

GLOWING HEARTS

BY PENELOPE MERCH-LEHMAN



To, for and because of
Miles Lehman
Your encouragement is *deeply* suspicious,
but extremely appreciated.

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Glowing Hearts

BOOK ONE

NEW FOUNDATIONS

by PENELOPE MERCH-LEHMAN

I dunno, this one is only like 55 pages long,
do you really need a table of contents for it?

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BY PENNY MERCH





MIND IF I JUMP OUT IT IN EMBARRASSMENT?



WE CAN DISCUSS THE VENTILATORY PROBLEMS OF YOUR ROOM AT A LATER POINT IN TIME.





THE ENTIRE SURFACE OF THE EARTH COULD BE YOUR KITCHEN AND YOU'D STILL NOT BE ABLE TO FIND A PLACE TO PUT YOUR CUTTING BOARD WITHOUT HAVING TO SEND A BUNCH OF STUFF TO THE MOON.



I'VE HEARD OF A DOOR HINGING ON SOMETHING ELSE, BUT SOMETHING HINGING ON A DOOR?
NOW I'VE HEARD EVERYTHING!

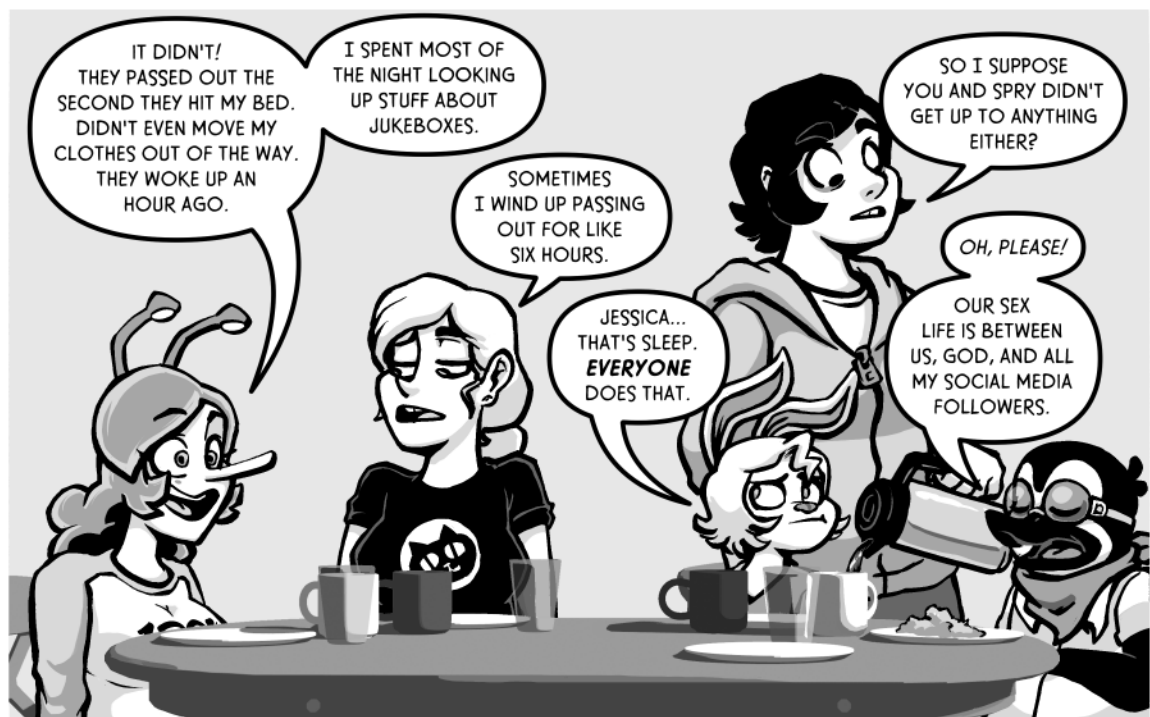


"OH, SO *JUST BECAUSE* IT'S MORE LIKE YOUR ENTIRE WORLD CAME TO AN END THAN BEING ON A VACATION, YOU CAN'T SLEEP WITH MY GIRLFRIEND??? RUDE!"





DON'T MIND HIM, HE THINKS *EVERYTHING* IS MUMMIFICATION.



WAIT, HOLD ON, I DON'T CARE ABOUT SEX ANYMORE.



WHAT COULD YOU POSSIBLY SPEND **EIGHT HOURS** LOOKING UP ABOUT JUKEBOXES?

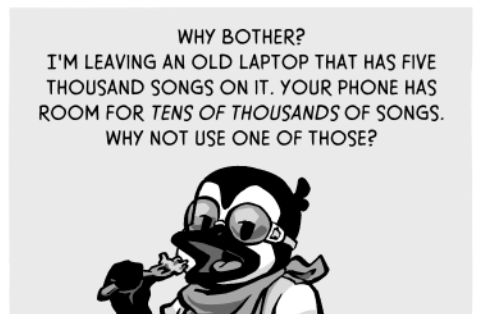
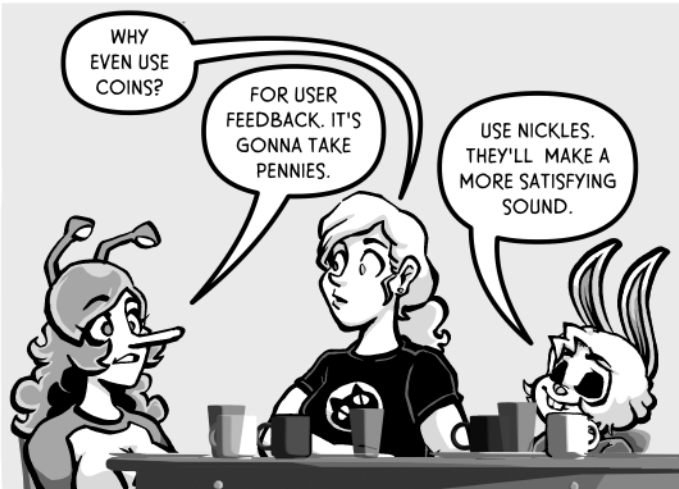
YOU BOX IT AND IT JUKE!

INTERESTING THAT NO ONE ASKED SCUM AND LORI IF THEY HAD.

JESSICA MENTIONED THEM AS A POSSIBLE MEANS OF GIVING ME A DIGESTIBLE AMOUNT OF SONGS TO DEAL WITH AT A TIME.

FOR THE TECH STUFF, I COULD USE JUNK WE HAVE LYING AROUND THE HOUSE.

THE CASING COULD BE ALMOST FULLY MECHANICAL - FROM THE BUTTONS TO THE COIN DROP.



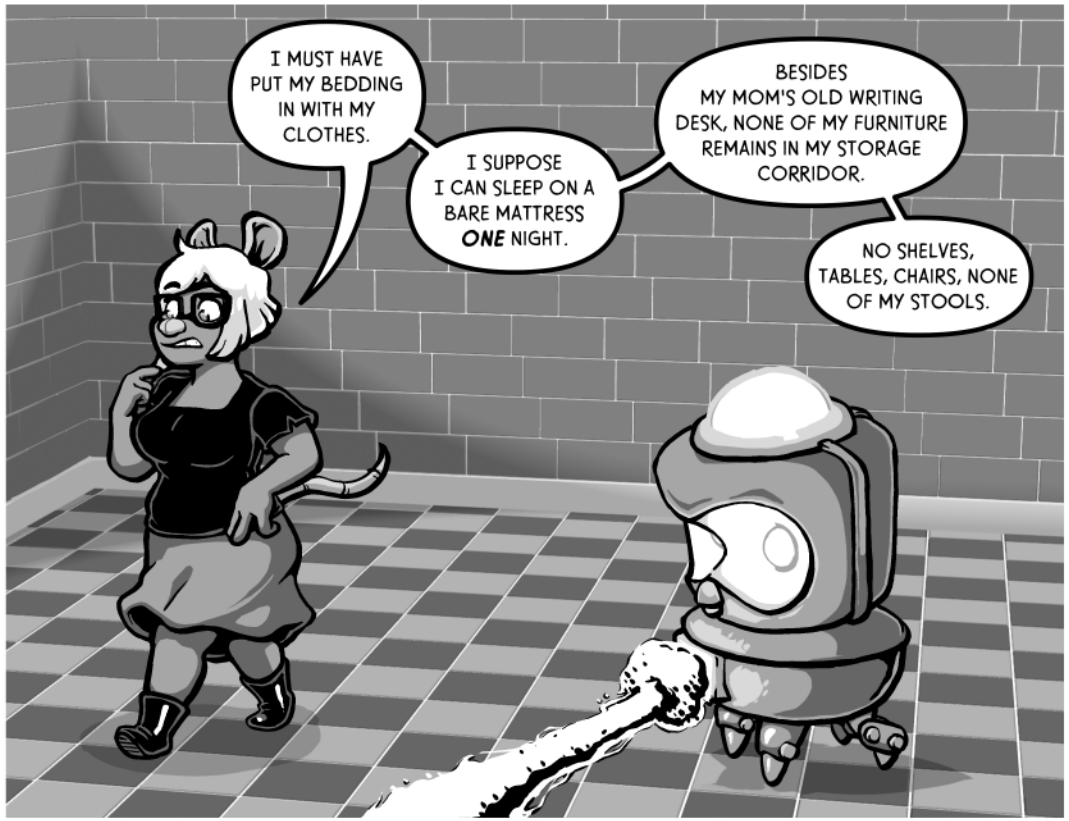
"MAYBE YOU GUYS DIDN'T GET THE MEMO - WHEN I SHARE SOMETHING I DID WITH YOU, YOU'RE ALL SUPPOSED TO TELL ME I'M GOOD WHICH IS WEIRD BECAUSE I *DEFINITELY* SENT IT TO EVERYONE."



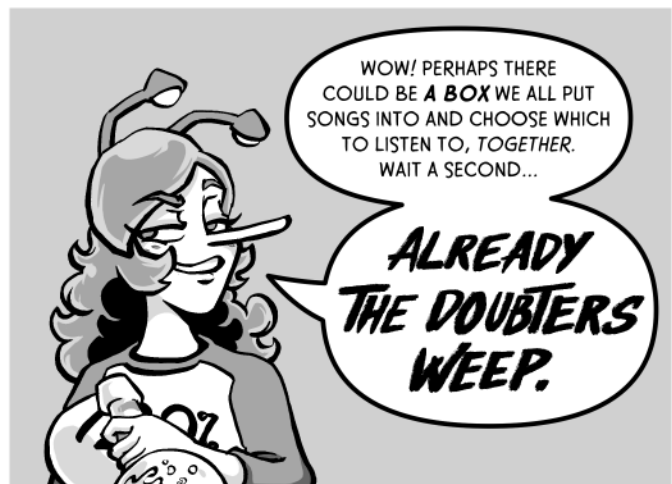
**OH SHIT!
ALREADY!?**

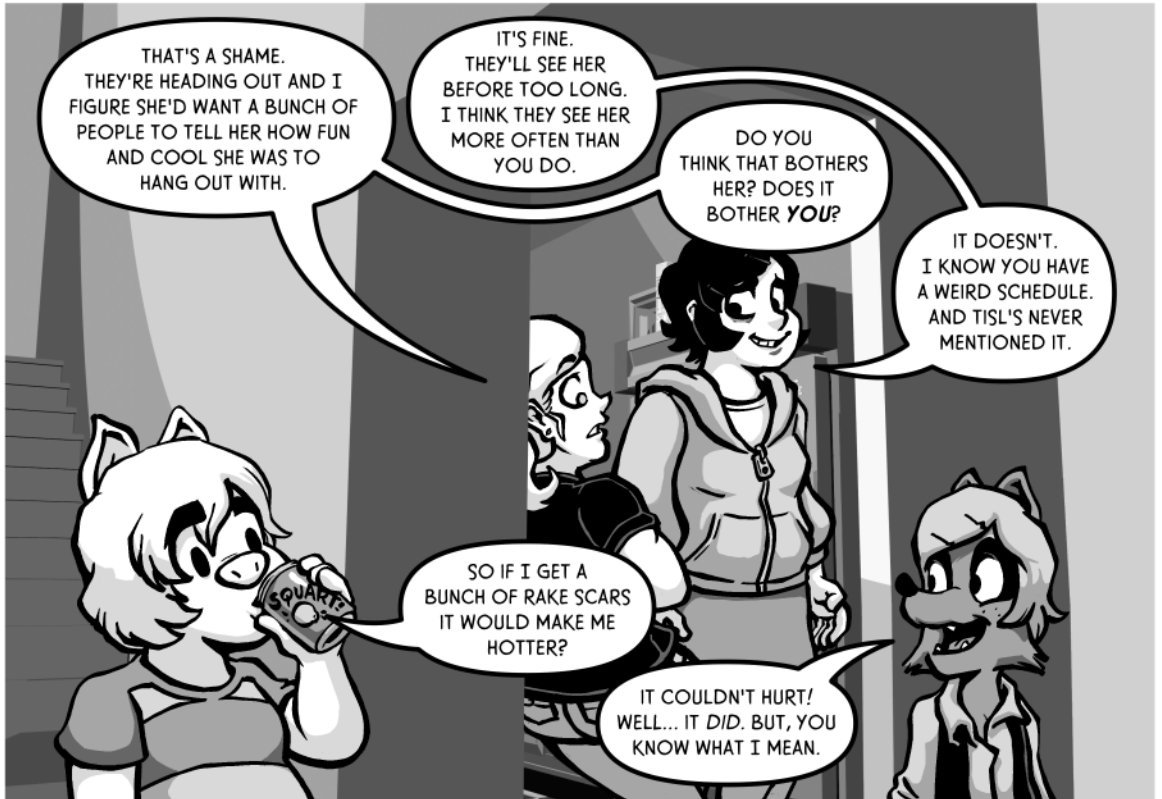
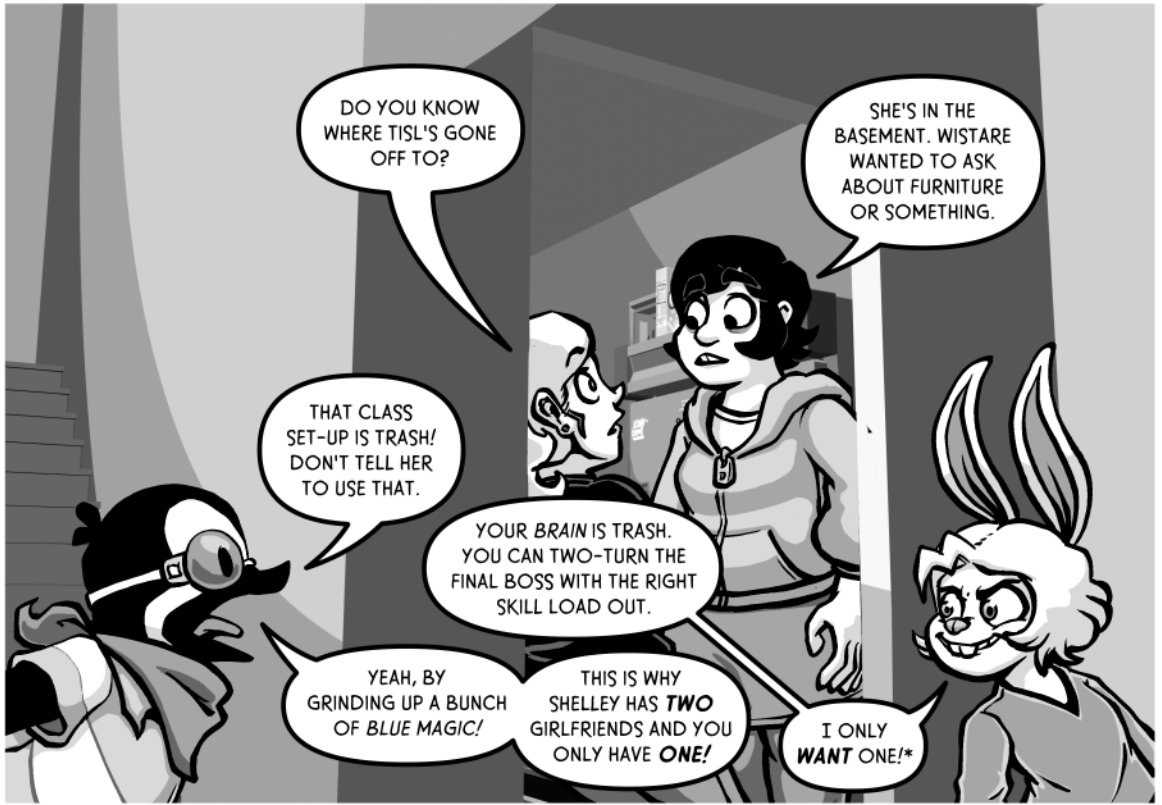


IT'S A ONE STEP PROCESS
STEP ONE: WANT TO BE A GIRL.
CONGRATULATIONS: YOU ARE ONE.

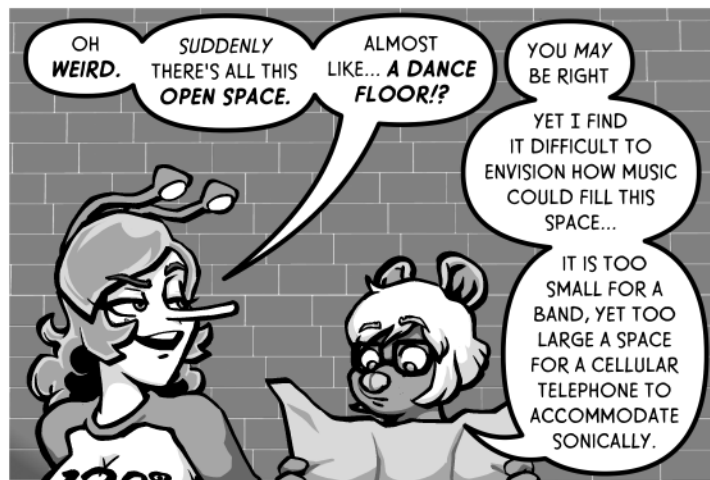
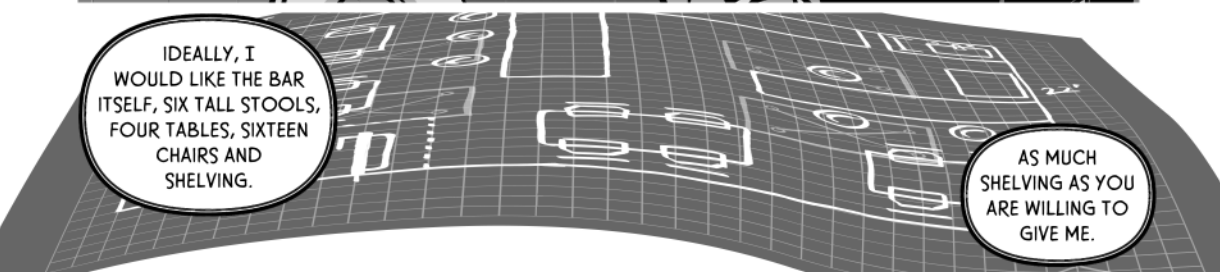


HAVING EMOTIONAL LABOR DELEGATED TO HIM?
BOULDOIT REALLY *IS* A REAL PET!





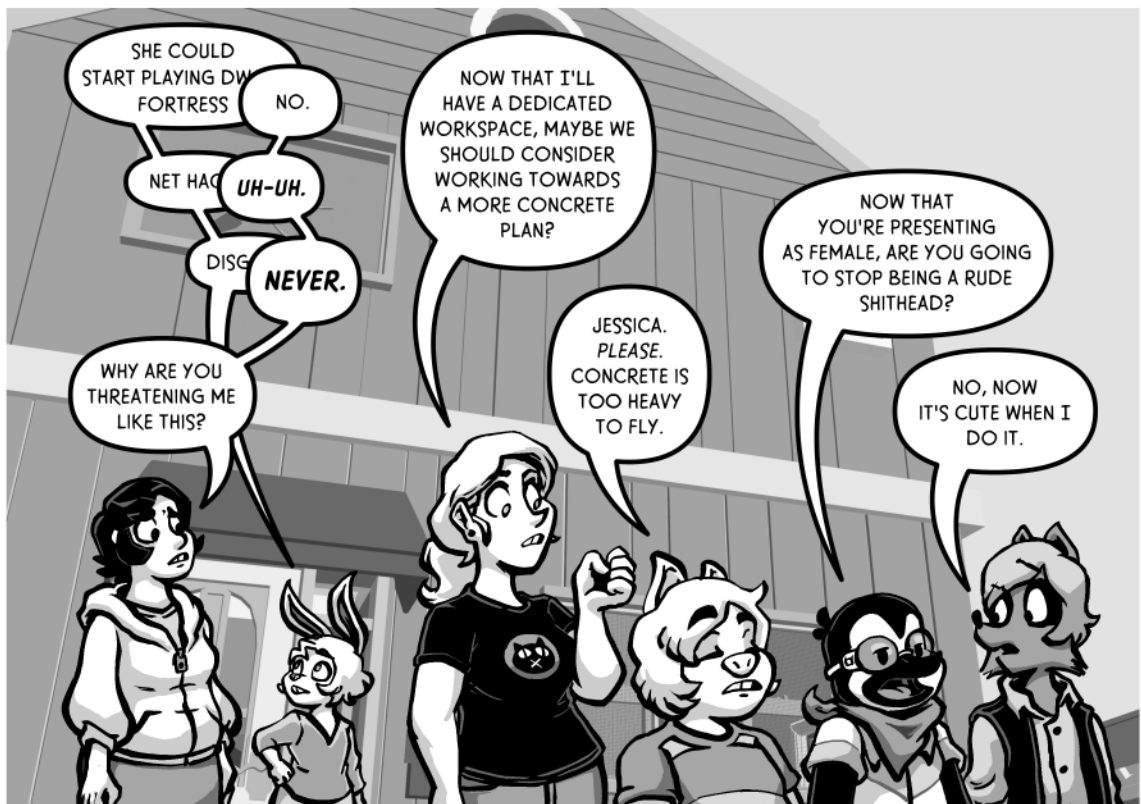
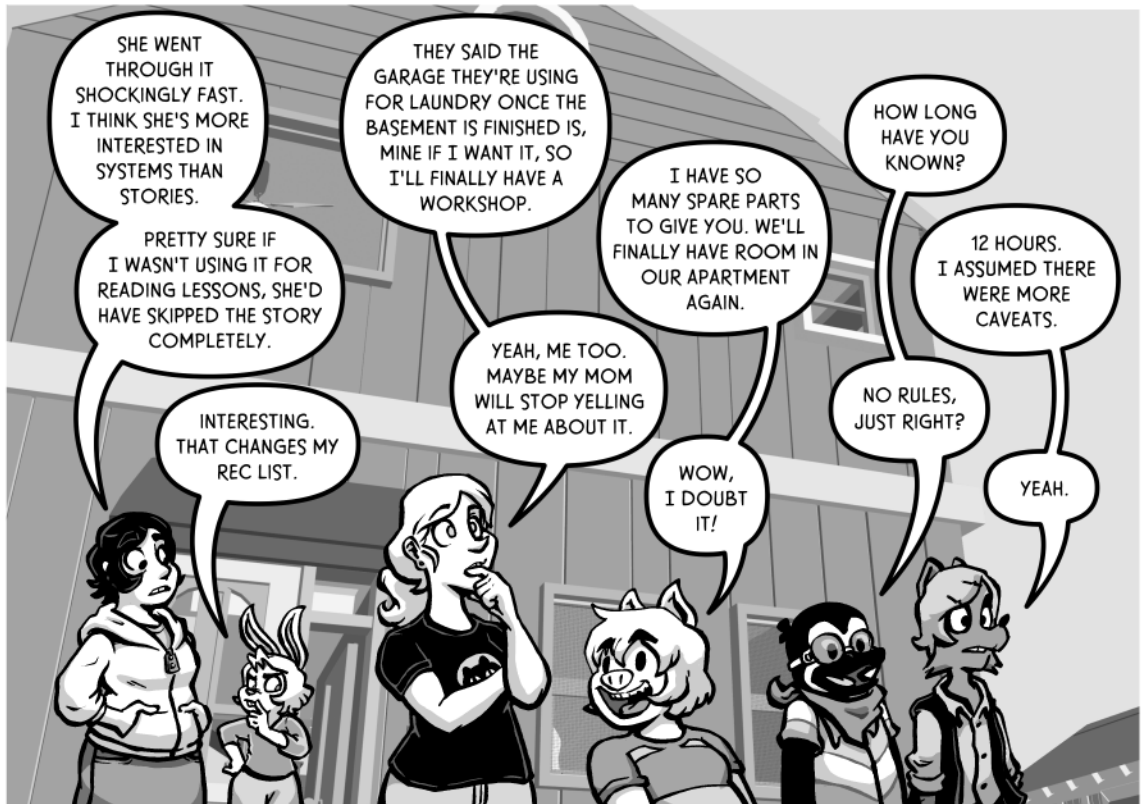
THIS REMAINS AN ANTI-BLUE MAGIC ZONE.
MISS ME WITH THAT SHIT. LITERALLY. I DON'T WANT TO LEARN IT.



INTERESTING!



YOU'RE NOT *ACTUALLY* TRICKING SOMEONE IF YOU'RE GIVING THEM EXACTLY WHAT THEY WANT.





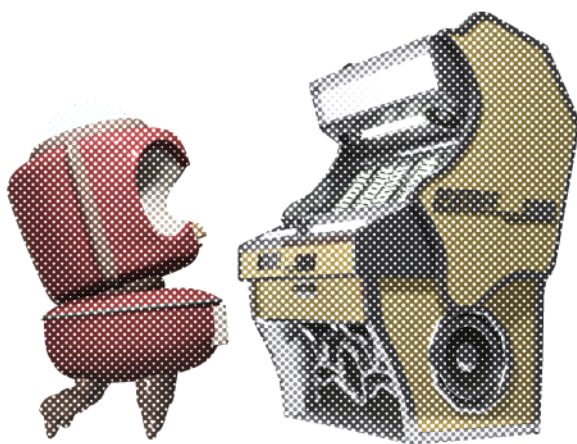


PULLING OUT A BUTCHER'S DRAWING OF VALOR, AND SHOWING ALL THE BEST PARTS OF IT.





NEXT TIME: A DETAILED INVENTORY OF EVERYTHING WRONG WITH THEM.



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PENELOPE MERCH

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TRYING TO MIRROR SOMEONE'S EXPRESSION IS TOTALLY NORMAL, I THINK.
NOW LET ME JUST TAKE A BIG SIP OF COFFEE WHILE I TAKE THIS RAADS-R TEST.



*CHOLER, OR "YELLOW BILE" IS ONE OF THE FOUR HUMORS. IT IS STORED IN THE SPLEEN AND CAUSES ANXIETY. THIS IS SCIENCE, OF COURSE.



DON'T GET HER WRONG, IT CAN ALSO BE AN EXCUSE.



I MEAN...



IF YOU CAN?



NOT EVERYTHING IN LIFE IS A LESSON WAITING TO BE LEARNED. SOMETIMES THINGS JUST HAPPEN.



HUH? I DON'T REMEMBER CHEECH BEING IN *GHOSTBUSTERS 2*.



YEAH, HE SEES THE GHOST TITANIC COME IN AND SAYS "BETTER LATE THAN NEVER."



THAT JOKE IS OK.



GHOSTBUSTERS 2 IS FULL OF JOKES THAT ARE OK.



YOU BETTER DECLARE YOURSELF, BEFORE YOU SCARE YOURSELF.



"OK, BUT DOES DEXTER EVEN *LIKE* HAVING BLOOD? THEY DON'T SEEM THAT CONCERNED WITH KEEPING IT INSIDE OF THEMSELVES."





"OK, BUT CAN'T SHE BE SAD AND FLIRTING WITH ME AT THE SAME TIME?"



IF I LAID EGGS I'D NEVER STOP TALKING ABOUT IT. IT'D COME UP IN EVERY CONVERSATION. I'D MAKE SURE OF IT.



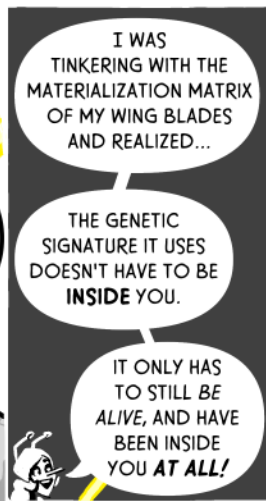
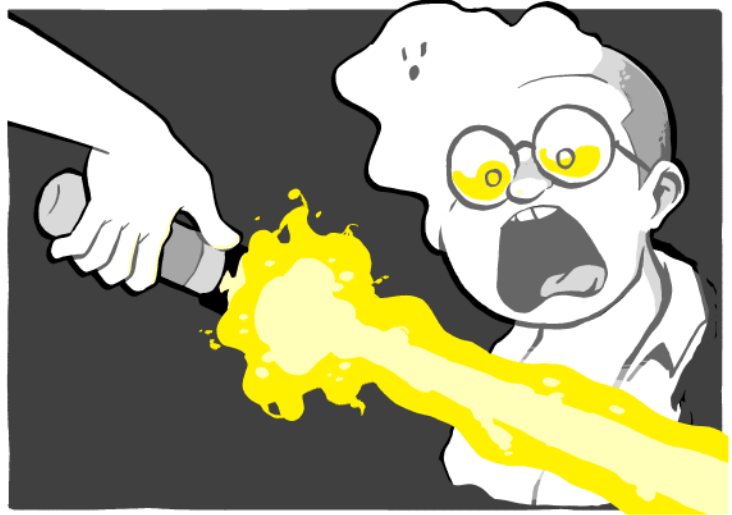
OK, I DON'T THINK CLANCE LIKES THESE ONES, SO IT'S PROBABLY FINE TO TAKE WITHOUT ASKING.

HE SAYS THEY'RE TOO HOPPY.



"I'M BEERY SORRY YOU GOT EVISCERATED!"





WHOA! JUST LIKE STARCRASH!



OH, SO YOU WEREN'T SAYING A "SWORD OF PEACE."



AT LEAST HE'S NOT TURNING THEM SPINE IN. DON'T DO THAT TO BOOKS. IT'S DISRESPECTFUL.

STRANGE - A NEW ENTRY IN YOUR STORAGE MATRIX THE DAY I WAS SENT TO THE SURFACE: FOURTY GALLONS OF WATER.

THEY MUST HAVE THOUGHT THEY WERE DESTROYING MY PROPERTY.

WHICH... THAT IS NOT HOW YOU WORK. THEY SIMPLY GAVE ME FOURTY GALLONS OF WATER.

BEEP
Boop

THAT IS RIGHT, MY *LITTLE BUDDY BOUDY*

HE *CLEARLY* DID NOT PAY ANY ATTENTION TO THE LECTURE THE XENO-ENGINEERS GAVE US ABOUT THE VARIOUS FUNCTIONS YOU POSSESS.

Bloop!

FWIP

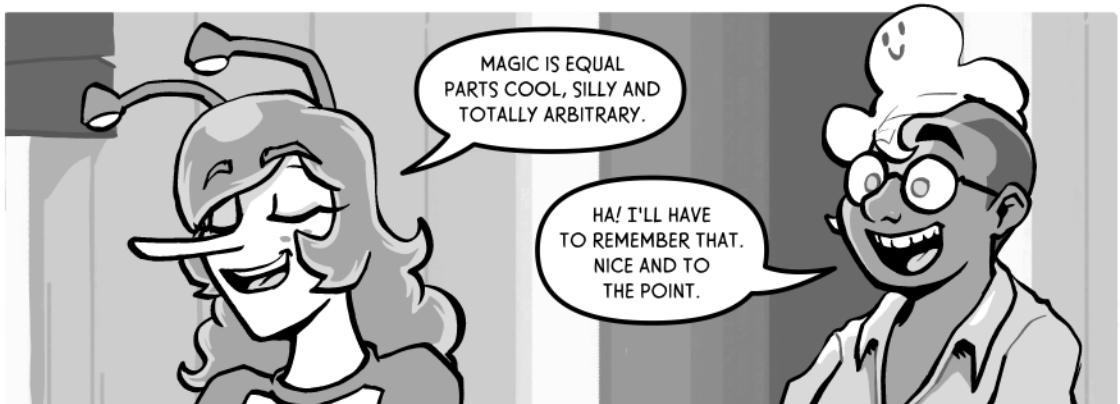


I WISH TISL HAD DONE THIS TO YOU WHEN WE WERE BACK HOME, SO YOU COULD KNOW HOW MUCH OF A CLOWN AMONGST JESTERS MY FOOL BROTHER IS.

OK, ALL YOUR ORDERS ARE SET FOR THE DAY. I **KNOW** YOU'LL DO A GOOD JOB.

AW! LOOKATCHA! YER JES SO PUMPED TEH GET TEH WORK AINCHA!

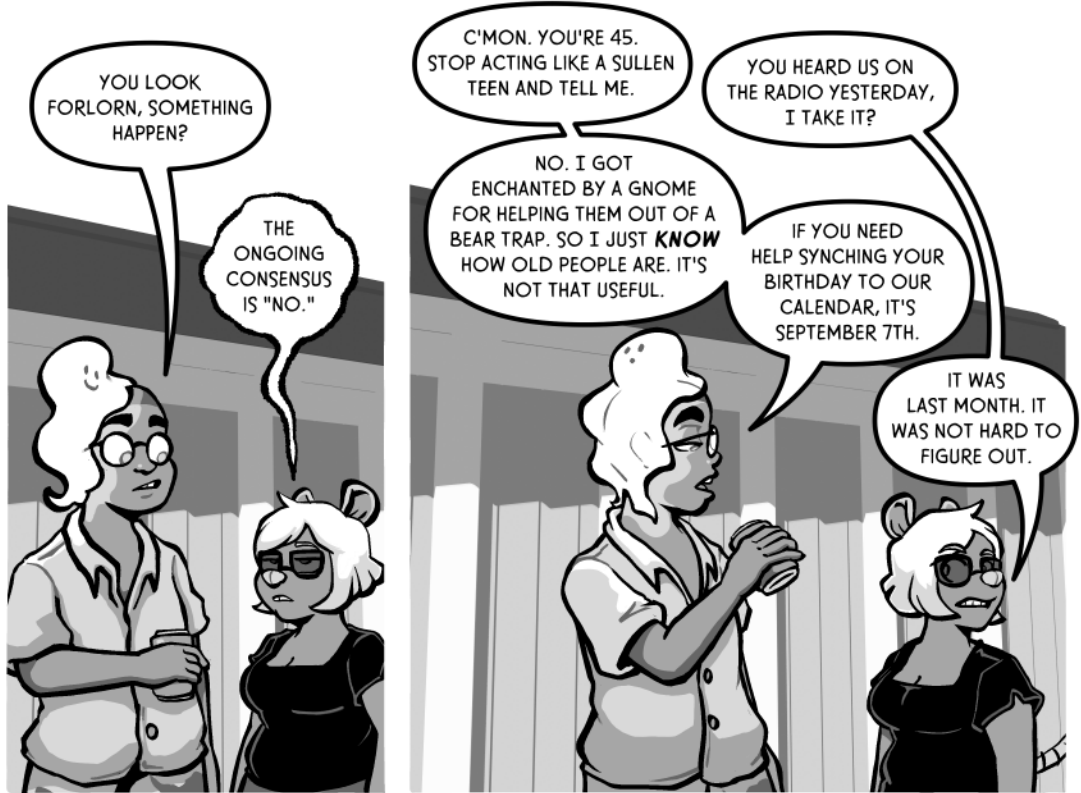
YOU BE A BUSY BOY FOR YOUR WISHY, I HAFTA GET SOME GRUB IN ME.



"WEIRD THAT YOUR FAVORITE COLOR IS YELLOW, I MEAN"



IT'S UNLIKELY SHE'LL BURN IT *ALL* DOWN.



LOOK OUT, EVERYONE, PENNY'S GOT ACCESS TO A DICTIONARY!



"OF COURSE, THE MAIN DISADVANTAGE IS THAT YOU'D BE DATING TISL AND SHELLEY."



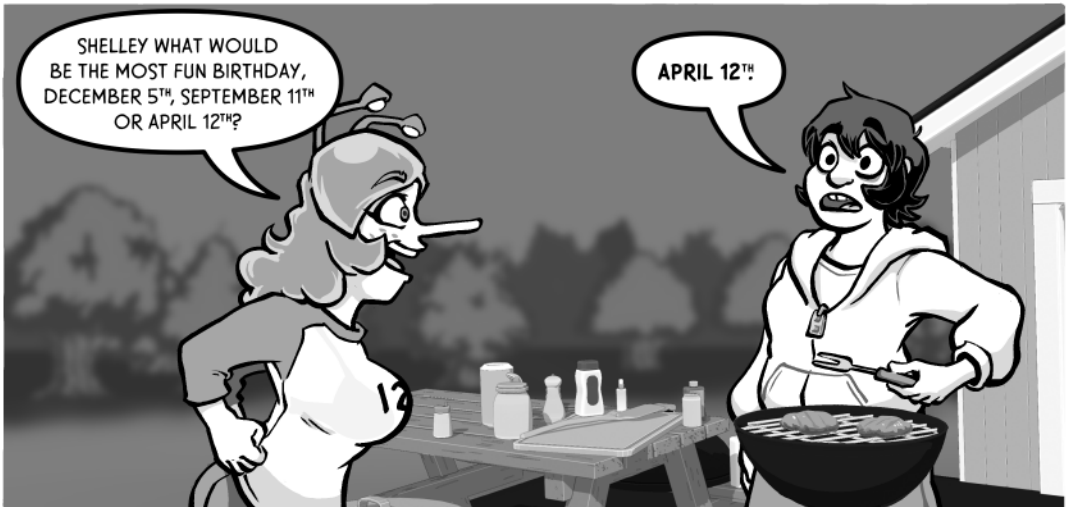
*TECHNICALLY, THIS IS TRUE.



DOCK A WEIRD GIRL'S LOVE FERRY IN THE HARBOR OF YOUR HEART.



IT'S NOT THAT WEIRD TO KNOW 15 PEOPLE.





"I HAVE BEEN TOLD WHAT A 'YES, AND' IS, CLEARANCE."







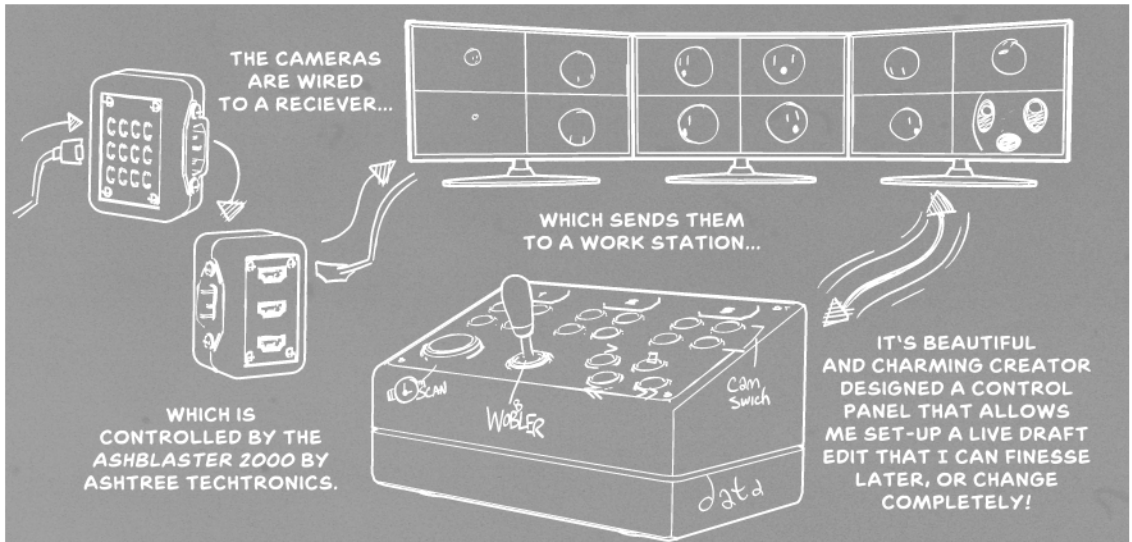
I DON'T WANT A BUNCH OF JOCK THEATER KIDS TO BEAT ME UP BECAUSE THEY'RE **MAD** AT ME.



I'VE BEEN WAITING TO TELL AN EIGHTEENTH PERSON ABOUT THIS!



*THE 180 DEGREE RULE IS A RULE FOR FILM - KEEPING THE CAMERA WITHIN THE BOUNDS OF A 180 DEGREE RADIUS HELPS THE AUDIENCE CONNECT EASIER WITH THE SPATIAL RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN CHARACTERS. JUMPING TOO FAR OR FAST JARS THE VIEWER AND REQUIRES A SMALL MENTAL RESET TO RECENTER.



BY THE WAY I PUT A BUNCH OF PROJECTOR SCREENS IN YOUR GARAGE.



BAD NEWS: I WATCH AEW NOW, SO THE REFERENCES TO WRESTLING ARE ONLY GOING TO GET WORSE AND MORE SPECIFIC FROM NOW ON.



*"MORNING'S DEW," ACCORDING TO BABY NAME WEBSITES. I ORIGINALLY TYPED A REAL-SOUNDING LAST NAME BEFORE RESEARCH AND ONLY LOOKED IT UP BEFORE PUBLISHING THE FIRST CHAPTER. IT ALSO MEANS "SOMETIMES" IN ITALIAN AND "CHUBBY" IN BASQUE.



"WAIT, DID YOU SAY BUG STUFF? WITH A 'G'?"





MAYBE THEY MISPELLED "DONUT!"
WE SHOULD OPEN IT RIGHT AWAY!

NEXT TIME: PROBABLY NOTHING!



VOET

thanks for reading
 *Emily M. L.*