



**TRILBY INTERNATIONAL PICTURES PRESENTS**



**A TRILBY PRODUCTION**





You're missing out, you know. It doesn't have to be like that. It could be great. It could be special.

You could be special.

You just have to give it a chance ...

hmm? mmmm!



Oh, god ...

Oh, god!

Oh, god!!

# INVASION OF THE GIRLS

CARMEN MATHIS

WARD WILLIAMS

KIRA WESTMINE

BELLA PRICE

WITH

EMME SCARLETT

BORIS GOLDBERG

KARLA FLOWERS

ROBERT STULL

ZEKE ROSSOVICH

PHIL SMYRCH

HARRY BYRON

JOANN SUSAN

ANDI REDHALL

LEXI HASSELBECK

AND

MELODY HARPER

DEE DALLAS

WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY TRILBY



Certainly is a quaint place.

"Quaint"? That's unPair, Mr. Rice.

I grant we're a very small community, but that does't make us relics.

And we're on a steady trend of growth, attracting industry to the area ...

JUNE 11



You've attracted one industry to the area, Mr. Balko ... that Ostrea plant or lab or whatever it is.

You've been trying for nearly a decade to get more commercial development, and so Par Ostrea have been the only takers. I did my homework.

Yes, well, that's true. But I have high hopes for the future. We offer a lot of inducements.

What kind of inducements?



Extremely cheap real estate, for one.

Mayor! Mayor!

And a property tax rate that won't make you scream.

-- sigh --

Will you excuse me, Mr. Rice? Duty calls, apparently.

Look around all you like. Come find me if you have any questions.



Ramona, I am trying to attract business development to our town.

I know, sir ... but Byron Posey stormed into your office, and he's really mad, and he said he's not leaving until he talks to you.

What's biting his ass?

He wouldn't tell me.



Balko, I am a leading citizen of this town and I deserve better treatment than this! This is unacceptable!

Hold on, Byron, hold on. I don't even know what the problem is yet.

Problem? The problem is that my wife has disappeared and I can't get anyone here to do a damned thing about it!

Eleanor has --? Well, that's certainly serious! But it's also Stern's department. Have you spoken to him?

I can't find Stern! Nowhere to be seen, and when I call, it goes to Gladys. I've left messages all morning.

He's off somewhere sitting on his thumb ...





Who's sitting on whose thumb?

Stern! Where have you been? Why aren't you out looking for my wife?

Why would I be looking for your wife?

Because she's vanished, you idiot!

Uh ... sir, the chief of police is here.

... Thank you, Ramona.

Well, now, that'd be a good thing to tell me, wouldn't it?

Gladys gave me a lot of messages, and you didn't say in any of them what it was about.

I could have been looking into this hours ago if you'd bothered to give me a clue. I'm not a mind-reader, Posey.

How long's she been missing? When did you last see her?

I don't know! She wasn't there when I came home last night.

Didn't mention any plans to you, I assume ...

I'll look into it right away. Meanwhile, take a deep breath, huh?

Incompetent ... can't get good service from anybody these days ...

Sorry about that, Stern.

Well, he's upset, it's understandable ...

But this is the kind of thing I was talking about the other day.

People expect we know everything that's going on ... but the police force is only two people, and the town's gotten a bit too big for us to keep track, especially now that all those Ostrea employees have moved in ...

"Who knows what kinds of things could be happening that we don't have a clue about?"



... What a day.

Gonna be a good night to just lie on the sofa and --

Hey, girl!

Damn, Jean, you look wrong out.

Have you been working too hard? I bet you have. I've told you, you've got to have balance.

Lynda??

Lynda, where have you been?

You've been gone for days! I've been asking everybody! The company said they didn't know! Nobody knew!

I've been wondering if you were dead!



Lynda, what--?

MMMMM ...

You know, I never realized before how hot you are ...

Lynda, cut it out! I need to know what the hell's going on!

I know you do. And I'm going to explain everything, I promise.

But I think we should Puck first.

Lynda -- UHHH ...

I ... I don't --

I know you don't.



But you will for me, won't you?

I'm special. You want me.

UHHH



JUNE 13



I was supposed to meet Jean yesterday for lunch and she didn't show.

She's not answering the phone, she's not answering the door, and Ostrea says she hasn't shown up for work yesterday or today!

I'm worried about her! You know she doesn't have a roommate right now ... nobody's checking on her ...



What do you want me to do, Ramona? Send out a search party? Knock down her door?

Hasn't even been two days, right? She's probably in bed with a cold.

Or maybe she got tired of being one of you lonely ladies and found some guy up at the roadhouse, and they're off having fun.

You do know what fun is, right?

You do know you're an asshole, Popper, right?



Maybe ... but I can't investigate if there's nothing to investigate.

Now, if you wanted to do something nice for a change ... like maybe have dinner with me ...

... I could see what I could do. As a personal favor.



Go to hell, Popper.



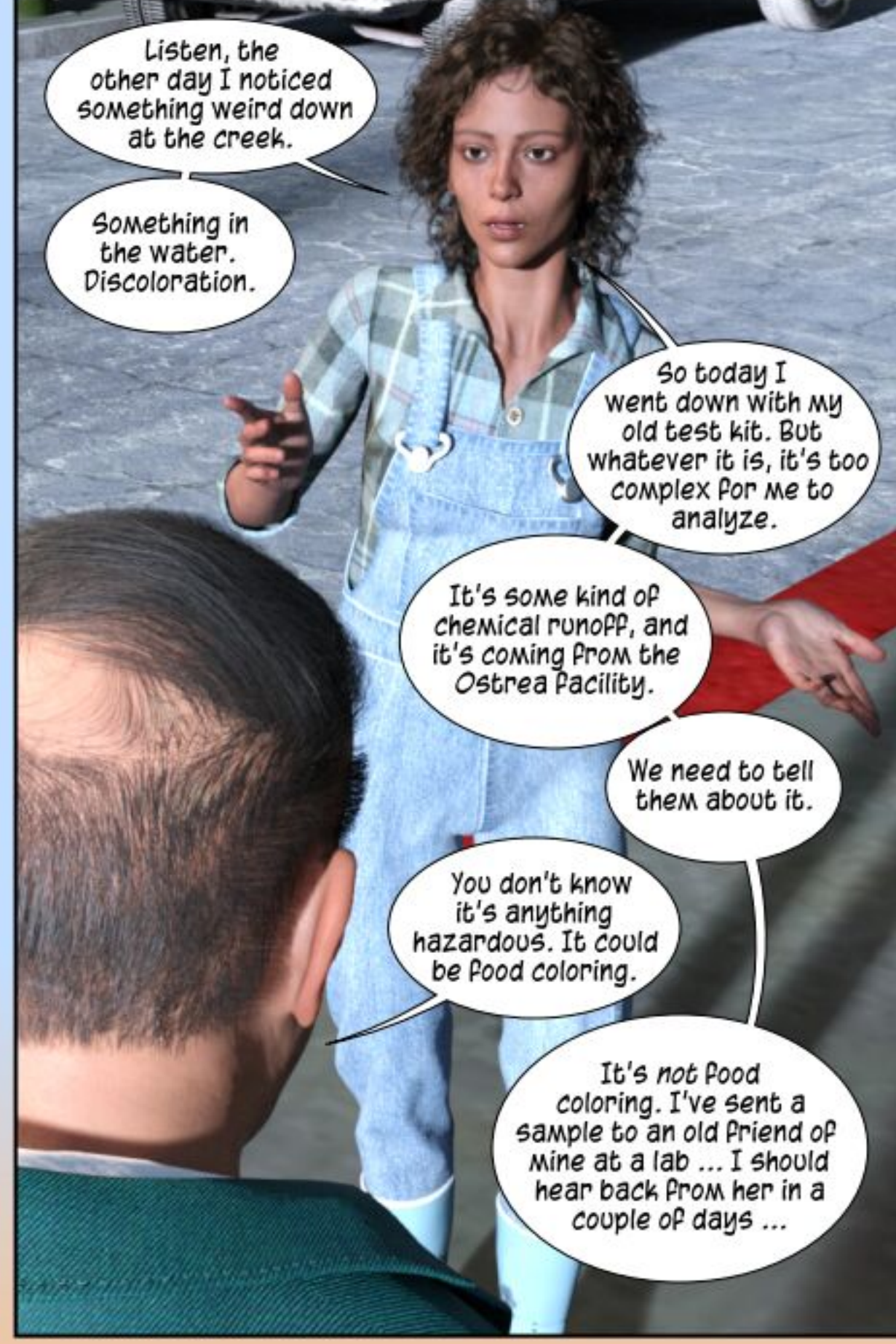
Damn it.



Mayor Balko! Just a second?

Trudy!

What brings our local recluse into town? Is it grocery day?



Listen, the other day I noticed something weird down at the creek.

Something in the water. Discoloration.

So today I went down with my old test kit. But whatever it is, it's too complex for me to analyze.

It's some kind of chemical runoff, and it's coming from the Ostrea Facility.

We need to tell them about it.

You don't know it's anything hazardous. It could be food coloring.

It's not food coloring. I've sent a sample to an old friend of mine at a lab ... I should hear back from her in a couple of days ...



And you just took it upon yourself to do this? Civic-minded and all that, eh?

If they're putting crap in the water ...

... nobody will care. Nobody cares about that goddamned creek but you, Trudy.

I haven't forgotten the things you said when Ostrea was trying to set up here. You didn't want them. You were so loud about it you almost convinced the rest of the town.

I don't care if you want to be a hippie and live in the woods, but the rest of us here want progress, and I'm not going to stand for you sabotaging what we've managed to achieve. Do you understand me?



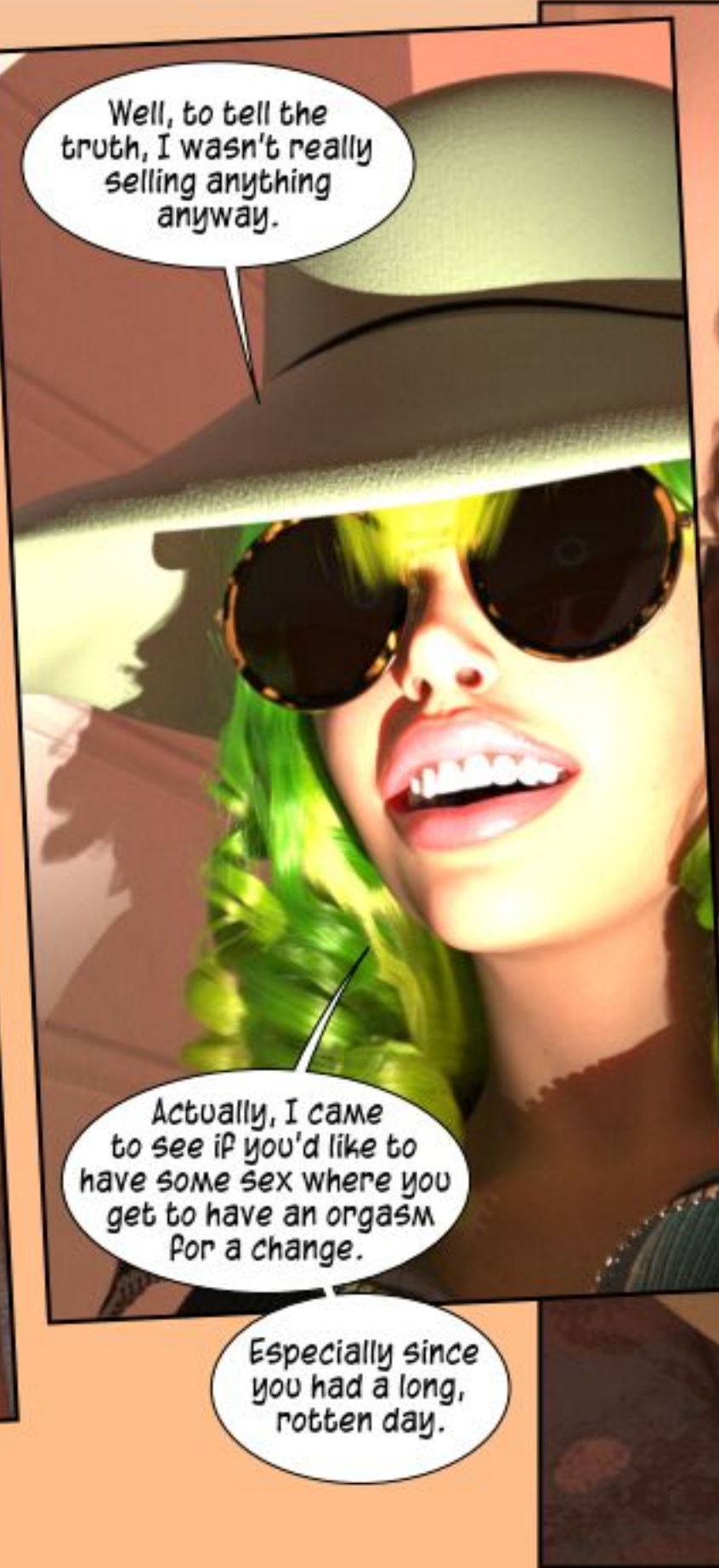
Who are you? What do you want?

I'd like to tell you about our body and skin care program. We're offering techniques to revitalize and rejuvenate --

OK, just can it right there.

I've had a long, rotten day, and I don't need this.

Whatever it is you're pitching, I'm not interested.



Well, to tell the truth, I wasn't really selling anything anyway.

Actually, I came to see if you'd like to have some sex where you get to have an orgasm for a change.

Especially since you had a long, rotten day.



You -- I -- what?

Uh ...

... come in.





Listen, sometimes when I'm up at the roadhouse, I don't ... I kinda lose track of time, OK?

I got in maybe two in the morning ... I didn't go looking for her, she'd have been pissed I woke her up. I crashed here on the couch ...

So you don't know if she was here when you came in. And you haven't actually seen her since she left for work yesterday morning.

Well, about that ... I was asleep when she left for work, see ...

Mhm. Would I be correct in assuming you and your wife aren't particularly close, Mr. Haller?

**JUNE 14**



What's to be close to?

Look at this place! All this shiny shit and a couch you can't get comfortable on ... it's her house, she just lets me live in it.

Just because she makes all the money ... she asks me to get a job and I say, "What, make a few bucks tending bar so you can feel better about supporting me?"

Like, if you think I'm worthless, then cut me loose ... but she won't do that, 'cause she likes to be able to tell me I'm worthless. Well, if you're going to keep me around for that, then you can pay for it, see?

If you feel like that, why'd you call me out?

Hey, I still love her! She's -- I mean, hell, Deenie and I have been together for years --

Either that, or you're worried something's happened to your meal ticket.



Now, come on! It's not like that! Next you'll be saying I killed her for insurance or something ...

No, she didn't have life insurance. She did have a policy on you, though. I checked.

So if she'd killed you, that might not have been much of a surprise.

... All right, I'm looking into it.

Don't leave town.



I mean, I could have told you that was what he was going to say. You know how he is about trying to boost this place.

Yeah, I know what he wants. Trees cut down, factories all around ... doesn't he know that people live here because it's not like that? If I wanted that kind of place, I'd move to Los Angeles.

But you're a hermit, Trudy. Some people don't like living in a teeny town with nothing to do on a Friday night except get drunk up at the roadhouse.

Then why are they here?



And what a coincidence! Here's the man who's not helping a bit!

Huh? What did I do this time?

Nothing! That's the point. Three women have disappeared in five days and you're not doing a thing about it.

-- sigh -- We've had this conversation before, you know.

Anyway, I'm a lot more worried about the disappearances than whatever Ostrea's doing.

We're sure not going to get people to come to this town if we get a reputation for being a place where women vanish.



That's not true. I'm investigating both Posey and Haller. In fact, I just came from talking to Haller's husband.

And I told Popper to look into the business with your friend.

And you think he's going to actually do it? Popper's useless, Stern. Everybody knows it but you.

Look, I admit the kid's got a few ... ah ... thing is, he's all I've got. Nobody else wants the job.

I can't do everything myself. Not enough hours in the day.



I assume that means you can't spare the hours to go investigate Ostrea, then.

Ostrea? What's to investigate?

They're dumping something. Runoff from the factory. Some kind of industrial waste.

Two of the women who've vanished worked for Ostrea. I know you know that.

Wouldn't it be interesting if it turned out they were trying to blow the whistle on whatever Ostrea's doing?



Now listen! That's the kind of thing you don't want to spread around.

You don't have any proof, and you're not going to make this situation any better by spreading crazy theories like that.

I have a duty to keep the peace in this town, and you're not going to need you causing a panic because you've been spending too much time out in your cabin making up stories.



You two need to spend less time gossiping and more doing something useful.

At least Ramona's got a job. You ought to look into that. Probably do you good.

Stern!



All the men in this town are assholes.

Oh, I don't know. He has a point. We don't have proof.

Want to go look around Ostrea and see what we can find out?

Trudy! They're not going to just invite us in to snoop.

You're in the municipal government. You practically run this town.

Make something up.





You know, we've shown the mayor's office around before ...

Yes, I know ... but it's been a while, and we like to stay informed. People come to us and ask "that Ostrea company, what exactly does it do?"

I mean, we don't want to misrepresent you ...

Though I was surprised to be getting a tour from the boss ... you didn't have to do that, Dr. Lurida ...

Please, call me Isabella.

As you say, we don't want anyone misrepresented. If I let someone else show you around, they might not do it justice.



Also, it's the inside joke of the company that I'm the person who has the least to do on a day-by-day basis. This way I'm not pulling anyone else away from their work.

Now let's see ... as I'm sure you know, Ostrea Biologicals is pursuing advances in beauty and personal health products ...

At the moment, we don't market anything commercially; we're providing our products directly to a limited audience.



The boutique approach?

More like the Avon lady approach.

We want our customers to have a relationship with our representatives.

We want them to not only be able to get our products, but trusted advice and help.

We'll skip the administrative floors. You know what paperwork looks like.

I'm sure it's the labs you really want to see.



This feels much more like a biochemistry facility ...

Than what?

Well ... than a cosmetics company.

Mmm. Exactly why I hate that label.



Do you have a biochemistry background?

Uh ... as a matter of fact, yes. I gave it up, though.

How interesting!

This is biochemistry. As far as I'm concerned, that's what this laboratory does. Calling it "cosmetics" is reductionist.

And, I think, demeaning. "Cosmetics" is what men call this to show it's not something that serious people do. By which they mean men, of course.



Uh ... since you mention it ...

I've been noticing that you don't seem to have any male employees.

Is that on purpose?



I don't think men are suited for this industry, do you? They don't really understand it.

I also find them difficult to work with. If I hire a woman who doesn't have quite the knowledge I need her to have, I can teach her.

Men tend to arrive assuming they already know everything, and you can't tell them otherwise no matter how hard you try.



That looks serious.

Particulates, probably.

Huh?

Fine powders. Inhalation hazard and flammable.

I couldn't have said it better.

And I can't show you that wing because I don't have safety equipment for you.

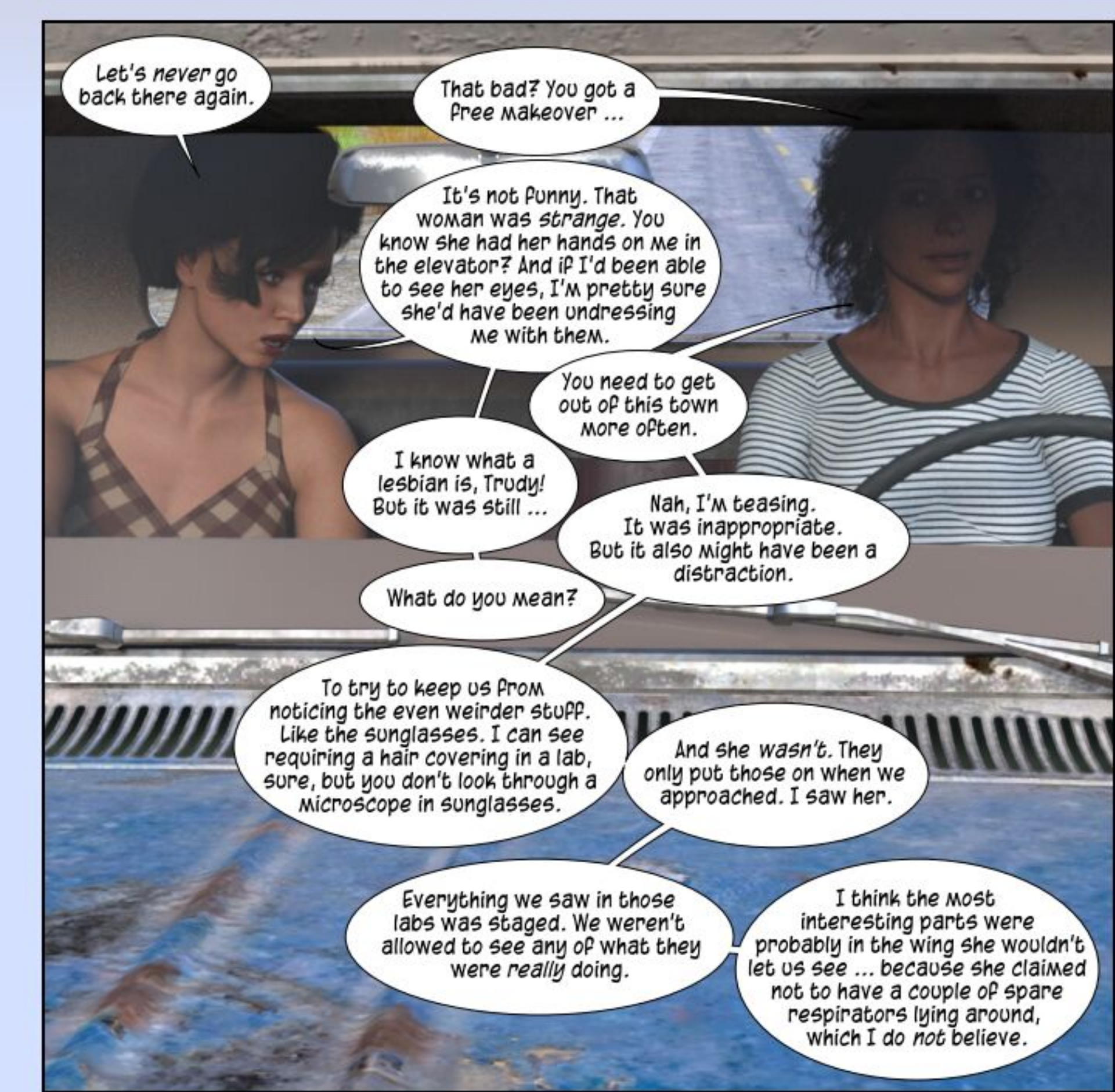


But I can show you the testing rooms.

That's the part that looks like a "cosmetics company."

Mirrors, makeup samples, people having their colors done, and all that nonsense.

I don't suppose either of you is interested in a makeover?



Let's never go back there again.

That bad? You got a free makeover ...

It's not funny. That woman was strange. You know she had her hands on me in the elevator? And if I'd been able to see her eyes, I'm pretty sure she'd have been undressing me with them.

You need to get out of this town more often.

I know what a lesbian is, Trudy! But it was still ...

Nah, I'm teasing. It was inappropriate. But it also might have been a distraction.

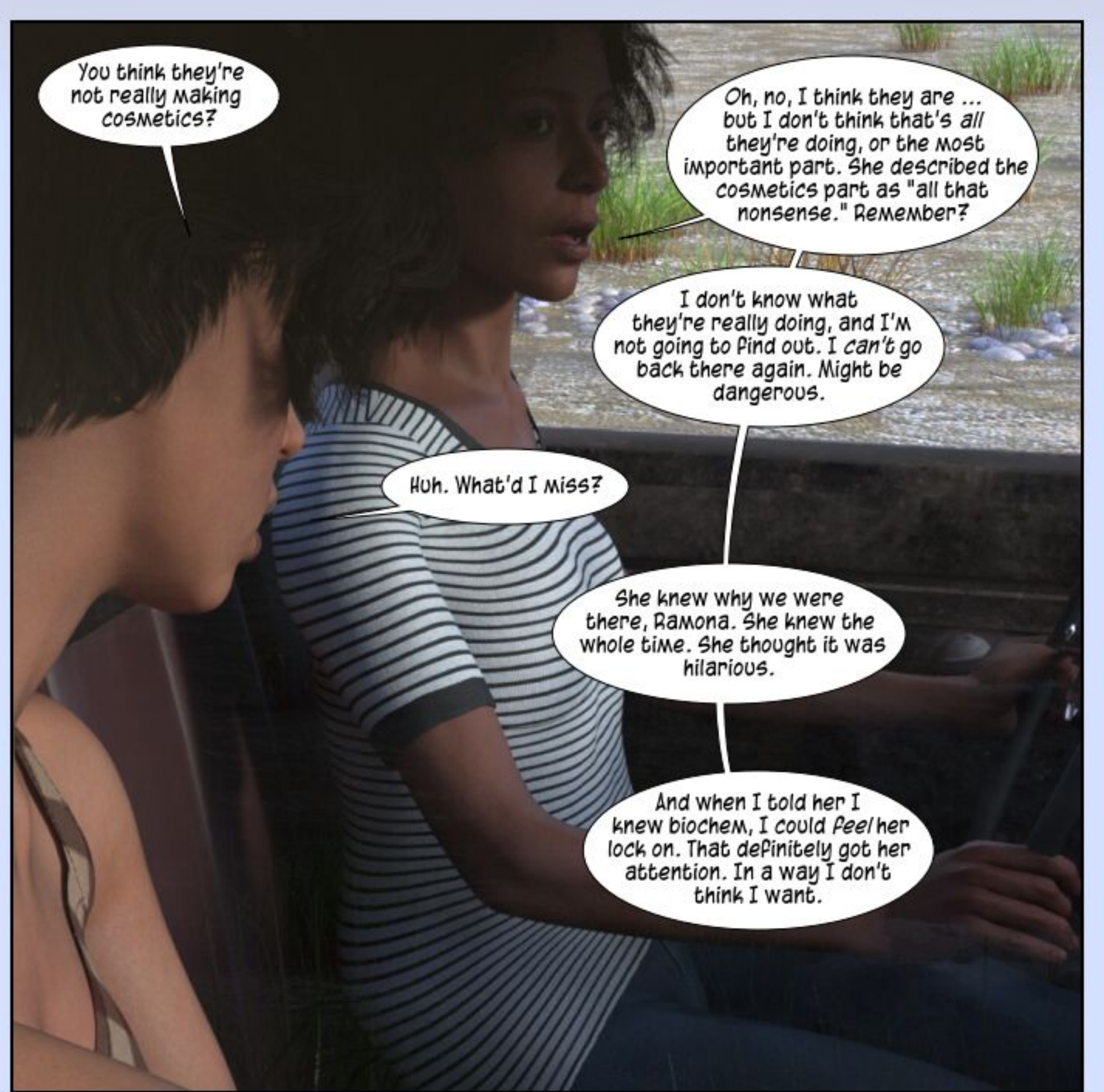
What do you mean?

To try to keep us from noticing the even weirder stuff. Like the sunglasses. I can see requiring a hair covering in a lab, sure, but you don't look through a microscope in sunglasses.

And she wasn't. They only put those on when we approached. I saw her.

Everything we saw in those labs was staged. We weren't allowed to see any of what they were really doing.

I think the most interesting parts were probably in the wing she wouldn't let us see ... because she claimed not to have a couple of spare respirators lying around, which I do not believe.



You think they're not really making cosmetics?

Oh, no, I think they are ... but I don't think that's all they're doing, or the most important part. She described the cosmetics part as "all that nonsense." Remember?

I don't know what they're really doing, and I'm not going to find out. I can't go back there again. Might be dangerous.

Huh. What'd I miss?

She knew why we were there, Ramona. She knew the whole time. She thought it was hilarious.

And when I told her I knew biochem, I could feel her lock on. That definitely got her attention. In a way I don't think I want.





Damn it, Posey, answer the door.

You're not at your office ... you'd better not have disappeared too ...

OK, what the hell do you --

Oh! Sorry, Stern ...

My fault. I didn't realize I'd be waking you up.

Uh ... you didn't wake me up, and that's not what I'm sorry about.

I meant to come tell you, but I got a little sidetracked ...

Tell me what?

Honey?

Are you coming back up?

Uh, that Eleanor reappeared last night.

So everything's fine now.

And I'm glad to hear it ...

... but I'm gonna need to ask your wife a few questions.



I feel so bad, Mr. Stern. I could have sworn I told Byron where I'd be going! I thought he had it on his calendar and everything!

Or maybe I told him and he didn't listen. Sometimes he doesn't, you know.

Still, it worked out. It was such a nice surprise for him this way, me coming back looking so good!

Don't I look good, Mr. Stern? Don't you think I look good?

Uh, yes ... But ...



Now, if you think of any other questions you want to ask me, you just come over any time you like and ask them.

We'll have a long talk. A long, close, personal talk.



SANDWICHES

JUNE 15

Ramona! Hey!!



Jean??

Listen, I'm so sorry about lunch the other day. I didn't blow you off, honest! I had to go to this employee thing and it was kind of involved ...

They promoted me! They're training me for a new position. I'm not a lab tech anymore! Isn't that great?



Jean, nobody's seen or heard from you for three days.

I was worried you might be dead! I had the police looking for you!

... Well, Popper. But I guess he counts.

And now you turn up and say "Hi, sorry about that, I just forgot to tell anybody?"



That is so sweet!

I didn't think there'd be anybody here who'd even notice if I went missing.

I'm sorry I had you worried. I really am.

Look, why don't you come to my place after you get off work tonight? We'll have some wine, maybe something to eat, and we can talk.

I have all kinds of things to tell you.

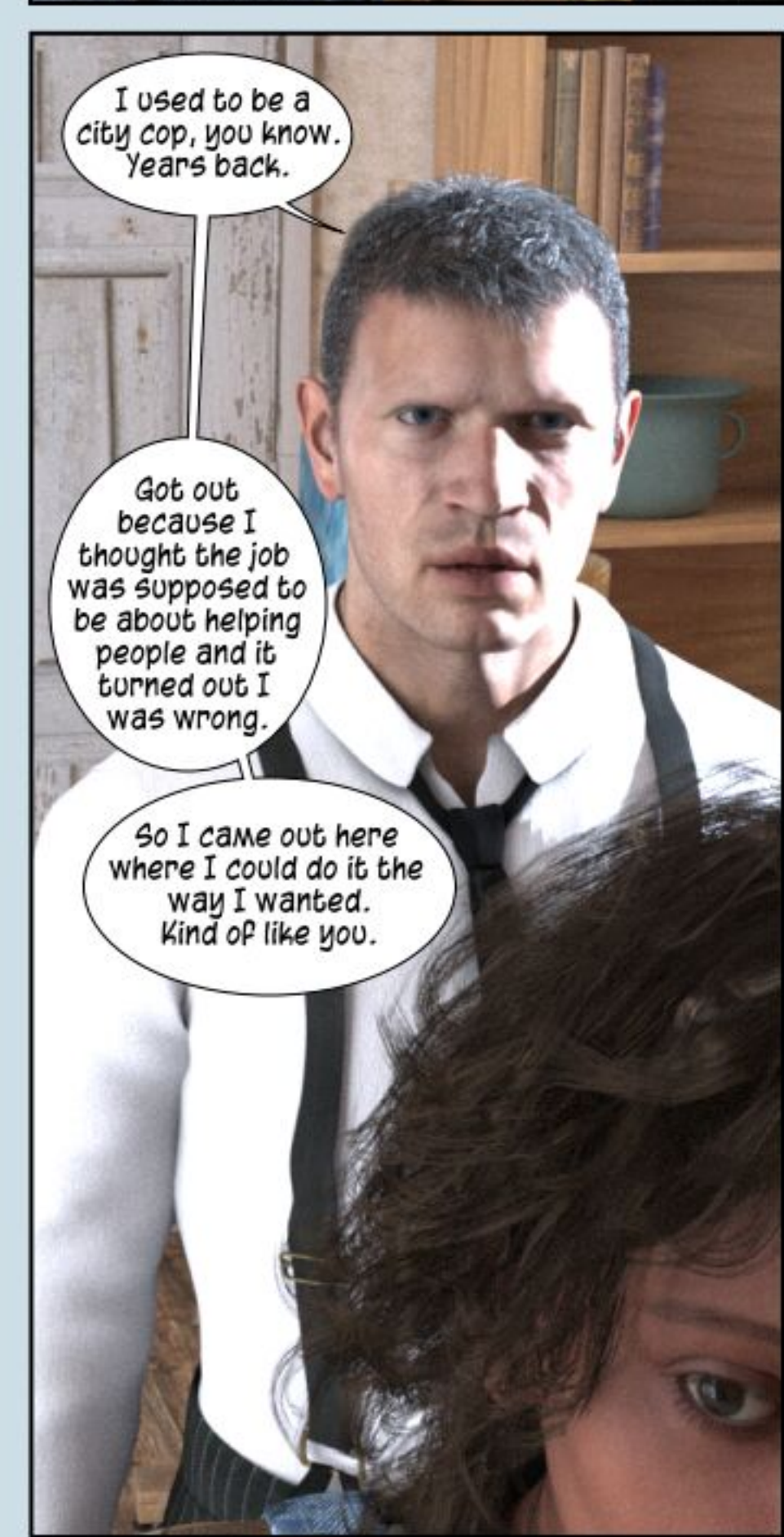


I, uh ...

I don't --

... I'll think about it.









Popper!

Where have you been? I've been looking for you all afternoon.



I don't answer to you, Ramona.

... Looking for me all afternoon, huh?

Oh, for god's sake, Popper. Not like that.



I need to talk to you about Jean.

Jean? Why? She's back now. Told you it was a waste of time.

Something's wrong! She's not the same. She's acting weird. She doesn't even look like herself!

Geez, Ramona, what do you want from me?

Probably she realized she didn't want to be one of you single women anymore and did what she needed.

You know, you don't have to make up problems to get my attention.

It's about time you got off your high horse and realized there are men in this town who need somebody ...



huurkkh!

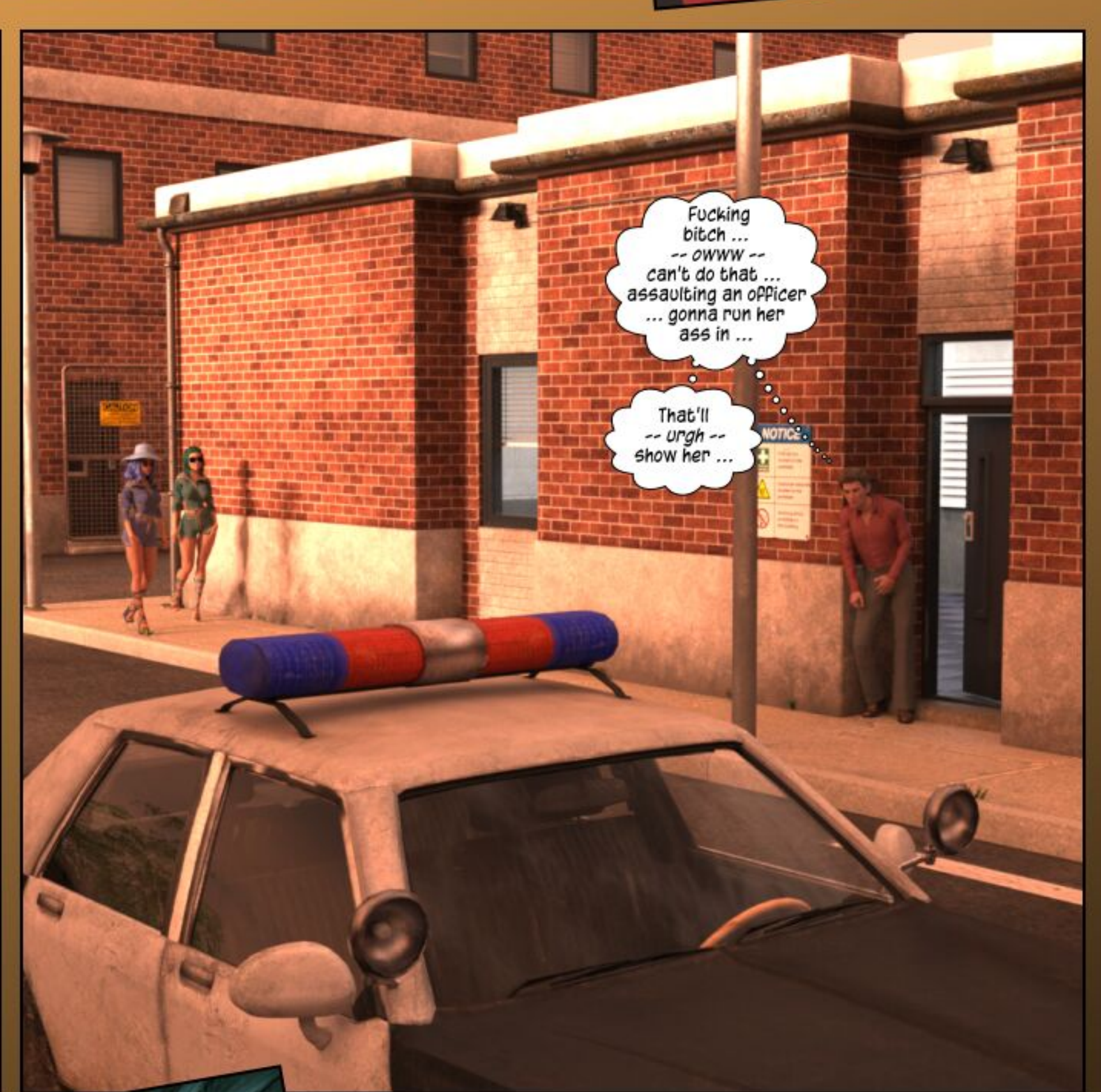
ASSHOLE!



If you ever touch me again, Popper ...

... First I'll get Stern to fire you. Then I'll get him to throw your ass out of town.

That is a promise.



Fucking bitch ...  
-- owww --  
can't do that ...  
assaulting an officer ...  
... gonna run her ass in ...

That'll -- urgh -- show her ...



Hey, hotshot.

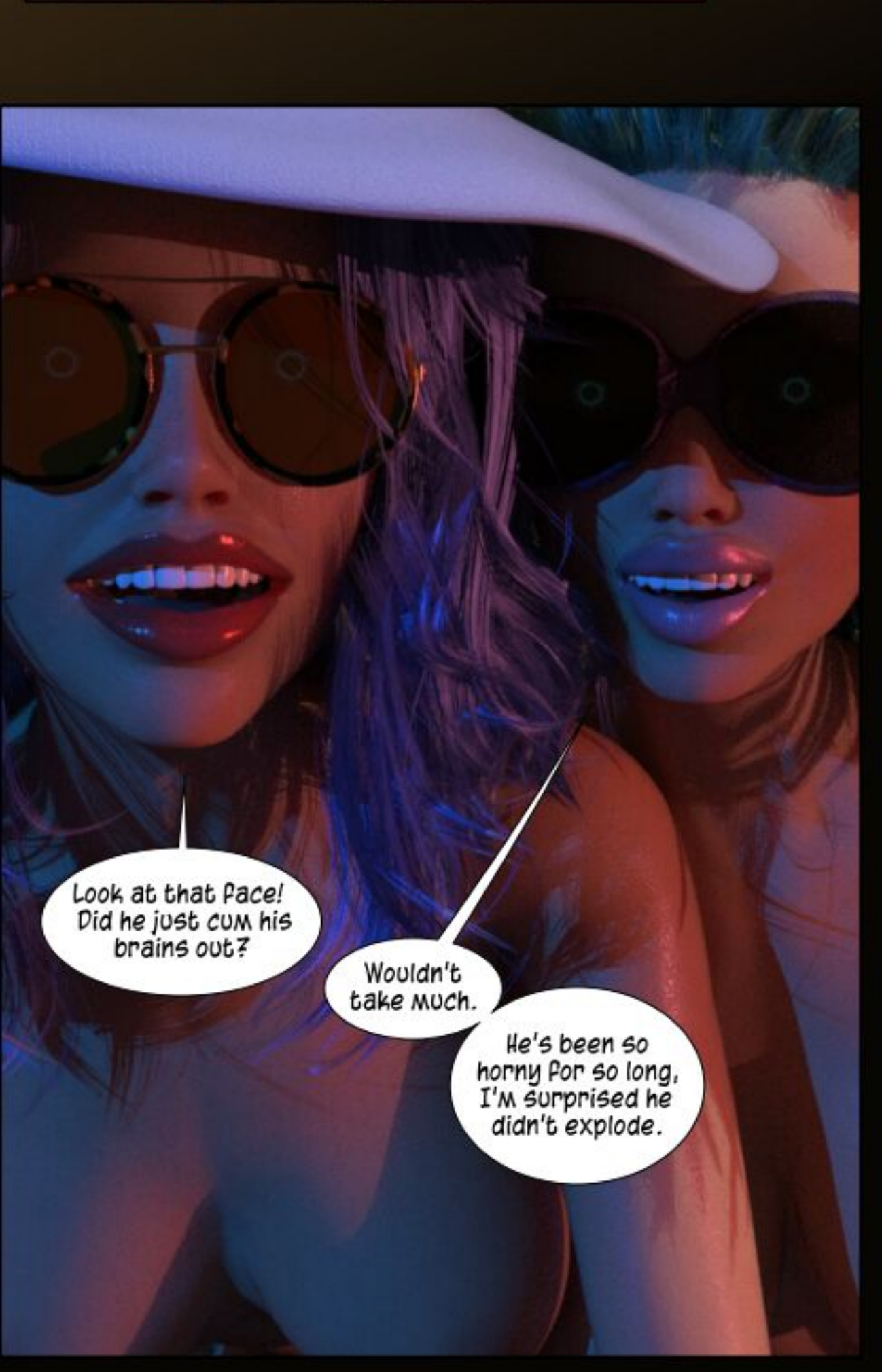
Don't waste your time on her. We've got what you want.



C'mon, let's have some fun.

Uh ... right here?

Why not? You're up for anything, aren't you, big guy?



Look at that face! Did he just cum his brains out?

Wouldn't take much.

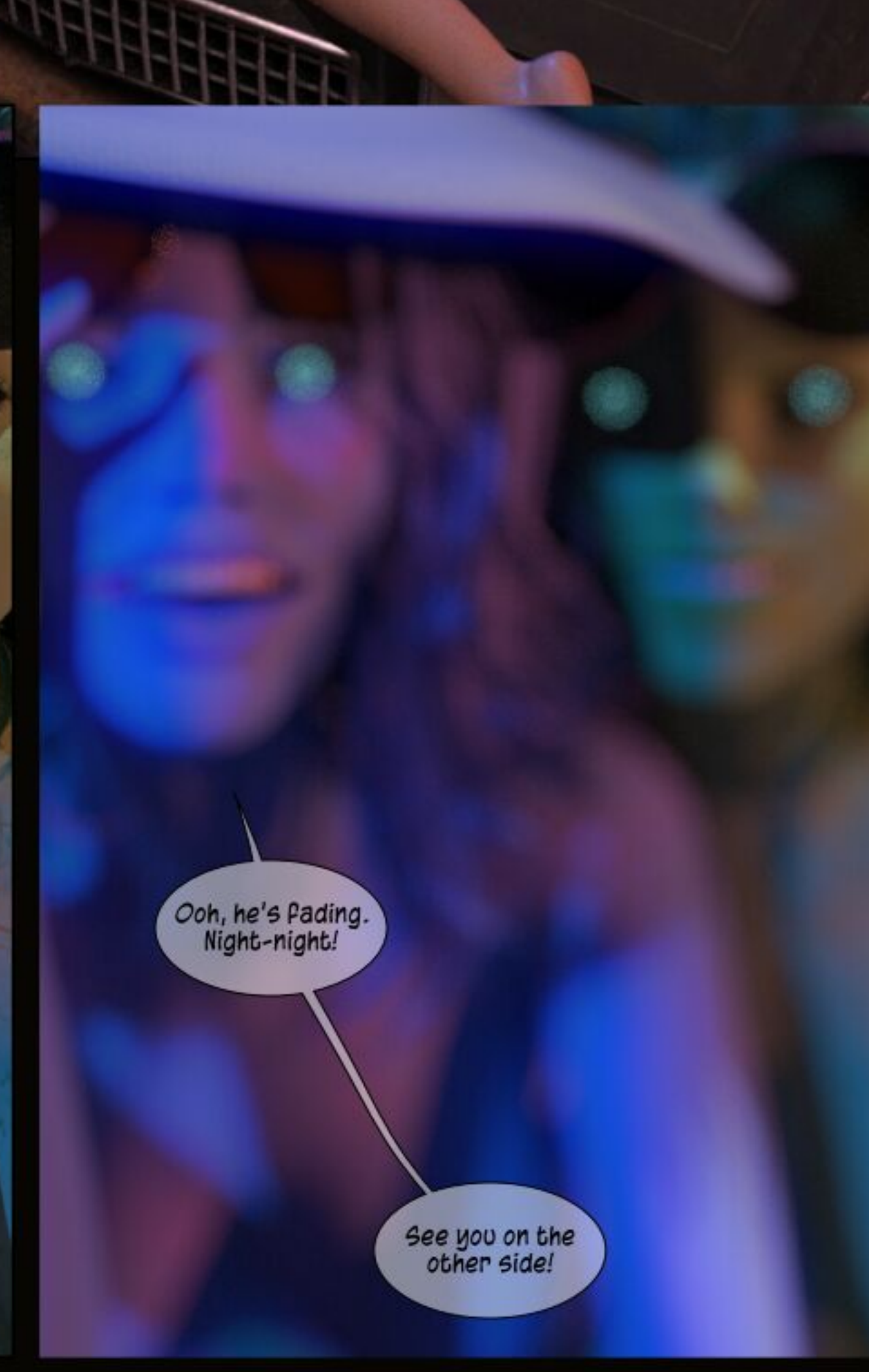
He's been so horny for so long, I'm surprised he didn't explode.



Aw, poor baby.

Don't worry! In a couple of days, you'll be able to get all the women you want!

-- giggle --



Ooh, he's fading. Night-night!

See you on the other side!





Oh, you poor thing.



Wrrhh ...

Deenie?



Hi, Jimmy. You're a mess.

Sorry I was gone. I got promoted ... and some other improvements. I guess you could say I got an upgrade.

Now, what we're going to do, we're going to get you off that sofa, we're going to get you a shower, get some solid Poop into you ...

... and then we're going to have a lot of sex.



Well, he tried.

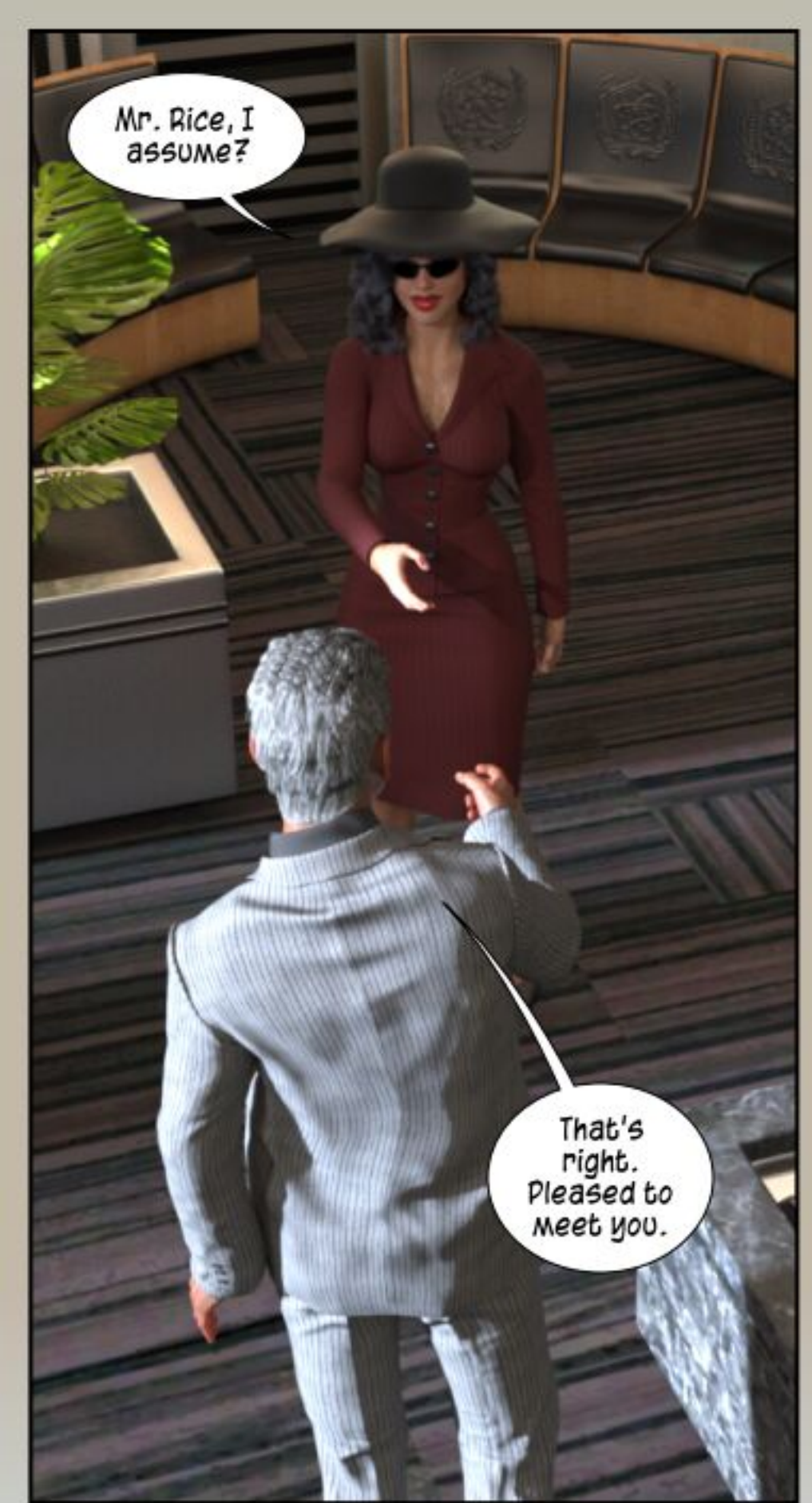
Poor useless Jimmy. He just can't keep up with me. He never could, even before.

And he's such a mess. He looks like he's going to waste away ... I bet that was the first thing he had to eat in days ...



Don't worry, Jimmy. It's about to get a lot better.

We're going to get you an upgrade too.



Mr. Rice, I assume?

That's right. Pleased to meet you.



I appreciate your letting me come ask you questions, Dr. Lurida.

Some business owners wouldn't care to share information in these circumstances. Competitive advantage, and so on.



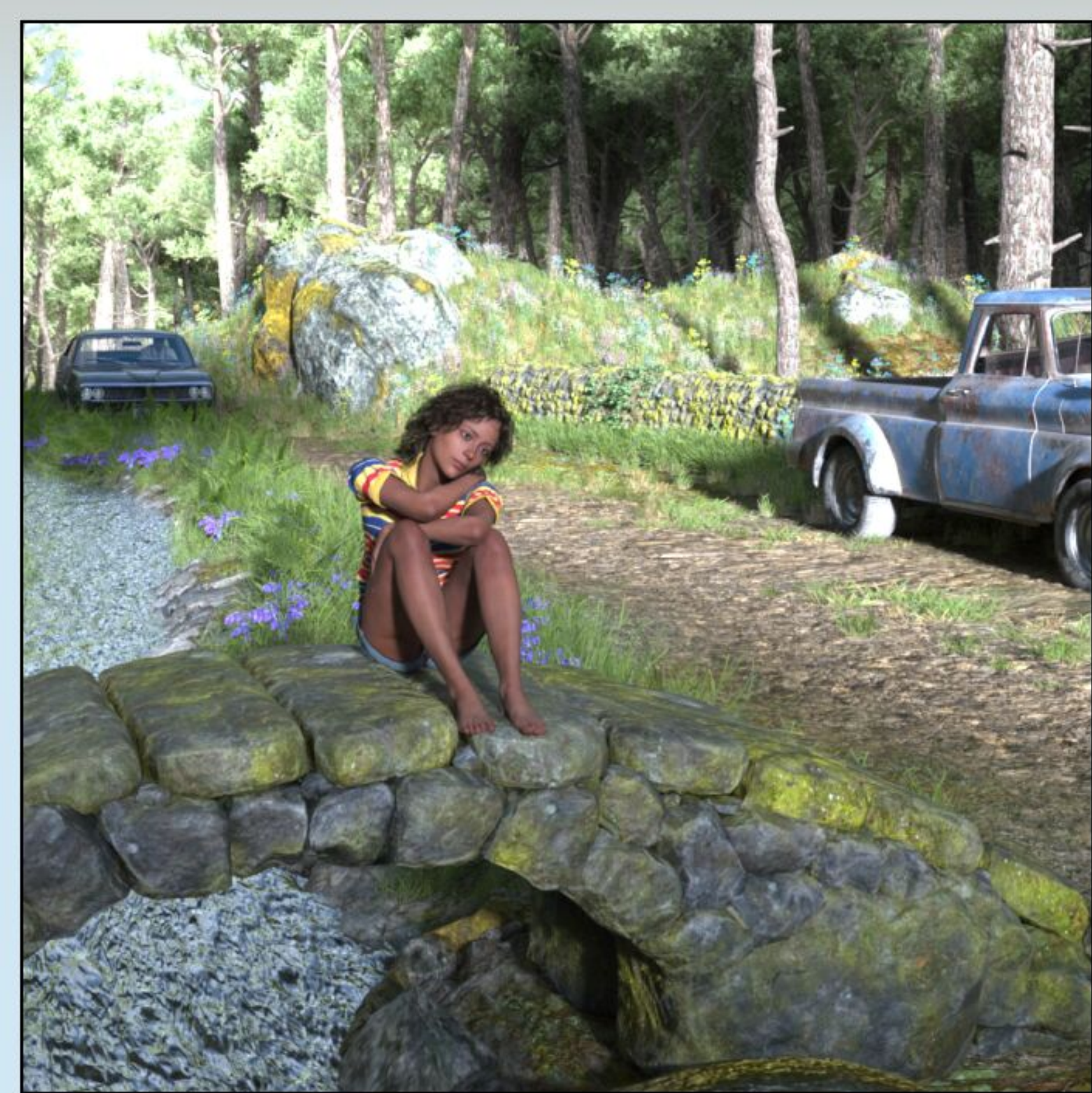
Ah, but we're not competing, Mr. Rice.

Our businesses don't intersect at all. The way I see it, making sure you have accurate information works to my advantage as well as to yours.

And please ...



... call me Isabella.



Penny for your thoughts.

Oysters.

Sorry?

You did ask.

What's up? Everything OK?



Honestly? No.

Popper's disappeared. Nobody's seen him since yesterday afternoon.

I want to ask Eleanor Posey some more questions. This time she's going to tell me exactly where she went.

I ... could I get you to come with me?





You want me here so she can't accuse you of trying to do something inappropriate?

When I was here before, I thought she was going to pull me onto the carpet and tear my clothes off.

I'm not flattering myself -- I got the impression she'd do it to anybody who got close enough. Never saw someone giving off just that hard before.

Hoping having someone with me will tone her down a little.

Just get her husband to sit in.

Might not work. I got the impression they'd been going like rabbits since she got back. You know he hasn't been at the office since then at all?

The other way around, actually.



Oh, Mr. Stern! So good to see you. Though I do wish you'd called first.

Sorry about that. I need to ask you a few more questions.

I could also stand to talk to your husband, since I can't seem to catch him at work ...

My husband? Ah ... well ...

My husband isn't here anymore, Mr. Stern.

Another disappearance?

I wouldn't call it that.

It's true I don't know where he is, but I'm sure I will as soon as I've served the divorce papers.

His decision, not mine.

It won't work!



It's not a dress! It's barely even a shirt! I can't --

Oh!

I didn't know someone was at the door ...



This is an old friend of mine who's staying with me for a while.

Come sit down and ask me your questions.



I just want to know more about where you were during your disappearance.

But I've told you ... I went to go receive revitalizing treatment ...

Stop that, you naughty thing!

Ms. Posey, is there some reason you don't want to tell me where you got this treatment?

The thing is, I'm not supposed to say. It's new, and I think it might be still a bit experimental? At any rate, they're only offering it to a few people right now, and we're supposed to keep it to ourselves ...

It was at Ostrea, of course. But I think you already knew that.

You won't tell them I told you, will you?



Look, it's only for long enough for us to go find you more clothes. It'll be fine. Just don't bend over or you'll flash somebody ...

... unless you want to! -- giggle --



I have a wild theory, but you're not gonna like it.

I already don't.

The total makeover was hard enough to believe. I am not going to add a sex change onto that. I just can't do it.

And yet I see you got there real fast.

C'mon, Posey wouldn't divorce her now. He just got his wet dream! He's been pucking her for three days solid!

Uh ... sorry. That was crude.

Maybe he left so he wouldn't die of exhaustion.

... I withdraw my apology.



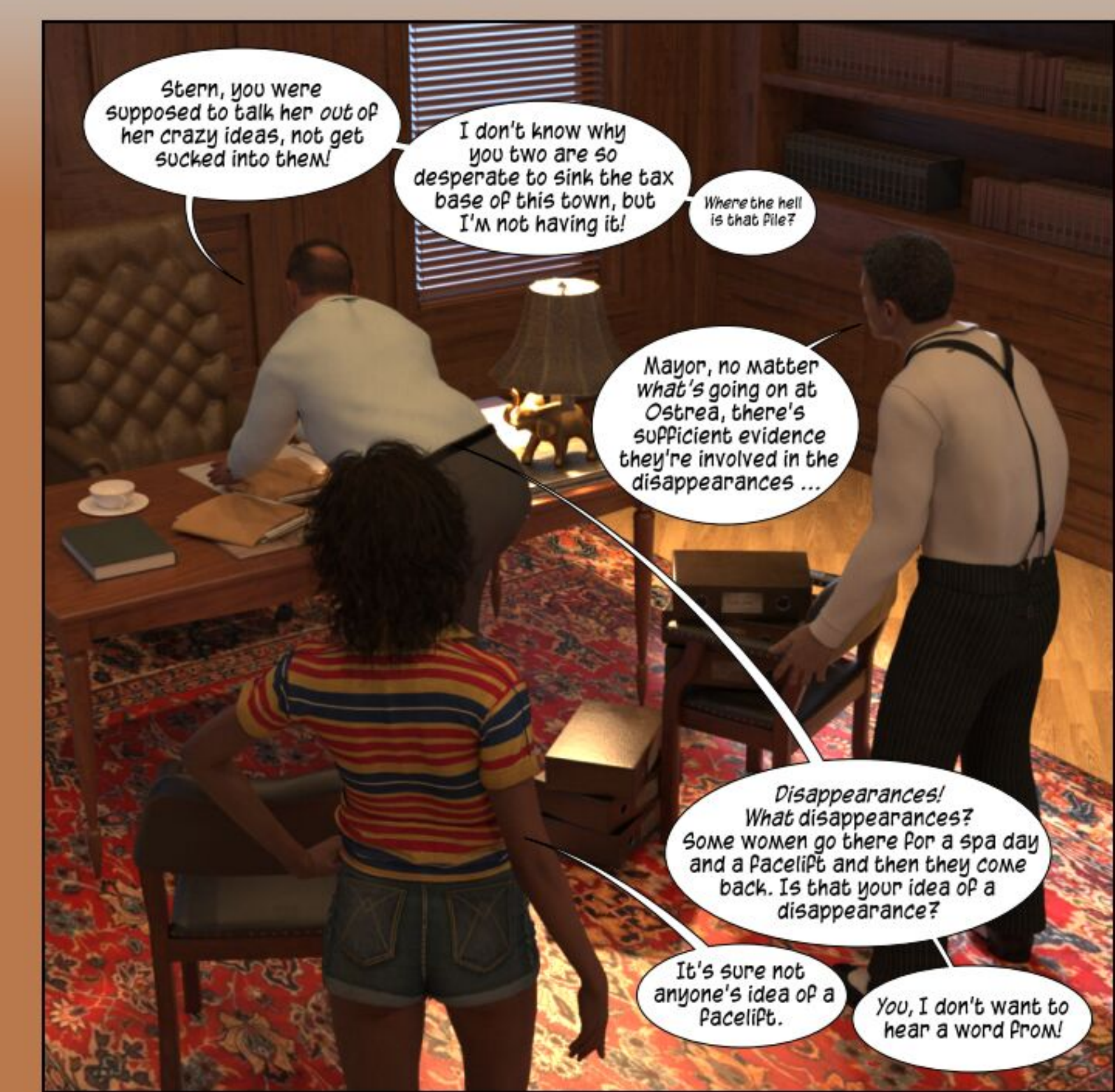
No, the wild theory explains a whole lot ... the only problem is it's completely ridiculous.

So don't mention that part when we talk to the mayor.

Oh, are we talking to the mayor now?

You don't have to come if you don't want.

Wouldn't miss it.



Stern, you were supposed to talk her out of her crazy ideas, not get sucked into them!

I don't know why you two are so desperate to sink the tax base of this town, but I'm not having it!

Where the hell is that file?

Mayor, no matter what's going on at Ostrea, there's sufficient evidence they're involved in the disappearances ...

Disappearances! What disappearances? Some women go there for a spa day and a PaceliPe and then they come back. Is that your idea of a disappearance?

It's sure not anyone's idea of a PaceliPe.

You, I don't want to hear a word from!



You want to investigate a disappearance? OK. Go find Ramona.

She didn't show up for work this morning, and I can't do a damned thing without her.

Then you'll be doing something useful!





OK, wow. I don't know what any of this is, but it looks serious.

You know, that outfit really doesn't do anything for you at all.

You've got a good figure under all that Prump. You shouldn't be scared to show it off.

Though I do approve of the color choices.

What brings you to this unauthorized area?

Just as I thought ... nobody keeping an eye on the back side of the building ...



I want to know what you did with Popper!

You don't even like him! The reports I have are that he was an annoyance to every woman in town ... especially you.

Are you concerned for him, or just here to see what happened?

You can't just kidnap people! Even if they're assholes.



He had a really good time, Ramona. Honest!

Don't you help, Jean!

How could you sign on with this ... this ...

I think you want to say "monster."

But I'm not.

And Jean joined us for the same reason everyone else has joined us: because it's a very good thing to do.

But we can discuss that later. I'll be happy to show you what's become of Mr. Popper.



You may have to take my word for it that it's him, though.



My god.

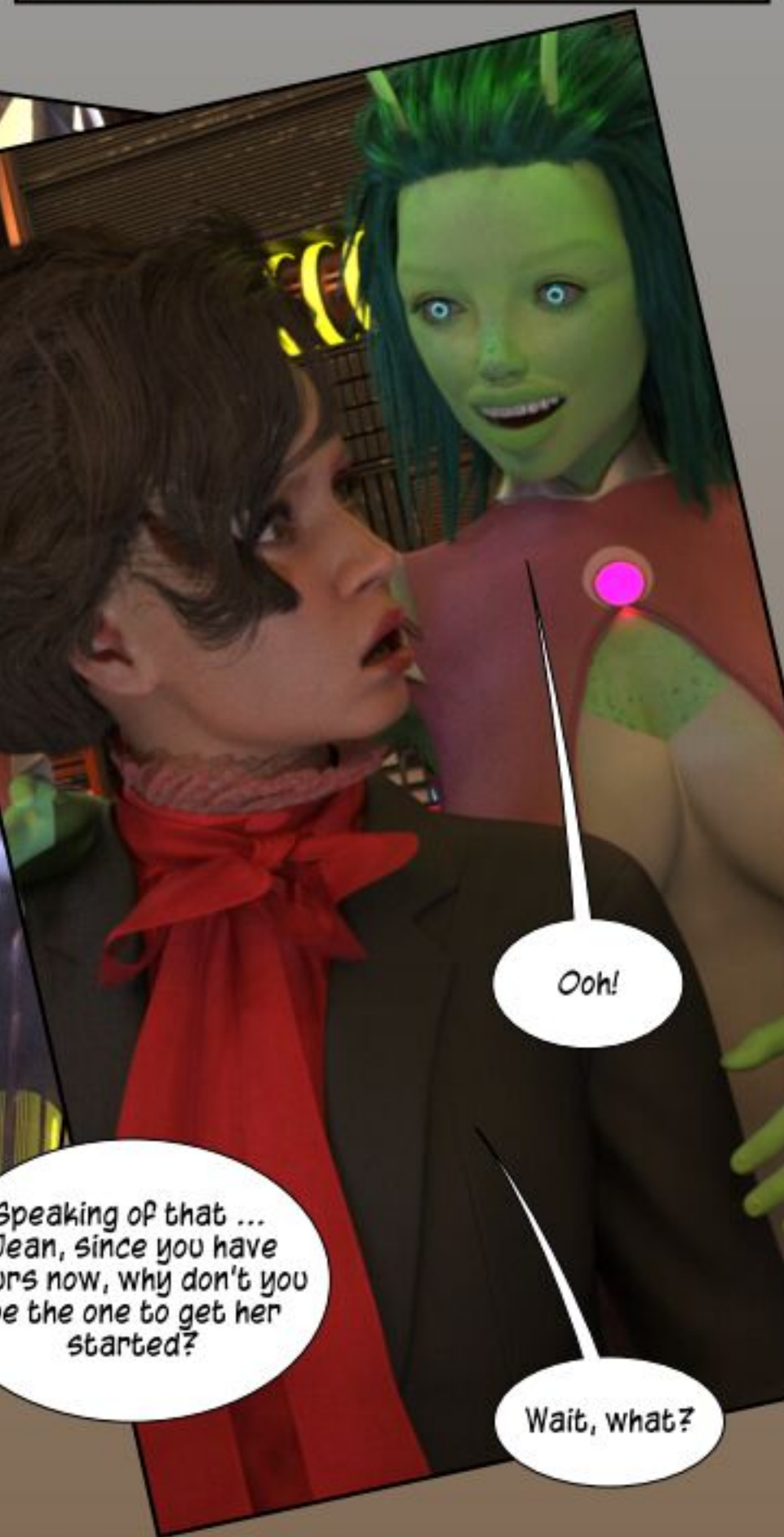
They're not really that big -- the glass distorts -- but they're still impressive.

I'm a bit worried about her, actually. The mental changes are mostly just loosening inhibitions ... but I gather this one was already an enormous horn dog, so heaven knows what we're going to get.



We'll know shortly! She'll be out of that tube by the end of the day. She's almost done with this stage. You can tell by the skin. The color change is the last thing to happen.

She'll still have some more development to do after that, of course. In particular, the antennae won't come in for another day or two.



Ooh!

Speaking of that ... Jean, since you have yours now, why don't you be the one to get her started?

Wait, what?



MMMMW!  
MM!  
... MM?  
... MMM ...



UhhhhMM ...

I know, huh?

I wanted to do this last night, but you didn't want to play ... I don't think you have a clue how hot you are ...

But don't worry! We'll get a chance soon.

Lots of chances.



Uhhrrr?

And just think ... when you come out, you'll be even hotter!

It's gonna be so good! You're going to love it!





When you asked me if I'd have dinner with you, I didn't realize you meant at your house ... but I have no regrets -- that was delicious.

Louis. If I'm going to call you Isabella, you should call me Louis, yes?

I do feel a little guilty though ...

Why, thank you, Mr. Rice!

Oh, no, you shouldn't! I love to cook, and I'm so busy I seldom get to.

Besides, there are no good restaurants in this town. There's a diner, and it's decent, but I thought we could do better than ham on rye.

Let me clean up a little, and then we can go sit and finish the wine.



It's good to get a chance to socialize with someone.

I can't really do that with my staff, for obvious reasons ... and I don't manage to get into town much.

I have the same sort of problem. I travel so much these days I never manage to see anyone.

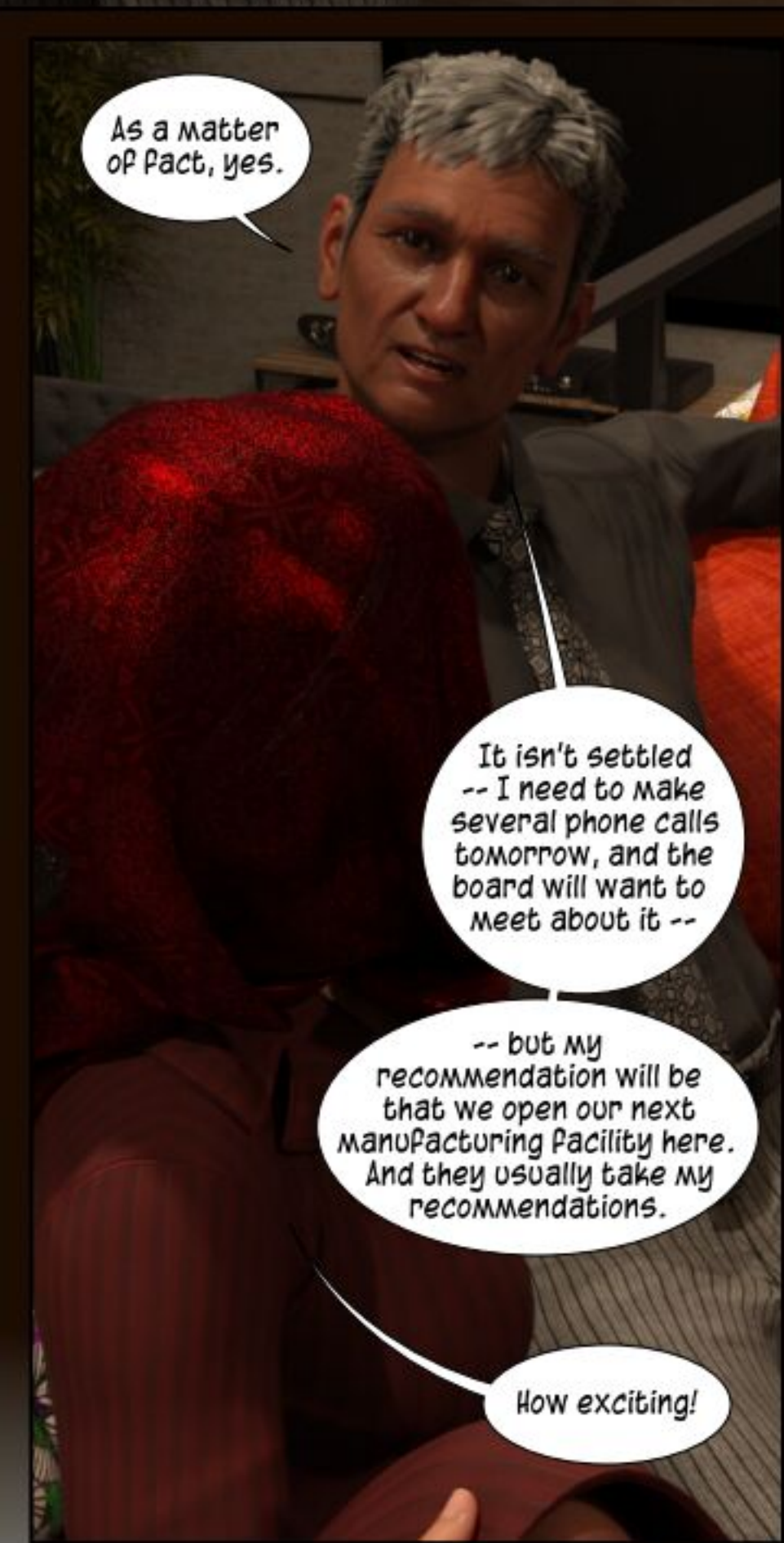
I'm curious -- you wear the sunglasses all the time?



My eyes can't adjust well to light. Been like that my whole life.

And the head covering is sheer vanity, I'm afraid. My hair is thinning on top and I hate it.

Have you reached a decision on what you're going to tell your company?



As a matter of fact, yes.

It isn't settled -- I need to make several phone calls tomorrow, and the board will want to meet about it --

-- but my recommendation will be that we open our next manufacturing facility here. And they usually take my recommendations.

How exciting!



I'm wondering -- you know, we most likely won't get a chance to see one another again ...

That sounds like celebratory news to me.

Would you like to have a little celebration?

I was hoping you'd ask.



**JUNE 18**

Thanks for meeting me here.

My god, it's a color!

Yeah, I knew you'd say that.

I have a blue one too.



You really think you're going to get anything out of Deenie Haller? I mean, she works for Ostrea. Pretty high up, too, I'm told.

I don't remember exactly what. I'd have to ask Ramona.

We need to find Ramona.

I don't, no. But I don't have any other ideas, and we have to get something else.

As for Ramona, Fifty bucks says she's in Ostrea somewhere ... and we're not going to get her out until we have sufficient cause to go in.

Which brings us back to the first problem.



It's ... Mr. Stern, isn't it?

Jimmy told me you might come by.

Do you have a title? Captain? Chief?

"Mr." is fine.

I need to ask you some questions about your disappearance. And your reappearance.



It's no use, Deenie!

I can't get this wig to fit! I think my head's just too big!

-- giggle -- Well, there's nothing we can do about that ...

We'll get a different wig later or something. Give me a minute to talk to Mr. Stern, OK?



Don't tell me. Your husband has left you, and you've got an old friend staying with you while you put your life back together.

Yes, that's right! How'd you know?

Lucky guess.

Sorry to have disturbed you, Ms. Haller.



Ready or not, here I come!

Ooh, I'm ready, Mistress!

That was it?

I suddenly didn't see any point.

They're laughing at us, Trudy. All of them.

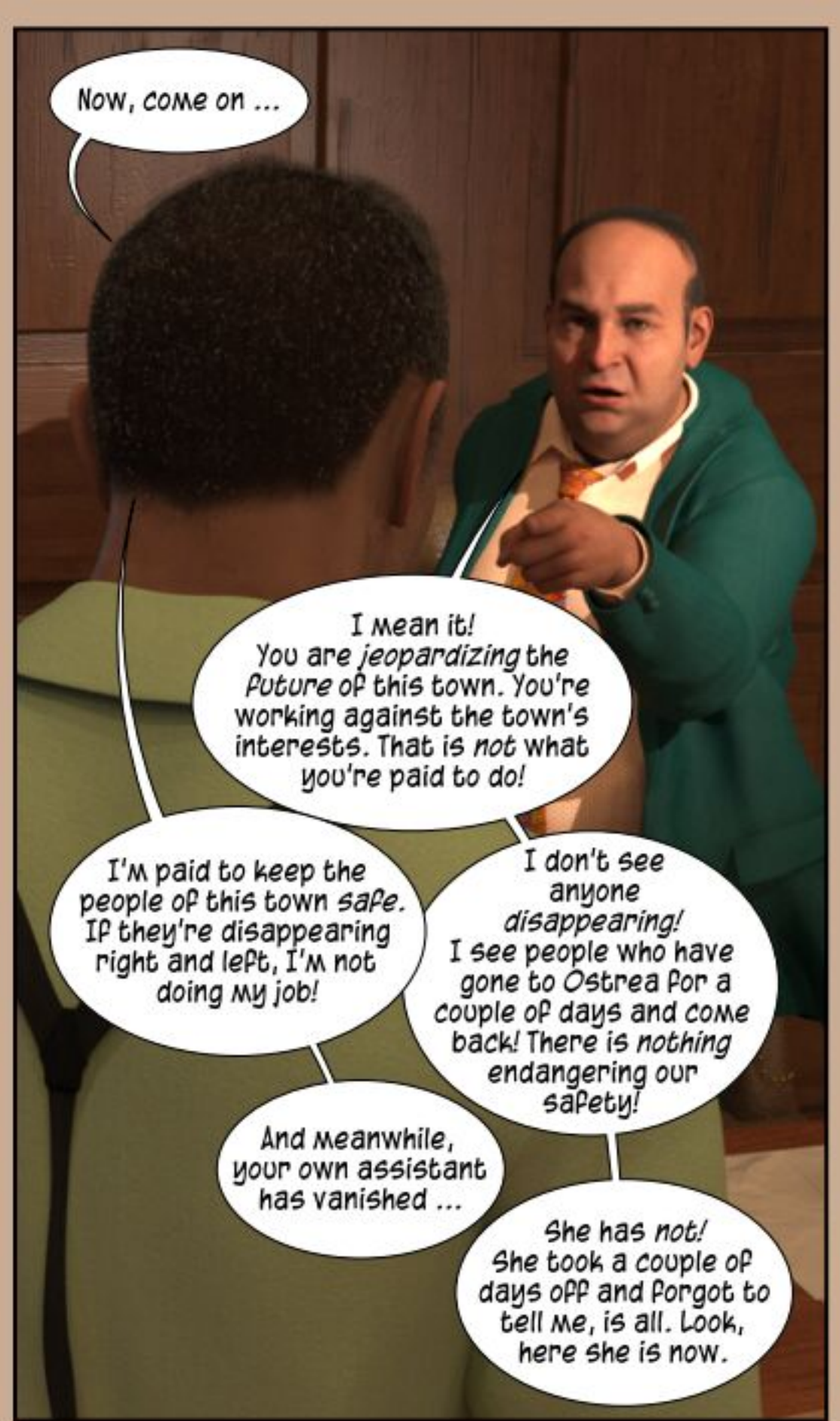
The most I could have gotten from her is that she went to Ostrea when she disappeared ... which we knew anyway, and which won't cut ground with the Mayor.

I'm going to talk to him again. You'd better not come; he's decided you're a public enemy.





Do you value your job, Stern?



Now, come on ...

I mean it! You are jeopardizing the future of this town. You're working against the town's interests. That is not what you're paid to do!

I'm paid to keep the people of this town safe. If they're disappearing right and left, I'm not doing my job!

I don't see anyone disappearing! I see people who have gone to Ostrea for a couple of days and come back! There is nothing endangering our safety!

And meanwhile, your own assistant has vanished ...

She has not! She took a couple of days off and forgot to tell me, is all. Look, here she is now.



Hmm?

I'm going to want to ask you some questions.

Not right now you're not! Rice will be here any minute, and I don't want you here spouting your conspiracies and discouraging him from investing in this town! Get out!



I don't want him in here again today.

And show Rice in as soon as he arrives, you understand?

Of course, sir.



Well, Mayor, it's official. I got off the phone a few minutes ago. We're building our next facility here.

Best news I've had all week, Mr. Rice. Is there anything else we need to do right now?

No. They liked the second parcel you showed, so we'll be arranging to buy that. If you can put a hold on it, that'd be nice, but the papers should be on your desk in a few days, and it doesn't seem like anyone else will grab it before then.



Ramona, a cup of coffee for Mr. Rice?

Thanks, no. I need to hit the road. I have to be in S.F. tonight.

It was a pleasure meeting you.



Congratulations, Mayor! Well done!

Thank you, Ramona.

And now you've fulfilled your purpose!

... huh?



You're going to take a little vacation. Could be as much as a week. It'll take you a while to reach your full potential.

But don't worry! I can hold the port until you get back.



I've been thinking a lot about oysters.



Well, at least you had the sense to ambush me in my house. Your friend tried to come in through the loading docks ...

Stop where you are! Don't come any closer.

I think your pheromones or lust signal or whatever needs pretty close range to work. Let's not test it.

Oh, you are clever. But I did know that.

What about oysters?



*Ostrea lurida*. The Olympia oyster. You could probably drive over to the coast and find a bucketful without much trouble.

And, more to the point, they don't need to be male for any reason except reproduction.

But you did know that.

It's one of the kinds of oysters that can change sex. They start as males, and switch after that. But sometimes they switch back again.

They don't move once they attach to their beds -- they're there for life -- so being able to change sex is needed to guarantee reproduction. If there's no male handy, one of the females will take the job.



I couldn't find any records of a Dr. Isabella Lurida. I did find Dr. Isabella Antonetti, though.

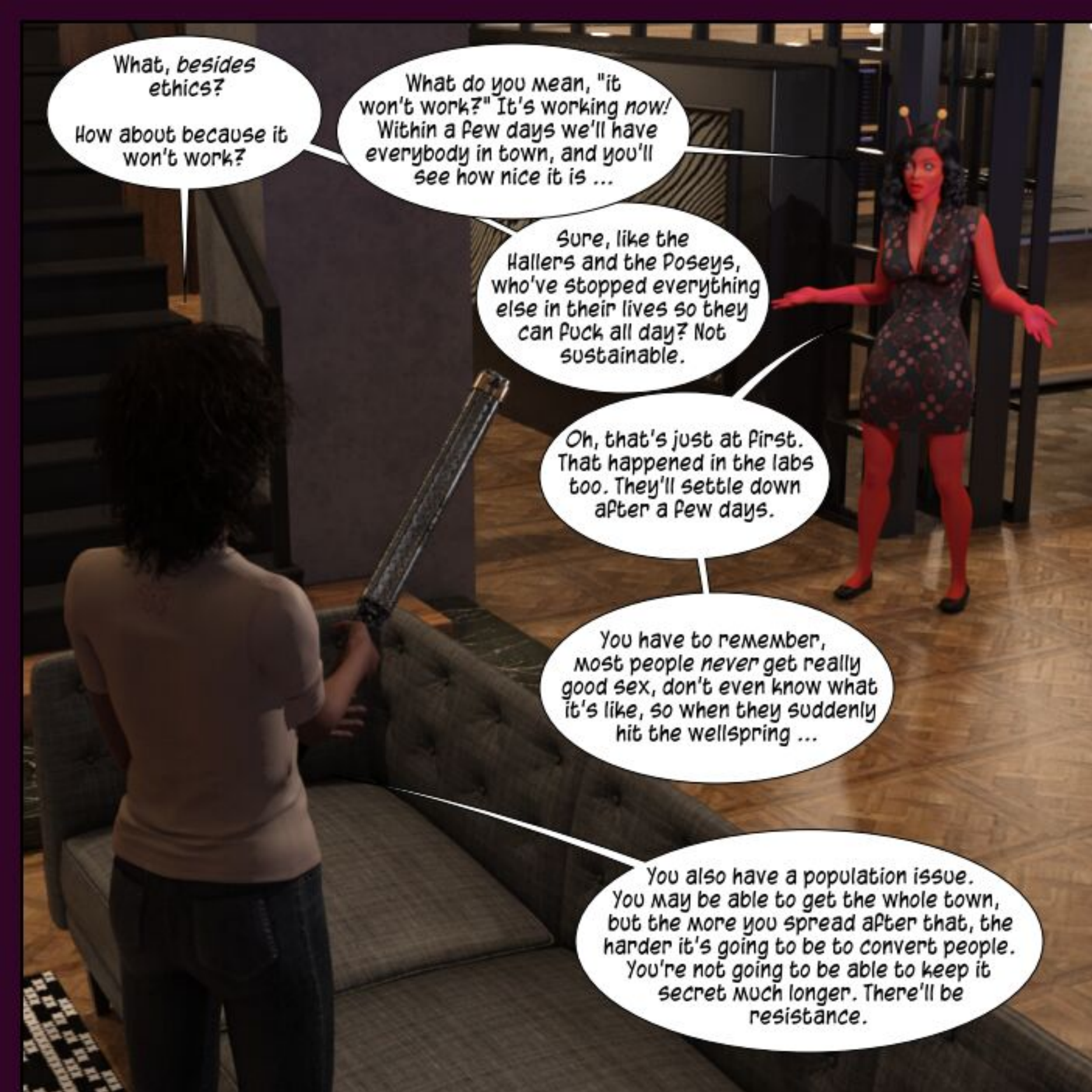
She's kind of a legend. And not in a good way.

I would think that someone with your own personal history would know to take what men say about me with a grain of salt.

I looked you up too.

What I don't understand is why on earth you would want to stop me.





What, besides ethics?

How about because it won't work?

What do you mean, "it won't work?" It's working now! Within a few days we'll have everybody in town, and you'll see how nice it is ...

Sure, like the Hallers and the Poseys, who've stopped everything else in their lives so they can fuck all day? Not sustainable.

Oh, that's just at first. That happened in the labs too. They'll settle down after a few days.

You have to remember, most people never get really good sex, don't even know what it's like, so when they suddenly hit the wellspring ...

You also have a population issue. You may be able to get the whole town, but the more you spread after that, the harder it's going to be to convert people. You're not going to be able to keep it secret much longer. There'll be resistance.



Yes ... that's my main concern at the moment.

When I first tried the procedure on myself, years ago, the changes took a week, three days of which I spent in a coma.

We've made huge improvements since then in every way. Now it takes less than twenty-four hours for women, a bit longer for men. Not counting a few bits that grow in later.

And that's still not good enough.

When Mr. Rice's company builds their new facility here, it will employ about a thousand people. That's more than the current town and Ostrea combined.

But if we have to get them in here one by one to change them, even if it's fast, it won't work. As you say, they'll catch on.

What we need is a way to make the changes transmissible. We need for one of us to be able to start the process in another person just by, say, intimate contact. And have the changes happen without needing further tending.

But we can't figure it out. I realized a few days ago that we need outside expertise.



So imagine my reaction when I learned that someone with the exact background I need ...

... someone I couldn't find because she'd gone off to live in the woods ...

... was practically on my doorstep all this time.



Oh, no. Uh-uh.

First, I don't do that anymore. Haven't for years.

Second, I do have ethics.



I still don't see how ethics comes into it.

The only person I ever took serious experimental risks with was myself. This is a tested technology.

The lab staff are all volunteers. The only ones who didn't give permission first are the ones who've changed from the town.

And even then ... I'm not hurting them; I'm not changing them for the worse; I'm not ruining their lives ...

Your friend is still your friend, she's still herself ... she went right back to doing the same things she always does. I hope she'll get to have a sex life now, of course.

I do have a conscience. It's perfectly fine with everything I've done. I sleep well at night.



Yeah, well, I couldn't sleep at night if I helped you ... Don't get any closer!

I don't think you'll really shoot me.

Probably not ... but if you use your magic seduction powers on me to get me to cooperate, you'll just be proving my point: You cheat.



Oh, all right, Pine.

The sex would have been fun, though. I'd have liked that.

I won't use any of that on you. I promise. I'll try to convince you the hard way.

But I am going to sit down. I've been on my feet all day, and I want to take these shoes off.

And I might want a drink.



I always only wanted to do one thing, from the beginning: Make a better world.

But every time I thought up some way to do that, I ran into the same obstruction: men.

Don't want to have wars? Great, except for men being assholes. Want everybody to have fulfilling love lives? Fine, except for men and the weird transactional ideas they have about sex.

Every time I did the equations, I ended up at the same place: If we want a better world, men have to go.

And we don't really need them. It's like the oysters.

Changing sex in an oyster is just a matter of a couple of squishy bits.

It's not much more complex in a human at the low level.

OK, but what if we need men to be assholes? What if we get complacent without them constantly throwing sand in the gears?



I don't think you believe that.

I do think you believe in a better world.

I need you, Trudy.

I can't do this without you.





Oh! Mr. Stern ... I ...

Who are you?

I ... Uh ... I'm the new assistant ...

What happened to Ramona?

Nothing! Ramona's, uh, training me ...

Hmm. Well, let me train you to get out of my way.

I'm seeing the Mayor whether he likes it or not.



The Mayor? But ... sir ... uh ...

I don't want to hear it.



Mr. Stern! My, you're looking your name today. Bad morning?

Where's the Mayor?

He's taken a leave of absence for personal improvement. Several days, I think. He needs a lot of improvement.

You shouldn't try to be Punny. You're no good at it.

So you've all just stopped pretending to have a cover story, huh? Just do your body snatching in broad daylight. I saw that movie.



That's cruel and unfair. Do I look like a replacement to you?

But you're right about the other part ... I think we're past the point where we need to bother to pretend. At least, not for each other. Maybe for strangers.

But you're not a stranger, are you, Mr. Stern? Do you want to be a stranger?

By the way, did you say hello to Popper on the way in?



Popper??

I --! er ... I mean ...

Don't let him scare you, Popper. He's just having a little trouble getting with the program.

I'm teaching Popper to do community outreach, Mr. Stern. She's already showing an aptitude for it.

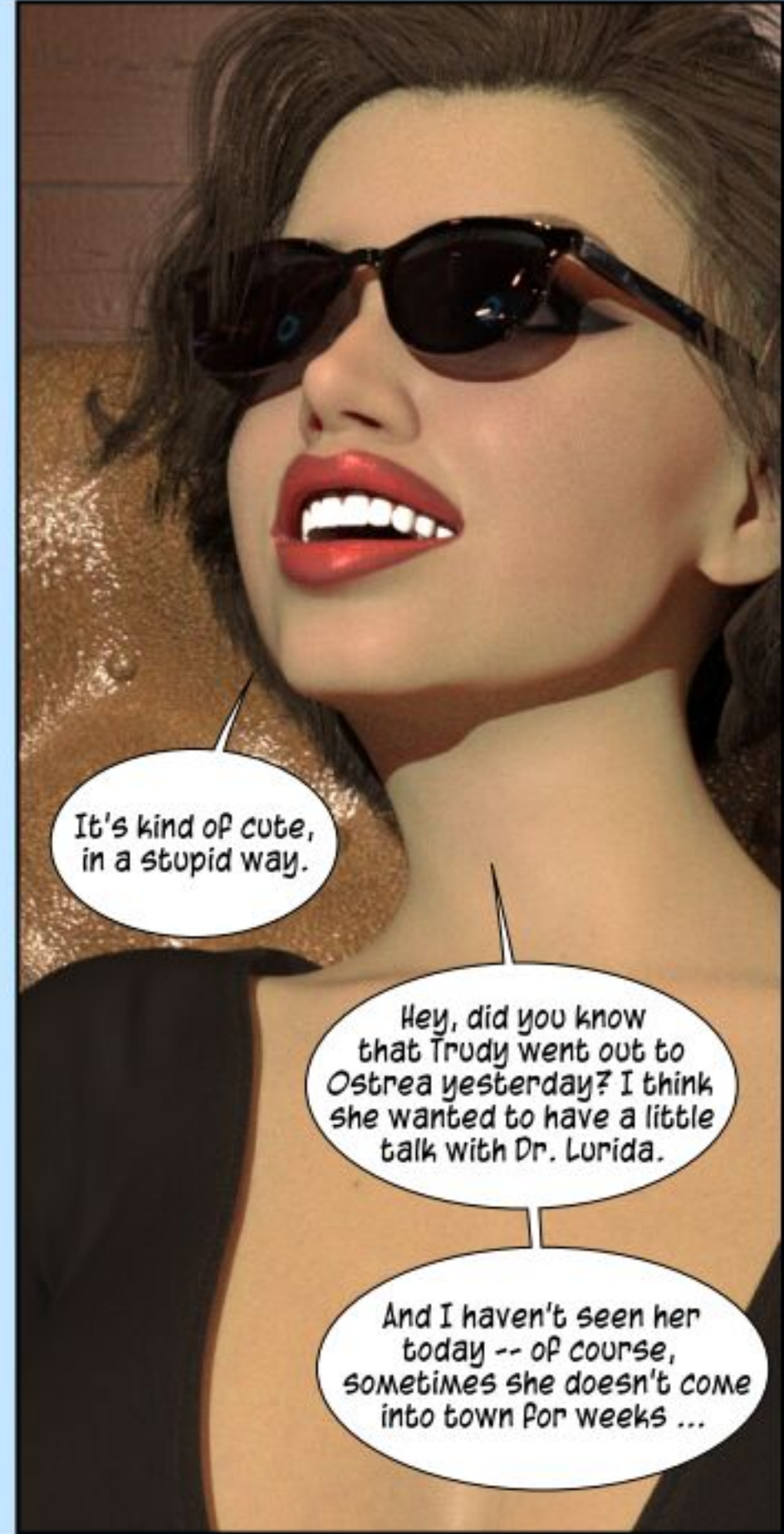


You know, you're not going to be able to just do this to everybody in the town.

Some people will fight you. I sure as hell will. Trudy will.

You like her, don't you? Have you told her that yet? Have you figured it out yourself yet?

I bet you haven't.



It's kind of cute, in a stupid way.

Hey, did you know that Trudy went out to Ostrea yesterday? I think she wanted to have a little talk with Dr. Lurida.

And I haven't seen her today -- of course, sometimes she doesn't come into town for weeks ...



Damn you!

I'm looking forward to seeing how this goes! I think you're going to turn out really cute!

You and Popper can be the hottest municipal police force in the state!





Sir!  
Sir!!

You can't just go in there!

Watch me.

That's a restricted area! You're trespassing!

You're right. Maybe you should call the police.



AAAA!

Where is she?



The logs say she's in this one over here ... but, uh ... sir ... it's really bad to interrupt the

I don't want to hear it.

Just get her out.

If you haven't fried her brain yet, maybe I won't shoot you.

You know, this is not going to work out the way you think.



Because of whatever that toy gun is? You don't think I can shoot you or your trained rat First?

Oh, honestly. I knew you were a squarehead, but I didn't think you were dumb.

I certainly hope the process improves you.

I'm not going to be going through your process. I'm getting Trudy out of that tube and we're leaving.

But that's what she's trying to tell you.



I've already finished.

And if you shoot them, you don't get to use me as your excuse, because I did it voluntarily.

Trudy! ... but ... why?

Because it's better.

You can't really believe that.

You can't expect me to believe that.



No.

I expect you to find out for yourself.

Welcome to the future.



Hey! Wake up! ... It's over.

ZXXZHX



Uuh ... how much did I miss?

Just about all of it, Dee!

Ah, hell, I'm sorry ...

... but you know I always doze off when you put on one of these documentaries.

**THE END**  
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