE MY
FATHER. THOSE YEARS
ARE GONE.




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!





HOW LONG HAS SHE BEEN LIKE THAT?

PANT

PANT

SINCE SHE CAME HOME FROM DINNER.



IS SHE HAVING A SEIZURE?

PANT

PANT

IT'S NOT A SEIZURE. SHE'S JUST A DOG.



A **HAPPY** DOG.

PANT

PANT

SHE'S CATATONIC WITH IT.



PANT

PANT



PANT

PANT

HOW LONG DOES THIS LAST?

UNTIL SHE FALLS ASLEEP AND HER HEAD HITS THE TABLE.



HE DID IT!
HE PROPOSED!

HE PROPOOOOSED!

BOUNCE

BOUNCE

BOUNCE

OH WOW.
ROBERT FINALLY
DID IT.

THIS IS NICE. I'VE YET TO PLAN
MY FIRST BACHELORETTE PARTY.

A PARTY!?! WITH CAKE!?!

OH, THERE'LL BE A
LOT OF CAKE

OH GOD...



HEY, BETH. WHY DO YOU PAINT?

WHAT KIND OF QUESTION IS THAT?

YOUR PARENTS ARE RICH. YOU LIVE ON A TRUST FUND. YOU DON'T **HAVE** TO DO ANYTHING.



MY FATHER GAVE MY SISTER AND I MONEY ON THE CONDITION WE FOUND SOMETHING WE LOVED TO DO.



WHEN PEOPLE ASK WHAT YOU WOULD DO ALL DAY IF YOU WON THE LOTTERY, AND THEN TELL YOU TO TURN THAT INTO A CAREER? I LIVE THAT NOW.



IT'S TOO BAD FOR MOST THAT GETTING HIGH AND PLAYING VIDEO GAMES ISN'T A BUSINESS PLAN.

THEY'D ALL GET RICH IN COLLEGE.



LUCY BLACK!

LUCY BLACK!!

LUCY BLACK!

BOB LOWELL GOT INTO AN ACCIDENT ON THE WAY HERE! THERE'S NO ONE TO DO "LOWELL'S LOVEAVES"!



SO? JUST RUN A "BEST OF"!

THE CARTS ARE FLOODED FROM THIS EVENING'S STORM! WE HAVE NO TAPE, NO BACKUP!

UNLESS...



WOW. IT'S THE PERFECT STORM.



YOU'RE COMING WITH ME, NEWS-GIRL!



I'M NOT A BROADCAST ENTERTAINER! I JUST READ THE NEWS!

YOU'RE THE ONLY VOICE HERE, THIS LATE.

I'LL DO THE PHONES, YOU JUST... TALK ABOUT LOVE, OR SOMETHING.

BUT I'M NOT QUALIFIED!

THIS IS RADIO. NO ONE'S QUALIFIED.

PEOPLE CALL FOR HELP! I'M NOT A THERAPIST!

DOES DOCTOR LAURA SOUND LIKE A REAL DOCTOR TO YOU?

OH. GOOD POINT.

YOU'RE NOT LUCY
BLACK WITH THE NEWS.
YOU'RE "LUCY LOVE".

YOU'RE A RELATIONSHIP
COUNSELOR WITH A NICE
SULTRY LADY-VOICE.

THE BUMP IS PLAYING
RIGHT NOW, AND WE'LL
COUNT YOU DOWN TO
WHEN YOU SHOULD
START TALKING.

THREE... TWO... ONE...

UUP

GOOD EVENING AND WELCOME
TO LOWELL'S LOVEWAVES. I'M
LUCY LOVE, FILLING IN FOR
MR. LOWELL...

WE'RE HERE TO ANSWER ALL OF
YOUR RELATIONSHIP QUESTIONS...

HEY. IS THAT
YOUR GIRLFRIEND?



LET'S GO TO BILL IN NORCROSS. I HEAR YOU'RE HAVING TROUBLE UNDERSTANDING WOMEN?

WELL, I'M LOSING FAITH IN WOMEN NOT BEING SELFISH AND SHALLOW...
WHY'S THAT, BILL?

I'M A NICE GUY, I THINK. BUT WOMEN AREN'T INTERESTED IN WHAT'S INSIDE. THEY DWELL ON HOW I DON'T HAVE A JOB OR MUCH MONEY...



THEY SAY I DON'T EXERCISE AND I'M OVERWEIGHT. THEY LAUGH AT THE CARTOON CHARACTER T-SHIRTS I WEAR. BUT, I SHOULDN'T HAVE TO CHANGE ANY OF THAT, BECAUSE I WANT A WOMAN TO LOVE ME FOR "WHO I AM."



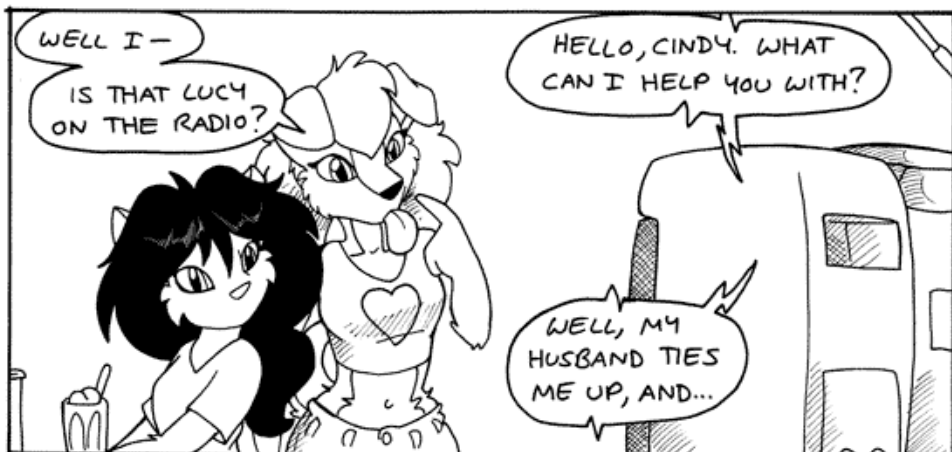
WELL, THAT BEGS THE QUESTION, BILL: "WHO ARE YOU?"



SIP



UM... A BROKE, UNEMPLOYED MAN WHO DRESSES LIKE A CHILD AND DOESN'T TAKE CARE OF HIS BODY?



BETTY IN NORTH ATLANTA... YOU HAVE A... AH... UNIQUE PROBLEM?

YES LUCY...
UM...

... I CAN'T ACHIEVE ORGASM
UNLESS I'M HAVING ANAL SEX...

OH...

WELL... IS THAT A... PROBLEM?

... IN A VAN, WITH MY
FACE PUSHED AGAINST
THE WINDSHIELD...

... WITH YOUR BROTHER HOLDING
MY HAIR...

WAIT... **BETH!?**

BABA-BOOEY.

HA HA

YOU JUST WAIT UNTIL I GET HOME,
YOU LITTLE BRAT!!

HA HA HA H







THAT WAS BETH. SHE WANTS US TO PLAN ROBERT'S BACHELOR PARTY. WEIRD.

THAT IS WEIRD.



ROBERT'S A JOCK. HOW DO WE PARTY WITH A JOCK? KEGS OF BEER AND FOOTBALL ON TV?

MY BROTHER PARTIES WITH STRIPPERS.



OOO - I DON'T KNOW HOW LUCY WOULD FEEL ABOUT ME GOING TO A PARTY WITH STRIPPERS.



MOLLY, YOU CAN'T GET TOO UPSET. MEN WILL WANT TO LOOK AT OTHER WOMEN. IT'S HOW THEY ARE MADE. AS LONG AS HE IS NOT DECEIVING YOU AND HAVING AFFAIRS, ALLOW HIM HIS OCCASIONAL GLANCE.



MISS RADIO STAR!
WELCOME HOME!

UGH.
I'VE LOST
FAITH IN
MANKIND.



THEY WANT ME TO FILL IN FOR THE NEXT MONTH. IT'S GOING TO CUT INTO MY REPORTING INTERNSHIP. I DON'T THINK

I WANT TO MAKE A CAREER OUT OF GIVING RELATIONSHIP ADVICE TO TOOTHLESS HILLBILLIES AND CODEPENDENT MORONS.



YOU'D RATHER REPORT ABOUT THEM AFTER THEY SNAP?

YES.

I GUESS IT'S A MATTER OF "DISTANCE".

BING BONG

≡GASP!≡
ROBERT'S
HERE!

WHAT?

ROBERT'S HERE?


FOR THE NIGHT?

KNOK MOAN WHUFF
KNOK PANT PANT PANT
KNOK
KNOK
KNOK
KNOK
KNOK



YOU CAN SPEND
THE NIGHT AT MY PLACE
IF YOU WANT.

THANK
YOU.



WELL SURE. YOU CAN HAVE A PARTY WITH YOUR FRIENDS. I'LL PROBABLY HANG OUT WITH FISK OR SOMETHING.

FISK JUST DEPLOYED TO SOMALIA. I DON'T KNOW IF HE'LL BE BACK BY THEN.


YOU SHOULD BECOME FRIENDS WITH LUCY'S BOYFRIEND.

THE LITTLE GUY?
WHAT'S HE INTO?
WHAT SCHOOL DOES HE GO TO?

OH! HE'S AN ENGINEERING MAJOR AT GEORGIA TECH...

WHERE?

... GEORGIA TECH...



HOW DO GEORGIA TECH
GUYS HAVE FUN?

YOU MET TOMMY AT LUCY'S
MOM'S WEDDING! THEY'RE
JUST LIKE OTHER GUYS!

MAYBE WE CAN TYPE THINGS
INTO OUR CALCULATORS THAT
SPELL DIRTY WORDS WHEN
TURNED UPSIDE DOWN.

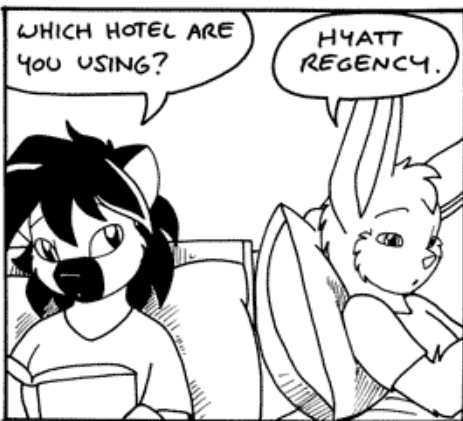
AWW, YOU'LL HAVE FUN! NOW
C'MON... LET'S HAVE SOME
MORE FUN...

WHAT ABOUT
KEEPING LUCY
AWAKE?

OH, SHE'S SPENDING THE
NIGHT WITH BETH SO SHE
CAN CATCH UP ON SLEEP.

zzzmmz
...FISKmm...
zzzz









I'VE GOT TO TALK TO MARY. IT SHOULD ONLY TAKE A MINUTE.

BUY A DRINK ON ME.

SURE.



CAN I GET YOU ANYTHING?

UM. GIN AND TONIC. THANKS.



COMING RIGHT UP!



MAN. HOW WEIRD CAN MALE PORN GET?

TURN YOUR EYES TO THE STAGE, LADIES! HE'S SMOOTH! HE'S QUAFFED! HE'S OILED UP AND READY TO SLIDE INTO YOUR HEART! HE'S "CUM-BUBBLE-BOY"!

I DECIDED TO GO WITH
A WHOLE "INTERNATIONAL"
THEME.

THIS IS "LONG
CREEK." HE'S
KNOWN FOR LIVING
AT ONE WITH NATURE
AND PLEASURING EVERY
PART OF A WOMAN SO
NOTHING GOES TO
WASTE.


THIS IS "ZULU BOB!"

FAR FROM
NOBLE, BUT HE'S
DEFINATELY
SAVAGE!

AND THIS IS MARVIN
LIPSCHITZ. HE'S...
WELL...

I'VE NEVER SEEN
A BIGGER KOSHER DILL
IN MY LIFE, HONESTLY.

NOT EVEN IN MOVIES.



MARVIN !? DIDN'T YOU TAKE ELIZABETH TO A DANCE AT OUR HIGH SCHOOL, YEARS AGO?


OH! ELIZABETH, YEAH. SHE'S A SWEET GAL.

OH MY...




YOU WENT OUT WITH ELIZABETH?

ONE DATE. IT WAS HER MOTHER'S IDEA. I DON'T THINK SHE IMAGINED I'D BE WORKING THROUGH COLLEGE BY WAVING MY JUNK IN PEOPLE'S FACE.



IS ELIZABETH INVITED TO YOUR PARTY?


WELL DAMN. SHE IS NOW!




SO WHY DIDN'T ELIZABETH STAY WITH THIS GUY INSTEAD OF THE STIFF SHE'S WITH, NOW?

I DON'T THINK IT'S ABOUT WHAT SHE WANTS, AS MUCH AS WHAT HER MOTHER WANTS.

BESIDES, SHE STILL SECRETLY WANTS FISK.




SHE WANTS FISK?
MY FISK?



"YOUR FISK"... YOU'RE SLEEPING WITH TWO OTHER GUYS!

HOW CAN YOU SAY THAT?



YEESH. THE WORST PART OF POLYAMORY IS WHEN YOU GET JEALOUS, YOU CAN'T JUSTIFY IT.

OH... ANOTHER LAYER OF THE INVINCIBLE BETH GETS PEELED BACK...

WELL, EXPLAIN IT THE OTHER WAY AROUND. I DON'T MEAN TO PUT DOWN TOMMY, BUT HOW DO YOU JUST STICK WITH ONE GUY?

BECAUSE, I GUESS I CAN BE CONTENT...

TOMMY'S A GREAT GUY. SMART, GOOD FUTURE, GOOD IN BED THANKS TO MY TUTELAGE...

WHenever I see some slab of eye-candy, I realize I don't want to risk what I have by dividing my time.

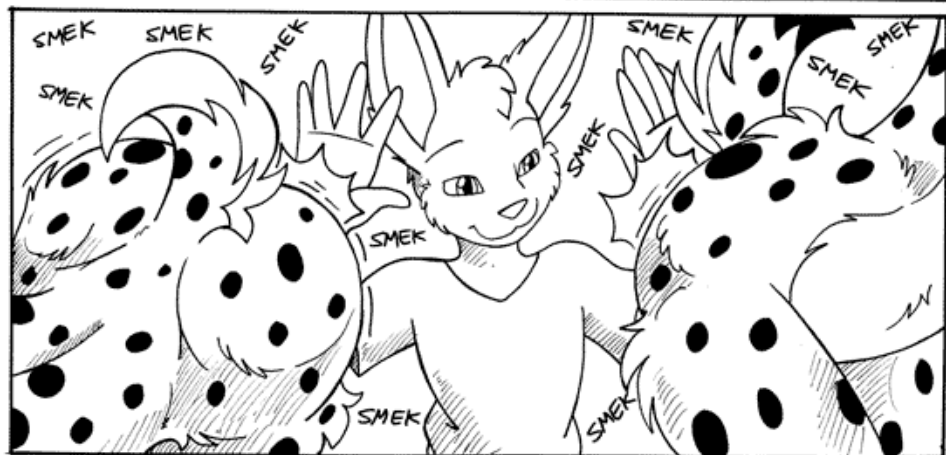
BUT WHAT IF SOMETHING HAPPENS TO TOMMY? WHAT IF YOU LOSE HIM?

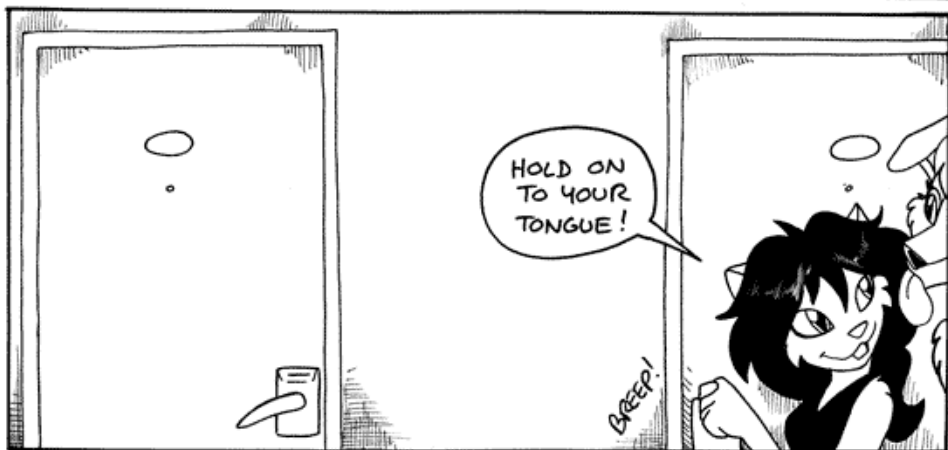
SEE... THIS ISN'T ABOUT PHYSICAL SATISFACTION.

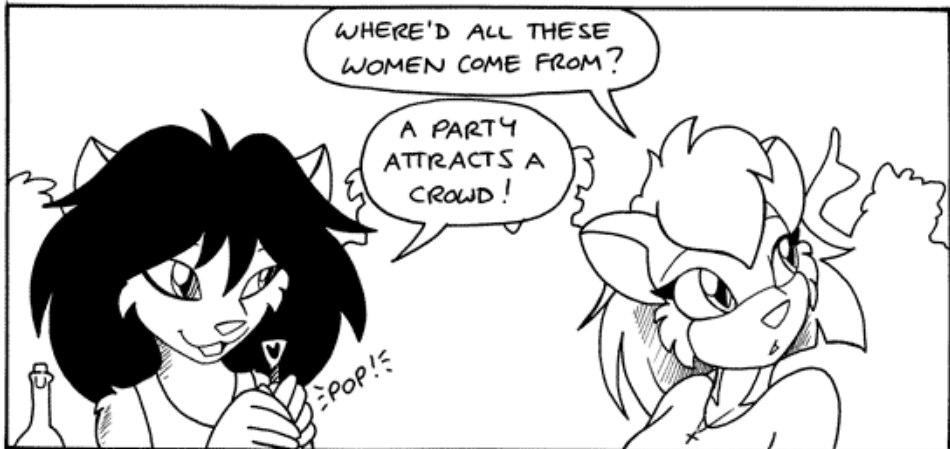
THIS IS ABOUT YOUR FIRST BOYFRIEND WHO DIED. YOU'RE AFRAID TO INVEST ALL YOUR EMOTIONAL EGGS IN ONE BASKET, AGAIN.

SOMETIMES I THINK I SHOULD JUST GO BACK TO TOMS.









WHERE'D ALL THESE
WOMEN COME FROM?

A PARTY
ATTRACTS A
CROWD!

POP! :3



DON'T LET ANY FOOL YOU INTO
THINKING SHE'S INNOCENT. SHE
TOLD ME WHAT SHE DID AT
JESUS CAMP LAST YEAR ...



LUCY! YOU'VE BEEN BITTEN
BY THE GIN MONSTER!

THAT DOESN'T MEAN
I'M LYING!



TELL HER ABOUT
AUSTIN MCELRR-MM!

SHHH!



WHAT'S THIS DOOR?
ANOTHER CLOSET?

THAT... IS THE
DOOR TO THE
ADJOINING
SUITE.

THERE'S MUSIC AND LAUGHING
NEXT DOOR. THEY MUST BE
HAVING A PARTY, TOO.

WE CAN OPEN THE DOOR AND
HAVE AN EVEN BIGGER PARTY!
I'M PRETTY SURE THEY
LOCK THAT DOOR.

~CLICK

WE SHOULDN'T JUST
BARGE IN.

MAYBE WE
SHOULD KNOCK?

TAKE A PEEK
FIRST!

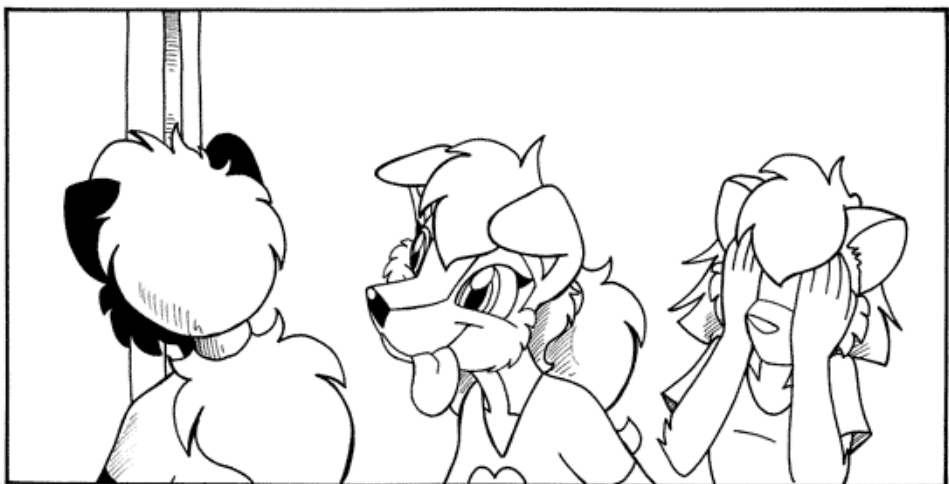


AHEM. NOTHING.

HEY444...

WRRP?









GET THAT THING AWAY FROM ME, BETH!


"STRIPPER JOUST" HUH?

NO, NO, TOMMY! IT'S DIFFERENT! ALL MALE STRIPPERS ARE GAY!

THE POINT IS: YOU'RE NOT!

HEY! I'M NOT GAY.


HOLY SHIT!




WHAT'S ALL THIS FIGHTING ABOUT?




WELL... LUCY'S MAD AT TOMMY FOR HAVING STRIPPERS AT ROBERT'S PARTY. TOMMY'S MAD AT LUCY FOR BEING MAD, WHEN SHE'S AT A PARTY WITH MALE STRIPPERS.




JESSICA'S MAD AT ROBERT FOR ENJOYING THE STRIPPERS. LUCY AND JESSICA ARE MAD AT BETH WHO PROMISED TOMMY WOULD BE TOO NERDY TO PLAN A PARTY WITH STRIPPERS.




THIS ALSO MAKES TOMMY MAD AT BETH.



AND LUCY, JESSICA, AND BETH DON'T UNDERSTAND HOW MALE STRIPPERS ARE THE SAME AS FEMALE STRIPPERS, BECAUSE ALL MALE STRIPPERS ARE SAFELY GAY.



Wow. THEY TOLD YOU ALL THIS?



NO. I'VE JUST KNOWN THESE WEIRDOS TOO LONG.



YOU KNOW... I NEVER NOTICED.

YOU'RE THE ONLY ONE. I THINK THAT'S WHY I LIKE YOU THE MOST.



EVERYONE'S LEAVING ANGRY!

WHERE ARE YOU GOING?

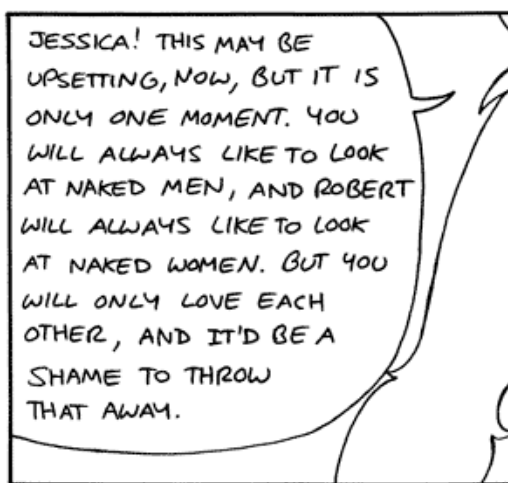
I'M GOING TO PUT AN END TO THIS SILLINESS!





BETH! YOU SHOULD HAVE MADE YOUR EXPECTATIONS ABOUT TOMMY VERY CLEAR WITHOUT JUST ASSUMING HE WAS TOO TIMID. HE'S A NICE YOUNG MAN WHO DESERVES BETTER FROM HIS FRIENDS!

AND NOT ALL MALE STRIPPERS ARE GAY!
JUST MOST!




JESSICA! THIS MAY BE UPSETTING, NOW, BUT IT IS ONLY ONE MOMENT. YOU WILL ALWAYS LIKE TO LOOK AT NAKED MEN, AND ROBERT WILL ALWAYS LIKE TO LOOK AT NAKED WOMEN. BUT YOU WILL ONLY LOVE EACH OTHER, AND IT'D BE A SHAME TO THROW THAT AWAY.



THE PENIS SPOKE.
AND IT WAS WISE.

LUCY! YOU SAID ON YOUR RADIO SHOW THAT LOOKING WAS HARMLESS, AS LONG AS HE WASN'T CHEATING...




THE TALKING PENIS IS RIGHT. I DO NOT WANT TO BE MAD AT YOU.

I DON'T WANT TO GO BACK TO MY PARTY.

SOMETIMES A PENIS CAN SAY WISE THINGS.

ME NEITHER.




I'M SORRY I GOT MAD FOR YOU HAVING STRIPPERS TOO.

I'M SORRY BETH PLAYS STRIPPER JOUST.


I'M SORRY I DIDN'T SAY WHAT KIND OF PARTY WE WERE HAVING.

I'M SORRY YOU LOST AT STRIPPER JOUST.



WOW. YOU'RE GOOD.

I HAVE A WAY OF GETTING PEOPLE'S ATTENTION.



I DON'T GET IT.
MY GAYDAR IS USUALLY
FLAWLESS!

I SHOULD
HAVE SEEN
MARVIN
WASN'T GAY.

IN ALL FAIRNESS,
HE *IS* DRINKING
WHITE WINE.

THAT SHOULDN'T MATTER. MY GAYDAR
IS LEGENDARY. I'VE DISCOVERED
PASTORS AS GAY. I'VE OUTTED
HAIR DRESSERS AS STRAIGHT.

I'VE SPOTTED POST-OPS AT
100 FEET. I'VE SPOTTED GUNS
PRETENDING TO BE GAY TO
GET WOMEN...

I KNEW YOU WERE
STRAIGHT, EVEN WITH HAIR
LIKE THAT.

END

HEY, BUDDY. YOU CALLED ME FOR ADVICE. LET ME FINISH GIVING IT BEFORE YOU INTERRUPT.

BUT YOU'RE JUST-

FINE. I'LL PUT YOU ON HOLD.

YOU CAN'T PUT ME ON HO--!!

NOW, AS I WAS SAYING: I...

rrrrRRREEEEEEEEYAAH!

WHAT THE HELL WAS THAT!?

I FOUGHT MY WAY OFF OF HOLD! THAT'S HOW TOUGH I AM!

FINE. I'LL JUST HANG UP ON YOU.

CAN I GET A FREE T-SHIRT AND TICKETS TO--
CLICK?




NICE SHOW TONIGHT, LUCY.

... OUR TOP STORIES
TONIGHT...

THANKS!


YOU EVER GOING
TO GO BACK TO
REPORTING?



I'M NOT SURE. I'D LIKE TO, BECAUSE
IT'S WHAT I STUDIED FOR. THE SHOW
IS FUN... BUT I DON'T
KNOW IF I WANT
TO DO IT
FOREVER...

...AN ARMY OPERATION
IN MOGADISHU HAS
RESULTED IN MORE
THAN ONE DOWNED
AMERICAN HELICOPTER...

MAYBE THERE'S A
WAY TO DO BOTH...



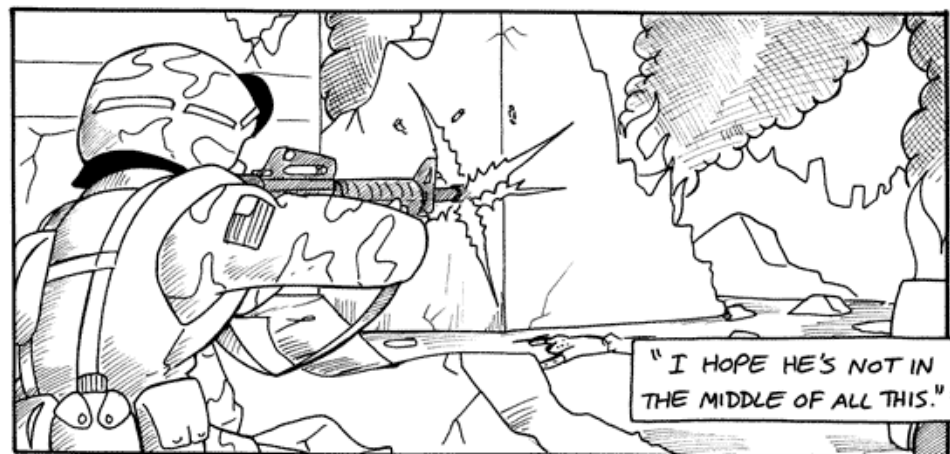
LET'S GO KILL A FEW
DRINKS SINCE WE'RE
OFF.

... AND THE DEATH
OF OVER A DOZEN
U.S. ARMY RANGERS...

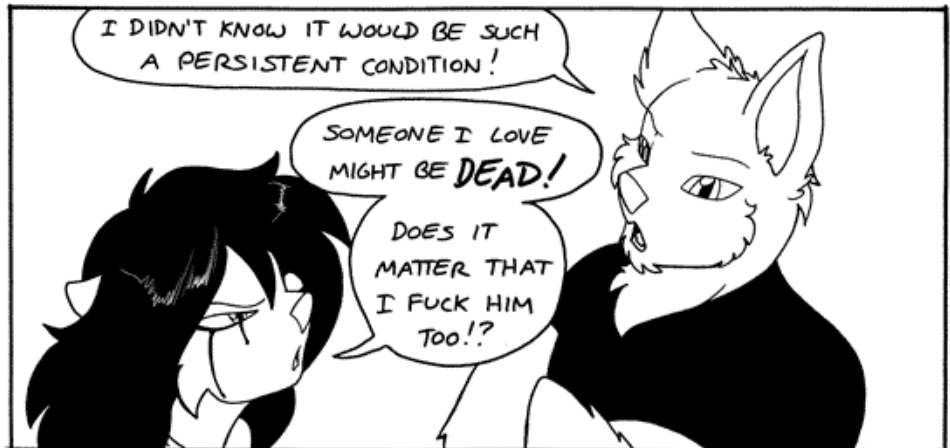
WOAH!
WAIT...


OH MY
GOD.

DETAILS
DEVELOPING...










I DON'T GET YOU, BETH! YOU EVEN SAID I WAS THE BEST LOOKING AND MOST SUCCESSFUL! WHY DO YOU NEED THOSE OTHERS?

JUST GO!



YES, I SHOULD.

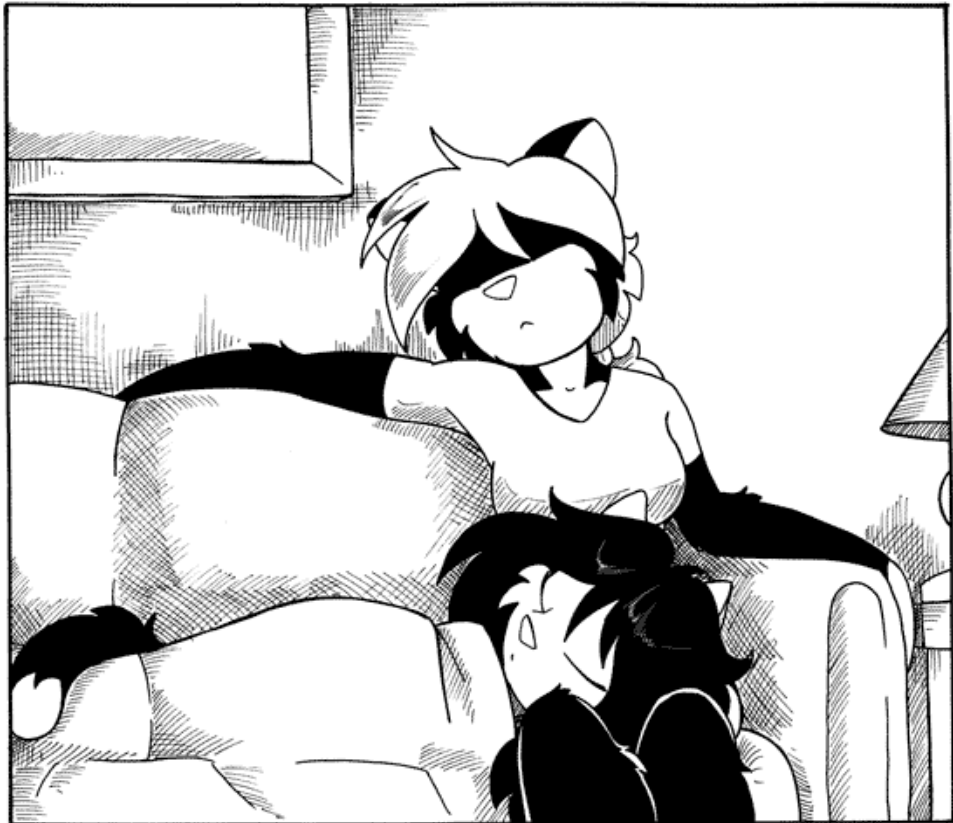
I CAN FIND FAR MORE STABLE WOMEN, AND KNOW I'M NOT JUST GOING TO BE ONE OF SEVERAL SWINGING DICKS FOR HER TO CHOSE FROM IN AN EVENING!

DON'T CALL ME.



SLAM











OH, HI SIS! HOW'S NEW YORK?

MM-HM.
OH YEAH?



MY ART? YEAH.

YOU SHOWED MY PAINTINGS
TO WHO?

AN ART
GALLERY?

NIP

NIP

NIP

NIP



THEY WANT TO MEET
ME !? IN NEW YORK?

TO DISPLAY
MY WORK !?!

EEEEEE






A black and white comic panel showing two cats in a clothing store. The cat on the left has dark fur and a choker, while the cat on the right has lighter fur. They are standing in front of a rack of clothes.

NEW CLOTHES?


YEAH! IT'S A SOPHISTICATED PLACE. YOU WANT TO LOOK NICE.

THE BOYS SEEM TO HAVE THE IDEA...


A black and white comic panel showing the two cats from the previous panel, now dressed in formal suits and hats. The dark-furred cat is on the left, and the light-furred cat is on the right. They are both wearing top hats and suits.

ARE YOU READY FOR OUR BIG EXCURSION INTO CULTURE AND SOPHISTICATION, JULES?


INDEED, THADDEUS!

A black and white comic panel showing a close-up of the dark-furred cat. She has a determined and slightly angry expression.

I GUESS SOMEONE DOESN'T WANT TO HAVE ANY **SEX** WHILE WE'RE THERE!


A black and white comic panel showing a close-up of the light-furred cat. He is wearing a top hat and has a serious expression.

A LASS OF THE NIGHT TEMPTS ME WITH FORNICATION!




THIS IS NICE.

FIRST TIME FLYING IN
FIRST CLASS?



I'VE ONLY EVER
FLOWN FOR THE ARMY.

NOTHING WAS
THIS NICE.



LOOKS LIKE TOMMY'S JUST
GETTING USED TO IT, TOO.



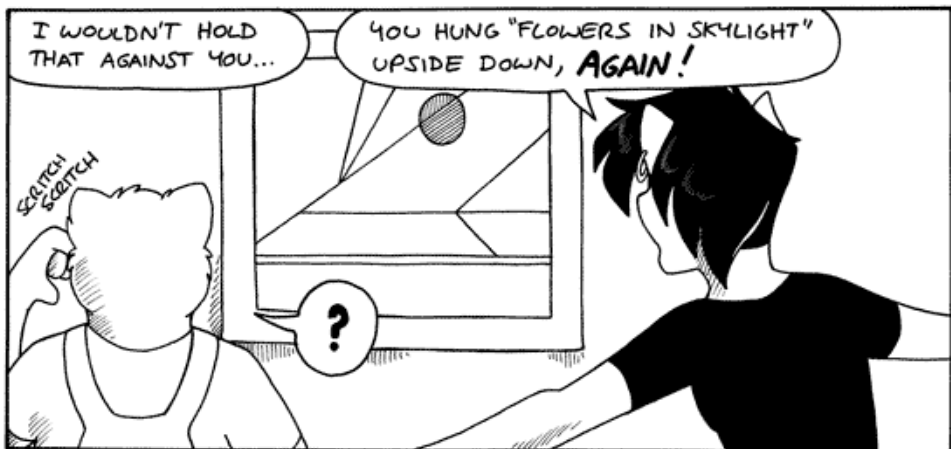
MORE CHAMPAGNE, SIR?


YES.

DON'T STOP UNTIL
MY PANTS
DISAPPEAR.









"VIOLENCE IN WARM" IS ONE OF MY FAVORITES. IT SHOWS THE TRUE TURMOIL THAT IS OUR SOUL:

A TORTURED, SCREAMING ANIMAL, CONSTANTLY AT WAR WITH REALITY. IT YERNS TO BREAK THE BONDS OF REASON, AND THE SHELL OF IDENTITY AND CAUSALITY.

THIS IS A TESTAMENT TO MANKIND'S ULTIMATE IMPOTENCE. OUR WEAK, DEFORMED, TWISTED STATE, LASHING OUT BEFORE THE INEVITABLE END...

I RAN THE PAINT THROUGH A JET ENGINE TO GET LEVELS OF VIOLENCE IMPOSSIBLE THROUGH REASONED PLANNING. THE EFFECTS ARE STUNNING.

SO... YOU TOOK A MACHINE SO PRECISELY MACHINED, SO BRILLIANTLY ENGINEERED BY MANKIND, A TESTAMENT TO HIS REASON, HIS ABILITY IN THE FACE OF NATURE ...

... AND MADE A PAINTING TO DEMONSTRATE HIS IMPOTENCE?

BEAUTIFUL, NO?

I'D RATHER HAVE THE ENGINE ON MY WALL.







SO, HOW'S THE GALLERY?
CLARISSE LOVES YOUR
WORK, I HEAR.

SHE MAY BE THE
ONLY ONE.



NOTHING?



PAINTINGS THAT LOOK LIKE RANDOM
LINES OR FLASHES OF COLOR.
PEOPLE INTERPRET WHATEVER
IT IS FROM WHIMS IN THEIR OWN
MINDS. THE ARTIST
HAS NO
ROLE IN
DEPICTING
ANYTHING.

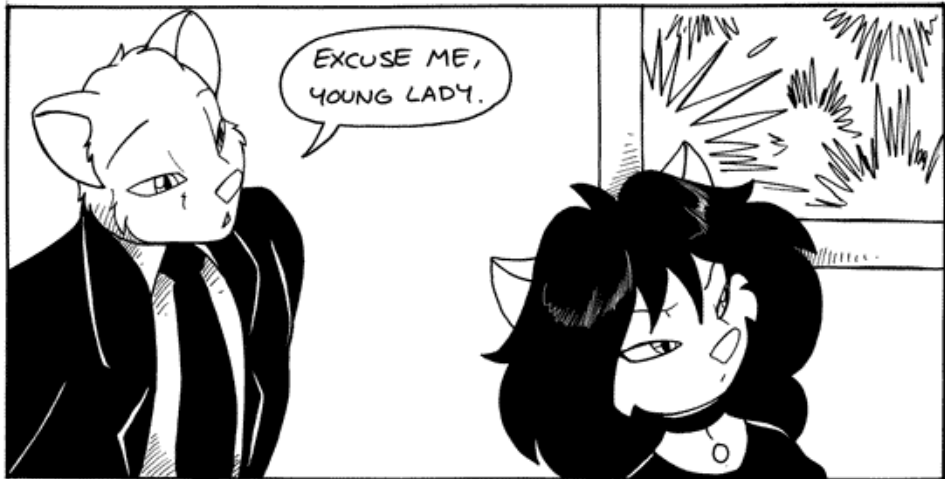


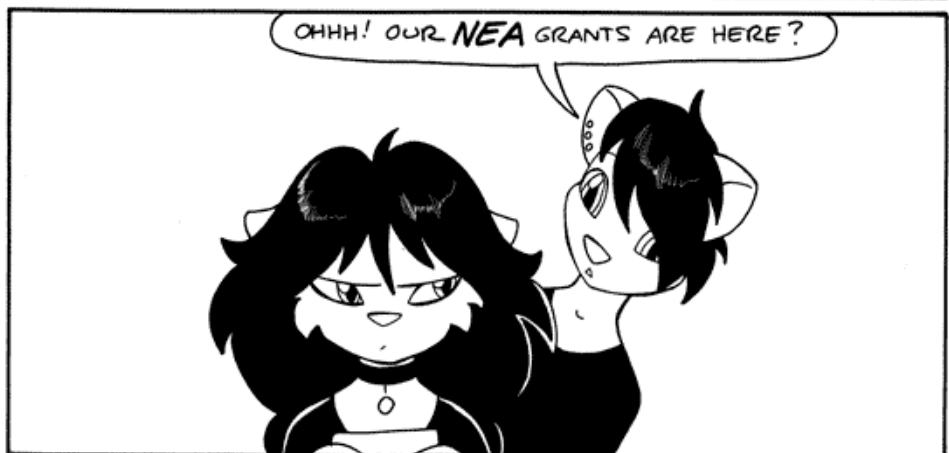
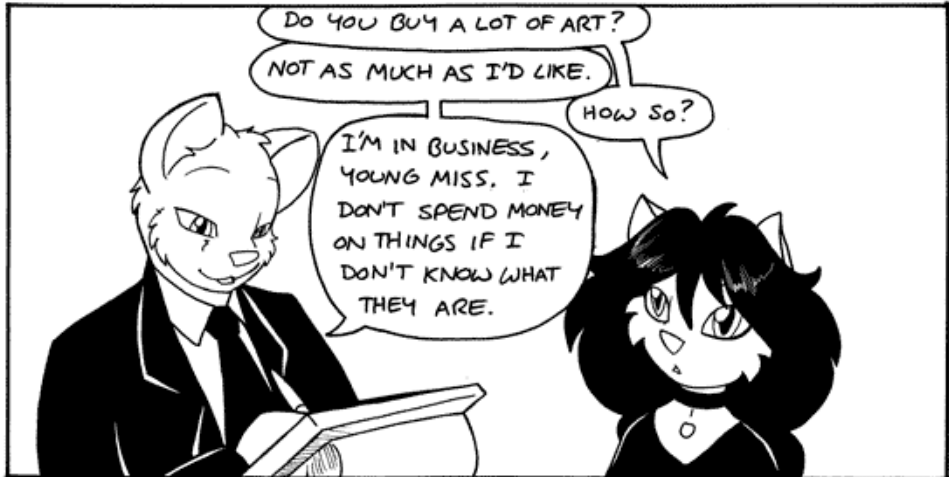
YOU DON'T NEED MONEY.
THAT ISN'T
WHAT YOU'RE
LOOKING FOR,
IS IT?

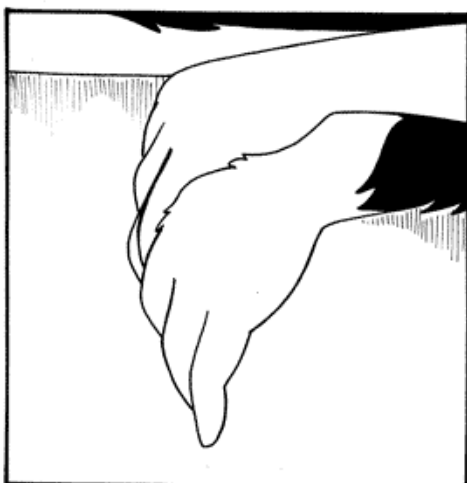
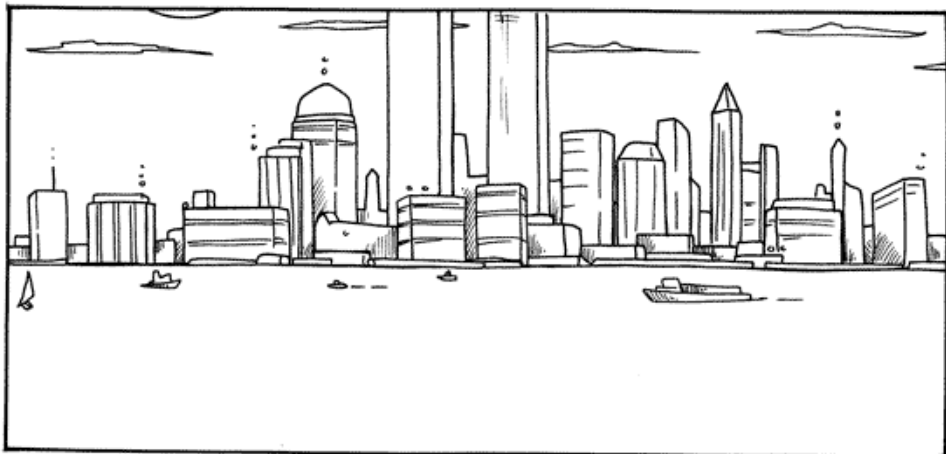



NO. MAYBE NOT MONEY, OR
VALIDATION. MAYBE... A PEER?













YOU CAN DO WHAT YOU LIKE. WORK WHATEVER KIND OF WORK YOU LIKE.

I HAVE ENOUGH MONEY FOR LIFE... YOU WON'T HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT THAT.

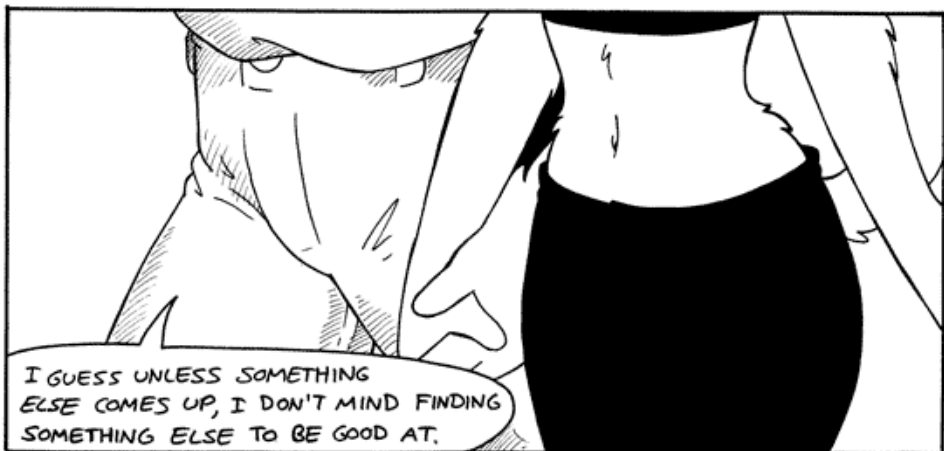
THIS IS WHAT I WANT. I DON'T KNOW WHY BEING THIS HONEST IS SO HARD.



THERE. YOU DID IT. YOU GOT ME TO SAY YOU'RE THE ONE.



I DON'T WANT YOU TO FEEL BOUND FOR MY SAKE... BUT I HAD TO LET YOU KNOW ...

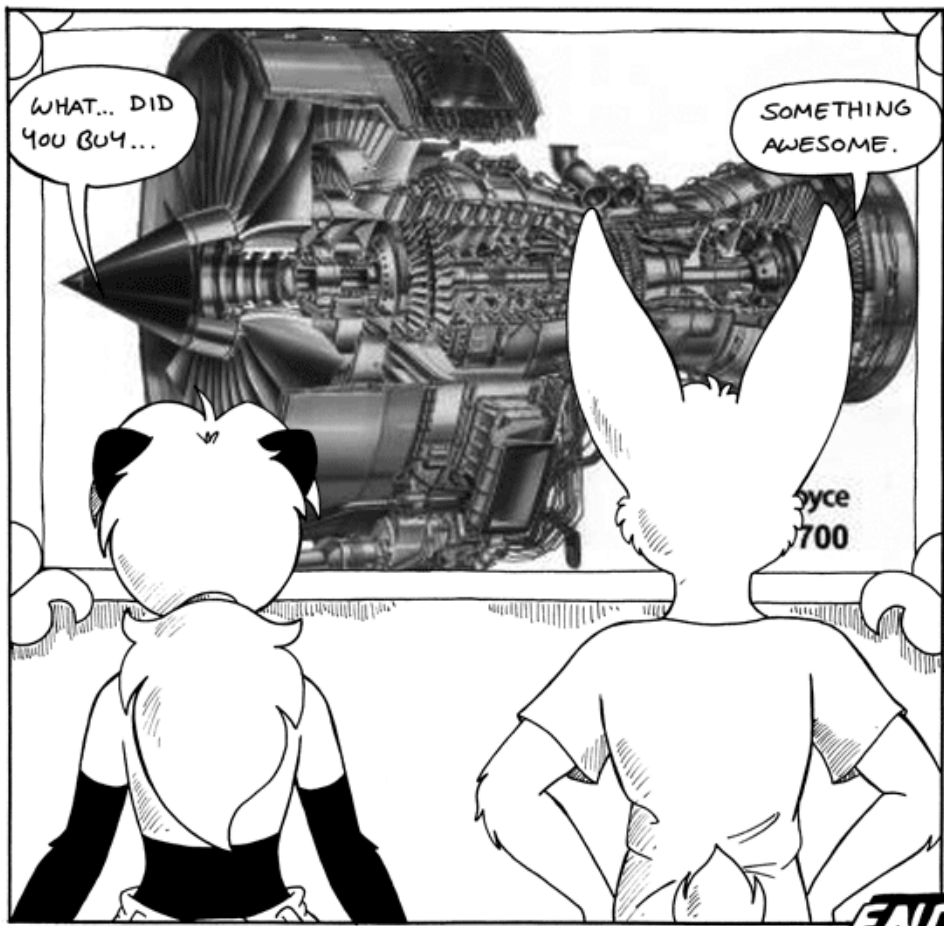




I'M GLAD I BROUGHT EVERYONE ALONG.

EVEN TOMMY BOUGHT SOME ART TO TAKE HOME.

REALLY?
MR. ENGINEER?



WHAT... DID YOU BUY...

SOMETHING AWESOME.

byce
700

END

HOW DOES OUR BATCH OF CANDIDATES LOOK?

GOOD MEN. I LIKE MOST OF THE CANDIDATES FROM THE F.B.I. BUT—

BUT NONE OF THEM ARE KNOWN QUANTITIES. LAW ENFORCEMENT IS RISKY TO APPROACH. TOO MANY LAW AND ORDER IDEALISTS.

WELL, THIS IS MORE THAN KILLING. DO YOU WANT TO TRUST A MARINE WITH FIELD WORK?

MM. I'D RATHER TRY TO BUILD SOMEONE FROM THE GROUND UP. FULL TRAINING.

WELL, HERE'S A FAMILIAR NAME...

HM?

SERGEANT BLACK. RYAN PULLED HIS FILE. HE SAYS THEY'RE STEP-BROTHERS.

IS THAT JIM'S SON?

I THINK SO. BEEN THROUGH RANGER SCHOOL, IRAQ AND SOMALIA...

WHERE'S HE NOW?

FT. BRAGG.

FT. BRAGG, NORTH CAROLINA.

POP

POP.POP

CEASE FIRE!

GOOD RUN.
EVERYONE ASSEMBLE
OUTSIDE.

SERGEANT
BLACK!

SIR!

MAJOR KANE WANTS
YOU TO REPORT TO
HIS OFFICE.

SOMETHING
UP, SIR?

DON'T KNOW,
SERGEANT.



AT EASE, SERGEANT.
YOU HAVE A COUPLE
OF VISITORS.



KELSO? WHAT ARE YOU
DOING HERE?



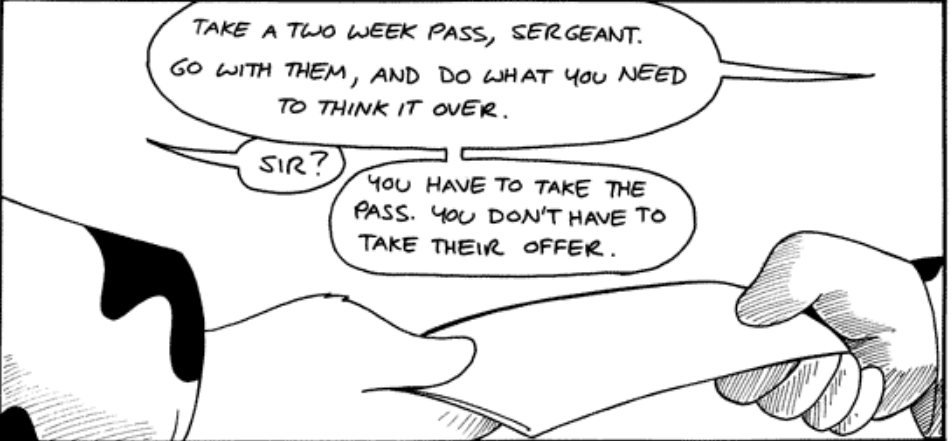
I'M GOING TO LET MR. HUNTER
FILL YOU IN ON WHY WE'RE
HERE.



WE'RE NOT HERE FOR
PLEASANTRIES, SERGEANT.

WE UNDERSTAND YOUR
ARMY CONTRACT IS UP SOON,
AND WE'VE COME TO OFFER
YOU A JOB.


YOUR FATHER'S
JOB.



TAKE A TWO WEEK PASS, SERGEANT.
GO WITH THEM, AND DO WHAT YOU NEED
TO THINK IT OVER.


SIR?

YOU HAVE TO TAKE THE
PASS. YOU DON'T HAVE TO
TAKE THEIR OFFER.



ALL RIGHT, WHAT IS THIS ALL ABOUT?
I THOUGHT I **WAS** IN MY FATHER'S
JOB—


NOT QUITE.



EXCUSE ME FOR BEING A
LITTLE RUDE. I THINK I'M
ENTITLED TO STRAIGHT
ANSWERS.

YOU'RE RIGHT,
FISK.

WE'LL TALK
WHILE WE
DRIVE.



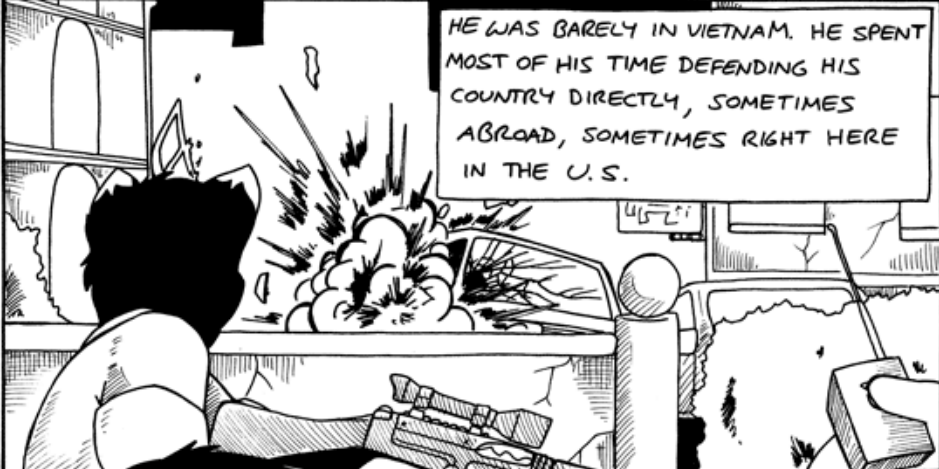
"BEING A SOLDIER WAS
YOUR FATHER'S COVER.
HE WAS EMPLOYED BY
OUR FRONT-COMPANY..."

"DOING
WHAT?"


"ANYTHING THAT NEEDED TO BE DONE. THERE
ARE THINGS THAT A BUREAUCRATIC GOVERNMENT
AGENCY CAN'T DO EFFICIENTLY AND IN A
TIMELY FASHION."

"ILLEGAL THINGS?"

"BATTLEFIELDS AREN'T JUST
JUNGLES AND DESERTS WITH
UNIFORMED SOLDIERS AT
WAR."



HE WAS BARELY IN VIETNAM. HE SPENT MOST OF HIS TIME DEFENDING HIS COUNTRY DIRECTLY, SOMETIMES ABROAD, SOMETIMES RIGHT HERE IN THE U.S.



HE COULD HAVE PICKED UP A PHONE ANYTIME AND CALLED YOUR MOTHER. BUT HE KNEW HER SAFETY, AND YOURS, DEPENDS ON HER NOT KNOWING.


SO, HE WAS SOME
KIND OF C.I.A. SPOOK?

UNFORTUNATELY, WE WERE TIED INTO
THE C.I.A.'S OPERATIONS DIVISION
AT FIRST...

AS THE SOVIETS COULD
COMPROMISE THE C.I.A.
THEY COULD ALSO
COMPROMISE US.

THIS LEAD TO YOUR
FATHER'S DEATH.


BUT WITH CONGRESS
LIMITING C.I.A. POWER
AFTER VIETNAM, IT
WAS OUR CHANCE TO
GO INDEPENDENT. CUT
ALL OFFICIAL TIES WITH
THE GOVERNMENT AND
GO FULLY UNDERCOVER.



YOU RUN YOUR OWN INTELLIGENCE SERVICE, WITH OPERATIONS, PRIVATELY?

WITH DETAIL I CAN'T GO INTO WITHOUT A COMMITMENT FROM YOU...

... YES.



THE POINT IS, FISK, WE DEFEND THIS COUNTRY IN WAYS THE GOVERNMENT EITHER CAN'T OR WON'T.

WE JOINED THE SERVICE ORIGINALLY FOR THAT REASON.



IT'S ALL UP TO YOU.

YOU CAN GO ON TO DO SOMETHING ELSE, MAYBE TO LEAD A RELAXED LIFE. YOU CAN CONTINUE YOUR MILITARY SERVICE... I HEAR THE NEW ADMINISTRATION IS INTERESTED IN A MORE ACTIVE ROLE IN BOSNIA...

... OR, YOU CAN BE ON THE REAL FRONT LINES, DEFENDING US AGAINST THE ENEMIES THAT NEVER MAKE THE NEWS.



ONE OF THOSE KINDS OF JOBS?

YES.

WHERE IS IT?

IT'S IN THE WASHINGTON AREA, BUT IT INVOLVES A LOT OF TRAVEL.

IF IT'S WHAT YOU WANT TO DO, YOU SHOULD TAKE IT.

WHAT ABOUT YOU?

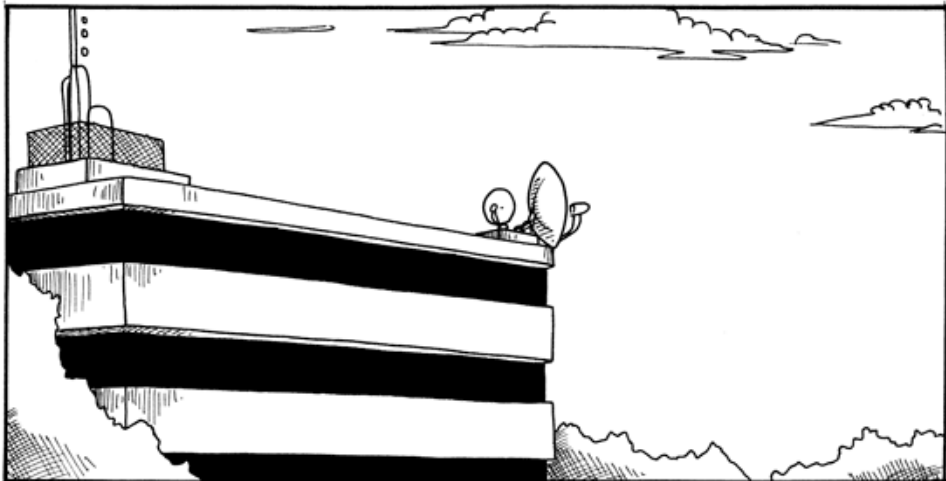
I CAN'T...

I **WON'T** KEEP YOU FROM THE WORK YOU'VE ALWAYS WANTED.

BUT I'LL KEEP A PLACE FOR YOU HERE, WHENEVER YOU'RE AROUND.

THANK YOU, BETH.





THIS ISN'T LANGLEY,
BUT WE CAN SEE IT FROM
HERE.

THERE'S A FILE
WITH YOUR "OFFICIAL"
JOB ON THE
TABLE.

OR MORE
EXACTLY: YOUR
COVER.



IS THIS VERY LARGE NUMBER
MY REAL SALARY?

YES. BUY YOURSELF
A FEW NICE SUITS TO
LOOK THE PART.

YOU'RE ONE OF OUR
INVESTMENT SCOUTS, NOW.
WELCOME TO THE
COMPANY.

WE'RE STARNES AND DYE, INCORPORATED.
A SIMPLE, SMALL INVESTMENT FIRM THAT
DOES MOST OF ITS BUSINESS TRANSACTIONS
OVER THE PHONE AND COMPUTER.

WE'RE SMALL AND COMMON
ENOUGH TO NOT DRAW
NOTICE, WITH OUR SMALL
COMMISSION FEES FUNDING
OUR OTHER
OPERATIONS.



THIS IS KAREN HAGEL. SHE WORKS
CLOSELY WITH YOUR KIND OF
OPERATIONS, WHEN SHE ISN'T
TRACKING THE SPENDING OF BAD
GUYS AND KEEPING OUR TECHNOLOGY
UP TO SPEED. WE PAY HER IN
COFFEE AND CANDY BARS.

VERY
FUNNY.



KAREN, THIS IS FISK BLACK. HE'S
GOING TO BE OUR NEW AGENT.

OH, HE'S REPLACING
YOU, JOE?

YEP.

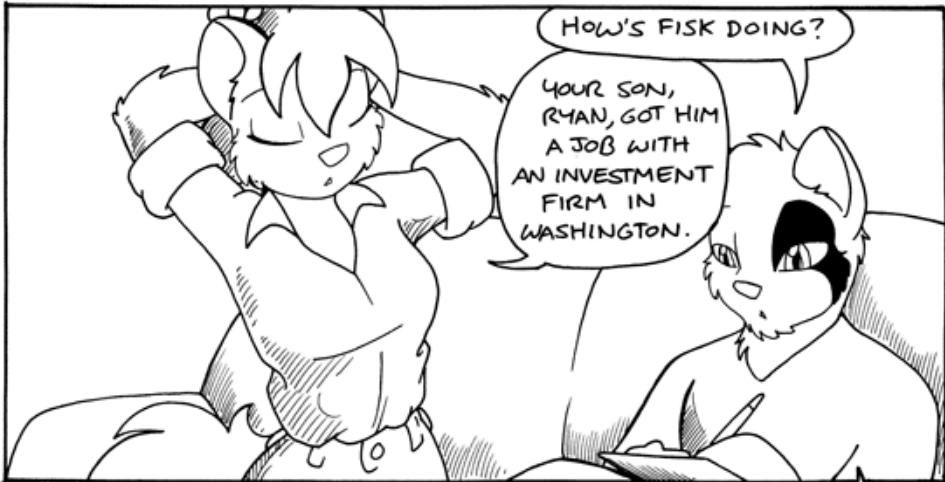


YOU'RE
RETIRING?

NO. KELSO IS.
I'M TAKING HIS
JOB.













WE'RE GOING TO NEW YORK CITY.
WE'LL GET YOU SOME CLOTHES TO
HIDE YOUR BUILD, AND HEAD
TO J.F.K.

WE'RE FLYING
SOMEWHERE?

YES. I CAN'T TEACH
GOOD FIELD CRAFT IN THE
U.S. IT'S TOO... UH...
STABLE.

TOO
SAFE.

WHAT ABOUT YOU?
WHERE ARE YOU
FROM?

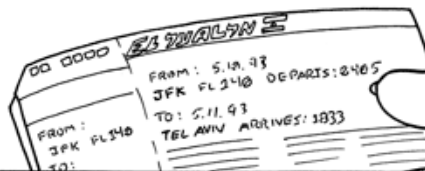
WHO DO
YOU WORK
FOR?

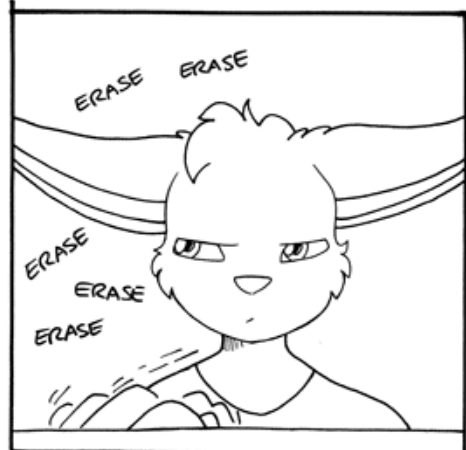
THERE ARE BOARDING PASSES
ON THE TABLE. YOU'LL SEE.

IT'S IMPORTANT TO KNOW
DANGER, AND NOT TO
IMAGINE IT. IT'S VITAL TO
GO WHERE SOME SORT OF
CIVILIZATION ASSAINS A
SAVAGERY INTENT ON
DESTROYING IT.

YOU WILL HAVE TO
GET USED TO SILENT
BATTLE, AND AMONGST
CITIES AND POPULATION.

IT IS NOT THE
OPEN DESERT
SAND.







OH, YOU GOT A LETTER FROM FISK. I PUT IT ON THE HALLWAY TABLE.

OH? I WONDER WHY HE'D WRITE.

IT LOOKS LIKE IT'S FROM OVERSEAS.



HUH. IT'S FROM ISRAEL.

CAT GETS AROUND!

MUST BE NICE TO HAVE A SIBLING WHO'S ALSO A FRIEND. I COULD CARE LESS ABOUT MINE.

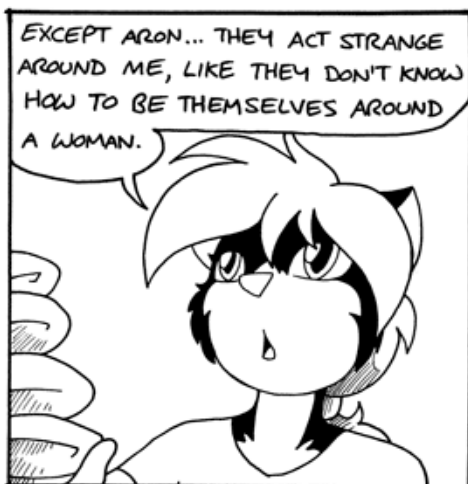


WELL, YOU DON'T HAVE A TWIN!











SHE CONTROLS THE WHOLE VILLAGE WITH HER NECROMANCY.

AS LONG AS THERE ARE THE DEAD, HER TYRANNY WILL GROW. YOU HAVE SEEN THIS FOR YOURSELF. WHAT DO YOU NEED TO SLAY HER?

MORE MEN.

THERE **ARE** NO MORE MEN.



THERE ARE NO MORE ABLE MEN!?

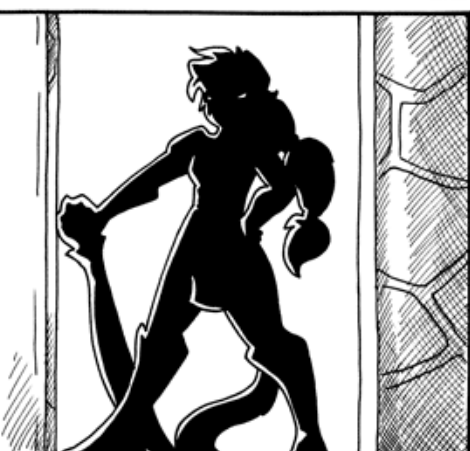
THEY HAVE FLED BEFORE THE TYRANNY OF THE DEAD.



CALM DOWN, VIRTUS. PERHAPS IT ISN'T IN MEN WHERE WE'LL FIND OUR HELP.



BUT IN A **WOMAN**.







MY COMPANION IS HORACE, FROM SAVAGE LANDS TO THE NORTH, SWORN TO DEFEND MY LIFE AFTER OUR MANY STRUGGLES...



... AND THIS IS SABRIAN THE LARGE HUNTER FROM THE GREAT PLAINS OF THE... WHAT? WHAT'S SO FUNNY?



THE CALLOPE
WASTELANDS

WE'RE
CLOSE.



WHAT IS
THAT?

A GIRL.

OUT HERE?



WHAT ARE YOU DOING OUT HERE,
CUTIE PIE?

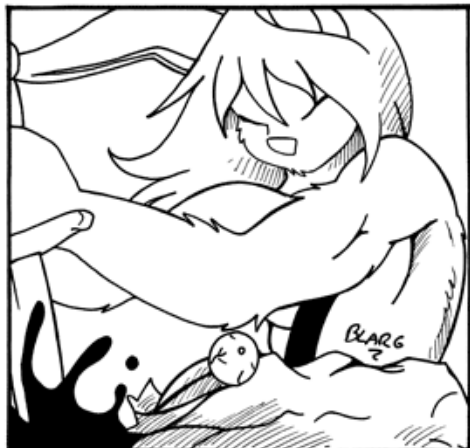
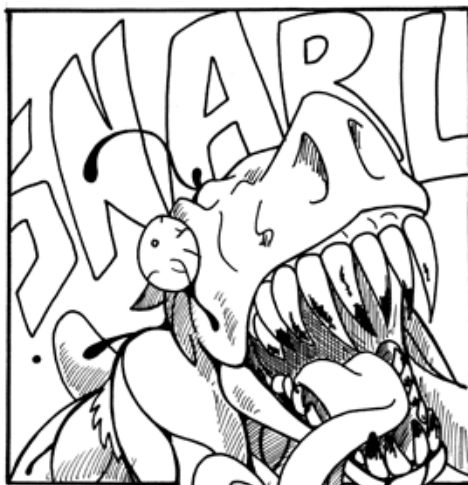
MY PET, MR. PUFFLES,
IS SICK.

WHERE IS
MR. PUFFLES?



OVER THERE,
EATING PEOPLE.





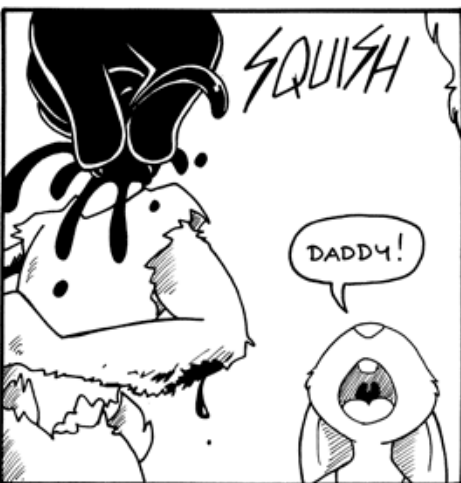
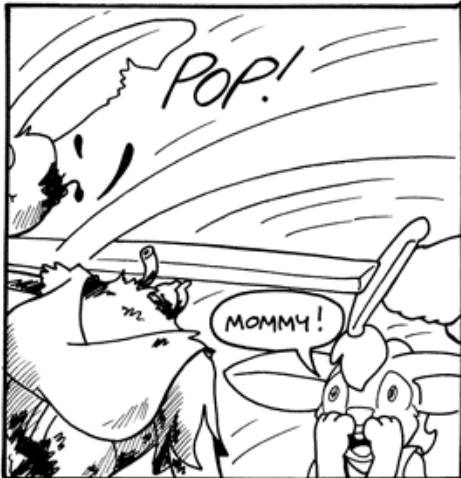


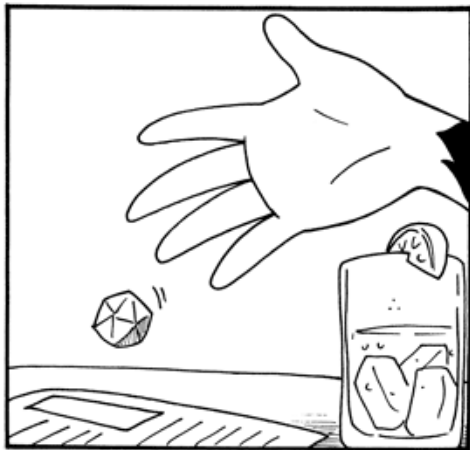
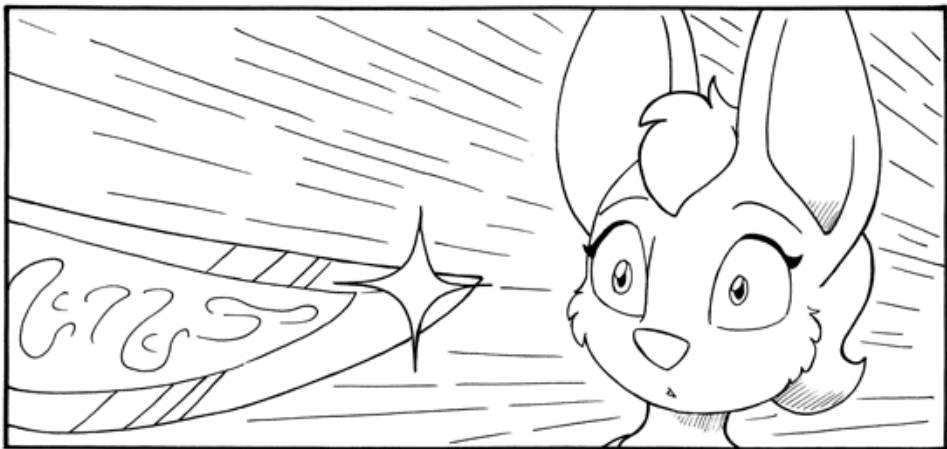
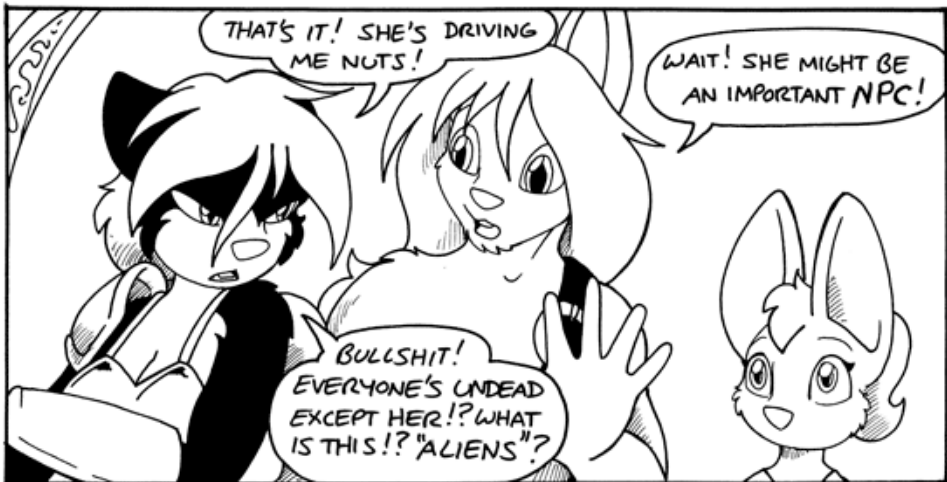
ALL RIGHT. WHICH ONE IS THIS SORCERESS?

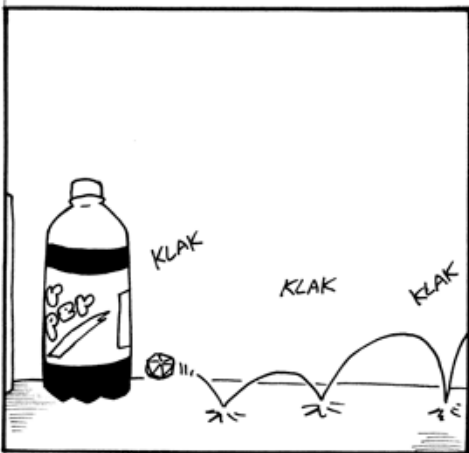
I DOUBT SHE WILL SHOW HERSELF SO QUICKLY!

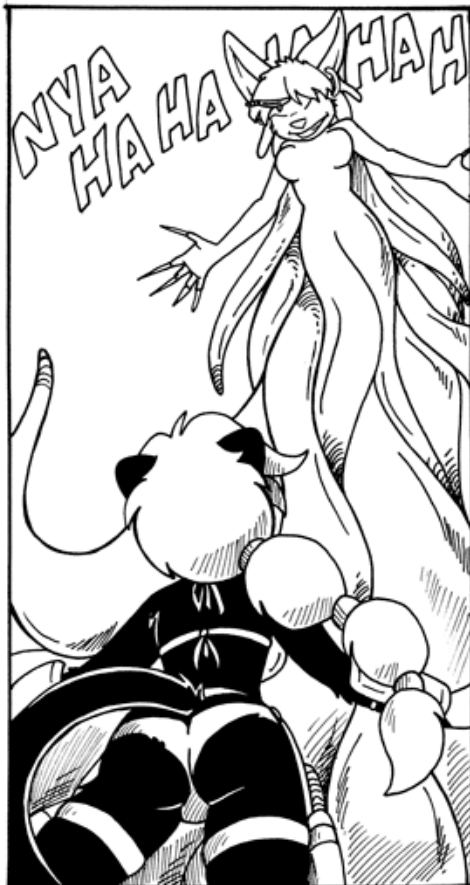
THEN WE SLAY THEM ALL!
THEY'RE DEAD ALREADY!

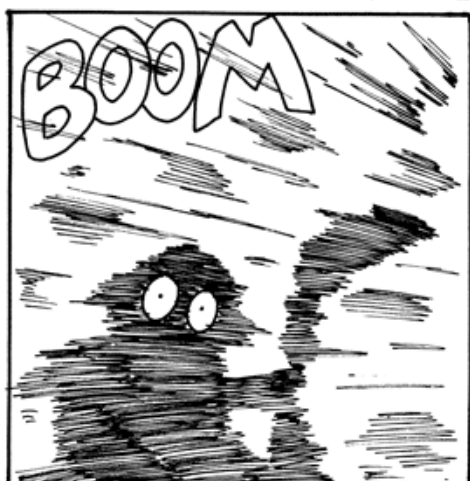
THEIR SOULS HAVE DEPARTED TO BE JUDGED BY THE GODS, AND OUR OWN ARE FREE TO DO AS THEY PLEASE TO DISPOSE OF THEIR WALKING HUSKS!

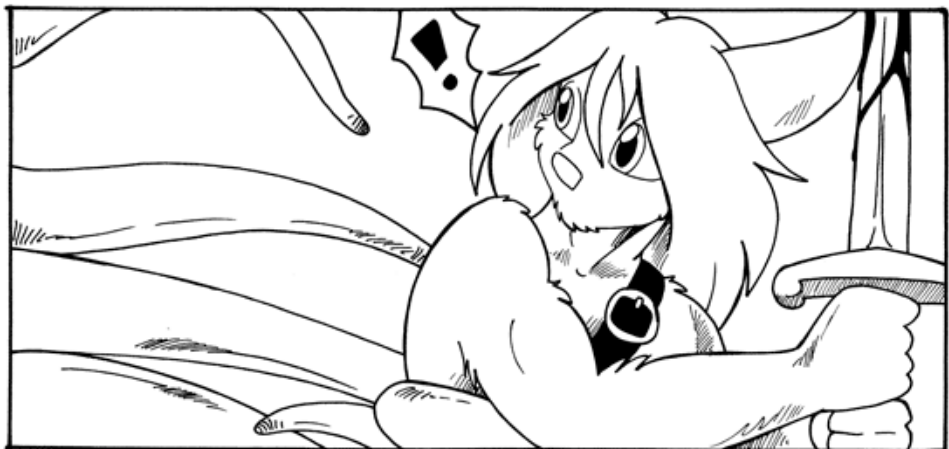















OH! WHAT FINE STOCK! YOU MEN ARE LUCKY...

... I NEED YOU STRONG AND HEALTHY TO BREED MY ARMY OF WORKERS, SERVANTS, AND WARRIORS.



HER... H-HER WEAKNESS...

IT'S THE PINK PEARL... YOU MUST DESTROY IT!

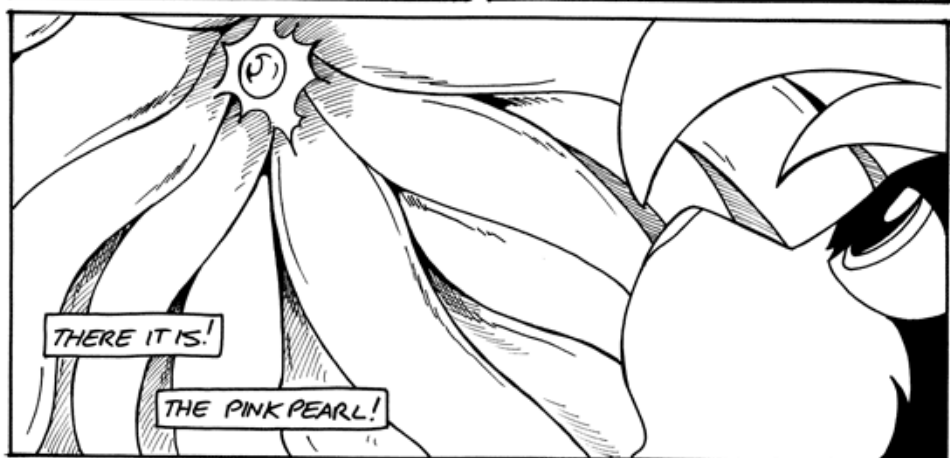
THE PINK PEARL? WHERE IS IT?



IN THAT TANGLE OF BEASTLY TENTACLES!

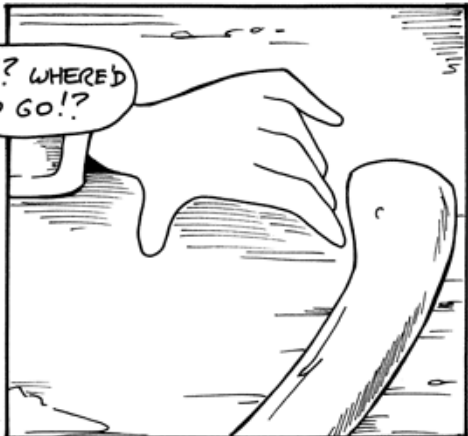
THEY SAY NO MAN CAN FIND IT...

... BUT AS A WOMAN, YOU MAY HAVE A CHANCE!





HEY!?! WHERE'D YOU GO!?!




HYAAAAAAAAA











HEY! THAT WAS A PRETTY FUN GAME!



LET ME KNOW IF YOU EVER NEED ANOTHER PLAYER AGAIN!


BUMP



THAT'S IT? THE CAMPAIGN IS OVER?
IT WAS SUPPOSED TO LAST THE REST OF THE YEAR!

WHO ELSE WANTS ANOTHER DRINK?

ANOTHER MOUNTAIN DEW PLEASE!



LET ME GUESS: YOU DIDN'T EXPECT ANYONE TO UNCOVER THE SORCERESS SO SOON?

I DIDN'T EXPECT HER TO ROLL AN 18, A 19 AND A 20 ALL IN A ROW!

END



WHAT TIME ARE JESSICA AND ROBERT ARRIVING TOMORROW?

NOON!



IT'LL BE NICE TO SEE THEM AGAIN. I DIDN'T EXPECT THEM TO GO TO GERMANY FOR SIX MONTHS AFTER THEY GOT MARRIED.



ROBERT'S GOT FAMILY THERE, RIGHT? THAT'S A HELL OF A STAY.



SHE SAID SHE HAD SOME SORT OF SURPRISE FOR US.

ARRIVALS

HEY, THERE THEY ARE...
OH MY GOODNESS!

WOW. THAT
WAS FAST.



HAYYY
GUYS!!



HI, LUCY!


HEY!




HI, BETH!

IF YOU LICK ME,
I TAKE YOUR FACE.






WOW. YOU DIDN'T WASTE ANY TIME, DID YOU?



GEEZ. HOW'D YOU MANAGE THAT SO QUICK?

ERRRM...



YOU HAVE TO MAKE SURE HE PUTS HIS DOKEY IN YOUR CHA-CHA, INSTEAD OF YOUR BUTT.







ALL I CAN TELL IS
THAT SHE GOT INTO
ONE LAST FIGHT WITH
HER BEASTLY MOTHER.



SHE HAD ENOUGH OF THE
PRESSURE, THE PAGEANTS,
HER MOTHER LIVING THROUGH
HER...

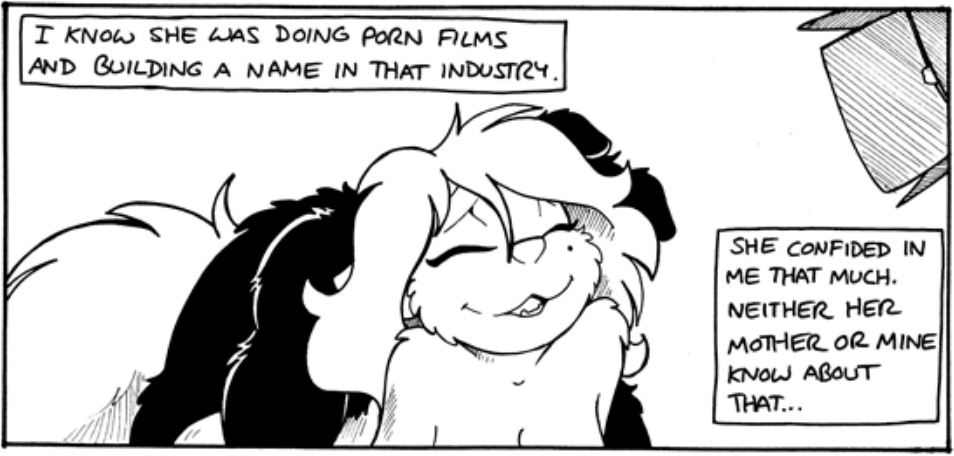


SHE TOOK ALL OF HER
MODELLING MONEY AND
RAN OFF TO L.A.



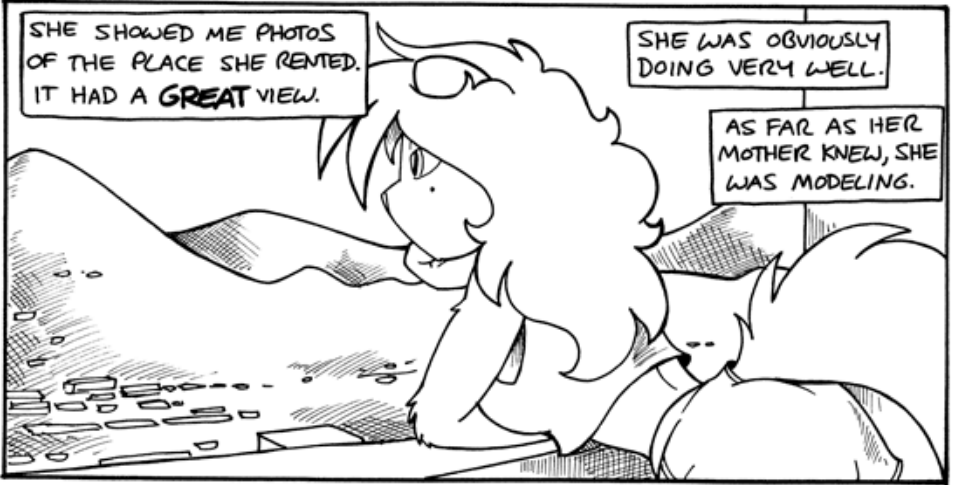
LAST I HEARD, SHE HAD A
JOB, A PLACE... AND THEN
HER PHONE SUDDENLY ISN'T
WORKING.





I KNOW SHE WAS DOING PORN FILMS
AND BUILDING A NAME IN THAT INDUSTRY.

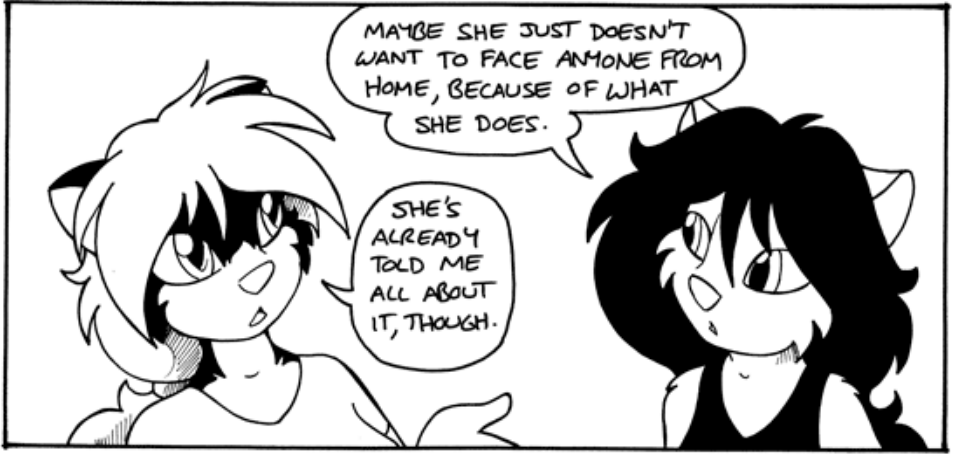
SHE CONFIDED IN
ME THAT MUCH.
NEITHER HER
MOTHER OR MINE
KNOW ABOUT
THAT...



SHE SHOWED ME PHOTOS
OF THE PLACE SHE RENTED.
IT HAD A **GREAT** VIEW.

SHE WAS OBVIOUSLY
DOING VERY WELL.

AS FAR AS HER
MOTHER KNEW, SHE
WAS MODELING.




MAYBE SHE JUST DOESN'T
WANT TO FACE ANYONE FROM
HOME, BECAUSE OF WHAT
SHE DOES.

SHE'S
ALREADY
TOLD ME
ALL ABOUT
IT, THOUGH.



**BING
BONG**



ARON! GET THE DOOR!
I'M STILL DRESSING!



GOT IT!



OH...





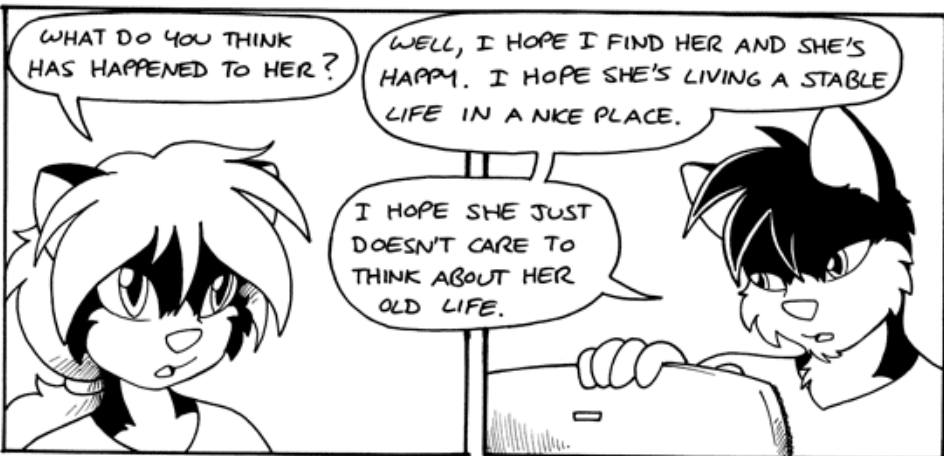


YOU'RE PACKING ALREADY?

YOU JUST GOT HERE.

I'VE GOT A COUPLE OF MONTHS BEFORE MY JOB NEEDS ME, AGAIN.

I'M GOING TO DRIVE TO LOS ANGELES. IT'LL BE A GOOD USE OF WHAT I'VE LEARNED TO TRY TO TRACK DOWN PERSIA.



WHAT DO YOU THINK HAS HAPPENED TO HER?

WELL, I HOPE I FIND HER AND SHE'S HAPPY. I HOPE SHE'S LIVING A STABLE LIFE IN A NICE PLACE.


I HOPE SHE JUST DOESN'T CARE TO THINK ABOUT HER OLD LIFE.



THEN WHY ARE YOU TAKING A GUN?

I'VE SEEN THE WORLD, AND I KNOW A PRECAUTION IS MORE VALUABLE THAN A HOPE.





PAULY.

YEAH BOSS?

I WANT YOU TO
MAKE SURE THIS
NEW GIRL IS GOOD
FOR US.

WHAT DO YOU
MEAN?

SHE'S THE
BEST ONE
WE GOT!

THAT'S THE POINT.

NO ONE GIVES A DAMN WHEN
A POOR PIECE OF UNGROOMED
TRASH GOES MISSING. BUT THIS
ONE LOOKED CARED FOR.

SHE'S JUST THE KIND
OF SUBURBAN WHITEBREAD
KID WHO'S PROFILE
MIGHT MAKE THE
NATIONAL NEWS.

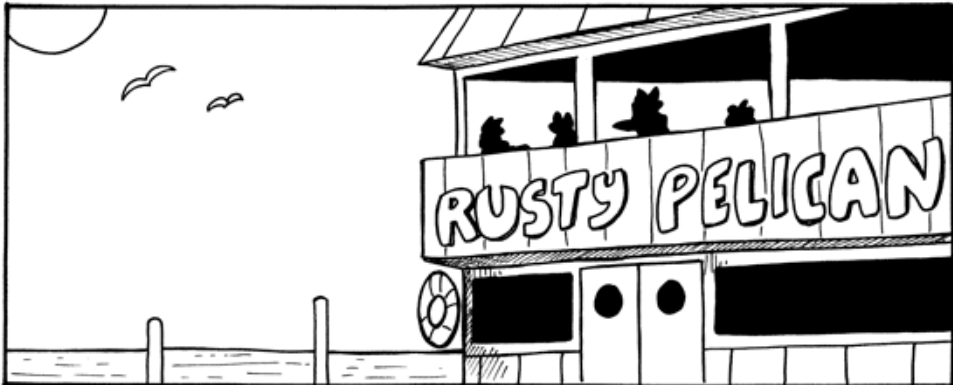
AH SHIT.

I DIDN'T THINK ABOUT THAT
AT ALL. THAT KIND OF HEAT
COULD KILL US.

I DON'T EXPECT YOU TO THINK MUCH.
THAT'S MY JOB.

FIND OUT IF SHE HAS ANY
FAMILY, FRIENDS, BOYFRIEND...

ANYONE WHO
MIGHT REPORT
HER MISSING
AFTER A
WHILE.



RIFKIN

OHH, YEAH! PERSIA! SHE DID SOME WORK IN OUR AD AGENCY. A TRUE NATURAL BEAUTY.

SHE WAS HELPIN' US PUSH BOTTLED WATER ... Y'KNOW, MAGAZINE ADS, BILLBOARDS...

SHE HOOKED UP WITH SOME BOYFRIEND STARTIN' HIS OWN ADULT FILM STUDIO. PROBABLY TRYIN' TA MAKE MORE MONEY.

HE HANGS OUT AT HERMOSA BEACH WITH ALLA THEM OTHER MUSCLE HEADS.

OH, YAH HAH... PERSIA. WE HOOKED UP.

SEE, IT'S MY PHILOSOPHY THE PEOPLE OF THE MOST MAXIMUM HOTNESS SHOULD HOOK UP WITH ONE ANOTHER. SO IT WAS KINDA LIKE... NATURAL, YA KNOW.

I NEVER SAW HER AFTER SOME ESTABLISHED STUDIO OFFERED HER MORE MONEY. BRASILIA EXPOSED, I THINK.

BUT SOMEDAY SHE'LL COME BACK, REALIZIN' YA CAN'T PUT A PRICE ON MY KINDA HOTABILITY.

Brasilia Exposed
ADULT ENTERTAINMENT



OH! YOU MADE IT JUST IN TIME!
WE'RE ABOUT TO CLOSE THE DOOR
ON NEW AUDITIONS!

I NEED TO SPEAK
TO WHOEVER RUNS
THE STUDIO.

SHE DOESN'T
TAKE APPOINTMENTS
OFF THE STREET.

SHE ONLY
SEES AUDITIONS.



UH... AUDITION?

RIGHT,
AUDITION...



HERE! FILL THIS OUT AND
HAVE IT READY WHEN YOU'RE
CALLED.

NOW GET IN
LINE!



I HAVEN'T SEEN
YOU BEFORE. FIRST
AUDITION?

CHECK ALL
APPLY:

- SEX WITH WOMEN
- SEX WITH MEN
- SEX WITH SH
- ORAL SEX
- TEA BAG
- ANAL
- RIMM
- ORA
- EE
- SH



I JUST NEED A COUPLE OF
MINUTES —

TIM! THIS GENTLEMAN
WAS JUST LEAVING.

AUDITION'S OVER,
PRETTY BOY.

CLAP

CRASH

I'M TRYING...
...MY BEST...
...TO BE POLITE!

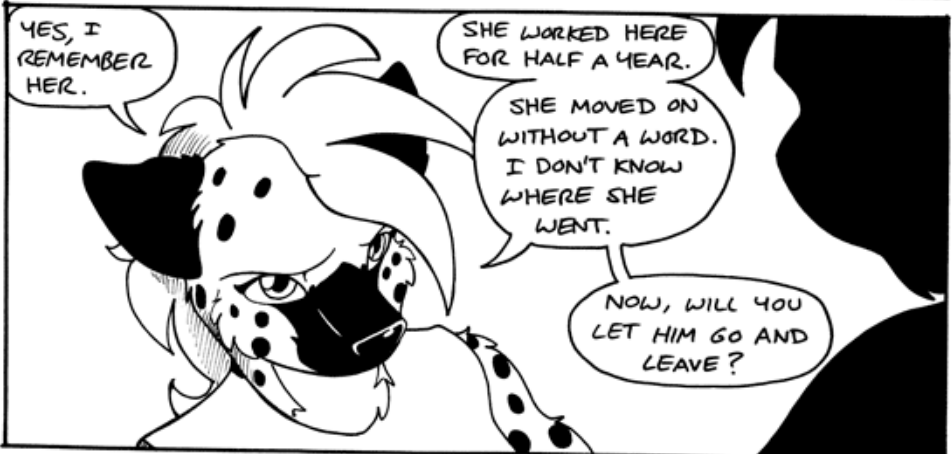
GRRRAAH FUCK!



HER NAME IS PERSIA.

SHE'S A WHITE CAT,
BLONDE HAIR,
BEAUTY MARK...

REMEMBER
HER ?



YES, I
REMEMBER
HER.

SHE WORKED HERE
FOR HALF A YEAR.

SHE MOVED ON
WITHOUT A WORD.
I DON'T KNOW
WHERE SHE
WENT.

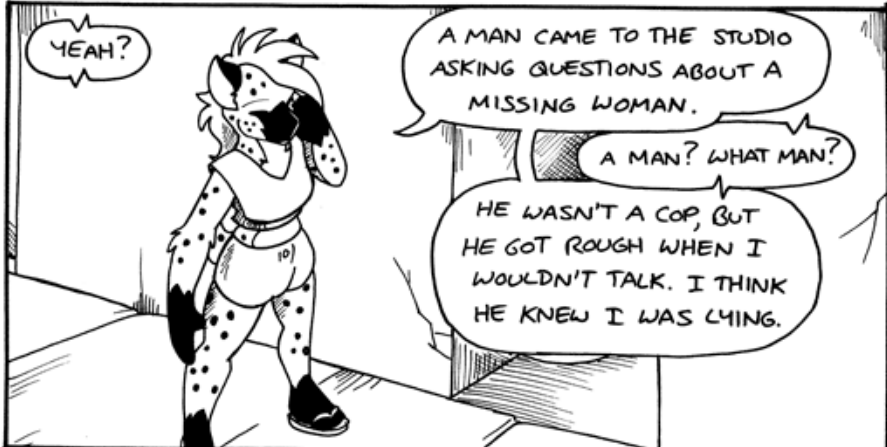
NOW, WILL YOU
LET HIM GO AND
LEAVE ?



WHEN YOU TAKE YOUR HANDS
OFF ME, I'LL BREAK
YOUR FUCKIN' FACE!

CRACK

EYAAAAA



YEAH?

A MAN CAME TO THE STUDIO ASKING QUESTIONS ABOUT A MISSING WOMAN.

A MAN? WHAT MAN?

HE WASN'T A COP, BUT HE GOT ROUGH WHEN I WOULDN'T TALK. I THINK HE KNEW I WAS LYING.



YOU DIDN'T CALL THE COPS, DID YOU?

OF COURSE NOT.

GOOD. IT'S JUST ONE GUY SO—

HE BROKE TIM'S ARM.

... HE WHAT?

I DON'T LIKE THIS DEAL. IT'S WRONG, AND I WANT OUT.

YOU LIKED IT WHEN WE WERE DOING YOUR FIELD WORK AND WRITING YOUR CHECKS.

NOTHING CHANGES.




GEEZ, FISK. YOU DID WHAT?

I SHOOK THINGS UP. I'M SURE SHE'S HIDING SOMETHING.

SO, WHAT NOW?
WHAT DO YOU NEED FROM ME?

SHE JUST CALLED SOMEONE.
HOW HARD WOULD IT BE TO GET HER CELL CALL HISTORY?




UHH... IT WOULD TAKE A FORMAL INVESTIGATION TO GET A WARRANT FROM A JUDGE.

THAT BIG OF A DEAL, HUH?

YEAH, THE CONSTITUTION USUALLY IS.

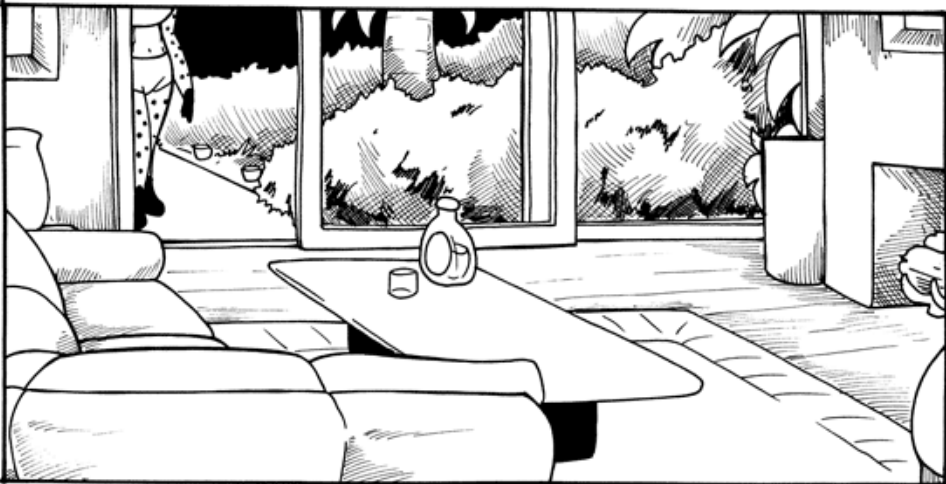
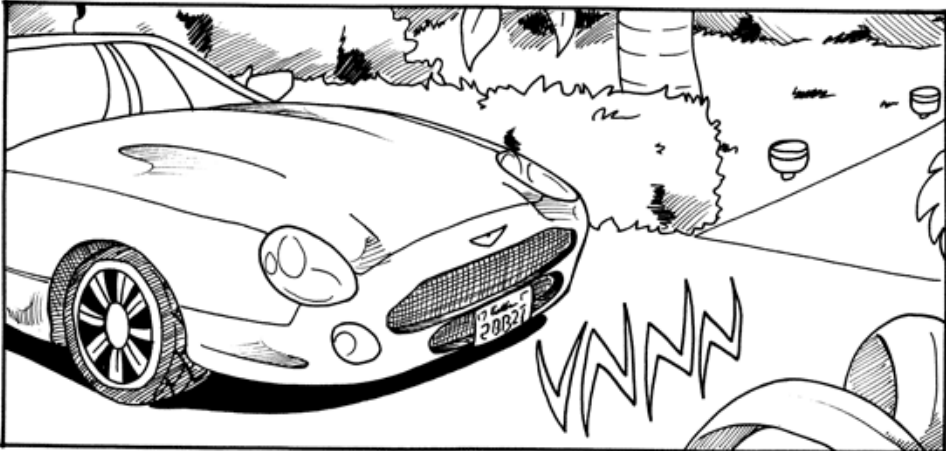
FAIR ENOUGH.
I'LL HAVE TO THINK OF SOMETHING ELSE.



TRY TO STAY OUT OF PRISON, OKAY?

THERE'S ONLY SO MUCH WE CAN DO FOR YOU.

DON'T WORRY.





OH, PERSIA.

YEAH?

I NEED YOU TO RUN OVER AND PICK UP A NEW ACTRESS.



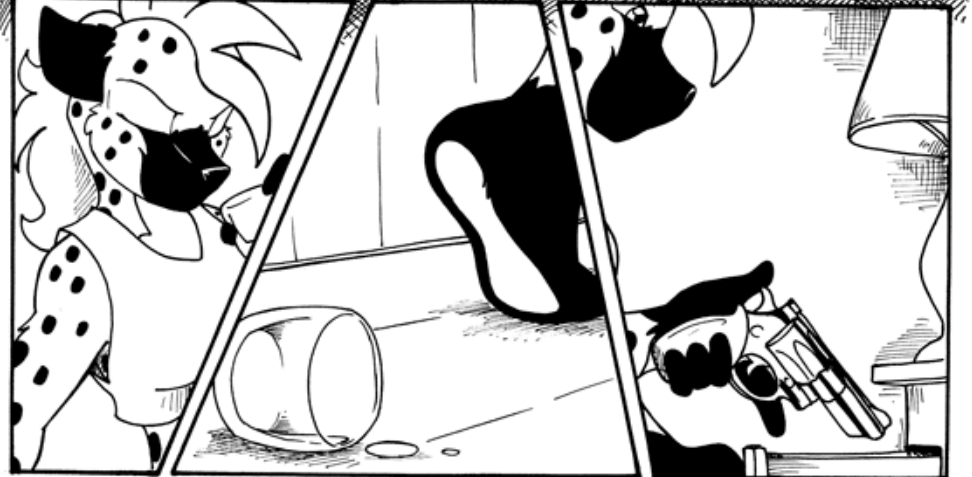
HERE'S HER ADDRESS. I'VE TOLD HER THAT YOU'RE ON YOUR WAY.

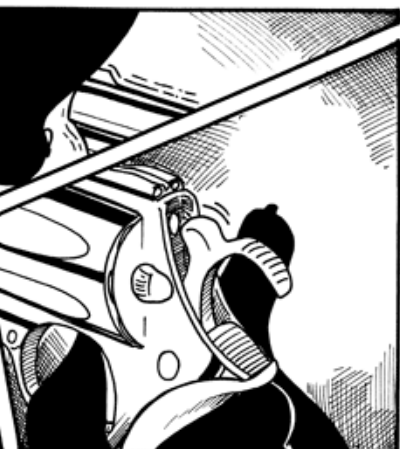
YOU SEEM A LITTLE BLUE, TODAY, SPARKY. WHY SO SOURPUSS?

OKAY!
I'LL BE
RIGHT
BACK!

JUST A LOT OF
STUFF ON MY MIND,
DEAR.

GOODBYE.







YOU CAN KILL YOURSELF.
BUT I HAVE TO ASK FOR YOUR
HELP BEFORE YOU DO.

I WON'T TORTURE
YOU.

ALL I CAN DO
IS ASK.
THEN I'LL
LEAVE.



BUT IF YOU DON'T CARE WHAT'S
ON YOUR CONSCIENCE—

WHO ARE YOU?

PERSIA'S COUSIN.

...

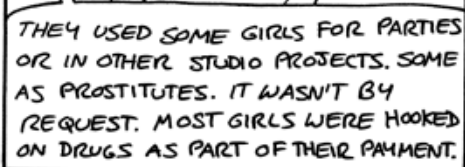
WHAT DO
YOU NEED
FROM ME?

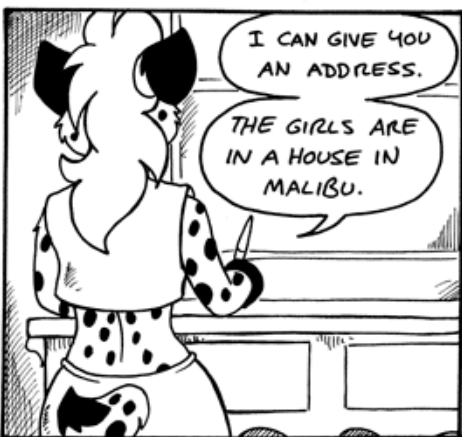


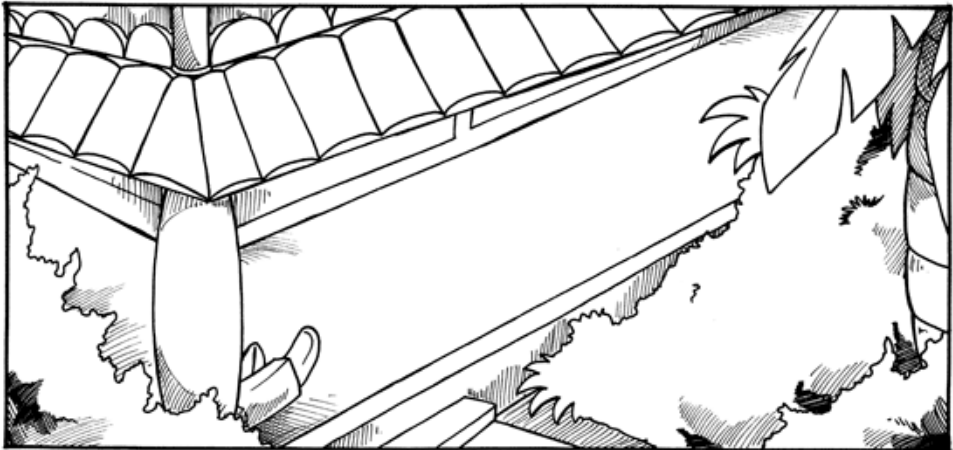
I NEED EVERYTHING
YOU KNOW.

YOU HAVE REGRETS?
SHARE THEM. IF YOU
WANT TO HELP PERSIA,
HELP ME.

I CAN TELL THERE'S
MORE THAT YOU'RE NOT
LETTING ON ABOUT.







HEY, MILO. MIKEY'S GOING OUT FOR A BITE. YOU WANT HIM TO PICK YOU UP SOMETHIN'?

MILO?

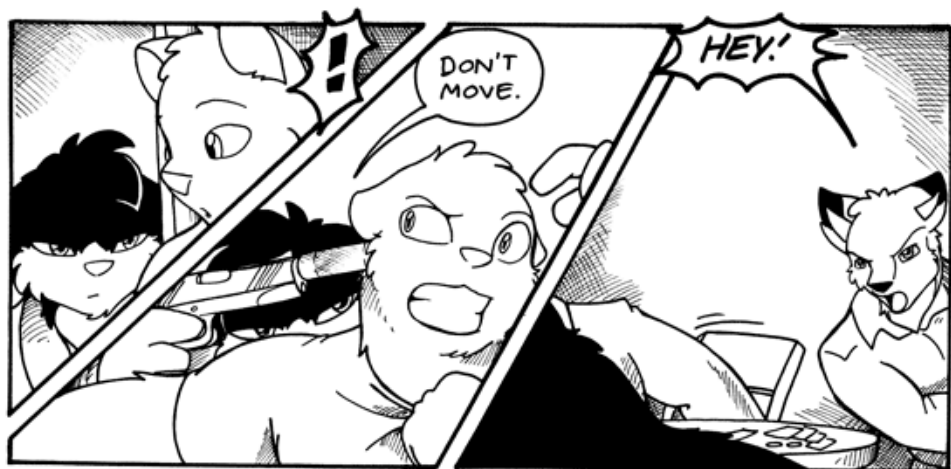


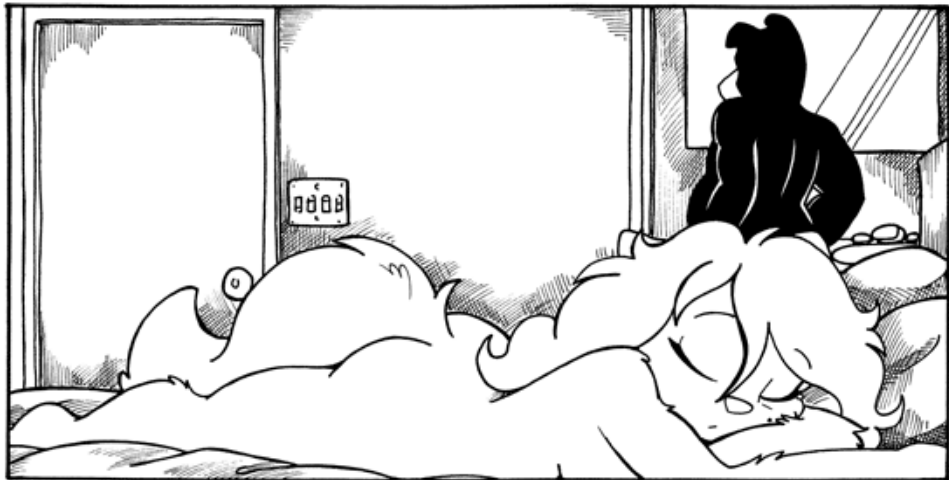
IF YOU FELL ASLEEP IN THE SUN, AGAIN, I'M GONNA SEND MIKEY OUT TO BUST YOUR HEAD.



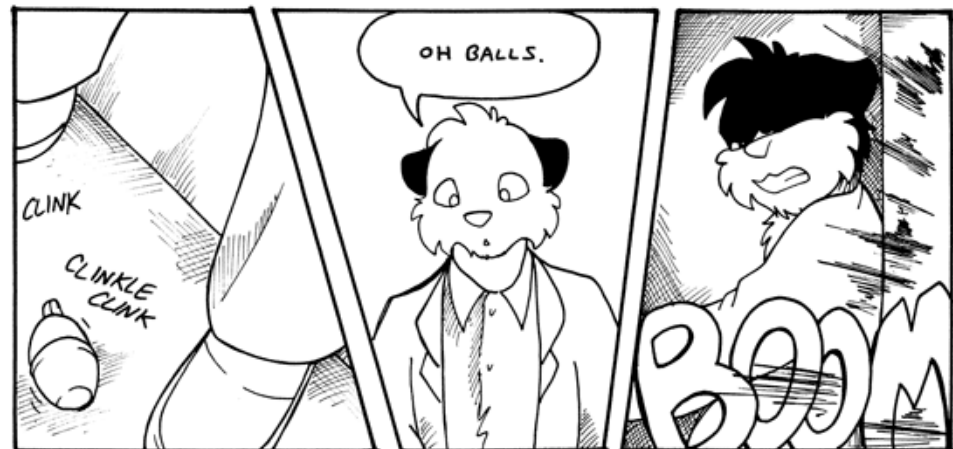
CHECK UP ON HIM ON YOUR WAY OUT.

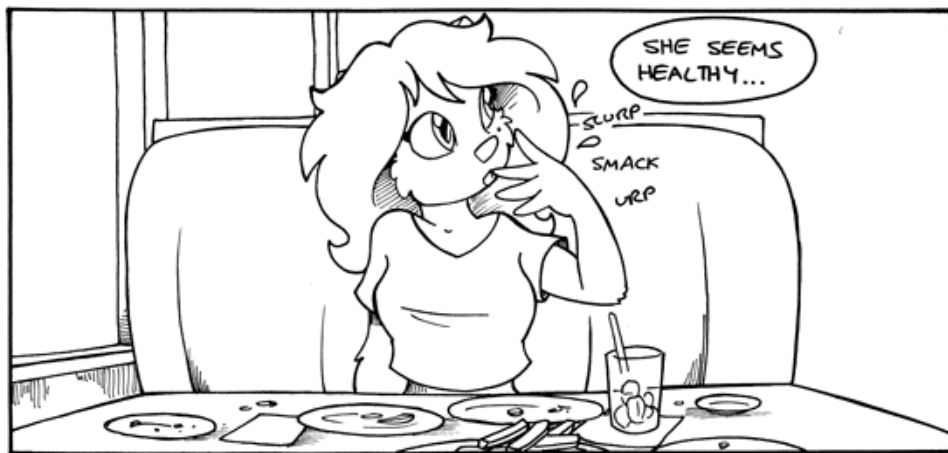
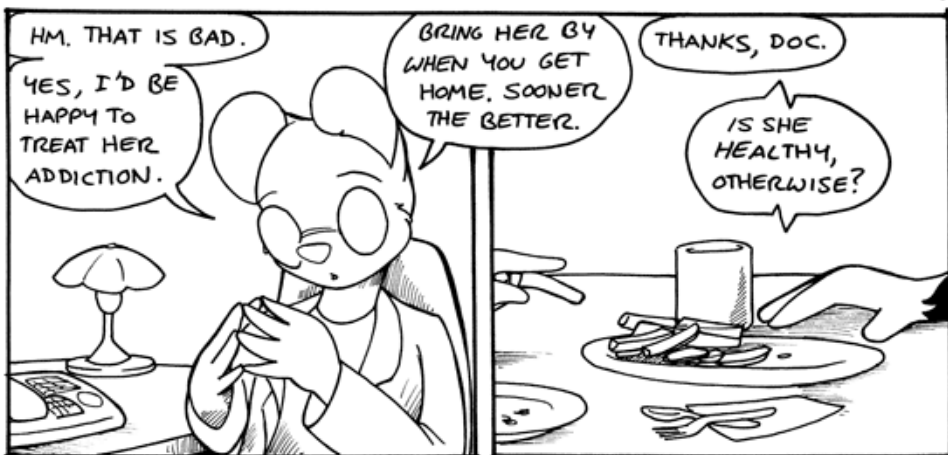
YEAH
YEAH.













YOU KILLED THOSE PEOPLE.
FOR MY SAKE.

NOT ENTIRELY.

RALPHIE, THE WEASEL
GUY, KEPT SAYING THERE
WAS NO SUCH THING AS
RIGHT AND WRONG.

I DON'T KNOW HOW
TO FEEL ABOUT WHAT
YOU DID.

THEN HE CAN'T USE
OUR STANDARDS OF
RIGHT TO DEFEND HIS
RIGHT TO LIVE. I
GAVE HIM WHAT HE
WANTED.

DON'T LET PEOPLE TAKE YOUR
GOOD NATURE AND USE
IT AGAINST YOU.

NO ONE HAS THE
RIGHT TO ENSLAVE YOU.

FAIRFAX, VIRGINIA

OUT!

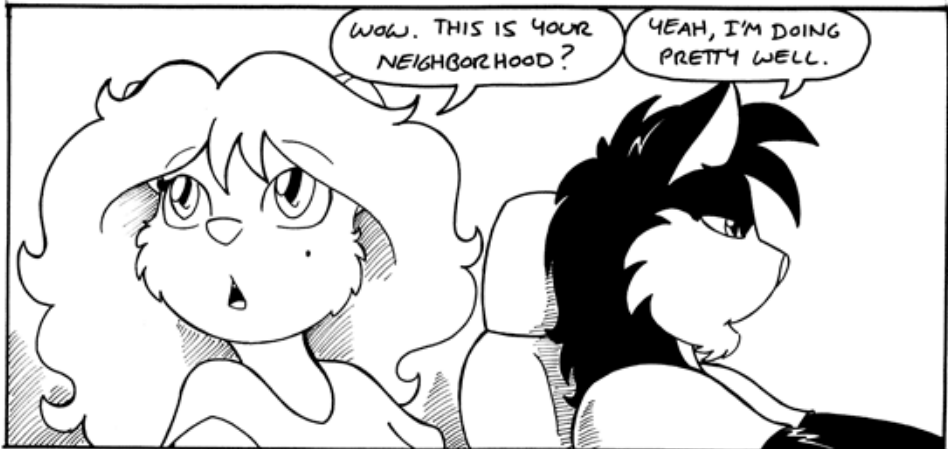
GET OUT OF
MY HOUSE!

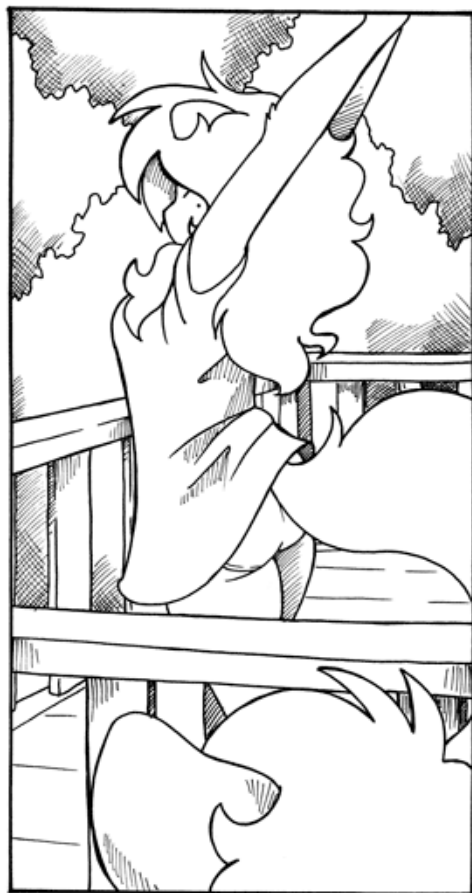
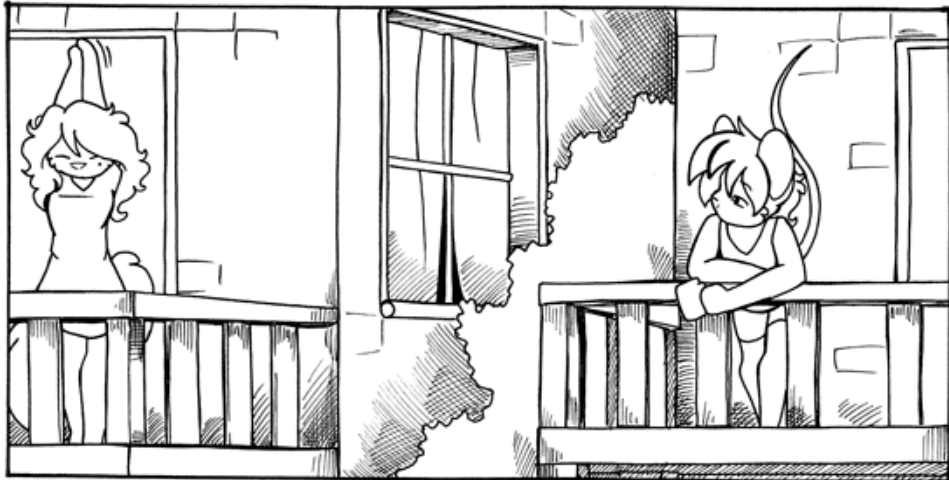
WITH YOUR NO-JOB
AND YOUR NO-HELP...

BUT I HAVE
NOWHERE TO
GO!

GET BY ON YOUR
BIG MUSCLES
AND YOUR GOOD
LOOKS!

HUFF!
MEN.









I DON'T KNOW IF I WOULD
JEOPARDIZE A GOOD RELATIONSHIP
FOR THE POSSIBILITY
OF ADVENTURE.



WELL, LUCY. YOU'VE BEEN TOGETHER
FOR YEARS, BUT YOU SHOULDN'T
FEEL OBLIGATED TO TAKE STEPS
YOU AREN'T READY FOR.



TOMMY'S A SWEET GUY WITH A BRIGHT
FUTURE. WHAT BENEFIT COULD THERE
BE TO STRAYING AROUND WITH

SEVERAL OTHER
GUYS?

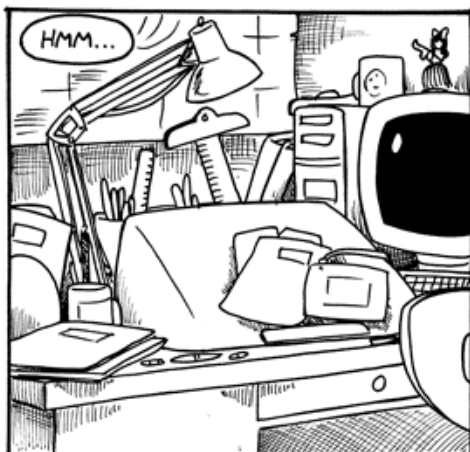


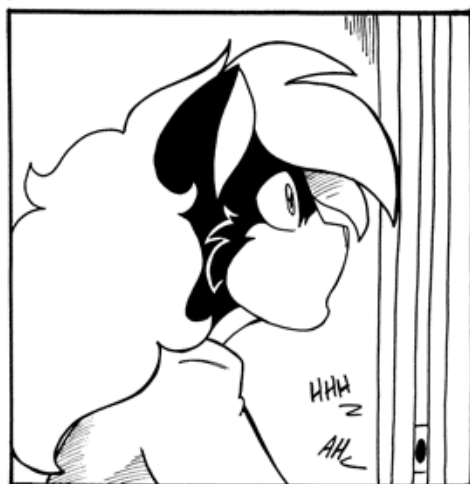
BETH WOULD KNOW!
LETS ASK HER!

COUGH!

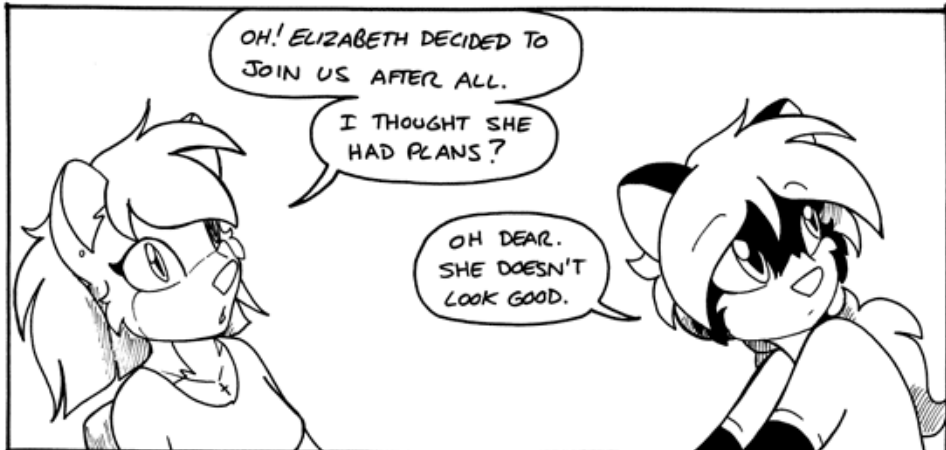


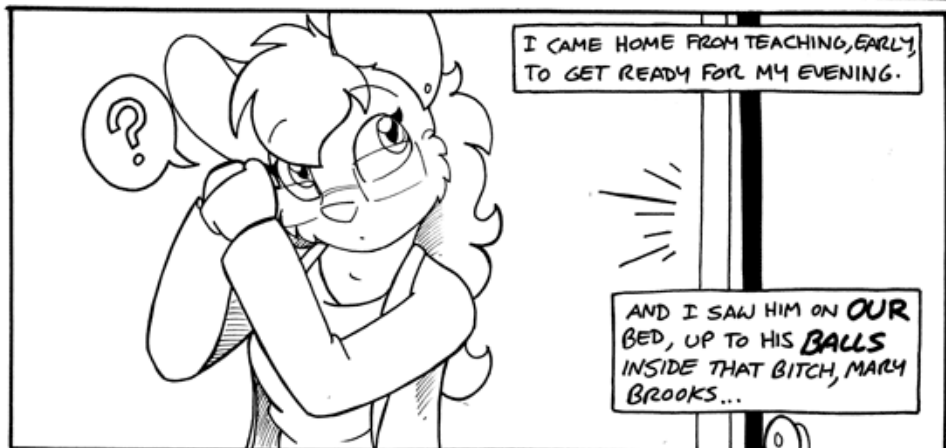














WHAT'S IT MATTER!?

I CAN'T LEAVE DAVID!
MY MOTHER WOULD BE
DEVASTATED!

ELIZABETH! YOU'RE MY FRIEND
AND I LOVE YOU, BUT THAT'S
BULLSHIT!

YOU KNOW WHEN BETH STARTS
TALKING ALL PHILOSOPHICAL AND
WE BARELY KNOW WHAT THE HELL
SHE'S SAYING?

I'M STARTING TO UNDERSTAND!

YOUR MOTHER DOESN'T LIVE YOUR LIFE!
SHE DOESN'T LIVE WITH YOUR DECISIONS!

YOU DO!

SHE DOESN'T WEAR
YOUR FLUR! SHE DOESN'T
HAVE TO FUCK YOUR
HUSBAND...

WHY DO YOU MAKE YOUR MOST
IMPORTANT DECISIONS WITH THE
LEAST CONSIDERATION FOR THE
ONE WHO HAS TO LIVE WITH THEM?

YOU!



OH GOD... LUCY'S RIGHT. I'VE SPENT MY LIFE WORRYING ABOUT EVERYONE'S HAPPINESS, BUT MY OWN!

I ALMOST STARTED A **FAMILY** WITH SOMEONE I DIDN'T LOVE!



WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO?

I DON'T KNOW.



I'LL TELL YOU WHAT SHE'S GOING TO DO! SHE'S GOING TO HAVE FUN WITH HER FRIENDS AND FORGET ABOUT DAVID FOR THE WEEKEND!



FSK?

BECAUSE, YOU KNOW... MY BROTHER'S COMING HOME FROM HIS TRIP, THIS WEEKEND...

WELL, I DON'T HAVE **ANOTHER** BROTHER.



NO WAY!

WAY.

I ALWAYS HAD AN IMPRESSION DAVID WAS SLIMY, EVER SINCE I MET HIM.

WHAT'S SHE GOING TO DO?

NOT SURE. BUT I GAVE HER FISK'S NUMBER FOR WHEN HE COMES BACK.

THEY'VE LIKED EACH OTHER SINCE THEY WERE KIDS.


I KNOW.

YOU'RE HOPING SHE'LL HAVE AN AFFAIR WITH FISK?

WELL... WHO KNOWS...

OH NO, LUCY. FISK IS SUPPOSED TO BE **MY** OCCASIONAL DALLIANCE!

YOU DONT EXPECT THAT TO LAST FOREVER, DO YOU?



SIGH... YEAH
I SUPPOSE.

WELL, YOU COULD HAVE HAD
FISK TO YOURSELF IF YOU'D
LET HIM HAVE HIS CAREER.

HMM.
I KNOW...

BESIDES, YOU AND ARON HAVE THAT
"OPEN" UNDERSTANDING. YOU DON'T
MIND WHEN **HE** HOOKS UP WITH
OTHER LADIES,
DO YOU?

HM. TRUE. BUT HE'S NEVER
HOOKED UP WITH ANYONE ELSE
AS FAR AS I KNOW. I'M HIS
ONLY SOURCE OF
SEX.

OH...

OH, I
SEE.

SIGH...



OH! ARON, WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?

HELLO LUCY.

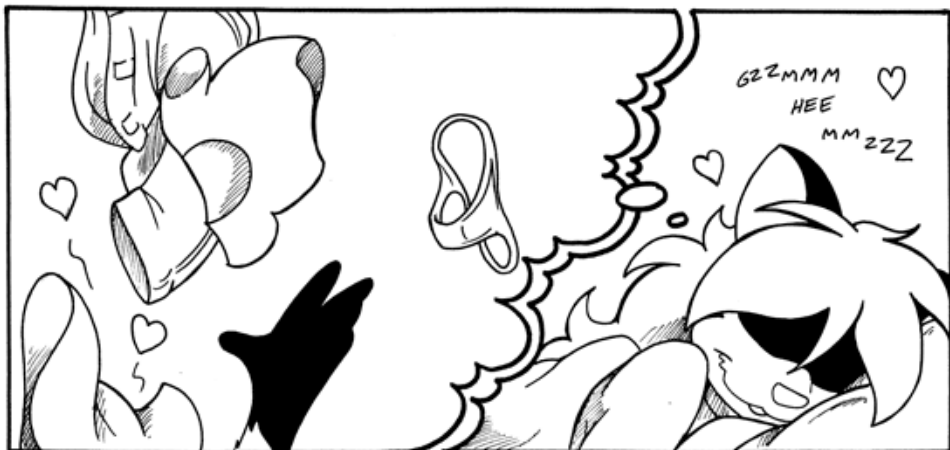


I KNOW YOU WATCHED US...



LET ME SHOW YOU...

OHHH~













DON'T THINK OF TAKING ADVANTAGE OF LUCY'S UNCERTAINTY!

I WOULD NEVER!



IT'S FAR MORE FLATTERING TO WAIT FOR CERTAINTY!

JUST BE CAREFUL, ARON. YOU'RE MESSING AROUND WITH SOME OF YOUR BEST FRIENDSHIPS.




NO... LUCY IS.

YOU KNOW AS WELL AS I DO THAT THEIR RELATIONSHIP DOESN'T HINGE ON MY ACTIONS, BUT ON HER DESIRES.

NOTHING I DO, OR **DON'T DO**, WILL CHANGE HER DESIRE FOR WHAT SHE BELIEVES SHE'S LACKING.

THAT IS WHAT IS AFFECTING THEIR RELATIONSHIP.

SIGH...




HOW WAS YOUR TRIP?


MM. THE USUAL, YOU KNOW.
NOTHING SPECIAL.



OH, PLENTY OF "SPECIAL" THINGS
HAVE BEEN HAPPENING HERE!



OH? LIKE
WHAT?



ELIZABETH CAUGHT
DAVID CHEATING, AND
IS THINKING OF LEAVING
HIM! ISN'T THAT
GREAT!?

UH...



AAAND SHE *MAY*
CALL YOU THIS
WEEKEND.

JUST
SAYING.

MAYBE.

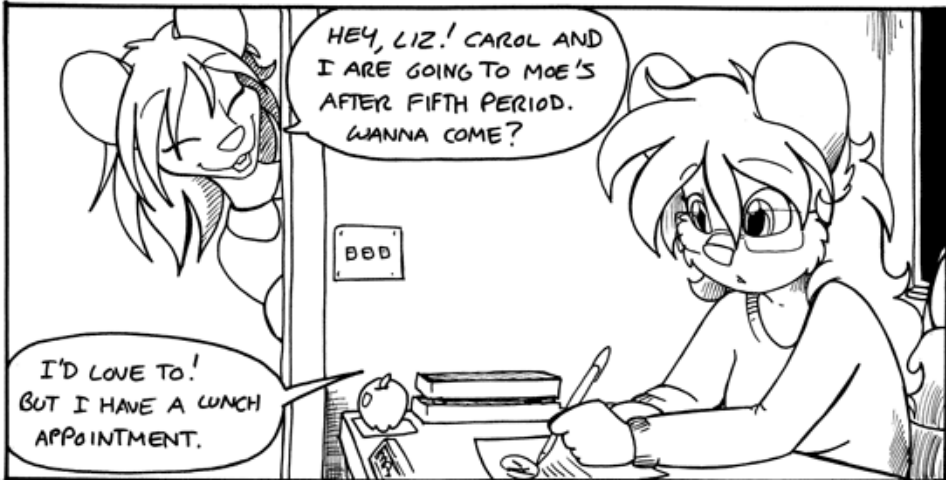


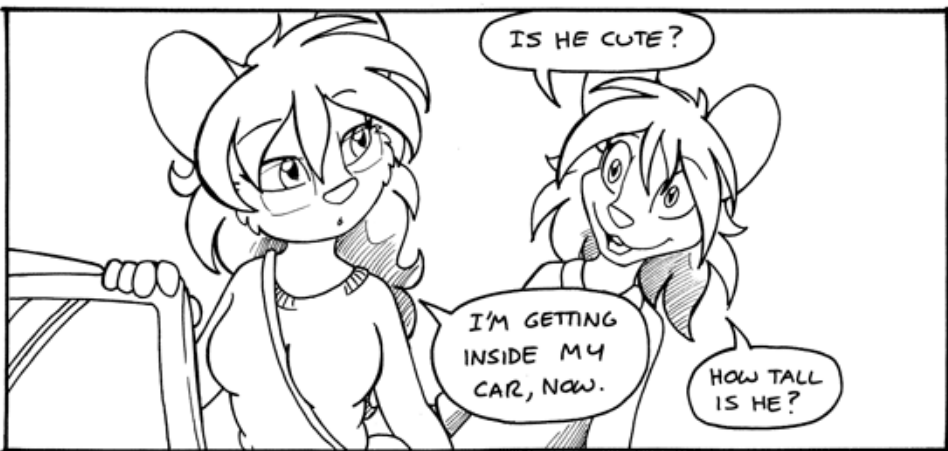
YOU CAN THANK
ME LATER, IF
YOU WANT.

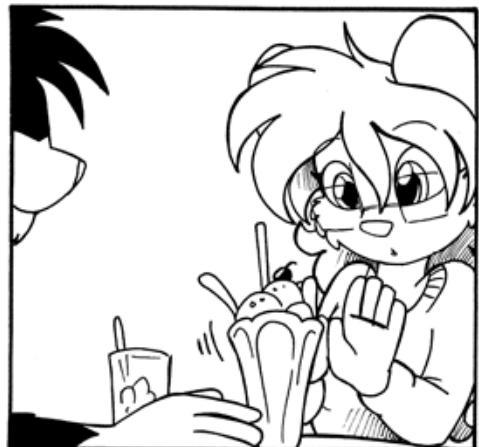


I'M SORRY. I'VE BEEN IN
SINGAPORE FOR A MONTH.
ALL I CAN THINK ABOUT IS
HAVING A REAL AMERICAN
CHEESEBURGER, RIGHT NOW.

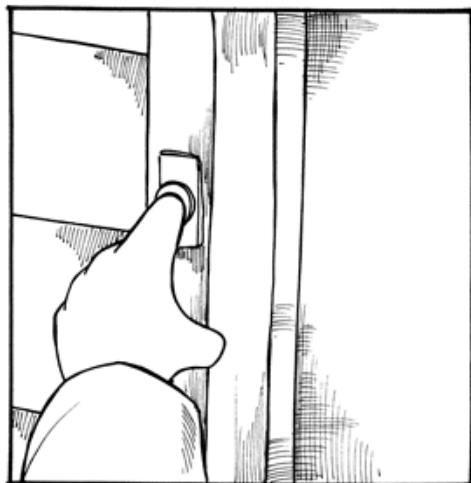
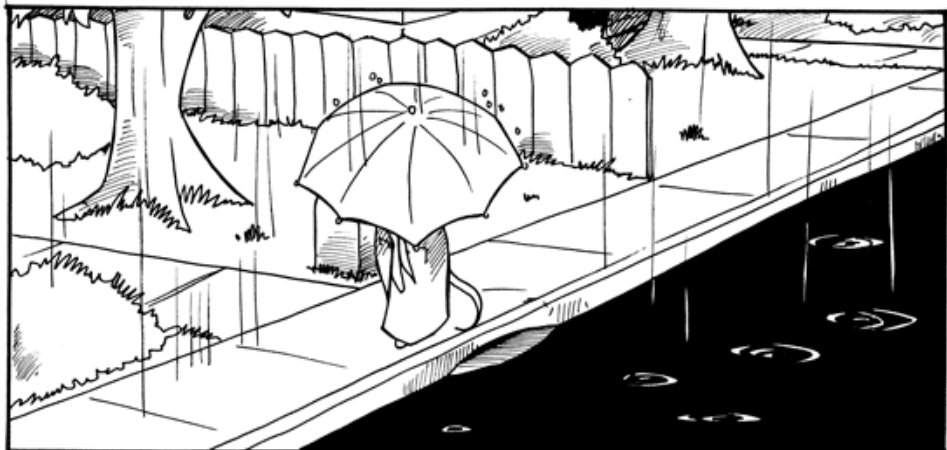
















SIGH...



WHAT'S WRONG,
BETH?

LUCY WENT TO HAVE
SEX WITH ARON AND
I...



YOU DON'T SAY?



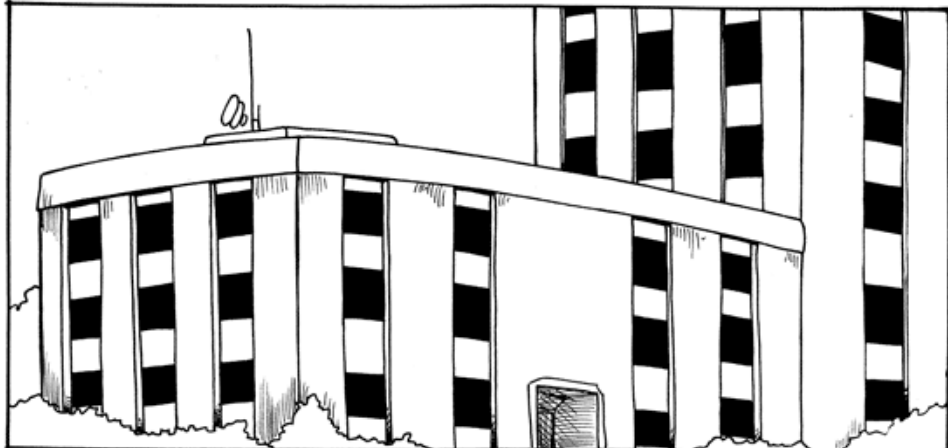
WHAT ARE YOU
DOING HERE !?

WHERE'S
LUCY !?

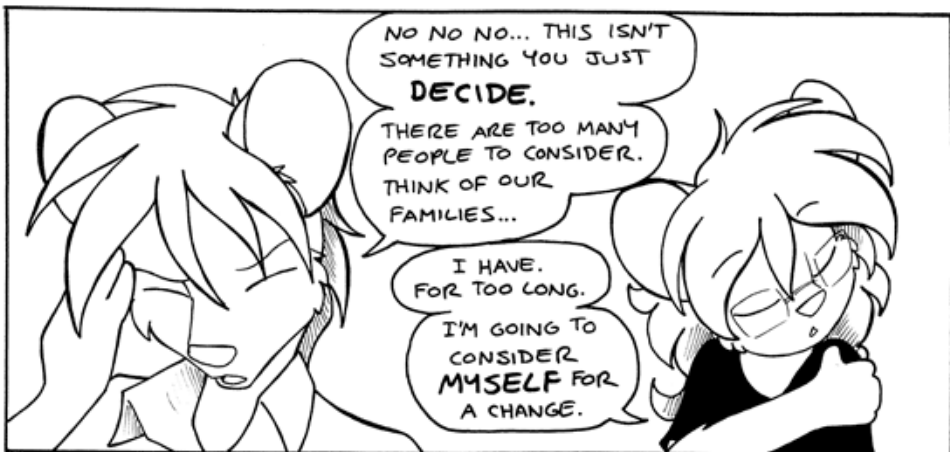
I DON'T KNOW!

SHE JUST GRABBED HER
PURSE AND LEFT WHEN
SHE FINISHED TALKING TO
YOU!

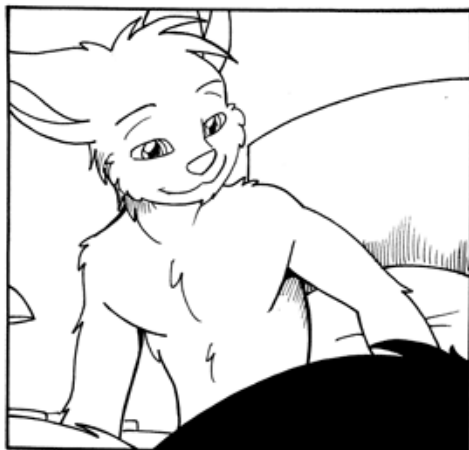















UNLESS YOU WANT TO SEE IF I CAN BLOW OFF WORK, TODAY.

MMM, NO.

I WON'T FALL FOR THAT FALSE CHOICE.

I WANT YOU TO WORK.

OH?

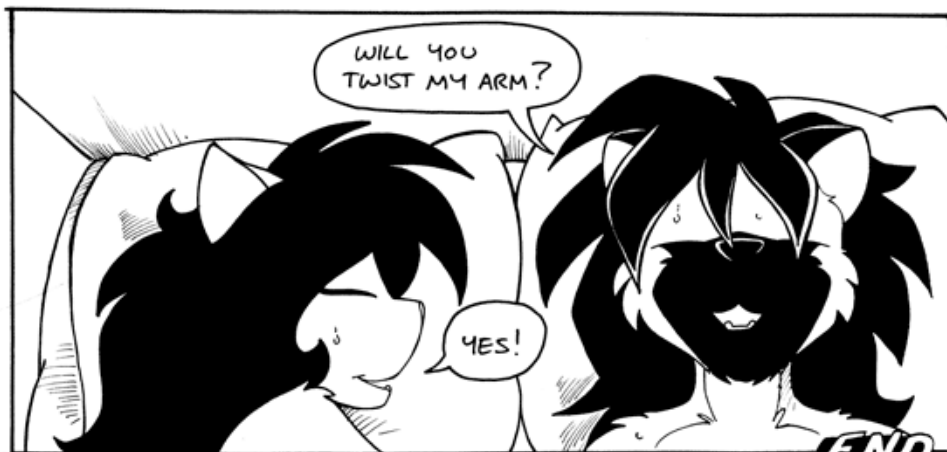
I LOVE YOU, TOMMY. AND I WANT YOU. YOU. NOT SOME VERSION OF YOU THAT DOESN'T INCLUDE WHAT YOU DO.

I WON'T HAVE ANYTHING BUT YOU, AND DON'T EVER SUGGEST OFFERING ME ANYTHING ELSE, AGAIN.

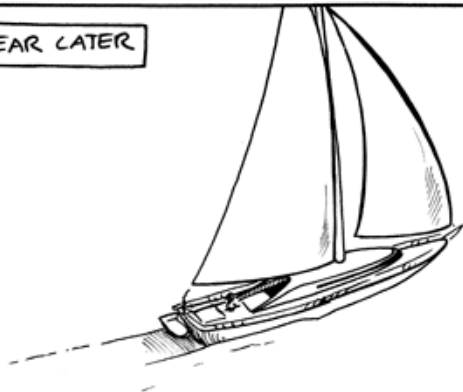
JUST... WHEN YOU'RE DONE TONIGHT, NO MATTER HOW LONG IT TAKES, RETURN HERE.

CONSIDER THIS "HOME".

THAT'S ALL I NEED.



ONE YEAR LATER



HA-HA. RUN OUT THE
STARBOARD BATTERY
AND BUCKLE
MY SWASH!



SET THE JIB
AND STOW THE
WENCHES!

YOU DON'T
EVEN KNOW
WHAT THAT
MEANS!





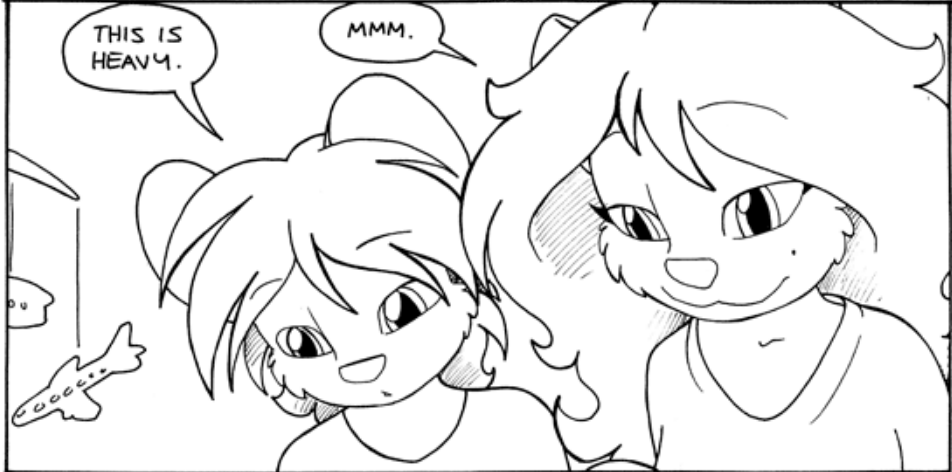
I PROMISE I WON'T CRASH INTO ANYTHING!

UM...

PLEASE?

OKAY, BUT YOU HAVE TO REMOVE THAT STUPID HAT.

ARON!

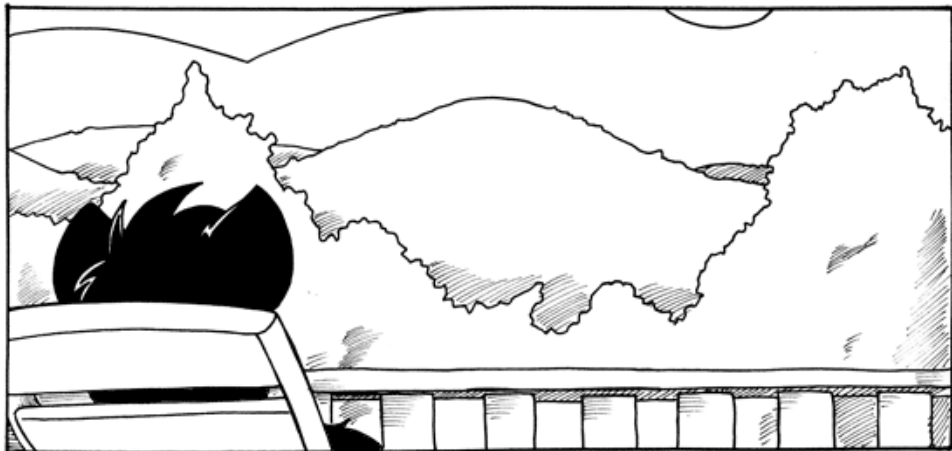


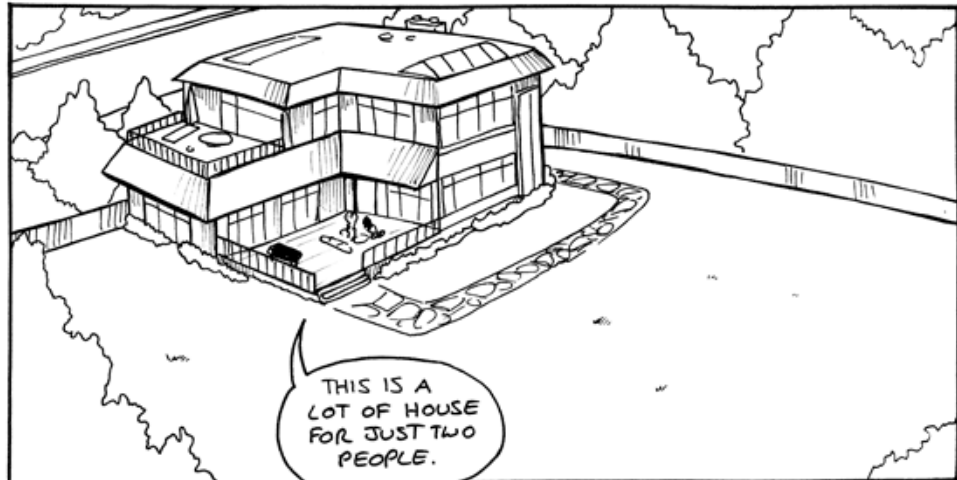














Thank you, and good night.