TECH JUNKIE

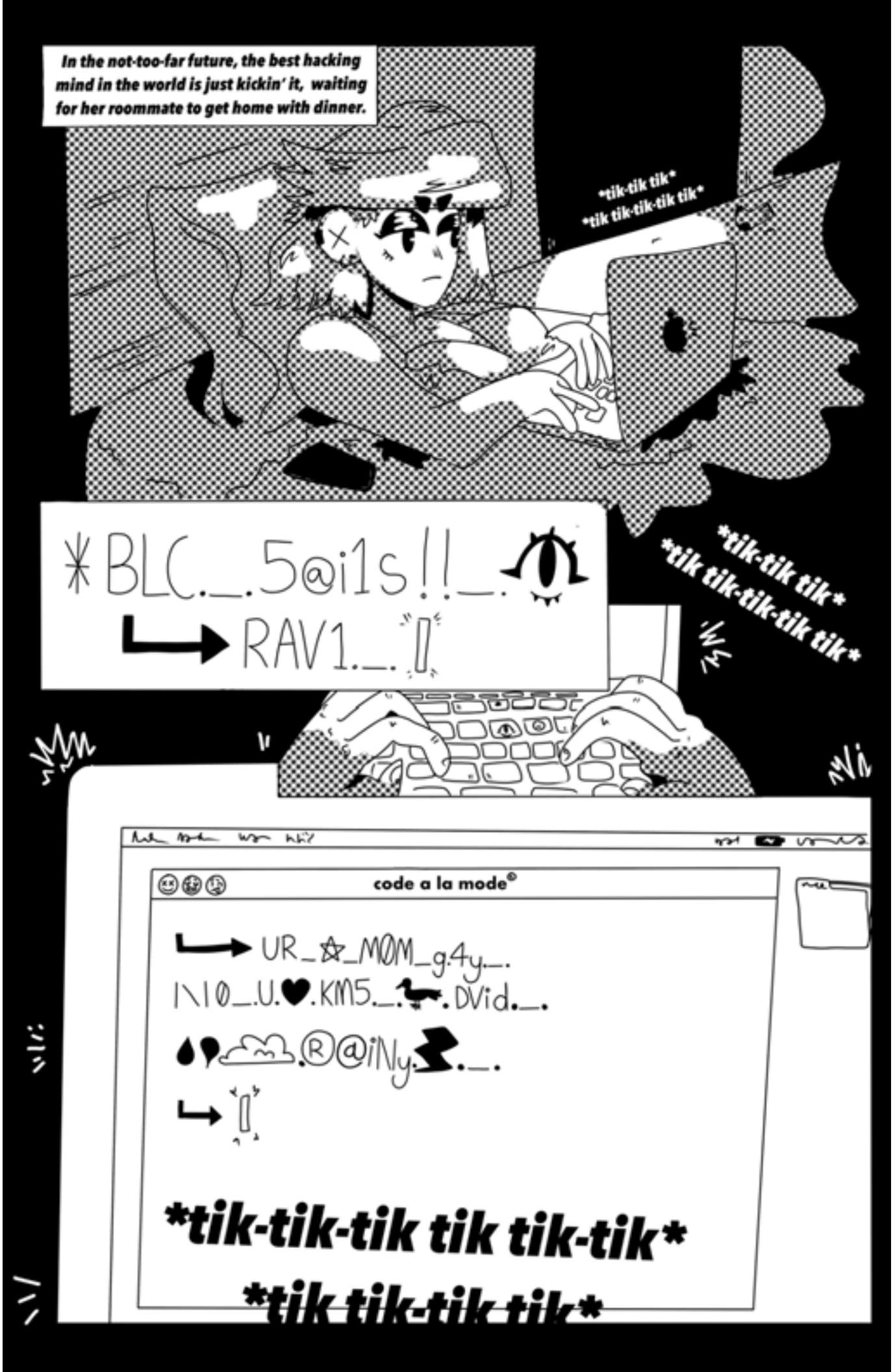
My final project is a zine, or short graphic novel, titled *Tech Junkie*. I undertook the whole process of independently creating this zine; I wrote, storyboarded, illustrated and self-published my 42-page story. The plot revolves around Dakota, the protagonist and a skilled hacker who needs to post bail for her roommate Charlie in a vaguely dystopian future city.

This zine was borne of (first) my desire for more casual gender equality in modern comic book culture, (second) being more pessimistic about the future of technological advances, as well as of (third) escapist coping mechanisms; mostly, however, I just wanted this zine to be (fourth) fun and entertaining for the reader! I hope that you enjoy reading it.

Ruby H.
New York

tech junkie

by ruby harris


In the not-too-far future, the best hacking mind in the world is just kickin' it, waiting for her roommate to get home with dinner.
tik-tik tik
tik tik-tik-tik tik
*BLC._.5@i1s!!_.
RAV1._.
tik-tik tik
tik tik-tik-tik tik
code a la mode©
UR_☆_M0M_g.4y._.
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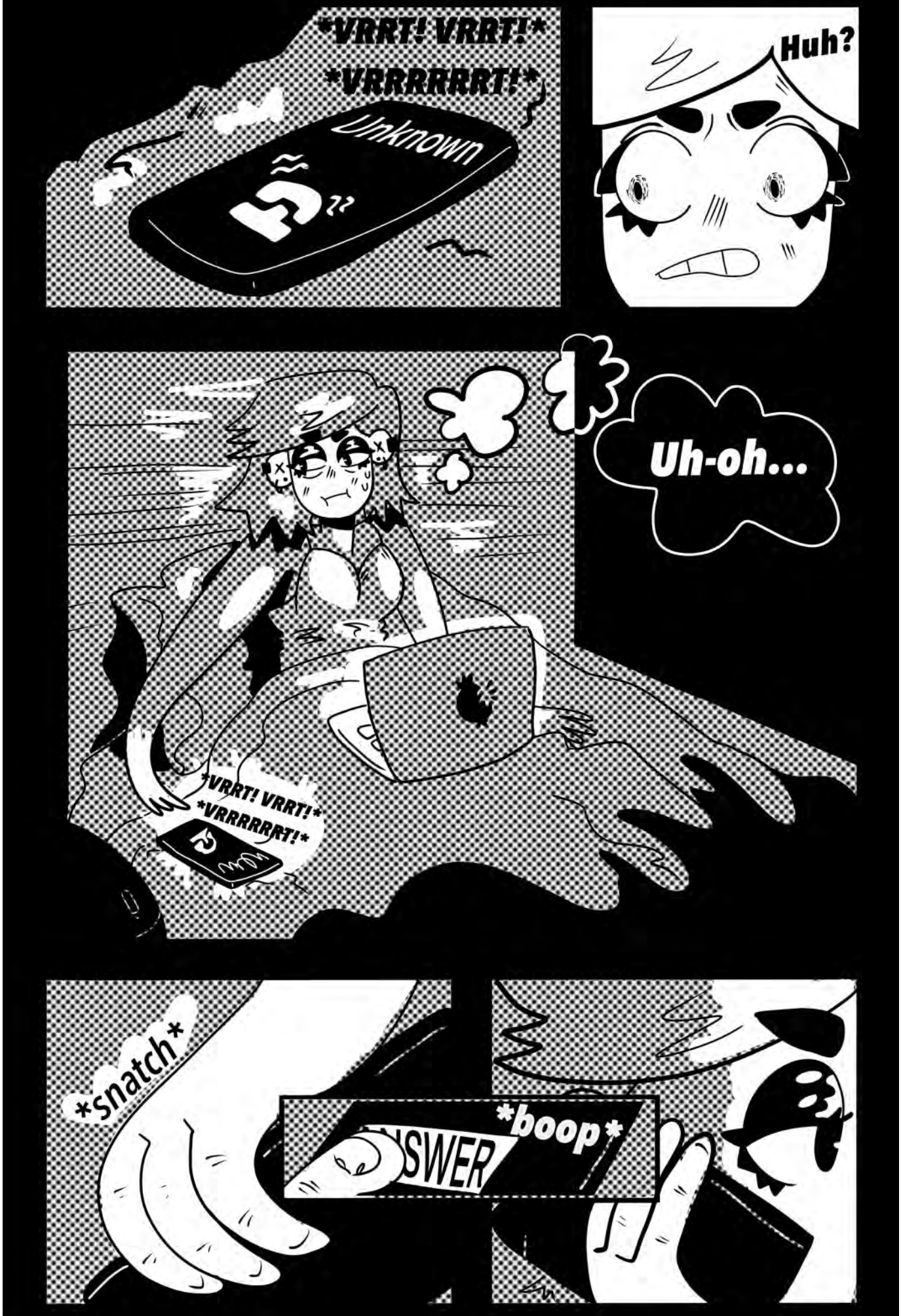
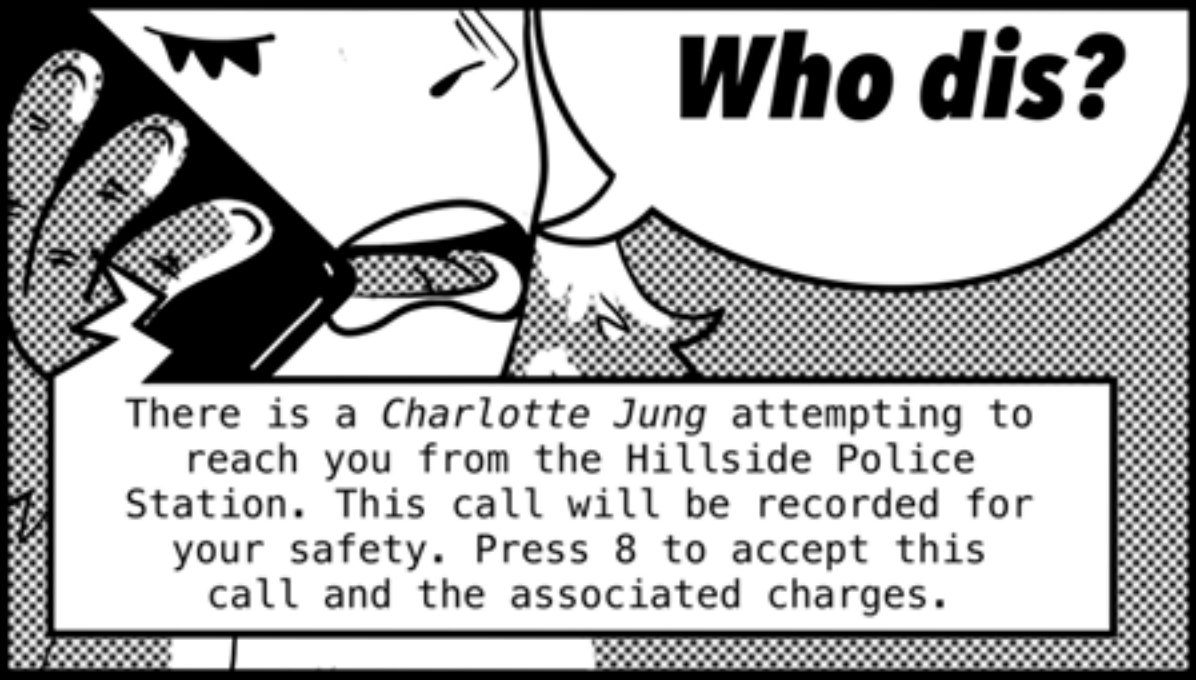
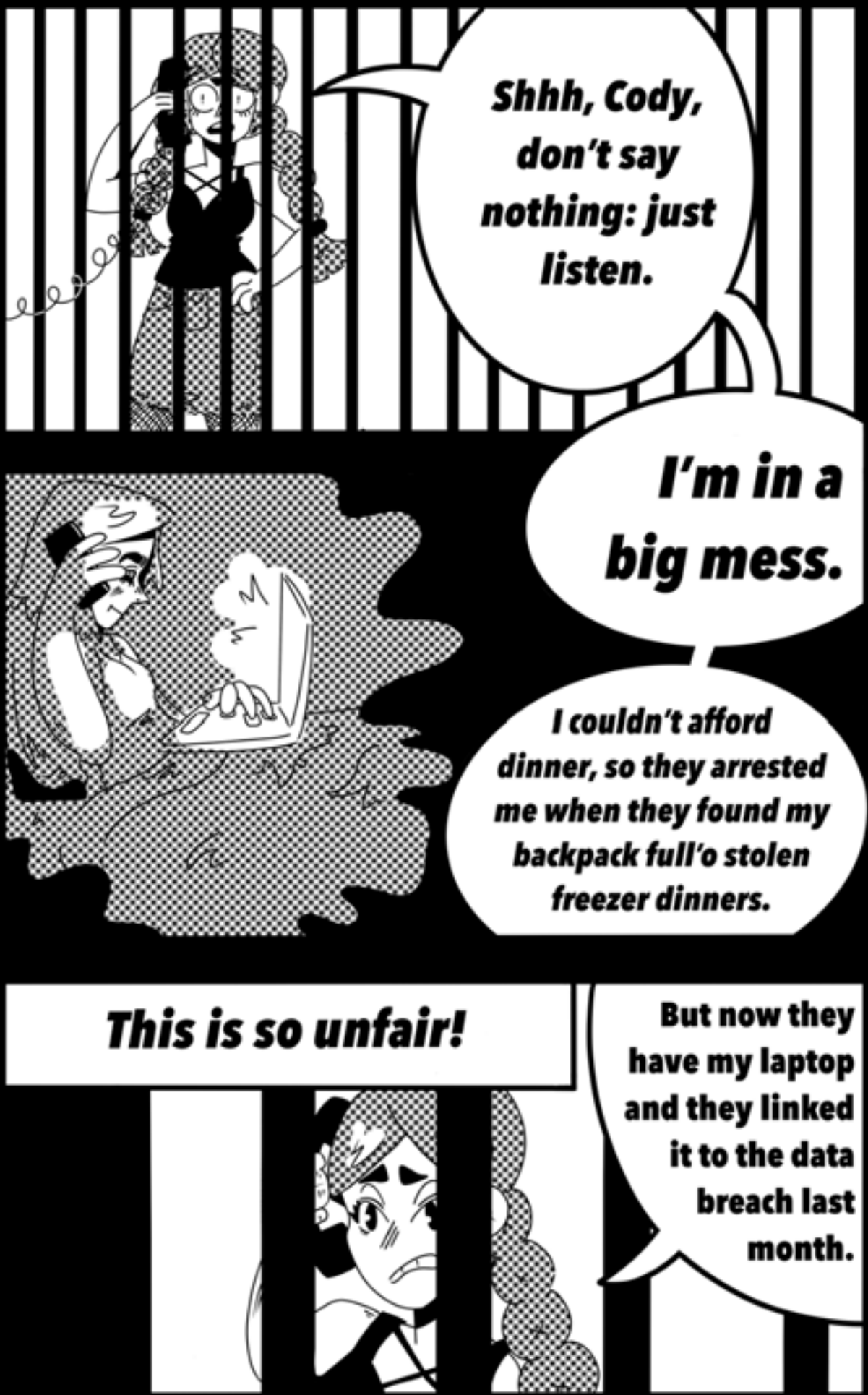
tik-tik-tik tik tik-tik
tik tik-tik-tik


VRRT! VRRT!
VRRRRRRT!
Unknown
Huh?
Uh-oh...
VRRT! VRRT!
VRRRRRRT!
snatch
boop


Who dis?
There is a *Charlotte Jung* attempting to reach you from the Hillside Police Station. This call will be recorded for your safety. Press 8 to accept this call and the associated charges.

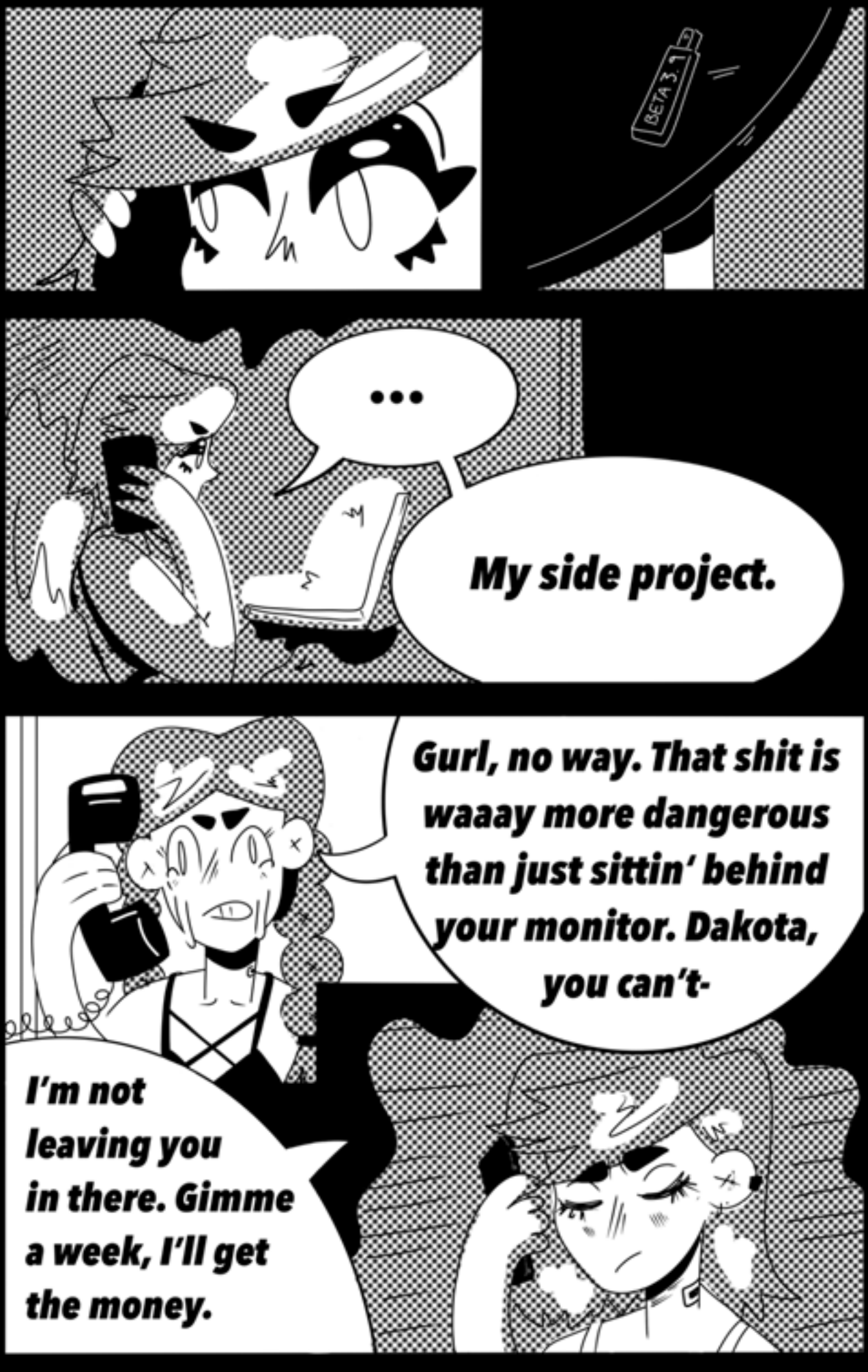
boop
Please wait.

-kota?
Dakota?
Charlie?!
What's go-


Shhh, Cody, don't say nothing: just listen.
I'm in a big mess.
I couldn't afford dinner, so they arrested me when they found my backpack full'o stolen freezer dinners.
This is so unfair!
But now they have my laptop and they linked it to the data breach last month.

Oh no.
Glitchy piece of $#!+!!
I gave Charlie that computer.
Just take it– I got a new one anyway.
This is all my fault!
My bail's ten grand, Cody! We can't even afford dinner!

Since we can't post it, imma be stuck in here forever waiting for trial, an' then I'm prolly still looking at a few months jail time cuzza some dumbass public defender!
I can't go to jail, gurl! I'm too pretty for that!!
Fuck!! Charlie-- Charlie I'm gonna get you out of there!
You-- how the hell are you gonna make 10k?

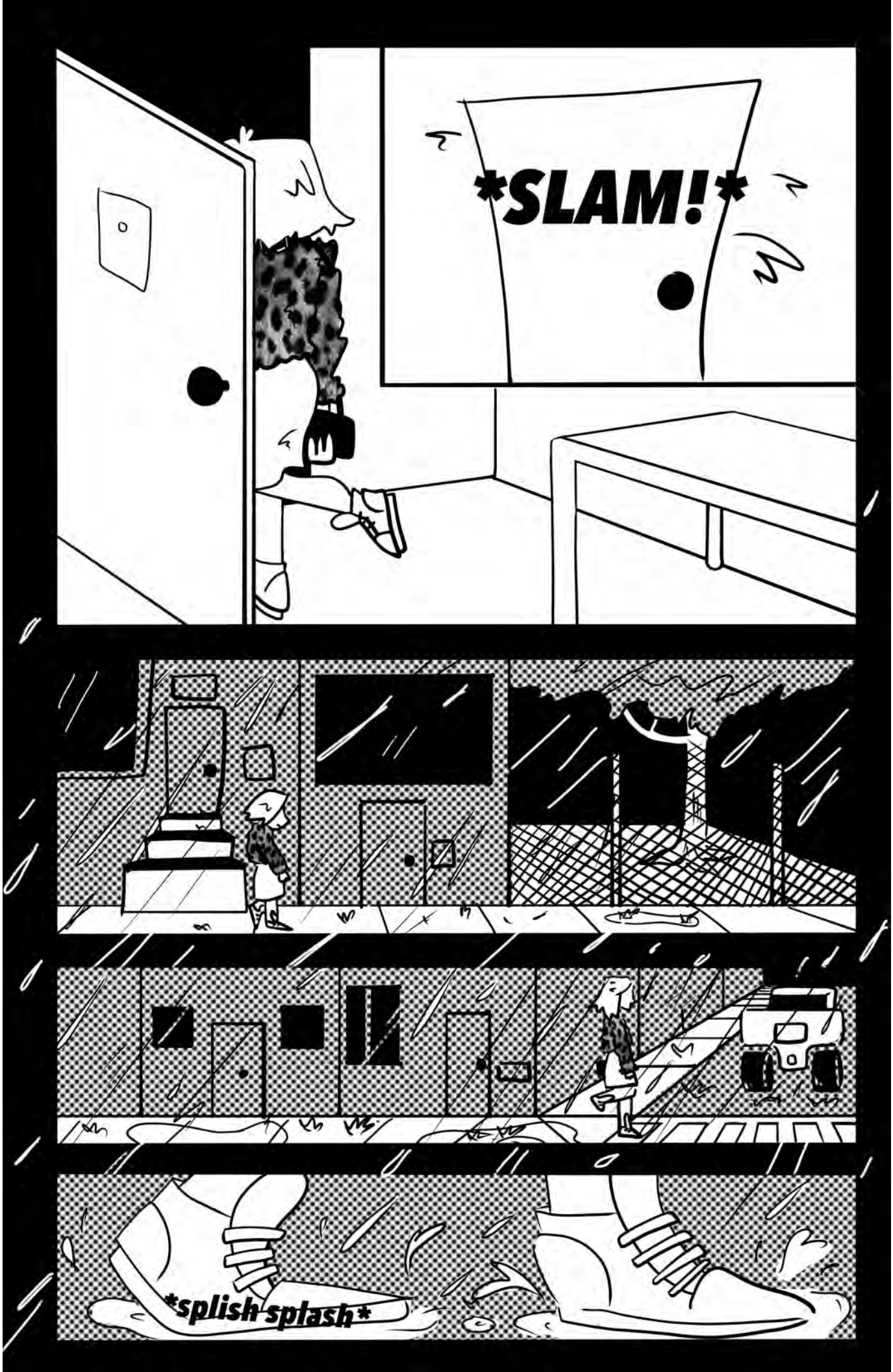

BETA 3.1
...
My side project.
Gurl, no way. That shit is waaay more dangerous than just sittin' behind your monitor. Dakota, you can't-
I'm not leaving you in there. Gimme a week, I'll get the money.

Gurl you are fucking crazy.
See you in a week, gurl.
END CALL
boop

Ughhhhhh
hghh
swish
chk!

LOADING...

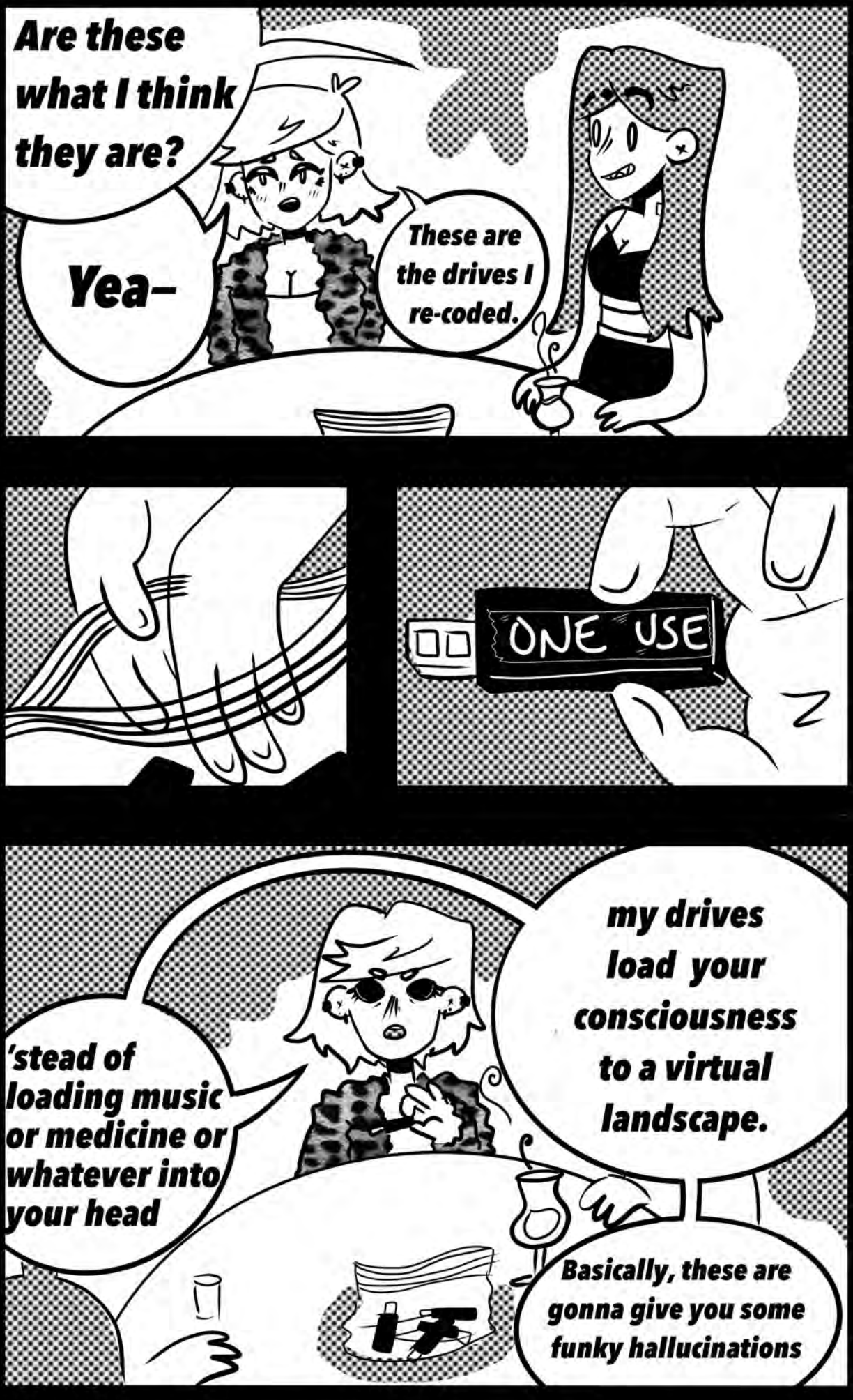
jingle jangle
THE NEXT NIGHT
glance
snatch


SLAM!
splish splash

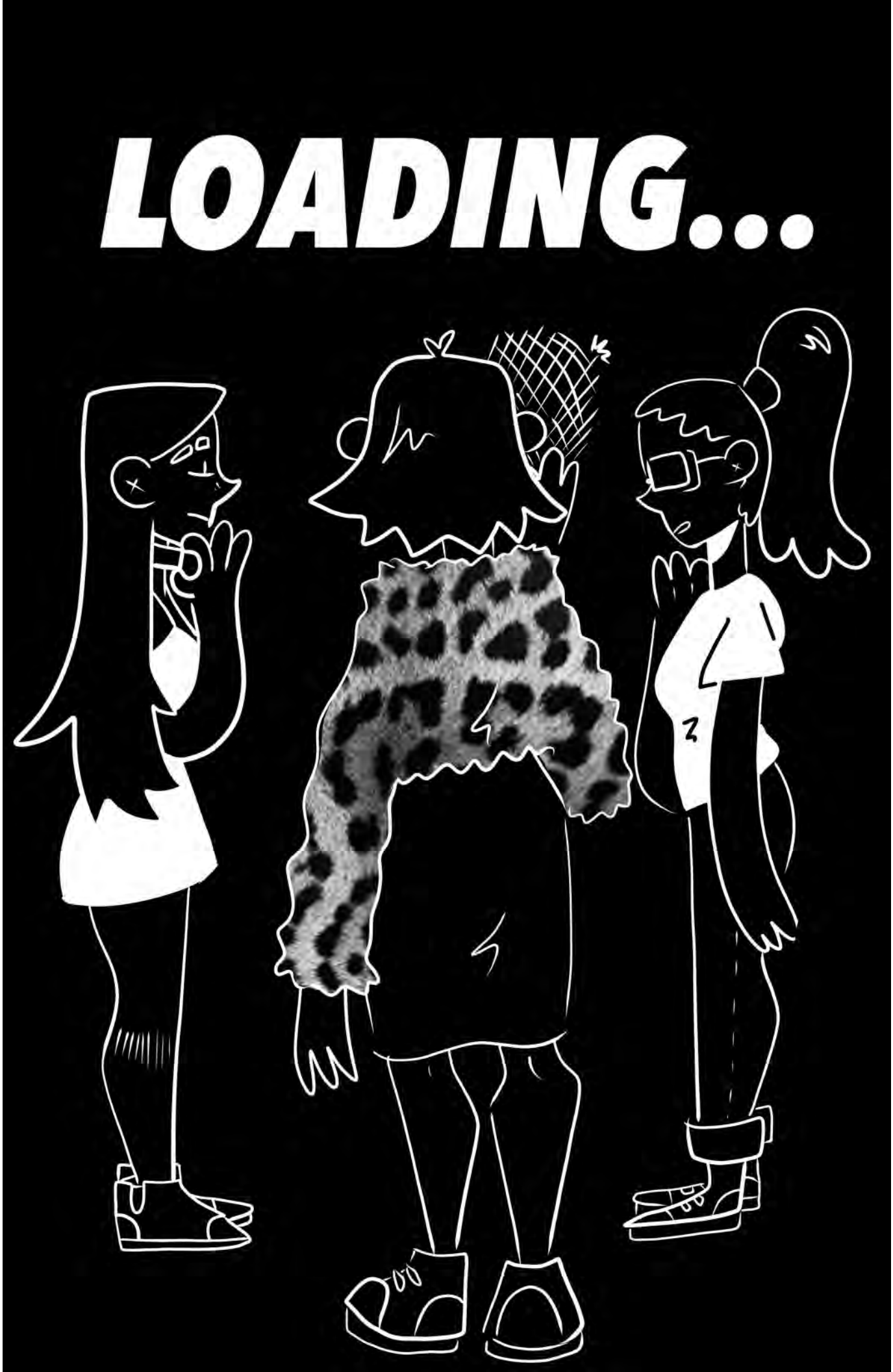
THE NEON LOUNGE
gulp
widen
Ho-lee shit.
Make some noise!

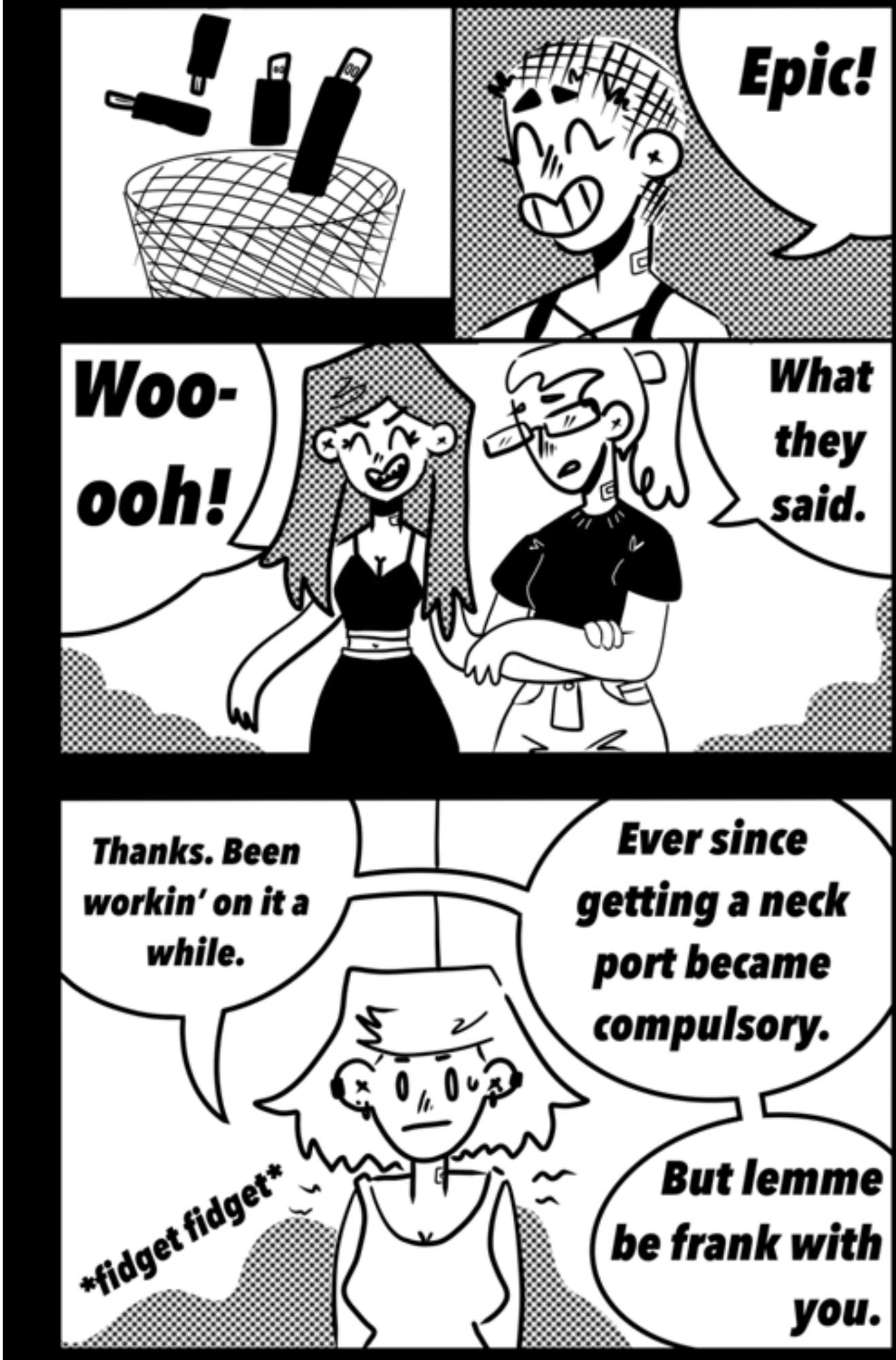
This place is gross.
MmM, tHatS A gOoOOooDdD DeAL!
LO PRICE
tsk, Creep.
HEEYYY~ Kit-Kat!
There's Maddie.
It's been years since we talked;
I'm lucky she agreed to meet.

This is my old hacker buddy-- meet Eve, Rachel, KitKat!
Hiya!
Sup.
Th-- that's my online handle. My real name's Dakota.
Can I buy you a drink?
Mine's a blue screen.
I'd rather just show you why I'm here.
loom


Are these what I think they are?
Yea–
These are the drives I re-coded.
ONE USE
'stead of loading music or medicine or whatever into your head
my drives load your consciousness to a virtual landscape.
Basically, these are gonna give you some funky hallucinations

Sweet!
Ooh la la!
Wicked.
There's one for each of you.
chk!
chk!
chk!
chk!
Seeya on the other side.

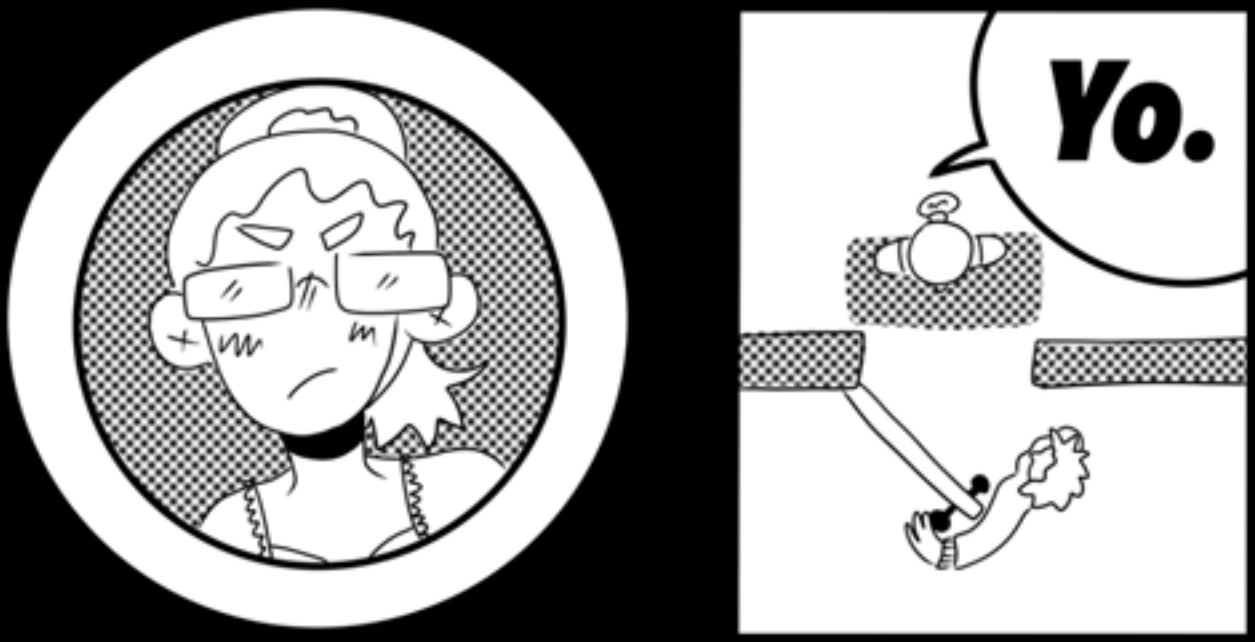

LOADING...


Epic!
Woo-ooh!
What they said.
Thanks. Been workin' on it a while.
Ever since getting a neck port became compulsory.
fidget fidget
But lemme be frank with you.

OK, Frank, go ahead.
I need you to push these for me.
I wouldn't be asking unless I had no other option. I need the money quick, and you three are the best at what you do.
Hmmm, that's a big risk for us, sweetie. Selling highly illegal tech? You're gonna have to sell me on it.
I– um I can–
One 15% share of all your profits. Each.

Is she insane?
That's 45% of my profits - -
creeeeeek
Get lost, basic bitch.
Oh boy...
SLAM!
O- - okay, fifteen percent each.
Pleasure doing business.

THE NEXT MORNING
UuUugghhHh–
pshhhhhtt
TYLENOL
Much better.
RAPP! RAPP! RAPP!


Yo.

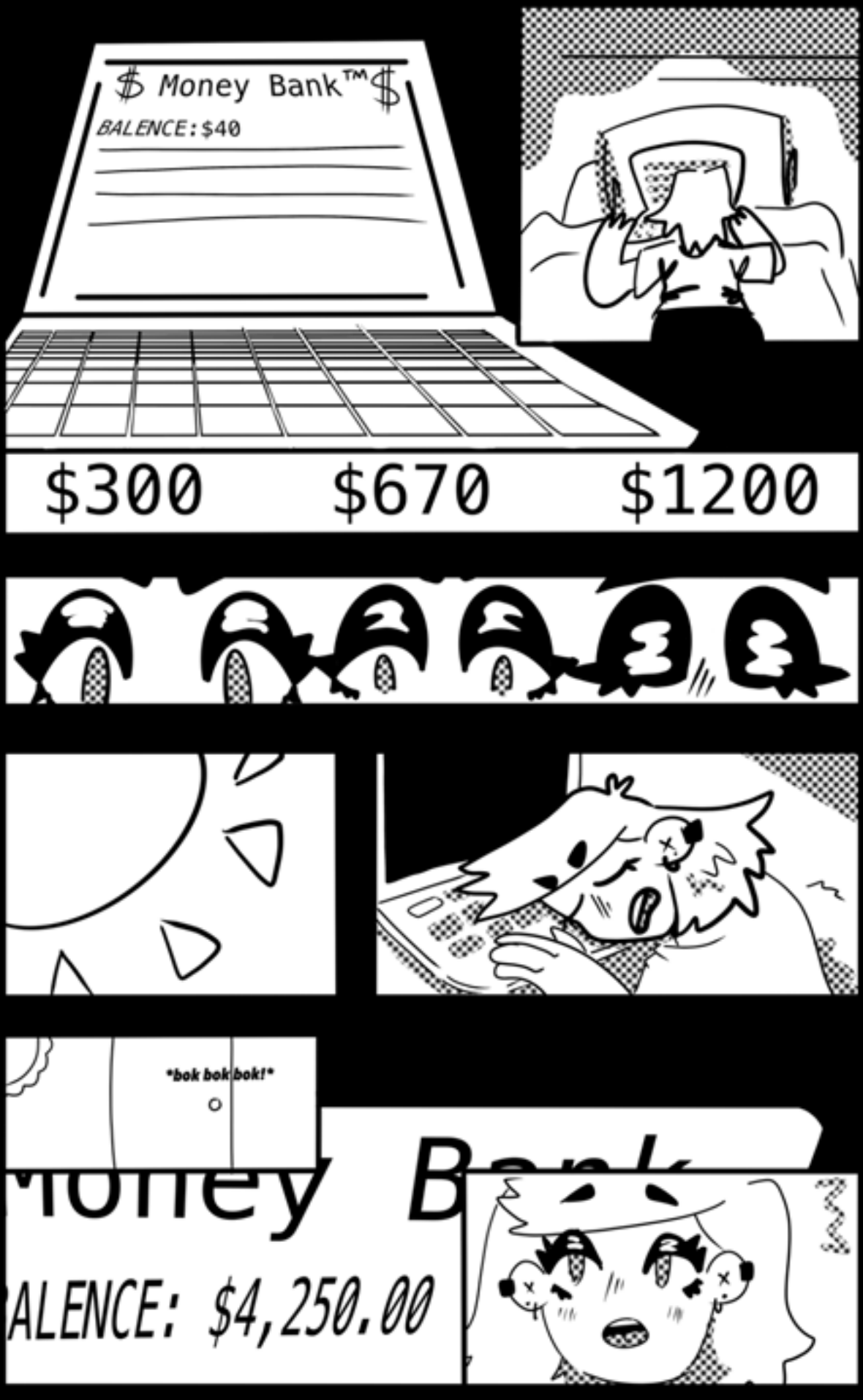
Rachel? What are you doing here?

Eve 'n Rachel sent me ta pick up the drugs.
Guess you were probably expecting Maddie..

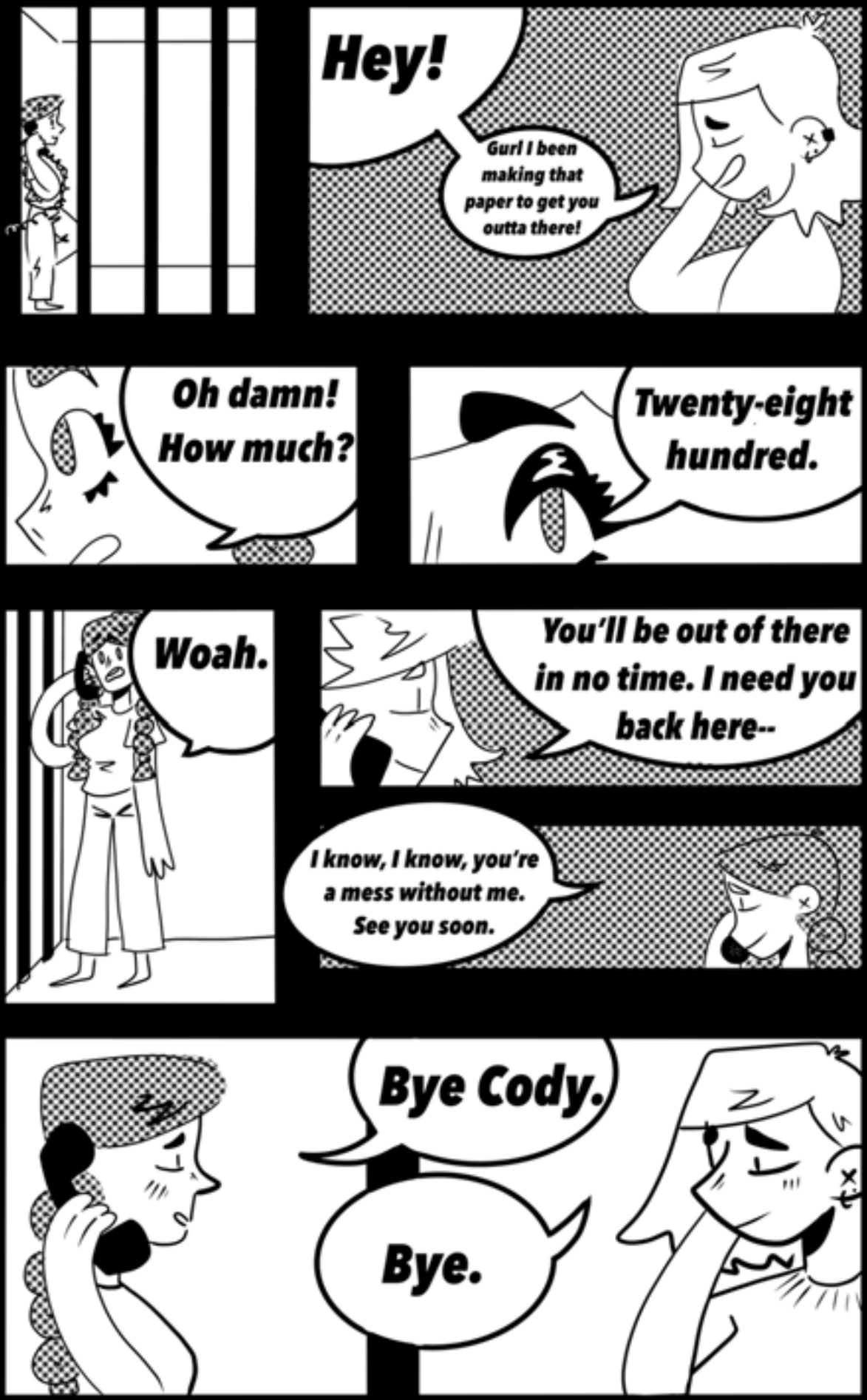
No I-- it's okay, I just wasn't expecting you so soon--
Well, you was the one who said you was in a Big Time Rush™ to make all this dough.

I might be able ta save ya even more time.
Not for free tho. You know that by now.

What is this?
You've already asked such a steep price! I--
Dakota, calm down. Those bitches are good at selling drugs, but they're also mad stupid.
Ya can get away with paying each like, 7%, but only if I lie to them for you. Gimmee a 20% share, and you'll save 11% of your profits.
O-okay?
Hah, s'always funny ta see how easily bitches fuck each other over. Been a pleasure doin' business.

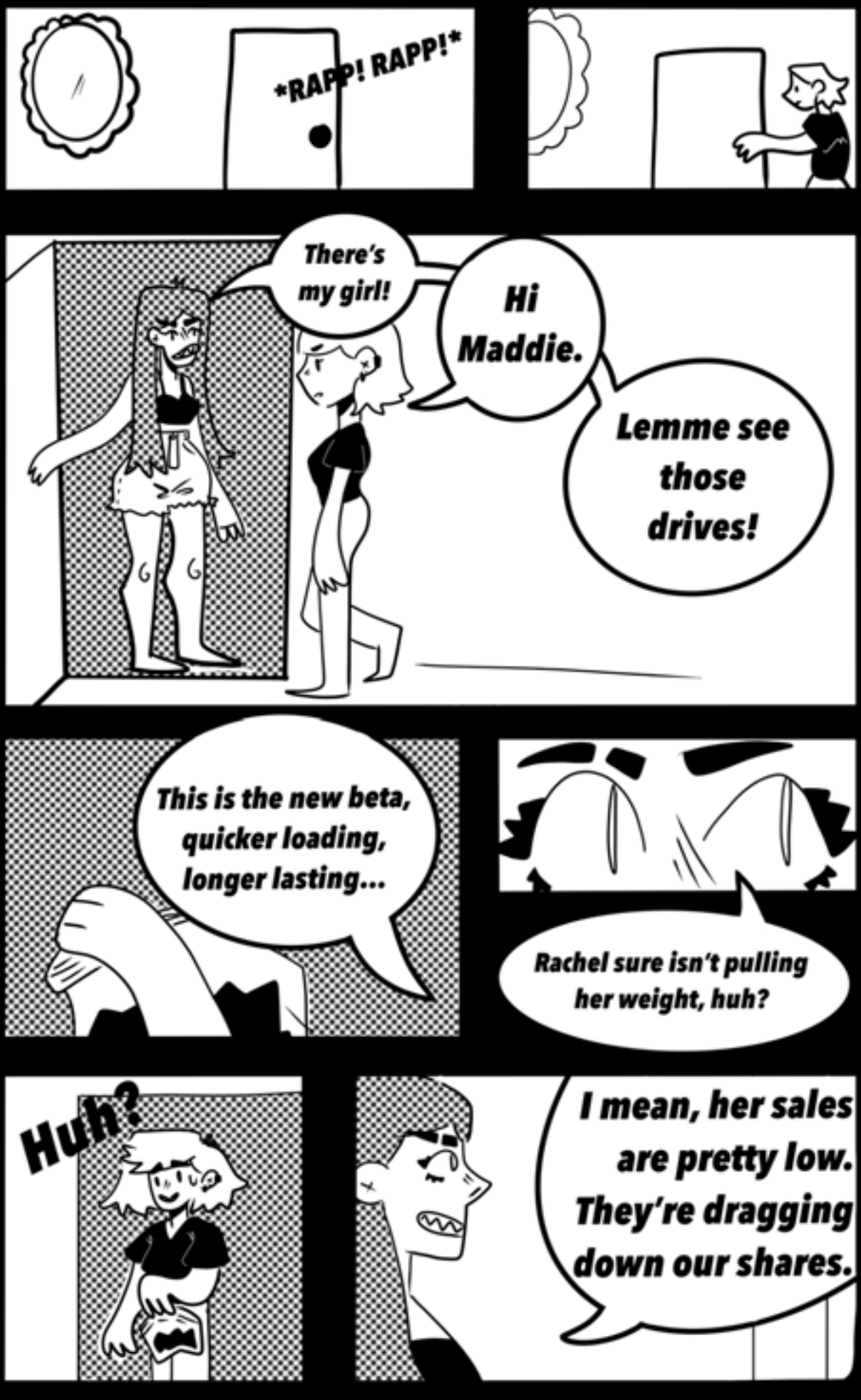

$ Money Bank™ $
BALENCE:$40
$300 $670 $1200
bok bok bok!
Money Bank
BALENCE: $4,250.00

bok bok!
Hiiiiiii!
Hello Eve.
Thanks!
Bye!


Hey!
Gurl I been making that paper to get you outta there!
Oh damn! How much?
Twenty-eight hundred.
Woah.
You'll be out of there in no time. I need you back here--
I know, I know, you're a mess without me. See you soon.
Bye Cody.
Bye.

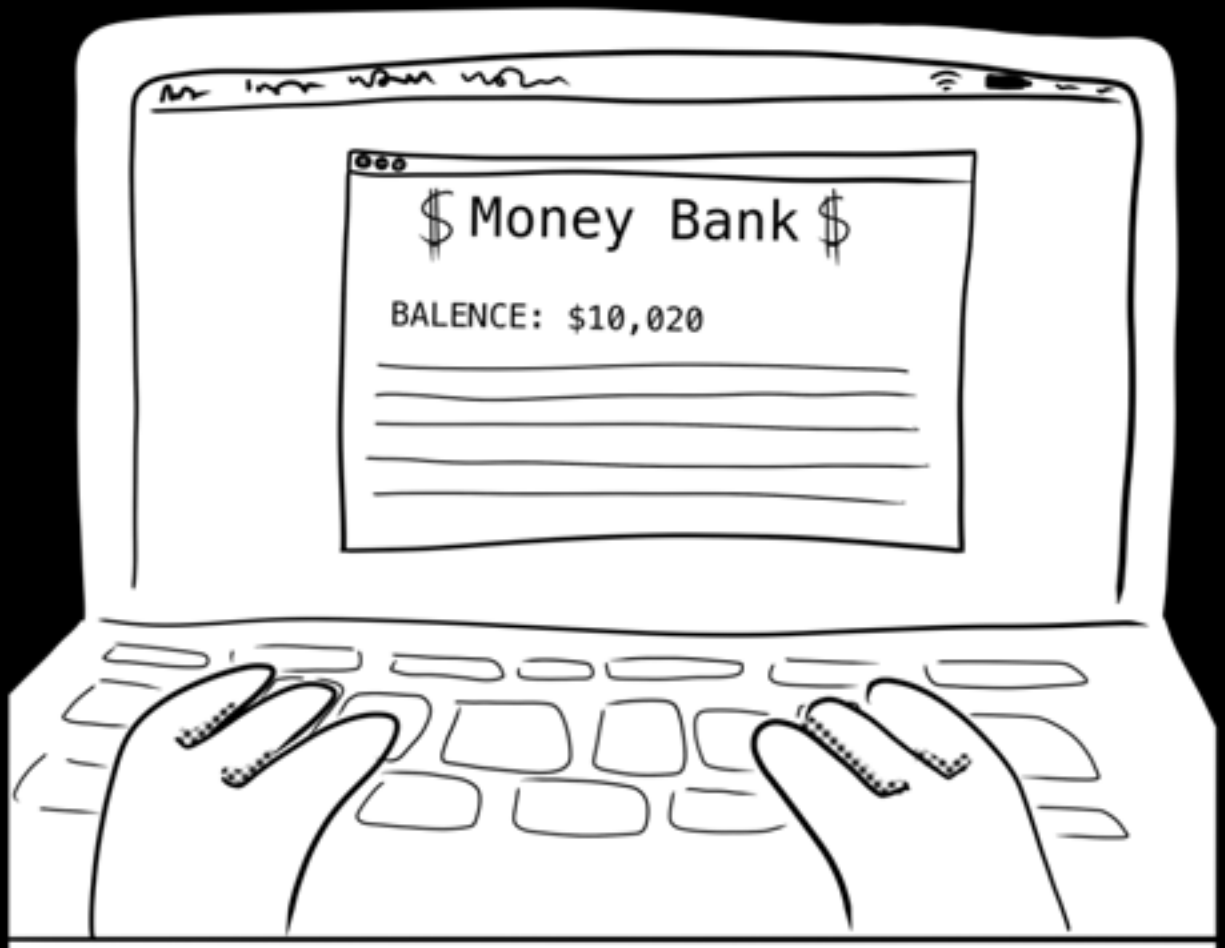
cronch
REDIALLING...
Hello, you've reached Hillside Police Station.
I need to talk to Charlie-- Charlotte. Jung. You've held her three days
M'am, if you would just slow down. I need to take your name first.
Dakota. Iverson.
Ok, one moment.
CODY! YOU'RE SUCH A BITCH-- WHY HAVEN'T YOU CALLED IN THREE DAYS!

SLEEP WHEN UR DEAD!
code a la mode©
RE _@U. ?@
ACB. BD30o00.B3.
U.M.?
Gi
u.y.0o0.
~/@_B00b_.@.

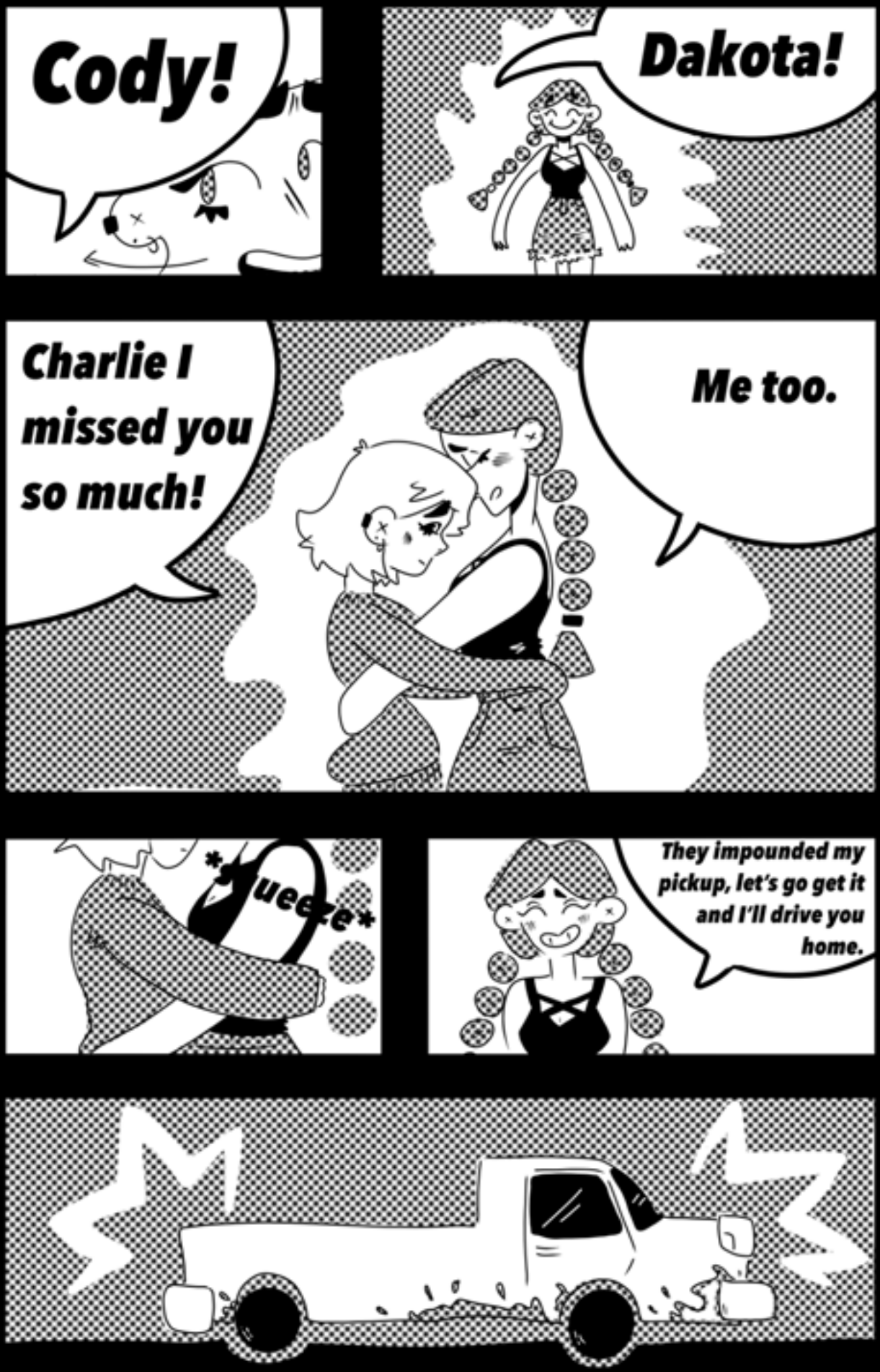

RAPP! RAPP!
There's my girl!
Hi Maddie.
Lemme see those drives!
This is the new beta, quicker loading, longer lasting...
Rachel sure isn't pulling her weight, huh?
Huh?
I mean, her sales are pretty low. They're dragging down our shares.

Oh. Uh, well I hope the new betas help her. Other than that, nothing I can do. Sorry.
Okay. Bye KitKat!
SLAM!
phew

5 AM THE NEXT MORNING



I can post bail! I guess Charlie and I can just skip town before the girls catch on.

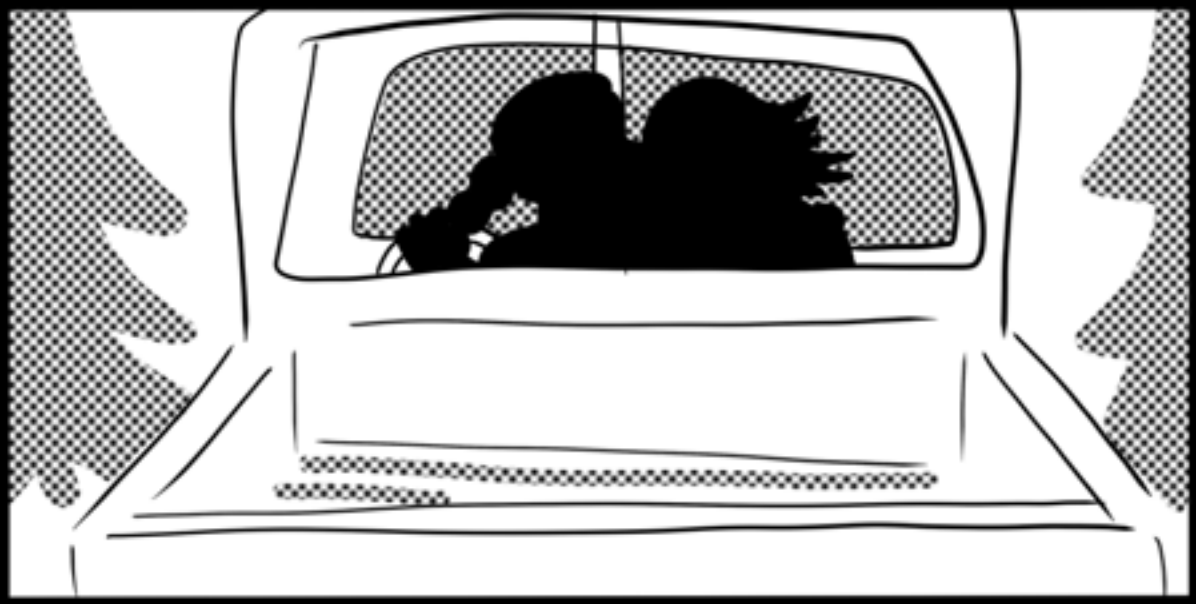

Cody!
Dakota!
Charlie I missed you so much!
Me too.
ueeze
They impounded my pickup, let's go get it and I'll drive you home.

THE POLICE STATION
I'm here to post bail for Charlotte Jung.
Okay sweetie, I'm going to need to see your ID as well.
Give me a moment to process this.
NEW YORK DRIVER'S LICENSE
DAKOTA IVERSON
AGE: 21
HEIGHT: 5'4
WEIGHT: 140lbs
DON'T GIVE AWAY MY ORGANS
Wait over there.

Dakota, is something wrong?
...
Hello?
I think I just scared myself a little bit.
What does that-
It means that I went back on my word to a lot of people this week.
If I can do that to people so easily, who says I can't do it to you?
If I ever hurt you, I would be the worst person ever!

You know the drill: IDs, cells, passports. Anything with our names on it.
What is this, ameteur hour?
splash
Okay, stand back.
*brrrring!
brrrrihg!

I--i-i'm s-s-sorry
You should be sorry.
That's the dumbest thing you've ever said. You did everything you did for me.
Thank you so much Dakota-- thank you



FIN.

for more art, visit
my instagram!
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