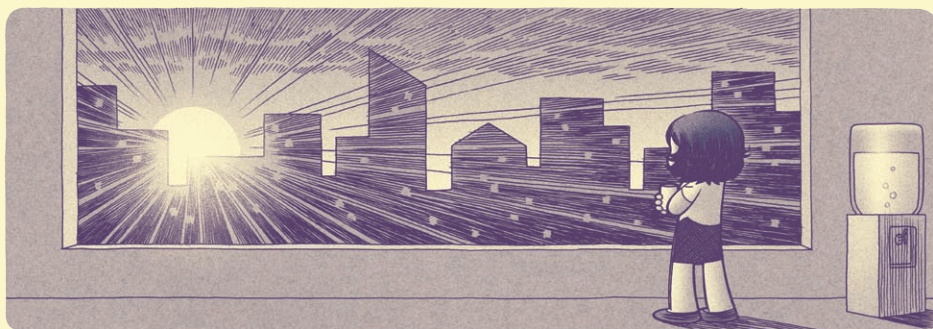


THE ETERNAL SMILE

THE ETERNAL SMILE



three stories

BY GENE LUEN YANG
& DEREK KIRK KIM

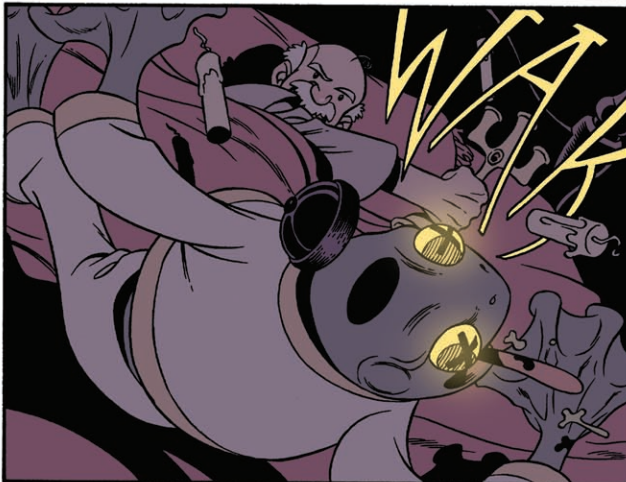
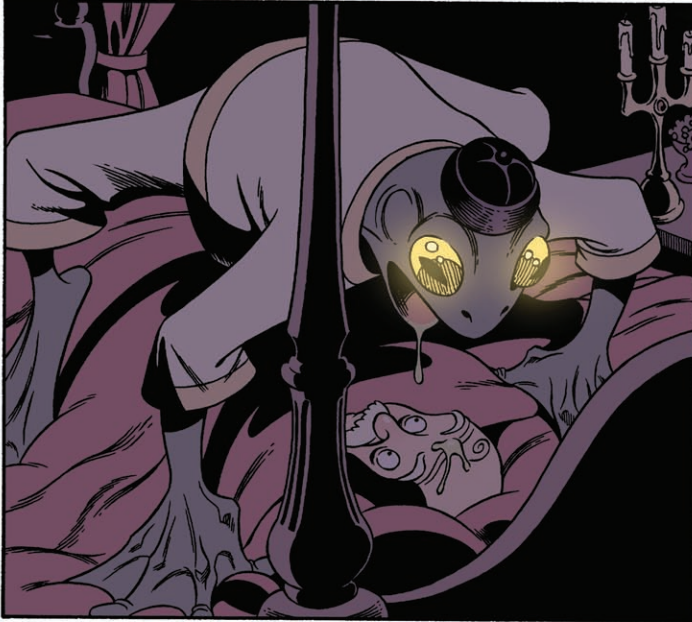


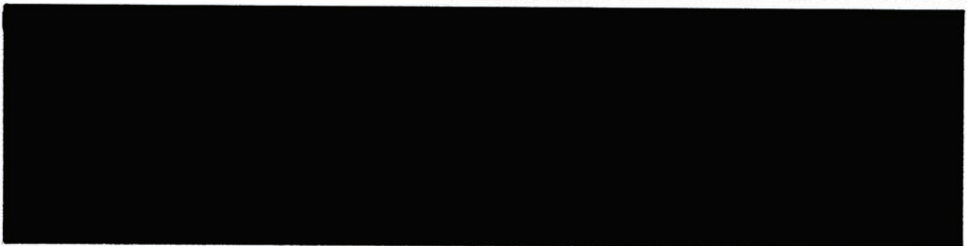
First Second
New York & London

Duncan's Kingdom

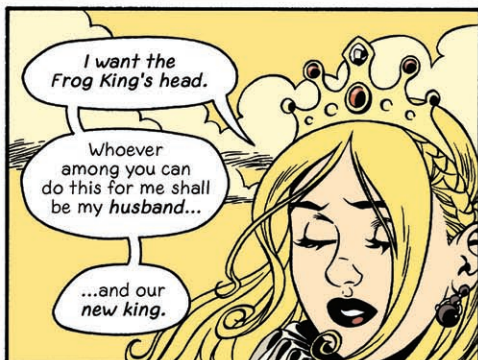
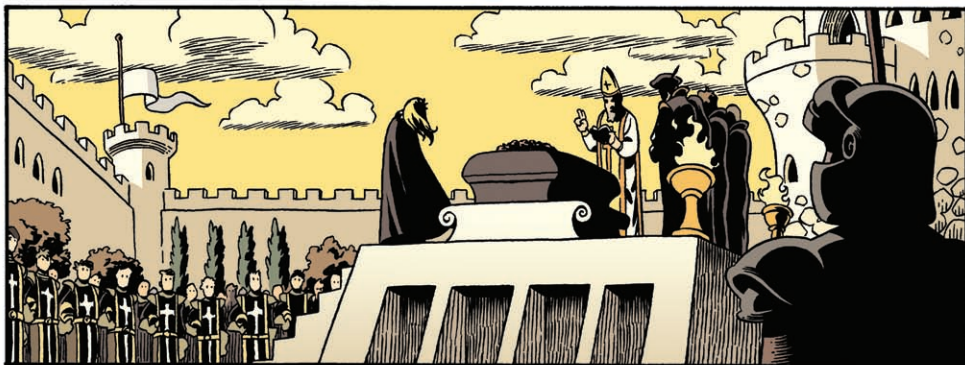


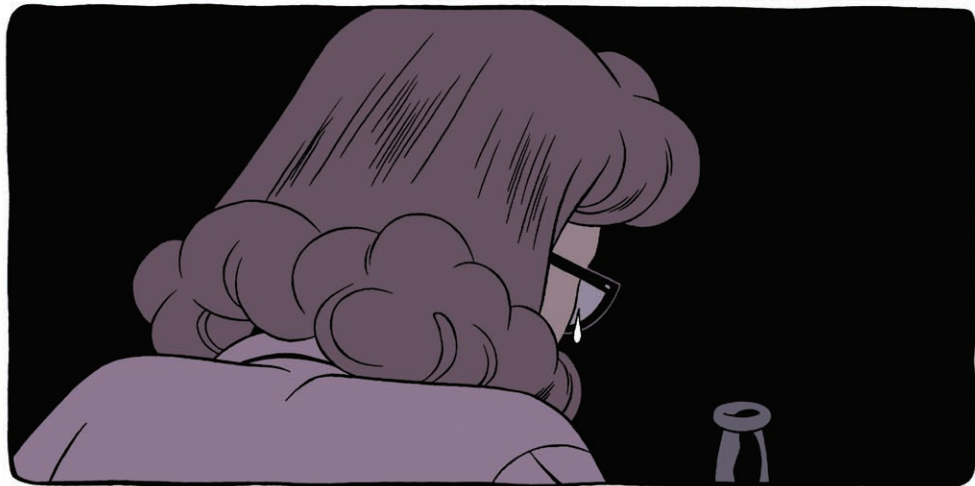






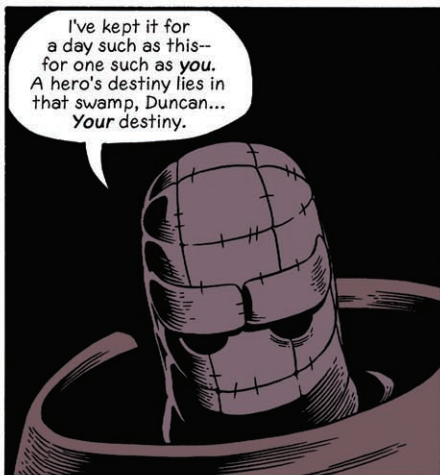


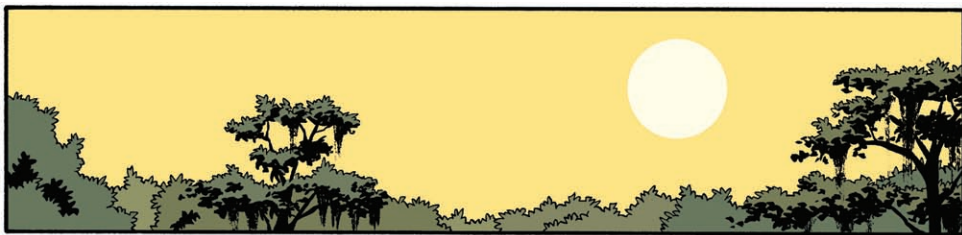




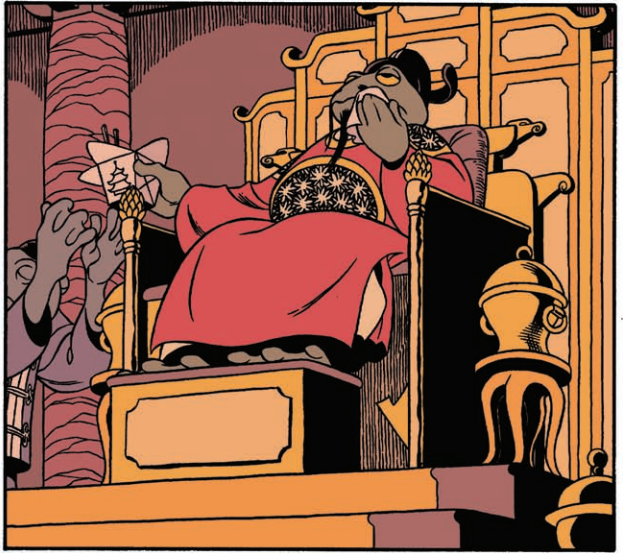


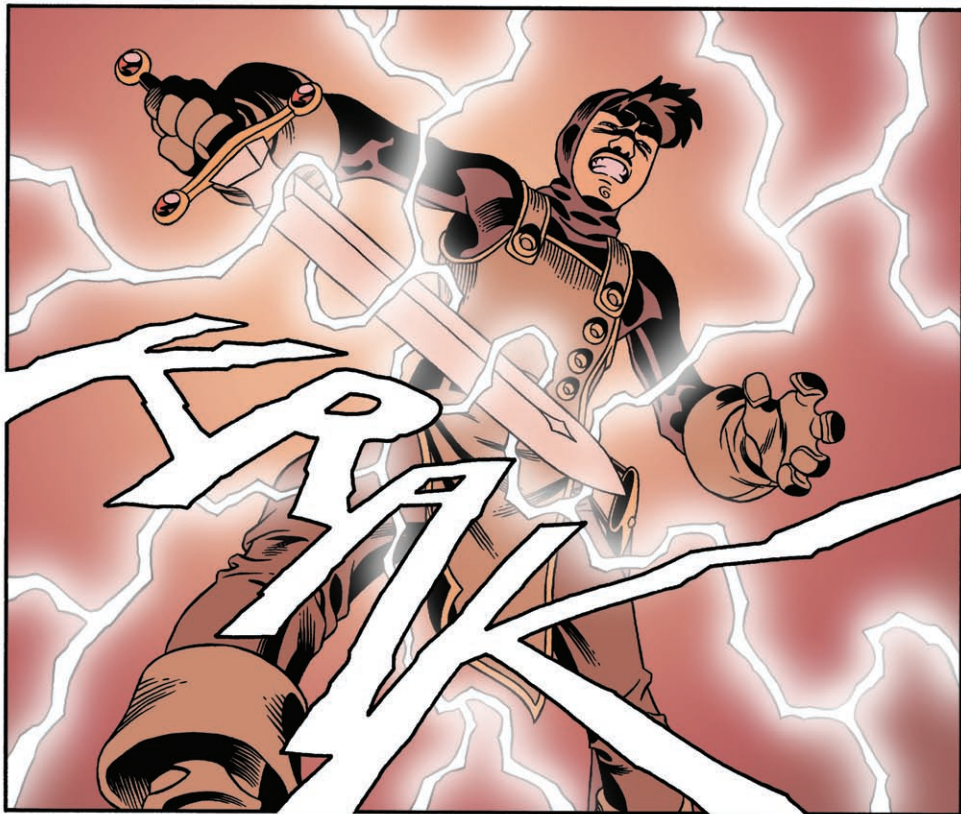
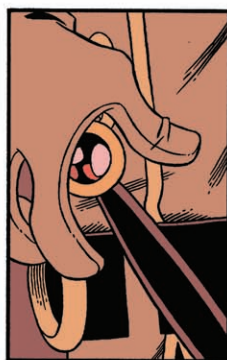










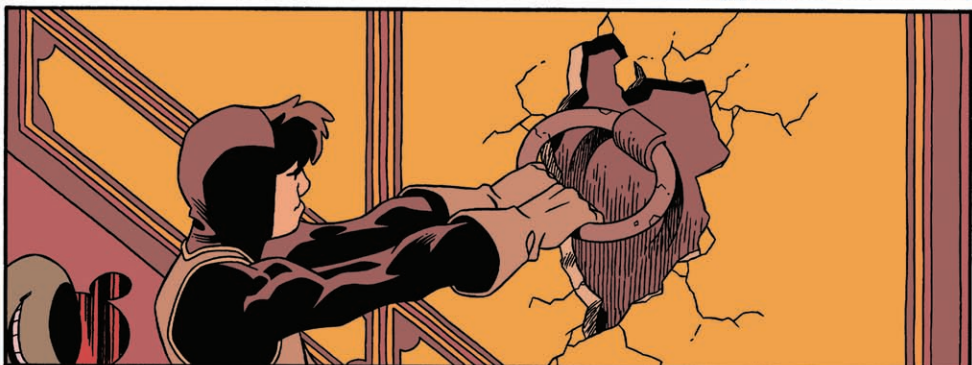
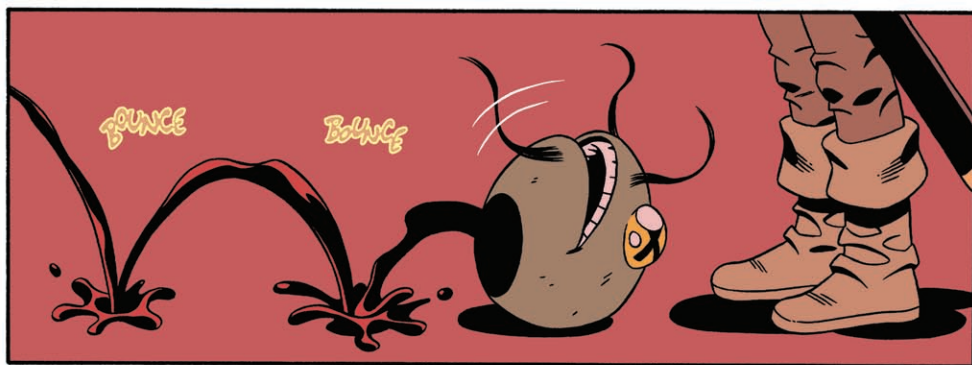


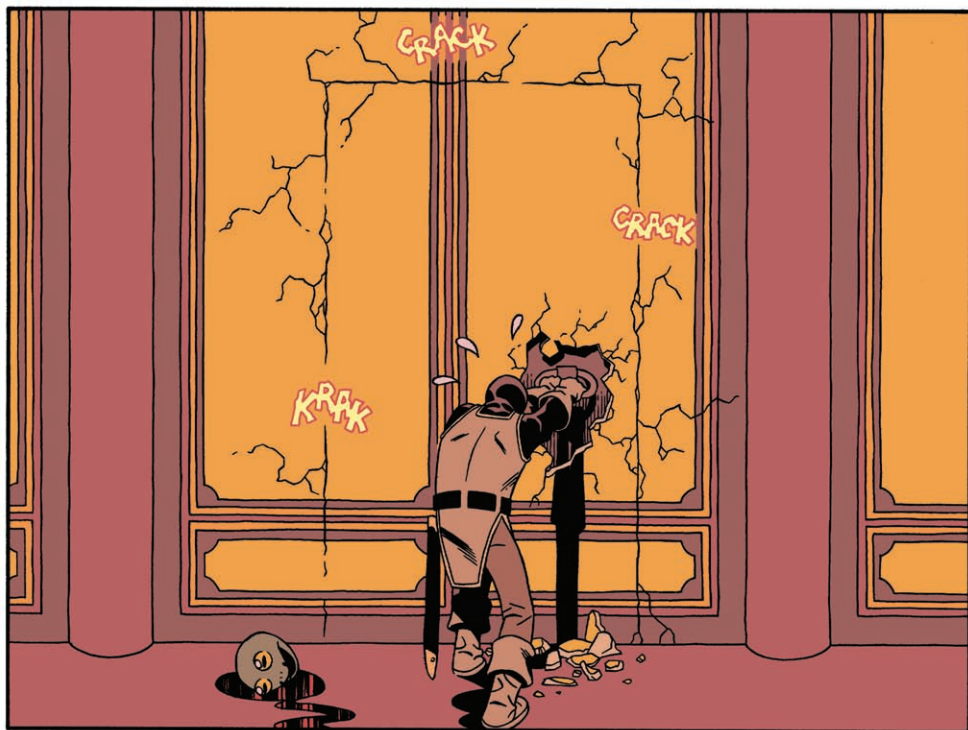




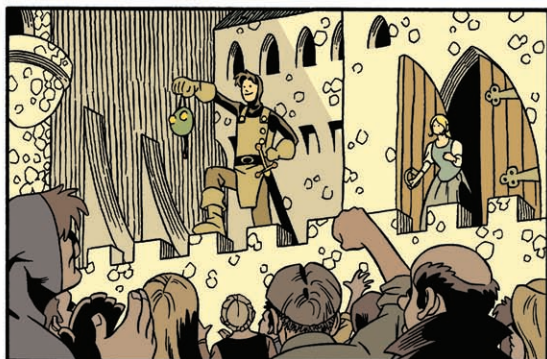


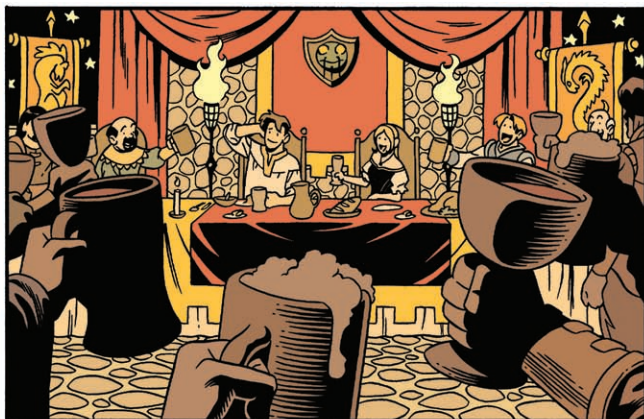


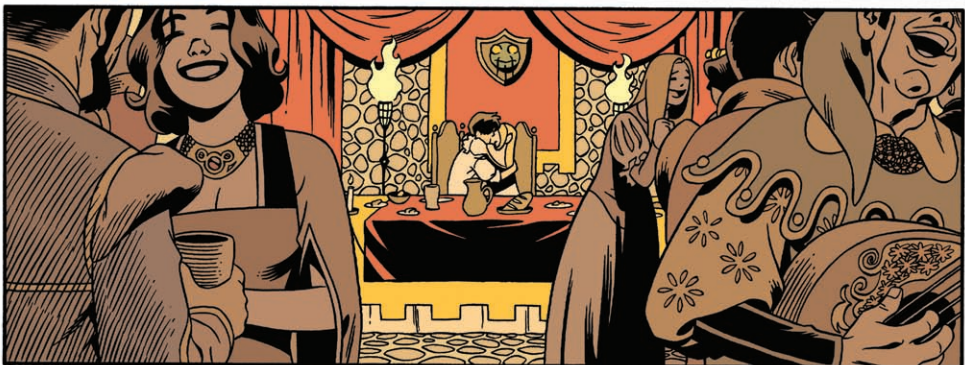
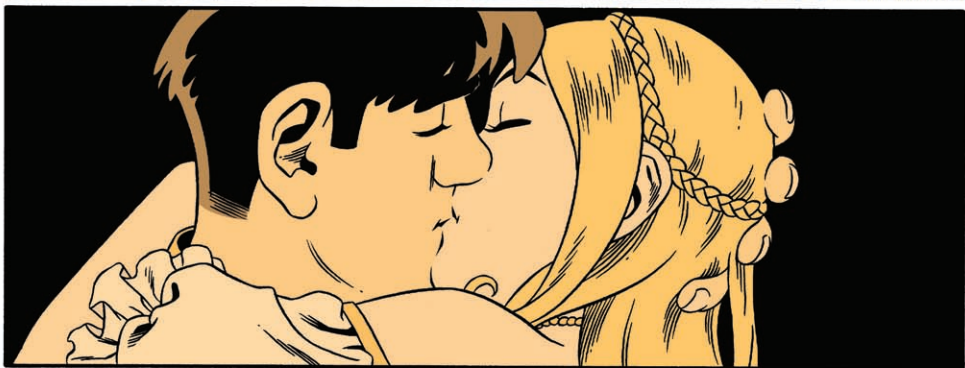


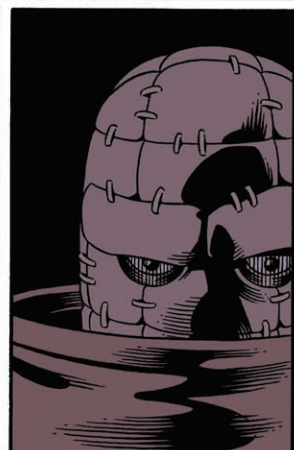






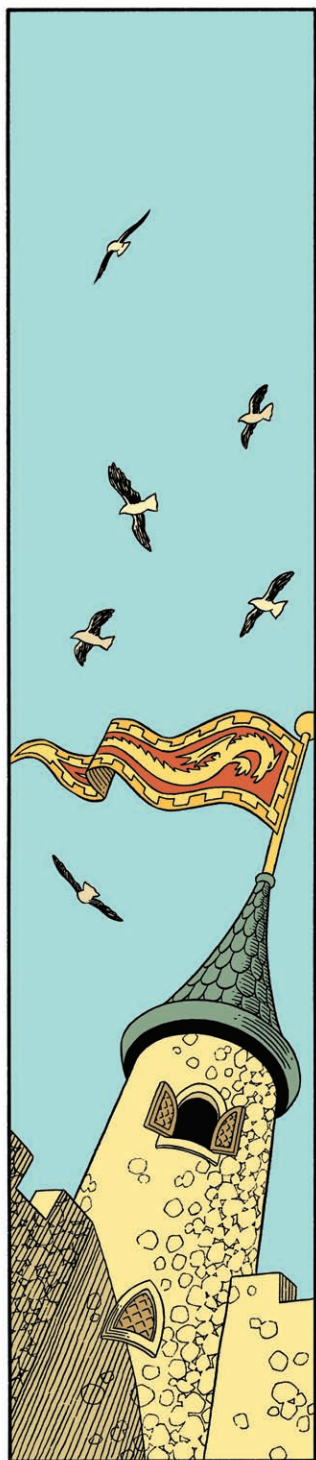










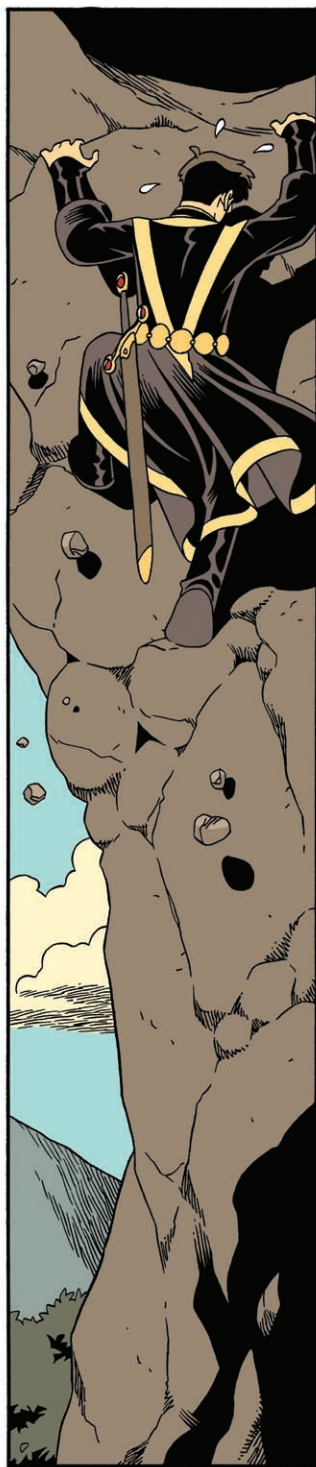




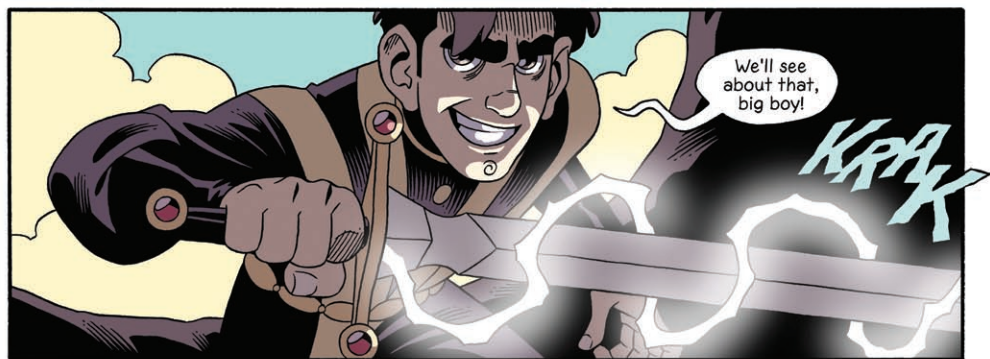








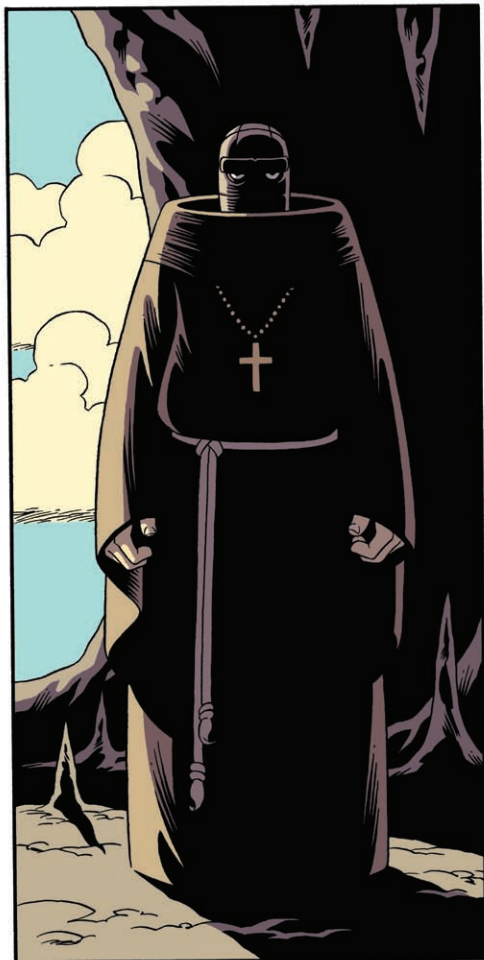


















The "truth" is, Duncan, you don't live in a magical kingdom, you live in a *tenement* in *Oakland*. And your world isn't filled with *kings* and *castles* and *princesses* -- it's filled with *politicians*, *concrete buildings*, and girls who won't give you the time of day.



And in all "*truthfulness*," Duncan, you're not a knight in the royal guard. You're a *loser*. You have *no friends*. You spend most of your waking hours with your nose buried in your *books*, your *comics*, and your *porno mags*.



You're lying!



I am, am I?

Then how is it that you know what a *porno mag* is?



Have I mentioned that *girl* you've had a crush on since the *third grade*? She must've inspired an encyclopedia's worth of *poetry* from you -- all *drive!* -- and yet you haven't spoken a single word to her.

Imagine that.



Not that it'd *matter*. Rumor has it she recently started dating one of those *varsity water polo types* -- big, tall, strapping boy with a nice sports car.

The very picture of virility.

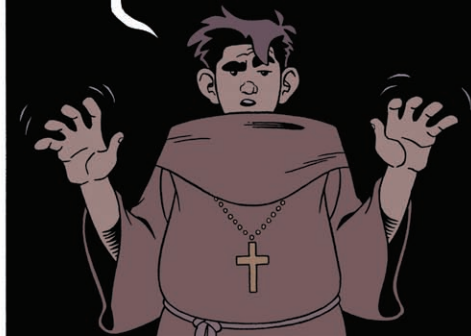


All this and we haven't even gotten to the *juicy parts*.

Isn't the "truth" just dandy?



Your birth father was a *zoologist*. He died two years ago from *salmonella*. Seems he forgot to wash his hands after experimenting with a batch of rare *Asian frogs*. ʒtsk tskʒ



Since then you've had a veritable *police line-up* of would-be "father figures." The latest is a *chain-smoking bartender*. Every time your mother messes up the pancakes, he beats her 'til she squeals like a *pig*.



When you tried to *stop* him last week, he beat you into a *coma*.

That's how we met.

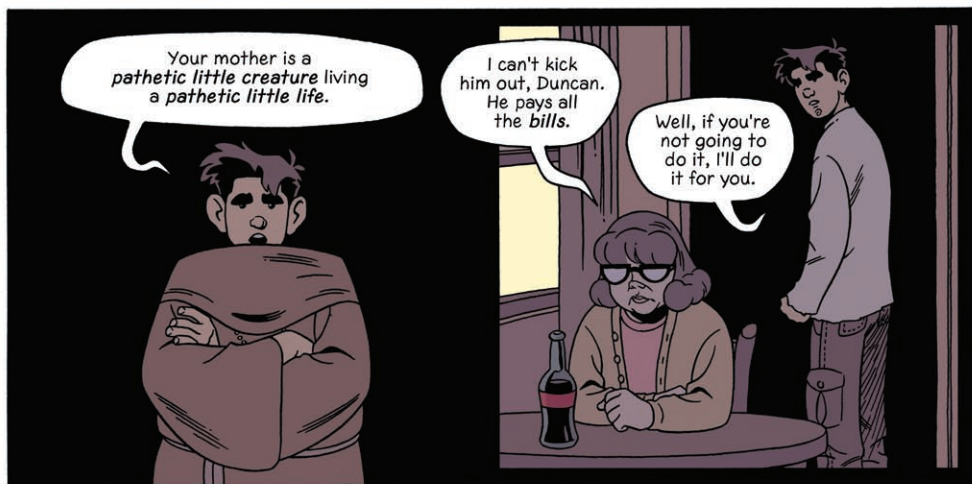


And your *mother* -- isn't she something! She hasn't held down a *steady job* for the past two years because of her "*headaches*."

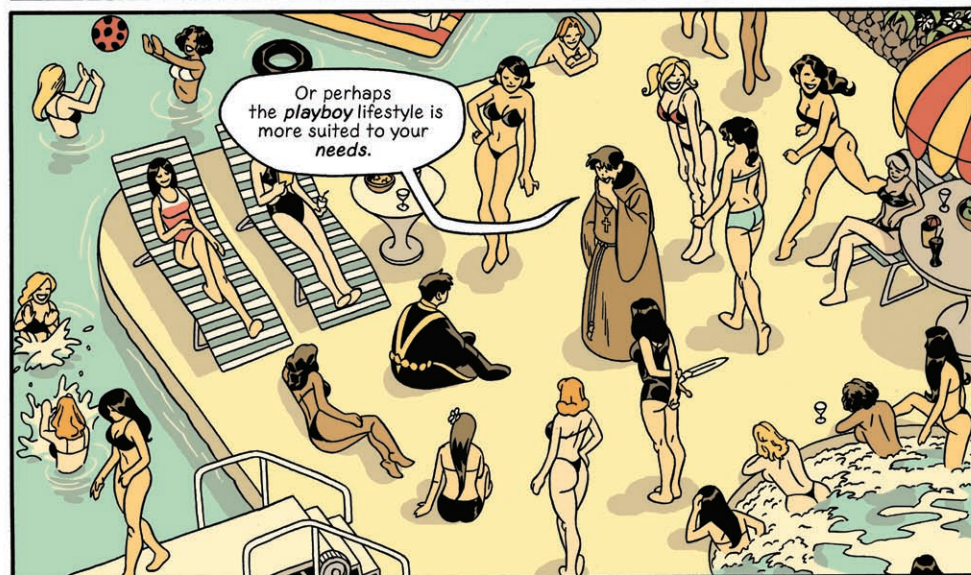


Besides, most of her time is taken up by her duties as the president of the *Snappy Cola Fan Club*.

























#717
GOLD



LOCK
COMICS

ELIAS McFADDEN'S

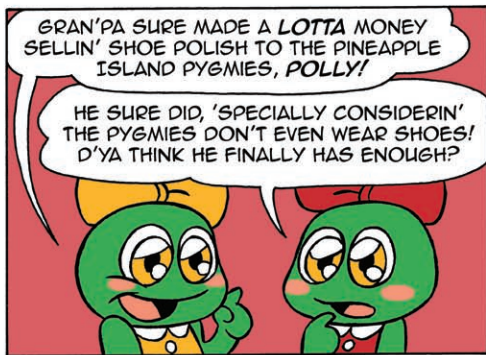
GRAN'PA GREENBAX

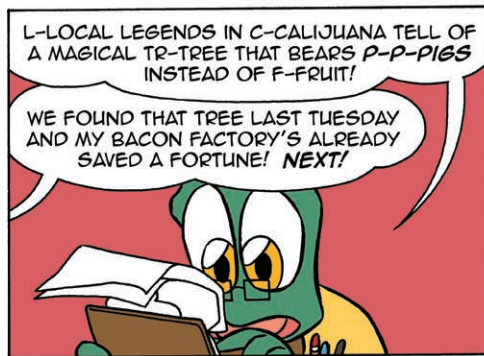
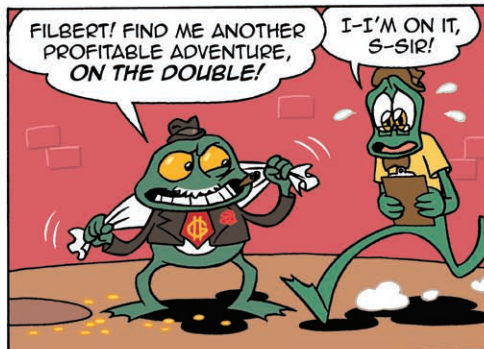
and The Eternal
Smile

50¢

Based
on the hit
TV show!



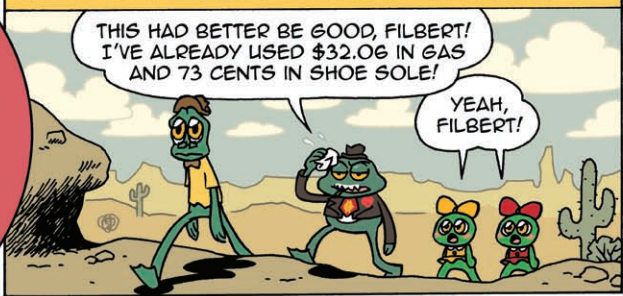






WELL, TH-TH-THERE IS ONE M-MORE ITEM ON MY L-LIST...

SIX HOURS LATER, THE FROGS FIND THEMSELVES IN THE MIDDLE OF THE DESERT JUST NORTH OF FROGVILLE!



THIS HAD BETTER BE GOOD, FILBERT! I'VE ALREADY USED \$32.06 IN GAS AND 73 CENTS IN SHOE SOLE!

YEAH, FILBERT!

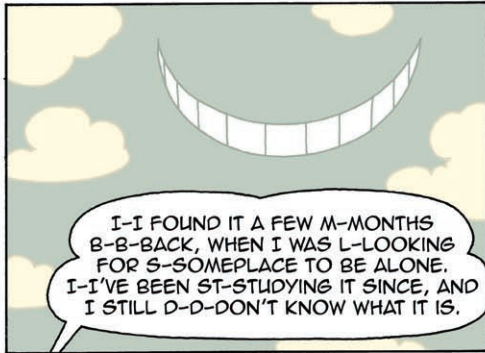


I-I J-J-JUST WANTED TO SH-SHOW YOU TH-TH-THAT.

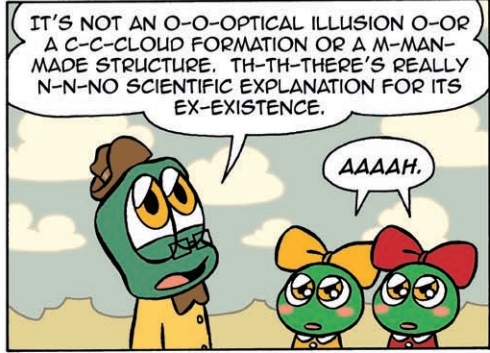


OOOOH.

WHAT IS IT?



I-I FOUND IT A FEW M-MONTHS B-B-BACK, WHEN I WAS L-LOOKING FOR S-SOMEPLACE TO BE ALONE. I-I'VE BEEN ST-STUDYING IT SINCE, AND I STILL D-D-DON'T KNOW WHAT IT IS.



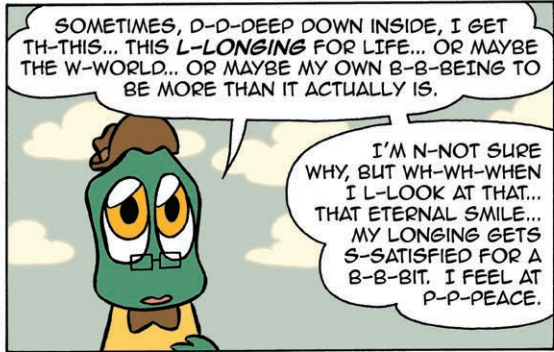
IT'S NOT AN O-O-OPTICAL ILLUSION O-OR A C-C-CLOUD FORMATION OR A M-MAN-MADE STRUCTURE. TH-TH-THERE'S REALLY N-N-NO SCIENTIFIC EXPLANATION FOR ITS EX-EXISTENCE.

AAAAH.



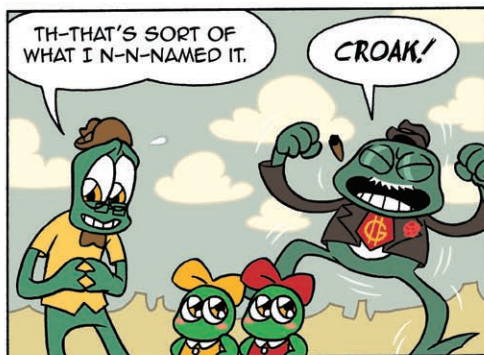
HOW'S IT GOING TO MAKE ME MONEY?!

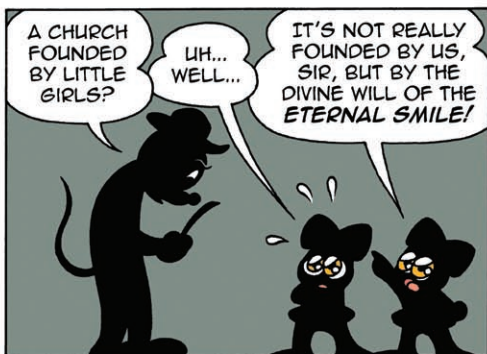
YEAH, HOW'S IT GONNA MAKE GRAN'PA MONEY?!



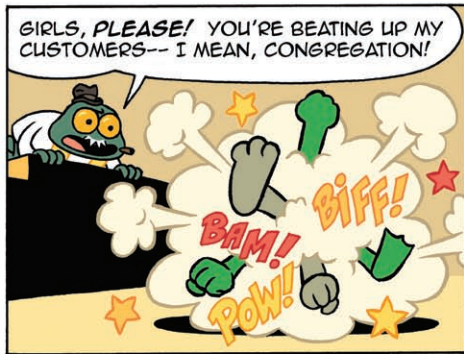
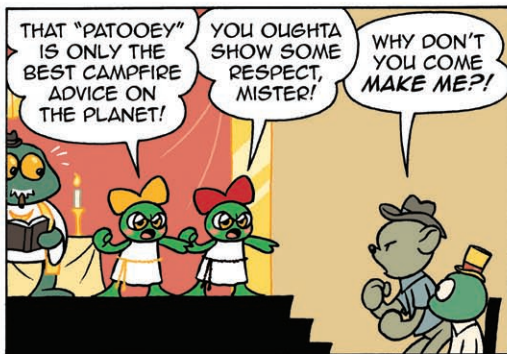
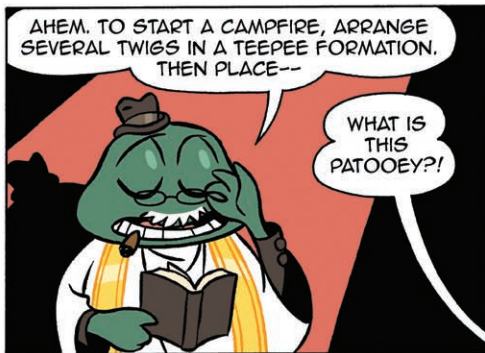
SOMETIMES, D-D-DEEP DOWN INSIDE, I GET TH-THIS... THIS L-LONGING FOR LIFE... OR MAYBE THE W-WORLD... OR MAYBE MY OWN B-B-BEING TO BE MORE THAN IT ACTUALLY IS.

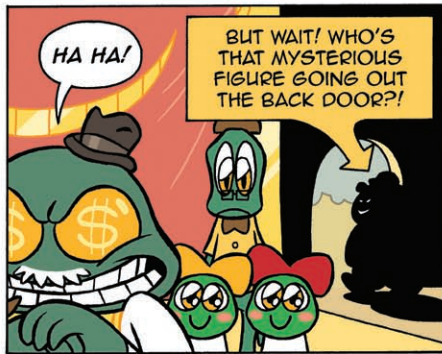
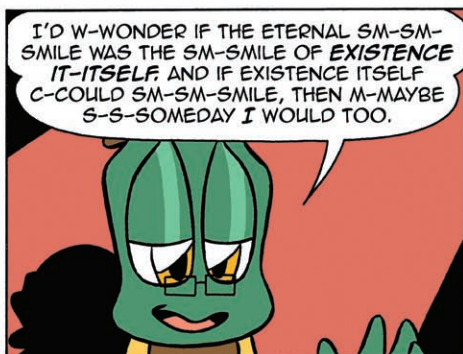
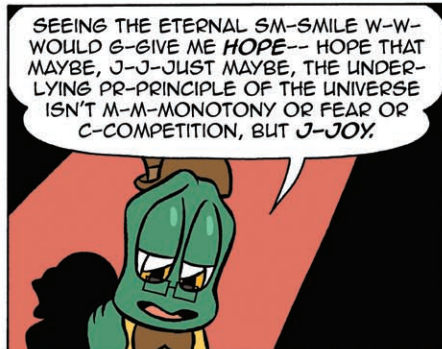
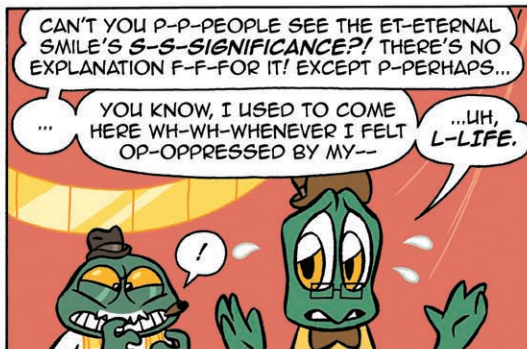
I'M N-NOT SURE WHY, BUT WH-WH-WHEN I L-LOOK AT THAT... THAT ETERNAL SMILE... MY LONGING GETS S-SATISFIED FOR A B-B-BIT. I FEEL AT P-P-PEACE.

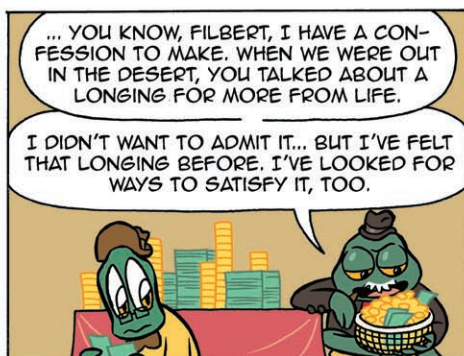
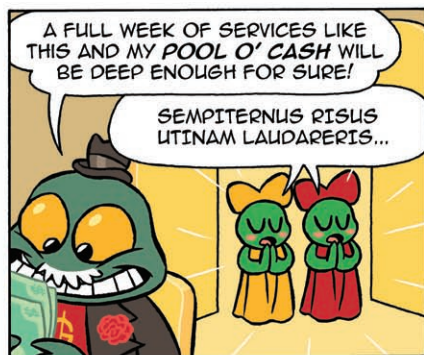
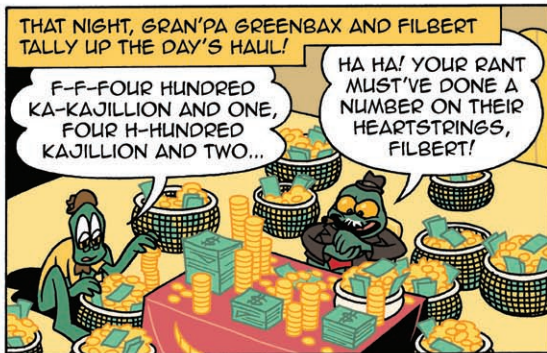




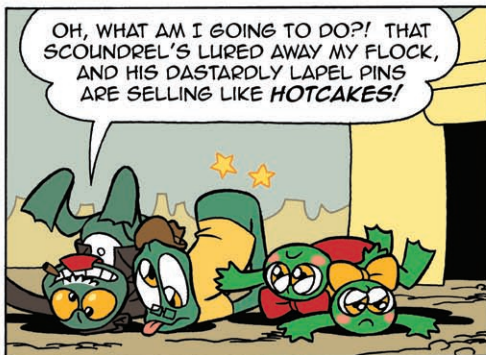
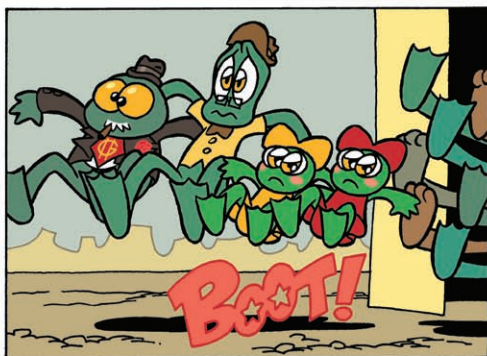


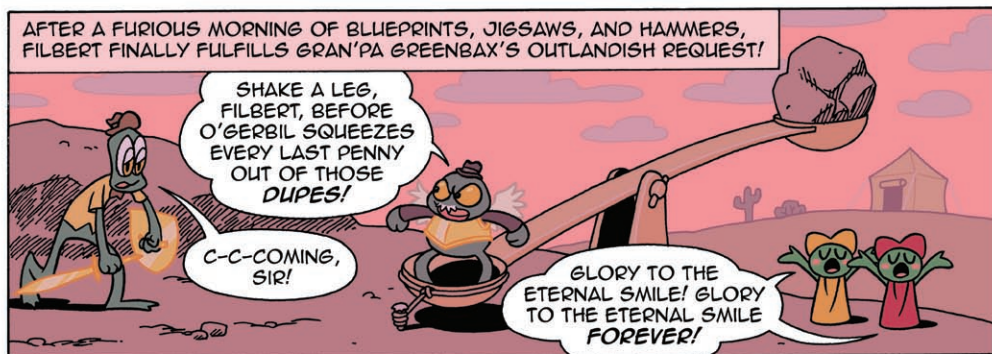
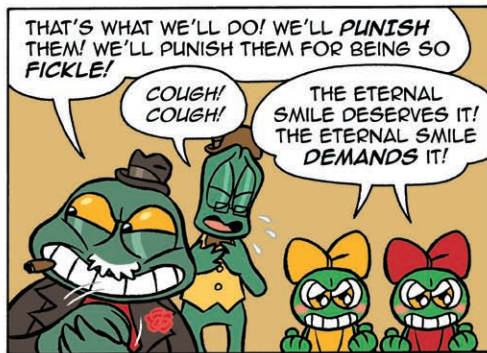
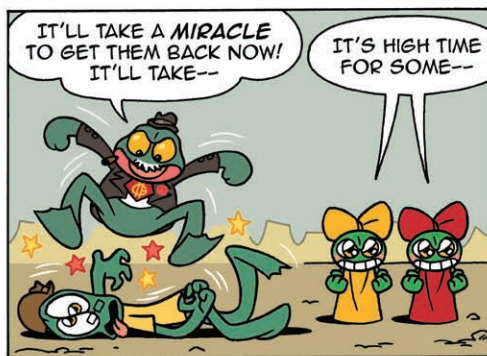
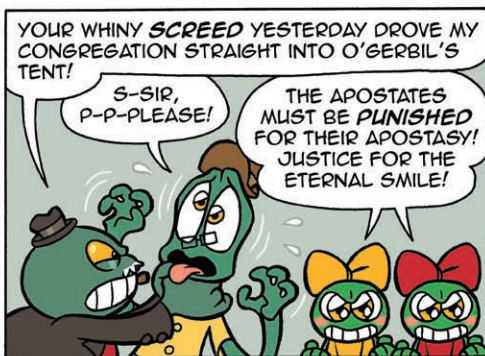


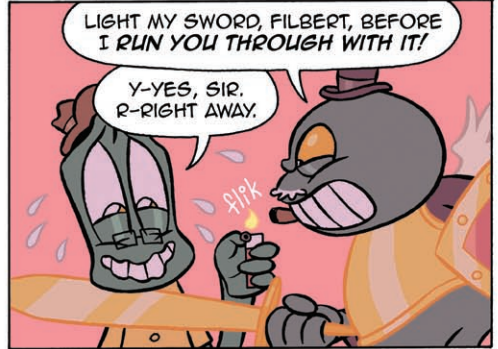
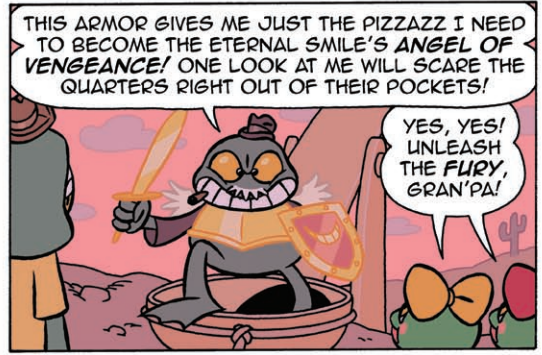
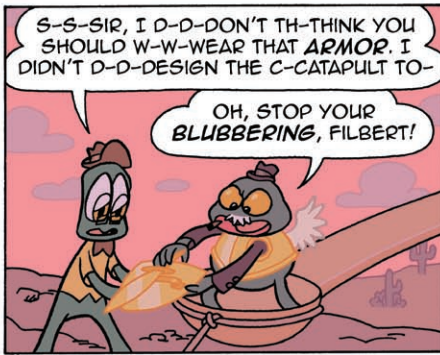


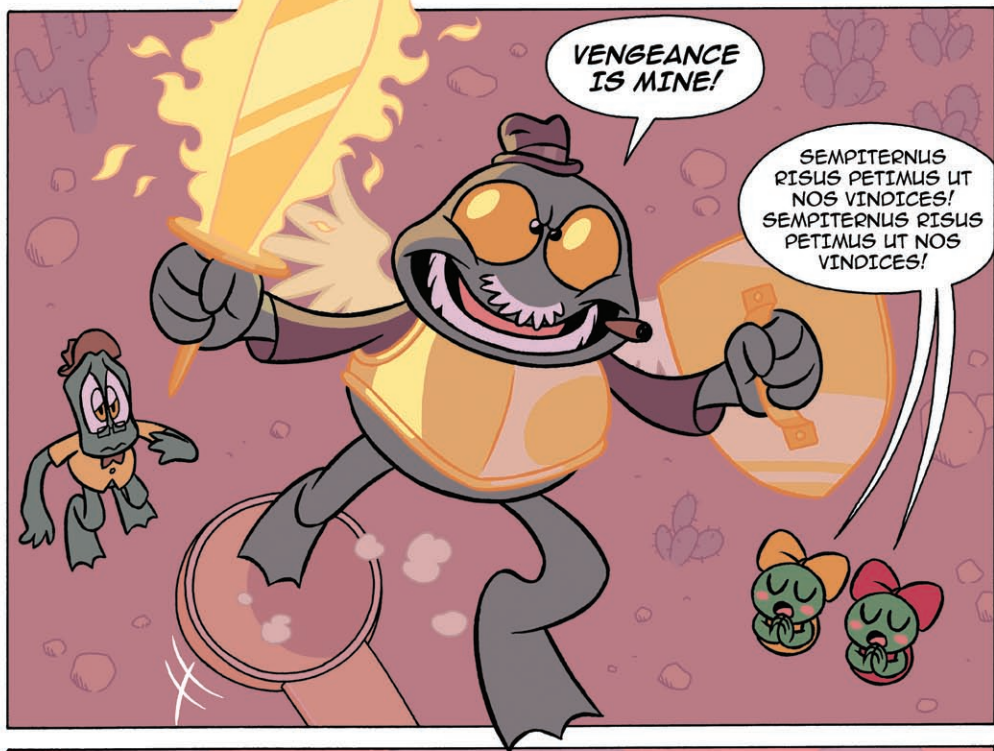


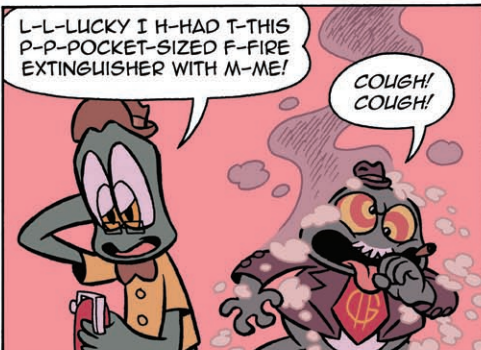
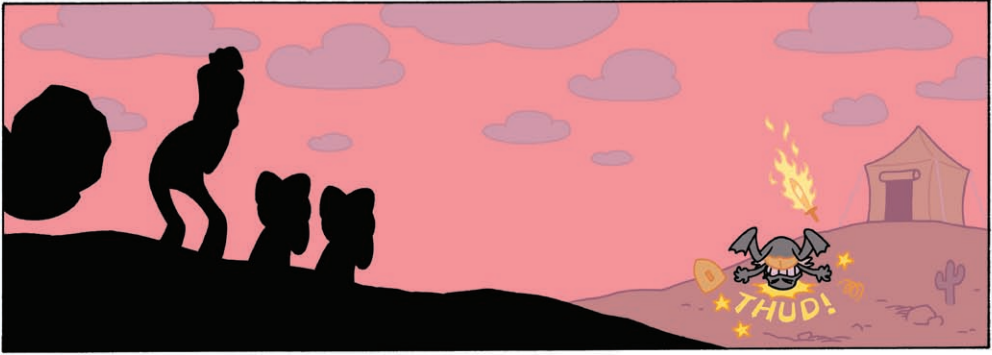


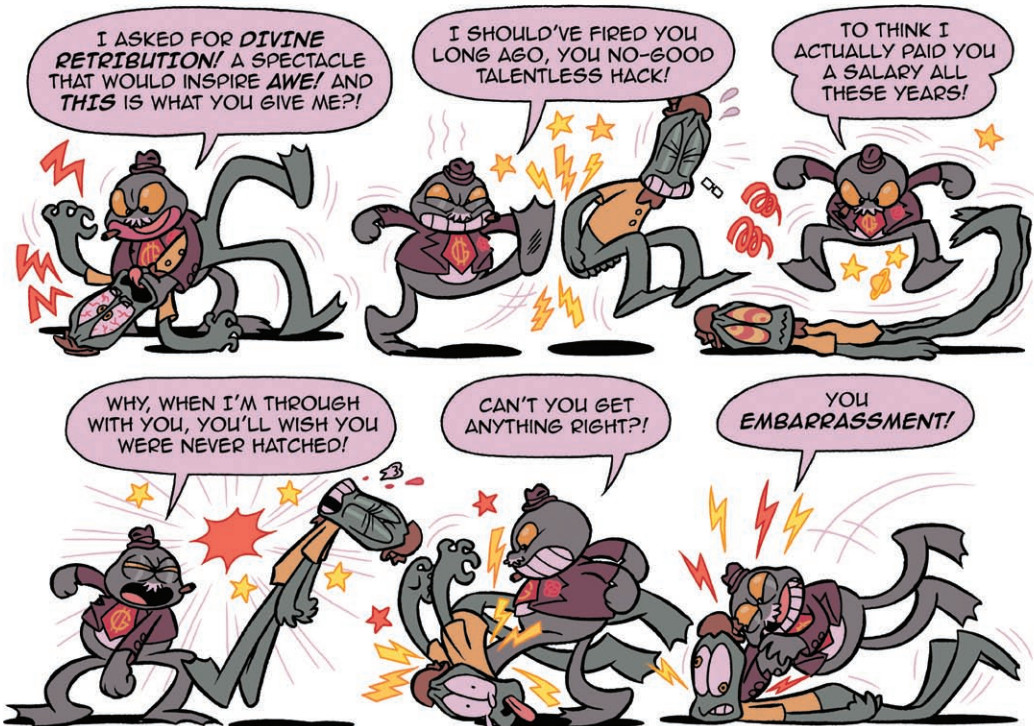


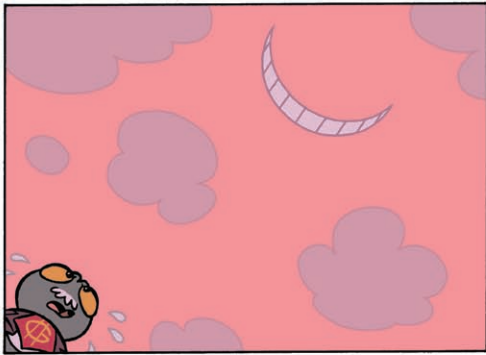


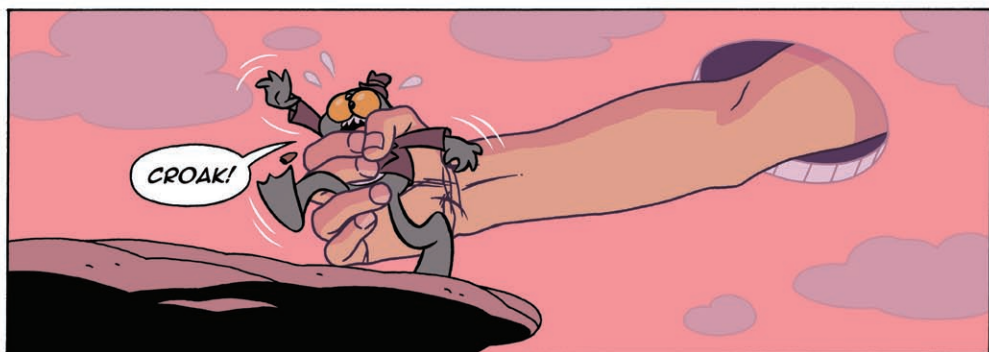


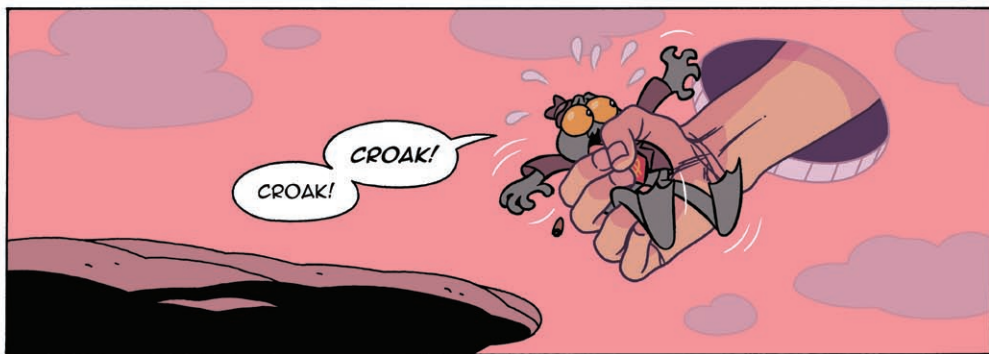


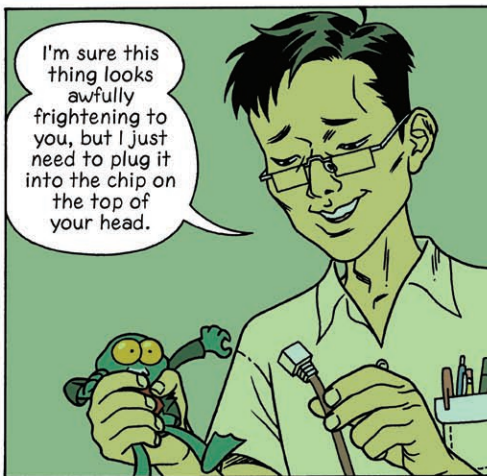


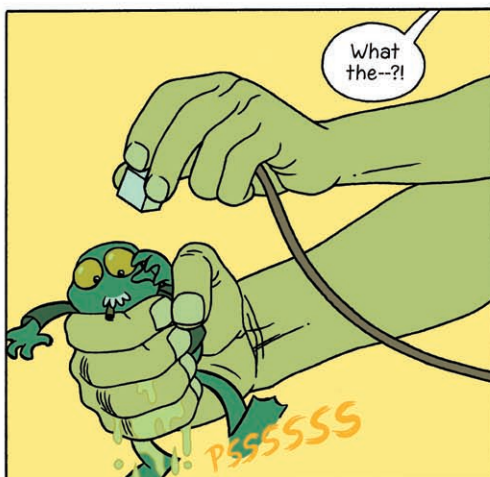
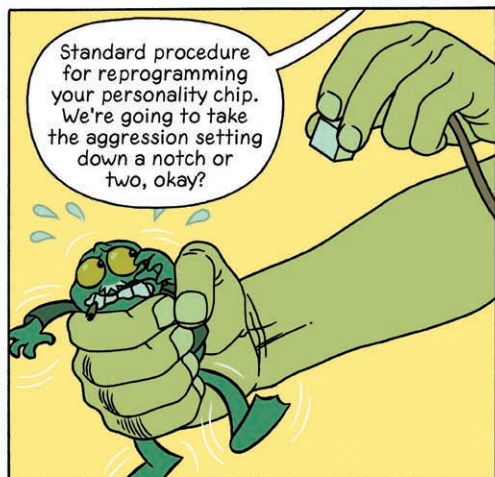


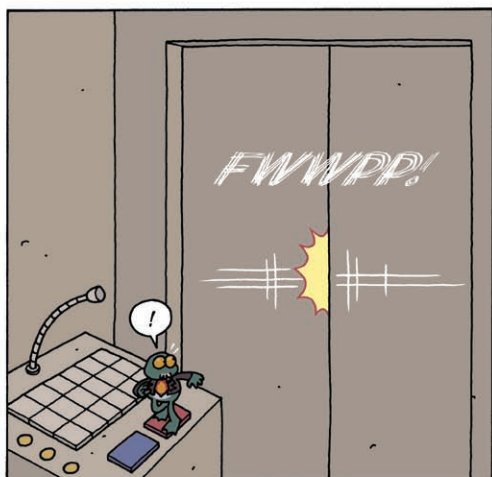














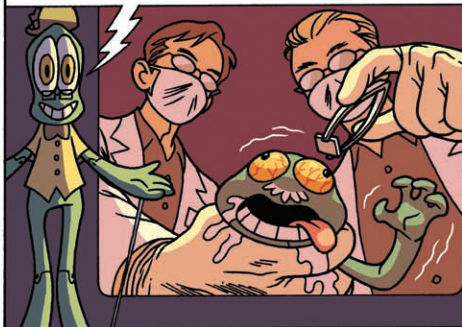
Welcome to the McFadden Studio Tour! Today
you're going to see all the behind-the-scenes
magic it takes to bring *Frog Tales* to your
television screen!



Over a decade ago, our founder Elias
McFadden dreamengineered an ingenious way of
combining the unpredictable drama of reality
TV with the anthropomorphic fun of Saturday
morning cartoons: chip-enhanced animal
characters!



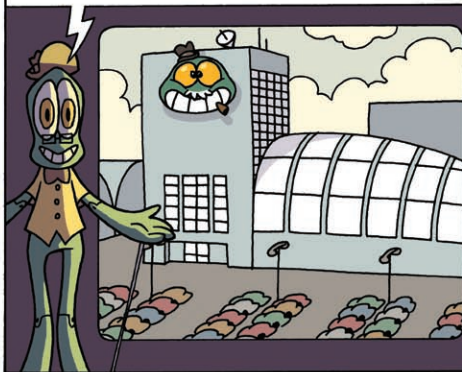
By surgically attaching **McFadden Personality Chips** to the brains of real live animals, McFadden dreamengineers gave Gran'pa Greenbax, Molly, Polly, me, and all the other Frog Tales characters human-like speech, emotions, and personalities!



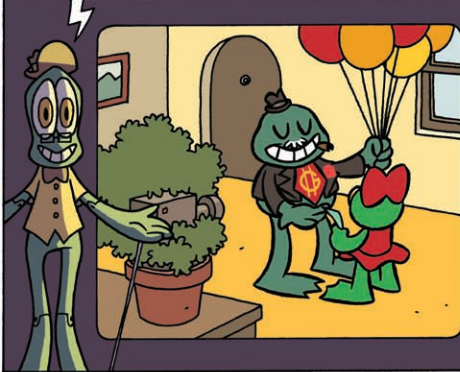
But that's not all! McFadden dreamengineers then built a giant synthetic environment in which we all live, work, and play, completely contained inside the McFadden Studio building!



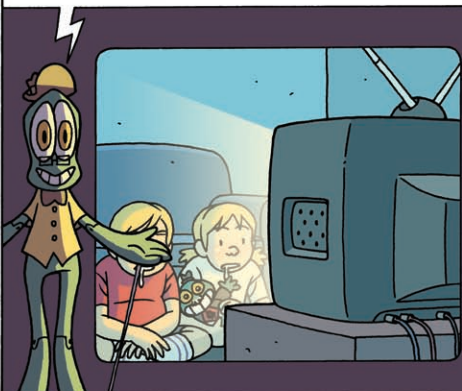
That's right! Frogville, Bunnytown, and even the sites of Gran'pa Greenbax's most remote Profitable Adventures are all under the same roof you're under now!



Hidden cameras within the environment capture all the unpredictable action... and the unpredictable fun!

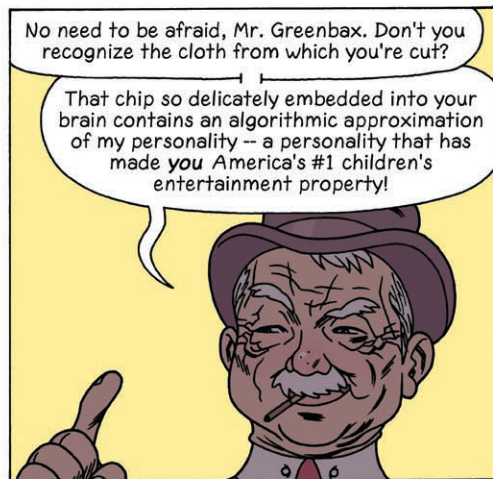
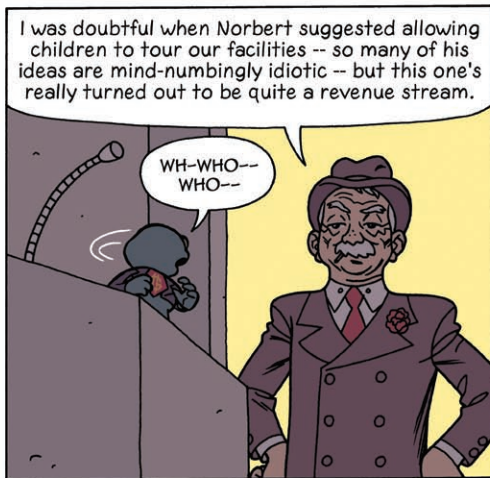
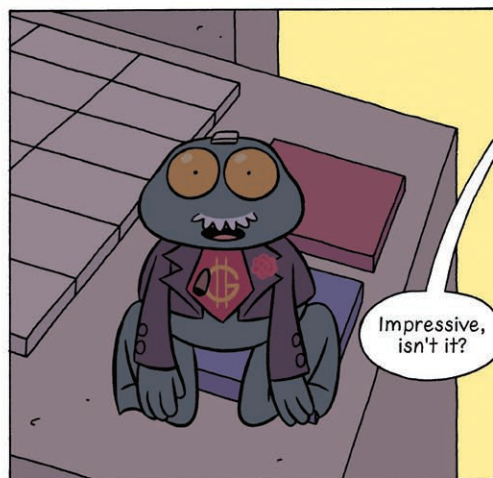
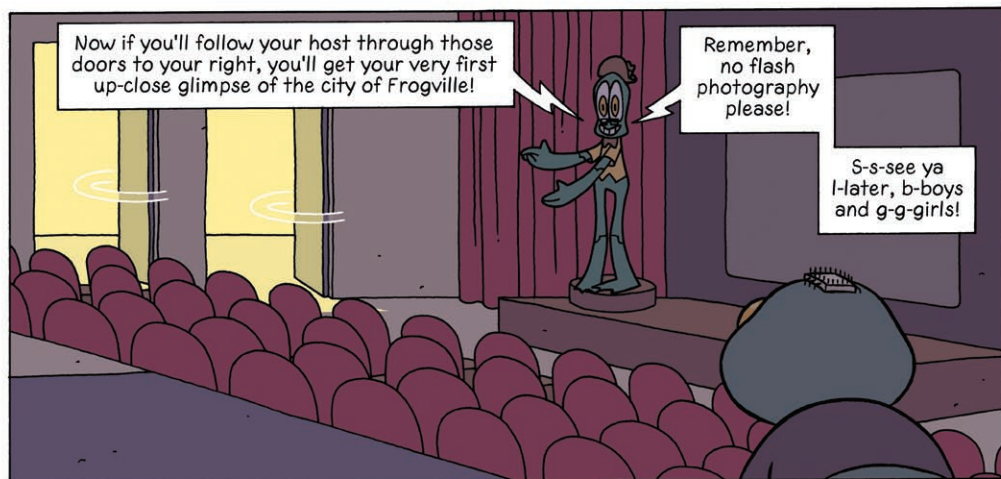


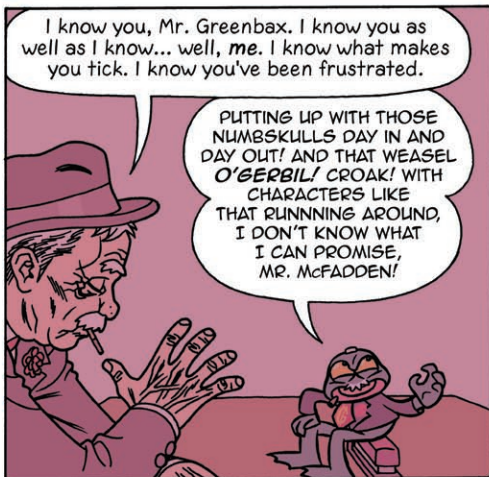
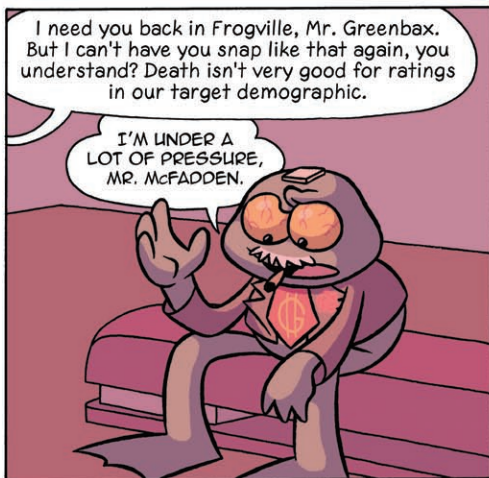
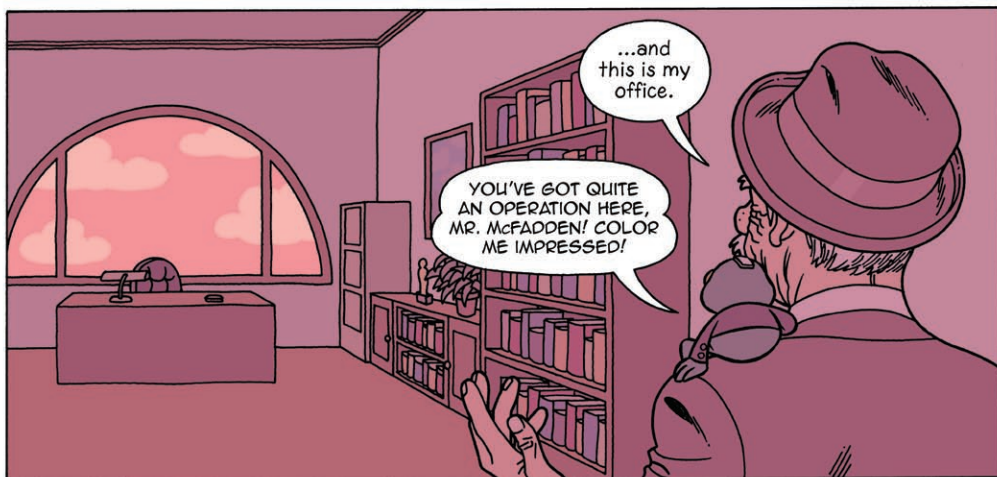
And my golly, what fun it's been! What started as a half hour after-school show has grown into a full-fledged 24-hour cable network!



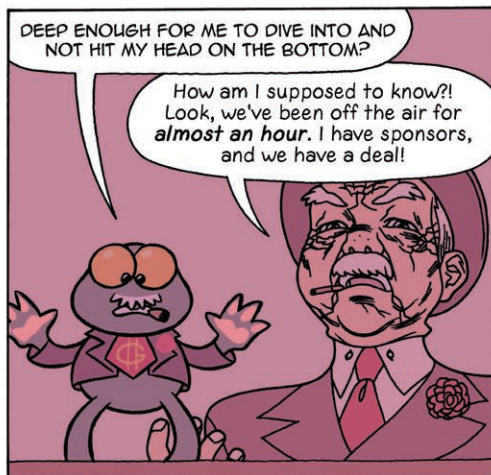
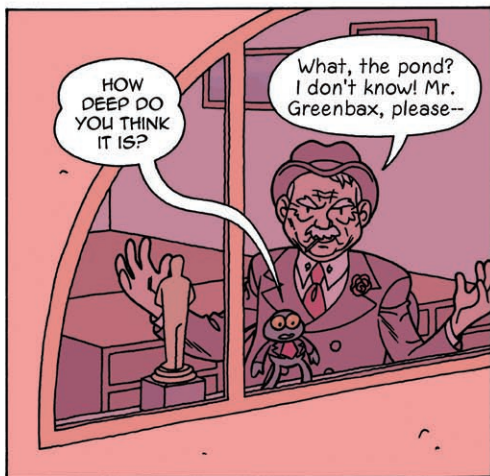
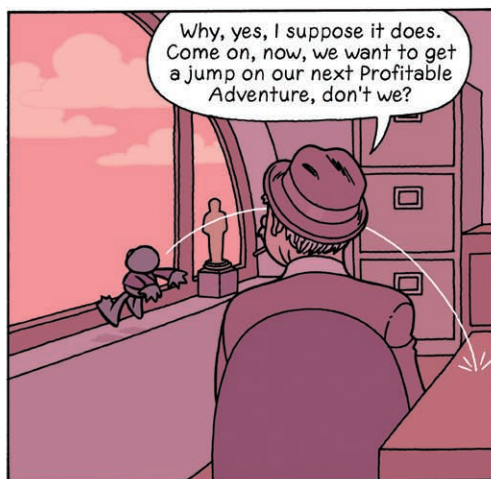
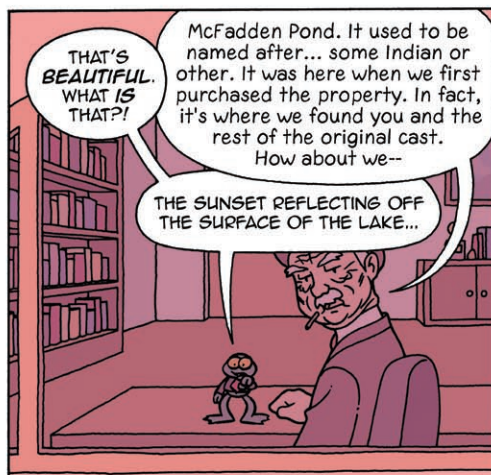
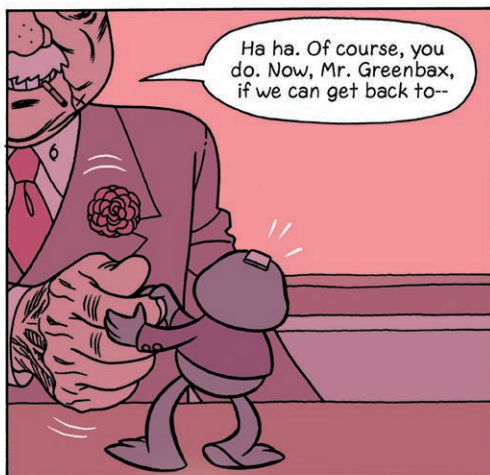
And that's what makes **Frog Tales**, America's most popular children's show!

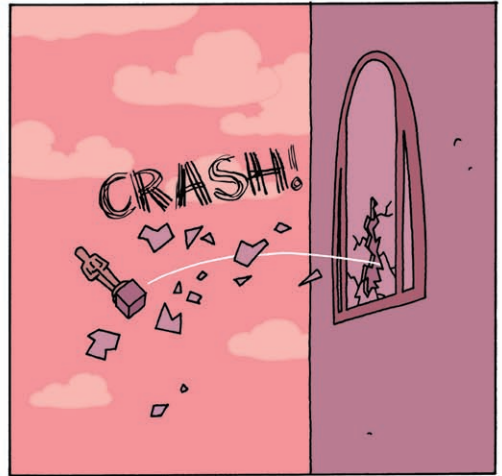
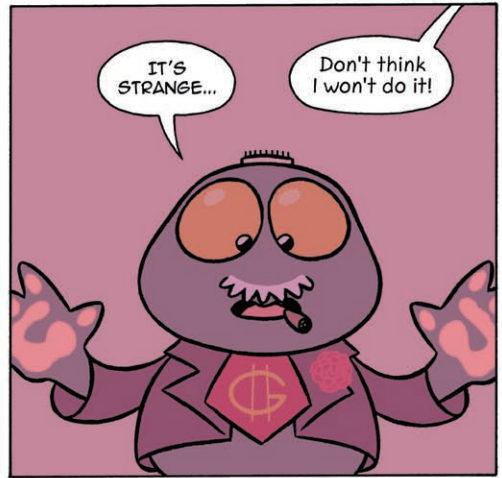




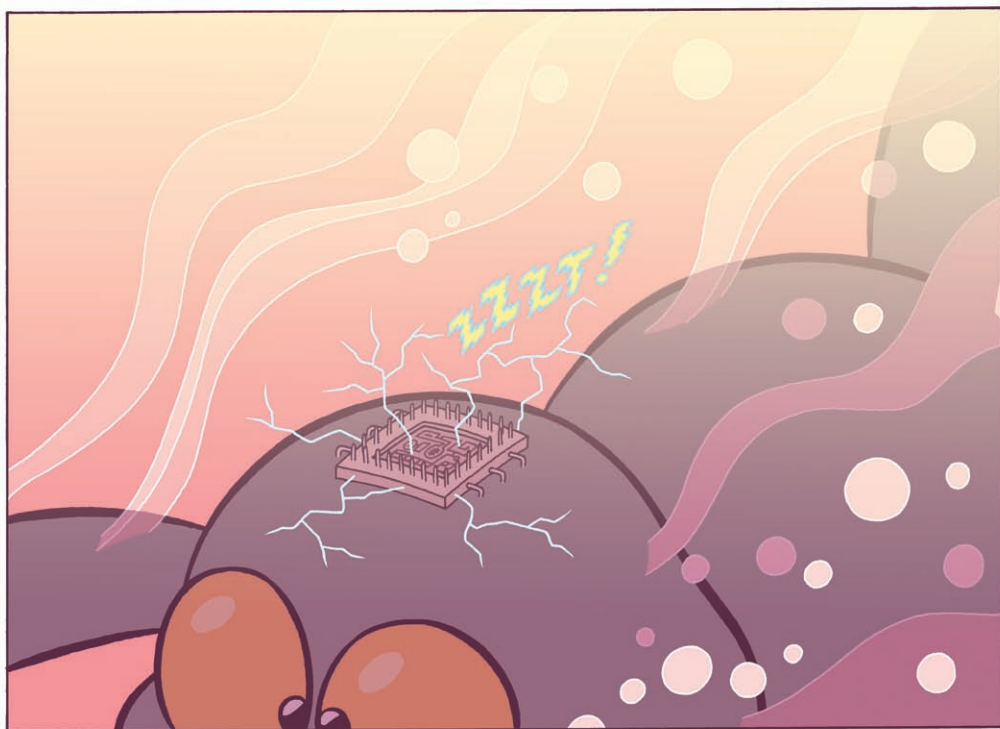
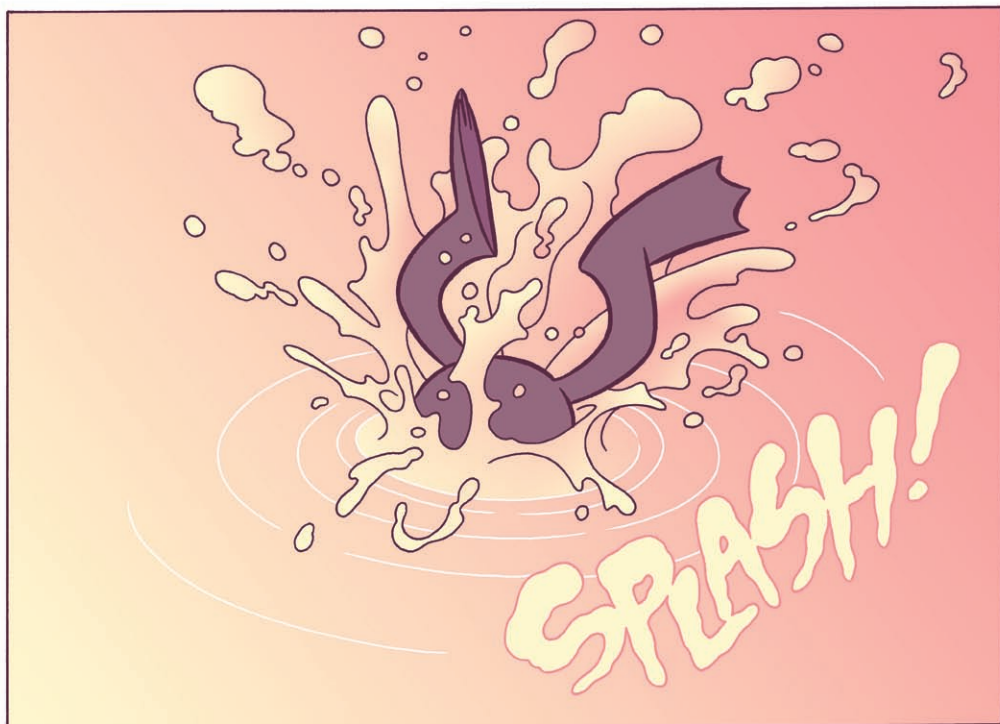


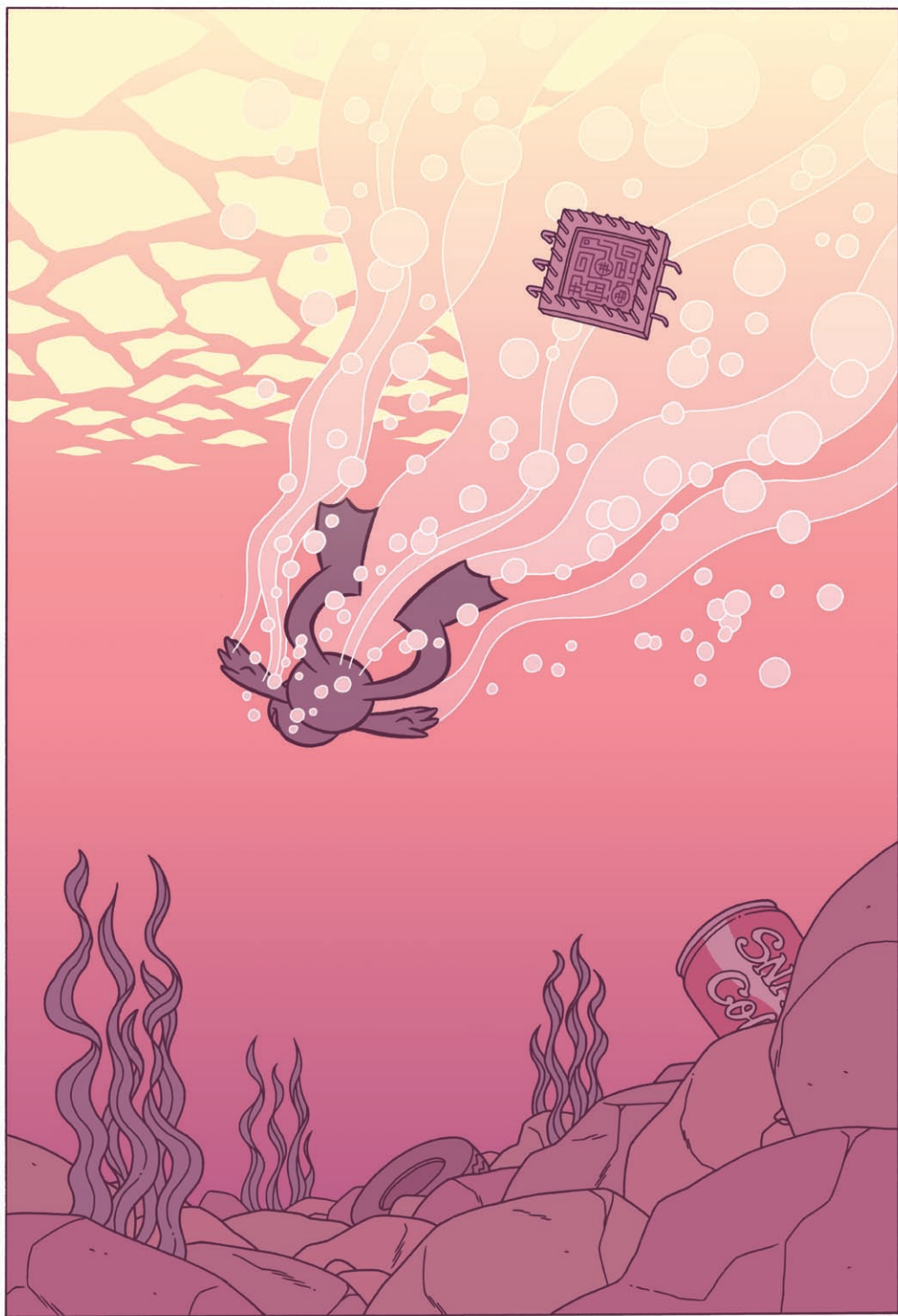




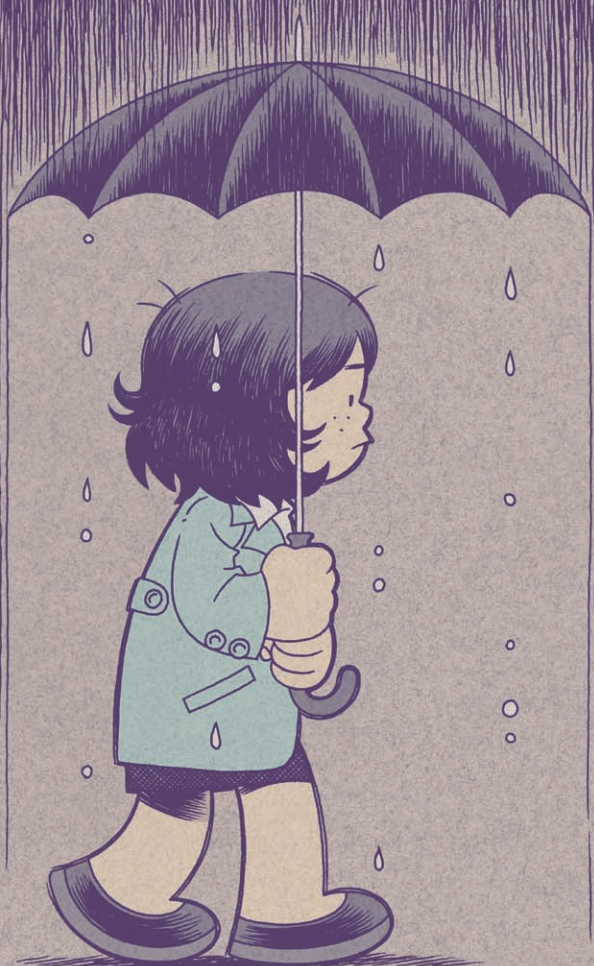


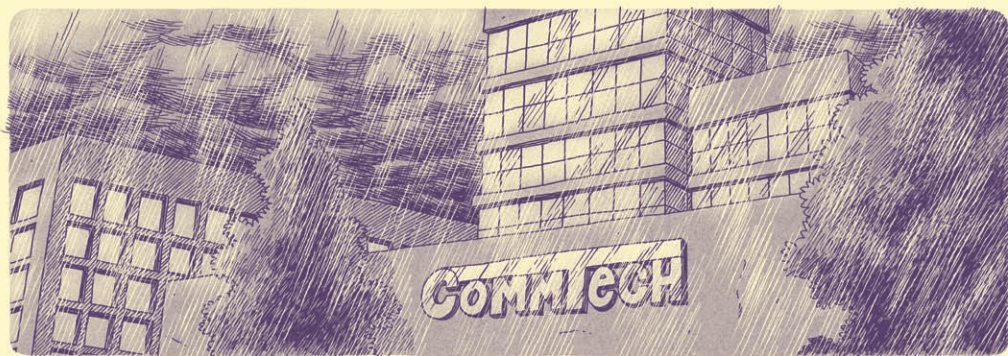






URGENT REQUEST





What are you
milling around
here for?

Oh! I-- well-- we had a
meeting scheduled, sir,
for one o'clock. My
performance review.



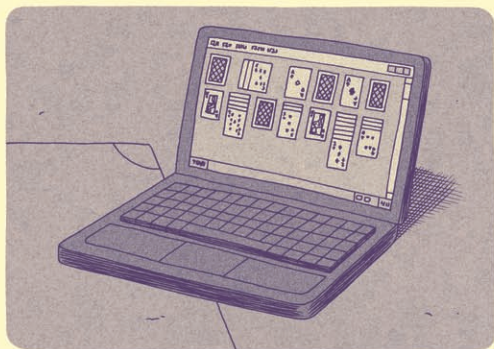
Must've slipped my
mind. I've been busy.

It's all right, really--

I'm not apologizing.
I'm telling you:



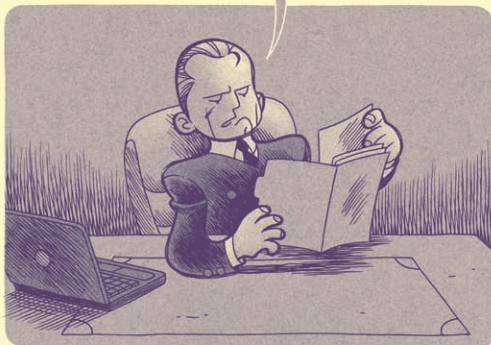
I've been busy.



So. You've been here,
what, five years--

Seven, sir.

--seven years. I've never had any complaints
about your work. And I don't have any now.



Good job. You're a highly valued member of the CommTech team. Thanks for coming in.

Thank you, sir.



You're still here.



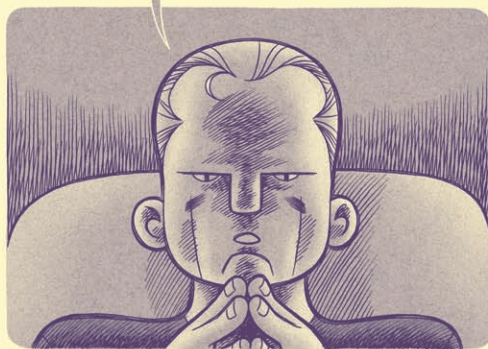
Well... there is another... um... I- I saw the post for that open position on our website.



I just... I think I'm ready for new responsibilities. I've actually been taking some networking classes at night. I'm not... I mean, I really enjoy working here. It's been wonderful. I... I just...



Janet Oh, are you asking for a promotion?



Well...

...Yes, Mr. Hoffman.
I suppose I am.





You see that plaque right there? I won it nine years ago by being the best phone sales associate in the company. The *best*. And this was when they started off-shoring to India, too. You know how many qualified phone sales associates they got over there? You have any idea how big that country is?

Uh... yes, sir. India's quite--



Is it dusty?

...India, sir?

No. The plaque.
Is it dusty?

It might just be the lighting, but
there seems to be a thin layer of--



You mind dusting
it for me, Janet?

What? I... No.
Not at all, sir.





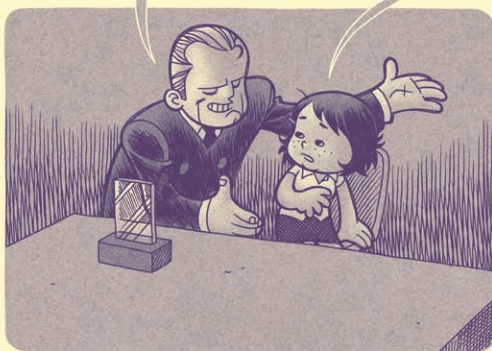
Let me give it to you straight, Janet.
Money's tight. True, we've had a good
quarter. A great quarter, in fact -- a great
quarter under great leadership. But if we
want those great quarters to keep coming,
we have to watch that bottom line, you
understand?

But I like you. I mean, we were
just saying, you've been a loyal
employee of this company for
the last five years--

--seven--

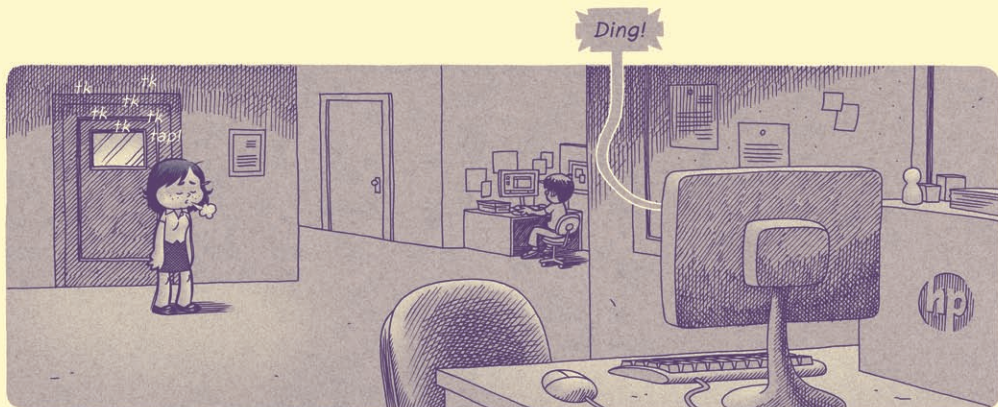
--seven years. I'll make it
my personal mission to see
what I can do. How's that
sound to you?

Thank
you,
Mr. Hoffman.



Thank you.





From: Reginald Hoffman
Subject: YOUR PROMOTION



From: Regina Hoffman
Subject: YOUR PROMOTION



Dear Janet,

After giving your request considerable thought, I have some bad news: I'm going to have to say "no" to your promotion. :-(



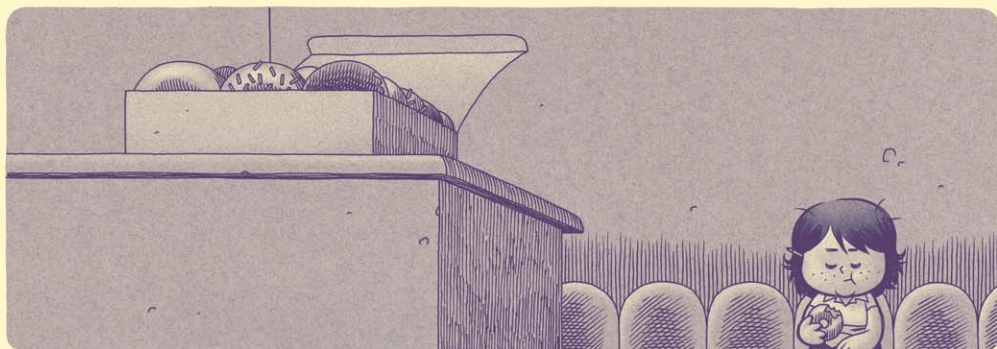
Even so, you are a highly valued member of the CommTech team!

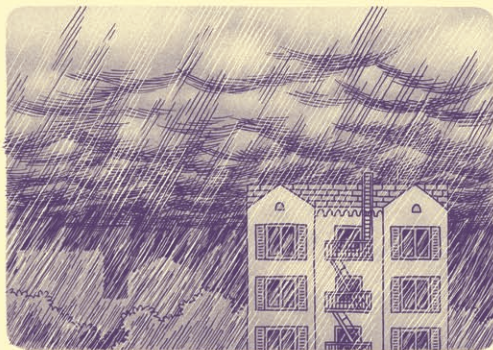
Mr. Hoffman
Regional Director
Phone Sales Associate of the Year 1998
CommTech Internet Services, Inc.



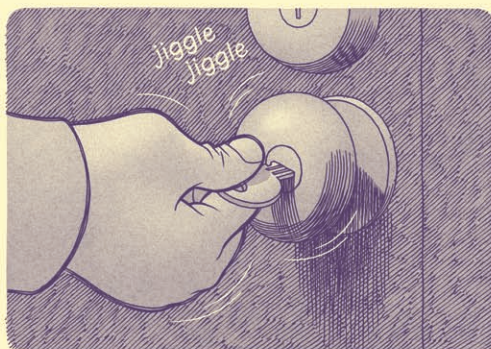
P.S. There is a box of donuts in the break room. Help yourself! :-)







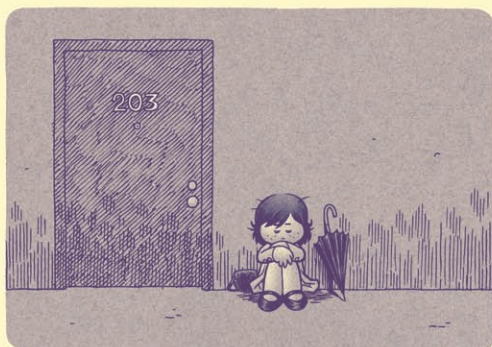
Janet Oh,
I change your lock to fix door sticking problem.



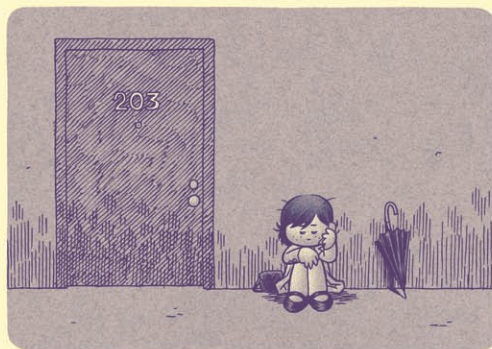
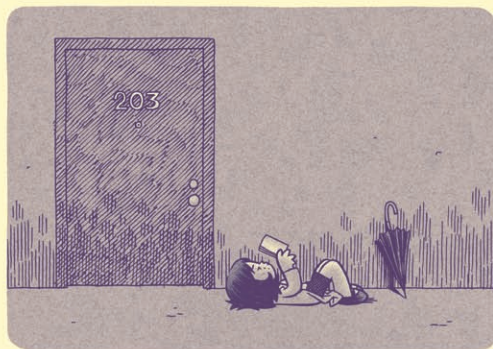
I bring you new key tonight.
Be here waiting for me.

≡sigh≡

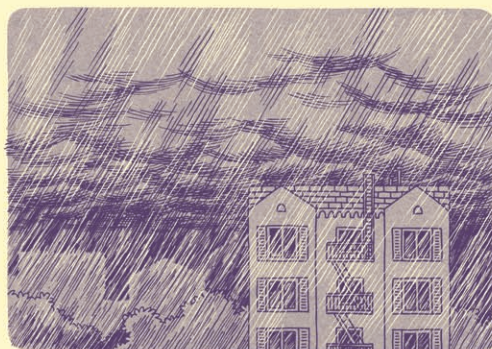
Stan

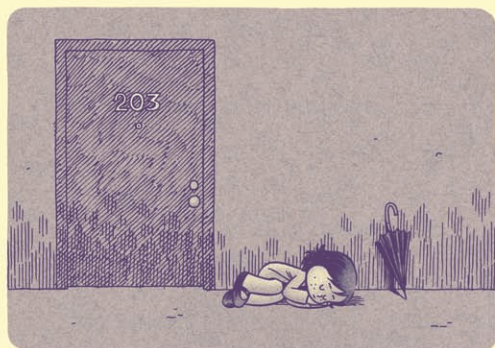


...please leave a
message at the beep.



Thank you.







Ding! You have mail.



From: Henry Alembu
Subject: URGENT REQUEST



Dear Friend,

I heartily solicit for your honest/Godly assistance to save my family's soul. Since the death of my father the late former Nigeria head of state, I no longer trust anybody within my beloved country.

You have heard from media reports of various huge sums of money deposited by my father in security firms abroad. US \$350,000,000 of this must be immediately transferred to United States for safekeeping.

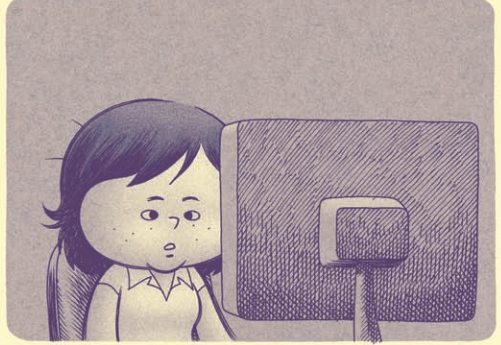
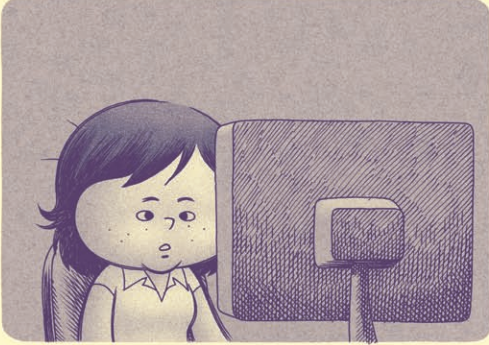


Might you have a bank account of use? I require simply your routing number and PIN. For your trouble, you will please accept my humble gift of 10% of total sum for yours to keep.

I got your contacts through my personal research and found trust in you. Out of desperation, my family decided to reach you. Please help.

Sincerely yours,

Prince Henry Alembu
Royal Family of Nigeria





Please, Janet. I am in need of you.

I'm flattered, Prince Alembu, but I don't know... I mean, we haven't even met--



"I saw th-th-the open p-position on our w-w-website and--

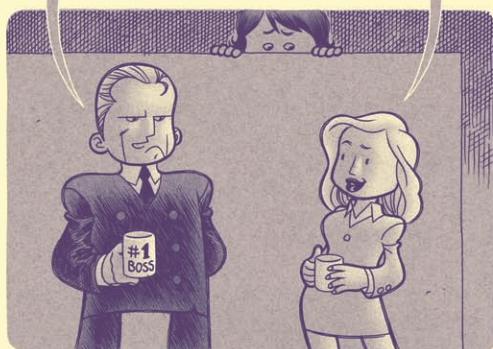
"I was j-j-just wondering if I could g-g-g-get a pr-promotion."

Ha ha!



That was the longest sentence I ever heard her say. I thought she was gonna wet herself.

So did you give it to her?



No, course not. I don't wanna be mean or anything, but she's just so... so... what's the word--

Awkward? Shy? Frumpy?



...insignificant.



Dear Prince Henry Alembu,

It would be an honor to help you and your family. You will find my bank account information in the attached document. Thank you for entrusting me with a task of such significance.

Your friend,
Janet Oh



Balance: \$0.00

...



Can I take your order, Miss?

No, I... no...



Prince Alembu,

I visited an ATM machine on my lunch break.
Imagine my surprise to find my checking
account completely cleaned out.

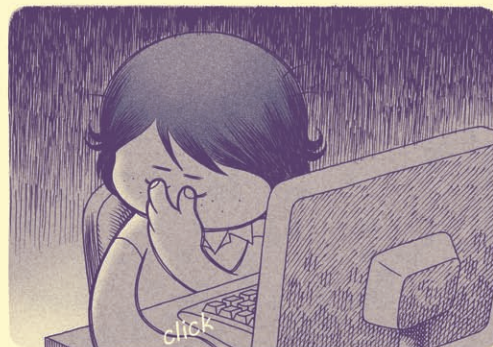


I suppose I shouldn't be angry. After all, I
have been betrayed by nothing more than my
own naive generosity.

Janet



Send





Ding! You
have mail.

?



From: Henry Alembu
Subject: RE: URGENT REQUEST



Dear Janet,

Do not misunderstand my intentions please. Politics here are excessive instability and my family suddenly was in need of emergency funds.

To use your personal monies was a last resort. US \$350,000,000 to be forthcoming. For now, might you lend another \$500?

Sincerely yours,
Prince Henry Alembu



Reply

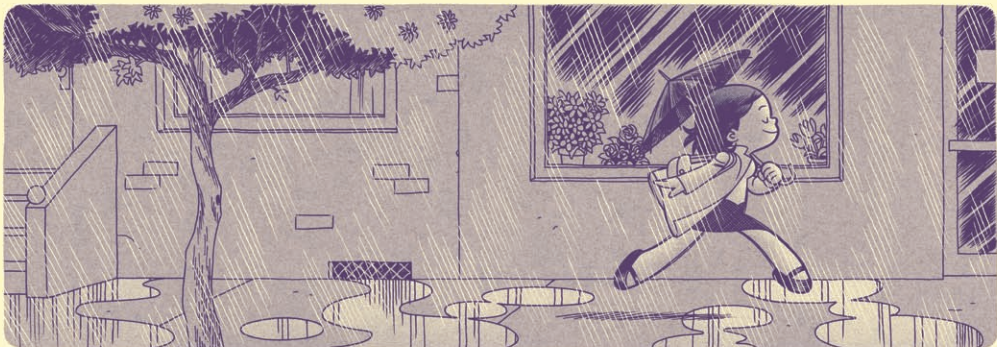
Prince Henry Alembu,



I underestimated your family's plight.
All is forgiven.



I'd like to
make a transfer
of \$500, please.

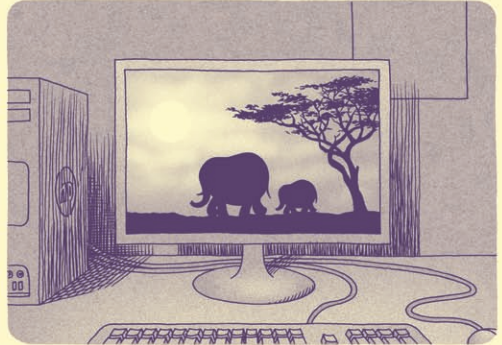


Janet,

I have no words to express my appreciation of our friendship. You have saved us much hardship/torture.



All of royal family in Nigeria lies prostrate in debt to you.



Might you be willing to expand our debt by \$500 more? Medicinal supplies for my elderly aunt.

Sincerely yours,
Prince Henry Alembu

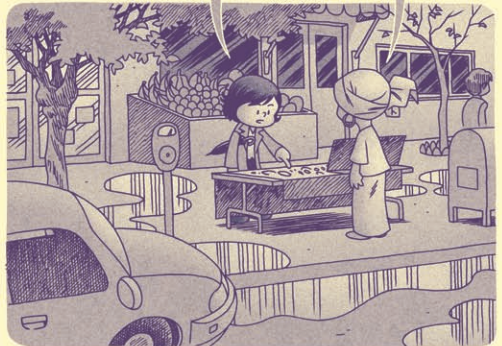


Dear Prince Henry,

It is good to hear from you again. You will have the money by tomorrow.

Where were these earrings made?

Zimbabwe.



Please give your aunt my warmest regards
and thank her for her patience.

How far away is
that from Nigeria?



Tell me, Prince Henry, what is Nigeria like?

Love,
Janet

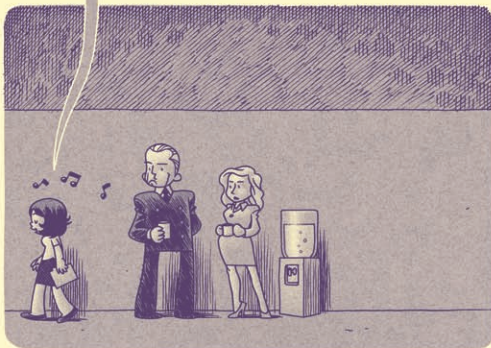
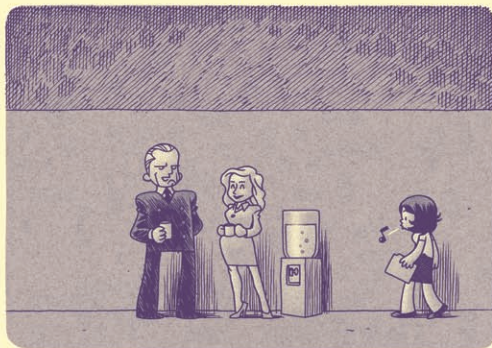


Dear Janet,

In this season the Nigerian night skies are
utmost in clarity. The brightness of the stars
reminds me of your superb humanity.

Only by your help have my family and I been
able to thrive. Soon, I will be transferring the
\$350,000,000.

la la la laa laaaaa~



Please, one more favor. Another \$1000?

Sincerely yours,
Henry

Hakuna Matata~!



Dear Henry,

I blush at the sweetness of your words.



If you can wait until my next paycheck at the end of the month, I shall fulfill your request.



In the meantime, please give your family my best. You are always in my thoughts.

Love,
Janet



Dearest Janet,

My heart bursts from your generosity. I bear most excellent news!

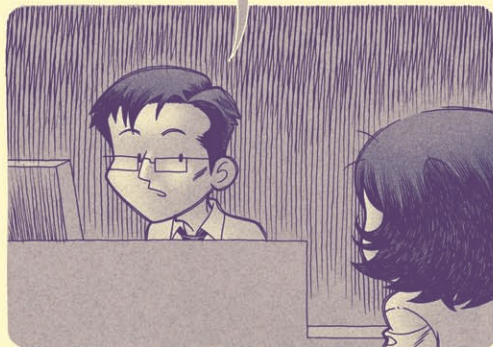
I'd like to make another transfer, please.

Hm.



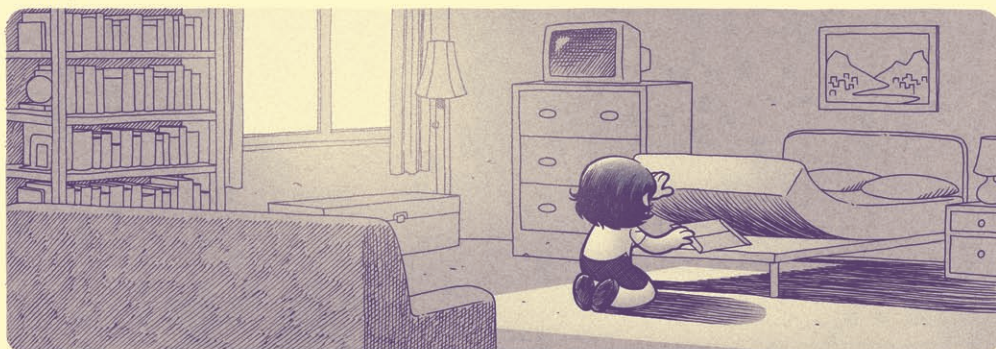
By grace/fortune, my visa and papers have come through. I have now the chance to visit to your country, to finalize US \$350,000,000 transfer in person.

I'm sorry, but there's nothing left to transfer.



Only \$2,500 for airfare is required.

Your prince always,
Henry

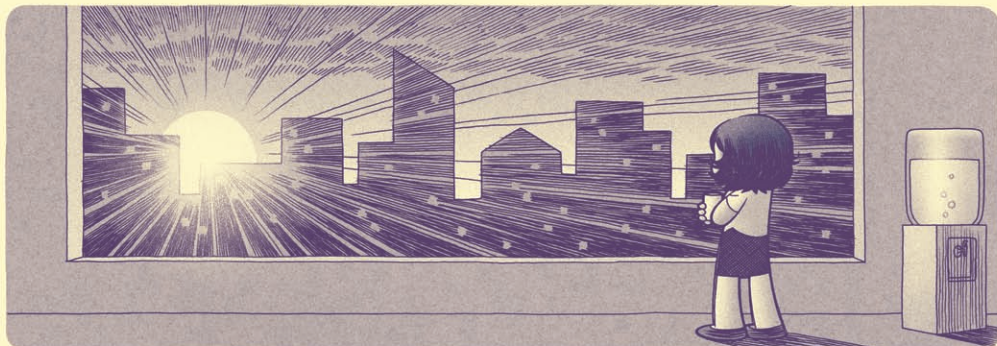


My sweet prince,

That truly is most excellent news. Before granting you this final favor, however, I must ask for one in return.

Will you promise to meet me in person as soon as you arrive in the United States?

Love always,
Janet





Ding! You
have mail.



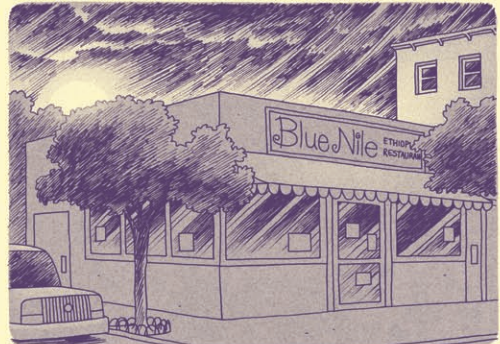
My dearest friend of my heart,

Name the place and time. I will be there.
I tremble with anticipation/joy.

Yours as always,
Henry

Dearest Henry,

There is an Ethiopian restaurant just down
the street from where I work...

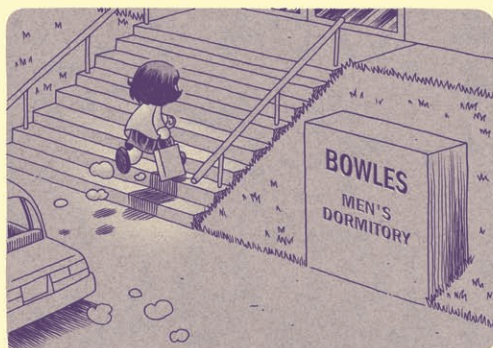
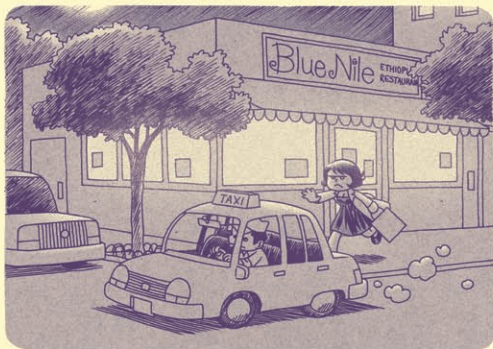




I'm sorry, Miss, but our kitchen closes in 10 minutes. Is there anything I can get you?

No, thank you.





Crap, man! I'm in the middle of Wow, for cryin' out--

Well, hello. What can I do for you?



I'd like to speak with Prince Henry Alembu.

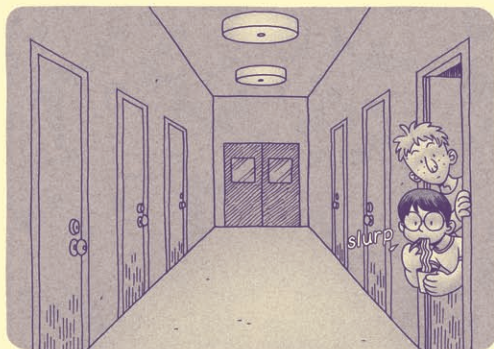




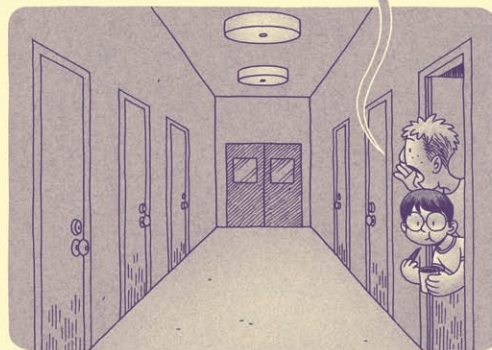
Open this door, Henry! Open this door!

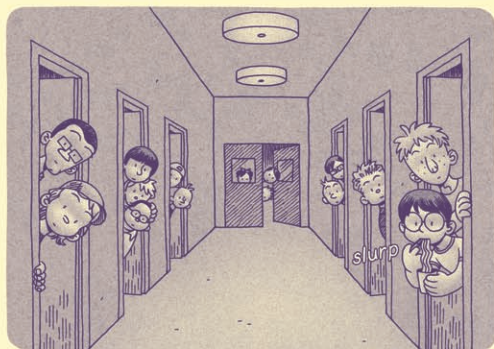
Go away! I'm calling my R.A.!

Oh crap oh crap oh crap! How did she find me?!



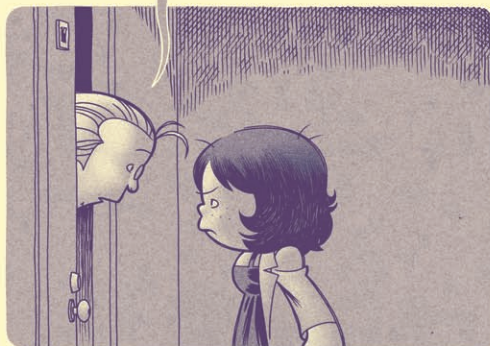
Beaver in the hall!





Open this door, Henry! After all the money I've given, I deserve a date with a Nigerian prince!

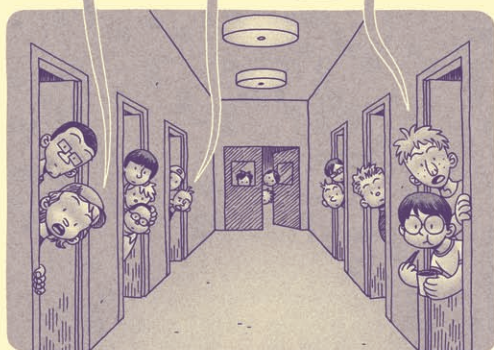
A date?



Do it, Steve!

But she's a nut job!

Dude! She's a girl, and he's Steve!





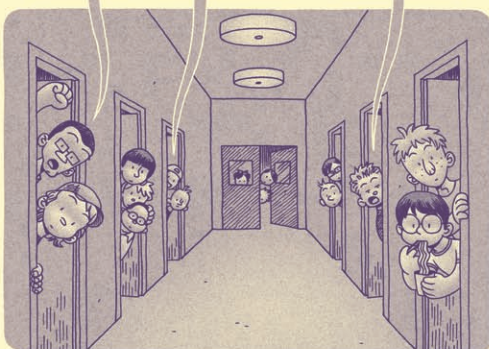
All right. Where are we going?



You go, boy-eee!

Someone's gettin' some tonight!

Boom chicka waa waa!



Put this on.



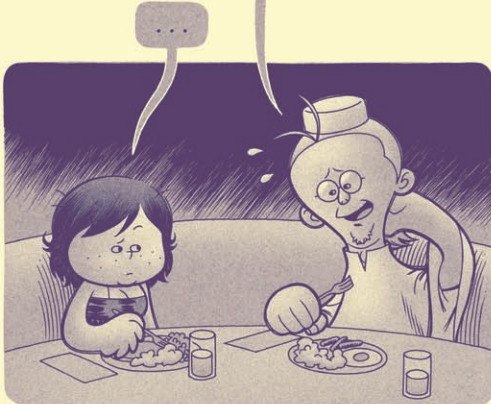
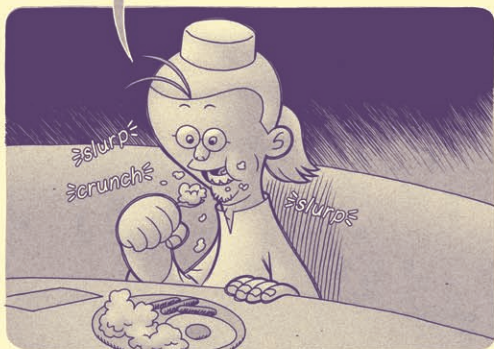




Man, this is boss! I forgot how tasty Denny's Grand Slam breakfast is! I don't think I've had one of these since I took my cousin to the prom!



Oh, uh... When I say "cousin" I mean in the general sense, you know? Not... uh... you know? Heh heh.



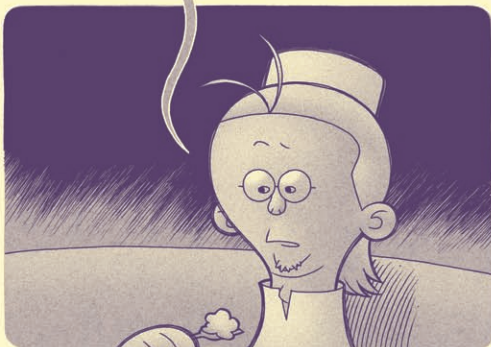
So, Henry--

My name's not Henry, actually. It's Steve.

So, Henry, tell me about Nigeria.

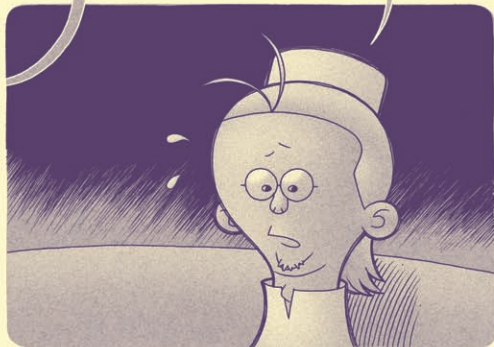


Ooo-kay...



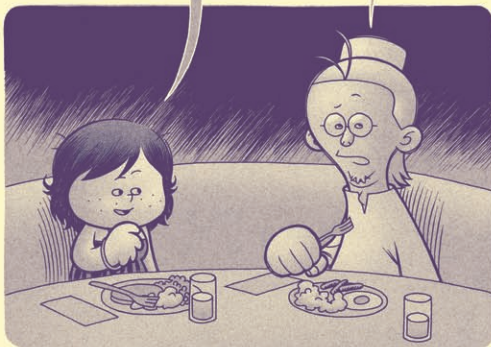
Well... it's, um, really sunny there. With big... you know, trees. And animals. Lots of animals.

Animals? That sounds wonderful. I love animals. What sort of species?



I guess, um... giraffes and stuff. Bears... lions... kangaroos...

Kangaroos? I thought they were only in Australia.

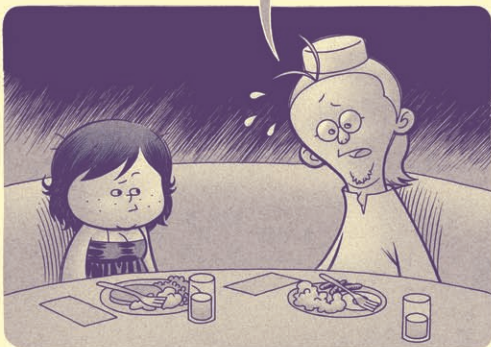


Yeah, Australia. That's true. Good point. Um... we... we import them.

Import kangaroos? For what?



Well... you know... kangaroo skin... you can make really nice shoelaces...



≥sigh≤ I can't do this. Look, I'm sorry... about everything. Sometimes, when you do stuff on the Internet, when you don't see the other person...



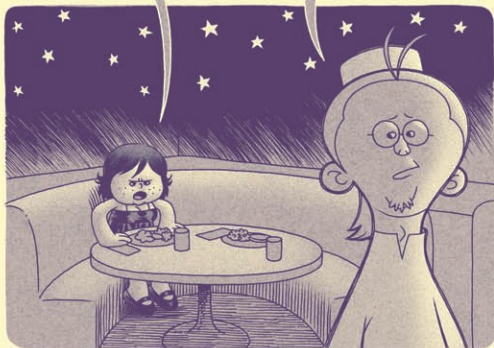
I'll pay for dinner, okay? Order dessert for yourself, too. My cousin loves-- er, I heard they got a great key lime pie. Is that cool?

But, Prince Henry--!



Henry! You're not even done with your dinner yet!

I'm sorry.



But-- but--



≥sigh≤
W-wait.
Wait!

Why... I mean...
what'd you do with
all that m-money?



What? I don't know... I...

Steve, please. No
more lies. Just tell me.



...

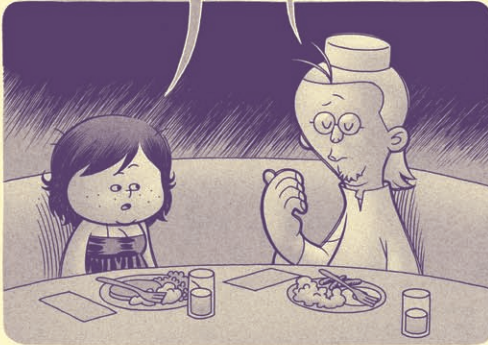


Start-up
capital.



I'm an entrepreneur.

What kind of business?



You ever heard of Second Life? It's like this whole *virtual reality* you can get to from the Internet. You walk around in this cartoon character called an *avatar*, and you can do anything. Well, *almost* anything. See, avatars don't have... private parts. Heh heh.

Ooo-kay...



So that's what my company does. We create "avatar enhancements" for "adult leisure activities" in digital environments.



You used my money to make genitals for a video game?



No no no! Second Life is *not* a video game! That is *such* a misconception! It's like this other *dimension*, okay?! It's so much more than--



≥sigh≤
Forget it.



How'd you find me, anyway?

I work for CommTech. We manage your school's network and Internet services.



I don't get it, then. You must've known, right? This whole time--



...

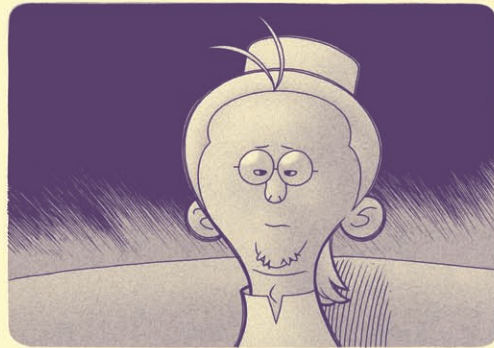
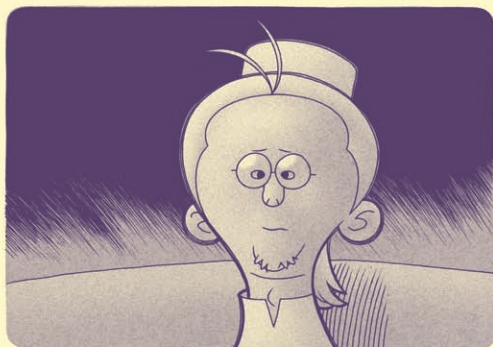
Yes. I knew.
I knew we
were playing
make-believe.

But that didn't
stop me from
needing to play
for a little while,
you know?



Look, Ma!
I'm a boy
wizard!

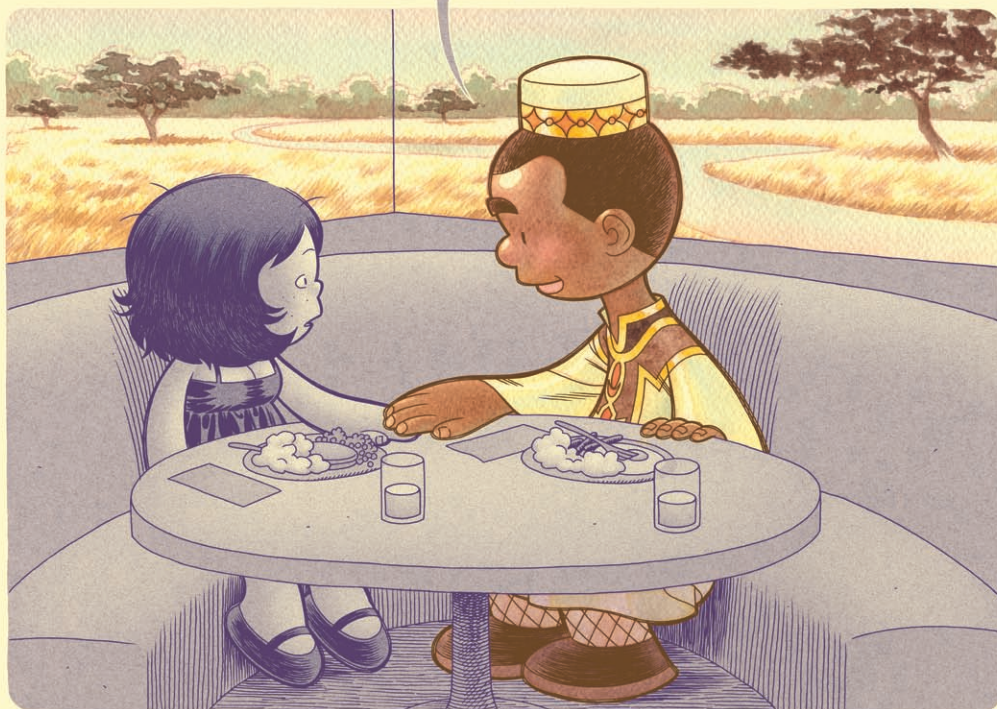
Steve, you idiot!
Give me back my
bathrobe!







Yes, I know.



Come with me.















My fellow
countrymen, I
present to you my
beloved bride--



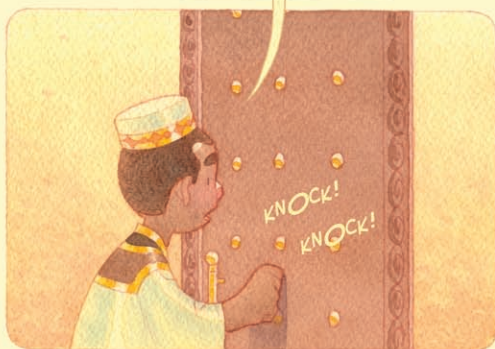
--and the new
Queen of Nigeria!



!



Dear queen,
what's the matter?



I'm no queen.
They all know it. I must look
ridiculous in these clothes.



Don't be foolish, my love! My family
has been restored to power! I am now
king, and you are my bride! You are
rightfully the queen!



Henry, listen to me.
I'm not a queen. I'm an
office assistant.



Stop.
Stop!

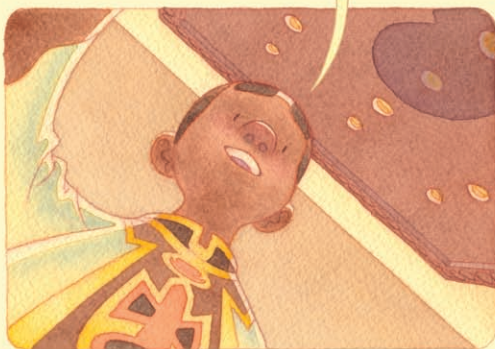
I don't live in a castle.
I work in a cubicle



You, this place, our life together... it's all so beautiful... but it isn't real. I mean, Nigeria doesn't even *have* a royal family. All of this is just a... an escape.



You... you are right about many things. But you are wrong about why you are here. You did not come here to *escape*, but to *see*.

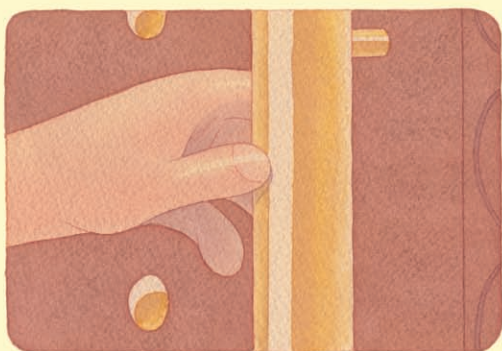


Some truths can only be seen clearly beneath the light of the Nigerian sun.



Open the door. Come out. I will show you.







Once again, my fellow countrymen,
I present to you my beloved bride--



--and Queen of Nigeria!



...Hi.



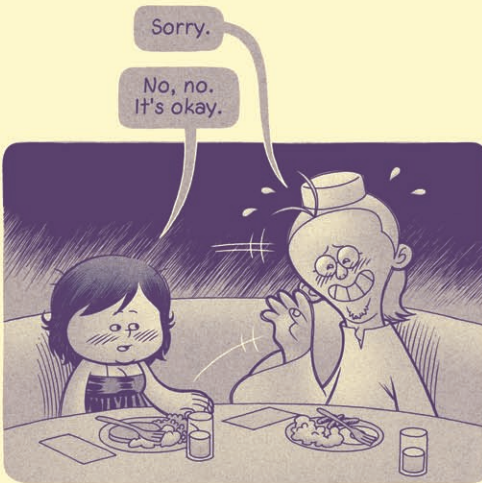
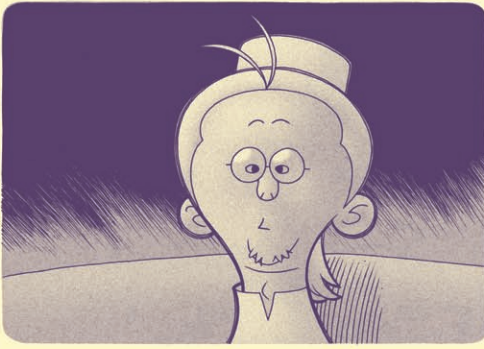


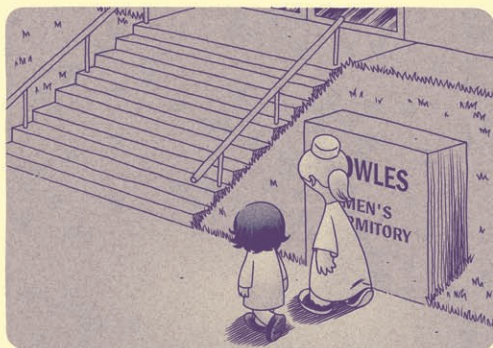
CLAP CLAP CLAP
CLAP YEAH! CLAP
YEAH! CLAP WOO-
HOO!



ALL HAIL
THE QUEEN!

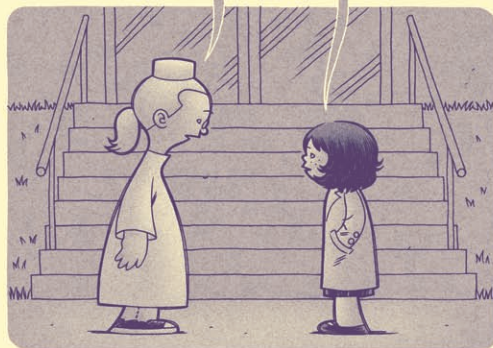






So, uh...
You want to
come up?

No
thanks.



Oh, uh, not for that. Not
that, of course. Heh heh. I
was just thinking maybe--

No
thanks.

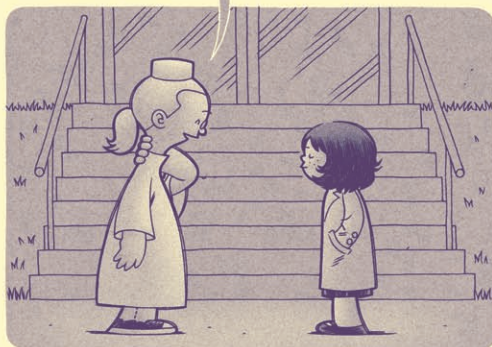


It's just that I've got this
pretty boss collection of
vintage Micronauts action
figures. Maybe you'd--

No
thanks.



All right.
Heh heh.



You know, all that money-- I really
see it as more of a loan. Once NeoNads,
Inc., starts turning a profit, I'm gonna
pay it all back, okay?



It shouldn't be too long. Just last week I got this order for a fourteen inch--

Thanks for coming out with me, Steve. I enjoyed it.



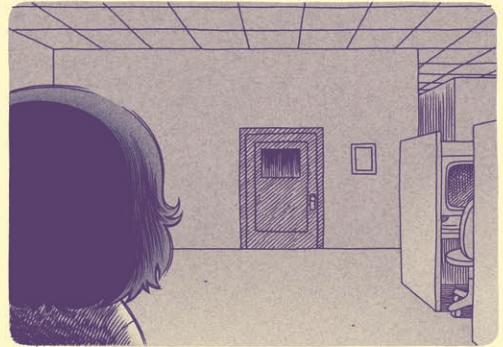
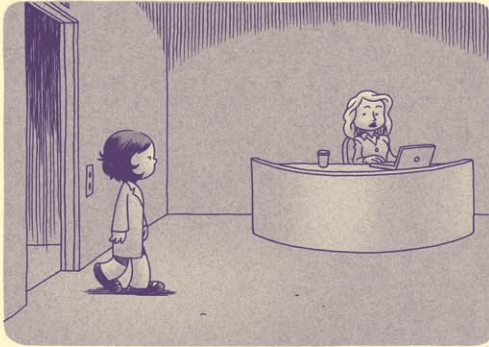
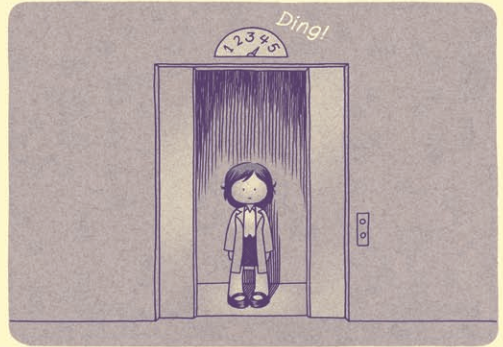
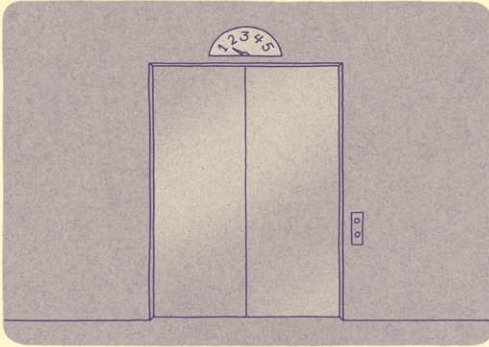
Oh, yeah. Yeah. Me too.



So maybe next time on the Micronauts?

I'll see you around. Thanks again.





My dearest Henry,



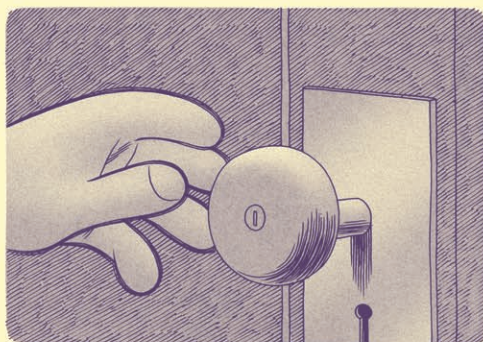
I miss you, my king. I think back often to our days together in Nigeria. It never fails to make me smile.



Life looks so different now. It's as if you've given me a piece of myself that I've always longed for, but never quite knew how to find.



You are forever in my heart, Henry.
Thank you for everything.



Your queen,
Janet Oh.

Mr. Hoffman,
we need to talk.



For Theresa.

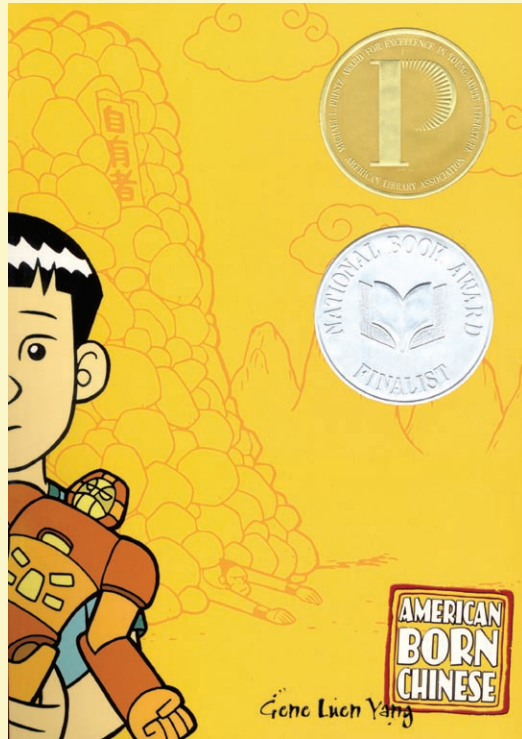
– GLY

For Elena.

– DKK



by Gene Luen Yang



Michael L. Printz Award National Book Award Finalist

Eisner Award for Best Graphic Album

Reuben Award for Best Graphic Novel

Amazon.com Best Graphic Novel of the Year

American Library Association Top Ten Book for Young Adults

YALSA Top Ten Graphic Novel for Teens

Booklist Editor's Choice Book

Booklist Top Ten Graphic Novel for Youth

Publisher's Weekly Best Book of the Year

Publisher's Weekly Comics Week Best Comic of the Year

School Library Journal Best Book of the Year

NPR Holiday Pick

Bank Street Best Children's Book of the Year

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San Francisco Chronicle Best Book of the Year

Library Media Editor's Choice for 2007

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“Like Toni Morrison’s *The Bluest Eye* and Laurence Yep’s *Dragonwings*, this novel explores the impact of the American dream on those outside the dominant culture in a finely wrought story that is an effective combination of humor and drama.”
– *School Library Journal*, starred review

“Yang accomplishes the remarkable feat of practicing what he preaches with this book: accept who you are and you’ll already have reached out to others.”
– *Publisher’s Weekly*

“The stories have a simple, engaging sweep to them, but their weighty subjects—shame, racism, and friendship—receive thoughtful, powerful examination.”
– *Booklist*

“This graphic novel could be especially cathartic for teens and adults of Asian descent, but people of any ethnicity would find themselves reflected in the universal themes of self-acceptance, peer pressure, and racial tensions.”
– VOYA





A.L.I.E.E.E.N.
BY LEWIS TRONDHEIM



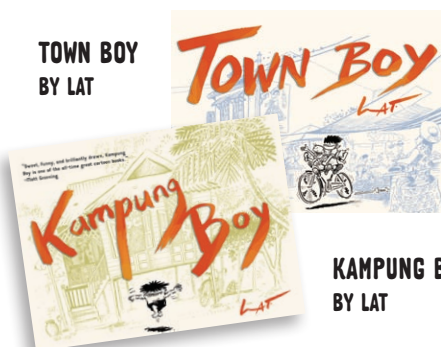
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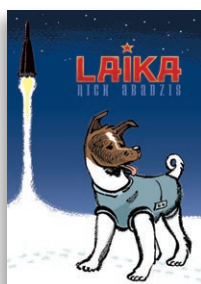


**THE LOST COLONY
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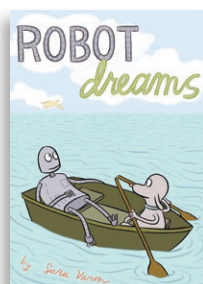


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KAMPUNG BOY
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BY NICK ABADZIS



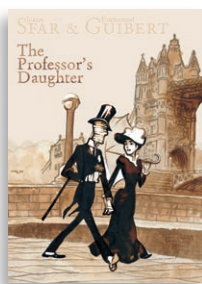
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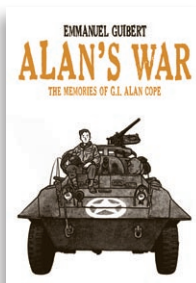
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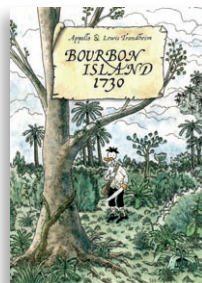
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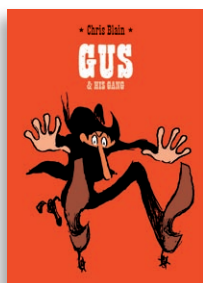
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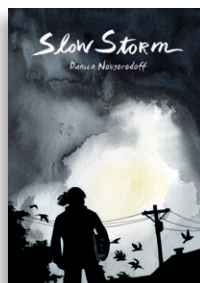
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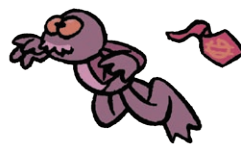
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GARAGE BAND
BY GIPi



**NOTES FOR A WAR
STORY**
BY GIPi





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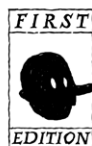
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