



The first thing you need to know about St. Valentine is that there may have been two of them. There are all kinds of legends floating around, and it's impossible to tell which ones apply to which real people. This was around 300 CE, after all. Documentation is thin.

The second thing you need to know is that, no matter how many there were, they were all mostly notable for their martyrdom.

There's nothing in any of the Valentine legends that has anything to do with love, courtship, romance, sex ...

St. Valentine's Feast day got hooked to all that because it happened around the same time as the Roman Lupercalia, and the Christians had a bad habit of piling the serial numbers off any pagan observances, changing the names, and trying to claim them. It made recruitment easier.



Unfortunately for the Christians, who were prudish, the Lupercalia had the same problem for them as the pagan antecedents of Easter did: Too filthy!

For example, there was a Lupercalia custom where the names of young women were put in a box, and the young men would draw names, and that was how they picked who'd be coupled for the next year. Somewhere between a hand-pasting and a key party. Obviously they couldn't let that sort of thing go on.

So that gradually got toned down by the Christians until it became the practice of giving people "valentines," which is completely innocuous unless you're in elementary school.

But if you know where to look, you can still find some of the pagan fun lurking under the prudery.



For example, there's an artifact in our own college's museum which is labeled as a relic of St. Valentine, but is clearly a Lupercalia wand.

The legend is that whoever you touch with one of these wands not only will transform into your ideal partner, but will become infatuated with you, more or less, and will be your lover for the year.



Of course, no one really believes that ... you always have to be careful with folklore, a lot of it is outright fiction ...

Still, it's interesting to contemplate.



This is a dumb idea.

Keep your voice down!

... gonna have to drag it away from the wall just to open it ...

And stay alert. I don't trust the other two to do a good job watching the doors. John has the attention span of a gnat.

It can't possibly be real ...



And if it isn't, it isn't. Big deal.

But what if it is? Valentine's Day is coming up. Do you want to spend it with nobody? Again?

We'll take turns. All four of us will get a chance to use it.



I guess you'll want to go first, huh?

First? No, no.

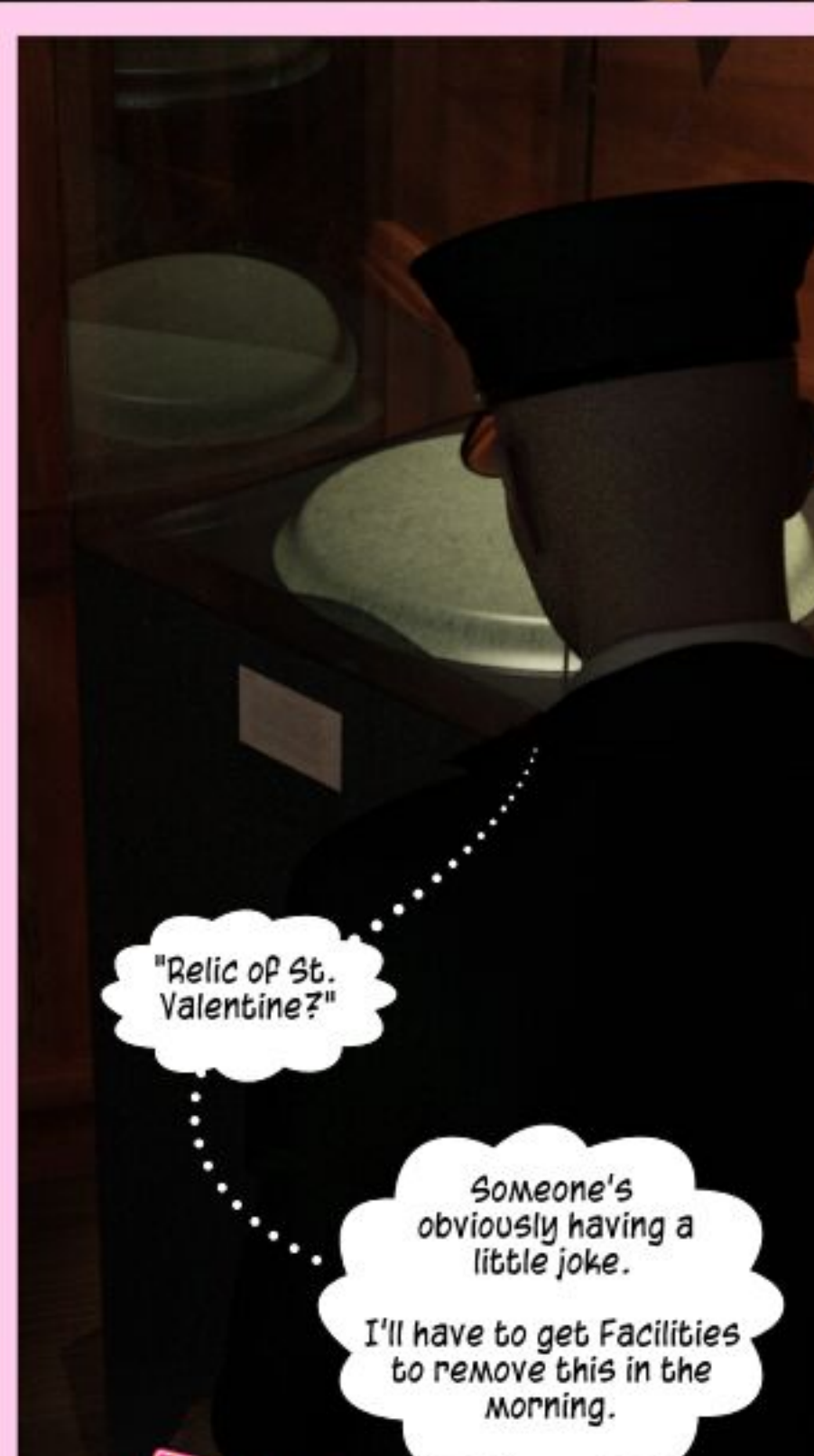
I'm going last.

C'mon, let's clear out before the guard comes in.



Hmm?

There's not supposed to be a display case there ...



"Relic of St. Valentine?"

Someone's obviously having a little joke. I'll have to get Facilities to remove this in the morning.



This is stupid.

People are going to see me carrying this around and think I'm a huge pervert ...

And I'm sure that was all total bullshit and it doesn't do anything ...

And even if it does, who am I going to use it on? I don't go anywhere there's a lot of opportunities.



But if it does work, it works on anybody, right?

So I could just pick somebody at random ... I mean, I'll end up with my dream woman no matter what ...



♪



Hey!! You did something, didn't you? I know you did something!

Uh ... no ... I ...

You're the only other person here ... and you touched me with something!

What is that thing in your hand?

I don't ... it was just a ...



You know, I'm strangely attracted to you.

But I'm going to walk out of here right now unless you tell me the truth.

I bet you don't want that, do you?

It's ... uh ... it's supposed to turn you into ... my dream woman.

I didn't think it would work!

... and I didn't know you'd notice ...

So you bumped up my tits and ass, gave me an eyebrow wax and a full face of makeup, and let my hair down.

Don't know whether to be flattered I was already pretty close, or concerned about your lack of imagination.



You look really good though ...

Thank you. At least I can tell you're trying.

I'm way overdressed for laundry now, you know.

Hey, you're not, like, a Nazi or anything, are you?

Uh ... no?

Oh, good. Then we can probably work with this.

Let me put my laundry in the dryer and then we'll go see how you clean up.



Clean up?

We've got a lot of work to do.

We need to lose that beard, for starters. And then do something about the hair.

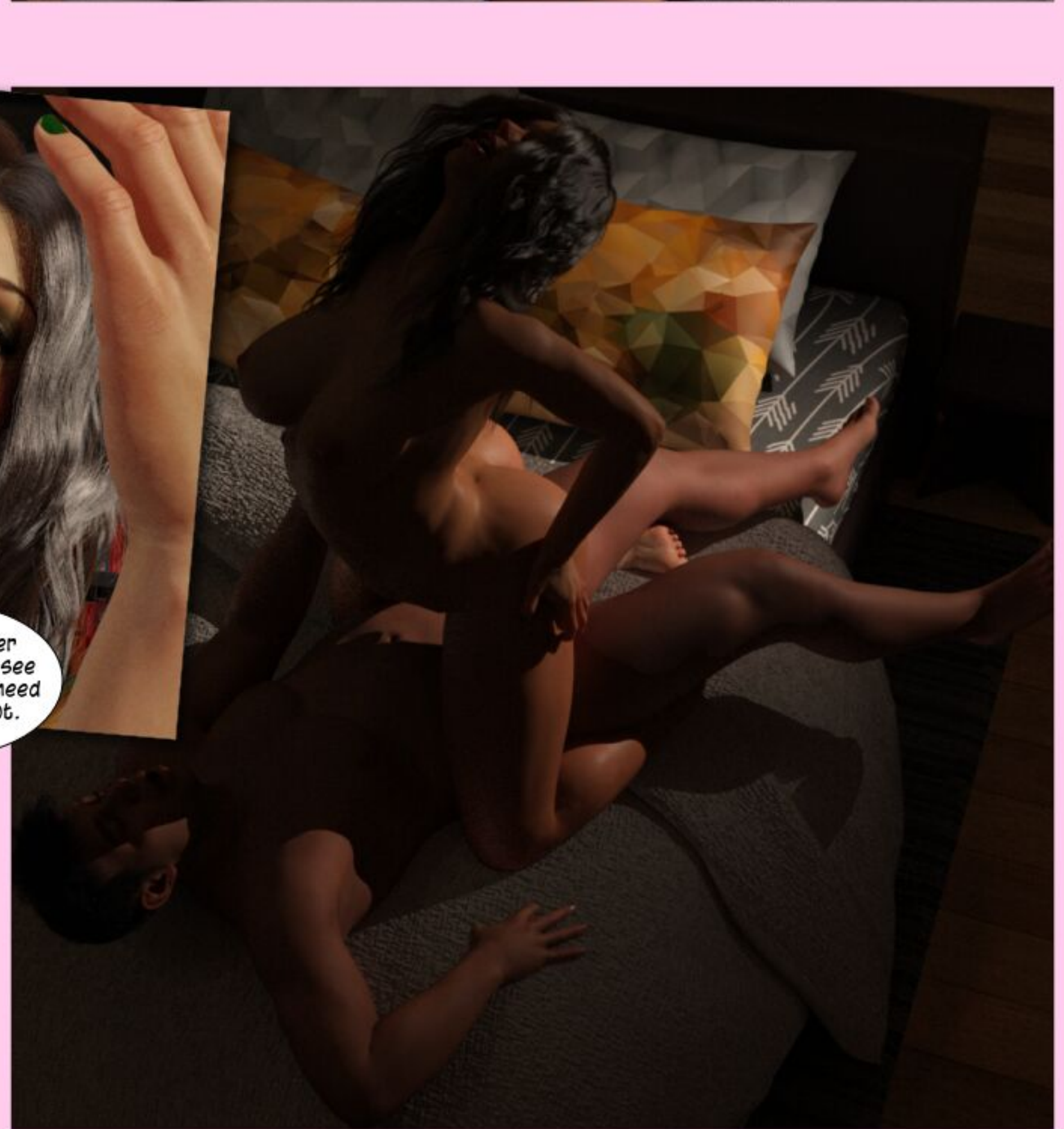
And we really should look into getting you to the gym, but we can't do that tonight.



LATER. I don't know ... it doesn't feel like me ... and it's a lot of maintenance ...

Hey, upkeep cuts both ways. I haven't put on makeup for anybody in years.

Don't think of it as maintenance, think of it as "making my girlfriend hot for my body."



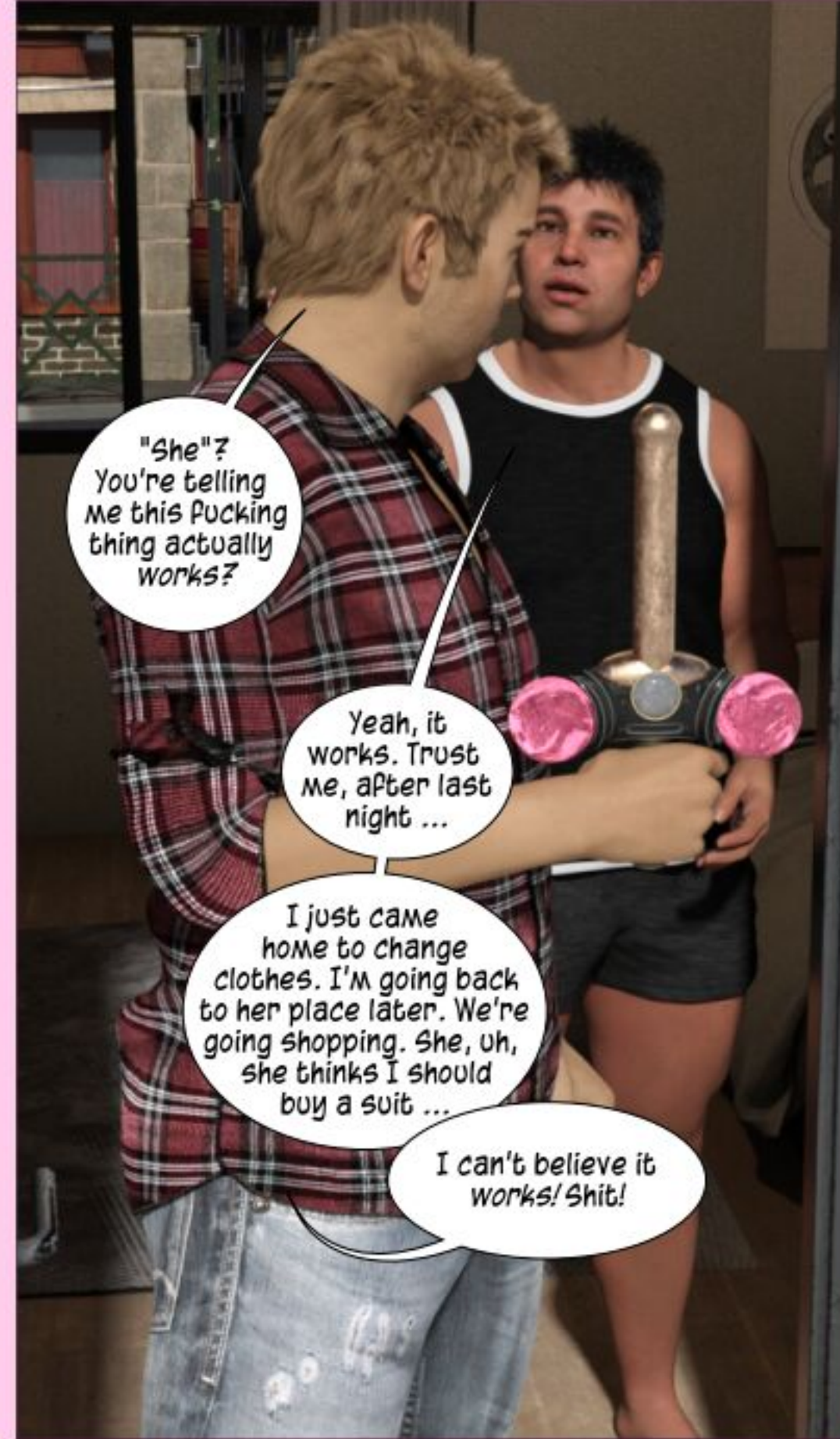
Now come over here and let's see what else you need to learn about.

NEXT DAY.



Dude! I almost didn't recognize you.

Yeah, I know, but she likes it this way.



"She"? You're telling me this Pucking thing actually works?

Yeah, it works. Trust me, after last night ...

I just came home to change clothes. I'm going back to her place later. We're going shopping. She, uh, she thinks I should buy a suit ...

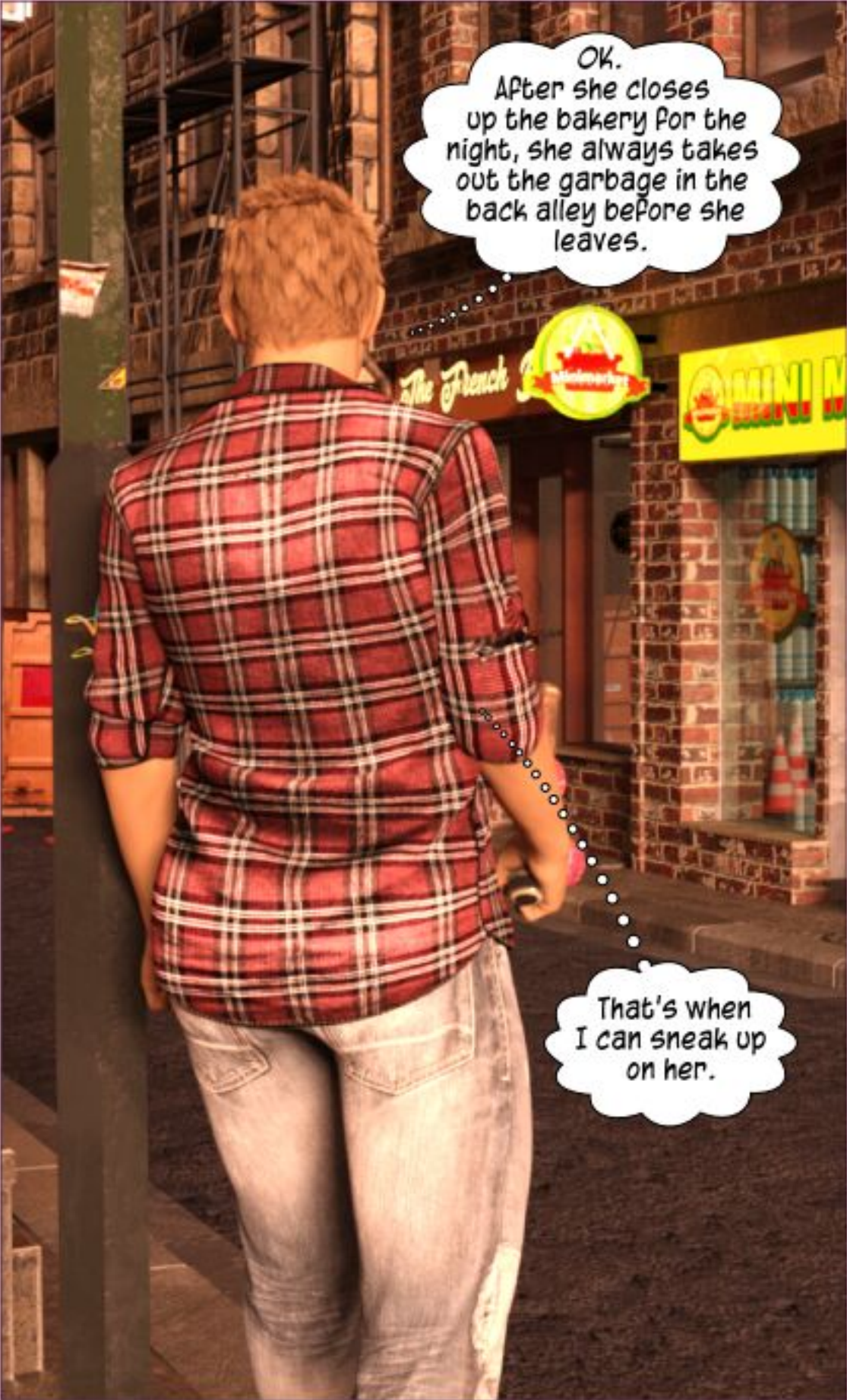
I can't believe it works! Shit!



Listen, uh ... it doesn't *exactly* work the way--

Yeah, yeah. I'll figure it out. Gotta go!

This is gonna be so awesome!



OK. After she closes up the bakery for the night, she always takes out the garbage in the back alley before she leaves.

That's when I can sneak up on her.



B--b--b ... big

What have we here?

Nasty perverted little boy who thinks he's clever, hmm? Thinks he's a big man?

How dare you touch me?

Get on your knees and apologize!



But ...

On your knees, beta boy!

NOW!!



That's right, little boy, kiss it!

I don't hear you apologizing!

--MWA-- I'm sorry! I'm sorry!

"I'm sorry, Mistress!"

... I'm sorry, Mistress!

Hmm. I don't think you're trying nearly hard enough.



I think you're going to need to kiss something else to show me you're really sorry.

Maybe several times.

Take me to your place. And no talking on the way. I don't need to hear your whining noises.



Hey! How'd it go--



AAAA!

Damn it, don't startle me like that!

Sorry! I thought you saw me. I did knock ...



What are you doing?

What the Puck does it look like I'm doing?

"You've got a great place," she said, "so why do you keep it such a pigsty?"

I guess it worked, then?



It's f*cked up! I don't know what happened. She's, like, taking control and making me do stuff, and humiliate myself ... I didn't want this!

Well ... uh ... are you sure?

It's supposed to make your dream woman, right? So seems to me like you did want this. Must have.

What? No!



Don't lie to your friend. Especially since he's right.

Tell him how many times you came last night.

Aw, no ... he doesn't need to--

Tell him!!



Six.

Right. So I don't want to hear anything else about you not getting exactly what you asked for.

Now get back to those dishes.

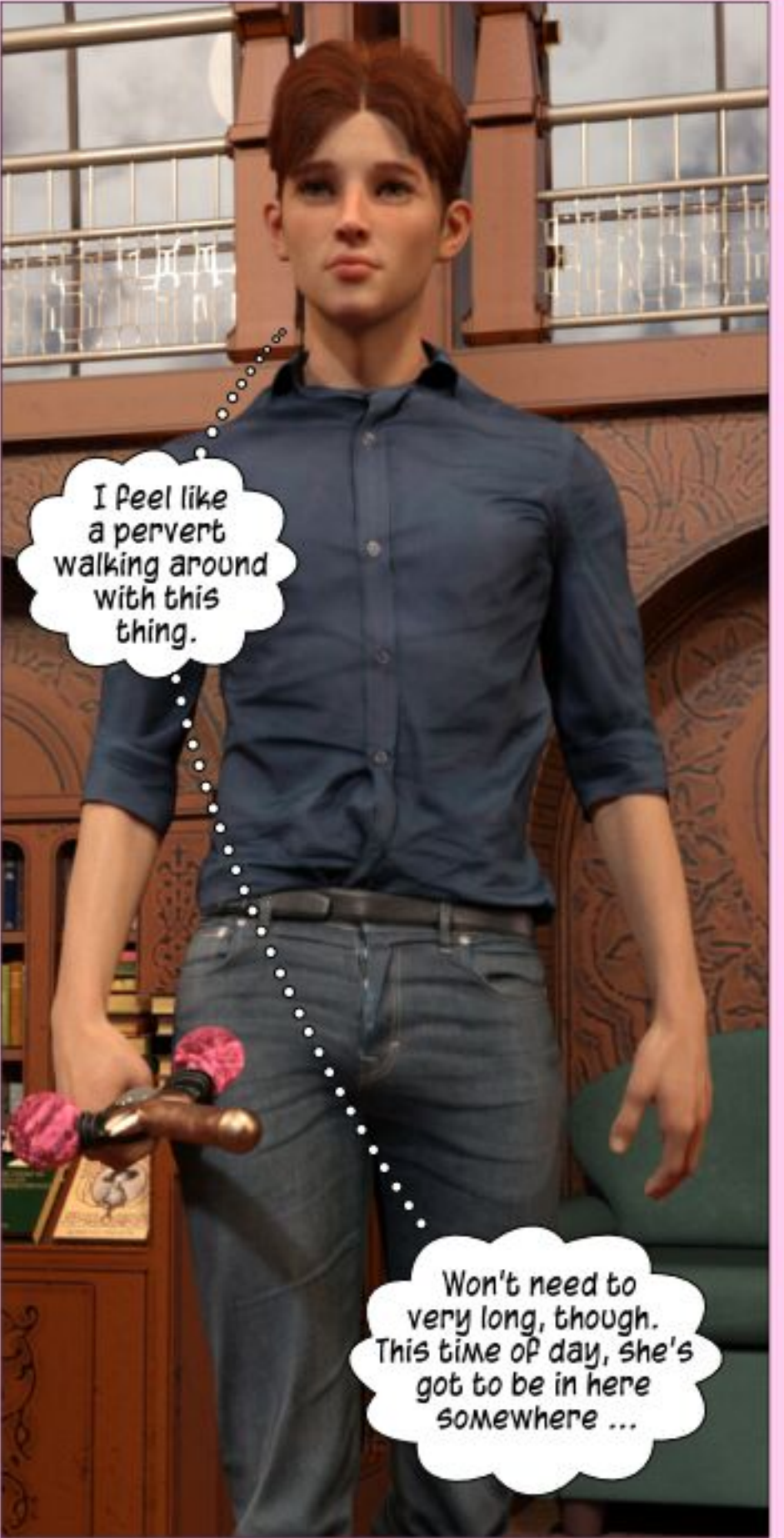
Yes, Mistress.



Good luck.

Uh ... thanks.

Careful with that thing, now. You never know what you might learn about yourself!



I feel like a pervert walking around with this thing.

Won't need to very long, though. This time of day, she's got to be in here somewhere ...



There we go. And she's not paying any attention.

Easy to sneak up behind her ...



No, I can't. I can't do it.

It just doesn't feel right ... I mean, it's not fair to her ...

This was a really bad idea from the beginning.



Oh, hi, George! Were you looking for something? I'm not actually on duty right now, but I can--

She knows my name???

Uh, no ... just, uh, passing through ...

You can't "pass through" here, it doesn't connect to anything.

What's that you've got in your hand?



Uh, nothing.

Oh, c'mon. Let me see!

Is it some kind of toy? It looks kind of like somebody was trying to make a Lupercalia wand ...

How did you --?! ... I mean ... it does?



Oh my gosh, it is! George! Where did you get this?

These things are dangerous! If you touch somebody--

Wait. Were you going to touch me? Were you going to use it on me???

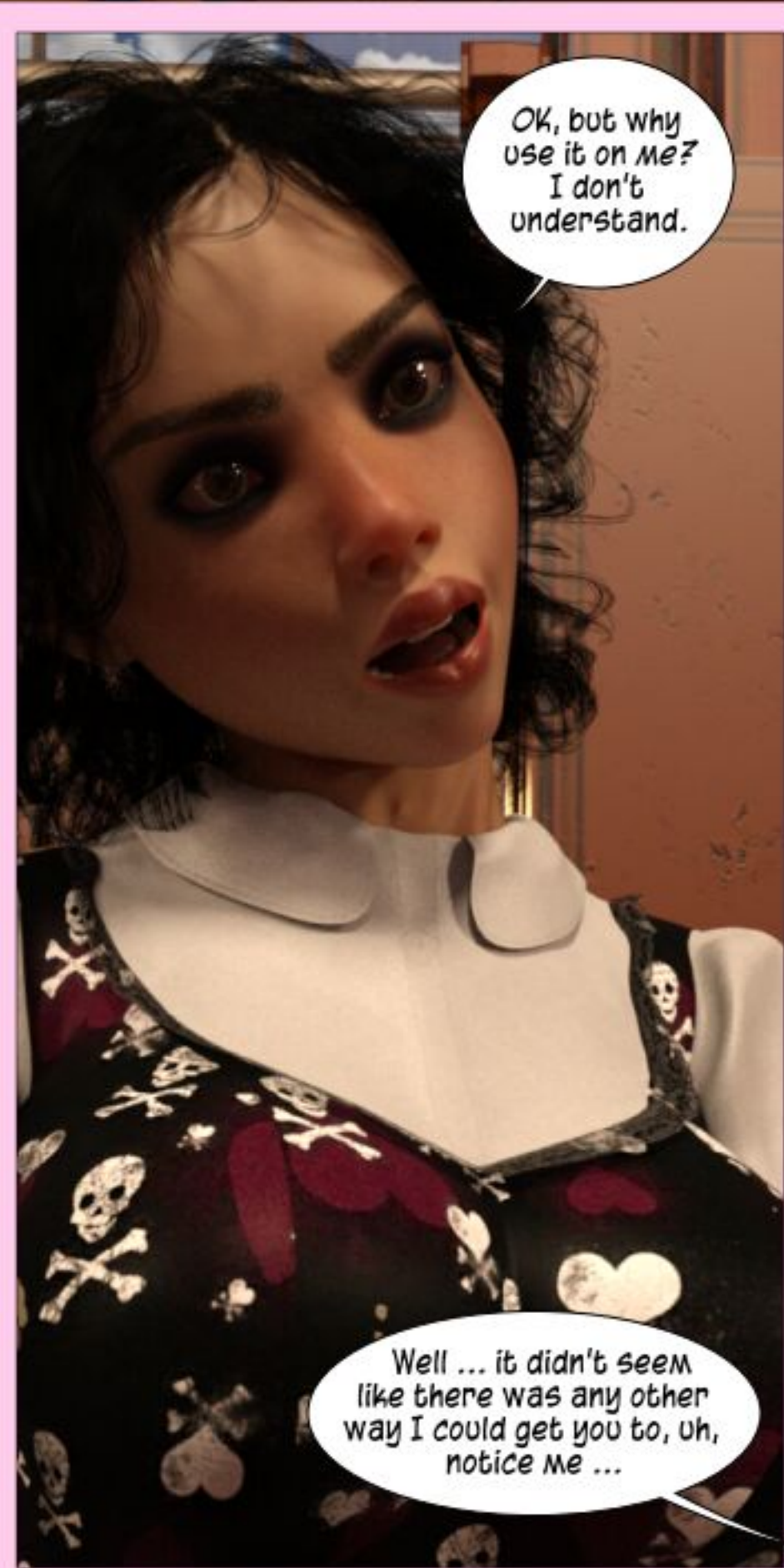


No.

I mean, yeah, OK, that's what I was going to do, but I decided it'd be really bad and I changed my mind.

I was about to leave when you saw me. I'm sorry.

... I'll go now.



OK, but why use it on me? I don't understand.

Well ... it didn't seem like there was any other way I could get you to, uh, notice me ...



George.

First off, if you want someone to notice you, it helps if you ever actually talk to them.

Second, that didn't answer my question. Why me as your dream woman? What were you hoping I'd change into?

... I didn't expect you to change. You were already pretty much there.



Your dream woman is a short, antisocial, gothy witch with bad hair?

Uh ... yeah. Why? Is that weird?



HMM!

Y'know, we need to go somewhere and talk about this.



So, uh ... Are you really a witch?

That's your first question?



Richie!
... uh, hey

EEEEEE!

George,
I'm not
dressed!!



Nice!
Guess it worked.

I didn't realize you
liked them short.
Good ass, though.

Her name's
Gladys.

And I didn't
use it.



What?!

Are you stupid or
something? You
could have had--

I wasn't
comfortable with
using it.

And it turned out I
didn't even need to.



Well, it's too late to
change your mind now.
You've lost your turn.

I've got plans for this
thing, and I'm not delaying
them just so you can get
your shit together.

See you later.



He's going to
do something
really horrible with
that, isn't he?

... I think so,
maybe.

Should we
try to do
something
about it?



All right,
here we go ...
round one ...

... wait
for her to
start
walking ...



... I should
have plenty of
time to get away
before she thinks
to look around ...



A little trickier.
Good thing there aren't
many people here ...

If I wait
until she's
passing that
classroom door up
there, I can duck
into it as soon as
I touch her ...



Whuh?



QUIET PLEASE
KEEP CALM AND COME TO FILM CLUB



Here's your order. Have a great day!

Two down, one to go.

I can get her as she moves to a table ...



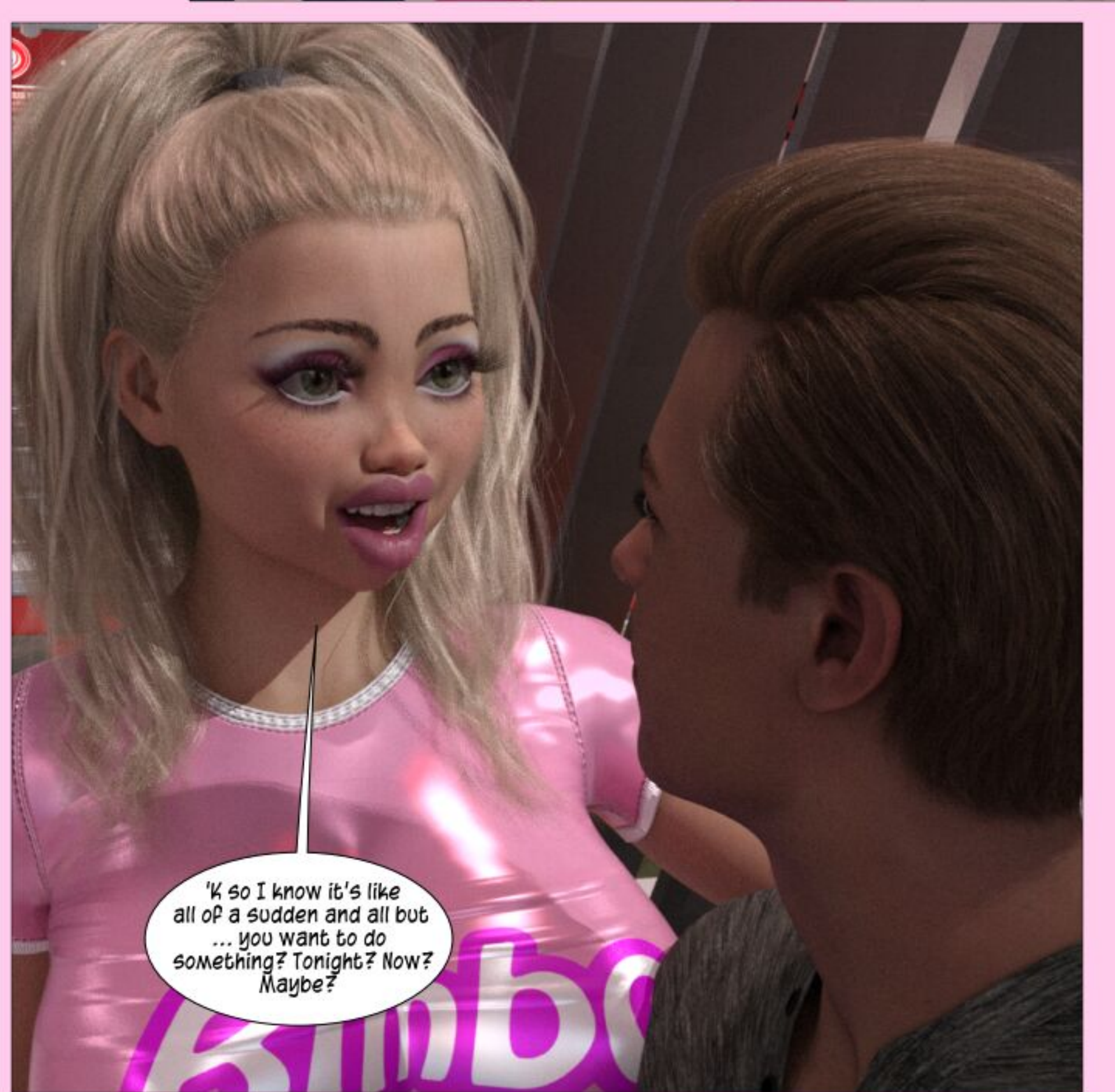
AAAUUHH!

oMigod



Ooh!

Richie! Hey!



'K so I know it's like all of a sudden and all but ... you want to do something? Tonight? Now? Maybe?



You must be kidding.

You think I'd want to hang out with someone like you? C'mon.

I'd be embarrassed to be seen with you. I mean, take a look at yourself, huh?



Richie! Wait!!

I've been looking all over for you. Want to come to my place tonight?



No way in hell.

Now leave me alone.



... I don't get it.

I do.

They're all women who turned him down.

He doesn't want a lover. He wants revenge.

... but --



So he gets them hopelessly in love with him and then rejects them?

And this guy is a friend of yours?

Not anymore, he's not.



I don't know what we do next, though ... I mean, can what he did to them be undone? I don't know enough about how the thing works ...

Me neither.

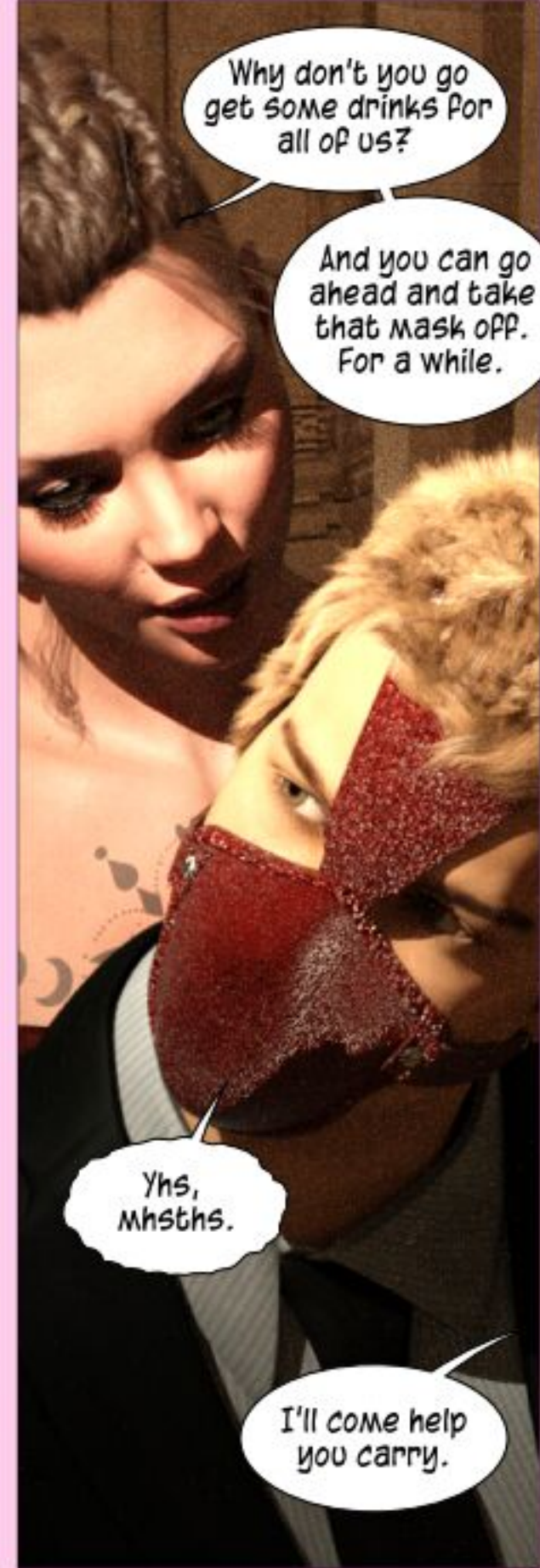
But I know who to ask.

EVERY YEAR AT THE COLLEGE THERE IS A VALENTINE'S DAY BALL FOR CHARITY. IT'S A BIG SOCIAL EVENT. OUR HEROES ARE ALL ATTENDING IT FOR THE FIRST TIME.



Hey!

Hmh.



Why don't you go get some drinks for all of us?

And you can go ahead and take that mask off. For a while.

Yhs, mhsths.

I'll come help you carry.



So, you got caught up in their mischief too?

Uh-huh.

I tried to warn you, dude ...

'S'all good.



He's actually very sweet ... and attentive ... he just needed to lose a couple of bad ideas and clean up a bit ...

I could see myself really falling in love with him. I mean, on my own. What about you?

I think mine is more ... transactional.

I don't know how he found exactly the right person to pick on. I must have been the only working dom in town, and there wasn't enough business, so I haven't done it in years.

I mean, I'm not charging him. But the bakery job barely paid my rent, and he's got some money from somewhere. He's got a very nice apartment.

So let's say it's mutually beneficial.



I don't see him anywhere ... do you think he's going to show up?

Well, we did say that if the wand worked we were all going to be here so everyone could see how it--

Wait. Look!



Ooh, everybody has pretty clothes!

... why are we here?

We're going to dance, remember? And say hello to your friends.

Ohhhh right. And then we're going to go home and fuck?

Absolutely.

Yay!



Well, that worked out all right.

... I guess.

He's going to have trouble with his classes though.

Maybe they'll do his papers for him.

You know, we didn't see what they did with the wand ... afterward.

That thing's still kicking around somewhere. I hope they don't make more trouble with it ...



Not to worry, Gladys. It's going back where it belongs.

I think we've had enough fun with it for this year.

Maybe next year I'll let someone borrow it again.

Unless I come up with something even better, that is!

HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY!