

Growing Up Spanko



Rude Rumps

Mature
Themes



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This work contains recollections of the author's childhood perspectives and experiences, including development of the author's sexual identity. There is no intent in this work to sexualize minors, and any such interpretation reflects the reader's perspectives and intentions, not the author's.

Introduction

“Art is not handicraft, it is the transmission of feeling the artist has experienced.”

—Leo Tolstoy

This is my story, about growing up with a spanking fetish. I’ve been fascinated by spanking for as long as I can remember.

One of my earliest memories is nap-time at preschool, when I must’ve been about three or four. In the afternoon, the teacher would tell us to put our blankets down on the floor and take a nap. I could never fall asleep, so instead I’d close my eyes and tell myself what I called “spanky stories.” They were rather elaborate fantasies. Sometimes, I’d imagine myself as a character from a TV show or a book. Other times, I was me, except with magical powers or living in a different place, like an orphanage in NYC. But, the scenario was always the same: I’d get in trouble for something and get spanked at the end.

My other early memories are about doing art. Looking back at snapshots my dad took of me as a child, it’s rare to find one of me without a crayon, colored pencil or marker in my hand. I still have my Dr. Seuss “My Book About Me” from when I was in Kindergarten. On the page where it asks what I wanted to be when I grew up, I wrote “ARTIST,” in big, shaky, block letters (complete with backwards “S”). I did plenty of typical drawings of things like princesses and horses. But, I also did many, many spanky illustrations, which I’d hide under my mattress. Some actually survived the years, and I’ve even included a few here.

I created lots of spanking art up until I was a young adult, then I stopped for a long time. There were many reasons. Maybe I’ll go into that in my next graphic novel. But, about four years ago, I started up again. It happened out of the blue. I’d just gone through a really tough period emotionally that’d lasted years. I was finally starting to work again and had to learn a new 3D program called Daz Studio for a project. To entertain myself, I made a spanking pose with 3D figures. Then, something tripped in my brain and took me back to a younger me, when those spanky stories held so much power. Over the next few months, I made dozens and dozens of spanking illustrations.

Then, something even stranger happened: I had an urge to share my spanking art. For more than four decades, I’d never shown this part of me to anyone. I think the loneliness finally got to me. I grew up before the Internet. For the longest time, I thought I was the only one in the

world with these feelings. The closest thing I’d found were descriptions in books on mental illness, about people with sadism and masochism fetishes. Later, as a young adult, I found a few spanking personal ads in racy tabloid papers, and started to realize I wasn’t quite the only one. When I started to use the Internet in the nineteen-nineties, I found spanking sites, of course, and I’d look at pictures and stories on them. But, I never got up the nerve to post anything, until I was almost fifty years old. To my surprise, people liked my art. I’d often post little reminiscences to accompany my art, and those really seemed to resonate with people. Soon, I made some very close friends and I talked to them about things I’d never shared with anyone before.

So, about a year after first posting my spanking art on-line, I decided I wanted to create something bigger. There’s almost nothing out there about the spanko experience. Jillian Keenan’s groundbreaking book, “Sex with Shakespeare,” is one of the few. When I first read it a couple years ago, I cried. Finally, I didn’t feel so alone. One thing Jillian doesn’t talk much about in her book, though, is the connections to childhood. It’s a difficult topic for many reasons. I’ve talked to some spankos who developed their interest as adults. But, for many of us, the feelings started very early in childhood. It’s especially complicated for me, because I have what I call “Little tendencies.” I don’t literally dress-up and sit on the floor and draw with crayons (though that might be fun). But, I often regress in my mind to a simpler, littler me when I get spanked. It’s a part of who I am. It’s fantasies and role-playing, though, and has nothing to do with real children. There probably are spankos and age-players who want to hurt actual children. After all, there are evil people in all walks of life. But, most of us find anything like that abhorrent.

When I started researching graphic novels, I found a bunch of amazing coming-of-age stories with lesbian narrators, like Emil Ferris’ “My Favorite Thing is Monsters,” Alison Bechdel’s “Fun Home” and Tillie Walden’s “Spinning.” I feel like the spanko community is where the gay community was fifty years ago. We’re just starting to come out. But, there’s still tons of prejudice and misunderstanding. In movies and books, when we’re mentioned at all, it’s mostly as comic relief or we’re portrayed as evil psychos. At best, the mainstream accepts spanking as a kind of kinky foreplay, but not a whole identity, like being queer. At worst, we’re seen as crazy and as child molesters, especially for those of us with age-play elements to our fetish. That’s why I’m still not out.

INTRODUCTION

Obviously, my name's not really Rude Rumps. It just popped into my head when I first posted on-line. The "Rude" part was inspired by my mom's catch-phrase when I was growing up, "Excuse me, young lady, but is your middle name Rude?" The "Rumps" part is more obvious. The two together are kind of an homage to a famous spanking artist. If I were more courageous, maybe I'd sign my real name to my work. But, I fear I could lose my job, my friends and my romantic partner, if they learned about this part of me. I hope someday things will be different. I've also changed the names of other people and certain details in my story to protect the innocent (and not so innocent).

It took me over a year and a half to finish this. When I started, I thought I'd be done in a few months...my whole life story, up to present day! Part of it is that I have a full-time job, and I had to work on my graphic novel in the middle of the night. The other part of it is that I'm not a professional comic book artist and I'd no idea how much work it is! I've always loved comics, but the most I'd finished were some short comic strips, never anything like a graphic novel. I don't know why I didn't know better. I've been a commercial artist for over thirty years and know it can take weeks to do a single illustration, so I should've known how long it'd take to do hundreds!

Doing this in 3D also probably slowed things down. I know many comic fans don't even like it, and some fine arts people don't consider it art at all. I myself have a love-hate relationship with it. I'm sure I would've scoffed at it in art school, if it'd been around then. It lacks the simple beauty of hand-inked lines or the exquisite texture of oils. Yet, over time, I've come to appreciate it. Some days, to my Little self, it feels kind of like playing with dolls: dressing them up, posing them, and making them talk! I guess, it's more like photography or cinematography in some ways. There's almost a purity, a peeling away of everything but light, shadow, and space. For me, there's also something about 3D graphics, that when done right, evokes feelings of dreams and memories. Things look almost real, but are slightly off-kilter, uncanny. I tried to bring this out with techniques like distressing filters, saturated colors, and quite a bit of hand-painting in Photoshop. I know it's not a typical comic book style. It kind of brings together all my weird artistic influences, from comic books, to video game and digital art aesthetics, to traditional painting!

The other reason this took longer, though, is I kept wanting to add things to the story. I've heard it said that life is a tapestry. Being a spanko is at the core of me, woven together by all these other threads, like art, music, my parents and my friends from childhood. Without all that, the story of my life doesn't hold together. I know people

will find some things in here controversial or disturbing. I touch on corporal punishment of children, bullying, mental illness, religious dogma, magick, child molesters, developing sexuality, teenage sex, self-harm, suicide and a romantic relationship between a high school student (me) and her teacher, to name just a few topics. I try to keep things tasteful, and never show anything explicit. But, this is a graphic novel, so there are pictures. I'm sorry if any of it offends people. That's not my intent; it's to tell my story, warts and all. If it touches even one spanko, and makes them feel less alone, then I'll be happy I made this.

When I finished the pages, I resisted the temptation to go back and re-do the art. I edited the text to fix typos and make it flow better, and I re-lettered every page to make the type all the same style. But, the art reflects a journey, so I let it stand. In part, I got better at using the software and the technology got better, so I could do things like more complicated lighting set-ups in later pages. Also, as the story evolved, I experimented with different techniques to get across how I felt throughout the stages of my childhood. Sometimes, I tried to pay homage to famous painters and illustrators who influenced me artistically along the way. See if you can find all the "Easter eggs!"

The other part of this journey, though, was COVID-19. I started on my graphic novel in November 2019. In February 2020, when I was staying in NYC, I got very sick. I had a high fever and it was hard to breathe. At times I felt too weak to get out of bed, but I kept working on my graphic novel on my laptop. Vivid memories of being in the hospital as a child came flooding back, and I incorporated them into the story. When my fever finally broke, I had a vision of summer and freedom and horses. That ended up as the illustration at the end of the first chapter. I only learned much later that I was sick with COVID-19. Other events during the pandemic provoked more memories and feelings that melded with the story. The brutal murder of George Floyd made me remember the racist attitudes of my childhood friends and their parents. The crazy conservative political climate reminded me of struggling to grow up as a goth-punk teenager during the Reagan years. And, being stuck in quarantine brought back the sense of confinement I felt in the small town where I grew up.

As I finish my graphic novel and write these words now in July, 2021, the pandemic seems to be receding, at least in the United States. I know I'll heal, and the world will heal. But, that'll take time. It's been a very strange journey, indeed. In an unexpected way, it gave me a blessing: time and space to reflect and to create.



Foreword

On Rude Rumps, Spanking Art, Important Stuff, Rock N' Roll, Pulling Off Scabs, The Weirdest Kid In School and G.U.S. • By DROOAYGAH

LET ME TELL YOU, at the outset, that I'm not even sure what to say. Most of it's been said already, in the foreword, and in the story proper, which speaks for itself anyway. But R.R. is a friend of mine and she asked me and that's good enough. Plus I'm flattered to have been asked. And I have a big ego that responds to flattery like a cat to catnip. So here I am.

But I guess if I'm going to offer any worthwhile insight, I will go for this.

See, it was a guy named Spankart who, as far as I know was the first to say that there was such a thing as a genre of spanking art. Which was kind of a cool thing. It made us (well, me anyway) feel like members of a club. And the members ranged from genuinely talented to spiritedly amateur—or in some cases merely amateur—as in more power to them for trying anyway.

However, while some of the art was impressive, and some titillating, the one thing I couldn't say about any of it (and that very much includes my own) is that any of it could be called "important." But rest assured R.R.'s autobiographical work here is important.

It is important because it breaks ground, delving into corners of the spanko world that even a lot of self-proclaimed spankos would rather deny even existed (already detractors have claimed it "glorifies" the corporal punishment of children. If anything, the adults in the story mostly come off as well-meaning doofs who can't think of anything else to do when their kid acts like...a kid) (p.s. I'd have been pissed off about the glasses too).

But art (and yes, this is art, not just artwork, if one must distinguish) (must one?) is not required to soothe or reassure, and most of what we consider the best of it does exactly the opposite. Greil Marcus once parodied an unbearably simpering ad for genteel soft-rocker Jonathan Edwards by swapping Edwards out for Mick Jagger, with an appropriate change in tone: "his songs are loud, brutal, and mean, containing feelings you like to pretend you do not have, recollections you would like to forget, and temptations that up until now you have wisely avoided." While I wouldn't call "G.U.S." (the fact that it acronyms as "gus" is one more reason to like it) loud, brutal or mean, as to the rest of it ... well. If Rude Rumps is willing to pull the scabs off maybe it's time for more of the spanko world to look under the band-aid.

But it would be important anyway, because it is not merely a series of illustrations of erotic fantasies. It is a story about growing up in small-town America in the 70's. And it is a story about people unwilling or unable to see a bigger picture. And it is a story about being the Weirdest Kid in School, which, it turns out, is an honorable thing to be.

Okay, so I'm quickly running out of brilliant and profound things to say. Not because the story doesn't warrant them but because it is more brilliant and profound than I am. So I will leave you with what I said to R.R. when the tale first started appearing online:

This is, hands-down (should I say pants-down?) the most remarkable thing I've ever seen in the genre of spanking art—in fact, it completely transcends the genre entirely—it's art, plain and simple. If it weren't for the subject matter, it could be professionally published. I suppose it still could.

Absolutely, it pushes plenty of spanko buttons. Probably most of us can relate to some or all of these experiences and see ourselves here. But more than that—it's beautifully drawn, the flow from panel to panel is perfect, the writing is excellent. It's also funny, moving, disturbing, surreal and very, very human. Just in these few pages, we see the great love the parents have for their treasured child, and yet within that context their need to do what they think is their duty by using corporal punishment; the child's confusion and anguish over having pain and humiliation inflicted on her by loving parents; the father's remorse and guilt over doing something he's obviously ambivalent about (whether he fully realizes it or not); a parent's frustration at not knowing how to deal with a gifted child whose imagination is too big and fertile to be bound by a lack of paper...

And finally, how brave to make this autobiographical in nature. This is going to be controversial. It takes a huge amount of courage to come out like this. Rude—you're making the "Citizen Kane" of spanking art. I bow down to you, in awe.

CHESTNUT; *S. fly*, bright green insect dried & used for raising blisters, as aphrodisiac, &c.; *S. fowl*, breed of domestic fowl with glossy greenish-black plumage; *S. grass*, esparto; *S. main* (hist.), NE coast of S. America between Orinoco river & Panama, & adjoining part of Caribbean sea; *War of the S. succession* (between France & Bavaria on one side & England, Prussia, & United Provinces, on the other, on death of Charles II of Spain without issue, 1701-14); (n.) S. language. [ME *Spainisc* (Spain, see -ISH¹)]

spank, v.t. & i., & n. Slap on buttocks with open hand or slipper &c.; **spank-ing**¹ [-ING¹] n.; urge forward by slapping or whipping; (of horse &c.) move forward at a step between trot & gallop; (n.) slapping with open hand &c., on buttocks. [OE *spanke* strut, LG *spankern* move actively]

spanker, n. In vbl senses also or esp.: fast-going horse; (colloq.) person of tall or notable size or quality, stout copper; (Naut.) fore-&-aft sail set on after side of mizzenmast. [-ER¹]

spanking² (for s.¹ see SPANK), n. & v. In vbl senses; also; (colloq.) striking, excellent, as *had a s. time*, *a s. (strong) breeze*, (adv.) *a s. fine woman*. [-ING²]

spanless, a. (perh. *span* + *less*)

spanner, n. Instrument for turning nut on screw &c.; cross-brace of bridge &c.; connecting-rod in parallel motion of engine; = SPAN²-worm. [-ER¹]

spar¹, n., & v.t. Stout pole esp. such as is used for mast, yard, &c., of ship; *s.-buoy* (made of a s. with one end moored so that other stands up); *s.-deck*, upper deck extending from bow to stern, including quarter-deck and fore-castle; (v.t.) furnish with s., help (ship) over shallow bar with ss. [ME *sparre*, cf. Du. *spar*, G *sparren*, ON *sparri*, perh. cogn. w. SPEAR]

spar², n. Kinds of crystalline mineral, easily cleavable and non-lustrous, as *calcareous s.*, calcite, *Derbyshire* (= FLUOR) *s.*, *Iceland s.*, transparent calcite much used for optical purposes. [OE *spar*; G has *spath*, a diff. wd]

spar³, v.i., & n. Make motions of attack & defence with closed fists, use the hands (as) in boxing, (often *at* opponent); (fig.) bandy words, as *they are always sparring (at each other)*; (of cocks) fight esp. with protected spurs; (n.) sparring motion, boxing-match, cock-fight. [orig. = (of cock) strike out with spurs, f. OF *esparer* part. of Teut. orig., cf. SPUR, SPURN]

spā'rabl, n. Headless nail for soles and heels of boots. [corrupt. of *sparrow-bill*]

(do not provoke) *his blushes*; be f. *spartan* (f. prec.), cf. Du. & G *spar*
spar'ger, n. Sprinkling-apparatus for brewing. [f. rare vb *sparge* f. L *spargere*]
spark¹, n. Flery particle thro' burning substance; small bright point e.g. in gem; (fig.) brilliant e.g. wit &c., esp. *strike ss. out of* per- him to lively or original convers- neg. or quasi-neg.) particle of fire quality &c., as *not a s. of life remo-* had a s. of generosity in you; minous effect of sudden disruptiv- electric s. serving to fire explosive oil-engine of motor &c., as *adca-* the increase, decrease, frequ- phosphorescent light fr- able matter &c.; *s.-arrester* preventing (injury from) SPARK² in cal apparatus, netting &c. to catch engine. Hence **sparkless** a., **sp** [OE *spearca*, cf. MDu. *sparcke*, & Da. *sprage*, crackle; perh. f. crack- ing wood &c.]

spark², v.i. Emit sparks of fir- ity; *sparkling-plug*, device for fir- mixture in motor-engine; (Elec) sparks at point where continuity interrupted. [OE *spearcian* as pr-

spark³, n. & v.i. Gay fellow; ga- Hence **sparkle** f. n.) prov. E *sprack* lively, cf. *sprækr*, also SPEAK & SPARK¹]

sparkle, v.i., & n. Emit spar- &c. & fig. of wit &c.) glitter, glis- late, whence **sparkler**¹ n., **spa-** adv.; *sparkling wines* (giving ou- acid gas in small bubbles, cf. STIL- ling, gleam, spark. [ME *sparkle* f. SPARK^{1,2} + -LE(L, S)]

spā'row (-ō), n. Kinds of s- coloured bird, esp. *house s.*, Eur- noted for attachment to human dw- liveness, and pugnacity; *s.-grass* (ragus); *s.-hawk*, kinds of small ha- on ss. &c. [OE *spearwa*, cf. ON *spurr*, cogn. w. SPAR²]

spar'ry, a. Of, like, rich in, sp-
sparse, a. (Of population &c.) tered, not dense; (Bot., Zool.) placed at distant or irregular intervals
spar'sel'y² adv., **spar'seness** n. *gere spars-* scatter]

Spar'tan, a. & n. (Native) of Sp- allusion to supposed characteristic *endurance, simplicity*. [f. L *Sparta* f. Gk *Spirtē*, see -AN]


Chapter One

The Early Years: Ages 4-8



HI, I'M RUDE RUMPS AND I'M AN **ARTIST**. AND A **SPANKO**.

A SPANKO IS A PERSON WHO WANTS OR **NEEDS** TO BE SPANKED (A SPANKEE) OR TO SPANK (A SPANKER). WE HAVE DIFFERENT **REASONS**.




SOME OF US FIND IT **EROTIC**. OTHERS FEEL THE NEED TO BE **DISCIPLINED**.

AND SOME OF US, LIKE ME, ARE ALSO INTO THE AGE-PLAY ASPECT AND FEELING **LITTLE**.



THIS IS MY **STORY**, ABOUT BEING A SPANKEE. LIKE MANY OF US, MY **FASCINATION** WITH SPANKING STARTED WHEN I WAS VERY **YOUNG...**




SPANK (V): TO STRIKE, ESP. ON THE BUTTOCKS WITH AN OPEN HAND, AS A PUNISHMENT.

I GREW UP IN THE 1970'S, IN A SMALL TOWN IN THE NORTHEAST I'LL CALL **MIDDLEBRIDGE**.

BOTH MY PARENTS WERE SCHOOL **TEACHERS**. MY MOM TAUGHT ME TO READ WHEN I WAS FOUR, BEFORE I STARTED KINDERGARTEN.

I REMEMBER I'D PULL THE **DICTIONARY** OFF THE SHELF AND LOOK UP THE WORD "SPANK." OVER AND OVER.

I STILL REMEMBER THE **EXACT** DEFINITION FROM OUR **MERRIAM-WEBSTER'S** EDITION.



DUMPING THAT POT OF HONEY ALL OVER THE FAIRY KING WAS VERY MISCHIEVOUS OF US, WASN'T IT, RUDE?

WE SHOULD NEVER HAVE DONE IT, FLOOEY! NOW I'M SURE HE'LL SPANK US! MAYBE EVEN ON OUR UNDERPANTS!

I'M AN ONLY CHILD AND GOT LONELY. SO, I INVENTED IMAGINARY PLAYMATES LIKE FLOOEY THE FAIRY.

WE'D PLAY TOGETHER IN MY ROOM OR THE BACKYARD FOR HOURS.



"YOU WERE A VERY BAD GIRL, RUDE! YOU'VE EARNED A TRIP TO THE MAN WITH WHITE GLOVES!"

BEDTIME WAS ANOTHER CHANCE TO USE MY IMAGINATION. I HAD TROUBLE FALLING ASLEEP SO, I'D SOOTHE MYSELF WITH "SPANKY STORIES" AS I LAY IN BED.

THE STORIES WERE VERY EXCITING TO ME, BUT ALSO A BIT SCARY, LIKE FAIRY-TALES.

THEY BECAME MORE AND MORE ELABORATE AS I GOT OLDER, WITH A NEW "CHAPTER" EVERY NIGHT AND MANY TWISTS AND TURNS.

ONE OF MY ABSOLUTE FAVORITES WAS ABOUT A "DISCIPLINARIAN" I WAS SENT TO.

HE WAS A VERY CLASSY GENTLEMAN WHO LIVED IN A MANSION AND ALWAYS DRESSED IN FORMAL VICTORIAN CLOTHES.



AND, FOR SOME REASON, HE ALWAYS WORE WHITE GLOVES WHEN HE SPANKED ME.

WHAP

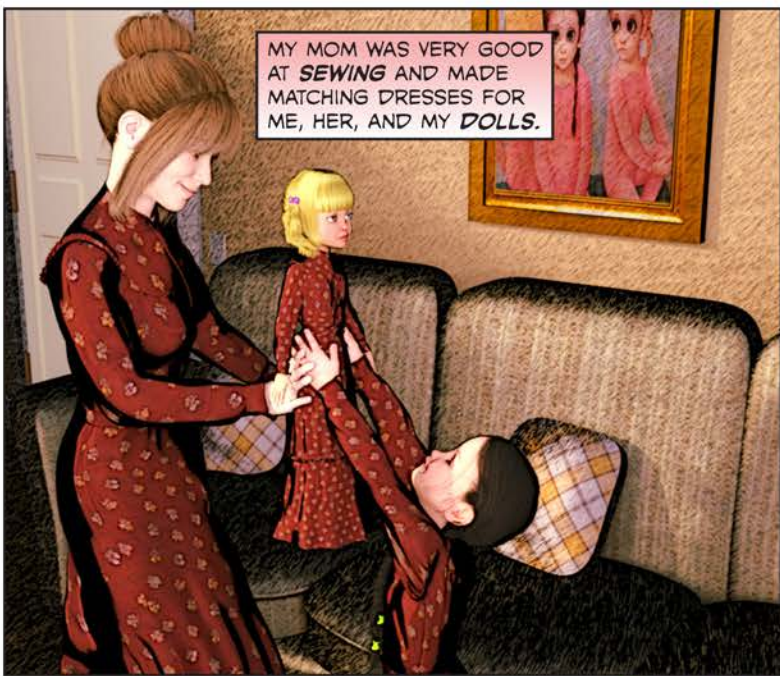
WHAP

WHAP

YEOWCH!

THE MOST THRILLING PART WAS THE BUILD-UP, WHERE I'D GET IN TROUBLE AND GET SCOLDED AND HAVE TO WAIT FOR MY PUNISHMENT.

I'D DRAG THAT OUT FOR A LONG TIME, AND PRETTY OFTEN FALL ASLEEP BEFORE EVEN GETTING TO THE SPANKING PART!



MY MOM WAS VERY GOOD AT **SEWING** AND MADE MATCHING DRESSES FOR ME, HER, AND MY **DOLLS**.



THE DRESSES DIDN'T **STAY** ON MY **DOLLS** LONG, THOUGH.

I'M AFRAID YOU **NEED** A GOOD, **HARD** SPANKING **LIZZY!**



MY DAD AND I WERE VERY **CLOSE**.

HE LOVED OLD **JAZZ** RECORDS AND I'D SIT ON HIS LAP LISTENING WITH HIM AFTER DINNER.

OH, I'M THE SHIEK



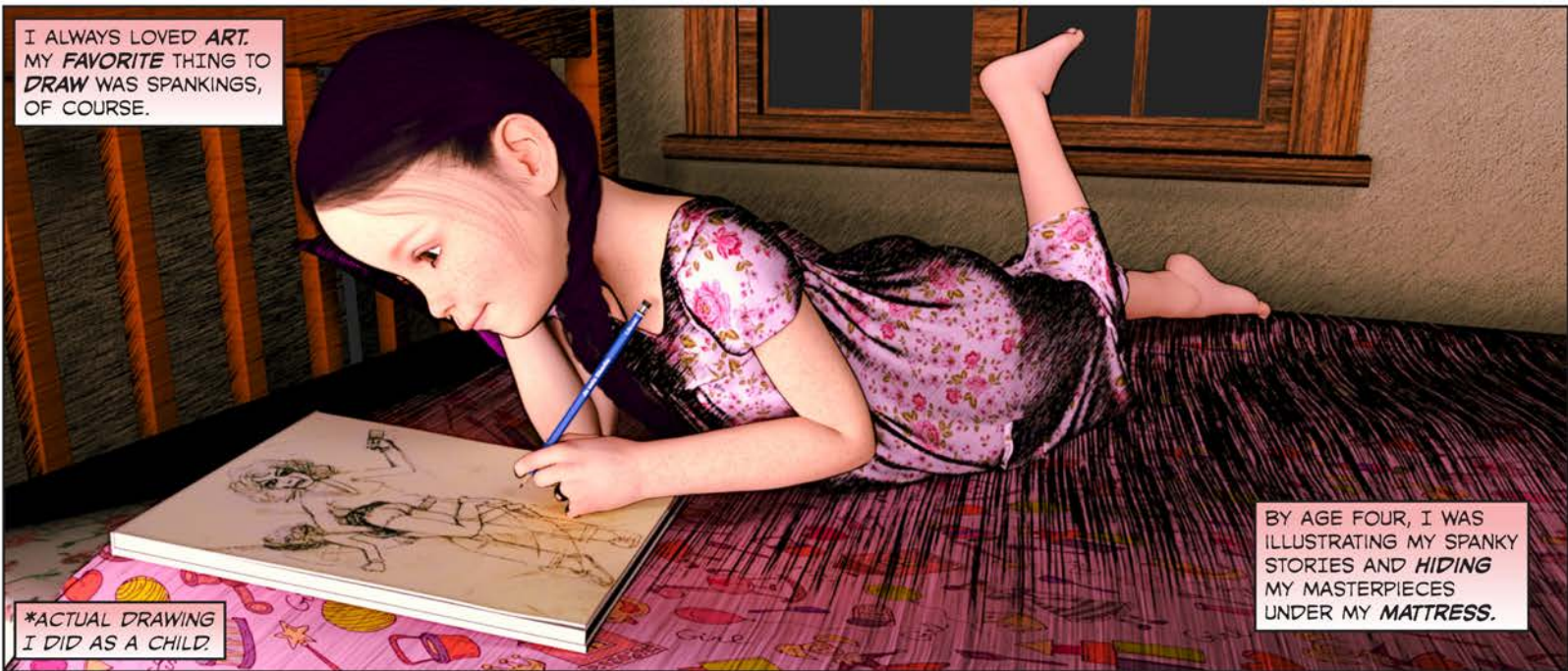
HE'D **READ** TO ME AT BEDTIME.

"I BEGIN TO FEEL MY HEART BEATING ALONG THE OLD LINES THAT THE **CANE** MADE ON MY **BOTTOM** SOME 55 YEARS AGO..."

CAN I HEAR THIS ONE **AGAIN** TOMORROW, DADDY?

QUITE A FEW BOOKS HAD SPANKING **REFERENCES** BACK THEN.

MY **PULSE** WOULD QUICKEN EVERY TIME I HEARD THOSE STORIES.



I ALWAYS LOVED **ART**. MY **FAVORITE** THING TO **DRAW** WAS SPANKINGS, OF COURSE.

BY AGE FOUR, I WAS ILLUSTRATING MY SPANKY STORIES AND **HIDING** MY MASTERPIECES UNDER MY **MATRESS**.

*ACTUAL DRAWING I DID AS A CHILD.

SO, HOW WAS I ACTUALLY DISCIPLINED?

I CAN'T BELIEVE HOW RUDE YOU WERE TO MRS. GRAY, YOUNG LADY!

YOU CAN STAY IN YOUR ROOM UNTIL YOU'RE READY TO APOLOGIZE!

MY MOM WAS PRETTY STRICT. SO, SHE WAS ALMOST ALWAYS THE PARENT WHO DECIDED WHEN AND HOW TO PUNISH ME.

MOSTLY, SHE'D SEND ME TO MY ROOM. SOMETIMES, FOR HOURS.

I COULD BE VERY STUBBORN.

DON'T YOU DARE SPIT THAT OUT!

I TOLD YOU THREE MINUTES. ONE MINUTE FOR EVERY TIME YOU SAID THAT FILTHY WORD!

A FEW TIMES, SHE WASHED MY MOUTH OUT WITH SOAP FOR SAYING BAD WORDS.

IT WAS IVORY SOAP. I STILL REMEMBER THE SLIMY, BITTER TASTE. I WON'T USE THAT BRAND TO THIS DAY!

AND YES, I WAS SPANKED.

Oooh, IT'S SO PRETTY FLOOEY! THIS'LL MAKE A FRIENDLY GHOST WANT TO COME TO OUR SEANCE, FOR SURE!

IT DIDN'T HAPPEN ALL THAT OFTEN, ESPECIALLY WHEN I WAS REALLY LITTLE. MY PARENTS RESERVED IT FOR WHAT THEY CONSIDERED SERIOUS OFFENSES.

ONE OF THE FIRST I REMEMBER WAS FOR PLAYING WITH FIRE, WHEN I WAS AROUND FIVE.

IT HAPPENED EARLY IN THE MORNING, BEFORE MY PARENTS WERE UP. SOMEHOW, I GOT THE IDEA TO HAVE A "SEANCE." WITH CANDLES. I KNEW WHERE MY MOM KEPT THE SPECIAL ONES WE LIT AT CHRISTMAS.

WHAT ON EARTH WERE YOU THINKING, RUDE?!? YOU COULD'VE BURNED THE HOUSE DOWN!

I USED OUR STOVE TO TRY TO LIGHT THEM. IT WORKED FOR THE FIRST ONE, BUT THE SECOND ONE MADE LOTS OF SMOKE AND SET OFF THE ALARM.

MY MOM CAME RUNNING INTO THE KITCHEN FRANTICALLY. AFTER SHE PUT OUT THE CANDLE, SHE GRABBED A WOODEN SPOON OUT OF A DRAWER.

THEN, SHE TURNED ME OVER HER KNEE AND GAVE ME SEVERAL GOOD WHACKS ON THE SEAT OF MY PAJAMAS.

I CAN'T SAY I NEVER PLAYED WITH FIRE AGAIN, BUT I WAS MORE CAREFUL NOT TO GET CAUGHT. LET'S JUST SAY THAT PARTICULAR LESSON GOT BURNED INTO MY MEMORY--AND MY BOTTOM!

THWACK THWACK



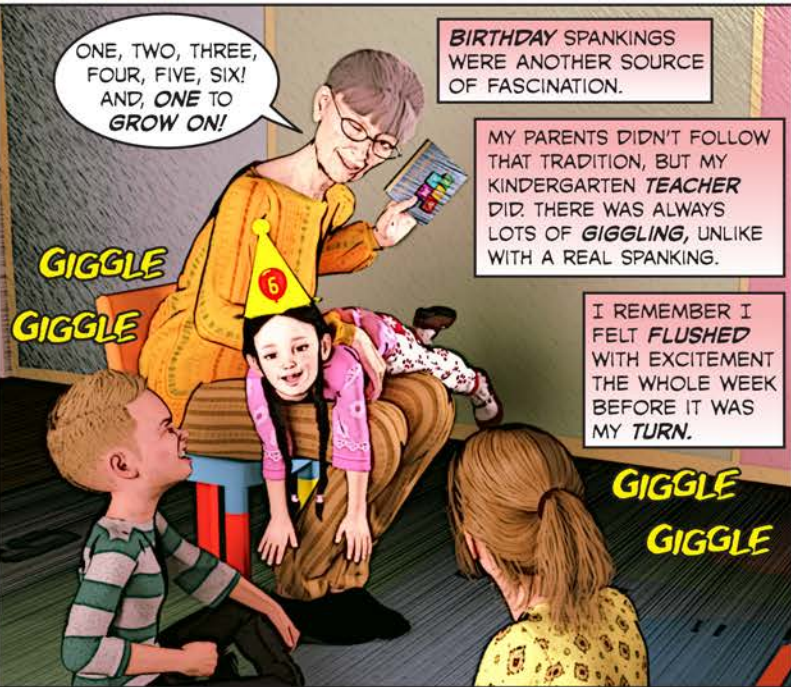
Um, WHAT'S THE WORST PUN'MENT YOU EVER, EVER GOT?

TEN SWATS ON MY UN'ERPANTIES WITH THE PANCAKE TURNER FOR TELLIN' A BIG FIB!

THE BELT ON MY BARE BUTT FOR HITTIN' MY LITTLE BROTHER.

I WAS FASCINATED BY OTHER KIDS' PUNISHMENTS, TOO. SPANKING WAS VERY COMMON BACK THEN, AND KIDS WOULD OFTEN TELL "WAR STORIES."

SO, NO ONE SEEMED TO THINK IT WAS TOO WEIRD WHEN I BROUGHT UP THE TOPIC. I SOON FOUND OUT MANY KIDS GOT IT WAY WORSE THAN I DID.



ONE, TWO, THREE, FOUR, FIVE, SIX! AND, ONE TO GROW ON!

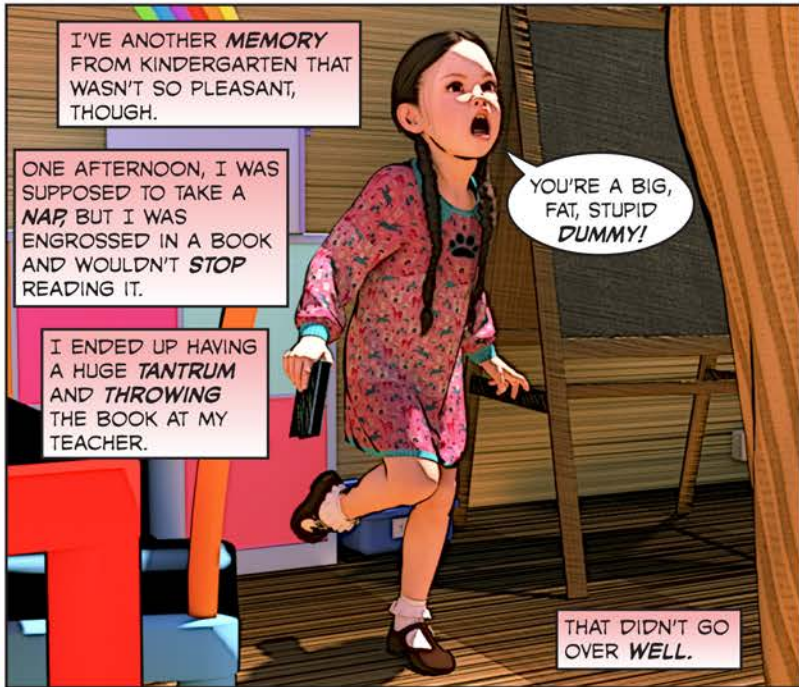
BIRTHDAY SPANKINGS WERE ANOTHER SOURCE OF FASCINATION.

MY PARENTS DIDN'T FOLLOW THAT TRADITION, BUT MY KINDERGARTEN TEACHER DID. THERE WAS ALWAYS LOTS OF GIGGLING, UNLIKE WITH A REAL SPANKING.

I REMEMBER I FELT FLUSHED WITH EXCITEMENT THE WHOLE WEEK BEFORE IT WAS MY TURN.

GIGGLE GIGGLE

GIGGLE GIGGLE



I'VE ANOTHER MEMORY FROM KINDERGARTEN THAT WASN'T SO PLEASANT, THOUGH.

ONE AFTERNOON, I WAS SUPPOSED TO TAKE A NAP, BUT I WAS ENGROSSED IN A BOOK AND WOULDN'T STOP READING IT.

I ENDED UP HAVING A HUGE TANTRUM AND THROWING THE BOOK AT MY TEACHER.

YOU'RE A BIG, FAT, STUPID DUMMY!

THAT DIDN'T GO OVER WELL.



SHE DRAGGED ME TO THE PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE. HE TOLD ME I WAS A VERY BAD GIRL AND I'D BETTER APOLOGIZE, OR ELSE.

I WAS INDIGNANT OVER HAVING TO TAKE A STUPID NAP AND REFUSED TO SAY I WAS SORRY ABOUT ANYTHING.

SO, HE SPANKED ME. VERY HARD, AND REPEATEDLY, UNTIL I APOLOGIZED.

WHAP WHAP WHAP

ARE YOU GOING TO APOLOGIZE NOW?

NO!?!? OK, ANOTHER FIVE SWATS ON YOUR RUMP THEN.

NO!! BOO-HOO!

I WAS TERRIFIED I'D GET IN TROUBLE WHEN I GOT HOME.

BUT, STRANGELY, NOTHING HAPPENED. MAYBE THE PRINCIPAL DID THIS ALL THE TIME AND DIDN'T THINK IT WAS WORTH MENTIONING TO PARENTS...?

NOT LONG AFTER I TURNED SIX, SPANKINGS SEEMED TO BECOME MORE FORMAL.

AGAIN, RUDE?? I CAN'T BELIEVE IT!

MY MOM STOPPED ADMINISTERING THEM HERSELF. INSTEAD, SHE'D TELL MY DAD AND I'D HAVE TO WAIT IN MY ROOM FOR HIM TO COME HOME AND DO THE DEED.

I DON'T KNOW EXACTLY WHAT BROUGHT ABOUT THE CHANGE. I GUESS SHE FIGURED I WAS OLD ENOUGH FOR STERNER MEASURES.

THE FIRST TIME I REMEMBER IT HAPPENING LIKE THAT WAS IN THE SUMMER, RIGHT AFTER I FINISHED KINDERGARTEN.



B-BUT I WAS OUTTA PAPER, MOMMY! AN' I DIDN'T WANNA FORGET MY IDEA!

ART WAS ALREADY AN OBSESSION FOR ME, AND LET'S JUST SAY I HAD SOME TROUBLE CONTROLLING MY CREATIVE URGES.



THAT'S THE FINAL STRAW! YOU'RE GETTING A REAL SPANKING THIS TIME!

OVER YOUR FATHER'S KNEE! GOOD AND HARD! WITH YOUR PANTS DOWN!

NOW, GO TO YOUR ROOM AND WAIT THERE UNTIL HE GETS HOME!

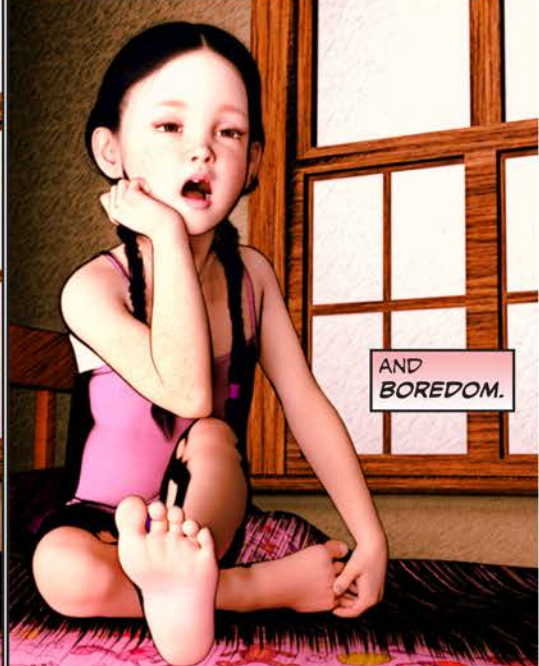
P-PLEASE NOT THAT, MOMMY! I'LL CLEAN IT ALL UP! BOO-HOO!



THE LONG WAIT WAS AN AWFUL MIX OF TEARS...

ANXIETY...

AND BOREDOM.



MAKE SURE TO DO IT **GOOD AND HARD!** SHE NEEDS TO LEARN A **SERIOUS** LESSON THIS TIME!

I WAS **ALMOST** RELIEVED THE WAIT WAS OVER. BUT, I SURE WASN'T **PREPARED** FOR WHAT CAME **NEXT**.

WHILE MY MOM **STOOD** THERE AND MADE SURE MY DAD CARRIED OUT MY SENTENCE CORRECTLY, HE **TURNED** ME OVER HIS KNEE AND **YANKED** MY SHORTS DOWN.

THEN, BEFORE I COULD CATCH MY BREATH, HE LANDED THE **HARDEST** SMACK I'D EVER FELT IN MY LIFE, RIGHT ACROSS THE UPTURNED **SEAT** OF MY **PANTIES**.

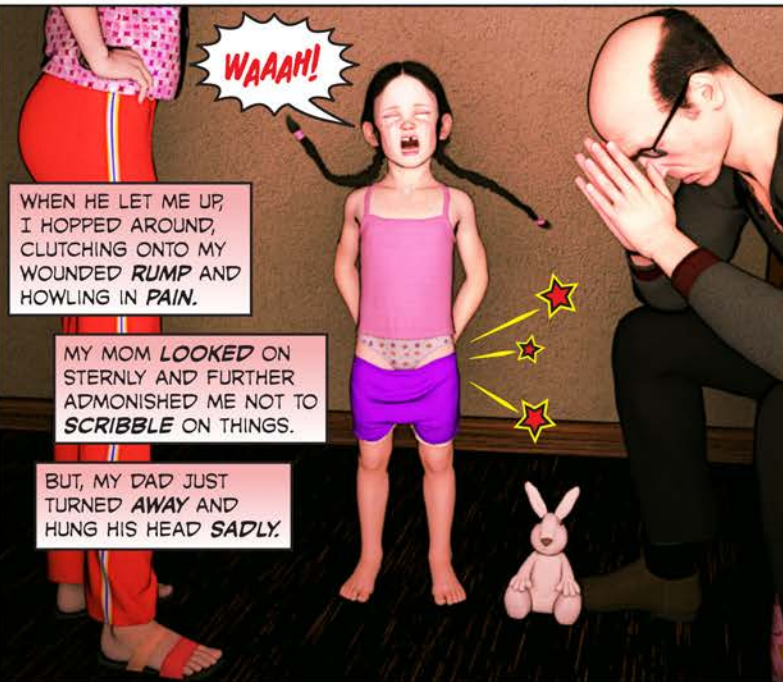
JUST **HOLD** STILL AND TAKE YOUR **MEDICINE**, YOUNG LADY! LET'S GET THIS **OVER** WITH!

WHAP



IT REALLY **HURT**, ESPECIALLY WITH ONLY **THIN** COTTON UNDERPANTS FOR PROTECTION. OBVIOUSLY, THAT WAS **EXACTLY** WHAT WAS INTENDED.

I TRIED TO SQUIRM AWAY, BUT MY DAD **HELD** ME DOWN AND ADMINISTERED SEVERAL MORE **VERY** FORCEFUL **WHACKS**.



WHEN HE LET ME UP, I HOPPED AROUND, CLUTCHING ONTO MY WOUNDED **RUMP** AND HOWLING IN PAIN.

MY MOM **LOOKED** ON STERNLY AND FURTHER ADMONISHED ME NOT TO **SCRIBBLE** ON THINGS.

BUT, MY DAD JUST **TURNED** AWAY AND HUNG HIS HEAD **SADLY**.



THEN, AS MY PARENTS **LEFT** MY ROOM, MY MOM TOLD ME TO CHANGE INTO MY **PAJAMAS**. I WAS GETTING AN EARLY **BEDTIME**, TOO, AS PART OF MY PUNISHMENT.

I **CRIED** FOR A LONG TIME. I **HATED** EVERYTHING THAT'D HAPPENED--MY PARENTS BEING **MAD** AT ME AND THEN BEING **HIT** HARD BY MY DAD.

BUT, THE ACTUAL PAIN PROBABLY ONLY LASTED A **MINUTE**. AND THEN, AS I BEGAN TO **CALM** DOWN, MY **CURIOSITY** TOOK OVER.

I REMEMBER INSPECTING MY REDDENED **BOTTOM** INTENTLY IN THE **MIRROR**, WHILE POKING THE SKIN GINGERLY WITH MY NAILS TO SEE IF IT WAS **TENDER** (IT WAS).

THE **FLOOD** OF CONFLICTING **EMOTIONS**, THAT MIX OF HORROR AND FASCINATION, **CONFUSED** ME.

BY FIRST GRADE, SPANKINGS SEEMED TO BECOME MORE FREQUENT. OR, MAYBE I JUST REMEMBER THEM BETTER, BECAUSE I WAS SOMEWHAT OLDER.

AGAIN, RUDE?!?

I DIDN'T USUALLY PROVOKE MY MOM ON PURPOSE.

BUT, I HAD A HABIT OF NOT LISTENING TO HER AND WELL, um, LETTING MY IMAGINATION RUN A BIT WILD.

IT WASN'T LIKE I WAS SPANKED DAILY, BUT ABOUT EVERY MONTH OR SO, I'D DO SOMETHING THAT MY MOM DEEMED BAD ENOUGH TO MERIT ANOTHER TRIP OVER MY DAD'S KNEE.

LIKE THE TIME I DECIDED TO HAVE A GIANT "POOL PARTY" IN THE BATHTUB WITH MY DOLLS AND STUFFED ANIMALS. IN THE MIDDLE OF WINTER.

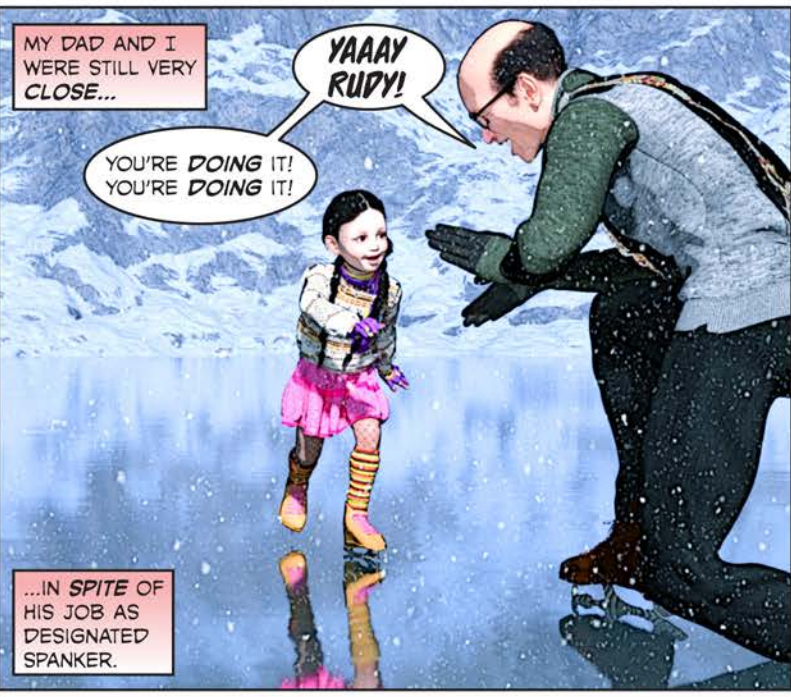


SHE FLOODED THE WHOLE BATHROOM! THE FLOOR'S PEELING UP NOW!

SOB!

I-I WAS JUS' PLAYIN' POOL PARTY!

WHAP
WHAP
WHAP



MY DAD AND I WERE STILL VERY CLOSE...

YAAAY RUDY!

YOU'RE DOING IT!
YOU'RE DOING IT!

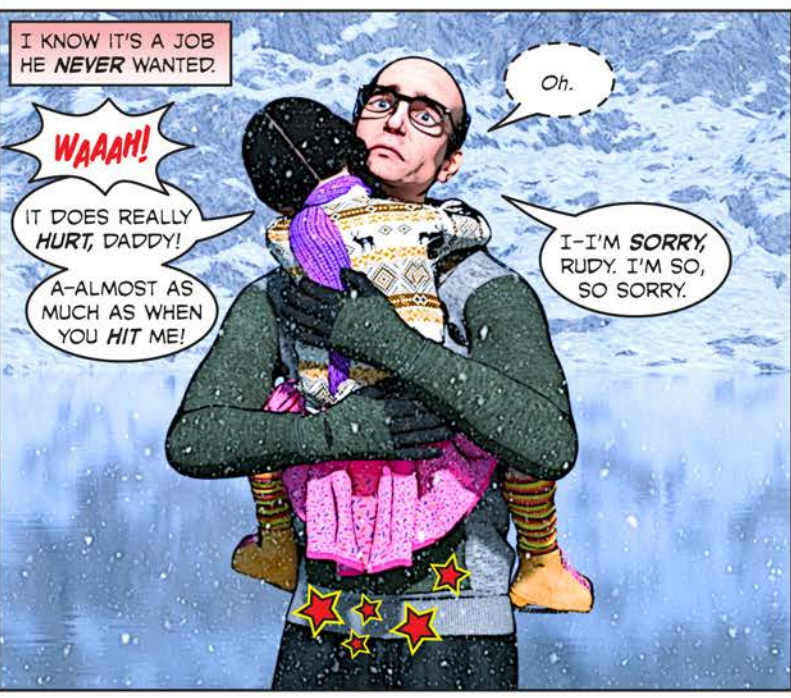
...IN SPITE OF HIS JOB AS DESIGNATED SPANKER.



OH NO!

WELL, LUCKILY YOU DIDN'T FALL FAR!
I-IT CAN'T HURT TOO MUCH.

YEOWCH!



I KNOW IT'S A JOB HE NEVER WANTED.

Oh.

WAAAH!

IT DOES REALLY HURT, DADDY!
A-ALMOST AS MUCH AS WHEN YOU HIT ME!

I-I'M SORRY, RUDY. I'M SO, SO SORRY.

I REMEMBER ANOTHER INCIDENT VERY WELL. I WAS SEVEN AND IT WAS THE DAY OF MY FIRST COMMUNION.

WE HAD CLAY SOIL IN OUR YARD AND I'D DISCOVERED I COULD MAKE "POTTERY" FROM IT. I WAS ALL DRESSED UP AND READY TO GO TO CHURCH. BUT, I JUST HAD TO CHECK ON THE "VASE" I'D LEFT OUT TO DRY THE DAY BEFORE...

RUDE!
WHAT ON EARTH DID YOU DO TO YOUR NEW DRESS?!



YOU'RE GETTING THE SPANKING OF YOUR LIFE, MISSY!

NO, DADDY! LEMME 'SPLAIN! SEE IT RAINED 'N MY VASE...



MY DAD WASN'T INTERESTED IN MY EXPLANATION.

HE'D GROWN UP POOR, AND RUINING NEW CLOTHES WAS SIMPLY INEXCUSABLE TO HIM.

IT WAS ONE OF THE FEW TIMES HE DECIDED ON HIS OWN TO PUNISH ME.

WHAP

THE SPANKING WAS EXTRA HARD. BUT, WHAT ALMOST HURT WORSE WAS THAT HE WAS TRULY ANGRY AT ME THAT TIME.

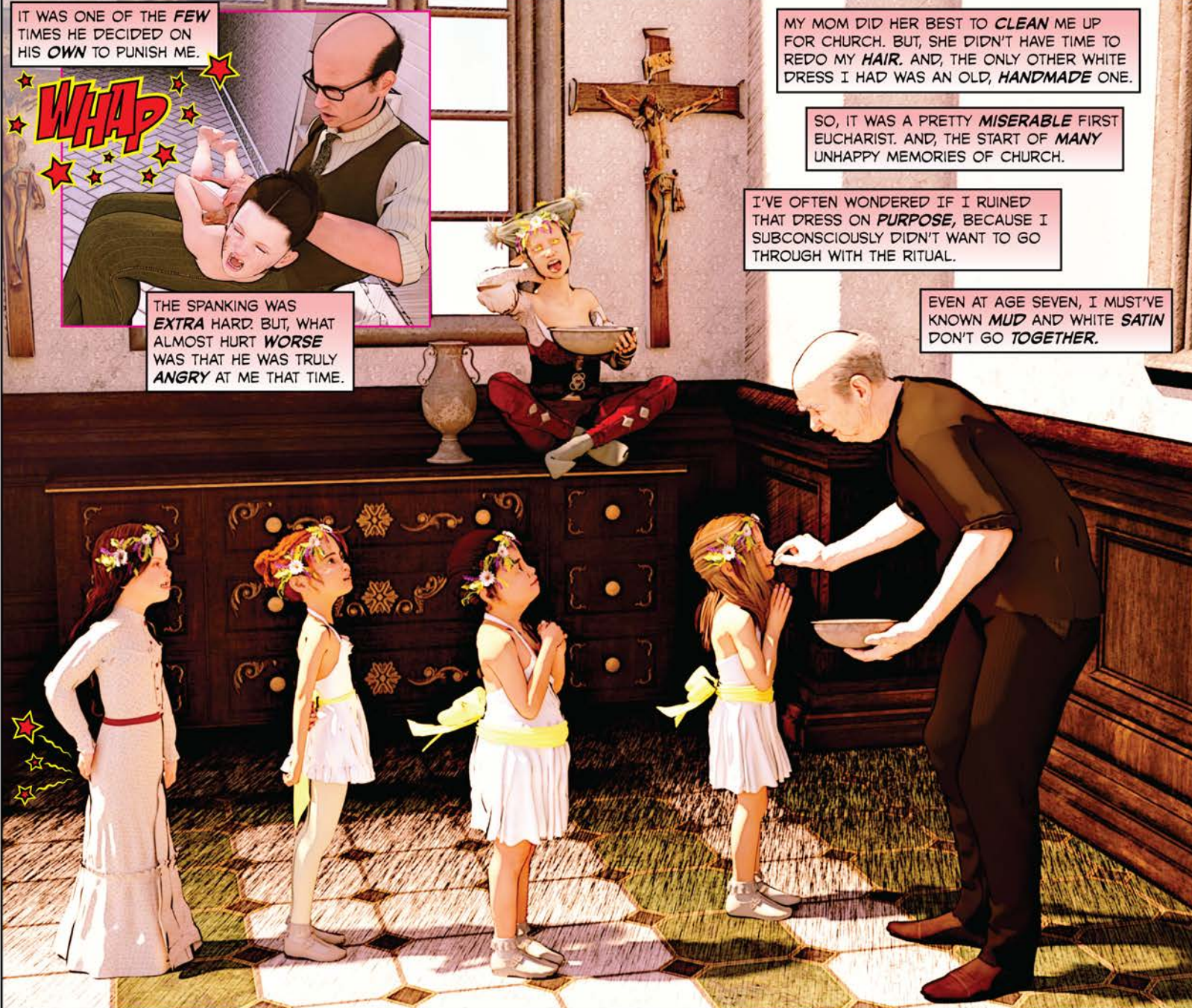


MY MOM DID HER BEST TO CLEAN ME UP FOR CHURCH. BUT, SHE DIDN'T HAVE TIME TO REDO MY HAIR. AND, THE ONLY OTHER WHITE DRESS I HAD WAS AN OLD, HANDMADE ONE.

SO, IT WAS A PRETTY MISERABLE FIRST EUCHARIST. AND, THE START OF MANY UNHAPPY MEMORIES OF CHURCH.

I'VE OFTEN WONDERED IF I RUINED THAT DRESS ON PURPOSE, BECAUSE I SUBCONSCIOUSLY DIDN'T WANT TO GO THROUGH WITH THE RITUAL.

EVEN AT AGE SEVEN, I MUST'VE KNOWN MUD AND WHITE SATIN DON'T GO TOGETHER.



THAT **SUMMER** WHEN I TURNED EIGHT, THOUGH, I HAD THE MOST **WONDERFUL** EXPERIENCE EVER--**BROWNIE CAMP**, FOR A **WHOLE WEEK!**

HONEY, SHE'LL BE **FINE!** IT'S **SUMMER CAMP!**

THE ONLY THING SHE HAS TO REMEMBER IS TO CHANGE HER **UNDERWEAR** EVERY DAY!

WE PACKED YOU **LOTS** OF POSTCARDS, SO WRITE **EVERY DAY!**

AND DON'T GO SWIMMING FOR AN **HOUR** AFTER YOU EAT!

AND IF YOU GET **HOMESICK** CALL COLLECT WHENEVER YOU WANT! AND...



I-I CAN'T BELIEVE HOW **PRETTY** IT IS HERE!



YOU FOUR WILL BE IN THE "MIGHTY MOHEGAN MIDGET PADDLERS" **CABIN.**

I'M SURE YOU'LL ALL BECOME **BEST FRIENDS!**



CHARLEY (CHARLOTTE) D'ANGELO WAS THE OLDEST IN OUR CABIN. SHE WAS CONFIDENT, FUN-LOVING AND **TOMBOYISH.**



JENNY CONNERS WAS THE YOUNGEST. SHE WAS SERIOUS, **SMART** AND **SCARED** OF EVERYTHING!



SAM (SAMANTHA) WHITE WAS THE SECOND OLDEST. SHE WAS **PRETTY, GIRLY** AND AN AWFUL **BULLY!**



AN' THE CAMPERS
TRIED TO **DROWN**
THE **WICKED**
BROWN OWL...

...BUT, SHE WAS A
WITCH, SO SHE
CAME BACK EV'RY
FULL MOON!

I WAS THE SECOND
YOUNGEST--THE
DARK, **ARTISTIC**,
IMAGINATIVE ONE.



"AN' SHE'S STILL OUT THERE,
CATCHIN' SLOW-POKE CAMPERS
WHO GO OUT TO PEE WHEN IT'S
A FULL MOON!

IF SHE CATCHES YOU, SHE'LL
GIVE YOU THE **WORST SPANKIN'**
EVER WITH HER AWFUL BONY
WITCHY HAND THAT'S CRACKLIN'
WITH HELLFIRE THAT'LL BURN
YOUR FULL MOONS RIGHT OFF!"

THAT WAS THE
BEST GHOST
STORY **EVER**,
RUDE!

WELL, I
THOUGHTED IT
WAS **DUMB!**

EVER'BODY KNOWS
WITCHES **DON'T SPANK**
KIDS! THEY **BOIL 'EM**
AND **EAT 'EM**.

I-I'M NOT GONNA
BE ABLE TO **SLEEP**
FOR A **WEEK** AFTER
THAT STORY!



THE NEXT DAY...

GOOD NEWS, CHARLEY!
AS PRES'DENT OF THE
POP'LAR GIRLS'
SECRETS CLUB, I'M
'VITIN' YOU TO JOIN!

NEAT-O! ARE
RUDE 'N JENNY
'VITED, TOO?

NO WAY! JENNY'S A
BIG CRYBABY 'N
RUDE'S A TOT'L
WEIRDO!

FINE! WE'LL JUS'
START OUR OWN
CLUB THEN!

I WAS USUALLY PRETTY *SHY*, BUT WHEN I GOT TO
USE MY *IMAGINATION*, I COULD REALLY SHINE.

WHEN OTHER KIDS COULDN'T THINK OF WHAT TO
PLAY, I COULD COME UP WITH A MILLION *IDEAS*
(AND MOST INVOLVED SPANKING SOMEHOW).

HOW 'BOUT WE CALL IT
THE '*MAGINATION*
CLUB? WE CAN PLAY
ALL SORTSA GAMES!

I GOT A GOOD ONE TO
START! IT'S CALLED THE
VON CLAPPER SISTERS.
OUR PARENTS'RE DEAD SO
WE HAFTA *SING* 'N
DANCE TO GET FOOD 'N
STUFF.

IT'S KINDA LIKE THE
PARTRIDGE FAMILY, 'CEPT
IT'S IN OLDEN TIMES 'N
WE'VE ALL GOT DIFF'RENT
MAG'CAL POWERS...

AND, SO *BEGAN* THE
IMAGINATION CLUB!

FOR THE NEXT **WEEK**, WHENEVER WE HAD A BREAK FROM ACTIVITIES AT CAMP, OUR "CLUB" WOULD MEET.

I'M **DARCY**, THE YOUNG'ST SISTER! MY POWER'S **TALKIN'** TO **FAIRIES!**

LOOK, MY FAIRY FRIEND'S LED US RIGHT TO THE **TREASURE!**

I'M **MAEVE**, THE OLD'ST SISTER! I'M **STRONGER'N** ANY MAN!

I'LL PUT THIS GIANT LOG ON TOPPA THE TREASURE SO NO ONE CAN **STEAL** IT!

I'M **CASSIDY**, THE MID'L SISTER! I CAN SEE THE **FUTURE!**

I CAN SEE WE'RE GONNA **LOSE** THE TREASURE 'N BE **POOR 'GIN!**



I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU TRADED ALLA THE TREASURE FOR **MAGIC CARROTS!**

Uh oh. A-ARE YOU GONNA **PUNISH** ME FOR IT, BIG SIS?

Yep. YOU'RE GETTIN' A **GOOD PADDY-WHACKIN'** LIL' SIS!

SMEK!
SMEK!

OFTEN, I'D FIND SOME WAY TO INTRODUCE **PLAY SPANKINGS** INTO OUR GAMES.

THERE WAS SOMETHING VERY **EXCITING** AND **FORBIDDEN** ABOUT IT.



CHARLEY AND I LIKED PLAYING OUR GAMES SO MUCH THAT WE'D **SNEAK** AWAY FROM OTHER ACTIVITIES AT CAMP. JENNY WAS AFRAID TO, SO THOSE TIMES IT WAS JUST THE **TWO** OF US.

I CAME UP WITH A **NEW** GAME ABOUT **SPACE-GIRLS** AND **MARTIANS** THAT CHARLEY ESPECIALLY LIKED.

IN SOME WAYS, IT DIDN'T SEEM LIKE WE HAD MUCH IN **COMMON**.

SHE WASN'T VERY **IMAGINATIVE**, AND I CERTAINLY WASN'T VERY **ATHLETIC**.

BUT, AS THEY SAY, **OPPOSITES ATTRACT**.

YOU'VE BEEN STEALIN' OUR WATER 'GIN?!? YOU **MARTIANS** SURE ARE **NAUGHTY!**

Uh oh! W-WHAT DO YOU EARTHLINGS DO TO **BAD** MARTIANS?



WE PADDY-WHACK 'EM **GOOD 'N HARD**, O' COURSE!

Ha! WE **MARTIANS** HAVE **TOUGH BUTTS!** YOU'LL HAFTA WHACK **HARDER'N THAT!**

SNEEK!
SNEEK!



WHAT ON **EARTH** ARE YOU GIRLS **DOING?!?** YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO BE IN THE **CRAFTS CABIN** NOW!



IF I **CATCH** YOU GIRLS SNEAKING AWAY AGAIN, I'LL CALL YOUR **PARENTS**.

AND, I DON'T THINK YOU'LL GET **PATS** ON THE **HINEY** LIKE YOU'VE BEEN PLAYING AT--I BET YOU'LL GET **REAL RUMP ROASTINGS!**

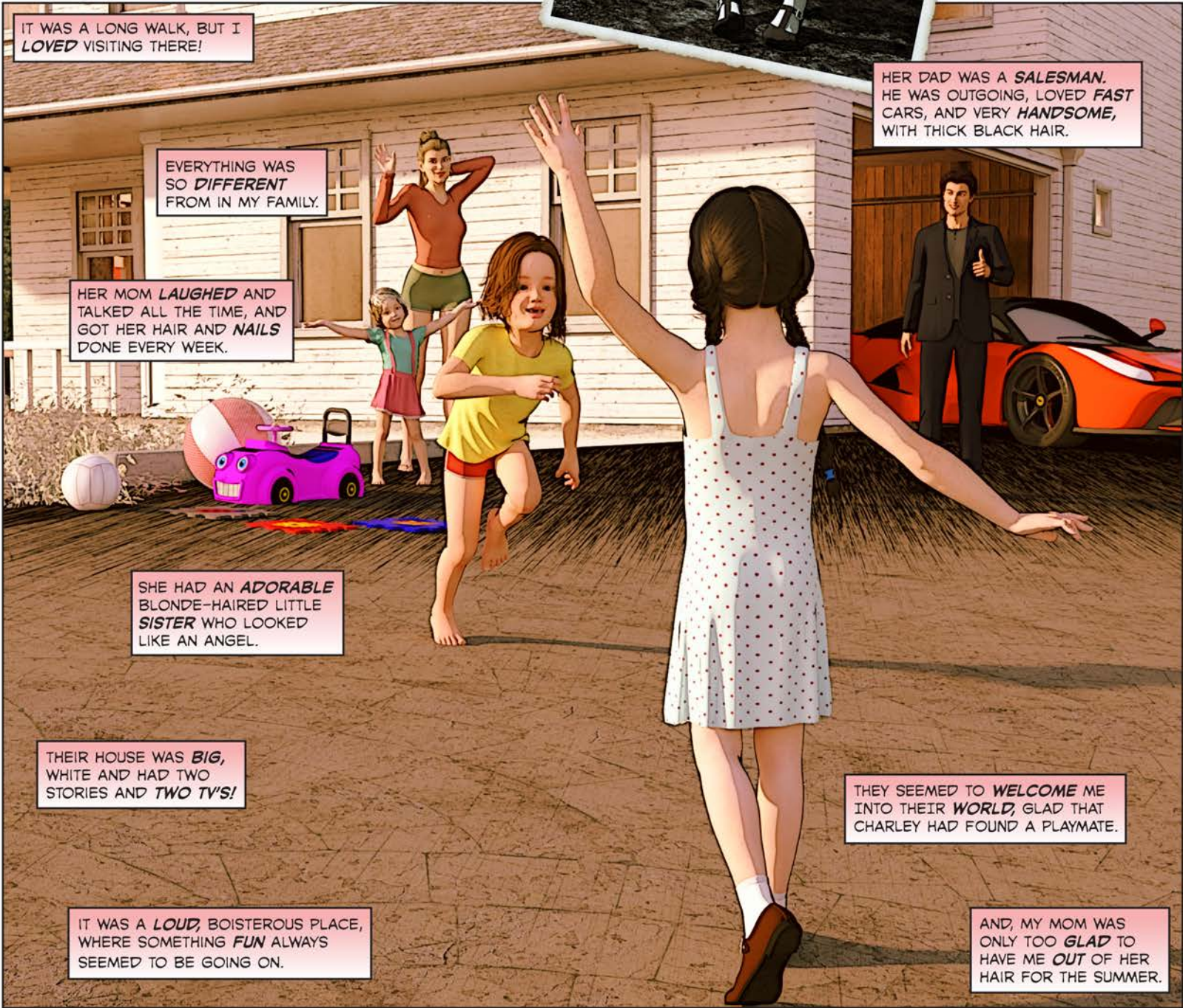


WE DID SNEAK AWAY AGAIN, BUT **LUCKILY** WE DIDN'T GET CAUGHT!

BY THE END OF THAT WEEK, CHARLEY AND I WERE **INSEPARABLE**.

IT TURNS OUT WE LIVED ABOUT TWO MILES APART. IN THOSE DAYS KIDS **ROAMED** FREELY, SO FOR THE REST OF THE SUMMER I SPENT ALMOST **EVERY DAY** AT HER **HOUSE**.

IT WAS A LONG WALK, BUT I **LOVED** VISITING THERE!



EVERYTHING WAS SO **DIFFERENT** FROM IN MY FAMILY.

HER MOM **LAUGHED** AND TALKED ALL THE TIME, AND GOT HER HAIR AND **NAILS** DONE EVERY WEEK.

HER DAD WAS A **SALESMAN**. HE WAS OUTGOING, LOVED **FAST CARS**, AND VERY **HANDSOME**, WITH THICK **BLACK HAIR**.

SHE HAD AN **ADORABLE** BLONDE-HAIRED LITTLE **SISTER** WHO LOOKED LIKE AN ANGEL.

THEIR HOUSE WAS **BIG**, WHITE AND HAD TWO STORIES AND **TWO TV'S!**

THEY SEEMED TO **WELCOME** ME INTO THEIR **WORLD**, GLAD THAT CHARLEY HAD FOUND A PLAYMATE.

IT WAS A **LOUD**, BOISTEROUS PLACE, WHERE SOMETHING **FUN** ALWAYS SEEMED TO BE GOING ON.

AND, MY MOM WAS ONLY TOO **GLAD** TO HAVE ME **OUT** OF HER HAIR FOR THE SUMMER.

AND THEN, THERE WAS CHARLEY'S ROOM.

I COULD HARDLY BELIEVE MY EYES. IT WAS LIKE STEPPING INTO A VAST PINK, FAIRY-PRINCESS CASTLE.

WASN'T THIS EVERY LITTLE GIRL'S FANTASY?

IN CONTRAST, MY ROOM WAS PAINTED A DRAB BEIGE, AND SO SMALL IT WAS CLAUSTROPHOBIC.



BUT, I ALSO SAW SOME STUFF ON THE WALLS AND FLOOR OF HER ROOM THAT DIDN'T QUITE SEEM TO FIT.

THEN, I NOTICED ONE VERY INTERESTING DECORATION NEXT TO HER BED.

G-GOSH! I LOVE YOUR ROOM! IT'S SO BIG 'N PINK 'N PRETTY!

WELL, I WANTED IT SPORTS THEMES. BUT, MY MOM DEC'RATED IT LIKE THIS.

I DON'T LIKE ALLA WHITE 'N PINK MUCH. SO, I'VE BEEN DOIN' MY OWN DEC'RATIN'.



Oh my. THAT SIGN! WHERE'D YOU GET IT?

AT THAT T-SHIRT SHOP AT THE MALL. YOU KNOW, THE ONE WITH THE IRON-ONS.

I COULD SURE USE ONE OF THOSE WHEN I GET IN TROUBLE! HEE HEE

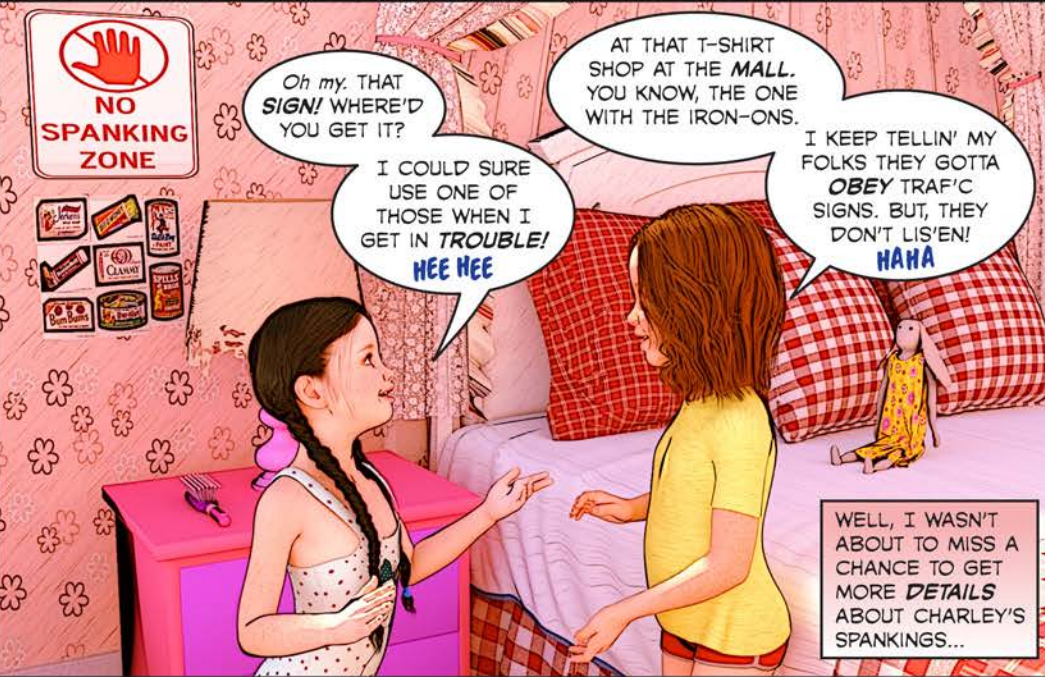
I KEEP TELLIN' MY FOLKS THEY GOTTA OBEY TRAF'C SIGNS. BUT, THEY DON'T LIS'EN! HAHA



So, um. DO YOU GET SPANKED LOTS?

ON YOUR UN'ERPANTIES? DOES IT HURT TO SIT AFTER?

WELL, I WASN'T ABOUT TO MISS A CHANCE TO GET MORE DETAILS ABOUT CHARLEY'S SPANKINGS...



Naw, IT'S USUALLY
JUS' ON MY
PANTS 'N DOESN'T
HURT MUCH.

THIS ONE TIME I
THOUGHT IT WAS
GONNA REALLY STING
BAD, THOUGH.

SEE, MY DAD SAID HE
WAS GONNA USE THIS
HERE HAIRBRUSH ON
MY BUTT...

"IT WAS THE SECOND TIME I **BROKE** OUR
WINDOW PRACTICIN' BASEBALL. HE WARNED
ME I'D GET IT GOOD NEXT TIME I WASN'T
CAREFUL PLAYIN'. SO, BEFORE HE CAME HOME
I PUT ON LIKE **FIVE PAIRS** OF SPANKY PANTS*!

WELL, I WASN'T 'PECTIN' IT, BUT
WHEN HE TURNED ME OVER HIS
KNEE, HE SAID IT WAS GONNA BE
ONA **BARE** CUZ' I WAS SO BAD!

BUT, WHEN HE TOOKED MY PANTS DOWN 'N
SAW MY BIG OL' **LUMPY** BUTT WITH ALL THAT
UN'ERWEAR ON IT, HE STARTED **LAUGHIN'**!

HE DID **PULL** DOWN ALLA MY UN'ERPANTIES
'N TRYTA BE SERIOUS, BUT HE WAS **LAUGHIN'**
SO HARD, ALL HE COULD DO WAS GIVE ME
LIKE THREE LITTLE **PATS** ON MY **HINEY** WITH
THE HAIRBRUSH. IT DIDN'T HURT AT ALL!"

EVERYONE I KNOW WEARS
Carter's Spanky Pants

Girls come in all sizes
(thank heavens)
and so do **Spanky Pants**
(thank Carter's).
Pretty-prints, pastel-tints
in as many styles and sizes
as there are girls
and women to wear them.
And love the smooth
feel, fashion, fit of these
softest cotton-knits.
Remember, everything
Carter's is made
with Carter's care.

Carter's

***CARTER'S SPANKY PANTS WERE A BRAND OF UNDERWEAR FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS THAT WERE VERY POPULAR WHEN I WAS GROWING UP. THEY WERE MADE OF A WEIRD, INDESTRUCTIBLE, BAGGY, MATERIAL THAT ALWAYS RODE UP. I REMEMBER CHATTING ABOUT THEM WITH OTHER GIRLS AT SCHOOL, COMPLAINING HOW THEY NEVER FIT RIGHT OR CONTINUING THE ETERNAL DEBATE ABOUT WHETHER THEY MADE SPANKINGS HURT MORE, OR LESS. I'M TOTALLY CONVINCED WHOEVER CAME UP WITH THE NAME WAS A SPANKO!**

Little-to-ke girls. Mother-type girls—every smart woman over two wears Carter's Spanky Pants. For the colors, prints, patterns. For the perfect fit of them with Carter's Tights. And the loveliness. Enjoy the best of comfort—you're wearing to Carter's, too!

Carter's





SOON WE HAD OUR FIRST SLEEPOVER!

WHATCHA WANNA DO FIRST?

SNACKS? VON CLAPPER SISTERS?

TV? BOARD GAMES?

GOSH! I DON'T KNOW! IT'S SO MANY CHOICES!

'N I CAN'T BELIEVE YOUR MOM LETS YOU EAT'N YOUR ROOM!

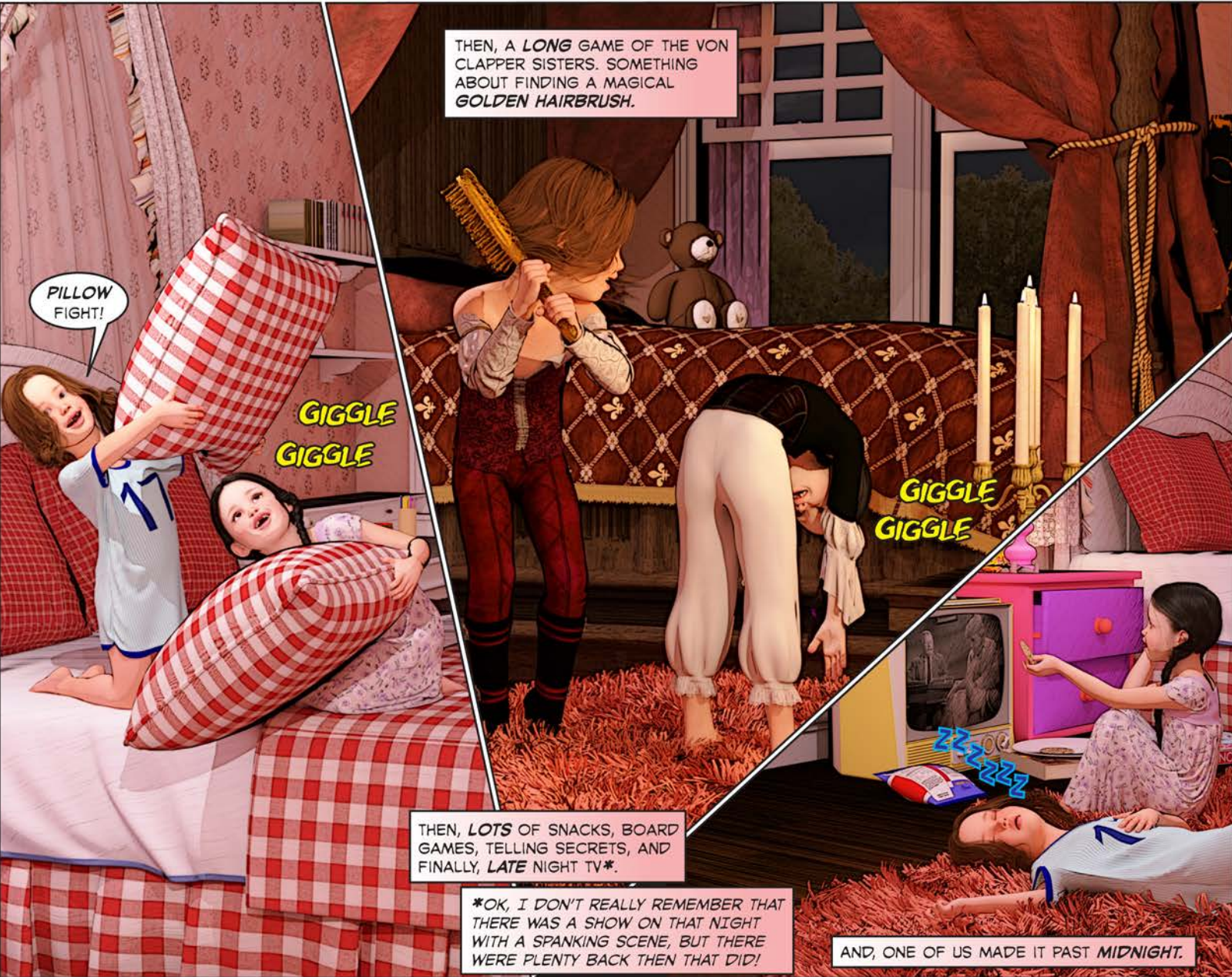
'N, OH GOLLY, YOU GOT UNDEROOS!



Yep. THEY'RE FUNTA WEAR!

Yeah. BUT, EAT ONA FLOOR. SHE SAID SHE'D PADDLE BOTH OUR FANNIES IF THERE'S CRUMBS ONA BED!

N' I GOTTA IDEA WHATCHA DO FIRST!



THEN, A LONG GAME OF THE VON CLAPPER SISTERS. SOMETHING ABOUT FINDING A MAGICAL GOLDEN HAIRBRUSH.

PILLOW FIGHT!

GIGGLE GIGGLE

GIGGLE GIGGLE

THEN, LOTS OF SNACKS, BOARD GAMES, TELLING SECRETS, AND FINALLY, LATE NIGHT TV*.

*OK, I DON'T REALLY REMEMBER THAT THERE WAS A SHOW ON THAT NIGHT WITH A SPANKING SCENE, BUT THERE WERE PLENTY BACK THEN THAT DID!

AND, ONE OF US MADE IT PAST MIDNIGHT.

THE NEXT MORNING AT BREAKFAST, CHARLEY AND I WERE BOTH VERY TIRED. AND, SHE WAS ACTING VERY SILLY.

REALLY, I'M FINE, MRS. D'ANGELO!

SEE I'M KINDA A PICKY EATER. BUT, THIS PLAIN TOAST LOOKS DELICIOUS!

Oh, I LOVE THIS NIGHTY, TOO! MY MOM MADE IT!

HEY RUDE, WANNA SEE ME GARGLE MY TANG LIKE MOU'WASH?

EGGIES! EGGIES!

GIGGLE

YOU SURE YOU DON'T WANT ME TO MAKE YOU AN EGG 'N A SAUSAGE, TOO, RUDE?

Hmmm. IF ONLY CHARLEY ATE LIKE THAT. YOU'RE NEVER TOO YOUNG TO WORRY ABOUT YOUR WAIST!

Oh, 'N I LOVE YOUR NIGHTY! IF ONLY CHARLEY WOULD WEAR SUMTHIN' WITH FLOWERS!

DON'T YOU START THAT AGAIN, CHAR! YOU KNOW IT DRIVES YOUR MOM CRAZY!

CHARLEY DIDN'T LISTEN.

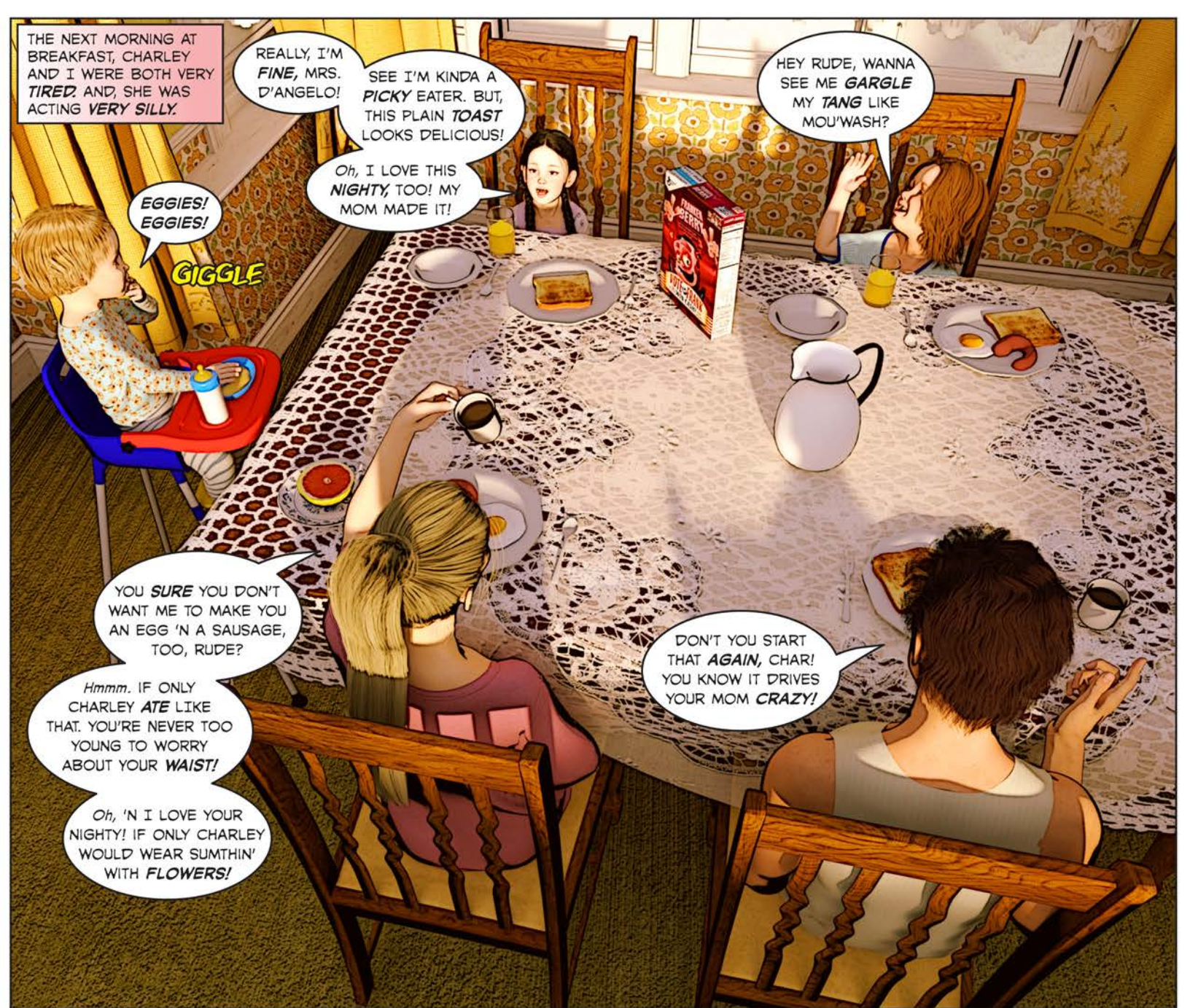
THEN, AS SHE PLAYED AROUND, SOME TANG ACCIDENTALLY WENT DOWN HER WINDPIPE.

HER DAD WAS NONE TOO HAPPY ABOUT WHERE HER DRINK LANDED.

GARGLE GARGLE GARGLE

SPEW

COUGH COUGH



I WAS RIVETED TO THE SPOT, WATCHING WHAT UNFOLDED NEXT.

TO THIS DAY, I REMEMBER EVERY LITTLE DETAIL VIVIDLY.

THAT'S IT! GET YOUR BUTT OVER HERE NOW, CHARLEY!

N-NO DADDY! I'LL CLEAN IT ALL UP! I'M REALLY SORRY! P-PLEASE NO!

IT WAS A REAL SPANKING, ALL RIGHT. HE RAISED HER NIGHTY AND ADMINISTERED TEN GOOD, HARD SMACKS (YES, I COUNTED) ON THE SEAT OF HER PANTIES.

YET, IT WAS SO DIFFERENT FROM THE WAY I WAS PUNISHED.

IT WASN'T DRAWN-OUT AND SOLEMN, BUT INSTEAD SPONTANEOUS AND RAUCOUS.

I WARNED YOU, LITTLE MISS! NOW YOU'RE GETTING A SORE TUSH!

WHAP WHAP WHAP

OWCH!
THAT HURT, YOU BIG MEANIE!

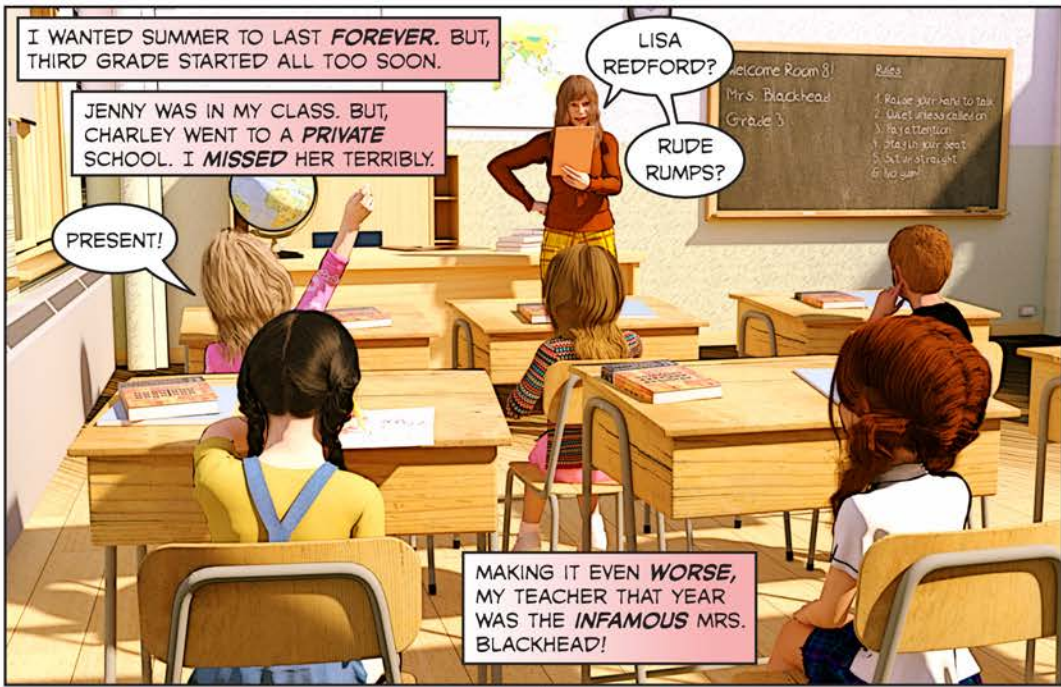
I WAS SURPRISED SHE DIDN'T CRY, EVEN THOUGH IT OBVIOUSLY HURT.

AND THEN, SHE SAT DOWN AND STARTED EATING. ALMOST LIKE NOTHING HAD HAPPENED.

SHE EVEN DARED TO BE A LITTLE SASSY (THOUGH SHE DIDN'T PUSH IT TOO FAR!)

HER DAD WAS ALMOST PLAYFUL AFTERWARDS.

THAT EXPERIENCE MADE ME REALIZE SO MUCH OF HOW WE REACT TO SPANKINGS ISN'T REALLY ABOUT THE PHYSICAL PART, BUT ABOUT WHAT'S IN OUR HEADS.



I WANTED SUMMER TO LAST FOREVER. BUT, THIRD GRADE STARTED ALL TOO SOON.

JENNY WAS IN MY CLASS. BUT, CHARLEY WENT TO A PRIVATE SCHOOL. I MISSED HER TERRIBLY.

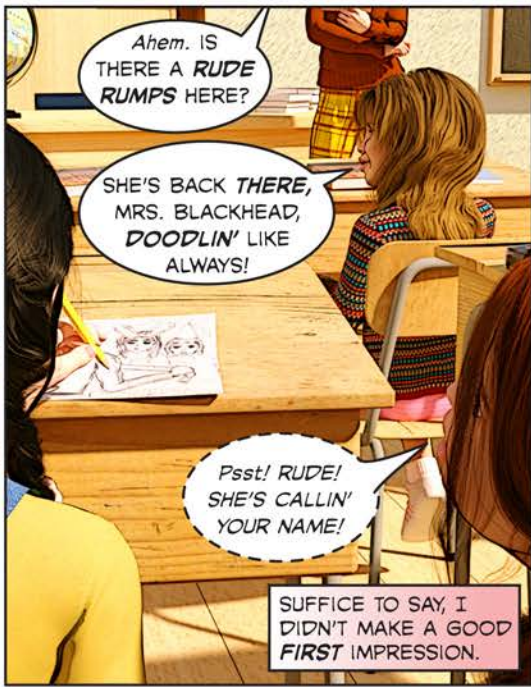
PRESENT!

LISA REDFORD?

RUDE RUMPS?

Welcome Room 8!
Mrs. Blackhead
Grade 3
Rules
1. Raise your hand to talk
2. Quiet unless called on
3. Pay attention
4. Stay in your seat
5. Sit up straight
6. No gum!

MAKING IT EVEN WORSE, MY TEACHER THAT YEAR WAS THE INFAMOUS MRS. BLACKHEAD!



Ahem. IS THERE A RUDE RUMPS HERE?

SHE'S BACK THERE, MRS. BLACKHEAD, DOODLIN' LIKE ALWAYS!

Psst! RUDE! SHE'S CALLIN' YOUR NAME!

SUFFICE TO SAY, I DIDN'T MAKE A GOOD FIRST IMPRESSION.

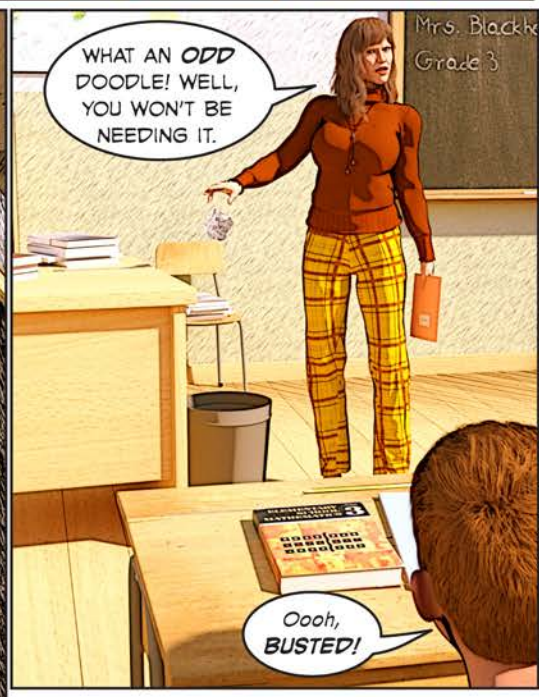


RUDE RUMPS, eh? THAT'S A RATHER UNUSUAL NAME!

WOULD YOU CARE TO SHARE WHAT YOU'RE WORKING ON?



*ACTUAL DRAWING I DID AS A CHILD.

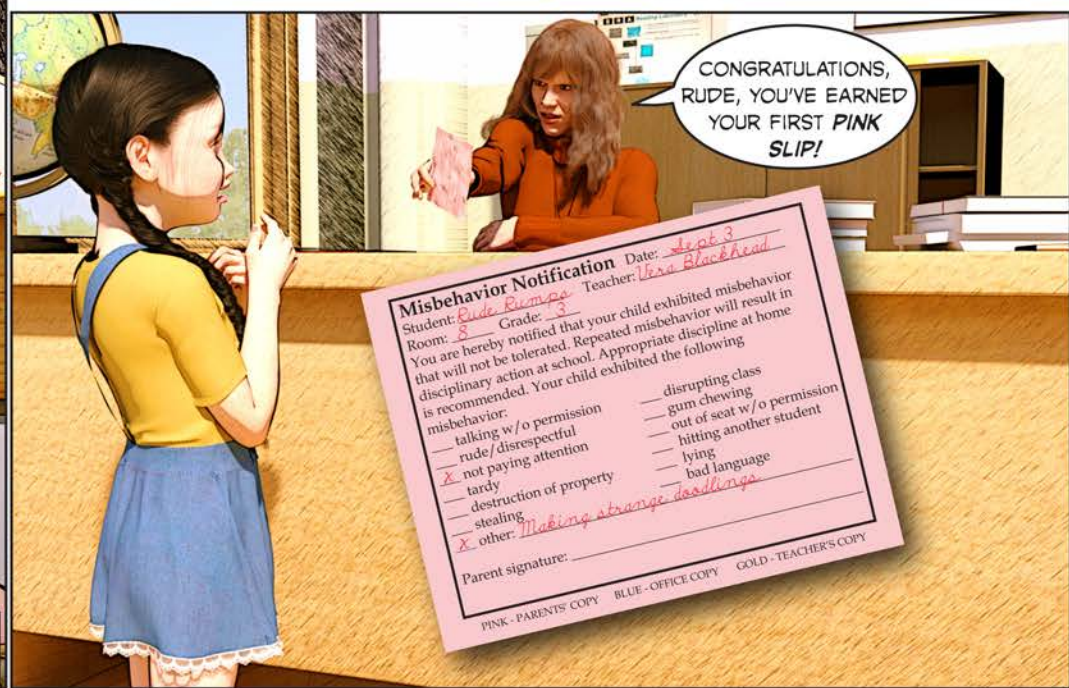


WHAT AN ODD DOODLE! WELL, YOU WON'T BE NEEDING IT.

Oooh, BUSTED!



COME SEE ME WHEN ROLL'S OVER, YOUNG LADY.



CONGRATULATIONS, RUDE, YOU'VE EARNED YOUR FIRST PINK SLIP!

Misbehavior Notification Date: Sept 3
 Student: Rude Rumps Teacher: Vera Blackhead
 Room: 3 Grade: 3
 You are hereby notified that your child exhibited misbehavior that will not be tolerated. Repeated misbehavior will result in disciplinary action at school. Appropriate discipline at home is recommended. Your child exhibited the following misbehavior:

<input type="checkbox"/> talking w/o permission	<input type="checkbox"/> disrupting class
<input type="checkbox"/> rude/disrespectful	<input type="checkbox"/> gum chewing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> not paying attention	<input type="checkbox"/> out of seat w/o permission
<input type="checkbox"/> tardy	<input type="checkbox"/> hitting another student
<input type="checkbox"/> destruction of property	<input type="checkbox"/> lying
<input type="checkbox"/> stealing	<input type="checkbox"/> bad language
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: <u>Making strange doodlings</u>	

Parent signature: _____
 PINK - PARENT'S COPY BLUE - OFFICE COPY GOLD - TEACHER'S COPY



W-WHAT'RE YOU GONNA DO?
KNOWIN' YOUR MOM, SHE'S NOT GONNA BE HAPPY!

Yeah, SHE'S GONNA KILL ME.

I MEAN, IT'S ONLY THE FIRS' DAY OF SCHOOL, AND I'M ALREADY IN TROUBLE.

Sigh. I'M 'PECTIN' SHE'LL TELL MY DAD TO WARM UP HIS 'PANKIN' ARM.



WELL, MY BIG SISTER ONCE **FAKED** MY MOM'S **SIG'TURE** ON HER REPORT CARD...

I WAS **INSPIRED**.



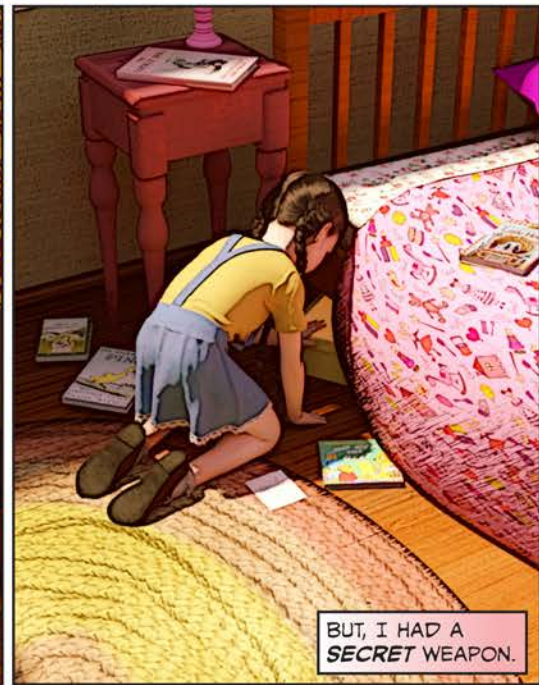
HOW WAS YOUR **FIRST** DAY OF **THIRD** GRADE, HONEY?

O-oh, **FINE** MOM, JUS' **FINE**.

'CEPT I'M REAL **TIRED**, SINCE IT WAS THE **FIRS'** DAY 'N ALL.

I'M JUST GONNA GO **DRAW** IN MY ROOM 'TIL DINNER.

MOST **THIRD** **GRADERS** **COULDN'T** **HAVE** **PULLED** **IT** **OFF**.



BUT, **I** **HAD** **A** **SECRET** **WEAPON**.



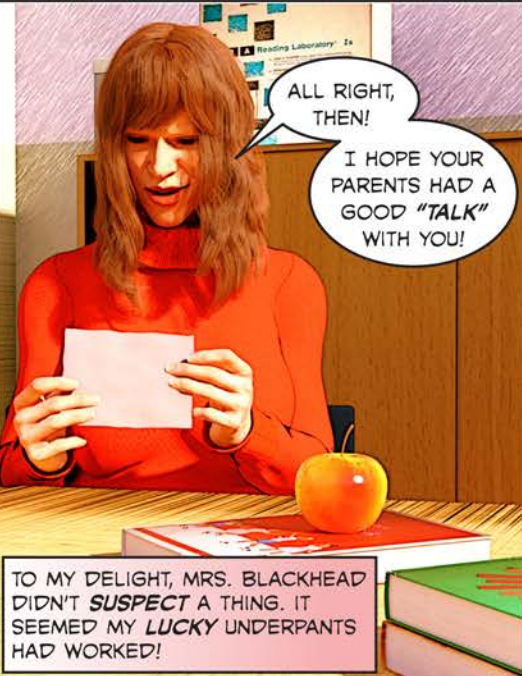
I'D **BEGGED** MY PARENTS FOR A **BATTERY-OPERATED** **LIGHT** **BOX** FOR **CHRISTMAS** SO I COULD **TRACE** **ART**.

USING THAT, AND MY **LIBRARY** **CARD** (PARENTS HAD TO SIGN THEM BACK THEN), I **COPIED** MY MOM'S **SIGNATURE** ONTO THE **PINK** **SLIP**.



IN THE **MORNING**, I **WOKE** **UP** **REALLY** **SCARED** THAT I'D **GET** **CAUGHT**.

TO **EASE** MY **FEAR**S, I **PUT** **ON** MY **LUCKY** **UNDERPANTS**--A **WORN-OUT**, **OLD** **PAIR** **MADE** **OF** **PURPLE**, **FLOWERED** **COTTON**.



ALL RIGHT, THEN!
I HOPE YOUR PARENTS HAD A GOOD "TALK" WITH YOU!

TO MY DELIGHT, MRS. BLACKHEAD DIDN'T SUSPECT A THING. IT SEEMED MY LUCKY UNDERPANTS HAD WORKED!

OVER THE NEXT MONTH, THE PINK SLIPS KEPT PILING UP, ABOUT ONE A WEEK. AND, I KEPT BLISSFULLY FORGING AWAY, WHILE WEARING MY LUCKY UNDERWEAR.

Room: 8 Grade: 3
You are hereby notified that you will not be tolerated. Repeated misbehavior is recommended. Your child exhibited the following misbehavior:

Misbehavior Notification
Student: Rude Rumps Teacher: Vera Blackhead
Room: 8 Grade: 3
You are hereby notified that your child exhibited misbehavior that will not be tolerated. Repeated misbehavior will result in disciplinary action at school. Appropriate discipline at home is recommended. Your child exhibited the following misbehavior:

- talking w/o permission
- rude/disrespectful
- not paying attention
- tardy
- destruction of property
- stealing
- other: Passing notes

Parent signature: _____

PINK - PARENTS' COPY BLUE - OFFICE COPY GOLD - TEACHER'S COPY

Behavior Notification
Student: Rude Rumps Teacher: Vera Blackhead
Room: 8 Grade: 3 Date: Sept 19
You are hereby notified that your child exhibited misbehavior that will not be tolerated. Repeated misbehavior will result in disciplinary action at school. Appropriate discipline at home is recommended. Your child exhibited the following misbehavior:

- talking w/o permission
- rude/disrespectful
- not paying attention
- tardy
- destruction of property
- stealing
- other: Staring into space and more strange doodlings!

Parent signature: _____

PINK - PARENTS' COPY BLUE - OFFICE COPY GOLD - TEACHER'S COPY

IN OCTOBER, THOUGH, I RAN INTO TROUBLE. I'D FORGOTTEN ABOUT PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES!



I'LL NEVER FORGET THAT AWFUL DAY. I STILL REMEMBER I WAS WEARING MY FAVORITE DRESS, A RED CHECKERED JUMPER.

TO YOUR ROOM, YOUNG LADY! MARCH!
YOU'RE GROUNDED FOR A WHOLE MONTH!



B-BUT MOM, HALLOWEEN'S THIS MONTH!

HALLOWEEN WAS THE HIGHLIGHT OF THE WHOLE YEAR! MY MOM COULDN'T BE THAT MEAN!

BUT, MY PUNISHMENT WAS ABOUT TO GET WORSE. MUCH WORSE!

A BARE-BOTTOM SPANKING!



Oh, THAT'S NOT ALL.
GETTING GROUNDED IS ONLY FOR MISBEHAVING AT SCHOOL.
FOR LYING AND CHEATING, I'M GOING TO TELL YOUR FATHER TO GIVE YOU...



THE HORRIBLE WORDS ECHOED IN MY EARS.

MY MOM HAD THREATENED IT BEFORE, BUT I'D NEVER DONE ANYTHING QUITE BAD ENOUGH TO DESERVE THE MOST DREADED OF PUNISHMENTS!



YOU BROUGHT THIS ON YOURSELF, RUDE!

NOW SIMMER DOWN, SO WE CAN GET IT OVER WITH.

P-PLEASE DADDY, NO! NOT ON THE BARE!

THE WAIT FELT ENDLESS. BUT, FINALLY MY DAD ARRIVED HOME AND DID THE DEED.



SPLAT!



SPLAT!



SPLAT!

THE SLAPS ON BARE SKIN MADE DISTINCTIVE LOUD, WET, FLESHY SOUNDS, WHICH SOMEHOW ADDED TO THE EMBARRASSMENT.

ALTHOUGH THE SWATS DEFINITELY STUNG, THEY REALLY DIDN'T HURT THAT BAD--MY DAD WAS OBVIOUSLY HOLDING BACK, AND NOT HITTING NEARLY AS HARD AS USUAL.

BUT, THE AWFUL MIX OF FEAR AND HUMILIATION LEFT ME CRYING MY EYES OUT AND SWEARING I'D NEVER EARN ANOTHER SPANKING AS LONG AS I LIVED!



YOU'VE BEEN MOST NAUGHTY, YOUNG MISS RUDE.

I'VE NO CHOICE BUT TO ADMINISTER A BARE-BOTTOM SPANKING!

THAT NIGHT AT BEDTIME, I FELT CONFUSED.

I WANTED TO FORGET ALL ABOUT WHAT'D HAPPENED AND YET, I KEPT THINKING ABOUT IT.



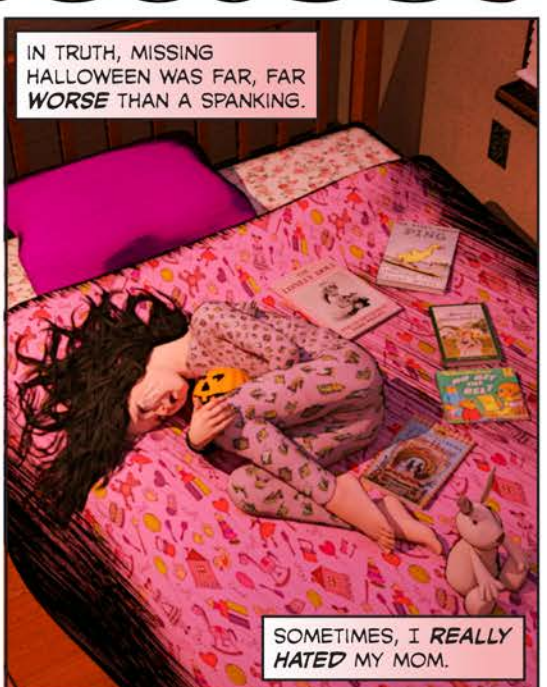
THREE WEEKS LATER.

SORRY, GIRLS, BUT RUDE'S STILL GROUNDED FOR HER ATROCIOUS BEHAVIOR!

Aw, SHUCKS! WE THOUGHTYA MIGHT LET 'ER OUT JUS' FOR HALLOWEEN.

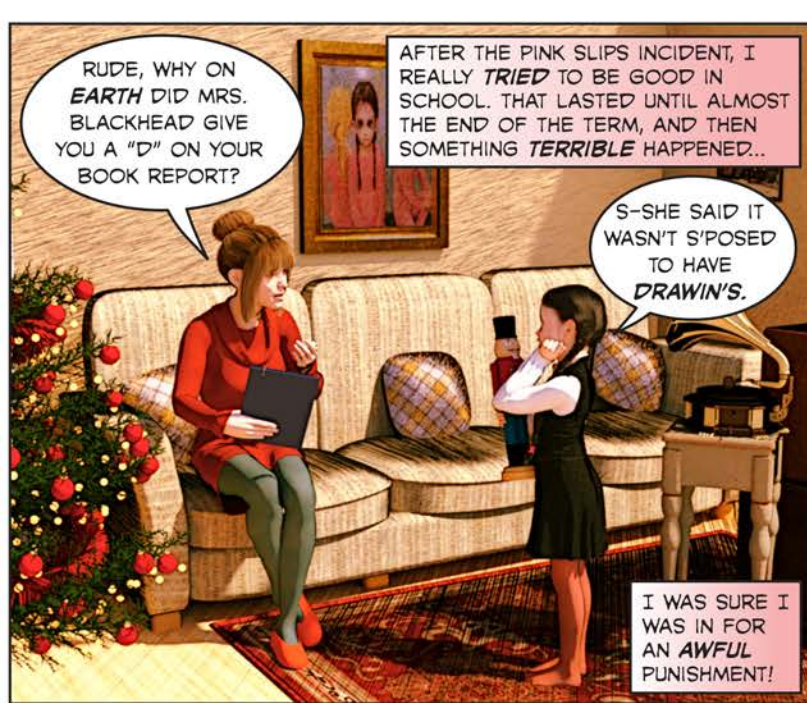
WELL, I GUESS DAT'S THE WAY THE COOKIE CRUMBLES.

TO THINK I GAVE RUDE THE IDEA!



IN TRUTH, MISSING HALLOWEEN WAS FAR, FAR WORSE THAN A SPANKING.

SOMETIMES, I REALLY HATED MY MOM.



RUDE, WHY ON EARTH DID MRS. BLACKHEAD GIVE YOU A "D" ON YOUR BOOK REPORT?

AFTER THE PINK SLIPS INCIDENT, I REALLY **TRIED** TO BE GOOD IN SCHOOL. THAT LASTED UNTIL ALMOST THE END OF THE TERM, AND THEN SOMETHING **TERRIBLE** HAPPENED...

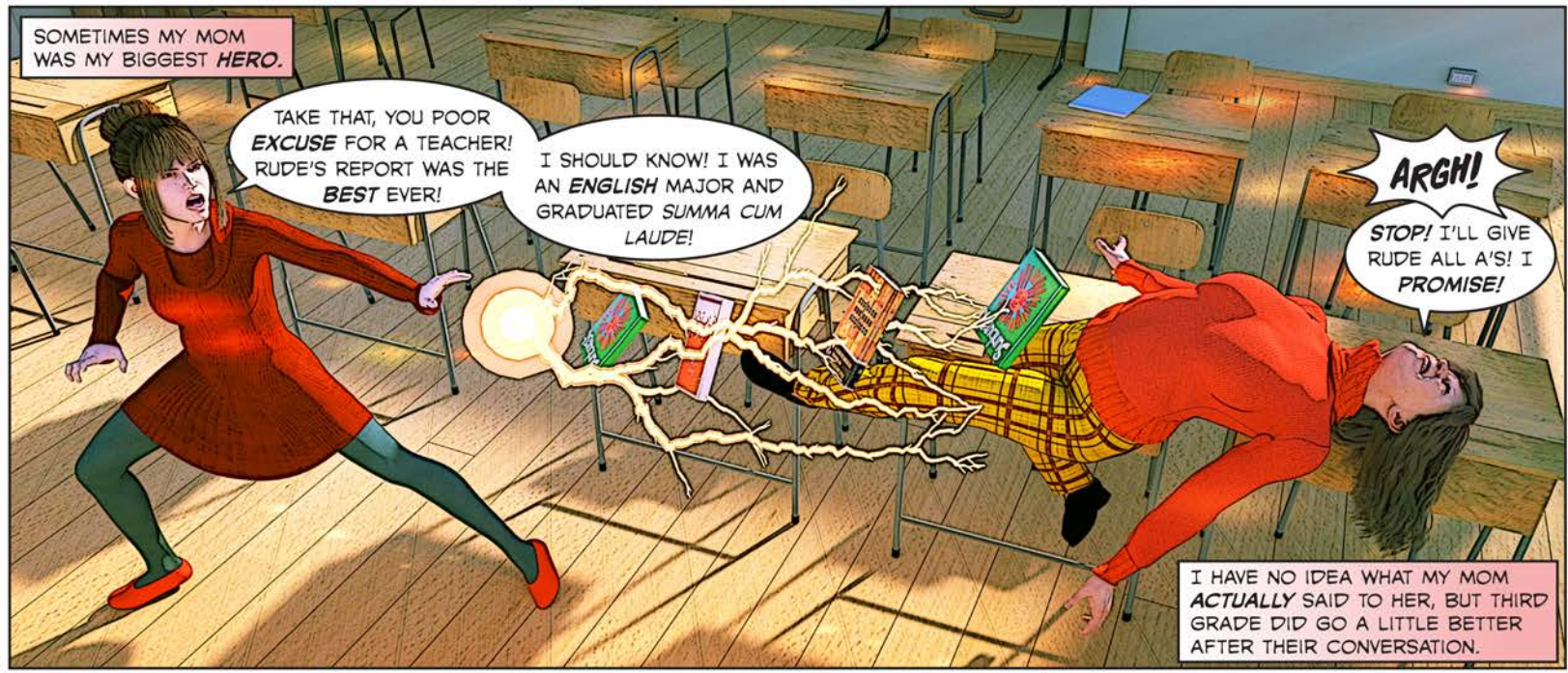
S-SHE SAID IT WASN'T S'POSED TO HAVE **DRAWIN'S**.

I WAS SURE I WAS IN FOR AN **AWFUL** PUNISHMENT!



THAT'S **NONSENSE!** IT'S WELL-WRITTEN FOR A THIRD GRADER, AND THE DRAWINGS ARE CHARMING.

I'M GOING TO HAVE A **TALK** WITH THAT **WITCH**, er, WOMAN!



SOMETIMES MY MOM WAS MY BIGGEST **HERO**.

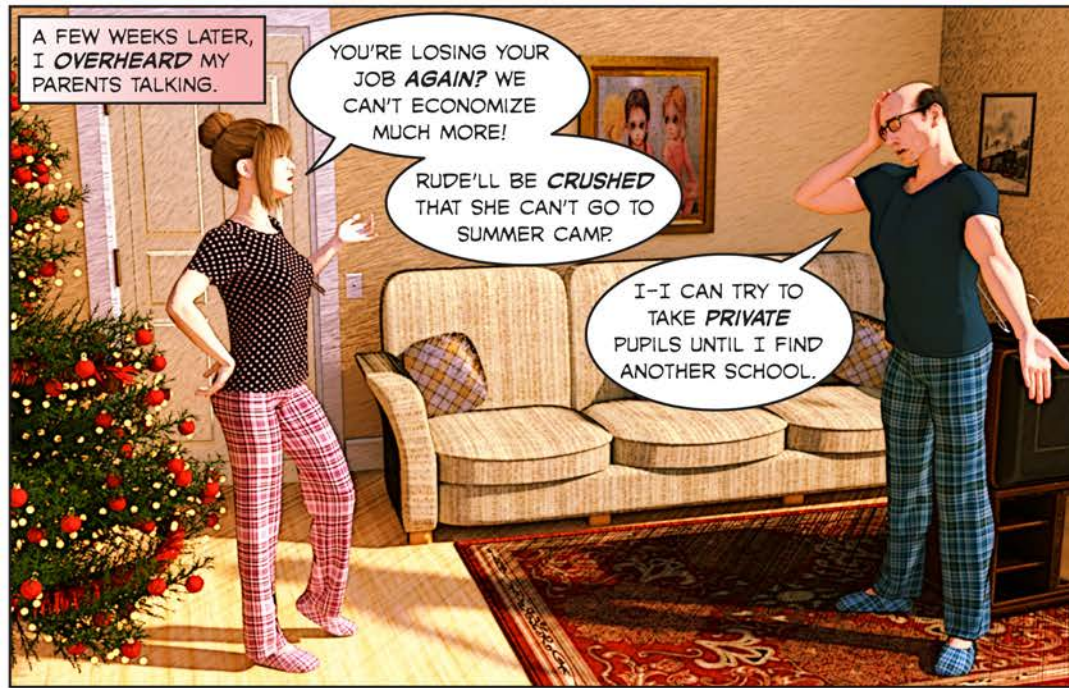
TAKE THAT, YOU POOR **EXCUSE** FOR A TEACHER! RUDE'S REPORT WAS THE **BEST** EVER!

I SHOULD KNOW! I WAS AN **ENGLISH** MAJOR AND GRADUATED **SUMMA CUM LAUDE!**

ARGH!

STOP! I'LL GIVE RUDE ALL A'S! I **PROMISE!**

I HAVE NO IDEA WHAT MY MOM **ACTUALLY** SAID TO HER, BUT THIRD GRADE DID GO A LITTLE BETTER AFTER THEIR CONVERSATION.



A FEW WEEKS LATER, I **OVERHEARD** MY PARENTS TALKING.

YOU'RE LOSING YOUR **JOB** AGAIN? WE CAN'T **ECONOMIZE** MUCH MORE!

RUDE'LL BE **CRUSHED** THAT SHE CAN'T GO TO **SUMMER CAMP**.

I-I CAN TRY TO TAKE **PRIVATE** PUPILS UNTIL I FIND **ANOTHER** SCHOOL.



YOU DO THAT! IN THE **MEANTIME**, I'LL **REACTIVATE** MY **TEACHING** CREDENTIAL.

MIDDLEBRIDGE JR. HIGH IS LOOKING FOR A NEW **ENGLISH** **TEACHER** NEXT YEAR.

YES, SHE WAS MY **HERO**.

AT *LONG* LAST, SCHOOL LET OUT AND MRS. BLACKHEAD'S *REIGN* ENDED.

THERE WERE *HORSES* AND *CHARLEY* WAS THERE.

THAT SUMMER, I TURNED NINE AND GOT TO GO TO *GIRL SCOUT* CAMP.



AT NINE, THE WORLD STILL FELT SO VAST AND *NEW* AND EVERY TINY DETAIL WAS HEART-BREAKINGLY *BEAUTIFUL*.

THAT SUMMER WAS *HEAVEN* ON EARTH.

THERE WOULD NEVER BE *ANOTHER* QUITE LIKE IT.

CHESTNUT; *S. fly*, bright green insect dried & used for raising blisters, as aphrodisiac, &c.; *S. fowl*, breed of domestic fowl with glossy greenish-black plumage; *S. grass*, esparto; *S. main* (hist.), NE coast of S. America between Orinoco river & Panama, & adjoining part of Caribbean sea; *War of the S. succession* (between France & Bavaria on one side & England, Prussia, & United Provinces, on the other, on death of Charles II of Spain without issue, 1701-14); (n.) S. language. [ME *Spainisc* (Spain, see -ISH¹)]

spank, v.t. & i., & n. Slap buttocks with open hand or slipper. [*spank* **spanking**¹ [-ING¹] n.; urge forward by slapping or whipping; (of horse &c.) move forward at a step between trot & gallop; (n.) slap with open hand &c., on buttocks. [OE *spanke* & Du. *spanke* strut, LG *spankern* move actively]

spanker, n. In vbl sense also or esp.: fast-going horse; (colloq.) person or thing of notable size or quality, stunner, whopper; (Naut.) fore-&-aft sail set on after side of mizzenmast. [-ER¹]

spanking² (for s.¹ see SPANK), a. & v.i. In vbl senses; also; (colloq.) striking, excellent, as *had a s. time*, *a s.* (strong breeze, (adv.) *a s. fine woman*. [-ING²]

spanless, a. (poet.). Beyond measure. [-LESS]

spanne, n. In vbl senses; also; instrument for tightening; connecting-rod in parallel motion of engine; = SPAN²-worm. [-ER¹]

spar¹, n., & v.t. Stout pole esp. such as is used for mast, yard, &c., of ship; *s.-buoy* (made of a s. with one end moored so that other stands up); *s.-deck*, upper deck extending from bow to stern, including quarter-deck and fore-castle; (v.t.) furnish with s., help (ship) over shallow bar with ss. [ME *sparre*, cf. Du. *spar*, G *sparren*, ON *sparri*, perh. cogn. w. SPEAR]

spar², n. Kinds of crystalline mineral, easily cleavable and non-lustrous, as *calcareous s.*, calcite, *Derbyshire* (= FLUOR) *s.*, *Iceland s.*, transparent calcite much used for optical purposes. [OE *spar*; G has *spath*, a diff. wd]

spar³, v.i., & n. Make motions of attack & defence with closed fists, use the hands (as) in boxing, (often *at* opponent); (fig.) bandy words, as *they are always sparring (at each other)*; (of cocks) fight esp. with protected spurs; (n.) sparring motion, boxing-match, cock-fight. [orig. = (of cock) strike out with spurs, f. OF *esparer* part. of Teut. orig., cf. SPUR, SPURN]

spā'ra'ble, n. Headless nail for soles and heels of boots. [corrupt. of *sparrow-bill*]

(do not provoke) *his blushes*; be f. *spartan* (f. prec.), cf. Du. & G *spar*
spar'ger, n. Sprinkling-apparatus for brewing. [f. rare vb *sparge* f. L *spargere*]
spark¹, n. Flery particle thro' burning substance; small bright point e.g. in gem; (fig.) brilliant e.g. wit &c., esp. *strike ss. out of* per- him to lively or original convers- neg. or quasi-neg.) particle of fire quality &c., as *not a s. of life remo-* had a s. of generosity in you; minous effect of sudden disruptiv- electric s. serving to fire explosive oil-engine of motor &c., as *adca-* the increase, decrease, frequen- phosphorescent light fr- stable matter &c.; *s.-arrester* preventing (injury from) SPARK² in cal apparatus, netting &c. to catch engine. Hence **spar'kless** a., **sp** [OE *spearca*, cf. MDu. *sparcke*, & Da. *sprage*, crackle; perh. f. crack- ing wood &c.]

spark², v.i. Emit sparks of fir- city; *sparkling-plug*, device for fir- mixture in motor-engine; (Elec) sparks at point where continuity interrupted. [OE *spearcian* as pr-

spark³, n., & v.i. Gay fellow; ga- play the gallant. Hence **spar'kly** adv. *spark lively*, cf. *sprawl*, also SPEAK & SPARK¹]

sparkle, v.i., & n. Emit spar- &c. & fig. of wit &c.) glitter, glis- late, whence **spar'kler**¹ n., **spar** adv.; *sparkling wines* (giving off acid gas in small bubbles, cf. STIL- ling, gleam, spark. [ME *sparkle* f. SPARK^{1,2} + -LE(L, S)]

spā'row (-ō), n. Kinds of s. coloured bird, esp. *house s.*, Eur- noted for attachment to human dw- lifeness, and pugnacity; *s.-grass* (ragus); *s.-hawk*, kinds of small ha- on ss. &c. [OE *spearwa*, cf. ON *spurr*, cogn. w. SPAR²]

spar'ry, a. Of, like, rich in, sp-
sparse, a. (Of population &c.) tered, not dense; (Bot., Zool.) placed at distant or irregular intervals
spar'sely² adv., **spar'seness** n. *gere spars-* scatter]

Spar'tan, a. & n. (Native) of Sp- allusion to supposed characteristic *endurance, simplicity*. [f. L *Sparta* f. Gk *Spirtē*, see -AN]

Chapter Two

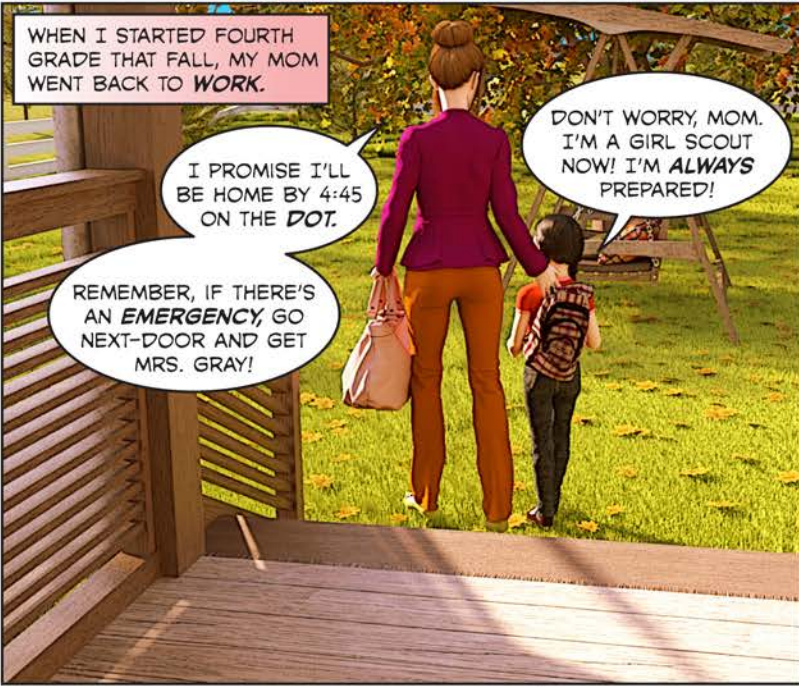
The Stubborn Years: Ages 9-10

WHEN I STARTED FOURTH GRADE THAT FALL, MY MOM WENT BACK TO **WORK**.

I PROMISE I'LL BE HOME BY 4:45 ON THE **DOT**.

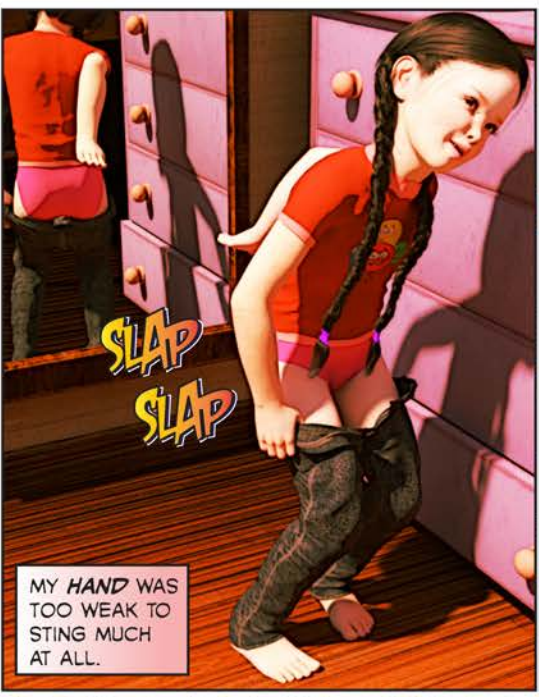
DON'T WORRY, MOM. I'M A GIRL SCOUT NOW! I'M **ALWAYS** PREPARED!

REMEMBER, IF THERE'S AN **EMERGENCY**, GO NEXT-DOOR AND GET MRS. GRAY!

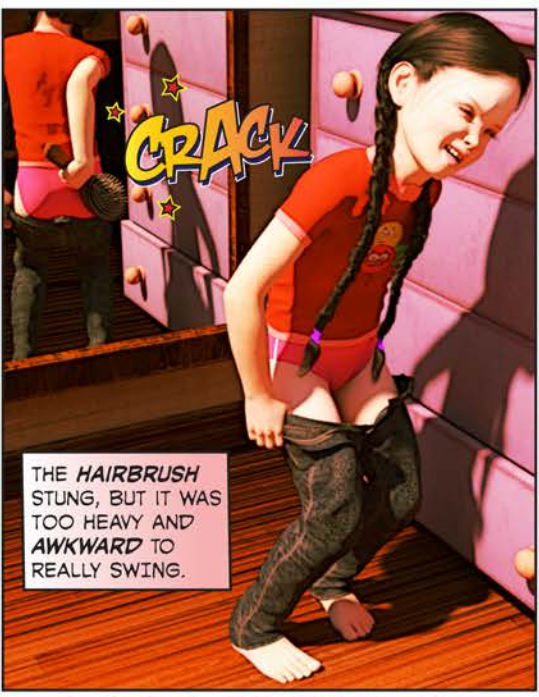


SUDDENLY, I HAD A COUPLE HOURS **ALONE** AFTER SCHOOL.

THE VERY FIRST DAY, I GATHERED A FEW THINGS AND PULLED MY JEANS DOWN FOR A LITTLE **EXPERIMENT**.



MY **HAND** WAS TOO WEAK TO STING MUCH AT ALL.



THE **HAIRBRUSH** STUNG, BUT IT WAS TOO HEAVY AND **AWKWARD** TO REALLY SWING.



THE **WOODEN SPOON** WAS MY FAVORITE. IT **SMARTED** LIKE THE DICKENS!

I WAS AFRAID MY MOM WOULD NOTICE THE SPOON WAS WET IF I **WASHED** IT. SO, I JUST PUT IT BACK IN THE **DRAWER** IN THE KITCHEN.

BUT, RUDE, YOU ALWAYS **LIKED** SPAGHETTI!

NOT ANYMORE! IT'S **SO FAT'NIN'**! YOU 'N DAD SHOULDN'T EAT IT, EITHER!

SUIT YOURSELF MORE FOR ME, THEN! I'M **STARVING!**



AND, GUESS WHAT SHE USED TO **SERVE** DINNER WITH THAT NIGHT?

Le Butt Spoon

AFTER THAT, I HID **LE BUTT SPOON** UNDER MY MATTRESS. MY MOM WAS CONVINCED MY DAD ACCIDENTALLY **THREW** IT OUT CLEANING UP!

ABOUT A MONTH LATER, I MET THE FIRST LOVE OF MY LIFE.

RUDE! YOU HAVE A SPECIAL VISITOR!

KNOCK KNOCK

WHO IS IT, MOM? I'M NOT 'PECTIN' 'N'BODY!

MR. FOSTER THE SCIENCE TEACHER RETIRED LAST TERM.

HE WANTED THE CLASS PET TO GO TO A GOOD HOME!

W-WHAT IS IT?

I'D ALWAYS WANTED A CUDDLY PET, BUT MY DAD WAS TERRIBLY ALLERGIC TO ANYTHING FURRY.

HE'S A PYTHON. DON'T BE AFRAID OF HIM, HONEY.

HE'S VERY GENTLE. GO AHEAD, TRY HOLDING HIM!

YOU SEE, MY MOM WASN'T A TYPICAL SUBURBAN HOUSEWIFE.

Oooh, I think he LIKES ME! IT FEELS LIKE HE'S HUGGIN' ME!

HE LIKES YOUR WARMTH! SNAKES ARE PRETTY SIMPLE CREATURES.

WHAT DO YOU WANT TO CALL HIM? MR. FOSTER DIDN'T TELL ME HE HAD A NAME.

SHE'D GROWN UP ON A FARM AND HAD WANTED TO BE A VETERINARIAN. SO, CREEPY CRAWLIES DIDN'T FAZE HER.

BECAUSE OF MY DAD'S ALLERGIES, MY MOM HAD GOTTEN ME UNUSUAL PETS, LIKE FROGS, ANTS AND EVEN WORMS.

I'M GONNA CALL HIM SLITHER!

Oooh, I LOVE HIM!

ONE THING ABOUT, SLITHER, HONEY-- HE HAS TO EAT LIVE MICE.

I CAN TAKE HIM IN THE BASEMENT TO DO IT, IF YOU'RE TOO SQUEAMISH.

Oh, it won't bother me, mom. It's NATURAL for snakes.

DAD'S THE SQUEAMISH ONE, NOT ME!

SOMETIMES I THINK HE CRIES MORE'N ME WHEN HE HAS TO 'PANK ME!

THE NEXT DAY WAS A SATURDAY.

AS SOON AS I GOT UP, I PUT SLITHER IN MY BIKE BASKET AND TOOK OFF FOR CHARLEY'S.



I COULDN'T WAIT TO SHOW SLITHER TO HER!



WHEN I GOT TO CHARLEY'S, EVERYONE WAS OUTSIDE, INCLUDING JENNY, WHO'D COME OVER TO PLAY.

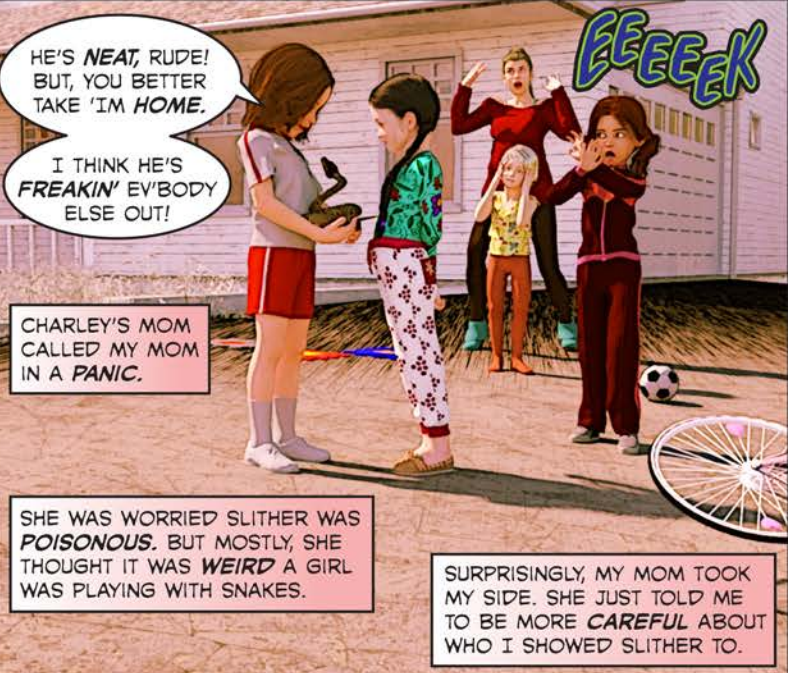
HE'S NEAT, RUDE! BUT, YOU BETTER TAKE 'IM HOME.

I THINK HE'S FREAKIN' EV'BODY ELSE OUT!

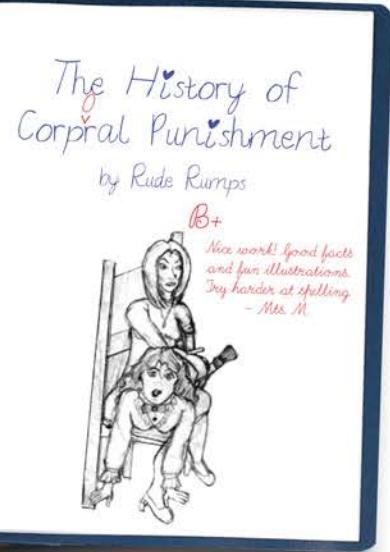
CHARLEY'S MOM CALLED MY MOM IN A PANIC.

SHE WAS WORRIED SLITHER WAS POISONOUS. BUT MOSTLY, SHE THOUGHT IT WAS WEIRD A GIRL WAS PLAYING WITH SNAKES.

SURPRISINGLY, MY MOM TOOK MY SIDE. SHE JUST TOLD ME TO BE MORE CAREFUL ABOUT WHO I SHOWED SLITHER TO.



YES, EVERYTHING SEEMED TO BE GOING MY WAY THAT YEAR. EVEN MY TEACHER SEEMED TO LIKE ME!



*REAL DRAWING DONE BY YOURS TRULY IN CHILDHOOD.

THAT HALLOWEEN WAS GLORIOUS. UNLIKE THE, ahem, PREVIOUS YEAR.

CHARLEY TOOK US ON A FIVE MILE WALK TO WHERE THE MANSIONS WERE. JUST LIKE SHE SAID, THEY GAVE OUT FULL-SIZED CANDY BARS!



WINTER CAME. OUR DRAFTY OLD HOUSE WAS FREEZING.

EVERY DAY WHEN I GOT HOME FROM SCHOOL, I'D TAKE SLITHER OUT AND LET HIM CURL UP UNDER A BIG LAMP TO WARM HIMSELF.

I'D ALSO TAKE MY BOTTOM OUT AND WARM THAT UP, TOO.





Yep. EVERYTHING WAS GOING GREAT. UNTIL **SPRING**.

HOW MANY FINGERS AM I HOLDING UP, RUDE?

O-ONE?

MY MOM WAS THE FIRST TO NOTICE THE PROBLEM. I COULD SEE FINE CLOSE-UP, BUT FAR AWAY EVERYTHING WAS A **BLUR**.



WHICH FRAMES DO YOU PREFER, YOUNG LADY?

"NEITHER."



I **HATED** GLASSES.

...GAVE ME HEADACHES...

THEY WERE **UGLY**...

...AND MADE MY FACE **SWEAT**.



THEY WERE ALSO A **MAGNET** FOR BULLIES.

I DIDN'T KNOW MIDDLEBRIDGE HAD A COLONY OF FOUR-EYED MARTIANS!

I MADE UP MY MIND THEN AND **THERE**.



SHE'S SO **WEIRD!** I'VE HEARD SHE PLAYS WITH SNAKES, TOO!

I **HAD** TO GET RID OF THOSE GLASSES **SOMEHOW**.



CHUK

SO, I SNEAKED INTO A KINDERGARTEN CLASSROOM AT LUNCH AND THREW MY GLASSES IN THE **TRASH**.

I FIGURED THEY'D END UP RIGHT AT THE **DUMP**, WHERE THEY BELONGED.



I WAS SURE MY MOM WOULDN'T PUNISH ME FOR AN **ACCIDENT**.

Um, **TERRIBLE** NEWS, MOM.

SOMEHOW I **LOST** MY GLASSES AT SCHOOL!

RUDE! I TOLD YOU TO BE **CAREFUL!** THEY COST \$40!

I'LL ASK TERRY* TO CHECK AROUND AS **SOON** AS SHE GETS TO SCHOOL!

*THE SCHOOL NURSE AND MY MOM'S FRIEND.

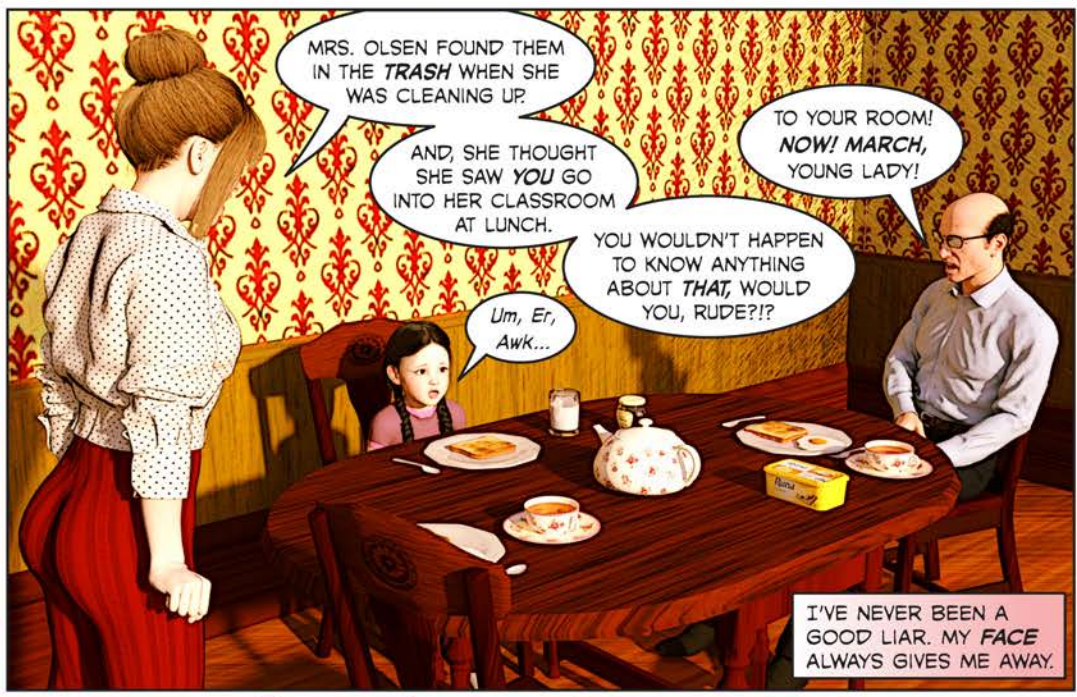


THE NEXT MORNING, DURING BREAKFAST, TERRY CALLED. APPARENTLY, SCHOOL NURSES START THEIR DAYS **EARLY**.

TERRY?
Oh, THANK **GOODNESS!**

MRS. OLSEN LEFT YOU A NOTE? SHE THOUGHT SHE **SAW** RUDE? THAT'S **ODD**, ALL RIGHT!

LOOKING BACK, IT WASN'T A BRILLIANT **PLAN**. BUT, HEY, I WAS NINE.



MRS. OLSEN FOUND THEM IN THE **TRASH** WHEN SHE WAS CLEANING UP.

AND, SHE THOUGHT SHE SAW **YOU** GO INTO HER CLASSROOM AT LUNCH.

TO YOUR ROOM! **NOW!** MARCH, YOUNG LADY!

YOU WOULDN'T HAPPEN TO KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT **THAT**, WOULD YOU, RUDE???

Um, Er, Awk...

I'VE NEVER BEEN A GOOD LIAR. MY **FACE** ALWAYS GIVES ME AWAY.



SO WHAT IF I DID???

I **HATE** THEM AND YOU CAN'T **MAKE** ME WEAR THEM!



NO, BUT I CAN TEACH YOU TO TREAT EXPENSIVE THINGS WITH **RESPECT!**

NOW, GET YOUR **PANTS** OFF! YOU'RE GOING TO HAVE TROUBLE **SITTING** IN SCHOOL TODAY!



I WASN'T **ONE** BIT SORRY AND MADE A **BIG** SHOW OF IT.

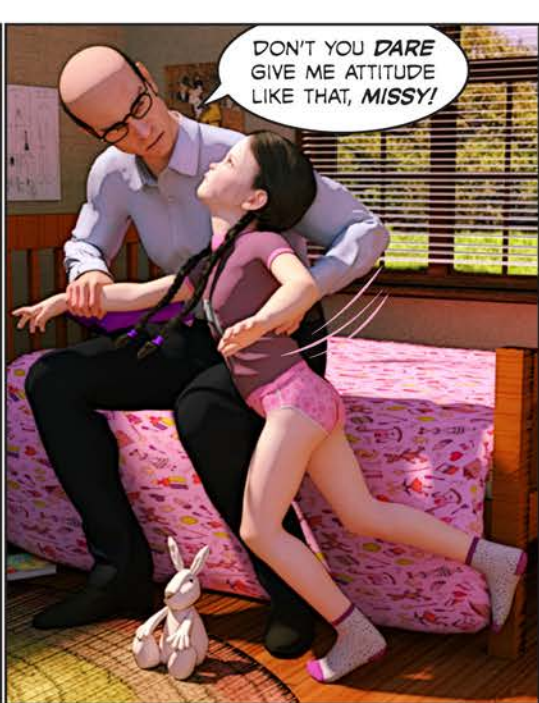
IT ALL SEEMED SO **UNFAIR!** I NEVER **ASKED** FOR GLASSES.



Fine! GO AHEAD AND **BEAT** ME INTO SUBMISSION.

I COULD BE **VERY** DRAMATIC.

MY DAD WAS **NOT** AMUSED.



DON'T YOU **DARE** GIVE ME ATTITUDE LIKE THAT, **MISSY!**



USUALLY I WOULD'VE BEEN **SOBBING** CONTRITELY THE **MOMENT** MY DAD TURNED ME OVER HIS KNEE.

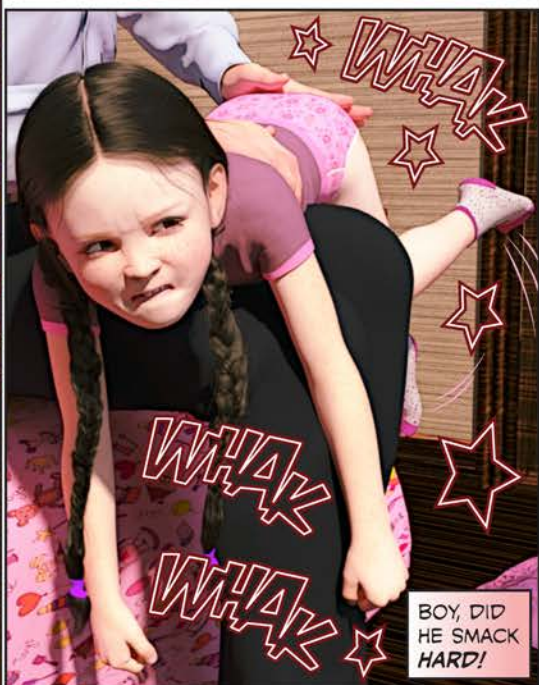
BUT, THIS TIME, I WASN'T LOOKING FOR **SYMPATHY**.

I WANTED TO SHOW HIM HE WASN'T THE **BOSS** OF ME.



IT **HURT**. LOTS. BUT, I WAS DETERMINED **NOT** TO GIVE IN.

AND, HE WAS DETERMINED TO MAKE ME **CRY**.



BOY, DID HE SMACK **HARD!**

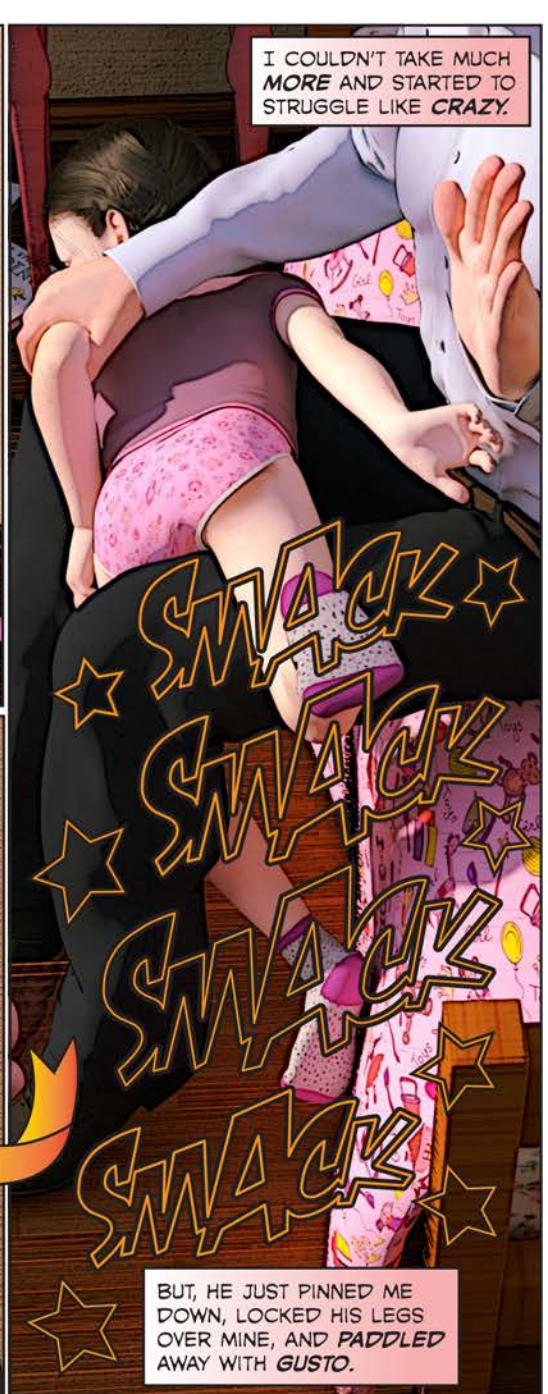


IT FELT LIKE MY RUMP WAS BEING ROASTED IN THE FIRES OF HELL.

I DID ALL I COULD TO REMAIN STOIC.



SO, DAD REDOUBLED HIS EFFORTS, IN THE BATTLE OF HAND VS. BUTT.



I COULDN'T TAKE MUCH MORE AND STARTED TO STRUGGLE LIKE CRAZY.

BUT, HE JUST PINNED ME DOWN, LOCKED HIS LEGS OVER MINE, AND PADDLED AWAY WITH GUSTO.

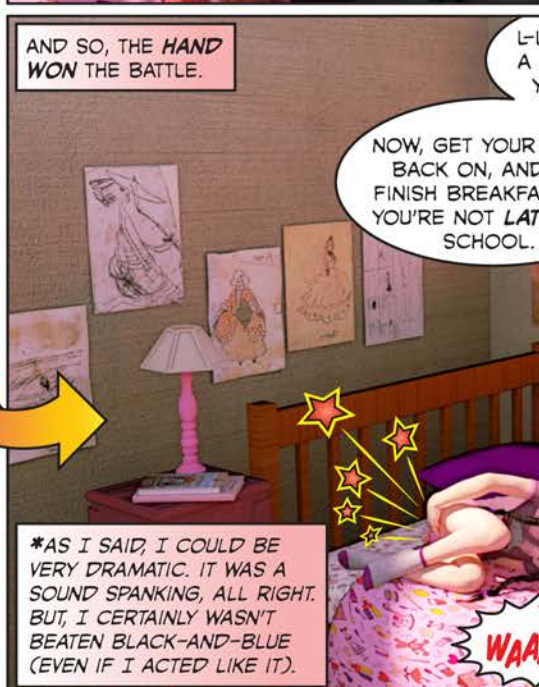


HE DELIVERED A FLURRY OF VERY HARD BLOWS TO MY ALREADY SCORCHED SEAT.



IT FELT SOMETHING LIKE SITTING ON A HUNDRED RED HOT NEEDLES AFTER BEING STUNG BY A NEST OF HORNETS.

THE WORLD BECAME A BLUR OF EXPLOSIVE SMACKING SOUNDS AND SEARING PAIN*.



AND SO, THE HAND WON THE BATTLE.

NOW, GET YOUR PANTS BACK ON, AND GO FINISH BREAKFAST, SO YOU'RE NOT LATE FOR SCHOOL.

LET THAT BE A LESSON TO YOU, RUDE.

*AS I SAID, I COULD BE VERY DRAMATIC. IT WAS A SOUND SPANKING, ALL RIGHT. BUT, I CERTAINLY WASN'T BEATEN BLACK-AND-BLUE (EVEN IF I ACTED LIKE IT).

WAAAH!

LET'S JUST SAY THE WALK TO SCHOOL THAT MORNING WAS A BIT **UNCOMFORTABLE**.

Oh, HE SPANKED ME **SO HARD**. YOU WOULDN'T BELIEVE IT!

I'M **NEVER** GOING TO TALK TO HIM AGAIN!

Gosh! WELL, AT LEAST HE DIDN'T HIT YOU WITH YOUR GLASSES **ON!**

I MEANT WHAT I SAID.

I PLANNED TO GIVE MY DAD THE SILENT TREATMENT **FOREVER**.

THAT NIGHT AT DINNER, I REFUSED TO UTTER A **WORD** TO HIM.

PLEASE PASS THE KETCHUP, RUDE.

Oh, dear!

HOW ABOUT WE LISTEN TO YOUR **FAVORITE RECORD** TONIGHT?

AND, IT WAS THE **SAME** NEXT NIGHT...

CAN I **READ** YOU SOME ROALD DAHL?

...AND, THE NEXT.

JUST WHEN I THOUGHT THINGS COULDN'T GET **ANY** WORSE...

GUESS WHAT? I DID SO GOOD IN TRYOUTS, I'M GOING TO TENNIS CAMP **ALL** SUMMER!

B-BUT THAT'S **TERRIBLE!** YOU WON'T GET TO GO TO GIRL SCOUT CAMP WITH ME!

Geez, IT'S NOT THE **END** OF THE WORLD! WE CAN STILL HANG OUT LOTS AFTER CAMP.

SOB!

YES IT **IS** THE END OF THE WORLD!



IT REALLY DID SEEM LIKE THE END OF MY WORLD.

I DIDN'T FEEL LIKE DOING ANYTHING.

WHEN I CAME HOME FROM SCHOOL, I'D JUST LIE IN BED.

I DIDN'T DRAW...

...DAY AFTER DAY...



...WEEK AFTER WEEK...

...I DIDN'T WANT TO READ OR WATCH TV...

...I DIDN'T WANT TO SEE CHARLEY...

...I DIDN'T WANT TO PLAY WITH SLITHER. I JUST LEFT HIM ALONE IN HIS CAGE...

...AND, MOST OF ALL, I DIDN'T WANT TO EVEN THINK ABOUT SPANKING, AFTER WHAT'D HAPPENED.



AND, I STILL WOULDN'T TALK TO MY DAD. NOT ONE WORD.

I OVERHEARD MY MOM TELLING HIM TO BE PATIENT.

"IT'S JUST A PHASE," SHE TOLD HIM. SHE SAID I WAS ASSERTING MY INDEPENDENCE.

IT DRAGGED ON FOR OVER A MONTH.

SCHOOL ENDED AND SUMMER CAME.



ONE DAY, I FELT WORSE THAN EVER.

IT WAS RIGHT AROUND MY TENTH BIRTHDAY.

MY HEAD THROBBED...

...MY THROAT BURNED...

...IT FELT LIKE THE DARKNESS WAS CLOSING IN.

I WANTED IT TO END...

...ALL OF IT TO END.

THAT NIGHT...

W-WHERE AM I?

ON THE MOUNTAINS OF THE MOON.

W-WHY AM I HERE?

W-WHO ARE YOU?

ENOUGH QUESTIONS! THIS IS A PLACE OF SILENCE!

ALL WILL BE REVEALED ON THE OTHER SIDE.

"I WENT DOWN TO ST. JAMES INFIRM'RY..."

"...SAW MY BABY THERE..."

I DON'T REMEMBER MUCH.

JUST WAKING UP TO THE SOUNDS OF HOT JAZZ.

"...STRETCHED OUT ON A LONG WHITE TABLE..."

"...SO COLD, SO SWEET, SO FAIR."

I'D BEEN VERY SICK.

Oh Dear God, THANK YOU!

D-DADDY? WHAT HAPPENED TO ME?

I FOUND OUT I COULDN'T BREATHE WHEN I WENT INTO THE HOSPITAL.

WHEN I WOKE UP, THEY'D TAKEN MY TONSILS OUT.

Shhhh, HONEY. DON'T STRAIN YOUR VOICE.

Oh, I PROMISE, DADDY. I DO.

JUST PROMISE ME YOU'LL NEVER STOP TALKING TO ME AGAIN!

"...AND I THINK TO MYSELF..."

"...WHAT A WONDERFUL WORLD..."

I KEPT THAT PROMISE FOR ALMOST FORTY YEARS...

"I SEE TREES OF GREEN..."

"...RED ROSES TOO..."

...UNTIL THE MOMENT HE BREATHED HIS LAST BREATH. R.I.P.

IT TOOK **WEEKS**, BUT I MADE A FULL RECOVERY.

MY MOM FELT REALLY BAD I DIDN'T GET TO GO TO CAMP WITH **CHARLEY**.

SO, SHE SKIMPED AND **SAVED** SO I COULD TAKE EQUESTRIAN LESSONS TWICE A MONTH WITH MY BEST FRIEND.

Owch!
I'M STILL SO **SO**RE, I DUNNO IF I CAN EVEN RIDE TODAY!

Gosh! DIDJA **FALL** PLAYIN' TENNIS?
OR, **HAHA**, DIDJA GETA SPANKIN'?

I TRIED TO SOUND CASUAL, BUT MY EARS REALLY **PERKED** UP AT THE MENTION OF A SORE BOTTOM!

THE WORDS "**BELT**" AND "**BUTT**" MADE MY HAIRS STAND ON END.

WORSE'N A REG'LAR ONE!
MY DAD **BELTED** MY BUTT!

"I GOT INNA **BIG** FIGHT WITH MY MOM 'N CALLED 'ER THE '**B**' WORD."

BEND OVER YOUR BED. **NOW!**

UNDERWEAR **DOWN**, TOO!

YOU'RE GETTING THE **BELT** ON YOUR **BARE** HINEY.

THWAK
THWAK
THWAK
YEOWCH!
"HE GAVE ME SIX GOOD LICKS. IT FELT LIKE MY BUTT GOT FRIED INNA PAN!"

"I STILL HAD **BIG**, **RED** **WHELPS** BY BEDTIME.

"SO, I **RUBBED** SUMMA MY DAD'S **LINIMENT** FOR SORE MUSCLES ON 'EM."

I FELT A STRANGE MIX OF HORROR, SHAME AND EXCITEMENT WHEN SHE TOLD ME HER STORY.

Oh God, SHE **KNOWS!**

I DON'T GET IT, RUDE.
SPANKINGS **SUCK**...
...BUT YOU SEEM TO KINDA **LIKE** 'EM?!?

AT AGE TEN, I WASN'T VERY GOOD AT **HIDING** MY EMOTIONS.

IF I COULD GO BACK AND TALK TO MY TEN-YEAR-OLD SELF, WHAT WOULD I SAY?

THAT IT'S OKAY TO BE DIFFERENT?

TO ACCEPT YOURSELF?

TO BE HONEST WITH THE PEOPLE YOU LOVE?

THAT BEING A SPANKO IS PART OF WHO YOU ARE?

TO SHOUT IT FROM THE ROOFTOPS?

OR, THAT BOYFRIENDS WILL LEAVE YOU BECAUSE OF IT?

THAT THERAPISTS WILL CALL YOU SICK?

THAT YOU'LL HATE YOURSELF FOR IT?

THAT YOU'LL PRAY IT GOES AWAY?

THAT YOUR SECRET WILL KEEP BURNING INSIDE YOU EVERY DAY OF YOUR LIFE?

AFTER ALL THESE YEARS, I STILL DON'T KNOW WHAT I'D SAY.



MY FIRST INSTINCT THAT DAY WAS TO DENY IT OR MAKE A JOKE OF IT.

BUT, CHARLEY WAS MY BEST FRIEND. I OWED HER MORE.

I-I DUNNO.

I MEAN, I HATE IT WHEN MY DAD DOES IT TO ME.

BUT, I LOVE TO MAKE UP STORIES ABOUT IT. AND, IT'S FUN WHEN YOU DO IT TO ME.

HONESTLY, FOR A TEN-YEAR-OLD, I THINK I DIDN'T DO TOO BAD A JOB EXPLAINING IT.

Well, um...THAT'S KINDA WEIRD, RUDE.

BUT, I DON'T MIND HAVIN' A BEST FRIEND WHO'S A LITTLE STRANGE.

AND, CHARLEY DID A PRETTY GOOD JOB ACCEPTING ME.

NOTHING MORE NEEDED TO BE SAID ABOUT IT THAT DAY.



FOR THE FLEETING INSTANT THAT IS CHILDHOOD, WE SHARED A SPECIAL WORLD.

Nah, I THINK WE'RE TOO OLD FOR THAT.

BUT, HOW ABOUT OUR GAME ABOUT THE MARTIANS?

SMEK

SMEK

Oh, AND CHARLEY WASN'T ALWAYS SO STRAIGHTFORWARD HERSELF.



SCRATCH SCRATCH

THAT SUMMER, I WAS CLOSER THAN EVER TO MY DAD.

HE LIKED TO SPEND EVENINGS LISTENING TO OLD RECORDS AND PLAYING CARDS.

WE DID IT ALMOST EVERY NIGHT. WITHOUT MY MOM.

RIGHT AFTER DINNER, SHE'D SAY SHE HAD A HEADACHE AND DISAPPEAR TO HER ROOM.

I DIDN'T UNDERSTAND IT THEN, BUT NOW I REALIZE SHE HAD BAD MOOD SWINGS. JUST LIKE ME.

THE DOWN SWINGS COULD LAST FOR MONTHS. SHE WAS LIKE A GHOST IN THE HOUSE DURING THOSE TIMES.

DECISIONS! DECISIONS!

DON'T RUSH ME, RUDE! ROME WASN'T BUILT IN A DAY!

THE STRANGE THING IS, MY DAD WAS TRULY AWFUL AT CARDS. EVEN "OLD MAID."

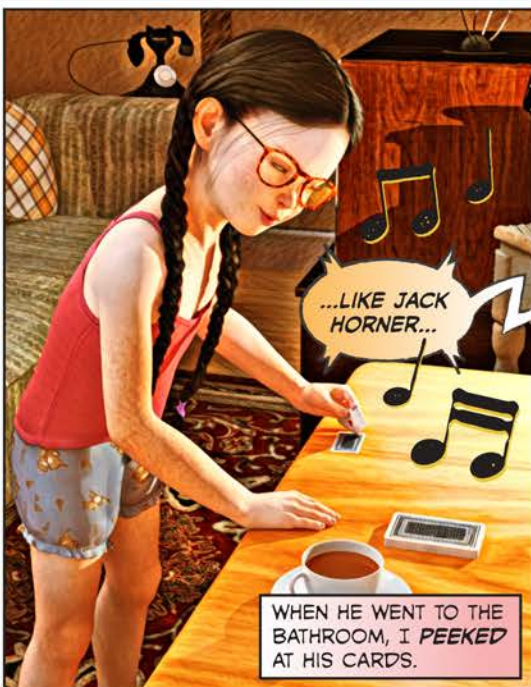
AIN'T MISBEHAVIN'...



Ah, DUTY CALLS.

A BIT TOO MUCH TEA. BE RIGHT BACK.

...SAVIN' MY LOVE FOR YOU...



...LIKE JACK HORNER...

WHEN HE WENT TO THE BATHROOM, I PEEKED AT HIS CARDS.



I KEPT PEEKING, UNTIL HE CAME BACK. I WANTED TO GET CAUGHT.

Ha! CAUGHT YOU RED HANDED!

...IN THE CORNER...

So?

I DIDN'T UNDERSTAND WHAT I WAS DOING AT THE TIME, BUT SPANKOS CALL IT BRATTING.



IT'S A THRILL. YOU KEEP PUSHING, AND SEE WHAT HAPPENS.

IT'S KIND OF PLAYFUL. YOU'RE KIND OF IN CONTROL. AND YOU'RE KIND OF NOT. THAT'S WHAT MAKES IT EXCITING.

Hrmp! WHAT'RE YOU GONNA DO 'BOUT IT? SPANK ME?

...AIN'T MISBEHAVIN'...



Hmmm, THAT'S NOT A BAD IDEA, YOU LITTLE CHEATER!

WELL, I'VE LET YOU STAY UP LATE ENOUGH. SO, IT'S OFF TO BED WITH YOU, MISSY!

HE BARELY TAPPED MY BOTTOM, BUT IT FELT LIKE A JOLT OF ELECTRICITY WENT THROUGH MY WHOLE BODY.

THE SCOLDING, THE SOUND OF THE LITTLE SLAP, THE GENTLE STING--ALL FELT SO DELICIOUS.

SMEK

I WENT TO BED UTTERLY CONFUSED.

NEAR THE END OF THE SUMMER, SOMETHING HAPPENED THAT REALLY PUT THINGS IN PERSPECTIVE.

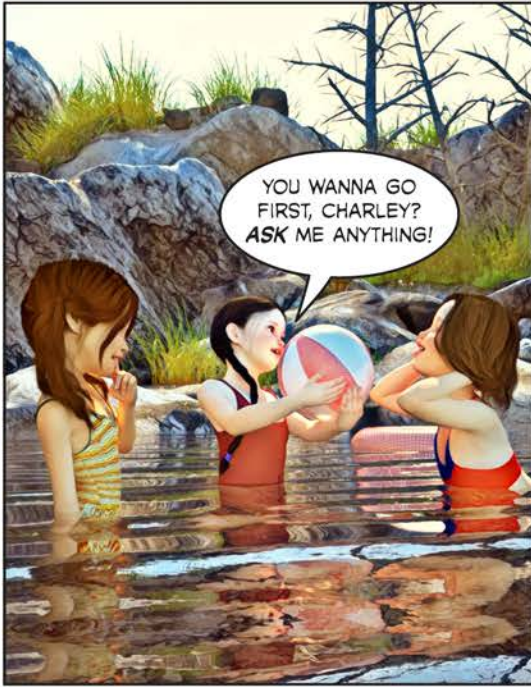
IT WAS A VERY **HOT**, MUGGY DAY AND WE WERE SWIMMING IN THE LAKE AT THE EDGE OF TOWN.

THE YEAR BEFORE WHEN WE SWAM, WE'D CHATTER ABOUT HORSES AND BARBIES. BUT, NOW WE HAD A BIT MORE **GROWN-UP** THOUGHTS ON OUR MINDS.

Hey, I'VE GOT AN IDEA FOR A **FUN** GAME!

YOU HAFTA TOSS THE BALL TO SOMEONE, AND THEY GET TO ASK YOU **ANYTHING**.

YOU HAFTA ANSWER! NO MATTER HOW **EMBARRASSING!**



YOU WANNA GO FIRST, CHARLEY? **ASK ME ANYTHING!**



OK, HERE'S YOUR **QUESTION!**

WILL I GROW **BIG BOOBIES** NEXT YEAR? **HAHA!**

GIGGLE

GIGGLE



Oh Gosh, THAT'S **SO RUDE!** WAIT, I'M RUDE! **HAHA!**

OK, THE ANSWER IS **YES!** YOU'LL HAVE **B-BIG B-BOOBIES!** **HEEHEE!**

GIGGLE GIGGLE

GIGGLE



OK, JENNY, YOUR **TURN!** ASK ME **SUMTHIN' GOOD!**

GIGGLE



Um, Uh, Ok. D-DO YOU EVER NOT LIKE THE WAY YOUR **STEPDAD**, Er, I MEAN YOUR **DAD**, **TOUCHES** YOU?



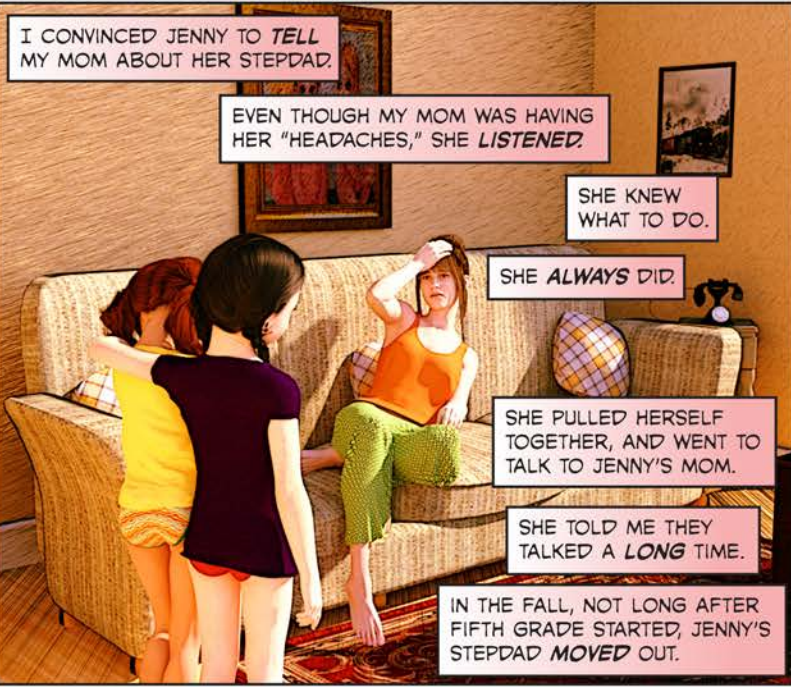
Well, **Duh!** THAT'S A **DUMB QUESTION!** Yeah, I **DON'T** LIKE IT WHEN HE **BELTS** MY **BUTT!**



IS IT LIKE ON THAT **ABC AFTERSCHOOL SPECIAL**, JENNY? I-IS IT **BAD** TOUCHES LIKE THAT?

S-SORRY.

IT WAS LIKE THAT.



I CONVINCED JENNY TO TELL MY MOM ABOUT HER STEPDAD.

EVEN THOUGH MY MOM WAS HAVING HER "HEADACHES," SHE LISTENED.

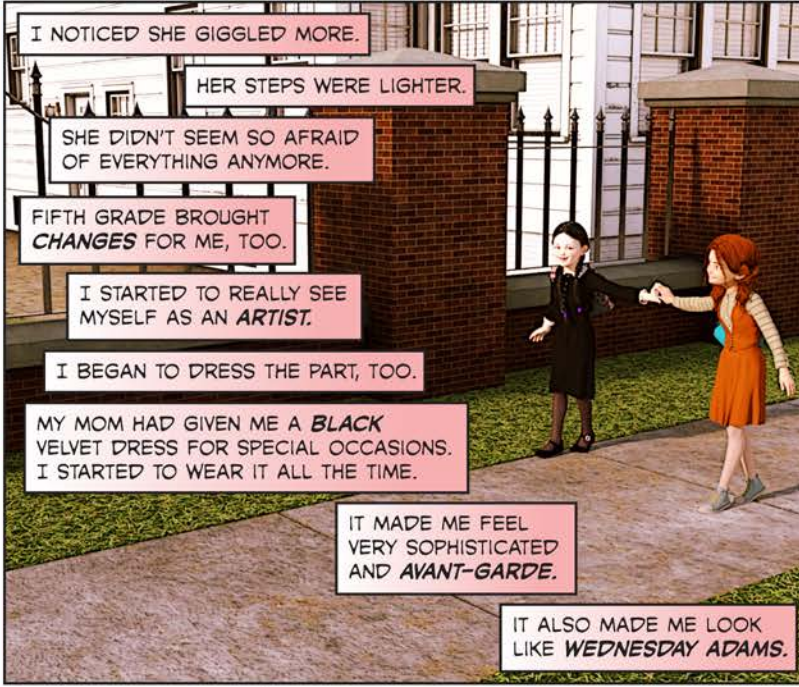
SHE KNEW WHAT TO DO.

SHE ALWAYS DID.

SHE PULLED HERSELF TOGETHER, AND WENT TO TALK TO JENNY'S MOM.

SHE TOLD ME THEY TALKED A LONG TIME.

IN THE FALL, NOT LONG AFTER FIFTH GRADE STARTED, JENNY'S STEPDAD MOVED OUT.



I NOTICED SHE GIGGLED MORE.

HER STEPS WERE LIGHTER.

SHE DIDN'T SEEM SO AFRAID OF EVERYTHING ANYMORE.

FIFTH GRADE BROUGHT CHANGES FOR ME, TOO.

I STARTED TO REALLY SEE MYSELF AS AN ARTIST.

I BEGAN TO DRESS THE PART, TOO.

MY MOM HAD GIVEN ME A BLACK VELVET DRESS FOR SPECIAL OCCASIONS. I STARTED TO WEAR IT ALL THE TIME.

IT MADE ME FEEL VERY SOPHISTICATED AND AVANT-GARDE.

IT ALSO MADE ME LOOK LIKE WEDNESDAY ADAMS.



Well, Well, IF IT ISN'T WEDNESDAY AND HER SIDE-KICK, SMELLY JENNY!

HA HA HA HA HA HA

SAM HAD TORMENTED ME FOR YEARS.

BEFORE, I'D ALWAYS JUST TRIED TO IGNORE HER.

BUT, AFTER WHAT'D HAPPENED TO JENNY, I FELT PROTECTIVE.

IT WAS THE FIRST TIME I REALLY FELT RESPONSIBLE FOR SOMEONE ELSE.



SO, I USED MY ONLY WEAPON.

IMAGINATION.



STAY BACK, YOU FOOLS! I'VE GOT WAX DOLLS OF YOU RIGHT HERE IN MY BACKPACK!

IF I STICK PINS IN THEIR EYES, YOU'LL GO BLIND!

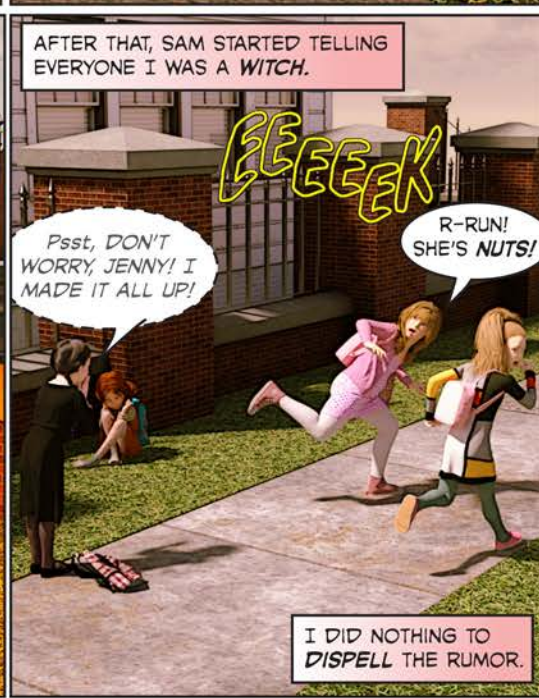


AND, IF I LET MY PET SNAKE BITE 'EM, YOU'LL BE POISONED.

FIRST, YOU'LL BLOW UP LIKE THAT GIRL IN WILLY WONKA.

THEN, YOU'LL DIE.

HISSSS



AFTER THAT, SAM STARTED TELLING EVERYONE I WAS A WITCH.

BEEEEK

Psst, DON'T WORRY, JENNY! I MADE IT ALL UP!

R-RUN! SHE'S NUTS!

I DID NOTHING TO DISPELL THE RUMOR.

OTHER THAN BULLIES, MOST OF THE KIDS AT SCHOOL PRETTY MUCH **IGNORED** ME.

AT RECESS, I'D OFTEN HEAD TO A REMOTE PART OF THE YARD AND **SKETCH**.

AFTER A WHILE, SOME KIDS DID **NOTICE** I WAS GOOD AT DRAWING.

HI, RUDE! WHATCHA DRAWIN'?

CAN I SEE IT?

OK. BUT, IT'S **NOTHING** SPECIAL.

WOW! NEAT! IT LOOKS JUST LIKE YOU!

IT'S JUST A QUICK SKETCH.

YA'KNOW, I **LOVED** THAT COMIC YOU DID FOR JENNY.

WOULD YOU DO ONE FOR ME? **PRETTY PLEASE?**

EVEN THEN, I UNDERSTOOD THE **BASICS** OF COMMERCIAL ART.

IF YOU'LL GIVE ME YOUR **DING DONGS** FOR THREE DAYS IN A ROW.

DEAL! MAKE IT 'BOUT ME AS A FAMOUS BALLERINA!

LOTSA PAGES OF DANCING!

OK. HOLD THAT **POSE**, LONG AS YOU CAN.

YES, I HAVE SOMEWHAT OF A **HISTORY** WITH COMICS.

THERE WAS A DIME STORE IN MIDDLEBRIDGE, WHERE THEY SOLD USED COMICS FOR **FIVE CENTS** EACH. I'D BUY **STACKS** OF THEM WITH MY ALLOWANCE. MY FAVORITES WERE LITTLE LULU AND LITTLE DOT, BECAUSE THEY SEEMED **QUIRKY**, LIKE ME.

*ACTUAL CHILDHOOD DRAWING.



THE OTHER REASON I WAS FASCINATED WITH THOSE COMICS IS THAT THEY WERE **FULL** OF SPANKINGS! I'D LOOK AT THE PANELS OVER AND OVER, AND GET A **FUNNY** FEELING IN MY STOMACH. IT ALL STUCK IN MY MIND **FOREVER**--THE FRILLY WHITE PANTIES, THE WHACKING SOUNDS, THE YOWLS, AND THE STARS SHOOTING OUT OF SMACKED BOTTOMS.

BY WINTER OF FIFTH GRADE,
MY MOM'S FUNK HAD ENDED.

IN FACT, SHE HAD LOTS OF ENERGY FOR
A NEW PROJECT: SAVING OUR **SOULS**.

SHE DECIDED THE CATHOLIC CHURCH
IN MIDDLEBRIDGE WAS FAR TOO
LIBERAL, AND FOUND A "BETTER" ONE.

IT WAS AN *HOUR'S DRIVE* INTO THE
MOUNTAINS. WE'D LEAVE WHEN IT
WAS STILL DARK OUTSIDE.

WE HAD TO WEAR OUR COATS INSIDE.
APPARENTLY, FATHER BURNS THOUGHT
TURNING ON THE HEAT WAS A **SIN**.

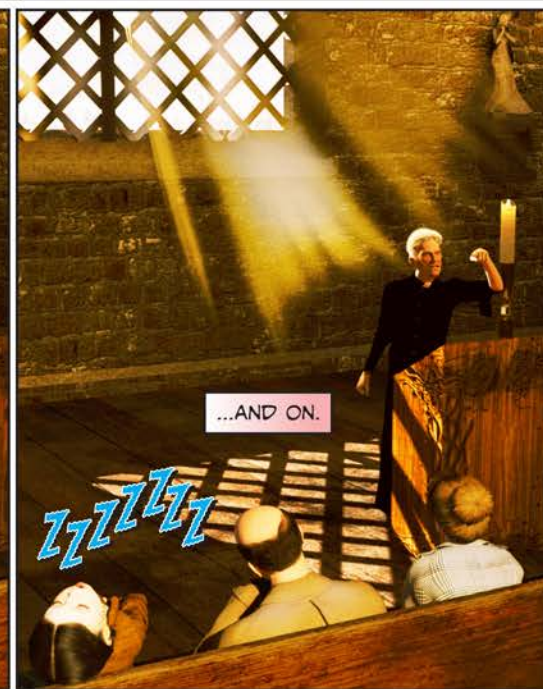


REALLY, HE THOUGHT
EVERYTHING WAS A SIN.

HE'D *DRONE* ON
ABOUT THAT...



...AND ON...



...AND ON.



AFTER THE SERMON, I
WAS TREATED TO **THREE
HOURS** OF CATECHISM
CLASS IN THE BASEMENT
OF THE CHURCH.

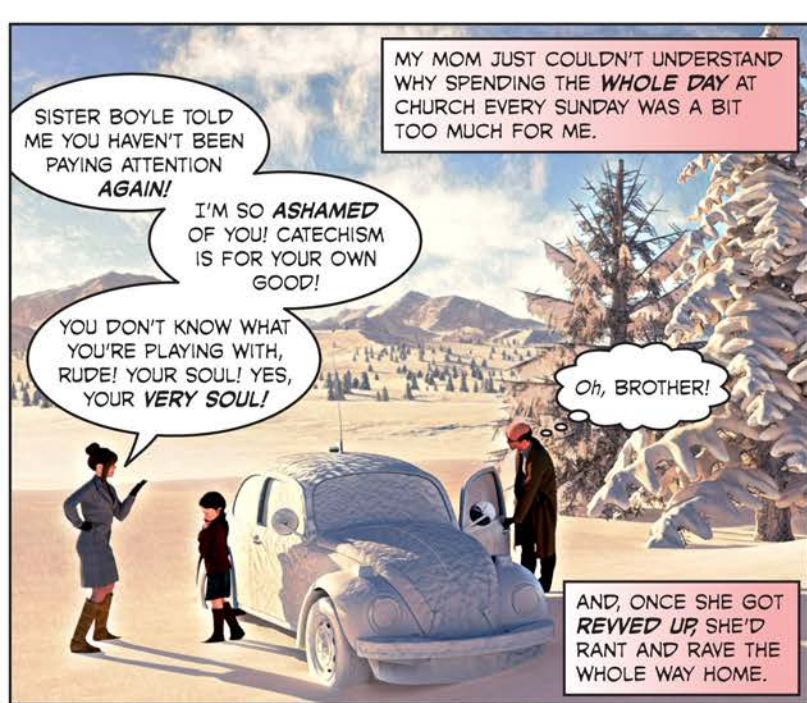


THE TEACHER, SISTER BOYLE, WAS
FOND OF RAPPING MY **KNUCKLES**
WITH A SPLINTERED OLD RULER
WHEN I WASN'T PAYING ATTENTION.

SHE DID FAR **WORSE**
TO THE BOYS, THOUGH.

I SAW HER PULL THEM BY
THEIR **EARS**, AND SLAP
THEM ACROSS THEIR **FACES**.

LOVELY OLD LADY.



SISTER BOYLE TOLD ME YOU HAVEN'T BEEN PAYING ATTENTION AGAIN!

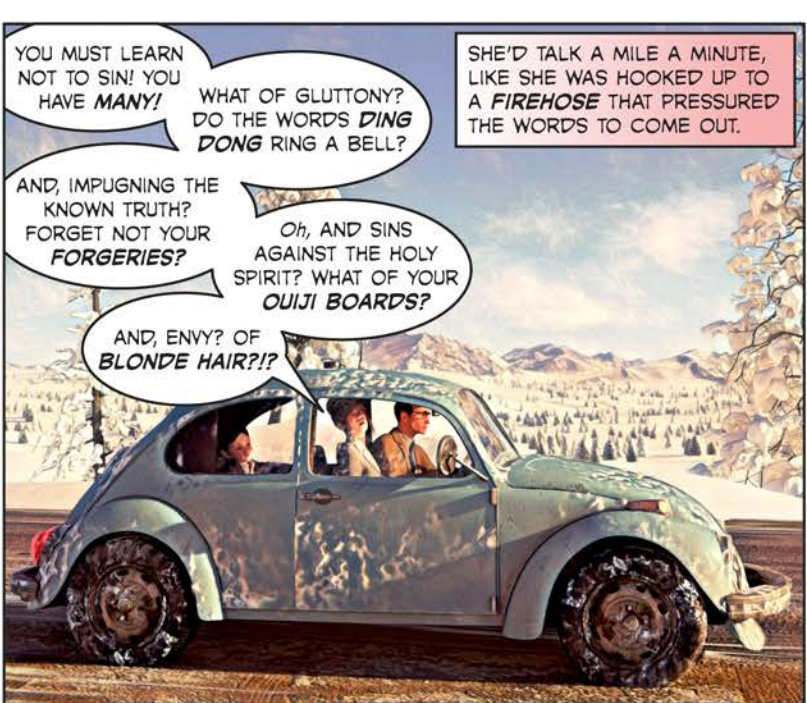
I'M SO ASHAMED OF YOU! CATECHISM IS FOR YOUR OWN GOOD!

YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE PLAYING WITH, RUDE! YOUR SOUL! YES, YOUR VERY SOUL!

Oh, BROTHER!

MY MOM JUST COULDN'T UNDERSTAND WHY SPENDING THE **WHOLE DAY** AT CHURCH EVERY SUNDAY WAS A BIT TOO MUCH FOR ME.

AND, ONCE SHE GOT **REVVED UP**, SHE'D RANT AND RAVE THE WHOLE WAY HOME.



YOU MUST LEARN NOT TO SIN! YOU HAVE **MANY!**

WHAT OF GLUTTONY? DO THE WORDS **DING DONG** RING A BELL?

SHE'D TALK A MILE A MINUTE, LIKE SHE WAS HOOKED UP TO A **FIREHOSE** THAT PRESSURED THE WORDS TO COME OUT.

AND, IMPUGNING THE KNOWN TRUTH? FORGET NOT YOUR **FORGERIES?**

Oh, AND SINS AGAINST THE HOLY SPIRIT? WHAT OF YOUR **OUIJI BOARDS?**

AND, ENVY? OF **BLONDE HAIR?!**



GO TO YOUR **ROOM**, YOUNG LADY, TO THINK OVER YOUR SINS!

THIS HAD PRACTICALLY BECOME THE **ROUTINE** ON SUNDAYS.

GOING TO MY ROOM WAS A **RELIEF**, HONESTLY.

AND, SHE'D ALWAYS CALM DOWN BY DINNER, ANYWAY.



BUT, THE SUNDAY AFTER THANKSGIVING, SOMETHING IN ME FINALLY **SNAPPED**.

NO!
I'M GONNA CALL CHARLEY!

CHARLEY'S BIRTHDAY WAS COMING UP, AND I'D BEEN WAITING **ALL DAY** TO TALK TO HER TO FINALIZE OUR PLANS.



DON'T YOU **DARE** DEFY ME!

NOW YOU'RE GROUNDED! FOR **TWO WEEKS!**

I-I'M GONNA GO MAKE SOME TEA.

EITHER OF YOU CARE FOR A CUP?

SUDDENLY, MY FOREHEAD BURNED, AND I SMELLED A WHIFF OF SULFUR.



CHARLEY'S BIRTHDAY'S IN A **WEEK** AND YOU KNOW IT!

I **HATE** YOU! YOU'RE A STUPID, UGLY WITCH, AND I HOPE YOU GO TO **HELL!**

YOU SEE, I'D JUST SPENT HOURS BEING **LECTURED** ON BEELZEBUB, SATAN, LUCIFER, OR WHATEVER HE'S CALLED...

...SO, I WAS **GODDAMNED READY** TO SIN.



BLASPHEMOUS DEVIL!

SLAP

THE SLAP MADE ME EVEN **ANGRIER**.

IT WASN'T ALL THAT HARD, REALLY.

BUT, SHE'D NEVER HIT ME BEFORE (WELL, EXCEPT ON MY **BOTTOM**).



I-I HEARD SHOUTING.
W-WHAT'S GOING ON?



YOUR DEAR DAUGHTER CALLED ME FOUL, SACRILEGIOUS THINGS THAT I SHAN'T REPEAT!
I TELL YOU, SHE DESERVES THE SPANKING OF HER LIFE!



I-I THINK SHE'S GETTING TOO OLD FOR THAT.
RUDE, HONEY, APOLOGIZE TO YOUR MOTHER.
IT'S THE CHRISTIAN THING TO DO, AND I'M SURE SHE'LL FORGIVE YOU.



APOLOGIZING MIGHT'VE ENDED IT. BUT, KNOWING MY MOM, MAYBE NOT. ANYWAY, I WAS WAY TOO MAD TO THINK STRAIGHT.

S-SHE SHOULD APOLOGIZE!
S-SHE HIT ME!
SHE'S AWFUL!

I CAN'T HELP HATING THAT STUPID CHURCH, EITHER!

SISTER BOILFACE HITS ME, TOO. SHE'S A FAT, GROSS BITCH WHO SHOULD BE BOILED IN HER OWN BLUBBER!

AND, FATHER BURNS IS A PATHETIC, DIRTY, OLD BUGGER!

ONCE THE DAM BROKE, THE BILE JUST SPEWED OUT.

IT FELT RATHER SATISFYING TO BE FOUL AND BLASPHEMOUS.

UNFORTUNATELY, MY DAD WAS NOT AMUSED.



OK, YOU HAD YOUR CHANCE!
I GUESS YOUR MOTHER'S RIGHT--YOU DO NEED YOUR BOTTOM BLISTERED!



YOU'RE GETTING IT GOOD THIS TIME, MISSY!
I EXPECT YOU'LL STILL BE FEELING THIS ONE NEXT SUNDAY!



MY DAD WASN'T KIDDING. HE DIDN'T HOLD BACK.
BUT, I WAS TEN AND A HALF. I WASN'T GOING TO CRY EASILY.

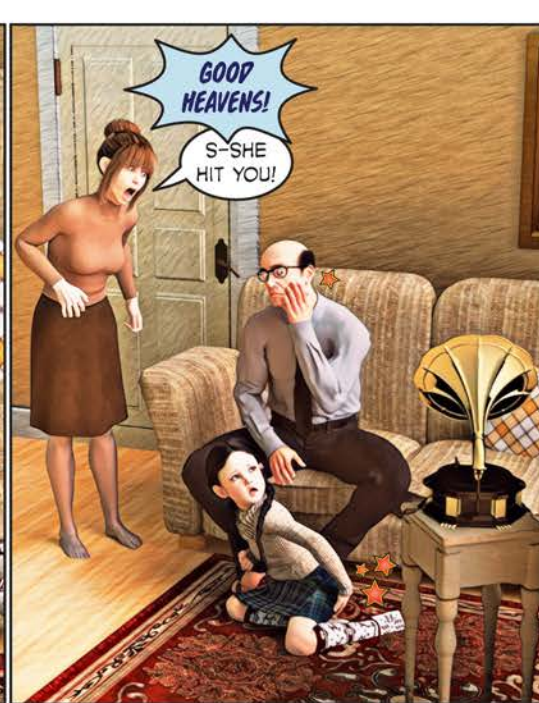
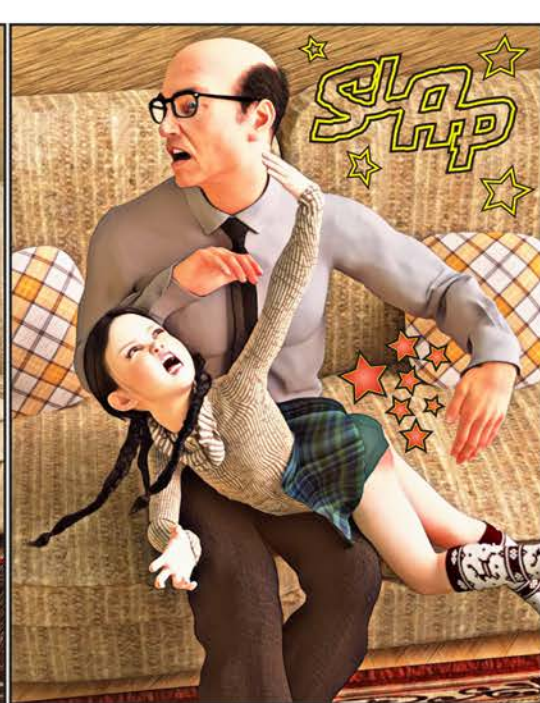


SO, HE HIT HARDER.

AND, THAT JUST MADE ME MADDER.



AND THEN, I TOTALLY, COMPLETELY LOST IT.



WHAT'RE YOU WAITING FOR?!? TURN HER BACK OVER YOUR KNEE!

PULL DOWN HER PANTIES! IF ANYTHING MERITS A BARE BOTTOM SPANKING, THIS DOES!

SHALL I FETCH THE HAIRBRUSH? A WOODEN SPOON?

BETTER YET, GIVE HER THE BELT!



NO! IT'S TIME TO TURN THE OTHER CHEEK!

THERE'S BEEN FAR TOO MUCH HITTING TODAY.

YOU TWO WILL HAVE TO FIND SOME OTHER WAY TO RESOLVE YOUR DIFFERENCES.



DINNER THAT EVENING WAS A SOMBER AFFAIR.

I THINK WE EACH KNEW WE'D DONE WRONG IN OUR LITTLE FAMILY DRAMA.

THAT NIGHT, I TOSSED AND TURNED IN BED, RACKED WITH GUILT.



BY THE TIME I GOT HOME FROM SCHOOL THE NEXT DAY, I'D HATCHED A PLAN.

I GATHERED UP SIX OF THE NASTIEST SPANKING IMPLEMENTS FROM UNDER MY MATTRESS.

THEN, I TURNED UP THE RECORD PLAYER FULL BLAST, TO DROWN OUT ANY SMACKING NOISES THE NEIGHBORS MIGHT HEAR.

I WOKE UP IN LOVE THIS MORNING...



I'D DECIDED I DESERVED TWENTY WHACKS WITH EACH IMPLEMENT.

...WITH YOU ON MY MIND...

I SPANKED MYSELF AS **HARD** AS I COULD.

I WASN'T VERY STRONG, BUT I MADE UP FOR THAT WITH **SINCERE EFFORT**.

CRACK CRACK CRACK

...**FERRIS WHEELS**...

I'D TAKE A LITTLE BREAK, THEN START IN AGAIN WITH A NEW IMPLEMENT.

THE PAIN JUST KEPT **BUILDING UP**.

WAP WAP

...**SCARED TO CALL**...

BY THE TIME I WAS THROUGH, MY BOTTOM FELT LIKE IT'D BEEN **PLAYED ALIVE**.

IT HURT **FAR WORSE** THAN ANY SPANKING FROM MY PARENTS.

THWAK THWAK

...**BACK HOME**...

THWAK THWAK

I MANAGED TO GET MY RUMP REDDER THAN IT'D **EVER** BEEN BEFORE.

BUT, I WANTED SOMETHING MORE: **BRUISES**.

I REMEMBERED CHARLEY HAD LOANED ME AN OLD **STEEL TENNIS RACKET**.

IT WAS **HEAVY** AND HAD A LONG HANDLE.

...**DREAMS COME TRUE**...

I WAS TERRIBLE AT TENNIS. BUT NOW, I HAD A USE FOR IT.

THE TENNIS RACKET DID THE TRICK. IT LEFT LONG, BLACK-AND-BLUE **MARKS**. THE PAIN WAS **INTENSE**.

I FELT **RAW, TORN APART, DESTROYED**.

WHAT'D I **DONE** TO MYSELF?

BUT THEN, A SENSE OF **PEACE** AND CALM CAME OVER ME, LIKE I'D NEVER FELT BEFORE.

THE GUILT AND SADNESS WERE GONE. I WAS **WHOLE** AGAIN.

HIGH ABOVE ALL TIME AND SPACE...

A BIT LATER...

I-I'M SO SORRY, MOM. I DIDN'T MEAN **ANY** OF IT.

I **LOVE** YOU SO MUCH! PLEASE **FORGIVE** ME!

OH HONEY, I **LOVE** YOU, TOO! AND, I DO FORGIVE YOU. I **TRULY** DO.

I'LL CONSIDER YOUR PUNISHMENT OVER, IF YOU'LL **CONFESS EVERYTHING** TO FATHER BURNS...

...AND DO **WHATEVER PENANCE** HE GIVES YOU.

AND, WHEN MY DAD GOT HOME...

I-I'M SORRY, DADDY--

Shhh, my dearest little one, you don't need to say it. I'm the one who's **SORRY**.

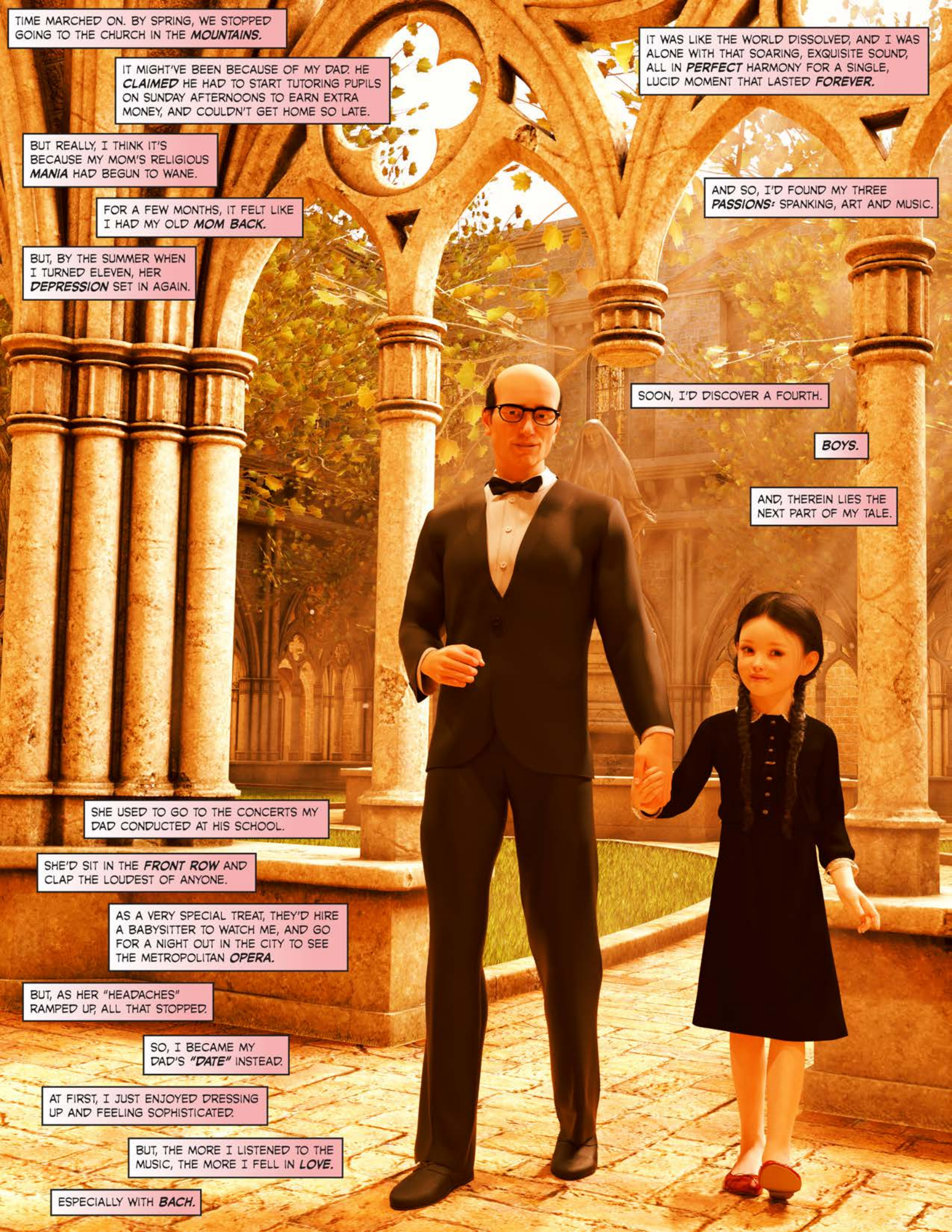
I SHOULD'VE **STOPPED** HITTING YOU LONG, LONG AGO.

AND, I'VE MADE UP MY MIND. I'LL **NEVER** TO DO IT AGAIN!

MY DAD KEPT HIS WORD THAT WAS THE **LAST** TIME HE EVER SPANKED ME.

THE NEXT SUNDAY, I HAD MY TALK WITH FATHER BURNS. IT WENT OK.

BUT, I LEFT OUT A FEW DETAILS. LIKE, THE PART WHERE I BEAT MY BEHIND **PURPLE** WITH A TENNIS RACKET.

A man in a black tuxedo, white shirt, and black bow tie, wearing glasses, stands in a gothic courtyard holding the hand of a young girl. The girl is wearing a black dress with a white collar and red shoes. The courtyard features large stone arches and columns, with trees and foliage in the background. The scene is bathed in warm, golden light.

TIME MARCHED ON. BY SPRING, WE STOPPED GOING TO THE CHURCH IN THE **MOUNTAINS**.

IT MIGHT'VE BEEN BECAUSE OF MY DAD. HE **CLAIMED** HE HAD TO START TUTORING PUPILS ON SUNDAY AFTERNOONS TO EARN EXTRA MONEY, AND COULDN'T GET HOME SO LATE.

BUT REALLY, I THINK IT'S BECAUSE MY MOM'S RELIGIOUS **MANIA** HAD BEGUN TO WANE.

FOR A FEW MONTHS, IT FELT LIKE I HAD MY OLD **MOM BACK**.

BUT, BY THE SUMMER WHEN I TURNED ELEVEN, HER **DEPRESSION** SET IN AGAIN.

IT WAS LIKE THE WORLD DISSOLVED, AND I WAS ALONE WITH THAT SOARING, EXQUISITE SOUND, ALL IN **PERFECT HARMONY** FOR A SINGLE, LUCID MOMENT THAT LASTED **FOREVER**.

AND SO, I'D FOUND MY THREE **PASSIONS**: SPANKING, ART AND MUSIC.

SOON, I'D DISCOVER A FOURTH.

BOYS.

AND, THEREIN LIES THE NEXT PART OF MY TALE.

SHE USED TO GO TO THE CONCERTS MY DAD CONDUCTED AT HIS SCHOOL.

SHE'D SIT IN THE **FRONT ROW** AND CLAP THE LOUDEST OF ANYONE.

AS A VERY SPECIAL TREAT, THEY'D HIRE A BABYSITTER TO WATCH ME, AND GO FOR A NIGHT OUT IN THE CITY TO SEE THE METROPOLITAN **OPERA**.

BUT, AS HER "HEADACHES" RAMPED UP, ALL THAT STOPPED.

SO, I BECAME MY DAD'S "**DATE**" INSTEAD.

AT FIRST, I JUST ENJOYED DRESSING UP AND FEELING SOPHISTICATED.

BUT, THE MORE I LISTENED TO THE MUSIC, THE MORE I FELL IN **LOVE**.

ESPECIALLY WITH **BACH**.

CHESTNUT; *S. fly*, bright green insect dried & used for raising blisters, as aphrodisiac, &c.; *S. fowl*, breed of domestic fowl with glossy greenish-black plumage; *S. grass*, esparto; *S. main* (hist.), NE coast of S. America between Orinoco river & Panama, & adjoining part of Caribbean sea; *War of the S. succession* (between France & Bavaria on one side & England, Prussia, & United Provinces, on the other, on death of Charles II of Spain without issue, 1701-14); (n.) S. language. [ME *Spainisc* (Spain, see -ISH¹)]

spank, v.t. & i., & n. Slap on buttocks with open hand or slipper &c., whence **spanking**¹ [-ING¹] n.; urge forward esp. by slapping or whipping; (of horse &c.) move briskly esp. at a step between trot & gallop; (n.) slap, blow with open hand &c., of buttocks. [cf. NFr. *spanner* & Du. *spanke* strut, LG *spanken* to spank, &c. tively]

spanker, n. In vbl senses; also: a horse, esp. a fast-going horse; (colloq.) person or thing of notable size or quality, stunner, whopper; (Naut.) fore-&-aft sail set on the leeward side of mizzenmast. [-ER¹]

spanking² (for s.¹ see SPANK), a & adv. In vbl senses; also; (colloq.) strikingly, excellently, as *had a s. time*, *a s.* (strong) (adv.) *a s. fine woman*. [-ING²]

spanless, a. (poet.). Beyond measure; less;

spanner, n. In vbl senses; also: instrument for turning nut on screw &c.; cross-brace of bridge &c.; connecting-rod in parallel motion of engine. = SPAN²-WORD [-ER¹]

spar¹, n. & v.t. & i. (n.) Mast, yard, &c., of ship; *s.-buoy* (made of a s. with one end moored so that other stands up); *s.-deck*, upper deck extending from bow to stern, including quarter-deck and fore-castle; (v.t.) furnish with s., help (ship) over shallow bar with ss. [ME *sparre*, cf. Du. *spar*, G *sparren*, ON *sparri*, perh. cogn. w. SPEAR]

spar², n. Kinds of crystalline mineral, easily cleavable and non-lustrous, as *calcareous s.*, calcite, *Derbyshire* (= FLUOR) *s.*, *Iceland s.*, transparent calcite much used for optical purposes. [OE *spar*; G has *spath*, a diff. wd]

spar³, v.i., & n. Make motions of attack & defence with closed fists, use the hands (as) in boxing, (often *at* opponent); (fig.) bandy words, as *they are always sparring (at each other)*; (of cocks) fight esp. with protected spurs; (n.) sparring motion, boxing-match, cock-fight. [orig. = (of cock) strike out with spurs, f. OF *esparer* part. of Teut. orig., cf. SPUR, SPURN]

spā'ra'ble, n. Headless nail for soles and heels of boots. [corrupt. of *sparrow-bill*]

(do not provoke) *his blushes*; be f. *spartan* (f. prec.), cf. Du. & G *spar*
spar'ger, n. Sprinkling-apparatus for brewing. [f. rare vb *sparge* f. L *spargere*]
spark¹, n. Flery particle thro' burning substance; small bright point e.g. in gem; (fig.) brilliant wit &c., esp. *strike ss. out of* per- him to lively or original convers- neg. or quasi-neg.) particle of fire quality &c., as *not a s. of life reme-* had a s. of generosity in you; minous effect of sudden disruptiv- electric s. serving to fire explosive oil-engine of motor &c., as *adca-* the s., increase, decrease, frequ- *fairy ss.*, phosphorescent light fr- vegetable matter &c.; *s.-arrester* preventing (injury from) SPARK² in steam apparatus, netting &c. to catch sparks. Hence **sparkless** a., **sparkling** a. [OE *spearca*, cf. MDu. *sparcke*, & Da. *sprage*, crackle; perh. f. crackling wood &c.]

spark², v.i. Emit sparks of fire; *sparkling-plug*, device for firing mixture in motor-engine; (Elec) sparks at point where continuity is interrupted. [OE *spearcian* as pro-

spark³, n., & v.i. Gay fellow; *gallant*; play the gallant. Hence **sparkling** a. (f. n.) = prov. E *sprack* lively, cf. *sprækr*, also SPEAK & SPARK¹]

sparkle, v.i., & n. Emit sparks; glitter, glisten; hence **sparkler**¹ n., **sparkling** adv.; *sparkling wines* (giving off acid gas in small bubbles, cf. STINGLING, gleam, spark. [ME *sparkle* f. SPARK^{1,2} + -LE(1, 3)]

spar'row (-ō), n. Kinds of small coloured bird, esp. *house s.*, European; noted for attachment to human dwellings, and pugnacity; *s.-grass* (ragus); *s.-hawk*, kinds of small hawk on ss. &c. [OE *spearwa*, cf. ON *spurr*, cogn. w. SPAR²]

spar'ry, a. Of, like, rich in, sparkling; **sparse**, a. (Of population &c.) scattered, not dense; (Bot., Zool.) placed at distant or irregular intervals
spar'sely² adv., **spar'seness** n. [*gere spars*-scatter]

Spar'tan, a. & n. (Native) of Sparta; allusion to supposed characteristic *endurance, simplicity*. [f. L *Sparta* f. Gk *Spirtē*, see -AN]

Chapter Three

The Awkward Years: Ages 11-12

I THINK I SPENT HALF THE SUMMER I TURNED ELEVEN SITTING UNDER A TREE AT THE END OF OUR STREET.

I HAD TO GET AWAY FROM MY MOM. SHE WAS IMPOSSIBLE TO BE AROUND WHEN SHE WAS DEPRESSED.

ANYWAY, IT WAS THE PERFECT PLACE TO DAYDREAM, SKETCH, LET SLITHER SUN HIMSELF...

...AND KEEP AN EYE ON SEAN O'LEARY!

SEAN WAS IN MY SECOND, THIRD AND FIFTH GRADE CLASSES...

...BUT, I HADN'T PAID MUCH ATTENTION TO HIM BACK THEN.

IN FACT, FOR YEARS, I DIDN'T EVEN KNOW HOW TO SAY HIS NAME.

I'D THOUGHT IT WAS PRONOUNCED "SEEN" FROM THE WAY IT WAS SPELLED.

THEN, WHEN I TURNED ELEVEN, I SUDDENLY FOUND HIM VERY INTERESTING.

Let me describe him: he was graceful as a gazelle, as swift as a wild stag.

He was like a bouquet of henna blossoms.

He gazed into my soul, peering through the portal.

THE PROBLEM IS, HE DIDN'T SEEM THE LEAST BIT INTERESTED IN ME.

A FEW TIMES, I GOT UP THE COURAGE TO TALK TO HIM. BUT, THE MOST HE'D DO WAS GRUNT "HELLO."

APPARENTLY, I WASN'T COMPLETELY INVISIBLE SITTING UNDER THAT TREE.

AISHA

CHARLEY TALKS ABOUT YOU ALL THE TIME!

SHE SAYS YOU'RE THE ONLY GIRL WHO CAN WHIP HER BUTT AT TENNIS!

HA! NOT TO MY FACE SHE DOESN'T!

SAY! YOU'RE CHARLEY'S FRIEND, AREN'T YOU?

THE ARTIST WITH THE PET SNAKE?

Yeah! I'M RUDE, CHARLEY'S BEST FRIEND

PLEASED TO MEET YOU, RUDE! I'M AISHA.



SAY, WHY DON'T YOU STOP BY CHARLEY'S SOME TIME?

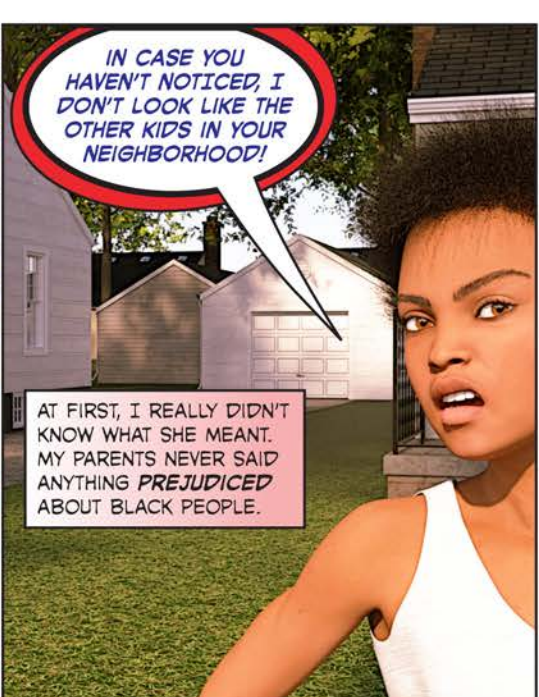
I SEE HER LIKE EVERY DAY. WE COULD ALL DO SOMETHING! IT'D BE FUN!

Well, I COULDN'T...
...I LIVE ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE BRIDGE.



BUT, THAT'S ACTUALLY *CLOSER* TO CHARLEY'S THAN TO HERE...

Uh, SEE, RUDE...



IN CASE YOU HAVEN'T NOTICED, I DON'T LOOK LIKE THE OTHER KIDS IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD!

AT FIRST, I REALLY DIDN'T KNOW WHAT SHE MEANT. MY PARENTS NEVER SAID ANYTHING *PREJUDICED* ABOUT BLACK PEOPLE.



W-WHAT DO YOU MEAN?

Oh. YOUR SKIN.

IT MAY NOT MATTER TO YOU!

BUT, IT MATTERS TO PLENTY OF *OTHER* FOLKS AROUND HERE...

...LIKE CHARLEY'S PARENTS!

BUT, WHAT DIFFERENCE DOES THAT MAKE?

THERE WERE THINGS ABOUT MIDDLEBRIDGE THAT I'D NEVER NOTICED BEFORE THAT SUMMER.

AND, ONCE I STARTED TO SEE IT FOR WHAT IT WAS, I FELT ITS SMALLNESS SLOWLY, INEXORABLY *CLOSING IN* ON ME.



B-BYE, AISHA.

Well, I BETTER FINISH MY RUN BEFORE IT GETS TOO *HOT*.

I'M SURE I'LL SEE YOU AROUND.

I GO BY HERE MOST EVERY MORNING.

I SAW AISHA QUITE OFTEN OVER THE YEARS.

SHE'D STOP TO CHAT ON HER RUNS. WE BECAME PRETTY GOOD *FRIENDS*.

BUT, SHE'D *NEVER* GO INSIDE MY HOUSE, EVEN THOUGH I INVITED HER MANY TIMES.



MY MOM DIDN'T WORK IN THE SUMMER AND WAS HOME ALL THE TIME, SO I COULDN'T SPANK MYSELF MUCH. INSTEAD, I MADE UP *LOTS* OF STORIES.

STORIES ABOUT SEAN O'LEARY.

IT WAS THE FIRST TIME I'D FANTASIZED ABOUT A *BOY*.

AT ELEVEN, I WAS STILL PRETTY *INNOCENT*.

I MOSTLY IMAGINED SEAN AND ME GETTING INTO *MISCHIEF* AND RECEIVING SPANKINGS TOGETHER.



YOU'RE *NEXT*, MISSY! I WARNED YOU TWO!

SMACK ★
SMACK ★
★ ★
SMACK ★

JUST WHEN I THOUGHT SEAN WOULD NEVER NOTICE ME, FATE INTERVENED.

IT WAS ON A SATURDAY. CHARLEY WAS BUSY, AND JENNY AND I WERE ROAMING AROUND TOWN LOOKING FOR SOMETHING TO DO.

WHEN WE HAPPENED TO MEANDER BEHIND THE OLD TRAIN STATION, WE CAME UPON A MOST CURIOUS SCENE...



SEAN, HIS OLDER BROTHER SEAMUS, AND A WEIRD KID WE CALLED "BIG MIKE" WERE UP TO SOMETHING VERY INTERESTING!

Hey, WHAT'RE YOU GUYS DOING?

WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE?

WE ARE MAKING A FILM, ABOUT NOBLE KNIGHTS AND BLACK KNAVES OF THE MIDDLE AGES!

Oooh, NEAT! WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

Ahem! Well, IF YOU MUST KNOW...

...AFTER THE KNIGHT VANQUISHES HIS FOE, THERE IS A COMEDIC SCENE WITH HIS YOUNG SQUIRE.

I DO! DIRECTORS PLAYING BIT PARTS IN THEIR FILMS COMES FROM A GREAT TRADITION...

...IT INCLUDES AUTEURS SUCH AS HITCHCOCK AND LANG!

Um, WHO PLAYS THE SQUIRE? YOU'VE ONLY GOT TWO ACTORS!

Well, HOW 'BOUT PARTS FOR JENNY AND ME?

WE'RE BOTH GREAT ACTRESSES!

colly colly

AHEM! THERE ARE NO ROLES FOR GIRLS IN MY PRODUCTION!





SAY, I COULD DRESS UP AS A BOY AND PLAY THE SQUIRE!

THAT WAS VERY COMMON IN MEDIEVAL TIMES, YOU KNOW.

ABSURD!



Hmmm, THAT CAMERA LOOKS VERY EXPENSIVE...
...IS IT YOUR DAD'S?

Ha! THEIR DAD'S OUTTA TOWN AND DON'T KNOW A THANG!

DOLT! IDIOT! DO NOT TELL HER THAT!



Gosh! IT'D BE AN AWFUL SHAME IF HE FOUND OUT, SOMEHOW...

YES, I COULD BE DEVIOUS.



OK, OK! BLACKMAILER!

RETURN POST-HASTE, DRESSED AS A BOY!

WE SHALL NOT WAIT LONG! THE SHOW MUST GO ON!



JENNY DIDN'T QUITE SHARE MY ENTHUSIASM.

Jenny

Oh boy, THIS IS GONNA BE SO MUCH FUN!

JUST WATCH OUT FOR BIG MIKE.

MY SISTER SAYS HE STEALS STRAWS FROM MCDONALD'S, AND SNIFFS GLUE.

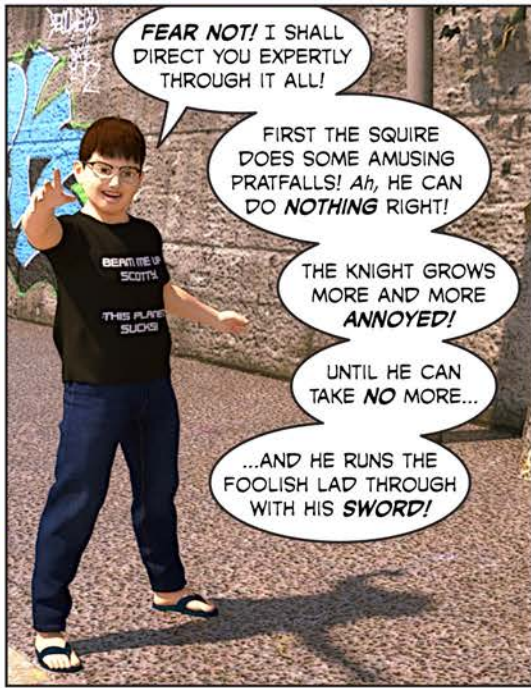


HERE I AM!

TELL ME ALL ABOUT THE SCENE WITH ME AND SEAN, MR. DIRECTOR! TEE HEE!

IT WASN'T A HALF-BAD COSTUME, THOUGH NOT EXACTLY MEDIEVAL.

I'D PIECED TOGETHER MY MOST BOYISH CLOTHES, AND COMPLETED THE OUTFIT WITH A CAP MY DAD HAD WORN IN HIS YOUTH IN THE "OLD COUNTRY."



FEAR NOT! I SHALL DIRECT YOU EXPERTLY THROUGH IT ALL!

FIRST THE SQUIRE DOES SOME AMUSING PRATFALLS! Ah, HE CAN DO NOTHING RIGHT!

THE KNIGHT GROWS MORE AND MORE ANNOYED!

UNTIL HE CAN TAKE NO MORE...

...AND HE RUNS THE FOOLISH LAD THROUGH WITH HIS SWORD!



H-HE KILLS ME?

BUT, KNIGHTS ARE THE GOOD GUYS!

CAN'T HE DO SOMETHING ELSE, INSTEAD?

LIKE SPANK ME WITH THE FLAT OF HIS SWORD?

IT JUST POPPED OUT OF MY MOUTH. I FELT EMBARRASSED AFTER I'D SAID IT, BUT ALSO EXCITED.

SURPRISINGLY, SEAMUS LIKED MY SUGGESTION.

MAYBE HE THOUGHT A LITTLE **MEDIEVAL-STYLE** CORPORAL PUNISHMENT WOULD ADD AN AUTHENTIC TOUCH TO HIS "MOVIE."

OR, MAYBE HE JUST RELISHED THE IDEA OF SEEING ME GET **WHACKED**, AFTER I'D BLACKMAILED HIM.

HERE IS THE VORPAL BLADE OF YOUR FOE, SIRE!

I TOOK MY ROLE **VERY SERIOUSLY**.

HERE IS THE VORPAL BLADE OF YOUR FOE, SIRE!

INDEED, I'D EVEN CALL MY ACTING **INSPIRED**.

Uh, Um, FOOLISH GIRL--I MEAN BOY --YOU GOTTA, Um, **WARSH IT.**

SEAN'S ACTING WAS ANOTHER MATTER, THOUGH.

LIKE, Uh, Er, DUMB SQUARE--I MEAN SQUIRT--Erm, **WARSH IT.**

SO, WE DID THAT SCENE OVER, AND OVER, AND OVER...

ACTION!

...UNTIL SEAMUS FINALLY LOST HIS PATIENCE.

POLT! IDIOT! IMBECILE!

GIVE ME THAT HELMET! I SHALL PLAY THE KNIGHT!

B-BUT YOU'LL HAVE TO FILM ALL THE SCENES WITH SEAN IN THEM **OVER!**

THIS WAS **NOT** PART OF MY PLAN.

NONSENSE! FEW WILL NOTICE THE SWITCH!

BESIDES, WE FOLLOW A **GREAT TRADITION!**

THINK THE **PARTRIDGE FAMILY!** THINK **PLAN NINE!**

SEAN HAD ENOUGH OF HIS OVERBEARING BROTHER, AND **STALKED OFF.**

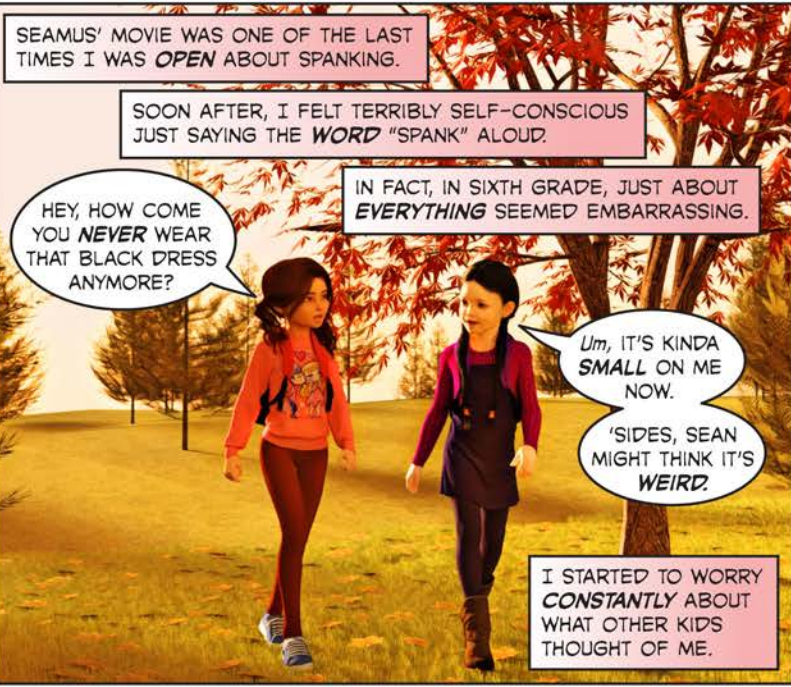
Heh, Heh! A GIRL'S **BUTT!**

AND NOW **BOY**, YOU SHALL HAVE **FIFTY** WITH THE FLAT OF MY SWORD!

OH, BROTHER!

THE SAD THING IS, SEAMUS WAS A PRETTY **GOOD SPANKER.**

IF HE WASN'T SO ANNOYING, I MIGHT'VE ACTUALLY ENJOYED IT.



SEAMUS' MOVIE WAS ONE OF THE LAST TIMES I WAS **OPEN** ABOUT SPANKING.

SOON AFTER, I FELT TERRIBLY SELF-CONSCIOUS JUST SAYING THE **WORD** "SPANK" ALOUD.

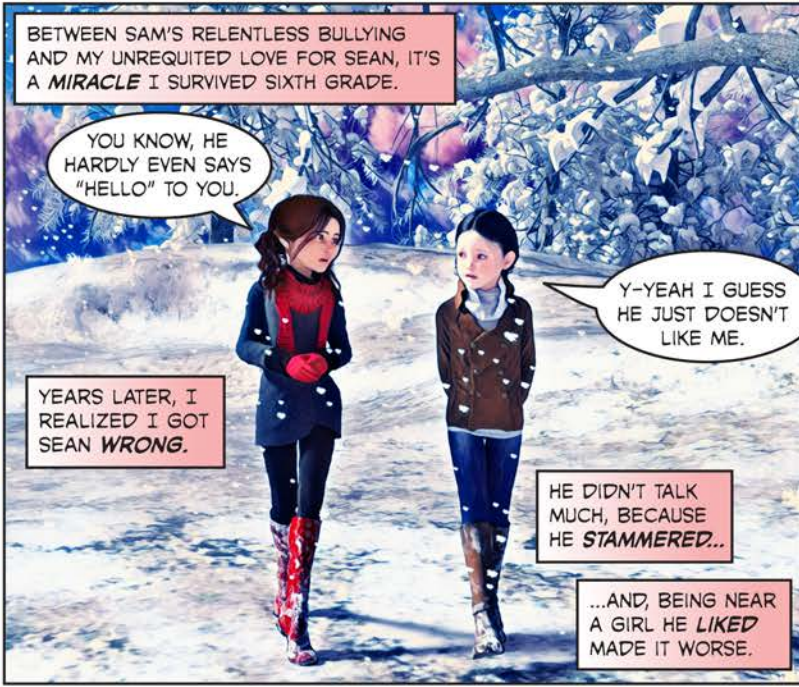
IN FACT, IN SIXTH GRADE, JUST ABOUT **EVERYTHING** SEEMED EMBARRASSING.

HEY, HOW COME YOU **NEVER** WEAR THAT BLACK DRESS ANYMORE?

Um, IT'S KINDA **SMALL** ON ME NOW.

'SIDES, SEAN MIGHT THINK IT'S **WEIRD**.

I STARTED TO WORRY **CONSTANTLY** ABOUT WHAT OTHER KIDS THOUGHT OF ME.



BETWEEN SAM'S RELENTLESS BULLYING AND MY UNREQUITED LOVE FOR SEAN, IT'S A **MIRACLE** I SURVIVED SIXTH GRADE.

YOU KNOW, HE HARDLY EVEN SAYS "HELLO" TO YOU.

Y--YEAH I GUESS HE JUST DOESN'T LIKE ME.

YEARS LATER, I REALIZED I GOT SEAN **WRONG**.

HE DIDN'T TALK MUCH, BECAUSE HE **STAMMERED**...

...AND, BEING NEAR A GIRL HE **LIKED** MADE IT WORSE.



BUT, I SOON FELL EVEN HARDER FOR **SOMEONE ELSE**--A CERTAIN VERY FUNNY SPACE ALIEN ON TV.

CALLING KORSON...COME IN KORSON! NANU, NANU!

Yeah, HE **CRACKS** ME UP!

God! ISN'T HE **CUTE?** AND, SO FUNNY!

HE SENT MY IMAGINATION INTO **OVERDRIVE**.

S--SORRY, KORK. P--PLEASE DON'T **PUNISH** ME!

SHAZBOT, RUDY! YOU'RE SUCH A **BAD GIRL**! I WARNED YOU ABOUT TOUCHING THE GLEEK!

HE SEEMED LIKE THE **PERFECT** BOYFRIEND FOR ME...

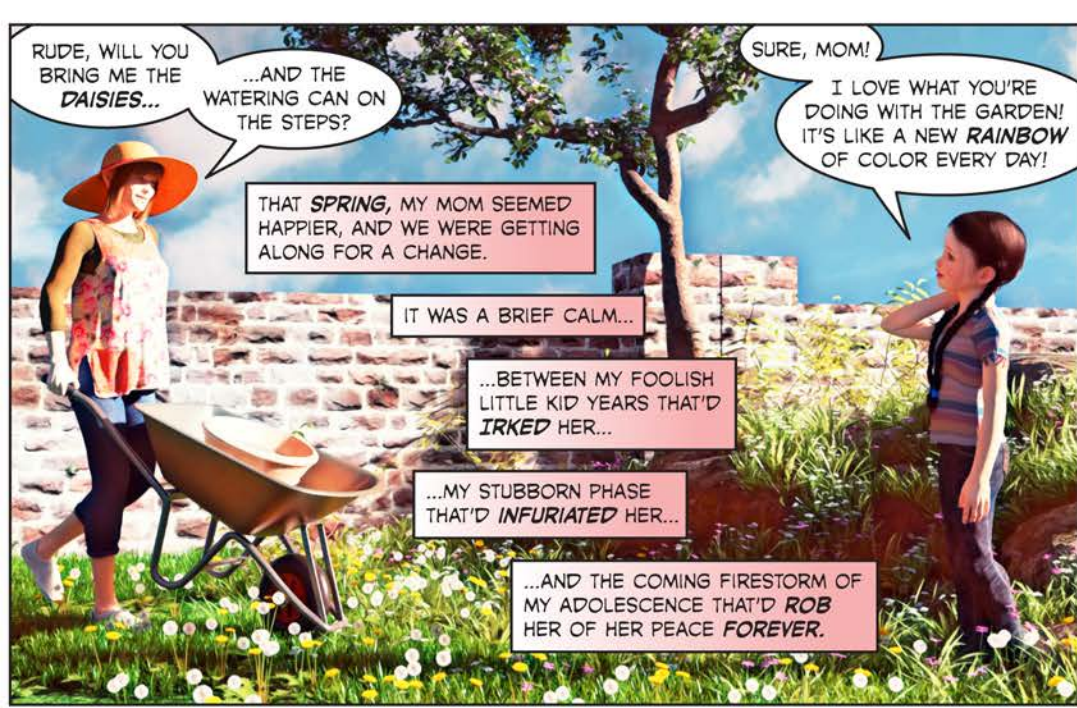


KORK & RUDY

...HE WAS HANDSOME, HILARIOUS, QUIRKY, HAD MAGIC POWERS...

...AND, HE WORE THOSE **SILVER GLOVES!**

*OK, THIS HAS TO BE ABOUT THE MOST EMBARRASSING FANTASY I'VE EVER ADMITTED TO! IF ANYONE FOUND OUT WHEN I WAS ELEVEN, I'M SURE I'D HAVE DIED OF **ACUTE MORKIFICATION**.



RUDE, WILL YOU BRING ME THE **DAISIES...**

...AND THE WATERING CAN ON THE STEPS?

THAT **SPRING**, MY MOM SEEMED HAPPIER, AND WE WERE GETTING ALONG FOR A CHANGE.

IT WAS A BRIEF CALM...

...BETWEEN MY FOOLISH LITTLE KID YEARS THAT'D **IRKED** HER...

...MY STUBBORN PHASE THAT'D **INFURIATED** HER...

...AND THE COMING FIRESTORM OF MY ADOLESCENCE THAT'D **ROB** HER OF HER PEACE **FOREVER**.

SURE, MOM!

I LOVE WHAT YOU'RE DOING WITH THE GARDEN! IT'S LIKE A NEW **RAINBOW** OF COLOR EVERY DAY!



THANKS, HONEY.

Oh, I HAVE SOME **NEWS** THAT I THINK YOU'LL LIKE!

WHAT IS IT?!



I'D BEEN BUGGING MY MOM FOR OVER A YEAR TO LET ME BABYSIT...

...BUT SHE KEPT SAYING I WASN'T READY YET.

Well, LAST WEEK TERRY TOLD ME SHE NEEDS A NEW **BABYSITTER...**

...AND, I TOLD HER HOW **MATURE** YOU'VE GOTTEN...



I WAS ECSTATIC! GETTING TO BABYSIT MEANT...

...SO, SHE SAID YOU SHOULD GIVE HER A **CALL...**

...IF YOU'RE INTERESTED.

ARE YOU KIDDING?!

OF COURSE I'M INTERESTED!



...MY MOM **TRUSTED** ME...

...I'D HAVE SOME **MONEY** TO BUY STUFF I WANTED...

YOU WON'T REGRET THIS, MOM!

I'LL BE THE **BEST** BABYSITTER **EVER!**



...AND, I FINALLY HAD AN EXCUSE TO CHECK **PARENTING BOOKS** OUT OF THE LIBRARY!

"TEN HARD BLOWS ON THE BUTTOCKS WITH A HAIRBRUSH IS AN EXPERIENCE THAT THE CHILD WILL BEAR IN MIND..."



Yep, ALL FIVE BOOKS.

I'M **STUDYING** TO BE A BABYSITTER!

My, SUCH A DILLIGENT YOUNG LADY!

I'D BEEN SCOURING PARENTING BOOKS FOR **SPANKING REFERENCES** SINCE I WAS IN KINDERGARTEN.

IT WAS SUCH A RELIEF NOT HAVING TO READ THEM IN **SECRET** ANYMORE.

LOOKING BACK ON IT THOUGH, SOME OF THE CHILD-REARING ADVICE IN THOSE BOOKS WAS TRULY **HORRIFYING!**

Editorial--A few spankos online have asked me if I "got" to spank any of the kids I babysat. I don't even know where to start with that question. Fortunately, parents never asked me to do anything like that. Maybe it's easier being a spankee, because I've never wanted to spank someone else. But, even as a child, I understood that involving anyone in my spanking fetish against their will was wrong. I felt very protective over the kids I babysat and never would've dreamed of hurting them. The spanking games I played as a child were always with kids my own age and they were willing participants.

RUDE'S A DUMB NAME!

I ONLY EAT MAC 'N CHEESE 'N JUS' THE WAY MY MOMMY MAKES IT.

I'LL HOLD MY BREATH 'TIL I TURNS BLUE IF I DON' GET MY WAY!

NO, IT'S AN OLD FAMILY NAME.

I ONLY KNOW HOW TO MAKE TOAST.

I TRIED THAT ON MY MOM ONCE, AND SHE LET ME TURN PURPLE AND PASS OUT.

THE FIRST CHILD I BABYSAT WAS A PRETTY TOUGH CUSTOMER. I HAD ABSOLUTELY NO CLUE WHAT TO DO.

BUT ONCE AGAIN, ART AND IMAGINATION CAME TO MY RESCUE.



TRUST ME, IT'LL BE FUN!

NOW, JUST MAKE UP A STORY AND I'LL DRAW WHATEVER YOU TELL ME TO.

IT SOUNDS BORIN', BUT OK, I'LL TRIES IT.

Once upon a time, there was a princess with really pretty blonde hair.

A dumb boy in her class named Steven was always bothering her.

She had a pet unicorn.



So, she told her unicorn to poop in his face.

The End.



SURE, YOU CAN KEEP THE FIRST PAGE. BUT, I BETTER HOLD ONTO THE UNICORN POOP ONE!

CAN I KEEPS THE DRAWIN'S?

CAN WE DO 'NOTHER ONE? PRETTY PLEA...

WE CAN DO MORE THE NEXT TIME I BABYSIT. BUT, YOU'RE VERY SLEEPY NOW!

ZZZZZZZ

AND, THAT'S HOW I GOT MY FIRST REPEAT CUSTOMER.

THAT **SUMMER** WHEN I TURNED TWELVE, I COULD ALREADY FEEL CHILDHOOD RECEDING.

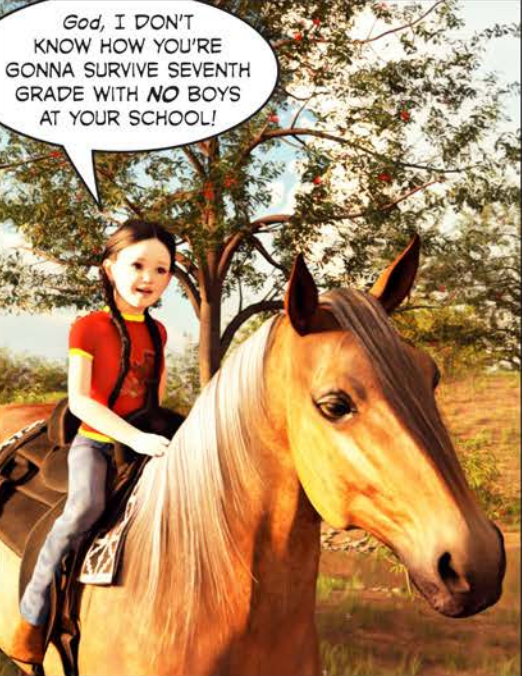
AS SEVENTH GRADE LOOMED CLOSER, IT SEEMED LIKE **EVERYTHING** WAS CHANGING.

BUT, I STILL HAD **CHARLEY** AND **HORSES**.

WELL, AT LEAST SOMETIMES. SHE KEPT GETTING **BUSIER** WITH SPORTS AND HER OTHER ACTIVITIES.

AND, SHE'D HAVE EVEN **LESS** TIME IN THE FALL.

HER PARENTS HAD DECIDED TO SEND HER TO AN **ALL-GIRLS** SCHOOL, WHICH WAS ALMOST AN HOUR AWAY.



God, I DON'T KNOW HOW YOU'RE GONNA SURVIVE SEVENTH GRADE WITH **NO BOYS** AT YOUR SCHOOL!



EASY. I LIKE **GIRLS!**

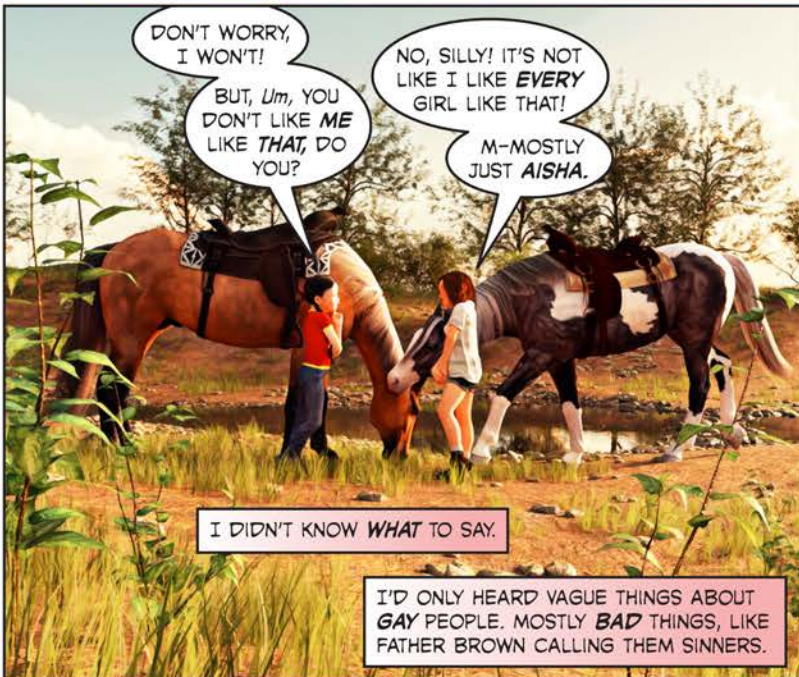


Yeah, Haha, BUT NOT LIKE HOW I **LIKE SEAN!**



NO, THAT'S **EXACTLY** HOW I LIKE GIRLS!

BUT, DON'T TELL **ANYONE!**



DON'T WORRY, I WON'T!

BUT, Um, YOU DON'T LIKE **ME** LIKE **THAT**, DO YOU?

NO, SILLY! IT'S NOT LIKE I LIKE **EVERY** GIRL LIKE THAT!

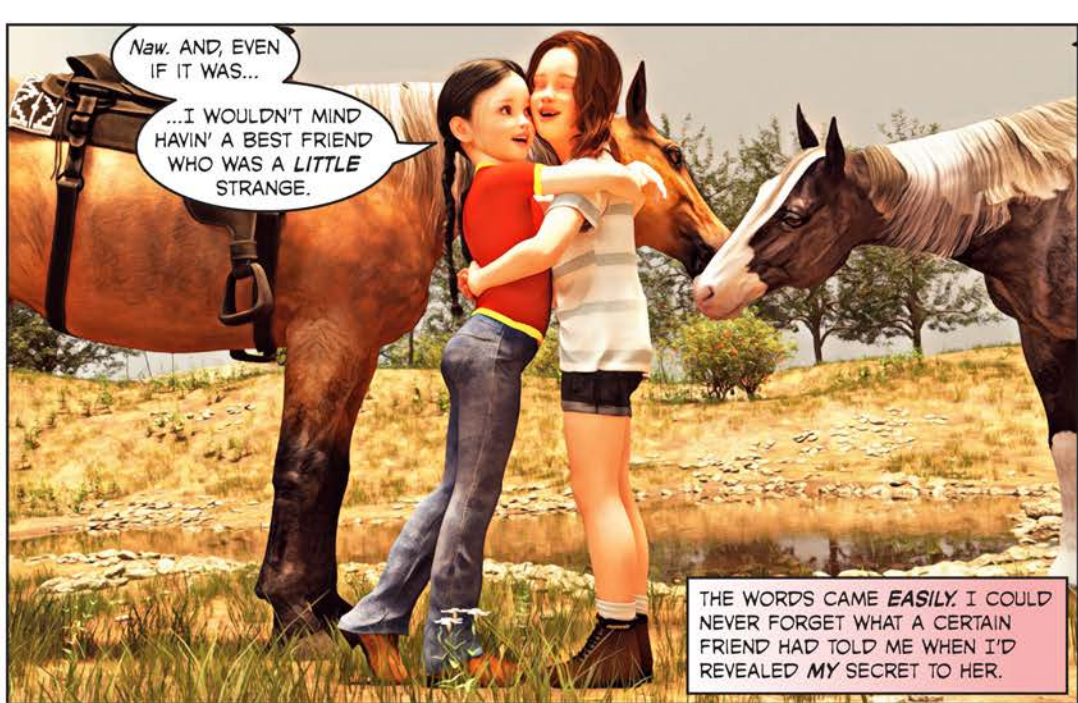
M-MOSTLY JUST **AISHA**.

I DIDN'T KNOW **WHAT** TO SAY.

I'D ONLY HEARD VAGUE THINGS ABOUT **GAY** PEOPLE. MOSTLY **BAD** THINGS, LIKE FATHER BROWN CALLING THEM SINNERS.



Ugh. Y-YOU THINK IT'S **WEIRD**, DONCHA?



Naw. AND, EVEN IF IT WAS...

...I WOULDN'T MIND HAVIN' A BEST FRIEND WHO WAS A **LITTLE STRANGE**.

THE WORDS CAME **EASILY**. I COULD NEVER FORGET WHAT A CERTAIN FRIEND HAD TOLD ME WHEN I'D REVEALED **MY SECRET** TO HER.



IT WAS SOON OCTOBER. THAT WAS THE **LAST YEAR** WE WENT TRICK OR TREATING.

IN NO TIME, WE'D LEAVE BEHIND OUR LAND OF WISTFUL PONIES AND MAKE-BELIEVE **FOREVER**...

...AND STEP INTO A **CHURNING** RIVER OF HOMEWORK, ACNE AND BROKEN HEARTS.

BUT, FOR THAT HALLOWEEN NIGHT WE STOOD ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE **THRESHOLD**...

...WHERE THE COWGIRLS AND WITCHES AND LITTLE RED RIDING HOODS WERE STILL VERY **REAL**...

...AND THE CANDY ALL TASTED, *Oh*, SO **SWEET**.



SCHOOL DAYS WERE LONG, BORING AND **LONELY**.

WHATCHA WANT FOR CHRISTMAS?

IT STARTED ON DECEMBER SIXTH, WITH HER **BIRTHDAY**...

I COULD ONLY BEAR THEM KNOWING **DECEMBER** WOULD COME.

A GRAPHITE RACKET!

...THEN LOTS OF **SLEEPOVERS** DURING THE SCHOOL BREAK...

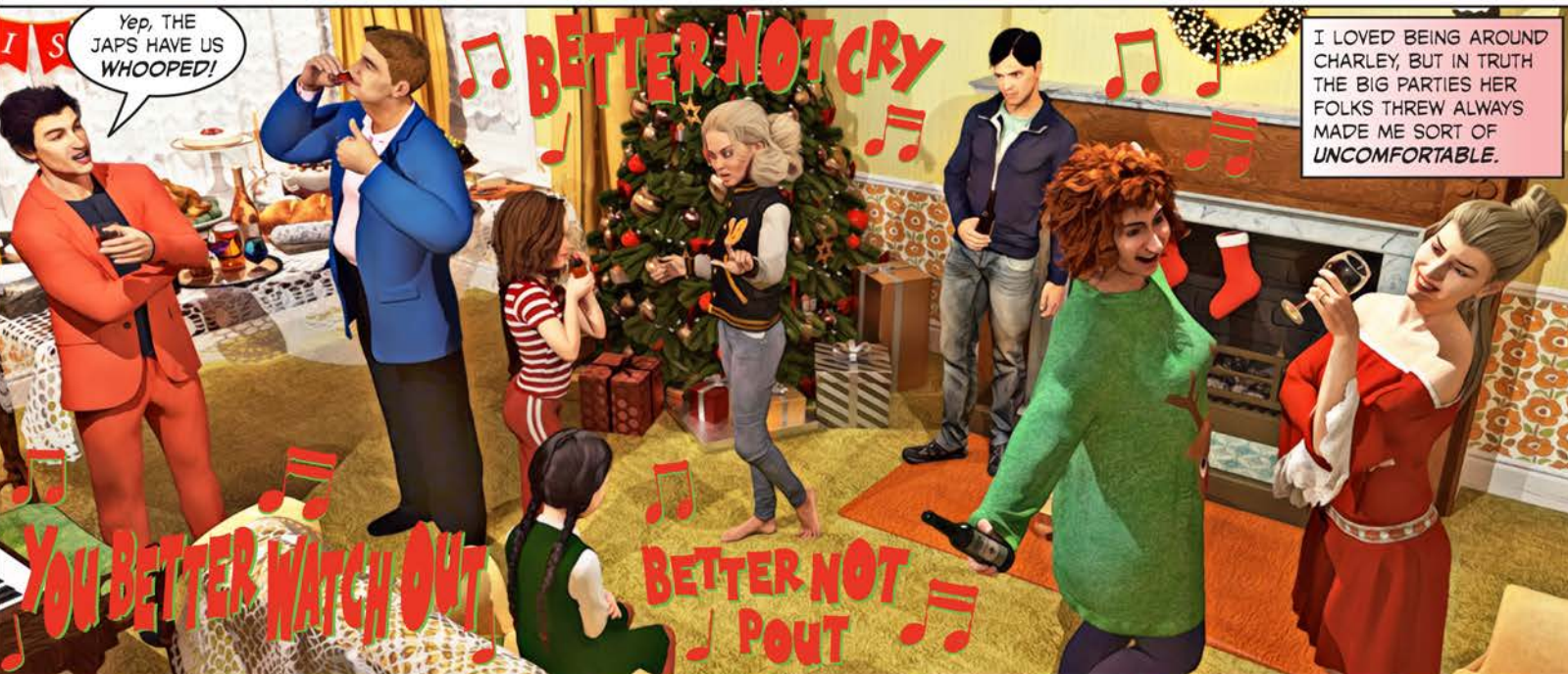
THE WHOLE MONTH WAS KIND OF A CELEBRATION OF **CHARLEY**.

...AND FINALLY, **BIG** CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR'S EVE PARTIES WITH HER FAMILY.



Hmm...I WONDER HOW THAT'D **SPANK**?

THEY'RE LIGHT BUT SUPER **STRONG!**



Yep, THE JAPS HAVE US **WHOOPE!**

BETTER NOT CRY

I LOVED BEING AROUND CHARLEY, BUT IN TRUTH THE BIG PARTIES HER FOLKS THREW ALWAYS MADE ME SORT OF **UNCOMFORTABLE**.

YOU BETTER WATCH OUT

BETTER NOT POUT



Yah, INNA COUPLA YEARS, IT'LL ALL BE **SPANKIN'** NEW JAP CARS MADEA NUTHIN' BUT PLASTIC!



HOHOHO! I'D **WHALE DA TAR** OUTTA 'ER IF SHE WAS MY KID!

HE KNOWS WHEN



YA KNOWS, BILLIE KIN **WHIP** ANYBODY'S BUTT ONNA COURT!

YOU'VE BEEN BAD



OR GOOD



SO BE GOOD



THE ADULTS WOULD DRINK AND DRINK. AND, ACT REALLY **WEIRD**. LIKE THE MAN WHO KEPT STARING AT ME.

HEY, I'M JOE. WHO'RE YOU?



Um, RUDE. I'M CHARLEY'S BEST FRIEND.



Haw, YOU'RE NAH RUDE! YOU'RE SWEET!

HE HAD THESE SHIFTY, EMPTY EYES.

BEST FRIENDS, HUH? YOU TWO MAKEA, hic, CUTE COUPLE A'RIGHT!



GATHER 'ROUND, FOLKS! IT'S TIME FOR THE **BIG EVENT!**

GIGGLE!

NO, DAD!

SQUEAK!

LUCKILY, THERE WAS A DISTRACTION JUST THEN. WHEN I WAS YOUNGER, I'D WANTED TO TAKE CHARLEY'S PLACE IN THIS BIRTHDAY **RITUAL**.



THIRTEEN BELATED **SMACKEROOS** FOR THE B'DAY GIRL!

SQUEAK!

NOT TOO HARD, DAD!

GIGGLE!



TEN...ELEVEN... TWELVE... ..AAAAND... THIRTEEN!

BUT AT AGE TWELVE, MY EXCITEMENT WAS TEMPERED BY **EMBARRASSMENT**. ESPECIALLY AROUND SOMEONE LIKE **MR. CREEP**.

SNIKER!

SNIKER!

SNIKER!

SNIKER!



I JUST HAD TO GET **AWAY** FROM HIM.

Uh, 'SCUSE ME, I GOTTA USE THE RESTROOM.

C'MON, **ONE MORE!** TA GROW ON!

SQUEAK!

GIGGLE!



HEY, I FORGOTTA ASK. WHAT GRADE'RE YA IN?

BUT, WHEN I GOT OUT OF THE BATHROOM, THERE HE WAS.



Um, S-SEVENTH.



YA KNOW, YOUR FRIEND'S ALREADY GOT, hic, TITS...



BOYS AT SCHOOL TALKED LIKE THAT.

HE WAS A GROWN MAN.

...BUT, I LIKE YOU'RE STILL FLAT. DAT'S, hic, CUTE!



I SENSED HE WAS HOLLOW INSIDE, AND TRYING TO FILL HIMSELF UP WITH SOMETHING I HAD.

I-I GOTTA GET BACK TO THE PARTY!

I TRIED TO GET PAST HIM.



UNFORTUNATELY, I DIDN'T ESCAPE UNSCATHED.

I LIKE YA GOTTA REAL NICE, hic, SOFT BUTT, TOO!

HE MANAGED TO TAKE A PART OF ME THAT NIGHT.



I TOLD CHARLEY I HAD A BAD STOMACHACHE AND HAD TO LEAVE EARLY.

I WAS IN SUCH A HURRY, I FORGOT MY COAT.

AS I RAN IN THE SNOW, I KEPT LOOKING OVER MY SHOULDER, THINKING HE WAS FOLLOWING ME.



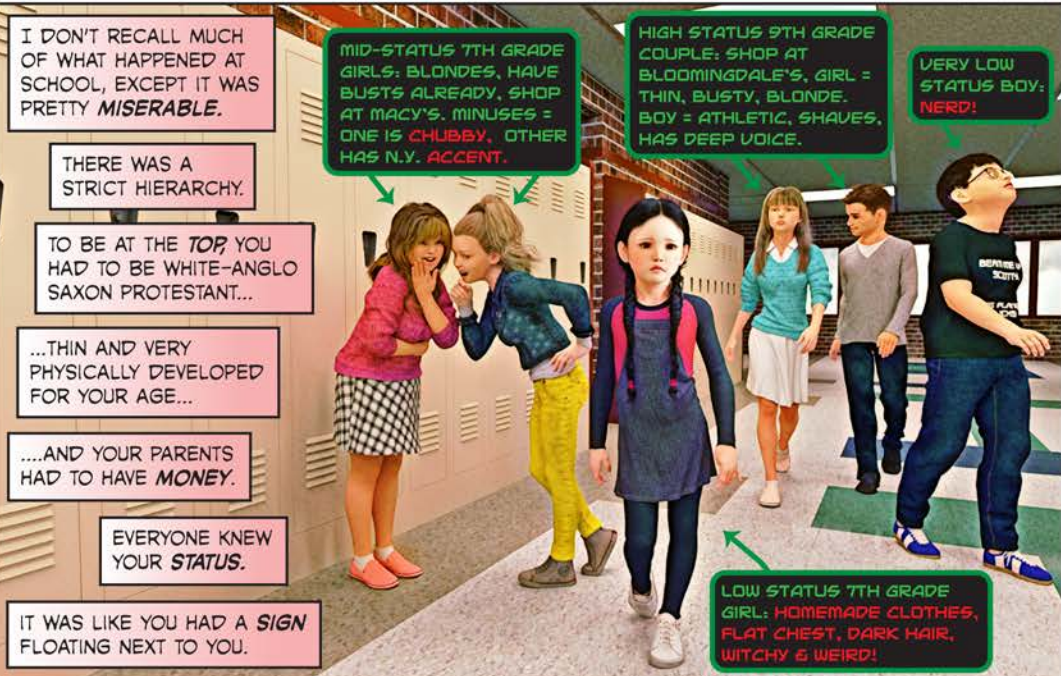
WHEN I GOT CLOSER TO MY HOUSE, I DECIDED I WAS SAFE, AND STOPPED TO THROW UP.

I'VE OFTEN WONDERED IF HIS PREDATORY INSTINCTS HELPED HIM SEE INSIDE ME, SO HE COULD HURT ME MORE.

FOR ME, AS A SPANKO ABOUT TO ENTER ADOLESCENCE, THAT SLAP ON MY BOTTOM WAS AN ESPECIALLY AWFUL VIOLATION

I FELT SO SCARED AND HUMILIATED THAT NIGHT.

I NEVER TOLD ANYONE WHAT'D HAPPENED.



I DON'T RECALL MUCH OF WHAT HAPPENED AT SCHOOL, EXCEPT IT WAS PRETTY **MISERABLE**.

THERE WAS A STRICT HIERARCHY.

TO BE AT THE **TOP**, YOU HAD TO BE WHITE-ANGLO SAXON PROTESTANT...

...THIN AND VERY PHYSICALLY DEVELOPED FOR YOUR AGE...

....AND YOUR PARENTS HAD TO HAVE **MONEY**.

EVERYONE KNEW YOUR **STATUS**.

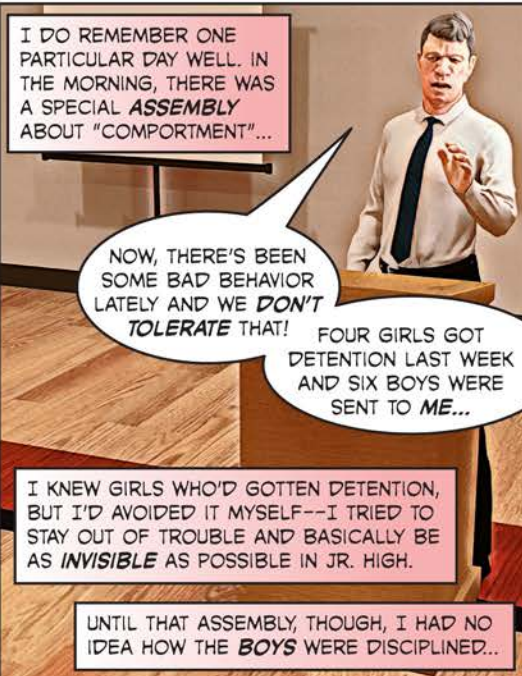
IT WAS LIKE YOU HAD A **SIGN** FLOATING NEXT TO YOU.

MID-STATUS 7TH GRADE GIRLS; BLONDES, HAVE BUSTS ALREADY. SHOP AT MACY'S. MINUSES = ONE IS CHUBBY, OTHER HAS N.Y. ACCENT.

HIGH STATUS 9TH GRADE COUPLE; SHOP AT BLOOMINGDALE'S, GIRL = THIN, BUSTY, BLONDE. BOY = ATHLETIC, SHAVES, HAS DEEP VOICE.

VERY LOW STATUS BOY: **NERD!**

LOW STATUS 7TH GRADE GIRL: HOMEMADE CLOTHES, FLAT CHEST, DARK HAIR, WITCHY & WEIRD!



I DO REMEMBER ONE PARTICULAR DAY WELL. IN THE MORNING, THERE WAS A SPECIAL **ASSEMBLY** ABOUT "COMPORTMENT"...

NOW, THERE'S BEEN SOME BAD BEHAVIOR LATELY AND WE **DON'T TOLERATE** THAT! FOUR GIRLS GOT DETENTION LAST WEEK AND SIX BOYS WERE SENT TO **ME**...

I KNEW GIRLS WHO'D GOTTEN DETENTION, BUT I'D AVOIDED IT MYSELF--I TRIED TO STAY OUT OF TROUBLE AND BASICALLY BE AS **INVISIBLE** AS POSSIBLE IN JR. HIGH.

UNTIL THAT ASSEMBLY, THOUGH, I HAD NO IDEA HOW THE **BOYS** WERE DISCIPLINED...



...SO, HERE'S WHAT THEY GOT! RIGHT ACROSS THEIR **HINEYS**, LIKE THIS...

SUDDENLY, THE PRINCIPAL PULLED OUT A **GIANT PADDLE**.

THE BOYS LET OUT A PAINED, COLLECTIVE **GROAN**, WHILE ALL THE OTHER GIRLS EXCEPT ME SNICKERED IN COUNTERPOINT.

AS FOR ME, I WAS **MUTE**, RIVETED TO THE SPOT.



I'LL NEVER FORGET HIS "DEMONSTRATION" ON THE PODIUM.



I HAD SO MANY QUESTIONS ABOUT THE **DETAILS**, BUT WASN'T FRIENDLY ENOUGH THEN WITH ANY BOYS TO ASK.



THERE'S ANOTHER REASON I REMEMBER THAT DAY, THOUGH.

AT LUNCH, I STARTED HAVING **STOMACH CRAMPS**.

AS THE DAY WORE ON, IT HURT WORSE.

BY DISMISSAL, I WAS REALLY IN **PAIN**.



IT WAS MARCH, AND SNOW WAS STILL ON THE GROUND.

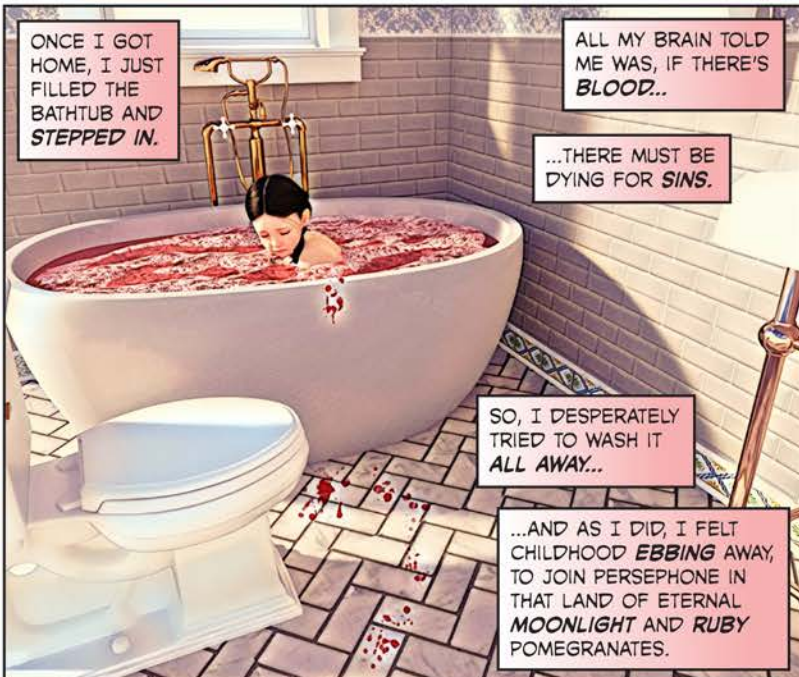
AS I WALKED HOME, I FELT SOMETHING **WARM** AND **WET** TRICKLING DOWN MY LEGS.

I LOOKED BACK, AND SAW A **TRAIL OF BLOOD** BEHIND ME IN THE WHITE, VIRGINAL SNOW.

I'D READ JUDY BLUME...

...AND I'D SEEN RUSTY SPOTS IN MY UNDERPANTS THE LAST FEW DAYS...

...BUT, MY BRAIN HADN'T PUT IT ALL TOGETHER.



ONCE I GOT HOME, I JUST FILLED THE BATHTUB AND **STEPPED IN**.

ALL MY BRAIN TOLD ME WAS, IF THERE'S **BLOOD**...

...THERE MUST BE DYING FOR **SINS**.

SO, I DESPERATELY TRIED TO WASH IT **ALL AWAY**...

...AND AS I DID, I FELT CHILDHOOD **EBBING** AWAY, TO JOIN PERSEPHONE IN THAT LAND OF ETERNAL **MOONLIGHT** AND **RUBY POMEGRANATES**.

I'D PLANNED TO STAY IN THAT BATHTUB FOREVER.

RUDE? WHY'S THERE BLOOD ALL OVER THE FLOOR? WHY AREN'T YOU ANSWERING ME?

KNOCK KNOCK

THAT'S IT! I'M GETTING A PAPER CLIP AND OPENING THE DOOR!



HONEY, IT'S OK. HERE, LET ME HELP YOU.

MY MOM WASN'T FREAKED OUT IN THE SLIGHTEST.

AFTER ALL, SHE'D GROWN UP ON A FARM WHERE SHE'D SEEN HOGS SLAUGHTERED.

WHAT WAS SEEING HER DAUGHTER FLOATING IN A FEW GALLONS OF MENSTRUAL BLOOD, COMPARED TO THAT?

FIRST, SHE CLEANED ME AND THE BATHROOM UP.

DON'T BE UPSET, SWEETIE.

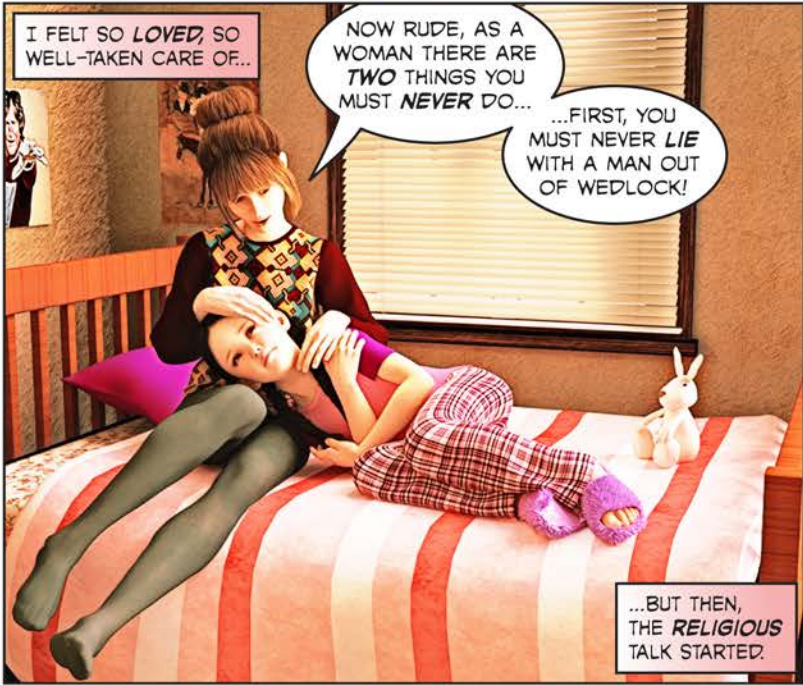
THEN, SHE INDUCTED ME INTO THE MYSTERIES OF MAXI PADS.

IT'S WONDERFUL, REALLY. YOU'RE A WOMAN NOW!

I FELT SO LOVED, SO WELL-TAKEN CARE OF...

NOW RUDE, AS A WOMAN THERE ARE TWO THINGS YOU MUST NEVER DO...

...FIRST, YOU MUST NEVER LIE WITH A MAN OUT OF WEDLOCK!



...BUT THEN, THE RELIGIOUS TALK STARTED.

...SECOND, YOU MUST NEVER TOUCH YOURSELF DOWN THERE FOR PLEASURE!

D-DON'T WORRY, MOM! I WON'T EVER DO THAT STUFF! I-I WANNA GO TO HEAVEN!

EITHER CAN SEND YOU STRAIGHT TO HELL!

I WAS BEING SINCERE. MY BRAIN DIDN'T CONNECT WHAT SHE WAS SAYING WITH WHAT I WAS DOING.

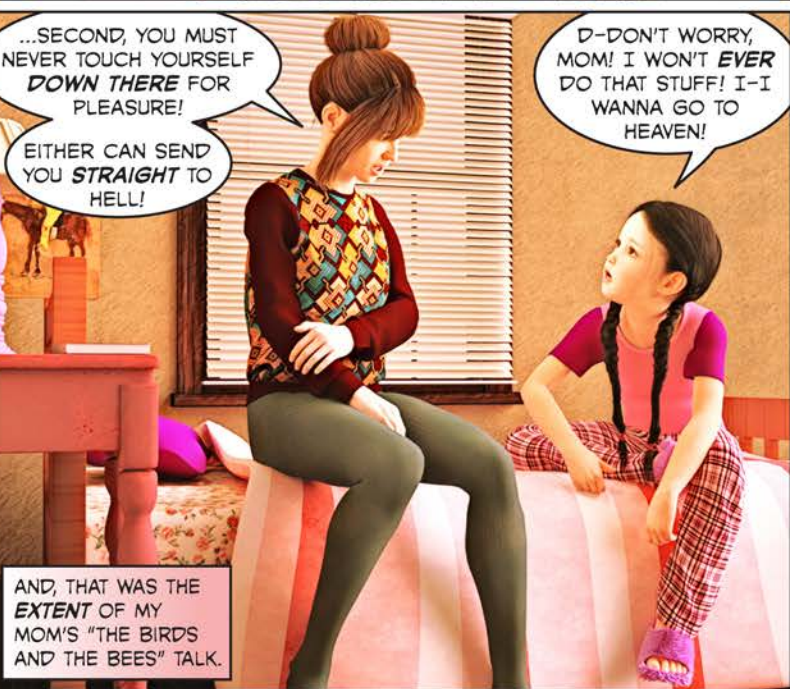
I WAS SPANKING MYSELF ALMOST EVERY DAY.

WHILE I DID IT, I'D OFTEN PUT A PILLOW BETWEEN MY LEGS AND RUB AGAINST IT.

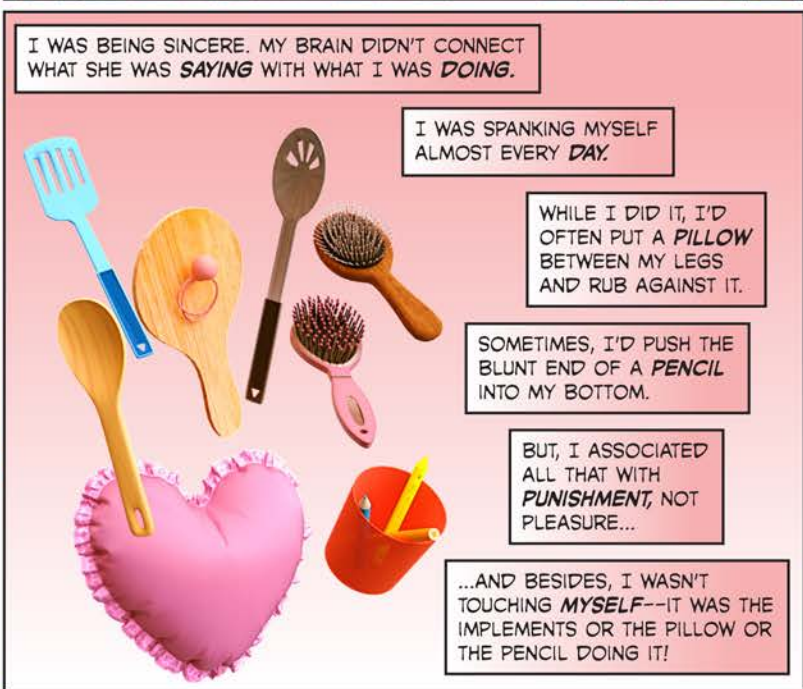
SOMETIMES, I'D PUSH THE BLUNT END OF A PENCIL INTO MY BOTTOM.

BUT, I ASSOCIATED ALL THAT WITH PUNISHMENT, NOT PLEASURE...

...AND BESIDES, I WASN'T TOUCHING MYSELF--IT WAS THE IMPLEMENTS OR THE PILLOW OR THE PENCIL DOING IT!



AND, THAT WAS THE EXTENT OF MY MOM'S "THE BIRDS AND THE BEES" TALK.



I RECALL ANOTHER DAY THAT YEAR *VERY* VIVIDLY.

IT WAS IN JUNE, NEAR THE END OF SEVENTH GRADE, JUST BEFORE I TURNED THIRTEEN.

I'D BEEN IN A DAZE ALL DAY AT SCHOOL, HAVING SPANKY *FANTASIES*.

WHEN I GOT HOME, THE SUN WAS MAKING *DUST* MOTES DANCE IN THE AIR...

I TOOK OFF MY SHORTS AND T-SHIRT AND EAGERLY LAID OUT MY *SUPPLIES*.

...AND *BAKING* THE OLD WOOD ON THE WINDOW SILL IN MY ROOM, UNTIL IT *EXHALED* THE SCENT OF ANCIENT MAPLES TREES.

I IMAGINED MYSELF BEING PUNISHED IN A *THOUSAND* SCENARIOS...

...AS I FLIPPED THOUGH MY OLD SPANKY DRAWINGS...

...*RUBBED* AGAINST THE PILLOW...

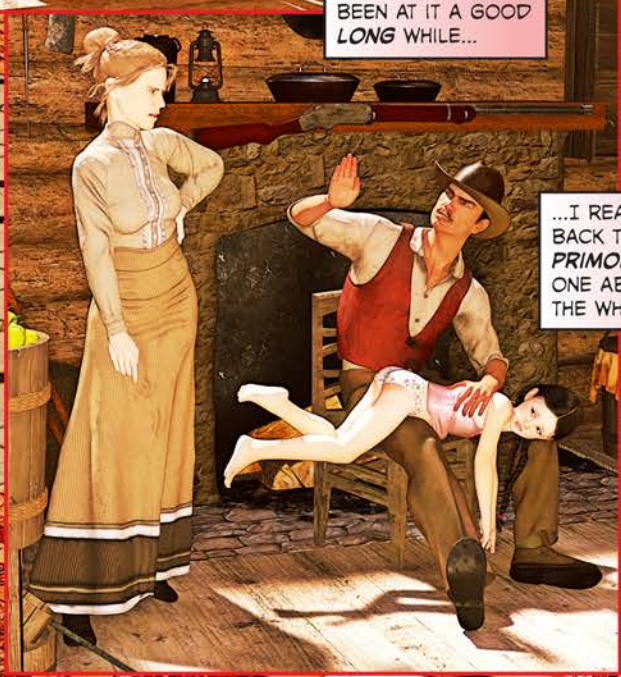
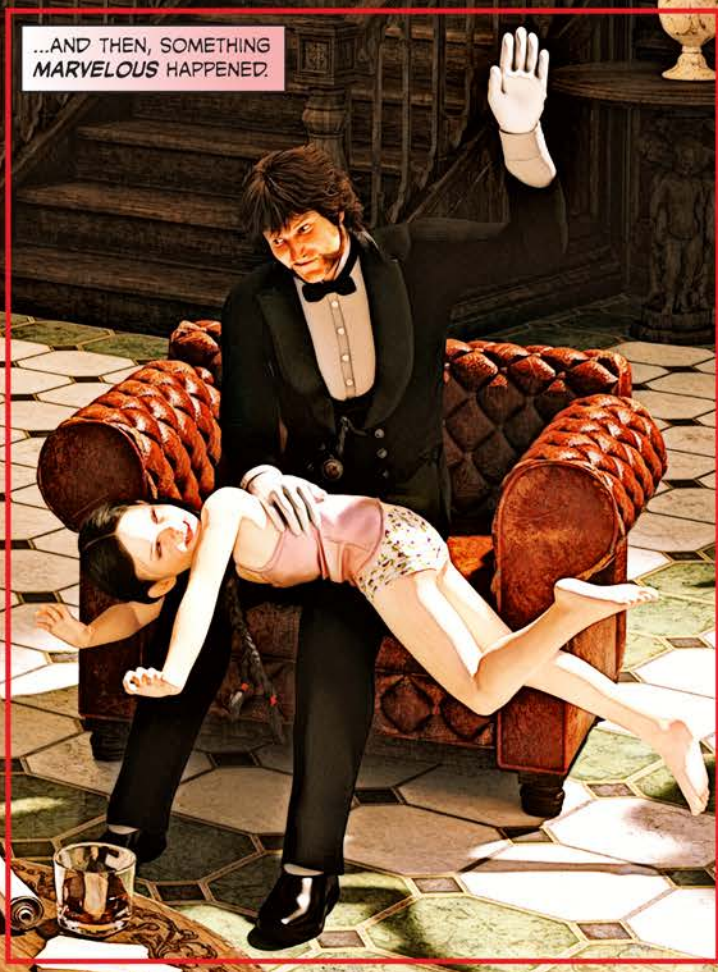
...PUT THE *PENCIL* IN MY BOTTOM...

...SAVORED THE STING OF DIFFERENT IMPLEMENTS FIRMLY *SLAPPING* MY RUMP...

...AND, WHEN I'D BEEN AT IT A GOOD *LONG* WHILE...

...AND THEN, SOMETHING *MARVELOUS* HAPPENED.

...I REACHED ALL THE WAY BACK TO MY MOST *PRIMORDIAL* FANTASY, THE ONE ABOUT THE MAN WITH THE WHITE GLOVES...





As it spread into my stomach,
I felt light filling my body.



When it reached my navel, the
world began to shimmer and
contract in waves of rainbows.



I felt a warmth begin to bloom
deep in my chest.



Finally, it coursed through my legs
and bottom and I was engulfed in
its illimitable power.



I had entered the Original Garden.

I smelled every flower, saw each green blade of grass, felt the fluttering of a million butterfly wings, tasted all the fruits, and heard the trumpets of angels and the trombones of devils.

For the first time, I felt truly alive, and it was then that I understood what my mother and the Church feared most, this power in all of us that is stronger and more mysterious than even death.



CHESTNUT; *S. fly*, bright green insect dried & used for raising blisters, as aphrodisiac, &c.; *S. fowl*, breed of domestic fowl with glossy greenish-black plumage; *S. grass*, esparto; *S. main* (hist.), NE coast of S. America between Orinoco river & Panama, & adjoining part of Caribbean sea; *War of the S. succession* (between France & Bavaria on one side & England, Prussia, & United Provinces, on the other, on death of Charles II of Spain without issue, 1701-14); (n.) S. language. [ME *Spainisc* (Spain, see -ISH¹)]

spank, v.t. & i., & n. Slap on buttocks with open hand or slipper &c., whence **spanking**¹ [-ING¹] n.; urge forward esp. by slapping or whipping; (of horse &c.) move briskly esp. at a step between trot & gallop; (n.) slap, blow with open hand &c., of buttocks. [cf. NFr. *spaner* & Du. *spanke* strut, LG *spanken* to spank, v. t. v. i.]

spanker, n. In vbl senses; also: a horse of fast-going horse; (colloq.) person or thing of notable size or quality, stunner, whopper; (Naut.) fore-&-aft sail set on after part of mizzenmast. [-ER¹]

spanking² (for s.¹ see SPAN¹), & adv. In vbl senses; also; (colloq.) spanking, excellent, as *had a s. time*, *a s. (strong) man*, &c. (adv.) *a s. fine woman*. [-ING²]

spanless, a. (poet.). Beyond measure. [-LESS]

spanner, n. In vbl senses; also: instrument for turning nut on screw &c.; cross-brace of bridge &c.; connecting-rod in parallel motion of engine; = SPAN²-worm. [-ER¹]

spar¹, n. (naut.). A spar, a pole or beam used for mast, yard, &c. of ship; *s.-boy* (made of a s. with one end moored so that other stands up); *s.-deck*, upper deck extending from bow to stern, including quarter-deck and fore-castle; (v.t.) furnish with s., help (ship) over shallow bar with ss. [ME *sparre*, cf. Du. *spar*, G *sparren*, ON *sparri*, perh. cogn. w. SPEAR]

spar², n. Kinds of crystalline mineral, easily cleavable and non-lustrous, as *calcareous s.*, calcite, *Derbyshire* (= FLUOR) *s.*, *Iceland s.*, transparent calcite much used for optical purposes. [OE *spar*; G has *spath*, a diff. wd]

spar³, v.i., & n. Make motions of attack & defence with closed fists, use the hands (as) in boxing, (often *at* opponent); (fig.) bandy words, as *they are always sparring (at each other)*; (of cocks) fight esp. with protected spurs; (n.) sparring motion, boxing-match, cock-fight. [orig. = (of cock) strike out with spurs, f. OF *esparer* part. of Teut. orig., cf. SPUR, SPURN]

spā'ra'ble, n. Headless nail for soles and heels of boots. [corrupt. of *sparrow-bill*]

(do not provoke) *his blushes*; be f. *spartan* (f. prec.), cf. Du. & G *spar*
spar'ger, n. Sprinkling-apparatus for brewing. [f. rare vb *sparge* f. L *spargere*]
spark¹, n. Flery particle thro' burning substance; small bright point e.g. in gem; (fig.) brilliant wit &c., esp. *strike ss. out of* per- him to lively or original convers- neg. or quasi-neg.) particle of fire quality &c., as *not a s. of life rem- had a s. of generosity in you*; minous effect of sudden disruptiv- electric s. serving to fire explosive oil-engine of motor &c., as *adca the s.*, increase, decrease, frequ- *fairy ss.*, phosphorescent light fr- vegetable matter &c.; *s.-arrester* preventing (injury from) SPARK² in steam apparatus, netting &c. to catch sparks. Hence **sparkless** a., **sparkling** a. [OE *spearca*, cf. MDu. *sparcke*, & Da. *sprage*, crackle; perh. f. crackling wood &c.]

spark², v.i. Emit sparks of fire; *sparkling-plug*, device for firing mixture in motor-engine; (Elec) sparks at point where continuity interrupted. [OE *spearcian* as *pr*]

spark³, n., & v.i. Gay fellow; *gallant play the gallant*. Hence **sparkling** a. (f. n.) = prov. E *sprack* lively, cf. *sprækr*, also SPEAK & SPARK¹]

sparkle, v.i., & n. Emit sparks; glitter, glisten, v. i. Hence **sparkler**¹ n., **sparkling** adv.; *sparkling wines* (giving off acid gas in small bubbles, cf. STINGLING, gleam, spark. [ME *sparkle* f. SPARK^{1,2} + -LE(L, S)]

spar'row (-ō), n. Kinds of s. coloured bird, esp. *house s.*, European, noted for attachment to human dwellings, and pugnacity; *s.-grass* (= ragus); *s.-hawk*, kinds of small hawk on ss. &c. [OE *spearwa*, cf. ON *spurr*, cogn. w. SPAR²]

spar'ry, a. Of, like, rich in, sparkling
sparse, a. (Of population &c.) scattered, not dense; (Bot., Zool.) placed at distant or irregular intervals
spar'sely² adv., **spar'seness** n. [*gere spars*-scatter]

Spartan, a. & n. (Native) of Sparta; allusion to supposed characteristic endurance, simplicity). [f. L *Sparta* f. Gk *Spirtē*, see -AN]

Chapter Four

The Boy-Crazy Years: Ages 13-14

NEAR THE END OF JUNE,
I TURNED THIRTEEN.

IT WAS AN *IDLE* SUMMER.

ASIDE FROM EXPLORING MY
NEW-FOUND *POWERS* ALONE
IN MY BED, I MOSTLY JUST
DREW, BABYSAT, AND HUNG
OUT WITH JENNY.

I HARDLY SAW CHARLEY.

SHE WAS TOO BUSY WITH
SPORTS, SCHOOL, FRIENDS,
AND MOST RECENTLY,
COTILLION ON SATURDAYS.

THAT'S THE DAY WE *USED*
TO GO HORSEBACK RIDING.

I *TRIED* RIDING
WITHOUT HER, BUT IT
WASN'T MUCH FUN.

I REALIZED I
DIDN'T EVEN *LIKE*
HORSES MUCH.

THEY'RE BEAUTIFUL
TO LOOK AT, BUT UP
CLOSE, THEY'RE BIG
AND *SCARY*.

AND, THEY *SMELL*.

SO, SUMMER
PASSED TO
AUTUMN.

I MISSED
CHARLEY.

WHEN DECEMBER, THE
MONTH OF CHARLEY,
FINALLY ROLLED AROUND,
MY HEART LEAPT WITH *JOY*.

I MET UP WITH HER
AFTER HER *COTILLION*
CLASS. I HADN'T
SEEN HER IN *WEEKS*.

I *LOVE* THE NEW
HAIRSTYLE...

...BUT I DON'T
THINK THE *DRESS* IS
REALLY *YOU!*

OH, TRUST ME,
RUDE, *NONE*
OF IT'S ME!

BUT, MY MOM'S
STARTING TO *SUSPECT*,
SO I GOTTA PLAY
ALONG.

B-BUT HOW *LONG*
CAN YOU KEEP IT
HIDDEN, CHAR?

SOMEDAY,
YOU'VE GOTTA
BE *YOU*.

LOOK, *RUDE*, THE
WAY I SEE IT...

...I GOTTA *SURVIVE*
FOUR MORE YEARS IN
MIDDLEBRIDGE...

GIGGLE!

...THEN, WE CAN
MOVE TO NEW YORK
AND BECOME
HEROIN ADDICTS
TOGETHER!

GIGGLE!

GIGGLE!

WELL, SHE WAS
RIGHT ABOUT
PART OF THAT.

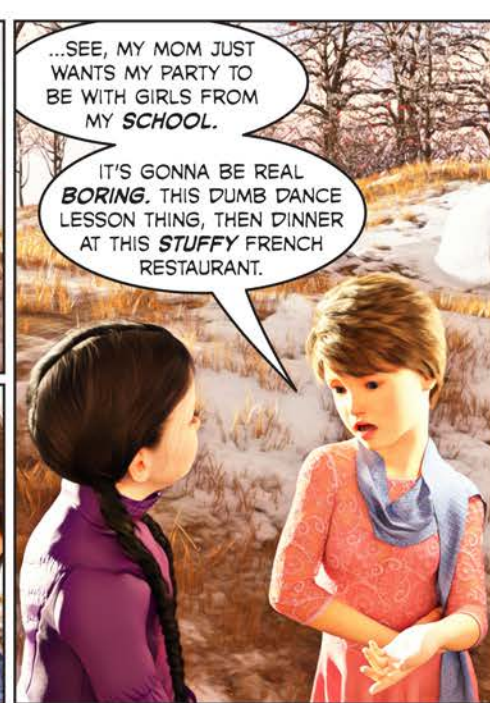


SO, WHAT'RE WE GONNA DO FOR YOUR **BIRTHDAY**?

GIGGLE!



Um, yeah, I WANTED TO TALK TO YOU ABOUT THAT...



...SEE, MY MOM JUST WANTS MY PARTY TO BE WITH GIRLS FROM MY **SCHOOL**.

IT'S GONNA BE REAL **BORING**. THIS DUMB DANCE LESSON THING, THEN DINNER AT THIS **STUFFY** FRENCH RESTAURANT.



SO, YOU'RE JUST GONNA DO WHAT YOUR MOM SAYS?

TREAT ME LIKE **AISHA**, huh?



L-LOOK, I TOLD YOU. I GOTTA **PLAY ALONG**.

HOW 'BOUT IF YOU SLEEP OVER THE NIGHT **BEFORE**?



W-WE COULD DO SOMETHING **SATURDAY**, MAYBE?



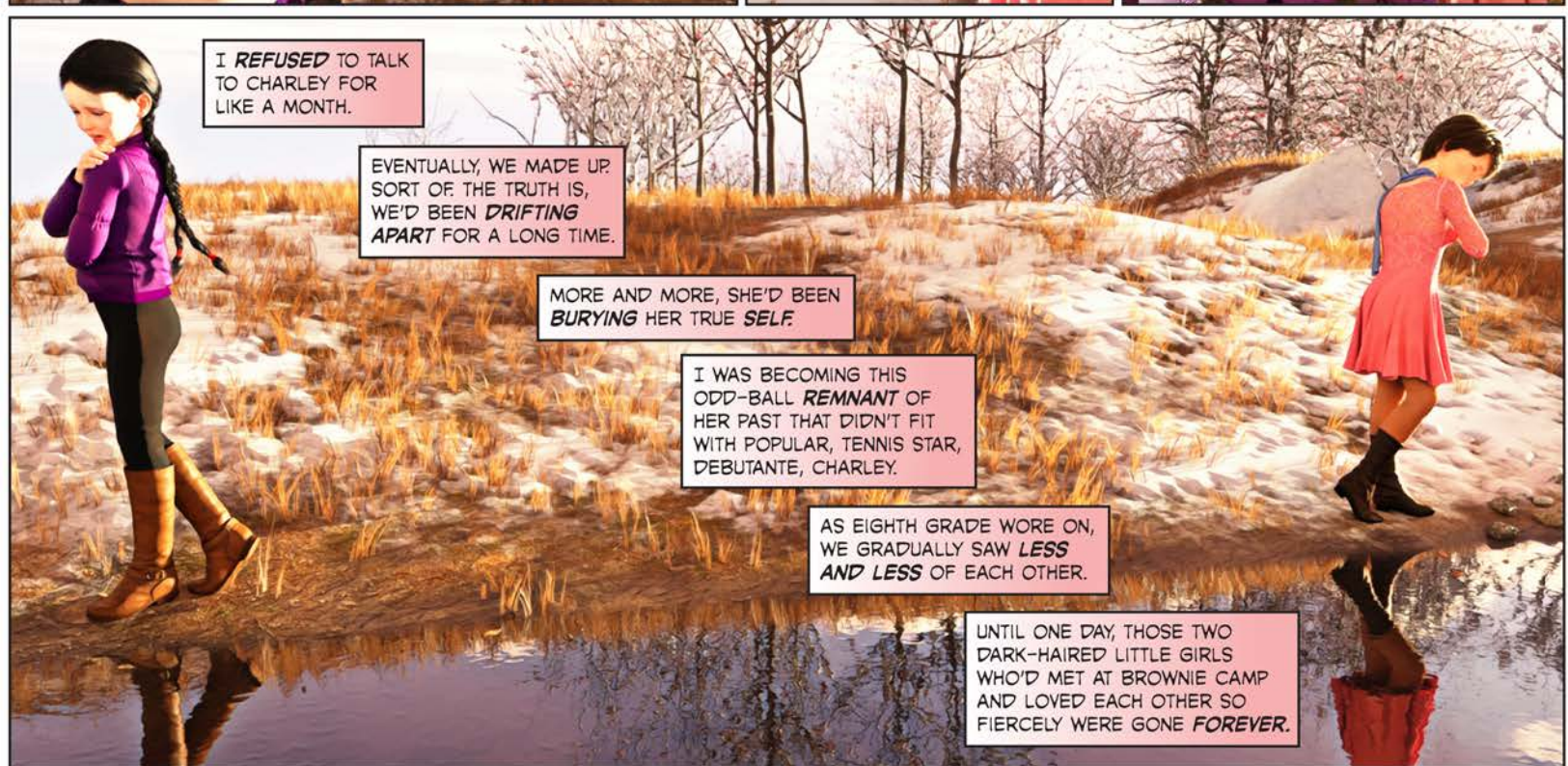
SORRY, I'M BUSY **SATURDAY**--AND FOR THE NEXT **HUNDRED YEARS!**

SOB!



WHAT SHOULD I DO? RUN OUT THE BACK DOOR IN MY **PAJAMAS** WHEN YOUR **REAL** FRIENDS GET THERE?

OR, HIDE IN THE **CLOSET**, SO THEY DON'T SEE ME?



I **REFUSED** TO TALK TO CHARLEY FOR LIKE A MONTH.

EVENTUALLY, WE MADE UP. SORT OF. THE TRUTH IS, WE'D BEEN **DRIFTING APART** FOR A LONG TIME.

MORE AND MORE, SHE'D BEEN **BURYING** HER TRUE **SELF**.

I WAS BECOMING THIS **ODD-BALL REMNANT** OF HER PAST THAT DIDN'T FIT WITH POPULAR, TENNIS STAR, DEBUTANTE, CHARLEY.

AS EIGHTH GRADE WORE ON, WE GRADUALLY SAW **LESS AND LESS** OF EACH OTHER.

UNTIL ONE DAY, THOSE TWO **DARK-HAIRED** LITTLE GIRLS WHO'D MET AT **BROWNIE** CAMP AND LOVED EACH OTHER SO **FIERCELY** WERE GONE **FOREVER**.

I WON'T TORTURE YOU WITH PANEL AFTER PANEL OF ME LOOKING **DEPRESSED**.

SUFFICE TO SAY, I DON'T HAVE THE BEST MEMORIES OF EIGHTH GRADE.

IT WAS PRETTY MUCH **BOREDOM**, INTERRUPTED BY **PAIN**.

LOSING CHARLEY WAS ONLY THE TIP OF THE ICEBERG. MOODY, ARTISTIC ME REALLY DIDN'T FIT IN AT MIDDLEBRIDGE JR. HIGH.

REAGAN HAD JUST BEEN ELECTED. ALL THE KIDS DRESSED LIKE MINI WALL STREET EXECUTIVES, AND TALKED ABOUT NUKING COMMIES.

UNLIKE CHARLEY'S PARENTS, MINE WEREN'T EXACTLY GOOD ROLE MODELS FOR FITTING IN, EITHER.

MY MOM SPENT MOST OF HER LEISURE TIME ALONE IN A DARK ROOM WITH "HEADACHES."

WHEN SHE HAD THE ENERGY, SHE'D **RANT** ABOUT HOW THE COUNTRY NEEDED A GOOD CATHOLIC LIKE **JFK** AGAIN.

AND, MY DAD, WELL, HE SEEMED CONTENT TO STAY **LOST** IN HIS WORLD OF VINTAGE RECORDS AND MUSTY BOOKS.

LIFE WASN'T **ALL** GLOOM AND DOOM, THOUGH.



I'D DISCOVERED I COULD ENTER MY SECRET GARDEN JUST BY **THINKING** ABOUT SPANKING (AND MAYBE A BIT OF PILLOW RUBBING).

ART WAS TAKING ON NEW DIMENSIONS FOR ME, TOO.

I WAS LEARNING FRENCH IN SCHOOL, SO I STARTED CALLING MY BEDROOM MY "**ATELIER**." I KNOW, PRETENTIOUS, HUH?

MY MOM JUST CALLED IT **MESSY**. I WAS EXPLORING DIFFERENT MEDIA AND LEFT ART SUPPLIES STREWN ABOUT EVERYWHERE.

I DIDN'T HAVE MANY FRIENDS. BUT, I HAD **SLITHER** TO KEEP ME COMPANY.

SNAKES ARE VERY **UNDERRATED**.

BEHIND THEIR UNBLINKING GAZES IS ANCIENT **WISDOM**, AND CALM, STEADY **LOVE**.

I HAD **JENNY**, TOO.

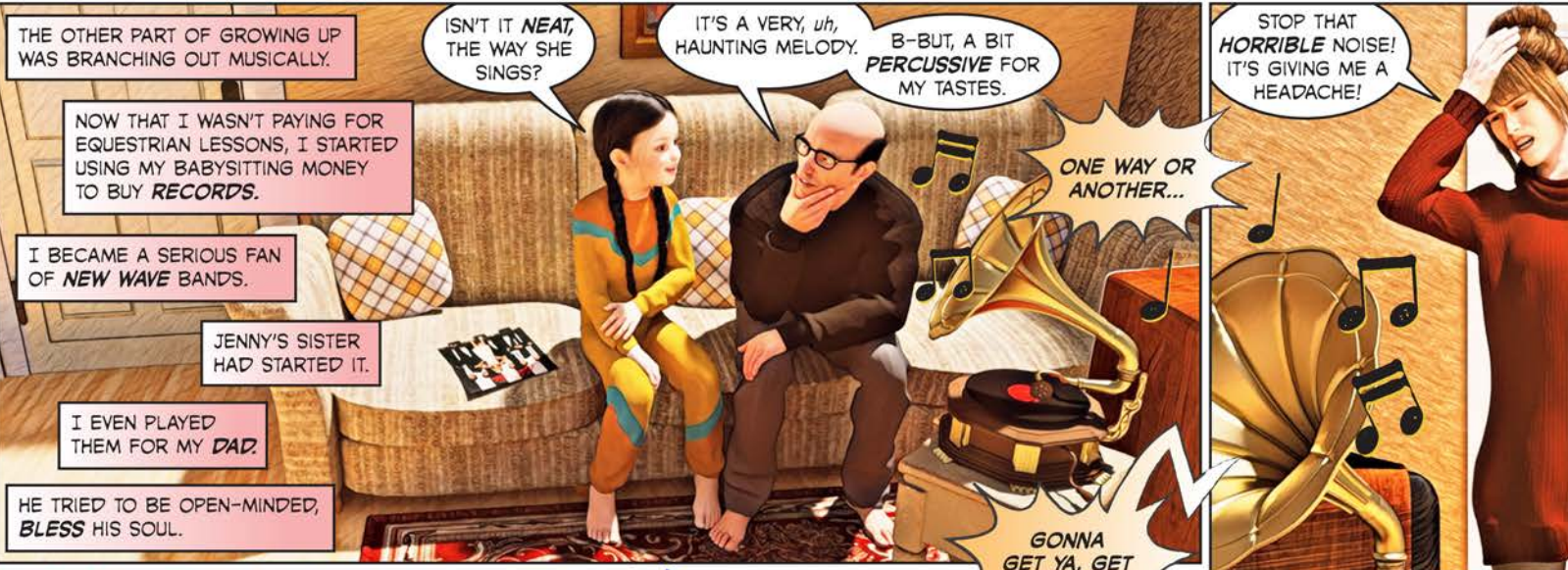
Wow! DID YOUR SISTER **REALLY** SAY I COULD BORROW IT?

Yeah, JUST DON'T SCRATCH IT, OR SHE'LL **KILL** YOU!

DESPITE HER FEAR OF **SLITHER**, SHE REMINDED ME OF HIM IN SOME WAYS.

SHE POSSESSED A KIND OF **QUIET WISDOM**, TOO, BORN OF **ADVERSITY**.

AND, NO MATTER WHAT, SHE WAS ALWAYS A **LOYAL FRIEND**.



THE OTHER PART OF GROWING UP WAS BRANCHING OUT MUSICALLY.

NOW THAT I WASN'T PAYING FOR EQUESTRIAN LESSONS, I STARTED USING MY BABYSITTING MONEY TO BUY **RECORDS**.

I BECAME A SERIOUS FAN OF **NEW WAVE** BANDS.

JENNY'S SISTER HAD STARTED IT.

I EVEN PLAYED THEM FOR MY **DAD**.

HE TRIED TO BE OPEN-MINDED, **BLESS** HIS SOUL.

ISN'T IT **NEAT**, THE WAY SHE SINGS?

IT'S A VERY, *uh*, HAUNTING MELODY.

B-BUT, A BIT **PERCUSSIVE** FOR MY TASTES.

ONE WAY OR ANOTHER...

GONNA GET YA, GET YA, GET YA

STOP THAT **HORRIBLE** NOISE! IT'S GIVING ME A HEADACHE!

MY MOM WAS ANOTHER MATTER.

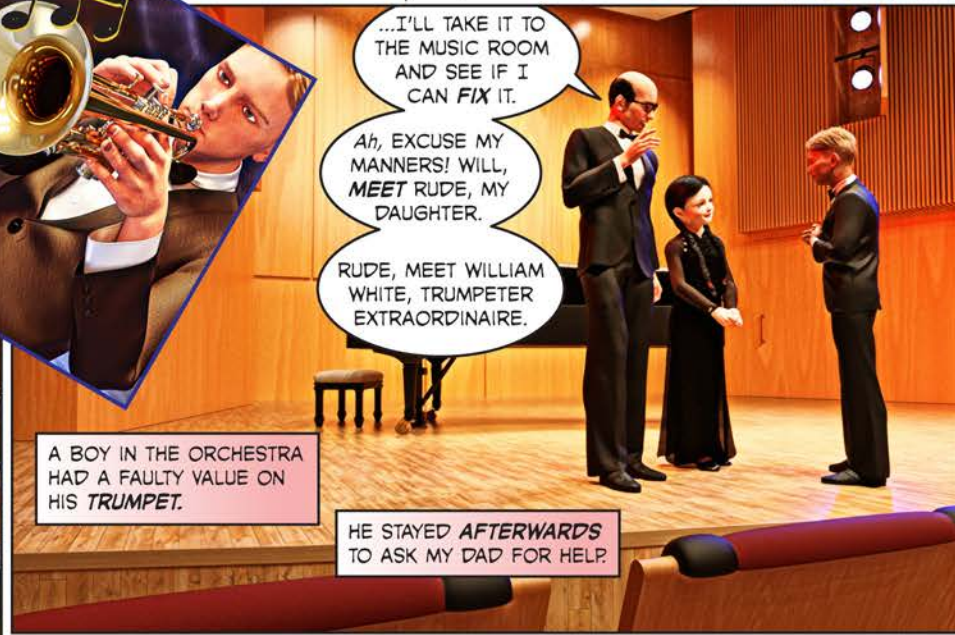


I STILL **LOVED** BACH, THOUGH...

...AND KEPT GOING TO THE CONCERTS AT ST. VINCENT'S, THE FANCY BOYS' SCHOOL WHERE MY DAD TAUGHT.

AND, ONE FINE SPRING NIGHT, **FATE** INTERVENED.

A BOY IN THE ORCHESTRA HAD A FAULTY VALUE ON HIS **TRUMPET**.



...I'LL TAKE IT TO THE MUSIC ROOM AND SEE IF I CAN **FIX** IT.

Ah, EXCUSE MY MANNERS! WILL, **MEET** RUDE, MY DAUGHTER.

RUDE, MEET WILLIAM WHITE, TRUMPETER EXTRAORDINAIRE.

HE STAYED **AFTERWARDS** TO ASK MY DAD FOR HELP.



RUDE LIKES MUSIC, TOO.

MOST RECENTLY, A SINGER NAMED **BLONDIE**.



DAAA! THE **BAND'S** **BLONDIE!** SHE'S **DEBBIE HARRY!**



Well, *um*, PLEASD TO MEET YOU, *uh*, RUDE.

AND, *um*, yeah, MR. RUMPS, THE **SINGER'S** **DEBBIE HARRY**--A, *uh*, **HOT** BLONDE!

WILL OFFERED TO SHOW ME AROUND, WHILE MY DAD FIXED HIS TRUMPET.



Naw, IT'S, um, TOTALLY **BORING**.

SO, YOU LIKE CLASSICAL MUSIC, TOO, huh?

BUT, MY, uh, OLD MAN SAYS PLAYING TRUMPET'LL HELP GET ME INTO, um, **YALE**.

MY DAD HAD TAUGHT AT ST. VINCENT'S FOR YEARS, SO I KNEW MY WAY AROUND **VERY** WELL...

...BUT, I DIDN'T LET ON...



Wow, **YALE!** WHAT DO YOU WANNA STUDY THERE?

Oh, I DON'T GIVE A **SHIT**.

JUST SOMETHING I GOTTA, um, DO, BEFORE MY OLD MAN **BUMPS** OFF AND I TAKE OVER THE, uh, FAMILY BIZ.

...AFTER ALL, I'D NEVER GOTTEN A TOUR FROM A **HANDSOME** TENTH GRADER!



WHAT KIND OF BUSINESS?

NO, uh, **PENCILS**.

MONKEYS? **HAHA**

BORING AS FUCK.

BUT, IT, um, MAKES **SHITLOADS** OF MONEY...

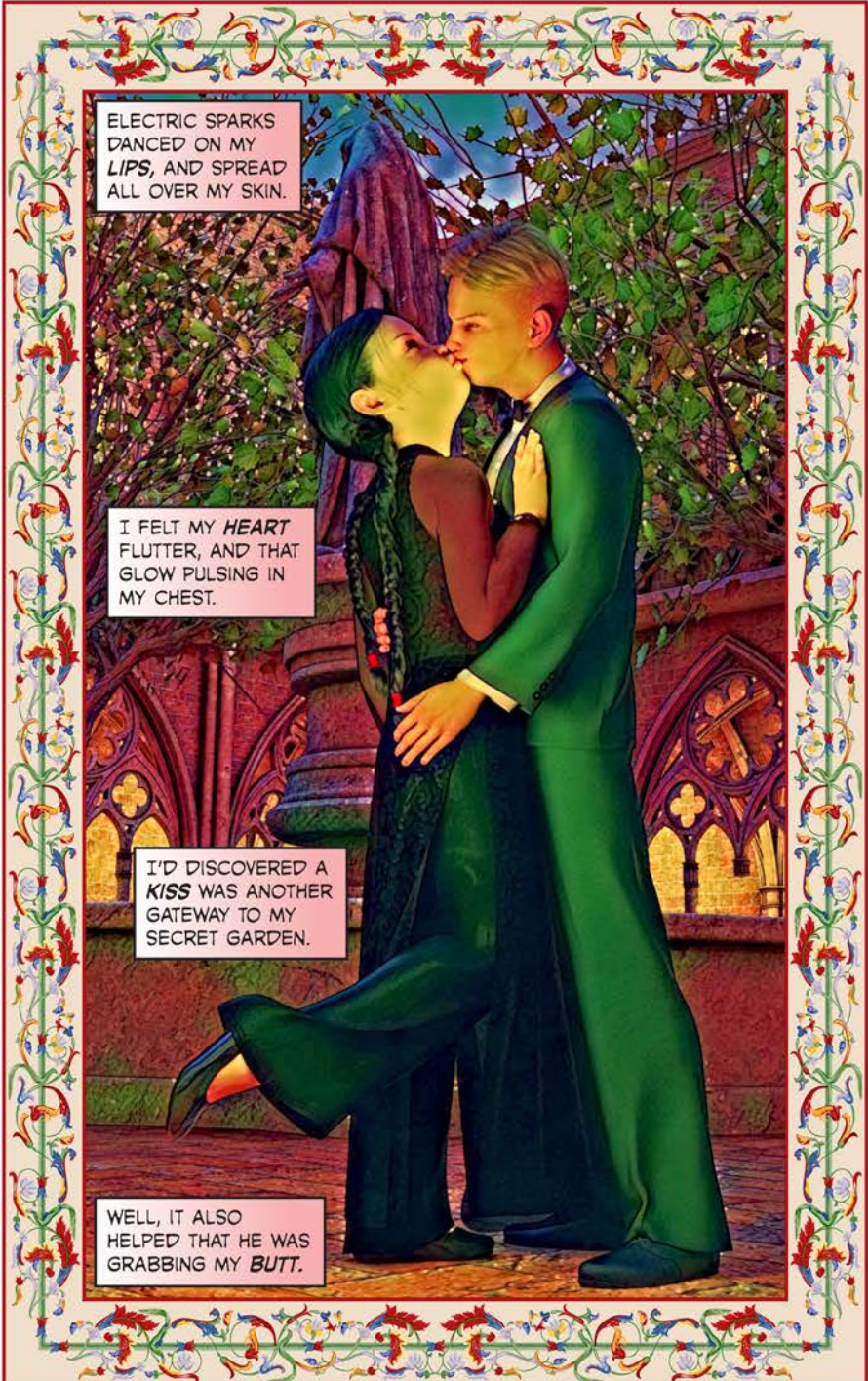
...LIKE, uh, **PORCHES** AND **HOT BLONDES** KINDA MONEY!



Wow! I **LOVE** PENCILS. SEE, I WANNA BE AN **ARTIST**--

Um, yeah. YOU SEEM **REALLY**, uh, COOL, RUDE.

SAY, uh, WANNA TRY **KISSING** BEHIND THE, um, STATUE? NOBODY'S, uh, AROUND.



ELECTRIC SPARKS DANCED ON MY **LIPS**, AND SPREAD ALL OVER MY SKIN.

I FELT MY **HEART** FLUTTER, AND THAT GLOW PULSING IN MY CHEST.

I'D DISCOVERED A **KISS** WAS ANOTHER GATEWAY TO MY SECRET GARDEN.

WELL, IT ALSO HELPED THAT HE WAS GRABBING MY **BUTT**.

AFTER THAT FATEFUL DAY, I STARTED VISITING ST. VINCENT'S ANY CHANCE I GOT.

YEZ, DEAR, THAZ RIGHT, THIZ IZ MIZZUZ WHITE.

I WENT TO CONCERTS, REHEARSALS, *WHATEVER*-- JUST SO I COULD MEET UP WITH WILL.

PLEAZ PUT WILLIAM ON. YEZ, I SHALL WAIT. THANK YOU *VEDDY* MUCH.

THAT SOON LED TO MORE *SECRET* KISSES BEHIND THE STATUE, AND A ROMANCE. OF SORTS.

WILL DIDN'T HAVE HIS OWN PHONE IN HIS DORM, SO WE WORKED OUT A WAY I COULD CALL WITHOUT AROUSING *SUSPICION*.

I BECAME QUITE GOOD AT IMITATING A STUFFY, WASPY MIDDLE-AGED *MOM* VOICE.



HE TOLD ME I SHOULD CALL AT 3:45 PM, WHEN HE HAD A BRIEF BREAK FROM HIS AFTER-SCHOOL ACTIVITIES.

Um, SORRY, I'M THREE MINUTES LATE!

MAYBE YOU'LL HAFTA GIVE ME A GOOD *LICKIN'* FOR THAT! **HAHA**

SOMETIMES, I'D CALL A TINY *BIT* LATE.

ON PURPOSE.

YEP, *BRATTING*.

I ALSO KEPT TRYING TO DROP LITTLE *HINTS* ABOUT SPANKING. BUT, WILL DIDN'T TAKE THE BAIT.

IN FACT, HE DIDN'T SAY *MUCH* ON OUR CALLS.



I, ON THE OTHER HAND, COULD BE A *CHAMPION* BABBLER WHEN THE MOOD STRUCK ME.

SO, JENNY'S SISTER DROVE US TO MCDONALD'S YESTERDAY...

...AND, SHE GOT A BIG MAC, FRIES AND A SHAKE! CAN YOU BELIEVE IT?

AFTER A WHILE, WE'D EVEN WORKED OUT A WAY I COULD VISIT HIM *ALONE*.

I JUST GOT *FRIES*. **HAHA**

THEIR HAMBURGERS ARE SOOOO *GROSS!*

I'D GO ON SATURDAYS, AND TELL MY PARENTS I WAS SPENDING THE DAY AT JENNY'S.

I HAD TO TAKE *TWO* BUSES TO GET TO ST. VINCENT'S.

I'D CALL FROM A PAYPHONE WHEN I ARRIVED.



I MEAN, THE *NORMAL* SHAKES, THEY'RE GROSS, TOO!

BUT, *SHAMROCK* SHAKES, THOSE ARE WORTH WAITING *ALL* YEAR FOR!

I GUESS I LOVE 'EM 'CUZ OF MY *IRISH* ANCESTORS! **HAHA**

I KNOW YOU SAID YOU'RE ENGLISH...

...BUT, YOU'VE GOT THE *CUTEST* LITTLE FRECKLES AROUND YOUR NOSE! THAT'S SOOOO *IRISH!*

WE'D MEET IN THE *WOODS*, BEHIND THE SCHOOL.



...AND, WHEN I GOT HOME, MY HAIR SMELLED LIKE *FRIES!* SO, I TOOK A BATH. I BET YOU'D LIKE TO SEE ME IN A BATH, *huh?* **HAHA**

THEN I GOT TO THINKING, IN THE BATH...

...WHAT IF GOD'S NOT *BIG*, BUT REALLY, REALLY SMALL, LIKE INSIDE OF *EVERYTHING?*

I'D BRING *SNACKS* I'D BOUGHT WITH MY BABYSITTING MONEY.

I'D BABBLE, WHILE WILL *GUZZLED*.

(ODDLY, HE NEVER OFFERED TO USE ANY OF HIS VAST PENCIL FORTUNE TO HELP *PAY* FOR THE SNACKS.)



THEN, WE'D LIE ON THE GROUND AND MAKE OUT *FURIOUSLY*, FOR HALF AN HOUR...

DO YOU EVER THINK ABOUT STUFF LIKE THAT, WILL? I MEAN--

Um, I GOTTA GO RUDE. SEE YA, *uh*, SATURDAY. BRING, *um*, COKE 'N *DING DONGS* AGAIN!

...BEFORE I HAD TO *RUN* BACK TO THE BUS STOP, SO I WASN'T LATE FOR DINNER.

IT WAS ALL VERY *ROMANTIC*, INDEED.



I VISITED WILL AT HIS SCHOOL ALMOST **EVERY** WEEK.

BUT, WHEN **SUMMER** ROLLED AROUND, HE WAS RECALLED TO THE FAMILY PENCIL KINGDOM IN PENNSYLVANIA.

I MAILED HIM LONG, FLORID LETTERS **DAILY**, USING MALE PSEUDONYMS AND FAKE RETURN ADDRESSES, AND WAITED WITH BATED BREATH FOR HIS OCCASIONAL TERSE, TYPE-WRITTEN MISSIVES.

FORTUNATELY, I HAD A DISTRACTION FROM MY ROMANTIC **ANGST** FOR PART OF THE SUMMER.

I'D JUST TURNED FOURTEEN, AND WAS FINALLY OLD ENOUGH TO BE A JUNIOR COUNSELOR AT **BROWNIE CAMP!**

THIS TIME, ONLY MY DAD SAW ME OFF. MY MOM WAS HAVING **PROBLEMS** AGAIN.

CAN'T THE DOCTOR DO ANYTHING ABOUT MOM'S **HEADACHES?**

IT'S COMPLICATED, RUDE. WHAT'S **IN** HER HEAD IS THE REAL PROBLEM, I'M AFRAID.

WHEN SHE DOESN'T WANT TO DO ANYTHING OR BE AROUND ANYONE, IT'S **NOT** HEADACHES.

SHE'S **DOWN**, DEPRESSED, WHATEVER YOU WANT TO CALL IT.

THEN THERE'S THE TIMES IT'S THE **OPPOSITE**, LIKE WHEN SHE GETS UP AT FOUR AM AND REPLANTS THE WHOLE GARDEN.



WELL, HE GAVE HER **LITHIUM** WHEN YOU WERE LITTLE...

...BUT SHE SAID THAT MADE HER FEEL EVEN **MORE** DOWN.

C-CAN'T THE DOCTOR HELP WITH **THAT**, THEN?

G-gosh, I C-CAN'T **IMAGINE** HER ANY MORE DOWN.

IT'D BE LIKE SHE WAS **TOTALLY** GONE.

I KNOW, HONEY. HONESTLY, IF WE DIDN'T HAVE YOU...

...AND, WE WEREN'T CATHOLIC, I DON'T KNOW IF WE'D STAY **MARRIED?**



IT WAS A **LONG** DRIVE TO CAMP.

AT FOURTEEN, THE WHOLE WORLD FELT **UNSTEADY**.

AND, REALIZING MY PARENTS HAD **BIG** PROBLEMS DIDN'T EXACTLY HELP.

IT WAS LIKE HAVING THE RUG PULLED OUT FROM UNDER MY FEET, AFTER I'D **ALREADY** STARTED TO TRIP.



FINALLY, WE ARRIVED AT CAMP.

IT SEEMS LIKE SO LONG AGO WHEN YOU DROPPED ME OFF HERE FOR THE FIRST TIME, DAD!

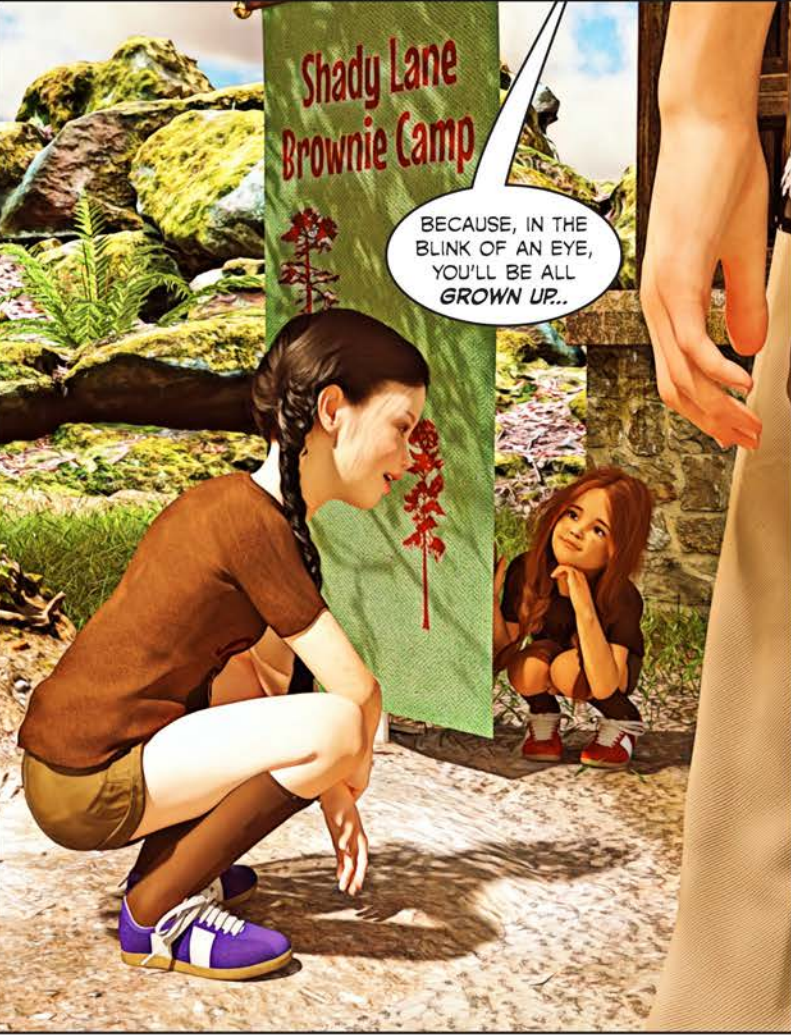
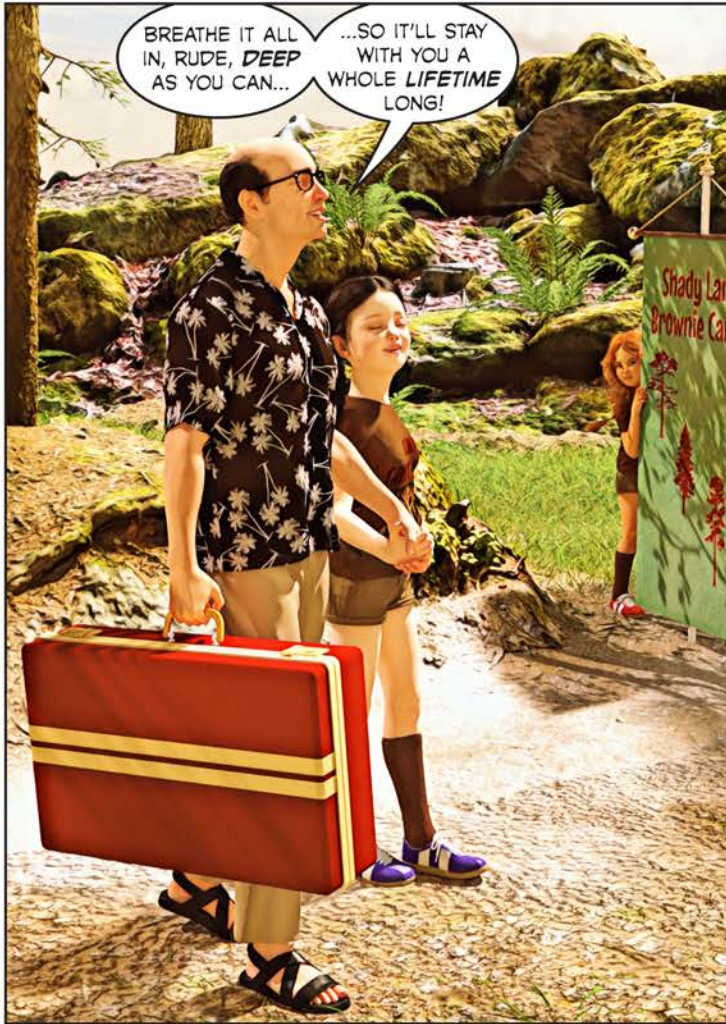
Sniff SMELL THAT AIR! IT'S PINE TREES AND DIRT AND CAMPFIRES AND HORSES!

Gosh, IT SEEMS LIKE ONLY YESTERDAY TO ME, RUDE.

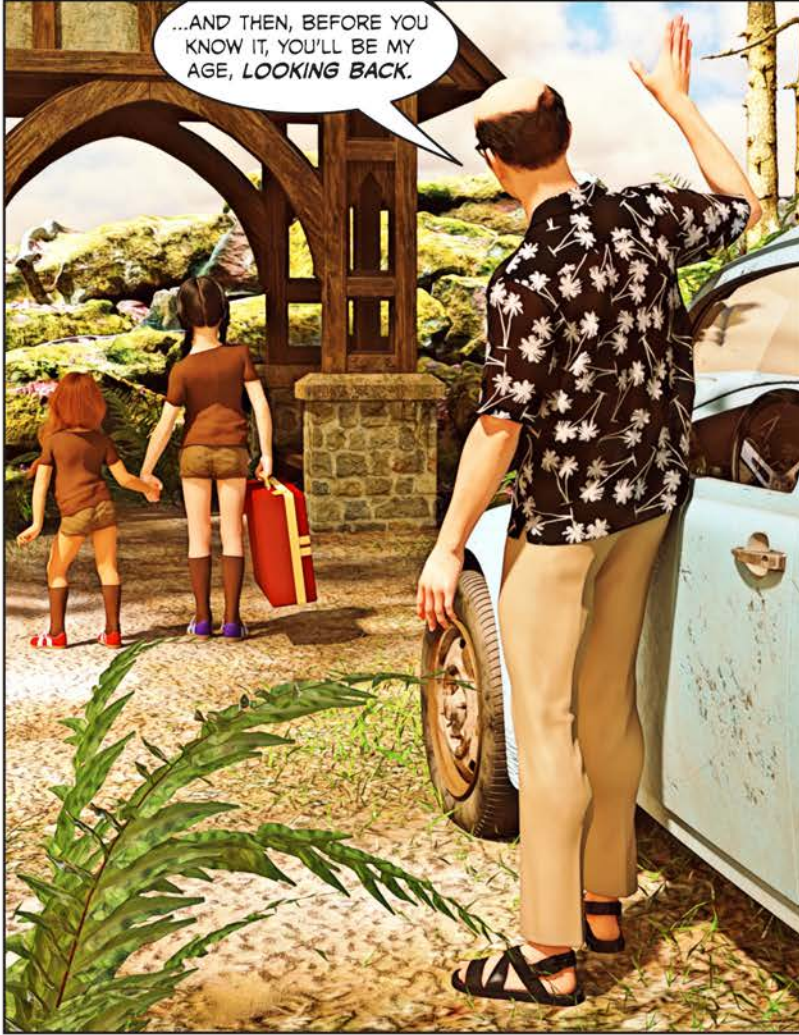
YES, IT'S THE MOST WONDERFUL SMELL IN THE WORLD, ISN'T IT?

BREATHE IT ALL IN, RUDE, DEEP AS YOU CAN...

...SO IT'LL STAY WITH YOU A WHOLE LIFETIME LONG!



BECAUSE, IN THE BLINK OF AN EYE, YOU'LL BE ALL GROWN UP..



...AND THEN, BEFORE YOU KNOW IT, YOU'LL BE MY AGE, LOOKING BACK.



WHEN I GOT HOME THAT SUMMER AFTER BEING A CAMP COUNSELOR, I FELT **DIFFERENT**.

MORE GROWN UP, I GUESS.

MY MOM SEEMED **BETTER**, TOO.

YOUR FATHER AND I HAD A **TALK** WHILE YOU WERE GONE, RUDE.

YOU KNOW, IT'S OUR **TWENTIETH ANNIVERSARY** IN SEPTEMBER.

WE'RE GOING TO CELEBRATE IN THE HAMPTONS, WHERE WE HAD OUR HONEYMOON.



IT'LL ONLY BE A FRIDAY AND A **WEEKEND!**

SO, WE DECIDED YOU'RE MATURE ENOUGH TO STAY HOME **ALONE**.

OF COURSE, TERRY WILL CHECK IN ON YOU, AND YOU CAN ALWAYS CALL US IF THERE'S AN **EMERGENCY!**

THAT'S **GREAT MOM!** IT'LL BE **REALLY** SPECIAL FOR YOU AND DAD!

AND, DON'T WORRY ABOUT ME!

I'M GONNA BE A **SENIOR** IN GIRL SCOUTS THIS YEAR!

DID SHE SENSE I WAS A LITTLE **TOO** ENTHUSIASTIC?



A FEW WEEKS LATER...

THIS TIME, **WILL** TOOK TWO BUSES.

Uh, I DIDN'T KNOW YOUR HOUSE WAS THIS, uh, **SMALL**.

AND, uh, WHAT'S WITH ALL THE, um, **OLD** STUFF? IT'S LIKE A, um, MUSEUM.

HAHA Well, HOME'S WHERE THE HEART IS.

WANNA START WITH SOME TV? I THINK THERE'S **WESTERNS** ON NOW.

YOU LIKE THOSE? MY FAVORITE'S **MCLINTOCK** WITH JOHN WAYNE!



Uh, WESTERNS ARE, um, **BORING**. DONCHA, um, HAVE CABLE?

OF COURSE, WE BOTH **KNEW** HE HADN'T COME ALL THIS WAY TO WATCH TV.



I WISH. BUT, I'M SURE WE'LL FIND **OTHER** STUFF TO DO. **HAHA**

LEMME GET SOME **SNACKS**. I GOT COKE AND POPCORN!

I HAD A **PLAN**.



I'D FANTASIZED ABOUT THIS FOR WEEKS.

POPCORN?

Uh, yeah, COOL!



WHAT THE FUCK?!!

COKE?



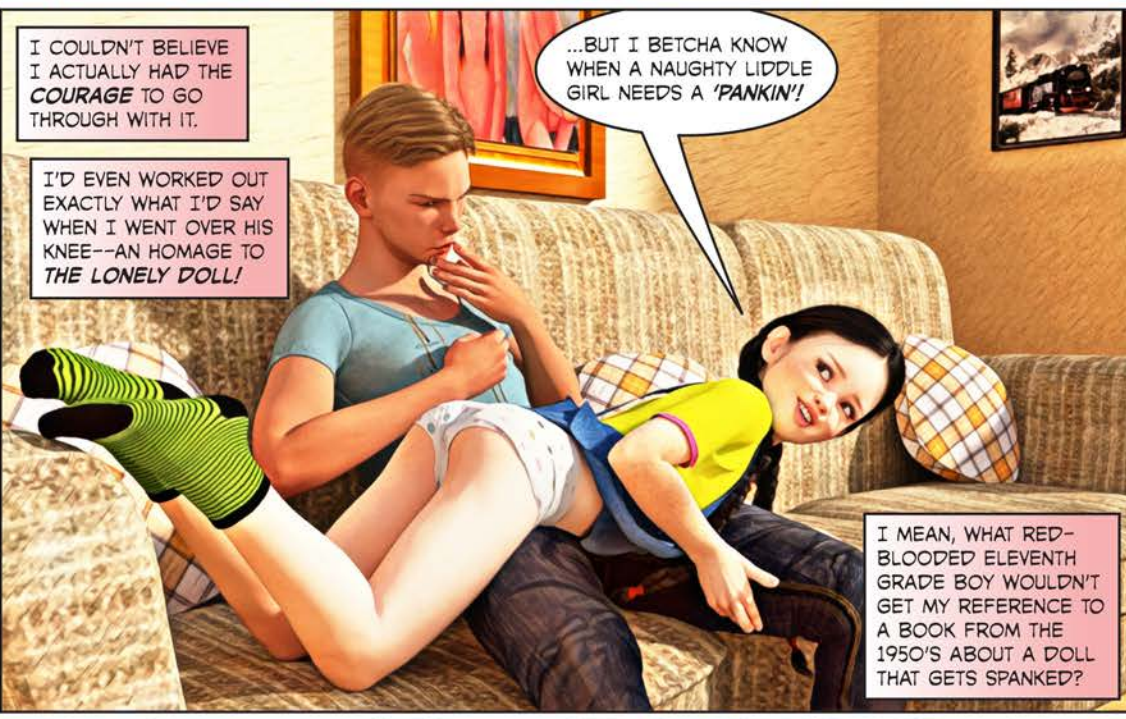
Ooops, BUTTERFINGERS.

OR, DID I DO IT ON PURPOSE, hmmm?

YEP, I WAS BRATTING BIG TIME.



YOU MAY JUST BE A SILLY OL' THING, WILLKINS...



I COULDN'T BELIEVE I ACTUALLY HAD THE COURAGE TO GO THROUGH WITH IT.

I'D EVEN WORKED OUT EXACTLY WHAT I'D SAY WHEN I WENT OVER HIS KNEE--AN HOMAGE TO THE LONELY DOLL!

...BUT I BETCHA KNOW WHEN A NAUGHTY LITTLE GIRL NEEDS A 'PANKIN'!

I MEAN, WHAT RED-BLOODED ELEVENTH GRADE BOY WOULDN'T GET MY REFERENCE TO A BOOK FROM THE 1950'S ABOUT A DOLL THAT GETS SPANKED?



Uh, RUDE YOU'RE BEING, um, TOTALLY WEIRD.

YOU'RE, uh, ACTING LIKE AN EIGHT-YEAR-OLD.

WELL, THAT WENT OVER LIKE A LEAD BALLOON.



AND, geez, YOU'RE WEARING LIKE, um, GRANNY UNDERWEAR.

KINDA, uh, KILLS THE MOOD.

AND YES, MY MOM WAS STILL BUYING MY UNDERWEAR.

BUT, I'D THOUGHT THIS WAS A VERY CUTE PAIR.



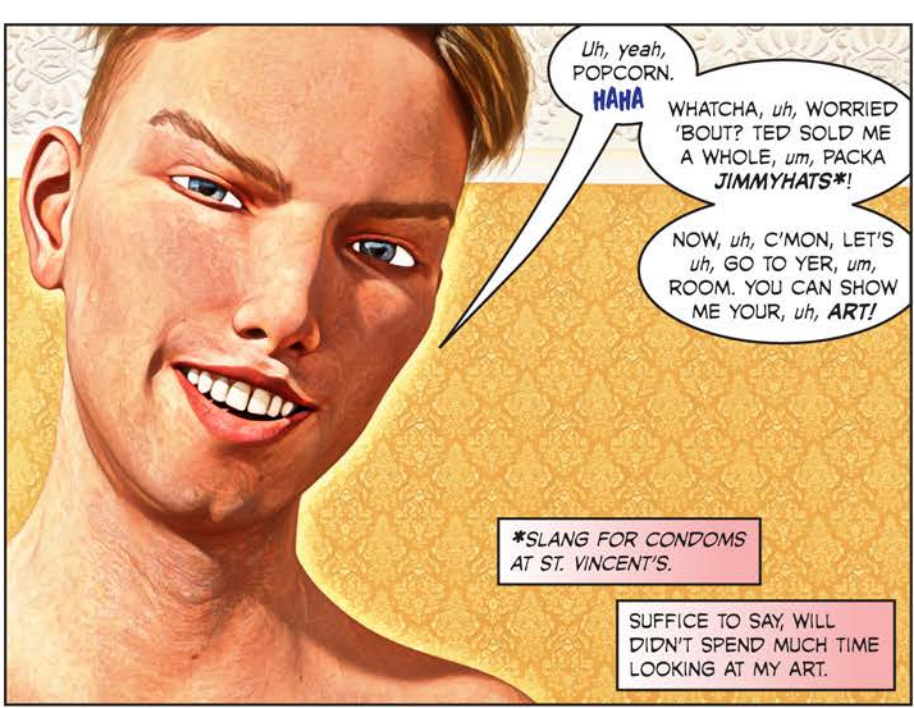
BUT, uh, WHO CARES 'BOUT UNDIES...

... 'CUZ WE'RE GONNA, um, GIT NIKKID, RIGHT?

I'D KNOWN THIS WAS PART OF THE PLAN, BUT IT WAS ALL HAPPENING SO FAST.

Um, D--DON'T YOU WANNA FINISH THE POPCORN FIRST?

BESIDES, MY FANTASIES ONLY GOT AS FAR AS THE SPANKING PART.



Uh, yeah, POPCORN. HAHA

WHATCHA, uh, WORRIED 'BOUT? TED SOLD ME A WHOLE, um, PACKA JIMMYHATS*!

NOW, uh, C'MON, LET'S uh, GO TO YER, um, ROOM. YOU CAN SHOW ME YOUR, uh, ART!

*SLANG FOR CONDOMS AT ST. VINCENT'S.

SUFFICE TO SAY, WILL DIDN'T SPEND MUCH TIME LOOKING AT MY ART.



Oh, uh, yeah, yeah, BABY!

SEX WASN'T WHAT I'D EXPECTED.

MOSTLY, IT JUST FELT SWEATY AND UNCOMFORTABLE.

IT SEEMED A LONG WAY FROM MY SECRET GARDEN.



Uh, um, um, COOL!



IT DIDN'T HELP THAT WE WERE DOING IT IN MY ROOM, WITH ALL MY OLD TOYS STARING AT US...

...AND THAT SLITHER WAS WATCHING...



...BUT THE BIGGEST THING IS, I KNEW THAT ACCORDING TO MY MOM AND FATHER BROWN...

...I WAS HEADED STRAIGHT TO HELL!



THAT FALL, NINTH GRADE STARTED.



IT **SUCKED**, BUT AT LEAST I HAD WILL, RIGHT?

I VISITED HIM EVERY WEEKEND WHEN THE WEATHER WAS GOOD.

WE FOUND A PLACE OUT IN THE WOODS TO HAVE SEX. IT WAS BETWEEN TWO **BOULDERS**, WHERE NO ONE COULD SEE US.

AFTER HOW HE REACTED, I **NEVER** BROUGHT UP SPANKING AGAIN.

BUT, I FIGURED OUT I COULD ENTER MY SECRET GARDEN DURING SEX, BY FANTASIZING ABOUT HAVING MY BOTTOM **WHACKED**.

AND NOW, WHENEVER I IMAGINED I WAS OVER WILL'S KNEE, I ALWAYS PICTURED MYSELF WEARING **FANCY RED PANTIES** INSTEAD OF THE PLAIN COTTON KIND.



**KNOCK!
KNOCK!**

C-COME IN!

RUDE, WE NEED TO TALK!

Oh, God! SHE KNOWS!

IT'S ABOUT **SCHOOL**. WE CAN'T HAVE A REPEAT OF LAST YEAR!

FALLING ASLEEP IN CLASS, A 'D' IN MATH...

I-I TRY MOM. B-BUT, I CAN'T **CONCENTRATE** IN SCHOOL.

ESPECIALLY NOT IN MATH. IT'S **IMPOSSIBLE!**

WELL, YOU'VE GOT TO **TRY HARDER**, YOUNG LADY!

YOUR GRADES WILL START TO COUNT TOWARD **COLLEGE** SOON!

Phew! AND, I THOUGHT IT WAS GOING TO BE ABOUT HAVING **SEX** WITH WILL...

...OR, **HIDING** WOODEN SPOONS UNDER MY MATTRESS!

Y-YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND. I'M NOT **SMART**, LIKE YOU AND DAD!

B-BESIDES, I DON'T KNOW IF I EVEN WANNA GO TO COLLEGE.





YOU'RE PLENTY SMART! YOU JUST DON'T **APPLY** YOURSELF!

AND, YOU HAVE TO GO TO COLLEGE TO BE A **TEACHER** OR A **NURSE**, LIKE WE'VE TALKED ABOUT!



BUT, I DON'T WANNA TEACH KIDS OR BE AROUND SICK PEOPLE!

I WANNA BE AN **ARTIST!**



LOOK RUDE, I KNOW YOU LIKE ART. AND, IT'LL ALWAYS BE A FUN **HOBBY** FOR YOU.

BUT, YOU CAN'T MAKE A **LIVING** AT IT!

YOU'VE GOT TO BE **PRACTICAL!**

DON'T THINK YOU CAN RELY ON A **MAN** TO TAKE CARE OF YOU!

DID YOU KNOW WE ALMOST **LOST** THE **HOUSE**, BECAUSE YOUR FATHER REFUSED TO TEACH ANYTHING BESIDES MUSIC?

NO, I DIDN'T KNOW.

IT FELT LIKE WHEN I TURNED FOURTEEN, MY PARENTS DECIDED IT WAS TIME TO DUMP ALL THE FAMILY **SECRETS** ON ME.



I TOLD MY MOM I'D TRY HARDER IN SCHOOL. I REALLY MEANT IT.

I KNEW I WASN'T GOING TO BE A TEACHER OR A NURSE...

...BUT I GUESS I FIGURED DOING BETTER IN SCHOOL MIGHT OFFSET MY MANY **SINS**.

BESIDES, WHEN WINTER CAME, I HAD MORE **TIME** ON MY HANDS.

SNOW AND FRIGID AIR PUT MY TRYSTS WITH WILL ON **HOLD**.



ANYWAY, I HAD A PLAN TO IMPROVE MY **CONCENTRATION**...

"HOW MANY **SQUARE** FEET IS A CIRCLE WITH A DIAMETER OF SEVEN FEET?" Hmmm...



...STOP MY ENDLESS FITS OF **GIGGLES**...

Aha! IT'S A **TRICK** QUESTION! IT'S CIRCLE FEET, NOT SQUARE FEET!

UNLESS THEY MEAN A CIRCLE WITH SQUARE FEET. AND **SHOES!**

Oooh, I HAFTA DRAW THAT!



...AND, GET A HANDLE ON MY TWO HOUR **DOODLING** SESSIONS.

THAT'S IT, YOUNG LADY! DISTRACTED **AGAIN!** FOUR **DEMERITS!**

YOU BETTER TAKE YOUR SWATS **NOW**, OR IT'LL BE **DOUBLE** LATER!



UNFORTUNATELY, MY PLAN CAUSED **OTHER** DISTRACTIONS.

ONE... TWO...

THWAK!

AFTER A LONG, HARD WINTER, SPRING ARRIVED.

IT'S A **SPECTACULAR** SEASON IN NEW ENGLAND.

Wow! THE HIGHEST GRADE ON YOUR TEST? AND YOU'RE IN **ALGEBRA!**

I ALWAYS SAID YOU'RE **SMART!** Well, YOUR MOM MUST BE PROUD!

ME, I JUST GOT A 'D' AGAIN. AND, I'M IN **DUMMY MATH!**

Ha! I DIDN'T EVEN **TELL** HER.

SHE'S TOO BUSY TEEING UP STEP-DAD NUMERO TRES.

DELILAH TOOK ME TO MCDONALD'S TO CELEBRATE, THOUGH.

NICER WEATHER ALSO MEANT I COULD RESUME MY OUTDOOR "ACTIVITIES" WITH WILL.

HONESTLY, THOUGH, THAT WAS STARTING TO FEEL KIND OF **EMPTY**.

SPEAKING OF YOUR SISTER, DID SHE DO YOUR **HAIR?**

I LOVE IT! I GUESS SHE'S GETTING A'S IN BEAUTY SCHOOL, huh?

BUT, geez, IT FEELS LIKE I'M THE **LAST** GIRL IN THE WORLD WITH LONG HAIR!

Oh, SAME OLD, SAME OLD. HE WAS TOTALLY **BUSY** IN THE WINTER.

NOW, I'M SEEING HIM LIKE EVERY WEEK AGAIN.

WE FOUND A NEW PLACE TO **DO IT!**
HAHA

Geez, DO YOU TWO DO **ANYTHING** ELSE BESIDES SCREW?

LIKE GO TO THE MOVIES?

OR, HANG OUT WITH FRIENDS, OR SOMETHING?

I MEAN, I **STILL** HAVEN'T EVEN MET HIM!

Yeah, SHE SAID I WAS GETTING TOO OLD FOR **PIG-TAILS**.

YOU KNOW, SHE'LL DO YOURS TOO, IF YOU EVER WANNA TRY A DIFFERENT **STYLE**.

ANYWAY, HOW'S **WILL?**

W-well, YOU KNOW WE HAVE TO KEEP IT A **SECRET**.

Uh, yeah.

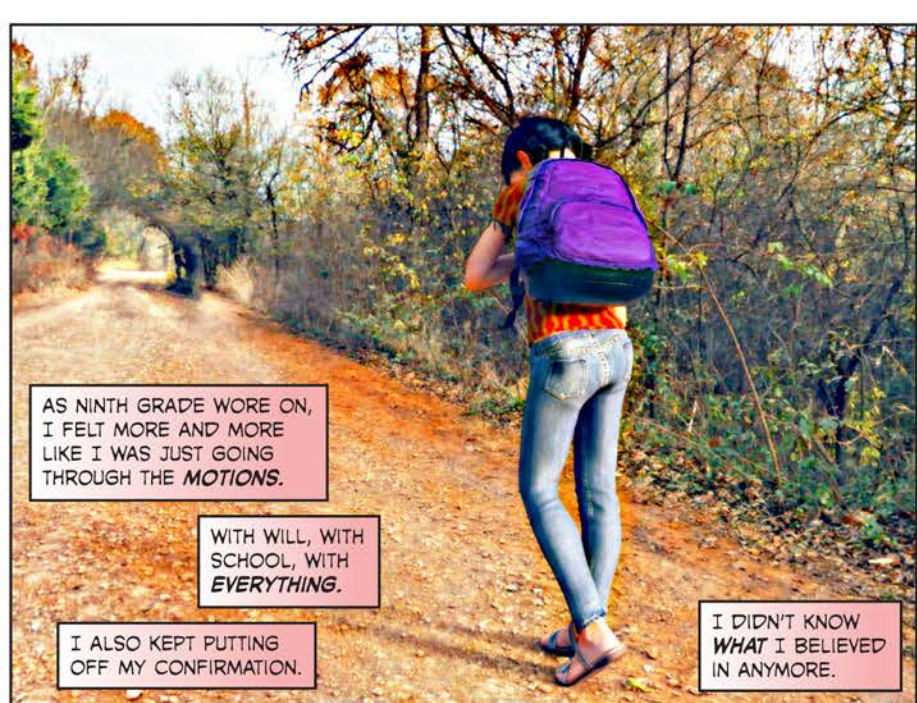
I-I DID MEET HIS FRIEND TED **ONCE**, WHEN WILL SNUCK ME INTO HIS DORM.

Hmmm. Well, ok.

ANYWAY, HAVE YOU NOTICED SAM'S GETTING WORSE?

SHE'S GAINED LIKE **FIFTY** POUNDS...

...AND, I SAW HER "PANTS" **TWO** SEVENTH GRADERS ON MONDAY.

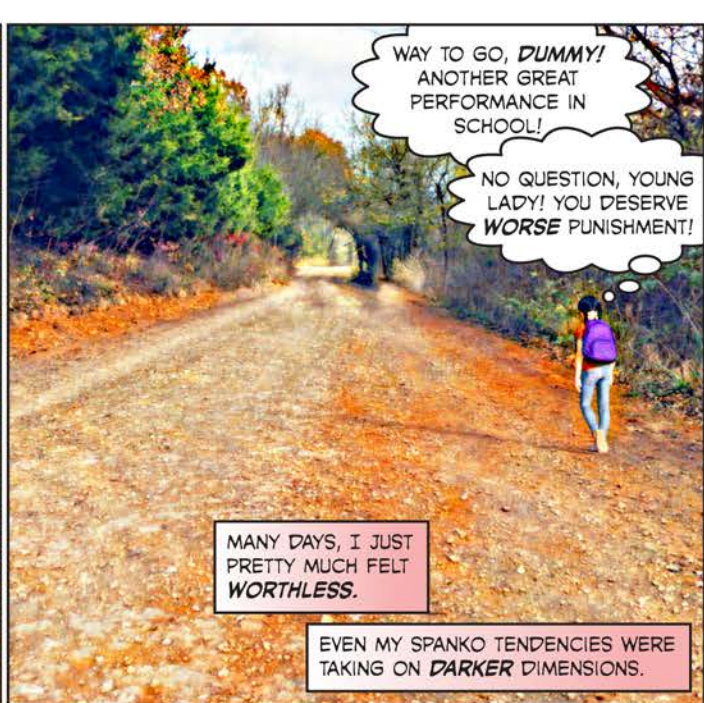


AS NINTH GRADE WORE ON, I FELT MORE AND MORE LIKE I WAS JUST GOING THROUGH THE *MOTIONS*.

WITH WILL, WITH SCHOOL, WITH *EVERYTHING*.

I ALSO KEPT PUTTING OFF MY CONFIRMATION.

I DIDN'T KNOW *WHAT* I BELIEVED IN ANYMORE.



WAY TO GO, *DUMMY!* ANOTHER GREAT PERFORMANCE IN SCHOOL!

NO QUESTION, YOUNG LADY! YOU DESERVE *WORSE* PUNISHMENT!

MANY DAYS, I JUST PRETTY MUCH FELT *WORTHLESS*.

EVEN MY SPANKO TENDENCIES WERE TAKING ON *DARKER* DIMENSIONS.



AT FIRST, I'D SPANKED MYSELF OUT OF *CURIOSITY*...

...THEN, TO RELIEVE STRESS AND *GUILT*...

...AND LATER, TO ENTER MY *SECRET GARDEN*.

BUT THEN, I STARTED TO DO IT TO *HURT* MYSELF.

Yep, YOU NEED *MORE* THAN JUST A SPANKING THIS TIME!

THE PAIN MADE ME FEEL *ALIVE*.



EVENTUALLY, SPANKING WASN'T *ENOUGH*.

SO, ONE DAY, I HAD A NEW IDEA.

I HEATED A FRYING PAN UNTIL IT *GLOWED*.

I PLANNED TO HOLD IT TO MY BOTTOM FOR A *FULL* MINUTE.



I ONLY MANAGED TO HOLD IT THERE FOR ABOUT FIVE SECONDS.

BUT, THAT WAS ENOUGH TO CAUSE *HUGE* BLISTERS.

IT SMELLED LIKE FRIED *BACON* IN MY ROOM.

MY BOTTOM TOOK *TWO WEEKS* TO HEAL.

I HAD TO TAPE GAUZE ON THE BLISTERS, SO THEY DIDN'T *OOZE* ALL OVER MY UNDERWEAR.

I TOLD WILL I WAS GROUNDED, SO HE WOULDN'T SEE WHAT I'D *DONE* TO MYSELF.

I NEVER USED THE FRYING PAN AGAIN...

...INSTEAD, I TRIED THE *BRISTLE* SIDE OF A HAIRBRUSH, *NEEDLES*, AND A MEAT TENDERIZER.

BUT, *NONE* OF THAT WAS ENOUGH.

SIZZLE

SO, I LIMPED ALONG, UNTIL THE END OF MAY.

THEN, THINGS **REALLY** FELL APART.

Hey, MY DAD TOLD ME YOUR JAZZ BAND'S GONNA PLAY AT THE **PROM**.

I SUPPOSE THERE'S ALWAYS THE STRAW THAT **BREAKS** THE CAMEL'S BACK.

AND, **ALL** THE BOYS IN THE BAND CAN BRING DATES, NOT JUST THE SENIORS!

Uh, yeah.

Well, I WAS THINKING...

I SAVED UP LOTS OF MONEY BABYSITTING.

I COULD BUY A DRESS YOU THINK'S REALLY COOL. NOT LIKE MY **HOMEMADE** STUFF.

I COULD EVEN GET A **BLONDE** WIG! WOULDN'T THAT BE FUN?

Uh, YOU KNOW YOU CAN'T, um, GO, RUDE.

WE'VE GOTTA, um, KEEP, uh, US A **SECRET**.

I-I GUESS YOU'RE RIGHT.

Well, COULDN'T WE DO SOMETHING **ELSE** FUN THEN?

MAYBE GO SEE A MOVIE? NOBODY'D SEE WE WERE TOGETHER, IN THE **DARK**.

Um, WELL, THERE'S NOT REALLY, uh, **TIME**.

YOU ALWAYS, uh, HAVE TO, um, RUSH BACK ON THE BUS, AFTER WE, uh, **SCREW**.

Y-YOU'RE NOT **EMBARRASSED** BY ME, ARE YOU?

I SWEAR, SOMETIMES IT FEELS LIKE I'M NOT **REALLY** YOUR GIRLFRIEND.

Uh, NO RUDE, um, NOTHING LIKE, uh, THAT YOU'RE THE, uh, **COOLEST**.

AND YOU'RE, uh, **TOTALLY** MY, um, GIRLFRIEND.

YOU, uh, KNOW, YOU'RE MY, um, **LITTLE ARTIST**.

Mmmm. YOU KNOW I **LOVE** IT WHEN YOU CALL ME THAT!

JUST **PROMISE** ME YOU WON'T INVITE ANOTHER GIRL TO THE DANCE.

Uh, SURE, RUDE.

YOU KNOW, IT'S GETTING, uh, **LATE**.

AND, I'M, uh, **SUPER HORNY**.

C'MON, LET'S, um, **SCREW**, BEFORE YOU HAFTA, uh, GO.



TWO WEEKS LATER, THE NIGHT OF THE PROM.

HOW WAS THE PROM THING?

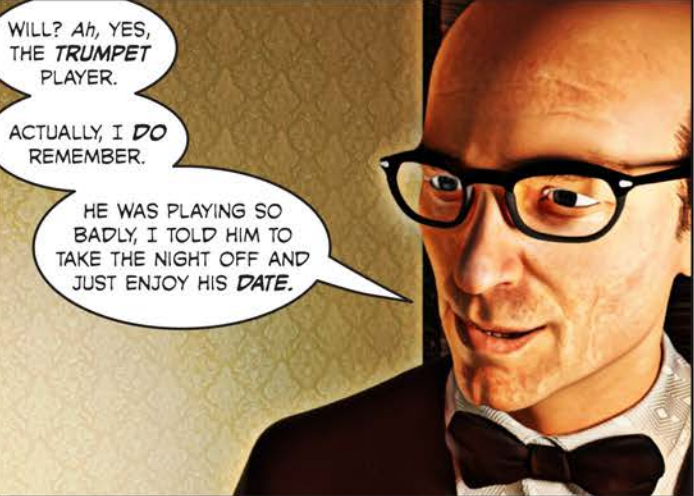
A SUCCESS, I THINK. THE BOYS SEEMED TO ENJOY THEMSELVES!

I TRIED TO ACT NONCHALANT WHEN MY DAD GOT HOME.

BUT, I'VE NEVER BEEN GOOD AT HIDING MY TRUE FEELINGS.



H-HOW ABOUT WILL?



WILL? Ah, YES, THE TRUMPET PLAYER.

ACTUALLY, I DO REMEMBER.

HE WAS PLAYING SO BADLY, I TOLD HIM TO TAKE THE NIGHT OFF AND JUST ENJOY HIS DATE.



H-HIS D-DATE?

SURE, ALL THE BOYS SEEMED TO HAVE ONE.

I CERTAINLY RECALL HIS...

...BECAUSE SHE WAS A GOOD HALF-HEAD TALLER THAN HIM. ESPECIALLY WITH ALL HER CURLY, BLONDE HAIR.



Oh dear, I SHOULD'VE REALIZED.

YOU KNOW, I THINK HE NOTICES YOU, TOO!

YOU MIGHT TRY CHATTING HIM UP A BIT.

BOYS THAT AGE CAN BE SHY. I SURE WAS!

SNIFFLE



I HELD IT IN UNTIL MY DAD WENT TO BED.

THEN, I CRIED UNTIL THE SUN CAME UP.

SOB!



YEZZ, THIZ IZ MIZZUZ WHITE.

I MUST SPEAK WITH WILLIAM RIGHT AWAY!

THERE'ZZ BEEN A DEATH IN THE FAMILY!

IN THE MORNING, I KEPT THROWING UP.

MY PARENTS THOUGHT I HAD THE FLU.

AS SOON AS THEY LEFT FOR CHURCH, I DIALED UP WILL'S DORM.



HI, WILL. GUESS WHO.

I JUST WANTED TO TELL YOU...



I HATE YOUR GUTS!

Um, WAIT! IT WAS TED'S SIS--

AND, I DON'T EVER WANT TO SEE YOU AGAIN!

CLICK!

AND, THAT MONDAY, I GOT MY YEARBOOK. ADDING INSULT TO INJURY, THERE WAS A LITTLE SURPRISE INSIDE FOR ME. I KNEW SAM HAD DONE IT. SHE WAS ON THE YEARBOOK STAFF.

WILL DID SEND ME A LETTER. BUT, I SHOVED IT UNDER MY MATTRESS, TOO ANGRY TO LOOK AT IT.

YEARS LATER, AFTER I'D GRADUATED FROM COLLEGE, I FOUND IT IN AN OLD BOX AND OPENED IT.

Dear Rude:

I was trying to tell you it was Ted's sister but you hung up. I just took her to the Prom as a favor to him. She's butt ugly. You're way cuter and cooler.

You're really special. Your art is really great. I'm not kidding. Someday I think you'll be famous. Me, I'll just have a fucking cocksucking pencil factory.

But I know you won't take me back. I don't deserve you. I'm really sorry I never treated you right. I think I'm fucked up inside. I'm like my old man I guess. Fuck, I can't even tell my own mom I love her.

Well I'll keep the picture you drew of me forever. I shouldn't have taken you for granted. I miss you. I hope you'll call me again someday.

Sincerely,
Will



JENNIFER REDFORD
"Most Likely To Drive A Brand New Silver Bimmer"
Jr. Glee; Student Council; Candy Strippers; Majorette; Jr. Business



RUDE RUMPS
"Most Likely To Become A Zodiac Killer Groupie"
Jr. Coven; Snake Handlers; Holly Marshall Fan Club; Glue Sniffers



I WONDER IF MY LIFE WOULD'VE BEEN DIFFERENT IF I'D OPENED WILL'S LETTER THAT SUMMER.

BUT, THAT'S NOT WHAT HAPPENED.

INSTEAD, I WENT OFF TO BROWNIE CAMP AND TRIED TO FORGET HIM.

WILLOW

AS THEY SAY, THOUGH, WHEREVER YOU GO, THERE YOU ARE.

AND, IT ALSO SEEMED LIKE WHEREVER I WENT, THERE WAS WILL.

WILMA

Shady Lane Brownie Camp

WILLABELLE

WILMINA

I WAS SUCH A BASKET CASE, CRYING AND MOPING AROUND...

...THAT THE CAMP DIRECTOR SENT ME HOME AFTER ONLY TWO WEEKS.

AND, IT SEEMED THAT SUMMER, WHEN IT RAINED, IT **POURED**...



RUDE, HONEY, SIT DOWN.

I HAVE SOME **VERY** BAD NEWS.

I'VE **NO** IDEA HOW IT HAPPENED...

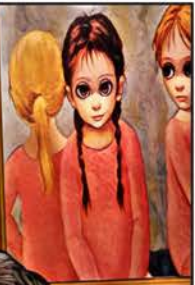
...YOU KNOW I'M SO CAREFUL WITH **SLITHER**...

...BUT, SOMEHOW HE **ESCAPED!** I LOOKED EVERYWHERE!

HE'S **G-GONE**. I'M SO SORRY, HONEY.

SOB!

IN MANY WAYS, LOSING **SLITHER** WAS **WORSE** THAN LOSING **WILL**.



I'VE HEARD SNAKES CAN LIVE A LONG, LONG TIME.

EVEN TODAY, I LIKE TO TELL MYSELF **SLITHER'S** STILL **OUT** THERE...

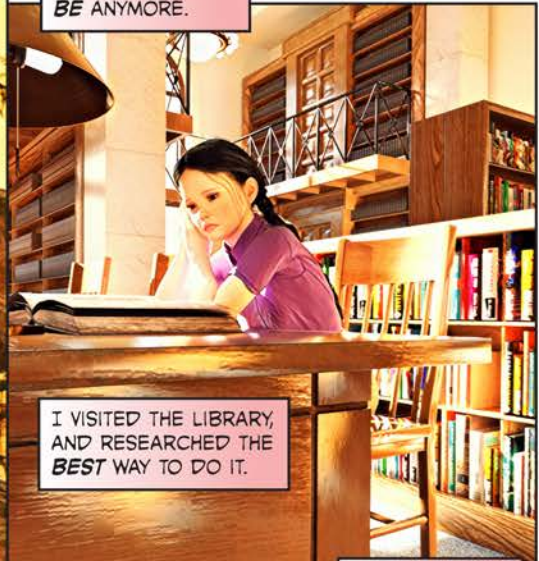
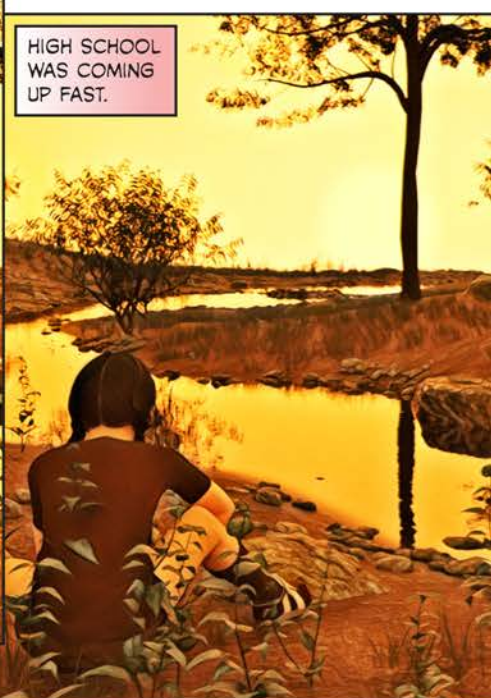
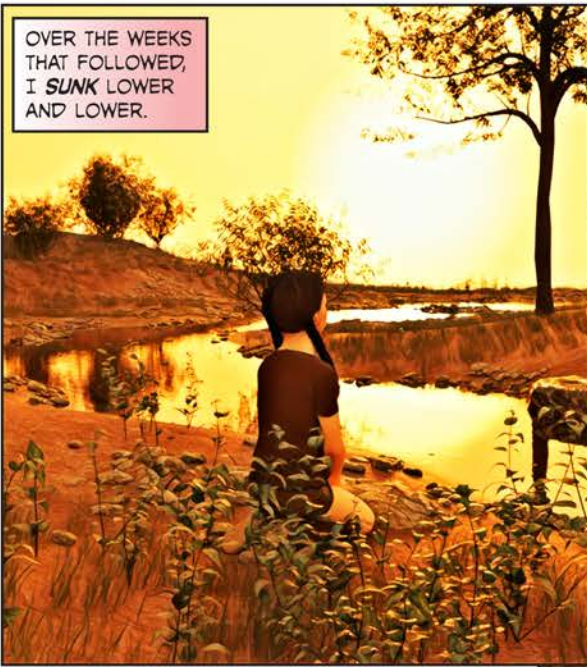
...CRAWLING AROUND IN THE WOODS, SNIFFING OUT SQUIRRELS AND FIELD MICE, IN A KIND OF SNAKY **HEAVEN**.



OVER THE WEEKS THAT FOLLOWED, I **SUNK** LOWER AND LOWER.

HIGH SCHOOL WAS COMING UP FAST.

I DECIDED I JUST DIDN'T WANT TO **BE** ANYMORE.



I VISITED THE LIBRARY, AND RESEARCHED THE **BEST** WAY TO DO IT.

SOON, I CAME UP WITH A **PLAN**.

THE **SUNDAY** BEFORE SCHOOL STARTED, I FAKED A FEVER, SO I COULD STAY HOME.

THEN, AS SOON AS MY PARENTS LEFT FOR CHURCH...

...I UNDRESSED AND CREPT INTO THE BATHROOM, TO CARRY OUT MY PLAN.

I'D READ IT'S ALMOST **PAINLESS**, IF YOU DO IT UNDERWATER.

BUT, EVEN IF IT HURT, WHAT'D I CARE?

I WAS NO **STRANGER** TO PAIN.

Uh uh, KIDDO. NOT ON MY WATCH.



F-FLOOEY? B-BUT, YOU'RE NOT RE--

Shhh...DON'T SAY IT ALOUD!

THAT'S VERY UNHEALTHY FOR US FAIRIES!

DIDN'T YOUR MOM EVER TELL YOU NOT TO PLAY WITH **SHARP** OBJECTS?

YOU KNOW, MISS, EVEN MORE THAN A GOOD SPANKING, YOU NEED A **MAKE-OVER!**

IN OTHER WORDS, IT'S TIME FOR YOU TO BE **YOU!**

B-BUT, I WANNA STAY **HERE**. IT'S WARM 'N COZY...

NONSENSE, LITTLE ONE!

IT'S TIME WE SAIL AND SAIL THE **SEAS...**

...AND THEN, WE SHALL COME TO **BYZANTIUM**.



INDEED, THERE WAS A *DEATH* THAT DAY.

WITH A TRIP TO THE THRIFT STORE AND SOME SNIPS OF DELILAH'S *SCISSORS*...

...I'D KILLED THAT *INNOCENT*, WIDE-EYED GIRL WITH THE LONG, STRAIGHT BRAIDS.

ALL THE SADNESS HAD *HOLLOWED* ME OUT, LEAVING BEHIND A RAW, JAGGED SPACE.

AND, WHEN I LET MYSELF SING, MY VOICE REVERBATED IN THAT ROUGH CATHEDRAL INSIDE ME, UNTIL IT EMERGED, *DARK* AND UNBRIDLED.



IN HER PLACE WAS A TOUGHER, GRITTIER ME, WHO SWOONED AT THE BEAUTY OF *PITCH-BLACK* NIGHTS...

...AND DANCED WILDLY TO THE HOWLING WINDS AND BOOMING THUNDER OF *HURRICANES*.

I FELT *FREE* FOR THE FIRST TIME IN MY LIFE.

MY HEAD *RACED* WITH POSSIBILITIES, AT A MILLION MILES AN HOUR.

IN MY EXCITEMENT, I DIDN'T CONSIDER AT ALL THAT MY PARENTS MIGHT BE A TEENSY-WEENSY BIT *FREAKED OUT*.

CHESTNUT; *S. fly*, bright green insect dried & used for raising blisters, as aphrodisiac, &c.; *S. fowl*, breed of domestic fowl with glossy greenish-black plumage; *S. grass*, esparto; *S. main* (hist.), NE coast of S. America between Orinoco river & Panama, & adjoining part of Caribbean sea; *War of the S. succession* (between France & Bavaria on one side & England, Prussia, & United Provinces, on the other, on death of Charles II of Spain without issue, 1701-14); (n.) S. language. [ME *Spainisc* (Spain, see -ISH¹)]

spank, v.t. & i., & n. Slap on buttocks with open hand or slipper &c., whence **spanking**¹ [-ING¹] n.; urge forward esp. by slapping or whipping; (of horse &c.) move briskly esp. at a step between trot & gallop; (n.) slap, blow with open hand &c., of buttocks. [cf. NFr. *spanner* & Da. *spanke* strut, LG *spanken* to spank, &c. tively]

spanker, n. In vbl senses; also: a horse, esp. a fast-going horse; (colloq.) person or thing of notable size or quality, stunner, whopper; (Naut.) fore-&-aft sail set on after part of mizzenmast. [-ER¹]

spanking² (for s.¹ see SPAN¹), adv. In vbl senses; also; (colloq.) strikingly, excellently, as *had a s. time*, *a s. (strong) breeze* (adv.) *a s. fine woman*. [-ING²]

spanless, a. (poet.). Beyond measure. [-LESS]

spanner, n. In vbl senses; also: instrument for turning nut on screw &c.; cross-brace of bridge &c.; connecting-rod in parallel motion of engine: = SPAN² *iron*. [-ER¹]

spar¹, n., & v.t. & i. (naut.) spar (of ship) used for mast, yard, &c.; *s.-buoy* (made of a s. with one end moored so that other stands up); *s.-deck*, upper deck extending from bow to stern, including quarter-deck and fore-castle; (v.t.) furnish with s., help (ship) over shallow bar with ss. [ME *sparre*, cf. Du. *spar*, G *sparren*, ON *sparri*, perh. cogn. w. SPEAR]

spar², n. Kinds of crystalline mineral, easily cleavable and non-lustrous, as *calcareous s.*, calcite, *Derbyshire* (= FLUOR) *s.*, *Iceland s.*, transparent calcite much used for optical purposes. [OE *spar*; G has *spath*, a diff. wd]

spar³, v.i., & n. Make motions of attack & defence with closed fists, use the hands (as) in boxing, (often *at* opponent); (fig.) bandy words, as *they are always sparring (at each other)*; (of cocks) fight esp. with protected spurs; (n.) sparring motion, boxing-match, cock-fight. [orig. = (of cock) strike out with spurs, f. OF *esparer* part. of Teut. orig., cf. SPUR, SPURN]

spā'ra'ble, n. Headless nail for soles and heels of boots. [corrupt. of *sparrow-bill*]

(do not provoke) *his blushes*; be f. *spartan* (f. prec.), cf. Du. & G *spar*
spar'ger, n. Sprinkling-apparatus for brewing. [f. rare vb *sparge* f. L *spargere*]
spark¹, n. Flery particle thro' burning substance; small bright point e.g. in gem; (fig.) brilliant wit &c., esp. *strike ss. out of* per- him to lively or original convers- neg. or quasi-neg.) particle of fire quality &c., as *not a s. of life reme- had a s. of generosity in you*; minous effect of sudden disruptiv- electric s. serving to fire explosive oil-engine of motor &c., as *adca- the s.*, increase, decrease, frequ- *fairy ss.*, phosphorescent light fr- vegetable matter &c.; *s.-arrester* preventing (injury from) SPARK² in apparatus, netting &c. to catch &c. Hence **sparkless** a., **spark** [OE *spearca*, cf. MDu. *sparcke*, & Da. *sprage*, crackle; perh. f. crack- ing wood &c.]

spark², v.i. Emit sparks of fire; *sparkling-plug*, device for firing mixture in motor-engine; (Elec) sparks at point where continuity interrupted. [OE *spearcian* as pr-

spark³, n., & v.i. Gay fellow; *ga- play the gallant*. Hence **spark** (f. n.) = prov. E *sprack* lively, cf. *sprækr*, also SPEAK & SPARK¹]

sparkle, v.i., & n. Emit sparks; (n.) glitter, glisten, whence **sparkler**¹ n., **spark** adv.; *sparkling wines* (giving off acid gas in small bubbles, cf. STIL- ling, gleam, spark. [ME *sparkle* f. SPARK^{1,2} + -LE(L, S)]

spar'row (-ō), n. Kinds of s. coloured bird, esp. *house s.*, Euro- noted for attachment to human dw- lifeness, and pugnacity; *s.-grass* (ragus); *s.-hawk*, kinds of small ha- on ss. &c. [OE *spearwa*, cf. ON *spurr*, cogn. w. SPAR²]

spar'ry, a. Of, like, rich in, sp-
sparse, a. (Of population &c.) tered, not dense; (Bot., Zool.) placed at distant or irregular intervals
spar'sel'y² adv., **spar'seness** n. *gere spars-* scatter]

Spar'tan, a. & n. (Native) of Sp- allusion to supposed characteristic *endurance, simplicity*. [f. L *Sparta* f. Gk *Spirtē*, see -AN]

Chapter Five

The Goth Years: Ages 15-17



RUDE
WHAT IN HEAVEN'S NAME!?!



YOUR HAIR!
Y-YOUR LONG,
DARK BEAUTIFUL
BRAIDS!
M-MY LITTLE
RUDY?!?
G-GONE?!?



DON'T WORRY DAD!
IT'S JUST HAIR! IT
GROWS BACK!
THE IMPORTANT
THING IS, **FAIRIES**
ARE REAL!
I WAS IN THE
BATHTUB, YOU
KNOW, AND, **BOOM!**
THERE WAS THIS
BRIGHT LIGHT!
WAS IT BRIGHTER
THAN A **THOUSAND**
SUNS? MAYBE! I
SAW THE WHOLE
UNIVERSE---



W-WHAT'S
WRONG WITH
HER? IS SHE ON
DRUGS?!?

A-ACTUALLY
HONEY, SHE SOUNDS
LIKE **YOU**, WHEN
YOUR MOOD IS UP
TOO MUCH.



GO TO YOUR
ROOM,
RUDE!

I-I NEED TO
TALK THIS OVER
WITH YOUR
FATHER!



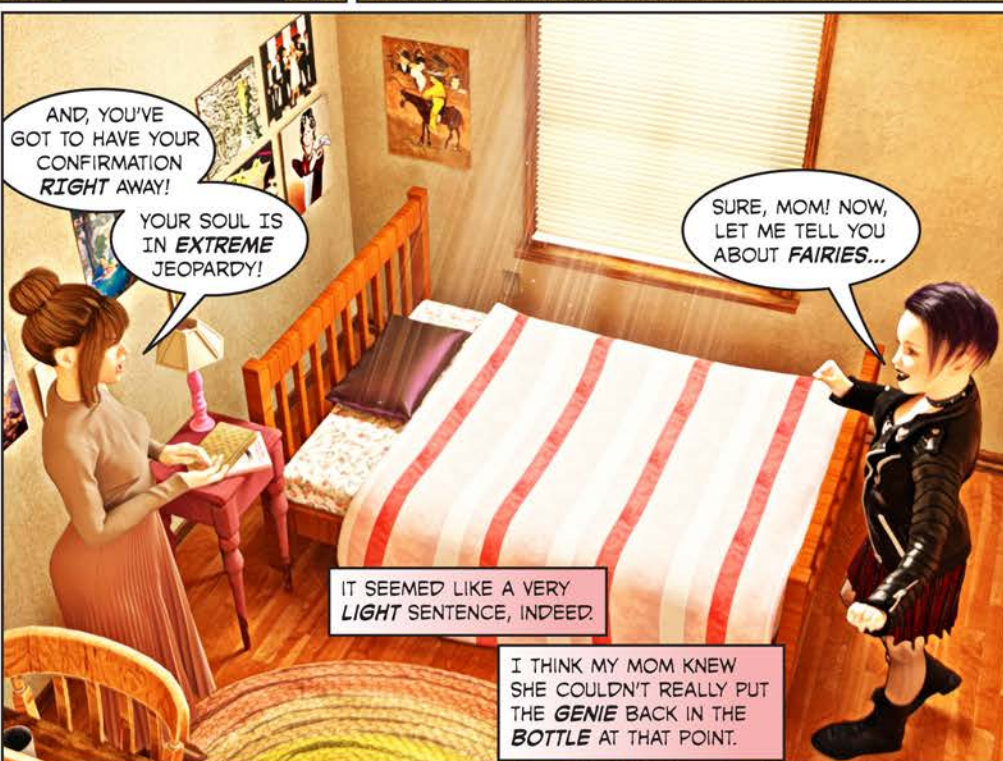
QUITE A WHILE
LATER...

ALL RIGHT RUDE,
HERE'S WHAT
WE'VE **DECIDED.**

FIRST, ABOUT YOUR
HAIR. WE DON'T LIKE IT.
BUT, IT'S **YOURS** AND
YOU CAN DO WHAT YOU
WANT WITH IT.

NO **MAKE-UP**,
THOUGH, UNTIL
YOU'RE OLDER!

AND, YOU'LL WEAR
NORMAL CLOTHES
TO CHURCH AND
SCHOOL!



AND, YOU'VE
GOT TO HAVE YOUR
CONFIRMATION
RIGHT AWAY!

YOUR SOUL IS
IN **EXTREME**
JEOPARDY!

SURE, MOM! NOW,
LET ME TELL YOU
ABOUT **FAIRIES...**

IT SEEMED LIKE A VERY
LIGHT SENTENCE, INDEED.

I THINK MY MOM KNEW
SHE COULDN'T REALLY PUT
THE **GENIE** BACK IN THE
BOTTLE AT THAT POINT.

Early October

#THE NIGHT BEFORE MY CONFIRMATION

SOMEHOW IT WAS EASIER TO GO THROUGH WITH IT NOW THAT I DIDN'T REALLY BELIEVE ANYMORE.

OVER THE LAST MONTH, I'D COME DOWN FROM MY *MANIA* AND COULD SEE THINGS MORE CLEARLY.

THAT NIGHT WAS ODDLY WARM FOR FALL.

I FELL ASLEEP AT PEACE, AS A *DRY*, SULTRY BREEZE BLEW THROUGH MY WINDOW.



Then, I was standing on an endless highway. Everything around me looked parched and worn out.



The smell of stale gasoline wafted on an arid wind.



A beat-up old pickup truck approached.



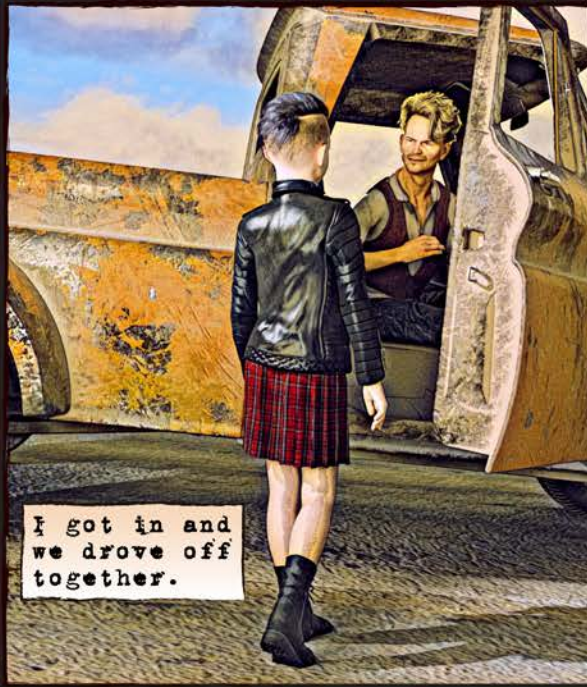
The truck stopped. The man inside was gaunt, with dirty, blonde hair. His age was hard to tell.



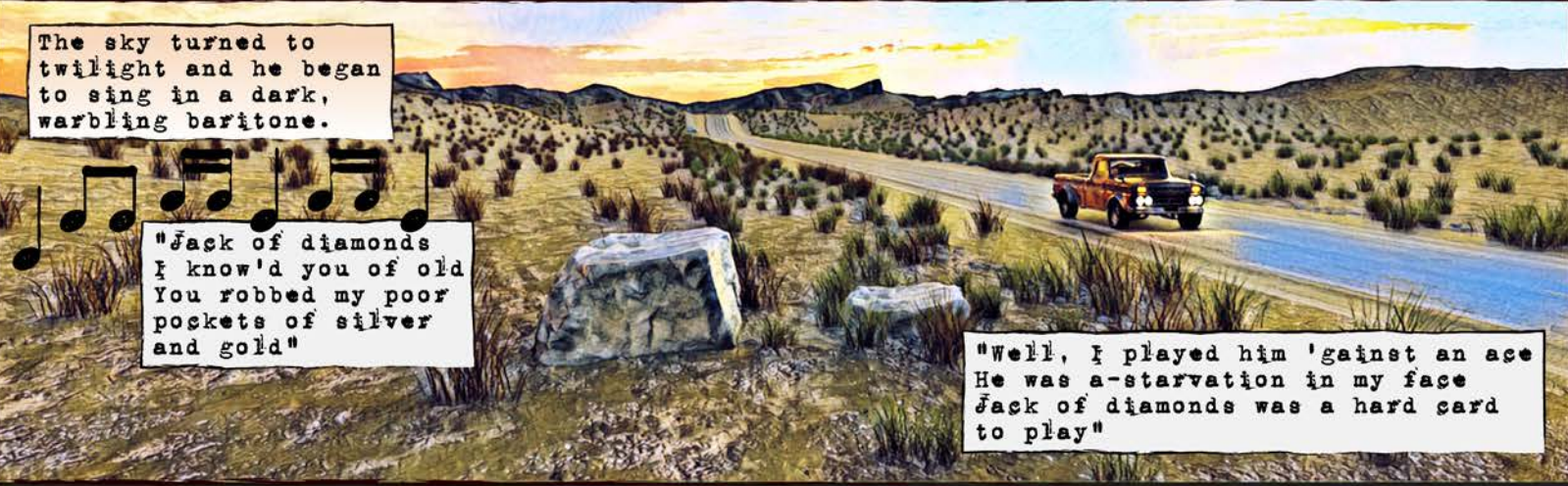
W-where are you going?



Five hun'ed miles 'way from home.



I got in and we drove off together.



The sky turned to twilight and he began to sing in a dark, warbling baritone.



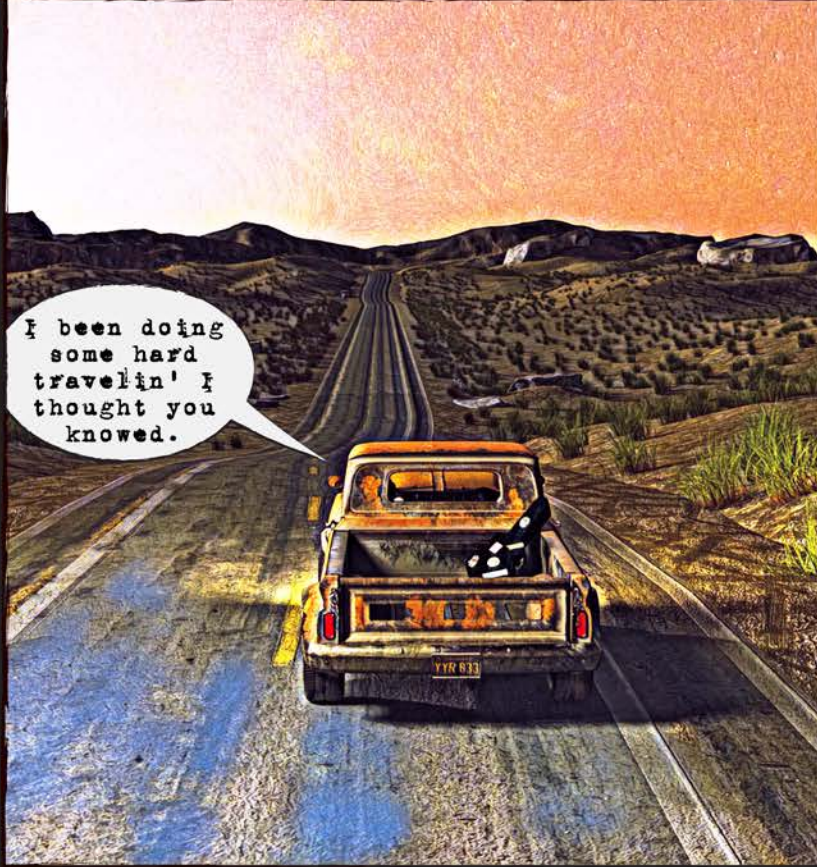
"Jack of diamonds I know'd you of old You robbed my poor pockets of silver and gold"

"Well, I played him 'gainst an ace He was a-starvation in my face Jack of diamonds was a hard card to play"



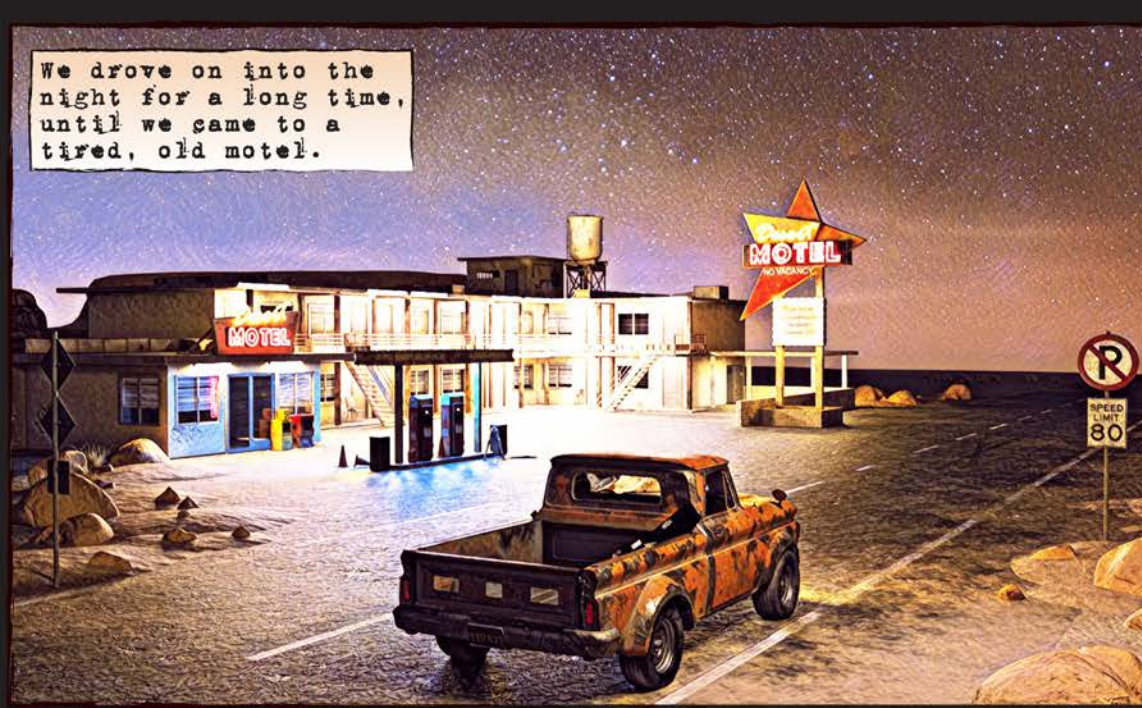
Where've you been anyway, mister?

Your truck looks like it's been to hell and back.

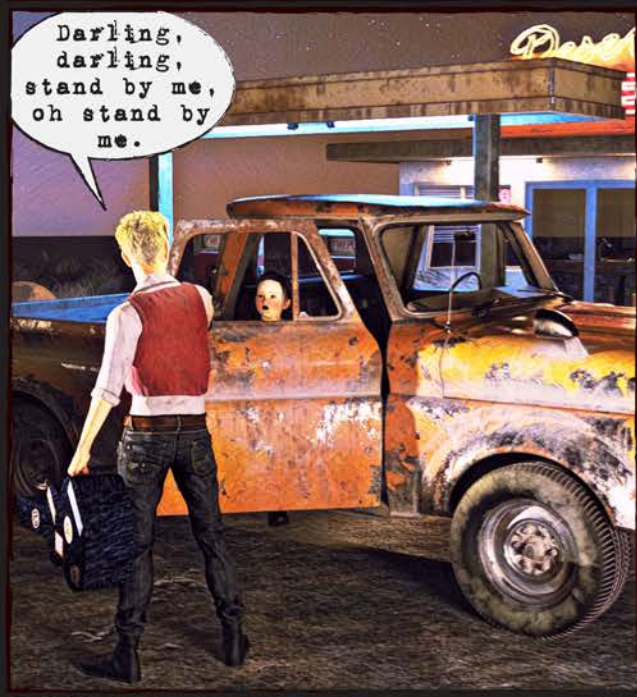


I been doing some hard travelin' I thought you knowed.

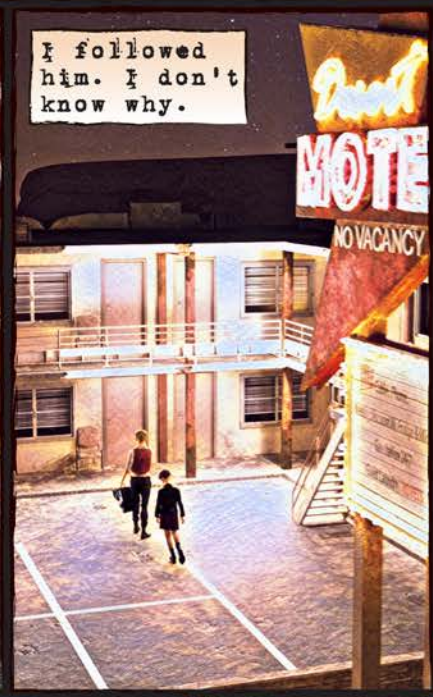
We drove on into the night for a long time, until we came to a tired, old motel.



A-are you out of gas?



Darling, darling, stand by me, oh stand by me.



I followed him. I don't know why.



When we got to the room, he took out his guitar and began to sing again.

Rudy, pretty Rudy, come go along with me...



If ever I return pretty Rudy-O, if ever I return, all your cities I will burn...

W-who are you? W-what are you?

He moved from song to song. But, they were all about me.



Whoa Black Rudy BAM-BA-LAM Black Rudy needs a spankin' BAM-BA-LAM...

Yes, the songs were all about me.

Then, the room was filled with the scent of a hundred thousand roses and I was over his knee.



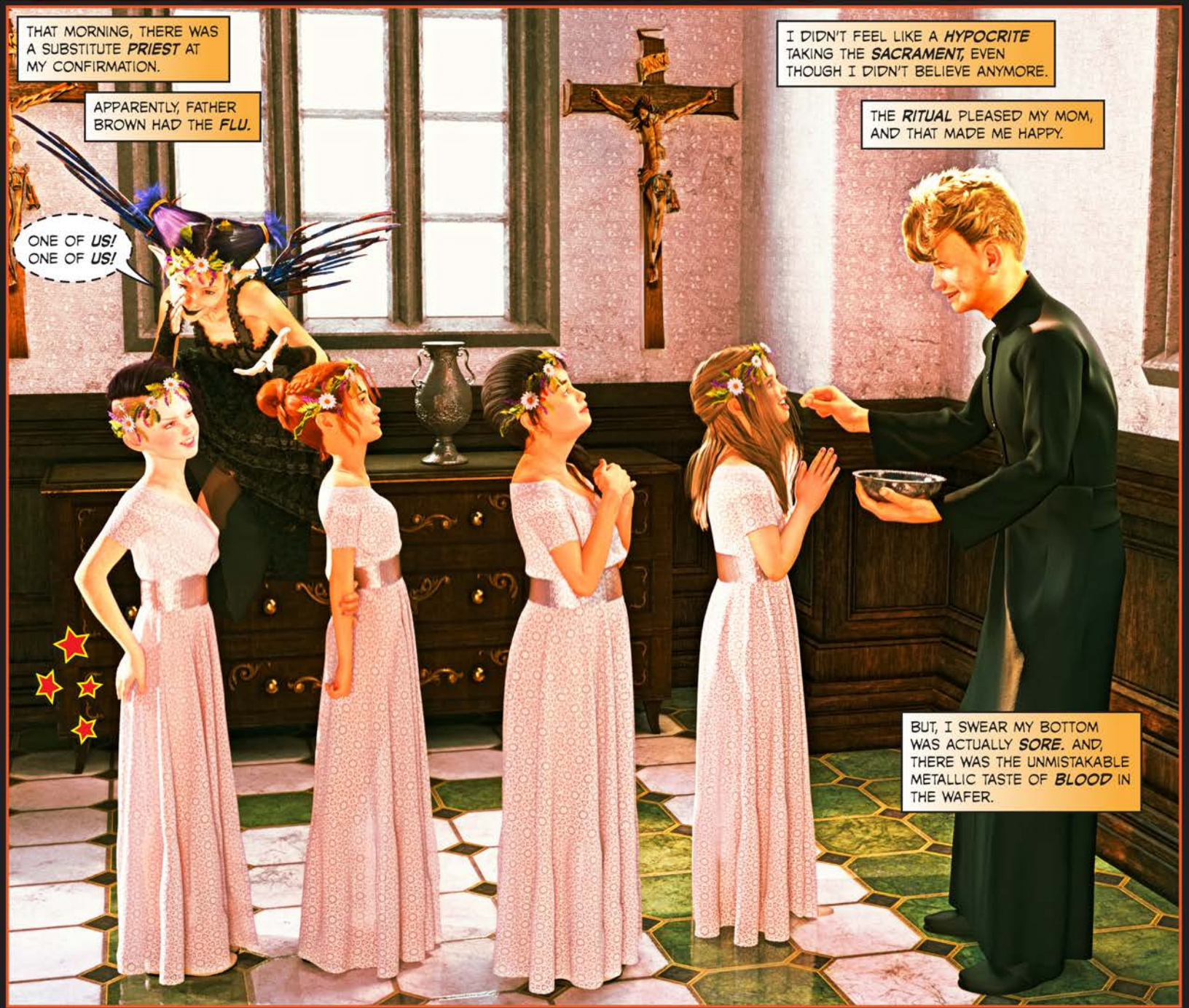
THAT MORNING, THERE WAS A SUBSTITUTE *PRIEST* AT MY CONFIRMATION.

APPARENTLY, FATHER BROWN HAD THE *FLU*.

ONE OF US!
ONE OF US!

I DIDN'T FEEL LIKE A *HYPOCRITE* TAKING THE *SACRAMENT*, EVEN THOUGH I DIDN'T BELIEVE ANYMORE.

THE *RITUAL* PLEASED MY MOM, AND THAT MADE ME HAPPY.



BUT, I SWEAR MY BOTTOM WAS ACTUALLY *SORE*. AND, THERE WAS THE UNMISTAKABLE METALLIC TASTE OF *BLOOD* IN THE *WAFER*.

MY MOM THOUGHT SHE'D SAVED MY SOUL.

Heh, heh. YOU'RE THAT GIRL SEAMUS SLAPPED ON THE BUTT. AREN'T YA?

I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT, DOUCHE-BAG. YOU GONNA SELL US A DIME BAG, OR NOT?

I'D DISCOVERED OTHER MISFITS IN MIDDLEBRIDGE, SO I WASN'T QUITE SO LONELY.

IF SHE ONLY KNEW WHAT I WAS REALLY UP TO...

DO YOU THINK WE COME BACK AFTER WE DIE? LIKE WE KEEP GOING 'ROUND AND 'ROUND?

ONE WAS JENNY'S FIRST BOYFRIEND, BOB HICKEY.

IT'S NOT, LIKE, JUST ONE SOUL.

HE WAS ACTUALLY REALLY SMART.

THERE'S YURGAS FOR HUMANITY. FOUR MILLION, THREE HUNDRED THOUSAND YEARS.

ANOTHER BOY WE HUNG OUT WITH, JASON CROW, WAS ARTISTIC AND PLAYED GUITAR.

HE CLAIMED TO BE NATIVE AMERICAN, THOUGH IT WAS RUMORED HIS MOTHER WAS VIETNAMESE.

THAT'S DEEP, MAN. I SHOULD'A BROUGHT MY WALKMAN.

INNA GADDA DA VIDA WOULD BE PERFECT NOW.

Uh, YOU PROBABLY OUGHTTA LAY OFF THE SHIT FOR A WHILE, RUDE.

I'VE TOTALLY GOT THE MUNCHIES. MCDONALD'S ANYBODY?

Um, DID YOU GUYS JUST GET TALLER?



THEN, THERE WAS SCHOOL...

ALL RIGHT, CLASS **DISMISSED**. EXCEPT YOU, MS. RUMPS. PLEASE STAY AFTER.

Reading
William Faulkner
Flannery O'Connor's "The Croquet Ground" and
"The Life You Save May Be Your Own"

Writing
Compare and Contrast
Journal



I BELIEVE **THIS** IS YOURS.

W-WHAT'D I DO **WRONG** THIS TIME?

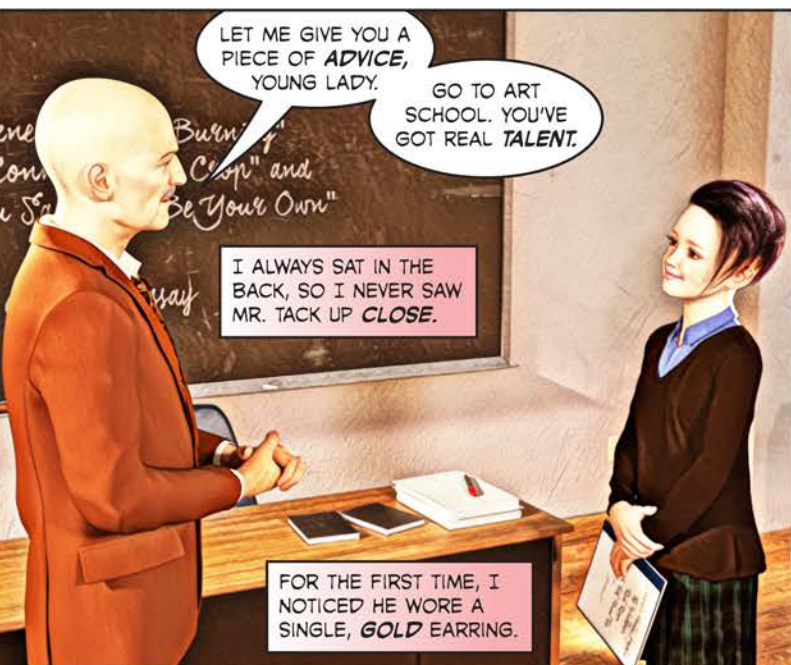
Next week
Reading
William Faulkner
Flannery O'Connor
"The Croquet Ground" and
"The Life You Save May Be Your Own"

Writing
Compare and Contrast
Journal



ON ITS OWN, IT'S A FINE, **SENSITIVE** READING OF HOPKINS.

BUT, WITH YOUR ILLUSTRATION OF THE WINDHOVER-- IT'S **EXQUISITE**.



LET ME GIVE YOU A PIECE OF **ADVICE**, YOUNG LADY. GO TO ART SCHOOL. YOU'VE GOT REAL **TALENT**.

I ALWAYS SAT IN THE BACK, SO I NEVER SAW MR. TACK UP **CLOSE**.

FOR THE FIRST TIME, I NOTICED HE WORE A SINGLE, **GOLD** EARRING.



AND, GET YOURSELF **FAR AWAY** FROM MIDDLEBRIDGE.

YOU DON'T WANT TO END UP **CLEANING BLACKBOARDS** LIKE ME.

ONE OF **US**. ONE OF **US**.

I LATER LEARNED HE'D GRADUATED WITH HONORS FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO, AND WON **PRIZES** FOR HIS SHORT STORIES.

HE'D PLANNED TO MAKE HIS LIVING AS A **WRITER**, BUT THINGS HADN'T QUITE TURNED OUT THAT WAY FOR HIM.

MY MOM WAS SO **THRILLED** I WAS DOING WELL IN ENGLISH, THAT SHE AGREED TO LET ME START LEARNING TO **DRIVE**.

I STILL GOT A 'D' IN **MATH**, THOUGH, AND HAD TO MAKE IT UP IN SUMMER SCHOOL.

Serve
cream



MiddleBridge Burger



Regular Burger.....\$1.10
Double Burger.....\$1.50
Golden Fries.....75¢

AS SOON AS I TURNED SIXTEEN IN JUNE, I GOT MY **LICENSE** AND A **JOB** AT THE MALL.

WOULD YOU LIKE **FRIES** WITH THAT, **DOUCHE-BAG**?

I'D WORK THERE EVERY DAY AFTER MY MATH CLASS, AND COME HOME WITH MY HAIR **SMELLING** LIKE FRENCH FRIES.

MY MOTIVATION: MY DAD AGREED TO SELL ME HIS OLD **CAR**, WITH A PAY-OFF PLAN OF \$15 A MONTH FOR THE NEXT TWO YEARS.

MY DAD ALSO ENCOURAGED MY INTEREST IN **ART**.

HE GOT ME TO SPREAD MY **WINGS** AND TAKE AN EXTENSION CLASS ON SATURDAYS AT THE STATE **COLLEGE**.

IT WAS A FORTY-FIVE MINUTE DRIVE FROM OUR **HOUSE**.

GETTING OUT OF MIDDLEBRIDGE ON MY OWN WAS COMPLETELY **LIBERATING**, EVEN FOR JUST A FEW HOURS.

THE COURSE WAS **LIFE-DRAWING**.

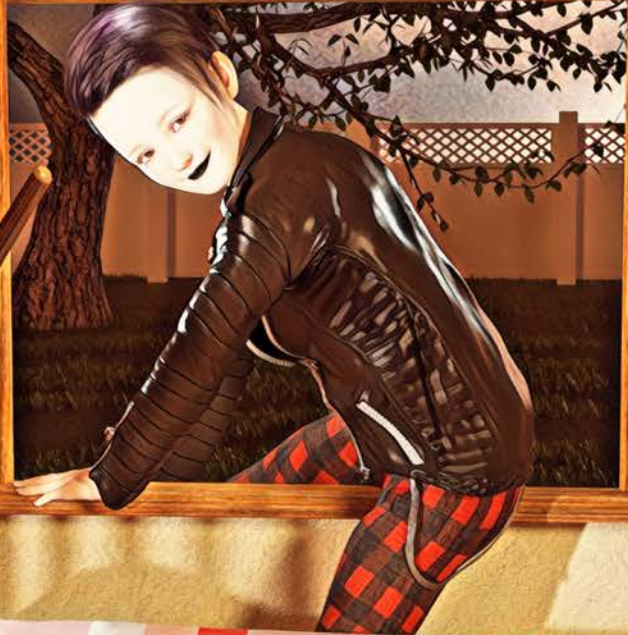
I KNEW I'D FOUND MY **CALLING**.

I WAS ESPECIALLY GOOD AT DRAWING ONE PART OF THE **ANATOMY**, AS YOU MIGHT'VE GUESSED.



WHEN ELEVENTH GRADE ROLLED AROUND, I KEPT **FLIPPING** BURGERS AFTER SCHOOL AND TAKING ART CLASSES ON SATURDAYS.

I ALSO FOUND OTHER THINGS TO DO AT **NIGHT**.



I'D SNEAK OUT MY **WINDOW** AFTER MY PARENTS WENT TO BED, AND MEET UP WITH MY LITTLE GANG OF MISFITS TO SMOKE POT.

SOMETIMES, WE'D EVEN DRIVE TO A BAR NEAR THE STATE COLLEGE, AND GET IN USING **FAKE ID'S** BIG MIKE HAD SOLD US.



THE HIGHLIGHT OF EVERY WEEK WAS MY SATURDAY **PAINTING** CLASS, THOUGH.

I'D STAY AFTER TO TALK TO THE **TEACHER**, MR. NICK FIRENZI, ABOUT ART.

HE TOOK ME SERIOUSLY, UNLIKE MOST **ADULTS**.

HE WAS TWENTY-FIVE, TALL, DARK AND **HANDSOME**.

YOU'VE **NEVER** SEEN VELAZQUEZ'S LAS MENINAS?



NO. WHAT IS IT?

Oh, YOU'LL **LOVE** IT!

I'LL LEND YOU A **BOOK** WITH A **GREAT** CHAPTER ABOUT IT.



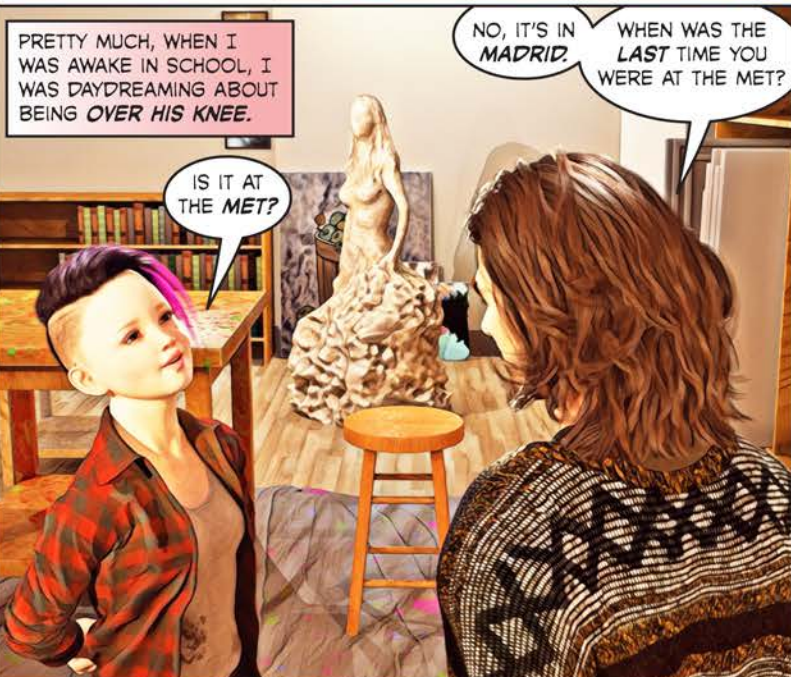
I WAS DEVELOPING QUITE A **CRUSH** ON HIM.

PRETTY MUCH, WHEN I WAS AWAKE IN SCHOOL, I WAS DAYDREAMING ABOUT BEING **OVER HIS KNEE**.

IS IT AT THE **MET**?

NO, IT'S IN **MADRID**.

WHEN WAS THE **LAST** TIME YOU WERE AT THE **MET**?



Gosh, NOT SINCE MY DAD TOOK ME FOR MY **THIRTEENTH** BIRTHDAY.

SERIOUSLY? MAYBE WE'LL HAVE TO ORGANIZE A **FIELD TRIP**!



NICK *ENCOURAGED* ME TO APPLY TO ART SCHOOL, TOO. AND, FOR THE FIRST TIME I BEGAN TO THINK ABOUT IT AS A REAL *POSSIBILITY*.

HE TOLD ME I'D NEED A *PORTFOLIO*, SO I STARTED LOOKING AROUND FOR SUITABLE *SUBJECTS* TO PAINT.

I STILL BUMPED INTO *AISHA* QUITE A BIT, WHEN SHE JOGGED NEAR MY HOUSE.

AND ONE DAY, *INSPIRATION* STRUCK...



Um, THIS MIGHT SOUND *WEIRD*, BUT....
....COULD I *PAINT* YOU?

Eh, YOU'RE NOT LIKE *CHARLEY* ARE YOU?



NO, NO, I'M WORKING ON *FIGURE STUDIES* FOR ART CLASS...

Hmmm. Well, ok, *REMBRANDT*. WHAT DO I HAVE TO DO?

...AND YOUR *MUSCLES* ARE *PERFECT!*



I GOT *AISHA* TO DO LIKE *FIFTY* POSES.

I WANTED TO MAKE SURE I GOT *EVERY* MUSCLE RIGHT.

SHE WAS A GOOD *SPORT* ABOUT IT, BUT BY THE END, I THINK SHE WAS CONVINCED I WAS *NUTS*.

PUT YOUR *ARMS* BACK A LITTLE MORE. GOOD! NOW, HOLD THAT *POSE!*



I WORKED FOR MONTHS ON A PAINTING FROM THE *SKETCHES* I'D MADE THAT DAY.

ART CAN BRING OUT MY *OBSESSIVE* SIDE FOR SURE.

AS SUMMER DREW NEAR, I STARTED TO LET MY HAIR **GROW** BACK.

I FELT **SOFTER**, MORE OPEN TO THE WORLD.

MY STYLE CHANGED FROM **ANGRY PUNK**, TO...**GOth HIPPIE?**

I'M SURE THE FACT I SAW **NICK** EVERY SATURDAY HAD SOMETHING TO DO WITH IT.

IT WAS BECOMING MORE THAN JUST A **CRUSH**.

I WAS FALLING IN **LOVE** WITH HIM.

CAN YOU BELIEVE IT? I'M GONNA **PASS** GEOMETRY!

IT'S GONNA BE A **GLORIOUS** SUMMER! NO MAKING UP CLASSES!

JUST FRENCH-FRY HAIR BY DAY, AND GETTING **WASTED** BY NIGHT!

YOU'LL HAVE TO **WRITE** ME ALL ABOUT IT.

W-WRITE? W-WHAT DO YOU **MEAN?**

WE'RE MOVING TO ABILENE, **TEXAS** NEXT MONTH. STEP-DAD NUMERO FOUR'S IN OIL.

WHO WOULD'A THUNK IT, MY **BABY**'LL BE BORN IN TEXAS!

JENNY HAD A HABIT OF **FORGETTING** TO TELL PEOPLE THINGS. **BIG** THINGS.

B-BABY? Oh my God. I-I DIDN'T--

I-IT'S **BOB'S**, ISN'T IT?

I'D NOTICED JENNY WAS GAINING **WEIGHT** THE LAST COUPLE MONTHS...

...BUT, I HADN'T PUT TWO AND TWO TOGETHER.

YEAH. IT'S **BOB'S** ALL RIGHT.

HE WANTS ME TO GO TO **PLANNED PARENTHOOD**.

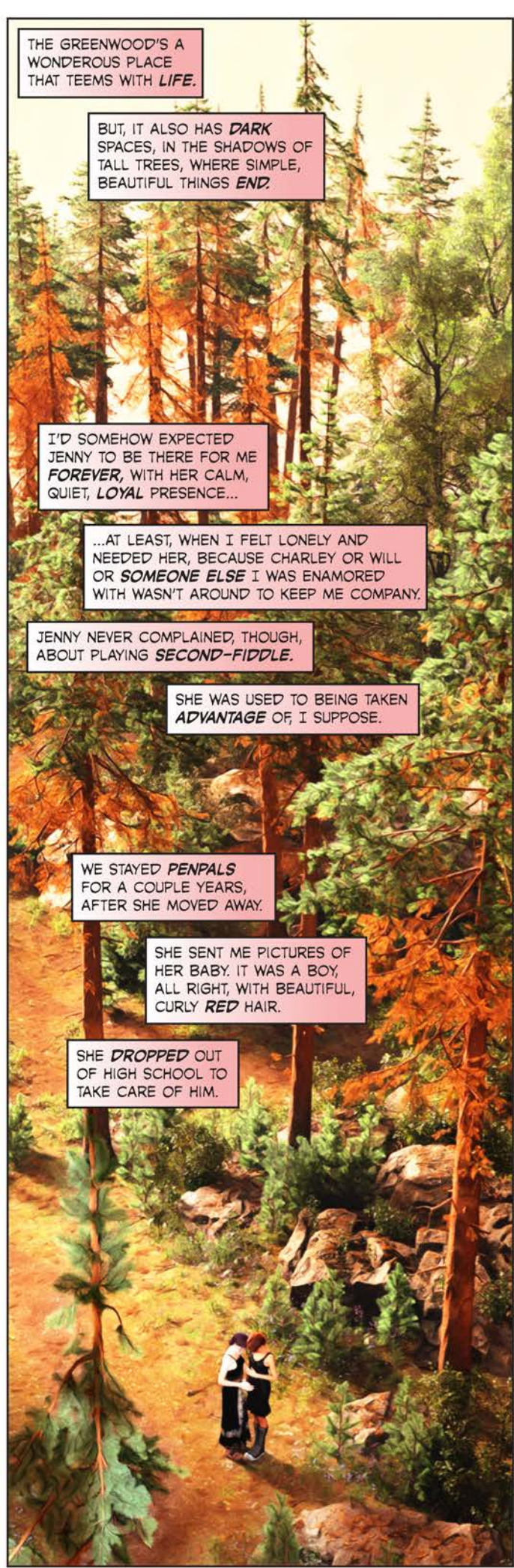
SO DOES MY MOM.

BUT, I'M GONNA **KEEP** THE BABY.

I'D FIGURED IT WAS JUST TOO MUCH **MCDONALD'S**.

IT'S A **BOY**. I CAN TELL.

AND, HE'LL BE TINY AND WARM AND **MOIST**, AND I'M GONNA LOVE HIM LIKE **NOBODY'S** EVER LOVED ME.



THE GREENWOOD'S A WONDEROUS PLACE THAT TEEMS WITH *LIFE*.

BUT, IT ALSO HAS *DARK* SPACES, IN THE SHADOWS OF TALL TREES, WHERE SIMPLE, BEAUTIFUL THINGS *END*.

I'D SOMEHOW EXPECTED JENNY TO BE THERE FOR ME *FOREVER*, WITH HER CALM, QUIET, *LOYAL* PRESENCE...

...AT LEAST, WHEN I FELT LONELY AND NEEDED HER, BECAUSE CHARLEY OR WILL OR *SOMEONE ELSE* I WAS ENAMORED WITH WASN'T AROUND TO KEEP ME COMPANY.


JENNY NEVER COMPLAINED, THOUGH, ABOUT PLAYING *SECOND-FIDDLE*.

SHE WAS USED TO BEING TAKEN *ADVANTAGE* OF, I SUPPOSE.

WE STAYED *PENPALS* FOR A COUPLE YEARS, AFTER SHE MOVED AWAY.

SHE SENT ME PICTURES OF HER BABY. IT WAS A BOY, ALL RIGHT, WITH BEAUTIFUL, CURLY *RED* HAIR.

SHE *DROPPED* OUT OF HIGH SCHOOL TO TAKE CARE OF HIM.



SHE WROTE TO BOB FOR YEARS, BUT HE *NEVER* ANSWERED HER LETTERS.

HER MOM AND STEP-DAD CALLED HER A *LOSER*.

WHERE DO I PUT MY *HAND?* HERE?

AT SOME POINT, SHE MOVED TO LIVE WITH HER *SISTER* IN ARIZONA.



Wow! I REALLY CAN FEEL HIM *KICKING!*

I DON'T REMEMBER WHY WE *STOPPED* WRITING.

PROBABLY, I WAS TOO BUSY WITH MY NEW FRIENDS IN *COLLEGE*.



I'LL MISS YOU JENNY. MORE THAN *ANYTHING*.

I'VE TRIED TO *FIND* HER MANY TIMES OVER THE *YEARS*, BUT NEVER COULD.

I'VE A FEELING SHE'S A *GRANDMOTHER* NOW. A VERY, VERY *LOVING* ONE.

WHEN I TURNED SEVENTEEN THAT JUNE, JENNY HAD ALREADY *MOVED AWAY*.

I'D PLANNED TO TAKE THE DAY OFF FOR MY *BIRTHDAY*, AND MEET NICK THAT MORNING.

BUT, A GIRL CALLED IN *SICK* AT WORK, AND MY BOSS TOLD ME I HAD TO TAKE THE FIRST SHIFT.

WHEN I WAS DONE, I WAS SO *EXCITED* TO SEE NICK, I RUSHED OVER WITHOUT *CHANGING*.

SORRY, IF I SMELL LIKE *FRIES*.

Haha. HERE, I GOT YOU *SOMETHING*.

IT'S A *BOOK* I THINK YOU'LL LIKE.

Oh, wow! I'LL BET IT'S A *GORGEOUS* ONE.

HEY, I JUST GOT AN IDEA OF SOMETHING *ELSE* YOU COULD GIVE ME!

IT'S AN *OLD* TRADITION...

I HAD A SUDDEN *IMPULSE*.

C'MON! OVER *HERE!*

YOU'VE GOTTA DO THIS *SITTING* DOWN!

AND, I'VE GOTTA GET IN THIS *POSITION...*

I HADN'T *PLANNED* IT, LIKE I DID WITH *WILL*.

Hmm. OK, BIRTHDAY GIRL.

TO THIS DAY, THE *SMELL* OF FRENCH FRIES TAKES ME BACK TO THAT *MOMENT*.

GIGGLE

I GUESS EVERYONE HAS THEIR OWN PERSONAL *MADELEINE*.

I'M SURE I'D HAVE LOST MY *NERVE*, IF I'D THOUGHT ABOUT IT TOO MUCH.

DON'T FORGET, ONE TO *GROW* ON, TOO!

FOR THE FIRST TIME, I FELT *LITTLE* AND INNOCENT, AND *GROWN-UP* AND NAUGHTY, ALL AT THE SAME TIME.

HE SMACKED SO GENTLY, I ONLY FELT THE MILDEST STING THROUGH THOSE *HIDEOUS* BROWN, POLYESTER PANTS.

...NINE...TEN...
...ELEVEN...

SQUEAL
GIGGLE
SMEK
SMEK
SMEK

NONETHELESS, IT FELT *HEAVENLY*.

SENSATIONS OF HIS *MAGIC* ELECTRIC HAND SPREAD THROUGH ME...

...TWELVE...
...THIRTEEN...
...FOURTEEN...

...SMOOTH AND JAGGED...FIRE AND ICE...*QUICKSILVER* AND IRON...

SMEK
SMEK
SMEK

...AND, THE EIGHTEENTH SWAT TURNED THE WORLD BRIGHT AND *GOLDEN*...

...FIFTEEN...
...SIXTEEN...
...SEVENTEEN...
...AND ONE TO GROW ON!

...SO, WITH ONE SOFT, SIGHING BREATH, THE ORIGINAL GARDEN *INHALED* ME.

Oh, geez, MAYBE I *SHOULDN'T* HAVE DONE THAT.

I-I DIDN'T MEAN TO BE *INAPPROPRIATE* WITH YOU.

I *DESEPERATELY* WANTED MORE...

...BUT, I WAS AFRAID HE'D THINK I WAS A *FREAK* IF I PUSHED IT TOO FAR.

INSTEAD, I SETTLED FOR A KISS.

...AND, SO IS THIS.

Oh, IT WAS *VERY, VERY* INAPPROPRIATE *SIGNORE FIRENZI*...

A LONG, *PASSIONATE* KISS. WITH *TONGUES*.



Um, NICK. NEXT TIME WE MAKE LOVE...

...WILL YOU DO WHAT YOU DID ON MY BIRTHDAY?

Hmm? WHAT DO YOU MEAN, BABE? TALK ABOUT ART?

NOT LONG AFTER MY BIRTHDAY, I SLEPT WITH NICK.

IT FELT GOOD. VERY GOOD.

AND, THAT GAVE ME THE COURAGE TO ASK FOR MORE.



NO, SILLY! I MEAN S-SPANK ME!

IT WAS SCARY EVEN SAYING THE WORD ALOUD, THOUGH.



Ah! STILL A LITTLE PUNKETTE, ARE YOU?

WHIPS AND CHAINS AND LEATHER GOODS, eh?



NICK SAW SPANKING AS AN S&M THING.

I DIDN'T UNDERSTAND MY SPANKO FEELINGS VERY WELL YET, SO THAT SEEMED TO MAKE SENSE.

HE ADMITTED HE WASN'T INTO IT, BUT HE DID IT BECAUSE HE WANTED TO PLEASE ME.

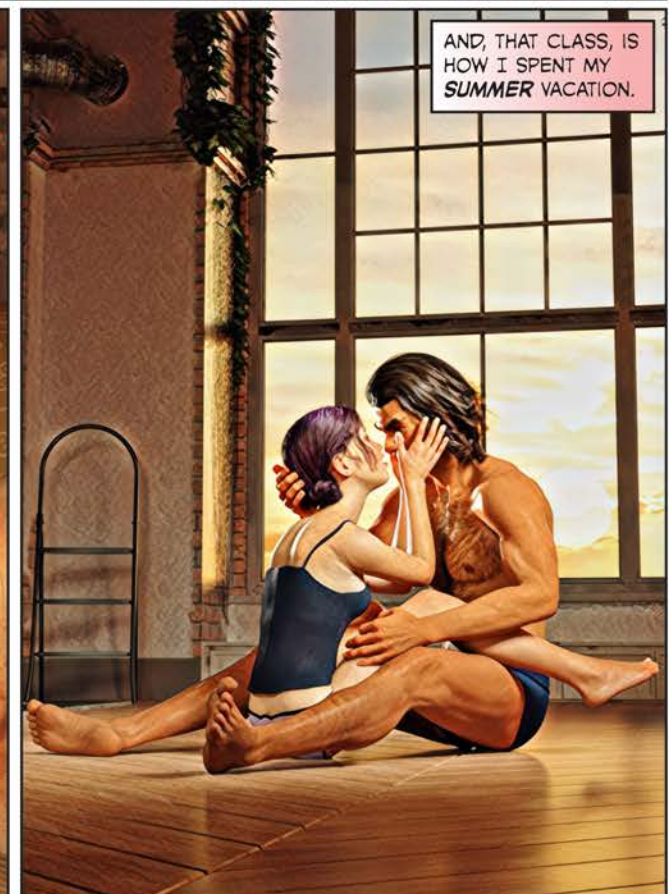
FIRST, HE'D KIND OF WRESTLE WITH ME, AND BITE MY EARLOBES A LITTLE.

THEN, HE'D ROLL ME OVER AND SMACK MY BOTTOM.

IT WASN'T HARD AT ALL, ALMOST LIKE CARESSES.

STILL, IT FELT LIKE THE GREATEST THING IN THE WORLD.

SMEEK!
SMEEK!
SMEEK!



AND, THAT CLASS, IS HOW I SPENT MY SUMMER VACATION.

NICK HAD ENCOURAGED ME TO ENTER MY **PAINTING** OF AISHA IN A COMPETITION FOR **YOUNG ARTISTS**.

TO MY UTTER **AMAZEMENT**, I GOT A LETTER SAYING I'D BEEN PICKED AS A **FINALIST**.

THEY INVITED ME TO **EXHIBIT** MY PAINTING AT AN ART SHOW IN **MANHATTAN** THAT OCTOBER.

PARENTS WERE INVITED, TOO. MY DAD CAME, OF COURSE. BUT, MY MOM STAYED HOME WITH "**HEADACHES**."

MANY OF US. MANY OF US.



THERE WEREN'T **PEOPLE** LIKE THIS IN **MIDDLEBRIDGE**.

DRINK, MADAME?

FINALLY, I FELT LIKE I WAS IN MY **ELEMENT**.

THANKS, DON'T **MIND** IF I DO!

MY DAD TOLD THE **SERVERS** I WAS OLD ENOUGH TO **DRINK**. I FELT VERY **SOPHISTICATED**.

I ALSO STARTED TO FEEL VERY **DRUNK**.

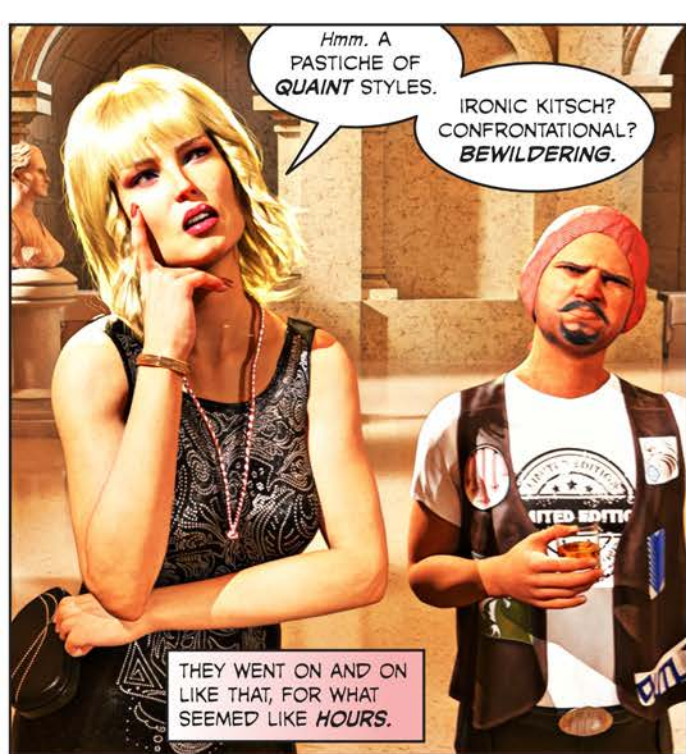
YOURS?

Y-YESH.

IT WAS A **HARBINGER** OF A **LIFELONG PROBLEM**. I GET **ANXIOUS** AROUND LOTS OF **PEOPLE**, SO I **DRINK** AND **DRINK**, TO TRY TO **CALM** MY **NERVES**.

IT'S SO...**Ahem**, **REPRESENTATIONAL**.





Hmm. A PASTICHE OF QUAINST STYLES.

IRONIC KITSCH? CONFRONTATIONAL? BEWILDERING.

THEY WENT ON AND ON LIKE THAT, FOR WHAT SEEMED LIKE HOURS.



FINALLY, IT WAS TIME TO ANNOUNCE THE WINNERS.

FIRST PLACE GOES TO GEORGE GEEF OF LAGUARDIA HIGH FOR "RED."

A DELICIOUS ABSTRACTION OF ANGER THAT SUBVERTS...

...THE DOMINANT PARADIGM THROUGH BOLD COLOR WITHOUT COLOR...



I WAS SO PLASTERED, I COULD BARELY STAND.

SECOND PLACE GOES TO MICHAEL GREENBLATT...

...OF ALEXANDER HAMILTON HIGH FOR "DEAD DOT"...



THIRD PLACE GOES TO RUDE RUMPS OF MIDDLEBRIDGE HIGH FOR "RUNNER."

AN IRONIC WORK THAT SHOCKS WITH ITS STARK REPRESENTATIONALISM...

...WHILE FORCING US STRIDENTLY TO CONFRONT THE BEAUTY OF THE HUMAN FORM.

THE ROOM KEPT SPINNING AROUND AND AROUND.

I WAS CONVINCED THE WHOLE CEREMONY WAS A BAD HALLUCINATION.



THE NEXT THING I REMEMBER WAS WAKING UP IN BED WITH A TERRIBLE HANGOVER.

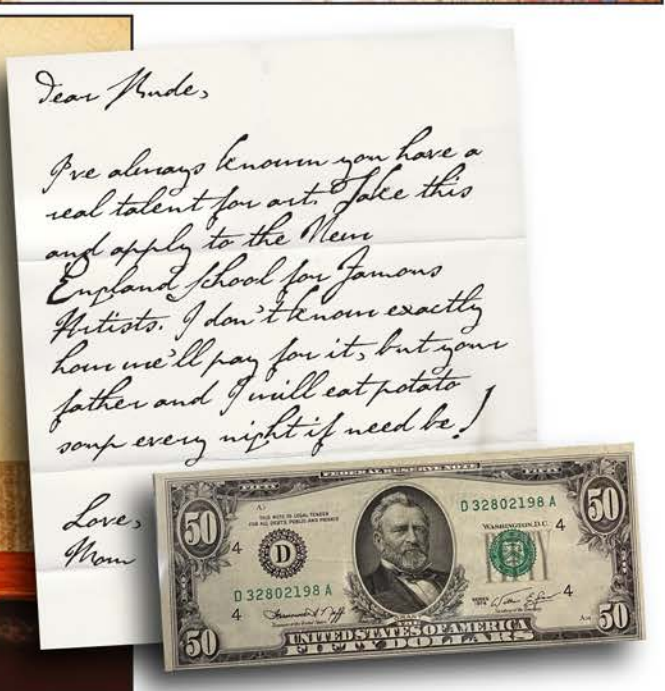
WHEN I FINALLY GOT UP TO GET A GLASS OF WATER, IT WAS LATE AFTERNOON THE NEXT DAY.

A MYSTERIOUS CHANGE HAD HAPPENED IN OUR LIVING ROOM.

THE HORRID PAINTING WE'D HAD ON THE WALL FOR YEARS WAS GONE.

IN ITS PLACE WAS MY PAINTING.

AND, I NOTICED AN ENVELOPE SLIPPED IN THE CORNER OF THE FRAME.



Dear Mude,

I've always known you have a real talent for art. Take this and apply to the New England School for Famous Artists. I don't know exactly how we'll pay for it, but your father and I will eat potato soup every night if need be!

Love,
Mom



THE WINTER OF TWELFTH GRADE WAS A HARD **SLOG**, THROUGH BORING CLASSES AND **ENDLESS** BURGER FLIPPING.

BUT FINALLY, **SPRING** ARRIVED, AND WITH IT, A BIG **ENVELOPE** FROM NESFFA*.

THEY EVEN GAVE ME A SMALL **SCHOLARSHIP**.

IT WASN'T MUCH, REALLY. I'D STILL HAVE TO **BEG**, **BORROW**, **STEAL**, AND **WAITRESS** TO ATTEND.

I COULD HARDLY SAY NO TO MY **DREAM** ART SCHOOL, THOUGH.

IT FELT LIKE I'D WON THE **LOTTERY**.

NICK WAS THE FIRST PERSON I TOLD THE **NEWS** TO.

*NEW ENGLAND SCHOOL FOR FAMOUS ARTISTS (NOT A REAL PLACE, BUT BASED ON ONE).



I HAVE SOME NEWS, TOO. I'M GOING TO **CALCUTTA...**
...IN **AUGUST**.

WHEN WE FIRST MET, NICK HAD TOLD ME HE PLANNED TO JOIN THE **PEACE CORPS** SOMEDAY.

BUT, I'D THOUGHT THAT WAS JUST A FAR-OFF **PIPE-DREAM**.



I-INDIA?
A-AUGUST?

I-I THOUGHT I'D COME BACK ON **WEEKENDS**, AND SEE YOU!



I KNOW, BUT AUGUST'S WHEN THEY **NEED** ME.

BESIDES, THAT'S THE RIGHT TIME FOR **US**, TOO.

I **LOVE** YOU BABE, BUT YOU KNOW WE CAN'T KEEP THIS UP **FOREVER**.

YOU'LL BE EIGHTEEN IN A FEW MONTHS, AND GOING OFF TO **COLLEGE**.

I'LL BE TWENTY SEVEN, AND IF I STAY HERE, I'LL KEEP GOING **NOWHERE**.

TO EVERYTHING, THERE IS A **SEASON**.



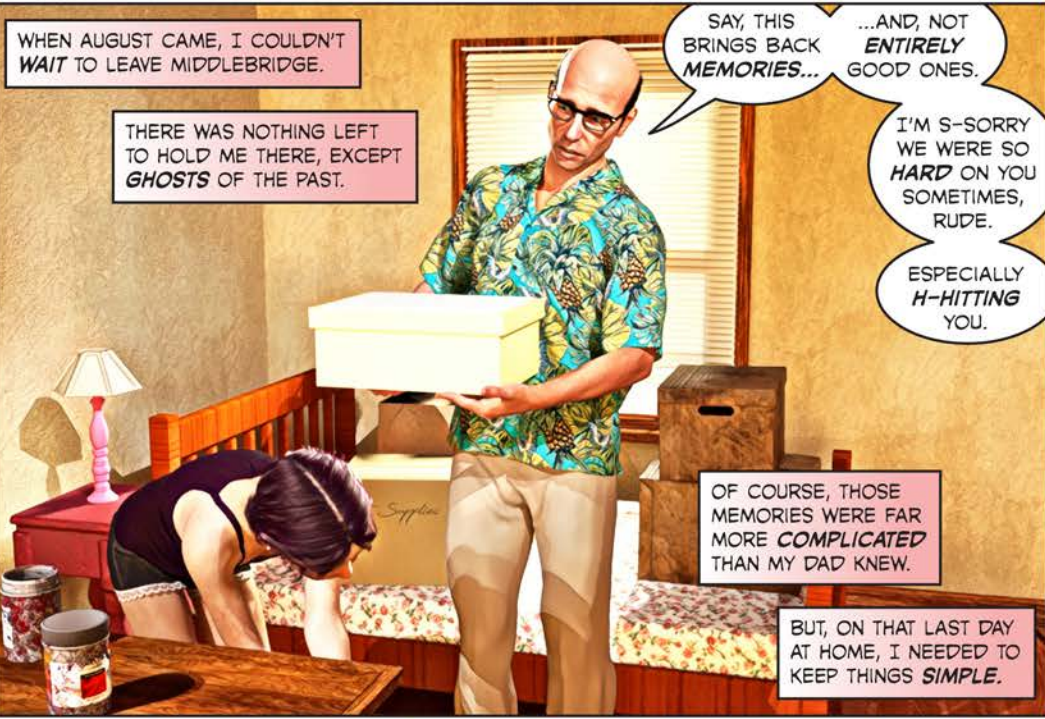
THAT SUMMER REMINDED ME OF THE **MOVIE** "HAROLD AND MAUDE."

NICK AND I TRIED TO PACK ALL WE COULD INTO THOSE **MONTHS**.

WE **CRIED**, WE LAUGHED, WE HAD SEX, WE ATE CAVIAR.

BUT, A **DEATH** HAD BEEN **FORETOLD**, AND EACH DAY, THE END DREW NEARER.





WHEN AUGUST CAME, I COULDN'T WAIT TO LEAVE MIDDLEBRIDGE.

THERE WAS NOTHING LEFT TO HOLD ME THERE, EXCEPT **GHOSTS OF THE PAST.**

SAY, THIS BRINGS BACK **MEMORIES...**

...AND, NOT **ENTIRELY** GOOD ONES.

I'M S-SORRY WE WERE SO **HARD** ON YOU SOMETIMES, RUDE.

ESPECIALLY **H-HITTING** YOU.

OF COURSE, THOSE MEMORIES WERE FAR MORE **COMPLICATED** THAN MY DAD KNEW.

BUT, ON THAT LAST DAY AT HOME, I NEEDED TO KEEP THINGS **SIMPLE.**



G-gosh, DAD, **EVERY** PARENT S-SPANKED IN THOSE DAYS. B-BESIDES, IT NEVER REALLY **HURT.**

THE FIRST PART OF WHAT I SAID WAS MORE OR LESS **TRUE.**

THE SECOND PART WAS A **LIE.**



LUCKILY, MY **MOM** WALKED IN AND WE DROPPED THE SUBJECT.

DON'T JUST **STAND** THERE!

HELP HER WITH THAT **BOX!**

THAT BOX WAS **VERY** SPECIAL.

IT CONTAINED **HUNDREDS** OF MY SPANKY DRAWINGS...

...DOG-EARRED BOOKS AND COMICS CONTAINING SPANKING **REFERENCES...**

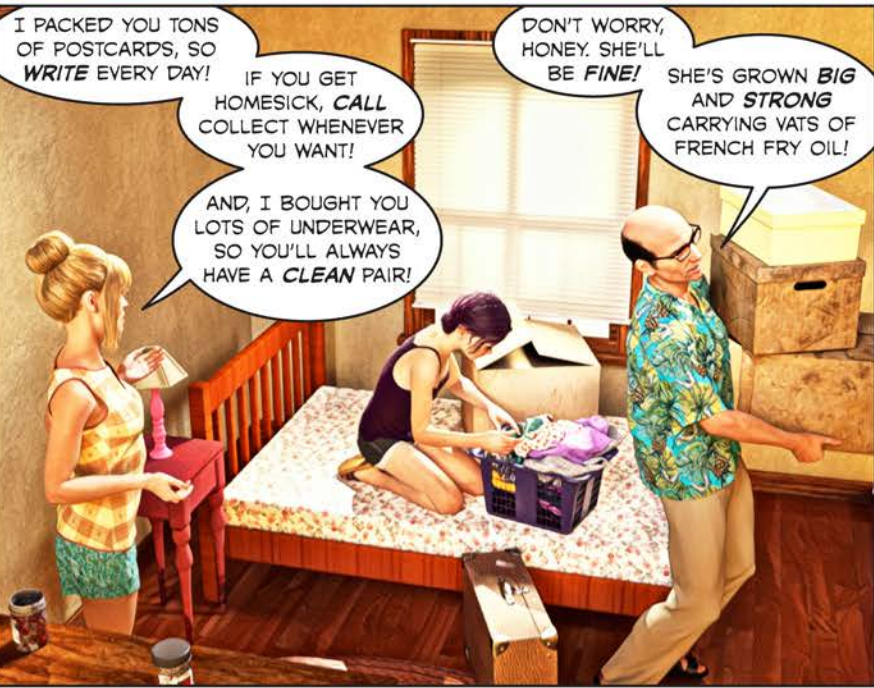
...NOTEBOOKS FILLED WITH UNSENT **LETTERS** TO WILL AND MY BAD ATTEMPTS AT EROTIC SPANKING **STORIES...**

...AND ALL THE KITCHEN **UTENSILS** I'D STOLEN TO SPANK MYSELF WITH.

I-I-V-E GOT IT MOM. I-IT'S JUST LIGHT **ART** SUPPLIES.

DAD CAN HELP WITH THE **HEAVY** BOXES ON MY BED.

FOR **DECADES** I'D CARRY AROUND THAT BOX FULL OF **SECRETS**, AS I MOVED FROM CITY TO CITY.



I PACKED YOU TONS OF POSTCARDS, SO **WRITE** EVERY DAY!

IF YOU GET **HOMESICK**, **CALL** COLLECT WHENEVER YOU WANT!

AND, I BOUGHT YOU LOTS OF UNDERWEAR, SO YOU'LL ALWAYS HAVE A **CLEAN** PAIR!

DON'T WORRY, HONEY. SHE'LL **BE FINE!**

SHE'S GROWN **BIG** AND **STRONG** CARRYING VATS OF FRENCH FRY OIL!



N-NO, SHE'S N-NOT BIG.

SHE'S STILL MY **LITTLE** GIRL, MY PRECIOUS LITTLE **BABY** GIRL.

AT AGE EIGHTEEN, I'D FELT MIDDLEBRIDGE CLOSING IN ON ME...

...THE SMALL-MINDED PEOPLE, THE ETERNALLY QUIET STREETS, THE **COOKIE-CUTTER** HOUSES...

I DESPERATELY WANTED OUT.

THE FUNNY THING IS, NOW I'D GIVE **ANYTHING** TO GO BACK.

I'VE VISITED THERE OVER THE YEARS. RECENTLY EVEN.

IT'S CHANGED.

FLOOEY, I'VE A FEELING WE'RE NOT IN MIDDLEBRIDGE ANYMORE.

NOW, THE OPEN LAKE THAT JENNY AND CHARLEY AND I USED TO SWIM IN WITHOUT ANY SUPERVISION, HAS A **FENCE** AROUND IT AND A LIFEGUARD STATION.

A STARBUCKS HAS REPLACED THE ABANDONED TRAIN STATION, WHERE I'D ACTED IN SEAMUS' "MOVIE" AND LATER **SMOKED** POT WITH MY GANG OF MISFITS.

BUT, IT'S NOT **JUST** MIDDLEBRIDGE THAT'S CHANGED. I HAVE.

WHEN I VISITED MY OLD BROWNIE CAMP RECENTLY, THOSE **WOODS** THAT'D SEEMED SO VAST AND **MAGICAL** TO AN EIGHT-YEAR-OLD, NOW LOOKED SO SMALL AND ORDINARY.

I GUESS I'VE SEEN TOO MANY GRANDER, BETTER FORESTS IN THE INTERVENING YEARS.

SO NO, I CAN'T EVER GO BACK, NO MATTER HOW MUCH I MIGHT **WANT** TO.

BUT, I CAN MAKE ART.

AND THAT WAY, THERE WILL ALWAYS BE SOMETHING OF **SUMMERS** AND **HORSES** AND **CHARLEY** IN THIS WORLD.

The End?

CHESTNUT; *S. fly*, bright green insect dried & used for raising blisters, as aphrodisiac, &c.; *S. fowl*, breed of domestic fowl with glossy greenish-black plumage; *S. grass*, esparto; *S. main* (hist.), NE coast of S. America between Orinoco river & Panama, & adjoining part of Caribbean sea; *War of the S. succession* (between France & Bavaria on one side & England, Prussia, & United Provinces, on the other, on death of Charles II of Spain without issue, 1701-14); (n.) S. language. [ME *Spainisc* (Spain, see -ISH¹)]

spank, v.t. & i., & n. Slap on buttocks with open hand or slipper &c., whence **spanking**¹ [-ING¹] n.; urge forward esp. by slapping or whipping; (of horse &c.) move briskly esp. at a step between trot & canter; (n.) slap, blow with open hand &c., on buttocks. [cf. NFr. *spanner* & Du. *spanke* strut, LG *spakke* shove, etc. tively]

spanker, n. In vbl senses also; (n.) fast-going horse; (colloq.) person or thing of notable size or quality, stout, whooper; (Naut.) foremast set on after side of mainmast.

spankling (for *spanking*), a. & n. In vbl senses also; (a.) shining, notable, excellent, as *ad a spankling* (stunning) breed, (adv.) *a s. fine* (come). [-ING²]

spanless, a. (colloq.). Beyond measure. [-LESS]

spanner, n. In vbl senses also; instrument for turning nuts, or for raising brace of bridge &c.; connecting-rod in parallel motion of engine; = SPAN²-worm. [-ER¹]

spar¹, n., & v.t. Stout pole esp. such as is used for mast, yard, &c., of ship; *s.-buoy* (made of a s. with one end moored so that other stands up); *s.-deck*, upper deck extending from bow to stern, including quarter-deck and fore-castle; (v.t.) furnish with s., help (ship) over shallow bar with ss. [ME *sparre*, cf. Du. *spar*, G *sparren*, ON *sparri*, perh. cogn. w. SPEAR]

spar², n. Kinds of crystalline mineral, easily cleavable and non-lustrous, as *calcareous s.*, calcite, *Derbyshire* (= FLUOR) *s.*, *Iceland s.*, transparent calcite much used for optical purposes. [OE *spar*; G has *spath*, a diff. wd]

spar³, v.i., & n. Make motions of attack & defence with closed fists, use the hands (as) in boxing, (often *at* opponent); (fig.) bandy words, as *they are always sparring (at each other)*; (of cocks) fight esp. with protected spurs; (n.) sparring motion, boxing-match, cock-fight. [orig. = (of cock) strike out with spurs, f. OF *esparer* part. of Teut. orig., cf. SPUR, SPURN]

spā'ra'ble, n. Headless nail for soles and heels of boots. [corrupt. of *sparrow-bill*]

(do not provoke) *his blushes*; be f. *spartan* (f. prec.), cf. Du. & G *spar*

spar'ger, n. Sprinkling-apparatus for brewing. [f. rare vb *sparge* f. L *spargere*]

spark¹, n. Flery particle thro' burning substance; small bright point e.g. in gem; (fig.) brilliant e.g. wit &c., esp. *strike ss. out of* per-

him to lively or original convers. neg. or quasi-neg.) particle of fire of quality &c., as *not a s. of life removed*; *had a s. of generosity in you*; minous effect of sudden disruptive

electric s. serving to fire explosive oil-engine of motor &c., as *ad a the s.*, increase, decrease, frequency

fairy ss., phosphorescent light from vegetable matter &c.; *s.-arrester* preventing (injury from) SPARK² in apparatus, netting &c. to catch in engine. Hence **sparkless** a., **spark**

[OE *spearca*, cf. MDu. *sparcke*, & Du. *sprage*, crackle; perh. f. crackling wood &c.]

spark², v.i. Emit sparks of fire; *sparkling*, device for firing in engine; (Elec) spark plug where continuity interrupted. [OE *spearcian* as present participle]

spark³, n., & i. Gay fellow; gay play the gallant. Hence **sparkling** a. *spark* lively, cf. *sparkle*, also SPEAK & SPARK¹]

sparkle, v.i. & n. Emit sparks &c. & fig. of wit &c.) glitter, glimmer, whence **sparkler**¹ n., **sparkling** adv.; *sparkling wines* (giving off acid gas in small bubbles, cf. STINGLING, gleam, spark. [ME *sparkle* f. SPARK^{1,2} + -LE(L, S)]

spā'row (-ō), n. Kinds of small coloured bird, esp. *house s.*, European noted for attachment to human dwellings, and pugnacity; *s.-grass* (ragus); *s.-hawk*, kinds of small hawk on ss. &c. [OE *spearwa*, cf. ON *spurr*, cogn. w. SPAR²]

spar'ry, a. Of, like, rich in, **spars** sparse, a. (Of population &c.) scattered, not dense; (Bot., Zool.) placed at distant or irregular intervals

spar'sely² adv., **spar'seness** n. *gere spars-* scatter]

Spar'tan, a. & n. (Native) of Sparta; allusion to supposed characteristic *endurance, simplicity*. [f. L *Spartanus* f. Gk *Spirtē*, see -AN]



I thought I was done making comics about my childhood when I finished GUS, but then the spanking artist GM reappeared on the internet after what seemed like decades. GM had created this whole fictional universe of comics from the forties that had spanking scenes in them. I loved his invented history of spanko comics (and, after all, real comics from that era, like Little Lulu, were chock full o' spankings). His stuff had certainly inspired my work! Anyway, one day he posted a panel from GUS, said it was one of his favorites in my graphic novel, and that he'd love to hear more stories about it. Of course, I had to do something. At first I was just going to do a picture or two, but his post sparked lots of memories, and I decided I had to do a whole story about it. So, here I am, three years after GUS, doing more comics about my childhood!

This story is about my recollections of my earliest spanking fantasy, about a man who always wore white gloves. I couldn't have been older than preschool or Kindergarten age, because I distinctly remember thinking about this during naptime at school. The teacher would turn off the lights and we'd have to lie on these mats on the floor and go to sleep. I hated naptime, because I wanted to keep playing or reading books. Besides, I could never fall asleep. So, instead I'd tell myself what I called "spanky stories." These were no simple daydreams, but instead were these elaborate soap operas I'd continue over months.

The stories took place in all sorts of locales and had a big cast of characters, whose backstories I'd think about constantly. I was always the protagonist and a good part of the stories had nothing to do with spanking—I'd make friends with fairies, develop magical powers, go on adventures, solve mysteries, etc. However, somehow the threat of a spanking always loomed in the background, and this is what made the stories so exciting for me. This was obviously long before spanking had erotic connotations for me. It just seemed endlessly fascinating and I didn't really question why at that age.

Where did the ideas for my fantasies come from? Looking back on it, I'm sure I was influenced by books, comics, TV shows, and movies. I loved fairy tales, especially ones that were a bit dark. There was something thrilling about reading the macbre parts of those stories, not unlike thinking about spankings. I loved stories with Victorian and Gothic settings, too, probably for the same reasons. There were also shows on at the time with those themes, like Dark Shadows and The Addams Family, which was one of my favorites (I identified with Wednesday for sure).

What about the white gloves? Well, white symbolizes purity and being unblemished. It also conveys aspects of class and "special handling" as in "white glove service." Cartoon characters, like Mickey Mouse and Bugs Bunny also wore white gloves. So, maybe I got the idea from that kind of thing. But, what about the spanking part, or making plaster casts of my bottom? I really have no idea...I'll have to leave that for the Freudians out there to figure out!

Rude Rumps

October 2024

"THE MAN WITH WHITE GLOVES"

Art & Story by
RUDE RUMPS

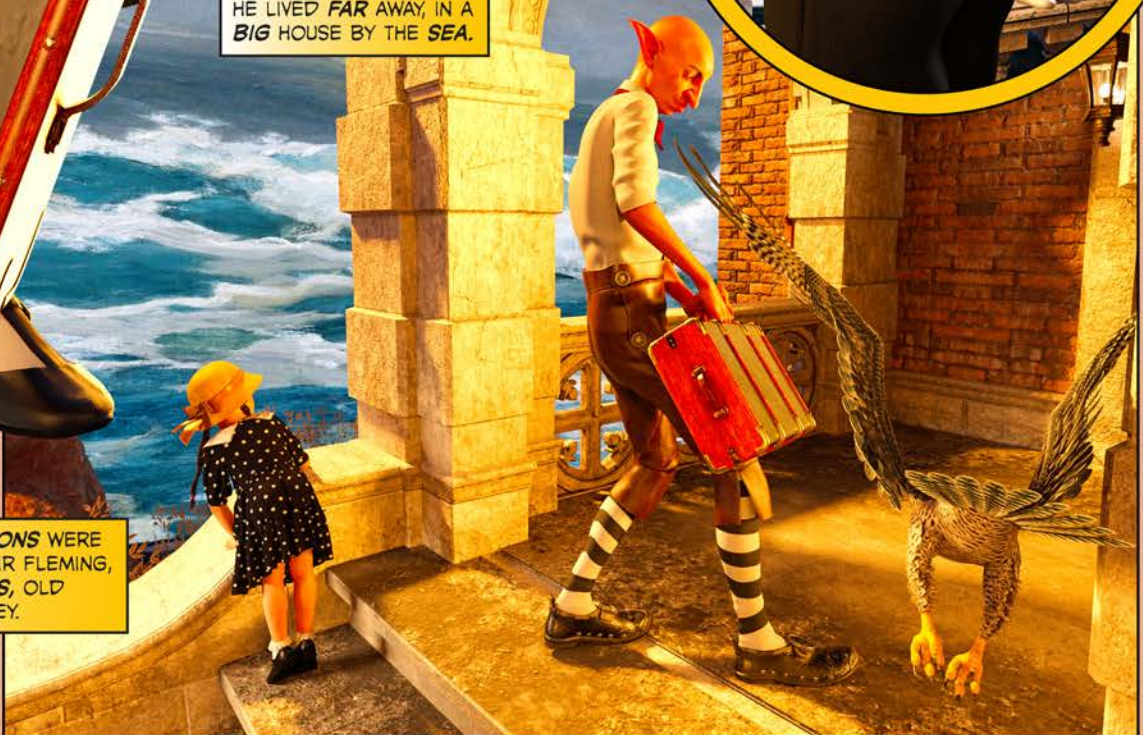


WHEN I WAS *FIVE*, IF I REALLY *MISBEHAVED*, MY MOTHER WOULD *SEND* ME TO STAY WITH THE *MAN WITH WHITE GLOVES*.

HE LIVED *FAR AWAY*, IN A *BIG HOUSE* BY THE *SEA*.



HIS ONLY *COMPANIONS* WERE HIS PET *FALCON*, SIR *FLEMING*, AND TWO *SERVANTS*, OLD *MURKEL* AND *FLOOEY*.





HE ALWAYS WORE *FORMAL*,
OLD-FASHIONED CLOTHES.

AND, HE ALWAYS,
ALWAYS WORE *CLEAN*,
WHITE GLOVES.



YOU MAY READ
ANYTHING IN MY
LIBRARY.

THERE IS A *WHOLE*
SHELF OF BOOKS
ABOUT *LONELY* DOLLS,
WHICH I THINK YOU MAY
ESPECIALLY *ENJOY*.



THESE
ART-MAKING
THINGS ARE
FOR YOU.

YOU MAY USE THEM IN
THE *CONSERVATORY*,
OR *OUTSIDE*, IF IT IS
GOOD WEATHER.

BUT, OF COURSE, YOU
MUST *NEVER* DRAW
ON THE *WALLS*.



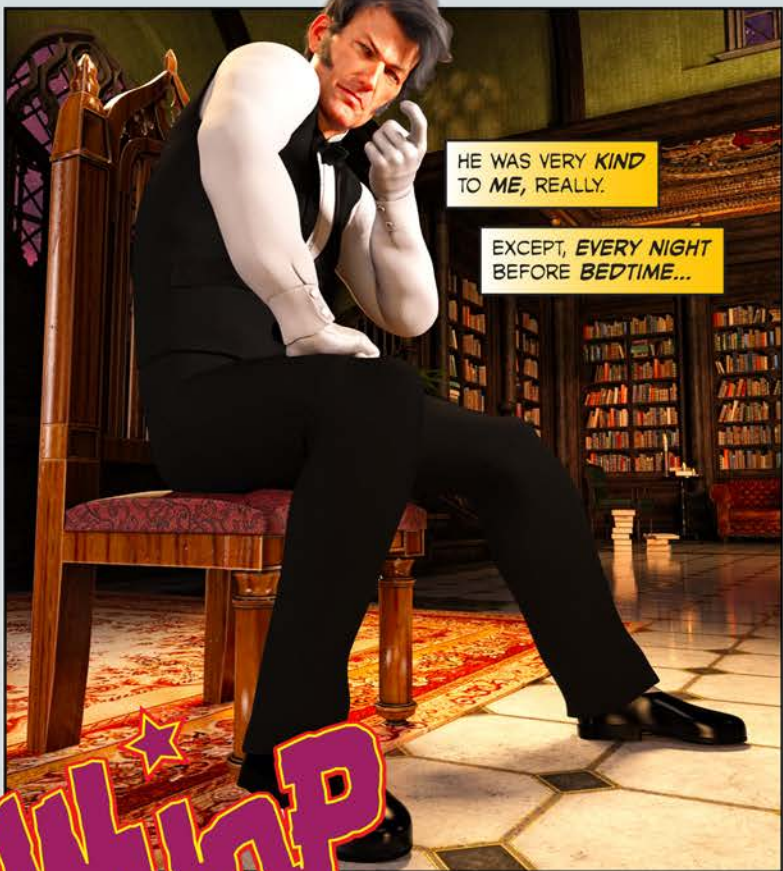
THE TWO OF US DINED *TOGETHER*
EVERY *EVENING*, AT A *HUGE* TABLE.

HIS *SERVANTS* WOULD
BRING ME *WHATEVER*
I WANTED TO *EAT*.

THEN, I'D TELL HIM *LONG*
TALES THAT I'D *MAKE* UP
ON THE *SPOT*, AS HE *SUPPED* ON
HIS *TWENTY-COURSE* MEALS.

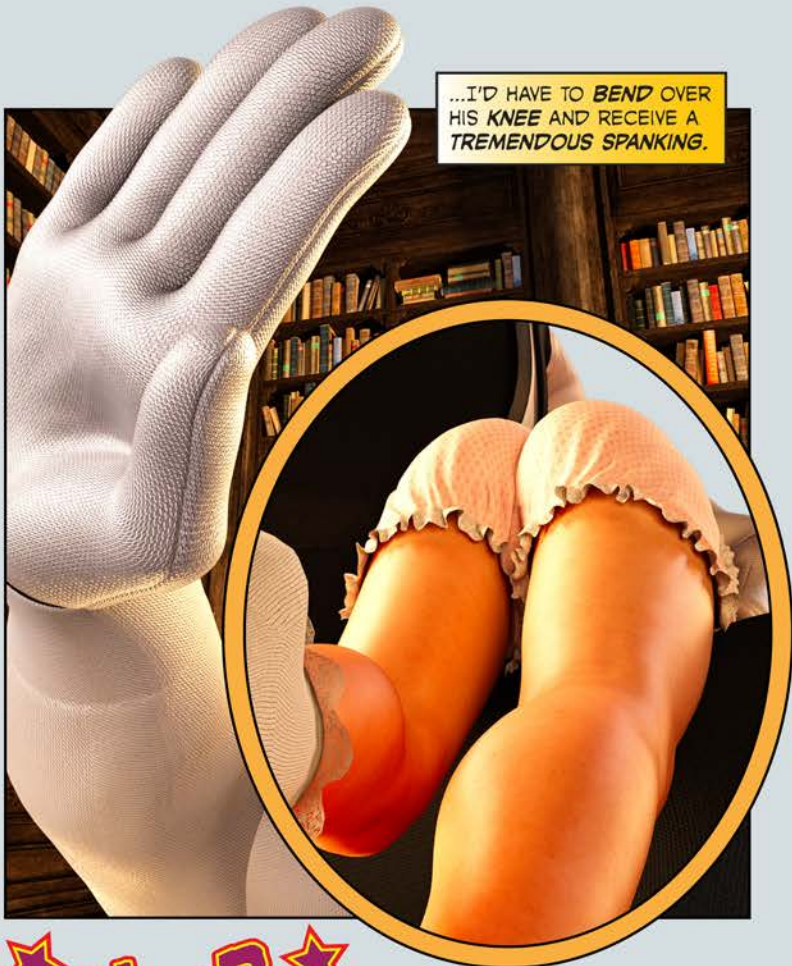


YOUR *PANCAKES*,
MISS *RUDE*.



HE WAS VERY KIND TO ME, REALLY.

EXCEPT, EVERY NIGHT BEFORE BEDTIME...



...I'D HAVE TO BEND OVER HIS KNEE AND RECEIVE A TREMENDOUS SPANKING.

WHAP

HIS GLOVED HAND MADE A VERY LOUD, BUT SLIGHTLY MUFFLED SOUND, EVERY TIME IT STRUCK THE SEAT OF MY POOR PANTIES.

WHAP

WHAP

WHAP

AND, STRIKE IT DID.



OVER AND OVER.

VERY, VERY HARD.

WHAP

WHAP

WHAP

HE SPANKED AND SPANKED, UNTIL MY BACKSIDE FELT LIKE IT WAS ON FIRE.

WHAP

WHAP

WHAP



AND THEN, HE SPANKED SOME MORE.

WHAP

WHEN MY SPANKING WAS FINALLY OVER, I'D HAVE TO STAND IN THE CORNER UNTIL AN HOURGLASS RAN DOWN...

...WHICH TOOK EXACTLY TWENTY-TWO MINUTES AND THREE SECONDS.

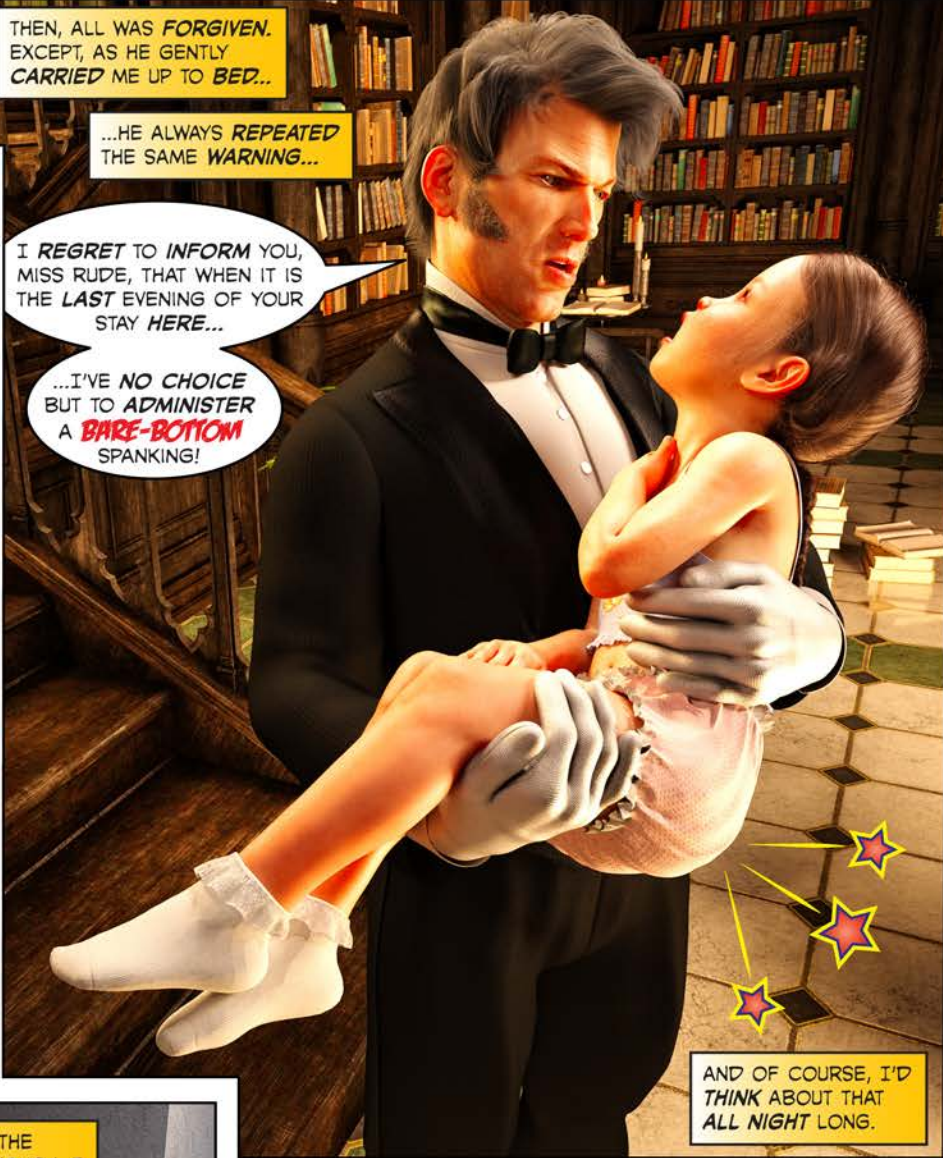


THEN, ALL WAS FORGIVEN. EXCEPT, AS HE GENTLY CARRIED ME UP TO BED...

...HE ALWAYS REPEATED THE SAME WARNING...

I REGRET TO INFORM YOU, MISS RUDE, THAT WHEN IT IS THE LAST EVENING OF YOUR STAY HERE...

...I'VE NO CHOICE BUT TO ADMINISTER A BARE-BOTTOM SPANKING!



AND OF COURSE, I'D THINK ABOUT THAT ALL NIGHT LONG.

WHEN I WOKE UP THE NEXT MORNING, THOUGH, I ALWAYS FELT REFRESHED.

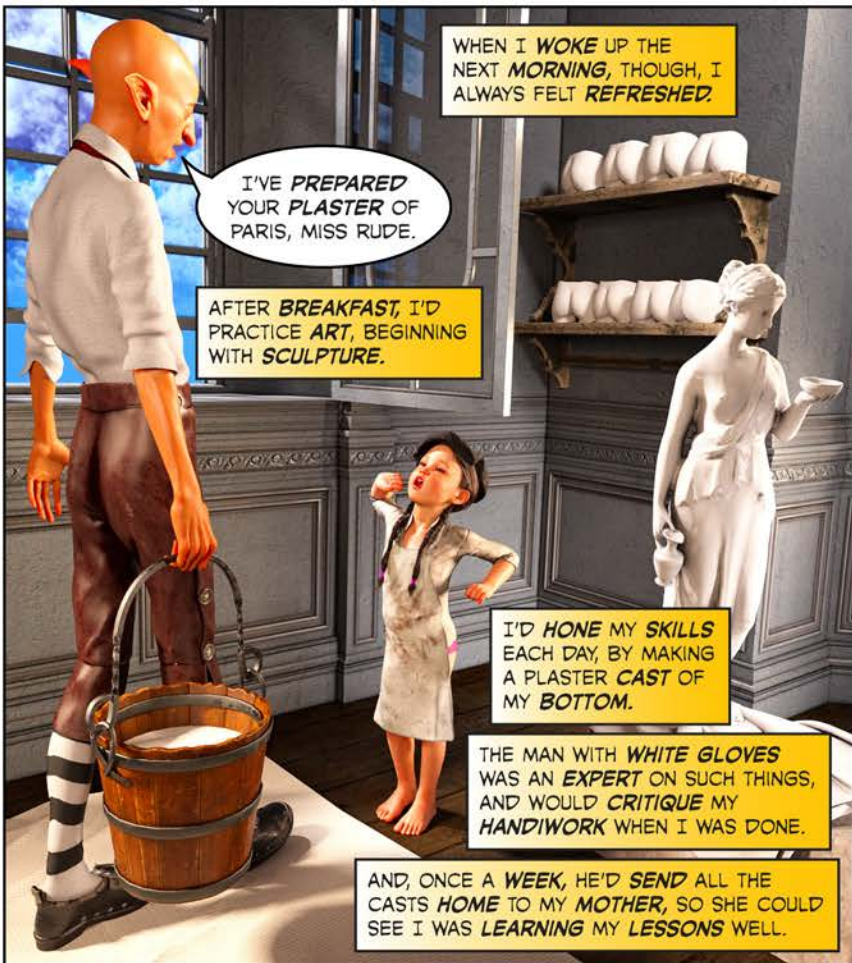
I'VE PREPARED YOUR PLASTER OF PARIS, MISS RUDE.

AFTER BREAKFAST, I'D PRACTICE ART, BEGINNING WITH SCULPTURE.

I'D HONE MY SKILLS EACH DAY, BY MAKING A PLASTER CAST OF MY BOTTOM.

THE MAN WITH WHITE GLOVES WAS AN EXPERT ON SUCH THINGS, AND WOULD CRITIQUE MY HANDIWORK WHEN I WAS DONE.

AND, ONCE A WEEK, HE'D SEND ALL THE CASTS HOME TO MY MOTHER, SO SHE COULD SEE I WAS LEARNING MY LESSONS WELL.



NEXT, I'D PAINT, OFTEN IN THE GARDEN, AND FLOOEY WOULD GIVE ME TIPS.

Oh yes, MISS RUDE, THAT'S AN EXCELLENT IDEA, PRACTICIN' YOUR SHADES OF RED.



AFTERNOONS, AFTER ART PRACTICE, WERE A TIME FOR FUN. OLD MURKEL WOULD PLAY GAMES WITH ME.

WHAT DID YOU TWO PLAY AT TODAY?

WELL, WE WERE HAVIN' A TEDDY BEAR PICNIC...

...BUT, THE BIG SILLY GOT BORED WID IT, 'N' CHANGED INTO A HARE 'N' RAN 'WAY...

...SO, ME 'N' SIR FLEMING WENT A HUNTIN'!

THE MAN WITH WHITE GLOVES NEVER COULD RESIST A GOOD RABBIT STEW.

WHEN TWILIGHT FELL, I'D SOMETIMES GET HOMESICK.

I-I MISS MY DADDY, FLOOEY!

Oh, DON'T BE SAD MISS RUDE.

HE'S NOT ACTUALLY YOUR FATHER, YOU KNOW.

THIS IS YOUR REAL FATHER, THE MOON.

AND ANY TIME YOU'RE LONELY, YOU CAN HOLD HIM AND TALK TO HIM.

FLOOEY ALWAYS KNEW JUST WHAT TO SAY.

THE EVENING SPANKINGS WERE FOR MY MISBEHAVIOR AT HOME, BUT I RECEIVED MORE IF I GOT IN TROUBLE WITH THE MAN WITH WHITE GLOVES HIMSELF.

LIKE, WHEN I DREW ON THE WALLS...



*ACTUAL DRAWING I DID IN CHILDHOOD.

...WHICH EARNED ME LOOOONG SESSIONS ON THE SPANKING MACHINE IN THE ATTIC.



YEOWCH!

Whap

Whap

Whap

WHIRRRRRR

Whap

Whap

Whap

OR, THE TIME WHEN HE WAS NAPPING AND I DECIDED TO SEE WHAT WAS UNDER HIS GLOVES...



ZZZZZZZ

HUH?!?



SNOORVV

Whap

Whap

AIIIIIIIIII

Whap

THAT WAS NOT A GOOD IDEA.

Sometimes I was so bad, I had to stay for years.



IT WAS ALWAYS IN THE AUTUMN WHEN I'D KNOW IT WAS TIME TO LEAVE.

SURE, I WAS HOMESICK, BUT MOSTLY I MISSED TRICK-OR-TREATING AND GETTING THOSE FULL-SIZED THREE MUSKETEER CANDY BARS OUR NEIGHBOR GAVE OUT.

FOR SOME REASON, THEY DIDN'T HAVE THOSE WHERE THE MAN WITH WHITE GLOVES LIVED.

SO, INEVITABLY THE DREADED EVENING WOULD COME.

LOWER YOUR UNDERPANTS, MISS RUDE, AND BEND OVER MY KNEES.

WHEN HIS GLOVED PALM STRUCK MY BARE SKIN IT MADE AN AWFUL SOUND, LIKE A MALLET TENDERIZING A CHUNK OF VEAL.

THWAK

THWAK

IN NO TIME, MY REAR-END FELT LIKE IT WAS BEING STUNG BY MILLIONS OF BEES WHILE BEING BOILED IN OIL.

*I'M PRETTY SURE I HADN'T YET GOTTEN A BARE BOTTOM SPANKING IN REAL LIFE, SO I IMAGINED IT'D BE UNBELIEVABLY HORRIBLE!

HE SPANKED AND SPANKED, AND SPANKED SOME MORE...

...AND THEN, I'D WAKE UP IN MY BED AT HOME, FIVE AGAIN, SAFE (AND SOUNDLY SPANKED)...

THWAK

THWAK

THWAK



...UNTIL THE NEXT TIME MY MOTHER SENT ME TO STAY WITH THE MAN WITH WHITE GLOVES.

THE END

Two years in the making, Rude Rump's graphic novel tour de force, "Growing Up Spanko," resides in a category all its own. Her memoir brings to life for her readers the vicissitudes of growing up with a particularly socially-unacceptable variety of spanking fetish. Beginning with her earliest memories, Ms. Rumps recounts her experiences growing up in a home with parents who both loved her and hit her, along with her guilty secret fascination with the latter. Replete with both humor and pathos, "Growing Up Spanko" brings to life the human story of a "pervert's" journey through childhood and adolescence, and succeeds to a degree unprecedented in the visual arts.

— HandPrince

webmaster of The Handprints
Spanking Art & Stories Page

