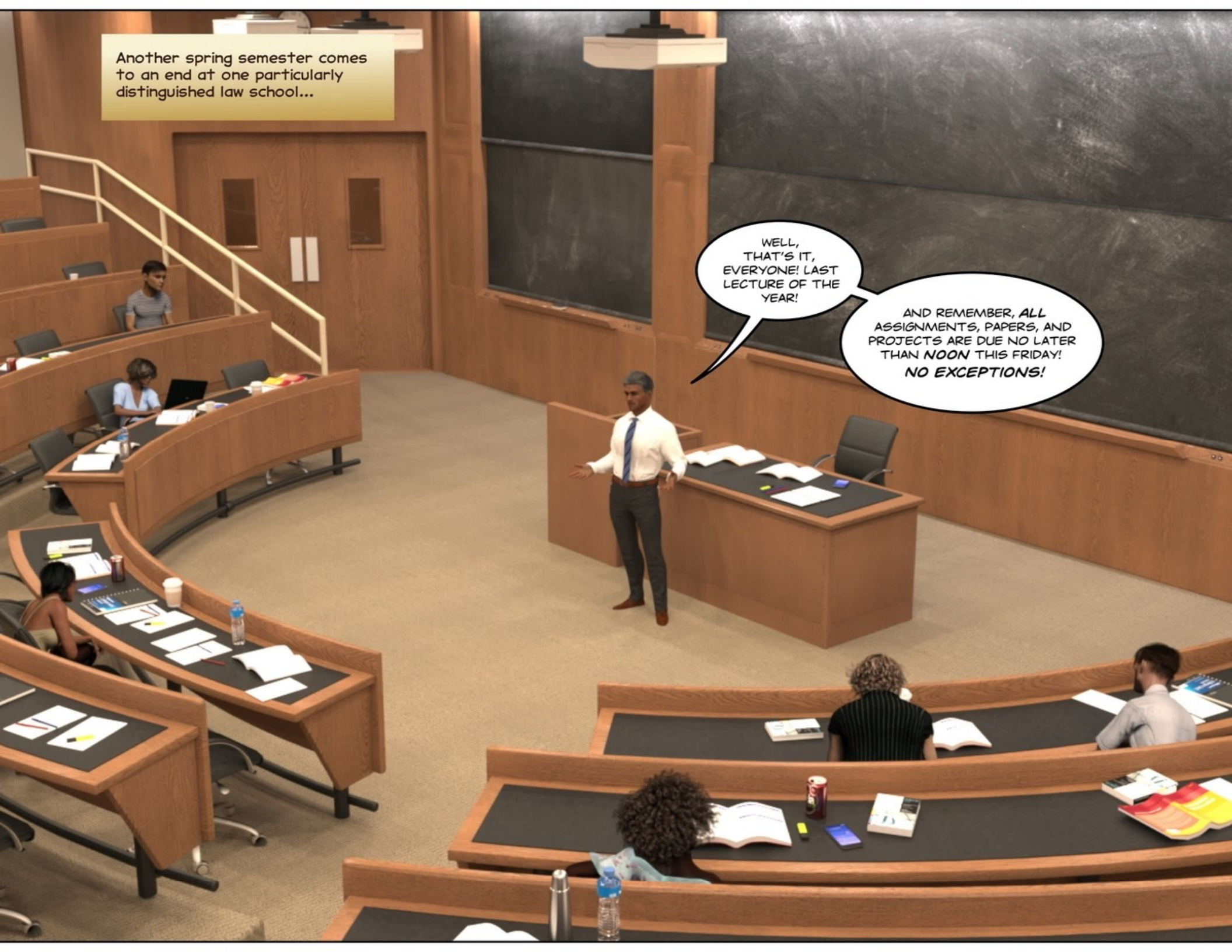
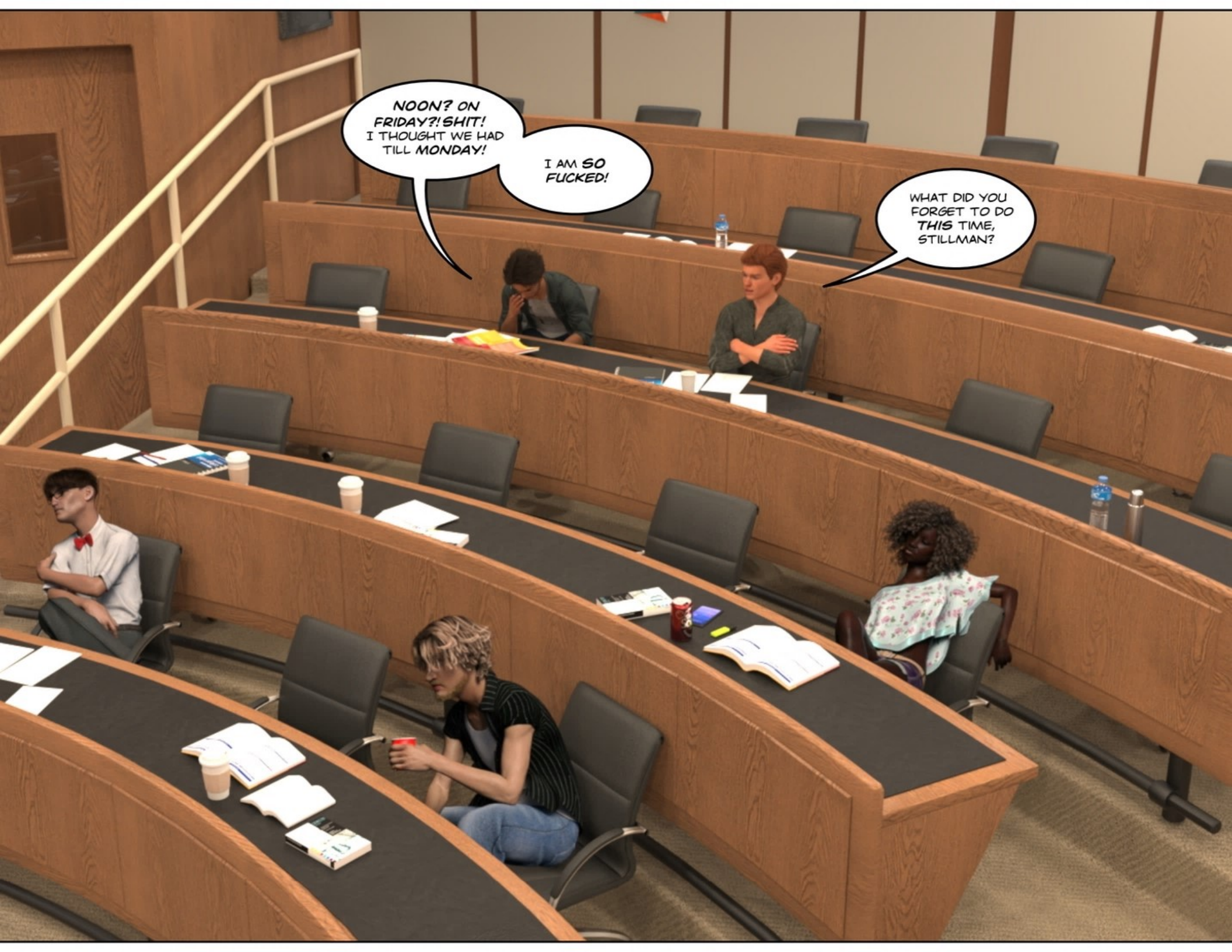

A
Miss-Judgement
by
C. Black


Another spring semester comes to an end at one particularly distinguished law school...
WELL, THAT'S IT, EVERYONE! LAST LECTURE OF THE YEAR!
AND REMEMBER, ALL ASSIGNMENTS, PAPERS, AND PROJECTS ARE DUE NO LATER THAN NOON THIS FRIDAY! NO EXCEPTIONS!


NOON? ON FRIDAY?! SHIT! I THOUGHT WE HAD TILL MONDAY!
I AM SO FUCKED!
WHAT DID YOU FORGET TO DO THIS TIME, STILLMAN?

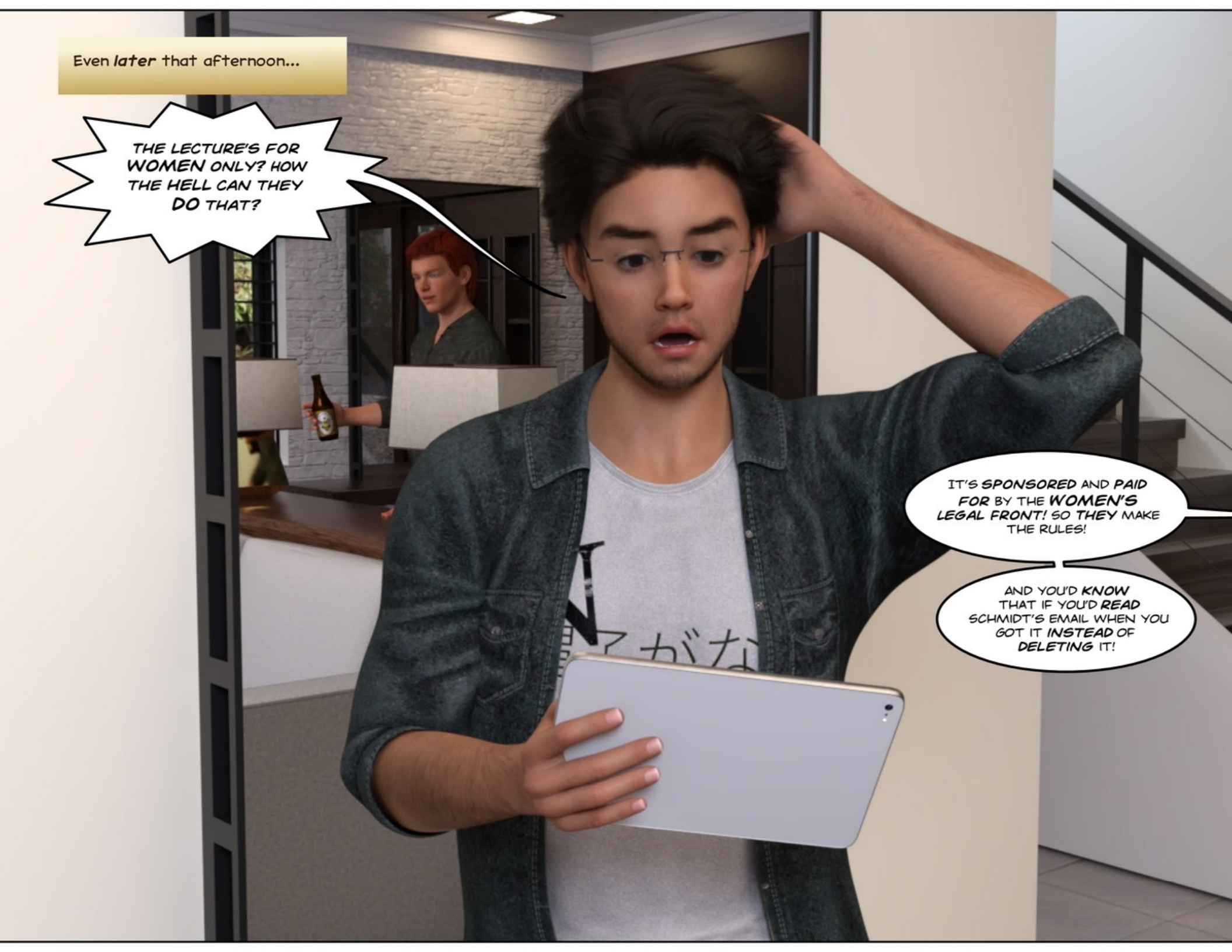

THE GUEST LECTURER REQUIREMENT! I NEVER GOT IT DONE!
I... I JUST FIGURED I'D GET TO IT SOONER OR LATER! AND I THINK I DELETED THE EMAIL HE SENT WITH THE LIST!
SERIOUSLY, DUDE? PROFESSOR SCHMIDT POSTED A LIST OF OVER A DOZEN VALID LECTURERS AND DATES AT THE BEGINNING OF THE SEMESTER SO WE COULD SIGN UP AHEAD OF TIME! AND WE ONLY HAD TO DO ONE!
HOW COULD YOU FUCK THAT UP?


DO YOU STILL HAVE A COPY OF THE LIST?
I'VE STILL GOT ONE MORE CLASS TODAY! CAN I GET THE LIST FROM YOU LATER?
THANKS, IAN! YOU'RE A LIFE SAVER!
PROBABLY! BUT IF I DO, IT'S ON MY COMPUTER BACK AT THE HOUSE!
YEAH! JUST STOP BY MY ROOM WHEN YOU GET BACK!
AND YOU'RE A FUCKING LOST CAUSE!
CAREER
Headline
Brochure


Later that afternoon, at one of the more prestigious legal fraternities on campus...
I TELL YOU, MAX, LETTING THAT MIDWESTERN MORON INTO OUR HOUSE WAS A HUGE MISTAKE! I DON'T CARE HOW GOOD HIS UNDERGRADUATE GRADES WERE!
IF HE FLUNKS OUT OF HIS SECOND YEAR OF LAW SCHOOL IT'LL REFLECT ON THE WHOLE HOUSE! I MEAN, HELL, THE LITTLE FREAK DOESN'T EVEN DRINK!
I KNOW, I KNOW! AND FROM WHAT YOU'VE TOLD ME, HE'S JUST HANGING ON BY A HAIR!
YEAH! HIM PASSING OR FAILING PRETTY MUCH RELIES ON HIM GETTING THIS LECTURE TAKEN CARE OF BY FRIDAY!
SO IF HE GETS IT DONE, HE PASSES... BUT WITH PRETTY SHITTY GRADES! NOT A GOOD LOOK FOR US!
SO WHAT DO WE DO?


THAT DEPENDS! ARE THERE ANY LECTURES BETWEEN NOW AND FRIDAY?
JUST ONE! ABIGAIL MONROE... SPEAKING TOMORROW AT FOUR IN THE MAIN LECTURE HALL! IT'S SPONSORED BY THE WOMEN'S LEGAL FRONT!
REALLY? LEMME SEE!


OH YEAH!
I THINK I KNOW A WAY TO SOLVE OUR LITTLE STILLMAN PROBLEM!


Even later that afternoon...
THE LECTURE'S FOR WOMEN ONLY? HOW THE HELL CAN THEY DO THAT?
IT'S SPONSORED AND PAID FOR BY THE WOMEN'S LEGAL FRONT! SO THEY MAKE THE RULES!
AND YOU'D KNOW THAT IF YOU'D READ SCHMIDT'S EMAIL WHEN YOU GOT IT INSTEAD OF DELETING IT!


SHIT,SHIT, SHIT! I AM SO SCREWED!
HOW? THE WLF HAS ALWAYS BEEN PRETTY FUCKIN' MILITANT AND ISN'T KNOWN FOR MAKING EXCEPTIONS! ESPECIALLY FOR GUYS!
NOT NECESSARILY, YOUNG ROBERT! THERE MIGHT STILL BE A WAY FOR YOU TO ATTEND THAT LECTURE!
YOU'RE ABSOLUTELY RIGHT! THEY WOULDN'T... FOR A GUY!


EXACTLY! SO HOW THE HELL DO I...?
OH, YOU HAVE GOT TO BE FUCKIN' KIDDING ME!


The next day, early afternoon...
I GOTTA HAND IT TO YOU, MAX! YOUR PLAN IS BRILLIANT!
WELL, I'M NOT TOP OF THE CLASS JUST 'CAUSE OF MY GOOD LOOKS, YOU KNOW!
BRILLIANT IDEAS COME WITH THE TERRITORY! HEH-HEH!


I MEAN, THE ONLY WAY HE DOESN'T GET KICKED OUT OF SCHOOL AND HAS TO MOVE OUT IS IF HE PULLS THIS OFF WITHOUT GETTING BUSTED SO HE PASSES THE COURSE!
EVEN THEN, WE'LL BE ABLE TO HOLD IT OVER HIM IN CASE HE FUCKS UP AGAIN!
IT'S A WIN-WIN SCENARIO FOR US!
THOSE ARE MY FAVORITE KIND!


HOW'S IT GOIN' UP THERE?
ALMOST DONE!


YOU KNOW, I'M SURPRISED THE GIRLS SO EASILY AGREED TO HELP US OUT WITH THIS!
I EXPECTED AT LEAST A LITTLE PUSH-BACK FROM THEM, BUT THEY JUMPED INTO THIS ALMOST EAGERLY!
YEAH, IT'S ONE OF THOSE CHICK, DRESS-UP THINGS THEY'RE INTO! GO FIGURE!


OKAY! READY FOR THE GRAND UNVEILING?
C'MON, SWEETIE! DON'T BE SHY!
OH, YEAH! LET'S SEE "HER"!
I REALLY DON'T WANT TO DO THIS!


I SURE AS HELL HOPE SOMEONE'S READY TO CATCH MY ASS WHEN I FALL DOWN THESE STAIRS!
YOU'RE DOING JUST FINE, SWEETIE! TAKE YOUR TIME!
I DON'T SEE WHY I HAVE TO WEAR THESE DAMN SHOES ANYWAY!
BECAUSE THEY GO WITH THE OUTFIT AND THEY MAKE YOUR LEGS LOOK GREAT!


HOLY SHIT!
WOW! YOU GIRLS DID AN AMAZING JOB!
YES... YES, WE DID, DIDN'T WE?
THE CLOTHES ARE MINE, BUT THE ACCESSORIES AND MAKEUP... THAT'S ALL KAYTE'S WORK!


YEAH, ABOUT THESE "ACCESSORIES"! IGNORING HOW MUCH MY EARS HURT, HOW'M I GONNA EXPLAIN MY PIERCED EARS TO ANYONE AFTER TODAY?
LOTS OF GUYS HAVE PIERCED EARS, ROB HONEY! BESIDES, IF YOU LEAVE THEM ALONE, THEY'LL FILL BACK IN IN NO TIME!
WHILE MY EYEBROWS AND ALL MY BODYHAIR GROW BACK, RIGHT?
EXACTLY! *GIGGLE!*


A LITTLE CINCHING HERE AND A LITTLE PADDING THERE! SECRETS WE GIRLS HAVE BEEN USING SINCE MIDDLE SCHOOL!
NONSENSE! IT'S BARELY TIGHT AT ALL! IT COULD BE A LOT MORE CONSTRICTING IF WE WANTED IT TO... TRUST ME!
OKAY, UNFORTUNATELY I'VE SEEN STILLMAN IN HIS UNDERWEAR BEFORE AND KNOW FOR A FACT HE DOESN'T HAVE CURVES LIKE THAT! HOW'D YOU DO IT?
AND IT'S THE "CINCHING" THAT MAY CAUSE ME TO PASS OUT HALFWAY THROUGH THE LECTURE!
SO ARE YOU GONNA DO SOMETHING ABOUT THAT VOICE OR PRETEND YOU'RE A MUTE?


OH, WE'VE BEEN WORKING ON *THAT,* TOO! AND "SHE'S" GOTTEN PRETTY GOOD! LET THEM HEAR YOU, DEAR!
A-HEM! IS *THIS* BETTER?
A LITTLE *ROUGH,* BUT PASSABLE!
WE'LL MAKE SURE SHE GETS A *LOT* MORE PRACTICE WHEN WE WALK HER OVER TO THE LECTURE HALL!


WALK?! IN THESE SHOES? IT'S ALL THE WAY ACROSS CAMPUS!
THEY'RE JUST WEDGES, ROB! NO BIG DEAL! AND WHAT BETTER WAY TO GET USED TO THEM?
IT'LL ALSO GIVE US TIME TO GO OVER ALL THOSE LAST MINUTE DETAILS EVERY GIRL SHOULD KNOW! *GIGGLE!*

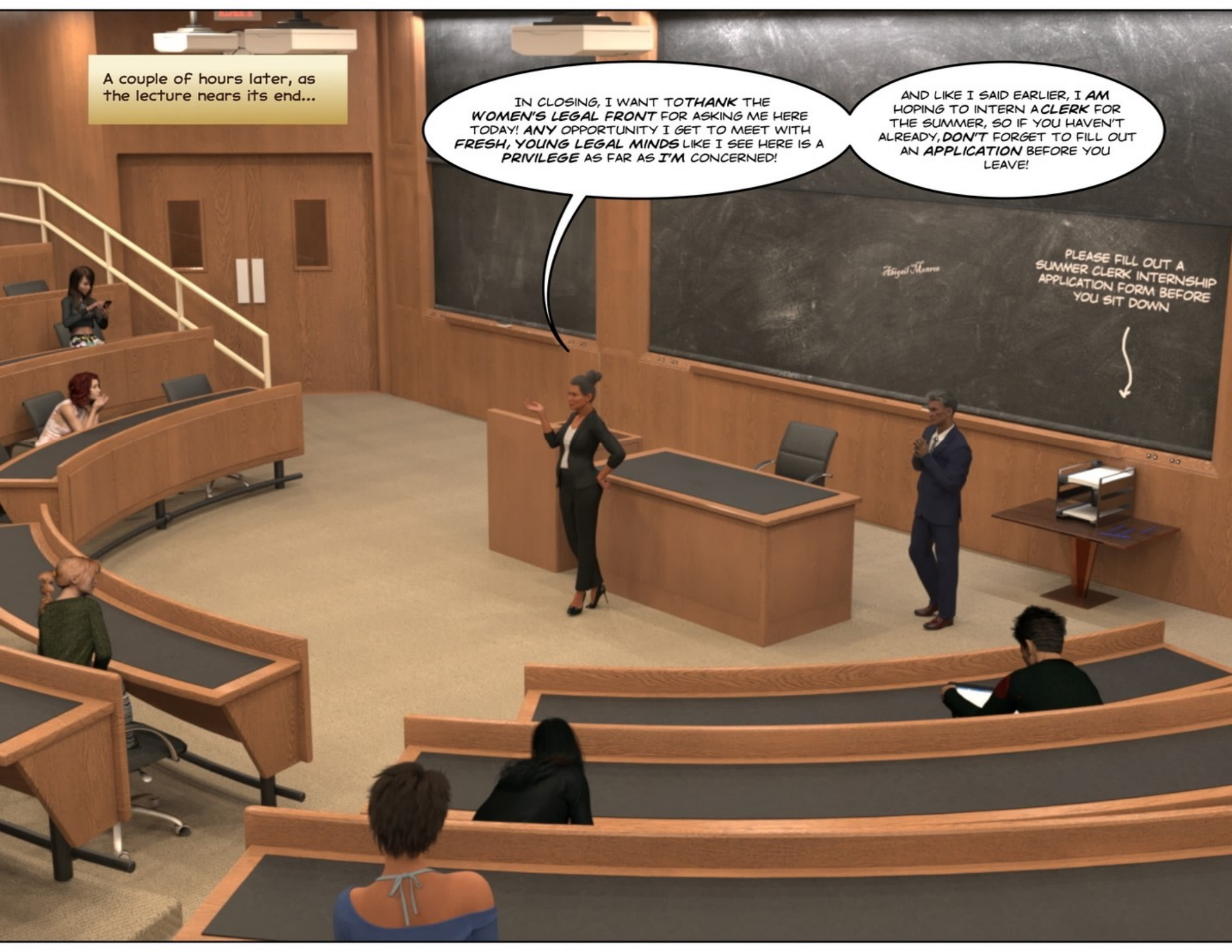

WELL, YOUR LECTURE STARTS IN ABOUT AN HOUR! THAT'LL GIVE US PLENTY OF TIME TO GET YOU THERE SO YOU'RE NOT LATE!
YEAH, THE LAST THING I WANT IS EVERYONE WATCHING ME AS I WALK IN... AND PROBABLY FALL FLAT ON MY FACE!
GOOD LUCK... ROBERTA! *CHUCKLE!*


SIGH! I'M GONNA NEED IT!

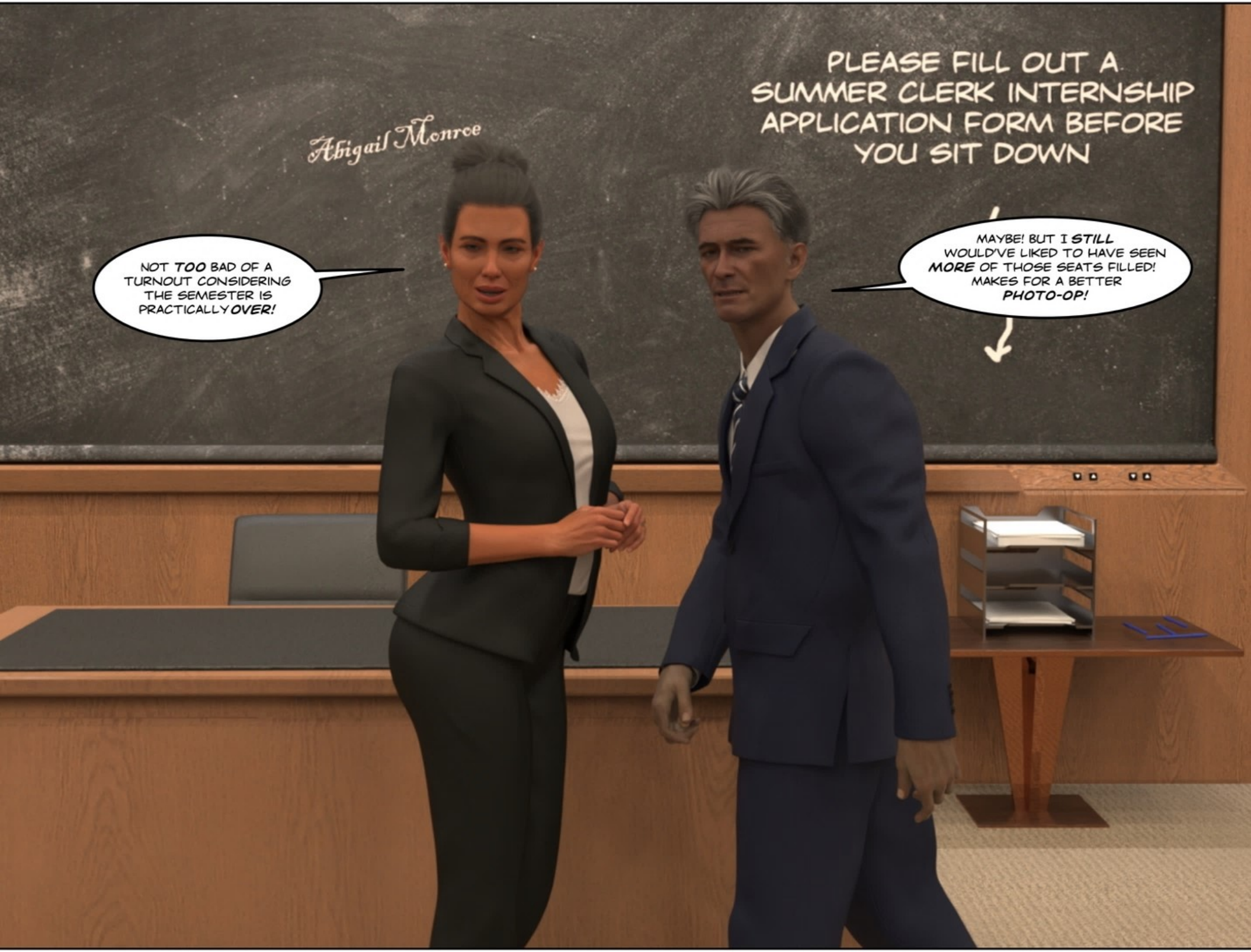

SO... THINK HE'LL BE PISSED WHEN HE REALIZES IT WASN'T A "WOMEN ONLY" LECTURE? *CHUCKLE!*
IT'S HIS OWN DAMN FAULT FOR NOT KEEPING A COPY OF THE ORIGINAL, UN-EDITED LECTURE LIST!
Slam!

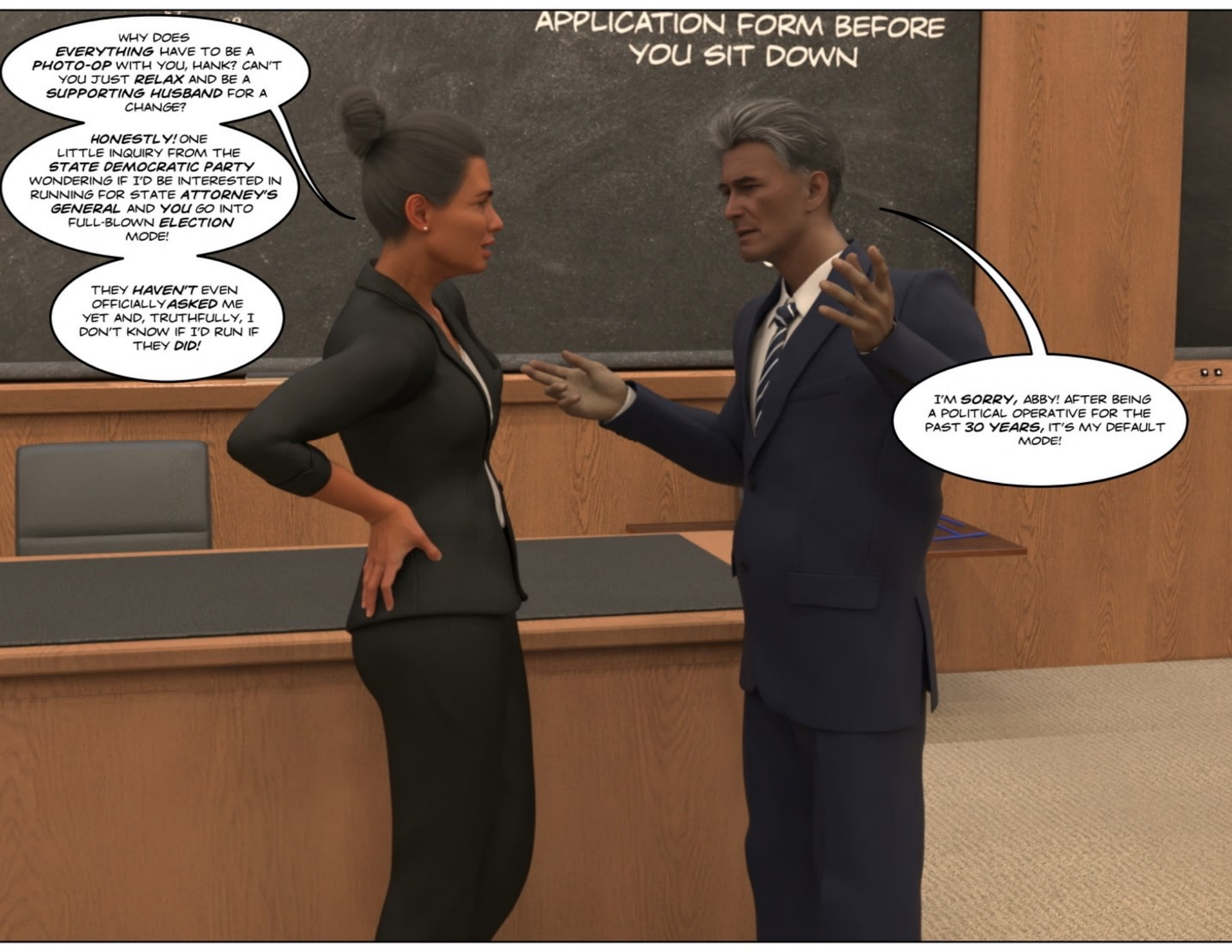

BESIDES, ANY GOOD SECOND-YEAR LAW STUDENT SHOULD RECOGNIZE THAT PUTTING RESTRICTIONS LIKE THAT ON A CAMPUS LECTURE IS PROBLEMATIC AT BEST!
SO HE GETS WHAT HE DESERVES!
WHICH HOPEFULLY WILL BE A FAILING GRADE WHICH GETS HIM OUT OF OUR HAIR FOR GOOD!


AND, WORST CASE SCENARIO, WE'LL KNOW WE HAVE A HOUSEMATE WHO'S GULLIBLE ENOUGH TO DO ANYTHING WE ASK OF HIM!
ALWAYS A GOOD IDEA TO HAVE ONE OF THOSE LYING AROUND! *CHUCKLE!*
NO SHIT! *CHUCKLE!*

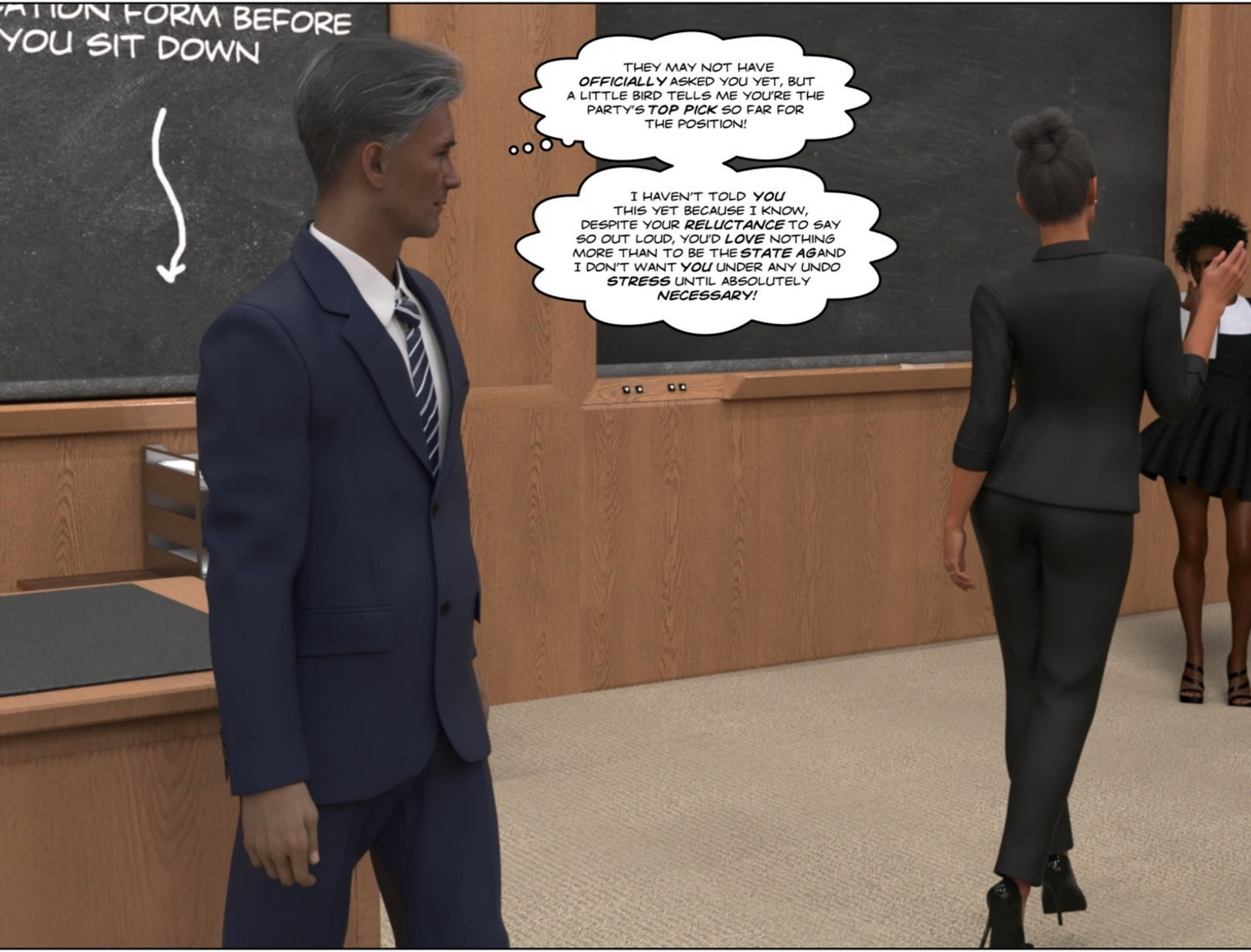

A couple of hours later, as the lecture nears its end...
IN CLOSING, I WANT TO **THANK** THE **WOMEN'S LEGAL FRONT** FOR ASKING ME HERE TODAY! **ANY** OPPORTUNITY I GET TO MEET WITH **FRESH, YOUNG LEGAL MINDS** LIKE I SEE HERE IS A **PRIVILEGE** AS FAR AS **I'M** CONCERNED!
AND LIKE I SAID EARLIER, I **AM** HOPING TO INTERN A **CLERK** FOR THE SUMMER, SO IF YOU HAVEN'T ALREADY, **DON'T** FORGET TO FILL OUT AN **APPLICATION** BEFORE YOU LEAVE!
Abigail Munro
PLEASE FILL OUT A SUMMER CLERK INTERNSHIP APPLICATION FORM BEFORE YOU SIT DOWN

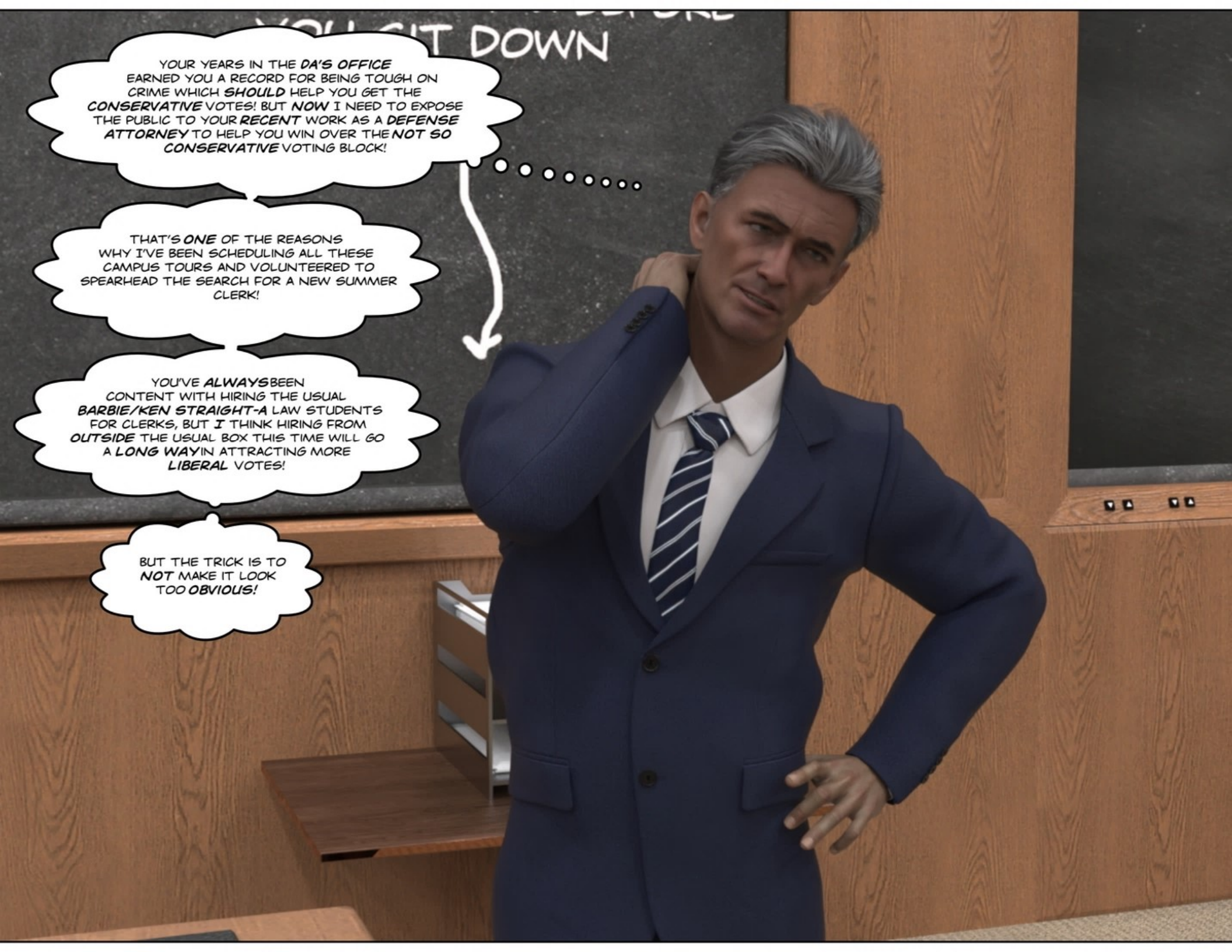

OKAY... I'M CONFUSED! IF THIS WAS A WOMEN ONLY EVENT, WHY THE HELL WERE THERE SEVERAL GUYS IN THE AUDIENCE?
DID THEY CHANGE THE RULES OR SOMETHING AND I WENT THROUGH ALL THIS FOR NOTHING?
HMMM! CONSIDERING HOW EAGER MAX AND IAN WERE IN GETTING ME TO THIS LECTURE DRESSED LIKE THIS, I WOULDN'T BE SURPRISED IF THEY SET ME UP!
IN FACT, I'M ALMOST 100% SURE THEY DID! THOSE FUCKERS!
THANK YOU AGAIN!
clap!
clap!
clap!
clap!
clap!
clap!
clap!
clap!


PLEASE FILL OUT A SUMMER CLERK INTERNSHIP APPLICATION FORM BEFORE YOU SIT DOWN
Abigail Monroe
NOT TOO BAD OF A TURNOUT CONSIDERING THE SEMESTER IS PRACTICALLY OVER!
MAYBE! BUT I STILL WOULD'VE LIKED TO HAVE SEEN MORE OF THOSE SEATS FILLED! MAKES FOR A BETTER PHOTO-OP!


APPLICATION FORM BEFORE YOU SIT DOWN
WHY DOES EVERYTHING HAVE TO BE A PHOTO-OP WITH YOU, HANK? CAN'T YOU JUST RELAX AND BE A SUPPORTING HUSBAND FOR A CHANGE?
HONESTLY! ONE LITTLE INQUIRY FROM THE STATE DEMOCRATIC PARTY WONDERING IF I'D BE INTERESTED IN RUNNING FOR STATE ATTORNEY'S GENERAL AND YOU GO INTO FULL-BLOWN ELECTION MODE!
THEY HAVEN'T EVEN OFFICIALLY ASKED ME YET AND, TRUTHFULLY, I DON'T KNOW IF I'D RUN IF THEY DID!
I'M SORRY, ABBY! AFTER BEING A POLITICAL OPERATIVE FOR THE PAST 30 YEARS, IT'S MY DEFAULT MODE!


SUMMER CLERK INTERNSHIP
OKAY! I'LL HAVE ALL THE APPLICATIONS IN ORDER WHEN YOU'RE READY TO LEAVE!
I FORGIVE YOU, OF COURSE! NOW, IF YOU'LL EXCUSE ME, I'M GOING TO GO CHAT WITH A FEW OF THE STUDENTS ON THEIR WAY OUT!


ATION FORM BEFORE YOU SIT DOWN
THEY MAY NOT HAVE OFFICIALLY ASKED YOU YET, BUT A LITTLE BIRD TELLS ME YOU'RE THE PARTY'S TOP PICK SO FAR FOR THE POSITION!
I HAVEN'T TOLD YOU THIS YET BECAUSE I KNOW, DESPITE YOUR RELUCTANCE TO SAY SO OUT LOUD, YOU'D LOVE NOTHING MORE THAN TO BE THE STATE AGAND I DON'T WANT YOU UNDER ANY UNDO STRESS UNTIL ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY!


IT DOWN
YOUR YEARS IN THE DA'S OFFICE EARNED YOU A RECORD FOR BEING TOUGH ON CRIME WHICH SHOULD HELP YOU GET THE CONSERVATIVE VOTES! BUT NOW I NEED TO EXPOSE THE PUBLIC TO YOUR RECENT WORK AS A DEFENSE ATTORNEY TO HELP YOU WIN OVER THE NOT SO CONSERVATIVE VOTING BLOCK!
THAT'S ONE OF THE REASONS WHY I'VE BEEN SCHEDULING ALL THESE CAMPUS TOURS AND VOLUNTEERED TO SPEARHEAD THE SEARCH FOR A NEW SUMMER CLERK!
YOU'VE ALWAYS BEEN CONTENT WITH HIRING THE USUAL BARBIE/KEN STRAIGHT-A LAW STUDENTS FOR CLERKS, BUT I THINK HIRING FROM OUTSIDE THE USUAL BOX THIS TIME WILL GO A LONG WAY IN ATTRACTING MORE LIBERAL VOTES!
BUT THE TRICK IS TO NOT MAKE IT LOOK TOO OBVIOUS!


WELL, AT LEAST IT TURNED OUT TO BE A WORTHWHILE LECTURE! I'VE BEEN A FAN OF ABIGAIL MONROE'S WORK IN THE LEGAL COMMUNITY FOR YEARS!
AND IT SHOULDN'T BE TOO HARD TO TYPE UP A SHORT REFLECTION ON THE LECTURE AND SEND IT TO SCHMIDT BEFORE THE DEADLINE SO I CAN PASS HIS COURSE!
WHAT WILL BE HARD, THOUGH, IS GETTING OUT OF HERE AND BACK TO THE HOUSE DRESSED LIKE THIS!
NO ONE MAY HAVE RECOGNIZED ME ON THE WAY OVER, BUT I WAS WALKING WITH LAURA AND KAYTE AT THE TIME SO I WAS HARDLY THE FOCUS OF ATTENTION!
THIS TIME IT'S JUST ME... ALONE! BEST THING I CAN HOPE FOR IS NOBODY RECOGNIZING ME!


NOW... IF I CAN JUST GET DOWN THESE DAMN STAIRS WITHOUT FACE-PLANTING IN FRONT OF...


OH FUCK!!
trip


WHOA THERE! ARE YOU OKAY?
UH...YEAH, THANKS!


IT'S JUST THESE DAMN SHOES...


SHIT,SHIT,SHIT! GET BACK IN CHARACTER BEFORE HE NOTICES!
AHEM I MEAN, THANK YOU! THAT REALLY COULD'VE HURT IF YOU HADN'T CAUGHT ME!
I WAS JUST LUCKY TO BE IN THE RIGHT PLACE AT THE RIGHT TIME!


DID YOU ENJOY THE SPEECH, MISS...?
STIL... SULL... SULLIVAN! ROB... ROBIN SULLIVAN!
I'M SORRY! GUESS I'M STILL A LITTLE SHAKEN UP BY THE FALL!
AND, YES, I ENJOYED IT VERY MUCH! SHE WAS VERY INSPIRATIONAL!
WELL, SHE'LL BE HAPPY TO HEAR THAT!


HAVE YOU ALREADY FILLED OUT AN APPLICATION FOR THE CLERK POSITION WITH MY WIFE?
YES... YES I DID! ALTHOUGH I DON'T HAVE MUCH HOPE OF GETTING THE POSITION!
WHY NOT?
I'M SURE SHE WOULD MUCH RATHER HIRE SOMEONE WITH PERFECT GRADES INSTEAD OF SOMEONE LIKE ME!
WHAT DO YOU MEAN "SOMEONE LIKE YOU"?
OH, UH... SOMEONE WITH IMPERFECT GRADES... AMONG OTHER THINGS!
OTHER THINGS LIKE NOT BEING ABLE TO HOLD ONTO A JOB FOR MORE THAN 2 MONTHS AT A TIME, AS YOU'LL SEE IF YOU FOR SOME UNGODLY REASON ACTUALLY LOOK AT MY APPLICATION!


GRADES AREN'T EVERYTHING, MISS SULLIVAN! THINK POSITIVELY!
AND YOU AS WELL, MISS SULLIVAN! YOU AS WELL!
I TRY, MR. MONROE! I REALLY DO!
NOW, IF YOU'LL EXCUSE ME, I REALLY SHOULD BE GOING!
IT WAS NICE CHATTING WITH YOU!


JESUS! I THOUGHT I'D NEVER GET AWAY FROM THAT GUY!
ANY LONGER AND HE MAY HAVE SEEN THROUGH MY DISGUISE!
THANK GOD HE DIDN'T OR I'D BE UP SHIT CREEK!


HMMM! VERY IMPRESSIVE! AND VERY CONVINCING... EVEN UP CLOSE!
BUT THAT UNTIMELY FALL INTO ME ACCIDENTALLY REVEALED A WHOLE MANNER OF INCONGRUITIES!
INCONGRUITIES THAT HAVE MOVED YOU TO THE TOP OF MY LIST, "MISS" SULLIVAN!


A few days later...
ABBY? I THOUGHT YOU WERE IN COURT ALL DAY!
I WILL BE! BUT I WAS IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD AND WAS JUST LEAVING YOU A NOTE!


BY THE WAY, HOW GOES THE *SEARCH* FOR A SUMMER CLERK?
GREAT! I'VE GOT A COUPLE OF REALLY *PROMISING* PROSPECTS I'M LOOKING AT!
I HOPE TO HAVE IT *LOCKED UP* NO LATER THAN *TOMORROW!*
WITHOUT ANY INPUT FROM *ME?* REALLY?


I THINK I KNOW YOU WELL ENOUGH TO HAVE A PRETTY GOOD IDEA OF THE TYPE OF PEOPLE YOU LIKE WORKING WITH!
WE'VE ONLY BEEN MARRIED FOR 35 YEARS, AFTER ALL!
I SUPPOSE I CAN LET YOU HANDLE IT ALONE THIS TIME!
HAVING ONE LESS THING ON MY PLATE TO WORRY ABOUT IS ALWAYS A BLESSING!


I'LL SEE YOU LATER TODAY! LOVE YOU!
LOVE YOU, TOO!


I GUESS I MIGHT'VE EXAGGERATED A LITTLE WHEN I SAID I HAD A "COUPLE" OF PROSPECTS FOR THE JOB, BECAUSE I'M LASER-FOCUSED ON ONE PARTICULAR APPLICANT!
ONE THAT'LL BOTH IMPRESS THE DNC AND SEAL THE LIBERAL VOTE!
HAVING A YOUNG TRANSWOMAN ON THE SUMMER STAFF WILL BE QUITE THE FEATHER IN ABBY'S CAP AS FAR AS THE LGBTQ-PLUS COMMUNITY IS CONCERNED!
OF COURSE, IT'D BE BEST TO PLAY IT STRATEGICALLY AND LET IT SLIP OUT AFTER THE FACT SO WE DON'T LOOK TOO OBVIOUS!
WHICH WORKS OUT IN OUR FAVOR SINCE THE SPECIAL ELECTION ISN'T UNTIL NEXT JUNE, WHICH WILL GIVE US PLENTY OF TIME TO DEVELOP A BALANCE IN COURTING BOTH THE CONSERVATIVE AND LIBERAL VOTERS!


IRONICALLY, THOUGH, THE ONLY POSSIBLE BUMP IN MY PLAN IS THE YOUNG "LADY" IN QUESTION!
CONSIDERING HOW SHE FILLED OUT HER APPLICATION, THE WAY SHE APPEARED THE OTHER DAY MAY BE LIMITED TO HER ON-CAMPUS LIFE ONLY!
I ONLY HOPE I CAN CONVINCE HER OTHERWISE!


A short time later, back on campus...
HEY, ROBERTA! WHEN YOU'RE DONE DOWN THERE, BRING ME UP A BEER, WOULD YA? *HAR-HAR!*
YEAH, THAT'S NEVER GONNA GET OLD, MAX!
ASSHOLES!


OKAY, THE MOMENT OF TRUTH!


YES! GOT THE PAPER TURNED IN JUST UNDER THE WIRE! SCHMIDT'S GOT NO CHOICE BUT TO PASS ME NOW! IT'S BY THE SKIN OF MY TEETH, BUT I'LL TAKE IT!
YEAR TWO... NOT PRETTY, BUT DONE!

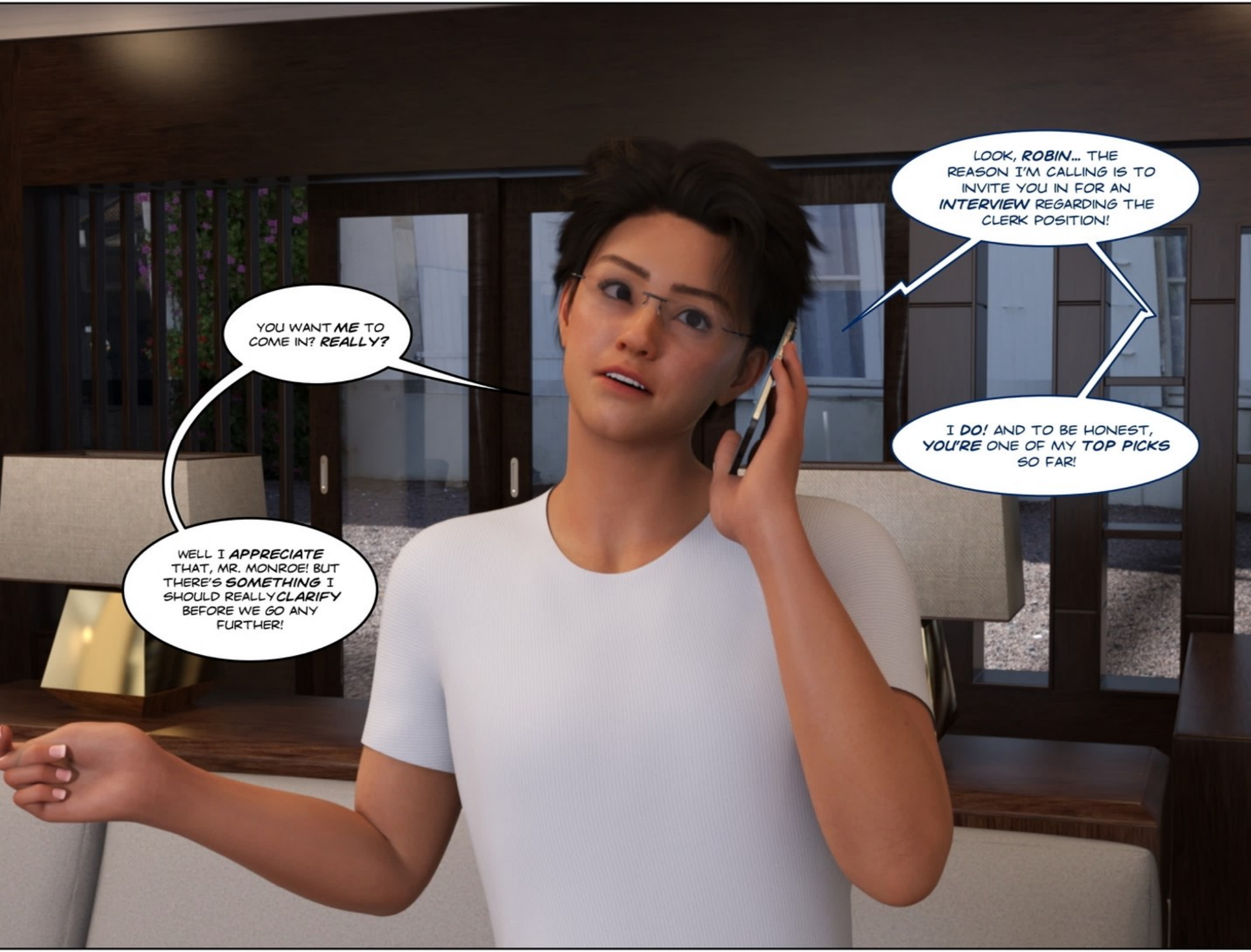

THIS'LL ALSO GET ME OFF THE HOOK WITH THE REST OF THE HOUSE... AT LEAST FOR NOW!
ANY FAILED COURSE IS GROUNDS FOR BEING KICKED OUT OF THE HOUSE! AND SINCE I CAN'T AFFORD TO LIVE ALONE, FAILURE IS NOT AN OPTION!
BUT JUST PASSING ISN'T ENOUGH! CONSISTENTLY CRAPPY GRADES CAN ALSO GET ME KICKED OUT!
SO I NEED TO SPEND THE SUMMER GETTING MY SHIT TOGETHER!


AND SINCE I'M PRETTY DAMN SURE IAN AND MAX SET ME UP THE OTHER DAY TO TRY AND MAKE ME FAIL, I CAN ONLY ASSUME THEY'D BE MORE THAN HAPPY TO SEE ME LEAVE THE HOUSE FOR GOOD!
SO I'VE ALSO GOT TO DO EVERYTHING I CAN TO KEEP THEM FROM PULLING SOMETHING LIKE THAT AGAIN!
Ring


HELLO?
YES... YES IT IS!
YES! I REMEMBER!
OH MY GOD! COULD THIS BE ABOUT THE CLERK POSITION?
IS THIS ROBERT STILLMAN?
THIS IS HAROLD MONROE! WE TALKED THE OTHER DAY AT MY WIFE'S LECTURE!


OH SHIT! WAIT A MINUTE! I WAS DRESSED UP AS A GIRL AND TOLD HIM MY NAME WAS ROBIN! HOW THE HELL...?!
I MEAN... NO! I... I THINK YOU MIGHT HAVE THE WRONG NUMBER, AND...!
RELAX, ROBERT... OR, ROBIN! OR WHATEVER YOU WANT TO CALL YOURSELF!
ANY SECRETS YOU WANT TO KEEP ARE SAFE WITH ME!
MY WIFE AND I ARE VERY UNDERSTANDING AND SUPPORTIVE WHEN IT COMES TO TRANSGENDER PEOPLE AS WELL AS THE ENTIRE LGBTQ PLUS COMMUNITY!


FUCK! HE KNOWS THAT WAS ME! AND TRYING TO DENY IT WILL JUST MAKE IT WORSE!
HOW... HOW DID YOU KNOW HOW TO FIND ME?
I... I WASN'T EXPECTING TO TALK TO ANYONE, SO YOU KIND OF CAUGHT ME OFF GUARD!
WHEN I COULDN'T FIND AN APPLICATION FOR "ROBIN SULLIVAN", I EXPANDED MY SEARCH TO INCLUDE SIMILAR NAMES!
ESPECIALLY ONES THAT STARTED WITH "STIL", SINCE THAT'S WHAT YOU STARTED TO TELL ME THE OTHER DAY WHEN I ASKED FOR YOUR NAME!
I FIGURED AS MUCH!


LOOK, ROBIN... THE REASON I'M CALLING IS TO INVITE YOU IN FOR AN INTERVIEW REGARDING THE CLERK POSITION!
YOU WANT ME TO COME IN? REALLY?
I DO! AND TO BE HONEST, YOU'RE ONE OF MY TOP PICKS SO FAR!
WELL I APPRECIATE THAT, MR. MONROE! BUT THERE'S SOMETHING I SHOULD REALLY CLARIFY BEFORE WE GO ANY FURTHER!


I... I'LL BE THERE!
YOU CAN TELL ME *TOMORROW* WHEN YOU COME BY AT, SAY...*TWO O'CLOCK?*
EXCELLENT! SEE YOU THEN!


JESUS! HE THINKS I'M TRANSGENDER! OF COURSE, I CAN'T REALLY BLAME HIM CONSIDERING HOW I LOOKED THE OTHER DAY!
BUT AS AMAZING AS IT'D BE TO CLERK IN JUDGE MONROE'S OFFICE ALL SUMMER, THEY'VE GOT TO KNOW THE TRUTH ABOUT ME BEFORE THEY OFFER ME ANY KIND OF JOB!
I'LL JUST MAKE THAT A PRIORITY AS SOON AS I GET THERE TOMORROW!


SIGH! WHICH COULD MAKE IT ONE VERY SHORT INTERVIEW!


The next day, a few minutes before two o'clock...
THIS INTERVIEW HAS TAKEN ON MORE SIGNIFICANCE THAN I'D ORIGINALLY THOUGHT!
BECAUSE THE MORE I THINK ABOUT IT THE MORE I RECOGNIZE THE IMPACT OF HAVING SOMEONE LIKE ROBIN WORKING FOR ABBY!
WHEN I FINALLY "ACCIDENTALLY" LET THE NEWS SLIP IN AUGUST, THE LIBERALS WILL LOVE IT AND THE CONSERVATIVES WON'T DARE SAY A WORD WITHOUT MAKING THEMSELVES LOOK BAD!
AND THE FACT THAT ROBIN HAS JUST FALLEN INTO OUR LAPS LIKE THIS IS PURE PROVIDENCE!


BUT TO MAKE IT WORK, I NEED TO REMOVE ALL HESITATION AND RELUCTANCE FROM HER MIND SO SHE'LL FEEL FREE TO BE HER TRUE SELF HERE!
AND I'M JUST ABOUT TO DISCOVER HOW DIFFICULT THAT'S GOING TO BE!
Knock knock
COME IN!


MR. MONROE?
HI! I'M...
ROBIN! OF COURSE! I WAS EXPECTING YOU!


IT'S ROBERT, ACTUALLY... ROBERT STILLMAN!
I'M VERY MUCH AWARE OF THAT... ROBERT!
BUT I JUST WANT YOU TO KNOW THAT THIS IS A SAFE SPACE FOR ROBIN AS WELL!
WELL, THAT'S, UMMM... GOOD TO KNOW!


I AM A LITTLE SURPRISED, THOUGH, THAT YOU CHOSE TO ATTEND THIS INTERVIEW LIKE THIS!
I'D HAVE THOUGHT YOU'D WANT TO PRESENT YOURSELF AS THE SAME PERSON I MET THE OTHER DAY!
YEAH, WELL... ABOUT THAT...
I MEAN, I UNDERSTAND IF YOU HAVE RESERVATIONS ABOUT BEING ROBIN IN UNFAMILIAR SURROUNDINGS! BUT I WANT TO ASSURE YOU THAT SHE WOULD BE MORE THAN WELCOME HERE!


IN FACT, TO BE TRUTHFUL, YOU GOT THIS INTERVIEW BECAUSE OF ROBIN... NOT ROBERT!
OH, DON'T GET ME WRONG! I'LL STILL CONSIDER YOU FOR THE POSITION! BUT IT'S JUST THAT MY WIFE HAS ALWAYS PREFERRED HIRING YOUNG WOMEN AS SUMMER CLERKS!
IT'S BEEN HER WAY OF ENSURING EQUITY IN THE LEGAL PROFESSION!
WHA... WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
BUT I'M NOT A WOMAN! YOU OBVIOUSLY KNEW THAT WHEN YOU CALLED ME AND ASKED ME HERE!


MAYBE NOT A CISWOMAN, BUT A TRANSWOMAN IS JUST AS MUCH A WOMAN AS FAR AS WE'RE CONCERNED!
IT'S NOT THE ONLY REASON! BUT IT DOES PUT AN EXTRA CHECKMARK IN THE POSITIVES COLUMN!
I GET THE FEELING YOU ONLY WANT TO HIRE ME BECAUSE YOU THINK I'M TRANS!
THEN I THINK I'D BETTER TELL YOU THE TRUTH BEFORE THIS GOES ANY FURTHER!


LIKE I SAID BEFORE, ROBIN, IT'S SAFE TO BE YOURSELF HERE, AND...
I AM NOT A TRANSWOMAN!
NO, I'M SERIOUS! I'M NOT TRANSGENDERED AND NEVER HAVE BEEN!
I WAS DRESSED LIKE THAT THE OTHER DAY BECAUSE I THOUGHT IT WAS THE ONLY WAY I COULD GET INTO THE LECTURE!


WHY ON EARTH WOULD YOU THINK THAT?
THE LIST OF LECTURES I GOT FROM ONE OF MY ROOMMATES STATED YOUR WIFE'S LECTURE WAS FOR WOMEN ONLY!
IT MOST CERTAINLY WASN'T!
AS I FOUND OUT AFTER I GOT THERE! BUT IT WAS TOO LATE TO GO HOME AND CHANGE!
AND I REALLY NEEDED TO ATTEND THAT LECTURE!
WHAT DO YOU MEAN "NEEDED TO"?


I NEEDED TO ATTEND AT LEAST ONE LECTURE THIS SEMESTER IN ORDER TO PASS A COURSE! AND BY THE TIME I GOT AROUND TO IT, YOUR WIFE'S WAS THE ONLY ONE LEFT!
SO IT WAS EITHER STAY FOR THE LECTURE DRESSED LIKE I WAS OR FAIL THE COURSE, WHICH ALSO WOULD'VE GOTTEN ME KICKED OUT OF MY FRAT!
SO YOU MISREPRESENTED YOURSELF IN ORDER TO PASS YOUR CLASS, IS THAT IT?
I'M SORRY, MR. MONROE! IT... IT WASN'T INTENTIONAL! AT THE TIME, I THOUGHT I HAD NO CHOICE! PLEASE BELIEVE ME!


SHIT! THIS CHANGES EVERYTHING!
BUT THERE MIGHT STILL BE A WAY TO MAKE THIS WORK OUT!
WELL, I GUESS I HAVE TO COMMEND YOU A LITTLE AT THE LENGTHS YOU WERE WILLING TO GO THROUGH IN ORDER TO PASS YOUR COURSE!
NO ONE WAS HARMED BY YOUR LITTLE MASQUERADE... AT LEAST NOT YET!
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?


HAS IT OCCURRED TO YOU THAT YOUR FRATERNITY BROTHERS SET YOU UP TO FAIL BY DOCTORING THE LECTURE LIST THEY SHOWED YOU?
SIGH! YEAH... IT HAS! BUT SINCE I PASSED THE COURSE, THEIR PLAN FAILED!
THIS TIME! SO WHAT MAKES YOU THINK THEY WON'T TRY AGAIN?
I'LL JUST HAVE TO MAKE SURE THEY DON'T TRICK ME INTO THAT KIND OF SITUATION AGAIN!
OH, THEY DON'T HAVE TO PUT YOU INTO A NEW SITUATION WHEN THERE'S SO MUCH MORE THEY COULD GET OUT OF THIS ONE!
I DON'T SEE HOW!


AT THE VERY LEAST, THEY COULD SPREAD THE STORY OF YOU ATTENDING THE LECTURE IN DRAG, MAKING YOUR SUMMER, IF NOT YOUR ENTIRE LAW SCHOOL CAREER, UNCOMFORTABLE!
BUT IF THEY WERE REALLY SERIOUS ABOUT CAUSING YOU TO FAIL, THEY COULD MAKE SURE YOUR PROFESSOR KNOWS ABOUT YOUR "PRANK", WHO MIGHT, IN TURN, FAIL YOU FOR ETHICAL REASONS!
WHETHER HE WOULD DO THAT OR NOT, IT'S HARD TO SAY SINCE I DON'T KNOW HIM! BUT IT'S A DEFINITE POSSIBILITY!
I... I HADN'T THOUGHT OF THAT!


NORMALLY I WOULDN'T BE THAT CONCERNED ABOUT A COLLEGE PRANK LIKE THIS, BUT SINCE IT INVOLVES MY WIFE, A HIGHLY RESPECTED ATTORNEY, IT TROUBLES ME DEEPLY!
MAYBE SO! BUT SURELY YOU REALIZE THAT ANY MENTION OF HER NAME DURING AN ETHICS VIOLATION, EVEN JUST FOR A LAW STUDENT, COULD DAMAGE HER REPUTATION!
THAT WAS NEVER MY INTENTION, MR. MONROE! PLEASE BELIEVE ME!
I... I REALIZE THAT NOW AND WISH THERE WAS SOMETHING I COULD DO TO KEEP THAT FROM HAPPENING!


MAY I ASK WHY YOU CONTINUE TO LIVE IN SUCH A TOXIC ENVIRONMENT?
IT'S ALL I CAN AFFORD! THE DORMS ARE RESERVED FOR UNDERCLASSMEN AND I DON'T HAVE ANY FRIENDS TO SHARE AN APARTMENT WITH!
THEN IT'S DOUBLY UNFORTUNATE YOU AREN'T THE PERSON I THOUGHT YOU WERE!
WHY DO YOU SAY THAT?
BECAUSE MY WIFE AND I HAVE A SMALL COTTAGE APARTMENT ATTACHED TO OUR GARAGE THAT WE LET SUMMER CLERKS LIVE IN FOR FREE!
"ROBIN" NOT ONLY WOULD'VE EARNED A REWARDING JOB BUT ALSO FREE RENT FOR THE SUMMER!


WOW! THAT'S VERY GENEROUS OF THE TWO OF YOU, SIR, AND I COMPLETELY UNDERSTAND WHY YOU CAN'T OFFER THE JOB TO ME!
I'M VERY GLAD WE AGREE ON THAT, ROBERT!
BUT BEFORE WE END YOUR INTERVIEW, LET ME ADD A SLIGHT WRINKLE TO THE SITUATION!


YOU SEE, THERE ARE SEVERAL REASONS WHY I WANTED TO HIRE "ROBIN" FOR THIS POSITION!
BUT THE PRIMARY REASON HAS TO DO WITH THE FACT THAT MY WIFE IS BEING CONSIDERED AS A CANDIDATE FOR STATE ATTORNEY'S GENERAL!
WHICH IS WHY I'M SO COMMITTED TO GETTING HER ELECTED!
THE STATE AG! THAT'S INCREDIBLE! JUDGE MONROE WOULD BE AMAZING IN THAT POSITION!
BUT HOW DOES HIRING "ROBIN" HELP WITH THAT?


YOU SEE, A SIGNIFICANT NUMBER OF VOTERS IN THIS STATE ARE VERY PRO-LGBTQ PLUS! AND ALTHOUGH SHE AND I ARE BOTH VERY LIKE-MINDED IN THAT REGARD, IT ISN'T REFLECTED IN HER HIRING RECORD!
SO HAVING SOMEONE LIKE "ROBIN" ON STAFF, IF ONLY FOR THE SUMMER, WOULD GO A LONG WAY IN SWAYING THE COMMITTEE!
ACTUALLY SHE KNOWS NOTHING ABOUT ANY OF THIS! I ONLY KNOW ABOUT THE DNC'S INTEREST IN HER THROUGH VARIOUS BACK-CHANNELS AND WANT TO KEEP IT OFF HER PLATE UNTIL THEY OFFICIALLY ASK HER TO RUN!
SO MEETING "ROBIN" THE OTHER DAY FELT LIKE AN ACT OF SERENDIPITY THAT WOULD BENEFIT US ALL! UNTIL, THAT IS, TODAY WHEN YOU CAME HERE AND TOLD ME THE TRUTH!
ALL OF WHICH FORCES ME TO ASK YOU TO CONSIDER ACCEPTING THIS JOB... AS ROBIN!
SO MS. MONROE WANTED TO HIRE "ROBIN", TOO?
WHAT?!


I... I'M NOT A TRANSEXUAL, MR. MONROE! I THOUGHT I MADE THAT CLEAR!
YOU DID! BUT I STILL CAN'T GET OVER HOW CONVINCING YOU WERE THE OTHER DAY, EVEN IF YOU WERE JUST PRETENDING!
WHICH COMPELS ME TO WONDER WHY YOU COULDN'T CONTINUE THE PRETENSE FOR THE SUMMER!
BUT I COULDN'T HAVE BEEN THAT CONVINCING, SINCE YOU REALIZED I WAS A MAN ALMOST IMMEDIATELY!
THAT WAS ONLY BECAUSE YOU BUMPED INTO ME AND I ACCIDENTALLY BECAME AWARE OF CERTAIN... INCONSISTENCIES, AS IT WERE!

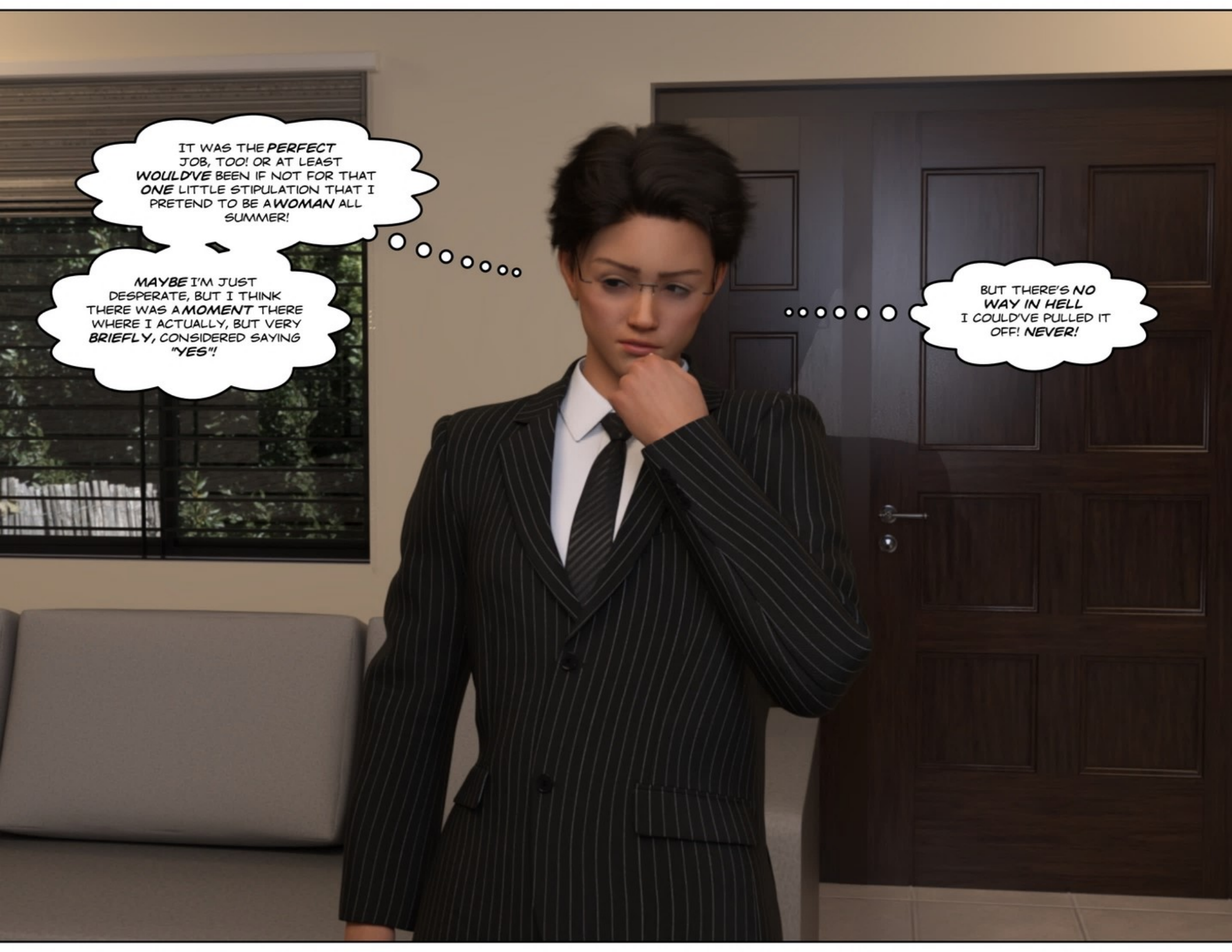

OH MY GOD! WHY DIDN'T I TUCK LIKE THE GIRLS TOLD ME TO?
I... I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO SAY, MR. MONROE!
THEN LET ME PUT IT ALL ON THE LINE FOR YOU...
SPENDING THE SUMMER WORKING FOR US AS ROBIN GETS YOU OUT OF THAT HOUSE AND INTO A WELL-PAYING JOB WITH BENEFITS THAT INCLUDE FREE RENT!
I WASN'T GOING TO ANNOUNCE THE HIRING OF A TRANSGENDER PERSON UNTIL THE FALL! AND WHEN I DO, I'LL INSIST ON MAINTAINING YOUR PRIVACY, SO YOUR TRUE IDENTITY NEVER NEED BE KNOWN!
NEEDLESS TO SAY, "ROBIN'S" DEDICATION TO THE JOB WOULD EARN "ROBERT" OUR ENDURING GRATITUDE FOR YEARS TO COME!


I'M... SORRY, MR. MONROE! BUT I THINK YOU HAVE A LOT MORE CONFIDENCE IN ME THAN I DO!
AND BESIDES, I DON'T THINK MY HOUSEMATES ARE AS BAD AS YOU THINK THEY ARE!
I HOPE YOU'RE RIGHT, ROBERT! I REALLY DO!


BUT IF YOU CHANGE YOUR MIND IN THE NEXT COUPLE OF DAYS, YOU HAVE MY NUMBER!
THANK YOU, SIR! BUT I REALLY *DON'T* THINK I WILL!


WELL, SHIT!

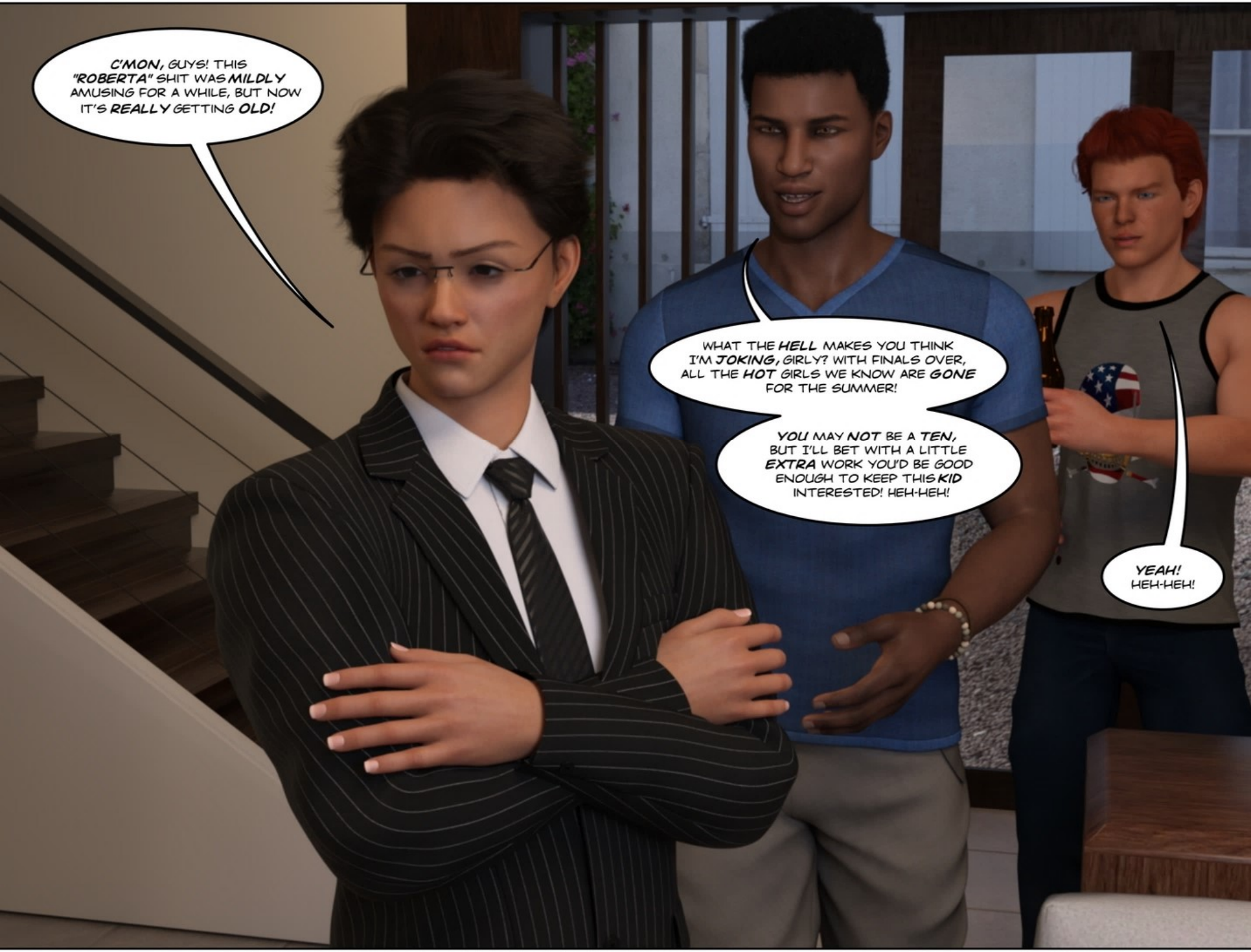

A short time later, back at the fraternity house...
THAT HAD TO BE THE WEIRDEST INTERVIEW I'VE EVER HAD IN MY LIFE!


IT WAS THE PERFECT JOB, TOO! OR AT LEAST WOULD'VE BEEN IF NOT FOR THAT ONE LITTLE STIPULATION THAT I PRETEND TO BE A WOMAN ALL SUMMER!
MAYBE I'M JUST DESPERATE, BUT I THINK THERE WAS A MOMENT THERE WHERE I ACTUALLY, BUT VERY BRIEFLY, CONSIDERED SAYING "YES"!
BUT THERE'S NO WAY IN HELL I COULD'VE PULLED IT OFF! NEVER!


WHOA! WHAT ARE YOU ALL DRESSED UP FOR?
I HAD A JOB INTERVIEW!
HATE TO BREAK THIS TO YOU, ROBERTA, BUT YOU DON'T NEED A COAT AND TIE TO INTERVIEW AT THE BARF N' BURGER! *HEH-HEH!*


UH, YEAH! I JUST GOT BACK! WHAT'S UP, MAX?
HEY, I'LL DO WHATEVER I CAN!
OH GOOD, YOU'RE HERE!
WE NEED YOUR HELP TO IMPRESS A NEW PLEDGE!
HIS FAMILY'S GOT BIG MONEY SO SCORING HIM TO THE HOUSE WOULD BE A HUGE WIN FOR US!


FINALLY! SOMEONE WHO REALIZES I'M WORTH SOMETHING AROUND HERE!
AWESOME! HE'LL BE HERE IN A COUPLE OF HOURS, SO THAT'LL GIVE YOU PLENTY OF TIME TO GET READY!
GET READY? WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
YOU'RE GONNA BE HIS DATE TONIGHT!


C'MON, GUYS! THIS "ROBERTA" SHIT WAS MILDLY AMUSING FOR A WHILE, BUT NOW IT'S REALLY GETTING OLD!
WHAT THE HELL MAKES YOU THINK I'M JOKING, GIRLY? WITH FINALS OVER, ALL THE HOT GIRLS WE KNOW ARE GONE FOR THE SUMMER!
YOU MAY NOT BE A TEN, BUT I'LL BET WITH A LITTLE EXTRA WORK YOU'D BE GOOD ENOUGH TO KEEP THIS KID INTERESTED! HEH-HEH!
YEAH! HEH-HEH!


BUT I CAN'T...
OH, YES YOU CAN! OR WOULD YOU RATHER THE DEAN OF STUDENTS GOT AN ANONYMOUS LETTER DETAILING HOW YOU TRIED TO EMBARRASS A DISTINGUISHED GUEST LECTURER WITH YOUR LITTLE CROSS-DRESSING PRANK!


YOU... YOU CAN'T DO THAT! I COULD GET KICKED OUT OF SCHOOL!
THEN DO AS I SAY AND GET YOUR ASS UPSTAIRS AND MAKE YOURSELF PRETTY FOR THE NEW PLEDGE!


HEY, YOU THINK ANY OF THE OTHER HOUSES MIGHT WANT TO BORROW "ROBERTA" THIS SUMMER?
BORROW? HELL, LET'S RENT HER TO THEM! A NICE LITTLE INFLUX OF SUMMER CASH FOR THE HOUSE!
AWESOME IDEA! HEH-HEH!

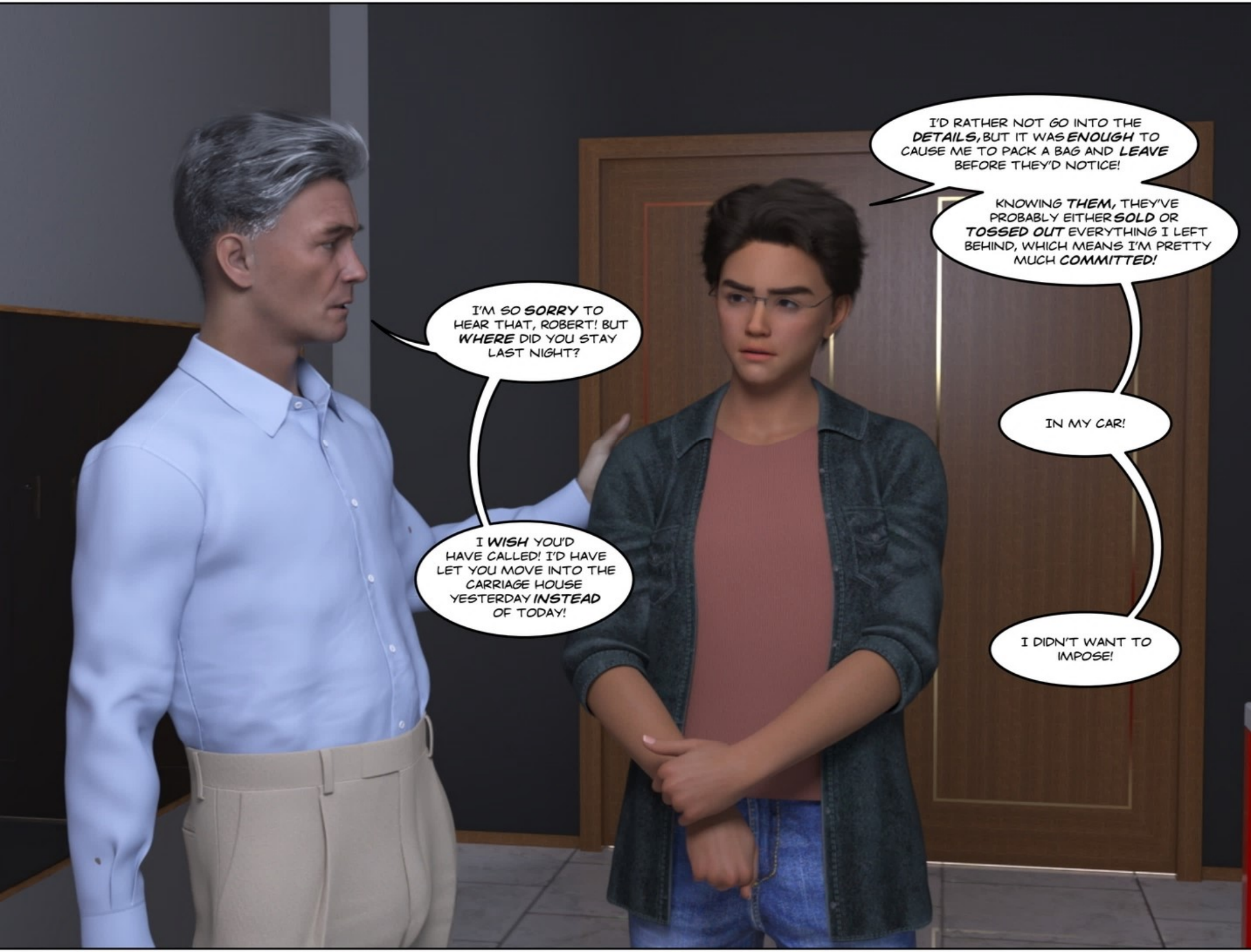



click click click


HELLO? MR. MONROE? THIS IS ROBERT... ROBERT STILLWELL!


IS THAT JOB FOR ROBIN STILL AVAILABLE?

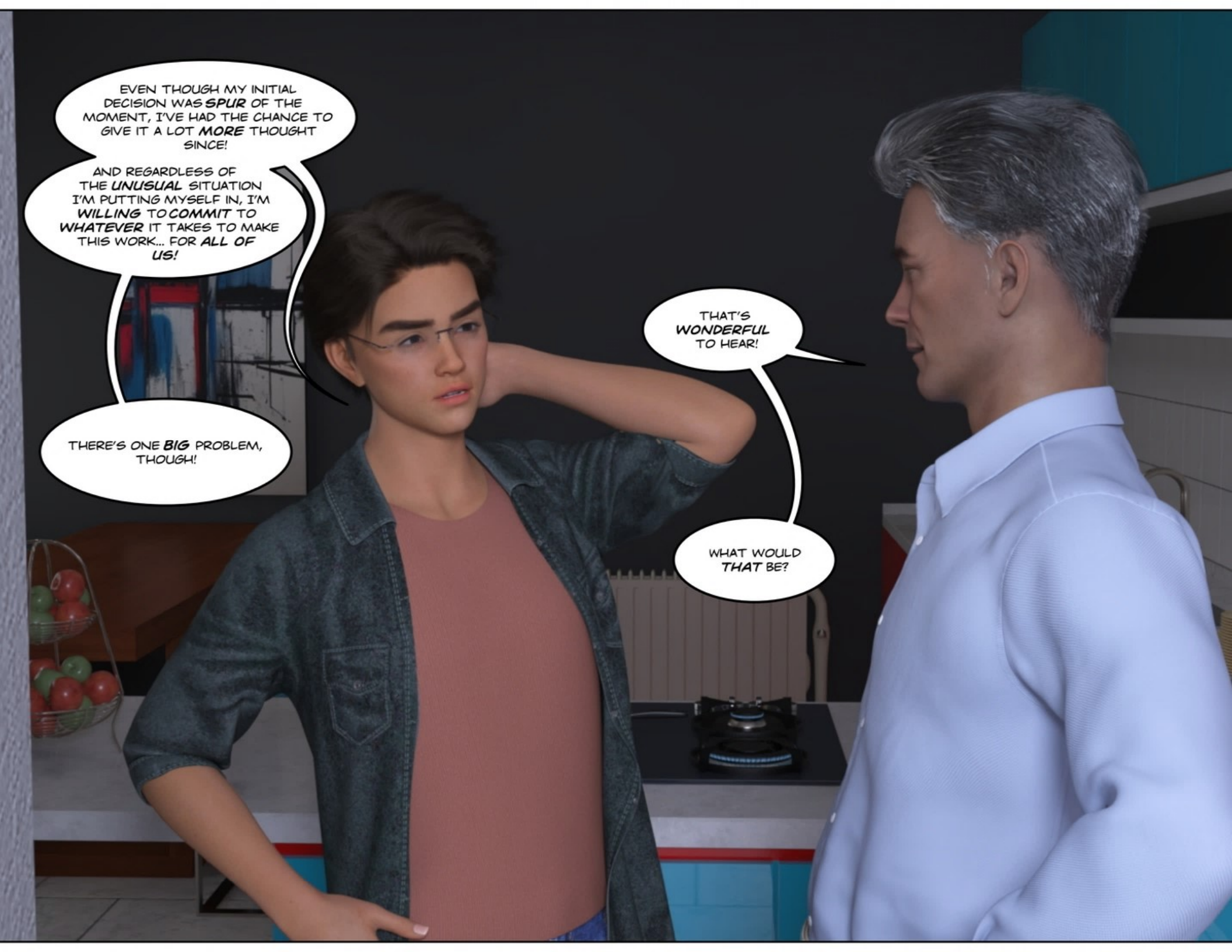

The next day...
SO, WHAT CAUSED YOU TO CHANGE YOUR MIND ABOUT THE JOB?
IT DIDN'T SEEM TO TAKE YOU VERY LONG TO COME TO THAT CONCLUSION! WHAT HAPPENED?
IT TURNS OUT YOU WERE *RIGHT* ABOUT MY HOUSE MATES AND THE *TOXIC* ENVIRONMENT I WAS BEING EXPOSED TO!


I'M SO SORRY TO HEAR THAT, ROBERT! BUT WHERE DID YOU STAY LAST NIGHT?
I WISH YOU'D HAVE CALLED! I'D HAVE LET YOU MOVE INTO THE CARRIAGE HOUSE YESTERDAY INSTEAD OF TODAY!
I'D RATHER NOT GO INTO THE DETAILS, BUT IT WAS ENOUGH TO CAUSE ME TO PACK A BAG AND LEAVE BEFORE THEY'D NOTICE!
KNOWING THEM, THEY'VE PROBABLY EITHER SOLD OR TOSSED OUT EVERYTHING I LEFT BEHIND, WHICH MEANS I'M PRETTY MUCH COMMITTED!
IN MY CAR!
I DIDN'T WANT TO IMPOSE!


WHATEVER THE CIRCUMSTANCES, I'M GLAD YOU'RE HERE NOW! AND WE HAVE A LOT TO DISCUSS!
SHE'S OUT OF TOWN FOR A COUPLE OF DAYS WHICH GIVES US TIME TO GET "ROBIN" IN PLACE BEFORE SHE GETS BACK!
BECAUSE I'VE DECIDED IT BEST TO LEAVE HER IN THE DARK REGARDING THE TRUTH ABOUT "ROBIN"!
I FIGURED AS MUCH! WILL YOUR WIFE BE JOINING US?
WHY IS THAT SO IMPORTANT?
I... I DON'T UNDERSTAND!


I WASN'T PLANNING ON TELLING HER THAT "ROBIN" WAS A TRANSGENDER PERSON UNTIL AFTER YOU'D BEEN WORKING FOR HER AWHILE! A FEW WEEKS , AT LEAST!
THAT'S WHY YOU NEED TO BE A VERY CONVINCING "ROBIN" FROM DAY ONE!
AND THE REASON I DON'T WANT HER TO KNOW THAT YOU REALLY AREN'T A TRANSGENDER PERSON, IS TO KEEP HER FREE FROM BLAME ON THE OUTSIDE, AND VERY UNLIKELY, CHANCE THAT THE TRUTH COMES OUT!
REST ASSURED, I SEE NO FEASIBLE REASON FOR THAT TO HAPPEN, BUT I HAVEN'T GOTTEN WHERE I AM IN THE WORLD BY NOT PREPARING FOR EVERY POSSIBILITY!


I'M AFRAID SO! AND SINCE YOU'LL BE LIVING IN OUR CARRIAGE HOUSE, YOU HAVE TO BE "ROBIN" 24-7!
SO IF YOU DON'T THINK YOU CAN DO THIS, NOW'S THE TIME TO SAY SO! BECAUSE ONCE MY WIFE GETS HOME, IT WILL BE TOO LATE!
SO I'LL BE LYING TO HER, TOO! IS THAT WHAT YOU'RE SAYING?


EVEN THOUGH MY INITIAL DECISION WAS SPUR OF THE MOMENT, I'VE HAD THE CHANCE TO GIVE IT A LOT MORE THOUGHT SINCE!
AND REGARDLESS OF THE UNUSUAL SITUATION I'M PUTTING MYSELF IN, I'M WILLING TO COMMIT TO WHATEVER IT TAKES TO MAKE THIS WORK... FOR ALL OF US!
THERE'S ONE BIG PROBLEM, THOUGH!
THAT'S WONDERFUL TO HEAR!
WHAT WOULD THAT BE?


MY EX-HOUSE MATES! YOUR HOUSE IS PRETTY CLOSE TO CAMPUS, WHICH INCREASES THE CHANCE OF ONE OF THEM SEEING ME AS ROBIN!
AND THAT COULD RUIN EVERYTHING!
ACTUALLY, I ANTICIPATED THAT PROBLEM!


AND I BELIEVE I'VE COME UP WITH A SOLUTION!


A few minutes later in the Monroe's carriage house...
SO, THIS IS WHERE YOU'LL BE STAYING FOR THE NEXT COUPLE OF MONTHS!
WHAT DO YOU THINK?
OH MY GOD! THIS IS SO MUCH NICER THAN ANYPLACE I'VE EVER LIVED BEFORE!


Knock knock
THIS IS SO GENEROUS OF YOU! I DON'T KNOW HOW TO THANK YOU!
WELL, YOU MIGHT WANT TO HOLD ON AND SEE IF YOU STILL FEEL THAT WAY AFTER THE NEXT COUPLE OF DAYS!
BECAUSE YOU HAVE A LOT OF PREP WORK TO DO BEFORE MY WIFE GETS HOME TOMORROW!


AND *THIS* SHOULD BE THE PERSON WHO'S GOING TO *HELP* YOU WITH THAT!


SORRY I'M LATE! FIGURING OUT WHAT TO PACK UP TOOK LONGER THAN I THOUGHT!
YOUR TIMING COULDN'T BE BETTER, HONEY!
PACK UP? ARE... ARE YOU MOVING IN HERE, TOO?


YOU MUST BE ROBERT! AND, NO, I'M NOT MOVING IN HERE! THESE THINGS I PACKED UP ARE FOR YOU!
WELL, MORE SPECIFICALLY, THEY'RE FOR ROBIN!
I... I DON'T UNDERSTAND!


THIS IS MY NIECE, NORA! SHE'LL BE HELPING YOU DEVELOP AND MAINTAIN "ROBIN" FOR THE NEXT FEW MONTHS!
EVERYTHING, YES! BUT I TRUST HER COMPLETELY! AND YOU SHOULD, TOO!
SO SHE KNOWS...?
JUST THINK OF ME AS THE BEST BIG SISTER YOU COULD EVER HAVE!


WELL, I'LL LET YOU TWO GET ACQUAINTED!
LET ME KNOW IF YOU NEED ANYTHING!
THANKS, UNCLE HANK! WE WILL!


OKAY, THEN! WHY DON'T YOU GO INTO THE BEDROOM, STRIP DOWN AND LET ME SEE WHAT I'VE GOT TO WORK WITH!
YEAH! JUST LIKE THAT! CHOP CHOP, ROBIN!
WHAT?! JUST LIKE THAT?


UNCLE HANK'S LET ME CRASH IN THIS CARRIAGE HOUSE MORE THAN A FEW TIMES OVER THE YEARS WHEN MY MOM AND I DIDN'T SEE EYE TO EYE!
THAT'S ONE OF THE REASON'S WE'RE SO CLOSE!
GOOD TO KNOW... REALLY.
NOW WHEN YOU SAY "STRIP DOWN", JUST HOW FAR ARE WE TALKING HERE?
IF WE'RE GONNA DO THIS RIGHT, I NEED TO SEE IT ALL, SWEETIE!
SIGH! GREAT!

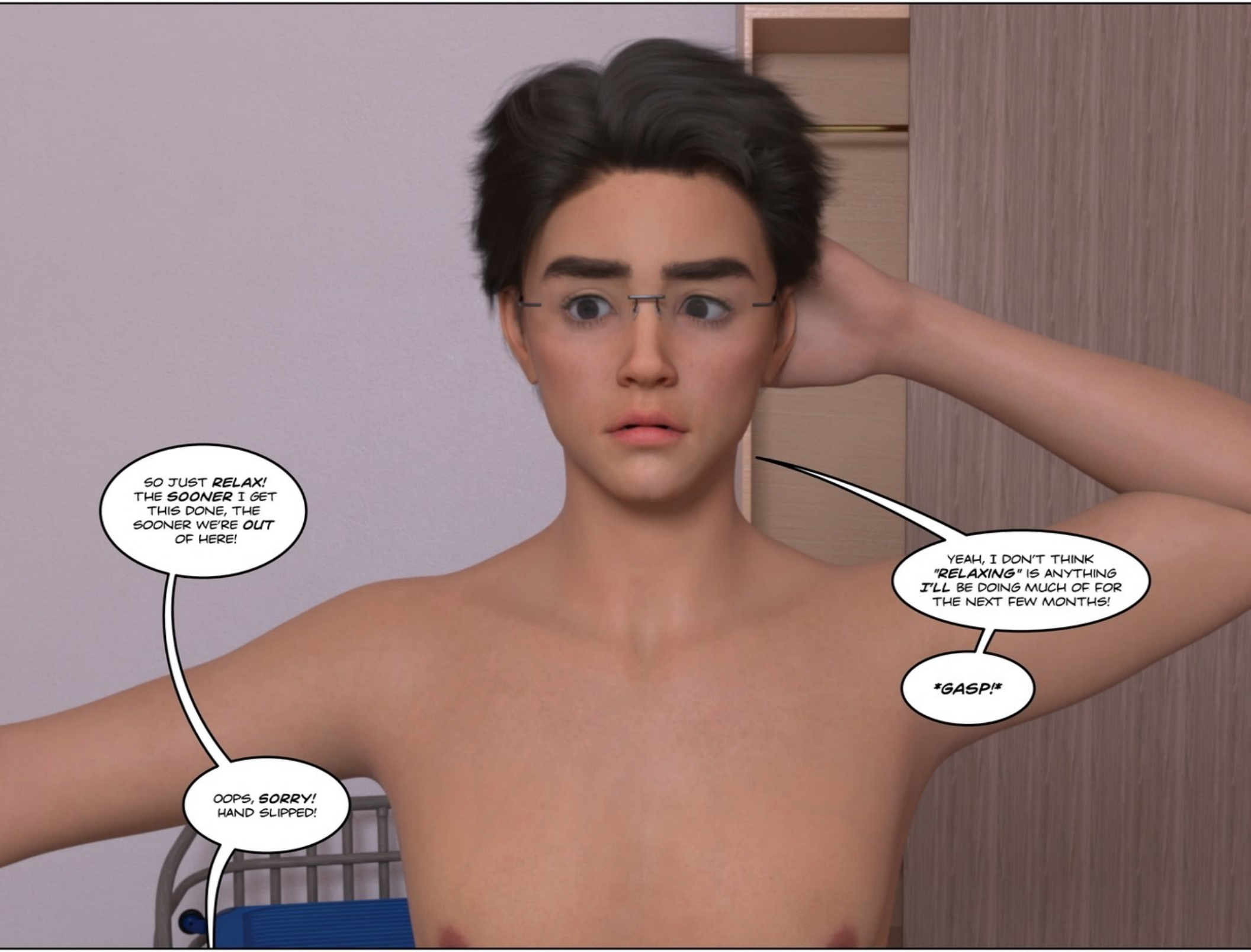

THE GIRLS WHO DRESSED ME THE OTHER DAY HAD ME SHAVE ALL OVER! IT JUST HASN'T GROWN BACK YET!
WHAT LITTLE BEARD I HAD TOOK ME SEVERAL MONTHS TO GROW! SO, YEAH... I'M NOT A VERY HAIRY PERSON!
HMMM... NICE SKIN! ARE YOU NATURALLY THIS BODY HAIR FREE?
AND YOUR FACIAL HAIR?
LUCKY FOR US!


HEY, THE VISUAL INSPECTION IS EMBARRASSING ENOUGH! BUT IS HANDLING THE GOODS REALLY NECESSARY?
IT IS IF I'M TO KNOW WHERE I NEED TO PAD OR NOT!
SO RELAX AND GET USED TO IT, GIRLFRIEND! THERE'LL BE A LOT MORE OF THIS IN THE COMING DAYS!
WONDERFUL! JUST FUCKING WONDERFUL!


LOOK! I'M NOT YOUR ENEMY! I KNOW THIS IS UNCOMFORTABLE FOR YOU AND I WISH WE HAD MORE TIME SO I COULD EASE YOU INTO IT! BUT WE DON'T!
TO KEEP YOU FROM BEING RECOGNIZED BY ANYONE, I HAVE TO CREATE A WHOLE NEW GIRL OUT OF YOU AND THAT'S GONNA TAKE SOME WORK!
SO PLEASE, JUST BEAR WITH ME FOR THE NEXT COUPLE OF DAYS AND DO EVERYTHING I SAY! THEN, WHEN THINGS CALM DOWN A BIT, WE'LL TAKE SOME TIME TO GET TOKNOW EACH OTHER BETTER!
AND HOPEFULLY YOU'LL SEE THAT I'M NOT THE HEINOUS BITCH YOU THINK I AM!


SIGH! I DON'T THINK YOU'RE A HEINOUS BITCH! I'M JUST BEING A JERK BECAUSE I'M OVERLY STRESSED RIGHT NOW!
I KNOW I AGREED TO ALL THIS, BUT THE SUDDEN URGENCY OF IT IS REALLY MESSING WITH MY EMOTIONS!
SO, I'M SORRY, NORA, AND I PROMISE I'LL STOP SNAPPING AT YOU... JUST AS SOON AS YOU LET ME PUT SOME DAMN CLOTHES BACK ON!


NO APOLOGIES NECESSARY! AND AS SOON AS I TAKE A FEW MEASUREMENTS, YOU CAN SLIP INTO THOSE CLOTHES I BROUGHT FOR YOU!
THE CLOTHES I BROUGHT ARE JUST TEMPORARY UNTIL WE GET TO WHERE I CAN GET YOU FITTED FOR BODY SHAPERS AND YOUR REAL CLOTHES!
THEY'RE WHY I NEED YOUR MEASUREMENTS!
WHY DO YOU NEED MY MEASUREMENTS IF YOU ALREADY BROUGHT CLOTHES?
I GUESS THAT MAKES SENSE!


SO JUST RELAX! THE SOONER I GET THIS DONE, THE SOONER WE'RE OUT OF HERE!
OOPS, SORRY! HAND SLIPPED!
YEAH, I DON'T THINK "RELAXING" IS ANYTHING I'LL BE DOING MUCH OF FOR THE NEXT FEW MONTHS!
GASP!


A short time later...
WHY DOES EVERYONE KEEP PUTTING ME IN SKIRTS? WOMEN WEAR PANTS TOO, YOU KNOW!
TRUE! BUT AS CUTE AS YOUR ASS IS FOR A GUY, IT NEEDS SOME WORK BEFORE I'D WANT TO SEE IT SQUEEZED INTO A PAIR OF SKINNY JEANS OR TIGHTS!
BESIDES, YOU'VE ALREADY GOT DYNAMITE LEGS! SO WHY NOT SHOW 'EM OFF?


EVEN WITH "DYNAMITE" LEGS, I DON'T THINK ANYONE WHO TOOK A CLOSE LOOK AT ME IN THIS GET-UP WOULD THINK I WAS REALLY A WOMAN!
TRUE! BUT IN A MERE FIFTEEN MINUTES I MADE SURE NO ONE WOULD RECOGNIZE YOU, AND THAT WAS THE POINT!
GIVE ME A COUPLE OF HOURS AND THE PROPER RESOURCES AND YOU'LL SEE WHAT I CAN REALLY DO!


SO, I HAVE TO ASK! IS THIS SOMETHING YOU DO A LOT?
DEFINE "THIS"!
MAKING GUYS LOOK LIKE GIRLS!
NOT SPECIFICALLY! BUT I AM SOMETHING OF AN EXPERT IN SFX MAKEUP!
WHAT THE HELL DOES THAT MEAN?
I'M A MAKE-UP AND SPECIAL EFFECTS ARTIST!


WAIT! YOU WORK IN THE MOVIES?
I'VE DONE A FEW! BUT WORKING IN LIVE THEATER IS MY MAIN GIG!
HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN DOING IT?
A FEW YEARS! I STUDIED THEATER AND ACTING IN COLLEGE, BUT REALIZED PRETTY QUICKLY THAT ACTING DOESN'T PAY THE BILLS!
JUST HOW GOOD?
SO I BECAME REALLY GOOD AT SOMETHING THAT'D KEEP ME IN THE BUSINESS AND PROVIDED A CONSTANT PAYCHECK!
PRETTY DAMN GOOD... AS YOU'RE ABOUT TO FIND OUT!


SO THIS IS WHERE YOU WORK?
MOST OF THE TIME!
LET ME GET THE LIGHTS SO YOU CAN SEE IT BETTER!


WOW! WHERE EXACTLY ARE WE?
BACKSTAGE OF THE ORPHEUS THEATRE!
I'M THE RESIDENT MAKEUP ARTIST FOR THE THEATRE BUT ALSO DO A LOT OF FREELANCE WORK FROM HERE!
IT'S QUITE THE SETUP!
DAMN STRAIGHT! AND IT'S GOT EVERYTHING I'LL NEED TO MAKE A NEW WOMAN OUT OF YOU!


SIGH! YEAH. SO... WHEN DO WE GET STARTED?
TAKE OFF EVERYTHING? AGAIN?
RIGHT NOW! GO INTO ONE OF THOSE CHANGING BOOTHS AND TAKE OFF THOSE CLOTHES!
YES, BUT DON'T WORRY! I'LL BRING YOU A ROBE YOU CAN THROW ON BEFORE YOU COME OUT!


IT'S JUST SURREAL HOW CALMLY I'M ACCEPTING ALL THIS! BUT I GUESS THAT'S A GOOD THING SINCE THE ALTERNATIVE IS FREAKING OUT!
AND THAT'S NOT AN OPTION IF I WANT TO KEEP THIS JOB AND PLACE TO LIVE FOR THE SUMMER!
I SUPPOSE I'M LUCKY TO HAVE A PROFESSIONAL LIKE NORA HELP ME PULL THIS OFF! I JUST WISH IT ALL WASN'T HAPPENING SO GODDAMN FAST!


HERE YOU GO! PUT THESE ON BEFORE YOU COME OUT!
NO, THEY'RE NOT! BUT THEY ARE SOMETHING YOU'RE GOING TO HAVE TO GET USED TO WEARING... FOR A WHILE AT LEAST!
HEY! NEITHER OF THOSE IS A ROBE!


YOU KNOW, CONSIDERING WHAT THEY MADE ME WEAR A COUPLE OF DAYS AGO, THIS ISN'T THAT BAD!
YEAH... THAT'S BECAUSE I HAVEN'T TIGHTENED IT UP YET!
TAKE A DEEP BREATH!


HOLY...
SHIT!


JESUS! I CAN BARELY BREATH!
I FEEL LIKE I'M BEING CRUSHED!
YOU'LL GET USED TO IT! JUST AVOID TRYING TO TAKE DEEP BREATHS FOR A WHILE!
THEY'RE CALLED BODY-SHAPERS FOR A REASON!
BESIDES SQUEEZING THAT BABY FAT OF YOURS INTO SOME RESPECTABLE CLEAVAGE, THIS LITTLE BEAUTY WILL ALSO START TRAINING YOUR WAIST INTO A MORE FEMININE SHAPE!


AND THE *PADDING* IN THESE SHORTS WILL GIVE YOU AN *ASS* TO RIVAL *MINE!* *GIGGLE!*
NOW, TAKE OFF THAT WIG, SLIP ON A ROBE AND FOLLOW ME! WE'RE GONNA WORK ON YOUR *HAIR* FIRST!


SO WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO TO MY HAIR?
COULDN'T WE JUST DO ANOTHER WIG... LIKE THE ONE I WORE HERE?
THE REAL QUESTION IS WHAT AM I NOT GOING TO DO TO YOUR HAIR?
BESIDES THE BODY, A WOMAN'S HAIR IS THE MOST NOTICEABLE ATTRIBUTE SHE HAS!
SO TO KEEP YOU FROM BEING RECOGNIZED, THIS SHORT, BLACK HAIR OF YOURS HAS GOT TO GO!
TOO TEMPORARY AND FALLIBLE! IF THIS IS GOING TO LAST ALL SUMMER, WE NEED SOMETHING MORE PERMANENT!


DO I GET ANY SAY IN THIS?
NOPE! JUST GET COMFORTABLE AND TUNE OUT WHILE I WORK MY MAGIC, SWEETIE! THIS IS GOING TO TAKE A WHILE!
SIGH! ALL RIGHT.
NOT LIKE I HAVE ANY CHOICE.


A couple of hours later...
WAKEY, WAKEY, SUNSHINE! NO TIME TO DAWDLE!
HUH? WHAT?


HOW LONG HAVE I BEEN ASLEEP?
A COUPLE OF HOURS!
WHAT DID YOU DO? CAN I SEE IT?
NOT UNTIL IT'S DONE SETTING! DID YOU BRING YOUR CONTACTS?
YEAH, BUT LIKE I SAID, I DON'T REALLY LIKE WEARING THEM IF I DON'T HAVE TO!
WELL, CONSIDER THEM SOMETHING ELSE YOU'LL JUST HAVE TO GET USED TO!
PUT 'EM IN AND THEN WE'LL GO WORK ON YOUR FACE!


IS THIS GOING TO TAKE AS LONG AS MY HAIR DID?
NO! BUT IT WILL TAKE LONGER THAN NORMAL THIS FIRST TIME IF I'M TO GET THAT FOREST OF EYEBROWS DOWN TO THE SHAPE I WANT!


BY THE WAY, HOW ARE YOU IN DEALING WITH *PAIN?*
WHAT I HAVE PLANNED INVOLVES PLUCKING, POKING, STICKING *AND* PIERCING!
BEAUTY CAN BE A LITTLE *PAINFUL*, SWEETIE! YOU READY?
I'M OKAY UNTIL THE *CHAINSAWS* COME OUT! SHOULD I ASK *WHY?*
SIGH! I KIND OF *ASSUMED* AS MUCH!
AS READY AS I'LL EVER BE!


A while later...
NO, THE ICE REALLY HELPED! BUT THEY STILL FEEL REALLY PUFFY!
NOT LONGER WOULD BE PREFERABLE!
HOW ARE THE LIPS FEELING? DO THEY STILL HURT?
THAT'S NORMAL FOR THE AMOUNT OF GEL I INJECTED! BUT THEY LOOK GREAT AND SHOULD LAST ALL SUMMER, IF NOT LONGER!
NOT MUCH I CAN DO ABOUT THAT! SORRY!


OH, YEAH! THEY TURNED OUT GREAT!
NOW, LET'S SEE IF THE HAIR IS JUST AS FABULOUS!


IT'S AMAZING WHAT A LITTLE COLOR AND SOME EXTENSIONS CAN DO!
WHAT DO YOU THINK?
HOLY SHIT!


THAT...THAT LOOKS NOTHING LIKE ME!
AND I'M ACTUALLY... CUTE!
THAT WAS KINDA THE POINT!
PUPPIES ARE CUTE, ROBIN! I MADE YOU INTO A KNOCKOUT!


I NEVER IN A MILLION YEARS IMAGINED YOU COULD GET ME TO LOOK THIS CONVINCING!
AS BACKHANDED COMPLIMENTS GO, I'LL TAKE IT!
BUT AS FAR AS CONVINCING GOES, THAT'S GOING TO BE UP TO YOU!
AND THAT'S WHERE MY OTHER TALENTS WILL COME IN HANDY!
WHAT OTHER TALENTS?
ACTING!


LOOKING THE PART IS EASY! BUT MAKING IT BELIEVABLE IS A WHOLE DIFFERENT BALLGAME!
EVEN THOUGH YOU'RE EVENTUALLY GOING TO BE "OUTED" AS A TRANSWOMAN, UNCLE HANK SAYS IT'S EXTREMELY IMPORTANT YOU PRESENT YOURSELF AS A NORMAL, EVERYDAY WOMAN!
ESPECIALLY SINCE YOU'LL BE WORKING FOR MY AUNT ABBY, AN EXTREMELY INTELLIGENT AND OBSERVANT PERSON WHO WON'T BE TOLD THE "TRUTH" ABOUT YOU FOR SEVERAL WEEKS!
SO MY OTHER JOB IS NOT ONLY TO HELP YOU ACT THE PART, BUT LIVE THE PART!
I GUESS THAT MAKES SENSE!
SO... WHEN DO WE START?


AS SOON AS I FIND JUST THE RIGHT OUTFIT FOR ROBIN'S DEBUT!


Later...
ARE YOU SURE YOU KNOW WHERE THIS PLACE IS? IT FEELS LIKE WE'VE BEEN WALKING FOREVER!
THEN WHY DID YOU HAVE THE DRIVER DROP US OFF SO DAMN FAR AWAY?
OF COURSE I KNOW WHERE IT IS! I MEET MY GIRLS HERE ALL THE TIME!
TO GIVE YOU EVEN MORE TIME TO GET YOUR WALK DOWN IN THOSE HEELS!
GRAND
MULBERRY
RESTAURANT
BRUNCH • LUNCH • DINNER
BAR


MORE LIKELY THEY'VE BEEN LOOKING AT MY PADDED ASS IN THIS WAY TOO SHORT SKIRT!
DID WE REALLY HAVE TO GO THIS ROUTE ON MY VERY FIRST DAY?
NOT THE BEST ANALOGY SINCE I NEVER LEARNED HOW TO SWIM!
AND FROM THE LOOKS YOU'VE BEEN GETTING, I'D SAY YOU'RE NAILING IT!
CONSIDERING OUR TIME-FRAME, THROWING YOU INTO THE DEEP END IS REALLY THE ONLY CHOICE WE HAVE!


I WOULDN'T DO THAT TO YOU! IT'S JUST A LAIDBACK PLACE MY GIRLFRIENDS AND I MEET UP AT WHENEVER WE CAN!
IT'S HARDLY A "MICRO" SKIRT AND THE HEELS COULD BE HIGHER... TRUST ME!
BUT YOU'VE GOT TO STOP KVETCHING ABOUT THE CLOTHES BEFORE WE GET THERE!
AND PLEASE TELL ME THIS PLACE YOU'RE TAKING ME TO ISN'T SOME MEAT MARKET WHERE VISION-IMPAIRED GUYS MIGHT TRY TO HIT ON ME!
THEN WHY THE MICRO SKIRT AND DEATH HEELS?


YOU SEE, AS FAR AS MY FRIENDS KNOW, YOU'RE JUST A NORMAL FEMALE LAW STUDENT WHO'S GOING TO WORK FOR MY AUNT!
SO AS A FAVOR TO HER, I OFFERED TO TAKE YOU UNDER MY WING FOR THE SUMMER AND LET YOU HANG OUT WITH ME AND MY FRIENDS!
AND IF YOU'RE GOING TO SOCIALIZE WITH US, YOU HAVE TO DRESS THE PART! HENCE, THE SHORT SKIRT AND HIGH HEELS YOU'RE GOING TO LEARN TO LOVE!
OH, WE ARE!
YOU MAKE IT SOUND LIKE WE'RE GOING TO BE DOING THIS A LOT!


WHAT YOU NEED IS A CRASH COURSE IN BEING A WOMAN, AND THERE'S NO BETTER WAY THAN IMMERSING YOURSELF AMONG THEM!
SO, A GIRLS' NIGHT OUT WITH ME AND MY BESTIES IS EXACTLY WHAT THE DOCTOR ORDERED!
YOU HAVE TO USE THIS TIME TO OBSERVE HOW WE, AND OTHER WOMEN, INTERACT, MOVE, AND EXPRESS OURSELVES!
SOAK IT ALL IN - EVERY MANNERISM, EVERY NUANCE - TO HELP YOU TRULY DEFINE WHO ROBIN IS!
IT WILL BE IF YOU COMMIT TO IT!
DO YOU REALLY THINK THAT'LL BE ENOUGH TO CONVINCE PEOPLE THAT I'M A REAL WOMAN?
DEFINE "COMMIT"!


YOU CAN'T TREAT THIS AS A ROLE YOU PLAY ONLY WHEN CERTAIN PEOPLE ARE AROUND! YOU HAVE TO LIVE IT 24-7!
IN OTHER WORDS, THE MORE YOU FULLY EMBRACE BEING ROBIN, THE EASIER IT WILL BE TO CONVINCE OTHERS!
LOOK, TONIGHT'S ABOUT GETTING COMFORTABLE WITH YOURSELF! YOU'RE THE NEW GIRL IN THE GROUP, SO NO ONE HAS ANY PRECONCEIVED NOTIONS ABOUT YOU!
YOUR VOICE STILL NEEDS A LITTLE WORK, BUT THE BACKGROUND NOISE IN THE PLACE WE'RE GOING TO SHOULD KEEP ANYONE FROM NOTICING!
SO JUST TAKE IT SLOW AND EASY! WE'LL BE DOING THIS A LOT, SO YOU'LL BE ABLE TO ADD TO YOUR CHARACTER AS YOU LOOSEN UP!
SO, TOTAL CHANGE IN MINDSET! GOT IT! NO PROBLEM!


WHEN YOU SAY WE'LL BE DOING THIS A LOT, YOU MEAN...
WHAT KIND OF ERRANDS?
I MEAN WE'LL BE GOING OUT WITH THE GIRLS EVERY NIGHT THIS WEEK... FOR THE SOCIAL INTERACTIONS!
PLUS, WE HAVE A FEW ERRANDS TO RUN TOMORROW MORNING BEFORE YOU MEET AUNT ABBY IN THE AFTERNOON!
WE'LL TALK ABOUT THAT LATER...


'CAUSE, HERE WE ARE!
OF COURSE IT IS! I WOULDN'T LIE TO YOU! REMEMBER THAT!
I GUESS IT IS A PRETTY LAID BACK LOOKING PLACE!


I TAKE IT THOSE ARE YOUR FRIENDS WAVING AT US!
YEP! THAT'S LIZ ON THE LEFT AND DESI ON THE RIGHT!


I'VE KNOWN THESE TWO FOR YEARS AND THEY'RE BOTH AWESOME PEOPLE!
SO JUST RELAX AND LET YOURSELF ENJOY THE EVENING!
SIGH! I'LL DO MY BEST!
EASIER SAID THAN DONE!


LIZ... DESI... THIS IS MY NEW FRIEND, ROBIN!
ROBIN, THESE ARE MY BEST FRIENDS... LIZ AND DESI!
IT'S, UMMM... NICE TO MEET YOU GUYS!
AWESOME MEETING YOU, TOO, ROBIN!
DITTO! LET'S GO GRAB A TABLE!


As the evening progresses,
new friendships develop...


SO ROBIN, NORA SAYS YOU MOVED HERE FROM THE MIDWEST! WHAT *PART?*
I *THOUGHT* I DETECTED A BIT OF THAT *NORTHERN MIDWEST ACCENT* IN YOUR VOICE!
DON'T YOU DARE! I THINK IT'S *ADORABLE!*
ME TOO!
THE *CHICAGO* AREA! I GREW UP AND DID MY UNDERGRAD WORK THERE!
YEAH, I'VE BEEN, UHHH... *TRYING* TO GET *RID* OF IT!


WELL IF YOU TWO APPROVE OF IT, I'D BE A FOOL TO TRY AND CHANGE IT! *GIGGLE!*
SMART GIRL! *GIGGLE!*
SMART? HELL, SHE'S BRILLIANT! *GIGGLE!*


I HATE TO DO THIS, BUT ROBIN AND I HAVE A LOT TO DO TOMORROW BEFORE SHE STARTS HER NEW JOB! SO WE'VE GOTTA CALL IT A NIGHT!
YEAH, I'VE GOT AN EARLY DAY TOMORROW MYSELF!
ME TOO! BUT WE'RE MEETING UP AGAIN TOMORROW NIGHT, RIGHT?
HELL YES!


SEE YOU BOTH TOMORROW NIGHT THEN!
YEAH, AND WELCOME TO THE GANG, ROBIN! *GIGGLE!*
THANK YOU BOTH... SO MUCH!


SO... DID I DO OKAY?
WHEW! THAT'S A HUGE RELIEF!
OKAY? GIRLFRIEND, YOU KNOCKED IT OUT OF THE PARK!
CONGRATULATIONS! YOU'RE OFFICIALLY ONE OF THE GIRLS NOW!


SO, WHAT ARE ALL THESE IMPORTANT "ERRANDS" WE HAVE TO RUN TOMORROW?
AND WHAT WOULD THAT BE?
YOU CAN'T BE SERIOUS!
THERE'S REALLY ONLY ONE! BUT IT'S SOMETHING UNCLE HANK STRONGLY SUGGESTED!
AN APPOINTMENT WITH A DOCTOR... SPECIFICALLY A GENDER-AFFIRMING SPECIALIST!
OH, I AM!


SOMETIME THIS SUMMER, YOU AND UNCLE HANK WILL REVEAL TO MY AUNT THAT YOU'RE A TRANSWOMAN! RIGHT?
THAT'S THE PLAN!
ONE THING YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT MY AUNT IS THAT SHE CARES VERY DEEPLY FOR THE PEOPLE AROUND HER!
ONCE YOU TELL HER ABOUT YOURSELF, SHE'LL WANT TO GET INVOLVED! AT THE VERY LEAST, SHE'LL WANT TO MAKE SURE YOU HAVE THE VERY BEST MEDICAL CARE!
SHIT!
EXACTLY!


BUT I'M NOT ACTUALLY TRANSITIONING! THE DOCTOR WILL NOTICE THAT IMMEDIATELY!
TRUE! BUT CONSIDERING HOW I LOOK, HE'LL ASSUME I PROBABLY WANT TO START!
AND FROM WHAT I'VE READ UP ON, THAT REQUIRES LIVING AS A WOMAN FOR AT LEAST A YEAR ALONG WITH A MENTAL HEALTH EVALUATION!
SEEING A MEDICAL DOCTOR IS ONE THING, BUT THERE'S NO WAY IN HELL I COULD GET PAST A PSYCHOLOGICAL EXAM!
YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE ACTIVELY TRANSITIONING TO SEE A GENDER SPECIALIST!


ACTUALLY, UNCLE HANK SAYS HE'S GOT THAT PART TAKEN CARE OF!
FROM WHAT HE TELLS ME, THERE ARE ALREADY RECORDS OF YOU LIVING AS A WOMAN FOR THE PAST YEAR WHILE UNDER THE CARE OF A PSYCHOLOGIST!
HOW THE HELL DID HE MANAGE THAT?!
I DON'T KNOW! BUT HE'LL PROBABLY TELL US THE DETAILS AS SOON AS WE GET YOU HOME!


SHIT! THIS IS STARTING TO GET OUT OF HAND!

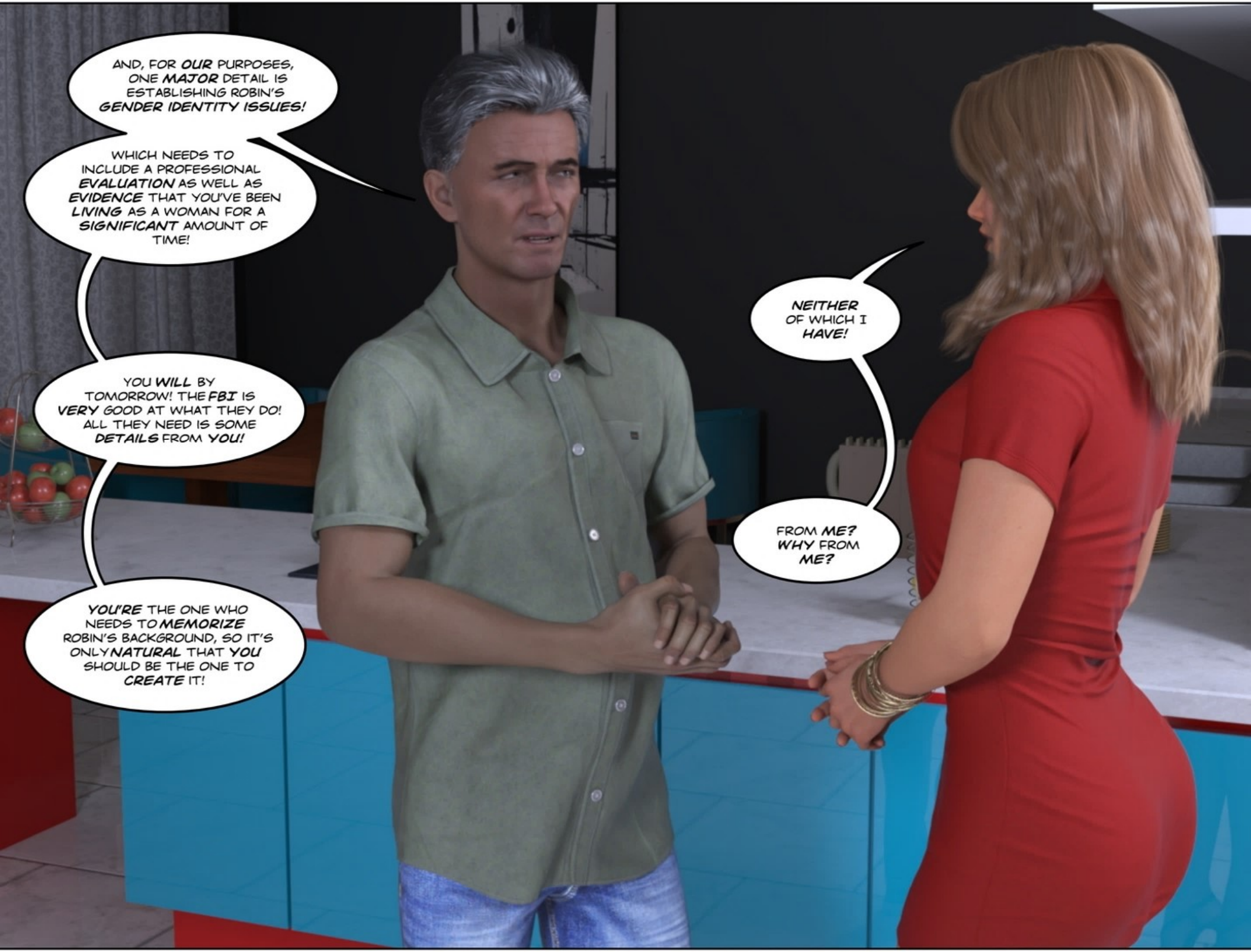

A short time later...
YOU SURE WE HAVE TO STOP HERE FIRST? IT'S KIND OF LATE!
SORRY, ROBIN! BUT THIS CAN'T WAIT UNTIL MORNING!

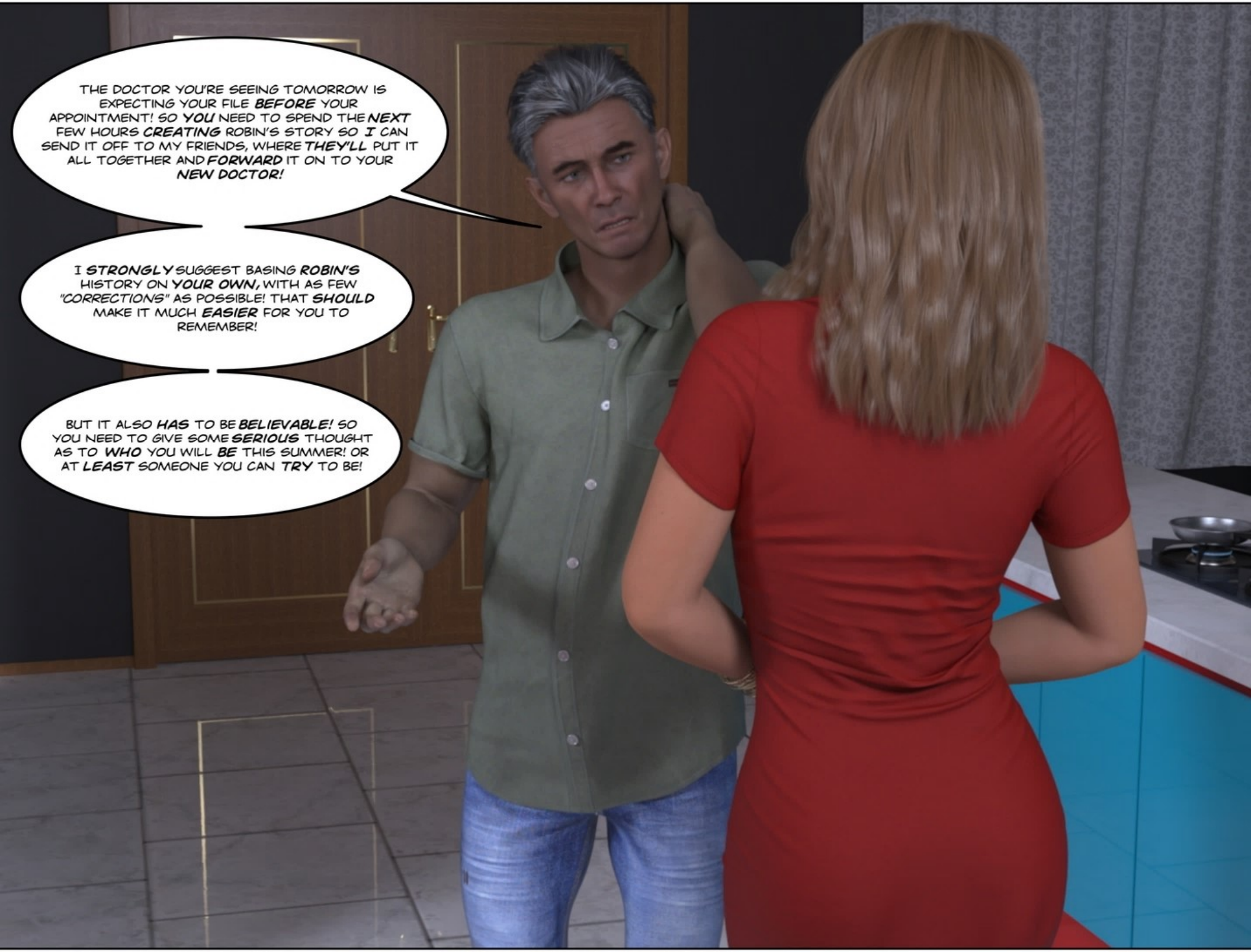

WOW! YOU'VE REALLY OUTDONE YOURSELF, NORA! EXCELLENT JOB!
THAT'S EXACTLY WHAT I WAS HOPING TO HEAR!
THANKS, UNCLE HANK! BUT ROBIN DESERVES A LOT OF THE CREDIT, TOO! SHE REALLY STEPPED UP AND GOT INTO CHARACTER TONIGHT!


I'M GOING TO TAKE OFF AND LET YOU TWO TALK!
YOU DID AWESOME TODAY, ROBIN! AND I'LL SEE YOU IN THE MORNING!
THANKS, NORA! SEE YOU TOMORROW!


I TAKE IT NORA TOLD YOU ABOUT YOUR APPOINTMENT TOMORROW MORNING?
AND YOU HAVE QUESTIONS!
THEN LET ME EXPLAIN!
YES, SHE DID!
OH, YEAH!

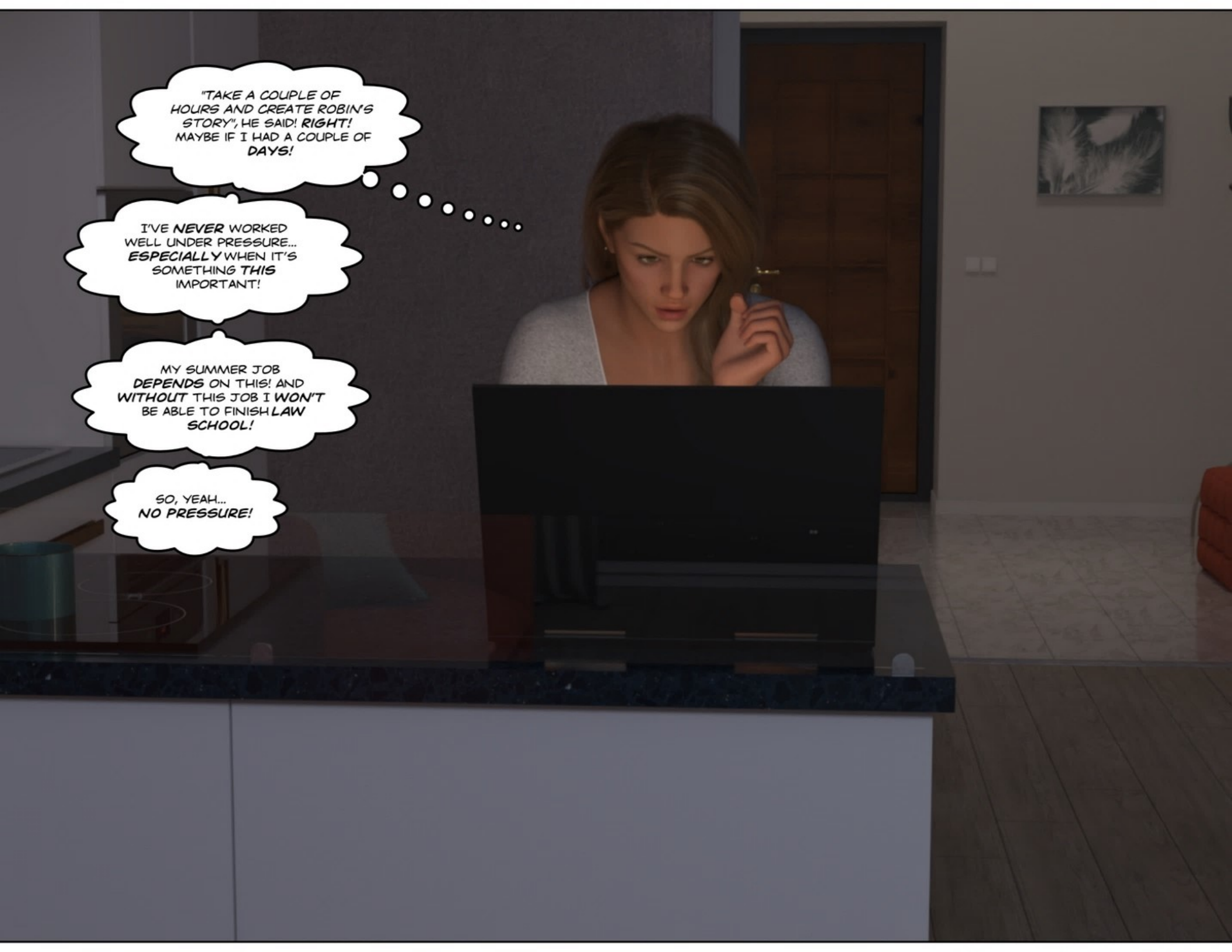

SINCE YOU CALLED AND ACCEPTED MY OFFER YESTERDAY, I'VE BEEN BUSY CREATING AN OFFICIAL IDENTITY FOR ROBIN SULLIVAN!
I HAVE FRIENDS WITH THE FBI'S WITNESS PROTECTION AGENCY! WITH A PICTURE AND A FEW RELATIVELY VAGUE PARAMETERS, THEY CAN EASILY CREATE THE NEEDED DOCUMENTS!
EXACTLY! WHAT WE HAVE TO DO NOW IS FILL IN THE DETAILS!
YOU CAN DO THAT?
THAT'S WHY NORA INSISTED ON TAKING THAT HEADSHOT OF ME BEFORE WE WENT OUT TONIGHT!


AND, FOR OUR PURPOSES, ONE MAJOR DETAIL IS ESTABLISHING ROBIN'S GENDER IDENTITY ISSUES!
WHICH NEEDS TO INCLUDE A PROFESSIONAL EVALUATION AS WELL AS EVIDENCE THAT YOU'VE BEEN LIVING AS A WOMAN FOR A SIGNIFICANT AMOUNT OF TIME!
YOU WILL BY TOMORROW! THE FBI IS VERY GOOD AT WHAT THEY DO! ALL THEY NEED IS SOME DETAILS FROM YOU!
YOU'RE THE ONE WHO NEEDS TO MEMORIZE ROBIN'S BACKGROUND, SO IT'S ONLY NATURAL THAT YOU SHOULD BE THE ONE TO CREATE IT!
NEITHER OF WHICH I HAVE!
FROM ME? WHY FROM ME?


THE DOCTOR YOU'RE SEEING TOMORROW IS EXPECTING YOUR FILE BEFORE YOUR APPOINTMENT! SO YOU NEED TO SPEND THE NEXT FEW HOURS CREATING ROBIN'S STORY SO I CAN SEND IT OFF TO MY FRIENDS, WHERE THEY'LL PUT IT ALL TOGETHER AND FORWARD IT ON TO YOUR NEW DOCTOR!
I STRONGLY SUGGEST BASING ROBIN'S HISTORY ON YOUR OWN, WITH AS FEW "CORRECTIONS" AS POSSIBLE! THAT SHOULD MAKE IT MUCH EASIER FOR YOU TO REMEMBER!
BUT IT ALSO HAS TO BE BELIEVABLE! SO YOU NEED TO GIVE SOME SERIOUS THOUGHT AS TO WHO YOU WILL BE THIS SUMMER! OR AT LEAST SOMEONE YOU CAN TRY TO BE!


I KNOW IT'S A LOT TO ASK OF YOU, BUT THIS IS AN EXTRAORDINARY SITUATION AND WE HAVE A VERY SHORT WINDOW IN WHICH TO SET IT UP!
SIGH! YEAH... I GET THAT!
SO AS SOON AS YOU GET IT DONE, EMAIL IT TO ME AND I'LL GET THE BALL ROLLING!
I'LL... DO MY BEST!


Almost two hours later...


"TAKE A COUPLE OF HOURS AND CREATE ROBIN'S STORY", HE SAID! RIGHT! MAYBE IF I HAD A COUPLE OF DAYS!
I'VE NEVER WORKED WELL UNDER PRESSURE... ESPECIALLY WHEN IT'S SOMETHING THIS IMPORTANT!
MY SUMMER JOB DEPENDS ON THIS! AND WITHOUT THIS JOB I WON'T BE ABLE TO FINISH LAW SCHOOL!
SO, YEAH... NO PRESSURE!


THIS MIGHT ALSO BE A LITTLE EASIER IF I DIDN'T HAVE TO KEEP WEARING THIS GODDAMN VISE AROUND MY WAIST!
BUT NORA INSISTS THAT THE MORE I WEAR IT NOW, THE LESS I'LL HAVE TO WEAR IT LATER!
AND AS FAR AS I'M CONCERNED, THE SOONER THAT HAPPENS, THE BETTER!


WHICH BRINGS UP QUESTIONS I'M SURE THE DOCTOR'S GOING TO ASK ONCE HE OR SHE EXAMINES ME TOMORROW!
IF I'VE BEEN LIVING AS A WOMAN FOR AT LEAST A YEAR, WHY AM I JUST NOW STARTING TO WEAR BODY-SHAPERS?
AND WHY HAVEN'T I STARTED TAKING HORMONES YET?
SHIT! I SHOULD SMACK MYSELF FOR NOT DOING MORE RESEARCH BEFORE AGREEING TO ALL THIS!
BUT AT THE TIME, I REALLY DIDN'T HAVE MUCH OF A CHOICE... AND I STILL DON'T!


OKAY, FIRST THINGS FIRST! I NEED TO CREATE A BRIEF OUTLINE OF "ROBIN'S" LIFE AND SEND IT TO MR. MONROE!
FOR NOW, I'LL JUST TAKE HIS ADVICE AND USE MY OWN LIFE EXPERIENCES AND TWEAK THEM TO FIT THE NEEDED NARRATIVE!
THEN, I'VE GOT TO DO A SHIT LOAD OF RESEARCH ON GENDER-AFFIRMING CARE!
I NEED TO KNOW EVERYTHING ABOUT THE STEPS "I'VE" TAKEN SO FAR AND THE OPTIONS I'M SURE THE DOCTOR WILL PRESENT TO ME TOMORROW!


AND AT SOME POINT, I NEED TO SERIOUSLY CONSIDER WHAT I'M WILLING TO GO THROUGH TO MAKE THIS WORK!


The next morning...


YOU SURE YOU DON'T WANT ME TO COME UP THERE WITH YOU?
WELL I'M SURE YOU'LL DO GREAT!
YOU'VE DONE MORE THAN ENOUGH FOR ME THESE LAST 24 HOURS! I NEED TO PROVE TO MYSELF THAT I CAN HOLD MY OWN ALONE BEFORE I MEET YOUR AUNT LATER TODAY!
AND THIS APPOINTMENT WITH THE DOCTOR IS MY ONLY CHANCE TO DO THAT!
SO, THANKS FOR THE OFFER, BUT IT'S TIME FOR ME TO TAKE MY FIRSTSOLO FLIGHT!
JUST AS LONG AS I DON'T HYPERVENTILATE FROM A COMBINATION OF NERVES AND THIS CORSET!


SO, DO YOU WANT TO GO OVER YOUR STORY ONE MORE TIME OR DO YOU THINK YOU HAVE IT MEMORIZED?
I'M NOT SURPRISED! UNCLE HANK HAS SOME SERIOUS CONNECTIONS!
OH, I THINK I'VE GOT IT! KEEPING "ROBIN'S" LIFE STORY CLOSE ENOUGH TO MY OWN MAKES IT PRETTY EASY TO KEEP TRACK OF... AS LONG AS I REMEMBER ALL THE NECESSARY "TWEAKS"!
YOUR UNCLE TOLD ME, THAT BASED ON WHAT I SENT HIM LAST NIGHT, A SUMMARY OF "MY" LIFE AND THERAPY HISTORY ARE ALREADY AVAILABLE TO THE DOCTOR!
TELL ME ABOUT IT! I EVEN HAD A DRIVER'S LICENSE, CREDIT CARD AND INSURANCE CARD ALL WAITING FOR ME WHEN I GOT UP THIS MORNING!


OKAY, LAST CHANCE FOR ME TO COME UP WITH YOU FOR MORAL SUPPORT!
ALL RIGHT THEN! JUST TEXT ME WHEN YOU'RE DONE! I'LL BE RIGHT ACROSS THE STREET IN THAT COFFEE SHOP!
I THINK I'M GOOD! NERVOUS AS HELL, BUT GOOD! I THINK I'VE GOT THIS!
I WILL! SEE YOU SOON, NORA!


OKAY... HERE WE GO!


A short time later, in the doctor's office...
HI, ROBIN! I'M DOCTOR JOHNSON! PLEASE HAVE A SEAT!
OKAY!
YIKES! I HAD NO IDEA DOCTOR C. JOHNSON WAS A WOMAN!
I'VE NEVER BEEN EXAMINED BY A FEMALE DOCTOR BEFORE!
NOT THE BIGGEST CONCERN ON MY LIST RIGHT NOW, BUT IT DOES ADD A TWIST I WASN'T EXPECTING!


SO, BEFORE WE GET TO THE ACTUAL EXAMINATION, WHY DON'T YOU TELL ME A LITTLE ABOUT YOURSELF!
I DID, AND GAVE IT A CURSURY LOOK! BUT I PREFER TO HEAR MY PATIENTS TELL ME ABOUT THEMSELVES IN THEIR OWN WORDS! AND ALSO WHAT THEY EXPECT FROM ME!
UMM... DIDN'T YOU GET MY FILE?
WELL, UMMM... OKAY!


WHEN DID YOU *FIRST* START THINKING OF YOURSELF AS A *FEMALE?*
WELL, I'M FROM *ILLINOIS* ORIGINALLY... THE *CHICAGO* AREA! THE *ONLY CHILD* OF A *SINGLE* MOTHER! I LIVED THERE THROUGH MY UNDERGRADUATE YEARS IN COLLEGE!
NOT UNTIL *AFTER* MY MOTHER *PASSED* A COUPLE OF YEARS AGO! I WAS HAVING TROUBLE *COPING* AND STARTED SEEING A THERAPIST!
IT WAS DURING *THOSE* SESSIONS THAT I STARTED GETTING IN *TOUCH* WITH MY *FEMININE* SELF, SO HE RECOMMENDED ME TO A *DIFFERENT* THERAPIST WHO SPECIALIZED IN *GENDER-AFFIRMATION!*


AND HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN LIVING AS A WOMAN?
SINCE MY SENIOR YEAR OF COLLEGE!
WHAT DID YOUR FRIENDS THINK?
TRUTHFULLY, I DIDN'T REALLY HAVE ANY FRIENDS AT COLLEGE! SO NO ONE REALLY NOTICED! OR, IF THEY DID, THEY DIDN'T SAY ANYTHING!
AND YOU'VE BEEN OUT HERE GOING TO LAW SCHOOL FOR THE LAST YEAR! HAVE YOU BEEN SEEING A DIFFERENT THERAPIST?
NO! I'VE BEEN MEETING WITH MY THERAPIST BACK IN CHICAGO TWICE A MONTH THROUGH ONLINE ZIP CONFERENCES!


BUT I'M THE FIRST PHYSICIAN YOU'VE SEEN REGARDING YOUR GENDER AFFIRMATION! THAT'S UNUSUAL AFTER ALL THIS TIME!
AND WHAT'S CHANGED NOW?
I REALIZE THAT! BUT I'VE BEEN SO FOCUSED ON LAW SCHOOL, I DIDN'T REALLY WANT ANYTHING TO POSSIBLY DISTRACT ME FROM MY STUDIES!
WELL, IT'S SUMMER, SO I HAVE A FEW MONTHS TO SPEND ON MYSELF BEFORE I GET CAUGHT UP IN MY SECOND YEAR OF LAW SCHOOL!
SO I FIGURED I'D USE THE DOWN TIME TO FINALLY FOLLOW MY THERAPIST'S ADVICE AND START SEEING SOMEONE OUT HERE AS WELL!


WELL, OKAY THEN! LET'S GO DOWN TO THE EXAMINATION ROOM SO I CAN TAKE A LOOK AT YOU!
THEN WE'LL COME BACK HERE AND CONTINUE OUR CONVERSATION!
SOUNDS OKAY TO ME!


SIGH! JUST KEEP IT TOGETHER, ROBIN!


A short time later, after a slightly uncomfortable physical examination...
WELL, YOUR GENERAL HEALTH IS JUST FINE! BLOOD PRESSURE, HEART RATE... ALL IDEAL FOR SOMEONE YOUR AGE!
OF COURSE I'LL KNOW MORE WHEN WE GET YOUR FULL BLOOD TEST RESULTS BACK IN A DAY OR TWO!
AS FAR AS YOUR HEALTH IS CONCERNED, YES! BUT I DO HAVE SOME RESERVATIONS I'D STILL LIKE TO DISCUSS WITH YOU!
SO FAR SO GOOD! RIGHT, DOCTOR?
RESERVATIONS?
UH-OH!


YOU'VE BEEN LIVING AS A WOMAN FOR CLOSE TO TWO YEARS NOW, RIGHT?
YET IN ALL THAT TIME YOU'VE DONE RELATIVELY NOTHING TO ADVANCE YOUR ACTUAL PHYSICAL TRANSITION! NO COSMETIC PROCEDURES, NO HORMONES... NOTHING!
EVERYTHING YOU HAVE DONE... THE BODY SHAPERS, THE MAKEUP AND HAIR EXTENSIONS... BESIDES BEING TIME-CONSUMING AND UNCOMFORTABLE, ALL SEEM SUPERFICIAL AT BEST!
IT CAUSES ME TO WONDER IF YOU REALLY ARE COMMITTED TO BEING A WOMAN!
YES! JUST A LITTLE OVER THAT, ACTUALLY!
SHIT! I THINK I KNOW WHERE THIS IS GOING!


I MEAN, BY ALL OUTWARDLY APPEARANCES, YOU PRESENT AS A LOVELY YOUNG WOMAN! BUT IN SPITE OF YOUR PREVIOUS RECORDS, I WOULD MORE LIKELY CLASSIFY YOU AS A TRANSVESTITE RATHER THAN A TRANSSEXUAL!
IS THERE ANYTHING YOU CAN TELL ME THAT WOULD CONVINCE ME OTHERWISE?
CRAP! I WAS REALLY HOPING I WOULDN'T HAVE TO GO DOWN THIS PATH! BUT IT LOOKS LIKE I HAVE NO CHOICE!


I'M EMBARRASSED TO SAY THAT THE PRIMARY REASON FOR NOT SEEKING MORE PERMANENT PROCEDURES IS COST!
WHAT LITTLE MONEY MY MOTHER LEFT ME WENT TO PAYING MY UNDERGRADUATE TUITION! AND DURING MY FIRST YEAR OF LAW SCHOOL I LIVED OFF SCHOLARSHIPS AND STUDENT LOANS!
SO, UP TO NOW, PAYING FOR ANYTHING LIKE HORMONE TREATMENT OR ANY OTHER PROCEDURES JUST HASN'T BEEN POSSIBLE!
I TAKE IT SOMETHING HAS CHANGED IN THAT REGARD!
IT HAS!


I GOT A VERY GOOD SUMMER JOB WITH AN EMPLOYER WHO'S EXTREMELY SYMPATHETIC TO MY SITUATION!
THEY'VE OFFERED TO HELP WITH ANY COSTS FOR TREATMENTS I MAY CHOOSE TO START! WITHIN REASON, OF COURSE!
THAT'S VERY GENEROUS OF THEM!
YES! I'M A VERY LUCKY GIRL!
ESPECIALLY IF I LIMIT MYSELF TO ONLY TREATMENTS THAT ARE REVERSIBLE!
AND FROM WHAT I'VE READ, PRETTY MUCH EVERYTHING SHY OF FULL-ON SRS CAN BE UNDONE!


THEN MAY I SUGGEST STARTING YOU ON **HORMONE THERAPY** AS **SOON** AS I GET A LOOK AT YOUR BLOOD WORK?
IN FACT, IF YOU LIKE, I'LL **EXPEDITE** YOUR LAB RESULTS SO WE CAN GET YOU STARTED **TOMORROW!**
THAT WOULD BE **WONDERFUL,** DOCTOR!
THE SUMMER WILL BE OVER **BEFORE** THE HORMONES CAUSE ANY REALLY **NOTICEABLE** PHYSICAL EFFECTS, SO I'M NOT WORRIED ABOUT **THEM** AT ALL!


AND AS YOUR NEW DOCTOR, I HAVE TO INSIST YOU STOP WEARING THAT CORSET ON A DAILY BASIS! BESIDES BEING DANGEROUS, I'M SURE IT'S EXTREMELY UNCOMFORTABLE!
YEAH... IT IS! A FRIEND RECOMMENDED IT TO HELP CINCH MY WAIST AND GIVE ME A LITTLE CLEAVAGE WITHOUT HAVING TO DEAL WITH BRA INSERTS!
THE HORMONES WILL HELP WITH BOTH OF THOSE ISSUES! PLUS I CAN RECOMMEND SOME EXERCISES AND DIET TO HELP REDUCE YOUR WAIST!
IF IT'LL KEEP ME FROM HAVING TO WEAR THIS THING, I'M ALL FOR IT! *GIGGLE!*
AND SINCE YOU'VE INDICATED A RELUCTANCE TO USE BRA INSERTS, MAY I MAKE A SUGGESTION?
UMMM... SURE!


THERE'S A PROCEDURE COLLOQUIALLY CALLED "VACATION BREASTS" THAT INVOLVES INSERTING SALINE SOLUTION INTO THE BREASTS TO ENLARGE AND SHAPE THEM!
ORIGINALLY, YES! BUT IT'S BEEN MODIFIED TO LAST SEVERAL DAYS OR EVEN SEVERAL WEEKS DEPENDING ON THE NEEDS OF THE PATIENT!
IT'S A RELATIVELY NEW PROCEDURE, BUT I'VE USED IT ON MANY OF MY PATIENTS WITH GREAT SUCCESS!
IS THIS SOMETHING YOU MIGHT BE INTERESTED IN?
I'VE HEARD OF IT! BUT DOESN'T IT ONLY LAST ABOUT 24 HOURS?
I DIDN'T KNOW THAT!
I... I'M NOT SURE!
DAMN! I DIDN'T THINK SHE'D BE PUSHING SOMETHING LIKE THIS SO SOON!


IF IT WERE PERMANENT, OF COURSE! BUT LIKE I SAID, THIS IS A TEMPORARY PROCEDURE DESIGNED TO GIVE WOMEN A PREVIEW OF HOW NEW BREASTS WOULD LOOK AND FEEL!
IT'S ALSO SOMETHING THAT TAKES VERY LITTLE TIME, NO RECOVERY PERIOD AND I PERFORM RIGHT DOWN THE HALL!
I AM! AND I THINK YOU'LL AGREE TO IT FOR TWO VERY GOOD REASONS!
I REALLY SHOULD GIVE SOMETHING LIKE THIS A LOT MORE THOUGHT, SHOULDN'T I?
IT SOUNDS LIKE YOU'RE ASKING ME IF I WANT TO GET IT DONE RIGHT HERE AND NOW!
TWO, HUH? WHAT ARE THEY?


FIRST, YOU WON'T NEED THE "SHOVING UP" EFFECT OF THAT CORSET THAT I WASN'T GOING TO LET YOU WEAR OUT OF HERE ANYWAY!
BECAUSE I'M SO SURE YOU'LL DECIDE YOU LOVE THEM AND WANT TO KEEP THEM LONGER, I'LL GIVE YOU THE ONE WEEK VERSION AT NO CHARGE!
NOT HAVING TO WEAR THE "CRUSHER" ANYMORE? THAT'S A BIG, BIG PLUS! BUT STILL...
OKAY, I'LL GIVE YOU THAT ONE! WHAT'S THE OTHER REASON?


HOLY SHIT!
NO CHARGE? YOU'RE KIDDING!
THAT'S... INCREDIBLY GENEROUS OF YOU!
I DON'T KID WHEN IT COMES TO MY PATIENT'S CARE!
I CONSIDER IT AN INVESTMENT... IN YOU!
WHAT DO YOU SAY? I COULD HAVE YOU OUT OF HERE IN LESS THAN AN HOUR LOOKING EVEN BETTER THAN YOU DO RIGHT NOW!


DAMN! I WISH NORA HAD COME IN WITH ME! I COULD REALLY USE HER OPINION RIGHT ABOUT NOW!
BUT IT IS TEMPORARY, SO EVEN IF SHE DOESN'T APPROVE, MY MISTAKE IS GONE IN A LITTLE OVER A WEEK!
AND IT DOES GIVE ME ONE FUCKING GOOD REASON TO STOP WEARING THIS CINCHER FROM HELL! FOR A FEW DAYS, AT LEAST!
SO THIS REALLY IS A NO-BRAINER, ISN'T IT?


OKAY, DOCTOR! LET ME TEXT MY FRIEND AND TELL HER I'M GOING TO BE A LITTLE LATE!
THEN I'M ALL YOURS!


A little over an hour later...
OKAY ROBIN, WHERE THE HECK ARE YOU?
IT'S BEEN OVER AN HOUR SINCE YOU TEXTED AND NOW I'M OVER-BUZZED FROM WAY TOO MANY LATTES!
CHOP CHOP!


SHE DIDN'T SAY WHY THE APPOINTMENT WAS RUNNING SO LONG, BUT I'M PRETTY SURE IT HAS SOMETHING TO DO WITH THE OVERWHELMING AMOUNT OF INFO THE DOCTOR IS PROBABLY BOMBARDING HER WITH!
I KNOW SHE SAID SHE WANTED TO DO THIS ALONE, BUT I STILL SHOULD'VE BEEN UP THERE WITH HER! IF NOT FOR MORAL SUPPORT, THEN AT LEAST TO HELP HER UNDERSTAND EVERYTHING THEY'RE DISCUSSING UP THERE!


MAYBE EVEN PROVIDE A LITTLE GUIDANCE ON ANYTHING SHE COULD DO... IN THE SHORT RUN AT LEAST!
AND LET HER KNOW THAT, IF NECESSARY, UNCLE HANK HAS SOME RATHER DEEP POCKETS!
HEY THERE! SORRY I TOOK SO LONG!


BUT THE DOCTOR AND I GOT TO TALKING! AND ONE THING LED TO ANOTHER...
NOT A PROBLEM! I KNOW HOW DOCTORS CAN RAMBLE ON, AND...


GASP!
HOLY SHIT,
GIRL!


FIRST OFF, THEY'RE *TEMPORARY!* THEY'LL ONLY LAST ABOUT *A WEEK!*
BUT ARE THEY *TOO MUCH?* WAS I COMPLETELY *INSANE* TO DO SUCH AN *IMPULSIVE* THING?
PLEASE! BE *HONEST!*
HONESTLY? THEY LOOK *AMAZING!* BETTER THAN ANYTHING *I* COULD'VE COME UP WITH!


THANK GOD! AS SOON AS SHE FINISHED I GOT THIS HORRIBLE FEAR THAT I'D MADE A HUGE MISTAKE!
YOU WERE? REALLY?
NOT AT ALL! IN FACT, IF THE DOCTOR HADN'T SUGGESTED IT, I WAS GOING TO!
ABSOLUTELY! THE FEWER THINGS YOU HAVE TO WEAR THAT SQUEEZE YOU INTO PLACE, THE BETTER!


NO, IT'S HERE IN THIS BAG THE DOCTOR GAVE ME... ALONG WITH MY PURSE AND THE TOP PART OF THIS BLOUSE!
DOCTOR JOHNSON WANTED ME TO, UMMM... DISPLAY HER WORK!
SPEAKING OF... I NOTICE YOU'RE NOT WEARING YOUR CORSET ANYMORE! YOU DIDN'T LEAVE IT UP THERE, DID YOU?
SMART LADY! ALWAYS TAKE ADVANTAGE OF FREE ADVERTISING! *GIGGLE!*


PROBLEM IS, SHE GAVE ME THESE ON SPEC ASSUMING I'D BE BACK FOR THE SEVERAL WEEK VERSION, BUT THERE'S NO WAY I CAN AFFORD THEM!
HE'D SERIOUSLY DO THAT?
THAT'S... GOOD TO KNOW! I GUESS!
I WOULDN'T WORRY ABOUT THAT! ONCE UNCLE HANK SEES HOW MUCH MORE CONVINCING YOU LOOK NOW, HE'LL HAPPILY SPRING FOR WHATEVER YOU NEED!
IN A HEARTBEAT! A COUPLE OF THINGS YOU'LL LEARN ABOUT MY UNCLE, HE DOESN'T LIKE TO LOSE AND HE DOESN'T DO ANYTHING HALF-ASSED!
ONCE HE SINKS HIS TEETH INTO A PROJECT, HE SEES IT THROUGH TO THE END... NO MATTER WHAT!


SO, C'MON! NOW THAT YOU HAVE A NEW FIGURE, WE NEED TO BUY A FEW MORE OUTFITS BEFORE YOU MEET MY AUNT THIS AFTERNOON!
WITH BOTH ME AND MY UNCLE ON YOUR SIDE, THERE'S NO WAYYOU CAN FAIL! *GIGGLE!*
YOU REALLY THINK I CAN PULL THIS OFF?
I HOPE YOU'RE RIGHT!


Later that afternoon...


SO, YOU SAID YOU HAD A SURPRISE FOR ME!
THAT'S WONDERFUL, HANK! THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR TAKING THAT OFF MY PLATE!
I DO! I FOUND YOU A SUMMER CLERK!
IT WAS MY PLEASURE, LOVE!


I HOPE YOU DON'T MIND, BUT SINCE HER APARTMENT HAD ONLY A TEN-MONTH LEASE, I TOLD HER SHE COULD STAY IN THE COTTAGE HOUSE FOR THE SUMMER!
I DON'T MIND AT ALL! DOES THAT MEAN I GET TO MEET HER THIS EVENING?
EVEN SOONER, AS A MATTER OF FACT!


ABBY, MEET ROBIN SULLIVAN!
IT'S SO NICE TO FINALLY MEET YOU, MRS. MONROE!
YES, MA'AM... I MEAN, ABBY!
WELL, YOU'RE CERTAINLY ADORABLE!
BUT IF YOU PLAN ON KEEPING THIS JOB, YOU'D BETTER START CALLING ME ABBY!


EXCELLENT, ROBIN DEAR! NOW, WHY DON'T WE HAVE A SEAT SO WE CAN GET TO KNOW EACH OTHER BETTER!
I'D LIKE THAT VERY MUCH, ABBY!


A few hours later...


GOOD LORD, ABBY! ARE YOU STILL GRILLING THIS POOR GIRL?
OH, HUSH, HANK! WE'RE JUST CHATTING!


IT'S ALL MY FAULT, MR. MONROE! ONCE ABBY MENTIONED ONE OF HER CASES, I JUST HAD TO HEAR MORE!
I'M AFRAID I'M THE ONE WHO'S BEEN MONOPOLIZING HER TIME ALL AFTERNOON!
NONSENSE, DEAR! I'VE ENJOYED EVERY SECOND OF OUR TIME TOGETHER TODAY!


AND I HOPE TO ENJOY *EVERY MOMENT* WE HAVE TOGETHER THIS SUMMER!
I *KNOW* YOU WON'T DEAR!
I'M HOPING SO, *TOO*, ABBY! AND I PROMISE I *WON'T* DISAPPOINT YOU FOR GIVING ME THIS OPPORTUNITY!
Slam


HEY, EVERYONE!
HELLO, NORA, DEAR! HAVE YOU MET ROBIN YET?
OH, YEAH! UNCLE HANK CALLED ME OVER YESTERDAY SO I COULD HELP HER GET SETTLED IN!
YOU READY TO GO, ROBIN?
I THINK SO!


WHERE ARE YOU TWO OFF TO?
WELL ISN'T THAT SWEET OF YOU, DEAR!
WE'RE MEETING A COUPLE OF FRIENDS OF MINE FOR DINNER AND SOME GIRL TALK!
IT WAS UNCLE HANK'S IDEA!
NORA HAS BEEN REALLY WONDERFUL ABOUT INTRODUCING ME TO HER FRIENDS!


DO YOU STILL WANT TO RIDE IN WITH ME FOR YOUR FIRST DAY TOMORROW, ROBIN?
THEN BE HERE AND READY TO GO BY 7:30!
YOU TOO, DEAR! BOTH OF YOU!
YES, I WOULD LOVE THAT!
I WILL BE! HAVE A GOOD EVENING!


YOU HAVE DONE A VERY GOOD THING FOR BOTH ME AND THAT SPECIAL YOUNG LADY!
NOW... HOW SHOULD I REWARD YOU FOR THAT?
OH, I THINK WE CAN COME UP WITH SOMETHING! *CHUCKLE!*


SO, HOW'D IT GO?
THAT'S MY AUNT ABBY, ALL RIGHT!
OH MY GOD, IT WENT GREAT! WE CHATTED FOR A COUPLE OF HOURS AND SHE NEVER ONCE MADE ME FEEL UNCOMFORTABLE!


IS SHE YOUR ACTUAL AUNT OR AUNT BY MARRIAGE?
BY MARRIAGE! MY UNCLE HANK IS MY MOTHER'S OLDER BROTHER!
BUT THEY'VE BOTH BEEN LIKE SECOND PARENTS TO ME FOR AS LONG AS I CAN REMEMBER!
I CAN SEE WHY! I'VE ONLY KNOWN THEM FOR A SHORT TIME BUT THEY ALREADY FEEL LIKE FAMILY... OR AT LEAST WHAT I IMAGINE FAMILY IS SUPPOSED TO FEEL LIKE!


TAKE MY WORD FOR IT, THOSE TWO ARE EXACTLY WHAT FAMILY IS SUPPOSED TO FEEL LIKE!
THEY'VE NEVER BEEN ABLE TO HAVE KIDS OF THEIR OWN, SO I'VE ALWAYS BEEN LIKE THE DAUGHTER THEY NEVER HAD!
AND IF YOU'RE GETTING THAT VIBE FROM THEM, THEN YOU'RE OBVIOUSLY DOING SOMETHING RIGHT!


THAT'S JUST IT, THOUGH! I'M NOT DOING SOMETHING RIGHT! I'M LYING TO ABBY!
WHEN I FIRST AGREED TO DO THIS I WAS OKAY WITH IT BECAUSE IT WAS A WAY TO HELP ME STAY IN LAW SCHOOL AND MAYBE HELP ABBY'S CHANCES OF GETTING THE NOMINATION FOR STATE AG!
BUT NOW THAT I'VE MET HER AND GOTTEN TO KNOW HER, I FEEL HORRIBLE ABOUT KEEPING THE TRUTH FROM HER!
SO I'M SUDDENLY BEGINNING TO WONDER IF I CAN DO THIS JOB IF IT MEANS LYING TO HER FACE EVERY DAY!

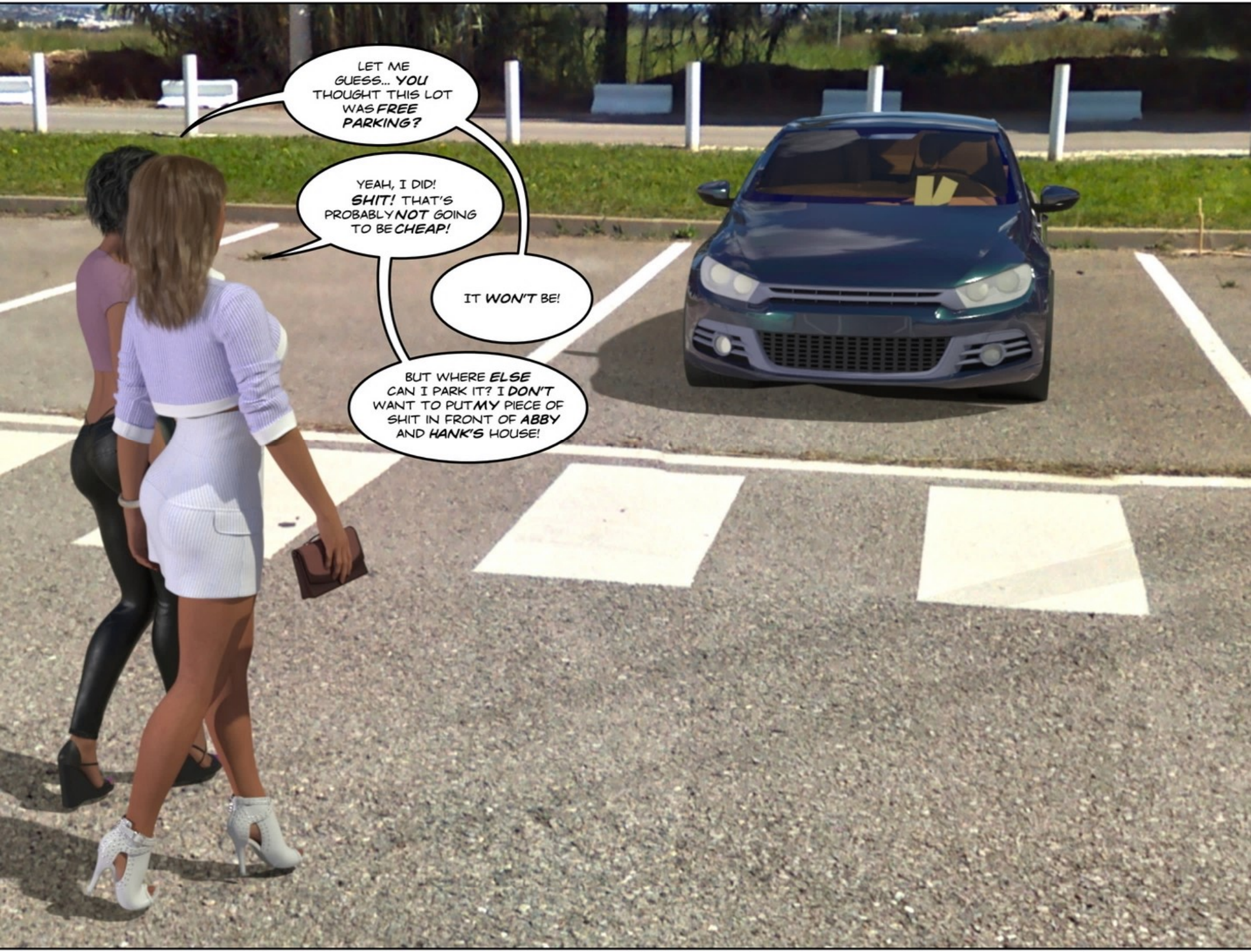

LET ME GET THIS STRAIGHT... DO YOU WANT THIS JOB?
YES! IT'S AN INCREDIBLE OPPORTUNITY AND I'M SURE I'LL LOVE WORKING FOR ABBY!
AND DO YOU ALSO WANT TO HELP GET ABBY ELECTED?
OF COURSE! SHE'LL BE AN AMAZING AG!
SO REALLY YOUR ONLY PROBLEM IS YOU THINK YOU'RE LYING TO HER!
I AM LYING TO HER! "ROBIN SULLIVAN" DOESN'T EXIST!
AND THAT'S WHERE YOU'RE WRONG!
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?

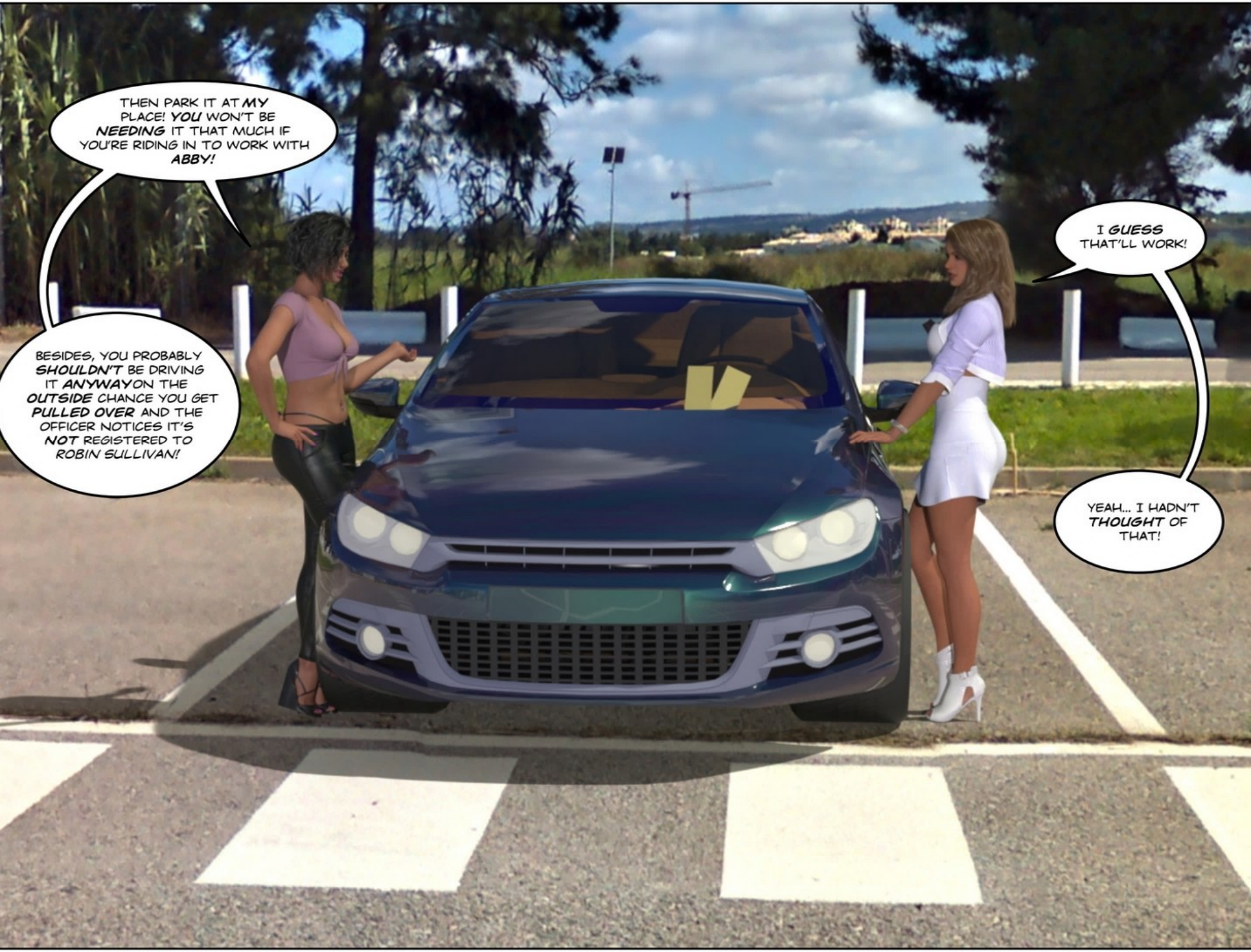

YOU HAVE TO STOP THINKING OF YOURSELF AS A MAN PRETENDING TO BE A WOMAN AND TURN IT AROUND!
REMEMBER THAT ROBIN IS A WOMAN WHO HAS LIVED FOR YEARS IN THE BODY OF A MAN AND HAS JUST RECENTLY DISCOVERED THE COURAGE TO LIVE THE WAY SHE WAS MEANT TO!
SO YOU NEED TO EMBRACE THE IDEA THAT YOU'VE ALWAYS BEEN ROBIN, BUT SPENT SO MANY YEARS PRETENDING TO BE ROBERT!
ONCE YOU CAN DO THAT YOU'LL BE LESS STRESSED, MORE COMFORTABLE WITH WHO YOU ARE, AND REALIZE YOU'RE NOT LYING TO MY AUNT... YOU'RE ONLY DELAYING THE TRUTH!
WELL... WE'LL JUST JUMP OFF THAT BRIDGE WHEN WE GET TO IT! *GIGGLE!*
JUST LIKE THAT, HUH? AND WHAT HAPPENS AT THE END OF THE SUMMER WHEN THE JOB ENDS?


SIGH! I UNDERSTAND WHAT YOU'RE SAYING, BUT IT'S HARDLY AS EASY AS YOU MAKE IT SOUND!
OF COURSE IT ISN'T! IF IT WAS, EVERYONE WOULD BE A FABULOUS ACTOR, LIKE ME! *GIGGLE!*
GOOD POINT! *GIGGLE!*


WELL, SHIT!
THE ÖBER DRIVER JUST TEXTED AND SAID HE'S RUNNING LATE! ZERO STARS FOR YOU, ASSHOLE!
WHAT?
JUST CANCEL THE ÖBER! I'LL DRIVE!
1


I DIDN'T KNOW YOU HAD A CAR!
NOTHING FANCY, BUT IT WORKS!
C'MON! IT'S PARKED IN THE LOT BACK BEHIND THE COTTAGE HOUSE!


LET ME GUESS... YOU THOUGHT THIS LOT WAS FREE PARKING?
YEAH, I DID! SHIT! THAT'S PROBABLY NOT GOING TO BE CHEAP!
IT WON'T BE!
BUT WHERE ELSE CAN I PARK IT? I DON'T WANT TO PUT MY PIECE OF SHIT IN FRONT OF ABBY AND HANK'S HOUSE!


THEN PARK IT AT MY PLACE! YOU WON'T BE NEEDING IT THAT MUCH IF YOU'RE RIDING IN TO WORK WITH ABBY!
BESIDES, YOU PROBABLY SHOULDN'T BE DRIVING IT ANYWAYON THE OUTSIDE CHANCE YOU GET PULLED OVER AND THE OFFICER NOTICES IT'S NOT REGISTERED TO ROBIN SULLIVAN!
I GUESS THAT'LL WORK!
YEAH... I HADN'T THOUGHT OF THAT!


SO I'LL JUST DRIVE REAL CAREFUL TODAY AND THEN YOU CAN TAKE IT HOME TONIGHT! SOUND GOOD?
AWESOME! I'LL TEXT THE GIRLS AND TELL 'EM WE'RE ON OUR WAY!
PAGAMENTO
PRAIA BEACH


A short time later...
THE DINER
Subway


MAN, THIS NEW SET OF WHEELS YOUR OLD MAN GOT YOU IS *AWESOME!* THINK HE'D LIKE TO *ADOPT* ME? *HEH-HEH!*
YOU COULDN'T HANDLE *MY* OLD MAN, DUDE! *TRUST ME!* *CHUCKLE!*


HEY! ISN'T THAT STILLMAN'S CAR IN FRONT OF US?
I'M SURPRISED HE'S STILL IN TOWN AFTER BOLTING FROM THE HOUSE THE WAY HE DID!
IT IS! I'D RECOGNIZE THAT PIECE OF SHIT ANYWHERE!
YEAH! PRETTY FUCKIN' RUDE OF HIM AFTER WE WENT TO ALL THAT TROUBLE TO MAKE "ROBERTA" FEEL WELCOME! *HEH-HEH!*


MAYBE WE NEED TO *CATCH UP* WITH OUR OLD BUDDY AND MAKE *SURE* HE'S GETTIN' ALONG OKAY *WITHOUT* US!
GREAT IDEA! I'D SURE *HATE* FOR HIM TO THINK WE'VE *FORGOTTEN* ALL ABOUT HIM! *CHUCKLE!*
LAUNDROMAT


OH SHIT!
MY OLD HOUSEMATES ARE RIGHT BEHIND US! I'M SURE THEY RECOGNIZE MY CAR!
WHAT?
WE'RE ALMOST AT THE RESTAURANT! WHAT DO YOU WANT TO DO?


GET THEM OFF MY BACK, ONCE AND FOR ALL!


A few miles later...
HEY, IT LOOKS LIKE HE'S PULLING OVER! AND I THINK HE'S GOT SOMEONE WITH HIM!
FRIENDS? NO FUCKIN' WAY! PROBABLY LIVIN' IN HIS CAR AND TOOK IN A ROOMIE! *HEH-HEH!*
PULL UP BEHIND 'EM SO WE CAN GIVE 'EM A PROPER "HELLO"!


THIS IS GONNA BE FUN!
TELL ME ABOUT IT!
Holiday
NEW
bombshellvolume
NEW YORK
OPE 6975


UMMM... IAN?
YOU SURE THIS IS STILLMAN'S CAR?
YEAH, DUDE?
HUNDRED PERCENT SURE! WHY?


CAN I HELP YOU BOYS WITH SOMETHING?
OH! WELL... WE WERE JUST, UMMM...
IF YOU WERE JUST, UMMM... TRYING TO BE STALKERS, I'D SUGGEST ANOTHER LINE OF WORK, BECAUSE YOU'RE NOT VERY GOOD AT IT!
WHOA!


WE JUST THOUGHT THIS CAR BELONGED TO A FRIEND OF OURS AND WERE GOING TO MESS WITH HIM A LITTLE!
UH-HUH! I'M SURE YOUR "FRIEND" WOULD'VE REALLY APPRECIATED HAVING YOU TWO RIDING HIS ASS SO CLOSE HE COULD SEE YOU BOTH LAUGHING HYSTERICALLY!
BECAUSE THE TWO OF US THOUGHT IT WAS A REAL HOOT!
YEAH! JUST HAVE A LITTLE FUN WITH HIM! THAT'S ALL! *HEH-HEH!*


WELL MAYBE WE COULD MAKE IT UP TO YOU BY BUYING YOU LADIES A DRINK!
OH PLEASE! THE LAST TIME I WENT OUT WITH SOMEONE WHO HAD THE EMOTIONAL MATURITY YOU TWO DEMONSTRATE WAS IN MIDDLE SCHOOL!
SO I'M SURE YOU'LL UNDERSTAND WHY WE'LL PASS ON YOUR KIND OFFER!
GOOD NIGHT, BOYS!


I THOUGHT YOU WERE "100% SURE" THIS WAS STILLMAN'S CAR, ASSHOLE!
NO SHIT!
OKAY, 75% MAYBE!
WICKED ASSES ON THOSE CHICKS, THOUGH!


CAN I JUST SAY HOW FUCKING AMAZED AND PROUD I AM OF YOU?
THE WAY YOU HIKED UP YOUR SKIRT BEFORE GETTING OUT OF THE CAR AND THE EXTRA UMPH YOU'RE PUTTING INTO YOUR WALK RIGHT NOW...
HELL, IF I DIDN'T KNOW BETTER, I'D SAY YOU WERE AN OLD PRO AT THIS! *GIGGLE!*
YEAH, I'M, UHHH... KIND OF PROUD OF MYSELF, TOO!
IT WAS ALL KIND OF A SPUR OF THE MOMENT THING!
Hops
YORK

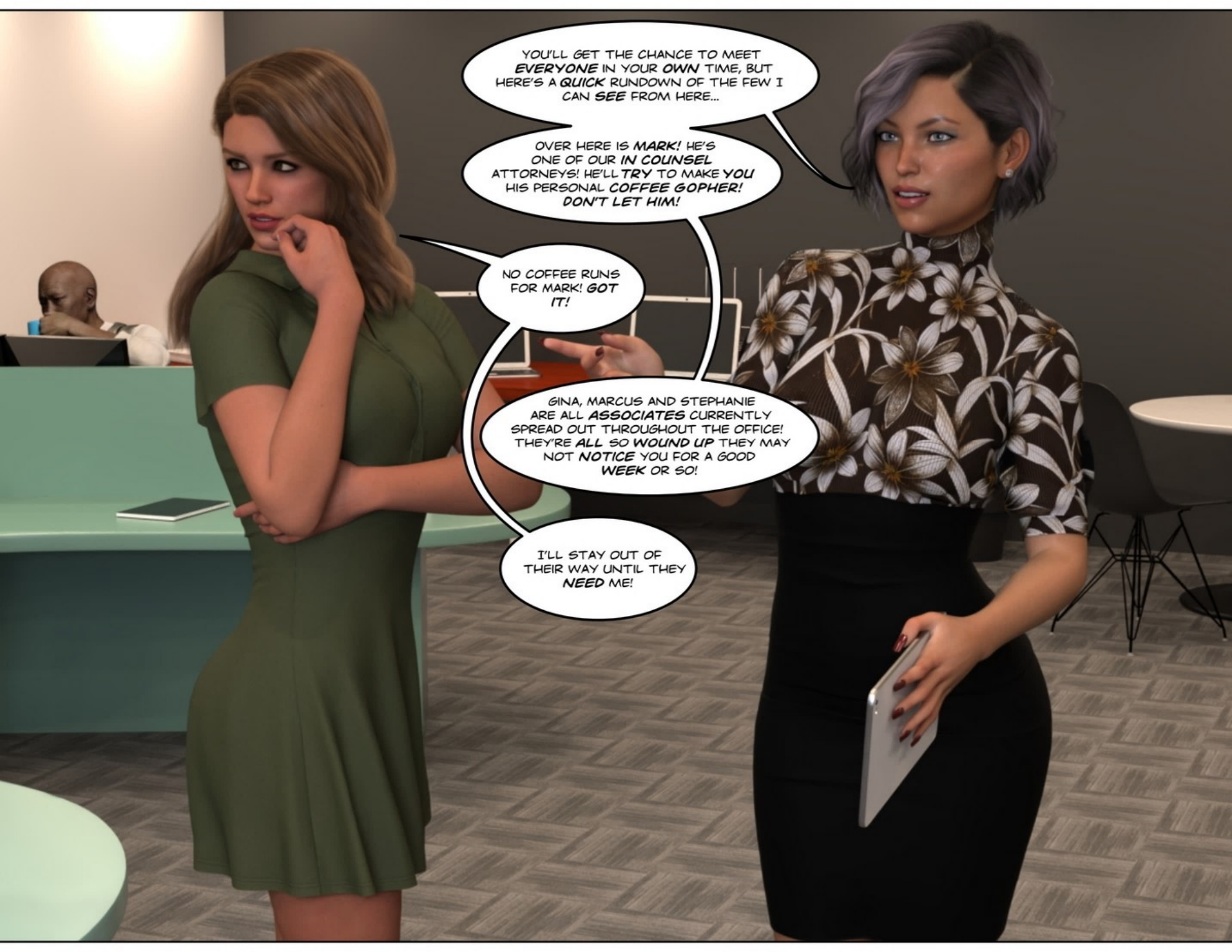

I JUST WANTED TO MAKE DAMN SURE THOSE TWO ASSHOLES KNEW THAT ROBERT STILLMAN WAS GONE FOR THE SUMMER!
AND THEY'RE NOT GOING TO FIND HIM ANYWHERE!


The next day...
SO, THIS IS MONROE, DOBBINS AND MCCOY!
I WISH I COULD SPEND MORE TIME SHOWING YOU AROUND, ROBIN, BUT I'M DUE IN COURT IN AN HOUR!
I COMPLETELY UNDERSTAND!


I'M SURPRISED AT HOW BUSY IT IS FOR 8 AM!
ANY I MIGHT HAVE HEARD OF?
THAT'S NOT UNUSUAL! ESPECIALLY SINCE WE HAVE SEVERAL HIGH PROFILE CASES WE'RE CURRENTLY WORKING ON!
PROBABLY! BUT I'LL LET YOUR IMMEDIATE SUPERVISOR FILL YOU IN!


ROBIN SULLIVAN, THIS IS JILL WEATHERS! SHE'S THE TOP EQUITY PARTNER IN OUR FIRM AND YOU'LL BE REPORTING DIRECTLY TO HER!
IT'S NICE TO MEET YOU MS. WEATHERS!
YOU TOO, ROBIN! AND SINCE WE'RE ALL PRETTY MUCH ON A FIRST NAME BASIS AROUND HERE, CALL ME JILL!


SINCE I DON'T KNOW HOW LONG I'LL BE IN COURT TODAY, I WOULDN'T COUNT ON ME FOR A RIDE HOME!
THEN I'LL LEAVE YOU IN VERY CAPABLE HANDS!
THAT'S OKAY! NORA'S PICKING ME UP AFTER WORK!
THANK YOU, ABBY! AND GOOD LUCK TODAY!


YOU'LL GET THE CHANCE TO MEET EVERYONE IN YOUR OWN TIME, BUT HERE'S A QUICK RUNDOWN OF THE FEW I CAN SEE FROM HERE...
OVER HERE IS MARK! HE'S ONE OF OUR IN COUNSEL ATTORNEYS! HE'LL TRY TO MAKE YOU HIS PERSONAL COFFEE GOPHER! DON'T LET HIM!
NO COFFEE RUNS FOR MARK! GOT IT!
GINA, MARCUS AND STEPHANIE ARE ALL ASSOCIATES CURRENTLY SPREAD OUT THROUGHOUT THE OFFICE! THEY'RE ALL SO WOUND UP THEY MAY NOT NOTICE YOU FOR A GOOD WEEK OR SO!
I'LL STAY OUT OF THEIR WAY UNTIL THEY NEED ME!


AND THE RATHER INTENSE LOOKING GUY BEHIND ME STARING INTO HIS PHONE IS SKIP! HE'S A FREE-LANCE INVESTIGATOR WE KEEP ON RETAINER!
AS YOU CAN SEE, HE REALLY EARNS HIS MONEY!
I CAN HEAR YOU, YOU KNOW!
JUST SEEING IF YOU WERE CONSCIOUS!
GIGGLE!


UMM... YEAH! IT WAS A LOT TOUGHER THAN I THOUGHT IT'D BE! THERE WERE ALSO SOME PERSONAL ISSUES I HAD TO DEAL WITH... BUT THEY'RE NOT AN EXCUSE SO I WON'T BORE YOU WITH THEM!
NO! I, UHHH... I'M NOT!
SO, I UNDERSTAND YOU STRUGGLED A BIT DURING YOUR FIRST YEAR!
SMART CHOICE! AND YOU'RE NOT RELATED TO ANYONE HERE AT THE FIRM?


NEITHER A TYPE-A DRONE NOR A NEPO-BABY! HMMM! I THINK YOU AND I ARE GOING TO GET ALONG JUST FINE, ROBIN!
I... I THINK SO, TOO, JILL!


Later that afternoon...
GOTTA GO, CLIFF! WE'LL TALK AGAIN TOMORROW!


I TAKE IT ROBIN'S ALREADY LEFT!
YEP! JUST MISSED HER! HOW'D IT GO IN COURT?
ABOUT WHAT WE EXPECTED! I'LL BE CROSS-EXAMINING THEIR MAIN WITNESS TOMORROW!


SO, WHAT DO YOU *THINK* OF HER?
AND *THAT'S* PROBABLY *WHY* YOU LIKE HER!
ACTUALLY, *HANK* HIRED HER SINCE *I* WAS SO *CAUGHT UP* IN THIS TRIAL!
BUT AFTER *MEETING* HER, I *AGREED* WITH HIS CHOICE *100%!*
I *LIKE* HER! SHE'S *DIFFERENT* FROM THE GIRLS YOU *USUALLY* HIRE FOR THE SUMMER!
EXACTLY! *CHUCKLE!*


DID SHE TELL YOU ANYTHING ABOUT HERSELF?
WE DIDN'T GET THE CHANCE TO TALK THAT LONG! SHE DID MENTION SOMETHING ABOUT PERSONAL ISSUES, BUT DECLINED TO GO INTO ANY DETAIL!
WELL... EXCEPT FOR A MOTHER WHO I WOULDN'T CALL A VERY POSITIVE INFLUENCE, SHE'S PRETTY MUCH RAISED HERSELF!
AND IT WASN'T UNTIL HER MOTHER DIED A FEW YEARS AGO THAT ROBIN WAS FINALLY ABLE TO START COMING INTO HER OWN!
WELL SHE SEEMS TO HAVE DONE A PRETTY DAMN GOOD JOB SO FAR!
I AGREE! BUT I THINK THERE'S SO MUCH MORE TO THIS GIRL THAT HAS YET TO BE REALIZED!


SHE'S ALREADY GOT NORA HELPING HER TO FIT IN WITH HER CROWD, BUT I THINK YOU AND I CAN HELP HER HELP GROW EVEN MORE BY BEING THE ROLE MODELS SHE'S NEVER HAD!
I'M ON BOARD! BUT DON'T YOU DARE ASK ME TO BE A "MOTHER" INFLUENCE TO HER!
I KNOW BETTER THAN THAT, JILL! BESIDES, I PRETTY MUCH ALREADY ADOPTED THAT ROLE!
JUST BE YOURSELF, A STRONG, CONFIDENT, PROFESSIONAL WOMAN, AND SHE'LL BENEFIT IN MORE WAYS THAN ONE!
THAT I CAN DO!
THANKS, JILL! I KNEW I COULD COUNT ON YOU!


NOW, HOW ABOUT JOINING ME FOR A DRINK BEFORE HEADING HOME?
I THOUGHT YOU'D NEVER ASK!


A short time later...
SO, HOW WAS YOUR FIRST FULL DAY WITH THE "VACATION BREASTS"?
I HAVE TO ADMIT, IT WENT A LOT BETTER THAN I THOUGHT IT WOULD!


THE COUPLE OF PEOPLE WHO KNEW I GOT THEM WERE VERY SUPPORTIVE AND VERY COMPLIMENTARY!
AND NOT HAVING TO WEAR THE CORSET WAS A HUGE PLUS AS FAR AS I'M CONCERNED!
I THOUGHT YOU'D LIKE THEM! IN FACT, NONE OF MY PATIENTS HAS EVER GIVEN THEM A BAD REVIEW!


SO, SINCE YOUR BODY WILL START ABSORBING THESE IN ABOUT A WEEK, SHOULD WE MAKE AN APPOINTMENT FOR THE THREE-WEEK UPGRADE?
WELL, I REALLY DON'T WANT TO HAVE TO RESORT TO STUFFING MY BRA! AND MY EMPLOYER DID AGREE TO PAY FOR THEM IF I CHOSE TO DO SO!
THEN SHOULD I TAKE THAT AS A "YES"? I HAVE AN OPENING NEXT FRIDAY AFTERNOON AT 4:30!
I GUESS IT'D BE SILLY OF ME NOT TO!


EXCELLENT! THEN LET'S STEP INTO THE EXAMINATION ROOM SO I CAN GIVE YOU YOUR FIRST HORMONE INJECTION!
OH, YOU'LL GET PILLS, TOO, FOR DAILY USE! THE INJECTIONS ARE JUST ONCE A MONTH FOR THE FIRST COUPLE OF MONTHS TO HELP ACCELERATE THE PILLS' EFFECTIVENESS!
YOU SHOULD START SEEING RESULTS IN WEEKS RATHER THAN MONTHS!
INJECTION? I... I THOUGHT THEY'D BE PILLS!


OH! WOW! THAT'S, UMMM... GREAT!
"WEEKS"?! CRAP! THAT'S WHAT I GET FOR USING GAGGLE SEARCHES FOR MY RESEARCH INSTEAD OF PEER-REVIEWED SOURCES!
HOW THE HELL AM I GOING TO HIDE THE CHANGES TO MY BODY WHEN THE FALL SEMESTER STARTS BACK UP? BAGGY CLOTHES?


And, a short time after that...
I SWEAR, I ALMOST *FREAKED* WHEN THE DOCTOR TOLD ME THE HORMONE'S EFFECTS WOULD BE *VISIBLE* AFTER JUST A COUPLE OF *WEEKS!*
I THOUGHT IT TOOK *MONTHS!*
YEAH... I GUESS IT DOES!
I DID TOO! BUT *I* DON'T NORMALLY *KEEP UP* ON THE *NEW* DEVELOPMENTS IN HORMONE THERAPY, SO I'M *NOT* REALLY *THAT* SURPRISED!
SCIENCE MARCHES ON, AND ALL THAT!


SO, DID YOU SCHEDULE THE BOOB UPGRADE?
UMMM... YEAH! NEXT FRIDAY AFTERNOON!
PERFECT! JUST IN TIME FOR THE WEEKEND! *GIGGLE!*


SPEAKING OF GOING OUT, CAN I PASS ON GOING OUT WITH YOU ALL TONIGHT? THAT SHOT LEFT ME A LITTLE LOOPY, NOT TO MENTION A LITTLE TENDER!
OH, I SUPPOSE SO! BUT THAT JUST MEANS WE'LL HAVE TO HAVE TWICE AS MUCH FUN TOMORROW NIGHT! DEAL?


SIGH! DEAL!


A few days later...
TO SAY THAT THE LAST WEEK HAS BEEN A CHAOTIC WHIRLWIND IS A MASSIVE UNDERSTATEMENT!
I'M SURE WHEN MY ASININE EX-HOUSEMATES FIRST TRICKED ME INTO WEARING A SKIRT THEY HAD NO CLUE WHAT THEY WERE SETTING IN MOTION!
HELL, I'M LIVING WITH THE CONSEQUENCES OF THEIR CHILDISH LITTLE PRANK AND HARDLY BELIEVE IT MYSELF!


I SHOULD BE FURIOUS AT THEM, AND I AM! BUT JUST NOT AS MUCH AS I COULD BE!
BECAUSE ALTHOUGH I'M STILL PRETENDING TO BE A WOMAN, AND TAKING HORMONES, AND GETTING A TEMPORARY BOOB JOB, MY LIFE RIGHT NOW AS ROBIN IS A HELL OF A LOT BETTER THAN MY LIFE EVER WAS AS ROBERT!
A FACT THAT BECAME EVEN MORE EVIDENT WHEN I WAS ABLE TO LOOK THEM IN THE EYES AND TELL THEM OFF WITHOUT THEM RECOGNIZING ME AT ALL!
I'M HAVING TO MAKE A LOT OF ADJUSTMENTS THIS SUMMER, BUT SO FAR, THEY'VE ALL BEEN WORTH IT!


AND NORA IS RIGHT! SINCE THIS IS A TEMPORARY SITUATION, FULLY ACCEPTING THE ROLE IS THE BEST OPTION FOR ME AND EVERYONE INVOLVED!
THE LESS I HAVE TO STRESS ABOUT BEING DISCOVERED, THE MORE I CAN ENJOY THE SUMMER WITH MY INCREDIBLE NEW JOB AND AWESOME NEW FRIENDS!
AND, IF MY BEING HERE CAN SOMEHOW HELP ABBY GET NOMINATED FOR THE AG JOB, THEN THAT'S ALL THE MORE REASON TO EMBRACE THIS LIFE TO THE FULLEST!
AT LEAST WHILE IT LASTS!
Knock knock
SIGH! I'LL BET THAT'S NORA! TAKING ONE LAST STAB AT GETTING ME TO COME OUT TONIGHT!


Knock knock
I'M COMING!


I CAN COME BACK IF THIS IS A BAD TIME! YOU LOOK LIKE YOU'RE GETTING READY FOR BED!
OH! MR. MONROE! I THOUGHT YOU WERE NORA!
NO, PLEASE! COME IN!


IT'S NOT A PROBLEM, ROBIN! REALLY! AND I WON'T TAKE MUCH OF YOUR TIME ANYWAY!
I'M SORRY ABOUT THE WAY I'M... I MEAN, NORA PUT ALL MY OLD CLOTHES IN STORAGE AND ONLY BOUGHT ME A COUPLE OF THINGS TO WEAR AT NIGHT, AND...
WELL, OKAY! THEN WHAT CAN I DO FOR YOU, MR. MONROE?


BEFORE ABBY GETS HOME, I WANTED TO PERSONALLY THANK YOU FOR GOING TO THE LENGTHS YOU HAVE IN ORDER TO MAKE THIS PLAN A SUCCESS!
YOUR DEDICATION AND SACRIFICE GO WAY BEYOND ANYTHING I INITIALLY EXPECTED OF YOU! ESPECIALLY IN THE WAY YOU'VE AGREED TO THE... ALTERATIONS YOU'RE UNDERGOING!
NORA DESERVES A LOT OF THE CREDIT! SHE'S CONVINCED ME THAT IMMERSING MYSELF IN THIS ROLE IS BEST FOR ALL CONCERNED! YOU, ME, AND, OF COURSE, YOUR WIFE!
AND IF MY BODY NEEDS SOME EXTRA TIME TO CHANGE BACK AFTER THE SUMMER IS OVER, WELL... THAT'S JUST SOMETHING I'LL DEAL WITH WHEN THE TIME COMES!


WELL, IF IT MAKES YOU FEEL ANY BETTER, YOU'LL BE DOING SO IN YOUR OWN APARTMENT... WITHOUT ANY NOSY OR ANNOYING ROOMMATES YOU'D HAVE TO EXPLAIN THINGS TO!
WHAT ARE YOU SAYING?
I HAVEN'T WORKED OUT THE DETAILS YET, BUT AT THE CONCLUSION OF YOUR SUMMER JOB YOU'LL RECEIVE EITHER A STIPEND OR SCHOLARSHIP THAT SHOULD MORE THAN COVER THE COSTS OF MAINTAINING AN APARTMENT ON YOUR OWN FOR THE NEXT SCHOOL YEAR!
OH MY GOD! I... I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO SAY, MR. MONROE!


YOU DON'T HAVE TO SAY ANYTHING AS LONG AS YOU START CALLING ME HANK!
YOU'VE BEEN ADDRESSING THE REST OF MY FAMILY BY THEIR FIRST NAMES, SO I THINK IT'S ONLY FAIR YOU DO THE SAME FOR ME!
OF COURSE I WILL... HANK! AND THANK YOU! THANK YOU VERY MUCH!


HAVE A LOVELY EVENING, ROBIN!
I WILL, HANK! AND THANK YOU AGAIN!


THIS IS HUGE! LIVING ALONE THIS FALL ESSENTIALLY REMOVES ALL THE STRESS I'D HAVE OF TRYING TO HIDE MY CHANGING BODY FROM EVERYONE!
ON CAMPUS, I'LL BE JUST ANOTHER RANDOM STUDENT IN BULKY CLOTHES AND A BALL CAP!
AND, IF I KEEP THE BLONDE HAIR AND CONTACTS, EVEN MY EX-ROOMMATES WON'T RECOGNIZE ME!


THIS MAKES EVERYTHING I COMMIT TO THIS SUMMER SO MUCH EASIER!

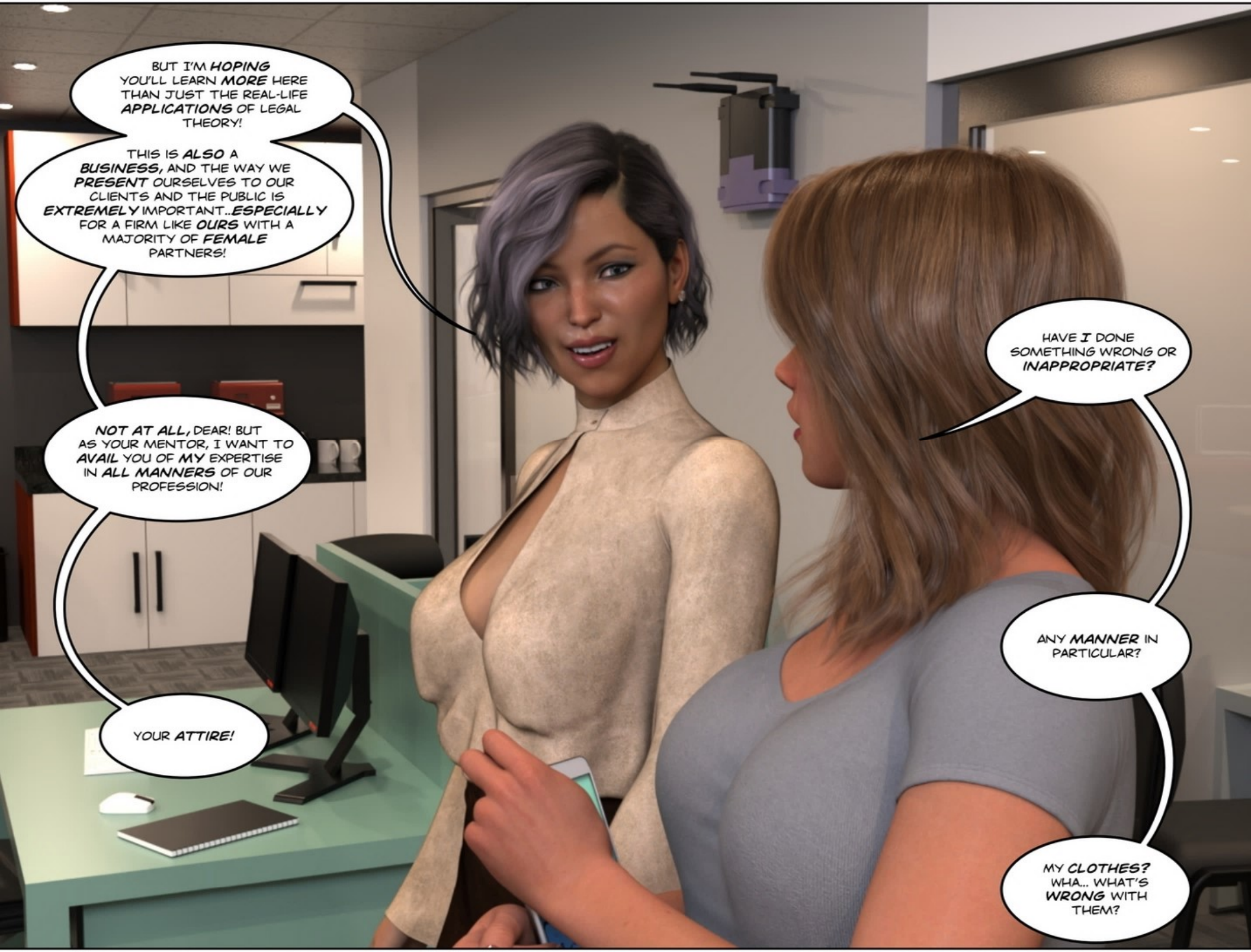

Several days later...


DID YOU FIND THE PRECEDENCE I WAS LOOKING FOR?
NOT YET! ALL I'VE BEEN ABLE TO FIND IN THE DATABASE SO FAR IS A JUDGEMENT FROM 2011 THAT'S TANGENTIAL AT BEST!
SO MY NEXT STOP IS GOING OLD SCHOOL AND VENTURING INTO THE BASEMENT!
THE FIRM'S LAW LIBRARY? GOOD LUCK WITH THAT!
WELL, HAVE HIM CALL ME BACK AS SOON AS HE GETS OUT OF HIS DAMN MEETING, CECELIA!


SORRY ABOUT THAT! THE ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF AT THE DA'S OFFICE CAN BE A LITTLE SLOW WHEN IT COMES TO... WELL, PRETTY MUCH ANYTHING!
IT SURE SOUNDS LIKE IT!
IF YOU THINK YOU NEED MORE HELP WITH THAT RESEARCH, GRAB ANOTHER INTERN OR TWO!
THANKS! BUT I'M PRETTY SURE I CAN HANDLE IT!
BUT I'LL LEAVE A TRAIL OF BREADCRUMBS, JUST IN CASE! *GIGGLE!*


I'M HEADING IN THAT DIRECTION! MIND IF I WALK WITH YOU SO WE CAN *CHAT* A BIT?
NOT AT ALL! YOU *ARE* THE BOSS AFTER ALL!


SO, I KNOW YOU'VE ONLY BEEN HERE A COUPLE OF DAYS, BUT HOW DO YOU LIKE IT SO FAR?
I'M GLAD TO HEAR THAT, DEAR! BECAUSE WE ENJOY HAVING YOU HERE AS WELL!
I LOVE IT! EVEN THOUGH I'M JUST DOING RESEARCH, BEING IMMERSED IN THE WORKINGS OF A REAL LAW FIRM, ESPECIALLY ONE LIKE YOURS, REAFFIRMS MY DECISION TO GO INTO LAW!
I THINK I'VE LEARNED MORE IN TWO DAYS HERE THAN I HAVE IN A WHOLE SEMESTER OF TORTS!


BUT I'M HOPING YOU'LL LEARN MORE HERE THAN JUST THE REAL-LIFE APPLICATIONS OF LEGAL THEORY!
THIS IS ALSO A BUSINESS, AND THE WAY WE PRESENT OURSELVES TO OUR CLIENTS AND THE PUBLIC IS EXTREMELY IMPORTANT..ESPECIALLY FOR A FIRM LIKE OURS WITH A MAJORITY OF FEMALE PARTNERS!
NOT AT ALL, DEAR! BUT AS YOUR MENTOR, I WANT TO AVAIL YOU OF MY EXPERTISE IN ALL MANNERS OF OUR PROFESSION!
YOUR ATTIRE!
HAVE I DONE SOMETHING WRONG OR INAPPROPRIATE?
ANY MANNER IN PARTICULAR?
MY CLOTHES? WHA... WHAT'S WRONG WITH THEM?


NOW, DON'T GET ME WRONG, THIS IS AN ADORABLE DRESS! BUT IT SCREAMS "COLLEGE INTERN" OR "TEMP" AT THE VERY LEAST!
I COMPLETELY UNDERSTAND, DEAR! WHICH IS WHY I'D LIKE TO TAKE YOU SHOPPING!
I WAS AFRAID OF THAT! UNFORTUNATELY, I'VE NEVER HAD THE NEED FOR ANYTHING "PROFESSIONAL" TO WEAR! SO MY WARDROBE IS A LITTLE LACKING IN THAT DEPARTMENT!
AND, EXCEPT FOR THE ONE OUTFIT I WORE WHEN I MET ABBY, IT'S THE BEST NORA AND I COULD COME UP WITH GIVEN SUCH SHORT NOTICE!


YOU... YOU WANT TO TAKE ME SHOPPING? REALLY?
FOR A COUPLE OF OUTFITS, THAT'S ALL! SOMETHING TO GET YOU STARTED!
THAT'S INCREDIBLY GENEROUS OF YOU!
WELL, ABBY AND I TALKED IT OVER AND WE BOTH THINK YOU'RE A WORTHY INVESTMENT! IF NOT IN OUR FIRM SOMEDAY, THEN AT LEAST TO THE LEGAL PROFESSION!


I... I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO SAY!
I'LL SEE YOU THEN! AND.... THANK YOU, JILL!
JUST SAY YOU'LL BE READY AT TWO O'CLOCK ON SUNDAY! I'LL PICK YOU UP AT ABBY'S!
DOES THAT WORK FOR YOU?


WOW! JUST A COUPLE OF DAYS INTO THE JOB AND THE PARTNERS ARE ALREADY IMPLYING THEY MAY HAVE A PLACE FOR ME HERE WHEN I GRADUATE!
SIGH! WHO AM I KIDDING? THAT JOB'LL BE FOR ROBIN... SOMEONE WHO WON'T EVEN EXIST BY THE TIME I GRADUATE!


JESUS! I HAVE GOT TO STOP BEING SUCH A GODDAMN DEFEATIST!
RIGHT NOW, I'VE GOT MORE FRIENDS AND PEOPLE THAT RESPECT ME THAN I'VE EVER HAD IN MY LIFE! I CAN'T RUIN THAT BY WORRYING ABOUT WHAT MAY HAPPEN MONTHS DOWN THE ROAD!
EVEN IF IT DOES COME TO AN END EVENTUALLY, I OWE IT TO MYSELF TO LIVE THIS LIFE TO THE FULLEST WHILE I CAN!


THIS HAS THE POTENTIAL OF BEING THE MOST MEMORABLE AND ENJOYABLE SUMMER OF MY LIFE!
AND I'M NOT GOING TO LET IT GO TO WASTE!


Friday afternoon...
DO YOU NEED ME TO GET UNDRESSED AND PUT ON A ROBE OR ANYTHING LIKE THAT?
HOW MUCH MORE INVOLVED?
THAT WON'T BE NECESSARY, ROBIN!
EVEN THOUGH THIS PROCEDURE IS A LITTLE MORE INVOLVED THAN THE PREVIOUS ONE, I CAN DO EVERYTHING I NEED TO WITH JUST YOUR TOP OFF!


SINCE THIS LONGER LASTING METHOD MAKES USE OF A DIFFERENT COMPOUND THAN WHAT YOU'VE ALREADY GOT, WE HAVE TO REMOVE THE OLD COMPOUND FIRST!
IT'S EITHER THAT OR WAIT FOR YOUR BODY TO ABSORB IT, WHICH WILL TAKE ANOTHER COUPLE OF DAYS, BUT YOUR DECREASING SIZE WILL BE QUITE NOTICEABLE!
QUITE UNDERSTANDABLE! AND DON'T WORRY, THE ONLY NEEDLES YOU'LL FEEL WILL BE THE FIRST SMALL PINCHES OF THE LOCAL ANESTHESIA!
REMOVE IT? YOU MEAN SUCK IT OUT?
YEAH... I'D RATHER NOT HAVE TO EXPLAIN THAT!

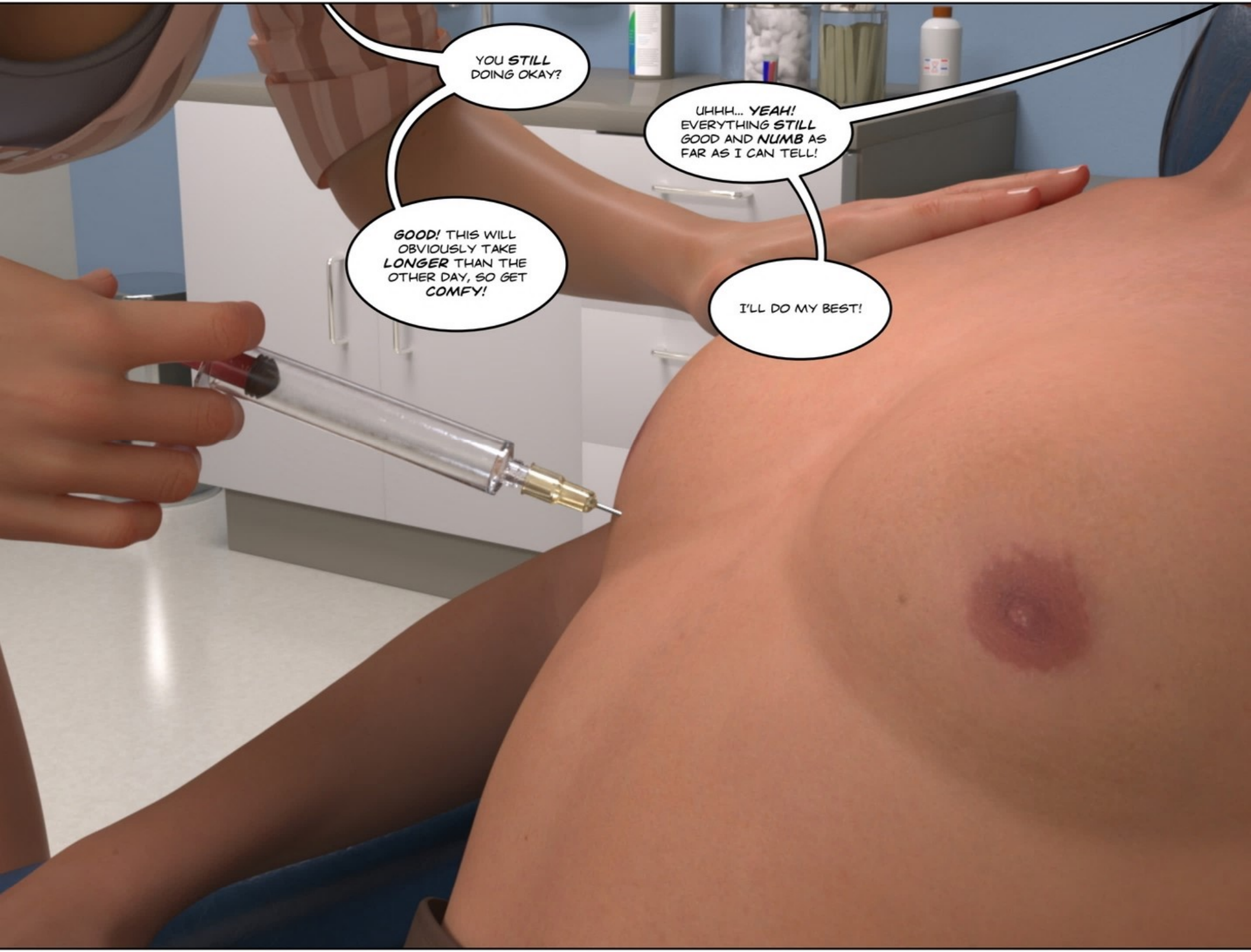

WE'LL GIVE THE ANESTHETIC A FEW MINUTES TO KICK IN BEFORE WE GET STARTED!
IT MIGHT FEEL A LITTLE WEIRD AT FIRST, BUT THAT'S TO BE EXPECTED!
OKAY!


I KNOW I AGREED TO THIS, BUT THAT STILL DOESN'T KEEP ME FROM BEING A LITTLE FREAKED OUT!
BEFORE THIS SUMMER STARTED, THE MOST INVASIVE PROCEDURE I'VE EVER EXPERIENCED WAS HAVING A CAVITY FILLED! SO THIS IS ALMOST LIKE MAJOR SURGERY IN COMPARISON!
BUT... I'M COMMITTED TO THIS, AND SHE DOES SEEM TO KNOW WHAT SHE'S DOING, SO...
DEEP BREATHS AND GO TO MY HAPPY PLACE!


LET'S SEE HOW YOU'RE DOING? CAN YOU FEEL ANYTHING HERE?
NOT REALLY! JUST A VERY SLIGHT PRESSURE!
GOOD! THEN LET'S GET STARTED!


AFTER I INSERT THIS NEEDLE, I'M GOING TO ATTACH IT TO A TUBE WHICH WILL...
ACTUALLY, I DON'T REALLY NEED THE STEP BY STEP, IF YOU DON'T MIND!
I GET IT! SORRY!


A few minutes later...
OKAY, I'M ALL DONE REMOVING THE OLD SOLUTION!
ONE OF THE ADVANTAGES OF DOING IT THIS WAY IS IT LEAVES YOUR BREAST TISSUE STRETCHED OUT A LITTLE SO THE NEW ONES WILL LOOK MORE NATURAL!


YOU STILL DOING OKAY?
UHHH... YEAH! EVERYTHING STILL GOOD AND NUMB AS FAR AS I CAN TELL!
GOOD! THIS WILL OBVIOUSLY TAKE LONGER THAN THE OTHER DAY, SO GET COMFY!
I'LL DO MY BEST!


A while later...
OKAY! YOUR RIGHT BREAST LOOKS WONDERFUL!
I'LL MAKE SURE YOUR LEFT ONE IS JUST AS GORGEOUS!
OKAY...




JUST A LITTLE BIT LONGER! I REALLY THINK YOU'RE GOING TO BE PLEASED WITH THE RESULTS!


SO... HOW DO THEY FEEL?
OF COURSE! BESIDES THE NORMAL SWELLING THAT'LL GO DOWN IN A DAY OR TWO, THE EXTENDED PROCEDURE REQUIRES MORE SOLUTION WHICH DOES RESULT IN A SLIGHT INCREASE IN CUP SIZE!
IT VARIES FROM PATIENT TO PATIENT! COME TAKE A LOOK!
DEFINITELY BIGGER THAN BEFORE! IS THAT NORMAL?
JUST HOW MUCH OF AN INCREASE?


WHAT DO YOU THINK?
WELL, LIKE I SAID, I'VE DONE THIS MORE THAN A FEW TIMES, SO I'VE GOTTEN PRETTY GOOD AT IT!
AND THE SIZE WILL COME DOWN A LITTLE AS THEY SETTLE! WHICH IS WHY I'M GOING TO HAVE YOU WEAR A SPECIAL BRA THAT WILL HELP THEM SETTLE INTO THE APPROPRIATE SHAPE!
AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE FOR THE NEXT COUPLE OF DAYS... EVEN WHILE YOU SLEEP! I ALSO HIGHLY RECOMMEND SLEEPING ON YOUR BACK FOR AWHILE, IF YOU CAN!
WOW! THEY LOOK SO... SO REAL! AND DEFINITELY BIGGER THAN BEFORE!
HOW LONG WILL I HAVE TO WEAR IT?
SIGH! I'LL DO MY BEST!


I'M GETTING THE SENSE THAT YOU'RE NOT HAPPY WITH THE RESULTS!
I'M SORRY IF I COME OFF THAT WAY, DOCTOR! I'M JUST A LITTLE SHELL-SHOCKED IS ALL!
I REALLY HAD NO IDEA THEY'D COME OUT LOOKING AS GOOD AS THEY DO!


WELL, I'M RELIEVED TO HEAR THAT!
WHEN YOU'RE DONE DRESSING, COME OUT TO MY OFFICE AND WE'LL SCHEDULE YOUR FOLLOW-UP APPOINTMENTS!
OKAY!


SIGH! MAYBE THEY'LL GO DOWN ENOUGH BY MONDAY THAT NO ONE AT WORK WILL NOTICE THE DIFFERENCE!
BUT NORA WILL SEE THEM TOMORROW! AND I HAVE A PRETTY GOOD IDEA WHAT SHE'LL SAY!


OH MY GOD!
THEY'RE
PERFECT!


EVERYONE'S GOING TO LOVE THEM!
SIGH!


That night...


OH YEAH! SOUNDS LIKE IT'S HOPPIN' IN HERE TONIGHT!
C'MON, YOU TWO!
WE'RE COMING! GO AHEAD AND GRAB A TABLE!


IF I'D KNOWN THIS PLACE REQUIRED TRAVERSING SUCH A STEEP FLIGHT OF STAIRS I WOULDN'T HAVE LET YOU TALK ME INTO THESE EXTRA HIGH HEELS... AMONG OTHER DUBIOUS CLOTHING CHOICES!
I TOLD THE GIRLS YOU'VE NEVER WORN ANYTHING HIGHER THAN 3-INCH HEELS, SO THEY UNDERSTAND! WE'VE ALL BEEN THERE!
AND AS FOR THE "OTHER" CLOTHING ITEM YOU'RE REFERRING TO, I WON'T APOLOGIZE ONE LITTLE BIT! YOU LOOK AMAZING!


AREN'T YOU REALLY SAYING "THEY" LOOK AMAZING? I MEAN, THEY'RE PRACTICALLY FALLING OUT OF THIS DRESS!
SPOKEN LIKE A TRUE NEWBIE! NOT A PROBLEM, SWEETIE! THE TIGHTNESS OF THAT DRESS WILL KEEP THEM RIGHT WHERE THEY'RE SUPPOSED TO BE!
TELL ME ABOUT IT! NOW I KNOW WHY YOU SAID I DIDN'T HAVE TO WEAR MY BUTT SHAPER! EVERY SEAM WOULD'VE BEEN OUTLINED BY THIS THING!


DON'T WORRY, ROBIN! I DON'T THINK TOO MANY PEOPLE WILL BE LOOKING AT YOUR ASS TONIGHT ANYWAY! *GIGGLE!*
BESIDES, BETWEEN THE HORMONES AND THOSE EXERCISES YOU'VE BEEN DOING, YOU'LL HAVE YOUR VERY OWN PERFECT BUTT IN NO TIME!
OH, GOOD! THEY FOUND A TABLE!


EXIT
I JUST WANT TO REEMPHASIZE THAT I WILL NOT BE DOING ANY DANCING TONIGHT! NOT IN THESE SHOES AND NOT IN THIS DRESS!
AND ANY GUY WHO TRIES TO HIT ON ME IS GOING TO GET ONE FUCKING CHILLY RESPONSE!
I'LL TRY! BUT NO PROMISES!
FAIR ENOUGH! YOUR FIRST TIME TO A DANCE CLUB SHOULDN'T BE REMEMBERED FOR PRATFALLS OR WARDROBE MALFUNCTIONS!
UNDERSTANDABLE! BUT SEE IF YOU CAN AT LEAST BE A LITTLE LADYLIKE ABOUT IT!
IF IT HELPS, I'LL TURN AWAY THE FIRST COUPLE ATTEMPTS SO YOU CAN SEE HOW IT'S DONE!


I HOPE YOU DON'T MIND ME SAYING IT AGAIN, ROBIN, BUT I THINK YOUR NEW BOOBS LOOK *AWESOME!*
OH! UHHH... THANKS... *AGAIN!* *GIGGLE!*
I LOVE THEM, TOO! *WHAT* MADE YOU DECIDE TO GET THEM DONE?


WELL I DIDN'T REALLY HAVE ANY CHOICE DID I? I MEAN, AFTER HANGING OUT WITH YOU THREE ALL WEEK, I GOT TIRED OF FEELING LIKE THE UGLY AND FLAT STEPSISTER! *GIGGLE!*
THAT ISN'T REALLY THE REASON... IS IT?
NO! BUT IT SOUNDS A HECK OF A LOT BETTER THAN THE TRUTH!


IT WAS JUST A SPUR OF THE MOMENT THING! I WAS AT A REGULAR CHECK-UP WITH MY DOCTOR, SHE MADE A SUGGESTION, AND I WENT FOR IT!
WOW! THAT'S PRETTY IMPULSIVE!
YEAH, I'VE NEVER BEEN A VERY SPONTANEOUS KIND OF PERSON, BUT I'M STARTING TO LEARN A THING OR TWO BY HANGING OUT WITH NORA OVER HERE!
OH, PLEASE! DON'T PUT THE BLAME ON ME!


I'M 100% CONVINCED THERE'S BEEN A SEXY LITTLE FIRECRACKER INSIDE YOU ALL ALONG JUST DYING TO GET OUT!
AND HANGING WITH US JUST GAVE HER AN EXCUSE TO FINALLY LET HER FREAK FLAG FLY! *GIGGLE!*
NOW... WHO WANTS TO GO UP TO THE BAR WITH ME AND GET THE DRINKS?
I WILL!
ME TOO!


KEEP OUR SEATS WARM FOR US, ROBIN! WE'LL BE RIGHT BACK!
BY THE WAY, I MEANT EVERYTHING I JUST SAID ABOUT YOU!
YOU... YOU DID?
UH-HUH! EVERY SINGLE WORD!


C'MON, LADIES! I THINK I'VE ALREADY SPOTTED A COUPLE OF GUYS WHO DESPERATELY WANT TO BUY OUR DRINKS FOR US! *GIGGLE!*
NORA ACTUALLY THINKS THIS IS WHO I WANT TO BE?
SHE SAID THE BEST WAY TO BE BELIEVABLE WAS TO LIVE THE PART, AND I THOUGHT I WAS NAILING IT!
BUT NOW SHE'S IMPLYING I'M NOT JUST ACTING! IS SHE ACTUALLY SERIOUS?


OH, I SEE WHAT SHE'S DOING! THIS IS DEFINITELY HER BIZARRE VERSION OF A PEP TALK!
SHE'S CLEARLY NOTICED MY HORMONE-INDUCED CRABBINESS THESE LAST COUPLE OF DAYS AND WANTS TO CHEER ME UP SO I DON'T TORPEDO THE EVENING!
BY SUGGESTING I'VE ALWAYS SECRETLY WANTED TO BE A WOMAN, SHE'S TRYING TO GIVE MY EGO A MASSIVE BOOST, MAKING ME THINK MY PERFORMANCE IS SO GOOD IT'S EVEN CONVINCED HER!
WOW! HER GOING TO SUCH ELABORATE LENGTHS JUST TO MAKE ME FEEL BETTER REALLY SPEAKS VOLUMES ABOUT OUR FRIENDSHIP!


AND HONESTLY, IF SHE'S GOING TO ALL THAT TROUBLE FOR ME, WHAT KIND OF FRIEND WOULD I BE IF I DIDN'T RETURN THE FAVOR?
IF SHE WANTS ME TO BELIEVE I'M SUCH A PHENOMENAL ACTOR, WHY NOT LET HER THINK SHE'S UNEARTHED MY DEEPEST, MOST HIDDEN DESIRE TO BE A REAL WOMAN?
FOR A FEW DAYS, AT LEAST! MAYBE A WEEK OR TWO... WHO KNOWS? *GIGGLE!*


HERE YOU GO, SWEETIE! ONE VIRGIN MAI-TAI!
THANKS, NORA!
A CHOICE, ACTUALLY!
YOU KNOW, IT JUST OCCURRED TO ME THAT I RARELY SEE YOU DRINK ANYTHING WITH BOOZE IN IT!
IS THAT JUST A COINCIDENCE?


BOTH MY PARENTS WERE ALCOHOLICS! SO I MADE A PROMISE TO MYSELF A LONG TIME AGO THAT I'D NEVER WIND UP LIKE THEM! THAT'S WHY I ALWAYS KEEP MY DRINKING TO A MINIMUM!
OH! I'M SO SORRY FOR BRINGING THAT UP!
NOT TO WORRY! I CAME TO TERMS WITH IT A LONG TIME AGO!
AND IT DOESN'T BOTHER YOU WHEN OTHERS DRINK AROUND YOU?
WE'RE IN A BAR! I'D BETTER BE OKAY WITH IT! *GIGGLE!*


WHICH OF YOU LOVELY LADIES WOULD LIKE TO DANCE?
I THINK I COULD BE TALKED INTO IT!
ME TOO!


AND YOU TWO?
WE'RE GOING TO SIT AND CHAT FOR AWHILE! ANOTHER TIME MAYBE!
LIKE I SAID... ANOTHER TIME!
HEY, WE KNOW HOW TO CHAT! CAN WE JOIN YOU?


AND THERE YOU GO! IT'S JUST THAT EASY!
AND IF THEY'RE NOT THAT AGREEABLE?
THEN YOU REPLACE THE SMILE WITH RESTING BITCH FACE AND MAKE SURE THE NEXT COUPLE OF TABLES HEAR YOU TELL HIM TO FUCK OFF!
JUST LIKE THAT, HUH?
YEP! JUST LIKE THAT!


SERIOUSLY, THOUGH... MOST REPUTABLE PLACES, LIKE THIS ONE, TRAIN THEIR WAIT STAFF TO BE ON THE LOOKOUT FOR CREEPS!
LETTING TOXIC ALPHA-MALES ROAM FREE AND HARASS WOMEN IS BAD FOR BUSINESS! AND THEY DAMN WELL KNOW IT!
BUT YOU PROBABLY WON'T HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT IT SINCE YOU'LL ALWAYS BE HANGING OUT WITH US FOR THE REST OF THE SUMMER!
AND AS LONG AS YOU'RE WITH US, WE'LL KEEP THE DOUCHEBAGS AT ARMS LENGTH FOR YOU!
I APPRECIATE HOW YOU WANT TO MAKE ALL THIS AS EASY FOR ME AS POSSIBLE, NORA, BUT AT SOME POINT, I NEED TO BE ABLE TO TAKE CARE OF MYSELF!


BECAUSE YOU MAY BE RIGHT ABOUT ME! MAYBE THE REASON I'M SO GOOD AT BEING ROBIN IS BECAUSE DEEP DOWN SHE'S WHO I'VE ALWAYS REALLY BEEN!
AND IF THAT IS THE CASE, THEN I'LL BE HAVING TO DEAL WITH GUYS FOR A LOT LONGER THAN JUST THE NEXT COUPLE OF MONTHS!
POSSIBLY THE REST OF MY LIFE!
YEAH... YOU'RE NOT THE ONLY ACTOR IN THIS BOOTH! *CHUCKLE!*


I HAD A FEELING! YOU WERE JUST TOO PERFECT AT BEING A WOMAN FOR IT TO BE AN ACT!
SO IF THIS IS THE JOURNEY YOU WANT TO TAKE, REST ASSURED I'LL BE THERE EVERY STEP OF THE WAY FOR YOU!
THANK YOU, NORA! YOU HAVE NO IDEA HOW MUCH THAT MEANS TO ME!


Later...


YOU KNOW, YOU HAVE BEEN BABYSITTING ME LONG ENOUGH! YOU'RE DYING TO DANCE AND YOU KNOW IT!
SO GO GRAB ONE OF THOSE CUTE GUYS THAT HAVE BEEN OGLING YOU ALL NIGHT AND HAVE SOME FUN!
I'LL BE JUST FINE HERE!
YOU SURE?
GO!


THAT SURE DIDN'T TAKE LONG! *GIGGLE!*


HMMM! I JUST REALIZED THAT "COMING OUT" TO NORA LIKE THIS MAY TAKE A LOT OF THE STRESS OUT OF MY LIFE THIS SUMMER!
NOW THAT SHE BELIEVES I'M ACTUALLY TRANSITIONING, SHE MAY NOT BE AS QUICK TO CRITICIZE ANY FEMININE FAUX PAS I MIGHT MAKE!


I JUST HOPE SHE DOESN'T GET TOO UPSET WHEN I EVENTUALLY TELL HER THAT THIS HAS BEEN AN ACT ALL ALONG!
AND IF SHE DOES GET PISSED AT ME, WILL IT BE BECAUSE I SAW THROUGH HER ACT OR SHE DIDN'T SEE THROUGH MINE?
GUESS WE'LL FIND OUT LATER THIS SUMMER!


HEY THERE, GORGEOUS! YOU LOOK LIKE YOU COULD USE SOME COMPANY!
SIGH! WELL, I WAS DUE FOR MY FIRST SOLO AT SOME POINT! MIGHT AS WELL GET IT OVER WITH!
ACTUALLY, I WAS KIND OF ENJOYING MY ALONE TIME! SO IF YOU DON'T MIND...


DO I MIND JOINING YOU? NOT AT ALL, PRETTY LADY!
EITHER YOU'RE HARD OF HEARING OR HAVE A LEARNING IMPEDIMENT, SO I'LL TRY THIS AGAIN, BUT VERY SLOWLY...
I DO NOT WANT YOUR COMPANY! SO PLEASE LEAVE!


YEAH, THAT'S WHAT ALL YOU CHICKS SAY AT FIRST! BUT YOU NEVER REALLY MEAN IT! HEH-HEH!
OH, REALLY?!


WHAT TH' FUCK?!
OOPS! SORRY! I DIDN'T REALLY MEAN TO DO THAT!
Smack!


YOU FUCKIN' BITCH!
YES... YES, I AM! *GIGGLE!*
THAT WAS VERY SATISFYING! AND A LITTLE INVIGORATING!


OH... WHY THE HELL NOT?


HEY THERE! I THOUGHT YOU WEREN'T GOING TO DO ANY DANCING TONIGHT!
ISN'T IT A GIRL'S PREROGATIVE TO CHANGE HER MIND? *GIGGLE!*
DAMN RIGHT IT IS! JOIN THE FUN, GIRLFRIEND!


OH MAN, THAT WAS PRECIOUS! SAW THE WHOLE THING FROM HERE!
SHOULD I ORDER YOU ANOTHER BEER, MAN, OR ARE YOU JUST GONNA WEAR THAT ONE HOME HA-HA!
FUCK YOU, MAN!
HEY, I TOLD YOU SHE WASN'T GOING TO BE A PUSHOVER, DUDE!


GUESS I SHOULD'VE *TOLD* YOU *WE* RAN INTO THAT *BALL-BUSTER* LAST WEEK! AND IT *DIDN'T* GO MUCH *BETTER* FOR *US!*
'COURSE *WE* CAME AWAY WITH OUR PANTS *AND* DIGNITY *INTACT!* *HEH-HEH!*
YEAH, WELL... *I'M* NOT LIKE *YOU* LOSERS!


"'Cause eventually, one way or another, I'm gonna get a piece of that!"


The next day...


VARSECE
VARSECE
THERE'S ONE MORE PLACE DOWN THE STREET I WANT YOU TO LOOK THROUGH BEFORE WE CALL IT A DAY!
HONESTLY, JILL... YOU'VE ALREADY BOUGHT WAYTOO MUCH FOR ME AS IT IS!
BESIDES, I DON'T THINK I CAN CARRY MUCH MORE!
FIRST RULE OF THUMB WHEN SHOPPING... IF YOU'VE STILL GOT A FREE HAND, YOU HAVEN'T BOUGHT ENOUGH!
AND I STILL HAVE A FREE HAND! SO, ONE MORE STOP IT IS!
SIGH! THE DEFENSE CONCEDES THE POINT! *GIGGLE!*


SO, JILL... HOW MANY SUMMER INTERNS HAVE YOU TAKEN SHOPPING OVER THE YEARS?
I'M THE ONLY ONE? REALLY? WELL... WHY ME AND NOT THE OTHERS?
INCLUDING YOU? ONE!
LIKE I SAID THE OTHER DAY, ABBY AND I BOTH THINK YOU'RE AN EXCEPTIONAL YOUNG LADY AND A WORTHY INVESTMENT!


AS TO WHY WE NEVER TREATED ANY OF THE OTHER INTERNS THIS WAY... WELL, TO BE TRUTHFUL, I BARELY REMEMBER ANY OF THEM!
THEY ALL SEEMED TO COME FROM THE SAME UNREMARKABLE MOLD! THEY SHOWED UP, DID A SO-SO JOB AND DID NOTHING TO DISTINGUISH THEMSELVES!
YOU, ON THE OTHER HAND, HAVE SHOWN MORE DRIVE AND RESOURCEFULNESS IN YOUR FIRST WEEK THAN ANY OF THEM DID OVER AN ENTIRE SUMMER!
AND THE FACT THAT YOU'VE GOTTEN YOURSELF HERE WITHOUT THE HELP OF A RICH FAMILY OR SORORITY CONNECTIONS SPEAKS VOLUMES ABOUT YOU!


YOU DON'T HAVE TO SAY ANYTHING, DEAR! BUT WE DO WANT YOU TO THINK ABOUT SPENDING EVERY SUMMER WITH US UNTIL YOU GRADUATE!
WOW! NO ONE HAS EVER HAD SO MUCH FAITH IN ME BEFORE! I... I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO SAY!
OF... OF COURSE I WILL!
5th Avenue


OH MY GOD! THAT'S THE SECOND TIME SHE'S SUGGESTED I HAVE A FUTURE WITH HER FIRM!
I WONDER IF THEY'LL FEEL THE SAME WHEN I "CONFESS" THAT I'M A TRANSWOMAN?
AND IF THEY DO, WOULD THEIR OFFER STILL EXTEND TO ME IF... I MEAN, WHEN I RETURN TO BEING ROBERT?
I CAN'T IMAGINE IT WOULD! BUT IT'S NICE TO DREAM!


I HAVE TO ASK, DEAR... DID YOU HAVE A HOT DATE THIS WEEKEND?
WELL, I'VE ALWAYS BEEN A VERY OBSERVANT PERSON AND NOTICED YOU'VE GONE UP AT LEAST A CUP SIZE SINCE I SAW YOU FRIDAY!
I JUST ASSUMED IT WAS TO IMPRESS SOMEONE! AM I WRONG?
WHAT? UHH... NO! NO, I DIDN'T! WHAT MAKES YOU THINK I DID?


I'M NOT TRYING TO EMBARRASS YOU, DEAR! I'M JUST... CURIOUS!
ARE THOSE THE "VACATION BOOBS" I'VE READ ABOUT?
OH MY GOD! I WAS WONDERING IF YOU'D NOTICE OR NOT!
IT'S JUST... SOMETHING I'M TRYING OUT FOR AWHILE!
UMMM, YEAH! MY DOCTOR GAVE THEM TO ME FOR A COUPLE OF WEEKS TO SEE IF I LIKED BEING A LITTLE... BIGGER!
5th Avenue


WELL I THINK THEY LOOK ADORABLE, DEAR!
PERSONALLY, I THINK YOUR FRAME COULD HANDLE EVEN MORE, BUT THAT'S JUST ME!
YOU DO WHATEVER MAKES YOU FEEL RIGHT!
SMART GIRL!
THANK YOU! I KIND OF LIKE THEM, TOO!
THEY SURE BEAT THE ALTERNATIVE!
I... I WILL! BUT I'LL ALSO TAKE YOUR ADVICE INTO ACCOUNT THE NEXT TIME I SEE MY DOCTOR! *GIGGLE!*
I'M JUST STARTING TO GET USED TOTHESE AND SHE WANTS ME TO GO BIGGER? NO THANK YOU, JILL!


That evening...
"ONE MORE STOP", SHE SAID!
SHE CONVENIENTLY LEFT OUT THE "ON THIS STREET" PART!
SIGH! I'M GOING TO NEED A BIGGER CLOSET!


I'M HARDLY COMPLAINING, THOUGH! NO ONE HAS EVER SPENT THIS MUCH MONEY ON ME BEFORE!
WELL, WITH THE EXCEPTION OF HANK WHO'S PAID FOR ALL MY ORIGINAL CLOTHES, IDENTIFICATION, AND DOCTOR'S VISITS!
CHRIST! THESE PEOPLE HAVE ALL BENT OVER BACKWARDS TO WELCOME ME INTO THEIR LIVES!
THEY'RE QUICKLY BECOMING THE ONLY TRUE FAMILY I'VE EVER KNOWN!
AND ONE THING I'VE LEARNED ABOUT FAMILY IS I DON'T LIKE LYING TO THEM!


HANK SAID HE WANTED TO WAIT A FEW WEEKS BEFORE TELLING ABBY I WAS A TRANSWOMAN, BUT KEEPING SO MUCH FROM HER AND JILL IS KILLING ME!
I WONDER IF HE'D LET ME TELL THEM SOONER... LIKE THIS WEEK, OR EVEN TOMORROW?
KNOWING THOSE TWO, LEARNING THE "TRUTH" ABOUT ME WON'T MAKE ANY DIFFERENCE TO THEM WHATSOEVER!
SO AS FAR AS I'M CONCERNED, THE SOONER THEY KNOW, THE BETTER!


PROBLEM IS, THOUGH, THIS IS AN EXTENDED CONVERSATION I'D NEED TO HAVE WITH HANK, AND WITH ABBY BEING HOME, TONIGHT JUST ISN'T POSSIBLE!
AND A PROLONGED PHONE CALL DURING THE DAY TOMORROW WOULD NOT ONLY INTERFERE WITH MY WORK, BUT MIGHT ALSO LOOK A LITTLE SUSPICIOUS!
SIGH! I REALLY NEED TO GET AT LEAST SOME OF THIS OFF MY CHEST IN THE NEXT COUPLE OF DAYS OR I'M GOING TO GO CRAZY!
THERE'S GOT TO BE SOME WAY I CAN...


I'VE GOT IT!




HELLO, NORA? THIS IS ROBIN!
I HAVE A HUGE FAVOR TO ASK OF YOU!


The next morning...
GOOD MORNING, NORA!
YES! SHE AND ROBIN LEFT ABOUT A HALF HOUR AGO!
MORNING, UNCLE HANK! HAS AUNT ABBY LEFT YET?


YOU SAID YOU HAD SOMETHING IMPORTANT TO TALK ABOUT REGARDING ROBIN! IS ANYTHING WRONG?
THEN WHAT'S THE EMERGENCY?
ON THE CONTRARY, EVERYTHING'S GOING VERY. VERY WELL!
ROBIN'S DOING AN AMAZING JOB LEARNING TO FIT IN BOTH AT WORK AND SOCIALLY!


ROBIN DOESN'T WANT TO WAIT A FEW WEEKS TO TELL AUNT ABBY SHE'S A TRANSWOMAN! SHE WANTS TO TELL HER NOW!
ALREADY? DID SHE SAY WHY?
SHE SAID SHE'S GROWN VERY CLOSE TO BOTH AUNT ABBY AND HER PARTNER, JILL! AND SHE FEELS THAT KEEPING THE TRUTH FROM THEM IS BETRAYING THEIR TRUST!
SHE REALLY FEELS THAT WAY?
SHE DOES!


WHY DIDN'T SHE TELL ME THIS HERSELF?
SHE WANTED TO, BUT WITH ABBY HOME WITH YOU ALL WEEKEND, SHE DIDN'T HAVE THE CHANCE!
I GUESS USING YOU AS AN INTERMEDIARY MAKES SENSE! ANY EXCESSIVE CONTACT BETWEEN HER AND ME COULD SEEM SUSPICIOUS ON VARIOUS LEVELS!
SO, WHAT SHOULD I TELL HER?
02


TELL HER TO GO AHEAD WHENEVER SHE FEELS READY TO! AND MAKE SURE SHE ALSO INCLUDES THE FACT THAT I KNEW SHE WAS A TRANSWOMAN WHEN I HIRED HER!
IF, ON THE OUTSIDE CHANCE, ABBY GETS UPSET WITH THE NEWS, I WANT HER TO BE UPSET WITH ME... NOT ROBIN!
I KNOW! I JUST WANT TO MAKE SURE THAT ANY HINT OF DECEPTION ORIGINATES FROM ME AND ME ALONE!
OH, THERE'S NO WAY SHE'D EVER GET MAD AT ROBIN FOR THIS!
02


IT WILL BE GOOD TO GET THIS PART OF OUR STORY OUT IN THE OPEN! IT'S ONE LESS THING TO KEEP HIDDEN FROM YOUR AUNT!
I JUST PRAY TO GOD SHE NEVER LEARNS THE FULL TRUTH ABOUT OUR MISS SULLIVAN!
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
THAT MAY NO LONGER BE AN ISSUE!


I HAD A LITTLE HEART TO HEART WITH ROBIN THE OTHER NIGHT AND SHE ALL BUT CONFIRMED WHAT I'D SUSPECTED ABOUT HER FROM DAY ONE!
WHICH IS?
THAT SHE REALLY IS A TRANSWOMAN AND IS SERIOUSLY CONSIDERING LIVING THE REST OF HER LIFE AS "ROBIN SULLIVAN"!
YOU'RE SURE ABOUT THIS?
LET'S JUST SAY MY CONFIDENCE LEVEL IS HOVERING AROUND 98 PERCENT!


OUTSTANDING! THAT MEANS MY INITIAL GUT FEELING ABOUT HER WAS CORRECT AS WELL! AND THE ONLY REAL INDISCRETION I'VE COMMITTED WAS NOT IMMEDIATELY TELLING ABBY THE TRUTH ABOUT ROBIN BEING A TRANSWOMAN!
THIS WHOLE PLAN I CONCOCTED AROUND ROBIN IS NO LONGER A FABRICATION, BUT A REALITY!
WE WERE NEVER GOING TO GIVE OUT HER NAME ANYWAY, SO THAT ISN'T A PROBLEM!
MAYBE! BUT KEEP IN MIND, NOW THAT'S SHE'S HAD THIS REVELATION, SHE MAY NOT WANT TO GO PUBLIC ABOUT IT!
02


AS YOU KNOW, MY POWERS OF DISCRETION ARE LEGENDARY, NORA DEAR!
UNTIL SHE TELLS ME HERSELF, I KNOW ABSOLUTELY NOTHING ABOUT HER DECISION!
WELL I'M GLAD YOU'RE SO HAPPY ABOUT THIS! BUT REMEMBER, SHE TOLD ME THIS IN CONFIDENCE, SO DON'T LET ON THAT YOU KNOW!
AWESOME!
02


ONE OF US WILL CALL YOU AFTER ROBIN SPILLS THE BEANS SO YOU WON'T BE BLINDSIDED BY AUNT ABBY!
HAVE A GOOD DAY, UNK! LOVE YOU!
I'D APPRECIATE THAT!
LOVE YOU, TOO, DEAR!


SIGH! THANKS TO THOSE TWO, ABBY'S NOMINATION IS ESSENTUALLY IN THE BAG!
I DON'T KNOW HOW I'LL EVER REPAY THEM... BUT I WILL! NO MATTER WHAT!


Later that afternoon...
I'VE BEEN ON PINS AND NEEDLES ALL DAY SINCE NORA CALLED AND GAVE ME HANK'S OFFICIAL OKEY-DOKEY!
I'M HAPPY HE SO READILY AGREED WITH MY DECISION, BUT NOW THE REALITY OF THE SITUATION IS SINKING IN!
EXACTLY HOW DO I TELL ABBY AND JILL THAT I'M NOT THE WOMAN THEY THINK I AM?


IT'S NOT LIKE I CAN JUST WALK UP TO THEM AND SAY, "OH, BY THE WAY, I'M NOT REALLY A WOMAN! SORRY I DIDN'T TELL YOU SOONER!"
THESE TWO WOMEN HAVE OPENED UP THEIR HEARTS AND LET ME INTO THEIR LIVES! THE LAST THING I WANT TO DO IS DISAPPOINT THEM!
BUT I HAVE TO TELL THEM... THERE'S NO OTHER WAY! AND WHATEVER HAPPENS AFTERWARD, I'LL JUST HAVE TO ACCEPT!


AND NOW THAT ABBY HAS FINALLY RETURNED FROM COURT, I HAVE THE PERFECT OPPORTUNITY TO WALK IN THERE AND TELL THEM BOTH THE TRUTH!
IF ONLY I COULD GET MY LEGS TO AGREE WITH THAT PLAN!


SUCK IT UP, ROBIN! IT'S NOW OR NEVER!


SO YOU THINK WE'LL HAVE A FAVORABLE VERDICT?
I'M CONFIDENT! BUT WHO KNOWS WHAT THE JURY'S GOING TO DECIDE!


UMM, EXCUSE ME, JILL AND ABBY! COULD I TALK TO THE TWO OF YOU FOR A FEW MINUTES?
WHY, OF COURSE, ROBIN DEAR! THIS SOUNDS SERIOUS! IS ANYTHING WRONG?
WELL, THAT KIND OF DEPENDS ON HOW YOU TWO REACT TO WHAT I WANT TO DISCUSS!
I'M INTRIGUED! LET'S GO TO THE CONFERENCE ROOM, SO WE'LL HAVE A LITTLE MORE PRIVACY!


SO, ROBIN, TELL US WHAT'S GOING ON!
AND REMEMBER, WE'RE A FAMILY HERE! YOU CAN TELL US ANYTHING!
I'M... KIND OF COUNTING ON THAT!

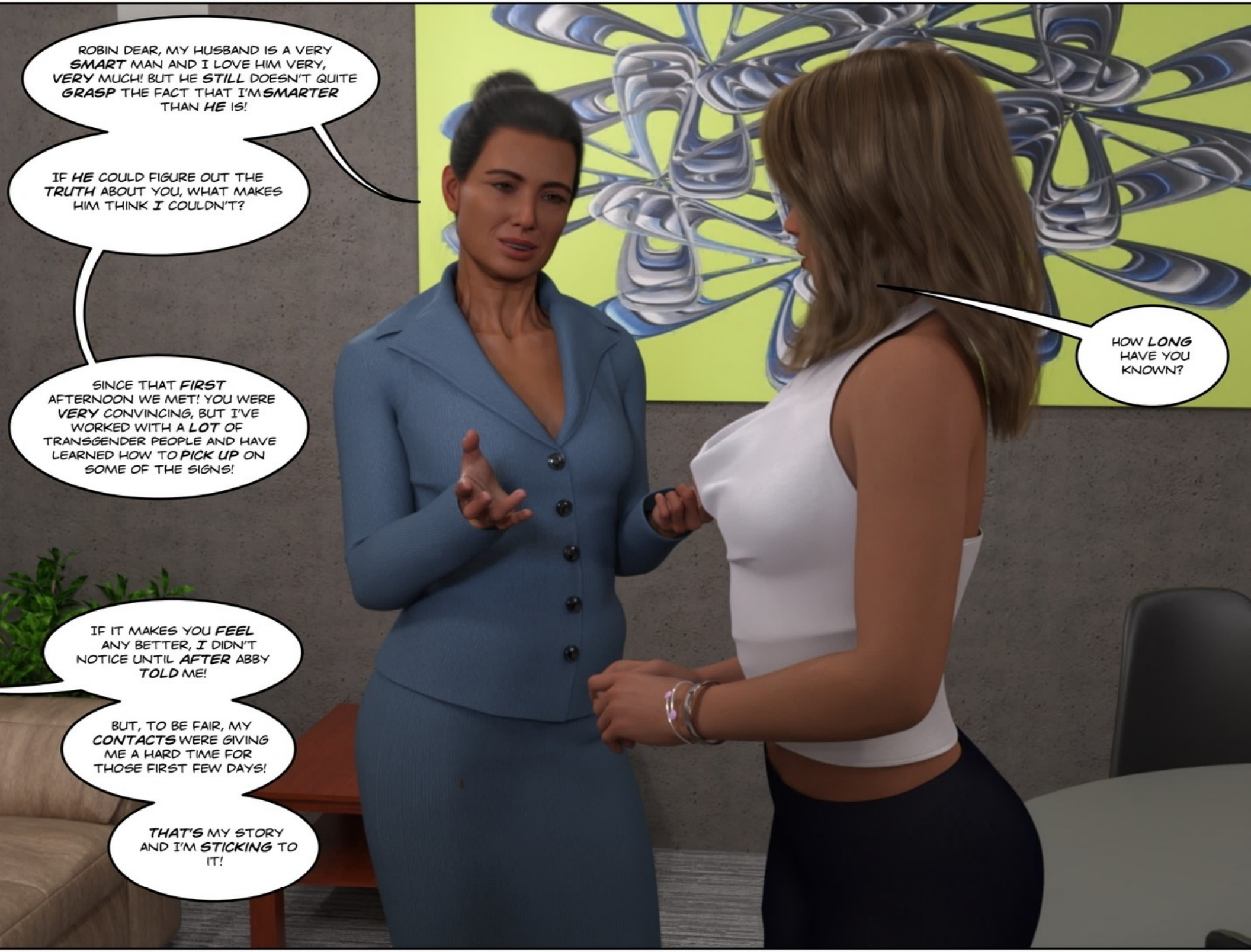

WELL I GUESS THE BEST WAY TO DO THIS IS TO JUST COME RIGHT OUT AND SAY IT!
THERE'S SOMETHING ABOUT ME I'VE BEEN KEEPING FROM YOU! SOMETHING I SHOULD HAVE TOLD YOU ON DAY ONE!
YOU'RE NOT IN TROUBLE, ARE YOU, DEAR? WE ARE A LAW FIRM AFTER ALL! WE CAN HELP!
NO, IT... IT'S NOTHING LIKE THAT!
YOU SEE I... I WASN'T BORN A WOMAN! I'M... I'M A TRANSWOMAN!




SO, WHAT DO WE DO? BUY EACH OTHER DINNER?
THAT KIND OF DEFEATS THE PURPOSE OF THE BET, DOESN'T IT?
WH... WHAT'S GOING ON? WHAT BET?


WE HAD A BET OVER WHO YOU'D TELL FIRST! THE LOSER HAD TO BUY THE WINNER DINNER AT A RESTAURANT OF HER CHOICE!
BUT THEN YOU WENT AND SPOILED IT BY TELLING US BOTH AT THE SAME TIME!
YOU... YOU KNEW? HOW?!


LET ME ASK YOU THIS, DEAR! DID MY HUSBAND KNOW?
YES! HE, UMMM... FIGURED IT OUT BEFORE HE HIRED ME!
HE THOUGHT WE SHOULD WAIT TO TELL YOU SINCE YOU HAD SO MUCH GOING ON WITH YOUR TRIAL AND EVERYTHING!
WELL WASN'T THAT THOUGHTFUL OF HIM.


ROBIN DEAR, MY HUSBAND IS A VERY SMART MAN AND I LOVE HIM VERY, VERY MUCH! BUT HE STILL DOESN'T QUITE GRASP THE FACT THAT I'M SMARTER THAN HE IS!
IF HE COULD FIGURE OUT THE TRUTH ABOUT YOU, WHAT MAKES HIM THINK I COULDN'T?
SINCE THAT FIRST AFTERNOON WE MET! YOU WERE VERY CONVINCING, BUT I'VE WORKED WITH A LOT OF TRANSGENDER PEOPLE AND HAVE LEARNED HOW TO PICK UP ON SOME OF THE SIGNS!
HOW LONG HAVE YOU KNOWN?
IF IT MAKES YOU FEEL ANY BETTER, I DIDN'T NOTICE UNTIL AFTER ABBY TOLD ME!
BUT, TO BE FAIR, MY CONTACTS WERE GIVING ME A HARD TIME FOR THOSE FIRST FEW DAYS!
THAT'S MY STORY AND I'M STICKING TO IT!


OH HONEY, OF COURSE NOT! WHO YOU ARE AND WHO YOU WANT TO BE IS YOUR OWN PERSONAL BUSINESS!
BUT THE FACT THAT YOU FELT SAFE ENOUGH TO SHARE THIS WITH US MEANS THE WORLD TO US!
SO... YOU'RE NOT UPSET WITH ME FOR KEEPING THIS FROM YOU?
I'M JUST SORRY I KEPT IT FROM YOU FOR AS LONG AS I DID!


ACTUALLY I'M A LITTLE UPSET WITH THE WAY YOU TOLD US! I WAS REALLY LOOKING FORWARD TO BEING TREATED TO A NIGHT OUT BY MY SENIOR PARTNER!
SIGH! I GUESS I CAN LIVE WITH THAT! *CHUCKLE!*
WELL, HOW ABOUT INSTEAD THE TWO OF US TAKE ROBIN OUT TO DINNER? TO CELEBRATE HER "COMING OUT" TO US!


SNIFF! YOU TWO REALLY ARE THE BEST!
OF COURSE WE ARE, DEAR!
NONE BETTER!


A week later...
YEAH, I'M NOT IMAGINING IT! THE HORMONES ARE DEFINITELY BEGINNING TO HAVE A NOTICEABLE EFFECT!
IT'S EITHER THAT OR THE SALINE INJECTIONS IN MY BOOBS ARE SPONTANEOUSLY EXPANDING ALL ON THEIR OWN!


AND EXERCISES ALONE AREN'T RESPONSIBLE FOR THAT ASS!
I'M NOT SURE, BUT I THINK MY HIPS ARE ALSO A BIT WIDER!
THAT WOULD EXPLAIN THE ACHES AND PAINS I'VE BEEN HAVING DOWN THERE RECENTLY!


WELL, DOCTOR JOHNSON'S BEEN RIGHT ABOUT EVERYTHING SO FAR, SO THAT'S ENCOURAGING... I GUESS!
BUT I'M ONLY A COUPLE OF WEEKS INTO THE SUMMER, WHICH MAKES ME WONDER HOW MUCH I'LL BE CHANGED BY AUGUST AND HOW LONG IT'LL TAKE FOR THE EFFECTS TO WEAR OFF!
AND IT'S NOT LIKE I CAN JUST TELL HER TO TAPER OFF ON THE HORMONES! THAT WOULD IMPLY I DON'T REALLY PLAN ON GOING THROUGH WITH MY "TRANSITION"!
AND NO ONE BESIDES ME, NORA AND HANK CAN KNOW THAT UNTIL THE SUMMER ENDS!


CORRECTION... I FORGOT I'VE GOT NORA THINKING THAT "ROBIN" MIGHT BE HERE TO STAY! SOMETHING I SHOULD PROBABLY CORRECT ONE OF THESE DAYS!
BUT THEN AGAIN, SHE MAY HAVE SEEN THROUGH MY ACT AND IS KEEPING QUIET ABOUT IT SO I'LL KEEP BELIEVING I'M AN AWESOME ACTOR TOO!
SIGH! I GUESS AS FAR AS NORA'S CONCERNED, THE "TRUTH" IS JUST A MATTER OF WHO GIVES IN FIRST!


BUT ABBY AND JILL ARE ANOTHER MATTER COMPLETELY! WHAT THE HELL WILL I TELL THEM WHEN THE TIME COMES?
WHEN I AGREED TO DO THIS, I HAD NO IDEA I'D GET SO EMOTIONALLY ATTACHED TO THE PEOPLE INVOLVED!
THEY'VE TAKEN ME UNDER THEIR WING AND ALL BUT OFFERED ME A FUTURE WITH THEIR FIRM!
HOW WILL THEY REACT WHEN I EVENTUALLY TELL THEM "ROBIN" WAS A MISTAKE.. A FAILED EXPERIMENT...AND SHE WON'T BE COMING BACK?


BUT MAYBE HANK HAS ALREADY FIGURED ALL THAT OUT! CONSIDERING THE DETAILS OF THIS PLAN AND HIS CONNECTIONS, I CAN'T IMAGINE HE WOULDN'T HAVE SOMETHING ALREADY IN PLACE!
SOMETHING THAT WILL EXPLAIN WHY NO ONE WILL EVER SEE "ROBIN" AGAIN WITHOUT CAUSING EVERYONE, ESPECIALLY ABBY, ANY UNDUE EMOTIONAL UPHEAVAL!
AND IF HE DOES HAVE A PLAN, WHICH, GIVEN HIS TRACK RECORD, I'M PRACTICALLY CERTAIN HE DOES, THEN I'M WORRYING ABOUT NOTHING!
I'M SURE IT'S BEST FOR EVERYONE INVOLVED THAT HE KEEPS THAT INFO CLOSE TO THE VEST FOR AS LONG AS POSSIBLE!


WHICH MEANS I CAN SPEND THE REST OF THE SUMMER JUST ENJOYING THIS LIFE THAT'S BEEN HANDED TO ME!
IT'S NOT ONE I EVER EXPECTED OR DESERVED, BUT WHILE IT'S MINE, I WANT TO LIVE IT TO ITS FULLEST!
THAT WAY, WHEN THE SUMMER COMES TO AN END AND I WALK AWAY FROM "ROBIN", I'LL HAVE NO REGRETS!


WELL... EXCEPT FOR WALKING AWAY FROM THE BEST PEOPLE I'VE EVER MET IN MY LIFE!


As the next couple of weeks pass, Robin experiences some significant changes to her life...


in her job, as she's granted more opportunities...


physically, as the hormones continue their work...


and *personally*, as her ties with the people in her life deepen...


WE STILL GOING CLUBBING ON SATURDAY?
WHAT ELSE WOULD WE POSSIBLY BE DOING ON A SATURDAY? *GIGGLE!*
AWESOME! WE'LL SEE YOU TWO THEN!


I DON'T KNOW IF I'VE SAID THIS ENOUGH LATELY, BUT DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEA HOW PROUD I AM OF YOU?
PROUD OF ME? FOR WHAT?
ARE YOU KIDDING? THE WAY YOU TOOK AN UNCOMFORTABLE SITUATION AND IN JUST A COUPLE OF WEEKS COMPLETELY TURNED IT AROUND!
WELL, I DID HAVE JUST A WEE BIT OF HELP! *GIGGLE!*


I'M SERIOUS, ROBIN! IN JUST OVER A MONTH YOU'VE GONE FROM A LANKY, INSECURE PUNCHING BAG FOR A HOUSEFUL OF ALPHA-MALE WANNABES TO A GORGEOUS AND CONFIDENT YOUNG WOMAN WHO'S INDISPENSABLE TO A HIGH-PROFILE LAW FIRM!
THE WAY YOU SO EASILY ADAPTED INTO THIS LIFE AND THIS LIFESTYLE IS, TO ME, ROCK-SOLID EVIDENCE THAT THIS IS WHO YOU WERE ALWAYS MEANT TO BE!
YOU'RE JUST BIASED BECAUSE YOU'RE MY BEST FRIEND!
YES, I AM! THANK GOD! AND BECAUSE I'M YOUR BESTIE, I HAVE ONE VERY IMPORTANT QUESTION FOR YOU!
HIT ME!
WHEN ARE YOU GOING TO TELL DOCTOR JOHNSON THAT YOU'RE DONE WITH THE TEMPORARY BOOBS AND READY FOR THE "REAL THING"?


YOU KNOW, THAT'S NOT A BAD IDEA! IT WOULD PROBABLY SAVE YOUR UNCLE SOME MONEY IN THE LONG RUN!
AND MAYBE I COULD GET SOME THAT'LL FINALLY PUT ME IN THE SAME CATEGORY AS YOU ALL! *GIGGLE!*
AS FAR AS UNCLE HANK'S CONCERNED, MONEY'S NO OBJECT! TRUST ME!
AND AS FOR SIZE, WELL, THAT'S TOTALLY UP TO YOU, GIRL! *GIGGLE!*


OKAY, THIS MAY BE GETTING OUT OF HAND! IT MIGHT BE AS GOOD A TIME AS ANY TO TELL NORA THE TRUTH!
YOU KNOW, THERE'S SOMETHING I SHOULD COME CLEAN ABOUT...
HOLD THAT THOUGHT A SEC...
BUZZ!


WHAT'S GOING ON?
YOU'RE KIDDING? SERIOUSLY?!
YEAH! I CAN BE THERE IN TEN MINUTES!


OH MY GOD! THERE'S A MAJOR FILM DOING SOME NIGHT SHOTS IN THE WAREHOUSE DISTRICT AND THEIR CHIEF MAKEUP ARTIST IS MIA!
AND THEY WANT ME TO FILL IN!
YOU'RE THE BEST!
THEN WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR? GO!
AND DON'T WORRY ABOUT ME! I'LL CALL AN ÖBER OR GRAB A CAB!


WISH ME LUCK!
YOU DON'T NEED IT, BUT "GOOD LUCK" ANYWAY!


OH WELL! I'VE STILL GOT SEVERAL WEEKS TO TELL HER!


SO THERE'S NO HURRY AT ALL!
TAXI!
DISCOVER THE CITY
9R14
AXI


A couple of days later...
HAVE A SEAT, ROBIN, AND WE'LL TALK A BIT BEFORE WE GO IN BACK FOR YOUR MONTHLY SHOT!
ANYTHING YOU SAY, DOCTOR JOHNSON!


FIRST OFF, I'D LIKE TO SAY HOW WONDERFUL YOU LOOK, AND IT'S NOT JUST THE HORMONES TAKING EFFECT!
YOU'RE REALLY BLOSSOMING AS A BEAUTIFUL YOUNG WOMAN! AND I ABSOLUTELY ADORE THE NEW HAIRSTYLE!
THANKS! I HAVE A FRIEND WHO'S A PROFESSIONAL MAKEUP ARTIST, AND SHE LIKES TO PRACTICE ON ME!
WELL, SHE OBVIOUSLY IS VERY GOOD AT HER JOB!
I'LL TELL HER YOU SAID SO!


YOU KNOW, I BARELY RECOGNIZE THE PERSON THAT WALKED INTO THIS OFFICE A LITTLE OVER A MONTH AGO!
NOT ONLY HAS YOUR BODY RAPIDLY ADOPTED TO THE CHANGES BROUGHT ON BY THE HORMONES, BUT YOUR WHOLE ATTITUDE HAS CHANGED AS WELL!
IN JUST A FEW SHORT WEEKS THAT TIMID GIRL HAS GROWN INTO A CONFIDENT AND VIVACIOUS YOUNG WOMAN! AND I COULDN'T BE PROUDER!
THEN AS YOUR DOCTOR, LET ME GIVE YOU A LITTLE ADVICE THAT I THINK MAY HELP EVEN MORE!
WELL, LIKE I TOLD MY FRIEND WHO SAID PRETTY MUCH THE SAME THING TO ME THAT YOU JUST DID, I HAD A LOT OF HELP... ESPECIALLY FROM YOU!


THOSE TEMPORARY BREASTS YOU HAVE ARE DUE FOR A "REFRESH" IN ABOUT A WEEK AND I WANT TO PRESENT YOU WITH THREE OPTIONS!
FIRST, BECAUSE OF YOUR NATURAL DEVELOPMENT DUE TO THE HORMONES, REPLENISHING YOUR BREASTS WITH THE SAME AMOUNT OF SALINE AS BEFORE, OR MORE, WILL RESULT IN A LARGER CUP SIZE!
WHICH I THINK, BOTH PROFESSIONALLY AND PERSONALLY, WOULD LOOK WONDERFUL ON YOU!
OR, IF YOU WANT TO MAINTAIN YOUR CURRENT SIZE, I CAN JUST ADD A SMALLER AMOUNT OF SALINE THAN I DID ORIGINALLY!
WHAT ARE THEY?
YOU SAID THERE WERE THREE OPTIONS! WHAT'S THE THIRD?


IMPLANTS! I DON'T NORMALLY MAKE THAT KIND OF RECOMMENDATION AFTER ONLY ONE MONTH, BUT THE PROGRESS I'VE SEEN FROM YOU DEMONSTRATES THAT YOU'RE ON THE FAST TRACK FOR MORE ADVANCED AND PERMANENT PROCEDURES!
MAYBE EVEN SRS IN A COUPLE OF MONTHS, IF THAT'S WHAT YOU WANT!
SRS? SERIOUSLY?
HOLY SHIT! IT DIDN'T OCCUR TO ME THAT WHILE I WAS CONVINCING NORA THAT I WAS READY TO GO ALL THE WAY THAT MY DOCTOR WOULD PICK UP ON IT AS WELL... AND WANT TO ACT ON IT!
WELL, AT LEAST I KNOW THAT IF I WASH OUT OF LAW SCHOOL I HAVE A FUTURE IN ACTING TO FALL BACK ON! *CHUCKLE!*


AND SINCE A "COUPLE OF MONTHS" PUTS US WELL INTO FALL, I CAN PULL OUT ALL THE STOPS AND GO FOR MY OSCAR!
OH MY GOD, THAT'S AMAZING NEWS, DOCTOR JOHNSON! I THOUGHT I'D HAVE TO WAIT A YEAR OR MORE BEFORE EVEN HOPING THAT SRS WAS A POSSIBILITY!
IN MOST CASES, YES! BUT LIKE I SAID, YOU ARE AN EXTRAORDINARY EXCEPTION!
THEN, YES! OF COURSE I WANT SRS! IT'S ONLY BEEN MY DREAM EVER SINCE I DISCOVERED MY TRUE SELF!
WONDERFUL! IN THAT CASE I'D LIKE TO SUGGEST WE GET STARTED PLANNING IMMEDIATELY!
YOU'D BE SURPRISED HOW COMPLICATED IT CAN BE LINING UP HOSPITAL DATES, SURGEONS, AND, OF COURSE, PAYMENT CONSIDERATIONS!


I'LL HAVE MY SECRETARY DRAW UP SOME PRELIMINARY PAPERS FOR YOU TO SIGN!
BY THE WAY, WHAT DID YOU DECIDE ABOUT YOUR BREASTS?
CAN WE WAIT AND DO THE IMPLANTS WHEN I HAVE THE SRS? THAT WAY, I CAN GET THE FULL EFFECT ALL AT ONCE!
OF COURSE! WE'LL JUST REPLENISH YOUR BREASTS A FEW MORE TIMES UNTIL THEN! WHAT ABOUT THE SIZE?
WELL, YOU'RE THE SECOND PERSON I TRUST WHO THINKS I CAN GO BIGGER, SO WHY NOT WORK MY WAY UP SLOWLY UNTIL THE SURGERY! IS THAT OKAY?
THAT WILL BE JUST FINE! I'LL BE BACK IN A FEW MINUTES AND WE CAN SCHEDULE IT!


WELL, THIS APPOINTMENT TURNED INTO A HELL OF A LOT MORE THAN I WAS EXPECTING!
FORTUNATELY THOUGH, ANYTHING I PLAN TODAY, EXCEPT FOR THE NEXT COUPLE OF BOOB ENHANCEMENTS, WON'T MATTER SINCE IT'LL ALL TAKE PLACE AFTER "ROBIN" IS GONE!
I SHOULD PROBABLY GO AHEAD AND ASK HANK HOW THAT'S GOING TO HAPPEN SINCE THE END OF SUMMER IS STARTING TO COME INTO SIGHT AND I WANT TO BE READY FOR IT!
AT THE SAME TIME I CAN LET HIM KNOW ABOUT EVERYTHING I'VE TOLD THE DOCTOR HERE TODAY! BEST HE KNOWS THAT I'M COMMITTING HIM TO PAY FOR SOME MAJOR SURGERIES!
BUT SURGERIES THAT'LL NEVER HAPPEN!


AND, IF I REMEMBER RIGHT, ABBY HAS PLANS WITH JILL ON SUNDAY! SO THAT'LL BE THE PERFECT TIME FOR ME TO TOUCH BASE WITH HANK AND BRING HIM UP TO DATE WITH... WELL, EVERYTHING!


Saturday night...




HEY, HOW 'BOUT WE...
SORRY, DAVE! I'M ONLY HERE FOR THE DANCING! NOTHING ELSE! LATER!


YOU'RE GETTING PRETTY GOOD AT THAT!
I'VE HAD A VERY GOOD TEACHER! *GIGGLE!*


I'M *EXHAUSTED* AND READY TO CALL IT A NIGHT! WHERE *IS* EVERYONE?
THEN *I'M* GOING TO GO PAY THE TAB! BACK IN A MINUTE!
LEXI ALREADY *TOOK OFF* WITH THAT GUY SHE WAS DANCING WITH AND IT LOOKS LIKE *DESI* HAS PLANS TO *STICK AROUND* FOR A WHILE LONGER!
WE'LL BE HERE!




EXIT




HEY DESI! DID YOU SEE WHERE NORA WENT?
I THINK SHE AND THAT HUNK SNUCK OFF TO SOME SECLUDED CORNER! *GIGGLE!*
OH, I SEE THEM! WELL, WE'RE TAKING OFF SO WE'LL TALK TO YOU LATER!
OKAY! SEE YA!


WHY DO I HAVE THE FEELING THIS DESIGNATED DRIVER IS GOING HOME ALONE TONIGHT?


I'M SO SORRY WE DISAPPEARED ON YOU, ROBIN!
OH, I UNDERSTAND! *GIGGLE!*
SO, I, UHH... HAVE ALTERNATE TRANSPORTATION! DO YOU MIND TAKING THE CAR?
NOT A PROBLEM!

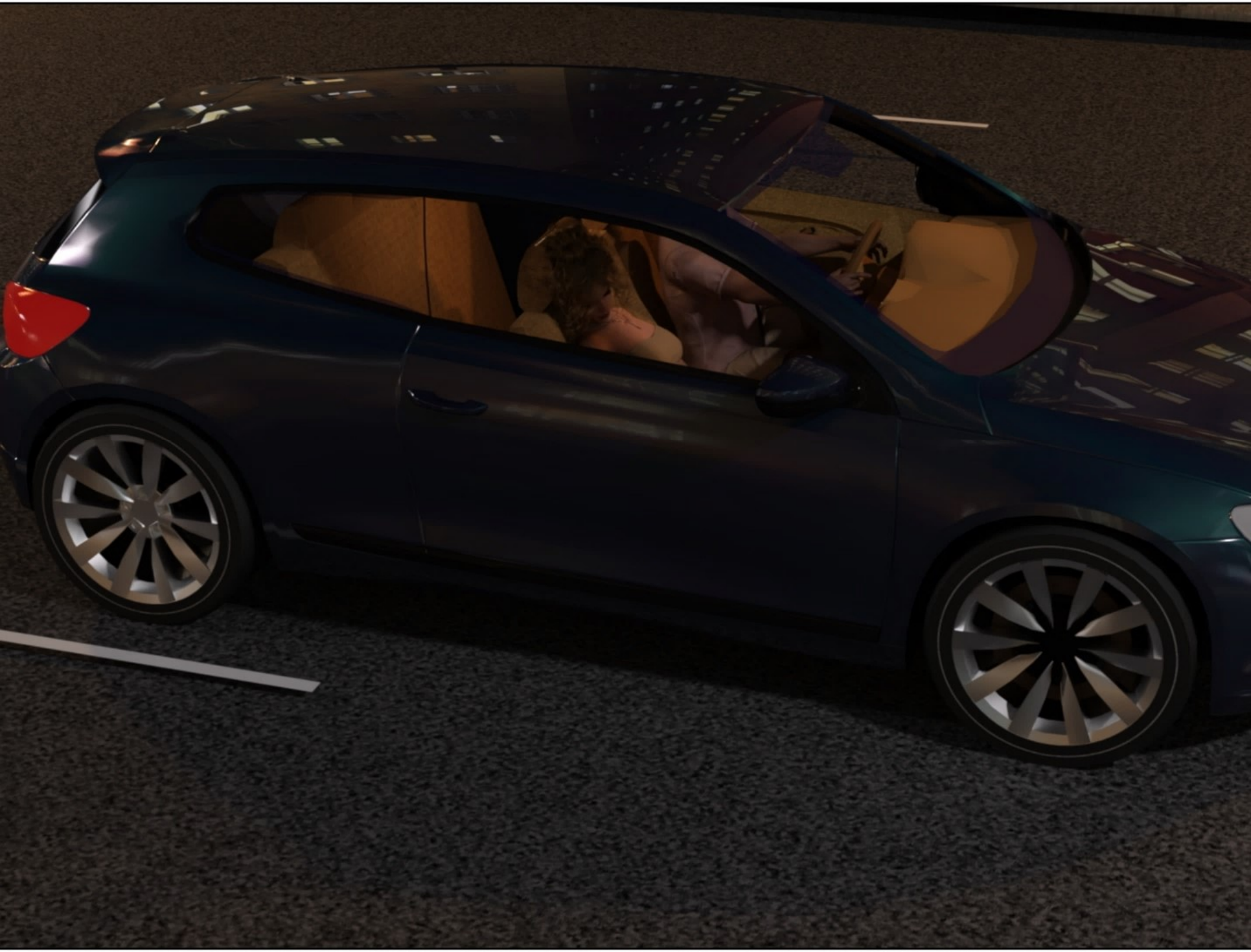

YOU TWO KIDS HAVE FUN! *GIGGLE!*
OH, WE WILL! *GIGGLE!*


JESUS! I DON'T REMEMBER THE CAR BEING THIS FAR AWAY!
I MUST BE MORE EXHAUSTED THAN I THOUGHT!


FUCK EXHAUSTION! I FEEL LIKE I'M ABOUT TO PASS OUT!
BUT I... I ONLY DRANK COKES ALL NIGHT! HOW THE HELL...?


JUST NEED TO... TO GET IN CAR... TURN THE AIR ON! I'LL... I'LL BE JUST... JUST...


Vroom




UGH! WHA... WHAS GOIN' ON? WH... WHERE AM I?
SAFE AND SOUND, DARLIN'! I'M GONNA TAKE REAL GOOD CARE OF YOU!


WHO... WHO'R YOU? DON... DON'T KNOW YOU!
YOU WILL SOON, HOT STUFF! BELIEVE ME! HEH-HEH!


NO! GE... GET OUT MY CAR!
WATCH IT, YOU CRAZY BITCH! WE'RE DOIN' SO! YOU COULD MAKE US...


Crash!!


The next morning...
WHAT THE FUCK?


DUDE! HEY, DUDE! WAKE THE FUCK UP!
WHAT THE HELL YOU DOIN' SLEEPING ON OUR COUCH?
HUH? WAZZAH...


OH, HELL, DUDE! WHO DID THAT TO YOUR FACE?
THEY SURE GOT YOU GOOD! HAW-HAW!
GROAN!


IS THIS THE SAME CHICK THAT DISSED YOU A COUPLE OF WEEKS AGO THAT YOU'VE BEEN GOIN' ON ABOUT?
HAW! THAT MAKES THIS EVEN FUNNIER! SHE'S DEFINITELY GOT YOUR NUMBER, DUDE!
THIS IS PARTIALLY YOUR FAULT, MAN!
THE CHICK I TRIED TO PICK UP LAST NIGHT STILL HAD A LOT OF FIGHT LEFT IN HER EVEN AFTER DOSING HER WITH THOSE MAGIC PILLS OF YOURS!
YEAH...?


UH, NO! SHE WAS JUST TOO MUCH TROUBLE, SO I, UHHH... LEFT HER IN HER CAR TO SLEEP IT OFF!
BUT SHE NEVER GOT A GOOD LOOK AT MY FACE, SO NO WORRIES ABOUT HER RECOGNIZING ME!
SO WHY THE FUCK DID I HAVE SO MUCH TROUBLE THIS TIME? I NEVER HAVE BEFORE!
DID YOU AT LEAST SEAL THE DEAL WITH HER WHEN SHE CALMED DOWN?
SHE PROBABLY WASN'T DRUNK ENOUGH! THESE BABIES ARE DESIGNED TO WORK WITH THE ALCOHOL TO NOT ONLY FURTHER LOWER HER INHIBITIONS, BUT ALSO MAKE HER MORE SUSCEPTIBLE TO SUGGESTION!
THEN IT BREAKS DOWN AND BECOMES UNDETECTABLE IN A BLOOD TEST! THAT'S THEIR MAGIC AND THEY'VE NEVER FAILED US BEFORE! HEH-HEH
BUT I SUGGEST YOU KEEP THAT UGLY MUG OF YOURS OUT OF THE SPOTLIGHT UNTIL IT HEALS UP!
THOSE SCRATCH MARKS OF HERS COULD FORCE A FEW UNWANTED QUESTIONS!


NO WORRIES THERE! I'M HITTIN' THE ROAD FOR A FEW WEEKS UNTIL CLASSES START BACK UP!
THAT'S WHY I STOPPED BY! I WANTED TO GET A FEW MORE OF THOSE PILLS FOR THE ROAD!
SERIOUSLY, DUDE? YOU WANT TO TAKE YOUR EPIC FAILURES ON THE ROAD?


HEY, FUCK YOU! THIS WAS ONLY THE FIRST TIME I WAS DENIED!
WHATEVER! WAIT HERE AND I'LL GET 'EM FOR YOU!


HELL YEAH! I WANNA MAKE SURE I'M PREPARED FOR ANY OPPORTUNITIES THAT MIGHT ARISE DURING MY TRAVELS! HEH-HEH!


Later that morning...
HERE'S TO ANOTHER WELL-FOUGHT CASE AND SATISFIED CLIENT!
AND OUR HEALTHY PERCENTAGE OF THE SETTLEMENT!
Buzz


THIS IS ABBY MONROE!
WHY YES, I DO HAVE AN EMPLOYEE BY THAT NAME! WHAT'S THIS ABOUT?
IF THAT'S A CLIENT CALLING US ON A SUNDAY, TELL HIM TO FUCK OFF!
AS OF FRIDAY, WE CAN AFFORD IT!


HOLY SHIT, ABBY! WHAT'S WRONG?
ROBIN'S BEEN IN A CAR ACCIDENT! SHE'S IN THE ER AT COUNTY GENERAL!
OH MY GOD! IS SHE OKAY?!
WHAT HOSPITAL?!
I'M ON MY WAY!


LET ME DRIVE AND I'LL GET US THERE IN FIVE MINUTES!
YOU CALL HANK AND NORA AND LET THEM KNOW!


A short time later in the County General ER...


I'M ABIGAIL MONROE! WHERE IS ROBIN SULLIVAN?
WHO?
THE CAR CRASH VICTIM!
OH, SHE'S IN THE RECOVERY ROOM! BUT THE DOCTOR'S WITH HER AND WILL BE OUT TO SPEAK WITH YOU AS SOON AS HE'S DONE!


SORRY I LOST YOU THERE FOR A MINUTE! I GOT IN A PISSING MATCH WITH AN EMT WHO DIDN'T LIKE ME PARKING BEHIND HIS PRECIOUS TRUCK!
WHERE IS SHE?
IN THERE! BUT THE DOCTOR HASN'T BEEN OUT HERE YET TO TELL ME ANYTHING!
EXIT


Recovery
WELL, I CAN FIX THAT REAL QUICK!
MISS! YOU CAN'T GO IN THERE!


IS THERE A PROBLEM OUT HERE?
THERE WILL BE IF WE DON'T GET TO SEE ROBIN!
JILL! CALM DOWN!


I'M ABBY MONROE AND THIS IS JILL WEATHERS! ROBIN WORKS FOR US! THE POLICE CALLED AND SAID SHE'D BEEN IN A CAR ACCIDENT!
WE'RE THE CLOSEST THING SHE HAS TO A FAMILY, SO PLEASE TELL US HOW SHE IS!
I'M DOCTOR MACY! I DON'T KNOW THE DETAILS OF THE CRASH, YOU'LL HAVE TO TALK TO THE POLICE ABOUT THAT!
BUT HER CONDITION IS STABLE! SHE GOT PRETTY BANGED UP IN THE WRECK! A FEW CRACKED RIBS AND SOME FACIAL CONTUSIONS!
PROBABLY THE MOST SEVERE WAS A GROIN INJURY WHICH INITIALLY CAUGHT US A LITTLE OFF GUARD!


Recove
YES, SHE'S CURRENTLY TRANSITIONING! WE KNOW ALL ABOUT THAT!
WELL, WHATEVER IMPACTED HER DOWN THERE, IT COULD'VE BEEN THE STICK SHIFT, CAUSED BOTH HER TESTICLES TO RUPTURE! SO WE HAD TO PERFORM AN EMERGENCY ORCHIECTOMY!
IT'S SOMETHING SHE WOULD HAVE HAD TO DO ANYWAY IF SHE IS INDEED TRANSITIONING, BUT THE ACCIDENT FORCED THE ISSUE!
IS SHE AWAKE? WHEN CAN WE SEE HER?
SHE'S STILL UNCONSCIOUS, BUT BEFORE I LET YOU IN, THERE'S SOMETHING ELSE YOU SHOULD KNOW!
WHAT IS IT?


WE'RE REQUIRED BY LAW TO DO A BLOOD TEST FOR DRUGS OR ALCOHOL AFTER ACCIDENTS LIKE THIS!
ROBIN DOESN'T DO DRUGS! SHE RARELY EVEN DRINKS!
WHICH HER TESTS VERIFIED! BUT THERE WERE TRACES OF GHB IN HER BLOODSTREAM!
ARE YOU TELLING ME SOMEONE TRIED TO DATE-RAPE ROBIN?
IT WOULD SEEM THAT WAY!
EXCUSE ME! ARE YOU ABIGAIL MONROE?


I AM! AND WHO ARE YOU?
I'M OFFICER DARBY! I CALLED YOU EARLIER ABOUT THE VICTIM! COULD I ASK YOU A FEW QUESTIONS?
WELL, I'D REALLY LIKE TO SEE ROBIN FIRST!
GO AHEAD AND GET THIS OVER WITH FIRST, ABBY! I'LL GO KEEP ROBIN COMPANY!


DO YOU KNOW WHAT HAPPENED, OFFICER DARBY?
FROM WHAT WE CAN TELL, SHE WAS A PASSENGER IN A CAR THAT STRUCK THE SIDE OF A BUILDING AT HIGH SPEED LATE LAST NIGHT!
LATE LAST NIGHT? THEN WHY ARE WE JUST NOW HEARING ABOUT IT?
BECAUSE WE DIDN'T HAVE ANY ID ON HER UNTIL THIS MORNING! ALL WE FOUND IN A BURNED UP PURSE WAS THE REMAINS OF AN EMPLOYEE ID FOR YOUR FIRM! THAT'S WHEN WE CALLED YOU!
IF SHE WAS THE PASSENGER, THEN WHO WAS THE DRIVER? OH GOD, IT WASN'T NORA, WAS IT?


I DON'T KNOW WHO NORA IS, BUT THE DRIVER WAS A YOUNG MAN SEEN RUNNING FROM THE WRECK!
NO EYE-WITNESSES COULD ID HIM DIRECTLY, BUT WE DID GET A HIT FROM THE CAR'S VIN!
WHO'S CAR WAS IT?
DO YOU KNOW A ROBERT STILLMAN?
I'VE NEVER HEARD OF HIM! WAS HE THE PERSON WHO TRIED TO DRUG AND RAPE ROBIN?
SO THE DOCTOR TOLD YOU ABOUT THE GHB! WELL, YES... THIS DOES MAKE HIM OUR PRIME SUSPECT!
ESPECIALLY SINCE A CREDIT CARD TRACE ON HIM SHOWS ACTIVITY LAST NIGHT AT THE SAME CLUB YOUR EMPLOYEE WAS AT!
HOW DO YOU KNOW WHERE SHE WAS?
THE STAMP ON THE BACK OF HER HAND MATCHES WHAT THE CLUB USES!


WHAT ARE YOU DOING TO *FIND* THIS *CREEP?*
EVERYTHING WE CAN! WE DON'T HAVE A *GOOD* DESCRIPTION YET, BUT AS SOON AS WE FIND OUT *MORE* ABOUT MR. STILLMAN, YOU CAN *REST ASSURED* WE'LL *TRACK HIM DOWN!*
WELL, *WHATEVER* MY FIRM AND I CAN DO TO HELP, *PLEASE* DON'T *HESITATE* TO ASK, OFFICER DARBY!
NOW IF YOU'LL *EXCUSE* ME, I *NEED* TO SEE *ROBIN!*
OF COURSE, AND *THANK YOU,* MA'AM! WE'LL BE IN TOUCH!


PLEASE REST ASSURED, IT LOOKS A LOT WORSE THAN IT IS!
LIKE I SAID EARLIER, EXCEPT FOR THE REMOVED TESTICLES, EVERYTHING WILL HEAL!
IT MAY TAKE A LITTLE TIME, BUT SHE WILL RECOVER!
OH MY GOD! YOU POOR THING!


IN REGARD TO HER RECOVERY AND TREATMENT, DOES SHE HAVE A PERSONAL PHYSICIAN?
I DON'T KNOW ABOUT A GENERAL PHYSICIAN, BUT HER TRANSITION SPECIALIST IS DOCTOR CAROLYN JOHNSON IF THAT'S ANY HELP!
IT IS! THE ORCHIECTOMY WILL OBVIOUSLY HAVE A MAJOR IMPACT ON WHATEVER HER TRANSITION SCHEDULE WAS!
I'LL CONTACT DOCTOR JOHNSON IMMEDIATELY SO YOU TWO CAN HAVE SOME TIME ALONE WITH ROBIN!
THANK YOU, DOCTOR... FOR EVERYTHING YOU'VE DONE!


BY THE WAY, WE DID FIND SOME SKIN UNDER HER FINGERNAILS!
I DON'T KNOW IF IT WILL HELP THE POLICE OR NOT, BUT IT DOES SHOW SHE PUT UP A GOOD FIGHT BEFORE THE CRASH!
THAT'S MY GIRL!


ARE HANK AND NORA ON THE WAY?
I CALLED HANK BUT HE WASN'T ANSWERING SO I LEFT A MESSAGE!
WHAT DO YOU WANT TO DO?
GET HER INTO A PRIVATE ROOM UPSTAIRS AND CALL IN AS MANY SPECIALISTS AS IT TAKES!
AND WHAT ABOUT THE SLIMEMOLD THAT DID THIS TO HER?
OH, HIS LIFE IS OVER! I CAN PROMISE YOU THAT!


A few hours later...
Knock
Knock
I'M COMING! I'M COMING!


THE NAME'S SKIP ANDERSON! I'M AN INVESTIGATOR! I UNDERSTAND ROBERT STILLMAN USED TO LIVE HERE!
THEN LET'S TALK ABOUT THAT!
YEAH?
HE USED TO, BUT NOT ANYMORE!


HEY! I DIDN'T SAY YOU COULD COME IN!
WE ALREADY TOLD THE COPS EVERYTHING WE KNOW ABOUT STILLMAN!
PROBABLY BECAUSE I DIDN'T ASK!
WELL I'M NOT THE COPS, SO THE SOONER YOU TELL ME EVERYTHING YOU TOLD THEM, THE SOONER I'LL BE GONE!


FINE! LIKE I TOLD THE COPS, WE HAVEN'T SEEN OR HEARD FROM STILLMAN SINCE HE UP AND MOVED OUT OVER A MONTH AGO! SO WHY IS EVERYONE LOOKING FOR HIM?
NOT A CLUE! WE ALL WOKE UP ONE MORNING AND HE WAS GONE! JUST LEFT A NOTE SAYING HE WAS MOVING OUT!
GOOD RIDDANCE, IF YOU ASK ME!
I'M NOT AT LIBERTY TO SAY! WHY DID HE MOVE OUT?
WHY DO YOU SAY THAT?
MIAMI BEACH
Florida


HE WAS A CREEPY LITTLE DUDE! KEPT TO HIMSELF, ALWAYS HUDDLED OVER HIS LAPTOP AND HIS PHONE, NEVER LETTING US SEE WHAT HE WAS LOOKING AT!
HE WAS JUST WEIRD!
HE DIDN'T HAVE ANY FRIENDS, PERIOD! WE WERE JUST HOUSE-MATES... NOTHING ELSE!
DOES HE HAVE ANY OTHER FRIENDS YOU KNOW ABOUT?
MIAMI BEACH
Florida


SEE? THAT WASN'T TOO PAINFUL! A FEW EASY QUESTIONS AND NOW I'M OUT OF YOUR HAIR!
BUT I'M SURE YOU'LL CONTACT ME THE SECOND YOU THINK OF SOMETHING NEW!
OH, YEAH! YOU'LL BE THE FIRST ONE WE CALL!


IN YOUR FUCKIN' DREAMS!
Slam!


WHO THE HELL WAS THAT?
WHAT'D YOU TELL HIM?
SOME PI ASKING QUESTIONS ABOUT STILLMAN!
THE EXACT SAME THING I TOLD THE POLICE!
MIAMI BEACH
Florida


WHICH, NOW THAT I THINK ABOUT IT, MAY HAVE GIVEN THEM THE IMPRESSION THAT STILLMAN WAS SOME KIND OF SEX FIEND!
SURE HOPE I DIDN'T INADVERTENTLY CAUSE THEM TO DOUBLE DOWN ON THEIR EFFORTS TO FIND THE UNGRATEFUL LITTLE SHIT! HEH-HEH!
YEAH! THAT'D SURE BE TERRIBLE!
ESPECIALLY AFTER ALL THE GOOD TIMES WE HAD TOGETHER! HEH-HEH!


Back at the hospital...


HELLO! I'M DOCTOR JOHNSON!


OH, YOU'RE ROBIN'S TRANSITION SPECIALIST! I'M ABBY MONROE! ROBIN WORKS FOR ME!
IT'S ABBY, PLEASE! HAVE THE OTHER DOCTORS TALKED TO YOU YET, DOCTOR JOHNSON?
YES, I KNOW! ROBIN SPEAKS VERY HIGHLY OF YOU DURING OUR SESSIONS, MS. MONROE!
DOCTOR MACY FILLED ME IN ON EVERYTHING AND I CHECKED HER CHARTS RIGHT BEFORE COMING IN!
AND PLEASE CALL ME CAROLYN!


I'M CONCERNED THAT SHE HASN'T FULLY WAKEN UP YET! SHE'S STIRRED A FEW TIMES AND MUMBLED, BUT NOTHING ELSE!
ABOUT THAT! DOCTOR MACY SAID IT SHOULDN'T IMPACT HER TRANSITION PLANS, BUT I WANTED TO HEAR IT FROM YOU!
I WOULDN'T BE TOO CONCERNED! THERE WAS NO INDICATION OF HEAD TRAUMA OR CONCUSSION, SO SHE'S MOSTLY JUST SLEEPING OFF THE ANESTHESIA FROM THE ORCHIECTOMY!
SINCE THERE WEREN'T ANY OTHER INJURIES TO HER PELVIC REGION, THE REMOVAL OF HER TESTICLES ACTUALLY PUTS HER WAY AHEAD OF SCHEDULE!
IN FACT, IF WE'D HAD THE FINAL APPROVAL, THEY PROBABLY WOULD'VE ALREADY DONE THE VAGINOPLASTY IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE ORCHIECTOMY!


WELL, I'M SURE SHE'LL BE THRILLED TO HEAR THAT SHE'S THAT CLOSE! ESPECIALLY CONSIDERING EVERYTHING SHE'S BEEN THROUGH!
HOW SOON AFTER SHE WAKES UP WILL IT TAKE TO GET THE BALL ROLLING AGAIN?
WELL, LIKE I SAID, SHE'S ALREADY SIGNED ALL OF THE PRELIMINARY PAPERWORK! ALL WE'D NEED IS A GO-AHEAD FROM HER AS SOON AS SHE WAKES UP, OR FROM YOU AS HER DESIGNATED HEALTH AGENT!


WAIT! I'M HER HEALTH AGENT?
NO, I DIDN'T! I... I HAD NO IDEA SHE TRUSTED ME SO MUCH!
YOU DIDN'T KNOW?
OH, SHE DEFINITELY DID! WHICH MEANS THAT UNTIL SHE REGAINS CONSCIOUSNESS YOU CAN MAKE MEDICAL DECISIONS FOR HER!


IN THAT CASE, WOULD YOU PLEASE SEE HOW SOON YOU CAN GET A SURGICAL TEAM TOGETHER?
AFTER WHAT THIS GIRL HAS BEEN THROUGH, SHE DESERVES TO HAVE THE LIFE SHE'S DREAMED ABOUT!
AND AS SOON AS POSSIBLE!
I'LL GET RIGHT ON IT!


A short time later...
WE'RE HERE! WHAT HAPPENED?!
I LEFT YOU A MESSAGE HOURS AGO! WHERE THE DEVIL HAVE YOU BEEN?!
PLAYING GOLF WITH SID AND MARTY! I DIDN'T KNOW MY PHONE WAS DEAD UNTIL WE FINISHED UP ABOUT A HALF HOUR AGO!
OH MY GOD! HOW IS SHE?


WHAT CAR CRASH? SHE WAS FINE WHEN SHE LEFT THE CLUB LAST NIGHT!
SHE'S FINE! JUST A LITTLE BANGED UP FROM THE CAR CRASH!
SOME GUY DRUGGED HER AND THEN SHOVED HER INTO HIS CAR! WHEN SHE WOKE AND FOUGHT BACK, THEY CRASHED!
WHERE'S THE GUY? DO THE POLICE HAVE HIM, OR IS HE A PATIENT HERE TOO?
WHICHEVER THE CASE, I'LL KILL HIM!
THEY HAVEN'T FOUND HIM YET! HE RAN OFF AND LEFT HER IN THE WRECKED CAR!


GOD! THIS IS ALL MY FAULT! I SHOULD'VE BEEN WATCHING THE DRINKS! INSTEAD, I WAS TOO DAMN BUSY TRYING TO...
IT'S NOT YOUR FAULT, DEAR! ALL THE BLAME LANDS SQUARELY ON THE SHOULDERS OF THE SORRY EXCUSE FOR A MAN THAT DID THIS!
FORTUNATELY, THE POLICE DISCOVERED WHO OWNED THE CAR! AND THAT VERY PERSON USED HIS CREDIT CARD AT THE SAME CLUB YOU ALL WERE AT!
SO THEY HAVE A SUSPECT?
VERY MUCH SO!
WHAT... IS... HIS... NAME?!


ROBERT STILLMAN!
GASP! DID... DID YOU SAY STILLMAN?


YES! WHY? DO YOU KNOW HIM?
GROAN! OOHH! MY HEAD HURTS!


ROBIN! YOU'RE AWAKE!
YOU'RE IN THE HOSPITAL, DEAR! YOU WERE IN A CAR WRECK, BUT YOU'RE OKAY! JUST A LITTLE BANGED UP AND BRUISED!
LAST NIGHT! DO YOU REMEMBER ANYTHING ABOUT IT?
UHHH, YEAH! WH... WHAT'S GOING ON? WHERE AM I?
CAR WRECK? WHEN?
JUST GETTING DIZZY ON THE WAY TO THE CAR! THEN... NOTHING, UNTIL NOW!
WHAT HAPPENED AFTER THAT?


WELL, ALL EVIDENCE POINTS TO SOMEONE SPIKING YOUR DRINK AT THE CLUB AND THEN FORCING YOU INTO THEIR CAR WHEN YOU STARTED PASSING OUT!
I'M AFRAID SO! BUT HE NEVER GOT THE CHANCE TO BECAUSE IT SEEMS YOU WERE ABLE TO FIGHT HIM OFF!
THAT'S WHAT PROBABLY CAUSED THE CRASH!
I'M AFRAID HE GOT AWAY... FOR NOW! BUT THE POLICE HAVE SOME VERY STRONG LEADS!
SOMEONE TRIED TO DATE-RAPE ME? SERIOUSLY?
JESUS! DID THEY CATCH THE GUY?


I WANT TO GO TELL THE DOCTOR SHE'S AWAKE AND THEN CALL JILL!
PLEASE STAY WITH HER!
OH, WE'RE NOT GOING ANYWHERE!


LOOK, ROBIN... BEFORE THE DOCTOR AND ESPECIALLY ABBY COME BACK IN HERE, WE NEED TO FIGURE A FEW THINGS OUT!
FIRST OFF, THE CAR THAT CRASHED LAST NIGHT WAS YOUR CAR!
LIKE WHAT?
AW, SHIT! MY INSURANCE IS GOING TO GO THROUGH THE ROOF, AND...
THE INSURANCE IS THE LEAST OF OUR WORRIES RIGHT NOW!
ALSO, DID YOU USE YOUR OLD CREDIT CARD LAST NIGHT?
IT'S... POSSIBLE! IT WAS DARK, I WAS IN A HURRY AND IT LOOKS JUST LIKE MY NEW CARD!
WHAT'S THIS ALL ABOUT?


SIGH! THE "STRONG LEAD" THAT ABBY REFERRED TO IS YOU!
THE POLICE ARE LOOKING FOR ROBERT STILLMAN AS THE PRIME SUSPECT IN YOUR ATTEMPTED RAPE!
NOT TO MENTION KIDNAPPING, HIT AND RUN, AND A HOST OF OTHER FELONIES!


THEY'RE LOOKING FOR ME? FOR THE ATTEMPTED RAPE OF... ME?
YOU'RE NOT MAKING THIS UP, ARE YOU!
HOW? WH... WHAT DID YOU TELL HIM, NORA?
I WISH I WAS, ROBIN!
BUT FROM WHAT NORA'S TOLD ME, THE SITUATION'S NOT NEARLY AS DIRE AS IT COULDVE BEEN!


I TOLD UNCLE HANK HOW YOU'VE DECIDED TO KEEP BEING ROBIN EVEN AFTER THE SUMMER ENDED!
I DID! I'M SORRY IF I BROKE YOUR CONFIDENCE, ROBIN! I REALLY AM!
YOU DIDN'T!
OH, SHIT! SHIT, SHIT, SHIT, SHIT, SHIT!
BE ANGRY AT HER LATER WHEN WE HAVE THE TIME!


RIGHT NOW, THE FACT THAT YOU WANT TO STAY BEING ROBIN PRESENTS US WITH AN OPPORTUNITY AND A DECISION TO MAKE!
SINCE YOU DON'T PLAN ON BEING ROBERT AGAIN, THE POLICE WILL HAVE A VERY HARD TIME FINDING HIM!
AND I CAN MAKE SURE THAT ANY TRAIL "HE" MIGHT LEAVE NEVER LEADS BACK TO YOU!
WHAT OPPORTUNITY?


IN OTHER WORDS, THANKS TO MY SURPRISINGLY ADEPT ACTING ABILITIES, THE LIFE I WAS PLANNING ON GOING BACK TO IS OVER! GREAT!
SO WHAT'S THE DECISION WE HAVE TO MAKE?


WHAT DO WE TELL ABBY?
I'VE SEEN THAT LOOK ON HER FACE BEFORE! SHE IS ON A MISSION TO BRING YOUR ASSAILANT IN FOR JUSTICE!
SO, DO WE KEEP HER IN THE DARK SO SHE KEEPS THINKING "ROBERT STILLMAN" IS THE CULPRIT?
OR, DO WE TELL HER THE TRUTH?
SINCE THIS IS YOUR LIFE WE'RE TALKING ABOUT HERE, THE DECISION IS YOURS, ROBIN!


WE CAN'T TELL HER THE TRUTH! IF WE DID, ABBY WOULD FEEL COMPELLED TO TELL THE POLICE AND EVENTUALLY IT WOULD GET OUT TO THE PUBLIC!
I DON'T CARE ABOUT HOW THAT WOULD MAKE ME LOOK, BUT IT WOULD MOST CERTAINLY TARNISH ABBY'S REPUTATION!
EVEN THOUGH WE DID NOTHING ILLEGAL, THE PRESS WOULD SENSATIONALIZE THE WHOLE THING, RUINING HER CHANCES IN THE ELECTION!
I CAN'T LET THAT HAPPEN TO HER!


AS MUCH AS I DISLIKE KEEPING THINGS FROM HER, I HAVE TO AGREE!
SO AS SOON AS I LEAVE HERE TODAY I'LL START DROPPING SOME BREADCRUMBS THAT WILL LEAD THE POLICE INTO THINKING "ROBERT" HAS LEFT TOWN... FOR GOOD!
WITH HIM OUT OF THE PICTURE, ABBY JUST MIGHT BE ABLE TO SPEND LESS TIME FIXATING ON HIM AND MORE TIME PLANNING FOR THE ELECTION!
ME TOO!


I UNDERSTAND I HAVE A CONSCIOUS PATIENT IN HERE!
YES, SHE WOKE UP A FEW MINUTES AGO!
I'M HANK MONROE AND THIS IS MY NIECE, NORA! I BELIEVE YOU'VE ALREADY MET MY WIFE, ABBY!
I HAVE! SHE'S OUT IN THE HALL RIGHT NOW ON THE PHONE!


HI, ROBIN! I'M DOCTOR DARBY! HOW DO YOU FEEL?
SORE!
ANY PLACE IN PARTICULAR?
SIGH! IT'D PROBABLY BE EASIER TO SAY WHERE I DON'T HURT!
BUT I MOSTLY FEEL IT IN MY FACE, MY CHEST AND, FOR SOME REASON, MY GROIN!
WELL... THAT'S TO BE EXPECTED!


COULD YOU TWO GIVE ME THE ROOM FOR A FEW MINUTES!
OF COURSE! WE'LL BE RIGHT OUTSIDE, ROBIN!


SO, WHAT ALL DID MS. MONROE TELL YOU ABOUT YOUR INJURIES WHEN YOU WOKE UP?
AND SHE WAS RIGHT! YOU ARE GOING TO BE JUST FINE!
SHE REALLY DIDN'T GO INTO ANY DETAIL! SHE JUST SAID I GOT BANGED UP IN A CAR CRASH AND I'D BE OKAY!


BUT THERE IS ONE INJURY I ASKED HER TO LET ME TELL YOU ABOUT!
AN INJURY THAT, IRONICALLY, YOU MAY BE ULTIMATELY HAPPY ABOUT!


A short time later, after Doctor Macy has left...
WELL... SHIT!


I WAS REALLY HOPING I COULD EASE INTO THE IDEA THAT I WAS GOING TO HAVE TO BE ROBIN FOR THE REST OF MY LIFE, BUT IT LOOKS LIKE THAT OPTION HAS BEEN TAKEN AWAY FROM ME!
ALL BECAUSE SOME SLEAZY PIECE OF SHIT PICKED ME, OF ALL PEOPLE, TO TRY AND DATE-RAPE!
JESUS! I CAN ONLY IMAGINE WHAT HE MIGHT'VE DONE IF HE'D GOTTEN FAR ENOUGH TO REALIZE I WASN'T THE "GIRL" HE THOUGHT I WAS!
THERE'S A STRONG CHANCE I COULD'VE ENDED UP IN A MUCH COLDER ROOM THAN THIS ONE!


BUT I DON'T HAVE TIME TO DWELL ON THAT RIGHT NOW, BECAUSE ABBY IS GOING TO COME THROUGH THOSE DOORS ANY MINUTE GUSHING ABOUT MY IMPENDING SRS!
AND AS FAR AS SHE AND EVERYONE ELSE IS CONCERNED, THIS IS SOMETHING I WANT MORE THAN ANYTHING ELSE!
SO I'VE GOT TO SUCK IT UP AND FIND SOME WAY TO CONVINCE MYSELF THAT THIS IS THE BEST THING FOR ME!


HI, SWEETIE! HOW ARE YOU DOING?
I'M FINE, ABBY! AND LIKE THE DOCTOR SAID, I'M GOING TO GET EVEN BETTER!


DOCTOR MACY SAID HE TOLD YOU ABOUT THE ORCHIECTOMY AND WHAT DOCTOR JOHNSON AND I TALKED ABOUT!
HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT THAT?
HOW DO I FEEL?


OH, ABBY! I COULDN'T BE HAPPIER! I THOUGHT I WAS GOING TO HAVE TO WAIT MONTHS TO BECOME A REAL WOMAN, BUT YOU'RE GOING TO HELP ME MAKE IT HAPPEN IN JUST DAYS!
I... I DON'T KNOW HOW TO THANK YOU!


I AM SO RELIEVED TO HEAR YOU SAY THAT! I WAS AFRAID YOU MIGHT RESENT ME FOR OVERSTEPPING MY BOUNDARIES!
AND THAT'S SOMETHING I JUST COULDN'T HANDLE! YOU JUST MEAN TOO MUCH TO ME!
I... I DO?
OF COURSE! MY GOD, ROBIN, YOU AND NORA ARE ESSENTIALLY THE DAUGHTERS HANK AND I COULD NEVER HAVE!




SNIFF!
WHAT'S WRONG, DEAR?
NOTHING! NOTHING AT ALL!
IT'S JUST THAT ALL OF A SUDDEN EVERYTHING ABOUT MY LIFE FINALLY MAKES SENSE!


I'M SO GLAD TO HEAR THAT, ROBIN DEAR!
NOW... WHEN WOULD YOU LIKE TO SCHEDULE THE SURGERY?


SNIFF! THE SOONER, THE BETTER!


A few days later, after Robin's SRS...
EVEN THOUGH WE'RE STILL A MONTH AWAY FROM THE BEGINNING OF THE SEMESTER, I KNOW HOW CONCERNED YOU ARE ABOUT MISSING THE FIRST FEW WEEKS OF CLASSES! BUT I THINK I HAVE A SOLUTION!
YOU DO? WHAT IS IT?


THERE'S A VERY GOOD CHANCE I CAN TALK THE DEAN INTO LETTING YOU ATTEND YOUR CLASSES REMOTELY, AT LEAST FOR THE FIRST FEW WEEKS!
HE'S A FRIEND OF MINE, AND ALTHOUGH I DON'T LIKE CURRYING FAVORS, FOR YOU I'LL MAKE AN EXCEPTION!
THAT WOULD BE AMAZING, ABBY! DO YOU REALLY THINK HE'LL GO ALONG WITH THAT IDEA?
I'M PRETTY CONFIDENT HE WILL!
AND IF THAT DOESN'T WORK, I HAVE A HISTORY WITH A COUPLE OF THE TRUSTEES AND KNOW WHERE A FEW SKELETONS ARE BURIED!
JUST IN CASE, OF COURSE!


YOU TWO ARE THE BEST, YOU KNOW THAT, DON'T YOU?
WHY, YES... I BELIEVE WE DO!
ESTABLISHED LONG AGO BY UNANIMOUS VOTE!


I'LL LET YOU KNOW WHAT THE DEAN'S DECISION IS AS SOON AS I TALK WITH HIM!
DO YOU NEED ANYTHING BEFORE WE LEAVE? ARE YOU COMFORTABLE?
I'M FINE! I HAD TWO NURSES, THE ATTENDING PHYSICIAN AND MY SURGEON STOP BY RIGHT BEFORE YOU GOT HERE!
AND THEY ALL CONCUR THAT EVERYTHING, INCLUDING MY NEW... PLUMBING, IS HEALING JUST LIKE IT SHOULD!


WE'LL STOP BY AGAIN LATER THIS AFTERNOON!
TRY NOT TO GO TOO CRAZY WITH BOREDOM, DEAR!
I'LL DO MY BEST! BYE!

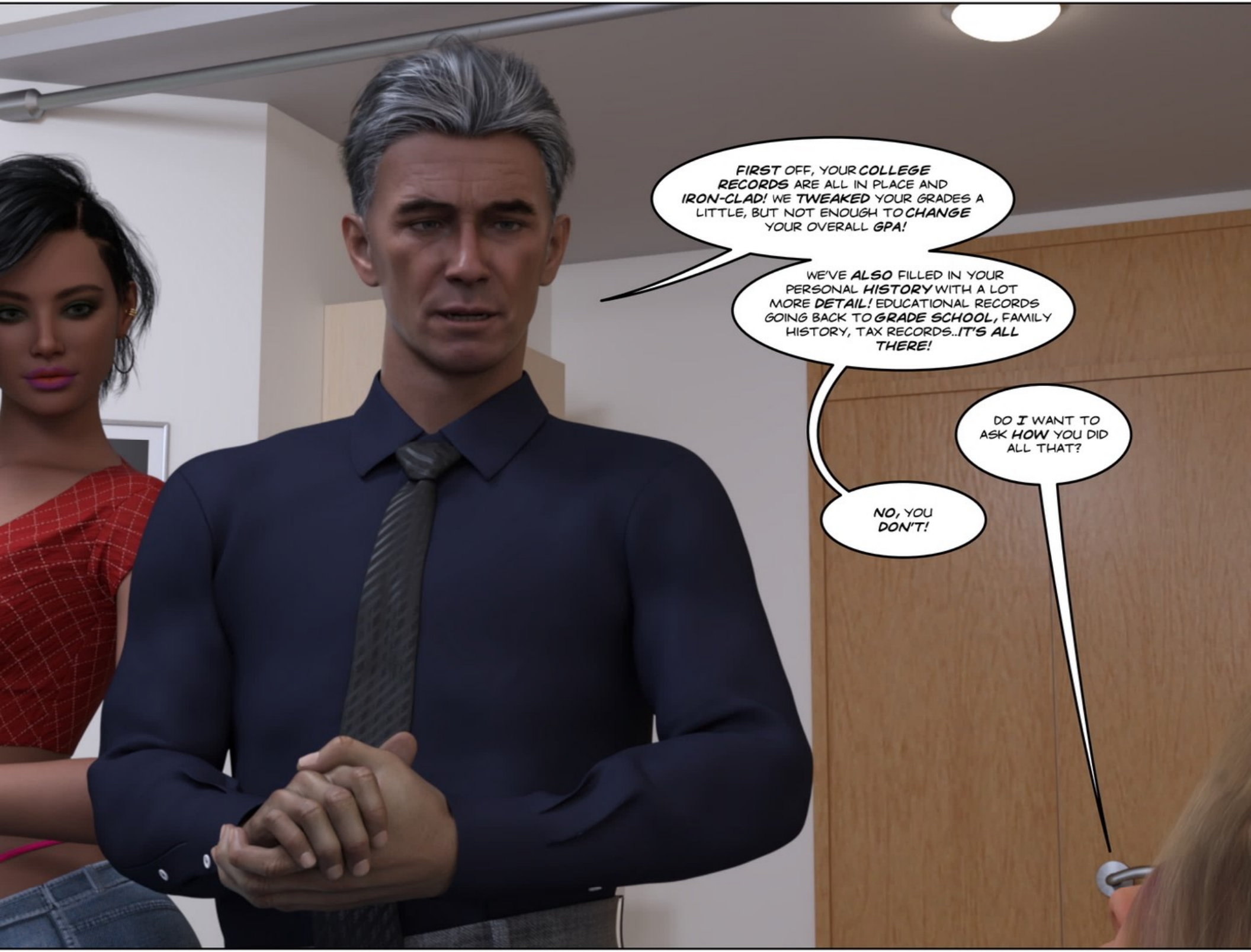

I KNOW I SHOULD BE TOTALLY STOKED ABOUT BEING ABLE TO RESUME MY SECOND YEAR ON TIME, BUT IT ALSO BRINGS UP SOMETHING THAT UNTIL RECENTLY I'D NEVER ANTICIPATED!!
AND THAT'S ATTENDING LAW SCHOOL AS ROBIN SULLIVAN INSTEAD OF AS ROBERT STILLMAN!
ALTHOUGH HANK SAID ALL MY SCHOOL RECORDS AND TRANSCRIPTS SHOULD BE IN PLACE, THERE'S STILL THE RISK THAT SOMEONE MIGHT NOTICE NEVER SEEING ME ON CAMPUS OR IN CLASS BEFORE!
I CAN ONLY HOPE THAT THE OVERWHELMING SIZE OF ALL MY FIRST YEAR CLASSES WILL KEEP THAT FROM HAPPENING!


THERE IS, HOWEVER, ONE PERSON WHO JUST MIGHT RECOGNIZE ME! AND THAT'S THE PSYCHO WHO PUT ME IN HERE!
I MAY NOT REMEMBER WHAT HE LOOKS LIKE, BUT HE DOESN'T KNOW THAT! AND HE SURE AS HELL GOT A GOOD LOOK AT ME!
EVEN THOUGH THE POLICE RELEASED A STATEMENT THAT ROBERT STILLMAN WAS WANTED IN CONNECTION WITH MY ASSAULT, IF THIS GUY IS STILL AROUND HERE AND THINKS I MAY BE ABLE TO ID HIM, I COULD BE IN TROUBLE IF HE SPOTS ME!
I THINK I KNOW OF A WAY TO KEEP THAT FROM HAPPENING! BUT I'LL HAVE TO RUN IT BY HANK FIRST!


HEY THERE, GIRLFRIEND! HOW YOU DOING?
SPEAK OF THE DEVIL!
ALWAYS BETTER WHEN YOU ALL ARE AROUND!


HMMM! LOOKS LIKE THOSE PESKY DARK ROOTS OF YOURS ARE STARTING TO SHOW AGAIN! NEED ME TO TOUCH 'EM UP?
REALLY? CHANGE TO WHAT?
ACTUALLY, I'M THINKING OF CHANGING THE COLOR, SO LET'S HOLD OFF FOR AWHILE!
NOT SURE RIGHT NOW! BUT WE'LL TALK!


WE PASSED ABBY AND JILL IN THE HALL SO WE WON'T TIRE YOU WITH THE SAME QUESTIONS THEY ASKED!
THANK YOU!
BUT THERE ARE SOME THINGS THAT ONLY THE THREE OF US CAN TALK ABOUT!
SO I WANTED TO GIVE YOU AN UPDATE ON EVERYTHING WE DISCUSSED EARLIER!


FIRST OFF, YOUR COLLEGE RECORDS ARE ALL IN PLACE AND IRON-CLAD! WE TWEAKED YOUR GRADES A LITTLE, BUT NOT ENOUGH TO CHANGE YOUR OVERALL GPA!
WE'VE ALSO FILLED IN YOUR PERSONAL HISTORY WITH A LOT MORE DETAIL! EDUCATIONAL RECORDS GOING BACK TO GRADE SCHOOL, FAMILY HISTORY, TAX RECORDS..IT'S ALL THERE!
DO I WANT TO ASK HOW YOU DID ALL THAT?
NO, YOU DON'T!


AND WHAT ABOUT "ROBERT"? WHERE IS HE?
TURNS OUT "ROBERT" ISN'T A VERY SAVVY FUGITIVE! HE LEFT A CREDIT CARD TRAIL HALFWAY ACROSS THE COUNTRY!
SO "HE'S" SOMEWHERE OUT WEST?
NOT ANYMORE! SOMEONE WHO MATCHES HIS DESCRIPTION VERY, VERY CLOSELY WAS CAPTURED ON SECURITY VIDEO IN TIJUANA!
SO, TO ALL APPEARANCES, "ROBERT STILLMAN" HAS FLED THE COUNTRY!
SIGH! WELL... AT LEAST NO ONE WILL MISS HIM!
I GUESS THAT'S ONE ADVANTAGE OF NOT HAVING ANY FRIENDS OR FAMILY!


THAT MAY HAVE BEEN TRUE OF ROBERT, BUT ROBIN HAS PLENTY OF FRIENDS... AND FAMILY, WHO LOVE HER VERY MUCH!
DON'T YOU EVER FORGET THAT!
THAT'S RIGHT! FAMILY THAT WILL STAND BESIDE HER AND SUPPORT HER IN EVERY WAY AS SHE NAVIGATES HER NEW LIFE!
STOP IT! YOU'LL MAKE ME CRY! AND IF I CRY, I SNIFF! AND SNIFFING HURTS MY BROKEN NOSE! *SNIFF!*
OUCH!


BEFORE THE NURSE MAKES HER ROUNDS, THERE'S SOMETHING I NEED TO TALK TO YOU TWO ABOUT!
IT HAS TO DO WITH THE GUY WHO ACTUALLY PUT ME IN HERE!
I'VE GOT A FEW SOURCES LOOKING INTO THAT, BUT, TO BE TRUTHFUL, THERE'S NOT MUCH TO GO ON SO FINDING HIM IS A STRETCH!
I KNOW! BUT MY MAIN CONCERN IS HIM FINDING ME!
WE MADE SURE YOUR NAME WAS KEPT OUT OF THE PAPERS!
YES, BUT HE KNOWS WHAT I LOOK LIKE! AND I DON'T WANT TO KEEP LOOKING OVER MY SHOULDER IN CASE HE THINKS I CAN ID HIM... WHICH I CAN'T!
WHAT DO YOU WANT TO DO ABOUT THAT?


I... I HAVE AN IDEA...


Later that day...
I'M SORRY I'M LATE FOR OUR APPOINTMENT, ROBIN! I GOT TIED UP WITH A COUPLE OF OTHER PATIENTS!
THAT'S OKAY, DOCTOR JOHNSON! IT JUST GAVE ME MORE TIME TO CONSIDER A FEW THINGS WE TALKED ABOUT THE OTHER DAY!


SO I TAKE IT YOU'VE MADE SOME DECISIONS REGARDING YOUR BREAST AUGMENTATION SURGERY!
YES, I HAVE!


NOT BEING ABLE TO RENEW THEM BEFORE MY ACCIDENT MADE ME REALIZE HOW MUCH I LOVED HAVING THEM!
SO I'M GOING TO TAKE YOUR ADVICE, AS WELL AS THE RECOMMENDATION OF MY CLOSEST FRIEND, AND GO WITH THE FULL "C" CUP!
I THINK THAT'S AN EXCELLENT CHOICE!


I'LL CALL THE PLASTIC SURGEON AND SCHEDULE A MEETING BETWEEN THE THREE OF US LATER TODAY SO WE CAN WORK OUT DETAILS AND SCHEDULE A DATE AND TIME FOR THE PROCEDURE!
GOOD! BECAUSE I'D ALSO LIKE TO DISCUSS HAVING A FEW OTHER PROCEDURES PERFORMED, IF POSSIBLE!
REALLY? LIKE WHAT?


OH, JUST A FEW TWEAKS HERE AND THERE!


Two months later...






THIS IS IT! I'VE BEEN GEARING UP FOR THIS DAY FOR WEEKS!
THANK GOD ABBY PULLED SOME STRINGS SO I COULD KEEP UP WITH THE FIRST MONTH'S COURSEWORK ONLINE WHILE I HEALED FROM MY SURGERIES!
OTHERWISE, THERE'S NO WAY IN HELL I'D BE ABLE TO START THIS LATE AND MY WHOLE THIRD AND LAST YEAR WOULD BE SCREWED!
AND THIS BEING THE FIRST TIME ANYONE ON CAMPUS WILL ACTUALLY MEET "ROBIN SULLIVAN" ADDS A WHOLE NEW LAYER OF IMPORTANCE TO TODAY!
BEFORE I KNEW I WAS GOING TO BE ROBIN FOREVER, MY PLAN WAS FOR "ROBERT" TO BE AS UNOBTRUSIVE AS POSSIBLE THE WHOLE YEAR!
JUST SLINK INTO THE BACKGROUND, QUIETLY ATTEND MY CLASSES, AND BE A HERMIT IN THE APARTMENT HANK WAS GOING TO GET FOR ME!
EXCEPT FOR THE APARTMENT, PRETTY MUCH THE SAME WAY I'D BEEN LIVING MY LIFE EVERY DAY.. AS "ROBERT"!


BUT IT DIDN'T TAKE ME LONG TO REALIZE THAT BECOMING ROBIN IS MY SECOND CHANCE AT LIFE!
NOT JUST TO IMPROVE ON WHAT I'D STARTED, BUT TO BECOME SOMEONE WHO'S ESSENTIALLY THE ANTITHESIS OF WHO I USED TO BE!
SOMEONE WHO ISN'T CONTENT BEING RELEGATED TO THE BACKGROUND BUT INSTEAD CHOOSES TO ENJOY THE ATTENTION SHE DESERVES!


ATTENTION I'M PRACTICALLY GUARANTEED THANKS TO ALL THE SURGERIES I ELECTED TO HAVE!
SINCE THE ACCIDENT DID A NUMBER ON MY NOSE, CHEEKS AND LIPS, IT ONLY MADE SENSE TO ASK THE DOCTORS TO MAKE SURE THEY HEALED IN A MUCH MORE AESTHETIC MANNER!
WHICH GIVES ME THE ADDED BONUS OF MY ATTACKER NEVER RECOGNIZING ME IN CASE WE ACCIDENTALLY CROSS PATHS AGAIN!

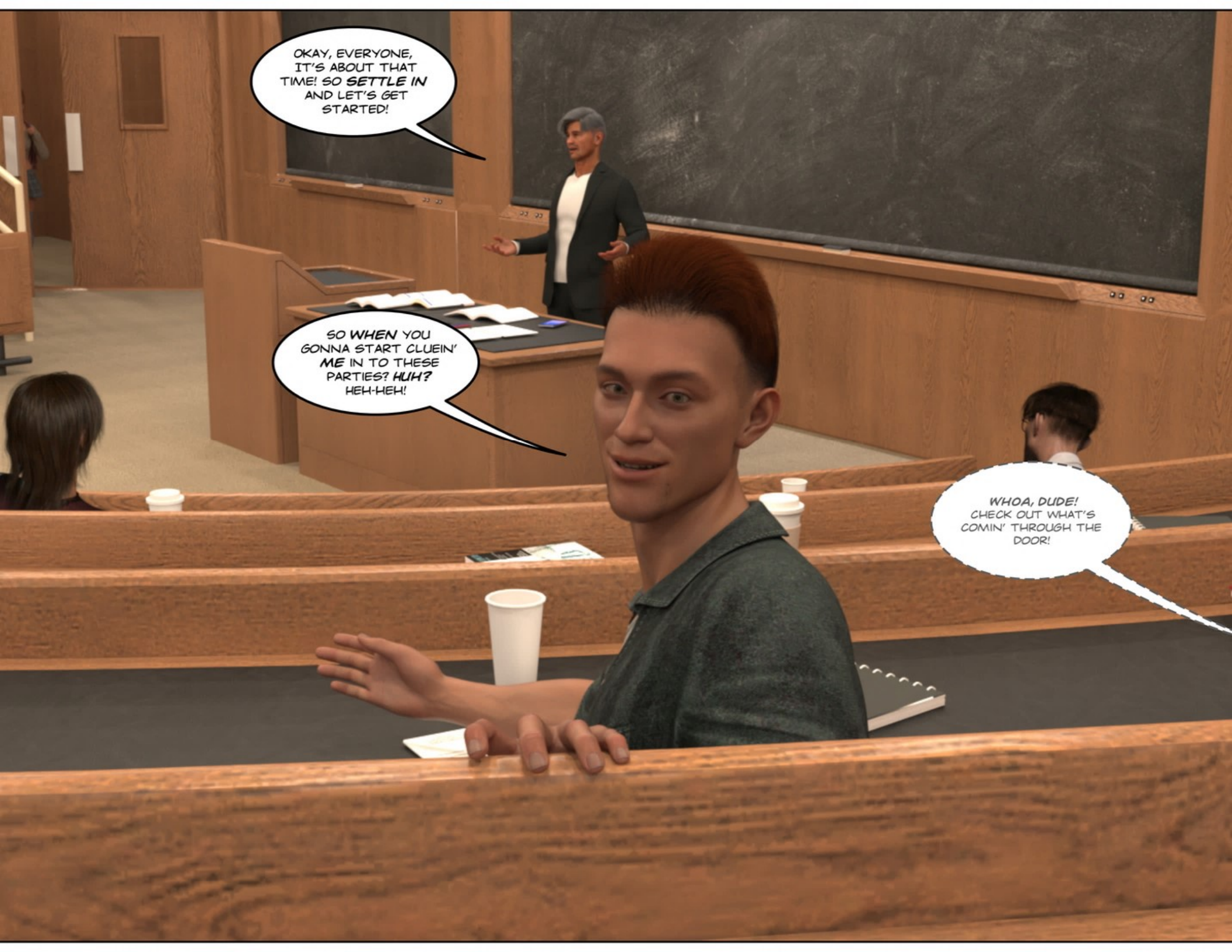

I PUT A LOT OF THOUGHT INTO HOW I WANT TO PRESENT MYSELF ON MY VERY FIRST DAY AND HAVE TRIED DOZENS OF DIFFERENT LOOKS!
AND THANKS TO NORA, I THINK I FINALLY NAILED WHO I THINK ROBIN SULLIVAN SHOULD BE GOING FORWARD!


NOW, IT'S JUST A MATTER OF SEEING IF I CAN PULL IT OFF!


A short time later, as students start to arrive for their ten o'clock class...


A few familiar faces are in attendence...


HOW COME I DIDN'T SEE YOU TWO LOSERS SCORING AT THE CLUBS THIS WEEKEND?
'CAUSE WE DON'T NEED TO HIT THE CLUBS TO SCORE! THAT'S WHAT SORORITIES ARE FOR! DUH!
YEAH! COMPARED TO THE CLUBS, SORORITY PARTIES ARE LIKE SHOOTING FISH IN A BARREL!
AND WE KNOW ALL THE HOTTEST SORORITIES! HEH-HEH!
MARCH MADNESS
COLLEGE FOOTBALL
Integrated Technology For The Business Minded


OKAY, EVERYONE, IT'S ABOUT THAT TIME! SO SETTLE IN AND LET'S GET STARTED!
SO WHEN YOU GONNA START CLUEIN' ME IN TO THESE PARTIES? HUH? HEH-HEH!
WHOA, DUDE! CHECK OUT WHAT'S COMIN' THROUGH THE DOOR!


OKAY! HERE WE GO!
HOLY SHIT!


EXCUSE ME, PROFESSOR ROBINSON! I'M ROBIN SULLIVAN!
LIKEWISE! AND I WANT TO THANK YOU AGAIN FOR ALLOWING ME TO WORK VIRTUALLY THESE LAST 4 WEEKS!
AH, THE ELUSIVE MISS SULLIVAN! NICE TO FINALLY MEET YOU IN PERSON!
WELL, WHEN ABIGAIL MONROE VOUCHES FOR SOMEONE, YOU TAKE IT SERIOUSLY!


OH, I AM, PROFESSOR! I'VE KEPT UP ON ALL THE READINGS AND WATCHED ALL YOUR RECORDED LECTURES... REPEATEDLY!
YES, SIR!
BUT THAT'S WHERE YOUR PRIVILEGE ENDS, MISS SULLIVAN! I EXPECT YOU TO BE AS FLUENT IN THE ASSIGNED CASES AS EVERYONE ELSE IN THIS CLASS!
GOOD! BECAUSE, REST ASSURED, I WILL BE CALLING ON YOU TODAY TO PROVE JUST THAT!
NOW PLEASE HAVE A SEAT SO WE CAN GET STARTED!


OH, ABBY! YOU OWE ME BIG TIME FOR THIS!


YEAH! I THINK I ABSOLUTELY NAILED THE IMPRESSION I WAS GOING FOR!
AFTER SPENDING THE BULK OF MY LIFE BEING ESSENTIALLY NON-EXISTENT TO THE WORLD, I THINK I'M DUE FOR MY TIME IN THE SPOTLIGHT!
AND THIS ENSEMBLE IS DEFINITELY DOING THE TRICK! *GIGGLE!*


About eighty minutes later...
I THINK WE'LL CALL IT A DAY, FOLKS! BUT *PLEASE* REMEMBER TO KEEP UP ON YOUR *READINGS!*
IT'S PAINFULLY *OBVIOUS* THAT *SOME* OF YOU ARE *NEGLECTING* TO DO SO!
DO BETTER NEXT TIME!


WELL, HE SURE WASN'T SHITTING WHEN HE SAID HE'D BE CALLING ON ME TODAY!
THANK GOD I WAS ONE OF THE FEW WHO DID KEEP UP ON THE READINGS!


MISS SULLIVAN, COULD I HAVE A WORD WITH YOU BEFORE YOU LEAVE?
UMM... OF COURSE, PROFESSOR!
UNFORTUNATELY, HIS DEADPAN RESPONSES GAVE ME NO CLUE AS TO WHETHER HE LIKED MY ANSWERS OR NOT!
UH-OH! LOOKS LIKE I'M GOING TO FIND OUT EXACTLY WHAT HE THOUGHT AFTER ALL!


I JUST WANTED TO TELL YOU I WAS VERY IMPRESSED WITH YOUR ANSWERS TODAY! IT'S OBVIOUS YOU DID MAKE A CONCERTED EFFORT TO STAY CURRENT WITH THE READINGS!
IN FACT, I BELIEVE YOU KNEW THE CASES BETTER THAN ANYONE ELSE IN CLASS! SO KEEP UP THE GOOD WORK!
TH... THANK YOU, PROFESSOR ROBINSON! I WILL!


OH MY GOD! I HAVE NEVER, EVER BEEN COMPLEMENTED BY A PROFESSOR BEFORE!
IN FACT, UNTIL A FEW MONTHS AGO, I DON'T REMEMBER RECEIVING ANY KIND OF POSITIVE FEEDBACK FOR ANYTHING!


I DON'T KNOW IF IT'S BECAUSE OF HOW I LOOK NOW OR JUST BECAUSE I'M MAKING BETTER CHOICES WITH MY LIFE OR BOTH!
REGARDLESS, IT'S WORKING! AND I'M NOT ABOUT TO CHANGE A THING!
UMM... HEY THERE!


I'M MAX AND THIS IS IAN! WE WERE BOTH IN PROFESSOR ROBINSON'S CLASS WITH YOU AND WOULD SWEAR WE'D NEVER SEEN YOU IN THERE BEFORE!
YEAH! WE DEFINITELY WOULD'VE NOTICED SOMEONE LIKE YOU BEFORE! DIDN'T KNOW THEY ALLOWED LATE STARTS HERE!
SIGH! YEAH, I SPOTTED YOU TWO ASSHOLES IN THERE ALSO AND KNEW IT WAS JUST A MATTER OF TIME BEFORE YOU'D MAKE A PITIFUL ATTEMPT AT HITTING ON ME!
FORTUNATELY, I CAME PREPARED!


OH, HI! I'M ROBIN! AND I'M NOT REALLY A LATE START, AT LEAST NOT TECHNICALLY!
I'VE BEEN STUDYING ABROAD FOR THE LAST FEW MONTHS AND GOT SPECIAL PERMISSION TO FOLLOW MY CLASSES VIRTUALLY UNTIL I GOT BACK! WHICH I JUST DID THIS LAST WEEKEND!
I SERIOUSLY CONSIDERED SHOOTING YOU DICKWADS DOWN AGAIN LIKE I DID EARLIER THIS SUMMER, BUT THOUGHT BETTER OF IT!
I DIDN'T WANT ANYTHING ABOUT THE NEW ME TO REMIND YOU OF THE GIRL YOU SAW DRIVING "ROBERT'S" CAR THAT NIGHT!
OUT OF THE COUNTRY, HUH? THAT'S PRETTY COOL!
YOU KNOW, WE'RE HAVING A PARTY THIS WEEKEND! COULD BE THE PERFECT SETTING TO GET RE-ACCLIMATED TO THE GOOD OL' U S OF A! HEH-HEH!
YEAH! YOU SHOULD DEFINITELY COME BY!


YOU TWO ARE SWEET TO INVITE ME, BUT I'M REALLY GOING TO HAVE TO TAKE A RAIN CHECK ON THAT!
YOU SEE, I'VE STILL GOT SO MUCH TO CATCH UP ON THAT I'LL BE SPENDING MY NIGHTS AND WEEKENDS STUDYING FULL TIME FOR THE NEXT FEW WEEKS AT LEAST!
BUT MAYBE SOMETIME AFTER THAT!
GETTING YOUR HOPES UP NOW WILL MAKE DASHING THEM LATER SO MUCH MORE SATISFYING! *GIGGLE!*
YEAH! MOST DEFINITELY!


OKAY THEN!
♪BYE, GUYS!♫
OH, MAN!
THAT SHIT IS
WICKED HOT!
FUCK ME!


OH YEAH! THIS IS GOING BETTER THAN I EVER IMAGINED!
NOT ONLY HAVE I GOT THOSE TWO ASSWIPES EATING OUT OF MY HANDS, I'LL BET THEY'D EVEN EAT CAT LITTER IF I ASKED THEM!
IT'S GOOD TO BE QUEEN! *GIGGLE!*


WHOA! CHECK OUT THE ASS ON THAT FINE SPECIMAN!
SHAKE IT, GIRL! SHAKE IT!
FOR THE PERSON WHO TAUGHT ME HOW TO SHAKE IT? ANYTIME! *GIGGLE!*


WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?
I'M SO GLAD YOU DID!
YOU SAID YOU HAD A NINETY MINUTE BREAK FOR LUNCH TODAY, SO I THOUGHT I'D SURPRISE YOU!
I ALSO COULDN'T WAIT TO HEAR HOW YOUR FIRST DAYWAS GOING!


WELL, LET ME GIVE YOU THE RUN DOWN...


Several minutes later...
I KNEW IT WOULDN'T TAKE YOU LONG TO DISCOVER YOUR NEW POWER!
THE WAY YOU HANDLED YOUR EX-ROOMMATES WAS SUBLIME!
OF COURSE, I WOULD'VE GROUND THE LITTLE SHITS UNDER MY HEEL, BUT THAT'S JUST ME!
CAUGHT HIM SNEAKING PEAKS AT YOUR BOOBS, DID YOU?
YOU HAVE A LOT MORE CONFIDENCE IN ME THAN I DID!
I WASN'T SURE OF ANYTHING UNTIL AFTER I FINALLY CAME FACE TO FACE WITH MY PROFESSOR!
AS A MATTER OF FACT, I DID! *GIGGLE!*


AFTER YOU, LADIES!
UH-OH! THIS SOUNDS SERIOUS!
OKAY! WHAT IMPORTANT THING DO YOU WANT TO TALK ABOUT?
YOU KNOW, THERE'S SOMETHING I'VE BEEN PUTTING OFF TALKING TO YOU ABOUT! BUT AFTER HEARING HOW WELL YOUR MORNING WENT, I FIGURE NOW'S A GOOD A TIME AS ANY!
"SERIOUS" HAS SUCH OMINOUS CONNOTATIONS! I THINK "IMPORTANT" WORKS MUCH BETTER HERE!
YOUR SEX LIFE!


WOW! YOU'RE JUST GONNA JUMP RIGHT INTO IT, AREN'T YOU?
WELL, YOU NEVER TOLD ME ANYTHING ABOUT "ROBERT'S" SOCIAL LIFE, OR IF HE EVEN HAD ONE! WAS HE GAY, STRAIGHT, ASEXUAL? NONE OF THE ABOVE?
AND BEFORE YOUR OPERATION, "ROBIN'S" SEX LIFE WAS NON-EXISTENT, FOR THE OBVIOUS REASON!


I DIDN'T WANT TO BRING ANY OF THIS UP BEFORE YOUR TRANSITION BECAUSE YOU HAD MORE THAN ENOUGH ALREADY GOING ON!
BUT NOW THAT YOU'RE ROBIN FOR GOOD AND INTERACTING WITH THE WORLD, IT MIGHT BE A GOOD TIME TO TAKE STOCK OF YOURSELF AND SEE WHAT DIRECTION YOU WANT TO GO!
BECAUSE FACE IT, HONEY, YOU'RE ONE HOT PROPERTY! AS YOU'VE ALREADY SEEN WITH YOUR EX-DOUCHEMATES, YOU'RE GOING TO ATTRACT A SHIT LOAD OF GUYS... AND MORE THAN A FEW GIRLS!
YOU HAVE NOTHING TO HIDE ANYMORE AND ALL THE EQUIPMENT NECESSARY TO RESPOND... IF YOU CHOOSE TO!


DON'T THINK FOR A MINUTE THAT I HAVEN'T BEEN THINKING ABOUT EVERYTHING YOU JUST MENTIONED!
WHEN YOU HELPED ME BECOME ROBIN THIS SUMMER, I DISCOVERED THAT I LIKED THE ATTENTION I WAS STARTING TO GET!
BUT I DIDN'T FULLY APPRECIATE THE FACT THAT I ALWAYS HAD YOU AND THE GIRLS WITH ME WHEN WE WENT OUT TO KEEP ME FROM GETTING IN OVER MY HEAD!
BECAUSE, TO ANSWER ONE OF YOUR QUESTIONS, "ROBERT" NEVER HAD ANY KIND OF SOCIAL LIFE, SO BEING POPULAR IS A COMPLETELY NEW, AND INTOXICATING, EXPERIENCE FOR ME!
NO SOCIAL LIFE WHATSOEVER? REALLY?


THE CLOSEST THING I EVER HAD THAT COULD EVEN REMOTELY BE CALLED A DATE WAS A DISASTROUS "HOOK-UP" ON A MODEL U.N. FIELD TRIP DURING MY SENIOR YEAR IN HIGH SCHOOL!
THIS ONE GIRL, WHO WAS JUST TRYING TO GET BACK AT HER BOYFRIEND, INVITED ME TO HER HOTEL ROOM! EVEN THOUGH I KNEW WHY SHE ASKED ME UP, I WENT! WHY WOULDN'T I?
BUT WHEN MY LACKADAISICAL AND PREMATURE PERFORMANCE FAILED TO PROVIDE HER WITH THE REVENGE SHE WANTED, SHE CHEERFULLY PROVIDED DETAILS TO ANYONE AND EVERYONE WHO WOULD LISTEN!
BITCH!
HENCE MY AVERSION TO DATING... AT LEAST AS ROBERT!


OF COURSE I HAVE! THAT'S ONE OF THE REASONS I HAD THE EXTRA PROCEDURES DONE!
I ESSENTIALLY GOT HOOKED ON THE ATTENTION I GOT THIS SUMMER OF BEING A PRETTY GIRL! SO WHEN I GOT THE CHANCE TO BECOME A BEAUTIFUL GIRL, I JUMPED AT IT!
DOES THAT MAKE ME A SHALLOW PERSON?
SO YOU HAVE BEEN THINKING ABOUT DATING?
HARDLY! IT MAKES YOU HUMAN, BABE! JUST LIKE THE REST OF US!


CONSIDERING MY LACK OF EXPERIENCE, I WOULDN'T SAY I'M "INTO" EITHER... AT LEAST NOT YET!
BUT I AM WILLING TO EXPERIMENT! *GIGGLE!*
SO, THAT BRINGS UP THE MILLION DOLLAR QUESTION... ARE YOU INTO GUYS, GIRLS, OR BOTH?
THAT'S WHAT I LIKE TO HEAR!


JUST TO BE CLEAR, I'M **NOT** LOOKING FOR A SERIES OF **ONE NIGHT STANDS!**
BESIDES THE **HANDFUL** OF PEOPLE WHO HAVE BEEN THE **CENTER** OF MY LIFE THESE LAST FEW MONTHS, **INCLUDING YOU** OF COURSE, I'VE **NEVER** FELT **INTIMATE** OR EVEN **CLOSE** TO ANYONE BEFORE!
I WANT TO GO ON **ACTUAL DATES** AND MAKE **CONNECTIONS** WITH PEOPLE! IF SEX HAPPENS, THEN IT HAPPENS! BUT IT'S **FURTHER DOWN** ON MY LIST! MAYBE **THIRD** OR EVEN **FOURTH!**
OKAY, **SECOND** ON MY LIST! *GIGGLE!*
I **GET** IT, ROBIN! I **REALLY** DO!


BUT TRUST ME, WITH THAT FACE AND THAT BOD, FINDING A DATE WILL BE A PIECE OF CAKE!


A couple of days later...
BUT I WANT TO COME IN AND WORK FOR A FEW HOURS AT LEAST, JILL!
IT'S EARLY AND I'M DONE WITH CLASSES FOR THE DAY!


YES, I'M ALL CAUGHT UP ON MY READINGS! IN FACT, I'M A FEW DAYS AHEAD!
GREAT! I SHOULD BE THERE IN ABOUT AN HOUR AFTER I STOP BY HOME AND CHANGE!
SEE YOU THEN!


THE NEAREST ÖBER IS FIFTEEN MINUTES AWAY? WELL, SHIT! LOOKS LIKE IT'LL TAKE ME MORE THAN AN HOUR TO GET TO WORK!


OH! UMMM... I DON'T KNOW IF THAT'S SUCH A GOOD IDEA! I TRY TO AVOID GETTING INTO CARS WITH STRANGERS!
I'M SURE YOU UNDERSTAND!
EXCUSE ME! I DIDN'T MEAN TO EAVESDROP, BUT IF YOU'RE IN A HURRY TO GET SOMEWHERE, I'D BE MORE THAN HAPPY TO GIVE YOU A LIFT!
I'M PARKED ONLY ABOUT A HALF BLOCK AWAY!


I'M UHH... ROBIN SULLIVAN! THIRD YEAR LAW STUDENT!
I DO COMPLETELY! YOU DON'T KNOW ME FROM ADAM! WHICH, COINCIDENTALLY, IS MY NAME, BY THE WAY...ADAM NIELSON! I'M A GRAD STUDENT HERE!
A COUPLE OF TIMES? REALLY? THAT SOUNDS VERY STALKER-ESQUE!
I THOUGHT I'D SEEN YOU COMING OUT OF THE LAW SCHOOL A COUPLE OF TIMES!
I GUESS THAT MAKES SENSE!
I AGREE IT MIGHT, IF I WEREN'T STUDYING HEALTH AND SPORTS TRAINING WHICH IS IN THE BUILDING RIGHT NEXT TO THE LAW SCHOOL!


LOOK, YOU'RE OBVIOUSLY A VERY CAREFUL WOMAN, AND I RESPECT THAT! BUT I'D ALSO VERY MUCH LIKE TO TAKE YOU OUT SOMETIME!
SO WHAT I'M THINKING IS THAT YOU COULD TAKE A FEW DAYS AND VET ME, AS ANY GOOD LAWYER MIGHT, AND THEN CALL ME IF YOU THINK I'M SAFE ENOUGH!
BUT... I DON'T KNOW YOUR NUMBER!


YOU DO NOW!
Beep


I REALLY HOPE TO HEAR FROM YOU AGAIN, BUT IF I DON'T, IT WAS NICE MEETING YOU, ROBIN SULLIVAN! IF ONLY FOR A SHORT AMOUNT OF TIME!
OH, AND I HOPE YOU GET TO YOUR APPOINTMENT ON TIME!


WHAT THE HELL JUST HAPPENED? I FEEL LIKE A VICTIM OF A HIT-AND-RUN!
BUT I GUESS IT WAS REALLY MORE OF A "HIT ON ME AND WALK AWAY" SCENARIO INSTEAD!
AND I STOOD HERE LIKE A DEER CAUGHT IN HEADLIGHTS!
IF I'M SERIOUS ABOUT JOINING THE DATING WORLD, I'VE GOT TO BE MORE ON THE BALL WHEN THE OPPORTUNITY ARISES!
STANDING AROUND LOOKING GOBSMACKED IS NOT GOING TO CUT IT!




Buzz






Robin Sullivan
12:35 PM
12:34 PM
Santini's on Third
Saturday night at 8.
I'll meet you there.


Later that afternoon...


ROBIN? OH MY GOD, I BARELY RECOGNIZED YOU!
JILL SAID YOU HAD SOME WORK DONE BECAUSE OF THAT HORRIBLE ACCIDENT, BUT I HAD NO CLUE YOU'D COME OUT LOOKING SO AMAZING!
WELL, THE FACT THAT YOU'RE HEALTHY IS THE BEST PART!
WELL, I WAS VERY, VERY LUCKY! AND THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR THE COMPLIMENT!
YES... YES, IT IS!


WELL IT'S GREAT TO HAVE YOU BACK!
THANKS, SHIRLEY! IT'S WONDERFUL TO BE BACK!


I'M SO GLAD ABBY AND JILL JUST TOLD EVERYONE THAT I WAS THE VICTIM OF A HIT-AND-RUN ACCIDENT AND NOT AN ATTEMPTED SEXUAL ASSAULT!
I DON'T THINK I COULD HANDLE ALL THE SYMPATHETIC LOOKS, THE CONDOLENSCES AND THE CONSTANT REMINDERS OF WHAT ALMOST HAPPENED TO ME!
PUTTING THE WHOLE EXPERIENCE BEHIND ME IS THE BEST PATH MOVING FORWARD!


THERE YOU ARE, ROBIN! ABBY WANTS TO SEE THE TWO OF US IN HER OFFICE!
OKAY! CAN I LAVE MY IPAD IN YOUR OFFICE?
BE MY GUEST!


YOU LOOK ADORABLE TODAY, BY THE WAY! I LOVE THE NEW HAIR COLOR ON YOU!
THANKS! I WANTED SOMETHING A LITTLE DIFFERENT AND IT'S A LITTLE CLOSER TO MY NATURAL COLOR!
DID ABBY SAY WHAT THIS WAS ABOUT?
NO! SHE JUST SAID SHE HAD A COUPLE OF THINGS SHE WANTED TOSHARE WITH US!
CRYPTIC AS ALWAYS, THAT PARTNER OF MINE IS!


WE WHO HAVE BEEN SUMMONED, OBEY!
OH, HUSH! I'M ALMOST DONE PUTTING THE FINISHING TOUCHES ON THIS ACCEPTANCE SPEECH!
ACCEPTANCE FOR WHAT?


A VERY POORLY KEPT SECRET AROUND HERE IS THAT THE STATE DEMOCRATIC PARTY HAS BEEN CONSIDERING ME AS THEIR CANDIDATE FOR THE STATE'S ATTORNEY GENERAL POSITION!
WHAT? YOU? WHY, I HAD NO IDEA!
WELL AREN'T YOU FULL OF VINEGAR TODAY!
CAN'T HELP IT! THE DELI WAS OUT OF BLEU CHEESE DRESSING FOR MY SALAD TODAY, SO I HAD TO SETTLE FOR ITALIAN INSTEAD!
SIGH! IN ANY CASE, AFTER GIVING IT SOME THOUGHT, I'VE DECIDED TO ACCEPT THEIR OFFER AND RUN FOR OFFICE!


OH MY GOD! THAT'S WONDERFUL, ABBY! THEY COULDN'T HAVE PICKED A BETTER CANDIDATE!
THANK YOU, DEAR! THE SUPPORT OF YOU, JILL AND THE REST OF MY FAMILY MEANS THE WORLD TO ME!


UNFORTUNATELY, THE COMMITTEE INSISTS ON MAKING A HUGE DEAL OUT OF THE WHOLE THING, SO THEY'RE THROWING A PARTY FOR ME TONIGHT! I PLEADED WITH THEM NOT TO, BUT THEY INSISTED!
THE ONLY WAY I CAN ENDURE IT IS IF I'M SURROUNDED BY THOSE CLOSEST TO ME, WHICH, OF COURSE, INCLUDES YOU TWO!
GETTING ALL DOLLED UP AND LOOKING FANTASTIC FOR THE PRESS? *SIGH!* IF WE MUST!


ARE YOU SURE YOU WANT ME THERE, TOO, ABBY?
OF COURSE, ROBIN! YOU'RE LIKE FAMILY, AND I WANT MY WHOLE FAMILY TO BE THERE BESIDE ME!
AND WHILE YOU'RE HERE, I WANT TO GIVE YOU A LITTLE MORE GOOD NEWS!
REALLY? WHAT IS IT?


MY SOURCES HAVE TRACKED STILLMAN TO A MEXICAN BOARDER CROSSING IN SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA!
OH! HE LEFT THE COUNTRY? WELL... GOOD RIDDANCE!
OH, I'M NOT LETTING HIM OFF THAT EASY! I'VE GOT CONTACTS IN MEXICO THAT CAN TRACK THAT DEGENERATE DOWN AND HAUL HIM BACK UP HERE TO FACE JUSTICE FOR WHAT HE TRIED TO DO TO YOU!
BUT... ARE YOU SURE HE'S WORTH ALL THAT TROUBLE? PERSONALLY, I'M READY TO PUT IT ALL BEHIND ME!
I UNDERSTAND, DEAR! BUT CHANCES ARE, HE'S DONE THIS WITH OTHER GIRLS, AND MAY STILL TRY AGAIN! SO I'M NOT GOING TO STOP UNTIL HE'S BEHIND BARS!


CRAP, CRAP, CRAP! I CAN'T LET HER KEEP WASTING TIME AND MONEY CHASING A GHOST!
I KNOW I SHOULD PROBABLY TALK TO HANK FIRST, BUT...
YOU HAVE TO STOP CHASING HIM, ABBY! PLEASE!
BUT WHY, DEAR?
BECAUSE... ROBERT STILLMAN DOESN'T EXIST! AT LEAST NOT ANYMORE!
WHAT ARE YOU SAYING?


THERE'S SOMETHING I HAVE TO TELL YOU BOTH! SOMETHING I SHOULD'VE TOLD YOU A COUPLE OF MONTHS AGO!


Later, after a long, thorough, and emotionally draining confession...
SO WHAT YOU'RE SAYING IS, IF NOT FOR A CRUEL PRANK PULLED BY YOUR EX-ROOMMATES, ROBIN SULLIVAN WOULDN'T EVEN EXIST! DO I HAVE THAT RIGHT?
ULTIMATELY..YES! BUT I WANT TO STRESS THAT IT WAS MY DECISION NOT TO TELL YOU ALL THIS WHEN YOU STARTED HUNTING FOR ROBERT STILLMAN!
HANK AND NORA WANTED TO TELL YOU, BUT I CONVINCED THEM NOT TO SO AS NOT TO TAINT ABBY'S POSSIBLE NOMINATION!


I'M SURE IT WON'T MAKE ANY DIFFERENCE, BUT LYING TO YOU, BOTH OF YOU, IS THE HARDEST THING I'VE EVER HAD TO DO IN MY ENTIRE LIFE!
AND I WANT YOU TO KNOW THAT I'LL NEVER FORGIVE MYSELF FOR VIOLATING THE TRUST YOU PUT IN ME... AS AN EMPLOYEE, A FRIEND, AND A... A FAMILY MEMBER!


SOB!


YOU'VE BEEN AWFULLY QUIET THROUGH ALL OF THIS! WHAT ARE YOU THINKING?
SIGH! I THINK AN EASIER QUESTION WOULD BE, WHAT AM I NOT THINKING!
BUT, SINCE I'VE JUST TOLD THE DCCC THAT I'M RUNNING FOR OFFICE, I HAVE TO FOCUS ON WHAT THIS REVELATION MEANS IN THAT REGARD!


AS MUCH AS I ABHOR LYING, ROBIN'S FIRST INSTINCT NOT TO TELL US OR ANYONE ELSE THE TRUTH ABOUT "ROBERT" WAS PROBABLY THE RIGHT THING TO DO!
ALTHOUGH TECHNICALLY NO LAWS WERE BROKEN, THE MEDIA WOULD'VE HAD A FIELD DAY WITH THIS! PUTTING A STAIN ON OUR FIRM'S REPUTATION AND POSSIBLY RUINING ROBIN'S LIFE!
BOTH OF WHICH I WOULD ALSO HAVE DONE PRETTY MUCH ANYTHING TO KEEP FROM HAPPENING! SO I CAN SOMEWHAT UNDERSTAND THE MOTIVATION BEHIND EVERYTHING ROBIN HAS JUST TOLD US!
BUT THAT DOESN'T MEAN I'M HAPPY ABOUT IT! ON THE CONTRARY, I'M FURIOUS THAT ALL THIS WAS GOING ON BEHIND MY BACK!


HANK'S INVOLVEMENT DOESN'T SURPRISE ME ALL THAT MUCH! HE HAS, AFTER ALL, BEEN A POLITICAL OPERATIVE MOST OF HIS LIFE, WORKING ON CAMPAIGNS FOR GOVERNORS, SENATORS AND EVEN A PRESIDENT!
YOURS, ON THE OTHER HAND, THROWS ME FOR A COMPLETE LOOP! I'M SADDENED, FRUSTRATED AND DEEPLY DISAPPOINTED IN YOU, ROBIN!
I... I UNDERSTAND, ABBY! *SNIFF!*


TO THE CARRIAGE HOUSE AND PACK MY THINGS! DON'T WORRY, I'LL BE GONE BEFORE YOU GET HOME!
WHERE ARE YOU GOING?
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
YOU WILL, HUH? WELL, THAT'S DAMNED INCONVENIENT!
I... I DON'T GET IT! YOU STILL WANT ME TO GO TO THE PARTY? AFTER EVERYTHING I'VE JUST TOLD YOU?
I'D MUCH RATHER WE ALL WENT TO THE ANNOUNCEMENT PARTY TOGETHER RATHER THAN HAVING TO SEND A CAR TO WHERE EVER IT IS YOU THINK YOU'RE MOVING TO!


ROBIN, DARLING! EVERY FRIENDSHIP... EVERY FAMILY HAS ISSUES AND CONFLICTS THEY HAVE TO DEAL WITH! IT'S WHAT STRENGTHENS RELATIONSHIPS!
NOTHING YOU DID WAS DONE WITH MALICE! IN FACT, EVERYTHING THAT BROUGHT YOU TO THIS POINT... BROUGHT US TO THIS POINT, WAS A RESULT OF YOU DOING WHAT YOU THOUGHT WAS BEST FOR ME!
SO, YES, I STILL WANT YOU TO GO TO THE PARTY WITH US! I STILL WANT YOU TO WORK HERE! I STILL WANT YOU TO LIVE IN THE CARRIAGE HOUSE!


AND, OF COURSE, I STILL WANT YOU TO BE LIKE A SISTER TO NORA... TO BE ONE OF THE DAUGHTERS HANK AND I COULD NEVER HAVE!


SNIFF! I... I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO SAY, ABBY!
GIGGLE! I'LL DO THAT! THANK YOU, ABBY!
YOU DON'T HAVE TO SAY ANYTHING! JUST GO FIND NORA AND GET YOURSELVES SOME OUTFITS FOR TONIGHT!
REMIND HER THAT IT'S SEMI-FORMAL, SO NONE OF THE USUAL GET-UPS SHE LIKES TO WEAR!
DON'T MENTION IT! NOW SCOOT!


I DON'T THINK SHE HEARD YOU!
I'M SURE SHE KNOWS THAT, DEAR!
DITTO WHAT SHE SAID!
WELL THE SENTIMENT WAS STILL THERE!


That evening, at the announcement party...
OPEN


YOUR ACCEPTANCE SPEECH WAS PERFECT, ABBY! I COULDN'T BE PROUDER OF YOU!
YES, I KNOW! YOU'VE TOLD ME THAT SEVERAL TIMES TONIGHT!
AND IF MEMORY SERVES, I'VE TOLD YOU EACH TIME THAT I'D PREFER TO KEEP ANY CONVERSATIONS BETWEEN US TO A MINIMUM UNTIL WE GET HOME!
THEN YOU AND I WILL HAVE A NICE LONG CHAT ABOUT EVERYTHING YOU'VE BEEN KEEPING FROM ME THESE LAST FEW MONTHS!
OPEN


I'M SORRY YOU HAD TO FIND OUT THIS WAY, ABBY! IT'S JUST THAT...
YES, DEAR!
I SAID WHEN WE GET HOME! UNTIL THEN, JUST SMILE AND PRETEND YOU WON'T BE SLEEPING IN THE GUEST ROOM FOR THE NEXT WEEK!
NOW, MAKE YOURSELF USEFUL AND GO GET ME A DRINK!


YOU KNOW, EVERYTHING HE DID WAS IN YOUR BEST INTEREST! SO YOU MIGHT WANT TO CUT HIM A LITTLE SLACK!
ONE WEEK IN THE GUEST ROOM IS CUTTING HIM SOME SLACK! AND I'LL PROBABLY LET HIM OFF AFTER JUST A COUPLE OF DAYS WITH GOOD BEHAVIOR!
BUT I CAN'T JUST LET THIS SLIDE UNTIL I KNOW EVERY DETAIL OF WHAT THIS LATEST CONTRIVANCE OF HIS ENTAILED!
FOR GOD'S SAKE, JILL, HE INVOLVED HIS NIECE THIS TIME... AND A COMPLETE STRANGER!


TRUE! BUT THAT "COMPLETE STRANGER" BECAME A WONDERFUL YOUNG LADY WHOM YOU'VE REFERRED TO AS FAMILY ON MORE THAN ONE OCCASION!
SO REGARDLESS OF WHETHER HANK'S PLAN GOT YOU THE NOMINATION OR NOT, IT DID ADD ROBIN TO OUR MERRY LITTLE GROUP!
I'D CALL THAT A MAJOR WIN!


SIGH! I SWEAR, THAT MAN LEADS A CHARMED LIFE!
I DO TOO! AND IT'S THE MAIN REASON I HAVEN'T GONE BALLISTIC WITH HANK!
WHICH MAY BE CONSIDERABLY SHORTER THAN HE'D LIKE IF HE DOESN'T GET HERE WITH MY DRINK TOUT DE SWEET!


"Speaking of Robin, have you seen the *girls* lately?"
"No! But I told them they didn't *have* to stick around *us* after the speech, so I'm *sure* they're keeping themselves entertained!"


WELL I THINK IT'S AWESOME YOU'RE FINALLY TAKING THE PLUNGE AND GOING ON A DATE... WITH A GUY EVEN!
WHAT MADE YOU SAY "YES" TO THIS PARTICULAR GUY?
HEY, THAT'S ALL IT TAKES IN MY BOOK! *GIGGLE!*
YEAH, I KIND OF SURPRISED MYSELF!
I DON'T KNOW! HE WAS NICE, HE WAS GOOD LOOKING, AND HE ASKED!


OPEN
BUT NOW THAT I'VE HAD SOME TIME TO THINK ABOUT IT, I REALIZE I HAVE NO IDEA HOW TO ACT ON A DATE!
LIKE I TOLD YOU THE OTHER DAY, I'VE NEVER BEEN ON A REAL DATE BEFORE... AND ESPECIALLY NOT AS A GIRL!
THAT WAS DIFFERENT! I HAD NO INTENTION WHATSOEVER OF MAKING A CONNECTION WITH ANY OF THOSE GUYS! I JUST WANTED TO LEARN TO DANCE!
AND BESIDES, I HAD YOU ALL THERE TO BACK ME UP JUST IN CASE!
SO WHAT AM I GOING TO DO?
I DON'T KNOW... YOU ALWAYS HANDLED YOURSELF PRETTY WELL WHENEVER WE HIT THE CLUBS!
WHICH YOU DID VERY HANDILY, I MIGHT ADD!
YEAH, NO BACK-UP THIS TIME!


WHAT YOU LACK, GRASSHOPPER, IS CONFIDENCE! AND THE BEST WAY TO BUILD CONFIDENCE IS THROUGH PRACTICE!
IF YOU THINK ABOUT IT, DATING IS JUST A ONE-ON-ONE SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT WHERE TWO PEOPLE ARE TRYING TO GET TO KNOW EACH OTHER OR TRYING TO GET LAID!
WE'RE IN A PRIME ENVIRONMENT FOR YOU TO PRACTICE FOR THE FORMER SINCE I ASSUME YOU'RE NOT LOOKING TO SCORE THE LATTER YOUR FIRST TIME OUT!
PRACTICE? MY DATE IS SATURDAY! HOW DO I PRACTICE DATING IN JUST THREE DAYS?
AND YOU'D BE SO RIGHT!


SO, YOU ALREADY KNOW HOW TO FLIRT! I'VE SEEN YOU DO IT AND YOU'RE A PRO!
THAT'S WHAT YOU HAVE TO PRACTICE! FLIRTING THAT EVOLVES INTO MORE MEANINGFUL CONVERSATIONS!
GUYS LOVE TO TALK ABOUT THEMSELVES! SO IT USUALLY DOESN'T TAKE LONG BEFORE YOU REALIZE IF YOU REALLY DO WANT TO GET TO KNOW HIM OR JUST PLAY ALONG UNTIL YOUR "HEADACHE" KICKS IN!
WELL, YEAH! BUT IT'S ALWAYS BEEN RELATIVELY BRIEF AND DISINGENUOUS!
THAT MAKES SENSE, BUT AGAIN... HOW AM I GOING TO PRACTICE THAT BEFORE SATURDAY?


IN CASE YOU HADN'T NOTICED, WE'RE AT A SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT LOADED WITH GUYS WHO'VE BEEN EYEING US EVER SINCE WE GOT HERE!
WHICH GIVES YOU AMPLE OPPORTUNITY TO PICK ONE OF THEM, USE YOUR COQUETTISH SKILLS TO STRIKE UP A CONVERSATION, AND ACTUALLY LISTEN TO HIM SO YOU CAN HOPEFULLY STOP FEIGNING INTEREST AND ACTUALLY ENJOY HIS COMPANY!
AND SINCE THE NIGHT IS YOUNG, MAYBE TRY IT WITH A SECOND GUY! HELL, MAYBE EVEN A THIRD! IT'S A SAUSAGE SMORGASBORD HERE TONIGHT! *GIGGLE!*


JUST TO BE CLEAR, I'M NOT ASKING YOU TO HOOK UP WITH ANY OF THESE GUYS TONIGHT! JUST GET COMFORTABLE TALKING TO THEM WITHOUT HAVING TO FAKE ANYTHING!
THINK YOU CAN DO THAT?
WELL, BETTER TO TRY AND FAIL TONIGHT THAN ON SATURDAY! RIGHT?
THAT'S THE CONFIDENCE I WANTED TO HEAR! *GIGGLE!*


SIGH! WISH ME LUCK!
GOOD LUCK, BESTIE! NOT THAT YOU NEED IT!


OPEN


A GLASS OF CHARDONNEY, PLEASE!
COMING RIGHT UP!


EXCUSE ME, BUT DIDN'T I SEE YOU ARRIVE WITH THE MONROES?
OH! UMMM... YES, I DID! ABBY AND HANK HAVE KIND OF TAKEN ME UNDER THEIR WING SINCE I CLERKED FOR HER THIS SUMMER!
THAT DOESN'T SURPRISE ME! THEY'RE BOTH REMARKABLE PEOPLE!
YES... YES THEY ARE! VERY REMARKABLE!


MY NAME'S CALVIN LEEDS! I'M ONE OF THE COMMITTEE MEMBERS FOR THE STATE DEMS!
DOES THAT MAKE YOU ONE OF THE PEOPLE RESPONSIBLE FOR GETTING ABBY NOMINATED?
AS A MATTER OF FACT, IT DOES!
THEN IT'S VERY NICE TO MEET YOU, CALVIN! MY NAME'S ROBIN! ROBIN SULLIVAN!


SO, CALVIN... TELL ME A LITTLE ABOUT YOURSELF!


As the evening progresses and her confidence builds, Robin discovers a new set of social skills she didn't know she had...


Initiating and maintaining conversations with people, especially *men,* is remarkably easy...


So she practices...


A lot...


IT'S GETTING LATE, CHICA! READY TO GO?
I GUESS SO! GOT AN EARLY CLASS TOMORROW!


IT WAS GREAT MEETING YOU, ROBIN! I HOPE TO SEE YOU AGAIN SOMETIME!
MOST DEFINITELY!
WELL THAT'S ENTIRELY UP TO YOU! DO YOU REMEMBER MY NUMBER?
OKAY THEN! ♪'BYE!♪


LOOK AT YOU! GIVING A GUY YOUR PHONE NUMBER!
I'D SAY YOU MADE SOME SERIOUS PROGRESS TONIGHT!
YEAH! TURNS OUT IT REALLY WASN'T AS HARD AS I THOUGHT IT'D BE!


I ADMIT I WAS A LITTLE NERVOUS WITH CALVIN, HE WAS THE FIRST GUY! BUT BY THE TIME I STRUCK UP A CONVERSATION WITH WILL, EVERY RESERVATION I HAD WAS GONE!
I COULD TELL! YOU AND WILL LOOKED PRETTY COZY BACK THERE!
OH, THAT WASN'T WILL! THAT WAS DAVE! WILL WAS THE GUY I CHATTED WITH BEFORE DAVE! OR WAS THAT HOLT?
OKAY, JUST HOW MANY GUYS DID YOU MEET TONIGHT? AND HOW MANY DID YOU GIVE YOUR NUMBER TO?


UM... FOUR, AND... FOUR! *GIGGLE!*


OH I THINK YOU'LL DO JUST FINE SATURDAY NIGHT, AS LONG AS YOU REMEMBER THAT YOU'RE OUT WITH JUST THE ONE GUY!
I'LL DO MY BEST! *GIGGLE!*


Saturday, late morning...
THIS WAS SO MUCH MORE THAN ONE OF YOUR USUAL POLITICAL MANEUVERS, HANK! ETHICS ASIDE, YOU'VE COME DANGEROUSLY CLOSE TO BREAKING THE LAW!
THAT IN ITSELF MIGHT'VE JUST EARNED YOU A STERN SIDEWAYS SCOWL FROM ME, BUT YOU INVOLVED YOUR OWN NIECE... AND SOMEONE YOU'D ONLY KNOWN FOR A FEW DAYS!
IT DOESN'T!
IF IT MAKES ANY DIFFERENCE, I DID HAVE "ROBERT" FULLY VETTED BEFORE I ORIGINALLY CONTACTED HIM!


ABBY, YOU KNOW THAT EVERYTHING I DID, ANYTHING I EVER DO, IS ALWAYS IN YOUR BEST INTEREST!
MY INITIAL PLAN WITH ROBERT WAS SUPPOSED TO BE SHORT TERM AND I WAS GOING TO TELL YOU ALL ABOUT IT AFTER THE FIRST FEW WEEKS!
BUT UNFORESEEN CIRCUMSTANCES POPPED UP, NOT THE LEAST OF WHICH WAS EVERYONE'S ATTACHMENT TO ROBIN AND HER SURPRISING DECISION TO FULLY TRANSITION!
AND WHEN ROBIN'S ACCIDENT HAPPENED AND THE EVIDENCE STARTED POINTING TO ROBERT AS HER ATTACKER, I HAD TO GO INTO FULL-BLOWN RECOVERY MODE TO SALVAGE EVERYTHING!
I JUST DID THE BEST I COULD GIVEN THE CIRCUMSTANCES!


SIGH! I KNOW YOU DID, HANK! BUT THAT STILL LEAVES US WITH SEVERAL SERIOUS MESSES TO CLEAN UP!
UMM... EXCUSE ME?


ROBIN, DEAR! I DIDN'T HEAR YOU COME IN!
YOU'RE RIGHT, OF COURSE! I JUST DIDN'T THINK YOU'D FEEL COMFORTABLE WATCHING ME TEAR HANK A NEW ONE!
WELL, I WAS OUT FRONT WAITING FOR MY ÖBER AND YOUR WINDOW WAS OPEN AND I HEARD MY NAME BEING MENTIONED REPEATEDLY, SO I THOUGHT IT BEST TO BE PRESENT FOR A CONVERSATION THAT WAS OBVIOUSLY ABOUT ME!


I KNOW I'VE SAID THIS BEFORE, BUT I WANT TO REITERATE THAT EVERYTHING THAT I'VE DONE THESE PAST FEW MONTHS WAS MY DECISION AND MY DECISION ALONE! HANK DIDN'T FORCE OR TRY TO COERCE ME IN ANY WAY AT ALL!
I UNDERSTAND THAT, DEAR! BUT BECAUSE OF US, YOUR LIFE HAS UNDERGONE UNIMAGINABLE CHANGES! SO IT'S UP TO US TO PUT EVERYTHING RIGHT!


ABBY, BECAUSE OF YOU, HANK AND NORA MY LIFE HAS BECOME MORE WONDERFUL THAN I EVER COULD'VE IMAGINED!
YOU'VE GIVEN ME A LIFE AND A FAMILY THAT I NEVER COULD'VE HAD! AS FAR AS I'M CONCERNED, NOTHING COULD BE MORE RIGHT!
OH, ROBIN! WE FEEL EXACTLY THE SAME WAY! ALL WE WANT TO DO NOW IS MAKE SURE NOTHING STANDS BETWEEN YOU AND THE LIFE YOU DESERVE!
AND ONE OF THOSE OBSTACLES IS "ROBERT"!


I THOUGHT "ROBERT" WAS HIDING OUT IN MEXICO AND WOULDN'T BE A PROBLEM ANYMORE!
THAT'S WHAT WE HAVE TO FIX! AS LONG AS HE'S ON THE RUN THE POLICE WILL ASSUME HE'S THE ONE WHO TRIED TO ATTACK YOU AND STOP LOOKING FOR THE REAL CULPRIT!
I... I HADN'T THOUGHT OF THAT!
ANOTHER THING TO CONSIDER IS IF YOU EVER DECIDED TO COME OUT ABOUT BEING A TRANSWOMAN! YOU WOULD EITHER NEED TO ADMIT TO BEING "ROBERT" OR WE WOULD HAVE TO ADJUST THE HISTORY HANK HAS ALREADY CREATED FOR YOU!
THE LAST THING I WANT IS TO CAUSE MORE TROUBLE FOR THE TWO OF YOU!


SO I THINK THE EASIEST OPTION IS FOR ME TO COME OUT NOW AND TELL EVERYONE, ESPECIALLY THE POLICE, WHO I USED TO BE!
IT'LL CLEAR "ROBERT" AND HELP YOU GET MORE SUPPORT FROM THE LGBTQ+ COMMUNITY, WHICH WAS THE WHOLE POINT OF THIS IN THE FIRST PLACE!
I WHOLE-HEARTEDLY DISAGREE!


ANY ADDITIONAL VOTES I MIGHT GARNER FROM THE GAY COMMUNITY WOULD MOST LIKELY BE OFFSET BY THE VOTES I'D LOSE FROM THE NARROW-MINDED COMMUNITY!
SO THE WHOLE "DOING IT FOR ABBY'S CAMPAIGN" JUSTIFICATION DOESN'T HOLD WATER!
AND COMING OUT NOW WOULD THROW YOUR LIFE INTO TURMOIL! YOU'RE JUST NOW EMBARKING ON YOUR NEW LIFE!
TAKE THE TIME TO BECOME WHO YOU WANT TO BE FIRST! THEN DECIDE WHAT YOU WANT THE REST OF THE WORLD TO KNOW!


BUT MY BACKGROUND, ROBIN'S BACKGROUND, ISN'T REAL! HANK MADE IT ALL UP! COULDN'T YOU GET IN TROUBLE IF THAT EVER BECOMES KNOWN?
FROM WHAT YOU TOLD ME ABOUT YOUR PREVIOUS LIVING ARRANGEMENT, YOUR RELOCATION AND NEW IDENTITY IS PERFECTLY LEGAL UNDER STATE DOMESTIC ABUSE LAWS!
I'LL JUST HAVE HANK GO BACK THROUGH EVERYTHING, FILL IN ANY MISSING PIECES AND MAKE SURE EVERYTHING IS FLAGGED ACCORDINGLY!


WAIT! IT'S ALL LEGAL? YOU TOLD ME I WAS DANGEROUSLY CLOSE TO BREAKING THE LAW!
AND I'D HAVE LET YOU KEEP THINKING SO AS LONG AS POSSIBLE JUST TO WATCH YOU SQUIRM!
BUT LUCKY FOR YOU, ROBIN FORCED MY HAND!


SO WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO ABOUT "ROBERT"?
"WE'RE" NOT GOING TO DO ANYTHING! HANK AND I WILL FIGURE SOMETHING OUT! AND WHEN I SAY HANK AND I, I REALLY MEAN HANK!
CONSIDERING ALL THE POLITICAL SCHEMES AND GAMES HE'S PLAYED IN HIS CAREER, I'M SURE HE'LL BE ABLE TO FIGURE SOMETHING OUT! RIGHT, DEAR?
YES, DEAR!


NOW, UNLESS I'M MISTAKEN, YOU HAVE A BIG DATE TONIGHT TO GET READY FOR!
SO I SUGGEST YOU CALL BACK YOUR ÖBER, GO FIND YOURSELF A FABULOUS OUTFIT, HIT THE SALON FOR THE PERFECT HAIR-DO, AND LET THAT YOUNG MAN SEE JUST HOW LUCKY HE REALLY IS!
THAT'S ALL YOU NEED TO DEAL WITH TODAY! THE REST IS UP TO US! OKAY?
OKAY!


YOU TWO ARE THE BEST! YOU KNOW THAT, DON'T YOU?
WELL, YOU'RE HALF RIGHT, DEAR! NOW SCOOT! YOU CAN TELL ME ALL ABOUT YOUR DATE TOMORROW!
THANK YOU, ABBY... HANK! I LOVE YOU BOTH!
WE LOVE YOU, TOO, DEAR!


HALF RIGHT? REALLY?
SIGH! YES, DEAR!
OH, YOUR DOGHOUSE DAYS HAVE JUST BEGUN, HANK DEAR! SO GET USED TO IT!


Later that night, at Santini's...


About 30 minutes *after* 8 PM...
OF **COURSE** I'M EXCITED ABOUT IT! AND I'D **LOVE** TO HEAR **ALL** THE DETAILS, BUT I'M KIND OF ON A **DATE** RIGHT NOW!
YES! FIRST THING IN THE MORNING! ***THANK YOU*** FOR UNDERSTANDING!


AT LEAST I HOPE I'M ON A DATE!
EITHER SHE'S JUST FASHIONABLY LATE, OR I'VE BEEN STOOD UP!
THE QUESTION IS, HOW LONG DO I WAIT UNTIL I'M SURE WHICH IT IS?


I'M SORRY I'M SO LATE! MY ÖBER TOOK FOREVER TO PICK ME UP!
I'M SURE IF HE'D KNOWN HOW YOU LOOKED TONIGHT HE'D HAVE DRIVEN THE WRONG WAY DOWN ONE-WAY STREETS TO GET TO YOU ON TIME!


WOW! I WAS HOPING HE'D LIKE THE WAY I LOOKED TONIGHT, BUT I HAD NO IDEA I'D FEEL SO FLUSTERED BY HIS COMMENT!
GOOD THING THE LIGHTS ARE LOW SO HE CAN'T SEE ME BLUSH!
OKAY, IF HE'S GOING TO KEEP DOING THAT, I'M GOING TO BE IN BIG TROUBLE!
IT WAS A GIRL, ACTUALLY! GOD, I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU'RE STILL HERE WAITING!
YOU WOULD NOT HAVE WAITED THAT LONG!
WELL, TO BE HONEST, I WAS ONLY GOING TO GIVE YOU UNTIL THE PLACE CLOSED... WHICH I THINK IS AROUND !!! *CHUCKLE!*
MAYBE NOT! BUT NOW THAT I SEE YOU AGAIN I GUARANTEE THAT IN THE FUTURE I WILL WAIT AS LONG AS IS HUMANLY, OR INHUMANLY, POSSIBLE!


COMPLIMENTS LIKE THAT WILL DEFINITELY PUT YOU ON A GIRL'S GOOD SIDE!
CUTE! *GIGGLE!*
HOW COULD I GO WRONG? FROM MY PERSPECTIVE, YOU HAVE NO BAD SIDE! *CHUCKLE!*


SO, ROBIN SULLIVAN, I KNOW YOU'RE A THIRD YEAR LAW STUDENT! WHAT ELSE SHOULD I KNOW ABOUT YOU?
OH, SO YOU'RE GOING TO MAKE ME GO FIRST, HUH!
THAT'S THE PLAN! CONSIDER IT YOUR PENANCE FOR BEING LATE!
OKAY, FINE, MR. NIELSON! HAVE IT YOUR WAY!


CREATING "MY" HISTORY TO FILL OUT MEDICAL FORMS IS ONE THING, BUT THIS IS THE FIRST TIME I'VE REALLY HAD TO TALK TO ANYONE ABOUT IT! LET'S HOPE I DON'T SCREW IT UP!
WELL, I'M A MIDWEST GIRL FROM THE CHICAGO AREA... ELGIN TO BE MORE PRECISE! IT'S ABOUT AN HOUR NORTHEAST OF THE LOOP!
HAVING ACTUALLY GROWN UP AN HOUR SOUTHWEST OF THE LOOP IN JOLIET, I STILL KNOW MORE THAN ENOUGH ABOUT THE CHICAGO AREA TO AVOID BEING CAUGHT TRYING TO FAKE IT!
AND BEFORE YOU ASK, I'M NOT A BULLS, BEARS OR BLACKHAWKS FAN SINCE I'VE NEVER REALLY BEEN A BIG SPORTS FAN!
OH, YOU MAY DISCOVER MORE THAN ONE BEFORE THE NIGHT'S OVER! *GIGGLE!*
DIAL IT BACK, ROBIN! YOU DON'T WANT TO GIVE HIM TOO MANY IDEAS!
GASP! I SPOKE TOO SOON! MAYBE YOU DO HAVE A BAD SIDE AFTER ALL! *CHUCKLE!*


I'M SO SORRY! THAT MUST HAVE BEEN TOUGH ON YOU AT THE TIME!
AS FOR FAMILY, I'M PRETTY MUCH ON MY OWN! I HAVE NO SIBLINGS AND MY FATHER DIED WHEN I WAS ABOUT TWO!
SO IT WAS JUST ME AND MY MOTHER UNTIL SHE PASSED AWAY A COUPLE OF YEARS AGO WHILE I WAS A SOPHOMORE AT NORTHWESTERN!
IT WAS, INITIALLY! BUT I GOT OVER IT! WE DIDN'T HAVE WHAT YOU'D CALL A TYPICAL MOTHER-DAUGHTER RELATIONSHIP!
TO SAY THE LEAST!


AND AFTER GRADUATING WITH A DEGREE IN POLITICAL SCIENCE, I GOT A SCHOLARSHIP TO COME OUT HERE AND STUDY LAW!
WHICH, BARRING ALL THE BORING DETAILS, BRINGS US UP TO DATE!
I SOMEHOW DOUBT THE DETAILS OF YOUR LIFE HAVE BEEN BORING!
BORING ENOUGH TO LEAVE OUT OF TONIGHT'S CONVERSATION AT LEAST!
ARE YOU IMPLYING THERE COULD BE FUTURE DATES?
THAT ALL DEPENDS ON HOW YOUR STORY GOES! C'MON... IT'S YOUR TURN! GIVE IT UP!
VERY WELL THEN!


WELL, UNLIKE YOU, I'M NOT A TRANSPLANT! I'M A BORN AND BRED NORTHEASTERNER FROM CONNECTICUT, THE YOUNGEST OF FOUR KIDS, TWO BROTHERS AND A SISTER WHO TORMENTED ME MERCILESSLY WHILE GROWING UP!
I DOUBT THEY DO THAT ANYMORE!
NOT SINCE I WAS TWELVE, WHEN I QUICKLY OUTGREW THEM ALL! THERE'S ALWAYS BEEN SOME TONGUE-IN-CHEEK SPECULATION THAT MY MOTHER HAD A FLING WITH A NEW YORK GIANT ABOUT NINE MONTHS BEFORE I WAS BORN!
I CAN SEE WHY SOMEONE WOULD THINK THAT! *GIGGLE!*


IT DIDN'T HELP TO DISSUADE THAT SPECULATION WHEN I ENROLLED AT UCONN TO STUDY PHYSICAL THERAPY AND ENDED UP PLAYING ON THEIR FOOTBALL TEAM!
SINCE PLAYING IN THE NFL WAS NEVER IN THE CARDS FOR ME, I DECIDED TO COME DOWN HERE AND GET MY MASTERS IN SPORTS MEDICINE TO HOPEFULLY BE A TRAINER INSTEAD!
WHICH, BARRING ALL MY BORING DETAILS, ONCE AGAIN BRINGS US UP TO DATE!
ARE YOU ACCUSING ME OF BEING LESS THAN TRUTHFUL?
IT MIGHT...IF YOUR DETAILS WERE ACTUALLY AS BORING AS YOU'D HAVE ME BELIEVE!


LET'S JUST SAY YOU'RE LEAVING OUT SOME RATHER IMPORTANT DETAILS!
LIKE HOW YOU DIDN'T JUST PLAY FOOTBALL AT UCONN, YOU WERE THEIR STAR RUNNING BACK YOUR JUNIOR AND SENIOR YEARS!
AND DESPITE TEARING YOUR ACL DURING A PLAYOFF GAME, THE REASON YOU WEREN'T DRAFTED INTO THE NFL, YOU STILL WERE AWARDED THE MVP YOUR SENIOR YEAR!


YOU HAD ME VETTED!
OF COURSE I DID! LIKE YOU SAID, IT'S WHAT ANY GOOD LAWYER WOULD DO! AND I PLAN ON BEING A VERY GOOD LAWYER!
OF THAT I HAVE NO DOUBT!


WELCOME TO SANTINI'S! CAN I GET YOU TWO SOMETHING FROM THE BAR?
I'LL HAVE WHATEVER HAZY IPA YOU HAVE ON TAP! AND THE LADY WILL HAVE...
A GLASS OF CHARDONNEY!
VERY GOOD! WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE THE MENU?


OH, I THINK WE'RE GOING TO CHAT FOR A WHILE BEFORE WE EVEN THINK ABOUT DINNER, IF THAT'S OKAY WITH YOU!
VERY GOOD, SIR!


UNLESS YOU'RE IN A HURRY TO EAT!
NO... I'M IN NO HURRY!


SIGH! NO HURRY WHATSOEVER!


Later, just after closing time...
I HOPE THE STAFF WASN'T TOO UPSET WITH US FOR STAYING SO LONG!
I COMPLETELY LOST TRACK OF TIME!
NEVER IN A MILLION YEARS DID I THINK I'D ENJOY JUST TALKING WITH SOMEONE FOR SO LONG!
ESPECIALLY SOMEONE WHO LOOKS AT ME THE WAY HE DOES!
SO DID I! THAT'S WHY I HOPE THE TIP WAS ENOUGH TO SHOW OUR APPRECIATION FOR THEIR PATIENCE!


WHERE ARE YOU PARKED?
YOU'RE GOING TO HAVE A HARD TIME GETTING ONE AT THIS TIME OF NIGHT ON A SATURDAY!
THINK YOU TRUST ME ENOUGH TO GIVE YOU A RIDE HOME?
EXCELLENT! I'M PARKED JUST AROUND THE CORNER!
I'M NOT! I TOOK AN ÖBER HERE!
I TRUSTED YOU ENOUGH TO TRY THE CALAMARI FRITTI, SO I GUESS ACCEPTING A RIDE ISN'T OUT OF THE QUESTION!
I WAS HOPING HE'D ASK! I'M JUST NOT READY TO END THIS DATE YET!


I HAD A WONDERFUL TIME TONIGHT! I'M SO GLAD YOU ASKED ME OUT!
JUST ANOTHER ONE OF THOSE SELF-ASSURED MIDWESTERN GIRLS PUSHING US POOR INNOCENT EAST COAST BOYS AROUND!
AND IT WORKED, DIDN'T IT! GUESS WE EAST COAST BOYS AREN'T AS GULLIBLE AS WE APPEAR! *CHUCKLE!*
I GUESS I DID, DIDN'T I!
OH, PLEASE! YOU PRACTICALLY DARED ME TO ASK YOU OUT AFTER I TURNED DOWN YOUR INITIAL ATTEMPT!
I GUESS NOT! *GIGGLE!*


YOU KNOW, NOW THAT OUR DATE IS ALMOST OVER, THERE'S SOMETHING I SHOULD TELL YOU!
YOU'RE NOT GOING TO TRY TO TELL ME YOU'RE MARRIED, ARE YOU? REMEMBER, I HAD YOU VETTED! I KNOW ALL YOUR DIRTY LITTLE SECRETS!
I'M SURE YOU WOULD... IF I HAD ANY! NO, THIS IS SOMETHING THAT CAME UP SUDDENLY THIS EVENING!
REALLY? AND YOU'RE JUST NOW TELLING ME ABOUT IT?
TRUTHFULLY, I WANTED TO SEE HOW THE DATE WENT FIRST!
WELL NOW I'M INTRIGUED!


LITERALLY RIGHT BEFORE YOU ARRIVED I GOT A CALL FROM MY EX-COACH AT UCONN WHO NOW WORKS FOR THE PHOENIX CARDINALS! THEY'RE LOOKING FOR AN ASSISTANT TRAINING COACH AND HAVE ALL BUT OFFERED THE POSITION TO ME!
THAT'S WONDERFUL! IT'S EXACTLY WHAT YOU WERE HOPING FOR!
SO DOES THAT MEAN YOU'D BE MOVING DOWN TO PHOENIX THIS NEXT SUMMER?
THAT'S JUST IT! HE SAID THEY'D WANT ME TO START BEFORE THIS SEASON'S PLAYOFFS... IN JUST A COUPLE OF WEEKS!


I KNOW THIS ALL SOUNDS A LITTLE SKETCHY... LIKE A PLOY TO "ACCELERATE" OUR RELATIONSHIP, BUT I ASSURE YOU, IT ISN'T!
OH IT WOULD DEFINITELY SOUND VERY SKETCHY, IF YOU WERE THAT KIND OF PERSON... BUT WE BOTH KNOW YOU'RE NOT!
OKAY, JUST HOW THOROUGHLY DID YOU VET ME?
ACTUALLY IT WAS MY BOSS WHO HAD YOU VETTED! SHE'S VERY PROTECTIVE OF ME AND SHE HAS A VERY GOOD INVESTIGATOR!
I'LL KEEP THAT IN MIND! *CHUCKLE!*


SO WHY DID YOU *WAIT* TO TELL ME UNTIL *AFTER* YOU SAW HOW OUR DATE WENT?
I THOUGHT WE ESTABLISHED THAT *I* ASKED *YOU* OUT!
TRUTHFULLY, IF IT *HADN'T* GONE WELL, I PROBABLY *WOULDN'T* HAVE TOLD YOU SINCE WE MOST LIKELY *WOULDN'T* GO *OUT* AGAIN!
IN FACT, IF I'D KNOWN *EARLIER* THIS WEEK, I *PROBABLY* WOULDN'T HAVE ASKED YOU OUT IN THE *FIRST PLACE!*
AFTER I *INITIALLY* ASKED *YOU* OUT!


REGARDLESS, I'M NOT THE KIND OF PERSON WHO WOULD ASK A WOMAN OUT KNOWING I'D BE DISAPPEARING FROM HER LIFE IN A FEW WEEKS!
I WOULD NEVER DO THAT! ESPECIALLY TO YOU!
I KNOW!


AND THAT JUST MAKES ME WANT TO SPEND MORE TIME WITH YOU WHILE I CAN!








SO, UMMM... YEAH! I'LL CALL YOU TOMORROW...AFTER I GET MORE DETAILS ABOUT THE JOB!
THEN WE'LL, UMMM... WE'LL...
RIGHT!
WE'LL GO FROM THERE!


NEEDLESS TO SAY, I HAD A REALLY GREAT TIME TONIGHT!
GOOD NIGHT, ROBIN!
I DID TOO!
GOOD NIGHT, ADAM!


Slam!
HOLY SHIT! WHO THE HELL WAS THAT GIRL? 'CAUSE I SURE AS HELL DIDN'T RECOGNIZE HER!
IT'S ALMOST AS IF A TOTALLY DIFFERENT PERSON CAME HOME FROM THAT DATE!


WHEN I FIRST SHOWED UP TONIGHT I FIGURED MAYBE, JUST MAYBE I'D LET HIM KISS ME GOODNIGHT AT THE END OF THE DATE!
NOTHING COMMITTAL, NOTHING STEAMY! JUST A TOKEN, AND POLITE, GOOD NIGHT KISS! JUST TO SEE WHAT IT'S LIKE!
BUT SOMETHING CLICKED INSIDE ME WHILE WE WERE WALKING TO HIS CAR! SOMETHING I DIDN'T SEE COMING!
SOMETHING... UNRESTRAINED, AND MORE THAN A LITTLE EXHILARATING!


GOD! THE CLOSEST THING I'VE EVER FELT TO IT WAS WHEN I USED TO WATCH PORN VIDEOS ON-LINE BACK IN HIGH SCHOOL!
BUT THIS IS ON A WHOLE OTHER LEVEL! AFFECTING PARTS OF MY BODY IN WAYS I NEVER THOUGHT POSSIBLE!
PARTS THAT ARE STILL CRYING OUT FOR ATTENTION!
ACHING TO BE TOUCHED, AND CARESSED, AND...


... AND...


OHH... WHERE THE HELL DID I PUT THAT THING?


PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE TELL ME I DIDN'T THROW IT AWAY!


YES! THANK YOU, NORA!


OH... OH...
OH... GOD!!!


The next morning, bright and early...
OKAY, GIRLFRIEND, I NEED THE DEETS, THE T, EVERYTHING!
UMM... GOOD MORNING TO YOU, TOO, NORA!


YEAH, YEAH, YEAH... G'MORNING AND ALL THAT!
HOW DID THE DATE GO? DID HE KISS YOU? YOU GONNA SEE HIM AGAIN? IS HE STILL HERE?
C'MON! NOSY AND INQUIRING MINDS WANT TO KNOW!
SIGH! NO, HE IS NOT STILL HERE! I MAY SEE HIM AGAIN, AND, YES, THERE WAS KISSING INVOLVED!
SO ALL IN ALL, THE DATE WENT VERY, VERY WELL!


THEN I WANT DETAILS, GIRLFRIEND! AND DON'T YOU DARE SCRIMP!


A little while later...
I AM SO PROUD OF YOU FOR TAKING THE INITIATIVE LIKE THAT!
SNIFF! MY LITTLE GIRL IS GROWING UP! *GIGGLE!*
WELL DON'T GIVE ME TOO MUCH CREDIT! KISSING HIM FIRST WAS MORE LIKE ME LOSING CONTROL THAN ANYTHING ELSE!
I JUST COULDN'T HELP MYSELF!


SO WHEN WILL YOU KNOW IF THIS NEW JOB OF HIS IS A DONE DEAL?
OH, IT IS A DONE DEAL! HE ALREADY CALLED ME THIS MORNING AND SAID THEY'RE FLYING HIM OUT TO PHOENIX LATER THIS WEEK TO MEET THE TEAM, THE COACHES AND THE OWNERS!
YOU GOING TO SEE HIM AGAIN BEFORE THEN?
HE WANTED TO, BUT I TOLD HIM WE SHOULD WAIT UNTIL HE GETS BACK SO WE'LL HAVE MORE TO TALK ABOUT!
"TALK" ABOUT, HUH! REALLY?


HEY, YOU'RE PREACHING TO THE CHOIR HERE, DARLIN'!
BUT IF YOU'RE SO FIRED UP TO GO TO THE NEXT LEVEL, WHY PUT IT OFF?
NEWS ALERT! A LOT OF GUYS LIVE FOR "DEFLOWERING" VIRGINS!
OKAY, FINE! I GOT A LITTLE TASTE OF PHYSICAL INTIMACY THE OTHER NIGHT AND WANT MORE! IS THERE ANYTHING WRONG WITH THAT?
BECAUSE, WELL... BECAUSE I'M A VIRGIN OBVIOUSLY!
UMMM... I DON'T HAVE A "CHERRY" TO POP! BUT THAT'S NOT WHAT I'M TALKING ABOUT!


I REALLY WANT TO GIVE ADAM SOMETHING TO REMEMBER ME BY BEFORE HE MOVES AWAY!
BUT MY ONLY SEXUAL EXPERIENCE SINCE THAT DISASTROUS INCIDENT IN HIGH SCHOOL IS, WELL... WITH THAT TOY YOU GAVE ME A COUPLE OF MONTHS AGO!
UMM, YEAH! LAST NIGHT!
SO YOU FINALLY TOOK IT OUT OF THE BOX?
'BOUT DAMN TIME!


BUT I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU DON'T THINK HE'LL REMEMBER YOU! I MEAN, HAVE YOU LOOKED IN A MIRROR LATELY? YOWZA, GIRLIE!
HE DIDN'T ACTUALLY TELL YOU THAT, DID HE?
IT'S NOT JUST ABOUT LOOKS! HELL, HE'S BEEN A JOCK SINCE HIGH SCHOOL! HE'S DATED AND SCREWED NOTHING BUT CHEERLEADERS HIS WHOLE POST-ADOLESCENT LIFE!
NO! BUT THE BACKGROUND INVESTIGATION ABBY HAD DONE ON HIM WAS VERY THOROUGH!
HE'S BEEN WITH GYMNASTS, NORA! GYMNASTS! HOW THE HELL CAN I COMPETE WITH THAT?


I HAVE TO BE HONEST HERE, HONEY! IF YOU'RE HOPING TO GIVE HIM A RIDE COMPARABLE TO SOME NUBILE CONTORTIONIST WHO'S GOT A GOOD SIX YEARS OF EXPERIENCE UNDER HER PANTIES, THEN YOU'RE BEING UNREALISTIC! ESPECIALLY IN THE TIME FRAME YOU'VE GOT LEFT WITH HIM!
AND YOU THINK PUTTING HIM OFF FOR A FEW DAYS WILL CHANGE THAT?
IT MAY BE SATISFYING, BUT YOU WON'T LEARN MUCH STYLE PRACTICING WITH YOUR NEW TOY!
SIGH! I'M PAINFULLY AWARE OF THAT! I JUST DON'T WANT HIM TO BE DISAPPOINTED BY MY INEXPERIENCE! SOMETHING HE'S BOUND TO NOTICE!
ACTUALLY, THAT'S NOT WHAT I HAD IN MIND!


THEN WHAT DID YOU HAVE IN MIND? 'CAUSE REALLY THE ONLY WAY TO CONVINCE A GUY YOU'VE GOT EXPERIENCE, IS TO GO OUT AND...


OH!

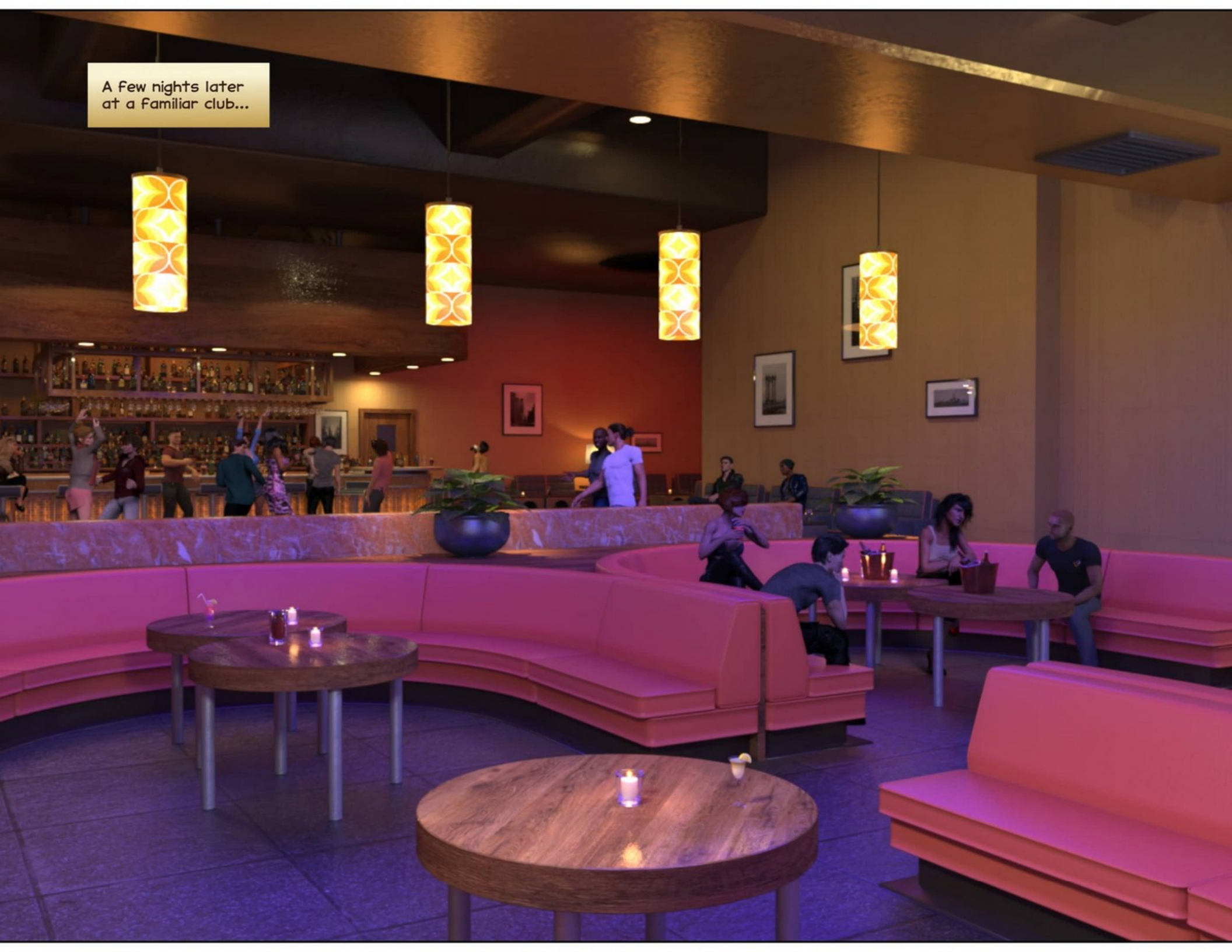

OKAY, LET ME FIRST SAY I HAVE NO QUALMS AT ALL ABOUT MEANINGLESS HOOK-UPS! IN FACT, I'M A HUGE FAN! I LOVE THE FREEDOM, THE VARIETY, AND, WELL, THE SEX!


BUT AT THE SAME TIME I DON'T WANT YOU TO JUMP INTO SOMETHING YOU'RE NOT READY FOR JUST TO MAKE A GOOD IMPRESSION ON A GUY YOU JUST MET AND ONLY GOING TO KNOW FOR A COUPLE OF WEEKS!


THE THING IS, NORA, I AM READY! I'VE BEEN THINKING ABOUT THIS SINCE ABBY'S PARTY THE OTHER NIGHT! I'VE ACTUALLY IMAGINED WHAT IT WOULD BE LIKE TO HAVE SEX WITH EACH OF THE GUYS I FLIRTED WITH THAT NIGHT!
AND IN EACH IMAGINED SCENARIO, I DIDN'T REALLY CARE IF THEY GOT OFF OR NOT! IT WAS ALL ABOUT ME!
REALLY? WHY YOU HORNY LITTLE MINX YOU!
GOOD FOR YOU!


BUT OF COURSE SINCE I'M STILL NEW TO THIS, I'LL NEED THE SUPPORT OF MY BESTIES TO MAKE IT HAPPEN!
SO, YOU THINK YOU AND THE GIRLS CAN BE MY "WINGMEN" A FEW NIGHTS THIS WEEK?
GIRLFRIEND, SAY THE WORD AND WE ARE THERE FOR YOU! ANYTIME, ANYPLACE!


THANK YOU SO MUCH, NORA! ADAM DOESN'T GET BACK UNTIL SATURDAY, SO THAT'LL GIVE ME A FEW DAYS OF "PRACTICE"! *GIGGLE!*


A few nights later
at a familiar club...


LOOKIN' GOOD OUT THERE TONIGHT!
OH YEAH! ALWAYS A GOOD CROWD ON WEDNESDAYS!
THEN WHAT ARE WE WAITING FOR? C'MON, ROBIN! THIS IS YOUR NIGHT!


I'M COMING! I'M COMING!
DON'T WORRY! THEY SMELLED FRESH MEAT AND TOOK OFF ALREADY!


DO YOU THINK I'M CRAZY FOR DOING THIS?
CRAZY? NEVER! UNORTHODOX? A LITTLE!
BUT THAT'S BEEN THE STORY OF YOUR LIFE THESE LAST FEW MONTHS, SO I SAY GO WITH WHAT WORKS FOR YOU!
AND FOR WHAT YOU WANT TO ACCOMPLISH, I CAN'T THINK OF A BETTER WAY TO GET IT DONE!


AND, AS LUCK WOULD HAVE IT, I SEE A PERFECT CANDIDATE FOR YOU!
SEE THE HUNKY GUY AT THE BAR? RED SHIRT, NURSING A BEER?
BECAUSE HE'S A REGULAR! HIS NAME'S ZACH! HE'S NOT ONLY A NICE GUY, BUT HE'S ALSO GREAT IN THE SACK!
YOU DO? WHERE?
UMMM... YEAH! WHY DOES HE LOOK SO FAMILIAR?


WAIT A MINUTE! YOU'VE HAD SEX WITH HIM?
WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?
SURE! I THINK ALL THREE OF US HAVE! LIKE I SAID, HE'S A REGULAR... JUST LIKE WE ARE!
IT MEANS THAT ALTHOUGH THE HUNT FOR NEW BLOOD IS ALWAYS EXCITING, IT CAN ALSO BE A LITTLE SKETCHY!
SO HAVING A GROUP OF "REGULARS" TO FALL BACK ON IS A WAY TO PLAY IT SAFE!


SO ZACH IS "SAFE", HUH?
SAFE, CLEAN AND DEFINITELY WORTH IT!
SO I SUGGEST YOU GO MAKE YOUR MOVE BEFORE SOME SLUT TRIES TO PUT HER CLAWS IN HIM!
AND TRUST ME, THE WAY YOU LOOK TONIGHT, YOU WON'T HAVE ANY PROBLEM AT ALL!


OKAY! HERE I GO!
HAVE FUN! YOU CAN TELL ME ALL ABOUT IT TOMORROW! *GIGGLE!*




HI! I'M ROBIN! WANNA DANCE?
WITH YOU? MORE THAN ANYTHING!
GOOD ANSWER! *GIGGLE!*








WANNA GET OUTTA HERE?
GOOD ANSWER! *CHUCKLE!*
WITH YOU? MORE THAN ANYTHING!
OKAY... I'M COMMITTED NOW!


A short time later...


OH... GOD! HAVING SOMEONE ELSE'S HANDS TOUCH ME THIS WAY IS SO FUCKING INTENSE!
CAN'T EVEN IMAGINE WHAT IT'LL FEEL LIKE WHEN HE'S INSIDE ME!


THIS IS IT! THERE'S NO GOING BACK NOW!
BUT GOING BACK IS THE FURTHEST THING FROM MY MIND RIGHT NOW!
BECAUSE I WANT THIS! I WANT THIS NOW!


THE FIRST COCK I'VE EVER TOUCHED OTHER THAN MY OWN! AND IT'S SO MUCH BIGGER!
AND ANY SECOND, IT'S GOING TO BE...


GASP!
OH... GOD!!


OH! OH... GOD!
THAT FEELS SO...
SO...


OOOOHHHH!!


ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
SIGH! I'M... WONDERFUL!


YOU... YOU DIDN'T FINISH, DID YOU?
NO... NO I DIDN'T!


GOOD!


The next day...


I KNOW I HAVE NOTHING TO COMPARE HIM TO, BUT...JESUS, NORA! HE WAS INCREDIBLE!
I JUST HOPE I DIDN'T DISAPPOINT HIM!
BECAUSE I CAME SO FAST AND SO HARD THE FIRST TIME THAT I ALMOST PASSED OUT!
I... STOPPED COUNTING AFTER THE THIRD!
WHY WOULD YOU SAY THAT?
THE "FIRST TIME", HUH? JUST HOW MANY TIMES WERE THERE?
SO YOU DIDN'T PASS OUT AND YOU ORGASMED AT LEAST THREE TIMES!
TRUST ME, DARLIN', HE WAS NOT DISAPPOINTED!


MAYBE SO, BUT I SERIOUSLY DOUBT IT HAD ANYTHING TO DO WITH MY SEXUAL SKILLS!
I DID LITTLE MORE THAN LIE THERE AND MOAN THE WHOLE TIME!
BUT THAT'S NOT WHAT I WANT TO GIVE ADAM!
HEY, FOR SOME GUYS THAT'S ALL IT TAKES! AND ALL THEY WANT!
I KNOW THAT, HONEY! SO, ARE WE GOING OUT AGAIN TONIGHT?


ACTUALLY, SINCE I ONLY HAVE A COUPLE OF DAYS TO WORK WITH, I WANTED TO TRY A SOLO OUTING TONIGHT!
DON'T WORRY! I HAVE OUR INVESTIGATOR, SKIP, DOING A CURSORY BACKGROUND CHECK INTO THE FOUR GUYS I MET AT THE PARTY THE OTHER NIGHT!
AFTER I GET THE RESULTS, I'LL PICK ONE AND SET UP A NICE, QUIET ONE-TO-ONE DATE IN A PUBLIC PLACE!
EXACTLY! *GIGGLE!*
YOU'RE NOT GOING TO THE CLUB ALONE! NO WAY!
THAT YOU HOPE ENDS UP AS A BOOTY CALL!


NOW THAT I KNOW WHAT TO EXPECT, I'M HOPING I CAN STAY COHERENT ENOUGH TO BE MORE OF AN ACTIVE PARTICIPANT!
MAYBE! BUT JUST IN CASE, I THINK I'LL SPEND AN HOUR OR TWO THIS AFTERNOON WATCHING SOME ON-LINE PORN! *GIGGLE!*
I'M SURE YOU'LL DO JUST FINE,
NEVER HURTS TO LEARN FROM PROFESSIONALS! *GIGGLE!*


I'LL CALL YOU TOMORROW AND LET YOU KNOW HOW IT GOES!
I WILL! BYE, NORA!
JUST BE YOUR FABULOUS SELF AND HAVE FUN, BABE!


SHE THINKS I WAS KIDDING ABOUT THE PORN!
NOW, WHERE THE HELL IS THAT LINK?


Later in the evening...


WHY, THANK YOU, SIR!
MY PLEASURE!


IS THIS TABLE OKAY?
IT'S PERFECT!


YOU KNOW, I'M SORRY I DIDN'T CALL YOU AFTER MEETING YOU THE OTHER NIGHT!
I WAS PLANNING TO, BUT YOU JUST BEAT ME TO IT!
OH I'VE ALWAYS BEEN A FIRM BELIEVER IN ACTING ON ONE'S IMPULSES! *CHUCKLE!*
IF ANYONE SHOULD APOLOGIZE IT'S ME FOR JUMPING THE GUN THE WAY I DID!
I'M AFRAID I'VE ALWAYS HAD A LITTLE TROUBLE WHEN IT COMES TO IMPULSE CONTROL!


THST'S GOOD TO KNOW! *GIGGLE!*
IT'S ALSO GOOD TO KNOW THAT YOU HAVE A FAIRLY SERIOUS GIRLFRIEND YOU REGULARLY CHEAT ON!
WHICH IS THE REAL REASON YOU DIDN'T CALL THIS WEEK AND WON'T AGAIN AFTER TONIGHT... JUST THE WAY I WANT IT!


Later in the evening...
WOULD YOU LIKE ANOTHER DRINK?
NO, THANK YOU! ACTUALLY, I THINK I'M READY TO LEAVE!


OH! YOU WANT TO GO HOME?


GOING HOME IS THE FURTHEST THING FROM MY MIND RIGHT NOW!


THEN, BY ALL MEANS, LET'S MOVE THIS DATE TO AN ALTERNATE LOCATION!


HOW CONVENIENT!
AND, AS IT SO HAPPENS, MY PLACE IS JUST A COUPLE OF BLOCKS AWAY!


AND NOT AT ALL SURPRISING SINCE THAT'S WHY I PICKED THIS PLACE TO MEET!
QUICK AND EASY ACCESS TO HIS PLACE!


SO WE CAN GET RIGHT DOWN TO WHAT I REALLY CAME HERE FOR TONIGHT!


OH! OH GOD! YES!


OH, FUCK! THIS GUY HAS MOVES ZACH NEVER SHOWED ME!
AND, OOOHHHH... THEY'RE ALL AMAZING!


OH... OH...
OH FUCK!!


OKAY, BABY! LET'S TRY IT MY WAY FOR A BIT!
OH, I'M GAME!


THIS SEEMED TO BE A RECURRING AND FAVORED POSITION IN THE VIDEOS!
OH, YEAH! RIDE 'EM, COWGIRL!


OOHH, YES! AND IT JUST BECAME ONE OF MINE!


Saturday night...
Cafe Parisien


I'M SURPRISED YOU'RE NOT MORE EXCITED ABOUT YOUR NEW JOB WITH THE CARDINALS!
I REALLY HAVEN'T HAD TIME TO LET IT SINK IN YET! EVER SINCE THEY OFFICIALLY OFFERED ME THE JOB EARLIER THIS WEEK, THEY'VE KEPT ME INSANELY BUSY WITH PAPERWORK AND MEETINGS!
AND SINCE THEY WANT ME TO REPORT TO WORK ON MONDAY, I'VE BEEN KNOCKING MYSELF OUT TYING UP LOOSE ENDS HERE!
Cafe parisien


NOT THAT I WOULD EVER THINK OF YOU AS A LOOSE END!
OH, I KNOW! IT'S LIKE WE TALKED ABOUT THE OTHER NIGHT! WITH YOU STARTING A NEW CAREER AND ME HALF WAY THROUGH LAW SCHOOL, NEITHER ONE OF US IS IN A POSITION TO START A NEW RELATIONSHIP!
SO WE JUST ENJOY EACH OTHER'S COMPANY WHILE WE CAN!


I'LL TAKE YOU AT YOUR WORD, COUNSELOR! *CHUCKLE!*
BESIDES, I LOOKED IT UP, AND THE OFFICIAL **MINIMUM** NUMBER OF DATES REQUIRED TO BE CONSIDERED A "LOOSE END" IS **THREE!** SO WE'RE GOOD! *GIGGLE!*


As dinner winds down...
I WAS HOPING THAT COMPLETING MY MASTERS WOULD GIVE ME AN EXCUSE TO TAKE SOME TIME OFF AND COME BACK UP HERE OCCASIONALLY!
VERY MUCH SO! BUT UNFORTUNATELY, AND WITHOUT MY KNOWLEDGE, THE CARDINALS ORGANIZATION WORKED OUT A DEAL WITH ASU TO TRANSFER ALL MY CREDITS DOWN THERE!
TO BE FAIR, THEY THOUGHT THEY WERE DOING ME A FAVOR, SINCE, EVEN IN THE OFF-SEASON, THERE'S A LOT OF WORK TO DO!
THAT WOULD'VE BEEN NICE!
THEY JUST WANTED TO KEEP YOU CLOSE! I KIND OF KNOW HOW THEY FEEL!


SIGH! HERE'S TO WHAT COULD HAVE BEEN!
TO WHAT COULD'VE BEEN!


Clink
AND TO WHAT HOPEFULLY WILL BE LATER TONIGHT!


WE'VE ARRIVED AT YOUR DESTINATION, M'LADY!
THANK YOU, SIR!


THANK YOU
VERY MUCH!




I THINK WE'D BE MUCH MORE COMFORTABLE CONTINUING THIS INSIDE!
ARE YOU SURE THAT'S SUCH A GOOD IDEA?


IT IS... UNLESS YOU DON'T MIND THE NEIGHBORS CALLING THE POLICE ON US! *GIGGLE!*


THEN WHO AM I TO INITIATE A NEIGHBORHOOD SCANDAL? *CHUCKLE!*














TIRED YET?
NOT IN THE SLIGHTEST!
GOOD!


BECAUSE I WANT OUR LAST NIGHT TO BE MEMORABLE!
IT ALREADY IS! TRUST ME!






Eventually...
MMMMM! I HOPE YOU'RE NOT IN A HURRY TO GO ANYWHERE, BECAUSE I DON'T THINK I CAN MOVE FROM THIS SPOT!
I CAN'T THINK OF ANYPLACE I'D RATHER BE!


I KNOW YOU HAVE A LOT TO DO TOMORROW, SO IF YOU CAN'T STAY THE NIGHT, I'LL UNDERSTAND!
BUT COULD YOU AT LEAST HOLD ME UNTIL I FALL ASLEEP?
NOTHING WOULD MAKE ME HAPPIER!


SIGH!
WELL... MAYBE ONE THING WOULD MAKE ME HAPPIER!


The next morning...
YAWN!




Robin




Robin

Rafiu


For the next few months, Robin's focus is primarily on her classes...


All her studies...


And work...


Which causes some concern from her friends...
LOOK, I KNOW LAW SCHOOL IS IMPORTANT TO YOU, BUT YOU'VE BEEN HITTING IT PRETTY DAMN HARD THESE LAST COUPLE OF MONTHS!
WE HARDLY SEE YOU ANYMORE! WE WOULDN'T BE HAVING THIS CONVERSATION IF I HADN'T AMBUSHED YOU TODAY!
I KNOW, AND I'M SORRY ABOUT THAT, NORA! IT'S JUST THAT WITH THIRD YEAR WINDING DOWN, I'M SEEING THE LIGHT AT THE END OF THE TUNNEL!
AND I DON'T WANT TO BLOW IT!


I GET THAT, BUT I CAN'T HELP BUT NOTICE THAT THIS EXCESSIVE, TYPE A DEVOTION TO YOUR STUDIES BEGAN SHORTLY AFTER ADAM LEFT TOWN!
YOU THINK THAT MIGHT HAVE HAD SOMETHING TO DO WITH IT?
I DON'T KNOW! MAYBE! ALL I DO KNOW IS MY GRADES TOOK A SIGNIFICANT DIP RIGHT AFTER HE LEFT!
BUT, THEN AGAIN, IT COULD JUST BE A COINCIDENCE! AFTER ALL, IT WAS ONLY TWO DATES!


OH HONEY, I SAW THE LOOK ON YOUR FACE AFTER THAT FIRST DATE! AND NO MATTER HOW HARD YOU TRY TO DENY IT, YOU HAD IT BAD FOR THE GUY!
WHY ELSE WOULD YOU GO THROUGH EVERYTHING YOU DID TO GET READY FOR YOUR SECOND DATE?
AND I'M SURE HE DOES! THE QUESTION IS, JUST HOW "FOND" ARE YOUR MEMORIES OF HIM?
I... I JUST WANTED IT TO BE SPECIAL BECAUSE I KNEW IT WAS GOING TO BE OUR LAST DATE! I WANTED HIM TO HAVE FOND MEMORIES OF ME!
SIGH! A LOT MORE THAN I EXPECTED THEM TO BE!


AND THAT SURPRISES YOU? I KNOW YOU'RE RELUCTANT TO USE THE "L" WORD, BUT FACE FACTS, SWEETIE, EVEN THOUGH YOUR RELATIONSHIP WAS EXTREMELY SHORT-LIVED, ADAM WAS ESSENTIALLY YOUR FIRST LOVE! AND A GIRL DOESN'T GET OVER THAT VERY EASILY!
I DO!
YOU REALLY THINK THAT'S WHY I'VE SEQUESTERED MYSELF AWAY ALL THIS TIME?


BUT IT'S BEEN OVER THREE MONTHS! TIME TO SUCK IT UP AND RE-ENTER THE WORLD!
NOW I'M NOT SAYING YOU NEED TO DIVE BACK INTO THE DATING POOL, BUT A LITTLE SOCIALIZATION WOULD DO YOU GOOD!
AND BESIDES, YOUR FRIENDS MISS YOU!
MOST DEFINITELY!
THEY DO, HUH?


THAT'S WHY WE'VE PLANNED A GIRL'S NIGHT OUT THIS SATURDAY THAT, IF NECESSARY, DOES INVOLVE A KIDNAPPING!
YOU'RE DAMN STRAIGHT WE WOULD!
YOU'D REALLY DO THAT, WOULDN'T YOU?


SMART DECISION, GIRLFRIEND!
OH, YOU DIDN'T! *GIGGLE!*
OKAY, OKAY, I'M IN! I KNOW WHEN I'M BEATEN!
IT'S NOT LIKE I HAD A CHOICE! *GIGGLE!*


That Saturday night...


YOU'RE NOT CALLING IT QUITS ALREADY ARE YOU? IT'S STILL EARLY!
WELL, I GUESS THAT'S OKAY! AS LONG AS YOU PROMISE NOT TO STAY OFF THE DANCE FLOOR TOO LONG!
RELAX! I'M JUST TAKING A BREATHER! REMEMBER, I'M OUT OF PRACTICE!
I PROMISE! IN THE MEANTIME, YOU'VE STILL GOT LIZ OUT THERE DANCING UP A STORM AND DESI...


THE LAST I SAW OF HER SHE WAS UP AT THE BAR FLIRTING WITH SOME GUY!
SHE WOULDN'T LEAVE WITHOUT TELLING US, SO I'M SURE SHE'S STILL AROUND HERE SOMEWHERE!
CONSIDERING THE "BUNCH", THAT'S NOT SAYING A LOT! *GIGGLE!*
ACTUALLY, I HAVEN'T SEEN DESI FOR AWHILE!
TRUE! SHE IS THE RESPONSIBLE ONE OF THE BUNCH!
GIGGLE!


JUST A FEW MINUTES OF DOWNTIME! THAT'S ALL I NEED!
WELL, DON'T TAKE TOO LONG! IT'S NOT THE SAME IF YOU'RE NOT OUT THERE WITH US!


AS USUAL, NORA WAS RIGHT! IT DOES FEEL GOOD TO GET BACK OUT WITH MY FRIENDS AGAIN!
I REALLY DON'T KNOW WHAT I'D DO WITHOUT HER... OR THE OTHERS! AND I HOPE TO GOD I NEVER HAVE TO FIND OUT!
WHOOPS! SHORRY 'BOUT THAT!
Crash!


UH-OH! I THINK I FOUND DESI! AND IT SOUNDS LIKE SHE'S HAD A LITTLE TOO MUCH FUN FOR ONE NIGHT!
I'M SURPRISED BECAUSE SHE'S USUALLY PRETTY GOOD AT KNOWING HER LIMIT!
WHOA! I THINK I'M PRETTY WASTED! *GIGGLE!*
NOT A PROBLEM, GORGEOUS!
OH GREAT! SLEAZY PREDATOR AT 6 O'CLOCK! WELL, I'LL JUST HAVE TO...


'CAUSE I'M GONNA TAKE REAL GOOD CARE OF YOU!
GASP!
THAT... THAT VOICE! I KNOW THAT VOICE!


I'M GONNA TAKE REAL GOOD CARE OF YOU!


OOHHH! I THINK I SHOULD GO HOME!
DON'T WORRY, BEAUTIFUL! I'LL GET YOU THERE SAFE AND SOUND! MY CAR'S RIGHT OUTSIDE!


OH, THERE'S NO WAY IN HELL SHE'S GOING ANYWHERE WITH YOU!


THERE YOU ARE, DESI! WE'VE BEEN LOOKING ALL OVER FOR YOU!
I KNOW, HONEY! DON'T YOU WORRY! WE'LL GET YOU HOME!
OH, THAT'S VERY,,, SWEET OF YOU! BUT WE'LL TAKE CARE OF HER!
I DON FEEL SO GOOD, ROBIN! THINK... THINK I DRANK TOO MUCH!
YEAH, I WAS JUST ABOUT TO GIVE HER A RIDE HOME!


YOU COULD REALLY GIVE ALL FOUR OF US A RIDE HOME? THAT'D BE GREAT!
ARE YOU SURE? IT'S REALLY NO PROBLEM WHATSOEVER!
ALL FOUR OF YOU? UMM... ON SECOND THOUGHT, I DON'T THINK MY CAR'S GOT ENOUGH ROOM!


EVERYTHING OKAY BACK HERE?
YEAH! DESI'S NOT FEELING TOO WELL SO I THINK WE'D BETTER GET HER HOME!


LIZ, CAN YOU GET HER SOME AIR? WE'LL BE RIGHT BEHIND YOU!
I WANT TO TAKE CARE OF SOMETHING FIRST!
NO PROBLEM! C'MON, HONEY!
'KAY!


WHO?
WHAT THE FUCK?! SOMEONE DRUGGED DESI?
HMPH! I HAD A FEELING HE'D DISAPPEAR!
THE SCUMBAG WHO DRUGGED DESI!


NOT JUST SOMEONE! I'M 98% SURE IT WAS THE SAME PIECE OF SHIT WHO DRUGGED ME!
HIS VOICE! I'D RECOGNIZE THAT SLIMY DRAWL ANYWHERE!
AND NOW THAT I'VE SEEN THE FACE THAT GOES WITH THE VOICE, THAT DOUCHEBAG IS TOAST!
OH, I KNOW!
WHAT?! BUT I THOUGHT YOU NEVER SAW HIS FACE! HOW DO YOU KNOW IT WAS HIM?
BUT THE POLICE WILL NEED A LOT MORE THAN YOUR DRUGGED UP MEMORY TO ARREST HIM!


BUT I'M SURE THAT BETWEEN THE TWO OF US, WE'LL FIND A WAY TO BRING HIM DOWN!


The next day...
100% CERTAINTY ON MY PART THAT THIS IS THE SAME GUY!
AND I WON'T HAVE THAT UNTIL WE HAVE THIS DRINK ANALYZED AND DISCOVER IT'S THE SAME SHIT HE USED ON ME!
LET ME GET THIS STRAIGHT! YOU'RE SURE THIS IS THE SAME GUY WHO TRIED TO RAPE YOU, BUT YOU HAVEN'T REPORTED HIM TO THE POLICE YET!
WHAT AM I MISSING HERE?


SO WHY NOT HAVE THE POLICE ANALYZE IT?
FOR THE SAME REASON WE'RE TALKING TO YOU WHEN ABBY'S NOT AROUND!
ONCE I'M CONVINCED, WITHOUT A DOUBT, THAT THIS IS THE GUY, THERE'S NOTHING I WON'T DO, LEGAL OR NOT, TO GET HIS SORRY ASS THROWN IN JAIL!
AND I DON'T WANT ANY OF THAT TO TAINT ABBY'S REPUTATION OR HER CHANCES AT BECOMING ELECTED!


I UNDERSTAND AND DEEPLY APPRECIATE THAT, ROBIN! BUT IT SOUNDS LIKE YOUR INTERVENTION LAST NIGHT MAY HAVE SCARED HIM OFF!
HOW ARE YOU GOING TO FIND HIM AGAIN?
I RECOGNIZED HIM FROM ONE OF MY CLASSES! SO EVEN THOUGH I DON'T KNOW HIS NAME... YET, I DO KNOW EXACTLY WHERE HE'LL BE FROM NINE TO ELEVEN THIRTY EVERY MONDAY THROUGH THURSDAY FOR THE NEXT FEW WEEKS!
WHICH GIVES ME AMPLE TIME AND OPPORTUNITY TO DETERMINE THE BEST WAY TO DEAL WITH HIM!


SO WHAT'S YOUR PART IN ALL THIS?
BACKUP, SAGE ADVICE, GETAWAY DRIVER... WHATEVER IT IS THE SPUNKY SIDEKICK ALWAYS DOES!
GIGGLE!


WELL, I WON'T GET THE RESULTS BACK ON THIS FOR A COUPLE OF DAYS! BUT I DON'T SUPPOSE THAT'LL KEEP YOU TWO FROM INITIATING WHATEVER IT IS YOU'VE GOT PLANNED!
AFRAID NOT!
DIDN'T THINK IT WOULD!
NOPE!


WHATEVER YOU TWO DECIDE TO DO, PLEASE BE CAREFUL!
YOUR AUNT WOULD HAVE MY HIDE IF I WERE TO LET ANYTHING HAPPEN TO EITHER OF YOU!
WE KNOW, UNCLE HANK! WE KNOW!


I KNOW I'VE SAID THIS BEFORE, ROBIN, BUT WE ARE FAMILY! AND AS NORA KNOWS, THERE'S NOTHING ABBY AND I WON'T DO FOR FAMILY!
ALWAYS REMEMBER THAT!
SNIFF! I WILL! AND THANK YOU SOO MUCH...


... UNCLE HANK!


A few days later...
RONNY! WILL YOU JUST FUCKIN' STOP, MAN? WE'VE GOTTA TALK TO YOU ABOUT THIS!
TALK? THAT'S WHAT YOU CALL IT? ALL I'VE HEARD FROM YOU TWO IS WHINING LIKE THE LITTLE BITCHES YOU ARE!


DUDE! I SAID STOP!
IF I HAVE TO!
WHAT? YOU GONNA DECK ME RIGHT HERE IN THE HALLS OF THE LAW SCHOOL?


TRUE! BUT YOU'VE GOT MORE FUCK UPS THAN ANY OF US!
YOU'RE GETTING SLOPPY, MAN! AND IF YOU'RE NOT CAREFUL, YOU'RE GONNA BRING US ALL DOWN WITH YOU!
OKAY, FINE! I DON'T SEE WHAT THE BIG DEAL IS! I STRUCK OUT THE OTHER NIGHT AT SHENANIGANS! SO WHAT? IT'S NOT LIKE IT'S THE FIRST TIME... FOR ANY OF US!
HEY! YOU FUCKERS WERE THERE, TOO! YOU DIDN'T KNOW SHE HAD FRIENDS THERE EITHER! RIGHT?


THAT'S NOT THE POINT! IF A FRIEND, BARTENDER, OR ANYONE GETS INVOLVED, YOU GIVE HER UP AND DISAPPEAR IMMEDIATELY! THAT'S THE RULE!
BUT YOU STUCK AROUND AND ACTUALLY ARGUED WITH HER FRIEND WHO NOW KNOWS WHAT YOU LOOK LIKE!
IF ANYTHING HAD GONE WRONG WITH THE CHICK, YOUR FACE WOULD BE ALL OVER THE POLICE BLOTTERS!
AS FAR AS YOU KNOW!
BUT NOTHING DID GO WRONG!


I THINK THAT'S A SMART MOVE!
LOOK! I'M NOT STUPID! I KNOW WHAT'S AT STAKE IF ANY OF US GETS CAUGHT!
BUT IF IT MAKES YOU TWO FEEL ANY BETTER, I'LL STEER CLEAR OF SHENANIGANS FOR THE REST OF THE SEMESTER AND FIND SOMEPLACE ELSE TO DO MY HUNTING!
I WAS GETTING TIRED OF THAT SHITHOLE ANYWAY!


JESUS! I KNEW THOSE TWO WERE SADISTIC ASSHOLES, BUT I HAD NO IDEA THEY WERE JUST AS SLEAZY AS THAT PIECE OF SHIT!
IT DOES, HOWEVER, EXPLAIN HOW LOSERS LIKE THAT COULD BE SO "SUCCESSFUL" WITH WOMEN, AND A LOT OF OTHER THINGS I TRIED TO IGNORE WHEN I LIVED WITH THEM!


I DIDN'T THINK IT POSSIBLE FOR THIS TO BECOME ANY MORE PERSONAL THAN IT ALREADY WAS, BUT IT JUST DID!


IT MIGHT ALSO BE A GOOD IDEA FOR YOU TO SPLIT TOWN FOR THE SUMMER, LIKE YOU DID LAST YEAR! JUST IN CASE!
HEY! NO SCRATCH MARKS OR BRUISES TO HEAL UP THIS TIME, SO WHY BOTHER?
I THOUGHT I RECOGNIZED YOU FROM SOMEWHERE!


YOU ARE SO FUCKING BUSTED!
SHUT THE FUCK UP!
UHHH... YEAH!
WE'RE IN THE SAME CRIMINAL PROCEDURE CLASS, AREN'T WE?


I WANTED TO TALK TO YOU ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED WITH MY FRIEND AT SHENANIGANS THE OTHER NIGHT!
UHHHH... SURE!
DON'T SAY A FUCKING WORD ABOUT US BEING THERE, TOO! YOU GOT IT?
WILL YOU JUST FUCKING CHILL ALREADY? I'LL HANDLE IT!


I JUST WANTED TO THANK YOU SOO MUCH FOR LOOKING OUT FOR HER THE WAY YOU DID!
HUH?!
I MEAN, WHO KNOWS WHAT COULD'VE HAPPENED IF SOME CREEPY GUY, OR GUYS, HAD GOTTEN TO HER BEFORE YOU DID!
UMM, YEAH! MY THINKING EXACTLY! THAT'S WHY I WAS TRYING TO GET HER OUT OF THERE AND HOME!
WELL I'M SORRY IF I CAME OFF A LITTLE BITCHY THAT NIGHT! I WAS JUST WORRIED ABOUT DES!
NO PROBLEM! YOU WERE JUST BEING A GOOD FRIEND!
THAT'S SWEET OF YOU TO SAY!


MY NAME'S ROBIN, BY THE WAY! ROBIN SULLIVAN!
I'M RONNY... RONNY CHASE! AND THESE ARE MY TWO BUDS, MAX CRAWFORD AND IAN MCKEE!
HI! YEAH, I THINK I'VE SEEN YOU IN PROFESSOR RALSTON'S CONSTITUTIONAL LAW CLASS!
UH, YEAH! 'CAUSE WE'RE IN THERE, TOO!


WELL, I HAVE TO GET GOING! THANK YOU AGAIN FOR BEING SUCH A SWEETHEART THE OTHER NIGHT!
AND I'LL SEE YOU TWO GUYS IN RALSTON'S CLASS LATER!
YEAH!
DEFINITELY!


SAY, UHHH... ROBIN! WAIT A MINUTE!
YEAH?


HOW ABOUT YOU AND I GO OUT SOMETIME? MAYBE THIS SATURDAY?
I GET IT! WELL, MAYBE SOME OTHER TIME THEN?
OH... IT'S SWEET OF YOU TO ASK, BUT I ALREADY HAVE PLANS!
YOU SEE, A FRIEND'S BAND IS PLAYING AT THE UNDERGROUND THIS WEEKEND AND WE PROMISED WE'D GO!


UHH... WHAT?
WELL... TO BE COMPLETELY HONEST, I DON'T DATE COLLEGE GUYS!
I MEAN, I'LL STILL HANG OUT WITH THEM, GO TO THEIR PARTIES AND DANCE WITH THEM AT THE CLUBS!
BUT WHEN IT COMES TO PERSONAL, MORE INTIMATE ENCOUNTERS, LIKE DATES, I JUST PREFER MEN THAT ARE A LITTLE MORE... MATURE!


I HOPE YOU'RE NOT OFFENDED!
NO! NOT AT ALL! WHY WOULD I POSSIBLY BE OFFENDED?


WELL I'M GLAD TO HEAR THAT! SEE YOU IN CLASS TOMORROW!
♪ BYE, GUYS! ♫


HAW, HAW! OH, MAN! THAT WAS BRUTAL!
NO SHIT! THAT WAS AN EPIC TAKE DOWN! HEH-HEH!
HEY, FUCK YOU! FUCK BOTH OF YOU!


SETTLE DOWN, MAN! SETTLE DOWN! I THOUGHT WE'D AGREED YOU WERE GONNA STEER CLEAR OF SHENANIGANS FOR THE REST OF THE SEMESTER!
GOOD!
NO STUCK UP BITCH LIKE THAT SHOOTS ME DOWN AND GETS AWAY WITH IT!
YEAH... WE DID! AND I'M A MAN OF MY WORD!
BUT THAT COCKTEASE IS NEXT ON MY LIST AND ANYPLACE ELSE SHE GOES IS FAIR GAME!


AND I KNOW JUST WHERE SHE'LL BE ON SATURDAY!


WELL, THE FIRST PART OF THE PLAN SEEMS TO HAVE WORKED!
AS LONG AS HE'S FIXATED ON ME, HE WON'T BE HURTING ANYONE ELSE!


SIGH! NOW I JUST NEED TO FIGURE OUT A WAY TO PROTECT MYSELF!


Saturday night, at
The Underground...




MAN, THIS PLACE IS HOPPING WITH HOT CHICKS! I'M GONNA HAVE TO START COMING HERE MORE OFTEN!
BUT ONLY AFTER I SCORE MY PRIME TARGET HERE TONIGHT!
THAT STUCK-UP BITCH, ROBIN, IS GONNA FALL HARD FROM HER HIGH HORSE ONCE I GET HER DOSED!
AND WITH ONLY TWO OF THEM HERE INSTEAD OF A WHOLE GODDAMN GAGGLE, IT'LL BE A LOT EASIER TO SEPARATE THEM!
ESPECIALLY IF I JUST GO AHEAD AND SPIKE BOTH THEIR DRINKS AND LET SOME OTHER LUCKY GUY HAVE HER FRIEND! HEH-HEH!


THEY AREN'T MAKING IT EASY, THOUGH! CLUMSY BITCHES SPILLED THE FIRST DRINKS I SPIKED!
LUCKY FOR ME I BROUGHT ENOUGH PILLS FOR A SECOND SHOT AT THEM! YEAH, I AM NOT GOIN' HOME ALONE TONIGHT! HEH-HEH!


"BUT FIRST THEY'VE GOTTA GRAB THEIR DRINKS AND WIGGLE THEIR TIGHT ASSES AWAY FROM THE BAR! IT'S TOO GODDAMN BRIGHT AND CROWDED OVER THERE!"


IS HE STILL WATCHING US?
I HAVEN'T SEEN HIM TALK TO OR INTERACT WITH ANYONE ELSE TONIGHT! HAVE YOU?
GOOD! THEN BETWEEN THE TWO OF US, WE SHOULD BE ABLE TO KEEP A CLOSE EYE ON HIM ALL NIGHT!
OH YEAH! "HIDING" UNDER THAT HOODIE SO WE COULDN'T POSSIBLY RECOGNIZE HIM!
NOPE! I'M PRETTY SURE HE'S WORKING SOLO TONIGHT!


YOU KNOW, WE COULDVE JUST HAD SECURITY HERE WATCH HIM AND THEN HAVE HAS ASS ARRESTED AS SOON AS THEY SAW HIM MESSING WITH OUR DRINKS!
IT'S SOMETHING!
TRUE! BUT THAT'D ONLY BE AN ATTEMPTED ASSAULT, AND HE'D PROBABLY FIND A WAY TO SLITHER OUT OF IT!
BUT IT'S NOT ENOUGH! I WANT HIM, AND EVERYONE ELSE INVOLVED, RIDICULED, KICKED OUT OF SCHOOL AND BUSTED FOR A FELONY!
ANYTHING LESS IS UNACCEPTABLE!


AND THAT'S WHAT TONIGHT IS ALL ABOUT! SETTING HIM UP FOR AN EPIC FAILURE SO HE LOSES HIS COOL AND STARTS MAKING MISTAKES!
I KNOW! SO IMAGINE WHAT HIS FRAIL LITTLE EGO WILL DO WHEN, AFTER ALL HIS "HARD WORK", HE SEES SOME OTHER GUY GETTING HIS HANDS ON THIS! *GIGGLE!*
YEAH... I THINK I'VE BEEN INACTIVE LONG ENOUGH!
WHY DO YOU THINK WE CAME HERE OF ALL PLACES?
I THINK SEEING YOU IN THAT DRESS IS ENOUGH FOR ANY GUY TO LOSE HIS COOL! *GIGGLE!*
IT SOUNDS LIKE YOU'RE FINALLY READY TO MOVE ON PAST ADAM!
ANY PROSPECTS IN PARTICULAR?


REMEMBER THERE WERE FOUR GUYS I FLIRTED WITH AT ABBY'S PARTY?
THAT WAS DAVE! THE GUY I'M TALKING ABOUT IS HOLT! KIND OF AN INTENSE GUY, BUT YOU'D EXPECT THAT FROM A DAY TRADER!
YEAH! YOU USED ONE OF THEM FOR PRACTICE BEFORE YOUR BIG DATE WITH ADAM, RIGHT?
REALLY? AND WHAT WOULD A DAY TRADER BE DOING AT A PLACE LIKE THIS?


PLAYING DRUMS!
GIGGLE!
OH, WOW!


AND THE OTHER TWO GUYS?
ONE'S A STOCK BROKER, THE OTHER'S A MARKET ANALYST! NEITHER ONE CURRENTLY MARRIED OR IN A SERIOUS RELATIONSHIP!
YOU HAD THEM VETTED JUST FOR ME, DIDN'T YOU?
OF COURSE! WHAT ARE BEST FRIENDS FOR?
I LOVE YOU SO MUCH RIGHT NOW!


WHAT DO YOU SAY WE GET OUT THERE AND SHOW THE GUYS WHAT WE GOT WAITING FOR THEM?
HONEY, YOU READ MY MIND! *GIGGLE!*



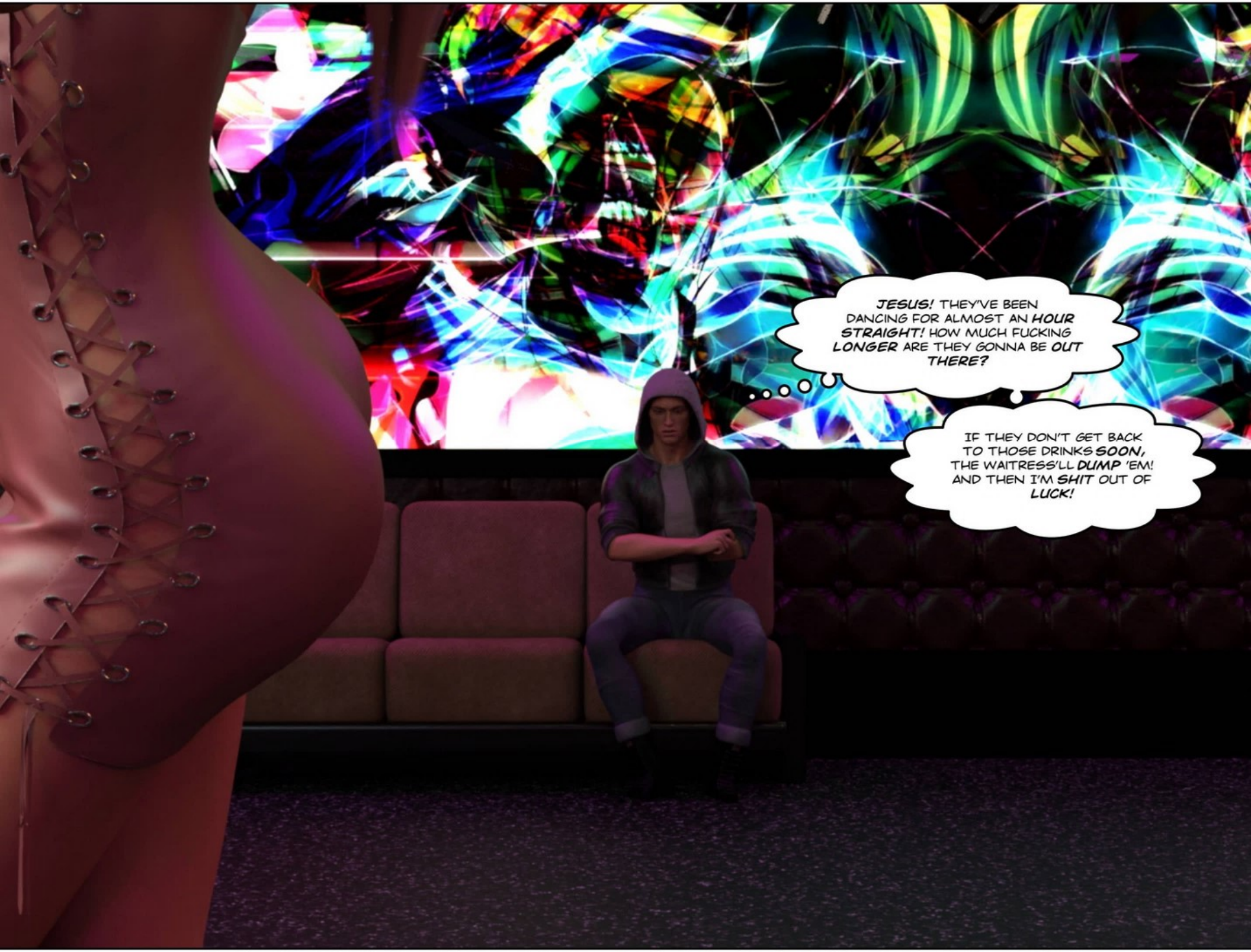

FINALLY!


A COUPLE FOR YOU...


... AND THE LAST TWO FOR YOUR FRIEND!


But what Ronny hopes will be just a few minutes...


Extends to well beyond that...


JESUS! THEY'VE BEEN DANCING FOR ALMOST AN HOUR STRAIGHT! HOW MUCH FUCKING LONGER ARE THEY GONNA BE OUT THERE?
IF THEY DON'T GET BACK TO THOSE DRINKS SOON, THE WAITRESS'LL DUMP 'EM! AND THEN I'M SHIT OUT OF LUCK!


But getting back to their drinks may *not* be the *first* thing the girls have on their minds...




LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, WE'RE GOING TO TAKE OUR FIRST BREAK OF THE EVENING!
BUT STICK AROUND! WE'LL BE BACK... EVENTUALLY!


AND YOU LOOK GREAT DOWN HERE!
YOU ALL SOUND GREAT UP THERE!


SO MAYBE WE NEED TO FIND SOMEWHERE QUIET AND... CATCH UP!
I KNOW IT'S BEEN QUITE A WHILE SINCE WE MET AT THAT PARTY...
JUST WHAT I WAS THINKING!


OH, YOU HAVE GOT TO BE FUCKING KIDDING ME!


"SHE'S SO ENTHRALLED BY THAT, THAT...MEAT PUPPET SHE'S TOTALLY FORGOTTEN ABOUT THEIR FUCKING DRINKS!!"

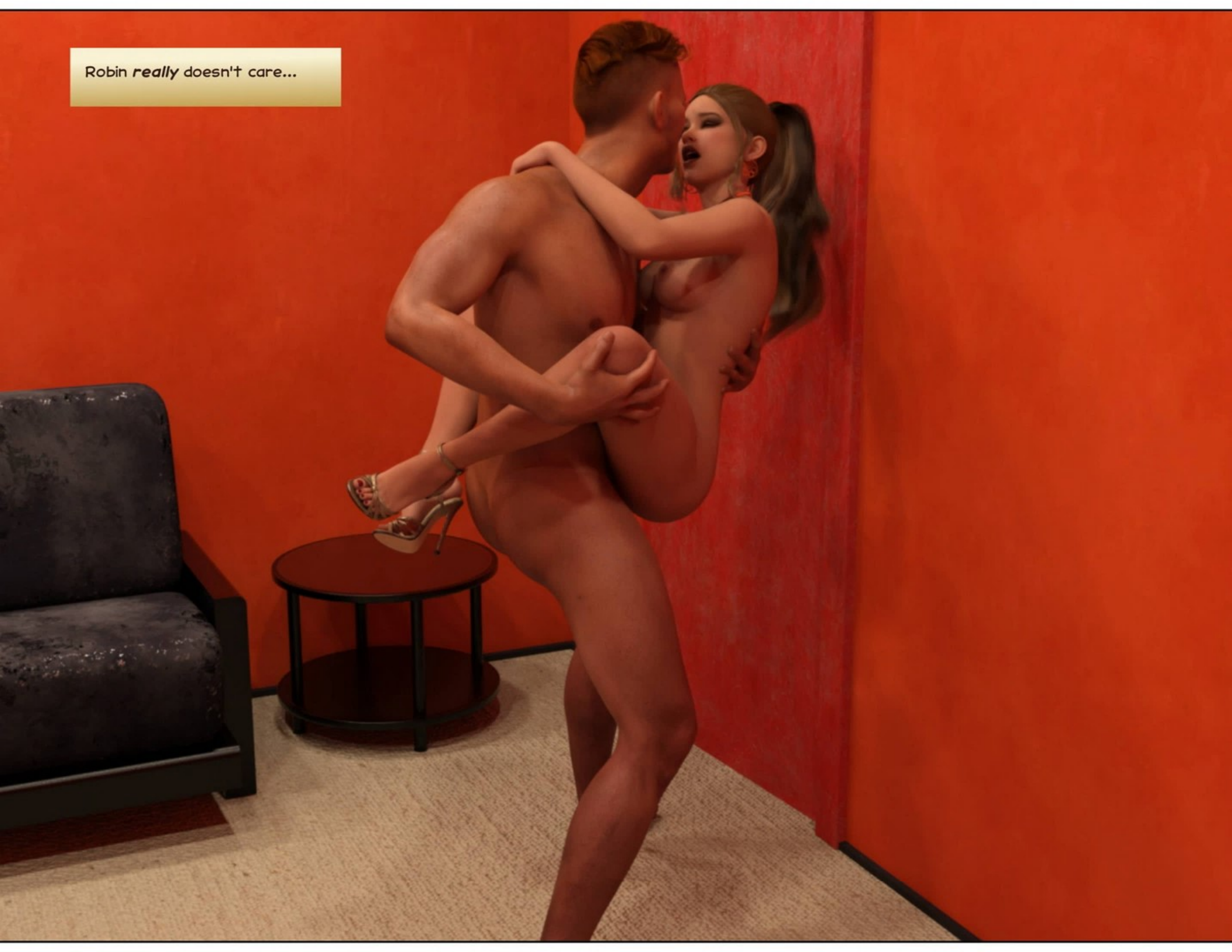

"AND IF SHE'S NOT BACK OUT HERE SOON..."


NO!! FUCK!
FUCK! FUCK!


THAT'S IT!
I'M GOING TO
NAIL THAT BITCH!
NO MATTER WHAT I
HAVE TO DO!


Even if Ronny's threats were spoken *aloud*, they'd be falling on *deaf ears...*


Because at this particular moment, in a different part of the club...


Robin *really* doesn't care...


The next day...
WELL, THE RESULTS CAME BACK! YOUR FRIENDS DRINK HAD THE EXACT SAME DRUG WE FOUND IN YOUR BLOODSTREAM!
THAT'S BECAUSE I'M NOT!
YOU DON'T SOUND VERY SURPRISED!


AFTER DOING SOME DIGGING INTO AREA POLICE REPORTS, WE'VE FOUND AN INCREASING NUMBER OF UNSOLVED, SUSPECTED DATE-RAPE CASES WITH VERY SIMILAR M.O.S!
YOUNG WOMEN WAKING UP IN THEIR CARS OR EVEN AT HOME AFTER A NIGHT OUT AND NOT REMEMBERING HOW OR WHEN THEY GOT THERE!
IT IS FOR THOSE WHO REALIZE THAT SOMETIME DURING THE NIGHT THEY'VE HAD SEX! AND, AFTER A BLOOD TEST, THERE'S NO TRACE OF ANY KNOWN DATE-RAPE DRUG!
AND, ALMOST ALL OF THESE OCCURRED AFTER THEY FREQUENTED ONE OF JUST A FEW CLUBS AROUND TOWN!
THEY HAD THE HIGHEST REPORTED RATE!
SUCH AS?
THAT'S NOT THAT UNCOMMON!
LIKE SHENANIGANS?


I'VE ALSO HAD MR. CHASE FOLLOWED FOR THE LAST FEW DAYS AND IT SEEMS HE SPENDS A LOT OF TIME AT THE HOUSE YOU USED TO LIVE IN!
WHAT MAKES YOU SAY THAT?
YEAH, THAT DOESN'T SURPRISE ME AT ALL! NOW THAT I KNOW WHAT HE LOOKS LIKE, I SEE HIM WITH MY EX-ROOMMATES ALL THE TIME!
I'M SURE THEY'RE INVOLVED IN THIS WITH HIM! HELL, I THINK THEY COULD EVEN BE SUPPLYING THE PILLS!


FROM LISTENING TO THEIR CONVERSATIONS AND PIECING TOGETHER LITTLE THINGS I NOTICED WHEN I LIVED THERE!
THEY NEVER BROUGHT ANY "DATES" HOME, BUT THERE WERE LOTS OF GUYS WHO CAME AND WENT THAT I DIDN'T KNOW!
AND, IF I REMEMBER RIGHT, ONE OF THEM HAS A BROTHER WHO'S IN PHARMACY SCHOOL! IT JUST ALL ADDS UP!
I HAVE NO PROBLEM WITH THAT! SO WHAT DO YOU NEED FROM ME?
I AGREE! BUT TO GET ABSOLUTE PROOF, WE'LL NEED TO GET "CREATIVE"!
AND THE KIND OF CREATIVITY I'M SUGGESTING ISN'T ALWAYS LEGAL!


WE NEED TO KNOW WHEN THE HOUSE WILL BE EMPTY! YOU ALREADY TOLD ME WHEN YOU HAVE CLASS TOGETHER, BUT KNOWING THEIR FULL COURSE SCHEDULE WOULD BE EVEN BETTER!
AND IF THAT DOESN'T GIVE US ENOUGH TIME, IS THERE ANY WAY YOU CAN KEEP THEM FROM THE HOUSE FOR A LONGER PERIOD?
I'M PRETTY SURE I CAN GET YOU THAT!

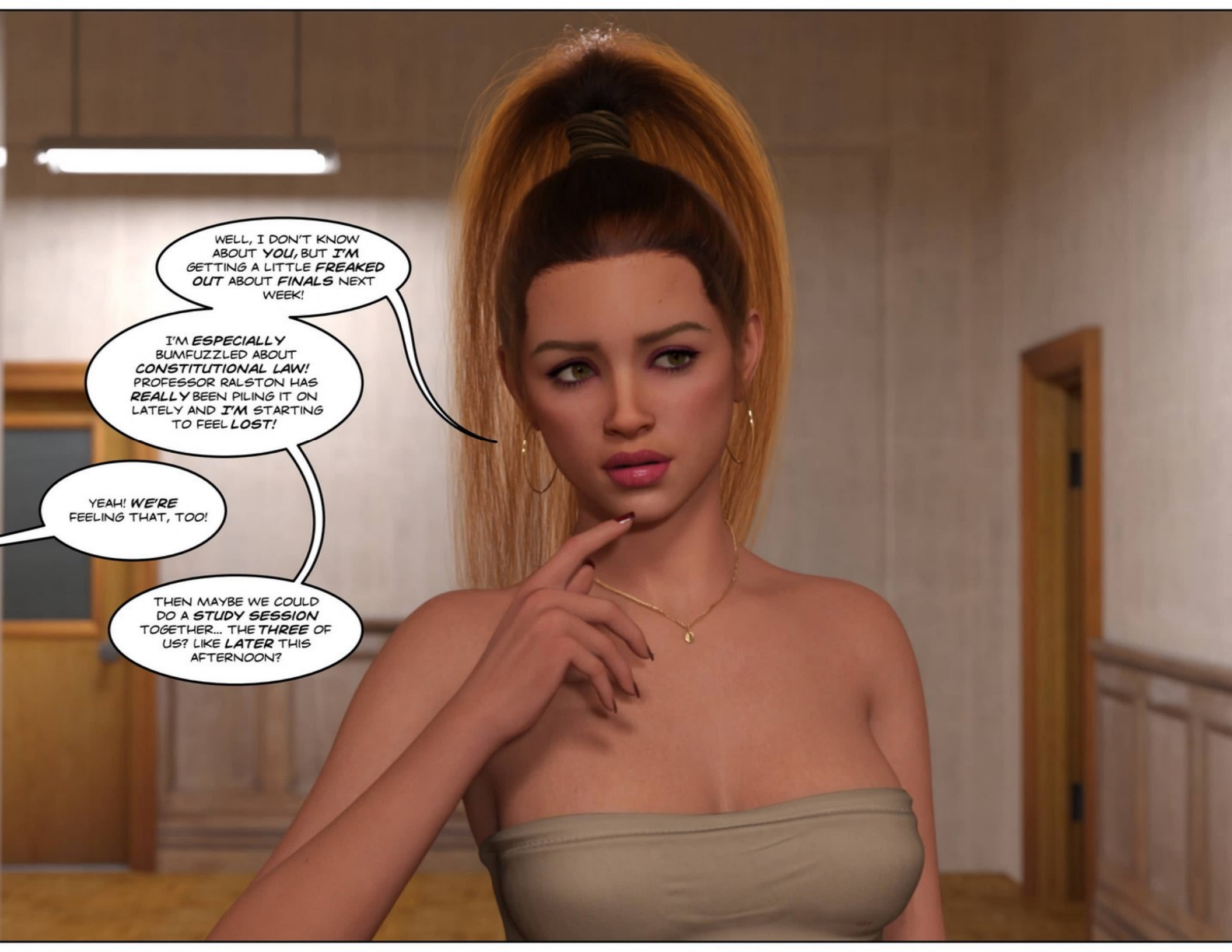

OH, THAT SHOULDN'T BE A PROBLEM!


A couple of days later, after class...
IS IT ME, OR WAS RALSTON EVEN MORE BORING TODAY THAN HE USUALLY IS?
HOW WOULD I KNOW? I SPENT THE WHOLE TIME CHECKING OUT SULLIVAN'S TITS! HEH-HEH!


I KNOW, MAN! I SWEAR, DURING FINALS, I'M GONNA HAVE TO SIT SOMEWHERE WHERE I CAN'T SEE HER! OTHERWISE, I'M DEAD MEAT!
WELL, WE'LL JUST HAVE TO MAKE DAMN SURE WE'RE AVAILABLE WHEN RONNIE FINALLY GETS HER "IN THE MOOD!" HEH-HEH!
NO SHIT! ALL I CAN THINK ABOUT WHEN I SEE HER IS PLUNGIN' MY FACE BETWEEN THOSE AWESOME THIGHS OF HERS!
HELL YEAH! SLOPPY SECONDS ARE BETTER THAN NOTHING! HEH-HEH!


OH, GOOD! I'M GLAD I CAUGHT UP WITH YOU GUYS!
OH, SHIT! YOU DON'T THINK SHE HEARD US, DO YOU?
IF SHE DID, SHE SURE AS FUCK WOULDN'T BE SMILING!


I'M MAX... HE'S IAN!
IT'S IAN AND MAX, RIGHT?
OH! I'M SO SORRY!
THAT'S OKAY! WHAT'S UP?


WELL, I DON'T KNOW ABOUT YOU, BUT I'M GETTING A LITTLE FREAKED OUT ABOUT FINALS NEXT WEEK!
I'M ESPECIALLY BUMFUZZLED ABOUT CONSTITUTIONAL LAW! PROFESSOR RALSTON HAS REALLY BEEN PILING IT ON LATELY AND I'M STARTING TO FEEL LOST!
YEAH! WE'RE FEELING THAT, TOO!
THEN MAYBE WE COULD DO A STUDY SESSION TOGETHER... THE THREE OF US? LIKE LATER THIS AFTERNOON?


HEY, I'M DOWN WITH THAT! YOU COULD COME OVER TO OUR PLACE! WE DON'T LIVE TOO FAR OFF CAMPUS, AND...
I WAS ACTUALLY THINKING OF THE LIBRARY! IT'S QUIETER THERE... NO DISTRACTIONS!
AND I REALLY THINK WE COULD GET A LOT MORE DONE THERE!
WELL, YEAH, BUT...


GREAT IDEA, ROBIN! HOW ABOUT WE MEET YOU THERE AROUND 4?
PERFECT! THANKS SO MUCH FOR THIS GUYS! I REALLY APPRECIATE IT!
HEY! OUR PLEASURE!


SEE YOU GUYS LATER!
YEAH! SEE YOU LATER!
DUDE! WHAT THE FUCK?
WAIT 'TIL SHE'S GONE, GODDAMMIT!


OKAY! NOW WHAT ARE YOU WHINING ABOUT?
AND DO WHAT? DOSE HER THERE? THAT'S PRETTY FUCKIN' STUPID!
EVEN IF SHE DIDN'T TELL ANYONE WHERE SHE WAS GOING, SHE'D STILL KNOW WHEN SHE WOKE UP!
WHY THE HELL DID YOU AGREE TO THE LIBRARY SO EASILY, MAN?
I'M SURE WE COULD'VE CONVINCED HER TO GO TOOUR PLACE!


LOOK AT THE BRIGHT SIDE! YOU GET TO SPEND A FEW HOURS STARING AT THEM FROM ACROSS A TABLE INSTEAD OF FROM ACROSS THE ROOM!
YEAH... YOU'RE RIGHT! I'M SORRY, MAN! IT'S JUST THAT WHEN I SEE THOSE TITS, MY MIND TURNS TO MUSH!
I CAN LIVE WITH THAT! HEH-HEH!


JUST TRY NOT TO DROOL TOO MUCH, OKAY!
NO PROMISES!


Several hours later...


I KNOW IT'S UP HERE SOMEWHERE!


AH-HA! I KNEW I'D FIND IT!
YEAH, I KNOW YOU'RE BACK THERE STARING AT MY PANTIES, YOU FECKLESS PIECE OF SHIT!


I'LL BET THE PRECEDENT WE'RE LOOKING FOR IS HIDING RIGHT IN HERE!
SIGH! THE THINGS I'LL DO TO KEEP THESE ASS WIPES OCCUPIED!


I CAN'T THANK YOU GUYS *ENOUGH* FOR AGREEING TO THIS! I'M STARTING TO FEEL A LOT MORE *CONFIDENT* ABOUT OUR FINALS!
HEY, IT'S HELPING *US* OUT, TOO!


YEAH, BY FUELING MY WET DREAMS FOR THE NEXT FEW WEEKS! HEH-HEH!
DISGUSTING! ACCURATE, BUT... DISGUSTING!


OKAY! NOW THAT WE FOUND THAT PRECEDENT, LET'S GET TO WORK ON THE...
YOU KNOW, GETTING IN GOOD WITH HER LIKE THIS MIGHT JUST PUT US IN CLOSE PROXIMITY TO HER AND HER HOT FRIENDS AT THE CLUBS!
AND YOU KNOW WHAT THAT MEANS, DON'T YOU?
THE EXACT SAME THOUGHT HAD CROSSED MY MIND! HEH-HEH!


WHOA!
I... I THINK I STOOD UP TOO FAST! I FEEL A LITTLE DIZZY!
WHAT'S WRONG, ROBIN?
BUT YOU WEREN'T SITTING DOWN!

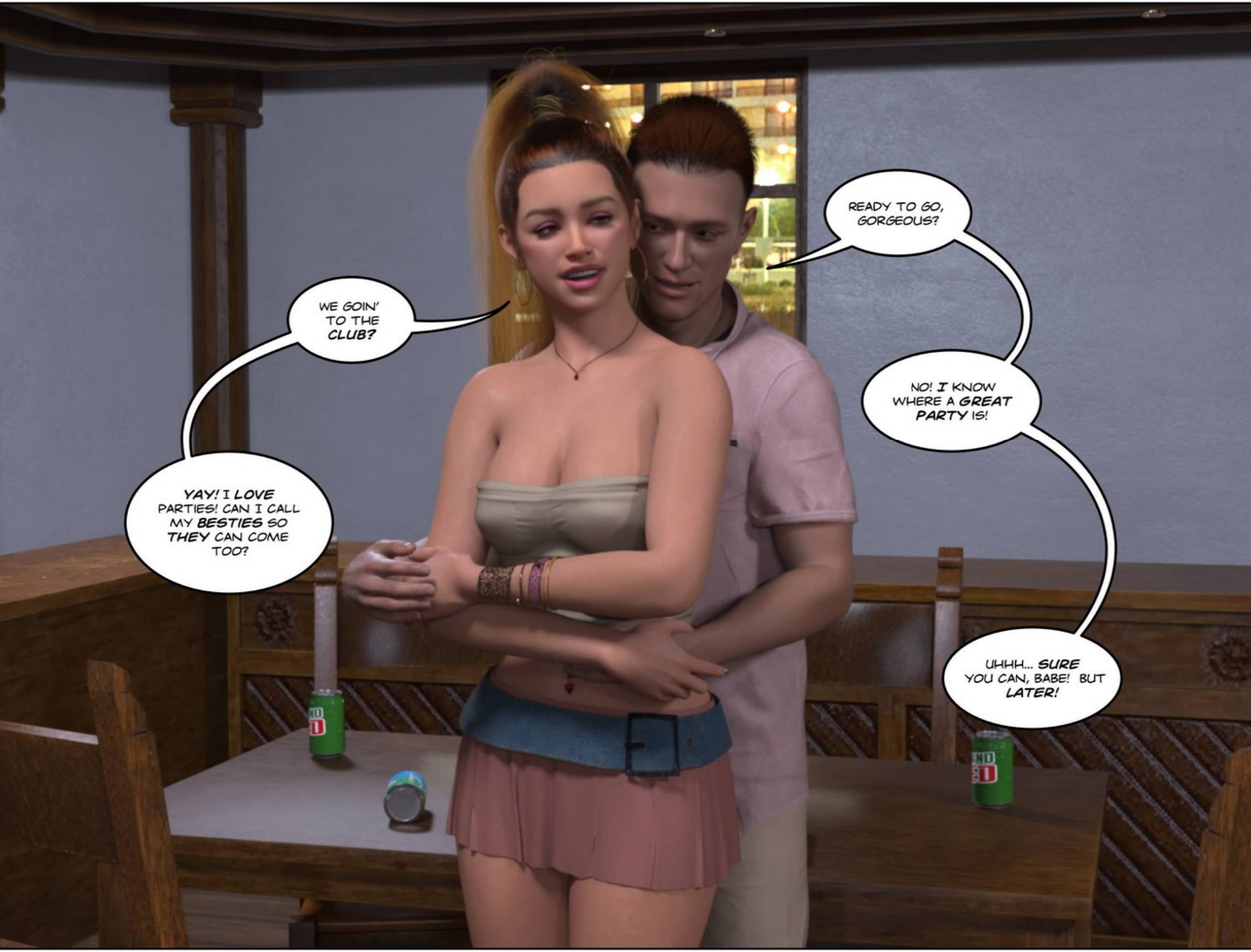

GIGGLE! THAT'S RIGHT... I WASN'T! *GIGGLE!*
DUDE! DID YOU FUCKIN' SPIKE HER DRINK?!
OF COURSE NOT!
NO! DID YOU?
THEN WHY'S SHE ACTING LIKE THAT?
BECAUSE I SPIKED HER DRINK WHILE YOU ALL WERE PLAYING FOOTSY IN THE STACKS!


DUDE! WHAT THE FUCK?! HOW DID YOU EVEN KNOW WHERE WE WERE?
I'VE BEEN TAILING HER FINE ASS EVER SINCE SHE STEPPED ONTO CAMPUS THIS MORNING!
I FIGURED SHE WOULDN'T BE HITTING THE CLUBS AGAIN UNTIL THE WEEKEND, AND I DIDN'T FEEL LIKE WAITING!
AND WHEN YOU ALL BROUGHT HER HERE TO THIS NICE, QUIET AND ALMOST DESERTED LIBRARY, I SAW MY CHANCE!
KEEP IT DOWN, MAN! SHE MIGHT HEAR YOU!
SO WHAT IF SHE DOES? SHE'S NOT GONNA REMEMBER ANYTHING AFTER DOWNING THAT SPECIAL LITTLE DIET DRINK OF HERS!
HEY! RONNY'S HERE! ♪HI, RONNY! ♫ *GIGGLE!*


UHHH... SURE! CAN'T STUDY 'CAUSE MY HEADS ALL FUZZY SO MIGHT AS WELL PARTY! *GIGGLE!*
HEY, GORGEOUS! READY TO BLOW THIS PLACE AND HAVE SOME FUN?
THAT'S MY GIRL!


LOOK, RONNY... YOU'RE PLAYING WITH FIRE HERE! MY BROTHER DESIGNED THIS STUFF TO WORK WITH ALCOHOL!
WE DON'T KNOW WHAT ALL THE EFFECTS ARE IF NO BOOZE IS INVOLVED!
BUT WE DO KNOW IT'LL SHOW UP IN A BLOOD TEST AFTERWARD... IF SHE HAS ONE DONE!
I DON'T GIVE A RAT'S ASS ABOUT ANY GODDAMN BLOOD TEST! THAT'S SOMETHING I'LL DEAL WITH WHEN OR IF SHE TAKES ONE!
HA-HA! YOU SAID RATS-ASS! *GIGGLE!*


THAT TICKLES! *GIGGLE!*
AND AS FOR THE OTHER EFFECTS... ÜBER-DITZY, EXTRA CUDDLY AND ABLE TO WALK ON HER OWN... HELL, I SEE THEM AS A VAST IMPROVEMENT!
WE MAY HAVE JUST TAPPED INTO THIS STUFFS HIDDEN POTENTIAL! HEH-HEH!
NOW, GET HER STUFF AND WE'LL GET OUT OF HERE!


READY TO GO, GORGEOUS?
WE GOIN' TO THE CLUB?
NO! I KNOW WHERE A GREAT PARTY IS!
YAY! I LOVE PARTIES! CAN I CALL MY BESTIES SO THEY CAN COME TOO?
UHHH... SURE YOU CAN, BABE! BUT LATER!


YOU KNOW, AS MUCH AS I'VE ALWAYS WANTED TO GET INTO HER PANTIES, I'M NOT SURE THIS IS THE BEST WAY TO DO IT!
SO, IN OTHER WORDS...
DITTO! BUT AS CRAZY AS RONNY'S PLAN... OR LACK OF ONE... IS, THIS MAY BE OUR ONLY CHANCE!
GO WITH THE FLOW, MAN! GO WITH THE FLOW!


A short time later...
HERE WE ARE!
WE'RE THE, UHHH... PRE-PARTY! WE JUST NEED TO GET IT STARTED!
BUT YOU SAID THERE'D BE A PARTY! WHERE'S THE PARTY?


WELL THEN, LET'S GET THIS PARTY STARTED!
WHO WANTS TO DO SHOTS? *GIGGLE!*


YOU HEARD THE LADY! SET UP SOME SHOTS!


OH, YEAH! THIS IS GONNA BE EPIC!


Much later...
OH... FUCK! WHAT TIME IS IT?


JESUS! WHAT WAS IN THOSE GODDAMN SHOTS!
I REMEMBER DOING A SECOND... OR WAS IT A THIRD? AND THAT'S ABOUT IT!


I DON'T 'MEMBER CRASHIN', OR EVEN WHO'S FUCKIN' BED THIS IS!
SHIT! I'M STILL SO FUCKED UP DON'T EVEN 'MEMBER IF I FUCKED ROBIN OR NOT!
HUH?
ZZZZZZ


ALL RIGHT! LOOKS LIKE ROBIN CALLED HER LITTLE FRIENDS OVER AFTER ALL!
DAMN CONSIDERATE OF HER SINCE SHE COCK-BLOCKED ME FROM GETTING THIS ONE LAST WEEK!
ZZZZZZ


OH, MAN! THAT IS ONE TASTY ASS... THAT I VAGUELY 'MEMBER TAPPING SOMETIME LAST NIGHT!
A TASTY ASS THAT NEEDS A SECOND GO... JUST IN CASE! HEH-HEH!
ZZZZZZZZZ


AND WILL YA *LOOK* AT THAT! THE *GRAND PRINCESS* HERSELF ALL *TUCKERED OUT* AFTER A NIGHT OF WHAT I'M *SURE* WAS THE *BEST SEX* SHE'S *EVER* HAD!
TOO BAD SHE WON'T REMEMBER *ANY* OF IT! HEH-HEH!


AND SINCE MY MEMORY'S A LITTLE FOGGY TOO, IT'S ONLY FAIR I REFRESH IT WITH A REPEAT PERFORMANCE!
ZZZZZZZZZ


I'VE ALWAYS LOVED TAKING CHICKS THIS WAY... 'SPECIALLY WHEN THEY HAVE ASSES THIS SPECTACULAR!


OH, YOU ARE ONE TIGHT BITCH, AREN'T YOU? DOESN'T SURPRISE ME, THOUGH! DOUBT YOU LET ANYONE NEAR YOUR PERFECTLY PRISTINE ASS!
AT LEAST TILL NOW! HEH-HEH!


I KNEW THAT STUCK UP BIT WAS JUST AN ACT! EVEN ASLEEP YOU JUST LOVE GETTIN' IT UP THE ASS!
WELL I'M HERE TO OBLIGE YOU, PRINCESS! *CHUCKLE!*
UUNGH!


OH, YEAH! GIMME THAT ASS, BITCH! YOU LOVE IT!
OOOHHHH ...
whoomp whoomp whoomp


Meanwhile, downstairs...
HEY! MAX! YOU HERE?
ANYONE? HELLO?
whoomp whoomp whoomp


OKAY, THIS IS BULLSHIT! WE ALL GET A CRYPTIC EMAIL FROM CRAWFORD LAST NIGHT ABOUT A HUGE "GOING OUT OF BUSINESS" SALE THIS MORNING AND NOW THE FUCKER ISN'T EVEN HERE!
THIS BETTER BE FOR REAL, 'CAUSE WITH ALL THE END OF SEMESTER PARTYING COMING UP, I NEED TO STOCK UP ON THOSE MAGIC PILLS OF HIS!
OH, FUCK YEAH!
whoomp whoomp whoomp
UMMM... I THINK I KNOW WHERE HE IS!


AW, FUCK, MAN! I DO NOT NEED TO HEAR THAT SHIT FIRST THING IN THE MORNING!
TELL ME ABOUT IT!
HEY, MAX! PULL OUT AND GET YOUR ASS DOWN HERE!


SINCE WHEN DID YOU MOVE IN HERE, CHASE?
YEAH... WE HEARD! UGH!
WHA' THE HELL YOU LOSERS MAKIN' SO MUCH NOISE ABOUT?
DIN'T! JUST TAKIN' CARE OF SOME UNFINISHED BUSINESS FROM LAST NIGHT! HEH-HEH!


Y'ALL JUST JEALOUS *YOU* DIN'T WAKE UP IN THE MIDDLE OF A *BABE SAMMICH!*
NOTHIN' LIKE TAPPIN' A *FINE* PIECE O' ASS *FIRST* THING IN THE MORNIN'! HEH-HEH!
HELL! I *MAY* JUST GO RIGHT BACK UP FOR *SECONDS!*
WHATEVER! JUST WAIT TILL WE *LEAVE* FIRST, OKAY? AND TELL *MAX* TO GET HIS ASS *DOWN* HERE!


WE... WASS ALL THE NOISE 'BOUT DOWN HERE?
AN' WHY'S MY BUTT HURT SO MUCH?
HOLY SHIT!
HEY, HOT STUFF! READY FOR ANOTHER GO AROUND? HEH-HEH!
WHAT THE FUCK?!


JESUS! IS THAT YOU, MCKEE?
YEAH...'COURSE ! WHA TIME IZIT? WE STILL PARTYIN'?
MAN... FEEL SOOO FUNKY!
CAN'T IMAGINE WHY? HEH-HEH!
WAIT! WHA...? WHA TH' FUCK?


GET YOUR ASS DOWN HERE, CRAWFORD! YOU GOTTA SEE THIS!
WHA' TH' FUCKS ALL THE NOISE DOWN HERE?
NO, NO, NO, NO...
WHOA! WHEN'D MY HAIR GET SO LONG?


WHYZ THAT CHICK NAKED?
OH, MAN! THIS SHIT IS GOLD! HEH-HEH!
AN' WHEN'D I GET TITS?
OH SHIT... OH SHIT... OH SHIT...


Meanwhile, on the other side of campus...
OH MY GOD! THIS IS GOING SO MUCH BETTER THAN I EVER THOUGHT IT WOULD!
PICTURES OF THOSE THREE WILL BE ALL OVER SOCIAL MEDIA WITHIN THE HOUR!
WE WON'T EVEN HAVE TO RELEASE ANY OF THE VIDEO WE HAVE!
THANK GOD! I NEVER WANT TO HAVE TO SEE WHAT WENT ON IN THAT BEDROOM EVER AGAIN! UGH!


JUST A TESTAMENT TO THE QUALITY OF YOUR WORK AND HOW MUCH OF A SLIMEBALL RONNY IS!
I CAN'T BELIEVE HOW REALISTIC THOSE TWO LOOK! I KNEW YOU WERE GOOD, BUT... JESUS!
IT'S WHAT I DO, SWEETIE! GIVEN A LITTLE MORE TIME, EVEN THE GUYS THAT AREN'T STILL FUCKED UP ON DRUGS WOULDN'T KNOW THEY WEREN'T REAL GIRLS!
YOU CAN'T IMAGINE HOW SUPREMELY SATISFYING IT WAS SPIKING THEIR DRINKS WITH THE SAME SHIT THEY DRUGGED ME AND SO MANY OTHER GIRLS WITH!
FORTUNATELY, THEY WERE VERY EASY TO FIND WHEN SKIP AND I WERE THERE YESTERDAY HIDING THESE CAMERAS!
UNLIMITED
POSITIVE


AND SWAPPING THEM OUT FOR IDENTICAL-LOOKING CINNAMON EXTRACT CAPSULES HELPED TIP ME OFF THAT THEY WERE TRYING TO DRUG ME AGAIN IN THE LIBRARY!
YOU DID SWAP THEM ALL BACK BEFORE WE LEFT, DIDN'T YOU?
WHY?
RIGHT AFTER SKIP AND I CARRIED THEIR UNCONSCIOUS CARCASSES UP TO THE BEDROOM!
WE EVEN LEFT A FEW CONSPICUOUSLY PLACED SO ANY CASUAL OBSERVER COULD SPOT THEM!
I BELIEVE WE'RE JUST ABOUT TO FIND OUT!


Knock knock
THIS IS THE POLICE! WE HAVE A WARRANT TO SEARCH THESE PREMISES!
OH, FUCK!!
HOW DID YOU GET A WARRANT SO EASILY?


WELL, IN CASE THE ANONYMOUS TIP ABOUT A DATE-RAPE DRUG RING ISN'T ENOUGH, YOU JUST HAVE TO FIND A MORE SYMPATHETIC JUDGE!
WHICH ISN'T DIFFICULT CONSIDERING HOW MANY JUDGES HAVE DAUGHTERS!
DO YOU THINK THEY'LL FIND ENOUGH EVIDENCE TO CONVICT THEM ALL?
ALMOST ASSUREDLY! ESPECIALLY IF ANY ONE OF THEM OPTS TO TESTIFY AGAINST THE OTHERS!
WHICH WILL PROBABLY BE IAN ONCE HE FINDS OUT WHAT RONNIE DID TO HIM! *CHUCKLE!*


MUM'S THE WORD! ALTHOUGH ONCE THE STORY BREAKS, I'M SURE SHE'LL SUSPECT WE HAD SOMETHING TO DO WITH IT!
NO SHIT! AUNT ABBY IS NO DUMMY!
AND REMEMBER, NOT A WORD OF ANY OF THIS TO ABBY!
TRUE, BUT SUSPECTING AND KNOWING ARE TWO VERY DIFFERENT THINGS! AS LONG AS SHE CAN CLAIM "PLAUSIBLE DENIABILITY", NONE OF THIS WILL EFFECT HER CAMPAIGN!
POSITIVE
VIBES


AS USUAL, I COULDN'T HAVE DONE ANY OF THIS WITHOUT YOUR HELP!
THANK YOU, UNCLE HANK!
I'LL NEVER TIRE OF HEARING YOU CALL ME THAT!


COME ON, NORA! I BELIEVE SOMEONE HERE HAS FINALS TO STUDY FOR!
GIGGLE! THANKS... SIS!
SAY NO MORE! GOOD LUCK... SIS!


SIGH!
POSITIVE
VIBES
STREET WEAR
URBAN STYLE


A few days later...


DID YOU NOTICE WHO ALL DIDN'T SHOW UP FOR FINALS TODAY?
I HEAR THEY'VE MISSED ALL THEIR FINALS!


CAN YOU BLAME THEM? I MEAN, HAVE YOU SEEN THOSE PICTURES?
WHO HASN'T? HEH-HEH!


A few days later...
I WOULDN'T ACTUALLY SAY I "ACED" THEM!
UMM, YEAH!
I HEAR YOU ACED YOUR FINALS! NICE JOB!
DID YOU GET "A"S ON ALL OF THEM?
ACED!


NO! BUT I'M SURE IT'S JUST TO CONGRATULATE YOU ON ACEING YOUR FINALS AND PUMPING YOU UP FOR THE BAR EXAM!
I MEAN, WHAT ELSE COULD IT POSSIBLY BE?
DID ABBY SAY WHY SHE WANTED TO SEE ME?
UH... NOTHING I CAN THINK OF!
UH-OH! TIME TO PLAY DUMB!


ROBIN, DEAR, I WANT TO START OFF BY SAYING HOW **PROUD** I AM OF YOU REGARDING YOUR FINAL EXAMS!
I'M **NOT** SURPRISED, THOUGH, CONSIDERING HOW **HARD** YOU'VE WORKED THIS LAST YEAR!
THANK YOU, ABBY! THAT MEANS A **LOT** TO ME!


I ALSO WANTED TO RELATE SOME NEWS THAT YOU MAY OR MAY NOT HAVE ALREADY HEARD CONCERNING YOUR EX-ROOMMATES!
IF YOU MEAN THE PICTURES THAT HAVE FLOODED SOCIAL MEDIA THE LAST COUPLE OF DAYS, THEN YEAH... I'VE SEEN THEM!
AND ALTHOUGH SOME PEOPLE ARE SAYING THEY GOT PRANKED, I COULDN'T CARE LESS! CONSIDERING WHAT THEY PUT ME THROUGH BEFORE I MOVED OUT, IT'S NICE TO SEE THERE'S STILL A LITTLE KARMA IN THE WORLD!


I WHOLEHEARTEDLY AGREE! BUT I WASN'T TALKING ABOUT THOSE PICTURES!
YOU WEREN'T?
NO! THEY, AND SEVERAL OTHERS, WERE ACTUALLY ARRESTED THE OTHER NIGHT FOR ILLEGAL DRUG POSSESSION WITH INTENT TO DISTRIBUTE!
OH MY GOD! WHAT KIND OF DRUGS?
I DON'T KNOW THE SPECIFICS... YET! BUT I'M TOLD THEY WERE A NEW TYPE OF DATE-RAPE DRUG!
THOSE ASSHOLES!


NOW... I'M GOING TO ASK YOU THIS ONCE, AND ONCE ONLY, DEAR...
IS THERE ANYTHING GOING ON THAT I NEED TO KNOW OR BE CONCERNED ABOUT?
NOTHING AT ALL, ABBY!


FROM WHAT IT SOUNDS LIKE, THE PEOPLE RESPONSIBLE FOR SO MUCH GRIEF TO ME AND MANY OTHER GIRLS GOT COCKY AND CARELESS, RESULTING IN THEIR OWN DOWNFALL!
AND THAT'S ALL YOU WANT TO TELL ME ABOUT THAT?
YES! AND THAT I'M RELIEVED AND HAPPY TO SEE THEM FINALLY GET WHAT'S COMING TO THEM!
AS AM I!


NOW THAT WE'VE GOT *THAT* NONSENSE OUT OF THE WAY, CAN WE *FINALLY* GET BACK TO WHAT'S *REALLY* IMPORTANT?
LIKE GETTING *THIS* ONE READY FOR HER IMPENDING *BAR EXAM AND* THE PROMOTION OF A NEW *NAMED PARTNER* IF AND WHEN *YOU* WIN YOUR *ELECTION* NEXT WEEK?
HINT, HINT! WINK, WINK! NUDGE, NUDGE!
I *AGREE!* WE HAVE *ENOUGH* ON OUR PLATES WITHOUT *WASTING* ANY OF *OUR* TIME WORRYING ABOUT A FEW *LOATHSOME* CREATURES!


AND AS MUCH I'D LOVE TO ORDER YOU TO IMMEDIATELY HUNKER DOWN AND START STUDYING FOR YOUR EXAM, I KNOW YOU'LL DO NO SUCH THING UNTIL AFTER THIS ELECTION IS OVER!
SO, IF I PROMISE NOT TO EVEN MENTION THE BAR EXAM UNTIL AFTER THE ELECTION, WILL YOU PROMISE TO ADHERE TO THE POST-ELECTION STUDY SCHEDULE I ASSIGN YOU TO?
YOU KNOW ME SO WELL! *GIGGLE!*
DEAL!


OKAY THEN! NOW LET'S GET OUT THERE AND GO WIN ME AN ELECTION!
NOTHING WOULD MAKE ME HAPPIER, ABBY!


WHY THE HELL WOULDN'T I? YOU'RE NOT THE ONLY ONE WHO THINKS OF HER AS HER OWN DAUGHTER, YOU KNOW!
YOU'RE STILL ON BOARD WITH HIRING HER, RIGHT?
JUST CHECKING!


NOW YOU'RE TALKIN' MY LANGUAGE! *GIGGLE!*
JUST MAKING SURE IN CASE I WIN AND SHE STILL WANTS TO COME TO WORK FOR DOBBINS, MCCOY AND WEATHERS!


Two months later, shortly after Abigail Morgan is sworn in as the new State's Attorney's General and Robin passes her bar exams with flying colors...
OLD MONEY
EAST CAFFEA .CO
OKAY LADIES! I'M AT THE COFFEE BODEGA AT 7TH AND 45TH! SO WHERE THE HELL ARE YOU?


YOU ALL MADE A HUGE DEAL ABOUT GETTING ALL DOLLED UP AND HITTING THE CLUBS TONIGHT TO CELEBRATE MY PASSING THE BAR!
BUT HERE I AM, WAITING FOR ALMOST A HALF HOUR, AND NOT A SINGLE TEXT FROM ANYONE!
NOT COOL, LADIES! NOT... COOL!


The New York
GREAT WAY TO START THE TWO-WEEK VACATION JILL *INSISTED* I TAKE BEFORE COMING TO WORK *FULL TIME!*
I *TOLD* HER I COULD START *RIGHT AWAY*, OR *EVEN* JUST TAKE *ONE* WEEK, BUT SHE WAS PRETTY DAMNED *ADAMANT* THAT I TAKE *TWO FULL WEEKS* TO MYSELF FIRST!


SHIT! I HAVEN'T HAD TWO WEEKS TO MYSELF SINCE I CAN REMEMBER!
AND WITH NORA, LIZ AND DESI ALL WORKING DURING THE DAYS, WHAT THE HELL AM I SUPPOSED TO DO WITH ALL THAT TIME?
FINALLY! SOMEONE HAS THE DECENCY TO EXPLAIN WHY THEY'RE SO DAMN LATE!
BUZZ


OKAY, THIS HAD BETTER BE GOOD, NORA! I'VE BEEN STANDING AROUND HERE SO LONG THE GUY IN THE BODEGA HAS ASKED ME OUT THREE TIMES AND I'M THIS CLOSE TO SAYING "YES"! WHERE ARE YOU GUYS?
I'M SO, SO SORRY, ROBIN! BUT THERE'S BEEN A CHANGE OF PLANS!
"CHANGE OF PLANS?" SERIOUSLY?
TAXI


EAST CAFFEA .CO
CORNISH PASTIES
SOMETHING CAME UP AT THE LAST MINUTE AND NONE OF US CAN MAKE IT!
WHAT KIND OF "SOMETHING" COULD MAKE ALL OF YOU CHANGE PLANS SO DAMN SUDDENLY?
YOU'LL UNDERSTAND EVENTUALLY! BUT FOR NOW, JUST KNOW THAT WE MADE ALTERNATE PLANS FOR YOU!
YOU MADE ALTERNATE PLANS FOR ME? WHAT THE HELL, NORA?


EXCUSE ME, MISS!
YES?!
I MEAN, THESE HAD BETTER BE PRETTY SPECTACULAR PLANS CONSIDERING HOW MUCH I WAS LOOKING FORWARD TO THIS!
UGH! HOLD ON, NORA! I THINK THE BODEGA GUY HAS FRIENDS!


I'M IN TOWN FOR TWO WEEKS WITH NOTHING TO DO! CAN YOU SUGGEST ANY ACTIVITIES THAT MIGHT INTEREST A GUY LIKE ME?
Access city services here.


ROBIN? YOU STILL THERE? ROBIN?


TWO WEEKS, HUH? OH, I THINK WE CAN COME UP WITH A FEW THINGS THAT MIGHT INTEREST A GUY LIKE YOU!


Access city services here.
WiFi
ATM
YEAH... I THINK HE'S *THERE!*
'CAUSE I *HEARD* HIS VOICE! *THAT'S* HOW!


Access city services here.
HANG UP THE PHONE, SWEETIE! HANG UP THE...
OH HELL... NEVER MIND!


EAST CAFE
Access city services here.
DISCOVER THE CITY
TALK TO YOU IN A COUPLE OF WEEKS, SWEETIE! LOVE YOU!
Fin