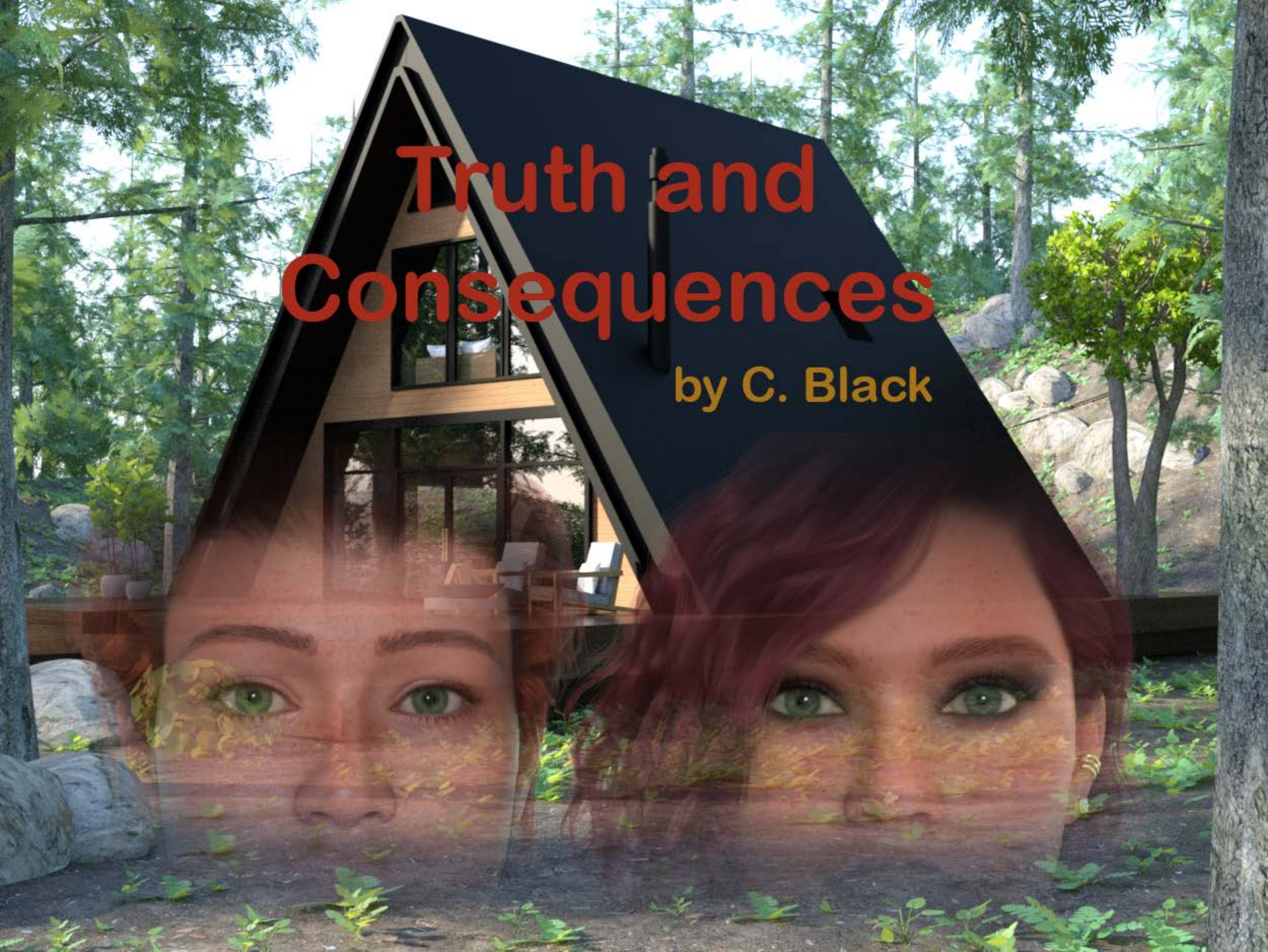


Truth and Consequences

by C. Black



It's a momentous day for Ryan Beckett,
as he hunts for his very first
apartment...

SO WHAT DO YOU THINK?
ALTHOUGH IT HAS A **SIMILAR**
FLOORPLAN TO THE **OTHER TWO**
VACANCIES ON THIS FLOOR, IT'S A BIT
ROOMIER AND HAS A **BETTER**
VIEW!





EXCELLENT! I
HAVE THE PAPERS
RIGHT HERE FOR YOU TO
SIGN! YOU CAN MOVE IN
TOMORROW!

WILL THERE BE ANY
OTHER NAMES ON
THE LEASE *BESIDES*
YOURS?

IT'S
PERFECT! I'LL
TAKE IT!

NOPE! IT'S
JUST ME!



WATSON CREEK,
OKLAHOMA, HUH? IS
THAT ANYWHERE NEAR
OKLAHOMA CITY?

SO WHAT
BROUGHT YOU *ALL*
THE WAY TO
MARYLAND?

NOT REALLY! IT'S ON A
BACK ROAD OF A *BACK*
ROAD ABOUT FOUR HOURS
SOUTHEAST OF *OKC*! IT'S NOT
MUCH MORE THAN A FEW HOUSES,
A POST OFFICE AND A
CONVENIENCE STORE!

I'M *NOT* 100%
SURE, TO TELL YOU THE
TRUTH! I *KNEW* IT WAS TIME
TO *LEAVE* OKLAHOMA AND, FOR
SOME REASON, *MARYLAND*
JUST SOUNDED *GOOD* TO
ME!



WELL, *GOOD LUCK*, MR.
BECKETT! AND *WELCOME*
TO *BALTIMORE*!

THANKS!

A man with short reddish-brown hair and green eyes stands in a modern kitchen. He is wearing a light blue button-down shirt with the sleeves rolled up and khaki pants. He has his hands on his hips and a slightly exasperated or determined expression. The kitchen features white upper cabinets, a stainless steel refrigerator, and a grey countertop. Three glass pendant lights hang from the ceiling. A speech bubble is positioned above his head to the right.

**SIGH!* I KNOW YOU
WOULDN'T APPROVE OF THIS,
MOTHER, BUT I COULDN'T STAY IN
WATSON CREEK ANY LONGER! I
HAD TO GET OUT AND ON MY
OWN!*

I **REALIZE** EVERYTHING YOU DID WAS TO KEEP **ME SAFE** AND **HEALTHY**, BUT I'M **OKAY** NOW... I **HAVE BEEN** FOR A LONG TIME! AND WITH YOU **GONE**, THERE'S NO REASON FOR **ME** TO **STAY** THERE! **NONE AT ALL!**



"I understand your *reluctance*
to allow me a *normal* life... at
least I do *now*! But that *wasn't*
always the case..."



"For *years* you kept me *isolated* from the other kids and I fought you *every chance* I could!"

BUT *I* SAW THE **HENDERSON** KIDS PLAYING OUTSIDE! WHY CAN'T *I* GO PLAY WITH THEM?

BUT *IT'S NOT FAIR!*

JUST BECAUSE *THEIR* PARENTS CHOOSE *NOT* TO WORRY ABOUT THE **PANDEMIC** DOESN'T MEAN *I'M* GOING TO!

THERE ARE *STILL* ALL SORTS OF **DISEASES** OUT THERE THAT CAN MAKE YOU *SICK... OR WORSE!*

DON'T ARGUE WITH ME, RYAN! NOW COME **BACK** INTO THE STUDY SO WE CAN **FINISH** YOUR **LESSONS** FOR THE DAY!

"Even when you *Finally* agreed to let me go out in public, it was *only* under your *strict guidelines!*"

YES, MOTHER!

I'LL DO MY BEST TO **SHUN** AS MANY AS **POSSIBLE**, MOTHER, BUT IT'LL BE **TOUGH** IN A **CLASSROOM FULL** OF **PEOPLE!**

REMEMBER, DRIVE **STRAIGHT THERE** AND THEN **STRAIGHT BACK!** NO **DETOURS** AND NO **STOPS** IN BETWEEN! YOU NEED TO BE **BACK** IN TIME FOR YOUR **MEDICATION!**

AND FOR **GOD'S SAKE**, KEEP **ANY** INTERACTIONS WITH PEOPLE TO A **MINIMUM!** THIS IS **NEW TERRITORY** FOR YOU!

DON'T GET **SASSY** WITH **ME**, YOUNG MAN!



A comic book panel depicting a conversation between two women in a modern kitchen. The woman on the left has short red hair and is wearing a green tank top and blue jeans, with a green backpack on her back. She is gesturing with her hands while speaking. The woman on the right has long grey hair and is wearing a black t-shirt and blue jeans. She is looking at the first woman and has her hand near her face. In the background, there is a kitchen counter with a stove, a wooden chair, and a large window looking out onto a garden. A speech bubble from the red-haired woman is at the top left, and another from the grey-haired woman is on the right. A third speech bubble is at the bottom left.

YOU ACT LIKE I'VE NEVER **SEEN** ANOTHER PERSON, MOTHER! I'VE BEEN TAKING CLASSES **ONLINE** SINCE HIGH SCHOOL! AND WITH THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE ONLY ABOUT **20 MILES AWAY**, THERE'S ESSENTIALLY **NO PLACE** FOR ME TO STOP BETWEEN HERE AND THERE!

IT'S **NOT** LIKE IT'LL COME UP IN **NORMAL** CONVERSATION, MOTHER! **DON'T WORRY!**

YOU **KNOW** WHAT I MEAN! YOUR **CONDITION** IS EXTREMELY **RARE!** AND VERY FEW PEOPLE, IF ANY, WOULD **UNDERSTAND** THE **LENGTHS** WE'VE GONE TO IN ORDER TO **CONTROL** IT!



I ALWAYS **HAVE**
BEEN, MOTHER! SEE
YOU THIS
AFTERNOON!

SIGH! JUST
PROMISE ME
YOU'LL BE
CAREFUL! OKAY?

AND EVEN THOUGH IT'S BEEN
TWO YEARS SINCE I'VE NEEDED
ANY MEDICATION AT ALL, I **STILL**
WAITED A FULL **SIX MONTHS** AFTER THAT
CAR WRECK THAT TOOK YOU FROM ME
TO SELL THE HOUSE AND MOVE OUT...
JUST TO BE SURE!

EVERYTHING'S GOING
TO BE **FINE**, MOTHER! I
JUST **WISH** YOU COULD BE
HERE TO **SEE** IT!



One week later...

**FINALLY! EVERYTHING
DELIVERED AND IN PLACE AND
THE LAST BOX OF STUFF
UNLOADED AND PUT AWAY! I'VE
DEFINITELY EARNED MYSELF A
LONG, HOT SHOWER!**



Knock, Knock!!

WHAT THE...?
WHO THE HECK
COULD THAT
BE?





HI THERE! I'M
SORRY TO DISTURB
YOU! MY NAME'S **SARA**
AND I **JUST** MOVED IN
DOWN THE HALL!

WELL I **HATE** TO BE
A TYPICAL **PEST** OF A
NEIGHBOR MY **FIRST** DAY HERE,
BUT I WAS JUST READY TO RELAX
AND **BINGE** SOMETHING ON MY
TV WHEN I REALIZED THE
REMOTE WAS **DEAD**!

I DON'T SUPPOSE **YOU**
MIGHT HAVE A COUPLE OF
AAA BATTERIES I CAN
BORROW?

UMM...
HELLO?

UH, **HI**, **SARA**! I'M
RYAN! WHAT CAN
I DO FOR YOU?



YOU'RE IN LUCK, SARA! AS IT
TURNS OUT, I JUST MOVED IN
ABOUT A WEEK AGO MYSELF SO I
PRETTY MUCH KNOW WHERE
EVERYTHING IS! FOLLOW
ME!

OH, YOU'RE
A LIFE
SAVER!

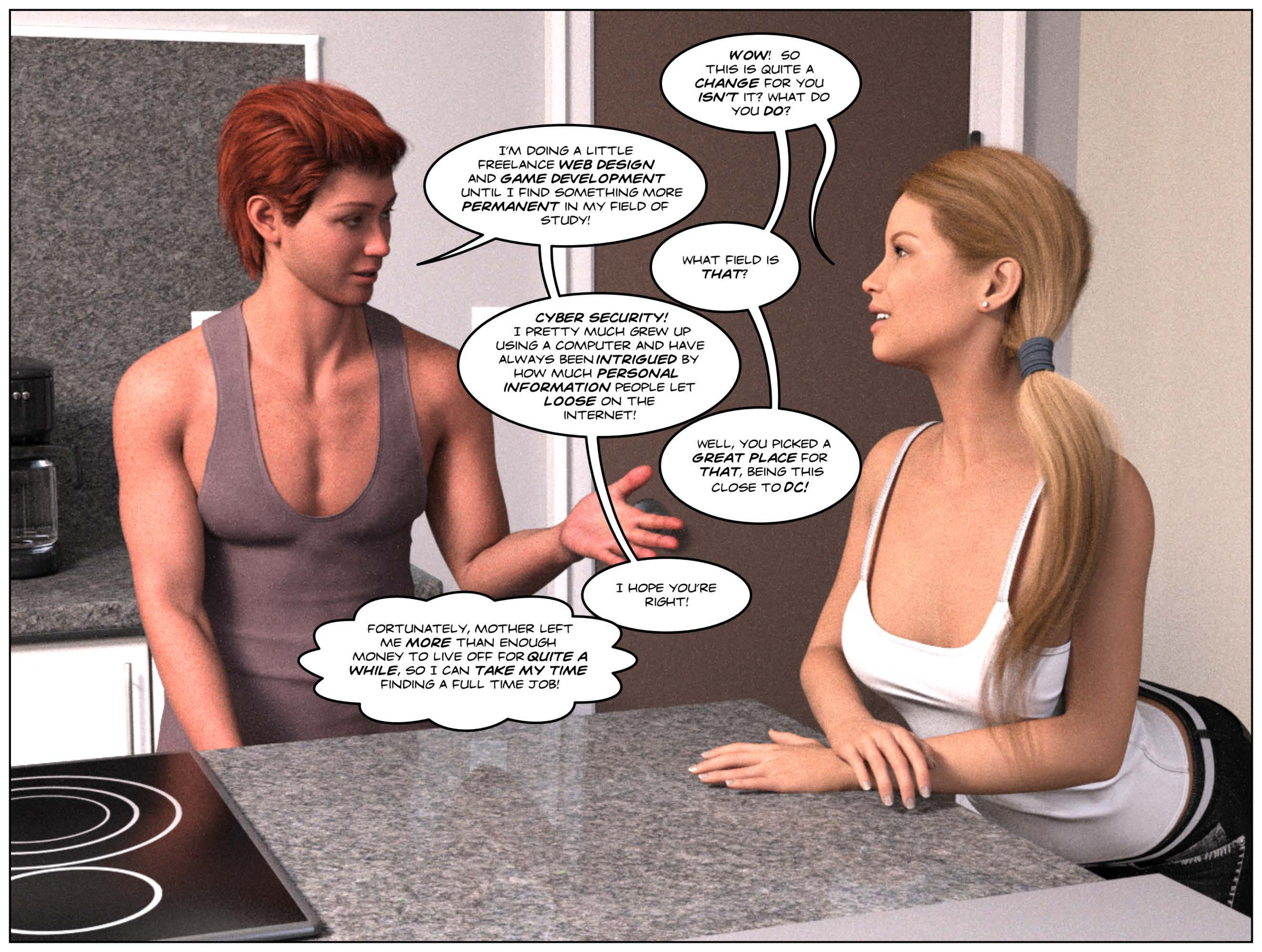


SO, ARE YOU *NEW* IN
TOWN LIKE *ME*, OR
JUST NEW TO THE
NEIGHBORHOOD?

OH, I *GREW UP* HERE IN
BALTIMORE! I JUST STARTED A
NEW JOB AS A *NURSE* AT THE
HEALTH CENTER DOWN THE STREET
SO I MOVED HERE TO *AVOID*
THE *COMMUTE*!

WHERE ARE *YOU*
FROM?

TINY LITTLE PLACE
IN OKLAHOMA I'M
SURE YOU'VE *NEVER*
HEARD OF!



WOW! SO
THIS IS QUITE A
CHANGE FOR YOU
ISN'T IT? WHAT DO
YOU DO?

I'M DOING A LITTLE
FREELANCE **WEB DESIGN**
AND **GAME DEVELOPMENT**
UNTIL I FIND SOMETHING MORE
PERMANENT IN MY FIELD OF
STUDY!

WHAT FIELD IS
THAT?

CYBER SECURITY!
I PRETTY MUCH GREW UP
USING A COMPUTER AND HAVE
ALWAYS BEEN **INTRIGUED** BY
HOW MUCH **PERSONAL**
INFORMATION PEOPLE LET
LOOSE ON THE
INTERNET!

WELL, YOU PICKED A
GREAT PLACE FOR
THAT, BEING THIS
CLOSE TO **DC!**

I HOPE YOU'RE
RIGHT!

FORTUNATELY, MOTHER LEFT
ME **MORE** THAN ENOUGH
MONEY TO LIVE OFF FOR **QUITE A**
WHILE, SO I CAN **TAKE MY TIME**
FINDING A FULL TIME JOB!



YOUR
BATTERIES,
M'LADY!

THANK YOU
SO MUCH,
RYAN!

HEY, IF YOU'RE
NOT BUSY, I WAS GOING
TO POP SOME POPCORN AND
REWATCH SEASON 2 OF
"THE MANDALORIAN"!



THANKS FOR THE
OFFER, BUT IT'S BEEN A
REALLY LONG DAY FOR ME SO I
WAS JUST GOING TO TAKE A
SHOWER AND CRASH!

MAYBE SOME
OTHER TIME
THOUGH?

SURE! I
UNDERSTAND! SEE
YOU AROUND,
RYAN!



*SEE, MOTHER?
THERE **ARE** SOME
NICE PEOPLE OUT HERE IN
THE **REAL WORLD!***

*AND IT'S **ALSO**
GOOD TO KNOW THERE'S A
DOCTOR'S OFFICE RIGHT
DOWN THE STREET...
JUST IN CASE!*

IT'D BE *GREAT* TO
HAVE A FRIEND HERE...
ESPECIALLY SOMEONE
WHO KNOWS THE AREA,
LIKE *SARA*!

BUT I HAVE TO BE
VERY CAREFUL ABOUT
MEETING *NEW* PEOPLE AND
LETTING THEM GET *CLOSE* TO
ME! IT'S SOMETHING I'M GOING
HAVE TO TAKE VERY, VERY
SLOWLY!

ooo



**SIGH!* ANY TYPE OF
ROMANTIC RELATIONSHIP
IS OUT OF THE QUESTION
... AT LEAST UNTIL I MEET
SOMEONE I CAN TRUST
COMPLETELY!*



A person is standing in a bedroom, facing the camera. They are nude. In the background, there is a bed with a colorful geometric patterned blanket (red, teal, orange, and white) and a dark headboard. To the right, there is a dark nightstand with a lamp. A thought bubble is positioned above the person's head, containing text.

BECAUSE I **DOUBT** THERE ARE MANY
PEOPLE OUT THERE THAT WOULD UNDERSTAND
WHY LIVING AS A **MAN** INSTEAD OF A **WOMAN**
ISN'T A **CHOICE** FOR ME... IT'S A MATTER OF
LIFE AND DEATH!

And over the next couple of weeks, Ryan *does* take it slowly with Sara...





Very slowly...





GOOD NIGHT,
RYAN!

SAY, UMMM...
RYAN! CAN I ASK
YOU A
QUESTION?

ARE YOU
GAY?

GOOD NIGHT,
SARA!

SURE!
WHAT IS IT?

I'M **SORRY** TO SPRING IT ON YOU LIKE THIS, RYAN! BUT **I'VE** HAD MY **SUSPICIONS** FOR A COUPLE OF **WEEKS**, AND AFTER TONIGHT, I **REALLY** NEED TO KNOW **ONE WAY** OR THE **OTHER**!

WOW! THAT...
THAT'S ONE
HELLUVA
QUESTION!

WHY
TONIGHT OF
ALL NIGHTS?



A woman with long brown hair, wearing a light blue spaghetti-strap mini dress, stands in a hallway. She has her left hand on her hip and is looking towards the camera. The hallway has a grey carpet and a large glass door or window in the background, through which other people can be seen walking. Three speech bubbles are positioned to the left of the woman, containing text.

SERIOUSLY? LOOK AT ME,
RYAN! I'M DRESSED TO KILL IN ONE
OF MY HOTTEST DRESSES! MOST
GUYS WOULD'VE BEEN TRYING TO GET ME
OUT OF IT BY NOW, BUT YOU
HAVEN'T REACTED AT ALL!

SO EITHER I'M LOSING
MY TOUCH IN A BIG WAY,
OR...

IT'S NOT
YOU, SARA!
IT... IT'S
ME!

A man with short, wavy red hair and a grey button-down shirt is looking down. A woman with long brown hair, wearing a light blue spaghetti-strap dress, stands next to him, looking at him with her hands clasped in front of her. They are in a hallway with a large mirror on the wall behind them, reflecting the scene. A speech bubble from the woman says, "SO, YOU ARE GAY?".

SO, YOU
ARE GAY?

TRUTHFULLY...**I DON'T
KNOW!** I TOLD YOU HOW I GREW
UP IN A VERY **ISOLATED** ENVIRONMENT!
BEFORE I MOVED HERE, **REGULAR
INTERACTION** WITH PEOPLE WAS
PRACTICALLY **NON-EXISTENT** FOR
ME!

OH, I GOT THE CHANCE TO
MEET A **FEW** PEOPLE WHEN I
WENT TO COMMUNITY COLLEGE, BUT
THAT WAS **ALWAYS** IN THE CONTEXT
OF CLASS... **NEVER** ANYTHING
SOCIAL!



IN **OTHER** WORDS,
I'M JUST **NOW** GETTING
THE CHANCE TO TRY AND
FIGURE OUT **WHO** I AM!

AND **TRUST ME**,
WHETHER I'M **GAY**,
STRAIGHT, **BI** OR **WHATEVER**, IS
A LOT MORE **COMPLICATED** FOR
ME THAN YOU COULD
IMAGINE!

SO I HOPE YOU'RE NOT
TOO DISAPPOINTED IN ME,
SARA, BECAUSE YOUR
FRIENDSHIP THESE LAST
FEW WEEKS HAS MEANT THE
WORLD TO ME!



THEN
WHY DID YOU
GET ALL
DRESSED UP
TONIGHT?

WELL,
MISSION
ACCOMPLISHED!
FRIENDS?

I'M **NOT**
DISAPPOINTED **AT ALL**, RYAN!
IN FACT, I'M **RELIEVED!** HAVING A
FRIEND IS **MUCH MORE**
IMPORTANT TO ME THAN HAVING
A **BOYFRIEND!**

I JUST **HAD** TO KNOW
ONE WAY OR THE **OTHER**
AND FIGURED THIS WAS THE
BEST WAY TO **FORCE** THE
ISSUE!

FRIENDS!

A woman with long blonde hair, wearing a light blue spaghetti-strap dress and black high-heeled sandals, is walking away from the viewer down a hallway. She is looking back over her shoulder at a man. The man has short reddish-brown hair and is wearing a grey long-sleeved shirt, blue jeans, and black shoes. He is standing in a doorway on the right side of the hallway, looking at the woman. The hallway has beige walls, a grey carpet, and several light fixtures. The scene is lit with warm, indoor lighting.

WELL THEN,
GOOD NIGHT...
AGAIN, SARA!

GIGGLE!
GOOD NIGHT,
RYAN!

.....

**WHEW!* THAT
TURNED OUT PRETTY WELL,
EVEN THOUGH I **ALMOST**
TOLD HER **MORE** THAN I
SHOULD!*

A man with short, reddish-brown hair and a grey, textured long-sleeved shirt stands in a doorway. He has a thoughtful expression, with his right hand resting on his neck and his left hand on his hip. The background is a plain, light-colored wall. A thought bubble is positioned to his right, containing text.

I WONDER... *HOW*
WOULD SARA REACT IF I
TOLD HER THE *TRUTH*
ABOUT MYSELF? THE
WHOLE TRUTH?

A woman with dark hair, wearing a purple tank top, is shown from the chest up. She is holding a large medical syringe in her right hand. The background is dark with some wooden beams and a hanging lamp with a yellowish glow.

WHY DO I HAVE TO
GET A **SHOT** NOW
TOO? AREN'T THE
PILLS ENOUGH?

I **KNOW** WE DID,
MOM! BUT THE
SHOTS HURT!

THEY **WERE** WHEN YOU
WERE **YOUNGER**, BUT **NOT** ANY
MORE! YOU'RE AT **THAT** AGE WHEN
YOUR BODY'S STARTING TO **CHANGE!**
AND WE **TALKED** ABOUT WHAT THAT
WOULD **MEAN** IF WE **ALLOWED** IT TO
CHANGE THE WAY IT **NORMALLY**
WOULD!

I **KNOW** THEY DO,
HONEY, BUT SINCE YOU'LL
NEED ONE **EVERY WEEK** FOR
THE NEXT FEW YEARS, YOU'LL
JUST **HAVE** TO GET **USED**
TO THEM!



**EVERY WEEK
FOR A FEW YEARS?!
ISN'T THERE ANYTHING
ELSE WE CAN TRY?**

**YOUR CONDITION IS
SO RARE, RYAN, THAT IT
DOESN'T EVEN HAVE A NAME!
I'VE BEEN STUDYING IT SINCE YOU
WERE BORN, SO THERE'S NO ONE
IN THE WORLD WHO KNOWS
MORE ABOUT IT THAN ME!**

**AND THE ONE THING
I DO KNOW FOR CERTAIN IS
THAT YOUR BODY WILL REJECT ANY
AND ALL SECONDARY FEMALE
CHARACTERISTICS THAT YOU WOULD
NATURALLY DEVELOP! EFFECTIVELY
RESULTING IN YOUR DEATH!**

**I HATE TO BE SO BLUNT
ABOUT IT, HONEY, BUT WE'VE
TALKED ABOUT THIS AND IT'S
EXTREMELY VITAL YOU UNDERSTAND
HOW IMPORTANT THESE TREATMENTS ARE!
I WANT YOU TO LIVE A LONG AND HAPPY
LIFE, AND SO FAR THIS IS THE ONLY
WAY I KNOW TO MAKE THAT HAPPEN!
DO YOU UNDERSTAND?**



**SNIFF!* I... I
DO, MOM! AND I'M
SORRY FOR BEING
SUCH A **BRAT** ABOUT
IT!*

*YOU'RE A
TEENAGER, HONEY...
YOU'RE **SUPPOSED** TO
BE A BRAT! **GIGGLE!***

A few days later, after
the "date" with Sara...

OOOHHHH,
DAMN! NOT
AGAIN!



A woman with short reddish-brown hair is sitting on a grey bed, leaning forward with her head resting on her hand. She is wearing grey underwear and is clutching her stomach with her other hand, appearing to be in pain. The background shows a dark headboard, a white pillow, and a nightstand with a small box. A yellow and orange patterned blanket is on the bed to the right.

SHIT! I THOUGHT
MY INNARDS WERE **FINALLY**
GETTING **USED** TO ALL THE
CARRY-OUT AND **DELIVERY**
FOOD I'VE BEEN EATING SINCE I
MOVED HERE!

GUESS I WAS
WRONG!

A photograph of a man from behind, standing in a doorway. He is shirtless and wearing dark grey briefs. His right hand is pressed against the white door frame. The background shows a bathroom with a toilet and tiled walls. Two thought bubbles are overlaid on the left side of the image. The first bubble contains the text 'OR IT COULD JUST BE THOSE CRAB CAKES FROM LAST NIGHT!' followed by three small circles. The second bubble contains the text 'NOTE TO SELF... NO MORE SEAFOOD FROM SIDEWALK VENDORS!'.

OR IT COULD
JUST BE THOSE
CRAB CAKES
FROM LAST NIGHT!

NOTE TO SELF... NO
MORE **SEAFOOD**
FROM **SIDEWALK**
VENDORS!

A person with short, wavy red hair is shown from the back, looking into a large bathroom mirror. The mirror reflects their face and upper torso. They are touching their chin with their right hand. The background of the reflection shows a tiled wall and a glass shower door. Two thought bubbles are present: one above the reflection's head and another to the left of the reflection's head. A dotted line connects the two bubbles.

NO SHAVE
NEEDED? **AGAIN?** A
COUPLE OF DAYS IS
NORMAL, BUT IT'S BEEN
OVER A WEEK!

BUT, IF I **REMEMBER**
CORRECTLY, THE **SAME**
THING HAPPENED **RIGHT**
AFTER MOTHER TOOK ME **OFF**
THE **MEDS!** AND THE
WHISKERS **CAME BACK** AFTER
ABOUT **TWO** WEEKS!



SO I'M **NOT** GONNA
GET ALL **WORKED UP**
OVER SOMETHING THAT'S
PROBABLY JUST A **FALSE**
ALARM!

BESIDES, DOES
ANYBODY REALLY
ENJOY SHAVING? **NOT**
ME, THAT'S FOR **DAMN**
SURE!

WHAT THE...?!
I'M... I'M
BLEEDING!?!





WHY THE
HELL WOULD I
BE **BLEEDING**
FROM MY...





OH...
SHIT!

Later that day, at the health clinic down the street...

I MUST SAY, IT'S A LITTLE **UNUSUAL** FOR A PATIENT TO HAVE SUCH **EASY ACCESS** TO THEIR **OWN** MEDICAL FILES! BUT IT **DOES** SAVE ME THE TROUBLE OF HAVING TO **REQUEST** THEM FROM YOUR **PREVIOUS** PHYSICIAN!

WELL, AS YOU CAN SEE, MY **PREVIOUS** PHYSICIAN WAS MY **MOTHER**, AND SHE MADE SURE I COULD **ALWAYS** ACCESS MY FILES... IN CASE OF AN **EMERGENCY**!





FORTUNATELY, MOTHER
HAD THE **FORESIGHT** TO PUT
TOGETHER THOSE FILES FOR ME AS A
FAIL-SAFE ON THE **OUTSIDE CHANCE**
I NEEDED MEDICAL CARE AND **SHE**
WASN'T AVAILABLE!

THEY **DON'T** PAINT A
COMPLETE PICTURE OF MY
MEDICAL HISTORY, BUT **JUST**
ENOUGH TO GET BY IN SITUATIONS
LIKE **THIS!**

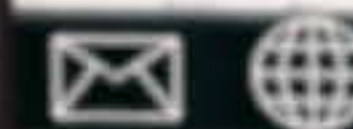
SIGH! BUT I **NEVER**
THOUGHT I'D **EVER** HAVE
TO USE THEM!

Local
Date
Time
Stage
Line

Multi
EP: 5
Inter
Health

Vital
11:40
Sat
Labs

Curr





UMM, YEAH! **THAT'S** WHAT I WANT TO FIND OUT, DR. SOLOMON! MY **MOTHER** HAD ME ON **HORMONE THERAPY** SINCE I WAS A **TEENAGER**! SOMETHING LIKE **THIS** HAS **NEVER** HAPPENED BEFORE!

I'M AFRAID I **DON'T**! MY MOTHER MUST'VE KEPT **THAT** INFO **SOMEWHERE ELSE**! BESIDES, IT'S BEEN **YEARS** SINCE I STOPPED TAKING IT, AND...

SO YOU'RE AFRAID SOMETHING'S GONE **WRONG** WITH YOUR **TRANSITION**, MR. BECKETT?

WELL, WE'LL TRY AND GET TO THE BOTTOM OF IT! I **DON'T** SEE YOUR ACTUAL **PRESCRIPTION** INFORMATION HERE! DO YOU **KNOW** WHAT YOU'RE TAKING?



WAIT A MINUTE! YOU
STOPPED YOUR HORMONE
THERAPY **SEVERAL YEARS AGO**
AND YOU'RE JUST **NOW** SEEING
THESE SYMPTOMS?

WELL,
YEAH! WHY?
ISN'T THAT
NORMAL?

NO, IT ISN'T NORMAL
AT ALL! ARE YOU
ABSOLUTELY **POSITIVE** YOU
HAVEN'T BEEN TAKING
ANYTHING?

YES, I'M
SURE!



WELL, LET'S HOPE MY
EXAMINATION WILL
ANSWER SOME OF
THESE QUESTIONS!

ARE YOU
COMFORTABLE
WITH ME GIVING
YOU A **PELVIC**
EXAM?

SIGH!
"COMFORTABLE" ISN'T THE
WORD *I'D* USE, DR. SOLOMON,
BUT IT'S THE **MAIN REASON**
I'M HERE, SO **DO** WHAT YOU
HAVE TO DO!

Later, after the exam...

I HAVE TO **SERIOUSLY**
CONSIDER **WHAT** TO TELL THE
DOCTOR IF **THIS** IS ANYTHING
MORE THAN A TREATABLE
INFECTION!

IF SOMETHING'S GONE
WRONG AND I **HAVE** TO TELL HIM
THE **TRUTH** ABOUT MY CONDITION,
MOTHER'S **WORST FEARS** WILL COME TRUE
AND **I'LL** BE SPENDING THE NEXT SEVERAL
MONTHS, IF NOT **YEARS**, ESSENTIALLY
IMPRISONED IN SOME RESEARCH
HOSPITAL BEING POKED AND PRODDED
24/7!

NOT THE KIND OF LIFE
I HAD IN MIND WHEN I LEFT
OKLAHOMA!



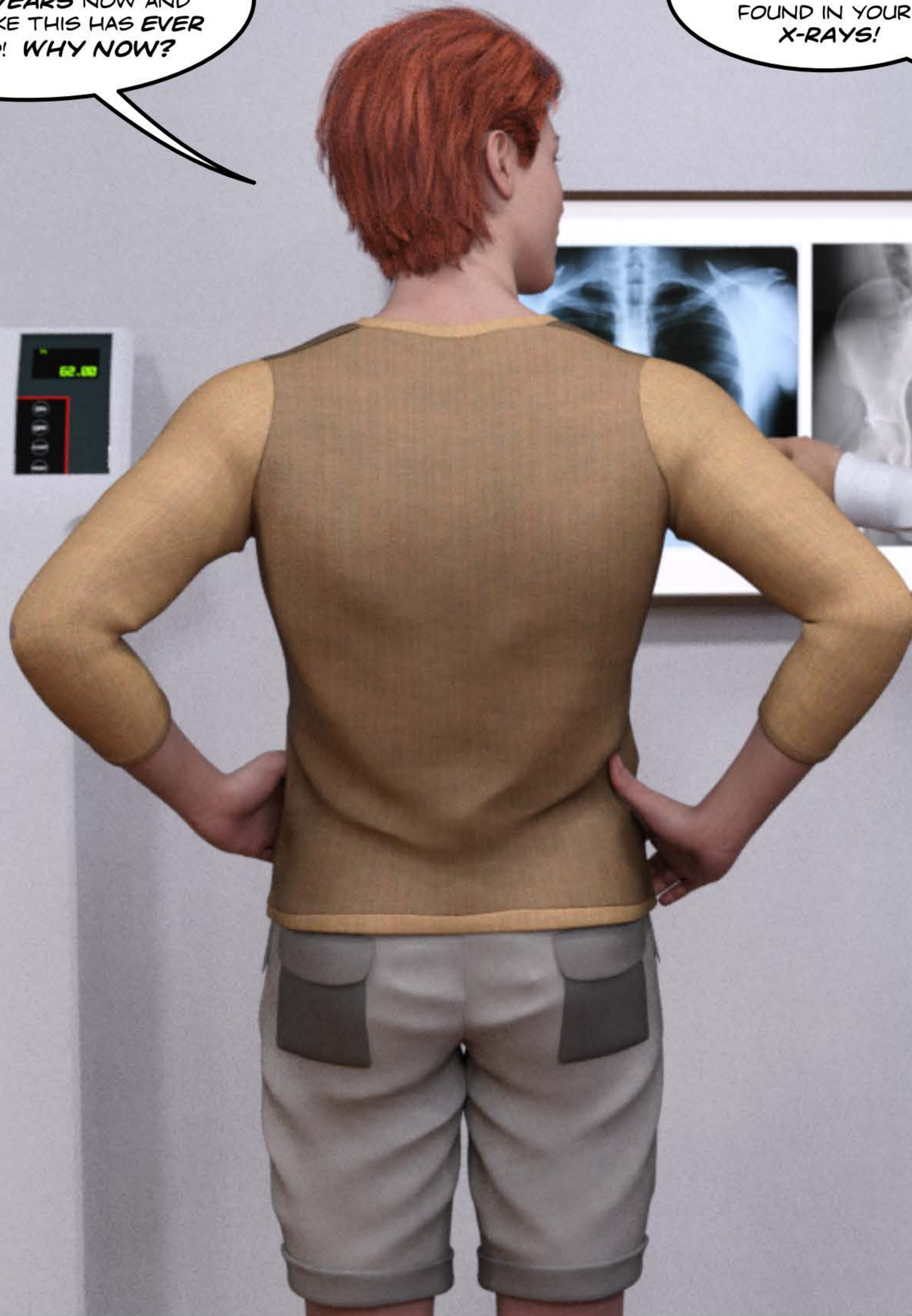
SORRY I KEPT YOU
WAITING SO LONG,
RYAN! I WAS JUST DOUBLE
CHECKING THE LAB
RESULTS!

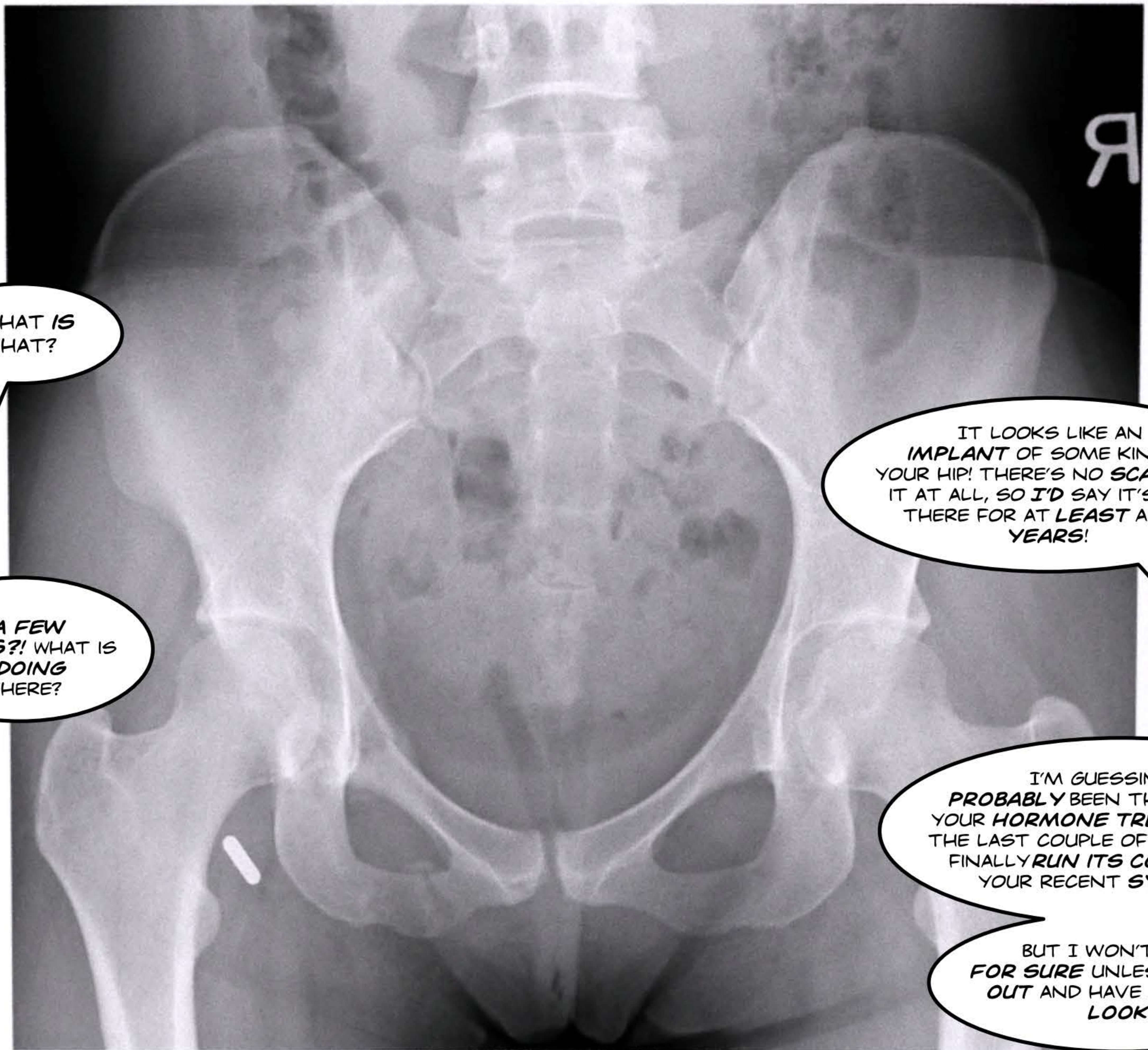
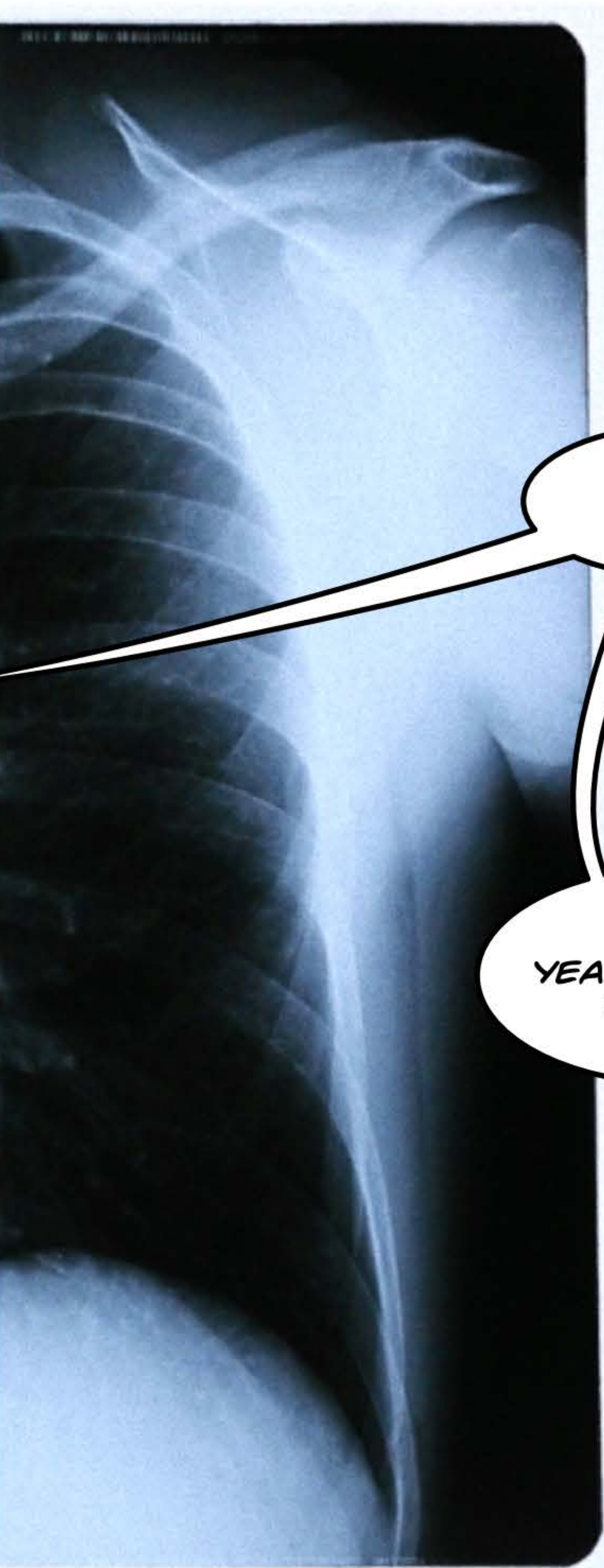
NO
PROBLEM, DR.
SOLOMON! SO...
WHAT DID YOU
FIND OUT?

WELL, FIRST OFF
LET ME PUT YOUR MIND
AT **EASE** BY SAYING YOUR
BLEEDING SEEMS TO BE
NOTHING MORE THAN YOUR
NATURAL **MENSTRUAL**
CYCLE!

BUT I **DON'T UNDERSTAND!** I'VE BEEN OFF MY **HORMONES** FOR A COUPLE OF **YEARS** NOW AND **NOTHING** LIKE THIS HAS **EVER** HAPPENED! **WHY NOW?**

I THINK I **MIGHT KNOW!** LET ME SHOW YOU WHAT I FOUND IN YOUR **X-RAYS!**





WHAT IS THAT?

A FEW YEARS?! WHAT IS IT DOING THERE?

IT LOOKS LIKE AN **IMPLANT** OF SOME KIND IN YOUR HIP! THERE'S NO **SCAR** NEAR IT AT ALL, SO I'D SAY IT'S BEEN THERE FOR AT **LEAST** A FEW **YEARS!**

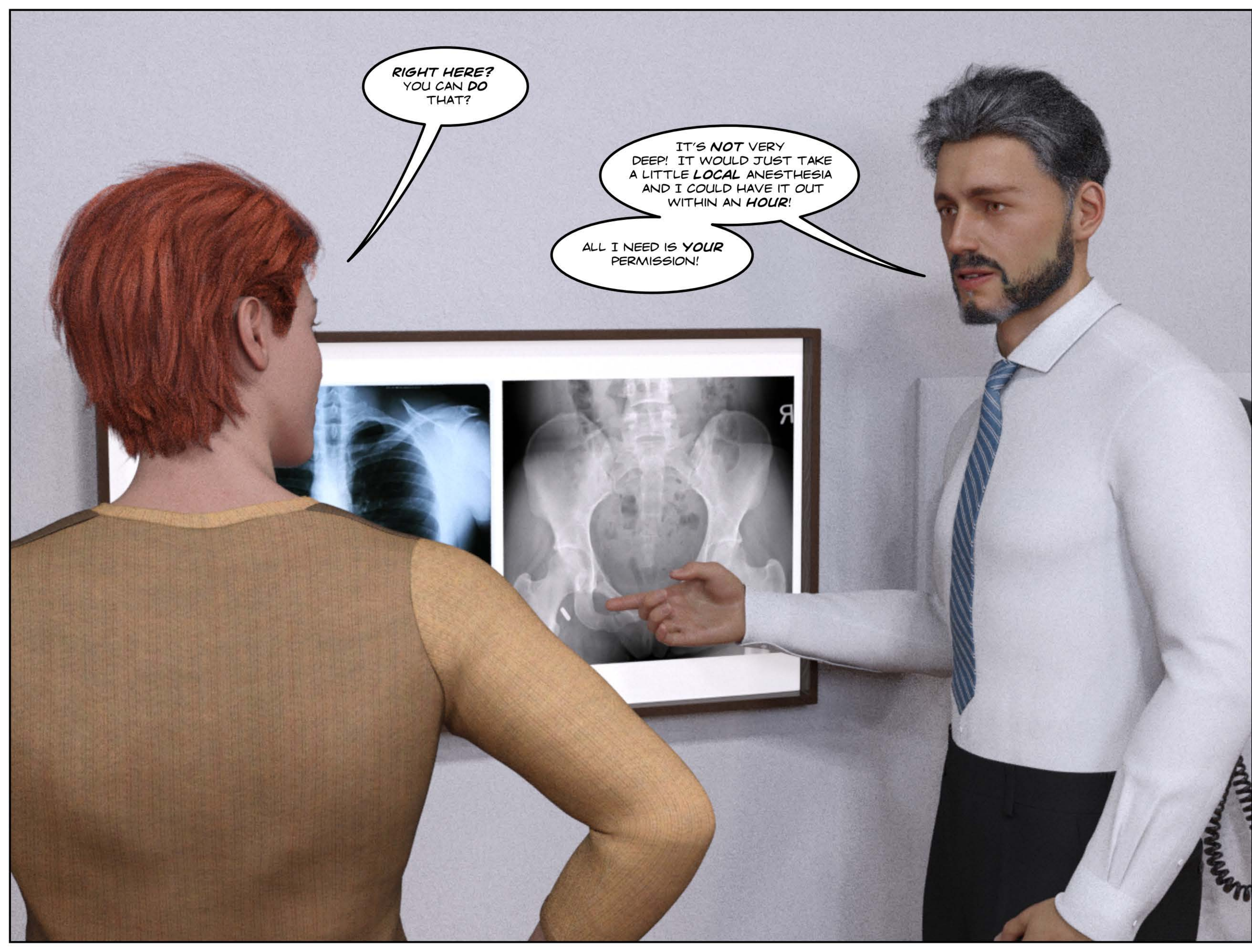
I'M GUESSING IT'S **PROBABLY** BEEN THE **SOURCE** OF YOUR **HORMONE TREATMENTS** FOR THE LAST COUPLE OF YEARS BUT HAS **FINALLY RUN ITS COURSE!** HENCE YOUR RECENT **SYMPTOMS!**

BUT I WON'T KNOW **FOR SURE** UNLESS I TAKE IT **OUT** AND HAVE A **CLOSER LOOK!**

RIGHT HERE?
YOU CAN DO
THAT?

IT'S *NOT* VERY
DEEP! IT WOULD JUST TAKE
A LITTLE *LOCAL* ANESTHESIA
AND I COULD HAVE IT OUT
WITHIN AN *HOUR*!

ALL I NEED IS *YOUR*
PERMISSION!



SHIT! IF HE'S RIGHT,
THAT IMPLANT HAS
ESSENTIALLY BEEN KEEPING ME ALIVE
THESE LAST COUPLE OF YEARS, SO
TAKING IT OUT PUTS ME AT
MAJOR RISK!

BUT, IF IT'S NO LONGER
WORKING, IT NEEDS TO BE
REPLACED! AND WITH MOM
GONE...

UMMM, DOCTOR
SOLOMON... BEFORE WE GO ANY
FURTHER, I SHOULD PROBABLY
FILL YOU IN ON THE FULL
TRUTH REGARDING MY
"TRANSITION" !

62.00

Several minutes later...

WELL... I CAN UNDERSTAND **WHY** YOU'D BE **RELUCTANT** TO HAVE THAT IMPLANT REMOVED! BUT I CONSIDER MYSELF A PRETTY **WELL-READ PHYSICIAN** WHO KEEPS ABREAST ON **ANY** AND **ALL** NEW AND DEVELOPING **DISEASES** AND SUCH!

AND **I** HAVE **NEVER** HEARD OR READ **ANYTHING** ABOUT **ANY** DISEASES THAT ARE TRIGGERED BY THE DEVELOPMENT OF **SECONDARY FEMALE CHARACTERISTICS**!

SO WHAT I **SUGGEST** IS THAT WE **REMOVE** THE IMPLANT AND THEN **I** PUT YOU **BACK** ON A REGIMEN OF **HORMONES**! HOW'S THAT SOUND?

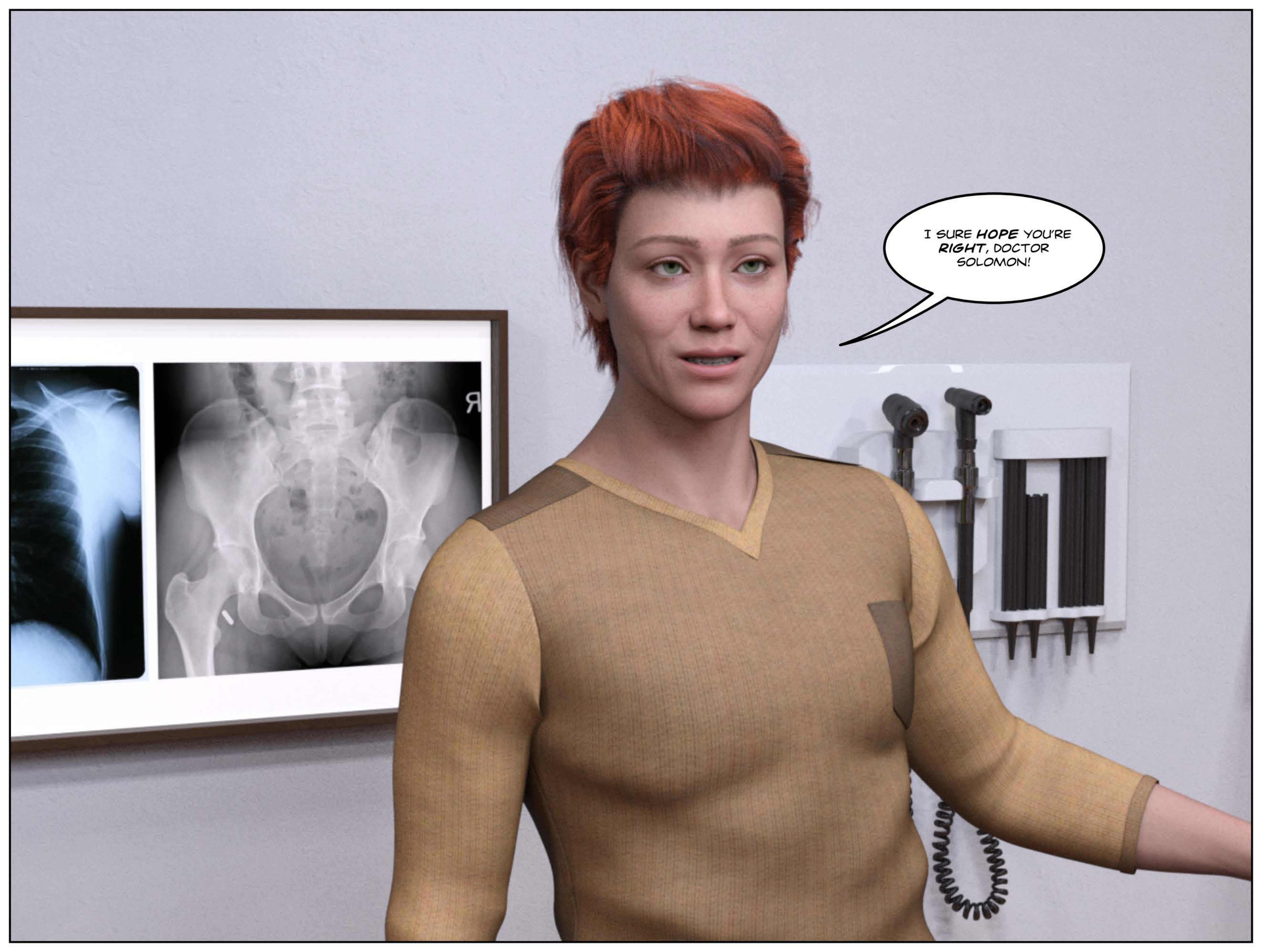
I... I GUESS **THAT** MAKES THE **MOST** SENSE, DOCTOR SOLOMON! OKAY... LET'S **TAKE IT OUT**!

A man with grey hair and a beard, wearing a white dress shirt and a blue striped tie, stands in a medical office. He is gesturing with his right hand towards a woman with short red hair who is sitting in a blue medical chair. The woman is wearing a tan sweater. In the background, there is a sink, a mirror, and two framed certificates on the wall. The certificates are from 'Medical University' and mention 'Certificate of Excellence' and 'Recognition of your outstanding excellence in Medical Science'.

GOOD! HOP
BACK UP INTO THE
CHAIR AND WE'LL
GET STARTED!

AFTERWARD I'LL SEND
BOTH THE **IMPLANT** AND
YOUR **BLOODWORK** OVER TO
JOHNS HOPKINS FOR A MUCH
MORE **DETAILED** ANALYSIS OF
EVERYTHING!

OUR LAB HERE IS **GOOD**, BUT
THE EQUIPMENT THEY HAVE OVER
THERE IS **SECOND TO NONE**! IF
THERE'S ANY **TRUTH** TO THIS
"**CONDITION**" OF YOURS,
THEY'LL FIND IT!



I SURE *HOPE* YOU'RE
RIGHT, DOCTOR
SOLOMON!

Later, shortly after Ryan has left...

YOU CALLED,
DOCTOR?

I NEED YOU TO SEND
THESE SAMPLES OVER TO
JOHNS HOPKINS FOR TESTING!
MAKE **SURE** THEY INCLUDE A
WHOLE GENOME SEQUENCING
ANALYSIS!

OF COURSE,
DOCTOR!



A woman with long brown hair in pigtails, wearing a teal V-neck short-sleeved dress, stands with her hands clasped over her stomach. She is looking slightly to the right. The background is a plain grey wall with a dark brown door frame to her left.

OH, AND **SARA**, ALSO PLEASE
SEND THIS **PRESCRIPTION** DOWN TO
FLORGREEN'S PHARMACY DOWN THE
STREET! I WANT TO MAKE **SURE** MR.
BECKETT GETS IT AS **SOON** AS
POSSIBLE!

MR. **BECKETT'S**
PRESCRIPTION? I'LL TAKE
CARE OF IT **RIGHT AWAY**,
DOCTOR SOLOMON!

Later that day...

I'VE BEEN GOING OVER IT,
AGAIN AND AGAIN, IN MY HEAD
ALL AFTERNOON AND THERE'S ONLY
ONE WAY THAT IMPLANT COULD'VE
GOTTEN INTO ME! **MOTHER PUT IT
THERE!**

SHE'S THE ONLY
DOCTOR, HELL... PRACTICALLY
THE ONLY **PERSON** I'VE COME
INTO **PHYSICAL CONTACT** WITH
MY **ENTIRE LIFE!** IT **HAD TO BE
HER!**



AND NOW THAT I **THINK**
ABOUT, THERE **WAS** THAT TIME A
COUPLE OF YEARS AGO WHEN SHE
ACCIDENTALLY **CUT** ME WITH A **KNIFE**
WHEN WE WERE MAKING DINNER!

SHE WAS CHOPPING VEGETABLES,
TURNED AROUND SUDDENLY AND
SLICED ME ACROSS MY HIP... **RIGHT**
WHERE DOCTOR SOLOMON FOUND THAT
IMPLANT!

SHE TREATED THE CUT HERSELF
AND GAVE ME **SOMETHING** TO HELP
PREVENT INFECTION... SHE **SAID!** BUT
WHATEVER IT WAS, IT MADE ME SLEEP
HALF WAY THROUGH THE NEXT
DAY!

THAT **MUST'VE** BEEN WHEN
SHE **DID** IT! BECAUSE IT WAS RIGHT
ABOUT **THEN** THAT **SHE** SAID I
COULD **STOP** TAKING MY **MEDS!**

BUT WHY DID
SHE HIDE IT FROM
ME? IT JUST
DOESN'T MAKE ANY
SENSE!

knock, knock!

SIGH! THAT'S
PROBABLY SARA! SHE
USUALLY STOPS BY
AROUND THIS TIME WHEN
SHE GETS OFF WORK!

A young man with short, reddish-brown hair and a green eye stands in a modern apartment. He is wearing a brown V-neck sweater with a dark pocket and light grey pants. He has a sad expression. The background shows a contemporary interior with a grey sofa, a kitchen island with a grey countertop, and a balcony with a white railing. A framed picture of a landscape hangs on the wall to the left.

AS MUCH AS I'D **LOVE** TO HAVE
SOMEONE TO **COMMISERATE** WITH, I'M
JUST **NOT READY** TO SPILL MY GUTS
TO SOMEONE **ELSE** TODAY!

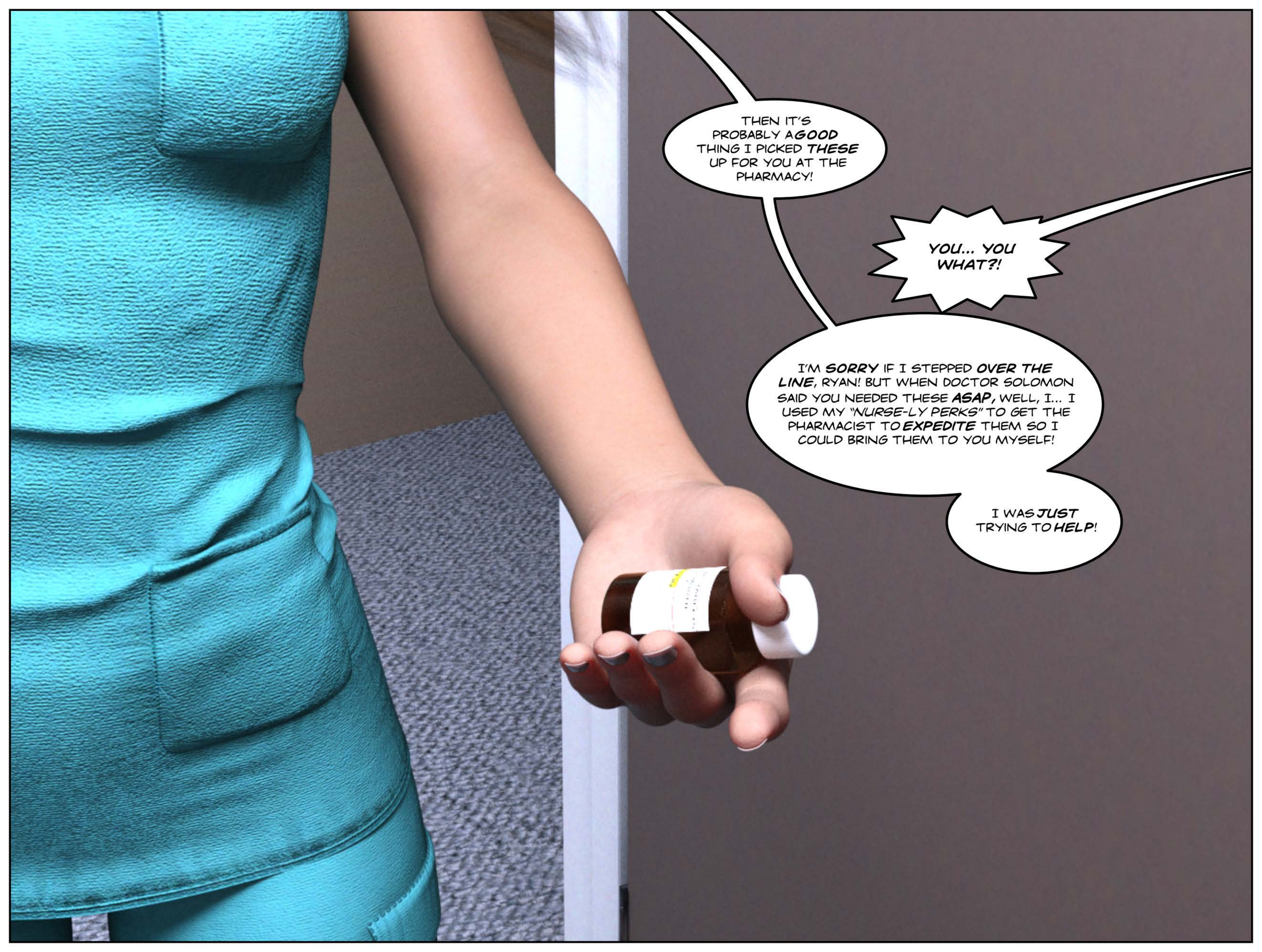
I'LL JUST TELL HER I'M
NOT FEELING WELL AND
WILL TALK TO HER
TOMORROW!



HEY, RYAN!
HOW YOU
DOING?

ACTUALLY, NOT
FEELING SO HOT,
SARA! SO, IF YOU DON'T
MIND, I THINK I'D BETTER
STAY IN **ALONE**
TONIGHT!

OH... THAT'S
TOO BAD!

A woman in a teal nurse's uniform is shown from the waist up, holding a small brown pill bottle with a white cap. She is looking towards the right. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

THEN IT'S
PROBABLY A **GOOD**
THING I PICKED **THESE**
UP FOR YOU AT THE
PHARMACY!

YOU... YOU
WHAT?!

I'M **SORRY** IF I STEPPED **OVER THE**
LINE, RYAN! BUT WHEN DOCTOR SOLOMON
SAID YOU NEEDED THESE **ASAP**, WELL, I... I
USED MY "NURSE-LY PERKS" TO GET THE
PHARMACIST TO **EXPEDITE** THEM SO I
COULD BRING THEM TO YOU MYSELF!

I WAS **JUST**
TRYING TO **HELP**!



YES... *I DO!* AND YOU
DON'T HAVE TO TELL ME
ANYTHING YOU *DON'T WANT* TO!
JUST KNOW THAT *I'M HERE* FOR
YOU WHENEVER *YOU* FEEL LIKE
TALKING!

SO YOU... YOU
KNOW WHAT
THESE ARE,
DON'T YOU?

I'LL... I'LL KEEP
THAT MIND!



SO... I GUESS I'D BETTER GET HOME AND CHANGE OUT OF THESE SCRUBS! THEY CAN GET PRETTY **GROSS** AFTER A WHOLE DAY OF...

SARA?

YEAH, RYAN?



I... I THINK I
FEEL LIKE
TALKING!



Several days later...

THANK YOU FOR COMING
IN ON SUCH **SHORT NOTICE**,
RYAN! BUT **I** THOUGHT YOU
SHOULD KNOW THE **RESULTS** OF
THE TESTS AS **SOON** AS I
GOT THEM IN!

THAT'LL BE
ALL, SARA!
THANK YOU!

ACTUALLY, **I** WANT
SARA TO **STAY**, DOCTOR!
YOU SEE, SHE'S A **VERY GOOD**
FRIEND OF MINE AND KNOWS
EVERYTHING ABOUT MY
SITUATION!

IN FACT, **SHE'S**
THE REASON I CAME TO
SEE **YOU** IN THE FIRST
PLACE!

WELL THEN, BY ALL
MEANS, SHE CAN
STAY!





SO, I'LL GET
RIGHT TO IT... YOUR
BLOOD WORK CAME BACK
SHOWING ABSOLUTELY **NO**
ABNORMALITIES
WHATSOEVER!

ARE YOU
SURE? MY MOTHER
ALWAYS SAID IT WOULD
BE VERY **HARD** TO
DETECT!

I SENT IT OVER TO
JOHNS HOPKINS **MYSELF**, RYAN!
THEY'RE ABLE TO ANALYZE YOUR
BLOOD DOWN TO THE **DNA!** IF **THEY**
DIDN'T FIND **ANYTHING** OUT OF THE
ORDINARY, THERE'S **NOTHING**
THERE!

SHE'S **RIGHT!** THEY
HAVE THE **BEST** GENOME
SEQUENCING FACILITY IN THE
COUNTRY!



WELL, *THAT* ANSWERS *ONE* QUESTION, BUT WHAT ABOUT THE *IMPLANT*? DID YOU FIND OUT WHAT IT WAS FOR?

IT'S *JUST* WHAT I *THOUGHT* IT WAS... A METHOD FOR DELIVERING YOUR *HORMONE TREATMENT* OVER A *LONG* PERIOD OF TIME!

IT WAS PRACTICALLY *EMPTY*, THOUGH, WHICH IS PROBABLY *WHY* YOUR MENSTRUAL CYCLE STARTED BACK UP!

BUT *NOW* THAT HE'S *BACK* ON *HORMONES*, EVERYTHING SHOULD GO BACK TO *NORMAL*! *RIGHT*, DOCTOR SOLOMON?



NOT **IMMEDIATELY**, I'M AFRAID! WHAT **LITTLE** WE COULD IDENTIFY IN THE IMPLANT WERE HORMONES THAT **AREN'T FDA APPROVED**, SO WE **CAN'T** REPLICATE THEIR EFFECT RIGHT AWAY WITH **STANDARD** MEDICATIONS!

IT WILL MOST LIKELY TAKE **SEVERAL WEEKS** OF ME TINKERING WITH DIFFERENT COMBINATIONS AT VARIOUS DOSAGES TO GET YOU **STABILIZED** AGAIN!

PROBABLY! IT'S YOUR BODY TRYING TO **ADJUST** TO THE **NEW** HORMONE REGIMEN!

REST ASSURED I'LL **TRY** TO FIND A SUITABLE **BALANCE** AS SOON AS POSSIBLE!

IS **THAT** WHY I'VE BEEN FEELING **ACHEY** AND GENERALLY **CRAPPY** ALL OVER THE LAST FEW DAYS?



I HAVE ANOTHER
CONSULTATION DOWN THE
HALL! BUT **DON'T WORRY**
... WE'LL GET A HANDLE ON
THIS! **RIGHT, SARA?**

YOU **BET**
WE WILL,
DOCTOR!

YEAH. UMMM...
THANKS, DOCTOR
SOLOMON!

THIS IS
GREAT NEWS,
RYAN! WHY DO YOU
STILL LOOK SO
UPSET?





BECAUSE NOW I
KNOW THE **TRUTH**
... THAT MY MOTHER
LIED TO ME MY
WHOLE LIFE!

WHY DID SHE
FORCE ME TO **PRETEND**
TO BE **MALE** WHEN IT
WASN'T A MATTER OF
LIFE AND DEATH AFTER
ALL?

DID SHE JUST WANT A
SON SO **BADLY** IT **DIDN'T**
MATTER WHAT **I**
THOUGHT?

OR WAS SHE TRYING
TO **HIDE** ME FROM
SOMETHING... OR
SOMEONE? AND IF
SO, **WHY?!**



I UNDERSTAND YOUR
CONFUSION AND SENSE OF
BETRAYAL BUT FOR NOW LET'S
CONCENTRATE ON THE FACT
THAT YOU'RE **100%**

YOU HAVE **PLENTY** OF
TIME **LATER** TO WORRY
ABOUT YOUR MOTHER'S
MOTIVATIONS!

***SIGH!* I
GUESS YOU'RE
RIGHT, SARA!**



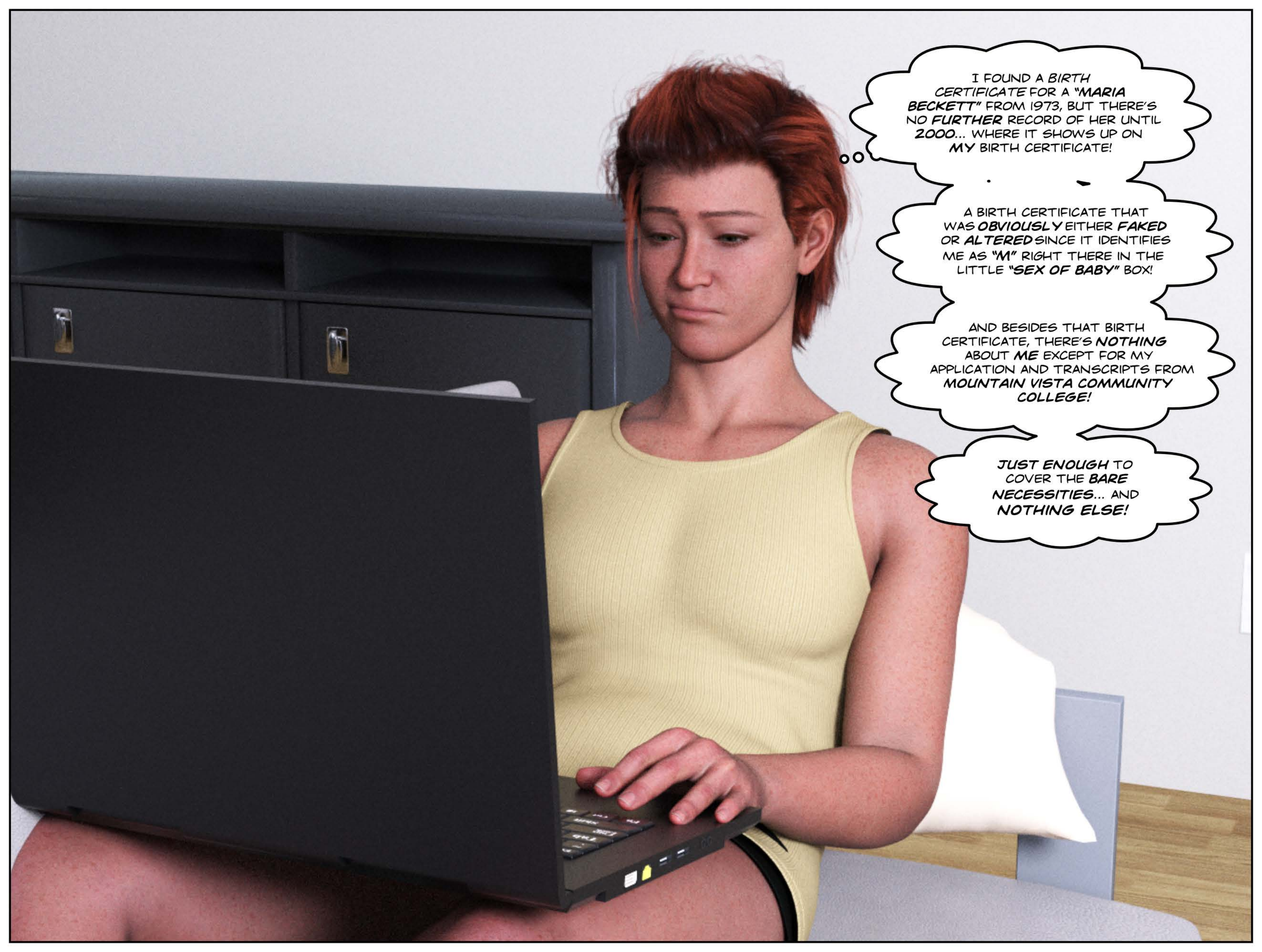
I WISH IT *WERE* THAT
EASY, SARA! BUT I *CAN'T*
MOVE *FORWARD* WITH MY
LIFE UNTIL I KNOW THE
TRUTH ABOUT MY *PAST*!

A week or so later...

NOTHING,
NOTHING AND
MORE NOTHING!

I'VE ACCESSED OR
HACKED INTO **EVERY**
DATABASE I CAN THINK OF
AND **ALL** I'VE FOUND OUT IS
THAT MY **WHOLE LIFE** HAS
BEEN **ONE BIG LIE!**



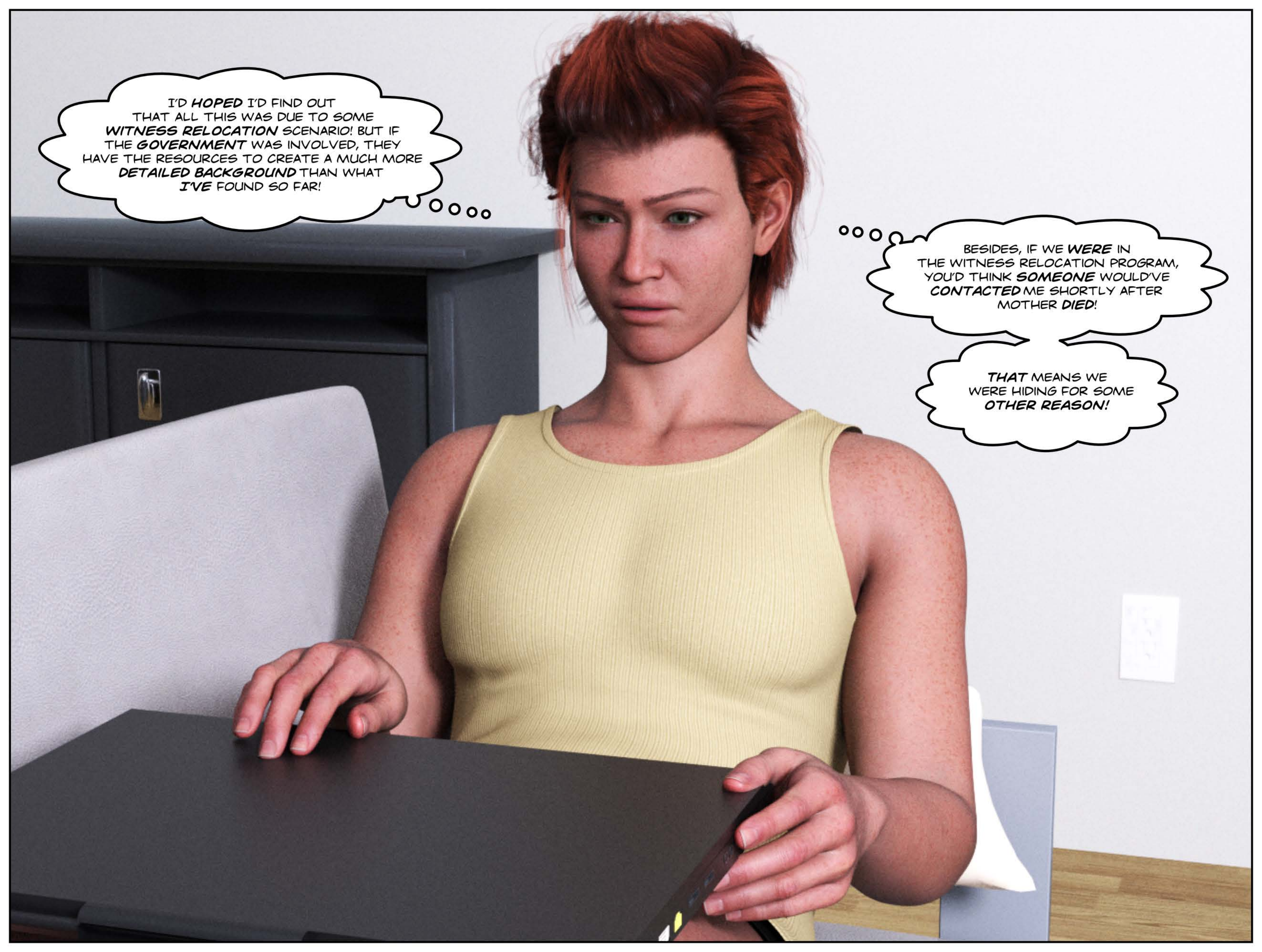


I FOUND A BIRTH
CERTIFICATE FOR A "MARIA
BECKETT" FROM 1973, BUT THERE'S
NO FURTHER RECORD OF HER UNTIL
2000... WHERE IT SHOWS UP ON
MY BIRTH CERTIFICATE!

A BIRTH CERTIFICATE THAT
WAS **OBVIOUSLY** EITHER **FAKED**
OR **ALTERED** SINCE IT IDENTIFIES
ME AS "M" RIGHT THERE IN THE
LITTLE "**SEX OF BABY**" BOX!

AND BESIDES THAT BIRTH
CERTIFICATE, THERE'S **NOTHING**
ABOUT **ME** EXCEPT FOR MY
APPLICATION AND TRANSCRIPTS FROM
MOUNTAIN VISTA COMMUNITY
COLLEGE!

JUST ENOUGH TO
COVER THE **BARE**
NECESSITIES... AND
NOTHING ELSE!



I'D *HOPED* I'D FIND OUT
THAT ALL THIS WAS DUE TO SOME
WITNESS RELOCATION SCENARIO! BUT IF
THE *GOVERNMENT* WAS INVOLVED, THEY
HAVE THE RESOURCES TO CREATE A MUCH MORE
DETAILED BACKGROUND THAN WHAT
I'VE FOUND SO FAR!

BESIDES, IF WE *WERE* IN
THE WITNESS RELOCATION PROGRAM,
YOU'D THINK *SOMEONE* WOULD'VE
CONTACTED ME SHORTLY AFTER
MOTHER *DIED*!

THAT MEANS WE
WERE HIDING FOR SOME
OTHER REASON!



I HATE **JUMPING TO CONCLUSIONS**, BUT WITH SO **LITTLE** INFORMATION ABOUT MY PAST, I HAVE NOTHING LEFT **BUT** SPECULATION!

MOTHER ALWAYS SAID MY **FATHER WAS NEVER** IN THE PICTURE... BUT **WHAT IF HE WAS?** WHAT IF HE WAS **ABUSIVE** AND SHE TOOK ME AND **RAN** FROM HIM!

HE WOULD'VE BEEN LOOKING FOR A MOTHER AND **DAUGHTER** ALL THIS TIME... **NOT** A MOTHER AND **SON**!

IT'S **DRASTIC** AND **POSSIBLE**, BUT **NOT** THE **WORST CASE** SCENARIO!



WHAT IF... WHAT IF *SHE*
WASN'T MY *REAL MOTHER*?
WHAT IF SHE *STOLE* ME AS A BABY
AND HAD BEEN *HIDING* ME FROM MY
REAL PARENTS MY WHOLE
LIFE?

AND ALL THAT *MONEY*
SHE LEFT ME *WASN'T*
"INHERITED FROM HER PARENTS",
BUT *INSTEAD* WAS *RANSOM MONEY*
SHE *KEPT* AFTER *NOT* RETURNING
ME!

THAT WOULD BE *MORE*
THAN REASON ENOUGH TO GO TO
THE *EXTREMES* SHE DID IN
HIDING ME!

IT... IT SEEMS
UNFATHOMABLE, BUT...
GIVEN THE FACTS, ENTIRELY
PLAUSIBLE!

HEY, RYAN...
IT'S *ME*! YOU
THERE?

Knock, knock!!

YEAH!
JUST A
MINUTE!

THANK GOD
I HAVE *SARA* TO
HELP ME THROUGH
ALL THIS!

WITHOUT SOMEONE
TO *TRUST* AND
CONFIDE IN I'D
PROBABLY BE GOING
BATSHIT CRAZY
RIGHT ABOUT NOW!





NOTHING EXCEPT THE **BIRTH CERTIFICATE** I TOLD YOU ABOUT YESTERDAY! AND WITH **SO LITTLE** INFO, MY **IMAGINATION** IS STARTING TO RUN A LITTLE **WILD**!

NO... NOT RIGHT NOW! I'M AFRAID IF I **TOLD** YOU SOME OF THE **CRAZY THEORIES** RUNNING THROUGH MY HEAD, YOU **MIGHT** HAVE ME **COMMITTED**!

SO, ANY **NEW DEVELOPMENTS** ON THE FAMILY HISTORY?

ANY YOU'D LIKE TO **DISCUSS**?



THEN LET'S
CHANGE THE
SUBJECT! HOW
YOU FEELING
TODAY?



LIKE CRAP... **STILL!**
THE **BLEEDING** HASN'T COME
BACK, BUT **EVERY BONE** AND
MUSCLE IN MY BODY FEELS
LIKE **SHIT!**

THERE'S A CONSISTENT
DULL THROB **EVERYWHERE**
WITH THE OCCASIONAL **STAB OF**
PAIN IN DIFFERENT LOCATIONS!
THE IBUPROFEN HELPS A
LITTLE, BUT **NOT**
ENOUGH!

I THINK IT'S **TIME** TO
GO **BACK** AND SEE
DOCTOR SOLOMON!



HE'S **OUT** THIS WEEK AT
SOME MEDICAL CONVENTION! BUT
EVEN IF HE **WAS** HERE, HE'D PROBABLY
TELL YOU THE **SAME** THING I'M
GOING TO TELL YOU!

IT'S MOST LIKELY YOUR BODY
STILL TRYING TO ADJUST TO THE
NEW HORMONES HE PRESCRIBED!
THEY'RE REALLY THE **ONLY** **OPTION**
SINCE WE DON'T **KNOW** FOR **SURE**
WHAT ALL YOUR MOTHER HAD YOU
ON!

WHICH BRINGS UP A
QUESTION I'VE BEEN
HESITANT TO ASK SINCE WE'VE
ONLY KNOWN EACH OTHER FOR A
FEW **WEEKS**!

AND **THAT**
MAKES ME
WONDER IF THEY'RE
DOING **ANYTHING**
AT **ALL**!

WHAT
QUESTION?



WHAT IF YOU
JUST **STOPPED**
TAKING THE
HORMONES
ALTOGETHER?

AND WHAT
WOULD BE SO
WRONG WITH
THAT?

STOPPED
TAKING THEM?! BUT
THEN I'D START
CHANGING... PROBABLY
START LOOKING MORE...
MORE **FEMININE**!

I... I DON'T KNOW!
IT'S JUST THAT... I'VE
ALWAYS BEEN...
I MEAN...



WELL,
YEAH, BUT...

DON'T **FREAK
OUT!** I'M JUST
SAYING THAT **NOW**
YOU HAVE A
CHOICE!

YOU SAID YOURSELF THAT
YOU WERE **FORCED** TO APPEAR AS
MALE ALL THESE YEARS WHEN YOU
DIDN'T **HAVE TO!** YOUR **MOTHER**
MADE THAT DECISION **FOR YOU...**
BASED ON LIES!

I **JUST** DON'T WANT
YOU TO **DISMISS** THE
POSSIBILITY **WITHOUT**
GIVING IT SOME **SERIOUS**
THOUGHT!



OKAY, THIS IS
STARTING TO GET A LITTLE
INTENSE! LET'S PUT ALL THIS
ON THE **BACK BURNER** AND GO
GRAB SOME LUNCH... MY
TREAT!

SOUNDS GREAT!
AND YOU'RE **RIGHT**... IT'S
NOT SOMETHING YOU
HAVE TO DECIDE **RIGHT**
THIS MINUTE!

EXACTLY!



HMMM... BUT IT
MIGHT COME UP
AGAIN **SOONER**
THAN YOU THINK!

A few days later...

HEY
RYAN! MIND
IF I COME ON
IN?

MY
DOOR'S
ALWAYS OPEN
FOR YOU, SARA!
C'MON IN!





WOW! YOU
LOOK EXTRA
AWESOME FOR SO
EARLY IN THE DAY!

I DIDN'T EVEN
KNOW WE *HAD* A NEW
NEIGHBOR! LET ME GUESS...
A *GOOD-LOOKING*
GUY! RIGHT?

NO... I WAS PLANNING ON
WELCOMING OUR NEW
NEIGHBOR TO THE BUILDING
AND DIDN'T WANT TO LOOK
ALL *FRUMPY*!

OH, YEAH! *VERY*
HOT! *HEY!* WHY DON'T
YOU COME DOWN WITH
ME?

WHAT?
ME?! UMM... I
DON'T THINK
THAT'S SUCH A
GOOD IDEA!

WELL, **LOOK** AT ME!
I'M A **MESS!** WHAT
KIND OF **IMPRESSION**
WOULD THAT GIVE THE
GUY?

AWW...
WHY NOT?

THAT'S WHAT
YOU'RE **WORRIED**
ABOUT? THAT **HE** MIGHT
NOT **LIKE** THE WAY YOU
LOOK? HMMMMM...
INTERESTING!





WHAT?! NO!!
THAT'S NOT
WHAT I MEANT!

ME THINKS
THOU DOTH
PROTESTETH
TOO MUCH!
GIGGLE!

IT'S OKAY, RYAN!
IN FACT IT'S PERFECTLY
NATURAL!
ESPECIALLY IF YOU
DECIDE TO...

HEY! I HAVEN'T DECIDED
ANYTHING YET! I'VE BEEN
TOO BUSY TRACKING DOWN MY
HISTORY TO GIVE MUCH
ELSE ANY THOUGHT!

I JUST MEANT THAT
I HAVEN'T SHOWERED YET
TODAY! AND WITH ALL THE
ACHES AND PAINS I'M STILL
HAVING TO DEAL WITH, I
WOULDN'T BE VERY GOOD
COMPANY!

UH-HUH...
IF YOU
SAY SO!





SO... HAVE YOU
FOUND OUT ANYTHING
NEW ABOUT YOURSELF
OR YOUR MOTHER?

AS A MATTER
OF FACT,
I HAVE!

I WAS ABLE TO
TRACE ALL THE MONEY
MY MOTHER LEFT ME BACK
TO **MULTIPLE DEPOSITS** IN
DIFFERENT BANKS
SHORTLY AFTER I WAS
BORN!

BY **THEMSELVES**, THESE
DEPOSITS WERE **SMALL** ENOUGH
TO **NOT** DRAW ANY ATTENTION! BUT
OVER THE YEARS, THEY WERE SLOWLY
COMBINED INTO THE **ONE FUND**
THAT MY MOTHER LEFT ME AS MY
"**INHERITANCE**"!

IT'S **HARD** TO SAY RIGHT NOW
EXACTLY **WHERE** THE MONEY CAME
FROM **ORIGINALLY**, BUT IT'S
OBVIOUS SHE WAS TRYING TO
HIDE IT!

YOU FOUND
OUT ALL OF
THAT FROM
HERE?

LET'S JUST
SAY I'VE
ALWAYS HAD A
KNACK FOR
HACKING!

NO
KIDDING!



OOO! I THINK I
HEAR HIM OUT IN
THE HALLWAY! YOU
SURE YOU DON'T
WANT TO COME?

MAYBE
ANOTHER TIME
THEN!

YES... I'M
SURE!

HIYA I
DON'T THINK
WE'VE MET! I'M
SARA!

WELL, **HI**
THERE, SARA!
I'M **CLINT!**



SIGH! EVEN IF I **DID**
DECIDE TO FOLLOW SARA'S
ADVICE AND "**GO FEMALE**", I'D
JUST BE **CRAMPING** HER
STYLE!

THE **LAST** THING A
GORGEOUS GIRL LIKE **HER**
NEEDS IS A SCHLUMPY
"**TOM-BOY**" HANGING
AROUND!

OH WELL...
BACK TO THE
LAPTOP!

Later that day...

WELL, *THAT*
WAS A WASTE OF
AN AFTERNOON!

WHY? WHAT
HAPPENED?





WELL, OUR NEW NEIGHBOR... *CLINTS*
HIS NAME, BY THE WAY... MAY HAVE THE
LOOKS AND PHYSIQUE OF A GREEK GOD,
BUT HES GOT THE *PERSONALITY OF A*
ROCK!

OH, THAT'S TOO
BAD! *SORRY* IT
DIDN'T WORK OUT
FOR YOU, SARA!

DON'T GET ME *WRONG,*
THOUGH... I *WOULDN'T*
KICK HIM OUT OF BED FOR
EATING *OREOS!* 'CAUSE HE'S
HUNG LIKE A HORSE!



SARA?! OH
MY GOD! DID
YOU...

OF COURSE
NOT! I'M **NOT** THAT
KIND OF GIRL! AT LEAST
NOT ON THE **FIRST**
DATE!

THEN HOW DO
YOU KNOW...

OH, A GIRL CAN
TELL THESE THINGS!
ESPECIALLY WHEN THE
GUY WEARS VERY **TIGHT**
SHORTS! *GIGGLE!*



WELL, GLAD
YOU CLARIFIED
THAT, AND...
OWWWW!!

WHAT'S WRONG?
CRAMPS AGAIN?

I WISH IT WERE **JUST**
CRAMPS! THESE HAVE BEEN
HAPPENING ALL OVER
DIFFERENT PARTS OF MY
BODY! AND THEY'RE GETTING
MORE AND MORE
FREQUENT!

THIS HAS GONE WAY
BEYOND JUST
ADJUSTING TO THE NEW
MEDICATIONS! I **NEED** TO
SEE DOCTOR SOLOMON
AGAIN!



OH **SHIT!** DIDN'T
I **TELL** YOU?
DOCTOR SOLOMON
MOVED OUT TO
CALIFORNIA!

WHAT?!

YEAH! HE MADE SOME
SERIOUS CONNECTIONS AT
THAT MEDICAL CONVENTION HE
WAS AT A FEW WEEKS AGO! SOME
HUGE FIRM IN SAN JOSE
OFFERED HIM A POSITION AND
HE **TOOK** IT!

SHIT! WHAT AM
I **GONNA** DO? I DO NOT
WANT TO START **ALL** OVER
WITH A **BRAND NEW** DOCTOR
AND A **BRAND NEW**
PRESCRIPTION THAT MAY OR
MAY **NOT** WORK BETTER
THAN WHAT I'VE **BEEN**
TAKING!



RYAN, WHAT YOU'VE BEEN
TAKING IS THE **BEST** STUFF
ANY DOCTOR COULD PRESCRIBE FOR
A WOMAN TRYING TO **TRANSITION**
TO A MAN! GOING TO A NEW DOCTOR
WOULDN'T MAKE **ANY**
DIFFERENCE ANYWAY!

SO YOU'RE
SAYING I'M **JUST**
GOING TO HAVE TO
LIVE WITH THIS
PAIN?

OF
COURSE I
DO!

NOT NECESSARILY!
YOU WANT MY
HONEST OPINION?

STOP TAKING
THE
HORMONES!

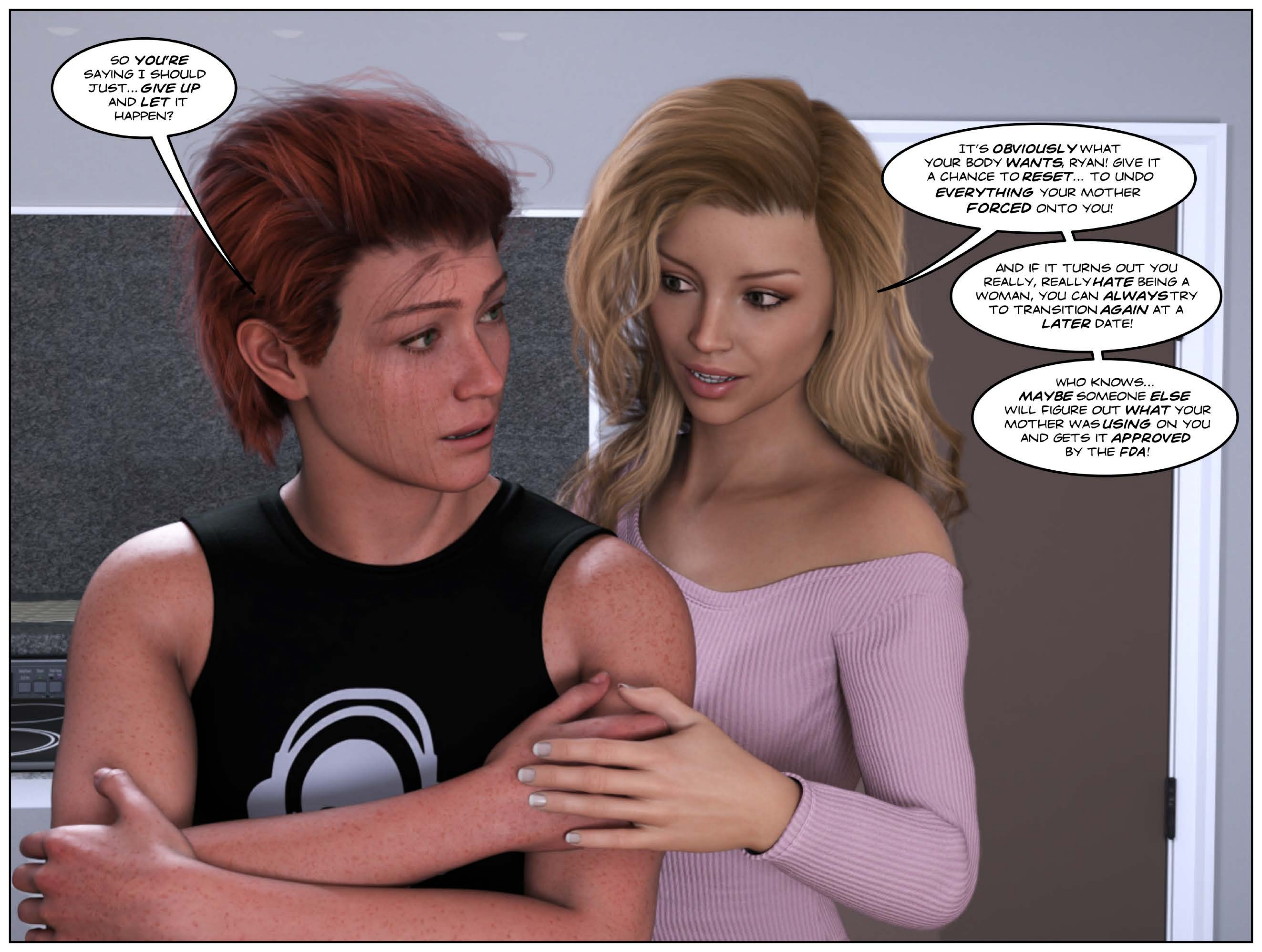


BUT IF I DO
THAT, I'LL...
I'LL...

START LOOKING
LIKE YOUR
NATURAL SELF...
LIKE A **WOMAN**!

IT'S **ALREADY**
HAPPENING, RYAN! I'M
SURE YOU'VE SEEN IT
BECAUSE **I** SURE HAVE!

YOUR **BODY** IS TRYING TO
CHANGE BACK **DESPITE** THE
HORMONES! THE **LONGER** YOU
KEEP **TAKING** THEM, THE LONGER
IT'LL **TAKE** AND THE LONGER
YOU'LL BE IN **PAIN**!



SO YOU'RE
SAYING I SHOULD
JUST... **GIVE UP**
AND **LET IT**
HAPPEN?

IT'S **OBVIOUSLY** WHAT
YOUR BODY **WANTS**, RYAN! GIVE IT
A CHANCE TO **RESET**... TO UNDO
EVERYTHING YOUR MOTHER
FORCED ONTO YOU!

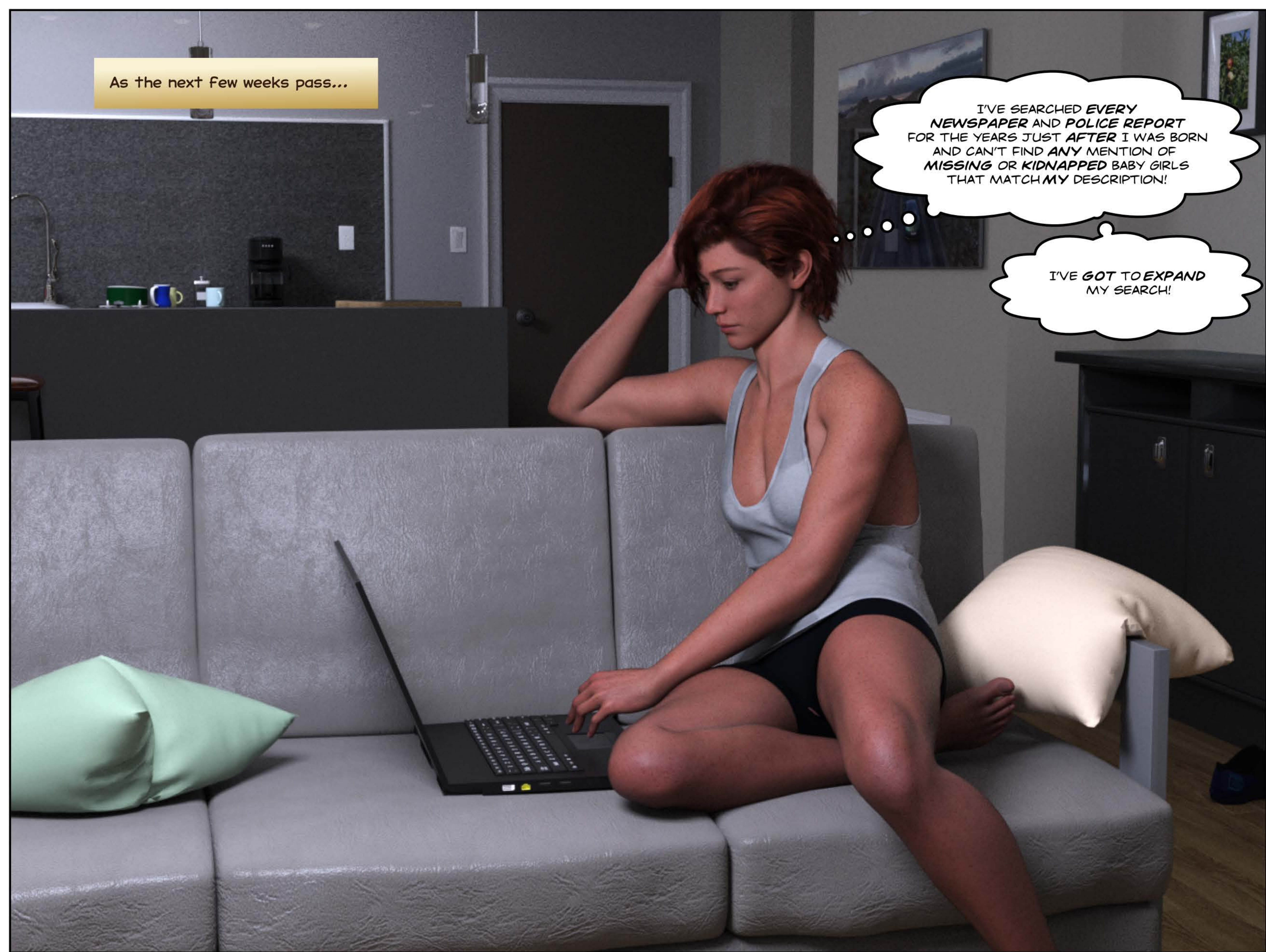
AND IF IT TURNS OUT YOU
REALLY, REALLY **HATE** BEING A
WOMAN, YOU CAN **ALWAYS** TRY
TO TRANSITION **AGAIN** AT A
LATER DATE!

WHO KNOWS...
MAYBE SOMEONE **ELSE**
WILL FIGURE OUT **WHAT** YOUR
MOTHER WAS **USING** ON YOU
AND GETS IT **APPROVED**
BY THE **FDA!**

As the next few weeks pass...

I'VE SEARCHED *EVERY*
NEWSPAPER AND *POLICE REPORT*
FOR THE YEARS JUST *AFTER* I WAS BORN
AND CAN'T FIND *ANY* MENTION OF
MISSING OR *KIDNAPPED* BABY GIRLS
THAT MATCH *MY* DESCRIPTION!

I'VE *GOT TO EXPAND*
MY SEARCH!



...the aches and pains do *indeed* start to *lessen* in intensity as their *effects* start to become more *noticeable*...

NOTHING IN
ANY OF THE STATE
AGENCIES OR EVEN
CANADA!

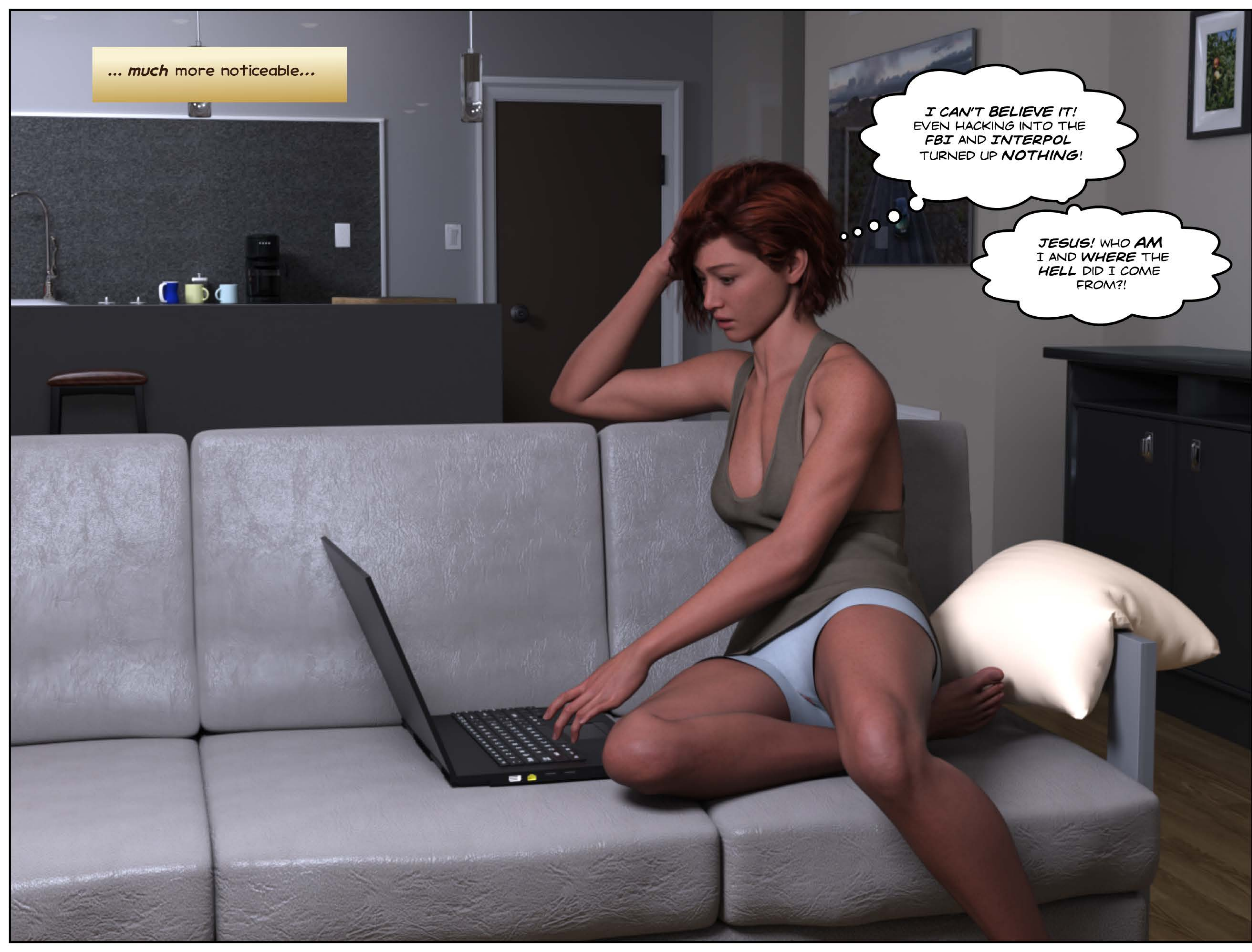
OKAY... IT'S
TIME TO GET
SERIOUS!



... *much* more noticeable...

I CAN'T BELIEVE IT!
EVEN HACKING INTO THE
FBI AND **INTERPOL**
TURNED UP **NOTHING!**

JESUS! WHO AM
I AND **WHERE** THE
HELL DID I COME
FROM?!





UGH! AS MUCH AS I DON'T
WANT TO, I HAVE *GOT* TO TAKE A
BREAK FROM ALL THIS! I FEEL LIKE I'VE
BEEN *STARING* AT THAT COMPUTER
NON-STOP FOR WEEKS!

*PHEW! AND THE FIRST
ORDER OF BUSINESS IS A
SHOWER! I THINK IT'S BEEN A
FEW DAYS SINCE MY LAST ONE
AND I'M GETTING PRETTY DAMN
RIPE!*







****GASP!****



OH MY...
OH MY...



WHA... WHAT
THE HELL WAS
THAT?

Later that evening after an embarrassed Ryan confides to Sara...

ARE YOU TRYING
TO TELL ME YOU'VE
NEVER STROKED
THE PEACH BEFORE?

STROKED
THE PEACH?
WHAT ARE YOU
TALKING
ABOUT?

MASTURBATION,
SWEETIE! HAVEN'T YOU
EVER DONE THAT
BEFORE?





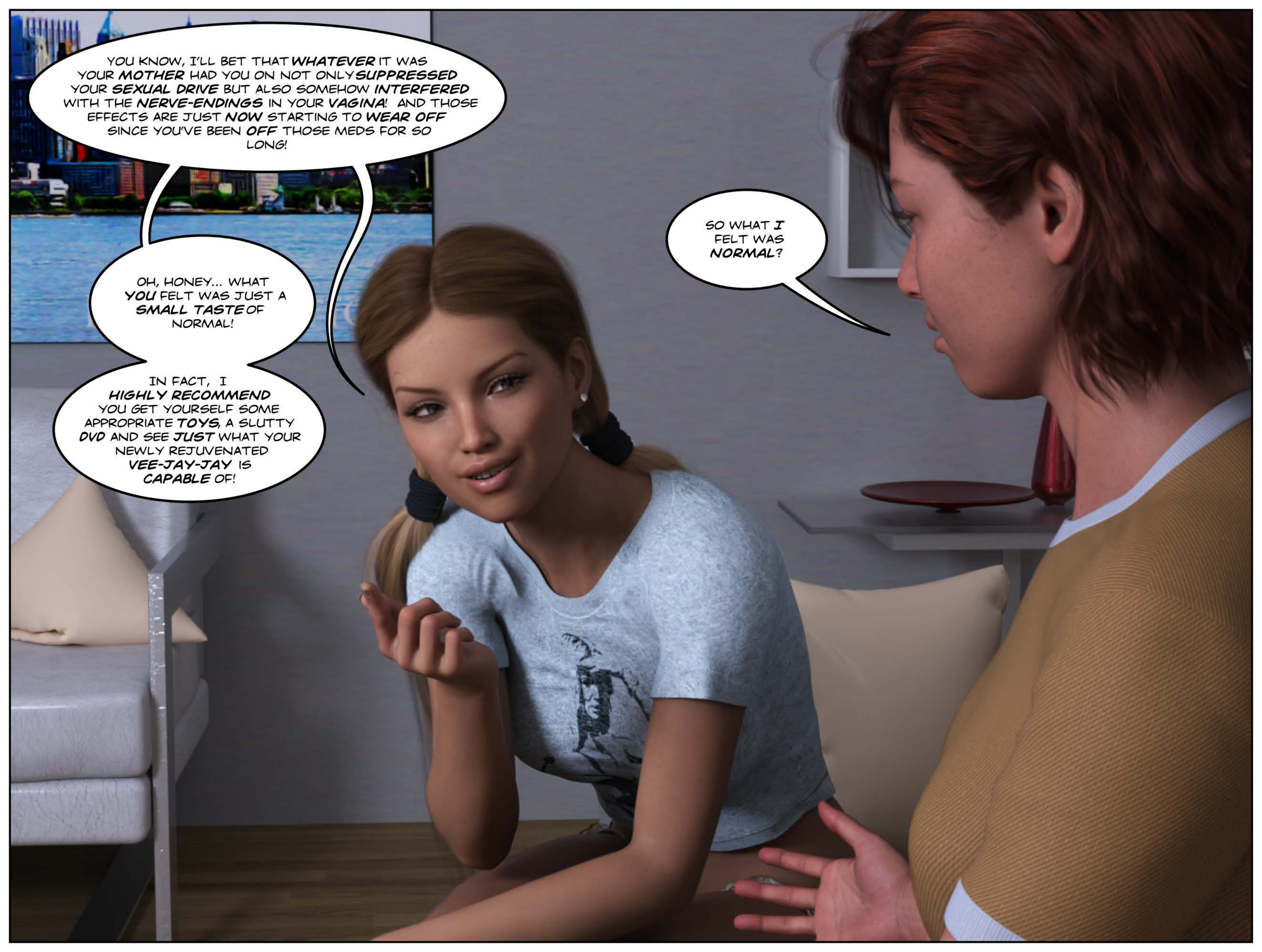
WHAT DO YOU
MEAN
NOTHING?

BUT IT **WAS**
DIFFERENT
TODAY?

NO! WELL... I MEAN, I
TRIED ONCE WHEN I WAS ABOUT
FIFTEEN **JUST** TO SEE WHAT THE
BIG DEAL WAS ALL ABOUT! BUT...
NOTHING HAPPENED!

IT WAS **NO MORE**
EXCITING THAN STICKING MY
FINGER IN MY **EAR!**

OH **YEAH!** I WAS
WASHING MYSELF DURING A
SHOWER AND MY FINGER
SLIPPED AND, WELL...
WOW!



YOU KNOW, I'LL BET THAT **WHATEVER** IT WAS
YOUR **MOTHER** HAD YOU ON NOT ONLY **SUPPRESSED**
YOUR **SEXUAL DRIVE** BUT ALSO SOMEHOW **INTERFERED**
WITH THE **NERVE-ENDINGS** IN YOUR **VAGINA!** AND THOSE
EFFECTS ARE JUST **NOW** STARTING TO **WEAR OFF**
SINCE YOU'VE BEEN **OFF** THOSE **MEDS** FOR SO
LONG!

OH, HONEY... WHAT
YOU FELT WAS JUST A
SMALL TASTE OF
NORMAL!

IN FACT, I
HIGHLY RECOMMEND
YOU GET YOURSELF SOME
APPROPRIATE **TOYS**, A **SLUTTY**
DVD AND SEE **JUST** WHAT YOUR
NEWLY REJUVENATED
VEE-JAY-JAY IS
CAPABLE OF!

SO WHAT **I**
FELT WAS
NORMAL?



OKAY, I KNOW *I'M* THE
ONE WHO ASKED YOU OVER TO
TALK ABOUT THIS, BUT I'M
EXTREMELY UNCOMFORTABLE NOW!
CAN WE **PLEASE** CHANGE THE
SUBJECT?

SURE, BUT **AFTER** I TELL
YOU THIS IS NOTHING TO BE
EMBARRASSED ABOUT! IT'S
PERFECTLY **NATURAL** AND, HONESTLY,
ONE OF THE **BEST** THINGS
ABOUT BEING A **WOMAN**!

NOT EXPERIENCING IT
TO IT'S **FULLEST** IS, IN MY
OPINION, A **CRIME**
AGAINST **NATURE**!



SIGH! I
UNDERSTAND THAT, BUT
I JUST NEED SOME TIME
TO PROCESS IT ALL!
OKAY?

FAIR
ENOUGH!



OH, BEFORE I LEAVE
YOU TO DO YOUR
"PROCESSING ", THOUGHT I'D
TELL YOU I'M GONNA BE **GONE**
FOR A **WEEK** OR SO!

ATLANTIC CITY WITH
SOME OF THE **OTHER**
NURSES AT THE OFFICE! THEY TELL
ME IT'S AN **ANNUAL** THING THEY
DO! WE'LL BE GONE AT LEAST A
WEEK... HOPEFULLY **LONGER** IF
OUR **LUCK** HOLDS OUT!

I'M **COUNTING** ON
IT! *GIGGLE!*

WHERE ARE
YOU GOING?

SOUNDS
LIKE **FUN**!

A woman with short, wavy red hair is standing in a doorway. She is wearing a yellow short-sleeved shirt with white trim at the neck, sleeves, and hem, and black shorts. She has her right hand raised to her hair. The background shows a grey wall with a light switch, a dark countertop, and a grey trash can. A speech bubble is next to her head.

"VEE-JAY-JAY?!"

The next day...

Knock, knock!!

COMING!

WHO COULD THAT BE?
COULDN'T BE SARA... SHE LEFT THIS
MORNING FOR ATLANTIC CITY! BESIDES,
SHE KNOWS SHE CAN ALWAYS WALK
RIGHT IN!





UMM...
HELLO?

HIYA! YOU'RE
RYAN, RIGHT?

UHH... YEAH, I
AM! WHO ARE
YOU?



I'M CLINT! I
LIVE DOWN THE
HALL!

SARA ASKED
ME TO GIVE
THIS TO YOU!

SHE TOLD ME SHE WAS
LEAVING *EARLY* TODAY
AND DIDN'T WANT TO JUST
SET IT OUT IN THE HALL
WHERE IT MIGHT GET
SNATCHED!

WHY DIDN'T
SHE GIVE IT TO ME
HERSELF?

A man with dark, curly hair and a goatee, wearing a dark purple t-shirt, stands in a kitchen holding a large, light-brown cardboard box. The box has a circular logo on its side that reads "Merco PRODUCTS". He is looking towards a woman standing in a doorway. The woman has short, curly reddish-brown hair and is wearing a bright cyan short-sleeved top with blue trim at the neck and sleeves, and dark grey shorts. She is looking back at the man with a slightly concerned or questioning expression. The kitchen background includes a grey speckled countertop with a black coffee maker on the left and a white electrical outlet. The doorway behind the woman leads to a darker area.

WELL, UMMM...
COME ON IN! JUST PUT
IT ON THE TABLE OVER
THERE!

GOT IT!

PIECE OF
CAKE!

HAVEN'T A
CLUE!

I HOPE IT'S NOT
TOO *HEAVY*!

DID SHE *TELL*
YOU WHAT IT
WAS?



WOW! SARA WASN'T
EXAGGERATING WHEN SHE
SAID HE HAD THE LOOKS AND
PHYSIQUE OF A **GREEK GOD!**

MAKES ME
WONDER IF SHE WAS
RIGHT REGARDING
EVERYTHING ELSE
ABOUT HIM!

GIGGLE!





WELL, IT WAS,
UHHH... **REALLY** NICE
TO MEET YOU, RYAN! I'M
SURE I'LL SEE YOU
AROUND!

YEAH,
UMMM... NICE
TO MEET YOU,
TOO, CLINT!
BYE!

WHEW! I THINK MY **SEX DRIVE**
IS STARTING TO COME BACK 'CAUSE I'VE
NEVER FELT LIKE THIS AROUND
ANYONE BEFORE! EVEN **SARA**!

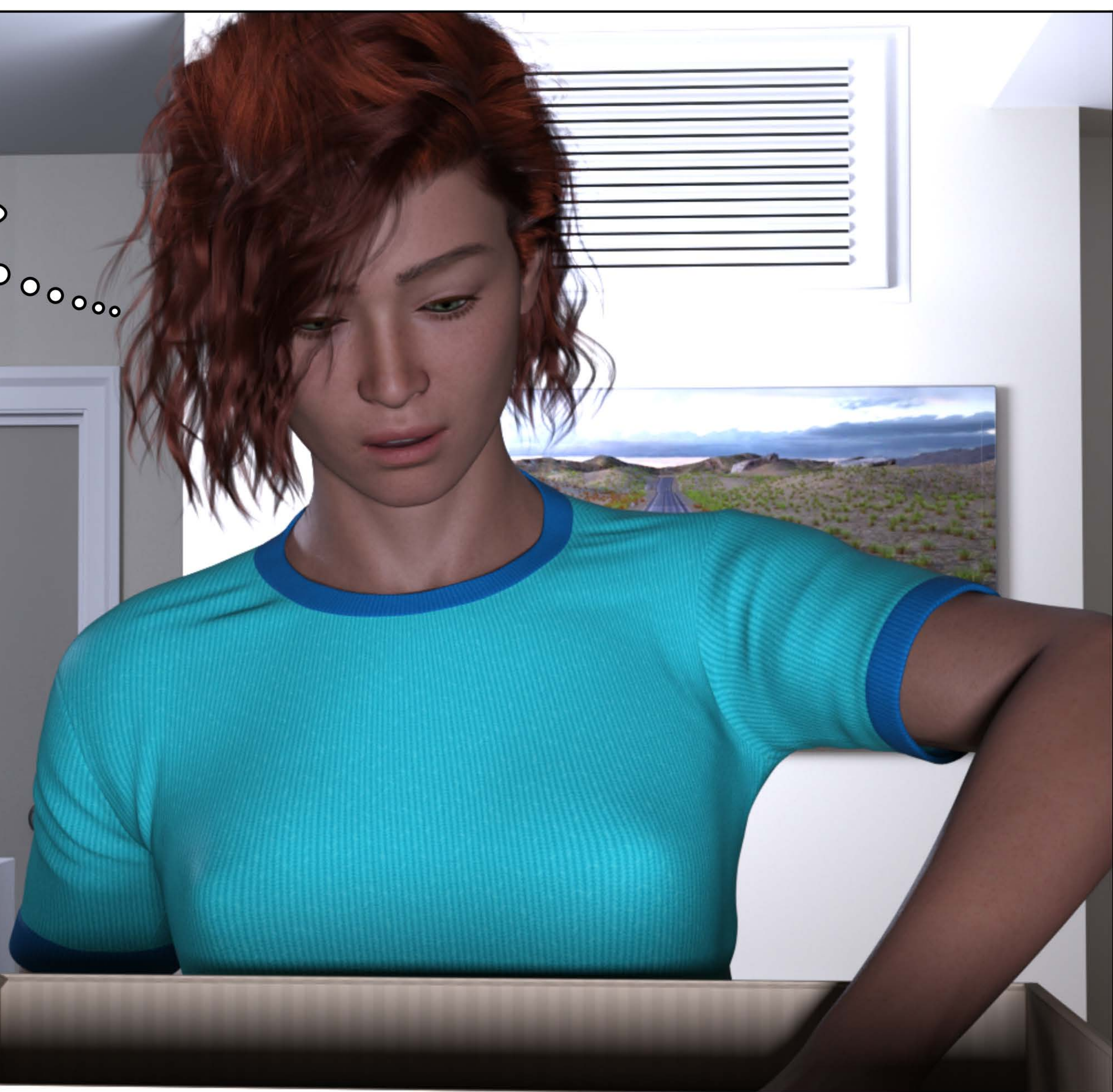
I HOPE CLINT **DIDN'T**
NOTICE! THAT WOULD BE
TOO **EMBARRASSING!**

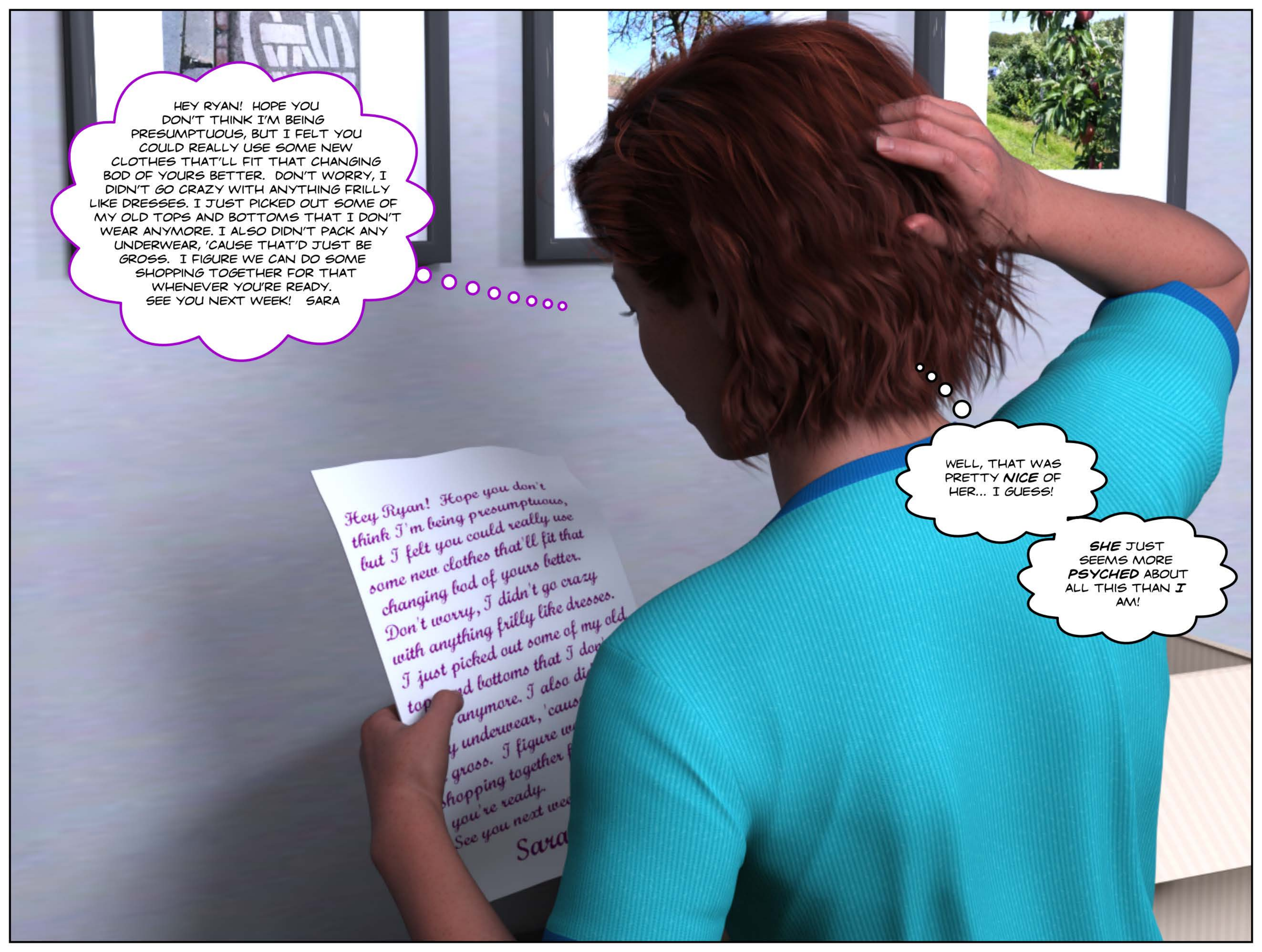


WELL, LETS
SEE WHAT SARA
THOUGHT WAS SO
IMPORTANT FOR
ME TO HAVE!



*CLOTHES?
SHE GAVE ME A
BUNCH OF
CLOTHES?*





HEY RYAN! HOPE YOU
DON'T THINK I'M BEING
PRESUMPTUOUS, BUT I FELT YOU
COULD REALLY USE SOME NEW
CLOTHES THAT'LL FIT THAT CHANGING
BOD OF YOURS BETTER. DON'T WORRY, I
DIDN'T GO CRAZY WITH ANYTHING FRILLY
LIKE DRESSES. I JUST PICKED OUT SOME OF
MY OLD TOPS AND BOTTOMS THAT I DON'T
WEAR ANYMORE. I ALSO DIDN'T PACK ANY
UNDERWEAR, 'CAUSE THAT'D JUST BE
GROSS. I FIGURE WE CAN DO SOME
SHOPPING TOGETHER FOR THAT
WHENEVER YOU'RE READY.
SEE YOU NEXT WEEK! SARA

WELL, THAT WAS
PRETTY **NICE** OF
HER... I GUESS!

SHE JUST
SEEMS MORE
PSYCHED ABOUT
ALL THIS THAN **I**
AM!

Hey Ryan! Hope you don't
think I'm being presumptuous,
but I felt you could really use
some new clothes that'll fit that
changing bod of yours better.
Don't worry, I didn't go crazy
with anything frilly like dresses.
I just picked out some of my old
tops and bottoms that I don't
wear anymore. I also didn't pack
any underwear, 'cause that'd be
gross. I figure we can do some
shopping together whenever
you're ready.
See you next week!
Sara

WAIT A MINUTE!
WHAT'S *THIS* DOWN
AT THE BOTTOM?



OH, YOU HAVE
GOT TO BE
FUCKING KIDDING
ME!





OH YEAH... SHE'S
DEFINITELY ENJOYING
THIS MORE THAN ME!

*Sorry!
I couldn't resist!
Enjoy!!*

But as the day wears on...



Curiosity starts to get
the better of Ryan...





WELL, *SHIT!* THERE'S
NO WAY I'M GOING TO GET
ANYTHING DONE UNTIL I AT
LEAST TRY ONE OF *THOSE*
THINGS OUT!

click!

'CAUSE I KNOW
DAMN WELL THAT SARA
WILL **NEVER** STOP
HOUNDING ME UNTIL I
DO!



A woman with short, wavy red hair is shown from the chest up, wearing a teal-colored short-sleeved shirt with a blue ribbed collar and cuffs. She is holding a black, cylindrical handle with both hands in front of her. Her expression is one of hesitation or uncertainty. Above her head is a thought bubble with a black outline and white text. The background consists of white vertical blinds covering a window, and to the left, a light-colored wall with several white, rectangular, open-frame shelves arranged in a staggered pattern.

YEAH, I *DON'T*
THINK I'M READY
FOR ANYTHING THAT...
INVASIVE YET!

A woman with voluminous, curly red hair is standing in a room with white vertical blinds. She is wearing a teal-colored short-sleeved shirt with blue trim at the neck and sleeves, and grey shorts. She is holding a bright pink vibrator with a clear, spherical head in her right hand. Her left hand is raised behind her head. She has a slightly distressed or thoughtful expression on her face. To her right, there are two comic-style thought bubbles. The first bubble contains the text 'GUESS THAT LEAVES YOU!'. The second bubble contains the text 'GOD! DID SHE HAVE TO PICK OUT ONE THAT WAS SO... PINK?'.

GUESS
THAT LEAVES
YOU!

GOD! DID
SHE HAVE TO
PICK OUT ONE THAT
WAS SO...
PINK?



WELL... HERE
GOES
NOTHING...

.....

HEY, THIS FEELS PRETTY
DAMN *NICE*! LIKE A TINY
LITTLE *MASSAGE*
BETWEEN MY THIGHS!

I WONDER WHAT IT
FEELS LIKE IF I PUT IT
RIGHT ON MY...

Bzzzzzzzz



HOLY
SHIT!!



OH MY GOD! THAT
WAS LIKE THE **ENTIRE**
SHOWER INCIDENT CRAMMED
INTO ONE **EYE-OPENING**
SECOND!

AND **HERE** I
THOUGHT SARA MIGHT'VE
BEEN JUST **TEASING** ME
ABOUT ALL THIS!

WOW! WAS I
WRONG!

A woman with short, curly red hair is sitting on a bed, looking down at a bright pink vibrator she is holding in her right hand. She is wearing a teal-colored short-sleeved shirt with a blue ribbed collar and cuffs. The background shows a modern bedroom with a dark headboard, white pillows, and a mirror reflecting another part of the room.

WELL... NOW THAT I'VE BEEN
PROPERLY INTRODUCED TO MY
NEW LITTLE **FRIEND** HERE, MAYBE I
NEED TO SEE WHAT IT'S
CAPABLE OF!



A woman with short reddish-brown hair, wearing a bright blue short-sleeved dress, is sitting on the floor in a bedroom. She is leaning back against a bed with white pillows, with her right hand on the bed for support. She is holding a pink, bullet-shaped vibrator against her left buttock. Her eyes are closed and her mouth is open in an 'O' shape, indicating intense sensation. A thought bubble above her head contains the text 'AND ON SETTING NUMBER 2!'. A jagged speech bubble to her right contains the text 'OH... FUCK!!! YES!!!'. A blue and white sound effect 'BZZZZZZZZ' is positioned near the vibrator. The room features a dark headboard, a bedside table with a lamp, and a doorway leading to another room with a staircase.

AND ON
SETTING
NUMBER 2!

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

BZZZZZZZZ

A couple of days later...

I **GUESS** IT'S A
GOOD THING **AFTER**
ALL THAT SARA GAVE
ME SOME CLOTHES TO
WEAR!

I REALLY HAD **NO**
IDEA MY BODY WOULD
CHANGE **SO FAST** ONCE I
WAS **OFF** THE
HORMONES!





A woman with short, curly red hair is lying on her side on a grey couch. She is wearing a green short-sleeved top and red shorts. Her right arm is resting on a large white pillow, and her left hand is on a black laptop that has the 'click' logo on its lid. The laptop is open, but the screen is not visible. In the background, there is a kitchen with white cabinets, a dark countertop, and a sink with a faucet. A wooden stool is also visible. Three thought bubbles are present, containing text about her search for information on her past and her distraction by a new past-time.

**SIGH!* I'VE ALSO
HIT A DEAD END IN
MY SEARCH FOR
INFO ON MY PAST!*

*AND IT DOESN'T
HELP THAT I'VE BEEN
SO DISTRACTED THE
LAST COUPLE OF DAYS WITH
MY NEW... PAST-TIME!*

*JESUS! SARA DIDN'T
SAY ANYTHING ABOUT
HOW ADDICTIVE IT COULD
BECOME!*



SPEAKING OF... MY **TOY**
SOUNDED A LITTLE
ANEMIC THIS MORNING!
MAYBE I SHOULD REPLACE ITS
BATTERIES!

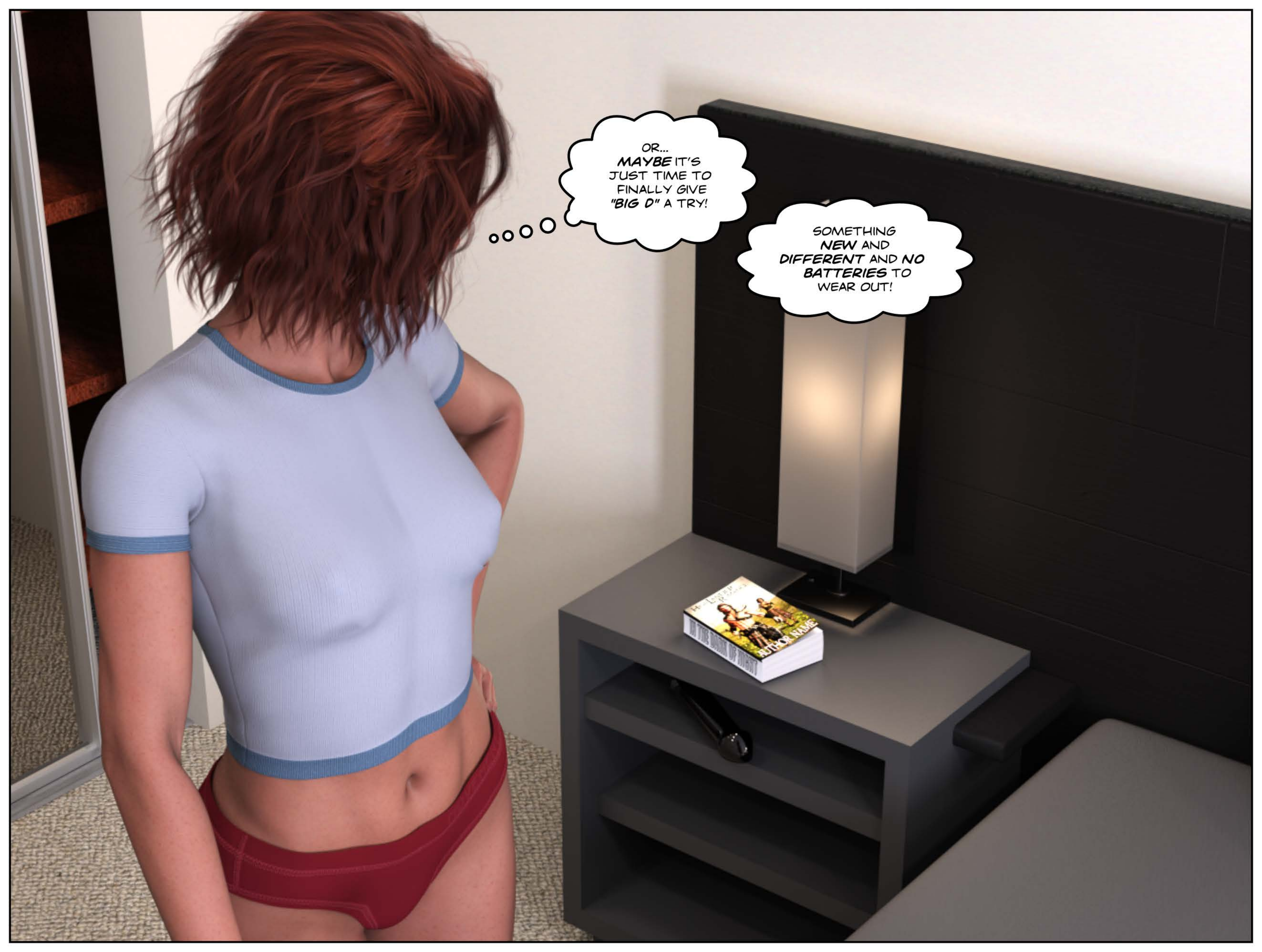
AND **OF COURSE** MAKE
SURE IT'S WORKING
PROPERLY AFTERWARD!
GIGGLE!

And, two days later...

OKAY, THIS IS
RIDICULOUS! THOSE
WERE **BRAND NEW**
BATTERIES AND THEY'RE
ALREADY DEAD?

HMPH! GUESS I
HAVE TO FIND BATTERIES
THAT ARE **BETTER**
EQUIPPED TO HANDLE
REPEATED USE OF THE
"HIGH" SETTING ON
THIS THING!





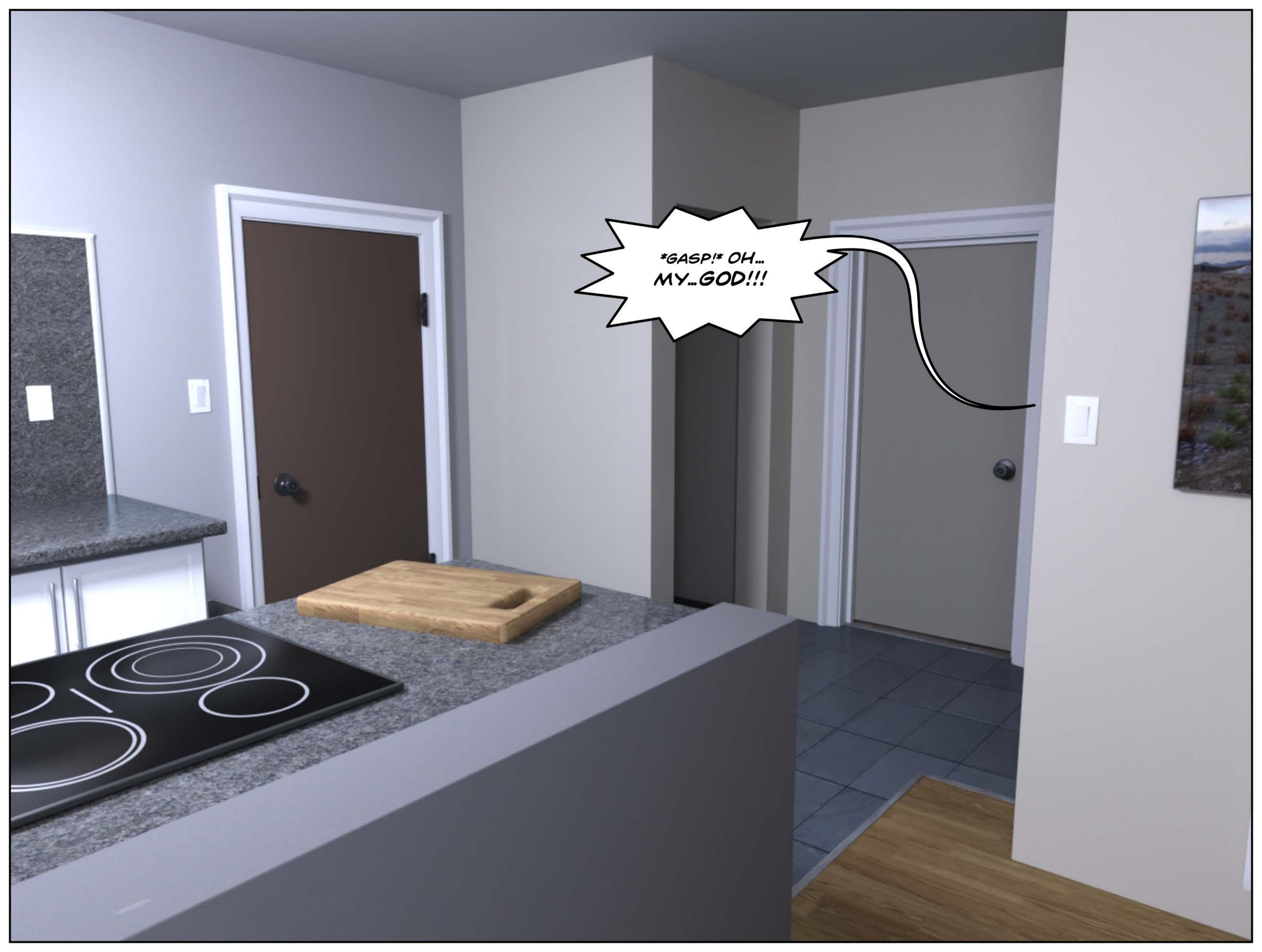
OR...
MAYBE IT'S
JUST TIME TO
FINALLY GIVE
"BIG D" A TRY!

SOMETHING
NEW AND
DIFFERENT AND **NO**
BATTERIES TO
WEAR OUT!



OKAY... FIRST TIME
ANYTHING BIGGER
THAN MY **FINGERS**
HAS GONE IN THERE!

LET'S **SEE**
WHAT THE **BIG**
DEAL IS ALL
ABOUT...



****GASP!* OH...
MY...GOD!!!***

A woman with reddish-brown hair is lying on her back on a grey floor. She is wearing a light blue short-sleeved top and dark underwear. Her legs are raised and bent at the knees, with her feet pointing towards her head. She has a pained or surprised expression on her face, with her mouth open. Her hands are resting on her thighs. To her left is a large white cushion. To her right is a bright yellow blanket. In the background, there is a grey sofa and a small table with a lamp and a laptop. A speech bubble is positioned above her head.

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



AAAAHHHHHHH!!!



OOOHHHH...
HELL, YEAH!
GIGGLE!

And the next day...

GOD, I HAVE *GOT* TO GET A *HANDLE* ON MYSELF! I *CAN'T* SPEND *HOURS* EVERY DAY *DILDO-ING* MYSELF SILLY! I'LL *NEVER* GET *ANYTHING* ACCOMPLISHED!

IT'S *GOT* TO JUST BE A *PHASE* I'M GOING THROUGH NOW THAT I'VE *FINALLY* LET ALL MY *PENT-UP* FEMALE HORMONES *RUN FREE*!

OF COURSE, IF IT *IS* A PHASE, I *HOPE* IT JUST KIND OF TAPERS OFF... *SLOWLY*! NO NEED TO QUIT *COLD TURKEY*, AFTER ALL! *GIGGLE!*



OH MY GOD! THAT
COULDN'T BE THE NEW
BATTERY-POWERED TOY
I ORDERED YESTERDAY...
COULD IT?

I MEAN, THEY PROMISE
FAST DELIVERY, BUT THIS
IS **RIDICULOUS!**

NOT THAT I'M
COMPLAINING, THOUGH!
GIGGLE!

Knock, knock!



A woman with short, wavy red hair is standing in a room, wrapped in a white towel. She is looking down at a black smartphone in her hands with a concerned expression. The room has a beige wall with four framed pictures on the left and a white geometric shelf in the background. To her right is a window with white vertical blinds. A light blue armchair is visible on the far left. Two thought bubbles are present: one above her head and another to the right.

*IT IS! THEY
LEFT IT **RIGHT**
OUTSIDE MY
DOOR!*

***SHIT!** I HOPE IT'S
PACKAGED IN THE PROVERBIAL
"**BROWN PAPER WRAPPING**"!
THAT COULD BE
EMBARRASSING AS HELL
IF IT ISN'T!*

I CAN JUST *IMAGINE* MY
85-YEAR-OLD NEXT DOOR NEIGHBOR
WALKING BY AND SEEING A PACKAGE LABELED,
"*BIG BOY LOVE MACHINE*" LEANING UP
AGAINST MY DOOR! *SHE* MIGHT HAVE A
HEART ATTACK!

THEN AGAIN, UNLESS SHE'S
DEAF, SHE *PROBABLY* HAS A
PRETTY *GOOD* IDEA OF HOW *I'VE*
BEEN SPENDING THE LAST COUPLE
OF DAYS! *GIGGLE!*





SORRY, MRS. MUIR!
BUT IT'S PROBABLY GOING TO
GET **EVEN LOUDER** OVER
HERE PRETTY SOON!

HELL, I'M **ALREADY**
IMAGINING HOW **GOOD**
THIS IS GOING TO FEEL
ONCE I...



HEY, RYAN!
GOOD TIMING! I
WAS JUST ABOUT
TO KNOCK!

GASP!
CLINT?!

UHHH...
YEAH! WHAT...
WHAT ARE YOU
DOING HERE?

WELL, *FIRST* OFF, I
THOUGHT I'D GIVE YOU THIS
PACKAGE I JUST FOUND
LEANING UP AGAINST YOUR
DOOR!

OH... *THANKS!* IT
MUST BE THE, UHHH...
BATH BOMBS
I ORDERED!

SHIT! THE
COMPANY NAME IS
ALL OVER THE BOX!
LET'S HOPE **HE** ISN'T
FAMILIAR WITH
THEM!



WHEW! I THOUGHT CLINT LOOKED GOOD IN THAT TIGHT T-SHIRT HE WAS WEARING A FEW DAYS AGO, BUT THAT MESH TANK-TOP REALLY SHOWS OFF WHAT HE'S MADE OF!

SO, DID YOU JUST COME BY TO DELIVER ANOTHER PACKAGE FOR ME?

I THINK I'VE GOT ONE STASHED AWAY SOMEWHERE!

HEH! KINDA SEEMS THAT WAY DOESN'T IT? ACTUALLY I WANTED TO SEE IF YOU HAD A FLASHLIGHT I COULD BORROW!

I NEEDED TO GO ROOT AROUND IN MY STORAGE LOCKER AND THE BULB IN MY FLASHLIGHT IS BURNED OUT!

Ever & Adam, Inc.
2320 E. Main St.
NY, NY 10014

Ryan Buckett
1345 W. 95th
Apt. 345
Baltimore, MD
21204

A woman with short brown hair, wearing a dark red short-sleeved crop top and black high-waisted shorts, stands in a kitchen. She is looking up at a high white cabinet. The kitchen has white cabinets, a dark countertop, and a sink. A dish rack with a red plate and a white mug is on the counter. The scene is lit with soft, cool-toned light.

OKAY, STOP
FLIRTING WITH THE
HUNK BEFORE YOU MAKE A
FOOL OF YOURSELF!

I'M **PRETTY**
SURE IT'S UP
THERE!

WHY WAY
UP **THERE**?

IT'S JUST WHERE I
PUT EVERYTHING I
DIDN'T **NEED** RIGHT
AWAY WHEN I MOVED
IN!



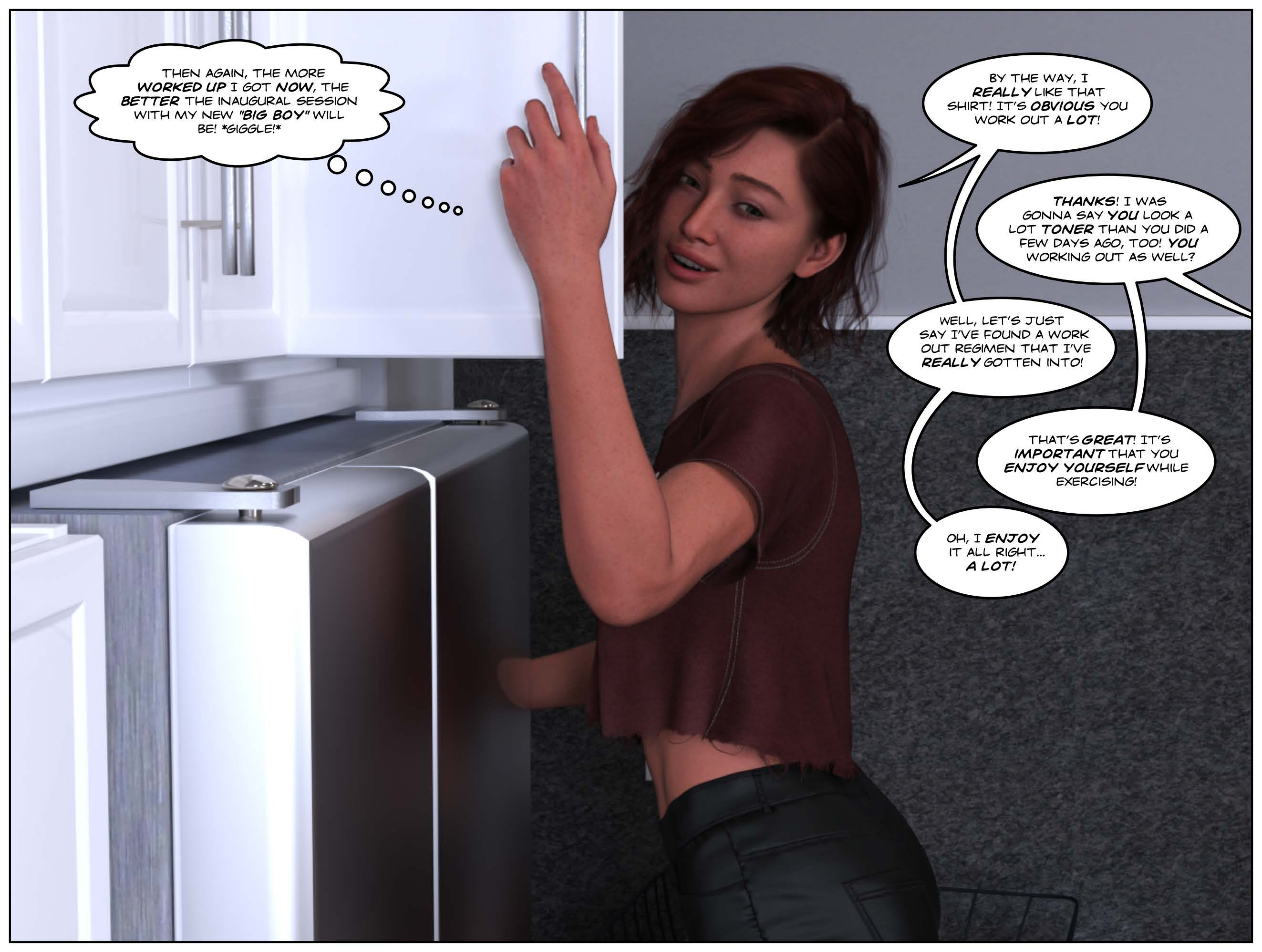
IS HE
CHECKING OUT MY
ASS? OH MY GOD, I
THINK HE IS!

AS IF I WASN'T
AROUSSED ENOUGH
ALREADY!

IT'S SWEET
OF YOU TO
WORRY, BUT THIS
LADDER'S
STRONGER THAN
IT LOOKS!

YOU NEED ANY
HELP? THAT LADDER
DOESN'T LOOK VERY STURDY
! WOULDN'T WANT YOU TO GET
HURT!

IF YOU SAY SO!

A woman with reddish-brown hair, wearing a dark red short-sleeved top and black pants, is standing in a kitchen. She is looking up at a white cabinet with her right hand touching it. The kitchen has white cabinets and a dark countertop. There are five speech bubbles on the right side of the image and one thought bubble on the left.

THEN AGAIN, THE MORE
WORKED UP I GOT NOW, THE
BETTER THE INAUGURAL SESSION
WITH MY NEW "**BIG BOY**" WILL
BE! **GIGGLE!**

BY THE WAY, I
REALLY LIKE THAT
SHIRT! IT'S **OBVIOUS** YOU
WORK OUT A **LOT**!

THANKS! I WAS
GONNA SAY **YOU** LOOK A
LOT TONER THAN YOU DID A
FEW DAYS AGO, TOO! **YOU**
WORKING OUT AS WELL?

WELL, LET'S JUST
SAY I'VE FOUND A WORK
OUT REGIMEN THAT I'VE
REALLY GOTTEN INTO!

THAT'S **GREAT!** IT'S
IMPORTANT THAT YOU
ENJOY YOURSELF WHILE
EXERCISING!

OH, I **ENJOY**
IT ALL RIGHT...
A LOT!

OH CRAP!!



A full-page comic book panel showing a man lifting a woman in a kitchen. The man, with short brown hair, is wearing a black mesh tank top and blue jeans. He is lifting the woman from behind, holding her waist and legs. The woman has long, wavy brown hair and is wearing a maroon off-the-shoulder crop top with a white logo that says "gink" and "OUTSIDE THE BOX" in yellow and white, and black shorts. She is looking down at the man with a surprised expression. The kitchen has white cabinets, a dark grey countertop, and a stainless steel refrigerator on the left. A dish rack with red plates is on the counter. Two speech bubbles are present: one from the woman saying "*GASP!*" and one from the man saying "DON'T WORRY... I'VE GOT YOU!".

GASP!

DON'T WORRY...
I'VE GOT YOU!



WHEW!
THANKS,
CLINT!

THAT
COULD'VE BEEN A
REAL **DISASTER** IF
YOU HADN'T
BEEN HERE!

OH MY GOD! IS
HE CHECKING OUT MY
TITS NOW? I MEAN, **HOW**
COULD HE **NOT**? THEY'RE
RIGHT IN HIS **FACE**!

GLAD I COULD
BE OF HELP!
REALLY...
REALLY GLAD!

I GUESS **THIS** IS THE
PART WHERE I'M **SUPPOSED** TO
SAY, "HEY, MY EYES ARE UP HERE!"
BUT **TRUTHFULLY**, I DON'T MIND
THE WAY HE'S **CHECKING ME**
OUT!

AND FROM WHAT **I** CAN
FEEL **GROWING** IN HIS PANTS,
HE DOESN'T MIND IT ONE
LITTLE BIT **EITHER!**

WHEW! I'M NO
EXPERT, BUT I HAVE A
FEELING **HE** MIGHT GIVE MY
"**BIG BOY**" A RUN FOR IT'S
MONEY!





WHICH **BEGS** THE QUESTION, **WHY** PUT MY NEEDS ON **HOLD** FOR A **BATTERY-POWERED** HUNK OF **PLASTIC** WHEN I'VE GOT THE **REAL THING** RIGHT **HERE**?

I MEAN, I'VE **NEVER** BEEN A VERY **BOLD** OR **AGGRESSIVE** PERSON BEFORE, BUT MY **CURIOSITY** AND **HORMONES** ARE GETTING THE **BETTER** OF ME!

AND A CHANCE LIKE **THIS** MAY **NOT** COME ALONG AGAIN FOR A LONG, **LONG** TIME!

SO... DO YOU WANT TO **HELP** ME GIVE THAT FLASHLIGHT A **SECOND** TRY?

YOU KNOW... I THINK THERE'S SOMETHING **ELSE** WE NEED TO TRY **FIRST**!



REALLY? BUT
WHAT COULD BE MORE
IMPORTANT, OR MORE
INTERESTING, THAN MY
OLD FLASHLIGHT? HMMM?

OH, I THINK WE'VE
BOTH ALREADY
THOUGHT OF **ONE** OR
TWO THINGS WE CAN
DO!



OH MY GOD! I MAY NOT
HAVE ANY **REFERENCE POINT** TO
GO BY, BUT I'M GOING TO **GUESS** THAT
THIS CLASSIFIES AS BEING **HUNG** LIKE
A **HORSE**!

JUST **ONE** OR **TWO**, HUH?
I'M THINKING THERE MIGHT BE
EIGHT OR EVEN **NINE** REALLY
GOOD IDEAS RIGHT HERE!
GIGGLE!

HEY, ON A **GOOD**
DAY, I CAN COME UP
WITH **TEN**!
HEH-HEH!



THEN I SAY YOU
COME OVER HERE AND
CRANK THAT BAD BOY ALL
THE WAY UP TO
ELEVEN!



OH, GOD...
YES...
YES...
YES!!

**FUCK, YEAH!
HARDER, BABY!
HARDER!!**





FUCK, YEAH!
HARDER, BABY!
HARDER!!





VID-01 KITCHEN



VID-03 BEDROOM



VID-02 HALLWAY



VID-04 LIVING ROOM

WELL... *THAT*
DIDN'T TAKE
ANYWHERE *NEAR* AS
LONG AS I *THOUGHT*
IT WOULD!