

LAiKA albarn

LIMERENCE

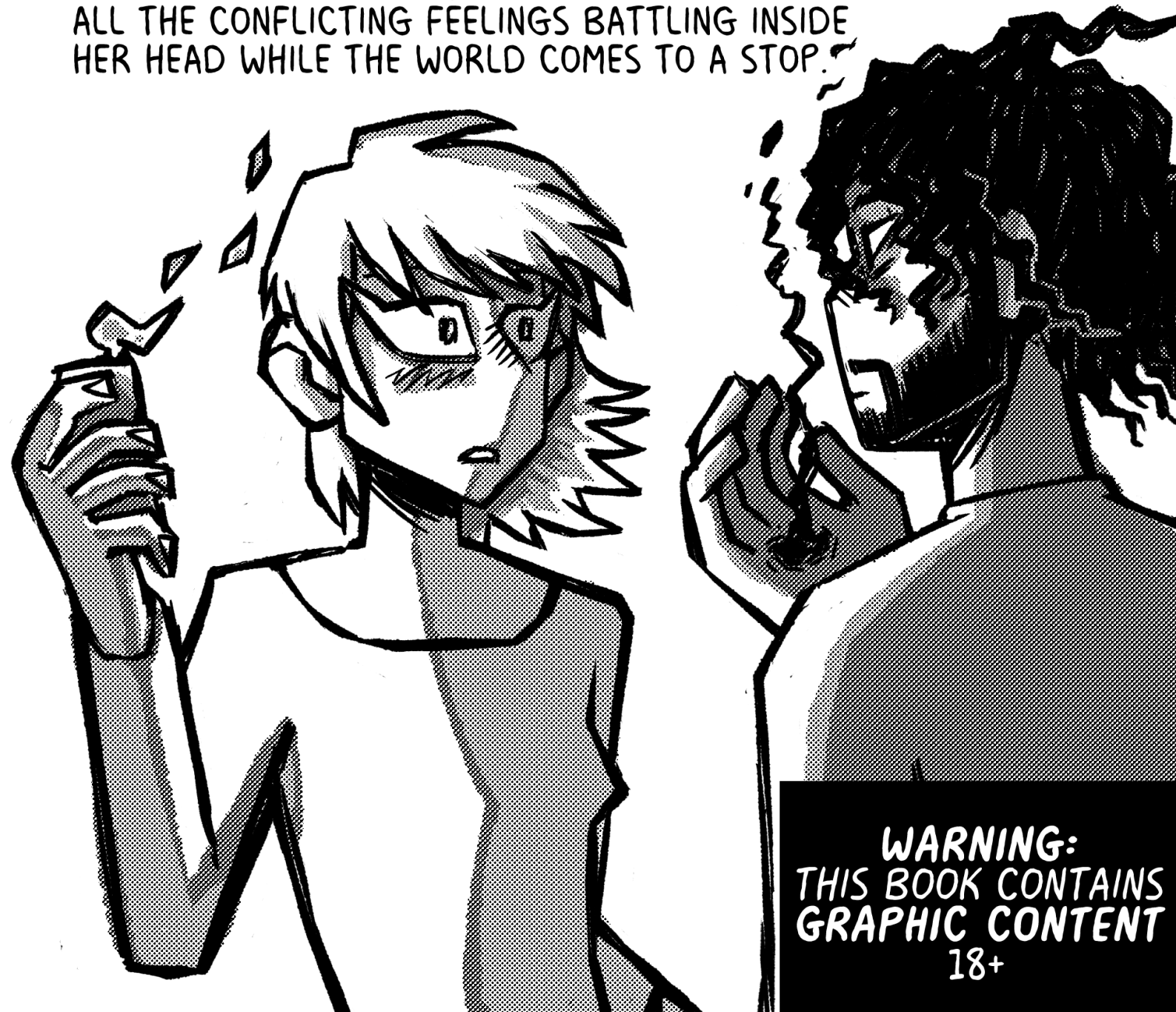
Part 1 : The only way is Forward



"NICE JOB BREAKING IT, HERO."

EVERYONE MAKES MISTAKES, BUT THIS ONE MIGHT BE TOO BIG TO SWALLOW. ESPECIALLY WHEN YOU DON'T WANT TO TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR HURTING THOSE YOU LOVE THE MOST.

IN 50 PAGES OF COMICS, LAIKA TRIES TO MAKE SENSE OF ALL THE CONFLICTING FEELINGS BATTLING INSIDE HER HEAD WHILE THE WORLD COMES TO A STOP.



WARNING:
THIS BOOK CONTAINS
GRAPHIC CONTENT
18+


WELL, WELL, WELL.
IF IT ISN'T MY
DEAR AUDIENCE.

CAME CRAWLING
RIGHT BACK, HUH?

THAT APPLIES TO
BOTH YOU AND ME,
TO BE HONEST.

HERE'S ONE ABUSIVE
RELATIONSHIP I'M NOT
GETTING OUT OF ANY
TIME SOON, THAT'S
FOR SURE.





BUT WHAT AM I
EVEN SAYING? YOU
MIGHT BE A NEW
READER-

ONE OF THE
LUCKY FEW WHO
HAVE NO CLUE
WHO I AM!

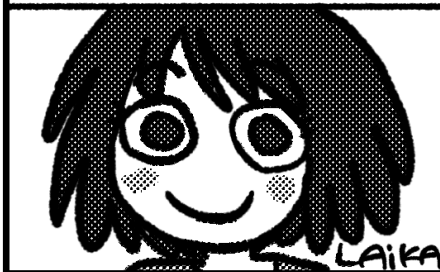
OH, HOW
MANY INTERNET
USERS ENVY
YOU, YOU HAVE
NO IDEA.

WELL, THEN,
HERE'S A QUICK
RUNDOWN:

MY NAME IS LAIKA, I'M A WEB ARTIST MOSTLY KNOWN FOR GETTING INTO TROUBLE, OPENING MY BIG MOUTH, ACTING UNPREDICTABLY, AND GENERALLY BEING FUCKING INSUFFERABLE.



I'VE ALWAYS BEEN A HUGE COMICS NERD, AND I STARTED POSTING MY OWN WHEN I WAS 14. THEY SUCKED VERY BAD, BUT I'M STILL PROUD OF THEM.



MY MOM DIED WHEN I WAS 10 AND BECAUSE OF THAT, FOR THE NEXT 6 YEARS, I WAS ALWAYS ON MY LAPTOP AND HAD A VERY TENUOUS RELATIONSHIP WITH MY DAD, UP UNTIL WE BONDED OVER COMICS.



AMIDST FANDOM INSANITY AND OTHER POINTLESS THINGS, WE ENDED UP GROWING SO CLOSE I FORMED A CRUSH ON HIM WHEN I WAS 19.



WITH ME BEING INSANE AND ALL, AND MY DAD BEING JUST SLIGHTLY LESS FUCKED UP, A FEW YEARS LATER I PURSUED THAT CRUSH AND SOMEHOW MANAGED TO GET HIM TO RECIPROCATE MY FEELINGS.



AGED 23, I VERY 'SMARTLY' DECIDED TO BABBLE ABOUT IT AROUND ME, TO PREDICTABLE OUTRAGE AND BACKLASH. NOT YET CONTENT WITH THE MESS I'D MADE, I WENT ON TO WRITE A WHOLEASS ILLUSTRATED ESSAY ABOUT THE RELATIONSHIP.



MY FATHER LOST MOST OF HIS FRIENDS IN THE COMICS INDUSTRY, WE BOTH GOT HARRASSED TO HELL AND BACK AND ENDED UP BACKING AWAY FROM THE INTERNET.



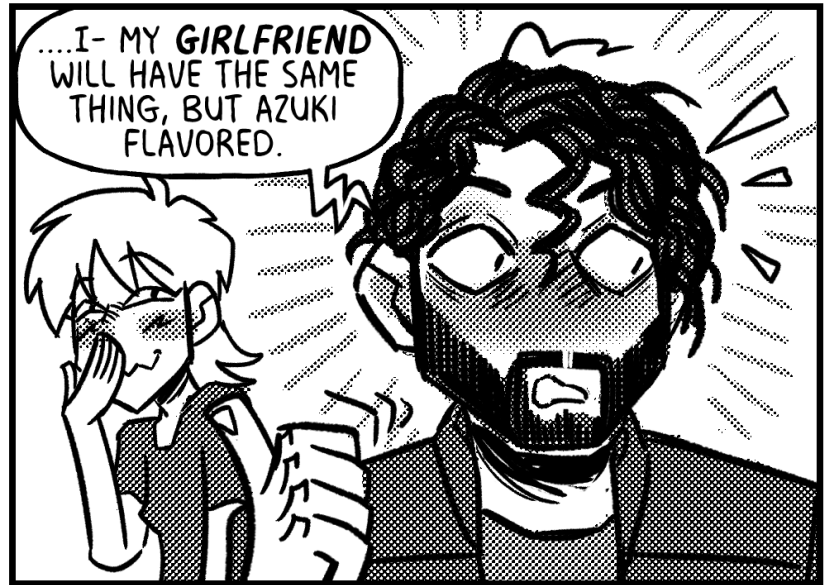
...BUT NOT FOR LONG, BECAUSE YOUR FAVE LOCAL ONLINE DIPSHIT LAIKA HERE IS BACK TO TELL YOU HOW THINGS HAVE BEEN SINCE.

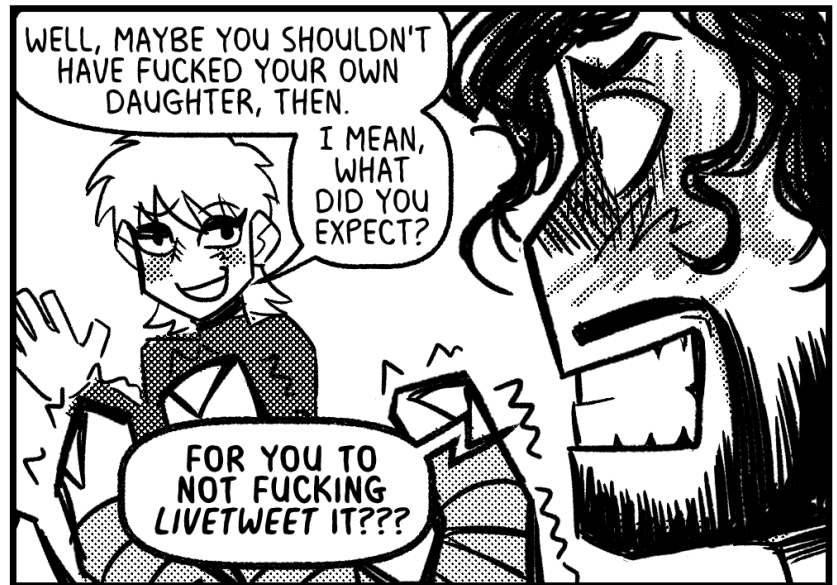


...AND THAT'S WHAT YOU MISSED ON GLEE. IT'S 2022 AS I'M WRITING THIS, I'M 27, BUT LET'S GO BACK TO WHERE WE LAST LEFT OFF, THE FAR-OFF YEAR OF 2020...



SPRING 2020





6 April 2019 at 04:06

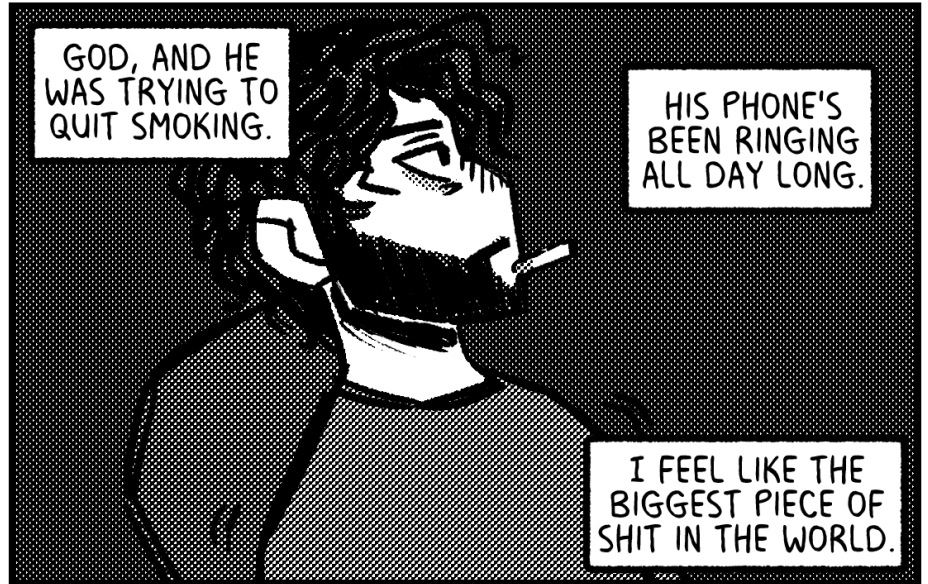
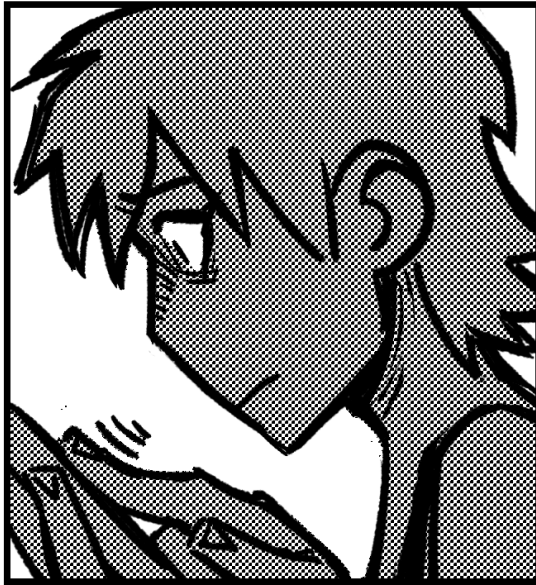
I get that he's pessimistic, but I think it's gonna work- not just because I'm talented, but because, as cheesy as it sounds, our love is real. I don't think anyone can read the things I've said about us and think we're not in love. I don't think there's any ambiguity in the way I express myself. What we have together is so insanely rare and special, I don't think it can easily be mistaken with something different. So, yeah, call me naive if you want. I don't care. People like us don't just stop. We're so deep into each other's head, I don't even know where I end and where he begins. I know no one is made for anybody, but we are what I would consider to be the perfect match. We just fit together, and it's so obvious if you just look at us for a few seconds, so I don't see how a wholeass essay on the matter is going to leave any doubt. So go ahead, sue me.

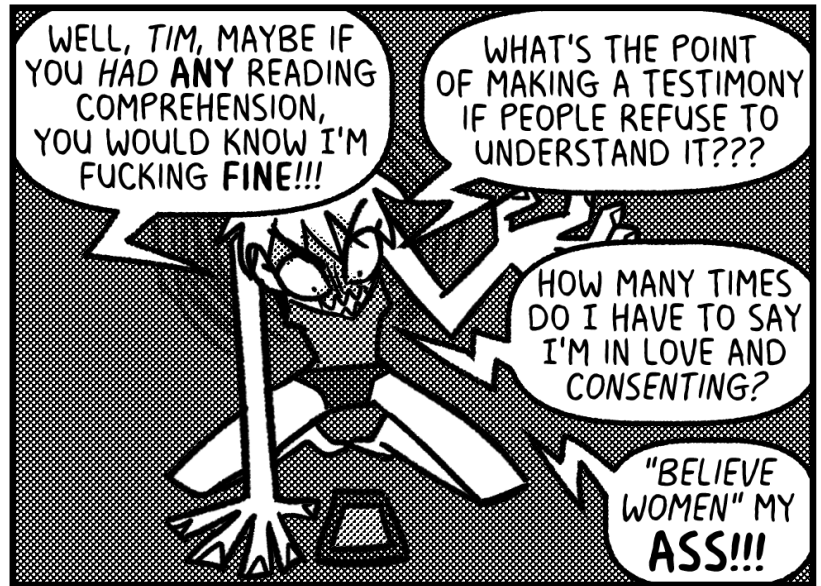
12 April 2019 at 02:52

It kills me that he's still so full of doubt. He loves me, he's IN LOVE WITH ME. He's literally told me those words, "I love you"! And I know he doesn't doubt them, what he's afraid of is how his friends will respond. And I get it, but we can't just hide forever. It's going to eat away at him, burn him from the inside out. He can't lie to save his life, I'm just ripping off a painful bandaid. But he'll be fine. We're both going to be fine, because no one but an idiot would see anything wrong with 2 grown fucking adults loving each other. So, fuck it. I'm doing this, I don't care.

LAIKA, YOU
FUCKING
iDiOT















I'm really disappointed in you.

You two should go to jail.

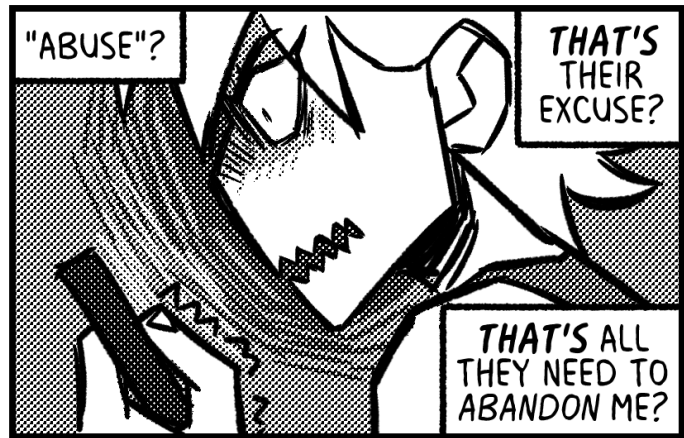
laika WTF
im legit disappointed in you this is fucked up

I wish I never met you

your dad is a degenerate and he knows it
i hope you both kill yourselves

fucking liar piece of shit
you said it was a joke
for months I thought you were just being edgy
and you pull THIS SHIT???

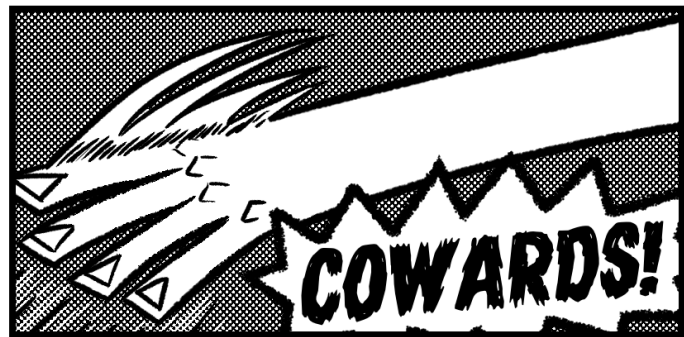
This is unbelievably unhealthy.
He's just using you, you know that, right?
You're clearly in an abusive relationship.
I refuse to stand there and watch it
happen, I'd rather cut ties with you.



"ABUSE"?

THAT'S
THEIR
EXCUSE?

THAT'S ALL
THEY NEED TO
ABANDON ME?



IF YOU WERE REALLY MY
FRIENDS, YOU WOULDN'T
GIVE UP ON ME LIKE THAT!



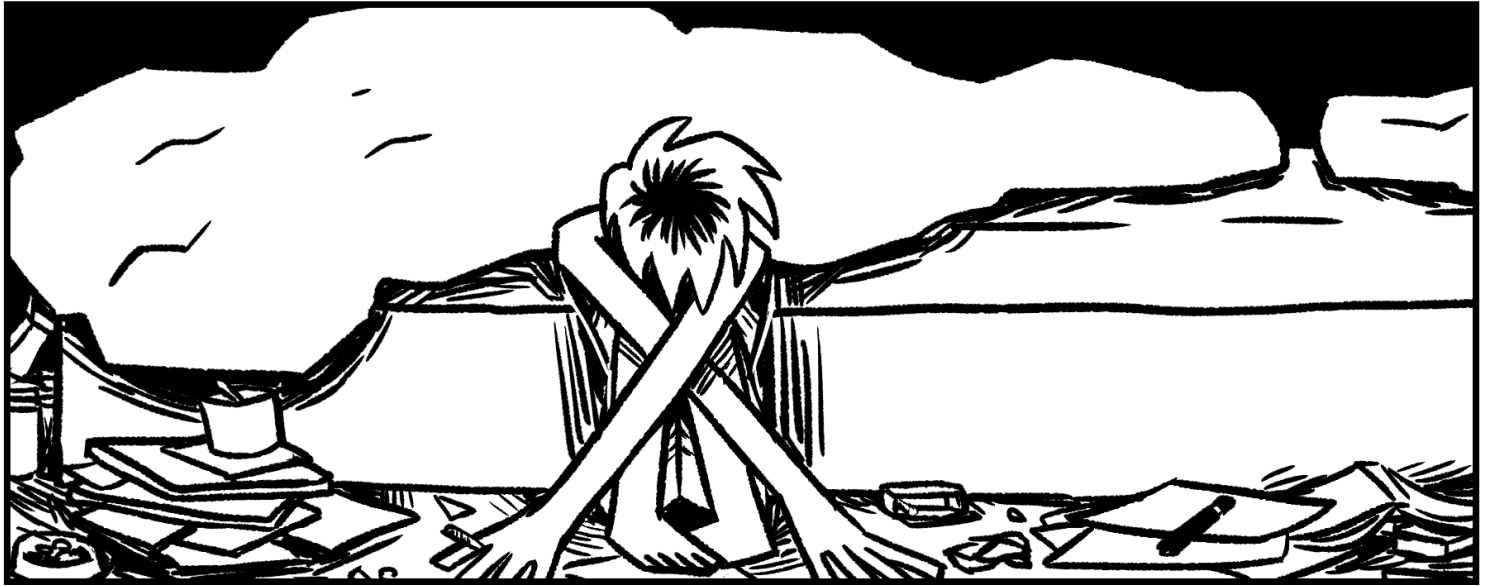
WHAT KIND OF PERSON
ABANDONS SOMEONE WHO
THEY THINK IS IN DANGER?

YOU DON'T GIVE A SHIT
ABOUT ABUSE VICTIMS,
AND YOU DON'T GIVE A
SHIT ABOUT ME EITHER!



I'M ALONE. I'M ALL ALONE.

AS I HAVE ALWAYS BEEN.



I JUST SPENT A FEW WEEKS HOLED UP INSIDE MY ROOM WITHOUT DRAWING. TODAY, MY FATHER FINALLY INTERVENED.



LET'S GET YOU BACK ON YOUR FEET.

WANNA KNOW THE COLOR OF THE WATER?



NOT REALLY.

IT'S GRAY, LAIKA.

YEESH.

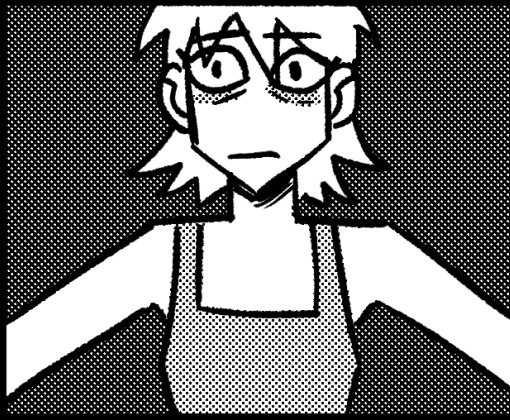
I FEEL LIKE I DON'T DESERVE TO BE PAMPERED.



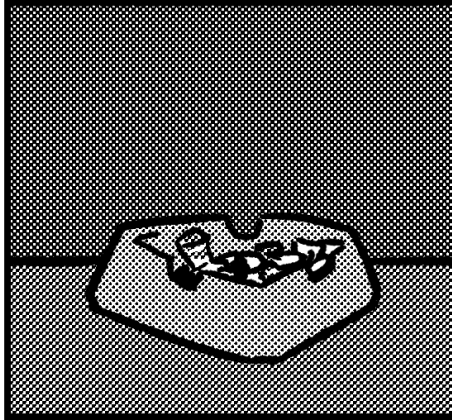
BUT I AM GRATEFUL.



EVERYTHING'S CLOSING DOWN AND WE'RE TOLD TO STAY HOME. THIS IS EITHER THE SHITTIEST OR GREATEST TIMING EVER.



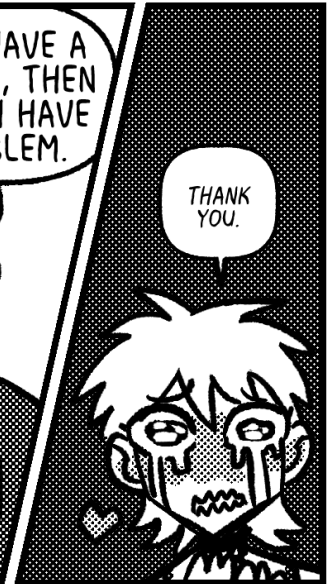
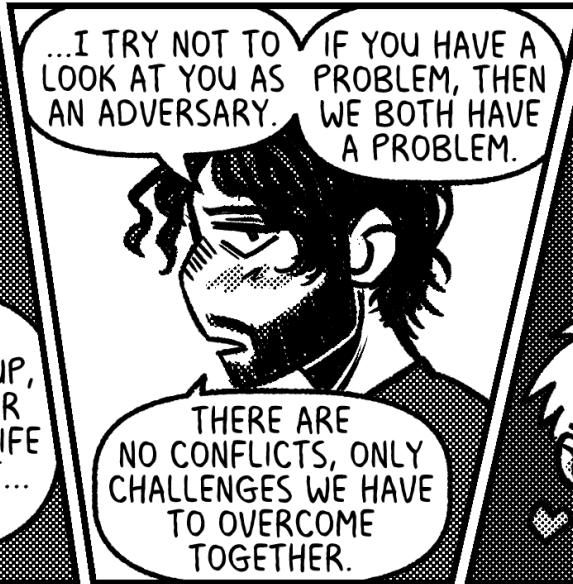
DAD'S FINALLY STARTING TO LAY OFF ON THE SMOKING AGAIN, I WAS STARTING TO GET A LITTLE WORRIED.



IT'S HARD NOT TO CHECK SOCIAL MEDIA, BUT IT HELPS THAT I'M NOT ALONE.



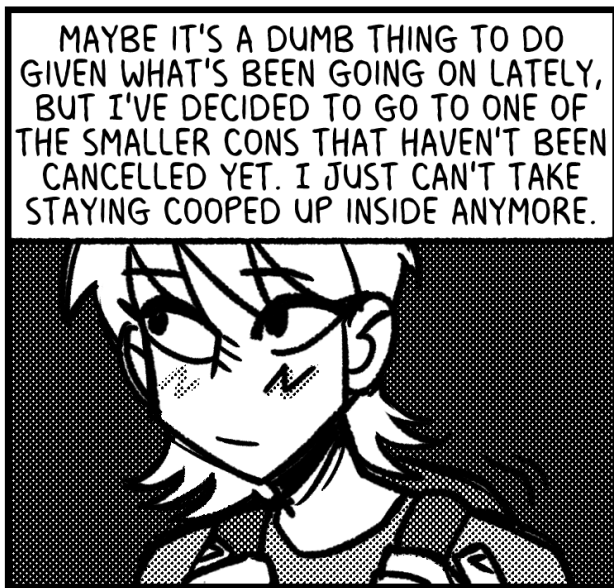
HE PROMISED HE'D ALWAYS BE BY MY SIDE, AND HE'S KEEPING THAT PROMISE.



I WANT
TO BE USED AND
ABUSED









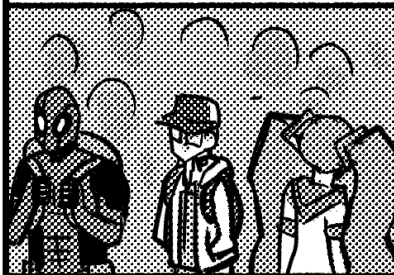
I'VE ONLY BEEN RECOGNIZED A FEW TIMES, BUT IT'S ALREADY TOO CLOSE FOR COMFORT, SO...

I WONDER HOW MANY PEOPLE OUTSIDE OF OUR INNER CIRCLE HAVE READ MY PIECE.

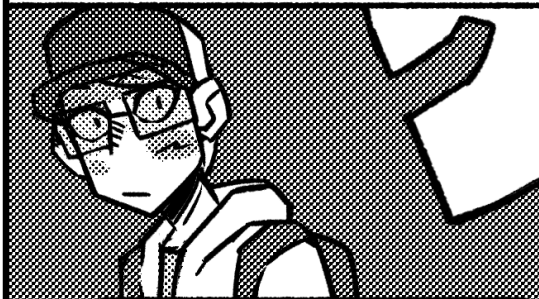
NO MATTER HOW MUCH THEY HATE DAD, NO ONE WOULD WANT TO BE THE ONE TO LEAK SOMETHING LIKE THAT TO THE PUBLIC, BUT...



THIS IS ME INCOGNITO, I GUESS.



MOST PEOPLE STILL SEEM TO BE UNAWARE- THAT'S FOR THE BEST.



TO OTHER PROS... THAT'S ANOTHER MATTER.



WERE YOU SENT THAT LINK TOO?

OH, LAIKA, RIGHT?

THEY'RE TALKING ABOUT ME!



POOR GIRL. SUCH A SHAME.

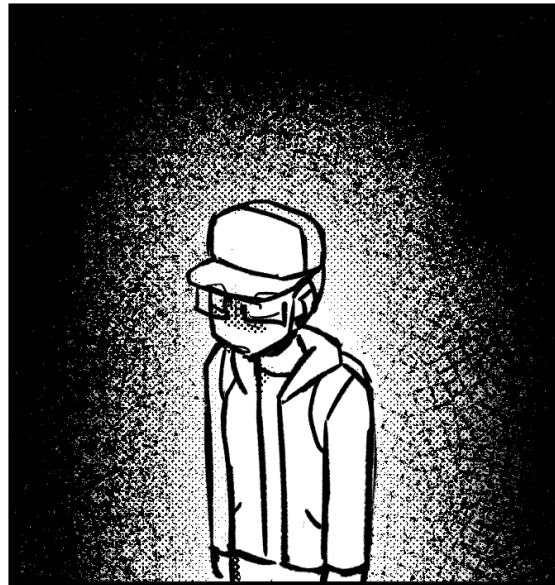
IT'S SAD I'M NOT EVEN THAT SURPRISED.



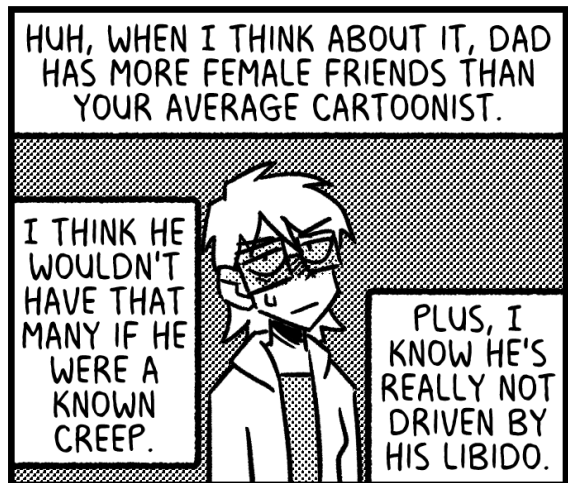
REALLY? WHY?

WELL, I MEAN-

WE ALL KNEW VAN HAD A REPUTATION FOR... YOU KNOW.

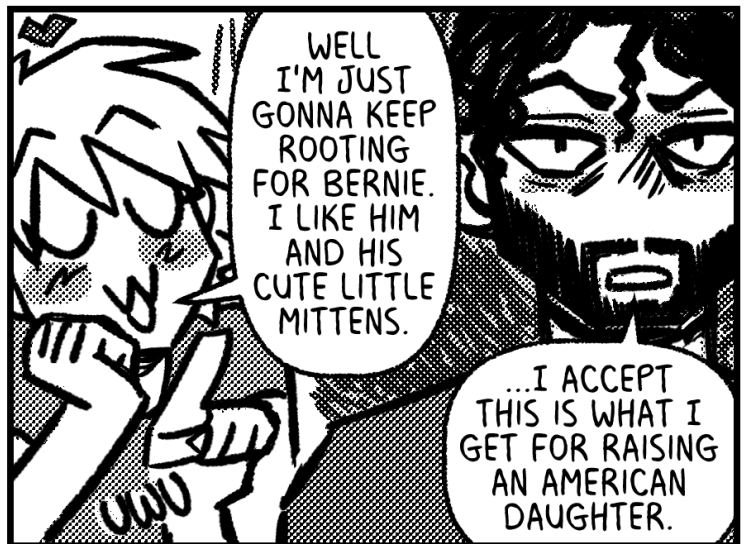
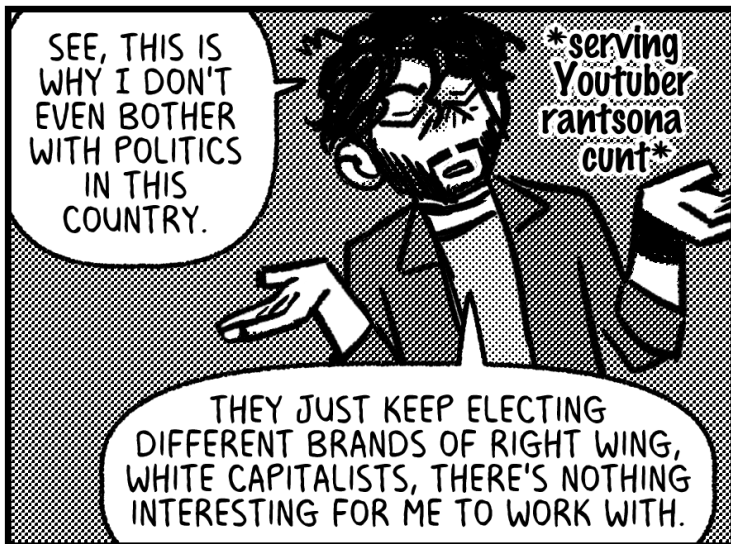
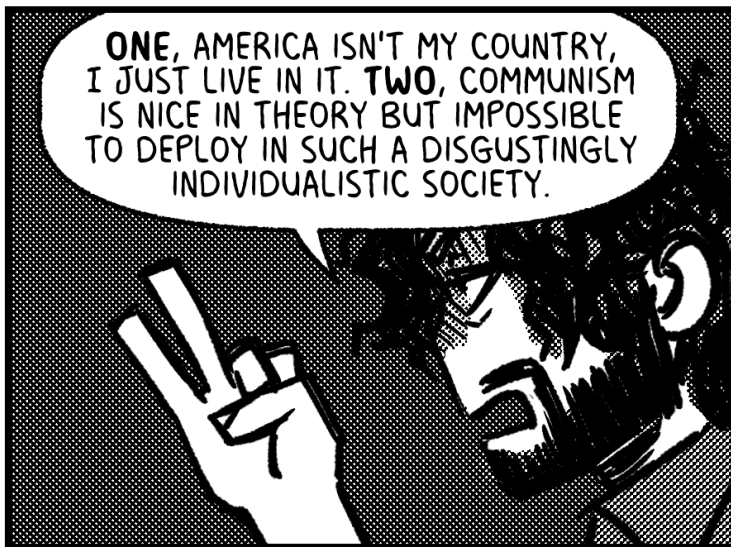
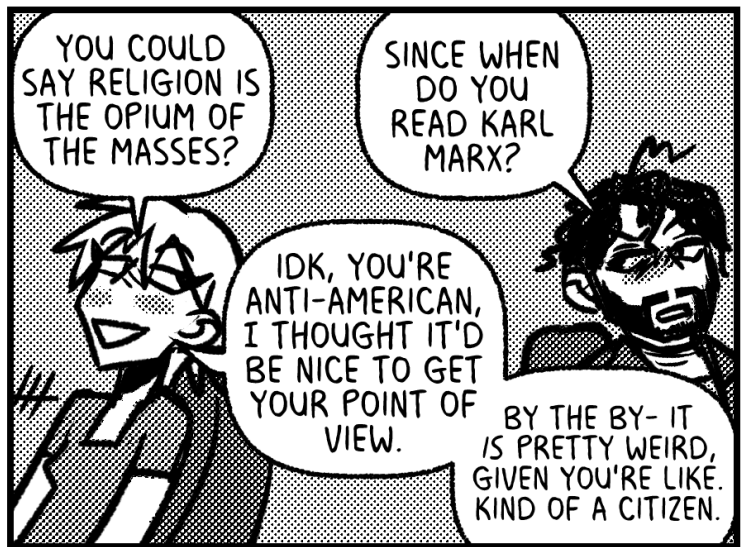


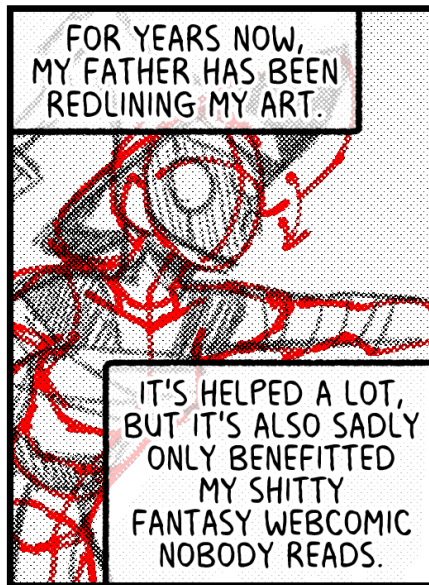
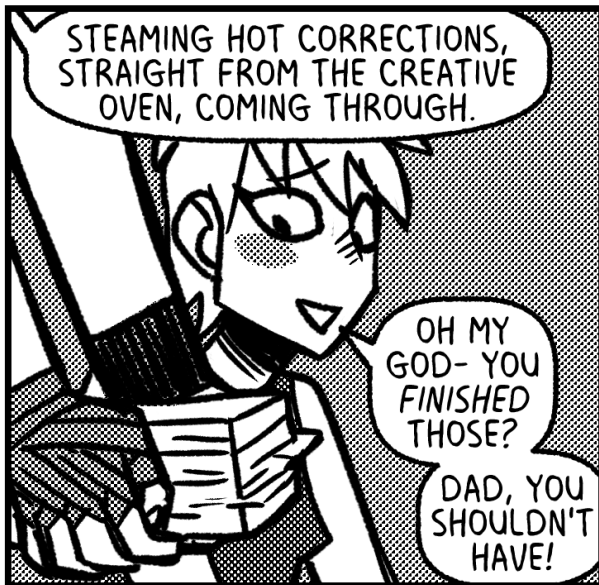
WHAT???

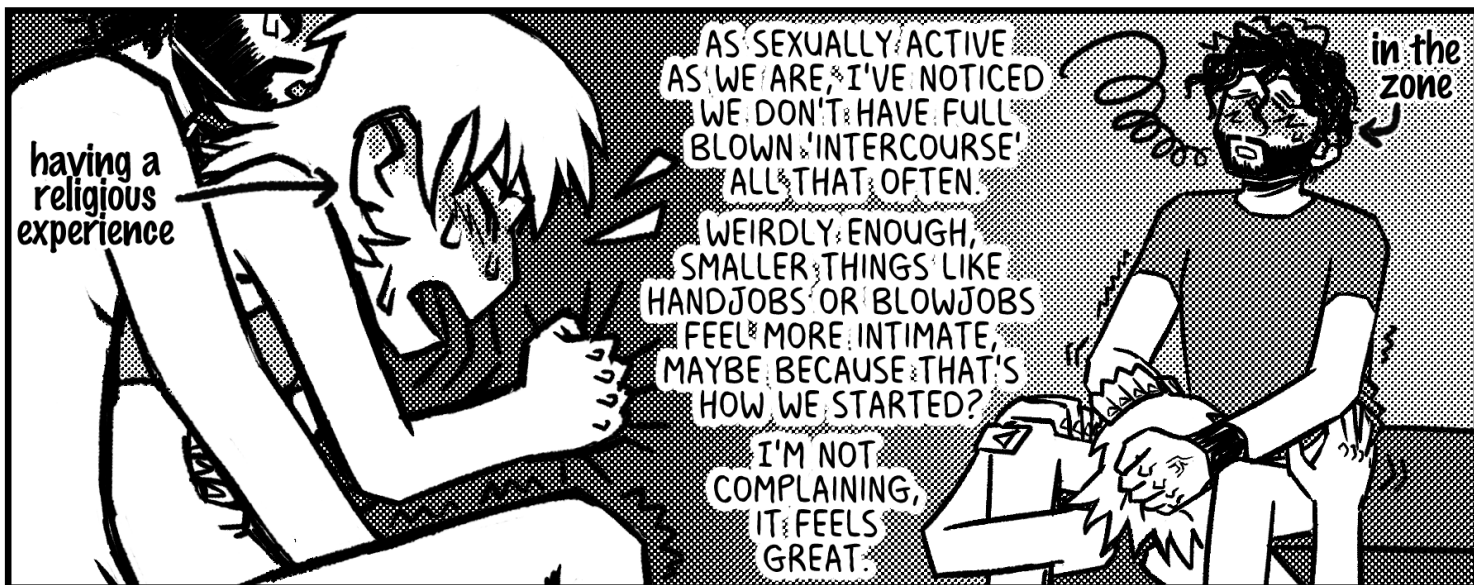




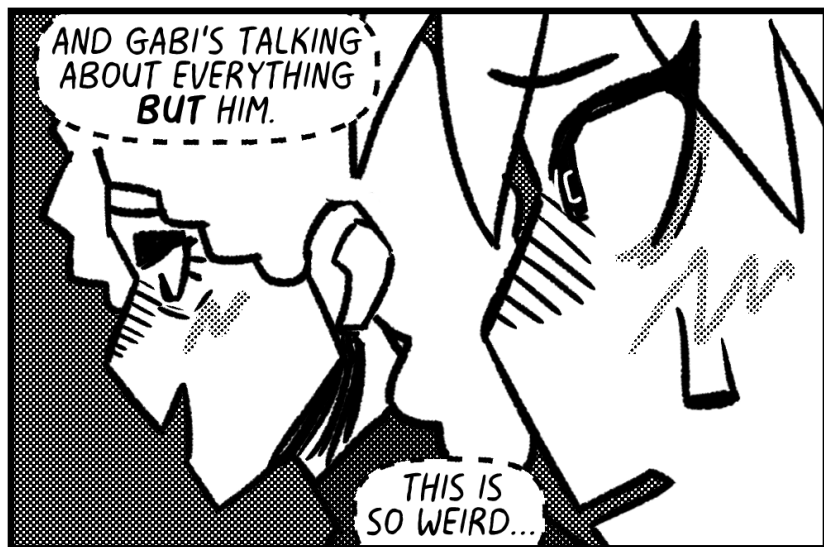
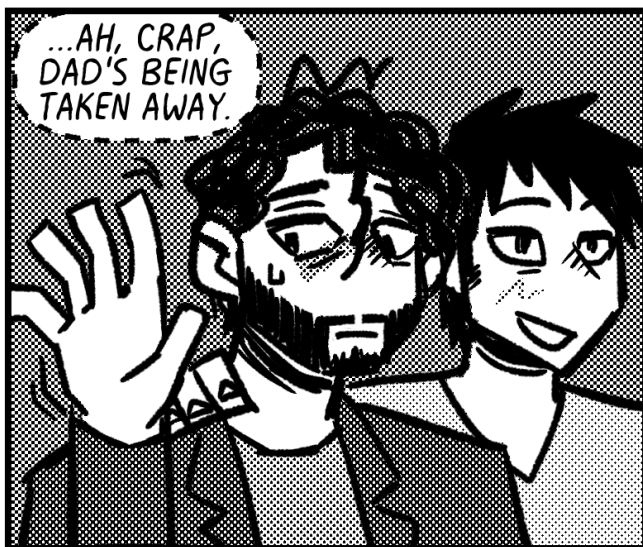
SUMMER 2020













I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU HAD THE **NERVE** TO SHOW UP HERE AS IF IT WAS NORMAL-

AS IF YOU WERE WELCOME.

I WAS INVITED.



A MORE DECENT PERSON WOULD'VE STAYED HOME.



DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEA HOW IT FELT TO READ THOSE THINGS?

YOU WERE MY FRIEND, MY PARTNER. AND NOW...

"BETRAYAL" DOESN'T EVEN COME CLOSE TO DESCRIBING IT.

I HAVE TO RESIST THE URGE TO THROW UP WHENEVER I SEE SOMETHING WE MADE TOGETHER.



EVERYTHING ABOUT YOU HAS BECOME DISGUSTING.



...CAN'T I EVEN TRY TO EXPLAIN IT?

NO.

I DON'T WANT TO HEAR YOUR EXCUSES.



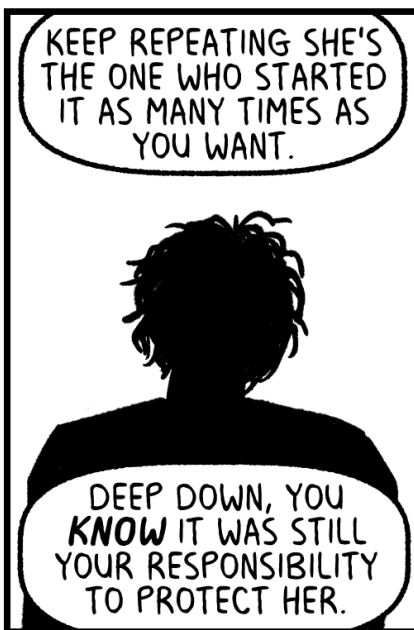
I MADE A MISTAKE, AND I'M OWNING UP TO IT-

YOU DON'T JUST ACCIDENTALLY GROOM YOUR OWN DAUGHTER.



THIS ISN'T A MISTAKE, VAN, THIS IS A LIFETIME OF MISTAKES.

I-



KEEP REPEATING SHE'S THE ONE WHO STARTED IT AS MANY TIMES AS YOU WANT.

DEEP DOWN, YOU **KNOW** IT WAS STILL YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO PROTECT HER.



THIS IS GOING TO FOLLOW HER AND UNDERMINE HER HER ENTIRE LIFE, NO MATTER HOW BADLY SHE THINKS SHE'S IN LOVE WITH YOU.

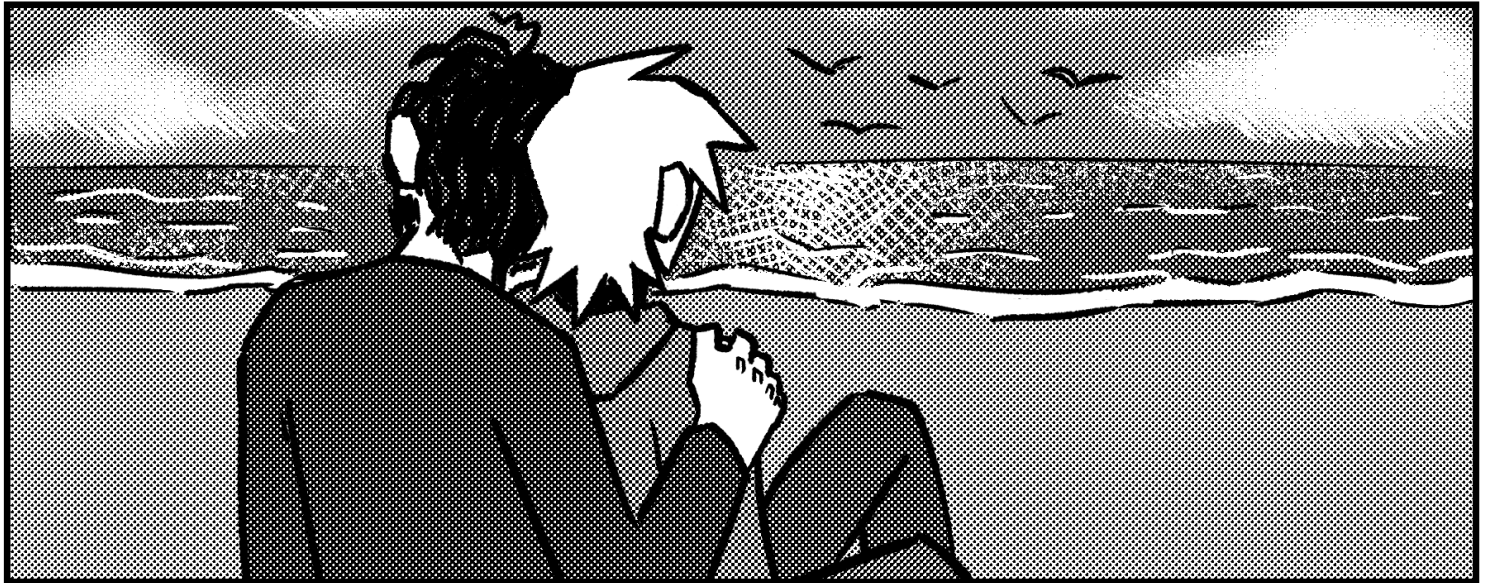
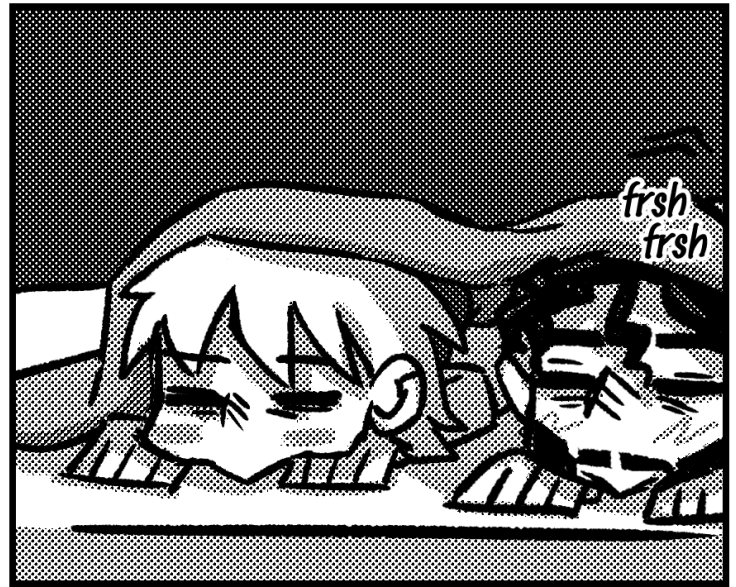
YOUR ONLY SAVING GRACE WAS BEING MAN ENOUGH TO NOT DENY HER THE RIGHT TO SPEAK OUT.

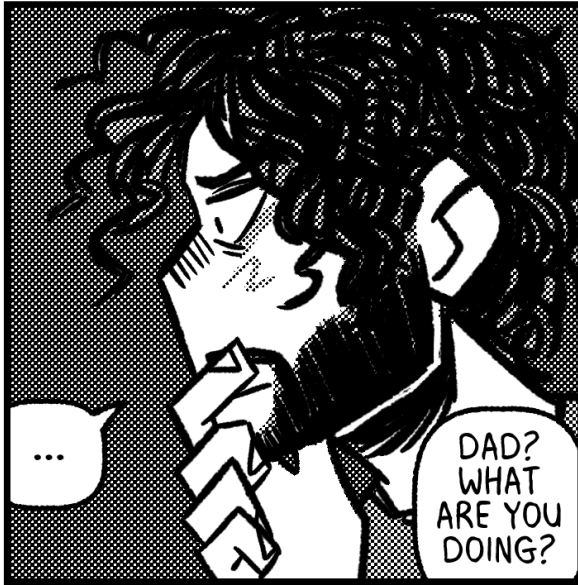
BUT LISTEN TO ME...



IF I LEARN YOU'VE BEEN HURTING HER, I SWEAR TO GOD-

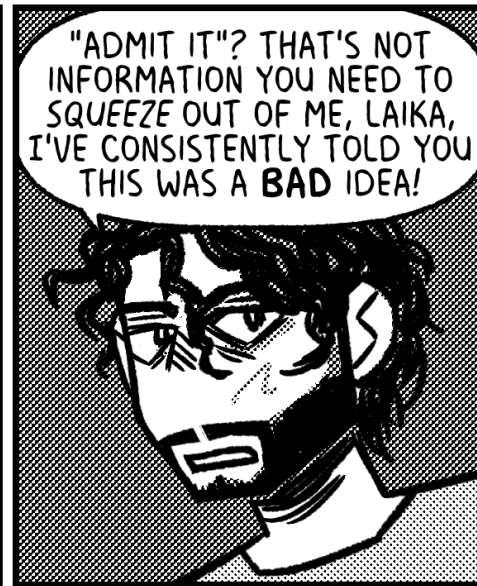
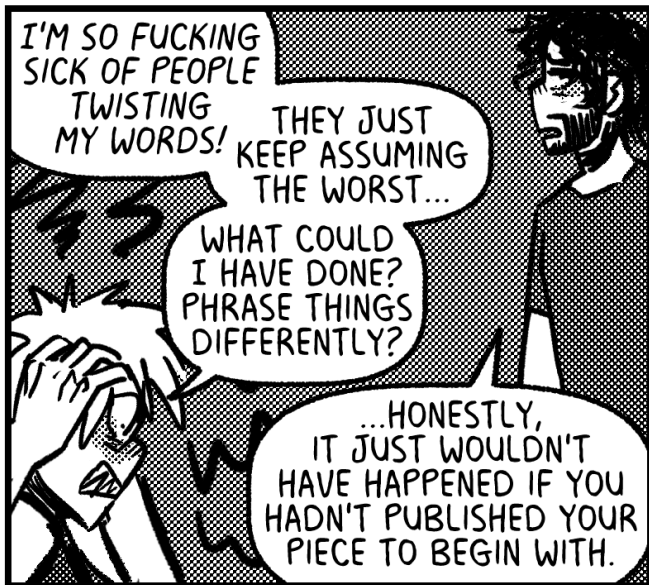
I WILL FUCKING KILL YOU.





**YOU CAN
NEVER TAKE
IT BACK.**

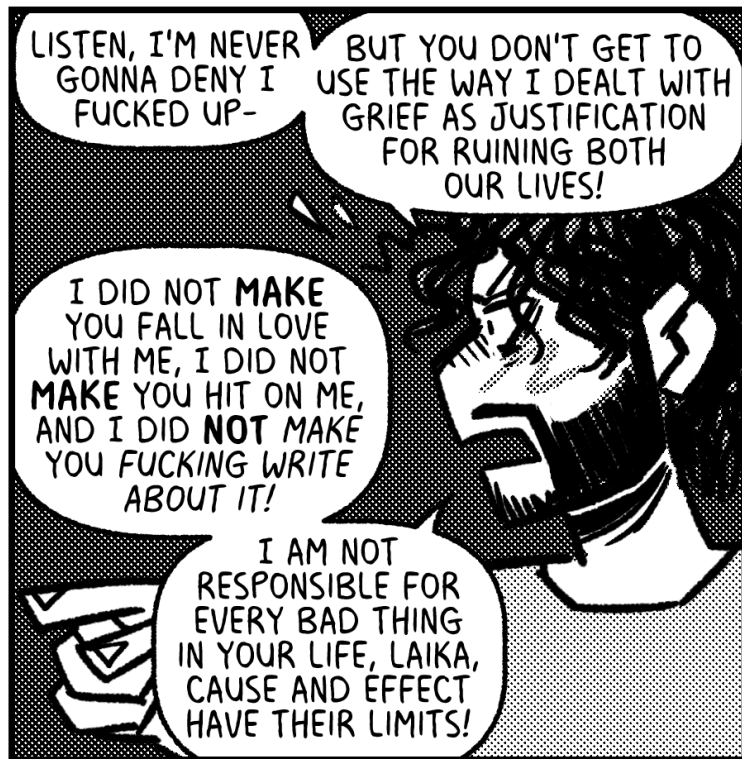






YOU'RE THE ONE WHO MADE ME FEEL THAT WAY-

I WOULD **NOT** HAVE BEEN SO DESPERATE FOR YOUR LOVE IF YOU HADN'T ACTED LIKE SUCH A FUCKING STRANGER AFTER MOM DIED!



LISTEN, I'M NEVER GONNA DENY I FUCKED UP-

BUT YOU DON'T GET TO USE THE WAY I DEALT WITH GRIEF AS JUSTIFICATION FOR RUINING BOTH OUR LIVES!

I DID NOT **MAKE** YOU FALL IN LOVE WITH ME, I DID NOT **MAKE** YOU HIT ON ME, AND I DID **NOT** **MAKE** YOU **FUCKING** WRITE ABOUT IT!

I AM NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR EVERY BAD THING IN YOUR LIFE, LAIKA, CAUSE AND EFFECT HAVE THEIR LIMITS!



OH, SO IT'S JUST ALL MY FAULT, NOW?

WOW, VERY BRAVE OF YOU, DAD, I COULD ALMOST FORGET YOU BARELY TALKED TO ME FOR 6 YEARS!



I DON'T WANNA PLAY THE BLAME GAME, AND I'M NOT GONNA LET YOU RETROACTIVELY DECIDE YOU OUTED US TO PUNISH ME FOR BEING A DISTANT FATHER!

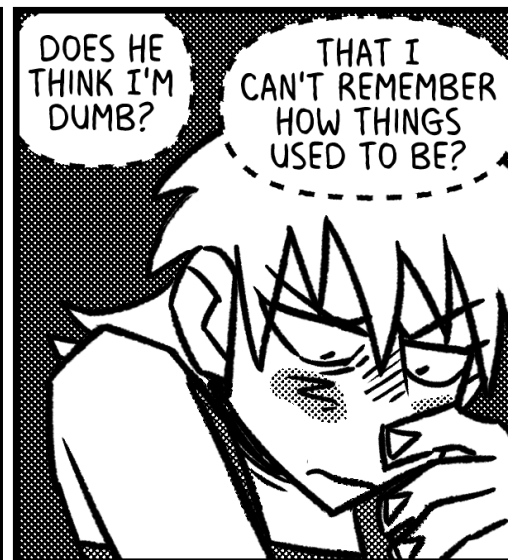
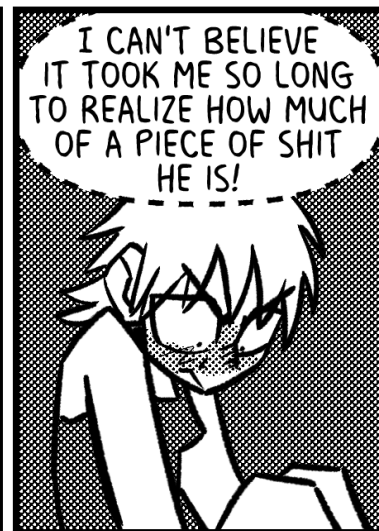
YOU WROTE ABOUT US, PSYCHOTICALLY THINKING THAT SOMEHOW, PEOPLE WOULD BE OKAY WITH US, AND THEY **WEREN'T**.

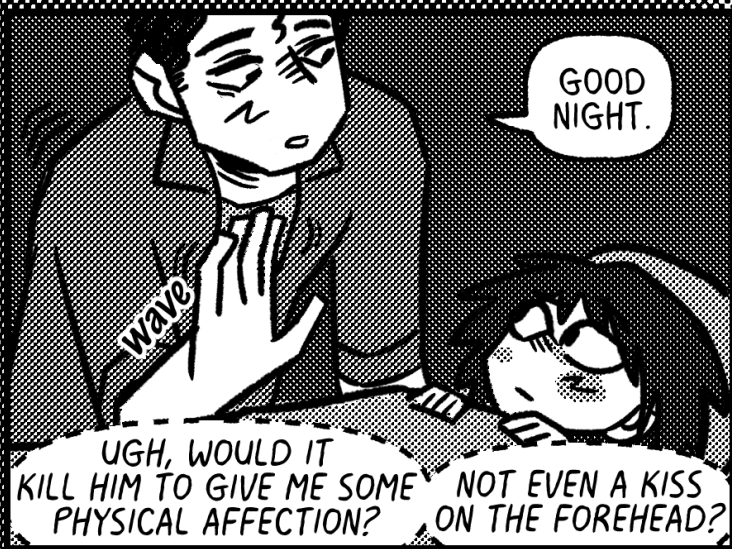
YOU GAMBLLED AND YOU **LOST**, THAT'S ALL THERE IS.



MY GOD- IT'S LIKE IT'S THE FIRST TIME YOU'VE BEEN FORCED TO ACKNOWLEDGE YOUR ACTIONS HAVE CONSEQUENCES!







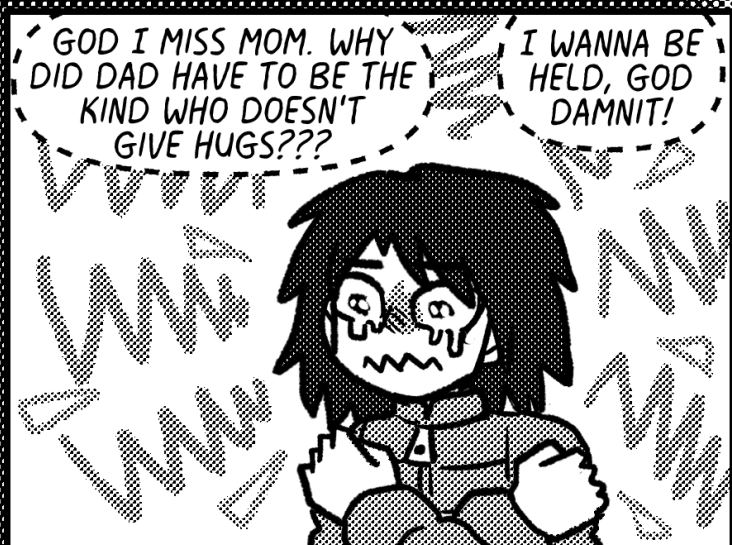
GOOD NIGHT.

wave

UGH, WOULD IT KILL HIM TO GIVE ME SOME PHYSICAL AFFECTION? NOT EVEN A KISS ON THE FOREHEAD?



MHF!



GOD I MISS MOM. WHY DID DAD HAVE TO BE THE KIND WHO DOESN'T GIVE HUGS???

I WANNA BE HELD, GOD DAMNIT!



...HE'S SO OBSESSED WITH WORK, I BET HE WOULDN'T EVEN NOTICE IF I BROKE A LEG.



I JUST SAW YOU TWITCH- LAIKA, PUT THAT PEN DOWN IMMEDIATELY!!

YOU'RE GONNA HURT YOURSELF IF YOU KEEP ABUSING YOUR HAND.





LAIKA-NO!

I WAS BEING GOOD! I WAS *FINALLY* BEING A GOOD FATHER, AND YOU JUST WANT TO...

FUCK, I...

YOU WANNA RUIN IT?



THAT'S NOT- I'M NOT TRYING TO RUIN ANYTHING!

I THOUGHT YOU WANTED THIS, WHY ELSE WOULD YOU..?

I DON'T KNOW. I NEEDED TO CONFESS. BUT THIS-

AND YOU WERE THE ONE WHO CALLED FIRST, I...

FUCK!

I WAS BEING A GOOD FATHER!



I WAS SO HAPPY TO BE ABLE TO CONNECT WITH YOU-

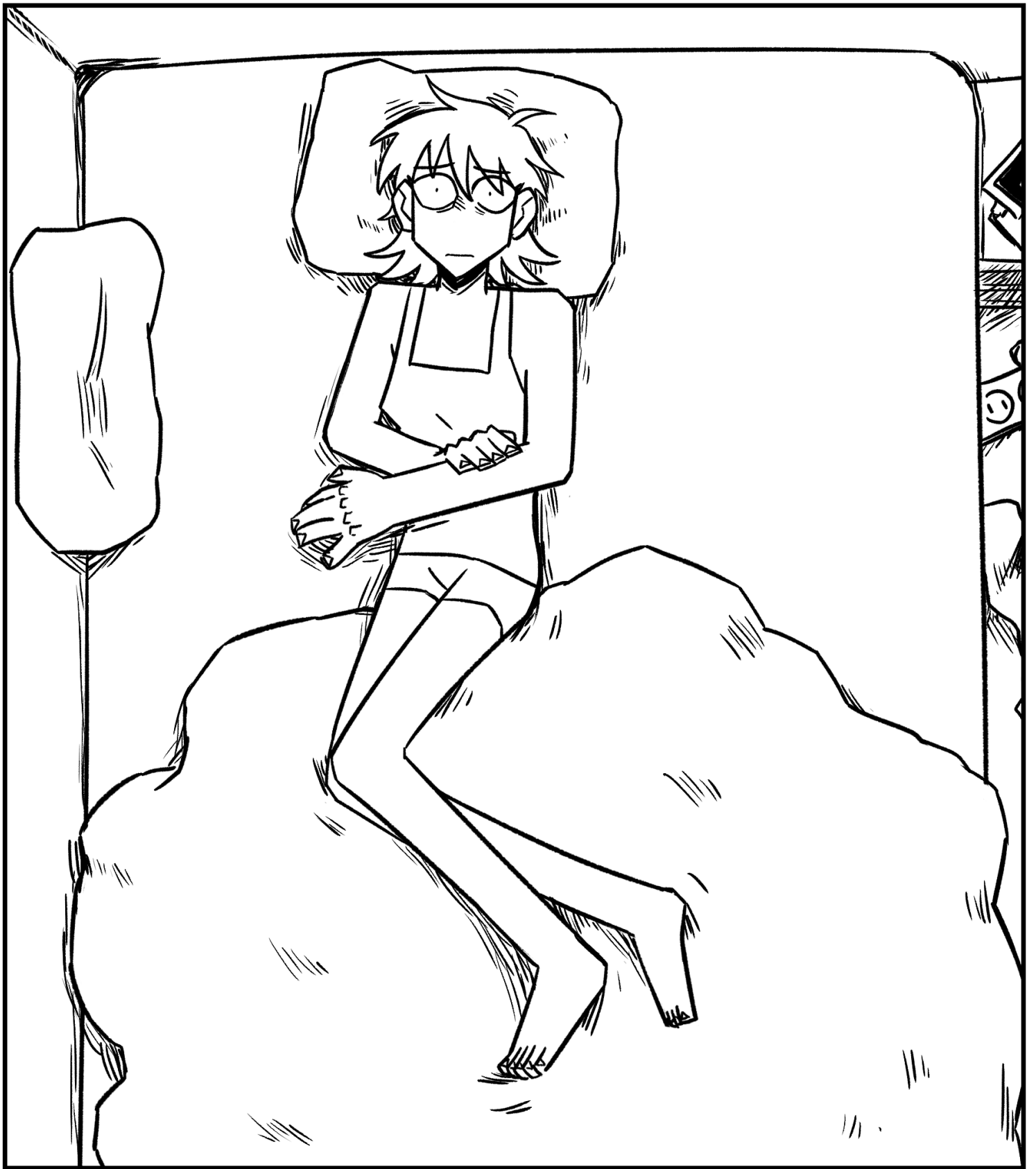
BUT WE STILL HAVE THAT BOND, WE'RE JUST... ADDING TO IT.

...THIS IS FUCKED UP...

TO ACTUALLY BUILD A BOND WITH YOU AND HELP YOU, FOR ONCE!

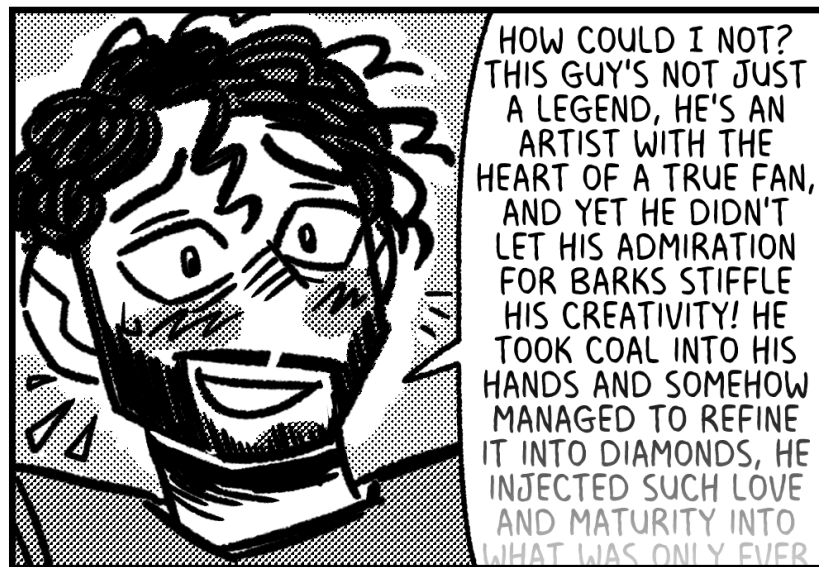
WE BOTH WANT IT, SO WHAT'S WRONG WITH THAT?

GOD, THIS IS SO FUCKED UP.



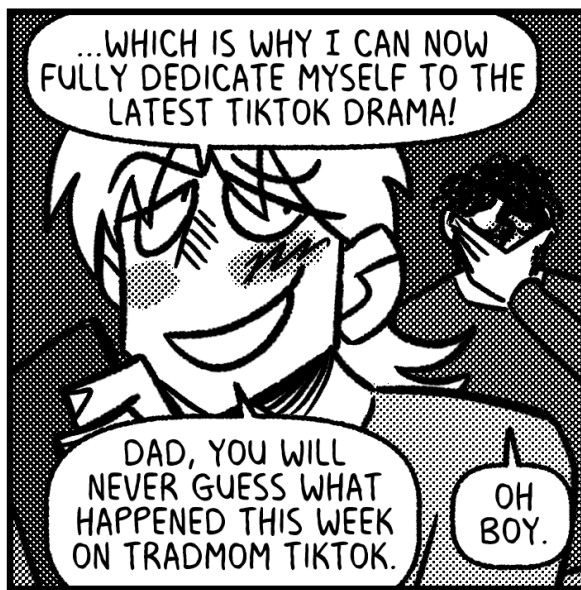
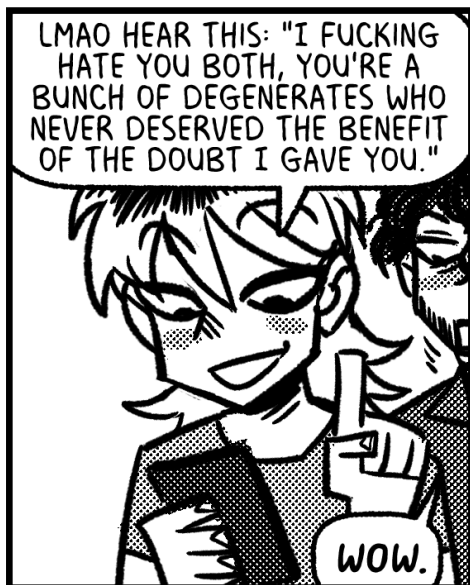


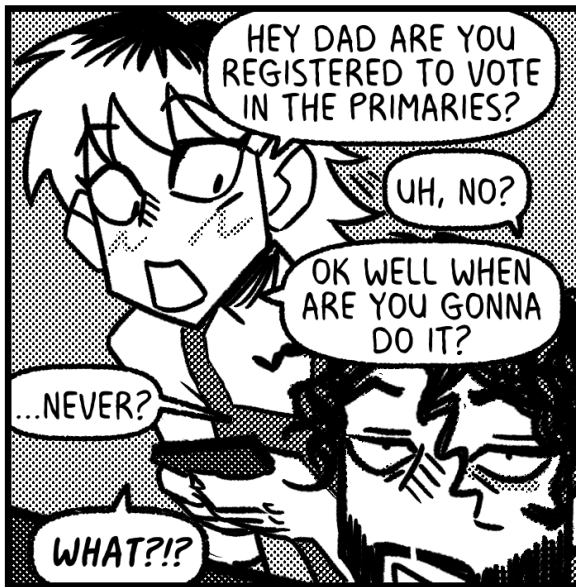






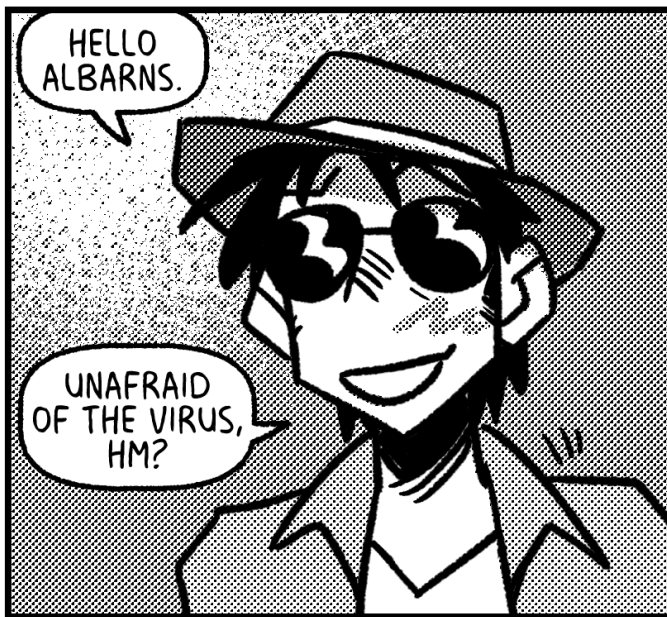
あんなに!



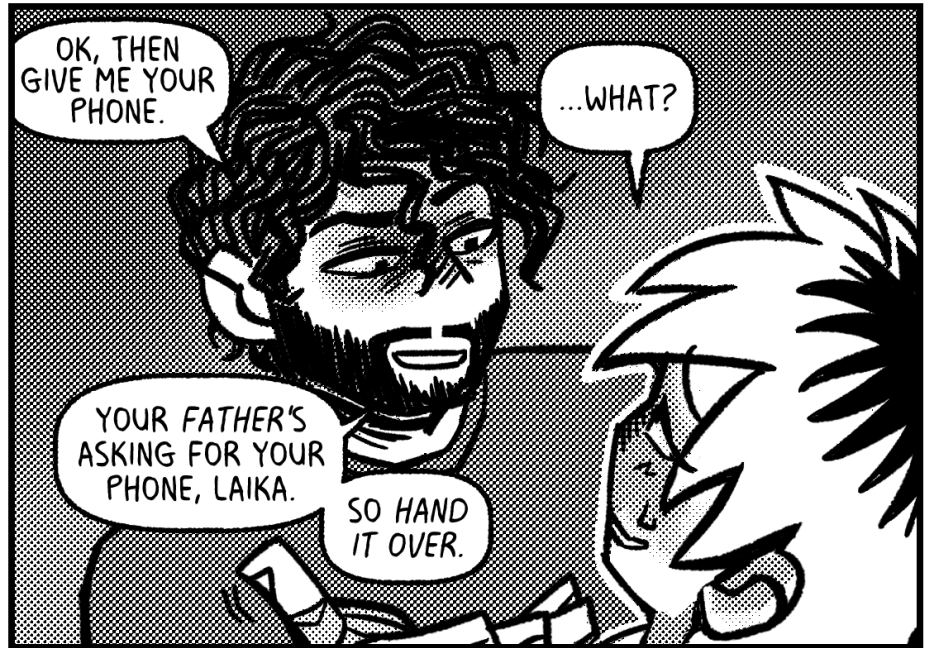


HEY, YOU
MADE IT!









TO BE CONTINUED...

WAIT- IT'S
ALREADY THE
END??

BUT
I WANT
MORE!!

WHAT
HAPPENS
NEXT?!

IN PART 2
OF

LIMERENCE



Afterword

Last summer (2021), I started writing what became a 60k wordcount novel loosely based on my life. It was done for fun and catharsis, and I didn't really picture myself sharing it with anyone but my close friends and my dad. But then, a few months later, something both beautiful and extremely shitty happened, and I found myself needing more than ever to express myself and share my art, as it is my one and only best coping mechanism to this date. I also just think comics are pretty fucking cool!

So here we are- after I finished publishing my autobio novel online, I decided to compile every comic and notes I'd made after my life really went to shit and tried to make it into one somewhat coherent whole.

Some old comics were redrawn, some were left as is, and some new comics I drew using my notes to fill in the blanks.

That's as much from me as you're gonna get.

The few people who've seen my prior work may have expected more explicit content, but truth is, I've realized listening to the more manic part of my brain is not the healthiest thing to do, so I've elected to keep the raunchier stuff to myself for once, and instead focus on the things I'm used to glossing over.

I am not a "good" trauma victim- I lash out, I throw tantrums, I say and do horrible things to those I love and expect kindness in return.

And even if, over time, I've learned to mitigate those behaviors, I don't feel like I want to pretend I'm not an incredibly toxic person. That would feel disrespectful, both to the people who have had to put up with me, and to myself as well, because the woman I see in those pages looks so foreign to me nowadays because of how much I've improved myself since.

One aspect of becoming a better person has been to try and be more respectful of other people's privacy- for this book, I insisted my father tell me what he was really uncomfortable with so that I could remove it. Nothing major was censored, but I am left with the impression that for once, I have made what truly is a harmless piece of work.

As always, thank/fuck you for reading this.

LAIKA
♡