

BOBBINS

OUT OF THE WOODS



2

2014/15

JOHN ALLISON

patreon.com/scarygoround

***These comics were originally published at
scarygoround.com from 18/4/2014 to 28/3/2015***

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So I pressed on.

I began work on a new Bad Machinery story on the web, and continued to fill Friday gaps with my Bobbins strips. I've always struggled with standalone strips, the basic unit of comics, one joke executed to the best of one's ability, but I continue to chase it. It's hard to quiet the voice that whispers, *if you strung this out to a week, it could be the sort of thing you're better at*. This collection starts with a few of what I've always referred to as "mixed nuts", before descending into chaos with the return of the then-divisive (but in 2021, I would say "beloved") Desmond Fishman. Des represents my worst impulses, but also my best creative efforts. He opens doors to the right kind of madness. The truth is, I don't enjoy writing mixed nuts very much.

There's also a brief segment where Ryan and Amy attempt to make "couple friends", notable for the first appearance of Ken Lord, who subsequently appeared in my *Giant Days* comic series. These strips have appeared previously in the back of Bad Machinery book 8, but this version reinstitutes a reef-smoking panel that was considered "not T-for-teen enough".

When the Bad Machinery story was done, I didn't feel desperate to make another one. I was beginning to write Giant Days, and wanted to give it my best efforts. So I leaned hard into continuity again for a big Bobbins story that would run across Christmas 2015. I had only a loose outline, with no predetermined conclusion, and just went week to week. This is a dangerous way for me to work.

Early in my webcomic career, readers would comment on the occasional story that petered-out quickly (usually due to my inability to end it satisfactorily). I had long put a stop to my petering, but with no roadmap, I'm forced to solve the story problems and plotlines I irresponsibly create at the start, no matter how long this takes. There was a story in the original *Scary Go Round* series, Super Crisis Quests, that I swear I could not get to the end to, no matter how many flow charts I drew.

Now, puffed up on my own confidence, I figured I would embark on a new, personal, Super Crisis Quest. I would march into the woods, then out of the

woods, hence the name. I would even explicitly reference Super Crisis Quests with the first page of the story. Maybe I should have just walked under a series of ladders, or actively sought out black cats whose paths I could cross.

They say that those who do not learn the lessons of history are doomed to repeat them. While I was writing the first few (I think very accessible) Giant Days issues, I was also deep in a thicket of Bobbins plot threads that I could not for the life of me untangle. Months rolled by and I attempted to resolve them utilising a sort of broken logic that required me to reach further and further back into the past. Oh, to peter out!

Now, I like all the crazy things I put in these comics - heavy plant fights, dimensional portals, eco-warriors, pro-hunting bear costumes, workplace reunions, erotic bathing. But it's a lot for one story to hold.

I only tried this trick once more, to wrap up the loose ends from this story. You might say that I wasn't "out of the woods" yet! Ha ha! Ha ha ha! HA HA!

- JA

Re: mixed nuts, when a friend became a syndicated newspaper cartoonist, he was regularly contacted by "gag-men" who would offer him punchlines for comics, as a very reasonable price. In a bid to undercut the market, here are a few royalty-free punchlines for your gag strip.

"Try to oscillate more slowly!"

"That's more than enough corn - and believe me, I know corn."

"Listen to Noam Chomsky here!"

"If you could just try to stop bleeding."

"Abraca-DAB-ra!" (Character is performing the now-dated "dabbing" dance move.)

"Abraca-TAB-ra!" (Character has approximately 60 browser tabs open.)

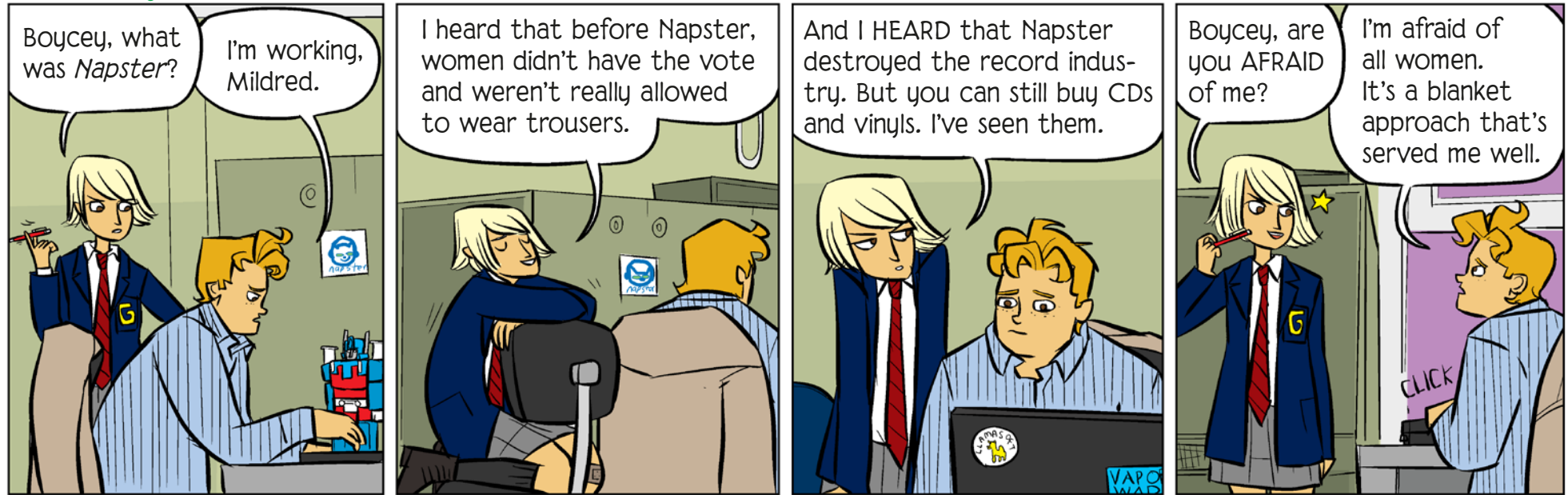
"Abraca-MUMM-ra!" (Mumm-ra, the ever-living mummy from the TV show Thundercats, appears in the last panel for no reason. Please obtain the proper licences first.)

"I can't even PLAY saxophone!"

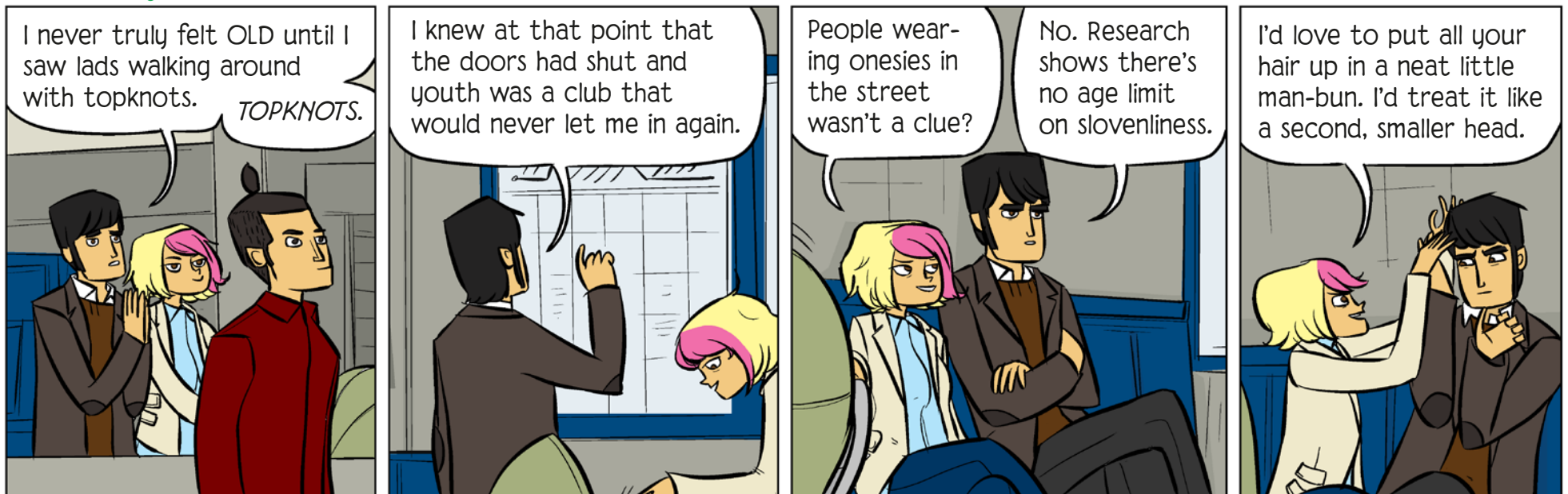
"Abraca-SAXOPHONE-ra!"

MIXED NUTS / KEN LORD

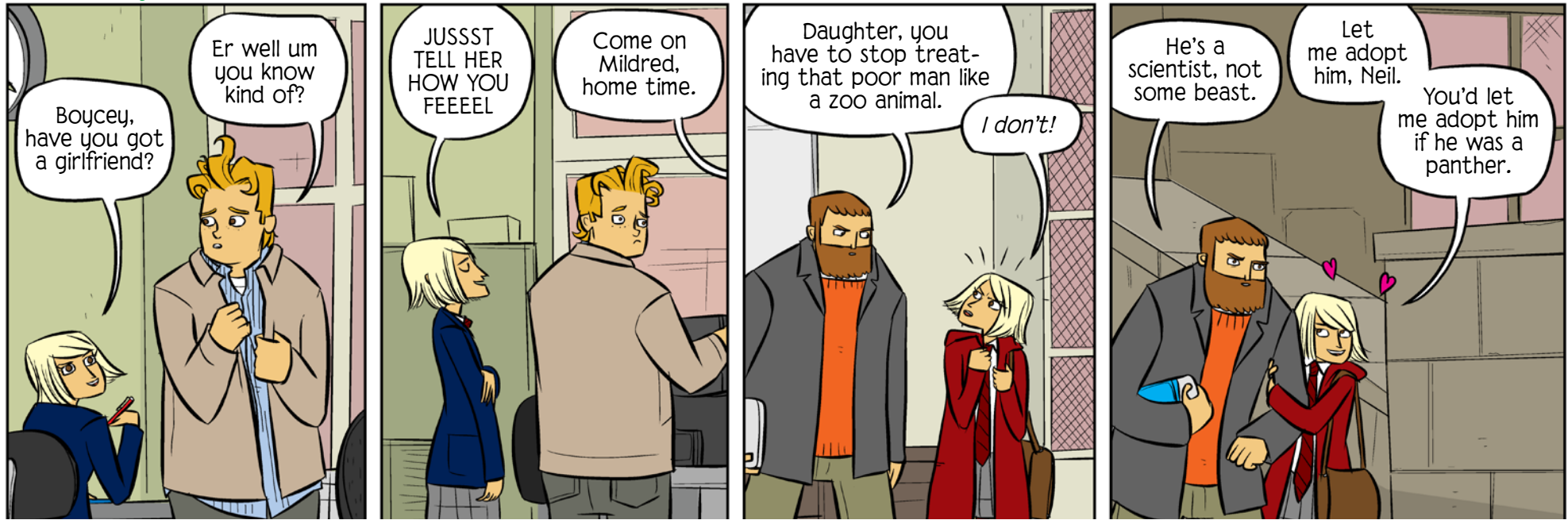
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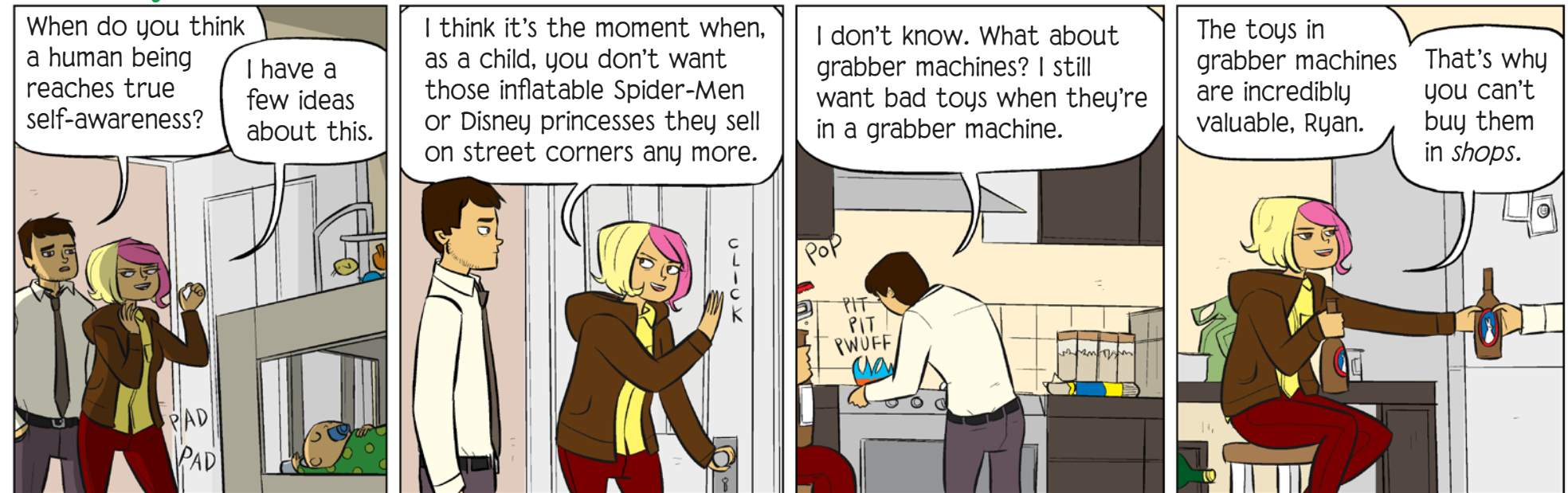
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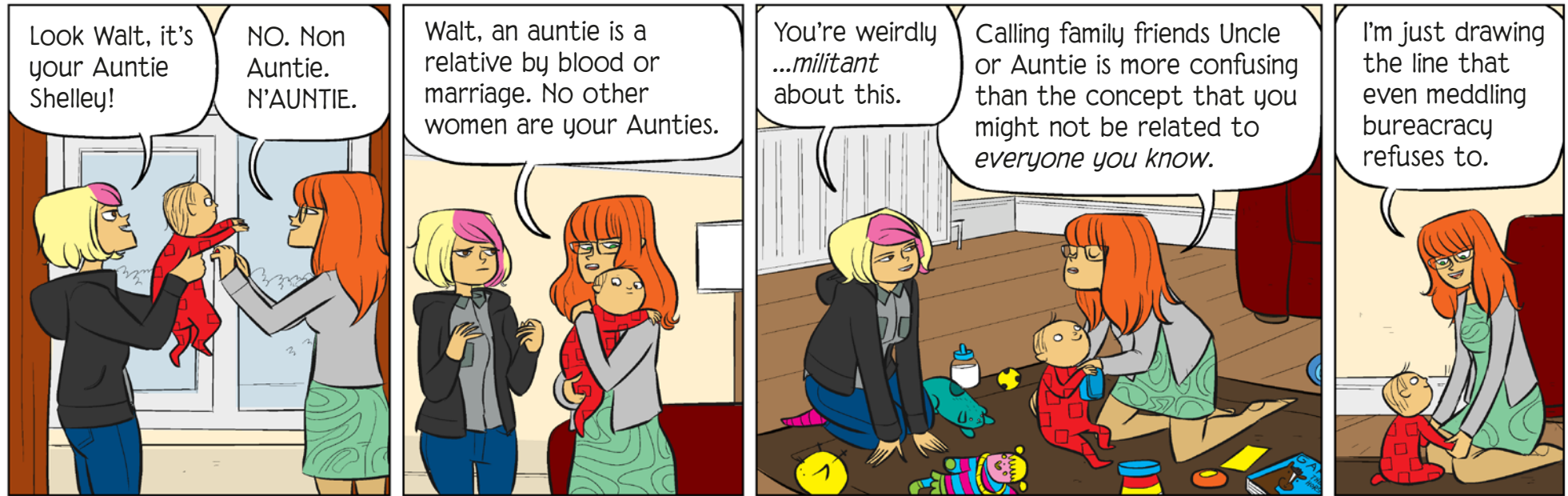
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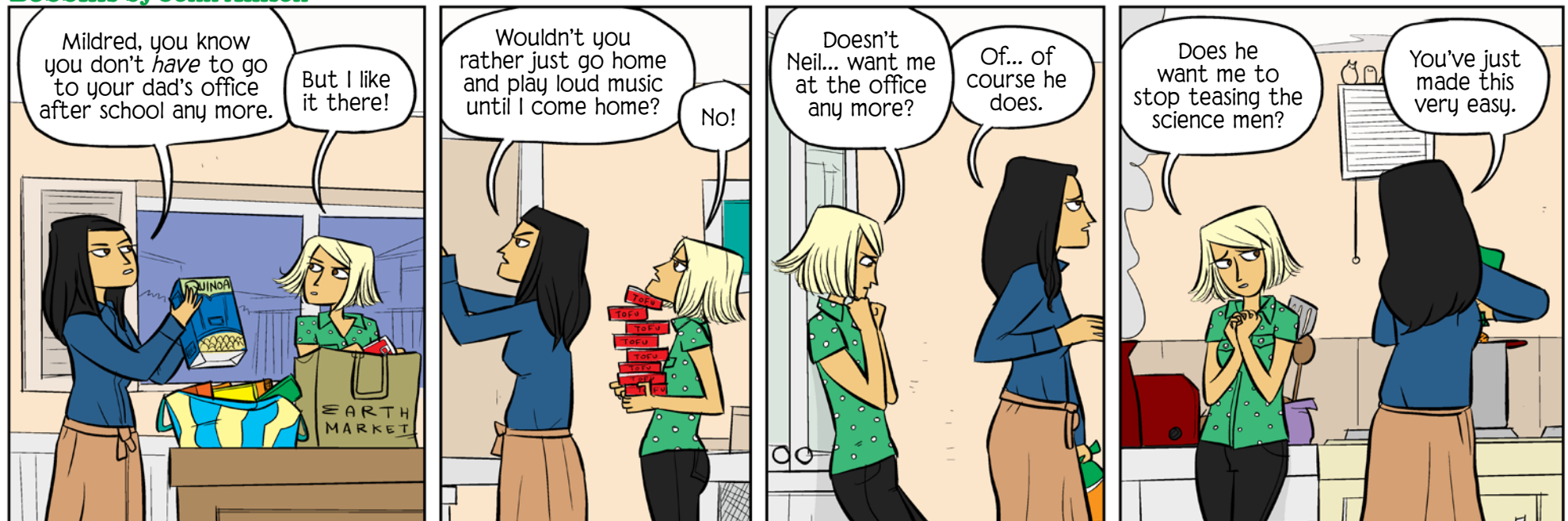


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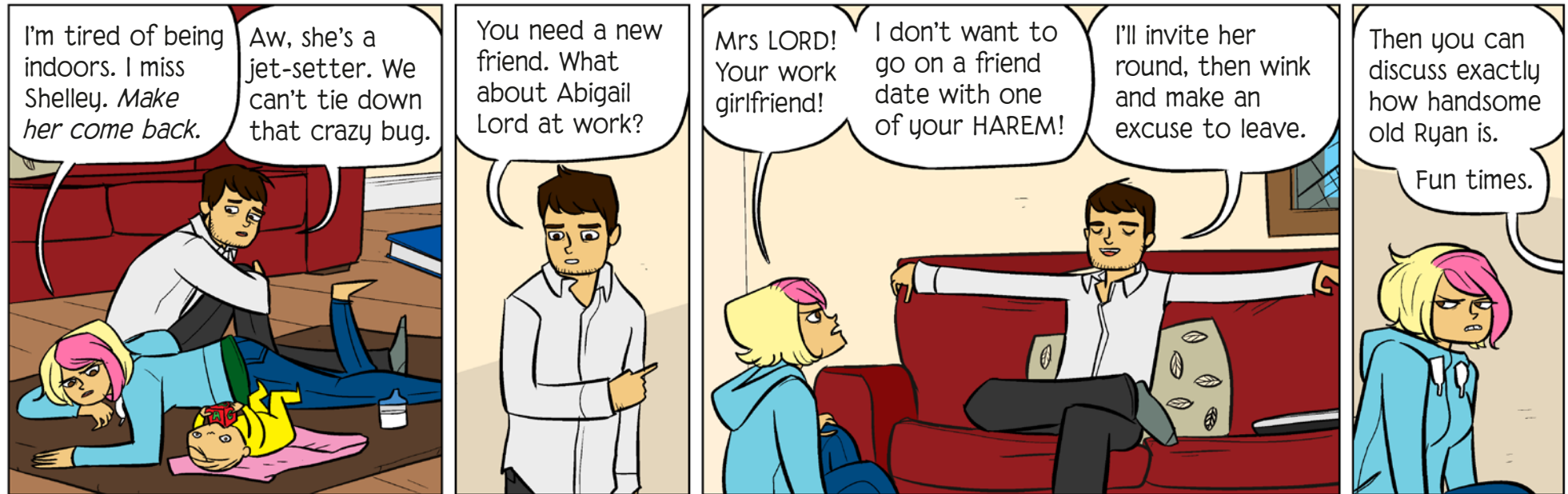


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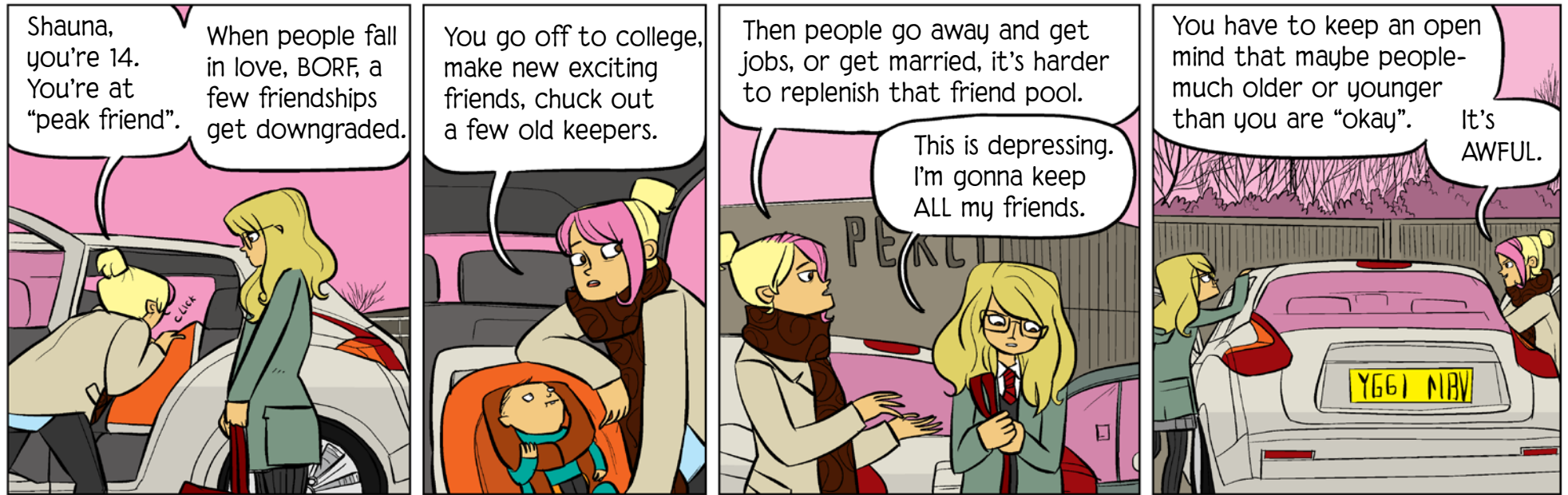


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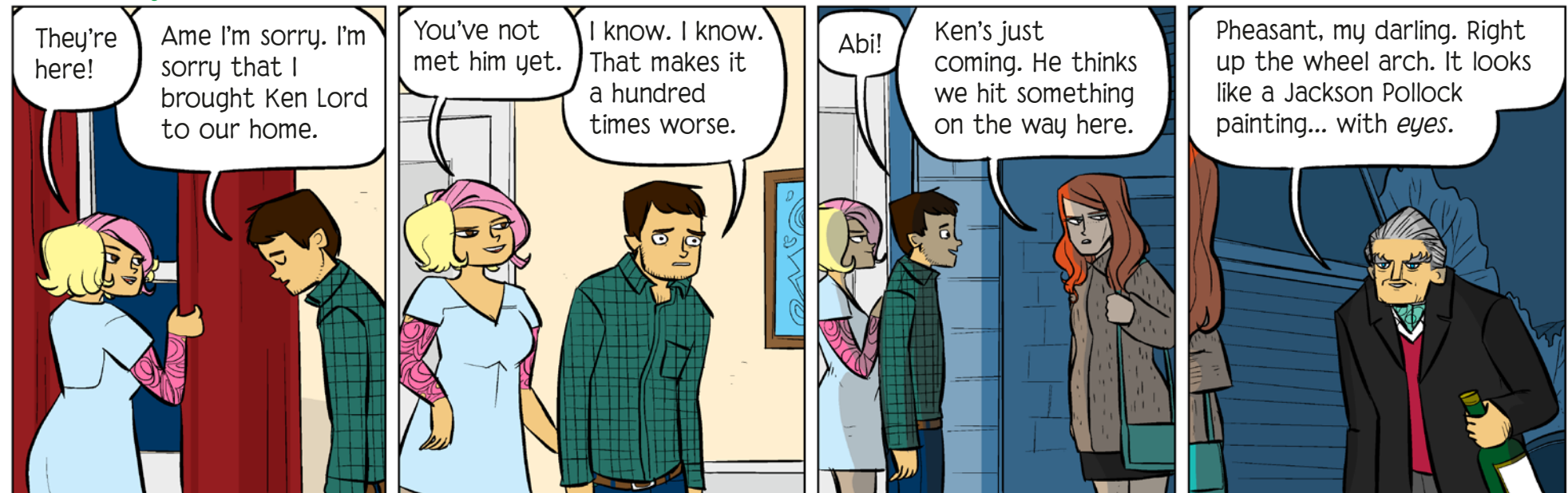
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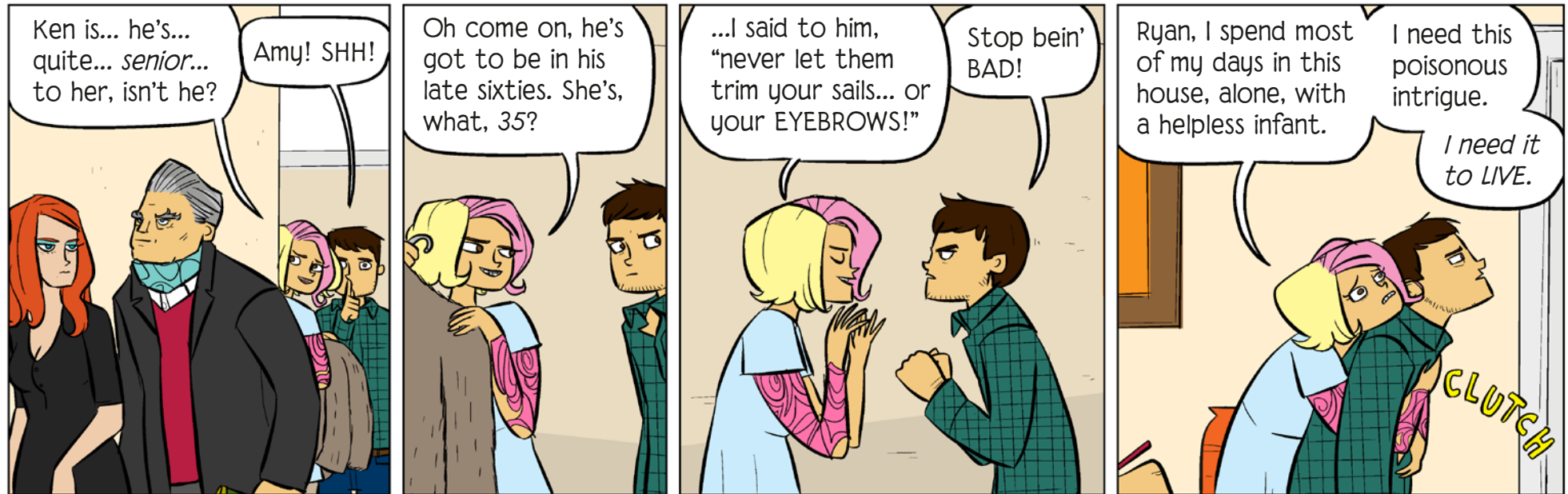
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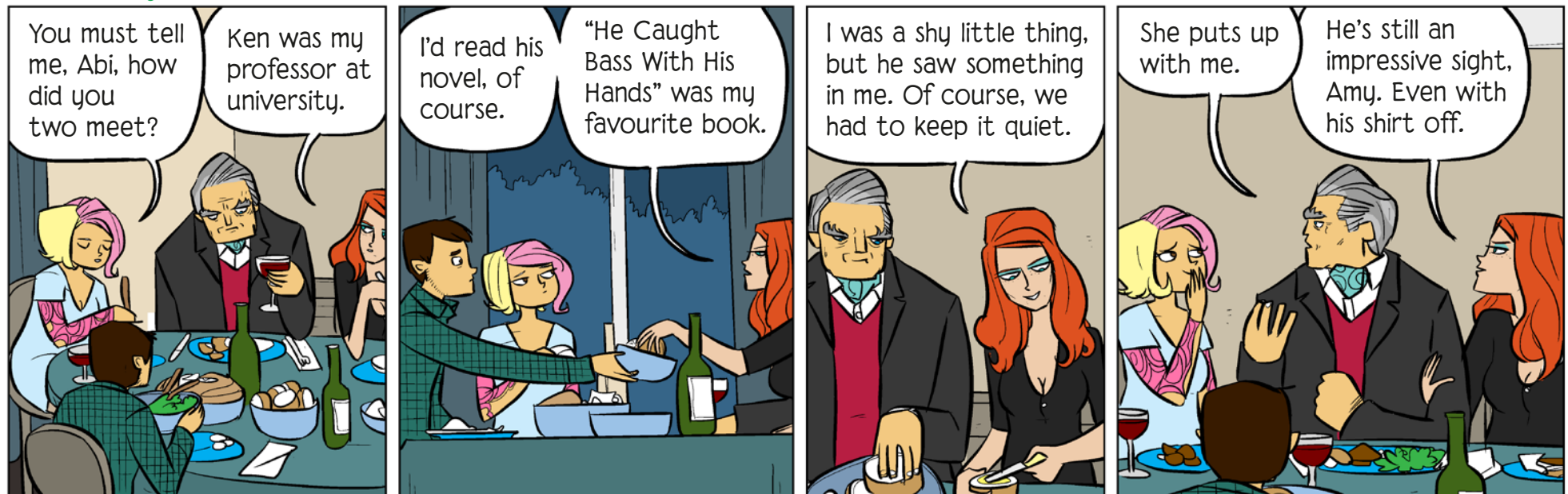


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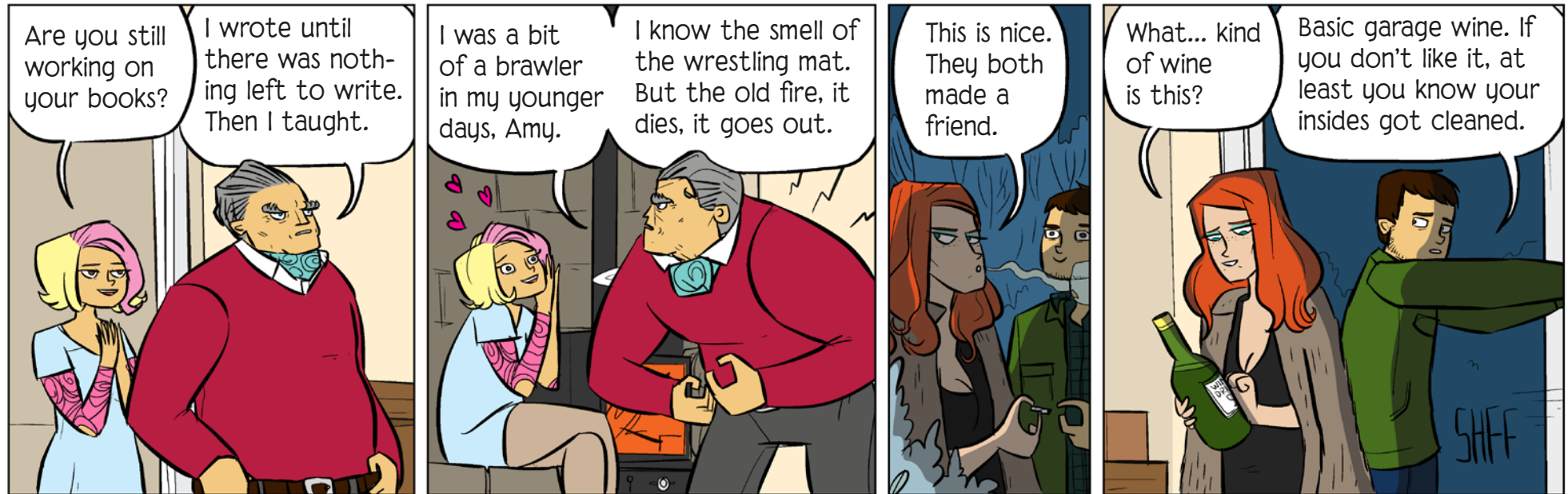
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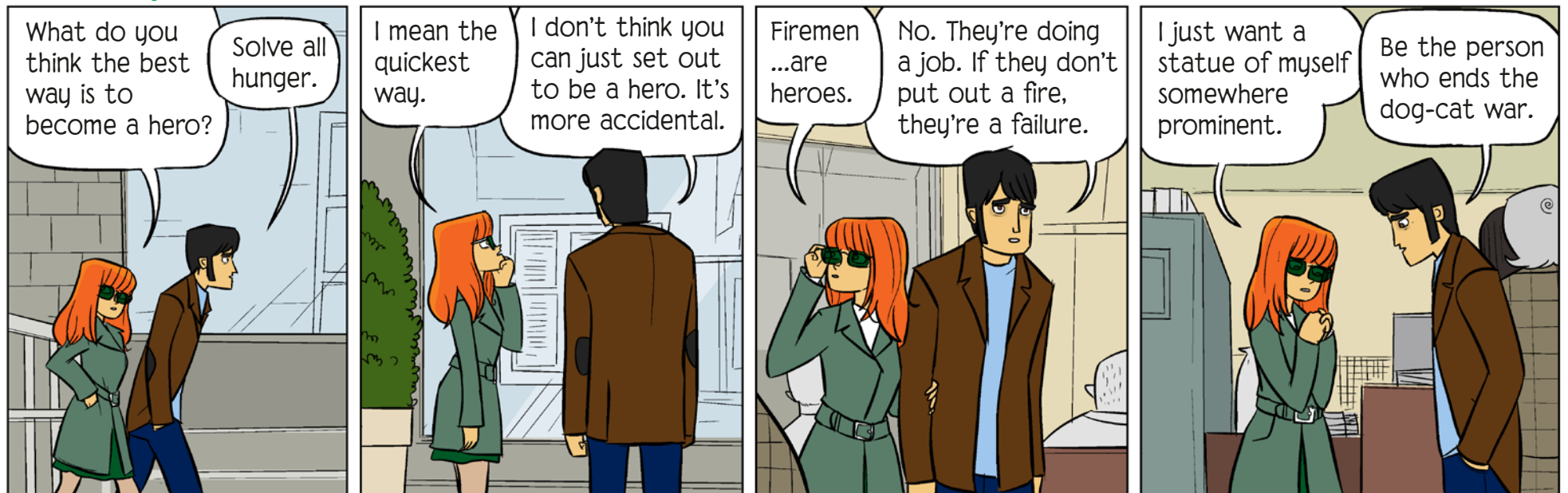
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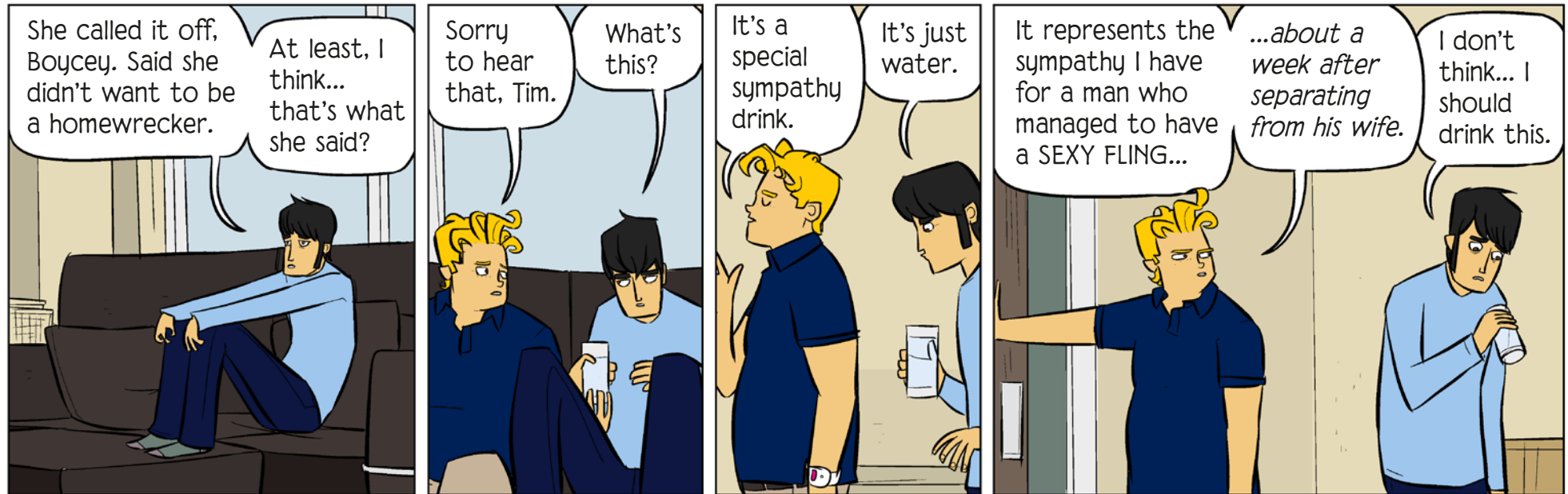
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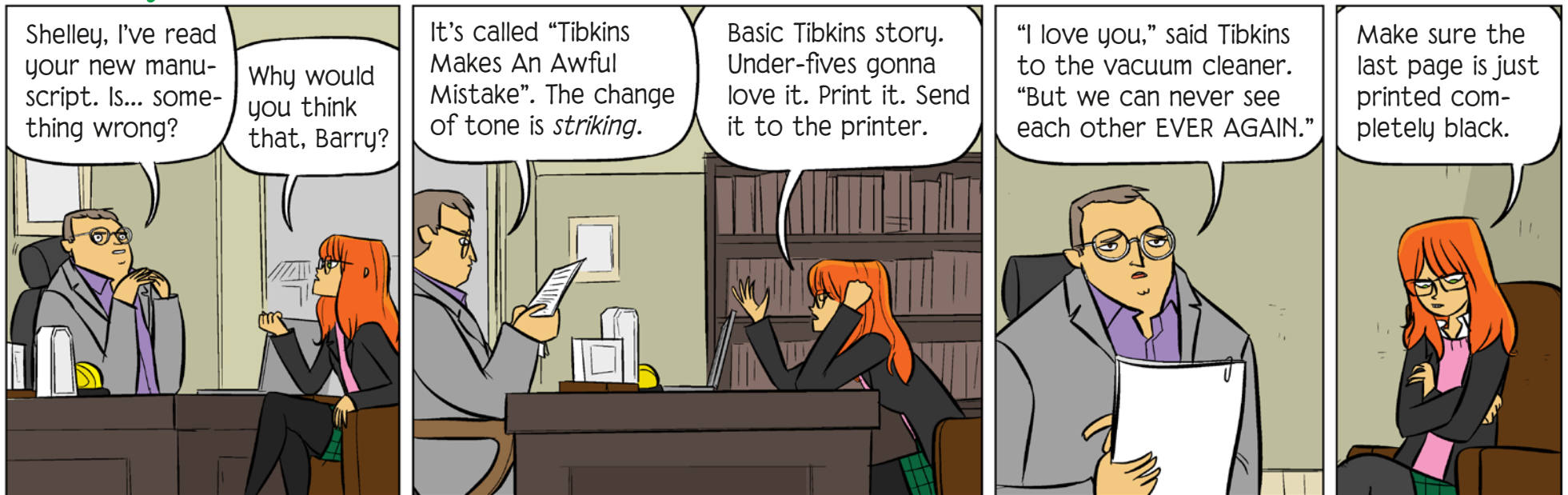
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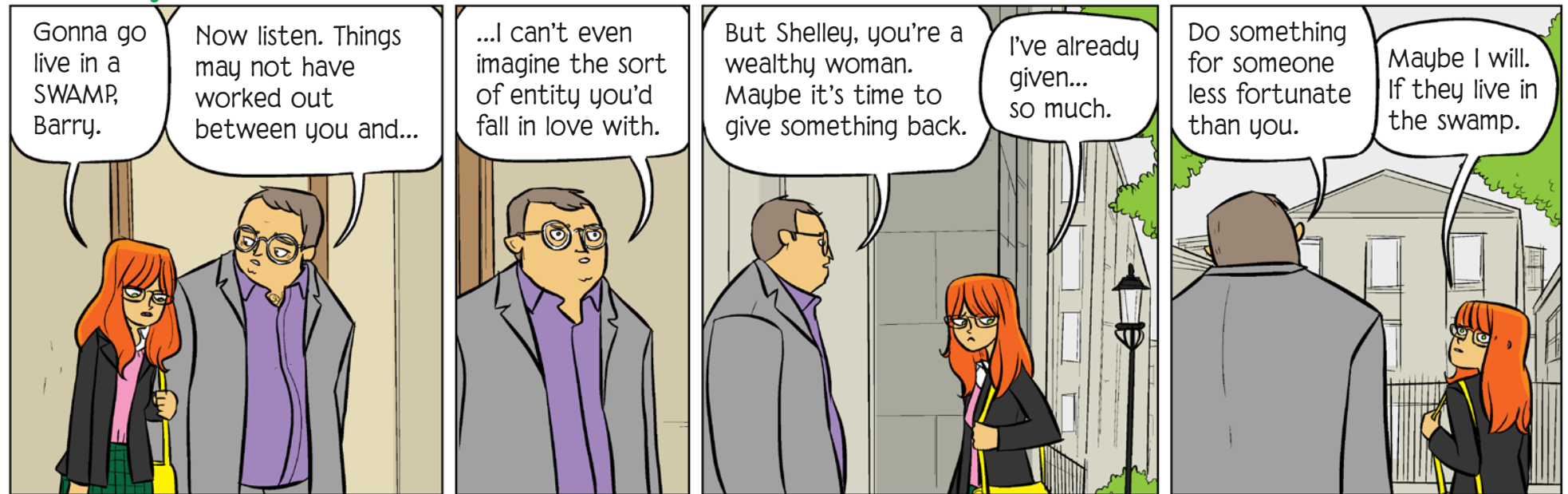
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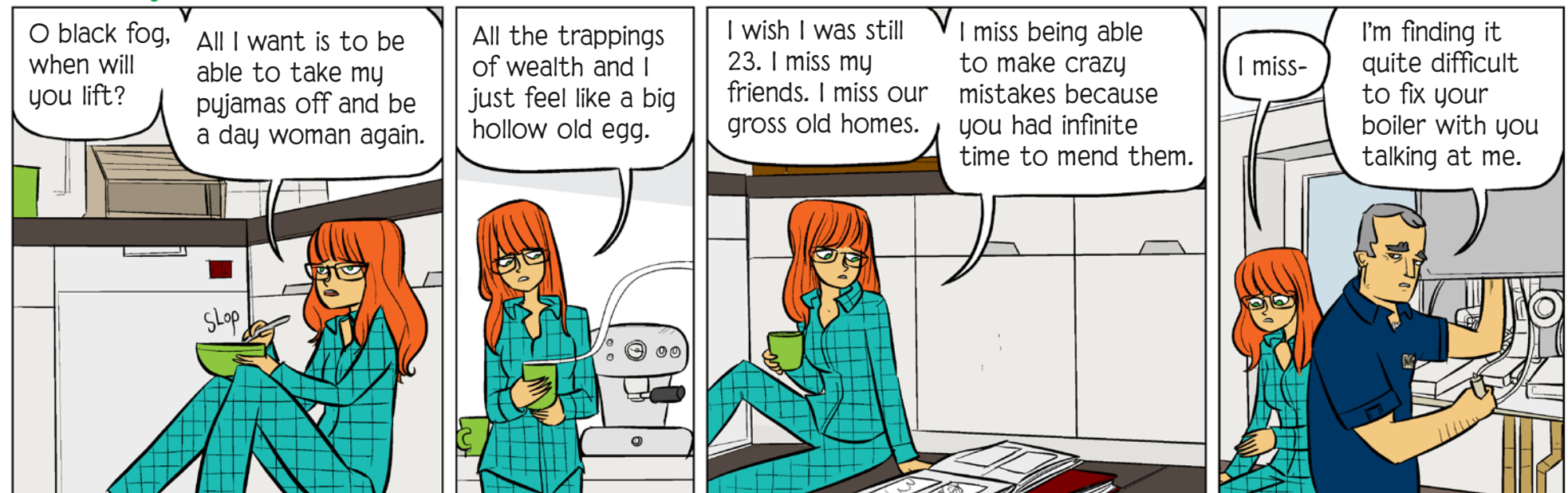
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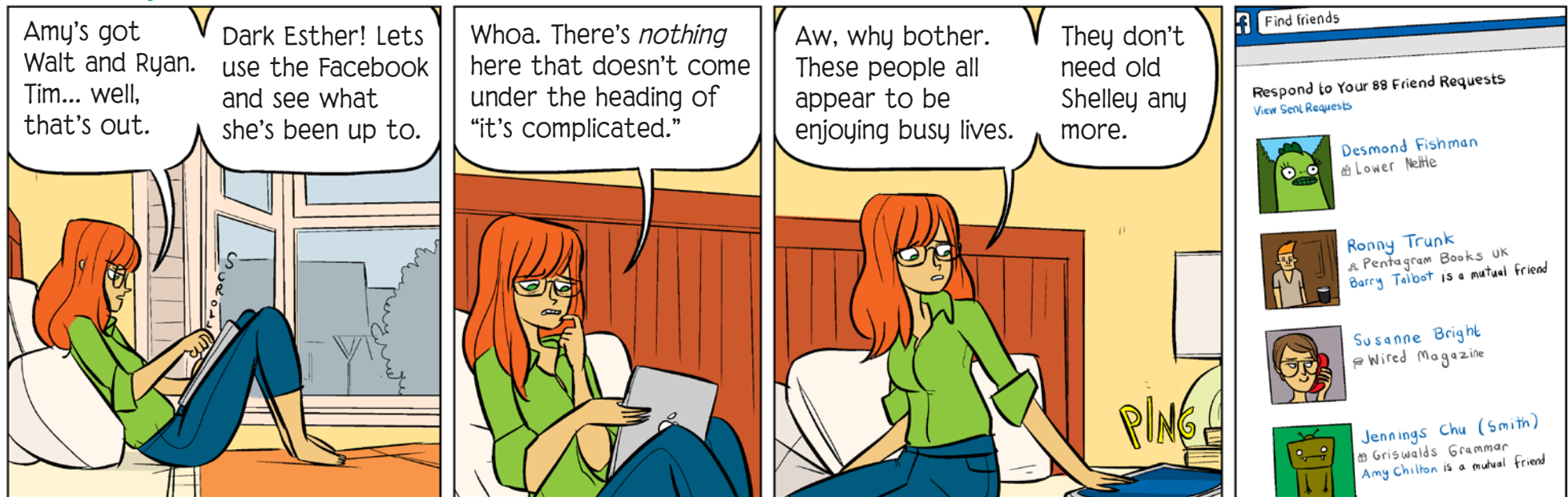
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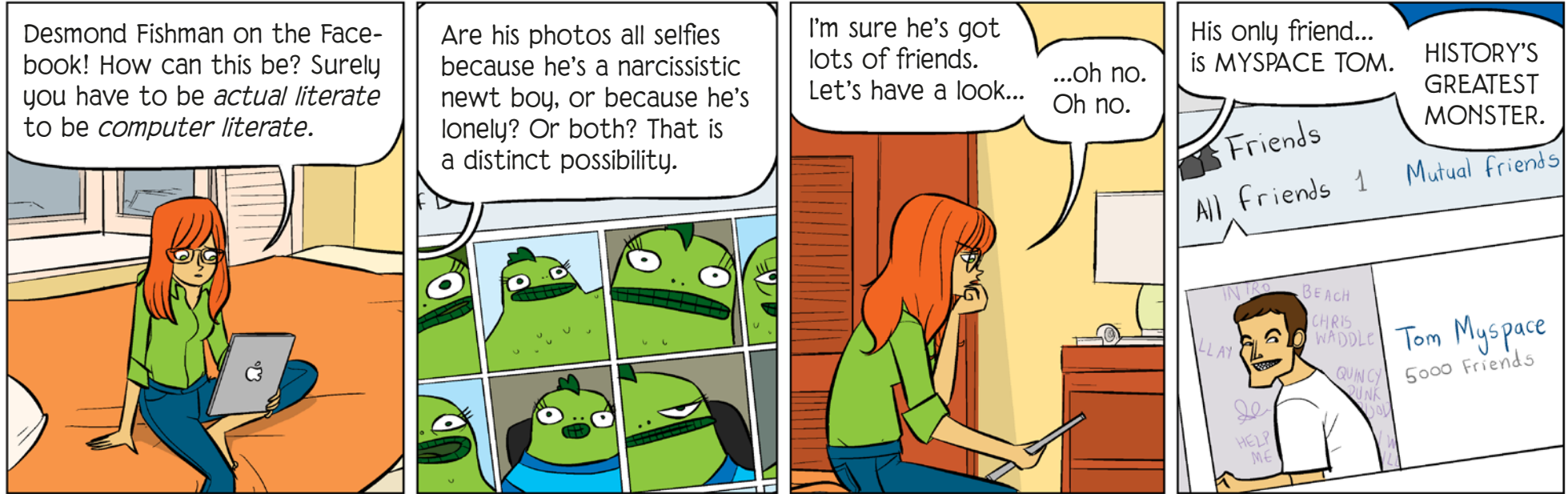
FISHMAN'S RETURN

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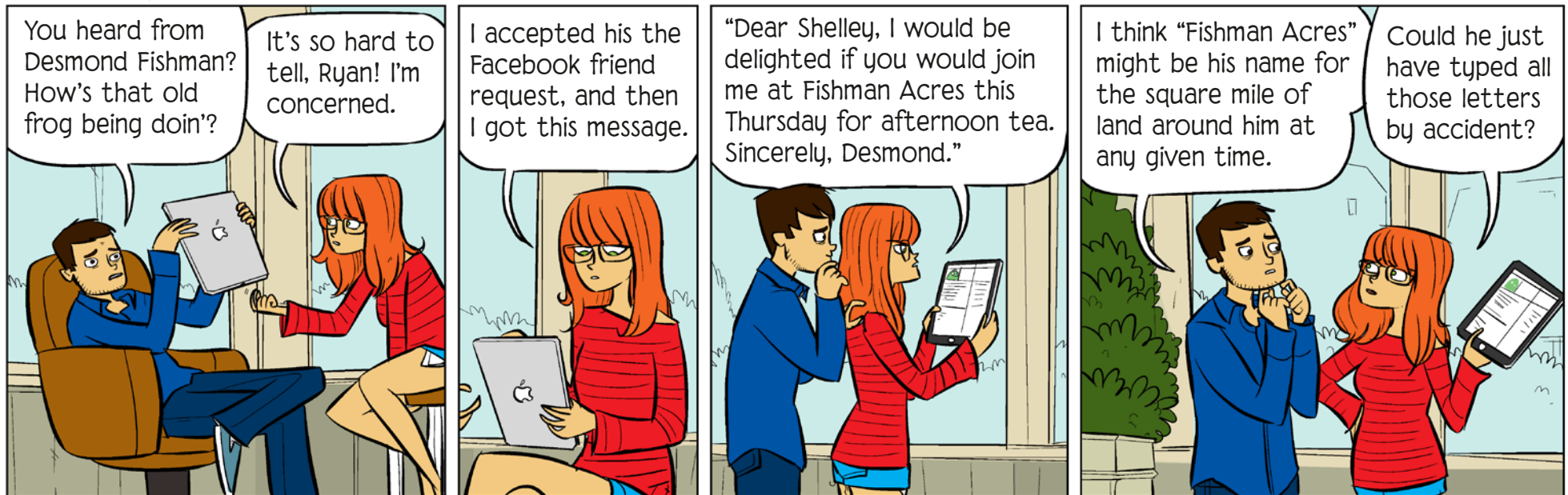
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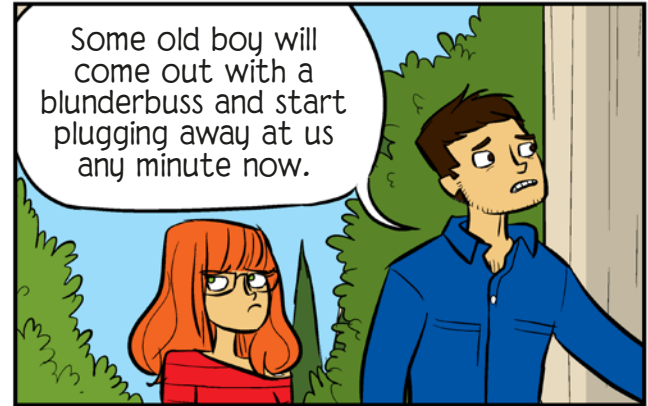


How can... Desmond... live in a house like this?

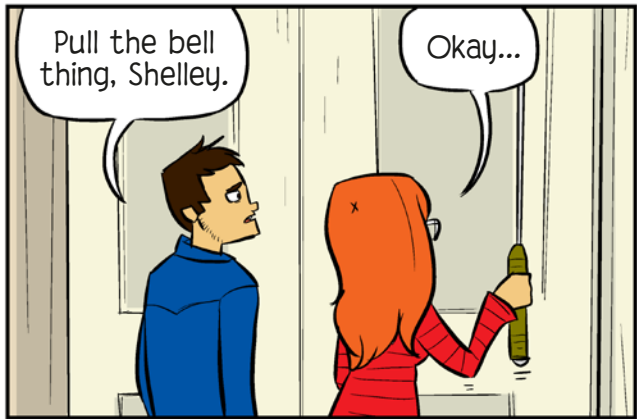
He's probably not in it, he's just near it.

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Some old boy will come out with a blunderbuss and start plugging away at us any minute now.



Pull the bell thing, Shelley.

Okay...



BLONG

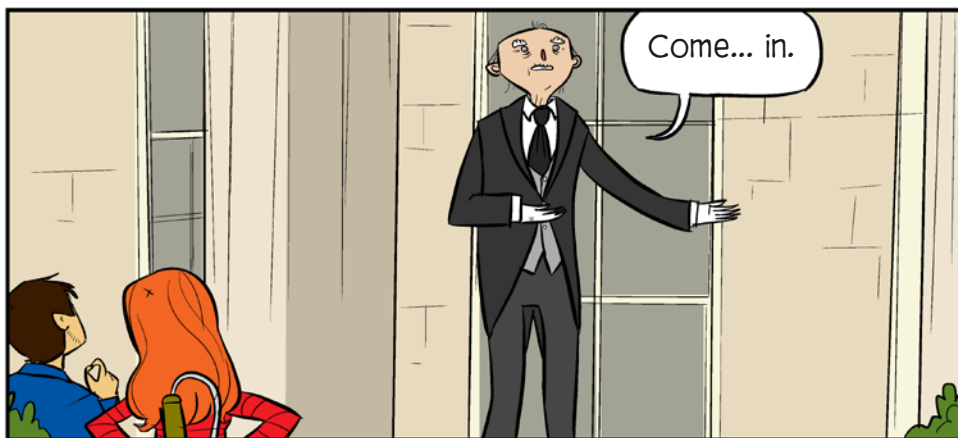
It came off in my hand!

PWANG

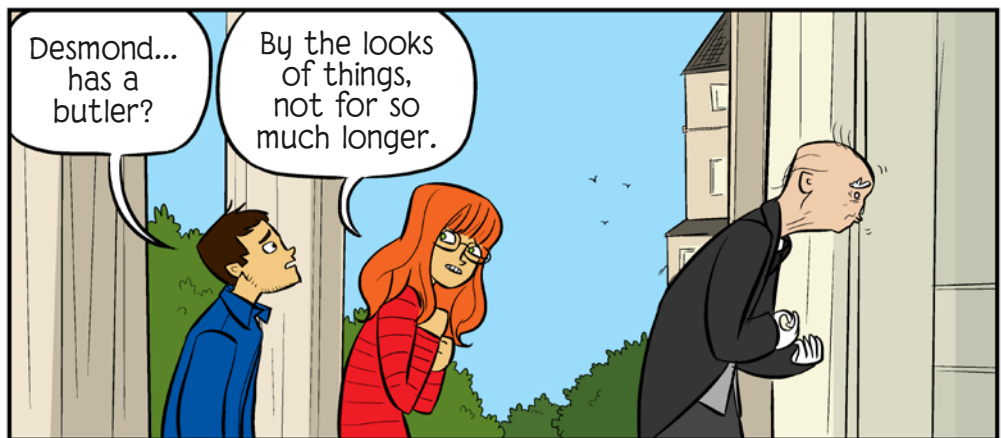


Ah! Don't stuff it into a dang bush!

I'm panicking!



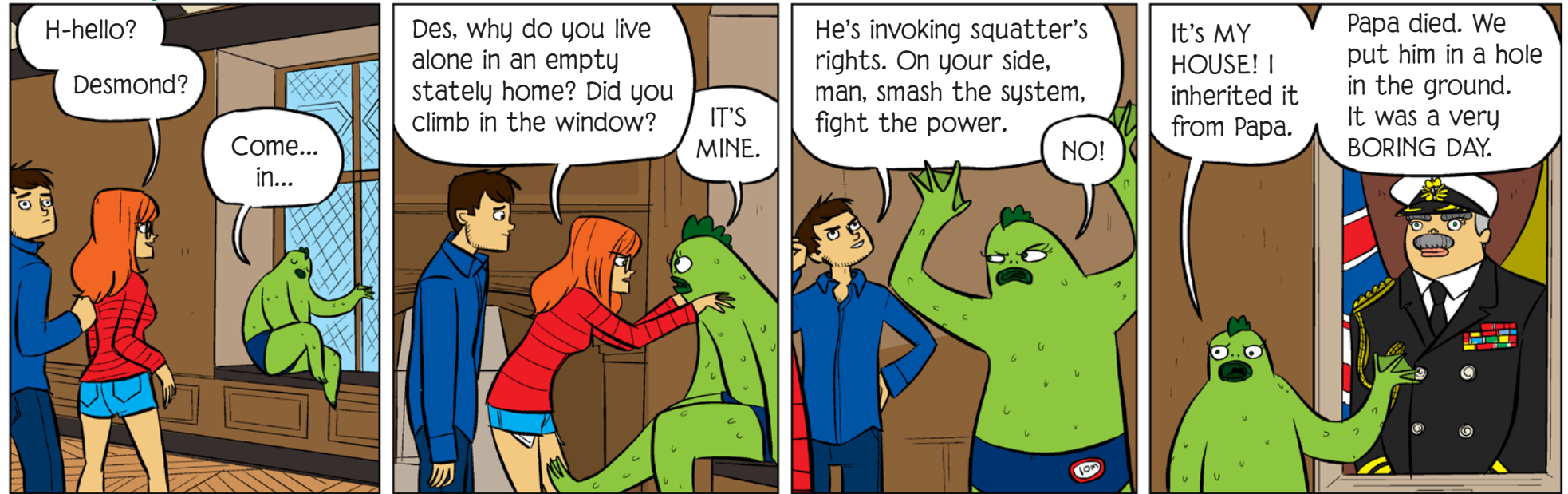
Come... in.



Desmond... has a butler?

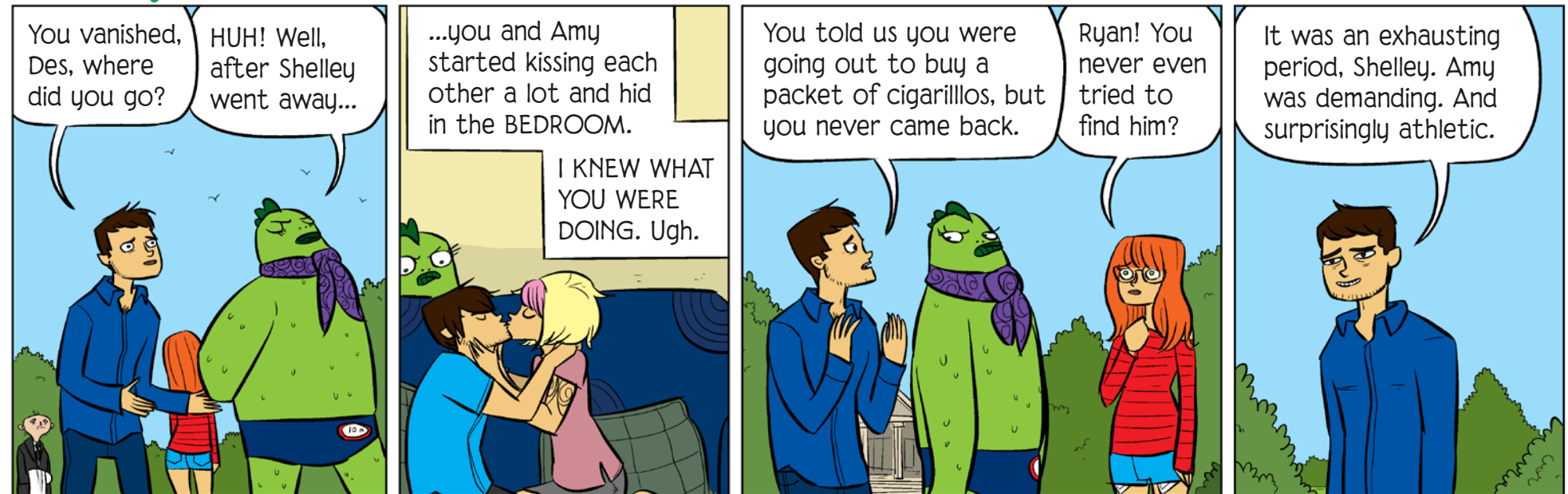
By the looks of things, not for so much longer.

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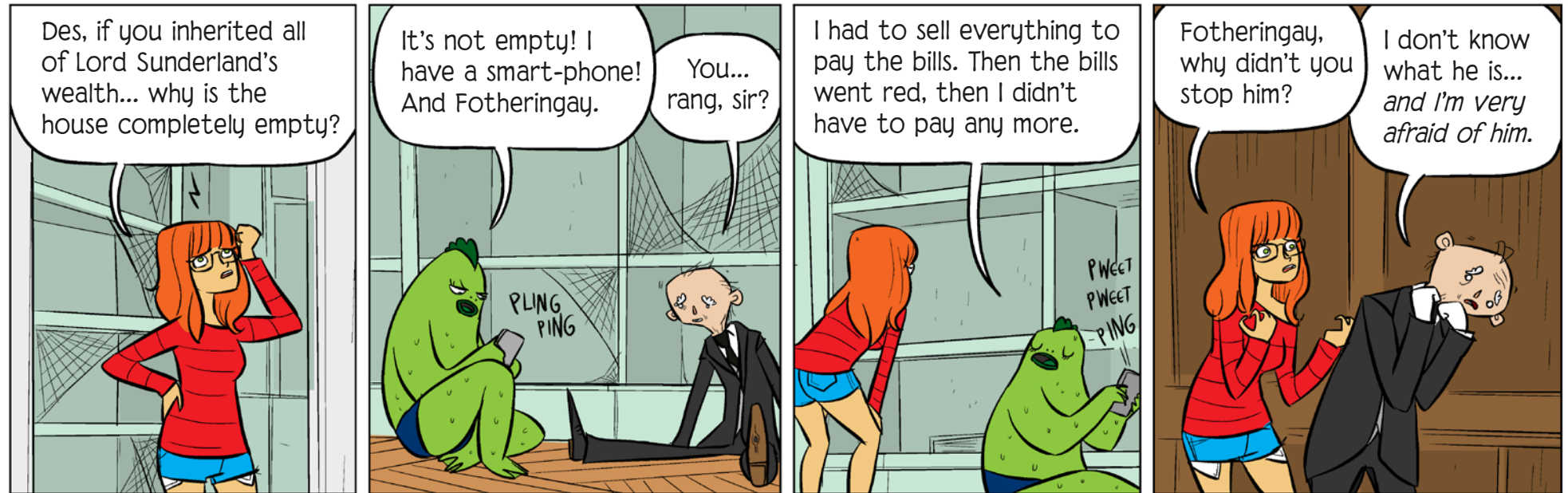
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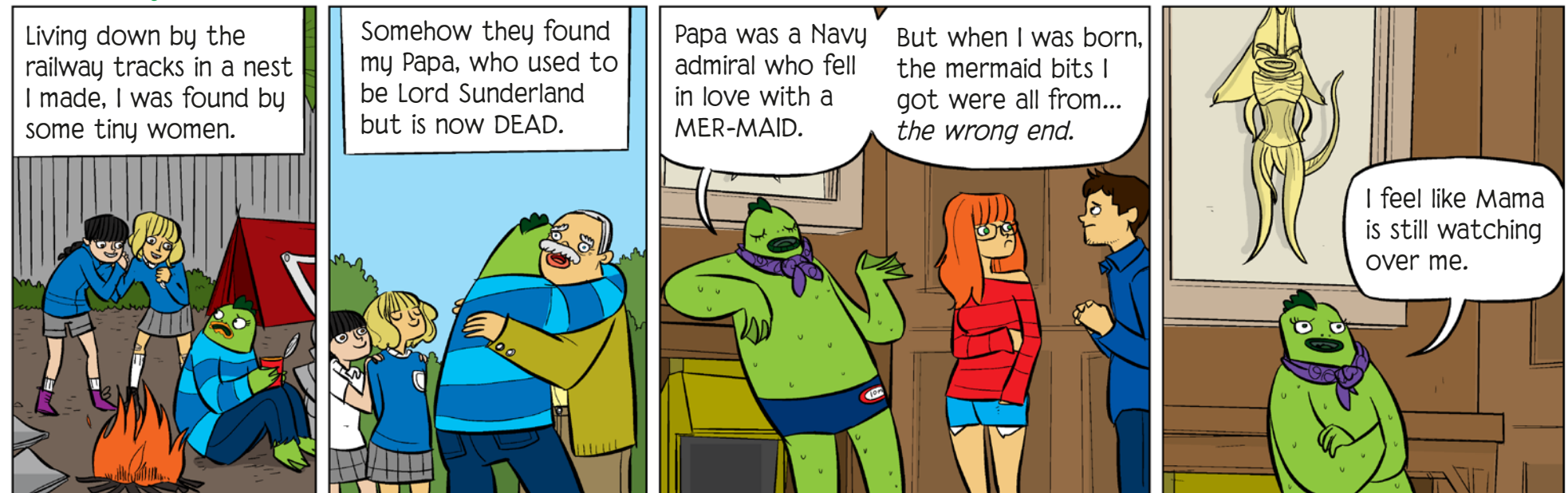
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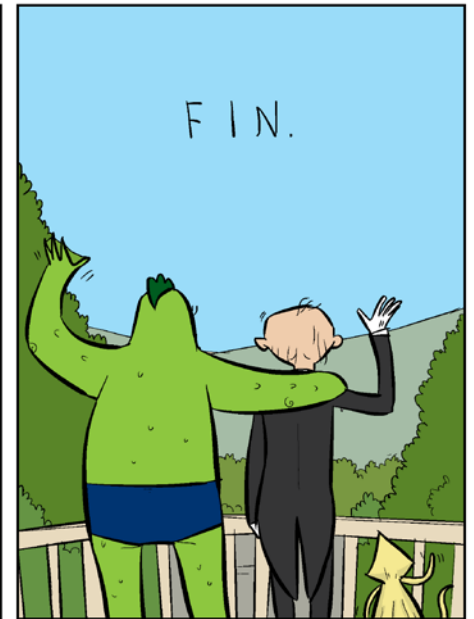
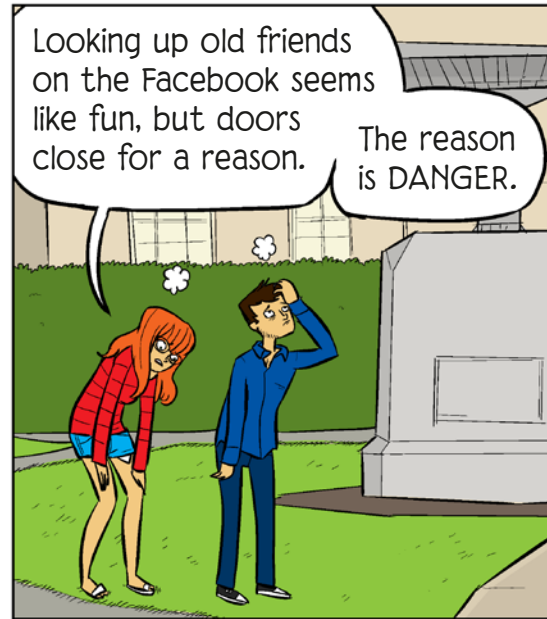
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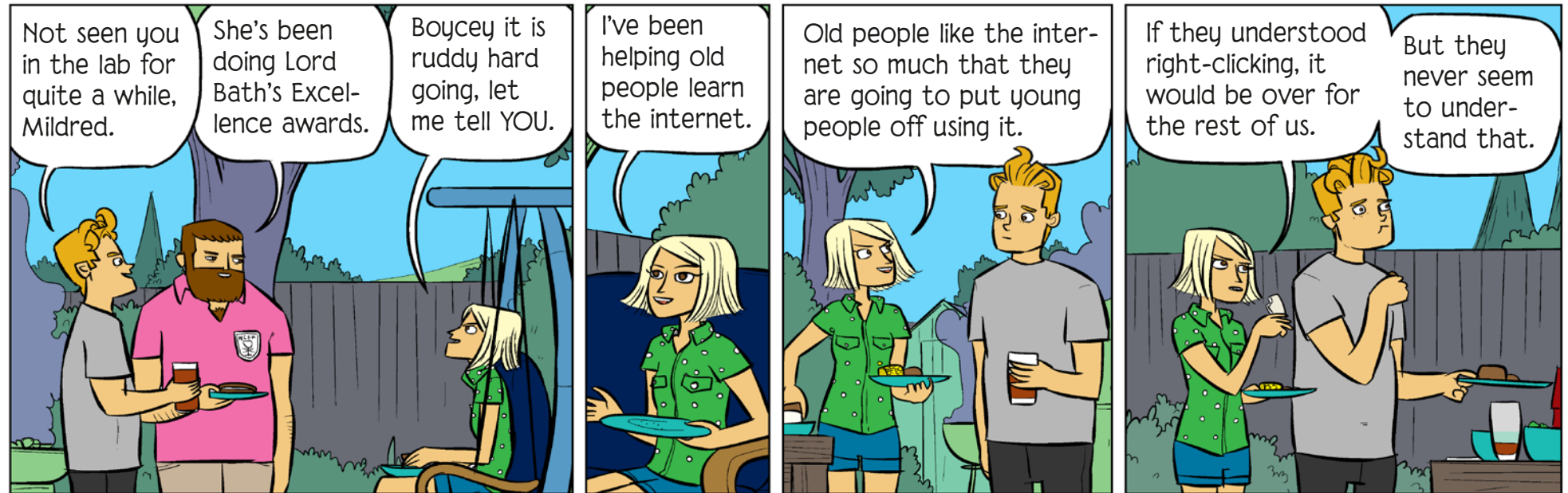


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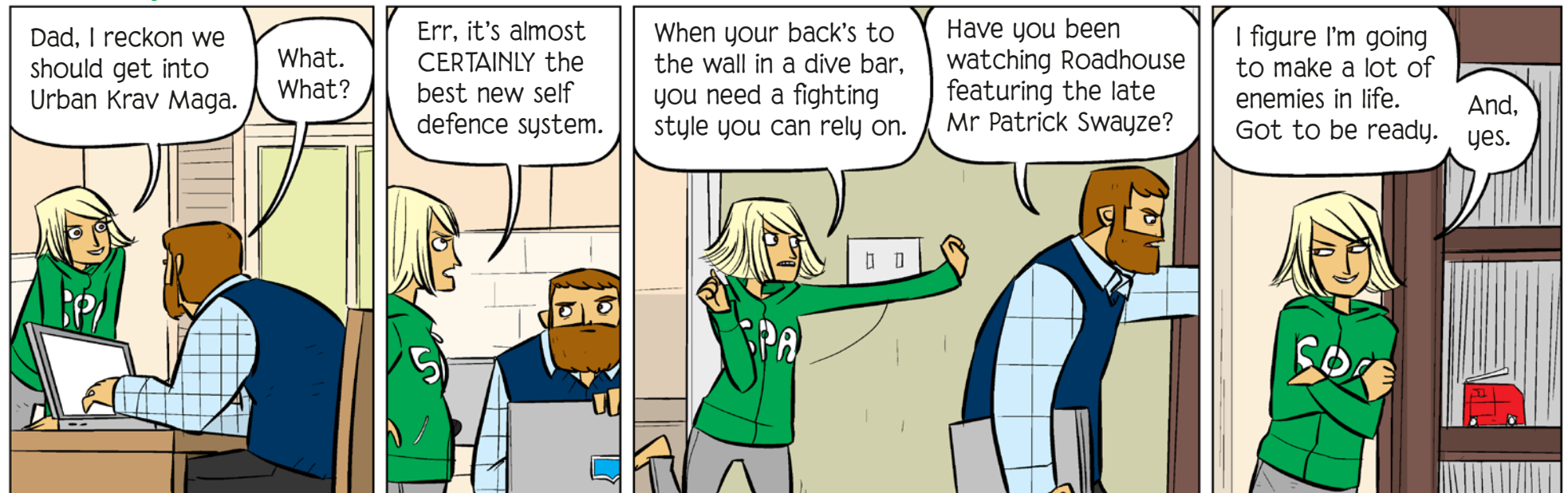


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OUT OF THE WOODS

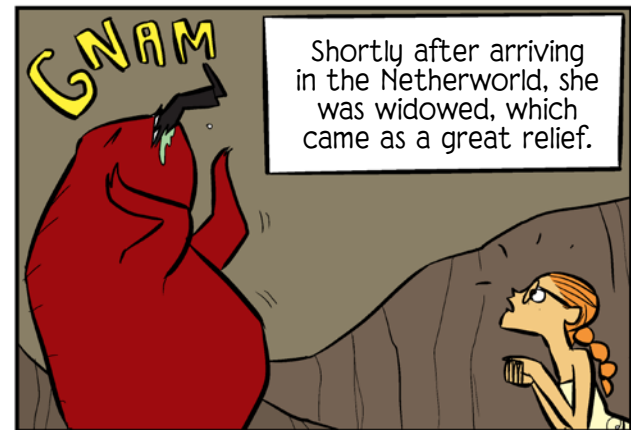


Though no fault of her own, Erin Winters was exiled to hell on her wedding day. She was 16 years old.

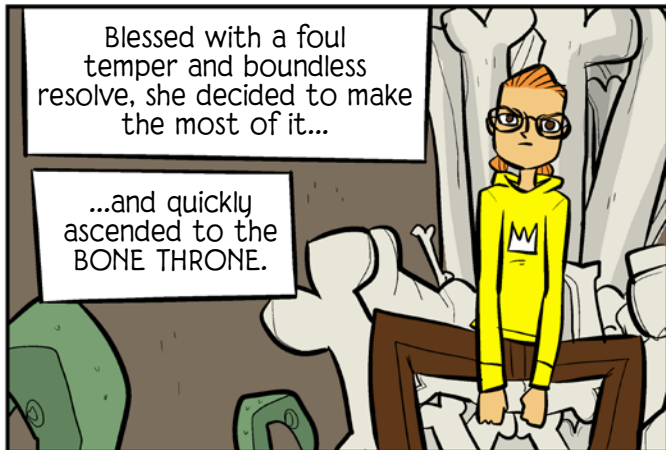
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At the second she vanished, everyone she knew forgot about her.

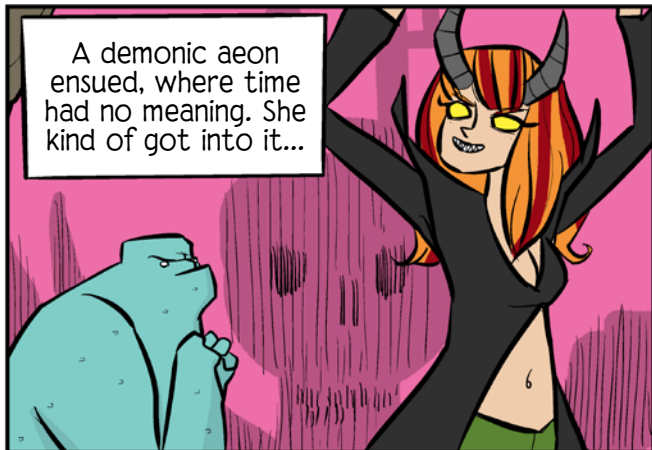


Shortly after arriving in the Netherworld, she was widowed, which came as a great relief.



Blessed with a foul temper and boundless resolve, she decided to make the most of it...

...and quickly ascended to the BONE THRONE.



A demonic aeon ensued, where time had no meaning. She kind of got into it...



...until the human remains of her broke free...



...and got back to the place she came from.



A few years in Purgatory followed...

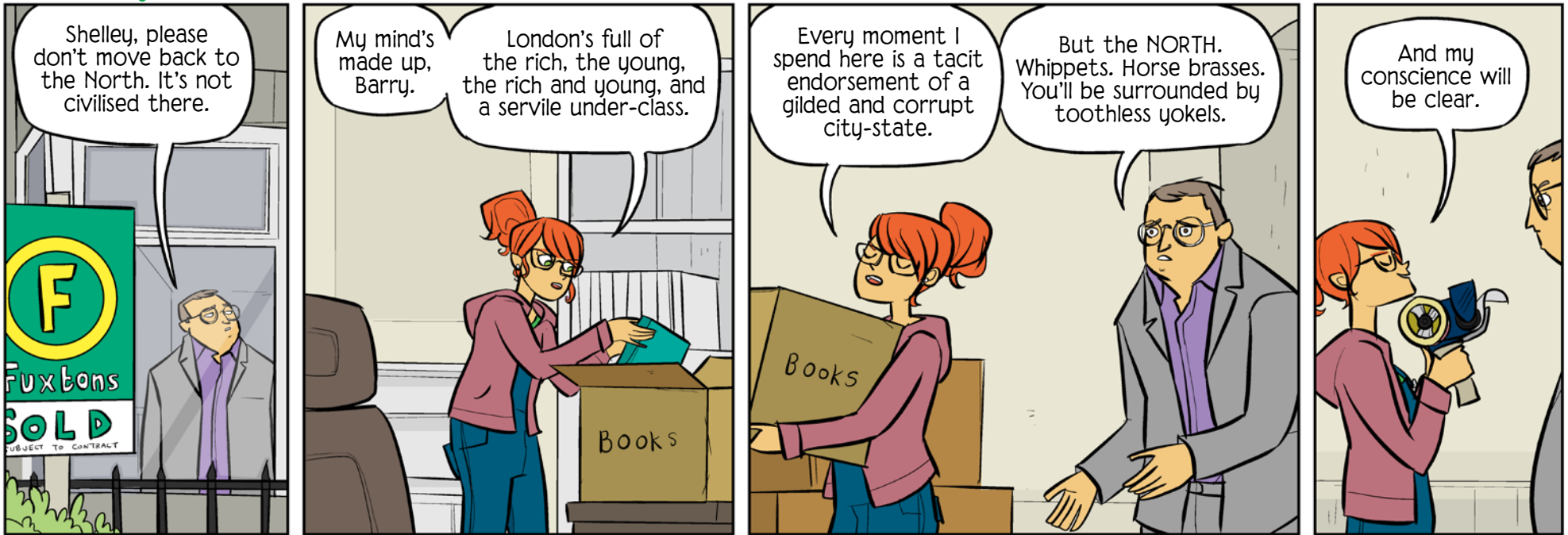


...before she escaped to the capital.



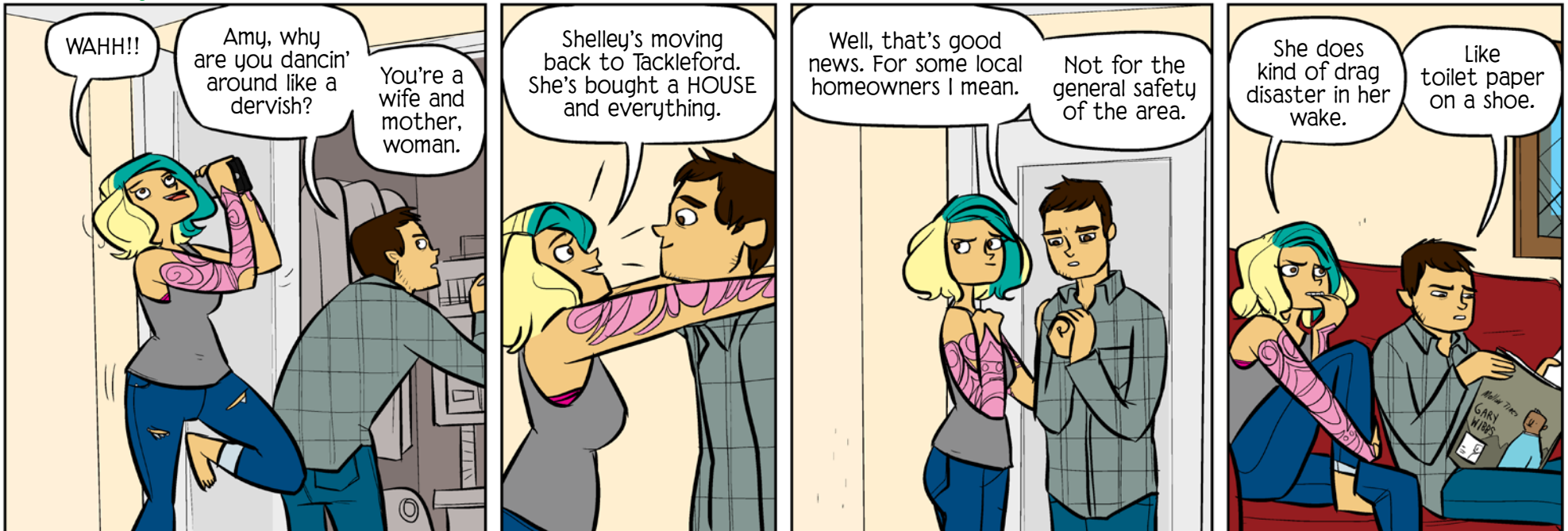
Here's what happened next.

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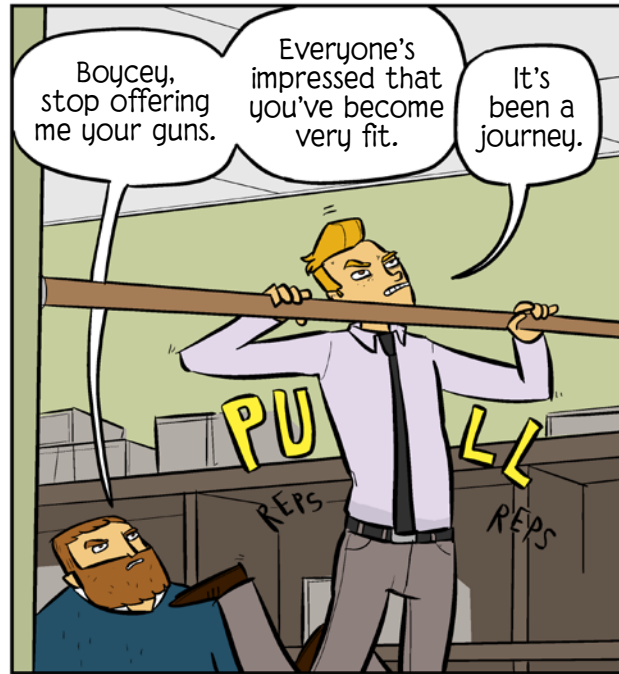
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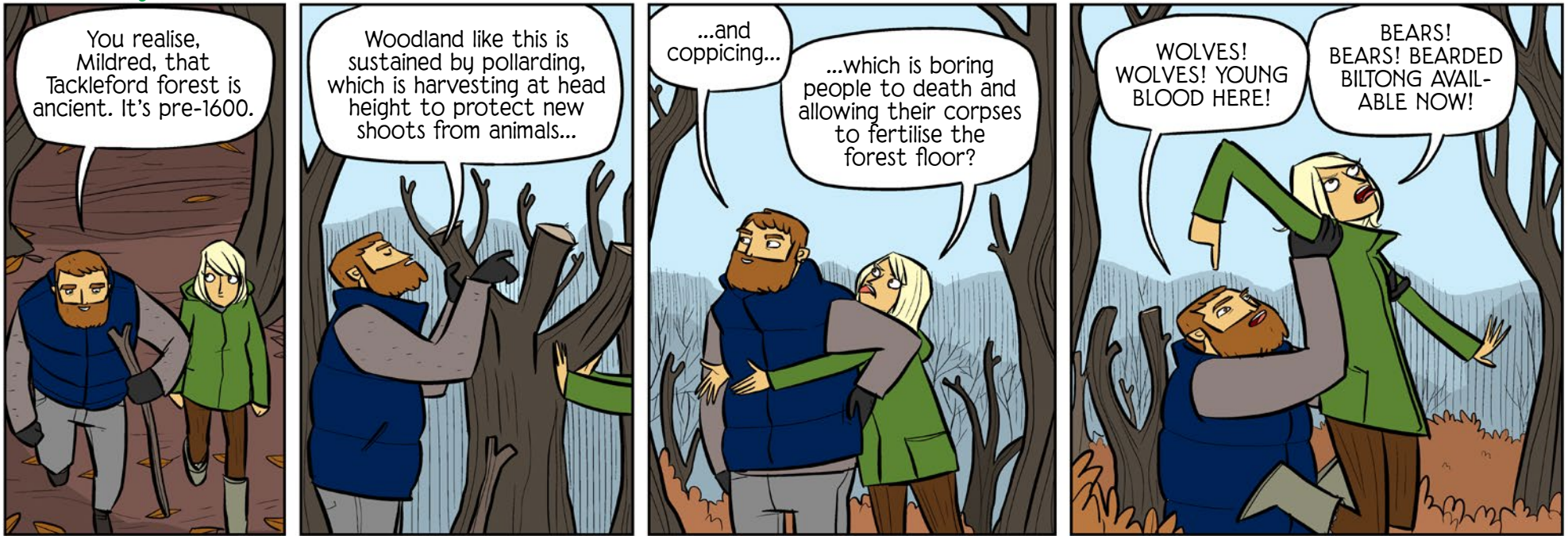
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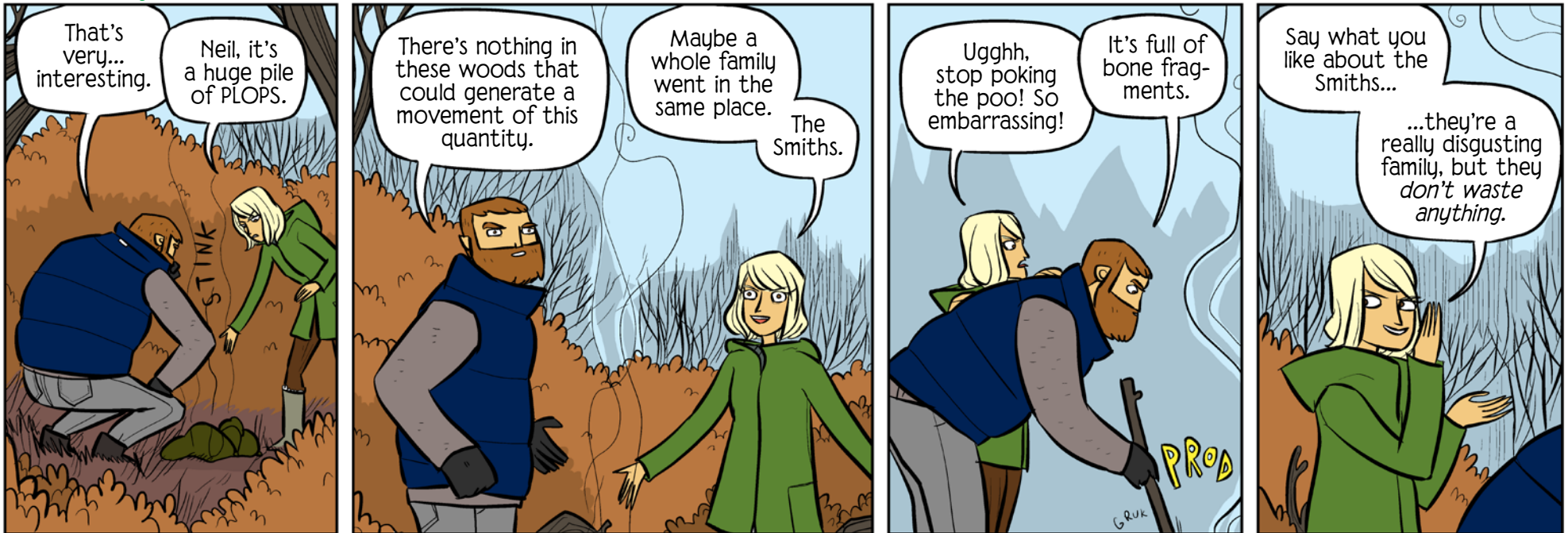
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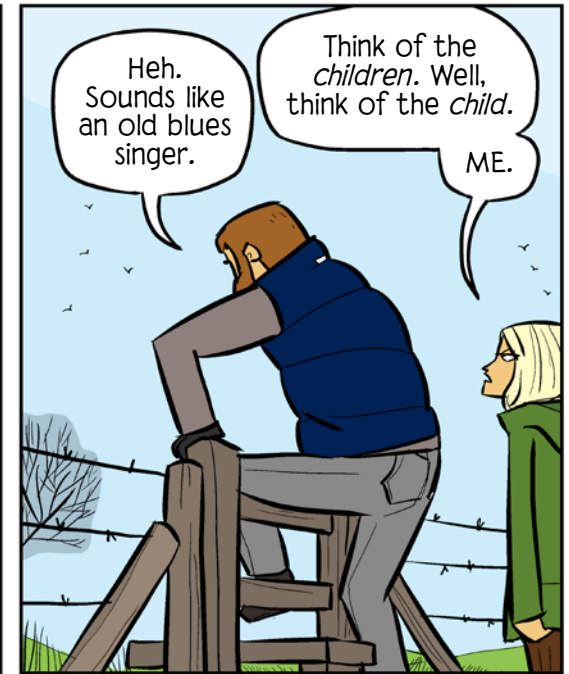
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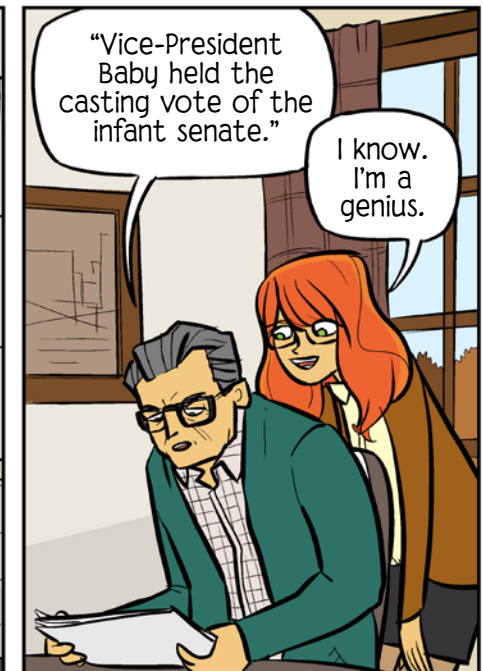
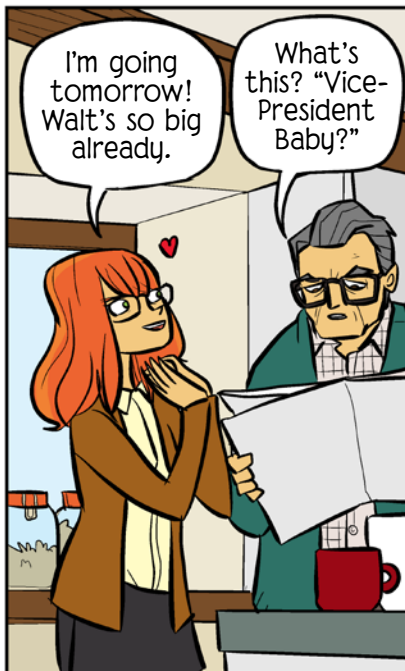
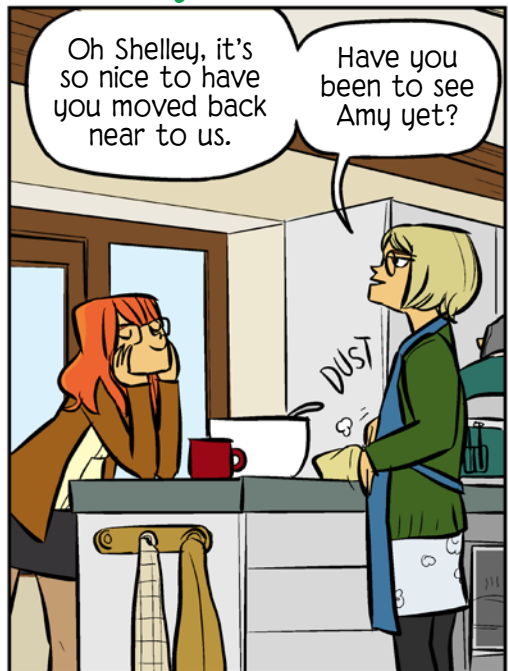
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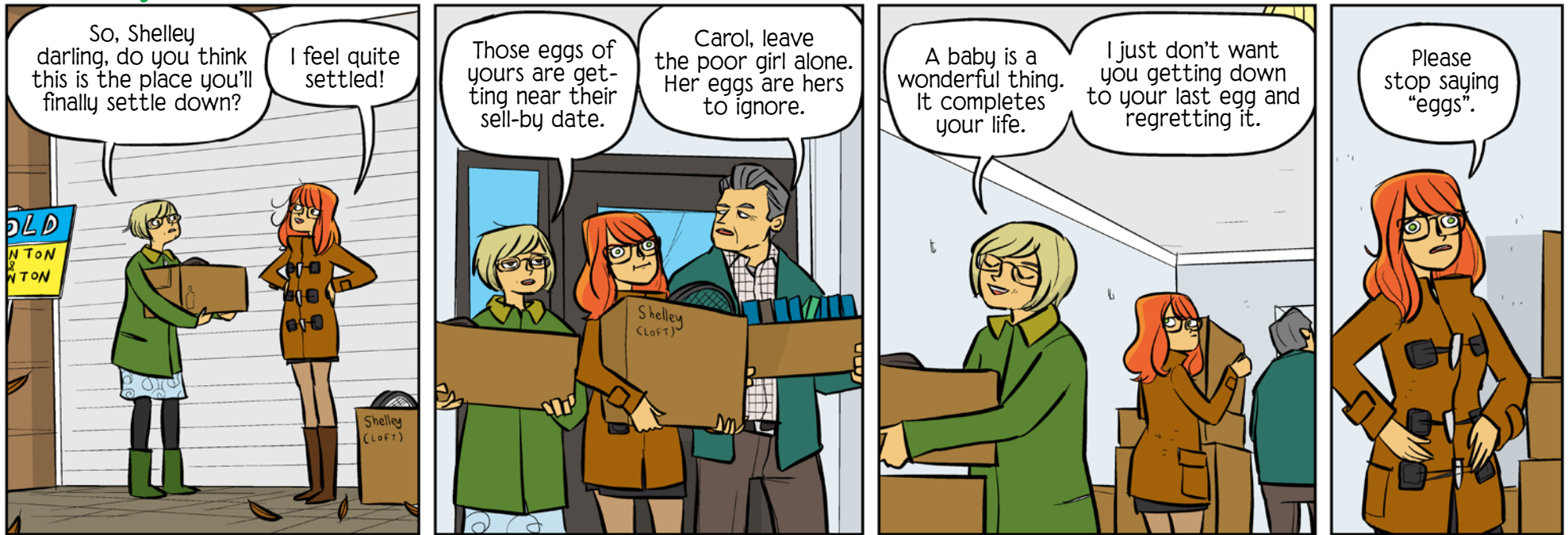
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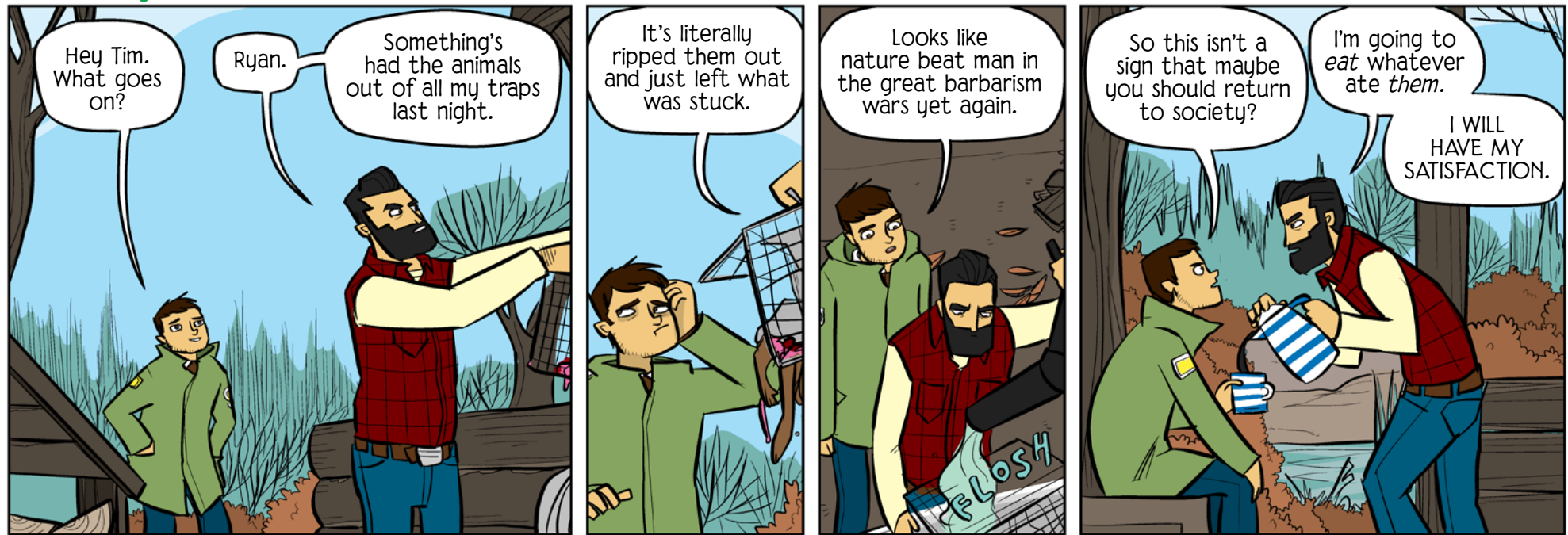
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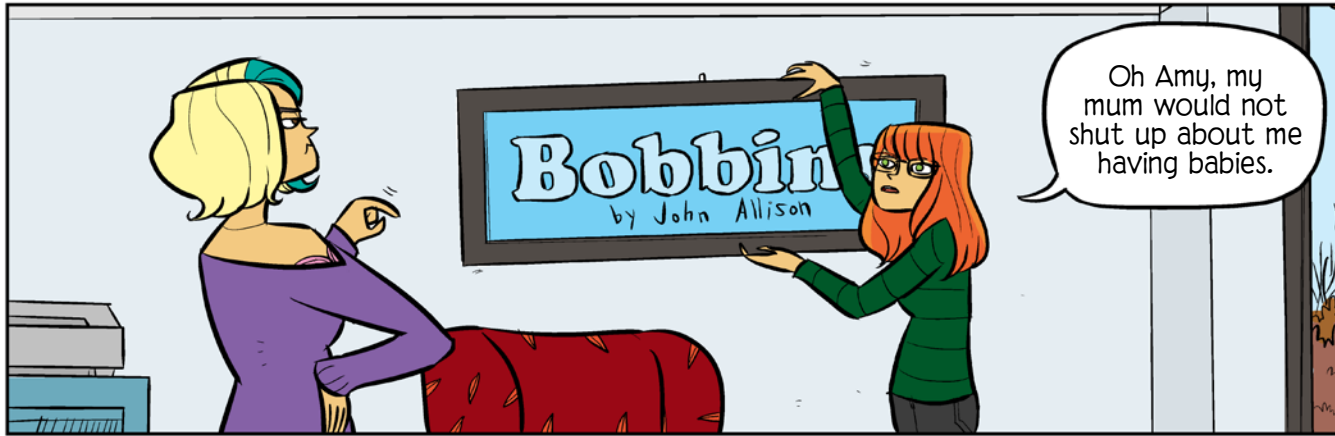


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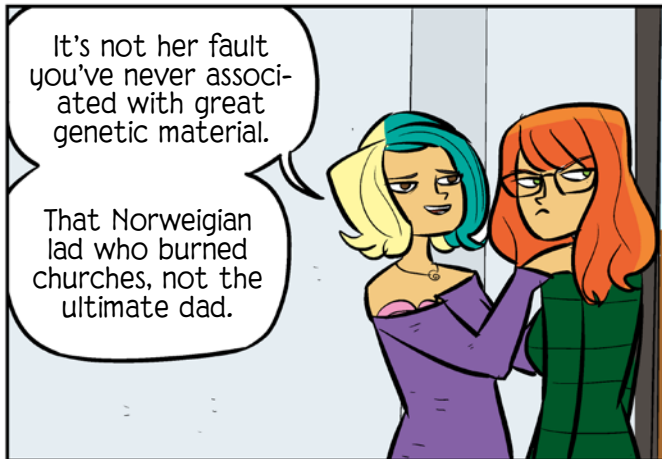
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Oh Amy, my mum would not shut up about me having babies.



Momma Winters just wants to sniff that ginger baby head, kiss that tiny bespectacled face.



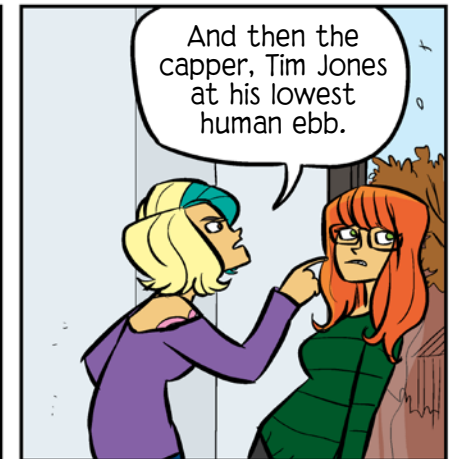
It's not her fault you've never associated with great genetic material.
That Norwegian lad who burned churches, not the ultimate dad.



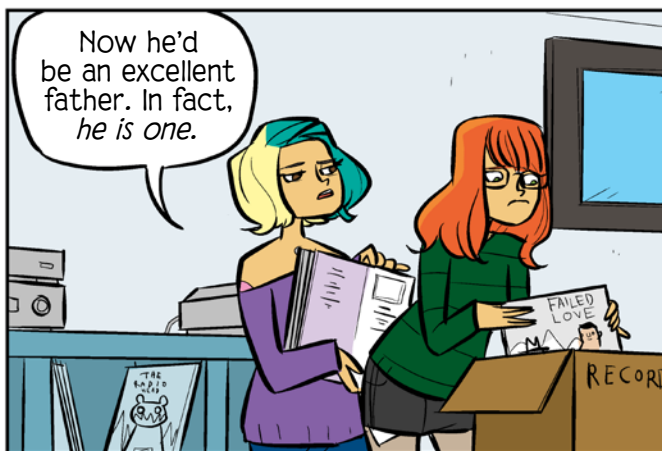
And the others, *Christ*, the playthings of a beautiful bachelorette.



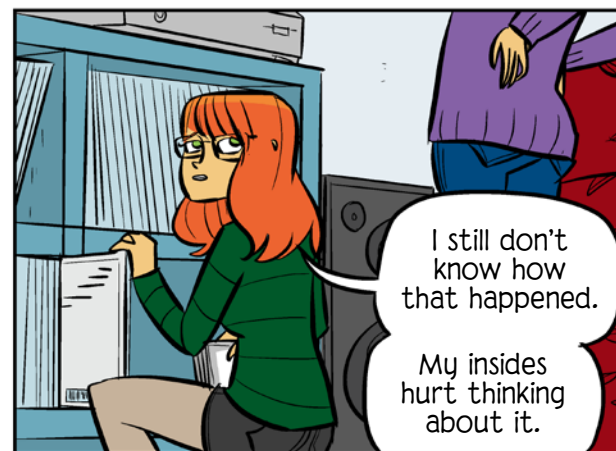
SO VAPID.



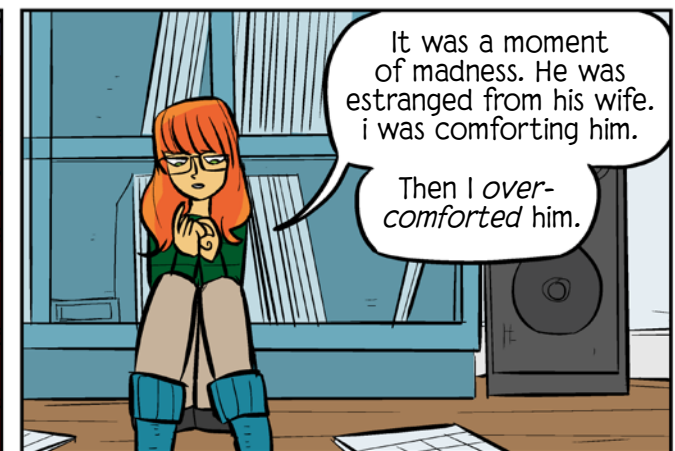
And then the capper, Tim Jones at his lowest human ebb.



Now he'd be an excellent father. In fact, *he is one.*

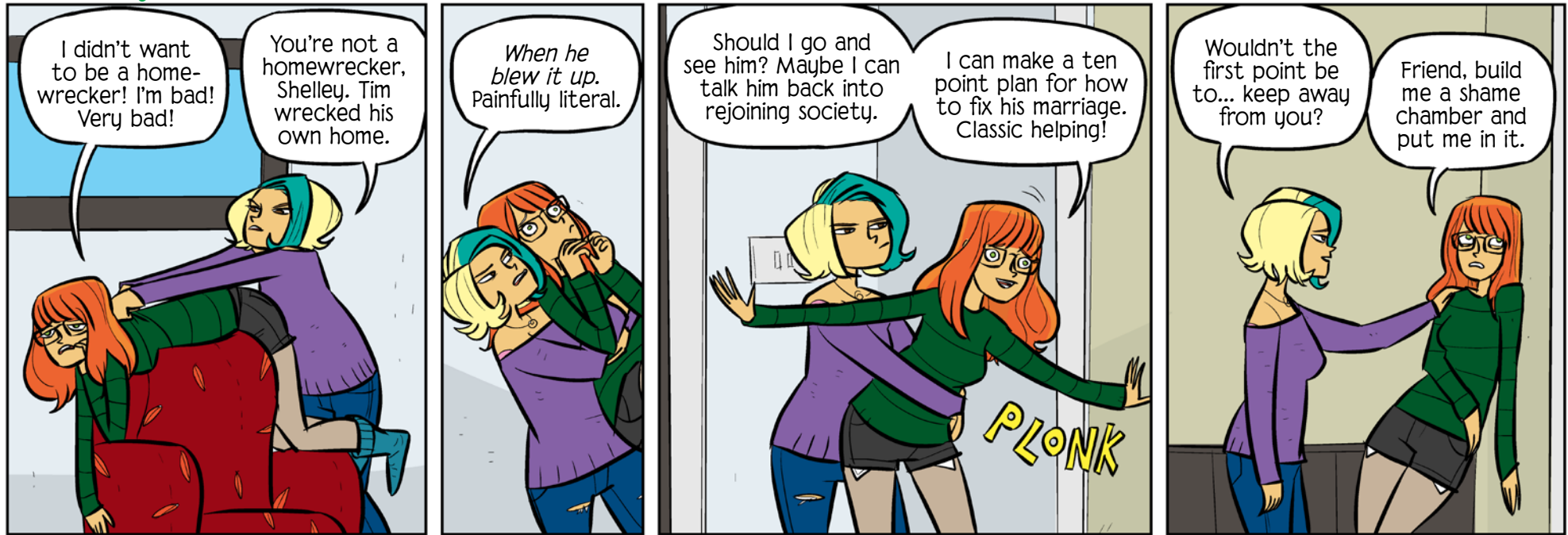


I still don't know how that happened.
My insides hurt thinking about it.



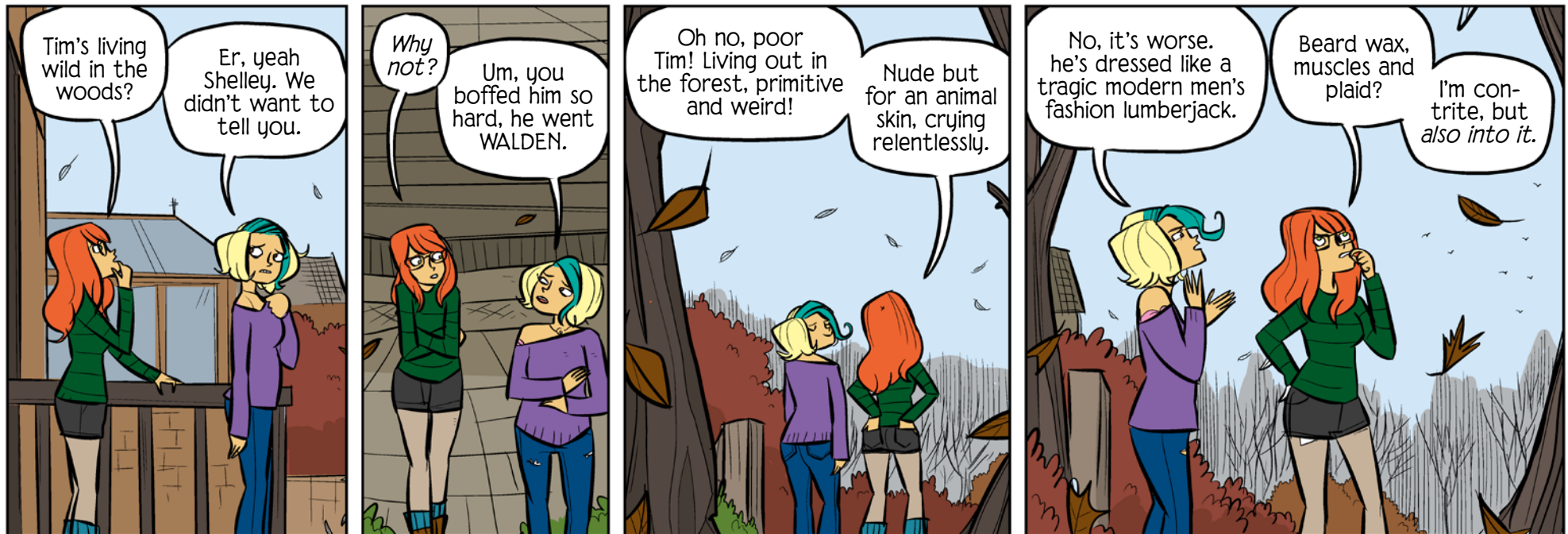
It was a moment of madness. He was estranged from his wife. i was comforting him.
Then I *over-*comforted him.

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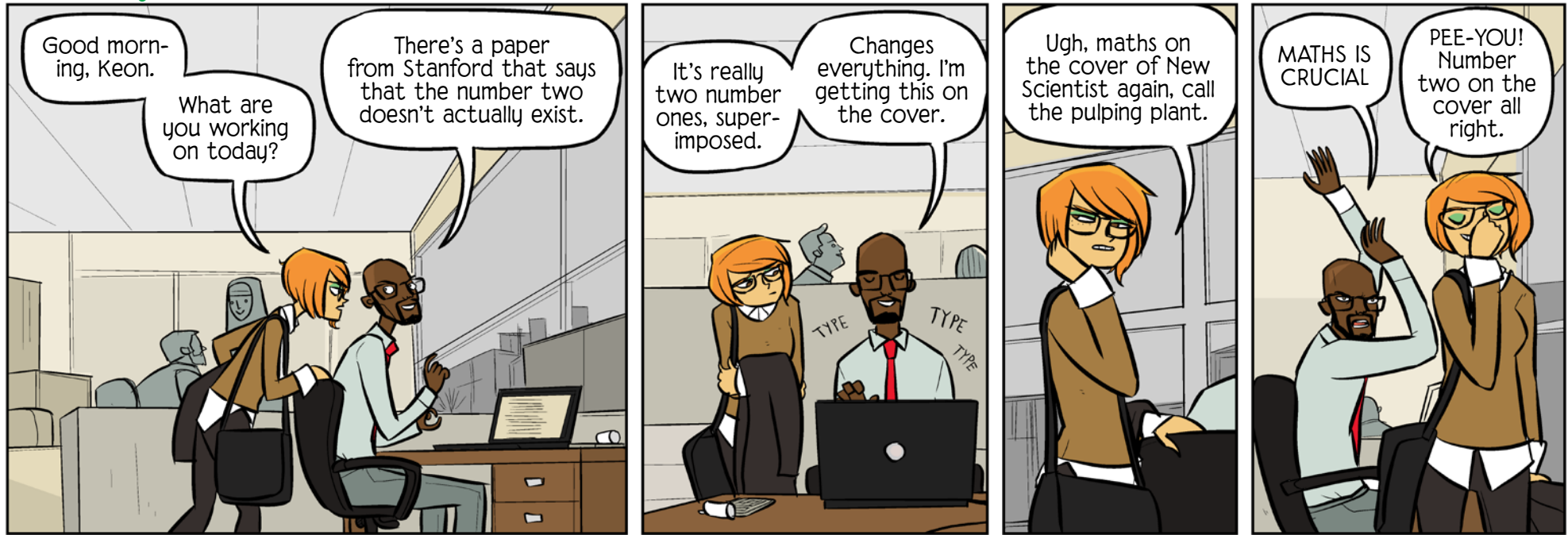
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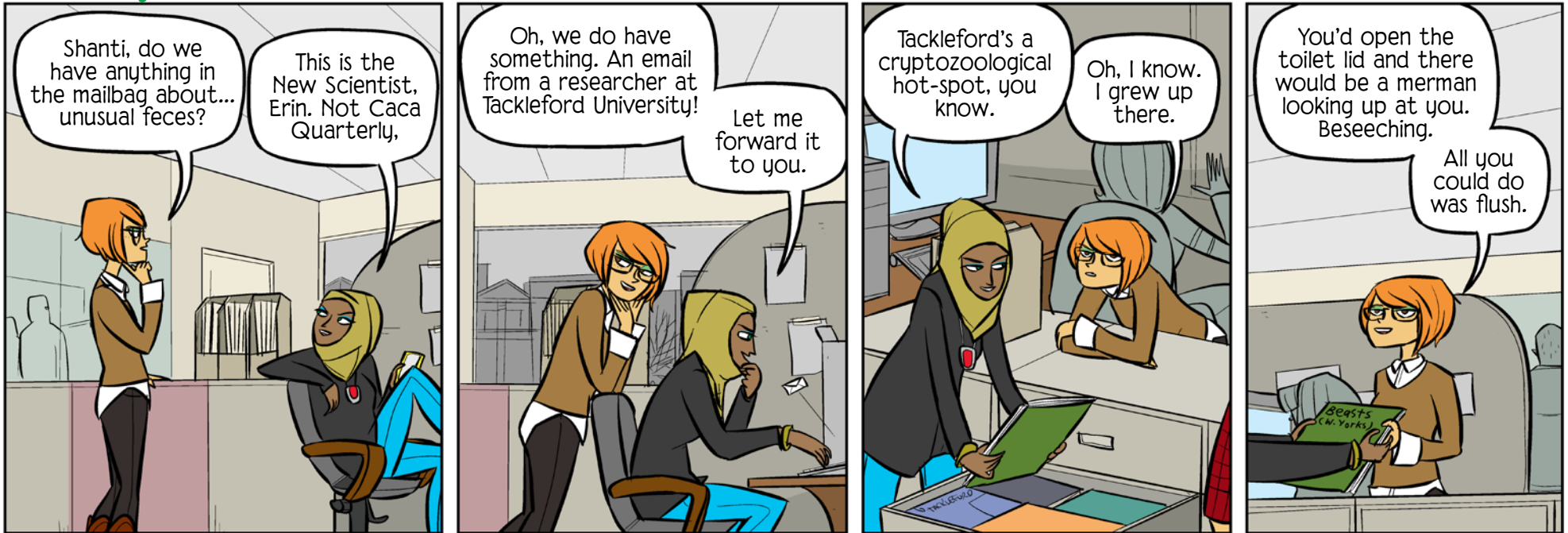
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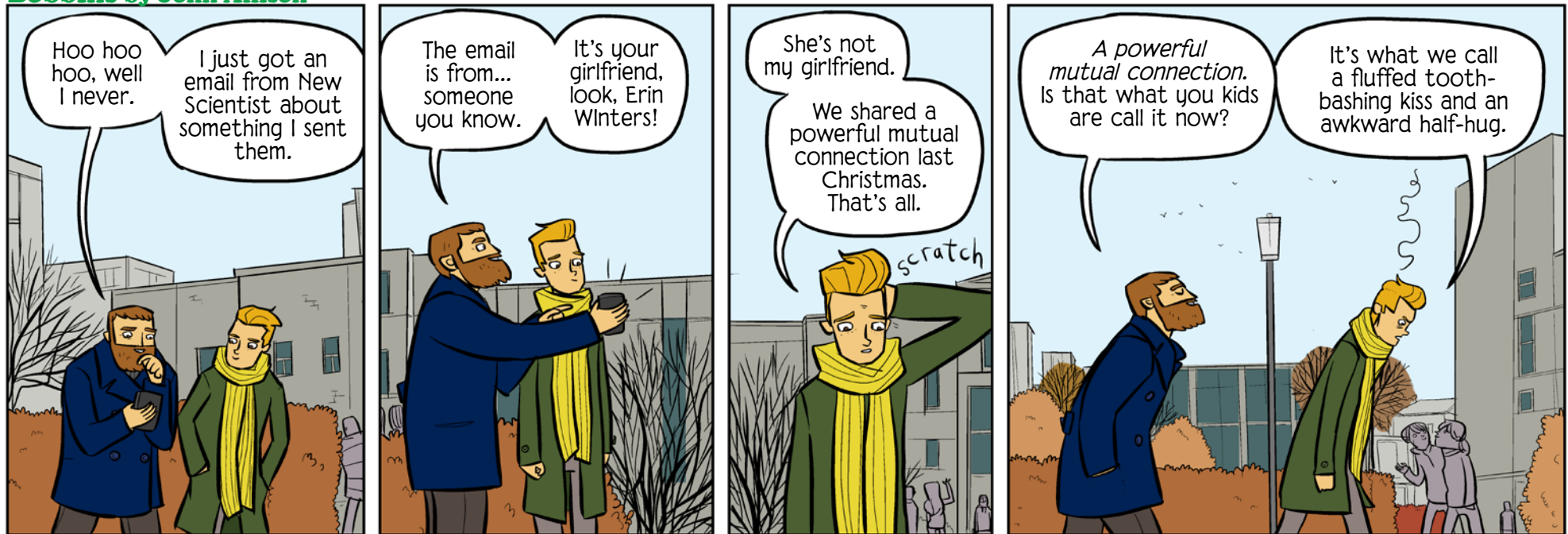
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Well son, I don't know if I could have built a better log cabin myself.

Thanks Pop.

Bobbins
by John Allison



Time's getting on. I'm going to head out.



**TINKLE
TINKLE**

TINKLE

TINKLE

The traps alarm! Let's see what's been getting into them!



God, I hope it's not a boar. I don't want to get tusked.



All right, you robbing bastards...



...hands where I can see them!



Do... what you want with your hands...

...as long as it isn't pulling bits off of me.

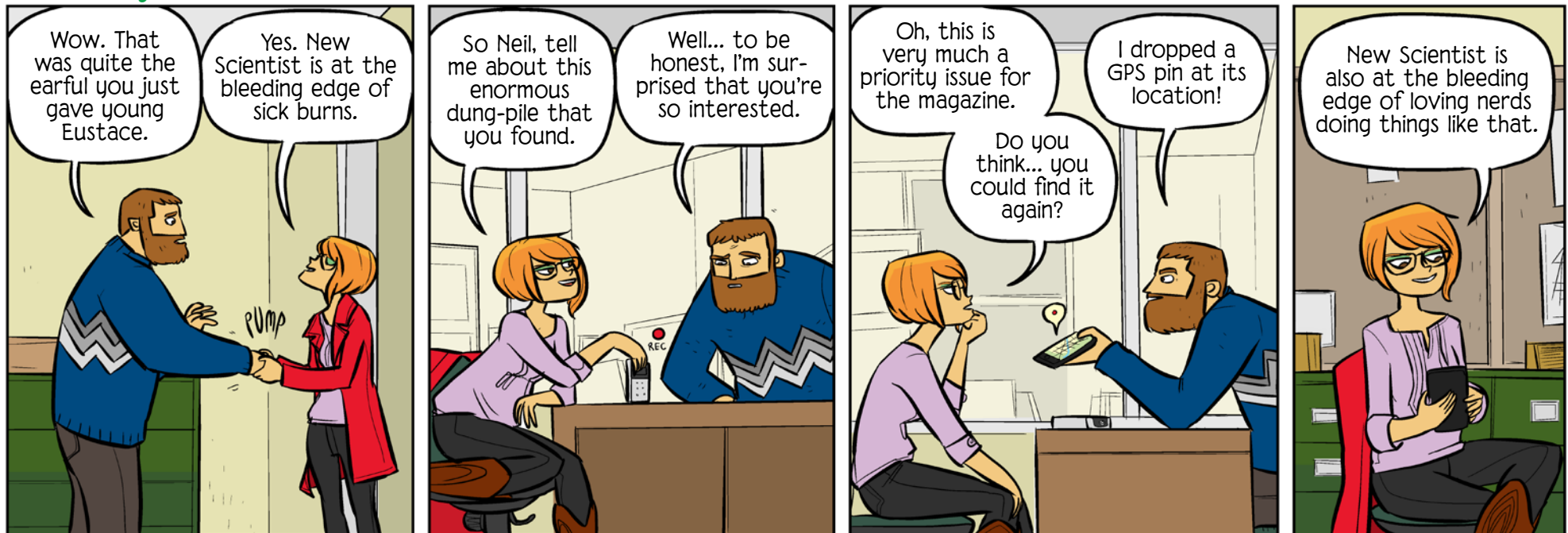
**GROF GROF
SNARE**

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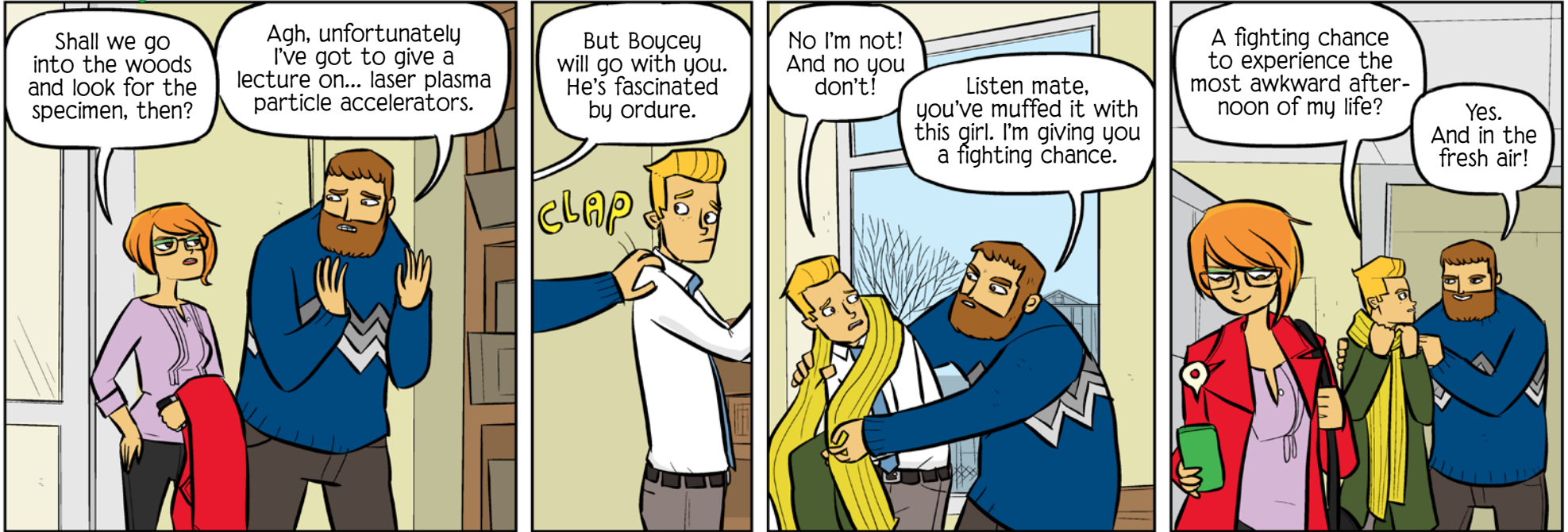
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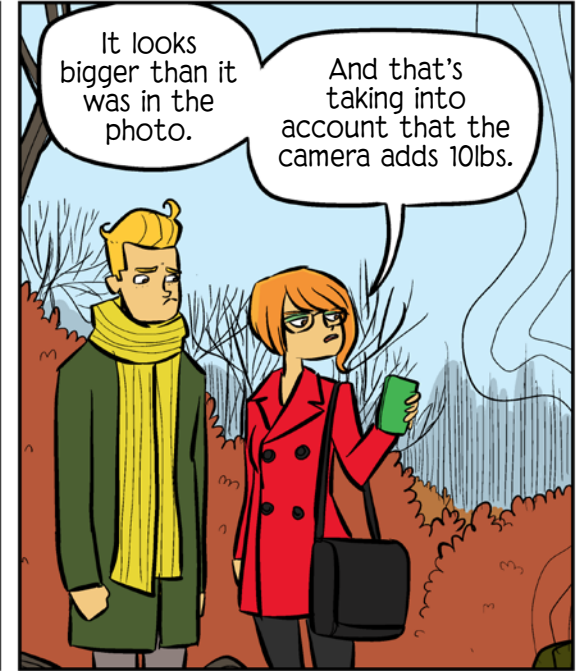
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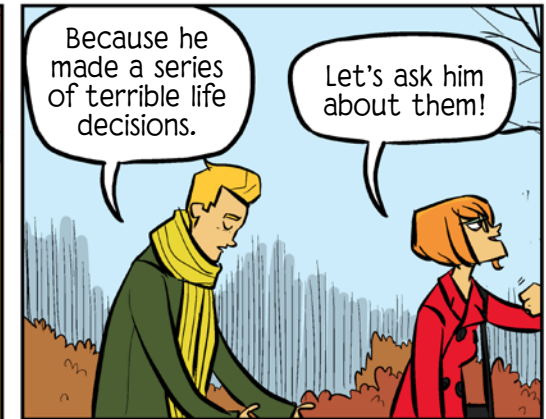
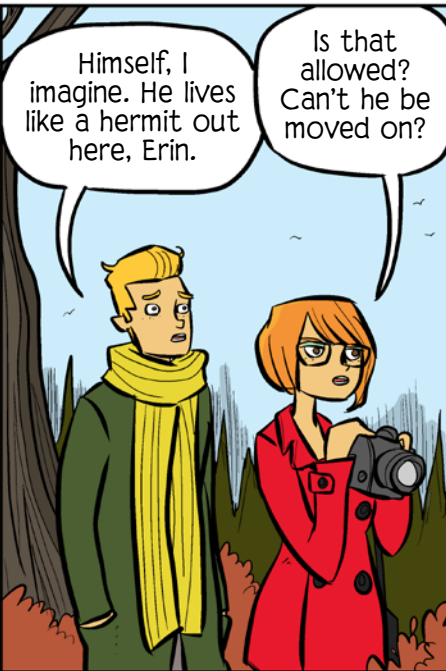
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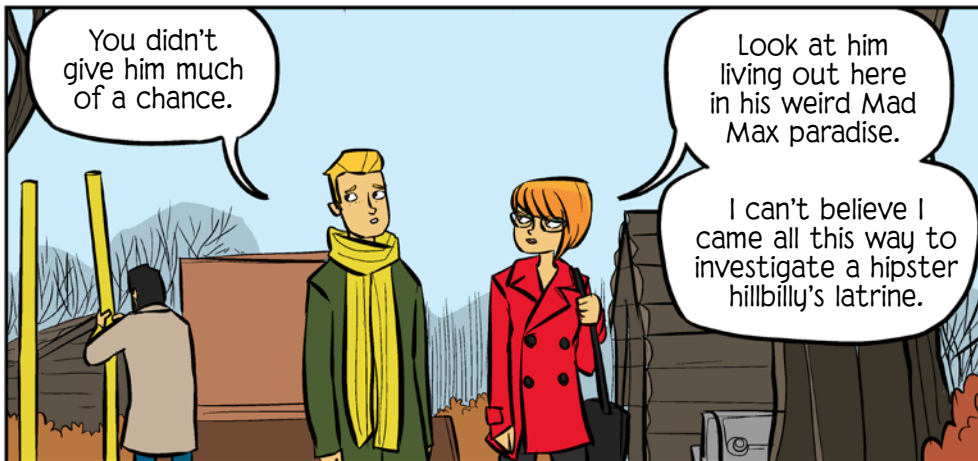
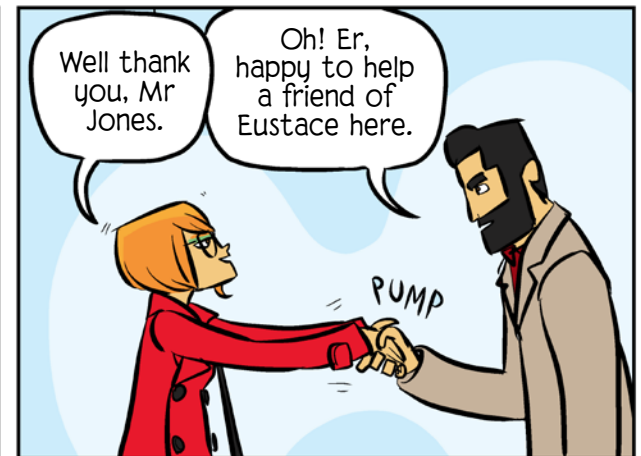
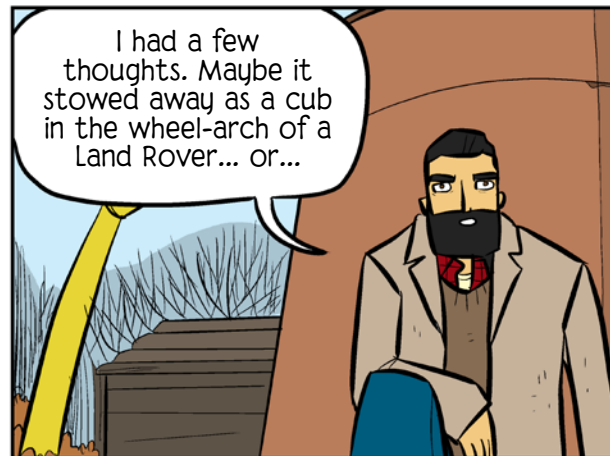
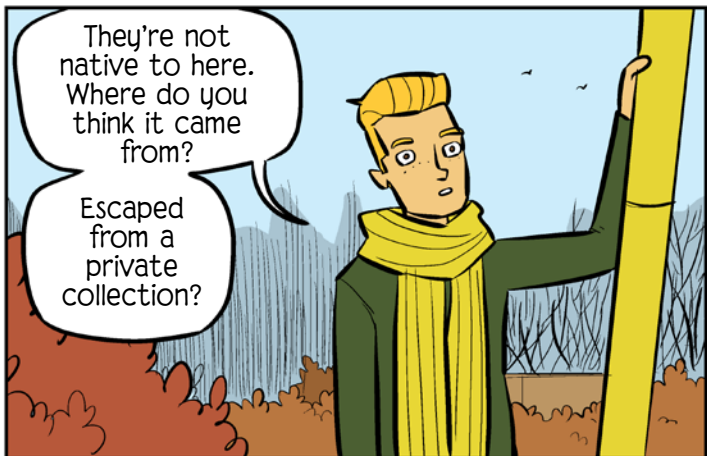


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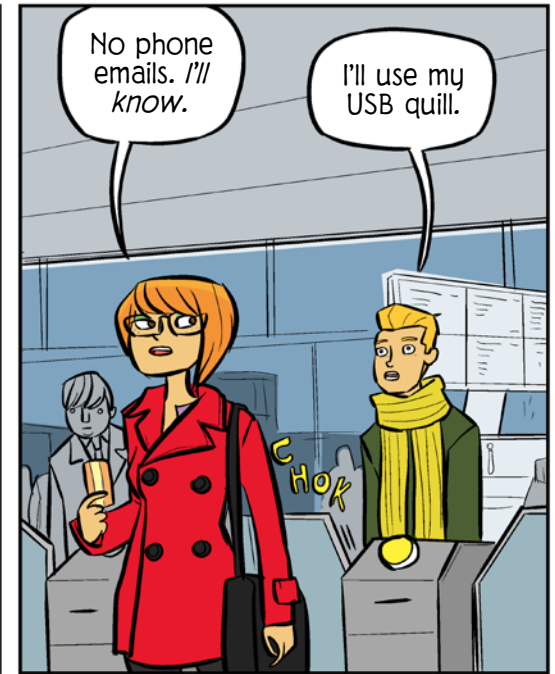
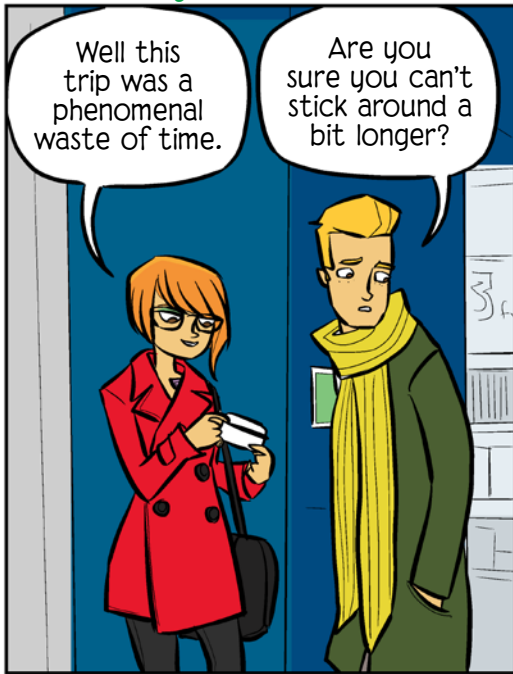
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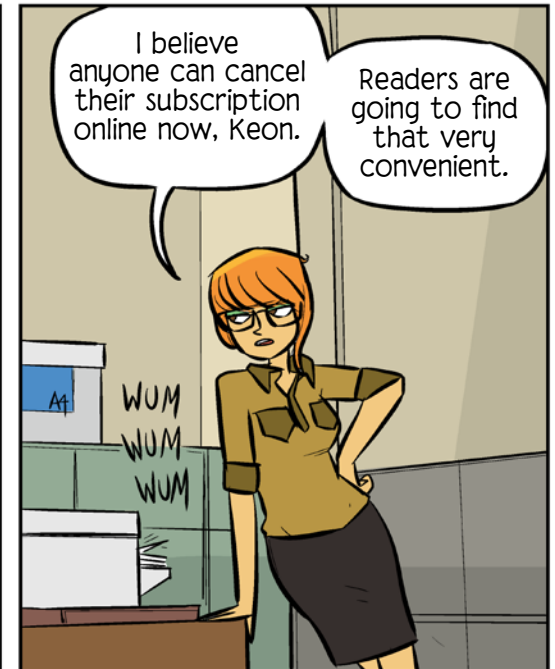
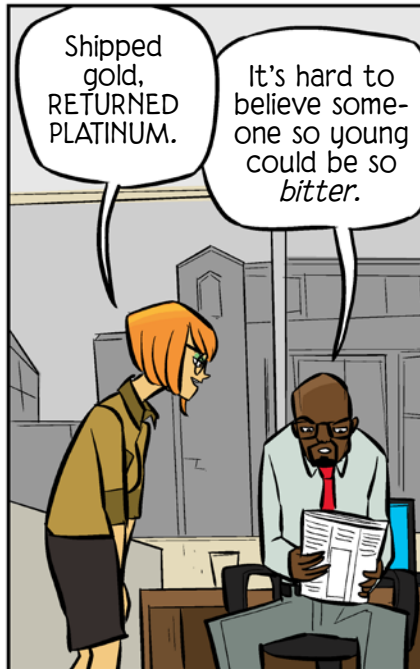
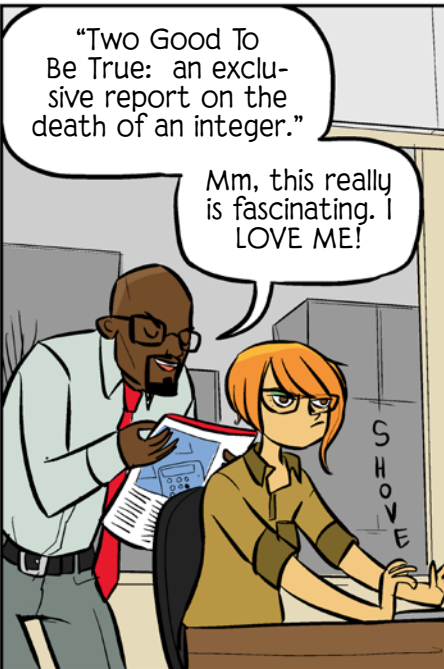


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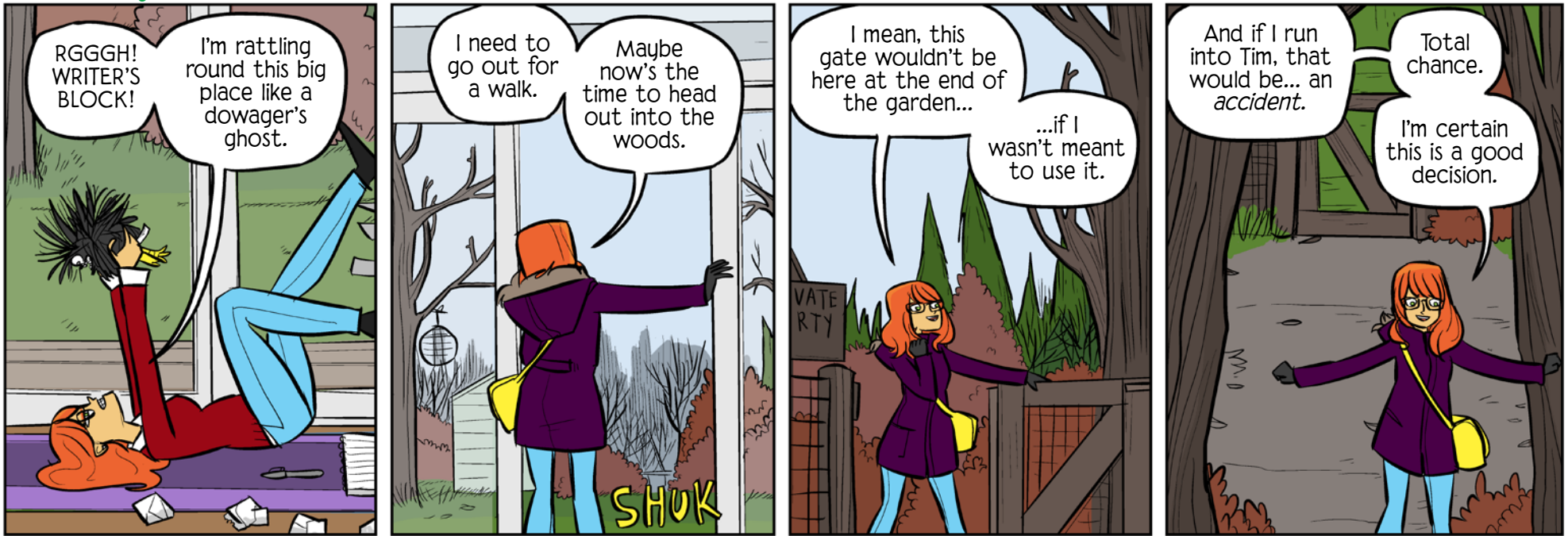
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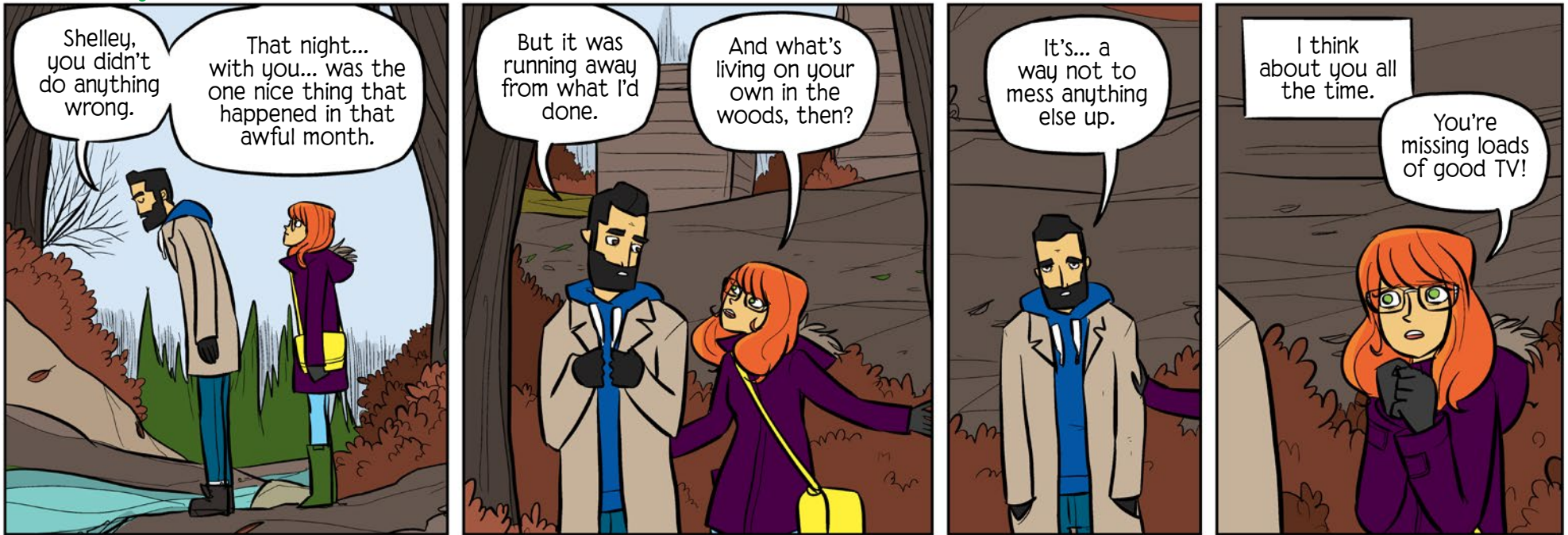
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LOSE THE SANDWICH! LOSE THE SANDWICH!



AAAH! Delicious BARBECUE FINGERS!



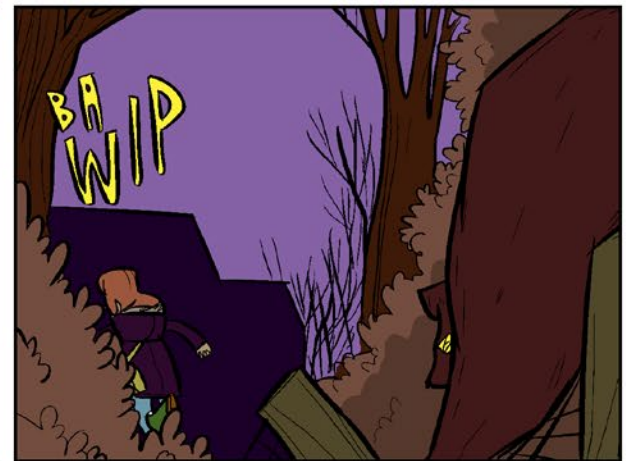
Door keys will take too long! BEARS WILL EAT ME!

I require LUXURY KEYLESS ENTRY!



DON'T EAT ME! DON'T EAT ME!

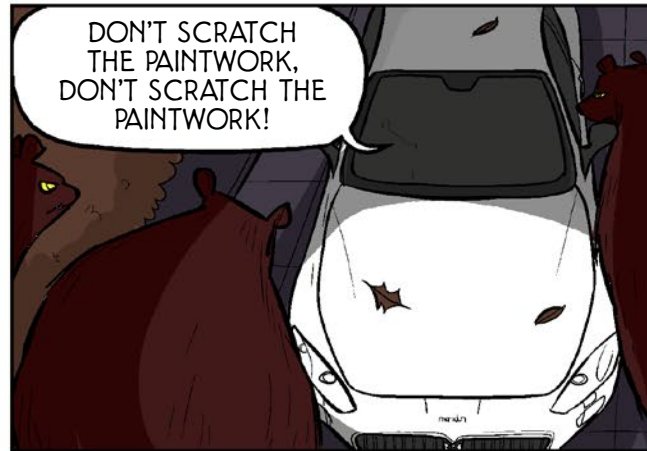
GROFF GROFF



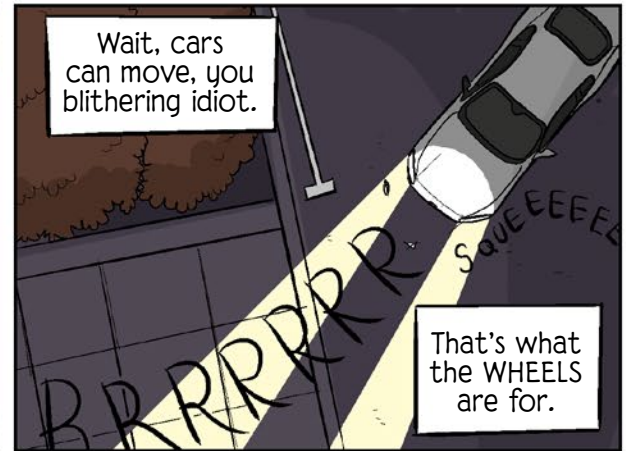
BA WIP



BAAAAB



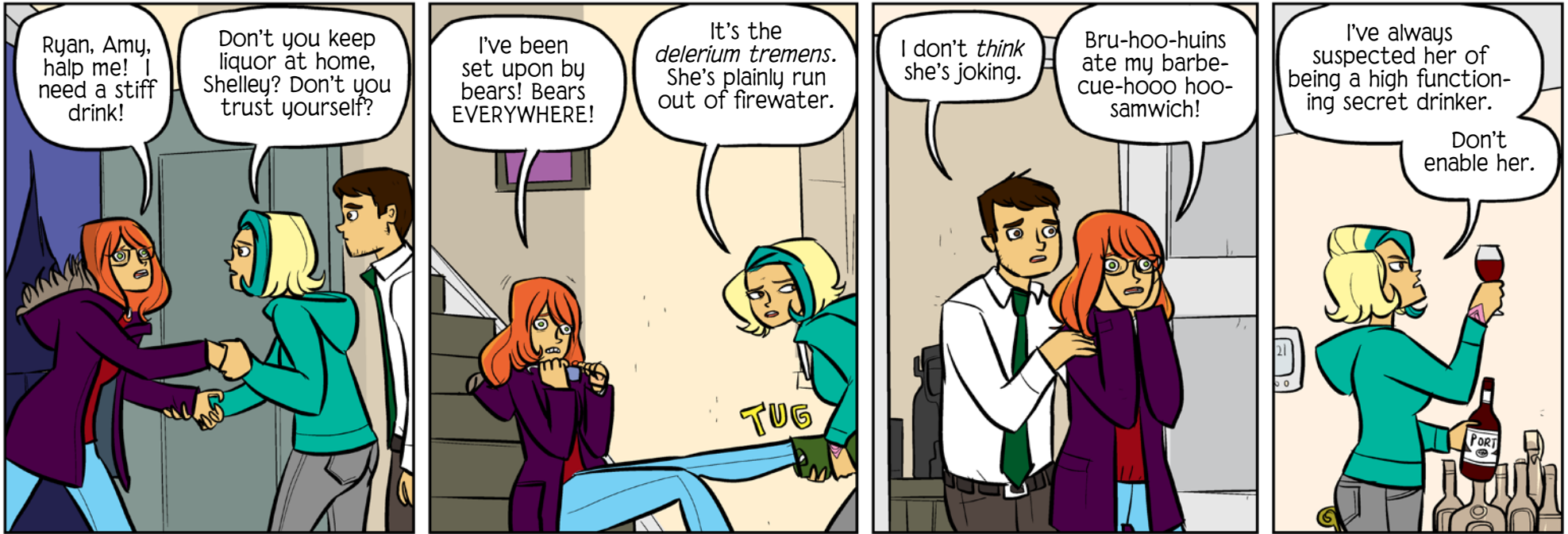
DON'T SCRATCH THE PAINTWORK, DON'T SCRATCH THE PAINTWORK!



Wait, cars can move, you blithering idiot.

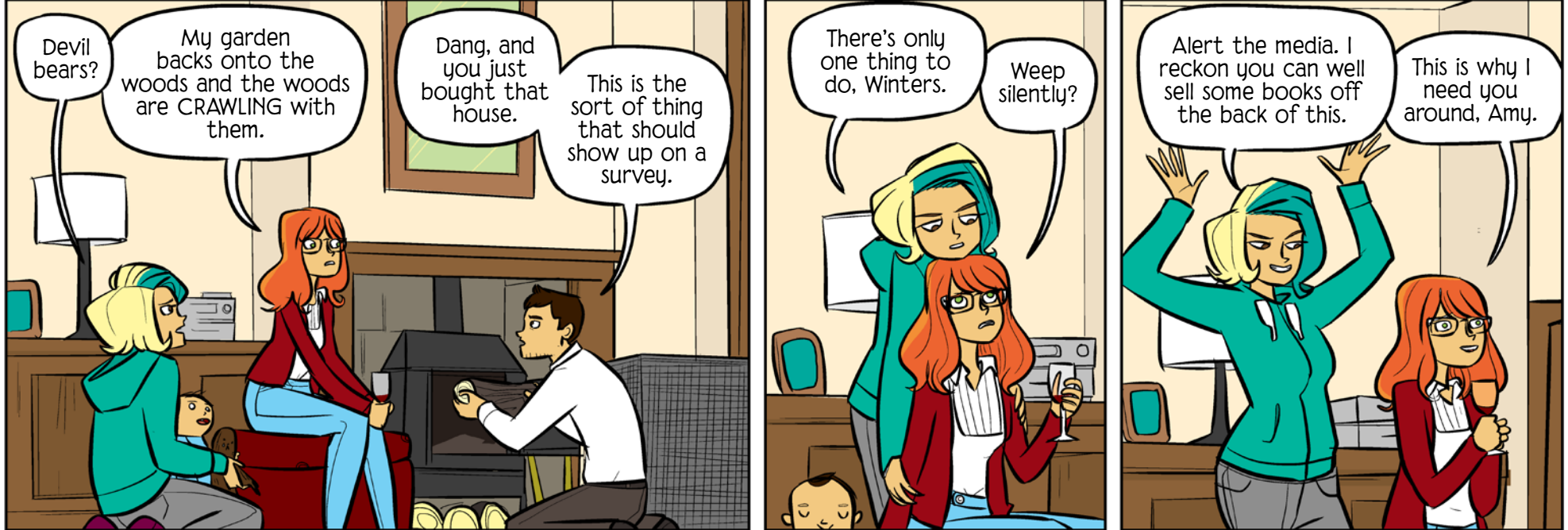
That's what the WHEELS are for.

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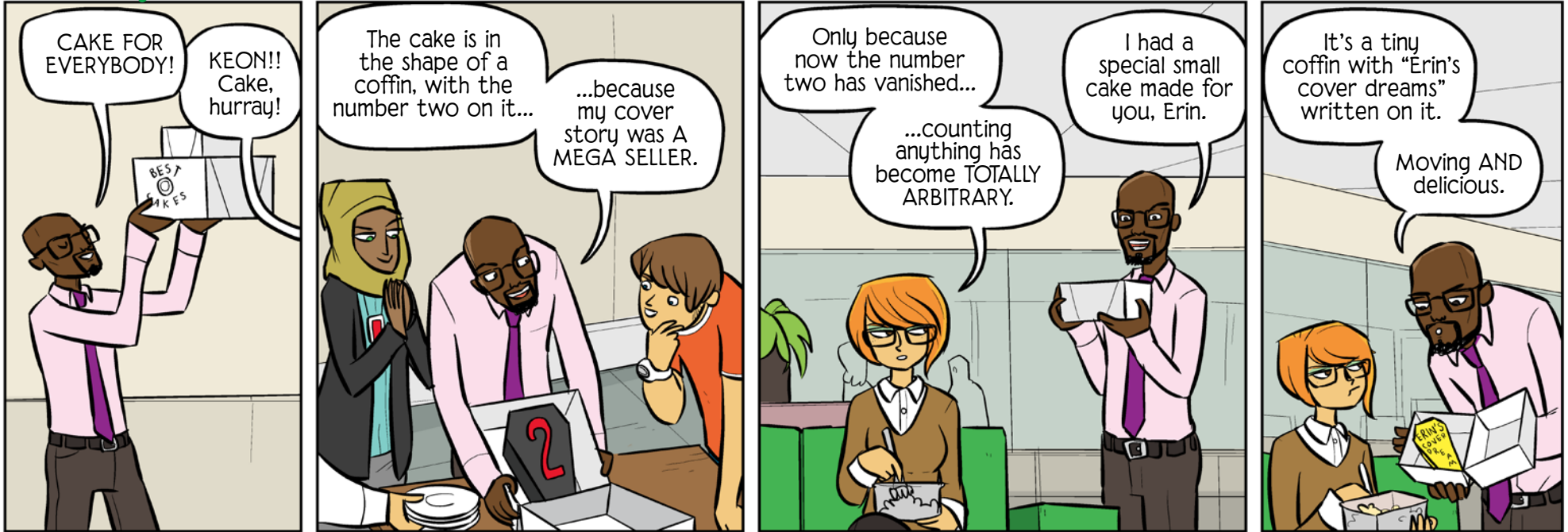
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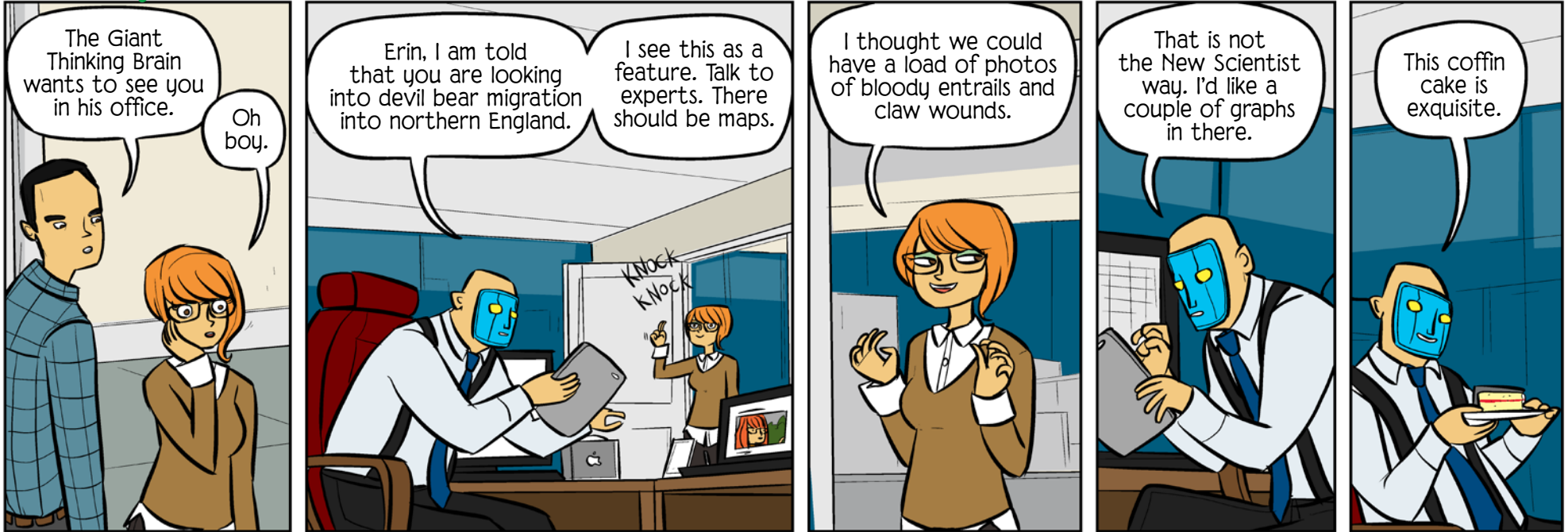
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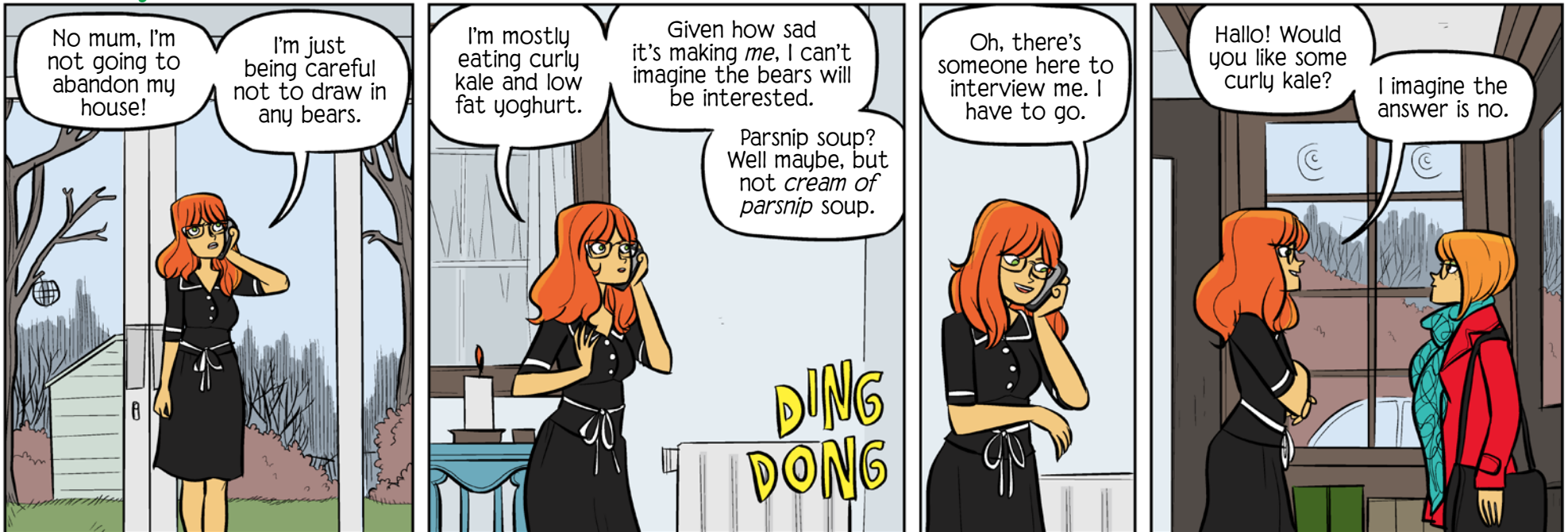
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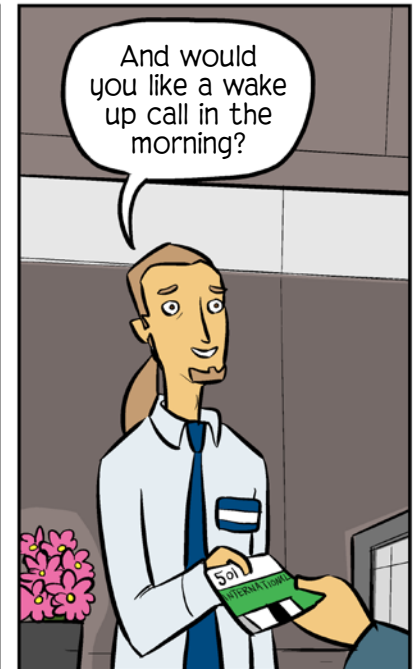
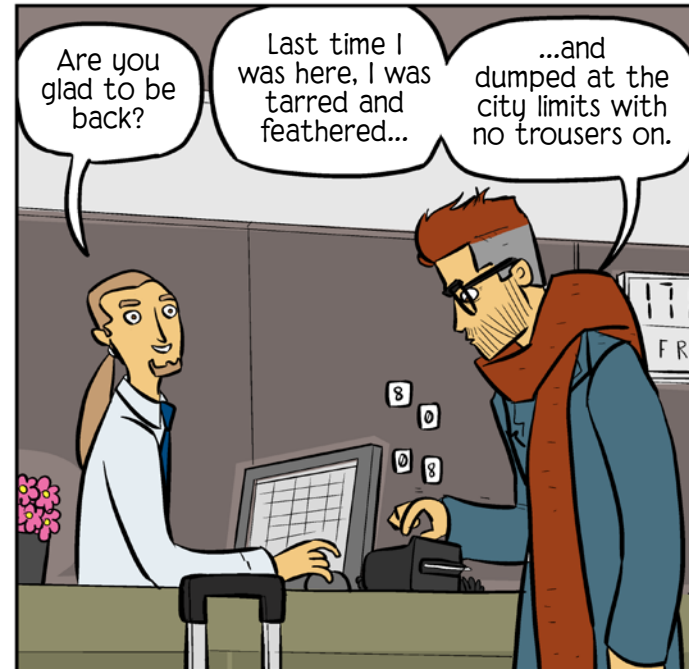
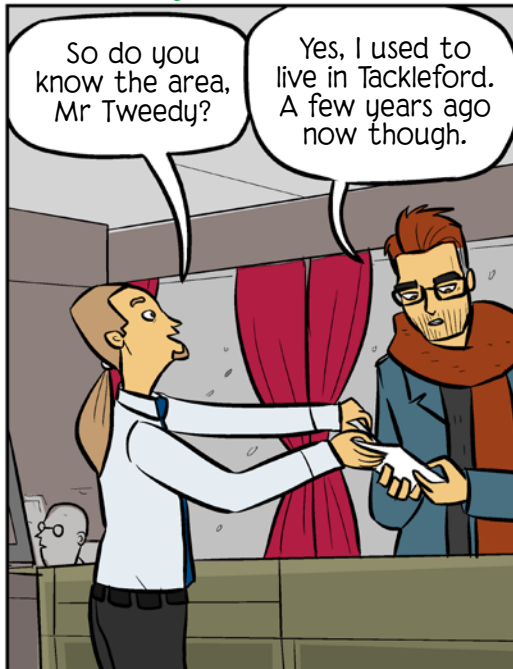
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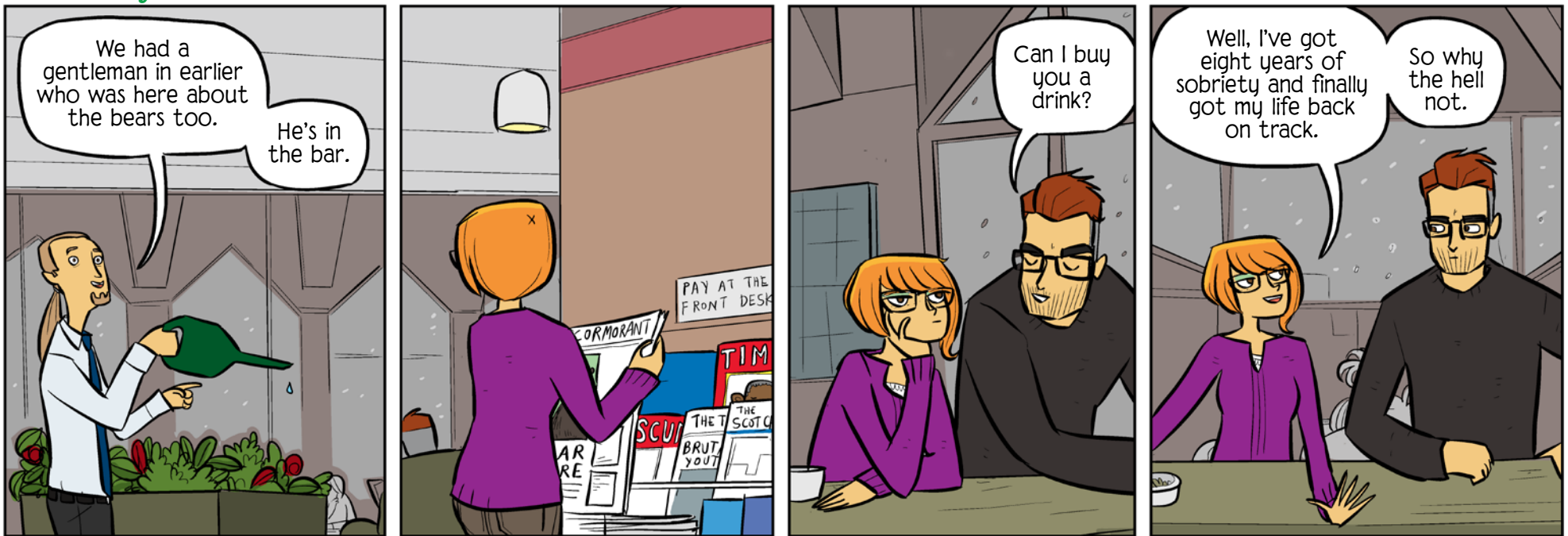
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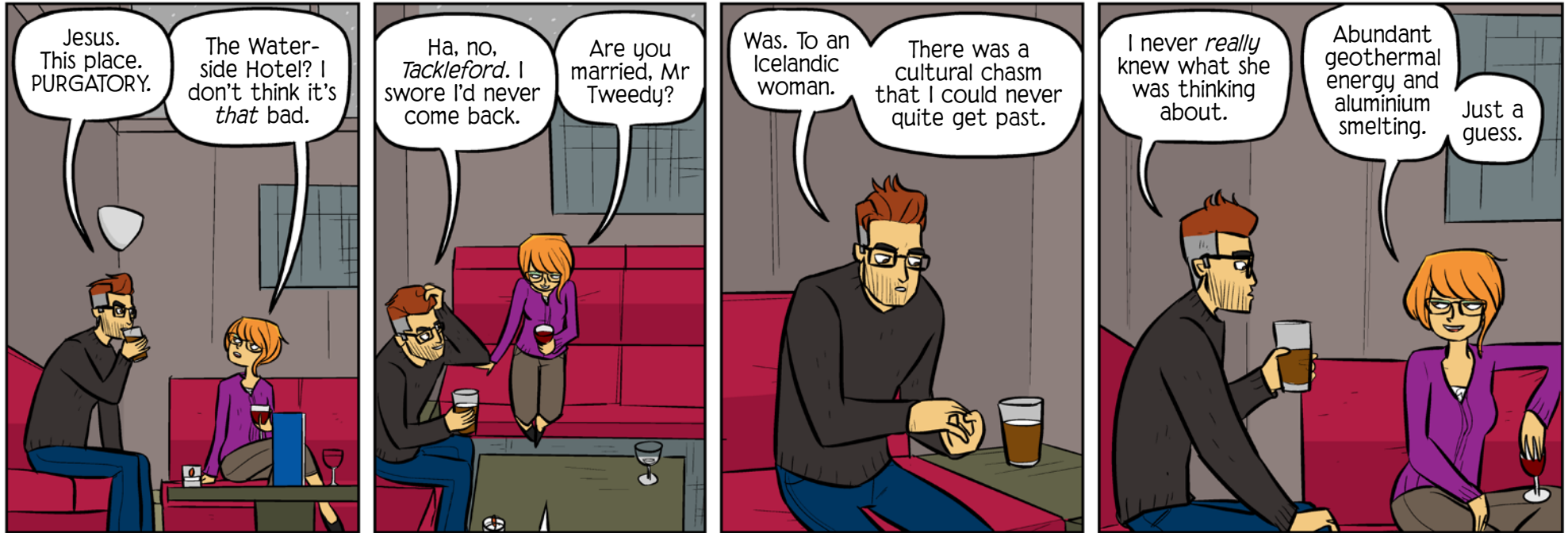
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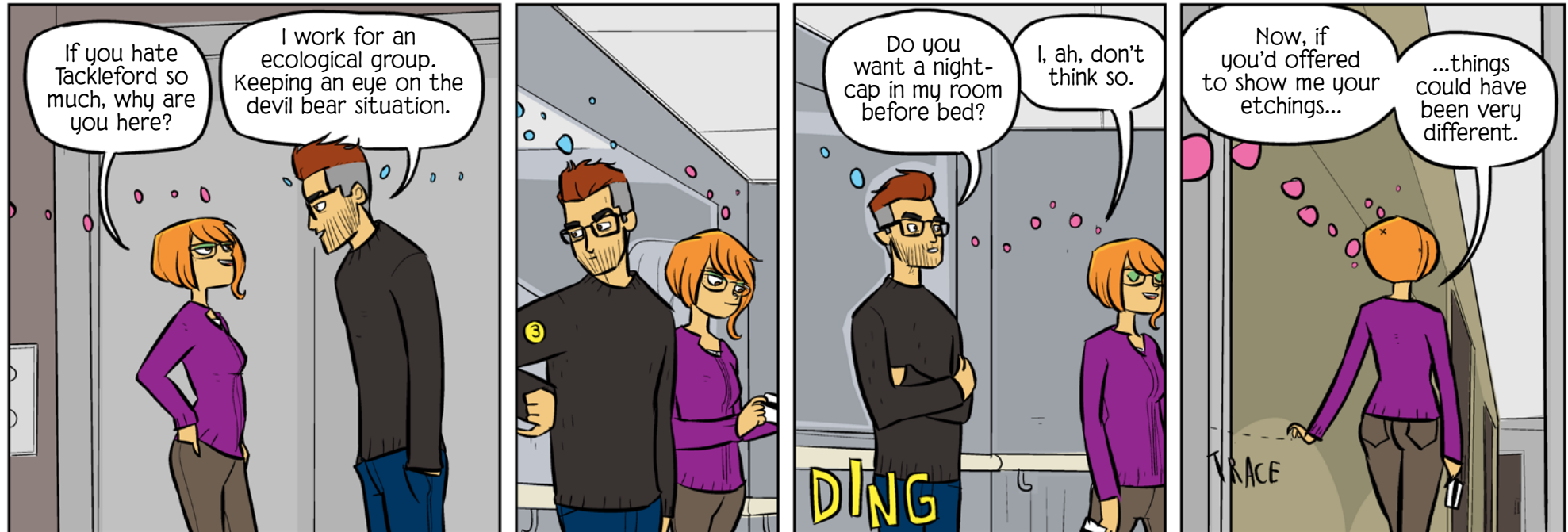
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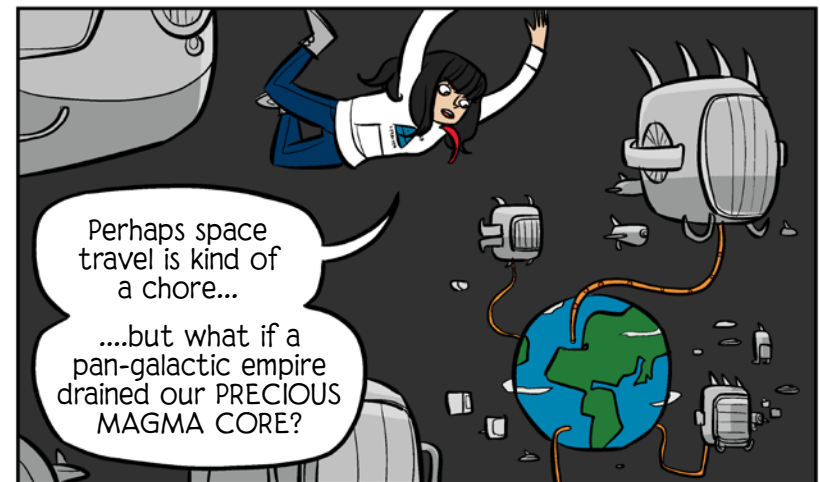
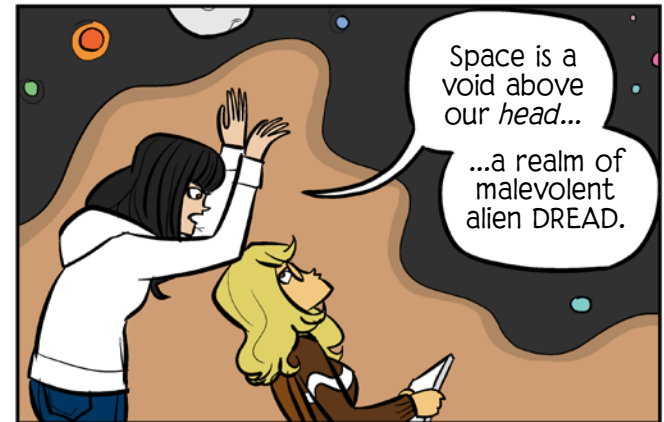
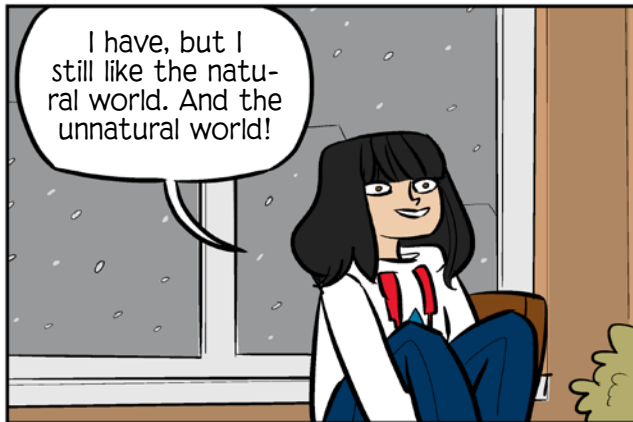
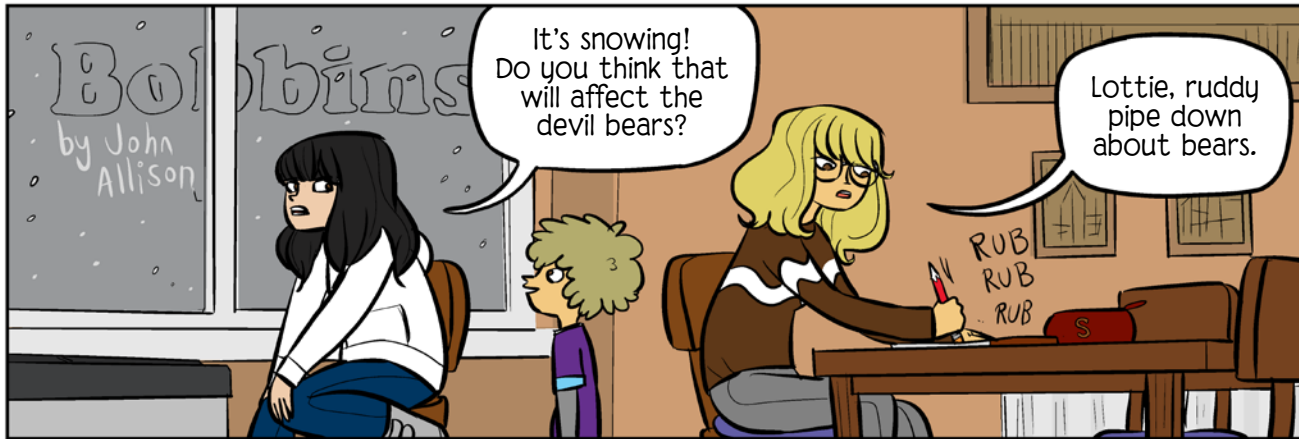


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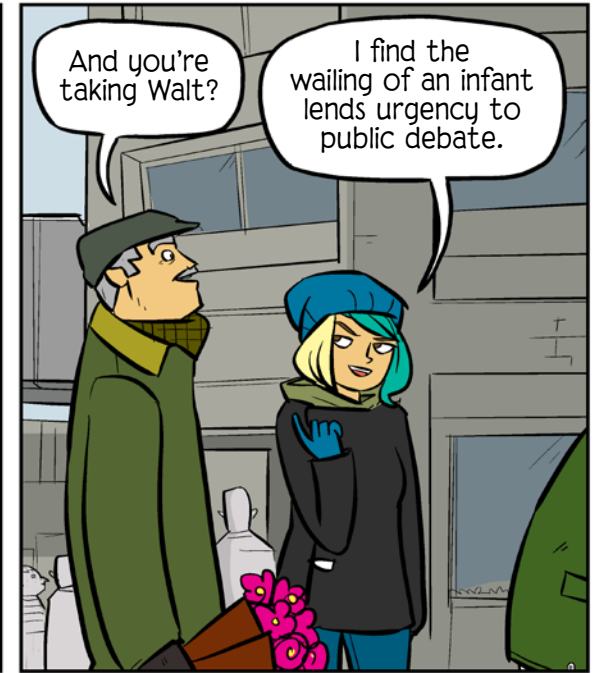
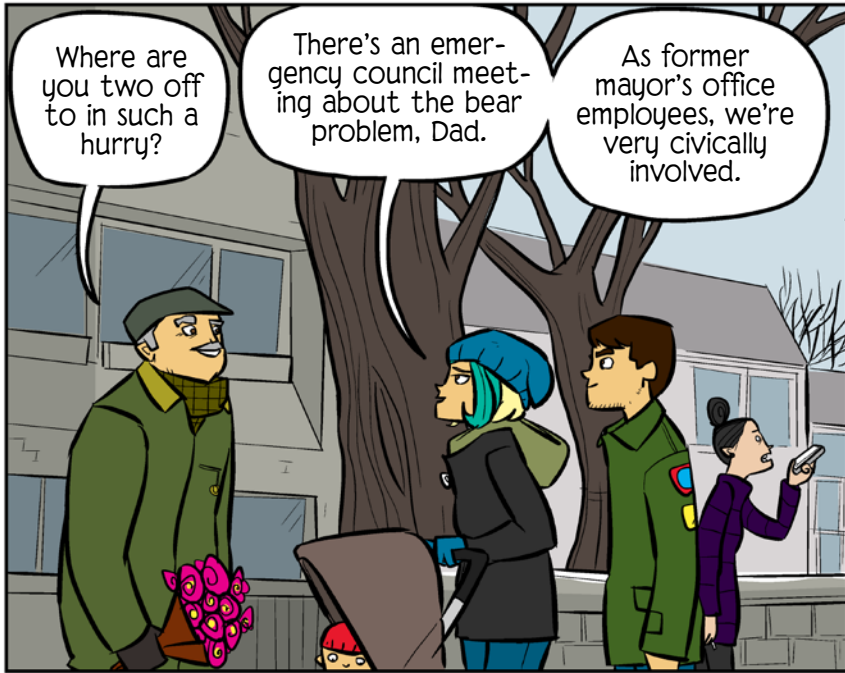
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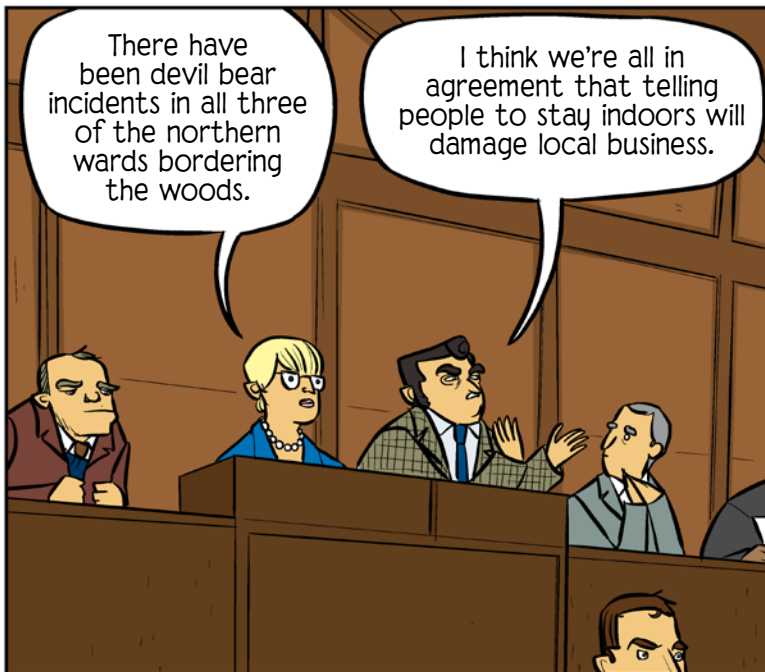


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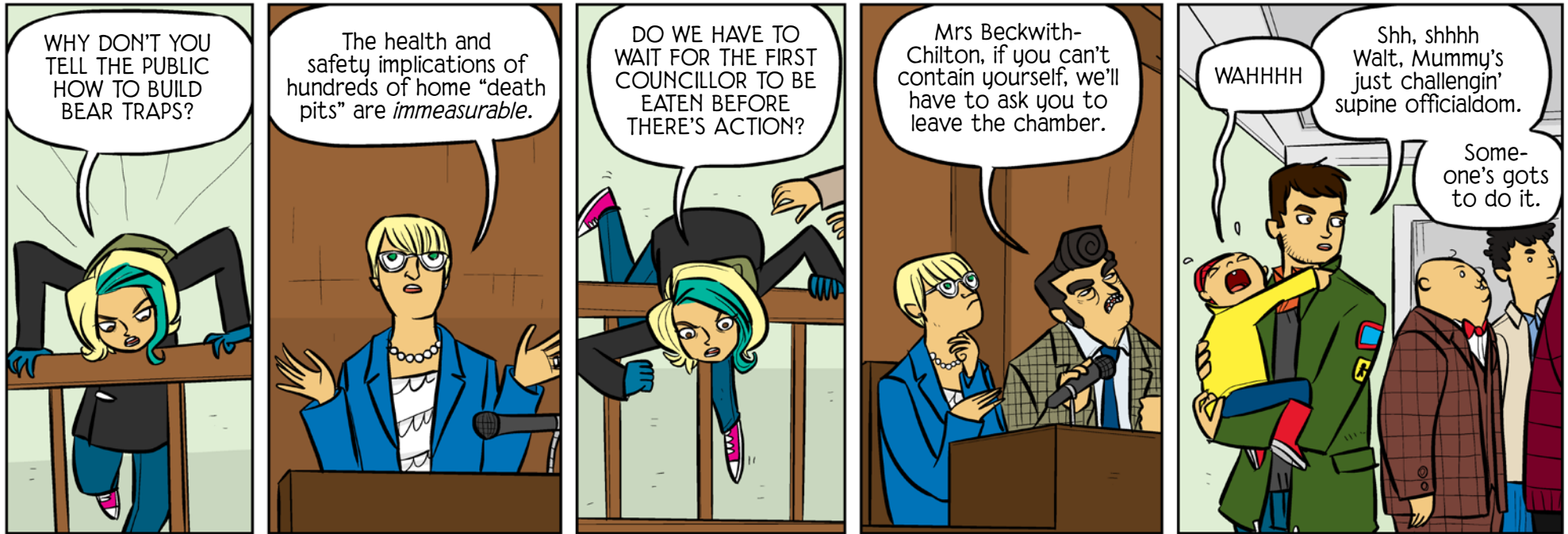
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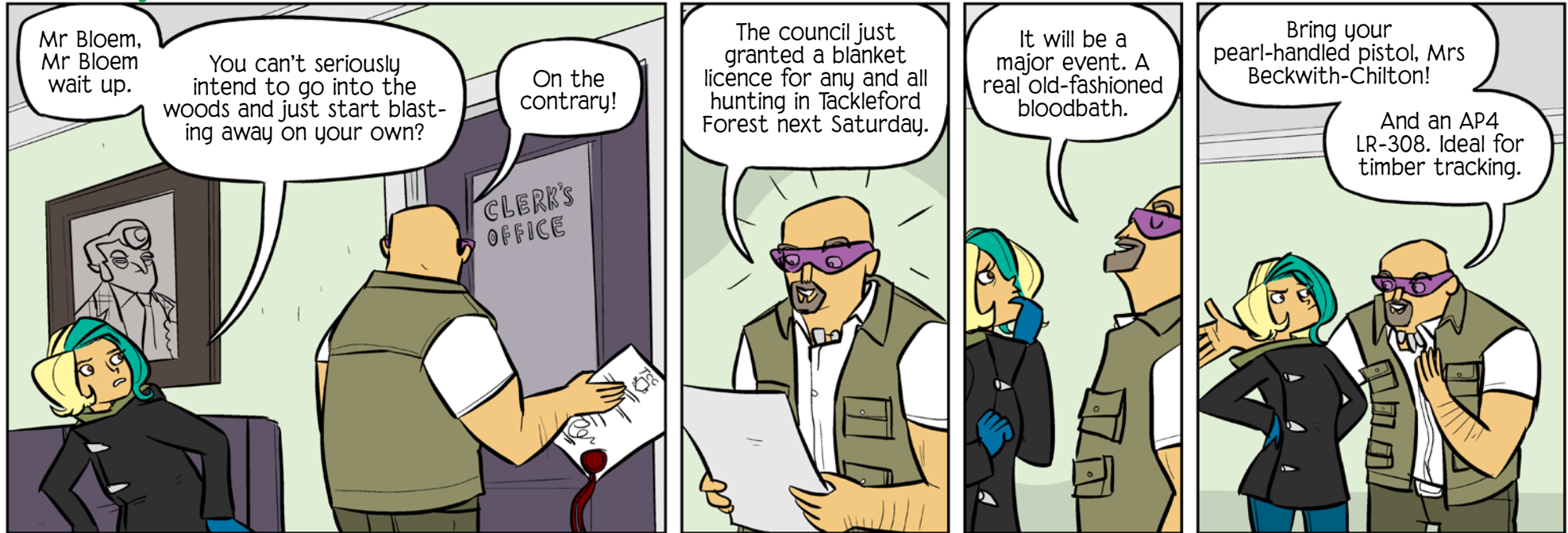
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Hunters, you say? Let them come, Shelley.

This is my home now. I'm going nowhere.



But Tim, they're going to be going shooty-shooty gun gun all over the woods!



Is that the official term for it?

Don't laugh at me! I already got chased by bears once coming to see you!



I'd have told you this on the phone but you live "off-grid" i.e. "in the primitive past".

I don't want you to be shot and I don't want you to get bear-eaten!



I'll be fine. Man lived like this for thousands of years.



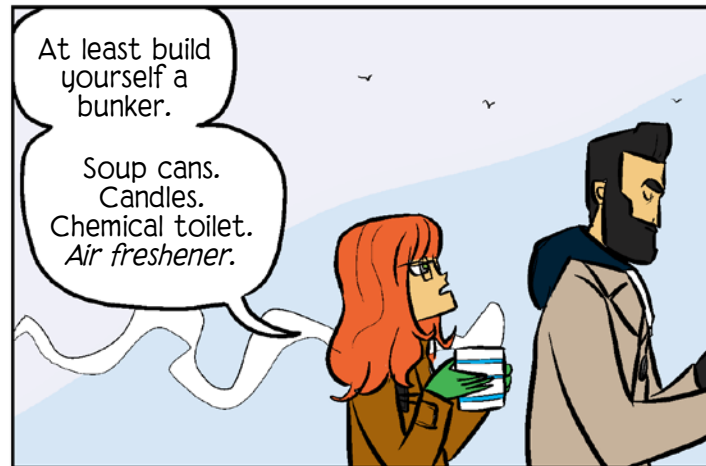
Were there assault rifles thousands of years ago?



Were there Steyr-Puch Pinzgauer?

Steyr-Puches Pinzgauer?

Steyrs-Puch Pinzgauer?



At least build yourself a bunker.

Soup cans.
Candles.
Chemical toilet.
Air freshener.

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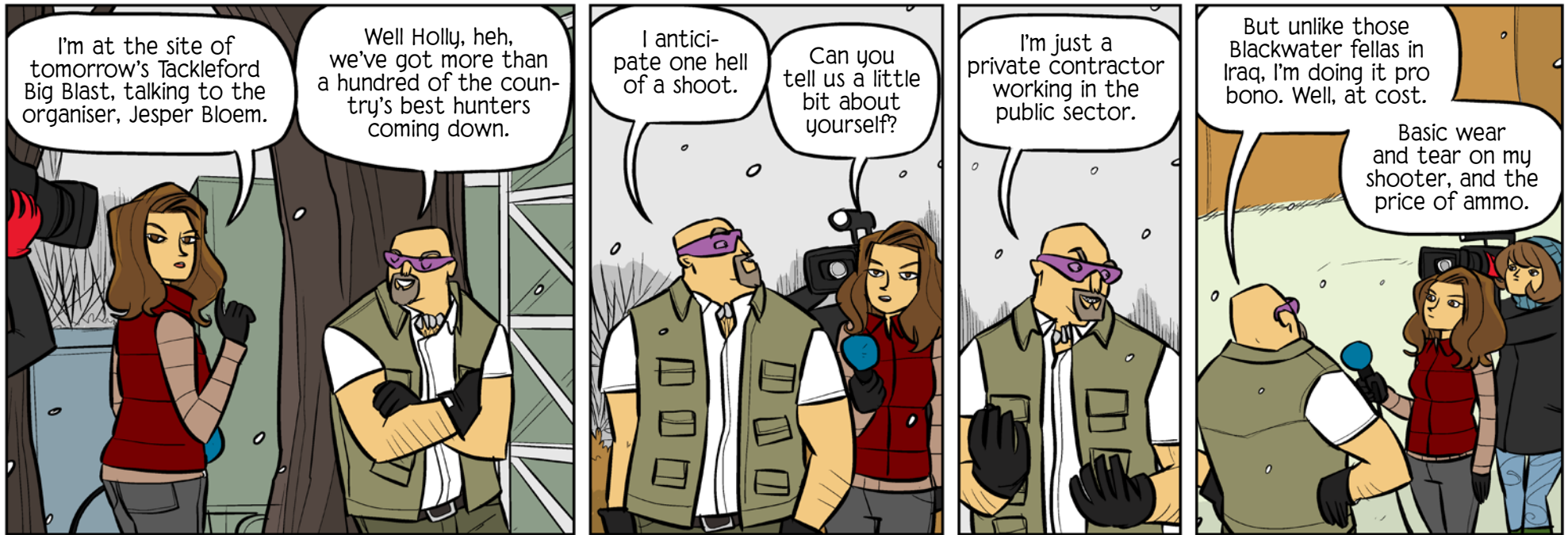
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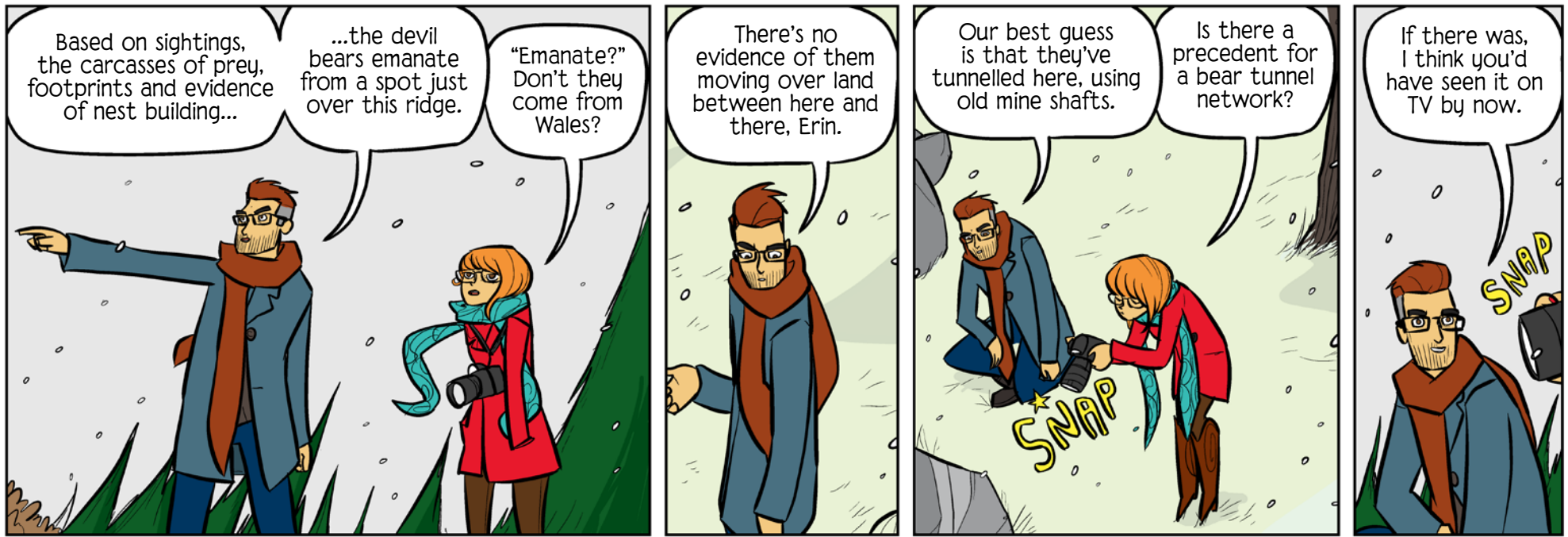
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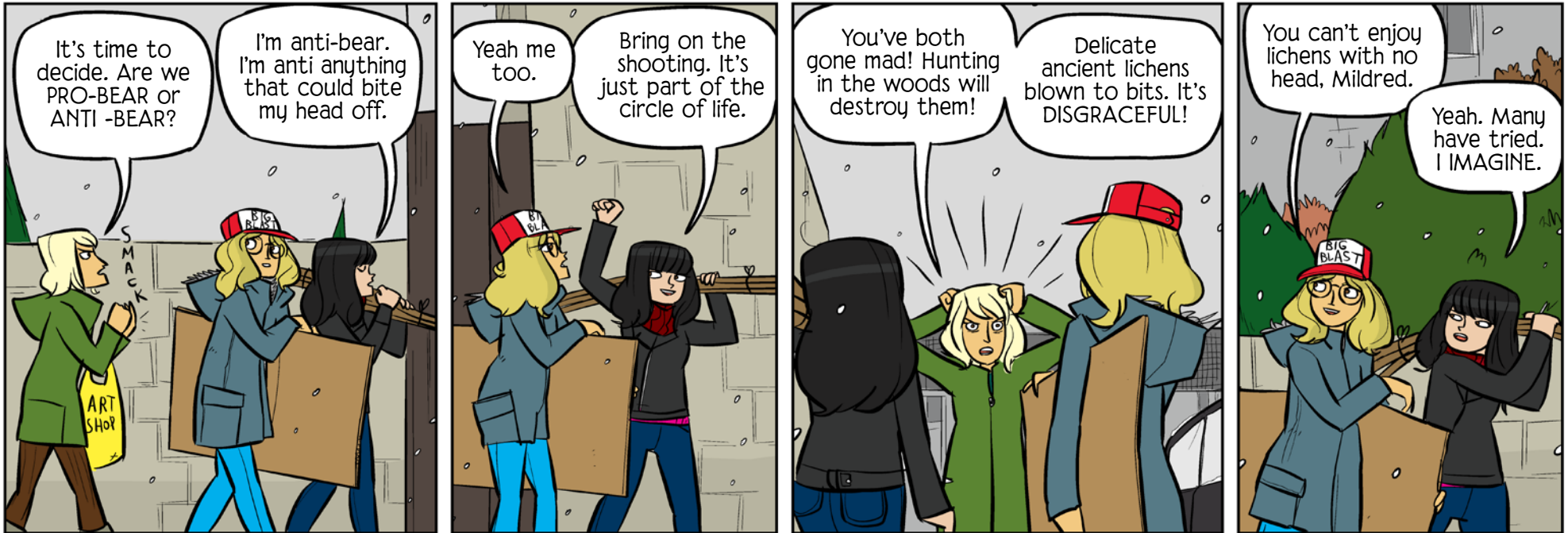
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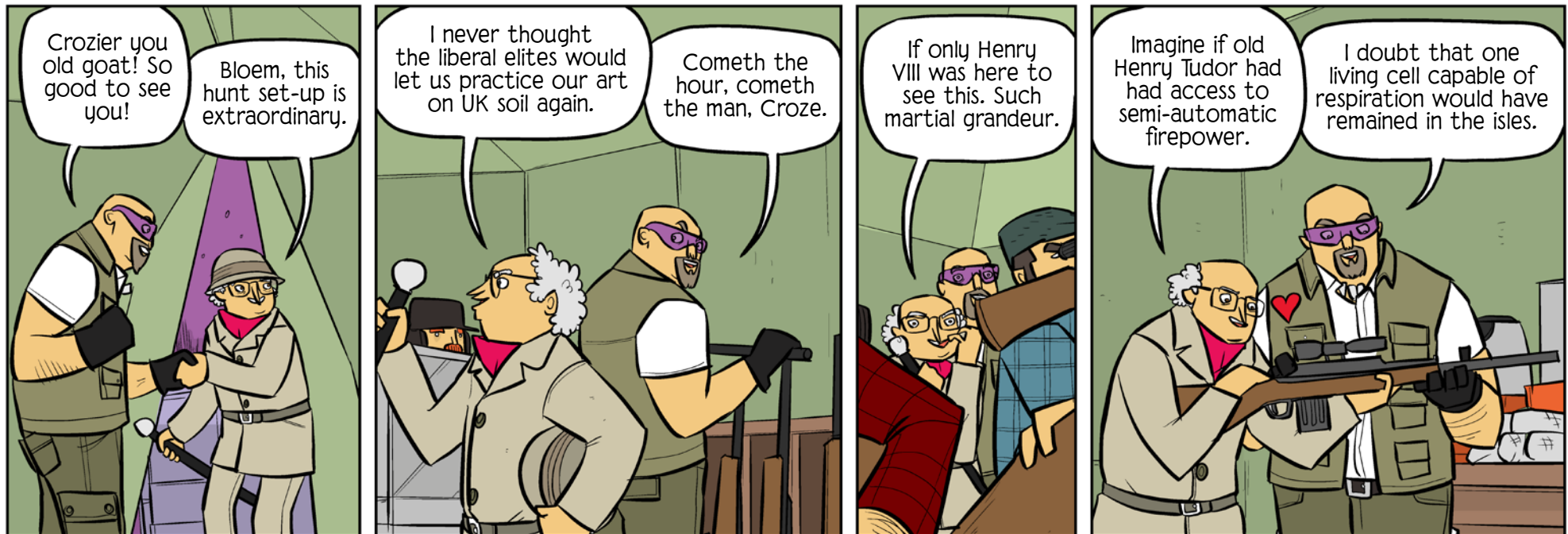
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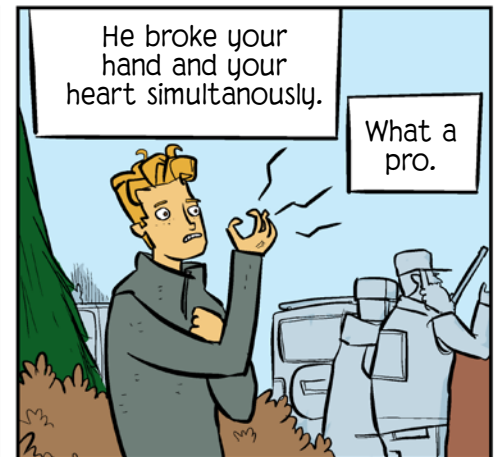
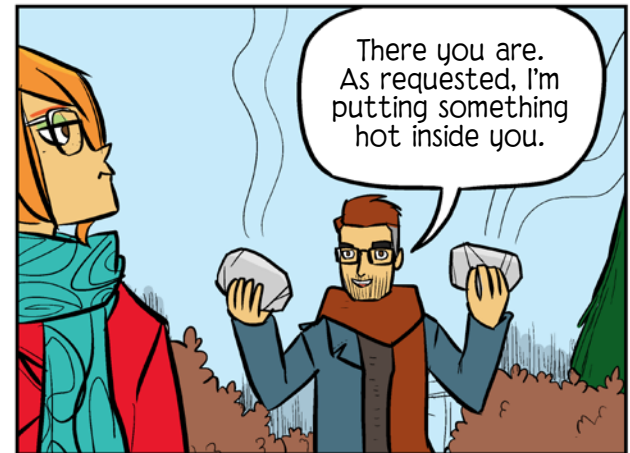
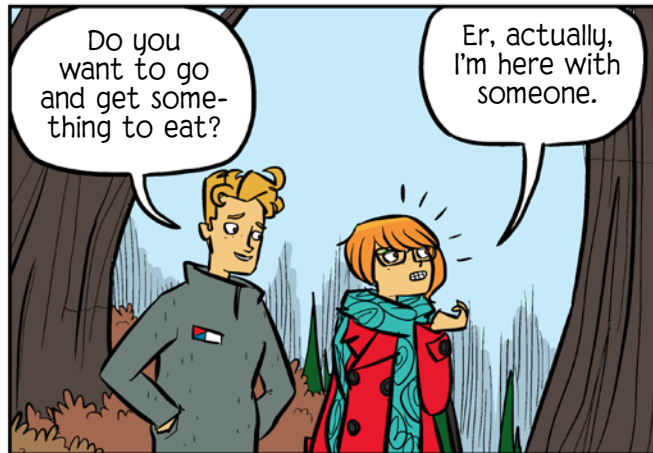
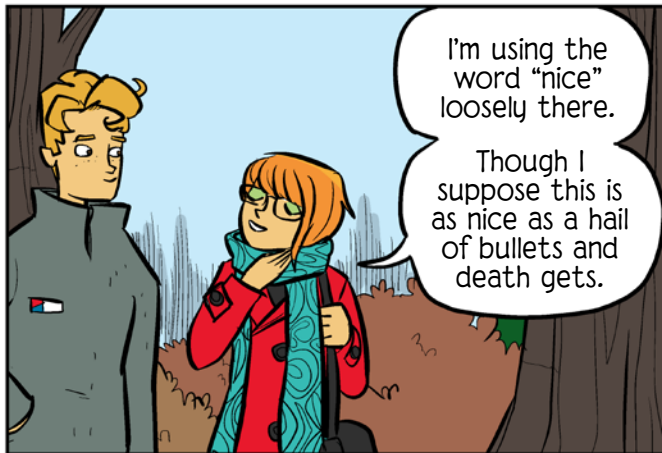
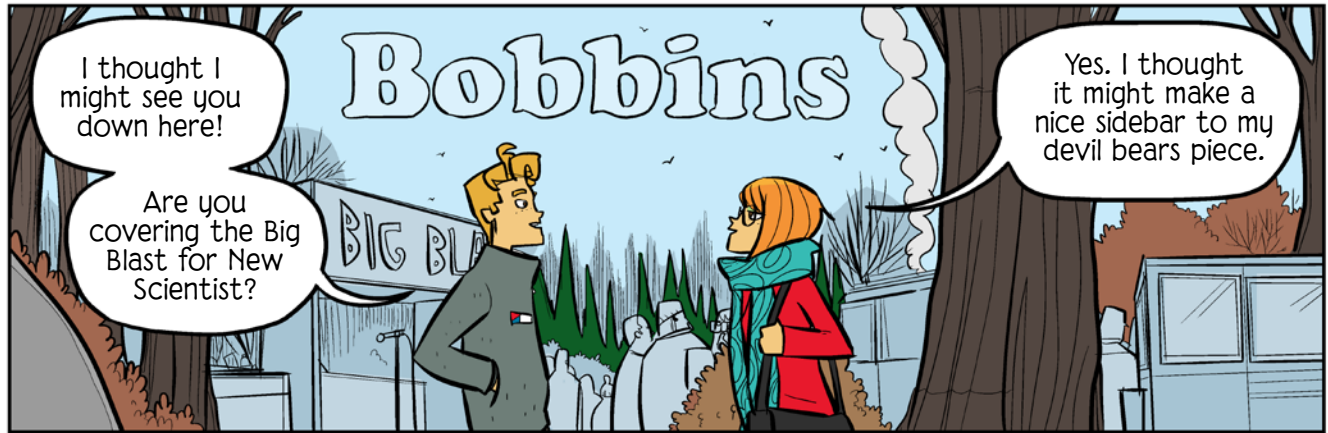
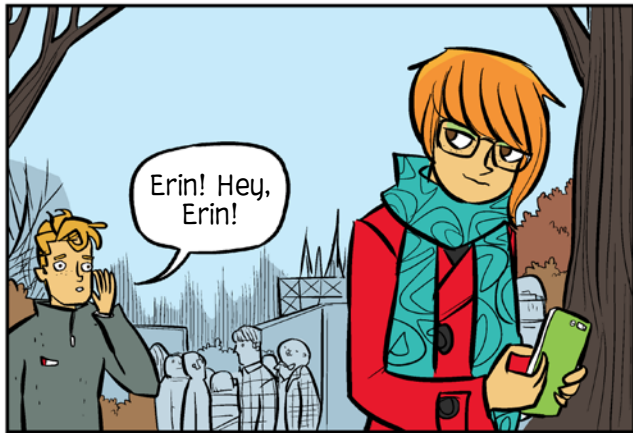


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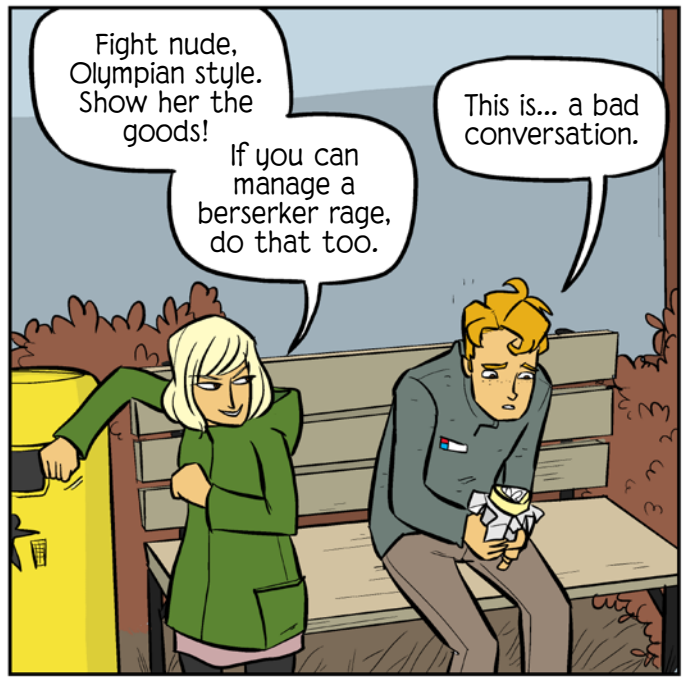


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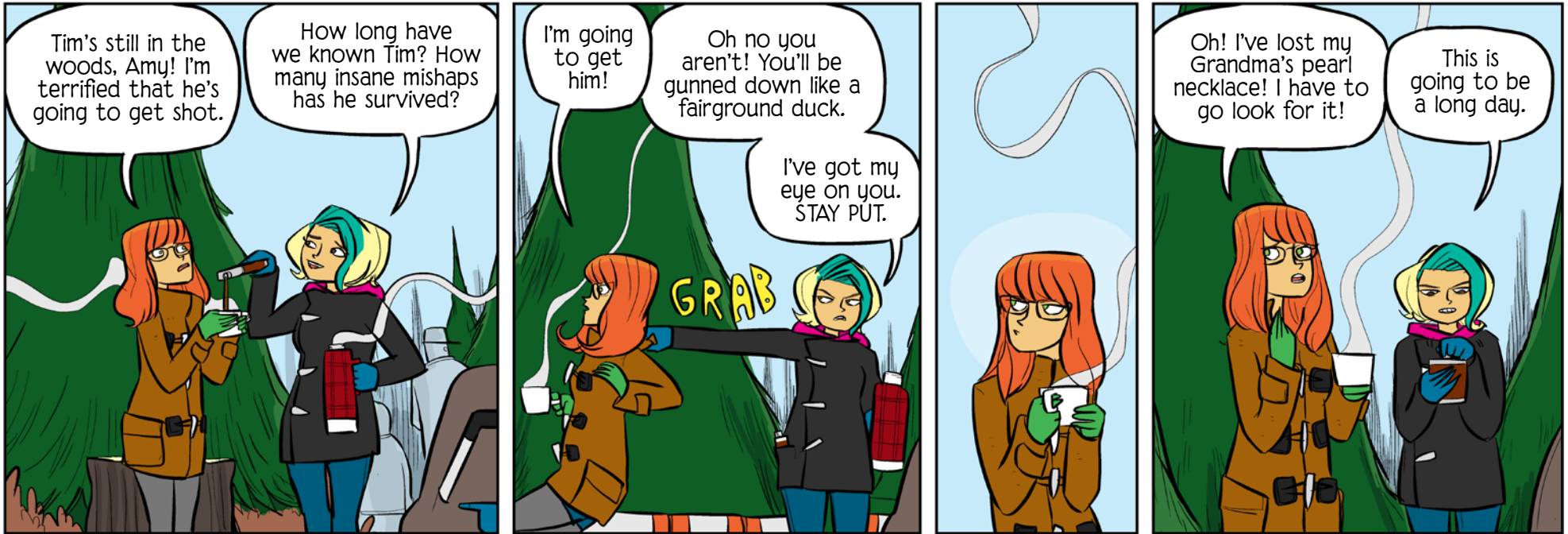
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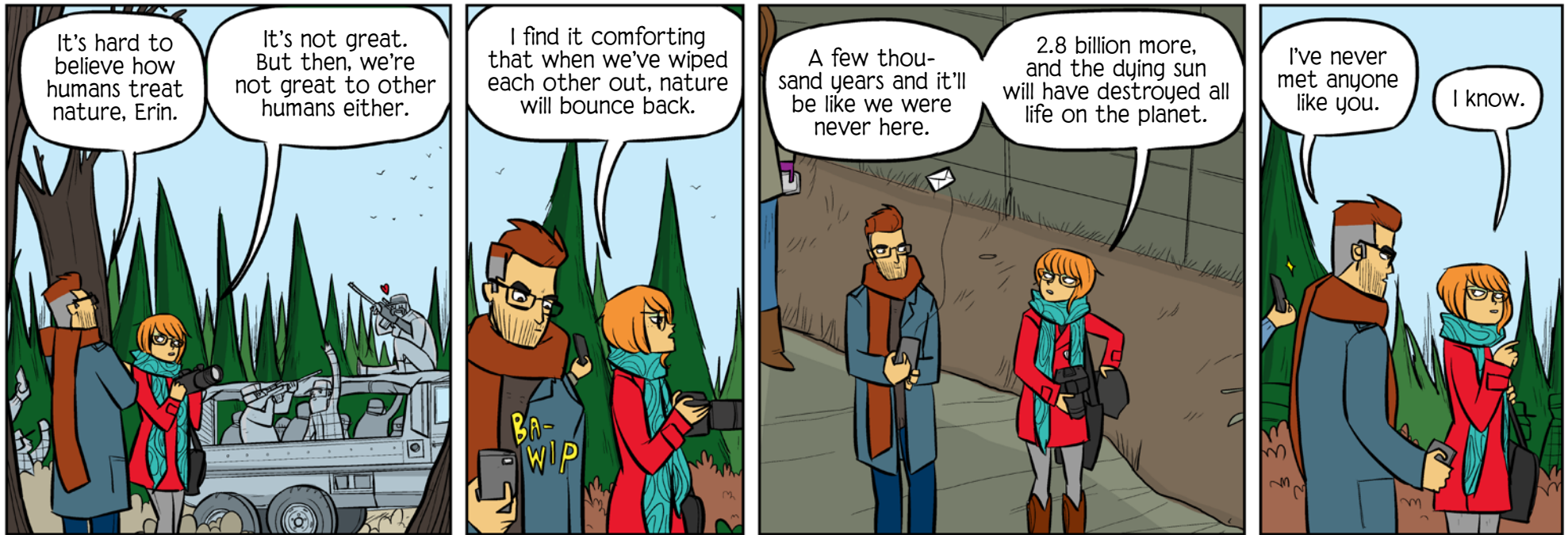
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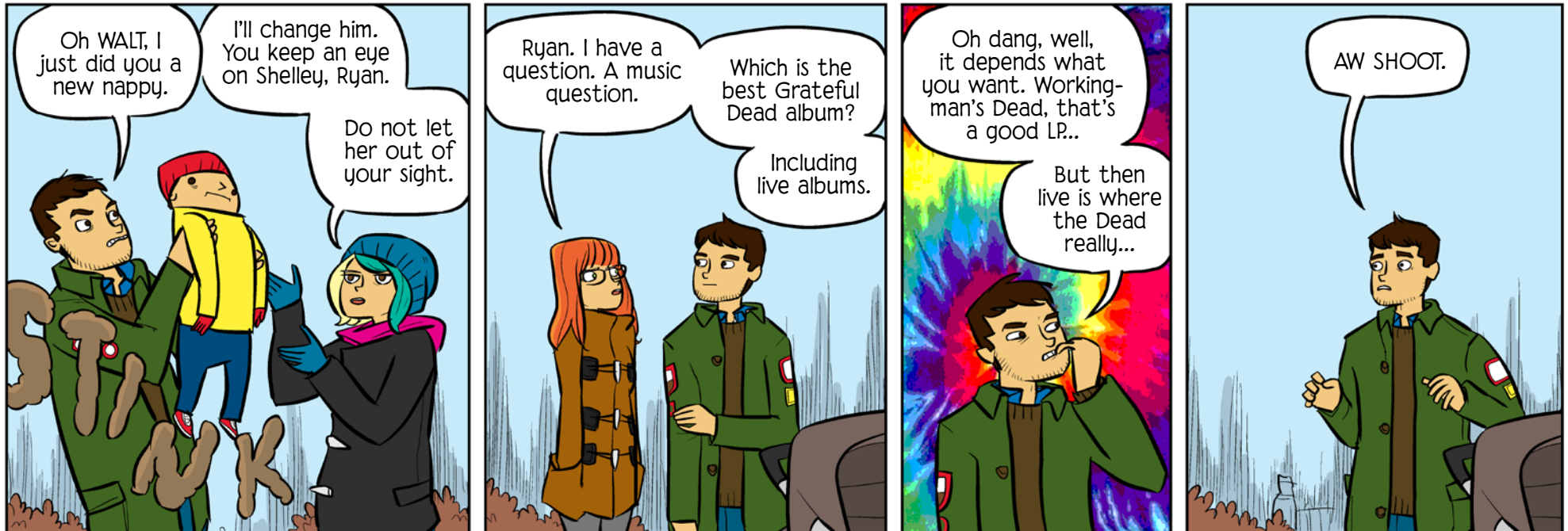
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Look at the mother, suckling her hairless young.

This must be their burrow, Croze!

You pick off momma, I'll have the cub for my collection.

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by John Allison



Easy does it...



Erin, we're just in time.

Rich, we're not getting involved. think of the prime directive!



DEPLOY ECO-FORCE!



Go go go go go go!

BAHAPP BAPPPA!

RUN BEAR RUN!



GRONK



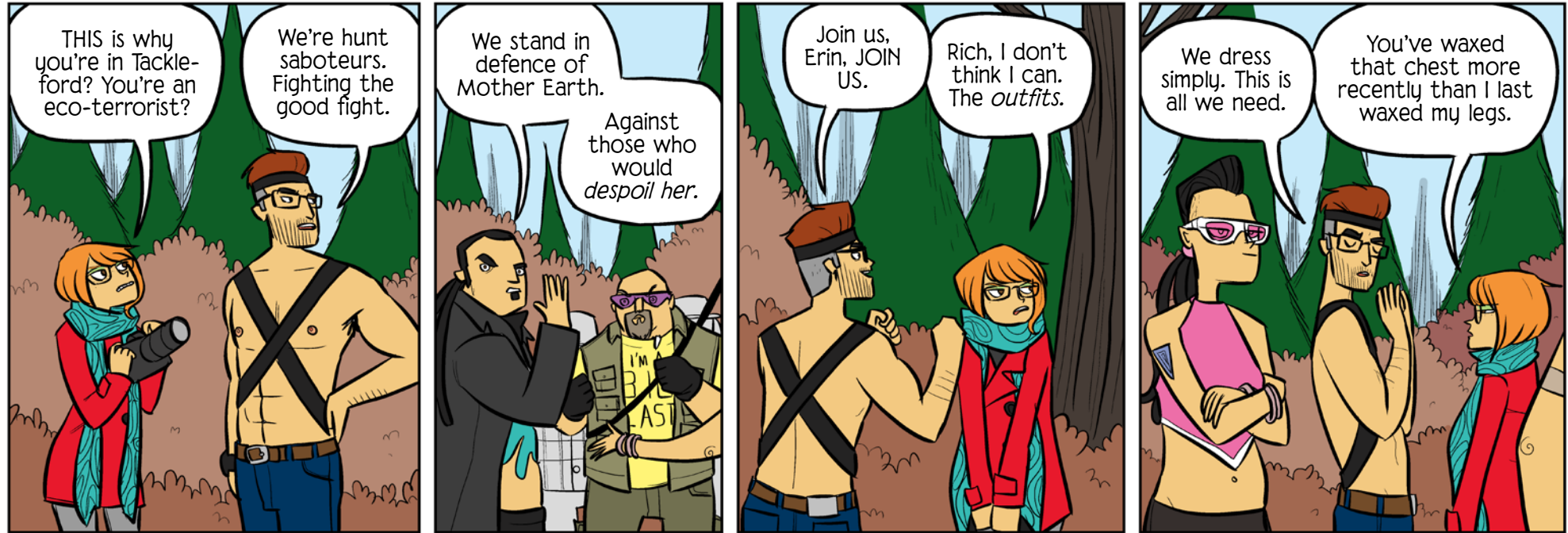
Why are they dressed like... post apocalyptic... burning man attendees?

SNAP SNAP



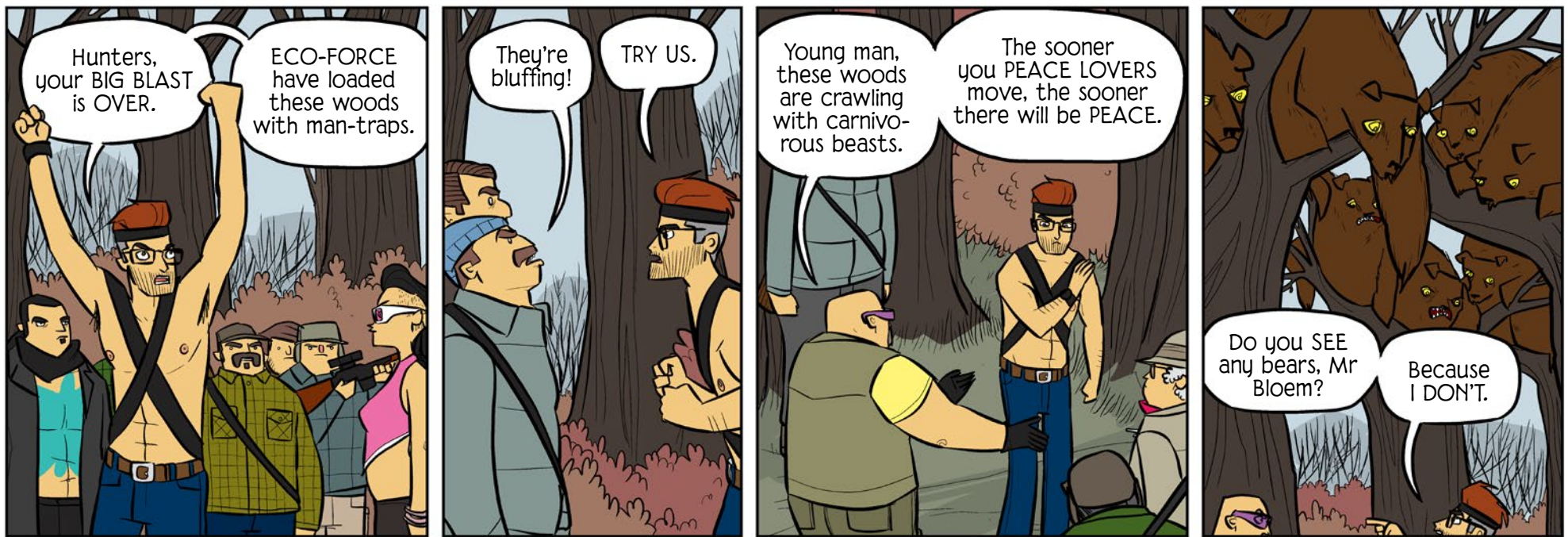
That's just... how we... be.

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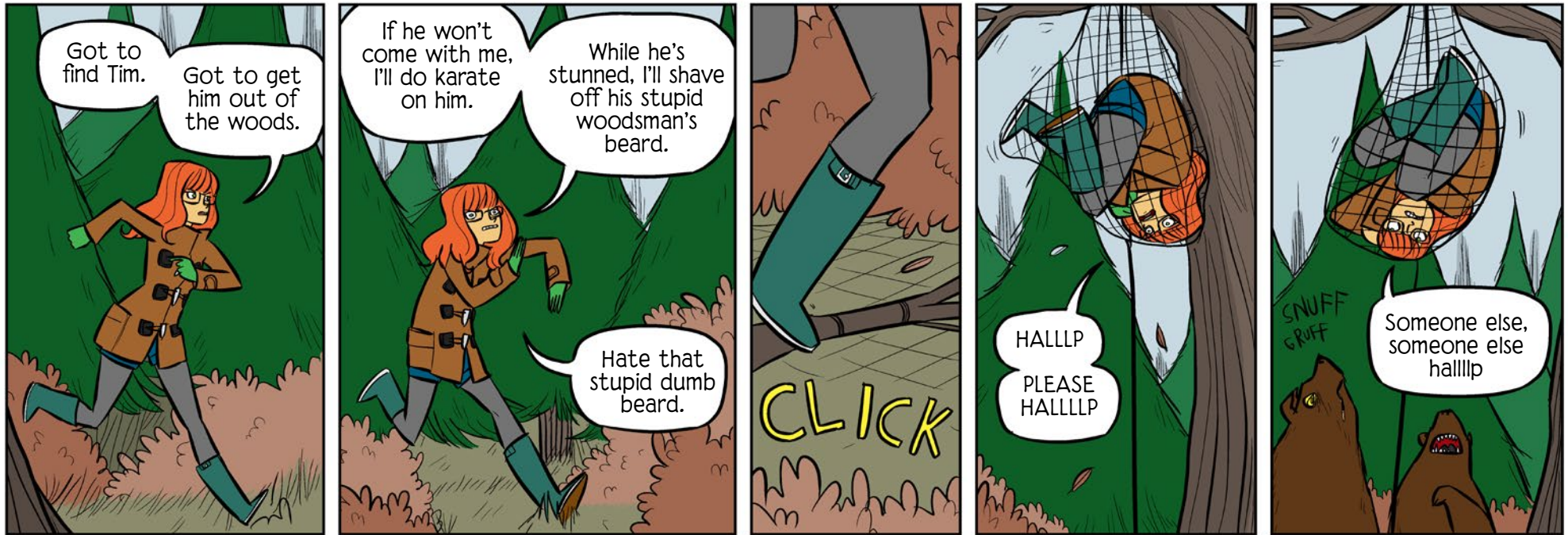
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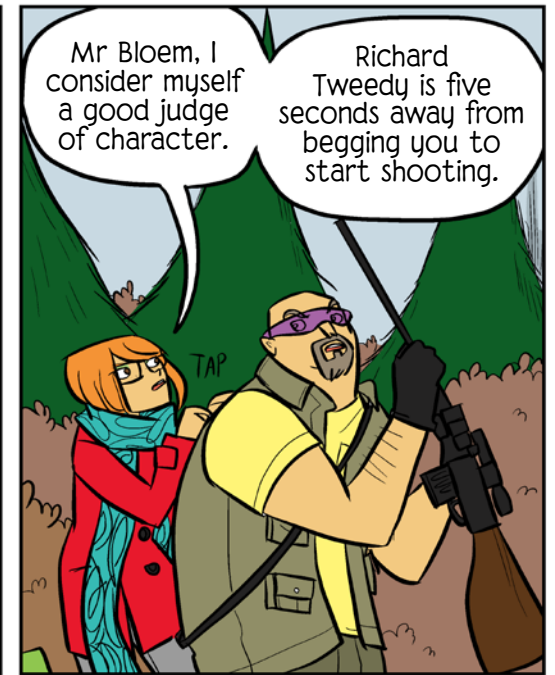
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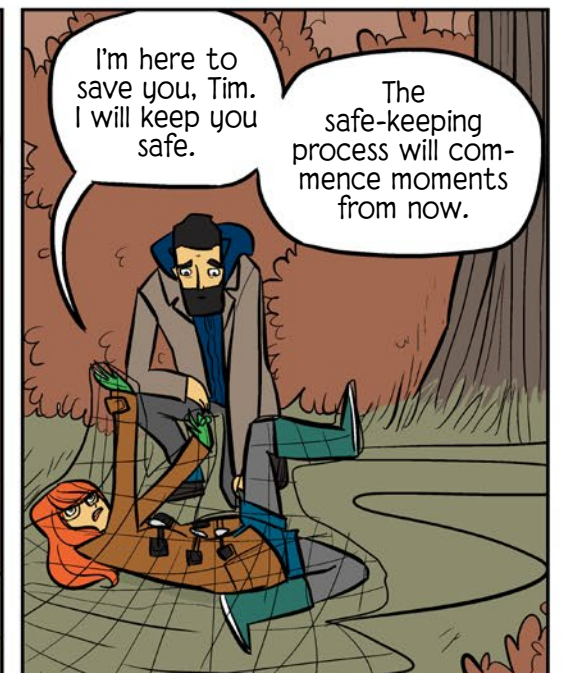
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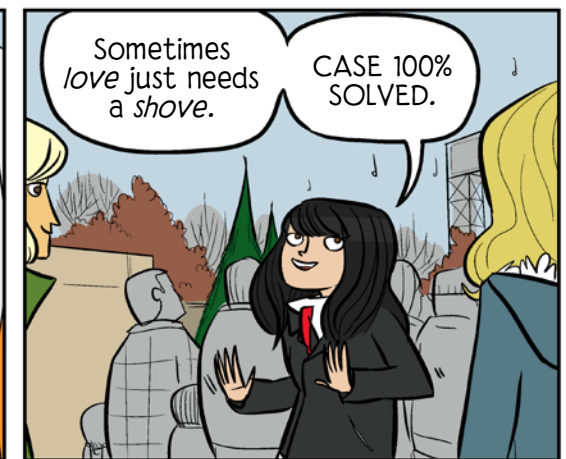
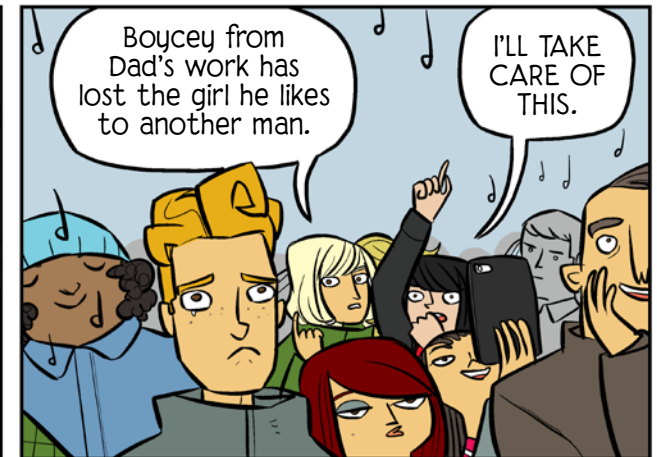
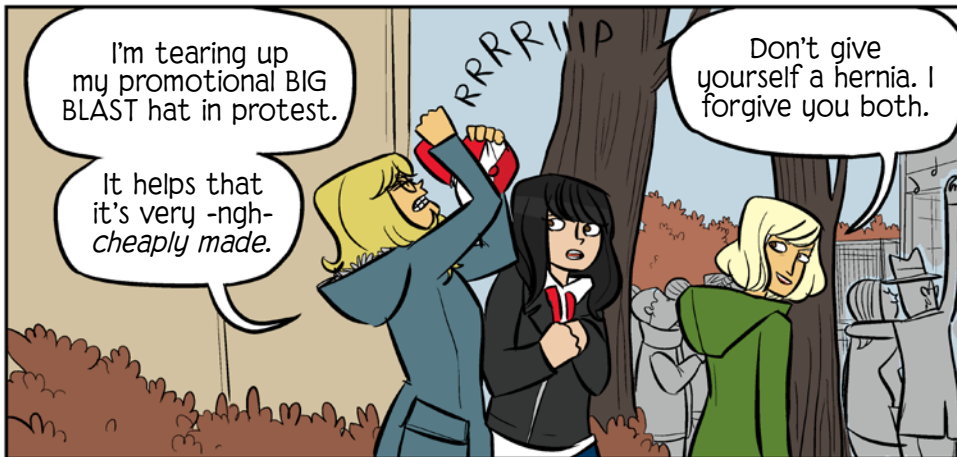


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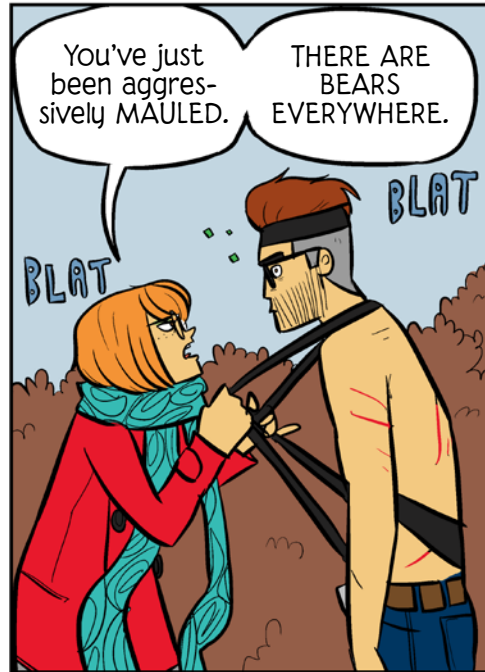
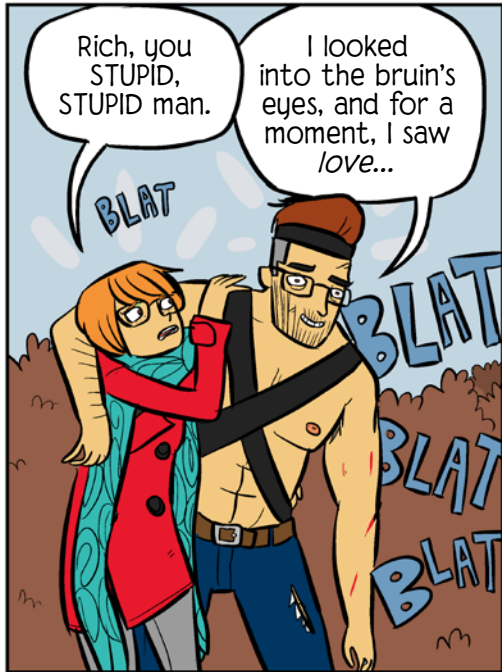


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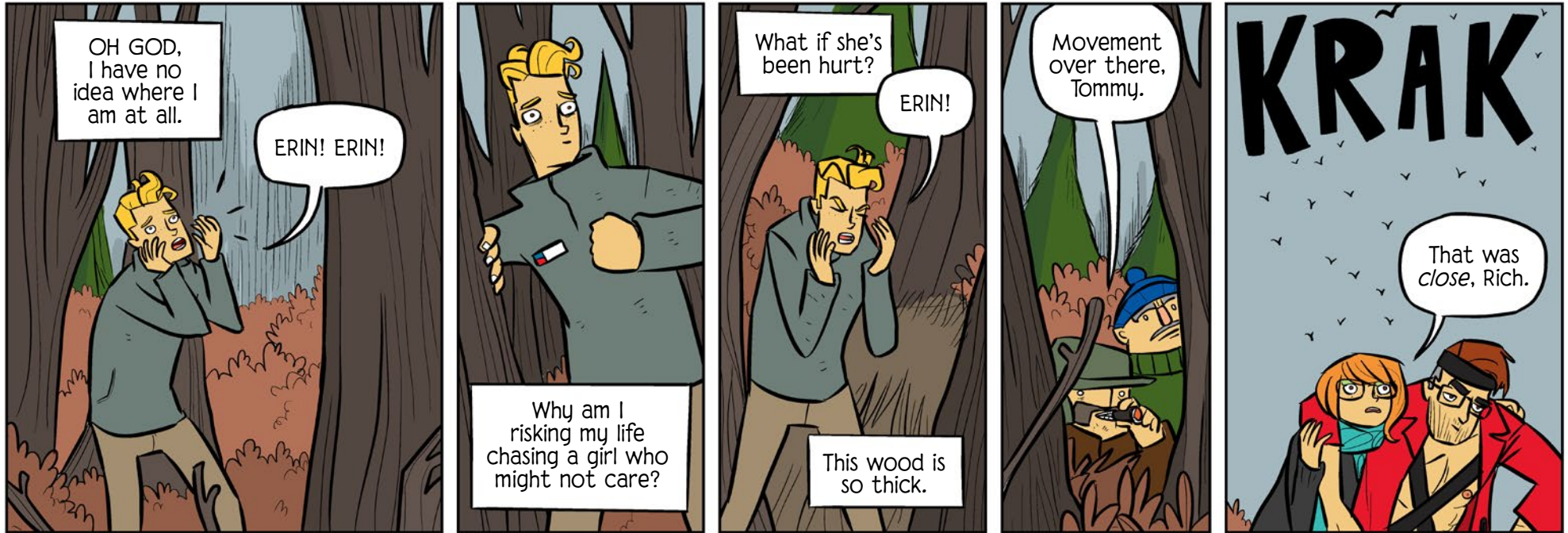
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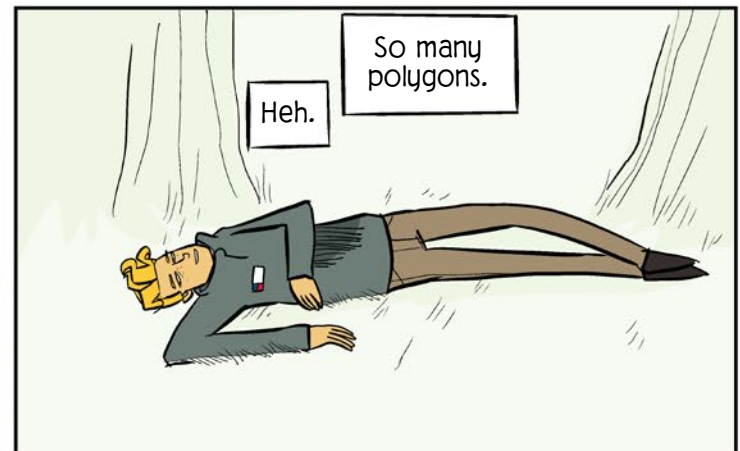
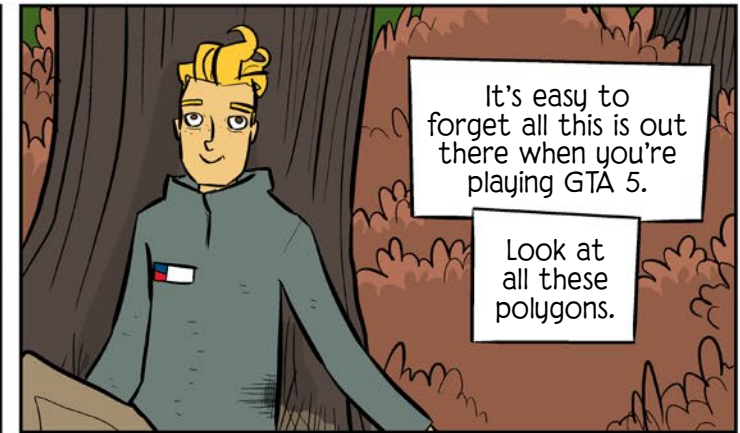


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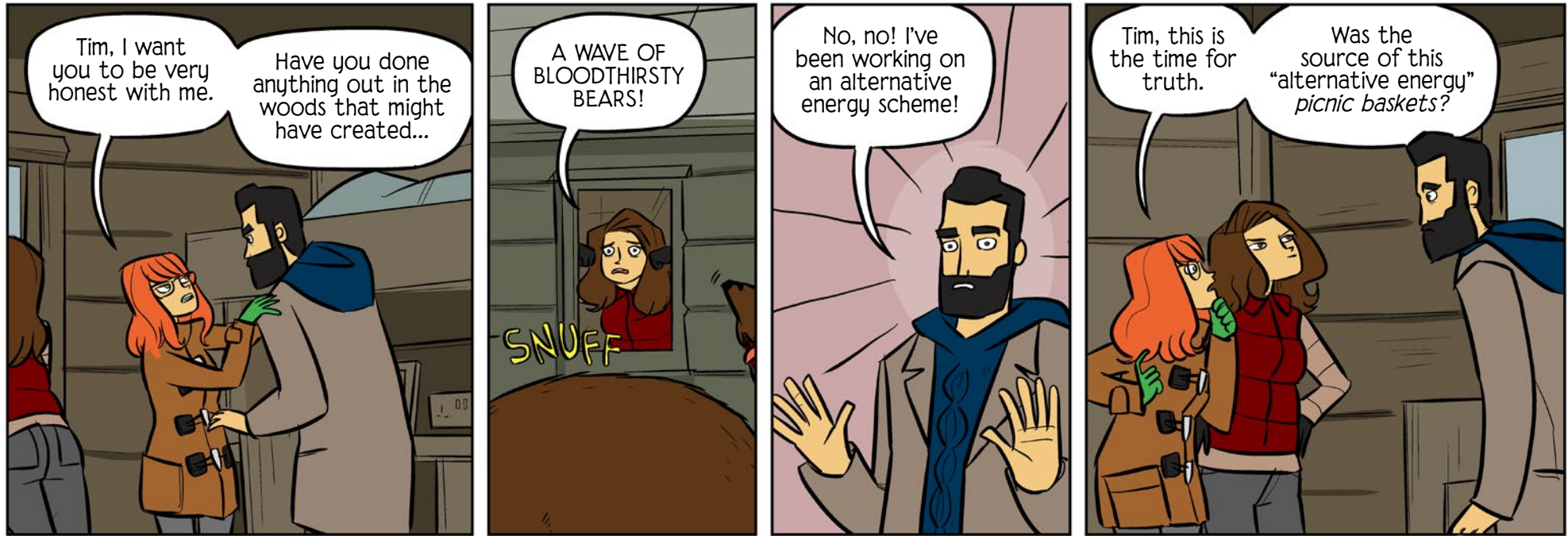
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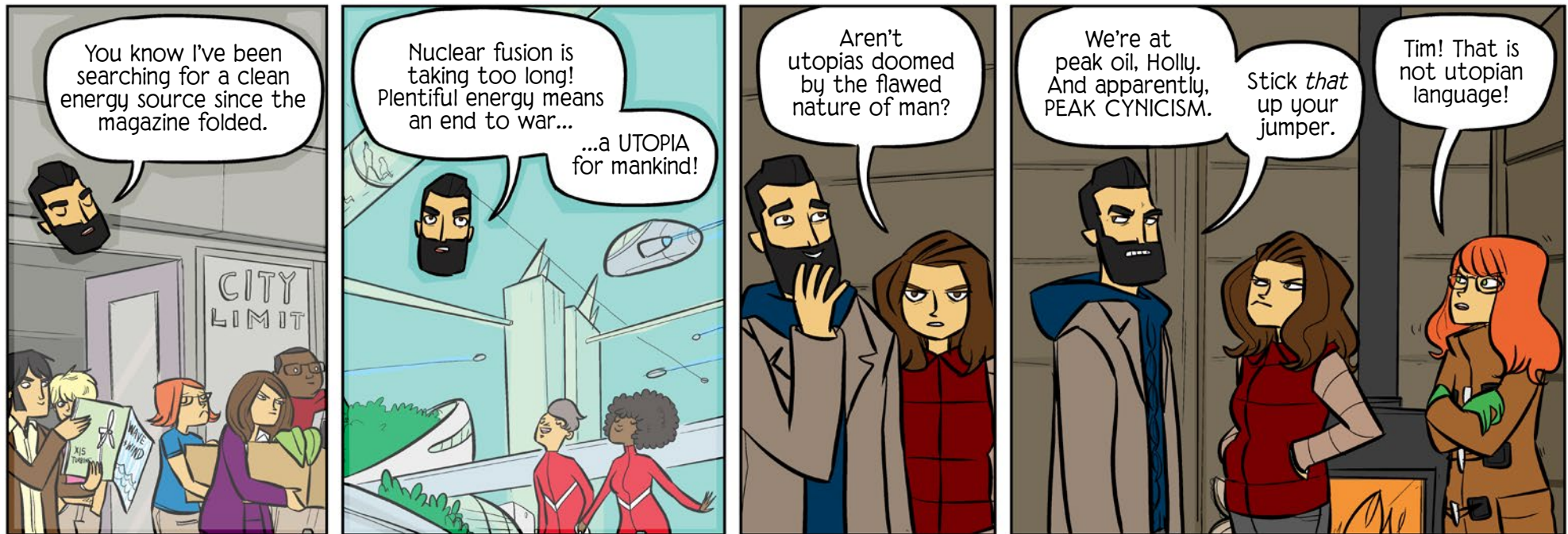


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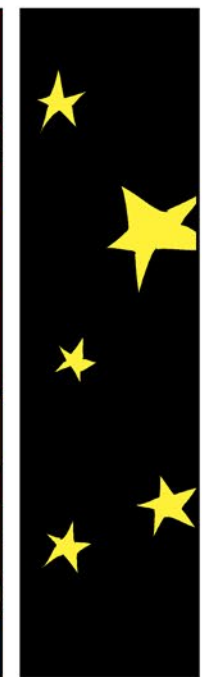
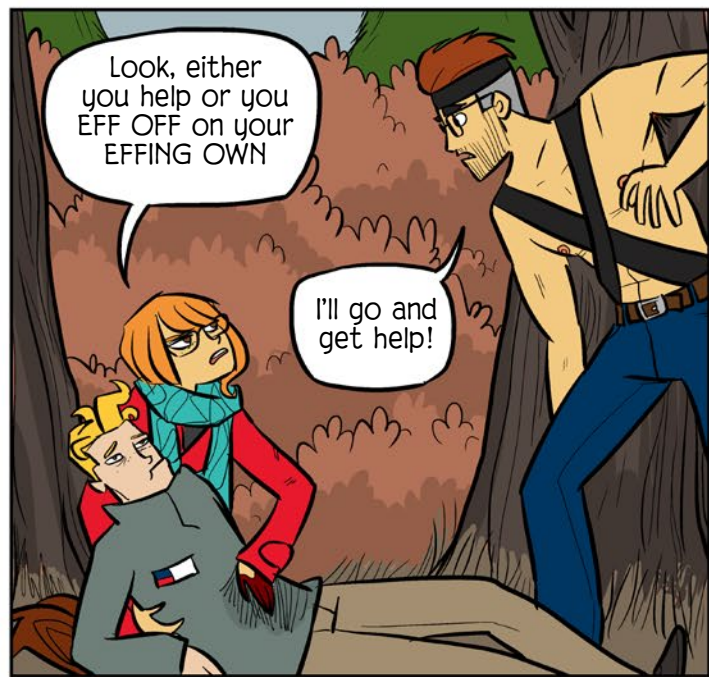
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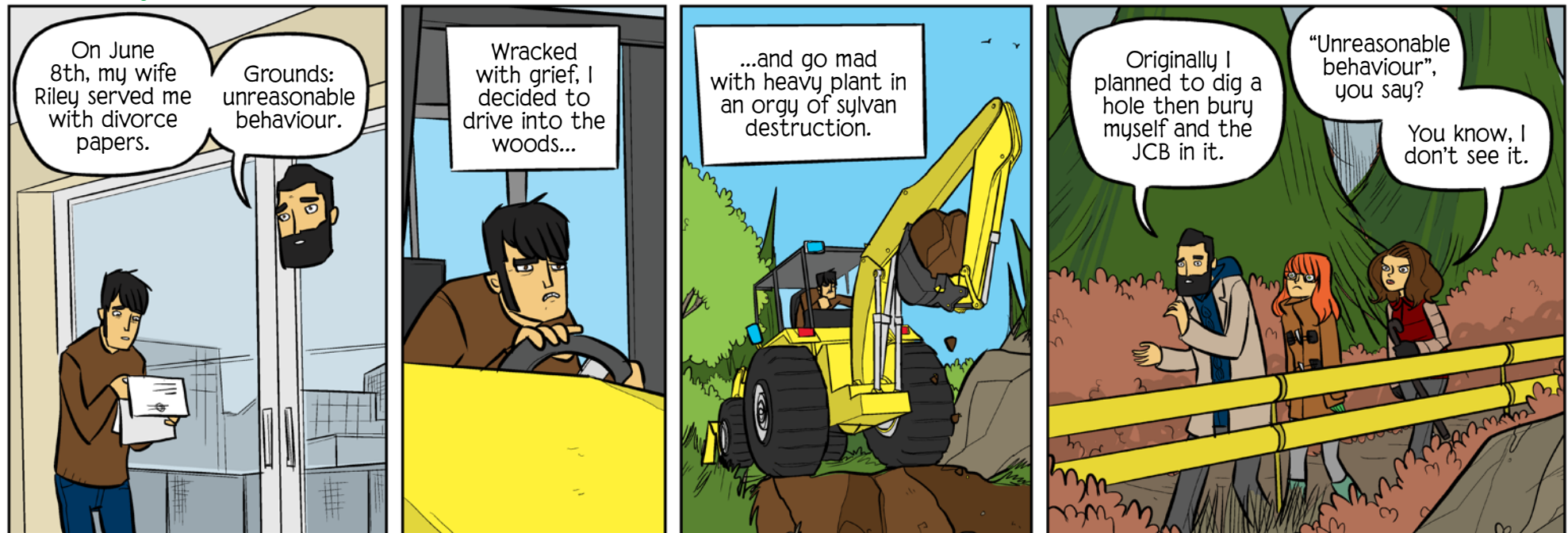
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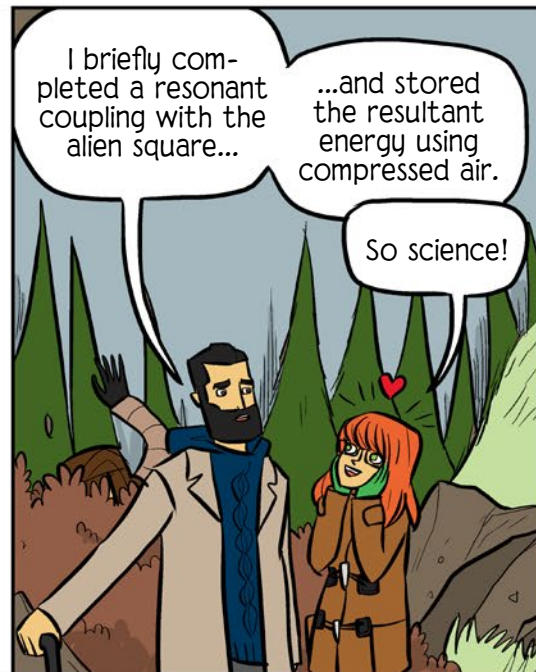
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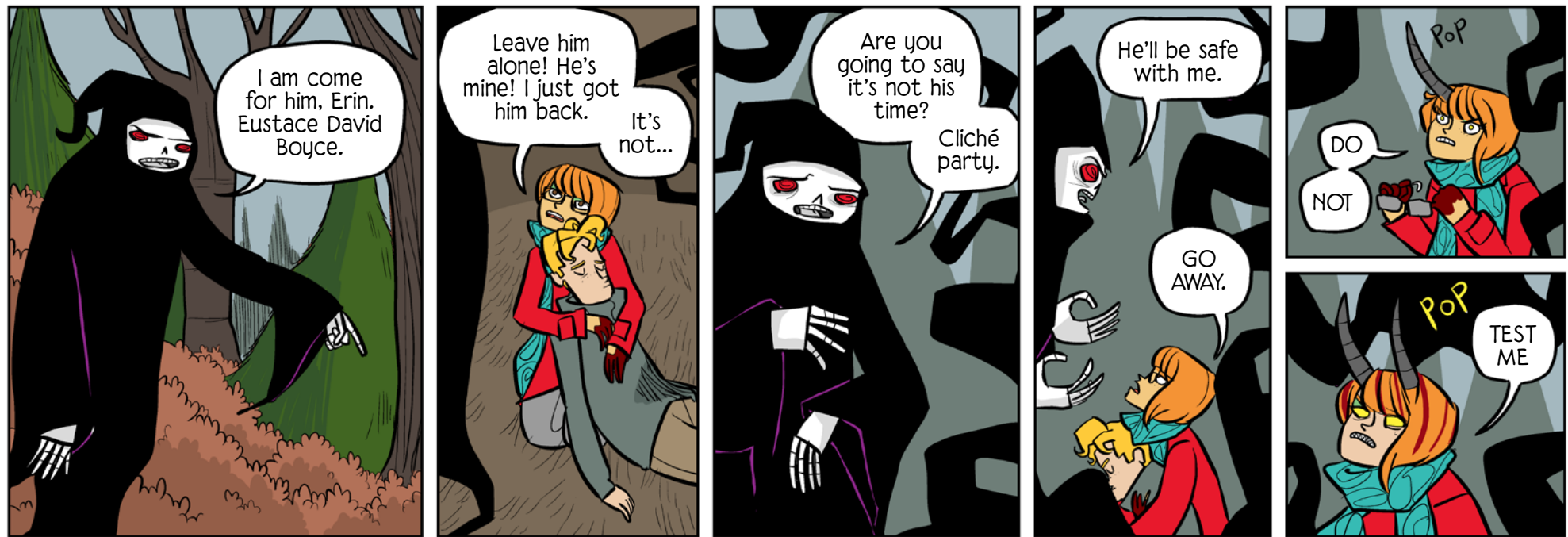
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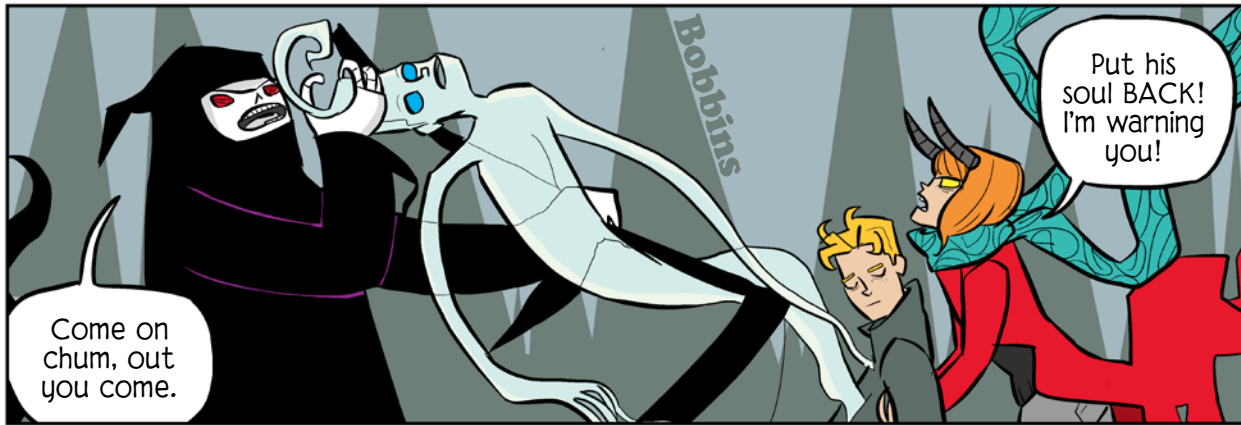


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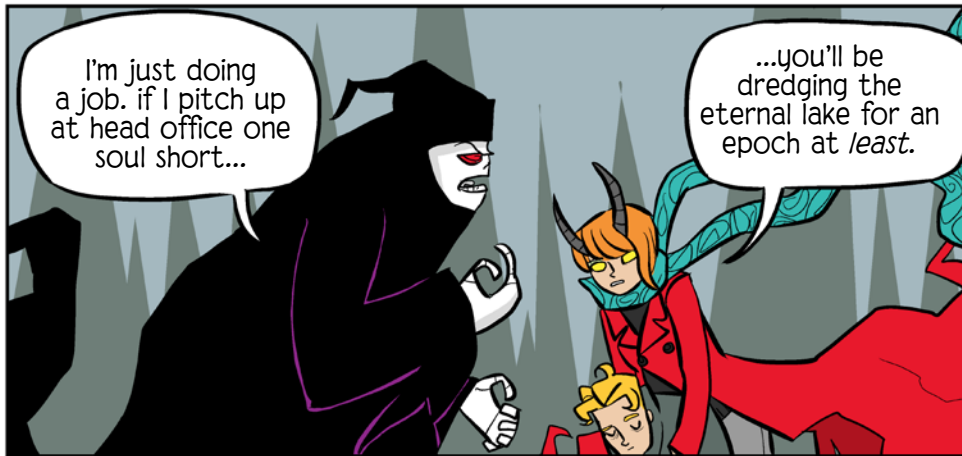


Come on chum, out you come.

Put his soul BACK! I'm warning you!



Look. I'm not going to argue with you, Erin.

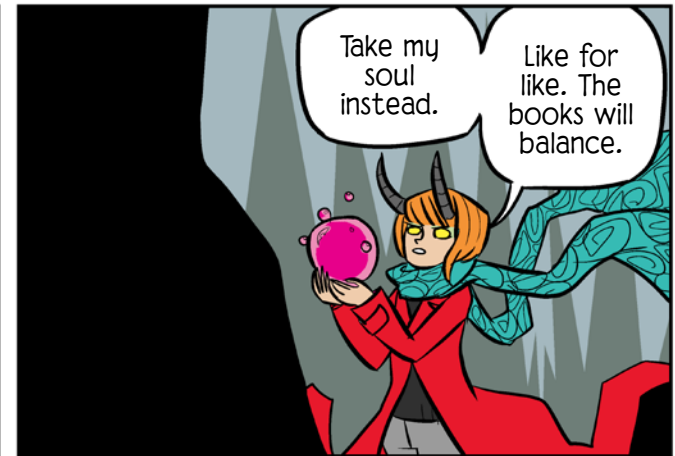


I'm just doing a job. if I pitch up at head office one soul short...

...you'll be dredging the eternal lake for an epoch at *least*.

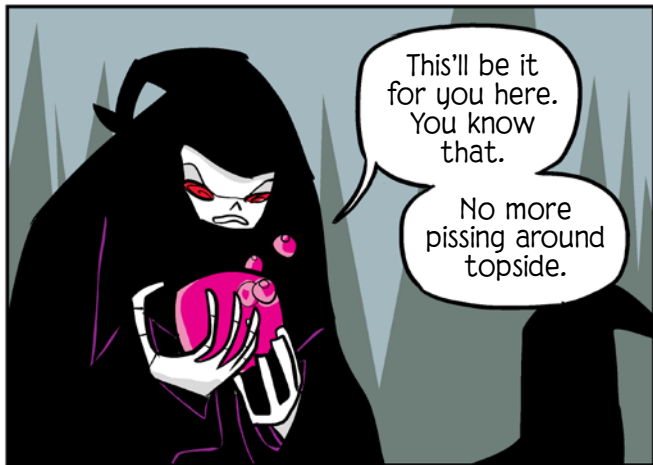


He's just so young. He's seen nothing.



Take my soul instead.

Like for like. The books will balance.



This'll be it for you here. You know that.

No more pissing around topside.



Fine.



The paper-work on this is going to be *brutal*.

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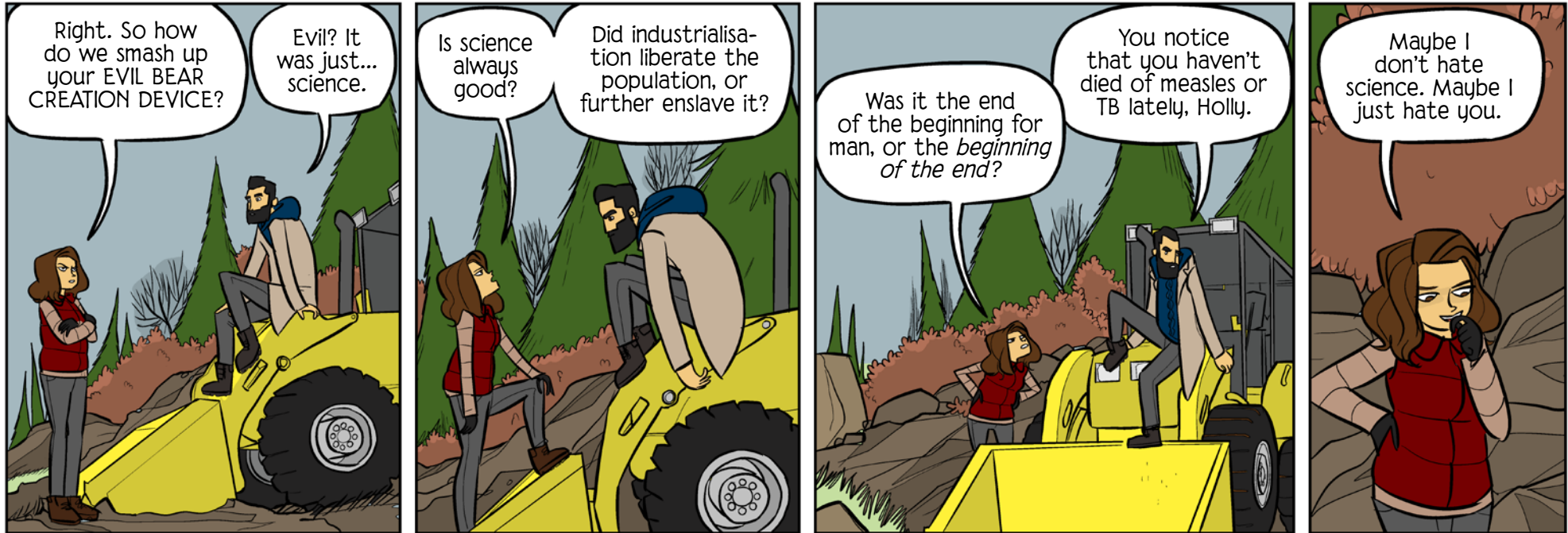
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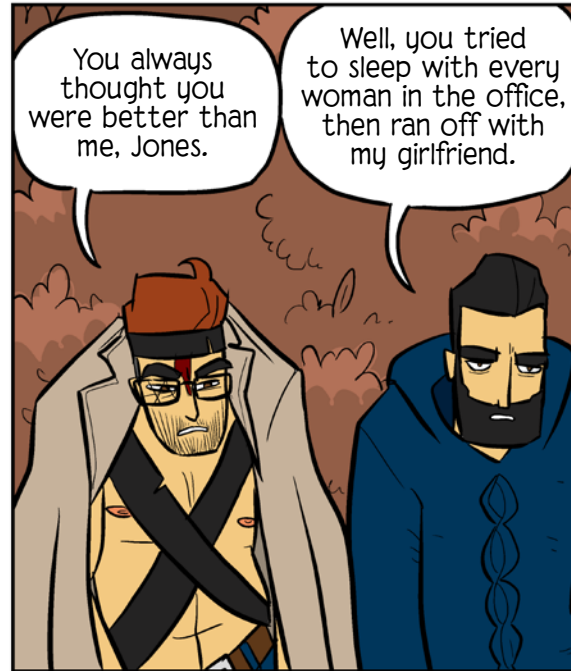
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Have you two **QUITE** FINISHED?

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by John Allison

BIF
BIF

WOK



Because I have a theory and **YOU** aren't going to like it, Timothy!



What you are grovelling on is not a **GIANT BATTERY...**

...it's an **INTER-DIMENSIONAL PORTAL**, yeah

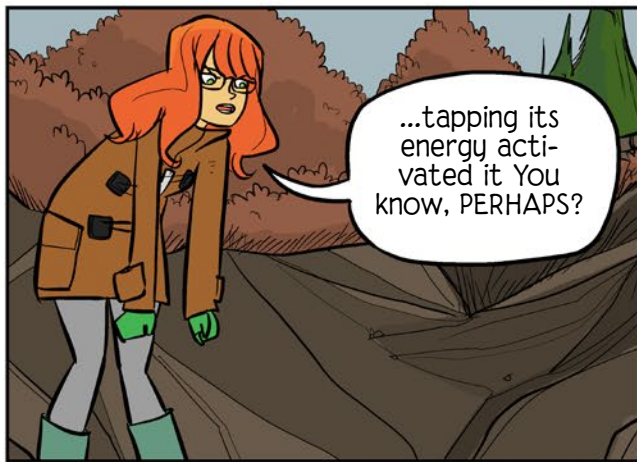


I sort of thought it might be.



And I don't know... maybe 20ft of mud and rocks were blocking it?

And... oh... **MAYBE...**



...tapping its energy activated it You know, **PERHAPS?**



And maybe the next thing that comes through will be a **MAD VIRUS** or a brain eating **WASP?**



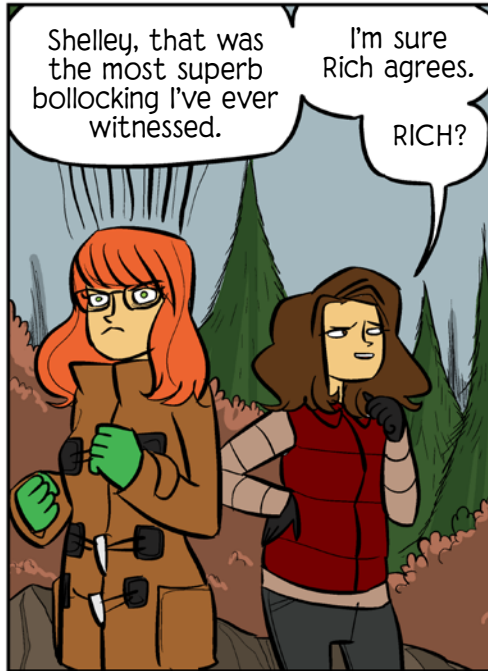
Er... I didn't... um...



I'M **APOPLECTIC**, TIM JONES!

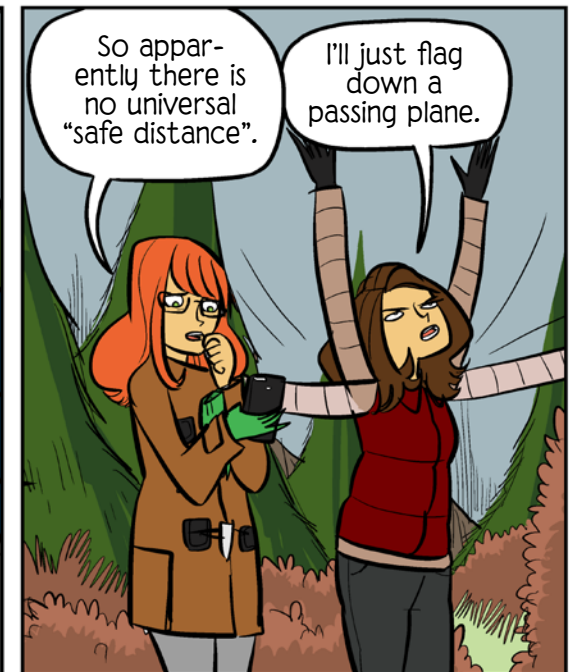
CLAP CLAP CLAP CLAP CLAP

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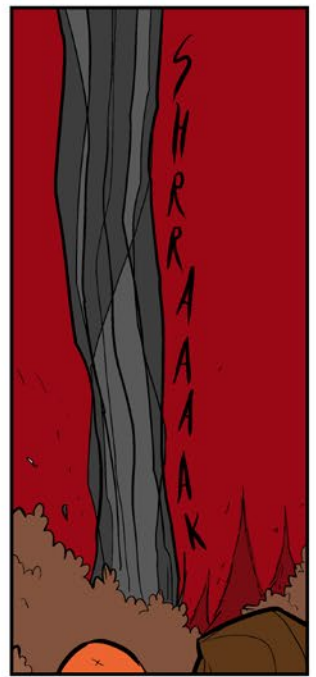
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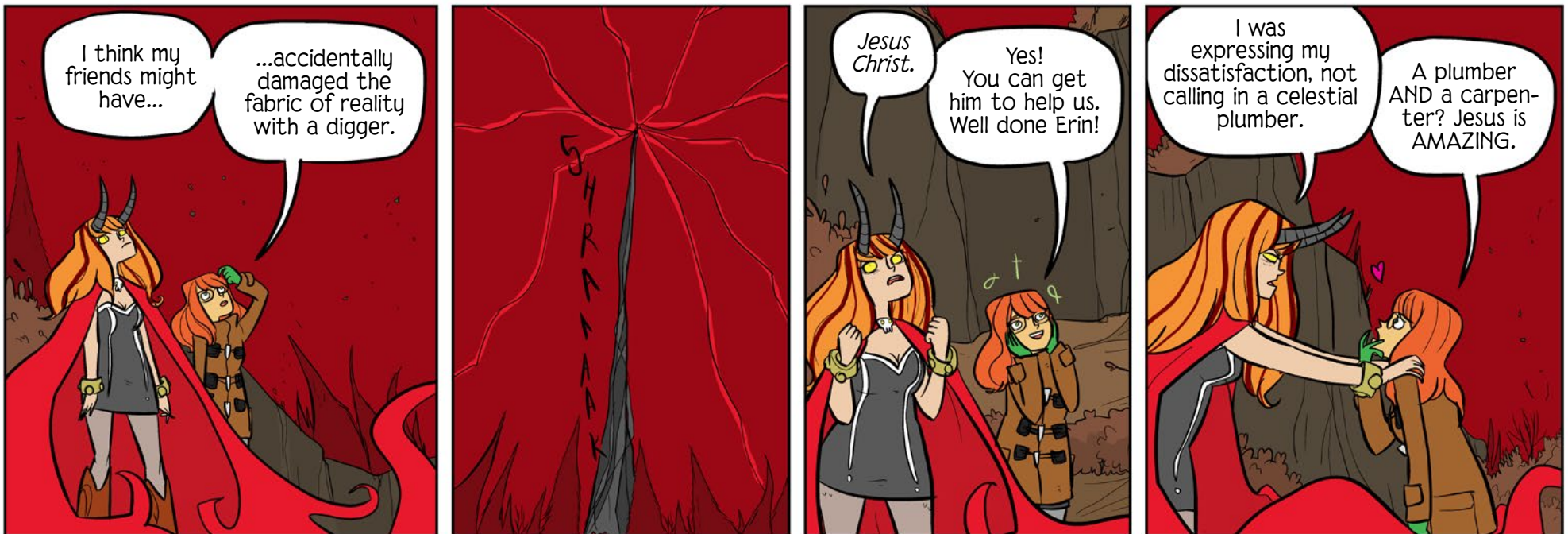
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What is it?

I don't know! Whatever it is, we probably shouldn't have smashed it with a JCB.



Is it the end of the world? I want to LIVE!

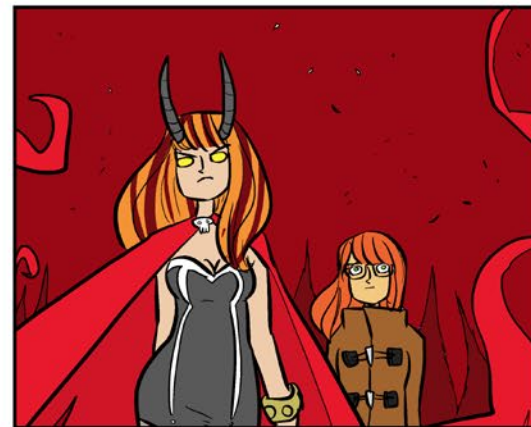
We've no evidence for that.



It might just stop. Give it five minutes.



Maybe it's the RAPTURE.



I'm not going to the good place.



YOU WON'T GET ME, SATAN!



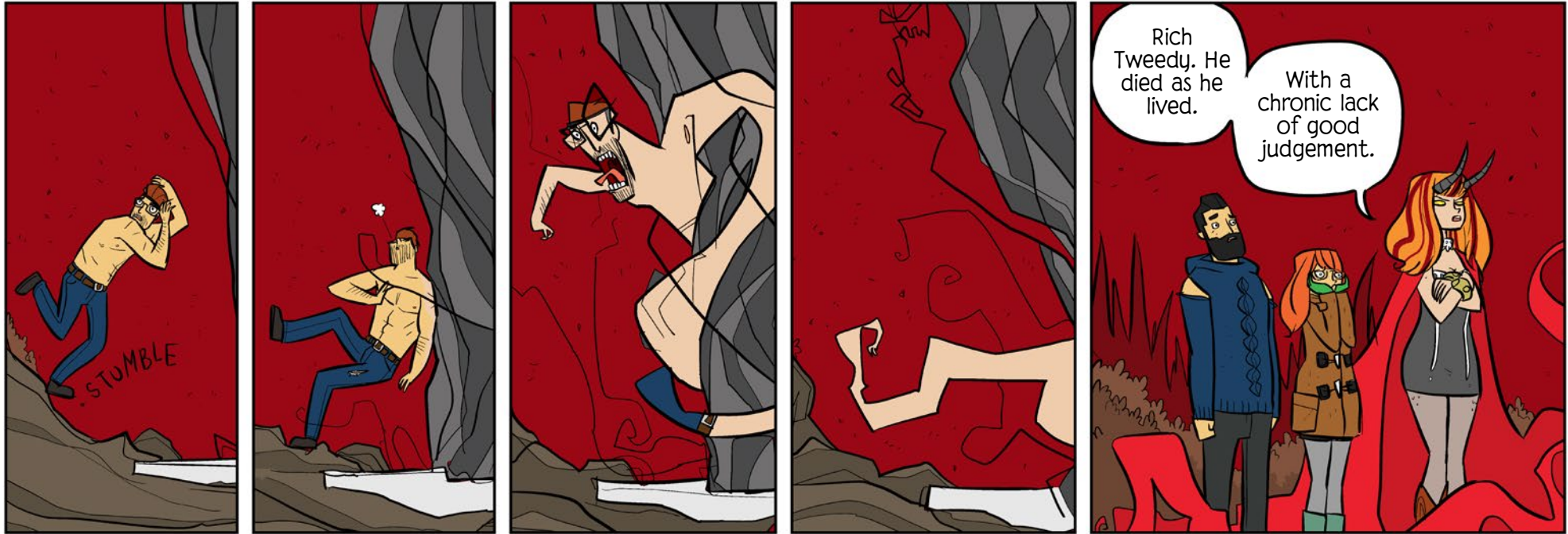
Rich, a safe distance is that way!



I can't watch-

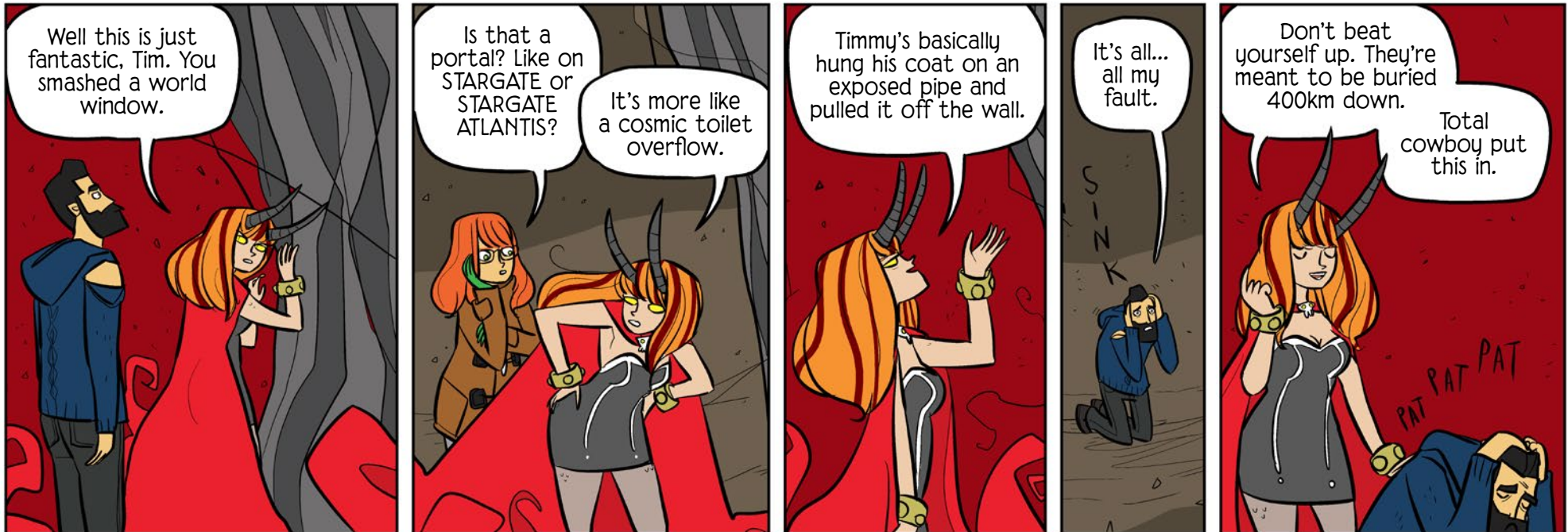
-but I'm almost certainly going to.

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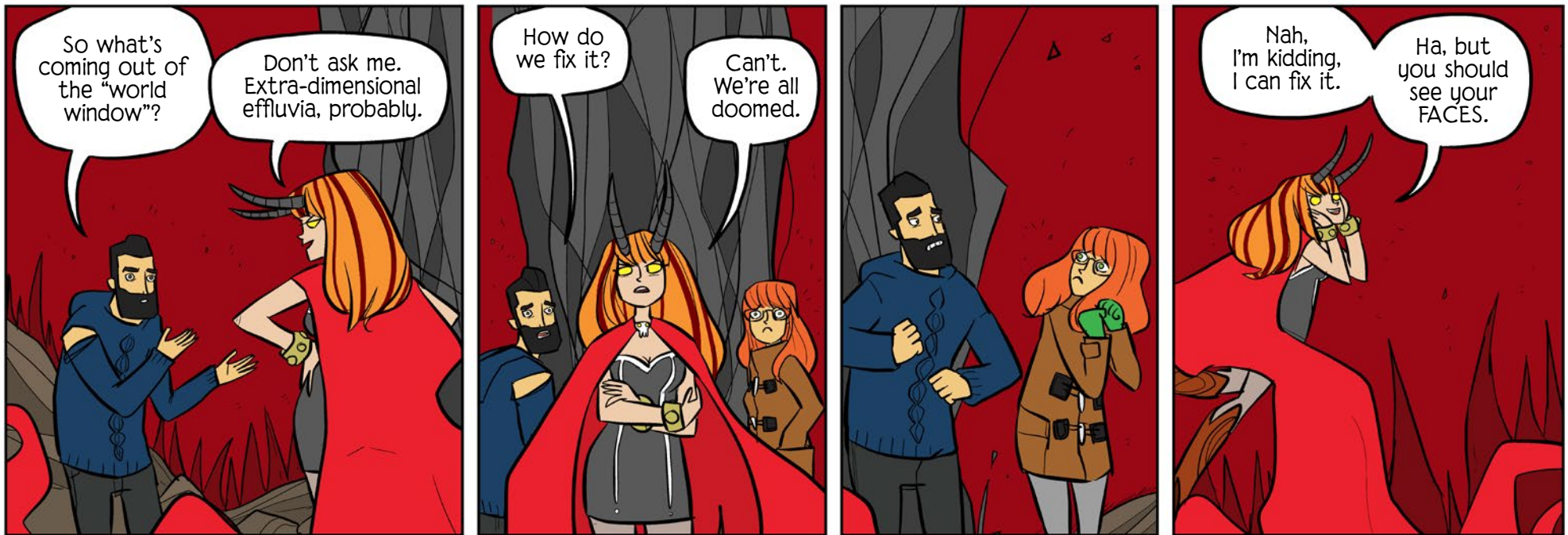
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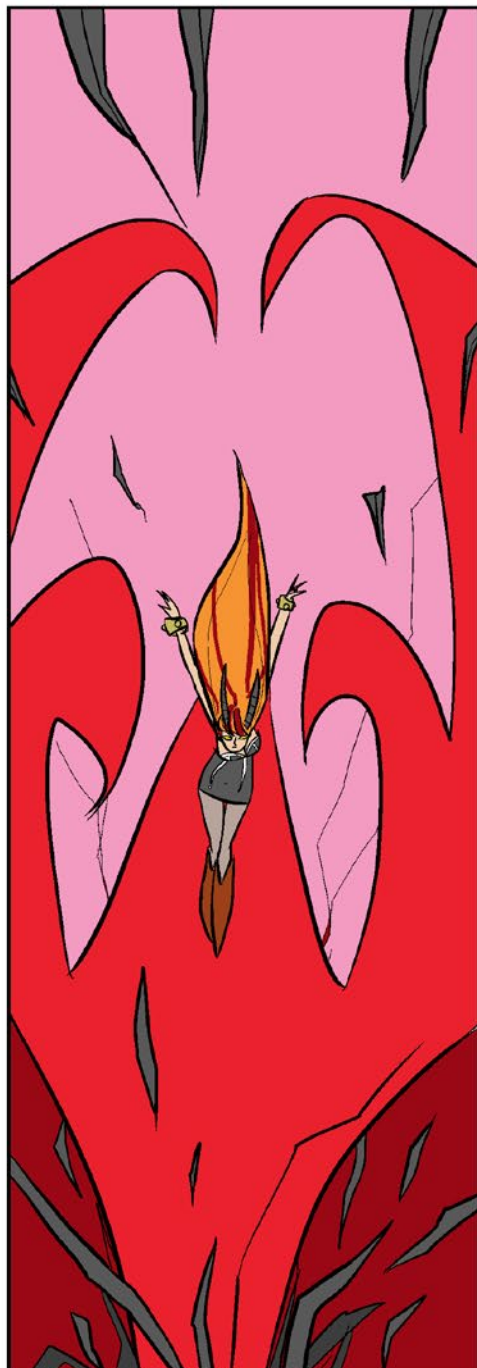
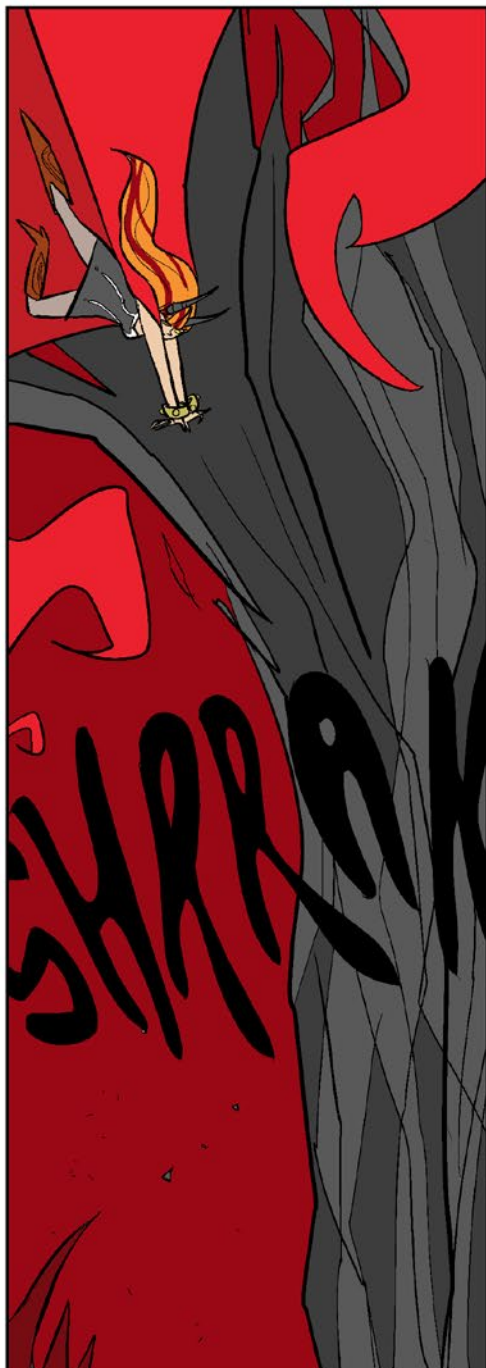
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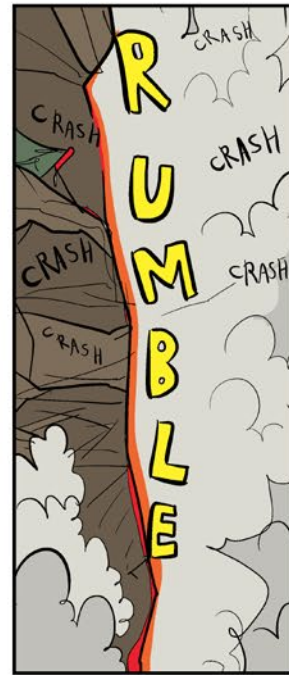
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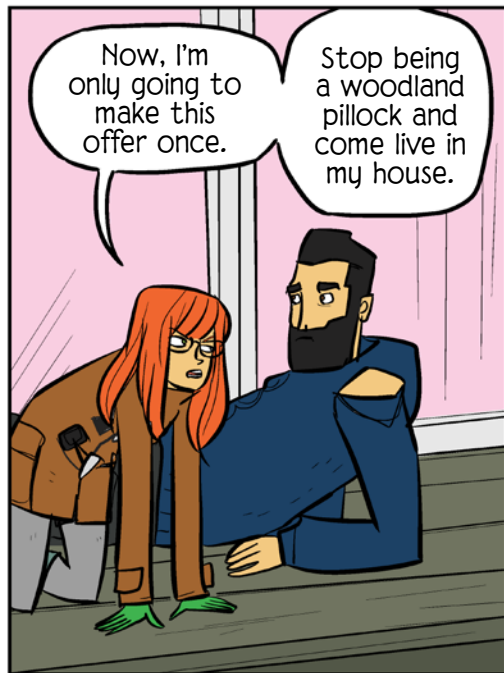


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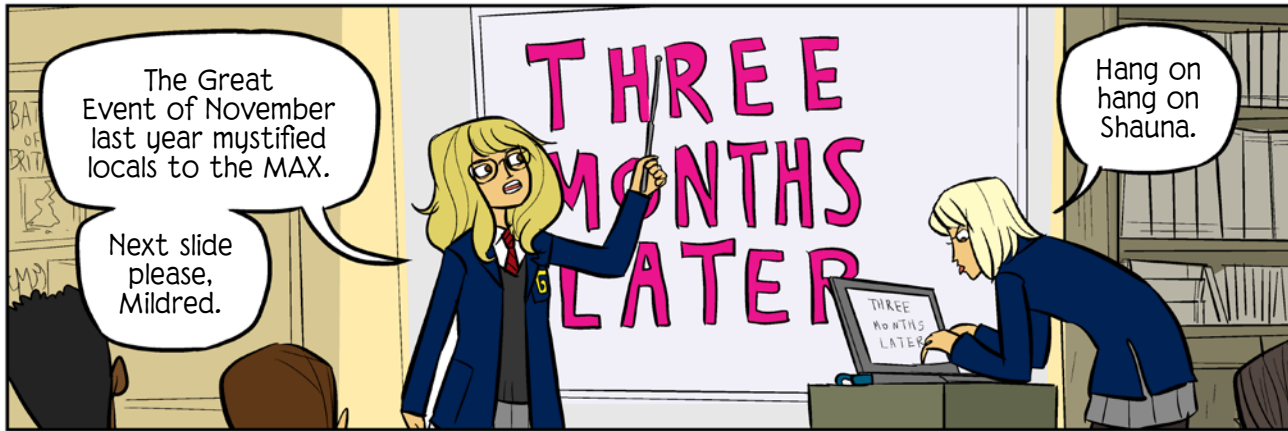


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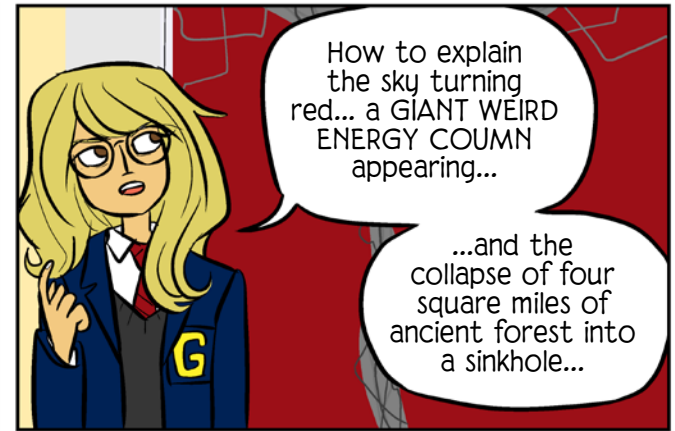
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The Great Event of November last year mystified locals to the MAX.

Next slide please, Mildred.

Hang on hang on Shauna.



How to explain the sky turning red... a GIANT WEIRD ENERGY COLUMN appearing...

...and the collapse of four square miles of ancient forest into a sinkhole...

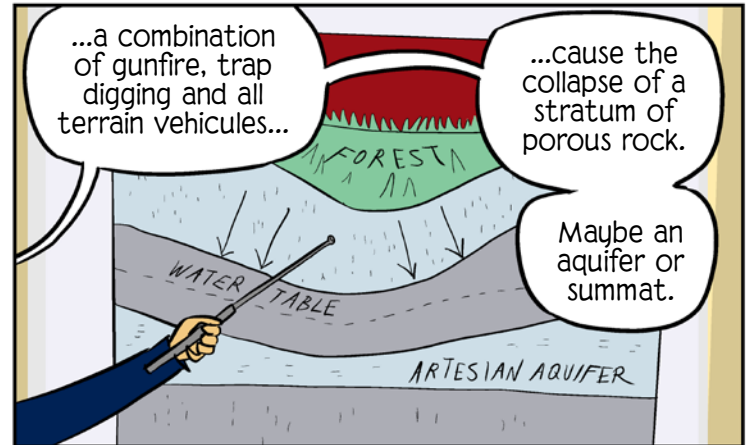


...leading to the tragic deaths of many devil bears, hunters, environmentalists...

...and a beloved and rare local LICHEN.



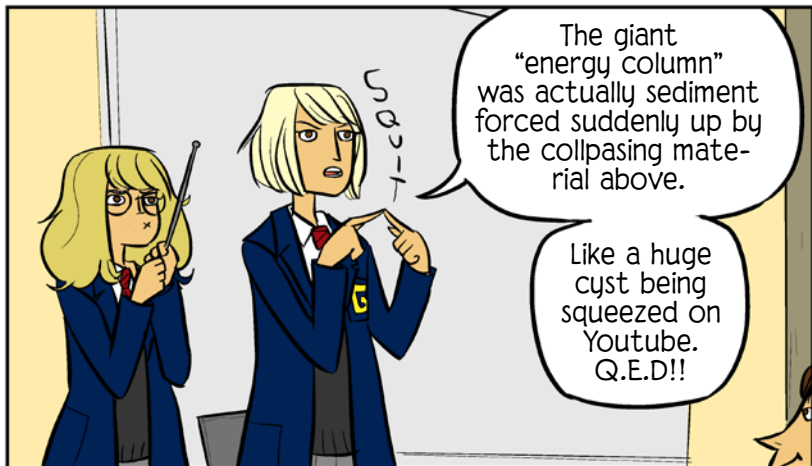
Based on the evidence, we believe...



...a combination of gunfire, trap digging and all terrain vehicles...

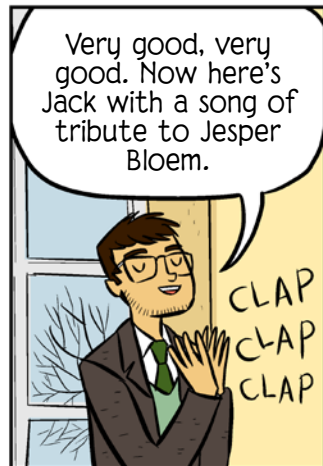
...cause the collapse of a stratum of porous rock.

Maybe an aquifer or summat.



The giant "energy column" was actually sediment forced suddenly up by the collapsing material above.

Like a huge cyst being squeezed on Youtube. Q.E.D!!



Very good, very good. Now here's Jack with a song of tribute to Jesper Bloem.

CLAP CLAP CLAP

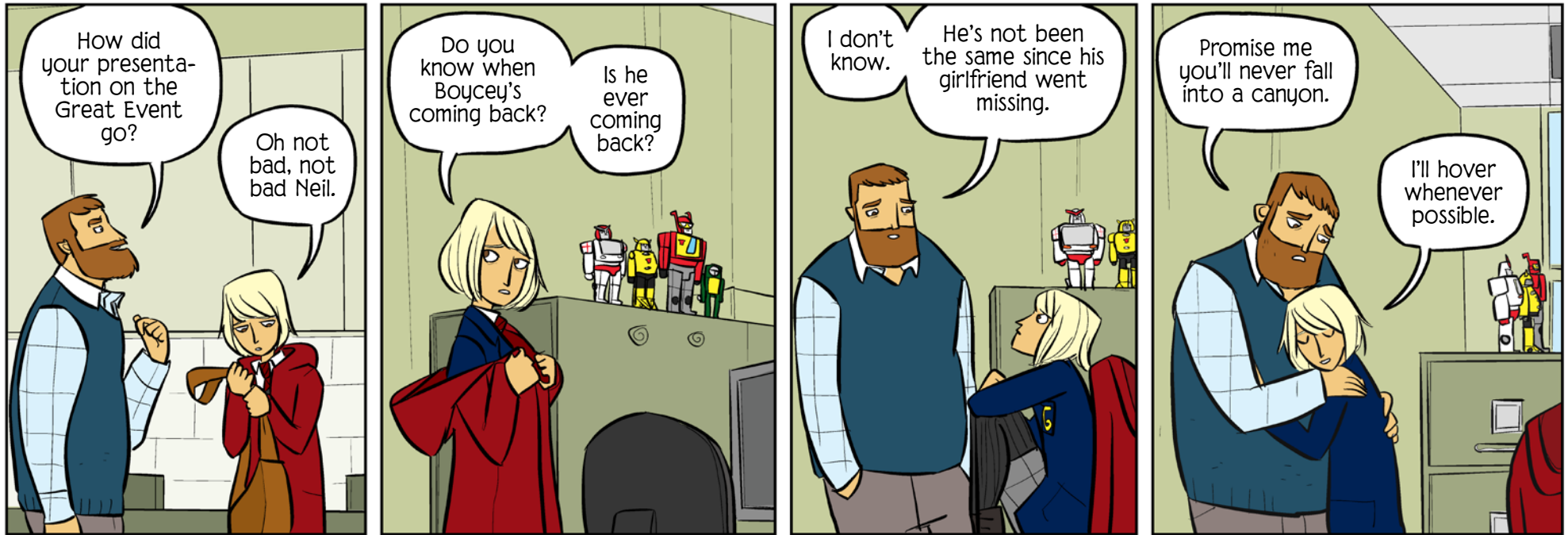


Shot eaten or exploded, we just don't know.

But one of the three is how he wanted to go.

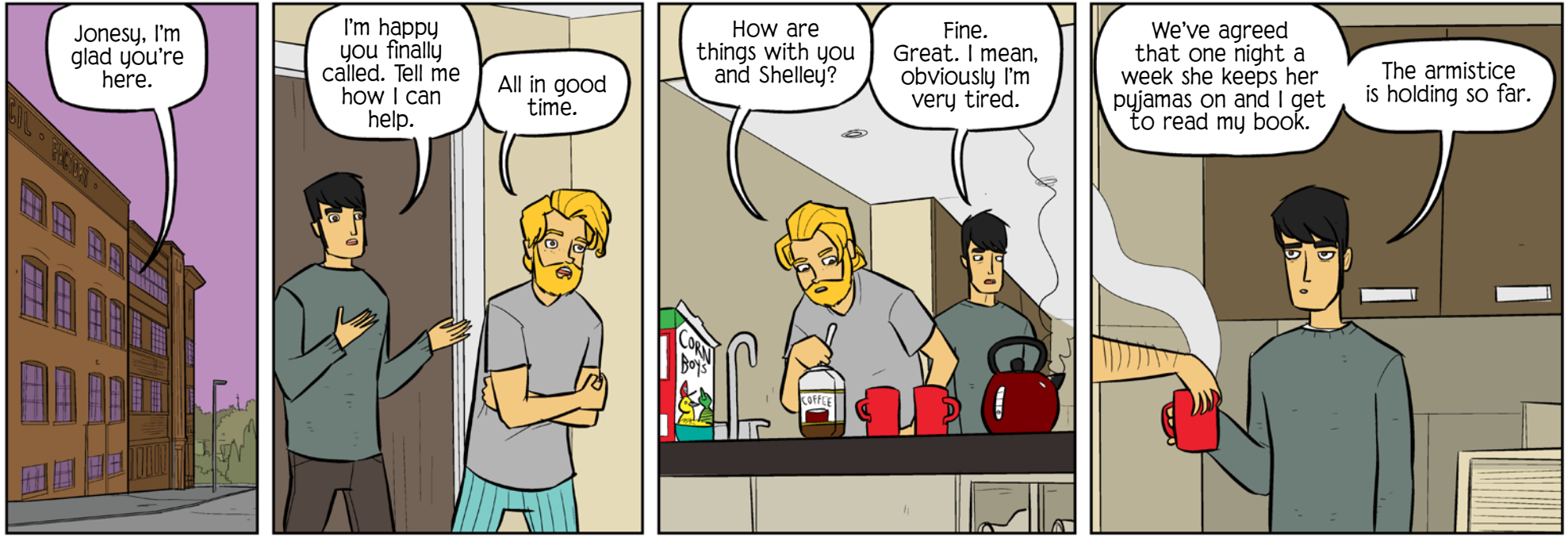
TOO SOON.

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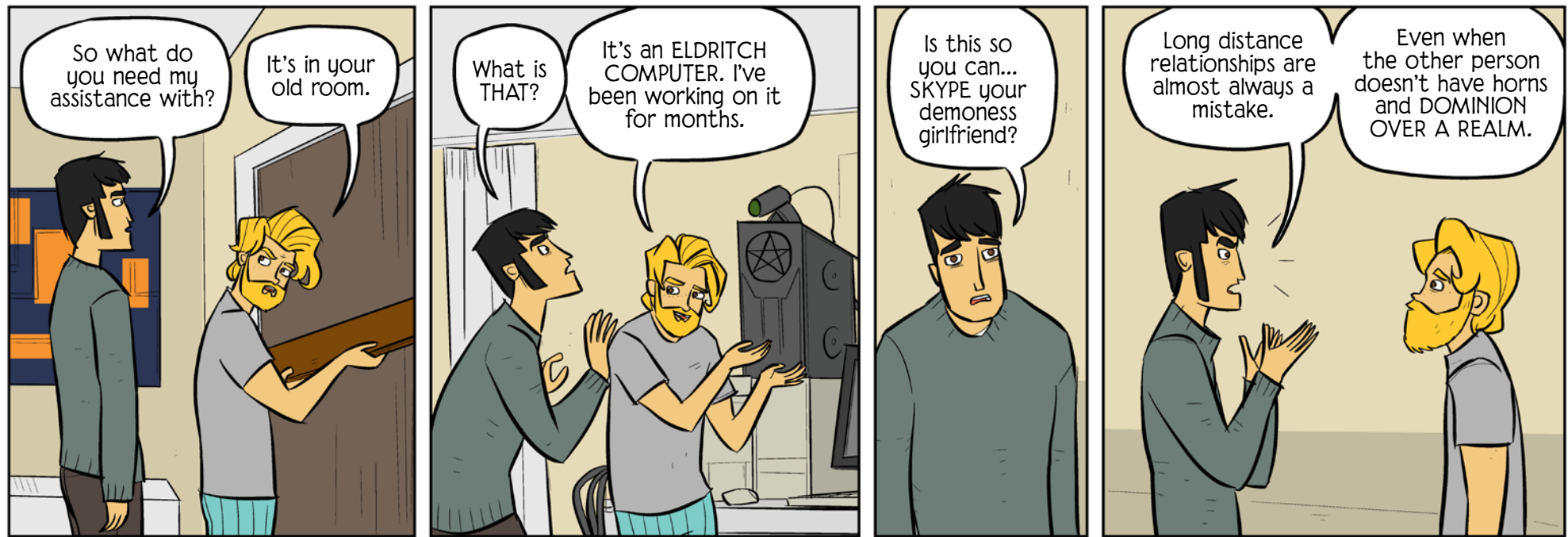
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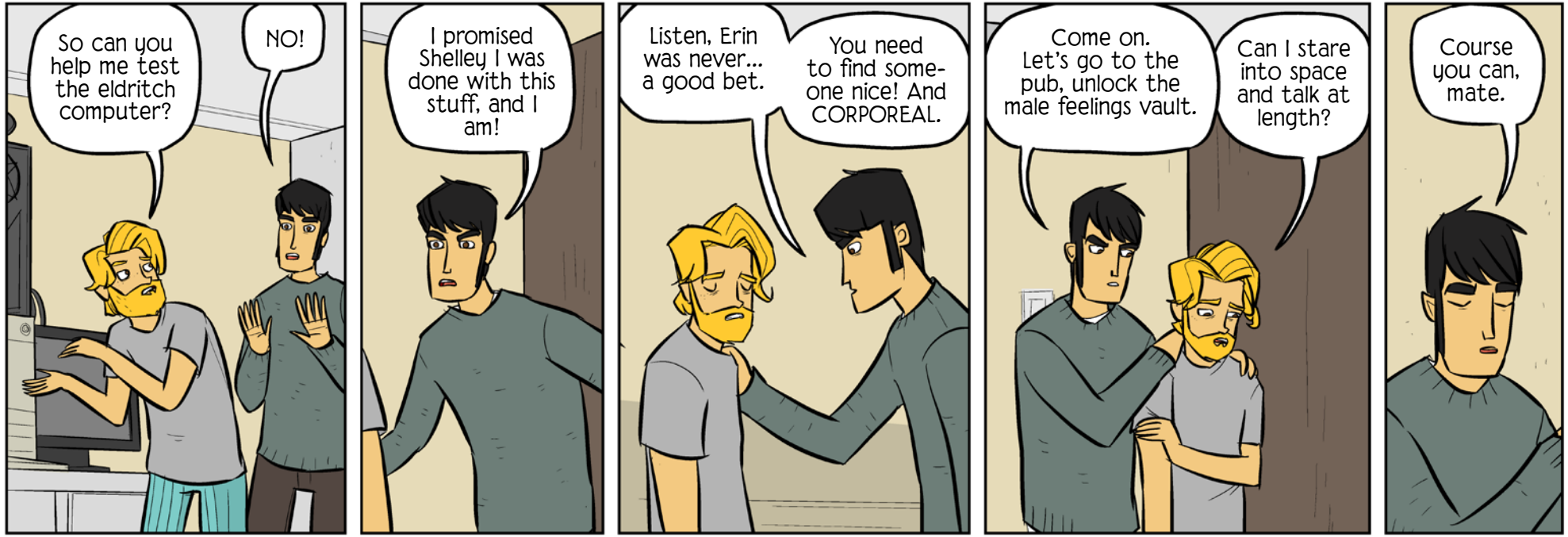
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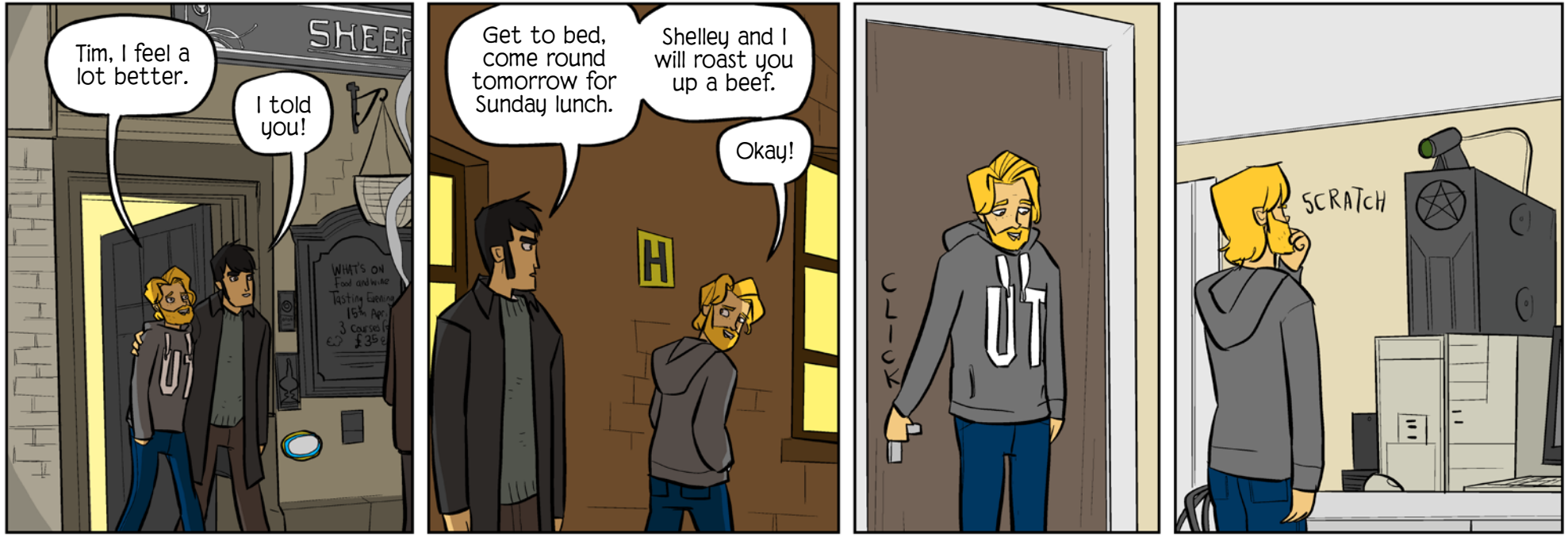
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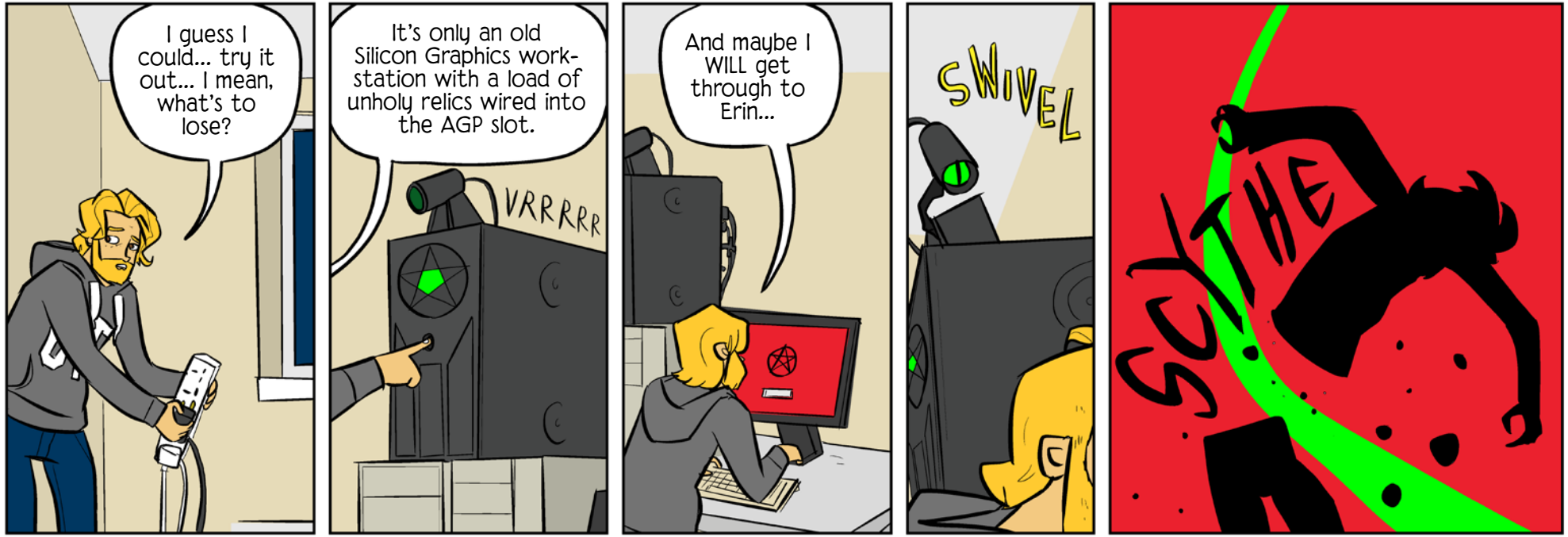
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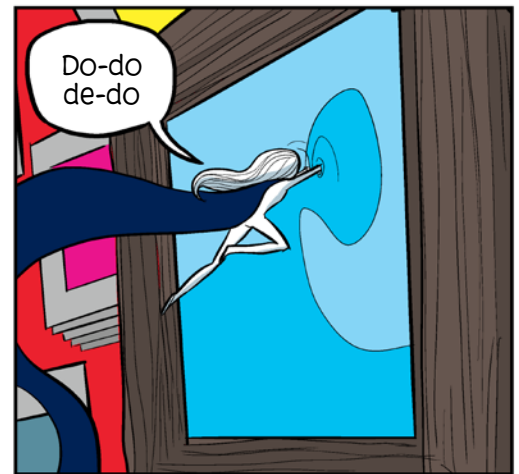
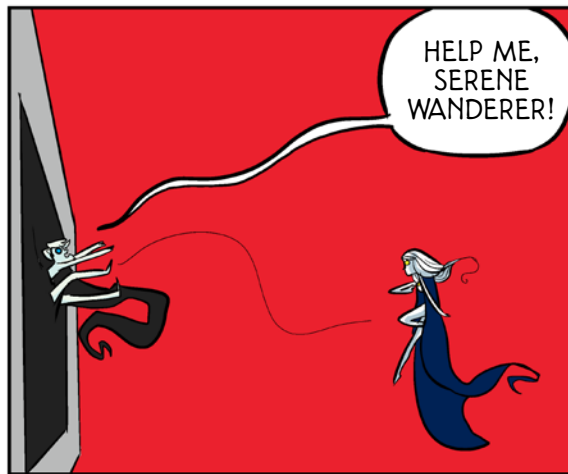
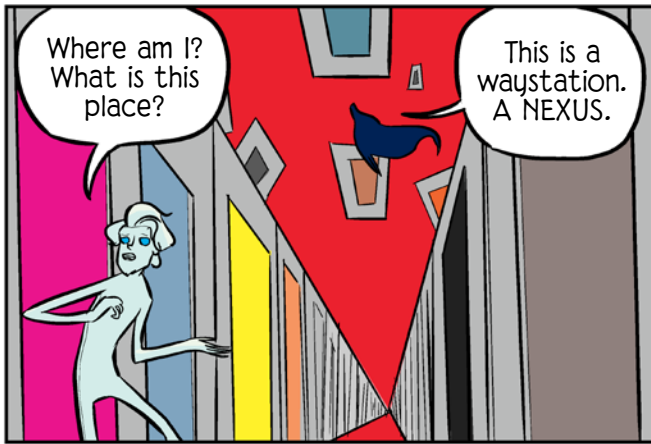
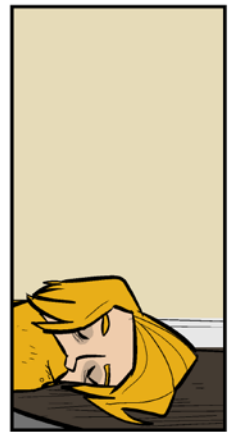
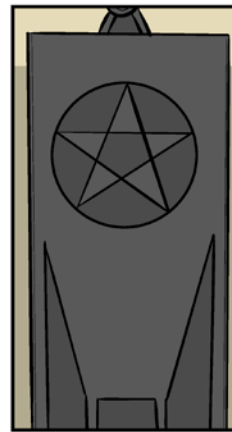
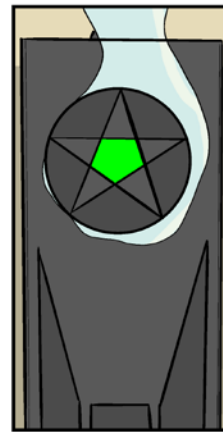
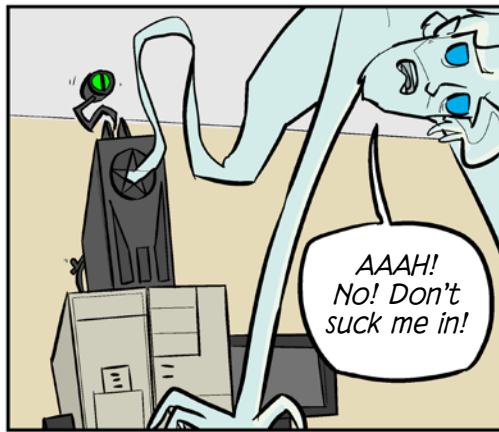


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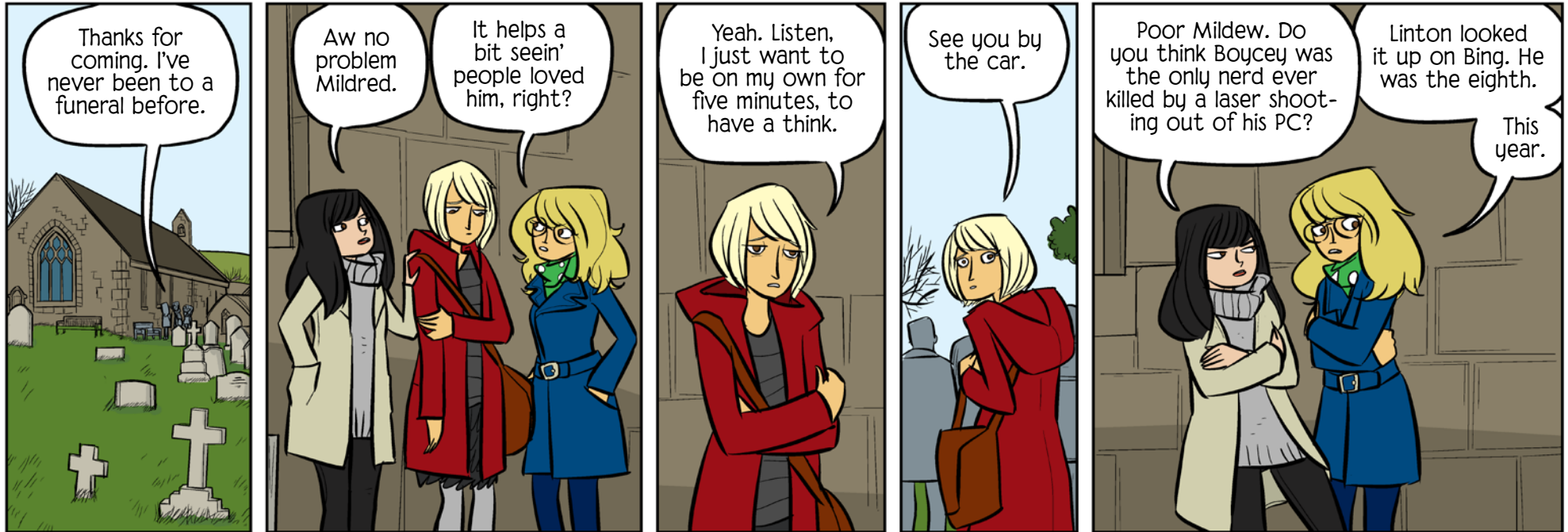
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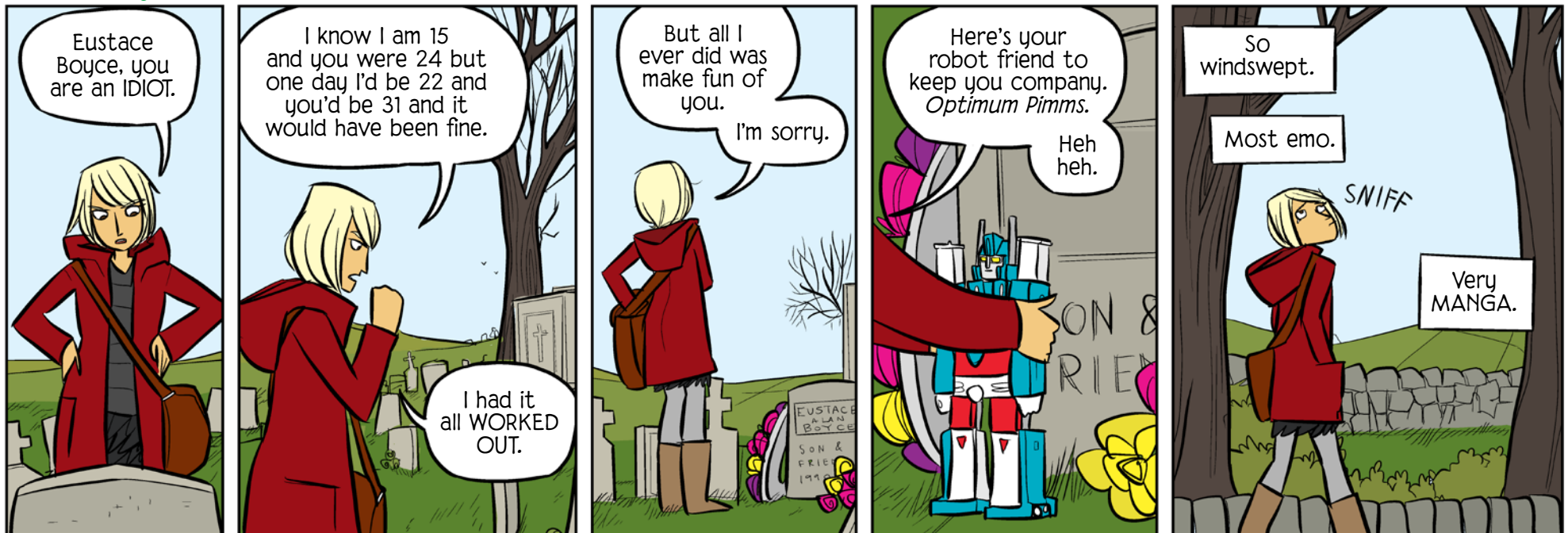


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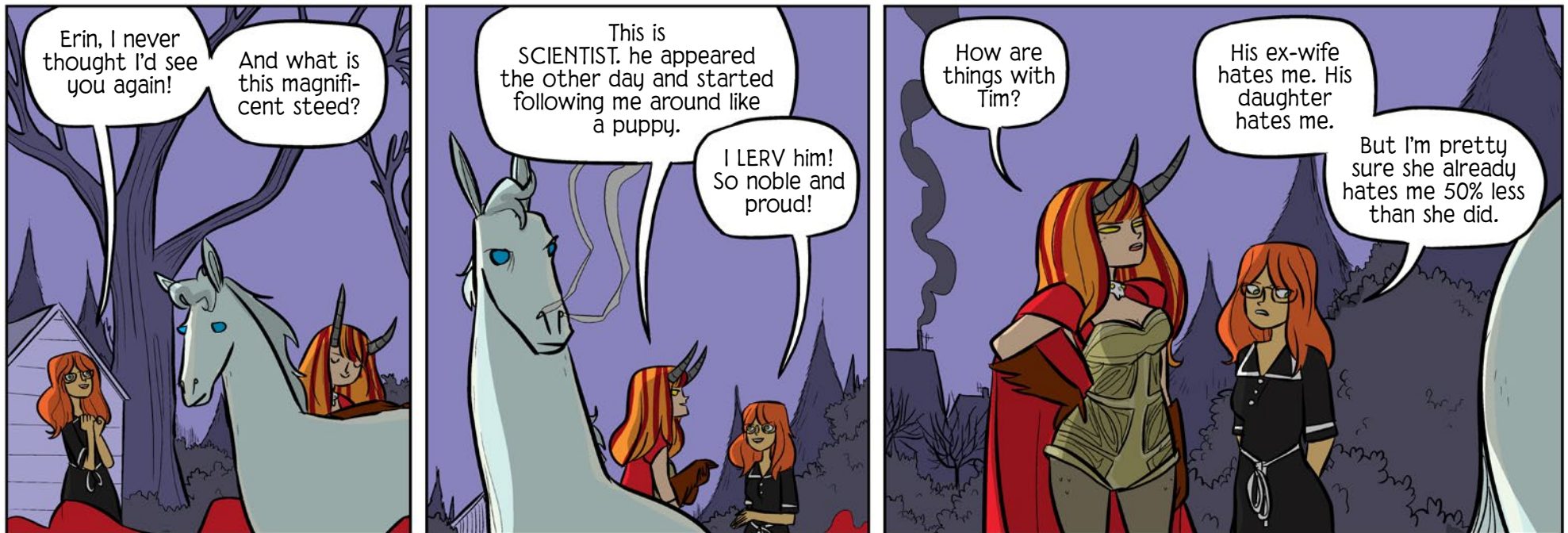
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