

Eyewitness News at ten o'clock --your source for all the up-to-the-minute local news!



Good evening. Tonight on Eyewitness News: The spread of the "lust virus"; robberies in the central district; and a possible teachers' strike.

Also, preparations for the state fair, a weekend travel advisory, and a young woman's fundraising success story.



ROD POLLARD

BETSY CLARK

Our top story tonight is the spread of the "lust virus." Still officially unnamed and unidentified, cases have now been found in an additional four neighborhoods, meaning that at this time we can no longer say there is any part of the city where it has not occurred.



Though the first part of its nickname is apt, given the mental effects on its victims, the second word may be inaccurate. Katherine Stockwell, head epidemiologist at City Hospital, told News 25 that the rapid physical changes seem to point to this being, not a virus, but a mutagen. She added that she is unaware of any source of a mutagen capable of producing mental and physical changes so quickly. "It shouldn't be possible," she said.

When asked for her theories on the origin of the mutagen, she replied "I have no idea."

The mayor has asked that anyone who has been affected by the "lust virus" place themselves in quarantine for at least ten days. The mayor's office said he was considering a mask mandate, but had not yet reached a decision.

As a reminder, observed symptoms of the virus include rapid physical changes, notably development in the breasts, hips, and lips, an increased libido, and a reduced capacity for ...

... Betsy?

oooooooooooo!

omigod yes!!

--cheeheehee--



--nnnn--



uhh?



aaaaahheeee ooooo!!!

Zach!
Are you asleep over there?
Cut!
Get those cameras off!!



Betsy!
We're live, dammit!

Cut to commercial!
Now!!



Zach?

Oh, shit.



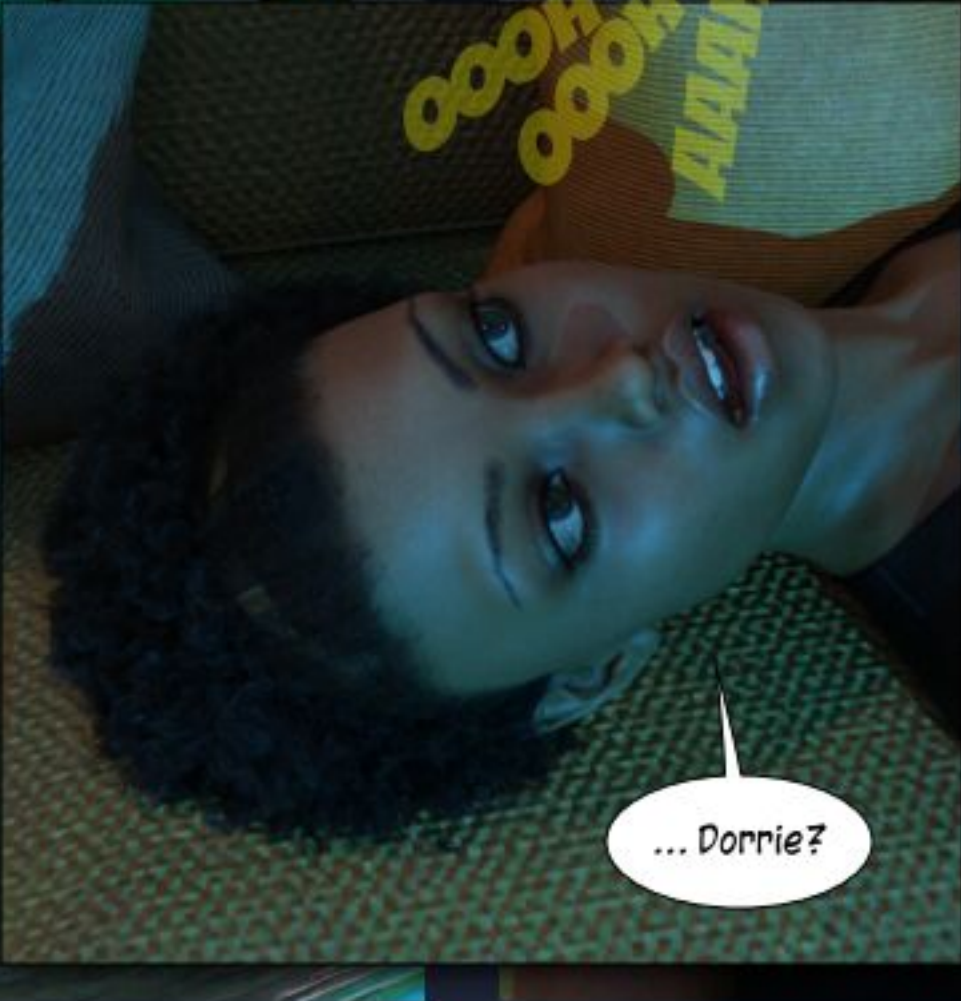
... Oh, shit.

THE PINK LAGUE
STORY AND IMAGES BY TRILBY

Dorrie!
Come see this!
Weird shit's going down
on the news!



ooooerrr
aaaaah
uunhh!!



... Dorrie?

Dorrie!



Mask ...
need a
mask right
now ...

Where'd I
put my
sanding mask?
Is it with my
tools?



Zeeeeee, come
plaaaaay ...



Need you to
play with me ...

I need to
get out of
here.

I'm sorry,
Dorrie.

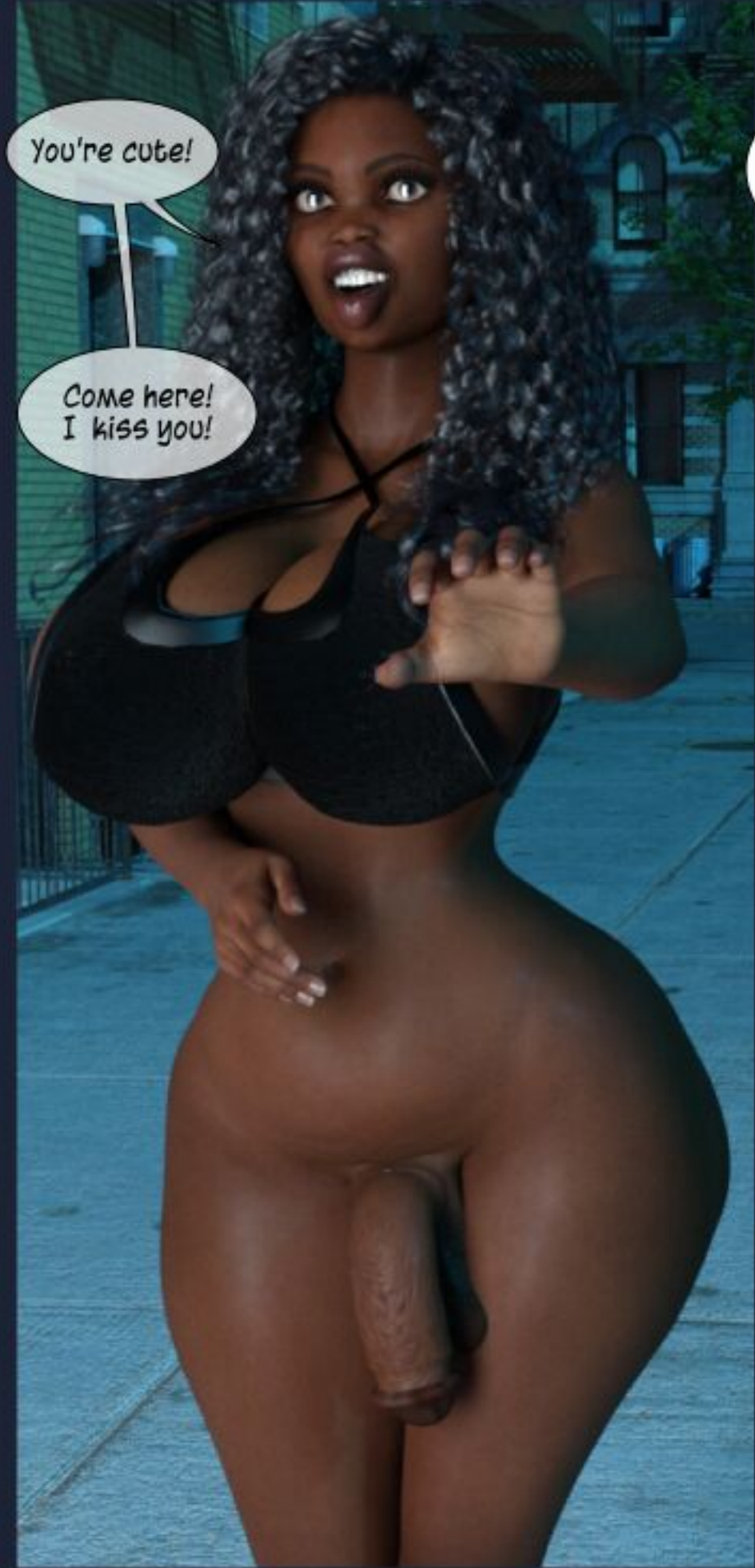


Oh, god, it's the whole
neighborhood ...



ooh!

Oh, no.



You're cute!

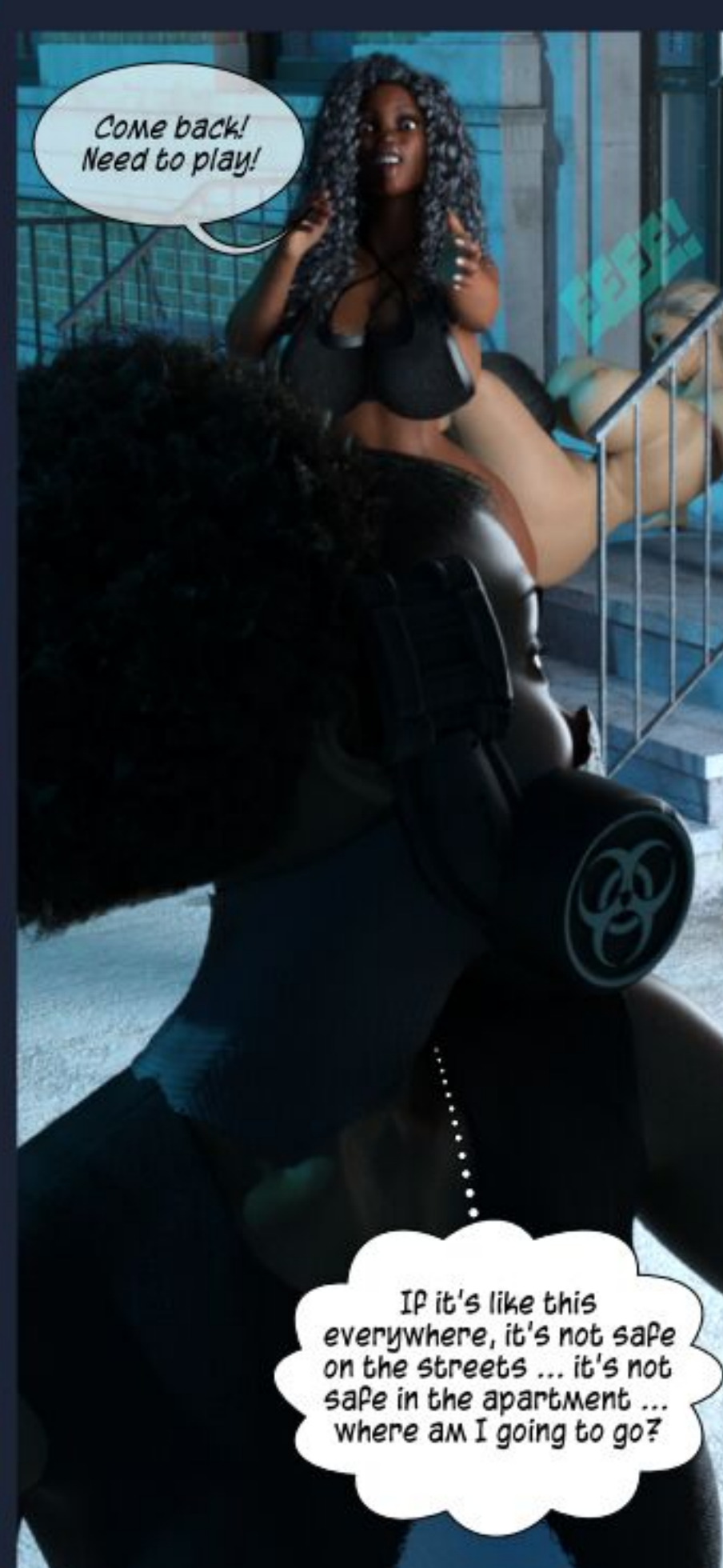
Come here!
I kiss you!



No!

Just
want kiss ...
Take off mask
so I kiss you
...

Get away!!



Come back!
Need to play!

If it's like this
everywhere, it's not safe
on the streets ... it's not
safe in the apartment ...
where am I going to go?



Wait. What about the woman they mentioned on the news? The epidemiologist. Maybe she knows what to do about this. Maybe she's got an antidote or some...

I can make it to City Hospital, no problem ...

Attention passengers! We are experiencing severe delays on all lines.

Normal service will be resumed in ... ah ... we will keep providing frequent updates ...

... Guess I'll be walking.



All qualified personnel to the E.R. ... Repeat, any available medical personnel to the emergency room ...

Any ... any ... anyeeeeehheehheee ...

-- ooh! -- Everybody come to this big room and play ...

This is really bad.

Kat, I know you can hear me in there!

You've got to let me in!

I'm sorry, Rosalyn.

At least they don't notice me passing through when they're doing that ...



Kat, I'm your boss! This is an order!

Kat, please! I know you can help me! You have to be able to ... help me ... please ...

... please ... I ...

oh god they're growing ...

eeeh!

oh, god ... help ...

Kaaaat!

eeeeeeeeee

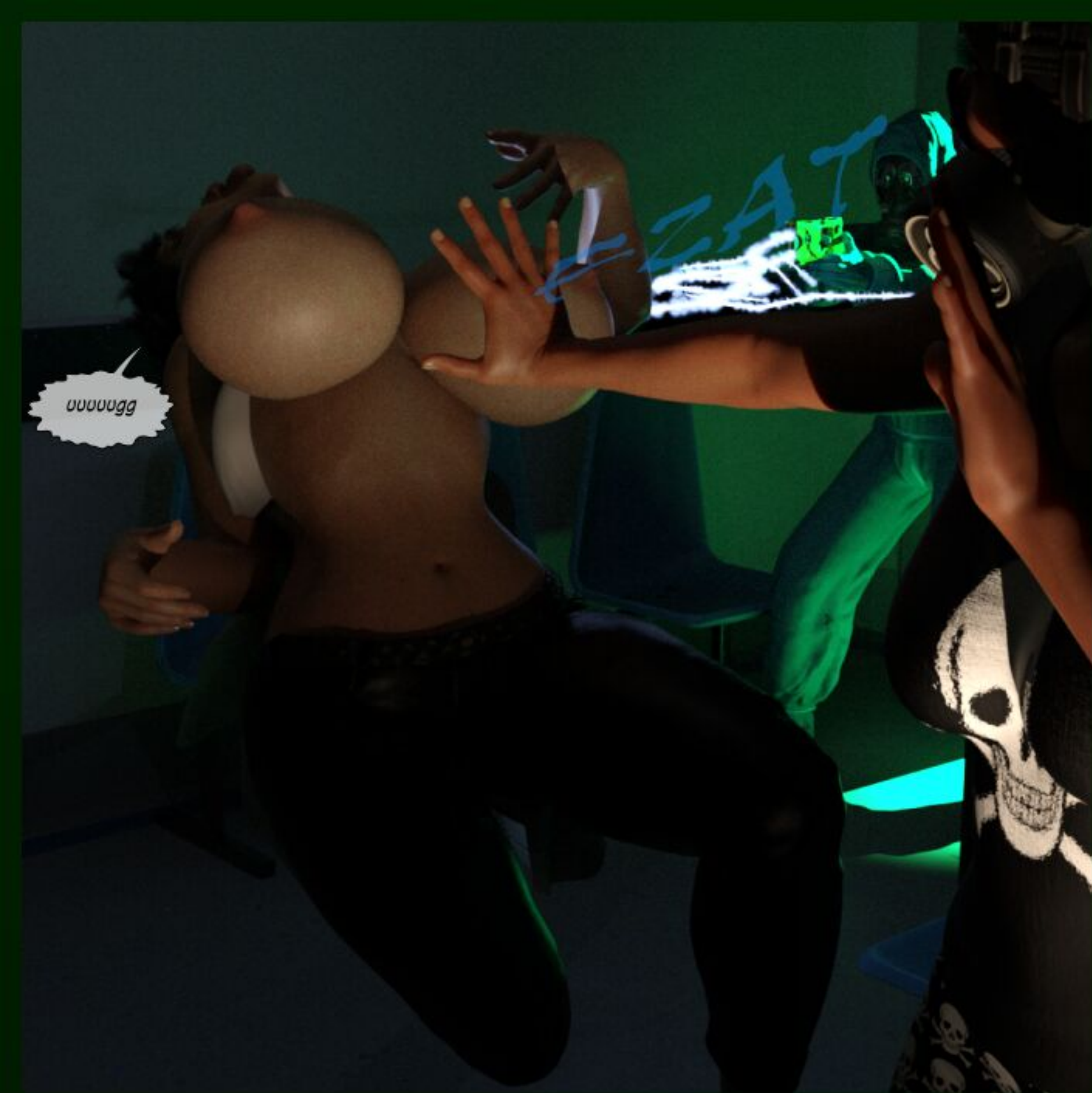


eeeeeeeeee

ooh!

Oh, no, no no ... keep away ...

Back off!



uuuuugg



That's a high-grade respirator you've got on. Just had that lying around?

I'm an artist. Lot of things in my work I don't want in my lungs.

What do you want?

I'm looking for Katherine Stockwell. An epidemiologist. I want to talk to her.

You're her, aren't you? She called you 'Kat.'

... Why do you want to talk to Dr. Stockwell?

Uh ... well, it seems like she's the only person who knows anything about this ... I was wondering if she could do something about it ...



'Do something about it'? What, like Pix it? Make it all go away?

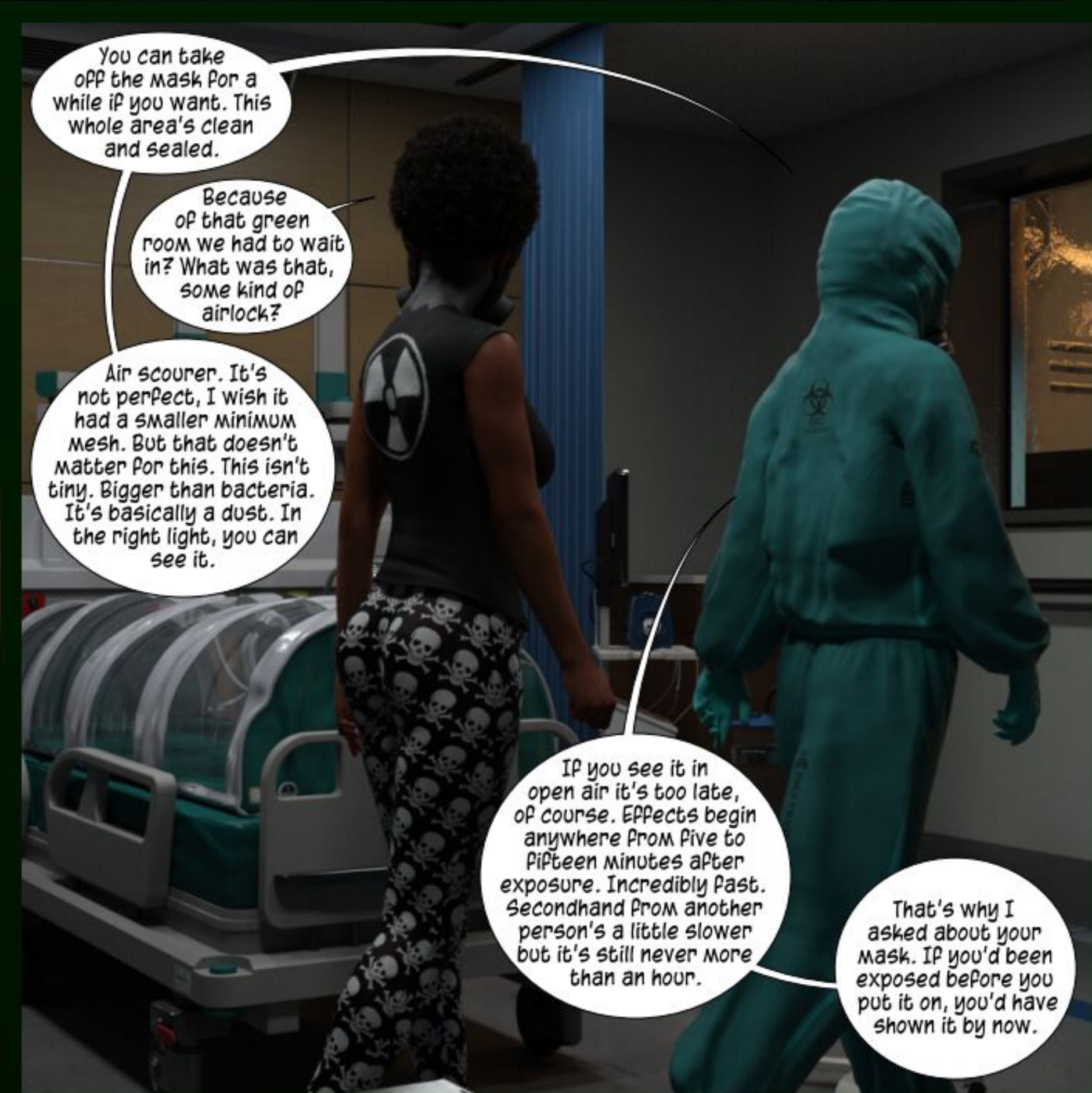
Well ... yes, though I was thinking more about inoculation ...

How long have you been wearing that mask? I mean today. How long since you put it on?

Uh ... about an hour. But the cartridges are pretty new ...

No, I don't mean that.

All right, you'd better come in.



You can take off the mask for a while if you want. This whole area's clean and sealed.

Because of that green room we had to wait in? What was that, some kind of airlock?

Air scrounger. It's not perfect, I wish it had a smaller minimum mesh. But that doesn't matter for this. This isn't tiny. Bigger than bacteria. It's basically a dust. In the right light, you can see it.

If you see it in open air it's too late, of course. Effects begin anywhere from five to fifteen minutes after exposure. Incredibly fast. Secondhand from another person's a little slower but it's still never more than an hour.

That's why I asked about your mask. If you'd been exposed before you put it on, you'd have shown it by now.



I'm Kat Stockwell. What's your name?

Zee. Zee Watson.

Pleased to meet you, Zee. I don't have any prophylactic measures I can give you. A good respirator is the only prevention I know of at the moment. No vaccines, no antidotes. It doesn't work that way.

Right, they said on the news you thought it was a mutagen, not a virus. Did someone make this stuff on purpose?

It absolutely has to be engineered. And using tech I wouldn't have thought possible. Rapid physical and mental changes, converting the carrier to a factory to make more of it ... it's science fiction stuff.

And since it appeared in most of the major cities in the nation simultaneously, I'm thinking it was released deliberately, yes.

Beyond that, I know nothing. I know somebody who might know a lot ... and I want to go find him ... but I have a problem.

It's about a Poll day's drive, and I don't want to make the trip by myself, under the circumstances. And ... everyone I could ask is ... well, they're not capable anymore.

Would you be interested?

Just like that?

You're the only one who's come down here who's been smart enough to get masked up properly in time. In a goddamned hospital.

And you ask intelligent questions. And I don't have another candidate.



It could be dangerous, of course. And I don't want to take you away from anyone or anything you need to be here to support.

I, uh ... I don't think I have any of that anymore.

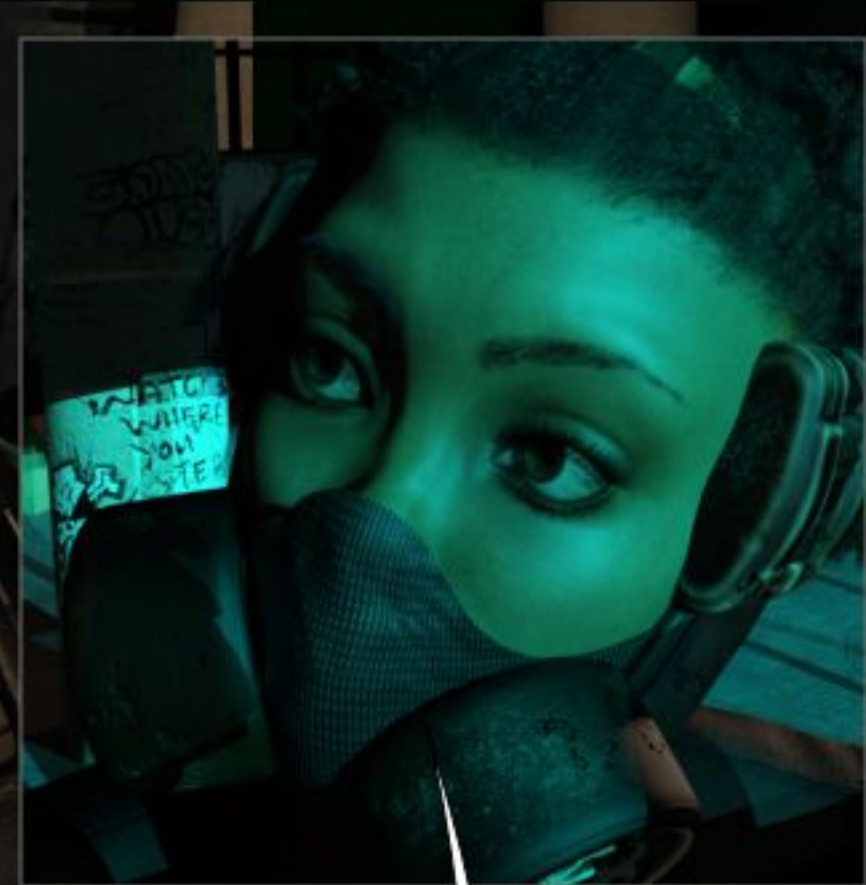


What is all this?

Let's see ... food, water, batteries, gasoline, respirator cartridges ... a spare respirator for you because you don't have any more cartridges for yours ... portable air scroungers ... a generator ... a tent ... analysis equipment ... other odds and ends like that ...

You've been planning this trip for a while.

Only a few days. I had most of it sitting around already.



... Do you hear something moving?



Get in!
Get in!



Move, dodos!

Ahhhh! Don't kill them!

I don't want to! But they won't get out of the way!



Air scourer in here just went green, if you want to unmask. Just don't open any windows.



Who do you keep trying to call?

My mother. She's not answering. I ... do you think ...?

Where is she?

Outside Chicago. I was hoping far enough outside ...

-- sigh -- I don't want to lie to you, you know?

But you saw the condition our city was in.

... Yeah.

So who is this person we're going to find? You think they can do anything about all this?



Two years ago I attended a talk by a guy named Henry Arschut. He wanted everyone to revise their ideas about chemical warfare. He said it was possible to create rapid mutagens--for example, to turn an entire population into near-mindless, sex-crazed monsters. He used that specific example.

He claimed he could prove the science, and was nearly laughed out of the room.

Not long after that, he set up a lab in the middle of nowhere and no one's heard from him since.

OK, but that sounds like he's the number-one candidate to have made the stuff.

I like you. You're quick.

He's both. Even if he did create it--and I agree with you--he's still the person who knows the most about how to undo it. More so.

But how do we get him to undo it, if he's the bad guy? Hold a gun to his head?

If we have to.

You know, there are some things about this trip you didn't tell me.



You're pulling over? This is probably a bad place for me to learn how to drive stick.

No, I think we should stop and sleep a while. We could go all night, but then we'd be wrecked when we find him tomorrow.

You'll need to mask again while we set up the bed.



Uh, Kat, we are in the complete ass end of nowhere. I haven't seen a house or another car for ages. No lights around at all.

You really want to stop here?

Just need to move this box out of the way ...

That's exactly what I want.

No people means no victims in the area. The more remote we are, the better.



So, I know this has already been a lot ... but, ah, considering the circumstances and all ...

... do you want to pool around?



Hmm.

Sure.



You go in and pay. My mask freaks people out more than yours.



That'll be twenty-five-fifty ...
If you don't mind my askin', Ma'am, what's up with that thing? Nearly scart me to death ...
We're in the middle of an epidemic. Didn't you know?
You yankin' my chain?
No, Por real. The city's a mess.
First I've heard--

BOBBY!!!

--Sigh--
That's my momma, over at the motel. I better go see what she wants. You need anything else, just come on over there.



Everything OK?

Yeah. Just spooking the locals a little.

BOBBY!

I'm comin', momma, geez ...



He had no idea what was going on.

We may not have needed the masks out here ... this is so far from everything, they're lucky if they see any other people all day ...



Well, I don't want to take chances.

The transmission rate's one hundred percent ... odds like that, it just takes one slip and--

EEEEEE!!!



AAA!

What're you two wearin' those get-ups for? Scare a body half to death ...

Trying to avoid what's happening to you.

Ma'am, you've been exposed to--

Look at these! I didn't have 'em this big even back when I was nursing Bobby ...

Is someone else here? Did someone else pass through recently?



Them two in 101 pulled up in that van out there this morning.

Just a minute ago, a third one busted out of the back. Big gal. She went straight for their room.

I sent Bobby in to see what was goin' on--

Oh, lord, my dress!



They were trying to keep her isolated in the back of the van. Probably trying to take her to get help.

... We're not going to be able to do anything, are we?

No.



Whoeee! you ladies sure are ...

Uh, hey now, let's not get too--

oh god ohhhh shit

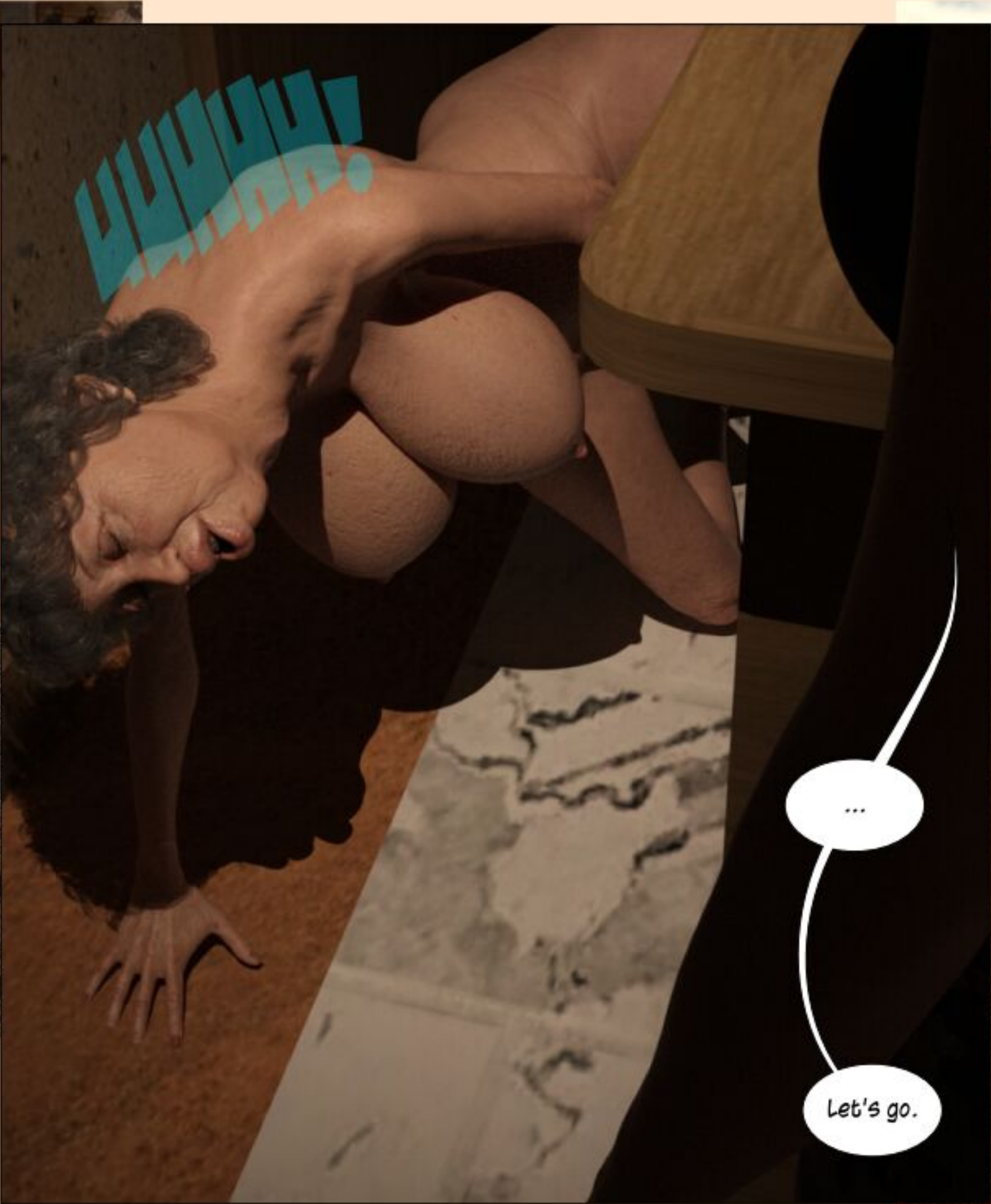
Aaaahh!!

ooooheeee eeee!!



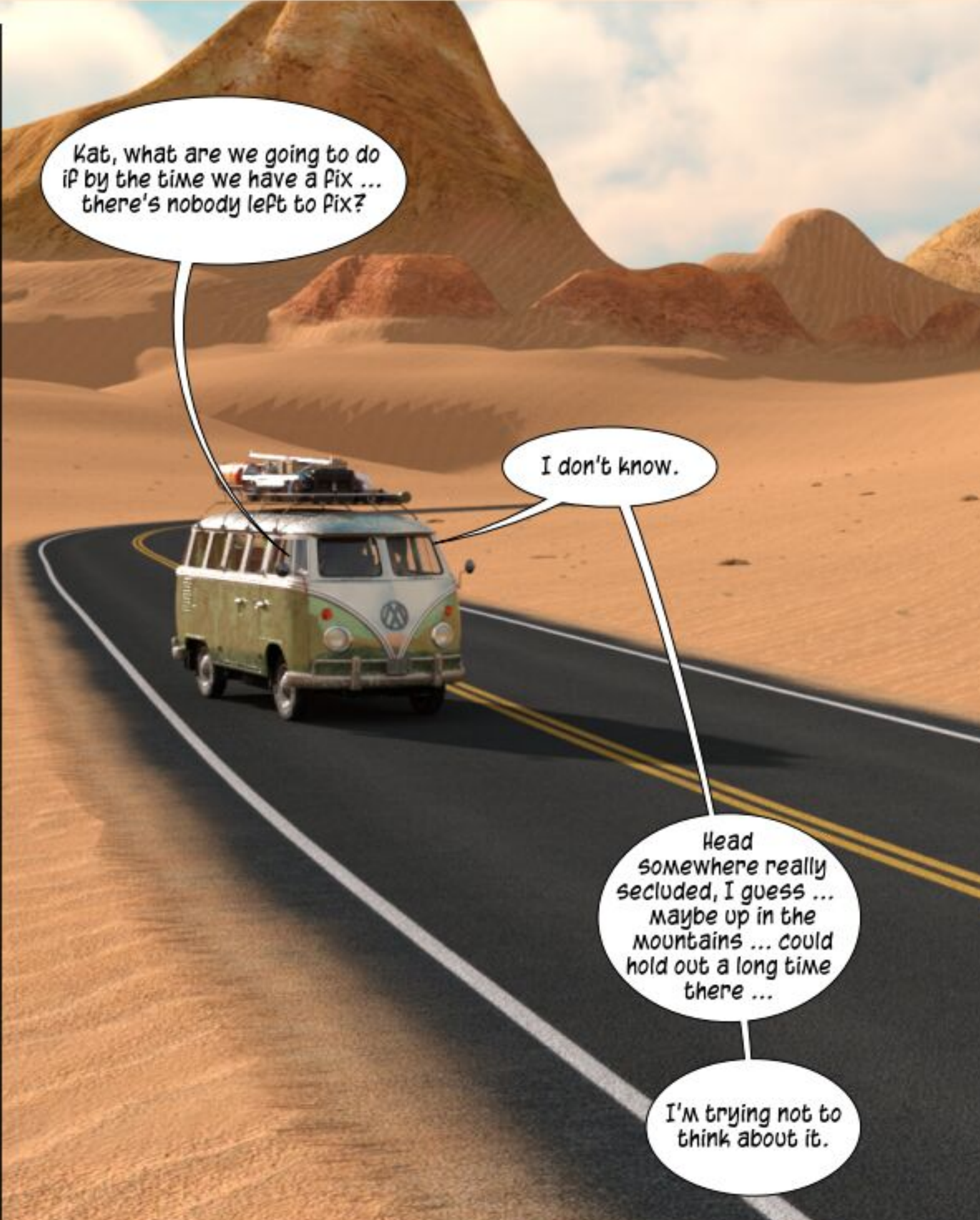
Ma'am? I'm afraid your son is ...

Ma'am?



...

Let's go.



Kat, what are we going to do if by the time we have a Pix ... there's nobody left to Pix?

I don't know.

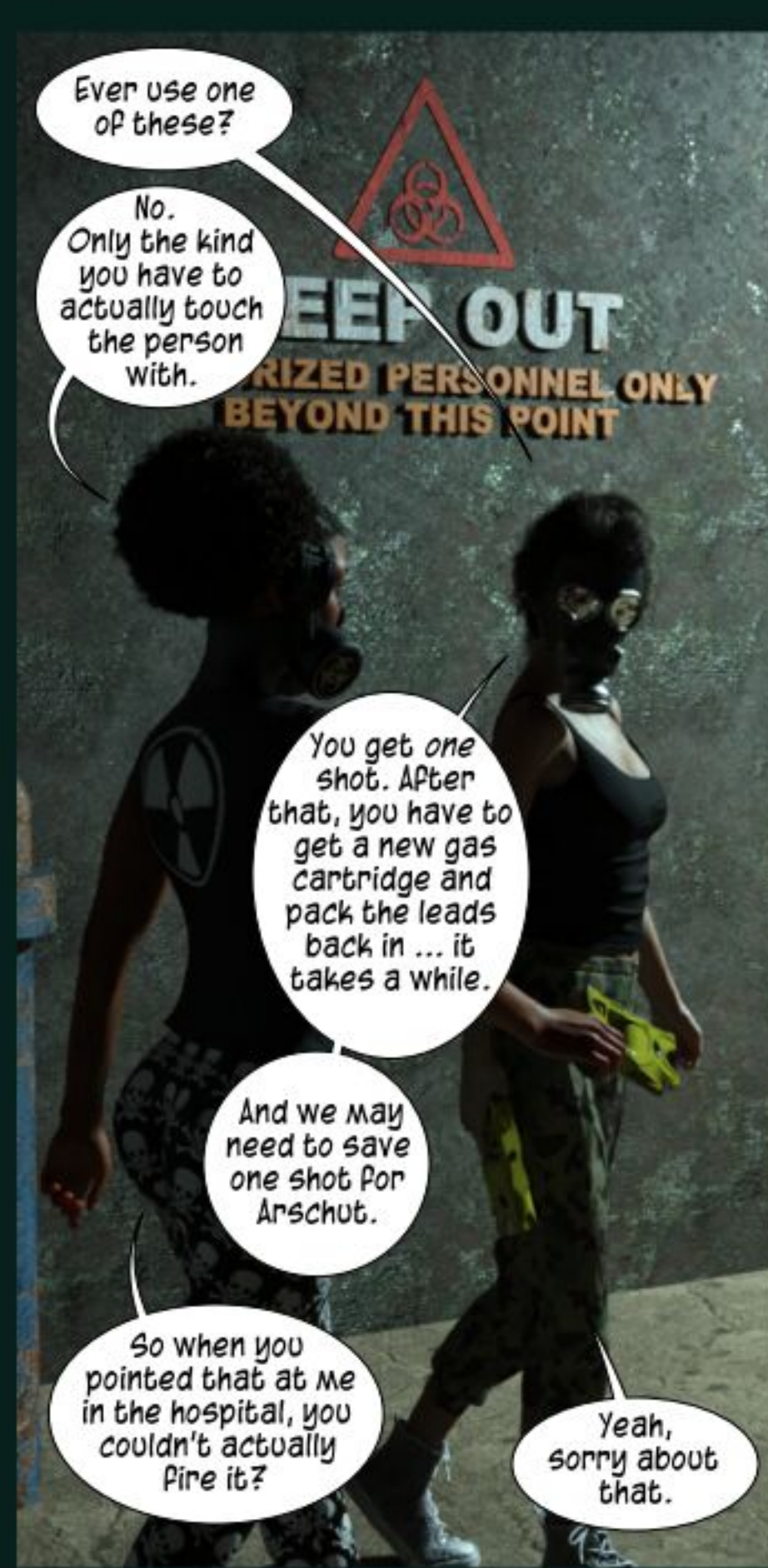
Head somewhere really secluded, I guess ... maybe up in the mountains ... could hold out a long time there ...

I'm trying not to think about it.



Old chemical plant. Was not expecting that.

Maybe he got the property cheap.



Ever use one of these?

No. Only the kind you have to actually touch the person with.

You get one shot. After that, you have to get a new gas cartridge and pack the leads back in ... it takes a while.

And we may need to save one shot for Anschutz.

So when you pointed that at me in the hospital, you couldn't actually fire it?

Yeah, sorry about that.



Look at all those tanks down there ... I guess they could be leftovers ...

I wouldn't bet on it. This equipment is in good condition. Some of it looks pretty new.

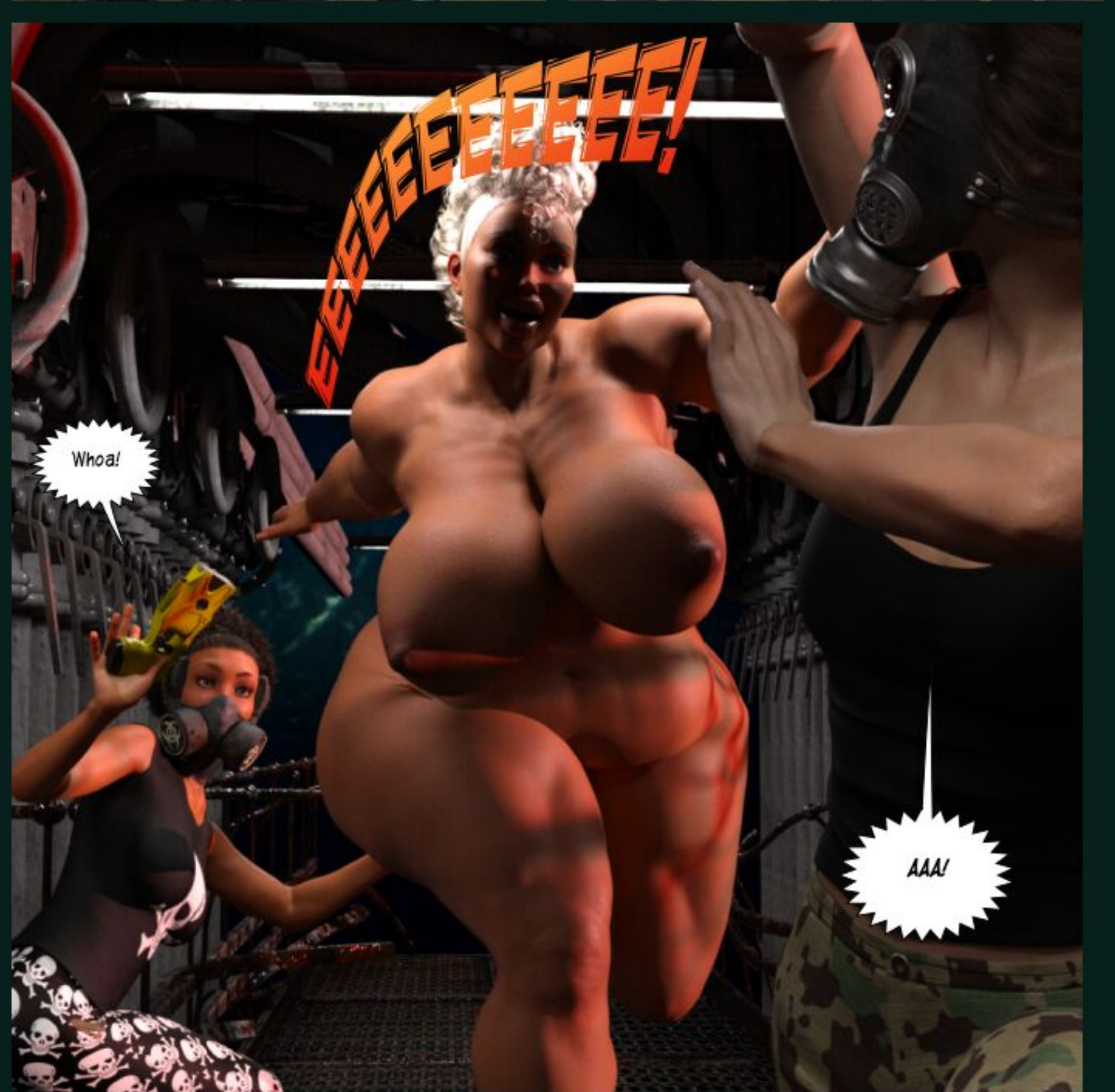
I wonder how much mutagen we're walking on top of right now.



I think we don't have a choice but to assume he did it, given all this.

Definitely changes how we approach him, when we find him.

If we find him.



Whoa!

AAA!



MMP! gmmf Prrmmr!!



You're still masked!

-- oop --

She was in such a hurry to sit on my face she didn't even try.

Don't know what she thought I could do with it on.

You think she's ... you think that's Anschutz?

No. The men keep their penises when they change, and she definitely doesn't have one.



Someone's actually living in here. Whole apartment ... even decorated it ...

Like I said, Anschutz hasn't been seen outside this place in ages, so that's no surprise.

But where is he?



How fast do you think she can recover from that zap?

Hang on ... there's a room up there. Looks like some kind of isolation ... someone's moving in it ...

There he is! That's him!



Damn it!

Locked himself in?

Well, the controls are working, but they don't do anything.

That door doesn't open unless the compartment you're in is sealed and scoured first. I'm cycling it now. Wait.

Uh-oh.



I wasn't expecting visitors.

I suppose I should be impressed that you managed to figure it out.

Come in. I warn you, the place is a mess.



Dr. Stockwell, isn't it? Well! That does explain a lot. I thought you were one of the few who was paying attention.

And now I suppose you'll want to drag me to justice, or something like that?

Is that an admission of guilt?

Not in the way you think.



It struck me, not long after that talk you attended, that one of the great sources of friction in the world today is bigotry caused by ... an enormous pile of superstitions and misinformation and other garbage we bring to sex and sexuality. People fighting with other people because of their preferences of partner, or gender, or so on.

What if no one cared about that? What if everyone were not just willing, but eager, to have sex with everyone else, readily and often?

But ... I made a mistake.

You made them too dumb.

The mutagen doesn't affect intelligence at all. It affects focus. They just don't care to concentrate on anything for very long except sex. But I concede the end effect is the same.

My test subject was anomalous. The mental effects weren't obvious in her until weeks later. I didn't realize until it was too late.

Wait, you only had one test subject?

Do you have any idea how hard it is to find volunteers for something like this?



So here I am, trying to find a way to immunize people, with no success, while the clock is running out. I can't even get at my main lab. I have to live and work in this tiny little tank.

What happened to your main lab?

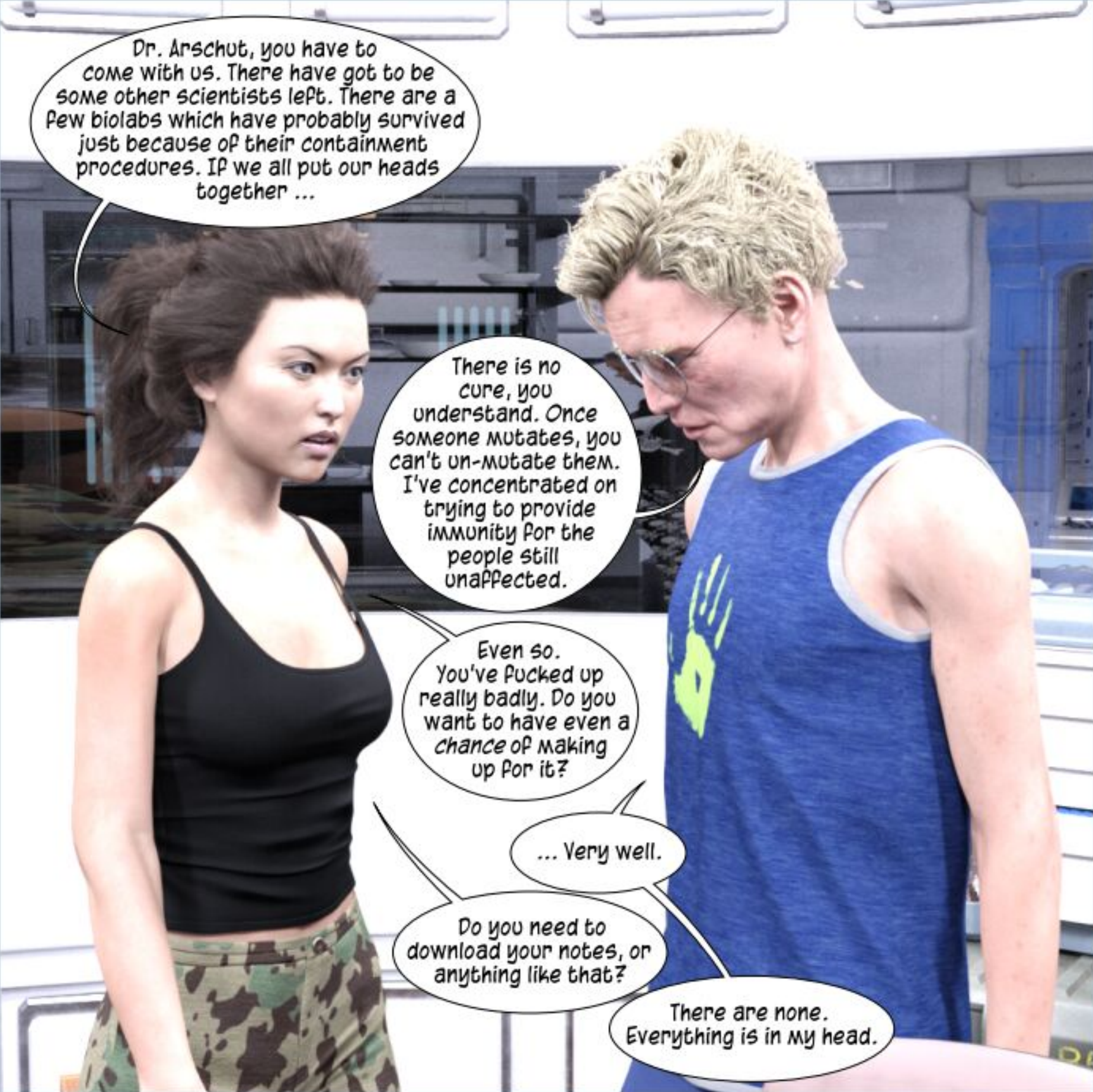
Ah ... there is an ... obstacle.

Is the obstacle big, muscly, blonde, and likes to leap on people and sit on their heads?

I wondered if you'd encountered her.

That last part I can't swear to. She's probably just desperate. She was fairly insatiable before the mutagen.

That's Hildegard. My assistant. And test subject.



Dr. Arschut, you have to come with us. There have got to be some other scientists left. There are a few biolabs which have probably survived just because of their containment procedures. If we all put our heads together ...

There is no cure, you understand. Once someone mutates, you can't un-mutate them. I've concentrated on trying to provide immunity for the people still unaffected.

Even so. You've fucked up really badly. Do you want to have even a chance of making up for it?

... Very well.

Do you need to download your notes, or anything like that?

There are none. Everything is in my head.



Jumpy?

You should be as well.

We're keeping our eyes out in all directions. It's not like she can jump out of a shadowy corner ...



AAAAAAA!



Shoot her!

The damn gun's not working!

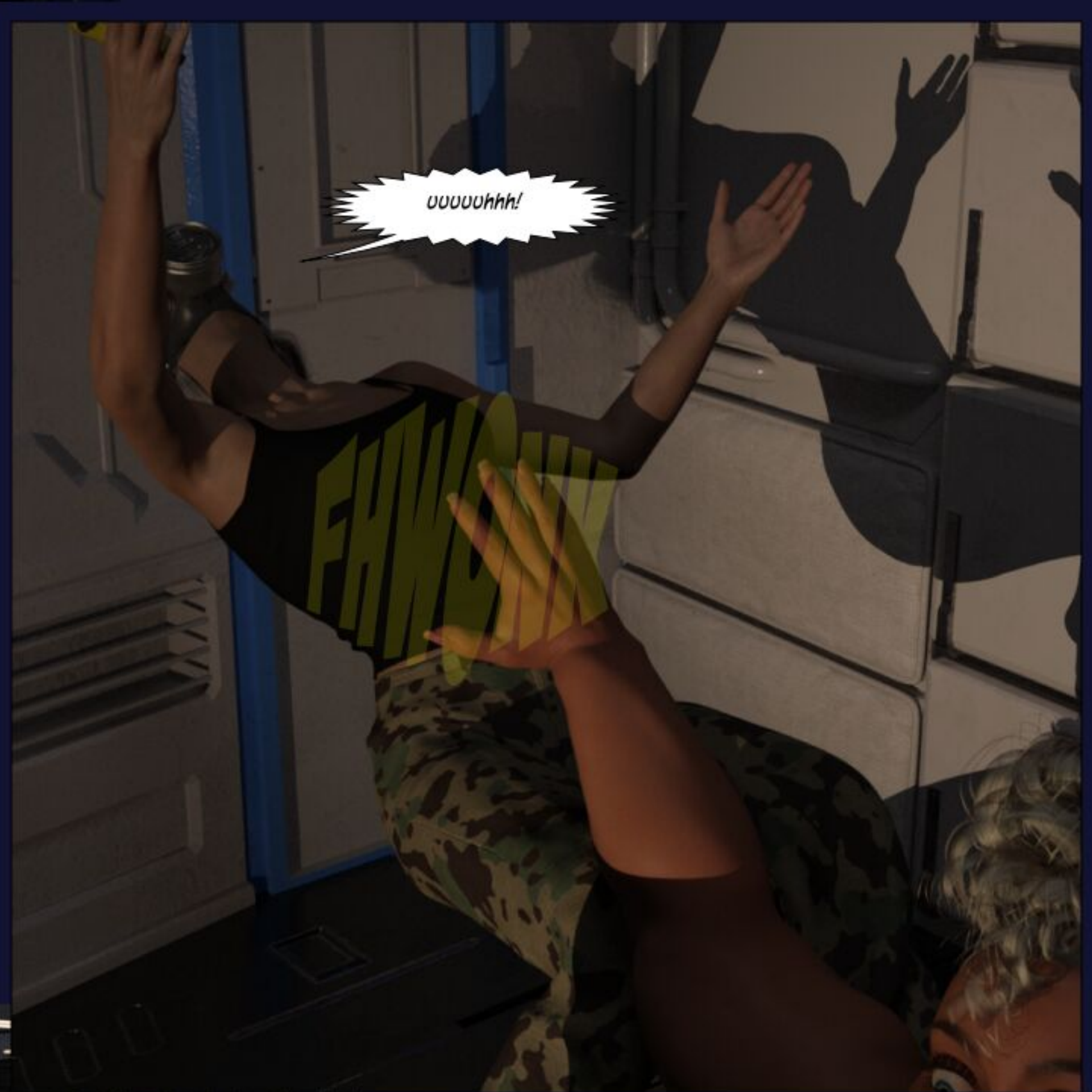
geh hrr oaa!
geh hrr oaa!



Shit.

Come on, Hildy,
wrestling time's over--

uuuaahrr!

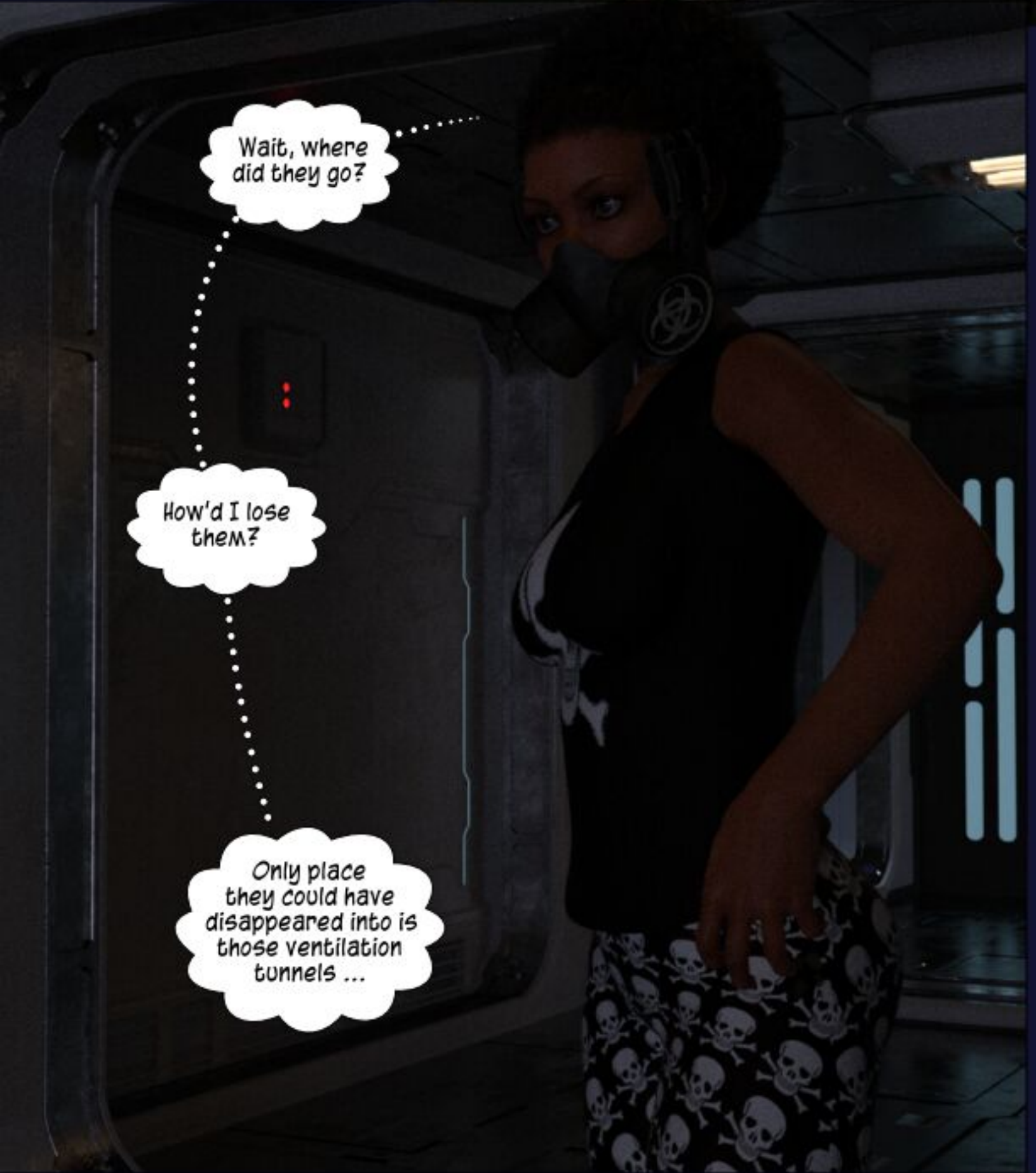


uuuuuhhh!



He's still got
his mask on!

-- hrr --
Go after them!
... I'm right behind you.



Wait, where
did they go?

How'd I lose
them?

Only place
they could have
disappeared into is
those ventilation
tunnels ...



AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA

Shit.



That's it, then.

Unless you have any other ideas ...

Out of them.

I think we head for the mountains now ... I ...

Are you OK?

I don't know ... I Peel ... weird ...



Oh, god.

Zee, the cartridge in my mask is gone! It's missing! It must have come out when she knocked me away ...

I'm exposed! You've got to get away from me!



No! We can get you to his clean room! Or the van! We can get you to the van! There's time!

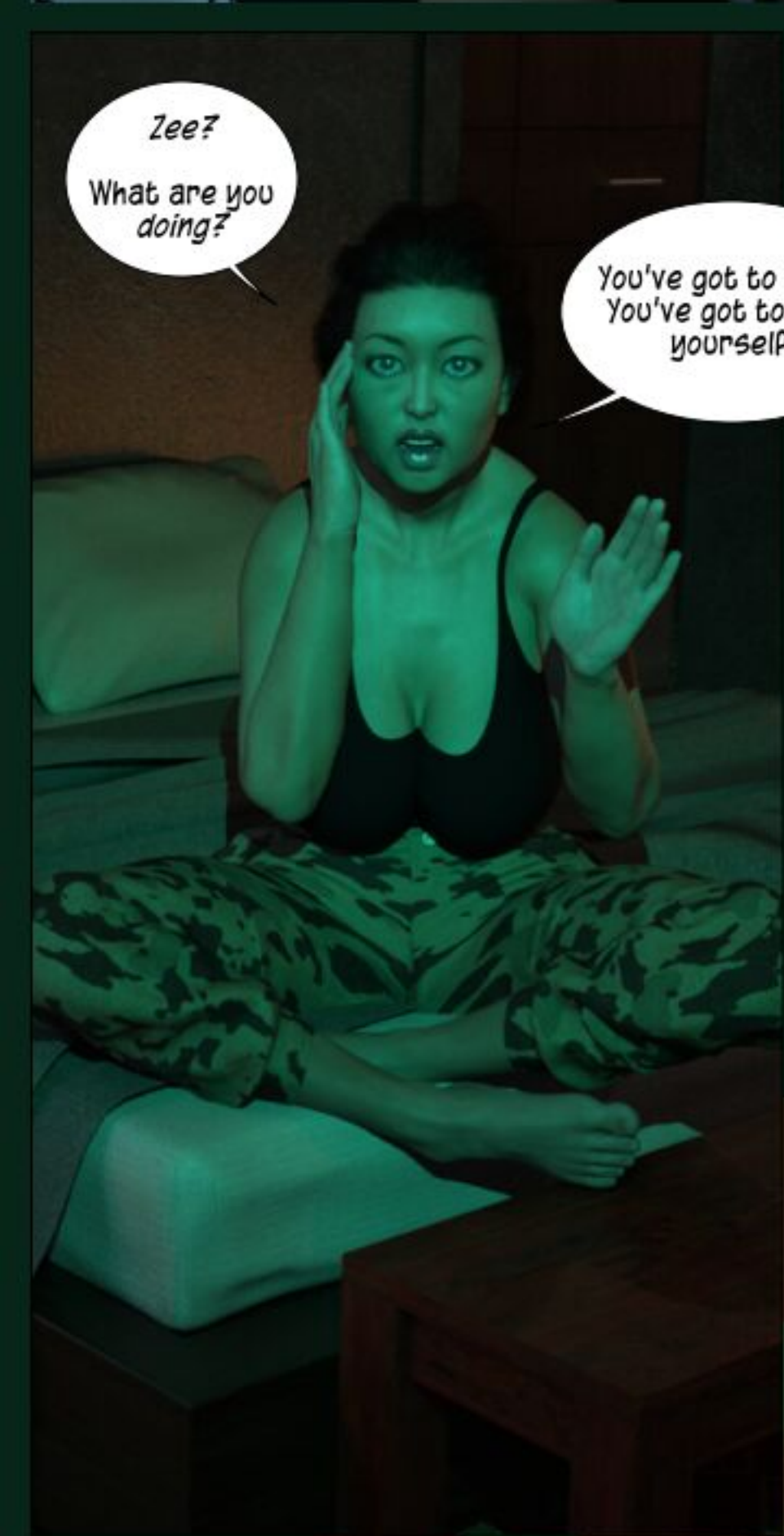
I've already got it, Zee. It's too late. I can Peel it.

Get out of here. There are supplies in the van. You'll be able to last a long time. Find somewhere there are no other people.

Go!

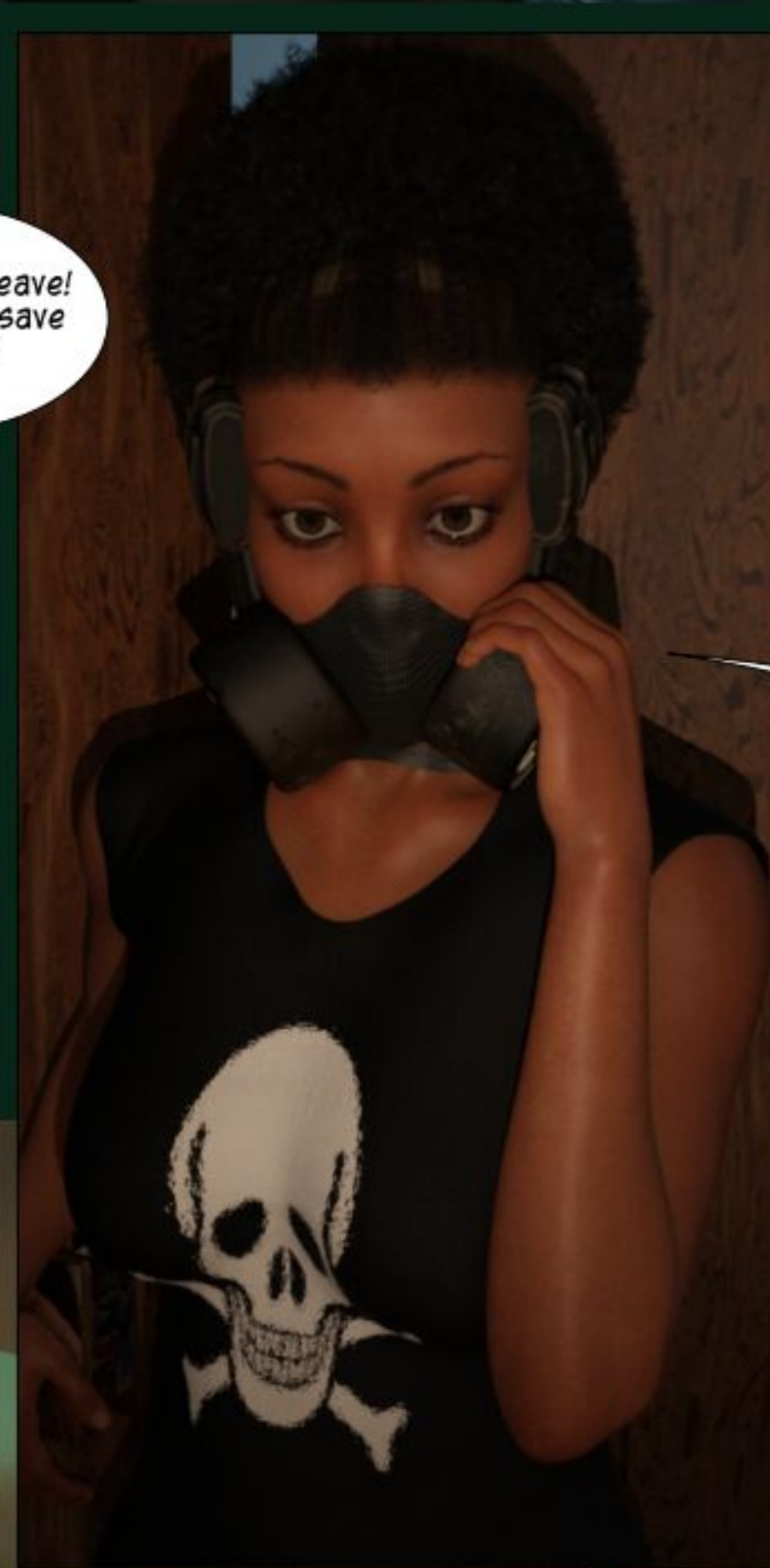


... wait.



Zee?
What are you doing?

You've got to leave!
You've got to save yourself!



For what?



THIS MEANS NO FEAR,
CAVALIER, RENEGADE
AND STEERING CLEAR

A TOURNAMENT,
A TOURNAMENT,
A TOURNAMENT OF LIES

OFFER ME SOLUTIONS,
OFFER ME ALTERNATIVES
AND I DECLINE

... IT'S THE END OF THE WORLD AS WE KNOW IT
IT'S THE END OF THE WORLD AS WE KNOW IT
IT'S THE END OF THE WORLD AS WE KNOW IT
AND I FEEL FINE

I FEEL FINE

-- R.E.M.