
RUNAWAY
CHAPTER-19
BY-IZUMISAN


IT'LL BE NEXT WEEK!


ALRIGHT, THEN.
I'LL FINALIZE HER NAME.
DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT. I'LL HANDLE THAT.
BESIDES, I TOLD YOU I NEED TWO NEW FACES
FOR THIS SHOOT ANYWAY. WITH YOUR SISTER,
AT LEAST HALF MY WORK IS ALREADY DONE.
THAT WOULD BE GREAT!
HOPE THAT WON'T BE A PROBLEM,
SINCE SHE DOESN'T HAVE ANY EXPERIENCE.
ANYWAY, THANKS FOR YOUR HELP!
AND... THERE'S SOMETHING I WANTED
TO ASK YOU. ABOUT WHAT YOU
SAID YESTERDAY...


DO YOU... REALLY THINK KEN HAS THAT KIND OF FEELINGS FOR ME?
I-I DON'T KNOW... BUT NOW THAT YOU MENTION IT...WHEN I THINK ABOUT ALL THE THINGS HE'S DONE FOR ME... I GUESS YOU MIGHT BE RIGHT.
OBVIOUSLY! DID YOU THINK I WAS JOKING?
消火器


BUT... I SWEAR, I'VE ALWAYS THOUGHT OF HIM AS JUST A FRIEND AND I DON'T WANT ANYTHING ELSE.
THEN, IF YOU'RE ALREADY CLEAR ABOUT EVERYTHING ON YOUR END, I'D SAY TALK TO HIM SOON, BEFORE HE GETS ANY MORE SERIOUS ABOUT YOU.


YEAH... YOU'RE RIGHT. I'LL TALK TO HIM AFTER WORK TODAY AND CLEAR EVERYTHING UP.


MEANWHILE...
Doux Bas


THIS LIPSTICK SHADE EMMA LEFT IS A LITTLE DARKER THAN THE ONES I'VE USED BEFORE... BUT IT ACTUALLY GOES REALLY WELL WITH THIS OUTFIT.
HMM... THANKS TO CLARA, I HAVE ALL THESE CLOTHES. OTHERWISE, I USED TO BE SO STUBBORN ABOUT BUYING NEW ONES. BUT I'M NOT EVEN SURE IF THESE SHORTS ARE MINE OR CLARA'S.
BEAUTY


WHATEVER, I DON'T THINK SHE'LL MIND IF I BORROW HERS... EVEN IF THEY ARE.
JULIA THINKS I DON'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT DRESSING UP... WELL, SHE WON'T GET A CHANCE TO TAUNT ME ABOUT IT AGAIN TODAY!
DON'T KNOW WHAT JACK HAS PLANNED. HE DIDN'T EVEN TELL US WHERE WE'RE GOING.
WISH ALICE COULD'VE COME TOO... BUT SHE HAD TO GO ON A FAMILY TRIP. WELL, IT'S FINE... AT LEAST JULIA IS COMING.


OH, THEY MUST BE HERE ALREADY!
BZZZ...
BZZZZ...

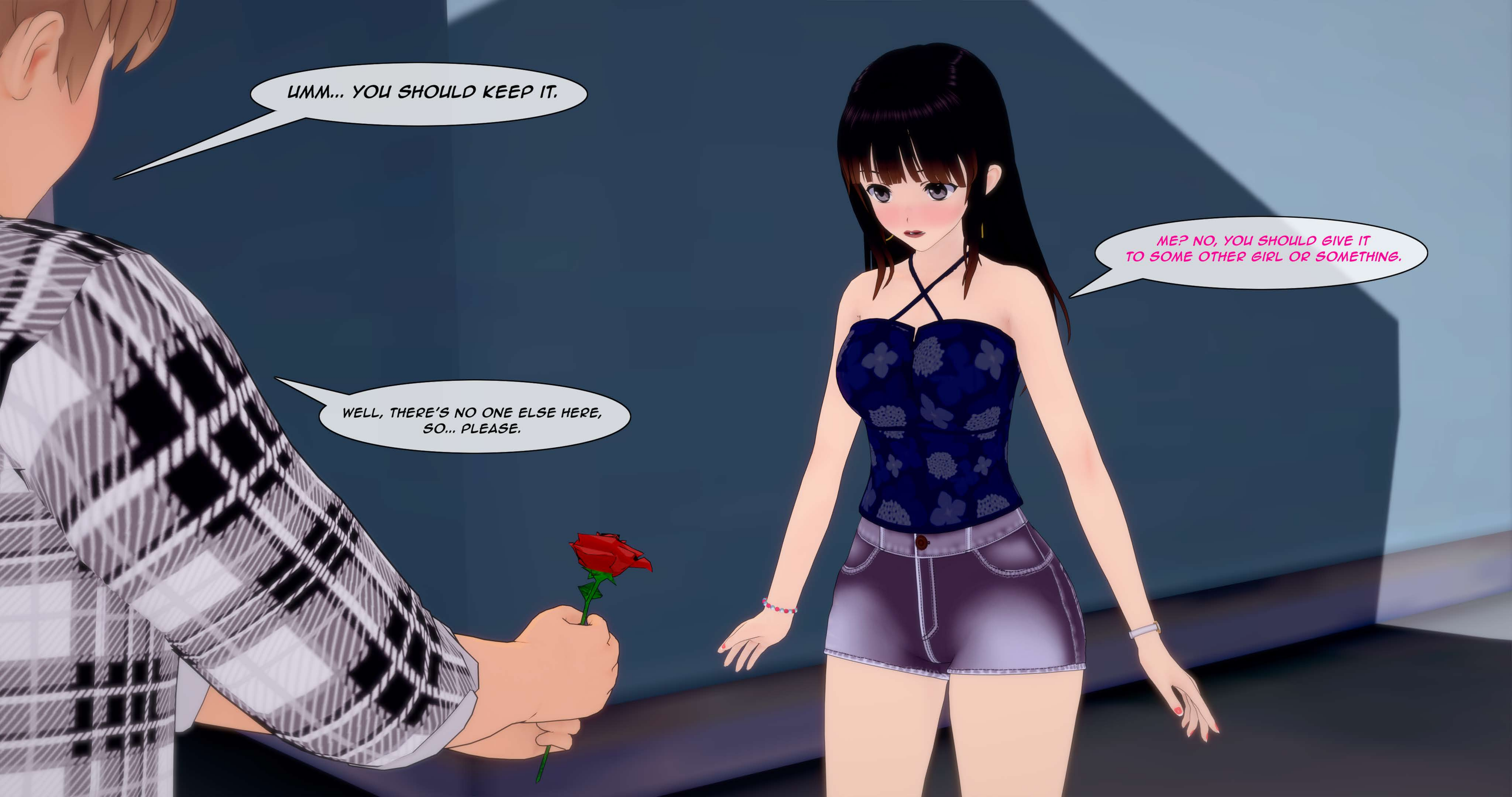

THIS IS FOR YOU! THANKS FOR AGREEING TO GO ON A DATE WITH ME!

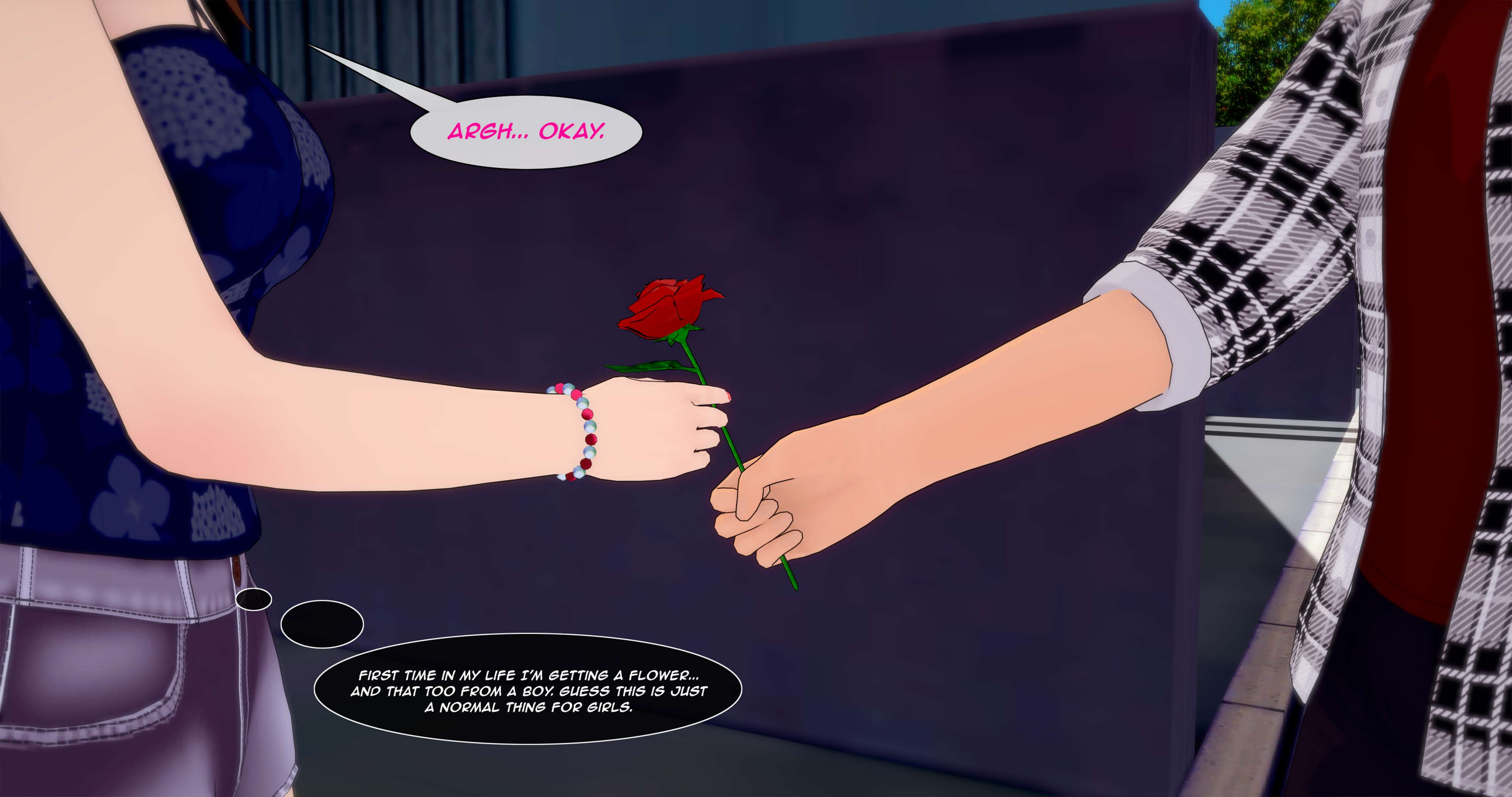

SHIT... WHAT A STUPID THING TO SAY.
SHE PROBABLY DOESN'T EVEN REALIZE THAT
I WAS ACTUALLY ASKING HER OUT ON A DATE.
EVEN THOUGH I FINALLY WORKED UP
THE COURAGE TO ASK HER OUT YESTERDAY,
SHE PROBABLY JUST THOUGHT IT WAS A NORMAL
OUTING... AND EVEN INVITED JULIA ALONG.


HONESTLY I DIDN'T THINK JULIA WOULD ACTUALLY HELP ME LIKE THIS. SHE TOLD MIA SHE'D COME, BUT THEN TOLD ME SHE WOULDN'T BE COMING AFTER ALL... JUST SO I COULD SPEND TIME ALONE WITH MIA.
AHH... ALRIGHT, I CAN'T LET A CHANCE LIKE THIS GO TO WASTE.
HEY, SORRY! HOPE YOU GUYS DIDN'T HAVE TO WAIT TOO LONG.


I JUST SAW SOMETHING...
DID YOU HIDE SOMETHING BEHIND YOUR BACK?
AHH, YOU'RE HERE...
NO, NO, IT WASN'T THAT LONG.


OH, IT'S JUST A FLOWER.
UMM... IT'S FOR YO--
I MEAN... I WAS COMING FROM HOME AND SAW A LADY SELLING FLOWERS ON THE ROADSIDE. I THOUGHT I'D BUY ONE TO SUPPORT HER.
WHO'S THAT FOR?
OH... THAT'S NICE OF YOU.


UMM... YOU SHOULD KEEP IT.
WELL, THERE'S NO ONE ELSE HERE, SO... PLEASE.
ME? NO, YOU SHOULD GIVE IT TO SOME OTHER GIRL OR SOMETHING.


ARGH... OKAY.
FIRST TIME IN MY LIFE I'M GETTING A FLOWER... AND THAT TOO FROM A BOY. GUESS THIS IS JUST A NORMAL THING FOR GIRLS.


BY THE WAY, WHERE'S JULIA? WEREN'T YOU SUPPOSED TO PICK HER UP FIRST? HER PLACE IS NEAR YOURS.
HUH? BUT I TEXTED HER THIS MORNING. SHE DIDN'T MENTION ANYTHING TO ME.
OH, I CALLED HER BEFORE HEADING OVER. SHE SAID SHE WASN'T FEELING WELL, SO SHE DECIDED NOT TO COME.
GUESS SHE SUDDENLY FELT SICK. MAYBE IT'S SOME KIND OF VIRAL INFECTION... AND SHE DIDN'T WANT US TO CATCH IT TOO, HAHA.

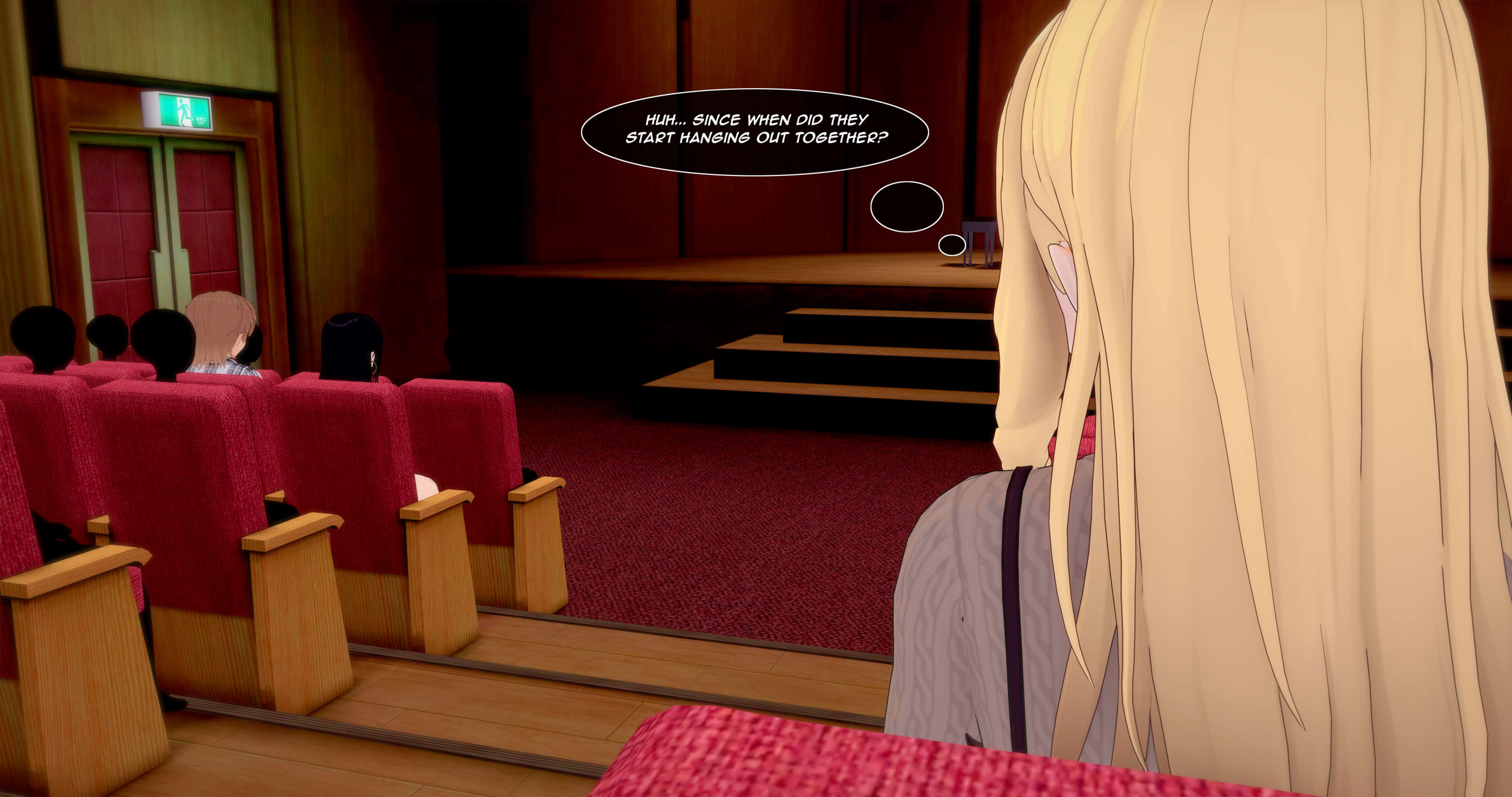

SHE ALSO SAID WE SHOULDN'T CANCEL OUR PLANS JUST BECAUSE SHE COULDN'T MAKE IT. SO... I THINK WE SHOULD STILL GO, RIGHT?
THAT MEANS IT'LL JUST BE ME AND HIM? MAYBE I SHOULD SAY NO TOO...
BUT THAT MIGHT LOOK BAD. HE HELPED ME WITH MY ASSIGNMENT THE OTHER DAY, AND HE CAME ALL THE WAY HERE TO PICK ME UP. HE MUST HAVE MADE PLANS FOR TODAY TOO.
HMM... IT'S BETTER THAN STAYING HOME ANYWAY. CLARA WILL BE BACK SOON, SO I SHOULD LEAVE BEFORE SHE GETS BACK.




AFTER A WHILE...




CLAP
CLAP
CLAP
WOW! THAT WAS AMAZING!
CLAP
CLAP
CLAP
CLAP
CLAP


HUH... SINCE WHEN DID THEY START HANGING OUT TOGETHER?


SOMETIME LATER...
GLAD YOU LIKED IT! YOU KNOW, HE'S ONE OF THE TOP PIANISTS. I'VE BEEN WANTING TO SEE HIM PERFORM FOR SO LONG.


I WASN'T EXPECTING IT TO BE THIS GOOD. BUT WATCHING THE PERFORMANCE LIVE, WITH THE WHOLE HALL PACKED... IT WAS SUCH A DIFFERENT EXPERIENCE. I GUESS IT MUST'VE BEEN PRETTY HARD TO GET TICKETS.
YOU COULD SAY THAT, BUT I WAS LUCKY. I CHECKED ONLINE YESTERDAY, AND THE SEATS WERE ALMOST ALL TAKEN. BUT WHEN I REFRESHED THE BOOKING PAGE, I SUDDENLY SAW TWO SEATS AVAILABLE. MAYBE SOMEONE HAD CANCELLED, SO I BOOKED THEM RIGHT AWAY.


HUH? YOU BOOKED THE TICKETS YESTERDAY? BUT YOU SAID JULIA ONLY CHANGED HER PLANS AT THE LAST MINUTE TODAY. DID YOU KNOW SHE WASN'T GOING TO COME?
CRAP... I JUST LET IT SLIP.


I-I THINK WE SHOULD GET SOME ICE-CREAM TOO. I'LL GO GET SOME.
HUH?

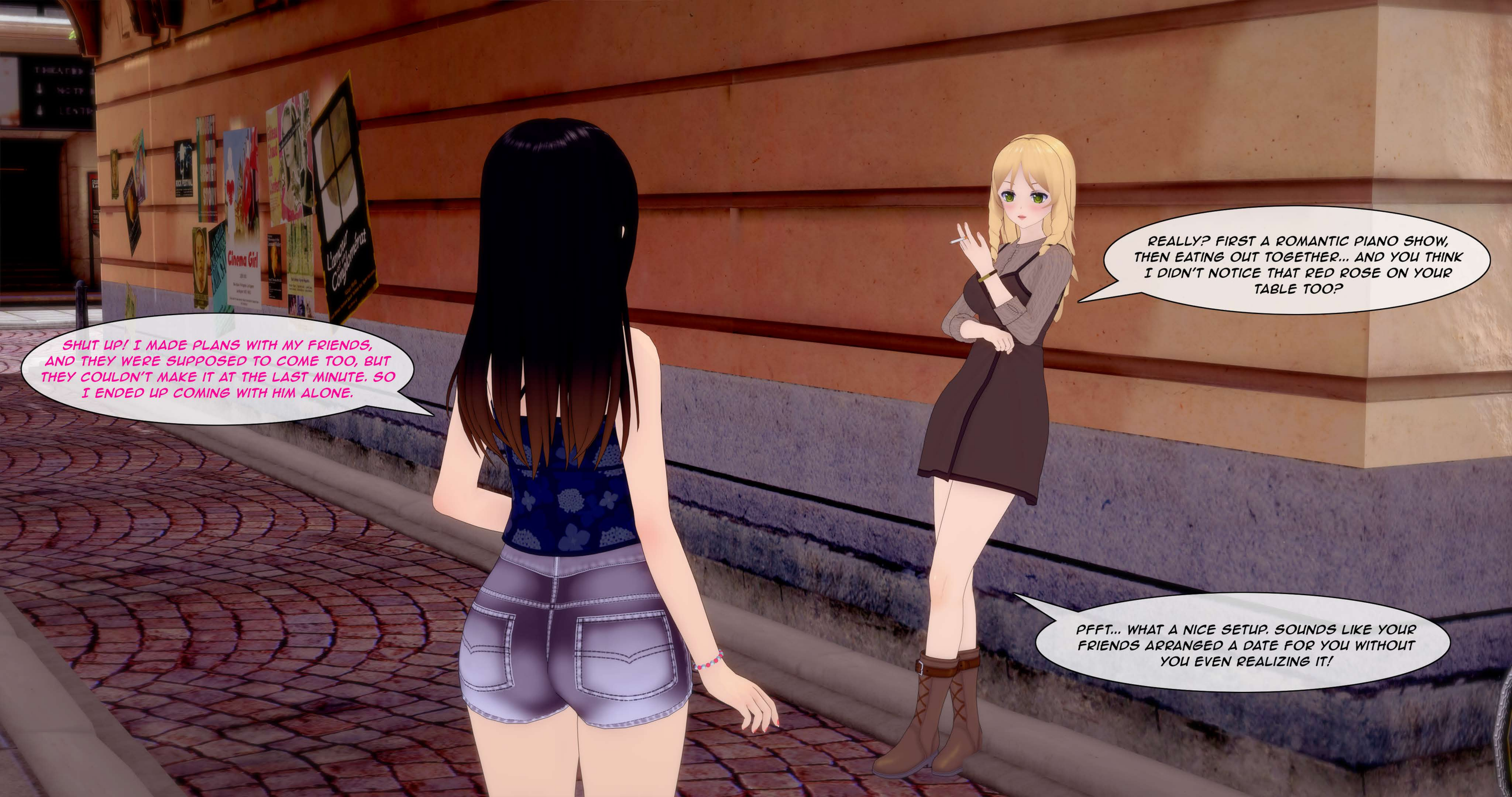

cinema
WHAT'S WRONG WITH HIM?
HE JUST IGNORED MY QUESTION. HE'S BEEN ACTING A LITTLE STRANGE SINCE YESTERDAY...
HE'S BEEN ACTING A LITTLE STRANGE SINCE YESTERDAY... AND JULIA... UH, SOMETHING DOESN'T FEEL RIGHT.


I SHOULD PROBABLY CALL HER.


A FEW MINUTES LATER...


GREAT... NOW SHE'S NOT PICKING UP MY CALLS.
MEN ARE SO BORING, AREN'T THEY?


TESSA? WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?
JUST LIKE YOU! I CAME HERE ON A DATE WITH A GUY, BUT HE WAS SUCH A BORE. SO I MADE AN EXCUSE TO SNEAK OUT FOR A SMOKE. AND WHAT ABOUT YOU? WHY ARE YOU RUNNING AWAY FROM YOUR DATE?
UGH... DON'T MAKE ASSUMPTIONS. I'M NOT HERE ON A DATE.


Cinema Girl
Lawyer Confidential
SHUT UP! I MADE PLANS WITH MY FRIENDS, AND THEY WERE SUPPOSED TO COME TOO, BUT THEY COULDN'T MAKE IT AT THE LAST MINUTE. SO I ENDED UP COMING WITH HIM ALONE.
REALLY? FIRST A ROMANTIC PIANO SHOW, THEN EATING OUT TOGETHER... AND YOU THINK I DIDN'T NOTICE THAT RED ROSE ON YOUR TABLE TOO?
PFFT... WHAT A NICE SETUP. SOUNDS LIKE YOUR FRIENDS ARRANGED A DATE FOR YOU WITHOUT YOU EVEN REALIZING IT!


WHAT?! H-HOW ARE YOU SO SURE?
SO... YOU'RE SAYING THIS WAS ALL PLANNED? NO... THIS CAN'T BE...
COME ON, AIRHEAD! USE YOUR BRAIN! IT'S DEFINITELY A DATE, EVEN IF YOU DON'T REALIZE IT.
HEY, DON'T MAKE SUCH A STRESSED-OUT FACE NOW! COME, I'VE GOT SOMETHING THAT'LL HELP YOU RELAX.


HERE, TAKE THIS!


NO! I'M NOT TAKING ANYTHING FROM YOU AGAIN. YOU DON'T KNOW HOW MUCH TROUBLE I GOT INTO BECAUSE OF YOU LAST TIME!
HMM... YOU TALK TOO MUCH.


WAIT! DON'T DO THIS AGAIN!
GRAB
GRAB


UMMM...


ROCK FESTIVAL
CLICK

STOP!

PUSH

PUSH

HEY, EASY! DON'T PUSH SO HARD.
YOU WANT ME TO FALL ON THE GROUND?

UGH... I TOLD YOU
TO STOP... WAIT... WH--


WHAT'S THIS WEIRD TASTE?
OOPS, I SLIPPED THE PILL INTO YOUR MOUTH. DID YOU SWALLOW IT? HAHA, DON'T WORRY, IT WON'T DO MUCH. JUST DON'T GO RUNNING AROUND, OR YOU'LL GET DIZZY.
HUH!?


J-JUST WHAT WERE YOU GUYS DOING?
SHIT!
AHH... POOR GUY! HE MUST'VE SEEN US KISSING...
L'isle Joyeuse
Cinema Girl


OH... I, UH... I WENT TO GET SOME ICE-CREAM FOR YOU, BUT YOU WEREN'T THERE WHEN I CAME BACK. SO I CAME LOOKING FOR YOU...
I-I DIDN'T KNOW YOU TWO WERE IN A THIS... KIND OF RELATIONSHIP.
SORRY... I DIDN'T MEAN TO INTERRUPT. I'LL, UH... LEAVE YOU TWO ALONE.
NAVET
TOMATE
POMME


JACK, WAIT!
YOU'VE GOT THE WRONG IDEA!
IT'S NOT WHAT YOU THINK!


DON'T TELL ME YOU'RE GOING TO FOLLOW HIM.
WHY DO YOU CARE ABOUT SUCH RUMORS?
HE SAW US KISSING... I NEED TO EXPLAIN EVERYTHING. OTHERWISE, IF HE TELLS ANYONE AT SCHOOL, PEOPLE WILL START SPREADING RUMORS ABOUT ME AGAIN.
ARGH... YOU WOULDN'T UNDERSTAND.

AHH... WHAT A WASTE.

I SHOULD PROBABLY HEAD BACK TOO. OTHERWISE, THAT GUY MIGHT THINK I GHOSTED HIM.

BUT... FOR A MOMENT, I FELT LIKE SOMEONE WAS WATCHING US FROM THAT CAR.

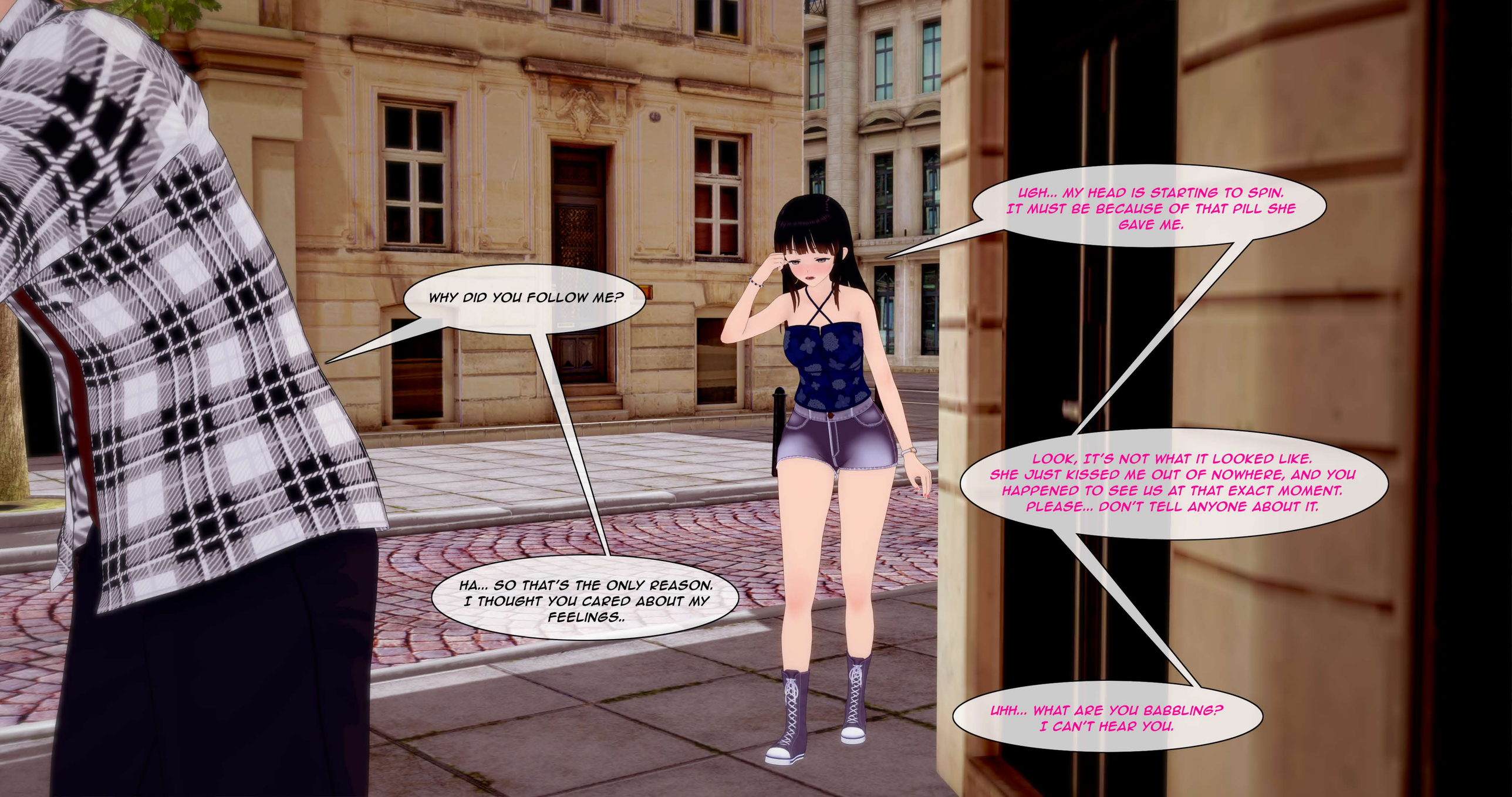

DAMN... THIS ISN'T WHAT I EXPECTED
LEICA
CAPTURE THE MOMENT
VARIO - SUMMICRON 1:2.8 - 4 / 15.5 - 128 ASPH.
1 INCH ULTRA CMOS


WHAT DO YOU THINK EMMA'S GONNA DO WHEN SHE SEES THIS PHOTO....
SEND TO EMMA

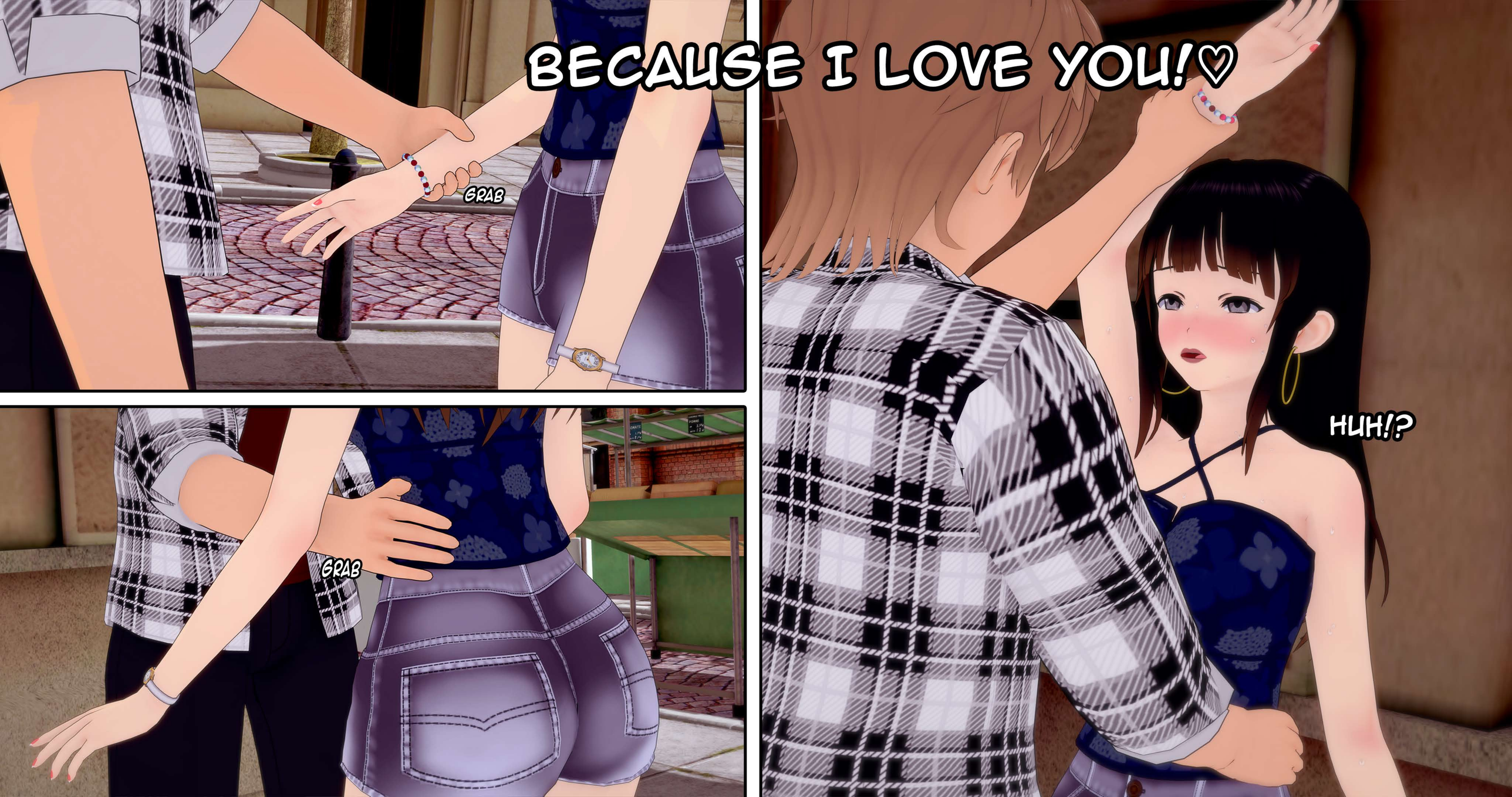

SERIOUSLY?!


I'M HERE WORKING MY ASS OFF TO GET US OUT OF THIS SITUATION,
AND HE'S OUT THERE CHEATING ON ME?!
THUD


A FEW MINUTES LATER...
HUFF
HUFF
STOP RUNNING! I CAN'T KEEP FOLLOWING YOU AROUND!


WHY DID YOU FOLLOW ME?
HA... SO THAT'S THE ONLY REASON. I THOUGHT YOU CARED ABOUT MY FEELINGS..
UGH... MY HEAD IS STARTING TO SPIN. IT MUST BE BECAUSE OF THAT PILL SHE GAVE ME.
LOOK, IT'S NOT WHAT IT LOOKED LIKE. SHE JUST KISSED ME OUT OF NOWHERE, AND YOU HAPPENED TO SEE US AT THAT EXACT MOMENT. PLEASE... DON'T TELL ANYONE ABOUT IT.
UHH... WHAT ARE YOU BABBLING? I CAN'T HEAR YOU.


HEY... I'M GETTING REALLY DIZZY.
CAN YOU JUST DROP ME OFF AT HOME? WE'LL TALK ABOUT THIS LATER. AND YOU SHOULD ALSO TELL ME THE TRUTH ABOUT WHY JULIA DIDN'T COME.
YOU WANTED TO KNOW THE TRUTH? FINE. I'LL TELL YOU RIGHT NOW!


GRAB
GRAB
BECAUSE I LOVE YOU!♡
HUH!?


SEEMS LIKE MY WORDS AREN'T ENOUGH. I'LL SHOW YOU, THEN.
N-NO, THIS CAN'T BE REAL... MAYBE I'M JUST HEARING THINGS.


GOD... NOT AGAIN. AND WHAT IS HE DOING WITH HIS OTHER HAND?
KISS


SQUEEZE
SQUEEZE


KISS
KISS
I CAN'T GET HIM TO LET GO OF MY HAND. HIS GRIP IS EVEN TIGHTER THAN TESSA'S...
EMMA... I MISS YOU! PLEASE GET ME OUT OF IT SOON.


AT THE SAME TIME...
HEY, I'M HERE!
YOU SAID YOU WANTED TO TALK ABOUT SOMETHING AFTER WORK.
SO, WHAT IS IT?


SO, YOU FINALLY CAME BACK TO ME?


Flamme Martini
HUH?! HOW MUCH HAVE YOU HAD TO DRINK?! YOU'RE MISTAKING ME FOR SOMEONE ELSE.
YOU SURE HAVE BEEN HAVING A LOT OF FUN WITH YOUR OTHER GIRLFRIEND.

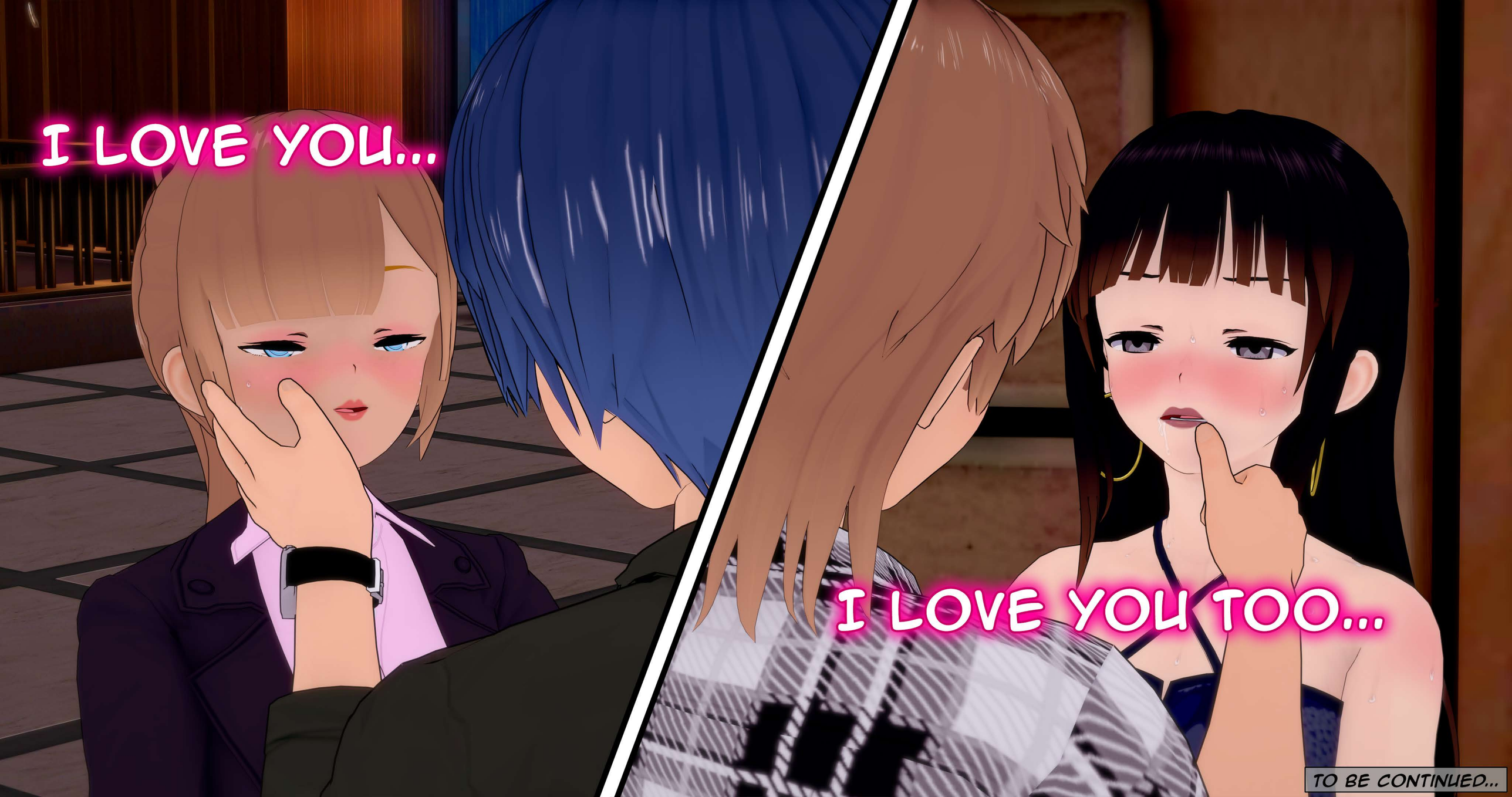

I KNOW EXACTLY WHO YOU ARE!
Martini


I MISS THE OLD YOU SO MUCH.
SHH... JUST KISS ME ALREADY!
WAIT, EMMA!


KISS


KISS
KISS
MMPH... PWEEZ... STA...PP...

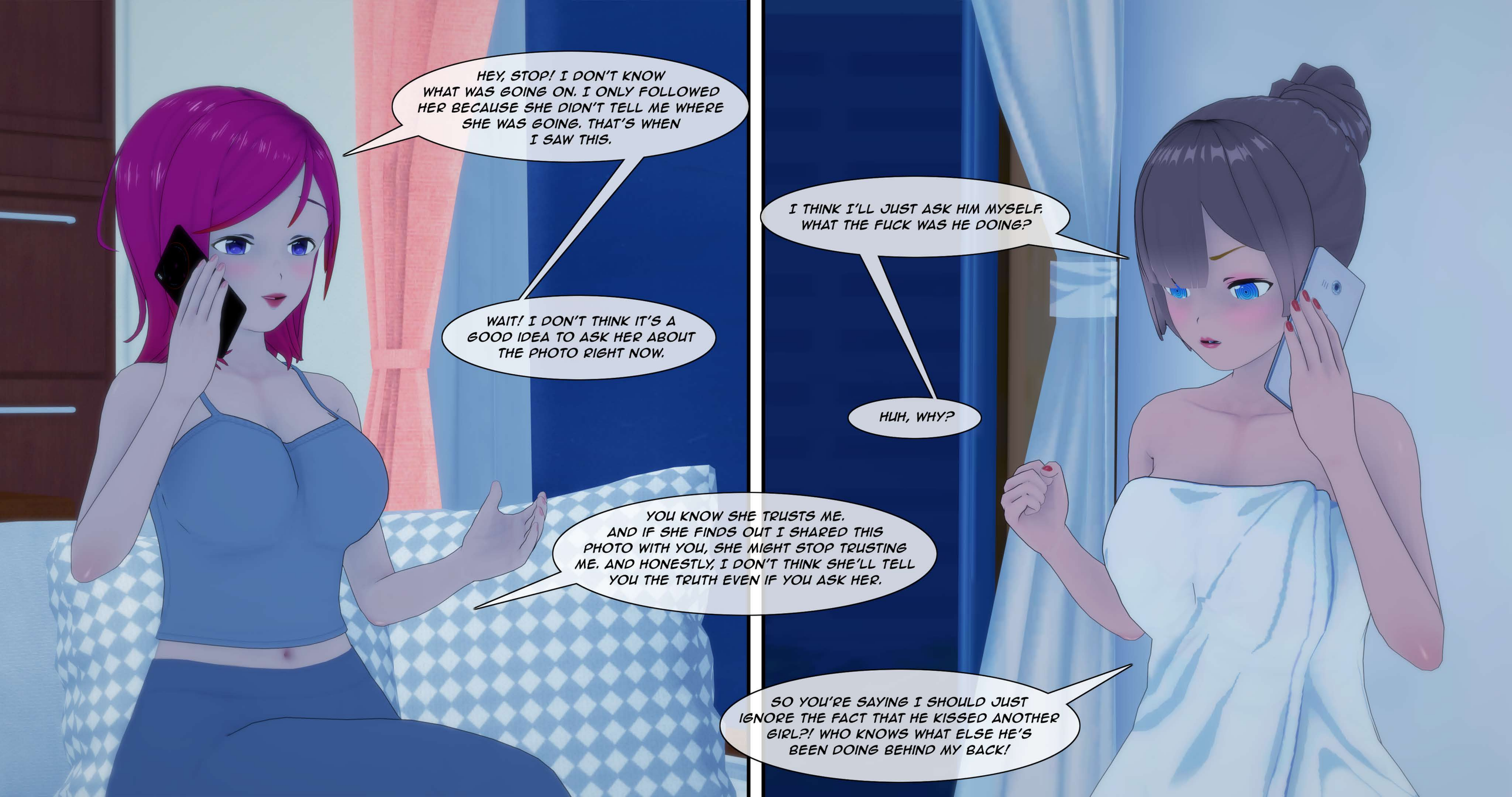

EARLIER, I DIDN'T EVEN REALIZE HOW STRONGLY I FELT ABOUT YOU. BUT SEEING YOU KISS SOMEONE ELSE... MADE ME REALIZE HOW MUCH I LOVE YOU. AND I'M NOT HOLDING BACK ANYMORE. HOPE YOU UNDERSTAND IT NOW.
OKAY, I WILL. BUT FIRST, SAY WHAT I WANT TO HEAR.
HUFF...
ARGH... I-I UNDERSTAND! PLEASE, LET GO NOW... YOU'RE HURTING MY HANDS!
HUFF...


I LOVE YOU...
I LOVE YOU TOO...
TO BE CONTINUED...


LATER THAT NIGHT...
HOLD ON...
YOU KISSED HIM?!

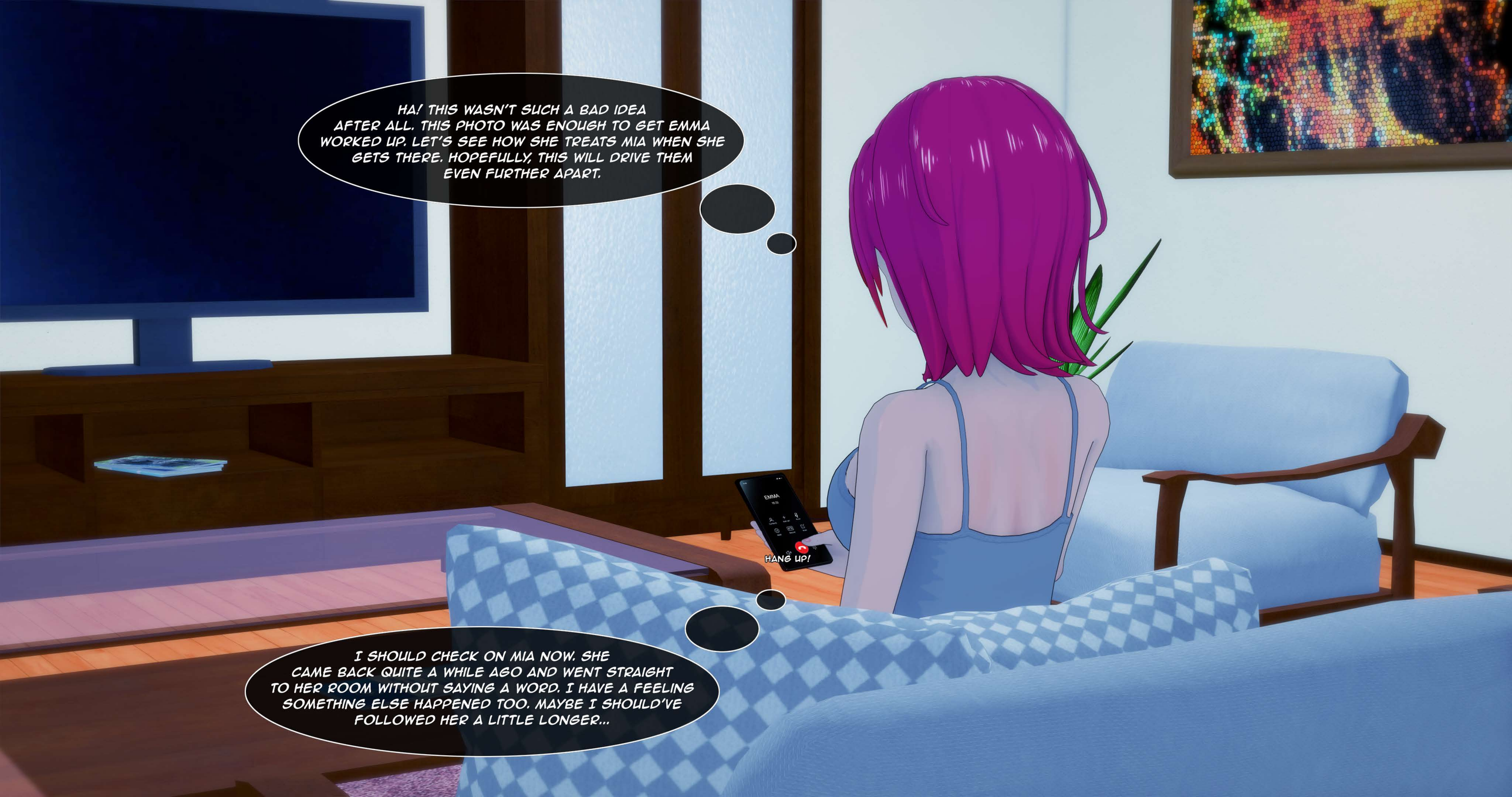

I WAS SO DRUNK.
I THOUGHT HE WAS ANDREW.
AND DON'T EVEN KNOW WHAT GOT INTO ME ALL OF A SUDDEN, AND I....
SHIT... WHAT HAVE I DONE? WHAT MUST KEN BE THINKING?
CALM DOWN. KEN PROBABLY UNDERSTOOD THAT YOU MISTOOK HIM.
AND BESIDES, DON'T BLAME YOURSELF FOR THIS. IT'S TOTALLY MIA'S FAULT. YOU MUST HAVE SEEN THE PHOTO I SENT YOU, RIGHT?
YEAH... I GOT SO ANGRY WHEN I SAW IT THAT I COULDN'T THINK STRAIGHT.
BUT AFTER I GOT HOME AND LOOKED AT THE PHOTO AGAIN CAREFULLY, I NOTICED SOMETHING...


CORN
IT LOOKED LIKE THAT OTHER GIRL WAS FORCING HERSELF ON HIM. HE LOOKED SHOCKED, TOO. I MEAN, HIS HANDS WEREN'T EVEN ON HER WAIST. THEY WERE JUST HANGING BY HIS SIDES.
YOU WERE THERE. WHAT WAS HAPPENING? WHY DIDN'T YOU INTERVENE? AND WHO WAS THAT GIRL?
YOU'RE STILL GIVING HIM THE BENEFIT OF THE DOUBT, HUH?
AISH... MAYBE I SHOULD'VE SAVED THIS PHOTO FOR LATER. HOPE THIS DOESN'T BACKFIRE ON ME...


HEY, STOP! I DON'T KNOW WHAT WAS GOING ON. I ONLY FOLLOWED HER BECAUSE SHE DIDN'T TELL ME WHERE SHE WAS GOING. THAT'S WHEN I SAW THIS.
WAIT! I DON'T THINK IT'S A GOOD IDEA TO ASK HER ABOUT THE PHOTO RIGHT NOW.
YOU KNOW SHE TRUSTS ME. AND IF SHE FINDS OUT I SHARED THIS PHOTO WITH YOU, SHE MIGHT STOP TRUSTING ME. AND HONESTLY, I DON'T THINK SHE'LL TELL YOU THE TRUTH EVEN IF YOU ASK HER.
I THINK I'LL JUST ASK HIM MYSELF. WHAT THE FUCK WAS HE DOING?
HUH, WHY?
SO YOU'RE SAYING I SHOULD JUST IGNORE THE FACT THAT HE KISSED ANOTHER GIRL?! WHO KNOWS WHAT ELSE HE'S BEEN DOING BEHIND MY BACK!


LOOK, MAYBE YOU'RE RIGHT, AND THAT OTHER GIRL REALLY WAS FORCING HERSELF ON MIA. YOU KNOW, THERE CAN BE ALL KINDS OF BULLYING AND STUFF AT SCHOOL, TOO.
OBVIOUSLY. WHAT ELSE COULD IT BE?
BULLYING? IS THAT REALLY POSSIBLE?
BUT STILL, IT'S NOT SOMETHING HE SHOULD HIDE FROM ME. BESIDES, RUBY SAID I COULD HAVE MY SISTER COME HERE THIS TUESDAY. I DOUBT I'LL BE ABLE TO ACT LIKE NOTHING HAPPENED WHEN I SEE HIM IN PERSON.


HMM... TUESDAY. YOU SHOULD DEFINITELY LET HIM COME. JUST ACT NORMAL. I KNOW IT'S NOT EASY, AND YOU HAVE EVERY RIGHT TO BE ANGRY.
I WOULD BE TOO IF I WERE IN YOUR PLACE, ESPECIALLY IF HE'S HIDING SOMETHING LIKE THIS, EVEN IF IT'S BECAUSE OF BULLYING OR ANYTHING. BUT STILL DON'T CONFRONT HIM DIRECTLY. IT'D BE BETTER IF HE TOLD YOU EVERYTHING ON HIS OWN, DON'T YOU THINK SAME?
YEAH... YOU'RE RIGHT.


HA! THIS WASN'T SUCH A BAD IDEA AFTER ALL. THIS PHOTO WAS ENOUGH TO GET EMMA WORKED UP. LET'S SEE HOW SHE TREATS MIA WHEN SHE GETS THERE. HOPEFULLY, THIS WILL DRIVE THEM EVEN FURTHER APART.
EMMA
HANG UP!
I SHOULD CHECK ON MIA NOW. SHE CAME BACK QUITE A WHILE AGO AND WENT STRAIGHT TO HER ROOM WITHOUT SAYING A WORD. I HAVE A FEELING SOMETHING ELSE HAPPENED TOO. MAYBE I SHOULD'VE FOLLOWED HER A LITTLE LONGER...


MEANWHILE, IN THE BEDROOM...
ARGH... I CAN'T STOP THINKING ABOUT IT...


THAT MOTHERFUCKER!
HE TOOK ADVANTAGE OF ME AGAIN...
AND THIS TIME, HE EVEN FORCED ME TO SAY, "I LOVE YOU"! WHO THE HELL DOES HE THINK HE IS?!
I ACTUALLY FORGAVE HIM FOR WHAT HE DID LAST TIME... AND STARTED THINKING OF HIM AS A GOOD FRIEND BUT HE... UGH... EVERY TIME THAT SCENE POPS INTO MY HEAD, I FEEL LIKE I'M GOING TO PUKE...
I WAS WRONG...
I SHOULDN'T HAVE TRUSTED HIM AGAIN.


WOW! ALREADY IN BED? IT'S NOT OFTEN I SEE YOU GO TO SLEEP THIS EARLY.
OR YOU'RE NOT ACTUALLY SLEEPING, ARE YOU?


AH, SO YOU WEREN'T ASLEEP AFTER ALL. WHAT'S WRONG? YOU SEEM TENSE, AND YOU HAVEN'T EVEN TOLD ME WHERE YOU WENT.
A-ACTUALLY, THERE IS SOMETHING HAPPENED TODAY I-I DON'T KNOW HOW TO TELL YOU...
HUH? SO YOU WANT TO HIDE THINGS FROM ME AGAIN? DID YOU FORGET YOU PROMISED YOU WOULDN'T KEEP ANYTHING FROM ME ANYMORE? IF YOU KEEP DOING THIS, DON'T EXPECT ME TO HELP YOU WHEN YOU GET STUCK IN A BIG PROBLEM AGAIN.
DON'T SAY THAT... I'LL TELL YOU EVERYTHING RIGHT NOW.


FIVE MINUTES LATER...
PWAHAHAHA!


SORRY... WHEN I SAW YOUR FACE, I THOUGHT SOMETHING SERIOUS HAD HAPPENED. BUT AFTER HEARING ALL THIS, I COULDN'T HELP BUT LAUGH.
WHY ARE YOU LAUGHING? THIS ISN'T FUNNY!
THIS IS SERIOUS! HE KISSED ME AGAIN, AND THIS TIME, HE WAS COMPLETELY SOBER! HE EVEN FORCED ME TO SAY, "I... I LOVE YOU"!


WELL, THEN, IT'S OBVIOUS THAT HE LIKES YOU.
HAHA! OKAY! WHAT HE DID WAS WRONG, BUT I CAN UNDERSTAND WHY HE ACTED THAT WAY. HE'S BEEN AROUND YOU THIS WHOLE TIME, SO IT'S PRETTY OBVIOUS THAT HE STARTED DEVELOPING FEELINGS FOR YOU. JUST THINK ABOUT IT FROM HIS PERSPECTIVE. HOW DO YOU THINK A GUY WOULD REACT IF HE SAW THE GIRL HE HAD A CRUSH ON KISSING SOMEONE ELSE?
T-THAT'S NOT WHAT I WANTED TO HEAR. BESIDES, I-I DON'T CARE WHAT HE THINKS OF ME.
WHATEVER... THAT STILL DOESN'T GIVE HIM THE RIGHT TO FORCE ME. SO... P-PLEASE, HELP ME DO SOMETHING ABOUT THIS... OTHERWISE, HE'LL JUST DO SOMETHING STUPID AGAIN.


WHAT, YOU WANT TO TAKE REVENGE? DID YOU FORGET THAT HE WAS THE ONE WHO SAVED YOU FROM THAT RAPIST?
DON'T COMPARE LUST WITH LOVE. AND IF YOU MESS WITH HIM, HE MIGHT TAKE IT PERSONALLY AND TRY TO GET BACK AT YOU. YOU KNOW WELL, WE'VE COME THIS FAR BECAUSE OF HIS FAMILY'S SUPPORT AND CONNECTIONS. SO INSTEAD OF MAKING THIS ANOTHER PROBLEM, WHY NOT TURN IT IN OUR FAVOR?
IN THIS CASE, I DON'T THINK HE'S ANY DIFFERENT.
HUH? I-I DON'T UNDERSTAND WHAT YOU'RE TRYING TO SAY.


I MEAN... WHY DON'T YOU JUST ACCEPT HIS PROPOSAL AND START DATING HIM?
WHAT?! ARE YOU OUT OF YOUR MIND?! HOW CAN YOU EVEN SUGGEST SOMETHING LIKE THAT?! I'M NOT GAY!


HEY, LET ME FINISH FIRST.
LOOK, YOU MUST'VE REALIZED BY NOW THAT HE'S PRETTY STUBBORN, JUDGING BY HOW HE ACTED TODAY. YOU CAN'T JUST AVOID HIM. INSTEAD, HAVING HIM AROUND COULD ACTUALLY BE VERY HELPFUL. HE'S ALREADY STOOD UP FOR YOU SEVERAL TIMES, AND IF PEOPLE AT SCHOOL KNOW YOU'RE WITH HIM, THEY MIGHT THINK TWICE BEFORE MESSING WITH YOU AGAIN--LIKE THAT GIRL TESSA. AND EVEN OUTSIDE OF SCHOOL, YOU KNOW YOU CAN COUNT ON HIM TO KEEP YOU SAFE.
YOU'RE SERIOUSLY SUGGESTING I DATE HIM JUST FOR PROTECTION?
EXACTLY. AND YOU DON'T HAVE TO GIVE HIM ANYTHING IN RETURN. YOU'VE SEEN HOW SOME GIRLS USE GUYS FOR THEIR OWN BENEFIT WITHOUT EVEN LETTING THEM GET PHYSICALLY CLOSE, RIGHT? YOU CAN DO THE SAME. JUST KEEP HIM AT A DISTANCE AND PRETEND TO BE HIS GIRLFRIEND ONLY FOR SHOW, UNTIL SCHOOL ENDS.


NOW DON'T MAKE THAT FACE. I'M JUST GIVING YOU AN IDEA. YOU CAN THINK IT OVER AND DECIDE FOR YOURSELF.
OH! AND I ALMOST FORGOT TO TELL YOU SOME GOOD NEWS! EMMA CALLED EARLIER! YOU CAN FINALLY GO VISIT HER!
I'VE BEEN WAITING TO SEE HER AGAIN, SO WHY AM I NOT HAPPY? MAYBE... AFTER EVERYTHING THAT HAPPENED TODAY, I'M JUST TOO EXHAUSTED TO FEEL ANYTHING. DO I REALLY HAVE TO DO WHAT CLARA IS SUGGESTING?
NO... SHE SAID IT'S COMPLETELY MY DECISION. AND ME? A GIRLFRIEND? THAT'S A TERRIBLE IDEA. I DON'T THINK IT'S NECESSARY. I'M SURE I CAN HANDLE THINGS WITHOUT DOING ALL THAT.


NEXT DAY...
THEN DON'T IGNORE ME.
I JUST WANT TO TALK TO YOU. CAN'T YOU AT LEAST GIVE ME A CHANCE?
ARGH... IF YOU TRY ANYTHING STUPID AGAIN, YOU'RE GOING TO REGRET IT.

A CHANCE? FOR WHAT?
WE'RE NOT FRIENDS ANYMORE...

SNATCH

AND I DON'T EVER
WANT TO TALK TO YOU AGAIN.

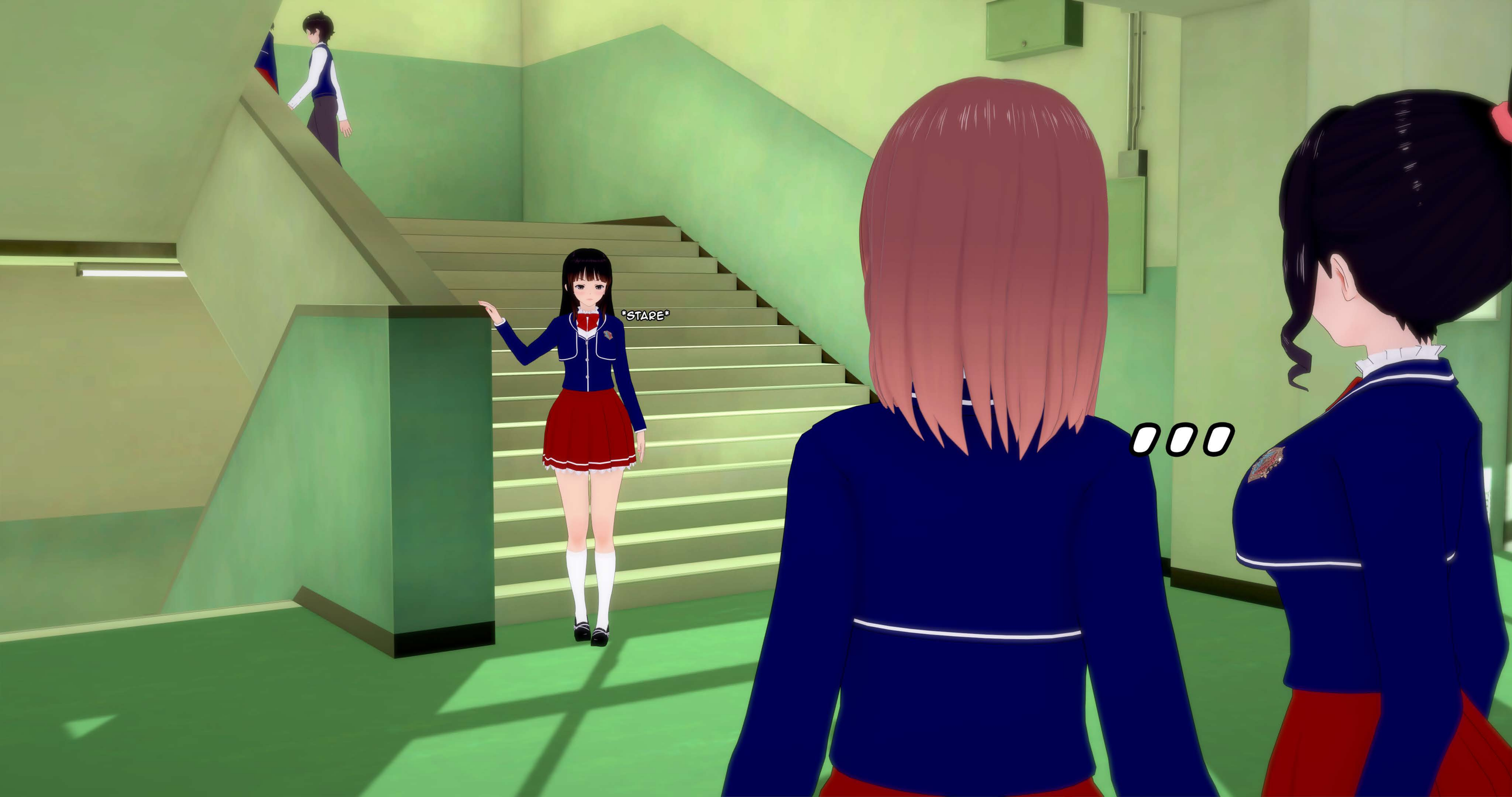

YOU'RE LUCKY I'M NOT REPORTING THIS TO THE TEACHER. BUT THAT DOESN'T MEAN I WON'T. SO STOP FOLLOWING ME AROUND!


DENY IT ALL YOU WANT,
BUT I'M NOT GIVING UP THAT EASILY. I'LL KEEP PURSUING YOU UNTIL YOU ACCEPT MY FEELINGS.
TCHHH...


WHAT A COCKY BASTARD.
CLARA WAS RIGHT.
HE REALLY IS STUBBORN. I CAN'T
KEEP AVOIDING HIM FOREVER...


HE'S NOT EVEN SCARED OF THE TEACHERS. UGH... THAT'S NOT EVEN AN OPTION. I CAN'T REALLY REPORT HIM... HE'S KEN'S BROTHER, AFTER ALL...
I NEED TO FIGURE SOMETHING OUT SOON... BEFORE HE DOES SOMETHING STUPID AGAIN.


OH, THERE YOU ARE!
WE WERE LOOKING FOR YOU. COME ON, LET'S GO TO THE CANTEEN.


STARE
...


HUH?! SHE JUST COMPLETELY IGNORED US!


SHE DIDN'T TALK TO US IN CLASS EITHER. BUT THE WAY SHE LOOKED AT YOU JUST NOW... YOU SURE YOU DIDN'T DO ANYTHING OR DID YOU?
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? I DON'T DO ANYTHING. MAYBE SHE'S DEALING WITH SOME PERSONAL ISSUES AND JUST WANTS SOME TIME ALONE.


I DON'T KNOW. I STILL HAVE MY DOUBTS ABOUT YOU.
THAT DUMBASS JACK MUST'VE MESSED THINGS UP. AND SHE MUST'VE FOUND OUT THAT I WAS THE ONE WHO SET UP THE DATE...


FUCK THEM ALL...
I'VE SPENT ENOUGH TIME AS A GIRL . I DON'T NEED ANY FRIENDS ANYMORE.
YES, I'LL SURVIVE ON MY OWN AND PROVE CLARA WRONG.


EMMA'S ENOUGH FOR ME. AND FINALLY... TOMORROW, I'M GOING TO SEE HER AGAIN. SHE MUST BE EVEN MORE EXCITED TO SEE ME THAN I AM TO SEE HER.


NEXT DAY...


LATER THAT EVENING, AT EMMA'S PLACE...
WELCOME, MIA!
YOU PROBABLY DON'T KNOW ME.
I'M RUBY, YOUR SISTER'S COLLEAGUE
AND ALSO HER FLATMATE.


HELLO. THANKS FOR HAVING ME. HOPE MY STAY HERE WON'T CAUSE YOU ANY PROBLEMS.
HUH? WHAT WORK? I DON'T UNDERSTAND.
YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE SO FORMAL. I'M JUST LIKE YOUR SISTER. BESIDES, I SHOULD BE THANKING YOU FOR AGREEING TO WORK FOR ME.
OH, GUESS EMMA DIDN'T TELL YOU ABOUT IT. DON'T WORRY, YOU WON'T HAVE TO DO MUCH. I'LL TELL YOU ALL ABOUT IT LATER. LET ME CALL EMMA FIRST. DON'T KNOW WHY SHE STILL HASN'T COME OUT. DIDN'T SHE HEAR THE DOORBELL...


EMMA!
OH! I WAS JUST ABOUT TO CALL YOU!


WHAT'S WITH ALL THIS LUGGAGE?! YOU'RE ONLY HERE FOR TWO DAYS, NOT A WHOLE MONTH!


U-UM... CLARA TOLD ME TO PACK SOME EXTRA CLOTHES, AND THERE ARE SOME BOOKS IN THE OTHER BAG. SHE SAID I SHOULDN'T MISS MY HOMEWORK WHILE I'M HERE...
WHATEVER... JUST GO FRESHEN UP FIRST. I'LL COOK SOMETHING FOR YOU. YOU CAN EAT IF YOU'RE HUNGRY.


I DIDN'T KNOW SHE WAS THIS STRICT WITH HER LITTLE SISTER. YOU MUST BE USED TO IT. HAHA, DON'T MIND HER. YOU MUST BE TIRED AFTER SUCH A LONG TRIP. COME ON, I'LL HELP YOU MOVE YOUR BAGS.
JL
MK
TO BE CONTINUED...