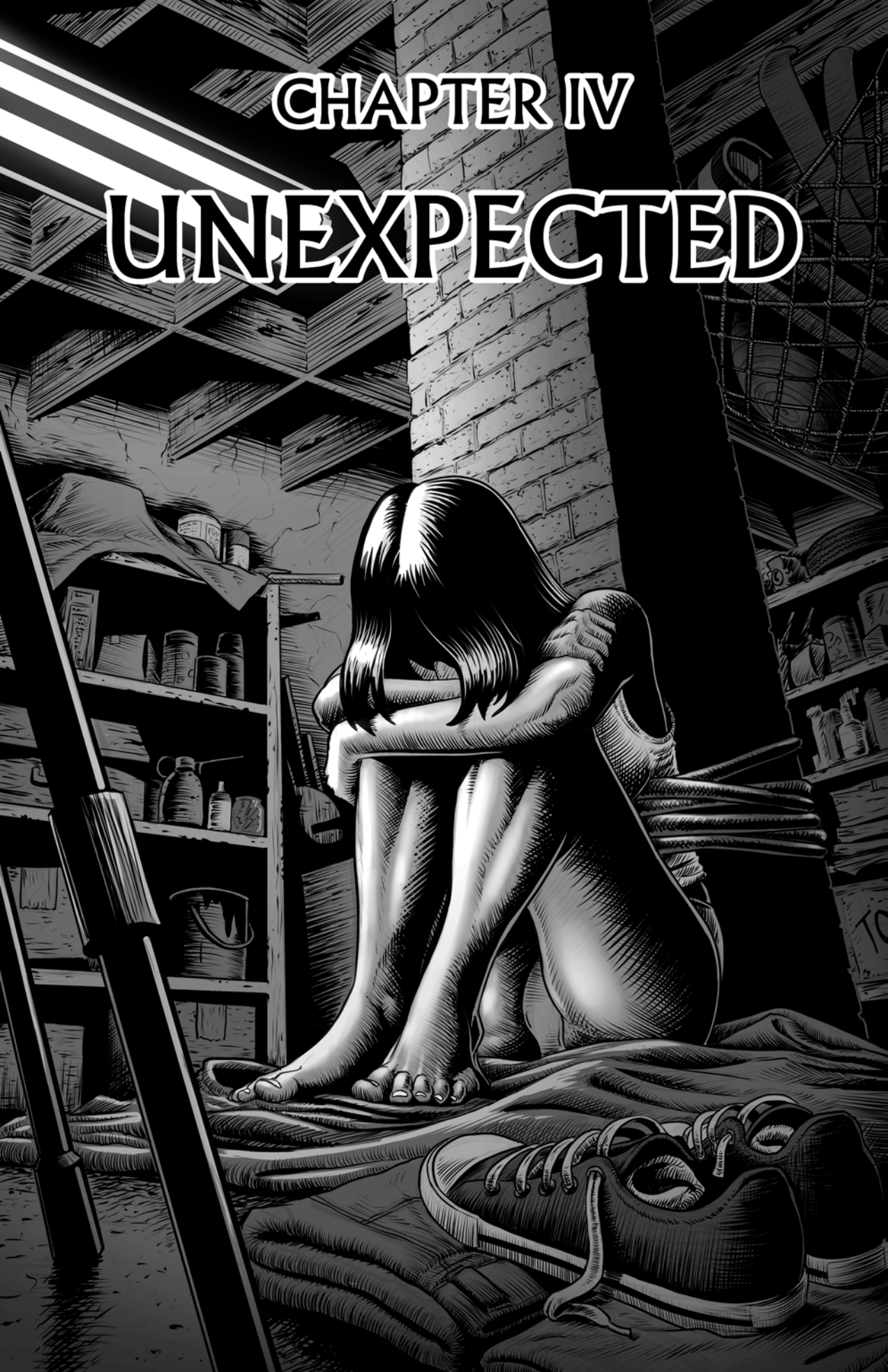


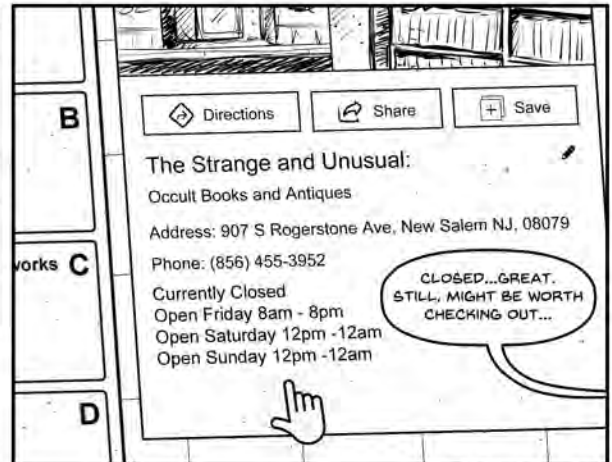
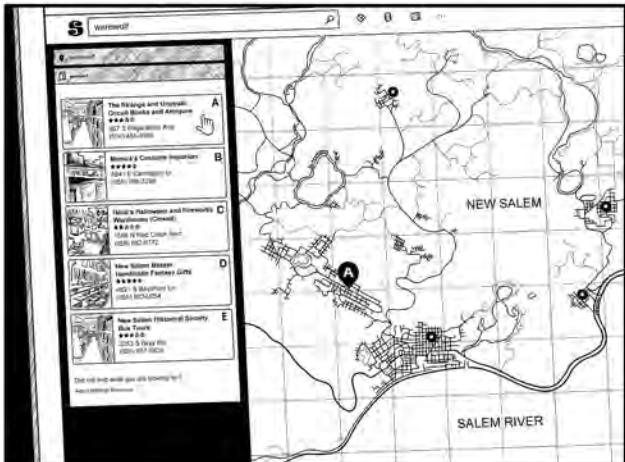
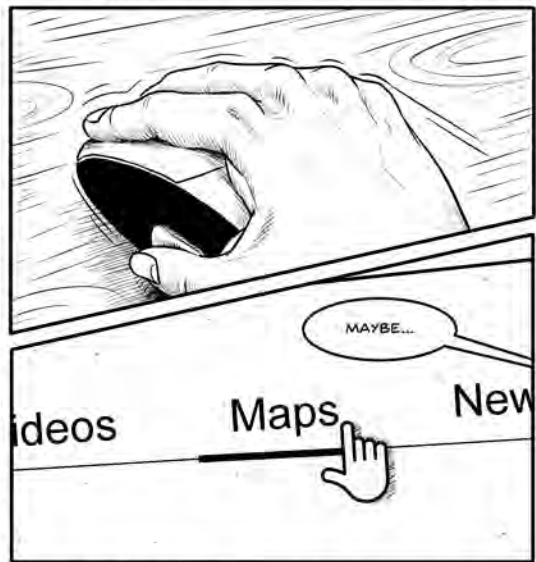
CHAPTER IV

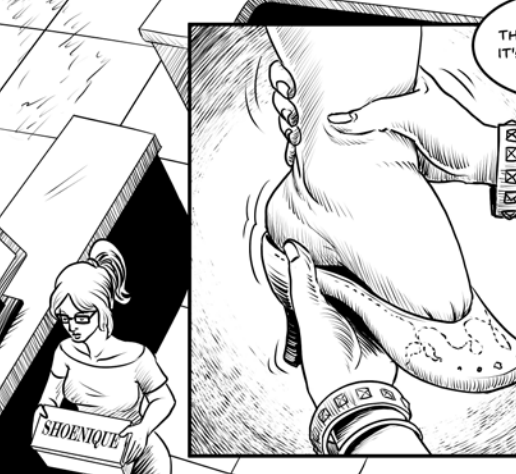
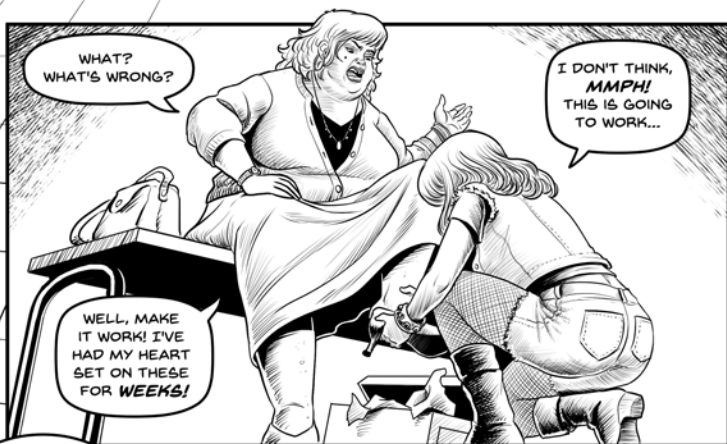
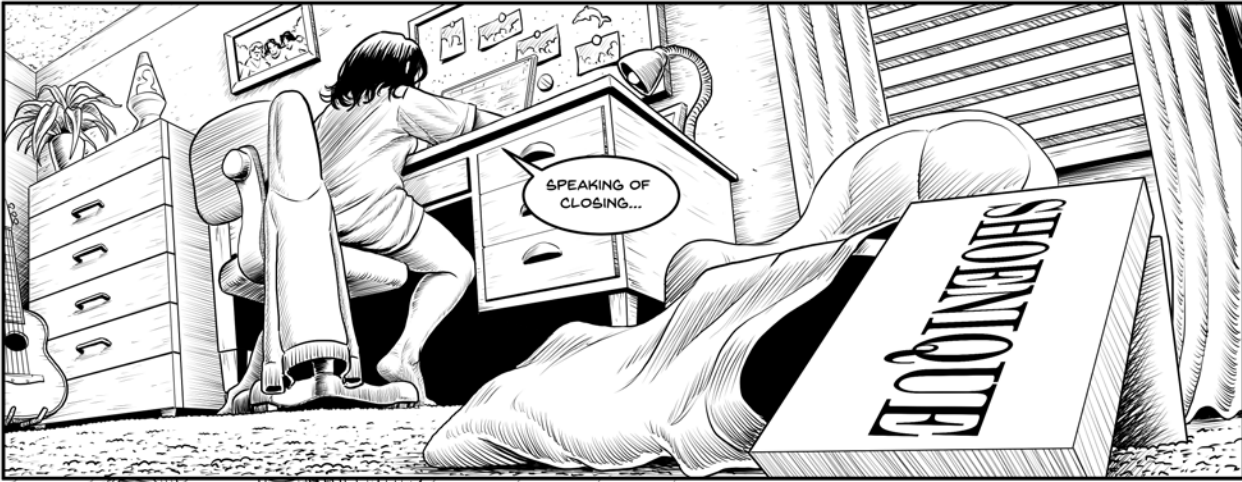
UNEXPECTED





...I'M SORRY ABOUT HER DOG...







LET ME GO IN THE BACK...
SEE IF THERE'S ANY...**LARGER**
SIZES WE HAVE FOR THIS...

SHOENIQUE THIS
IS MONICA HOW CAN...
...SURE JUST A SEC...

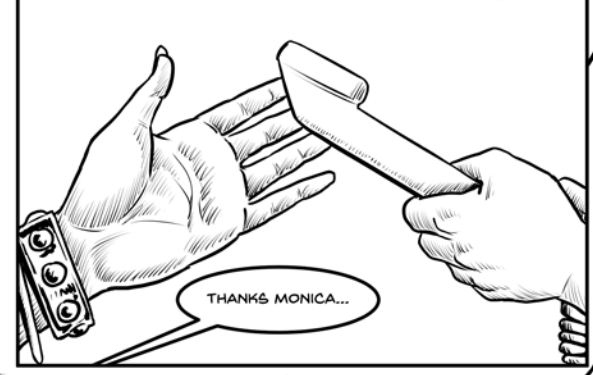
MEREDITH!
YOU GOTTA CALL!



EXCUSE ME, BUT--



I'LL BE RIGHT BACK MA'AM...
I'LL JUST BE A MINUTE...
MAYBE YOU CAN PARUSE OUR
RUNNING SHOES WHILE I'M GONE.
ATHLETICS ARE ON SALE...



THANKS MONICA...



'WE'RE MORE THAN SHOES,
WE'RE SHOENIQUE, THIS IS MEREDITH
HOW CAN I HELP YOU?'

MER? HEY IT'S SUE...



SUE? WHAT'S UP, WEREN'T YOU SUPPOSED TO BE IN THIRTY MINUTES AGO?!"

I KNOW I'M SORRY, THINGS ARE KINDA CRAZY AT THE MOMENT...



I WAS...I WAS HOPING YOU COULD COVER MY SHIFT THIS EVENING. I'M NOT...I'M NOT FEELING ALL THAT GREAT."

OH SWEETIE, WHAT'S WRONG?

CRAMPS?

NO, NO... IT'S NOTHING LIKE THAT.



WELL...MAYBE, I DON'T KNOW REALLY, I JUST...

THERE'S NO WAY I CAN WORK TONIGHT."

SIGH YOU OWE ME BIG TIME MISSY...



THE CLIENTELE ARE ESPECIALLY FRIENDLY TODAY..."

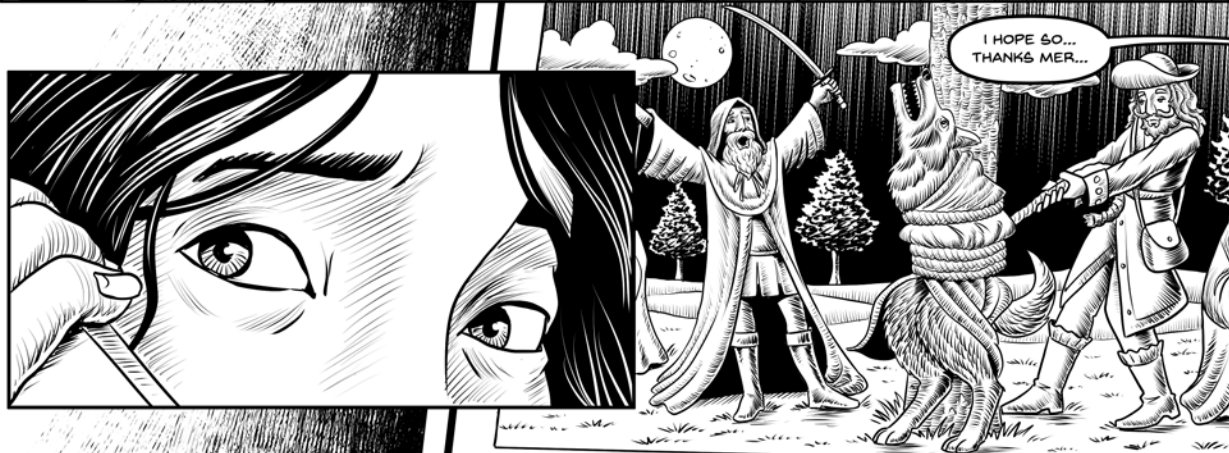
WHATEVER YOU WANT, YOU GOT IT.



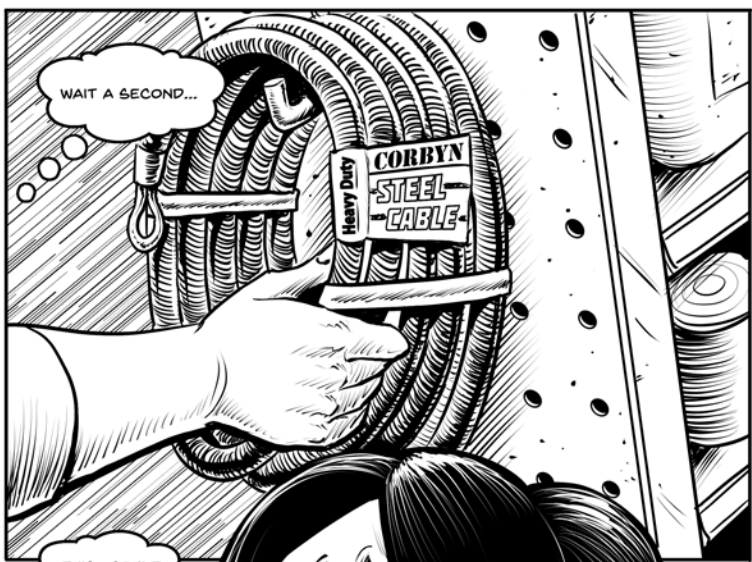
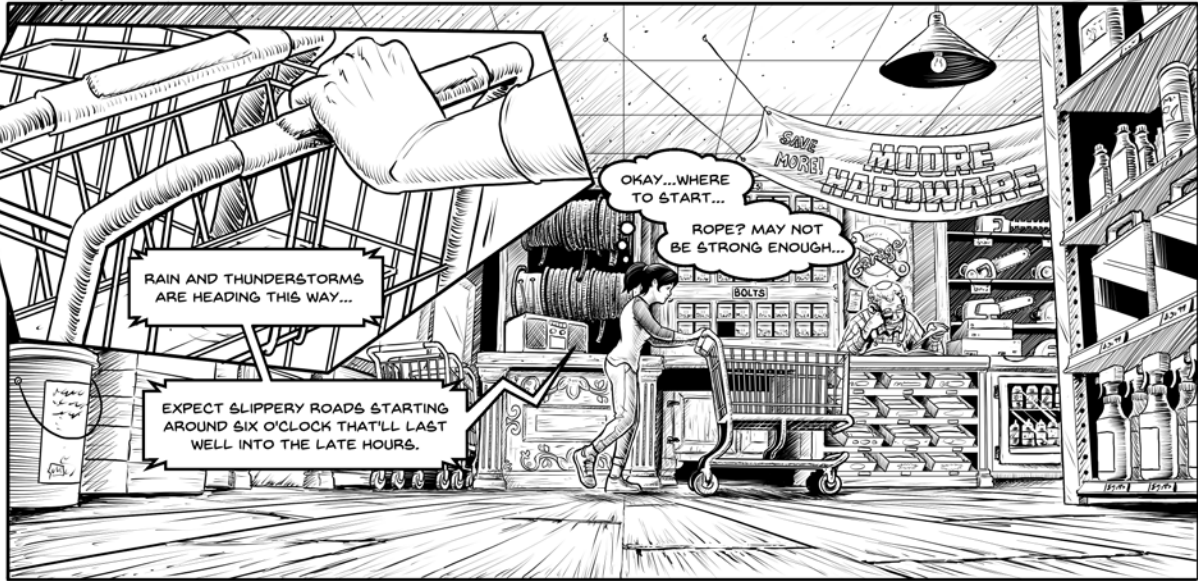
ALRIGHT GIRL, TAKE IT EASY...

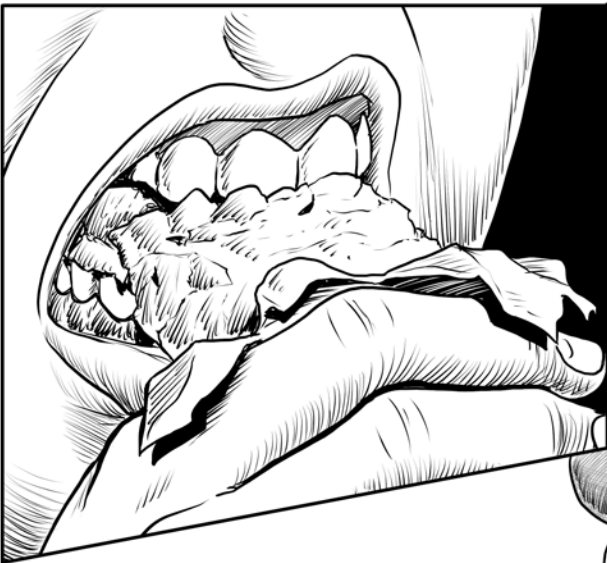
JUST REMEMBER...

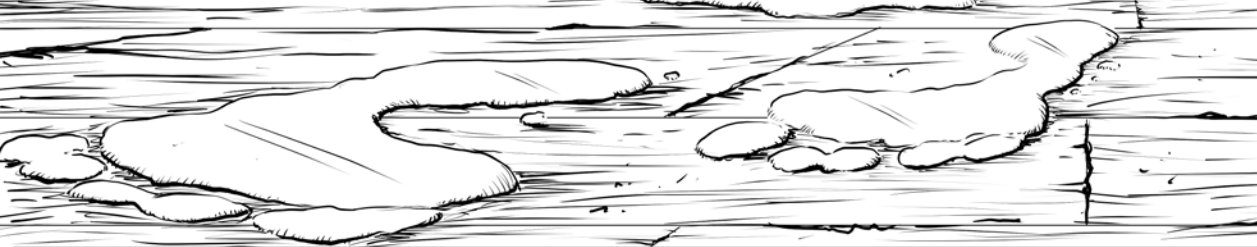
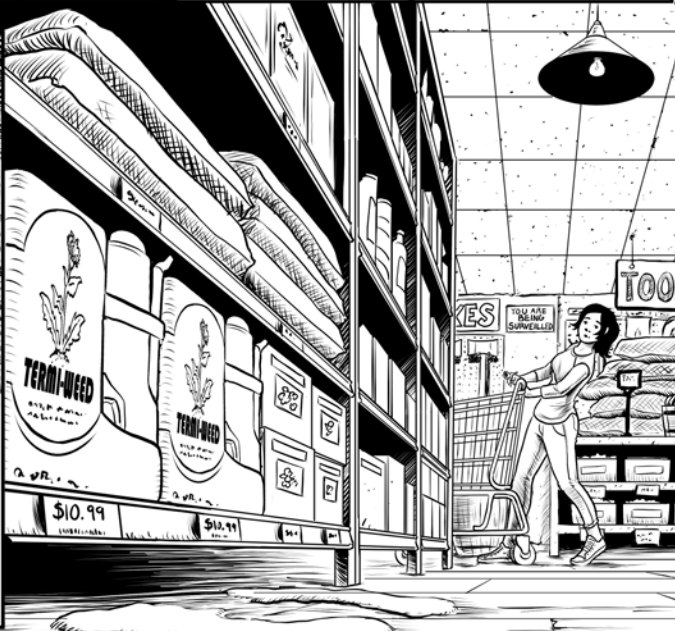
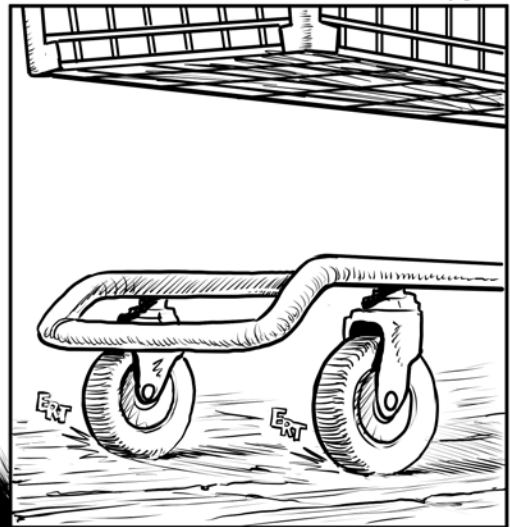
IT ONLY COMES AROUND ONCE A MONTH.

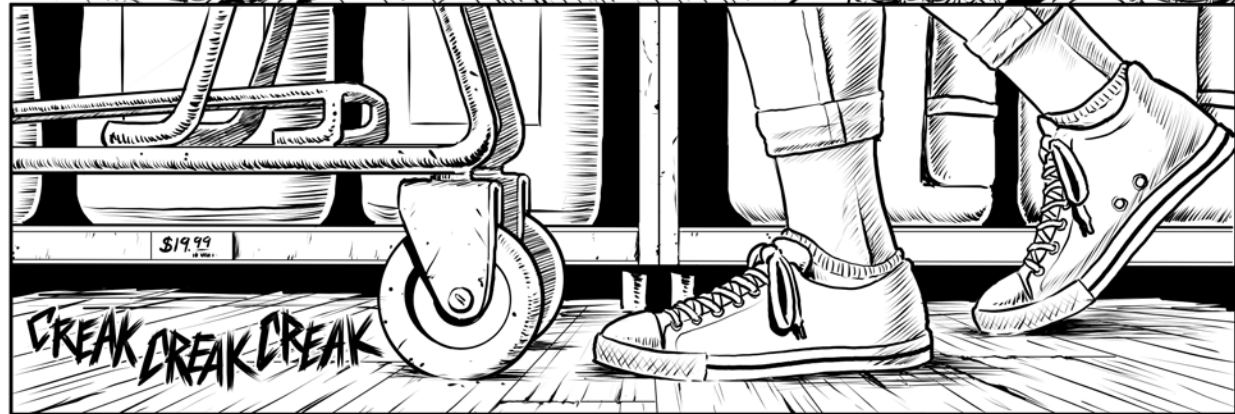


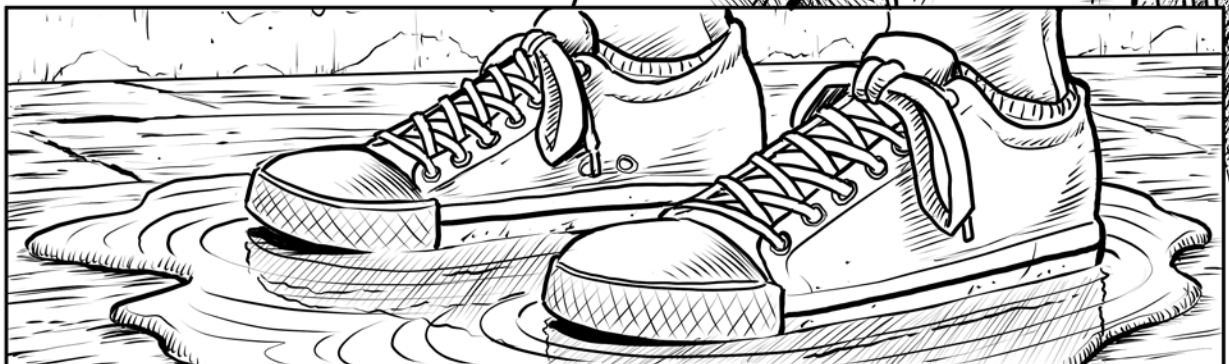
I HOPE SO... THANKS MER...

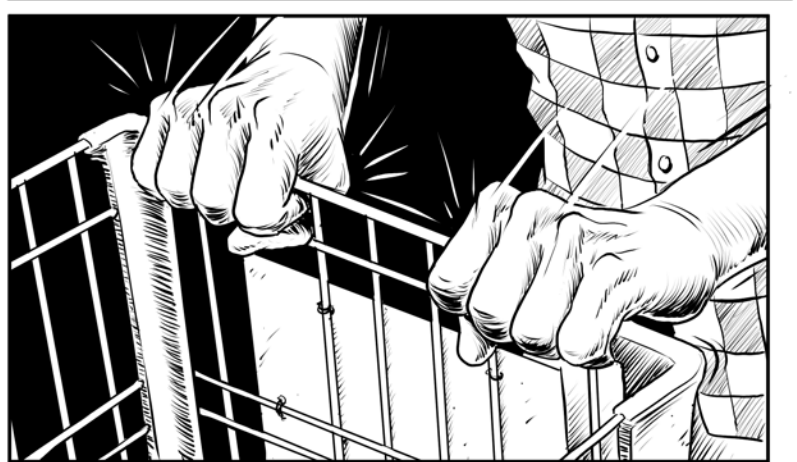
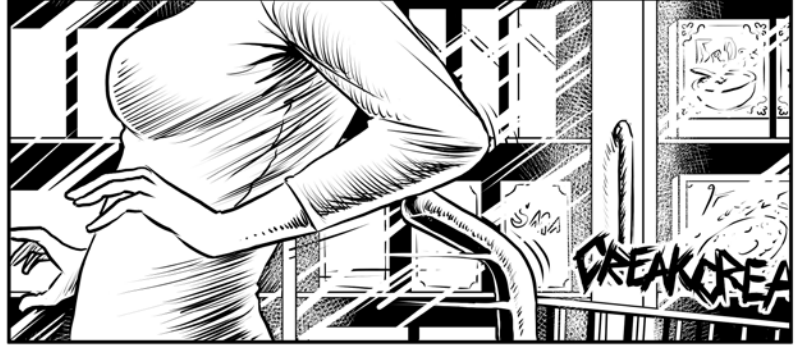
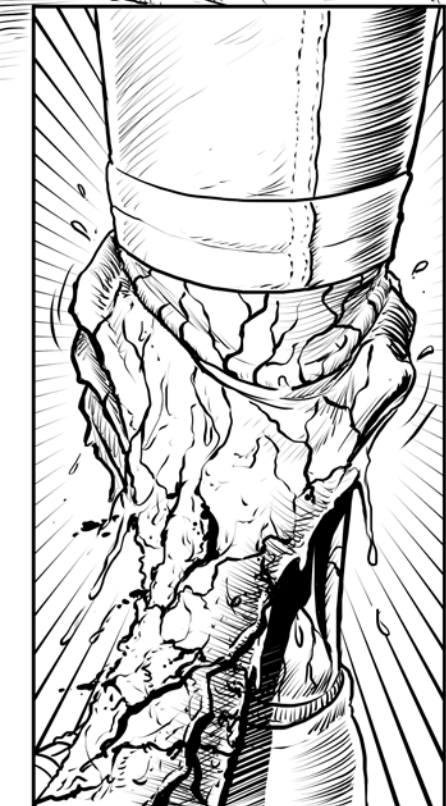














WHOA! CAREFUL THERE! YOU MIGHT HURT SOMEONE!



M-MATT?

NICE TO KNOW YOU HAVEN'T FORGOTTEN YET!



BUT THERE'S A...



THERE'S A...



OH GOD...

UH...EVERYTHING ALRIGHT? I KNOW IT'S BEEN AWHILE BUT I DIDN'T THINK YOU'D TAKE IT LIKE THIS...



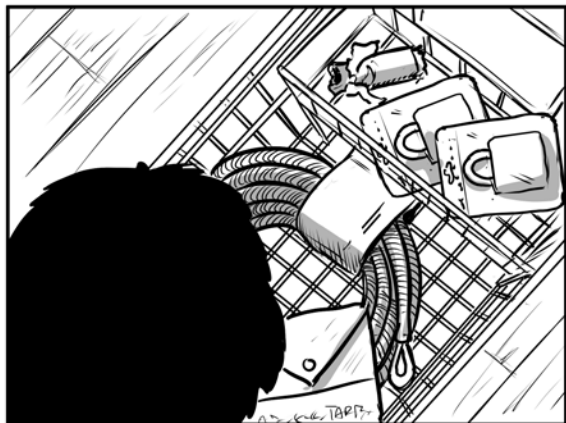
SORRY...I UH...

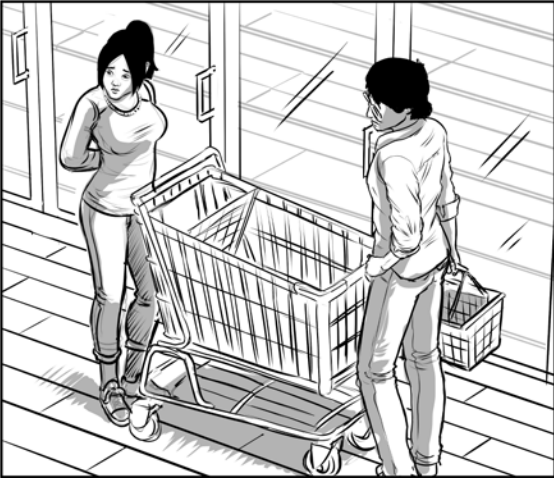
WHAT A SURPRISE! H-HOW HAVE YOU BEEN?

NOT BAD! NOT BAD, I'M JUST UH...VISITING FOR A FEW WEEKS...

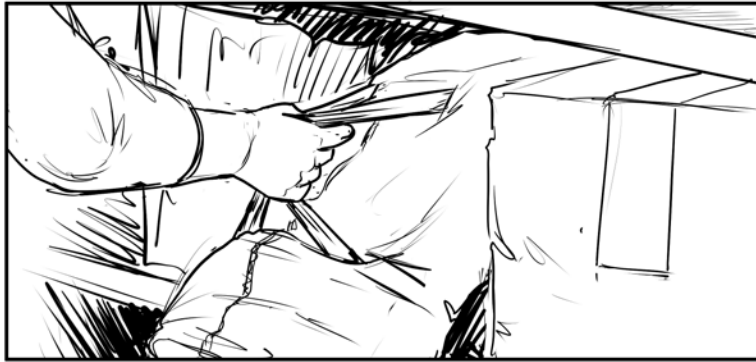
DAD NEEDED THE EXTRA HELP AT THE SHOP RIGHT NOW. I'VE GOT A COUPLE PROJECTS I'M WORKING ON AT THE HOUSE TOO SO...

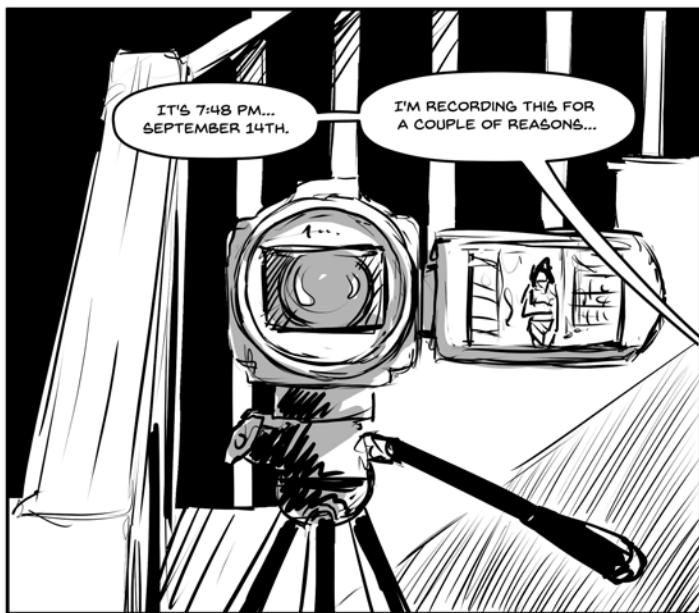
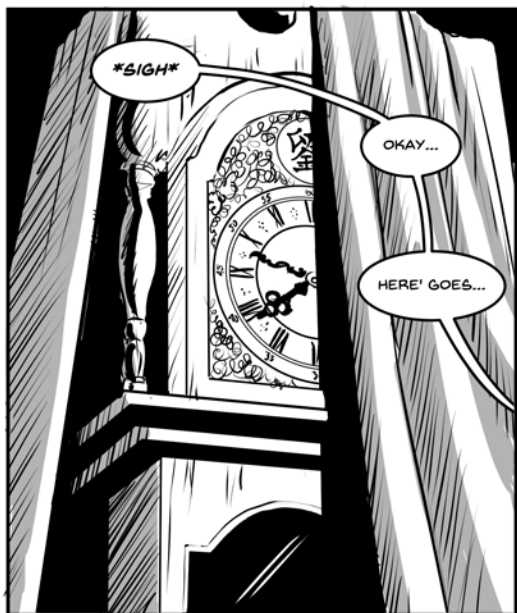
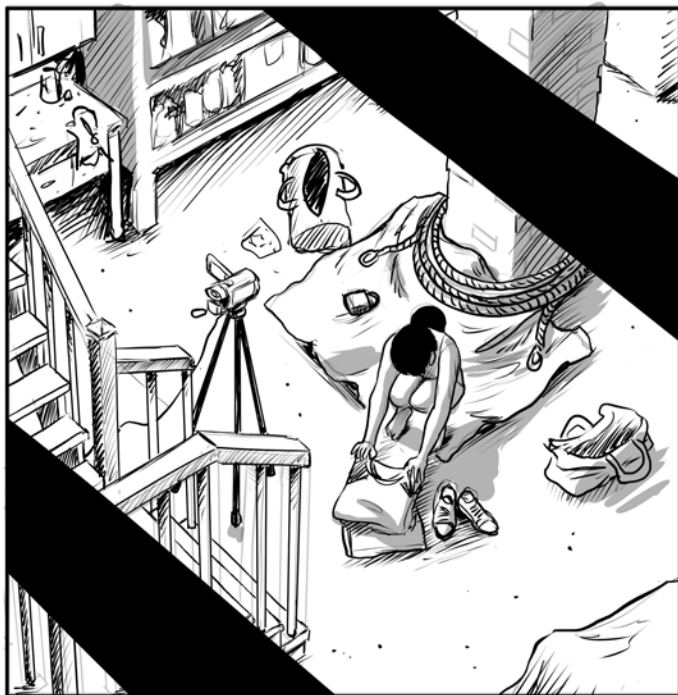
PROJECTS? STILL TOOLING UP RUST BUCKETS FOR CASH YOU MEAN RIGHT?













WON'T BE LONG NOW...

NINE O'CLOCK...

NINE O'CLOCK'S ABOUT WHEN I GOT HOME LAST NIGHT...

IF EVERYTHING GOES LIKE IT DID THEN...

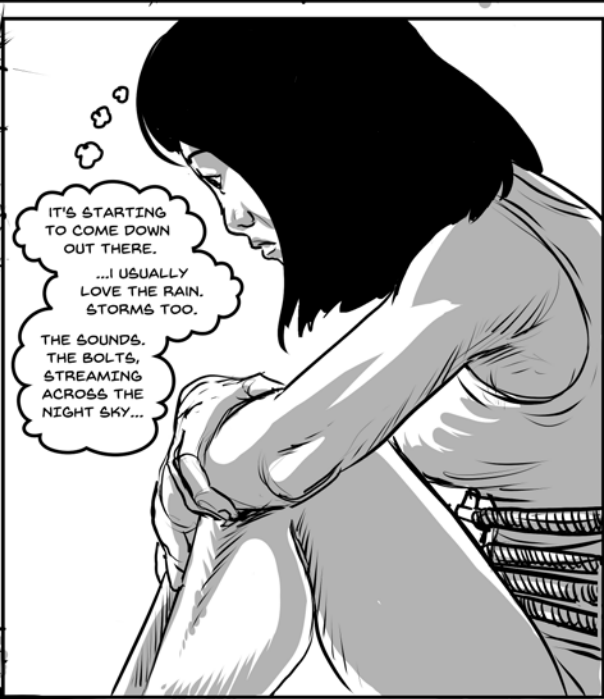


I WONDER IF IT'LL HURT AGAIN...

I HOPE NOT...

MAYBE I SHOULD HAVE SWALLOWED SOME SLEEPING PILLS. I MIGHT'VE BEEN ABLE TO JUST DREAM THROUGH ALL OF THIS.

WHAT IF THIS DOESN'T WORK? I'M JUST DANGLING MY ASS IN WATER AT THIS POINT, HOPING SOMETHING BITES.



IT'S STARTING TO COME DOWN OUT THERE.

...I USUALLY LOVE THE RAIN. STORMS TOO.

THE SOUNDS. THE BOLTS, STREAMING ACROSS THE NIGHT SKY...



THERE'S ALWAYS BEEN SOMETHING CALMING ABOUT ALL THAT CHAOS.

I REMEMBER DOING A RAIN DANCE AT CAMP KITTATINNY ONE YEAR BACK IN 7TH GRADE.

SOUNDED SILLY AT THE TIME BUT I STILL PLAYED ALONG.

I REMEMBER THE OTHER DANCING CAMPERS WERE SHOCKED TO FIND THAT IT ACTUALLY STARTED WORKING.

SOMEHOW I KNEW IT WOULD THOUGH.

NOT BECAUSE I BELIEVED THE DANCE HAD ANYTHING TO DO WITH IT.

BUT BECAUSE I WANTED IT TO RAIN.

IF ONLY ME WANTING SOMETHING STILL COULD MOVE THE HEAVENS...

IF ONLY.





SUE?!
YOU HOME?!



NO, NO, NO, NO!
NOT NOW!

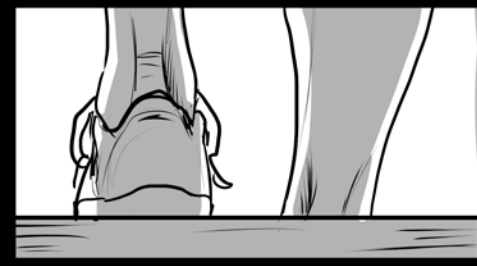
HEY, WHERE
ARE YA?!



OLLY,
OLLY,
OXEN
FREEEE!



SUE?!
YOU DOWN
THERE?!



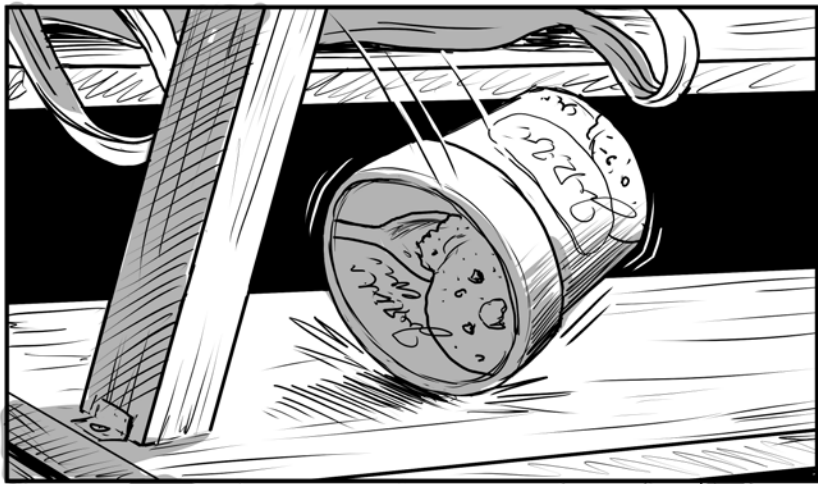
I HAVE A
SURPRISE--

CREEK



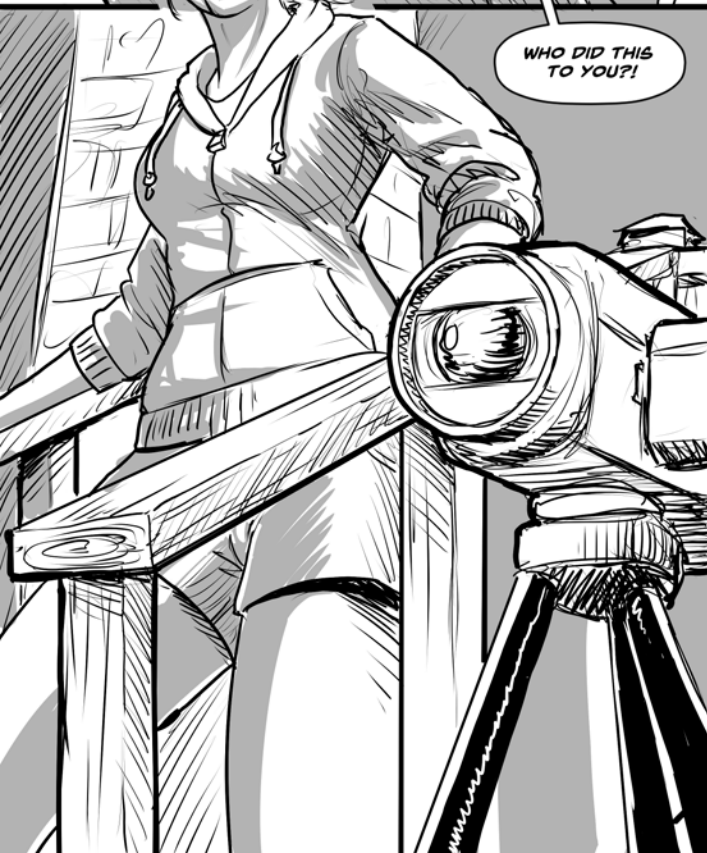
FOR...

YOU...



ASHLEY...YOU CAN'T BE HERE RIGHT NOW.

SUE...MY GOD, WHAT THE HELL IS THIS?!



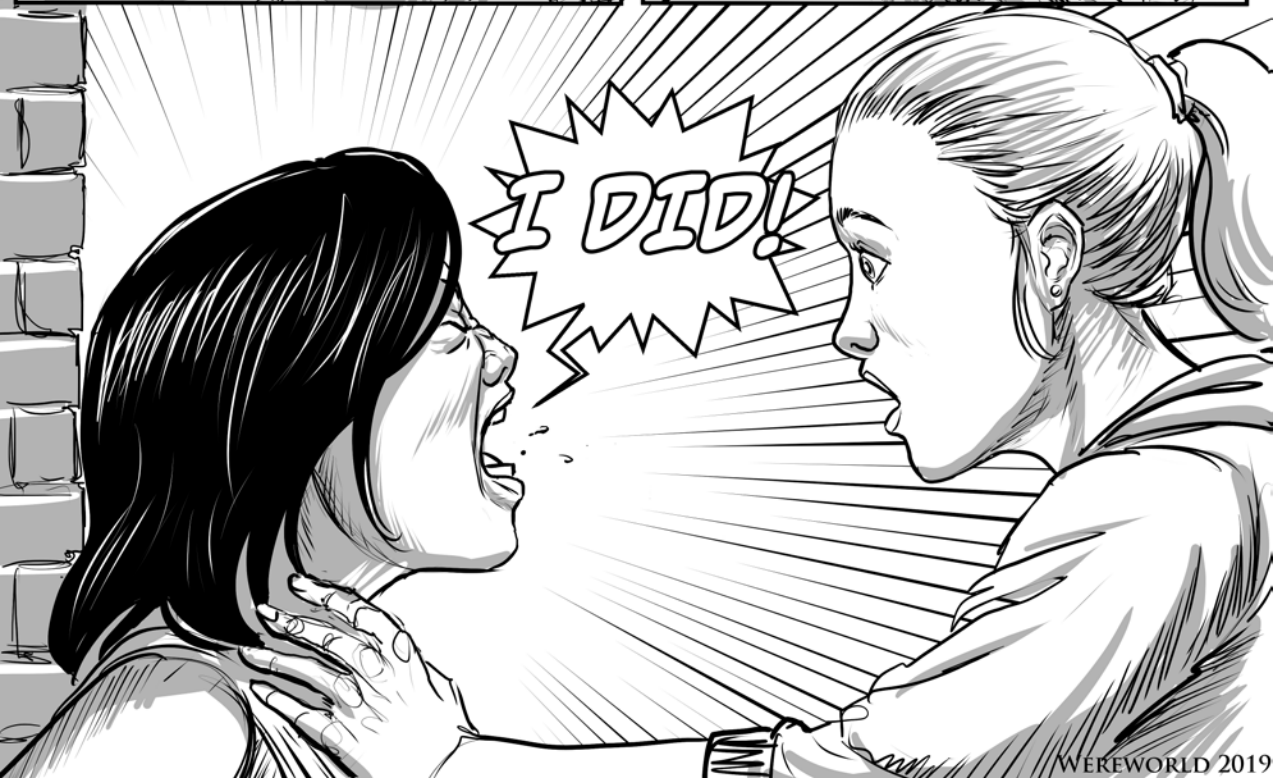
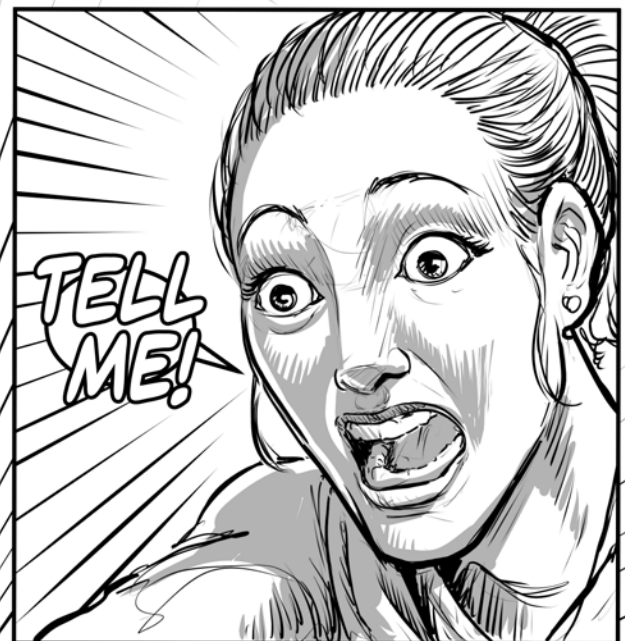
WHO DID THIS TO YOU?!



NO. ASHLEY. I'M SERIOUS.

YOU HAVE TO LEAVE.

RIGHT. NOW.





YOU...YOU DID THIS?
BUT...WHY?!



I...I CAN'T TELL YOU THAT!

YOU WON'T BELIEVE
ME BUT YOU HAVE TO
JUST TRUST ME!

YOU **CAN'T** BE HERE WITH ME
RIGHT NOW! YOU'RE IN **DANGER!**



SUE, **STOP THIS!**
I'M GETTING YOU
OUT OF HERE!



NO! I CAN'T LEAVE!
I HAVE TO DO THIS!



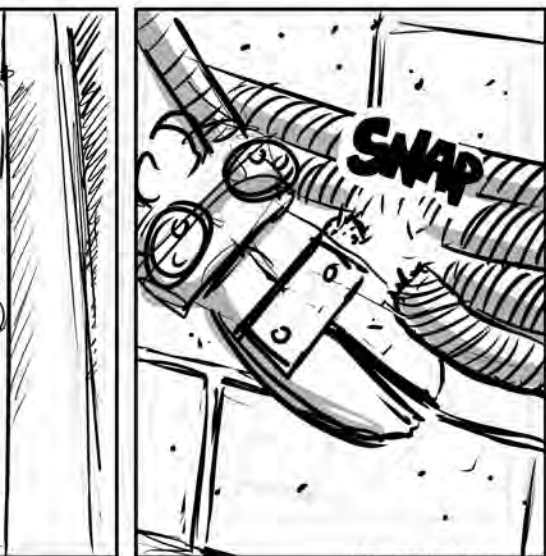
IF YOU DON'T TELL ME WHERE
THE KEY IS SUE, I'LL JUST HAVE TO TAKE
MATTERS INTO MY OWN HANDS.

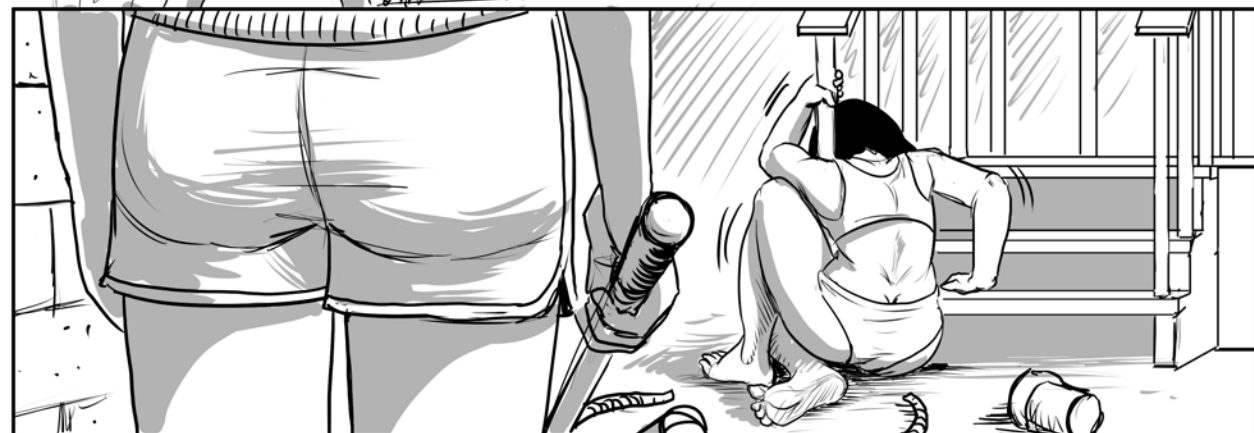
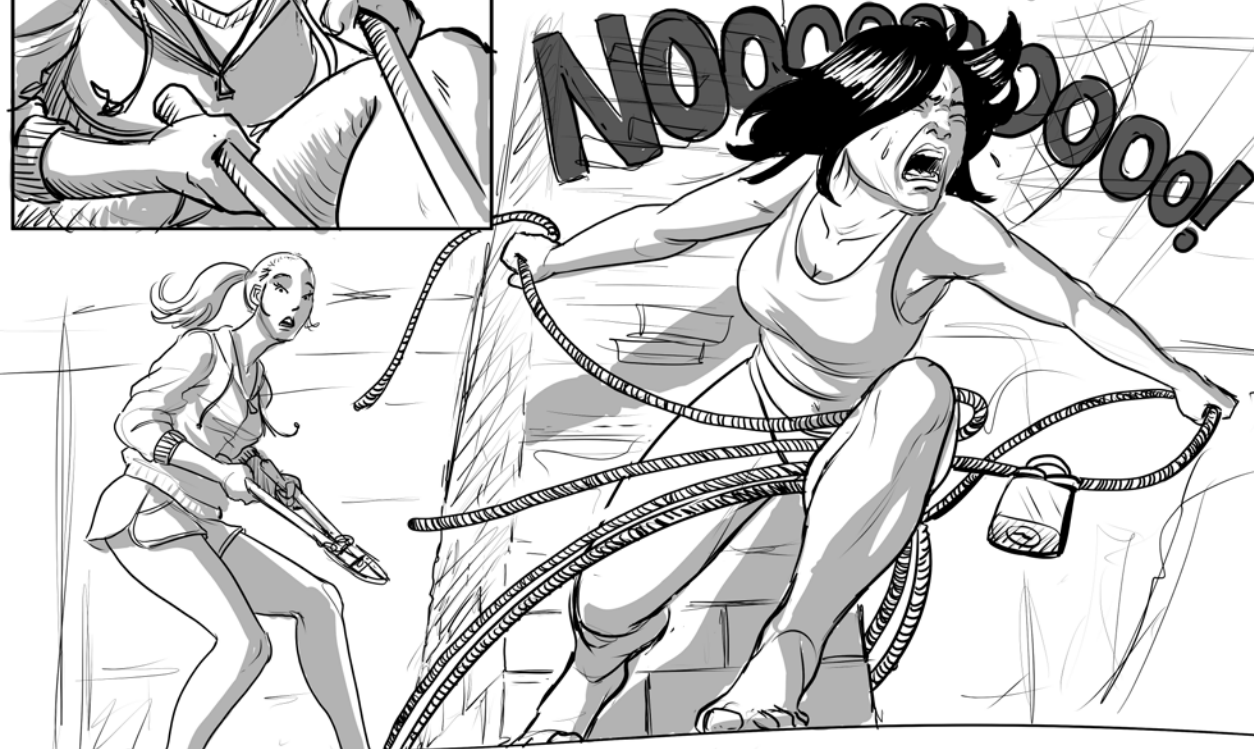
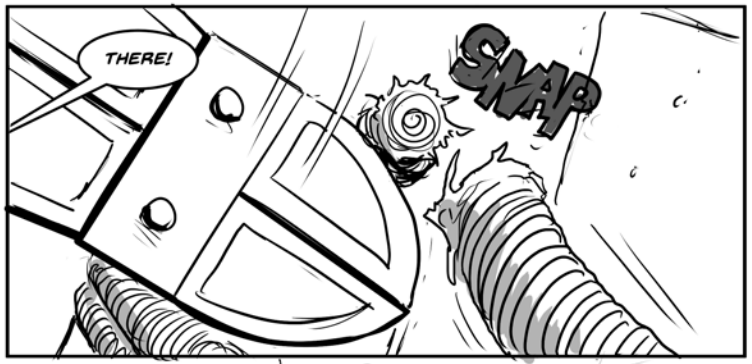
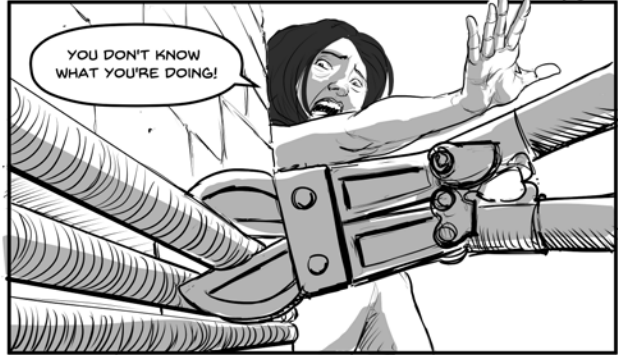


WATCH ME.

NO!
YOU **CAN'T!**







DONG
DONG
DONG



ASHLEY...



W-WHAT'S WRONG WITH ME?



I'M GOING OUT OF MY MIND!

I DON'T KNOW BUT...

SOB



WE'LL FIGURE IT OUT...

COME ON... YOU'RE COMING HOME WITH ME...

SOB