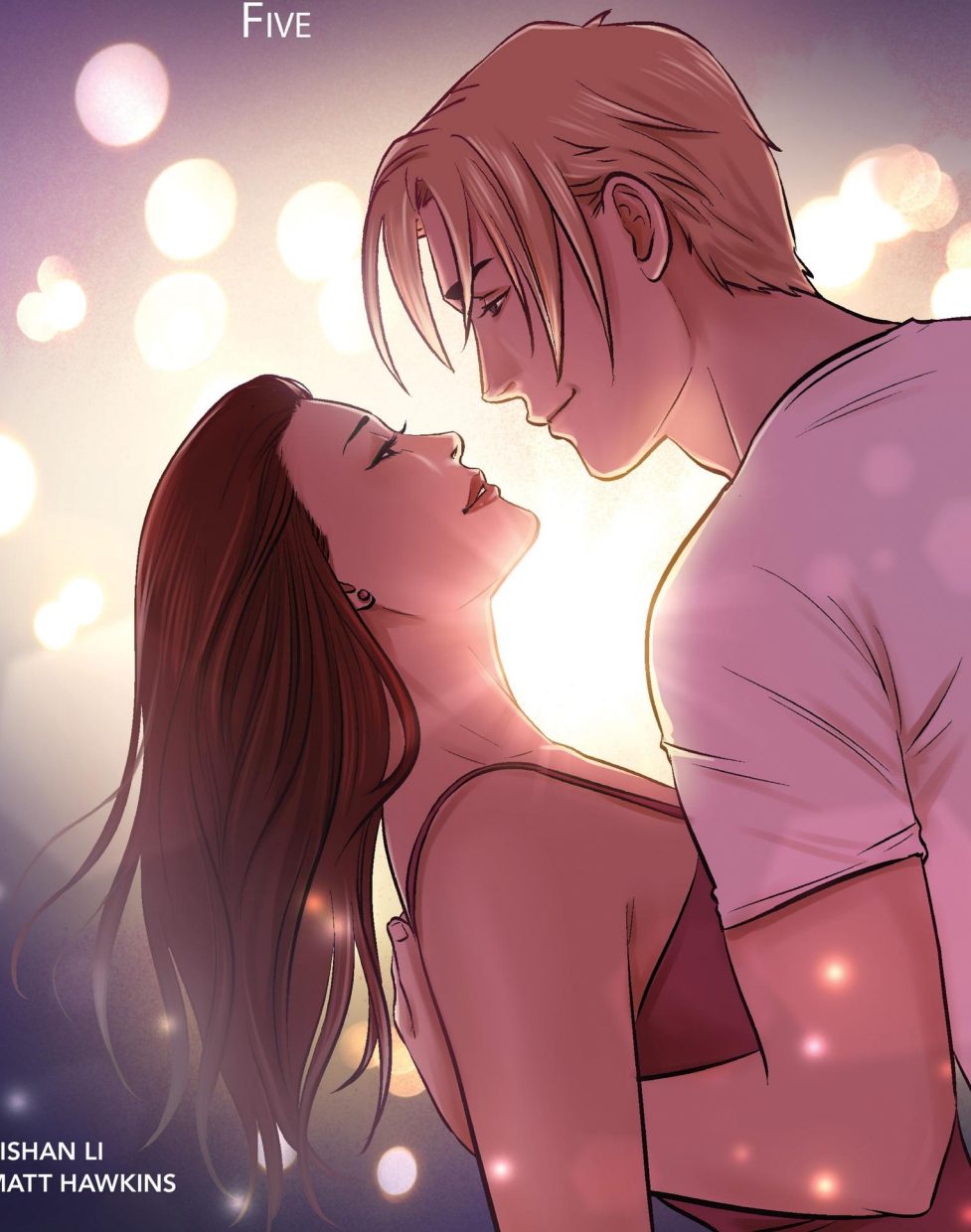


Swing™

VOLUME
FIVE



YISHAN LI
MATT HAWKINS

TOP COW PRODUCTIONS PRESENTS



Created by

LINDA SEJIC, MATT HAWKINS & JENNI CHEUNG



Published by Top Cow Productions, Inc.
Los Angeles

Top Cow Productions Presents...



CREATED BY
Linda Sejic, Matt Hawkins and Jenni Cheung

WRITTEN BY
Matt Hawkins

ART BY
Yishan Li

LETTERING BY
Troy Peteri

**BASED ON A STORY
AND CHARACTERS DEVELOPED BY**
Linda Sejic
Stjepan Sejic
Matt Hawkins
Jenni Cheung



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CAST



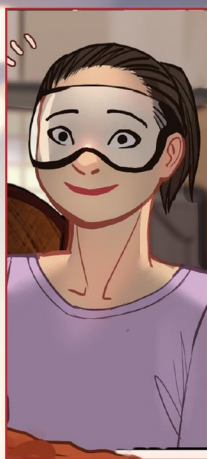
Cathy Chang



Dan Lincoln



**Blake
Lincoln**



**Ashley
Lincoln**



Mom

In the last four volumes of

Swing



DAN LINCOLN WAS A BRIGHT YOUNG GRAD STUDENT AND A GIFTED WRITER...

DETERMINED TO CRAFT THE NEXT GREAT AMERICAN NOVEL.

WHEN THEY FIRST MET, SPARKS FLEW.



IT WASN'T LONG BEFORE THEIR "TUTORING SESSIONS" TURNED INTO SOMETHING ELSE...

CATHY GRANT WAS A COLLEGE FRESHMAN, ON HER OWN AND CUTTING LOOSE FOR THE FIRST TIME IN HER SHELTERED LIFE.



AND WHEN THEIR FLING TURNED INTO SOMETHING DEEPER...



THEY FOUND THEMSELVES FACING A NEW CHALLENGE - TOGETHER.



BUT FOR ALL THE FEAR THAT COMES WITH A SHOT-GUN WEDDING, DAN AND CATHY WERE HAPPY.



THEY BELIEVED IN EACH OTHER. WHATEVER CAME NEXT...

THEY COULD FACE IT TOGETHER.

BUT 8 YEARS AND TWO KIDS LATER,
THE MAGIC STARTED TO FADE.

ROUTINE REPLACED ROMANCE.

RESPONSIBILITY

DAN STARTED TEACHING HIGH
SCHOOL ENGLISH --

AND SPENT MORE TIME GRIND-
ING AWAY AT 90S THAN WRIT-
ING HIS NOVEL.

CATHY ENDED UP IN THE ENTER-
TAINMENT INDUSTRY --

COURTING CLIENTS AND MANAG-
ING A TEAM OF WEB DESIGNERS
AND ENGINEERS.

THE MORE THEY CRIBED, THE
MORE TEMPTATION LOOMED.

BUT THEY LOVED EACH OTHER.

THEY DIDN'T WANT TO FEEL THIS
RECENTMENT

THEY BOTH WANTED TO FEEL
CLOSER...

THEY WOULD BECOME SWINGERS.

THEY WANTED TO FEEL
THE HEAT AGAIN.

AND CATHY HAD A PLAN TO PUT
THE SPICE BACK INTO THEIR
MARRIAGE.

I THINK I'D LIKE
TO TRY THAT.



THEY MADE RULES. THEY RESPECTED EACH OTHER'S BOUNDARIES.

AND AT FIRST, MERELY ENTERTAINING THE IDEA SEEMED TO BRING BACK THE OLD EXCITEMENT.

BUT DAN WAS SKEPTICAL AND INSECURE.

CATHY WAS PATIENT...

WHAT THE FUCK?



BUT SHE WORRIED THEIR MARRIAGE WAS ENDING BEFORE THEY COULD EVEN TRY OPENING IT UP.

SHE CONFIDED IN AN OLD FRIEND...



SO WITH DEBBIE'S HELP, CATHY HATCHED A PLAN.

NO STRANGERS, NO SPECIAL CLUBS --

JUST GOOD OLD-FASHIONED SEDUCTION.



IT WAS FAR FROM TRADITIONAL, BUT IT WORKED.

HERE WAS SOMETHING NEW, AND DAN AND CATHY LOVED IT.

AND LOVED EACH OTHER MORE FOR IT.

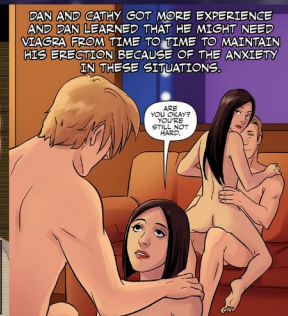


AFTER CATHY GOT DAN A SERIES OF THREESOMES WITH HER FRIENDS, HE WAS WILLING TO TRY A FOURSOME WITH ANOTHER COUPLE.



HI, GUYS. I'M MARY, AND THIS IS MY HUSBAND CLINT. WE USE CHERI AND JACK UNTIL WE SEE THE COUPLE'S LEGIT.

FIGHTING THROUGH A SERIES OF FAKES AND FLAKES VIA THE SWINGERS' ONLINE DATING SITES, THEY FINALLY MET CLINT AND MARY, A COUPLE THEY BOTH LIKED, AND THEY HAD THEIR FIRST SUCCESSFUL COUPLES SWING.



DAN AND CATHY GOT MORE EXPERIENCE AND DAN LEARNED THAT HE MIGHT NEED VIAGRA FROM TIME TO TIME TO MAINTAIN HIS ERECTION BECAUSE OF THE ANXIETY IN THESE SITUATIONS.

ARE YOU CLARY? YOU'RE MARY.

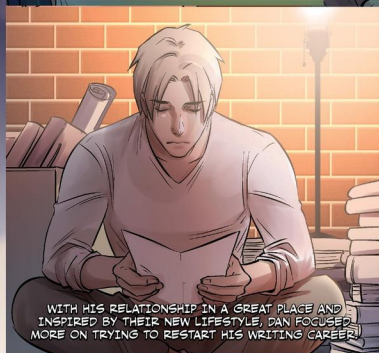


NOT AT ALL. IT'S JUST A REGULAR FRIDAY, BUT I WANTED TO TREAT YOU TO A SPECIAL NIGHT OUT.

WANTING TO MAKE SURE THEIR RELATIONSHIP STAYED ROCK SOLID, THEY INSTITUTED REGULAR DATE NIGHTS FOR JUST THE TWO OF THEM.



THEIR COMMUNICATION, HONESTY AND SHARED EXPERIENCE RESULTED IN A RENAISSANCE IN THEIR RELATIONSHIP. LIFE WAS GOOD.



WITH HIS RELATIONSHIP IN A GREAT PLACE AND INSPIRED BY THEIR NEW LIFESTYLE, DAN FOCUSED MORE ON TRYING TO RESTART HIS WRITING CAREER.



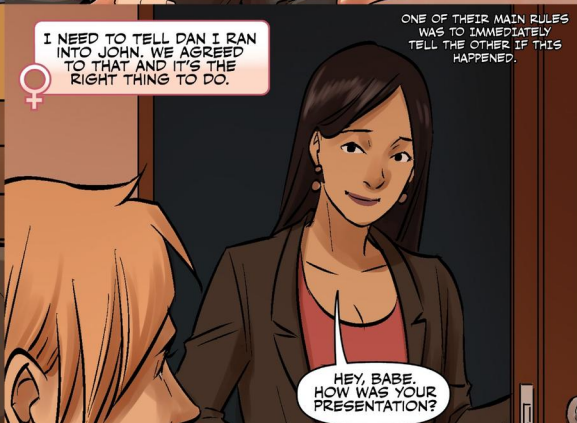
I'M CATHY CHANG. MANY OF YOU KNOW ME ALREADY, FOR THE PAST FIVE YEARS WE'VE DONE A SERIES OF TRAILERS FOR YOUR FILMS.

SINCE YOU'RE IN THE FILM BUSINESS, I THOUGHT IT APPROPRIATE MY TEAM PUT TOGETHER A SHORT FILM TO SHOW WHAT I'M PITCHING, RATHER THAN JUST TALKING AT YOU.

CATHY WAS ALSO ADVANCING WELL IN HER CAREER AND PITCHED AN OVERALL DEAL TO A MAJOR STUDIO.



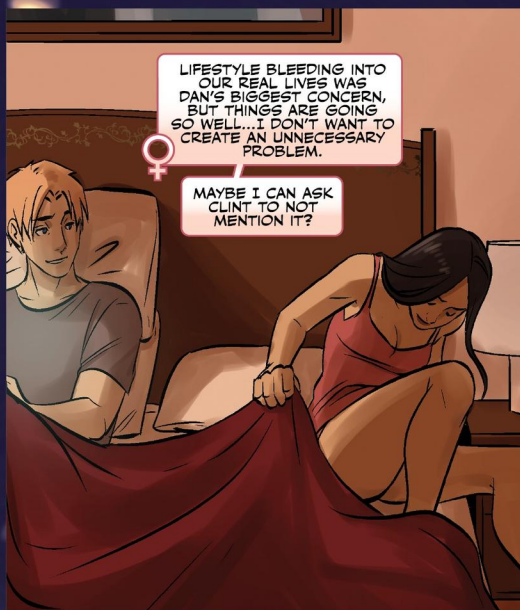
ONE OF DAN'S PRIMARY CONCERNS ABOUT THIS LIFESTYLE WAS IT CROSSING OVER INTO THEIR REAL LIVES. HE WANTED TO KEEP THIS PART OF THEM COMPARTMENTALIZED AND SEPARATE FROM EVERYTHING ELSE SO IT CREATED A PROBLEM FOR CATHY WHEN SHE RAN INTO CLINT DURING ONE OF HER STUDIO MEETINGS.



I NEED TO TELL DAN I RAN INTO JOHN. WE AGREED TO THAT AND IT'S THE RIGHT THING TO DO.

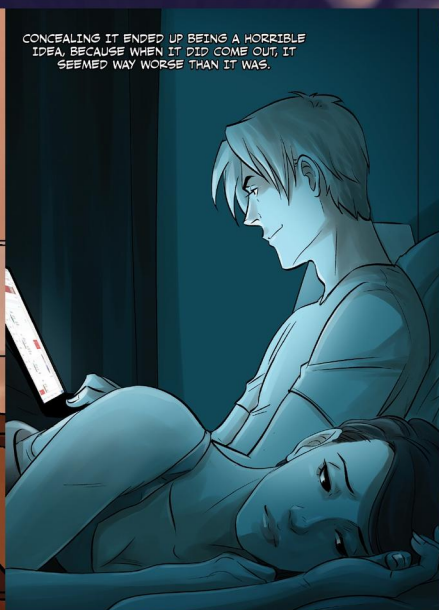
ONE OF THEIR MAIN RULES WAS TO IMMEDIATELY TELL THE OTHER IF THIS HAPPENED.

HEY, BABE. HOW WAS YOUR PRESENTATION?

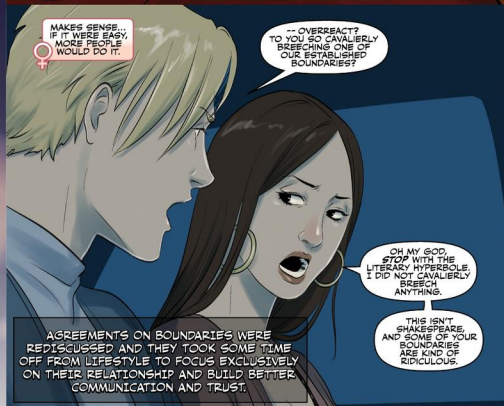


LIFESTYLE BLEEDING INTO OUR REAL LIVES WAS DAN'S BIGGEST CONCERN, BUT THINGS ARE GOING SO WELL...I DON'T WANT TO CREATE AN UNNECESSARY PROBLEM.

MAYBE I CAN ASK CLINT TO NOT MENTION IT?



CONCEALING IT ENDED UP BEING A HORRIBLE IDEA, BECAUSE WHEN IT DID COME OUT, IT SEEMED WAY WORSE THAN IT WAS.



MAKES SENSE, IF IT WERE EASY, MORE PEOPLE WOULD DO IT.

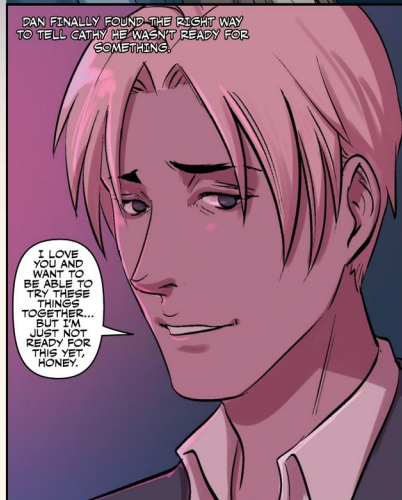
--OVERREACT? TO YOU SO CAVALIERLY BREACHING ONE OF OUR ESTABLISHED BOUNDARIES?

ON MY SOG STOP WITH THE LITERARY HYPERBOLIC I DID NOT CAVALIERLY BREACH ANYTHING.

AGREEMENTS ON BOUNDARIES WERE REDISCUSSSED AND THEY TOOK SOME TIME OFF FROM LIFESTYLE TO FOCUS EXCLUSIVELY ON THEIR RELATIONSHIP AND BUILD BETTER COMMUNICATION AND TRUST.

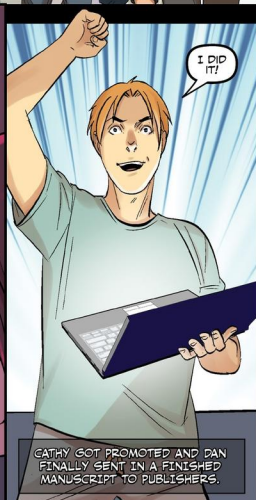


ON A FAMILY VACATION, THEY DECIDED TO HIT A SWINGER CLUB OUT OF STATE, JUST THE TWO OF THEM, AND IT REKINDLED THEIR JOINT DESIRE FOR LIFESTYLE.



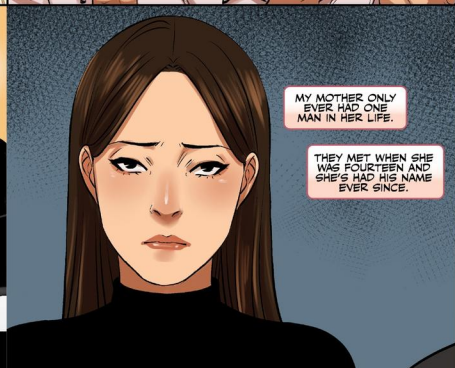
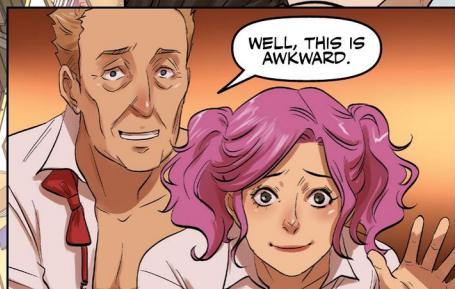
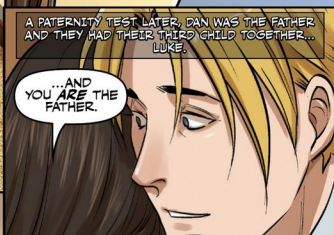
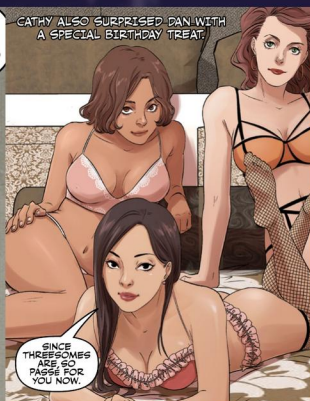
I LOVE YOU AND WANT TO BE ABLE TO TRY THESE THINGS TOGETHER... BUT I'M JUST NOT READY FOR THIS YET, HONEY.

I'M SORRY.



I DID IT!

CATHY GOT PROMOTED AND DAN FINALLY SENT IN A FINISHED MANUSCRIPT TO PUBLISHERS.



♀ THE CITY OF SIN.

GIVEN MY HEDONISTIC WAYS OF LATE, I'M NOT SURE I BELIEVE THAT ETHICAL NON-MONO GAMY IS A SIN.



DO YOU EVER FEEL GUILTY ABOUT SWINGING?

YEAH... I KNOW I SHOULDN'T... BUT I DO.

I WAS RAISED BUDDHIST AND NONE OF THOSE TEXTS DISCUSS MONOGAMY LIKE WESTERN RELIGIONS DO.

I HAVEN'T BEEN IN A CHURCH SINCE WE GOT MARRIED, BUT THAT EARLY SOUTHERN BAPTIST INDOCTRINATION IS HARD TO SHAKE.

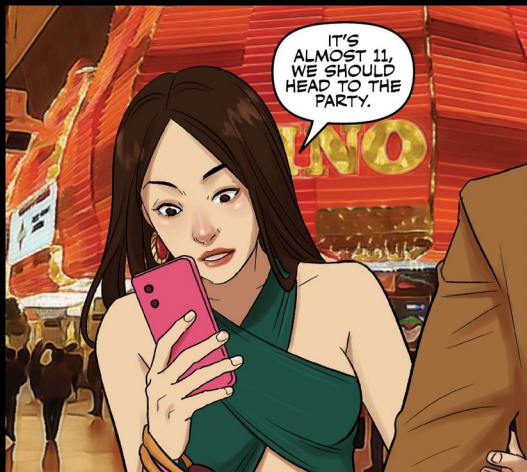
I'M NOT KNOCKING RELIGION, IT'S GOOD FOR SOME... BUT MY DAD WAS AN AWFUL ROLE MODEL.

HE'D BE SINGING IN THE PEWS ON SUNDAY MORNING AND CHEATING ON MY MOM BY MID-AFTERNOON.

OUR WAY IS BETTER.

DELET
DELET
DELET





IT'S
ALMOST 11,
WE SHOULD
HEAD TO THE
PARTY.



LET'S
GET A DRINK
FOR THE
WALK.



I LOVE IT
THAT YOU CAN
DRINK OUTSIDE
HERE ON THE
STRIP..THE
USUAL?

YEAH.

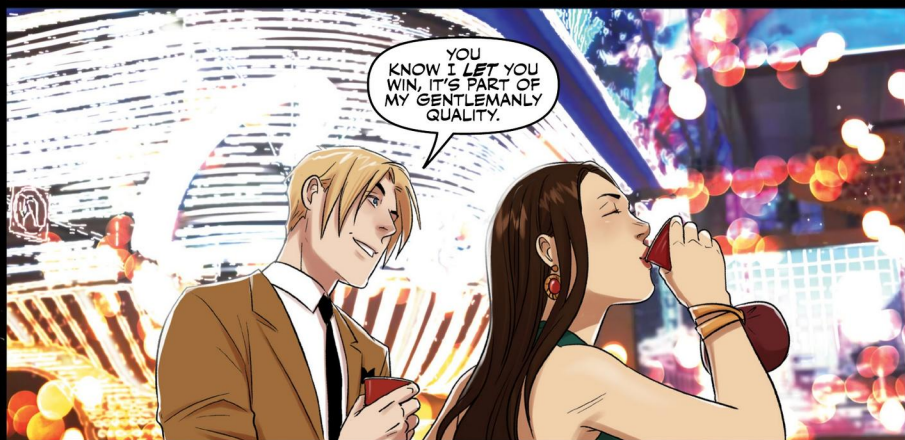


TWO JACK
AND DIETS
PLEASE, TO
GO.

YOU
KNOW WHAT
WOULD BE
FUN?



BEER
PONG AT
O'SHEAS
AFTER THE
PARTY!



HOTEL TAKEOVER PARTIES ARE A BIG PART OF LIFESTYLE.

LARGE GROUPS OF SWINGERS FROM ALL OVER CONVERGING IN ONE PLACE FOR A NIGHT OR A WEEKEND.

MOST PEOPLE CONSIDER SWINGING TO BE A FRINGE THING...BUT IT'S NOT...THERE ARE MORE SWINGERS THAN BDSM PARTICIPANTS...BY FAR.

I'M FINE WITH A NO, BUT IF THERE'S A PUPPY PILE...CAN WE JOIN?

YEAH, I THINK I AM FINALLY DOWN TO TRY THE ORGY, THANK YOU FOR BEING PATIENT WITH ME ON THAT.

I KNOW IT'S BEEN A FANTASY FOR YOU FOR A LONG TIME, JUST MAKE SURE ALL THE GUYS ARE WEARING CONDOMS AND STAY NEAR ME, PLEASE.

OF COURSE.

DO YOU HAVE YOUR INVITATION?

**SPECIAL
EVENT**

**INVITATION
ONLY**

THANK YOU.

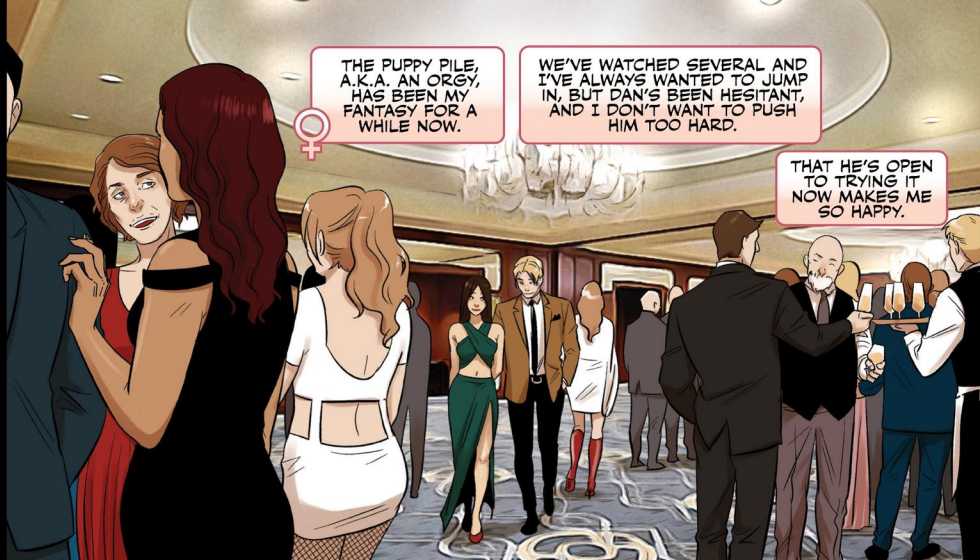
RIGHT THROUGH HERE. WE WOULD APPRECIATE IT IF YOU KEPT THE PLAY AND ANY NUDITY IN THE DESIGNATED AREAS.

THE PUPPY PILE,
A.K.A. AN ORGY,
HAS BEEN MY
FANTASY FOR A
WHILE NOW.



WE'VE WATCHED SEVERAL AND
I'VE ALWAYS WANTED TO JUMP
IN, BUT DAN'S BEEN HESITANT,
AND I DON'T WANT TO PUSH
HIM TOO HARD.

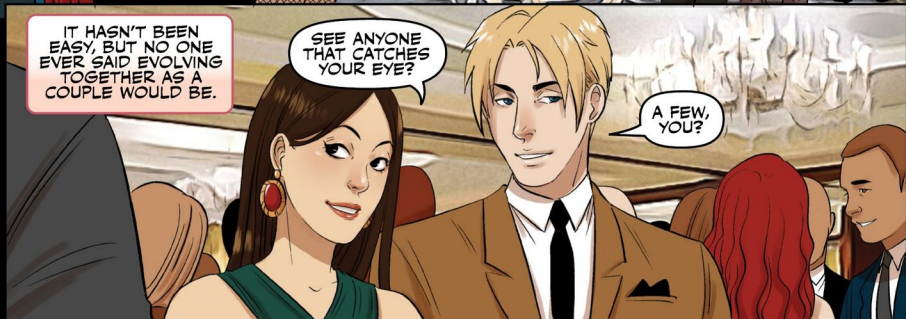
THAT HE'S OPEN
TO TRYING IT
NOW MAKES ME
SO HAPPY.



IT HASN'T BEEN
EASY, BUT NO ONE
EVER SAID EVOLVING
TOGETHER AS A
COUPLE WOULD BE.

SEE ANYONE
THAT CATCHES
YOUR EYE?

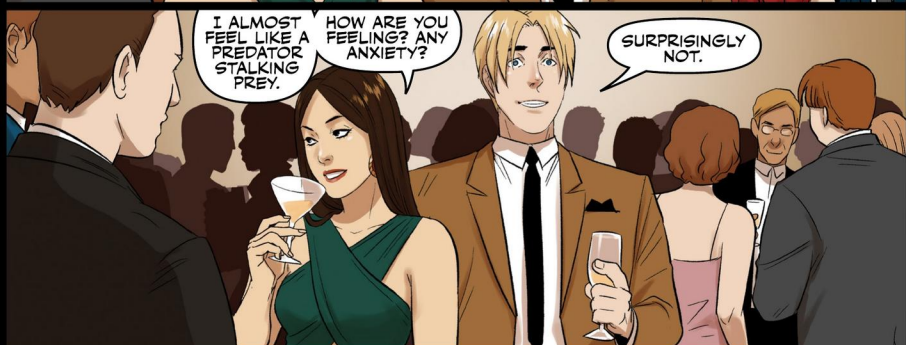
A FEW,
YOU?



I ALMOST
FEEL LIKE A
PREDATOR
STALKING
PREY.

HOW ARE YOU
FEELING? ANY
ANXIETY?

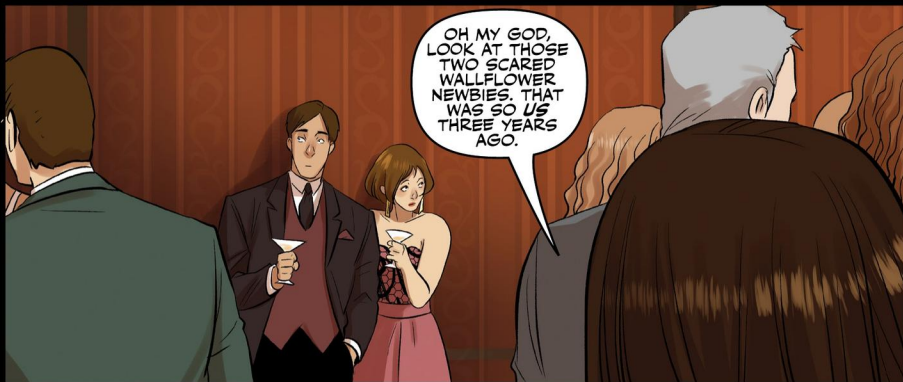
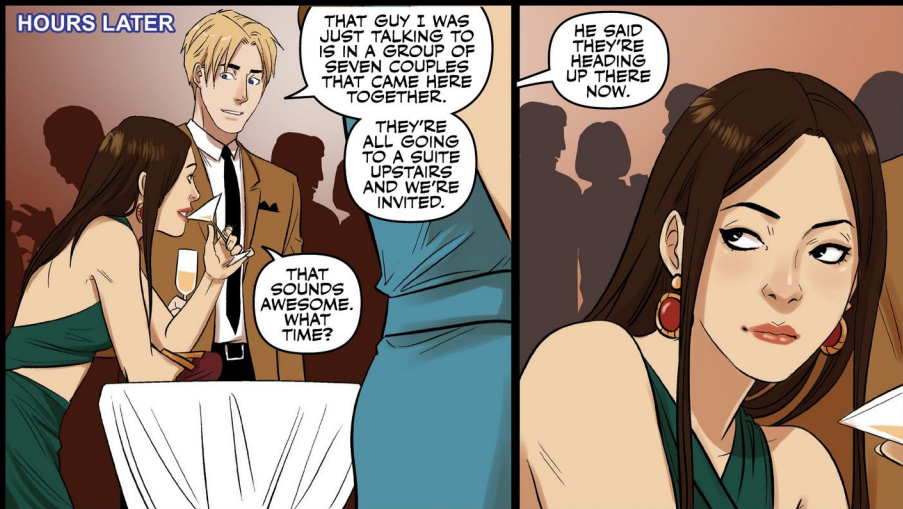
SURPRISINGLY
NOT.

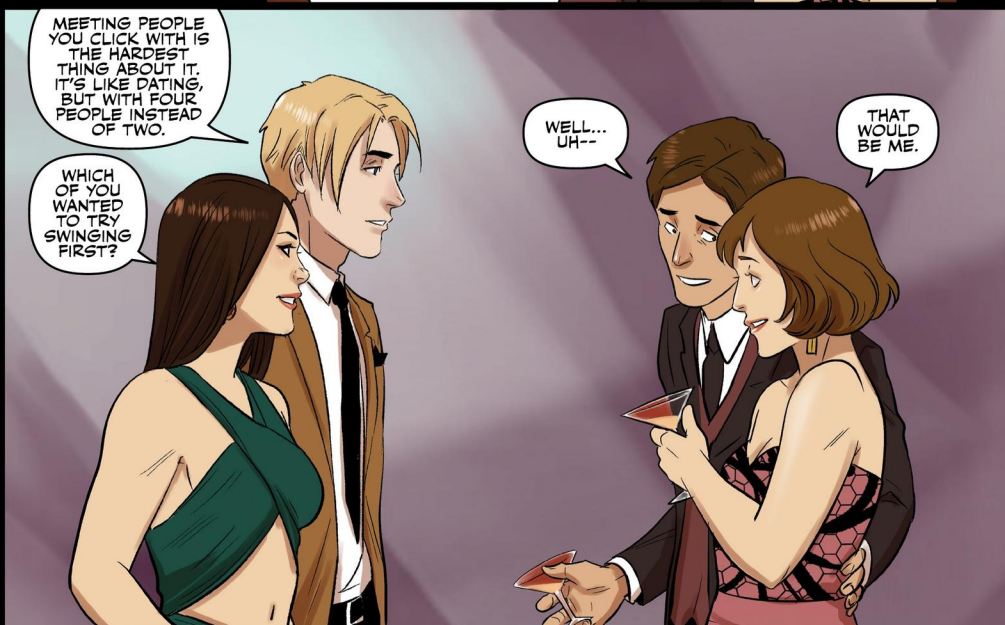
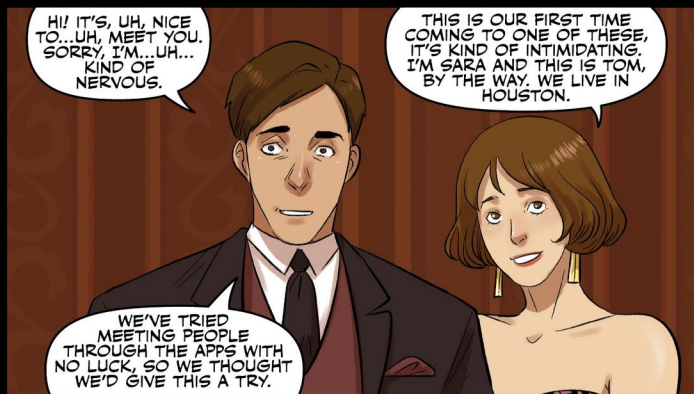


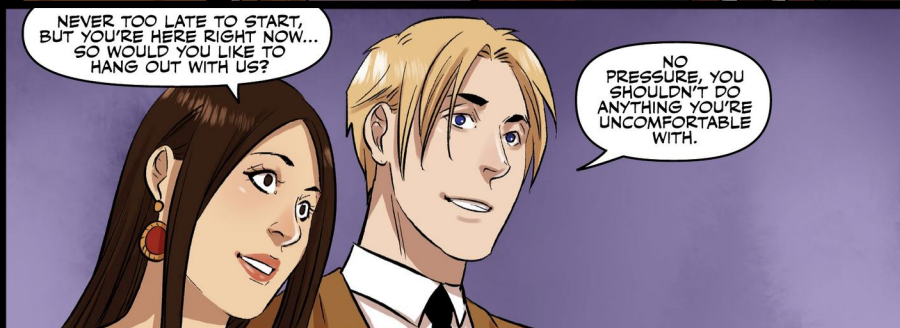
SHALL WE
MINGLE?

GOOD
WORD.











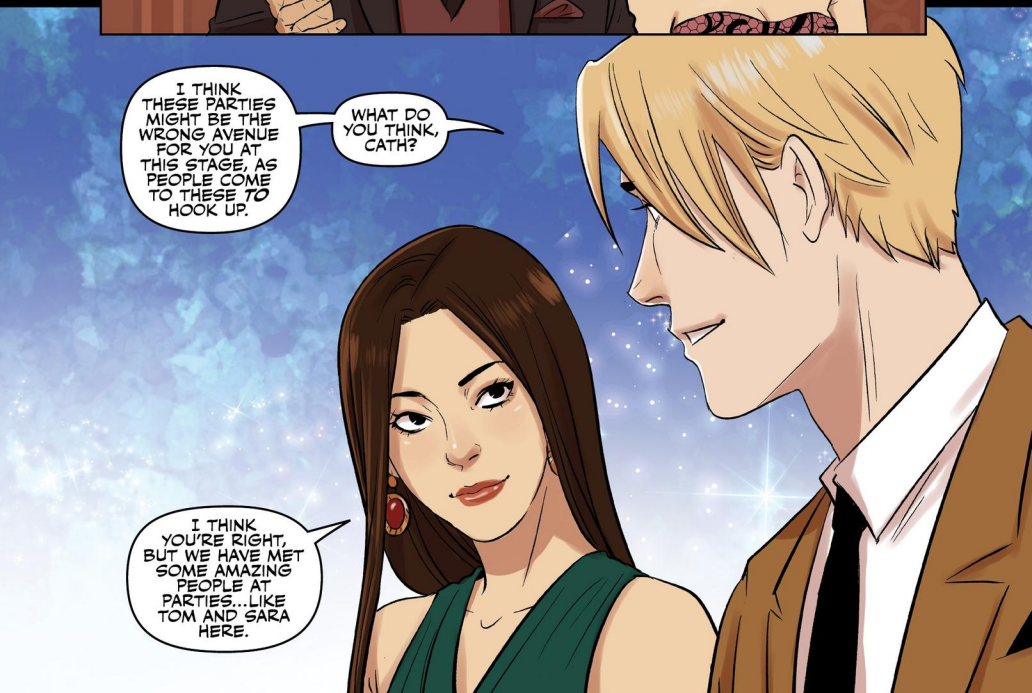
WE
WOULD
NOT BE
UPSET.



A BIG PART OF THIS FOR US IS MAKING
NEW FRIENDS. THE PEOPLE WE REGULARLY
SWING WITH NOW ARE SOME OF OUR BEST
FRIENDS. WE HANG OUT WITH THEM
SOCIALY ALL THE TIME.



WOW, I REALLY
APPRECIATE HOW
COOL Y'ALL ARE
BEING. WE'VE HAD
A FEW RUN-INS WITH
PEOPLE WHO WERE
LESS, HOW DO I SAY
IT...UH...UNDER-
STANDING ABOUT
TAKING IT SLOW
WITH US.



I THINK
THESE PARTIES
MIGHT BE THE
WRONG AVENUE
FOR YOU AT
THIS STAGE, AS
PEOPLE COME
TO THESE TO
HOOK UP.

WHAT DO YOU THINK,
CATH?

I THINK
YOU'RE RIGHT,
BUT WE HAVE MET
SOME AMAZING
PEOPLE AT
PARTIES...LIKE
TOM AND SARA
HERE.



THREE YEARS SHE'S BEEN WAITING AND WANTING TO PARTICIPATE IN AN ACTUAL ORGY AND I'M FINALLY WILLING AND WE HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TONIGHT...AND SHE'D RATHER HELP THIS COUPLE.



IT'S HER GIVING NATURE LIKE THIS THAT REMINDS ME HOW LUCKY I AM TO HAVE HER.



HOW ABOUT WE START BY SWAPPING PARTNERS ON THE DANCE FLOOR?



THUMP THUMP THUMP THUMP THUMP



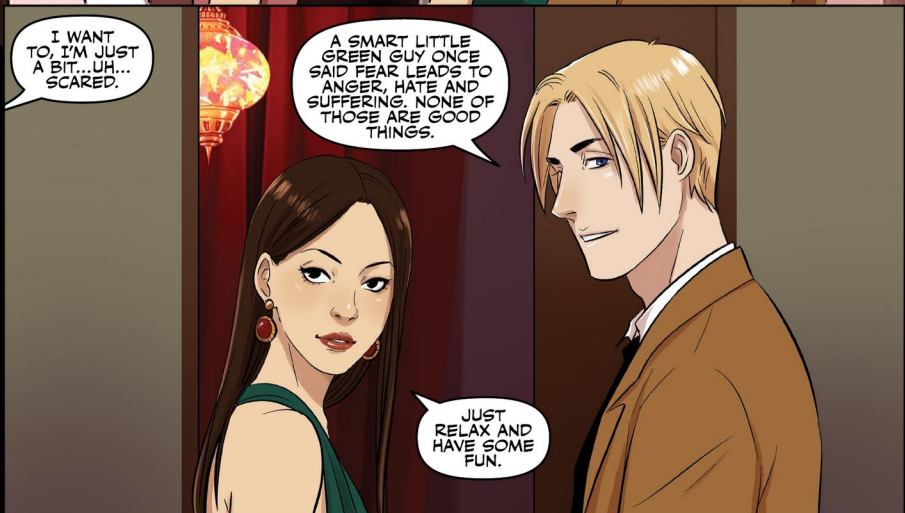
THUMP THUMP THUMP THUMP THUMP

THESE
SHOES ARE
KILLING ME, I
DON'T THINK
I CAN DANCE
ANYMORE.

YOU WANT
TO CALL IT
A NIGHT?

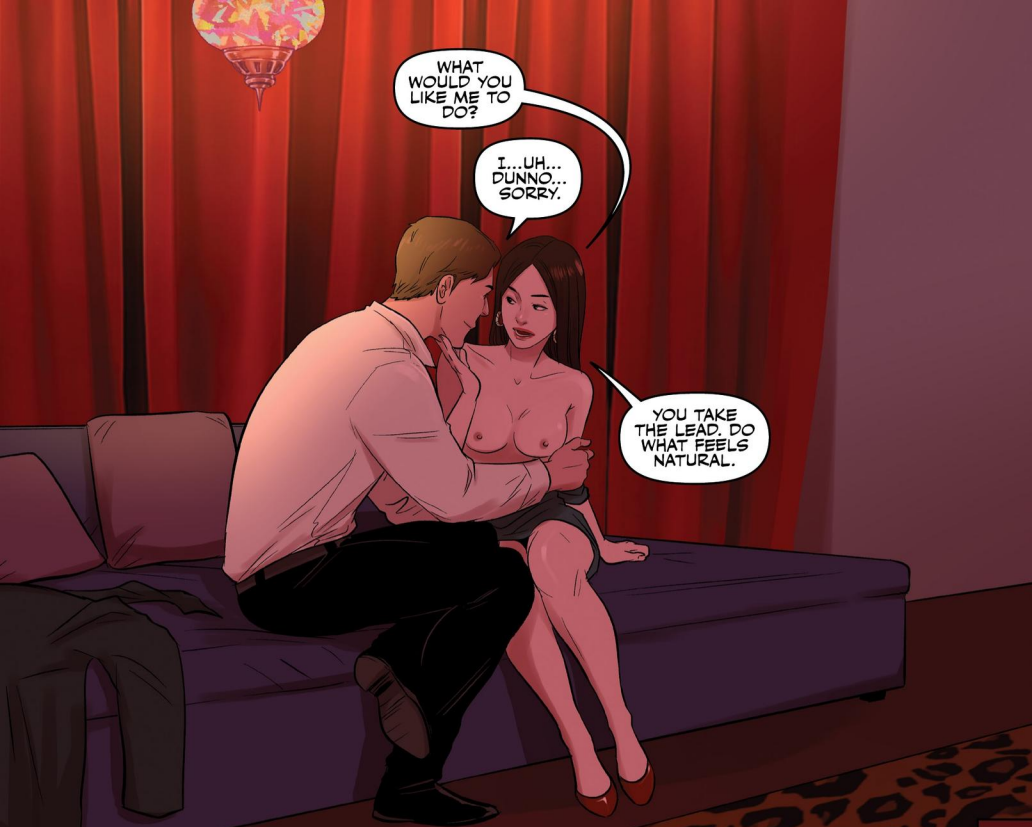


THUMPTHUMPTHUMPTHUMPTHUMP









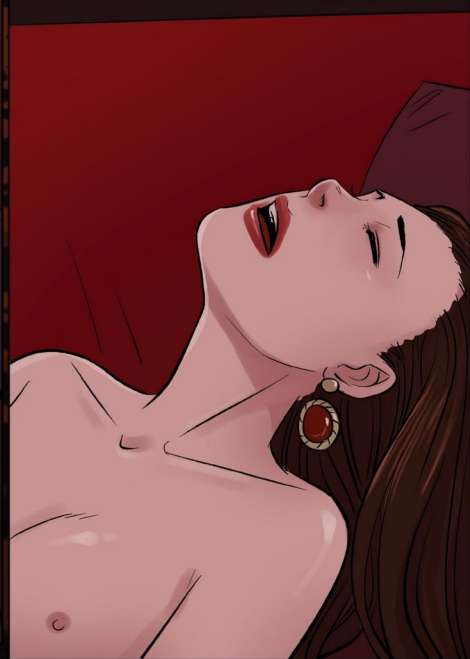
WHAT
WOULD YOU
LIKE ME TO
DO?

I...UH...
DUNNO...
SORRY.

YOU TAKE
THE LEAD. DO
WHAT FEELS
NATURAL.



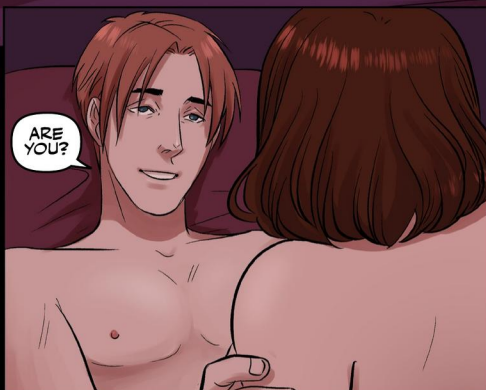
LIE
ON YOUR
BACK.





WOW.

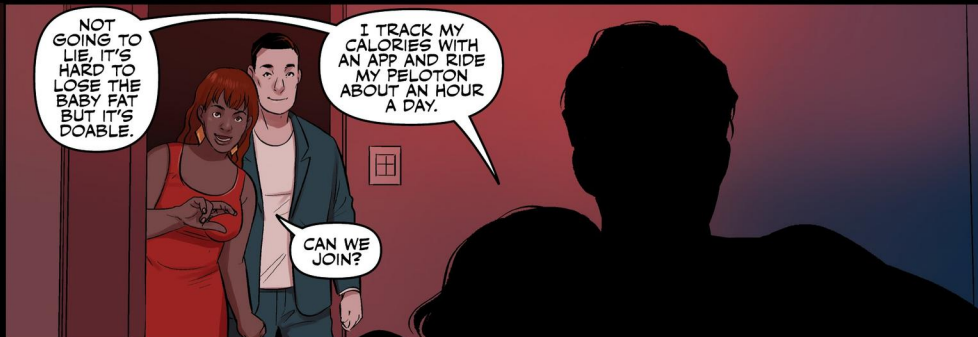
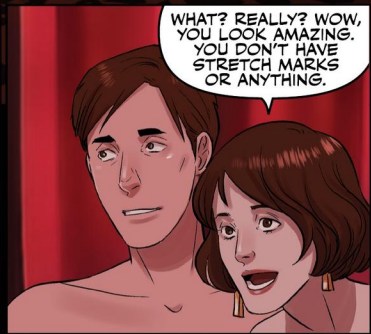
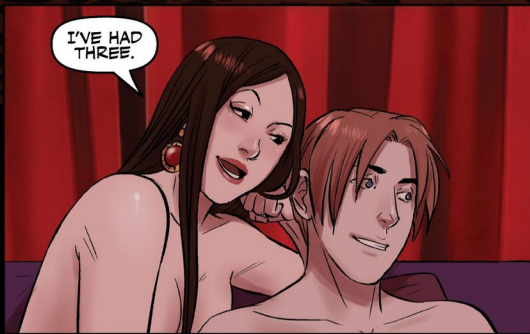
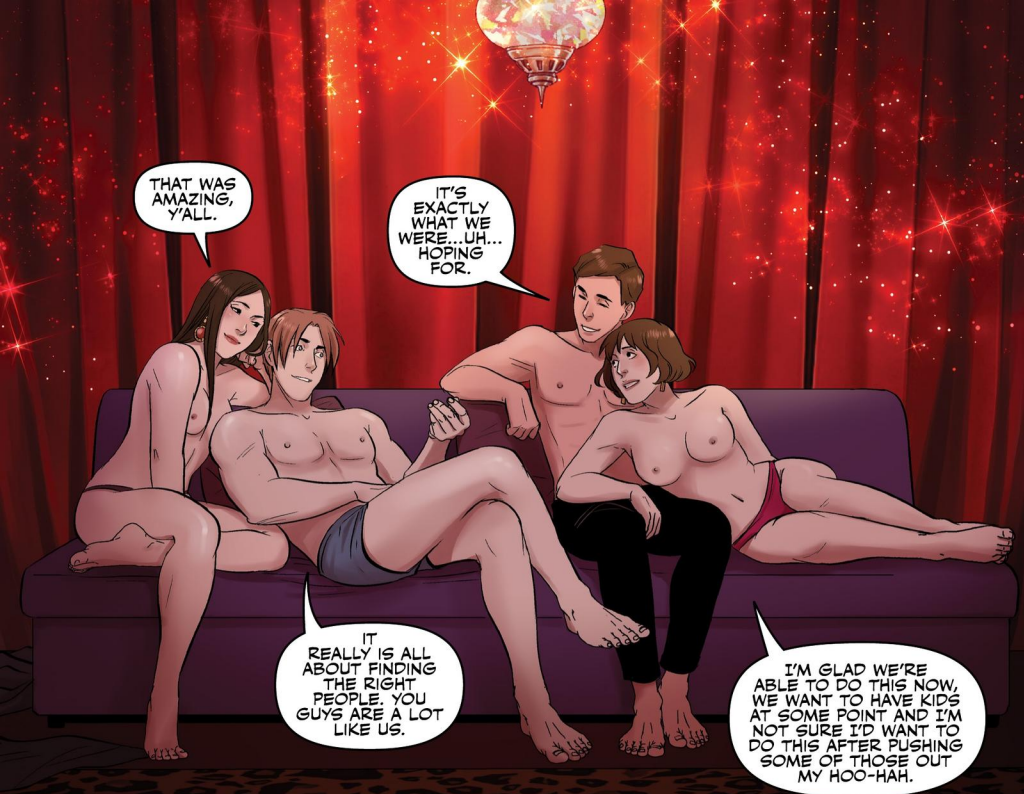
THEY'RE
FINE.

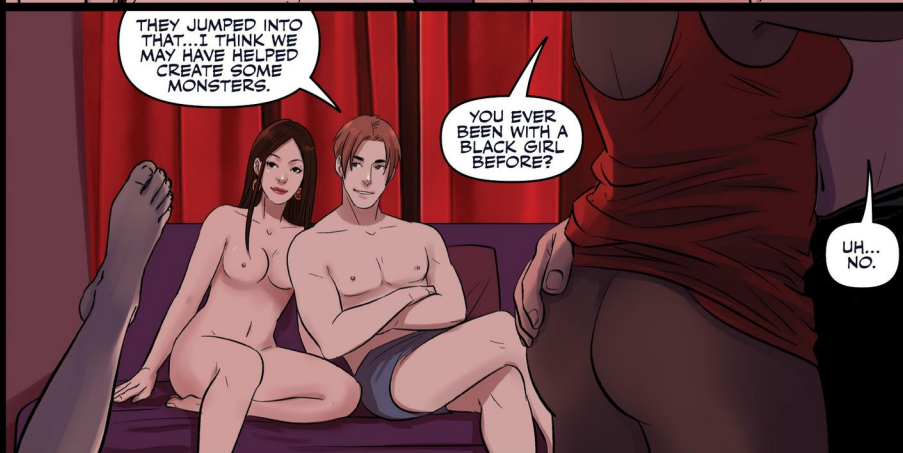


ARE
YOU?



YESSSSSS.







LET'S SKIP THE BEER PONG AND GET SOME FOOD, I'M FAMISHED.

WORKS FOR ME, HOURS OF SEX BUILDS UP AN APPETITE...WHEN DID WE BECOME CLINT AND MARY, BY THE WAY?

WHAT DO YOU MEAN?

WE'RE NOT PADAWANS ANYMORE, WE'RE LIKE FULL-ON JEDI SWINGERS...TEACHING THE NEXT GENERATION.

YOU ARE SUCH A NERD.

IT WAS TOM'S FIRST SWINGING EXPERIENCE, AND HE GOT A FULL TRIFFECTA.

WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?

HE HAD SEX WITH THREE GIRLS OF DIFFERENT ETHNICITIES. THAT'S A TRIFFECTA! LIKE AN ACHIEVEMENT IN A VIDEO GAME...ON HIS FIRST TIME!

OH MY GOD YOU ARE SUCH AN IDIOT. WHO THINKS LIKE THAT?

MOST GUYS.



REALLY? HOW ABOUT WE THINK ABOUT IT A LITTLE MORE RESPECTFULLY?

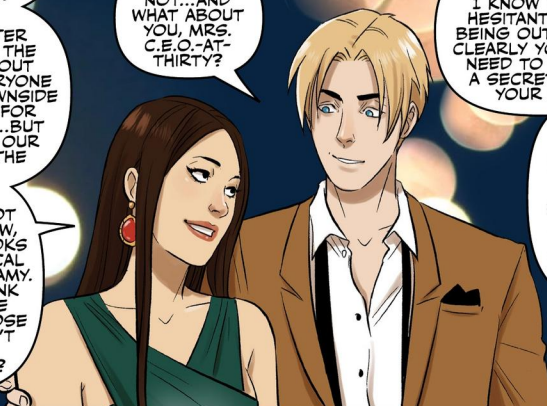
I WISH PEOPLE BETTER UNDERSTOOD THE POSITIVES ABOUT SWINGING. EVERYONE KNOWS THE DOWNSIDE AND IT'S NOT FOR MOST PEOPLE...BUT IT'S CHANGED OUR LIVES...FOR THE BETTER.

YOU'RE MR. BIGSHOT AUTHOR NOW, WRITING BOOKS ABOUT ETHICAL NON-MONO GAMY. DO YOU THINK YOU'D HAVE WRITTEN THOSE IF WE HADN'T STARTED SWINGING?

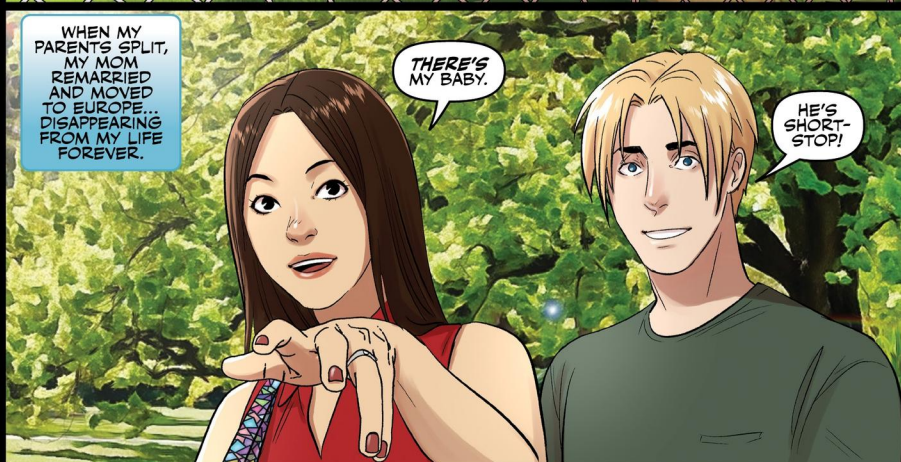
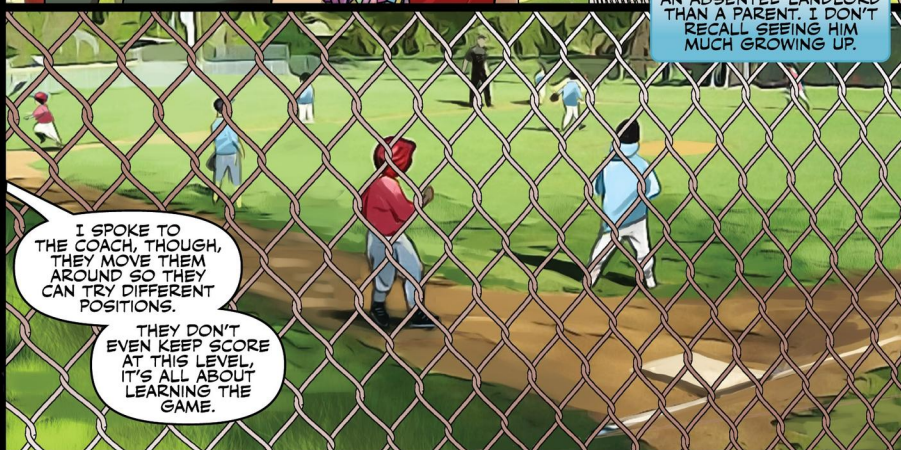
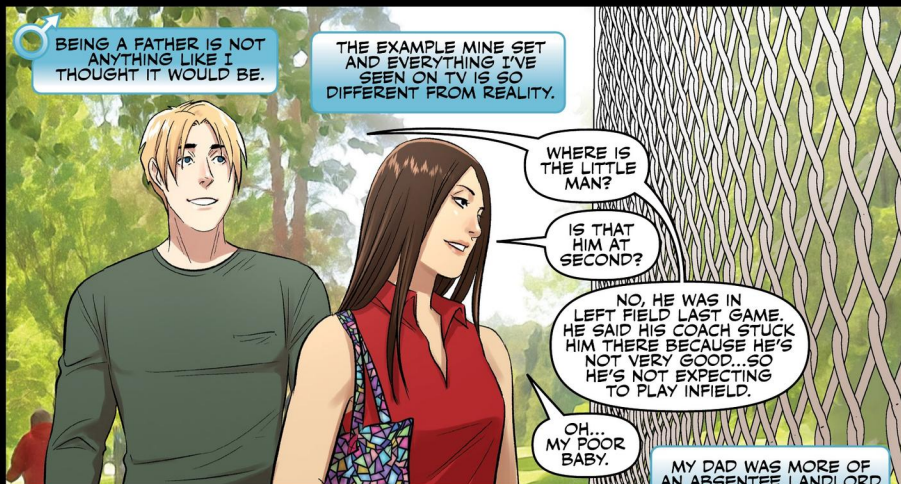
PROBABLY NOT...AND WHAT ABOUT YOU, MRS. C.E.O.-AT-THIRTY?

WE GOT IT GOING ON, BABE. I KNOW YOU'RE HESITANT ABOUT BEING OUTED...BUT CLEARLY YOU DON'T NEED TO KEEP IT A SECRET FROM YOUR DAD.

I JUST WISH WE COULD BE MORE PUBLIC ABOUT OUR SWINGING EXPERIENCES. I THINK IT WOULD HELP OTHERS LIKE TOM AND SARA.



WEEKS LATER





I LOVE MY DAD. HE DID SOME SHITTY STUFF TO MY MOM, BUT HE NEVER COMPLETELY ABANDONED ME LIKE SHE DID.

I'VE BEEN TO EVERY ONE OF BLAKE AND ASHLEY'S GAMES, SCHOOL EVENTS, RECITALS, WHAT-HAVE-YOU... AND I'LL BE AT ALL OF LUKE'S.

THIS WILL BOOST HIS CONFIDENCE, PLAYING INFIELD.

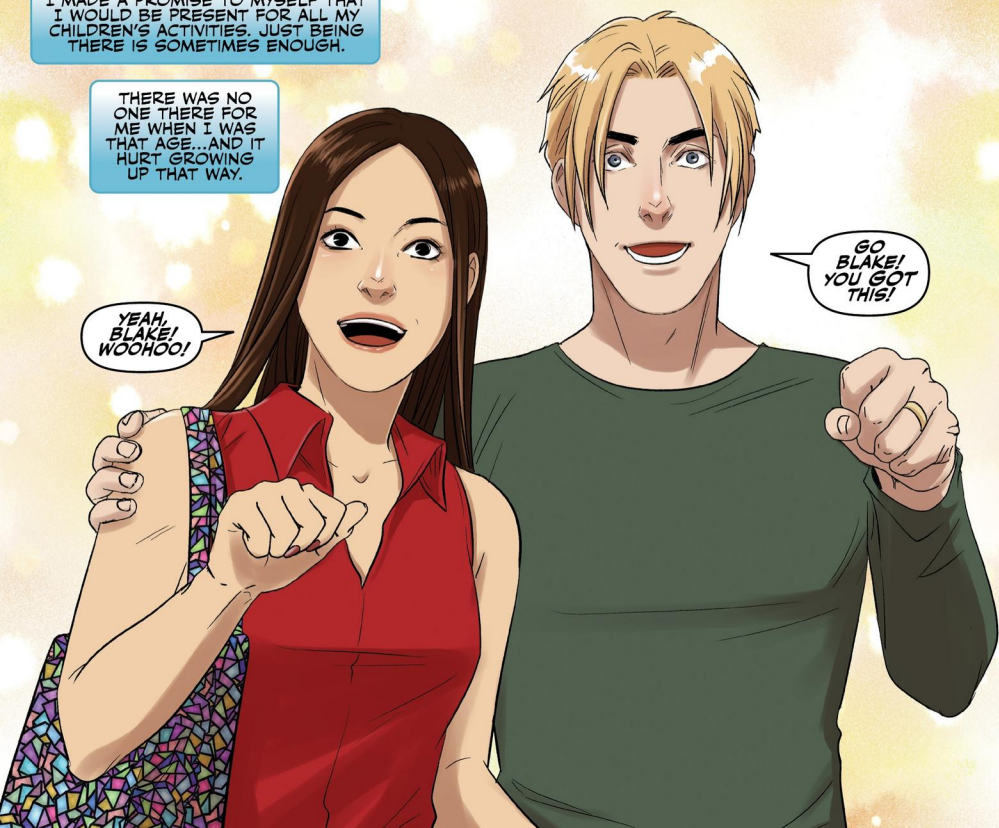


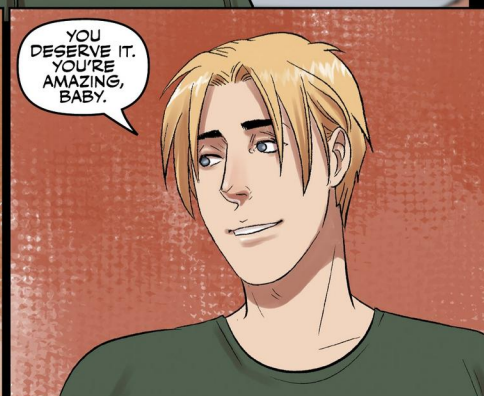
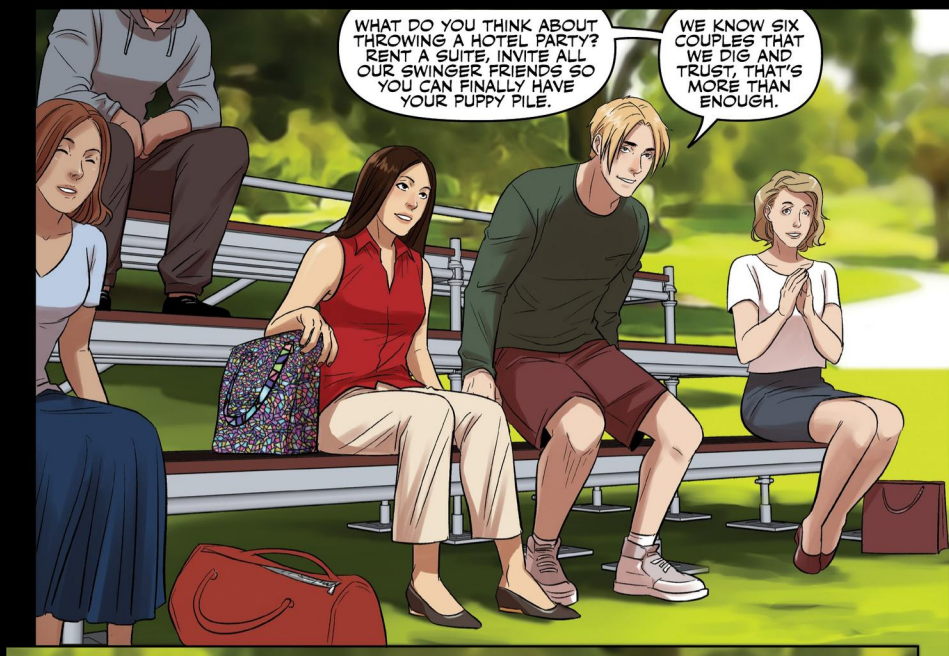
I MADE A PROMISE TO MYSELF THAT I WOULD BE PRESENT FOR ALL MY CHILDREN'S ACTIVITIES. JUST BEING THERE IS SOMETIMES ENOUGH.

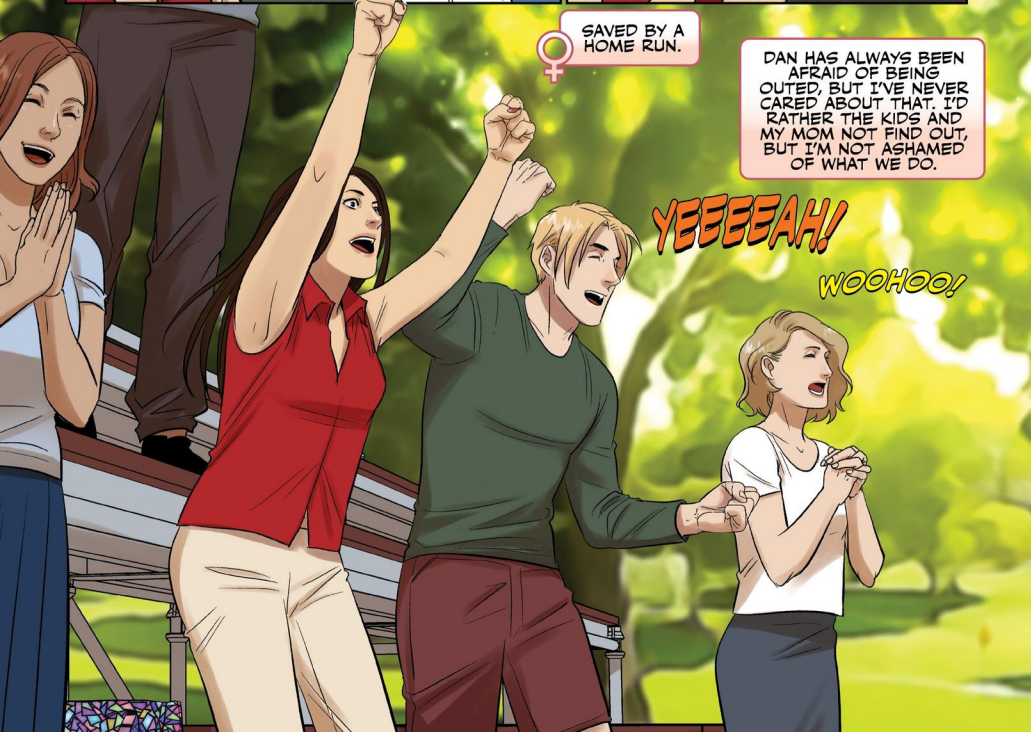
THERE WAS NO ONE THERE FOR ME WHEN I WAS THAT AGE...AND IT HURT GROWING UP THAT WAY.

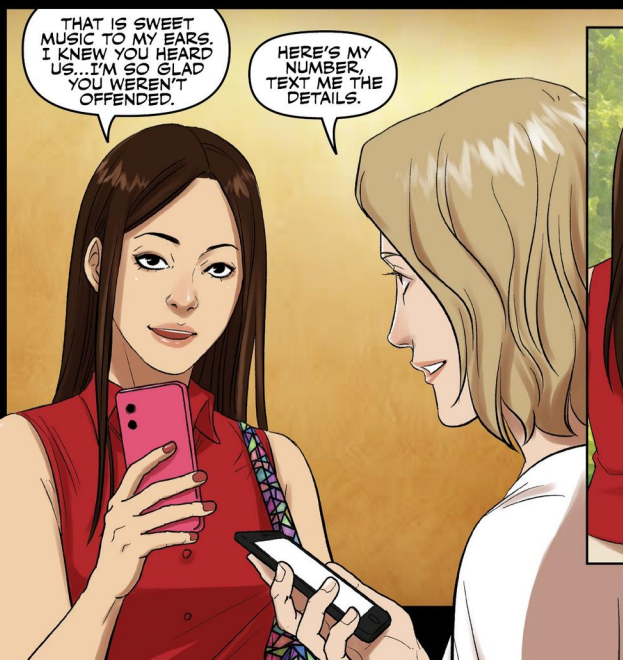
YEAH, BLAKE! WOOHOO!

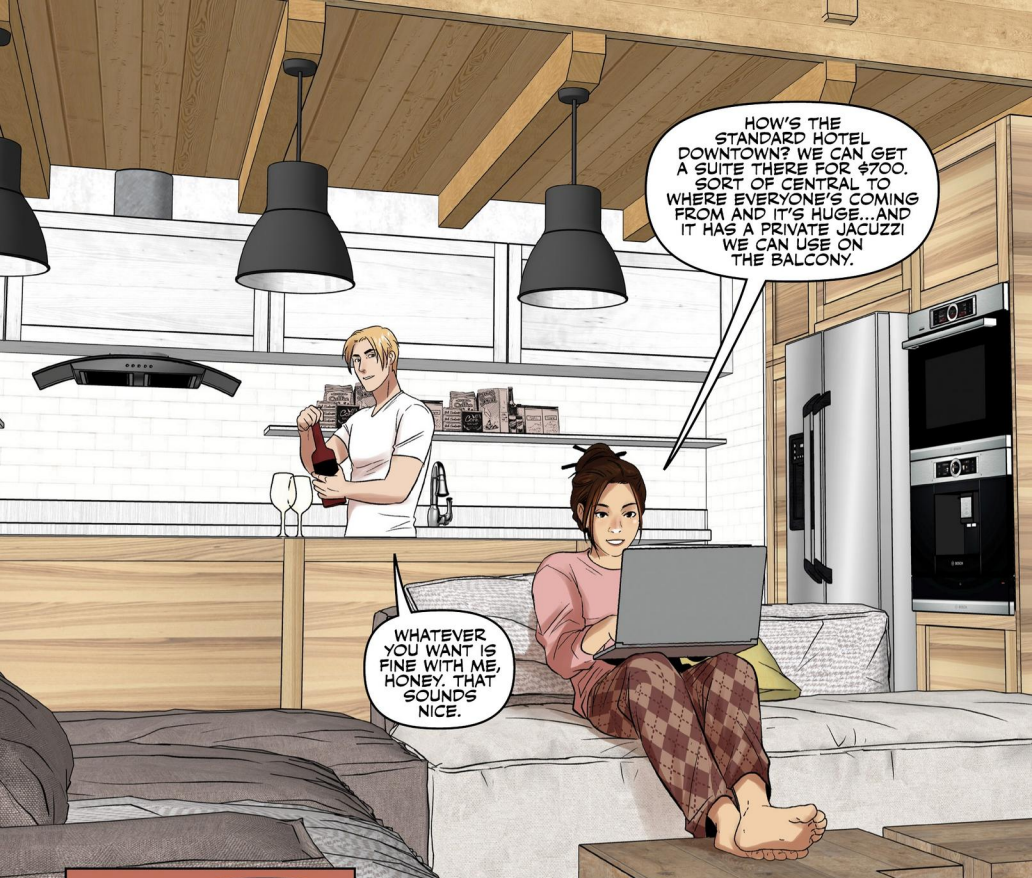
GO BLAKE! YOU GOT THIS!









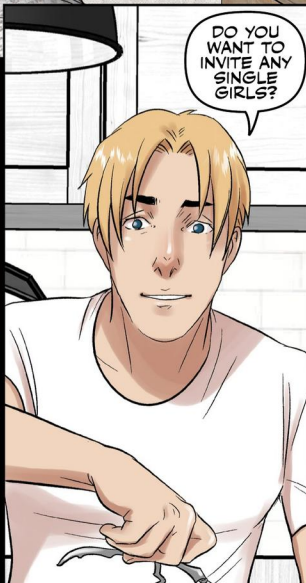


HOW'S THE STANDARD HOTEL DOWNTOWN? WE CAN GET A SUITE THERE FOR \$700. SORT OF CENTRAL TO WHERE EVERYONE'S COMING FROM AND IT'S HUGE...AND IT HAS A PRIVATE JACUZZI WE CAN USE ON THE BALCONY.

WHATEVER YOU WANT IS FINE WITH ME, HONEY. THAT SOUNDS NICE.



WHAT DO WE NEED? CONDOMS, LUBE, ALCOHOL--

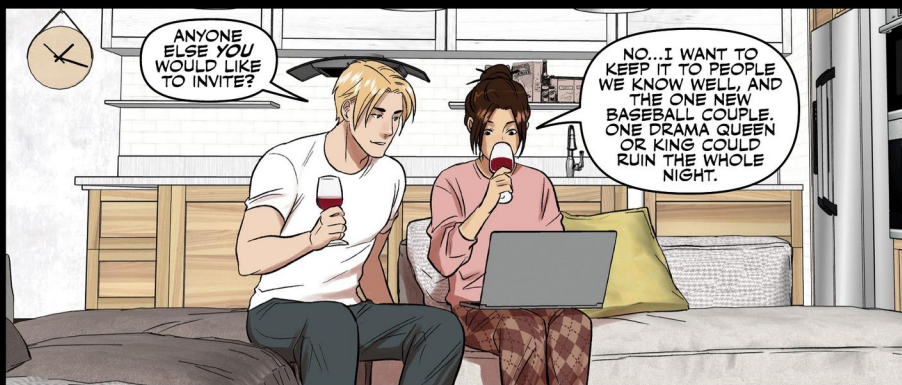


DO YOU WANT TO INVITE ANY SINGLE GIRLS?



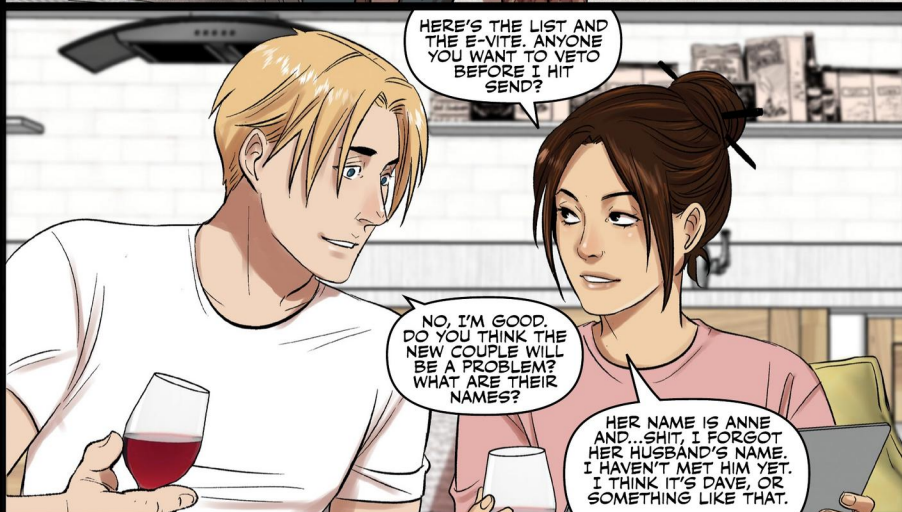
I THOUGHT THIS WAS A CELEBRATION OF ME?

NEVER HURTS TO ASK, BUT OKAY...NO UNICORNS.



ANYONE ELSE YOU WOULD LIKE TO INVITE?

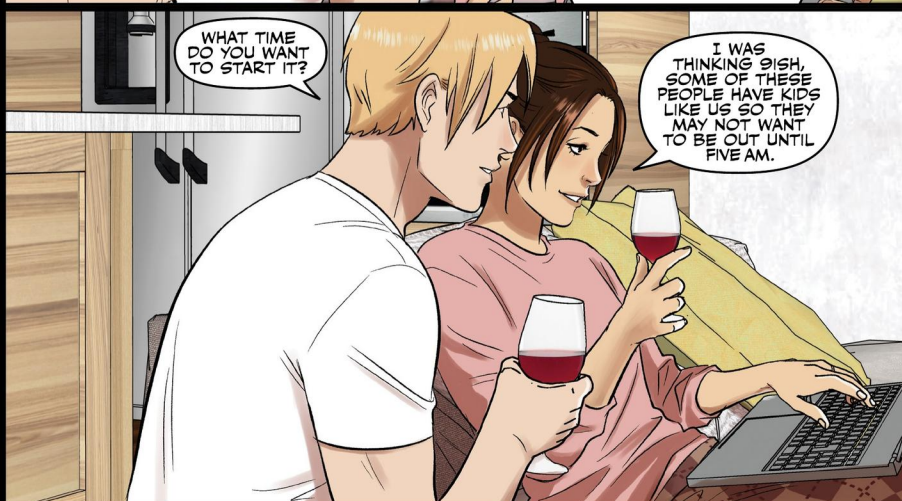
NO...I WANT TO KEEP IT TO PEOPLE WE KNOW WELL, AND THE ONE NEW BASEBALL COUPLE, ONE DRAMA QUEEN OR KING COULD RUIN THE WHOLE NIGHT.



HERE'S THE LIST AND THE E-VITE. ANYONE YOU WANT TO VETO BEFORE I HIT SEND?

NO, I'M GOOD. DO YOU THINK THE NEW COUPLE WILL BE A PROBLEM? WHAT ARE THEIR NAMES?

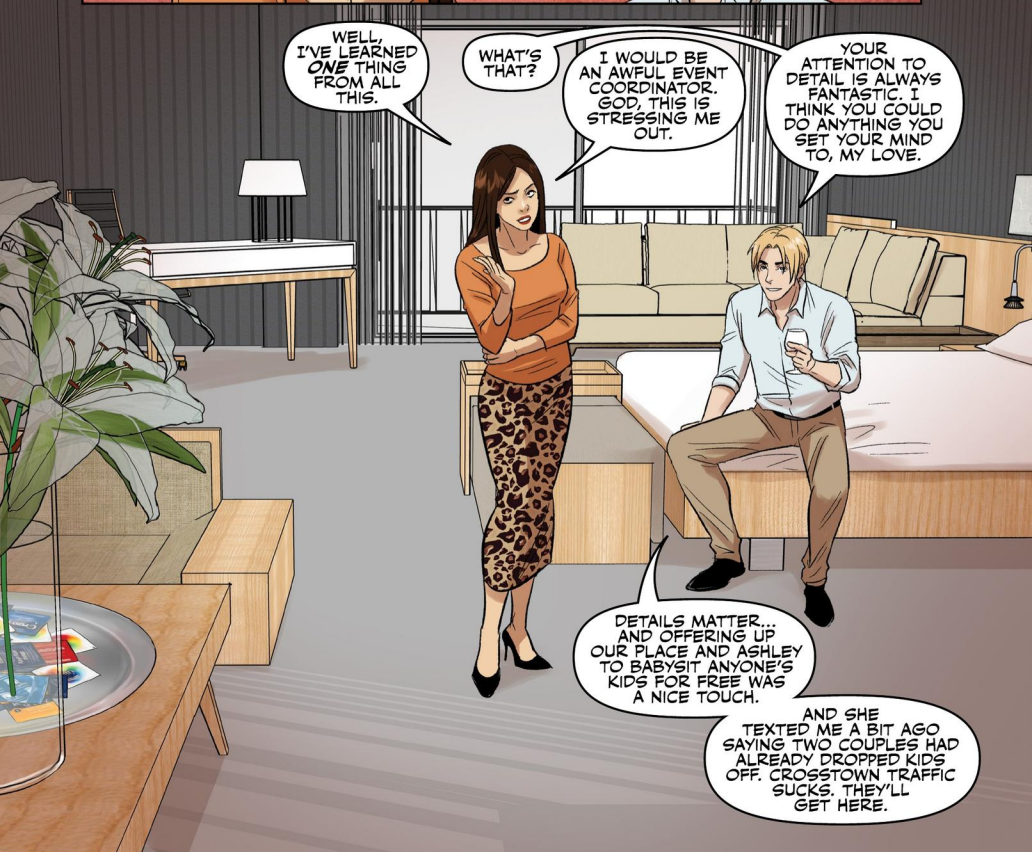
HER NAME IS ANNE AND...SHIT, I FORGOT HER HUSBAND'S NAME. I HAVEN'T MET HIM YET. I THINK IT'S DAVE, OR SOMETHING LIKE THAT.



WHAT TIME DO YOU WANT TO START IT?

I WAS THINKING 9ISH, SOME OF THESE PEOPLE HAVE KIDS LIKE US SO THEY MAY NOT WANT TO BE OUT UNTIL FIVE AM.

SATURDAY 9PM



WHAT IF NO ONE SHOWS UP?

EVERYONE RSVP'D. RELAX.

WELL, I'VE LEARNED ONE THING FROM ALL THIS.

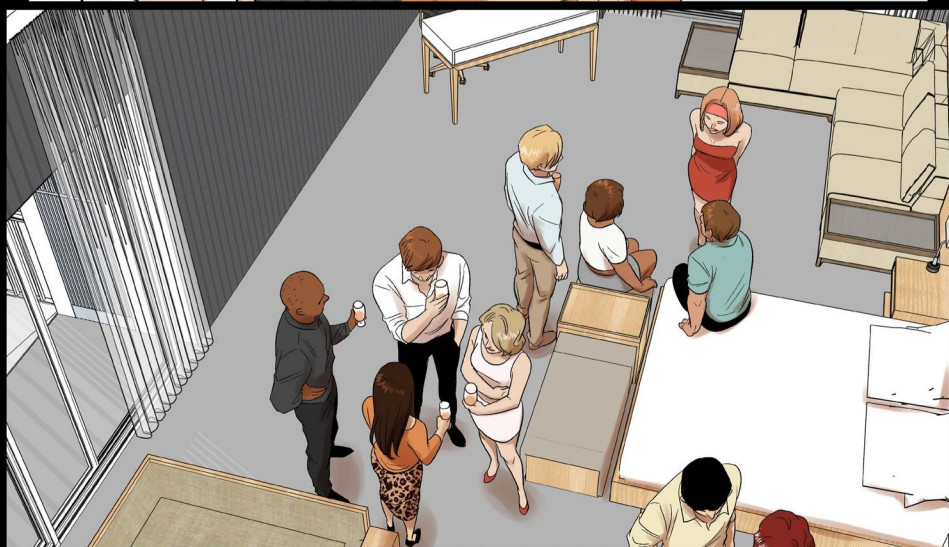
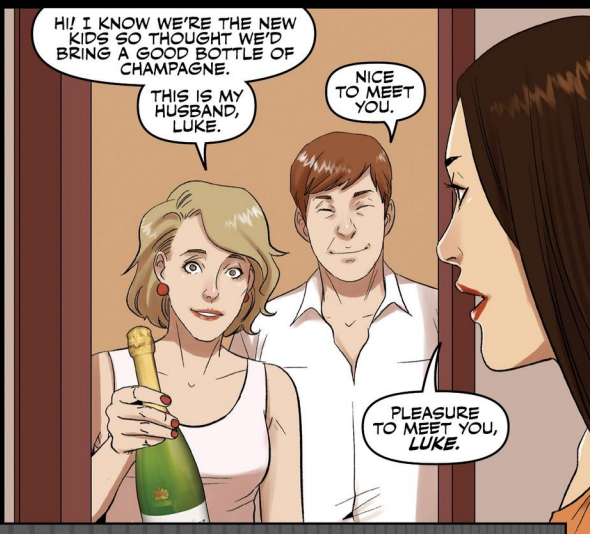
WHAT'S THAT?

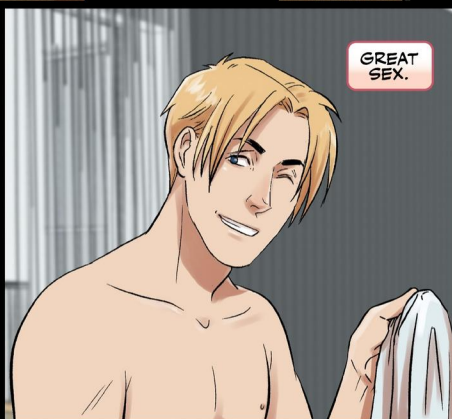
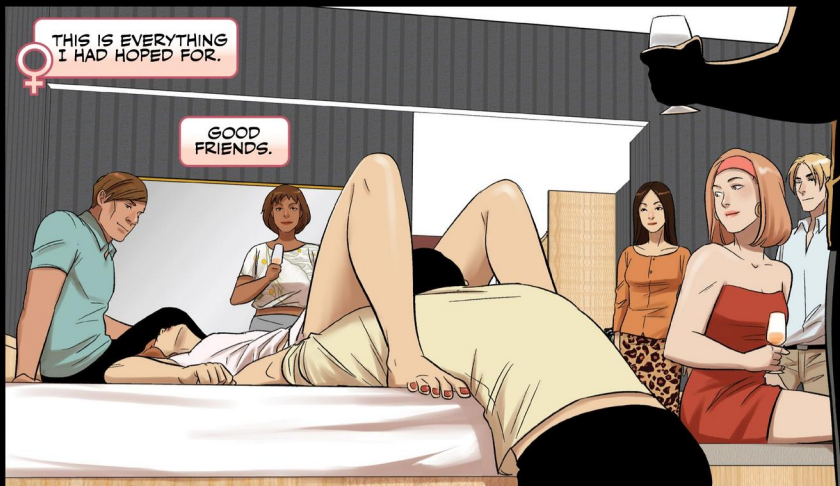
I WOULD BE AN AWFUL EVENT COORDINATOR. GOD, THIS IS STRESSING ME OUT.

YOUR ATTENTION TO DETAIL IS ALWAYS FANTASTIC. I THINK YOU COULD DO ANYTHING YOU SET YOUR MIND TO, MY LOVE.

DETAILS MATTER... AND OFFERING UP OUR PLACE AND ASHLEY TO BABYSIT ANYONE'S KIDS FOR FREE WAS A NICE TOUCH.

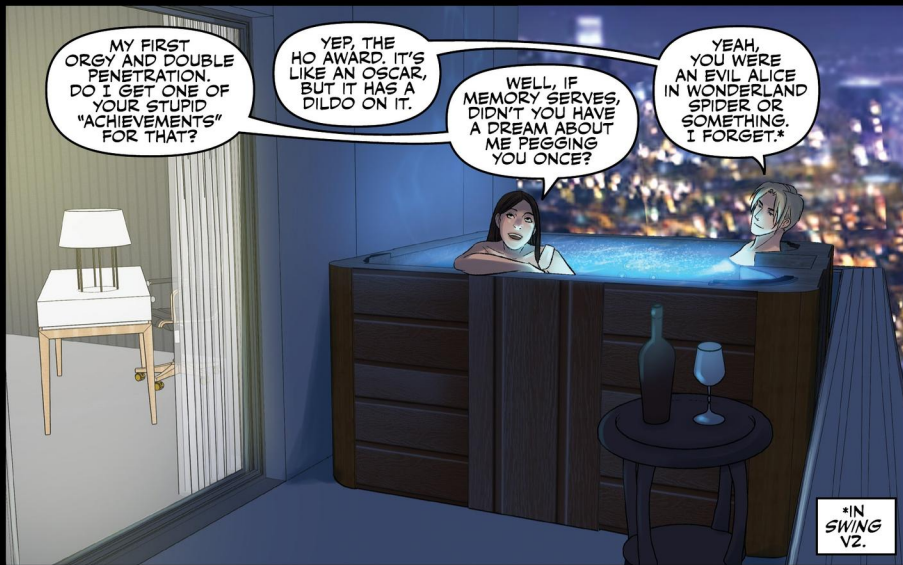
AND SHE TEXTED ME A BIT AGO SAYING TWO COUPLES HAD ALREADY DROPPED KIDS OFF. CROSSTOWN TRAFFIC SUCKS. THEY'LL GET HERE.

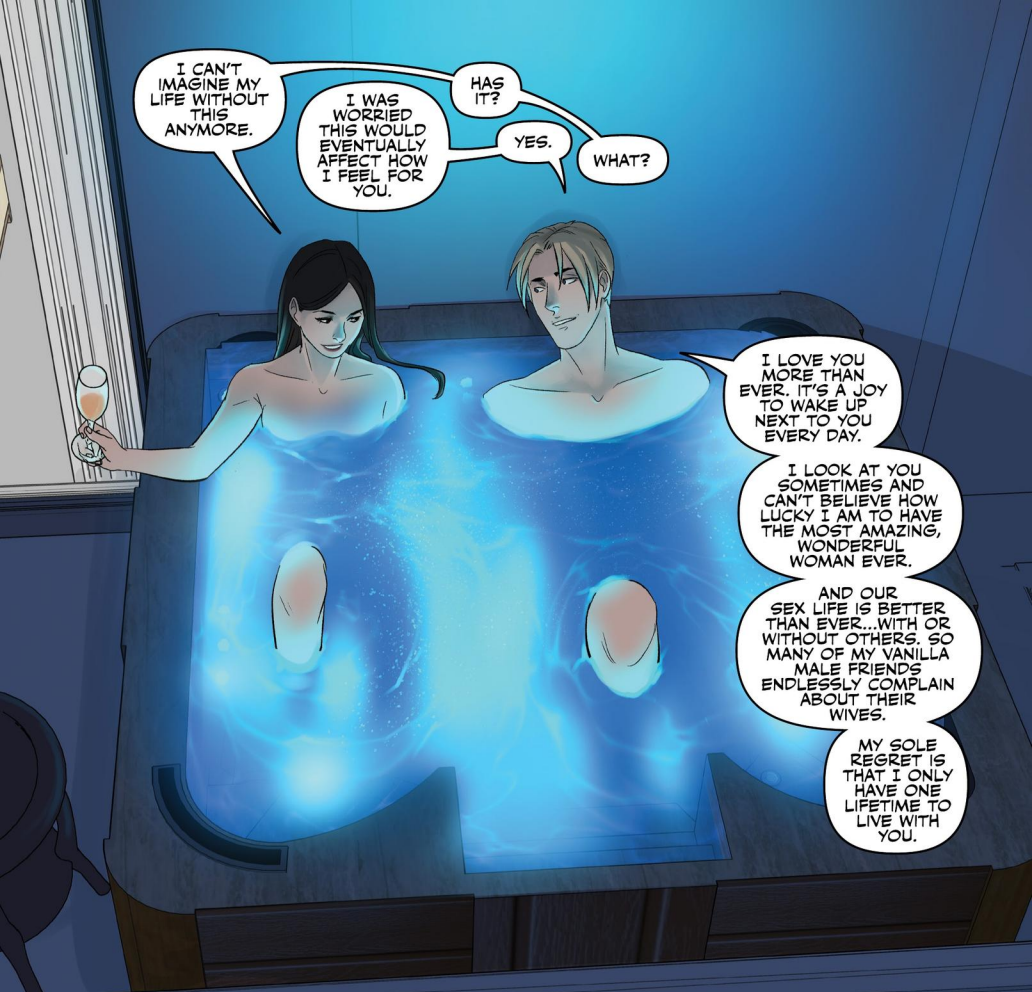












I CAN'T
IMAGINE MY
LIFE WITHOUT
THIS
ANYMORE.

I WAS
WORRIED
THIS WOULD
EVENTUALLY
AFFECT HOW
I FEEL FOR
YOU.

HAS
IT?

YES.

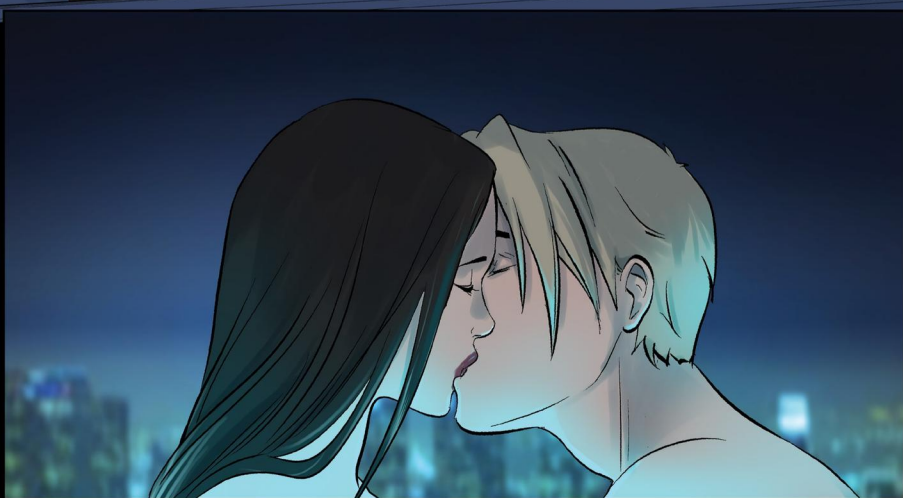
WHAT?

I LOVE YOU
MORE THAN
EVER. IT'S A JOY
TO WAKE UP
NEXT TO YOU
EVERY DAY.

I LOOK AT YOU
SOMETIMES AND
CAN'T BELIEVE HOW
LUCKY I AM TO HAVE
THE MOST AMAZING,
WONDERFUL
WOMAN EVER.

AND OUR
SEX LIFE IS BETTER
THAN EVER...WITH OR
WITHOUT OTHERS. SO
MANY OF MY VANILLA
MALE FRIENDS
ENDLESSLY COMPLAIN
ABOUT THEIR
WIVES.

MY SOLE
REGRET IS
THAT I ONLY
HAVE ONE
LIFETIME TO
LIVE WITH
YOU.



TWO YEARS LATER

I'VE STOPPED
PRETENDING TO BE
CATHY WHILE
CHATTING ONLINE.

SHE AND I BOTH TALK WITH
POTENTIAL PLAYMATES IN A
GROUP CHAT. IT'S EASIER AND
BETTER FOR TRANSPARENCY
AND COMMUNICATION ANYWAY.

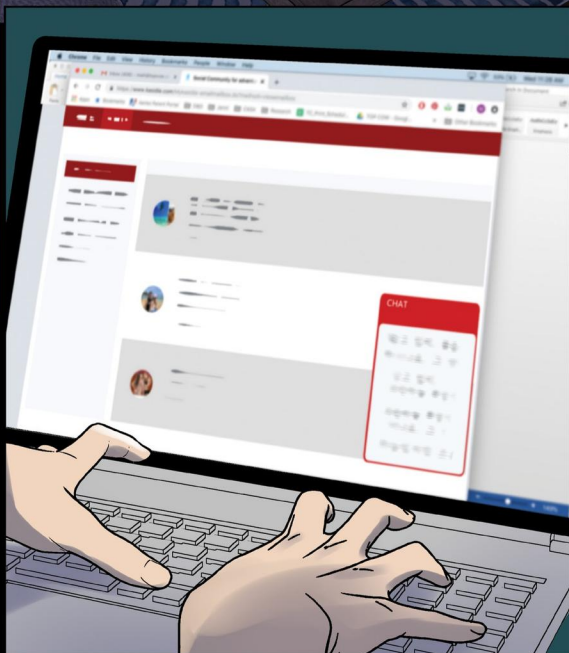
IT WAS FUN
POSING AS CATHY
ONLINE AT TIMES.

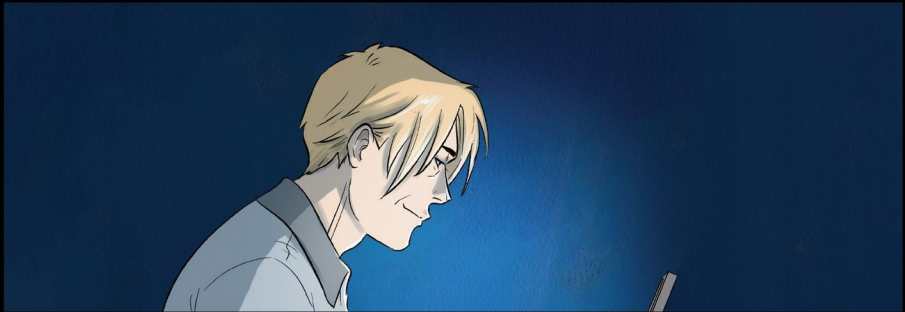
WEEDING OUT THE
DOUCHEY GUYS AND
TELLING THEM OFF HAD
ITS ENTERTAINING
MOMENTS.

I MAY HAVE BEEN A
TAD OVERZEALOUS
IN THE BEGINNING,
BUT I THINK I
NEEDED TO BE
AT THE TIME.

IT AMAZES ME THAT THINGS
WE DO ROUTINELY NOW
WOULD HAVE FREAKED ME
OUT FIVE YEARS AGO.

LIFE IS
GOOD.





CHAT

FRANKANDBEANS

Are you bisexual?

No

That's too bad, we've wanted to find a couple where all four play with all four.

Sadly, that's not us but I do know a few couples that do that, and you seem cool so I'm going to give them your screen name if that's okay?

Yes, please do and thanks.

CHAT

RUFFRIDER

Is your name supposed to be Muffrider.

No, it's ruff because I like doggie style and I like it rough.

I'll have to let my wife chime in if she's going to be into that or not. Talk more later.

Thanks.



CHAT

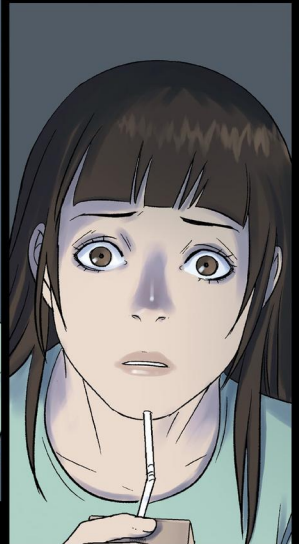
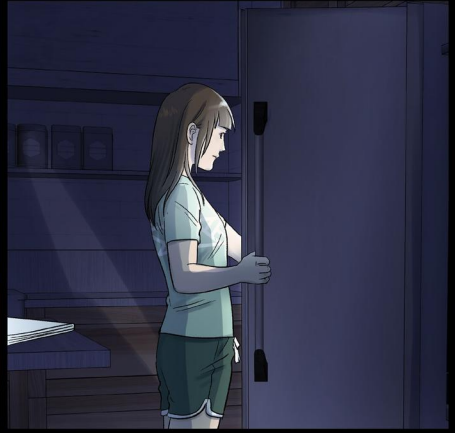
SPARKLYUNICORN

Hey! Fancy seeing you on here. Dan. It's been a year since we last hooked up.

I'd love to see you again.

It's been a while for me so I could really use a good f*ck. Plus I've gotten wicked better at BJs! Looking forward to giving you a good one. =)

It says you're online you must be a.f.k. Hit me up later.

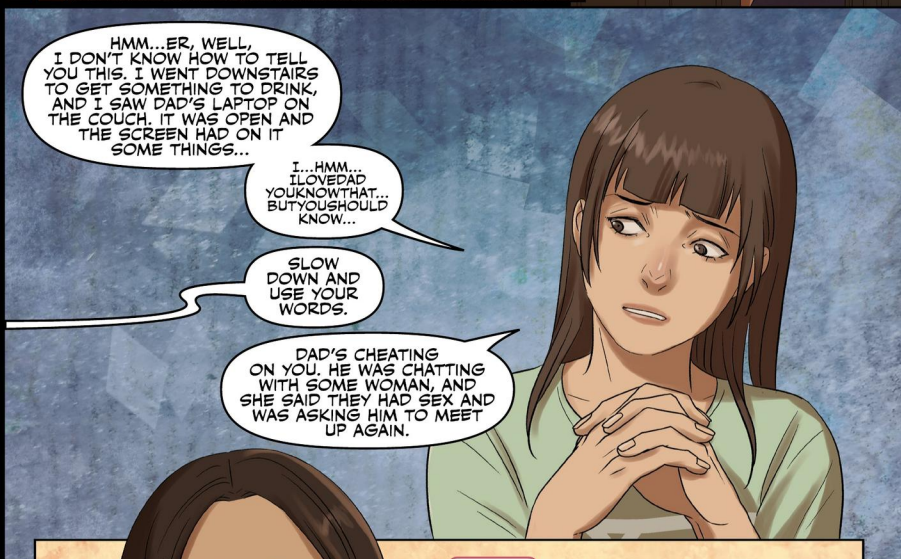






MOM,
CAN I TALK
TO YOU FOR A
MINUTE?

OF
COURSE.
WHAT'S
WRONG,
HONEY,
SHOULDN'T
YOU BE
GETTING
TO BED?



HMM...ER, WELL,
I DON'T KNOW HOW TO TELL
YOU THIS. I WENT DOWNSTAIRS
TO GET SOMETHING TO DRINK,
AND I SAW DAD'S LAPTOP ON
THE COUCH. IT WAS OPEN AND
THE SCREEN HAD ON IT
SOME THINGS...

I...HMM...
I LOVED DAD
YOU KNOW THAT...
BUT YOU SHOULD
KNOW...

SLOW
DOWN AND
USE YOUR
WORDS.

DAD'S CHEATING
ON YOU. HE WAS CHATTING
WITH SOME WOMAN, AND
SHE SAID THEY HAD SEX AND
WAS ASKING HIM TO MEET
UP AGAIN.

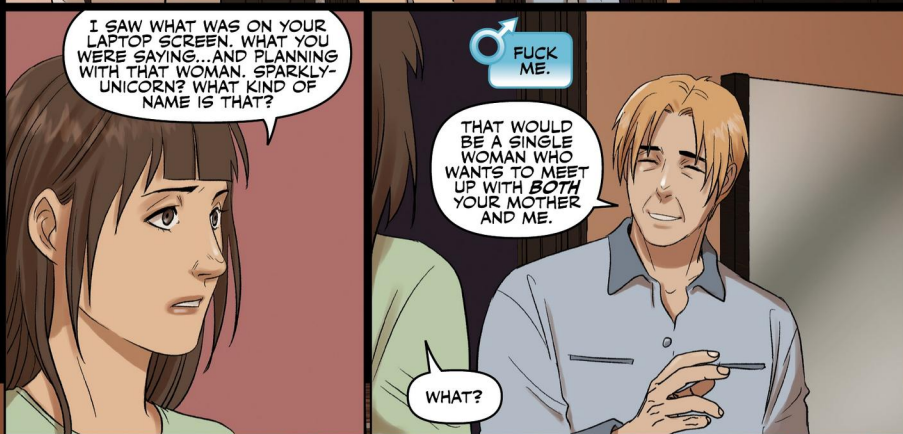


♀ OH
FUCK.

IT'S NOT
WHAT YOU THINK.
LET ME GET
YOUR FATHER AND
WE CAN TALK
ABOUT
THIS.



GET ME FOR WHAT?

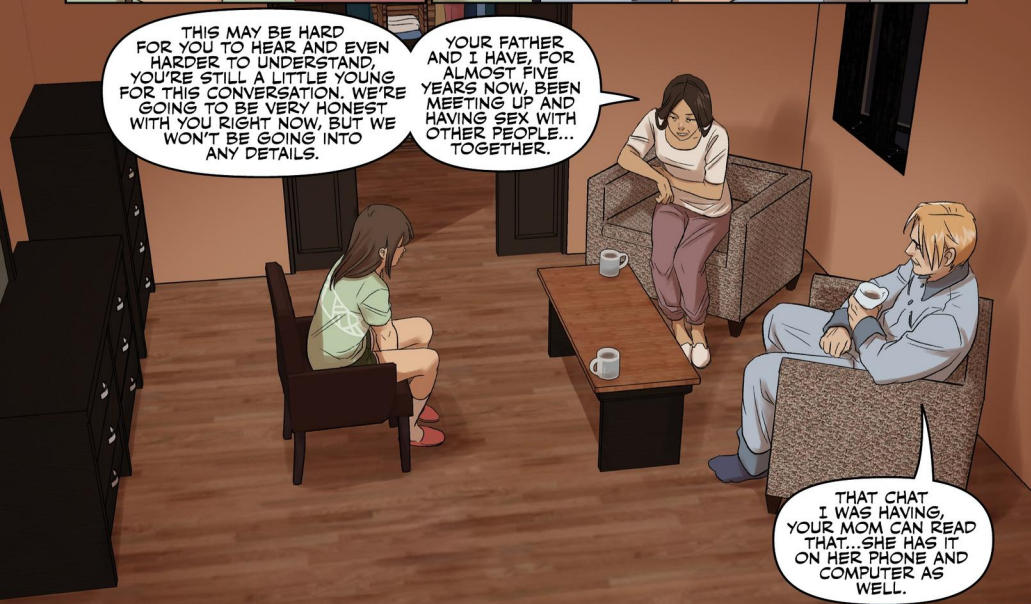


I SAW WHAT WAS ON YOUR LAPTOP SCREEN. WHAT YOU WERE SAYING...AND PLANNING WITH THAT WOMAN. SPARKLY-UNICORN? WHAT KIND OF NAME IS THAT?

FUCK ME.

THAT WOULD BE A SINGLE WOMAN WHO WANTS TO MEET UP WITH **BOTH** YOUR MOTHER AND ME.

WHAT?



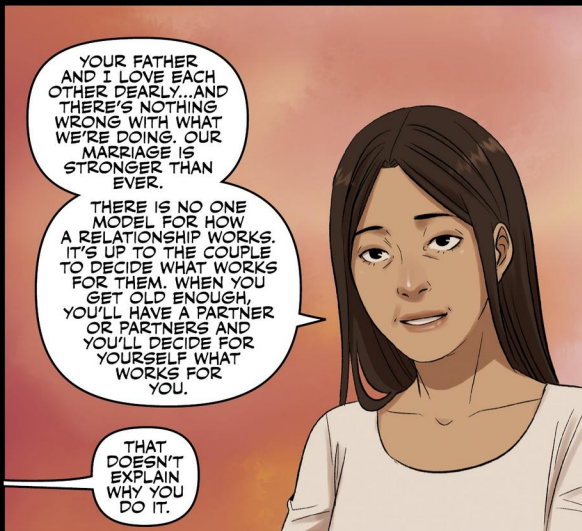
THIS MAY BE HARD FOR YOU TO HEAR AND EVEN HARDER TO UNDERSTAND, YOU'RE STILL A LITTLE YOUNG FOR THIS CONVERSATION. WE'RE GOING TO BE VERY HONEST WITH YOU RIGHT NOW, BUT WE WON'T BE GOING INTO ANY DETAILS.

YOUR FATHER AND I HAVE, FOR ALMOST FIVE YEARS NOW, BEEN MEETING UP AND HAVING SEX WITH OTHER PEOPLE... TOGETHER.

THAT CHAT I WAS HAVING, YOUR MOM CAN READ THAT...SHE HAS IT ON HER PHONE AND COMPUTER AS WELL.



WHY?
DO YOU NOT
LOVE EACH
OTHER
ANYMORE?



YOUR FATHER
AND I LOVE EACH
OTHER DEARLY...AND
THERE'S NOTHING
WRONG WITH WHAT
WE'RE DOING. OUR
MARRIAGE IS
STRONGER THAN
EVER.

THERE IS NO ONE
MODEL FOR HOW
A RELATIONSHIP WORKS.
IT'S UP TO THE COUPLE
TO DECIDE WHAT WORKS
FOR THEM. WHEN YOU
GET OLD ENOUGH,
YOU'LL HAVE A PARTNER
OR PARTNERS AND
YOU'LL DECIDE FOR
YOURSELF WHAT
WORKS FOR
YOU.

THAT
DOESN'T
EXPLAIN
WHY YOU
DO IT.

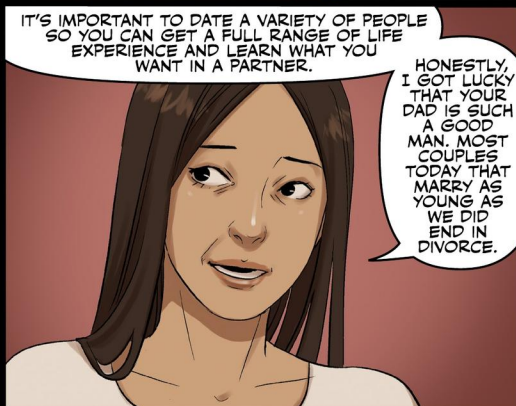


THE *WHY* IS
COMPLICATED
BUT...HMM...
HOW DO I
EXPLAIN
THIS?



YOUR MOM AND I MARRIED
VERY YOUNG WHEN WE
GOT PREGNANT WITH YOU.
I HAVE NO REGRETS
ABOUT THAT. I LOVE YOU
THREE KIDS SO MUCH AND
WOULDN'T CHANGE
ANYTHING ABOUT
OUR FAMILY...

...BUT WHEN PEOPLE
MARRY THAT EARLY,
ESPECIALLY NOWADAYS,
THEY CAN MISS OUT ON
SOME LIFE EXPERIENCES
THAT ARE IMPORTANT.



IT'S IMPORTANT TO DATE A VARIETY OF PEOPLE
SO YOU CAN GET A FULL RANGE OF LIFE
EXPERIENCE AND LEARN WHAT YOU
WANT IN A PARTNER.

HONESTLY,
I GOT LUCKY
THAT YOUR
DAD IS SUCH
A GOOD
MAN. MOST
COUPLES
TODAY THAT
MARRY AS
YOUNG AS
WE DID
END IN
DIVORCE.



THIS IS
A LOT TO
TAKE IN...I
MEAN...ER...
WOW. I DON'T
KNOW WHAT
TO SAY.



THERE IS
NOTHING TO SAY.
EVERYTHING IS
FINE.

THE DEEP TRUST,
COMMUNICATION AND
RESPECT YOUR
MOTHER AND I HAVE
FOR EACH OTHER
THAT ALLOWS US TO
DO THIS IS WHY WE
LOVE EACH OTHER
SO MUCH.

THIS ISN'T
SOMETHING
NEW FOR US,
WE'VE BEEN
DOING IT FOR
A LONG TIME
NOW. HAVE WE
EVER SEEMED
UNHAPPY?



NO...YOU
GUYS ALWAYS
SEEM HAPPY
TOGETHER.

OUR
RELATIONSHIP NOW
IS BETTER THAN IT'S
EVER BEEN.

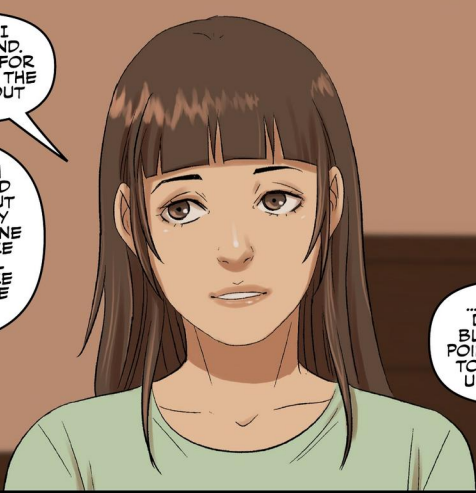
ARE
YOU, LIKE,
IN LOVE
WITH OTHER
PEOPLE
TOO?

NO. WE ONLY LOVE
EACH OTHER. WE HAVE PHYSICAL
INTIMACY WITH OTHERS, BUT
THAT'S IT. I'M NOT SURE I
COULD HANDLE SEEING YOUR
MOM TELL ANOTHER MAN
SHE LOVES HIM.

THERE ARE
COUPLES AND
PEOPLE THAT DO
THAT, IT'S CALLED
POLYAMORY BUT
THAT'S VERY
DIFFERENT FROM
WHAT WE DO.
NOTHING WRONG
WITH IT, IT'S
JUST NOT
FOR US.



PEOPLE FIGURE
OUT WHAT WORKS
FOR THEM AND FIND
LIKEMINDED PEOPLE
TO HANG OUT WITH.
IT'S HOW THE
WORLD ROLLS.



I...THINK I
UNDERSTAND.
THANK YOU FOR
TELLING ME THE
TRUTH ABOUT
IT.

YOU'RE
MATURE ENOUGH
TO KNOW THIS AND
WE TRUST YOU, BUT
PLEASE DON'T SAY
ANYTHING TO ANYONE
ABOUT IT AS THERE
ARE JUDGMENTAL
PEOPLE OUT THERE
WHO DON'T AGREE
WITH WHAT WE
DO.

...AND PLEASE
DON'T TELL
BLAKE AT THIS
POINT, HE'S STILL
TOO YOUNG TO
UNDERSTAND.



MY WRITING CAREER TOOK A SLIGHT PAUSE OVER THE LAST COUPLE YEARS FOR A VARIETY OF REASONS, BUT I FINALLY FINISHED MY THIRD BOOK AND IT'S DUE OUT TUESDAY.

I THOUGHT QUITTING TEACHING AFTER THE SECOND BOOK WOULD GIVE ME MORE TIME TO WRITE...BUT...DISTRACTIONS. HAVING A COUPLE HOURS A DAY TO WRITE IN THE CLASSROOM WAS EASIER THAN TRYING TO DO IT AT HOME. I MISS TEACHING, BUT IT BECAME TOO DIFFICULT WHEN SOME OF THE STUDENTS BECAME FANS.

Lifestyle Club

OUR FRIENDS CARL AND SHEILA WHO OWN THE LIFESTYLE CLUB IN DOWNTOWN L.A. INVITED US OVER FOR A PRIVATE CELEBRATION.

HERE'S TO ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL BOOK LAUNCH!

I LOVED IT, DAN, THANKS FOR LETTING ME READ IT EARLY.

YOU'RE VERY WELCOME! I NEEDED THE AFFIRMATION OF PEOPLE IN OUR COMMUNITY...I'VE BEEN GETTING A SMALL NUMBER OF REALLY NEGATIVE REVIEWS...

USUALLY FOLKS OBJECTING TO THE CONTENT IT SEEMS AND NOT JUDGING THE QUALITY OF THE STORY ITSELF.

DAN GETS A HUNDRED GOOD REVIEWS BUT FOCUSES ON THE ONE BAD ONE.



IT'S HARD NOT TO.

I KNOW, BABE, BUT YOU KNOW HOW CLOSE-MINDED SOME PEOPLE ARE. YOU JUST HAVE TO LET IT GO.

EASIER SAID THAN DONE.



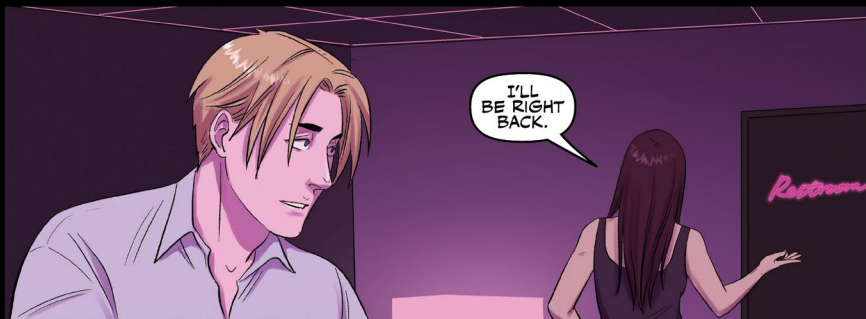
CATHY, THAT SURPRISE WE COOKED UP IS IN THE WOMEN'S RESTROOM.

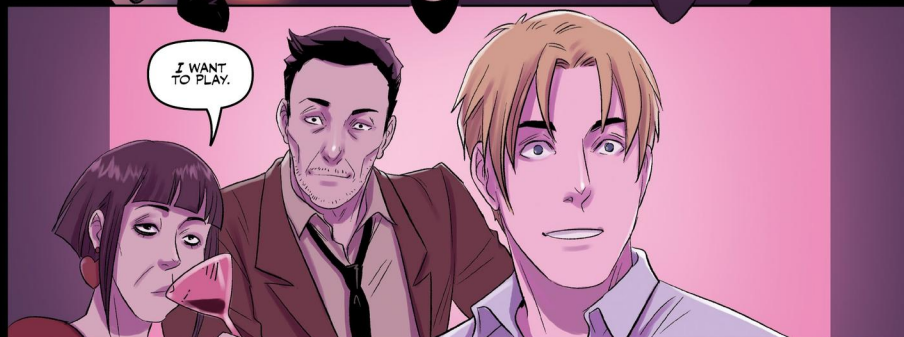
WE DIDN'T WANT DAN TO STUMBLE ACROSS IT EARLY.

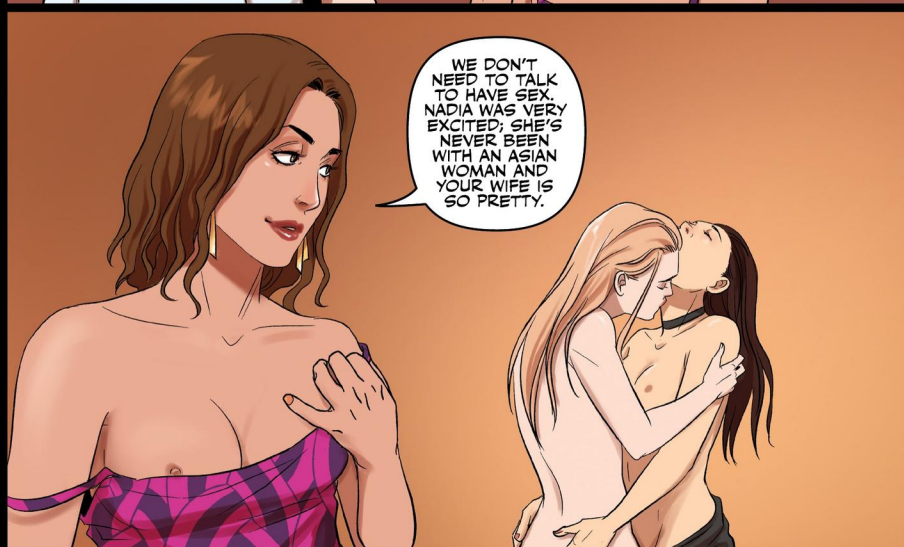
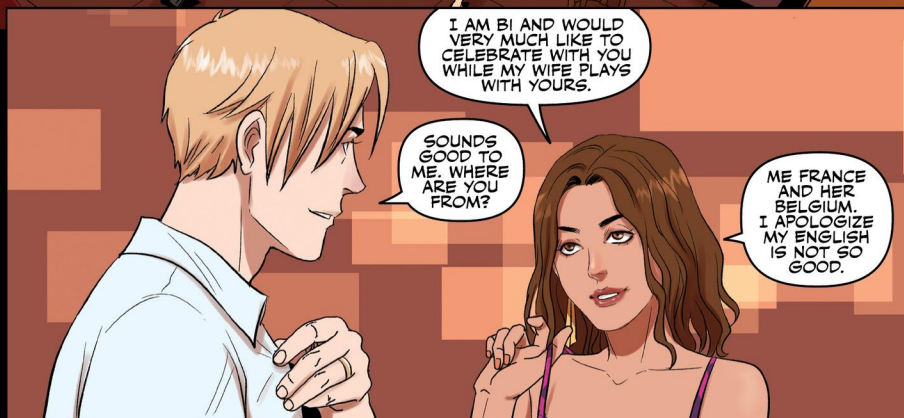


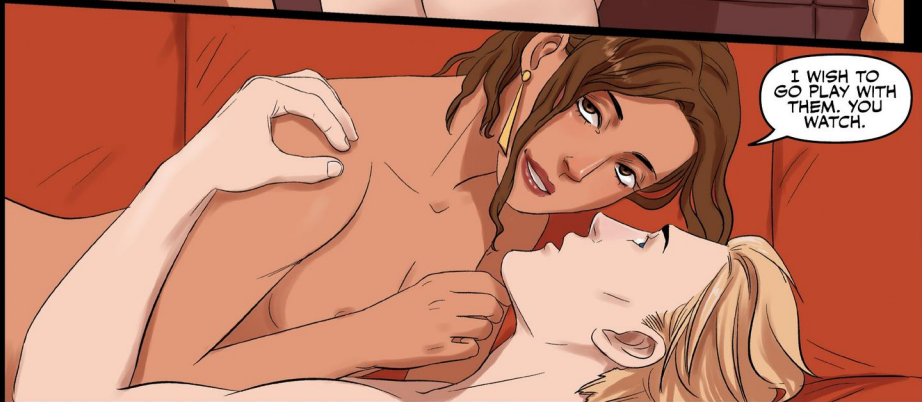
THEN LET ME GO FETCH YOUR SURPRISE.

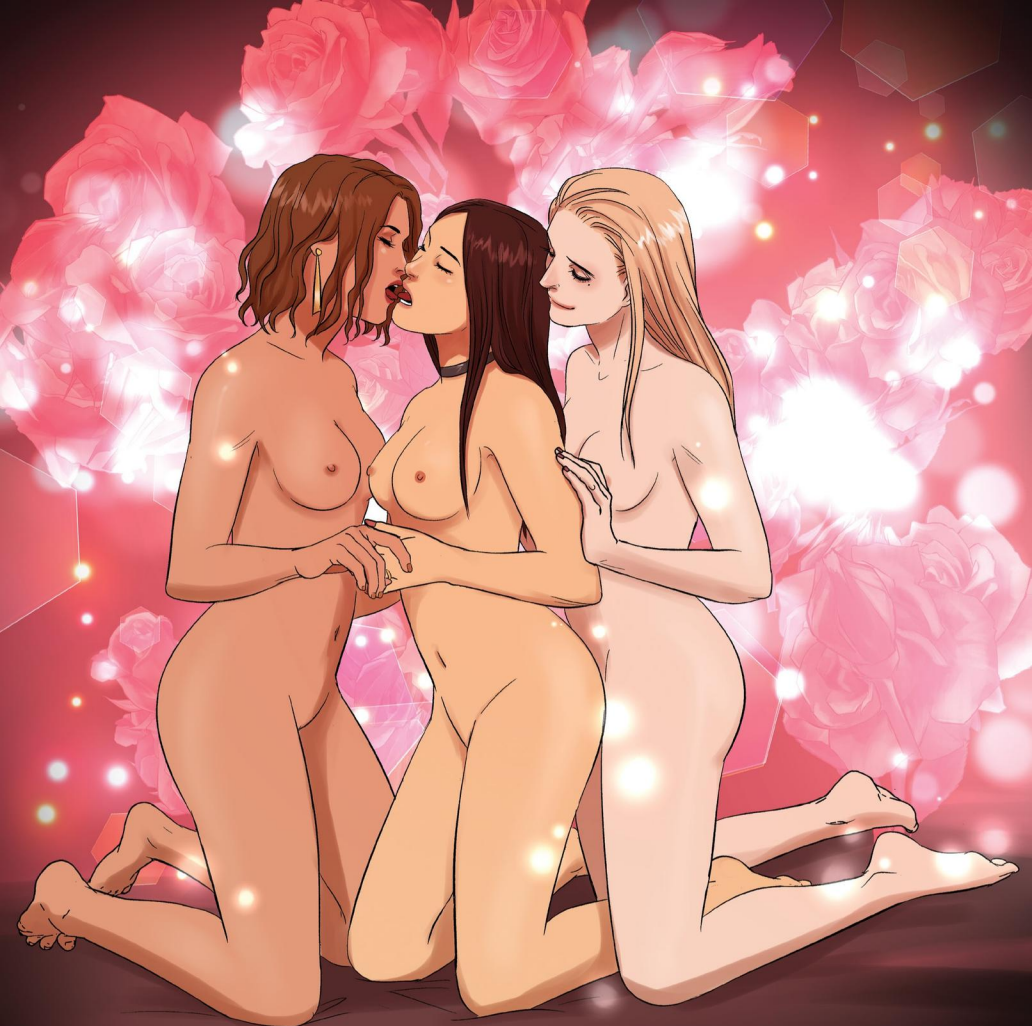




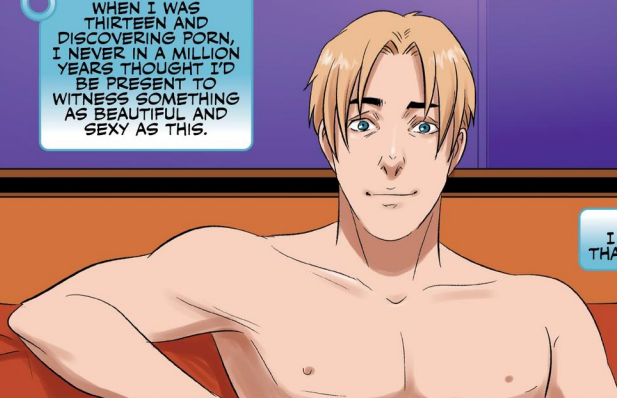








WHEN I WAS THIRTEEN AND DISCOVERING PORN, I NEVER IN A MILLION YEARS THOUGHT I'D BE PRESENT TO WITNESS SOMETHING AS BEAUTIFUL AND SEXY AS THIS.



LIFE IS GOOD. I KEEP THINKING THAT, BUT IT'S TRUE.



FIVE YEARS LATER



THE THIRD BOOK WAS A SUCCESS, AND IT SPAWNED A MOVIE ADAPTATION OF THE SERIES. DISAPPOINTINGLY THE FILM DIED IN DEVELOPMENT...SHOULD HAVE GONE WITH NETFLIX, OH WELL.

THE ANNOUNCEMENT AND ANTICIPATION SPIKED SALES THOUGH, AND THEY RERELEASED NEW EDITIONS.

I'M ON A SIXTEEN-CITY BOOK TOUR, CATHY ALWAYS COMES WITH ME TO NEW YORK.

BOOKS

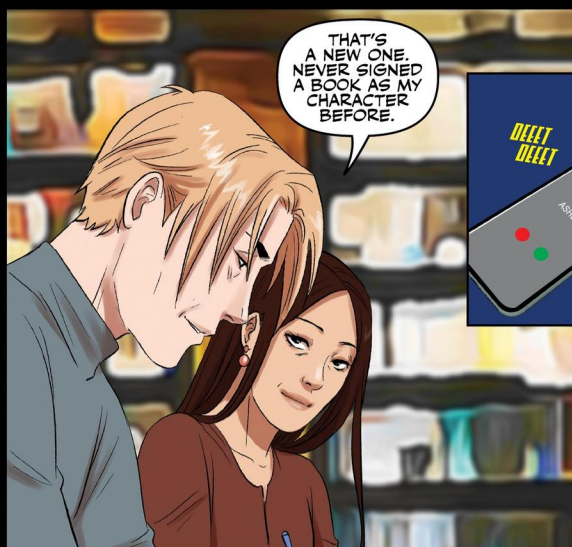
SHE LOVES IT HERE.

Victorian Fire

WILL YOU SIGN IT TO DEBBIE, I LOVE YOU WITH ALL MY HEART, ALEXANDER?

YOU WANT ME TO SIGN IT AS THE CHARACTER IN MY BOOK?

YES, PLEASE.





REMEMBER
ME NOW?



I DO, YES,
AND I'D REALLY
LIKE IT IF YOU
DON'T MAKE A
SCENE HERE,
I BLOCKED YOU
ONLINE FOR
A REASON.



YOU
AND I HAVE
BEEN LOVERS
IN PAST LIVES.
I'VE SEEN THIS.
WE ARE
DESTINED
TO BE
TOGETHER.

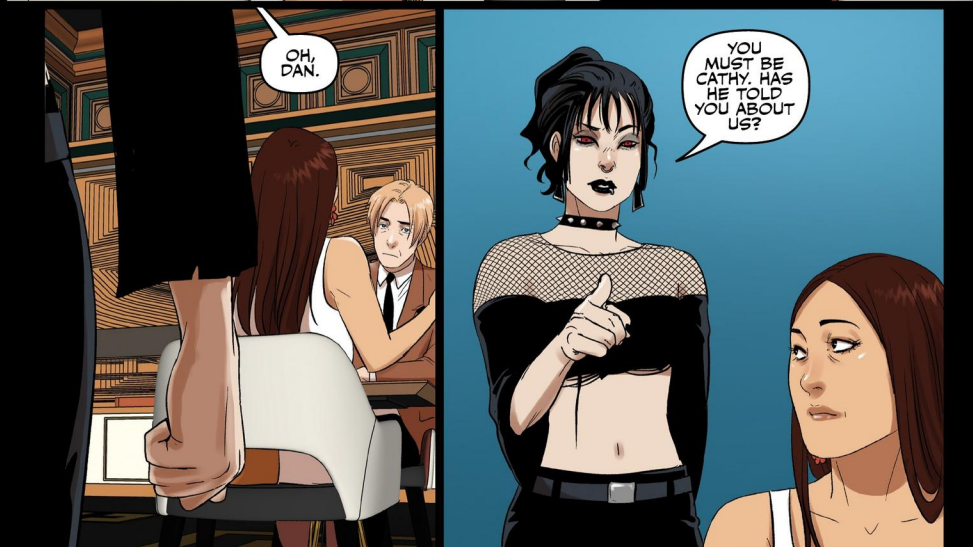
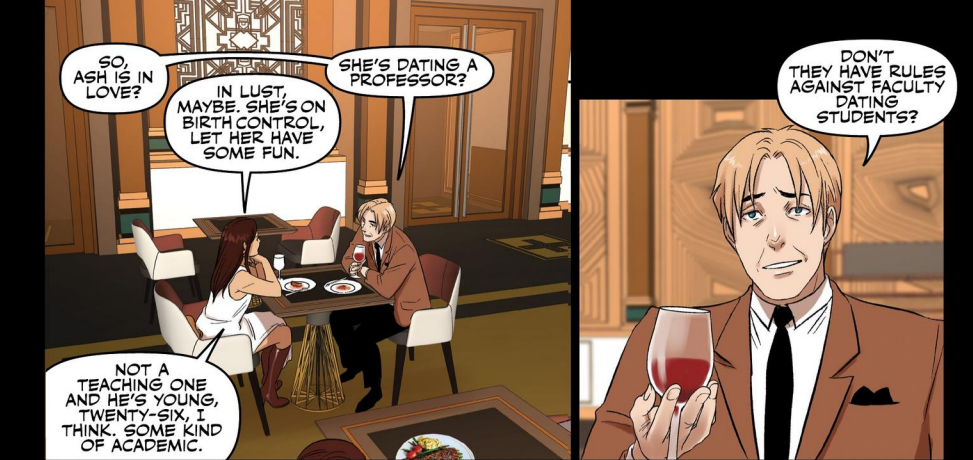


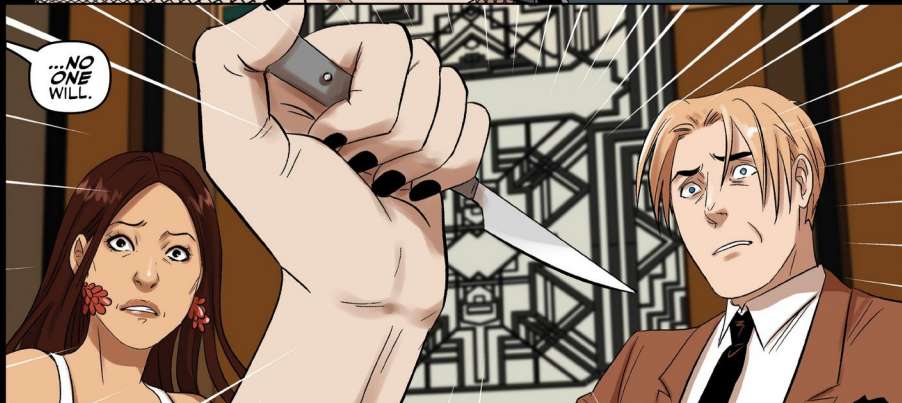
I AM HAPPILY
MARRIED TO THE
WOMAN OF MY
DREAMS.

YOU
NEED
TO LEAVE
BEFORE
I CALL
SECURITY.

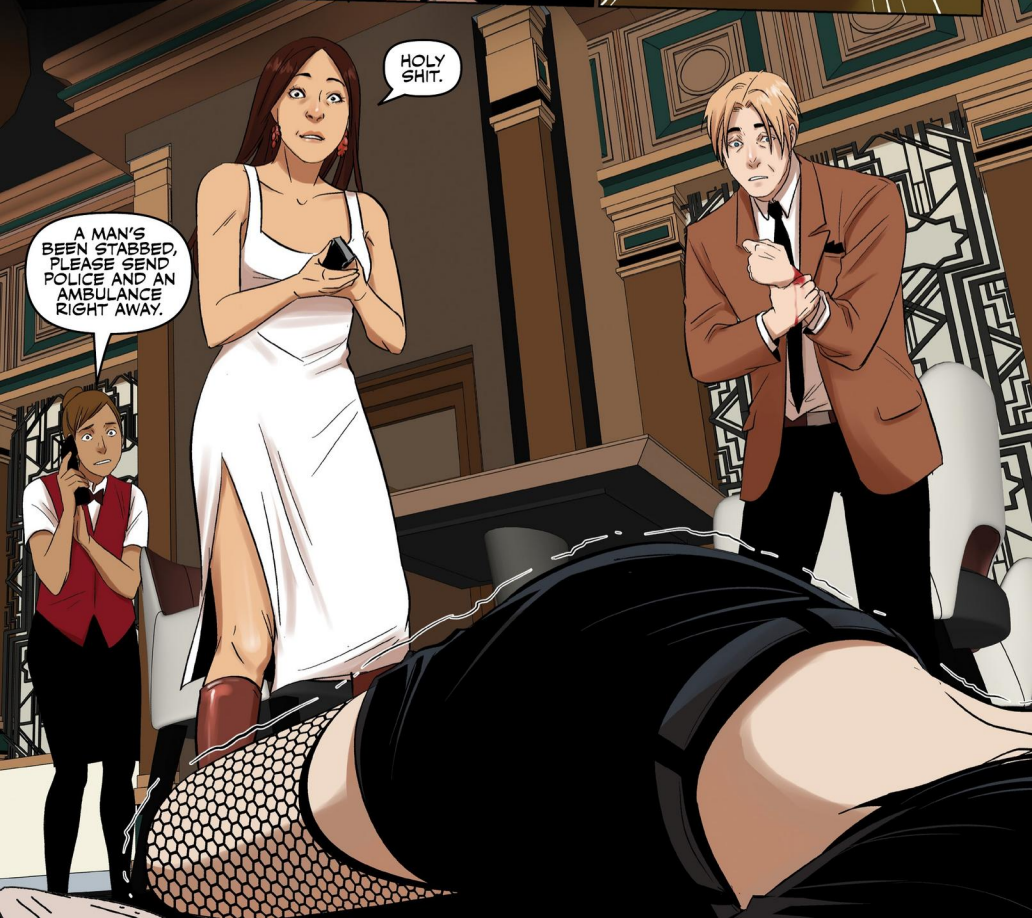


YOUR WIFE IS
A STAND-IN FOR
THE LOVE YOU'VE
SHARED WITH ME
FOR THOUSANDS
OF YEARS. YOU
CAN'T ESCAPE
FATE.





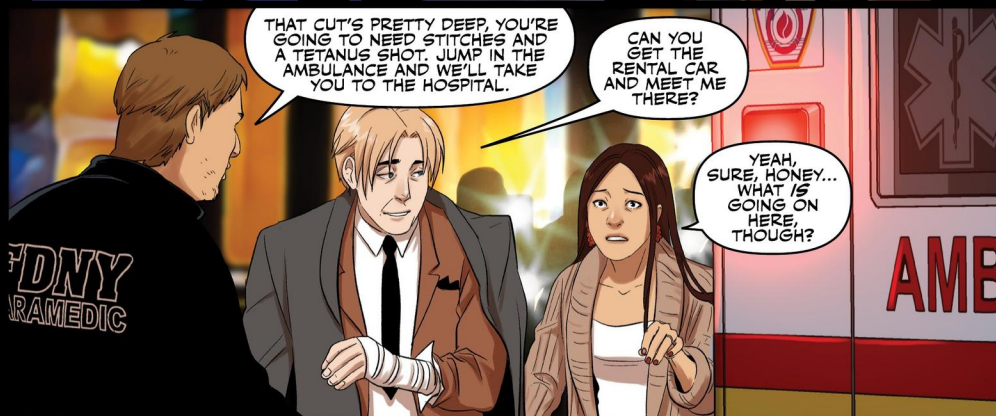






WHY'D YOU DO IT?

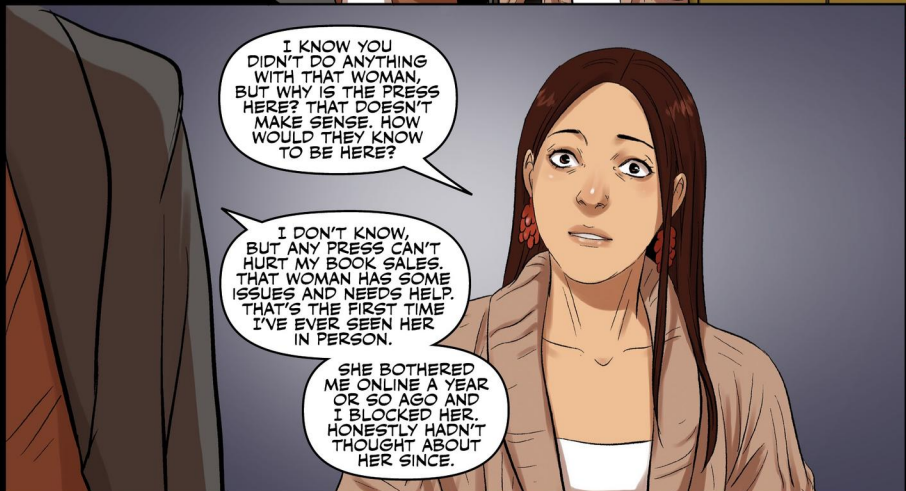
I LOVE HIM AND HE'S DENYING HIS LOVE FOR ME. I'M CARRYING HIS CHILD INSIDE ME RIGHT NOW.



THAT CUT'S PRETTY DEEP, YOU'RE GOING TO NEED STITCHES AND A TETANUS SHOT. JUMP IN THE AMBULANCE AND WE'LL TAKE YOU TO THE HOSPITAL.

CAN YOU GET THE RENTAL CAR AND MEET ME THERE?

YEAH, SURE, HONEY... WHAT *IS* GOING ON HERE, THOUGH?



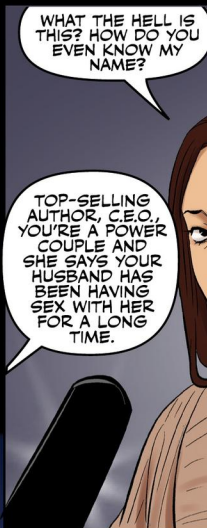
I KNOW YOU DIDN'T DO ANYTHING WITH THAT WOMAN, BUT WHY IS THE PRESS HERE? THAT DOESN'T MAKE SENSE. HOW WOULD THEY KNOW TO BE HERE?

I DON'T KNOW, BUT ANY PRESS CAN'T HURT MY BOOK SALES. THAT WOMAN HAS SOME ISSUES AND NEEDS HELP. THAT'S THE FIRST TIME I'VE EVER SEEN HER IN PERSON.

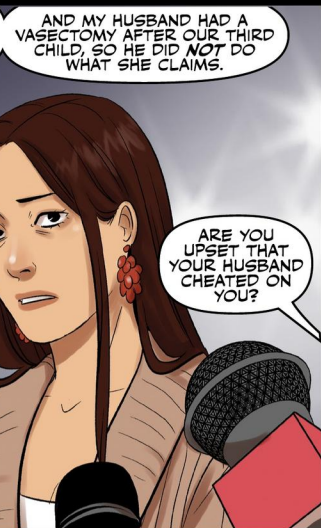
SHE BOTHERED ME ONLINE A YEAR OR SO AGO AND I BLOCKED HER. HONESTLY HADN'T THOUGHT ABOUT HER SINCE.



MRS. CHANG, THAT WOMAN CLAIMS YOUR HUSBAND IMPREGNATED HER.

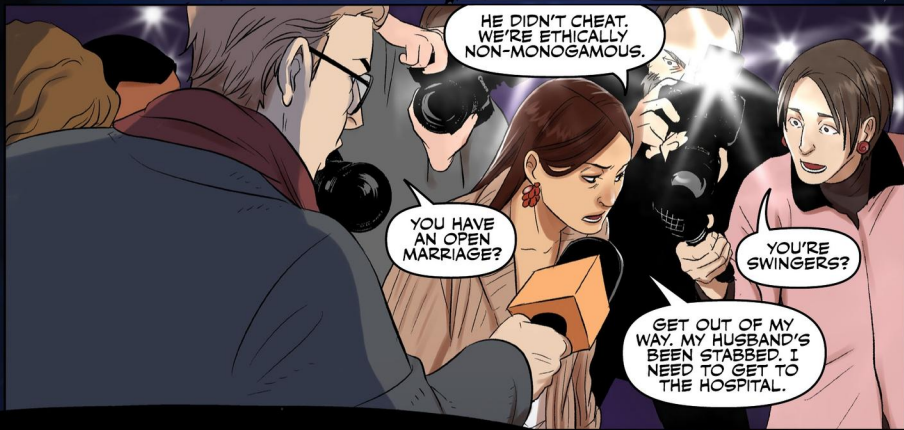


TOP-SELLING AUTHOR, C.E.O., YOU'RE A POWER COUPLE AND SHE SAYS YOUR HUSBAND HAS BEEN HAVING SEX WITH HER FOR A LONG TIME.



AND MY HUSBAND HAD A VASECTOMY AFTER OUR THIRD CHILD, SO HE DID NOT DO WHAT SHE CLAIMS.

ARE YOU UPSET THAT YOUR HUSBAND CHEATED ON YOU?



HE DIDN'T CHEAT. WE'RE ETHICALLY NON-MONOGAMOUS.

YOU HAVE AN OPEN MARRIAGE?

YOU'RE SWINGERS?

GET OUT OF MY WAY. MY HUSBAND'S BEEN STABBED. I NEED TO GET TO THE HOSPITAL.



LOS ANGELES
TWO DAYS LATER

THE PRESS WENT WILD WITH THE STORY,
AND IT GOT A LOT OF COVERAGE. THE
HEADLINES WERE GROSS AND HUMILIATING.

"FAMOUS AUTHOR,
C.E.O. POWER
COUPLE HAVE WILD
SEX PARTIES."

"LOS ANGELES POWER
COUPLE'S SECRET SEX
ORGY LIFE REVEALED."

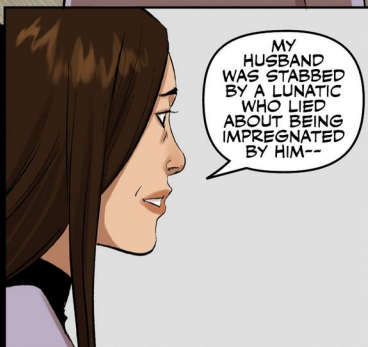
"HOLLYWOOD C.E.O.
IN SEX SCANDAL."

"AUTHOR'S
SALACIOUS
NOVELS BASED
ON HIS
OWN LIFE."





THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS HAS CALLED A SPECIAL MEETING TO REVIEW THE EVENTS OF THE PAST FEW DAYS AND THE RESULTANT NEWS STORM.



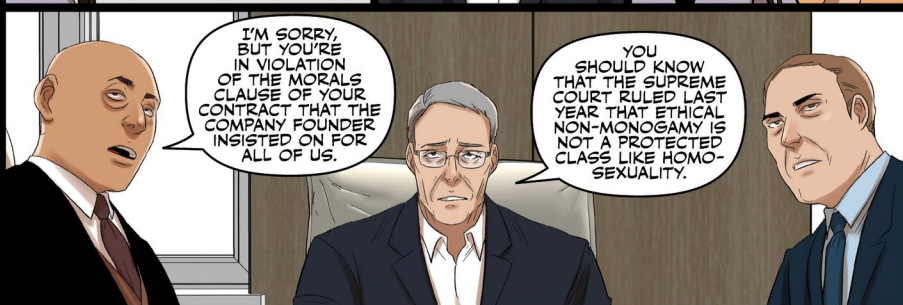
MY HUSBAND WAS STABBED BY A LUNATIC WHO LIED ABOUT BEING IMPREGNATED BY HIM--



I'M SORRY THAT HAPPENED TO YOUR HUSBAND, BUT I'M AFRAID WE'LL BE TERMINATING YOUR EMPLOYMENT. EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY.

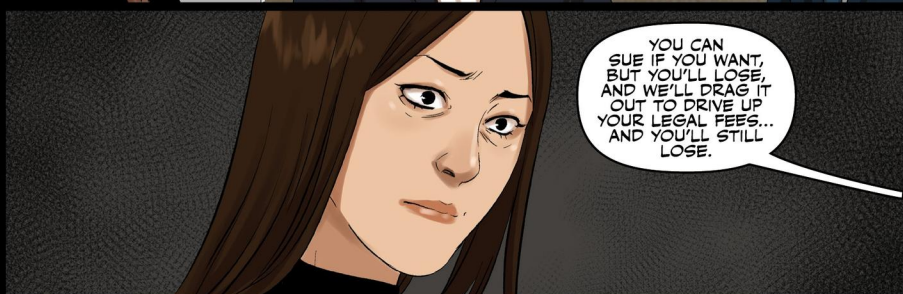


WHAT?!

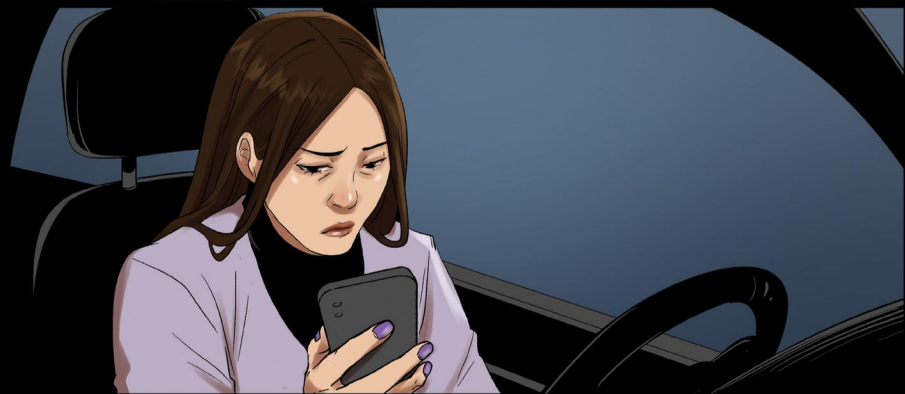


I'M SORRY, BUT YOU'RE IN VIOLATION OF THE MORALS CLAUSE OF YOUR CONTRACT THAT THE COMPANY FOUNDER INSISTED ON FOR ALL OF US.

YOU SHOULD KNOW THAT THE SUPREME COURT RULED LAST YEAR THAT ETHICAL NON-MONO GAMY IS NOT A PROTECTED CLASS LIKE HOMOSEXUALITY.



YOU CAN SUE IF YOU WANT, BUT YOU'LL LOSE, AND WE'LL DRAG IT OUT TO DRIVE UP YOUR LEGAL FEES... AND YOU'LL STILL LOSE.



FOR WHAT?

THE NEWS SHITSTORM ABOUT US AND SWINGING... THEY DON'T WANT A SLUT AS THEIR C.E.O.

WHAT THE FUCK?! THEY CAN'T DO THAT!

THEY CAN'T FIRE SOMEONE BECAUSE OF THEIR SEXUAL PREFERENCES.



ACTUALLY, THEY CAN. I'VE ALREADY ENGAGED AN ATTORNEY WHO WILL HELP ME WITH THE SEVERANCE...

BUT HE SAYS IT'S PERFECTLY LEGAL TO FIRE SOMEONE FOR BEING A SWINGER, IN AN OPEN RELATIONSHIP, POLYAMOROUS... FOR ANY OF THOSE REASONS.

I'M SO SORRY, HONEY. WE'RE FINE FOR MONEY, SO THAT'S NOT A CONCERN.

I KNOW THAT, BUT I LOVED MY JOB.

IF WE CAN'T BEAT THEM IN COURT THEN LET'S HIT THEM IN THE COURT OF PUBLIC OPINION. THIS IS BS.

IF WE DO THAT, I'LL LOSE MY SEVERANCE AND THEY'LL LIKELY SUE US FOR DAMAGES.

WE CAN'T JUST ROLL OVER ON THIS. LET ME TALK TO MY PUBLISHER. I HAVE AN IDEA.

"WELCOME BACK FROM THE BREAK. FOR THIS SEGMENT WE HAVE CATHY CHANG, FORMER C.E.O. OF DIGITAL ENTERTAINMENT SOLUTIONS, WHICH WE'LL CALL DES FOR SHORT. DES DESIGNS MOVIE TRAILERS AND MANAGES SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGNS FOR ENTERTAINMENT COMPANIES.

"SHE JOINS US TODAY HAVING WRITTEN A NEW BOOK CALLED *OUR JOURNEY*, ABOUT HER AND HER HUSBAND, AUTHOR DAN LINCOLN'S UNUSUAL RELATIONSHIP AND HER SUBSEQUENT TERMINATION FROM THE COMPANY AND DES'S LAWSUIT AGAINST THE COUPLE."

God HATES Swingers!!

SEX IS FOR MARRIAGE ONLY

Hedonists Go To HELL!!

WELCOME TO THE TOPIC, CATHY.

THANKS FOR HAVING ME. I'M A BIG FAN OF THE SHOW AND TOLD MY PUBLICIST I HAD TO COME HERE FIRST. I WANTED TO TALK WITH OTHER WOMEN ABOUT THIS.

I REMEMBER THE NEWS FROM A YEAR OR SO AGO WHEN YOU WERE TERMINATED...FOR BEING A SWINGER. IS IT OKAY TO CALL YOU THAT?

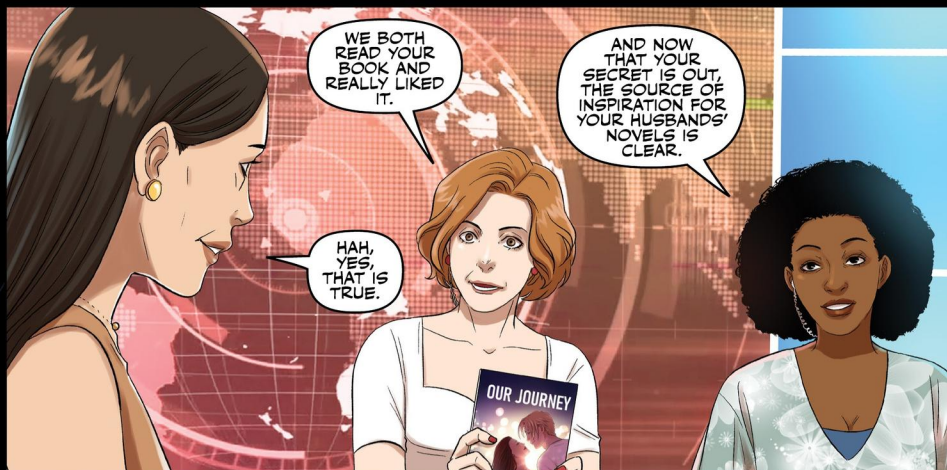
I PREFER ETHICALLY NON-MONOGAMOUS, BUT IT'S A MOUTHFUL SO I'M FINE WITH SWINGER...BUT IT DOES SEEM TO CARRY THE WRONG IMPRESSION FROM THE WORD ALONE.

YEAH, TO BE HONEST, WHEN I THINK OF SWINGERS, I THINK OF A HAIRY HIPPIE-TYPE MAN WITH A BIG GOLD CHAIN AROUND HIS NECK.

THE TOPIC

AND YOU CERTAINLY LOOK NOTHING LIKE THAT, NOR YOUR VERY HANDSOME HUSBAND, AUTHOR DAN LINCOLN.

YES, THE STEREOTYPES AND PREJUDICES AGAINST THOSE OF US WHO PRACTICE ETHICAL NON-MONOGAMY... SWINGING, IN OUR CASE...ARE VILE, OUTDATED, SEXIST, AND HORRIBLY PREJUDICIAL.



WE BOTH
READ YOUR
BOOK AND
REALLY LIKED
IT.

AND NOW
THAT YOUR
SECRET IS OUT,
THE SOURCE OF
INSPIRATION FOR
YOUR HUSBANDS'
NOVELS IS
CLEAR.

HAH,
YES,
THAT IS
TRUE.

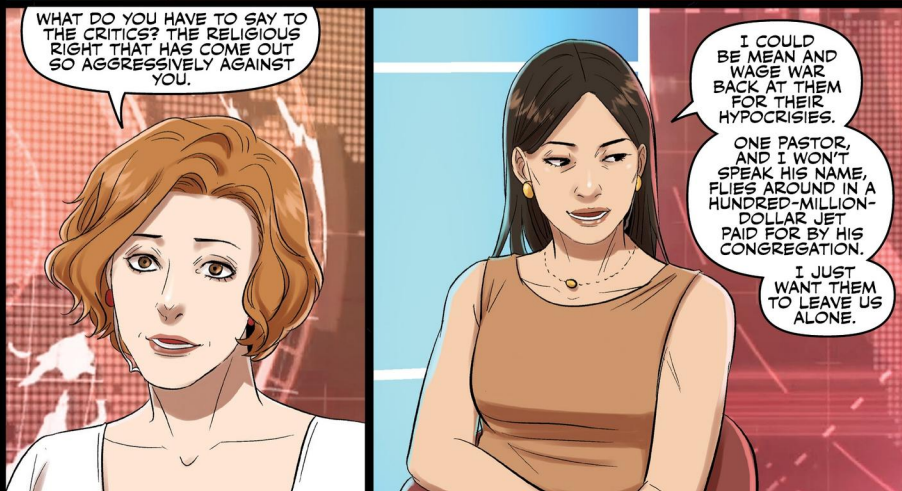
OUR JOURNEY



DO YOU
REALLY NOT GET
JEALOUS? IF I SAW
MY HUSBAND
WITH ANOTHER
WOMAN... I DON'T
THINK I COULD
HANDLE IT.

IT'S NOT FOR
EVERYONE BUT WHAT IS?
PEOPLE MAKE CHOICES
EVERY DAY ABOUT HOW
THEY LIVE THEIR LIVES.
OUR TWENTIETH WEDDING
ANNIVERSARY IS IN
A FEW MONTHS.

WE'VE BEEN IN THIS
LIFESTYLE FOR ALMOST TWELVE
YEARS NOW. WE HAVE EXCELLENT
COMMUNICATION AND WE BOTH
APPROVE WHAT THE OTHER
DOES IN ADVANCE.

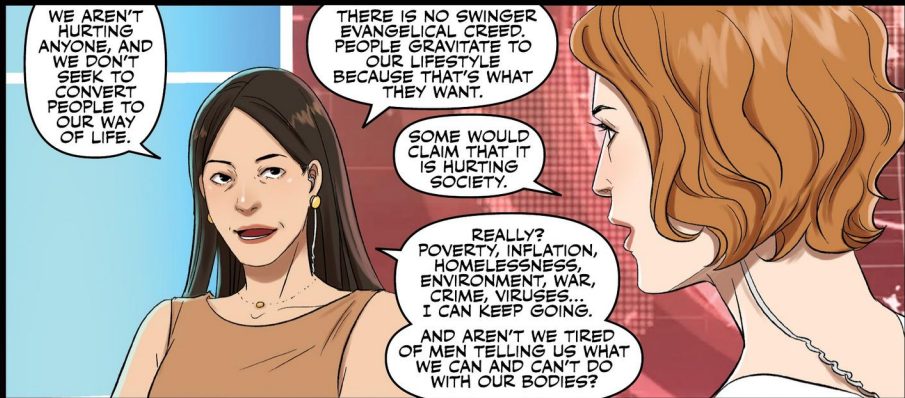


WHAT DO YOU HAVE TO SAY TO
THE CRITICS? THE RELIGIOUS
RIGHT THAT HAS COME OUT
SO AGGRESSIVELY AGAINST
YOU.

I COULD
BE MEAN AND
WAGE WAR
BACK AT THEM
FOR THEIR
HYPOCRISIES.

ONE PASTOR,
AND I WON'T
SPEAK HIS NAME,
FLIES AROUND IN A
HUNDRED-MILLION-
DOLLAR JET
PAID FOR BY HIS
CONGREGATION.

I JUST
WANT THEM
TO LEAVE US
ALONE.



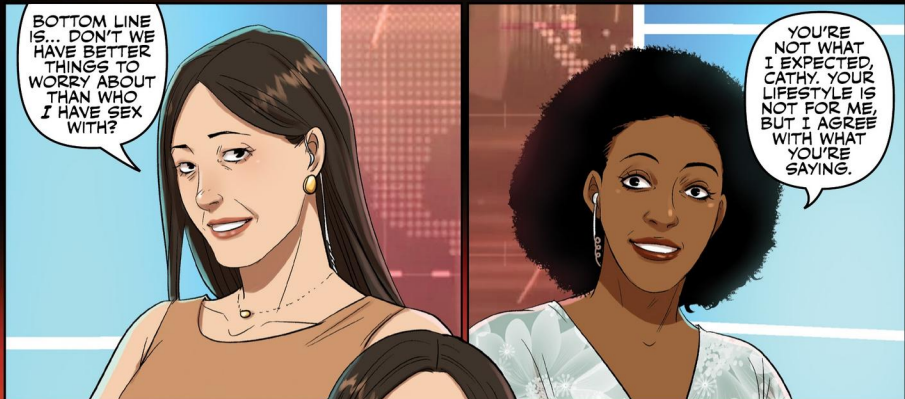
WE AREN'T HURTING ANYONE, AND WE DON'T SEEK TO CONVERT PEOPLE TO OUR WAY OF LIFE.

THERE IS NO SWINGER EVANGELICAL CREED. PEOPLE GRAVITATE TO OUR LIFESTYLE BECAUSE THAT'S WHAT THEY WANT.

SOME WOULD CLAIM THAT IT IS HURTING SOCIETY.

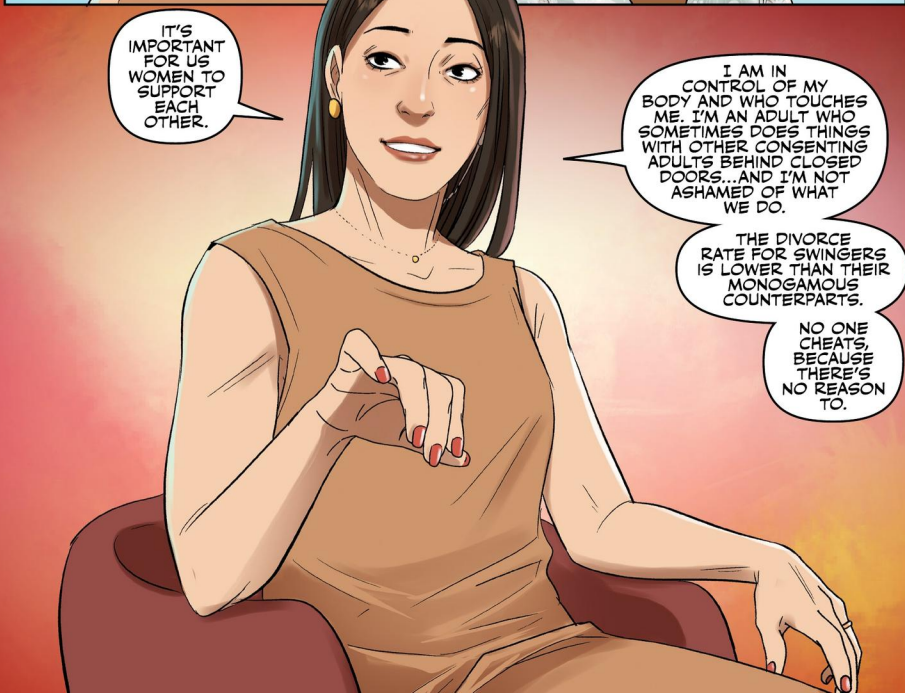
REALLY? POVERTY, INFLATION, HOMELESSNESS, ENVIRONMENT, WAR, CRIME, VIRUSES... I CAN KEEP GOING.

AND AREN'T WE TIRED OF MEN TELLING US WHAT WE CAN AND CAN'T DO WITH OUR BODIES?



BOTTOM LINE IS... DON'T WE HAVE BETTER THINGS TO WORRY ABOUT THAN WHO I HAVE SEX WITH?

YOU'RE NOT WHAT I EXPECTED, CATHY. YOUR LIFESTYLE IS NOT FOR ME, BUT I AGREE WITH WHAT YOU'RE SAYING.



IT'S IMPORTANT FOR US WOMEN TO SUPPORT EACH OTHER.

I AM IN CONTROL OF MY BODY AND WHO TOUCHES ME. I'M AN ADULT WHO SOMETIMES DOES THINGS WITH OTHER CONSENTING ADULTS BEHIND CLOSED DOORS...AND I'M NOT ASHAMED OF WHAT WE DO.

THE DIVORCE RATE FOR SWINGERS IS LOWER THAN THEIR MONOGAMOUS COUNTERPARTS.

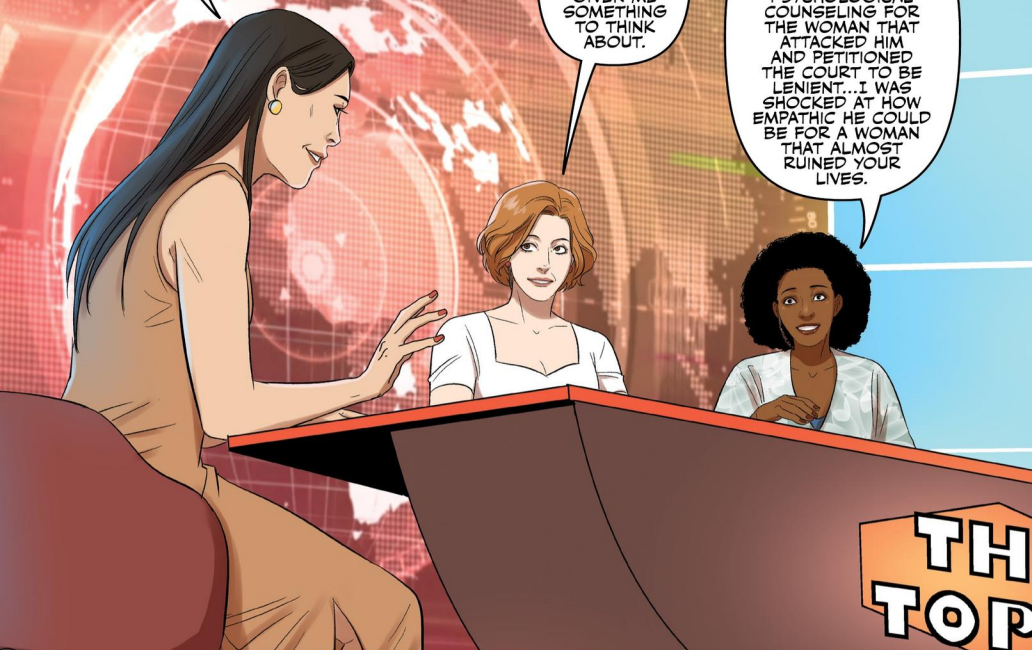
NO ONE CHEATS, BECAUSE THERE'S NO REASON TO.

HOW WOULD YOU LIKE TO TRUST YOUR PARTNER SO COMPLETELY THAT YOU CAN TELL HIM OR HER THE SEXUAL FANTASIES AND THOUGHTS THAT CREEP UP IN YOUR MIND...

...AND RATHER THAN GETTING UPSET ABOUT IT AND INTO MARITAL COUNSELING... THEY HELP MAKE IT HAPPEN FOR YOU... WITHIN REASON, OF COURSE.

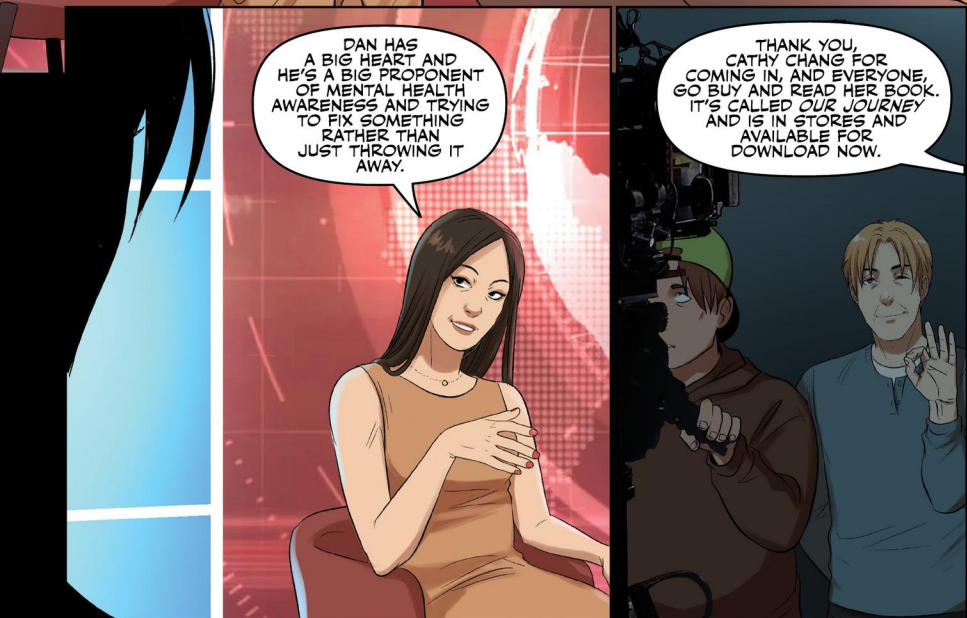
I THINK THAT'S AWESOME YOUR BOOK AND HEARING YOU HERE HAS GIVEN ME SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT.

WE ARE ALMOST OUT OF TIME, BUT MY FINAL COMMENT IS THAT I READ THAT YOUR HUSBAND PAID FOR PSYCHOLOGICAL COUNSELING FOR THE WOMAN THAT ATTACKED HIM AND PETITIONED THE COURT TO BE LENIENT...I WAS SHOCKED AT HOW EMPATHIC HE COULD BE FOR A WOMAN THAT ALMOST RUINED YOUR LIVES.



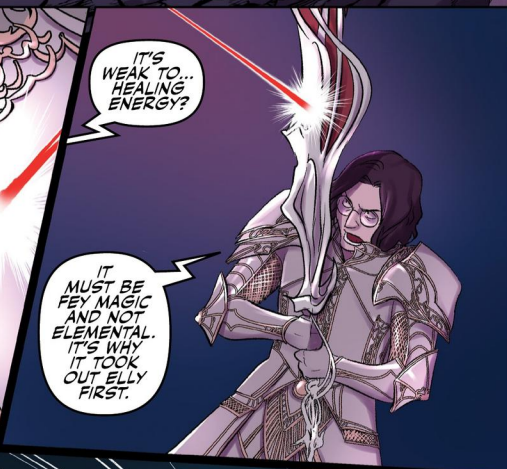
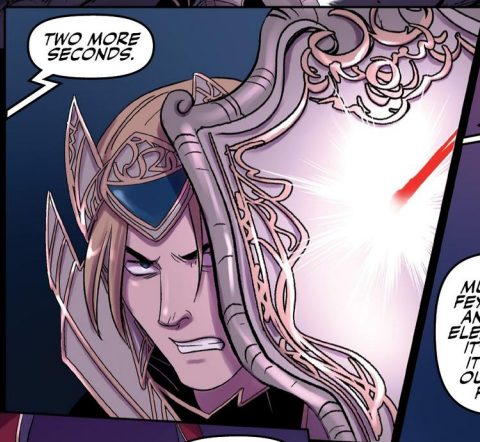
DAN HAS A BIG HEART AND HE'S A BIG PROponent OF MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS AND TRYING TO FIX SOMETHING RATHER THAN JUST THROWING IT AWAY.

THANK YOU, CATHY CHANG FOR COMING IN, AND EVERYONE, GO BUY AND READ HER BOOK. IT'S CALLED *OUR JOURNEY* AND IS IN STORES AND AVAILABLE FOR DOWNLOAD NOW.











PROTON

YEAH!

YOU
GUYS ARE SO
LUCKY TO HAVE
ME ON THE
TEAM.



I'VE GOT TO GO. DINNER'S
ALMOST READY I CAN SMELL
IT. HAPPY THANKSGIVING,
YOU GUYS.



HAVE
A GOOD ONE,
DAN. GO EASY
ON THE WINE...
YOU'RE NOT A
YOUNG MAN
ANYMORE.



SAY HI
TO CATHY
FOR ME.





TWENTY-FIVE YEARS LATER

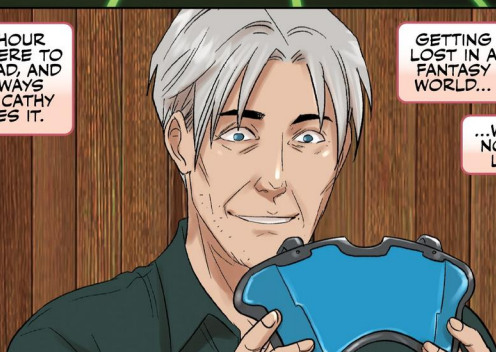


I'VE PLAYED
VIDEO GAMES
MY WHOLE LIFE.



NONE OF MY KIDS
DO...WHICH IS
WEIRD TO ME.

I NEED AN HOUR
HERE AND THERE TO
CLEAR MY HEAD, AND
GAMING ALWAYS
WORKS AND CATHY
ENCOURAGES IT.



GETTING
LOST IN A
FANTASY
WORLD...

...WHAT'S
NOT TO
LIKE?

DAN,
DINNER'S
ALMOST
READY AND
EVERYONE
BUT BLAKE'S
HERE.

OKAY,
HONEY.
I'LL BE
RIGHT
THERE.





I WAS TERRIFIED OF GETTING OLD, BUT NOW THAT I AM...IT'S NOT THAT BAD.

I LOVE THE GRANDKIDS. IT'S LIKE HAVING THE BEST OF A CHILD AND THEN HANDING THEM BACK TO THEIR PARENTS WHEN THEY ANNOY YOU.

I'M HUNGRY. I'M GOING TO GRAB A PIECE OF THIS HAM.

WILL YOU DISTRACT MOM SO SHE DOESN'T SEE?

SURE.

HAVING FAMILY AND FINANCIAL MEANS FOR COMFORT AND TRAVEL MAKE ALL THE DIFFERENCE.

MOM, MIKEY IS EATING HAM.

WHAT DID I TELL YOU ABOUT EATING BEFORE WE ALL SIT DOWN?

DID YOU EVEN WASH YOUR HANDS?

HEY, CHAMP, DO WHAT YOUR MOM SAYS.

I CAN SEE YOU'VE TAUGHT LIZZY TO NARC ON HER LITTLE BROTHER, LIKE YOU USED TO DO TO ME.

HEY, IT'S SHIT-FOR-BRAINS. WHERE'S MONICA?

OOO, MOMMY SAID SHIT.

I HAD TO BREAK IT OFF WITH HER. SHE WAS GETTING TO BE A LITTLE TOO CLINGY FOR MY TASTE.



THAT'S FUNNY, BECAUSE SHE TOLD DIANA SHE GAVE YOU THE BOOT AFTER YOU BOUGHT THAT MOTORCYCLE WITHOUT DISCUSSING IT WITH HER FIRST.



LOOK WHO IT IS... MY BABY BROTHER LUKE AND HIS PARTNER IN CRIME, DIANA TO RUIN MY FUN.



A woman with short, wavy grey hair and a warm smile is holding a large, golden-brown roasted turkey on a white platter. The turkey is garnished with fresh green herbs. She is wearing a light blue button-down shirt. The background is a warm, dimly lit room with brick walls and soft, out-of-focus lights.

HAVING US
ALL TOGETHER
UNDER ONE ROOF
IS A BLESSING AND
A MUCH TOO RARE
OCCURRENCE. I
THANK YOU ALL FOR
BEING HERE.

A man with grey hair and a surprised expression is being led by a hand from the right, which is holding a small box containing a piece of the roasted turkey. He is wearing a dark green shirt. In the background, a young boy and a young girl are looking on. The setting is a room with wooden doors and a window with multiple panes.

WHERE'S
DAD?

I'M
RIGHT
HERE.



LET ME
CARRY THAT
FOR YOU,
DEAR.

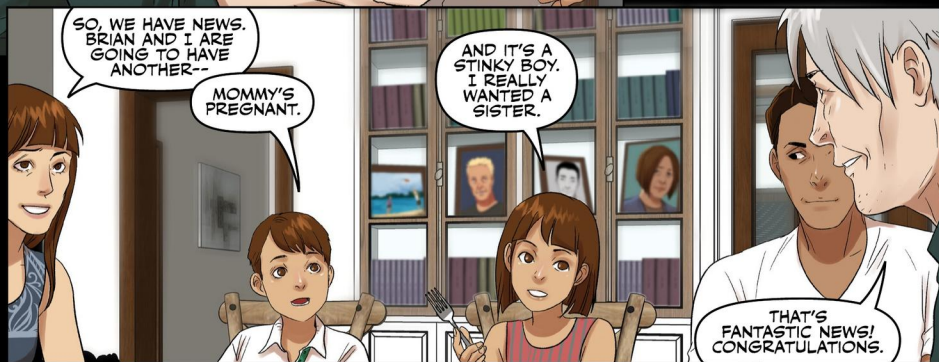
GEE,
THANKS.



I'M SORRY,
MY LOVE, WE
HAD THIS GIANT
RAT BOSS WITH
LASERS FOR
EYES--

STILL
SUCH A
NERD...
AFTER ALL
THESE
YEARS.

ALLY
SAYS
HI.



SO, WE HAVE NEWS.
BRIAN AND I ARE
GOING TO HAVE
ANOTHER--

MOMMY'S
PREGNANT.

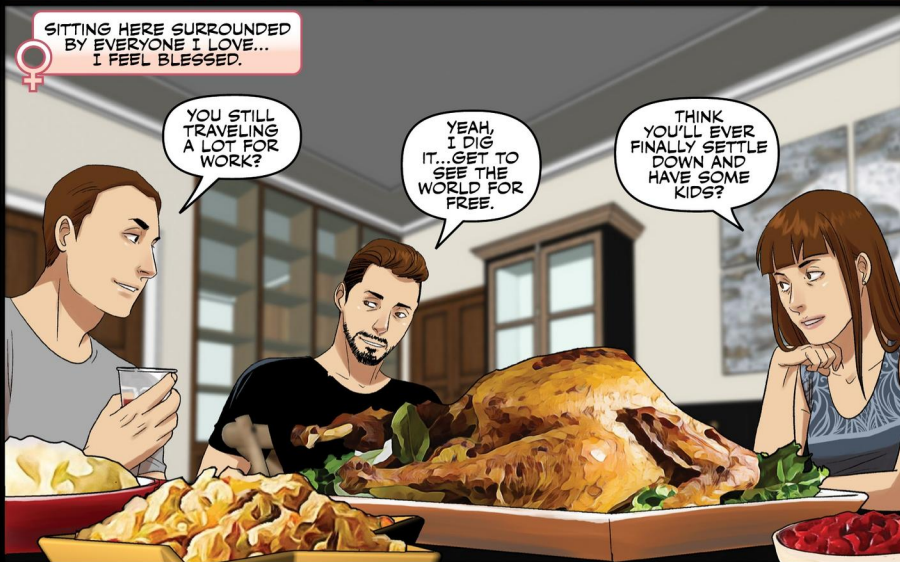
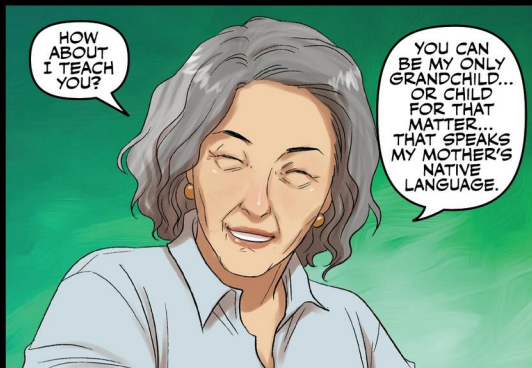
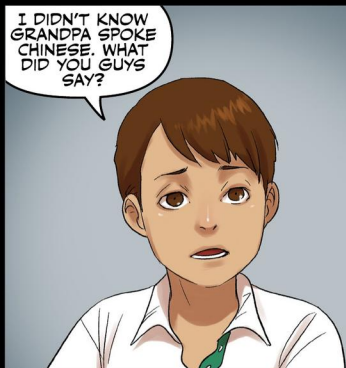
AND IT'S A
STINKY BOY.
I REALLY
WANTED A
SISTER.

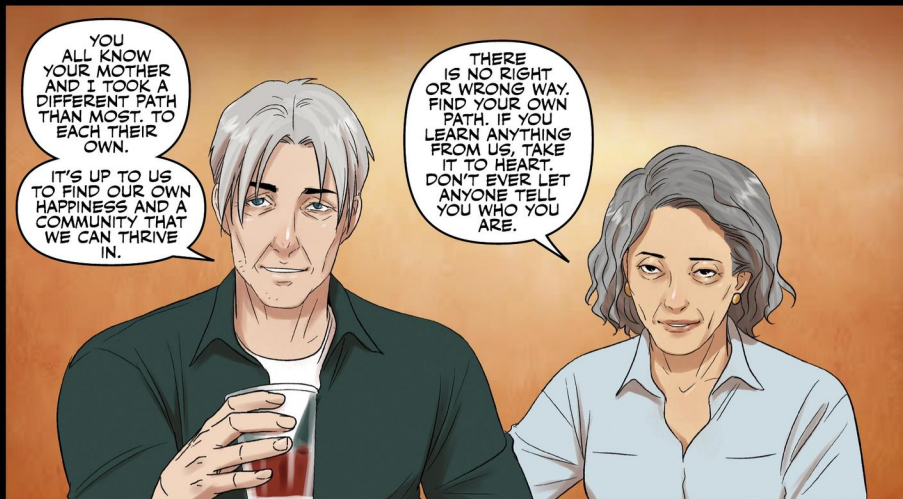
THAT'S
FANTASTIC NEWS!
CONGRATULATIONS.



他们太像我们了。

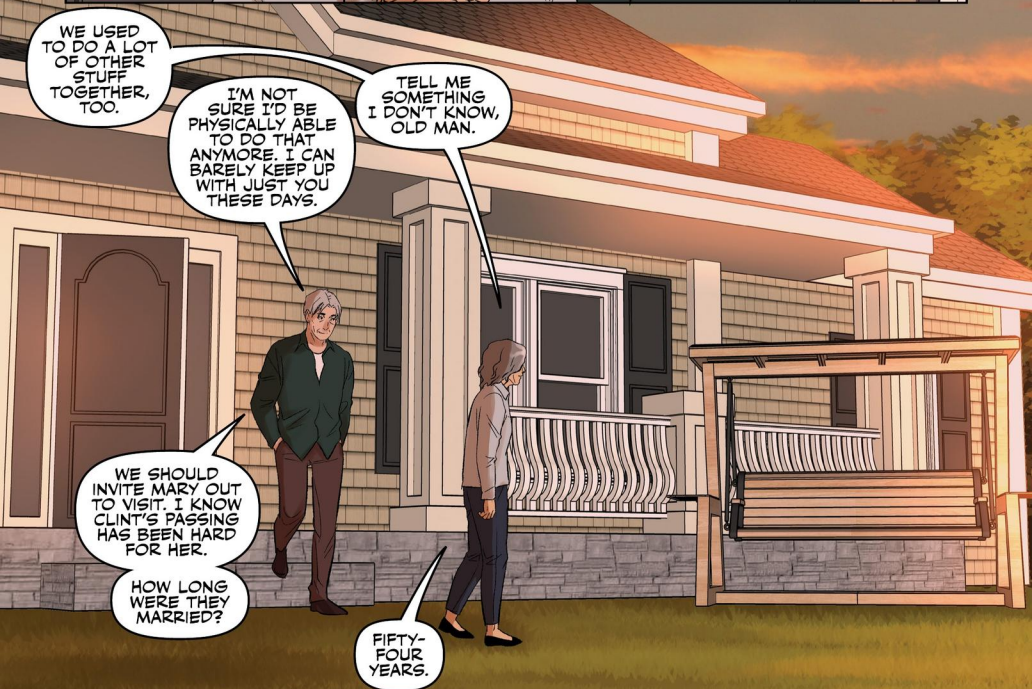
你越来越好了。

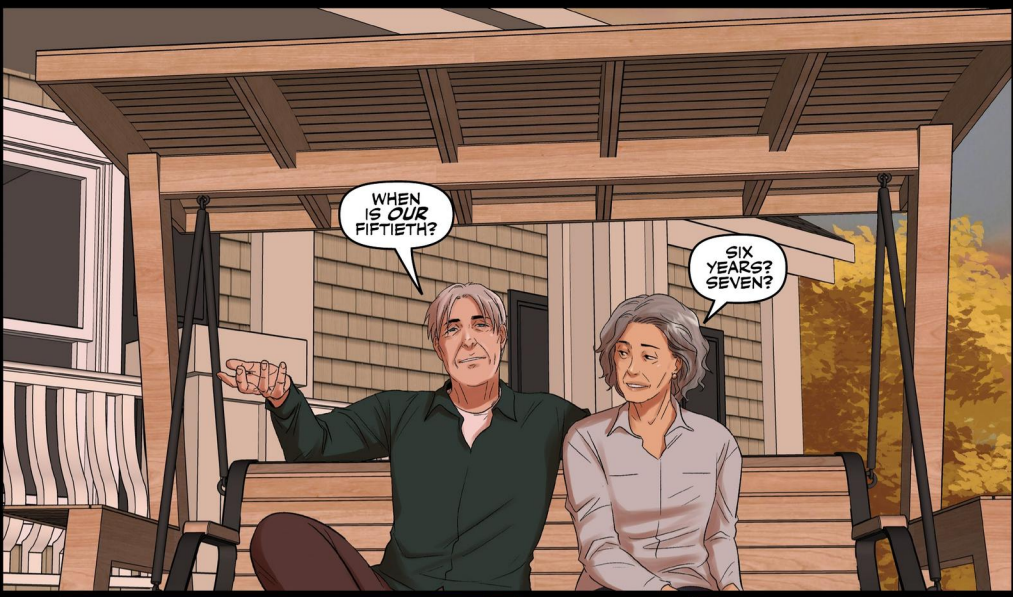






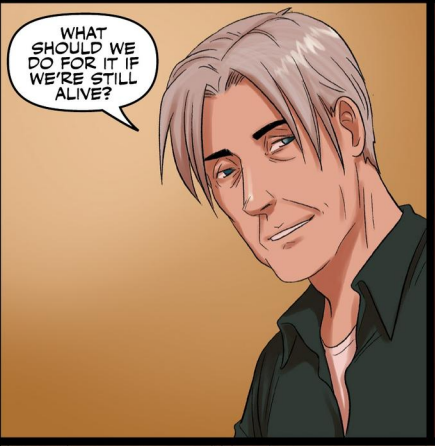




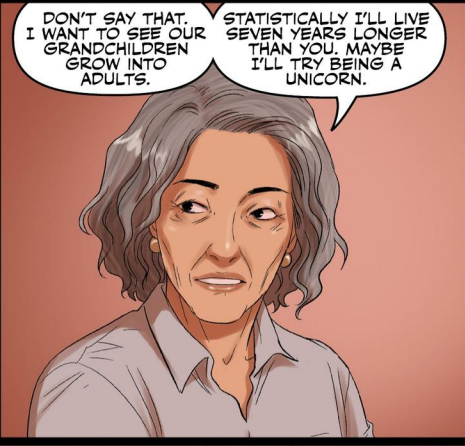


WHEN IS *OUR* FIFTIETH?

SIX YEARS? SEVEN?

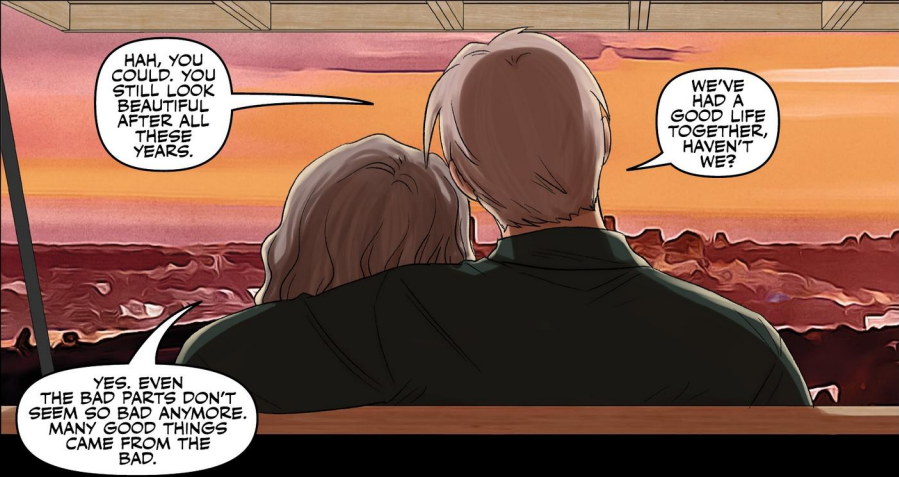


WHAT SHOULD WE DO FOR IT IF WE'RE STILL ALIVE?



DON'T SAY THAT. I WANT TO SEE OUR GRANDCHILDREN GROW INTO ADULTS.

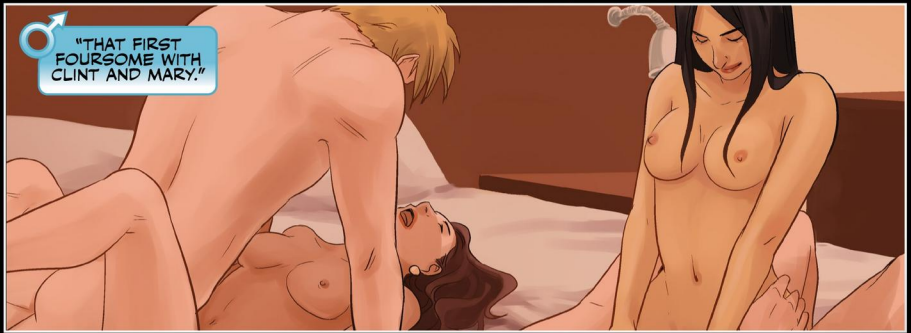
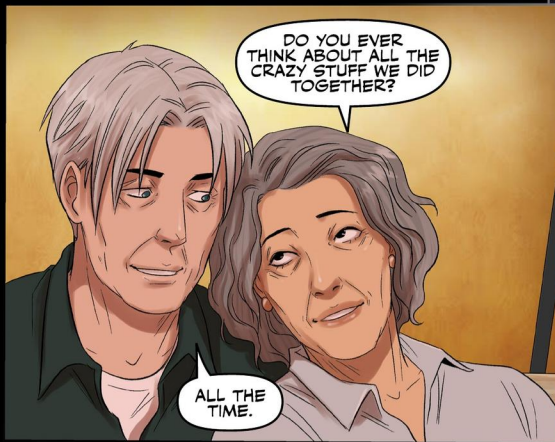
STATISTICALLY I'LL LIVE SEVEN YEARS LONGER THAN YOU. MAYBE I'LL TRY BEING A UNICORN.

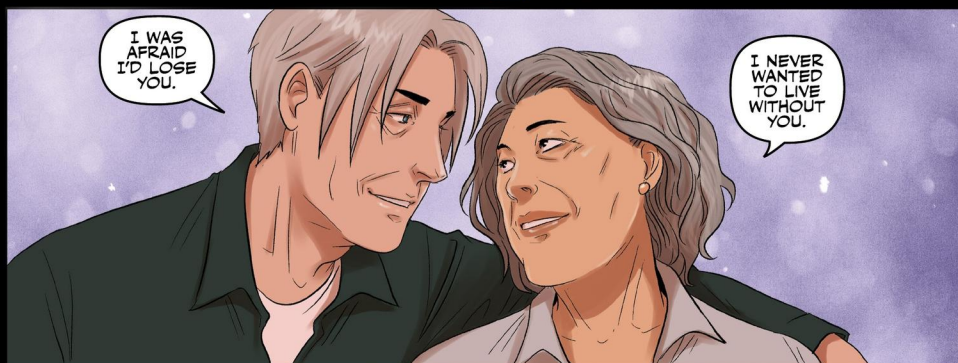
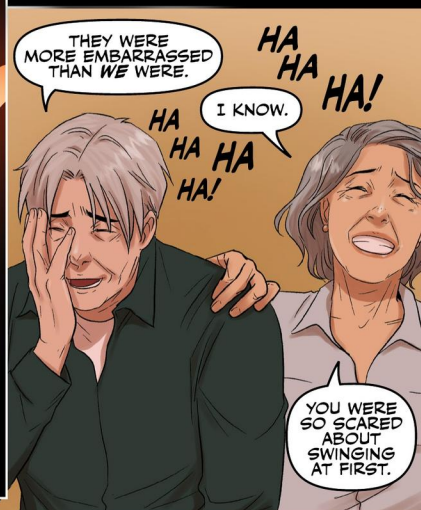
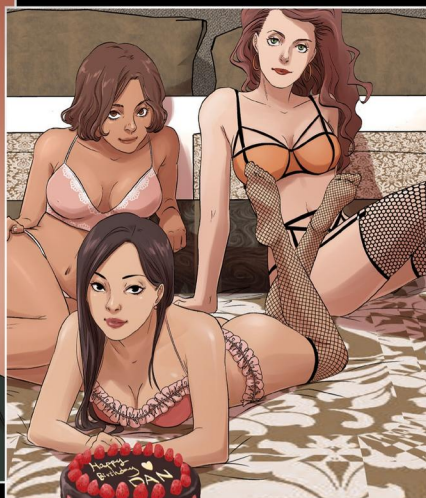


HAH, YOU COULD. YOU STILL LOOK BEAUTIFUL AFTER ALL THESE YEARS.

WE'VE HAD A GOOD LIFE TOGETHER, HAVEN'T WE?

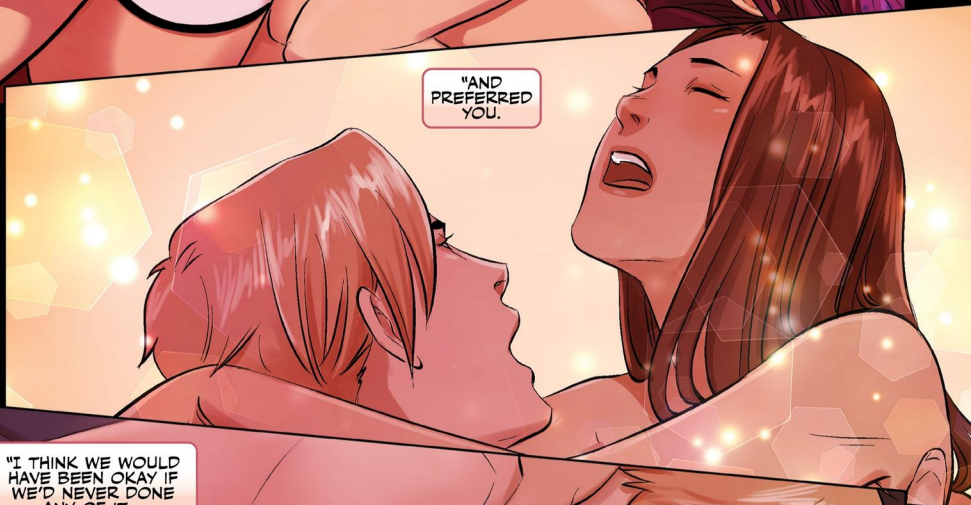
YES, EVEN THE BAD PARTS DON'T SEEM SO BAD ANYMORE. MANY GOOD THINGS CAME FROM THE BAD.



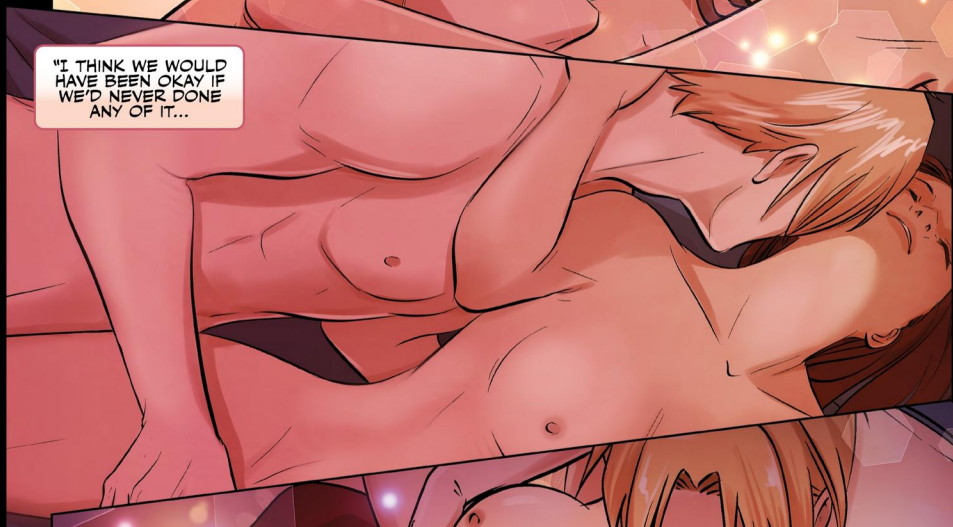




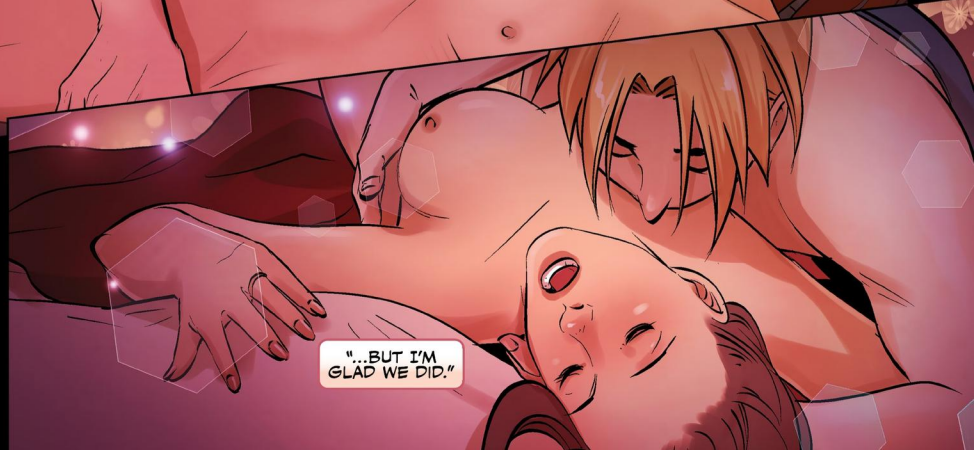
"I HAVE ALWAYS
LOVED YOU."



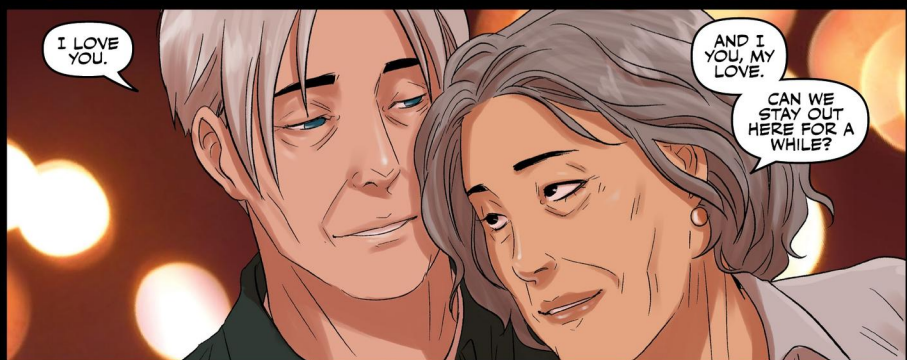
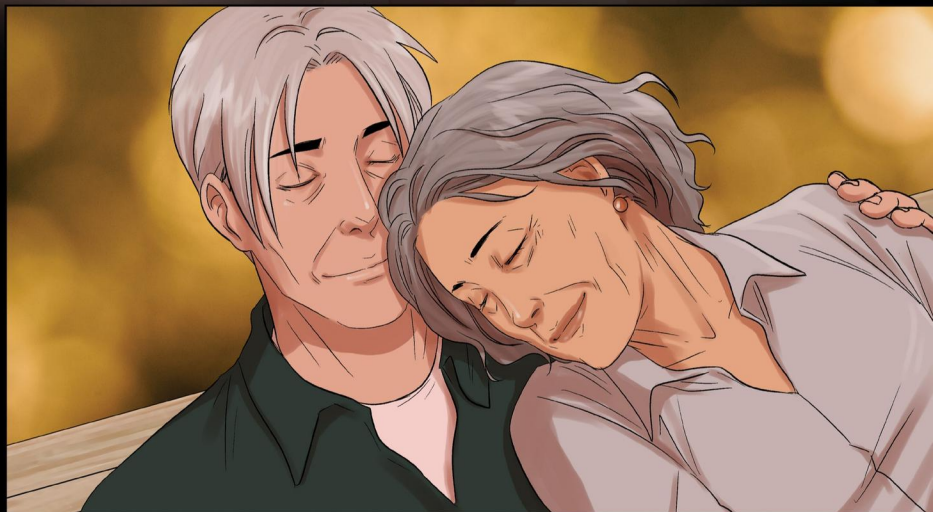
"AND
PREFERRED
YOU."



"I THINK WE WOULD
HAVE BEEN OKAY IF
WE'D NEVER DONE
ANY OF IT..."



"...BUT I'M
GLAD WE DID."





Fin



SWI

UNICORN

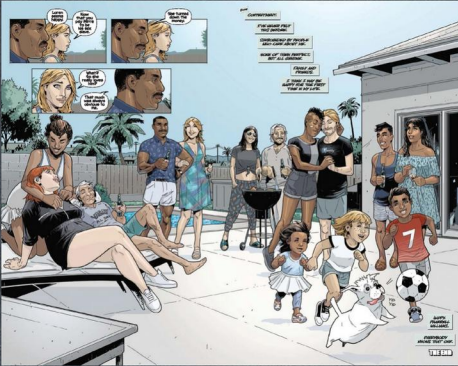
VOLUME

ONE

ING
2023

SEX ED

Welcome to the final volume of the first arc of SWING! Thank you for joining us on Cathy and Dan's journey. It's only happened twice in my career, but I got quite emotional when I wrote that last scene of those two together. I like happily ever after; we have the real world for reality. The other time was when I wrote that last scene of THINK TANK V5...which was also about David Loren finding family and community for himself. Similar themes in two very different books. If you do like this book, please recommend it to your friends. Word of mouth seems to be the best way to get new readers and we greatly appreciate it!



BEING OUTED AS A SWINGER

This was a HUGE part of this final story, how Cathy and Dan were outed, what happens, etc. I'll talk about the lack of legal protection below (from the story), but I have seen couples and individuals outed against their will and the resultant fallout...including one couple that the aftermath was so bad they eventually split up. I am all for anyone outing themselves, but it's messed up to do it to someone who prefers anonymity. Most people I talk to about swinging have zero regrets and truly believe that this is a better way to live...but they don't want to be outed because people can be mean and prejudicial.

FIRED FOR BEING ETHICALLY NON-MONOGAMOUS

"In many states, employment is considered at-will, which means an employee can be fired for any reason, at any time, and for no reason at all. 'An employer does not have to like the employee or his or her lifestyle and can fire the person if they dislike the person or the lifestyle,' says Albert Rizzo, an attorney in NYC. While Rizzo makes it clear that this issue can vary from state to state, 'It can generally be said that it is not illegal to fire someone solely for having an open relationship.'

And if it's legal to give someone the boot because of their lifestyle, then there is no legal option to contest the termination. You can always try to fight back, citing discrimination, but that is unlikely to get you very far. 'Illegal discrimination means an employer has treated an employee who is in a 'protected class' differently from other employees,' says Rizzo. 'The relevant question is whether persons in an open relationship are considered a 'protected class'—and they are not. The law protects employees against discrimination on the basis of race, gender, religion, national origin, etc.' That list does not include people who choose to have open relationships."

That is the opening paragraph from the first link:

<https://stories.avvo.com/relationships/can-open-relationship-cost-job.html>

<https://anncheryl93.medium.com/will-swingers-become-a-protected-class-417d4280eb35>

<https://www.mkfmlaw.com/faq-videos/what-is-a-protected-class-as-it-relates-to-employment-discrimination>

WHY ETHICAL NON-MONOGRAMY?

I really enjoyed this woman's blog post about why she's a swinger. It's a long piece, but here's a couple paragraphs to tantalize you to go read it:

"Being in intimate relationships with different people who have their own unique experiences allowed me to become skilled in asserting myself, enjoying sex, managing conflict, and negotiating the needs and desires of multiple people."

Ethical non-monogamy is not about having more or kinkier sex, which is often the stereotype associated with it. For me, it is about profoundly seeing and valuing all kinds of people without attachment to a particular connection or outcome. It allows me, after a stunted childhood and adolescence, to exist in the fluid state that I believe is natural."

<https://www.womenspress.com/why-i-practice-ethical-non-monogamy-marie-lapage/#:~:text=Ethical%20non%2Dmonogamy%20is%20not,a%20particular%20connection%20or%20outcome>

SIN

I was raised Southern Baptist, baptized at 13 and a part of that church, choir and tithed 10% of my income (pre-tax) until I was twenty-seven and lost my faith. It took decades to shake the conditioning, but eventually I started to realize that my opposition to things was based on a moral code I no longer subscribed to. Swingers are adults engaging in consensual sex, I don't see this as being anything other than choice. Dictionary says: Our current form of the word comes from the Middle English sinne, which is itself from the Old English syn. The original meanings of sin were largely concerned with religious matters ("a transgression of religious law," "an offense against God"). The concept of original sin was first alluded to in the 2nd century by Irenaeus, Bishop of Lyon in his controversy with certain dualist Gnostics.

What does the word sin mean in Hebrew?

To go astray

The word most commonly translated simply as "sin", hata, literally means "to go astray." Just as Jewish law, halakha, provides the proper "way" (or path) to live, sin involves straying from that path.

Hedonism comes from the Greek hēdonē ("pleasure"), which also provides the root of the word anhedonia ("a psychological condition characterized by inability to experience pleasure in normally pleasurable acts").

Guilty is an old word. It is believed to have been in use since before the year 1000. It is based on the noun guilt, which ultimately comes from the Old English gylt, meaning "offense." The suffix -y is used to turn the noun into an adjective. If you're guilty, it means you did it.

The point to all this is "sin" is relative and words evolve and change their meaning over time also. That we murder people for words people wrote thousands of years ago is, IMHO, silly.

And that's it for this final volume of SWING. That's the end of Dan and Cathy's story, thanks for reading.

Carpe Noctum,

Matt Hawkins

April 2022

Los Angeles

Twitter: @topcowmatt | <http://www.facebook.com/selfloathingnarcissist>

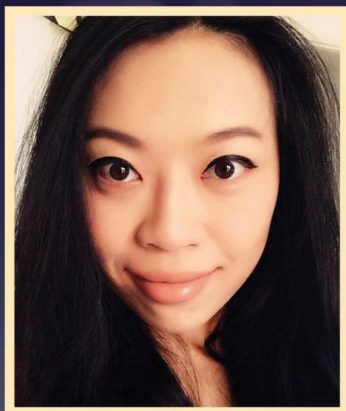


MATT HAWKINS

is a veteran of the initial Image Comics launch. Matt started his career in comic book publishing in 1993 and has been working with Image as a creator, writer, and executive for over twenty years. President/COO of Top Cow since 1998, Matt has created and written over thirty new franchises for Top Cow and Image including THINK TANK, THE TITHE, STAIRWAY, GOLGOTHA, and APHRODITE IX as well as handling the company's business affairs.

YISHAN LI

is a British/Chinese comic artist currently living in Shanghai. You can see a list of her projects at www.liyishan.com. Yishan Li has been drawing since 1998 and has been published internationally, including USA, France, Germany, Italy, and the UK. She has worked for publishers such as DC and Darkhorse and her last project was the *Buffy: The High School Years* graphic novels.



LINDA SEJIC

is a digital comics artist specializing in an expressive, dynamic art style. Her first major project with Top Cow was WILDFIRE, written by Matt Hawkins, which showcased her unconventional, character-focused technique and established her as an up-and-coming talent. Her critically acclaimed webcomic BLOODSTAIN is currently published in print from Top Cow, and is on its third volume. Linda lives in Croatia with her husband, illustrator Stjepan Sejic.

Sunstone Merry Part One





CHRIS CONNELLY WAS THE FIRST ON A VERY SHORT LIST OF FRIENDS I MADE DURING COLLEGE.



IT BEGAN AS A CHANCE ENCOUNTER. I WAS MOVING INTO THE CHEAP STUDENT HOUSING BUILDING WHERE HE LIVED. HE SAW ME AND DID THE MOST "CHRIS" THING POSSIBLE... HE OFFERED A HAND.

HEY, BUDDY, YOU NEED SOME HELP?



HUH?

HELP? YOU NEED SOME? THAT IS, IF YOU'RE MOVING IN...AND NOT, LIKE, ROBBING THE PLACE?

HEH. YEAH, I COULD USE A HAND, THANKS!



I'M CHRIS!

ALAN!

THAT A STAR TREK SHIRT?

YEAH, YOU WATCH IT?

HERE AND THERE.

FOR HOW IMPORTANT, AND AT TIMES, *UNEXPECTEDLY ODD* OUR FRIENDSHIP WAS, IT HAD A VERY MUNDANE BEGINNING...



BUT THERE WAS NOTHING WRONG WITH *MUNDANE*.

UH, ALAN... I REALLY HAVE TO GO NOW.

HUH? OH, YEAH, DUDE! HAVE A GOOD ONE!





ALL THE RUMORS ASIDE, THE WHOLE THING WAS PRETTY SIMPLE. I WAS DOODLING IN THE CAMPUS CAFETERIA, WHEN SARAH BENES, A CHARMING GIRL I VAGUELY KNEW, APPROACHED ME AND ASKED IF SHE COULD SEE MY DRAWINGS...

I DODGED HER REQUEST BY CLUMSILY OFFERING TO DRAW HER INSTEAD. SHE SAID YES. HONESTLY, THE WHOLE THING COULD HAVE JUST ENDED THEN AND THERE, BUT I HAD NO SUCH LUCK.

AS IT TURNED OUT, SARAH HAD A BOYFRIEND. A THIRD-YEAR STUDENT WITH A CHIP ON HIS SHOULDER AND A WIDE CIRCLE OF FRIENDS...

POINT IS, WORD GOT AROUND THAT SOME DUDE WAS COZING UP TO HIS GIRLFRIEND.

HE AND HIS FRIENDS STOLE MY SKETCHBOOK, PROBABLY INTENDING TO BURN IT OR SOMETHING. BUT AFTER LOOKING THROUGH IT, THEY FOUND *ANOTHER* USE FOR ITS CONTENTS.

HENCE, *THE SHITSTORM* I WAS ABOUT TO FACE.

A SKETCHBOOK IS SORT OF AN ARTISTIC DIARY. AT LEAST I THOUGHT OF MINE AS ONE. AND IN THIS CASE, IT WAS A DIARY OF A YOUNG *BDSM* FETISHIST WITH A PASSION FOR DESIGN.

NOT A SIDE OF ME THAT I INTENDED TO, AS THEY SAY, "SHARE WITH THE CLASS." SO OTHERS DID IT FOR ME.

I UNDERSTAND THAT THIS WAS NOT YOUR DOING, BUT I INSIST ON YOU... TAKING A *LEAVE OF ABSENCE*. AT LEAST FOR...

THE LADY FROM THE OFFICE OF STUDENT CONDUCT REFERRED TO IT AS A "LEAVE OF ABSENCE"...BUT, YEAH, I WAS *BOOTED* FOR TWO WEEKS.

"TO GIVE EVERYTHING TIME TO BLOW OVER," SHE SAID. SHE MEANT WELL...



IT DIDN'T WORK.

AS IT TURNED OUT, JUST LIKE IN HIGH SCHOOL, **EMBARRASSMENT** HAD STAYING POWER.



TO MAKE THINGS WORSE, WHERE SIMPLE INFORMATION MIGHT FADE, DRAWINGS WERE MORE PERMANENT, AND COPY INK BOUNTIFUL....

SO IT ALL TURNED INTO A JOKE WITH A SEEMINGLY ENDLESS SERIES OF PUNCHLINES. EMPHASIS ON THE "PUNCH."



I BECAME A **MEME**. AN EASY AND EFFECTIVE WAY FOR OTHERS TO DISTRACT THEMSELVES FROM THEIR OWN INSECURITIES AND FUCKUPS...

TO POINT AT AND SAY: "YEAH, I MESSED UP, BUT I'M NO **S/M BENSON!**"

I GUESS, IN THAT WAY I MADE A LOT OF LIVES EASIER...

THIS SHIT WENT ON FOR OVER **TWO MONTHS**.

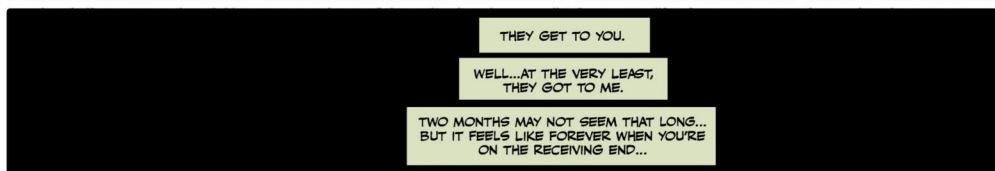


NOW, I'D LOVE TO TELL YOU THAT I SIMPLY EMBRACED THE LONER LIFESTYLE.

BUT THE ROMANTICIZED NOTION OF A LONE WOLF WITH A **FUCK-'EM-ALL** ATTITUDE IS OFTEN JUST PRETENSE.

TRUTH IS, EXCLUSION, DERISION, LONELINESS...

CONSTANT MOCKERY...



THEY GET TO YOU.

WELL...AT THE VERY LEAST, THEY GOT TO ME.

TWO MONTHS MAY NOT SEEM THAT LONG... BUT IT FEELS LIKE FOREVER WHEN YOU'RE ON THE RECEIVING END...



LIKE I SAID -- ALL OF IT GOT TO ME.

WHAT'S WITH THE ARM?

I WAS RUNNING WITH SCISSORS.

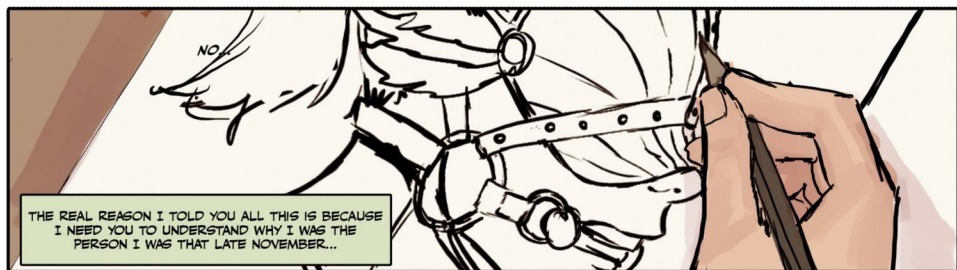
ANYHOW...



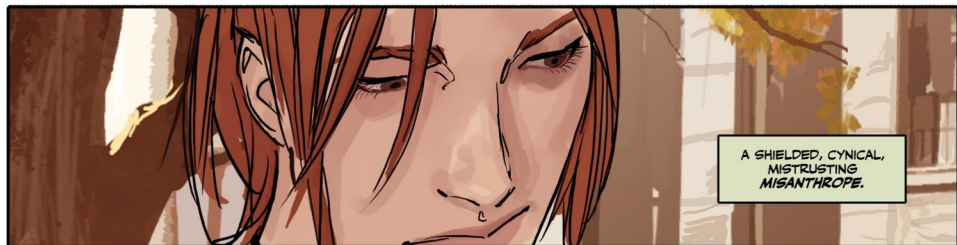
WHY AM I TELLING YOU ALL THIS?

CERTAINLY NOT FOR
PITY'S SAKE...

NOR AM I TRYING TO SET
UP SOME **ANTAGONIST** FOR MY COLLEGE
YEARS. HELL, THE ORIGINAL CREW DROPPED THE
JOKE SOON AFTER -- LIKE ANY MEME, IT WAS
OTHERS WHO PICKED UP ON IT AND SPREAD IT.



THE REAL REASON I TOLD YOU ALL THIS IS BECAUSE
I NEED YOU TO UNDERSTAND WHY I WAS THE
PERSON I WAS THAT LATE NOVEMBER...



A SHIELDED, CYNICAL,
MISTRUSTING
MISANTHROPE.



IN HINDSIGHT,
IT SEEMED IT
WOULD TAKE A
MIRACLE TO SNAP
ME OUT OF MY
GLOOM...

AS IT TURNED OUT,
I DIDN'T NEED A MIRACLE...
JUST A *KINDRED SPIRIT* --
SOMEONE WHO
SPOKE MY LANGUAGE.

IS THAT A
PONY-GIRL
OUTFIT?





IN THOSE DAYS AFTER THE SKETCHBOOK INCIDENT, PRETTY MUCH THE ONLY GIRLS THAT WOULD GO NEAR ME WERE TRYING TO MESS WITH ME. USUALLY PRETENDING THEY WERE INTO THIS "BONDAGE STUFF."

THEIR APPROACH WAS VERY PREDICTABLE.

YOU'RE THAT GUY THAT'S INTO LIKE, **ROPES** AND **LEATHER** AND STUFF, RIGHT?

S/M BENSON, RIGHT? LISTEN, MY FRIEND'S SHOELACE BROKE. YOU GOT SOME SPARE ROPE?

KHM...

YOU COULD SEE THEM COMING FROM A MILE AWAY.

FUCK, WITH THEIR BARELY SUPPRESSED LAUGHTER, YOU DIDN'T EVEN HAVE TO **SEE** THEM.

PFFF... KHM...HEY!

IN THE END, MY PATIENCE FOR THEIR BULLSHIT GREW THIN, AND MY SKIN THICK AND COVERED IN SPIKES.

SO, WHERE MIGHT A GIRL FIND A STURDY PAIR OF HANDCUFFS?

HAS THE GIRL TRIED HER PARENTS' SOCK DRAWER? SHOULD BE RIGHT NEXT TO THE **ANAL BEADS**.

I ULTIMATELY STOPPED GIVING A SHIT, AND AFTER A WHILE, THEY ALL KINDA STARTED BLENDING TOGETHER TO ME.

GUESS THAT'S WHY I'M HERE TODAY STRUGGLING TO REMEMBER HALF OF THEIR FACES.

THEN AGAIN, I **WANTED** THOSE PEOPLE WIPED FROM MY MEMORY.

FADE THOSE DAYS AWAY ALTOGETHER...

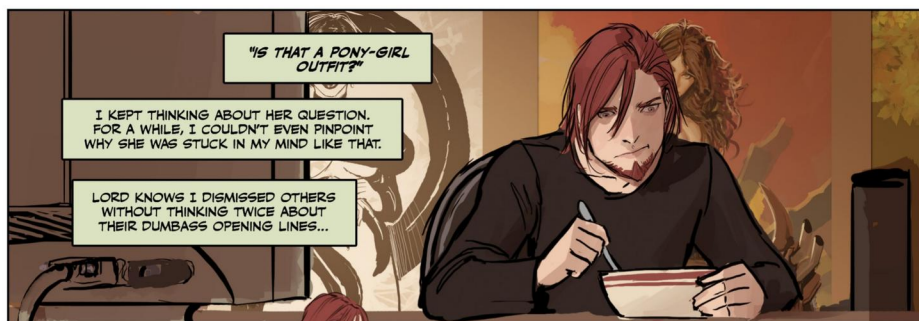
I MEAN, IN ALL HONESTY, EVERYTHING I TOLD YOU SO FAR IS A PATCHWORK OF STUFF I'VE TRIED TO FORGET. HELL, THAT MOMENT I ENTERED THE COLLEGE AND ALL EYES WERE ON ME? THAT WAS ABOUT A WEEK'S WORTH OF BULLSHIT SUMMARIZED INTO A SINGLE MOMENT.

NOW, THE REASON I'M TELLING YOU THIS IS... I REMEMBER **EVERY SINGLE MOMENT** WITH ALLY.

BUT THAT'S ALLY FOR YOU. SHE MADE LIFE **WORTH** REMEMBERING.

AND THE FIRST THING I REMEMBERED ABOUT HER... THE FIRST THING THAT STUCK WITH ME...





"IS THAT A PONY-GIRL
OUTFIT?"

I KEPT THINKING ABOUT HER QUESTION.
FOR A WHILE, I COULDN'T EVEN PINPOINT
WHY SHE WAS STUCK IN MY MIND LIKE THAT.

LORD KNOWS I DISMISSED OTHERS
WITHOUT THINKING TWICE ABOUT
THEIR DUMBASS OPENING LINES...



SO WHY NOT THIS ONE?



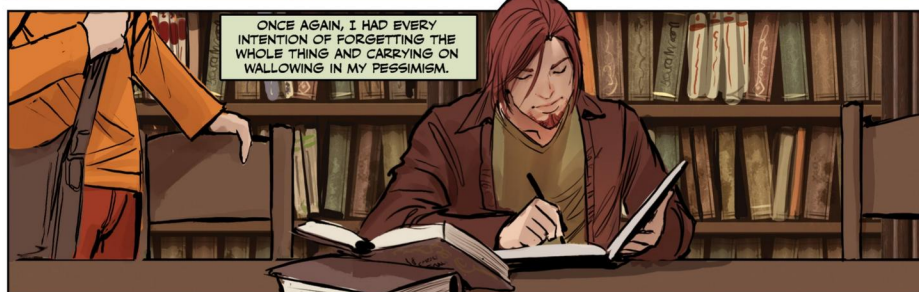
IT WASN'T UNTIL THE NEXT DAY
THAT I REALIZED WHAT IT WAS.

OTHERS USUALLY APPROACHED ME WITH
VAGUE REFERENCES TO SHIT THEY HEARD
IN AWKWARD JOKES ABOUT BDSM.

WHIPS, CHAINS, ROPES...

BUT SHE DID NO SUCH THING. SHE SAW
A SKETCH AND IMMEDIATELY CALLED IT
FOR WHAT IT WAS -- A PONY-GIRL OUTFIT.

THIS REALIZATION DID NOTHING TO CHANGE MY MIND.
THE WAY I SAW IT, SOONER OR LATER ONE OF THEM
WAS BOUND TO DO SOME RESEARCH TO FUCK WITH ME.



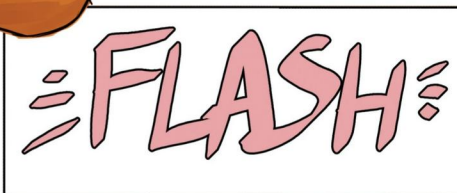
ONCE AGAIN, I HAD EVERY
INTENTION OF FORGETTING THE
WHOLE THING AND CARRYING ON
WALLOWING IN MY PESSIMISM.



HI THERE!
I THINK WE GOT
OFF ON THE WRONG
FOOT LAST TIME, SO TO
PROPERLY INTRODUCE
MYSELF, I'M ALLISON
CARTER -- ALLY TO
MY FRIENDS!

ALLY, HOWEVER, HAD
DIFFERENT PLANS.







NO, SERIOUSLY,
THE DAMN BUTTON IS
EXTRA SENSITIVE!

KHM!
COMPANY!

SHHH!!!
THIS IS A
LIBRARY!

THE TWO
OF YOU TAKE
YOUR ARGUMENT
SOMEWHERE
ELSE!



ARGH, FINE!
COME ON, WE'RE
LEAVING!

I TOOK HER HAND INSTINCTIVELY,
MY MIND IN FULL PANIC MODE.



TRUTH IS, I WAS *STUMPED*.

PEOPLE MESSING WITH ME
WAS SOMETHING I WAS
VERY MUCH USED TO.

BUT THIS I WAS ENTIRELY
UNPREPARED FOR.

THIS GIRL...I DIDN'T KNOW WHAT
TO MAKE OF HER. THE POSSIBILITY
THAT SHE MIGHT BE ON THE UP AND UP
WAS ENTICING, BUT MY EXPERIENCES
WARNED ME AGAINST DROPPING
MY GUARD.



SO YEAH -- TO BORROW
A LINE FROM CHRIS --
WITH MY SHIELDS RAISED,
I COMMENCED A SCAN
OF THIS *ANOMALY*.

FUCK ME, THAT
SOUNDED DORKY!



W...

UHHH...
WHY, THOUGH?



HEH...



HOW ELSE WAS
I GONNA GET YOU
TO LISTEN?



NOW, THOSE SHIELDS I MENTIONED RAISING...THEY WERE A TRUSTY BARRICADE MADE OF 100% PURE, COLD CYNICISM.

FOR MONTHS, THAT WAS MY LAST LINE OF DEFENSE --

IT KEPT THE ASSHOLES AT BAY.

THEY ONLY HAD THEIR FUN IF YOU LET THEM GET TO YOU.

OH, DON'T GET ME WRONG -- THEIR VERBAL BLOWS STILL STUNG ME, BUT MY SHIELD MADE IT SEEM LIKE I HAD NO FUCKS LEFT TO GIVE, SO THEY LOST THEIR INTEREST MUCH SOONER.

THIS BARRICADE OF MISANTHROPY HELD STRONG FOR A LONG TIME AND THEN...THERE SHE WAS.

KNOCKING ON THE PREVIOUSLY IMPENETRABLE WALL, TURNING IT TO GLASS.

I COULD FEEL THE CRACKS SPREADING.

I FELT...VULNERABLE.

DESPERATELY, I HELD UP MY SHIELD ONE LAST TIME.

I CAN'T IMAGINE YOU HAVE PROBLEMS FINDING FRIENDS...

I DON'T...
I MEAN...
"FRIENDS" IS A STRONG WORD...

NONE OF THEM REALLY KNOW ME. THEY KNOW "COLLEGE ALLY."

COLLEGE ALLY LISTENS TO THEIR PROBLEMS, LAUGHS AT THEIR JOKES AND SHIES AWAY FROM SEX TALK BECAUSE SHE MIGHT SPILL OUT A LITTLE TOO MUCH, AND FREAK EVERYONE OUT.

I GUESS I REALLY WANTED SOMEONE IN MY LIFE WHO I COULD TALK TO ABOUT THE OTHER STUFF.

STUFF THAT COLLEGE ALLY KEEPS HIDDEN.

I DON'T KNOW...A FRIEND WHO I COULD BE MYSELF WITH, IN A WAY I CAN'T BE AROUND EVERYONE ELSE.





AND YOU DECIDED
I WAS THAT PERSON
FROM SEEING JUST
ONE DRAWING...



YEAH...I MEAN,
THAT GOT ME STARTED...

UH, ALL CARDS
ON THE TABLE...I MADE
SOME EFFORTS TO FIND
COPIES OF SOME OF THE
PIECES THEY KEEP
POSTING...

A BUNCH OF
THE PIECES...

LIKE...
MOST OF
THEM.



YOU'RE
LEGIT.

...
ALSO,
SORRY.



CRASH

CRASH



AND THERE IT WAS.

WITH THE CREAK OF
A ROPE AND SOME HOWLING
LAUGHTER, THE LAST OF
MY DEFENSES LAY BROKEN.

FOR THE FIRST TIME IN
A WHILE, I REALIZED...
HERE WAS SOMEONE I
COULD TRUST.

AND FOR THE FIRST TIME IN
MONTHS, I FELT LIKE MYSELF
ONCE AGAIN.

PPFFFT!!!

BWAHA
HAHAHAH!



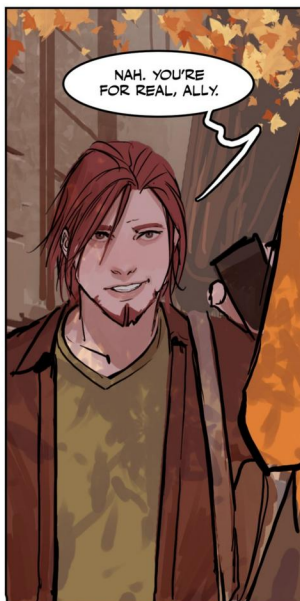
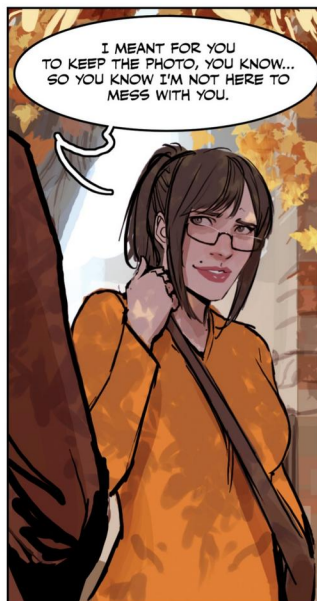
OH, GOD...
HEH! THIS IS *AWKWARD*
AS FUCK. ALLY, YOU WANNA
GET SOME COFFEE OR
SOMETHING?

OH HELL
YES!

PREFERABLY
SOMEPLACE WITH A DECENT
BATHROOM...I REALLY GOTTA
GET RID OF THIS ROPE ASAP...
IT'S, UM...I DID A
GOOD JOB...

A *REAL*
GOOD JOB!





AND SO, WITH THE SHATTERING OF THE LAST REMNANTS OF MY SHIELD, A NEW ERA OF MY LIFE BEGAN.

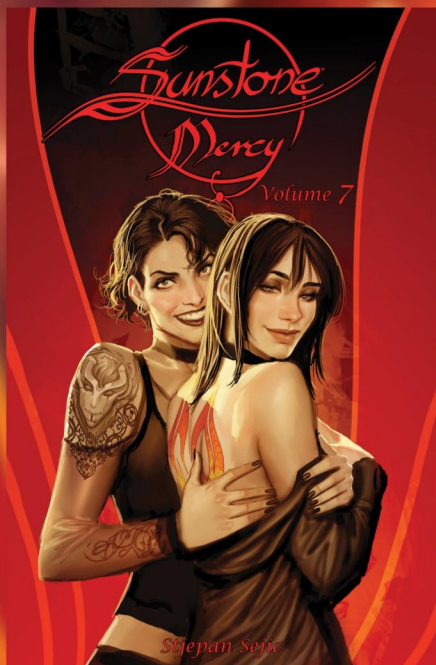
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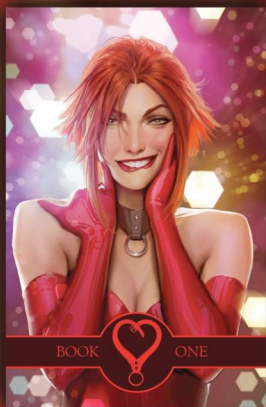
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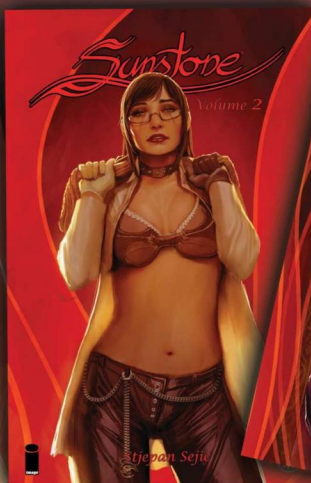


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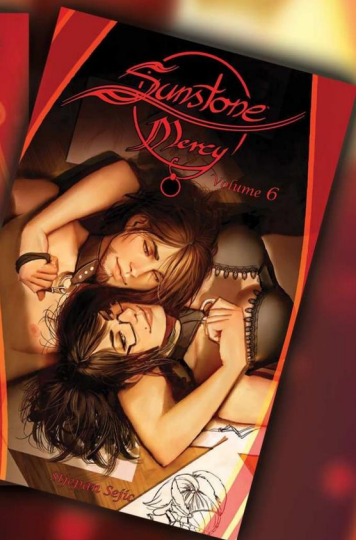


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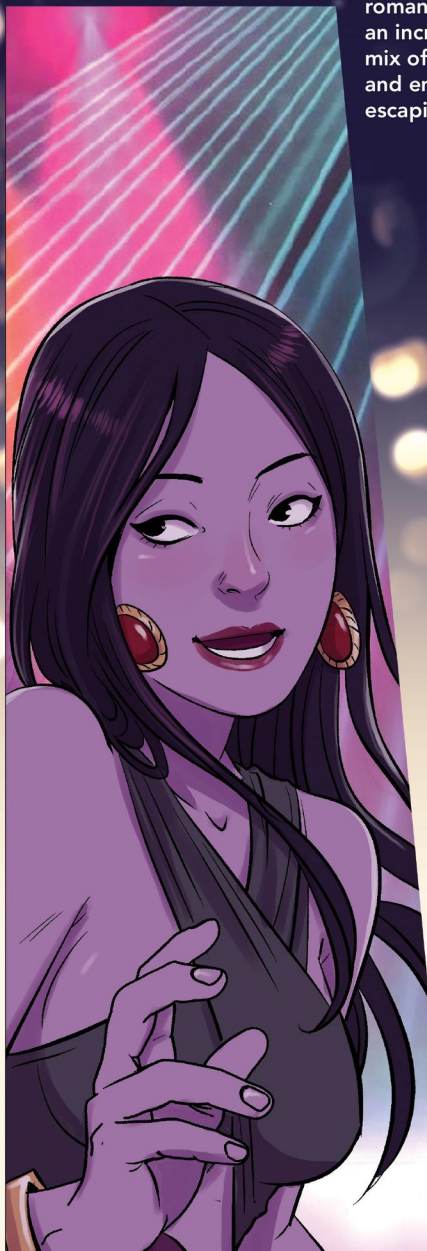
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