

BINGO⁶³™ L♥VE

TEE FRANKLIN
JENN STONGE
JOY SAN



*"A towering emotional achievement.
BINGO LOVE is the graphic novel
I didn't know I couldn't live without."
—Gail Simone*

BINGO

LOVE

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COLORS BY JOY SAN

LETTERS BY CARDINAL RAE

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For more information about *Bingo Love* visit BingoLoveComic.com



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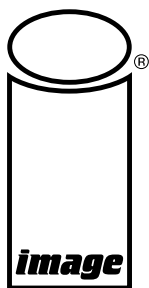
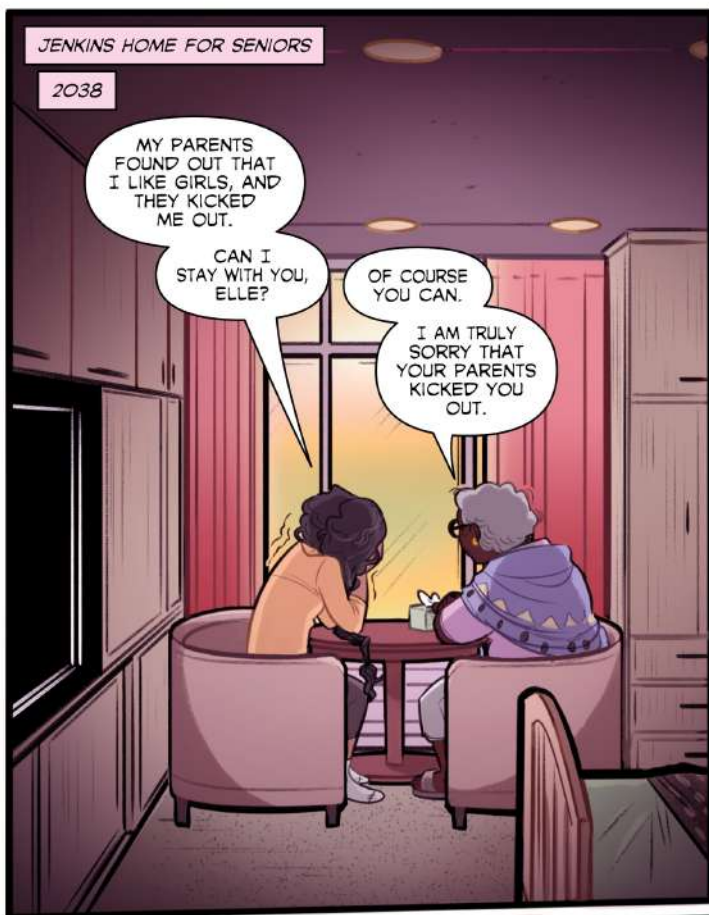


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FEBRUARY 10TH, 1963

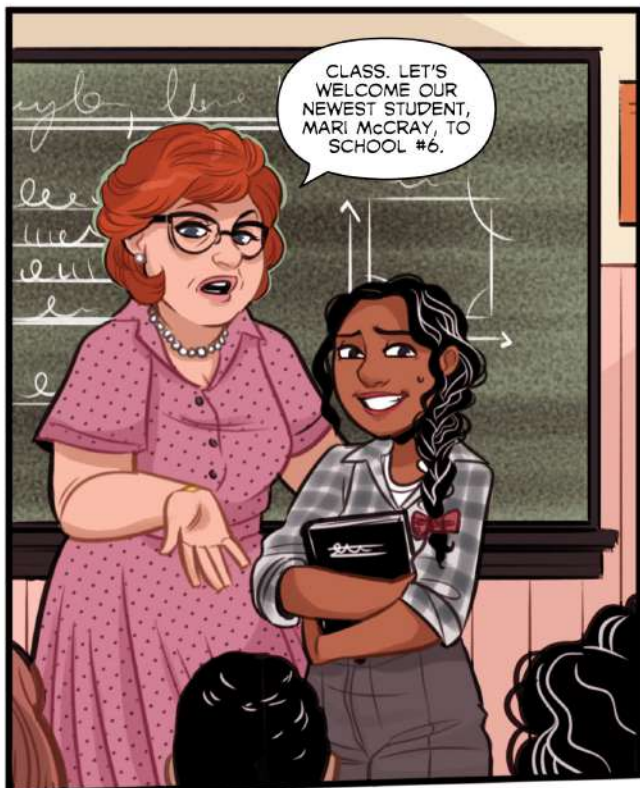
PATERSON, N.J.

"EVERY SUNDAY AFTER CHURCH I WOULD GO WITH MY GRAMS TO THE BINGO HALL.

"MOM WORKED ON SUNDAYS TO AVOID GOING TO CHURCH WITH GRAMS.

"SHE WASN'T RELIGIOUS, AND THAT PISSED OFF MY GRAMS...A LOT."











"MARI WAS ON MY MIND FOR THE REST OF THE DAY."

"WE DIDN'T HAVE ANY OTHER CLASSES TOGETHER SO I KEPT REPLAYING OUR INTERACTIONS OVER AND OVER IN MY HEAD."

Feb

$$\begin{aligned} 0^2 &= 0.0 = 0 \\ 3.3 &= 9 \\ &= (-2)(-2) = \\ &= \left(-\frac{5}{6}\right)\left(\frac{5}{6}\right) = \frac{25}{36} \end{aligned}$$


"WHEN SCHOOL LET OUT, I WAS HOPING TO SEE HER AGAIN."

≡sigh≡

Looks like I missed Mari after school. I wanted to walk her home.



HEY!
WAIT
UP!



WANNA
WALK HOME
TOGETHER?

SURE,
MARI!





SO...ARE YOU JUST GOING TO STARE OUT THE WINDOW UNTIL YOUR HOT CHOCOLATE FREEZES?

OR ARE YOU GOING TO TALK TO ME?



I'M SORRY, MARI.

I JUST FEEL WEIRD THAT YOU PAID FOR MY HOT CHOCOLATE.

IT'S ONLY HOT CHOCOLATE, ELLE.

"THAT WAS WHEN MARI GAVE ME A NICKNAME."



ELLE?

YEAH. IT FITS YOU.

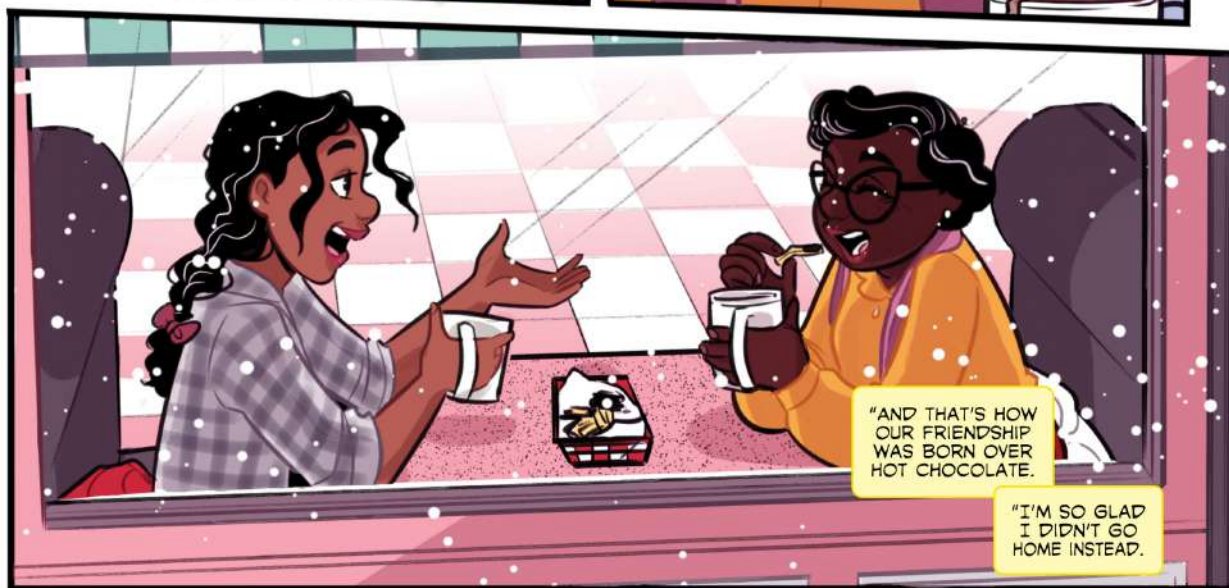
I GIVE ALL MY FRIENDS NICKNAMES.

DO YOU LIKE IT?



I DO, ACTUALLY.

"NO ONE HAS EVER CALLED ME THAT SINCE."



"AND THAT'S HOW OUR FRIENDSHIP WAS BORN OVER HOT CHOCOLATE."

"I'M SO GLAD I DIDN'T GO HOME INSTEAD."





BYE, ELLE.
SEE YOU TOMORROW
AT SCHOOL.

"WHEN SHE KISSED
MY CHEEK, IT WAS
JUST...MAGICAL.

"IN THAT MOMENT,
I REALIZED I WANTED
TO MARRY MARI."





"FROM THAT FIRST HOT CHOCOLATE, MARI AND I WERE BEST FRIENDS.

"MY MOTHER USED TO SAY WE WERE JOINED AT THE HIP.

"BETWEEN SCHOOL AND SPORTS, WE SPENT EVERY MOMENT WE COULD TOGETHER.

!!



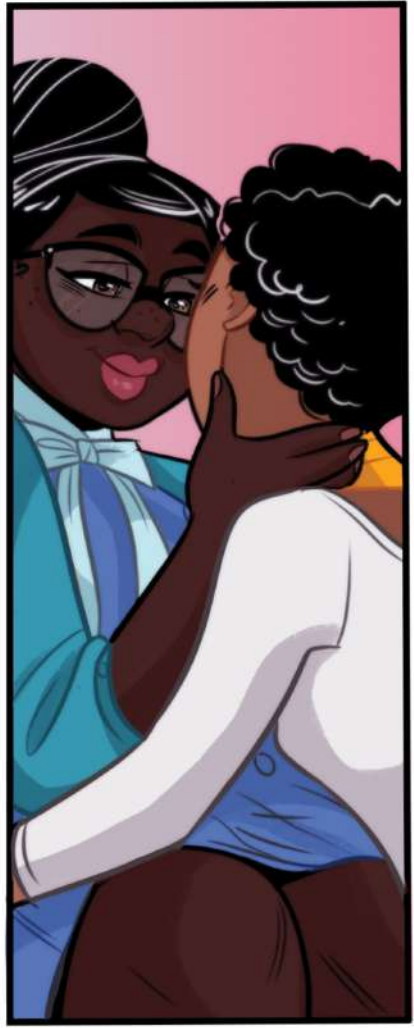
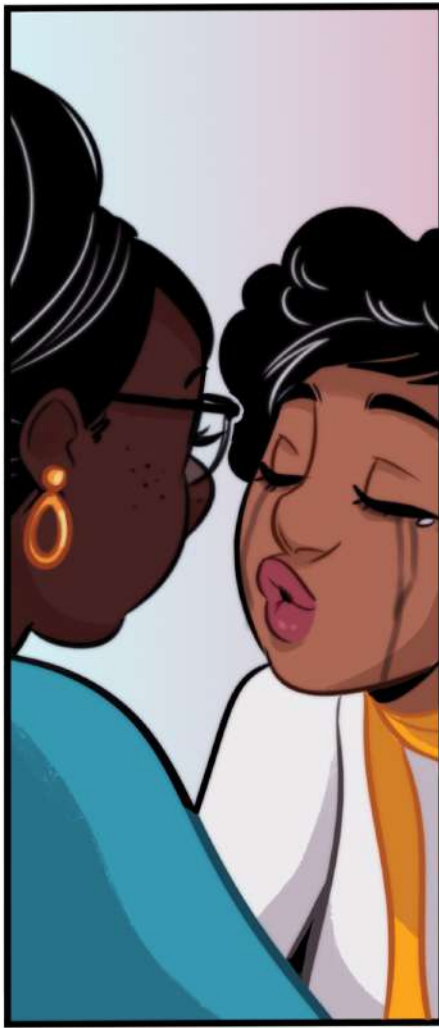
"WE REALLY
LOVED EACH OTHER
AS FRIENDS..."

"...BUT I
WANTED
SOMETHING
MORE."

"I WRESTLED WITH MY FEELINGS
FOR MARI FOR YEARS. WAS IT WORTH
RUINING OUR FRIENDSHIP IF SHE
DIDN'T FEEL THE SAME WAY?"

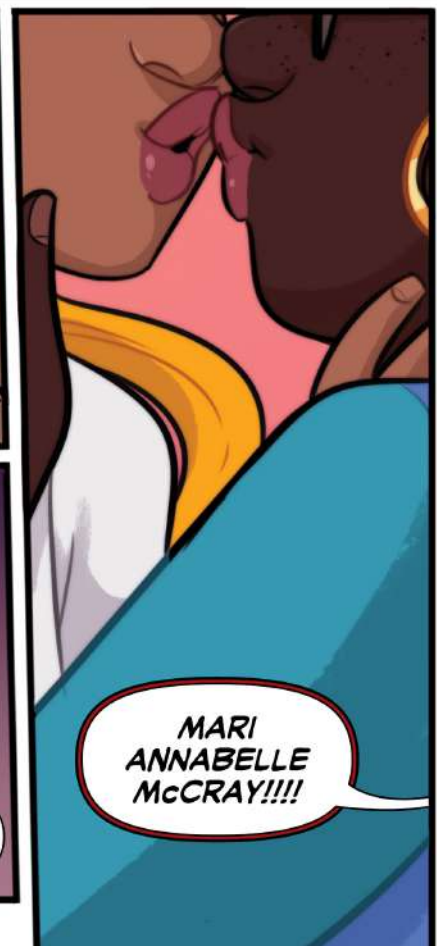














IT'S NOT
WHAT IT
LOOKS
LIKE!

I KNOW I
HAVE CATARACTS
AND CAN'T SEE WELL,
BUT I **KNOW** WHAT
I JUST SAW.

MY GRANDDAUGHTER
WAS **KISSING** A GIRL IN
FRONT OF MY HOUSE.

**GET YOUR
TAIL IN THE
HOUSE
NOW!**

AND DON'T
COME AROUND
HERE NO MORE,
HAZEL JOHNSON.

I **WILL** BE
TELLING YOUR
GRANDMOTHER
ABOUT THIS.







"I COULDN'T WAIT TO GO TO SCHOOL IN THE MORNING."

"KNOWING THAT I WAS GOING TO SEE MARI AT SCHOOL IS WHAT GOT ME THROUGH THE EVENING."



"ALAS, SHE DIDN'T COME TO SCHOOL THAT DAY..."



"...OR ANY OTHER DAY AFTER THAT."



Mari was my air, and now I can't breathe.



How am I supposed to live without her?



JOHNSON. UHH, GO TO THE NURSE ABOUT YOUR... UHH, WOMANLY PROBLEMS.





JESUS, ELLE!
WHY ARE YOU IN
MY TREE?

I MEAN...I'M
HAPPY TO SEE YOU,
BABY, BUT PLEASE
BE CAREFUL.

I WILL, MARI,
BUT I MISS YOU
SO MUCH.

WHEN ARE
YOU COMING BACK
TO SCHOOL?



I'M
NOT.

I LIKE GIRLS,
SO THEY'RE KICKING
ME OUT.

YOU CAN
STAY WITH
ME.

I CAN HIDE
YOU IN THE
BASEMENT.

I'M MOVING
DOWN SOUTH.



MY GRANDMOTHER SAYS
I'M AN ABOMINATION, AND
I'M GOING TO HELL.

SO SHE
FOUND SOMEONE
FOR ME TO MARRY--
A PREACHER'S SON.

IF I DON'T
MARRY HIM, MY
FAMILY WILL
DISOWN ME.

WHAT?
NO!

LET'S RUN
AWAY
TOGETHER.

ALL WE
NEED IS EACH
OTHER.



I CAN'T, ELLE.
THIS IS MY
FAMILY.

YOU'RE MY
FAMILY!

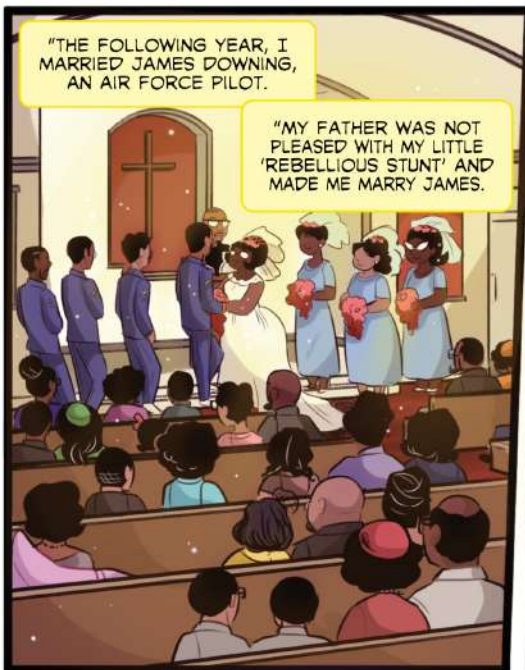
I CAN'T
BREATHE
WITHOUT
YOU!

I'LL ALWAYS
LOVE YOU, HAZEL
JOHNSON...

...BUT YOU
HAVE TO FORGET
ABOUT ME.



"AND THAT WAS
THE LAST TIME I SAW
MARI MCCRAY.



"THE FOLLOWING YEAR, I MARRIED JAMES DOWNING, AN AIR FORCE PILOT.

"MY FATHER WAS NOT PLEASED WITH MY LITTLE 'REBELLIOUS STUNT' AND MADE ME MARRY JAMES.



"LOOKING BACK, I SHOULD'VE SAID NO TO MY PARENTS AND LIVED MY LIFE, BUT I WANTED TO MAKE THEM HAPPY.

"JAMES WAS A GREAT MAN. I LOVED HIM.



"BUT HE WAS DEPLOYED TO VIETNAM A FEW MONTHS LATER.



"WE WROTE TO EACH OTHER EVERY DAY.

"THANK THE LORD HE CAME BACK TO ME.



"AND IN 1970, WE HAD OUR FIRST BABY, ISAIAH.



"JOSHUA CAME IN 1972.



"JAMES
WANTED A BIG
FAMILY."

"WE HAD
MARIAN IN
1977."

"I NAMED HER
AFTER THE LOVE
OF MY LIFE."

"JAMES HAD
NO IDEA."



"MY LIFE WAS REDUCED
TO BEING A HOUSEWIFE WHO
WAS ALWAYS BAREFOOT
AND PREGNANT."

"CREATING
CLOTHES WAS MY
ONLY ESCAPE."

"I DREAMED THAT I
WAS WITH MARI AND
SHE WAS MY MODEL."



"I CREATED
BEAUTIFUL PIECES
FOR MARI TO WEAR
ON OUR DATES."



"SHE LOOKED
GORGEOUS,
AS ALWAYS."



"HOWEVER, MY DREAMS WERE
SHORT-LIVED AND I WAS BROUGHT
BACK TO REALITY QUICKLY."

"I LOVED MY REALITY--
MY CHILDREN AND
MY HUSBAND WERE
MY **EVERYTHING**."

"WELL...MY
CHILDREN DEFINITELY
WERE."



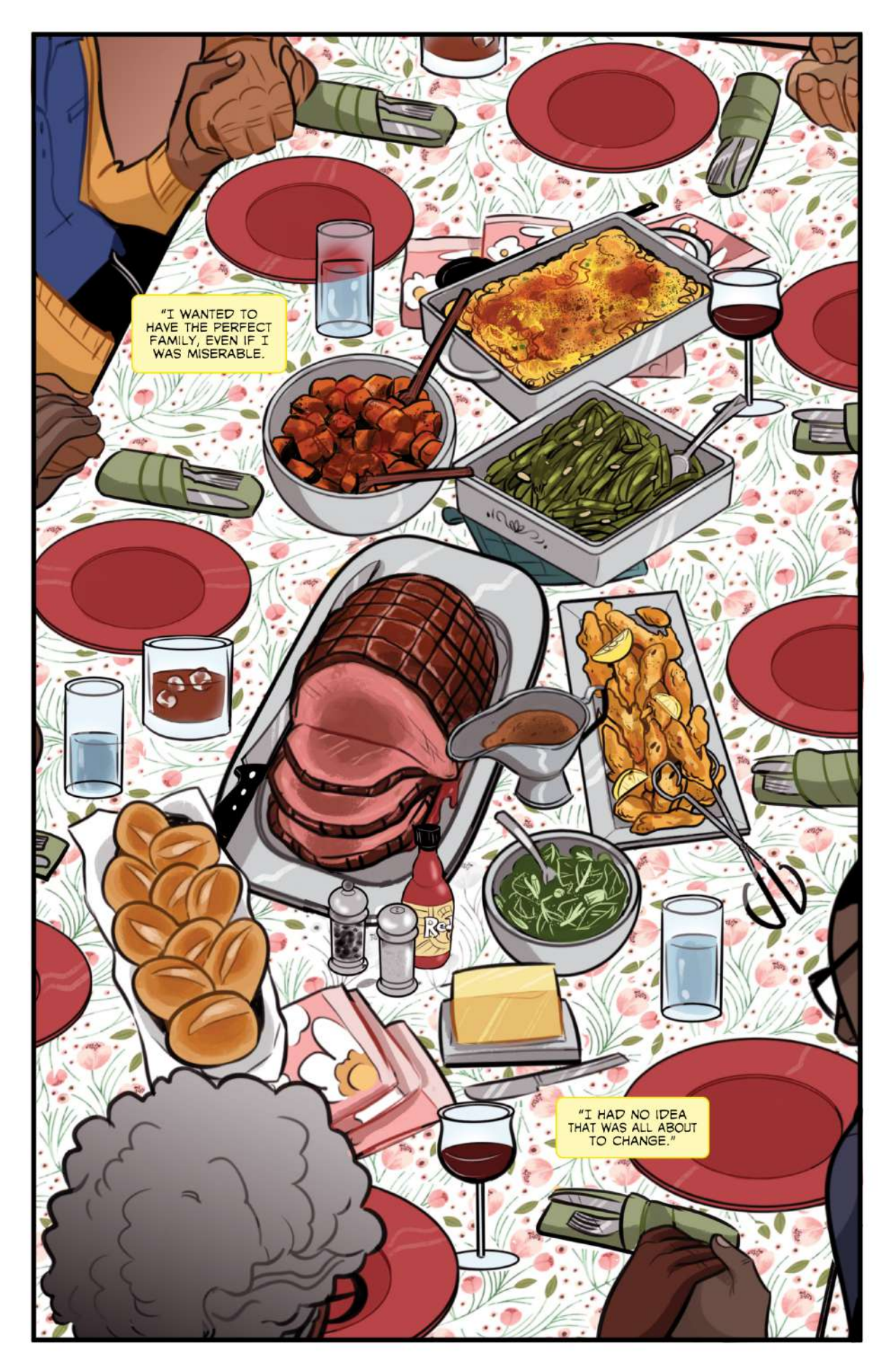
ENGLEWOOD, N.J.

"THIS WENT
ON FOR
DECADES.

"I COULD HAVE LEFT,
BUT I STAYED BECAUSE
OF THE KIDS...

GRAND
THE MA
THE MYT
THE LEGA

"...AND THEN
THE GRANDKIDS.



"I WANTED TO
HAVE THE PERFECT
FAMILY, EVEN IF I
WAS MISERABLE."

"I HAD NO IDEA
THAT WAS ALL ABOUT
TO CHANGE."









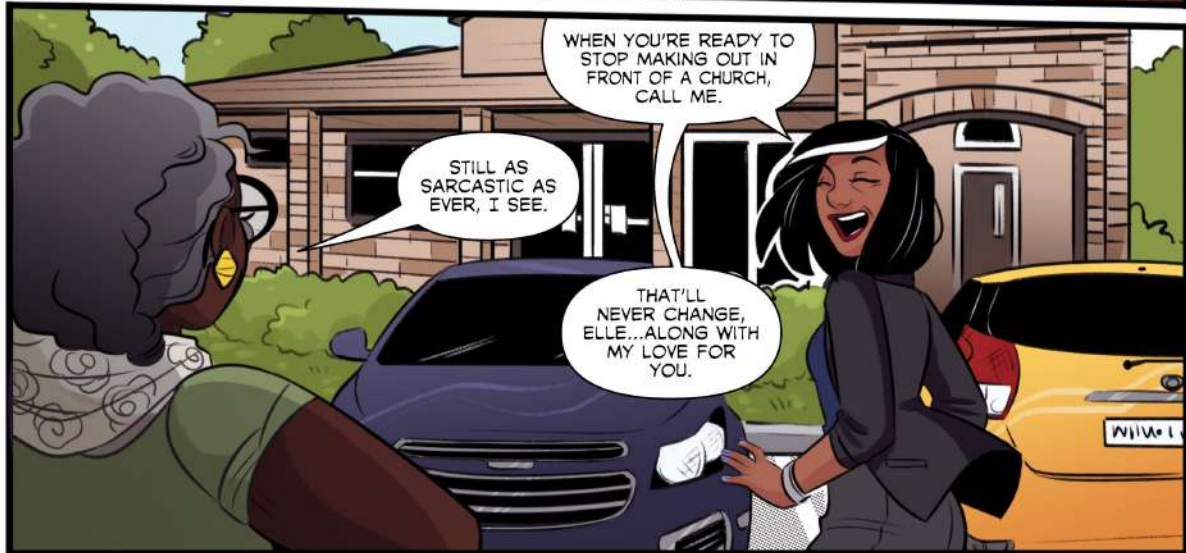


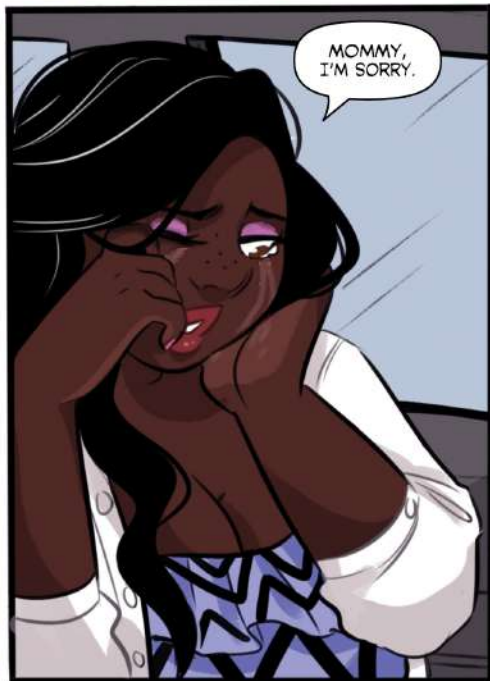














Am I ready to give all of this up?

YOU'RE HOME EARLY.
EVERYTHING OKAY, HAZEL?



NOT REALLY, JAMES.
I HAVE A HEADACHE.
CARE TO ASSIST ME UPSTAIRS?



I love my family, but deep down inside, I'm truly not happy.

I sacrificed my true happiness for my family.

I think I'm entitled to finally be happy.







**SHE KISSED
YOU IN FRONT OF
MARIAN?!?!?**

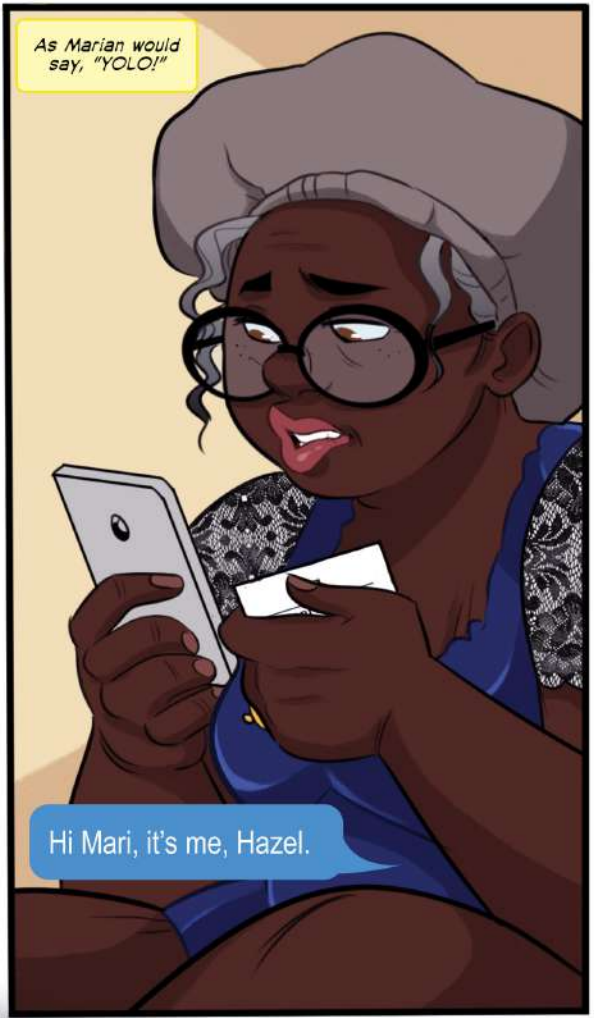
**HOW LONG
HAVE YOU BEEN
SEEING HER?**

**I MARRIED
A LESBIAN!!**

**WHY DIDN'T
YOU TELL
ME?!?!?**

I-I-I...





Hi Mari, it's me, Hazel.

Elle. I still can't believe
today happened.

I've been pinching
myself, it feels like a
dream.

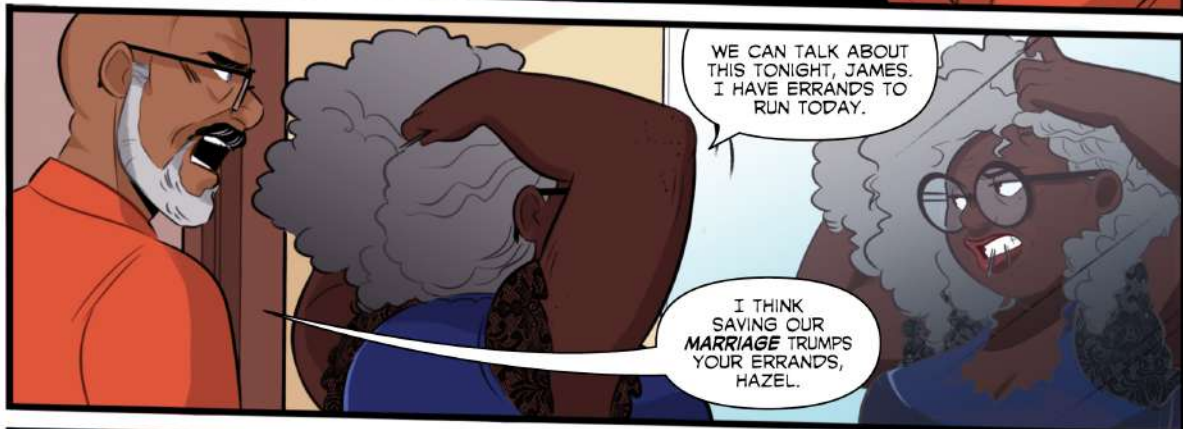
I'm not dreaming, Mari.

That kiss was definitely
not a dream.

I've had dreams of
kissing you, and it was
never like that.





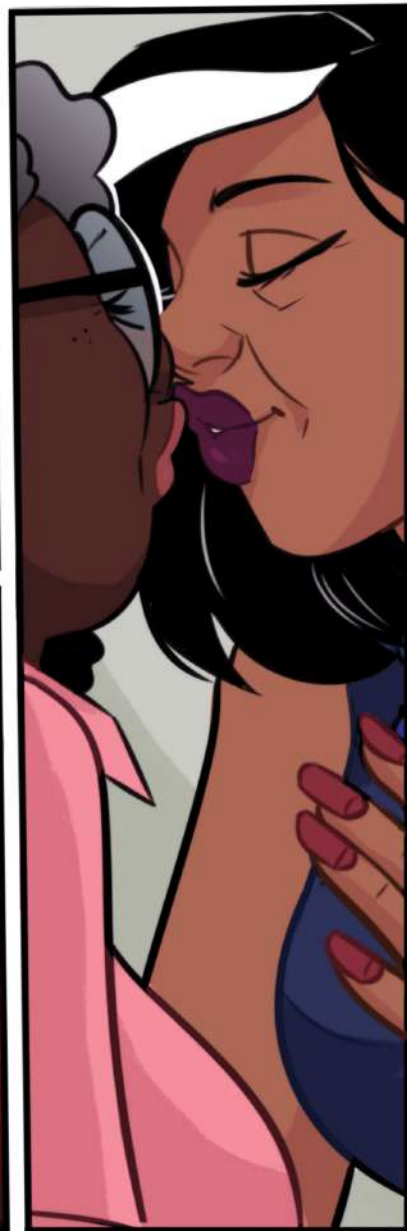
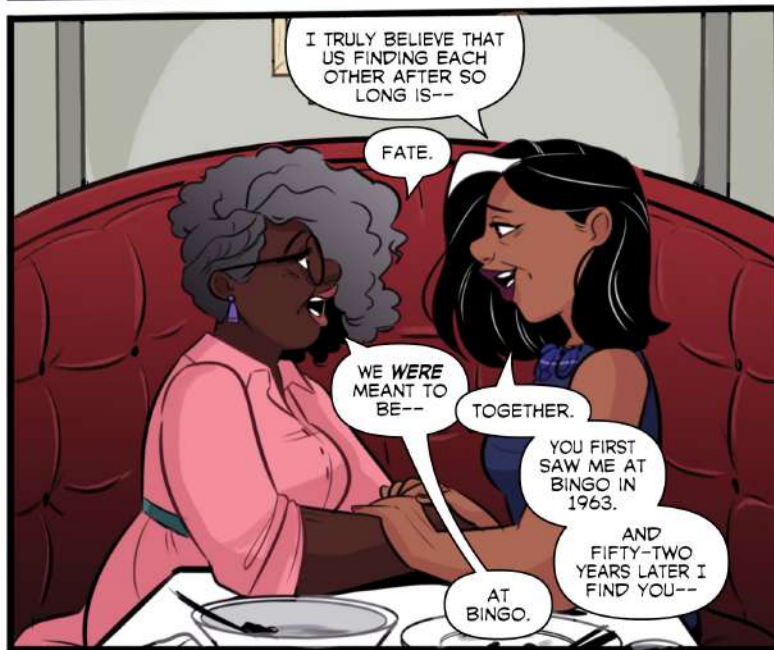


















YOU'RE RIGHT.
I DON'T KNOW WHAT
I WANT TO DO WITH
MY MARRIAGE...

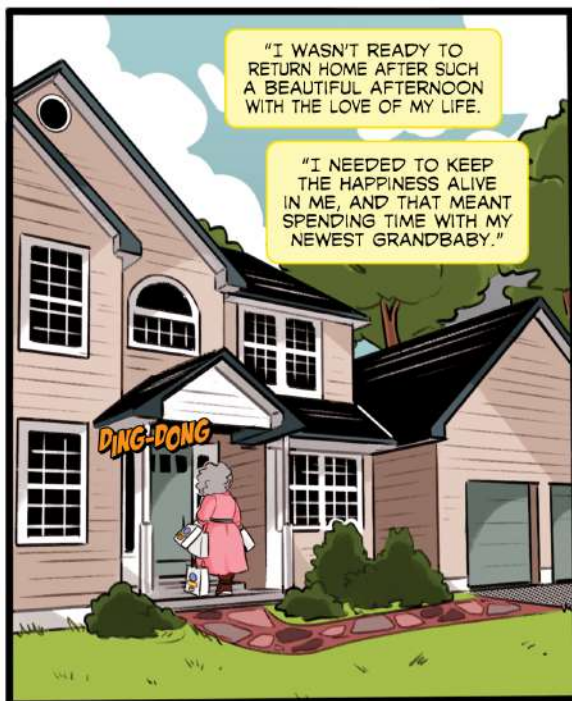
BUT I **DO**
KNOW THAT I
WANT YOU IN
MY LIFE.

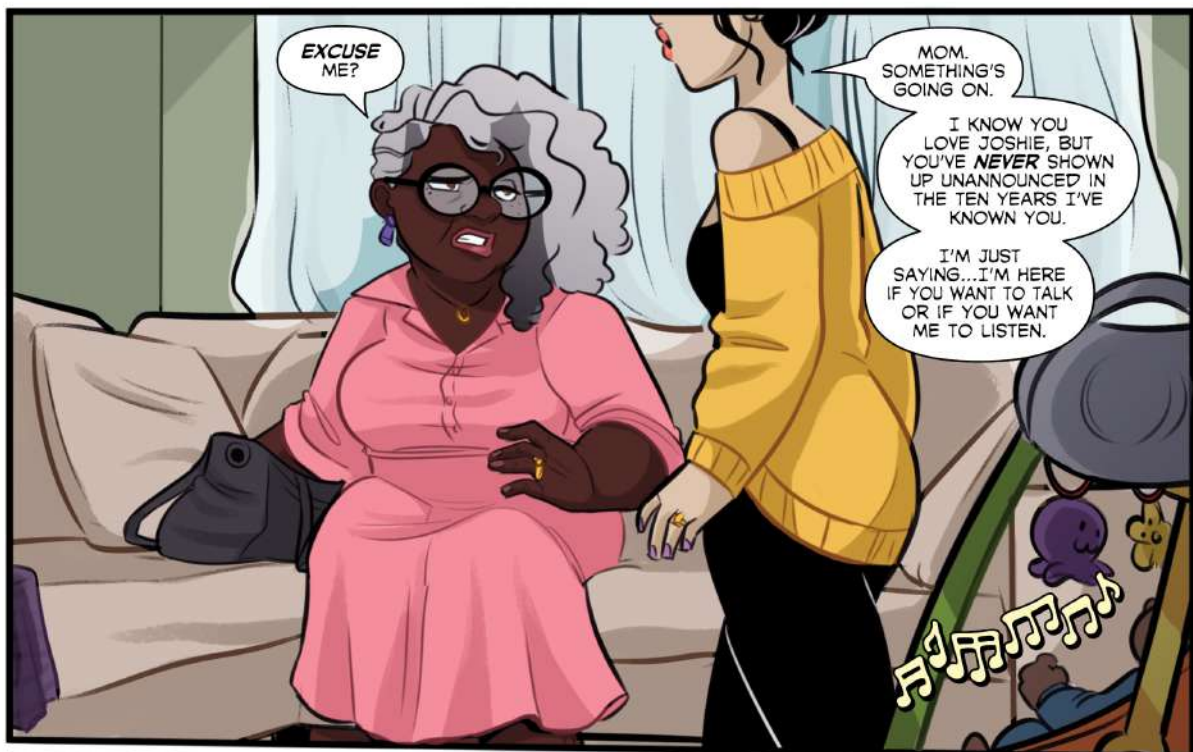
LIFE IS TOO SHORT,
AND I HAVE A SECOND
CHANCE WITH MY ONE
TRUE LOVE.

YOU BRING
ME COMPLETE
JOY.

I LOVE
YOU, MARI
MCCRAY.

ERR...
CONWAY.











"WHILE I WAS DOING ANNE'S HAIR, I WONDERED ABOUT MARI'S GRANDCHILDREN.



"SHE HAD SIX GRANDCHILDREN FROM THREE OF HER FIVE CHILDREN.



"DID THEY LOOK LIKE HER?"

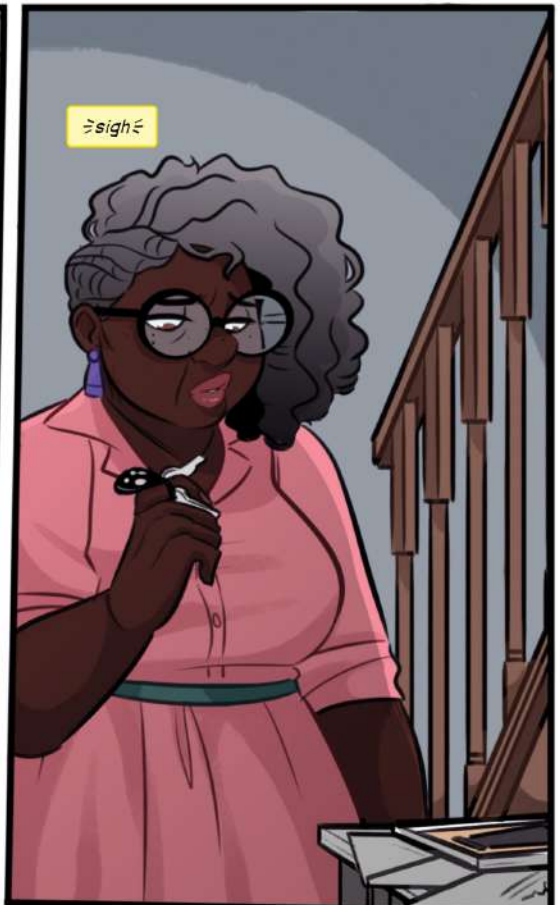


"I JUST COULDN'T GET HER OUT OF MY MIND."

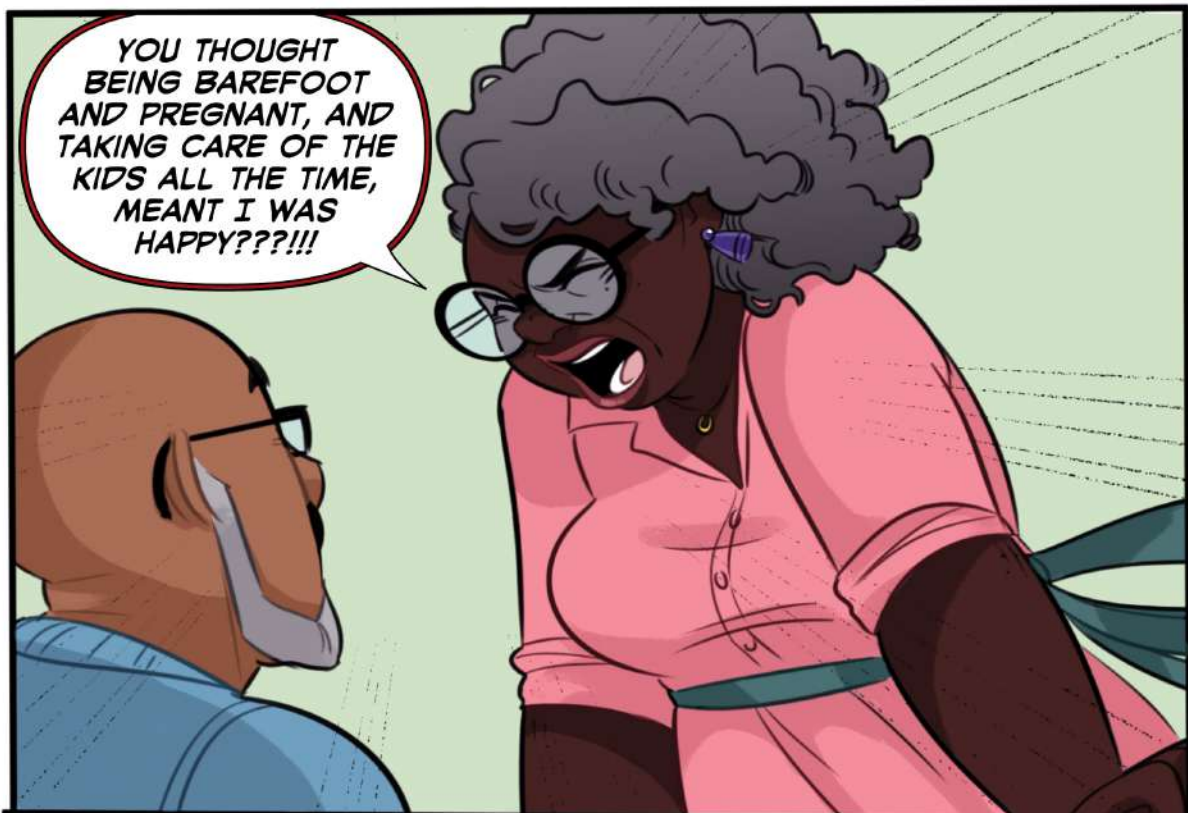


"ALTHOUGH I NEEDED TO. I WAS ABOUT TO GO TO MY HUSBAND SOON."









YOU THOUGHT
BEING BAREFOOT
AND PREGNANT, AND
TAKING CARE OF THE
KIDS ALL THE TIME,
MEANT I WAS
HAPPY????!!!



ABSOLUTELY!

IT'S THE LEAST
YOU COULD'VE
DONE FOR ME!

I SERVED
OUR COUNTRY!

I LOVED
EACH AND
EVERY ONE
OF YOU! I
TOOK CARE
OF YOU!



DON'T YOU *GET*
IT, JAMES?

YOU WERE IN LOVE
WITH THE *THOUGHT*
OF A FAMILY.

IF YOU'RE
HONEST WITH
YOURSELF, YOU
WEREN'T *IN* LOVE
WITH ME.

AND, HONESTLY...
I WASN'T *IN* LOVE
WITH YOU.



≥ sigh ≤

YOU'RE
RIGHT. I
WASN'T.

I WANTED
A FAMILY. IT
WAS SOMETHING
THAT I NEEDED...
TO **VALIDATE**
MYSELF.

AND...THERE'S
SOMETHING
ELSE, HAZEL.

"APPARENTLY I WASN'T THE
ONLY ONE KEEPING SECRETS
DURING OUR MARRIAGE."

"JAMES TOLD ME HIS OWN DEEP
AND DARK SECRET. FINALLY I
UNDERSTOOD WHY HE TREATED
ME THE WAY HE DID.

"I REMEMBER FEELING
BETRAYED WHEN JAMES
TOLD ME, AND I WANTED
TO HATE HIM..."

"BUT I GUESS THAT'S
HOW HE FELT WHEN
I KISSED MARI."

*FIND OUT WHAT JAMES WAS HIDING IN BINGO
LOVE: SECRETS BY SHAWN PRIOR AND DJ
KIRKLAND, A DIGITAL RELEASE. -- ED



SO...WHAT
DO WE DO
NOW?

WE HAD
A GOOD RUN,
JAMES...

...BUT,
I THINK IT'S
TIME WE GOT
A DIVORCE.

AND THE
KIDS?

THEY'LL
BE FINE...
EVENUALLY.



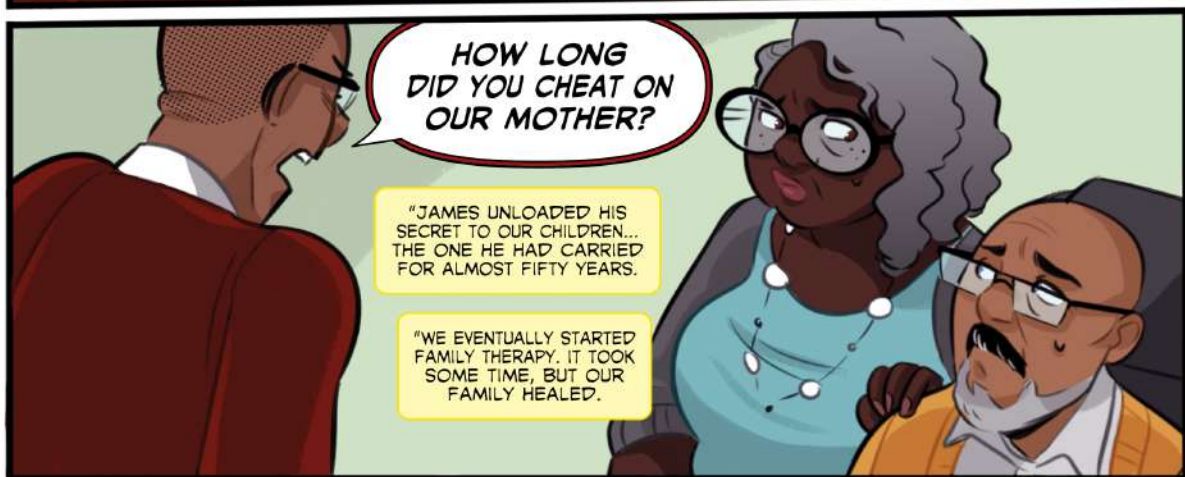
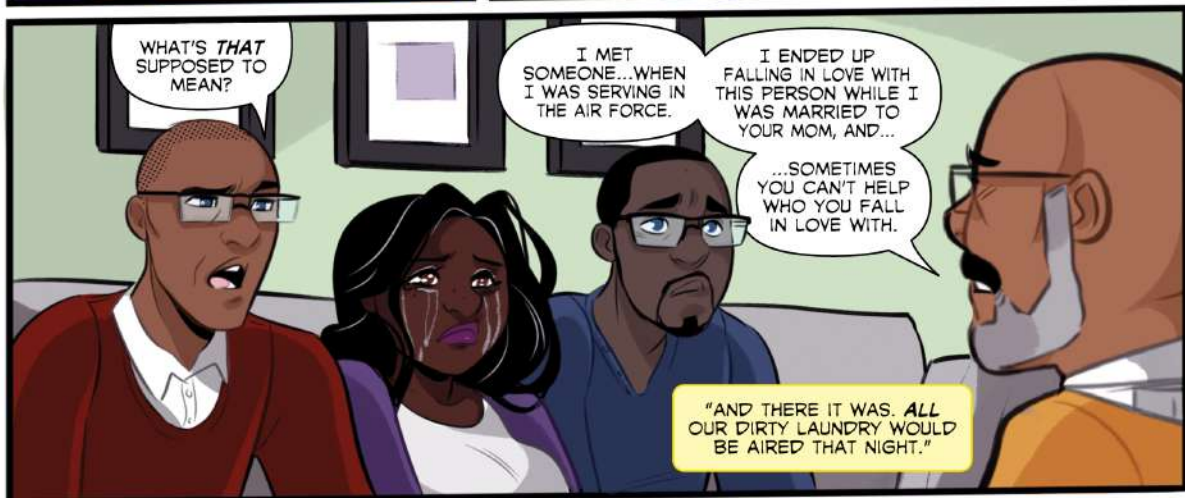
YOU
HUNGRY?

I COULD
EAT.

I **BET**.
THAT STASH OF
PEANUT BRITTLE
DIDN'T FILL YOU
UP, NOW DID IT?

STASH?
WHAT
STASH?







"THEN MARI AND
I WERE FREE TO START
OUR LIFE TOGETHER."



"IT WAS SUCH A
BEAUTIFUL SIGHT
TO SEE."

"EVEN IF OUR KIDS
WEREN'T HAPPY
WITH OUR CHOICES,
THEY STILL CAME
TOGETHER TO
HELP US TO MOVE."















PARIS, FRANCE

"WE TRAVELLED
ALL OVER FOR OUR
HONEYMOON."

"MARGUERITE BENNETT AND ASIA KENDRICK-HORTON
TAKE US AROUND THE WORLD IN *BINGO LOVE:
HONEYMOON*, A DIGITAL RELEASE. — ED."

THE MALDIVES

REYKJAVÍK, ICELAND

OAHU, HAWAII

"OUR LAST STOP WAS OAHU.
ALTHOUGH OUR TWO-MONTH
HONEYMOON WAS ENDING,
OUR HAPPILY EVER AFTER
WAS JUST BEGINNING."



2018

"WHILE MARI WORKED, I WENT TO THE BEST FASHION SCHOOL IN NEW YORK."

"SHE WANTED TO SEE ME SUCCEED AND SUPPORTED ME."

"I **ALWAYS** HAD A LOVE OF FASHION, BUT I NEVER HAD A CHANCE TO ATTEND COLLEGE, SO I COMBINED THEM BOTH."

"DESIGNING OUTFITS FOR MARI WAS ONE OF MY FAVORITE PASTIMES."

HONESTLY, I COULD JUST STARE AT YOU STANDING HERE FOR HOURS.

YOU ARE PERFECTION.

NOT WITH ALL THESE UGLY **BATTLE SCARS** ON MY STOMACH.

THOSE "BATTLE SCARS" ENHANCE YOUR BEAUTY, MY WARRIOR GODDESS.

NOW KEEP STILL.

"I'VE NEVER FELT SO ALIVE BEFORE."

"IT TOOK ME FIVE YEARS TO FINALLY REALIZE I WAS LIVING THE LIFE I WAS DESTINED TO LIVE."

CONGRATULATIONS

"THE LIFE THAT I **DESERVED**."

I'M SO PROUD OF YOU, ELLE.

YOU DESERVE ALL OF THIS AND SO MUCH MORE.

I THINK YOU MEAN "WE," MY LOVE.



"MARI AND I
LIVED OUR LIVES
TO THE FULLEST."

"WE ENJOYED SPENDING
TIME TOGETHER AND WITH
OUR GRANDBABIES."

"WE KNEW WE DIDN'T HAVE
A LIFETIME TOGETHER..."



"...BUT WE CRAMMED AS MUCH AS WE POSSIBLY COULD INTO THE TIME WE DID HAVE. WE WANTED IT TO LAST FOREVER."

"UNFORTUNATELY, TIME CATCHES UP TO ALL OF US..."

ATTENTION
ALARM
ACTIVATED
KITCHEN

**BEEP!
BEEP!
BEEP!**

"LOOKING BACK, I SHOULD'VE PICKED UP ON CERTAIN THINGS BEFORE IT GOT TO THIS POINT, BUT I JUST CHALKED IT UP TO US GETTING OLDER AND BEING FORGETFUL."

ROWR!

WAAAAHHHHHHH!



MARI!!!!

SHWOOSH



HONEY?
ARE YOU
OKAY?

PURRR

"I WILL NEVER FORGET SEEING MY WIFE, MY LIFE PARTNER THAT DAY."

"SHE LOOKED SO... LOST."

"MY HEART DROPPED AS I LOOKED AT MY BEAUTIFUL WIFE."

"AS I LOOKED UPON..."





Our weekly routine had been on hold for almost two weeks, but our families never stopped visiting.

Mari was getting sicker. For the past few days she didn't want to eat or drink anymore.



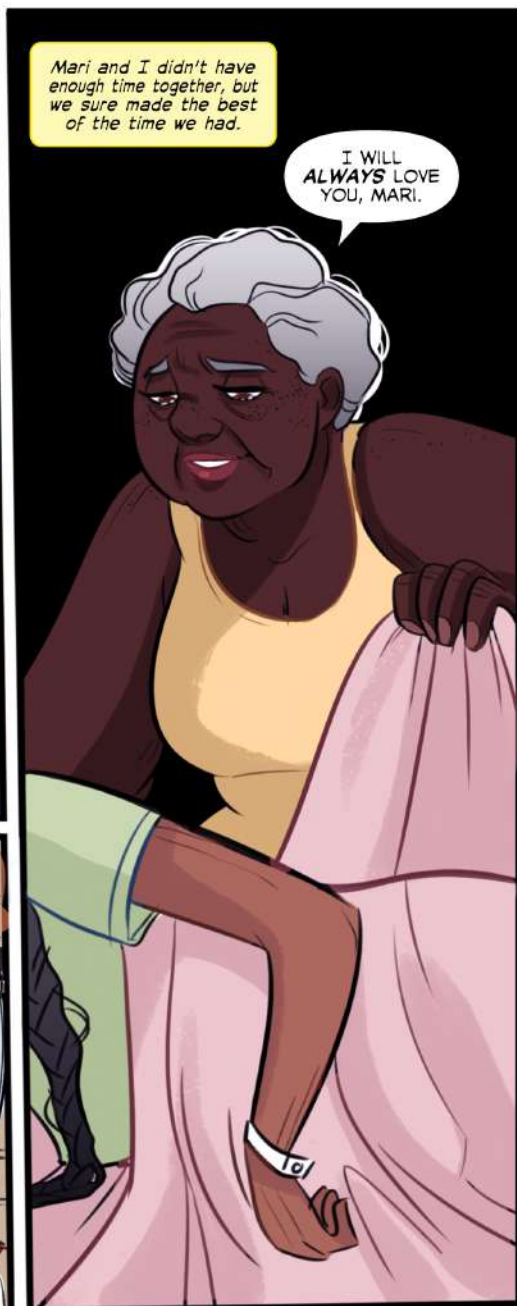
I'VE ALWAYS LOVED YOUR HAIR, MARI.
IT'S SO BEAUTIFUL AND LONG.

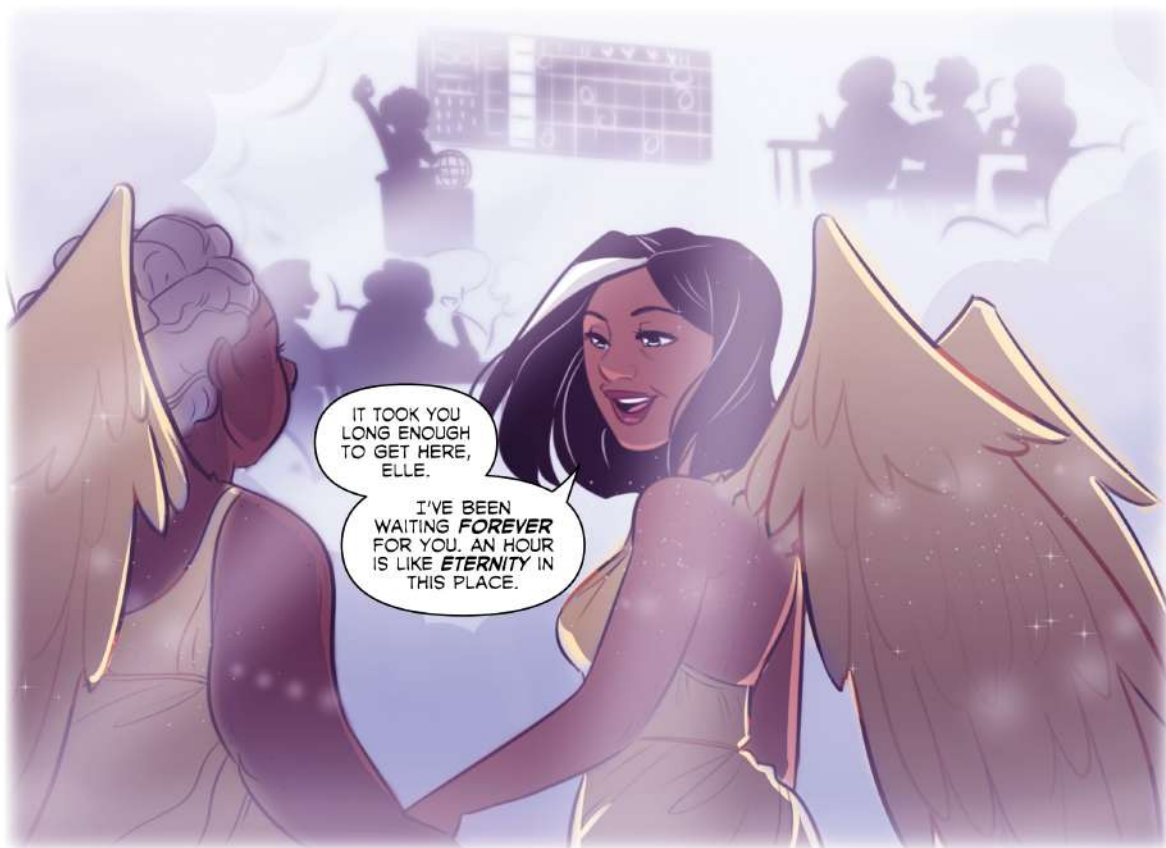


WE HAVE TO KEEP YOUR LIPS MOISTURIZED, SO I CAN KISS THEM.



C'MON. LET'S GET YOU INTO BED.





BINGO

L VE

To everyone who supported our
story of grandmothers in love,
THANK YOU!

YOU made *Bingo Love*
the success it is!





LGBT / ROMANCE
RATED T / TEEN
IMAGECOMICS.COM
BINGOLOVECOMIC.COM



Take a trip through time with Hazel Johnson and Mari McCray as they fall in love at church bingo in 1963, break up because of pressure from their families, and reunite nearly fifty years later!

"Tee Franklin's delivering a fresh, charming story of adolescent love with adorable, fluid art from Jenn St-Onge and Joy San. And if you care about representation, here's a great opportunity to step up. The world needs more stories with African American girl heroes of all different kinds, and BINGO LOVE is leading the charge."

—Greg Pak (Kingsway West, Totally Awesome Hulk)



INCLUSIVE
P R E S S