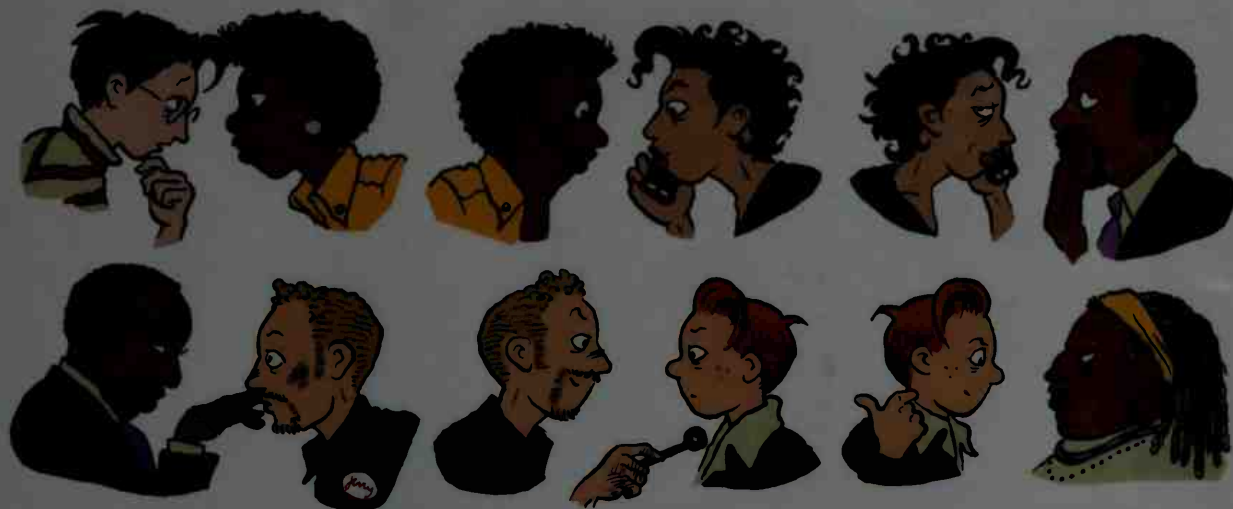




the essential

DYKES TO WATCH OUT FOR

ALISON BECHDEL *Author of*
FUN HOME

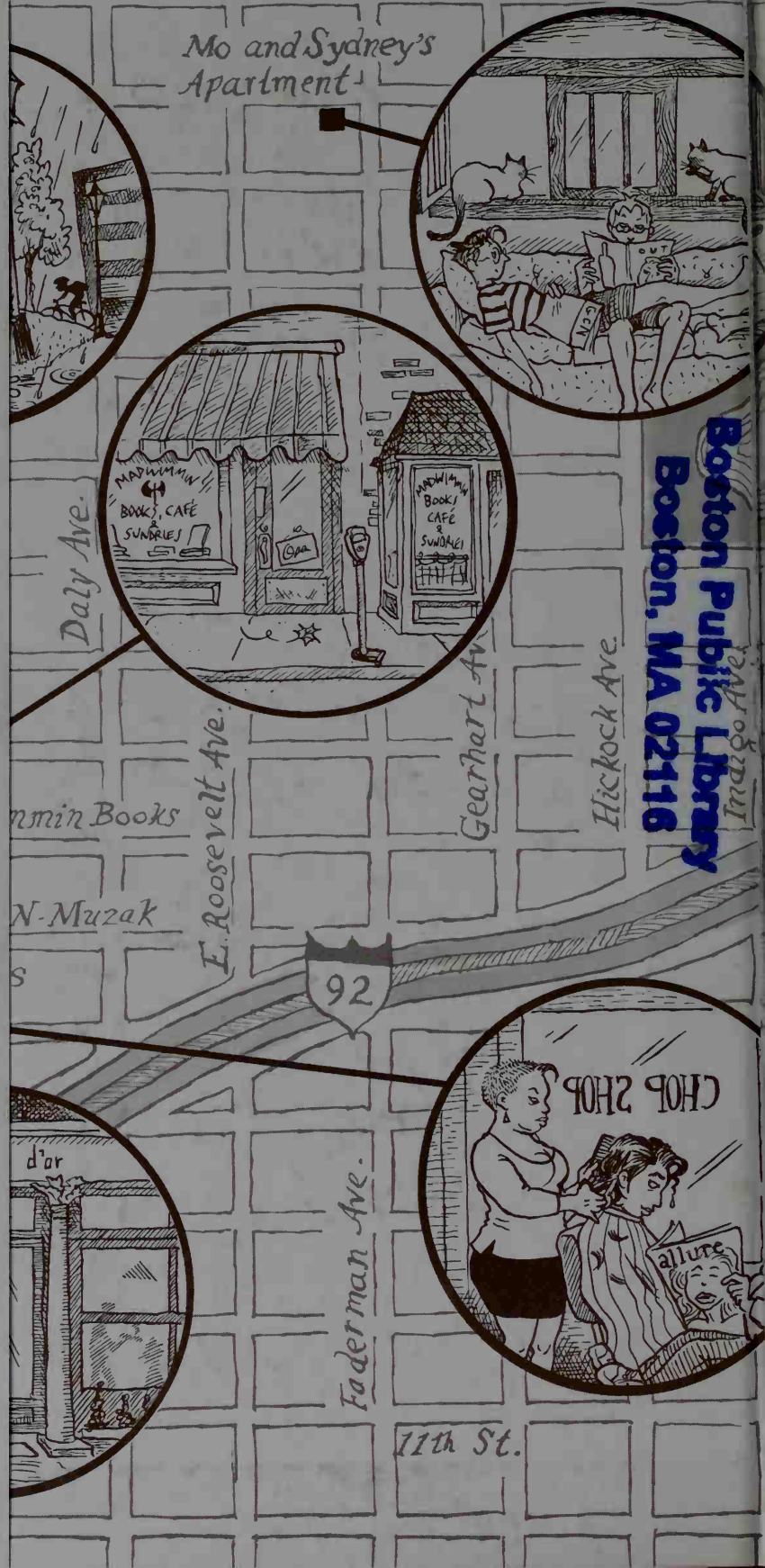


THE LIVES, LOVES, AND POLITICS OF CULT-FAV CHARACTERS
MO, LOIS, SYDNEY, SPARROW, GINGER, STUART, CLARICE, AND OTHERS

For twenty-five years Alison Bechdel's path-breaking *Dykes to Watch Out For* strip has been collected in award-winning volumes, syndicated in fifty alternative newspapers, and translated into many languages. Now, at last, *The Essential Dykes to Watch Out For* gathers a "rich, funny, deep, and impossible to put down" (*Publishers Weekly*) selection from all eleven *Dykes* volumes. Here too are sixty of the newest strips, never before published in book form.

Settle into this wittily illustrated soap opera (Bechdel calls it "half op-ed column and half endless serialized Victorian novel") of the lives, loves, and politics of a cast of characters, most of them lesbian, living in a midsize American city that may or may not be Minneapolis.

Bechdel's brilliantly imagined countercultural band of friends — academics, social workers, bookstore clerks — fall in and out of love, negotiate friendships, raise children, switch careers, and cope with aging parents. *The Essential Dykes to Watch Out For* fuses high and low culture — from foreign policy to domestic routine, postmodern theory to hot sex — in a serial graphic narrative "suitable for humanists of all persuasions."



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CRAP

to the Mall

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GOLF COURSE

Johnston Ave.

Kraich Ave.

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THE ESSENTIAL

THE **ESSENTIAL**

DYKES TO WATCH OUT FOR

ARTIST'S CONCEPT

SPLIT-LEVEL DYKES TO WATCH OUT FOR

THE FUTURE ALISON BECHTOLD

COMING TO THE SCREEN IN THE FALL OF 2001

NOT BEING SHOWN TO ANYONE BUT YOU

THE DYKES TO WATCH OUT FOR

THE DYKES TO WATCH OUT FOR

DYKES TO WATCH OUT FOR THE SEASON

THE DYKES TO WATCH OUT FOR

THE DYKES TO WATCH OUT FOR

THE DYKES TO WATCH OUT FOR

THE DYKES TO WATCH OUT FOR
BOSTON NEW YORK 2001

ALSO BY ALISON BECHDEL

FUN HOME

INVASION OF THE DYKES TO WATCH OUT FOR

DYKES AND SUNDRY OTHER CARBON-BASED LIFE FORMS TO WATCH OUT FOR

POST-DYKES TO WATCH OUT FOR

SPLIT-LEVEL DYKES TO WATCH OUT FOR

THE INDELIBLE ALISON BECHDEL

COMPLETE DYKES TO WATCH OUT FOR: VOLUME ONE

HOT THROBBING DYKES TO WATCH OUT FOR

UNNATURAL DYKES TO WATCH OUT FOR

SPAWN OF DYKES TO WATCH OUT FOR

DYKES TO WATCH OUT FOR: THE SEQUEL

NEW, IMPROVED! DYKES TO WATCH OUT FOR

MORE DYKES TO WATCH OUT FOR

DYKES TO WATCH OUT FOR

THE
ESSENTIAL
DYKES TO WATCH OUT FOR

ALISON BECHDEL



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BOSTON NEW YORK 2008

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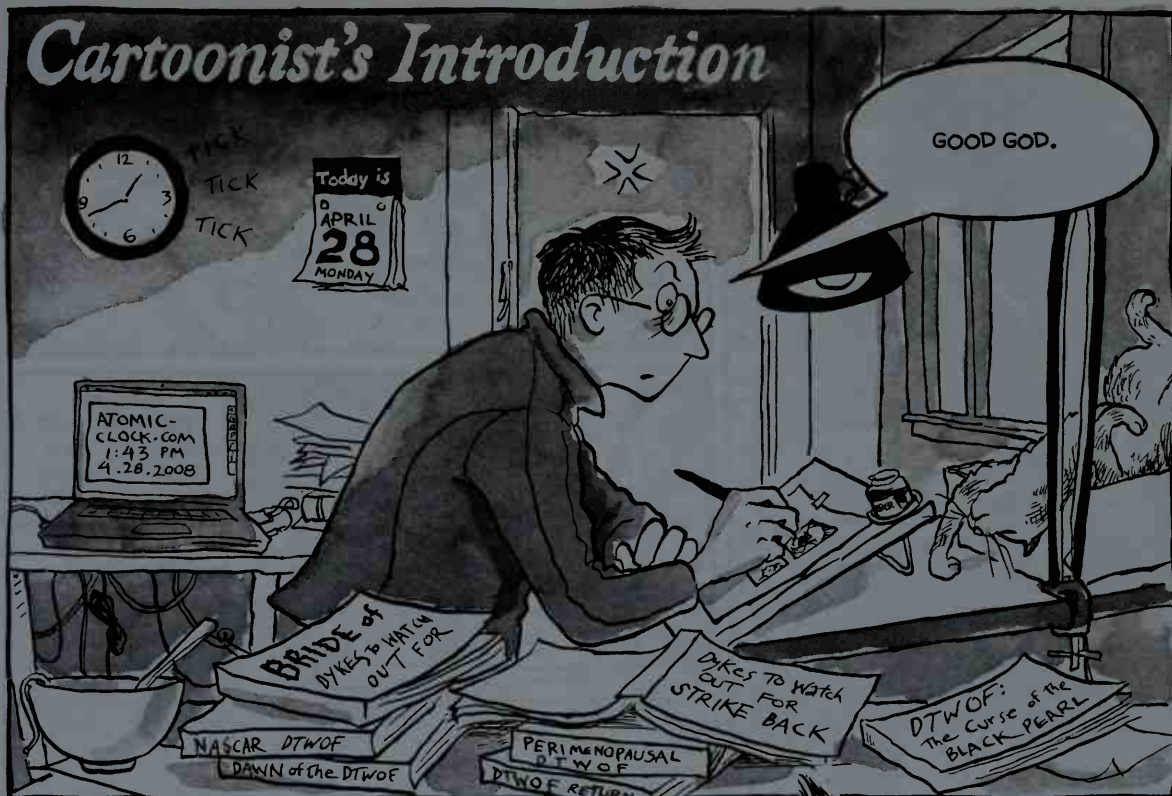
CARTOONIST'S INTRODUCTION VII

ESSENTIAL DYKES TO WATCH OUT FOR 1

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Cartoonist's Introduction

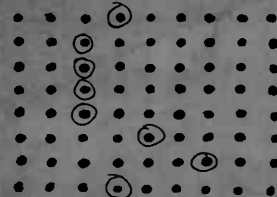




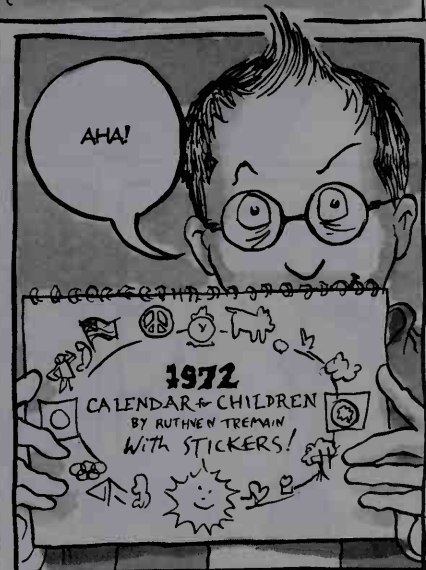
performs well where speaking is unnecessary
Art Draws in detail in realistic way.

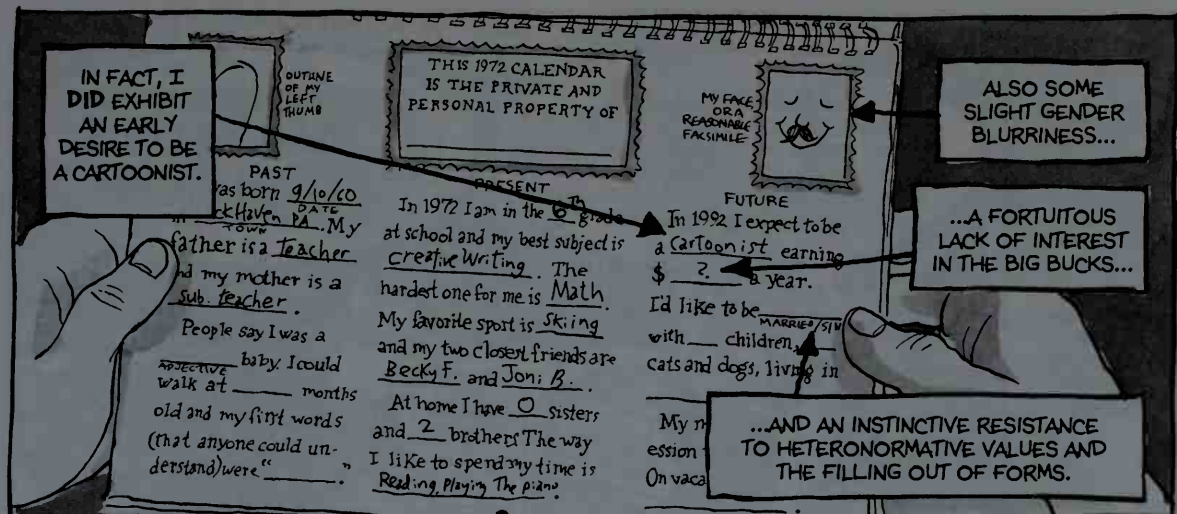
Personal Habits and Attitudes

1. Follows directions
2. Independent work
3. Completion of assigned tasks
4. Exercise of care in written work
5. Use of undirected time
6. Respect for leadership
7. Use of constructive criticism
8. Use of sound judgment

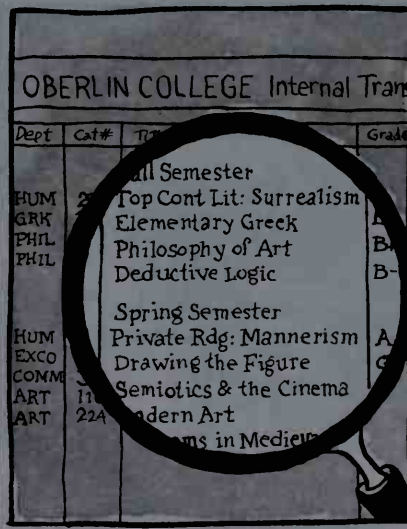
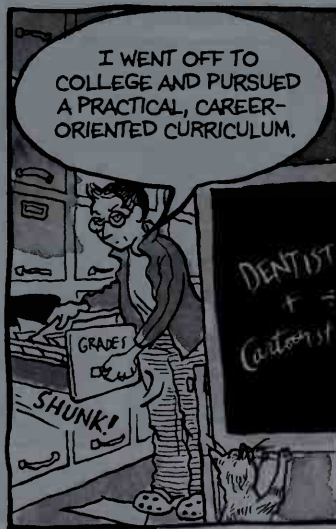
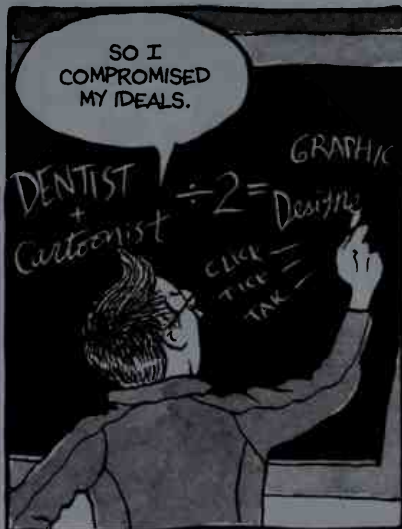
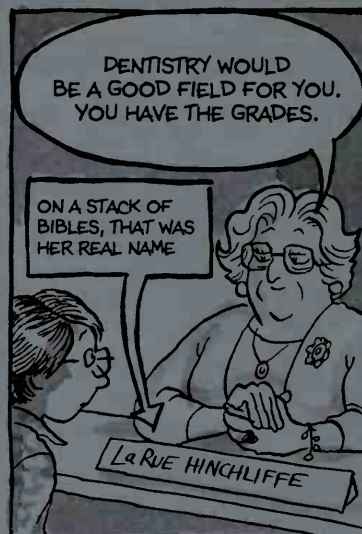


Teacher *Bertha L Boatman* Date *5/26/66*



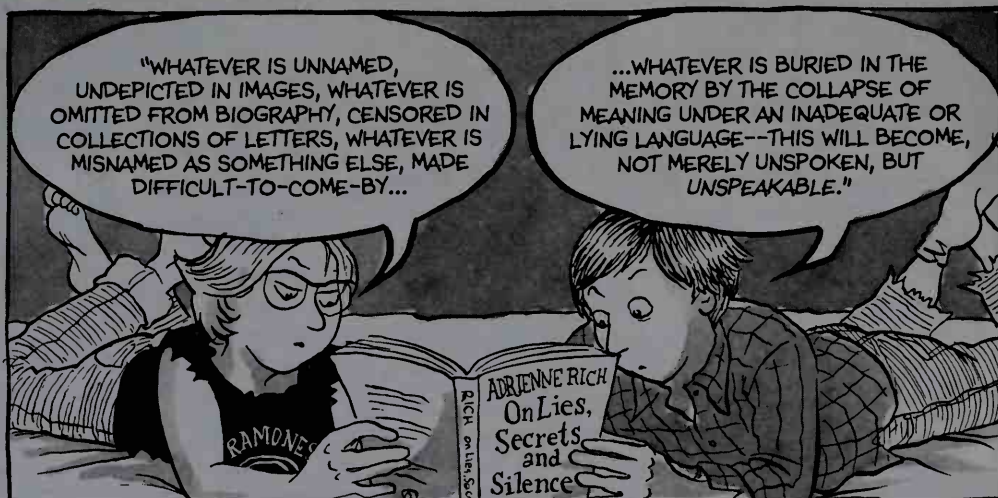


BUT SOON ENOUGH, STRONGER HEADS PREVAILED.



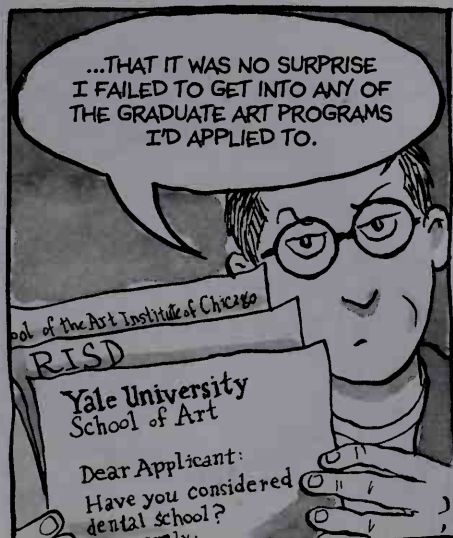
A FIELD OF STUDY THAT ENGAGED BOTH INTELLECT AND INSTINCT IN A FUSION SO HEADY...

UNOFFICIALLY, OF COURSE, I WAS MAJORING IN SOMETHING OF EVEN MORE DUBIOUS MARKETABILITY.



...SO VISCERAL...

...INDEED, SO ALL-CONSUMING...



YES, MY FRIENDS. I ATTENDED THE MFA PROGRAM OF THE **STREETS**.



ARMED WITH NOTHING BUT A HAZY MANDATE TO SPEAK THE UNSPEAKABLE, I LANDED IN NEW YORK CITY.



THE UNDERGROUND SCENE OF THE FIFTIES, THE REVOLUTIONARY FERMENT OF THE SIXTIES, THE RADICAL GAY AND LESBIAN COUNTERCULTURE OF THE SEVENTIES...



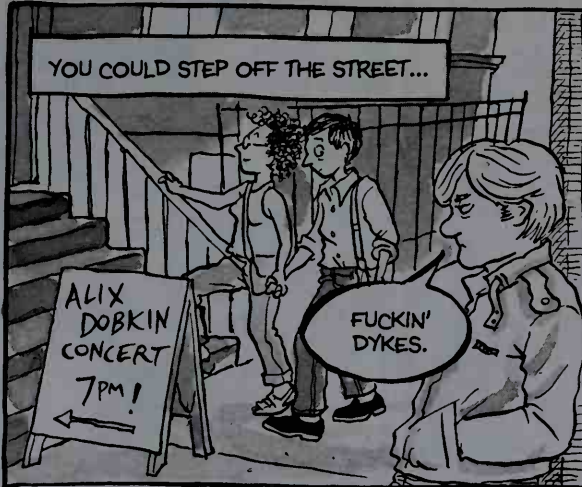
EVERYONE SEEMED TO HAVE THINGS PRETTY MUCH UNDER CONTROL.



I WAS ADRIFT THAT SUMMER. AIMLESS, LOST, AT SIXES AND SEVENS. IN SHORT, BEWILDERED.



I SAW THAT, IN FACT, THERE WAS PLENTY OF REVOLUTIONARY FERMENT STILL AFOOT.

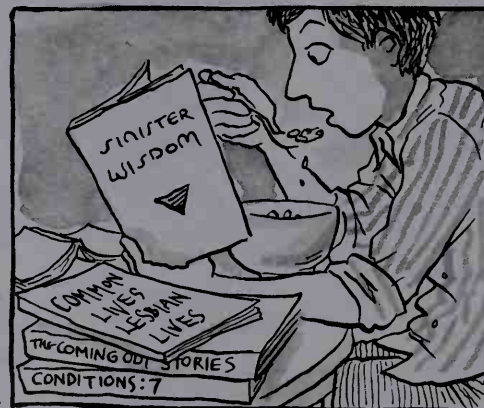


THIS UNRULY PAGEANT, THE SHEER VISUAL PLENTITUDE OF IT ALL, INDUCED A STRANGE YEARNING IN ME.

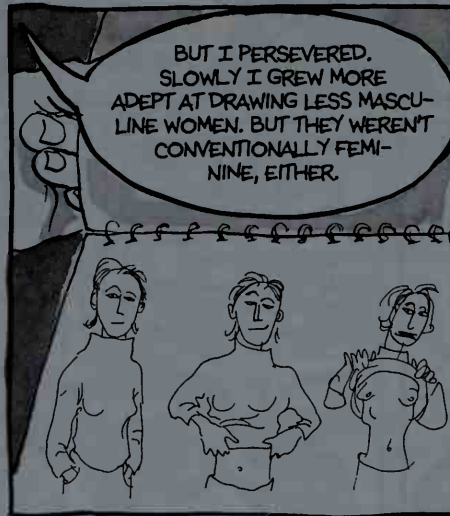
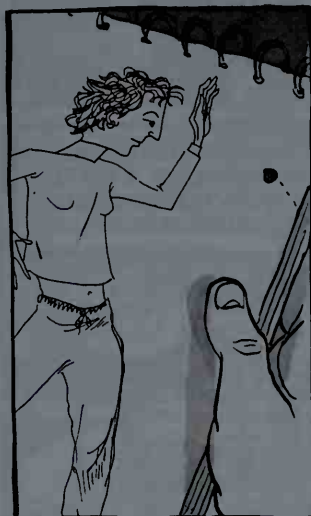
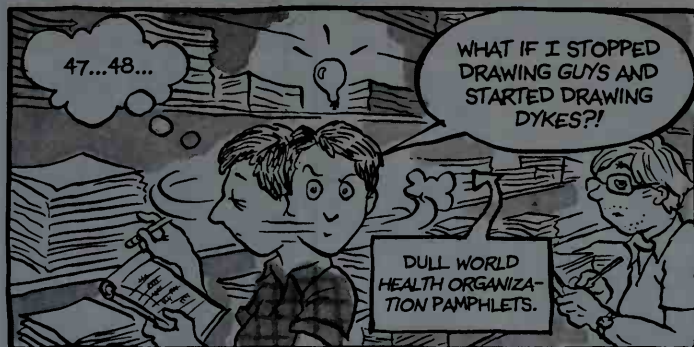


THE WRITERS I WAS DEVOURING SEEMED ABLE TO ACHIEVE THIS, TO APPREHEND THE RICH, TRANSFORMATIONAL QUALITY OF LESBIAN EXPERIENCE AND GET IT DOWN ON THE PAGE.

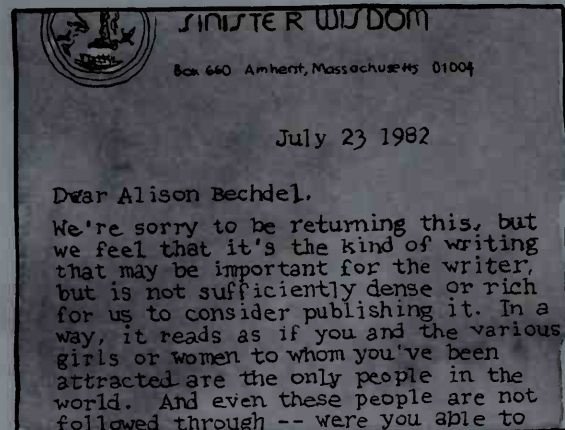
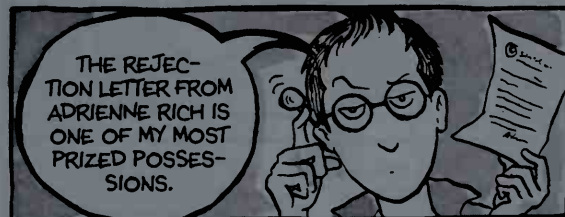
IN MY SPARE TIME, I GAVE WRITING A WHIRL.

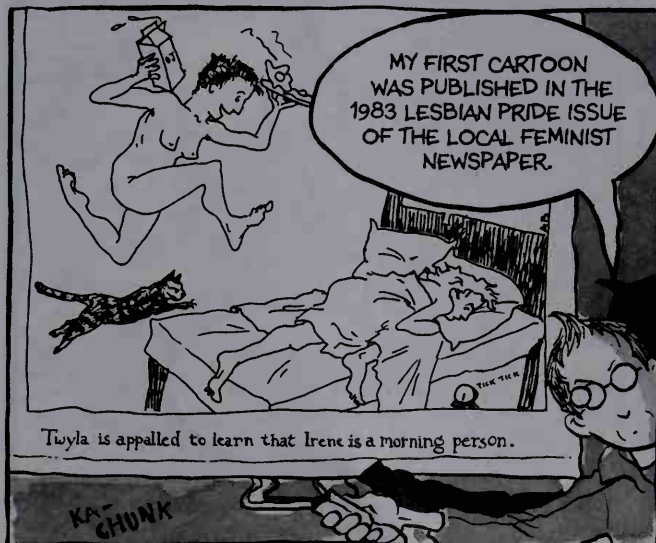
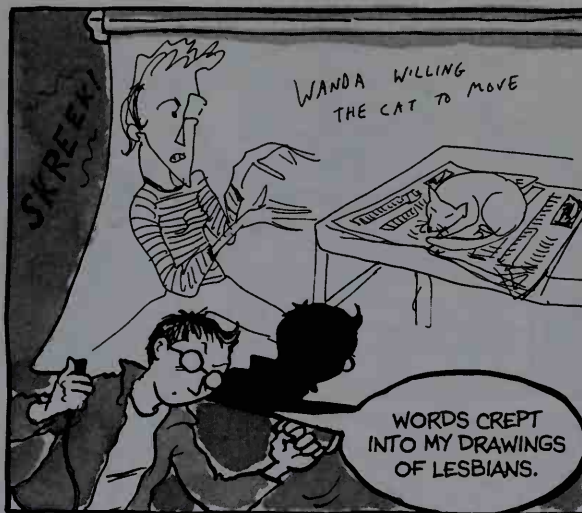


MEANWHILE, ONE AFTERNOON AT MY TEMP JOB, I HAD A REVELATION.



AT THE SAME TIME, I CONTINUED MY LITERARY EXERTIONS.





LET ME TELL YOU, MY FRIENDS. THOSE WERE BENIGHTED TIMES. DESPITE WHAT MY MOTHER THOUGHT ABOUT MY LESBIANISM...



It seems to me that you are searching for acceptance and have seized on what seems at this time the easiest solution.



...BEING AN OUT DYKE WAS NOT AN EASY ROW TO HOE. WE HAD NO "L WORD." WE HAD NO LESBIAN DAYTIME TV HOSTS. WE HAD NO OPENLY LESBIAN DAUGHTERS OF THE CREEPY VICE PRESIDENT.

WE HAD "PERSONAL BEST," AND WE LIKED IT.



I SAW MY CARTOONS AS AN ANTI-DOTE TO THE PREVAILING IMAGE OF LESBIANS AS WARPED, SICK, HUMORLESS, AND UNDESIRABLE.



OR SUPERMODEL-LIKE OLYMPIC PENTATHLETES, OBJECTIVE FODDER FOR THE MALE GAZE.



BY DRAWING THE EVERY-DAY LIVES OF WOMEN LIKE ME, I HOPED TO MAKE LESBIANS MORE VISIBLE NOT JUST TO OURSELVES BUT TO EVERYONE.

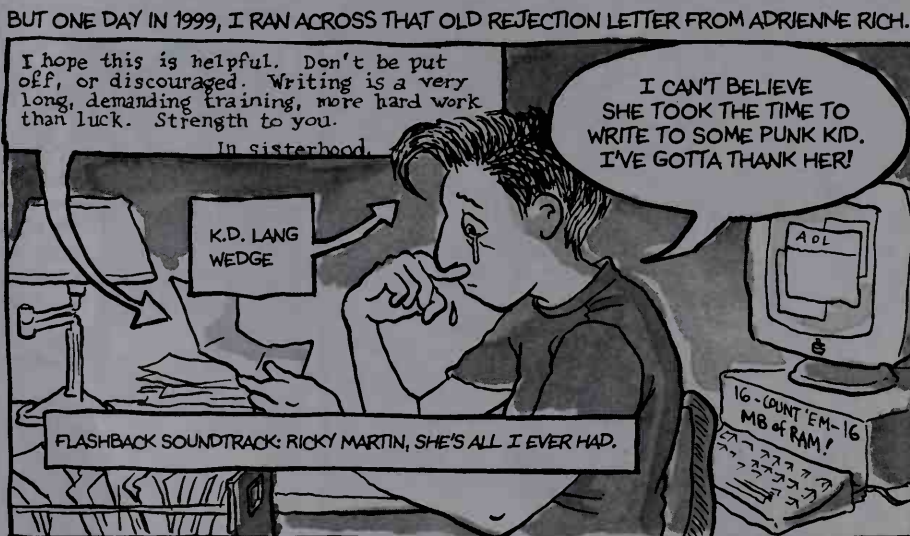
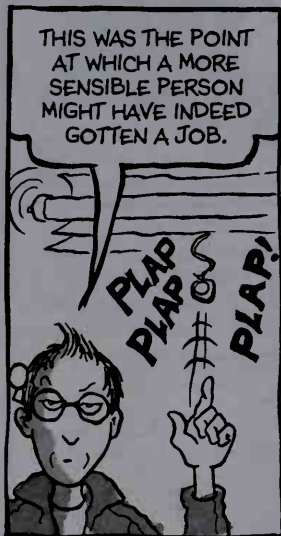
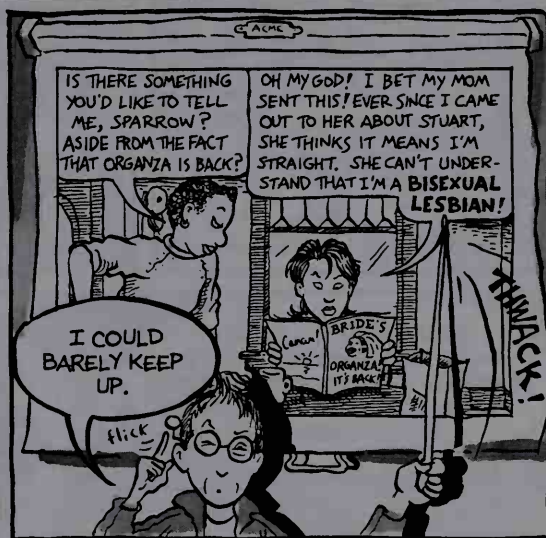


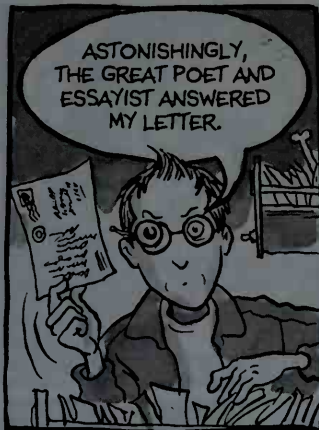
HOW COULD THEY HELP BUT LOVE US?!



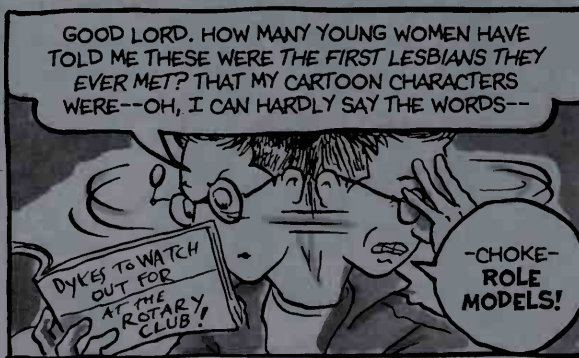
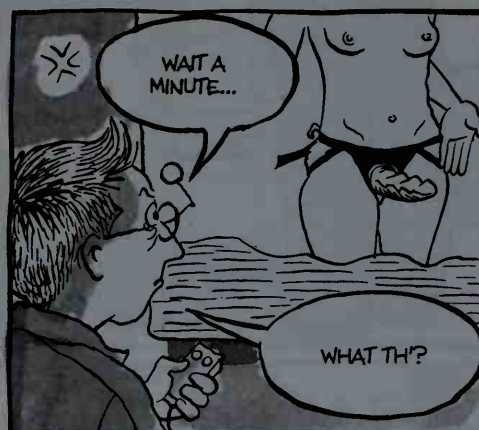
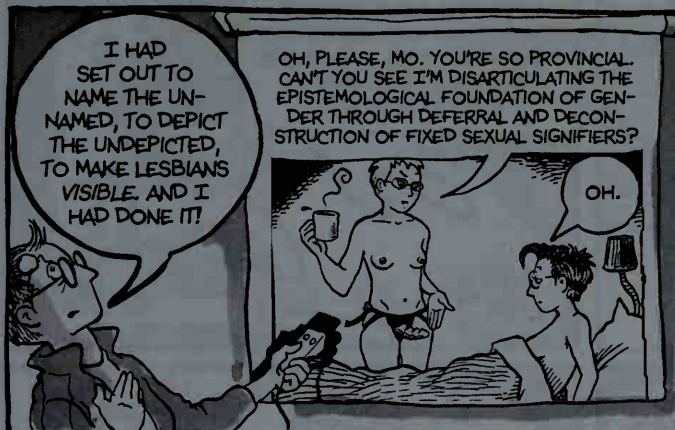
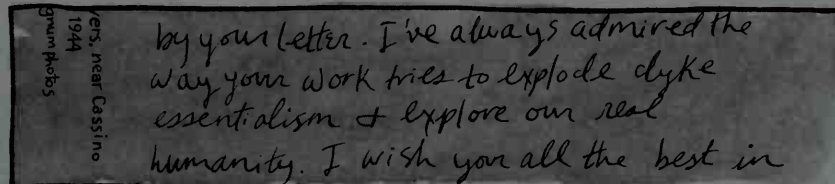
I MEAN, SERIOUSLY! LESBIANS WERE SO AWESOME! FREE THINKERS! VEGETARIANS! PACIFISTS! AT THE FOREFRONT OF EVERY SOCIAL JUSTICE MOVEMENT!







SHE SAID SHE WAS FAMILIAR WITH MY COMIC STRIP. AND FURTHERMORE...





THE
ESSENTIAL
DYKES TO WATCH OUT FOR

One Enchanted Evening

© 1987 BY ALISON BECHDEL

I'M TIRED OF BEING CELIBATE, LO! I HAVEN'T HAD SEX IN ... 8 MONTHS!



"CELIBATE"?! YOU MAKE IT SOUND LIKE IT WAS A CONSCIOUS CHOICE. ADMIT IT, MO. THE OPPORTUNITY JUST HASN'T ARISEN.

OKAY, OKAY! I ADMIT IT. BUT IT'S SO HARD TO MEET WOMEN, AND BESIDES, I HAVE SUCH HIGH STANDARDS!



YEAH, RIGHT. SO WHAT WAS WRONG WITH THE CUTE ACCOUNTANT?



SHE WASN'T POLITICAL ENOUGH. BESIDES, SHE WAS ALREADY INVOLVED!



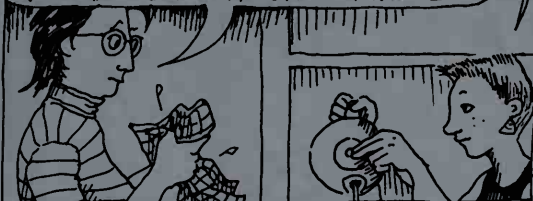
WHAT ABOUT THE WOMAN IN YOUR KARATE CLASS YOU WERE SO HOT FOR?

SHE WASN'T INTELLECTUAL ENOUGH. BESIDES, SHE DOESN'T SLEEP WITH OTHER KARATE STUDENTS. MATTER OF POLICY.



RIGHT...WHAT ABOUT NAOMI FROM THE FOOD CO-OP?

ARE YOU CRAZY? I'M WAY TOO CRUSHED OUT! I CAN'T EVEN ASK HER WHERE THE BULGHUR IS WITHOUT HYPERVENTILATING! NO...THAT KIND OF THING NEVER WORKS.



WELL...WHAT ABOUT ME?



VERY FUNNY, LOIS. YOU KNOW WE COULD NEVER HAVE AN AFFAIR! I HAVE TO FEEL ROMANTIC ABOUT SOMEONE BEFORE I SLEEP WITH THEM!



I KNOW, I KNOW. MAKING OUT WITH ME WOULD JUST BE INDULGING YOUR BASE, LOWER NATURE, RIGHT?

WELL...YEAH. SORT OF...

THANKS, MO. I'LL TAKE THAT AS A COMPLIMENT. LUCKY FOR ME, THOUGH, I DON'T BELIEVE IN "LOWER NATURE!"



WHERE ARE YOU GOING?



I HAVE A DATE FOR SOME HOT & HEAVY UNROMANCE WITH NAOMI! SHE WANTS TO TRY MY FAMOUS SEAWEEED-AVOCADO PATÉ! CIAO, BELLA!

RATZ! I NEVER HAVE ANY FUN!



IS MO A HOPELESSLY ROMANTIC IDEALIST, TRAPPED IN THE HARD-NOSED, FAST-PACED WHIRLWIND OF MODERN LESBIAN LIFE? OR IS SHE JUST A DRAG? STAY TUNED!

MO & LO in... the SKUNK

©1987 BY ALISON BECHDEL

MO'S LIFE HAS TAKEN A TURN FOR THE WORSE. STILL WITHOUT A LOVER, SHE HAS ALSO LOST HER JOB AND BECOME THE VICTIM OF A REGRETTABLE HAIRCUT?

BUT WHEN NO MAIL ARRIVES, EXCEPT FOR A REJECTION LETTER FROM A PROMINENT LESBIAN-FEMINIST LITERARY JOURNAL... EVEN OUR HEROINE'S RESILIENT NATURE IS TESTED!



I'M GONNA SUE THAT BARBER! MALPRACTICE! MENTAL CRUELTY! IRREPARABLE PSYCHOLOGICAL DAMAGE!



OH, THAT'S JUST GREAT! YOU KNOW, I DON'T UNDERSTAND HOW PEOPLE CAN LIE AROUND MAKING LOVE WHEN THERE'S SO MUCH MISERY AND DESOLATION IN THE WORLD!



AT LEAST IT'S WINTER. I CAN KEEP THIS HAT ON TILL MY HAIR GROWS BACK.



SHE TURNS TO HER FAITHFUL FRIEND LOIS FOR SUPPORT.

I'M SO DEPRESSED! HOW'M I EVER GOING TO GET A JOB LET ALONE A GIRLFRIEND, WITH THIS HAIRCUT?! I LOOK LIKE A TRANSEXUAL MARINE!



MO, YOUR HAIR WILL GROW BACK IN A FEW WEEKS!



THAT'S EASY FOR YOU TO SAY. WHAT AM I GONNA DO TILL THEN? LO, WHAT'S THAT WEIRD NOISE?



UH... IT'S NAOMI... WE'RE HAVING BREAKFAST.



MO, LIFE IS A CYCLE OF UPS AND DOWNS. THINGS WILL GET BETTER!

THAT'S REAL PROFOUND, LOIS. THANKS A LOT. I HAVE TO GO WATCH OPRAH WINFREY NOW. AT LEAST SHE HAS SOME UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORD COMPASSION!



WILL HER FRIENDSHIP WITH LO SURVIVE MO'S HARD TIMES? IS LIFE A CYCLE OF UPS AND DOWNS... OR DOES MO JUST HAVE BAD KARMA? AND THE CRUCIAL QUESTION: IS SHE A DRAG, OR WHAT?!

A RESOURCEFUL WOMAN, SHE DOES NOT GIVE IN TO DESPAIR, BUT KEEPS HERSELF BUSY.



MO, RELAX! YOU'RE GETTING ALL WORKED UP.

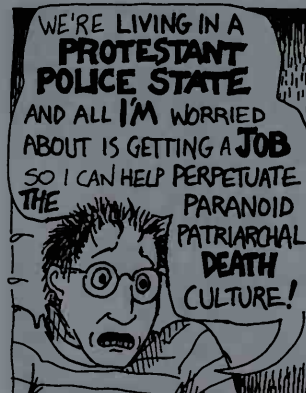
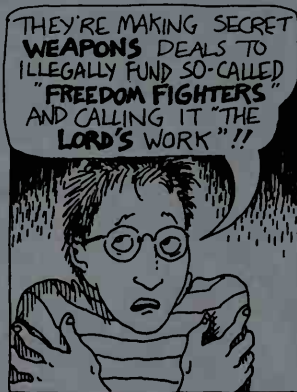
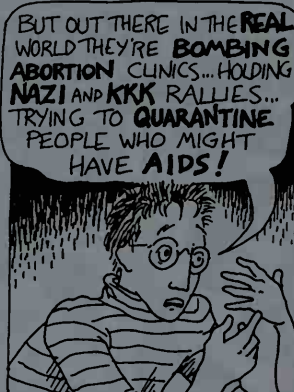
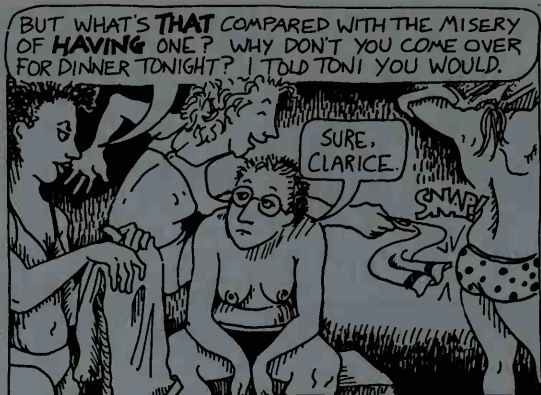


OF COURSE I'M GETTING WORKED UP! I'M ANXIOUS AND TENSE BECAUSE I HAVEN'T HAD SEX IN TEN MONTHS!



WICH ANXIETY

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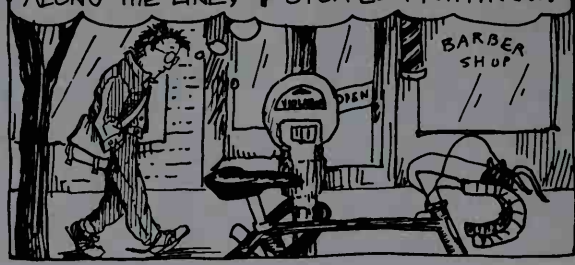
MO & CLARICE IN... the HOAX

©1987 BY ALISON BECHDEL

MO HAS DECIDED TO POSTPONE HER JOB SEARCH AND TAKE TIME TO **RE-THINK** HER **PRIORITIES**.
ON HER WAY TO A LUNCH DATE WITH HER **EX-LOVER**, CLARICE...



I REMEMBER WHEN CLARICE AND I CAME OUT TOGETHER IN COLLEGE... WE WERE SO **EXCITED**, SO **RADICAL**, SO **COMMITTED** TO **DISMANTLING** THE **PATRIARCHY**! CLARICE STILL **IS**... BUT SOMEWHERE ALONG THE LINE, I STOPPED FIGHTING...



HEY, MO! SO HOW'S THE **PRIORITY CHECK** GOING?
PAINFULLY. HOW'S LAW SCHOOL?
SAME OLD SHIT. STUDYING MY **ASS OFF**.



CLARICE, I JUST WANT YOU TO KNOW HOW MUCH I **ADMIRE** YOU, PATIENTLY PLAYING THE **BOYS' GAMES** BY THE **BOYS' RULES**, WORKING FOR CHANGE **INSIDE** THE **SYSTEM**... SLOWLY GAINING THE **POWER** TO REALLY **SHAKE** THINGS UP! **ATTACK** FROM **WITHIN**... THE **OLE** **TROJAN HORSE** PLOY...



Y'KNOW, MO, I'M REALLY GETTING **INTO** MY **CORPORATE TAX** CLASS LATELY!
LISTEN... IF I WENT INTO **CORPORATE LAW**, I COULD MAKE **\$70,000** MY **FIRST YEAR** OUT OF SCHOOL...
WHAT?



UH... JUST TO PAY BACK YOUR **LOANS**, **RIGHT**? THEN, AFTER A YEAR YOU'LL GO WORK FOR **LEGAL AID**, **RIGHT**?

WELL, I DUNNO... TONI AND I ARE THINKING OF BUYING A **HOUSE**. AND HAVING **KIDS**... YOU NEED **MONEY** FOR THAT.



CLARICE! OLD **CONRADE!** WHAT ARE YOU **SAYING**?

GODDESS **KNOWS**, US WOMEN OF COLOR HAVE A HARD ENOUGH TIME IN THIS COUNTRY... WHY SHOULDN'T I **ENJOY** THE **FRUITS** OF MY **LABORS**? GET A **MICROWAVE**, A **VOLVO** STATION **WAGON**...



CLARICE! I DIDN'T THINK IT COULD HAPPEN! **YOU**, OF ALL **PEOPLE!** MY **LAST HOPE!**

...PRIVATE SCHOOLS FOR THE KIDS... QUIET EVENINGS WITH TONI, **PORING** OVER OUR **STOCK PORTFOLIO**...



CLARICE! **SNAP OUT** OF IT! **JESUS**, WHERE ARE THOSE **DEPROGRAMMERS** WHEN YOU **NEED** ONE?!



CLARICE THE **UNSWERVING!** THE ORIGINAL **RADICAL LESBIAN FEMINIST TERRORIST!** WHAT **HOPE** IS THERE FOR **POOR WIMPS** LIKE **ME** IF EVEN YOU HAVE **KNUCKLED UNDER**?



I MAY AS WELL SEE IF THE **C.I.A.** IS **HIRING!**



IT'S MO AGAIN! AND SHE'S HAVING...

NO SEX

©1987 BY ALISON BECHDEL

LIFE PLODS ON FOR OUR AMOROUS HEROINE.

...HER EYES DARK WITH DESIRE, MONIQUE LICKED THE MELTED PAPAYA ICE CREAM FROM URSULA'S FINGERS. "I WANT YOU," WHISPERED URSULA HOARSELY, USING HER FREE HAND TO FUMBLE WITH THE ZIPPERS OF MONIQUE'S BLACK LEATHER FLIGHTSUIT...



THE NEXT MORNING FINDS MO AT HER FAVORITE LESBO HANGOUT, CAFE TOPAZ...

...ALMOST A YEAR SINCE MY LAST SEXUAL ENCOUNTER, AND STILL NO SIGN OF MS RIGHT...



MY **PENT-UP** EROTIC ENERGY IS DRIVING ME **CRAZY**... I'M ATTRACTED TO EVERY DYKE I SEE... THEY'RE ALL SO... SO **SEXY**...



THE WAY THEY LAUGH...



THE WAY THEY WALK...



THE WAY THEIR JEANS FIT...



HERE COMES A HAPPY COUPLE... LOOKS LIKE THEY JUST ROLLED OUT OF BED... THEY WERE PROBABLY **MAKING LOVE** ALL NIGHT LONG.



I STILL DON'T SEE WHY WE HAVE TO GO TO A **THERAPIST**--A COMPLETE **STRANGER**--TO DISCUSS OUR PRIVATE PROBLEMS!

BECAUSE WE'RE NOT **GETTING** ANYWHERE ON OUR **OWN**! WHEN WAS THE LAST TIME WE MADE LOVE?!



WILL YOU STOP **PRESSURING** ME ABOUT **SEX**?



PRESSURING YOU? IS IT TOO MUCH TO ASK THAT WE **MAKE LOVE** EVERY ONCE IN A WHILE? YOU USED TO **ENJOY** IT!

I **DO** ENJOY IT! JUST NOT ALL THE **TIME**!

ALL THE TIME?! AT THIS POINT I'M GRATEFUL FOR **ALTERNATE BANK HOLIDAYS**!!



WILL YOU **PLEASE** KEEP YOUR VOICE DOWN?



HERE'S YER **PANCAKES**! ANYTHING ELSE?

CAN I PLEASE LICK THE **MAPLE SYRUP** FROM YOUR **FINGERS**?

UH... NO, THANKS.



IT'S CLARICE & TONI!
AND THEY'RE...

GETTING RESPECTABLE

© 1987 BY ALISON BECHDEL

ON THE PHONE WITH MO ONE MORNING...

...BLAH, BLAH...WHINE...
NO GIRLFRIEND... NO SEX...
WHINE... BLAH, BLAH...

I KNOW, MO. BUT IT'S
SPRING! THINGS WILL
START HAPPENING AGAIN!

BYE,
DARLING!

I GUESS SO...
SO HOW ARE
YOU AND TONI?

JUST GREAT! YOU
KNOW, I DON'T THINK
I'VE EVER BEEN
SO HAPPY! IN FACT...

THAT'S NICE. WELL, I
HAVE TO GO READ THE
PERSONALS NOW. THANKS
FOR LISTENING, CLARICE!

ON CAMPUS THAT DAY...

IT'S GREAT TO **SEE** YOU,
CLARICE! IT'S BEEN
MONTHS! SO, ARE YOU &
TONI STILL TOGETHER?

UH... LAST
I HEARD,
WE WERE.

LATER IN THE AFTERNOON...

...MY OTHER GIRLFRIEND ANGELA IS
KIND OF UPTIGHT ABOUT ME SEEING
NAOMI. ANGELA'S A REAL **LINEAR**
THINKER. SHE CAN'T SEEM TO **TRAN-**
SCEND THE **MONOGAMOUS MINDSET.**

GEE, LO.
THAT'S
ROUGH.

FINALLY, BACK AT THE RANCH...

JUNE! I'M **HO-O-ME!**

IN HERE,
WARD!

TONI, AM I
STILL YOUR ONE
AND ONLY?

I THINK
SO. WHY?

I WAS AFRAID MAYBE SINCE THIS MORN-
ING YOU DECIDED THAT MONOGAMY WAS TOO
LINEAR, AND SO YOU **TRANSCENDED** IT.

WELL... IT IS KIND OF
UNCOOL... BUT I THINK
YOU'RE STUCK WITH ME.

WHY IS IT SO UNCOOL? WE DON'T GET ANY
CREDIT, TONI! WHEN I RUN INTO SOMEONE
I HAVEN'T SEEN IN A WHILE, IT'S ALWAYS
"SO, ARE YOU TWO STILL TOGETHER?" LIKE
THEY **EXPECT** US TO BREAK UP!

AND NO ONE WANTS
TO HEAR ABOUT HOW
HAPPY I AM WITH
YOU. THEY'RE ONLY
INTERESTED IN
ROMANTIC **STRIFE!**

SO, NOW WE NEED A SUPPORT
GROUP FOR HAPPY COUPLES?

YOU KNOW WHAT I MEAN! I
DON'T EXPECT ANYTHING FROM THE
STRAIGHT WORLD, BUT YOU'D THINK
AT LEAST OTHER **DYKES** WOULD
VALIDATE OUR RELATIONSHIP!

WELL... **STRAIGHT** COUPLES GET
RESPECT WHEN THEY **MARRY**.
MAYBE WE NEED TO MAKE SOME
KIND OF SYMBOLIC **AFFIRMATION**
OF OUR COMMITMENT TO
ONE ANOTHER!

YOU MEAN...

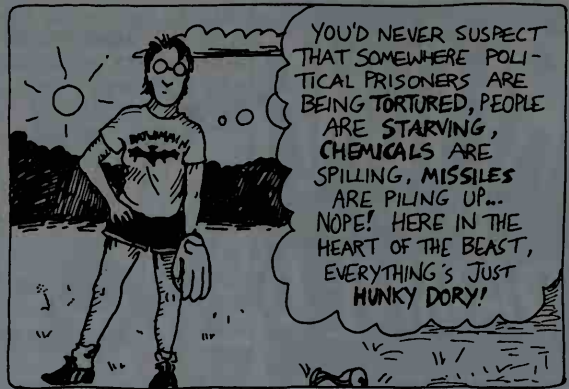
**YES! LET'S OPEN
A JOINT
CHECKING ACCOUNT!**

OH, DARLING! BUT
THIS IS SO **SUDDEN!**

ANGST IN RIGHT FIELD

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IT'S SOFTBALL SEASON AGAIN,
AND MO'S HAVING A TOUCH OF
WELTSCHMERZ IN THE LAST
INNING...



SOUTH AFRICA, CENTRAL AMERICA, AND THE MIDDLE EAST ARE ALL FAR AWAY. WE CAN WATCH THEM SAFELY ON THE NEWS EVERY NIGHT...



AND WHEN SOMETHING GETS TOO CLOSE TO HOME, THE NETWORKS FIND WAYS TO KEEP IT PALATABLE AND UNINFORMATIVE...



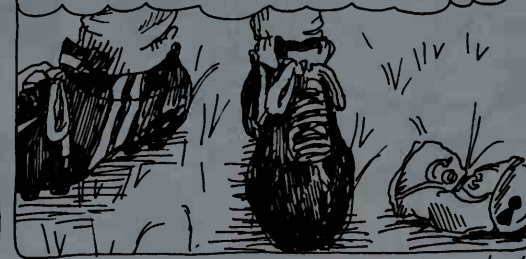
LIKE CALLING **OLIVER NORTH** AND HIS HENCHMEN 'KEY PLAYERS' IN THE IRAN-CONTRA DEAL, INSTEAD OF SOMETHING LESS POSITIVE LIKE 'CRIMINALLY INSANE HYPERMILITARY @*#&*! WARMONGERS!'



'KEY PLAYERS'! HMPH! MAKES 'EM SOUND LIKE GODDAMN FOOTBALL HEROES! LIES! CORRUPTION! HYPOCRISY!



AND PEOPLE SWALLOW IT! WELL, WHAT DO I EXPECT FROM A NATION THAT EQUATES TRUTH AND BEAUTY WITH HALLMARK CARDS? A NATION OF MINDLESS CONSUMERS GOBBLING UP NATURAL RESOURCES AND LEAVING ALL THIS SHIT BEHIND!



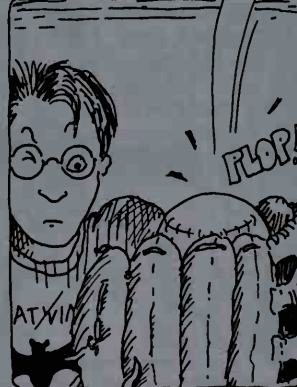
I MEAN, THE GLOBAL CLIMATE IS CHANGING BECAUSE WE'VE FUCKED UP THE ENVIRONMENT SO BAD!



I WONDER WHICH WILL COME FIRST, THE NEXT ICE AGE OR NUCLEAR HOLOCAUST?



HOW CAN WE STAND HERE PLAYING SOFTBALL? I MEAN, WHAT'S THE POINT ???



RESUME OF THE DAMNED

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THANKS FOR COMING OVER, LOIS! MY **UNEMPLOYMENT** RUNS OUT IN A COUPLE WEEKS AND I GOTTA GET MY **RESUME** TOGETHER.

NO PROBLEM, MO OLD PAL! I'M GOOD AT THIS KIND OF THING!

OKAY. LET'S START WITH YOUR LAST JOB.

PROOFREADER AND PRODUCTION ASSISTANT FOR THE NOW-DEFUNCT **GAYLY FORWARD NEWS**

...AND BEFORE THAT?

OFFICE ASSISTANT AT THE **ABORTION RIGHTS ACTION COUNCIL**.



UH... OKAY. AND BEFORE THAT?

DELIVERY PERSON FOR THE **COMMON WOMEN** (THAT'S WITH AN 'O') BREAD COLLECTIVE.

HM... THIS ISN'T SOUNDING TOO PROMISING... HOW ABOUT **VOLUNTEER WORK**?

WELL, I HAVE GOOD **EDITING** SKILLS FROM MY TWO YEARS ON THE STAFF OF THE **LESBIAN RAG**...

I GOT EXPERIENCE DOING **COUNSELING** WHEN I VOLUNTEERED AT THE BATTERED WOMEN'S SHELTER...

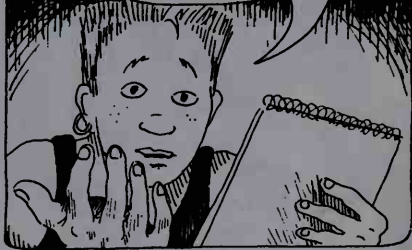


AND I HAVE **FACILITATING** AND **ORGANIZING** SKILLS FROM PLANNING DEMONSTRATIONS WITH THE **CLARA LEMLICH MEMORIAL AFFINITY GROUP** AND **GRAFFITI GUERRILLAS**!

MO, MO, MO... HAVEN'T YOU DONE ANYTHING LESS, UH... LESS **PROGRESSIVE**?

WHADDAYA MEAN?

I MEAN, WHO'S GONNA HIRE YOU WITH A RESUME LIKE **THIS**? COMON MO, **THINK!** YOU MUST HAVE DONE **SOME WORK** WHICH HAD **LITTLE OR NO** SOCIALLY REDEEMING **VALUE!**



WELL **JEEZ**, LOIS! I'M NOT **TRYING** TO GET A JOB WITH THE **STATE DEPARTMENT!**

OKAY, FINE! **BE** DOWNWARDLY MOBILE! **GET** ANOTHER LOW-PAYING JOB IN SOME IDEALISTIC, GOODY-TWO-SHOES ALTERNATIVE ORGANIZATION! SEE IF I CARE!



BY THE WAY, WE NEED ANOTHER **CASHIER** AT THE WOMEN'S BOOKSTORE. \$5 AN HOUR, NO BENEFITS. WHY DON'T YOU COME BY DURING MY SHIFT TOMORROW AND APPLY?

WHAT A PAL!



A LESSON in GRAVITY

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AS WE WAIT TO HEAR WHETHER MO HAS BEEN HIRED AS A CASHIER AT MADWIMMIN BOOKS, WE TURN OUR ATTENTION TO ANOTHER OF HER MANY PROBLEMS!

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WE FIND MO & CLARICE LIMBERING UP BEFORE KARATE CLASS...

MY SUPPLE YOUNG BODY IS SLOWLY WASTING AWAY FROM LACK OF USE, CLARICE! WHAT AM I GONNA DO? I NEED A LOVE INTEREST!

MO, YOU'RE TRYING TOO HARD! PEOPLE PICK THAT UP AND IT SCARES THEM OFF!

WHY? I'M A NICE CATCH! SHY BUT PASSIONATE, POLITICALLY AWARE, SKILLED IN SELF-DEFENSE!

NAH... THAT HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH IT. WOMEN WILL RUN AWAY FROM THE MOST SOCIALLY CONSCIOUS, MOST EMOTIONALLY TOGETHER, MOST HOT-LOOKING DYKE IN THE WORLD IF THEY SENSE SHE'S LOOKING FOR A LOVER!

I WOULDN'T! WHERE IS SHE?

YES, YOU WOULD. IT'S A LAW OF GRAVITY. THE MORE DESPERATE YOU ARE, THE MORE YOU REPEL WOMEN!

WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT, CLARICE? REMEMBER OUR SOPHOMORE YEAR IN COLLEGE? WE WERE SO DESPERATE FOR EACH OTHER WE FLUNKED EVERYTHING EXCEPT OUR WOMEN'S STUDIES CLASS!

OH, MO... THAT WAS DIFFERENT. IT WAS ALL NEW TO US THEN. YOU'RE MORE EXPERIENCED NOW. AND YOU'RE NOT GOING TO FIND A LOVER UNTIL YOU GET TO THE POINT WHERE YOU REALLY AREN'T LOOKING FOR ONE.

BUT I NEED TO HAVE SEX! SOON! I'M TIRED OF CREATIVE MASTURBATION!

TIRED OF IT! I'LL BET YOU HAVEN'T TRIED IT WITH JELLO YET!

I HAVE TOO. YOU TOLD ME THAT ONE MONTHS AGO.

MO, LISTEN. I KNOW YOU'RE HAVING A ROUGH TIME, BUT IT'S HARD BEING SUPPORTIVE AND ENCOURAGING WHEN ALL YOU DO IS WHINE!

WHINE? ME? CLARICE, I DON'T WHINE... DO I?

IS MO GOING TOO FAR? IS SHE STARTING TO REPEL HER FRIENDS AS WELL AS POTENTIAL LOVERS? WILL SHE GET HER ACT TOGETHER? BEAR WITH HER A LITTLE LONGER, AND MAYBE YOU'LL FIND OUT!

PRIDE & PREJUDICE

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SATURDAY NIGHT —PART I—

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AT LONG LAST, OUR HEROINE HAS REJOINED THE RANKS OF THE **GAINFULLY EMPLOYED**.

IT'S SATURDAY AFTERNOON AND SHE'S JUST FINISHING HER FIRST WEEK OF **CASHIERING** AT **MADWIMMIN BOOKS**.

ONE BUMPER STICKER, ONE SMALL CRYSTAL, ONE COPY **ON OUR BACKS**, ONE PACKAGE INCENSE... THAT'LL BE \$12.49.

PHEW! QUITTING TIME!

G'NIGHT, JEZANNA! SEE YOU MONDAY!

GOOD WEEKEND, MO!

MO IS IN A PARTICULARLY GOOD MOOD BECAUSE TONIGHT IS THE FIRST BIG SOCIAL EVENT IN WEEKS... THE **BENEFIT DANCE FOR THE LESBIAN HEALTH COLLECTIVE!**



AFTER A QUICK SUPPER...



MO BEGINS HER **GROOMING RITUAL** WITH GREAT ANTICIPATION.



A LITTLE **STYLING GEL** FOR THAT **WINDBLOWN LOOK!**



AND NOW... WHAT TO WEAR? SHORTS? NAH... TOO PLAYFUL... JEANS? CAN'T GO WRONG WITH **JEANS**...



FINALLY, SHE'S DRESSED...

A DISCREET **EARRING**... AND A DROP OF SANDALWOOD OIL TO ACCENTUATE MY **AURA OF MYSTIQUE!**



...AND ON HER WAY.



BUT HORRORS! IN HER EAGERNESS, **MO** HAS ARRIVED RIGHT ON TIME!!



STAY TUNED TO DISCOVER THE OUTCOME OF THIS MOST **AWKWARD PREDICAMENT!!**

SATURDAY NIGHT

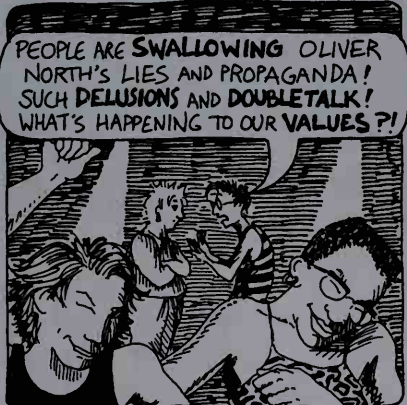
PART 2

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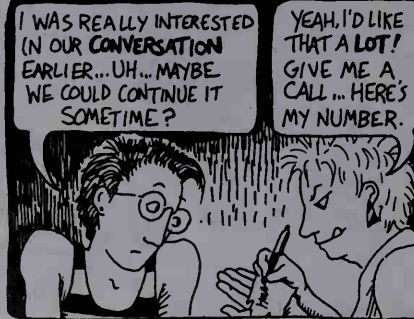
HAVING ARRIVED AT THE BIG DANCE UNFASHIONABLY EARLY, OUR HEROINE IS ENDEAVORING TO REMAIN CALM.



SUDDENLY NERVOUS, MO FINDS HERSELF STRANGELY UNABLE TO MAKE LIGHT, FRIENDLY CHIT-CHAT!



THEY DANCE A FEW SONGS, THEN GO THEIR SEPARATE WAYS... BUT BEFORE THE NIGHT IS OUT, THEY MEET AGAIN.



LET'S JOIN CLARICE & TONI AS THEY SPEND SOME...

"QUALITY TIME"

TOGETHER!

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IT'S WEDNESDAY MORNING...

UGH! NOT AGAIN! DIDN'T WE JUST WAKE UP **YESTERDAY**?

BEEP BEEP! BEEP BEEP BEEP!

ZNK.

CAN YOU DRIVE ME TO SCHOOL? I HAVE SOME LAST-MINUTE WORK TO DO BEFORE MY **TORTS** EXAM.

SKRITCH SKRITCH

OKAY, BUT HURRY UP. I'VE GOT TO DROP THE TRUCK OFF WITH THE **MECHANIC** ON MY WAY TO WORK. THE **MUFFLER'S** SHOT.

CAN I BORROW SOME UNDERWEAR?

THIS IS MY **LAST PAIR**! I THOUGHT YOU WERE GOING TO DO THE **LAUNDRY** YESTERDAY!

DAMMIT! NO MILK! I HATE EATING DRY CEREAL!

HAVE YOU PAID THE PHONE BILL? WE GOT A FINAL NOTICE YESTERDAY.

DISCONNECTION

THE **TOAST**!

¡AY!

OH, NO!

WHAT?

WE FORGOT OUR **ANNIVERSARY** AGAIN! MONDAY WAS OUR **FIFTH**!

CRUNCH CRUNCH

SCRAPE SCRAPE

TORTS

DATES

WELL, LET'S CELEBRATE TONIGHT, THEN.

I CAN'T. THE WOMEN OF COLOR ANTI-VIOLENCE PROJECT IS MEETING AT 8.

OH, WELL. I SHOULD GO TO KARATE CLASS ANYWAY, AND MO WANTS TO HAVE DINNER WITH ME. HOW ABOUT **TOMORROW** NIGHT?

I HAVE **THERAPY** TOMORROW NIGHT.

THERAPY? I THOUGHT YOU WERE FINISHED WITH THERAPY!

FINISHING. I'M IN THE PROCESS OF **FINISHING**. DON'T YOU LISTEN TO ME ANYMORE?

HOW COULD I **LISTEN** TO YOU? WE HAVEN'T HAD TIME FOR A CONVERSATION IN **WEEKS**!

HELL! IT'S LATER THAN I THOUGHT! THE ALARM CLOCK MUST BE SLOW AGAIN! I DON'T HAVE TIME TO DROP YOU OFF.

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY! BYE!

SAME TO YOU. BRING HOME SOME MILK.

RISKY Business

part one

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MO HAS JUST RUSHED OVER TO LOIS'S HOUSE TO WELCOME HER BACK FROM THE MICHIGAN WOMYN'S MUSIC FESTIVAL!

IT WAS WILD, MO! IT POURED RAIN THE WHOLE FIVE DAYS! I HAD SUCH A GREAT TIME!

IT SOUNDS MISERABLE

IT WAS SO PRIMAL! ESPECIALLY THE MUD WRESTLING! I FELT SO CLOSE TO THE EARTH!

MUD WHAT?

WRESTLING! YOU KNOW... PLAYING AND SLIDING IN THE MUD WITH A BUNCH OF NAKED WOMEN!

OH. RIGHT.

THAT'S WHERE I MET KATHLEEN! SHE ALMOST GOT ME IN A HAMMER LOCK, BUT I WAS TOO SLIPPERY FOR HER!

WE RACED TO THE SHOWERS, THEN WENT TO HER TENT AND HAD PASSIONATE SEX AS IT STARTED TO POUR AGAIN!

LOIS, ARE YOU MAKING THIS UP?

THE NEXT MORNING I WENT TO A WORKSHOP ON "PARTHENO-GENESIS WITH GEMSTONES", WHERE I MET AMETHYST. WHAT A FASCINATING WOMAN!

DIDJA GO TO HER TENT TOO?

NO, SHE CAME TO MINE. Y'KNOW, I THINK SHE FOUND MY G-SPOT!

LO-IS!

COME ON, MO SPARE ME THE PURITAN ROUTINE.

LOIS, YOU CAN'T JUST GO AROUND BEDDING EVERY WOMAN YOU MEET! HAVEN'T YOU HEARD? THERE'S AN EPIDEMIC GOING ON!

AW, MO, RELAX! LESBIANS ARE A LOW-RISK GROUP! I'M NOT GONNA GET AIDS FROM SLEEPING AROUND WITH OTHER WOMEN!

LOIS! BEING A DYKE DOESN'T MEAN YOU CAN'T GET AIDS! HOW DO YOU KNOW WHO ELSE ANEMONE OR ARTEMIS OR WHATEVER THE HELL HER NAME IS HAS SLEPT WITH?! YOU HAVE TO STOP HAVING SEX !!!

1 IS MO OVER-REACTING? IS LOIS UNDER-REACTING? THE DEBATE HEATS UP IN OUR NEXT EPISODE!

STAY TOONED!

TO BE CONTINUED...

RISKY Business

- part - two

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IN OUR LAST EPISODE, WE LEFT MO AND LOIS ON THE BRINK OF A DISPUTE REGARDING LOIS'S EROTIC EXPLOITS IN THE FACE OF AIDS!

STOP HAVING SEX?! WHAT'S WITH YOU, MO? HAVE YOU BECOME A FUNDAMENTALIST SINCE I LAST SAW YOU?!

LOIS, THE REASON LESBIANS ARE **LOW-RISK** IS BECAUSE, IN GENERAL, WE DON'T HAVE A LOT OF **CASUAL SEX**. BUT YOU SEEM BENT ON SINGLE-HANDEDLY **REVERSING** THAT TRAIT!



THAT'S **BULLSHIT!** SINCE WHEN HAVE YOU BECOME AN EXPERT ON THE RATE OF CASUAL SEX IN THE LESBIAN COMMUNITY, **SISTER CELIBATE?**



LOIS'S HOUSEMATE **GINGER** STEPS INTO THE FRAY...

OOH! **LOW BLOW**, LOIS! BUT YOU **ARE** WRONG, MO. **SLEEPING AROUND** ISN'T WHAT CAUSES AIDS... IT'S A **VIRUS**.



PART OF THE REASON DYKES ARE **LOW-RISK** IS BECAUSE IT'S JUST **HARDER** TO **TRANSMIT** DISEASES SEXUALLY BETWEEN TWO WOMEN THAN WHEN THERE'S **SPERM** BEING ABSORBED.



THANK YOU, GINGER.

HARDER, I SAID. NOT **IMPOSSIBLE**. REMEMBER THE TIME YOU CAUGHT THE **YEAST INFECTION** FROM THAT WOMAN VISITING FOR THE **WITCHCRAFT** CONFERENCE, AND THEN YOU GAVE IT TO **ANGELA?**



YEAH! SO THERE, MS. **DON JUANITA!**

HUH! I **FORGOT** ABOUT THAT... JEEZ, MAYBE I SHOULD'VE **TALKED** ABOUT THIS STUFF WITH **AMARYLLIS**... ER,... **AMETHYST**... BEFORE WE **SLEPT** TOGETHER...

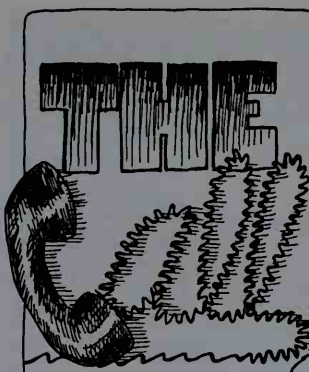


I GUESS WE **ALL** GOTTA START TALKING ABOUT IT.

YEAH, GREAT. I HAVE A HARD ENOUGH TIME ASKING FOR A **DATE** LET ALONE GRILLING SOMEONE ON HER **SEXUAL HISTORY**.

WELL, LOOK ON THE **BRIGHT** SIDE, MO. IT GIVES YOU SOMETHING **NEW** TO WORRY ABOUT!





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THE BALL IS IN OUR HEROINE'S COURT! IT'S BEEN SEVERAL WEEKS SINCE THE DANCE WHERE HARRIET GAVE MO HER PHONE NUMBER... BUT MO IS STILL DELIBERATING OVER WHETHER TO FOLLOW THROUGH...

17



BUT WHAT IF SHE'S IN THE BATHTUB?? WHAT IF, LIKE, HER PARAKEET JUST DIED OR SOMETHING? WHAT IF SHE'S EXPECTING A CALL FROM SOMEONE ELSE SHE GAVE HER NUMBER TO?

MO, WHAT IF RONALD REAGAN DECIDES IT'S TIME TO PUSH THE BUTTON AND WE'RE ALL REDUCED TO SUBATOMIC PARTICLES BEFORE DINNER'S READY?



JEEZ! I NEVER THOUGHT OF THAT! I BETTER CALL RIGHT NOW!

I KNEW THAT WOULD GET HER.

YOU SLY DEVIL.



HI, ... UH... HARRIET? THIS IS MO... I TALKED TO YOU AT THE DANCE FOR THE LESBIAN HEALTH COLLECTIVE...



MO! I'M GLAD YOU CALLED! WHAT'S UP?



WHAT'S UP? UH... I DUNNO. I JUST THOUGHT I'D CALL AND, UH... Y'KNOW... SEE HOW YOU WERE... HOW ARE YOU?!



ACTUALLY, AT THE MOMENT I'M KIND OF FRUSTRATED. I HAD THIS RIDE LINED UP FOR THE MARCH ON WASHINGTON AND IT JUST FELL THROUGH.



YEAH? WELL... GOSH, UH... Y'KNOW, YOU COULD RIDE WITH ME!



SURE! IT'S JUST ME, CLARICE, TONI AND LOIS IN LOIS'S OLD VW BUG! PLENTY OF ROOM! ... OKAY! ... SO I'LL CALL YOU WITH THE DETAILS IN A COUPLE DAYS... NOT AT ALL! NICE TALKING TO YOU TOO! BYE!



SO, SOUNDS LIKE YOU HAVE A DATE.



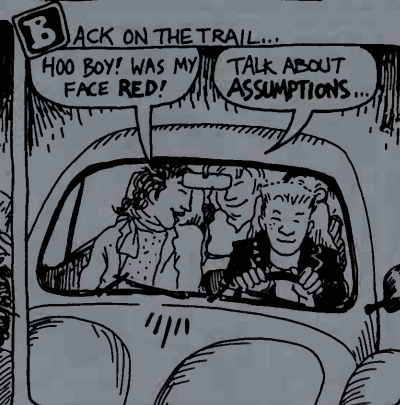
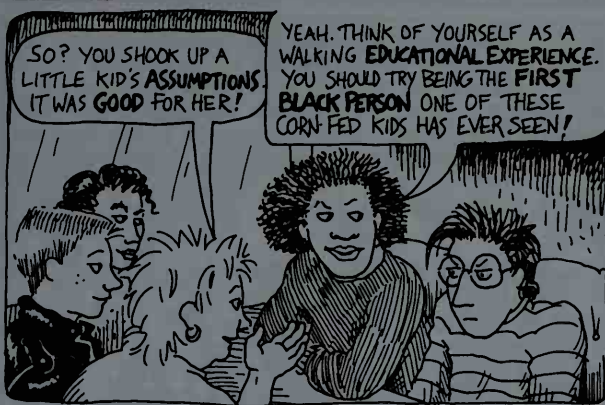
A DATE? WELL, I MEAN, ALL I DID WAS OFFER HER A RIDE. I HOPE SHE DOESN'T THINK I'M JUST LOOKING FOR A DATE! I MEAN, DIDJA THINK I WAS TOO HEAVYHANDED? DID I SOUND LIKE I JUST WANTED TO SLEEP WITH HER?

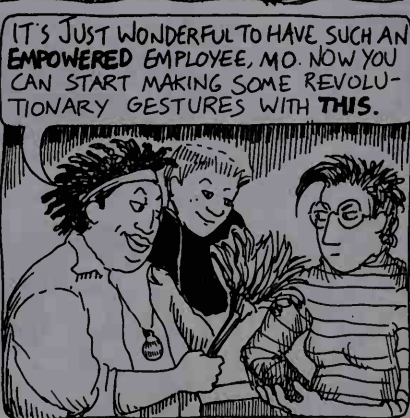
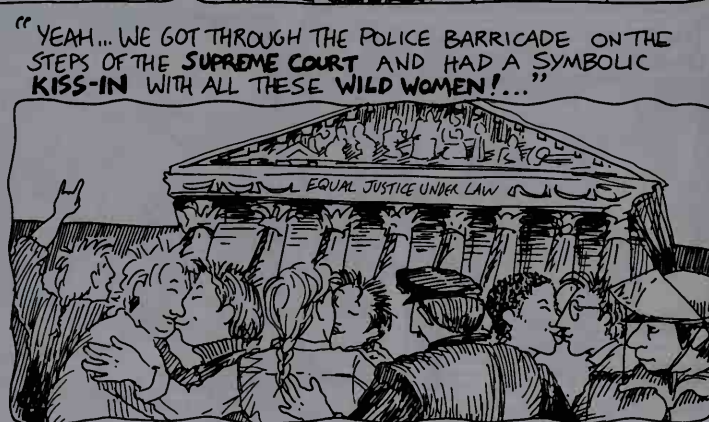
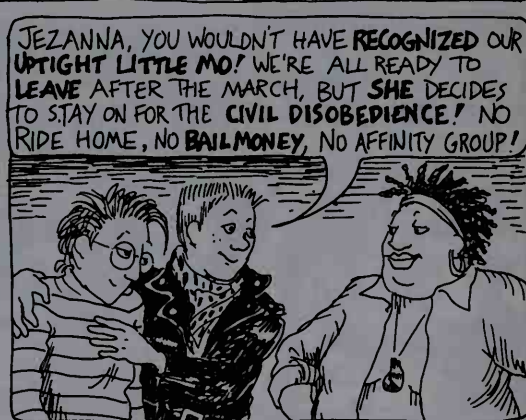
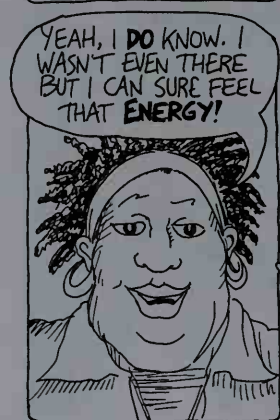


IT'S GONNA BE A LONG WAY TO D.C.



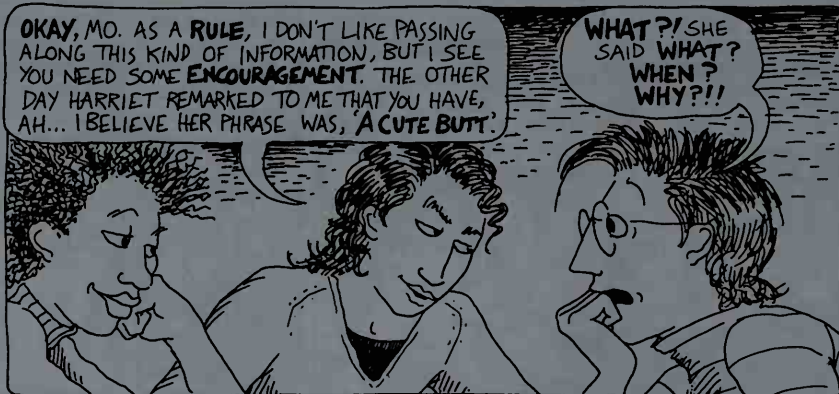
2 EN ROUTE TO THE MARCH ON WASHINGTON, OUR STALWART BAND OF TRAVELERS PAUSES BRIEFLY IN THE HEARTLAND OF AMERICA...





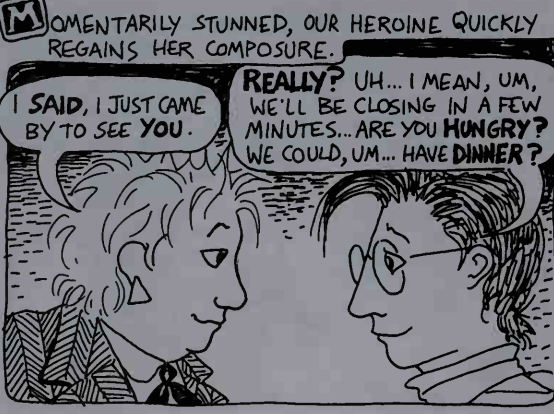
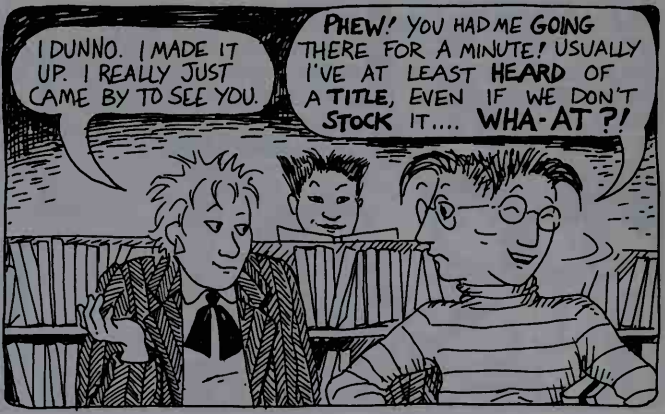
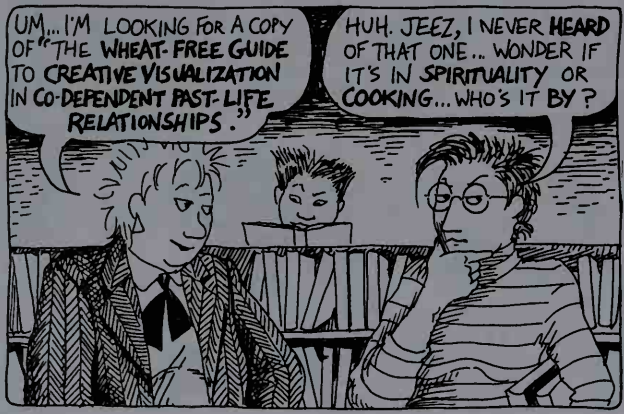
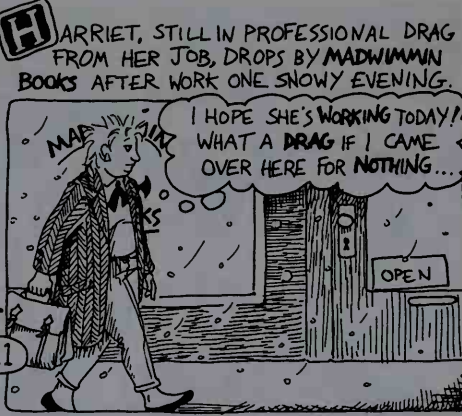
BUTT REACTION

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By The Book

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SUSPENSE!

22

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DINING AT CAFE TOPAZ, MO & HARRIET APPEAR TO HAVE FINALLY GOTTEN IT TOGETHER. BUT IS IT A DATE, OR IS IT JUST A FRIENDLY DINNER? ONLY MORE TIME WILL TELL...

THE AMBIENCE IS NOT EXACTLY INTIMATE...

I SWEAR EVERY DYKE I'VE EVER KNOWN IS HERE TONIGHT. HI, LIZA.

YEAH, JEEZ... ME TOO. HI NAOMI, GINGER.

NONETHELESS, THEY MANAGE TO SWAP COMING-OUT STORIES...

I THINK I FIRST REALLY KNEW WHEN I FELL IN LOVE WITH JULIE ANDREWS IN THE SOUND OF MUSIC. I WAS FOUR AT THE TIME...

AND RELATIONSHIP HISTORIES.

...YEAH, WE WERE TOGETHER FIVE YEARS, BUT WE HAD SEX I THINK TWICE DURING THE LAST THREE OF THEM.

EVENTUALLY THE CROWD GETS TO THEM.

HOW'S IT GONG, MO?

THEY DECIDE TO HAVE DESSERT AT A PLACE DOWN THE BLOCK.

IT'S REALLY SNOWING!

YOUR FEET MUST BE COLD.

THEY LINGER...

MORE TEA?

SURE.

SOMEHOW, EVENTUALLY, THEIR KNEES TOUCH.

SIGH!

GASP!

THEN SUDDENLY A STRANGE VOICE SPEAKS THROUGH MO'S BODY!

I...Y'KNOW, UM...I'M REALLY ATTRACTED TO YOU!

OMIGOD! WHO SAID THAT?!

A HORRIFYING SILENCE ENSUES. IS IT AN HOUR, OR MERELY SEVERAL SECONDS?

THUMP
THUMPA
THUMP

I'VE HAD A CRUSH ON YOU FOR MONTHS.

THANK GODDESS! I WAS ABOUT TO COMMIT HARA-KIRI WITH MY TEASPOON!

MODERN LOVE

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AFTER DECLARING THEIR MUTUAL ATTRACTION, OUR HEROINES RETURN TO MO'S APARTMENT UNDER THE PRETENSE OF WARMING HARRIET'S FEET.

HARRIET HAS JUST REFUSED MORE TEA.

23

UH... LISTEN, HARRIET... I HATE TO MAKE ASSUMPTIONS ABOUT WHAT'S GOING ON HERE... BUT IN THE EVENT THAT YOU AND I, Y'KNOW... AT SOME POINT, SAY, MAYBE GOT SEXUAL... HYPOTHETICALLY SPEAKING, OF COURSE... AH... I THINK WE SHOULD TALK ABOUT WHERE WE'VE BEEN AND ALL, CONSIDERING AIDS AND EVERYTHING... Y'KNOW?



HUH! THAT WAS REALLY BRAVE OF YOU... I DIDN'T KNOW EXACTLY HOW TO BRING IT UP...



OKAY. SO, I'VE NEVER SLEPT WITH A MAN... NEVER DONE I.V. DRUGS, ... BUT I DID ONCE HAVE A... UH... FLING WITH A WOMAN WHOSE HISTORY I WAS UNSURE OF...



A ONE-NIGHT STAND? A CHEAP, TAWDRY ENCOUNTER? YOU? MO, I'M SHOCKED!



I WAS YOUNG AND FOOLISH! IT WAS MY FIRST TIME IN A WOMEN'S BAR... I THOUGHT IT WAS REQUIRED BEHAVIOR! SHE SEDUCED ME AND I NEVER SAW HER AGAIN!



HOW BITTERSWEET. MO, RELAX! IT'S NO BIG DEAL!



BUT IT IS! I DON'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT HER! TECHNICALLY, THAT MAKES ME HIGH RISK!



LISTEN... EVEN KNOWING PEOPLE'S HISTORIES DOESN'T GUARANTEE ANYTHING... EVEN SUPPOSING YOU KNOW WHO ALL YOUR LOVERS' OTHER PARTNERS HAVE BEEN, HOW DO YOU KNOW WHO THEY'VE SLEPT WITH? OR WHO THEIR LOVERS HAVE SLEPT WITH?! IT'S PRACTICALLY IMPOSSIBLE!



YEAH... JEEZ, Y'KNOW, IF YOU THINK ABOUT IT, THERE'S NOTHING TO DO BUT CRAWL INTO A GIANT ZIP-LOCK BAGGIE AND RETIRE TO A CONVENT!



THAT'S NOT TRUE! YOU'RE SUCH AN ALARMIST! I CAN THINK OF LOTS OF THINGS WE COULD DO...



YEAH, RIGHT. LIKE HAVE SEX OVER THE TELEPHONE?

ACTUALLY, KISSING IS RELATIVELY LOW RISK...



WHAT? UH... I MEAN...



YOU'RE ADORABLE WHEN YOU PANIC.

I BET YOU SAY THAT TO ALL THE GIRLS.



the DILEMMA

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HAVING DECIDED, UPON FURTHER DISCUSSION, THAT SAFER-SEX PRECAUTIONS WERE NOT NECESSARY, MO AND HARRIET PROCEEDED TO INDULGE IN A WIDE RANGE OF AMOROUS EXPLORATIONS. SHORTLY AFTERWARDS, WE FIND MO PONDERING HER NEW **NON-CELIBATE** STATUS.

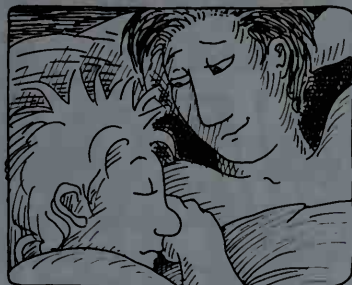
JEEZ, THAT WAS NICE... I GUESS I DIDN'T FORGET HOW AFTER ALL...



HOW CAN SHE SLEEP? I CAN NEVER SLEEP IN A STRANGE BED... OR WITH A STRANGE PERSON FOR THAT MATTER... PARTICULARLY WHEN THEY'RE LYING ON MY ARM...



WITH ZEN-LIKE PATIENCE, OUR HEROINE PERSEVERES INTO THE NIGHT AS HER ARM, IF NOTHING ELSE, **DOZES OFF**.



... SO NOW WHAT? IS THIS JUST A CASUAL THING FOR HER? MAYBE SHE DOES THIS ALL THE TIME... MAYBE SHE'S INCAPABLE OF COMMITMENT, OR WORSE YET, **NON-MONOGRAMOUS** ON PRINCIPLE!



... OR MAYBE SHE THINKS THIS MEANS WE'RE **MARRIED**! WHAT IF SHE STARTS CRITICIZING MY **TABLE MANNERS** AND ASKING ME WHAT I'M THINKING ABOUT? I DON'T THINK I'M **READY** FOR THIS...



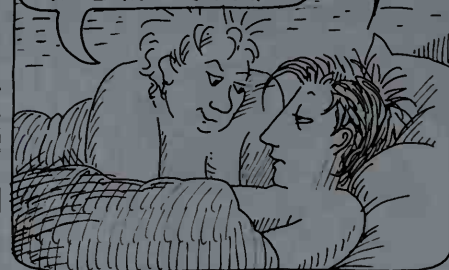
HER THOUGHTS RUN ON IN THIS MANNER TILL NEARLY DAWN...

I WONDER IF SHE WANTS TO HAVE **CHILDREN**... SHE SEEMED TO LIKE THE **CATS**... I THINK MY **MOTHER** WOULD LIKE HER...



HUH? WAS I ASLEEP?

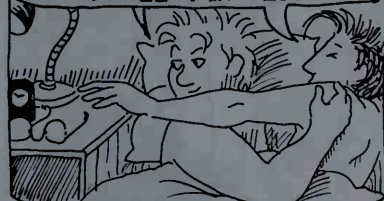
ASLEEP?! I WAS BEGINNING TO THINK YOU WERE IN A **COMA**!



OH, WOW... WHAT TIME IS IT?

A QUARTER PAST TEN. **RELAX!** IT'S SATURDAY!

SHIT! I WORK SATURDAYS... I HAF TA BE AT THE **BOOKSTORE** IN FIFTEEN MINUTES!



SO CALL IN SICK!

I CAN'T! JEZANNA DEPENDS ON ME!



SO GET UP AND GET DRESSED ALREADY.

I CAN'T! YOU FEEL SO NICE!



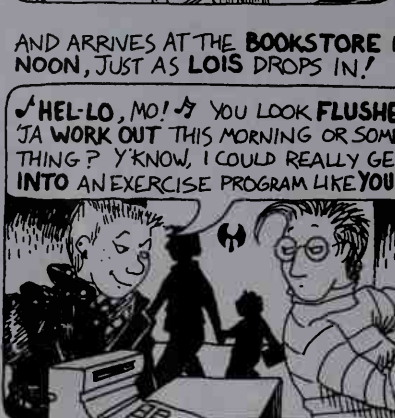
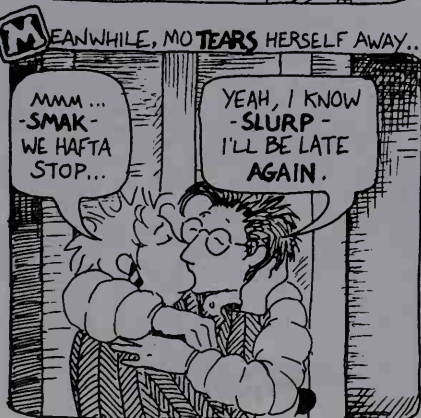
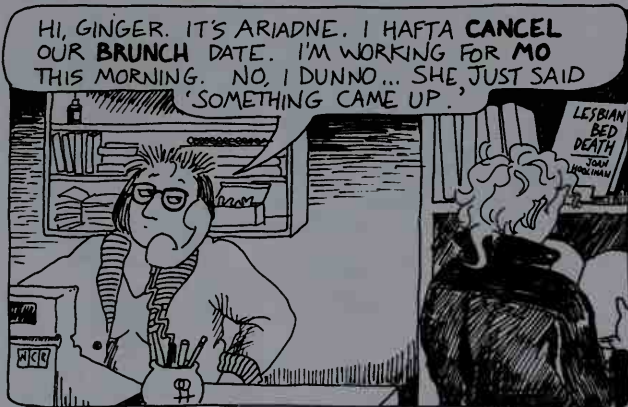
UST HOW STRONG IS OUR HEROINE'S MORAL FIBER ANYWAY? STAY TUNED!

COMMUNIQUE

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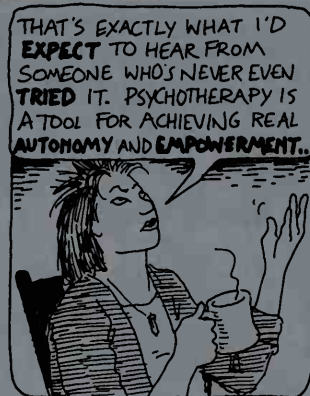
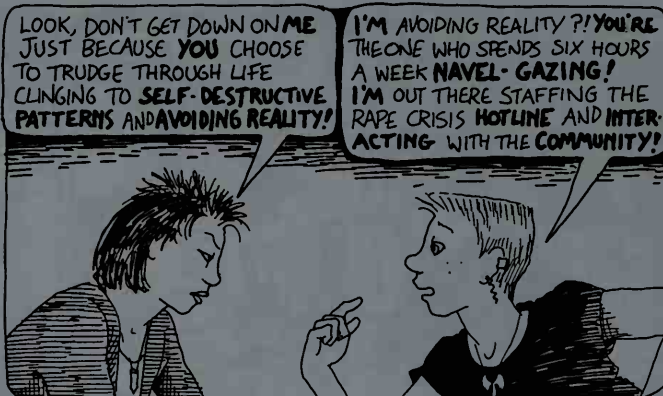
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ALTHOUGH SHE IS EXPECTED TO OPEN THE DOORS OF MADWIMMIN BOOKS TO THE PUBLIC IN TEN MINUTES, MO IS UNABLE TO WRENCH HERSELF FROM HARRIET'S EMBRACES!



The CURE

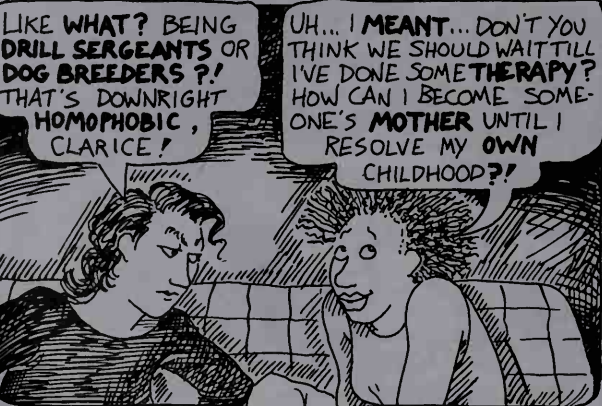
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COLD FEET

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ONE AFTERNOON IN THE GROVES OF ACADEME

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P LANNING HAS BEGUN FOR THE ANNUAL GAY & LESBIAN STUDIES CONFERENCE.



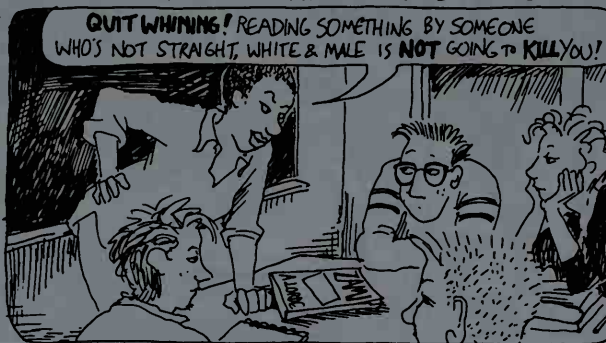
C OMMITTEES HAVE BEEN FORMED.



C LARICE IS ON HER WAY TO THE FIRST MEETING OF THE ACCESSIBILITY COMMITTEE.



G INGER, GRADUATE STUDENT IN ENGLISH, LEAVES HER SECTION OF FRESHMEN WITH SOME WORDS OF WISDOM...



A ND SETS OUT FOR THE VERY SAME MEETING.



WE NEED TWO PEOPLE TO TAKE THIS WHEELCHAIR AND MAKE SURE THESE WORKSHOP LOCATIONS ARE REALLY ACCESSIBLE.



O UR WINMIN VOLUNTEER!

MY NAME'S CLARICE. I'M AT THE LAW SCHOOL. YOU'RE ONE OF LOIS' HOUSEMATES, RIGHT?

YEAH. I'M GINGER. I'VE SEEN YOU AROUND BUT WE'VE NEVER MET.



NOPE.



YOUR TURN. I'M GETTING BLISTERS.



THIS IVORY TOWER NEEDS SOME RAMPS!



WHAT ARE YOU SAYING, GINGER?! BUILD RAMPS AND ANYONE COULD GET UP!! THE WHOLE SCHOOL WOULD BE OVERRUN BY BLACK COMMIE DYKES IN WHEELCHAIRS! REALLY, NOW!

TROUBLE in Paradise

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AFTER A GRUELING DAY AT WORK AND SCHOOL, OUR DYNAMIC DUO REGROUPS FOR DINNER AT THE TOPAZ.

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LOOK, CHICA! THERE'S A GROUP OF LESBIANS MEETING TO TALK ABOUT HAVING **BABIES**. LET'S GO! MAYBE IT WILL HELP YOU TO FEEL **LESS SCARED**.

UH...GROUP?

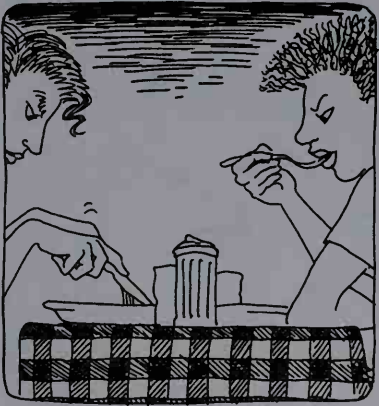


EVERY TUESDAY NIGHT AT THE COMMUNITY CENTER.

OH, TOO BAD. TUESDAYS ARE THE **COMMITTEE** NIGHTS FOR THE GAY AND LESBIAN STUDIES CONFERENCE.

OH, OF COURSE. HOW SILLY OF ME TO THINK PLANNING A **BABY** COULD TAKE PRIORITY OVER PLANNING A FOUR-DAY CONFERENCE.

TONI, BE **REASONABLE!** I'VE ALREADY **COMMITTED** MYSELF TO THIS, AND I **DO** WANT US TO HAVE A **BABY**, BUT I CAN'T STAND THIS CONSTANT **PRESSURE!**



HEY, CLARICE!

GINGER! HI! HOW ARE YA? THIS IS MY LOVER, TONI.

HI, TONI. SAY, CLARICE, WE JUST **HAVE** TO GET TOGETHER FOR SOME **GOSSIP** ABOUT THE CONFERENCE ONE OF THESE DAYS!

I'D LOVE TO. WE COULD GO OUT FOR **COFFEE** AFTER THE MEETING TUESDAY.



YOU GOT YOURSELF A **DATE!** SEE YOU THEN ... NICE MEETING YOU, TONI.

GINGER, HUH? SHE WAS **FLIRTING** WITH YOU. WASN'T SHE?

FLIRTING? TONI, WHAT IS THE **MATTER** WITH YOU? I THINK THIS **BABY** STUFF HAS GONE TO YOUR **BRAIN!**

HAS TONI TAKEN LEAVE OF HER **SENSES** ... OR IS SOMETHING INDEED **AFOOT?** DON'T MISS THE NEXT **GRIPPING EPISODE!**



TOTAL TRACTION!

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TONI IS MAKING A SUDDEN TRIP TO SAN JUAN FOR HER GRAND-MOTHER'S FUNERAL.

THE WORST THING IS, MY ABUELITA WAS THE ONLY **SANE** MEMBER OF MY ENTIRE FAMILY.

GATE 78

I KNOW, HONEY. CALL ME IF THEY START TO DRIVE YOU CRAZY. I WISH I COULD COME WITH YOU.



THAT EVENING, CLARICE ATTENDS A MEETING OF THE **ACCESSIBILITY COMMITTEE**.

WATTERS DRAG ON...

WE STILL NEED ANOTHER SIGN-LANGUAGE INTERPRETER FOR THE PANEL DISCUSSION, "**LES-BIANS AND GAYMEN WORKING TOGETHER: TACTICAL TEAM OR TOTAL TRAVESTY?**"

NO, WE DON'T. MARIA SAID SHE COULD DO IT.

BUT WE ALREADY HAVE A WOMAN SIGNING. WE NEED A **MAN** FOR **PARITY**, ESPECIALLY ON THIS PANEL!

BUT WE ONLY HAVE ONE MALE INTERPRETER, AND HE'S DOING THE MEN-ONLY WORKSHOP, "**SENSUAL, SALACIOUS & SAFE**" IN THE SAME TIME-SLOT!



AFTER AN APPARENT ETERNITY, THE MEETING ADJOURNS.

HI, STRANGER... ARE WE STILL ON FOR **COFFEE?**

SURE, GINGER! LET'S GET OUTTA HERE!



SO, WHAT'S THE STORY WITH YOU AND TONI? ARE YOU **MARRIED**, OR WHAT?

MARRIED? THAT'S KIND OF A **STRONG TERM**. WE'VE BEEN TOGETHER SIX YEARS, SHE'S HELPING TO PUT ME THROUGH **LAW SCHOOL**, AND WE'RE TALKING ABOUT HAVING A **BABY**... I WOULDN'T SAY WE WERE **MARRIED**, EXACTLY.



I'LL BE **UPFRONT** WITH YOU, CLARICE. I THINK YOU'RE **REALLY CUTE**. IF YOU'RE NOT **AVAILABLE**, I WON'T PURSUE IT. ARE YOU AND TONI **MONOGAMOUS?**

UH... (CHOKE!) THAT CERTAINLY IS **UPFRONT!** **WELL**, WE'VE NEVER REALLY **DEFINED** OUR RELATIONSHIP. I GUESS WE'RE **NOT MONOGAMOUS!** AND I THINK **YOU'RE PRETTY CUTE YOURSELF!**

WHAT AM I **DOING?** SHE **SAYS** SHE'S **AVAILABLE**... THAT MEANS IT'S **OKAY... RIGHT?**

WHAT AM I **DOING?** SHE **REALLY** IS **HOT**... NOTHING WRONG WITH A LITTLE, **INNOCENT AFFAIR**... **IS THERE?**



FRIENDLY ADVICE

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I'M GLAD YOU COULD COME OVER, MO. I REALLY NEED TO TALK TO YOU... UH... WHAT WOULD YOU THINK IF I HAD AN AFFAIR WITH GINGER?

WHAT?

I'M SO ATTRACTED TO HER! I CAN'T DESCRIBE IT... IT'S LIKE... GRAVITY... FATE... DESTINY!

WHAT?!

SHE FEELS THE SAME TOWARD ME. WE TALKED ABOUT IT LAST NIGHT.

CLARICE, WHAT ABOUT TONI?

WHAT ABOUT HER? THIS HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH MY COMMITMENT TO TONI! IN FACT, I THINK IT WOULD BE UNHEALTHY FOR OUR RELATIONSHIP IF I DIDN'T ACT ON THESE FEELINGS FOR GINGER! BESIDES, TONI'S STILL IN PUERTO RICO.

WHOA, CLARICE... CLARICE? ARE YOU IN THERE, OR HAVE YOU BEEN POSSESSED BY AN ALIEN?

MEANWHILE...

YEAH, I KNOW SHE'S INVOLVED WITH TONI. BUT I DON'T WANT TO MARRY HER, I JUST WANT TO SLEEP WITH HER!

WELL, I'VE NEVER BEEN ONE TO DISCOURAGE PEOPLE FROM FOLLOWING THEIR SEXUAL INCLINATIONS, BUT...

EXACTLY! IT WOULD BE WRONG TO REPRESS THESE FEELINGS FOR CLARICE!

LISTEN TO ME, GINGER! I SPEAK FROM EXPERIENCE. IT'S NOT A GOOD IDEA TO GET INVOLVED WITH MARRIED WOMEN!

BUT LOIS, THEY'RE NOT MONOGAMOUS! THAT'S ONE OF THE THINGS I ADMIRE ABOUT CLARICE. SHE DOESN'T JUST THEORIZE, SHE LIVES HER CONVICTIONS!

WE'RE HAVING DINNER TONIGHT. WHAT LOOK SHOULD I GO FOR? SCHOLARLY OR SEDUCTIVE?

HOW ABOUT SELF-DESTRUCTIVE?

WHAT EVENING...

¡TONI! ¿QUIÉN LLAMAS POR TELÉFONO? ¿TU NOVIO?

RING!
RING!
RING!

CLOSE-ENCOUNTER

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A TIP-O-THE-NIB TO PAT WINICK

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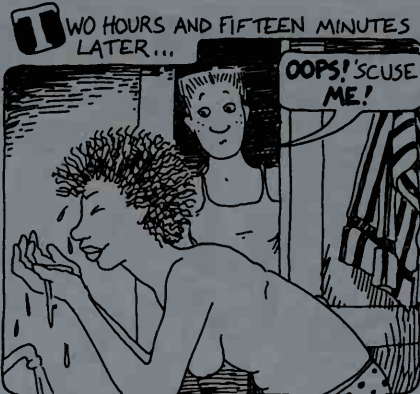
HEEDESS OF THEIR FRIENDS' ADVICE, CLARICE AND GINGER FIND THEMSELVES AT THE POINT OF NO RETURN.

WANNA COME IN? LOIS AND SPARROW WON'T BE HOME TILL LATE.

SURE.

IGNORE THE MESS. IT'S MY THESIS.

WHAT'S IT ABOUT?



In the HEAT of the NIGHT

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IT'S BEDTIME AT HARRIET'S APARTMENT...
 I JUST CAN'T BELIEVE IT! WHY IS CLARICE DOING THIS?
 I DON'T KNOW! SHE AND TONI SEEMED SO HAPPY!

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THEY'RE MY ROLE MODELS, HARRIET! DON'T THEY REALIZE THEY HAVE A RESPONSIBILITY TO ME TO STAY TOGETHER?!

MO, STOP. IT'S TOO HOT TO RAVE.
 THAT'S IT! IT'S THE GREENHOUSE EFFECT! THIS OPPRESSIVE HEAT IS CAUSING HORMONAL IMBALANCES AND CLARICE IS ONE OF THE FIRST VICTIMS!

I MEAN, DOESN'T IT BOTHER YOU, HARRIET? TO SEE AN ESTABLISHED, LONG-TERM LESBIAN RELATIONSHIP -- ONE THAT YOU LOOK TO FOR EXAMPLE AND INSPIRATION -- TO SEE IT JUST BITE THE DUST?!

MO, I THINK YOU'RE OVERREACTING. WHO SAID THEY WERE BREAKING UP?

WELL, JEEZ... I MEAN, CLARICE SLEPT WITH GINGER WHILE TONI WAS AT HER GRANDMOTHER'S FUNERAL! HOW SLEAZOID CAN YOU GET?

WOULD YOU LEAVE ME IF I SLEPT WITH SOMEONE ELSE?

WHO?! WHO IS IT?!

WHOA! IS THIS THE SAME WOMAN WHO WAS RECENTLY HOLDING FORTH ON HOW COUPLEHOOD SHOULD BE ABOLISHED IF WE HOPE TO REACH OUR TRUE HUMAN POTENTIAL?!

DON'T QUOTE ME OUT OF CONTEXT, HARRIET! WHO ARE YOU SLEEPING WITH?!

BESIDES YOU? LEMME SEE ... UH... NO ONE, AT THE MOMENT...

HAR-RI-ET!

THE INTERROGATION

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CLARICE HAS JUST PICKED TONI UP AT THE AIRPORT.

SO, DID YOU HAVE FUN WHILE I WAS GONE? ANY WILD AFFAIRS?

WHAAAT?!

SWERVE!

SCREE

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RELAX! JEEZ, I WAS JUST KIDDING SWEETHEART!

SORRY! I... UH... SO HOW WAS IT SEEING YOUR FAMILY?

PRETTY BAD. WITH MY GRANDMOTHER GONE, THERE WAS NO ONE TO STOP THEM ALL PESTERING ME ABOUT WHEN I'M GETTING MARRIED. THE FUNERAL WAS A CIRCUS.



YEAH, I CAN IMAGINE. I'M SORRY.

CLARICE, WHAT'S WRONG? YOU HAVE THE STEERING WHEEL IN A DEATH GRIP!

TONI... I WENT OUT WITH GINGER LAST NIGHT.

I REMEMBER, YOU MADE A DATE FOR COFFEE. SO?

SO, I MEAN... WE DIDN'T JUST HAVE COFFEE. WE... WE HAD DINNER.

WHAT? WHAT ARE YOU SAYING? YOU MEAN, YOU'RE ATTRACTED TO HER?

WELL... YEAH.

DID YOU TELL HER YOU WERE? IS IT MUTUAL?

UM... YES. YES.

I KNEW IT! I KNEW SHE WAS FLIRTING WITH YOU!

TONI...

SO WHAT HAPPENED? DID YOU KISS HER GOODNIGHT?!

UM... YES.

JESUS, CLARICE. I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU'RE SITTING THERE TELLING ME THIS!

DON'T CRY, TONI!



ON A LONG WALK WITH CLARICE, MO RELIES ON HER INBORN TACT AND ADROIT INTERPERSONAL SKILLS TO BROACH A DELICATE SUBJECT...

So, CLARICE... WHEN DO YOU PLAN TO TELL TONI YOU **CHEATED** ON HER WHILE SHE WAS **OUT OF TOWN**?

WHAT?! I DIDN'T "CHEAT" ON HER, MO! AND **BESIDES**, IT'S NONE OF YOUR @##*#*! **BUSINESS!**

WELL, I WISH IT **WASN'T**. BUT THIS IS A SMALL COMMUNITY, AND LIKE IT OR NOT, OTHER PEOPLE **KNOW** WHAT'S GOING ON. IT'S JUST NOT **FAIR** THAT TONI **DONES'T**.

OH, MO... SHE'S SO **HURT** AND **UPSET** THINKING GINGER AND I JUST **KISSED**... I **CAN'T** TELL HER WE **SLEPT** TOGETHER!

LISTEN, CLARICE. GIVEN THE **SPEED NEWS** TRAVELS IN THIS TOWN, SHE'LL FIND OUT **SOON** WHETHER YOU TELL HER OR NOT.

I **KNOW**... I HAVE TO **TELL** HER. (SNIFF) OH, JEEZ, SHE'LL NEVER (SOB) **TRUST** ME AGAIN! WHAT A **MESS!**

YOU CAN SAY THAT AGAIN!

THAT EVENING...

MY LIFE IS A **MESS**.

AW, TONI, IT'S NOT THAT **BAD!**

I FIND OUT THAT MY **HAPPY**, **SECURE**, **SIX-YEAR** **RELATIONSHIP** HAS BEEN A TOTAL **SHAM** AND IT'S NOT THAT **BAD?!**

TONI, **COME ON!** I **KNOW** YOU'RE IN A LOT OF **PAIN**, BUT YOU HAFTA LOOK AT THE **GRAND SCHEME** OF THINGS! LISTEN, THE **ENVIRONMENT** IS POLLUTED BEYOND THE POINT OF **NO RETURN**...

NICKELS AND **DIMES** ARE ALLOCATED FOR **AIDS** RESEARCH WHILE **BILLIONS** GO INTO **RADAR SYSTEMS** FOR **BLOWING UP** **CIVILIANS** IN THE **PERSIAN GULF**...

AND WE'VE GOT TO SPEND THE NEXT **TWO MONTHS** BEING ASSAULTED WITH **HYPOCRITICAL HYPE** AS TWO **MORALLY BANKRUPT** **WHITE BOYS** GEAR UP FOR ANOTHER **ELECTORAL FARCE!**

HAVING A **ROUGH TIME** IN YOUR **RELATIONSHIP** KINDA **PALES** IN **COMPARISON**, HUH?

GEE, MO... **THANKS**. I CAN ALWAYS COUNT ON YOU.

JUST DESSERT

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ON THE RARE OCCASION OF THEIR ALL HAVING NOTHING BETTER TO DO, OUR HOUSEMATES GINGER, LOIS & SPARROW SPEND AN EVENING TOGETHER.

WHAT A ROTTEN MOVIE. WANNA GET SOME DESSERT?

SURE.

OK, BUT I JUST WANT SOME TEA.

I'LL HAVE A CHOCOLATE ORGASM AND A CUP OF COFFEE

UH... I'LL HAVE THE TRIPLE TASMANIAN DEVILSFOOD DELIGHT AND AN ESPRESSO.

MINT TEA AND A BRAN MUFFIN, PLEASE.

I THOUGHT YOU WERE OFF CAFFEINE, GINGER!

AND I THOUGHT YOU WERE ALLERGIC TO CHOCOLATE

I DON'T KNOW WHY YOU GUYS EAT THIS STUFF IF YOU KNOW IT'S BAD FOR YOU! DON'T COMPLAIN TO ME ABOUT YOUR HEAD-ACHES AND INSOMNIA.

A SHORT WHILE LATER...

SO GINGER, I HAVEN'T RUN INTO CLARICE IN OUR BATHROOM LATELY... WHAT'S UP?

WE'RE NOT SEEING EACH OTHER... TURNS OUT SHE SLIGHTLY EXAGGERATED HOW NONMONOGAMOUS HER SCENE WITH TONI IS.

AW, GINGER, THAT'S TOO BAD... I'M SORRY. IN FACT, I'M SO SORRY THAT I WILL NOBLY REFRAIN FROM SAYING 'I TOLD YOU SO.'

YEAH, YEAH. I KNOW. BUT I DON'T HAVE ANY REGRETS. LIKE I TOLD YOU, I JUST WANTED TO SLEEP WITH HER, NOT GET MARRIED.

UH-OH! LOOK OUT! IT'S GINGER, WOMAN OF STEEL... AND SHE'S INVULNERABLE! C'MON, ADMIT IT! YOU'RE HURT! CAN I HAVE ANOTHER TEENSY TASTE OF YOUR CAKE?

ACTUALLY, I'M KIND OF RELIEVED IT DIDN'T WORK OUT. I'M SICK & TIRED OF ROMANTIC MELODRAMA. THERE ARE OTHER THINGS TO LIFE, AFTER ALL.

YOUR PROBLEM, GINGER, IS THAT YOU'VE NEVER WORKED THROUGH YOUR BREAK-UP WITH PHYLLIS. YOU SHOULD JOIN A THERAPY GROUP. ARE YOU GONNA FINISH THAT, LO?

TAKE IT. I'M STARTING TO HALLUCINATE.

SPARROW, YOU WOULD RECOMMEND A THERAPY GROUP IF I HAD HEMORRHOIDS! NOPE, I'M GOING TO TRY SOME GOOD OLD-FASHIONED CELIBACY AND FINISH MY THESIS!

YOU TELL HER, GINGER! C'MON, WE BETTER HURRY HOME BEFORE WE CRASH!

YEAH, I FEEL KINDA SPEEDY... D'YOU THINK THEY PUT SUGAR IN THE BRAN MUFFINS HERE?

Tête à Tête

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MO IS HARD AT WORK DURING A SATURDAY SALE AT MADWIMMIN BOOKS.



HEY, GINGER! HOW YA DOING! HAVEN'T SEEN YOU AROUND IN A WHILE!



HI, MO. OH, I'VE BEEN KEEPING A LOW PROFILE, THROWING MYSELF INTO MY WORK, THAT KIND OF THING.



I...UM, GINGER, I DON'T WANT TO, LIKE, INVADE YOUR PRIVACY, BUT I JUST WANNA SAY I KNOW ABOUT YOU & CLARICE, AND I HOPE IT DOESN'T GET IN THE WAY OF OUR BEING FRIENDS.



THANKS, MO. THESE THINGS CAN BE SO MESSY, WITH PEOPLE TAKING SIDES AND NOT SPEAKING TO EACH OTHER. TOO BAD CLARICE & I DIDN'T THINK OF THAT BEFORE WE HOPPED IN THE SACK.



WHAT'S WRONG?



OH, NOTHING! I WAS JUST GONNA SAY YOU SHOULD CHECK OUT THE 75% OFF BOOKS IN THE BACK... WAY IN THE BACK OF THE STORE...



CLARICE! TONI! OUT SHOPPING TOGETHER? THAT'S SO NICE! SO DOMESTIC AND SETTLED! C'MERE AND SEE MY WINDOW DISPLAY!



IN A MINUTE, MO. I WANT TO SEE IF THERE'S ANYTHING GOOD IN THE 75% OFF BIN FIRST.

OH, THERE'S NOTHING BACK THERE! JUST DUSTY OLE SCI-FI BOOKS AND BORING BIOGRAPHIES THAT NOBODY WANTED IN THE FIRST PLACE.. JUNK, THAT'S ALL!



MO, WHAT IS GOING ON?



HI, CLARICE. THANKS FOR THE TIP, MO... YOU GOT ALL KINDS OF SURPRISES BACK THERE! I'M GONNA DISAPPEAR NOW SO YOU CAN ALL RELAX AGAIN. BYE-BYE.



CIVIC DUTY

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HEY MO!
C'MON! IT'S
LATE! TIME
TO GET UP!

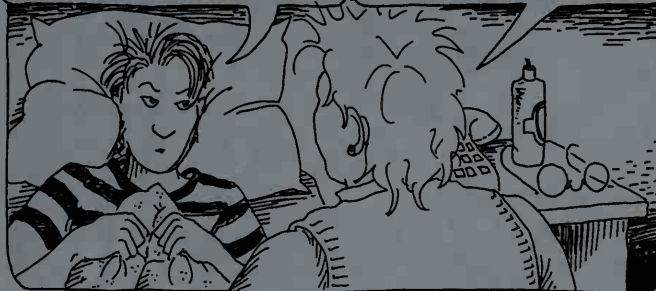


GET UP? WHAT FOR? I'M
NOT GETTING UP UNTIL THE
ELECTORAL COLLEGE IS
ABOLISHED AND GEORGE
BUSH IS IMPEACHED!



BUT SWEETIE,
YOU'LL GET
BEDSORES.

I'M NOT GETTING UP TIL ISRAEL
AND PALESTINE FIND A TWO-
STATE SOLUTION, AND APARTHEID
IS COMPLETELY OVERTHROWN.



YOU'RE JUST GONNA LIE
THERE? MAYBE A HUNGER
STRIKE WOULD ATTRACT
MORE MEDIA ATTENTION!

I'M SERIOUS, HARRIET! I JUST CAN'T DO IT ANYMORE.
I CAN'T GET UP ONE MORE DAY AND GO OUT
INTO A WORLD WHERE ATROCITIES ARE BEING
COMMITTED EVERY MINUTE WITH THE TAXES I'M
WORKING TO PAY!



WHY SHOULD I BE A PRODUCTIVE
MEMBER OF A SOCIETY THAT
THRIVES BY OPPRESSING EVERY-
ONE ELSE IN THE WORLD?



Y'KNOW, YOU'RE
ABSOLUTELY
RIGHT! I THINK
YOU'VE HIT ON
A VERY
SYMBOLIC
FORM OF
PROTEST
HERE!

YES! AS A CITIZEN OF A PRIVILEGED
COUNTRY, RENOUNCE THE POWER YOU HAVE
TO ACTIVELY DISSENT AND EDUCATE! JUST
STAY IN BED! THAT'LL SHOW THOSE
REPUBLICANS A THING OR TWO.



WHAT A MEANINGFUL WAY TO EXPRESS
YOUR SOLIDARITY WITH THE PEOPLE
WHO ARE SLEEPING FIVE TO A MATTRESS
IN REFUGEE CAMPS AND SHANTYTOWNS
AND PRISONS! CAN I GET YOU
ANOTHER BLANKET BEFORE I LEAVE?



ALL RIGHT.
ALL RIGHT!
I'M UP
ALREADY!



WHATEVER HAPPENED TO BRIBING
YOUR LOVER OUT OF BED WITH
HOT BLUEBERRY MUFFINS?



LOIS IN ACTION

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ONE AFTERNOON AT THE BOOKSTORE...

THANKS FOR STOPPING BY, EMMA, AND SAY HELLO TO JEROME FOR ME.

OKAY, JEZANNA. IT WAS NICE SEEING YOU, AND THANKS FOR YOUR HELP!



JEZANNA! HOW COME YOU DIDN'T INTRODUCE ME?! COULDN'T YOU SEE ME LEERING?!

GIRL, DON'T EVEN THINK ABOUT IT!

WHY NOT? YOU'RE NOT SEEING HER, ARE YOU? WHO IS SHE? AN EX?

FORGET IT! SHE'S GOT A HUSBAND AND TWO KIDS!

OH YEAH? WELL SHE WAS SURE DOING SOME HEAVY BROWSING IN THE LESBIAN SECTION! WHAT'D SHE BUY?



NONE OF YOUR BUSINESS! GIMME THAT!

AH HAH! "THE COMING OUT STORIES," "SURPASSING THE LOVE OF MEN," "LESBIAN SEX?.. LOOKS LIKE YOUR FRIEND IS DOING SOME, UH... RESEARCH, RIGHT?"

LOIS, I'M SERIOUS. STAY AWAY. I'VE KNOWN EMMA FOR YEARS NOW, EVER SINCE I WAS A STUDENT OF HER HUSBAND'S. YOU'VE HEARD ME TALK ABOUT JEROME, MY BLACK STUDIES PROFESSOR?

OH, SO SHE'S MARRIED TO SAINT JEROME. HUH?



YEAH WELL... NOW SHE THINKS MAYBE SHE'S A DYKE AFTER ALL... SHE'S IN A VERY VULNERABLE STATE, AND THE LAST THING SHE NEEDS IS YOU COMING ON TO HER LIKE A TON OF BRICKS.

OKAY, OKAY! I CAN TAKE A HINT!

GOOD.



POETIC LICENSE

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LOIS ACCOMPANIES GINGER TO A READING BY A RENOWNED LESBIAN POET AT THE UNIVERSITY.

WHY AM I DOING THIS?! I HATE POETRY! I MUST BE REALLY BORED!

YOU'RE SUCH A PHILISTINE, LOIS! A LITTLE CULTURE WILL DO YOU GOOD!

YEAH, SURE SITTING AROUND WITH A BUNCH OF PSEUDO-INTELLECTUALS PRETENDING TO UNDERSTAND WHAT SOME WACKO POET IS EMOTING ABOUT HAS ALWAYS BEEN MY IDEA OF A GOOD TIME!

HEY, LOOK! THERE'S EMMA, THE WOMAN I TOLD YOU ABOUT FROM THE BOOKSTORE! SHE'S SITTING OVER THERE WITH JEZANNA!

SHHH! IT'S STARTING!

I LICK THE DELICATE PEARL...

SHE'S MARRIED TO A MAN, BUT JEZANNA SAYS SHE'S JUST COMING OUT! ISN'T SHE HOT?!

DO YOU MIND?! SOME OF US CAME TO LISTEN!

...OF YOUR NAVEL / THE EXPANSE OF YOUR BELLY / A BEACH AT DAWN...

TIGHTASS ACADEMICS!

MAYBE I CAN MAKE SOME EYE CONTACT.

...YOUR DESIRE A TIDAL POOL...

WHOA! SHE'S... SHE'S STARING RIGHT AT ME! CAREFUL, LOIS, DON'T LOSE YOUR COOL!

...RIPE, LIQUID CORAL...

OMIGOD! WAS THAT A WINK?! DID SHE REALLY JUST WINK AT ME?

...AS THE WAVES CREST, SUBSIDE...

... LAP / AT THE EDGE. THE LINGERING SCENT / OF SEAWEED.

WELL, YOU CAN'T CALL THAT POEM DRY AND INTELLECTUAL! SHE HAS A WAY OF REALLY BRINGING HER SUBJECT ALIVE, DON'T YOU THINK?

I DIDN'T HEAR A WORD SHE SAID... BUT MY OPINION OF POETRY READINGS HAS DEFINITELY IMPROVED.

A Very Warm Reception

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EXCITED BY A STEAMY BOUT OF OCULAR FLIRTATION DURING A POETRY READING, LOIS SEEKS OUT HER INAMORATA AT THE RECEPTION AFTERWARDS.

THERE SHE IS! WITH JEZANNA OVER BY THE WINE & CHEESE! C'MON!

LOIS, YOU SAID JEZANNA TOLD YOU TO LEAVE THIS WOMAN ALONE! I DON'T THINK SHE'S GONNA TAKE KINDLY TO YOU FORCING YOURSELF ON THEM!

LEAVE THIS TO ME, GINGER.

JEZANNA! HI! FANCY MEETING YOU HERE! YOU KNOW MY HOUSEMATE GINGER, DON'T YOU?

OH. HI, GINGER. HI LOIS. I NEVER THOUGHT I'D SEE YOU AT A POETRY READING.

WELL JEZ, I THINK IT'S ALWAYS IMPORTANT TO TRY NEW EXPERIENCES.. IT KEEPS LIFE EXCITING, DON'T YOU AGREE?

I DON'T BELIEVE WE'VE MET! I'M LOIS!

CHARMED. I'M EMMA. DON'T YOU WORK WITH JEZANNA? I'VE SEEN YOU AT THE BOOKSTORE

OH! WHY, YES! I DO WORK WITH JEZANNA. I'M THE MERCHANDISING CONSULTANT FOR MADWIMMIN'!

MERCHANDISING CONSULTANT?! LOIS, YOU'RE A **CLERK!** LISTEN, EMMA, I REALLY HAVE TO GET HOME AND WALK MY DOG. LET'S GO!

OKAY. LET ME JUST FINISH THIS. I'LL BE RIGHT THERE.

SO YOU'RE A **CLERK!** THAT MUST BE FASCINATING!

OH! WELL...IT HAS ITS MOMENTS. UM...WHAT DO YOU DO?

I'M A **CHEMICAL DEPENDENCY** COUNSELOR.

OH! UM...I'M NOT AN **ALCOHOLIC**... I JUST HAVE A GLASS OF WINE NOW AND THEN AT, YOU KNOW, **RECEPTIONs** AND THINGS!

DON'T WORRY. I WON'T **ARREST** YOU. THAT'S A **LOVELY** EARRING YOU'RE WEARING.

EMMA! I HATE TO DRAG YOU AWAY LIKE THIS, BUT IF WE DON'T LEAVE RIGHT NOW, I'LL HAVE TO FACE **FIFI'S** REVENGE. NICE SEEING YOU, GINGER! G'NIGHT!

I'LL SEE YOU AT WORK TOMORROW. WE HAVE SOME **SERIOUS** CONSULTING TO DO.

The Wager

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JEZANNA, THE MORE YOU TELL LOIS TO STAY AWAY FROM YOUR FRIEND EMMA, THE MORE INTERESTED SHE GETS! YOU KNOW HOW LOIS IS!

YEAH, I DO KNOW HOW LOIS IS! THE AVERAGE LENGTH OF HER RELATIONSHIPS IS **THREE NIGHTS!** I JUST DON'T WANT EMMA TO GET **HURT.**

I DUNNO, JEZ. EMMA SOUNDS LIKE SOMEONE WHO CAN TAKE CARE OF HERSELF.

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MAYBE. THE OTHER THING IS, I JUST DON'T WANNA GET STUCK IN THE **MIDDLE**, Y'KNOW? I'M TOO OLD FOR THIS **EMOTIONAL TUG-OF-WAR STUFF.**

OH. YEAH, I FORGOT, YOU'RE FRIENDS WITH EMMA'S **HUSBAND**, TOO.

AFTER ALL, I KNEW **JEROME FIRST**. WHEN I GOT TO COLLEGE I'D NEVER **MET** A BLACK ACTIVIST BEFORE. HE **POLITICIZED** ME! AND IT WAS THROUGH HIS CLASSES THAT I **EVENTUALLY CAME OUT**. I JUST FEEL A CERTAIN **LOYALTY** TO HIM.

IT'S NOT THAT I DON'T SUPPORT EMMA EXPLORING HER **LESBIANISM**, BUT I'M **DAMNED** IF I'M GONNA PLAY **MATCHMAKER** FOR HER!

UH-OH. DON'T LOOK NOW, YENTA, BUT THINGS JUST MIGHT BE OUT OF YOUR **HANDS.**

HI, JEZ!

JEZ, I'M GONNA TAKE MY **BREAK** NOW. EMMA & I ARE RUNNING NEXT DOOR FOR COFFEE. I'LL BE BACK IN 15 MINUTES.

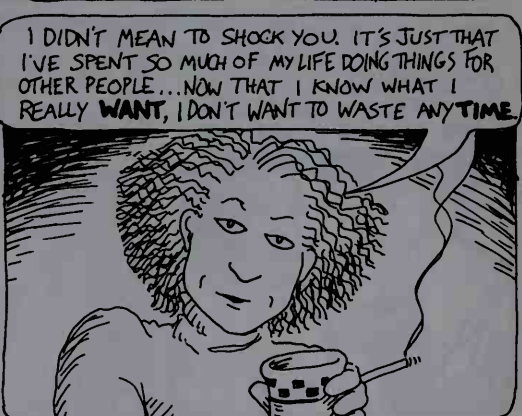
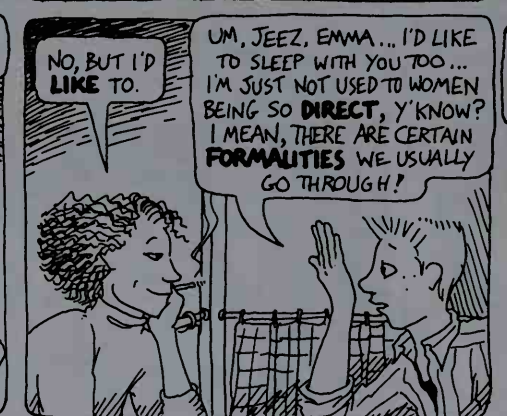
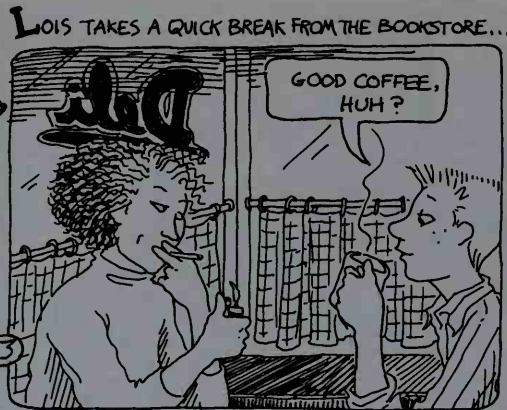
WHAT CAN YOU DO? THEY SEEM PRETTY **DETERMINED.**

HELL-BENT IS MORE LIKE IT. GUESS I JUST GOTTA LET NATURE TAKE ITS **COURSE.**

LOOK ON THE **BRIGHT SIDE!** ACCORDING TO YOUR STATISTICS, IT SHOULDN'T LAST MORE THAN **THREE NIGHTS!**

\$5 SAYS LESS THAN A MONTH.

WELL...I'M NOT A GAMBLING KINDA GAL AS A RULE... BUT \$2.50 AND YOU'RE ON.



AFTER the FACT

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THAT WAS REALLY NICE, LOIS.

SO, HAVE I CONVERTED YOU?

WELL...IF I HADN'T DECIDED TO CONVERT BEFORE I EVEN MET YOU, YOU JUST MIGHT HAVE.

YEAH? WOW. CAN I HAVE A CIGARETTE?

NO. SMOKING IS A **TERRIBLE** HABIT.

LISTEN, YOU MAY BE **OLDER** THAN ME, BUT YOU'RE **NOT** MY MOTHER.

YOU'RE ABSOLUTELY RIGHT. I DON'T KNOW WHAT I WAS THINKING. HERE.

NO THANKS.



SUIT YOURSELF.



UM...IT WAS REALLY NICE FOR ME TOO.



YOU PROBABLY DO THIS ALL THE TIME.

WELL, YEAH...BUT NOT AS MUCH AS EVERYONE THINKS. AND THIS TIME WAS DIFFERENT, KINDA.



OH? WELL, LISTEN...I HAVE A BIG DAY TOMORROW AND I NEED TO GET SOME SLEEP. ALONE.



OH. SURE. OF COURSE. WELL... I'LL BE GOING THEN.

COME HERE.



I'LL CALL YOU, OKAY?

THE PROPOSAL

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TONI, ONE MORE NIGHT ON THAT COUCH AND THE DAMAGE TO MY SPINE WILL BE PERMANENT.

SO CALL A CHIROPRACTOR IN THE MORNING.

I MISS YOU.



OKAY, GET IN. I MISS YOU TOO.

AW, TONI! THIS IS SO **NICE!** YOU FEEL SO **GOOD!**

YOU TOO. WHAT HAPPENED TO US, CLARICE? WHERE DID WE GO WRONG?



WELL, LEMME SEE... I THINK EVERYTHING STARTED TO GO WRONG WHEN **YOU** DECIDED WE SHOULD HAVE A **BABY**.

OH, IS THAT RIGHT? WELL AS I RECALL, EVERYTHING STARTED TO GO WRONG WHEN **YOU** WERE WORKING ON THE **CONFERENCE** MORNING, NOON, AND LET'S NOT FORGET **NIGHT**, WITH **GINGER!**

TONI, I WAS FEELING SO PRESSURED ABOUT MAKING A **COMMITMENT** TO YOU... SLEEPING WITH GINGER WAS JUST A WAY TO BLOW OFF SOME STEAM!

I UNDERSTAND, BUT I CAN'T LIVE LIKE THAT, CLARICE.



I KNOW. ME NEITHER. IN FACT, I'VE BEEN THINKING MAYBE WE SHOULD... UM... **YOU** KNOW... GET **MARRIED**.

WHAAAT? ARE YOU **SERIOUS?**

YEAH! I'VE GIVEN IT A LOT OF THOUGHT! I WANT US TO HAVE A REAL, TANGIBLE COMMITMENT! A CEREMONY & EVERYTHING!

SLEEPING ON THE COUCH **HAS** DONE PERMANENT DAMAGE. TO YOUR **BRAIN!**

WE'LL INVITE ALL OUR FRIENDS... SHOULD WE WEAR GOWNS OR TUXEDOS? WE COULD EVEN GO ON A **HONEYMOON**..



at the Salon

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SO HOW'S YOUR LOVE LIFE, CASANOVA?



ROTTEN. I SEEM TO BE LOSING MY TOUCH.

NO LURID TALES OF SEDUCTION FOR ME THIS TIME?

NOT UNLESS YOU WANT TO HEAR ABOUT MY BREATHLESS NIGHTS SPENT PASSIONATELY WAITING FOR THE PHONE TO RING.

LO, THIS DOESN'T SOUND LIKE YOU! IS IT THE WOMAN YOU WERE DROOLING OVER LAST TIME? OLDER, MARRIED?

YEAH. WE HAD ONE DATE. PIZZA AND SEX ON HER FOLD-OUT COUCH.

HOW WAS IT?

WELL, I COULDA DONE WITHOUT THE ANCHOVIES, BUT SHE ORDERED BEFORE I GOT THERE.



ANCHOVIES ON YOUR FIRST DATE? KINKY!

DON'T YOU THINK IF SHE DOESN'T WANNA SEE ME SHE COULD AT LEAST HAVE THE DECENCY TO SAY SO TO MY FACE? D'YOU THINK I SHOULD CALL HER?

... SO, LIKE, HE KEEPS CALLING ME. I DUNNO WHAT TO DO. WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

TELL THE PATHETIC JERK TO GET LOST. BELIEVE ME, HON, YOU CAN'T MINCE WORDS WHEN YOU'RE TRYING TO DUMP SOMEONE.



ON SECOND THOUGHT, CALLING HER MIGHT NOT BE THE WISEST OPTION. BUT WHAT CAN I DO? I CAN'T STAND THIS SUSPENSE!

WHY DON'T YOU SEND HER A TELEPATHIC MESSAGE THAT YOU WANT TO SEE HER?

YEAH, SURE.

MIKO, YOUR NEXT APPOINTMENT IS HERE!

HI, EMMA! HAVE A SEAT, I'LL BE WITH YOU IN A MINUTE! LOIS, DON'T JUMP LIKE THAT WHEN I'M TRIMMING YOUR EARS!

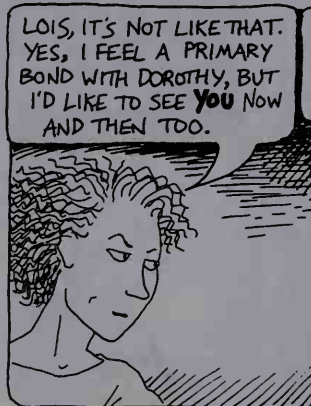
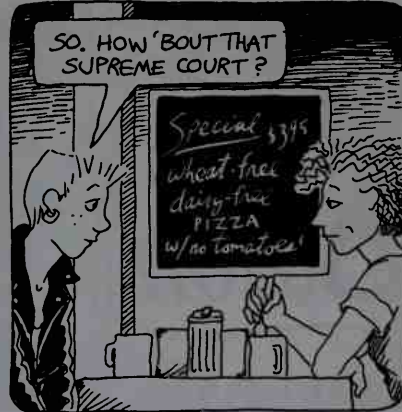


The Option

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AFTER A SURPRISE ENCOUNTER AT THE HAIR SALON, LOIS HAS ARRANGED TO MEET EMMA FOLLOWING HER APPOINTMENT.



The SPAT

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LET ME GET THIS STRAIGHT. EMMA SAYS SHE'S INVOLVED IN A PRIMARY RELATIONSHIP WITH SOMEONE NAMED DOROTHY.

RIGHT.

BUT SHE'D LIKE TO SEE **YOU** ON THE SIDE.

WELL... I PREFER TO SAY 'MORE CASUALLY.'

LOIS, IF I LIKE SOMEONE SO MUCH I WANNA BE **INVOLVED** WITH HER, THEN I WANNA BE **INVOLVED** WITH HER, FER GODDESS' SAKE! NONE OF THIS 'SECONDARY RELATIONSHIP' BULLSHIT!

I SAID **CASUAL**, NOT **SECONDARY**.

HOW CAN YOU EXCHANGE **INTIMATE BODILY FLUIDS** WITH SOMEONE AND CALL IT **CASUAL**?!

LISTEN! JUST BECAUSE YOU AND HARRIET INSTANTLY **MERGED IDENTITIES** DOESN'T MEAN THAT'S THE ONLY WAY TO DO THINGS!

WHADDAYA MEAN? HARRIET AND I HAVE PERFECTLY HEALTHY BOUNDARIES!

YEAH, SURE! YOU CAN'T EVEN GO TO A MOVIE WITH ME UNLESS YOU CHECK WITH HARRIET FIRST!

UM... EXCUSE ME...

BUT...

BUT NOTHING! YOUR TIME'S NOT YOUR OWN! AND I'VE NOTICED THE PRONOUN '**WE**' CREEPING INTO YOUR VOCABULARY AN AWFUL LOT LATELY!

AHEM!

SO WHAT! MAYBE I **LIKE** CHECKING WITH HARRIET! MAYBE I **LIKE** SAYING **WE**!

MAYBE YOU'D LIKE A **LOBOTOMY** TOO!

OKAY LOIS! **LET** EMMA JERK YOU AROUND! I'M TIRED OF TRYING TO HELP YOU!

UM... MAYBE YOU COULD **HELP ME** THEN.

HELP LIKE **YOURS** I CAN GET ON **CABLE TV**! ALL YOU DO IS **PREACH**!

LISTEN, I'D LIKE TO **BUY THIS BOOK** IF IT'S NOT TOO MUCH **TROUBLE**...

AWRIGHT! KEEP YER **SHIRT ON**!

JEEZ! DID SOMEONE GET UP ON THE WRONG SIDE OF THE BED TODAY?

Exclusive Engagement

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HOW ABOUT EARLY SPRING? OR JUNE! JUNE WOULD BE ROMANTIC!



OR WE COULD WAIT FOR OUR EIGHTH ANNIVERSARY AND DO IT THEN.



WILL YOU STOP? WE HAVEN'T DECIDED YET WHETHER WE'RE DOING IT AT ALL.

WELL I'VE DECIDED. I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOUR PROBLEM IS.

CLARICE, EXCUSE ME IF I SEEM HESITANT. ONE MINUTE YOU'RE HAVING AN AFFAIR AND LYING TO ME... THE NEXT, YOU WANT US TO DRESS UP IN WHITE SATIN AND SWEAR EVERLASTING MONOGAMY IN FRONT OF EVERYONE WE KNOW.



WILL YOU LET GO OF THE THING WITH GINGER? IT WAS NOTHING! DOESN'T THE FACT I'VE BEEN IN THERAPY WITH YOU FOR SIX MONTHS COUNT FOR ANYTHING?

ALL RIGHT. I'M SORRY. BUT WHY THE SUDDEN URGE TO GET MARRIED? A CEREMONY WON'T MAKE US MORE COMMITTED THAN WE ALREADY ARE.



IT'S A RITUAL, TONI! IT MEANS PUBLIC RECOGNITION OF OUR RELATIONSHIP!

IT JUST HAS SO MANY NEGATIVE CONNOTATIONS. MARRIAGE IS ABOUT PROPERTY TRANSFER AND CREATING STATE-APPROVED NUCLEAR FAMILIES.



WHY MIMIC IT? WE WON'T EVEN GET A STATE-APPROVED TAX BREAK!



TONI, FOR US IT'LL BE ABOUT LOVE.

NO. FOR YOU IT'S ABOUT FEAR. YOU THINK A COMMITMENT CEREMONY IS SOME KIND OF TICKET TO ETERNAL SECURITY.



LOOK, I JUST WANNA MARRY YOU!



THERE. YOU GOT YOUR PUBLIC RECOGNITION. SATISFIED?



IT'S NOT JUST ABOUT SECURITY, TONI... THINK OF THE PRESENTS!

PRESENTS?! WELL WHY DIDN'T YOU SAY SO?

a SERIOUS PARTY

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IT'S
JEZANNA'S
ANNUAL
COMING
OUT
PARTY,
AND THE
GANG'S
ALL
HERE!

WELL, MO... YOU CAME
OUT TO YOUR PARENTS
LAST YEAR. WHAT'S
YOUR NEXT STEP
GONNA BE?

AW, JEZ, I'M SICK & TIRED
OF COMING OUT! LIFE'S
HARD ENOUGH WITHOUT
HAVING TO TELL THE
PLUMBER YOU'RE A LESBIAN.
WHY KNOCK OURSELVES OUT?

BECAUSE EVERY TIME
YOU **DON'T** COME OUT,
YOU LET SOMEONE GO
ON THINKING THEY
DON'T KNOW ANY GAY
PEOPLE! IT MAKES
US **INVISIBLE!**



BUT IT'S NOBODY'S
BUSINESS WHO I
SLEEP WITH!
IT'S A **PERSONAL
MATTER!**

PRETTY TO THINK SO!
BUT IN THIS CULTURE
YOU'RE **PRESUMED** TO BE
SLEEPING WITH THE **OP-
POSITE SEX** UNTIL
PROVEN OTHERWISE!

DON'T WASTE YOUR BREATH, JEZ. SHE'S
GOING THROUGH SOME WEIRD **REACTIONARY
PHASE**. FRANKLY, I'M WORRIED. SHE
JUST LET HER **GREENPEACE** MEMBERSHIP
LAPSE, AND SUBSCRIBED TO **MS.** INSTEAD.

THINK OF IT, TONI! WHAT
BETTER WAY TO COME OUT
TO OUR FAMILIES THAN BY
ANNOUNCING OUR
COMMITMENT CEREMONY!



YEAH, THAT'S WHAT WE
THOUGHT. BUT MY FATHER
REFUSED TO COME WITNESS
A "CRIME AGAINST NATURE."

AT LEAST **MY FOLKS**
SENT US A **GIFT**—TWO
SETS OF TWIN-SIZE
SHEETS.

EMMA!
LOIS! I WAS HOPING
YOU'D BE HERE! I'M
STILL WAITING FOR
YOUR ANSWER!

WELL, UM... I'VE DECIDED
THAT **YES, I WOULD**
LIKE TO GO OUT WITH
YOU CASUALLY. NO
STRINGS ATTACHED.



OH, GOOD! I'D LIKE YOU
TO MEET MY PRIMARY
PARTNER DOROTHY!
HON, THIS IS LOIS!

OH, REALLY?
SHE'S A BIT
YOUNGER THAN
I EXPECTED.

HOW NICE TO SEE YOU ALL
GETTING ACQUAINTED! LOIS,
COULD YOU HELP ME IN THE
KITCHEN FOR A MINUTE?

I
OWE
YOU
ONE.

IT WAS JUST GOOD HOSTESS
TECHNIQUE. BELIEVE ME,
IF THIS WASN'T MY PARTY,
I'D HAVE GRABBED A
FRONT ROW SEAT.



an Unusual Plight

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CLARICE AND TONI ARE JUST RETURNING FROM THEIR SUPPORT GROUP FOR LESBIANS IN MULTICULTURAL RELATIONSHIPS.

SHEESH! IF THAT'S SUPPORT, I DON'T THINK I EVER WANNA SEE **ANTAGONISM!**

OH, COME ON! EVERYONE WAS **VERY** SUPPORTIVE... EXCEPT **TANYA**, OF COURSE.

DO YOU THINK SHE'S RIGHT? ARE WE JUST MAKING A PATHETIC BID FOR APPROVAL FROM A RACIST, IMPERIALIST, MISOGYNISTIC, HETEROSEXIST SYSTEM THAT WANTS TO **DESTROY** EVERYTHING WE STAND FOR?!

CLARICE, TANYA SAID THE EXACT SAME THING ABOUT YOU GOING TO LAW SCHOOL AND ME BEING A C.P.A.! IT NEVER BOTHERED YOU BEFORE!

WELL, YEAH, BUT...
OKAY. WHAT IS GOING ON?

YOU'VE BEEN PESTERING ME FOR **MONTHS** ABOUT HAVING A COMMITMENT CEREMONY... I FINALLY AGREE, AND **NOW** YOU'RE HAVING SECOND THOUGHTS!

I JUST WANNA MAKE SURE YOU **REALLY** WANNA GO THROUGH WITH IT.

YES, I DO! AND AFTER ALL THIS, YOU'D BETTER WANT TO GO THROUGH WITH IT TOO!

OKAY, OKAY... AS LONG AS YOU'RE CERTAIN IT'S THE RIGHT THING...

HERE.

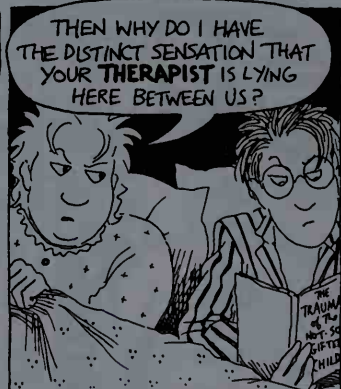
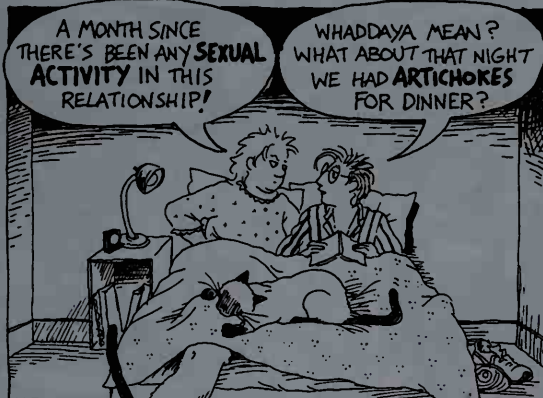
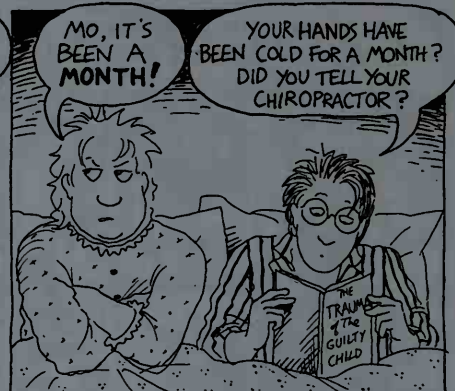
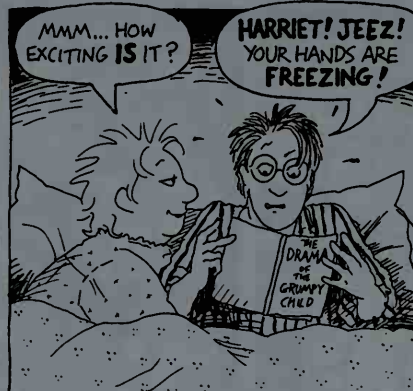
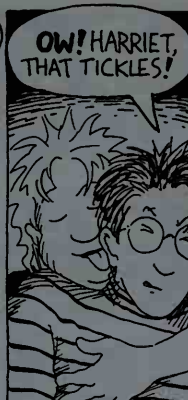
CLARICE! YOU DIDN'T!

SHRIEEEEK!

I'LL BE YOUR LAWYER IF YOU'LL BE MY ACCOUNTANT.

Z's a crowd

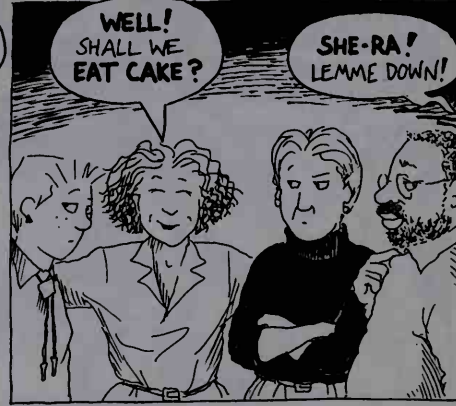
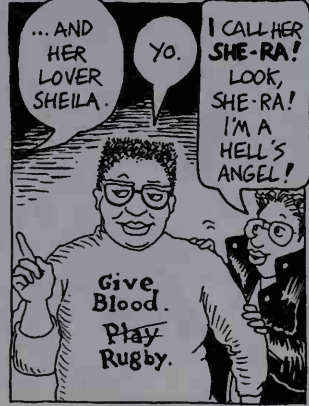
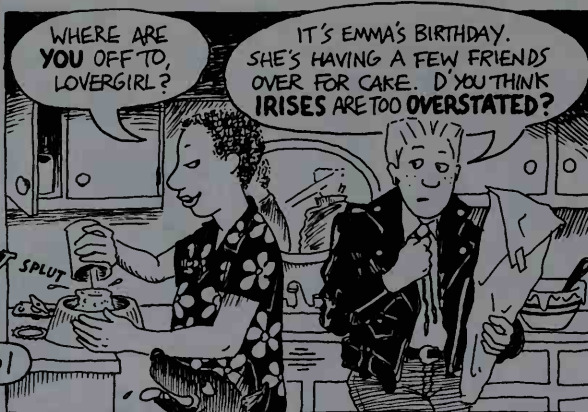
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ALL IN THE FAMILY

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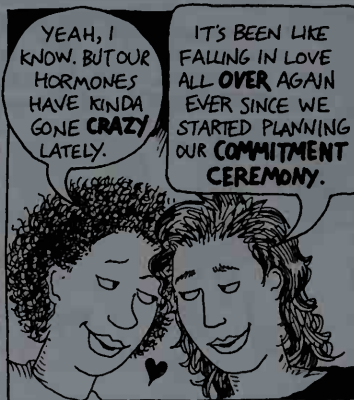
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Mo STARS IN

A Breach of Etiquette

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Pre-Nuptial DISAGREEMENT

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WHAT I DON'T GET IS, PROMISING SOMEONE YOU'LL NEVER SLEEP WITH ANYBODY ELSE, **FOREVER**. TALK ABOUT TERMINAL TEDIUM! I'D GO **STIR** CRAZY!



I DUNNO, LOIS. I **ENVY** CLARICE AND TONI. MAKING A COMMITMENT TO MONOGAMY SOUNDS KINDA **EXCITING**.



WHOA! LOOK OUT, LOIS! JEZANNA'S BEEN POSSESSED BY **JUNE CLEAVER!**



WELL I'M SERIOUS. I THINK PROMISING TO BE EXCLUSIVE OPENS UP A WHOLE NEW WORLD OF POSSIBILITY AND ADVENTURE AND INTIMACY.

OH NOOO! THE 'I' WORD!



WELL I THINK THEY'RE CLINGING TO AN OBSOLETE HETEROPATRIARCHAL CONSTRUCT... MARRIAGE IS ABOUT OWNERSHIP AND DOWRIES AND STUFF! I MEAN, **GROSS!**

CAN YOU **IMAGINE?** THE SAME LOVER...FOR **ETERNITY!**



THEY'RE EVEN EXCHANGING **RINGS**, CAN YOU BELIEVE IT?



YOU KNOW, MO, UNDERNEATH THAT HARD-LINE ATTITUDE I THINK YOU'RE BEING JUST PLAIN **HETEROSEXIST!**

WHAT, ME **HETEROSEXIST?**



YOU'RE RESPONDING JUST LIKE YOU'VE BEEN PROGRAMMED TO! TWO WOMEN LOVE EACH OTHER AND WANT TO AFFIRM THAT LOVE PUBLICLY, SO YOU **TRASH** THEM FOR IT!

BUT... BUT...



A **REALLY** POLITICALLY CORRECT PERSON WOULD SUPPORT THEIR COMMITMENT WHOLEHEARTEDLY!



SO WHAT ARE YA GIVING THEM, JEZ?

A COMBINATION WATER-**SAVING** SHOWER HEAD AND CAPPUCCINO MAKER. HOW 'BOUT YOU?



I'M GIVING THEM A COPY OF MY PERSONALLY RESEARCHED CATALOG OF FEASIBLE LESBIAN SEXUAL POSITIONS. GODDESS KNOWS THEY'LL NEED IT. WHAT ABOUT YOU, MO?



I DUNNO. I CAN'T DECIDE BETWEEN THE COMPLETE **DONNA REED SHOW** VIDEOCASSETTES AND THE T-SHIRTS THAT SAY "HERS" AND "HERS TOO."



Getting Committed

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THE BIG DAY HAS ARRIVED.

Clarice Desmona Clifford
and
Antonia Norma Ortiz
request the honor of your
participation in a
Circle of Commitment Ritual
and Barbecue
Saturday 11

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SO, HOWZIT
FEEL TO BE GOING
TO YOUR OLD FLAME'S
WEDDING?



HON, ONE MISGUIDED ROLL
IN THE HAY WITH CLARICE HARDLY
MAKES US OLD FLAMES. I THINK SHE
AND TONI WILL BE VERY HAPPY
AND I WISH THEM WELL.



THAT'S THE SPIRIT,
GINGER. PUT A BRAVE FACE
ON IT. WHO KNOWS? MAYBE
YOU'LL CATCH THE
BRIDAL BOUQUET!

WHY DON'T
YOU GO CATCH
A YEAST
INFECTION.



TA DA!
HOW DO I
LOOK?

GREAT, SPARROW.
GIDGET GOES TO
A RITUAL.

WHERE
DID YOU
GET
THAT?



ADAM LENT IT TO ME. IT'S
HIS RADICAL FAERIE PARTY
FROCK. ZIP ME UP?

MEANWHILE, THE SITUATION BETWEEN MO
AND HARRIET IS RAPIDLY DETERIORATING.



AW, HARRIET..
I FEEL STUPID
IN THIS! I'M
JUST GONNA WEAR
MY STRIPED
TANK TOP.



LOOK, YOU CAN'T SHOW UP IN
SOMETHING YOU WEAR EVERY DAY!
CLARICE & TONI ARE PLEDGING THEIR
LIFELONG COMMITMENT TO ONE
ANOTHER! IT'S A MOMENTOUS
OCCASION!



I STILL DON'T GET IT!
THEY'VE MADE IT EIGHT
YEARS TOGETHER! WHY DO
THEY FEEL THE NEED TO
OBSERVE THIS ABSURD,
PSEUDO-HET
FORMALITY ??

NO ONE'S FORCING
YOU TO COME, MO.
WHY DON'T YOU JUST
STAY HOME IN YOUR
STRIPED SHIRT AND
THOSE EVERLASTING
JEANS?



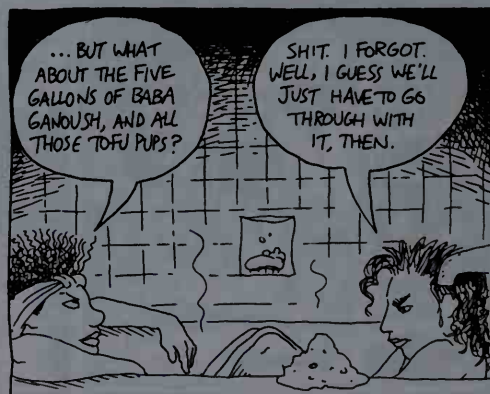
YOU USED TO
THINK I LOOKED
CUTE IN JEANS.



... AND OUR BETROTHED COUPLE IS BREATHELESS WITH
ANTICIPATION AS THEY PREPARE FOR THEIR CEREMONY ...

THERE'S STILL
TIME!

WE CAN JUST CALL EVERY-
ONE AND SAY WE'RE TERRIBLY
SORRY BUT SOMETHING CAME UP
AND WE HAVE TO LEAVE TOWN!



... BUT WHAT
ABOUT THE FIVE
GALLONS OF BABA
GANUSH, AND ALL
THOSE TOFU PUPS?

SHIT. I FORGOT.
WELL, I GUESS WE'LL
JUST HAVE TO GG
THROUGH WITH
IT, THEN.

Altared States



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A TIP OF THE NIB TO LINNEA STEVENSON

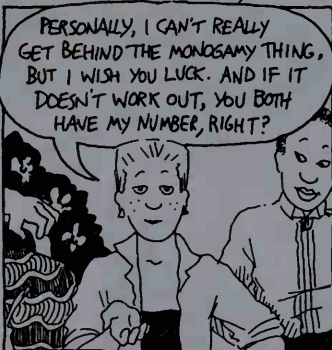
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HAVING QUASHED THEIR LAST-MINUTE RELUCTANCE, OUR STARRY-EYED BRIDES NOW FIND THEMSELVES IN THE BACK YARD SURROUNDED BY A LOVING CIRCLE OF THEIR NEAREST AND DEAREST!

THERE'S DRUMMING...



VARIOUS FRIENDS OFFER AFFIRMING TESTIMONY...



I JUST WANNA SAY I LOVE YOU BOTH LIKE **SISTERS**. MAYBE THAT'S WHY I GIVE YOU SO MUCH SHIT ABOUT BEING **YUPPIE SELLOUTS** AND WHY I SINCERELY HOPE THAT IN YOUR WEDDED **BLISS** YOU DON'T ABANDON THE STRUGGLE OF RADICAL LESBIANS OF COLOR AGAINST THE **IMPERIALIST PATRIARCHY!**



WELL I AM HARD-PRESSED TO THINK OF A MORE **RADICAL** ACT THAN TWO COURAGEOUS WOMEN CHALLENGING THE POWERS THAT BE BY PUBLICLY CELEBRATING THEIR LESBIAN RELATIONSHIP. HERE'S TO YOUR **GOLDEN ANNIVERSARY!**



THE VOWS HAVE BEEN CAREFULLY MEMORIZED...



BUT THE RING EXCHANGE IS EXTEMPORANEOUS.



A CEREMONIAL BROOMSTICK IS JUMPED, THEIR FATES ARE SEALED WITH A KISS... AND THE BARBECUE BEGINS!



The Honey-mooners

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AFTER THE LAST REVELERS DEPART, OUR NEWLYWEDS UNPLUG THE PHONE AND RETIRE TO THEIR MATRIMONIAL FUTON IN SEARCH OF NEW HEIGHTS IN CONJUGAL RAPTURE.



MEANWHILE... INSPIRED BY CLARICE & TONI'S ROMANTIC VOW OF COMMITMENT, MO & HARRIET ARE DETERMINED TO FAN THE FALTERING FLAMES OF THEIR OWN LACKLUSTER LOVE LIFE!

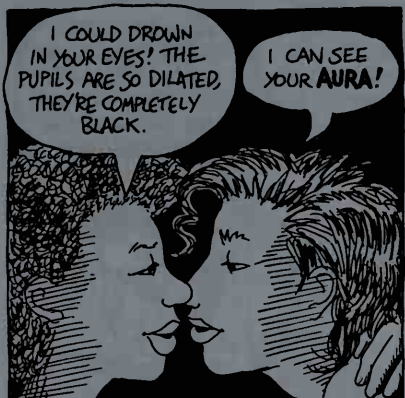


YOU HAD ONIONS ON YOUR TOFU PUP, DIDN'T YOU?

ALL RIGHT, ALL RIGHT. I'LL BRUSH MY TEETH AGAIN.



COULD WE, LIKE, SLOW DOWN? YOU ALWAYS GO RIGHT FOR MY BREASTS. HOW COME YOU NEVER KISS MY HANDS OR ANYTHING ANYMORE?



I COULD DROWN IN YOUR EYES! THE PUPILS ARE SO DILATED, THEY'RE COMPLETELY BLACK.

I CAN SEE YOUR AURA!

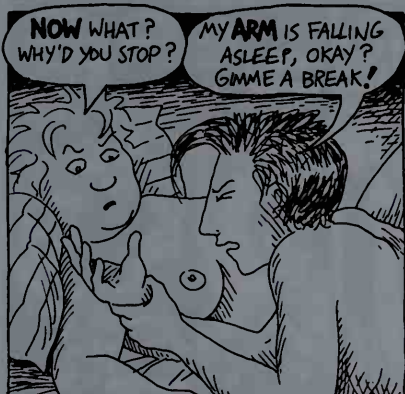


HEY, DIDJA KNOW YOU HAVE A ZIT ON YOUR SHOULDER?



OH!

SIGH!



NOW WHAT? WHY'D YOU STOP?

MY ARM IS FALLING ASLEEP, OKAY? GIMME A BREAK!



LATER...

THAT WAS UNBELIEVABLE! I FELT LIKE I WAS IN A TRANCE, IT WAS SO INTENSE.

YEAH, WOW. AURAS AND PSYCHIC VISIONS AND SIMULTANEOUS ORGASMS... WE SHOULD GET MARRIED EVERY WEEK.



MAYBE YOU SHOULD GO HOME.

CLEAR THE DECKS!
MO'S HAVING...

FEELINGS

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YEAH, CLARICE & TONI'S COMMITMENT CEREMONY WAS REALLY A TURNING POINT FOR ME. I REALIZED IT'S BEEN 3 YEARS SINCE PHYLLIS, AND DAMMIT, I WANT A GIRLFRIEND!

JEEZ, GINGER. WHAT A NEWS FLASH!

IF I WAITED 3 YEARS BETWEEN RELATIONSHIPS, I'D... I'D BE A HUNDRED AND TWO YEARS OLD.

DON'T LOOK NOW, BUT HERE COMES MO, AND IT LOOKS LIKE SHE'S GOT HER KNICKERS IN A TWIST.

MO! NICE TA SEE YA! COME ON IN AND VENT YOUR SPLEEN!

I DON'T KNOW WHAT THIS COUNTRY IS COMING TO! DID YOU SEE THE PAPER? THE CO-FOUNDER OF THE NATIONAL REVIEW JUST CAME OUT!

WOOF!
ARF
ARF!

YEAH, GREAT, HUH? ALL THAT HOOPA ABOUT OUTING SEEMS TO BE HAVING AN EFFECT.

BUT WHAT KIND OF EFFECT? I MEAN, WHAT KIND OF MESSAGE DOES AN OPENLY GAY RIGHT-WING CONSERVATIVE SEND TO THE YOUTH OF AMERICA, LOIS?

WHAT'LL IT BE NEXT? GAY C.I.A. AGENTS? LESBIAN CORPORATE RAIDERS? QUEER FUNDAMENTALIST PREACHERS?! IT'S- IT'S IMMORAL!

WELL... LIKE THE BUMPERSTICKER SAYS, WE ARE EVERYWHERE.

GROAN.

C'MON, MO. SURE, IT'S DISILLUSIONING, BUT WORSE THINGS COULD HAPPEN!

OH YEAH? LIKE THERE COULD BE A HUGE, NATIONWIDE SURGE IN ANTI-GAY AND ANTI-LESBIAN VIOLENCE, FOR EXAMPLE?

OR PERHAPS THE NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION COULD DECIDE TO RECYCLE LOW-LEVEL RADIOACTIVE WASTE INTO CONSUMER PRODUCTS?!

FACE IT! THE WORST IS ALREADY HAPPENING! LIFE ON THIS PLANET SUCKS!

AW, QUIT YOUR BELLACHING AND GET OVER IT, MO. AT LEAST YOU HAVE A GIRLFRIEND.

AAUGH!

UH-OH.

LOOKS LIKE TROUBLE.

RIGHT HERE IN RIVER CITY.

CRISIS

management

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MO HAS DROPPED IN ON HER PALS FOR A HIT OF NETWORK NEWS...

I CAN'T BELIEVE THIS COUNTRY! WE'RE ON THE BRINK OF **WORLD WAR III** JUST SO WE CAN KEEP DRIVING OUR BIG FUCKING CARS TO THE BIG FUCKING MALL!

92

..AND SO BUSH AND HIS BLOODTHIRSTY BUDDIES IN THE **DEFENSE BIZ** CAN PLAY 'WHOSE IS BIGGER' IN THE PERSIAN GULF, AND PROVE THAT WE NEED EVEN MORE MONEY FOR MILITARY SPENDING!

AND LOOKIT **THIS!** THE MEDIA DON'T EVEN **QUESTION** WHAT WE'RE DOING OVER THERE! THEY JUST WHIP EVERYONE INTO A FRENZY OVER 'PROTECTING THE AMERICAN WAY OF LIFE' AND CALL **SADDAM HUSSEIN 'HITLER'** TO **BOOST THEIR RATINGS!**

WHY DON'T YOU START CONSERVING ENERGY AND TURN THE TV OFF?

CLIK!

WHIE SERPENT GUIDE TO EXERCISE TINGLY INCORRECT BEHAVIOR

I JUST DON'T GET IT! INSTEAD OF EXPLORING ENVIRONMENTALLY-SOUND ENERGY SOURCES, OR RAISING OUR PATHETIC FUEL-EFFICIENCY STANDARDS, WE'RE PREPARED TO **KILL** FOR THE LAST DROP OF OIL ON THE **PLANET!** IT'S **INSANE!**

JUST WAIT. NEXT THEY'LL START DRILLING UP THE WILDLIFE REFUGES.

IT'S TYPICAL ADDICTED BEHAVIOR. WE'RE A NATION OF **OIL JUNKIES**, TOTALLY SELF-DESTRUCTIVE AND WILLING TO DO ANYTHING FOR A FIX. WE'RE LIKE A HUGE **DYSFUNCTIONAL FAMILY**. IF YOU ASK ME, WHAT THIS COUNTRY NEEDS IS A **GOOD 12-STEP PROGRAM!**

PUH-LEEZE, SPARROW.

SAY, HAVE YOU GUYS ALL FOUND YOUR **G-SPOT**?

GINGER, HOW CAN YOU THINK ABOUT **SEX** AT A TIME LIKE **THIS?** MADMEN ARE ABOUT TO **DESTROY** THE **EARTH!**

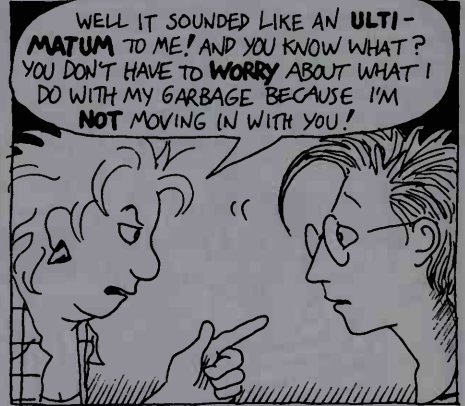
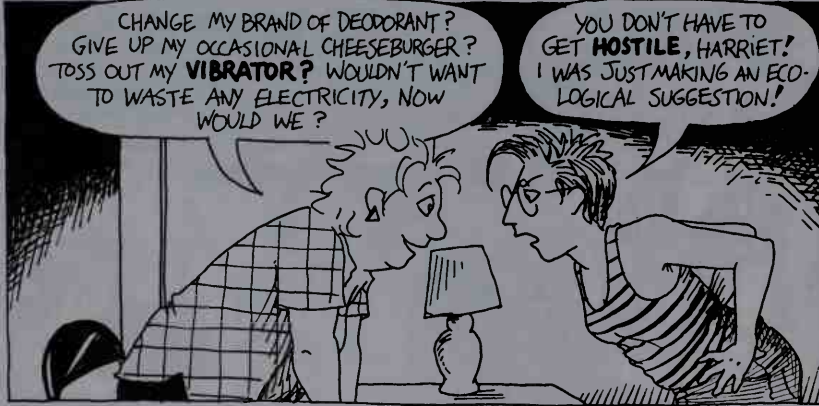
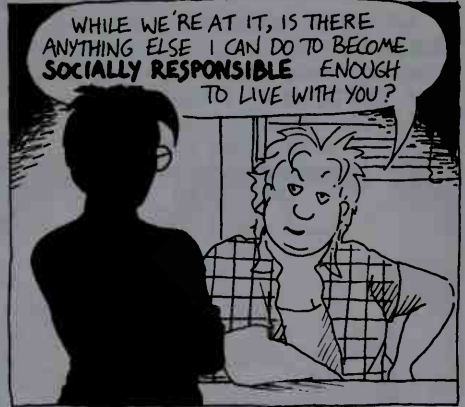
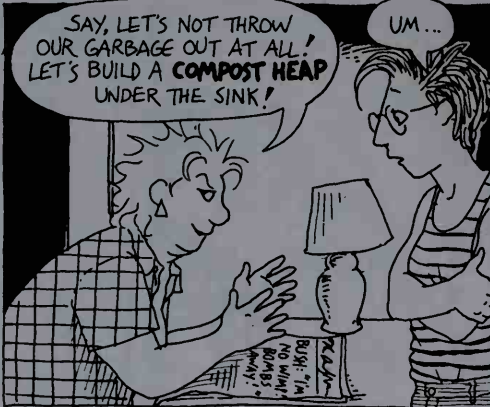
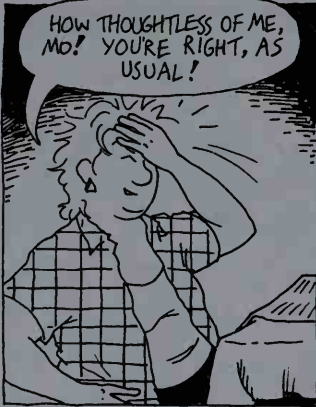
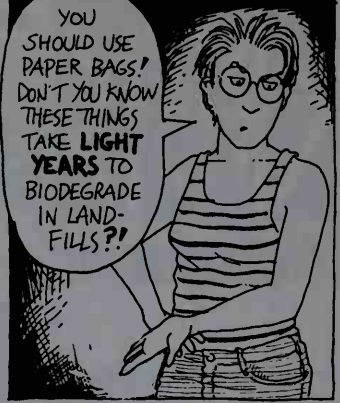
CAN YOU THINK OF A BETTER TIME? I DON'T KNOW ABOUT YOU, GIRL, BUT I WANNA HAVE A **G-SPOT ORGASM** BEFORE **ARMAGEDDON** HITS.

FIGHTIN' WORDS

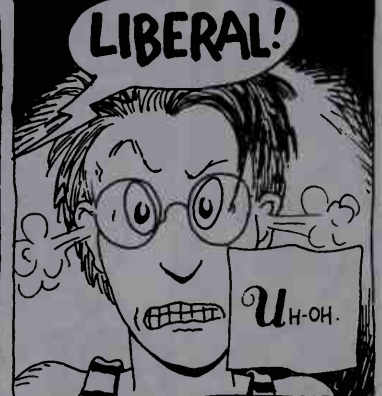
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MO'S BEEN STRANGELY PEEVISH EVER SINCE SHE PROPOSED COHABITATION TO HARRIET...



SHE TAUNTED, HARRIET, LIKE A SKILLED MARTIAL ARTIST, DEFTLY HONES IN ON HER OPPONENT'S WEAKEST POINT...

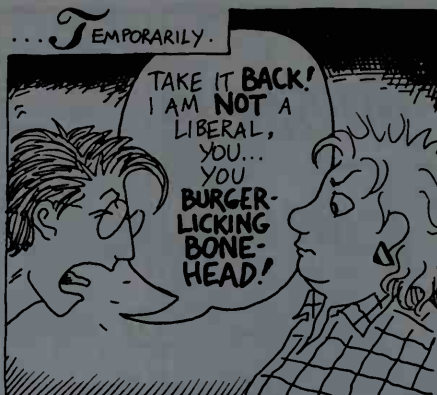


THE CLOUD-BURST

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HARRIET'S CRUEL EPITHET HAS RENDERED MO SPEECHLESS...



WILL OUR LACHRYMOSE HERDINES MANAGE TO OVERCOME THIS SOGGY STATE OF AFFAIRS? GODDESS KNOWS...UNTIL OUR NEXT POIGNANT EPISODE!

Outrageous Fortune



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FOLLOWING THEIR FIERCE FEUD AND SUBSEQUENT SOB SESSION, OUR COURAGEOUS COUPLE SEEMS MORE DETERMINED THAN EVER TO ENTER INTO THAT RAPTUROUS CONDITION KNOWN AS DOMESTIC PARTNERSHIP.!

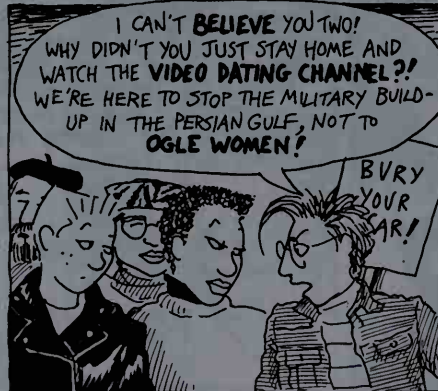
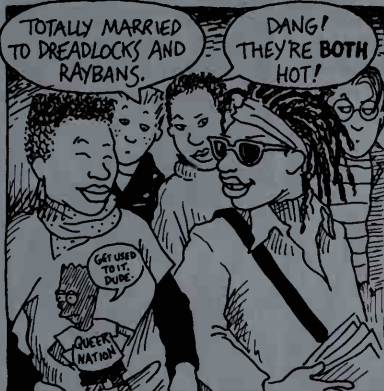
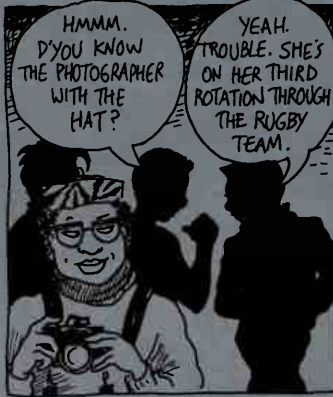
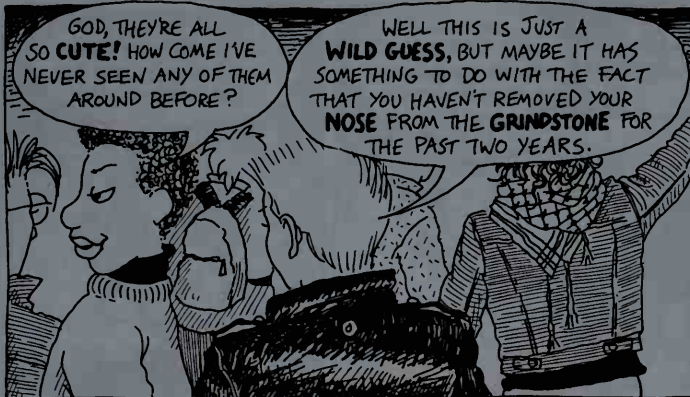
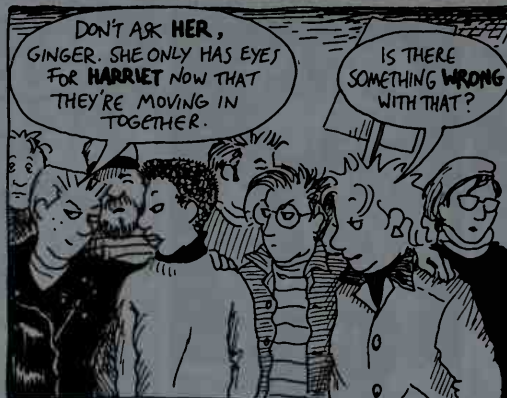


Dancing in the Streets

96

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A CRISP
AUTUMN
AFTERNOON
FINDS OUR
HEROINES
OUTDOORS,
VIGOROUSLY
EXERCISING
THEIR FIRST
AMENDMENT
RIGHTS.



A TIP O' THE NIB TO EMMA GOLDMAN

the Zealot

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EMMA, WE'VE BEEN GOING ALONG LIKE THIS FOR MONTHS AND MONTHS! I WANNA SEE YOU MORE OFTEN!

LOOK, LOIS. I TOLD YOU ABOUT DOROTHY WHEN THIS WHOLE THING STARTED. OUR AGREEMENT IS THAT I DON'T SPEND MORE THAN ONE NIGHT A WEEK WITH YOU, AND...

...IT'S NOT NEGOTIABLE.

YEAH, YEAH, YEAH. I KNOW. BUT HOW CAN YOU RESIST ME?

IT'S NOT EASY. THANK GOD I'M SO PRINCIPLED.

SPEND SATURDAY WITH ME! PLEASE? JUST THIS ONCE.

MMM... I REALLY CAN'T, HON. DOROTHY AND I HAVE PLANS TO GO SHOPPING.

SHOPPING?! YOU CAN DO THAT ANY OLD TIME! COME TO A DEMONSTRATION WITH ME, INSTEAD. IT'LL BE MUCH MORE PRINCIPLED.

WHAT DEMONSTRATION?

A QUEER NATION KISS-IN!

OH, PLEASE, LOIS. AREN'T WE BEYOND SHOCKING THE BOURGEOISIE?

NOT UNTIL THEY STOP BEING SHOCKED, WE'RE NOT! IT'S HIGH TIME PEOPLE JUST GOT USED TO US!

SO SHOVE IT IN THEIR FACES? I'M SORRY, BUT THAT'S JUST NOT THE MOST EFFECTIVE WAY TO WIN ACCEPTANCE.

AND SHOPPING IS? BESIDES, I WANT MORE THAN ACCEPTANCE! I WANT RESPECT!

YOU DON'T GET RESPECT BY PROVOKING PEOPLE!

IT'S NOT PROVOCATION! IT'S EDUCATION! A KISS-IN IS A VISIBLE, EMPOWERING, LIPS-ON FORM OF DIRECT ACTION AGAINST A SOCIETY THAT HATES US!

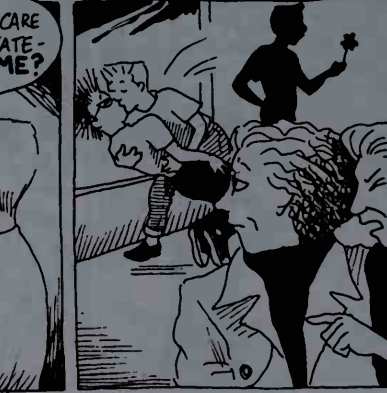
MMM... Y'KNOW, YOU'RE VERY SEXY WHEN YOU GET ZEALOUS!

MALL MANIA

LOIS AND HER QUEER NATION CRONIES HAVE DESCENDED ON A LOCAL MALL... AND THEY'RE NOT GOING SHOPPING!

99

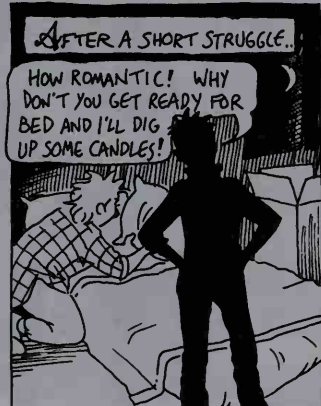
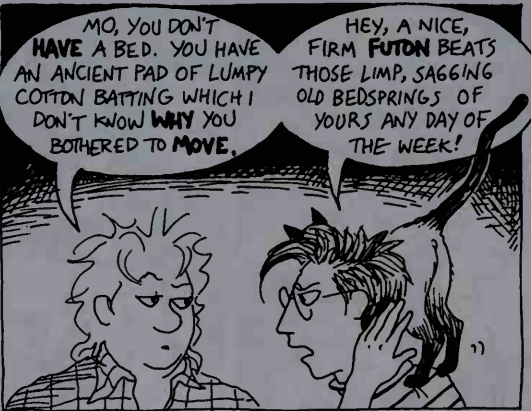
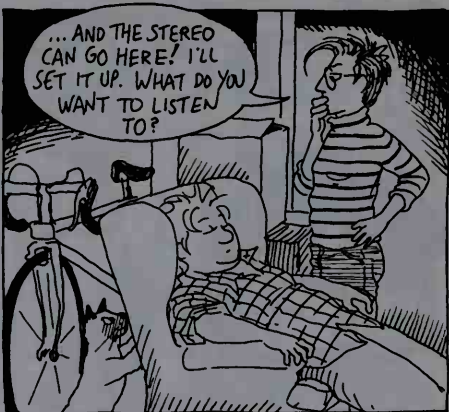
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Ménage à Deux

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STUDY WAR FER SURE

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A'S THE WORLD TEETERS ON THE BRINK OF WAR, IT'S SUPPERTIME IN NORTH AMERICA.

102

MO IS JADED.

HI, SWEETIE. HOW WAS THE DEMO?

I DUNNO, HARRIET. I DUNNO WHY WE BOTHER. WHAT ARE YOU MAKING?

SPAGHETTI. WHAT'S WRONG? DIDN'T ANYONE SHOW UP?

THERE WERE THOUSANDS OF US THERE! BUT BIG DEAL. THE GAS MASKS AND GERM-WARFARE ANTIDOTES ARE PASSED OUT. OL' GEORGE HAS ALREADY ORDERED THE COFFIN FLAGS AND "HUMAN REMAINS POUCHES."

IF ONLY WE PREPARED AS CAREFULLY FOR LIFE AS WE DO FOR DEATH.

YEAH, RIGHT. WE COULD ISSUE EVERYONE A 'VISUALIZE WORLD PEACE' BUMPERSTICKER.

GINGER & LOIS ARE CONFUSED.

WHY ARE ALL THOSE WOMEN HUMMING AND BURNING INCENSE IN OUR LIVING ROOM?

OH, IT'S SPARROW'S SPIRITUALITY CIRCLE. THEY'RE VISUALIZING WORLD PEACE. HOW'D THE DEMO GO?

IT WAS AWESOME! MY FOCUS GROUP GOT PSYCHED TO ORGANIZE A QUEER BUS TO THE MARCH ON WASHINGTON. IS THERE ENOUGH OF THAT FOR ME TOO?

YEAH, SURE. WHICH MARCH ON WASHINGTON? I DUNNO WHY WE THINK BUSH AND HUSSEIN CAN NEGOTIATE A SOLUTION WHEN THE ANTIWAR MOVEMENT CAN'T EVEN AGREE ON A DATE FOR A MARCH. UH... DON'T YOU WANT THAT HEATED?

WHY BOTHER?

CLARICE IS PISSED!

WHY IS IT?! WILL YOU EXPLAIN TO ME WHY THE LEAST EVOLVED MEMBERS OF OUR SPECIES END UP IN THE MOST POWERFUL POSITIONS?

WHO DOES BUSH THINK HE IS?! THE PEOPLE DON'T WANT WAR! I'M GONNA IMPEACH HIS DEATH-WORSHIPPING ASS!

HON, DON'T OVER-COOK THE PASTA.

IT'S JUST RIGHT.

IMPEACH HIS ASS!

GULF BALL

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ON THE HOME FRONT...

WHAT AN INTERCEPTION, STEVE!

YES SIR, THERE SURE IS SOME BUTT GETTING KICKED OUT ON THE FIELD TODAY!

STILL, THE SCORE IS SURPRISINGLY CLOSE!

WELL, WE HAVEN'T SEEN THE REAL HEAVY ARTILLERY YET, TED.

103

LOIS! HOW CAN YOU WATCH THE SUPER BOWL AT A TIME LIKE THIS?

I WISH IT WAS THE SUPER BOWL.

WE'LL BE BACK WITH MORE EXCITING DESCRIPTIONS OF MISSILES, PAYLOADS, AND EXPLOSIONS AFTER THIS WORD FROM OUR SPONSOR, GENERAL ELECTRIC.

MEANWHILE, OUT ON THE STREETS...

WHO WILL PROFIT? WHO WILL DIE?

WAR IS DUMB! BUSH IS SCUM!

STOP THE MADNESS

IMPEACH BUSH

DON'T CRY, BABE! YOUR EYES ARE GONNA FREEZE SHUT!

IMPEACH!

GO AHEAD, TONI... HAVE YOUR FEELINGS! WAR'S A BUMMER! BUT THINK OF THIS AS THE TRANSITION INTO THE AGE OF AQUARIUS. IT'S THE DEATH THROES OF PATRIARCHAL MILITARY CULTURE!

YEAH, RIGHT. AND MAYBE THE DEATH THROES OF EVERY OTHER KIND OF CULTURE INTO THE BARGAIN.

IMPEACH BUSH

NO ONE WINS

DRAFT GEORGE BUSH!

BRING OUR BOYFRIENDS HOME!

YELL A LITTLE, TONI! IT'LL MAKE YOU FEEL BETTER!

WHY SHOULD I FEEL BETTER? PEOPLE ARE GETTING KILLED AND WE'RE PAYING FOR IT!

DRAFT DAN QUAYLE!

YEAH. Y'KNOW, REFUSING TO PAY OUR TAXES WOULD STOP THE WAR MACHINE A LOT FASTER THAN CHANTING SLOGANS.

DRAFT NEIL BUSH WHEN HE GETS OUTTA JAIL!

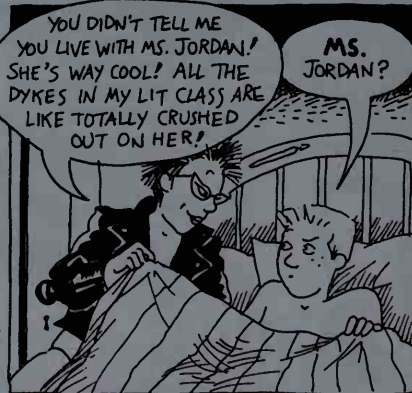
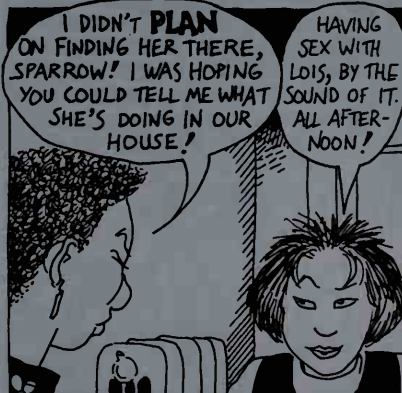
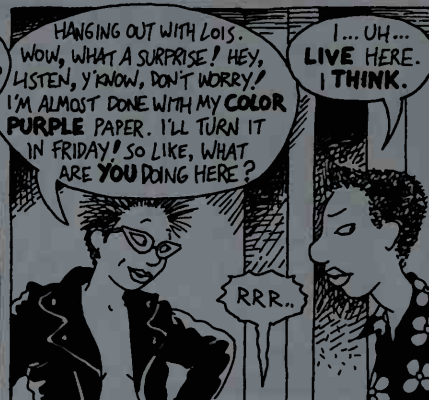
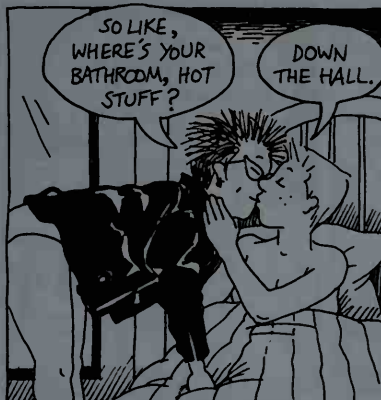
REFUSE TO PAY TAXES? DO THEY LET YOU DO THAT?!

Brief Encounter

T IRED OF PLAYING ODD GIRL OUT WITH EMMA AND DOROTHY, LOIS ATTEMPTS TO DISTRACT HERSELF WITH AN ADMIRER FROM HER QUEER NATION FOCUS GROUP.

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A TIP O' THE NIB TO JOHN BENSON!

ARMY OF LOVERS

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THE
PREMENSTRUAL
TENSION
HAS
REACHED
FEVER
PITCH
AT
GINGER'S
HOUSE!

LOIS, I JUST CAN'T
BELIEVE YOU'VE GOTTEN
INVOLVED WITH ONE OF
MY STUDENTS!

WILL YOU RELAX, GINGER?
HOW WAS I SUPPOSED TO KNOW
SHE WAS YOUR STUDENT? ANYWAY,
YOSHI AND I AREN'T INVOLVED.
WE'RE JUST FUCK BUDDIES!

EXCUSE ME?
IT SOUNDED LIKE
YOU JUST SAID
'FUCK BUDDIES.'

YEAH, YOU KNOW.
WE JUST MESS
AROUND. NO STRINGS
ATTACHED.

LISTEN, LOIS. I HAVE
BEEN VERY PATIENT ALL THESE
YEARS WITH YOUR ENDLESS PARADE
OF GIRLFRIENDS. STRANGERS IN THE
BATHROOM, MOANS OF ECSTASY AT 2 A.M.,
ALL THE PHONE CALLS AND DRAMAS!
BUT I HAVE REACHED MY LIMIT!

I UNDERSTAND,
GINGER. I'D PROBABLY
BE FEELING JEALOUS
TOO IF I WASN'T
GETTING ANY.

JEALOUS?!
DON'T MAKE ME
LAUGH, YOU...
YOU...

SLUT?

'SEX ADDICT'
IS A MORE
ACCURATE TERM,
I THINK.

WHO
ASKED
YOU?!

HEY, TEMPER
ARE RUNNING A LITTLE
HIGH, GIRLS! I THOUGHT YOU
MIGHT WANT ME TO
MEDIATE!

THIS IS
BETWEEN ME AND
LOIS, SPARROW! AREN'T
YOU LATE FOR A
12-STEP MEETING?

DON'T VENT
YOUR RAGE AT ME!
I CAN'T HELP IT IF
YOU'RE SEXUALLY
FRUSTRATED!

YOU'RE A
FINE ONE TO TALK,
SPARROW! WHEN WAS THE
LAST TIME YOU HAD SEX
WITH ANYBODY BESIDES
YOURSELF?

SO? AT
LEAST I
DO IT WITH
SOMEONE
I LOVE,
YOU
SLUT!

OH, THAT'S SO
ROMANTIC! DO YOU
CRY OUT YOUR OWN
NAME TENDERLY?

MAYBE I
DO NEED A
GIRLFRIEND. THEN
I COULD GO OVER
AND STAY AT
HER HOUSE!

LIFE FORCE

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AS THE AMERICAN EMPIRE CONTINUES ITS INEXORABLE DECLINE BEHIND A FAÇADE OF YELLOW-BERIBBONED DENIAL, OUR PATIENT HEROINES CONTINUE, IN THEIR OWN INEXORABLE WAY, TO NOURISH THE VITAL SPARK.

MO AND HARRIET ARE GETTING DOWN AND DIRTY.



ISN'T THIS GREAT, HARRIET? JOINING WITH OUR NEIGHBORS TO FIGHT CITY HALL AND CLAIM THIS VACANT LOT FOR THE PEOPLE!

COUNTERACTING THE FEAR AND ALIENATION OF URBAN LIFE AS WE COME TOGETHER IN ALL OUR GRAND CULTURAL DIVERSITY TO TILL THE SOIL!



WORKING IN HARMONY WITH NATURE! RENEWING, IN OUR SMALL WAY, THE PLANET'S DAMAGED ECO-SYSTEMS! LAYING THE GROUNDWORK FOR A SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY!



I'M GONNA PUT THE PEAS HERE. COULD YOU PICK THE ROCKS OUT?

JEEZ, HARRIET! I CAN'T STAND GETTING DIRT UNDER MY FINGERNAILS. DO WE HAVE ANY GLOVES?



GINGER IS GIDDY WITH NEWAGENDAS.

NO, I WAS JUST VISITING ATLANTA FOR THE NATIONAL LESBIAN CONFERENCE.

OH. HOW NICE.



'NICE' IS NOT THE WORD I'D CHOOSE. GLORIOUS CHAOS IS MORE LIKE IT. CAN YOU IMAGINE 3,000 LESBIANS FROM NEARLY EVERY WAY OF LIFE HOLDING PLEBARY SESSIONS IN THE CIVIC CENTER WHILE MERCURY IS IN RETROGRADE?

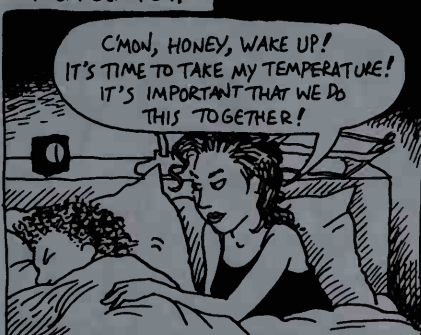
UM... NO, FRANKLY, I CAN'T.



IT WAS SOMETHING ELSE! OF COURSE, THE NETWORKING WAS THE MOST IMPORTANT PART.



TONI AND CLARICE ARE STARTING FROM SCRATCH!



C'MON, HONEY, WAKE UP! IT'S TIME TO TAKE MY TEMPERATURE! IT'S IMPORTANT THAT WE DO THIS TOGETHER!



HUH? OH, RIGHT. OH, WHAT DO I DO?

YOU WRITE IT DOWN ON THIS CHART WHEN I'M DONE.



OKAY. ZNNNK!

CLAR-EECE!

FAMOUS LAST WORDS

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GINGER HAS CONFESSED TO INDULGING IN FLIRTATIOUS BEHAVIOR AT THE NATIONAL LESBIAN CONFERENCE.

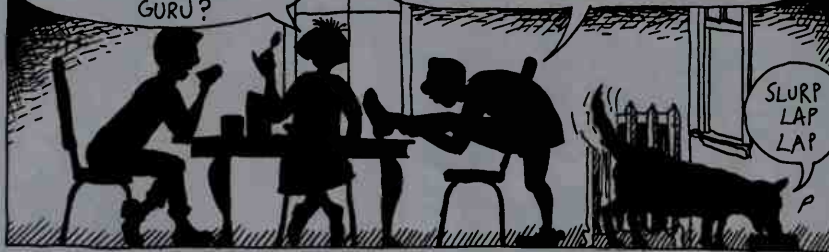
OH, WOW. LET ME GET THIS RIGHT. YOU SPENT A WHOLE WEEKEND TOGETHER AND DIDN'T EVEN HAVE SEX?

LOIS, WE WERE BUSY! THERE WAS RACISM TO CONFRONT! BATTLES TO JOIN! STAGES TO STORM! AND ANYHOW, WE ONLY JUST MET.



GINGER, DID YOU EVER HEAR THE PHRASE "CARPE DIEM"? WHAT IF SHE GOES HOME AND FALLS FOR SOMEONE ELSE OR GOES STRAIGHT OR WANDERS OFF TO FOLLOW HER GURU?

WHAT IS WITH YOU TWO? LOOK. I MET A WOMAN AT A CONFERENCE, SHE WAS ATTRACTIVE, WE HAD SOME GREAT CONVERSATION, WE BOTH FLEW BACK TO OUR RESPECTIVE HOMES WHICH ARE 2,000 MILES APART, **THE END.**



HAS SHE DONE THERAPY?

WHAT'S SHE LOOK LIKE?

DID YOU GET HER RELATIONSHIP HISTORY?

HOW BUTCH IS SHE?

IS SHE EMOTIONALLY AVAILABLE?

DID YOU SWIM NAKED TOGETHER IN THE HOTEL POOL?



IT DOESN'T MATTER BECAUSE NOTHING IS GOING TO HAPPEN.

DID I EVER TELL YOU ABOUT JASMINE? I MET HER AT A MEDITATION RETREAT WHERE NO ONE WAS ALLOWED TO TALK. AT THE END OF THE WEEK SHE GAVE ME HER ADDRESS AND WE EXCHANGED **REAMS** OF COSMIC LETTERS AND EROTIC POEMS. **SO ROMANTIC!**

I MET A WOMAN AT AN ANTI-RACISM CONFERENCE ONCE... WE HAD PHONE SEX LIKE YOU WOULDN'T BELIEVE FOR MONTHS AFTER, TILL HER BOSS FOUND OUT SHE WAS USING THE **WATS-LINE.**

WELL THAT'S ALL VERY TOUCHING, BUT I DON'T WRITE POETRY AND I PREFER TO HAVE SEX IN PERSON.



IT'D BE CRAZY! PHONE BILLS! PLANE TICKETS! TORMENT AND LONGING! UN-UH. THERE'S ABSOLUTELY NO WAY I AM GETTING INVOLVED IN A LONG-DISTANCE RELATIONSHIP. EVEN **SUPPOSING** MALIKA WAS INTERESTED.

DING DONG!

BOW OW OW OW!



A GINGER JORDAN LIVE HERE, SONNY?

YES, SHE DOES! THANK YOU KINDLY, MA'M!



ROSES? FOR ME?

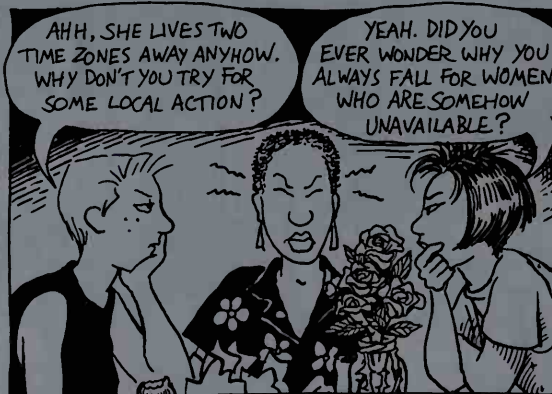
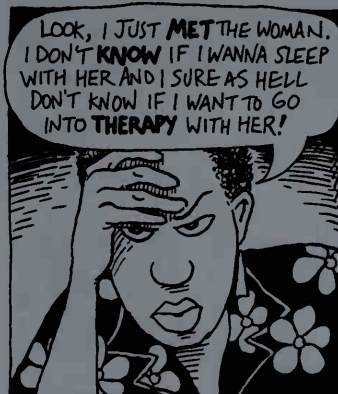
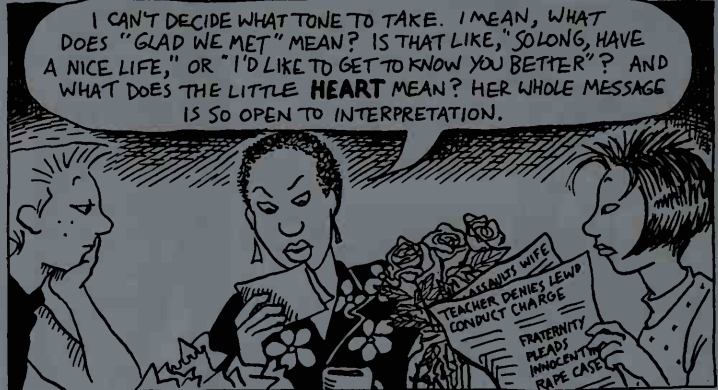
ARE YOU **SURE** YOU DIDN'T HAVE SEX WITH HER?



Support Group

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Clarice Clifford and the Supremes

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HAVING AT LONG LAST GRADUATED FROM LAW SCHOOL, OUR FRIEND CLARICE IS PREPARING ASSIDUOUSLY FOR THE BAR EXAM.

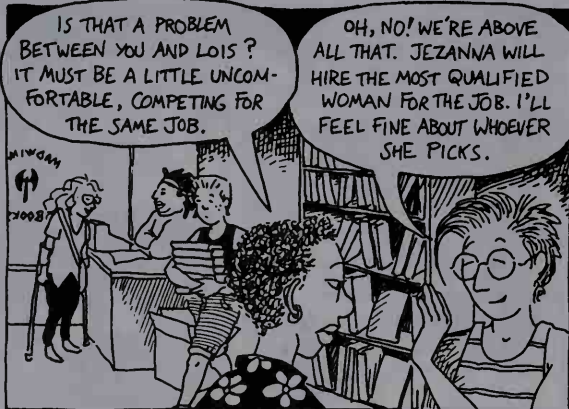
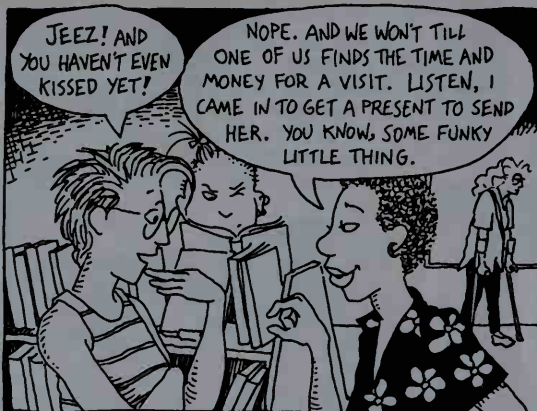
115



the MARKET PLACE

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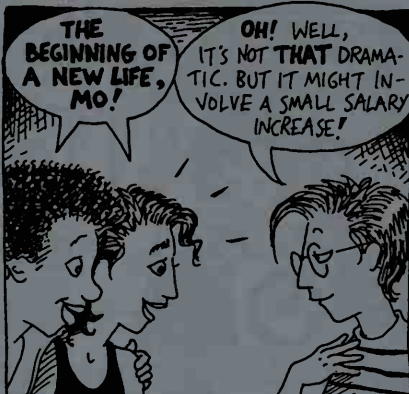
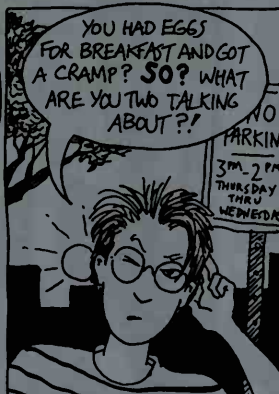
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ANTI-CIPATION

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ONE EVENING AT THE LOCAL CO-OP...



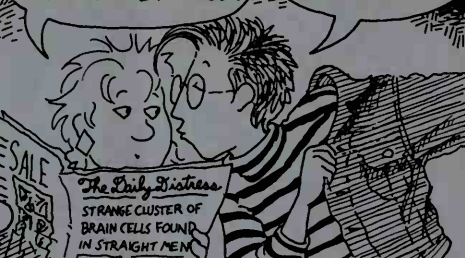
The Blow

©1991 BY ALISON BECHDEL

IT'S MONDAY MORNING AT MO'S HOUSE,

ISN'T TODAY THE DAY JEZANNA SAID SHE'D LET YOU KNOW WHO SHE'S HIRING FOR THE NEW JOB?

YUP! LET'S HAVE DINNER AT THE TOPAZ TONIGHT TO CELEBRATE!

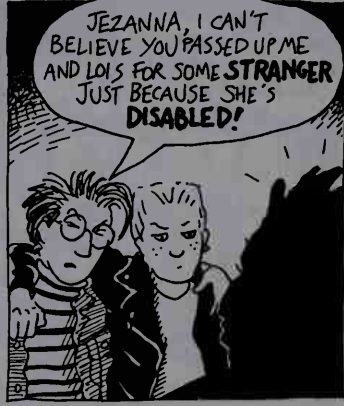
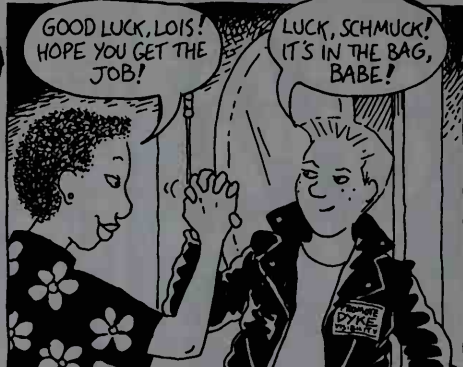


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AND AT LOIS'S TOO...

GOOD LUCK, LOIS! HOPE YOU GET THE JOB!

LUCK, SCHMUCK! IT'S IN THE BAG, BABE!



Yup-ward Bound

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I STAND
BACK!
MO'S
IN A
MOOD!

I CAN'T BELIEVE IT!
I'VE GIVEN MADWIMMIN BOOKS YEARS
OF FAITHFUL SERVICE. I'D'VE BEEN PERFECT
FOR THAT JOB AND JEZANNA GOES AND
HIRES THIS DISABLED WOMAN
OUTTA THE BLUE.

WHAT'S BEING DISABLED
HAVE TO DO WITH IT? I THOUGHT
YOU SAID THEA HAD LOTS OF
EXPERIENCE AT ANOTHER STORE.



YEAH, WELL, SO? I'D HAVE
EXPERIENCE TOO IF JEZ GAVE ME
HALF A CHANCE. SHE JUST HIRED
THIS WOMAN BECAUSE DISABILITY'S
A HOT ISSUE AND IT MAKES
THE BOOKSTORE LOOK
P.C.!

MO, LISTEN TO YOU! YOU
SOUND LIKE THOSE WHITE MEN
WHO WHINE ABOUT AFFIRMATIVE
ACTION! YOU'RE JUST PISSED
'CAUSE YOU DIDN'T GET THE JOB!

YEAH, EASY FOR
YOU TO SAY WITH
YOUR FANCY NEW GIG.
SO, IS THAT HOW
CLERKS FOR JUDGES
HAFTA DRESS?

YEAH. IT'S GONNA
TAKE SOME GETTING
USED TO.



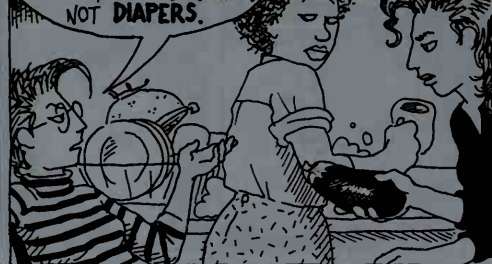
I JUST LOVE A
BUTCH IN A SKIRT.

YOU GUYS ARE SUCH
YUPPIES! SO, ARE YOU
STILL SERIOUS ABOUT
THAT BABY THING?

OF COURSE WE'RE
SERIOUS! WE'VE ONLY
BEEN TALKING ABOUT
IT FOR THE LAST 3
YEARS.

BUT DO YOU REALIZE
WHAT YOU'RE GETTING INTO?
WHY NOT LEAVE BREEDING TO
THE HETS? A LESBIAN'S JOB
IS TO CHANGE THE **WORLD**,
NOT **DIAPERS**.

MO, HOW DO
YOU KNOW WHAT
MY JOB IS?



LISTEN. LESBIANS HAVING
BABIES IS **GONNA** CHANGE
THE WORLD! THE P.T.A. WILL
NEVER BE THE SAME!

THAT'S JUST IT, CLARICE!
INSTEAD OF BEING ON THE FRONT
LINES AGAINST THE PATRIARCHY,
YOU'LL BE DRIVING THE KID TO
BAND PRACTICE.

THINK OF IT AS INFILTRATION.
YOU WORK THE FRONT LINES. WE'LL
SLIP INSIDE AND CHANGE THINGS
RIGHT UNDER THEIR NOSES.

IF THEY
DON'T CHANGE
YOU FIRST.

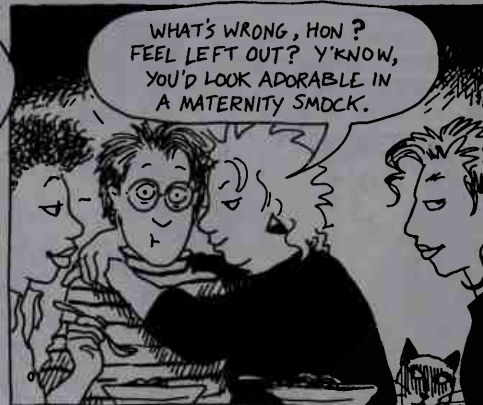
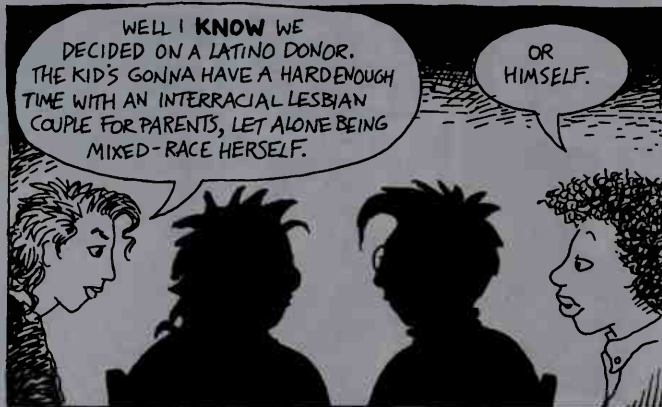


A Pregnant Moment

Mo AND HARRIET HAVE PREPARED A ROBUST LENTIL STEW FOR THEIR DINNER GUESTS.

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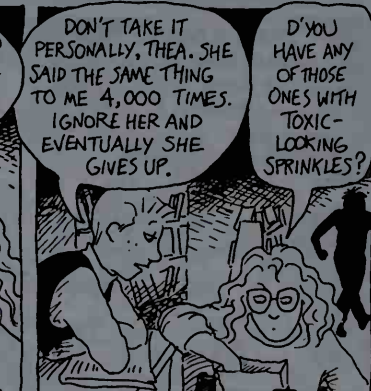
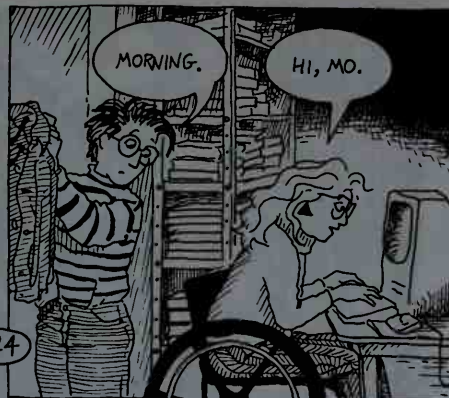
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...A ROLLING DONUT

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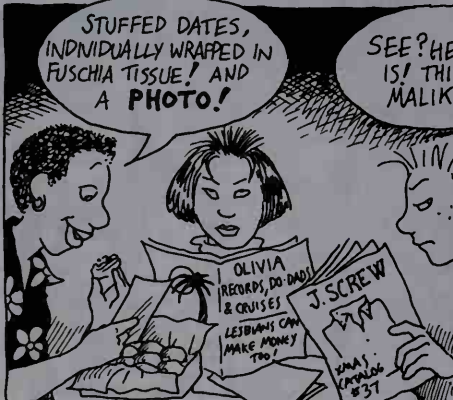
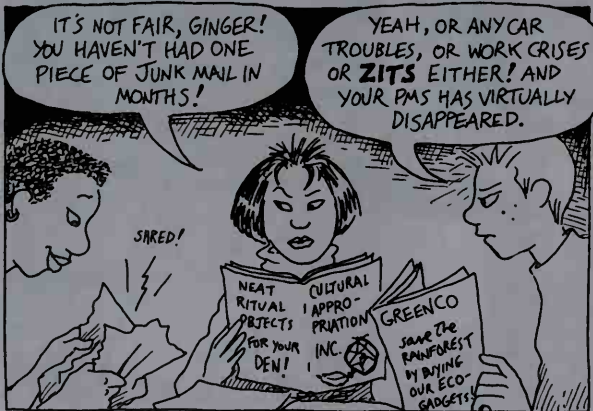


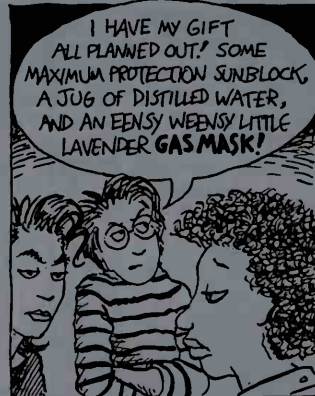
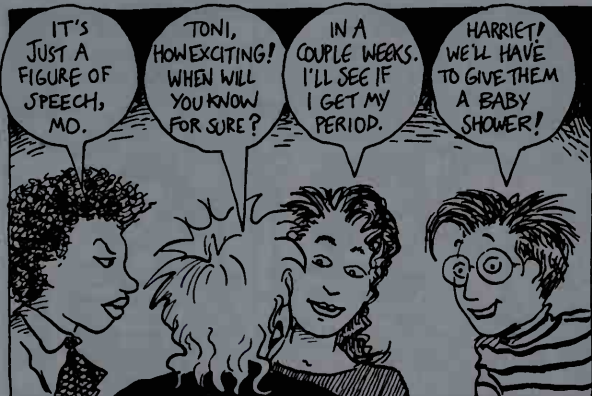
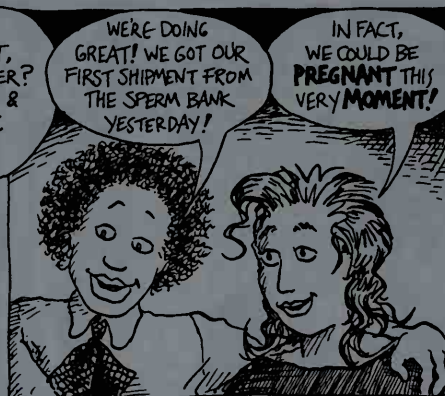
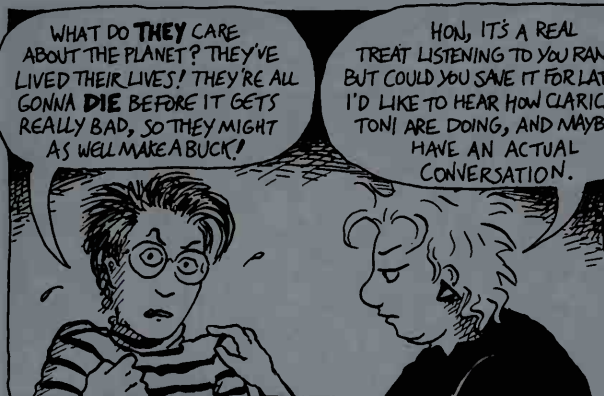
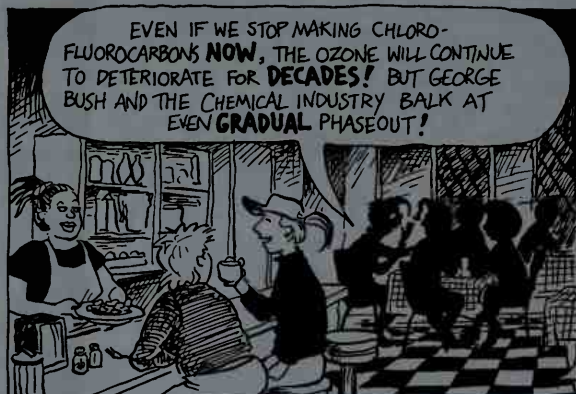
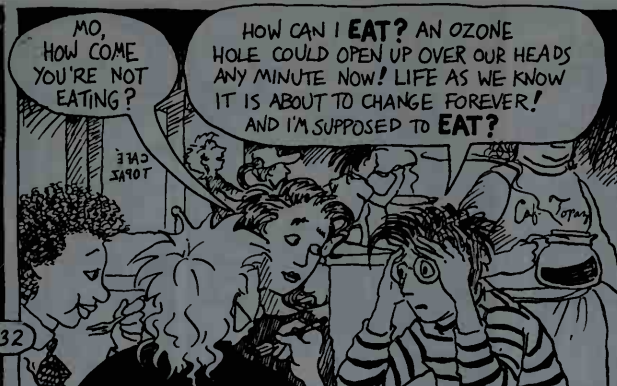
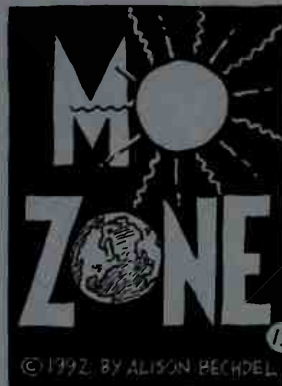
PRIORITY MAIL

OUR TRIBADIC TRIO HAS JUST RETURNED HOME FROM THEIR VARIOUS PLACES OF EMPLOY.

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SPRING FEVER



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LOVE'S
IN BLOOM
AT
GINGER'S
HOUSE...
BUT
SOME
PEOPLE
SEEM
TO BE
ALLERGIC!

133

HEY! GUESS WHAT!
SHE'S COMING! IN TWO WEEKS,
SHE'S GONNA BE HERE!



WHO?

WHO?
MALIKA! MY
BELOVED! WHO
ELSE?



GINGER, WE HAVE TO TALK
ABOUT YOUR PHONE HABITS. I HAD
TO MAKE A CALL LAST NIGHT BUT YOU
WERE STILL ON THE LINE WHEN I
WENT TO BED AT TWELVE!

OH. SORRY!
IT'S SO HARD TO KEEP
TRACK OF TIME WHEN
I'M TALKING TO HER. BUT
AREN'T YOU **EXCITED?**

ARF!

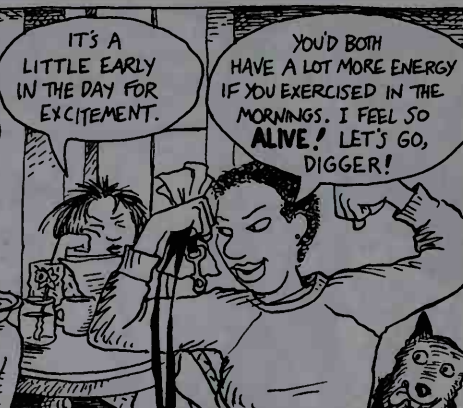


WHY?
IS SHE BRINGING
SOMEONE FOR ME
TOO?



IT'S A
LITTLE EARLY
IN THE DAY FOR
EXCITEMENT.

YOU'D BOTH
HAVE A LOT MORE ENERGY
IF YOU EXERCISED IN THE
MORNINGS. I FEEL SO
ALIVE! LET'S GO,
DIGGER!



WHY DO WE
GIVE HER SUCH A HARD
TIME, LOIS? SHE
DESERVES TO BE HAPPY.
ARE WE JEALOUS?



NAH. WE'RE
JUST TRYING TO KEEP A
LID ON HER ENTHUSIASM SO
SHE WON'T BE QUIRKY SO
DISAPPOINTED WHEN
IT'S OVER.



YOU
DON'T THINK
THINGS ARE GONNA
WORK OUT BETWEEN
THEM?



OH, THEY
MIGHT STAY TOGETHER
TILL THEY'RE 80, BUT
THAT "IN LOVE" STUPOR
WON'T LAST MUCH
LONGER.

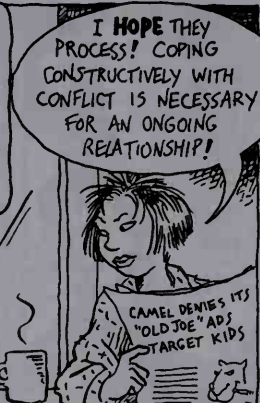
WHY NOT?
IF A COUPLE IS REALLY
COMMITTED TO EXPLORING
INTIMACY, THE "IN
LOVE" FEELING CAN
DEEPEN OVER TIME!



PUH-LEEZE! THAT'S JUST
PROPAGANDA TO KEEP THERA-
PISTS IN BUSINESS. I'M A
REALIST. IT DOESN'T LAST! WANNA
BET GINGER AND MALIKA DON'T
MAKE IT THROUGH THE WEEKEND
WITHOUT HAVING TO **PROCESS**
SOMETHING?



I **HOP**E THEY
PROCESS! COPING
CONSTRUCTIVELY WITH
CONFLICT IS NECESSARY
FOR AN ONGOING
RELATIONSHIP!



SPARROW,
I KNOW STRUGGLING
FOR INTIMACY TURNS
YOU ON. BUT I WANNA
HAVE FUN.



FUN'S FINE,
BUT SOONER OR
LATER YOU HAVE TO DEAL
WITH EACH OTHER'S
ISSUES.



AHH, ISSUES,
ISSUES, ISSUES!
I'M **SICK** OF
ISSUES.



GESUNDHEIT.

CAMEL DENIES ITS
"OLD JOE" ADS
TARGET KIDS

DESPITE 7,800%
INCREASE IN SALES
TO MINORS SINCE
ADS BEGAN

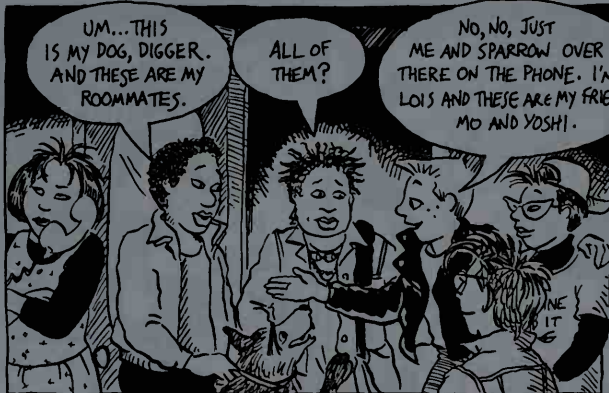
"AND WE DON'T DRAW
HIM TO LOOK LIKE
A PENIS EITHER!"
CHAIRMAN INSISTS

Alone at Last!

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GINGER ANXIOUSLY AWAITS THE ARRIVAL OF HER AIRBORNE AMOROSA!



As Time Goes By...

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FINALLY
FACE TO
FACE
WITH HER
PASSIONATE
PEN PAL,
GINGER
CHOKES!

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6:05

SO. HERE'S OUR OPTIONS FOR TONIGHT. WE'LL GO HAVE DINNER FOR STARTERS, THEN SEE A MOVIE - HERE'S THE LISTINGS - OR THERE'S AN AFRICAN DANCE TROUPE IN TOWN, OR WE COULD GO TO THIS PLAY AT THE UNIVERSITY. THEN AFTER THAT WE CAN GO OUT DANCING, OR ELSE TO A PARTY SOME FRIENDS ARE HAVING. WHATEVER YOU PREFER.



6:47

YOU'RE RIGHT. THIS IS MUCH BETTER THAN RUNNING ALL OVER TOWN. D'YOU PLAY SCRABBLE? OR MAYBE THERE'S AN OLD MOVIE ON CABLE. WE COULD MAKE POPCORN.



7:30

MMM. I GUESS I AM KINDA TENSE NOW THAT YOU MENTION IT.



7:58

HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN LIFTING WEIGHTS?



8:07



8:51



9:26



10:17

WHAT'S WRONG WITH YOUR DOG?

MMM? OH! SHE HAS TO GO OUT. DON'T MOVE! I'LL BE RIGHT BACK!



11:10



11:34

LOIS, I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU MADE ME SIT THROUGH THAT AWFUL MOVIE! WHY COULDN'T WE JUST STAY OUTSIDE PROTESTING?

SOMEONE HAD TO GO IN THERE AND SET OFF THOSE STINK BOMBS, SPARROW! WHAT A THANKLESS LIFE US ACTIVISTS LEAD.

CATHERINE DID IT?



11:37

HEY, IT LOOKS LIKE GINGER & MALIKA MUST BE IN BED. WE SHOULD BE QUIET.



12:03



VIDEO DISPLAY

*MALIKA'S
VISIT
IS
COMING
TO
AN
EXCITING
ANTICLIMAX!*

136

WHAT DO YOU MEAN, YOU DON'T HAVE ORGASMS WITH A PARTNER? MAYBE ALL YOUR **OTHER** PARTNERS WERE JUST BAD LOVERS! LEMME TRY AGAIN!

WHOA, BABE. RELAX. I'D BE VERY HAPPY TO MAKE LOVE SOME MORE, BUT NOT JUST SO YOU CAN "GIVE" ME AN ORGASM. I WISH EVERYONE DIDN'T MAKE SUCH A BIG DEAL OUT OF A FEW MUSCULAR CONTRACTIONS.



WELL, UH... D'YOU WANNA MAKE **YOURSELF** COME?

GINGER, IF THAT'S ALL I WANTED, I COULDA SAVED A COUPLA HUNDRED BUCKS AND STAYED IN SAN FRANCISCO. LOOK, DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT, OKAY?

OKAY, OKAY. NO PRESSURE. COME BACK TO BED AND I PROMISE I WON'T TRY TO MAKE YOU HAVE AN ORGASM. DEAL?

DEAL.

OH! WAIT A SECOND! I BROUGHT SOME-THING!

UH-OH. SOME KIND OF WLD SEX TOY FROM THE BIG BAD CITY?



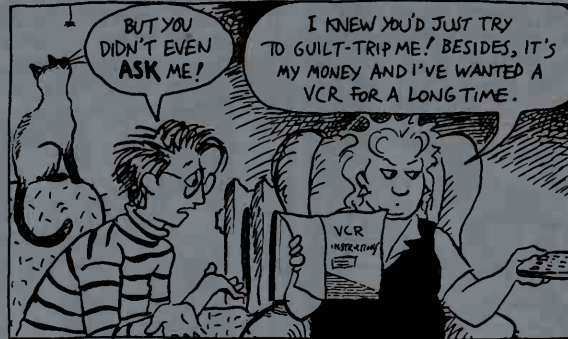
YOU COULD CALL IT THAT. I WANTED TO HAVE SOMETHING TO REMEMBER YOU BY. I'LL SEND YOU A COPY.



MEANWHILE... MO & HARRIET ARE EXPERIENCING TECHNICAL DIFFICULTIES OF THEIR OWN.

BUT YOU DIDN'T EVEN ASK ME!

I KNEW YOU'D JUST TRY TO GUILT-TRIP ME! BESIDES, IT'S MY MONEY AND I'VE WANTED A VCR FOR A LONG TIME.



WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL? YOU'RE ALWAYS WATCHING MOVIES OVER ON LOIS & GINGER'S! ISN'T IT A LITTLE HYPOCRITICAL TO ACT LIKE YOU'RE TOO PURE TO HAVE ONE YOURSELF?



NO! SHARING THINGS WITH FRIENDS IS A GOOD WAY TO REDUCE THE RAMPANT JUNK PRODUCTION AND MINDLESS CONSUMERISM THAT'S **KILLING OUR PLANET!**

LOOK, I JUST WANNA FUCKING TAPE "ALL MY CHILDREN."

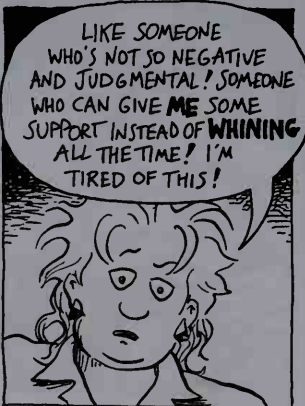
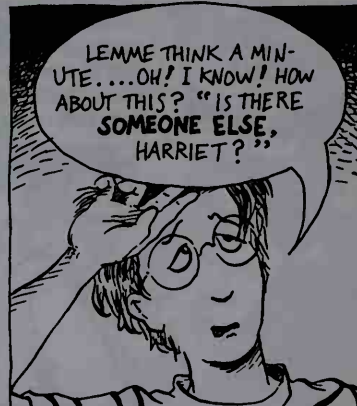
RIGHT. NEXT YOU'LL NEED A BIGGER TV, THEN AN "ENTERTAINMENT CENTER" TO PUT IT IN AND A RECLINER TO WATCH IT FROM... THEN **CABLE!** IT'S AN ADDICTIVE SPIRAL! THE MORE YOU BUY, THE MORE YOU NEED! IT'S BETTER TO QUIT **NOW, HARRIET!**



stunned

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WHAT'S IN THE CARDS? GO FISH

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WHILE HARRIET PACKS TO LEAVE THEIR APARTMENT, MO TURNS TO HER DEVOTED FRIENDS FOR SOLACE AND UNDERSTANDING.

JEEZ, MO! DON'T BE SO BUMMED! I NEVER THOUGHT HARRIET WAS RIGHT FOR YOU ANYWAY. THERE'S PLENTY MORE FISH IN THE SEA. IT'S PARTY TIME!

LOIS, BE QUIET. I NEED TO CONCENTRATE. HMM... THE THREE OF SWORDS... THAT'S REALLY INTERESTING, MO. IT MEANS YOU'RE EXPERIENCING PAIN AND SORROW... POSSIBLY THE LOSS OF A LOVED ONE.

NO SHIT, MADAME SHERLOCK. FORGET THE CARDS, MO. WHAT YOU NEED IS TO GET BACK INTO CIRCULATION.

LEAVE HER ALONE, LOIS. GRIEF IS A NATURAL PROCESS. YOU DON'T HEAL BY DISTRACTING YOURSELF WITH NEW PROSPECTS.

OH, COME ON. WE'VE ALL DONE IT. IT MAKES YOU FEEL BETTER.

THAT'S FOR SURE. HOPE DOES SPRING ETERNAL, DOESN'T IT? NO MATTER HOW BAD I'VE BEEN BURNED IN BREAKUPS, PART OF ME ALWAYS FELT EXCITED ABOUT HAVING ANOTHER CHANCE TO FIND THE REAL MS. RIGHT.

COMPLETE WITH SHINING ARMOR, WHITE HORSE, AND NO BAGGAGE?

YEAH. SOMEONE MYSTERIOUS, BEGULING. SOMEONE WHO'LL SAY THE THINGS YOU'VE ALWAYS WANTED TO HEAR. SOMEONE WHO'S NOTHING LIKE ANY OF YOUR EXES.

AT LEAST NOT UNTIL YOU GET TO KNOW HER. THEN YOU FIND OUT SHE'S **EXACTLY** LIKE YOUR EXES, ONLY **WORSE**.

OH, LIGHTEN UP! THERE'S NOTHING WRONG WITH A LITTLE ROMANCE TO TAKE YOUR MIND OFF YOUR TROUBLES.

PEROT: "TRUST ME. I'LL FIX THINGS. I'M NOT A POLITICIAN."

TEXAS BILLWHAIRE BRIBED NIXON. WON'T HIRE HOODES WILL RULE VIA TELEVISION.

SPOKEN LIKE A TRUE ADDICT. SEARCH FOR THE PERFECT LOVER TO SOLVE ALL YOUR PROBLEMS RATHER THAN FACE THEM ON YOUR OWN. NOW LEAVE US ALONE! I'M TRYING TO GIVE MO A READING.

IT WOULD BE NICE TO HAVE A GIRLFRIEND WHO REALLY APPRECIATED ME FOR ONCE. MAYBE SOMEONE WHO COULD PLAY GUITAR... AND COOK THAI FOOD...

MMM. THE FOOL. THIS IS A POWERFUL CARD, MO. ITS DIVINATORY SYMBOLISM IS EVOCATIVE AND COMPLEX.

REALLY? WHAT'S IT MEAN?

IT MEANS "WATCH IT, BABE, OR YOU COULD DO SOMETHING REALLY STUPID."

LAST TANGO

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HARRIET
BEDS DOWN
ON THE
COUCH FOR
HER
FINAL
NIGHT
AT THE
APARTMENT.

I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU'RE JUST
LEAVING. I MEAN, SHOULDN'T
WE **PROCESS** THIS FOR SEVERAL
MONTHS? AREN'T WE SUPPOSED
TO PAY LOTS OF MONEY TO A
THERAPIST BEFORE WE
BREAK UP?

IT'S TOO LATE, MO.
I'M SORRY. I
SHOULDN'T HAVE LET
THINGS SLIDE FOR SO
LONG, BUT THERE'S
NOTHING LEFT FOR
ME TO PROCESS.

JUST LIKE THAT,
BANG! YOU DON'T
LOVE ME ANY MORE.
IT'S OVER.



LISTEN, I FEEL AWFUL
TOO! I CAN'T BELIEVE
I'M LEAVING THE PERSON
I'M CLOSEST TO IN THE
WHOLE WORLD!

SO DON'T!
UNPACK YOUR VCR
AND STAY!

I KNOW.
YOU CAN'T.

SOB!



DON'T CRY,
SWEETHEART!

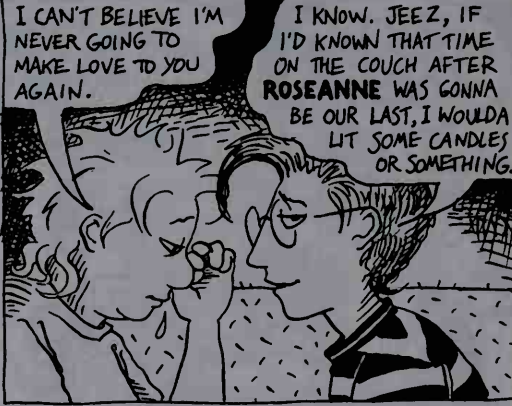
**BWAA
HAA HAA!**

IT'S OKAY,
DON'T WORRY.

SNK.

I CAN'T BELIEVE I'M
NEVER GOING TO
MAKE LOVE TO YOU
AGAIN.

I KNOW. JEEZ, IF
I'D KNOWN THAT TIME
ON THE COUCH AFTER
ROSEANNE WAS GONNA
BE OUR LAST, I WOULD'A
LIT SOME CANDLES
OR SOMETHING.



AT LEAST
WE COULD'VE TAKEN
ALL OUR CLOTHES
OFF.

SMIFF

MMMF! Plurp! PANT



SWEPT AWAY ON
A RELENTLESS TIDE
OF BODILY FLUIDS,
OUR DISCONSOLATE
HEROINES BID THEIR
ULTIMATE ADIEUS!



emasculate conception

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EMOTIONS
ARE
TURBULENT
AS CLARICE
AND TONI
BEGIN THEIR
FIFTH
ROUND
OF
INSEMINATION.

142

I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU STARTED
OVULATING A DAY EARLY! FOR THE
LAST YEAR YOU'VE BEEN LIKE CLOCK-
WORK! I MEAN, IT'S NOT LIKE
WE GET A **REFUND** IF THE
SPERM DOESN'T GET HERE IN TIME!

CLARICE, AS LONG AS IT
COMES TODAY, WE'LL BE FINE.
MY CYCLE IS PROBABLY OFF
FROM ALL THE STRESS. AND
YOU'RE NOT HELPING BY
OBSESSING ABOUT THE
MONEY!

TIPS: O-THE NIB TO JANE, DEB, NAT, SHEILA & BONNIE!



I'M SORRY! I'M SORRY I'M NOT THE
PERFECT CO-PARENT-TO-BE!
ALL THE TIMING AND WAITING AND HOME
PREGNANCY TESTS ARE STRESSING **ME**
OUT TOO. AND I CAN'T **HELP** WORRYING
ABOUT THE MONEY AT A HUNDRED AND
THIRTY-FIVE BUCKS A POP!



BZZZZT!

THAT
MUST BE POP
NOW.

GREAT! IT'S ONLY SIX
O'CLOCK. WE CAN DO IT
AND STILL GET TO OUR
BABY GROUP ON TIME. YOU
GO LIE DOWN. I'LL GET
EVERYTHING READY.



SO HOW MANY TIMES
IS **THIS**? YOU TWO
MUST BE SHELLING
OUT THE DOUGH.

DON'T THEY
EVER CHANGE
YOUR ROUTE?



IT'S HERE!
UNH! I'M GONNA
THAW IT
OUT!

REMEMBER
TO DOUBLE-CHECK
THE DONOR
NUMBER...



YEOW!

...AND BE CAREFUL
NOT TO TOUCH THE
CONTAINER WITH
YOUR BARE HANDS.



OH, NO! I
FORGOT, WE WERE
SUPPOSED TO BRING
FOOD TO THE GROUP
TONIGHT.



SHIT! WELL, WE CAN
STOP AND GET SOME KIND
OF TAKEOUT. WE'LL HAVE
TO HURRY, THOUGH. ARE
YOU READY?

OH, CLARICE!
I DIDN'T WANT
IT TO BE
LIKE THIS!



TONI, IT'S NO BIG
DEAL! SARAH AND
LOUISE BRING
TAKEOUT ALL
THE TIME!

NO, I MEAN **THIS**!
I WANTED IT TO BE SPECIAL
AND **ROMANTIC**, NOT SOME-
THING WE HAVE TO SQUEEZE
IN BEFORE RACING OUT
OF THE HOUSE!



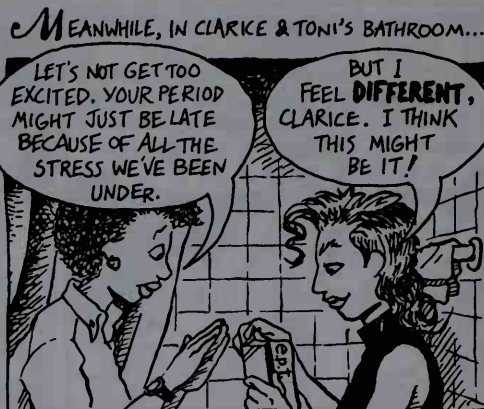
I KNOW, SWEETHEART.
KISS < BUT CAN WE TALK
ABOUT IT LATER? WE'RE
LOSING SPERM MOTILITY
BY THE SECOND HERE.



SURPRISE SURPRISE

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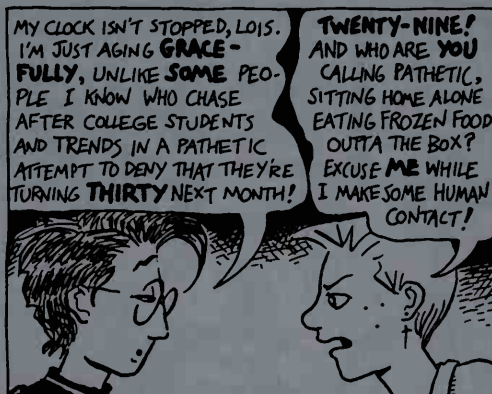
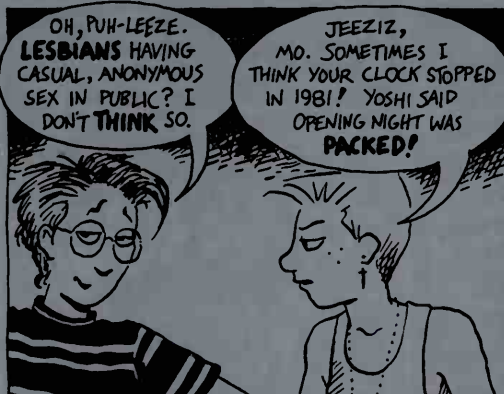
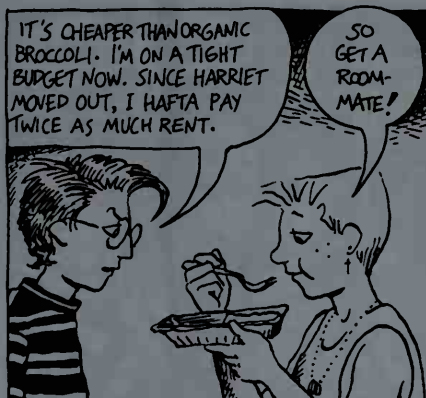


SWEET OF BIRD YOUTH

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MO
IS
WALLOWING
IN
HER
JUST-
DUMPED
STATUS.



The SIGHTING

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MO HAS
MANAGED TO
HEAVE HERSELF
FAR ENOUGH
FROM THE
SLOUGH
OF
DESPOND
TO MAKE IT
TO HER
WORKSHIFT
AT THE
CO-OP.

OKAY, NAOMI...THE DRIED,
UNSULPHURED, ORGANIC
BURDOCK CHIPS ARE ALL
RESTOCKED.

GREAT. NOW DO THE SULPHURED, COMMERCIAL
ONES, THEN THE WHEAT-FREE TAMARI-
ROASTED TRANSITIONAL PAPAYA SPEARS.



MO! YOU'VE RESURFACED! I
THOUGHT WE'D LOST YOU FOR A
WHILE THERE. YOU FEELING
BETTER ABOUT THE BREAKUP?

NO. I FEEL LIKE SLASH-
ING HARRIET'S TIRES.
Y'KNOW, I THINK SHE
MIGHT BE SEEING
SOMEONE.



REALLY?
ARE YOU TWO
TALKING?

UH-UH. SHE NEEDS TO
HAVE "A PERIOD OF NO
CONTACT." HA! I'LL SHOW
HER NO CONTACT!

SO WHAT'S GOING ON WITH
YOU? STILL INVOLVED WITH
THAT WOMAN?



UH...
YEAH,
WHY?



TAKE IT FROM ONE
WHO KNOWS, GINGER,
AND END IT **NOW**
BEFORE YOU MAKE
EACH OTHER
MISERABLE.

OOOPS! LOOKS
LIKE I'M IN THE
GRIMADVICE
AISLE... I WAS
LOOKING FOR
LURID GOSSIP.



HI, CLARICE!
DID TONI SEND
YOU OUT FOR
PICKLES AND
ICE CREAM?

I WISH. NO, I'M BUYING ALL THIS
HEALTHY SHIT FOR HER NEW...I MEAN,
OUR NEW DIET. NO MORE GREASY
TAKEOUT BARBECUE TILL THE KID'S
WEANED... HEY, HAVE YOU TWO
HEARD THE WORD ON NAOMI?



WHAT
ABOUT
HER?

BOYFRIEND.

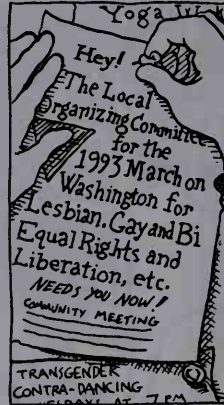
NO!



YES! AND AS
IF THAT'S NOT
BAD ENOUGH,
SHE'S STARTING
UP A BISEXUAL
SUPPORT
GROUP!

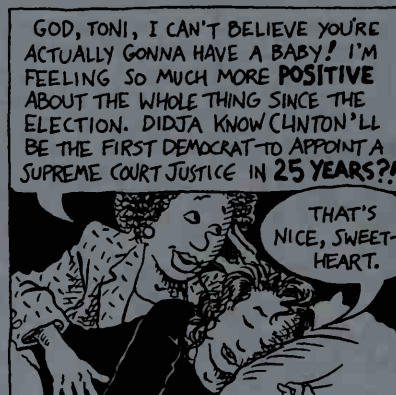
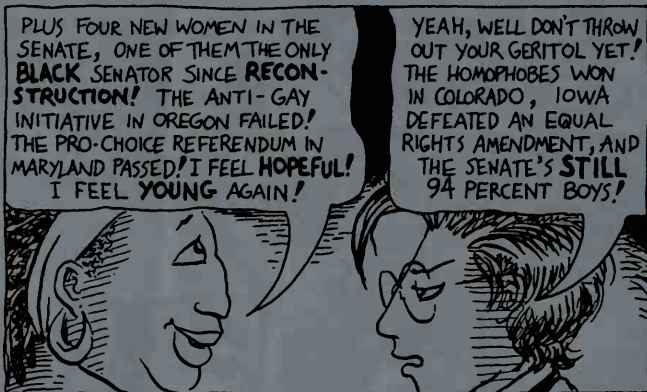
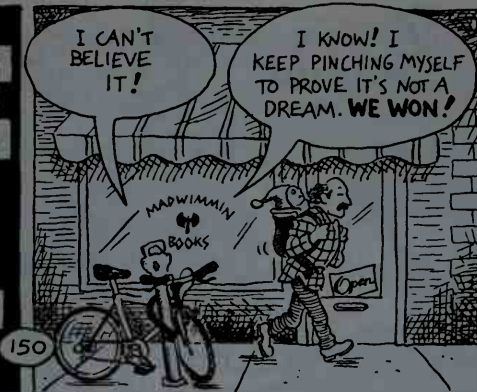
OH, COME ON! IS
THIS JUNIOR HIGH
SCHOOL? SO SHE'S
BISEXUAL! BIG
DEAL! AND WHAT'S
WRONG WITH START-
ING A GROUP?

WELL FOR **ONE** THING,
THEY'RE ALWAYS
MAKING US CHANGE
THE **NAMES** OF THINGS
TO INCLUDE THEM! IT'S,
... IT'S **AWKWARD!**



HOPE in HELL

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NO PLACE LIKE HOME

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OUR VALIANT HEROINES HAVE VENTURED FORTH ON HOLIDAY VISITS TO THEIR FAMILIES OF ORIGIN. LET'S JOIN THEM ON NEW YEAR'S EVE.

TONI CHOOSES THE PATH OF LEAST RESISTANCE.



A LA PUTA! AFTER ALL THOSE YEARS OF SCHOOL, AFTER ALL WE'VE DONE FOR YOU! YOU TURN OUT NO BETTER THAN YOUR COUSIN CARMEN! WHAT WILL WE TELL LA FAMILIA?



CLARICE GETS UPSTAGED.



LOIS REMINISCES WITH THE GIRL NEXT DOOR...



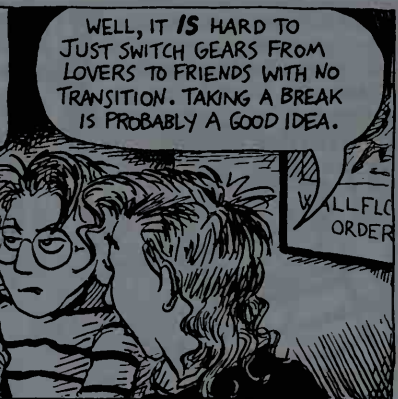
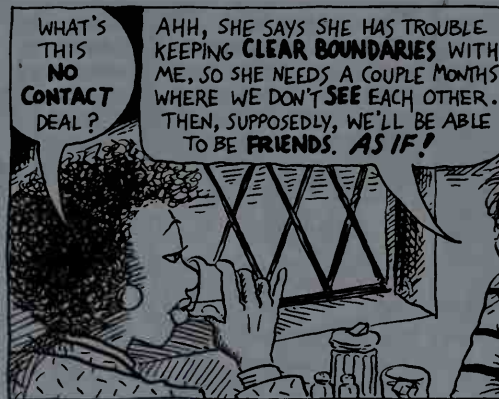
AND MO DISCOVERS JUST HOW ABUSIVE HER FAMILY SYSTEM REALLY IS!



SAY THE RIGHT THING

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SUGAR 'n SPICE

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LOIS STOPS IN AT THE HAIR PATROL ON HER LUNCH BREAK.

ARE YOU **SERIOUS?** AFTER YOU'VE GROWN IT ALL OUT SO NICE?

AHH, IT'S ONLY HAIR, MIKO! C'MON, **DO ME!** JUST LIKE THE PHOTO, OKAY?

154

MEANWHILE, BACK AT THE SHOP...

HERE YOU GO! GOTTA RUN...

THANKS, HON. SEE YOU TONIGHT.

WADMIW BOOKS

WHO WAS THAT? YOUR LOVER?

YEAH. MAXINE. I FORGOT MY LUNCH THIS MORNING.

HUH. ME TOO, BUT NOBODY'S GONNA RUSH OVER AND DELIVER **MINE** WITH A KISS. MUST BE NICE.

YEAH, I GUESS IT IS.

SPARE ME THE GORY DETAILS. I HEAR ENOUGH ABOUT DOMESTIC BLISS FROM CLARICE & TONI.

WILL THAT BE ALL?

YES.

IT'S GETTING REALLY HARD TO TAKE! THEIR TENTH ANNIVERSARY, THEIR HOTSHOT CAREERS, A BABY COMING. **NOW** THEY'RE SHOPPING FOR A **STATION WAGON**.

I DON'T NEED A BAG, THANKS.

THANK YOU.

AND LOOKIT **ME!** BROKE, JILTED, DUSTING SHELVES ALL DAY AND GOING HOME TO MY CATS AT NIGHT. I'M A **TRAGIC FIGURE!**

OH, I DUNNO. **PATHETIC**, MAYBE. D'YOU EVER STOP AND **LISTEN** TO YOURSELF?

WH-WHADDAYA MEAN?

I MEAN YOU ARE A **REAL PILL**. I DON'T THINK I'VE **EVER** HEARD YOU SAY ANYTHING **POSITIVE**.

OH, COME ON. I SAY **POSITIVE** THINGS!

LET'S HEAR ONE.

UM... YOUR HAIR LOOKS NICE LIKE THAT.

OH MY GOD!

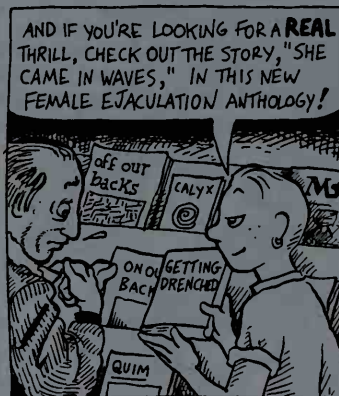
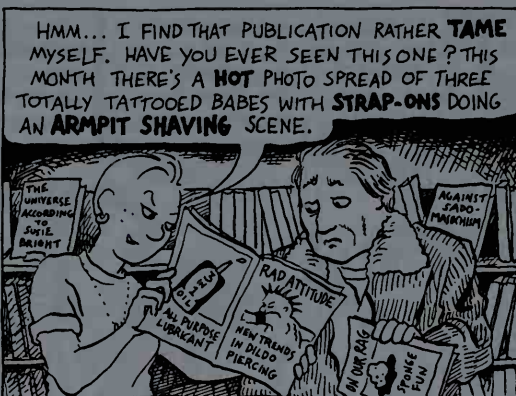
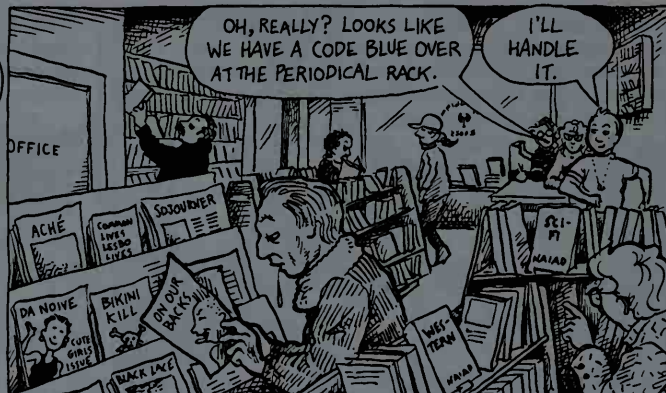
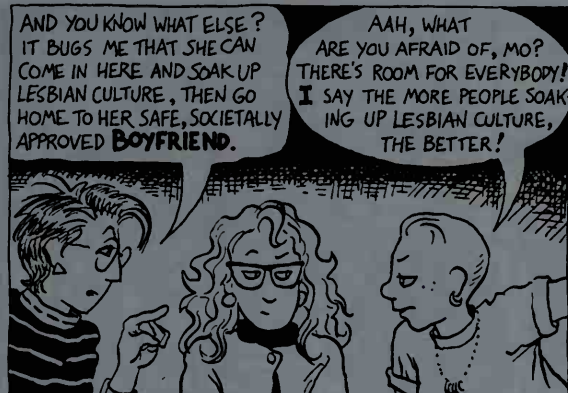
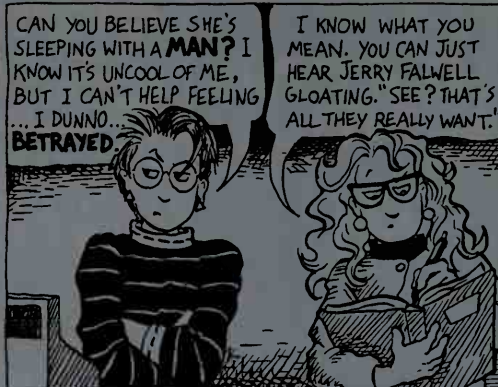
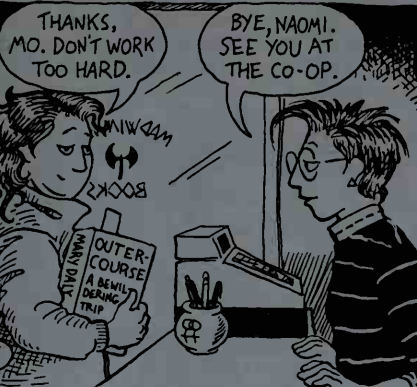
TA DA! WHAT DO YOU THINK? IT'S THE FIRST "PEROT" IN TOWN!

UM... YOUR HAIR LOOKS NICE LIKE THAT.

Cultural Exchange

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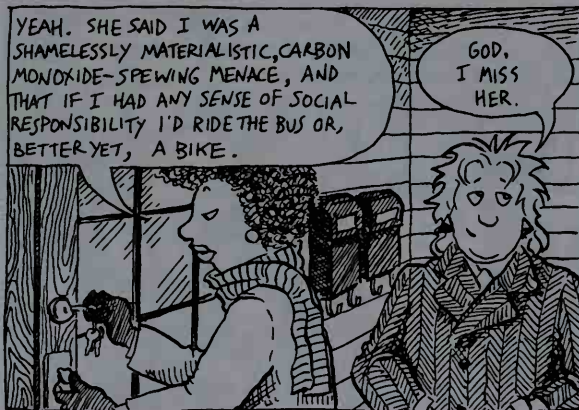


AT THE NIB TO DEN BOER!

WAGON HO

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Diversions

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SO THEN, I JUST READ ABOUT THIS COOL SHOW OF WEARABLE AGITPROP FIBER CONSTRUCTIONS OPENING AT THE FEMINIST ART CO-OP...

YEAH, MAXINE AND I ARE GONNA CHECK IT OUT TOMORROW. OH, HERE SHE IS NOW! CAN YOU LOCK UP?

157

SIGH.



SATURDAY NIGHT AND NO PLACE TO GO.

UH... HI, SPARROW. I JUST STOPPED BY TO SAY HI. FOR A MINUTE.

OH, MO. I THOUGHT YOU WERE THE PIZZA.

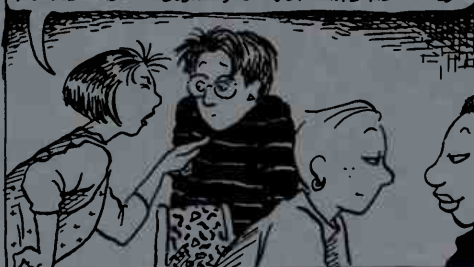
HEY, MO! C'MON IN AND JOIN THE BURNOUT BRIGADE!

YEAH. WE HAVE A FABULOUS EVENING PLANNED. LOW-NUTRIENT FOODSTUFFS AND LIGHTWEIGHT ENTERTAINMENT, GUARANTEED TO TAKE OUR MINDS OFF OUR TROUBLES.

OH, GREAT. ORDER A PIZZA, POP IN **SISTER ACT**, AND FORGET ALL ABOUT GENOCIDE, STARVATION, AND MASS RAPES IN BOSNIA! THE TRUE AMERICAN WAY.

LISTEN, MO. I HAVE BEEN DOING CRISIS INTERVENTION WITH BATTERED, HOMELESS WOMEN AND KIDS ALL WEEK LONG. TONIGHT, I AM GOING TO VEGETATE IN FRONT OF THE TV. IF YOU'RE SO WORRIED ABOUT BOSNIA, GO JOIN THE RED CROSS.

I'M SORRY. YOU'RE RIGHT. I'M PROJECTING MY OWN HOLLOW PURPOSELESSNESS ONTO EVERYONE ELSE. I NEED TO GET A LIFE.



HUH. YOU'RE LOOKING PRETTY FESTIVE FOR SUCH A LOST SOUL. NEW SHIRT? AND WHAT'S WITH THE EARRINGS?

NOTHING! JEEZ, IS IT SO UNUSUAL FOR ME TO LOOK NICE?

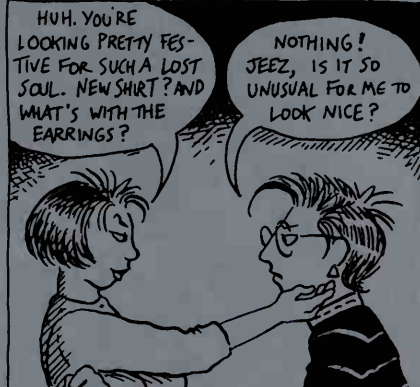
I KNOW WHAT'S WITH THE EARRINGS. MO'S HOT FOR SOMEONE, AREN'T YOU?

WHO?

I AM NOT! SHUT UP!

DON'T WORRY. YOUR SECRET'S SAFE WITH ME. ESPECIALLY SEEING AS SHE'S ALREADY SPOKEN FOR.

I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT. WHAT'LL WE WATCH FIRST.. **TRUTH OR DARE**, OR SHE'S GOTTA HAVE IT?



2 minds

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No ONE IN CLARICE & TONI'S BABY GROUP HAS HAD AN ACTUAL BABY YET, SO OUR MOTHERS-TO-BE ARE VISITING A MORE ESTABLISHED GATHERING IN SEARCH OF GUIDANCE AND INSPIRATION.

ARE YOU GOING TO THE MARCH ON WASHINGTON?

OH, ABSOLUTELY! WE GOT MARRIED AT THE LAST ONE '87. NOW WE'RE GOING BACK WITH TWO KIDS!

DEMONSTRATING WITH TODDLERS IS A REAL TREAT. I WENT GRAY OVERNIGHT AFTER THE PRO-CHOICE MARCH LAST SPRING.

NO!

SHRIEK!

WOW! WHAT A BUNDLE OF ENERGY.

YEAH. YOU'D NEVER KNOW SHE OVERDOSED ON PEG'S ALLERGY PILLS TWO WEEKS AGO. CLIMBED OUT OF HER CRIB, INTO THE MEDICINE CABINET, OPENED THE CHILD-PROOF CAP...

OH MY GOD!

OH, SHE WAS FINE ONCE THEY PUMPED HER STOMACH! WE JUST CAN'T TAKE OUR EYES OFF HER FOR A SECOND.

WHOOPS!

SHAKTI, DON'T YOU WANT TO PLAY WITH MAX'S TOOL BENCH?

NO! I'M A LITTLE MERMAID!



OH, GREAT! THE PINK PIG IS 'CLEAN' AND THE BROWN PIG IS 'DIRTY'. WHERE'D THIS RACIST BOOK COME FROM?

WHAT WACIST?

... SO SINCE I WENT FREELANCE, WE'VE BEEN TRYING TO GET ROGER'S COMPANY TO INCLUDE ELI IN HIS HEALTH INSURANCE POLICY, BUT...

DAD! CHELSEA DROPPED MY GAMEBOY IN THE TOILET!

HE'S ADORABLE!

UM...AND HE SEEMS TO BE LEAKING...

OH, NO! POOP ALL OVER EVERYTHING!

WHOOPS!



HAVE YOU FOUND A DAYCARE SITUATION YET?

NO. I'M JUST HOPING SOMETHING OPENS UP BEFORE I HAVE TO GO BACK TO WORK NEXT MONTH.

MARGE, YOU LOOK AWFUL! IS SHE STILL COLICKY?

CRIED FOURTEEN HOURS LAST NIGHT.

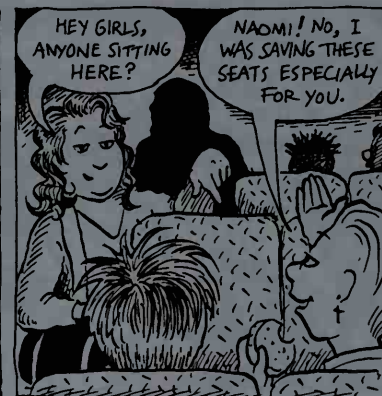
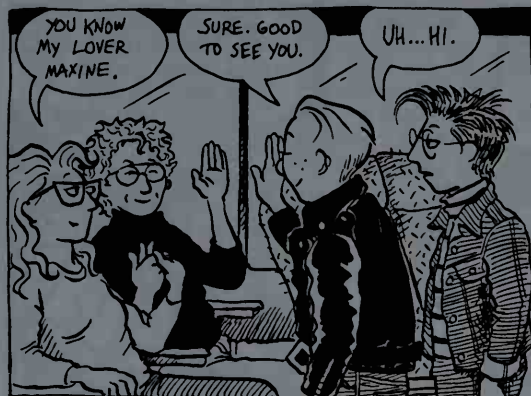
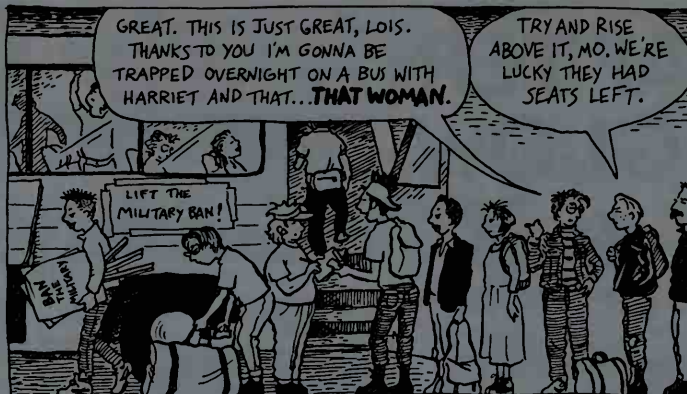


ONE BIG HAPPY

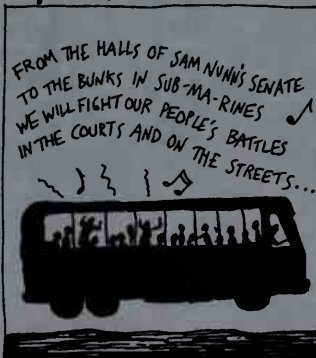
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DUE TO AN INOPPORTUNELY BLOWN OIL PAN GASKET, OUR GALS HAVE FORSAKEN LOIS'S AGED VW FOR A MORE PUBLIC MEANS OF TRANSPORT TO THE MARCH ON WASHINGTON.



AT LAST, THEY'RE OFF...



BUT IT'S A LONG, STRANGE TRIP FOR OUR HEROINE.



AFTER-GLOW



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A BUS FULL OF WEARY BUT EXHILARATED MARCHERS WENDS ITS WAY HOMEWARD FROM OUR NATION'S MOMENTARILY QUEER CAPITAL.



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SO WHERE'D YOU END UP STAYING, MO?

ON THE FLOOR WITH EIGHT OTHER PEOPLE AT MY COUSIN'S HOUSE IN THE BURBS. MY NECK IS DISLOCATED AND I HAVEN'T SLEPT IN SIXTY HOURS.



C'MERE. I'LL RUB YOUR NECK TILL MAXINE GETS BACK TO HER SEAT.

JEEZ, MO. WHO'D WANNA COME TO THE BABEFEST OF THE CENTURY AND SLEEP? I'M SO PUMPED ON ADRENALINE I DON'T THINK I'LL COME DOWN TILL NEXT WEEK.



DIDJA MAKE YOUR QUOTA, LOIS?

YUP. KISSED A WOMAN FROM EVERY STATE IN THE UNION. RHODE ISLAND WAS A DRAG QUEEN, THOUGH. DO YOU THINK THAT COUNTS?



A FEW SEATS BACK...

GINGER, WHAT DO YOU MEAN YOU DIDN'T LEAVE YOUR HOTEL? NOT EVEN FOR THE RALLY?



HEY, MALIKA AND I HADN'T SEEN EACH OTHER IN MONTHS. WE JUST LOST TRACK OF TIME.

WOW. I HOPE SHE GOT SOME OF THAT ON VIDEO.



AND UP FRONT...

YEAH, I'M COMPLETELY WIPED OUT, BUT IT WAS WORTH IT. I'M SO GLAD THE BABY GOT TO PICK UP THAT INCREDIBLE ENERGY.

WHAT ARE YOU TWO GONNA DO WITH YOURSELVES NOW THAT THE MARCH IS OVER?

GOSH, I DUNNO. NO MORE LATE-NIGHT MEETINGS, NO MORE PHONES RINGING OFF THE HOOK, NO MORE FRENZIED LAST-MINUTE ORGANIZING...



WELL, AS SOON AS I GET THREE MONTHS' WORTH OF LAUNDRY DONE, I'M GONNA RUN FOR CITY COUNCIL.



THANKS. THAT WAS GREAT.



LOIS! OMIGOD! YOU WERE RIGHT... I DO HAVE A CRUSH ON THEA! WHAT'M I GONNA DO?!

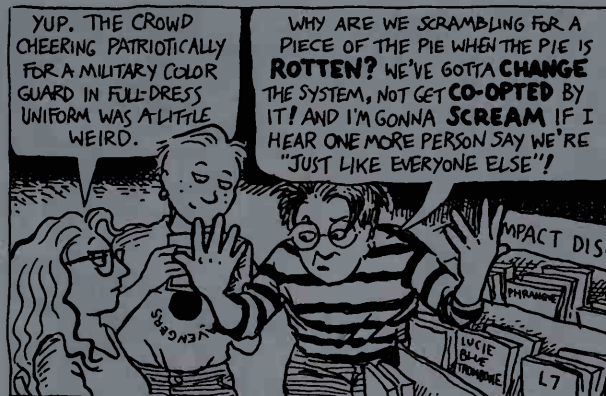
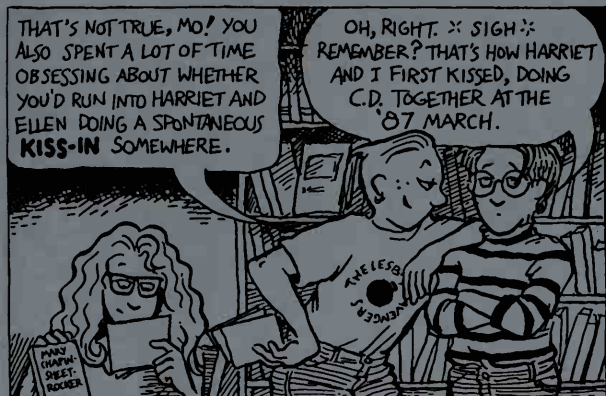
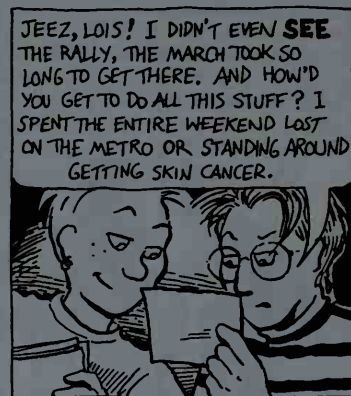


LEMME SEE... A COLD SPONGE BATH IN THE LAVATORY SOUNDS ABOUT YOUR SPEED.

★ ★

Apple Pie Order

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In Their Dreams

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NEWSFLASH! "A RECENT SEX SURVEY OF TWENTYSOMETHINGS REVEALS THAT AMONG MEN WHO FANTASIZE ABOUT CELEBRITIES, CINDY CRAWFORD AND DEMI MOORE RANK HIGH. WOMEN OPT FOR LUKE PERRY AND PRESIDENT CLINTON, WHILE GAY MEN TAPPED MARKY MARK AND TOM CRUISE." PERIOD. END OF PARAGRAPH.

D'YOU THINK THAT MEANS LESBIANS DON'T FANTASIZE ABOUT CELEBRITIES, OR DON'T ANSWER SURVEYS?

OH, COME NOW, GINGER! THERE ARE NO LESBIANS! AND IF THERE ARE, THEY REALLY JUST WANT TO SUCK COCK. I SAW IT ON ROSEANNE. SANDRA BERNHARD DUMPED MORGAN FAIRCHILD FOR TIM CURRY.

HOW COME MEN GET TO BE TOTALLY QUEER BUT WOMEN DON'T? I'M SICK OF BEING PORTRAYED AS SOME STRAIGHT SLOB'S PORN FANTASY.

LOOK. COULD YOU TWO AT LEAST TRY TO CONCENTRATE? I'M NOT ORGANIZING THIS BABY SHOWER BY MYSELF.

SORRY, SPARROW. WHERE WERE WE?

THE GUEST LIST. WHAT DO WE DO ABOUT MO AND HARRIET?

WELL, WE'VE GOTTA INVITE THEM BOTH. WE'LL JUST WARN EACH OF THEM THE OTHER ONE'S GONNA BE HERE.

THEN WHAT IF NEITHER OF THEM COME? OR WHAT IF THEY BOTH COME AND THEIR TENSION SPOILS THE PARTY ATMOSPHERE?

WE COULD INVITE SO MANY PEOPLE THEY'D NEVER SEE EACH OTHER. YOU KNOW, ONE OF THOSE LOUD, ROCKIN' DANCE PARTY KINDS OF BABY SHOWERS.

MEANWHILE, ACROSS TOWN...

WASN'T THAT INCREDIBLE? I FIND THAT STARTING OFF THE FIRST CLASS WITH A VIDEO OF AN ACTUAL BIRTH HELPS TO CALM A LOT OF FOLKS' CONCERNS RIGHT AWAY.

I ALSO THINK IT'S IMPORTANT FOR YOU DADS... ER, COACHES, TO SEE THE KIND OF SUPPORT YOU'LL BE PROVIDING DURING LABOR. NOW LET'S DISCUSS SOME OF OUR FANTASIES AND FEARS ABOUT CHILDBIRTH...

AND BACK AT THE RANCH...

HILLARY CLINTON AND QUEEN LATIFAH.

WHAT, IN THE SAME FANTASY, OR ONE AT A TIME?

...and baby makes three

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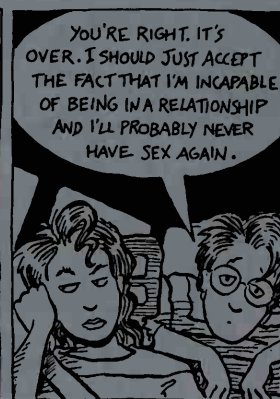
HOW'D IT GO, MO? WASN'T THIS THE FIRST TIME YOU'VE ACTUALLY SOCIALIZED WITH HARRIET SINCE SHE LEFT YOU? I MEAN, SINCE SHE LEFT?

YEAH. IT WAS OKAY. WE TALKED A BIT. SOUNDS LIKE YOU TWO HAVE BEEN GETTING PRETTY CHUMMY WITH HER AND HER NEW CONSORT.

UH... WELL, WE HAD DINNER ONCE.

JEEZ, YOU GUYS! IS IT ASKING TOO MUCH THAT MY BEST FRIENDS HAVE THE DECENCY TO OSTRACIZE MY EX-LOVER?

MO, IT'S NOT LIKE SHE COMMITTED A CRIME. ANYWAY, HARRIET'S OUR FRIEND TOO. REMEMBER? WE INTRODUCED YOU TO HER.



Promises, Promises

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TONI, I'M HOME!
I GOT IT! I
GOT THE JOB!

WHICH
ONE?



THE ONE AT THE ENVIRONMENTAL
JUSTICE FUND! REMEMBER, THE ORGAN-
IZATION THAT'S FIGHTING THE WAY POOR
NEIGHBORHOODS END UP WITH ALL THE
INDUSTRIAL POLLUTION AND WASTE DUMPS?
I'M THE **STAFF ATTORNEY!**

THAT'S GREAT, SWEETHEART!
I'M SO PROUD! UM... WHAT
HAPPENED TO THE JOB WITH
THAT FIRM, THE ONE THAT
PAYS TWICE AS MUCH?

THIS WORK IS **MUCH** MORE
IMPORTANT! PLUS I'LL HAVE
WAY MORE RESPONSIBILITY.
LET'S GO OUT AND
CELEBRATE!



OH, CLARICE... I'M WORN OUT. I
DIDN'T SLEEP WELL LAST NIGHT. MY
ANKLES ARE SWOLLEN, MY BACK
ACHES... WOULD YOU MIND JUST
GOING AND GETTING SOME TAKEOUT
FROM THE TOPAZ?

OH. OKAY.
YOU PHONE
THE ORDER
IN AND I'LL
BE RIGHT
BACK.



HEY, CLARICE!
PULL UP A
CHAIR!

WE WERE JUST HOLDING
AN INFORMAL REVIEW OF
THE CLINTON ADMIN-
ISTRATION.

OH, DON'T GET ME
STARTED! IF THE GUY
SAYS ONE THING, YOU
CAN TRUST HE'LL **DO**
THE OPPOSITE.

WE SHOULD'VE HAD
A CLUE WHEN HE
IMMEDIATELY ABAN-
DONED HIS CAMPAIGN
PLEDGE TO TAKE IN
HAITIAN REFUGEES.

HOW ABOUT HIS LATEST BACK-OFF
FROM LIFTING THE MILITARY BAN? SAYS
IT'S A "LEGITIMATE CONCERN" THAT
"OUR COUNTRY DOES NOT APPEAR TO BE
ENDORING A GAY LIFESTYLE."

AHH, ENDORSE MY
BUTT, BILL.



AND NOW LANI GUINIER!
HE NOMINATES HER,
THEN AS SOON AS THE
RIGHT WING STARTS THEIR
DISINFORMATION CAM-
PAIGN, HE LEAVES HER
TWISTING IN THE WIND!

GOD FORBID HE SHOULD
FIGHT FOR AN AFRICAN-
AMERICAN WOMAN IN
CHARGE OF CIVIL
RIGHTS WHO MIGHT
ACTUALLY **CHANGE**
SOMETHING.



HEY! I'M GONNA CHANGE SOMETHING!
LEMMIE TELL YOU ABOUT THE GREAT NEW JOB
I GOT TODAY! GINA! A ROUND OF YOUR FINEST
SPARKLING WATER FOR MY FRIENDS HERE!



the fairies' midwife

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BABE, LISTEN. I REALLY CAN'T GET AWAY THIS AFTERNOON. DO YOU MIND GOING TO SEE THE MIDWIFE WITHOUT ME, JUST THIS ONCE?

WELL OF COURSE I MIND, CLARICE! BUT IF YOU CAN'T COME, YOU CAN'T COME. I JUST WISH YOU'D GET YOUR PRIORITIES STRAIGHT!



LATER, AT THE BIRTH CENTER...

TONI, WHEN YOU'RE DONE WEIGHING YOURSELF AND TESTING YOUR URINE, MIRIAM'S READY TO SEE YOU.



TONI! COME ON IN, HON. YOU LOOK RADIANT! WHERE'S CLARICE?



OH, MIRIAM. SHE'S TOTALLY WRAPPED UP IN THIS NEW JOB! LAST NIGHT SHE MISSED OUR PRENATAL CLASS. I FEEL LIKE SHE'S BACKING OUT ON ME.



HAVE YOU TALKED TO HER ABOUT IT?

YES, BUT SHE SAYS THERE'S NOTHING SHE CAN DO. IT'S A DEMANDING JOB AND SHE JUST NEEDS TO PUT IN A LOT OF TIME RIGHT NOW.

H.M. SOUNDS A BIT LIKE MY EX-HUSBAND WHEN I WAS PREGNANT WITH ALEX. YOU CAN GO AHEAD AND GET ON THE TABLE.

WHAT DID YOU DO ABOUT IT?



LEFT HIM AND MOVED INTO A LESBIAN COMMUNE.

MIRIAM! I'M NOT GOING TO LEAVE HER! BESIDES, I DON'T THINK THEY HAVE LESBIAN COMMUNES ANYMORE.



OH, DON'T WORRY, DARLIN'. I THINK CLARICE IS THERE FOR YOU. MAYBE SHE'S JUST UNSURE OF HER ROLE. SOMETIMES IT'S HARD FOR THE NONBIOLOGICAL MOM TO KNOW EXACTLY WHERE SHE FITS IN.



WE'VE GOT A LOVELY HEARTBEAT HERE. HAS THERE BEEN MUCH MOVEMENT GOING ON?



YES, A LOT! LAST NIGHT IN BED, I WAS HOLDING CLARICE, AND SHE FELT THE BABY KICK HER IN THE BUTT!



MEANWHILE...



one sultry summer evening

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BABE, I'M SORRY! I DON'T LIKE WORKING 18 HOURS A DAY. BUT MY FIRST TIME IN COURT IS GONNA BE AGAINST SOME HEAVY CORPORATE LAWYERS!

I KNOW, CLARICE. I JUST WISH YOU WERE AS CONCERNED ABOUT THE BABY AS YOU ARE ABOUT YOUR JOB.

I AM CONCERNED ABOUT THE BABY! IF I DON'T WIN THIS INJUNCTION AGAINST THE GARBAGE INCINERATOR, THE KID WILL HAVE LUNG CANCER BY THE TIME IT'S FIVE!

LOOK, I JUST NEED FOR YOU TO COMMIT TO THE REST OF OUR PRENATAL CLASSES OR ELSE I'M ASKING SOMEONE ELSE TO BE MY PRIMARY SUPPORT.

WHAT? WHO?!

I DON'T KNOW! SPARROW OR SOMEONE FROM OUR BABY GROUP. JESUS, MAYBE I'LL ASK THE PAPER GIRL! I SEE MORE OF HER LATELY THAN I DO OF YOU. AND AT LEAST SHE'S DEPENDABLE! -SOB!-

WAIL!

AW, TONI! I'M YOUR SUPPORT! I'M SORRY I HAVEN'T BEEN AROUND. FROM NOW ON I WILL BE, BABY. I GUESS I'VE BEEN KIND OF AN ASSHOLE.

A BIG ASSHOLE. -SNIFF-

YEAH, OKAY. A BIG, ROYAL ASSHOLE. C'MON, OR WE'LL MISS THE DANG CLASS.

MEANWHILE, MO IS PAYING A CALL OVER AT LOIS, GINGER, & SPARROW'S PLACE.

Y'KNOW, I THINK THEA IS ATTRACTED TO ME, TOO. I JUST SENSE THAT KIND OF ENERGY FROM HER.

MO, GIVE IT UP. SHE'S MARRIED. IF YOU WANNA GET LAID, COME WITH ME TO THE LOVE TUNNEL TONIGHT. IT'S MUCH SIMPLER.

WELL, CALL ME FUSSY, BUT I PREFER HAVING SEX IN A PLACE WHERE MY SHOES DON'T STICK TO THE FLOOR.

HEY, WANT A VIBRATOR? AN EX WHO WORKS AT THE PLEASURE PIT GAVE ME THIS, BUT I ALREADY HAVE ONE LIKE IT.

UH...YEAH, SURE. I COULD REALLY USE IT ON MY NECK.

YEAH, I BET.

HEY, LOIS. REMEMBER I WAS GONNA BORROW YOUR CAR? MALIKA'S FLIGHT GETS IN AT 7:10.

MALIKA'S COMING? THAT'S GREAT, GINGER!

LIVE IT UP.

YEAH! SHE'S GONNA STAY FOR A WHOLE MONTH THIS TIME. FOR ONCE, LOIS WON'T BE THE ONLY ONE GETTING ANY ACTION AROUND HERE.

DING DONG

HI.

HI. I'M JUNE. IS SPARROW READY?

nocturne for Diverse instruments

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IS IT IN THE STARS? OR JUST SOMETHING IN THE WATER? WHATEVER,... ON THIS NIGHT OUR LUSTY LASSES' FANCIES TURN TO ACTS OF LOVE!

MO'S CRUSH ON HER CO-WORKER REACHES A TURBO-CHARGED PITCH.



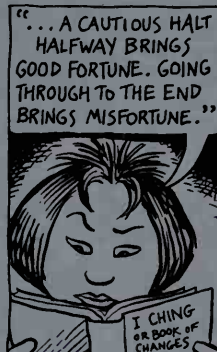
TOM'S HOT AND BOTHERED.



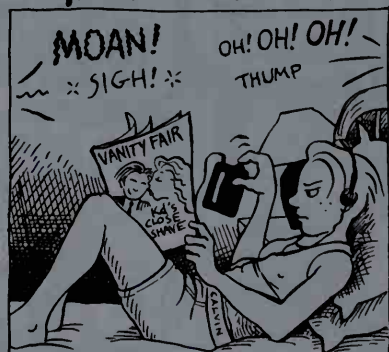
DOWN THE BLOCK, GINGER & MALIKA ARE LIVE AND IN-PERSON,...



... SPARROW GETS BACK IN THE SADDLE...



... AND LOIS ADJUSTS HER VOLUME.



Crushed

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LOOK, ANOTHER ONE. GOT IT AT THE CORNER STORE.

OH, GIMME A BREAK. ISN'T OUR FIFTEEN MINUTES UP YET?

WHATSA MATTER, MO? CAN'T HANDLE THE SPOTLIGHT?

I JUST DON'T TRUST IT. I MEAN, WOULD SOMEONE PLEASE EXPLAIN TO ME WHAT'S SO REVOLUTIONARY ABOUT **NEWSWEEK** TELLING US WHAT WE DO IN BED?

LESBIANS ARE REPLACING **STEP AEROBICS** IN THE DEPRAVED CESSPIT OF MAINSTREAM AMERICAN CULTURE! LEMME TELL YA, WE DIDN'T KNOW WHEN WE HAD IT GOOD! MOVING INVISIBLY, BEING ON THE OUTSIDE-- THAT'S WHERE THE REAL, SUBVERSIVE POWER LIES! RIGHT, THEA?

NO WAY. SUBVERSIVE POWER IS LESBIANS IN BANANA REPUBLIC ADS.

OH.

Y'KNOW, YOU'RE ABSOLUTELY RIGHT! SHATTERING THE MYTH THAT LESBIANS AREN'T REAL PEOPLE IS OUR SINGLE MOST EFFECTIVE TOOL IN COUNTERING THE RAMPANT HOMOPHOBIA AND MISOGYNY IN SOCIETY TODAY.

MEANWHILE, ACROSS TOWN AT NATUREBORN...

39 CENTIMETERS, 39 WEEKS! BABY'S COMING ALONG BEAUTIFULLY!

SO NEXT MONDAY IS STILL THE DUE DATE? ANY WAY TO PUSH IT BACK A FEW DAYS?

OH, PLEASE, CLARICE! WHAT DO YOU WANT ME TO DO? STAND ON MY **HEAD** FOR A WEEK? IF THE BABY COMES, YOU'LL JUST HAVE TO RESCHEDULE YOUR BIG COURTROOM SCENE!

LOOK, DON'T FIXATE ON THE DUE DATE. IT'S JUST AN APPROXIMATION. ONLY 5 PERCENT OF BABIES ACTUALLY ARRIVE ON IT. MOST COME LATER, IN FACT.

GREAT! HOW MUCH LATER? TWO DAYS? THREE?

LET ME GIVE YOU A FRIENDLY TIP, CLARICE. DON'T GET TOO HUNG UP ON KEEPING A TIGHT SCHEDULE FOR THE NEXT, SAY, EIGHTEEN YEARS OR SO.

BACK AT MADWIMMIN...

JEEZ, MO CHANGED HER POSITION SO FAST ON LESBIAN VISIBILITY OUT THERE, I THOUGHT SHE'D GET WHIP-LASH. SHE HAS IT BAD FOR YOU, THEA.

YEAH, I KNOW. SHE REMINDS ME OF REX WHEN HE WAS A PUPPY. IT'S KIND OF **CUTE** ISN'T IT?

OFFICE

OFFICE

the Big Day

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Monday Morning...

ARE YOU SURE?
MAYBE WE SHOULD
CALL THE MIDWIFE!
MAYBE I SHOULD
STAY HOME!

CLARICE, IT WAS JUST ONE
CONTRACTION TWO HOURS AGO!
I'M NOT IN LABOR! WHAT'S
THE MATTER? YOU GETTING
COLD FEET ABOUT GOING TO
COURT TODAY?

GOD, BABE!
I'M SO NERVOUS!
D'YOU THINK I CAN
DO IT?

YEAH.
I DO.

OKAY, THEN. HERE I GO. AFTER
ALL, I'M THE BREADWINNER NOW.
GOTTA BRING HOME THE BACON.
ANOTHER MOUTH TO FEED.
FAMILY TO SUPPORT. ARE YOU
SURE YOU'RE OKAY?

I'M FINE! I'LL CALL
YOU IF ANYTHING HAP-
PENS. NOW GET OUT OF
HERE! I HAVE A
MILLION THINGS TO DO
TO GET READY.

I
LOVE YOU SO
MUCH.

KISS

MMMM.
BYE.

CLIK!

WHOA!

THAT AFTERNOON AT THE CO-OP...

...98 CENTS
APOUND...

MO! HI!
WHAT'RE YOU
UP TO?

HI, TONI! I'M JUST
RUNNING ERRANDS ON MY DAY
OFF. WOW, YOU ARE REALLY
BIG! YOU LOOK READY
TO BLOW!

OH, JEEZ! I'M SORRY! WHAT A
STUPID THING TO SAY... I GUESS
YOU'RE PROBABLY REALLY SICK OF
COMMENTS LIKE THAT, HUH?
HOW INSENSITIVE OF ME TO...

MO?

CAN YOU
DO ME A
FAVOR?

SURE, ANYTHING!
WANT ME TO CARRY
THIS STUFF TO
YOUR CAR?

YEAH. AND
THEN I'D LIKE YOU
TO DRIVE ME HOME.
I THINK I'M IN
LABOR.

COOL.

HOLY SHIT!
SHOULDN'T
WE CALL AN
AMBULANCE
OR SOMETHING?

NAH. THAT'S JUST ON
TV. THE BABY'S NOT
COMING FOR A LONG,
LONG TIME. JUST
RELAX, AND DRIVE
CAREFULLY.

SQUEAL!

INFANT REPLAY

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MALIKA, I'M GONNA SMASH THAT FUCKING CAMCORDER!

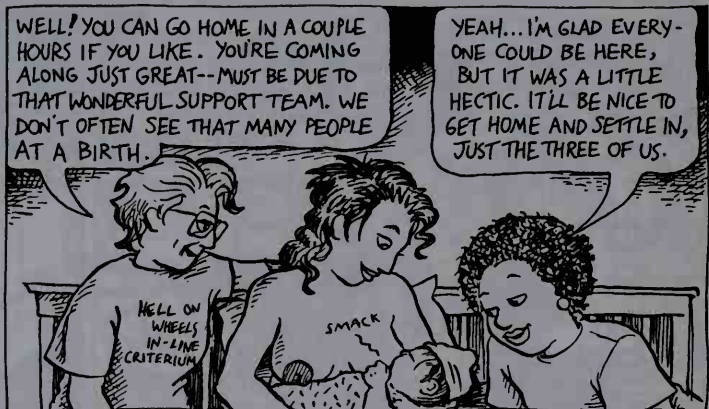
SHE'S GETTING REALLY CLOSE NOW!

YEAH, THIS IS RIGHT BEFORE THE BABY CROWNS.

THERE'S THE HEAD! JEEZ, IT'S ALMOST AS INTENSE ON TV AS IN REAL LIFE!

LOOK HOW BEAUTIFUL TONI IS, POISED ON THE BRINK OF THIS MIRACULOUS RITE OF PASSAGE!

UNNGH!



revelations

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ONE RAINY MORNING AT MADWIMMIN BOOKS...

THEA, YOU SHOULDN'T DRINK COFFEE WHILE YOU'RE ON THE COMPUTER. WHAT IF IT SPILLS?

RELAX, MO. I'M VERY CAREFUL.

SHEESH! WHAT'S UP HER BUTT? SHE'S BEEN ACTING REALLY WEIRD TOWARD ME LATELY.

OKAY, YOU MIGHT AS WELL KNOW. THE OTHER DAY, SHE OVERHEARD YOU TELLING ME HOW PUPPYLIKE YOU FIND HER CRUSH ON YOU.

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SHIT! SHE MUST FEEL AWFUL! I'D BETTER TALK TO HER.

OFFICE

OH, JEEZ. I HATE LESBIAN HONESTY. LOOK, JUST DON'T TELL HER I TOLD YOU SHE HEARD WHAT YOU TOLD ME.

CLARICE! WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE WITH A TWO-DAY-OLD KID AT HOME? STIR-CRAZY ALREADY?

I NEED SOME BOOKS ABOUT BABIES, FAST.

WHAT'S WRONG, CLARICE?

I DON'T KNOW! HE'S CRYING A LOT AND NOT NURSING. TONI'S NO HELP AT ALL - SHE KEEPS TELLING ME IT'S **NORMAL**. GOD, I SHOULD HAVE DONE MORE RESEARCH ON THIS!

CHILDREN & PARENTING

AND AS IF I DON'T HAVE ENOUGH TO DEAL WITH, HOW 'BOUT THAT JUDGE IN VIRGINIA?! HE SAYS A WOMAN IS UNFIT TO RAISE HER SON BECAUSE SHE'S A LESBIAN, THEN GIVES CUSTODY TO THE GRANDMOTHER!

WHAT IF TONI'S HOMOPHOBIC PARENTS TRIED SOMETHING LIKE THAT! D'YOU REALIZE HOW VULNERABLE WE ALL ARE TO THE LEGAL DECISIONS OF STUNTED, HATEFUL, PALEOZOIC **DICKHEADS** LIKE THIS GUY?!

PARENTS & CHILDING

YEAH, IT'S REALLY BAD NEWS. BUT WHEN WAS THE LAST TIME YOU GOT ANY SLEEP?

SLEEP? LIKE, LYING DOWN?

MAYBE YOU OUGHTA TAKE HER HOME.

I'LL GET MY JACKET.

JUST GO EASY WHEN YOU TALK TO MO. YOU WOULDN'T THINK IT TO LOOK AT HER, BUT THERE'S A PASSIONATE BABE LURKING BENEATH THAT NEUROTIC EXTERIOR.

OH, BELIEVE ME, I'VE THOUGHT IT.

OFFICE

a rock and a hard place

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HEY, CLARICE! I THOUGHT I'D DROP IN AND RELIEVE THE BOREDOM AND ISOLATION OF YOUR LIMITED LITTLE NUCLEAR FAMILY CIRCLE. HELLO, RAFAEL!

SAY HELLO TO AUNT MO! TELL HER SHE JUST MISSED YOUR FEEDING AND YOUR DIAPER CHANGE AND YOUR BURP!

BUT MAYBE YOU'RE BEYOND HELP.

AND WHAT A WORLD-CLASS BURP IT WAS, MY LITTLE SUGARTOES!

HI, TONI! HOW'RE THEY HANGING?

OH, GOD. MY NIPPLES ARE CRACKED, I'M CONSTANTLY LEAKING, HE EATS EVERY TWO HOURS 'ROUND THE CLOCK... I FEEL LIKE A FUCKING HOLSTEIN.

HONEY, NO MORE SWEARING, REMEMBER?

MO, DID YOU SEE OUR BIRTH ANNOUNCEMENT IN THE LATEST TRIBUNE?

NOT YET. BUT ISN'T THIS PIECE ABOUT THE NATIONAL GAY AND LESBIAN TASK FORCE INTERESTING?

THE HIGH-POWERED EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RESIGNS AFTER SIX MONTHS, IN A CLASH OVER STRATEGIES TO EXPAND THE ORGANIZATION. DON'T YOU LOVE THIS STUFF?

SOUNDS LIKE SHE WANTED TO TURN THE GRASSROOTS ACTIVIST-BASED TASK FORCE INTO A MORE CORPORATE, MAINSTREAM POLITICAL POWER, LIKE THE HUMAN RIGHTS CHAMPAGNE FUND.

IT'S AN INTERESTING DILEMMA, THOUGH. HOW DOES A NONPROFIT GAIN ENOUGH BUCKS AND INFLUENCE TO TAKE ON THE RELIGIOUS RIGHT, YET NOT LOSE THE PULSE OF THE QUEER ON THE STREET?

HEY, CHECK OUT THIS FACE HE MAKES WHEN HE HAS GAS!

READ OUR ANNOUNCEMENT, MO. IT'S ON PAGE 10.

OKAY, OKAY! HEY! ISN'T THIS HARRIET'S NEW GIRLFRIEND?!

WHIMPER...

YEAH! SHE'S RUNNING AGAINST SOME TRADITIONAL VALUES COALITION TYPE TO REPRESENT OUR WARD ON THE CITY COUNCIL!

OH, THAT'S JUST GREAT. WHO AM I GONNA VOTE FOR?

WAAA!

hot stuff

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IT'S SATURDAY EVENING...

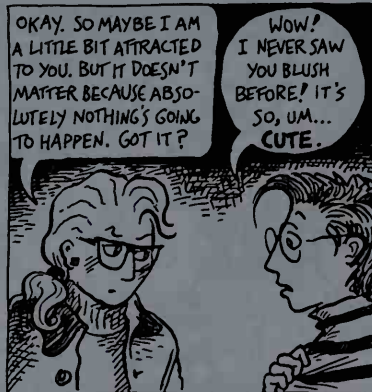


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LOIS BURN'T HER LIP EATING FIRE WITH THE LESBIAN AVENGERS.



MEANWHILE, OVER AT MADWIMMIN BOOKS...



A KISS is just A KISS

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MMM. JEZANNA'S DOUBLE CHOCOLATE RASPBERRY ESPRESSO NEW YEAR'S CHEESECAKE IS **ORGASMIC**.

UH... YEAH, IT IS. CAN I GET YOU ANOTHER PIECE?

ENJOYING THE PARTY, GIRLS? THEA, I'M **SO** SORRY MAXINE COULDN'T MAKE IT!

THANKS, JEZ. SHE'S GOT THE FLU.

LOIS, THE BOBBSEY TWINS OVER THERE ARE MAKING ME NERVOUS. THEIR LITTLE CRUSH WAS CUTE FOR A WHILE, BUT I CAN'T AFFORD TO HAVE TWO OF MY EMPLOYEES INVOLVED IN SOME SORDID SEXUAL SOAP OPERA.

RELAX. IT'S NOT A REAL ATTRACTION. IF THEA WAS ACTUALLY AVAILABLE, THEY WOULDN'T KNOW WHAT TO DO WITH EACH OTHER.

HUNH. LOOKS TO ME LIKE THEY'D HAVE A PRETTY GOOD IDEA.

OKAY. I'LL TAKE CARE OF IT. IT'S TIME MO GOT ON WITH HER LIFE, ANYWAY.

HEY! GREAT PARTY, HUH?

WHAT I LOVE BEST ABOUT NEW YEAR'S EVE IS THAT LITTLE WINDOW OF SEXUAL LAWLESSNESS AT MIDNIGHT WHEN YOU GET TO KISS EVERYONE. KIND OF LIKE GROWN-UP SPIN-THE-BOTTLE.

Y'KNOW, I'VE ALWAYS REGRETTED THAT I NEVER GOT TO PLAY SPIN-THE-BOTTLE WITH OTHER LITTLE DYKES WHEN I WAS A KID, INSTEAD OF BOYS.

I NEVER GOT TO PLAY SPIN-THE-BOTTLE WITH ANYONE.

FIVE... FOUR... THREE... TWO... ONE..

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

SLURP!

SMACK!

IN THE WEE HOURS OF JANUARY FIRST...

JEEZ. I HOPE I DIDN'T CATCH ANY OF MAXINE'S FLU GERMS FROM THEA.

BELIEVE ME, YOU'RE GONNA BE JUST FINE.

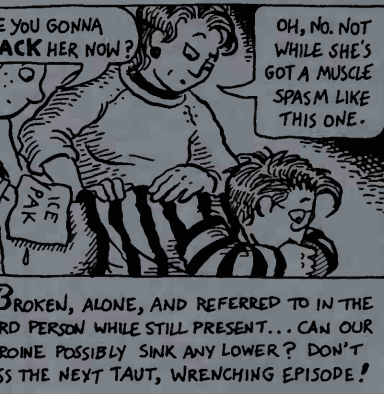
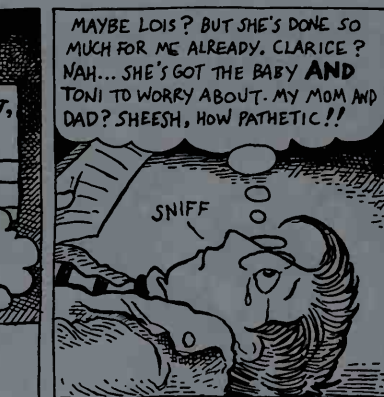
on her back

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ONE AFTERNOON AMID THE BUSTLE AND COMMERCE OF OUR FAVORITE FEMINIST BOOK EMPORIUM...

...AND WHEN YOU'RE DONE UNPACKING THOSE, CHECK THEM OFF ON THE PURCHASE ORDER BEFORE YOU...

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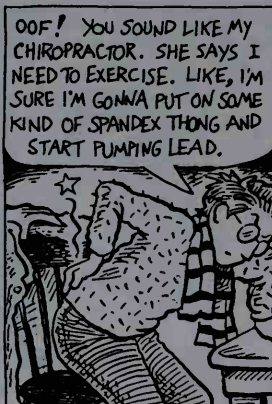
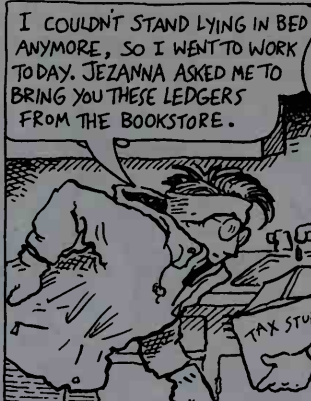


BROKEN, ALONE, AND REFERRED TO IN THE THIRD PERSON WHILE STILL PRESENT... CAN OUR HEROINE POSSIBLY SINK ANY LOWER? DON'T MISS THE NEXT TAUT, WRENCHING EPISODE!

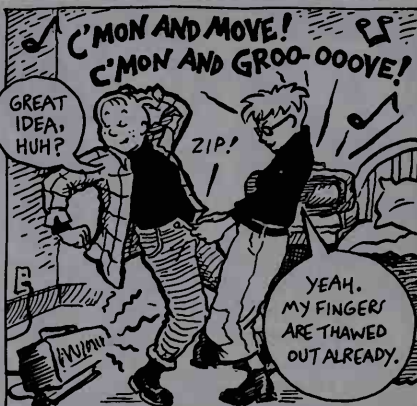
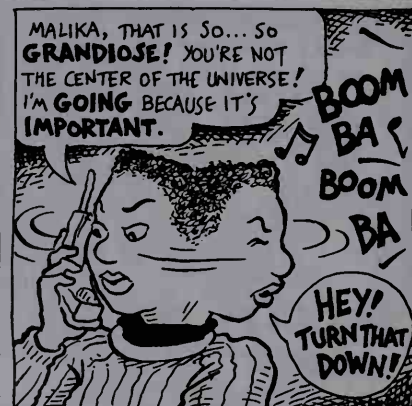
cold snap

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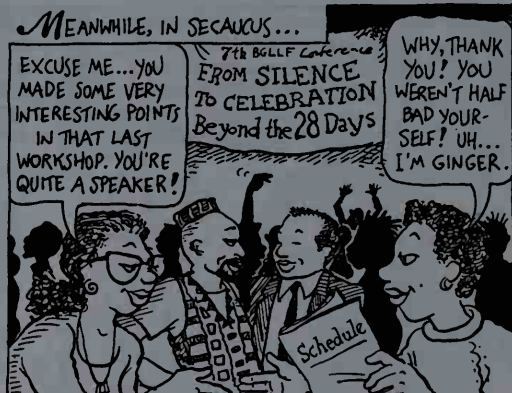
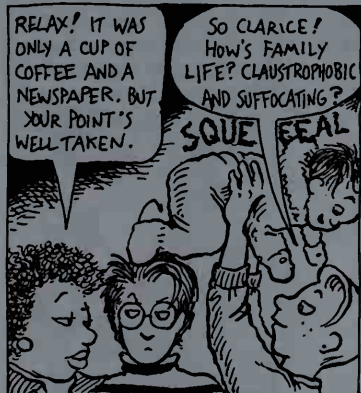


MEANWHILE, IT'S EVEN CHILLIER ACROSS TOWN



LOYALTY

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hummus where the heart is

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GINGER IS EXPECTED HOME IMMINENTLY FROM THE BLACK GAY AND LESBIAN LEADERSHIP FORUM CONFERENCE, AND MO HAS DROPPED BY FOR DINNER.

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WHOA! CAN YOU BELIEVE ALL THESE SCI-FI RADIATION TESTS THE GOVERNMENT DID IN THE 40'S AND 50'S? DOCTORS DIDN'T EVEN TELL PEOPLE THEY WERE INJECTING THEM WITH PLUTONIUM!

YEAH. HOW CONVENIENT NO ONE'S ADMITTING IT UNTIL 50 YEARS AFTER THE FACT. MAYBE IN 2044, THEY'LL CONFESS TO ALL THE STUFF THEY'RE DOING NOW.



LIKE HOW THE ARMY FORCED SOLDIERS IN THE GULF WAR TO TAKE ALL KINDS OF EXPERIMENTAL ANTI-BOTULISM AND ANTI-NERVE GAS DRUGS. NOW THEY'VE GOT BIZARRE ILLNESSES, THEIR BABIES ARE DEFORMED, AND THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE DOESN'T SEE A CONNECTION.

NO SHIT!

LOIS, YOU ARE SO NAIVE!

ARF!



HELLO! I'M BACK! DIGGER! COME TO MAMA, YOU BIG WOLF-GIRL!

GINGER!



WELCOME HOME!

HOW WAS THE CONFERENCE?

OH, IT WAS GREAT! THE GRASSROOTS ORGANIZING WORKSHOP REALLY GOT ME ALL CHARGED UP! AND I GOT ME SHELL NDEGE-OCHELLO'S AUTOGRAPH AFTER SHE PERFORMED SATURDAY.



NO KIDDING! I'VE SEEN HER ON MTV. PAIR OF ARMS, HUH?

RING RING

DON'T ANSWER THAT! UH... I MEAN, WE'RE TALKING! CAN'T WE LET THE MACHINE PICK UP?



BEEP! HI, IT'S MALIKA FOR GINGER. I MISS YOU, BABY! HOPE THE CONFERENCE WAS FUN... CALL ME AS SOON AS YOU GET IN, OKAY? I LOVE YOU, ANGEL LIPS! >CLIK!<

YOU DOG! YOU HAD AN AFFAIR, DIDN'T YOU?

GINGER! YOU DIDN'T!



DID YOU?

WELL, I WOULDN'T CALL IT AN AFFAIR. IT DIDN'T MEAN ANYTHING, IT JUST SORT OF HAPPENED. I HAVEN'T FIGURED OUT HOW TO TELL MALIKA YET.

TELL HER? WHY WOULD YOU WANT TO TELL HER?



LOIS, SHE TRUSTS ME!

SO WHY SPOIL IT? WHAT SHE DOESN'T KNOW WON'T HURT HER!

OH, GREAT! WHILE YOU'RE AT IT, WHY NOT SLIP SOME RADIOACTIVE IODINE INTO HER DECAF?



the best policy

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MALIKA'S COMING FOR THE WEEKEND. I WAS THINKING MAYBE YOU AND I SHOULD CLEAR OUT TONIGHT SO SHE AND GINGER CAN HAVE SOME TIME ALONE.

HOW THOUGHTFUL, IF UNCHARACTERISTIC OF YOU, LOIS. SO, I GUESS IF MALIKA'S FLYING IN ALL THE WAY FROM SAN FRANCISCO, SHE MUST HAVE FORGIVEN GINGER'S LITTLE CONFERENCE TRYST.

UH... GINGER DECIDED IT WASN'T THE SORT OF THING SHE COULD TELL HER OVER THE PHONE.

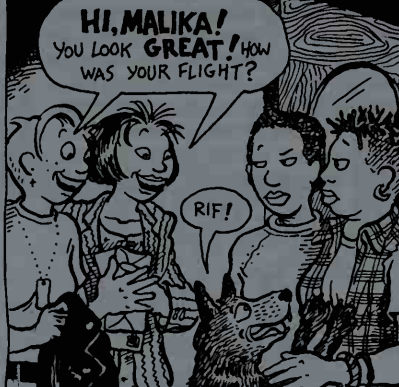
OH MY GOD! POOR MALIKA! Y'KNOW, I THINK I'LL CLEAR OUT FOR THE WHOLE WEEKEND.

ME TOO. I'LL BE AT SONYA'S. NORMALLY I AVOID WEEKEND-LONG DATES-- THERE'S SOMETHING SO SORDIDLY DOMESTIC ABOUT WAKING UP TWO DAYS IN A ROW WITH THE SAME PERSON-- BUT IN THIS CASE, I'M MAKING AN EXCEPTION.



CLIK!

HI, MALIKA! YOU LOOK GREAT! HOW WAS YOUR FLIGHT?



RIF!

GOTTA RUN!

CIAO!

NOW ALL THREE OF YOU ARE ACTING FISHY. WHAT'S GOING ON? DID YOU LEAVE ONE OF OUR "PERSONAL" VIDEOTAPES IN THE VCR AGAIN?



SLAM!

A TIP O' THE NIS TO RACHEL LURIE!

MEANWHILE, CLARICE IS HOME FROM THE SALT MINES.



HEY, A PACKAGE FROM YOUR PARENTS! WHY HAVEN'T YOU OPENED IT?

I'M AFRAID IT'S A BOMB.

AH PEE BAH

MAYBE IT'S A BABY PRESENT. YOU HAVEN'T HEARD FROM THEM SINCE RAFFI WAS BORN. THEIR GUILT REFLEXES MUST FINALLY BE KICKING IN. LET'S OPEN IT!



AJA!

TOLD YOU IT WAS A BOMB.



"THANK YOU FOR THE SNAPSHOTS. HE LOOKS SO MUCH LIKE YOUR TIO HECTOR. I JUST PRAY YOU'VE TAKEN HIM TO BE BAPTIZED, AND THAT IT'S NOT TOO LATE FOR YOU TO FIND A HUSBAND. A CHILD NEEDS TWO PARENTS, AND A BOY ESPECIALLY NEEDS A FATHER."



TONI...

I KNOW, I KNOW. I HAVE TO DO IT. AFTER ALL, WHAT KIND OF AN EXAMPLE AM I SETTING RAFAEL IF I CAN'T TELL MY OWN PARENTS I'M A LESBIAN?



BELIEVE ME, HON. TELLING THEM THE TRUTH CAN ULTIMATELY ONLY IMPROVE YOUR RELATIONSHIP.

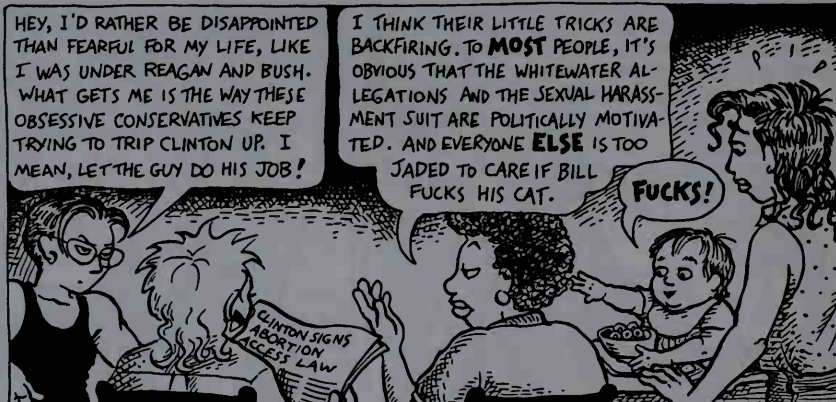
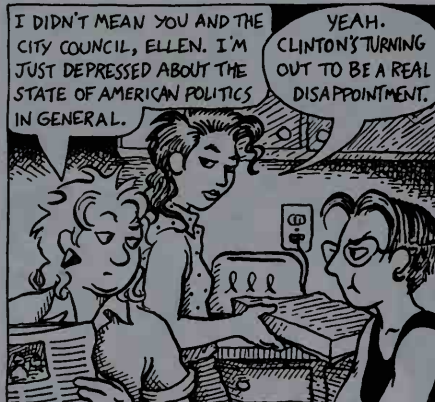


AM I MAD AT YOU? FOR DIDDLING SOME BIMBO? OH, GIRL. WHEN I GET MAD, YOU WON'T HAVE TO ASK. I'M JUST WARMING UP. I GOTTA PACE MYSELF IF I WANT TO MAKE YOU SUFFER WITHOUT PAUSE FOR THE REMAINDER OF YOUR BORN DAYS.



unminced words

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MEANWHILE, MALIKA'S VISIT DRAWS TO A CLOSE...

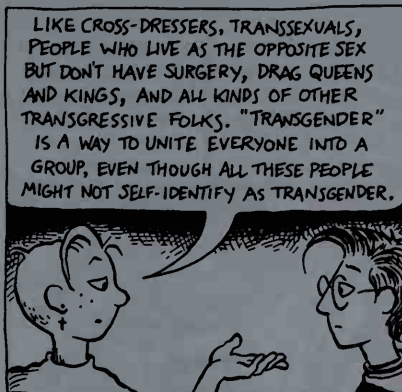
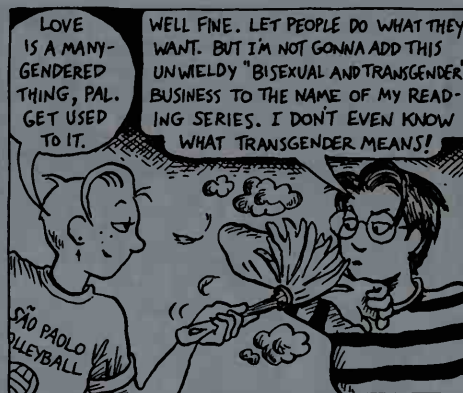
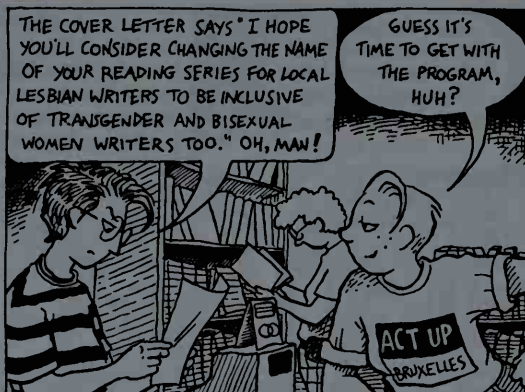
HERE'S A NEWS FLASH. "A RECENT STUDY SHOWS AFRICAN AMERICAN GAY MEN AND WOMEN HAVE SUBSTANTIALLY HIGHER LEVELS OF CHRONIC STRESS THAN HETEROSEXUAL BLACKS AND WHITES. AND LESBIAN AFRICAN AMERICANS SUFFER FROM MORE STRESS THAN THEIR GAY COUNTERPARTS."



Au Courant

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LIME LIGHT

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THANK YOU, JILLIAN, FOR THAT FASCINATING, UH, TRANSEXUAL VERSION OF THE OEDIPUS LEGEND, "OEDIPAL COMPLEX." THANKS ALSO TO MIKO TAKAGI AND DEIRDRE TRIVELPIECE FOR SHARING THEIR WORK WITH US TONIGHT, AND TO OUR ASL INTERPRETER, JO PALMER.



AND THANKS TO ALL OF YOU FOR COMING OUT TO SUPPORT OUR LOCAL AUTHORS, AND MAKING THIS FIRST EVENT IN OUR "MADWIMMIN READ" SERIES A SUCCESS. PLEASE STICK AROUND FOR REFRESHMENTS, AND COME BACK AGAIN NEXT MONTH.

A TIPO: THE NIB TO LYNETTE REEP.



HUH! YOU PULLED IT OFF! NICE WORK, MO. AND LOOK AT ALL THESE PEOPLE! I BETTER GET UP TO THE REGISTER. YOU GO SCHMOOZE.

VERY IMPRESSIVE. NO ONE WOULD EVER SUSPECT YOU WERE A SHY PERSON, THE WAY YOU RAN THE SHOW.



EXCUSE ME. I JUST NEED TO SAY I WAS REALLY SHOCKED THAT YOU LET A **MAN** READ HERE TONIGHT. MEN HAVE ACCESS TO THE WHOLE WORLD. WHY SHOULD WE SHARE OUR MEAGER RESOURCES WITH THEM?

UH... WELL, FIRST OF ALL, HE'S NOT A MAN, HE'S A LESBIAN. I MEAN, **SHE'S** A LESBIAN. AND SECOND, I WANT THIS SERIES TO BE INCLUSIVE, AND NOT SOME PRIVATE CLUB. I MEAN, WHO AM I TO QUESTION SOMEONE ELSE'S IDENTITY?



HMPH. I SUPPOSE YOU THINK "LESBIANS" WHO SLEEP WITH MEN ARE DYKES TOO.

UH... WELL...



EXCUSE ME, MO. I'M MJ, THE ARTS EDITOR AT THE TEN PERCENT TRIBUNE. GREAT EVENT YOU PUT TOGETHER TONIGHT. LISTEN, WE'RE LOOKING FOR A NEW BOOK REVIEWER, AND I WONDER IF YOU'D BE AT ALL INTERESTED?

UH... ME? WRITE BOOK REVIEWS? FOR THE NEWS-PAPER?!



MO, SORRY TO INTERRUPT. I'M FLORA, FROM THE QUEER VEGAN SOCIETY. WHEN YOU GET A CHANCE, LET'S TALK ABOUT SOME NON-ANIMAL PRODUCT ALTERNATIVES TO THE **CHEESE** YOU'RE SERVING HERE.



HEY, THANKS FOR INCLUDING JILLIAN'S WORK TONIGHT. I'M GONNA TELL MY FRIEND BIFF TO SEND YOU SOME OF HIS POEMS. HE'S BEEN WRITING **GREAT** STUFF ABOUT HIS FEMALE-TO-MALE TRANSITIONING.

UH... BIFF?



MO, THIS WAS WONDERFUL. THANKS A LOT FOR MAKING IT HAPPEN. I NEVER READ IN PUBLIC BEFORE. COULD YOU TELL HOW NERVOUS I WAS?!

UH... NOT AT ALL, DEIRDRE. YOU WERE GREAT. I DON'T THINK ANYONE NOTICED YOU READ THAT ONE PAGE TWICE.



SO, I KNOW YOU'RE PROBABLY REALLY BUSY AND ALL, BUT WOULD YOU MAYBE LIKE TO DO SOMETHING SOMETIME? LIKE, I DUNNO. A MOVIE?

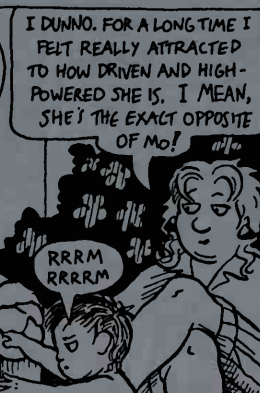
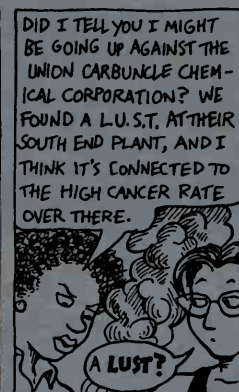
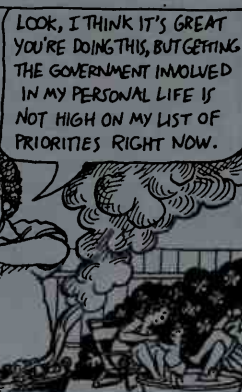
HERE YOU GO. CHECK OUT THESE RECIPES FOR MEAT, EGG, AND DAIRY-FREE HORS D'OEUVRES. THE PICKLED TOFU CHEESE IS MY PARTICULAR FAVORITE.



NO PICNIC

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let them eat cake

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BUZZED ON CAKE AND ICE CREAM, SEVERAL GUESTS AT RAFAEL'S FIRST BIRTHDAY PARTY HAVE REMAINED IN THE KITCHEN FOR SOME LIVELY DEBATE.



THE QUESTION IS, WOULD THESE LOG CABIN CLUB TYPES EVER HAVE COME OUT AT **ALL** IF **LEF-TIST** QUEERS HADN'T BEEN FIGHTING FOR THEIR RIGHTS IN THE STREETS FOR THE PAST **25 YEARS**? I THINK **NOT**.

I DUNNO, MO. STREET ACTIVISTS AND DYKES ON BIKES ARE GREAT, BUT IT TAKES ALL KINDS! IF SOME STARCHED, STRAIGHT-ACTING GAY MEN AND LESBIANS WANT TO SUCK UP TO THE REPUBLICAN PARTY, IT CAN ONLY HELP!

YEAH... **HELP THEM**. THEY'LL SELL THE **REST** OF US DOWN THE RIVER JUST TO GET THEIR WINGTIPS IN THE DOOR! THEY'RE ANTI-CHOICE, ANTI-AFFIRMATIVE ACTION, PRO-BIG BUSINESS...

THEY PROBABLY **EAT VEAL**! THEY PROBABLY DON'T **RECYCLE**! THEY PROBABLY HAVE **WET DREAMS** ABOUT SKINNYDIPPING AT THE BOHEMIAN GROVE WITH **GEORGE WILL**!

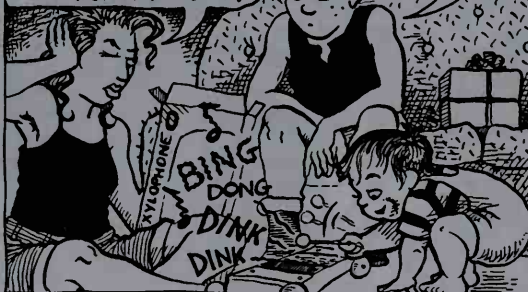
OKAY, MO. I THINK YOU'VE HAD ENOUGH ICING.



MEANWHILE, IN THE LIVING ROOM...

THANKS, LOIS. D'YOU THINK YOU COULD'VE FOUND A MORE IRRITATING GIFT?

WELL, IT WAS THIS OR THE TALKING STUFFED **BARNEY**.



LET'S SEE WHAT YOUR FOLKS SENT, BABE! SWEETS LIKE MONEY.

RAFFI, NO! DON'T BONK STELLA! SORRY, GLORIA.

IT'S OKAY. SO TONI, DID YOU COME OUT TO YOUR PARENTS YET?



NO... I WAS ALL READY TO, BUT THEN THE VATICAN MADE THEIR LITTLE PRONOUNCEMENT ABOUT HOW SAME SEX COUPLES SHOULDN'T BE ALLOWED TO ADOPT OR USE ALTERNATIVE INSEMINATION. MY MOM'S SO POPE-CRAZY, I THOUGHT I'D WAIT TILL THINGS QUIETED DOWN.



HAVE A NICE WAIT.

A CHECK FOR RAFFI, A PHOTO OF THE NEIGHBORS' SON, JULIO, FOR YOU.

HUH. JULIO LOOKS A LITTLE LIGHT IN THE LOAFERS TO ME.



THE KITCHEN CREW IS STARTING TO CRASH...

SO WHAT MAKES SOME GAY PEOPLE TURN OUT TO BE REVOLUTIONARY ACTIVISTS, AND OTHERS TURN OUT TO BE SWIVELING COLLABORATIONISTS?

THE AMOUNT OF REFINED SUGAR THEIR MOTHERS ATE WHILE THEY WERE IN THE WOMB?

SOMEONE STOP ME. I CAN SEE BOB DOLE'S FACE IN THE BUTTER PECAN.

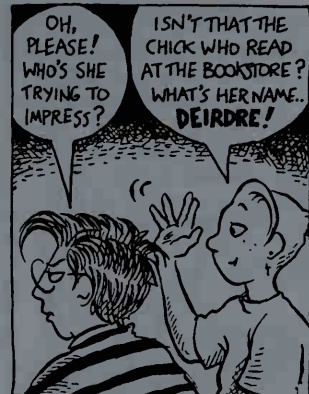
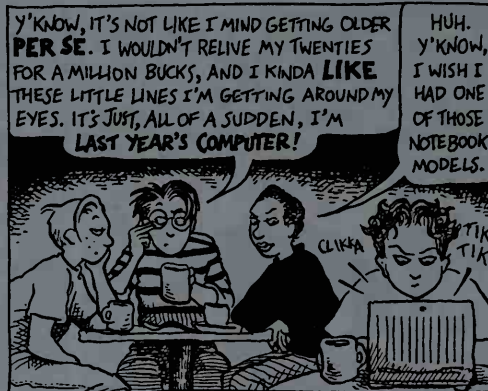
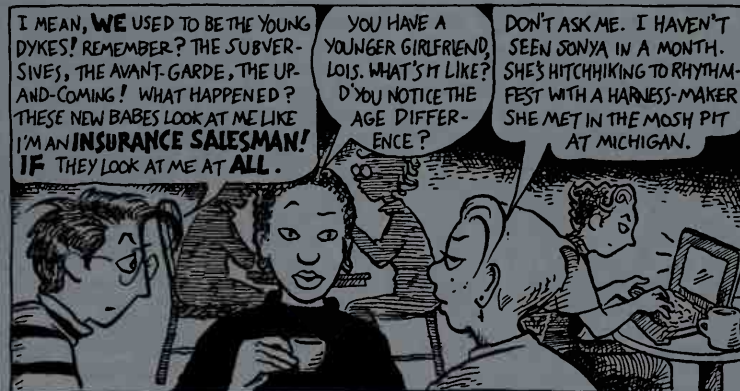
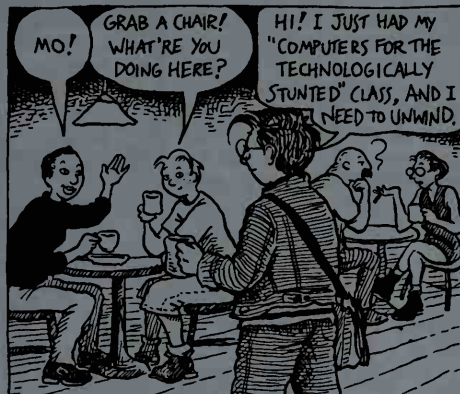
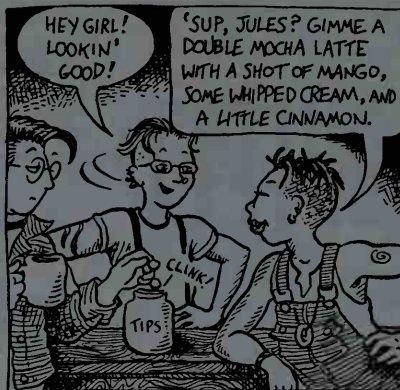
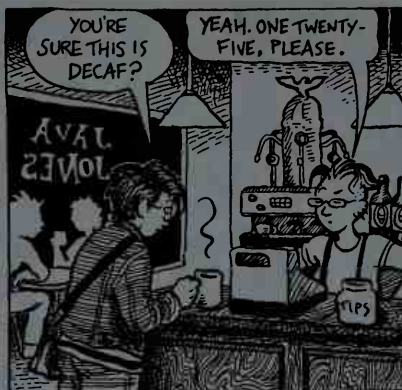


virtual interface

OUR
HEROINE
VENTURES
INTO
A
LOCAL
CAFFEINE
DEN.

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BUFFED

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ALL READY FOR YOUR BIG NIGHT, MO? D'YOU NEED ANY POINTERS? WANT ME TO COME OVER AND TAKE A PICTURE OF YOU TWO BEFORE YOU GO OUT?

OH, MY GOD! YOU HAVE A DATE?

NO, I DO NOT HAVE A DATE. UH... AND IF I DID, I WOULD RESSENT THAT TONE OF VOICE.

SHE'S GOING TO THE MOVIES WITH DEIRDRE, ONE OF THE WRITERS WHO READ HERE LAST MONTH.

REALLY? I LIKED HER. SHE WAS SMART. AND NOT UNATTRACTIVE, AS I RECALL.

SO MO, ARE YOU GONNA PUT OUT?

LOIS! THIS ISN'T A DATE! SHE JUST WANTS TO MEET MORE PEOPLE. AND IF IT WAS A DATE, I WOULD CERTAINLY NOT HAVE SEX WITH HER THE FIRST TIME WE WENT OUT!

THE BOOK OF SHORT LESBIAN PENGUIN STORIES

CHLOE PLUS MIL DRED

WHOA! HAVE YOU SIGNED THE YOUTH FOR CHRIST "TRUE LOVE WAITS" CHASTITY PLEDGE?

NO, IT'S JUST... I'VE DONE THE U-HAUL SCENE, Y'KNOW? I'M TIRED OF GOING TO BED WITH A DATE AND WAKING UP WITH A DOMESTIC PARTNER. FROM NOW ON I'M GONNA WAIT UNTIL I KNOW THIS IS WHO I WANT TO BE WITH BEFORE I SLEEP WITH HER.

WHAT KIND OF TWISTED LOGIC IS THAT? HOW D'YOU KNOW YOU WANNA BE WITH HER UNLESS YOU DO HER?

LOIS, I'M NOT LIKE YOU. IF I HAVE SEX, I FALL IN LOVE. IT'S A GENETIC DEFECT.

MO, WHY ARE YOU SO SURE TONIGHT ISN'T A DATE?

OH, IT'S A DATE! THIS BABE DEIRDRE WAS CREAMING HER JEANS WHEN MO SAID SHE'D GO OUT WITH HER.

LOIS!

GO ON. GIVE HER A TUMBLE. SHE WANTS YOU.

LOOK. EVEN IF I WAS INTERESTED, I'D WANNA GO REALLY SLOW. I THINK IT WOULD BE EXCITING.

I WISH MAXINE AND I HAD DONE THAT. ONCE YOU GO ALL THE WAY, YOU CAN NEVER GET BACK THAT SUBLIME, TORTURED TENSION OF JUST HOLDING HANDS, OR THE FIRST TIME YOU UNBUTTON HER SHIRT.

YEAH. MY NEW GUIDELINE IS, YOU SHOULDN'T BE NAKED WITH SOMEONE TILL YOU KNOW WHAT HER RELATIONSHIP WITH HER MOTHER IS LIKE.

GOOD POINT. IF I'D DONE THAT, I NEVER WOULD'VE TAKEN MY COAT OFF WITH MAXINE.

OKAY. I'M OUTTA HERE. I HAVE TO GO TO THE GYM BEFORE MY, UH... APPOINTMENT.

GO GIRL! WORK IT!

PUMP IT UP!

SHORTLY THEREAFTER...

MO! I DIDN'T KNOW YOU WORKED OUT HERE! THIS IS MY MOM, BETTY. MOM, THIS IS WHO I'M GOING OUT WITH TONIGHT!

Y.M.C.A. MOTHER-DAUGHTER SWIM MEET THIS SATURDAY!

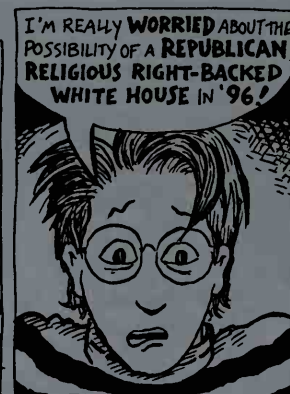
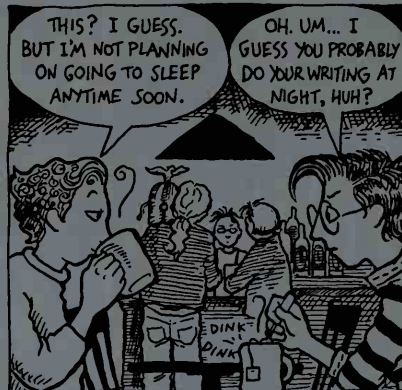
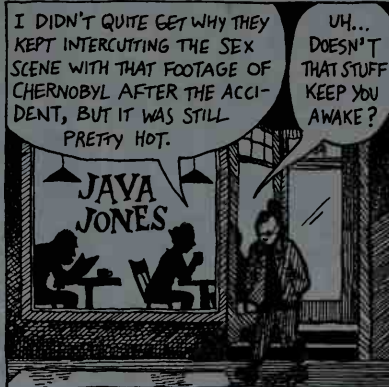
NICE TO MEET YOU, MO. DEIRDRE'S SO LOOKING FORWARD TO YOUR DATE!

from the sublimation to the ridiculous

AFTER AN
EVENING OF
EXPERIMENTAL
LESBIAN
FILM, MO AND
DEIRDRE'S
QUASI-DATE
CONTINUES
OVER COFFEE.

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the Fatalist

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YEAH?
AND
THEN
WHAT?

AND THEN
SHE KISSED
ME.

HAH! THEA
OWES ME
FIVE BUCKS!

WHOA! SHE
JUST, LIKE,
KISSED YOU?
WHAT DID
YOU DO?

I DUNNO! I MEAN,
WHAT COULD I DO? I
KISSED HER BACK.
SHE TOOK ME BY
SURPRISE.

WHAT KIND OF KISS
ARE WE TALKING HERE?
POLITE PECK? SISTERLY
SMOOCH? OR A REAL
SPITSWAPPER?

IT WAS... YOU KNOW,
A REGULAR KISS. SHE
TASTED LIKE POPCORN AND
VIENNESE ROAST.

THEN WHAT
HAPPENED?

THEN
SHE LEFT.

LET ME
GUESS. YOU DIDN'T
TRY TO STOP
HER.

SHE
WAS READY
TO GO.

MO, D'YOU MIND IF I INCLUDE THIS
STORY IN THE PAPER I'M PRESENTING
AT THE QUEER THEORY CONFER-
ENCE NEXT WEEK?

RING!

CRUNCH

I'M LOOKING AT HOW THE HYPERSEXUALIZED
PERSONAE OF BLACK WOMEN AND LESBIANS
IN THE MALE LITERARY CANON CONTRAST
WITH OUR ACTUAL EXPERIENCES OF DESIRE,
FOCUSING ON INTERSUBJECTIVE MODAL-
ITIES OF **LESBIAN IMPOTENCE**.

YOU KNOW WHAT'S
WRONG WITH YOU, MO?
YOU'RE AFRAID OF
LETTING ANYTHING
GOOD HAPPEN.

OF COURSE I AM!
AS SOON AS SOMETHING
GOOD HAPPENS, SOME-
THING **BAD** IS RIGHT
AROUND THE CORNER!

ARE YOU STILL
IN THERAPY?
AND WHAT ABOUT
THIS DEIRDRE?
IS SHE
PRE-SHRUNK?

JEEZIZ, SPARROW!
IT WAS OUR FIRST
DATE! I DIDN'T
TAKE HER MENTAL
HEALTH HISTORY!

WE'LL DON'T COME
CRYING TO ME
WHEN YOU FIND OUT
SHE STILL THINKS
SHE HAD A HAPPY
CHILDHOOD.

MO, THAT WAS JEZANNA ON
THE PHONE. SHE WANTS US TO
COME OVER TO THE BOOKSTORE
TONIGHT. RIGHT NOW, IF WE CAN.

WHAT'S
WRONG?!

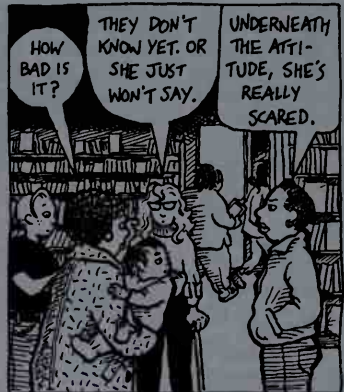
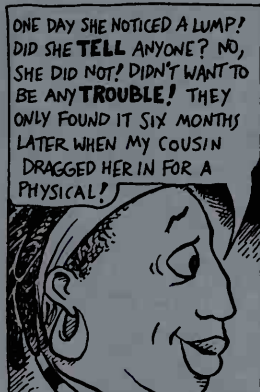
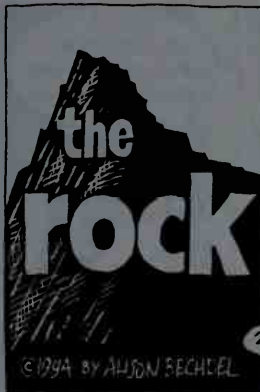
HER MOM IS REALLY SICK,
SO SHE HAS TO FLY HOME.
SHE WANTS TO GO OVER
STUFF AT WORK WITH US
BEFORE HER FLIGHT LEAVES.

WHAT'S THE
MATTER WITH
HER MOTHER?
DID SHE SAY?

NO. SHE
SOUNDED
PRETTY
UPSET,
THOUGH.

MAYBE I SHOULD COME
WITH YOU, IN CASE
SHE NEEDS TO TALK.
I MEAN, MY MOM'S BEEN
SICK A LOT. DO YOU
THINK SHE'D MIND?

PROBABLY.
BUT IT'S
WORTH A
TRY.
LET'S GO.



YIKES! MO'S...

minding the store

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RIGHT.... OKAY.... WELL LISTEN, I'M REALLY GLAD YOUR MOM MADE IT THROUGH THE SURGERY ALL RIGHT. HANG IN THERE, JEZ, AND I'LL TALK TO YOU TOMORROW.... **YES**, THE STORE IS **FINE**. I'VE GOT EVERYTHING UNDER CONTROL. DON'T WORRY! OKAY, BYE.



EXCUSE ME. I'M LOOKING FOR A COPY OF THAT NEW BOOK, "STRANGE JUSTICE: THE SELLING OF CLARENCE THOMAS."

SURE! WE JUST GOT A SHIPMENT IN THIS MORNING. LET ME GET YOU ONE.

WIMMINAM BOOKZ



HEY, MO. CHECK IT OUT. THEY SENT US THE **WRONG** NEW CLARENCE THOMAS BOOK. WE HAVE THIRTY COPIES HERE OF THE WACKO ONE BY SENATOR DANFORTH!

HOW'D **THAT** HAPPEN? SHIT! I'VE GOT A CUSTOMER OUT THERE WAITING FOR THE RIGHT ONE!

ISN'T THERE A DISPLAY COPY IN THE WINDOW? SELL THAT.

GOOD THINKING!



MAN, THIS BREAST CANCER THING REALLY HAS ME FREAKED OUT. EVERYWHERE I GO LATELY, SOMEONE EITHER HAS IT OR KNOWS SOMEONE WHO DOES. IT'S A FUCKING EPIDEMIC.

YEAH. AND THE SCARIEST THING IS, THERE'S NOTHING YOU CAN DO TO PREVENT IT. SOMETIMES MY BREASTS FEEL LIKE TICKING TIME BOMBS.

THEY SAY CHILD-BIRTH REDUCES YOUR RISK FACTOR A LITTLE. YOU COULD GET PREGNANT.

NOW THERE'S A TEMPTING OPTION.

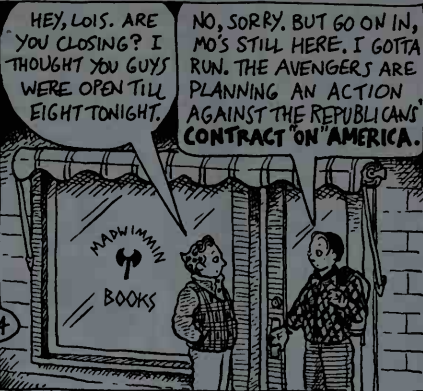
UH... I THINK I'LL TRY LIVING SOLELY ON ORGANIC WHEAT GRASS JUICE INSIDE A LARGE, TOXIN-FREE BUBBLE FIRST.



Trouble

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UH... HI, DEIRDRE. JEEZ, I CAN'T. I HAFTA WRITE A BOOK REVIEW FOR THE TRIBUNE TONIGHT, AND I HAVEN'T EVEN STARTED IT YET.

WHAT BOOK? WE CAN TALK ABOUT IT OVER DINNER. YOU GOTTA EAT, RIGHT?



NO, I REALLY HAVE TO GO HOME AND GET TO WORK. IT'S A NEW LESBIAN EROTICA COLLECTION. I'M GONNA DISCUSS IT IN THE CONTEXT OF OUR EROTOPHOBIC SOCIETY AND CLINTON'S FIRING OF JOYCELYN ELDERS FOR MENTIONING MASTURBATION.



THAT GUY IS SO GUTLESS! I MEAN, WHAT'S HE TRYING TO PROVE BY CANNING THE ONLY PERSON IN WASHINGTON WITH ANY INTEGRITY? DOES HE THINK THAT'S GONNA WIN BACK ALL THE ANGRY WHITE MEN WHO VOTED REPUBLICAN THIS FALL?



HE'D DO A LOT BETTER BY TAKING A **STAND** FOR ONCE. IF PEOPLE WANT A CONSERVATIVE PRESIDENT IN '96, THEY'LL VOTE FOR A **REAL** ONE.



CLINTON'S ALREADY LOST VOTES OVER THE MILITARY FIASCO. **ONE** IN **THREE** GAY VOTERS PICKED REPUBLICANS IN THE LAST ELECTION!



THE **FOOLS!** YOU CAN BET YOUR BUMPERSTICKERS THEY'RE MOSTLY WHITE GAY MEN WITH BUCKS, HAPPY TO SELL OUT IMMIGRANTS AND SINGLE MOTHERS ON WELFARE FOR A CHANCE AT A **FUCKING TAX BREAK.**



WHEN ARE PEOPLE GONNA LEARN? WE'VE GOTTA STICK TOGETHER IF WE EVER HOPE TO HAVE ANY REAL POWER IN THIS COUNTRY!



SO LIKE, WHAT'D YOU THINK OF THE BOOK?

I, UM... HAVEN'T READ IT YET.



MAYBE I CAN HELP YOU WITH YOUR RESEARCH. THOSE BOOKS ALWAYS INCLUDE A STORY ABOUT WOMEN HAVING SEX AT THE OFFICE.



UH... YES, I THINK YOU'RE RIGHT.





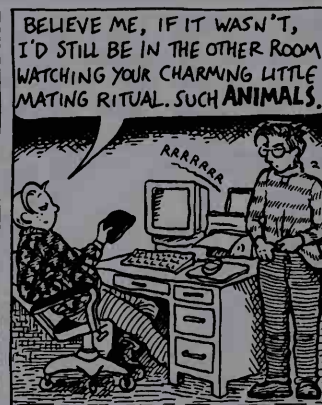
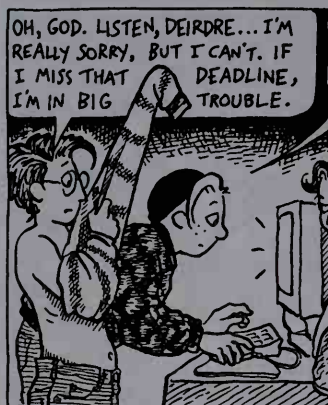
...THEN AFTER AN UPDATE FROM THE FUNDRAISING COMMITTEE, LOIS IS GONNA READ THE DRAFT OF THE FACT SHEET WE'LL BE PASSING OUT AT THE ACTION.

OH, NO. I LEFT IT AT WORK!

WE HAFTA FINALIZE THAT THING TONIGHT. TOMORROW'S MY LAST DAY TEMPING AT THE LAW FIRM AND I DON'T KNOW WHERE ELSE I CAN SCAM FREE COPIES.

205

MEANWHILE, AT THE BOOKSTORE...

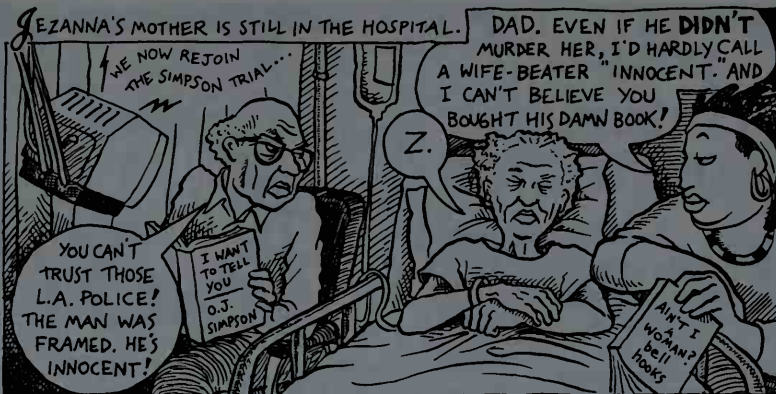


the media event

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A BLEAK WINTER'S EVE FINDS OUR VARIOUS HEROINES ENGAGED IN AN EVEN BLEAKER COMMON PURSUIT.

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TONI AND GLORIA HAVE A LOT IN COMMON.



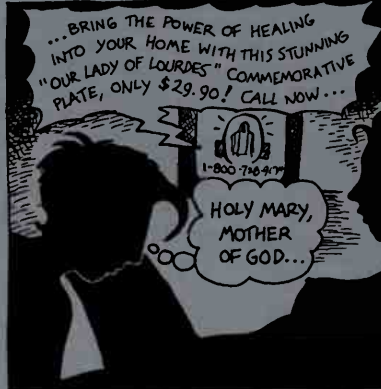
CLARICE PLOTS LEGAL STRATEGIES.



SPARROW IS HOLIER-THAN-HER-HOUSEMATES.



AND MO IS ON THE VERGE OF LOSING HER CELIBACY!

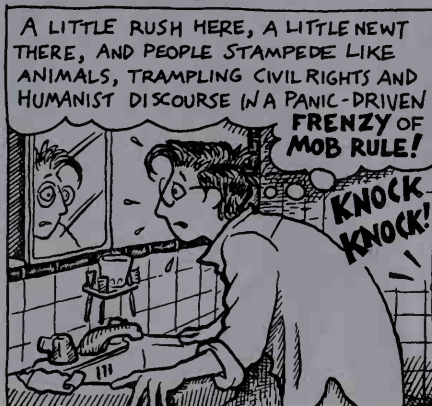
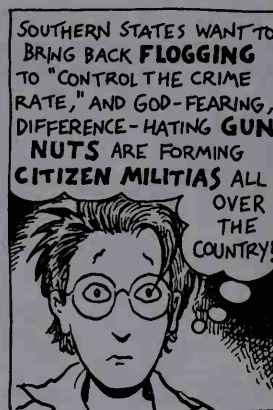
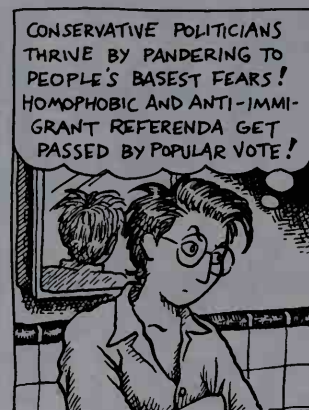
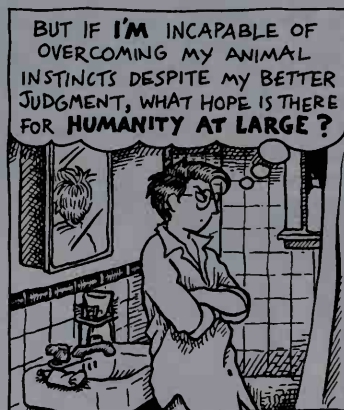


post coitum tristis¹

¹a certain melancholy
sometimes experienced
after sex.

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Family Hour

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I DUNNO. IT'S NOT LIKE I DIDN'T **ENJOY** IT. I JUST WISH WE'D **WAITED** A LITTLE LONGER.

SO GINGER, WHY WAS MALIKA CALLING LAST NIGHT? CAN'T LIVE WITHOUT YOU?

NO. SHE JUST WANTED TO GIVE ME HER NEW ADDRESS. SHE MOVED IN WITH THE WOMAN SHE MET A WEEK AFTER WE BROKE UP.

I MEAN, I KNOW IT SOUNDS VICTORIAN, BUT DON'T YOU THINK THERE'S SOMETHING TO BE SAID FOR **HOLDING OUT?**

OH, GINGER. THAT MUST'VE HURT!

ACTUALLY, IT KIND OF HELPED. I DECIDED TO QUIT MAKING EXCUSES. THIS SUMMER I FINISH MY DISSERTATION OR **ELSE.**

THAT'LL SHOW HER. I BET THE NEW BABE ONLY HAS A MASTER'S DEGREE.

DING DONG!

THERE'S THE FOOD! I'LL GET IT.

WURF!

SO WHY DIDN'T I HOLD OUT? AM I SABOTAGING MYSELF? DO I REALLY FEAR INTIMACY?

Y'KNOW, I'M TIRED OF THIS **LIMBO!** I WANNA BE AN **ADULT**, GET ON WITH MY **LIFE**, MY **CAREER.**

YEAH. IT'D BE NICE TO HAVE A LITTLE **POWER**, TOO. DID I TELL YOU THE SHELTER DIRECTOR IS FINALLY LEAVING? I'M GONNA APPLY FOR HER JOB.

ARF! ararf woof!

ON THE OTHER HAND, HAVING ORGASMS WITH SOMEONE IS A FAIRLY INTIMATE UNDERTAKING. BUT ON THE **OTHER** HAND, I HARDLY **KNOW** HER!

I'M STARVING!

CHANNA MASALA... SAAG PANEER...

WHERE'S MY ALOO PARATHA?

ARE YOU GUYS LISTENING TO ME??

YEAH, YEAH. YOU SLEPT WITH SOMEONE YOU BARELY KNOW...

...AND NOW YOU REGRET IT. BUT NOT AS MUCH AS WE DO.

LISTEN, MO. YOU WANNA KNOW MORE ABOUT DEIRDRE? IF YOU PROMISE TO QUIT WHINING ABOUT HOW SORRY YOU ARE YOU GOT LAID, I'LL RUN A CHECK ON HER FOR YOU.

MEANWHILE, ACROSS TOWN...

THANKS FOR ASKING US TO STAY, TONI. IT GETS KINDA LONELY THE NIGHTS ANA WORKS LATE.

TELL ME ABOUT IT. IT'S SUCH A TREAT TO HAVE ANOTHER ADULT AT THE DINNER TABLE.

MORE BIZZA!

BAP.

HERE, HONEY. I MADE YOU A SPECIAL RAFFI SIZED PIECE OF PIZZA.

JU-UNE! I'M HO-O--

OH! GLORIA, HI!

CLARICE! WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE? IT'S EARLY!

DRAGNET

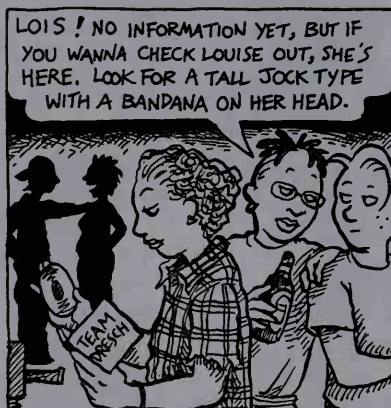
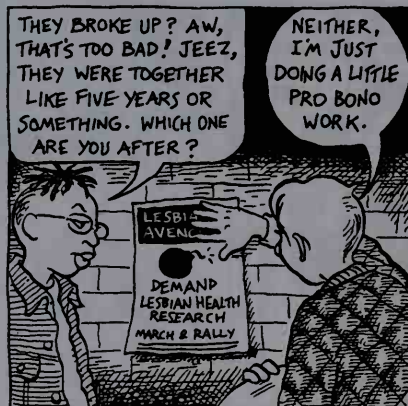
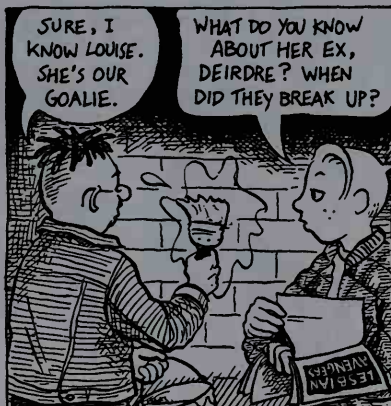
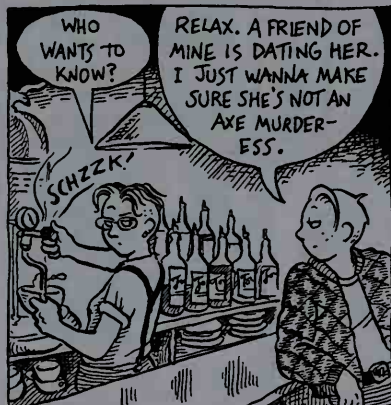
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2/1

LOIS HAS PROMISED TO DO A BACKGROUND CHECK ON DEIRDRE FOR MO.

CURLY-HAIRED CHICK? YEAH... I DID HER ONCE A YEAR OR SO AGO. I GUESS I WENT A TAD SHORTER THAN SHE LIKED. DIDN'T SHE READ HER STUFF AT THE BOOKSTORE THE SAME NIGHT I DID?

I DON'T THINK SHE QUITE PULLS OFF THAT FIRST PERSON, PRESENT TENSE PROSE STYLE. SHE'S IN THE SAME WRITER'S GROUP AS JULES, THE JAVA JERK AT THE CAFÉ ACROSS THE STREET.



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TO-NI..

UNH. WHAT
TIME IS IT?

TIME FOR
LOVE, SLEEPING
BEAUTY.

DEET!
DEET!
DEET!

DEET! DEET!...

CLARICE, ARE YOU NUTS?
RAFFI WILL BE UP ANY
MINUTE, YOU HAVE TO GO
TO WORK, AND I HAVE
A MILLION THINGS TO
DO THIS MORNING!

EXCUSE ME!
YOU'RE THE ONE
WHO'S BEEN
COMPLAINING
WE DON'T HAVE
ENOUGH SEX.

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YOU
DID THIS
ON PURPOSE,
DIDN'T
YOU?

WHAT?

YOU SUDDENLY FEEL LIKE
MAKING LOVE ON A BUSY
MORNING, THEN IT'S MY
FAULT FOR SAYING NO! DO
YOU HAVE ANY IDEA WHAT
MY DAY IS LIKE?

YEAH! YOU
HANG OUT WITH
GLORIA DRINK-
ING COFFEE AND
WATCHING THE
KIDS PLAY.

WHAT?

OH MY GOD! IT'S THURSDAY!
WHAT WAS I THINKING?! I HAVE
A BREAKFAST MEETING DOWN-
TOWN IN TWENTY MINUTES! I
HAVE TO GET **OUT** OF HERE!

I WON'T BE HOME TILL LATE! TONIGHT'S THE SOUTH END CITIZEN ACTION GROUP MEETING, AND I HAVE TO BE THERE.

OH, WELL, IF
YOU HAVE
TO BE THERE.
A PRIORITY'S
A PRIORITY!

WHAT?

I SAID MAYBE
GLORIA WILL
WANT TO COME
OVER FOR DIN-
NER AGAIN
TONIGHT.

LATER THAT MORNING...

WHAT?

I SAW HER AT THIS PARTY MAKING OUT WITH HER EX-LOVER WHO IT TURNS OUT ISN'T HER EX AT ALL BUT HER **CURRENT**. THEY'VE JUST DECIDED TO SEE OTHER PEOPLE.

BUT... BUT
ARE YOU
SURE IT WAS
DEIRDRE?

TRUST ME.
SHE LOOKED
EXACTLY LIKE SHE
DID WHEN I SAW
HER MAKING OUT
WITH YOU.

SHE TOLD ME THEY
BROKE UP! I CAN'T
BELIEVE I BELIEVED
HER! I... I MEAN,
WHAT AM I SUPPOSED
TO DO **NOW?**

SUCK IT
UP, BABE.
HERE COMES
YOUR FAVORITE
SALES
REP.

UH... HI,
ROGER.

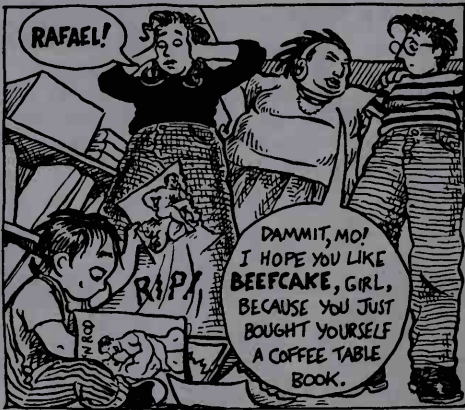
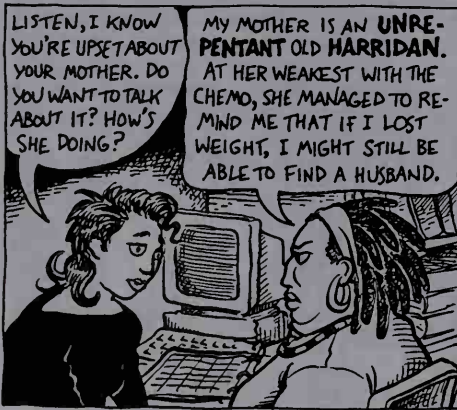
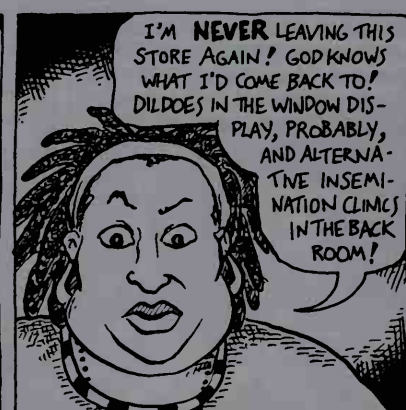
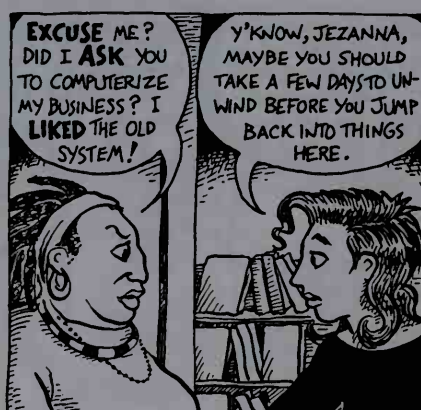
HIYA, MO! I GOT SOME GREAT NEW TITLES
TO SHOW YOU. LOTS OF **ANGEL** BOOKS.
I THINK THE LADIES'LL REALLY GO FOR 'EM!

The TANGO of ANGER

THE BOSS IS BACK.

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their brilliant careers

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GINGER! GET YOUR NOSE OUTTA THAT BOOK! I'M TAKING YOU TO DINNER!



LOIS! GET DRESSED! WE'RE GOING TO LA LENTILLE D'OR AND I'M TREATING! I GOT THE JOB!



WAY TO GO, GIRL!

HURRY UP AND GET READY! JUNE'S GONNA MEET US THERE. CAN YOU BELIEVE IT? I'M THE SHELTER DIRECTOR!



CONGRATULATIONS! SO HOW'S IT FEEL TO BE AN ADMINISTRATOR?

SHE'S PROBABLY GONNA START MAKING US FILL OUT REQUISITIONS WHEN WE NEED TO BORROW A TAMPON.



YOU MUST BE GETTING A HEFTY RAISE IF YOU CAN AFFORD THE LENTILLE D'OR.

CAN I GET THE PORTOBELLO MUSHROOMS FLAMBE AND THE SMOKED ATLANTIC SEAWEED?



OVER THE DESSERT COURSE...

SO GINGER, HOW'S THE DISSERTATION COMING?

FAST AND FURIOUS. YOU KNOW HOW I'VE BEEN DODGING MY ADVISER FOR, LIKE, FIVE YEARS BECAUSE I NEVER HAD ANYTHING TO SHOW HER?



YEAH.

WELL, YESTERDAY I SAW HER DUCK BEHIND A TREE AS I CROSSED THE CAMPUS. SHE HASN'T READ THE TWO FIFTY-PAGE CHAPTERS I DUMPED ON HER DESK LAST MONTH.

LOIS, WHAT'S WRONG? YOU HAVEN'T TOUCHED YOUR POMEGRANATE-YAM TART!



I DUNNO. I'M JUST THINKING. YOU GUYS ARE REALLY GOING SOMEWHERE WITH YOUR LIVES, AND I'M HAPPY FOR YOU. BUT WHAT ABOUT ME? I'M DOING THE SAME OLD THING I'VE ALWAYS DONE! I'M IN A RUT!



LOIS! YOU'RE REALLY UPSET!

EXCUSE ME A SECOND.

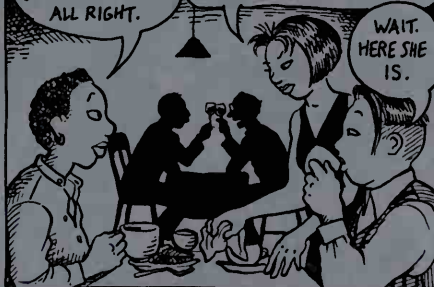


AFTER A DECENT INTERVAL...

MAYBE WE SHOULD SEE IF SHE'S ALL RIGHT.

I'LL GO. IF OUR GORGEOUS WAITRESS COMES BY, GET ME ANOTHER CUP OF TEA.

WAIT. HERE SHE IS.



LOIS, WHAT'S GOING ON? ARE YOU OKAY?

YEAH. WHY? HEY, SPARROW! MAKE SURE YOU GIVE OUR WAITRESS A BIG TIP. SHE'S TAKING ME OUT TO SOME CLUBS LATER.

JEEZ, I WOULDN'T MIND BEING IN A RUT LIKE YOURS, LOIS.

I THINK WE MISUNDERSTOOD HER, DARLING. SHE MEANT SHE WAS "IN RUT."



an
entrance
and an
exit

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...SO I SAID TO HER, "I WON'T BE TOYED WITH, DEIRDRE. FIND SOMEONE **ELSE** TO BE YOUR SEXUAL PLAYTHING!"

SPEAKING OF WHICH...DID I MENTION THE SUCCULENT DETAILS OF MY NIGHT WITH BABETTE THE WAITRESS? TALK ABOUT A **FEAST**.

EXCUSE ME. I HATE TO INTERRUPT, BUT...

WOULD ONE OF YOU GO **WORK THE REGISTER**? THIS IS A PLACE OF BUSINESS! KEEP YOUR LOVE LIVES OUT OF IT!

OFFICE

SWATCH THE POWER

PRESENTLY...

HI! IS JEZANNA IN?

YEAH. I'LL BUZZ HER. WHO SHOULD I SAY IS HERE?

WIMMIWIMMI
BOOKS

AUDREY?

HI, BABY! I GOT THE WEEKEND OFF! I THOUGHT I'D COME UP AND GIVE YOU A THRILL!

MEANWHILE...

THANK YOU, CLARENCE THOMAS AND SANDRA DAY O'CONNOR.

LEMME SEE... I THINK MY **FAVORITE** ARGUMENT AGAINST AFFIRMATIVE ACTION IS THAT "SPECIAL TREATMENT" IS INSULTING TO AFRICAN AMERICANS. I MEAN, HOW MANY WHITE GUYS DO YOU KNOW WHO FEEL "INSULTED" BY THE SPECIAL TREATMENT THEY'VE GOTTEN FOR CENTURIES?

CLARICE, WILL YOU PUT DOWN THE PAPER? WE ONLY SEE EACH OTHER FOR AN HOUR A DAY. COULD WE AT LEAST **TRY** TO HAVE A CONVERSATION?

I'M HAVING A CONVERSATION!

WITH **WHO**? I WAS TALKING TO YOU ABOUT HOW TO COME OUT TO MY PARENTS, WHEN YOU PICKED UP THE NEWS-PAPER AND STARTED RANTING!

TONI, I'VE HEARD YOUR PLANS TO COME OUT TO YOUR FOLKS NINE MILLION TIMES SINCE WE FIRST MET. EXCUSE ME IF EVERY ONCE IN A WHILE MY MIND WANDERS.

OKAY, CLARICE! I HAVE **HAD** IT WITH YOU! I DESERVE BETTER THAN THIS! I'M GOING OVER TO GLORIA'S, WHERE SOMEONE WILL **LISTEN** TO ME!

OH YEAH? AND WHAT **ELSE** WILL SHE DO TO YOU?

WAHAA!

SHUT UP! DON'T YOU **EVER** TALK ABOUT HER LIKE THAT! YOU ARE SO FULL OF... OF POOP!

SLAM!

POOP.

another Saturday night

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2.18

THANKS FOR DOING THIS, MO. TONI AND I REALLY NEED TO GET A BREAK.

WHERE ARE THOSE TWO?

WHAT TWO?

UH... I FORGOT TO TELL YOU. HARRIET AND ELLEN ARE GOING OUT WITH US.

YOU'RE DOUBLE DATING WITH MY EX AND HER LOVER, THE HUMAN DYNAMO? WELL DON'T I FEEL LIKE THE PATHETIC MAIDEN AUNT!

BZZT!

HERE THEY ARE.

HI, GIRLS.

HI! EXCUSE MY SUIT. I HAD TO GO RIGHT FROM A VICTORY FUND RECEPTION TO A MEETING OF THE WOMEN I'M GOING TO BEIJING WITH.

YOU'RE GOING TO THE U.N. CONFERENCE ON WOMEN? HOW EXCITING!

HI, MO. HI, RAFAEL!

NICE TO SEE YOU, MO. ARE YOU THE BABYSITTER?

NO. I'M THE FRENCH TUTOR.

C'MON, LET'S GO! IF WE DON'T LEAVE THIS SECOND, WE'LL MISS THE BEGINNING! I HATE THAT!

BYE-BYE! BE GOOD.

DO I HAVE A CHOICE?

WAAAH!

LATER THAT EVENING...

I WONDER IF WOMEN ARE HAVING MORE AFFAIRS SINCE THIS MOVIE?

WHY SHOULD THEY? THE ULTIMATE MESSAGE IS TO STAY ON THE FARM AND BE A MARTYR.

YEAH, BUT STILL... THE AUDIENCE REALLY WANTED HER TO GO OFF WITH CLINT EASTWOOD, DIDN'T YOU?

I DUNNO. I FELL ASLEEP IN THE MIDDLE. WHY D'YOU CARE? THINKING OF LEAVING CLARICE AND RAFFI FOR A STRAY PHOTOJOURNALIST?

UM... NO. BUT I AM KIND OF... UH... ATTRACTED TO SOMEONE. GOD! I ACTUALLY SAID IT! I'M NERVOUS, HARRIET! I NEVER FELT LIKE THIS BEFORE!

TONI, ARE YOU SERIOUS? IT'S GLORIA, ISN'T IT? HAVE YOU TOLD HER? DOES CLARICE KNOW?

CLARICE, D'YOU EVER WONDER IF YOU'RE IN THE RIGHT RELATIONSHIP? LIKE, MAYBE THERE'S SOME MYSTERIOUS STRANGER OUT THERE WHO'S GONNA COME ALONG AND CHANGE YOUR LIFE?

I KNOW TONI'S THE RIGHT ONE FOR ME. BUT I STILL FANTASIZE. DOESN'T EVERYONE CARRY AROUND A MYSTERIOUS STRANGER IN THEIR HEAD?

MAYBE. BUT... UH... WHAT DO YOU DO WHEN THEY SHOW UP IN YOUR BED?

ELLEN! WHAT ARE YOU SAYING? NO, DON'T TELL ME! OH, MAN! DOES HARRIET KNOW?

MEANWHILE, MO HAS A FEW QUESTIONS TOO.

IS THIS EERILY REMINISCENT OF TENTH GRADE, OR WHAT?

WILL I EVER HAVE A LIFE?

ARE MY FRIENDS THAT MUCH MORE STABLE AND MATURE THAN I AM?

the power of speech

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AFTER A MOST INTERESTING DOUBLE DATE, OUR DOTING COUPLES FIND THEMSELVES ALONE AT LAST.

I JUST CAN'T GET OVER WHAT TONI TOLD ME TONIGHT!



WHAT DID YOU AND ELLEN TALK ABOUT ON THE WAY TO THE CAR?



IT'S SO WEIRD TO THINK OF HER BEING ATTRACTED TO SOMEONE ELSE. I MEAN, IN FOURTEEN YEARS WITH CLARICE SHE'S NEVER EVEN NOTICED ANOTHER WOMAN!



I HOPE SHE DOESN'T DO ANYTHING STUPID! I'VE SEEN SO MANY DYKES LEAVE GOOD RELATIONSHIPS WHEN THINGS GOT TOUGH, JUST TO CHASE SOME MYSTERIOUS STRANGER.



THEY ALWAYS THINK THE NEW BABE IS THE "RIGHT" ONE, AS IF THEY'VE FOUND THE HOLY GRAIL.



UM...HARRIET? THERE'S SOMETHING I'VE BEEN MEANING TO TELL YOU...

ELLEN'S HAVING AN AFFAIR?! CLARICE, HOW COULD YOU WAIT AN HOUR TO TELL ME THAT? WHO WITH?!

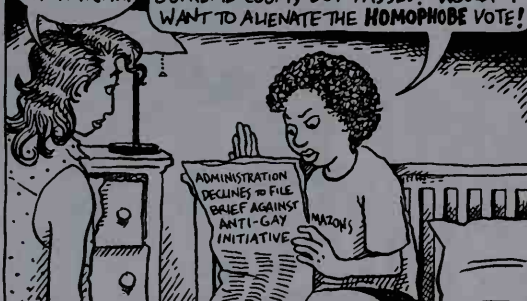


ONE OF THE WOMEN SHE'S GOING TO THE BEIJING CONFERENCE WITH. ALL THOSE PASSIONATE POLITICAL DISCUSSIONS, I GUESS.

NO! CAN YOU BELIEVE IT? I MEAN, IF YOU'RE GONNA KEEP A SECRET FROM YOUR PARTNER, AT LEAST HAVE THE DECENCY NOT TO DRAG YOUR FRIENDS INTO IT!



YEAH, YOU'RE RIGHT. UM... SPEAKING OF WHICH...

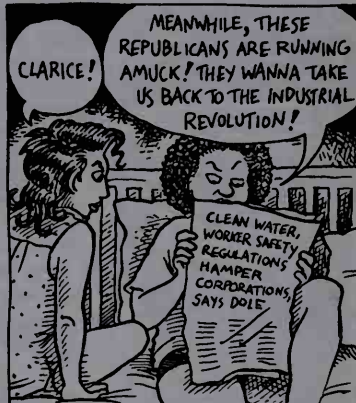


DID YOU SEE THIS? CLINTON HAD A CHANCE TO JOIN THE A.C.L.U.'S CHALLENGE TO COLORADO'S AMENDMENT TWO IN THE SUPREME COURT, BUT PASSED! WOULDN'T WANT TO ALIENATE THE HOMOPHOBIC VOTE!



HONEY?

WHY DOESN'T HE GO OUT WITH A PRINCIPLED BANG INSTEAD OF THIS WAFLING WHIMPER!



CLARICE!

MEANWHILE, THESE REPUBLICANS ARE RUNNING AMUCK! THEY WANNA TAKE US BACK TO THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION!



I GUESS I SHOULD BE RELIEVED THE SUPREME COURT ONLY WANTS TO GO AS FAR BACK AS JIM CROW!

ARE YOU DONE? I WANT TO TALK!



BABE, I'M EXHAUSTED! YOU KNOW I HATE PROCESSING IN BED. CAN'T WE DO THIS TOMORROW?



FINE! GO TO BEIJING WITH HER! GO TO THE KAMCHATKA PENINSULA FOR ALL I CARE! JUST DON'T BOTHER COMING BACK!

WOMEN ON THE VERGE

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WHILE RAFAEL AND STELLA RECHARGE...

TONI, D'YOU MIND IF I TURN THE RINGER OFF ON YOUR PHONE? SOMETIMES IT WAKES STELLA.

NO, GO AHEAD. IF ANYONE CALLS, WE'LL HEAR THEM WHEN THE MACHINE PICKS UP.

221

SO. HAVE YOU HAD THE BIG COMING OUT TALK WITH YOUR FOLKS YET?

NO. I CAN'T TELL THEM WHEN CLARICE AND I ARE GETTING ALONG SO BADLY. I REALLY NEED HER TO BE THERE FOR ME WHEN THEY FLIP OUT.

WHY DO YOU THINK YOU TWO ARE HAVING SUCH A HARD TIME?

OH, I DON'T KNOW, GLORIA. MAYBE SHE FEELS JEALOUS OF HAVING TO SHARE ME WITH RAFFI...

... OR MAYBE SHE'S JEALOUS OF YOU.

ME?

WELL, WE DO SPEND A LOT OF TIME TOGETHER. SHE'S MADE A COUPLE OF REMARKS.

SO HAS ANA. SHE ACTUALLY ASKED ME IF... IF WE WERE SLEEPING TOGETHER.

SLEEPING TOGETHER? WHAT DO THEY THINK WE DO ALL DAY?! WITH TWO TODDLERS, WE'RE LUCKY IF WE MANAGE LUNCH!

I KNOW. IT'S KINDA FUNNY.

UM... I WON'T SAY I HAVEN'T THOUGHT ABOUT IT, THOUGH.

REALLY?

OH, GOD! I'M SORRY! FORGET I SAID THAT!

I'VE THOUGHT ABOUT IT TOO. I DON'T KNOW WHY CLARICE DOESN'T TREAT YOU BETTER. YOU'RE SO SWEET AND SO BEAUTIFUL.

OH, NO.

TONI, WE CAN'T!

I KNOW. WE CAN'T.

> CLIK! < HI. WE CAN'T COME TO THE PHONE RIGHT NOW, SO LEAVE A MESSAGE! > BEEP! <

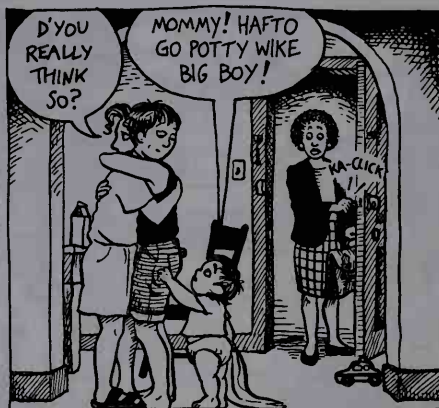
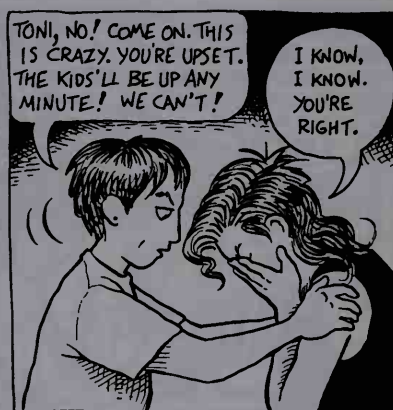
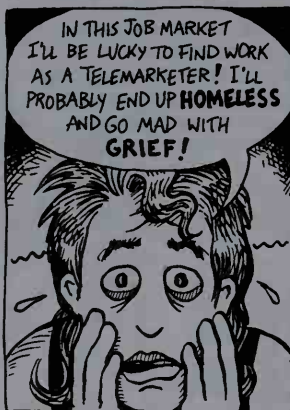
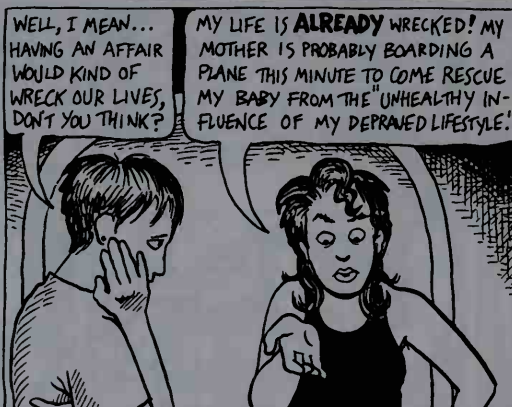
ANTONIA! ESTA ES TU MADRE! I AM VERY UPSET! I WAS JUST BABYSITTING AT YOUR COUSIN CARMEN'S, AND FOUND A STRANGE LETTER YOU WROTE HER ABOUT RAFAEL AND YOUR... YOUR FRIEND. YOU SAY YOU ARE "UNA FAMILIA LESBIANA". I AM SICK! I CAN'T SPEAK TO YOU! I CALL ME INMEDIATAMENTE!

INDISCREET

THEIR
INCIPIENT
KISS QUASHED
BY A
HYSTERICAL
PHONE MESSAGE
FROM TONI'S MOTHER,
OUR HEROINES
APPEAR TO BE
MOMENTARILY
NONPLUSSED.

222

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mouths o' babes

WE
REJOIN OUR
SORDID
DOMESTIC
DRAMA
JUST AS
CLARICE
RETURNS
HOME TO
FIND
TONI AND
GLORIA
IN A
CLINCH!

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Pajama Party

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ARE YOU SURE THIS IS OKAY? WE COULD STOP BY AFTER DINNER AND PICK HIM UP.

NO WAY! THE WHOLE POINT IS FOR YOU GUYS TO HAVE A NIGHT ALONE. NOW GET OUTTA HERE!

HEY, RAFSTER!

I DUNNO, TONI. HE'S NEVER SLEPT AWAY FROM HOME BEFORE. D'YOU THINK HE'LL BE ALL RIGHT?

HE'LL BE FINE. I'M MORE WORRIED ABOUT SPARROW, GINGER, AND LOIS. AT LEAST THERE'S THREE OF THEM.

GOOD! NOW CLICK ON THE HYPER-TEXT LINK TO THE MUPPET PAGE AND WE'LL FIND YOU A NICE BEDTIME STORY.

ANY NEWS FROM HOMOPHOBIA CENTRAL? OR IS YOUR MOTHER STILL NOT SPEAKING TO YOU?

CARMEN WENT OVER LAST NIGHT TO RUN INTERFERENCE. SHE SAYS MOM'S MOUTH HAS STOPPED FOAMING.

SHOULDN'T HE BE WINDING DOWN ABOUT NOW?

WOOF! DOGGY EAT!

YIP!

CLARICE, WHAT HAPPENED WITH GLORIA WAS TOTALLY CRAZY. I DIDN'T MEAN TO HURT YOU.

IT'S MY OWN FAULT. I'VE BEEN SO DISTANT AND WRAPPED UP IN MY WORK. I'M SURPRISED YOU DIDN'T LEAVE ME MONTHS AGO.

LOIS!

RELAX! IT'S NON-TOXIC, NON-STAINING, AND CONTAINS NATURAL FLAVORING.

GOD, IT'S WEIRD NOT HAVING RAFFI HERE. UH... I FEEL AWKWARD, PLANNING TO HAVE SEX LIKE THIS. MAYBE WE SHOULD RELAX WITH SOME TV FIRST...

CLARICE, IT'S BEEN FIVE MONTHS! I'M NOT WASTING ONE MORE SECOND ON MARY TYLER MOORE.

HOW ARE WE GOING TO EXPLAIN THE DRIED LUBE IN HIS HAIR?

EEK! NO THAMPOO!

JESUS. NO WONDER CLARICE AND TONI ARE ON THE SKIDS.

CLARICE! WHAT IS THIS?!

IT'S... YOU KNOW... KIND OF A NIGHTGOWN, I GUESS. I THOUGHT IT MIGHT HELP. D'YOU LIKE IT?

RHODA! WHY DID YOU REPLACE MY FLANNEL NIGHTIE WITH THIS FLIMSY NEGIGÉE FOR MY TRIP TO THE HOSPITAL?

HEY, KID. YOU WEREN'T GONNA MEET ANY DOCTORS IN THAT OLD THING.

Poetic Justice

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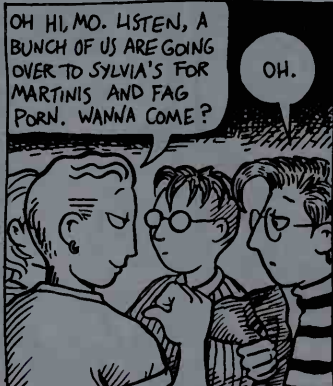
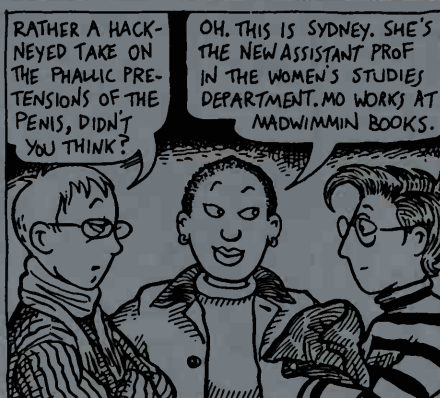
228

SOMEWHERE
IN A
RENOVATED
DOWNTOWN
WAREHOUSE...

MO'S PULCHRITUDINOUS PAL PERFORMS HER PUERILE POETRY.



AFTERWARDS...



DOUBLE NEGATIVE

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UNLUCKY
IN LOVE
YET AGAIN,
MO SEEKS
SOLACE
WITH GINGER
AND SYDNEY,
THE NEW
ASSISTANT
PROFESSOR.

229

YOU SHOULD BE RE-
LIEVED, MO. THE "POET"
WOULD'VE PUT YOU THROUGH HELL.
D'YOU ALWAYS CHOOSE SUCH
INAPPROPRIATE AFFEC-
TIONAL OBJECTS?

EXCUSE
ME?

GINGER, PERHAPS MO'S MISDIRECTED IN-
FATUATIONS AND YOUR INABILITY TO FINISH
YOUR DISSERTATION STEM FROM A SIMILAR
SENSE OF INFERIORITY. YOU BELIEVE
YOU'RE UNWORTHY OF SUCCESS, THERE-
FORE YOU ENGINEER FAILURE!

SYDNEY, HAS
ANYONE EVER
TOLD YOU YOU'RE
FULL OF
SHIT?

YES.
ESPECIALLY
WHEN THEY
KNOW I'M
RIGHT.

HEY! THIS MALAYSIAN
SUPREMO TASTES LIKE IT'S
BEEN PERCOLATING ALL
THE WAY FROM KUALA
LUMPUR. COULD I GET
SOME FRESH
BREWED?

GINGER,
WHAT IS
UP WITH
THIS BABE?
SHE'S UN-
BEARABLE!

OH, YOU KNOW HER TYPE.
SHE JUST LIKES TO
PROVOKE. IF YOU WANT
TO SHUT HER UP, ALL
YOU HAVE TO DO IS
AGREE WITH HER.

MEANWHILE...

NO!
NO WANNOO
GO TO SLEEP!
WANNOO PUT
BOOTS ON!

RAFFI, COME
ON! NO MORE
FOOLING AROUND.
YOU CAN'T WEAR
YOUR BOOTS TO BED.
NOW LIE DOWN!

NO!
BOOTS
NOW!

OH, MAN. IT'S ONE
OF THOSE NIGHTS.
WHO WAS ON THE
PHONE?

CARMEN. SHE SAYS
MY MOM THREW
OUT THE PFLAG
STUFF I SENT.

OH, TONI.
I'M SORRY.

HONEY, I KNOW YOU'RE CRAZED
WITH WORK, BUT I THINK IT'S
TIME TO APPLY FOR SECOND-
PARENT ADOPTION. I WANT
RAFFI TO HAVE A LEGALLY
PROTECTED FAMILY.

BOOTS!

RAFFI,
NO BOOTS.
SLEEP!

HEY, LET'S NOT TURN THIS
INTO A SHOWDOWN. IT'S
OKAY TO GO ALONG WITH
HIM ON THE LITTLE THINGS.
IT SHOWS WE RESPECT
HIS IDEAS.

I'LL GET
YOUR
BOOTS,
RAFFI.

NO BOOTS!
HUNGRY!
WANNA
BANAMA,
NOW!

NICE PARENTING
SKILLS, TONE. IT'S
A GOOD THING WE'RE
NOT APPLYING FOR
FIRST-PARENT
ADOPTION.

WHAT A
GODFORSAKEN TOWN.
NO POTABLE COFFEE! NO
DECENT NEWSPAPER,
NO ORIGINAL
THINKING...

YEP!
IT'S JUST
ONE BIG OLE
CULTURAL
WASTE-
LAND!

YOU AGREE WITH ME, YET YOU
CHOOSE TO STAY? HOW INTERESTING!
SOUNDS LIKE ANOTHER WAY OF SABOTAGING
YOURSELF! I KNOW IT'S SO EIGHTIES,
BUT HAVE YOU TRIED THERAPY?

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WELL, IT'LL HELP DEMONSTRATE THE
INSTABILITY OF THE HEGEMONIC
DISCOURSE, ON WHICH YOUR SITING OF
THE CORPOREAL INSCRIPTIONS OF RACE
AND GENDER DEPENDS. DOING ANY-
THING FUN THIS WEEKEND?

I'LL THINK OF
YOU WHILE I'M
OGGLING NUBILE
SNOWBOARDERS
ON THE LIFT
LINE.

230

OH. HI, GINGER.

WHY'D YOU TURN THE MUSIC OFF?

BECAUSE UNLIKE YOU SLACKERS, I HAVE WORK TO DO! GOD! IT'S LIKE LIVING WITH MY STUDENTS!

GINGER, IT'S FRIDAY! WE'RE JUST UNWINDING!

STOMP
STOMP
STOMP
SLAM!

Dear Ginger:
We're gone for the whole weekend. The house is clean and there's a pot of chili in the fridge. All you have to do is write.
Love, your housemates

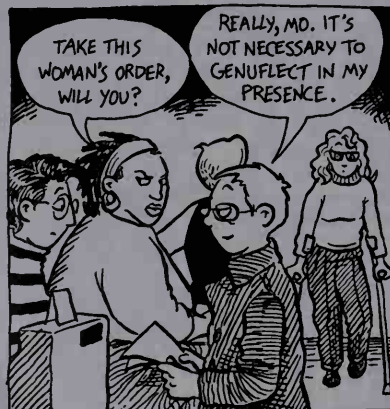
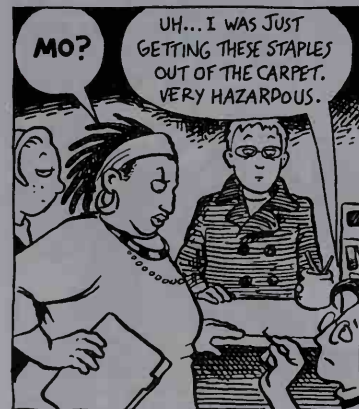
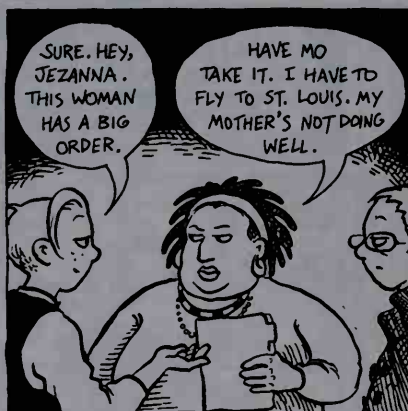
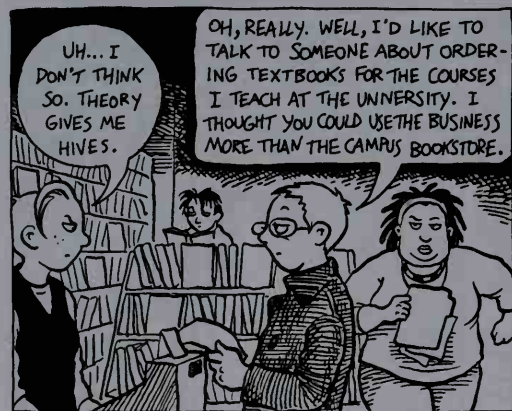
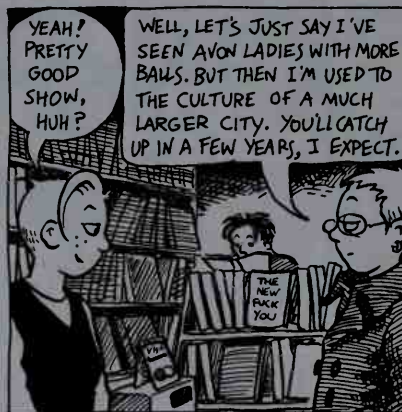
A black and white cartoon illustration of a man with a wide-eyed, shocked expression, holding a piece of paper and gesturing with his other hand. The man has a large nose, wide eyes, and a slightly open mouth, conveying a sense of surprise or alarm. He is wearing a textured sweater. The background is dark and textured, with a speech bubble shape above his head.

face to face

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IN THE OFFICE OF MADWIMMIN BOOKS...

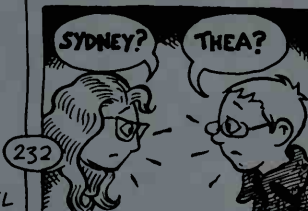
MEANWHILE, UP AT THE REGISTER.



A Smidge Too Far

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IN OUR LAST TEMPESTUOUS EPISODE, THEA APPEARED TO HAVE HAD A **PRIOR ACQUAINTANCE** WITH A PARTICULAR POMPOUS PROFESSOR.



BUT AFTER SYDNEY LEAVES, THEA IS A TAD RETICENT WITH THE DETAILS.



YEAH! MAYBE THEY MET IN ONE OF THOSE "EX-GAY" MINISTRIES, TRYING TO OVERCOME THEIR UNWHOLE-SOME DESIRES!

MAYBE SYDNEY HOSTED A FUCKERWARE PARTY WHERE THEA BOUGHT A **MARITAL AID** THAT SHORT-CIRCUITED AND **ELECTROLYSIZED** ALL HER LOVER'S PUBIC HAIR.

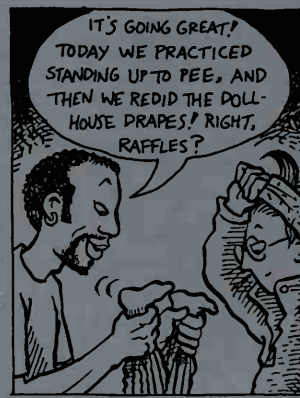
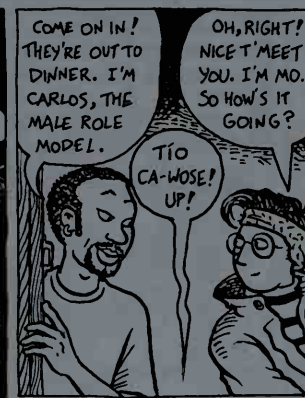
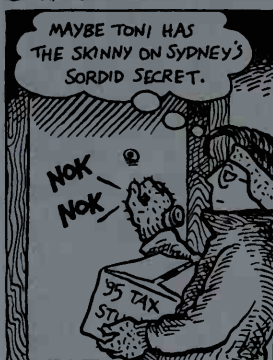


NO, I KNOW! THEY USED TO BE **LOVERS** UNTIL ONE DAY THEA CAME HOME EARLY AND DISCOVERED SYDNEY'S PENCHANT FOR CROSS-DRESSING AS **BEVERLY LA HAYE!**

GROW UP, ASSHOLES!

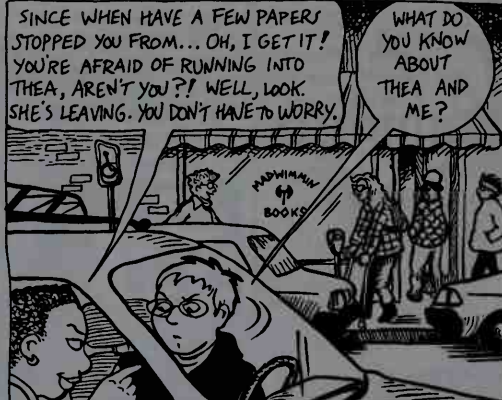
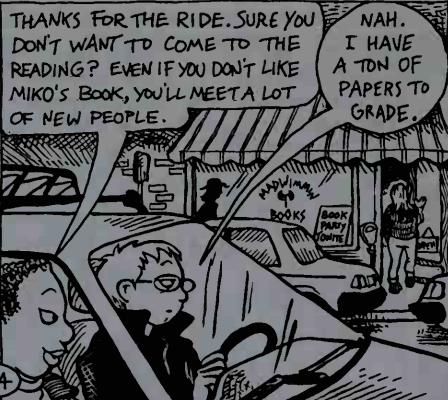


THAT EVENING...

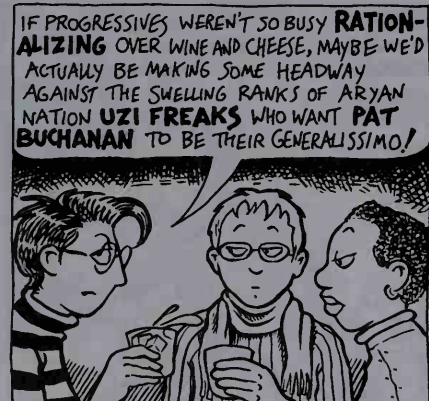
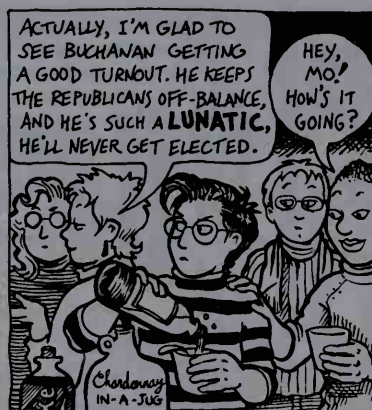
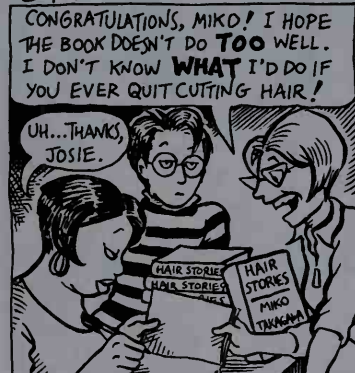


Seeing Pink

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A BIT LATER...



the ties that chafe

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JEZANNA ("ALBERTA" TO HER FOLKS) IS AT THE HOSPITAL.

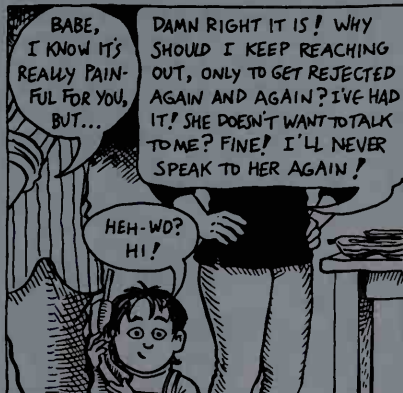
LOOKS LIKE I'LL BE VOTIN' FOR THAT SORRY-ASS CLINTON AGAIN. THESE SPAM-HEAD REPUBLICANS ARE EVEN MORE WORTHLESS THAN HE IS.

YEAH. PAINFUL AS IT IS, I HAVE TO AGREE WITH YOU.

WHAT'S SO PAINFUL? VOTING FOR CLINTON, OR AGREEING WITH YOUR FATHER?

BOTH, MOST LIKELY. SHE'S JUST THAT CONTRARY.

I LIKE A LITTLE CONTRARIENESS IN A WOMAN. SHE TAKES AFTER YOU.



guess who's coming to dinner

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THROUGH AN UNFORTUNATE INCIDENT INVOLVING RAFAEL AND THE REDIAL BUTTON, TONI IS STARTLED TO FIND HERSELF ON THE PHONE WITH THE VERY MOTHER SHE ONLY MOMENTS AGO VOWED NEVER TO SPEAK TO AGAIN.

WHINE!

OH, THAT'S RAFFI! CLARICE IS JUST TAKING HIM OFF FOR HIS BATH.

I AM?

YEAH, IT'S AMAZING. HE'S GROWING SO FAST! EVERY DAY HE DOES SOMETHING HE COULDN'T JUST THE DAY BEFORE.

COME, MY LITTLE HELLSPAWN. IT'S TIME FOR YOUR HOSE-DOWN.

No!

WELL, SURE. I'D LIKE YOU TO SEE HIM TOO. I MEAN, HE **IS** YOUR GRANDCHILD... OH, MAMA! I DON'T THINK SO! SAN JUAN'S AN AWFUL LONG WAY TO TRAVEL WITH A TODDLER. AND BESIDES, UM... I DON'T THINK CLARICE COULD GET AWAY FROM WORK.

... BECAUSE I **WANT** HER TO COME, THAT'S WHY! SHE'S RAFFI'S PARENT TOO! SHE'S MY FAMILY, AND YOU HAVE TO LEARN TO DEAL WITH IT.

MAMA... **MAMA!** I'M PAYING PEAK LONG-DISTANCE RATES HERE. COULD YOU SAVE THE HAIL MARYS UNTIL WE HANG UP?

MEANWHILE, OVER AT THE OLDEST EXTANT GROUP HOUSEHOLD IN LESBIANDOM...

SYDNEY'S ATTRACTED TO MO? GET **OUTTA** HERE! MO CAN'T **STAND** HER!

WAIT! IT GETS BETTER. YOU KNOW HOW YOU WERE TRYING TO FIND OUT THE CONNECTION BETWEEN SYDNEY AND YOUR ESTEEMED COLLEAGUE, THEA? **EXES.**

OH, NICE WORK! HOW DO YOU KNOW? DID SYDNEY SAY SO?

NO, BUT I COULD TELL BY THE LOOK IN HER EYES AS SHE WAS DENYING IT. SEE FOR YOURSELF. SHE'S COMING OVER FOR DINNER.

YOU'RE KIDDING, RIGHT? I INVITED **MO** FOR DINNER. SHE'LL BE HERE ANY MINUTE!

REALLY! WELL, THIS SHOULD BE AN INTERESTING MEAL...

SHALL WE SLIP SPANISH FLY INTO THE STUFFED SQUASH, OR SALT PETER INTO THE SOY SAUCE?

BACK AT TH' RANCH, TONI'S OFF THE PHONE...

CLARICE, WHAT WOULD YOU SAY IF I TOLD YOU I JUST INVITED MY PARENTS TO COME VISIT?

I'D SAY **ARE YOU INSANE?**

UH... TEMPORARILY, IT SEEMS. IS THE THIRD WEEK IN JULY OKAY WITH YOU?

PERFECT. IF WE START RIGHT NOW, WE CAN BE PACKED AND **OUTTA** HERE BEFORE THEIR FLIGHT LANDS.

legal beagle

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A TIP O' THE NIB TO DEB LASHMAN!

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THANKS FOR DOING THIS, CARLOS. WE SHOULD BE DONE WITH THE LAWYER BY EIGHT.

HEY, DE NADA! I GOT A VERY EXCITING EVENING PLANNED. FIRST, A QUIET DINNER FOR TWO CHEZ COLONEL SANDERS...

...THEN ONTO **BABY GAP** WHERE WE'LL TRY ON OVER-PRICED OUTFITS WE HAVE NO INTENTION OF BUYING.

BZZT!

HI THERE. TONI? I'M ALEXIS. I HOPE YOU LIKE DOGS. BRUCE IS ALONE ALL DAY, SO I THOUGHT I'D BRING HIM ALONG.

OH...FINE. HE'S, UH... VERY SWEET.

M-MOMMY?

IT'S OKAY, RAFFI. IT'S JUST A... A PUPPY DOG. HE WON'T HURT YOU.

THIS THE ADOPTEE?

UH...YES. THIS IS RAFAEL. AND THIS IS OUR FRIEND CARLOS. CARLOS, THIS IS ALEXIS, THE LAWYER WHO'S HANDLING THE ADOPTION.

CHARMED, CARLOS.

I THINK WE'LL BE OFF.

GOOD IDEA. BYE-BYE, PUMPKIN! I LOVE YOU!

CLARICE MENTIONED ORDERING IN SOME CHINESE FOOD. MIND IF I CALL NOW? WE'RE STARVING!

NO, GO AHEAD. HERE'S THE MENU. ORDER ANYTHING THAT'S CIRCLED FOR CLARICE AND ME. UH...WILL YOU EXCUSE ME A MINUTE?

CLARICE, WILL YOU GET OUT HERE? YOUR LAW SCHOOL CROWY AND HER **STALLION** ARE ORDERING DINNER. I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU'RE HIRING THIS WOMAN TO REPRESENT US! SHE'S GOT THE SOCIAL SKILLS OF A RHINOCEROS.

HON, RELAX! ALEXIS HAS A HIGHLY RESPECTED FAMILY LAW PRACTICE! SHE KNOWS WHAT SHE'S DOING!

LATER...

WHOOOPS! THIS IS THE FORM FOR ANNULMENT! I WONDERED WHY THEY WANTED TO KNOW IF THE MARRIAGE HAD BEEN CONSUMMATED. CLARICE, IF YOU'RE DONE WITH THAT CRAB RANGOON, I KNOW BRUCE WOULD JUST LOVE SOME.

WUF.

PANDA GARDEN

HERE'S A TRICKY QUESTION. "THE PETITIONER..." THAT'S CLARICE... "IS RELATED TO THE PERSON TO BE ADOPTED AS FOLLOWS: STEP-MOTHER, STEPFATHER, UNRELATED, OTHER RELATIONSHIP." I'D SAY THIS IS PROBABLY A CASE OF "OTHER," WOULDN'T YOU?

HERE WE GO. NOW WHAT THESE PAPERS WILL SAY, TONI, IS THAT AS RAFFI'S ONLY LEGAL PARENT, YOU CONSENT TO CLARICE ADOPTING HIM WITHOUT GIVING UP YOUR OWN PARENTAL RIGHTS.

IGNORE THIS DUCK SAUCE ON PARAGRAPH TWO.

UM... ALEXIS? PAR-DON MY ASKING, BUT HAVE YOU EVER DONE THIS BEFORE?

OH, SURE! I'VE DONE LOTS OF ADOPTIONS!

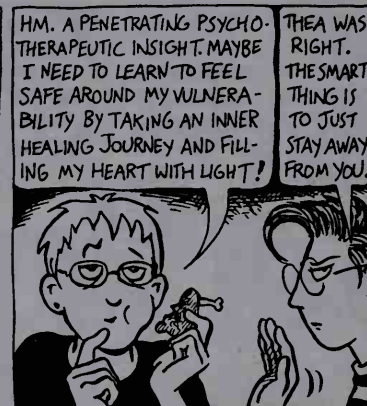
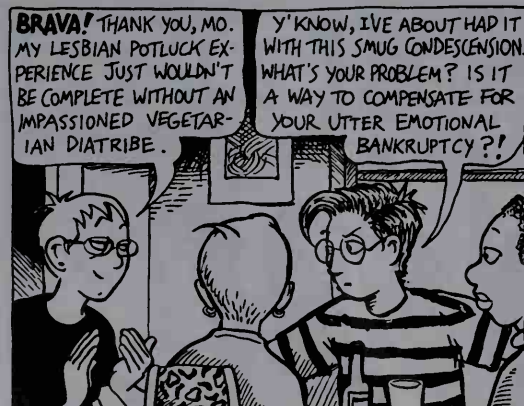
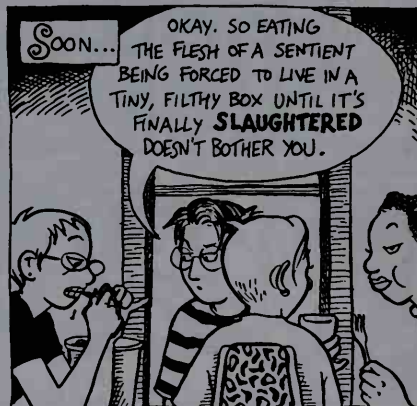
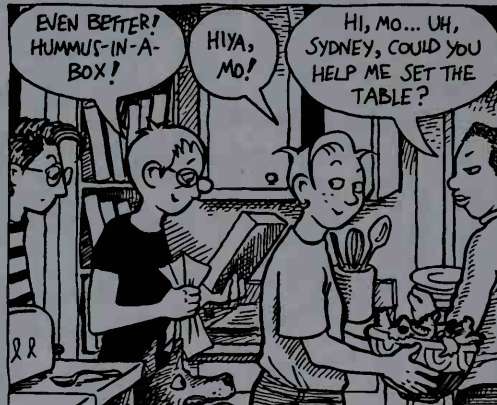
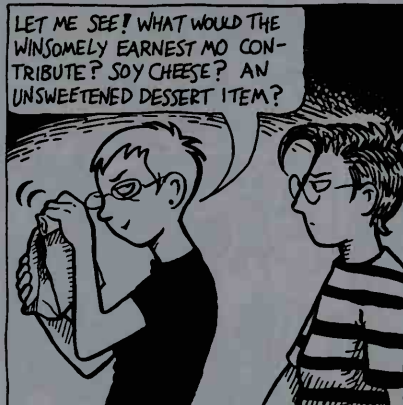
REALLY? FOR LESBIANS?

NO, YOU'LL BE MY FIRST! ISN'T IT EXCITING?

Wing Ding

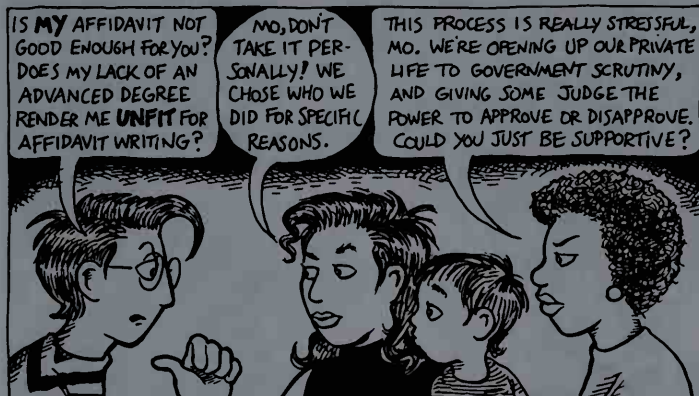
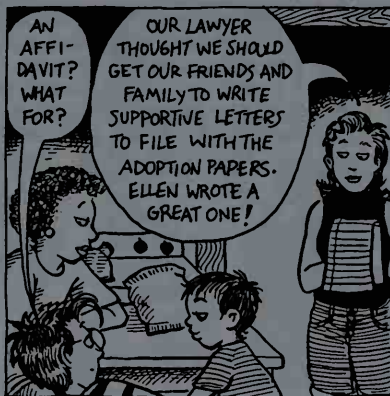
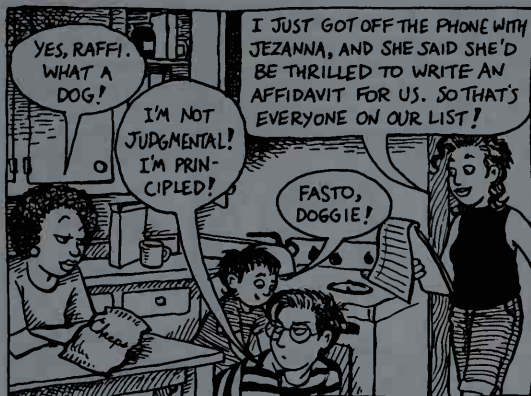
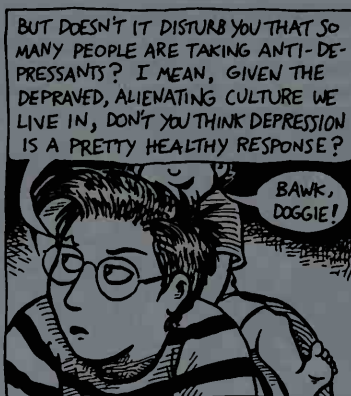
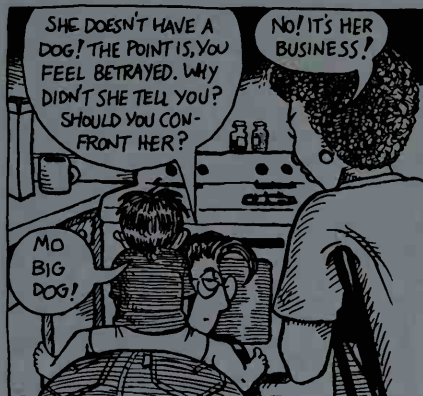
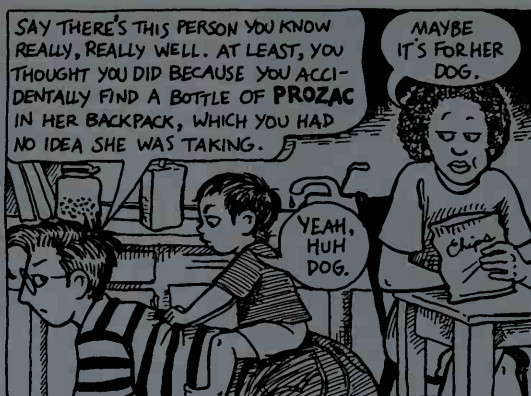
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OUR HEROINE IS SERENELY UNAWARE THAT SHE'S NOT THE ONLY DINNER GUEST ON THE SLATE FOR TONIGHT.



judgment day

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the pill

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MO, WHICH OF THESE MID-RANGE DILDOS DO YOU THINK WOULD SELL BETTER? THE ONE SHAPED LIKE A MANATEE, OR THE "BALLISTIC REALISTIC III"?

I'M SURE I DON'T KNOW.

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DICKS FOR CHICKS WHOLESAL CATALOG

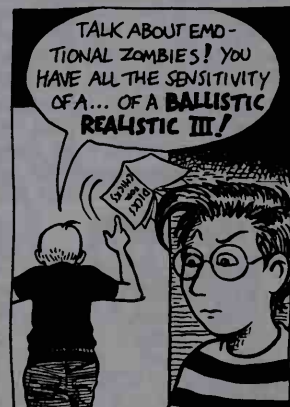
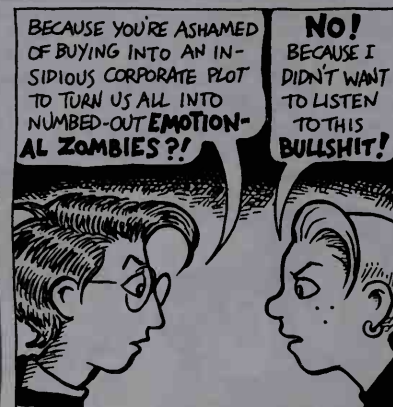
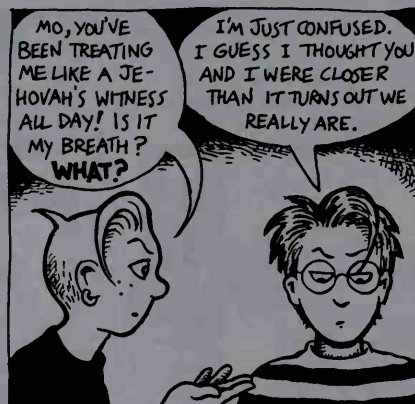
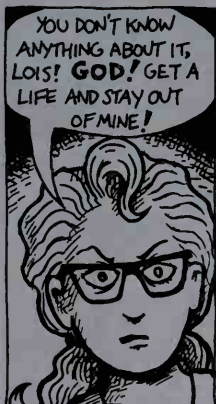
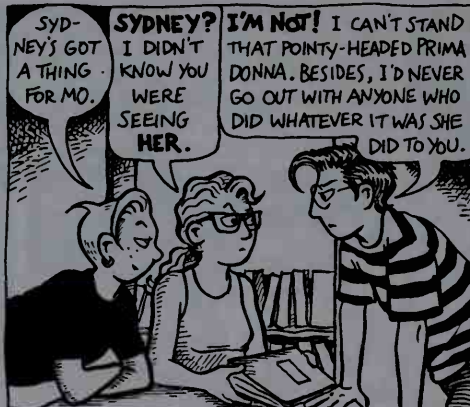
JEEZ, IT'S A FRICKIN' SAUNA IN HERE. FIRST JEZANNA JACKS UP OUR HEALTH INSURANCE, THEN SHE TURNS OFF THE A/C.

UH HUH.

HEY, GINGER HAD PROFESSOR SYDNEY OVER AGAIN LAST NIGHT. SHE ASKED ABOUT YOU.

OFFICE

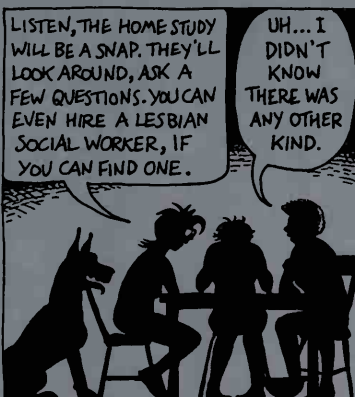
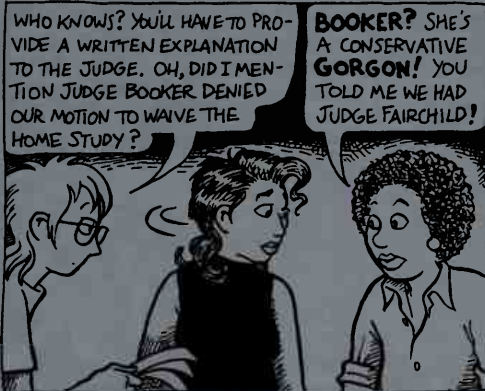
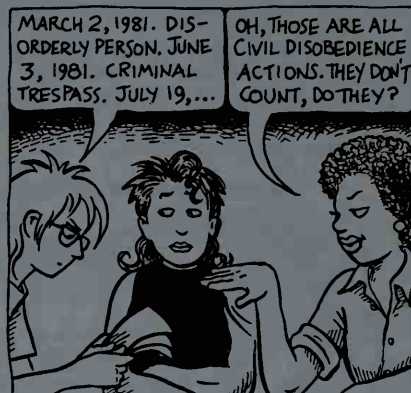
REALLY.



non compos mentis

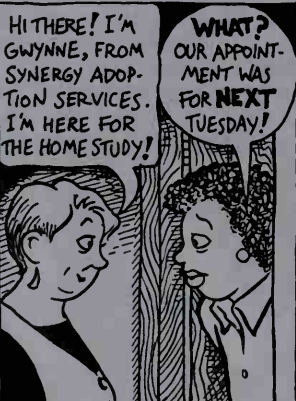
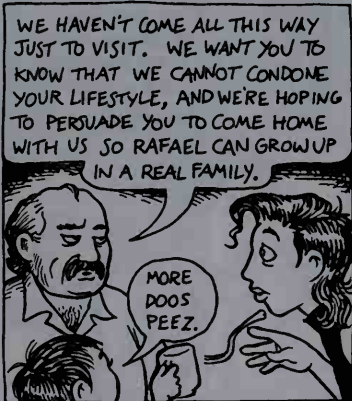
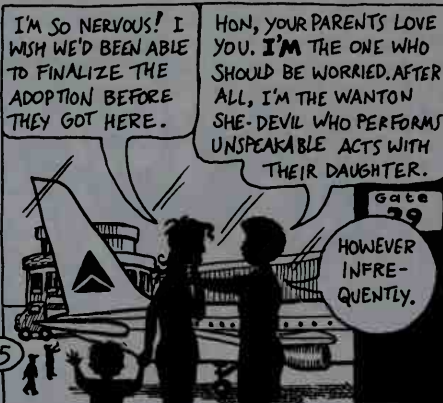
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in **LOCO** parentis

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the Converts

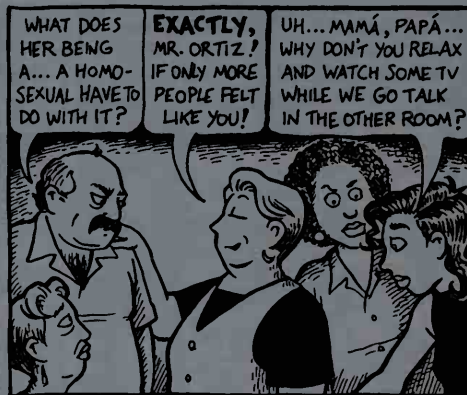
CLARICE
AND TONI'S
ADOPTION
CASEWORKER
HAS SHOWN
UP AT A
RATHER
INOPPORTUNE
JUNCTURE.

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* MOM, DAD ... GWYNNE IS... FROM THE CHURCH! YEAH! AND SHE'S HERE TO TALK ABOUT, UH... RAFAEL'S CHRISTENING! WE'VE DECIDED TO GET HIM BAPTIZED!



The Line

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ESTRANGED FROM HER TWO CLOSEST FRIENDS, MO FINDS HER SOCIAL LIFE SADLY CIRCUMSCRIBED.

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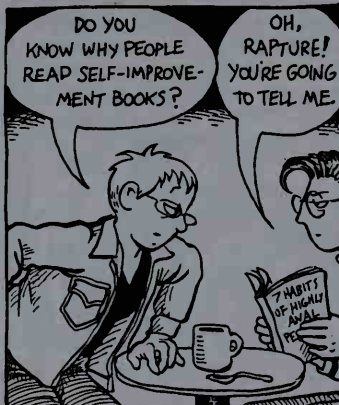
AMAZING! THAT RESOLUTE GAZE, THAT FIRMLY SET JAW! YOU LOOK LESS INEFFECTUAL ALREADY!

HELLO, SYDNEY.



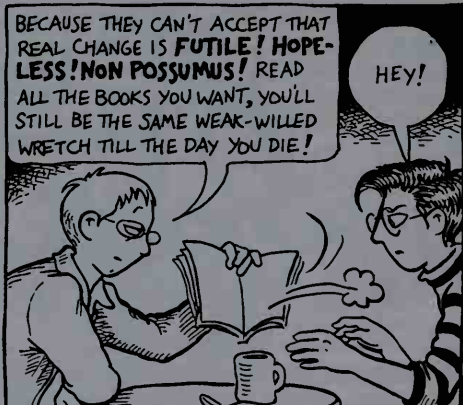
DO YOU KNOW WHY PEOPLE READ SELF-IMPROVEMENT BOOKS?

OH, RAPTURE! YOU'RE GOING TO TELL ME.



BECAUSE THEY CAN'T ACCEPT THAT REAL CHANGE IS FUTILE! HOPELESS! NON POSSUMUS! READ ALL THE BOOKS YOU WANT, YOU'LL STILL BE THE SAME WEAK-WILLED WRETCH TILL THE DAY YOU DIE!

HEY!



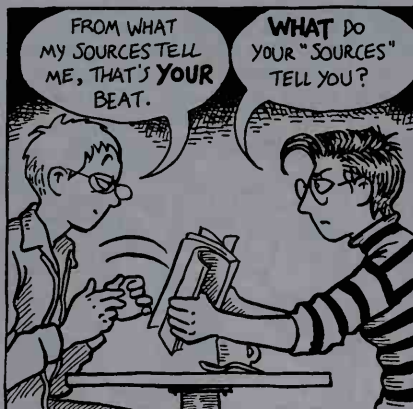
WHAT A SCAM. I SHOULD WRITE ONE OF THESE THINGS.

YEAH. "HOW TO LOSE FRIENDS AND ANTAGONIZE PEOPLE."



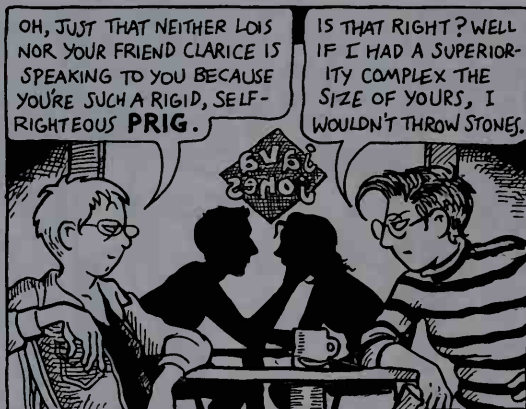
FROM WHAT MY SOURCES TELL ME, THAT'S YOUR BEAT.

WHAT DO YOUR "SOURCES" TELL YOU?



OH, JUST THAT NEITHER LOIS NOR YOUR FRIEND CLARICE IS SPEAKING TO YOU BECAUSE YOU'RE SUCH A RIGID, SELF-RIGHTEOUS PRIG.

IS THAT RIGHT? WELL IF I HAD A SUPERIORITY COMPLEX THE SIZE OF YOURS, I WOULDN'T THROW STONES.



SOUNDS LIKE MY SOURCES WERE RIGHT.

SYDNEY, IF YOU DON'T LIKE MY PERSONALITY, FEEL FREE TO GO PESTER SOMEONE ELSE.



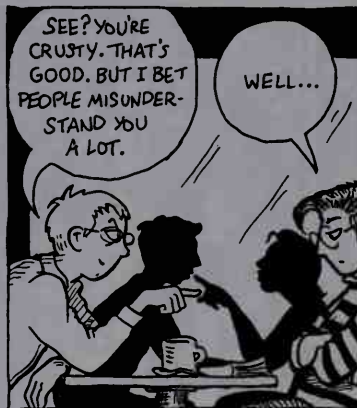
BUT THAT'S JUST IT! I DO LIKE YOUR PERSONALITY, MO! I ADMIRE YOU FOR PUTTING PRINCIPLES BEFORE PEOPLE-PLEASING.

WELL! AS LONG AS YOU ADMIRE ME, WHAT DO I NEED WITH FRIENDS?



SEE? YOU'RE CRUSTY. THAT'S GOOD. BUT I BET PEOPLE MISUNDERSTAND YOU A LOT.

WELL...



YOU DON'T NEED TO BECOME A BETTER PERSON, MO. YOU'RE PERFECT JUST THE WAY YOU ARE!

THANKS, SYDNEY, BUT YOU MAKE A REALLY GHOULISH MISTER RODGERS.



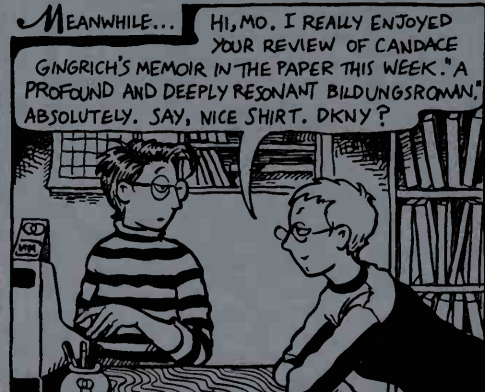
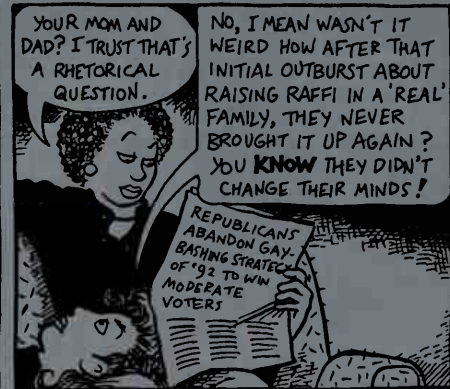
HUH. HAS SHE ALWAYS HAD SUCH LONG FINGERS?

false moderation

THE FATEFUL VISIT DRAWS TO A CLOSE.

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Ph.D. & Sympathy

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MEANWHILE...

... SO THIS WOMAN'S HUSBAND SHOWS UP AT THE SHELTER TODAY WITH A DOZEN ROSES AND A HUNTING RIFLE.

LONG-STEMMED?



GINGER!

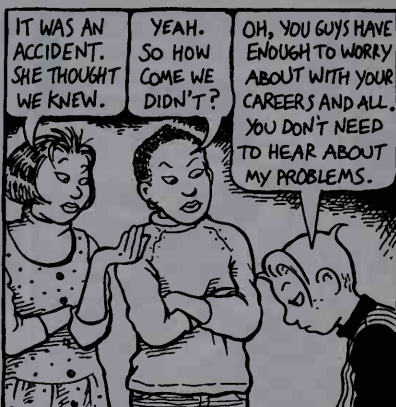
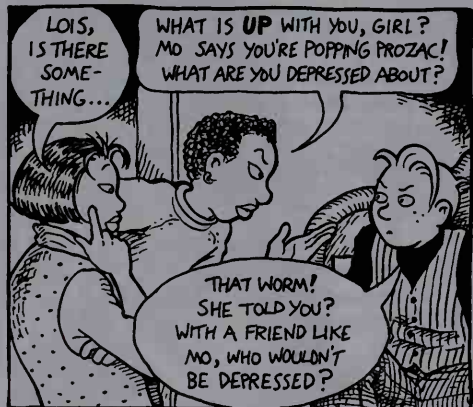
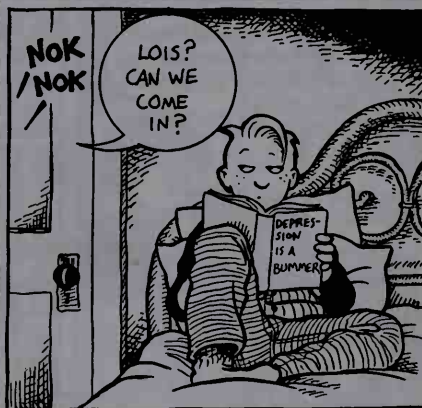
SPARROW, EVERY DAY YOU HAVE SOME NEW HORROR STORY! I CAN'T LET IT IN ANYMORE. HOW DO YOU DO THAT JOB?



WELL, WE CAN'T ALL SIT AROUND NOT WRITING OUR DISSERTATIONS.

KA-KLICK

WUF!



DESPERATE MEASURES

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HONEY!
I'M HOME!

HELLO, DARLING!
LET ME GET YOU A
MARTINI AND YOUR
SLIPPERS.

MY, WHAT
A HEAVY BEARD
YOU'VE GROWN SINCE
THIS MORNING,
MOMMY!

KISS
KISS

THAT'S
NOT MOMMY!
THAT'S
CARLOS!

OH, SUGAR, I
KNOW IT'S CARLOS!
I WAS JUST
BEING SILLY!

SOUNDS LIKE TIME FOR
ANOTHER DEPOSIT INTO
HIS THERAPY FUND.

WHERE'S
TONI?

OUT FOR A WALK. SHE WAS
ALL UPSET OVER SOMETHING
HER MOM SENT IN THE MAIL.

JESUS
CHRIST!

EXODUS
INTERNATIONAL
FREEDOM
FROM
HOMOSEXUALITY
IS POSSIBLE
THROUGH THE
POWER OF
JESUS CHRIST

MEANWHILE...

OKAY. "GENDER, DEVIANC,
AND THE INFOMERCIAL"
SHOULD BE IN ON THURS-
DAY. ANYTHING ELSE?

DINNER,
MAYHAP?

OH, PLEASE!
I CAN'T HAVE
DINNER WITH YOU,
SYDNEY!

WHY NOT?
BECAUSE I'M A
FLESH-EATER?

NO. BECAUSE
YOU'RE ARROGANT,
CONDESCENDING, AND
COMPLETELY OB-
NOXIOUS.

YET
STRANGELY
COMPELLING.

THAT WEASEL!
DOES SHE HAVE TO
DO HER FLIRTING
WHERE I WORK?

FRANKLY, I DON'T SEE THE
ATTRACTION. DOES SYDNEY
HAVE SOME KIND OF ILL-
DRESSED IDEOLOGUE FETISH?

OH, COME ON! MO'S
A CATCH. WELL...
IN A REPRESSED,
BUTCH BOTTOM
KIND OF WAY. I'VE
GOTTA WARN HER
ABOUT SYDNEY!

DOES THIS MEAN
WE'RE FINALLY
GONNA FIND
OUT WHAT SHE
DID TO YOU?

IF THAT'S
WHAT IT
TAKES.

TILL
FRIDAY,
THEN.

CIAO,
BELLA.

The Trouble With Sydney

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WE WERE LOVERS OUR LAST SEMESTER AT SANTA CRUZ. THEN WHEN SYDNEY WENT TO GRAD SCHOOL, I FOLLOWED HER EAST. GOD, WE LIVED IN THE NASTIEST LITTLE APARTMENT...

OFFICE

HI, BABE. I HAF TA EAT AND RUN. GOT AN IMPORTANT LECTURE TONIGHT. HOW WAS THE COPY SHOP?

I DIDN'T GO TO WORK. I HAD THAT APPOINTMENT AT THE CLINIC, REMEMBER?

OH, RIGHT. DID THEY FIGURE OUT WHAT'S WRONG WITH YOU?

YEAH. I HAVE MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS.

RIGHT. AND I HAVE BUBONIC PLAGUE.

NO, I'M SERIOUS. THIS IS FOR REAL. I'VE BEEN SUSPICIOUS FOR A WHILE, BUT I DIDN'T WANT TO TELL YOU TIL I KNEW FOR SURE.

MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS! ISN'T THAT SOME KIND OF DEGENERATIVE THING? LIKE WHERE YOU END UP PARALYZED IN A WHEELCHAIR?

A TIPO THE NIB TO LINNEA STENSON!

WELL, NO... NOT NECESSARILY. THEY GAVE ME A BUNCH OF INFORMATION...

SHE DIDN'T COME HOME THAT NIGHT.

GREAT. I'LL LOOK AT IT LATER. I GOTTA GO NOW OR I'LL BE LATE FOR "CIXOUS'S MEDUSA: (G)ORGONIZATION / CASTRATION OF THE PHALLIC ECONOMY."

WHAT AN ASSHOLE!

OFFICE

YEAH. NOT EXACTLY SUPPORTIVE. BUT... WE'VE ALL DONE AWFUL THINGS. SHE WAS YOUNG! IT WAS A SHOCK!

YEAH, WELL. WHEN SHE FINALLY SHOWED UP...

LOOK, THIS JUST ISN'T WORKING. YOU DON'T CHALLENGE ME ENOUGH. I'M MOVING OUT.

WH... WHERE WILL YOU GO?

I'M GONNA STAY WITH MADELEINE FOR A WHILE.

MADELEINE?? THE VISITING COMP LIT PROFESSOR?

TURN'S OUT THEY'D BEEN THEORIZING TOGETHER SINCE MY FIRST SYMPTOMS SHOWED UP.

SUH. LEAZE-BALL!

SHE JUST ABANDONED YOU? SCARED AND SICK IN A STRANGE CITY?! I CAN'T GO OUT WITH THIS WOMAN!

... AND IN HERE IS MY DILIGENT STAFF. HOPELESS WORKAHOLICS, AS YOU CAN SEE. EVERYONE, MEET OUR NEW INTERN, ANJALI.

OH, WOW. I AM TRIPPING OUT THAT I ACTUALLY GET TO WORK HERE!

BEING CONSTANTLY SURROUNDED BY BOOKS! BRINGING IDEAS, POEMS, AND MANIFESTOS TO THE WORLD! HOW CAN YOU STAND IT?!

THAT REMINDS ME, LOIS. THE LUBE SHIPMENT JUST CAME IN.

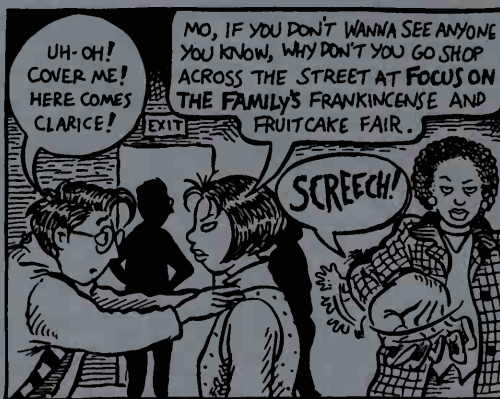
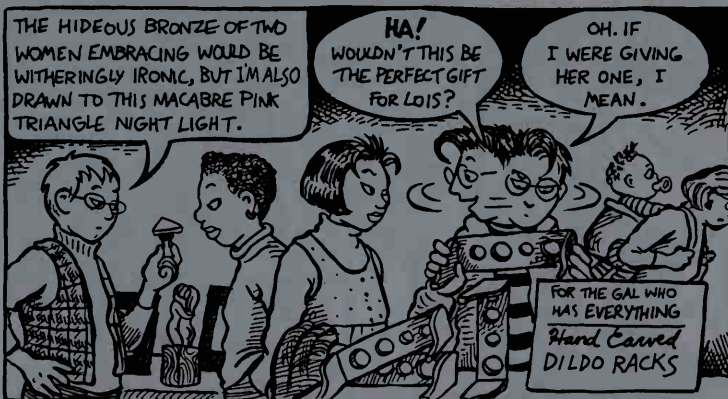
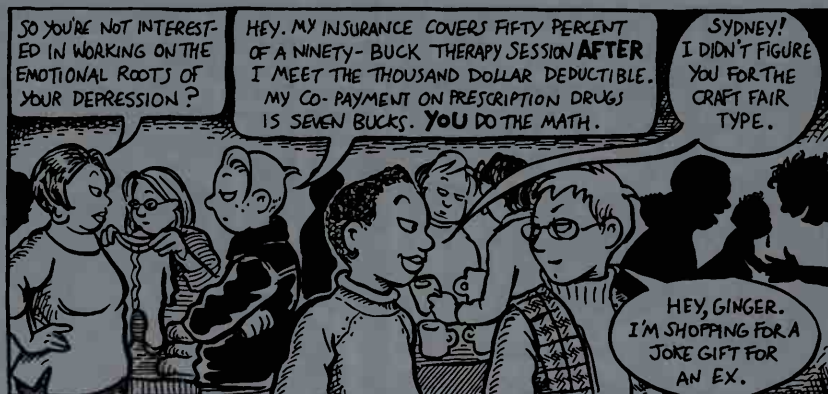
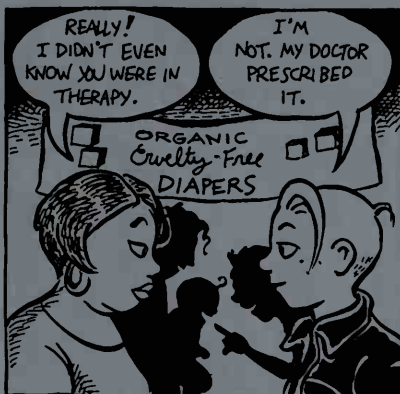
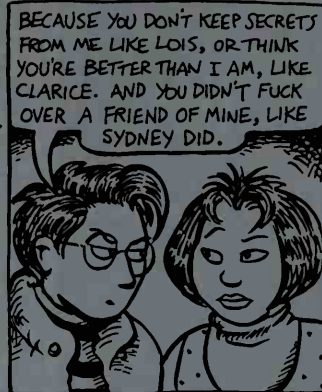
OH, WE MAN-AGE SOME-HOW.

Seasonal Affection Disorder

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253

AT THE ANNUAL HOLIDAY CRAFT BAZAAR, OUR HEROINE IS EXHIBITING SOME BIZARRE AND CRAFTY BEHAVIOR.



the retraction

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AFTER WORK, MO BRINGS THE NEW INTERN UP TO SPEED.

I DON'T WANT TO DISILLUSION YOU, BUT THIS IS NOT A GLAMOROUS JOB. IT'LL BE A LOT OF GRUNT WORK. SHELVING BOOKS, KEEPING THEM DUSTED...

OMIGOD! HANDLING BOOKS? CARESSING THEIR SPINES, SMELLING THEIR NEW BOOK SMELL?! IT'LL BE LIKE, TOTALLY ORGIASTIC!

YEAH, RIGHT. SO, JEZANNA TELLS ME YOU'RE IN HIGH SCHOOL.

WHATEVER. MAINLY, I'M A POET. WANNA READ THE SESTINA I WROTE AT LUNCH?

254

Close

FREE THE WEEKLY WHINE

90% 29% 0%

IT'S CALLED "SUCK MY LEFT ONE, SLOBODAN MILOSEVIC."

UH...

THE HAIL MARYS

MY LIFE LEMMA GOODMAN

ANXI'S ZINE

KAMEL MENTHE

WELL HELLO THERE, MO! IS THIS WHY YOU LEFT ME THAT TERSE LITTLE MESSAGE CANCELING OUR DINNER DATE? IF YOU DON'T MIND MY SAYING SO, YOU COULD BE HER MOTHER.

OH, LIKE THAT WOULD STOP YOU.

ACTUALLY, MY MOM'S MORE THE BUFFED AND COIFFED TYPE.

AND ANYWAY, IT'S NOT WHAT YOU THINK. SHE'S OUR NEW INTERN AT THE STORE. ANJALI, SYDNEY.

90% 29% 0%

DE-LIGHTED.

SO, DO YOU WANT TO RESCHEDULE, OR DID YOU MEAN "FRY IN HELL" LITERALLY?

THEA JUST TOLD ME HOW YOU DITCHED HER WHEN SHE GOT DIAGNOSED WITH MS.

OH. UH... YOU DIDN'T ALREADY KNOW?

ARE YOU NUTS? DO YOU THINK I'D AGREE TO GO OUT WITH THE POND SCUM WHO'D DO A THING LIKE THAT?

UH...

UH... I'M GONNA GO GRAB A SMOKE.

"UH"? SURELY YOU CAN DO BETTER THAN THAT! WHERE'S YOUR SCATHING RIPOSTE? YOUR TWISTED INTELLECTUALIZATION?

I...

OH, JEEZ! DON'T CRY SYDNEY!

SHORTLY... HONK.

ANJALI, I'M SORRY, BUT I HAVE TO GO TO DINNER. I'LL FINISH EXPLAINING THINGS TO YOU TOMORROW.

'KAY, WHATEVER. SHOULD BE INTERESTING.

DATE by default

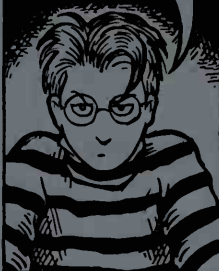
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FOLLOWING
SOME MILD
MELODRAMA
AT THE
COFFEE SHOP,
MO HAS
PACIFICALLY
AGREED TO
DINE WITH
SYDNEY.

255



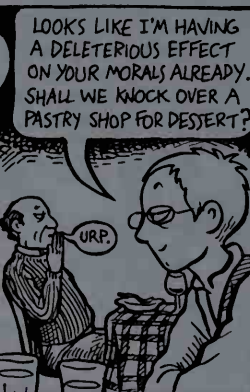
AND THIS IS **NOT** A DATE, OKAY? I JUST WANTED TO APOLOGIZE FOR HURTING YOU.



IT'S ODD. BEING CALLED POND SCUM NEVER BOTHERED ME BEFORE. BUT SOMEHOW, WHEN YOU SAID IT, IT REALLY **GOT IN!**



IN THAT INSTANT, YOU MADE ME **REALLY** UNDERSTAND WHAT A SHIT I'D BEEN TO THEA ALL THOSE YEARS AGO. YOU HAVE A CERTAIN MORAL AUTHORITY ABOUT YOU, MO. A KANTIAN CATEGORICAL IMPERATIVE KIND OF THING. VERY SEXY.



Futures Trading

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256

CLARICE? UH, I WONDER IF YOU COULD GET ME A COPY OF YOUR TAX RETURNS FROM THE PAST FIVE YEARS.

ALEXIS, WE SENT YOU THAT STUFF MONTHS AGO!

JATVEMOINVTAT
7202JCE
FUND

UM... WELL, I'VE BEEN BREAKING IN A NEW SECRETARY AND SHE GOT A TAD OVERZEALOUS WITH THE PAPER SHREDDER.

SHORTLY... SHREDDED?

CLARICE, IF YOUR "FRIEND" SCREWS UP THIS ADOPTION, YOU'RE GONNA BE SLEEPING ON THE COUCH. AT HER PLACE. WITH HER PET GIRAFFE!

BABE, I HAVE ANOTHER CALL. CAN YOU JUST GET THE COPIES IN THE MAIL?

AN' DEN... AN' DEN... AN' DEN DE MOUSE WAN'S SOME MIWK.

PERRY MASON SCREW UP AGAIN?

NATURALLY. D'YOU THINK YOU COULD STAY HERE WITH HIM WHILE I RUN OUT TO THE COPY SHOP?

LIKE I HAVE NOTHING BETTER TO DO! NO MATTER HOW BUSY I AM WITH RAFFI AND THE HOUSE AND MY BOOKEEPING GIGS, I'M THE ONE WHO HAS TO DROP EVERYTHING BECAUSE CLARICE'S JOB IS MORE IMPORTANT.

AN' HE DWINKS IT WIF A STWAW.

MM-HMM.

IT'S THE SAME WITH DANIEL. JUST BECAUSE I'M BETWEEN JOBS, HE THINKS I HAVE TIME TO STAND AROUND IRONING HIS DRAWERS. OH, I BROUGHT YOU THE TAPE OF YESTERDAY'S "ALL MY CHILDREN."

...AN' DEN HE CUTS HIS HAIR AND MAKES SUCH A MESS.

I'VE GOTTA GO BACK TO WORK FULL-TIME. GOD KNOWS WE NEED THE MONEY. I DON'T WANT RAFFI SPENDING HIS WHOLE CHILDHOOD IN THIS DUMP.

AND THEN THERE'S RETIREMENT TO START WORRYING ABOUT. WITH WALL STREET TRYING TO GET ITS PAWS ON SOCIAL SECURITY, WE COULD ALL BE ON THE STREETS WHEN WE'RE SEVENTY.

I THOUGHT WE'D BE ON THE STREETS ANYWAY. ISN'T SOCIAL SECURITY GOING BROKE?

CARLOS! SEE DE MESS?

YEAH, BUT THERE ARE OTHER SOLUTIONS BESIDES HANDING BROKERAGE FIRMS MILLIONS OF NEW ACCOUNTS TO COLLECT FEES ON. AND WHAT HAPPENS WHEN THE STOCK MARKET FALLS?

MAYBE RAFFI WILL GROW UP TO BE A RUTHLESS INVESTMENT BANKER, AND WITH THE MONEY HE BILKS OUT OF WIDOWS AND ORPHANS HE'LL BUY A NICE LITTLE CARIBBEAN ISLAND FOR HIS NEAREST AND DEAREST TO RETIRE ON.

IF HE'S THAT RUTHLESS, WHAT MAKES YOU THINK HE'LL SPARE US?

WHO SAID ANYTHING ABOUT YOU? I'M THE ONE WHO READ TO HIM. YOU WERE ALWAYS FLITTING OFF TO KINKO'S.

BYE-BYE, MOMMY.

the EX factor

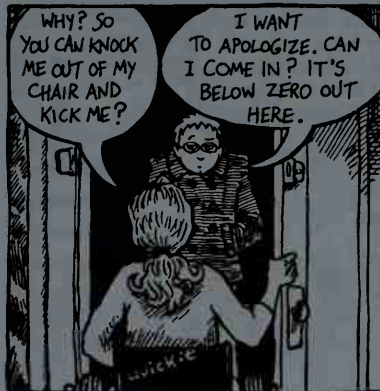
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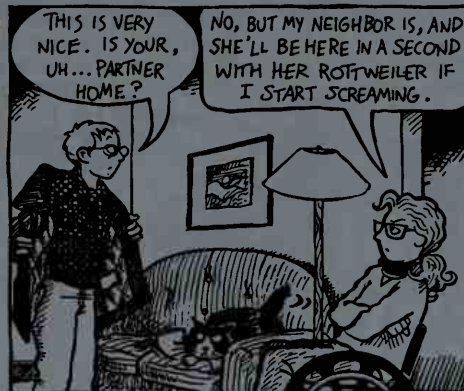
SYDNEY?
WHAT ARE
YOU DOING
HERE?

UM... I
NEEDED TO TALK
TO YOU. IN
PRIVATE.



WHY? SO
YOU CAN KNOCK
ME OUT OF MY
CHAIR AND
KICK ME?

I WANT
TO APOLOGIZE. CAN
I COME IN? IT'S
BELOW ZERO OUT
HERE.



THIS IS VERY
NICE. IS YOUR,
UH... PARTNER
HOME?

NO, BUT MY NEIGHBOR IS, AND
SHE'LL BE HERE IN A SECOND
WITH HER ROTWEILER IF
I START SCREAMING.



OKAY,
OKAY. I DE-
SERVE THAT.

NO, YOU
DESERVE MUCH
WORSE.



LOOK, I JUST WANT TO SAY
I KNOW I TREATED YOU
BADLY WHEN WE WERE TO-
GETHER, AND I'M SORRY.
I DIDN'T MEAN TO HURT
YOU. I WAS FUCKED UP.

WHY ARE YOU
TELLING ME
THIS NOW?
YOU'VE BEEN IN
TOWN FOR A
YEAR.



I... I COULDN'T FACE WHAT A
SCHMUCK I'D BEEN. BUT I'VE
HAD AN EPIPHANY! FOR THE
FIRST TIME IN MY LIFE, I FEEL
REMORSE. I WANT TO ATONE
FOR MY MISTAKES. I WANT
TO REDEEM MYSELF!

THERE'S SOMETHING ODDLY
FAMILIAR ABOUT THAT LOOK
IN YOUR EYE. THIS LITTLE
RELIGIOUS FIT WOULDN'T
HAVE ANYTHING TO DO WITH
YOU TRYING TO GET INTO
MO'S PANTS, WOULD IT?

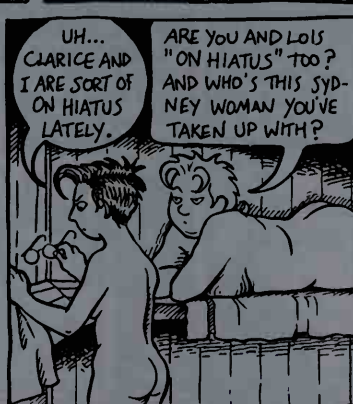


ABSOLUTELY NOT!
SHE HAS NO IDEA I'M
HERE! AND DON'T TELL HER,
EITHER. THIS IS BETWEEN
YOU AND ME.



HARRIET, HI!
I HAVEN'T SEEN
YOU IN AGES!

HEY, STRANGER! WHERE'VE
YOU BEEN? I THOUGHT I'D
SEE YOU AT CLARICE'S BIRTH-
DAY PARTY LAST WEEK.



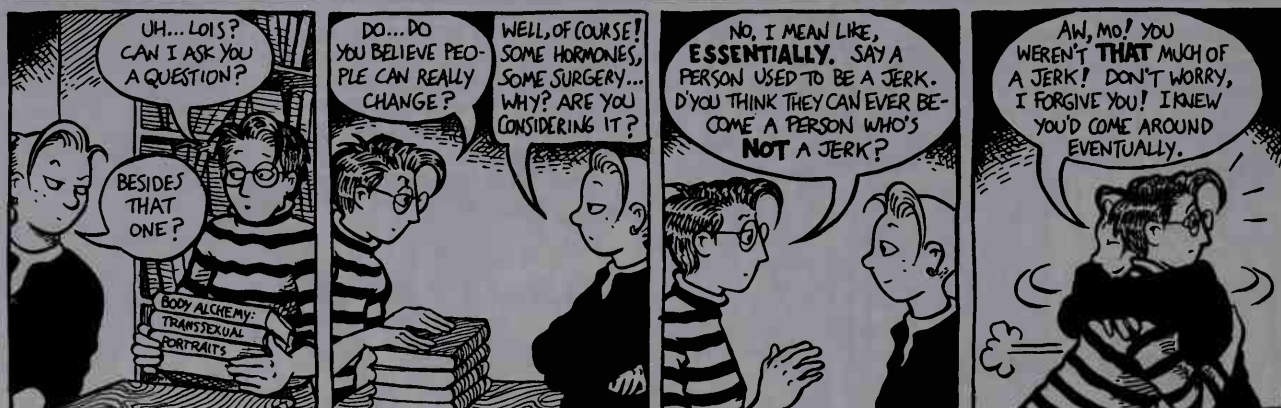
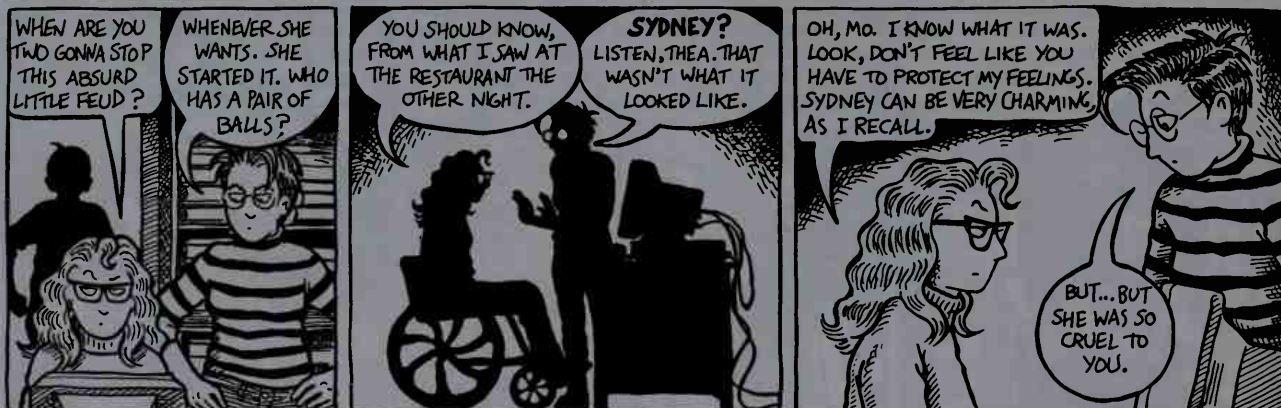
UH...
CLARICE AND
I ARE SORT OF
ON HIATUS
LATELY.

ARE YOU AND LOIS
"ON HIATUS" TOO?
AND WHO'S THIS SYD-
NEY WOMAN YOU'VE
TAKEN UP WITH?



GOD! YOU KNOW SO MUCH,
YOU TELL ME! EXCEPT I
HAVEN'T "TAKEN UP"
WITH HER. THERE WAS
FLIRTING, I ADMIT, BUT I
DON'T REALLY TRUST HER.

MAYBE NOT, BUT SOME-
THING'S UP. I REMEMBER
THAT GLAZED EXPRESSION
FROM WHEN WE WERE
FIRST GOING OUT. EVEN-
TUALLY I REALIZED IT
WASN'T STUPIDITY,
JUST LUST.



overbooked

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SO MO, ARE YOU GONNA GIVE IT UP FOR SYDNEY TOMORROW NIGHT?

NOW THAT WE'RE FRIENDS AGAIN, LOIS, I CAN ANSWER THAT HONESTLY. **GET STUFFED.**

OFFICE

BUT JEZANNA, A MADWIMMIN WEB SITE WOULD BE THE **BOMB!**

THAT'S EXACTLY WHAT I'M AFRAID OF. LISTEN, I HAVE **ZERO** MONEY TO DO ANYTHING EXTRA RIGHT NOW.

YOU COULD PUT IT UP FOR TWENTY BUCKS A MONTH! I CAN GET YOU A DEAL AT MY FRIEND'S ISP!

HEY, JEZ. D'YOU MIND IF I LEAVE A LITTLE EARLY? I HAFTA GET THESE VIDEOS BACK BY SIX.

GO AHEAD! RETURN YOUR VIDEOS! LAUNCH A WEB SITE! AND I WONDER WHY I'M NOT SELLING ANY @#*% BOOKS.

A TIP O' THE HIB TO MY FAVORITE GEEK, CARYL SHAW

UH... SEE YOU TOMORROW, THEN.

I ALREADY DID A MOCK-UP! LETME SHOW YOU!

SOON...

UM...HI, CIARICE.

MO!

JEEZ, IT'S BEEN A WHILE. UM...HOW'S THE ADOPTION COMING?

OKAY. OUR HEARING IS ON MONDAY.

HOW'S RAFFI? GOD, I MISS HIM.

NO ONE'S FORCING YOU TO STAY AWAY, YOU KNOW.

LOOK, I'M SORRY. I KNOW I'VE BEEN A PILL LATELY.

A LITTLE.

BUT NOBODY'S PERFECT, RIGHT? AND JUST BECAUSE YOU'RE A TOTAL YUPPIE ASSIMILATIONIST DOESN'T MEAN I DON'T STILL, YOU KNOW, **LOVE** YOU.

...SO IF YOU EVER NEED A SITTER OR ANYTHING, CALL ME, OKAY?

REALLY?

AS A MATTER OF FACT, WE HAVE TO GO TO THIS BIG AWARDS DINNER TOMORROW NIGHT, AND CARLOS JUST CANCELLED ON US.

SAY NO MORE! I'LL BE THERE!

THANKS SO MUCH, MO! SEE YOU TOMORROW AT SIX.

SO I'LL COME BY AROUND SIX!

Pierce the Veil

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NICE TO MEET YOU, SYDNEY. IT WAS SO SWEET OF YOU TWO TO CANCEL YOUR DATE AND HELP US OUT.

NOT A PROBLEM. WHAT A GORGEOUS DRESS!

SO WHAT'S THIS FANCY SHINDIG YOU'RE OFF TO?

OH, IT'S ONLY THE COMMUNITY CENTER'S ANNUAL FUNDRAISING DINNER.

AND CLARICE IS ONLY RECEIVING THE NEW LEADERSHIP AWARD.

WELL CONGRATULATIONS, CLARICE! THE ABILITY TO TRULY LEAD IS A RARE GIFT.

261

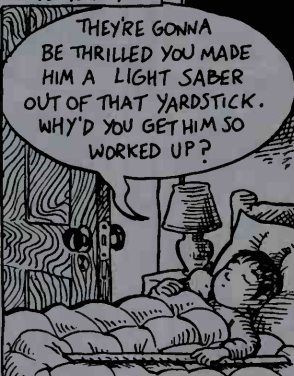
WHY THANKS!



SOON...



EVENTUALLY...



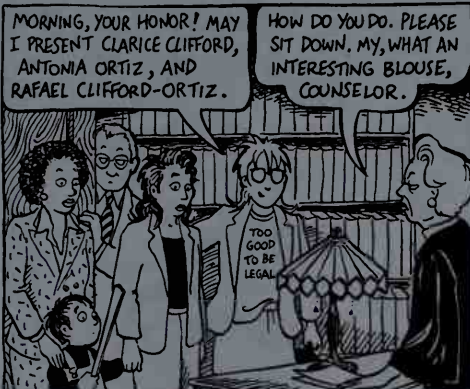
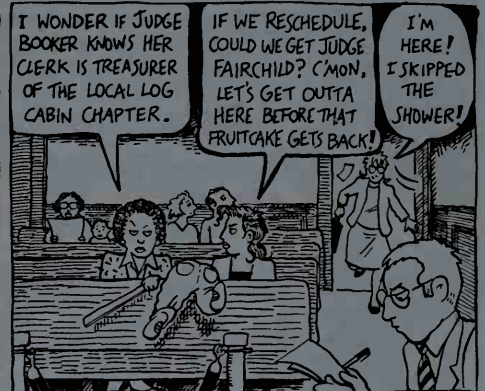
A TIP O' THE SABER TO BEN LASHMAN - VAN BUREN



Made to be Broken

©1997 BY ALISON BECHTOLD

262

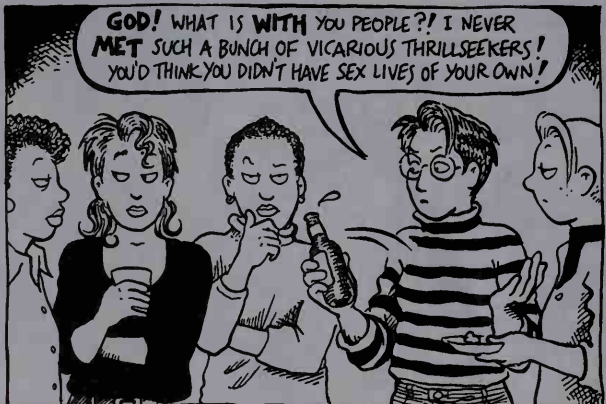
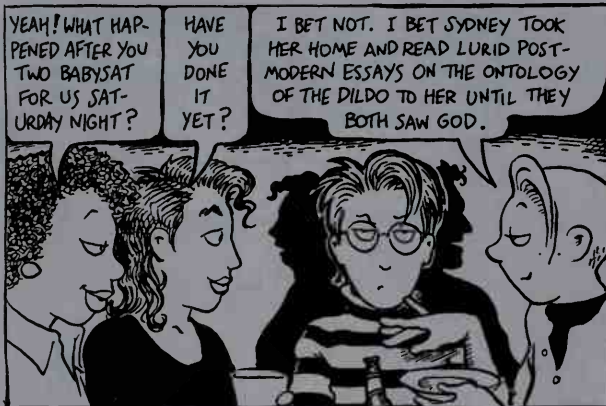


Moment of Truth

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JUDGE BOOKER IS SURPRISINGLY CALM FOLLOWING RAFFI'S DEMOLITION OF HER TIFFANY LAMP.

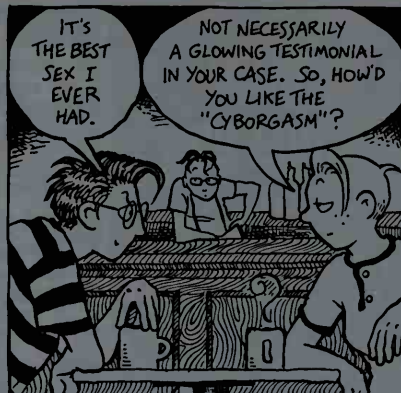


let the lover beware

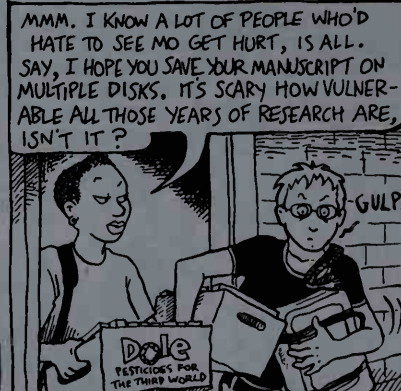
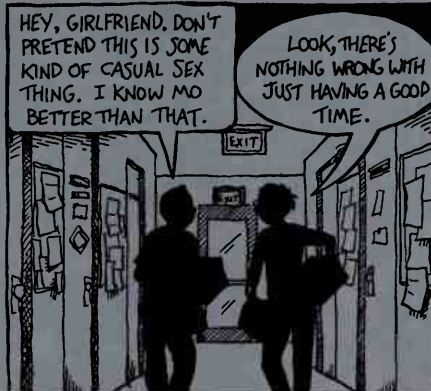
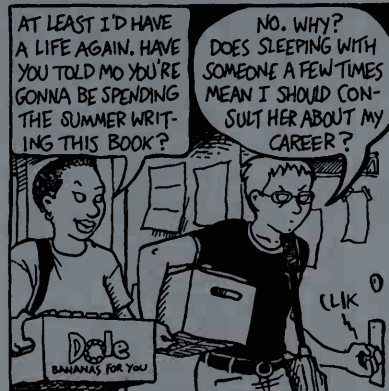
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Mo's HAVING A COFFEE BREAK WITH EVERY-BODY'S FAVORITE CONFIDANTE.

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MEANWHILE, OVER AT THE UNIVERSITY...



two degrees and separation

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OH, HI, MO. HEY, I LEFT A MESSAGE FOR YOU. I KNOW IT'S TOTALLY LAST MINUTE, BUT WE'RE HAVING A LITTLE DINNER TONIGHT TO CELEBRATE GINGER GETTING HER PH.D. CAN YOU COME?

JEE Z, I'D LOVE TO, BUT SYDNEY'S COMING OVER. I'M MAKING CURRIED ARTICHOKES AND MUNG BEAN GUMBO. IT'S SUPPOSED TO BE SOME KINDA **APHRODISIAC**. NOT THAT WE NEED ANY HELP.

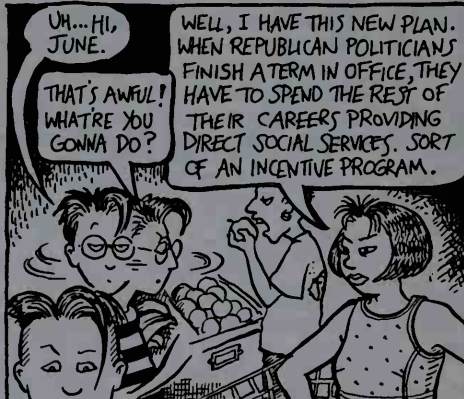


OH, OKAY. MAYBE SOME OTHER TIME.

YEAH. ARE YOU OKAY? YOU LOOK KINDA TIRED.

OH. OH... THINGS ARE REALLY HARD AT THE SHELTER. WE JUST LOST HALF OUR FEDERAL FUNDING, AND WE'VE GOT MORE WOMEN THAN EVER WHO NEED HELP.

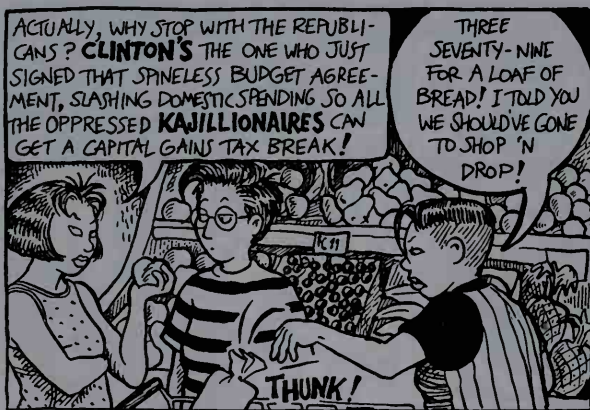
SPARROW, IF YOU'RE GONNA STAND HERE YAKKING, GIVE ME THE LIST.



UH... HI, JUNE.

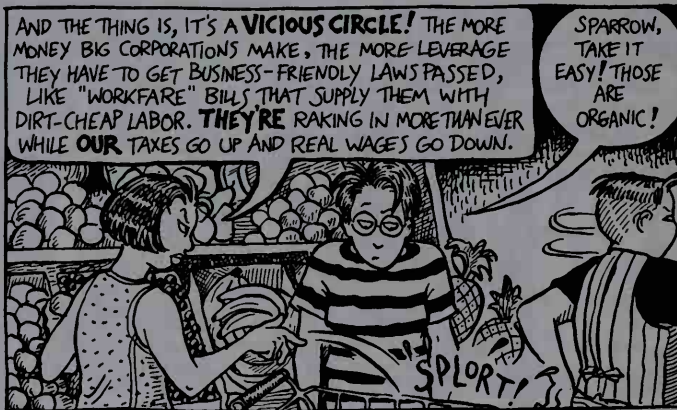
THAT'S AWFUL! WHAT'RE YOU GONNA DO?

WELL, I HAVE THIS NEW PLAN. WHEN REPUBLICAN POLITICIANS FINISH A TERM IN OFFICE, THEY HAVE TO SPEND THE REST OF THEIR CAREERS PROVIDING DIRECT SOCIAL SERVICES. SORT OF AN INCENTIVE PROGRAM.



ACTUALLY, WHY STOP WITH THE REPUBLICANS? **CLINTON'S** THE ONE WHO JUST SIGNED THAT SPINELESS BUDGET AGREEMENT, SLASHING DOMESTIC SPENDING SO ALL THE OPPRESSED **KAJILLIONAIRES** CAN GET A CAPITAL GAINS TAX BREAK!

THREE SEVENTY-NINE FOR A LOAF OF BREAD! I TOLD YOU WE SHOULD'VE GONE TO SHOP 'N DROP!



AND THE THING IS, IT'S A **VICIOUS CIRCLE!** THE MORE MONEY BIG CORPORATIONS MAKE, THE MORE LEVERAGE THEY HAVE TO GET BUSINESS-FRIENDLY LAWS PASSED, LIKE "WORKFARE" BILLS THAT SUPPLY THEM WITH DIRT-CHEAP LABOR. **THEY'RE** RAKING IN MORE THAN EVER WHILE **OUR** TAXES GO UP AND REAL WAGES GO DOWN.

SPARROW, TAKE IT EASY! THOSE ARE ORGANIC!

LATER...



FINE. MOVE AWAY IF YOU HAVE TO. BUT FOR **BUSINESS SCHOOL?**

GOD! WILL YOU STOP ACTING LIKE I'VE MADE A PACT WITH THE DEVIL? GETTING AN M.B.A. IS NOT A CRIME!

@AT THE UNIVERSITY...

SYDNEY! EVERYONE FINALLY SIGNED OFF ON THIS THING! COME FILE IT WITH ME AND THEN WE'LL GO TO MY PLACE. SPARROW'S MAKING A CELEBRATION DINNER.



GREAT! MO AND I WERE GONNA DO SOMETHING, BUT I'LL CALL AND GET A RAIN CHECK.



RING!

IT'S THE EVENT O' THE SEASON!

BLUE PARTY

267

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YOU'RE GOING TO GINGER'S PARTY?
... YEAH, I KNOW IT'S A BIG DEAL SHE
FINALLY GOT HER DOCTORATE. I MEAN,
I WAS INVITED TOO, BUT I TOLD
SPARROW WE ALREADY HAD PLANS. I'M
MAKING MY SPECIAL MUNG BEAN GUMBO!



WELL, WHY DON'T GINGER AND I
PICK YOU UP? THAT WAY WE'LL SEE
EACH OTHER AND GO TO THE PARTY!
KILL TWO BIRDS WITH ONE STONE.



SUCH A
ROMANTIC.

MEANWHILE...

WHAT AM I SUPPOSED
TO DO WHILE YOU'RE OFF IN
BOSTON AT BUSINESS SCHOOL?
SIT HOME KNITTING YOU
POWER TIES?



WELL... I DUNNO.
MAYBE WE SHOULD
TAKE A BREAK,
SEE OTHER PEOPLE
FOR A WHILE.

WHAT?

IT'S A TWO YEAR
PROGRAM. I DON'T
EXPECT YOU TO JUST
WAIT AROUND.



HI! I PICKED
UP THE CAKE.
NEED HELP WITH
DINNER?

SOB!

SWEETIE,
I'M JUST
THINKING
OF YOU!



UH...I'LL
GO PUT
THIS ON A
PLATE.

CAN'T WE DISCUSS
THIS LIKE ADULTS?
YOU ALWAYS GET
SO EMOTIONAL!

I THINK
YOU'D BETTER
LEAVE
RIGHT
NOW!



JUNE!
WHERE ARE YOU
GOING?

BOSTON.



YOU'RE NOT STILL MAD,
ARE YOU? I'LL EAT
YOUR GUMBO LATER!

WHAT'S GOING
ON IN HERE?

I DON'T
THINK
SO.

UH...
THERE'S A
SMALL PROBLEM
WITH DINNER.



-SNIFF!
I'M SORRY,
GINGER!

OH, SPARROW!
DON'T WORRY ABOUT
THE FOOD!



THE IMPORTANT THING
IS SHARING THIS... UH...
HAPPY MOMENT WITH
ALL OF YOU!

BAW!



MAYBE FOR APPETIZERS
WE SHOULD HAVE
SOME OF THESE NEW
ANTI-DEPRESSANTS
I'M TAKING.

"CONGRATULATIONS
ON YOUR RETIRE-
MENT?" LOIS,
THIS ISN'T THE
CAKE I ORDERED!



the mythology of everyday life

OUR
HEROINE
RETURNS
HOME
FROM
HER
LABORS.

270

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YOU LOOK
LIKE YOU'VE
BEEN PARBOILED,
SWEET-
HEART.

UHH. OUR AIR CONDITIONER
DIED, AND THE ONLY THING
I HAD TIME TO EAT ALL DAY
WAS A SNO-CONE.

OH, CLARICE. I HAVE-
N'T EVEN THOUGHT
ABOUT DINNER YET!
WE JUST GOT BACK
FROM THE MOVIES.

HI,
MEEMA.

HERCULES.
IN DIGITAL STEREO
AIR CONDITIONING.

HOW NICE FOR YOU. IN CASE YOU'RE WONDERING
WHAT I DID TODAY, I WON AN INJUNCTION
AGAINST A NITRIC ACID PLANT, THEN I FAILED
TO PREVENT 300 ACRES OF WETLANDS FROM
BEING TURNED INTO A LANDFILL, THEN
MY CASE AGAINST A PESTICIDE COMPANY GOT
DISMISSED ON PROCEDURAL GROUNDS.

MEEMA! IN DA
MOVIE, HEWKUWEES,
HE, HE, HE CUT
OFF DA MONSTOW'S
HEAD AN' DEN IT
GWEW MOW HEADS!

IT GREW MORE HEADS? HUH.
THINGS HAVEN'T CHANGED
MUCH IN THREE MILLENNIA.

OOPS.

SWEETIE, THAT WAS
THE LAST ONE. HOW
ABOUT SOME NICE, COLD
APPLE JUICE?

HEY, THAT BEER
LOOKS GOOD.

OKAY. HERE'S A THOUGHT. MAY-
BE IF I GO OUT AND COME BACK
IN, YOU'LL TELL ME YOU FOUND
A **JOB** TODAY, THERE'LL BE
SOMETHING TO EAT, AND STANLEY
KOWALSKI HERE WILL BE GONE.

CLARICE, I'M
SORRY YOU HAD
A BAD DAY, BUT
YOU DON'T NEED
TO BE RUDE.

I SHOULD BE
GOING ANYWAY.
BLANCHE AND
STELLA WILL BE
WANTING THEIR
DINNER.

AN' MEEMA,
DERE WAS DIS
GUY DEUCE.

DEUCE?

ZEUS,
RAFFI.

YEAH. I
WIKED HIM. HE HAD
A BIG BEARD AN' HE
WAS HEWKUWEES
FATHOW.

HIS
FATHER?

YEAH.
CAN I HAVE
A FATHOW?

I AM DEFINITELY LEAVING.
ENJOY THIS PRECIOUS
FAMILY MOMENT.

UM... WELL, YOU SEE, RAFFI...
WHEN MOMMY AND I
DECIDED WE WANTED YOU,
WE... UH... WENT TO A PLACE
CALLED THE SPERM BANK...

CLARICE, RELAX!
NO, RAFFI, YOU
CAN'T HAVE A
FATHER. YOU HAVE
TWO MOTHERS.

DEN CAN I HAVE
A GIANT DOG
WIF THWEE
HEADS WIKE IN
DA MOVIE?

A DOG?
OKAY!

SLAM!

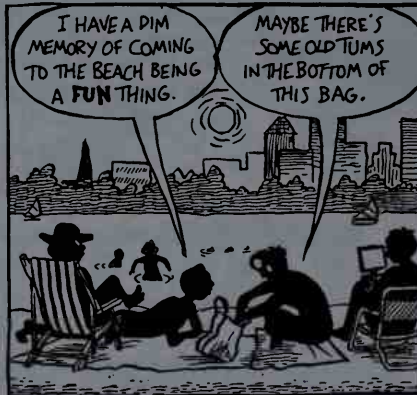
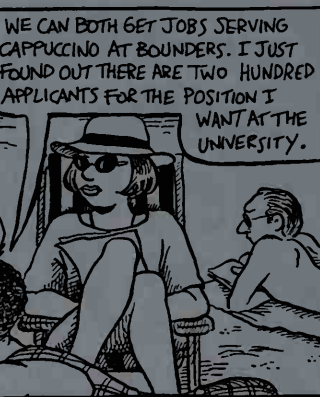
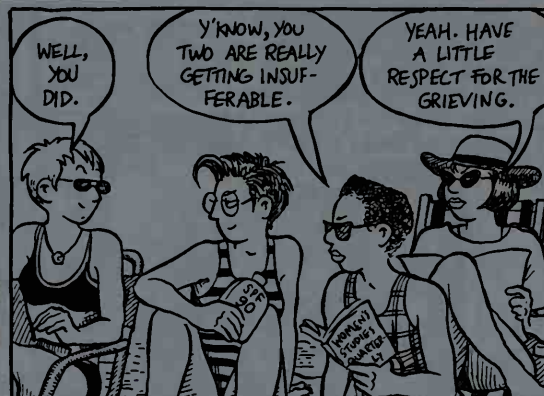
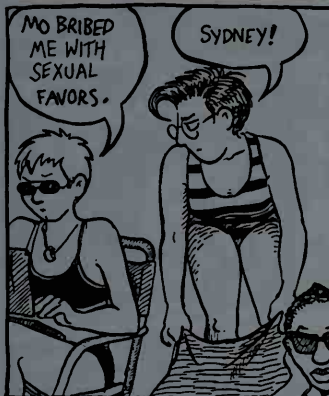
NICE WORK,
COUNSELOR. ARE YOU
THIS COOL-HEADED
IN COURT?

R&R

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OUR
PREOCCUPIED
PALS
HAVE
PACKED UP
ALL THEIR
CARES AND
WOES AND
BROUGHT
THEM TO
THE BEACH.

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one day

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MEANWHILE, IN THE BACK OFFICE...

MAD-WUMMIN BOOKS. CAN I HELP YOU?

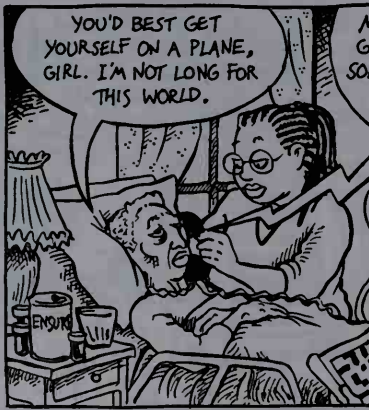
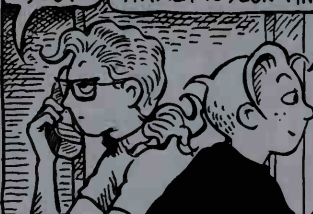
JEZ, IF WE JUST RETURN A FEW DOZEN TITLES THAT AREN'T MOVING, WE CAN AFFORD A SHIPMENT OF COOL NEW VIBRATORS THAT ATTACH TO YOUR FINGER.

OH, OKAY. AND WHEN A CUSTOMER COMES IN LOOKING FOR "STEPPE SISTERS: FEMALE HOMOEROTICISM DURING THE MONGOL EMPIRE," I'LL JUST SELL HER A FIDGETY DIGIT INSTEAD!

ANYONE WHO'D WANT TO READ THAT ARID TOME NEEDS A VIBRATOR.

DAMMIT, LOIS! WE'RE NOT RETURNING ANY BOOKS! I DON'T CARE HOW DEAD BUSINESS IS!

JEZ, I THINK IT'S YOUR MOM ON LINE ONE.



HI, BABY. IT'S ME. SHE JUST NODDED OFF. THE PAIN WAS REALLY BAD THIS MORNING AND SHE NEEDED A LOT MORE MORPHINE.... HOW CLOSE IS SHE? I CAN'T PREDICT THAT, HON. BUT SHE WON'T TOUCH YOUR COUSIN ETTA'S POT ROAST, AND SHE REALLY WANTS TO SEE YOU.



MEANWHILE...

WHAT AM I WEARING? YOU MEAN RIGHT NOW? A STRIPED SHIRT AND A PAIR OF JEANS. WHY?

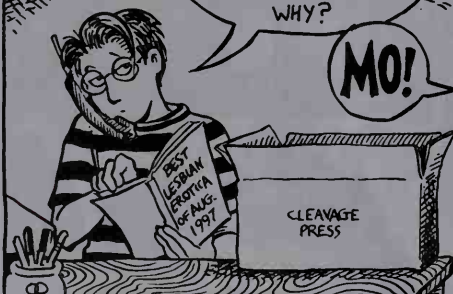
MO!

GOTTA GO, SYDNEY!

I'M CATCHING A 3:30 FLIGHT. MY MOTHER'S WORSE. I'LL CALL EVERY DAY TO CHECK IN. TRY NOT TO BANKRUPT US, OKAY?

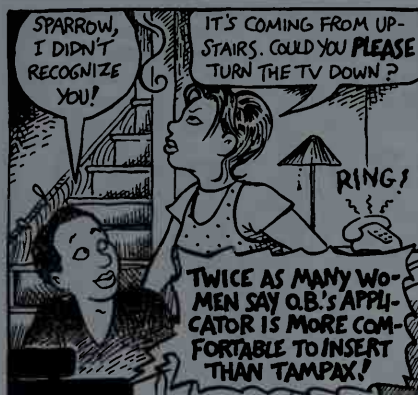
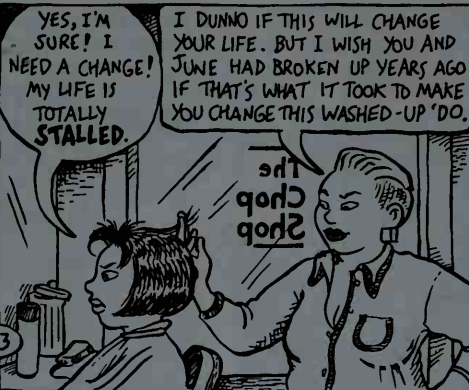
UH...RIGHT. HEY, JEZ...I HOPE SHE'LL BE...YOU KNOW, OKAY.

UM... TAKE CARE.



Change to Spare

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all for one

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THE FIRST PROSPECTIVE BUYERS HAVE JUST FINISHED TOURING OUR HAPLESS HOUSEMATES' HOME.



I BET THE WIFE HY-PHENATES THEIR LAST NAMES AND THE HUSBAND JUST USES HIS OWN.



NICE TOUCH, LOIS, THE DILDOS ALL TUCKED UNDER YOUR COVERS LIKE THEY WERE GOING TO SLEEP. I'D SWEAR BRAD AND JANET BLANCHED, IF THEY WEREN'T SO COLORLESS TO BEGIN WITH.



I CAN'T LIVE LIKE THIS! STRANGERS TRAIPSING THROUGH THE HOUSE, NOT KNOWING WHERE WE'LL BE IN TWO MONTHS... WE'VE GOTTA DO SOMETHING!



MAYBE ANOTHER LANDLORD'LL BUY THE PLACE AND WE WON'T HAVE TO DO ANYTHING.



MORE LIKELY, MS. MINIVAN-HYPHEN WILL BE MOVING IN WITH HER LAURA ASHLEY TOILET PAPER.



EVEN IF ANOTHER LANDLORD BUYS THE PLACE, HE COULD BE A CREEP, OR JACK UP THE RENT, OR SUBDIVIDE. LET'S FACE IT. IT'S TIME TO MOVE ON.



MOVE ON TOGETHER? OR MOVE ON APART?

LOOK, LIVING COOPERATIVELY IS A GREAT THEORY, BUT THE ACTUALITY'S REALLY WEARING ON ME. I NEED TO COME HOME TO A CALM ENVIRONMENT. NO BARKING, OR TV, OR SCREAMING FROM OTHER PEOPLE'S BEDROOMS.



YEAH, WELL... IT WOULD CERTAINLY BE A RELIEF TO CONDUCT MY PERSONAL LIFE FREE FROM OTHER PEOPLE'S SCRUTINY.



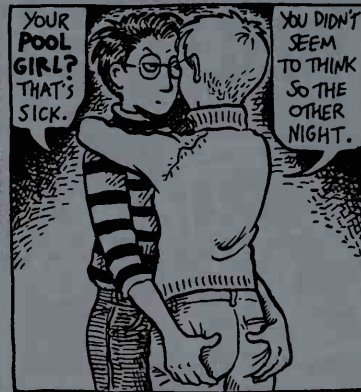
MMM. AND WHAT I'D GIVE TO FIND THE GARLIC PRESS OR THE REMOTE EXACTLY WHERE IT'S SUPPOSED TO BE.



handling it

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IT'S BEEN A LONG DAY AT THE HELM FOR OUR HEROINE...



spaced out

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SO THE POSSIBILITY OF THE CASSINI PROBE HURLING BACK INTO EARTH'S ATMOSPHERE WITH 70 POUNDS OF DEADLY PLUTONIUM ON BOARD DOESN'T GIVE YOU EVEN A SLIGHT QUALM?

NAH.

HOW DOES SOMEONE WHO PRIDES HERSELF ON HER CRITICAL THINKING SWALLOW NASA'S PRO-NUCLEAR PROPAGANDA SO BLITHELY?

I EXPECT IT'S SIMILAR TO THE WAY YOU SWALLOW THE LEFT'S ANTI-SCIENCE PROPAGANDA WITH SUCH CAREFREE -SNIFF- ABANDON.

OH, SO I SHOULD TRUST A BUNCH OF GOVERNMENT "DUCK AND COVER" FLACKS OVER THOUSANDS OF SELFLESS PEACE ACTIVISTS.

MO, I CAN'T ARGUE WITH YOUR KNEEJERK -SNIFF- OVERSIMPLIFICATIONS. DAMN!

YOUR ALLERGIES?

YEAH, AND I DON'T HAVE MY PILLS. I'M GONNA HAVE TO LEAVE BEFORE IT GETS WORSE.

HOW COME YOU WEREN'T ALLERGIC TO MY CATS WHEN WE FIRST STARTED GOING OUT?

ENDORPHINS OFTEN OVERRIDE ALLERGIC REACTIONS. I READ A PAPER ON IT ONCE. WHERE'S MY SCARF?

©OVER AT CLARICE & TONI'S...

HNG!

ARR!

clik

CRUNCH!

THIS PLACE IS DRIVING ME NUTS! THE BEDROOM CLOSET'S SO PACKED, ALL MY SUITS ARE CRUSHED. AND I RIPPED THIS THING TRYING TO GET THE DOOR SHUT.

STINKY!

GREAT. THAT WAS HIS FAVORITE BEANIE BABY.

WAIL!

ALL RIGHT, ALL RIGHT. I'LL LOOK AT IT.

©MEANWHILE...

THE REALTOR'S BRINGING SOME PEOPLE OVER AT SEVEN. I'M GOING BACK TO SCHOOL AND GRADE PAPERS.

I SHOULD GO TO THE GYM ANYWAY.

AND I'VE GOT A... I MEAN, I'M HAVING DINNER WITH SOMEONE.

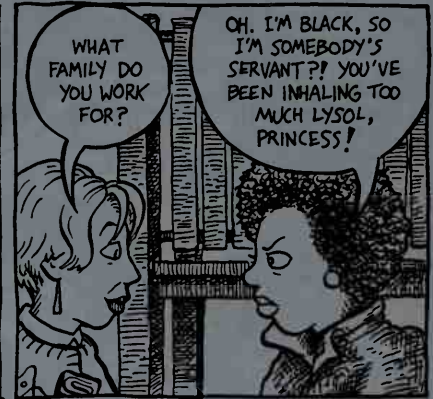
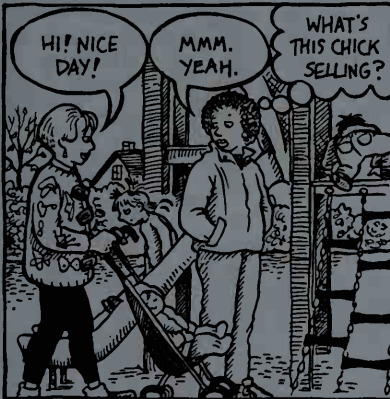
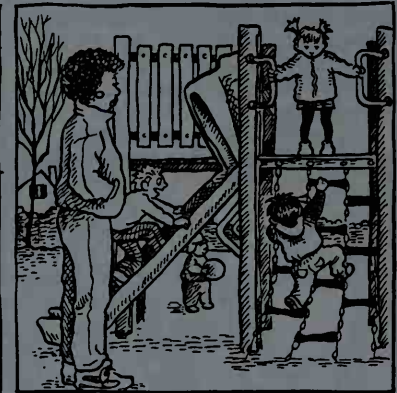
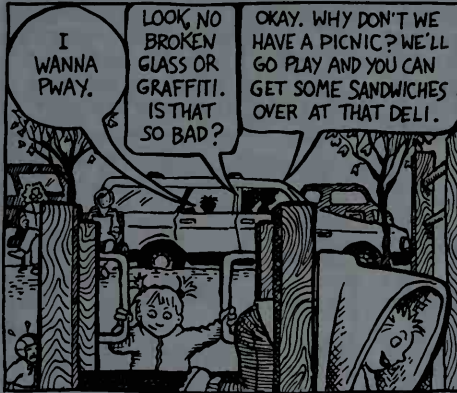
IS "SOMEONE" PICKING YOU UP, OR CAN I GIVE YOU A RIDE "SOMEWHERE"?

WHAT'S THE BIG MYSTERY? IS SHE IN A RELATIONSHIP? MARRIED? HIGH PROFILE AND IN THE CLOSET?

DOES THE YWCA STILL RENT ROOMS? MAYBE I'LL CHECK IN THERE TILL I CAN FIND MY OWN SPACE.

suburban subversion

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disclosure

Mo's
HAVING
A
LITTLE
HOLIDAY
CHEER
WITH
SYDNEY'S
FATHER
AND
STEP-
MOTHER.

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I DON'T KNOW WHY HARVARD TURNED YOUR BOOK DOWN, SYD. I SPOKE TO MY EDITOR THERE ABOUT IT.

DAD, IT'S MORE COMPETITIVE NOW. NOT LIKE WHEN YOU WERE YOUNG AND ANY HALF-WIT COULD GET HIS DISSERTATION PUBLISHED.

SYDNEY, YOU DIDN'T FAWN OVER PAUL'S OBSCENELY EXPENSIVE NEW SWEATER.

NICE! I'VE ALWAYS WANTED A CASHMERE TURTLENECK.



I'LL GET YOU ONE TOMORROW. JENNIFER ALREADY THINKS I SPEND TOO MUCH MONEY. A LITTLE MORE WON'T HURT.

HEY, ONE OF MY CREDIT CARDS RAISED MY LIMIT ANOTHER THOU! LET'S GO CHECK OUT THE NEW SKI EQUIPMENT, TOO.



SYDNEY! YOU CAN'T JUST BUY STUFF UNTIL YOU MAX OUT YOUR CREDIT! THAT'S INSANE!



AND LET'S GO BY GIZMO WORLD. I NEED A NEW PERSONAL DIGITAL ASSISTANT.

GREAT! YOU SHOULD BE GLAD YOU TWO CAN'T GET MARRIED. WHEN SHE CRASHES AND BURNS, YOU WON'T BE LIABLE FOR HER DEBT.



MEANWHILE, GINGER IS OFF JOBHUNTING AT THE MODERN LANGUAGE ASSOCIATION CONVENTION.

LOIS! I GOT YOUR MESSAGE! IS DIGGER OKAY?

YEAH, EVERYTHING'S UNDER CONTROL. SHE WAS LIMPING WHEN I GOT HOME, SO I TOOK HER TO THE VET. THEY SAID SHE HAS RHEUMATISM AND TO GIVE HER IBUPROFEN.



GINGER, RELAX! I CANCELLED MY PLANS TO GO TO MY FOLKS SO I CAN STAY WITH HER ALL WEEKEND.

HEY, NO PROBLEM, BELIEVE ME. I JUMPED AT THE CHANCE.

OKAY. WAIT A SEC.



SHE WANTS TO TALK TO YOU.

STOMP STOMP!

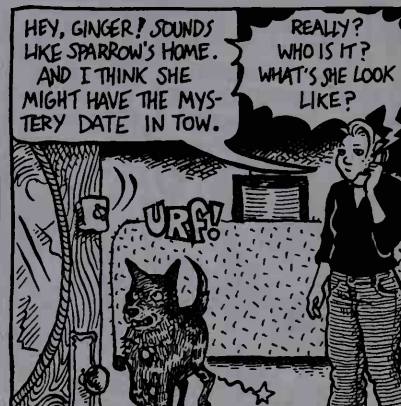
GIGGLE.

GRARR



HEY, GINGER! SOUNDS LIKE SPARROW'S HOME. AND I THINK SHE MIGHT HAVE THE MYSTERY DATE IN TOW.

REALLY? WHO IS IT? WHAT'S SHE LOOK LIKE?



UH... KINDA LIKE RICHARD DREYFUSS IN "JAWS," ONLY BALDER.

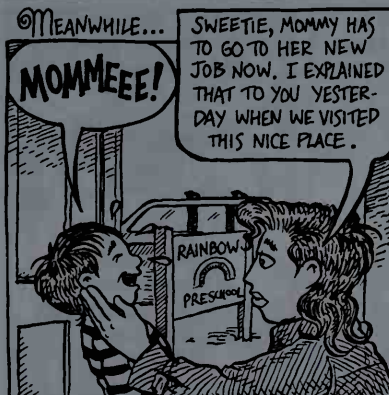
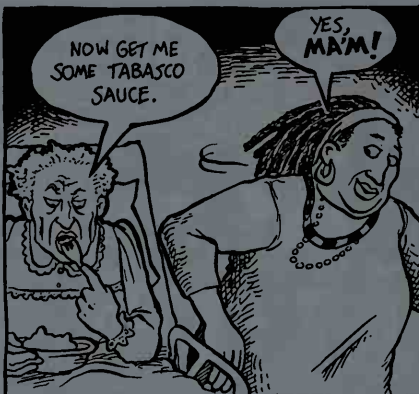
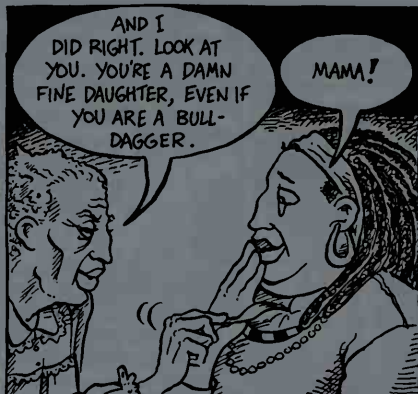
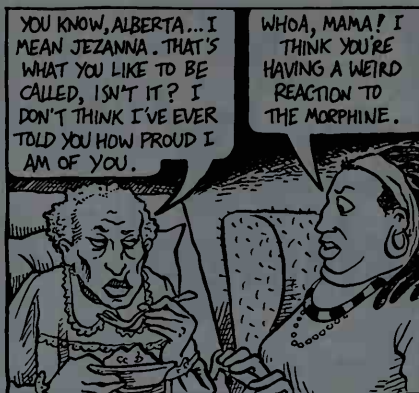
LOIS! WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?



the long goodbye

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a GUY thing

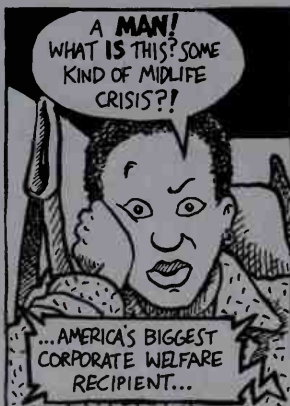
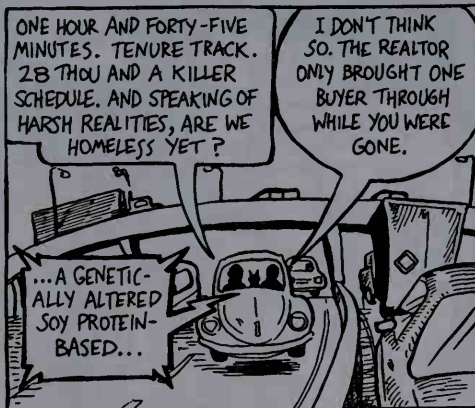
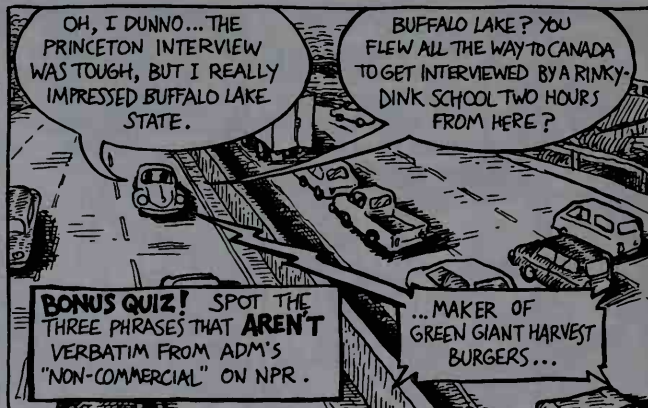
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GINGER RE-TURNS FROM THE MLA CONVENTION.

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TIP 0 TH NIB TO AMEY "FUKENGRIVEN" RADCLIFFE



life with father

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TURNIP GREENS! TROTTERS!
WHAT A **HEARTSTOPPING**
SPREAD. WISH I STILL ATE
MEAT. THE ONLY THING HERE
I CAN HAVE ARE THE ROLLS.

DID I EVER TELL YOU ABOUT
WANDA BARNES' GIRL THAT
WENT VEGETARIAN? IN
TWO WEEKS SHE WAS BALD
AS A BILLIARD BALL.

SHE SHAVED
HER HEAD,
AUNT YO-
LANDA.

THAT'S
WHAT SHE
TOLD
PEOPLE.

A BIG TIP O' THE NIB TO BARBARA SMITH

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HI, BABY.
HAS ETNA
SETTLED
DOWN?

I THINK SO. I
NEVER SAW ANYONE
GET THE SPIRIT QUITE AS
POWERFULLY AS SHE
DID TODAY.

TRUST ME. IT
WOULDN'T'VE BEEN
A CHURCH SER-
VICE IF ETNA
HADN'T FALLEN
OUT.

DON'T BE
RUDE. SHE'S GOING
TO BE LOOKING AFTER
YOUR FATHER
NOW.

LISTEN, I LOVE MY
FAMILY, BUT I CAN'T
WAIT TO GET BACK
HOME. TO **OUR** HOME.
ARE YOU REALLY COM-
ING WITH ME?
FOR GOOD?

I'D
BETTER
BE. I QUIT
MY DAMN
JOB.

ALBERTA!
GO SAY GOOD-
BYE TO THE
PREACHER.

REVEREND, THANK YOU FOR
THAT MOVING EULOGY. I HAD
NO IDEA MY MOTHER GAVE SO
MUCH TIME TO THE CHURCH
BUILDING FUND.

SHE WAS A GENEROUS LADY.
AND IT SOUNDS LIKE YOU TAKE
RIGHT AFTER HER. YOUR
FATHER JUST TOLD ME HE'S
MOVING UP NORTH WITH YOU AND
YOUR, UH...FRIEND AUDREY.

HE
WHAT?
KA-HACK!

THOSE ROLLS ARE AWFUL
DRY. GO TRY SOME OF
THAT CORNBREAD WITH
THE HAM CHUNKS AND
BACON DRIPPINGS.

Slap!

MEANWHILE...

OKAY, DAD, OKAY!
NOW WILL YOU GET
OFF MY ASS?
GOODBYE!

NOW
WHAT?

OH, HE WANTS ME TO
SEND A CHAPTER OF MY
BOOK TO SOME INFLUEN-
TIAL OLD FART HE KNOWS.

YOU TWO HAVE TERRIBLE
BOUNDARIES, SYDNEY. WHY
DO YOU LET HIM GET INTO
YOUR BUSINESS LIKE THAT?

I DUNNO.
IT'S NOT THAT
BIG A DEAL
TO KEEP HIM
HAPPY.

HE
SENT YOU
ANOTHER
CHECK, DIDN'T
HE?

HOW WOULD YOU
LIKE A NEW SWEATER?
THEY JUST GOT SOME NICE
STRIPED ONES IN DOWN AT
PAPAYA REPUBLIC.

divert & conquer

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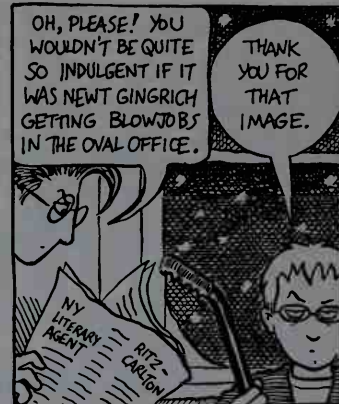
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THE MAN'S
CLEARLY A SEX ADDICT.
HE'S OUT OF CONTROL.
LYING, SUBORNING
PERJURY...

IT'S THIS PURITANICAL CULTURE THAT'S
THE PROBLEM. DO PEOPLE REALLY
EXPECT SOMEONE WITH THE RUTHLESS
LUST FOR POWER IT TAKES TO BECOME
PRESIDENT TO SPEND EVENINGS AT
HOME WITH HIS STAMP COLLECTION?

OH, PLEASE! YOU
WOULDN'T BE QUITE
SO INDULGENT IF IT
WAS NEWT GINGRICH
GETTING BLOWJOBS
IN THE OVAL OFFICE.

THANK
YOU FOR
THAT
IMAGE.



HA! THEY GOT US, SYDNEY!
THE WORLD IS TEETERING ON THE
BRINK OF GLOBAL DEFLATION,
AND HERE WE SIT PRATTLING ABOUT
THE PRESIDENT'S PENIS!

CAN I
HAVE A
SCREW?



IS THIS GANNETT RAG SHOWING US HOW
THE ASIAN BAILOUT BENEFITS BANKS AND
CORPORATIONS, BUT DESTROYS LOCAL ECONOMIES?
IS DAN RATHER EXPLAINING HOW
THE I.M.F.'S STRATEGY ESCALATES THE
PROBLEM OF CHEAP FOREIGN LABOR
AND THREATENS U.S. WORKERS' JOBS? **No!**

WHERE
ARE THE
PHILLIPS
HEADS?



THE CORPORATE
BEHEMOTHS WHO OWN THE NEWS
DISTRACT US WITH PRESIDENTIAL
PECCADILLOES WHILE THEY PRO-
CEED TO **PILLAGE** THE PLAN-
ET WITH **IMPUNITY!**

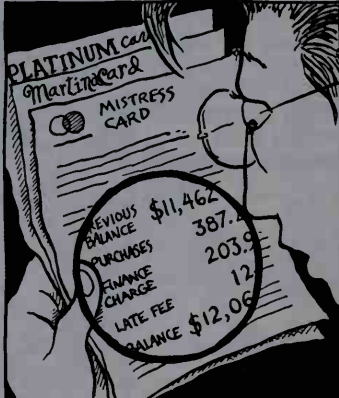
A TIP-O-THE-NIB TO CHRIS MOES



GOOD POINT.
WHILE YOU'RE UP,
COULD YOU SEE IF I
LEFT THOSE SCREWS
BY THE PHONE?



YEAH,
HERE THEY...
UH... ARE.



SYDNEY! THERE WAS THIS
STACK OF CREDIT CARD BILLS
LYING ON YOUR DESK! I...
I'M SHOCKED! D'YOU REALLY
OWE THIS MUCH MONEY?



MO...
I'M HAVING
AN AFFAIR WITH
ONE OF MY
STUDENTS.

WHAT?!

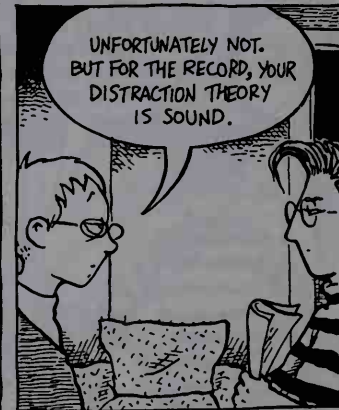


IT JUST SORT OF HAPPENED. ONE
MINUTE WE WERE DISCUSSING
GENDER SLIPPAGE, AND THE NEXT,
SHE'D SLIPPED RIGHT OUT OF HER
AQUA PLAID STRETCH PANTS!

ARE YOU
SERIOUS?



UNFORTUNATELY NOT.
BUT FOR THE RECORD, YOUR
DISTRACTION THEORY
IS SOUND.



the iceman cometh

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GINGER! THANK GOD YOU'RE HOME! I WAS SO WORRIED WHEN I HEARD THE WEATHER REPORT. HOW WERE THE ROADS?

FOUR HOURS TO DRIVE A HUNDRED MILES. I CAN'T UNCLENCH MY HANDS.

HOW'D IT GO AT BUFFALO LAKE STATE? ARE THEY GONNA HIRE YOU?

I HAVE A SINKING FEELING THEY MIGHT. SPARROW, YOU'RE NOT GOING OUT ARE YOU?

SHE PROBABLY HAS A DATE WITH HER GENTLEMAN CALLER.

283

WHAT'S IT FEEL LIKE TO BE STRAIGHT?

LOIS! I... I'M NOT STRAIGHT!

SO WHAT'RE YOU DOING WITH THIS GUY? TALK TO US! YOU'VE BEEN SNEAKING AROUND LIKE A GUILTY TEENAGER!

I DON'T KNOW WHAT I'M DOING! THIS IS VERY CONFUSING, AND YOU'RE NOT MAKING IT ANY EASIER.

ARE YOU SOTTUPPING HIM?

NO.

DO YOU WANT TO?

YES... I THINK. I DON'T KNOW! I REALLY LIKE HIM, BUT... HE'S A MAN!

WELL, THAT'S NOT NECESSARILY A PERMANENT CONDITION.

SHUT UP, LOIS. HOW DOES HE FEEL? WHAT DOES HE WANT?

HE'S A LITTLE WARY, TOO. HE SEEMS TO HAVE A PATTERN OF GETTING INVOLVED WITH WOMEN WHO TURN OUT TO BE LESBIANS.

WHAT IS IT WITH THOSE GUYS?

HERE HE IS. SEE YOU LATER.

STOMP STOMP

WUF!

CLIK!

SPARROW, INVITE HIM IN FOR A SECOND! WHAT'RE YOU AFRAID OF?

YEAH. I PROMISE I WON'T CARVE UP A CUCUMBER WITH A CLEAVER WHILE SHOUTING "DEATH TO THE PATRIARCHY."

LOOK, I'M JUST NOT READY TO HANG OUT PLAYING PARCHEESI WITH ALL OF YOU YET.

HI, STUART! STUART?

WHAT HAPPENED?

M-MY CAR... PHONE POLE... T-TEN BLOCKS AWAY...

THE WHITE COROLLA? I SAW THAT! ARE YOU OKAY?

COME ON IN, LADDY BUCK. I'LL SET UP THE PARCHEESI BOARD.

AR AR >KACK!< ARF

collateral DAMAGE

SPARROW'S SWAIN APPEARS TO BE IN A MILD STATE OF SHOCK.

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HERE. LIE DOWN AND ELEVATE YOUR FEET. I'LL GET YOU SOME HOT TEA WITH HONEY.

LOIS, COULD YOU FIND HIS TRIPLE A CARD IN HERE AND GET HIS CAR TOWED?

NO, I CAN DO IT. I'M F-F-FINE.

GIVE IT UP, STUART. WHO'S YOUR MECHANIC?

SHORTLY, IN THE KITCHEN...

RIGHT. WRAPPED AROUND A PHONE POLE AT 19TH AND MARTIN. WHY, THANK YOU, RITA. YOU HAVE A LOVELY EVENING TOO!

THIRTY-FOUR BUCKS CASH, AND THREE HUNDRED SEVENTY-ONE IN THE BANK. HUH. IF THAT'S STRAIGHT WHITE MALE PRIVILEGE, WE'RE NOT MISSING MUCH.

LOIS, YOU CAN'T JUST RIFLE THROUGH HIS WALLET!

CAN TOO. GROOVY P.C. CREDIT CARD, CO-OP MEMBERSHIP, THERAPIST'S BUSINESS CARD... JEEZ, MAYBE HE IS A LESBIAN.

PUT THAT STUFF BACK! HE'LL KNOW YOU WERE INTO IT!

WHAT DO YOU CARE? YOU'RE BEING SUSPICIOUSLY NICE TO THIS GUY. "OH, STUART! LET ME GET YOU SOME TEA!"

HEY, I'M JUST BEING POLITE. I'D DO THE SAME IF SPARROW WAS SEEING A WOMAN.

BUT SHE'S NOT, BLANCHE. SHE'S NOT. COME ON. I KNOW IT BUGS YOU. QUIT BEING SO TOLERANT.

WELL... I GUESS I AM DISAPPOINTED IN HER. IT'S JUST SO... CONVENTIONAL.

DON'TOHA FEEL LEFT IN THE LURCH? SHE'LL BE SHOWERED WITH APPROVAL AND APPLIANCES WHILE WE STAY HERE FENDING OFF PROMISEKEEPERS AND "PRO-FAMILY" PREVERTS.

YEAH. HER LIFE WILL BE COMPLETELY DIFFERENT WITH A MAN. A WHITE MAN AT THAT! WHAT IS SHE THINKING?

I DUNNO, BUT I FEEL HAD.

YEAH, BETRAYED. SPARROW SEEING A GUY IS LIKE CLINTON TURNING OUT TO BE JUST ANOTHER HYPOCRITICAL, FAMILY VALUES SPEWING, WELFARE-SLASHING, SABER RATTLING THUG!

REALLY.

STU! DUDE, I GOT YOUR TEA!

Buying the Farm

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I'M ALL PACKED. I LEFT STUART'S NUMBER BY THE PHONE IN CASE ANYONE NEEDS ME.

SPARROW, PLEASE DON'T DO THIS!

YOU CAN'T BREAK UP THE HOUSEHOLD. WE'RE...WE'RE FAMILY.

THAT'S THE PROBLEM. LOOK, IT'S ONLY FOR A LITTLE WHILE. I NEED SOME SPACE.

I WAS JUST VENTING WHEN I SAID ALL THAT STUFF ABOUT YOU AND STUART. I'M OVER IT!

286

SHE'S REALLY COME AROUND, SPARROW. I'VE TALKED TO HER.

SHUT UP, LOIS. I WAS FINE ABOUT IT TILL YOU STARTED WITH THE HETEROSEXUAL PANIC.

YOU TWO ARE GONNA HAVE TO SORT IT OUT ON YOUR OWN. I NEED TO BE IN A MORE SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENT.

SPARROW, WE'RE YOUR FRIENDS! I DON'T THINK IT'S SUCH A GOOD IDEA THAT YOU GO TO STUART'S PLACE. YOU HARDLY KNOW HIM. AND I'D SAY THE SAME THING IF HE WERE A WOMAN!

EXCEPT SHE'D SAY "YOU HARDLY KNOW HER."

DING DONG

THAT'S HER. I MEAN HIM.

Wurf!

DIGGER, CHILL! YOU'RE GETTING TOO OLD FOR THIS!

LORNA! WHAT DO YOU WANT?

I DIDN'T THINK YOU LADIES WOULD BE HERE. DIDN'T MY OFFICE CALL YOU?

NO, THEY DIDN'T.

WELL, YOU WON'T MIND IF I BRING A CLIENT THROUGH. HE'S LOOKING FOR A RENTAL PROPERTY. IF IT WORKS OUT, YOU COULD GET TO STAY HERE.

I COULDA TOLD YOU A DOG LIVED HERE. THE YARD'S A MESS. PEOPLE WHO RENT TO DOG OWNERS ARE NUTS.

LISTEN, YOU CAN'T JUST COME IN HERE WITHOUT ANY WARNING!

WOOF
Yipe! ARP

GRRR!

COME ON IN, MR. WIENER!

BAW! ATE!

I KNOW, HON. I'LL SPEAK TO MY SECRETARY ABOUT IT. LET'S START WITH THE BASEMENT, MR. W.

SEE THERE? LOOKIT WHAT THAT MUTT'S DONE TO THE WOODWORK.

OKAY, OUT! I MEAN IT, OR I SET THE HOUND LOOSE!

WELL! YOUR LANDLORD'LL HEAR ABOUT THIS!

JEEZ! BUNCHA NUT JOBS.

SLAM!

WOW! WAY TA GO, GINGER!

YEAH. THIS'LL BE EXCITING. I'VE NEVER BEEN EVICTED BEFORE.

NO ONE'S EVICTING ANYONE, LADIES. I'M GONNA BUY THIS DAMN HOUSE!

URF!

ARP?

POSSESSED GLEAM

WUF!

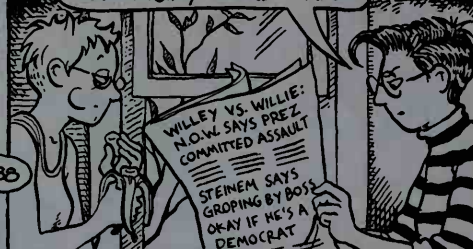
WHERE IS THE SLUSH — of — YESTERYEAR?

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ONE SPRINGY SATURDAY MORNING...

FEMINISTS CAN'T WIN! IF WE CRITICIZE CLINTON'S BEHAVIOR, WE'RE PRIDES. AND IF WE SUGGEST HIS SEX LIFE IS HIS OWN BUSINESS, WE'RE HYPOCRITES. IT'S THE SAME OLD VIRGIN / WHORE TRAP.

288



ACTUALLY, I WAS JUST THINKING THAT ALL THIS OBSESSION WITH OUR FEARLESS LEADER'S WENCHING HAS HAD THE INTERESTING ANCILLARY FUNCTION OF EXPANDING THE DISCURSIVE DEMARICATIONS OF WOMEN'S SEXUAL SUBJECTIVITY.

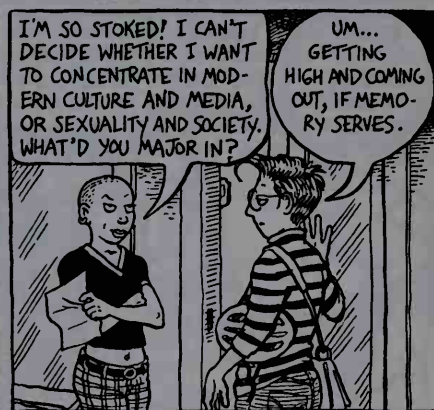
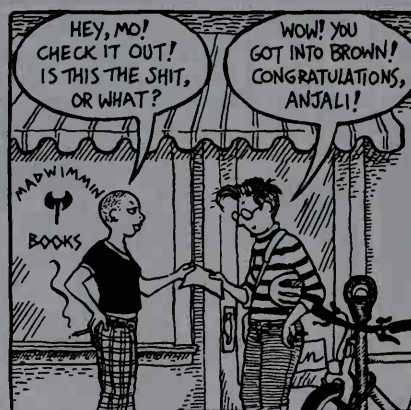
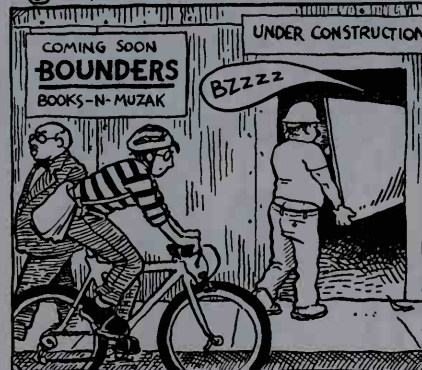


THE MORE OPEN DISCUSSION THERE IS ABOUT SEX, THE MORE WE MOVE BEYOND THE FALSE POLARITY OF WOMEN AS EITHER SEXUAL PREY, OR FRAIL VIRGINS IN NEED OF PROTECTION.

SOMEHOW, I THINK THAT POINT WILL ELUDE YOUR AVERAGE JOE MOLESTER. IF THIS IS PROGRESS, TAKE ME BACK TO THE FIFTIES. HEY! THAT'S THE LAST BANANA!



FORTY-SEVEN MINUTES LATER...



deferred Interest

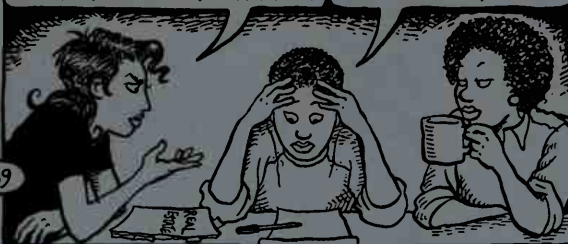
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...AND WITH AN ADJUSTABLE RATE MORTGAGE, YOU WANT TO BE CAREFUL OF NEGATIVE AMORTIZATION, OR DEFERRED INTEREST, BECAUSE AT THE END OF THE YEAR, YOU COULD BE FURTHER IN DEBT THAN WHEN YOU STARTED.

GOD, MY HEAD'S SWIMMING. I'M SO GLAD WE'RE BUYING HOUSES AT THE SAME TIME. I DON'T KNOW IF I COULD FIGURE ALL THIS OUT ON MY OWN.

YOU'LL GET THE HANG OF IT. IT'S ACTUALLY REALLY INTERESTING. SO FOR A 30-YEAR FIXED-RATE LOAN, YOU NEED TO PAY 20 PERCENT DOWN, OR YOU HAVE TO BUY MORTGAGE INSURANCE, WHICH...



I THINK IT'S GREAT YOU'RE COMMITTED TO STAYING IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD, GINGER. I DON'T WANT TO LEAVE, BUT...

BUT WE DON'T WANT RAFFI GROWING UP NEXT DOOR TO A CRACK HOUSE.



OKAY. THE BEST DEAL IS A 15-YEAR LOAN. YOU END UP PAYING WAY LESS INTEREST, BUT OF COURSE THE MONTHLY PAYMENTS ARE HIGHER.

I DON'T THINK I COULD AFFORD THAT. BUFFALO LAKE IS ONLY GIVING ME A PITTANCE.

HOW'D YOU DECIDE TO TAKE THE JOB? DIDN'T YOU SAY TEACHING AT A MOSTLY WHITE, SMALL-TOWN STATE COLLEGE SOUNDED LIKE THE NINTH CIRCLE OF HELL?



WELL, HELL STARTED LOOKING PRETTY GOOD. IT'S NOT EXACTLY A BUYER'S MARKET OUT THERE. 463 PEOPLE APPLIED FOR THIS JOB!

WHOA, RAFFI. THAT'S VERY UH... LETHAL LOOKING.

SO MUCH FOR 'NO MORE WAR TOYS.' SYDNEY GOT HIM THAT. SHE AND MO TOOK HIM TO TOYS R US LAST NIGHT WHILE I WAS AT A FREEDOM TO MARRY MEETING.



HEY, DO YOU HAVE ANY INTEREST IN VOLUNTEERING? IT'S SUCH IMPORTANT WORK!

UM... ACTUALLY, MARRIAGE ISN'T REAL HIGH ON MY AGENDA RIGHT NOW.

TONI, NOT EVERYONE WANTS TO FIGHT FOR THE DUBIOUS RIGHT OF HAVING THEIR DOMESTIC AFFAIRS LEGITIMIZED BY THE PATRIARCHY.



LISTEN, CLARICE, IT'S A MUCH MORE RADICAL ACT FOR TWO WOMEN TO CHALLENGE THE STATE BY GETTING MARRIED THAN TO SIT AROUND MUTTERING ABOUT THE PATRIARCHY.

UM... COULD YOU EXPLAIN THAT STUFF ABOUT "POINTS" AGAIN, AND HOW THEY AFFECT THE INTEREST RATE?

THWACK!

RAFFI!



LATER THAT EVENING...

I LOVE THAT WE'RE FRIENDS WITH GINGER. IT MAKES ME FEEL SO SOPHISTICATED, LIKE WE'RE IN A NOEL COWARD PLAY. WHEN WAS IT YOU TWO HAD THAT AFFAIR? TEN YEARS AGO?



CLARICE?



LOVE and WORK part 1

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BUTCH IN THE STREETS, FEMME IN THE SHEETS? HOW **TOO** TRITE.

SIT BACK & HANG ON AS OUR SPECIAL 2-PART SERIES EXPLORES SOME **MORE PIQUANT** DISPARITIES BETWEEN WORK-PLACE AND BED-ROOM DEMEANOR.

290

AT WORK, CLARICE HAS LASERLIKE FOCUS, ...AND TONI EXUDES MATURITY.

YOUR HONOR, MY ESTEEMED COLLEAGUE IS OVERLOOKING SECTION 304 (a) AND (f), 42 U.S.C. SEC. 7604, WHICH SETS AN EMISSION LIMIT OF 5mg/m³ OVER ANY 30 DAY PERIOD, IF I'M NOT MISTAKEN.



WHICH I'M NOT.

BECAUSE I'M THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, THAT'S WHY!

JOAN, LET'S DISCUSS THIS AFTER LUNCH. YOU KNOW YOU GET IRRITABLE WHEN YOU'RE HUNGRY.



TONI ORTIZ, BUS. MGR.

BUT IN THE BOUDOIR...



HA! I TAPED THIS FOR RAFFI, BUT IT'S REALLY GROWING ON ME.

HUH?

AGAIN!

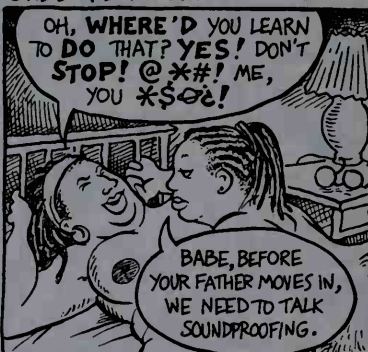
AT THE BOOKSTORE, JEZANNA IS A WOMAN OF FEW WORDS,



DIDJA SEE BOUNDERS BOOKS AND MUZAK IS HAVING THEIR GRAND OPENING NEXT MONTH?

MMPH.

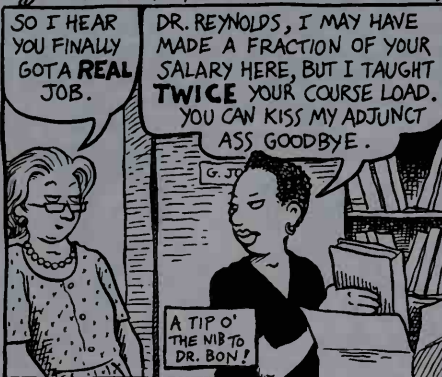
... BUT IN AN INTIMATE SETTING, SHE'S A BIT MORE VOLUBLE.



OH, WHERE'D YOU LEARN TO DO THAT? YES! DON'T STOP! @*#! ME, YOU *\$@#!

BABE, BEFORE YOUR FATHER MOVES IN, WE NEED TO TALK SOUNDPROOFING.

GINGER HAS AN EYE TO THE FUTURE AT WORK,



SO I HEAR YOU FINALLY GOT A **REAL** JOB.

DR. REYNOLDS, I MAY HAVE MADE A FRACTION OF YOUR SALARY HERE, BUT I TAUGHT **TWICE** YOUR COURSE LOAD. YOU CAN KISS MY ADJUNCT ASS GOODBYE.

A TIP O' THE NIB TO DR. BON!

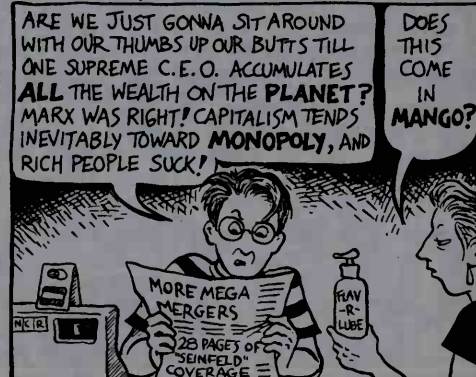
... BUT IN BED, SHE'S LIVING IN THE PAST.



RECENTLY EXCAVATED 10-YR. OLD MEMORY

LISS BUSH IN '80

ON THE JOB, MO STANDS BY HER PRINCIPLES...



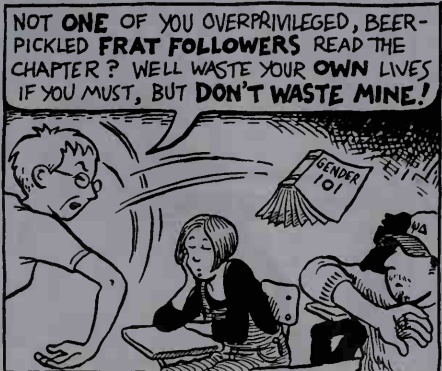
ARE WE JUST GONNA SIT AROUND WITH OUR THUMBS UP OUR BUTTS TILL ONE SUPREME C.E.O. ACCUMULATES **ALL** THE WEALTH ON THE PLANET? MARK WAS RIGHT! CAPITALISM TENDS INEVITABLY TOWARD **MONOPOLY**, AND RICH PEOPLE SUCK!

DOES THIS COME IN MANGO?

MORE MEGA MERGERS
28 PAGES OF "SEINFELD" COVERAGE

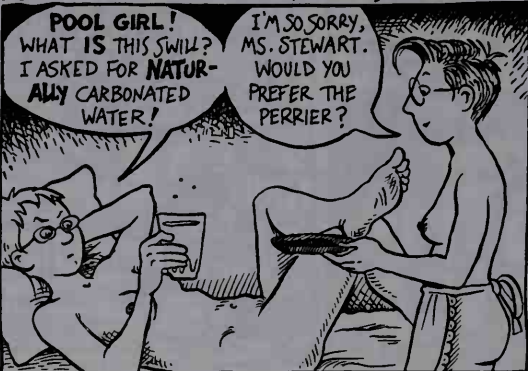
FLAY-R-LUBE

... AND SYDNEY'S OUT OF CONTROL.



NOT **ONE** OF YOU OVERPRIVILEGED, BEER-PICKLED **FRAT FOLLOWERS** READ THE CHAPTER? WELL WASTE YOUR **OWN** LIVES IF YOU MUST, BUT **DON'T WASTE MINE!**

BUT IN THE HEAT OF PASSION, MATTERS ARE DIFFERENT.



POOL GIRL! WHAT IS THIS SWIM? I ASKED FOR **NATURALLY** CARBONATED WATER!

I'M SO SORRY, MS. STEWART. WOULD YOU PREFER THE **PERRIER**?



YES. AND CALL ME **MARTHA**, YOU COMELY WENCH.

TO BE CONTINUED...

LOVE and WORK part II

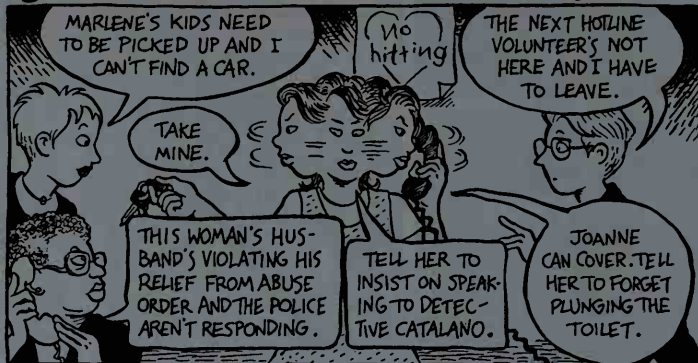
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TO LOVE AND TO WORK. THE TWIN CONDITIONS OF A MEANINGFUL LIFE. BUT IS OUR PERFORMANCE IN ONE ARENA AN INDEX OF OUR PERFORMANCE IN THE OTHER?

JOIN US AS WE SEEK THE ANSWER IN THIS FINAL INSTALLMENT OF OUR PENETRATING INVESTIGATIVE SERIES.

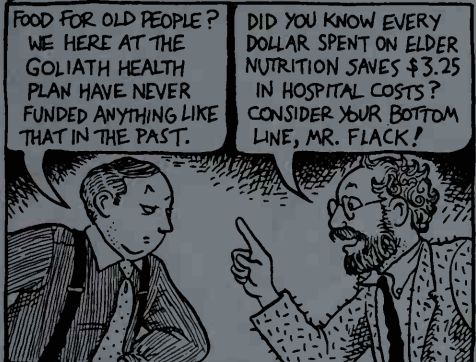
291

SPARROW'S A MODEL OF DECISIVENESS DOWN AT THE SHELTER...

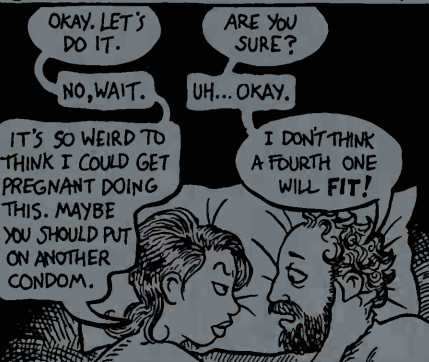


TIPS O' THE NIB TO PATTI McMANAW & NAT GRANT

AND STUART'S FUNDRAISING ZEAL IS UNFLAGGING.



BUT IN THE RACK, SHE CAN'T DECIDE,



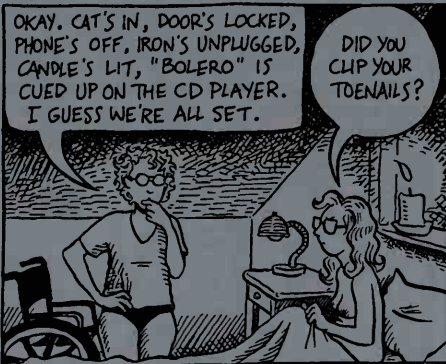
...AND HE FINALLY FLAGS.



THEA'S EASYGOING ON THE JOB...



BUT A BIT MORE PARTICULAR IN BED...



DISORIENTED BY HIS PROLONGED UNEMPLOYMENT, CARLOS IS HAVING SEX WHEN HE SHOULD BE WORKING...



...AND VICE VERSA.



AND LOIS BRINGS TO BOTH WORK AND PLAY... A CONSISTENT, SERVICE-ORIENTED APPROACH.



an embarrassment of condiments

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I HOPE YOU'RE NOT STARVING. TONI ISN'T BACK FROM HER FTM MEETING YET.

OH, TONI'S TRANSITIONING? HERE'S MORE RELISH. I DIDN'T KNOW YOU ALREADY HAD SOME.

NOT FEMALE-TO-MALE! FREEDOM TO MARRY. HERE'S SOME FRUIT-SWEETENED CATSUP.

SYDNEE!

COMMANDER SKY-WALKER? QUICK! SAND PEOPLE ON THE NORTH RIDGE!



SHOULD HE BE PLAYING WITH THAT LIGHT SABER? I MEAN, AREN'T YOU CONCERNED ABOUT ALL THESE BOYS MOWING DOWN THEIR CLASSMATES WITH ASSAULT RIFLES?



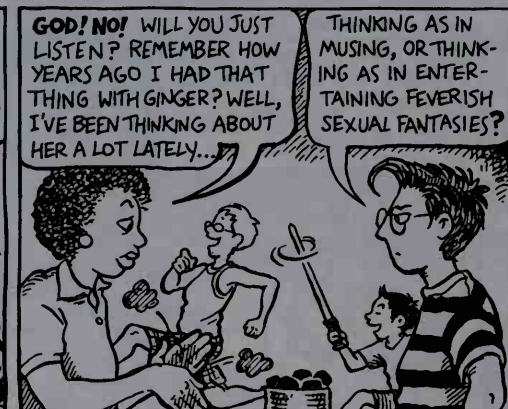
HEY, I DID EVERYTHING I COULD TO TALK SYDNEY OUT OF IT. BUT SHE'S A JUGGERNAUT WHEN SHE'S GOT A VISA CARD IN HER HAND.



YEAH. IT'S LIKE SHE HAS TO HAVE NEW STUFF ALL THE TIME. HER CLOSET IS LIKE A J. SCREW WAREHOUSE!



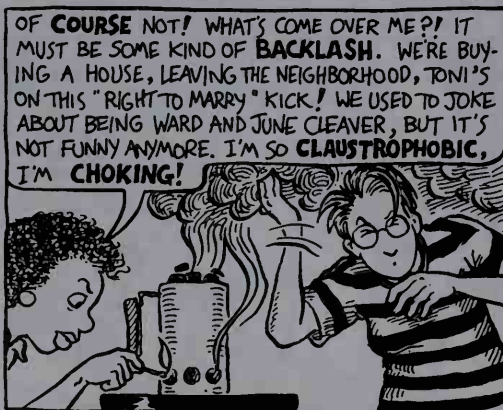
WHAT'S GOING ON?! IS SOMETHING WRONG? YOU GUYS AREN'T BREAKING UP, ARE YOU?



THINKING AS IN MUSING, OR THINKING AS IN ENTERTAINING FEVERISH SEXUAL FANTASIES?



GOD, CLARICE! YOU HAVEN'T SAID ANYTHING TO HER, HAVE YOU?

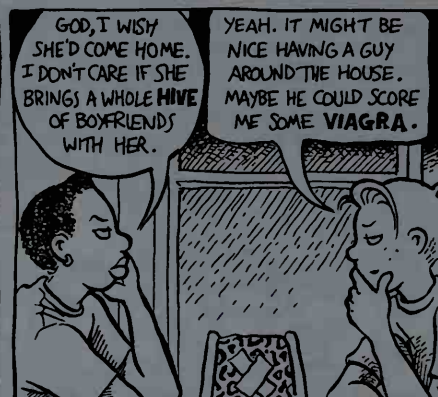
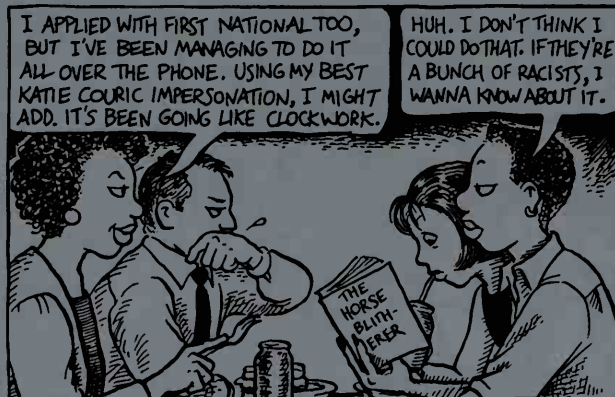


I THINK ONE CAN SAFELY SAY THERE'S ENTIRELY TOO MUCH RELISH AT THIS BARBECUE.

home economics

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IN A BRISK DOWNTOWN EATERY...



MEANWHILE...

YEAH, I KNOW. CLARICE CALLED EARLIER AND MENTIONED RUNNING INTO GINGER AT LUNCH.



SHE DID, HUH? AND DID SHE ALSO MENTION THE SCORCHING GAZE THEY WERE EXCHANGING?



WHAT ARE YOU SAYING, CARLOS?

I'M SAYING I MAY BE USELESS AT FINDING MYSELF A JOB, BUT I AM NEVER WRONG ABOUT AFFAIRS OF THE HEART. YOU KEEP AN EYE ON THAT GIRL.



OH, EVERYTHING IS SEXUAL TO YOU. YOU'VE BEEN WATCHING TOO MUCH PORN.



MAYBE IF YOU WATCHED MORE. QUERIDA, YOU'D LEARN HOW TO KEEP HER AT HOME.



BALM BLAST

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THIS IS NICE. WE DON'T SPEND ENOUGH TIME TOGETHER. UM... SO, ARE YOU GONNA DRAW UP THAT SPENDING PLAN TODAY? YOU KNOW, TO GET YOUR DEBT UNDER CONTROL?

I CAN'T THINK ABOUT IT RIGHT NOW. THE ANTIHISTAMINES ARE STARTING TO KICK IN.

HEY! I JUST HEARD A NEW CAT ALLERGY SOLUTION! APPLY **TIGER BALM** AROUND YOUR EYES! I HAVE AN OLD TIN SOMEWHERE IF YOU...

I DON'T THINK SO. I RATHER LIKE BEING ABLE TO SEE.

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GOD! HAVE YOU READ ABOUT THIS "MILENIUM MARCH" BROUHAHA? THE HUMAN RIGHTS CAMPAIGN AND THE METROPOLITAN COMMUNITY CHURCH GOT TOGETHER AND UNILATERALLY DECIDED TO THROW A NATIONAL MARCH ON WASHINGTON IN 2000.

A TIDY, CLOSED-PROCESS, TOP-DOWN EXECUTIVE DECISION. NO PUBLIC MEETING, NO DISCUSSION WITH OTHER GAY AND LESBIAN ORGANIZATIONS, NO COORDINATION WITH OTHER PROGRESSIVE GROUPS.

THE THEME IS "FAITH AND FAMILY." GAG ME WITH A RAINBOW FLAG! OR A **CRUCIFIX**! THAT'S PROBABLY THE LOGO, A RAINBOW CRUCIFIX! I BET THEY'RE PRINTING IT ON SOUVENIR DIAPER BAGS AS WE SPEAK!

WELL, IF THE MESSAGE THAT WE'RE ALL CHURCHGOING MALL PATRONS WINS US MORE SUPPORT, MAYBE IT'S A GOOD STRATEGY FOR THE MOVEMENT.

WHAT MOVEMENT?! THIS ISN'T A MOVEMENT ANYMORE, IT'S A @#i*! **CLOSELY-HELD CORPORATION**, RUN BY A BUNCH OF WHITE, POWER-HUNGRY **MARKETING STRATEGISTS** WHO'RE PACKAGING OUR LIVES INTO A COMMODITY THEY CAN SELL TO PAY THEIR SALARIES!

COME ON, MO. TIMES HAVE CHANGED. ONE SOUNDBITE ON CNN'S WORTH A HUNDRED SWEATY, WEEKEND-LONG, CONSENSUS-BUILDING MASS MEETINGS.

WHOSE SIDE ARE YOU ON, ANYWAY?

NOBODY'S. I'M JUST BEING INTELLECTUALLY RIGOROUS.

UM... SYDNEY? I HAD AN IDEA FOR HOW YOU COULD START WHITTILING DOWN YOUR CREDIT CARD BILL.

DOES IT INVOLVE PERFORMING LEWD ACTS?

MOVE IN WITH ME. WE'D BOTH SAVE OVER A COUPLE HUNDRED BUCKS A MONTH. NOT TO MENTION THE COMMUTING TIME.

YOU MEAN **LIVE** TOGETHER?

WELL, THERE WOULD ALSO BE LEWD ACTS INVOLVED.

HUH. WHY DON'T YOU GO GET THAT **TIGER BALM**? I HAVE A FEW OTHER IDEAS WHERE WE CAN APPLY IT.

it's a
lifestyle
choice

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SPARROW IS STILL SOJOURNING AT STUART'S...

GOD! THAT NEW NEIGHBOR'S DRIVING ME **INSANE!** HE'S PLAYED THIS MÖTLEY CRÜE ALBUM SIX TIMES SINCE I GOT HOME! AND IS THAT **CIGAR SMOKE?!**

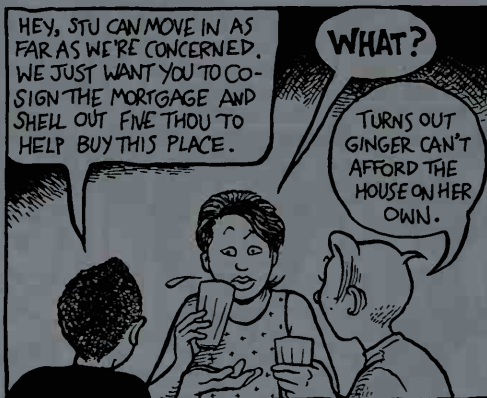
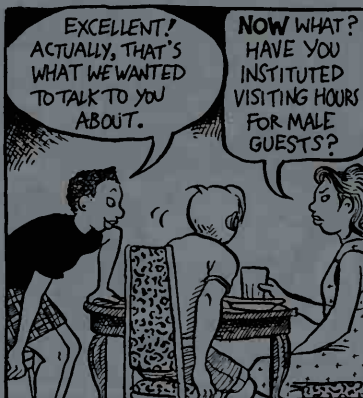
POOR BABY. SEE YOU LATER. I'M HAVING DINNER WITH LOIS AND GINGER.

Girls,
Girls,
Girls!

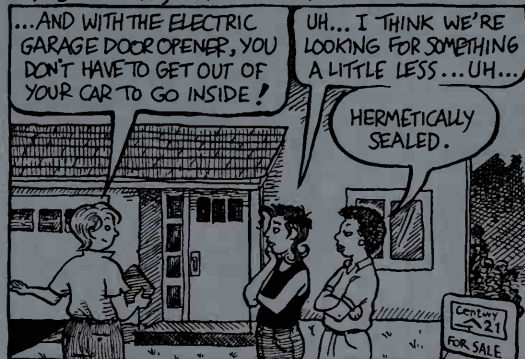
295

SHORTLY...

THANKS FOR COMING, SPARROW. I'VE MISSED YOU SO MUCH.



MEANWHILE, IN A DIFFERENT ZIP CODE...



LATER THAT EVENING...



living arrangements

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ARE YOU INTERESTED?

ARE YOU MAKING ME AN OFFER?

CLARICE! WILL YOU PAY ATTENTION?

HUH?

I WAS JUST SAYING THAT IF YOU'RE REALLY INTERESTED IN THIS HOUSE, I ADVISE MAKING AN OFFER TODAY.

THWACK!

I THINK WE SHOULD DO IT. THIS ONE FEELS RIGHT TO ME.

WELL, SURE, IT LOOKS OKAY. BUT WHAT ABOUT THE PROBLEMS WE CAN'T SEE? LEAD PAINT, AIRPLANE NOISE...

...FUNDAMENTALISTS, RADON...

HOW MUCH OF A DEPOSIT DO WE NEED TO PUT DOWN?

MEANWHILE,...

Grand Opening
FREE
CAPPUCCINO!

BOUNDERS
BOOKS-N-MUZAK

MO! WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?

OH, UH... HI, HARRIET. HI, CARLOS. JUST A LITTLE RESEARCH. YOU KNOW. GOTTA STAY ABREAST OF THE COMPETITION.

LOOKIN' PRESIDENTIAL: CLINTON BOMBS BETEEZUS OUT OF SUDANESE PENICILLIN PLANT

WELL, I'M NO BOOK MAVEN LIKE YOURSELF, BUT I THINK THE JOE'S BETTER AT BUNNS AND NOODLE.

I HOPE YOU'RE NOT SPENDING ANY MONEY HERE.

RELAX! WE'RE JUST HAVING FREE DRINKS AND GOSSIPING.

GOSSIPING? ABOUT WHO?

IS SYDNEY REALLY MOVING IN WITH YOU?

AND IS IT BECAUSE SHE'S IN SO MUCH DEBT SHE CAN'T PAY HER RENT?

Y'KNOW, IT'S VERY SAD TO SEE GROWN ADULTS TAKING SUCH AN INAPPROPRIATE INTEREST IN THE PRIVATE CONCERNS OF OTHER PEOPLE.

AND MEANWHILE AGAIN...

WELL, THE GOOD NEWS IS, WE GOT THE MORTGAGE. THE BAD NEWS IS, WE'VE GOTTA REWIRE THE HOUSE BEFORE WE CAN BUY IT. SEEMS THINGS AREN'T QUITE UP TO CODE.

GREAT. WHERE ARE WE GONNA GET THE CABBAGE TO PAY FOR THAT? TAKE IN LODGERS?

THAT WAS STUART ON THE PHONE. YOU DON'T MIND IF HE STAYS OVER AGAIN, DO YOU? HIS NEIGHBOR SEEMS TO BE HAVING ANOTHER KEG PARTY.

WHATEVER. HE PRACTICALLY LIVES HERE ANYWAY.

STRAY VOLTAGE

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WOW. YOU'RE ONLY WIRED FOR SIXTY AMPS. LOTTA ROBOT DAMAGE TOO, I'M SURPRISED THIS PLACE HASN'T BURNED TO THE GROUND.

UH... REALLY?

SO, CAN YOU GIVE US AN ESTIMATE?

LEMME GO OUT TO THE TRUCK AND WORK IT UP.

IN A MOMENT...

LOOK, I'M NOT ASKING STUART TO MOVE IN. I'M NOT READY FOR THAT KIND OF COMMITMENT. I DON'T CARE HOW BADLY WE NEED THE MONEY.

SPARROW, THIS IS NO TIME FOR INTIMACY ISSUES. JUST THINK OF IT AS HAVING A TEMPORARY ROOMMATE TILL WE PAY OFF THE REPAIRS.

DON'T LECTURE ME ABOUT INTIMACY ISSUES. YOU'RE THE ONE OBSESSED WITH A MARRIED WOMAN. AT LEAST STUART IS AVAILABLE!

WHY DON'T YOU ASK CLARICE TO MOVE IN, GINGER. YOU'RE GENERATING ENOUGH ELECTRICITY WITH YOUR CRUSH, WE WON'T NEED TO REWIRE.

MEANWHILE...

THANKS FOR THE BOXES, MO. TONI'LL CREAM. SHE'S SO EXCITED ABOUT THE MOVE, SHE'S DEVELOPING A CARDBOARD FETISH.



YOU DON'T LOOK SO THRILLED.

I'M A WRECK. I'M THINKING ABOUT GINGER ALL THE TIME. IT'S CRAZY. I'M AFRAID TONI KNOWS SOMETHING'S WRONG.

THUNK!



CLARICE, YOU'VE GOTTA RECONCILE YOUR FEELINGS ABOUT LEAVING THE NEIGHBORHOOD. IT'S NOT GINGER YOU'RE ATTRACTED TO, IT'S WHAT SHE REPRESENTS. THE CO-OP, THE PARK, THE BLOCK FESTIVAL, THE COMMUNITY!



OH. SO IT'S REALLY THE COMMUNITY'S INNER THIGHS I WANT TO DRIZZLE WITH MAPLE CRÈME ANGLAISE, WHICH I THEN SLOWLY LAP UP WHILE STRADDLING THE TANTALIZING TONGUE OF THE CO-OP.

UH... WELL, SORT OF...

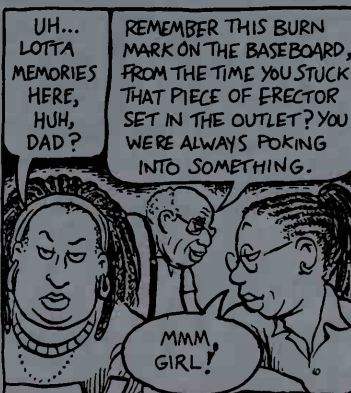
MEANWHILE, IN ST. LOUIS, JEZANNA AND AUDREY ARE PACKING UP JEZ'S FATHER TO COME BACK AND LIVE WITH THEM.

IT'S BEEN LONELY WITHOUT YOUR MAMA. BUT I'M GONNA MISS THIS HOUSE.

YOU CAN STILL CHANGE YOUR MIND. WE HAVEN'T SOLD IT YET, AND I CAN ALWAYS RETURN THE U-HAUL.



NUDGE



UH... LOTTA MEMORIES HERE, HUH, DAD?

REMEMBER THIS BURN MARK ON THE BASEBOARD, FROM THE TIME YOU STUCK THAT PIECE OF ERECTOR SET IN THE OUTLET? YOU WERE ALWAYS POKING INTO SOMETHING.

MMM, GIRL!

BACK AT THE RANCH...

OF COURSE, THAT DOESN'T INCLUDE REPAIRING THE WALLS AFTER I'M DONE.

Y'KNOW, MAYBE MY RELUCTANCE TO COMMIT IS A TAD UNHEALTHY.



\$525 INCLUDING UTILITIES.

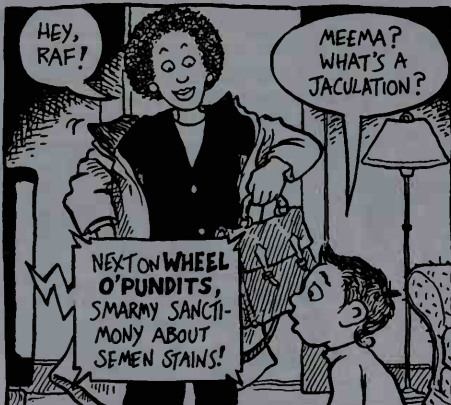
enough already

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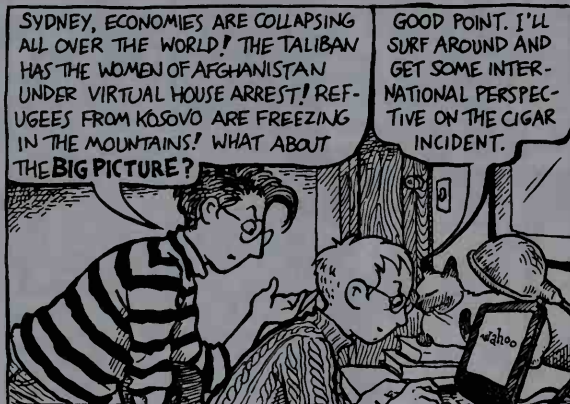
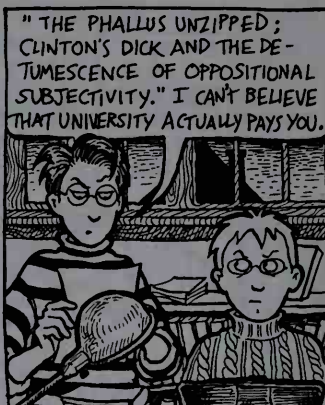
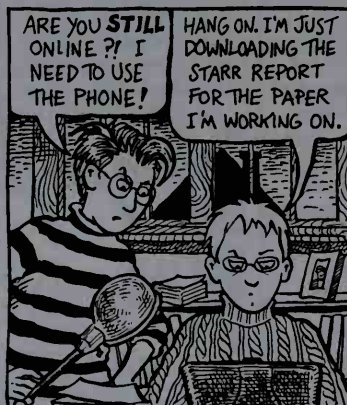
298

GET OUT YOUR ROLODEX. AS WE REJOIN OUR WANDERING NARRATIVE, THERE SEEM TO BE A FEW CHANGES OF ADDRESS.

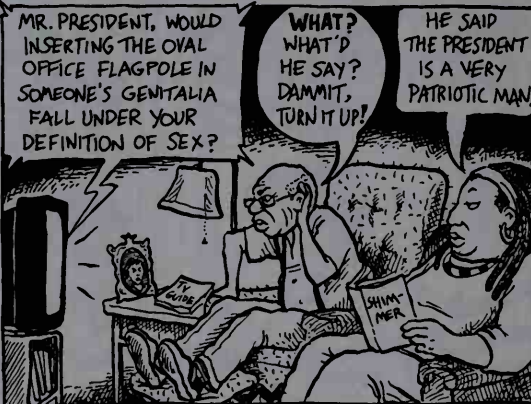
CLARICE AND TONI HAVE EMIGRATED TO THE RIGHT SIDE OF THE TRACKS.



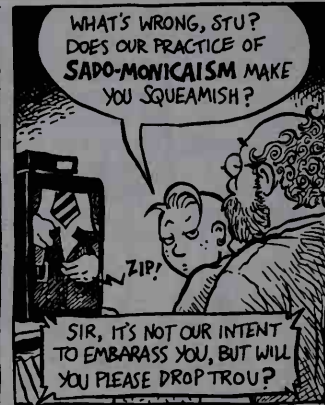
SYDNEY HAS BECOME MO'S NOT-SO-DOMESTIC PARTNER.



JEZANNA, IN A GRUDGING ACT OF FILIAL DUTY, HAS OPENED UP HER HOME TO HER BEGRIEVED FATHER.



AND IN A QUASI-MARRIAGE OF CONVENIENCE, STUART HAS TAKEN LODGINGS WITH SPARROW AND THE GIRLS.



buyer's remorse

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ONE AUTUMNAL TUESDAY EVE...

WELL, THAT WAS UNPLEASANT. BUT IT HAD TO BE DONE.

OH, THANKS, LOIS! SINCE GINGER STARTED HER NEW JOB, THE DOG SHIT'S REALLY BEEN PILING UP OUT THERE.

UH... I WASN'T CLEANING UP THE YARD. I JUST CAME FROM THE POLLS.

MMM. THAT WAS A NASTY BUSINESS.

MAY THE LORD HAVE MERCY ON MY SOUL. I VOTED FOR EVERY MARGINALLY LESSER EVIL ON THE TICKET.

YEAH, ME TOO. AND I'M GETTING PRETTY SICK OF THIS ROTTEN TWO-PARTY DEAL. IT'S GOT TO GO.

MAYBE IT'LL FINALLY HAPPEN, NOW THAT CLINTON'S TOTALLED THE DEMOCRATS, AND THE REPUBLICANS ARE LOST SOMEWHERE BETWEEN LEVITICUS AND THE 19TH CENTURY.

I DON'T KNOW. I'M LOSING FAITH IN PEOPLE'S COMMON SENSE. LIKE, WILL YOU EXPLAIN TO ME WHAT THESE LESBIAN AND GAY GROUPS ARE DOING IN BED WITH CONSERVATIVE REPUBLICANS?

ARF?

HIRE ENDORSES ANTI-CHOICE DAMATO
"WE'D RATHER HAVE GAYS IN THE MILITARY THAN GUN CONTROL!"
QUICHE
ORGANIC COW
EGGS

GETTING REAMED. BUT THEY SEEM TO LIKE IT.

HELLO!

LOG CABIN CLUB VONS TO DEFEAT TWO LESBIAN CONGRESSIONAL CANDIDATES

HEY, SPARROW. HOW'D THE CLOSING GO THIS MORNING?

WE GOT IT! GINGER AND I OFFICIALLY OWN THE HOUSE!

WELL, I JUST HOPE YOU WON'T TAKE ADVANTAGE OF A SIMPLE PEASANT LAD WITH YOUR DEBAUCHED, LANDED GENTRY WAYS.

LATER, AFTER GINGER RETURNS...

TO OUR NEW HOME. CHEERS.

PROSIT.

SKOAL.

FEH!

UH... GREAT NON-ALCOHOLIC WINE, SPARROW. ALUSTERE, YET MEAGER, WITH A HINT OF WELCH'S AND A SOBER FINISH.

HEY, WHAT'S THAT PILE OF SAWDUST UNDER THE WINDOW? I THOUGHT WE CLEANED UP AFTER THE ELECTRICIAN.

WE DID.

WEIRD. MAYBE THE FAMILY RESEARCH COUNCIL CAME BY AND PLANTED A LISTENING DEVICE.

WELL, IT'S DEFINITELY SOME KIND OF BUG. I CAN HEAR IT CHEWING.

the DRAMA of the GIFTED CHILD



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MO AND SYDNEY DECIDE TO SPEND THE FIRST HALF OF THEIR CHRISTMAS VACATION WITH SYDNEY'S FATHER AND STEP-MOTHER.

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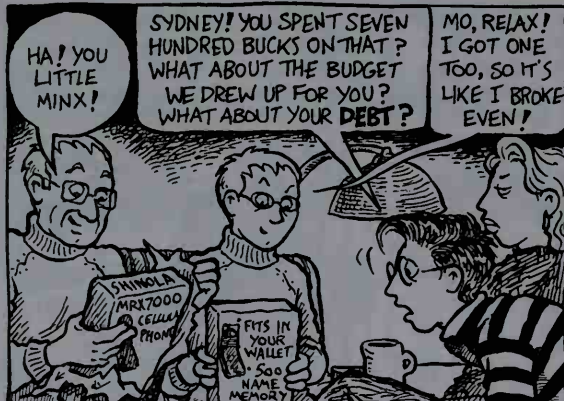
WHOA! AN MRX7000! I CAN'T BELIEVE IT! THANKS, DAD!

PAUL! YOU PROMISED TO SCALE BACK THIS YEAR! THAT MUST HAVE COST FIVE HUNDRED DOLLARS!



SEVEN. IT'S AN AMAZING PIECE OF TECHNOLOGY! OPEN IT UP, SYD!

OPEN YOURS FIRST!



HA! YOU LITTLE MINX!

SYDNEY! YOU SPENT SEVEN HUNDRED BUCKS ON THAT? WHAT ABOUT THE BUDGET WE DREW UP FOR YOU? WHAT ABOUT YOUR DEBT?

MO, RELAX! I GOT ONE TOO, SO IT'S LIKE I BROKE EVEN!

AND THE SECOND HALF WITH MO'S FAMILY.

UH... THANKS, DAD. HOW THOUGHTFUL. BUT Y'KNOW, I WORK IN A BOOKSTORE. I GET AN EMPLOYEE DISCOUNT. I TELL YOU THIS EVERY YEAR.

WELL, I GOT IT AT 20% OFF AT BUNNS AND NOODLE. BUT IF YOU DON'T WANT IT, I'LL TAKE IT BACK.



DAD! I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU! HAVEN'T I EXPLAINED A THOUSAND TIMES HOW BUNNS AND NOODLE IS RAPING THE CULTURAL LANDSCAPE!?



NICE TALK, MO! JUST TAKE THE BOOK! YOU'VE ALWAYS GOTTA GET EVERYONE'S ATTENTION.

SCOTT, WHY DON'T YOU GO POLISH YOUR JUMBO WOOD?

WHY'RE YOU SO CRITICAL OF SCOTT'S GOLF-PLAYING, MO? I THOUGHT LESBIANS LIKED GOLF.

SYDNEY! WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

I... I JUST THOUGHT I'D WORK ON THIS CROSSWORD THAT WAS LYING HERE.

I FORGOT TO WARN YOU. MOM'S A TAD TERRITORIAL ABOUT THE DAILY PUZZLE.

SCOTTY! GET ME SOME MORE EGGNOG. QUICK.

THE DRIVE HOME IS A BIT TENSE...

GOD! IT WAS LIKE I'D SWIPED CAPTAIN QUEEG'S BALLS! I ONLY FILLED IN A COUPLE SQUARES! "PERSONA NON..." WHO COULD RESIST?!

HEY, YOUR DAD'S NOT EXACTLY MR. MENTAL HEALTH EITHER. HOW OLD'S YOUR STEPMOTHER? IS SHE DRIVING YET?



MEANWHILE, THEIR CAT-SITTERS ARE MAKING AN INTERESTING DISCOVERY.

WHAT'RE YOU DOING ON SYDNEY'S COMPUTER? AND WHY ARE YOU BLUSHING?

I, UH... I WAS JUST LOOKING TO SEE IF SHE HAD ANY GAMES.

KOFF.



OH MY GOD! I'D SAY SHE DOES.



...like
it's
1999

IT'S NEW
YEAR'S EVE.
MO AND
SYDNEY
HAVE JUST
RETURNED
FROM
VISITING
THEIR
FAMILIES,
AND IN CON-
SEQUENCE
ARE FEEL-
ING A BIT
FRACTIOUS.

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JEEZ, SPARROW AND
STU DIDN'T CLEAN
OUT THE CAT BOX
ONCE WHILE THEY
WERE HERE.

GOD, MY KEYBOARD'S
ALL STICKY. LOOKS
LIKE THEY WERE MES-
SING AROUND ON MY
COMPUTER, TOO.

THEY LEFT
THIS INVITA-
TION TO THEIR
NEW YEAR'S EVE
PARTY. WANNA
GO?

UH... SURE. I HOPE
THEY DIDN'T GO
SNOOPING IN
MY FILES.

MEANWHILE, PARTY PREPARATIONS ARE AFOOT...

SYDNEY'S HAVING
A VIRTUAL AFFAIR?
WHO CARES? AND
WHAT WERE YOU
DOING ON HER
COMPUTER?

IT'S MY FAULT. I WAS
LOOKING FOR GAMES.
YOU KNOW, NASCAR
RACING! SOLITAIRE!
BUT IN THE FOLDER
LABELED 'GAMES...'

...THERE WERE ALL
THESE LOGS OF WILD
ONLINE SEX WITH
ANOTHER WOMAN.
SOMEONE NAMED
'GOOD THING.'

HOW DO YOU KNOW IT'S A
WOMAN? FOR ALL YOU KNOW,
IT COULD BE CHRISTINE TODD
WHITMAN. BESIDES WHICH, IT'S
NONE OF OUR BUSINESS.

OH. SO IF STUART HAD
SOME BIMBO OVER WHILE
I WAS AWAY, YOU
WOULDN'T BOTHER
MENTIONING IT TO ME?

OH, COME ON! YOU'RE
NOT GONNA TELL MO!
MAYBE SHE ALREADY
KNOWS. MAYBE THEY
HAVE AN ARRANGEMENT.

AND IT'S
NOT LIKE
IT'S A REAL
AFFAIR.

WHAT'S
NOT LIKE
IT'S A REAL
AFFAIR?

OH, LOIS... WE WERE
JUST DISCUSSING, UH...
IN A PURELY THEORET-
ICAL WAY... WHETHER AN
ONLINE AFFAIR COUNTS.

'COUNTS'?
SPARROW,
YOU'RE
SO 20TH
CENTURY.

SOON...

HI, KIDS!
WELCOME
BACK! HOW'RE
THE FOLKS?

UNH.

MPH.

OKAY! TONIGHT'S
TOPIC: EXTRA-
CURRICULAR SEX—
IS IT CHEATING IF
IT'S ONLY VIRTUAL?

LOIS! WHY
DON'T YOU
SEE IF ANYONE
WANTS MORE
HORSE RADISH
REMOULADE!

OF COURSE
IT'S CHEATING!
IT WOULD BE A
DIVERSION OF
EMOTIONAL
ENERGY.

I WOULDN'T CALL IT
CHEATING. IT'S MORE
LIKE REMOTE,
INTERACTIVE
MASTURBATION.

HMM... HAS SHE
BEEN DOING
A LOT OF "ON-
LINE RESEARCH"
LATELY, MO?

OW! JESUS,
SPARROW!

DARN. THAT WAS
SOME TASTY
REMOULADE.

WHOOOPS.

leadership vacuum

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HEY, HOW'S IT GOING? LISTEN, I HAVE TO ASK YOU TO BEAR WITH US. WE'RE EXPERIENCING SOME TECHNICAL DIFFICULTIES WITH THE STRIP.



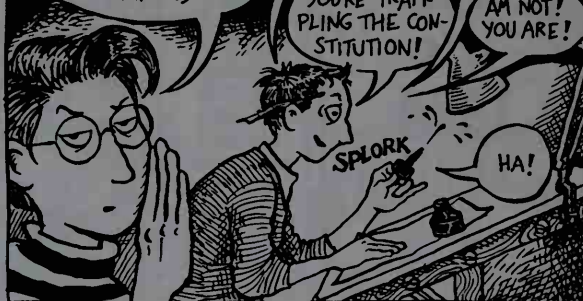
THE CARTOONIST SEEMS TO BE SUFFERING FROM A TOUCH OF THE VAPORS.

HA HA! RULE OF LAW!

COUP D'ÉTAT! COUP D'ÉTAT! COUP D'ÉTAT!

YOU'RE TRAMPLING THE CONSTITUTION!

AM NOT! YOU ARE!



IT'S BEEN A ROUGH WEEK, WHAT WITH ALL THE BREAKING NEWS.

NINA? COKIE? CAN YOU HEAR ME?



WHEN WE STARTED OUT, THE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE HAD JUST PASSED ARTICLES OF IMPEACHMENT.

NOT GERMANE!

THWACK THWACK THWACK

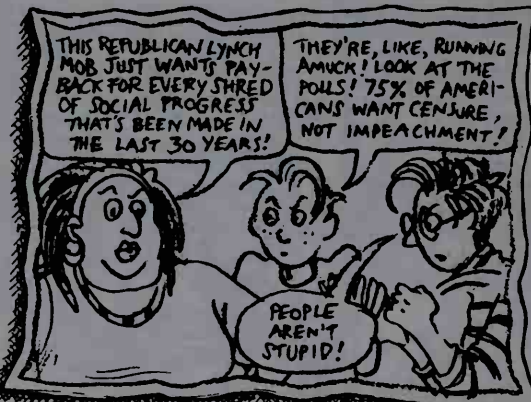


CRINKLE

THIS REPUBLICAN LYNCH MOB JUST WANTS PAY-BACK FOR EVERY SHRED OF SOCIAL PROGRESS THAT'S BEEN MADE IN THE LAST 30 YEARS!

THEY'RE, LIKE, RUNNING AMUCK! LOOK AT THE POLLS! 75% OF AMERICANS WANT CENSURE, NOT IMPEACHMENT!

PEOPLE AREN'T STUPID!



BUT THEN CLINTON DECIDED TO BUY SOME TIME BY BLOWING UP BAGHDAD, SO IT WAS BACK TO THE, UH... DRAWING BOARD.

ONLY 3 BOMBING DAYS LEFT TILL RAMADAN!



THE MAN'S A SOCIOPATH! LIKE ANYONE'S GONNA BELIEVE HE'S NOT ATTACKING IRAQ IN A LAST-DITCH ATTEMPT TO SAVE HIS OWN BONY ASS!

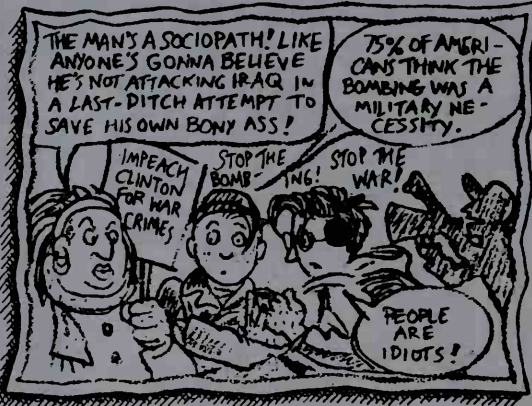
75% OF AMERICANS THINK THE BOMBING WAS A MILITARY NECESSITY.

IMPEACH CLINTON FOR WAR CRIMES

STOP THE BOMBING!

STOP THE WAR!

PEOPLE ARE IDIOTS!



AS OUR DEADLINE CLOSED IN, THE NEWS KEPT COMING.

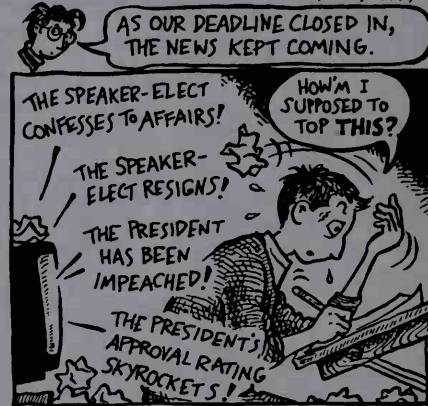
THE SPEAKER-ELECT CONFESSES TO AFFAIRS!

HOW'M I SUPPOSED TO TOP THIS?

THE SPEAKER-ELECT RESIGNS!

THE PRESIDENT HAS BEEN IMPEACHED!

THE PRESIDENT'S APPROVAL RATING SKYROCKETS!



SHE FINALLY WENT OFF HER TROLLEY.

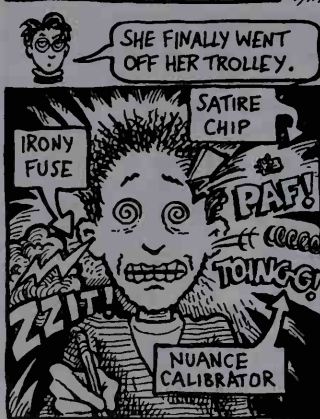
IRONY FUSE

SATIRE CHIP

RAFF!

TOING-G!

NUANCE CALIBRATOR



HEY! ARE YOU FINISHED YET? WE GOTTA SHIP THIS EPISODE OFF!

I'M SORRY YOU HAD TO SEE THIS.



"SEE, LOIS? FORNICATION IS A SIN!"

ALL DONE! HA HA!

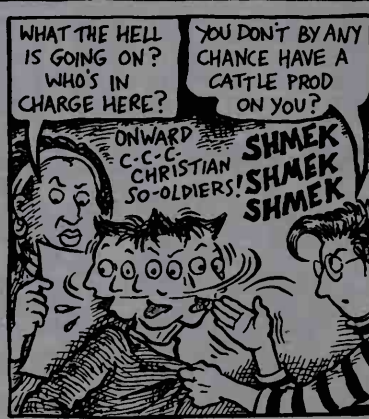


WHAT THE HELL IS GOING ON? WHO'S IN CHARGE HERE?

YOU DON'T BY ANY CHANCE HAVE A CATTLE PROD ON YOU?

ONWARD C.C.C. CHRISTIAN SO-OLDERS!

SHMEK SHMEK SHMEK



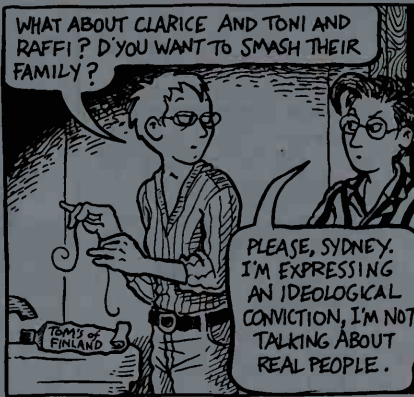
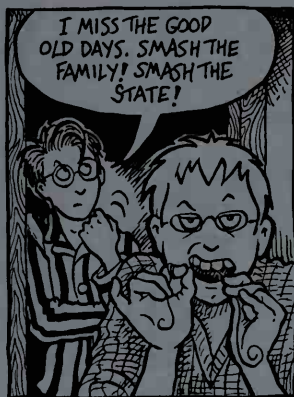
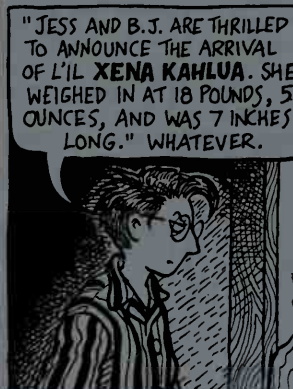
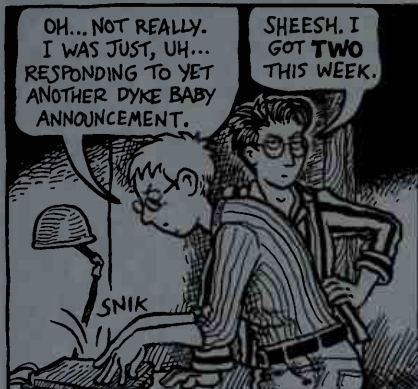
the baby question

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WHAT'S SYDNEY DOING ON HER COMPUTER SO LATE AT NIGHT?



*SECRET PET NAME



drugstore cowpokes

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ONE SNOWY SATURDAY MORN...

SHE MIGHT BE WHAT?

SHH! SHE DOESN'T WANT STUART TO KNOW TILL SHE'S SURE.

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I CAN'T BELIEVE SHE TOLD YOU AND NOT HIM! YOU DIDN'T GET HER PREGNANT!

LOIS, KEEP IT DOWN!

OH, RELAX. HE WENT OUT WHILE YOU WERE WALKING DIGGER. SO WHAT'S SPARROW GONNA DO?

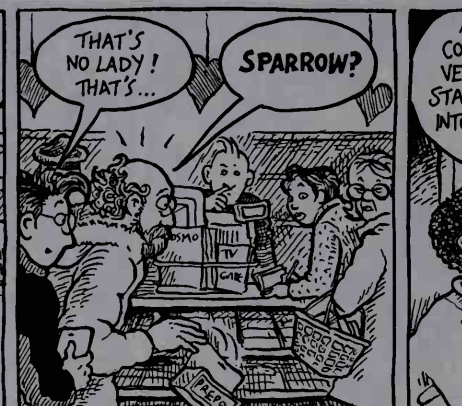
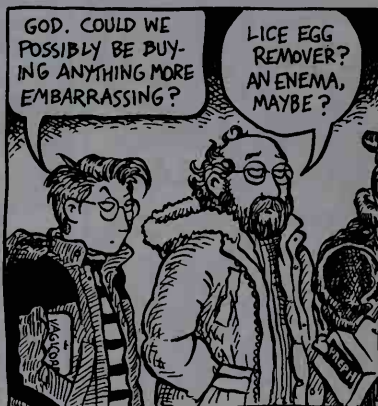
I DON'T KNOW. SHE WAS PRETTY WIGGED OUT. I KNEW ALL THIS HETEROSEXUALITY WOULD COME TO NO GOOD.

ALL I HAVE TO SAY IS, IF THEY BRING A BABY INTO THIS HOUSE, THEY'RE DAMN WELL GONNA PAY MORE OF THE EXPENSES.

MEANWHILE, DOWN AT THE LOCAL PHARMACY...

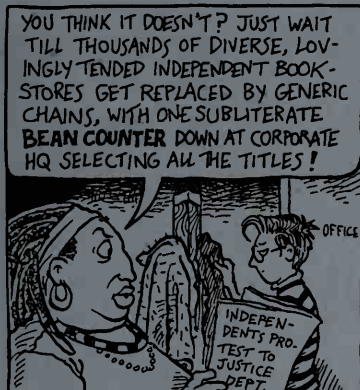
I'M SICK OF MESSING AROUND WITH YOGURT. I WONDER IF THIS STUFF THEY'RE ALWAYS ADVERTISING ON "MARTHA STEWART LIVING" WILL KILL ME?

...F...G... AH, THERE WE GO. PREPARATION H!



Gossip Failure

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©A BIT LATER...

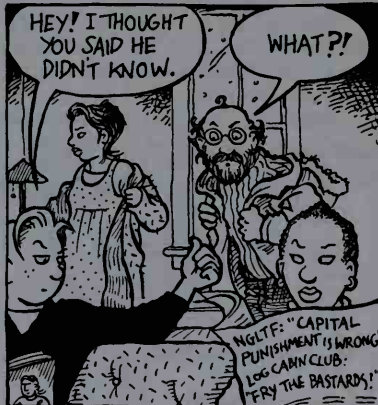


pestered

SPARROW
AND
STUART
RETURN
HOME
TOGETHER
AFTER A
CHANCE
ENCOUNTER
AT THE DRUG-
STORE.

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AVAIL
JONES

IF THE CHRISTIAN RIGHT WERE SMART,
THEY'D CONVERT ALL THOSE EX-GAY
OPERATIONS TO LESBIAN - FRIENDLY
SPERM BANKS. THEY'D HAVE US ALL
SO BUSY ECSTATICALLY PUMPING
BREAST MILK, WE'D NEVER NOTICE
THEM TAKING OVER THE WHOLE
FREAKING WORLD.

JAVA

THUMPITTA
THUMPITTA
CRASH

RAFFI! WHAT DID I TELL
YOU ABOUT ROLLERBLADING
ON THE STAIRS??

VISITORS TO

ACTUALLY,
BABE, NEVER MIND.
I'VE GOT IT UNDER
CONTROL.

KLUNKA

the Sensuous Bookshop

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ONE AFTERNOON AT MADWIMMIN BOOKS...

DID YOU FIND
ABSOLUTELY
EVERYTHING
YOU'RE LOOK-
ING FOR?

UH...
YES.
THANKS.
I'M ALL
SET.

SO DIANE, I'VE NEVER
BEEN TO A VEGAN
SEDER BEFORE. WHAT
DO WE DO ABOUT
THE SHANK BONE?

OH, WE JUST USE PART OF
AN OLD TOY DINOSAUR
SKELETON. BUT THE EGG-
LESS MATZO BALLS ARE
LIKE EATING LEAD SHOT.

Y'KNOW, IF YOU LIKE
THIS BOOK, YOU'LL
LOVE THE NEW EROTICA
ANTHOLOGY, "HOT AND
BUTTERED."

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OPEN
ME
CARE-
FULLY

LOIS.

EMILY
DICKIN-
SON'S
INTIMATE
LETTERS

THEA, I'M JUST
TRYING TO PRO-
VIDE A SERVICE.

I'LL FINISH THIS.
WHY DON'T YOU GO
TIDY UP THE BUMPER-
STICKER DISPLAY.

I LIVE TO
SERVICE. I
MEAN, TO
SERVE.

IN THE BACK...

AFTER I WATER
THE PLANTS,
SHOULD I FILL
THE WEB ORDERS?

DON'T BOTHER. THERE AREN'T
ANY. AND DO YOU KNOW WHY?
BECAUSE IF YOU DO A SEARCH
FOR OUR WEB SITE, AN AD FOR
THE ONLINE BOOKSELLING
BEHEMOTH medusa.com
SHOWS UP ON THE PAGE.

IT MAGICALLY SAYS
"BUY BOOKS ON MADWIMMIN
BOOKS." CLICK THE LINK,
AND YOU'RE IN THEIR
CLUTCHES.

WILL
THEY
STICK AT
NOTHING?!

THOSE ADS ARE
PROGRAMMED TO
SAY "BUY BOOKS
ON" WHATEVER IT IS
YOU'RE SEARCHING
FOR. IT'S NOT, LIKE,
INTENTIONAL.

YEAH, RIGHT. MY ONLY
CONSOLATION IS, THEY'RE
TRUNCING THE ONLINE
SALES OF **BUNNS & NOODLE**
AND **BOUNDERS, BOOKS
& MUZAK**, TOO.

... AND
THEY'RE
STILL NOT
TURNING A
PROFIT.

CUTTHROATS!
THEY EVEN HAVE
TO WIN AT
LOSING.

BYE, BABY.
CALL ME WHEN
YOU'RE DONE.

'KAY,
LATER.

LATEST CASUALTIES:
FULL CIRCLE BOOKS
ALBUQUERQUE,
RED & BLACK
BOOKS, SEATTLE

DESPITE LOSSES,
medusa.com
STOCK UP
1000%

BUMPERSTICKERS
I'M POLLUTING THE
ATMOSPHERE
MEAT PEOPLE SUCK
got bovine growth
hormone?

WHOA! SOPHIE
AND MRS. ROBINSON?
THE KID'S GOOD!

LOIS,
THAT'S HER
MOTHER.

OH. WELL
THEN, IS SHE
AVAILABLE?

DEAR
GOD, I
HOPE
NOT.

DON'T WORRY, JEZANNA. THIS
ONLINE SHOPPING FAD WON'T
LAST. HOW CAN BUYING A
BOOK ON YOUR COMPUTER
COMPARE WITH BROWSING
THROUGH REAL BOOKS, THE
HEFT OF AN ELEGANT
VOLUME IN YOUR HAND...

... THE SATIS-
FACTION OF
KNOWING YOUR
MONEY IS **SUS-
TAINING** COMMU-
NITY, NOT **LAYING**
WASTE TO IT.

... AND LET'S NOT
FORGET THE
WARMTH OF
HUMAN INTER-
ACTION WITH
SOMEONE WHO
KNOWS EXACTLY
WHAT YOU LIKE.

MILLIONS
FOR
MUMIA
TAMARA
PULLY
APRIL 24
LESBIAN
RIGHTS
SUMMIT
D.C.
APR. 21

MADWIMMIN
BOOKS

a just war? or just a war?

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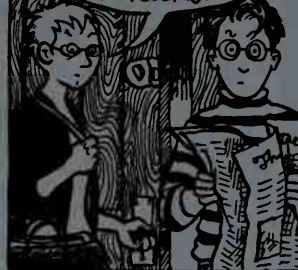
Mo's GOT A TOUCH OF WHIPLASH LATELY.

GOD! HOW CAN YOU LOOK AT THESE PICTURES OF TERRORIZED REFUGEES AND NOT WANT TO GO OVER THERE AND TAKE MILOSEVIC OUT?

312



THAT'S EXACTLY WHAT WASHINGTON WANTS YOU TO FEEL. MAKES YOU WONDER WHAT PICTURES WE'RE NOT SEEING.

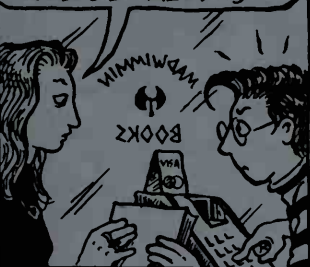


@AT WORK...

WE'RE BEING MANIPULATED BY THE PRESS! WHERE'S THE BALANCED COVERAGE? WHERE'S THE FOOTAGE OF ALL THE CIVILIANS MANGLED BY NATO BOMBS?



UH... DIDN'T YOU HEAR THE LATEST? US JETS MASSACRED A CONVOY OF REFUGEES WITH CLUSTER BOMBS BY MISTAKE. IT'S ALL OVER THE NEWS.



@AT LUNCH...

HAVEN'T WE LEARNED? YOU CAN'T STOP VIOLENCE WITH MORE VIOLENCE! SO FAR, ALL THE BOMBING HAS DONE IS KILL MORE PEOPLE AND ESCALATE THE SERBS' ATROCITIES!



SO WHAT DO YOU SUGGEST? THAT WE SEND A SQUADRON OF QUAKERS OVER THERE? FACE IT, LEFT-IST CLICHES AREN'T GONNA KEEP PEOPLE FROM BEING RAPED AND SHOT AND DRAGGED FROM THEIR HOMES.



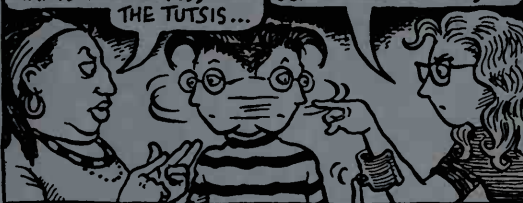
@BACK AT WORK...

I MEAN, THIS IS GENOCIDE! WE SHOULD USE WHATEVER FORCE IS NECESSARY TO STOP IT!



"ETHNIC CLEANSING" IS A TERRIBLE THING, BUT IT'S NOT THE SAME AS GENOCIDE. AND WHEN OFFICIALS TOSS THAT WORD AROUND FOR SPIN CONTROL, IT'S AN INSULT TO VICTIMS OF THE NAZIS, TO NATIVE AMERICANS, TO THE TUTSIS...

I THINK IT'S AN INSULT NOT TO CALL THIS GENOCIDE. AS A KID I ASKED MY GRANDPARENTS WHY THEY DIDN'T DO ANYTHING AFTER THEY FOUND OUT ABOUT THE HOLOCAUST. I'D BE A HYPOCRITE NOT TO SUPPORT GROUND TROOPS NOW.



@AT THE Y...

AREN'T WE MORALLY OBLIGATED TO INTERVENE?



HONEY, IF YOU THINK WE'RE IN THIS WAR TO PROTECT THE ETHNIC ALBANIANS, I HAVE A BRIDGE IN JUST YOUR COLOR. THERE'S STUFF JUST AS BAD HAPPENING IN LOTS OF OTHER COUNTRIES, AND WE'RE EITHER IGNORING IT, OR PAYING FOR IT.



@OVER DINNER WITH LOIS & GINGER...

BOMBING YUGOSLAVIA IS IMMORAL! NATO DOESN'T GIVE A SHIT ABOUT THE ETHNIC ALBANIANS OR HUMAN RIGHTS. IT'S JUST WORRIED ABOUT "GEOPOLITICAL STABILITY," WHICH IS NEWSPEAK FOR "WAL *MART."

BUT WHO CARES WHAT NATO'S MOTIVATION IS IF IT STOPS MILOSEVIC? WE'RE ON THE VICTIM'S SIDE FOR ONCE. LET'S KICK FASCIST BUTT!

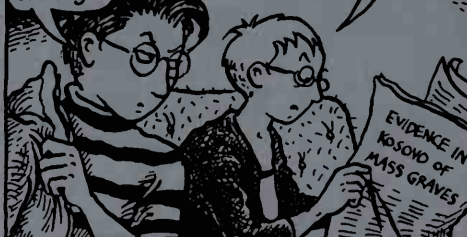
GOOD IDEA, LOIS. DECIMATING THE COUNTRY SHOULD BE A BIG BOOST TO THE MOVEMENT FOR DEMOCRACY.



@AND BACK AT HOME...

Y'KNOW, YOU WERE TOTALLY RIGHT. I DON'T KNOW WHAT I WAS THINKING, BUT I'VE COME BACK TO MY PACIFIST SENSES.

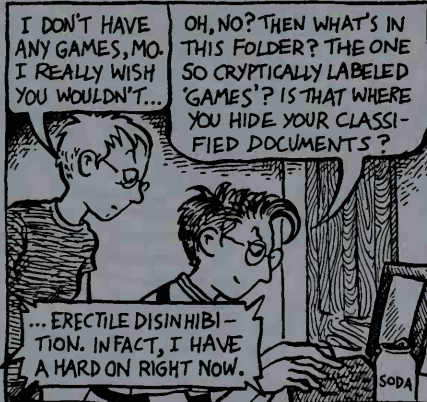
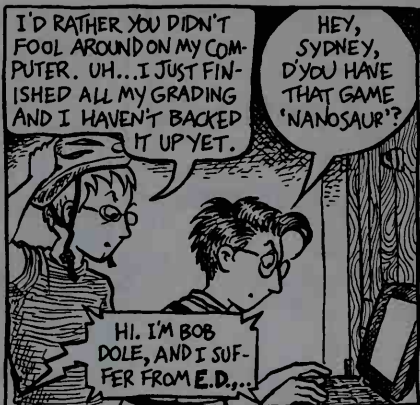
GOD! SOMEONE'S GOTTA TAKE THIS GUY OUT!



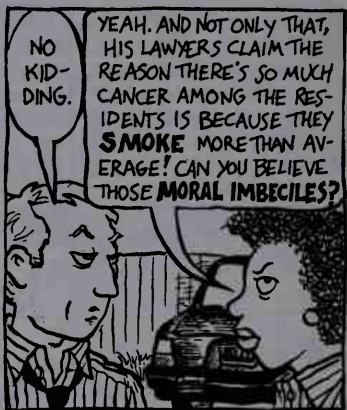
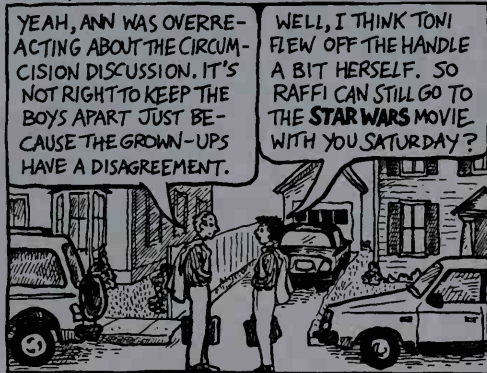
dustup

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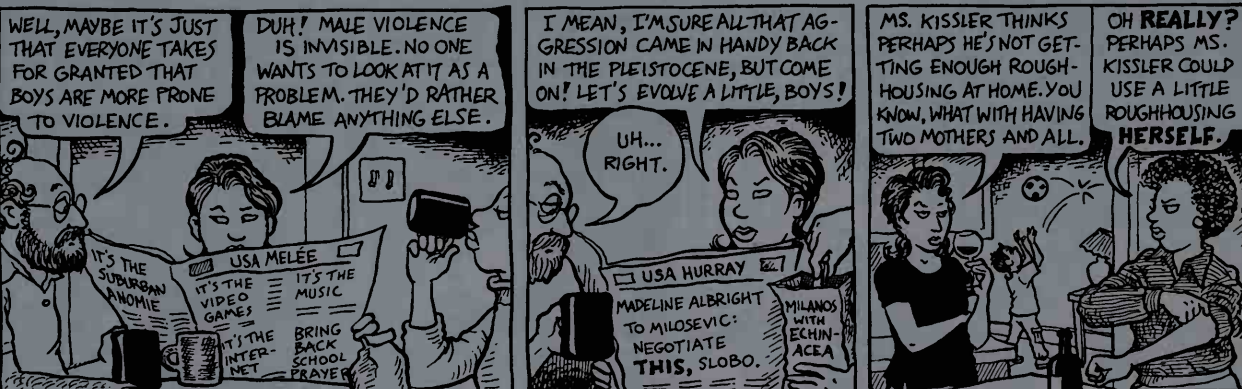
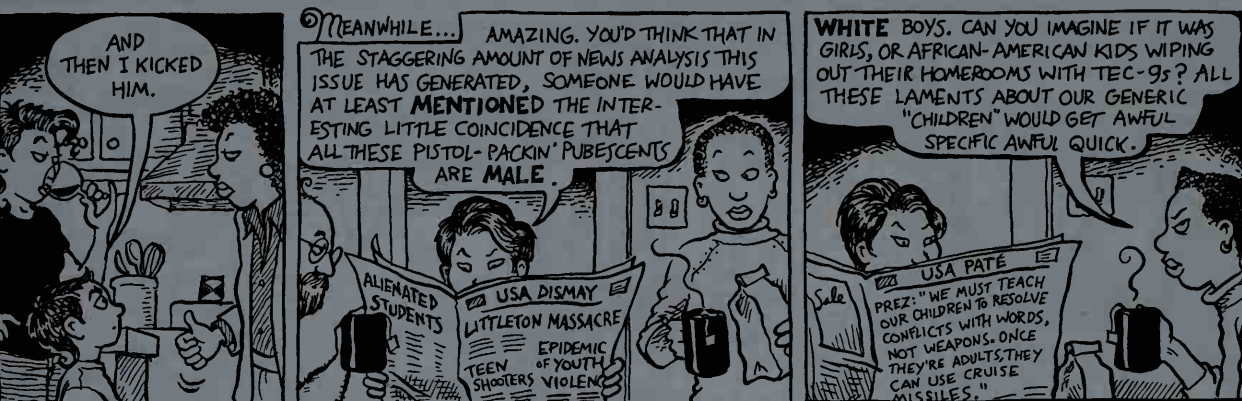
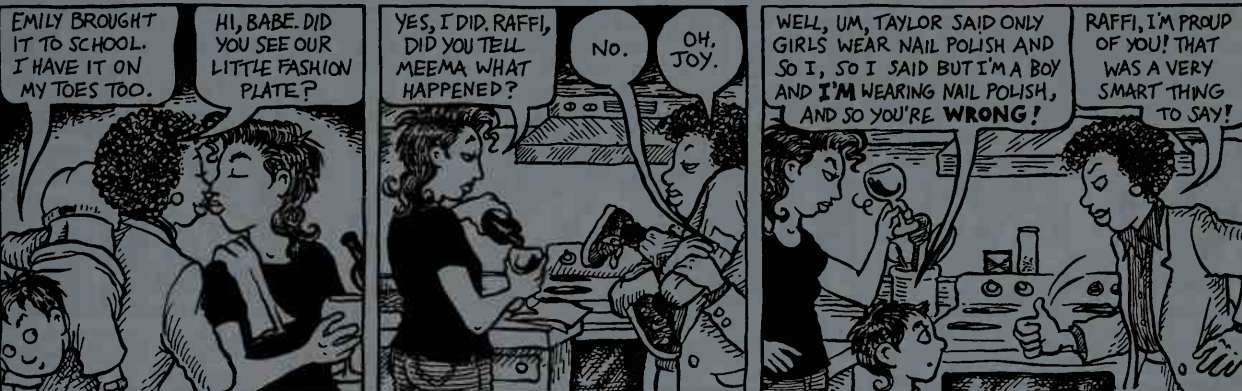


MEANWHILE, IN ANOTHER TAX BRACKET...



boy trouble

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idle hands

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OH, SUMMER VACATION! HAGGARD AND SPENT FROM THEIR STRESSFUL JOBS, SPARROW AND GINGER FINALLY GET SOME TIME OFF TO RE-CUPERATE.

THEIR HOUSE, THAT IS.

GOD, I HOPE THIS ISN'T LEAD PAINT. I DON'T HAVE ANY BRAIN CELLS TO SPARE.

SPEAKING OF ENVIRONMENTAL HAZARDS...

WAL-MART, AFTER BECOMING THE NATION'S SECOND LARGEST DRUG RETAILER...

HOW'S OUR FRIEND SYDNEY? HAS SHE DUMPED MO FOR THE CYBERSLUT YET?

OH, COME ON! YOU STILL THINK SYDNEY'S HAVING AN AFFAIR JUST BECAUSE...

...BY PUTTING SCORES OF SMALLER STORES OUT OF BUSINESS.

JUST BECAUSE OF THOSE ONLINE CAPERS WITH LITTLE MISS "GOOD-THING" I FOUND ON HER COMPUTER? WAKE UP, GINGER!

YEAH, WELL, YOU MAY BE RIGHT AFTER ALL. MO SAYS SYDNEY'S BEEN ACTING WEIRD LATELY, SECRETIVE.

...HAS ANNOUNCED IT WILL NOT BE CARRYING THE 'MORNING AFTER' EMERGENCY CONTRACEPTION PILL.

NOW DO YOU AGREE WE SHOULD WARN HER?

OH, SPARROW! WHAT WOULD WE SAY? "WE THINK YOUR GIRLFRIEND'S SCREWING AROUND ON YOU, BUT WE'RE NOT SURE, AND ANYWAY IT MIGHT ONLY BE VIRTUAL?"

WHEN ASKED IF THEY HAD ANY CONCERN ABOUT USING SHEER CORPORATE FORCE TO IMPOSE THEIR MORALITY ON WOMEN...

VIRTUAL SCHMIRTUAL. HOW LONG WILL THAT LAST? YOU KNOW WHAT LESBIANS ARE LIKE. THEY'LL CHAT ONLINE, THEY'LL PHONE, THEY'LL MEET, THEN SYDNEY'S OUTTA HERE.

WELL, MAYBE.

...BY LIMITING AVAILABLE HEALTH CARE OPTIONS, A WAL-MART SPOKESMAN HAD THIS TO SAY:

I SAY THE SOONER MO FINDS OUT, THE MORE LIKELY IT GETS NIPPED IN THE MODERN. ARE YOU BUSY TOMORROW AFTERNOON?

SPARROW! WE'RE WORKING ON THE HOUSE!

BWA HA HA HA!

WE HAVE TO EAT, DON'T WE?

DIT DIT DIT

FORTHWITH, AT MADWIMMIN BOOKS...

WHERE'S MO? IT'S SPARROW.

I HAVEN'T SEEN HER. DID SHE GO ON BREAK?

MO? ARE YOU HERE? PHONE!

UH...I'M ON THE OLD COMPUTER! I'LL TAKE IT UP HERE!

SHORTLY... SO SHE'LL HAVE LUNCH WITH US TOMORROW?

YEP. I REALLY THINK WE'RE DOING THE RIGHT THING. SHE DIDN'T SOUND LIKE HER USUAL SELF AT ALL.

THAT EVENING, MO CONTINUES TO WONDER IF PERHAPS SYDNEY'S ATTENTION IS NOT UNDIVIDED.

ARE YOU GONNA WRITE ALL NIGHT AGAIN?

I'M ON A ROLL WITH THIS PIECE FOR JLTQ.* GO TO BED. I'LL BE IN LATER.

* JOURNAL OF LUDICROUS QUEER THEORY

bewitched,
bothered,
&
betrayed

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Mo's
HAVING
TROUBLE
FALLING
ASLEEP
WHILE
SYDNEY'S
STILL UP
DOING
GOD KNOWS
WHAT ON
HER
COMPUTER.

SHE'S NOT
HAVING AN AFFAIR.
...IS SHE?

NAH! I'VE GOTTA
SETTLE DOWN. A LITTLE
LIGHT READING SHOULD
DO THE TRICK.

?!
"AMERICA'S
10 BEST
LESBIAN
PLACES TO
WORK: #2
MONSANTO."

A TIP O' THE NIB CATHY RESNER

ABSOLUT
GLOBAL CAPITALISM
GIRLFRENZY
NEWS
REVIEWS
SPECIAL
CAREER GUIDE

GREAT. WORKING FOR A MULTI-
NATIONAL BIOCHEMICAL
CORPORATION THAT'S FORCING
THE WORLD TO SWALLOW IT'S
TRANSGENIC CROPS IS A
VALID CAREER OPTION AS LONG
AS YOU'RE **OUT 'N PROUD!**

DID I HAVE TO
LIVE TO SEE THE PRIN-
CIPLES OF LESBIAN-FEM-
INISM BETRAYED SO
UTTERLY?

WHO NEEDS A
401(K)? I'VE GOT
MY INTEGRITY...

COME HERE, MY LITTLE FRENCH FRY! LEAVE
THAT LOW-RENT JOB AND JOIN THE **BIO-
FOOD** INDUSTRY! WE'LL MAKE BILLIONS ON
OUR **MUTANT VEGETABLES** BEFORE THE
UNKNOWN HEALTH EFFECTS AND RESISTANT
SUPERBUGS WREAK PLANETARY DEVASTATION!!

GIANT
LESBIAN
POTATO.
GENETI-
CALLY
ENGINEER-
ED BY
MONSANTO

WE HAVE A
GENEROUS
BENEFITS
PACKAGE!

EAT
ME! I'M
GOOD FOR
YOU!

SYDNEY'S
ALREADY
HAD A
TASTE!

GAAH!

THREE O'CLOCK! HOW'M
I SUPPOSED TO SLEEP WHEN
SHE'S UP FUTZING AROUND?!

SYDNEY?

UH-HUH...

... BLACK SILK
CAMISOLE WITH
STRAPS THAT CROSS IN
THE BACK... UH HUH
... YEAH...

WHO ARE YOU
TALKING TO?

HEY, I GOTTA
RUN. SOMEONE'S
AT THE DOOR.

busted

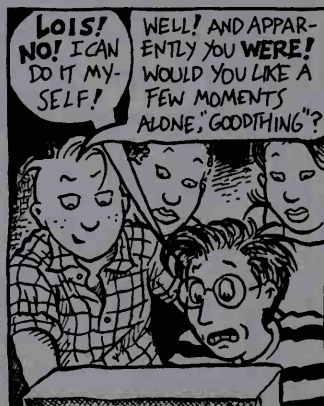
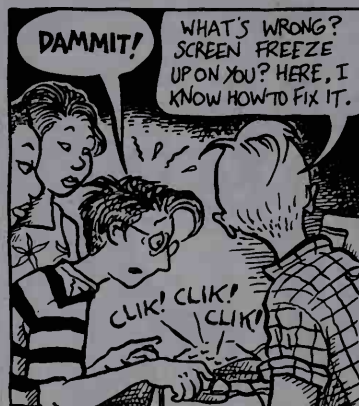
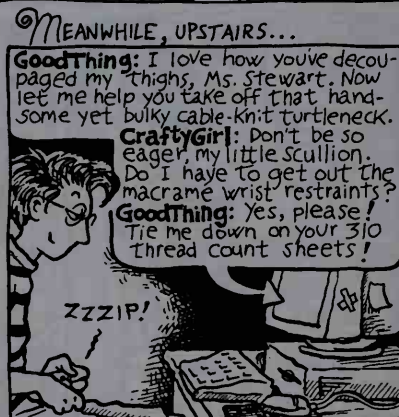
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MO HAS JUST DISCOVERED SYDNEY ENGAGED IN A DISCUSSION OF INTIMATE UNDERGARMENTS WITH AN AS-YET-UNIDENTIFIED THIRD PARTY IN THE HALL CLOSET AT 3 AM.



NEXT DAY AT MADWIMMIN BOOKS, GINGER & SPARROW ARRIVE A BIT EARLY FOR THEIR LUNCHEON ENGAGEMENT WITH MO.

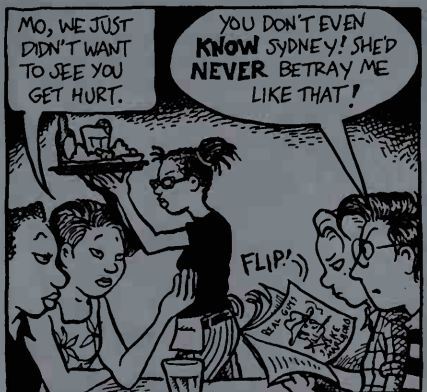
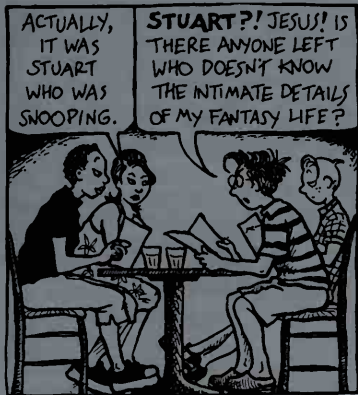
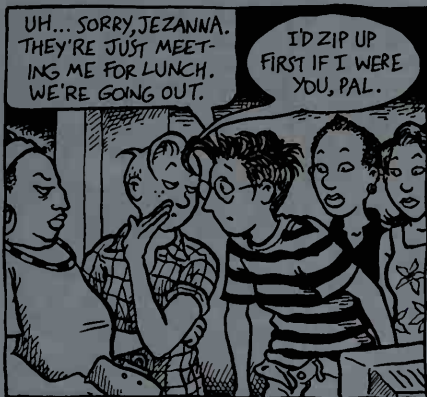


FRIENDS LIKE THESE

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MO HAS BEEN CAUGHT IN A RATHER COMPROMISING POSITION WITH THE OLD COMPUTER.

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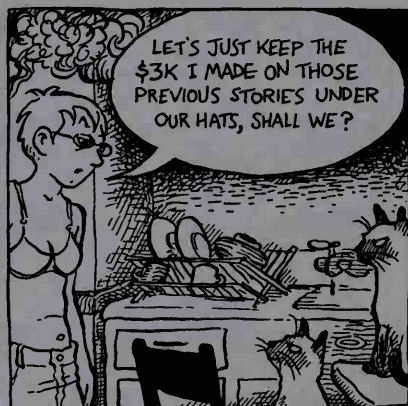
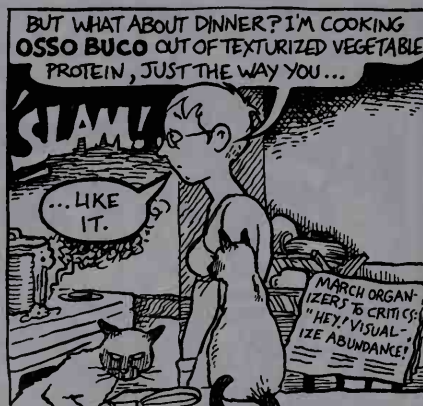
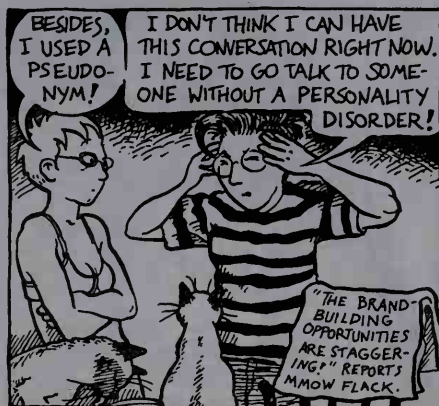
A T.I.P.O. THE MIB TO SEÑOR LORENZO SCHIMMEL!

LATEST EXPLOITS

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MO HAS JUST LEARNED THAT SYDNEY PUBLISHED A PARTICULARLY PRURIENT PORTION OF THEIR ONLINE INTERCOURSE IN "PANTHOUSE" MAGAZINE.



MOTHER WIT

© VISIT TO THE LOCAL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STIRS UP FOND MEMORIES FOR CLARICE.

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GOD, THAT SMELL! TEMPERA PAINT! GERMICIDE! FEAR!

GET USED TO IT. I SIGNED US UP TO BE CLASS-ROOM VOLUNTEERS.

AFTER ALL THE TROUBLE WE WENT THROUGH TO CHECK OUT SCHOOLS AND MOVE TO THIS NEIGHBORHOOD, I CAN'T BELIEVE WE HAVE TO START FROM SCRATCH WITH A NEW TEACHER.

LOOK, SO THAT NICE MS. McKECHNIE TOOK EARLY RETIREMENT. STUFF HAPPENS, CLARICE. DON'T TURN THIS INTO ANOTHER ARGUMENT FOR WHY WE SHOULD HAVE STAYED IN THE CITY.



MS. PETERSON? HI, I'M TOMI ORTIZ, AND THIS IS MY PARTNER, CLARICE CLIFFORD.

WE'RE RAFAEL CLIFFORD-ORTIZ'S PARENTS. HE'LL BE ONE OF YOUR STUDENTS THIS YEAR.



WE JUST THOUGHT WE'D DROP IN AND GET TO KNOW YOU A LITTLE BEFORE SCHOOL STARTS, ASK YOU A FEW QUESTIONS.

QUESTIONS?



YOU KNOW... BASIC STUFF. LIKE WHAT KIND OF EXPERIENCE YOU'VE HAD WITH INTERRACIAL AND LESBIAN AND GAY FAMILIES.

DO YOU USE BOOKS THAT REFLECT A MULTICULTURAL PERSPECTIVE?

WHAT ARE YOUR TECHNIQUES FOR DEALING WITH HOMOPHOBIC AND RACIST SLURS?

HOW DO YOU DEFINE FAMILY IN THE CURRICULUM? HOW DO YOU HANDLE MOTHER'S DAY AND FATHER'S DAY?



UM... I DON'T THINK THEY COVERED THIS IN THE CLASSROOM TRAINING. YOU SAY YOU'RE BOTH RAFAEL'S PARENTS? THEY DEFINITELY DIDN'T COVER THAT IN BIOLOGY 101.



MEANWHILE, MO, STILL BRUISED FROM SYDNEY'S "PANTHOUSE" PERFDY, TURNS FOR SUCCOR TO HER TRUSTY EX, HARRIET.

...THE REAL QUESTION IS, WHY AM I SO ATTRACTED TO SOMEONE WHO HAS THE MORAL SENSIBILITY OF A JACKAL?

MOVE FORWARD SO I CAN PUT MY FEET UP. GOD, I'M RETAINING SO MUCH FLUID! AND THESE HEMORRHOIDS! IT'S LIKE FIRE ANTS CRAWLING UP MY BUTT!



I GUESS MY TAWDRY DOMESTIC AFFAIRS LOOM PRETTY SMALL NEXT TO THE GREAT MYSTERY OF LIFE.



YEAH, IT'S AMAZING HOW PREGNANCY PUTS ALL THOSE PATHETIC LITTLE DRAMAS INTO PERSPECTIVE.



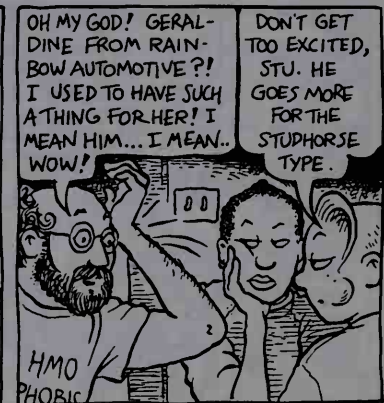
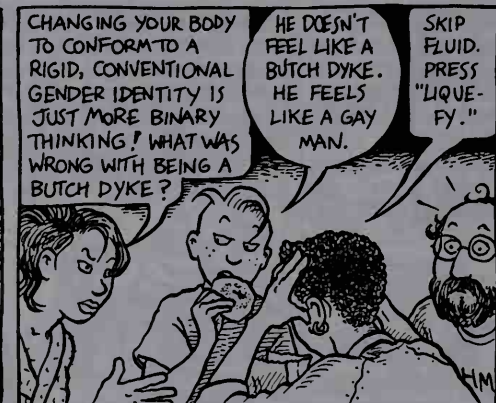
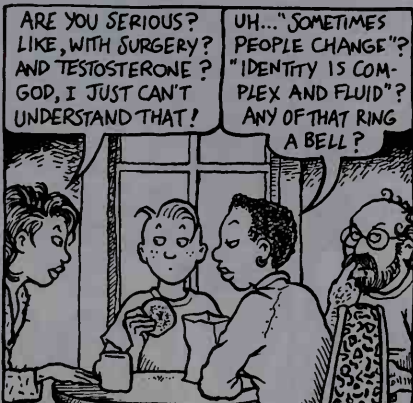
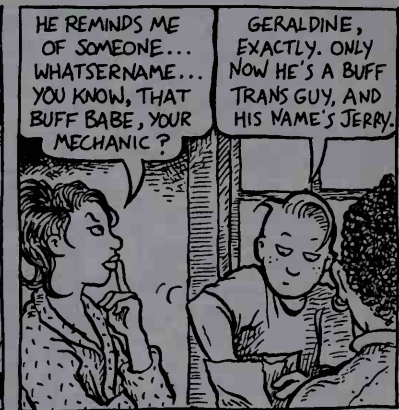
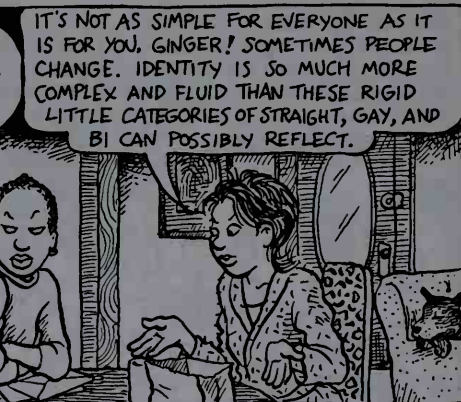
OH, GOD! LAST NIGHT I DREAMED I SOLD THE BABY ON e-BAY! IN THE PEZ DISPENSER CATEGORY! WHAT'S THAT ABOUT?

HANG ON. I HAFTA PEE AGAIN.



I.D. fixe?

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trite
and
true

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OKAY, I CAN GET OUT OF DEBT, SPEND A YEAR DOING RE-SEARCH, ANOTHER YEAR IN BARCELONA OR PARIS WRITING MY BOOK, THE YEAR AFTER THAT TREKKING IN NEPAL, AND STILL HAVE CHANGE LEFT OVER TO BUY A DECENT COUCH.

TIKKA
TIKKA
TIK

...THE INDONESIAN ARMY HAS RECEIVED OVER A BILLION DOLLARS OF MILITARY AID FROM THE US...

SYDNEY, GIVE IT UP. YOU'RE NOT GONNA WIN A MACARTHUR GENIUS GRANT.

...INCLUDING SECRET TRAININGS FOR THE SPECIAL FORCES WHO DIRECTED ANTI-INDEPENDENCE MILITIAS IN THEIR SLAUGHTER OF TIMORESE CIVILIANS...

I KNOW YOU'RE THREATENED BY MY HIGH LEVEL OF ACHIEVEMENT, MO, BUT THAT'S NO REASON TO BE PISSY.

RIGHT. WELL, YOU SET THE WORLD ON FIRE. I'M GOING OVER TO HARRIET'S.

FOR A SCINTILLATING DISCUSSION OF HER LATEST ULTRASOUND? I THOUGHT SHE WAS BORING YOU SILLY WITH ALL THAT BABY TALK.

HEY, HARRIET'S TRITE OBSERVATIONS ABOUT THE MIRACLE OF A NEW LIFE BEAT LISTENING TO YOU ANY DAY OF THE WEEK.

OKAY! YOU'VE MILKED THIS SYDNEY-IN-THE-DOGHOUSE THING JUST ABOUT LONG ENOUGH. WHEN ARE YOU GOING TO STOP BEING MAD?

...AFTER ADMITTING THAT HE'D LOST CONTROL OF HIS TROOPS, INDONESIA'S GENERAL WIRANTO DEMONSTRATED HIS EMOTION ABOUT LEAVING EAST TIMOR BY PUBLICLY CROONING "FEELINGS."

NOT
MADE
UP!

...THE US COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE PACIFIC RESPONDED WITH A MOVING RENDITION OF "WIND BENEATH MY WINGS."

MADE
UP.

RING

...SO I WAS THE ONE WITH ALL THE GLORY...

HELLO?

HUH-WO, AUNTIE! DERE'S A WIDDLE BITTY BABY HERE TO TALK TO YOU.

AND YOU WERE THE ONE WITH ALL THE STRAIN...

I'M SORRY. YOU HAVE THE WRONG NUMBER.

MONICA?!

VIRGINIA? NO, IT'S SYDNEY. HANG ON.

I THINK YOUR MOTHER HAS OFFICIALLY LOST IT.

MOM? WHAT'S WRONG?

ROSE HAD THE BABY! A PERFECT LITTLE GIRL! OH, MONICA! SHE LOOKS JUST LIKE YOU DID, ONLY MUCH PRETTIER!

OH MY GOD! REALLY?!

WHAT? WHAT HAPPENED?!

MY SISTER-IN-LAW HAD HER BABY! I'M AN AUNT! MY BROTHER'S A FATHER! MY MOTHER'S A GRANDMA! MY DAD'S A...

I THINK I CAN GENERALIZE FROM THERE.

OH MY GOD! SHE LOOKS LIKE ME! A NEW LIFE! TINY FINGERS AND TOES! IT'S A MIRACLE!

SHE LOOKS LIKE YOU? SNRK!

SIS? IT'S SCOTT. CAN YOU BELIEVE IT? LPGA, HERE WE COME! MAYBE SHE'LL EVEN BE A LESBIAN! THE BEST GOLFERS ALWAYS ARE, YOU KNOW.

sixty minute man

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YOU WENT TO THE PARK ALREADY? THAT WAS QUICK.

WE ONLY MADE IT TO THE END OF THE BLOCK. SHE'S HAVING A BAD DAY.

OOF! C'MON, PUP. YOU CAN DO IT.

POOR, SWEET DIGGER! ARE YOU STIFF, GIRL?

PANT
PANT

WHITE GUY GOES ON A SHOOTING SPREE

NOT TOO STIFF TO LICK UP SOME CHUNKS FROM A PILE OF BARF BEFORE I COULD STOP HER.

ANOTHER WHITE GUY GOES ON ANOTHER SHOOTING SPREE

SO LONG, BUCKOS. I'M OFF TO THE FIRST INTERNATIONAL DRAG KING EXTRA-VAGANZA IN COLUMBUS.

LOIS! YOU'RE NOT GOING ON THE PLANE LIKE THAT!

I WANT TO FULLY IMMERSE MYSELF IN THE TRANSGRESSIVE EXPERIENCE.

YOU SMELL LIKE YOU FULLY IMMERSED YOURSELF IN TRANSMISSION FLUID.

ANOTHER WHITE GUY, ANOTHER SHOOTING SPREE

JERRY LENT ME ONE OF HIS DIRTY UNIFORMS. WHAT DO YOU THINK? MAX AXLE, FRONT END EXPERT. I'M GONNA LIP-SYNCH TO "I'M YOUR VEHICLE, BABY."

GOD, THIS DRAG KING CRAZE IS SO RETROGRADE! MEN ARE DESTROYING THE PLANET! WHY COMPETE TO SEE WHO CAN MIMIC THEM MOST CONVINCINGLY?!

UH... BECAUSE I'M GOOD AT IT?

I DUNNO, LOIS. IT JUST SEEMS SO... SO MISOGYNIST. I COULD UNDERSTAND IF YOU WERE CRITIQUING MASCULINE STEREOTYPES INSTEAD OF GLORIFYING THEM, BUT...

SEE OUR NEW SHOOTING SPREE SECTION FOR MORE NEWS

ONE COULD ARGUE THAT DRAG IS THE ULTIMATE CRITIQUE OF GENDER STEREOTYPES, AND THUS INHERENTLY FEMINIST...

OH, PUT IT IN A TERM PAPER! LOOK, IT'S JUST A WAY OF EXPRESSING MY MASCULINE SIDE. MAYBE I AM GLORIFYING MASCULINITY. IS THAT SO TERRIBLE?

HEY, WHO USED UP ALL MY ROSEMARY-CUCUMBER CONDITIONER? I NEED IT TO KEEP MY BEARD SILKY!

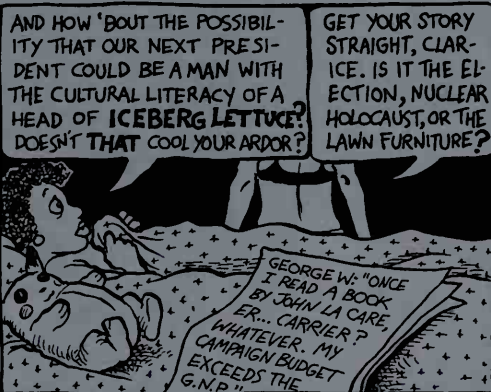
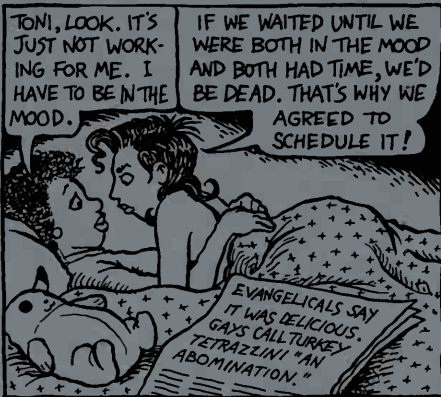
A REAL MACK-DADDY IS A GLORIOUS THING.

DUDE, JUST RUB A LITTLE CASTROL 30 WEIGHT INTO IT. WORKS FOR ME.

LABOR of Love

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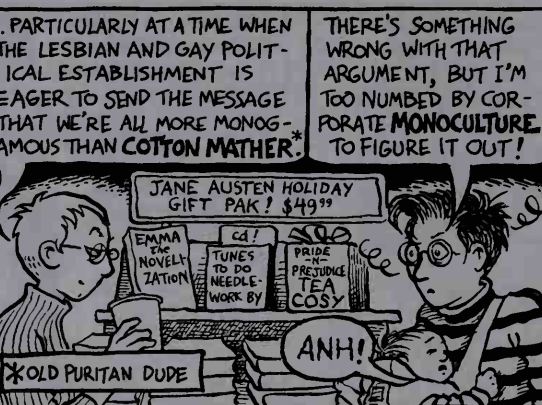
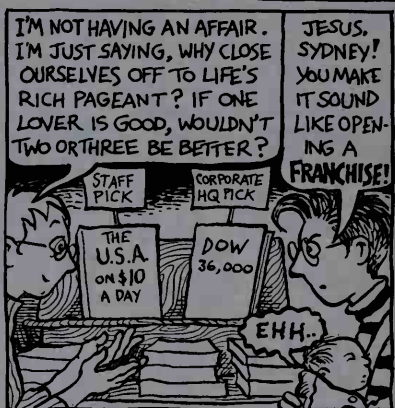
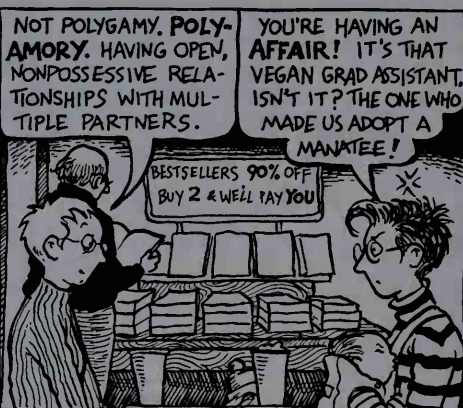
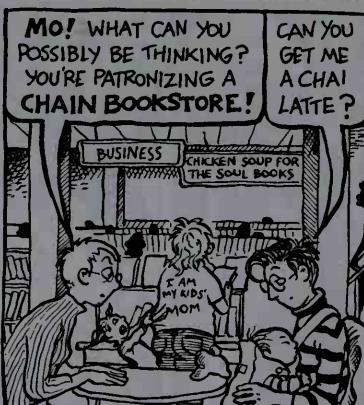
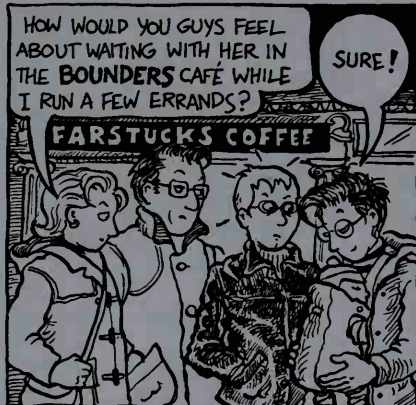
326



ECONOMY OF SCALE

ON A VISIT TO HER BROTHER, SISTER-IN-LAW, AND NEW NIECE, MO APPEARS TO BE COMPLETELY BE-SOTTED.

327



Holiday on ICE

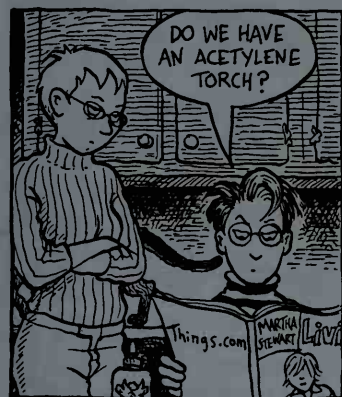
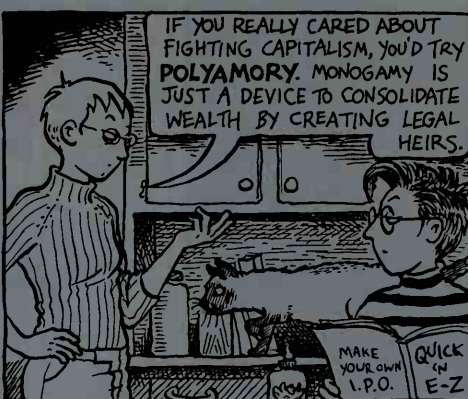
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IS THE SEASON! AT MO & SYDNEY'S ...

MO, I DON'T HAVE TIME FOR THIS. I HAVE A HUNDRED PAPERS TO GRADE. I'M JUST GONNA BUY PRESENTS LIKE A NORMAL PERSON.

FINE. FEED THE CONSUMER CAPITALIST MACHINE. ANNIHILATE YOURSELF WITH DEBT.

32B



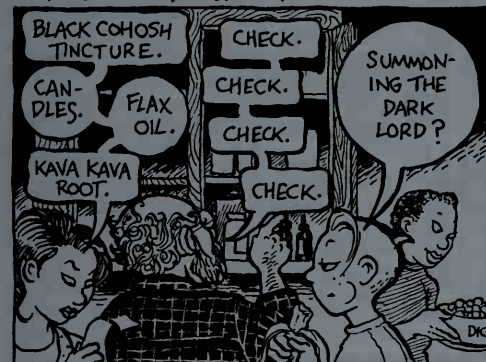
@AT MADWIMMIN BOOKS ...

AND THE LAST BOOK ON MY LIST IS "LOVE MAKES A FAMILY," IN HARDCOVER.

YEP, RIGHT HERE. LET ME KNOW WHEN YOU'RE READY TO CHECK OUT, I'LL BE WORKING ON THE WINDOW DISPLAY.



@AT SPARROW, STU, LOIS AND GINGER'S DIGS ...



JUST MAKING SURE WE'VE GOT THE NECESSITIES ON HAND IN CASE OF A Y2K MELTDOWN.



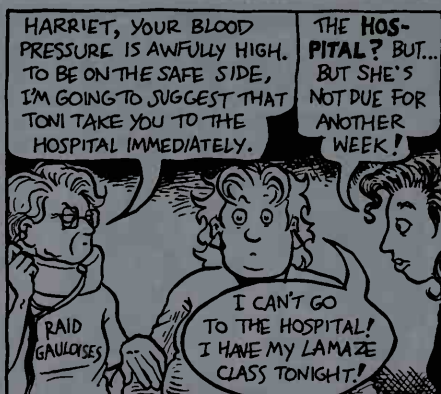
OH, GINGER! DON'T FORGET TO STOCK UP ON DOG FOOD!



@AND AT MIDTOWN MIDWIFERY SERVICES ...

OH, JUST A SLIGHT SNOWBOARDING MIS-HAP. IT'S NOTHING. HOW ARE YOU FEELING?

NOT SO GREAT, ACTUALLY. I'VE HAD A SPLITTING HEAD-ACHE ALL DAY.

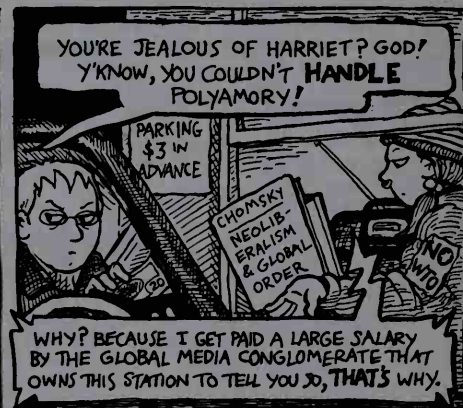
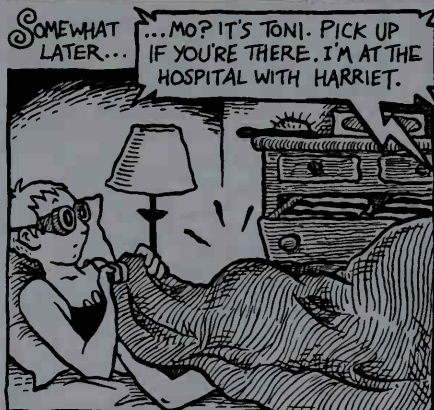


polyamorous perVersity

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Mo's
HOLIDAY
CRAFTS
PROJECT
APPEARS
TO
HAVE
BEEN
DERAILED.

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LUNCH MAKES A FAMILY

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GIVE HER TO ME, MO.

EHHH!

TONI, CAN YOU PUT THIS HERBAL WRAP BACK IN THE MICROWAVE A MINUTE?

RINGG!

CARLOS, WHERE'S MY FRIED EGG SANDWICH?

KEEP YOUR SHIRT ON.

VERMONT SUPREME COURT MAKES LAND-MARK DECISION

PESKY SINGLE MOTHERS. YOU'RE RUNNING THIS GREAT NATION INTO THE GROUND.

NOW FEED IT TO ME.

HARRIET, LET'S MOVE TO VERMONT. I COULD MAKE A QUASI-HONEST WOMAN OF YOU.

COVER ME AND ISABEL WITH YOUR HEALTH PLAN, AND WE'LL FOLLOW YOU ANYWHERE.

LESBIAN AND GAY COUPLES DESERVE SAME BENEFITS AS NORMAL MARRIED PEOPLE

MO, IT'S YOUR GIRL-FRIEND.

THERE GOES THE HONEYMOON IN STOWE.

I SAID NO MAYO.

NO, I'M GONNA EAT HERE.... SYDNEY, YOU'LL BE FINE! BOIL SOME RAMEN OR SOMETHING!

MEANWHILE...

HELLO, BABY. SORRY I WAS AT WORK SO LONG. HOW'S MY SWEET GIRL?

SHE HARDLY GOT OFF HER BED ALL DAY.

GOD, SPARROW. I DON'T KNOW HOW TO MAKE THIS DECISION. SHE'S SO HAPPY TO SEE ME, BUT SHE CAN BARELY MOVE, AND SHE'S NOT EATING.

ACTUALLY, SHE HAD A FEW BITES OF STEAK EARLIER. I BOUGHT ONE AND COOKED IT FOR HER. THE REST IS ON THE TOP SHELF OF THE FRIDGE IF YOU WANT TO GIVE HER MORE.

YOU COOKED A STEAK? IS THIS THE SAME WOMAN WHO ONCE TRIED TO CONVINCE ME DOGS COULD LIVE ON RICE AND BREWER'S YEAST BECAUSE SHE DIDN'T WANT MEAT IN THE HOUSE?

THAT'S DEVOTION, DIGGER.

LOOK, JUST DON'T TELL STUART I WAS SEARING FLESH IN HIS CAL-PHALON SAUTÉ PAN. HE'S EVEN MORE OF A PURIST THAN I AM.

HEY, I FINISHED OFF THAT SEITAN ON THE TOP SHELF OF THE FRIDGE. DELICIOUS! WHAT WAS IT MARINATED IN?

TAG TEAM

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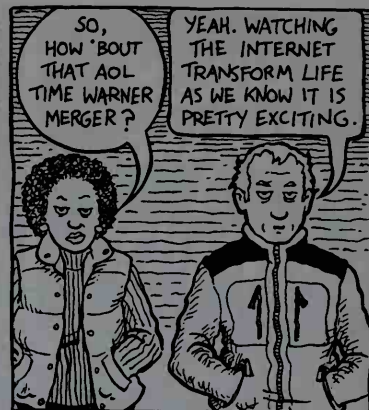
CLARICE HAS RUN INTO HER NEMESIS NEIGHBOR BILL AT THE LOCAL PARK WHERE THEIR RESPECTIVE CHILDREN ARE DISPORTING THEMSELVES.

332



WATCH, MEEMA!

READY, SET, GO!



SO, HOW 'BOUT THAT AOL TIME WARNER MERGER?

YEAH. WATCHING THE INTERNET TRANSFORM LIFE AS WE KNOW IT IS PRETTY EXCITING.

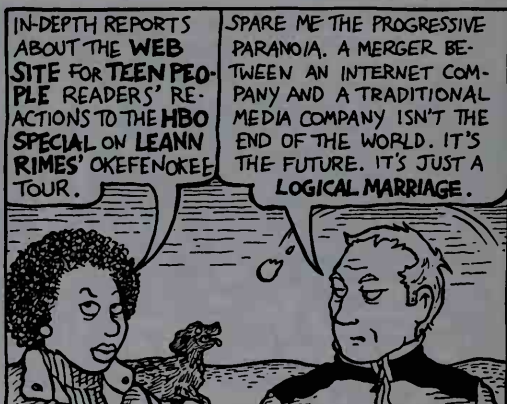


EXCITING LIKE THE MONGOL INVASION.

OH, COME ON. IT'S HISTORY UNFOLDING. YOU CAN WHINE AND DRAG YOUR FEET, BUT IT'S GONNA HAPPEN.



IT'S NOT TECHNOLOGY I HAVE A PROBLEM WITH. IT'S THESE METASIZING MEDIA MONSTERS. WITH FEWER, BIGGER CORPORATIONS PRODUCING AND DISTRIBUTING THE NEWS, THE MORE THE NEWS WILL BE JUST WHAT THEY WANT US TO HEAR.



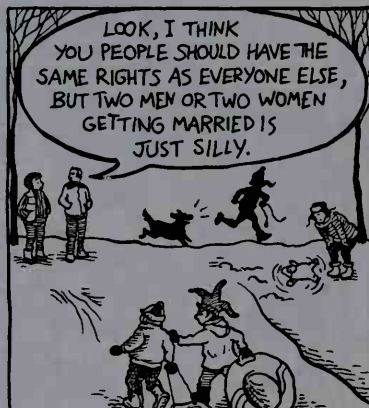
IN-DEPTH REPORTS ABOUT THE WEB SITE FOR TEEN PEOPLE READERS' REACTIONS TO THE HBO SPECIAL ON LEANN RIMES' OKEFENOKEE TOUR.

SPARE ME THE PROGRESSIVE PARANOIA. A MERGER BETWEEN AN INTERNET COMPANY AND A TRADITIONAL MEDIA COMPANY ISN'T THE END OF THE WORLD. IT'S THE FUTURE. IT'S JUST A LOGICAL MARRIAGE.



OH, I GET IT. KINDA LIKE SAME-SEX MARRIAGE.

VERY FUNNY.



LOOK, I THINK YOU PEOPLE SHOULD HAVE THE SAME RIGHTS AS EVERYONE ELSE, BUT TWO MEN OR TWO WOMEN GETTING MARRIED IS JUST SILLY.



HUH. I GUESS YOU MISSED THAT DAY IN LAW SCHOOL WHEN THEY COVERED 'SEPARATE BUT EQUAL' BEING UNCONSTITUTIONAL.

HEY, HEY HEY!



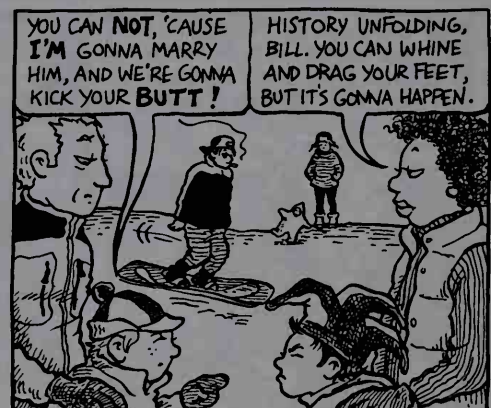
RAFFI!

WHAT'S THE PROBLEM HERE, GUYS?



I CAN TOO MARRY STONE COLD STEVE AUSTIN WHEN I GROW UP!

CLARICE, WHAT ARE YOU TEACHING THIS KID?



YOU CAN NOT, 'CAUSE I'M GONNA MARRY HIM, AND WE'RE GONNA KICK YOUR BUTT!

HISTORY UNFOLDING, BILL. YOU CAN WHINE AND DRAG YOUR FEET, BUT IT'S GONNA HAPPEN.

Village IDIOT

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MO, WHAT ARE YOU DOING?! THE DEAN'S RECEPTION IS AT EIGHT! I'M JUST GONNA CHANGE MY CLOTHES, THEN WE HAVE TO LEAVE!

I DON'T FEEL SO GOOD, SYDNEY.

LOOK, I KNOW YOU HATE THESE THINGS, BUT I HARDLY EVER ASK YOU TO COME, AND THIS ONE'S IMPORTANT!

I THINK IT'S THE FLU. GO WITHOUT ME. YOU'LL BE FINE.

A TIP O' THENB TO WILL MARQUESS!

GOD, THIS FOURTH YEAR SCRUTINY IS KILLING ME. I WAS HOPING YOU COULD HELP ME SCORE SOME POINTS WITH THE DEAN TONIGHT.

HOW WOULD YOUR LESBO GIRL-FRIEND POSSIBLY SCORE YOU POINTS?

BECAUSE MY PRESSED, STARCHED, LATIN PUN-SPEWING ARCHRIVAL **BETSY GILHOOLY** WILL BETHERE WITH HER GIRLFRIEND.

OH, RIGHT. THE ONE YOU'RE COMPETING WITH FOR TENURE.

AND TO TOP IT OFF, NOW THE GIRLFRIEND'S PREGNANT. THE DEAN'S VERY BIG ON CHILDREN. EVEN BIOENGINEERED ONES.

RING

HELLO?

MO, I THINK I HAVE THE FLU OR SOMETHING. I CAN'T GET OFF THE COUCH. CAN YOU COME OVER AND HELP WITH ISABEL?

SHINGATRON

OKAY, HARRIET. I'LL BE RIGHT THERE.

IF YOU'RE TOO SICK TO COME TO THE RECEPTION, YOU'RE TOO SICK TO GO PLAY HOUSE!

POINK!

HARRIET, MO'S A MESS. YOU'LL HAVE TO FIND ANOTHER NANNY. ... OH, REALLY?... EVERYONE? YOU DON'T SAY...

PC COMPACT FLUORESCENT BULB.

LATER THAT EVENING...

WHAT A NICE WAY TO END THE WORKDAY THESE COLLEGIAL GATHERINGS ARE, DEAN. OR AS I ALWAYS SAY, SIC TRANSIT GLORIA TUESDAY! AH HA HA HA!

QUITE.

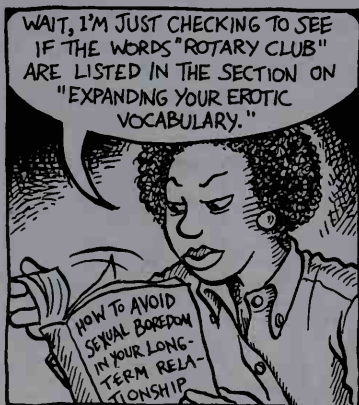
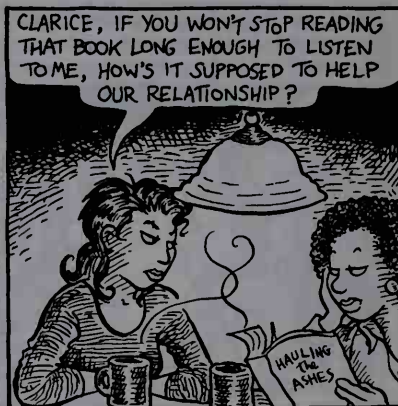
MS. KRUKOWSKI! WHO'S THIS LITTLE CHERUB? I DIDN'T KNOW YOU WERE A PARENT!

WELL, DEAN, TECHNICALLY I'M JUST HELPING OUT A SICK FRIEND, BUT YOU KNOW WHAT THEY SAY—IT TAKES A VILLAGE TO RAISE A CHILD.

OLD DOG NEW TRICKS

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A FINE MESS

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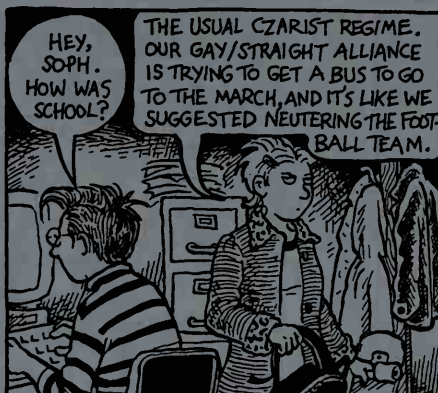


...AND I WORKED OUT A DEAL WITH THE WOMEN WHO RUN THE CAFÉ NEXT DOOR, AND WE'RE CONNECTING OUR SPACES.

HUH. SO NOW PEOPLE CAN GET COFFEE STAINS AND CRUMBS ALL OVER YOUR BOOKS INSTEAD OF THE ONES AT BUNNS & NOODLE.



EXACTLY. AND IN A COZIER ATMOSPHERE.



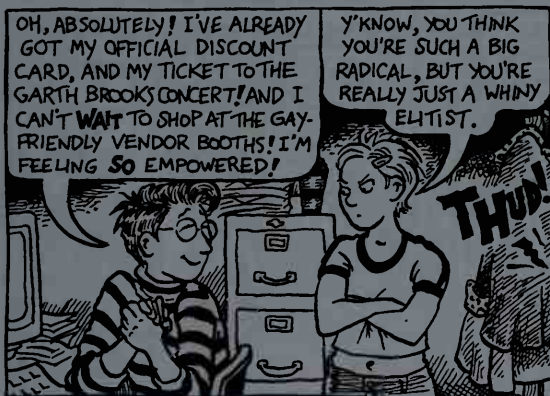
HEY, SOPH. HOW WAS SCHOOL?

THE USUAL CZARIST REGIME. OUR GAY/STRAIGHT ALLIANCE IS TRYING TO GET A BUS TO GO TO THE MARCH, AND IT'S LIKE WE SUGGESTED NEUTERING THE FOOTBALL TEAM.



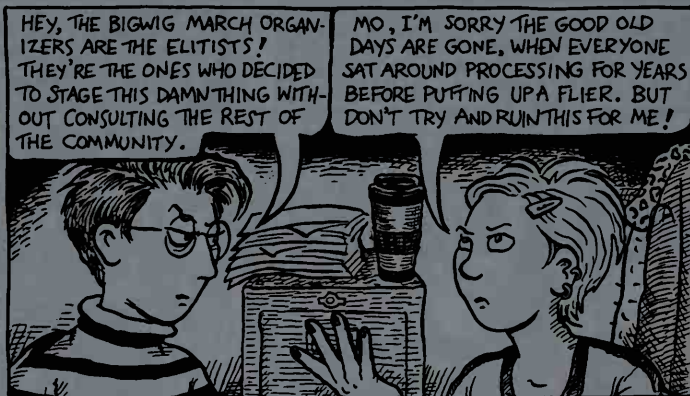
WHAT MARCH?

THE MILLENNIUM MARCH? THE LESBIAN/GAY/BI/TRANS MARCH ON WASHINGTON? AREN'T YOU GOING?



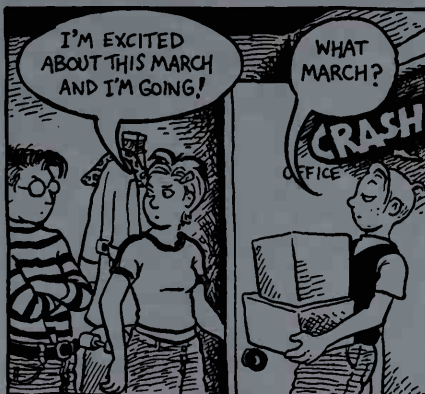
OH, ABSOLUTELY! I'VE ALREADY GOT MY OFFICIAL DISCOUNT CARD, AND MY TICKET TO THE GARTH BROOKS CONCERT! AND I CAN'T WAIT TO SHOP AT THE GAY-FRIENDLY VENDOR BOOTHS! I'M FEELING SO EMPOWERED!

Y'KNOW, YOU THINK YOU'RE SUCH A BIG RADICAL, BUT YOU'RE REALLY JUST A WHINY ELITIST.



HEY, THE BIGWIG MARCH ORGANIZERS ARE THE ELITISTS! THEY'RE THE ONES WHO DECIDED TO STAGE THIS DAMN THING WITHOUT CONSULTING THE REST OF THE COMMUNITY.

MO, I'M SORRY THE GOOD OLD DAYS ARE GONE, WHEN EVERYONE SAT AROUND PROCESSING FOR YEARS BEFORE PUTTING UP A FLIER. BUT DON'T TRY AND RUIN THIS FOR ME!



I'M EXCITED ABOUT THIS MARCH AND I'M GOING!

WHAT MARCH?



WHAT EVENING... SYDNEY! I THOUGHT YOU WERE GONNA CLEAN THE KITCHEN!

SORRY, BABE. I'VE BEEN WORKING ON THIS LECTURE.



WELL HOW AM I SUPPOSED TO COOK?!

OH, DON'T BOTHER. I'M NOT HUNGRY.

HOOP DREAMS

PART 1

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WHO'S SYDNEY TALKING TO?
I WONDER IF MO FINALLY
FOLDED AND AGREED TO AN
OPEN RELATIONSHIP?

LOIS, I'M TRYING TO WATCH
THE GAME.

LOOK, THERE'S
YOUR LITTLE FRIEND
CLARICE.

dot.com.com

GO FIGHT WITH
LADY
PORCUPINES!

90.7 FM

HI, LOIS. HI,
GINGER. GOOD
GAME, HUH?

WHATEVER.
WATCH MY SEAT.
I'M GONNA GO GET
A DRINK.

DE-FENSE!
DE-FENSE!

MEANWHILE,
AT THE OTHER
END OF THE
BLEACHERS...

CAN YOU KEEP AN EYE
ON RAFFI TILL CLARICE
GETS BACK? I'M GOING
TO THE BATHROOM.

The Distress

MY FIRST
BOOK OF
SNAKES

IN THE LOBBY...

HEY, LOIS! I HAVEN'T
SEEN YOU AT A GAME
BEFORE.

UH... HI, JERRY. I
JUST CAME WITH
MY HOUSEMATE.
ARE YOU A FAN?

MEN

A FAN?! SEE THAT
TROPHY? I WAS A LADY
PORCUPINE THE YEAR WE WENT
TO THE NCAA'S!

AND IN THE LADIES ROOM...

TONI!

GLORIA?!

Flush?

BUT... WHAT ARE YOU
DOING HERE? YOU'RE
SUPPOSED TO BE IN
ALBUQUERQUE!

WE JUST MOVED
BACK LAST WEEK!
ANA GOT TRANSFERRED
AGAIN.

I...
NOBODY
TOLD
ME!

I THOUGHT OF CALLING
YOU. BUT YOU KNOW, WE
HAVEN'T BEEN IN TOUCH...
AND WE PARTED ON SUCH
AN AWKWARD NOTE.

SO HOW'S
RAFFI? AND UH,
CLARICE?

BACK IN THE STANDS...

YESSS!

HEW! THE LADY PORCUPINES ARE UP
BY ONE AT THE HALFTIME BUZZER! TUNE
IN NEXT TIME AS THE TECHNICAL FOULS
CONTINUE!

HOOP DREAMS PART 2

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WE LEFT OUR SPORADIC SPORTSFANS AT HALF-TIME.

PLAY APPEARS TO HAVE RESUMED.

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Y'KNOW, IT'S NOT SO MUCH THE EVANGELICAL TYPES I HAVE A PROBLEM WITH. THERE'S NO REASONING WITH THEM, SO LET THEM HAVE THEIR DAMN HELLFIRE.



IT'S THE REST OF THESE COMPLACENT YAHOO'S I WANT TO SMACK. WHAT DO THEY BELIEVE IN? DAVID LETTERMAN? YET TAKE A POLL, AND IT'S "SAME-SEX MARRIAGE? UH, I DON'T THINK SO. CAN I HAVE MY REMOTE BACK NOW?"



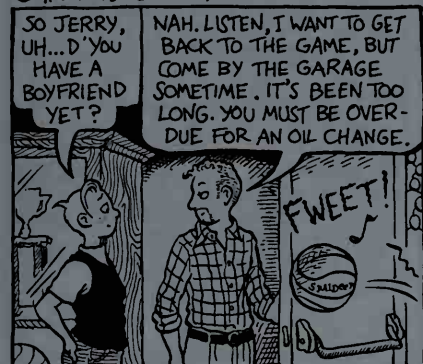
©MEANWHILE, IN THE LOBBY...

GLORIA, WE'VE GOT TO GET TOGETHER! I CAN TELL YOU EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT SCHOOLS FOR STELLA.

I CAN'T BELIEVE IT'S BEEN FIVE YEARS! YOU REALLY LOOK GREAT!



©AND LOIS IS LOBBYING TOO...



GINGER AND CLARICE FLIRT WITH A POSSIBILITY...

Y'KNOW, THERE'S A PICKUP GAME AT THE 'Y' WEDNESDAY NIGHTS. WE SHOULD GO SOMETIME.

THAT SOUNDS REALLY FUN. I HAVEN'T TOUCHED A BALL IN YEARS.



©AND ACROSS THE BLEACHERS...

THE GLORIA? THE LEGENDARY GLORIA OF YOUR SEXUAL FANTASIES? SHOW HER TO ME!

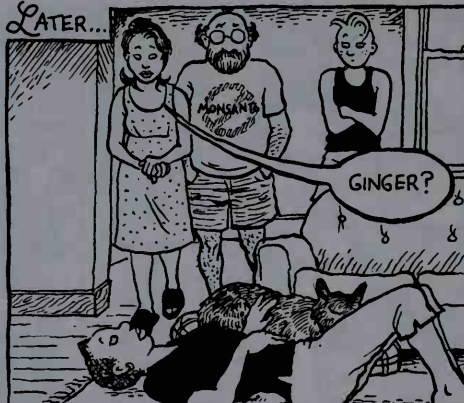
WHERE'S CLARICE? HAS SHE BEEN GONE ALL THIS TIME?



intervention

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the sweet bye-and-bye

6-21

340

THE VET
IS COMING
AT TWO.

DIGGER'S
DEVOTEES
HAVE BEEN
STOPPING
BY ALL
MORNING
TO PAY
THEIR FINAL
RESPECTS.



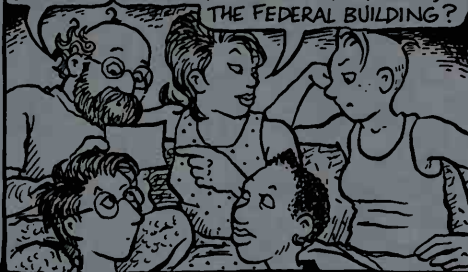
OH. YEAH. THAT WAS IN 1985, RIGHT BEFORE I STARTED GRAD SCHOOL AND MOVED IN WITH SPARROW AND LOIS. LOOK AT THAT DEWY, HOPEFUL FACE.

LITTLE DID I KNOW THAT FIFTEEN YEARS LATER, I'D BE TEACHING AT BUFFALO LAKE STATE AND STILL LIVING HERE.



WHO ARE ALL THESE WOMEN PETTING DIGGER?

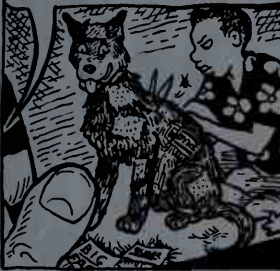
THAT'S LOIS'S OLD AFFINITY GROUP. WHAT ACTION ARE YOU PLANNING HERE? THE ONE WHERE YOU BLOCKADED THE BANK, OR THE ONE WHERE YOU CHAINED YOURSELVES TO THE FEDERAL BUILDING?



JEEZ, THE LAST THING I REMEMBER CHAINING MYSELF TO WAS SONYA'S NIPPLE RING. AND EVEN THAT WAS LONGER AGO THAN I CARE TO CONTEMPLATE.



OH, THAT WAS AFTER THE '92 PRIDE MARCH. THOSE QUEER NATION STICKERS WERE A BIT MORE ADHESIVE THAN I'D EXPECTED.



GOD, I DIDN'T EVEN GO TO PRIDE THIS YEAR. DID YOU GUYS?



that obscure object of desire

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©AHH... A PERFECT SATURDAY SUMMER'S MORN. HOW BEST TO PARTAKE OF ITS AMBROSIAL PROMISE?



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WHEEEE SKRRRR! DOINK DOINK SCHSCHXXX! WEL-COME!

WHO'S THAT POKEMON?!



RAFFI! TURN IT DOWN!

WHAT?

THIS BITES. DON'T YOU HAVE ANY FROSTED FRUITBATS?

IT'S INSIPACHU, WHO ANESTHETIZES ITS VICTIMS WITH SHODDY ANIMATION.



WHAT A BEAUTIFUL DAY!



WHERE'VE YOU BEEN? I WOKE UP AND YOU WERE GONE.

I WAS FAST WALKING WITH GLORIA. DIDN'T YOU HEAR HER CALL EARLIER?



GREAT. I'M RESEARCHING PLANE FARES TO VERMONT SO WE CAN GET MARRIED AND YOU'RE OFF CAVORTING WITH ANOTHER WOMAN.

I THOUGHT YOU DIDN'T WANT TO GO TO VERMONT!



AND I WASN'T CAVORTING. BUT SO WHAT IF I HAD BEEN? WE DECIDED TO TRY IT, REMEMBER?

WE DECIDED TO TALK ABOUT IT AND MAYBE TRY IT. "FAST WALKING!" SHEESH! WHERE'D YOU GET THAT? "SELF" MAG-AZINE?

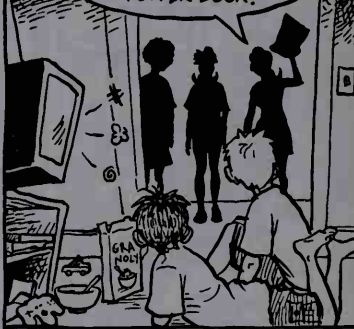


ANN! HI!

SORRY TO BARGE IN. I CAME TO GET BILLY.



BILLY! IT'S HERE! THE NEW HARRY POTTER BOOK!



MEDUSA.COM SHIPPED IT OVERNIGHT FOR FREE BECAUSE WE WERE ONE OF THE FIRST 250 BILLION CUSTOMERS TO PLACE AN ORDER.



WE'RE GETTING YOUR COPY THIS AFTERNOON, RAFFI. REMEMBER?

AT OUR LOCAL INDEPENDENT BOOKSTORE!



FIVE MINUTES LATER...

WAY TO SET LIMITS.

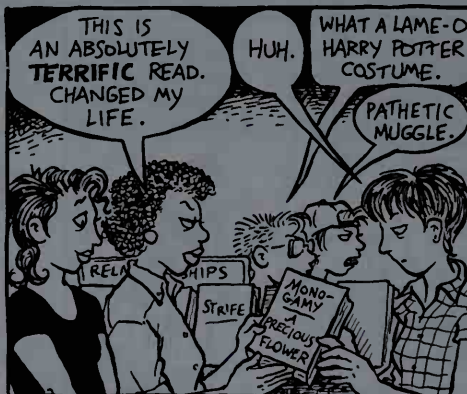
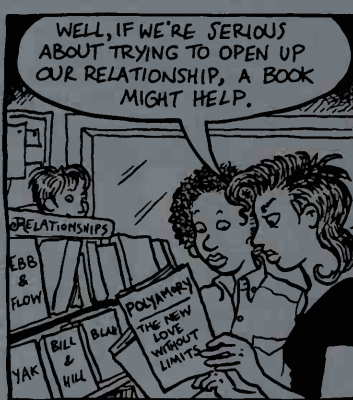
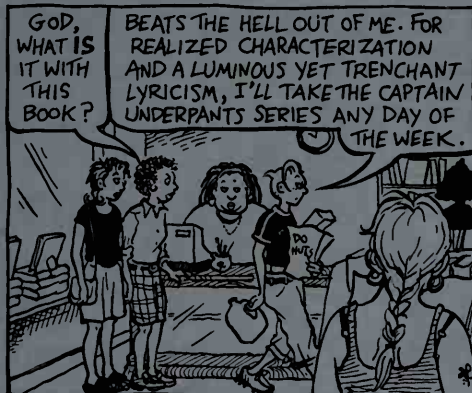
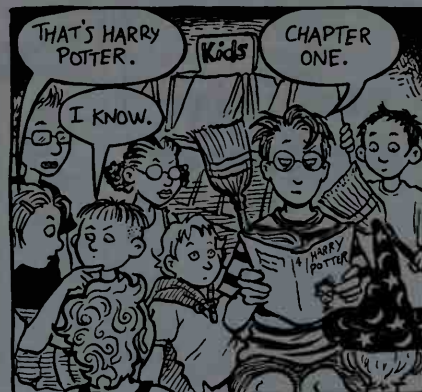
IT'S A SPECIAL EVENT, CLARICE. ONE BOOK WON'T SPOIL HIM.



BOOKED

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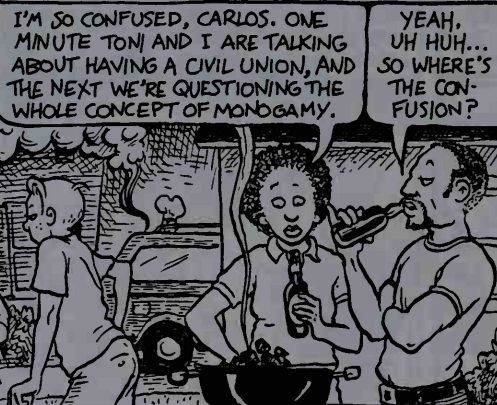
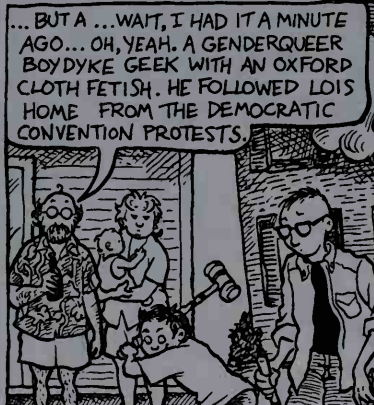
cognitive dissonance

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TONI'S THROWING A LITTLE FÊTE TO OBSERVE THAT MOST HEAVILY FREIGHTED OF BIRTHDAYS.

9/13

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weather

ANOTHER SCHOOL YEAR HAS BEGUN.

IT'S ONE OF THOSE DARK, RAINY MORNINGS WHEN THINGS SEEM, AT LEAST FOR THE MOMENT, UTTERLY AND IRREDEEMABLY HOPELESS.

EN ROUTE TO BUFFALO LAKE STATE COLLEGE...

"...HERE! CREEP, WRETCH, UNDER A COMFORT SERVES IN A WHIRLWIND, ALL / LIFE DEATH DOES END, AND EACH DAY DIES WITH SLEEP."

THAT WAS A POEM ENTITLED "NO WORST, THERE IS NONE. PITCHED PAST PITCH OF GRIEF," BY GERARD MANLEY HOPKINS. AND THAT'S THE WRITER'S ALMANAC FOR MONDAY, OCTOBER SECOND.



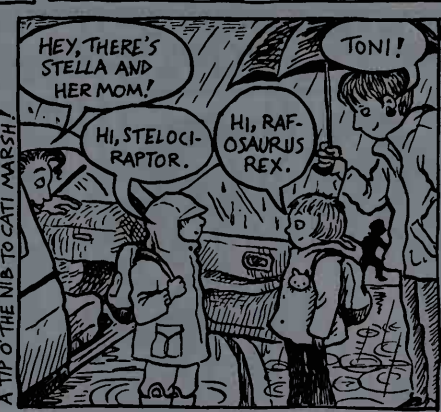
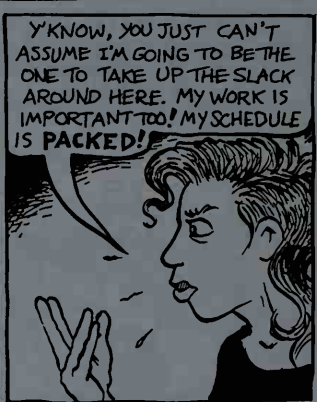
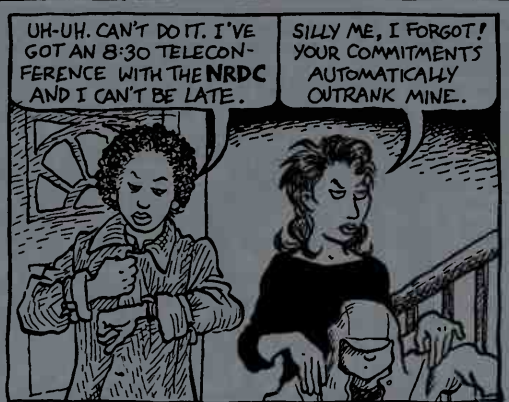
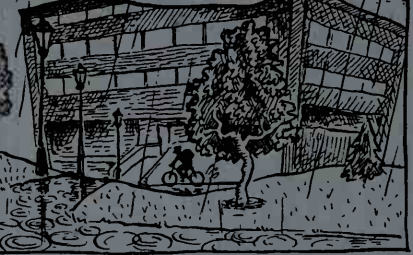
MEANWHILE, AT THE CLIFFORD-ORTIZES'...



AND ON UNIVERSITY HILL...



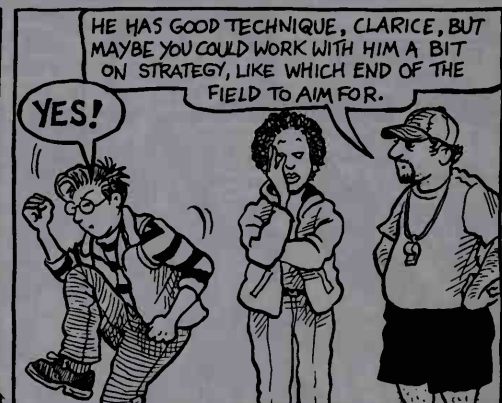
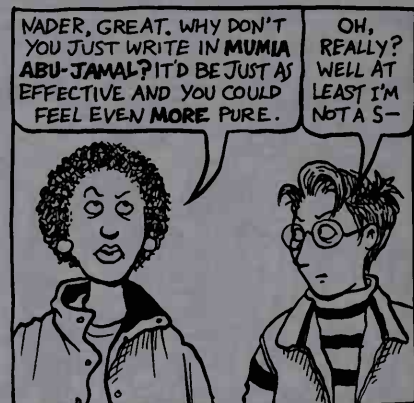
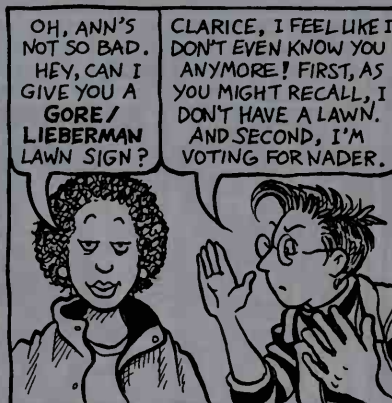
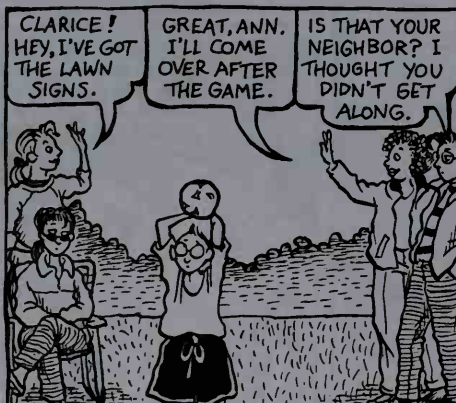
WHOEVER SCHEDULED GENDER, RACE, AND MINIATURE GOLF: THE SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF LEISURE FOR EIGHT O'CLOCK IN THE MORNING SHOULD BE STRAPPED TO A ROTATING WINDMILL FOR ETERNITY.



rules of engagement

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I JUST DON'T GET IT, CLARICE. YOU'VE ALREADY HAD A COMMITMENT CEREMONY. YOU'RE BOTH LEGALLY RAFFI'S PARENTS. YOU'VE BEEN TOGETHER LONGER THAN MELISSA AND JULIE AND ELLEN AND ANNE ALL PUT TOGETHER, TIMES, LIKE, A HUNDRED.



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THANK YOU, SYDNEEE!

RAFFI, NOT IN THE PARKING LOT! WE'LL GO HOME AND PRACTICE IN THE DRIVEWAY!

SUW24

TOYS

HUH. IT'S NOT QUITE AS PICTURESCUE AS I WAS LED TO BELIEVE.

DON'T WORRY. OUR B&B IS WAY OUT IN THE COUNTRY.

A cartoon illustration of a scene. In the foreground, a car is parked on the left. A speech bubble coming from the car says "SEE? IT IS PRETTY." To the right of the car, a person is riding a bicycle. A speech bubble coming from the cyclist says "PRETTY WHITE." In the background, there is a large, multi-story building with a central tower or cupola. The scene is set outdoors with some trees and a path.

A cartoon illustration. In the foreground, a man with curly hair is seen from the chest up, sitting in the driver's seat of a car and looking out the window. A speech bubble above him contains the text "IS IT?". In the background, a man wearing a hat and a coat is walking away from the viewer towards a large barn. The barn has two signs on its side that both read "TAKE BACK VERMONT". A large wheel is visible on the right side of the barn. The scene is set in a rural area with trees and a hill in the background.

I THOUGHT YOU WANTED TO DO THIS!

I DO! I WANT US TO BE PART OF AN IMPORTANT LEGAL BREAKTHROUGH. BUT I'M SORRY, IT'S JUST NOT A GOOEY HALLMARK MOMENT FOR ME.

FINE. WE'LL PICK UP THE LICENSE, GO TO THE JUSTICE OF THE PEACE, AND GET IT OVER WITH.

SNURF.

TONI? SORRY TO BOTHER YOU, BUT WHICH HOSPITAL WOULD YOU SAY IS THE CLOSEST TO YOUR HOUSE?

WAANH HAAA!

ICE PARK

SPUN

CLARICE, ONCE A HARMLESS NEWS JUNKIE, HAS BEEN MAINLINING A DEADLY CONCOCTION OF CNN, MSNBC, AND NPR FOR TWO WEEKS STRAIGHT NOW.

12-6

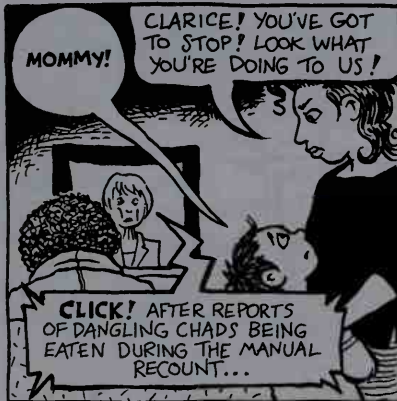
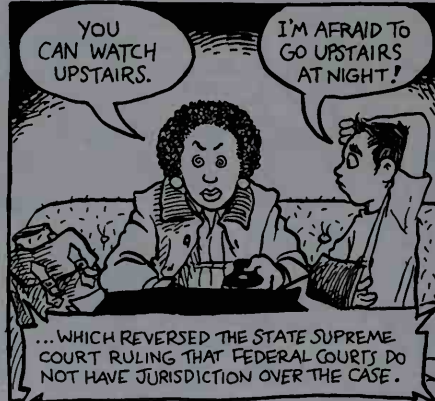
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...TO OVERTURN A RULING BY THE LOWER FEDERAL COURT IN MIAMI, WHICH UPHELD A DECISION BY THE 11TH CIRCUIT...

HI! YOU HAD A LONG DAY!



DEARTH IN THE BALANCE

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12-20

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AS THE BASKETBALL OF THE PRESIDENCY ROLLS PRECARIOUSLY AROUND THE RIM OF THE ELECTORAL COLLEGE, OUR LONGTIME FRIENDS GATHER FOR THANKSGIVING DINNER.

IT'S THE MATH THAT FASCINATES ME. WHAT ARE THE CHANCES OF A HUNDRED MILLION INDIVIDUAL VOTES RESULTING IN UTTER STATISTICAL EQUILIBRIUM?

IT'S NOT CHANCE, AND IT'S NOT EQUILIBRIUM. IT'S STAGNATION. TWO BANKRUPT PARTIES CANCELLING EACH OTHER OUT.

FOR GOD'S SAKE, TURN IT OFF! WE'RE EATING!

... SO FAR THE MANUAL RECOUNT IN PALM BEACH COUNTY HAS YIELDED A NET GAIN OF TWO VOTES FOR GORE.



THERE'S NO TURKEY BECAUSE MEEMA FORGOT TO GET THE UNFROZEN ONE AT THE CO-OP AND THE OTHER ONE'S MELTING IN THE BATHTUB.

I'M GLAD THERE'S NO TURKEY. IT'S LIKE THE GOOD OLD DAYS WHEN I WASN'T THE ONLY VEGETARIAN IN THIS LOT.

MO HAS TO STAY PURE SO SHE CAN INTERCEDE FOR THE REST OF US ON JUDGMENT DAY.

I THINK SHE ALREADY DID. IF SHE AND HER 97,000 FRIENDS IN FLORIDA HADN'T VOTED FOR NADER, WE WOULDN'T BE IN THIS MESS.

ENOUGH POLITICS! I'D LIKE IT IF WE COULD ALL TAKE A MINUTE BEFORE WE EAT TO SAY WHAT WE'RE THANKFUL FOR.

WHAT, LIKE GRACE?

WELL, YEAH. WHAT'S WRONG WITH GRACE?

CLARICE, WHAT MAKES YOU THINK WE'D HAVE VOTED AT ALL IF THE ONLY OPTIONS WERE GUSH AND BORE?

SILLY ME! THAT'S RIGHT! YOU WOULD HAVE JUST HELD YOUR BREATH TILL YOU TURNED BLUE!

I'LL START! I'M THANKFUL THAT AFTER ALL THESE YEARS, AND EVERYTHING WE'VE BEEN THROUGH TOGETHER, WE'RE ALL STILL SO CLOSE.

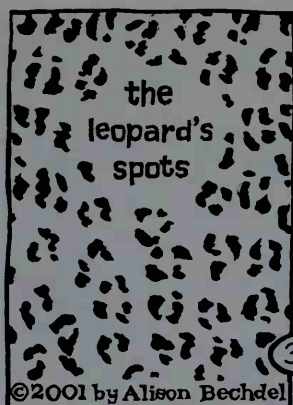
I HOPE BUSH DOES WIN. MAYBE THE LEFT IN THIS COUNTRY WILL FINALLY WAKE UP!

IT IS SO SAD, AND SO TYPICAL, THAT YOU CAN ONLY CONCEIVE OF FUNCTIONING IN THE UNDERDOG POSITION.

AT LEAST I HAVEN'T LOST TOUCH WITH THE UNDERDOGS, LIKE SOME PEOPLE I KNOW.

IS GRACE OVER?

I DON'T KNOW, BUT IT DEFINITELY SEEMS TO BE ON HIATUS.



NEW YEAR'S EVE IS A RATHER DISPIRITED AFFAIR IN THE LOOMING SHADOW OF A BUSH REGIME, BUT OUR PLUCKY FRIENDS MAKE A VALIANT EFFORT.

1-3

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SO JERRY, YOU REALLY LIKED OUR LIMP BIZKIT?

YEAH, ESPECIALLY YOUR 69 SCENE WITH THE KID DOING EMINEM. VERY CATHARTIC.

THANKS FOR ASKING ME OVER, LOIS. I DIDN'T REALLY WANT TO BE IN A BAR TONIGHT.



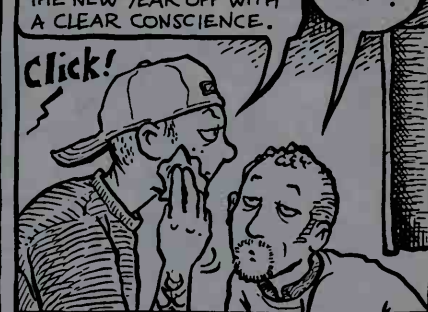
I THINK IT BITES THAT YOU CAN'T GO TO YOUR FRIENDS' ANNUAL SWEAT LODGE AND TUPPERWARE PARTY ANYMORE JUST BECAUSE YOU'RE A GUY NOW.

AHH, IT WOULD BE TOO WEIRD. I MEAN, I DON'T PARTICULARLY WANT TO GET NAKED WITH A BUNCH OF WOMEN. THOUGH I COULD REALLY USE SOME NEW ROCK 'N SERVE™ MICRO-WAVE CONTAINERS.

UH... D'YOU WANNA GET THAT? IT'S THE FOURTH CALL SINCE WE GOT HERE.

NAH. IT'S JUST MO, WANTING ME TO FORGIVE HER SO SHE CAN START THE NEW YEAR OFF WITH A CLEAR CONSCIENCE.

FORGIVE HER FOR WHAT?



LOIS, HI. I GUESS YOU'RE OUT. LISTEN, CALL ME. I, UH... WANT TO APOLOGIZE FOR SAYING I COULDN'T BE YOUR FRIEND IF YOU TURNED INTO A MAN, OKAY? SO, UH... HAPPY NEW YEAR.

BUT YOU'RE NOT TRANSITIONING!

I KNOW. I JUST FELT LIKE YANKING HER CHAIN. SHE WAS BEING REALLY TRANSPHOBIC AND IT PISSED ME OFF.

GOD, SHE PISSES ME OFF! ACTING LIKE I'M BEING OPPRESSIVE WHEN SHE'S THE ONE BETRAYING EVERY TENET OF FEMINISM FOR A CHANCE TO GRAB SOME MALE PRIVILEGE!

ISN'T IT A TENET OF FEMINISM THAT GENDER IS CULTURALLY CONSTRUCTED?



AND WHAT ARE YOU DOING WITH THE SHIRT I GOT YOU FOR CHRISTMAS?

EXCHANGING IT. IT'S NOT MY, UH... COLOR.

SO YOU'RE LETTING HER THINK IT'S TRUE EVEN THOUGH IT'S NOT, TO SEE IF SHE'LL STILL LIKE YOU? ISN'T THAT SORT OF MANIPULATIVE?

I'D MAKE A MEAN BACKSTREET BOY, DON'T YOU THINK?

SO YOU'RE APOLOGIZING TO HER EVEN THOUGH YOU'RE STILL MAD, BECAUSE YOU WANT HER TO FORGIVE YOU? ISN'T THAT SOMEWHAT DISINGENUOUS?

HERE'S A FETCHING STRIPED ONE.



THE CABINET OF DR. CALIGARI

PERHAPS HER ADRENAL GLANDS ARE SPENT FROM THE PROLONGED POST-ELECTION PANDEMONIUM.

PERHAPS IT'S PERIMENOPAUSE.

WHATEVER, CLARICE IS HAVING A HARD TIME HEALING AND MOVING ON.

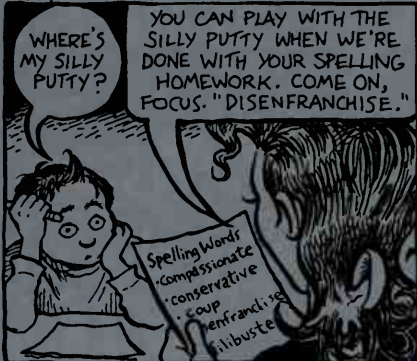
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MEANWHILE, ON THE HOME FRONT...



CLARICE? GOOD, YOU'RE STILL THERE. LISTEN, WE'VE HAD A SLIGHT MISHAP HERE, AND I HAVE TO COME DOWNTOWN FOR AN EMERGENCY HAIRCUT. WHY DON'T WE MEET YOU FOR DINNER?



A BIT LATER... I WISH I'D THOUGHT OF SILLY PUTTY. YOU WOULD'VE LOST THIS MULLET A DECADE AGO.



SO HOW'S TRICKS? OH, OKAY. I'M A LITTLE WORRIED ABOUT CLARICE, THOUGH. SHE'S BEEN IN SUCH A FUNK SINCE THE SUPREME COURT VOTED BUSH INTO OFFICE.



ISN'T THAT THE APPROPRIATE RESPONSE TO BEING FUNKED OVER? YEAH. BUT LAW IS SOMETHING SHE'S DEVOTED HER LIFE TO. I MEAN, SHE NEVER HAD ANY IDEALISTIC ILLUSIONS ABOUT THE JUSTICE SYSTEM, BUT SHE'D WAKE UP EVERY DAY EAGER TO GO TO WORK. NOW IT'S LIKE, WHY BOTHER?



SOUNDS LIKE DEPRESSION. I BETTER GIVE YOU MY SPECIAL SELECTIVE SEROTONIN REUPTAKE INHIBITOR SALON CUT. YOU'LL BE SO GORGEOUS, SHE'LL FEEL LIKE SHE'S BEEN ON PAXIL FOR THE PAST TWO MONTHS.



WHAT DO YOU THINK? I THINK I HAVEN'T SEEN A SCARIER CABINET SINCE WE FOUND THAT EGG SALAD SANDWICH RAFFI HID UNDER THE SINK.



CHOWDERHEAD

2/28

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SEE YOU FRIDAY, LISA!

GOOD LORD. COULD THAT POSSIBLY HAVE BEEN AN ACTUAL ROMANTIC PROSPECT?

NO, JUST THE WOMAN I CARPOOL WITH TO BUFFALO LAKE. WHERE ARE YOU OFF TO?

OUT TO EAT. I JUST GOT HOME, BUT SPARROW'S AT YOGA, STUART'S SPINNING, THE HOUSE IS COLD, AND THE LARDER IS BARE.

PERFECT. I SHOULD A BEEN A PAIR OF RAGGED CLAWS SCUTTLING ACROSS THE FLOORS OF SILENT SEAS.

TAKE ME OUT TO DINNER AND TELL ME ALL ABOUT IT.

CAN'T. MID-TERMS.

OH, GIVE 'EM ALL GENTLEMEN'S C'S AND BE DONE WITH IT, GINGER. THEY'LL GROW UP TO BE PRESIDENT, I GET A FREE MEAL.

SHORTLY...

... AND TONIGHT'S SOUP IS A LICHEE NUT CHOWDER WITH PICKLED SEA VEGETABLES. CAN I GET YOU A DRINK WHILE YOU'RE DECIDING?

NOTHING FOR ME.

I'LL HAVE A PINT OF PRAIRIE DOG PORTER.

COMMUTE. TEACH. SIT IN DEPARTMENT MEETINGS. GRADE PAPERS. COMMUTE AGAIN. GRADE MORE PAPERS. WHEN DO I HAVE TIME TO MEET ANYONE?

MISSILE SHIELD STRATEGISTS MOVE FROM PENTAGON...

AND EVEN ASSUMING THERE'S ANYONE LEFT TO MEET, LOOK AT ME, LOIS! I GET MORE HAGGARD EVERY DAY! I'M ON A HOPELESS DOWNWARD SPIRAL, DOOMED TO SLOG THROUGH LIFE ALONE AND DIE A SPINSTER!

... TO NEW WHITE HOUSE OFFICE OF FAITH-BASED INITIATIVE

SO YOU'VE GIVEN UP ON THE ALLURING CLARICE?

GOD, HOW CLASSIC IS THAT, PINING AFTER A MARRIED WOMAN? I WOULDN'T KNOW WHAT TO DO WITH AN AVAILABLE PERSON IF SHE FELL INTO MY SOUP.

HERE'S A SHOT OF BEET-GINGER JUICE ON THE HOUSE. YOU LOOK LIKE YOU COULD USE SOME CHEERING UP.

UH... THANKS.

SO, ARE YOU READY?

ER, NOT QUITE.

OH, YES SHE IS. BRING HER A BIG TUREN OF THAT CHOWDER AND POUR IT IN HER LAP.

LADIES' MAN

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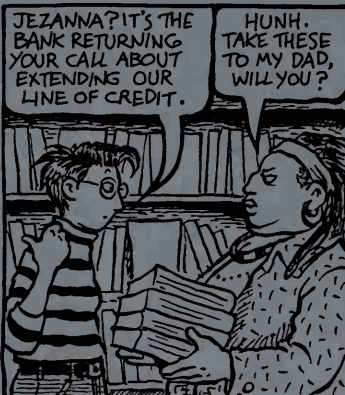
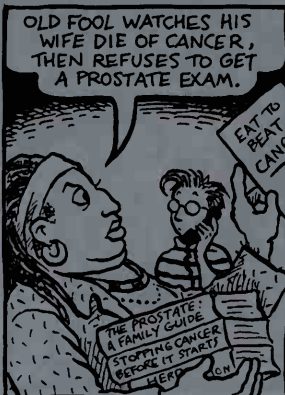
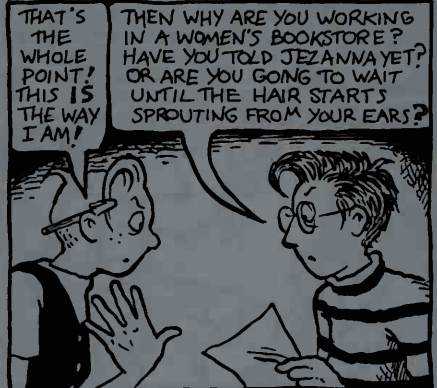
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WHERE'S JEZANNA? I'M TRYING TO ORDER MORE COPIES OF THE NEW OPRAH PICK, AND THE PUBLISHER SAYS WE HAVE TO PAY OFF OUR BALANCE FIRST.

SHE TOOK - HARUMPH! - SHE TOOK HER DAD TO A DOCTOR'S APPOINTMENT.

WHAT'S WRONG WITH YOUR VOICE?

I'M GETTING A SORE THR...



juiced

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CLARICE IS STILL NOT QUITE HERSELF...

I'M SO GLAD YOU COULD SEE US, PATRICIA. I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO. IT'S LIKE ALL THE JUICE HAS BEEN SQUEEZED OUT OF HER.

HOW LONG HAS THIS BEEN GOING ON?

SINCE THE INAUGURATION.

COULD YOU PLEASE NOT USE THAT WORD?

3/28

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INAUGURATION?

OR "PRESIDENT," "WHITE HOUSE," "WASHINGTON," "ADMINISTRATION." I CAN'T EVEN TALK ABOUT THE BU— THE SHRUBBERY IN THE YARD WITHOUT SETTING HER OFF.

INTERESTING. WHAT SEEMS TO BE THE PROBLEM, CLARICE?

THAT #*☆@ BUTTERFLY BALLOT COST GORE 6,607 VOTES! THAT'S TEN TIMES THE NUMBER HE NEEDED TO WIN!

SHE'S DEPRESSED.

LOOK, THIS IS HER IDEA. AS FAR AS I'M CONCERNED, IT'S THE HAPPY PEOPLE WHO NEED THERAPY.

HMM... THE LAST TIME WE MET, YOU TWO TALKED ABOUT FEELING A CERTAIN STAGNATION IN YOUR RELATIONSHIP.

OUR RELATIONSHIP? WHAT'S THAT HAVE TO DO WITH IT? WE'RE LIVING UNDER CONSERVATIVE OCCUPATION! ISN'T THAT ENOUGH TO BE DEPRESSED ABOUT?

I HEAR YOU, CLARICE. I JUST WANT TO MAKE SURE THERE'S NOT SOMETHING ELSE GOING ON, SOME DEEPER ISSUE THAT COULD BE A PRECEDENT.

AAUGH!

PRECEDENT, WITH A "C-E."

FOR EXAMPLE, I KNOW THE TWO OF YOU WERE THINKING OF EXPLORING SOME SORT OF NONMONOGAMY. HAS ANYTHING COME OF THAT?

NO. WE GOT TEMPORARILY SIDETRACKED BY GETTING MARRIED. ANYHOW, SHE'S LOST INTEREST IN EVERYTHING, EVEN THAT PERENNIAL OBJECT OF HER AFFECTION, THE ENCHANTING GINGER.

WHO?

MEANWHILE...

ONE APPLE-ALFALFA TONIC. YOU WANT A SHOT OF GINGER IN THAT, GINGER? IT'S VERY STIMULATING.

UM... SURE, JASMINE. THAT SOUNDS NICE.

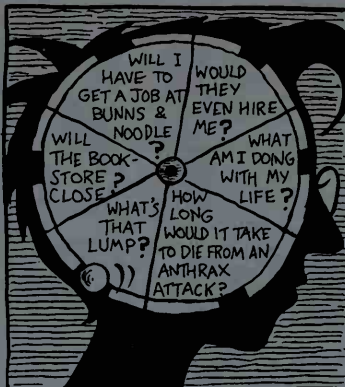
THE JUICE BAR & BREWERY

CUP OF CHEER

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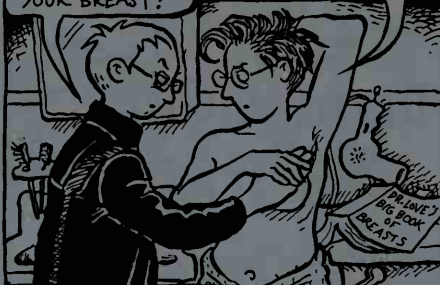
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LET'S SEE WHAT MO'S ROULETTE WHEEL OF WORRY HAS LANDED ON TODAY.



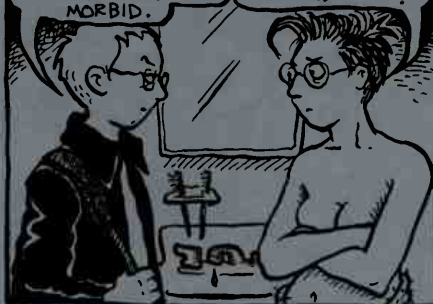
I CAN'T FEEL ANYTHING. BESIDES, THAT'S YOUR ARMPIT, NOT YOUR BREAST!

YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO CHECK YOUR ARMPITS TOO! DON'T YOU READ THE SHOWER CARD?



I TRY NOT TO... MUST WE KEEP THAT THING HANGING IN THERE ALL THE TIME? IT'S MORBID.

NOT AS MORBID AS CANCER. YOU DO THE EXAM EVERY MONTH, RIGHT?

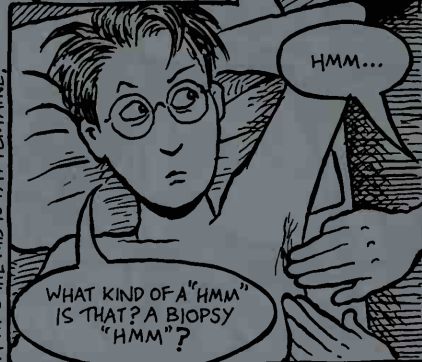


MORE OR LESS. I'VE GOTTA GO. I HAVE MY SEMINAR TONIGHT, REMEMBER?

I'LL CALL YOU AFTER MY APPOINTMENT.



WHAT AFTERNOON...

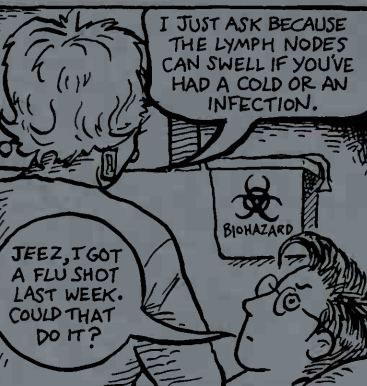


NO, NO... YOU'VE GOT A SWOLLEN LYMPH NODE. HAVE YOU BEEN SICK LATELY?

UM... I'VE BEEN A LITTLE CONSTIPATED.



I JUST ASK BECAUSE THE LYMPH NODES CAN SWELL IF YOU'VE HAD A COLD OR AN INFECTION.



JEEZ, I GOT A FLU SHOT LAST WEEK. COULD THAT DO IT?

I'LL BET THAT'S IT, JUST YOUR IMMUNE SYSTEM REACTING TO THE VACCINE. YOUR BREASTS FEEL FINE TO ME, MO. IF IT'S STILL THERE IN THIRTY DAYS, CALL ME, BUT I WOULDN'T WORRY.

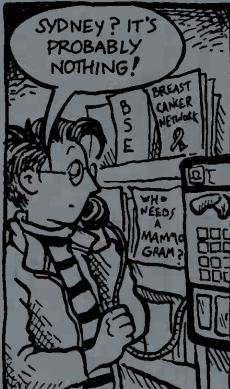


SHORTLY...

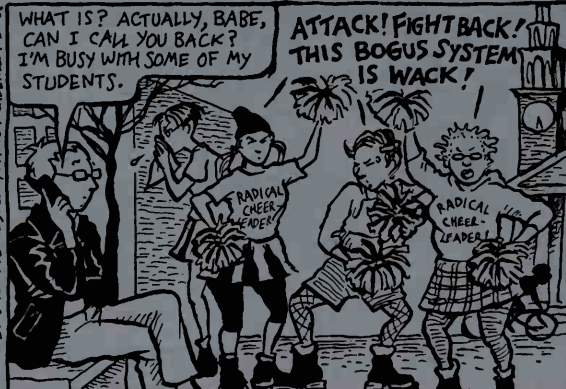
BOOBS! BELLIES! BUTTS! WE LOVE OUR BOOBS! BELLIES! BUTTS!



SYDNEY? IT'S PROBABLY NOTHING!



WHAT IS? ACTUALLY, BABE, CAN I CALL YOU BACK? I'M BUSY WITH SOME OF MY STUDENTS.



ATTACK! FIGHT BACK! THIS BOGUS SYSTEM IS WACK!

Not-So Quiet Desperation

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COME ON. YOU CAN'T STAY IN BED ALL WEEKEND AGAIN. I TOLD RAFFI YOU'D TAKE HIM TO GET NEW SNEAKERS.

OH, GOD. TO THE MALL?

CLARICE, I CAN'T TAKE MUCH MORE OF THIS. I AGREE, IT'S HORRIFYING THAT BUSH GOT APPOINTED PRESIDENT. BUT YOU KNOW WHAT? LIFE GOES ON!

AFTER A FASHION. WITH A LITTLE MORE GLOBAL WARMING, CARBON DIOXIDE, AND ARSENIC.

THAT'S WHAT I'M TALKING ABOUT! LOOK AT YOU! YOU'RE AN ENVIRONMENTAL LAWYER AND YOU'RE JUST ROLLING OVER AND TAKING IT!

THEY'RE DISMANTLING ABORTION RIGHTS, SLASHING ENERGY EFFICIENCY, REHEATING THE COLD WAR! AND YOU CAN'T ROUSE YOURSELF TO GO TO THE MALL.

I JUST WANT TO LIE HERE A LITTLE LONGER.

FINE. YOU'RE EXACTLY WHERE THEY WANT YOU.

MEEMA, I DON'T FEEL SO GOOD.

WHAT'S WRONG?

HCHXXCK!

ARE YOU CHOKING?

RAFFI, TALK TO ME!

WHO TURNED OUT THE LIGHTS?

UNHH! MY GUT! I'M DYING!

IT MUSTA BEEN BECAUSE THE PRESIDENT IRRADIATED THE LUNCH MEAT AT SCHOOL.

I'M UP. ARE YOU HAPPY?

I'M GETTING ICE BLUE ADIDAS KOBE'S, OKAY?

...BEFORE A FALL

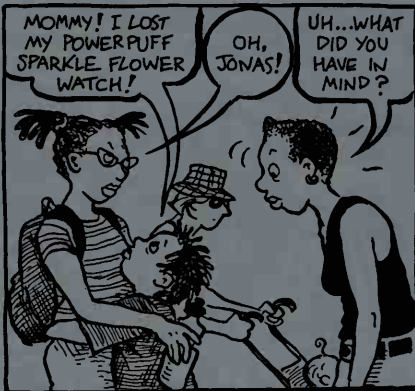
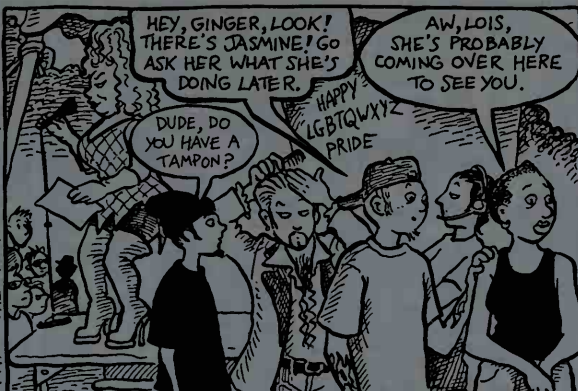
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OUR
HAPLESS
HOYDENS
HAVE
DUTIFULLY
MUSTERED
FOR THE
ANNUAL
PRIDE
WINDING.

LOIS'S DRAG
KING REVUE
IS WAITING
TO TAKE THE
STAGE.

365

A TIP-O' THE NIB TO YOLANDA!



GIRLS!
GIRLS!
GIRLS!

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WHY DIDN'T
YOU TELL ME
SHE HAD A
KID?!

HOW WAS I SUPPOSED TO
KNOW? WHAT AM I, YENTA
THE MATCHMAKER? YOU'RE
PAYING ME FOR MY
SERVICES?

HEY, JONAS,
CATCH!

OW!

KONK!

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HEY, BIG GUY!
YOU'RE OKAY. IT
JUST NICKED
YOU.

PUT
ME DOWN,
PLEASE.

SO DIDJA HEAR HOW THIS LESBIAN CLUB, GIRL BAR,
APPROACHED THE WNBA TEAM IN LOS ANGELES
ABOUT SELLING TICKET PACKAGES, AND THE TEAM
SAID "LESBIANS? EW, NO WAY!" NOW THIS SEASON
THEY'RE HAVING TROUBLE FILLING SEATS, SO THEY
CALL GIRL BAR BACK AND SAY THEY'VE RECONSIDERED.

WHAT AN INSULT.
WHERE WOULD
WOMEN'S BASKET-
BALL BE WITHOUT
THE WHOLESOME,
VIGOROUS, ALL-
AMERICAN LESBIAN?

ABOUT THE SAME
PLACE AS THE GIRL
SCOUTS.

AMERICAN FAMILY
ASSOCIATION
ATTACKS GIRL
SCOUTS FOR
NOT EXCLUDING
LESBIANS

HEY, UH... LOUIS. YOU
WERE GREAT AT THE
RALLY TODAY. UM, ARE
THOSE YOUR OWN
SIDEburns COMING IN?
THEY LOOK GOOD.

HUH? OH, JEEZ. I
FORGOT TO TAKE
THEM OFF. LISTEN,
MO. I'M NOT TAKING
TESTOSTERONE.

REALLY? SO IF YOU'RE
NOT DOING HORMONES,
THAT MAKES YOU,
LIKE, A NO-HO
TRANNNY, RIGHT?

JEEZ, SOMEONE'S
BEEN DOING HER
HOMEWORK. BUT
ACTUALLY, I'M NOT
TRANSITIONING AT ALL.

WHAT DO
YOU MEAN?
WHY NOT?

OH, NOW
YOU'RE DISAP-
POINTED?

MAYBE YOU'RE IN
DENIAL. MAYBE
IT'S YOUR
INTERNALIZED
TRANSPHOBIA.

I DON'T THINK
SO, DOCTOR. I
ENJOY BEING A
GIRL. IN A PER-
VERSE KIND
OF WAY.

CAN I PLAY?
WHAT ARE YOU
GUYS DOING?

WE'RE NOT GUYS. WE'RE
POWERPUFFS. YOU CAN BE
BUTTERCUP. I'M BLOSSOM.
AND HE'S BUBBLES.

notes on camp

AS HE PICKS RAFFI UP FROM DAY CAMP, CARLOS APPEARS TO HAVE WALKED INTO A LINGUISTIC DEBATE.

368

¡HOLA, RAFAEL! ARE YOU READY TO GO?

ASK MY UNCLE CARLOS. HE'S GAY, SO HE KNOWS.

BILLY SAID MY BOAT WAS GAY, AND I SAID BOATS CAN'T BE GAY, RIGHT?

UH...

WELL, THAT DEPENDS. DID YOU MEAN HIS BOAT WAS SLEEK AND BEAUTIFUL, BILLY?

HAH! NO! IT'S LAME AND STUPID!

OKAY, THERE'S YOUR PROBLEM. LAME, STUPID THINGS AREN'T GAY. ONLY COOL, EXCELLENT THINGS ARE GAY.

I THOUGHT JUST PEOPLE COULD BE GAY, NOT THINGS.

WORK WITH ME, RAF.

IS HIS SHIRT GAY?

HMM. NO, I'M SORRY TO SAY, RAFFI'S SHIRT IS EXTREMELY UN-GAY.

IS YOURS?

THAT'S AN EXCELLENT QUESTION, BILLY. BECAUSE IT IS GAY ON ME. BUT ON YOUR COUNSELOR OVER THERE, IT'S NOT. CAN YOU TELL ME WHY?

BECAUSE HE'S LAME AND STUPID?

WELL, PERHAPS. BUT I WAS THINKING, NOT ONLY DO I FILL MINE OUT IN A MORE AESTHETICALLY PLEASING WAY, I ALSO WEAR IT WITH AN IRONIC AND TRANSFORMATIVE NOD TO ITS HISTORY AS A SYMBOL OF MALE HETEROSEXUAL LOUISIANNESS. WHEREAS FOR YOUR COUNSELOR, IT WAS PROBABLY THE ONLY CLEAN THING LEFT IN HIS DRAWER.

MY BOAT'S STILL GONNA WIN TOMORROW, BUTTFACE.

WITH THAT HETEROSEXUAL HUNK OF JUNK? I DON'T THINK SO, STINKBUTT!

LATER...

YOU WANT WHAT KIND OF A SHIRT?

A WIFEBEATER. LIKE CARLOS HAS.

UM, TONI? I THINK WE NEED TO HAVE A LITTLE TALK WITH...

I'M ALL OVER IT.

IT'S REALLY GAY.

Not-For-Profit Motive

8/15

370

WHAT ARE YOU THINKING? SHE HAS A KID!

...AND THAT SLIGHT, CAPTIVATING GAP BETWEEN HER FRONT TEETH.

MEANWHILE, DOWNSTAIRS...

I FEEL DIRTY! IS IT A BRIBE? HUSH MONEY? BLOOD MONEY?

FROM G.W. BUSH YOU'RE A WINNER, LOIS MCGIVER!

SIGN IT RIGHT OVER TO THE SHELTER AND YOU WON'T HAVE TO TROUBLE YOUR PRETTY LITTLE HEAD ABOUT IT.

GIVE IT TO THE HOMELESS ALLIANCE AND YOU CAN DOUBLE YOUR IMPACT, THANKS TO THE MATCHING GRANT PROGRAM I SET UP.

OR YOU COULD SPLIT IT BETWEEN US.

OR I COULD BLOW IT ALL ON... ON... THE MIND REELS. GROCERIES? A MAMMOGRAM?

DING-DONG

HOUSE VOTES: THERAPEUTIC CLONING, NO. DRILLING IN ANWR, YES.

FUEL EFFICIENCY IN SUV'S. NO. EARTH IS FLAT. YES.

HI, LOIS. IS GINGER READY?

LEMME GO SEE.

YOUR DATE WANTS TO KNOW IF YOU'RE READY. I REFRAINED FROM TELLING HER YOU PASSED "READY" SEVERAL YEARS AGO AND WERE NOW WELL INTO THE DESPERATE ZONE.

I CAN'T DO THIS, LOIS! I CAN'T GO OUT WITH A WOMAN WHO HAS A CHILD! I'M TOO YOUNG, I TELL YOU! I HAVEN'T SOWN MY OATS YET!

I THINK YOUR OATS ARE IMPACTED. MAYBE SHE'S NOT LOOKING FOR A SECOND PARENT. MAYBE SHE JUST WANTS TO NAIL YOU.

SHE'S A SINGLE MOTHER! SHE CAN'T GO AROUND NAIL--HAVING CASUAL SEX WITH PEOPLE.

HOW D'YOU KNOW? AT LEAST FIND OUT WHAT HER INTENTIONS ARE.

GIVE IT AWAY? I DON'T THINK SO. I HAVE A KID TO RAISE.

SEE? I WAS RIGHT! AND THAT'S WHY I CAN'T GO OUT WITH HER!

YOU CAN'T GO OUT WITH ME BECAUSE I SPENT MY TAX REBATE ON A USED COMPUTER FOR JONAS?

IGNORE HER. IT'S THE HEAT.

the Bibliophile

IT'S A LOVELY SUMMER EVENING, AND MO'S NEW BOOK GROUP HAS FAILED TO MATERIALIZE.

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WHERE THE #@*% IS EVERYONE?

I DON'T KNOW, MO. MAYBE THEY DIDN'T FINISH "THE MILL ON THE FLOSS."

SLACKERS. NOW I HAVE TO STAY OPEN TILL NINE FOR NOTHING.

YEAH, LITERALLY. CAN YOU WAIT A DAY BEFORE YOU CASH YOUR PAYCHECK?

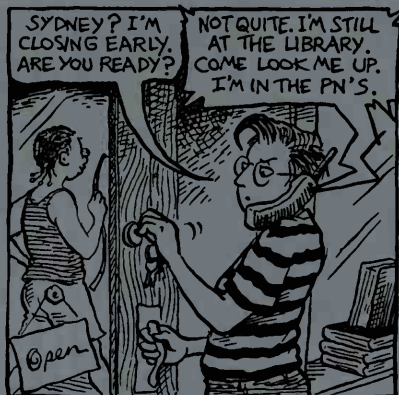


BY 8:22, SHE'S MADE ONE SALE.



ALL SET?

YEAH, THE BUMPER-STICKER'LL DO IT.



SYDNEY? I'M CLOSING EARLY. ARE YOU READY?

NOT QUITE. I'M STILL AT THE LIBRARY. COME LOOK ME UP. I'M IN THE PN'S.



GOD, WHAT IS IT ABOUT LIBRARIES?



BOOKS ABOUT EVERYTHING IN THE UNIVERSE, EACH ONE ITS OWN LITTLE WORLD.



WANNA FOOL AROUND? I THINK WE'RE THE ONLY PEOPLE IN THE BUILDING.

REALLY? I'VE ALWAYS FANTASIZED ABOUT LIBRARY CONGRESS. LET'S DO IT IN THE HQ 70'S.



TWENTY MINUTES LATER...

WOW. I THINK THAT WAS THE PEAK EROTIC EXPERIENCE OF MY LIFE TO DATE.

GOOD THING NO ONE ON YOUR TENURE COMMITTEE HAPPENED BY.



YOU SHOULD SPEND MORE TIME IN THE LIBRARY.

I'D LOVE TO. UNFORTUNATELY, I HAVE A LIVING TO EKE OUT.



DEAN HAVERSTICK!

HELLO, DR. KRUKOWSKI! WHAT ARE YOU DOING IN HERE ON SUCH A BEAUTIFUL NIGHT?

BECOME AN INFORMATION PROFESSIONAL
THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE

Modern Maturity

WHY'S THIS PURCHASE ORDER SITTING IN THE FAX MACHINE?

GOD, I MEANT TO SEND THAT AN HOUR AGO. I JUST GOT MY PERIOD AND I'M REALLY SPACED OUT.

I NEVER USED TO GET LIKE THIS. SPACEY, CRABBY, CAN'T SLEEP. I THOUGHT ALL THAT STUFF ABOUT WOMEN BEING AT THE MERCY OF THEIR HORMONES WAS JUST PATRIARCHAL LIES.

AH HA HA HA HA!

9/26

373

WELCOME TO PERIMENOPAUSE!

MENOPAUSE?! CRIPES, I'M NOT EVEN FORTY YET.

I SAID "PERI!" AROUND, ABOUT, NEAR. IT CAN LAST TEN YEARS. THEN THE REAL FUN BEGINS.

MADWIMMIN BOOKS

CITY CITY

AH HA HA HA HA!

Canon

WHAT'S THIS? YOU'RE APPLYING TO LIBRARY SCHOOL?

SHH! JEEZ! THANK GOD JEZANNA DIDN'T PICK THAT UP.

WHAT, YOU HAVEN'T TOLD HER? YOU'RE JUST BAILING?

I DUNNO. I HAVEN'T FIGURED IT OUT YET.

HUH. YOU OF ALL PEOPLE, WORKING INSIDE THE SYSTEM.

WHAT'S MY CHOICE? THERE'S NO OUTSIDE LEFT! YOU CAN BUY "BEST LESBIAN EROTICA" AT THE 7-11.

THE BOOKSTORE'S STRUGGLING. WHY SHOULDN'T I TAKE A CHANCE TO MAKE A DECENT LIVING? I'M NOT GETTING ANY YOUNGER.

TELL ME ABOUT IT.

WHAT HAPPENED, LOIS? LIFE WAS JUST GETTING STARTED.

HI, DAD. HOW'D IT GO?

HIS PSA COUNT'S HIGH. WE'RE PRETTY SURE IT'S ENLARGED, BUT HE STILL WON'T LET THE DOCTOR DO A DIGITAL EXAM.

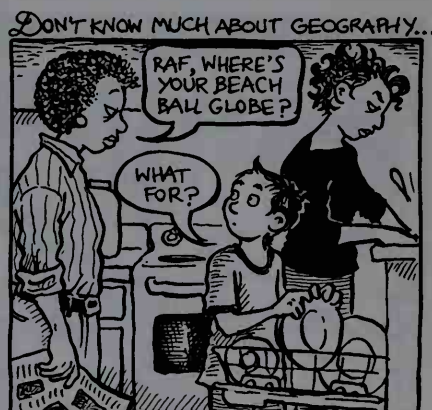
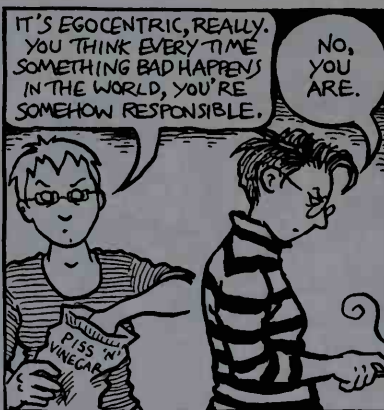
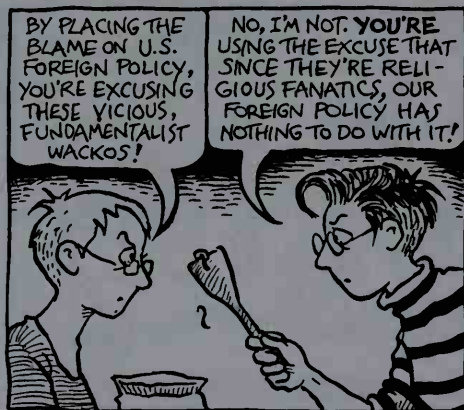
THEY FIND SOMETHING, THEY'LL WANT TO GO IN AND CUT ME. I'LL END UP LIKE CHARLIE RASKIN, LIMP AS AN EGG NOODLE.

THEN AGAIN, MAYBE WE STILL HAVE A FEW GOOD YEARS LEFT.

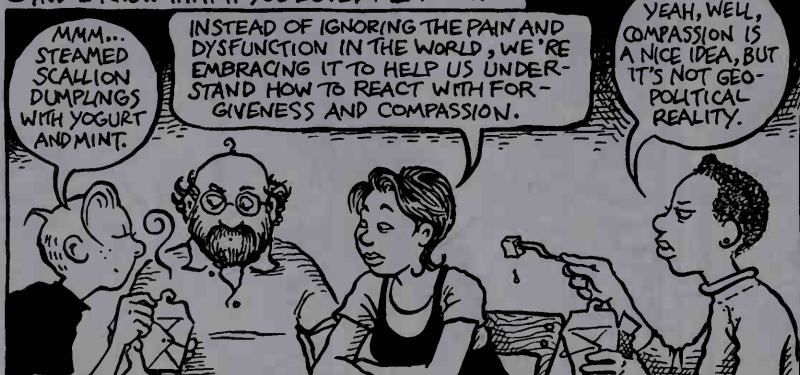
DAD!

REAL WORLD



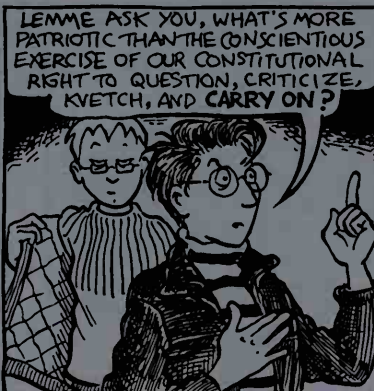
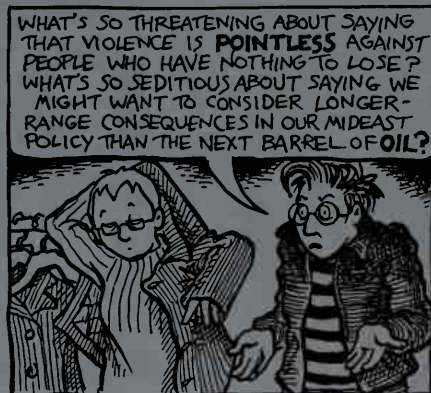
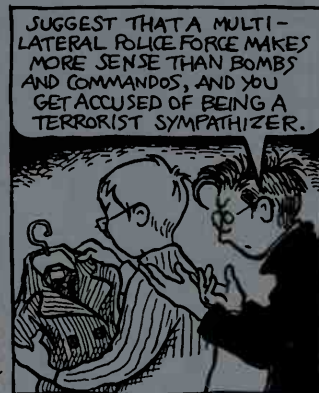
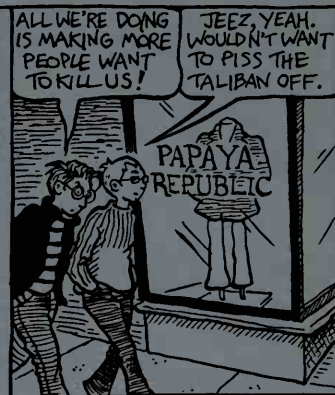
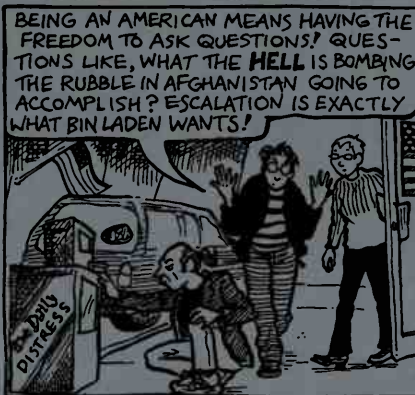
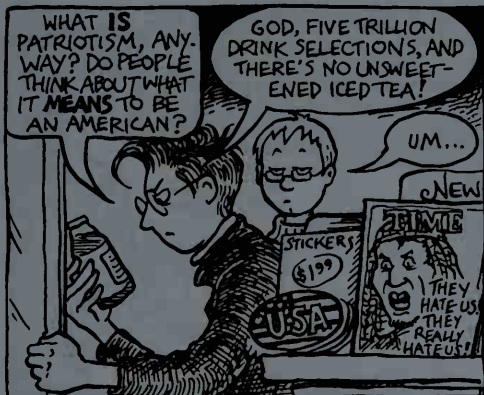
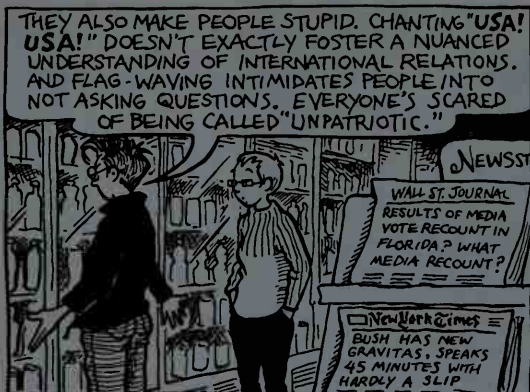


@AND I KNOW THAT IF YOU LOVED ME TOO...



Of thee I sing

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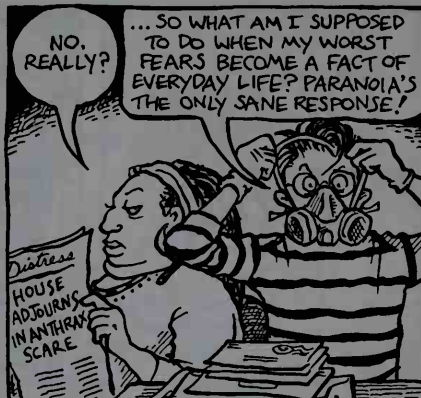
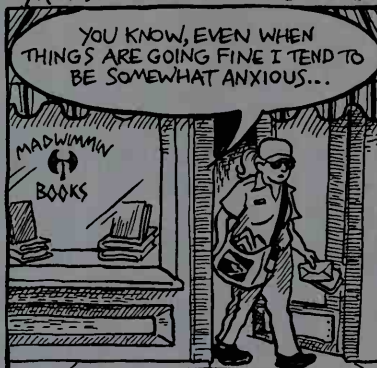


C'est la Guerre

IS STRESS BRINGING OUT THE BEST OR THE WORST IN OUR STOUT-HEARTED WOMEN?

377

Mo's BECOMING MORE LIKE SHE IS.



THE THINGS I USED TO WORRY ABOUT SEEM SO QUAIN'T NOW. "AM I SAVING ENOUGH FOR RETIREMENT? SHOULD I QUIT MY JOB TO GO TO LIBRARY SCHOOL? HAS SOMEONE SNEEZED IN THE BULK TOFU BUCKET?" I MEAN, WHAT DOES IT MATTER WITH THE FUTURE SO UNCERTAIN!



QUIT YOUR WHAT? PERHAPS THE FUTURE IS EVEN MORE UNCERTAIN THAN I THOUGHT.

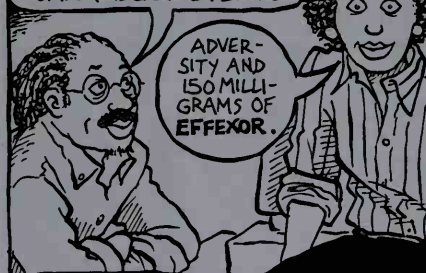


LARICE IS BECOMING MORE LIKE SHE USED TO BE.

I KNOW IT'S A SCARY TIME, BUT IT'S ALSO AN OPPORTUNITY TO RE-EVALUATE OUR PRIORITIES, TO LIVE MORE FULLY! WE CAN LET FEAR AND DESPAIR SHUT US DOWN, OR WE CAN DO WHAT WE CAN TO MAKE THE WORLD BETTER!



I'M GLAD TO HEAR YOU SAY SO. YOU'VE BEEN SO DOWN FOR MONTHS NOW, I WAS GETTING WORRIED. I GUESS ADVERSITY CAN REALLY GALVANIZE SOME PEOPLE.



YDNEY'S VEERING OFF-CURRICULUM.

I KNOW THIS IS INTRO TO WOMEN'S STUDIES, BUT I WANT TO SHARE WHAT ONE OF MY FAVORITE DEAD WHITE MEN HAS TO SAY ABOUT OUR HUMAN PROPENSITY TOWARD "...THAT CONDITION WHICH IS CALLED WAR."



"...IN SUCH CONDITION THERE IS NO PLACE FOR INDUSTRY, BECAUSE THE FRUIT THEREOF IS UNCERTAIN: AND CONSEQUENTLY NO CULTURE OF THE EARTH; NO NAVIGATION, NOR USE OF THE COMMODITIES THAT MAY BE IMPORTED BY SEA; NO COMMODIOUS BUILDING;..



...NO ARTS; NO LETTERS; NO SOCIETY; AND WHICH IS WORST OF ALL, CONTINUAL FEAR, AND DANGER OF VIOLENT DEATH; AND THE LIFE OF MAN, SOLITARY, POOR, NASTY, BRUTISH, AND SHORT."



INGER HAS REGRESSED SADLY.



WE CAN'T PRETEND WE'RE SICK EVERY DAY. EVENTUALLY WE'D GET FIRED.

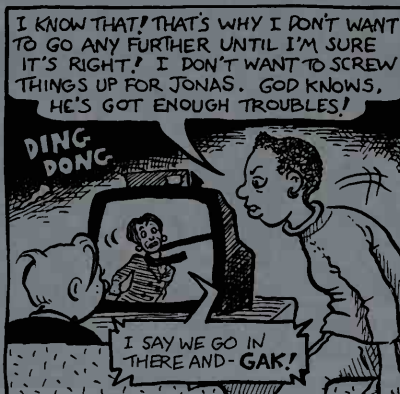
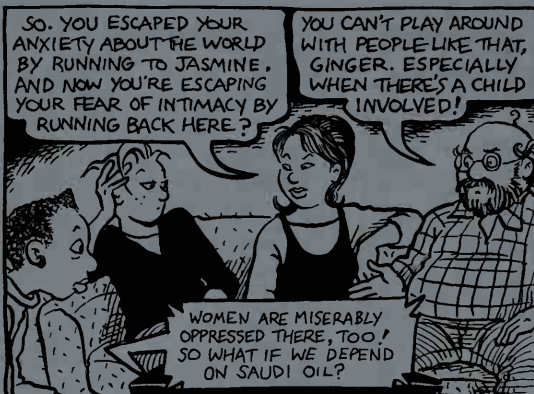
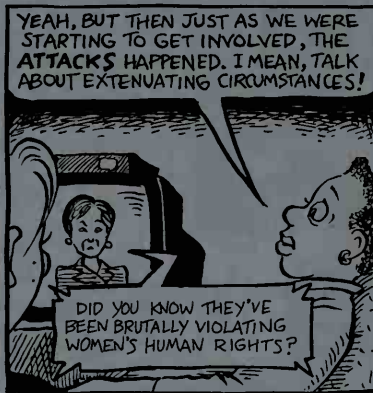
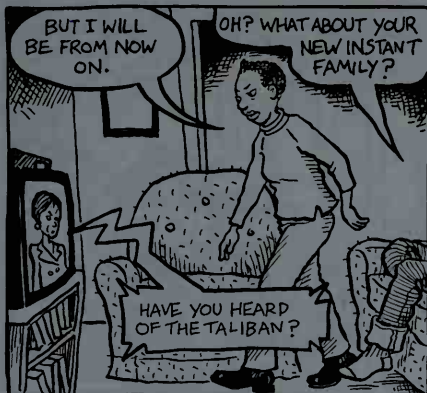


THE ROLE MODEL

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Search & Seizure

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UP ON UNIVERSITY HILL...

SYDNEY, YOU KNOW ALL THAT FLACK THE ADMINISTRATION GAVE ME OVER MY PRESENTATION AT THE ANTIWAR TEACH-IN?

UH.. YEAH.

WE'RE HAVING A SPEAKOUT FRIDAY ON ACADEMIC FREEDOM AND THE WHOLE CRACKDOWN ON CIVIL LIBERTIES IN GENERAL. CAN I TALK YOU INTO PARTICIPATING?

GEE, GEORGE. I'M CATCHING A FLIGHT IN A COUPLE HOURS. SORRY.

379

OH, LIKE YOU'D LOVE TO OTHERWISE.

HEY, SEE THIS? THIS IS MY TENURE FILE. SIX YEARS OF PAINSTAKING LABOR. WHY WOULD I COME THIS CLOSE, THEN BLOW IT ALL WITH FIVE MINUTES OF FIST-SHAKING?

LONG LIVE ACADEMIC FREEDOM.

BESIDES, I CAN'T GET TOO EXERCISED ABOUT THIS CIVIL LIBERTIES BUSINESS. IF THE FBI WANTS TO COPY MY HARD DRIVE, THEY'RE WELCOME TO IT. I HAVE NOTHING TO HIDE.

I JUST HAVE TO TURN THIS IN TO THE DEPARTMENT, THEN WE CAN GO.

HELLO, SYDNEY.

HELLO, BETSY.

THANK YOU, DR. KRUKOWSKI, DR. GILHOOLEY. JUST UNDER THE WIRE.

LATER, AT THE AIRPORT...

DID HERS LOOK BIGGER TO YOU?

WILL YOU DROP IT?

MIND IF I OPEN THIS UP?

NO, GO AHEAD. I DON'T HAVE ANYTHING TO HIDE.

CONCOURSE W →

UM...IT'S NOT LOADED.

LATER STILL, AT ANOTHER AIRPORT.

DADDY!

HI, BABY. HAS THAT TWO-BIT AGRICULTURAL SCHOOL GRANTED YOU TENURE YET?

UH.. NOT QUITE.

WE'RE GOING TO HAVE A SPLENDID TIME. I KNOW YOU DON'T SKI, MO, BUT THE CONDO'S GOT A HOT TUB!

SHE DOESN'T GET NAKED EITHER.

OH, PSHAW! WHAT'S SHE HAVE TO HIDE?

WE'RE GOING TO HAVE A SPLENDID TIME.

ARMY OF ONE

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ON VACATION WITH SYDNEY'S FATHER AND STEP-MOTHER, OUR HEROINE FINDS HERSELF TRAPPED IN A HELLISH VORTEX OF FRIVOLITY AND EXCESS.

HERE'S THE PAPER. SURE YOU DON'T WANT TO COME TO THE SPA, MO?

NO, I'M ALL SET. I JUST HAD MY NOSTRILS WAXED LAST WEEK.

MEANWHILE, ON THE SLOPES...

WHY DON'T YOU SEND SOME OF YOUR ARTICLES TO STANLEY STURGEON, SYD? A LETTER FROM HIM WOULD CINCINCH YOUR TENURE. MENTION MY NAME. WE WERE ON A PANEL TOGETHER ONCE.

RIGHT, DAD. I'M GONNA ASK A WORLD-FAMOUS ACADEMIC WHO MAY OR MAY NOT REMEMBER YOU TO GIVE ME A RECOMMENDATION.

OF COURSE HE'LL REMEMBER ME! HERE, I'VE GOT HIS E-MAIL ADDRESS.

RING!

HANG ON. I HAVE A CALL.

HELLO.

CAN WE GO HOME NOW?

MO, I TOLD YOU YOU'D GO NUTS SITTING AROUND THE CONDO. YOU SHOULD HAVE COME SKIING.

AM I THE ONLY PERSON BOTHERED BY THE CIRCULAR LOGIC OF PUBLIC OPINION POLLS? THE MEDIA'S TOO BUSY KISSING STAR-SPANGLED BUTT TO DO ANY CRITICAL OR INVESTIGATIVE REPORTING...

LATEST POLL: CIVILIAN CASUALTIES? OH, WELL! INVADE IRAQ? WOO HOO! MILITARY TRIBUNALS? BRING 'EM ON! ABM TREATY? NUKE IT! AMERICA... WORK

THEY PRESENT ONE PATRIOTICALLY CORRECT POINT OF VIEW. SO BIG SURPRISE! WHEN THEY TAKE A POLL, THAT'S THE ONE PEOPLE SPEW BACK. GARBAGE IN, GARBAGE OUT! WHY DOESN'T ANYONE EVER POLL ME?

GOOD EVENING! THE RUMSFELD CAN REPORT WLD'S LARGEST RUTABAGA

I'M LOSING THE CONNECTION, BABE! SEE YOU LATER! CLICK!

LATER...

WOULDN'T YOU BE MORE COMFORTABLE IN ONE OF THE TERRY-CLOTH ROBES?

SHUT UP.

WINE, MO?

YOU'RE NOT SUPPOSED TO USE THE HOT TUB UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF ALCOHOL.

ISN'T IT NICE, NOW THAT THE TALIBAN HAVE SURRENDERED..

...TO HAVE OUR OWN LITTLE DEPARTMENT FOR THE PROMOTION OF VIRTUE AND THE PREVENTION OF VICE?

HYUK!

SYD, D'YOU HAVE YOUR PALM? LET ME GIVE YOU THAT CONTACT I HAVE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF WICHITA PRESS.

OKAY, OKAY. IF IT'LL GET YOU OFF MY BACK.

MO, A FULL-BODY ALGAE WRAP WOULD DO WONDER FOR THAT ROUGH SKIN.

just a rhetorical question

Why is it that sex with a trusted and familiar partner,...

3/13

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EVEN AT ITS MOST ASSIDUOUS...

IT'S NO GOOD. YOU MIGHT AS WELL STOP.

ARE YOU SURE? I DON'T THINK I HAVE A REPETITIVE STRESS INJURY YET...

GOD. MAYBE I SHOULD GO OFF THE DRUG. THIS IS MORE DEPRESSING THAN IT WAS TO BE DEPRESSED.

NOT QUITE. IF YOU WERE DEPRESSED, YOU WOULDN'T BE ABLE TO COME. NOW, ENOUGH CHIT CHAT. GET TO WORK.

...ACCESSORIZED,...

MAYBE LOIS HAS ONE?

ARE YOU KIDDING? SHE'D WANT A FULL REPORT OVER BREAKFAST.

WELL, JEEZ. WE SHOULD BE OKAY WITH THE CAP AND THE GUNK.

IF YOU'D GET A VASECTOMY, WE WOULDN'T HAVE TO GO THROUGH THIS EVERY TIME.

A TIP OF THE NIB TO LOIS A 'LOVE COUNSELOR

BUT... BUT YOU KNOW I WANT TO HAVE A BABY EVENTUALLY.

SO MAKE SOME DEPOSITS AT A SPERM BANK FIRST. THEN WE CAN INSEMINATE LIKE NORMAL PEOPLE WHEN WE'RE READY.

...OR DEPRAVED,...

NEXT ON MARTHA STEWART LIVING, THREE-WAY SWITCHES AND TIPS ON PACKING.

...CAN'T MATCH THE INTENSITY OF BEING WITH SOMEONE NEW...

JASMINE!

OH. HI.

2 NITE THE VAGINA MONOLOGUES

IT'S NICE TO SEE YOU! YOU LOOK REALLY, UH...NICE!

COME ON, GINGER. DON'T PATRONIZE ME. YOU'VE MADE IT CLEAR HOW YOU FEEL, AND I CAN HANDLE IT.

BUT... BUT I MEANT IT.

FINE. WHATEVER.

'SCUSE ME, DUDES.

NO, REALLY! UM... I MEAN, I THOUGHT MAYBE, UH...

YOU THOUGHT WHAT? THAT YOU'D GIVE MY CHAIN A FEW MORE YANKS?

THIS BATHROOM IS DESIGNATED GENDER-FREE for the evening

...AND HAVING ABSOLUTELY NO SEX AT ALL?

NO, I MEAN, WELL, YES! I MEAN...

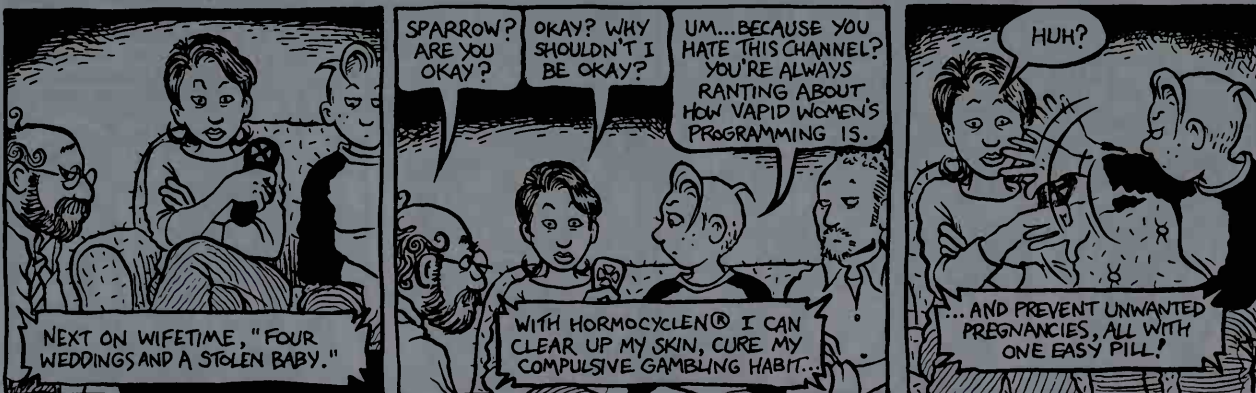
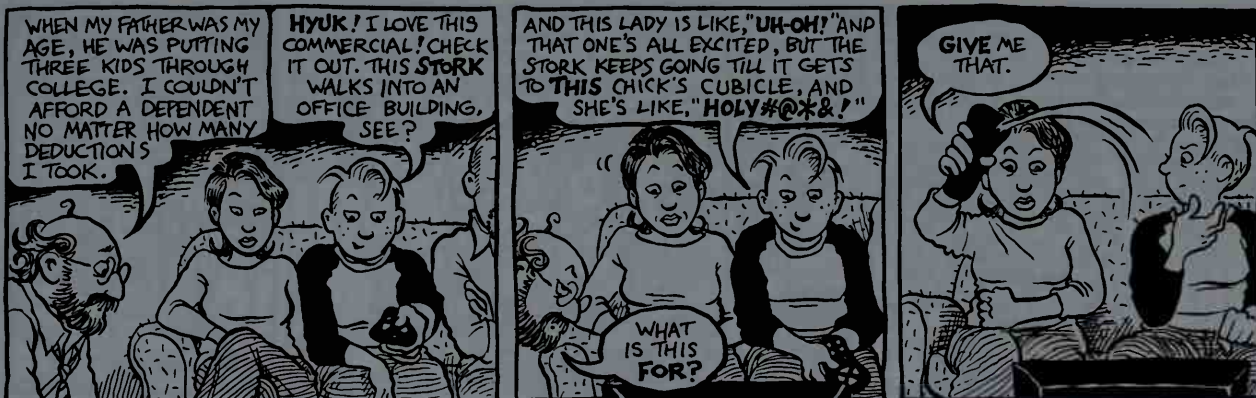
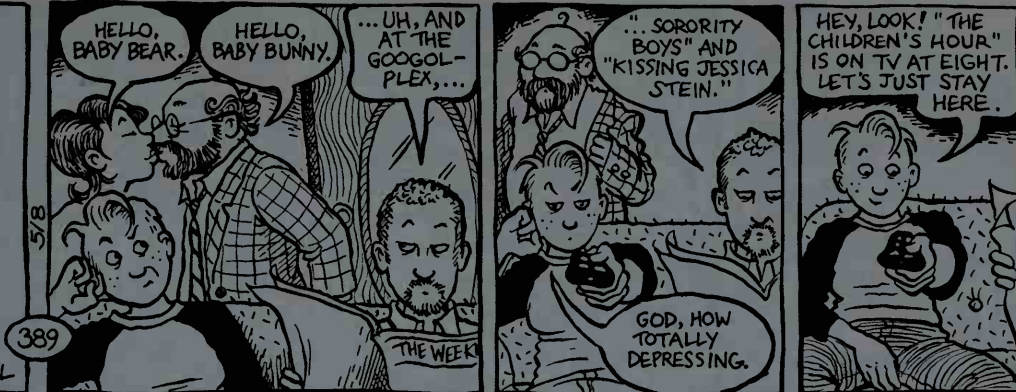
YOU ARE TOO *C#NG MUCH!

VAGINA MONOLOGUES

VDAY

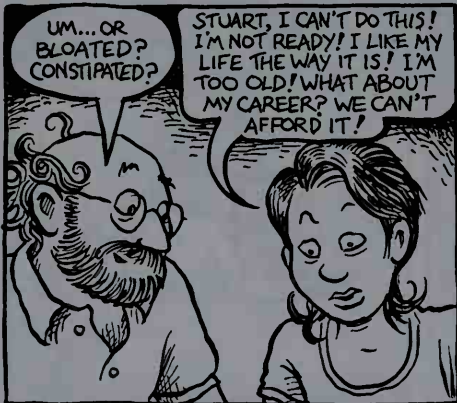
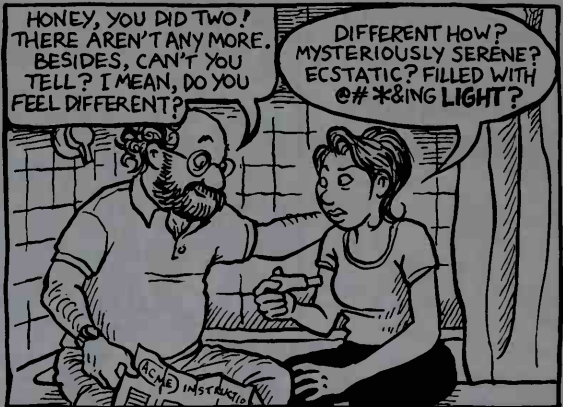
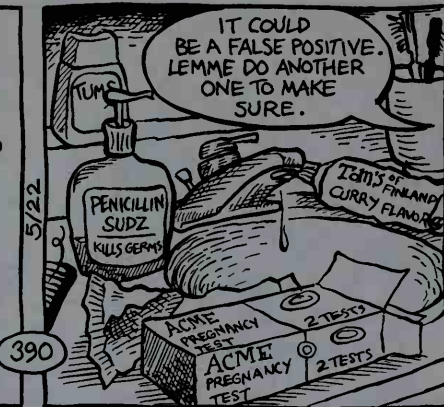
deductive reasoning

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waterworks

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MAMMA MIA

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HEY, GINGER.

THE SEMESTER'S OVER! PEACE AND QUIET! TIME TO THINK! NO MORE MESSY LITTLE STUDENT DRAMAS, NO MORE CAMPUS POLITICS AND ALL THAT CRAZED JOCKEYING FOR...

...FOR POSITION. JASMINE?

OH, YEAH. RIGHT THERE LOIS. HI, GINGER...

SHE PULLED A MUSCLE IN OUR KICKBOXING CLASS, AND JONAS NEEDED TO GO ONLINE FOR HIS REPORT ON ABBA, SO I SAID HE COULD USE YOUR COMPUTER.

UH...FINE. DON'T LET ME INTERRUPT YOU.

HEY, A LITTLE HEADS UP BEFORE YOU GO IN THE KITCHEN. SPARROW'S PREGNANT, SHE DOESN'T WANT THE BABY, STUART DOES, BUT HE'S TRYING NOT TO COME RIGHT OUT AND SAY SO.

MMM... LOWER.

I HAVE GOT TO GET A CONDO.

I THOUGHT YOU WANTED TO HAVE KIDS!

I THOUGHT I DID, TOO. IT'S A NICE THOUGHT! BUT I DON'T KNOW ABOUT THE REALITY. I MEAN, I'M ALMOST 40! DO YOU KNOW WHAT THE CHANCES OF COMPLICATIONS ARE AT MY AGE?

BUT... DO YOU KNOW WHAT THE CHANCES OF CONCEPTION ARE AT OUR AGE? OUR FERTILITY'S DWINDLING BY THE SECOND! IT'S A MIRACLE THIS HAPPENED AT ALL!

ANNIE LIEBOVITZ JUST HAD A BABY. SHE'S 52!

WELL, I'M NOT ANNIE LIEBOVITZ! AND HE'S NO SUSAN SONTAG!

GASP!

SPARROW, YOU KNEW YOU MIGHT GET KNOCKED UP WHEN YOU STARTED BOUNCING MR. SENSITIVE HERE. TIME TO PAY THE PIPER, BABE.

HEY, IT'S MY BODY! AND WHO THE HELL ARE YOU? THE PRO-LIFE WING OF "POLYAMOROUS PERVERTS OF AMERICA"?

GOD! WHAT ARE YOU PEOPLE GONNA DO NEXT, GO DOWN AND BLOCKADE PLANNED PARENTHOOD?!

SPARROW, I... I WANT TO HAVE THIS BABY! I MEAN, I WANT YOU TO HAVE IT. I MEAN, I WANT US TO HAVE IT.

YOU KNOW, EVERYONE'S AFRAID KIDS ARE GONNA BE ALL THIS WORK, BUT THEY'RE SO GREAT!

YEAH! LOOK AT JONAS!

MOM?

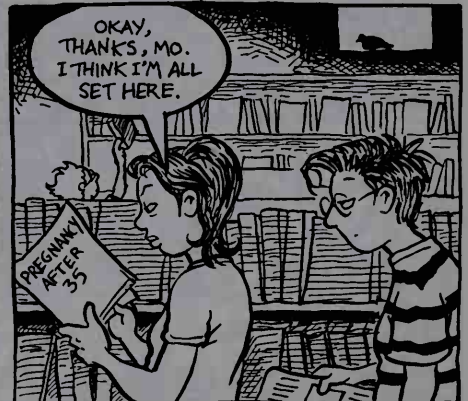
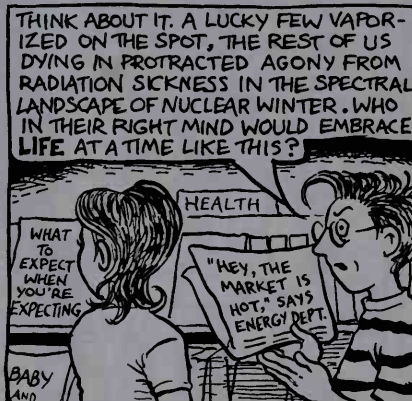
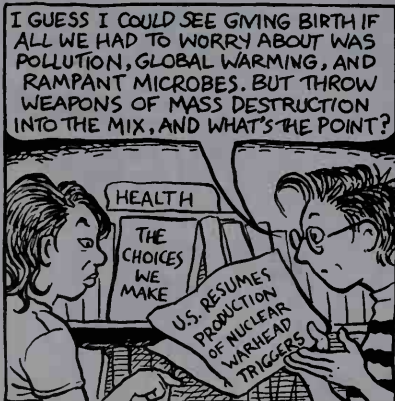
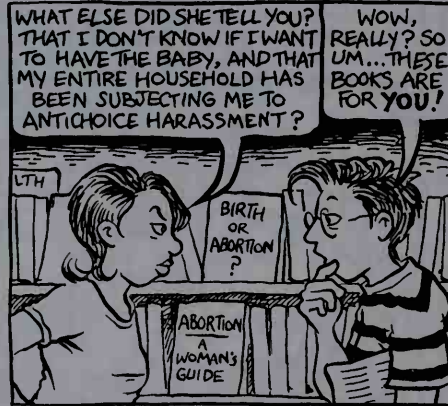
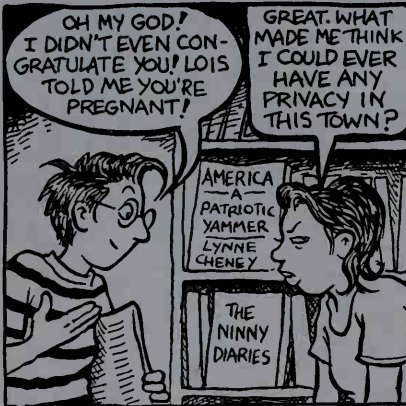
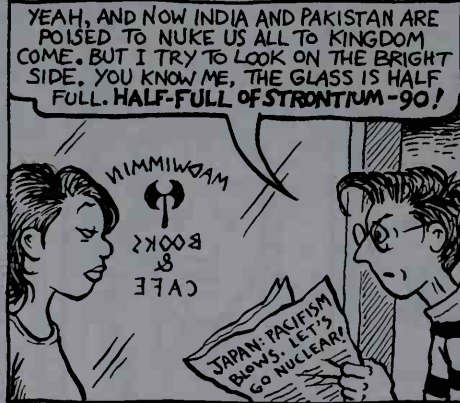
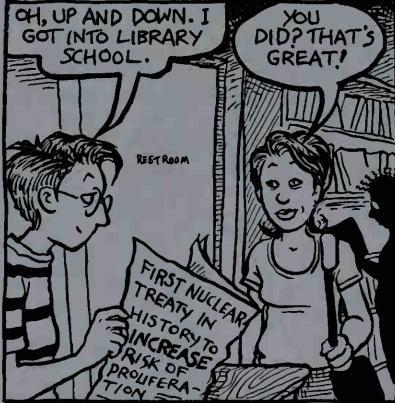
UM, SOMETHING HAPPENED WHILE I WAS DOWNLOADING "DANCIN' QUEEN," AND NOW THERE'S JUST A BLINKING QUESTION MARK ON THE SCREEN.

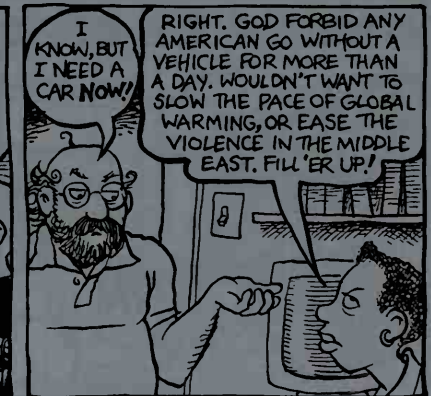
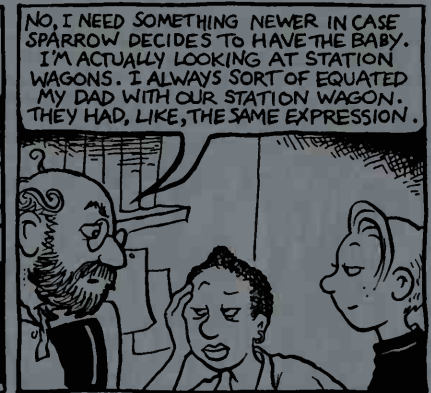
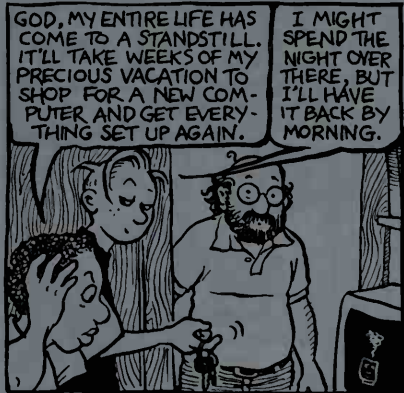
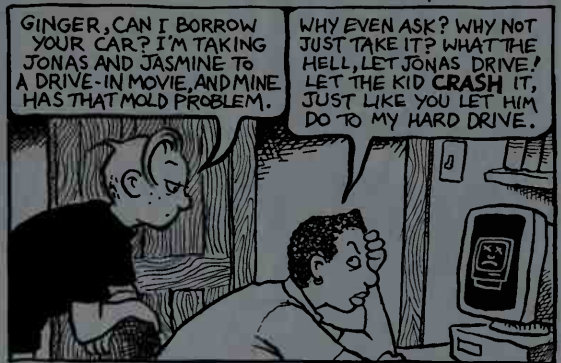
pro-lifer-ation

WHILE BROWSING AT THE BOOKSTORE, OUR HEROINE HAS SUFFERED A BRIEF BOUT OF NAUSEA.



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ANXIETY

TALES A TAD CRYPTIC

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ARE YOU FINDING THE ACTION-PACKED SUSPENSE OF THIS COMIC STRIP SIMPLY UNBEARABLE?

TODAY WE'LL RESOLVE A FEW SUBPLOTS THAT HAVE NO DOUBT KEPT YOU ON TENTERHOOKS FOR WEEKS.

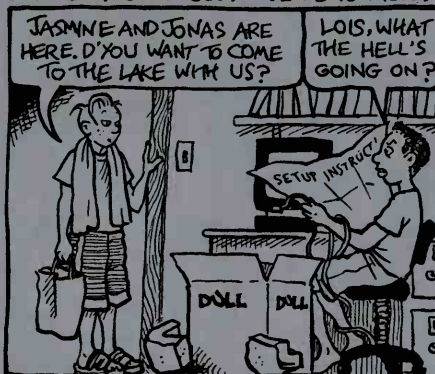
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DID STUART GET THAT STATION WAGON?



MAYBE YOU SHOULDN'T BE DOING THIS, SPARROW. THESE FUMES CAN'T BE GOOD FOR THE BABY. OR ME, EITHER. I'M STARTING TO FEEL A STRANGE CONVICTION THAT TAX RELIEF FOR THE WEALTHY IS A REALLY EXCELLENT IDEA.

WHAT'S GINGER'S COMPUTER SITUATION?



ARE YOU PURSUING JASMINE JUST TO TORTURE ME? LAST I HEARD, YOU WERE INTO BUTCH DADDIES AND TRANS MEN. SHE'S NOT YOUR TYPE AT ALL!

I HAVE VERY CATHOLIC TASTES. AND BESIDES, JONAS NEEDS A GENDERQUEER ROLE MODEL.



LOIS, LOOK! MOM LET ME WEAR THE TUBE TOP YOU GOT ME!

SWEET.



HAS SYDNEY HEARD FROM THE PROVOST?



BETSY? SURELY YOU'RE NOT LEAVING? YOU GET ANOTHER YEAR AFTER BEING DENIED TENURE!

OH, I GOT TENURE. BUT I WAS JUST OFFERED A POSITION AT HARVARD. TOUGH CHOICE! HAHA!



AND WHAT EXACTLY GOES ON AT LIBRARY SCHOOL ANYWAY?

EXCUSE ME, I, UH... JUST HAVE TO TELL YOU, I FOUND YOUR POWERPOINT PRESENTATION ON PRESERVING PATRON PRIVACY UNDER THE PATRIOT ACT PROVOCATIVE AND PENETRATING.



same as it
ever was

8/25

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HI, SWEETIE, SIT DOWN
AND PUT YOUR FEET UP.
HERE'S A GLASS OF MILK.
YOU SHOULD BE GAINING A
POUND A WEEK BY NOW.

STUART,
I DON'T...

DRINK UP! MOMMY'S
LOOKING A LITTLE
THIN. I HAVE A NICE,
PROTEIN-AND IRON-
RICH DINNER COMING
RIGHT UP.

UH...
MOMMY'S LOOKING A
LITTLE HOMICIDAL.

GOD, GINGER! HE'S SO COMPLETELY
INTO THIS BABY, THERE'S NO ROOM
FOR ME! WHAT IF I DON'T LIKE
MILK? WHAT IF THE WAY MY BODY'S
CHANGING IS **FREAKING ME OUT?**

WHAT IF ALL THE ESTROGEN TURNS
ME INTO ONE OF THOSE WOMEN
WHO YAMMER ABOUT **CALORIES**
AND **SELF-ESTEEM** AND **SHOES?**
I USED TO BE A RADICAL LESBIAN
FEMINIST. GODDAMN IT!

I HAVEN'T FELT
THIS LONELY AND
CONFUSED SINCE I
CAME OUT.

RIGHT. I'LL MOVE TO THE
BISEXUAL NEIGHBORHOOD
AND START VOLUNTEERING
AT THE COFFEEHOUSE FOR
UNINTENTIONALLY PREGNANT
BI-DYKES WITH OVER-
ZEALOUS MALE PARTNERS.

WELL...
DO WHAT YOU
DID THEN.

A TIP O' THE NIB TO MARGIT BERMAN!

MEAN-
WHILE,
JUST DOWN
THE STREET
FROM
BOUNDERS
BOOKS
AND MUZAK,
THE LAST
INDEPEND-
ENT BOOK-
STORE IN
TOWN BITES
THE DUST-
JACKET.

WHAT?!

I'M CLOSING
THE STORE.

I KNOW IT'S SUDDEN,
BUT I JUST GOT AN
UNEXPECTED TAX BILL.

SO...WE'LL
HAVE ANOTHER
FUND-RAISER!

THAT'S NO SOLUTION. SALES
ARE DOWN, COSTS ARE UP,
THE CAFE NEVER TOOK
OFF. WE CAN'T COMPETE
WITH THE BIG STORES, AND
I CAN'T GO ANY FURTHER
INTO DEBT.

SO... WE JUGGLE THE
BOOKS! WHAT ARE
GENERALLY ACCEPTED
ACCOUNTING STAND-
ARDS FOR?

NO.
THIS
IS IT.

WHEN I OPENED THIS PLACE 25
YEARS AGO, THIS STORE WAS AN
OUTPOST IN A HOSTILE ENVIRON-
MENT. THE FUTURE WAS UNCHARTED.
I HAD NO IDEA WHAT I WAS GETTING
INTO, EXCEPT THAT IT WASN'T GOING
TO MAKE MUCH MONEY.

WHAT AN
ACHIEVEMENT.
TO COME FULL
CIRCLE.

JEEZ, I
THOUGHT WE
WERE GONNA
MAKE THE
WORLD SAFE
FOR FEMINISM

WE DID. TO BE
PACKAGED AND
SOLD BY GLOBAL
MEDIA CONGLOM-
ERATES.

Intro to Queer Theory

THE ARC OF HISTORY IS LONG...

9/25

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THANKS, ANNE! SORRY I WAS A LITTLE LATE. I HOPE HE WASN'T ANY TROUBLE.

I WISH THE TWO OF THEM WOULD GIVE ME SOME TROUBLE. THEY JUST SIT IN FRONT OF THE COMPUTER LIKE... LIKE LARVAE.

SO HOW WAS YOUR FIRST DAY OF FOURTH GRADE?

WE'RE GOING TO KEEP JOURNALS AND WE HAVE TO WRITE CURSIVE IN THEM AND WE HAVE COMPUTER LAB EVERY DAY AND AT RECESS A NEW KID TAUGHT US THIS REALLY EXCELLENT GAME.

YEAH?

IT'S CALLED "SMOOR-TH-QUEER."

WHAT?

YOU THROW THE BALL IN THE AIR AND WHOEVER CATCHES IT RUNS AROUND AND WE ALL TRY TO KNOCK HIM DOWN AND PILE ONTO HIM. SEE MY SCRAPE?

RAFFI! DID YOUR TEACHER KNOW THIS WAS GOING ON? DID SHE SEE THE OTHER KIDS KNOCKING YOU DOWN?!

I DON'T KNOW. BUT I WAS KNOCKING THEM DOWN TOO!

I DON'T EVEN KNOW WHERE TO START! YOU KNOW IT'S WRONG TO GANG UP ON PEOPLE. YOU KNOW "QUEER" IS A VERY MEAN WORD!

THEN HOW COME YOU GUYS ARE ALWAYS SAYING IT?

...BUT IT BENDS TOWARD JUSTICE.

LATER THAT EVENING...

WELL, I'D APPRECIATE THAT. THANK YOU. ... NOT AT ALL. BYE.

WELL?

I THINK IT'LL BE FINE. SHE APOLOGIZED, SHE REALLY GETS IT, SHE'S GOING TO TALK TO THE KIDS ABOUT THE POWER WORDS HAVE TO HURT.

HOW ABOUT THE POWER OF GANG-TACKLING TO HURT? #%*@ING RITALIN-RADDLED RIFFRAFF!

CLARICE, CAN WE PLEASE TRY AND WIND DOWN? IT'S BEEN A LONG DAY.

HERE, WE CAN READ THE SAME-SEX COMMITMENT CEREMONY ANNOUNCEMENTS IN THE TIMES.GOD, REMEMBER WHEN THEY WOULDN'T EVEN PRINT THE WORD "GAY"?

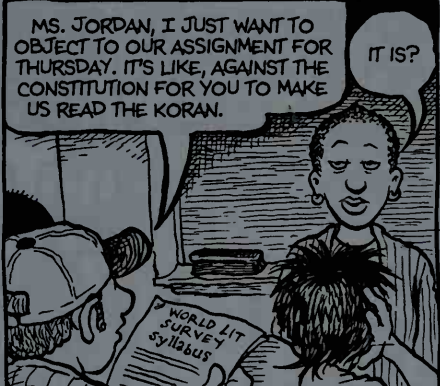
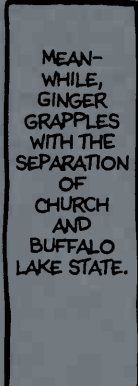
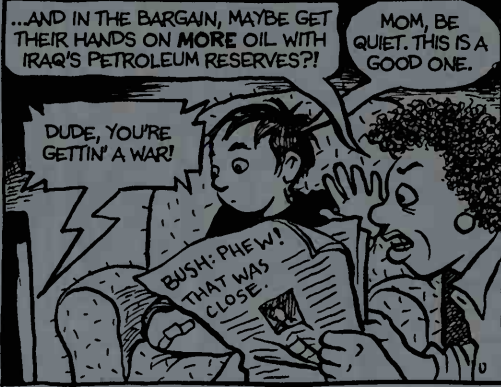
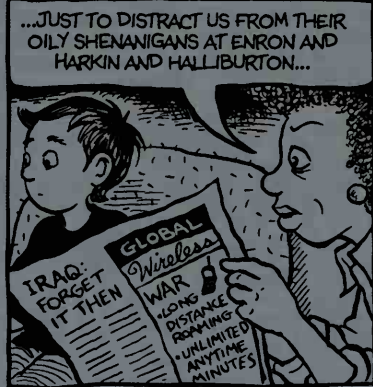
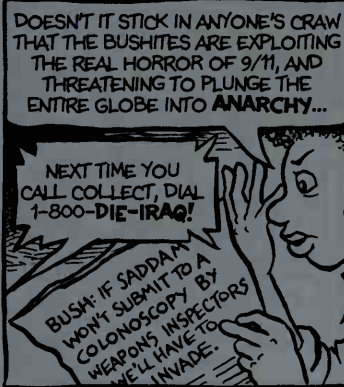
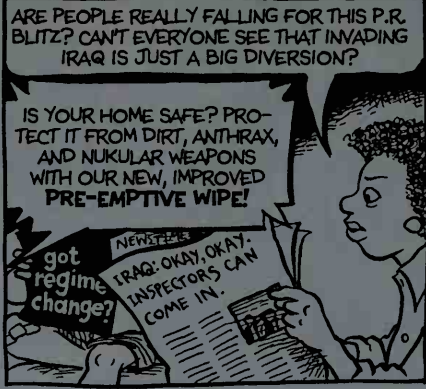
SORT OF.

(APOLOGIES TO DR. KING)

HILARY AND SCHUYLER... CHAPEL AT HOTCHKISS... STANFORD... MBA FROM U. PENN... HOW SWEET! THEY WORK AT THE SAME INVESTMENT BANK IN THE GLOBAL RAPINE & PILLAGE DIVISION.

OKAY, OKAY. WE CAN READ THE ARTS & LEISURE SECTION.

Sunday Styler
ALL THE NEWS THAT'S SOCIALLY CONNECTED



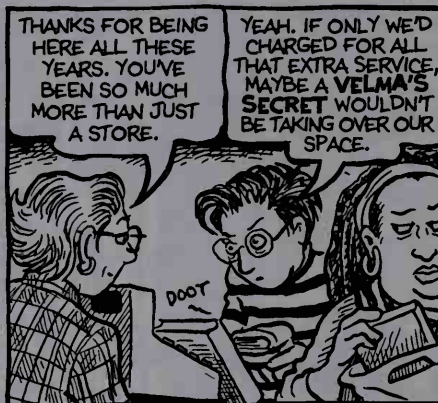
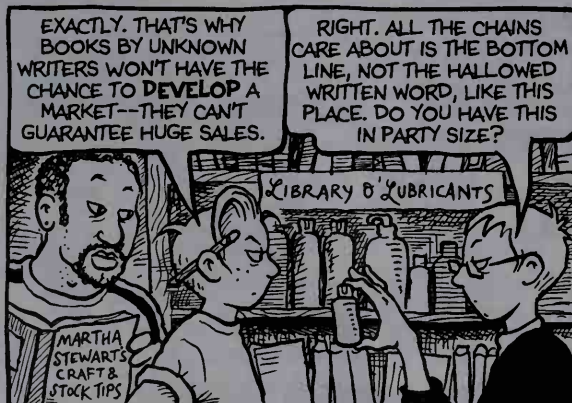
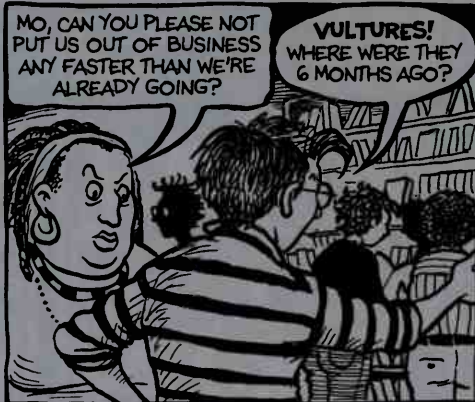
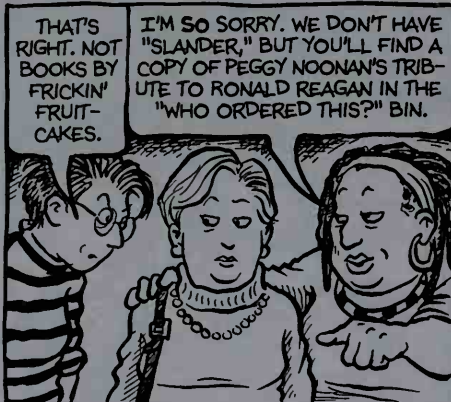
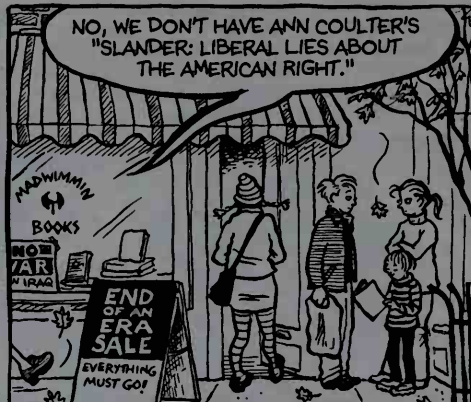
decline & fall

10/23

401

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AH, AUTUMN... DEGENERATION, DECAY, NATURE'S EBB, WHEN THE FOLIAGE, LIKE THE HOMELAND SECURITY THREAT LEVEL, RIPENS FROM YELLOW TO ORANGE.

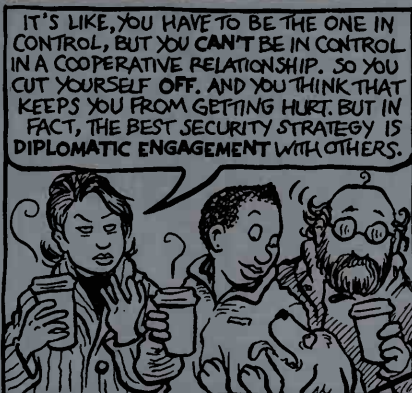
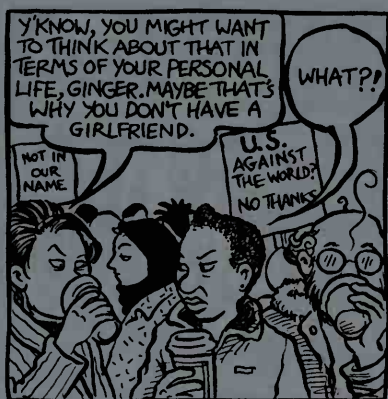
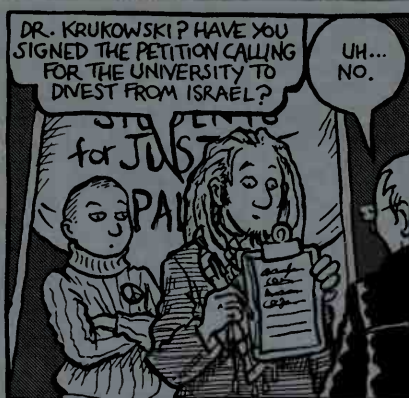
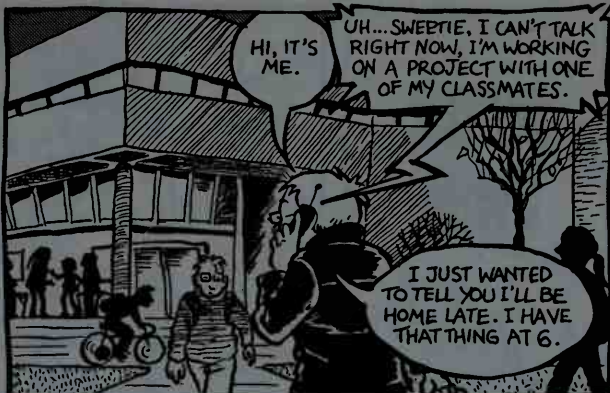


The Ambassadors

11/6

402

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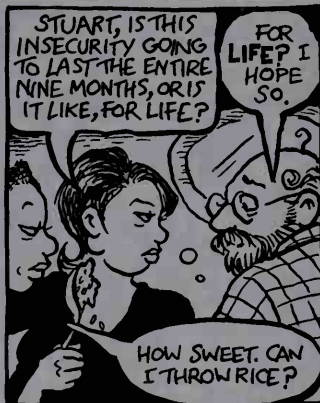
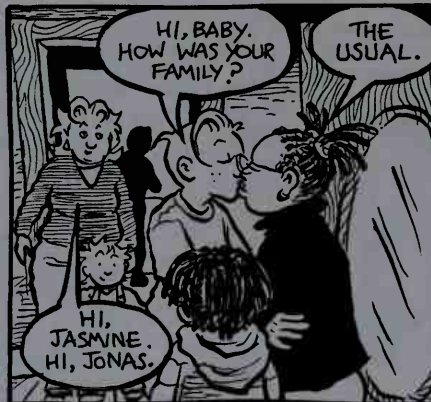
SWEET away

CON-
VIVIALITY
REIGNS
AS OUR
EUPETIC
FRIENDS
DIGEST
THE
THANKS-
GIVING
TOFURKEY.

11/20

403

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female trouble

12/18

405

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HUH. HAVE YOU TOLD SYDNEY ABOUT HER?



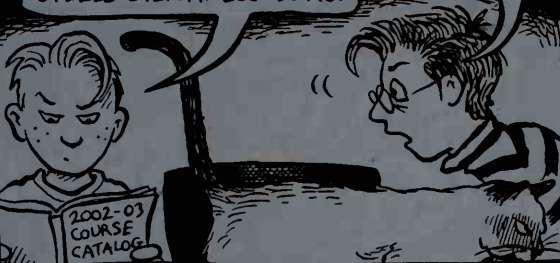
YEAH, BUT SHE UNDERSTANDS IT'S ONLY A CRUSH. I THINK FIONA IS JUST THE EMBODIMENT OF MY EXCITEMENT ABOUT THE THINGS I'M LEARNING IN THE PROGRAM.

IF I'D KNOWN THE DEWEY DECIMAL SYSTEM WAS EMBODIED LIKE THAT, I'D'VE GONE TO LIBRARY SCHOOL TOO.



BUT SADLY, WHILE YOU AND YOUR CHIPPY ARE PANTING OVER "CLASSIFICATION SYSTEMS FOR THE ORGANIZATION OF KNOWLEDGE," IT LOOKS LIKE I'LL BE SHOVELING DANIELLE STEELE OVER AT BOUNDERS.

BOUNDERS?! YOU GOT A JOB AT BOUNDERS BOOKS-N-MUZAK?!!



WELL, I APPLIED FOR ONE. LET'S FACE IT. WHAT ELSE AM I FIT FOR?

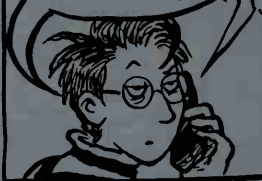
BUT LOIS...



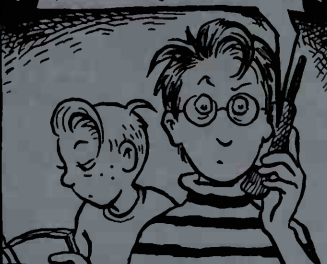
HELLO?

SYDNEY KU... KUR... KROTCH-OFFSKI?

NO, SHE'S NOT HERE. CAN I TAKE A MESSAGE?



THIS IS MARCIA AT THE BREAST CENTER. COULD YOU PLEASE ASK HER TO GIVE US A CALL? THANKS! HAVE A NICE DAY! CLIK!



I'M HOPING FOR AN EVENING SHIFT, JUST TO GET OUT OF THE HOUSE. SPARROW AND STUART ARE DRIVING ME NUTS. SHE'S CONVINCED SOMETHING'S GONNA GO WRONG. HE'S MANIACALLY UPBEAT. IT'S LIKE LIVING WITH THOMAS HOBBS AND GIDGET!



MEANWHILE...

I TOLD YOU.

SO IT'S... IT'S NOT JUST BRAXTON-HICKS?

NOPE. IT'S PRETERM LABOR, ALL RIGHT. BUT YOUR CERVIX HASN'T DILATED AT ALL. SO THAT'S GOOD.



GOOD. GOOD IS GOOD.

BUT I HAVE 6 WEEKS TO GO. WHAT DO I DO?

YOU'RE GOING TO NEED COMPLETE BEDREST. THE CONTRACTIONS SEEM TO HAVE SLOWED DOWN. BUT IF THEY START COMING CLOSE TOGETHER AGAIN, I WANT YOU TO CALL DR. HU.



THANKS TO NAN REID, MIDWIFE TO THE COMIX.

THEN WHAT? WHAT'S THE WORST CASE SCENARIO?

WELL, A PREMATURE DELIVERY. BUT LET'S NOT GET AHEAD OF OURSELVES. BED-REST OFTEN DOES THE TRICK.



COMPLETE BEDREST! DOESN'T THAT SOUND LIKE FUN?!

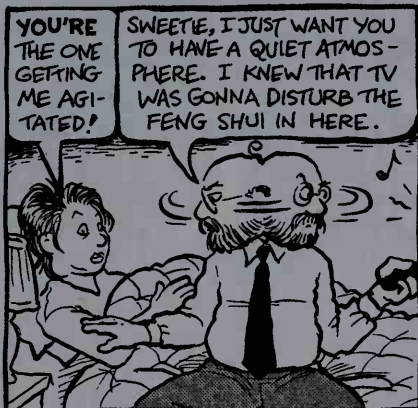


THE AWFUL TRUTH

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406

LET'S
SEE HOW
SPARROW'S
BEDREST
IS
PROGRES-
SING.



foreign policy

(don't try this at home)

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IS YOUR SUPREME AUTHORITY BEING FLAGRANTLY FLOUTED?

ARE YOU TIRED OF TEDIOUS NEGOTIATIONS AND MESSY COMPROMISES?

1/29

408

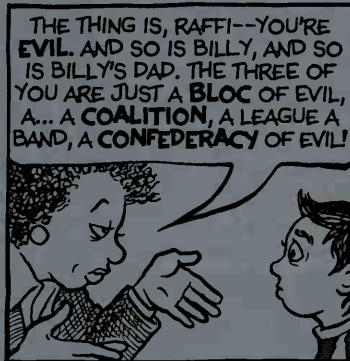


WHY NOT TAKE A **HARD LINE** FOR A CHANGE? IMAGINE HOW SIMPLE LIFE COULD BE!

START BY USING YOUR WORDS...

... AND SOME SANCTIONS, ...

... BUT THEN, HAUL OUT YOUR **BIG STICK!**



DON'T TRUST ANYONE FURTHER THAN YOU CAN LAUNCH A BALLISTIC MISSILE.

DON'T PANDER TO MALEFACTORS BY PROVIDING ANY INCENTIVE FOR THEM TO CHANGE THEIR BEHAVIOR.

IGNORE BLEEDING-HEART TERRORIST SYMPATHIZERS.



THEN AGAIN, PERHAPS THERE'S SOMETHING TO BE SAID FOR TEDIOUS NEGOTIATIONS.

LATER...



alienated labor

2/26

410

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ISN'T THERE ENOUGH TO WORRY ABOUT IN LIFE WITHOUT IMPENDING WORLD WAR AND THE FLAGRANT FEAR-MONGERING OF FRAUDULENTLY ELECTED FIGUREHEADS?

...AND WOULD YOU LIKE TO RECEIVE OUR E-MAIL NEWSLETTER?

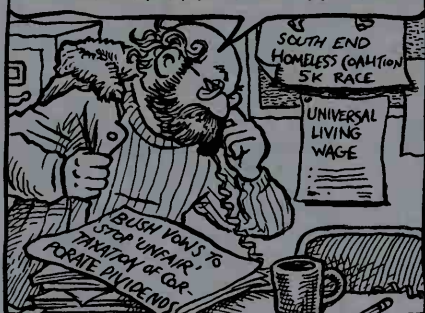
BOUNDER'S BOOKS-N-MUZAK

RIGHT. I NEED MORE JUNK E-MAIL LIKE I NEED A RIVET THROUGH MY SCROTUM.

COOL. JUST FILL THIS OUT.



SWEETIE, THE EMERGENCY SHELTER'S SWAMPED BECAUSE OF THE WEATHER. I'M GONNA HAVE TO GO HELP OUT.



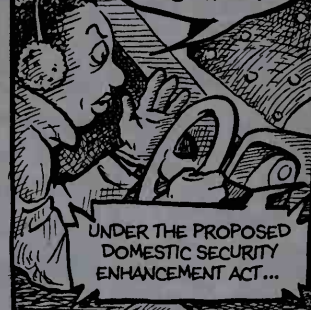
MY CELL'S DEAD, BUT SOMEONE CAN TRACK ME DOWN IF YOU NEED ME.



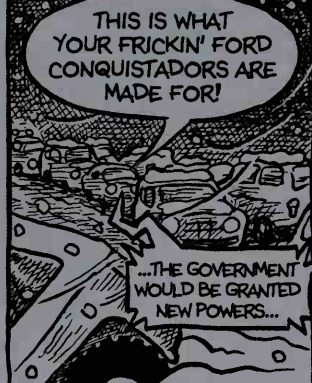
DON'T WORRY. I'VE BEEN HAVING SOME TWINGES, BUT NOTHING UNUSUAL. AND GINGER WILL BE HOME SOON.

AS THE DEADLINE NEARS FOR MALE VISITORS FROM MUSLIM COUNTRIES TO REGISTER WITH THE I.N.S., THERE IS CONFUSION AND PANIC IN IMMIGRANT COMMUNITIES.

OH, COME ON, PEOPLE! LET'S PICK IT UP!



THIS IS WHAT YOUR FRICKIN' FORD CONQUISTADORS ARE MADE FOR!



RING



...TO STRIP AMERICANS OF THEIR CITIZENSHIP...

HELLO?

IS THIS SYDNEY KROTCH-OFFSKI?

...AND CARRY OUT SECRET ARRESTS.



OH, I'M GLAD I CAUGHT YOU. THIS IS MARCIA FROM THE BREAST CENTER. WE JUST GOT YOUR BIOPSY REPORT, AND I'M AFRAID WE'RE GOING TO NEED TO SET UP AN APPOINTMENT AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

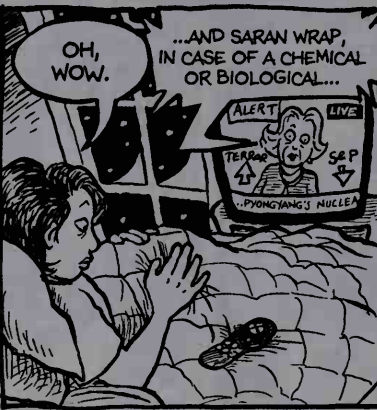


...MS. KRU... KER-CHEFF... SYDNEY? ARE YOU THERE?



OH, WOW.

...AND SARAN WRAP, IN CASE OF A CHEMICAL OR BIOLOGICAL...



HELLO?

MIRIAM, IT'S SPARROW. I'M HOME ALONE, AND THE BABY IS COMING. SOON!



this
brief
transit

IT'S A DARK AND STORMY NIGHT.

GINGER? ARE
YOU JUST GET-
TING HOME?

IT TOOK ME THREE HOURS! I
SHOULD'VE STAYED AT SCHOOL
BUT I WAS AFRAID I MIGHT
MISS SOMETHING.

3/12

411

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WHAT'RE YOU
GUYS DOING
OUTSIDE?

AND IF WE'RE ALL
OUT HERE, WHO'S
WITH SPARROW?



SKIS?

HUH. EITHER SHE FOUND
SOMEONE TO COME OVER,
OR WE'RE BEING BURGLED
BY A BIATHLETE.



SPARROW?

UUNNH!



STUART? OH, GOOD.
WASH YOUR HANDS AND
GET IN HERE! NOW!

NOWWW!

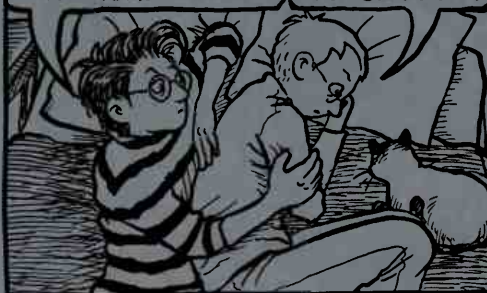
MEANWHILE...

I SHOULD'VE DONE THE SELF-
EXAMS. I SHOULD'VE EATEN
MORE GREENS. I SHOULD'VE
ONLY USED MY CELL PHONE
WITH A HEADSET.



HONEY, DON'T BE RIDIC-
ULOUS. CELL PHONES
GIVE YOU **BRAIN** CANCER,
NOT BREAST CANCER.

HOW CAN THIS
HAPPEN? WHAT IF
I DIE BEFORE MY
BOOK COMES OUT?



SHHH.



YEEOW!

I'VE GOT
A HEAD...AND
A LEG...



OH,
SHE'S MAGNI-
FICENT!



WELCOME,
BABY! DO YOU
HAVE A NAME?

I'VE BEEN LOBBYING
FOR HANS BLIX, BUT NO
ONE ELSE SEEMS TOO
KEEN ON IT.

EHH!

METAPHOR AS ILLNESS

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SOME OF OUR FRIENDS ARE IN SHOCK...

THINK OVER THE OPTIONS WE DISCUSSED. BUT YOU NEED TO MAKE A DECISION SOON. WE DON'T WANT THOSE LITTLE TERRORISTS AMASSING ANY MORE RECRUITS BEFORE WE GO IN THERE TO WIPE THEM OUT.

GOD, I'M GLAD YOU WERE TAKING NOTES. I COULDN'T FOCUS AT ALL.

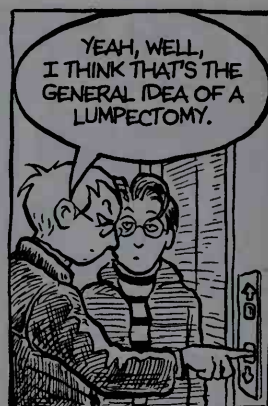
CRIPES! WHERE'D SHE STUDY MEDICINE? THE NATIONAL WAR COLLEGE?

3/26

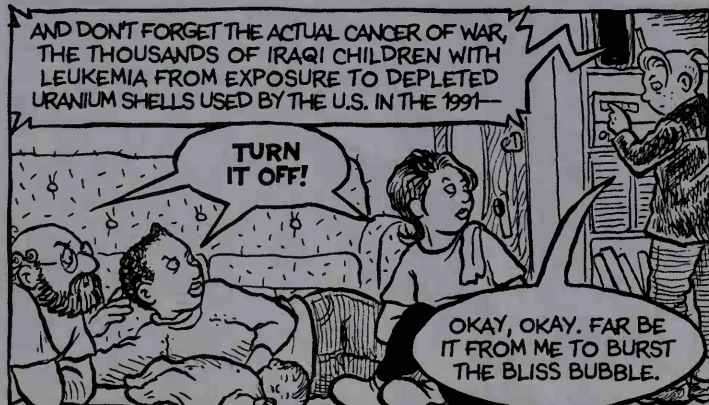
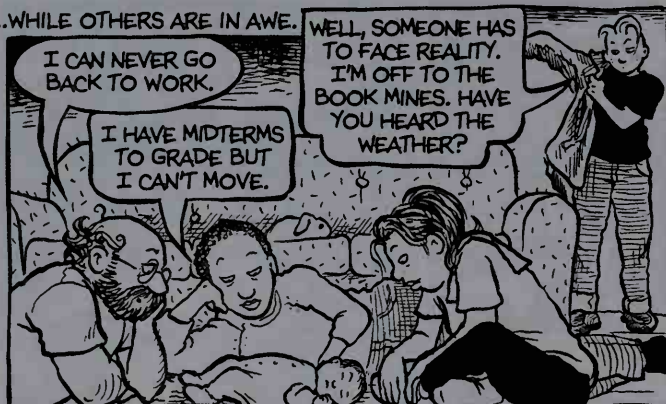
412

A TIP OF THE NIB TO PAT FONTAINE

EXIT



..WHILE OTHERS ARE IN AWE.



media- tion

©2003 BY ALISON BECHDEL

4/23

4/4

COMING UP NEXT, COALITION FORCES SHELL A HARDENED PLATOON OF NON-COALITION JOURNALISTS.

KNOCK! KNOCK!

HI, HARRIET.

HI. I JUST THOUGHT I'D STOP IN AND SEE HOW YOU'RE DOING.

MAN. THANK GOD I'M UNEMPLOYED, OR I DON'T KNOW HOW I'D STAY ON TOP OF THINGS. I SPENT THE WHOLE MORNING E-MAILING CONGRESS AND FORWARDING PETITIONS. THERE'S ALL THIS CORPORATE MEDIA COVERAGE TO MONITOR. I'VE GOT A DIE-IN AT FIVE...

UH...I MEANT, HOW ARE YOU DOING ABOUT SYDNEY.

HANG ON. IT SOUNDS LIKE ONE OF THESE BOOT-LICKING EMBEDS IS ACTUALLY GONNA TALK ABOUT THE CIVILIAN CARNAGE...

...I'M TELLING YOU, I HAVEN'T BATHED IN THREE WEEKS.

NEVER MIND.

THE SITUATION IS TERRIBLE HERE. AS AN AMERICAN, I'M EXTREMELY UNCOMFORTABLE. IT'S... WELL, IT'S SICKENING...

LOOK AT THIS. BUSH HAS CREATED SUCH A DIVERSION IN IRAQ, NOBODY NOTICES THE DOMESTIC SITUATION. HE'S USING HIS TAX CUTS AND HIS WAR TAB TO STARVE THE GOVERNMENT. HE'S RE-INSTITUTING FEUDALISM!

...TODAY THE PRESIDENT SUGGESTED THAT THE PESTICIDE METHYL BROMIDE COULD BE A VEGETABLE IN SCHOOL LUNCHES...

HELLO? WHAT ABOUT YOUR DOMESTIC SITUATION? YOUR LOVER'S HAVING SURGERY NEXT WEEK!

OH. RIGHT.

HI, SYDNEY.

GREAT. WHAT HAVE YOU BOUGHT NOW?

A DVD PLAYER. IF I'M GONNA BE LYING AROUND HERE IN A CHEMOTHERAPY HAZE, AT LEAST I CAN WATCH THE DIRECTOR'S CUT OF "UNCLE BUCK."

Y'KNOW, SHE BROKE UP WITH ME FOR BRINGING HOME A VCR.

SHE WON'T BREAK UP WITH ME! I HAVE CANCER! I CAN DO WHATEVER I WANT.

WELL...DVD PLAYERS REALLY DON'T COST VERY MUCH.

WHERE SHOULD WE PUT IT, DR. K?

SCOOTER, ALEX! THANKS. SET IT DOWN ANYWHERE.

HDTV, BABY!

I DON'T EVEN KNOW WHAT THAT MEANS.

HEAVY DENIAL TELEVISION.

ANOTHER TRANNY BUTCH ANARCHIST

reflux redux

©2003 BY ALISON BECHDEL

SPARROW'S PARENTS HAVE INVADED--
NOT TO CONQUER, BUT TO LIBERATE.



A TIP O' THE UMBILICUS TO VESA LEHTINEN

JUST TIDYING UP. YOUR FREEZER'S A MESS. I THOUGHT WE COULD HAVE THIS NICE ROAST FOR DINNER.



415

THAT'S MY PLACENTA! I'M SAVING IT TO BURY IN THE GARDEN WHEN THE GROUND THAWS!



SWEETHEART, I'M GONNA RAKE THE YARD, SO I TOOK THIS RIDICULOUS SIGN DOWN.



WILL YOU TWO PLEASE STOP TRYING TO HELP?!



MAYBE YOU MISSED THE NEWS--THE WAR'S OVER AND WE WON. C'MERE TO GRANDPA, BABY.



DADDY, NOBODY WON ANYTHING. A LOT OF INNOCENT IRAQIS WERE MAIMED AND SLAUGHTERED, ALONG WITH SOME AMERICAN KIDS WHO JOINED THE MILITARY BECAUSE THEY DIDN'T HAVE A BETTER OPTION.



HEY. YOU DIDN'T SUPPORT THOSE SOLDIERS WHEN THEY WERE ALIVE. DON'T INSULT THEM NOW. THEY DIED FOR FREEDOM.



THEY WERE SOLD A BILL OF GOODS, JUST LIKE YOU. THE ONLY FREEDOM THEY DIED FOR IS THE FREEDOM OF THE DEFENSE INDUSTRY BILLIONAIRES WHO DICTATE OUR FOREIGN POLICY TO MAKE MORE MONEY.



FACE IT, KID. YOU'RE ON THE WRONG SIDE OF HISTORY ON THIS ONE.



HISTORY'S A LITTLE LONGER THAN THE NEWS CYCLE, DADDY. BE CAREFUL! SHE'S TOO LITTLE TO--



HELL, SHE LOVES IT. WE CODDLED YOU TOO MUCH, THAT'S YOUR PROBLEM. YOU'RE GONNA BE A TOUGH LITTLE COOKIE, AREN'T YOU? NOT SOFT-MINDED LIKE YOUR MOTHER.



the basic anxiety

5/21

416

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I KINDA WISH THEY WERE
LOPPING THE WHOLE THING
OFF. JUST TO BE SURE.

GIRLS,
CAN I GET
IN THERE?

MOM, GO BACK TO SLEEP. YOU
DON'T HAVE TO GO WITH US. YOU
CAN DRIVE OVER WHEN I COME
OUT OF SURGERY.

NOK!
NOK!

CAN'T WE LOP
YOUR MOTHER
OFF INSTEAD?

IF YOUR FATHER'S GOING
TO BE THERE, SO AM I. I
DIDN'T COME ALL THIS WAY
AND MISS MY CONFERENCE
JUST TO SLEEP IN.

WHAT WAS THAT
CONFERENCE
AGAIN? REFRESH
MY MEMORY.

"BUDDHISM, PSYCHO-
THERAPY, AND COM-
PASSION." I DON'T
KNOW WHY YOU FIND
THAT SO AMUSING.

SHE'S LIKE A
MOTHER TO
ME. SORT OF.

WHAT IF SOMETHING GOES
WRONG WITH THE ANESTHESIA
AND I GET BRAIN DAMAGE?
WHAT IF THE SURGEON LEAVES
HER ROLEX INSIDE ME?

I WOULDN'T COUNT
ON IT. KNOWING DR.
ROMMEL, SHE HAS A
SWISS ARMY WATCH.
SET TO MILITARY TIME.

MAYBE IT'LL HAVE A
LUMINOUS DIAL. AT
LEAST THEN I WON'T
NEED RADIATION.

JOKING IS AN AVOIDANCE
STRATEGY, SYDNEY. TRY
TO FACE YOUR FEARS
DIRECTLY.

LOOK,
THERE'S
DADDY!

I'M GOING TO STAY
OUT HERE AND HAVE
A CIGARETTE. I'LL BE
IN IN A MINUTE.

SOME TIME LATER...

... THERE'LL BE A DRAIN IN THE
INCISION WHEN YOU WAKE UP. AND
DON'T WORRY IF YOU PEE BLUE
FOR A WHILE. IT'S JUST THE DYE
WE USED TO STAIN THE TUMOR.

KER...KRU...
CRUTCHOFFSKI,
BREAST CON-
SERVATION?

HOW ARE WE
FEELING?

A BIT LIKE AN
ENDANGERED
WETLAND.

I WISH IT
WERE ME
INSTEAD
OF YOU.

YEAH. I'M GETTING
THE SODIUM
PENTOTHAL. YOU
HAVE TO GO SIT
WITH MY PARENTS.

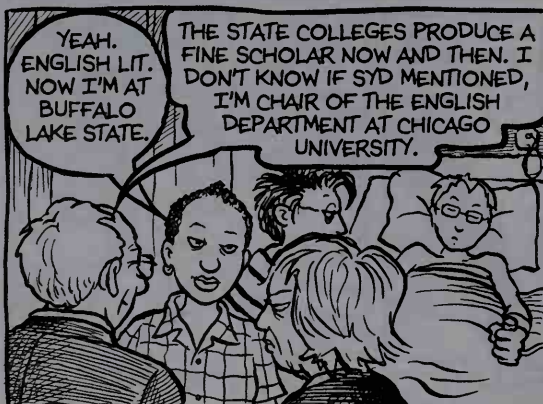
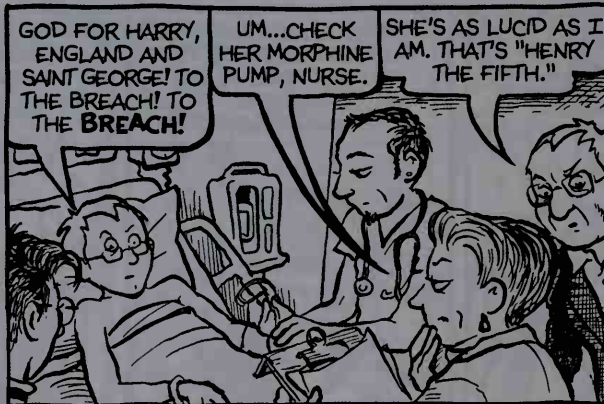
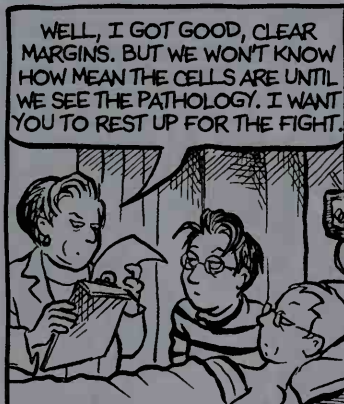
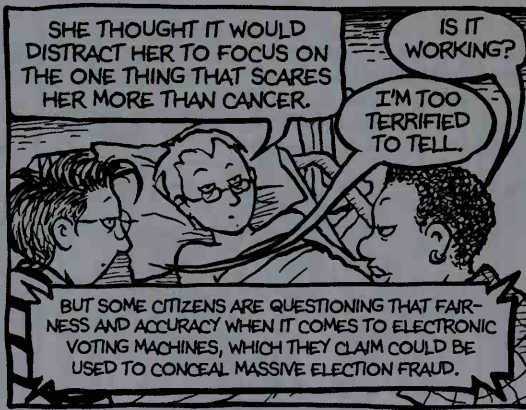
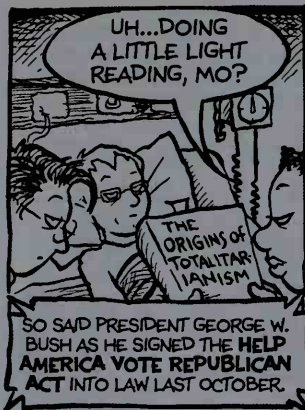
pump it up

6/4

417

©2003 BY ALISON BECHDEL

SYDNEY MADE IT THROUGH SURGERY. BUT WILL SHE SURVIVE HER MALIGNANT PARENTS AND THE MIASMAL FOG OF CABLE NEWS?



the candidate

2003 BY ALISON BECHDEL

7/2

419

ARE YOU KIDDING ME? HOW COULD THE PROSECUTOR NOT KNOW THE GUY HAS THREE PRIORS?!... NO, NO. I'LL CALL HER TOMORROW ... OKAY. BYE.



HONEY? DO YOU REALLY THINK YOU SHOULD BE TAKING CALLS FROM WORK? I'M WORRIED THE STRESS IS DECREASING YOUR MILK PRODUCTION.



SHE'S SO FUSSY, AND I DON'T THINK SHE'S GAINING ENOUGH WEIGHT.

STUART, SHE WAS FINE AT HER LAST CHECK-UP. AND YOU CAN'T WEIGH HER LIKE THAT!



YOU GUYS, WHAT DO YOU THINK? ANOTHER SOCK?

THAT DEPENDS. ARE YOU RUNNING FOR OFFICE?

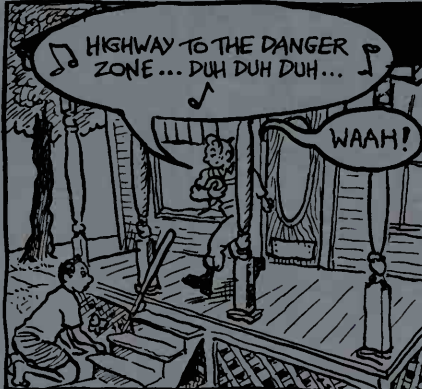
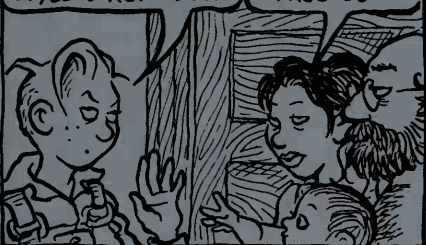


YEAH, TONIGHT'S THE "DEMOCRATS ARE A DRAG" REVUE AT CLUB L. I'M GONNA FLY ONSTAGE WITH A CABLE ATTACHED TO MY, UH... HARNESS.



THEN THE AUDIENCE VOTES AS I SQUARE OFF AGAINST THE DEMOCRATIC CANDIDATES IN AN "ARE YOU HOT" STYLE STRUT-FEST.

IF ONLY ALL CITIZENS WERE AS ENGAGED IN THE POLITICAL PROCESS.



GINGER, ARE YOU SURE YOU DON'T WANT TO COME? WE STILL NEED A DENNIS KUCNICH. PRO-CHOICE T-SHIRT, A PAIR OF FLIP-FLOPS, YOU'D BE ALL SET.



COME ON. I'M WORRIED ABOUT YOU. YOU'RE NEVER GONNA MEET ANYONE HANGING AROUND HERE WITH THE TACTICAL NUCLEAR FAMILY.



HELP!

7/30

421

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MO'S OFF, WITH SOME RELUCTANCE, FOR A TEN-DAY SESSION AT HER LOW-RESIDENCY LIBRARY SCHOOL PROGRAM.

SYDNEY, THIS DOESN'T FEEL RIGHT.

I'LL BE FINE. WHY SHOULD MY CHEMOTHERAPY DISRUPT BOTH OUR LIVES?

NO STANDING PLEASE, LADIES. UNLOAD AND MOVE ALONG.

UNATTENDED LUGGAGE WILL BE SHOT

NO STOPPING
STANDING
PAUSING
CONSIDERING
FALTERING
DAUNDLING
OR SHILLY
SHALLYING

WON'T YOU AT LEAST ASK GINGER TO GO WITH YOU TO YOUR APPOINTMENT TOMORROW?

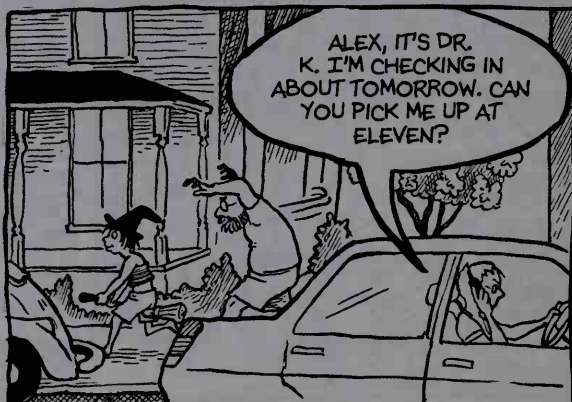
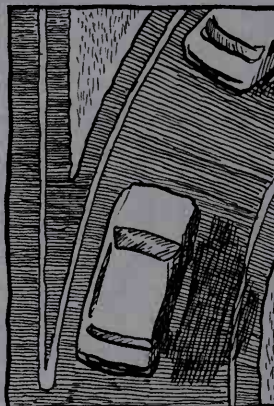
I TOLD YOU, SCOOTER AND ALEX ARE GOING TO TAKE ME.

I DON'T KNOW WHY YOU CAN ASK FOR HELP FROM YOUR STUDENTS, BUT NOT YOUR FRIENDS.

I DIDN'T ASK. THEY VERY OFFERED. THEY'RE VERY SWEET. IF MY HAIR FALLS OUT, THEY'VE VOWED TO SHAVE THEIR HEADS IN SOLIDARITY.

THEY ALREADY SHAVE THEIR HEADS!

HAVE FUN WITH FIONA. BRING ME BACK JUICY DETAILS.



job lot

8/27

HOW'S THE STAFF OF THE LATE, LAMENTED MADWIMMIN BOOKS MANAGING TO BRING HOME THE BACON SUBSTITUTE?

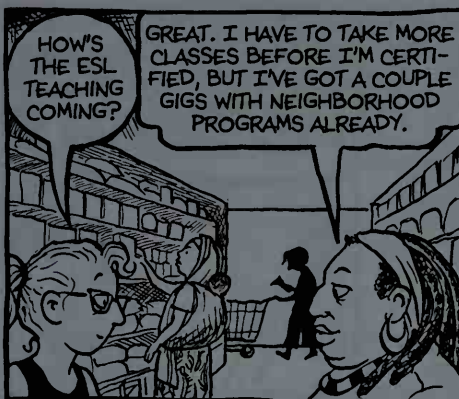
423

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THAT'S GREAT, THEA. I KNOW YOU ALWAYS WANTED TO TEACH ART.

YEAH. A LOAD OF CLAY, A JUG OF ELMER'S GLUE, AND A ROOM FULL OF FIVE-YEAR-OLDS. WHAT COULD BE BETTER?

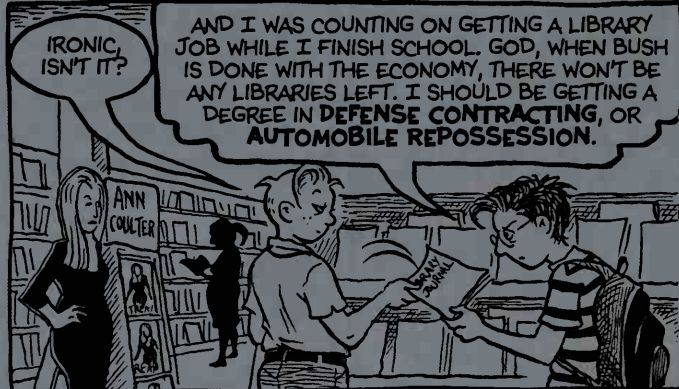
WHAT INDEED.



MEANWHILE...

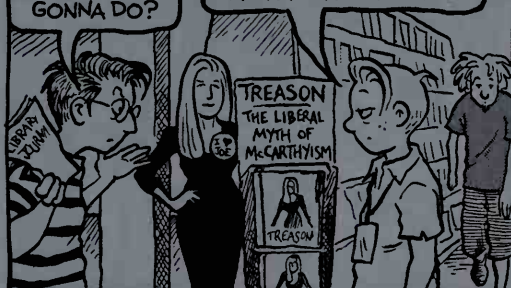
HELLO, MO! WHAT BRINGS YOU TO THE TEMPLE OF MAMMON?

I NEED THE LATEST EDITION OF "LIBRARY JOURNAL." I TRIED GOING TO THE LIBRARY-- NOVEL THOUGHT!--BUT THEY'VE CUT BACK THEIR HOURS.



NOW MY UNEMPLOYMENT'S ABOUT TO RUN OUT. WHAT'M I GONNA DO?

GET A MAKEOVER AND WRITE A BOOK ON HOW GENOCIDE OR SLAVERY HAS GOTTEN A BAD RAP FROM LIBERALS?



rites of fall

9/24

425

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AUTUMN:
INEXORABLE
DECLINE INTO
HARD, COLD
WINTER,...
OR
QUIESCENT
SEASON OF
SPIRITUAL
RENEWAL?

SO FAR, IT'S
LOOKING LIKE
THE FORMER.

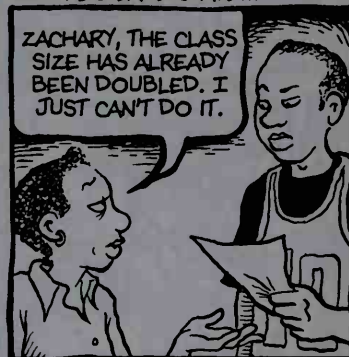
ON UNIVERSITY HILL...



AT NETHER HEIGHTS ELEMENTARY...



IN THE HALLOWED HALLS OF
BUFFALO LAKE STATE...



BUT I NEED IT TO GRADUATE!
IT'S THE ONLY SECTION THAT
FITS MY SCHEDULE NOW THAT
I'M WORKING FULL-TIME TO
PAY THE TUITION INCREASE!



MS. JORDAN, WHEN I SIGNED UP FOR
WORLD LIT, I WAS EXPECTING "BEOWULF"
AND "THE ODYSSEY." BUT THIS READING
LIST LOOKS LIKE **OPRAH'S BOOK CLUB!**
ARE YOU PLOTTING SOME KIND OF MUSH-
BRAINED LIBERAL INDOCTRINATION?



IN THE BUSTLING WORLD OF COMMERCE...

THE SELF-SERVICE KIOSKS HAVE
ENABLED US TO CUT DOWN ON STAFF,
BUT SOME CUSTOMERS STILL FEEL THE
NEED TO SPEAK TO AN ACTUAL HUMAN.
THAT'S WHERE YOU COME IN.



AND IN AN
OVER-
PRICED,
UNDER-
RENO-
VATED
APART-
MENT
ON THE
FRINGES
OF
CAMPUS...

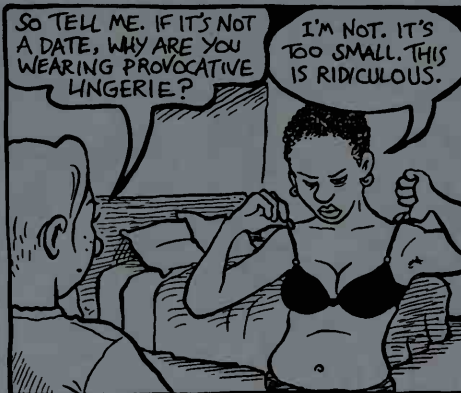
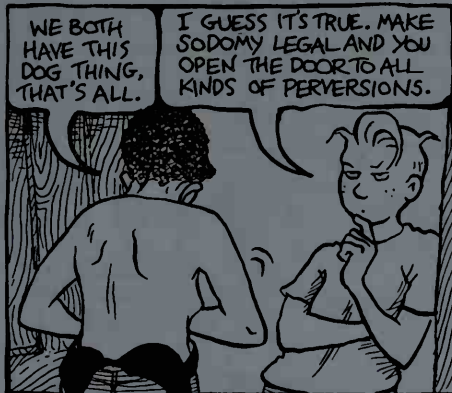


breastiality

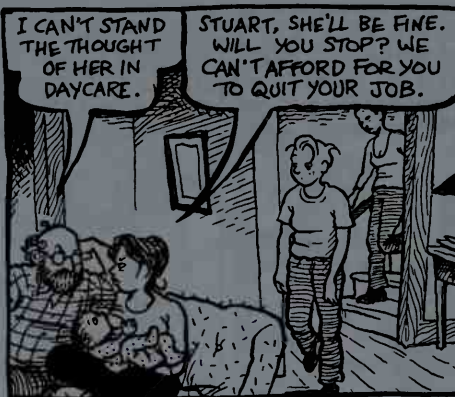
10/8

426

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MOMENTARILY, DOWNSTAIRS...



How quickly they grow

10/22

427

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I'M SO RELIEVED HIS POLL NUMBERS ARE DOWN, I COULD WEEP.

I JUST WONDER WHAT FRESH HELL THEY'RE PLOTTING TO GET THEM BACK UP AGAIN.

I'M WITH YOU. BUT SYDNEY THINKS WE'RE CYNICAL CASSANDRAS.

YES, I DO. BUT I'M GRIMACING BECAUSE EVERYTHING TASTES SO WEIRD AFTER A TREATMENT. THIS IS LIKE MOLYBDENUM VINAIGRETTE.



SYDNEY, LET ME SEE YOUR HEAD AGAIN.



COOL.

RAFFI, WHY DON'T YOU GO DOWNLOAD SOME BEYONCÉ OR SOMETHING?

NO, STAY, RAF. TELL ME HOW FIFTH GRADE'S GOING.



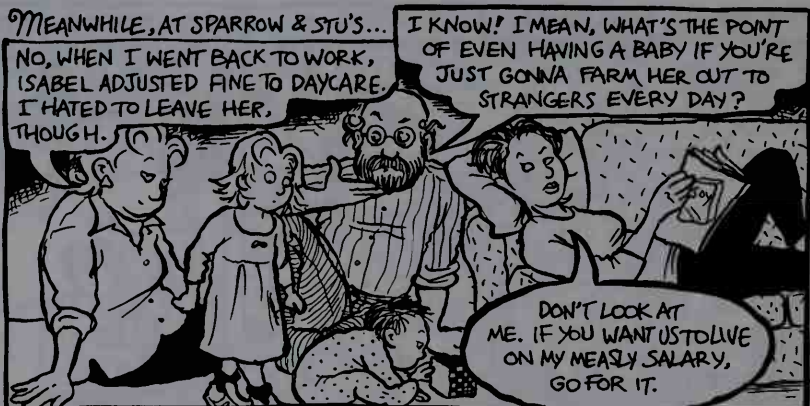
IT'S OKAY. EXCEPT FOR TAYLOR MAKING FUN OF ME FOR HAVING TWO MOTHERS. I'M GONNA KICK HIS @\$\$.

RAFFI, LANGUAGE. I KNOW TAYLOR'S A PROBLEM, BUT VIOLENCE ISN'T THE SOLUTION.



YOU'RE GONNA TALK TO HIM LIKE WE DISCUSSED, RIGHT? DO YOU WANT TO PRACTICE WHAT TO SAY?

HOW 'BOUT, "I'M GONNA KICK YOUR @\$\$, YOU #*&ING @\$\$HOLE."



MEANWHILE, AT SPARROW & STU'S... NO, WHEN I WENT BACK TO WORK, ISABEL ADJUSTED FINE TO DAYCARE. I HATED TO LEAVE HER, THOUGH.

I KNOW! I MEAN, WHAT'S THE POINT OF EVEN HAVING A BABY IF YOU'RE JUST GONNA FARM HER OUT TO STRANGERS EVERY DAY?

DON'T LOOK AT ME. IF YOU WANT USTOLIVE ON MY MEASLY SALARY, GO FOR IT.



UH...SWEETIE, DON'T LIFT THE BABY, SHE'S TOO LITTLE.



YOU #*&ING BITCH?

ISABEL!



UH... SHE PICKED THAT UP AT DAYCARE LAST WEEK.

EXCUSE ME. I HAVE A LETTER OF RESIGNATION TO WRITE.

small comforts

12/17

429

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I DON'T KNOW WHY YOU WON'T LET ME COME IN WITH YOU.

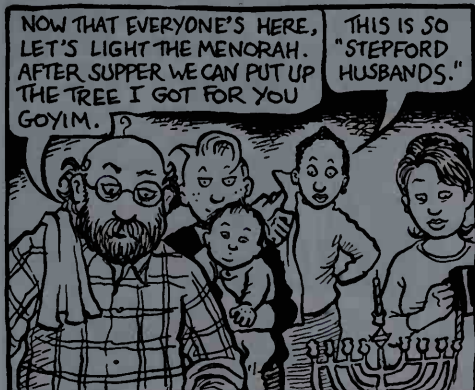
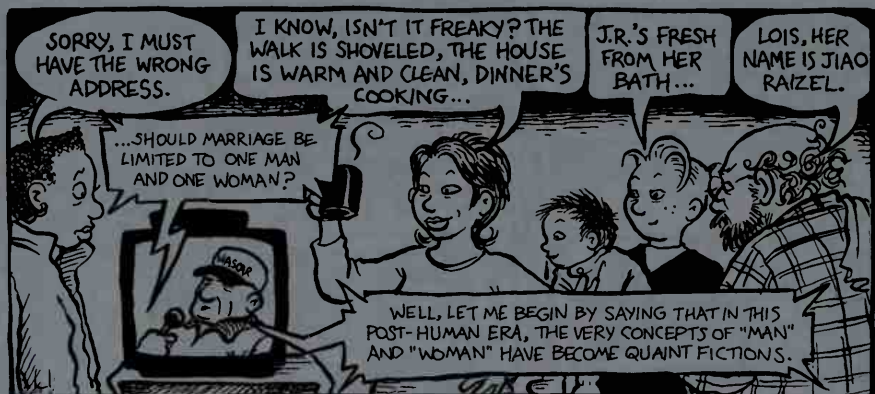
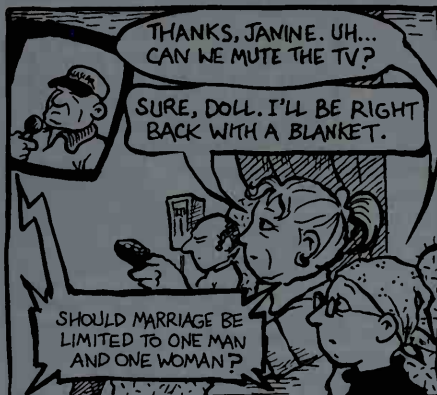
YOU'D HATE IT. THE TV'S BLARING, THE PLACE IS LITTERED WITH CUTESY LITTLE ANGELS AND BEARS AND NOW THEY'LL HAVE THE CHRISTMAS CRAP UP TOO. I THINK THE ENTIRE COLLECTIBLE KITSCH INDUSTRY IS KEPT AFLOAT BY CHEMO NURSES. SEE YOU AT SIX.

SHORTLY...

SORRY THAT TOOK SO MANY TRIES, HON. YOUR VEINS ARE GETTING SCARRED.

MASS. GAY MARRIAGE RULING

LET'S ASK THE MAN ON THE STREET!



A TIP OF THE NIB TO MICHAEL CRAMER

Entertaining a Fantasy

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432

1/28

HI.

HI, FUZZY NUT.

-- ONE OF THE WINNINGEST COACHES--
-CLIK!- DURANGO'S NEW 5.7-LITER HEMI MAGNUM V8 IS A--

WHAT'S THE MATTER, YOU DIDN'T GET ENOUGH RADIATION AT THE HOSPITAL TODAY?

-CLIK!- THE PRESIDENT'S VISIONARY PLAN CALLS FOR A MASSIVE, THROB-BING EXPANSION OF THE U.S. SPACE PRO-CLIK!-

WHOA, STOP A SECOND.

ON MONDAY THE SUPREME COURT UPHOLD THE BUSH ADMINISTRATION'S POST 9/11 POLICY OF SECRET ARRESTS AND DETENTION.

ARE WE RECEIVING TRANSMISSION FROM A PARALLEL UNIVERSE WHERE THE NEWS ACTUALLY TELLS YOU WHAT'S GOING ON?

IT'S "FREE SPEECH TV." THE SATELLITE COMPANY HAS TO GIVE SOME CHANNELS TO PUBLIC INTEREST PROGRAMMING.

WOW! IF I KNEW WE COULD WATCH "DEMOCRACY NOW," I WOULDN'T HAVE COMPLAINED ABOUT ALL THE MONEY YOU SUNK INTO THIS HOME ENTERTAINMENT SYSTEM.

THESE DETAINEES ARE PEOPLE WHO WERE SEIZED OFF THE STREET, THROWN IN JAIL WITHOUT ANY LAWYERS, WITHOUT ANY COURT HEARING...

LOOK! NEXT, THERE'S A SHOW ABOUT MILITARISM AND GLOBALIZATION! THEN THEY'RE COVERING A MEDIA REFORM CONFERENCE!

...AND THEN DEPORTED BECAUSE THEY WERE ARABS OR MUSLIMS.

WHAT PART OF "ENTERTAINMENT" DON'T YOU UNDERSTAND?

-CLIK!- CHARGES AGAINST JACKSON INCLUDE SEVEN COUNTS OF LEWD--

MEANWHILE, AT LA LENTILLE D'OR,... COULD IT BE? GINGER ON AN ACTUAL DATE WITH THE DOG-WOMAN?

I'VE BEEN SINGLE FOR A VERY LONG TIME. I'VE GOT A BAD RELATIONSHIP HISTORY. I'M... I'M INTIMACY IMPAIRED.

YOU AMERICAN GIRLS, YOU LOVE TO THINK YOU'RE SUCH BIG TROUBLE.

AND YOU SYRIAN GIRLS?

I'M ALL THE TROUBLE YOU NEED. DO YOU KNOW WHY I INVITED YOU HERE?

FOR THE BRUSSELS SPROUTS TARTARE?

FOR THE LONG, DISCREET TABLE-CLOTHS.

SHORTLY...

DESSERT, LADIES?

UHHHH...

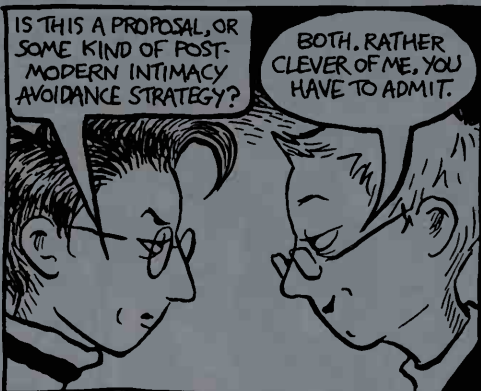
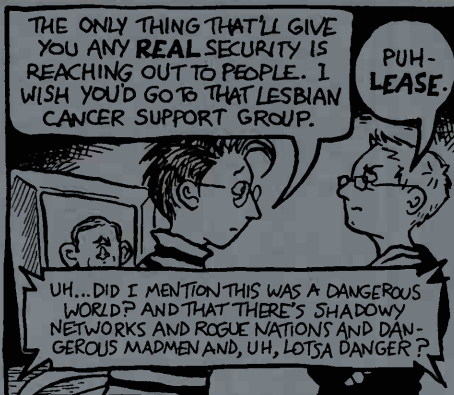
I THINK WE'LL SHARE THE GINGER POT DE CRÈME.

only disconnect

2/25

434

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milk man

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I DON'T THINK I CAN LEAVE FOR AT LEAST ANOTHER HOUR.

WELL, SHE POLISHED OFF THE LAST BOTTLE. AND YOU KNOW SHE WANTS YOU AT BEDTIME.

GIVE HER SOME RICE MILK.

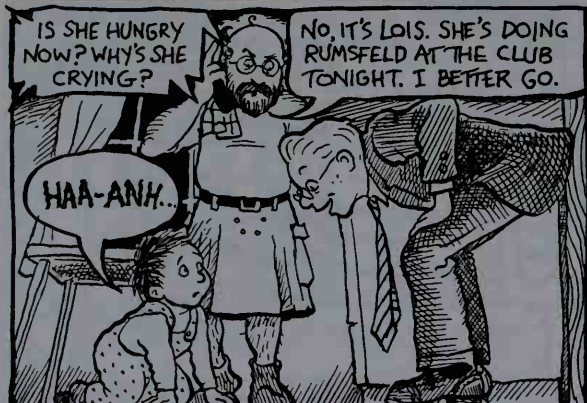
SHE'S NOT GONNA FALL FOR MILK-RELATED PROGRAM ACTIVITIES.

3/10

435



A TIP O' THE NIP TO KIRSTEN BERGGREN



IS SHE HUNGRY NOW? WHY'S SHE CRYING?

NO, IT'S LOIS. SHE'S DOING RUMSFELD AT THE CLUB TONIGHT. I BETTER GO.

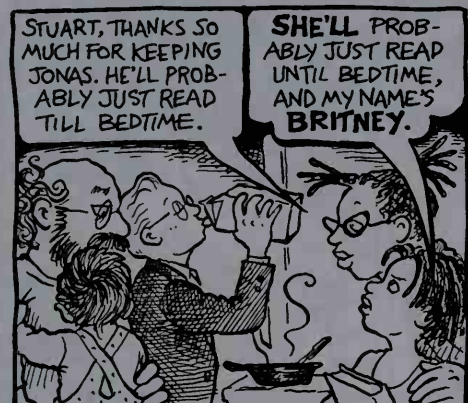
HAA-ANH...



LOIS!

GEE GOSH-DARN WILLIERS, LITTLE LADY! YOU'D THINK YOU'D NEVER SEEN A RUTHLESS NEOCON PSYCHOPATH HELL-BENT ON CONVULSING THE FRAGILE WORLD IN A FRENZY OF LAWLESS AGGRESSION BEFORE!

WAAAH!

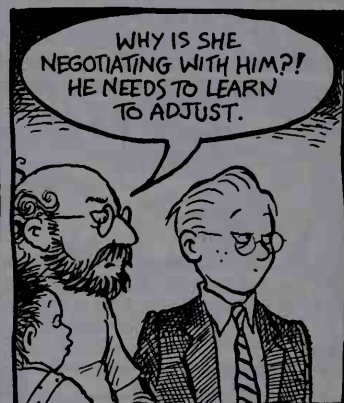


STUART, THANKS SO MUCH FOR KEEPING JONAS. HE'LL PROBABLY JUST READ TILL BEDTIME.

SHE'LL PROBABLY JUST READ UNTIL BEDTIME, AND MY NAME'S BRITNEY.



I'M SORRY, SWEETIE. I'LL TRY TO REMEMBER TO CALL YOU "SHE," BUT NO WAY WILL I CALL YOU BRITNEY. WE NEED TO DISCUSS THE NAME CHANGE FURTHER.



WHY IS SHE NEGOTIATING WITH HIM?! HE NEEDS TO LEARN TO ADJUST.

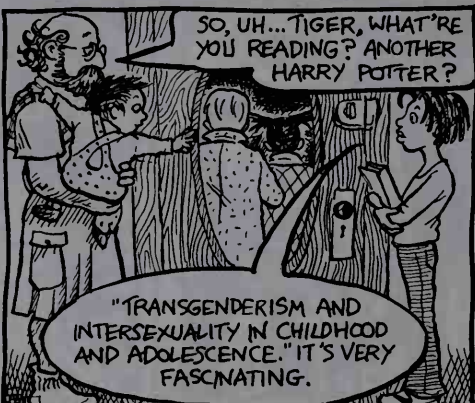


RIGHT. I'LL SEND HIM TO GITMO IN THE MORNING.

AND YOU'RE NOT HELPING MATTERS WITH THIS DRAG KING BUSINESS.



IF YOU WEREN'T WEARING A SKIRT, SIR, I'D TAKE EXCEPTION TO THAT REMARK.



SO, UH... TIGER, WHAT'RE YOU READING? ANOTHER HARRY POTTER?

"TRANSGENDERISM AND INTERSEXUALITY IN CHILDHOOD AND ADOLESCENCE." IT'S VERY FASCINATING.

get me to
the clerk
on time

3/24

436

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IN THE FIRST BLUSH OF HER ROMANCE WITH SAMIA, GINGER HAS BECOME A BIT LAX IN THE CLASSROOM DISCIPLINE DEPARTMENT.

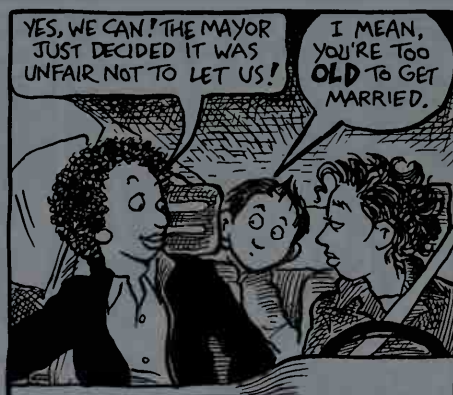
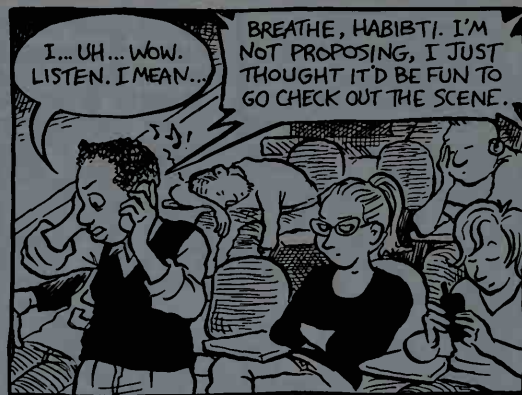
SO, UH... ANY THOUGHTS ABOUT THE WAY RUMI ADDRESSES THE DIVINE IN SENSUAL TERMS?

WELL, I FOUND IT OFFENSIVE. I THINK MEL GIBSON CONVEYS SURRENDER TO THE DIVINE MUCH MORE TASTEFULLY IN "THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST."

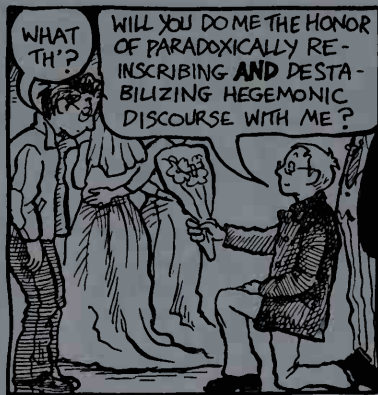
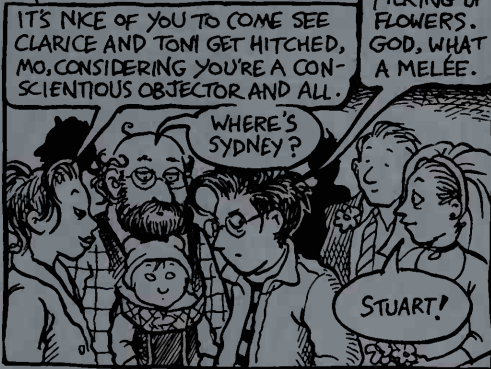
GIMME \$11 TO WIN \$10 ON UTAH MINUS THE SIX.

DID UZ DO IT LST NITE?

DEGT GF! STL GOT MY VCRD!



MEANWHILE, A CROWD GATHERS...



betrothal or betrayal?

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CLARICE AND TONI ARE GETTING MARRIED, BUT THEIR WITNESSES ARE DIVIDED.



MO, THIS IS ABOUT EQUAL PROTECTION, PURE AND SIMPLE. D'YOU BELIEVE IN THAT?

WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL? MARRY YOUR GIRLFRIEND.



I WON'T BE COMPLICIT WITH THE ENSHRINEMENT OF COUPLEDOM AS A PRIVILEGED CIVIC STATUS.

RIGHT, YOU'VE SO ENSHRINED YOUR OWN OPPRESSION AS A PRIVILEGED CIVIC STATUS, EQUALITY WOULD BE A DOWNGRADE.



LOOK, I JUST DON'T WANT THE NATIONAL SECURITY STATE IN BED WITH ME! AND BESIDES, WHILE WE STAND HERE FRETTING ABOUT OUR TROUSSEAUS, THE BUSHITES ARE LIQUIDATING THE REPUBLIC!

I'M BORED.



RAF, LOOK AT ALL THESE PEOPLE. WOULDN'T IT BE A GREAT OPPORTUNITY TO SIGN FOLKS UP FOR THE KERRY CAMPAIGN?

KERRY'S BORING.



AND IF YOU'RE SO GUNG-HO TO GET MARRIED, WHY AREN'T YOU BACKING KUCINICH OR SHARPTON, WHO ACTUALLY SUPPORT YOUR RIGHT TO?

BECAUSE I LIVE IN THE REAL WORLD, NOT IN MY NAVEL. ADULTS MAKE COMPROMISES. THAT'S HOW PROGRESS HAPPENS. THAT'S WHY SUPPORT FOR CIVIL UNIONS HAS BECOME THE CONSERVATIVE FALLBACK!



C'MON. LET'S DO IT BEFORE SOMEONE SAYS WE CAN'T.

SYDNEY, YOU JUST WANNA REGISTER AT POTTERY BARN.

Y'KNOW, THIS IS AN IMPORTANT EVENT FOR ME. COULD YOU GO SQUABBLE ELSEWHERE?



WHAT DO YOU WANT? A PRE-NUP SAYING YOU'RE NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR ANY FUTURE CHEMO BILLS I MAY INCUR?



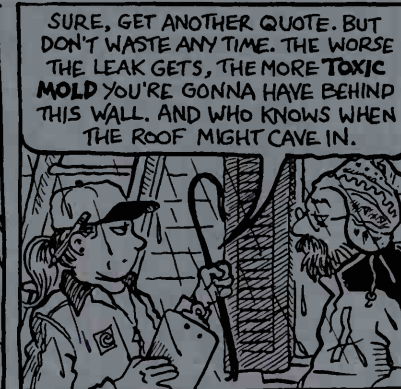
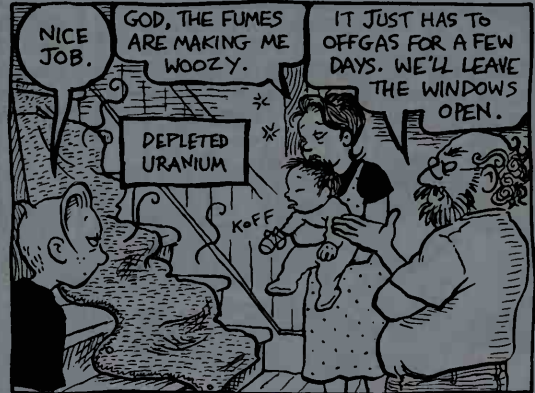
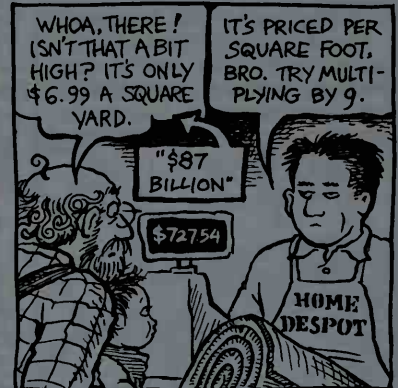
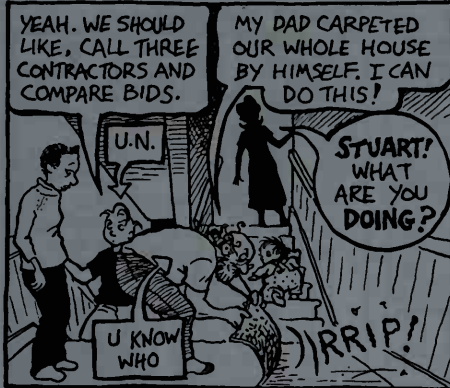
SNUG AS A BUG

a cautionary parable
for do-it-yourselfers

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4/21

438



LICENTIOUS BEHAVIOR

FOR THE NONCE, NO NUPTIAL NOOSE FOR OUR NAFERING NABOBS OF NETTLE-SOMENESS.

439

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SATISFIED?

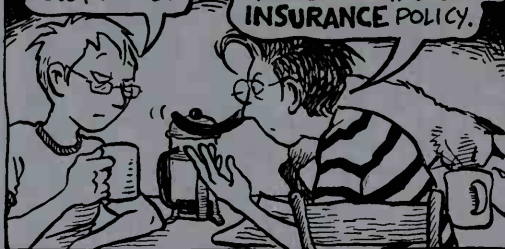


BWAHAHAHA! NOW IF I CAN JUST GET THAT CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT PASSED.

WILL YOU STOP? I'VE EXPLAINED THIS A HUNDRED TIMES. JUST BECAUSE I DON'T WANT TO GET MARRIED DOESN'T MEAN I THINK WE SHOULDN'T BE ALLOWED TO.



YET PART OF YOU IS RELIEVED WE CAN'T, BECAUSE IF MY CANCER COMES BACK, YOU CAN JUST LEAVE.



WHY WOULD I LEAVE? DID I LEAVE THIS TIME? GOD, SYDNEY. YOU HAVE ME, WHY DO YOU NEED A PIECE OF PAPER? MARRIAGE IS NOT SOME KIND OF INSURANCE POLICY.

THAT'S FOR DARN SURE.



OH, YEAH! THAT'S IT... PUSH A LITTLE HARDER.



HI, CLARICE!

OH, HI, HONEY. ARE YOU JUST GETTING UP? WE FAST-WALKED FIVE MILES ALREADY.

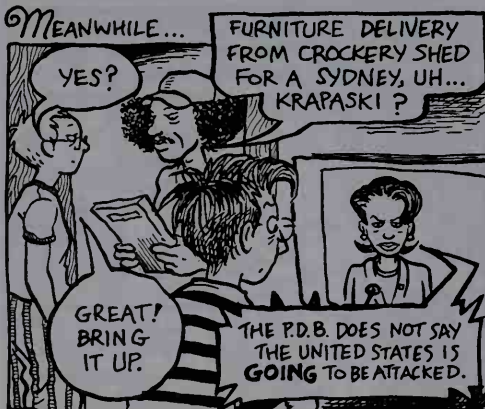


AND GUESS WHAT! I TALKED GLORIA INTO JOINING THE FREEDOM TO MARRY BOARD!

I DON'T KNOW WHAT I'M THINKING.



NEITHER DO I! HEY, GLORIA, DID YOU SEE OUR MARRIAGE LICENSE? IT'S REALLY COOL.



MEANWHILE...

YES?

FURNITURE DELIVERY FROM CROCKERY SHED FOR A SYDNEY, UH... KRAPASKI?

GREAT! BRING IT UP.

THE P.D.B. DOES NOT SAY THE UNITED STATES IS GOING TO BE ATTACKED.



I WONDER IF IT'S THE MANHATTAN ARMCHAIR OR THE LAUREL ARMOIRE.

IT SAYS BIN LADEN WOULD LIKE TO ATTACK THE UNITED STATES.



YOU TOLD YOUR FATHER WE GOT MARRIED.

WHAT'S HE GONNA DO? ASK TO SEE THE LICENSE?

Shameless

6/16

SAMIA HAS UNWITTINGLY AGREED TO TEACH ARABIC TO ONE OF GINGER'S MORE RIGHTWARD-LEANING STUDENTS.

442

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HOW WAS I SUPPOSED TO KNOW SHE WAS **THAT** CYNTHIA? SHE SEEMED PERFECTLY NICE ON THE PHONE.

SHE'S ALWAYS TRYING TO UNDERMINE MY AUTHORITY. I FELT OBLIGED TO TELL HER YOU WERE MY FRIEND. BUT I DON'T WANT THAT LITTLE MCCARTHYITE TO KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT MY PERSONAL LIFE. OKAY?



SO I SHOULDN'T MENTION YOUR PREDILECTION FOR CROCKNECK SQUASH?



MEANWHILE...

HEY, MO! ARE YOU GOING TO PRIDE? COME WITH US.



ACTUALLY, I'M GOING TO GAY SHAME.

IT'S AT THE OTHER END OF THE PARK, TO PROTEST HOW PRIDE HAS GOTTEN SO CORPORATE. I THINK WE SHOULD MAKE IT MORE INCLUSIVE, THOUGH. **AMERICAN SHAME!**



HEY, GUYS. HOP IN! I'LL DRIVE YOU TO THE PARADE.

THANKS, JUNE!

THAT'S YOUR MOMMY'S EX. CAN YOU SAY "EX"?



UH...BUT WE HAVE THE BABY AND EVERYTHING.

OKAY! SEE YA! I'LL BE PULLING THE LGBT TECH PROFESSIONALS' FLOAT!



WHATEVER IT COSTS TO FILL THAT THING UP, IT'S NOT NEARLY ENOUGH.

DON'T LET US STOP YOU. GO RIDE IN THE PRIDEMOBILE IF YOU WANT. WE'RE GOING TO SHAME.



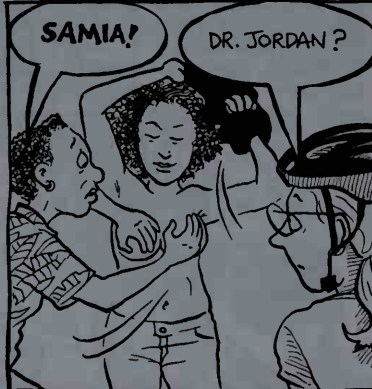
IN THE PARK...

IT'S CYNTHIA! WHAT'S SHE DOING HERE?! TAKING NAMES FOR THE JUSTICE DEPARTMENT?

WHY ARE YOU BEING SO PARANOID? SHE KNOWS YOU'RE A LESBIAN.

BUT SHE DOESN'T KNOW YOU'RE MY GIRLFRIEND.

LET'S GIVE HER A THRILL.



siren thong

B/11

446

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THERE'VE BEEN A FEW CHANGES AT THE HOME OF JASMINE AND HER SON JONAS.

JANIS! WILL YOU SHUT THAT OFF AND GET UP HERE? YOU NEED TO FINISH PACKING.

HE WANTS TO GROW BREASTS LIKE MOMMY



I THINK HE... I MEAN, **SHE** HAS NOW OFFICIALLY WATCHED THAT OPRAH EPISODE ON TRANS-GENDER KIDS MORE TIMES THAN THE "LITTLE MERMAID."

SO HERE'S STUART'S SLEEPING BAG...



AND THIS IS SPARROW'S RAIN JACKET. AND SOME FLEECE STUFF OF MINE.

THANKS. GOD, I HOPE THIS CAMP IS AS GREAT AS IT SOUNDS.



YEAH. IF SHE COULD JUST BE HERSELF WITH OTHER KIDS FOR A WHILE, WHERE THE GENDER THING ISN'T AN ISSUE.

CAMP TEN TREES
SESSION for LGBTQ YOUTH
• ARCHERY
• CANOEING
• DIVERSITY TRAINING
• LANYARD-WEAVING

JANIS! NOW!

A TIP OF THE NIB TO WWW.CAMPTENTREES.ORG

YOU'RE REALLY DOING GREAT WITH ALL THIS, YOU KNOW.



I DUNNO. I MISS MY ANGELIC LITTLE BOY WHO PLAYED WITH DOLLS. NOW I'M LIVING WITH THIS... THIS **VALLEY GIRL** WHO STEALS MY CLOTHES AND IGNORES ME.



BUT ON THE UPSIDE, ALL MY ANXIETY ABOUT BEING A SINGLE MOTHER RAISING A YOUNG BLACK MAN IN THIS CULTURE HAS COMPLETELY DISAPPEARED.



MOM, CAN I GET A SPARKLY "KERRY 2004" PIN? PLUS I THINK I MIGHT LIKE THE NAME TERESA BETTER THAN JANIS.



UH... LET'S GET YOUR STUFF TOGETHER. PRINCESS. LOOK, I BROUGHT YOU SOME NICE, WARM FLEECE.

IT'S HIDEOUS! CAN'T I TAKE MOM'S CASHMERE SWEATER SET?

JONAS!



WHO'S JONAS?

JANIS, IF YOU PACK QUICKLY AND SENSIBLY AND LISTEN TO YOUR MOM, I HAVE SOMETHING FOR YOU.



OMIGOD, I LOVE YOU!



HELLO KITTY THONG.

power to
the people

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SOMEWHERE IN THE BLOGOSPHERE...

subversive parenting

notes from a stay-at-home dad

About Me



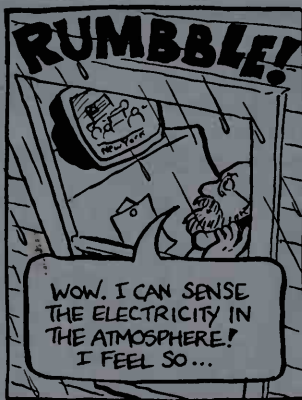
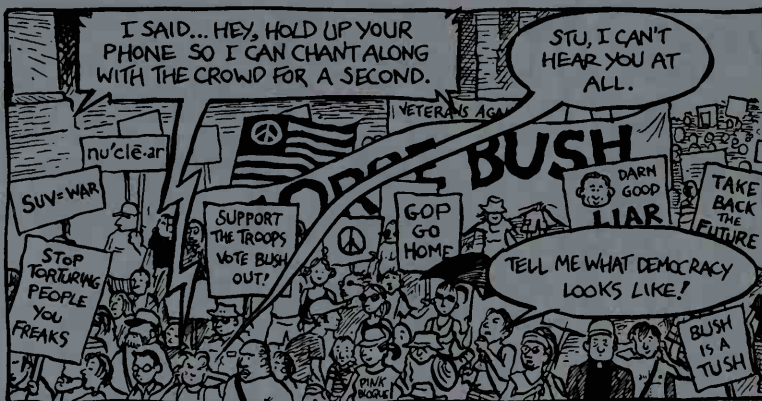
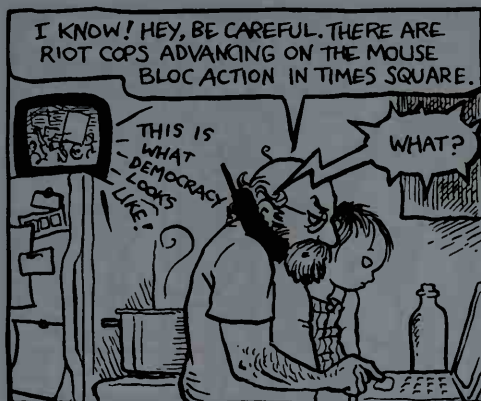
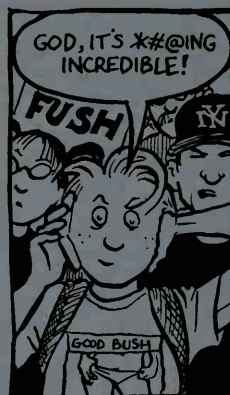
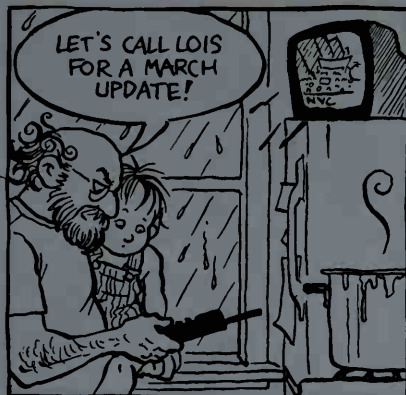
Name: Stuart Goodman
Location:

8.29.04
virtually active

Jiao Raizel and I are canning tomato sauce and watching the RNC protest on C-SPAN, listening to the rally on streaming radio, and monitoring the indymedia site for breaking news. Wish I was there with my housemate Lois, but this is almost better because I'm getting my canning done at the same time.

9/8

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impolitic

9/22

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AS
GOVERNMENT
OF THE PEOPLE,
BY THE PEOPLE,
FOR THE PEOPLE
APPEARS TO
BE IN DANGER
OF PERISHING
FROM THE
EARTH,
OUR PLUCKY
PATRIOTS
ATTEMPT CPR.

... SO THANKS FOR COMING TO
MY PARTY AND FOR MAKING A
DONATION TO MoveOn PAC
INSTEAD OF PRESENTS.

HAPPY ELEVENTH, RAF. I'M
PROUD OF YOU FOR GETTING
SO INVOLVED IN THE POLITICAL
PROCESS.



OH, PUH-
LEEZE! CUE
THE VIOLINS.

Barbecue
BUSH

CLARICE HAS SOME
NERVE TURNING HER
KID'S BIRTHDAY INTO
A FUNDRAISER!

IT WAS RAFFI'S
IDEA. I THINK
IT'S GREAT.

JEEZ, MO! I'M
DELIGHTED TO GIVE
MONEY. DEMOCRACY
ITSELF IS AT STAKE.

BUT THAT'S JUST IT! IT'S NOT DEMO-
CRACY IF YOU HAVE TO **BUY** IT! I
RESENT BEING MADE COMPLICIT IN
THE... THE CORRUPT **PUTRESCENCE**
THAT IS OUR ELECTORAL SYSTEM.

HAVE
YOU SEEN
TONI?

HUH. NOT
IN A WHILE.



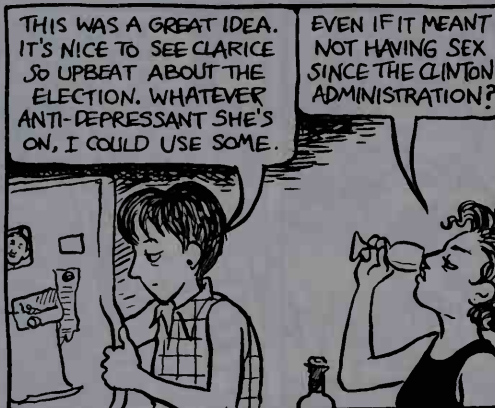
HEY. ARE YOU
HIDING?

OH, HI, GLORIA.
I'M JUST TAKING A
LITTLE BREAK.

THIS WAS A GREAT IDEA.
IT'S NICE TO SEE CLARICE
SO UPBEAT ABOUT THE
ELECTION. WHATEVER
ANTI-DEPRESSANT SHE'S
ON, I COULD USE SOME.

EVEN IF IT MEANT
NOT HAVING SEX
SINCE THE CLINTON
ADMINISTRATION?

UH...AND RAFFI'S
QUITE THE INSPIRED
ORGANIZER.



YEAH, HE AND CLARICE ARE
REALLY BONDING AROUND
ALL THIS. IT'S NICE, BUT A
LITTLE LONELY. I MISS THE
SPECIAL CONNECTION WE
USED TO HAVE.

YOU AND
RAFFI? OR YOU
AND CLARICE?

HEY, CAN
EITHER OF YOU GUYS
BREAK A FIVE?



"What is the first part of politics? education. The second? education. And the third? education."

~Michelet

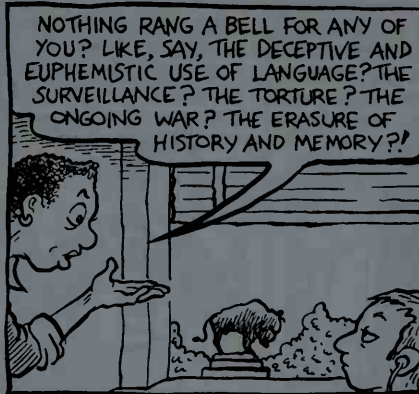
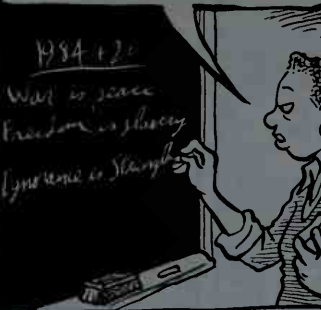
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19/6

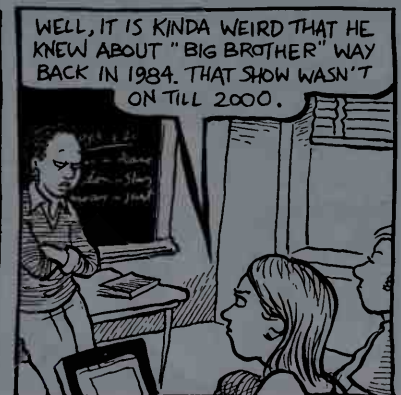
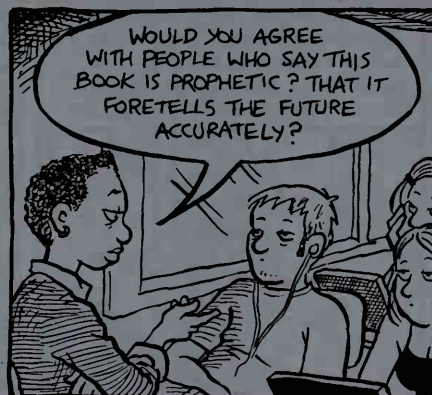
450

SCHOOL'S BACK IN SESSION, AND NOT A MOMENT TOO SOON CONSIDERING IT'S THE EVE OF AN ELECTION IN WHICH A MINUTE TIP OF THE IDEOLOGICAL BALANCE COULD USHER IN A RIGHT-WING ICE AGE.

SO, DID ANYONE NOTICE ANYTHING FAMILIAR ABOUT THE WORLD OF ORWELL'S "1984"?



MEANWHILE, CLARICE IS SUPPLEMENTING THE CURRICULUM AT RAFFI'S MIDDLE SCHOOL WITH HER OWN UNIT ON THE FACTS OF LIFE.



ABSOLUTE | VALUE |

WHAT'S
A
LESBIAN
REPUBLICAN
TO
DO?

11/3

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OF ALL THE TIMES TO COME
OUT TO YOUR FAMILY, I HAD
TO DO IT RIGHT BEFORE
THE LAST PRESIDENTIAL
DEBATE. DAMN THAT
JOHN KERRY!

CYNTHIA, I'M SORRY
YOUR PARENTS ARE
HAVING A MELTDOWN,
BUT IT'S HARDLY
JOHN KERRY'S FAULT.

WHEN HE CALLED
MARY CHENEY A
LESBIAN, I FELT
LIKE I'D BEEN
DROP-KICKED.



WELL, MARY CHENEY
IS A LESBIAN. AND
YOU'RE A POLITICAL
FOOTBALL. WELCOME
TO THE CLUB.

BUT IT WAS A NASTY
RHETORICAL TRICK! A
CODED MESSAGE TO
SCARE OFF BUSH'S
EVANGELICAL BASE.



HEY, THE CHENEYS ARE THE RHETORICAL
CONTORTIONISTS! THEY MANAGED TO
SIMULTANEOUSLY GAY-BASH THEIR OWN
DAUGHTER AND BLAME IT ON KERRY!
IT MAKES MY BRAIN HURT!

THEY WERE JUST
TRYING TO PROTECT
HER. MY PARENTS ARE
THREATENING TO CUT
OFF MY TUITION.



OH, THEY'LL
CALM DOWN.
GIVE THEM A
LITTLE TIME.

YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND.
THEY HOME-SCHOOLED ME
BECAUSE THEY WERE AFRAID
OF THE VALUES I'D PICK UP
IN THE PUBLIC SYSTEM.



THEY WANTED ME TO GO TO A
RELIGIOUS COLLEGE. I HAD TO
REALLY STRUGGLE WITH THEM TO
COME HERE. AND NOW LOOK!
THEIR WORST FEAR HAS COME TRUE.



OH, JEEZ. WELL,
UH... MAYBE YOU
SHOULD TALK
TO SOMEONE.

I
THOUGHT
I WAS.



MEANWHILE, BACK AT THE COLLECTIVE...

THIS K-8 SCHOOL
HAS BEEN OKAY FOR
HER. BUT WHAT
ABOUT NEXT YEAR?

IF ONLY WE
HAD A QUEER
HIGH SCHOOL.



WHY DON'T YOU HOME-SCHOOL
JONAS? I MEAN, JANIS. THAT'S
WHAT I'M GONNA DO WITH J.R.
SHE'S NEVER SETTING FOOT INSIDE
ONE OF THOSE CONFORMITY MILLS.



BUT SHE'LL BE
DOING STUFF
LIKE ALGEBRA
AND FRENCH.

I WAS QUITE A DAB HAND
AT MATH. HAD AN AFFAIR
WITH MY TRIG TEACHER.



marriage engagé

11/17

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AS CLARICE, TONI, AND RAFFI ENTERTAIN GUESTS, RIFTS SEEM TO BE EMERGING IN THE MARRIAGE EQUALITY MOVEMENT... NOT TO MENTION IN SOME MARRIAGES.

YEAH, BUT TONI, EVEN IF THE LEGISLATURE DOES PASS THE AMENDMENT, THEY'D HAVE TO PASS IT AGAIN IN THE NEXT SESSION. SO WE'D HAVE TIME TO ORGANIZE.

BUT WE ABSOLUTELY CAN'T LET IT COME TO A BALLOT INITIATIVE. EVEN THOUGH WE'RE A BLUE STATE, PEOPLE ARE FROZEN IN, LIKE, 3000 B.C. ON THIS.



YEAH, CAN WE SKIP THE SHOP TALK? I'M GAY-MARRIED OUT.

ME TOO. ENOUGH ALREADY. IF WE HADN'T BROUGHT IT UP, THE REPUBLICANS COULDN'T HAVE FED US TO THE FUNDAMENTALISTS, AND KERRY MIGHT HAVE WON.



OH, RIGHT. DON'T PUSH FOR YOUR CIVIL RIGHTS BECAUSE THERE'LL BE A BACKLASH THAT'S ALWAYS BEEN A WINNING STRATEGY.

CLARICE IS RIGHT. WITH ALL THESE STATE CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS, WE'RE LOSING GROUND.



WE? I HAVEN'T SEEN YOU OUT THERE CAN-VASSING.

STELLA, I JUST LEARNED HOW TO RIP THE GUY'S SKELETON OUT OF HIS MOUTH IN "MORTAL KOMBAT." LET'S GO PLAY!

RAFFI, STELLA'S YOUR GUEST. ASK WHAT SHE WANTS TO PLAY.



I BROUGHT MY NEW HAMTARO GAME, "HAM HAM HEARTBREAK."

I'M JUST SAYING, WE'D BE BETTER OFF COMPROMISING. GIVE US THE RIGHTS, AND CALL IT WHATEVER YOU WANT. CIVIL UNION, I DON'T CARE.



ANA ACTUALLY PREFERS "CIVIL UNION." IT'S SO MUCH LESS INTIMATE.

EXCUSE ME. I HAVE TO CALL THE HOSPITAL.



I SWEAR SHE CAN WILL THAT THING TO GO OFF.

OKAY, SO THIS EVIL HAMSTER MADE ALL THE HAM HAMS STOP LOVING EACH OTHER AND WE HAVE TO GET THEM BACK TOGETHER.

CAN WE RIP THE EVIL HAMSTER'S SKELETON OUT?



pilgrim's regress

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12/1

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IN KEEPING WITH OUR NATION'S NEW MORAL MANDATE, THIS COMIC STRIP HAS CHANGED ITS FORMAT TO **RELIGIOUS ALLEGORY**.

CAN OUR HEROINE FIND HER WAY TO SALVATION DESPITE THE MANY ABSTRACT-CONCEPTS-EMBODIED-IN-HUMAN-FORM THAT LITTER HER PATH?

HERE SHE IS, **MS. SECULAR HUMANIST**, FLOUNDERING IN THE SLOUGH OF DESPOND.

...IRAQ IN FLAMES... RESISTANCE SPREADING... TWICE AS MANY IRAQI CHILDREN STARVING THAN BEFORE THE WAR... OUTSOURCING TORTURE...

WHAT SHALL I DO TO BE SAVED?



SHE SETS OUT ON HER QUEST, STOPPING TO VISIT NEIGHBOR **OBSTINATE**. THEN, IT'S ON TO NEIGHBOR **PLIABLE**.

WHY'S THE MEDIA IGNORING THIS? WHY ARE WE ALL JUST ROLLING OVER? MY MOTHER COULD HACK AN ELECTRONIC VOTING MACHINE. I REFUSE TO ACCEPT THE ELECTION RESULTS!

I WISH I COULD REFUSE TO ACCEPT THIS CREDIT CARD BILL. TELL ME YOU DIDN'T GIVE \$500 TO THE DNC AT THE LAST MINUTE.

IT'S UP TO US TO BREAK THROUGH THIS CULTURAL POLARIZATION. TO CONNECT WITH RED STATERS, WE NEED TO GET COMFORTABLE TALKING ABOUT OUR FAITH.



MS. LITTLE-FAITH AND **MS. LOVE-LUST** WEIGH IN.

YEAH, I'M SURE TELLING SOME KNUCKLE-DRAGGERS ABOUT YOUR KABBALAH MEDITATION GROUP WOULD HEAL THE RIFT RIGHT UP.

LOOK. PEOPLE VOTED REPUBLICAN BECAUSE OF THE GAY MARRIAGE THING. THEY'RE TERRIFIED OF SEX.

IF WE'RE SERIOUS ABOUT REACHING OUT TO EVANGELICALS, LET'S PLANT SUBLIMINAL MESSAGES ON PORN SITES. "JESUS LOVES YOUR ORGASM."

UPON FLEEING, OUR HEROINE RUNS INTO **GIANT DESPAIR**.

I'M MANAGING. WHEN MY PAMIC ABOUT BUSH PROVOKING A NUCLEAR TERRORIST ATTACK GETS TOO INTENSE...



...I SWITCH TO MY FEAR OF BEING ROUNDED UP AND SHIPPED TO A GULAG FOR INTELLECTUALS. IN KENTUCKY.

ONWARD SHE TREKS, BUT BEFORE REACHING HER FINAL GOAL, OUR PILGRIM MUST PASS THROUGH THE TEMPTATIONS OF **VANITY FAIR**.

ON SECOND THOUGHT, MAYBE SHE'LL HANG HERE FOR A WHILE.

...CIA AND STATE DEPARTMENT PURGING DISSIDENTS... VOTING IRREGULARITIES... WAR CRIMES... IRAN'S NUCLEAR PROGRAM...

CAN I HAVE A SWIG OF THAT?



nothin'
left to
lose

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OH, THE MALL. AMERICA'S AORTA.

I MADE A HAIKU! "WANDERING, DAMNED
SOULS NEED SOMETHING, BUT AREN'T
SURE WHAT - NEXT STOP, CINNABON."

OKAY, SETTLE
DOWN. I'M
ALMOST DONE.

12/29

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SYDNEY?

CHERYL! UH...
HOW ARE YOU?

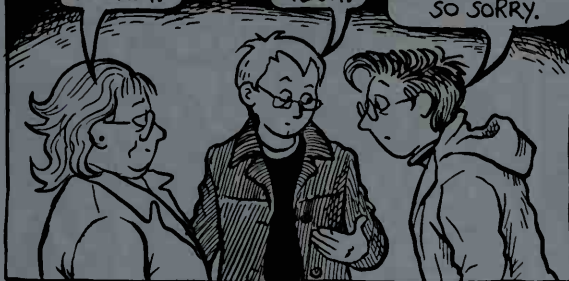
TARPIT



I'M DOING OKAY. I
REALLY APPRECIATED
YOUR CONDOLENCE
BASKET.

MO, THIS IS
CHERYL, MY
RADIATION
TECH.

OH. HI.
SYDNEY TOLD
ME ABOUT
YOUR SON. I'M
SO SORRY.

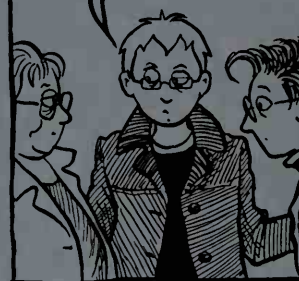


WELL, IT HELPS KNOWING HE
DIED DOING SOMETHING SO
IMPORTANT. WE TEND TO FORGET
THAT FREEDOM ISN'T FREE.

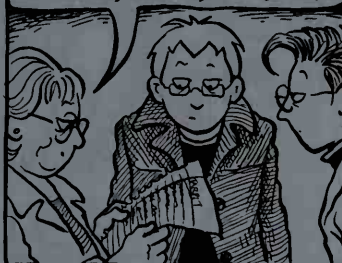
UHH...



YOU'RE SO
RIGHT.



BUT I'M STAYING BUSY. I'M
SENDING CARE PACKAGES TO
OTHER SOLDIERS. LOOK AT ALL
THIS STUFF THEY NEED! TOYS
FOR KIDS, SOCKS, BATTERIES..



SHORTLY...

I GUESS FREEDOM
HAS AN A.P.R. OF
18.99 %

SHUT UP AND
GO FIND THE
BEEF JERKY.



MEANWHILE, RAF'S TWO MOMMIES ARE AWOL.

MEEMA, COME ON! YOU SAID
YOU'D PLAY CRANIUM
WITH US.



I'LL COME WHEN
MOMMY GETS OFF
THE PHONE.



HEY, WE CAN'T ROLL OVER NOW.
IF WE GIVE AN INCH ON MARRIAGE,
NEXT THING YOU KNOW THEY'LL
BE SHOVING CREATIONISM AND
"ABSTINENCE" DOWN OUR THROATS!

MOM,
COME ON!



HANG ON,
GLORIA -

SWEETIE, I'LL COME
WHEN MEEMA GETS
OFF THE COMPUTER.



I'LL BE OVER
BEHIND THE QUICKIE
MART SCORING SOME
CRANK.

HAVE
FUN.

WEAR
YOUR HAT.



IN THE SEASON OF GREATEST DARKNESS, OUR QUASI-INTENTIONAL FAMILY ADMITS A STRAY EVANGELICAL TO THEIR MULTI-PURPOSE FESTIVAL OF LIGHTS.



OKAY. THESE MEGACHURCHES TELL PEOPLE TO VOTE AGAINST ABORTION AND GAY MARRIAGE BECAUSE THEY'RE IMMORAL. AND THEN THEY ELECT CONSERVATIVES WHO DEFUND CHILD-CARE AND HOUSING. ISN'T THAT HYPOCRITICAL?

NO! SOCIAL PROGRAMS ARE IMMORAL TOO, 'CUZ THEY MAKE PEOPLE DEPENDENT!

ENOUGH SMALL TALK, LET'S EAT!

UH... I'D LIKE IT IF WE COULD JUST TAKE A MINUTE AND THINK ABOUT OUR INTERDEPENDENCE WITH NATURE AS WE CELEBRATE THE SOLSTICE.



I THOUGHT THIS WAS **CHRISTMAS** DINNER.

BUT WE'RE NOT ALL CHRISTIAN! STUART'S JEWISH.

IN A NON-OBSERVANT, NATURE-MYSTIC SORT OF WAY.

SAMIA'S A MUSLIM.

A LAPSED, SADLY WESTERNIZED MUSLIM.

RIGHT. WHAT ARE YOU, CYNTHIA?



I SAY CYNTHIA HAS DIBS ON THE HOLIDAY. IT'S HER FIRST CHRISTMAS AWAY FROM HOME.

OKAY, IT'S ALL THE SAME TO ME. THE SUN RETURNS, THE MASCULINE PRINCIPLE IS REBORN OF THE GODDESS... I MEAN, WHAT'S JESUS IF NOT ANOTHER SUN DEITY?

THAT'S OKAY. TO BE HONEST, I'VE BEEN RETHINKING THINGS LATELY. I MEAN, I'M STILL A CHRISTIAN, BUT I'M DEFINITELY TRANSITIONING.

REALLY? IS YOUR MOM LETTING YOU DO HORMONES? MINE WON'T.

JANIS, I SAID WE'D DISCUSS IT.



below the law

WHAT'S CLARICE WATCHING?

THE ELECTIONS IN IRAQ?

1/26

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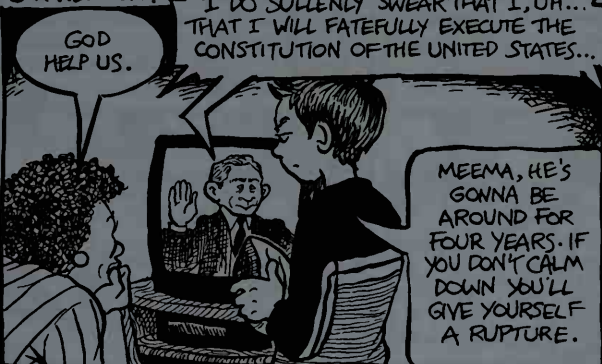
AS MILITARY HELICOPTERS HOVER OVERHEAD, CITIZENS PRESENT IDENTIFICATION PAPERS TO HEAVILY-ARMED SECURITY FORCES...



REPORT ON THE TSUNAMI DAMAGE?



OR NEITHER?



love among the ruins

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2/9

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OH, VALENTINE'S DAY, WHEN WE CELEBRATE THE LIFE-AFFIRMING BLISS OF THE EROTIC BOND.

ATMO AND SYDNEY'S...



NOW WHAT?

I DUNNO, SYDNEY. CALL ME SENTIMENTAL....

...BUT I FIND IT HARD TO **GET IT ON** WHILE MY GOVERNMENT IS BUILDING MORE CONCENTRATION CAMPS, UNDERMINING THE RULE OF LAW, PUMPING OUT PROPAGANDA THROUGH THE STATE MEDIA, AND SICCING THE MARQUIS DE RUMSFELD ON PEOPLE. AT LEAST NOW I KNOW WHAT IT WAS LIKE LIVING IN **1930s GERMANY**.



NO NAZIS, I BEG OF YOU!

IT'S A FACILE HISTORICAL COMPARISON! ONCE YOU INVOKE NAZIS, PEOPLE STOP LISTENING. PLUS IT'S A BONER KILLER.



BUT IF WE FORBID THAT ANALOGY, AREN'T WE IN A WAY ERASING THE HISTORICAL RECORD AND THEREBY **GUARANTEEING** THE RISE OF A DICTATOR?



YOU KNOW, A SIMPLE "NOT TONIGHT, I HAVE A HEADACHE" WOULD SUFFICE.



AND AT SPARROW & STU'S... COME ON! SHE'S SLEEPING LIKE A DRUNKEN SAILOR. WE'LL BE VERY QUIET.



I DON'T FEEL RIGHT ABOUT IT. I GUESS WE COULD GO TO ANOTHER ROOM... BUT EVERYONE ELSE IS STILL UP.

WE COULD TAKE A SHOWER.

I JUST HAD A SHOWER.



STUART!



OKAY, I'M NOT IN THE MOOD. I'M JUST...I'M SO WORRIED ABOUT HER FUTURE.

AREN'T YOU? I MEAN, WE'RE LIVING IN A COUNTRY RUN BY PEOPLE WHO BELIEVE IN **JUDGMENT DAY!** MASSIVE TRADE DEFICITS? GLOBAL WARMING? NUCLEAR PROLIFERATION? WHAT DO THEY CARE? THEY'LL BE PLAYING **GOLF** IN HEAVEN!



WHERE ARE YOU GOING?

TO "TAKE A SHOWER."



O conspiracy!

(Julius Caesar, II, i, 77)

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CLARICE
IS ON THE
PROGRESSIVE
DIET.

HER APPETITE
IS COMPLETELY
GONE, AND
SHE WORKS
HERSELF INTO
A LATHER
DAILY.

2/23

460

... AND THE BEAUTY OF IT IS, BUSH DOESN'T **NEED** THOUGHT POLICE. WE POLICE OURSELVES! EVERYONE'S SO AFRAID OF BEING LABELED A "CONSPIRACY THEORIST," THEY SHUT THEIR BRAINS DOWN!

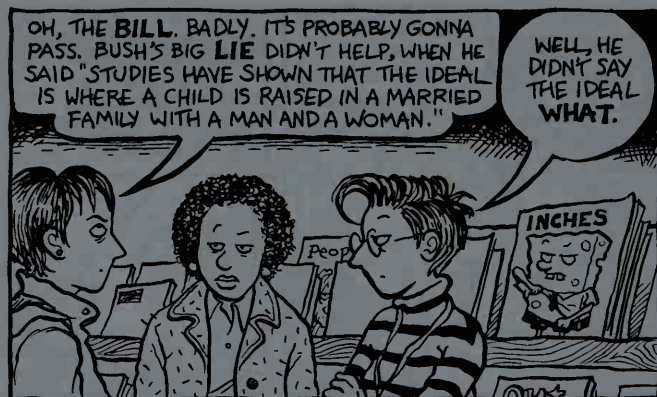
UH OH.
KEEP TALKING,
BUT I HAVE TO
LOOK BUSY.



I SAY, OF **COURSE** I'M A CONSPIRACY THEORIST! WHAT DO CEOs AND POLITICIANS AND MEDIA MOGULS AND DEFENSE CONTRACTORS **DO** ALL DAY IF NOT SIT AROUND CONSPIRING ABOUT HOW TO CONSOLIDATE THEIR POWER? IT'S IN THEIR **JOB DESCRIPTIONS!**

WELL, HERE'S A NEWS FLASH. WE **DID** INVADE IRAQ FOR OIL. THE GOVERNMENT **IS** SPYING ON US. THE OHIO ELECTION **WAS** RIGGED. AND BUSH CHEATED ON THE DEBATES BY WEARING A FRICKIN' **WIRE!**

CLARICE, CALM DOWN! I'M ON YOUR SIDE! AND BESIDES, YOU GET MORE CARDIOVASCULAR BENEFIT IF YOU STAY BETWEEN 50 AND 80 PERCENT OF YOUR MAXIMUM HEART RATE.



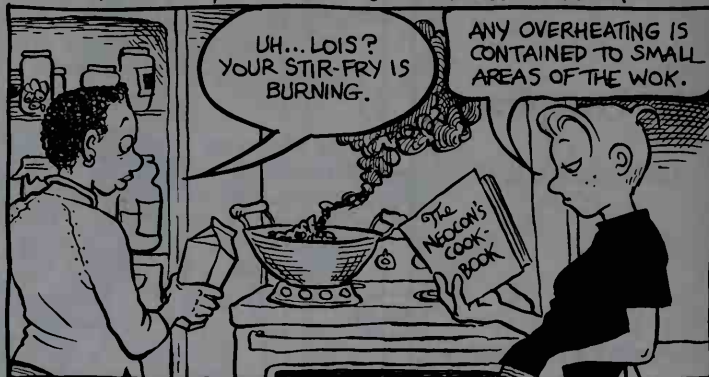


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THE BUSHITES SEEM TO THINK REALITY IS JUST A BIG **WAD OF GUM** THEY CAN CHEW INTO ANY SHAPE THEY LIKE.

WHAT IF WE **ALL** LIED THROUGH OUR TEETH LIKE THAT?

THERE ARE SO MANY DIFFERENT FUN TECHNIQUES: DENIAL.



UH... LOIS? YOUR STIR-FRY IS BURNING.

ANY OVERHEATING IS CONTAINED TO SMALL AREAS OF THE WOK.

THE COMMON OR GARDEN-VARIETY WHOPPER.

LOOKS LIKE YOU'LL HAVE TO REVISE THAT POST ON YOUR DADDY BLOG ABOUT YOUR FOOL-PROOF ONE-DAY TOILET-TRAINING PROGRAM.

UH... THAT'S JUST A BADLY TAILORED SUIT!

THAT'S A LOAD OF \$#@*.



THE OPPOSITE GAME-- DRIVE THE WHOLE FAMILY MAD!

YOU'VE BEEN **MONITORING** MY INSTANT MESSAGES? WHO MADE **YOU** DICTATOR?!

RAFFI, THERE IS NO JUSTICE WITHOUT FREEDOM, AND THERE CAN BE NO HUMAN RIGHTS WITHOUT HUMAN LIBERTY. NOW EMPTY YOUR POCKETS.



THE RETRO-FIT

WILL YOU RELAX? IT'S A BLACKENED CAJUN STIR-FRY!



LOIS!

DON'T LET THOSE PESKY, AGREED-UPON CONVENTIONS STAND IN YOUR WAY!

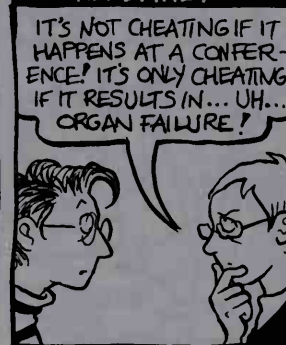
DISMISS!

COME NOW, MO. MONOGAMY'S A QUANT, OBSOLETE PARADIGM.



REDEFINE!

IT'S NOT CHEATING IF IT HAPPENS AT A CONFERENCE! IT'S ONLY CHEATING IF IT RESULTS IN... UH... ORGAN FAILURE!



EVADE!

SYDNEY, JUST TELL ME! DID YOU HAVE AN AFFAIR?



I DON'T RECALL SPECIFICALLY.

ONCE YOU BELIEVE YOUR LIE, THERE'S NO STOPPING YOU!

BAKING SODA! WE NEED TO THROW BAKING SODA ON IT!

STAND BACK, APPEASERS! YOU'LL JUST EMBOLDEN IT. I KNOW HOW TO HANDLE A KITCHEN FIRE.



AND IF REALITY **STILL** INSISTS ON REARING ITS UGLY HEAD. THERE'S ALWAYS THE DOUBLE-REVERSE BACK FLIP.



I HOPE YOU'RE HAPPY.

No News is not a Good Thing

3/23

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... AND WHEN THE REGIME OF FEAR IS BROKEN, AND THE PEOPLE FIND THEIR COURAGE AND FIND THEIR VOICE, DEMOCRACY IS THEIR GOAL, AND TYRANTS THEMSELVES HAVE REASON TO FEAR.

OKAY. I HAVE TO GIVE THE GUY SOME CREDIT.

IT'S TOTALLY IMPRESSIVE HOW HE SAYS THAT AND KEEPS A STRAIGHT FACE.

SHH!

I'M WATCHING THE NEWS HERE.

UP NEXT, CAREER TURNAROUNDS! MARTHA STEWART EXITS PRISON A NATIONAL HERO, AND GEORGE BUSH BRINGS DEMOCRACY TO THE MIDDLE EAST.

OH MY GOD. HAVE YOU BECOME A BLOGGER?

NO, BUT I'M GONNA HELP HOMESCHOOL JANIS NEXT YEAR, AND I SUDDENLY REALIZED I DON'T **KNOW** ANYTHING.

LIKE, WHAT THE HELL'S GOING ON IN LEBANON.

OR WHERE LEBANON IS.

BUT I'VE BEEN WATCHING THIS ALL DAY AND I **STILL** DON'T KNOW ANYTHING.

WHICH DEMONSTRATORS ARE THE GOOD GUYS? WHY'S SYRIA EVEN IN LEBANON? COULD BUSH **POSSIBLY** HAVE BEEN RIGHT ABOUT INVADING IRAQ?

ONE, IT'S COMPLICATED. TWO, LONG STORY. THREE, NO.

I MEAN, COME ON. BUSH DIDN'T EVEN WANT ELECTIONS TO **HAPPEN** IN IRAQ. NOW HE'S TAKING CREDIT FOR THEM?

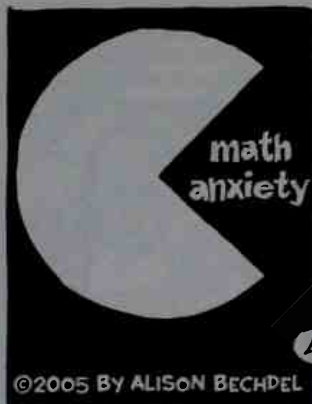
AND YOU CAN'T LEARN ANYTHING WATCHING THESE CORPORATE **HAIRDOS**. THEY WON'T PROVIDE ANY CONTEXT BY EXAMINING U.S./ISRAELI RELATIONS, OR COLONIALISM, OR THE BREAKUP OF THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE. YOU END UP STUPIDER THAN WHEN YOU STARTED OUT.

NOT ABOUT MARTHA. I COULD WRITE HER BIOGRAPHY BY NOW.

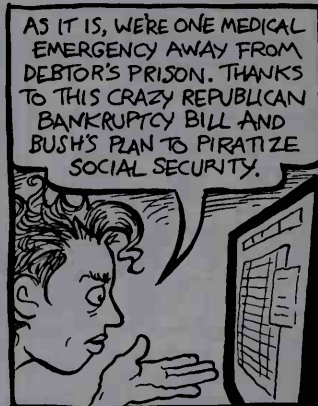
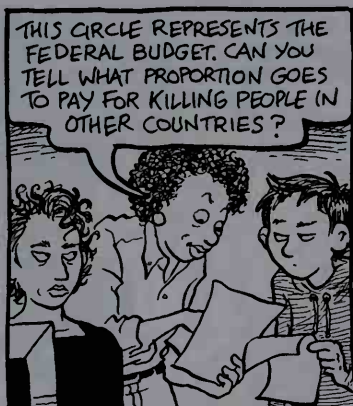
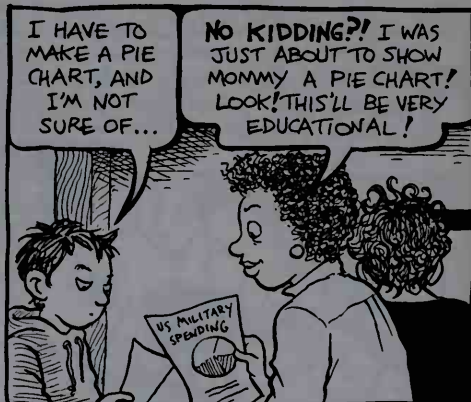
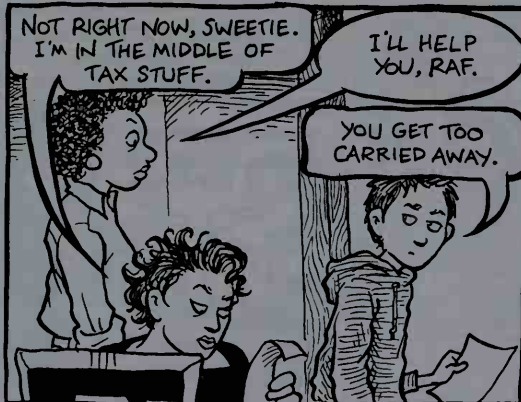
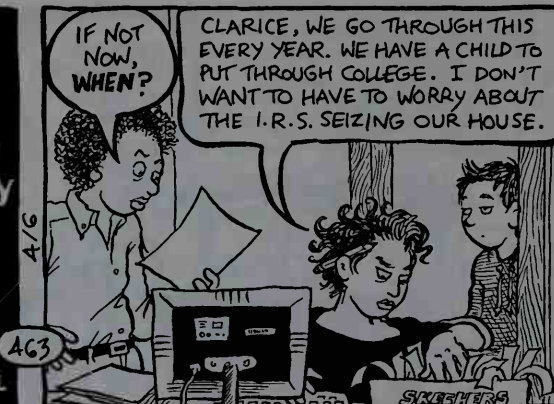
DIDN'T MARTHA STEWART CAUSE THE FALL OF THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE WHEN SHE DUMPED HER STOCK IN AN UPHOLSTERED FOOTSTOOL FIRM?

SHHH! I WANNA HEAR ABOUT THE PONCHO THE OTHER YARDBIRD MADE FOR HER.

GETTING OUT OF JAIL. IT'S A GOOD THING! LET'S TAKE A LOOK AT THE REHABILITATED MARTHA.



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SEPARATION OF POWERS

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I'M SO **STRESSED**. I'VE BEEN UP FOR TWO DAYS TRYING TO FINISH MY WEBSITE FOR MY GOVERNMENT PUBLICATIONS CLASS. IT'S DUE TOMORROW, BUT WE HAD TO BRING THE CATS TO THE VET AND TONIGHT I'M WORKING AT THE BOOKSTORE.



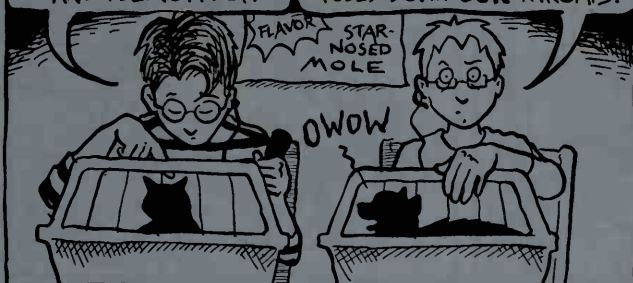
NO. TRUST ME, THE SCHIAVO CIRCUS AND THE TURPITUDE OF TOM De LAY WILL NOT AWAKEN THE POPULACE. AMERICANS ARE **NARCOLEPTIC AMNESIACS!** WITH A.D.D.!

4/20
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MR AAOOWWLL!

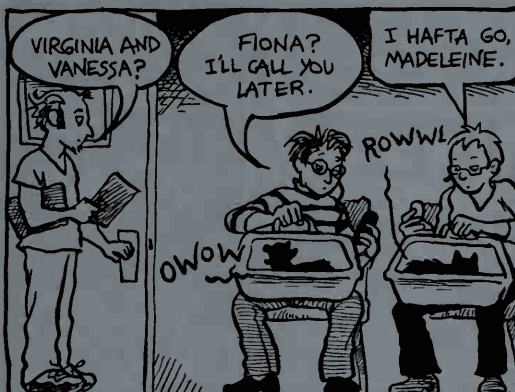
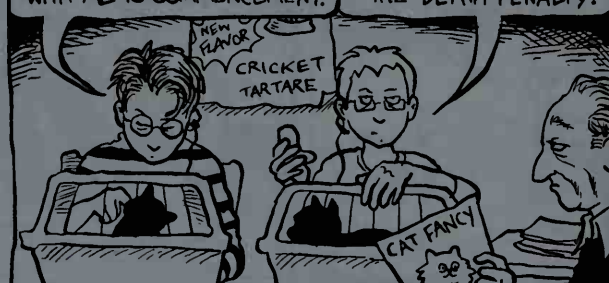
I THINK VANESSA'S EYE SIGHT IS GOING, AND VIRGINIA'S BEEN DRINKING AND PEEING A LOT.

AT LEAST WE WON'T HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT RIGHT-WING NUTBAGS SHOVING FEEDING TUBES DOWN **OUR** THROATS.



IF IT'S SOMETHING SERIOUS, SYDNEY MIGHT HAVE TO STAY WITH THEM AND NOT COME WITH ME TO COMMENCEMENT.

BECAUSE SOON THEY'LL PROBABLY BE GIVING "TENURED RADICALS" THE DEATH PENALTY.



MEANWHILE, CLARKE EXPLAINS A THING OR TWO.

LOOK. LET'S SAY I'M THE LEGISLATIVE BRANCH, MOMMY'S THE EXECUTIVE. AND YOU'RE THE JUDICIAL. THE POWER'S DIVIDED UP EQUALLY BETWEEN US.



NOW SAY I PASS A LAW THAT **XBOXES** ARE ILLEGAL AND EVERYONE HAS TO GET A **PS2**. MOMMY COULD VETO IT, BUT SHE WON'T, BECAUSE HER ELECTION CAMPAIGN WAS FUNDED BY PS2.



YOU CAN RULE IT UNCONSTITUTIONAL. BUT THEN PS2 CAN GIVE MONEY TO A LOT OF SENATORS AND MOMMY CAN NOMINATE A BUNCH OF PS2 JUDGES.



THEN THE PS2 SENATORS **ABOLISH** THE RIGHT OF THE XBOX SENATORS TO **FILIBUSTER** THE PS2 NOMINEES, SO THE PS2 JUDGES GET **CONFIRMED**. YOUR DECISION IS **REPEALED**, AND THE COURTS ARE PACKED WITH **PS2 PARTISANS** FOR ALL **ETERNITY**. DO YOU FOLLOW?



I THINK SO. THE WAY TO GET A NEW GAME SYSTEM IS TO **GAME** THE SYSTEM.



my sweet
impressionable
you

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5/4

THE EVIDENCE SPEAKS FOR ITSELF. ON A FACULTY OF 250, THERE ARE ONLY 15 OPENLY REPUBLICAN PROFESSORS.

WHAT ARE YOU PROPOSING? IDEOLOGICAL DIVERSITY THROUGH AFFIRMATIVE ACTION? THAT'S REAL CONSERVATIVE.

I'M PROPOSING THAT IMPRESSIONABLE STUDENTS HEAR ALL SIDES OF THE ISSUES. DOES THAT THREATEN YOU?



IF ALL SIDES INCLUDES CREATIONISM AND HOLOCAUST DENIAL AND THE NOVELS OF AYN RAND, THEN YEAH, I GUESS IT DOES.



4:22 PM. PROFESSOR GINGER JORDAN MOCKS ONE OF MY INTELLECTUAL HEROINES.

?!



I'LL JUST POST THIS LITTLE INCIDENT TO THE ACADEMIC FREEDOM COMPLAINT CENTER.

CYNTHIA, IF YOU REALLY WANT MORE REPUBLICANS ON THE FACULTY, TRY GETTING OUR SALARIES QUADRUPLED.



MEANWHILE, IN THE CEREAL AISLE...

Fozzy Foo BAAAAPS!

SWEETIE, YOU DON'T REALLY WANT THOSE. YOU JUST THINK YOU DO BECAUSE A COMMERCIAL TOLD YOU TO.



THAT WAS PERSUASIVE. YOU SHOULD GO INTO MARKETING.

OH, HI, MO. IT'S AMAZING. SHE HAS A VOCABULARY OF 50 WORDS, AND THREE OF THEM ARE "FROSTED FRUIT BATS."



J.R.! LOOK! HOW 'BOUT A NICE STRING BEAN?



HEY, I HEARD YOU'RE GRADUATING FROM LIBRARY SCHOOL NEXT WEEK. CONGRATS!

THANKS. IT'S REALLY EXCITING. BUT I'M BUMMED SYDNEY WON'T BE ABLE TO COME WITH ME. ONE OF OUR CATS IS SICK.



CAN'T LOIS CATSIT?

NO, IT'S KIND OF A DICEY OPERATION. WE HAVE TO GIVE HER INSULIN INJECTIONS TWICE A DAY.



CALLING DR. SYDNEY...

#@%&! VIRGINIA!



what's all
this then?

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5/8

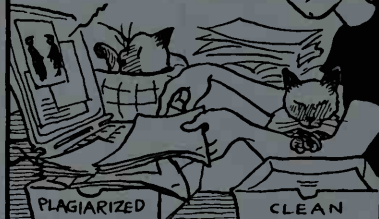
466

To: madeleine.zeugma@dartridge.edu
Cc:
Subject: Pompous circumstances
Attachments: none

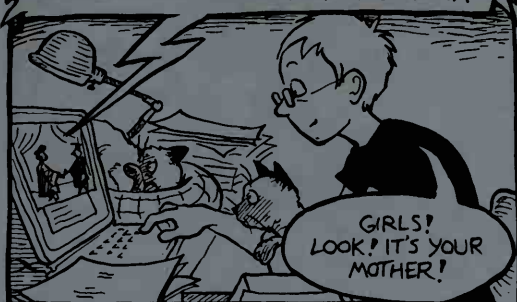
I'm home googling student papers and watching Mo's graduation via webcast. Having fond memories of the day I got my Ph.D. Remember going at it in your office in our academic robes? And how you got that big blue blot on your doctoral hood from lying on that fountain pen?

x
Sydney

HOW DID WE
LIVE BEFORE THE
INTERNET?



...AND THE FRANCINE J. LOTHROP AWARD FOR OUTSTANDING REFERENCE SERVICES IS SHARED BY TWO STUDENTS THIS YEAR. MO TESTA...



...AND FIONA FINGALL.

...AND HER LITTLE FRIEND.



LET'S TAKE A SCREENSHOT OF HER GETTING HER PRIZE!



OVER AT TONI AND CLARICE'S...

WHAT ARE YOU GUYS DOING?
FOLD THE COUCH BACK UP.
NO WAR IN THE HOUSE.



WE'RE NOT PLAYING WAR! WE'RE PLAYING RECONSTRUCTION. WE'RE PRIVATIZING THIS OIL FIELD.

COME ON. PUT EVERYTHING BACK THE WAY IT WAS.

INCLUDING THESE UNDER-PANTS?



HUH. WHERE'D THESE COME FROM? NEITHER OF US HAS STRIPED UNDERWEAR.

Boys!
OUTSIDE!
NOW!



AND AT THE RECEPTION, A GLASS OF WINE IN HER HAND...

JING, THANKS FOR LETTING ME STAY AT YOUR PLACE TONIGHT. IF I HAVE TO SLEEP IN THAT HOTEL ROOM WITH MY PARENTS AGAIN, SOMEONE'S GONNA DIE.

NO PROBLEM, FIONA. AS LONG AS MO DOESN'T MIND SHARING HER FUTON.



THE TEMPTATIONS

6/1

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MO HAS A MASTER'S DEGREE.

IN LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE.

NOW SHE'S SHARING A GRADUATION NIGHT FUTON WITH FIONA, THE DIGITAL SERVICES SPECIALIST.

COME ON. WE'RE DONE WITH THE PROGRAM, WE'RE BOTH GOING BACK TO OUR SEPARATE LIVES. IT'S THE PERFECT OPPORTUNITY FOR A NO-IMPACT, HERMETICALLY-SEALED TRYST.

GOD, FIONA. I... I REALLY WANT TO. BUT I CAN'T DO THAT TO SYDNEY.



YOU WOULDN'T BE DOING IT TO SYDNEY, YOU'D BE DOING IT TO ME. THAT'S THE WHOLE POINT!

HMM. I SEE YOUR LOGIC.



MEANWHILE, THE LONELY CYNTHIA HAS PARLAYED A RIDE WITH THE LOCAL LGBT CYCLING GROUP INTO DINNER, THEN COFFEE, WITH ONE CYCLIST IN PARTICULAR.

... AND THAT'S THE LOGIC OF PRE-EMPTION. WE CAN'T JUST SIT BACK AND LET A BUNCH OF FUNDAMENTALIST EXTREMISTS DESTROY THE FABRIC OF AMERICAN SOCIETY.

EXACTLY! THAT'S WHAT I'M ALWAYS SAYING!



THESE CONSERVATIVE EVANGELICALS WHO WANT TO MERGE CHURCH AND STATE WILL SCREW THIS COUNTRY WAY MORE THAN AL QAEDA COULD EVER DREAM OF. WE'VE GOT TO STOP THE **REPUBLICAN MULLAHS!**

NO, WHAT I MEANT WAS... UM, ACTUALLY, I'M AN EVANGELICAL. AND A REPUBLICAN.



YEAH, RIGHT. GOOD ONE, CYNTHIA.

NO, REALLY. AND IT'S SO HARD TO MEET PEOPLE. I TRIED THE RAINBOW REPUBLICANS, BUT THEY WERE ONLY **FISCAL** CONSERVATIVES.



GOD, YOU CRACK ME UP. LISTEN, D'YOU WANNA COME OVER TO MY PLACE?



REALLY? UM... I'D LIKE TO. BUT I SHOULD WARN YOU, I'VE SIGNED A VIRGINITY PLEDGE.

STOP IT! I'M GONNA PEE MY PANTS!



WILL PASSION PRE-EMPT PRINCIPLE?



PERHAPS.



PERHAPS NOT.

NO! I'M SORRY, FIONA! I JUST CAN'T!



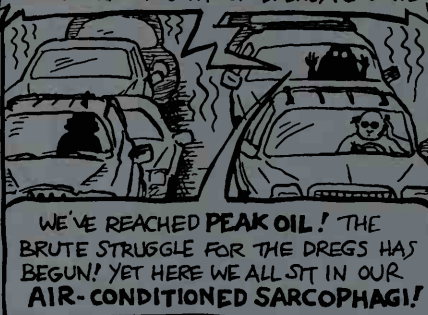
DAMN. I WAS REALLY LOOKING FORWARD TO BEING ABLE TO SAY, "WE'LL ALWAYS HAVE URBANA-CHAMPAIGN."

Divorced from Reality

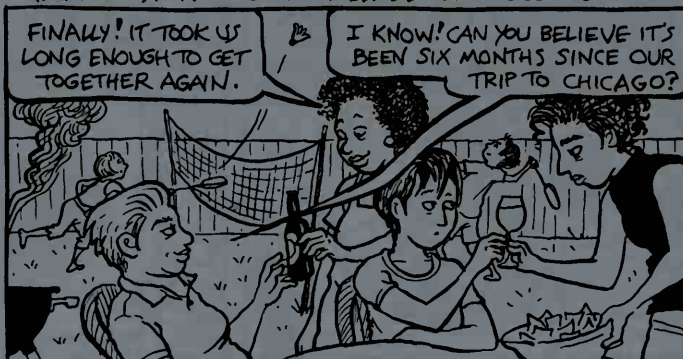
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THE PRESIDENT REPEATEDLY LINKED THE WAR IN IRAQ TO 9/11 AND SAID WE MUST DEFEAT THE TERRORISTS ABROAD BEFORE THEY ATTACK US AT HOME. IN BUSINESS NEWS, OIL PRICES TOPPED \$60 A BARREL...

...AND A CHINESE COMPANY'S BID FOR U.S. OIL GIANT UNOCAL TRIGGERS CONCERN THAT CHINA MAY GAIN STRATEGIC ENERGY RESERVES.



MEANWHILE, IN AN UNSUSTAINABLY DESIGNED SUBURB...

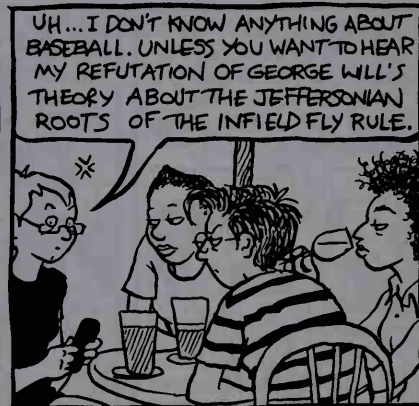
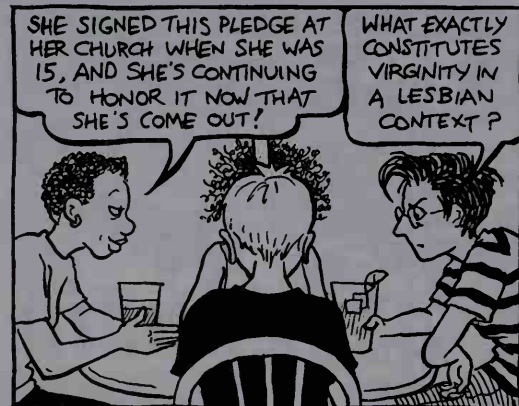
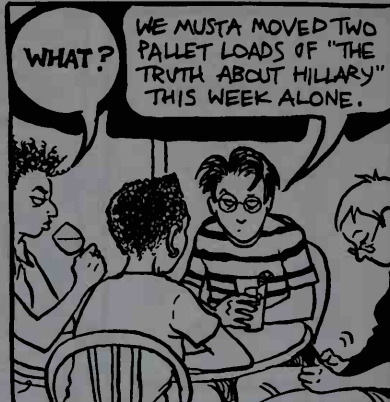


AND ON THE SHOULDER OF A MAJOR ARTERY...



wonk wank

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ZOO STORY

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HERE'S WHERE I GET OFF. I'LL SEE YOU TWO TONIGHT.

GINGER, AREN'T YOU GETTING TIRED OF THIS ROUTINE?

UM... WHICH ROUTINE ARE YOU REFERRING TO?

THE ONE WHERE YOU SLEEP AT MY HOUSE, THEN GO HOME TO YOUR HOUSE. I THINK WE SHOULD GET A PLACE TOGETHER.

8/10

470

NO! I LOVE ROUTINE!

WHAT DO YOU MEAN? LEAVE MY HOME WITH LOIS, SPARROW, AND STUART?

AND THE BABY, AND LOIS'S GIRLFRIEND, AND LOIS'S GIRL FRIEND'S KID. COME ON, THE JOINT'S A ZOO!

NO, IT'S NOT!

GINGER! THANK GOD YOU'RE HOME. CAN I BORROW YOUR CAR? ECO-BOY SOLD OURS.

SPARROW, BORROWING ANOTHER CAR DEFEATS THE PURPOSE!

WHAT PURPOSE IS THAT, STUART? THE PURPOSE OF YOU MAKING IMPULSIVE, ONE-SIDED, SELF-RIGHTEOUS DECISIONS?

HEY, I ADMITTED I WAS POWERLESS OVER FOSSIL FUEL. MY LIFE HAD BECOME UNMANAGEABLE.

I DON'T WANT TO READ THE NEW HARRY POTTER.

MY LIFE IS OVER. GINGER, LOOK!

Im not redi
2B tied
down. L8R.
Options Back

UH...WHO'S THIS FROM?

ALEX? MY BOYFRIEND?

SO CAN WE TAKE YOUR CAR TO MICHIGAN FOR A WEEK?

I'LL JUST GRAB YOUR KEYS.

THAT LITTLE BASTARD FROM CAMP LAST SUMMER. JANIS WAS ALL SET TO GO BACK THERE BUT NOW THE THREE OF US ARE GOING TO CAMP TRANS INSTEAD.

HONK IF YOU LOVE WAR, TERRORISM, AND GLOBAL WARMING!

Y CODE PINK MEN'S AUXILIARY

BUH BYE.

in the GOOD OLD SUMMER- TIME

8/24

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OH, THE
SIMPLE
PLEASURES
OF THE
SEASON!

RIDING BIKES

SEE?

IF EVERYONE GOT RID OF THEIR
CARS LIKE DADDY > HUFF < HUMANITY
MIGHT > GASP < HAVE A 50/50
CHANCE OF > PANT < SURVIVING
FOR ANOTHER HUNDRED YEARS!



CATCHING UP WITH FRIENDS

THANKS FOR THE LIFT, MO. I CAN'T
BELIEVE STUART SOLD OUR CAR. I'M
THE ONE WHO HAS TO WORK. HE'S ON
HIS BUTT **PODCASTING** ALL DAY.

BE THANKFUL HE'S NOT
ON HIS BUTT PRETENDING
TO WRITE A BOOK BUT
ACTUALLY FLIRTING WITH
HIS OLD COMP. LIT.
PROFESSOR ALL DAY.



LETTING ONE'S MIND WANDER

BUT MADELEINE, THAT'S WHAT I SAY IN CHAPTER TWO.
THE JIHADISTS AND THE NEOCONS ARE LOCKED IN
A MUTUAL PROJECTIVE FANTASY, LIKE VIOLENT
LOVERS WHO CAN'T BREAK UP BECAUSE THEY NEED
TO BELIEVE EVERYTHING IS THE OTHER ONE'S FAULT.



WATCHING TV

I THINK THEY
SHOULD JUST
SHOOT ALL THE
SUICIDE BOMBERS.

WELL, THAT'S HOW THE SUICIDE
BOMBERS WANT US TO REACT.
AND IT'S HOW GEORGE BUSH
WANTS US TO REACT, TOO. SO
EVERYTHING JUST ESCALATES.



ESCALADES? YOU
MEAN, LIKE THOSE
CADILLAC SUV'S?

UM...YEAH,
SORTA.



BECAUSE
YOU'RE
MINE...I
WALK THE
LINE.

GOING CAMPING

THIS ONE SHOULD BE INTER-
ESTING. WHO'D DRIVE AN
ESCALADE TO THE MICHIGAN
WOMYN'S MUSIC FESTIVAL?



WELCOME! WE'RE FROM
CAMPTRANS, AND WE'RE
TALKING TO FESTIE -
GOERS ABOUT THE...

LOIS!
YOU OLD
DOG!



IT'S ME, LETITIA! I RIWIRED
YOUR HOUSE! AND A FEW OTHER
THINGS, AS I RECALL. HEY,
PUDDING WRESTLING IN THE
"ZONE" FRIDAY NIGHT! BE THERE!



OR JUST DOING NOTHING AT ALL

HOW'S THE VIRGIN-
ITY PLEDGE GOING?
STILL SEEING THAT
CYCLIST?

قېسىش يېغا وىشامەن
مىل "بوفى زايە"
هەتتاتىن "الزول"
كاسە ئىلە ئىسى.



* WE HELD HANDS AND WATCHED THE ENTIRE FIRST
SEASON OF "BUFFY THE VAMPIRE SLAYER" LAST NIGHT.

Private Lives
Public Wives

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917

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AS THE TURBID,
OIL-SLICKED
TIDE OF
AMERICAN PUBLIC
OPINION BEGINS
TO TURN AGAINST
THE WAR, OUR
FRIENDS ARE
CAUGHT IN THE
UNDERTOW OF
THEIR OWN
PERSONAL
AFFAIRS.

SYDNEY, YOU TOOK MY "PLEASURE
AND DANGER" TWO SEMESTERS
AGO AND I NEED IT BACK.



UH... I'LL TAKE A LOOK, BUT
I DON'T THINK I HAVE IT.
HEY, D'YOU WANT TO ROOM
TOGETHER AT THE MLA CON-
VENTION AGAIN THIS YEAR?



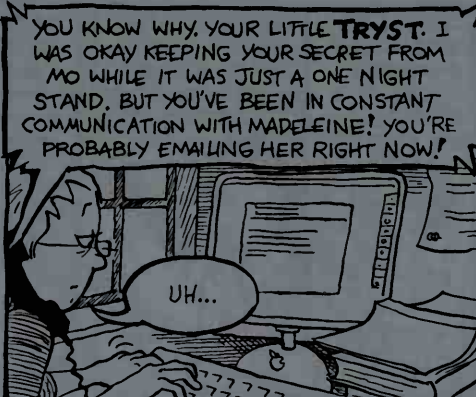
IF I GO, I'M
GETTING MY OWN
ROOM, THANK YOU
VERY MUCH.

WHY?



YOU KNOW WHY. YOUR LITTLE **TRYST**. I
WAS OKAY KEEPING YOUR SECRET FROM
MO WHILE IT WAS JUST A ONE NIGHT
STAND. BUT YOU'VE BEEN IN CONSTANT
COMMUNICATION WITH MADELINE! YOU'RE
PROBABLY EMAILING HER RIGHT NOW!

UH...



I HAVE TO GO. JUST
RETURN MY BOOK, OKAY?

TRAITOR!

YOU'RE
THE TRAITOR.
TROGLODYKE.



AND NEAR A MOTLEY CLOT OF BIG-BOX SHOPS...

MO! UH...
YOU'RE THE
LAST PERSON
I'D EXPECT TO
SEE IN THIS
PLACE.

HI, TONI! I HAVE A JOB INTERVIEW
AT THE LIBRARY BRANCH OUT HERE.
PLUS I'M ADDICTED TO THESE
FRICKIN' CHAI LATTES.



UM...
REALLY?

WHAT DO THEY
PUT IN THEM?
SOYLENT GREEN?

OOPS.



TONI, THANK GOD
YOU CAME. LISTEN,
WE HAVE TO THINK
FAST. ANA KNOWS.



HEY,
GLORIA.

MO?!



UH... YOU MEAN ANA KNOWS
ABOUT THE **SURPRISE**
PARTY WE'RE PLANNING?!

YES!
EXACTLY!

A PARTY! HOW
COME YOU DIDN'T
INVITE ME?



OH.



DRIVETIME DRIVE-BY

9/21

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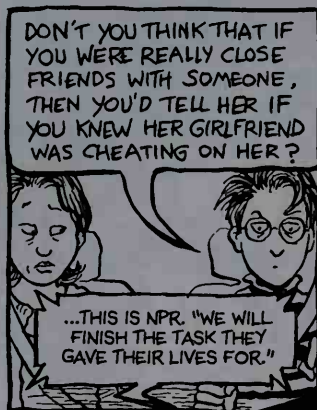
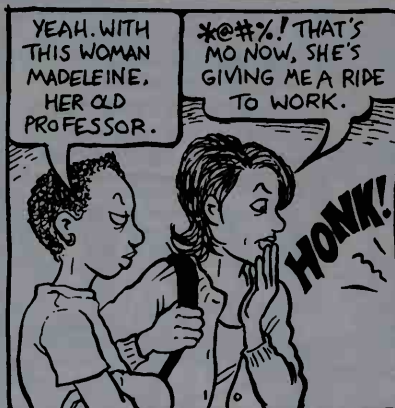
HEY, LEMME ASK YOU A QUESTION. SAY YOU'RE FRIENDS WITH BOTH PEOPLE IN A COUPLE, AND YOU KNOW ONE OF THEM'S CARRYING ON WITH SOMEONE ELSE. WHAT WOULD YOU DO?



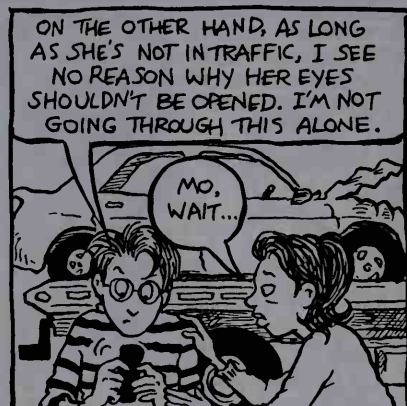
GOD, GINGER. DON'T GET IN THE MIDDLE OF IT. BELIEVE ME, NO ONE WILL THANK YOU.



OKAY, BUT WHEN IT ALL COMES OUT, AND PERSON A DISCOVERS THAT I KNEW ABOUT PERSON B'S AFFAIR, THAT'S GOING TO DAMAGE MY FRIENDSHIP WITH PERSON A, AND I REALLY CARE ABOUT MO!



A SHORT TIME LATER...



infra-structure.

10/5

FROM GULF TO STORMY GULF, THE AMERICAN EMPIRE IS IN A SHAMBLES.

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WELL, ONE UPSIDE. WHO EVER THOUGHT WE'D HEAR NETWORK TV DISCUSSING THE INTERSECTION OF RACE AND CLASS?

THE TRAGEDY OF HURRICANE KATRINA HAS REVEALED STARTLING LEVELS OF POVERTY AND RACIAL INEQUALITY...

WHO KNEW?

YEAH. PLUS, THE REPUBLICAN JESUS-AND-FREE-MARKET JUGGERNAUT HAS COME TO AN END. TURNS OUT PEOPLE REALLY DO WANT GOVERNMENT.

FEMA'S FLAMING *UCK-UPS

YEAH, WELL, THE PEOPLE MIGHT NOT HAVE A CHOICE. UNLESS THEY CAN PONY UP FOR THEIR OWN BLACKWATER MERCENARIES, TO DEFEND THEMSELVES FROM THE ONES HIRED BY "HOMELAND SECURITY."

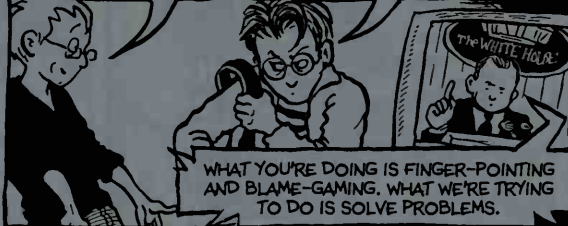
MEANWHILE, AT MO AND SYDNEY'S...

MO, IT WAS JUST A FLING. THE FACT THAT I DIDN'T TELL YOU ABOUT IT **PROVES** IT DIDN'T MEAN ANYTHING TO ME!

DON'T DO THAT. DON'T DISTORT LANGUAGE TO YOUR TWISTED ENDS LIKE ONE OF THESE SOUL-LESS BUSH MINIONS.

WHAT YOU'RE DOING IS FINGER-POINTING AND BLAME-GAMING. WHAT WE'RE TRYING TO DO IS SOLVE PROBLEMS.

WHERE ARE YOU GOING? YOU DON'T HAVE A HEADLIGHT ON YOUR BIKE!



GREAT. MAYBE FEMA WILL MOW ME DOWN WITH AN AMBULANCE.

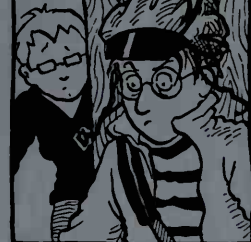
AND AT CLARICE AND TONI'S...

CLARICE, I HAVE NO EXCUSES. BUT REMEMBER, WE TALKED ABOUT OPENING UP THE RELATIONSHIP.

WELL, PART OF THAT LITTLE PLAN, AS I RECALL, WAS TO KEEP EACH OTHER FULLY INFORMED!

IT WAS JUST THAT ONE TIME! IT DIDN'T SEEM WORTH BRINGING UP!

THIS IS SUCH BULL-SHIT! I HAVE TO GET OUT OF HERE. I'LL TELL RAFFI I'M GOING BACK TO WORK.



BACK AT GINGER'S PLACE...

...HELL. WHY NOT TURN THE WHOLE SOUTH INTO A "GONE WITH THE WIND" THEME PARK?! THEY CAN HIRE **EVACUEES** TO PLAY THE **SLAVES!** AT LESS THAN THE PREVAILING WAGE, OF COURSE!

HABIBTI, WHY DON'T YOU COME OVER? I'M WORRIED ABOUT YOU.

NO. EVERYONE'S OFF AT THE MARCH ON WASHINGTON. I NEVER GET THE HOUSE TO MYSELF. I JUST WANT TO BE ALONE.

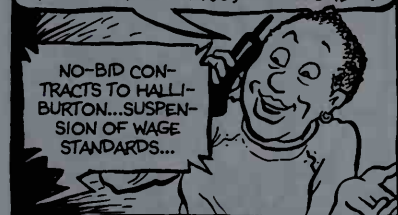
NO-BID CONTRACTS TO HALLIBURTON...SUSPENSION OF WAGE STANDARDS...

ARE WE SAFE?
HOMELAND CHIEF

DING DONG

WHO'S THAT?

UH...SPEAKING OF EVACUEES...



Schools for Scandal

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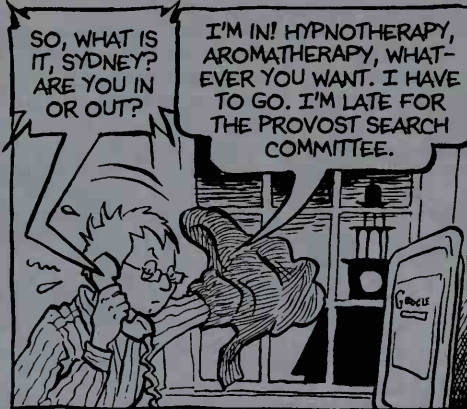
10/19

IF YOU WON'T SEE A THERAPIST WITH ME, I'M LEAVING.

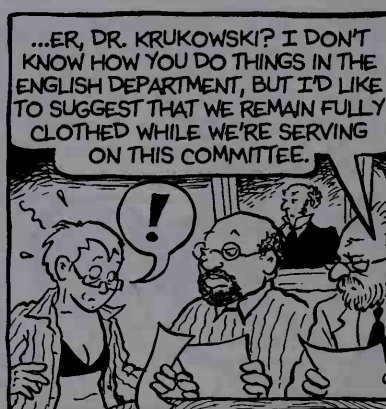
MO, I CAN'T HAVE THIS CONVERSATION NOW. I HAVE A MEETING IN TWO MINUTES.

BESIDES! I KEEP TELLING YOU, MADELEINE WAS A... A CANCER THING. I JUST NEEDED TO CONNECT WITH SOMEONE WHO UNDERSTOOD.

YOU HAD CANCER TWO YEARS AGO. IT'S NOT A PERMANENT GET-OUT-OF-JAIL-FREE CARD.



A FEW MOMENTS LATER...



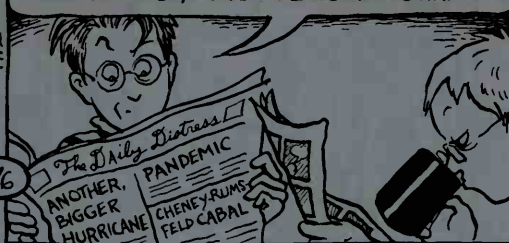
FIXED

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11/2

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MAN. TALK ABOUT CHICKENS COMING HOME TO ROOST. THIS BIRD FLU THING IS PERFECT. OUR MONEY AND SUV'S AND MISSILE DEFENSE FANTASIES CAN'T SAVE US. HOGGING ALL THE ANTI-VIRALS CAN'T SAVE US. ONCE A POOR COUNTRY GETS SICK, WE'RE ALL GOING DOWN!



NOW THAT'S GLOBALIZATION!

HA! DID YOU SEE "DILBERT"?



MINDLESS ENTERTAINMENT IS THE HANDMAIDEN OF FASCISM. HOW CAN YOU READ THE FUNNIES AT A TIME LIKE THIS?

A TIME LIKE WHAT? THE WORLD'S NOT GOING TO HELL ANY FASTER THAN IT EVER WAS.



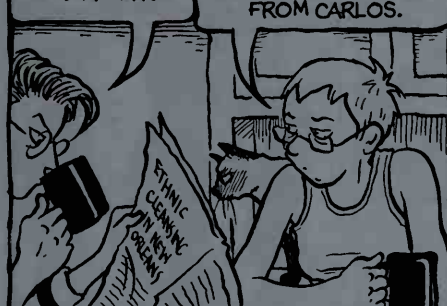
SPEAKING OF HELL, HAVE YOU CALLED ANY OF THOSE COUPLES THERAPISTS YET?

WHY DO I HAVE TO CALL THEM?



YOU'RE THE ONE WHO HAD THE AFFAIR.

I DID CALL ONE GUY. HE WASN'T ON YOUR LIST. I GOT HIS NAME FROM CARLOS.



A MAN?

HE'S GAY. CARLOS SAID HE REALLY HELPED HIM AND DANIEL.



YEAH, RIGHT. HELPED DANIEL ACCEPT THE FACT THAT CARLOS WILL NEVER BE MONOGAMOUS.

WE DIDN'T GET INTO PARTICULARS.



GOD! YOU ARE SO INTELLECTUALLY DISHONEST! YOU'RE LIKE THE BUSH ADMINISTRATION, FIXING THE INTELLIGENCE TO SUPPORT YOUR SELF-SERVING POLICY.

WELL THEN, SINCE YOU LET ME GET AWAY WITH MY OBVIOUS BULLS**T FOR SO LONG, THAT MAKES YOU LIKE THE DEMOCRATS--COMPLICIT.



I DON'T KNOW WHY YOU STAY WITH ME.

FAILURE OF LEADERSHIP, I GUESS.



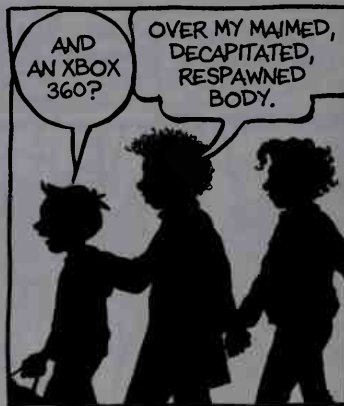
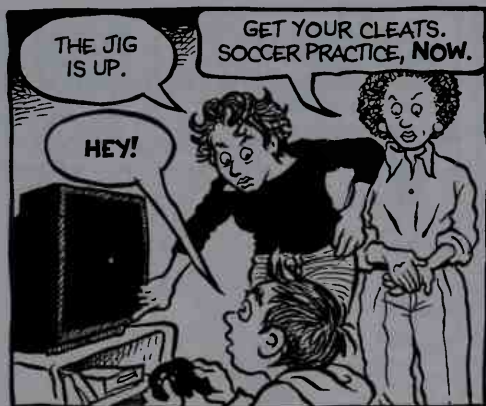
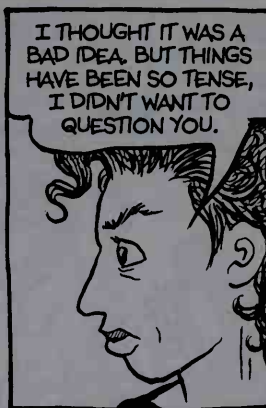
INTERACTIVE DEVELOPMENT

11/16

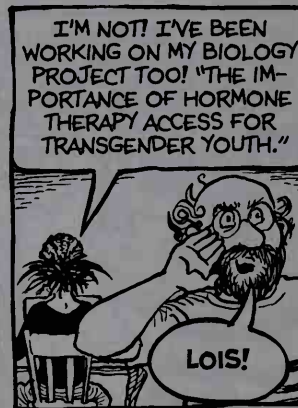
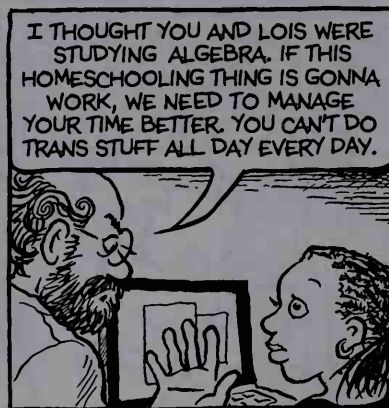
THERE'VE BEEN SOME COMMUNICATION PROBLEMS LATELY AT CLARICE AND TONI'S HOUSE.

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MEANWHILE, IN ANOTHER ADOLESCENCE...



strange bedfellows

IN THE HALLS OF BUFFALO LAKE STATE...

BUT THE REASON YOU'RE ABLE TO SIT HERE BEING ALL LIBERAL AND TOLERANT IS BECAUSE OTHER PEOPLE ARE OUT THERE USING FORCE-- AND TORTURE WHEN NECESSARY--TO GET TERRORISTS OFF THE STREETS AND PROTECT YOU FROM FUTURE ATTACKS!

THAT'S SO **BOGUS!** TORTURE DOESN'T PRODUCE GOOD INTELLIGENCE! EVEN IF THE PEOPLE YOU'RE TORTURING **ARE** ACTUAL TERRORISTS, AND NOT FARMERS OR JAYWALKERS, LIKE MOST OF THE **83,000** PEOPLE WE'VE DETAINED IN THE PAST FOUR YEARS!

11/30

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GOD! **ENOUGH!** I CAME HERE TO STUDY FOR THE HARLEM RENAISSANCE FINAL, NOT TO WATCH YOU TWO FLIRT.



MEANWHILE, AT THEIR PROFESSOR'S DOMICILE...

SAMIA? CAN I COME OVER? I HAVE FORTY HARLEM RENAISSANCE PAPERS TO GRADE AND I CAN'T HEAR MYSELF THINK.

SPARROW! I'M BUSY!

WE'LL BE QUICK! SHE'S GLUED TO THE TV!



BUT...BUT MR. RUMSFELD, HOW CAN WE ATTACK IRAQIS WITH CHEMICAL WEAPONS WHEN ONE OF THE ARGUMENTS REPEATEDLY GIVEN FOR THE INVASION WAS THE FACT THAT SADDAM USED CHEMICAL WEAPONS AGAINST HIS OWN PEOPLE?

YEAH! COME ON OVER!

Y'KNOW, MAYBE IF YOU HELPED OUT A LITTLE AROUND HERE, I'D FEEL MORE AMOROUS!



ELMO, YOU LITTLE DICKENS, WE DIDN'T ATTACK OUR OWN PEOPLE WITH CHEMICAL WEAPONS! WE ATTACKED IRAQIS WITH **WHITE PHOSPHORUS**. THAT'S AN INCENDIARY WEAPON! CAN YOU SAY "INCENDIARY"?

A SHORT WHILE LATER...

YOU COULD HAVE THIS KIND OF PEACE AND QUIET ALL THE TIME IF WE MOVED IN TOGETHER.

MAYBE YOU'RE RIGHT. I'M TOO OLD FOR THAT CHAOS.



HEY, BABY! OPEN UP!

AMMAR? I THOUGHT YOU WERE IN TOLEDO!

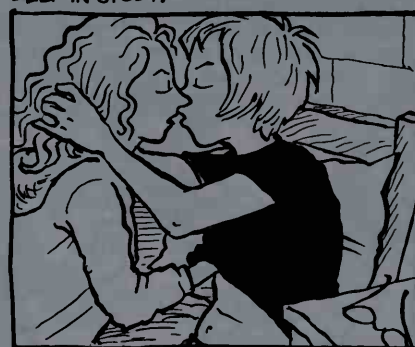
WHO THE HELL'S THAT?



UH...MY HUSBAND.



AND BACK AT THE DORM, CYNTHIA IS DEEP IN STUDY.

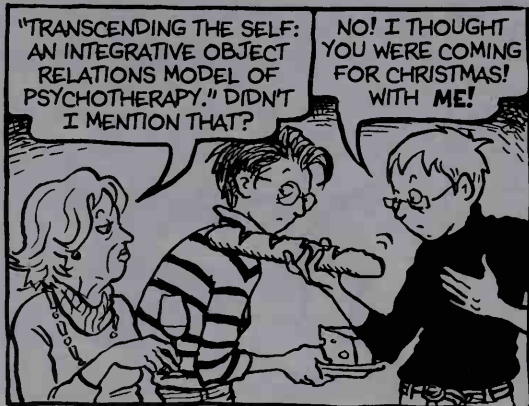
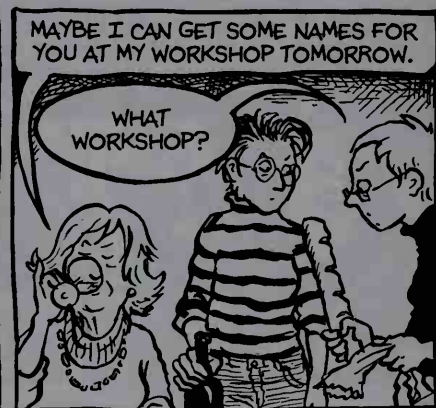
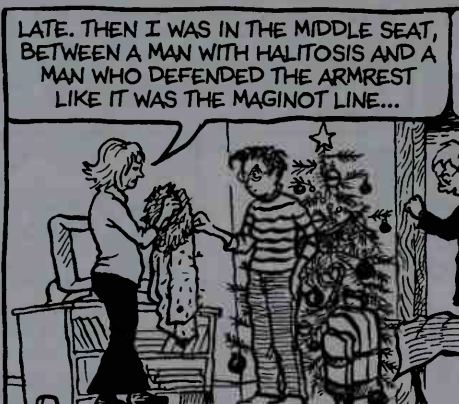


Object relations

12/14

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YOU BETTER WATCH OUT, YOU BETTER NOT CRY, YOU BETTER NOT POUT, I'M TELLING YOU WHY... SYDNEY'S MOM IS COMING TO TOWN!



Silent Night UPDATE

A BIG TIP O' THE NIB TO
SIMON AND GARFUNKEL

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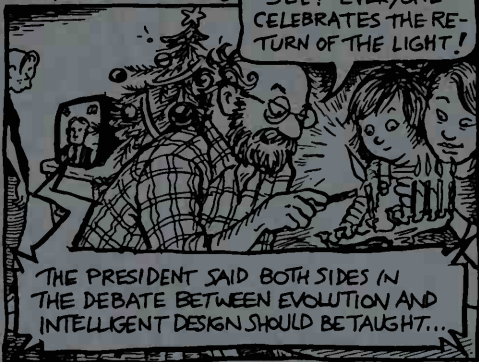
SILENT NIGHT... ♪ ♪ ♪



12/28
480

THE "UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT" DOES NOT "AUTHORIZE" OR "CON-
DONE" "TORTURE" OF "DETAINÉES."

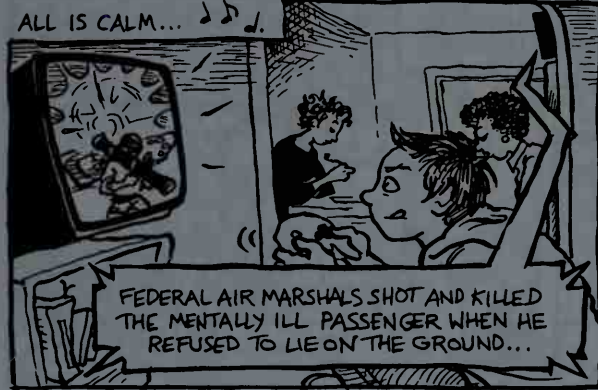
HOLY NIGHT... ♪ ♪ ♪



SEE? EVERYONE
CELEBRATES THE RE-
TURN OF THE LIGHT!

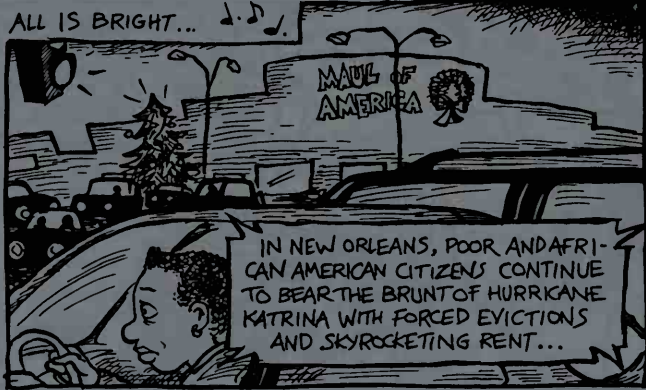
THE PRESIDENT SAID BOTH SIDES IN
THE DEBATE BETWEEN EVOLUTION AND
INTELLIGENT DESIGN SHOULD BE TAUGHT...

ALL IS CALM... ♪ ♪ ♪



FEDERAL AIR MARSHALS SHOT AND KILLED
THE MENTALLY ILL PASSENGER WHEN HE
REFUSED TO LIE ON THE GROUND...

ALL IS BRIGHT... ♪ ♪ ♪



IN NEW ORLEANS, POOR AND AFRI-
CAN AMERICAN CITIZENS CONTINUE
TO BEAR THE BRUNT OF HURRICANE
KATRINA WITH FORCED EVICTIONS
AND SKYROCKETING RENT...

ROUND YON YI-IR-GN... ♪ ♪ ♪

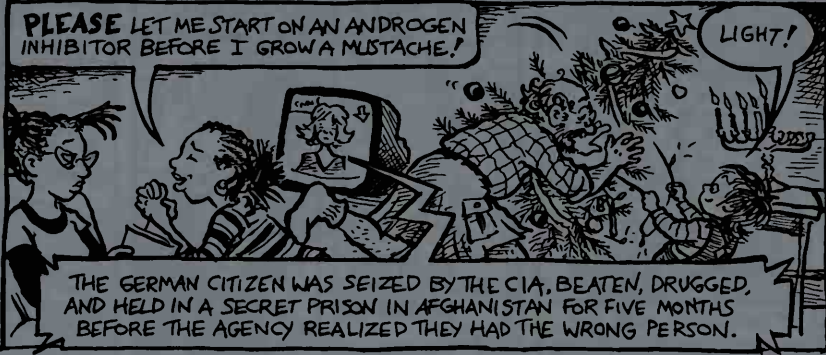


COME ON!
WHY NOT?

I TOOK A
PLEDGE.

A SECRET PENTAGON DATABASE LISTS
A MEETING OF QUAKER ANTI-WAR
ACTIVISTS IN FLORIDA AS A "THREAT..."

MOTHER AND CHILD... ♪ ♪ ♪



PLEASE LET ME START ON AN ANDROGEN
INHIBITOR BEFORE I GROW A MUSTACHE!

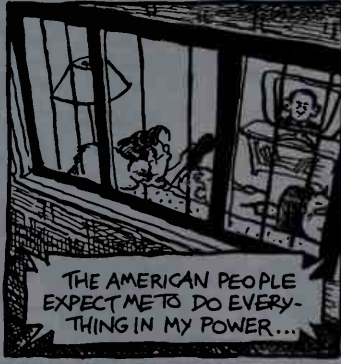
LIGHT!

THE GERMAN CITIZEN WAS SEIZED BY THE CIA, BEATEN, DRUGGED,
AND HELD IN A SECRET PRISON IN AFGHANISTAN FOR FIVE MONTHS
BEFORE THE AGENCY REALIZED THEY HAD THE WRONG PERSON.

SLEEP IN HEA-VEN-LY PEACE... ♪ ♪ ♪

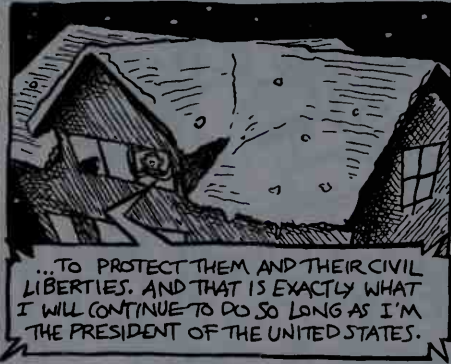


TODAY THE PRESIDENT DEFENDED HIS
ILLEGAL DOMESTIC SPYING PROGRAM AS
A VITAL TOOL IN THE WAR ON TERROR.



THE AMERICAN PEOPLE
EXPECT ME TO DO EVERY-
THING IN MY POWER...

SLEEP IN HEA-VEN-LY PEACE. ♪



...TO PROTECT THEM AND THEIR CIVIL
LIBERTIES. AND THAT IS EXACTLY WHAT
I WILL CONTINUE TO DO SO LONG AS I'M
THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES.

PSY-OPS

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GET THIS. BECAUSE IRAQIS, FOR SOME INEXPLICABLE REASON, DON'T TRUST AMERICAN INFORMATION, THE PENTAGON RUNS PRO-U.S. STORIES IN ARABIC NEWSPAPERS AND HIDES THE FACT THAT THEY'RE WRITTEN BY THE U.S. MILITARY!

CREDIBILITY PROBLEM SOLVED!

SPEAKING OF CREDIBILITY, HOW'S YOUR GIRLFRIEND'S HUSBAND, GINGER?

SAMIA HAS A HUSBAND?! NO ONE TELLS ME ANYTHING!

MARRIED WOMEN ARE HOT.

SHE'S NOT MARRIED MARRIED. IT WAS A LONG TIME AGO. SHE NEEDED TO GET HER FAMILY OFF HER BACK, HE NEEDED A GREEN CARD. OR SO SHE SAYS.

WHAT'S HE DOING HERE NOW?

HE LOST HIS JOB AND HE'S KIND OF AT LOOSE ENDS. SAMIA'S PUTTING HIM UP FOR A WHILE.

WAIT. SHE NEVER TOLD YOU ABOUT HIM?

NO! SO WHO KNOWS WHAT ELSE SHE HAS UP HER SLEEVE? ANOTHER GIRLFRIEND? A BOYFRIEND?

WHAT?

YOUR INEVITABLE INTIMACY FREACKOUT.

MEANWHILE, SYDNEY'S UNLOADING SOME BAGGAGE.

OKAY! BUH BYE!

I HOPE YOU'LL REALLY APPLY YOURSELF TO COUPLES COUNSELING. IT'S HARD TO REBUILD TRUST AFTER AN AFFAIR. LOOK WHAT HAPPENED WITH YOUR FATHER AND ME.

ACME AIRLINES

AHH. SO IT BEGINS.

OR MAYBE SAMIA USED TO BE SAMIR.

WELL, DAD WAS HAVING MORE THAN AN AFFAIR. MORE LIKE FIFTY.

NO, I MEAN MY AFFAIR. I NEVER SHOULD HAVE TOLD HIM ABOUT IT.

YOUR AFFAIR?!

AND IF I'D KNOWN WHAT YOU WERE UP TO SOONER, I'D HAVE ADVISED YOU TO TAKE IT TO YOUR GRAVE.

BUH BYE.

FLASH BACK

1/25

OUR INTREPID HOME-SCHOOLERS VENTURE INTO THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STREETS.

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THIS SUCKS! I THOUGHT WE WERE DOING HISTORY THIS AFTERNOON!

THIS IS HISTORY, JANIS! TODAY'S LESSON IS, "THOSE WHO CANNOT REMEMBER THE PAST ARE CONDEMNED TO REPEAT IT."

UNFORTUNATELY, SO ARE THOSE WHO CAN.



IF BUSH HAS GOOD CAUSE TO SPY ON PEOPLE, HE CAN GET A WARRANT. THE ONLY REASON TO BREAK THE LAW AND DO IT SECRETLY...

...IS IF HE'S MONITORING JOURNALISTS OR ACTIVISTS, IN A DESPERATE ATTEMPT TO COVER UP THE FACT THAT HE MISLED THE COUNTRY INTO WAR FOR POLITICAL PURPOSES. WHO'S THAT REMIND YOU OF?

THE WATERGATE GUY, OKAY? I GET IT. NOW CAN WE GO HOME?



'NOTHER BUNGEE, PLEASE.



JANIS, STOP WHINING. WHEN I WAS A GIRL, I HAD TO MISS NUMEROUS EPISODES OF THE PARTRIDGE FAMILY THANKS TO THAT GUY'S IMPEACHMENT HEARINGS.

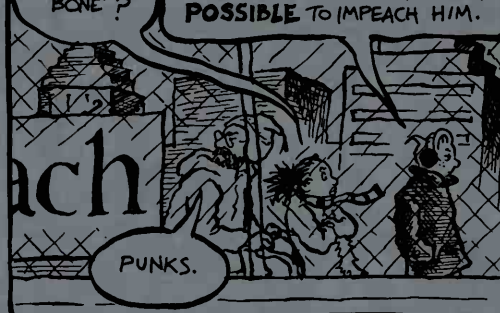
YO, BEYONCÉ! WANNA SMOKE THE BONE?

HEY! HAVE A LITTLE RESPECT!

WASN'T TALKIN' TO YOU, FUGLY.

WHAT'S "SMOKE THE BONE"?

SOMETHING THAT IF SOMEONE WOULD ONLY DO TO GEORGE BUSH MIGHT MAKE IT ACTUALLY POSSIBLE TO IMPEACH HIM.



HISTORY'S IN RE-RUNS ELSEWHERE, TOO.

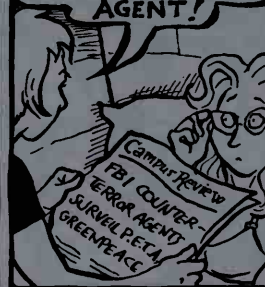
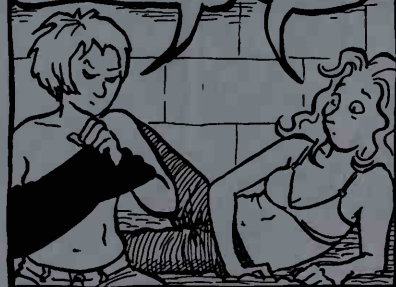
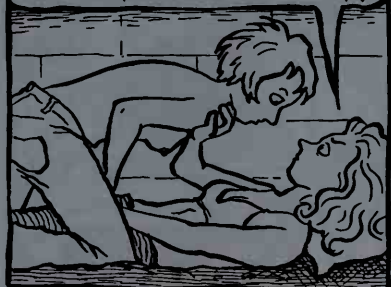
ASHLEY! FOR SOMEONE WHO CLAIMS TO BE A FEMINIST, YOU'RE ACTING A LOT LIKE A FRAT BOY!

I GIVE UP. IF YOU DON'T WANNA HAVE SEX, I'M GOING TO MY PETA MEETING.

CAN I... CAN I COME WITH YOU?

OH MY GOD?

THAT EXPLAINS IT! YOU DIDN'T TAKE A VIRGINITY PLEDGE, CYNTHIA. YOU'RE AN AGENT!



for
worse

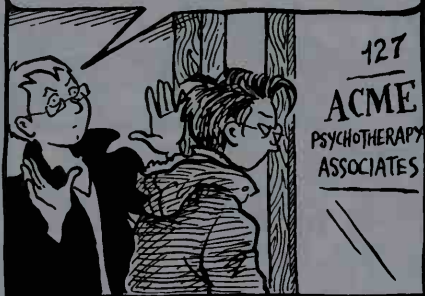
THE NOSTALGIC FALLACY IS AT WORK IN A STRANGE WAY IN "BROKEBACK MOUNTAIN." THINGS WERE WORSE IN THE PAST, BUT ALSO BETTER. I MEAN, WHO WOULDN'T PREFER A RUINED LIFE WITH A FEW PRISTINE MOMENTS TO A REGULAR, BANAL, DISAPPOINTING LIFE?

EVERYONE BUT **YOU**? WILL YOU STOP ANALYZING THE BEJEEZUS OUT OF THAT MOVIE? YOU'RE RUINING IT FOR ME. SPEAKING OF RUIN.

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IMAGINE THE CINEMATOGRAPHY IF ENNIS AND JACK **HAD** BEEN ABLE TO LIVE TOGETHER. SWEEPING VISTAS OF THEIR COUPLES THERAPIST'S OFFICE.



UH...TWO WOMEN SEEING A MAN. ABOUT THEIR **RELATIONSHIP**?

I THOUGHT IT'D BE REFRESHING. A SORT OF TABULA RASA APPROACH.

GOD. WHAT THE HELL ARE WE DOING IN HERE? WE COULD BE RUNNING THE COUNTRY! **BUSH** ISN'T IN THERAPY. **SAMUEL ALITO** ISN'T IN THERAPY.

BUT WOULD YOU WANT TO BE IN A RELATIONSHIP WITH ONE OF THEM?

HEY, WE'RE **ALL** IN A RELATIONSHIP WITH THEM. AND IT **@@#ING SUCKS!**



ANYHOW, SYDNEY THINKS THIS GUY IS MORE LIKELY THAN A WOMAN TO TELL HER IT'S OKAY TO DO WHATEVER SHE WANTS WHENEVER SHE WANTS.

WHAT'S **WRONG** WITH DOING WHATEVER YOU WANT WHENEVER YOU WANT?

SHE'S A BIG FAN OF THE UNITARY EXECUTIVE THEORY.

AND **YOU'RE** A RELATIONSHIP ORIGINALIST! YOU REFUSE TO ADAPT THE PARADIGM TO CHANGING CIRCUMSTANCES!



LET'S HOPE YOUR THERAPIST IMPEACHES YOU BOTH.

girls gone mild

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3/22

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SUSPICIOUS OF CYNTHIA'S VIRGINITY PLEDGE, ASHLEY HAS BROKEN THINGS OFF.

BUT CYNTHIA'S TRYING TO WOO HER BACK.

"PLAN B"! HMPH! IF WOMEN DON'T WANT TO GET PREGNANT, TRY "PLAN A"! ABSTINENCE.

AND IF YOU WANT TO CONVINCE ME YOU'RE NOT A JUNIOR FBI AGENT, YOU'RE GONNA HAVE TO TRY HARDER.

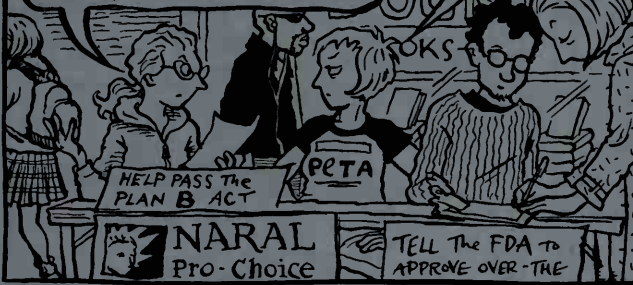


HEY, I'M SPENDING SPRING BREAK DOING PRO-CHOICE OUTREACH! WHY WOULD I DO THAT IF I DIDN'T REALLY CARE ABOUT YOU?

YOU'RE PROBABLY SPYING ON THIS GROUP, TOO.

I WAS NOT SPYING ON YOUR PETA ACTIVITIES! LISTEN, I'M EVEN HAVING SECOND THOUGHTS LATELY ABOUT GEORGE BUSH!

TOTALLY! EXPANDING STATE POWER TO ADVANCE HIS OWN AGENDA? HOW LIBERAL CAN YOU GET?



MEANWHILE...
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE STATE NARAL OFFICE? THAT WOULD BE A REALLY DEMANDING JOB.



A TIP OF THE NIB TO SUSIEBRIGHT.COM

IT WOULD MEAN LONGER HOURS, BUT ALSO MORE MONEY. AND NEW CHALLENGES!

YOU HARDLY SPEND ANY TIME WITH JIAO RAIZEL AS IT IS!



GINGER? IT'S YOUR GIRLFRIEND. AND HER HUBBY.



A little LIBERTY for a little SECURITY



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4/5

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IF THE ONLY THING WORSE THAN NOT HAVING A JOB IS HAVING A JOB, OUR HEROINE FINDS HERSELF IN AN EXCRUCIATING LIMBO.

CIAO. I'M OFF TO ANOTHER INTERVIEW.

UH... YOU MIGHT WANT TO REMOVE THIS.

LATER THAT AFTERNOON...

IS THERE ANYTHING I HAVEN'T COVERED?

PUBLIC LIBRARY
QUAIL RUN
BRANCH

YES, ONE MORE QUESTION. WHY IS THIS POSITION OPEN?

OH, THE LAST LIBRARIAN WASN'T REALLY HAPPY HERE. SHE HAD A BIT OF A PROBLEM WITH THE PATRIOT ACT, INSISTED ON WARNING PATRONS THAT THEIR COMPUTER USE AND LIBRARY RECORDS MIGHT BE MONITORED.

SUCCESS

SIGRID TOPP, Director

aspire

AND LATER STILL...

WHAT A NIGHTMARE. I'M TELLING YOU, IF BERGEN-BELSEN HAD A BOOKMOBILE, THIS CHICK WOULD'VE BEEN DRIVING IT. I'M NEVER GONNA FIND A JOB!

SYDNEY?

SYDNEY! ARE YOU THERE?

A TIP O' THE NIB TO AMY RUBIN

OH... SORRY. I GOT DISTRACTED. I WAS GOOGLING MYSELF.

IS THAT WHAT WE'RE CALLING IT NOW?

A TIP O' THE NIB TO RUTH HOROWITZ

I HAVE TO GO, I HAVE ANOTHER CALL. I'LL SEE YOU IN THERAPY.

WHAT A NIGHTMARE.

AND IN ANOTHER RELATIONSHIP...

I SAW GLORIA THIS AFTERNOON AT THE GROCERY STORE.

THAT'S NICE. DID YOU HAVE SEX WITH HER?

YEAH. IN THE DAIRY CASE.

SHE'S NOT DOING SO GOOD. ANA MOVED OUT LAST WEEK. STELLA'S HAVING A HARD TIME AND DOESN'T WANT TO GO TO SCHOOL. IT SOUNDS AWFUL.

WELL, GLORIA SHOULD HAVE THOUGHT OF THAT BEFORE SHE...

RAFFI! WHAT ARE YOU DOING?!

ARE YOU SPYING ON US?

IT'S SURVEILLANCE. IN CASE YOU'RE PLOTTING TO BLOW SOMETHING UP.

ultimata

4/19

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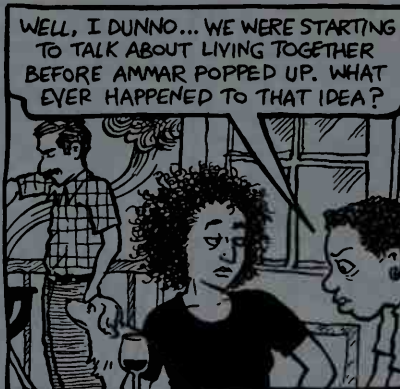
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96MM.
PEAK OIL,
A MILITARY
QUAGMIRE,
CATASTROPHIC
CLIMATE
CHANGE,
STRATO-
SPHERIC
DEBT, A
LOOMING
PANDEMIC...
WHAT'S A
NATION
TO DO?

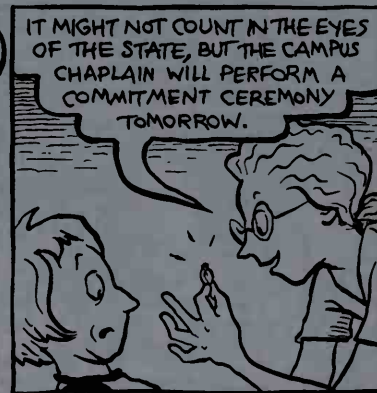
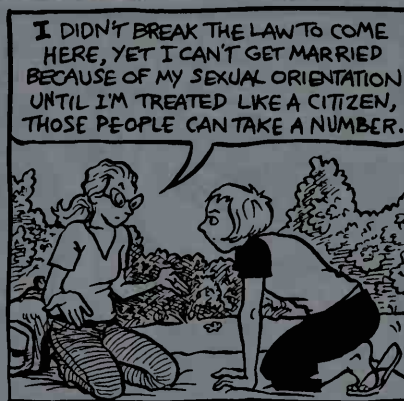
NUKE IRAN!
THAT WILL FIX
EVERYTHING!

I DON'T UNDER-
STAND HOW THESE
PEOPLE THINK.

THEY THINK LIKE THIS: WHEN
THE WORLD ENDS, THEY'LL ALL
BE TAKEN UP IN THE RAPTURE.
SO END IT NOW!



MEANWHILE, IN THE GROVES OF ACADEME...



bully for you

5/3

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I CAN'T KEEP TAKING OFF WORK LIKE THIS. IF WE CAN'T GET AN EVENING SLOT, I'LL HAVE TO QUIT THERAPY.

WE'LL TALK TO PATRICIA ABOUT IT.

WE'RE LATE. WHERE IS HE?

OVER THERE. WITH YOUR MISTRESS. WHAT'S SHE WANT?

...IF THERE'S A LEAK OUT OF MY ADMINISTRATION, I WANT TO KNOW WHO IT IS. AND IF THE PERSON HAS VIOLATED LAW, THE PERSON WILL BE TAKEN CARE OF.

NETHER HTS. MOLE SCHOOL

UH...HI, GLORIA.

HI. LISTEN, YOU KNOW THAT ANTI-BULLYING WORKSHOP WITH THE LGBT YOUTH GROUP THAT THE SCHOOL WAS SUPPOSED TO HAVE TODAY?

A COUPLE PARENTS FREAKED OUT, SO THE PRINCIPAL CANCELED IT AT THE LAST MINUTE.

ARE YOU KIDDING?

NO. WE HAD TO GO BACK TO SOCIAL STUDIES.

LEMME GET THIS STRAIGHT...THE PRINCIPAL WAS BULLIED INTO CANCELING AN ANTI-BULLYING WORKSHOP?

BASICALLY. I WAS JUST GONNA GO TALK TO HIM.

JEEZ...WE'RE ON OUR WAY TO THE SHRINK.

FORGET IT. WE'LL COME WITH YOU.

ARE YOU GONNA BULLY THE PRINCIPAL TOO?

MEANWHILE, ON UNIVERSITY HILL...

HURRY UP. WE'RE GONNA BE LATE FOR THE SHRINK-MAN.

OKAY, OKAY. I JUST HAVE TO FINISH THIS EMAIL.

SYDNEY? CAN I GET YOU TO JOIN MY RELAY FOR LIFE TEAM?

RELAY FOR LIFE? WHAT'S THAT, SOME KIND OF ANTI-ABORTION JAMBOREE?

No, no, it's a cancer fundraiser. You get teams together, and walk or run around a track all night. It's very inspirational.

No way. I'll give you ten bucks, but I don't do inspirational.

I THINK WE SHOULD TALK TO RICHARD ABOUT YOUR CANCER ISSUES.

I THINK THAT YOU NEED TO USE "I" STATEMENTS.

your
children
are not
your
children

THE FORCES OF LIGHT AND REASON HAVE PREVAILED...

ANA? WE WON. YEAH, THEY REINSTATED THE ANTI-BULLYING WORKSHOP. YOU SHOULD HAVE HEARD YOUR DAUGHTER SPEAKING TO THE SCHOOL BOARD!

BEE SCHOOL

5/17

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I WAS SURPRISED RAF DIDN'T GET UP THERE TOO. I DIDN'T REALIZE HE WAS SO SHY.



HOW COME YOU DIDN'T GIVE A BIG GAY SPEECH, LESBO-BOY?



#@\$ YOU, DILLWEED.

TAYLOR! LET'S GO!

MEANWHILE, SYDNEY'S ALLAYING SOME EXISTENTIAL DREAD BY BROWSING THE LATEST ELECTRONICS...

... OKAY, I'LL BE HOME SOON... OH, MAN! MY OLD RADIATION TECH JUST SPOTTED ME... THE WOMAN WHOSE SON WAS KILLED IN IRAQ. GOTTA GO.



46-64" TV'S

SYDNEY!

MILITARY COUP AT CIA
SEP 1 0:50
IF THE MAINSTREAM MEDIA INSISTS...

CHERYL! NICE TO SEE YOU. HOW'VE YOU BEEN?

I'M GETTING BY. IT'S ALMOST THE SECOND ANNIVERSARY OF BRENT'S DEATH, SO THAT'S KINDA HARD.



THE DANGER OF GRAPE-FRUIT JUICE

DOWN 32%

THAT STEPHEN COLBERT'S BUSH ROAST WASN'T FUNNY...

UHH... YEAH, JEEZ, I CAN'T IMAGINE...

BUT IT'S LUCKY I RAN INTO YOU! I'M ORGANIZING A TEAM FOR THE RELAY FOR LIFE, YOU KNOW, THE CANCER FUNDRAISER? I'D LOVE TO HAVE YOU ON IT.



31%

DO THEY MAKE A SOUND?

I THINK YOU'LL FIND IT VERY INSPIRATIONAL!



AND JASMINE SAYS NOTO DRUGS.

LOIS, I DON'T WANT HER DOING ANYTHING IRREVOCABLE. LOTS OF GENDER-VARIANT KIDS GROW UP TO BE NON-TRANSGENDER.

YEAH, AND LOTS OF TRANSGENDER PEOPLE WOULD HAVE GIVEN ANYTHING TO AVOID GOING THROUGH PUBERTY IN THE WRONG BODY.



AND YOU KNOW, THE MORE SHE CONFORMS, THE SAFER SHE'LL BE.

HEY, I DON'T NEED YOU TO TELL ME THAT. BUT I HAVE HIGHER HOPES FOR MY CHILD THAN CONFORMITY, OKAY?



the long war

5/31

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IT'S
ROUGH
SLEDDING
FOR THE
ASSOCIATES
AT
ACME
PSYCHO-
THERAPY.

HE WAS A HAPPY
KID UNTIL HE STARTED
MIDDLE SCHOOL.

THAT WAS RIGHT ABOUT
THE TIME SHE FOUND
OUT ABOUT THE THING
WITH GLORIA.

OH, SO IT'S MY
FAULT? FOR
FINDING OUT
ABOUT THE
"THING"?!

AND
IN
THE
NEXT
OFFICE...

SHE STILL HASN'T DEALT WITH HAVING CANCER. IT'S
ONLY MADE HER **MORE** DETERMINED NOT TO HAVE
ANY NEEDS, **MORE** CEREBRAL, **LESS** IN HER BODY...
THOUGH MORE IN MADELEINE'S, I MIGHT ADD.

YOU'RE
INTERPRETING
AGAIN, MO.

YOU TELL HER,
RICHARD.

WHY DON'T YOU
TELL **US**, SYDNEY?
WHAT **ARE** YOU
FEELING?

UHH... I FEEL SORT OF
DISCURSIVELY DISPERSED,
YOU KNOW? DECENTERED,
UNTHEORIZED... EVEN
A TAD HYPHENATED.

MEANWHILE,
ANOTHER
COUPLE
GETS A
THERAPEUTIC
WORKOUT
FROM AN
UNEXPECTED
SOURCE...

... THEN SHE TOLD ME I WAS
INSANE, AND WENT OFF TO
RESTORE WETLANDS IN NEW
ORLEANS FOR THE SUMMER.

OH, KIDDO. YOU
HAD A RING AND
EVERYTHING?

WELL... MY
HIGH SCHOOL
CLASS RING.

BUT CYNTHIA, WHAT DID
YOU EXPECT? YOU CAN'T
JUST GO AROUND PRO-
POSING MARRIAGE.

Snurf

WHY NOT?
ISN'T THAT WHAT
PEOPLE DO?

YES, IT **IS** WHAT PEOPLE DO.
MATURE, LOVING PEOPLE WHO
ARE PREPARED TO DEVOTE
THEMSELVES TO AN INTIMATE
RELATIONSHIP.

BUT IT'S **NOT** WHAT
RATIONAL, SELF-ACTU-
ALIZED PEOPLE **RUSH**
INTO WILLY NILLY.

UH... WHO'S
THAT GUY?

SAMIA'S
HUSBAND,
"WILLY."

ordinary people

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7/12

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@#&*!
THIS FISH IS STICKING.

MO, DON'T CHOP THE CARROTS LIKE THAT. CUT THEM IN LITTLE STRIPS.

UH...ARE YOU GUYS OKAY, TONI? YOU SEEM A LITTLE...

RAFFI! FOR THE THIRD TIME, SET THE TABLE!

...TENSE.

IN A MINUTE!

YOU SAID THAT FIFTEEN MINUTES AGO.

DIE, YOU NAZI MOTHER!

RAFFI!

HE'S PLAYING ONLINE.

OH.

A TIP O' THE GAMEPAD TO SAM HOROWITZ

YOU TOO, I SEE. CAN'T STOP RASPBERRYING MADELEINE FOR ONE EVENING?

RAF, YOUR MOMS ARE KINDA STRESSED OUT. MAYBE YOU SHOULD GIVE THEM A HAND.

OKAY.

ABIGAIL, I HAFTA GO. I'LL SEE YOU AT THE MALL LATER.

YOU'RE NOT SEEING ANYBODY AT THE MALL LATER. WE HAVE DINNER GUESTS.

I HAVE TO SEE HER! SHE'S GOING AWAY TO HER DAD'S FOR THE REST OF THE SUMMER!

CLARICE, DON'T BE RIDICULOUS. OF COURSE HE CAN GO.

NO ONE LISTENS TO ME. I DON'T KNOW WHAT I'M EVEN DOING HERE.

I WISH YOU GUYS WOULD GET DIVORCED. THEN I COULD BE NORMAL.

survivor's benefits

7/26

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I DON'T KNOW WHY YOU GUYS WANTED TO COME. IT'S JUST GONNA BE A SENTIMENTAL SPECTACLE OF SYNTHETIC CATHARSIS.

IT WAS THIS, OR WATCH SAMIA AND AMMAR CAULK THE TUB.

AMERICAN CANCER SOCIETY
Relay for Life
WALK / JOG / RUN
ALL-NIGHT FUNDRAISER

SWEETIE, I THINK IT'S REALLY GREAT THAT YOU'RE DOING THIS. I WANT TO SUPPORT YOU!

SUPPORT!

JUST GIMME A HALF-HOUR TO DO THIS SURVIVOR'S LAP THING, THEN I'M OUTTA HERE.

DISEASE AS COMMODITY. CONSUMPTION AS CHARITY. FIND A CURE, FORGET ABOUT THE CAUSE. WHY'D I LET CHERYL GUILT-TRIP ME INTO THIS OBSCENE CHARADE?

SYDNEY! COME JOIN THE TEAM!

A TIP O' THE NIB TO CHRISTINE JENKINS

BREAST
PROSTATE
MELANOMA
CERVICAL
LUNG
TESTICULAR

CANCER
WRISTBANDS \$5

RACE
for the
CURE

BRENT'S
BATTALION

WE'RE STARTING. HERE'S YOUR T-SHIRT AND BALLOON.

MY BALLOON? WHY'S THERE A "THREE" ON IT?

IT'S HOW MANY YEARS YOU'VE SURVIVED!

AT FIRST I THOUGHT IT WAS HOW MANY YEARS OLD I WAS EXPECTED TO FEEL WALKING AROUND WITH A BALLOON ON A STRING. ISN'T THIS INFANTILIZING?

BRENT'S
BATTALION

DEAN
HAVERSTICK!

I DIDN'T KNOW YOU, UH... THAT YOU...

COLORECTAL, STAGE TWO. NOT THE SORT OF THING ONE TRUMPETS ABOUT, I'M FINE NOW.

AS THE EVENING LENGTHENS...

SYDNEY!

I FORGOT YOU WERE STILL HERE! HEY, I'M GONNA STAY. I'M REALLY BONDING WITH THE DEAN. SHE'S CONFESSING A BOUT OF LESBIANISM IN HER RADCLIFFE DAYS.

I JUST HOPE THAT BOUT'S IN REMISSION.

A TIP O' THE NIB TO AMY RUBINI

PROXY WAR

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ANOTHER DAY, ANOTHER DEMO.

GOD, IT'S HOT.

SWIMMING,
DADDY!

NO, SWEETIE. THE
FOUNTAIN'S DIRTY.

SWIMMING!

HERE
WE GO.

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END
THE
WAR
IN
GAZA

STOP THE MASSACRE
IN LEBANON

JEWISH
VOICE
FOR
PEACE

IMON
FIRE
PLEASE

SWIM-
MING!

UH...WE'LL BE BACK IN A
FEW. WE'RE GONNA GET
SOME WATER.

IS SOME-
ONE HAVING A
TANTRUM?

OH. SHE'S
JUST A LITTLE
FRUSTRATED.

WAIL!

JVP

WHEN MY KIDS HAD TANTRUMS,
I'D GIVE THEM A FLICK ON THE
FACE. NOT HARD, JUST ENOUGH
TO SNAP THEM OUT OF IT.

IGNORING HER REALLY
WORKS BEST, TRUST ME.

I SUPPOSE YOU THINK
THAT'S A GOOD WAY TO
HANDLE TERRORISM, TOO.

?!

JEWISH
VOICE
FOR
PEACE

1559
WHAT
ABOUT
2422

I SUPPOSE YOU THINK BRUTAL-
IZING CIVILIANS IS A BETTER PLAN!
HEY, IT WORKED IN IRAQ, RIGHT?
EVERYTHING'S COPACETIC THERE!

COLLECTIVE
PUNISHMENT
IS
IMMORAL

SWIMMING!

LEMME TELL YOU
SOMETHING. A BOOT ON
THE NECK ONLY MAKES
THINGS WORSE!

TERRORIST
LOVER.

FACE
FLICKER!

STUART!

GOD, I THOUGHT YOU WERE
GONNA HEAD-BUTT THAT
LADY. WHO WAS SHE?

THE PRESIDENT OF
MOTHERS FOR A NEW
AMERICAN CENTURY.
BY THE SOUND OF IT.

DADDY'S
HAVING A
TIME OUT.

DAAA!

Signing Statements in everyday life

8/23

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OR,
HOW TO
GET AWAY
WITH
DOING
WHATEVER
YOU WANT
WHENEVER
YOU LIKE.

INVOKE THE "UNITARY EXECUTIVE" DOCTRINE.

OKAY, MADDY. SEE YOU AT THE
CONFERENCE. I'LL BRING THE LUBE,
YOU BRING "OUR MUTUAL FRIEND."

SYDNEY! YOU
CAN'T ARRANGE A
TRYST RIGHT UNDER
MY NOSE!



ACTUALLY, I SHALL CONSTRUER AS ADVISORY
RATHER THAN MANDATORY ANY PROVISIONS
THAT PURPORT TO DIRECT OR BURDEN MY
NEGOTIATIONS WITH FOREIGN GOVERN-
MENTS. SO **BACK OFF, JACK.**

SNICK



INVOKE YOUR WARTIME POWERS.

AHHA!
A CONDOM!

GINGER, THAT'S ALKA-SELTZER!
GOD! I'M NOT SLEEPING WITH
AMMAR, OKAY? YOU CAN'T JUST
RIFLE THROUGH MY THINGS!



I'M AFRAID I CAN.
THIS IS A **SECUR-
ITY** ISSUE.

SHLINK



INVOKE THE CONSTITUTION

RAFFI, WE
TALKED ABOUT THIS!
WE TRUSTED YOU!

YEAH, I KNOW. BUT I FOUND THAT
NOT DOWNLOADING PORN REALLY
IMPAIRED THE PERFORMANCE OF MY
CONSTITUTIONAL DUTIES, IN PARTIC-
ULAR THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS.



A TIP O' THE NIB TO VAL ROHY

HECK, INVOKE ANYTHING AT ALL!

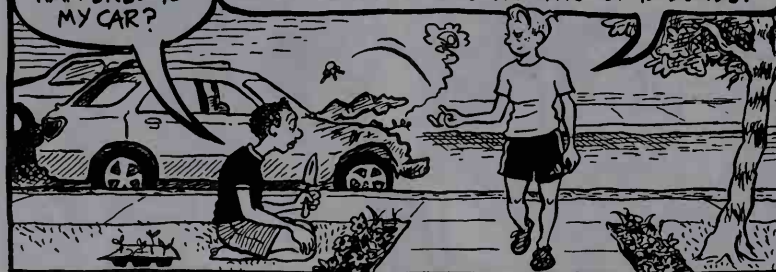
OF COURSE I DIDN'T SEND A PAYMENT THIS
MONTH. DIDN'T YOU SEE THAT LITTLE NOTE I
ADDED TO MY MORTGAGE? THE ONE THAT SAID
I DIDN'T ACTUALLY INTEND TO PAY YOU BACK?



BE CREATIVE.
MIX 'N' MATCH!

WHAT
HAPPENED TO
MY CAR?

I'M SORRY, BUT THE DISCLOSURE OF THAT
INFORMATION COULD IMPAIR FOREIGN RELATIONS,
THE NATIONAL SECURITY, THE DELIBERATIVE PRO-
CESSES OF THE EXECUTIVE, OR THE PERFORMANCE
OF THE EXECUTIVE'S CONSTITUTIONAL DUTIES.



THEN REPEAT THE "UNITARY EXECUTIVE" BIT.

MINE!



a terribly civil war

2006 BY ALISON BECHDEL

VACATION'S OVER...

YOU'RE TAIL-
GATING AGAIN!

TONI, IF I WANTED TO
KNOW HOW YOU THINK I'M
DRIVING, I'D HAVE AN 800
NUMBER YOU COULD CALL.

THAT LAKE SUCKS. I DON'T
WANNA GO THERE NEXT YEAR.

FINE.

494

A NEW POLL SHOWS NEARLY TWO-
THIRDS OF AMERICANS SURVEYED DO
NOT SUPPORT THE WAR, THE HIGHEST
LEVEL SINCE THE INVASION.

THE PRESIDENT ACKNOWLEDGED
HE WAS CONCERNED ABOUT THE
ONGOING SECTARIAN VIOLENCE IN
IRAQ, THE PROSPECTS OF CIVIL WAR...

...AND THE MOUNTING DEATH TOLL ON
BOTH SIDES. YET BUSH INSISTED, "WE'RE
NOT LEAVING SO LONG AS I AM PRESI-
DENT. THAT WOULD BE A HUGE MISTAKE.

WELL, WAKE UP
LITTLE SUSIE!

PROSPECTS?

&#@%ING
IDIOT!

DISASTER? FIASCO?
CATASTROPHE? WHATEVER!
GOTTA STAY THE COURSE!

MAYBE THAT'S
WHAT WE'VE BEEN
DOING.

WHAT?

I MEAN, MAYBEWE
SHOULD PULL OUT NOW,
BEFORE ANY MORE
DAMAGE IS DONE.

WHAT
ARE YOU
TALKING
ABOUT?

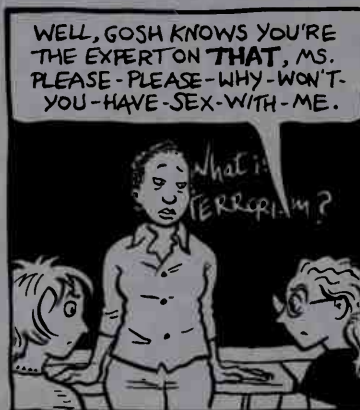
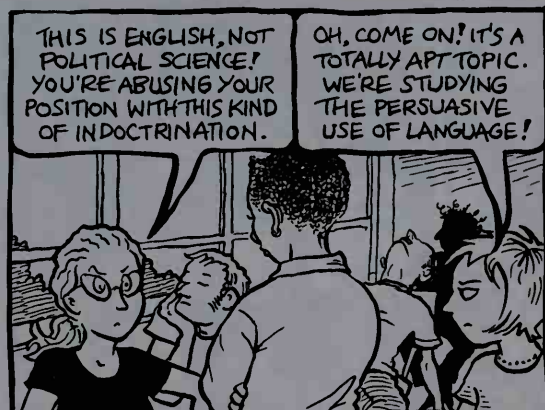
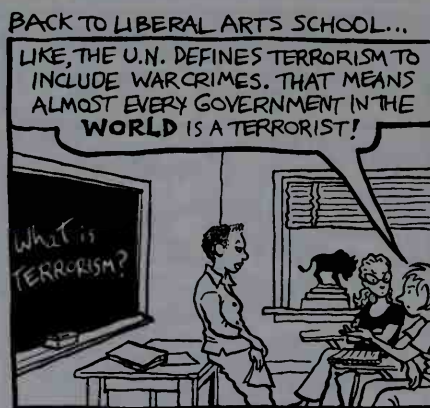
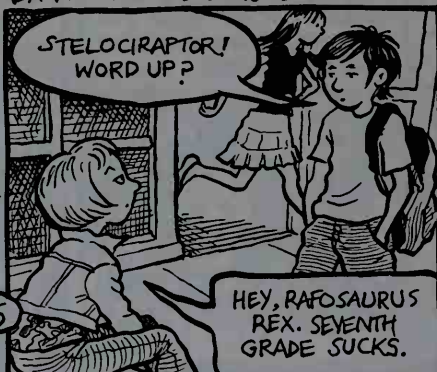
YOU KNOW WHAT I'M TALKING ABOUT.
WE'VE BEEN STRUGGLING FOR SO
LONG. MAYBE WE'D ALL BE HAPPIER.

WE COULD GO TO DISNEYLAND
NEXT SUMMER. WHO KNOWS,
YOU MIGHT LIKE IT.

MAYBE WE
WOULD.



BACK TO MIDDLE SCHOOL...



A TIP O' THE NIB TO SAMUEL LURIE

sleep's sister

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GROAANN

NO!
PLEASE!
STOP!

ALL RIGHT! ALL RIGHT! I'M
AWAKE! GOD, VIRGINIA. YOU
SHOULD GET A JOB IN A
SECRET DETENTION FACILITY.

YOU HAVE TO GET UP ANY-
WAY. YOU HAVE "DISORDER,
DEGENERACY AND
DEVIANCE" AT EIGHT.

I NEED A
SABBATICAL.

READY FOR YOUR
BREKIFY? WHERE'S
YOUR SISTER?

VANESSA?

Mo!

KITTY?!

OH, GOD.

SHE'S
ALL STIFF.
IT MUST HAVE
HAPPENED
HOURS
AGO.

life
2.0

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10/18

497

THANKS FOR COMING OVER, TOMI. SEE? I TRY TO OPEN THE FREEDOM TO MARRY DATABASE AND IT SAYS "FILE CORRUPT."

I CAN FIX THIS. I JUST HOPE STELLA DOESN'T MIND HANGING OUT WITH RAFFI FOR A WHILE.

MEANWHILE, UPSTAIRS...

NO WAY!

MAYBE YOU'LL BELIEVE ME ONCE YOU SEE THIS.



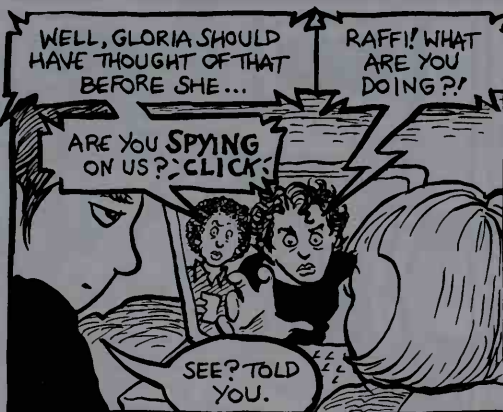
Shoont!

I SAW GLORIA THIS AFTERNOON AT THE GROCERY STORE.

THAT'S NICE. DID YOU HAVE SEX WITH HER?

YEAH, IN THE DAIRY CASE.

SHE'S NOT DOING SO GOOD. ANA MOVED OUT LAST WEEK. STELLA'S HAVING A HARD TIME AND DOESN'T WANT TO GO TO SCHOOL. IT SOUNDS AWFUL.



WELL, GLORIA SHOULD HAVE THOUGHT OF THAT BEFORE SHE...

RAFFI! WHAT ARE YOU DOING?!

ARE YOU SPYING ON US? CLICK

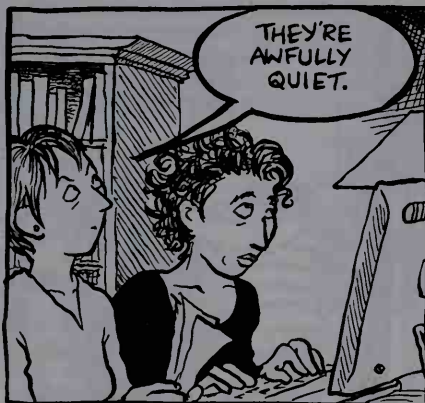
SEE? TOLD YOU.

THEY HAD SEX AT THE GROCERY STORE?!

NO, DIPTARD! THAT PART WAS A JOKE. BUT SOMETHING'S GOING ON.

YOU KNOW WHAT WE SHOULD DO?

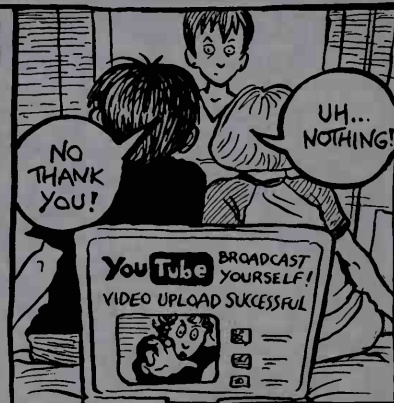
WHAT?



THEY'RE AWFULLY QUIET.



KIDS? ARE YOU HUNGRY?



NO THANK YOU!

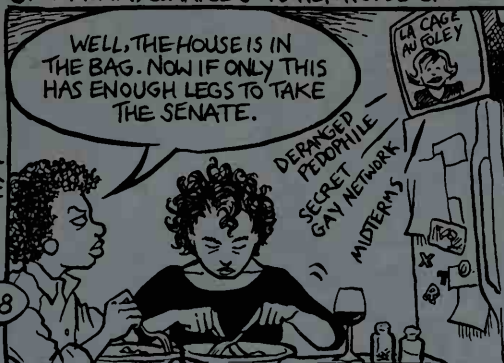
UH... NOTHING!

YouTube BROADCAST YOURSELF!
VIDEO UPLOAD SUCCESSFUL

SCANDAL IN THE HOUSE

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ONCE AGAIN, CLARICE GETS HER HOPES UP...



THANK GOD FOR CREEPY, INDISCREET, PAGE-HARRASSING, CLOSETED GAY REPUBLICAN CONGRESSMEN.



498

WHY ARE YOU SO FIXATED ON THIS? WE HAVE REAL PROBLEMS TO DEAL WITH.



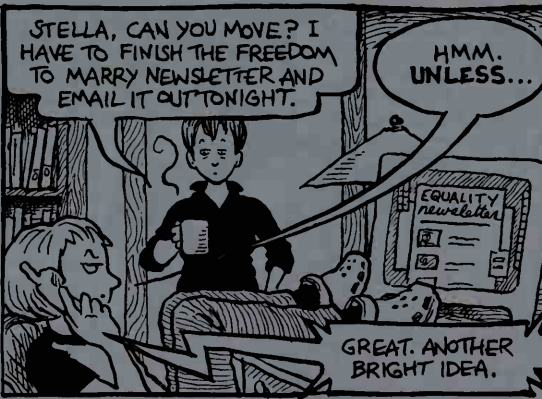
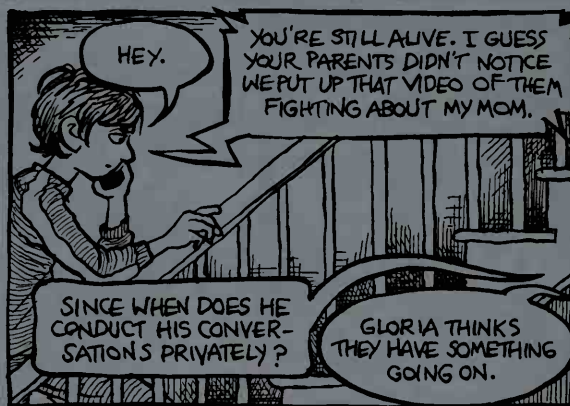
TONI, AMERICANS DON'T CARE ABOUT 600,000 DEAD IRAQIS, OR THE INTRICACIES OF THE ABRAMOFF SCANDAL, OR THE FACT THAT CONGRESS JUST OKAYED TORTURE AND DITCHED HABEAS CORPUS!



THEY CARE ABOUT DIRTY IM'S! AND IF THAT SWEEPS THE GOP OUT OF POWER, THEN WE CAN TACKLE THOSE REAL PROBLEMS!



I WAS REFERRING TO THE REAL PROBLEMS OF OUR SEPARATION.



HOIST

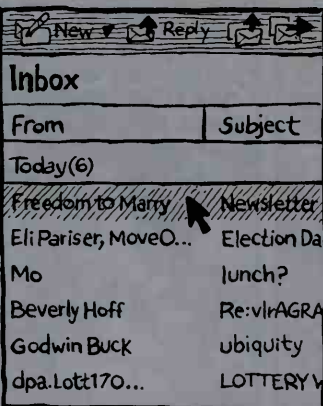
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11/15

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SO... IF WE'RE REALLY DOING THIS, IT'S WEIRD TO KEEP SLEEPING TOGETHER.

YOU TAKE THE BED. I'LL STAY ON THE COUCH. I CAN'T IMAGINE EVER SLEEPING AGAIN ANYWAY.



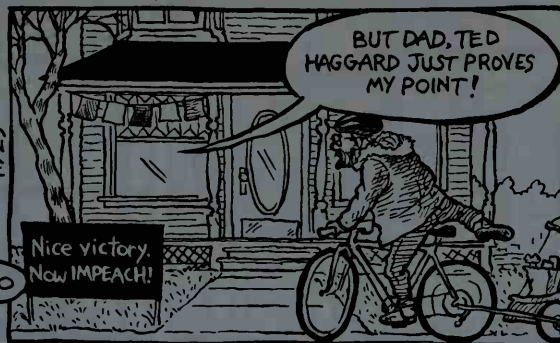
Who's your daddy?

CYNTHIA IS SPENDING THANKSGIVING BREAK AT THE HOME FOR WAYWARD EVANGELICALS.

11/29

500

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BUT DAD, TED HAGGARD JUST PROVES MY POINT!

Nice victory. Now IMPEACH!

IF IT WAS A CHOICE, WHY ON EARTH WOULD THE PASTOR OF AN EVANGELICAL GIGACHURCH CHOOSE TO BE GAY?



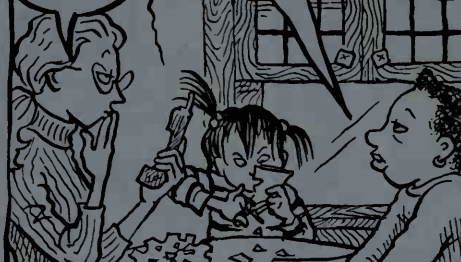
YEAH, HE IS A SINNER. BUT NOT BECAUSE HE'S GAY! BECAUSE HE'S A LYING, SANCTIMONIOUS ASSWIPE!



CLICK!

OOPSY.

UH... WHAT HAPPENED TO THE PLAN OF SWEET-TALKING HIM INTO PAYING FOR YOUR LAST SEMESTER?



HE'LL PAY IF I "RENOUNCE" MY SINS. HE WANTS ME TO GROVEL ABOUT MY "REPULSIVE AND DARK" NATURE LIKE THAT SLEAZEWAD HAGGARD, THEN HE CAN HAVE AN ORGY FORGIVING ME. I'D RATHER FRY IN HELL.



DADDY!

THROW-
FWAKE!

OH, HOW BEAUTIFUL, J.R.! DID CYNTHIA SHOW YOU HOW TO DO THAT?



THANKS FOR WATCHING HER, CYNTHIA... HEY.



THESE ARE MY IMPEACHMENT PETITIONS! I HAD A THOUSAND SIGNATURES COLLECTED!



UH... I THOUGHT IT WAS SCRAP PAPER.

TRUST ME. IT WAS.

MEANWHILE, MO AND SYDNEY ARE PAYING A VISIT TO SYD'S DAD AND STEPMOM.

A TOAST! TO A VALIANT BIBLIOPHILE WHOSE QUEST TO SPREAD THE LIGHT OF LITERACY IN THESE BENIGHTED TIMES HAS FINALLY LANDED HER A LIBRARY JOB.



TO MADELINE!



DAD, MADELINE WAS MY GIRLFRIEND, UH... A LONG TIME AGO. YOU MEAN MO.

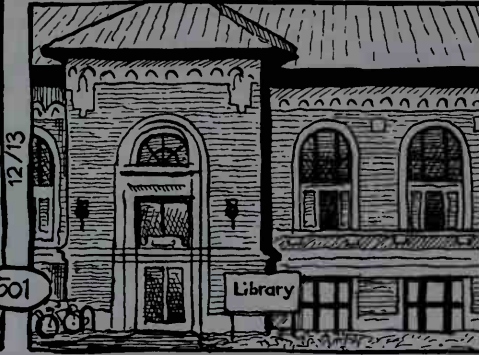
I SAID MO! WHAT'S WRONG WITH YOU, SYD? ARE YOU GOING DEAF?



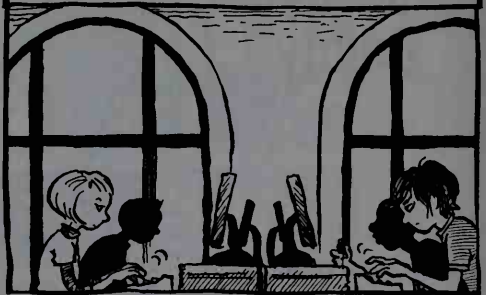
Off Message

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OH, THE LIBRARY. TEMPLE TO THE WRITTEN WORD.



S.Raptor: OMG what is up with r momz?
RaffiProSK8r: yeah WTF
RaffiProSK8r: howzit going being grounded from teh internet for life?



S.Raptor: awsum!!! hows being GFTIFL going for u?? ☺
RaffiProSK8r: it ROX!!!
RaffiProSK8r: r momz r toolz. their all about gay marriage so why r they getting divorced?



A TIPO TH' CURSOR TO SOPHIE HOROWITZ

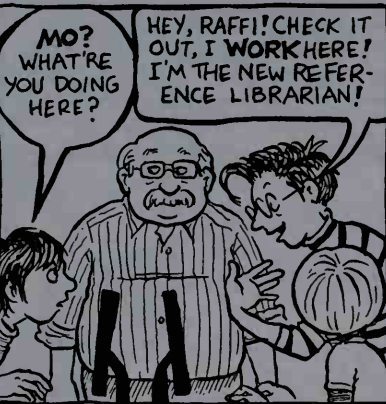
S.Raptor: ☹
RaffiProSK8r: hippocryts
RaffiProSK8r: hypocr
RaffiProSK8r: wtvr



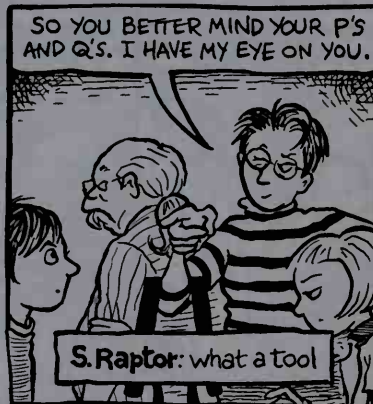
S.Raptor: the thing is tho when str8 peeps get divorced
S.Raptor: nobody says its bcuz their str8
RaffiProSK8r: there all toolz then



...AND HERE'S THE YOUNG ADULTS ROOM. ONE OF THE THINGS YOU'LL OVERSEE IS UPGRADING THE...

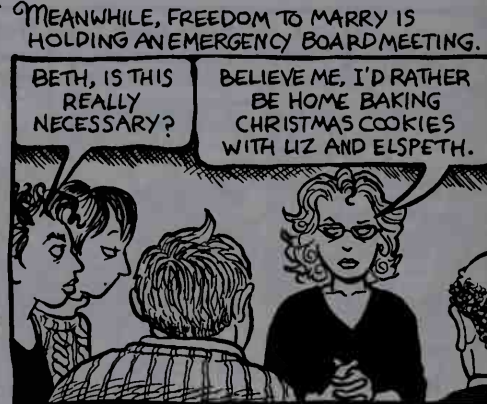


MO? WHAT'RE YOU DOING HERE?
HEY, RAFFI! CHECK IT OUT, I WORK HERE! I'M THE NEW REFERENCE LIBRARIAN!



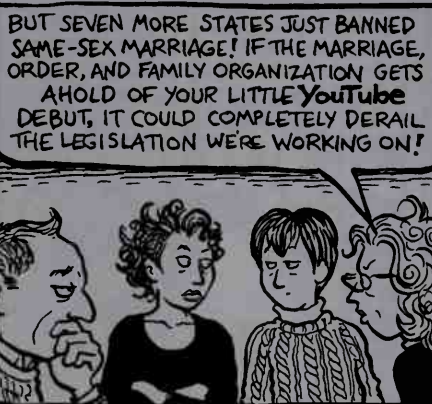
SO YOU BETTER MIND YOUR P'S AND Q'S. I HAVE MY EYE ON YOU.

S. Raptor: what a tool

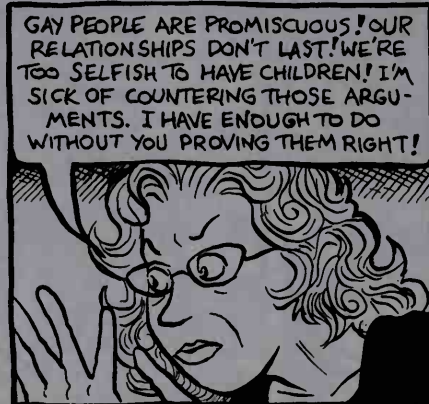


MEANWHILE, FREEDOM TO MARRY IS HOLDING AN EMERGENCY BOARD MEETING.

BETH, IS THIS REALLY NECESSARY?
BELIEVE ME, I'D RATHER BE HOME BAKING CHRISTMAS COOKIES WITH UZ AND ELSPETH.



BUT SEVEN MORE STATES JUST BANNED SAME-SEX MARRIAGE! IF THE MARRIAGE, ORDER, AND FAMILY ORGANIZATION GETS AHEAD OF YOUR LITTLE YouTube DEBUT, IT COULD COMPLETELY DERAIL THE LEGISLATION WE'RE WORKING ON!



GAY PEOPLE ARE PROMISCUOUS! OUR RELATIONSHIPS DON'T LAST! WE'RE TOO SELFISH TO HAVE CHILDREN! I'M SICK OF COUNTERING THOSE ARGUMENTS. I HAVE ENOUGH TO DO WITHOUT YOU PROVING THEM RIGHT!



IF WE'RE GONNA DO PROPER DAMAGE CONTROL, WE NEED TO KNOW EXACTLY WHAT'S GOING ON BETWEEN YOU TWO.

love & other calamities

1/24

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WHAT'S THE ANSWER FOR OUR EMBATTLED COUPLE?

PHASED WITHDRAWAL?

YOU SHOULD KEEP THE HOUSE. I'LL FIND A SMALLER PLACE NEARBY.

CLARICE, IT WOULD HAVE TO BE A TENT IN THE YARD. THERE'S NO WAY WE CAN AFFORD TO KEEP THIS PLACE, OR **ANYTHING** IN THIS SCHOOL DISTRICT IF WE HAVE TO KEEP UP TWO HOUSEHOLDS.



A SURGE, PERCHANCE?

THEIR PROBLEM IS, CLARICE WAS NEVER COMPLETELY COMMITTED.

WELL, SHE NEEDS TO GET COMMITTED. IT'S NOT TOO LATE.

NO MORE TROOPS

IMPEACH!



PUBLIC OPINION HAS TURNED.

STUART, THAT'S DELUSIONAL. WHAT THEY NEED IS TO CUT THEIR LOSSES AND MOVE ON.

YEAH, BEFORE WE HAVE TO RESCUE THEM FROM THE ROOF IN A CHOPPER.

STOP THE FUNDING STOP THE WAR

NO IRAQ ESCALATION



ALL THE OPTIONS ARE BAD.

WHERE'S THAT MORTGAGE CALCULATOR WE LIKED?

CHECK THE BROWSER HISTORY. I WAS ON IT LAST NIGHT.



UHHH...WERE YOU ALSO ON "SADDAM HANGING VIDEO"? OR DO WE NEED TO HAVE A TALK WITH SOMEONE?

OH, GOD.



WHERE DO WE EVEN START?

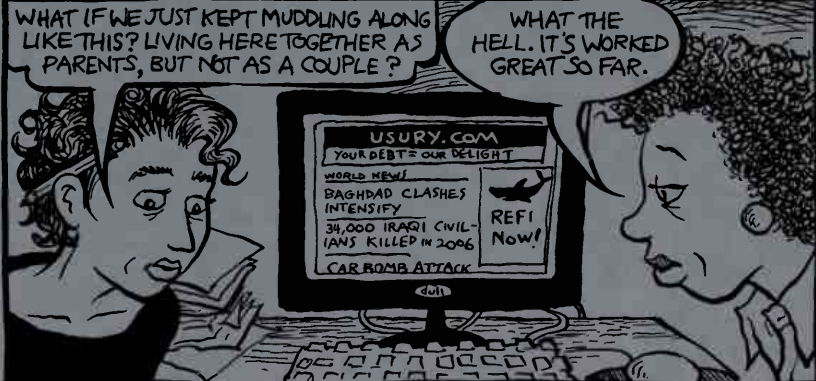


CASUALTIES ARE UNAVOIDABLE.



WHAT IF WE JUST KEPT MUDDLING ALONG LIKE THIS? LIVING HERE TOGETHER AS PARENTS, BUT NOT AS A COUPLE?

WHAT THE HELL. IT'S WORKED GREAT SO FAR.



FLUX

2/17

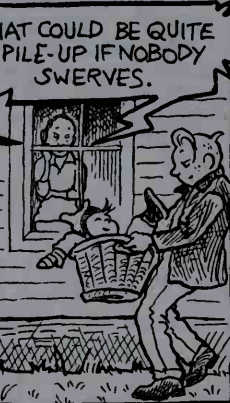
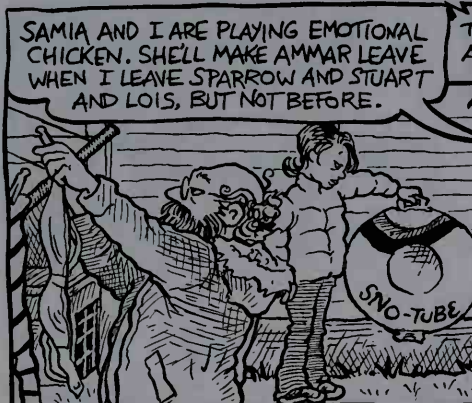
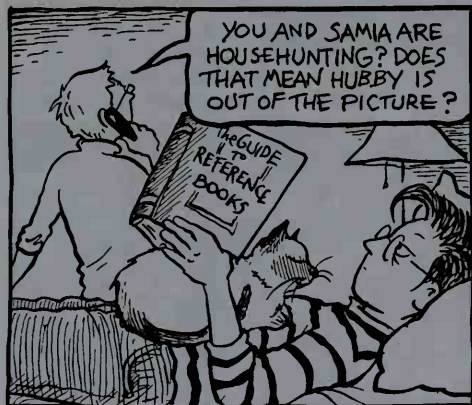
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WHERE ARE THE SNOWS OF YESTER-YEAR?



WE'RE ALL GONNA DIE.



THE USES OF INTELLIGENCE

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2/21

504

HEY! DR. JORDAN! I'M IN!
I GOT THE CIA INTERNSHIP!

THAT'S
UH, GREAT,
CYNTHIA.

THE Hortense
Schmendrick
LECTURE SERIES
WAR & LIES:
FABRICATED
INTELLIGENCE
FROM IRAQ
TO IRAN

AFTER GRADUATION, I'LL BE SPENDING
THE SUMMER AT THE GEORGE
BUSH CENTER FOR INTELLIGENCE,
DOING THE WORK OF THE NATION!

THE
WORK OF THE
NATION.

THANKS FOR SETTING ASIDE
YOUR KNEEJERK DISAPPROVAL
LONG ENOUGH TO WRITE ME
A DECENT RECOMMENDATION.

I'M JUST GLAD YOU'VE DECIDED TO
GO TO GRAD SCHOOL IN THE FALL,
BEFORE SETTLING ON TORTURE AND
RENDITION AS A PERMANENT CAREER.

YOU HAVE SO MUCH PROMISE, CYNTHIA. THERE
ARE BETTER WAYS TO CONTRIBUTE THAN
GATHERING INFORMATION FOR SOME FUTURE
PRESIDENT TO MANIPULATE AND MISUSE.

HEY, YOU CAN SIT HERE IN
YOUR IVORY TOWER, BUT
THE TRUTH IS, THERE ARE
BAD PEOPLE OUT THERE.

HERE ARE SOME NOW!
SAMIA AND AMMAR ARE
MEETING ME FOR THE
LECTURE. D'YOU WANT
TO SIT WITH US?

OKAY, BUT LET'S KEEP MY INTERNSHIP
ON THE QT. THE INTEREST
OF SOME INDIVIDUALS IN MY CIA
EMPLOYMENT MAY NOT BE BENIGN.

WHERE DO YOU GET THIS
STUFF?! YOU HAVE TO TELL
SAMIA. SHE TAUGHT YOU
ARABIC! YOU WOULDN'T
HAVE GOTTEN HIRED
WITHOUT HER.

WHY DOES SHE HAVE
AMMAR HANGING
AROUND ALL THE TIME.
DOESN'T HE BUG YOU?

UH...THEY HAVE
A COMPLICATED
HISTORY.

SAY THE WORD, AND I'LL
LOOK INTO HIS GREEN CARD
SITUATION WHEN I'M AT
HEADQUARTERS.

CYNTHIA!

LEMME GET
BACK TO YOU ON
THAT.

togetherness

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SO WE'LL MEET YOU RIGHT
HERE AFTER THE MOVIE'S
OVER AT 4:35. GOT IT?
REPEAT IT BACK TO ME.

OVER
THERE, AT
4:53.

IN THE
LOBBY, AT
5:34.

OKAY, FIRST THE OFFICE
SUPPLY STORE TO GET
TICKETS FOR THE RAFFLE.

3/7

505



DOESN'T IT STRIKE YOU AS STRANGE
THAT WE'RE BOTH STILL WORKING
FOR THIS GAY MARRIAGE ORGANI-
ZATION EVEN THOUGH WE'VE JUST
LEFT OUR PARTNERS?

WELCOME
TO

STAPLED

No.

WHAT STRIKES ME AS STRANGE IS THAT WE'RE
BOTH STILL WORKING WITH THE HORRIBLE
BETH McLAUGHLIN-FARKAS EVEN THOUGH SHE
ACCUSED US OF BEING ADULTERERS IN FRONT
OF THE ENTIRE FREEDOM TO MARRY BOARD.

MP3-GPS

DVD-COR

ZIP-POA

LCD-DLP

WTF

ENVELOPES
for LIFE

ENVELOPES

5000

5000

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NOW EVERYONE THINKS
WE'RE CARRYING ON. AT THIS
RATE WE MIGHT AS WELL BE.

ENVELOPES
for your NEXT 5
REINCARNATIONS

ENVELOPES
for your NEXT 5
REINCARNATIONS

ENVELOPES
for your NEXT 5
REINCARNATIONS

ENVELOPES
for your NEXT 5
REINCARNATIONS

ENVELOPES
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ENVELOPES
for your NEXT 5
REINCARNATIONS

ENVELOPES
for your NEXT 5
REINCARNATIONS

ENVELOPES
for your NEXT 5
REINCARNATIONS

IT'S SO WEIRD BEING SINGLE
AFTER ALL THESE YEARS. SINGLE!
WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?

GEL

GEL

GEL

GEL

GEL

GEL

GEL

GEL

GEL

GEL

GEL

GEL

GEL

GEL

GEL

GEL

GEL

GEL

GEL

GEL

GEL

GOD, YOU CAN'T
EVEN BUY A SINGLE
PEN ANYMORE.

SOB!



TONI! I'M SORRY TO GO
ON LIKE THIS WHEN IT'S
STILL SO RAW FOR YOU!



WHAT HAPPENED,
GLORIA? MY LIFE
USED TO BE SO
TOGETHER.

IT WILL BE
AGAIN. DON'T
WORRY.



OH, PLEASE. CAN'T
YOU PEOPLE CONTROL
YOURSELVES?



UHHH...
HI BETH. LIZ.

ELSPETH.



...but she digresses.

SYDNEY'S SPRING BREAK MIGHT BREAK HER.

SYDNEY! COME SEE IF YOU THINK THIS WOULD BE A GOOD COLOR ON ME.

IN A MINUTE, MOM. I'M DOING YOUR RECYCLING.

HI.

3/21

506

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GOD. MOM IS SO NEEDY. I HAVEN'T BEEN ABLE TO GET ANY WORK DONE ON MY DIGRESSION PAPER, AND THE PANEL IS FRIDAY!

THAT'S TOO BAD. LISTEN, I'M WORRIED ABOUT VIRGINIA. I THINK MAYBE IT'S NOT SO MUCH THAT SHE MISSES VANESSA, BUT THAT SHE'S FEELING SURVIVOR'S GUILT.

MO, SHE PROBABLY HAS A HAIRBALL. I HATE IT WHEN YOU ANTHROPOMORPHIZE.

BEEP!

OH, MAN. MY DAD'S CALLING. I GOTTA GO.

HELLO, PATER.

STRAND

HI, SYD. I JUST WANTED TO SEE WHEN YOU WERE PLANNING ON GETTING HERE.

DAD! I'M SPENDING THE BREAK AT MOM'S, REMEMBER? THE NARRATIVE CONFERENCE IS HERE THIS WEEKEND. I'LL SEE YOU IN JUNE. I TOLD YOU THIS LAST WEEK!

CLINK!

ER... I MUST'VE ENTERED THE DATES WRONG. I HAVEN'T GOTTEN USED TO THIS NEW BLACKBERRY.

SYDNEY! I CAN'T FIGURE OUT THIS WEB BROWSER YOU INSTALLED. I LIKED THE OLD ONE.

I HAVE TO GO. I'LL CALL YOU LATER.

LOOK. ALL YOUR BOOKMARKS ARE RIGHT HERE. SEE?

MADELEINE!

I'M SO EXCITED ABOUT SEEING YOU THIS WEEKEND I CAN'T FOCUS ON THE ETHICS OF NARRATIVE DIGRESSION. SAY SOMETHING TO DAMPEN MY ARDOR SO I CAN FINISH THIS PAPER.

MOTHERR!

OOPS.

Secrets and Spies

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FOUR YEARS INTO THE WAR, ALLIANCES ARE GETTING ODD.

I'M GLAD TO SEE YOU'VE COME TO YOUR SENSES ABOUT THE WAR, ASHLEY.

AS IF! I'M HERE TO SUPPORT QUEER TROOPS, NOT THE WAR, YOU CIA SPOOK.

WHO TOLD YOU ABOUT THAT?! ARE YOU TRYING TO OUT ME?!

507

GENERAL PACE IS IMMORAL
QUEER'S ARE FABULOUS

WHAT'S IMMORAL?

DON'T ASK DON'T TELL

HEY, CYNTHIA! DIDJA HEAR BIBLE STUDY IS CANCELED TONIGHT? WE'RE HOLDING A VIGIL AGAINST THE INHUMANE TREATMENT OF DETAINEES.

SHE CAN'T MAKE IT. SHE'LL BE CRAMMING FOR "ENHANCED INTERROGATION TECHNIQUES."

MEANWHILE ...

SAMIA!
GINGER!

ARE YOU LOOKING AT THIS PLACE? WE'LL BE NEIGHBORS!

FOR SALE
call LIZ
McLAUGHLIN-FARR
RE/MAX 962-5

HI, SYDNEY, I DUNNO. IT NEEDS A LOT OF WORK.

ARE YOU JUST GETTING BACK FROM THE CONFERENCE? HOW WAS IT?

YOU TWO CHAT. I'M GONNA GO TAKE A LOOK AT THE BACKYARD.

THIS THING WITH MADELEINE IS GETTING OUT OF CONTROL.

GOD, SYDNEY. I'M TOO OLD FOR THIS. AND SO ARE YOU! I'M TIRED OF KEEPING YOUR SORDID SECRETS.

OH, MAN.

SYDNEY!
YOU'RE HOME!

UH...HI, SWEETIE!
HI, STUART. HOW WAS THE MARCH?

IT WAS **SOMETHING!** J.R. ALMOST GOT ARRESTED. SHE WANDERED OFF AND FELL ASLEEP AT THE DIE-IN.

TROOPS OUT NOW

WAY TO GO, JR.!

GINGER, I THOUGHT YOU WERE AT BUFFALO LAKE ALL DAY. WHAT'RE YOU DOING HERE?

YOUR LITTLE HOUSE-MATE'S GROWING UP! SHE AND SAMIA ARE THINKING OF BUYING THIS PLACE!

YOU ARE?!

The beat goes on

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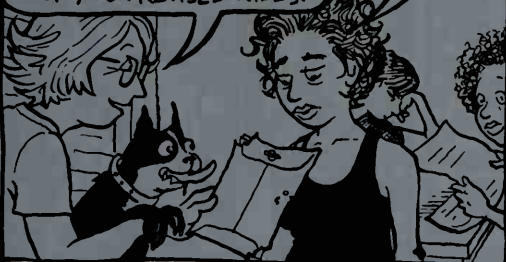
GOOD POINT, RAFFI.

YET
CURIOUSLY,
AGAINST THE
SWEEPING
BACKDROP
OF HISTORY...
EVERYDAY
LIFE
PRETTY MUCH
CONTINUES.

DIVORCES PROCEED

HI, TONI. I WAS JUST OUT WALKING VLAD, AND THOUGHT I'D DROP OFF THE DRAFTS OF YOUR REVISED WILLS.

OH. THANKS, ALEXIS.



CIVIC RITUALS PERSIST

YOUR HOOD'S SO PRETTY.

YOU CAN HAVE ONE TOO. GIVE UP THIS CIA SCHEME AND BECOME AN ACADEMIC.



THE HUMANITIES ARE ALL WELL AND GOOD, GINGER, BUT SOMEONE HAS TO MAKE THE WORLD SAFE FOR THEM.



REAL ESTATE TRANSACTIONS TRANSPIRE.

UH-OH. IS THAT THE APPRAISAL?

GOD. THIS PLACE HAS DOUBLED IN VALUE SINCE GINGER AND I BOUGHT IT IN '98.

JEEZ. HOW CAN WE AFFORD TO BUY HER OUT WITH ME NOT WORKING?



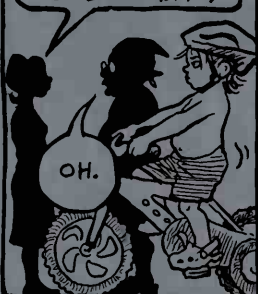
MAYBE THIS IS A GOOD TIME TO MENTION THAT I'VE BEEN OFFERED THE E.D. POSITION AT THE STATE NARAL OFFICE...

YOU **APPLIED** FOR THAT? I THOUGHT WE DECIDED IT WOULD BE TOO HIGH-PRESSURE!



JOBS ARE TAKEN.

AT DOUBLE MY CURRENT SALARY.



MISTAKES ARE MADE.

WHAT'S THIS CHARGE ON OUR JOINT ACCOUNT FROM "SEX TOYS 'R' US" ON MARCH 15TH? ISN'T THAT WHEN YOU WERE AT THE NARRATIVE CONFERENCE?

OH. I MEANT TO USE MY OWN CARD FOR THAT. IT WAS A WEDDING GIFT FOR MY OLD FRIEND, UM, THEODORA!



ALGEBRA GETS DONE.

YOU DIDN'T ANSWER MY QUESTION.

BECAUSE YOU JUST DO. GET USED TO IT.



doctor, doctor

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509

REFERENCE

HI, PAUL! IT'S MO.
IS SYDNEY THERE?
SHE'S NOT ANSWER-
ING HER CELL.

AH, THE MELLIFLUOUS TONES OF MY
DAUGHTER'S FAIR CONSORT, KEEPER OF THE
FLAME OF LITERACY! HOW GOES THE LIBRARY?

I THINK YOU'RE OVERREACT-
ING. HE'S SEVENTY! IT'S JUST
PART OF GETTING OLDER.

JENNIFER! HE RAN MY CELL PHONE
THROUGH THE DISHWASHER! HE NEEDS
TO SEE A DOCTOR. IF THEY CATCH IT
EARLY, THERE'S STUFF THEY CAN DO.

SYD! TELE-
PHONE. IT'S
MADELEINE.

WE NEED
TO TALK ABOUT
THIS.

MADDY! GOD, I MISS YOU SO MUCH.
I'M SURROUNDED BY CRAZY PEOPLE
AND I'VE BEEN HAVING THE MOST
OBSCENE FANTASIES ABOUT YOU.

LADY? HEY! I SAID I CAN'T
FIND THE SPORTS ILLUS-
TRATED SWIMSUIT ISSUE.

MEANWHILE...

JANIS, COME HELP ME
CARRY THE PICNIC TABLE
OUT OF THE GARAGE.

I CAN'T. I'LL GET
ALL MUSCLEY. PLUS I
JUST DID MY NAILS.

Y'KNOW, THIS
IS GETTING
OLD.

DR. TAUBMAN SAID IT'S
CRUCIAL AT THIS STAGE
THAT I NOT BECOME
TOO MASCULINE.

MADDY?
MADELEINE, ARE
YOU THERE?

JANIS, MOVE IT! YOU'RE ON
MY LAST NERVE WITH THE BIMBO
ROUTINE. WOMEN ARE STRONG
AND CAPABLE, NOT JUST
OBJECTS OF DESIRE.

OKAY, OKAY!
NO NEED TO
GO ALL ALICE
WALKER ON ME.

SISTER-
HOOD IS
POWERFUL!

I LIKED HER BETTER WHEN SHE WAS TAKING
THE BOY HORMONE-INHIBITORS, AND BEFORE
SHE STARTED ON THE GIRL HORMONES.

...HASN'T MADE US
SECURE ENOUGH,
SAYS BUSH

BUT RESTARTING
ARMS RACE WITH
RUSSIA MIGHT DO
TRICK

Are You My Mother?

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SYDNEY'S JIG IS UP.

LOOK, EXCEPT FOR THAT ONE TIME AT THE NARRATIVE CONFERENCE, IT'S BEEN PURELY VIRTUAL.

WELL, EXCEPT FOR THAT OTHER TIME AT THE MLA CONVENTION.

I JUST DON'T GET IT! WHAT IS SO EROTICALLY COMPELLING ABOUT THAT GNARLED LITTLE SHREW? YOU NEED TO FIGURE OUT YOUR FIXATION ON UNAVAILABLE OLDER WOMEN IN POSITIONS OF AUTHORITY!

510

FIVE SUPREME COURT JUSTICES TODAY WENT ON A WILDING SPREE...

OH. BY THE WAY, I CAN'T GO TO COUPLES COUNSELING TONIGHT. DEAN HAVERSTICK SIGNED ME UP TO ROW ON HER DRAGON BOAT CREW.

THE LAWLESS GANG OVERTURNED PRECEDENT, TORCHED INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS, EVISCERATED LANGUAGE...

MEANWHILE... HOW'S THE SEPARATION GOING?

DO YOU HAVE ANY PLANS FOR TOMORROW NIGHT?

NO. D'YOU WANT TO DO SOMETHING?

...AND DEFECATED ON WIDELY VALUED SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC POLICIES OF THE LAST CENTURY.

OH. NO, I MEAN, I WAS GONNA GO SEE THE MICHAEL MOORE MOVIE WITH GLORIA. AND RAFFI HAS THAT ALL-DAY FIELD TRIP SO SOMEONE NEEDS TO PICK HIM UP AT SEVEN.

WHAT'S GOING ON WITH YOU TWO?

NOTHING! UM, D'YOU WANT TO COME TOO? MAYBE CARLOS COULD GET RAFFI.

BECAUSE I CAN'T KEEP LIVING HERE IF YOU'RE INVOLVED WITH SOMEONE. THAT WAS OUR AGREEMENT!

H'LO?

OH, I'M SORRY. I MUST HAVE THE WRONG NUMBER.

RING!

THE DANGEROUS Book for Boys

RING! RING!

RAFF! ANSWER THE PHONE!

NO, HANG ON. IT'S THE RIGHT NUMBER!

IT'S MO!

MO?

GOD! WHEN DID RAFFI'S VOICE CHANGE?

IT'S BEEN HAPPENING GRADUALLY. KIND OF LIKE THE DISINTEGRATION OF MY ENTIRE LIFE. GOD, I CAN'T TAKE ONE MORE DAY OF THIS. I'M SO GLAD YOU CALLED.

OH, UH. SURE. I JUST WANTED TO CHECK IN AND SEE HOW YOU WERE DOING.

summer of vice

8/8

511

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WHAT ARE OUR FRETFUL FRIENDS UP TO THIS LAZY AUGUST SUNDAY?

NO GOOD, APPARENTLY.

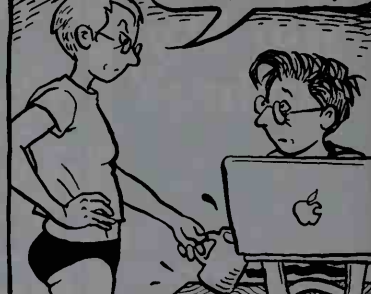
EXPLORING S/M

WHAT ARE YOU DOING ON MY COMPUTER?

READING YOUR EMAILS WITH MADELEINE.



HOW VERY DICK CHENEY OF YOU. WILL I BE RENDERED TO A BLACK SITE IN ROMANIA AFTER BRUNCH?



YOU TOLD HER YOU LOVED HER.

MO, THAT'S JUST A FIGURE OF SPEECH! I LOVE YOU.



SABBATH-BREAKING

DO YOU REALLY WANT IT?

YES.



ARE YOU SURE YOU'RE READY?

YES! YES! DO IT!



OKAY, BETH. WE ACCEPT THEIR COUNTEROFFER.

BUT THEY'RE STILL GOING TO FIX THE LEAKY DOWNSTAIRS TOILET, RIGHT?



PREACHING AND NOT PRACTICING

MO, WHY DO YOU STAY WITH HER WHEN SHE TREATS YOU LIKE THAT?

PROBABLY FOR THE SAME REASON YOU KEEP LIVING WITH TONI EVEN THOUGH YOU'RE MAKING EACH OTHER MISERABLE.



HELL, PROBABLY FOR THE SAME REASON THE BUSH ADMINISTRATION CLINGS TO THEIR IRAQ POLICY.



I HAVE TO DISAGREE WITH YOU THERE. I'M PRETTY SURE HALLIBURTON'S NOT MAKING A CENT OFF THE IMPLSION OF MY LIFE.

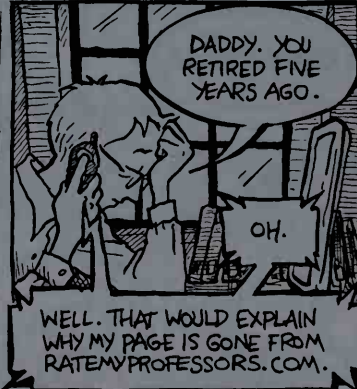
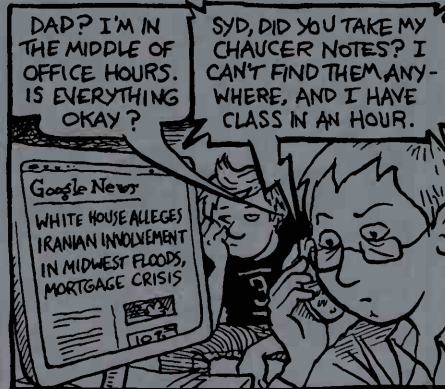
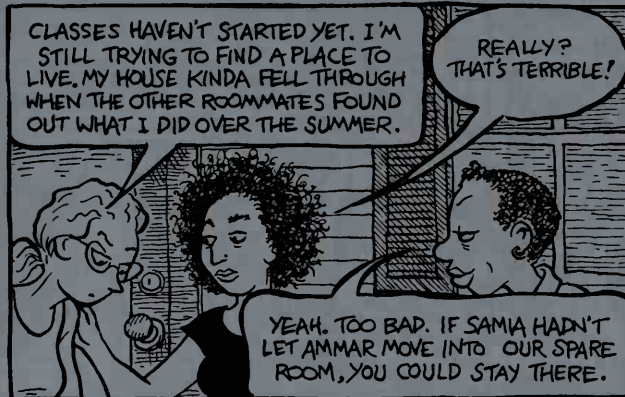
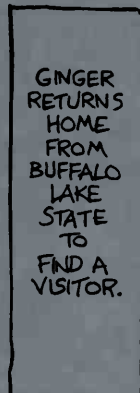
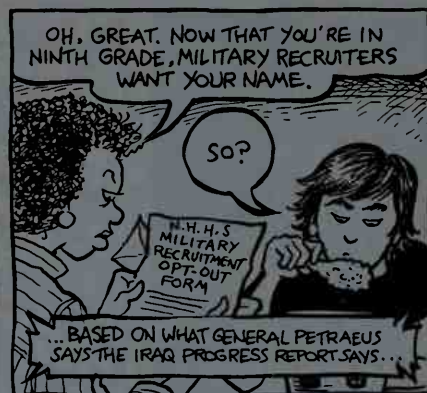
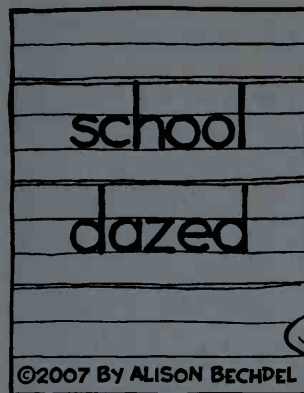


LIVING IN A DREAM.

SO THIS IS REALLY IT. I KNOW IT'S HARD, BUT TRUST ME, NO ONE'S SADDER THAN I AM. I'LL BE MOVING RIGHT AFTER MY CLOSING ON THE THIRTIETH.



OH. I KINDA THOUGHT YOU'D BE OUT SOONER. I'M EXPANDING OUR OFFICES INTO YOUR ROOM NOW THAT THE MOVEMENT'S FINALLY GAINING SOME TRACTION.



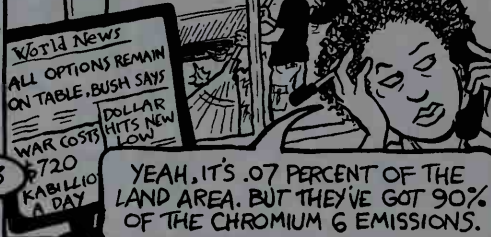
fortunate fall



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THE PLANET'S ON A GREASED POLE TO HELL... BUT IS PERSONAL PARADISE LOST FOR OUR PLUCKY PALS?

10/3



World News
ALL OPTIONS REMAIN
ON TABLE. BUSH SAYS
DOLLAR HITS NEW
LOW
WAR COSTS
\$720
KABILLIO
A DAY

YEAH, IT'S .07 PERCENT OF THE
LAND AREA. BUT THEY'VE GOT 90%
OF THE CHROMIUM 6 EMISSIONS.

* SIGH. *

LOOK, I KNOW THIS IS
BORING. BUT RICHARD
SAID WE NEED TO DO
STUFF TOGETHER.

PICK YOUR
OWN

I'M SORRY I CAN'T SIT AROUND
PROBLEMATIZING POSITIONALITY
IN "THE TURN OF THE SCREW," OR
WHATEVER THE HELL IT IS YOU DO
WITH MADELEINE.

MO, THAT'S
NOT WHAT
I WANT.

I'M SORRY I CAN'T SIT AT HOME
KNITTING ANTIMACASSARS, OR
WHATEVER IT IS YOU WANT ME TO
DO WITH YOU.

THAT'S
NOT WHAT I
WANT!

BUT I LOVE THAT YOU
KNOW WHAT AN ANTI-
MACASSAR IS.

ISN'T THAT
THE BEST WORD
EVER?

I DUNNO.
BETTER THAN
UNCTUOUS?

HMM. OR
ISTHMUS?

DIRNDL.

SYZGY!

OH GOD!
SYZGY!

GARY, I GOTTA GO SPEND SOME TIME WITH MY
EX AND THE KID... YEAH, WE'RE STILL LIVING
TOGETHER.... I KNOW, IT'S NUTS. IT KEEPS US
FROM MOVING ON WITH OUR LIVES. BUT WHAT
CAN YOU DO IN THIS HOUSING MARKET?

BREAKING NEWS
FAMILY VALUES
SENATOR
FOUND IN
MISSIONARY
POSITION WITH
OWN WIFE

HEY!

COWABUNGA!

MEANWHILE, IN THE BUSHES...

THEN AGAIN, I'VE ALWAYS
BEEN FOND OF PAROXYSM.

SCARY PROSPECTS

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514

10/31

MO! SYDNEY!
HAPPY HALLO-
WEEN!

EXCELLENT HILLARY
COSTUME, SPARROW!
VERY CREEPY.

I JUST GOT HOME FROM
WORK. THIS IS WHAT I
WEAR NOW THAT I'M LOB-
BYING AND FUNDRAISING
FOR NARAL ALL DAY.

HEY! HOW
COME YOU
GUYS DIDN'T
DRESS UP?

HEY
LOIS.

WE DID. I'M A
VICTIM OF THE
BREAST CANCER
INDUSTRY.

AND I'M A GOOD GERMAN,
STANDING IDLY BY AS MY
COUNTRY PERPETRATES
ATROCITIES IN MY NAME. I
LOOK LIKE EVERYONE ELSE.

I BETTER GO
TURN UP THE
MUSIC.

NICE
PARCEL.

LOOK 'OO'S 'ERE, FLEUR! OFFER
OUR FRIENDS A COCKROACH
CLUSTER! BUTTERBEER?

NICE HARRY
POTTER
OUTFIT, MO.

SHUT UP,
JANIS.

HI! I'M A PRO-
GRESSIVE! SIGN
MY IMPEACHMENT
PETITION?

CAN I INTEREST
YOU IN OUR
MAGAZINE?

JESUS, GINGER! YOU SCARED
THE CRAP OUTTA ME.

SAMIA?

WE'RE THE DAUGHTERS OUR
PARENTS ALWAYS WANTED.
HAVE YOU MET MY HUSBAND?

SO DO YOU MISS HAVING
GINGER AROUND NOW
THAT SHE AND SAMIA
GOT THEIR OWN PLACE?

YEAH, IT SUCKS. THIS USED
TO BE A GROUP HOUSE-
HOLD. NOW IT'S SPARROW
AND STU'S ROLE-REVERSED
NUCLEAR FAMILY CIRCUS.

HEY, I HEARD
ABOUT YOU
AND TONI. YOU
DON'T LOOK
SO GOOD.

I'M NOT DOING
SO GOOD. I
GOTTA GET
OUT OF THAT
HOUSE.

THERE'S A ROOM TO
LET AT THE HOME FOR
WAYWARD ADULTS.
JUST SAY THE WORD.

just
say
yes

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515

IT'LL BE BETTER
THIS WAY, YOU'LL
SEE.

AM I GONNA HAVE
TO SLEEP THERE?

NO. EVENTUALLY I'LL
GET MY OWN PLACE WITH
A ROOM FOR YOU. THIS
IS JUST TEMPORARY.

GOOD. 'CAUSE
THOSE PEOPLE
ARE WEIRD.

RAF, YOU LOVE
LOIS AND STUART
AND SPARROW.

THEY'RE STILL
WEIRD.

WELL, YEAH.
BUT IN A GOOD
WAY.

Nothing.
Whatev.

NOV 13 7:20
That wuz sum
xtreme weed.
RU still high?

WHAT TH'...
RAFFI!

NOV 13 6:58 PM
I am the ganja
master!!!!

NOV 13 6:34 PM
UR sick bro.
LMAO.

MEANWHILE, IN ANOTHER FAMILY...

MY INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS SEM-
INAR IS SO FRUSTRATING. YOU'D THINK
BY GRAD SCHOOL PEOPLE WOULD
HAVE SEEN THE LIGHT OF REALISM.

... BUT NO, THEY'RE
ALL LIVING IN A FUZZY
DREAM OF PEACE AND
INTERNATIONAL LAW.

UH, CYNTHIA,
WE'RE GONNA
TURN IN EARLY.

OH. OKAY. I'LL
BE UP LATE WITH
THUCYDIDES.

GOD, WE'RE
NEVER ALONE!

SHE NEVER GOES OUT,
NEVER GETS DRUNK
OR HIGH. NOT TO
MENTION LAID.

THIS IS ONE
TROUBLED
KID.

BUT YOU
SPIED
ON ME.

YOUR MYSPACE PAGE WAS
JUST SITTING THERE. I
THINK YOU WANTED TO TELL
US, AND I'M GLAD YOU DID.

YOU'RE TOO YOUNG
TO SMOKE POT, RAF.
END OF STORY.

YOU
SMOKED
POT.

AND LOOK AT ME NOW.
DIVORCED PARENT OF A
JUVENILE DELINQUENT.

PLUS
YOU SUCK AT
HALO 3.

FAILED STATE

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CLARICE IS FEELING A MITE HOMESICK.

IS YOUR ROOM OKAY? DID YA FIGURE OUT THE WIFI?

YEAH, I'M ALL HOOKED UP. IT'S KINDA COLD IN HERE, THOUGH.

11/28

516

OH, WE KEEP THE THERMOSTAT AT 64. YOU'LL GET USED TO IT. JUST PUT ON A HAT.

SPARROW'S WORKING LATE AND LOIS IS OVER AT JASMINE'S, SO IT'S JUST GONNA BE US FOR DINNER.

PAKISTAN

...UNDER THE STATE OF EMERGENCY, GENERAL MUSHARRAF HAS DISMISSED THE SUPREME COURT AND DETAINED...

KINDA REFRESHING, ISN'T IT, TO SEE SOMEONE COME STRAIGHT OUT AND TELL PEOPLE HE'S SUSPENDING HIS COUNTRY'S CONSTITUTION?!

CAN YOU GRAB MY KASHA VARNISHKES?

SHORTLY...

UH... PLEASE PASS THE SALT.

SORRY. NO SALT, SOY SAUCE, OR COFFEE. WE'RE TRYING TO EAT LOCAL ALL WINTER. YOU'LL GET USED TO IT.

LOCALVORE

SO, I'M SORRY THINGS DIDN'T WORK OUT BETWEEN YOU AND TONI. Y'KNOW. I'VE NEVER REGRETTED MAKING MY FAMILY MY TOP PRIORITY. HEY, I HAVE AN IDEA!

LOCALVORE

WHY DON'T YOU INVITE TONI AND RAFFI TO OUR SOLSTICE RITUAL!

I WANT FROSTED FRUIT BATS.

SWEETIE, I EXPLAINED TO YOU, THAT CEREAL COMES FROM THOUSANDS OF MILES AWAY.

I WISH I WAS FOUSANDS OF MILES AWAY.

KUCINICH 2008

HOLD THAT THOUGHT. I'LL BE RIGHT BACK.

TONI!

HEY. HOW'S IT GOING OVER THERE?

I'M BEING FROZEN, STARVED, PREACHED AT, AND FORCED TO TAKE PART IN A RITUAL! IT COULDN'T BE GOING WORSE!

CAN WE DO THIS LATER? GLORIA AND STELLA ARE HERE FOR DINNER.

OH. OKAY. BYE.

in the
bleak
midwinter

STUART'S SOLSTICE RITUAL IS UNDER WAY...

WHY DID I LET
YOU DRAG ME
TO THIS WIT-
LESS AFFAIR?

BECAUSE YOU'RE STILL
ATONING FOR **YOUR**
WITLESS AFFAIR.

...IT'S THE DARKEST HOUR OF THE YEAR,
POSSIBLY THE DARKEST HOUR OF OUR
NATION. AND THINGS AREN'T LOOKING ANY
TOO BRIGHT FOR THE PLANET, EITHER...

SO CLARICE,
HOW D'YOU LIKE
LIVING HERE?

I'M ECSTATIC. I
CAN'T IMAGINE WHY
YOU MOVED OUT.

517

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UH...IT'S NICER AFFI
CAME TONIGHT. IT
MUSTA BEEN HARD
LEAVING HIM AND TONI.

IT WAS. I'M SORRY,
GINGER. DON'T MIND ME.
I'VE BEEN IN A CLINICAL
DEPRESSION SINCE
DECEMBER 12, 2000.

...PEOPLE CREATED SOLSTICE RITUALS
BECAUSE THEY WERE AFRAID THE SUN
WOULD NEVER COME BACK TO THE SKY.
AND LEMME TELL YA, AFTER SEVEN YEARS
OF BUSH, I KNOW HOW THEY FELT...

THOSE TWO SEEM
BACK ON TRACK. HAS
SYDNEY REALLY QUIT
THAT FOOLISHNESS
WITH MADELEINE?

YEAH. MO FINALLY LAID
DOWN THE LAW. I THINK IT
KINDA TURNED SYDNEY ON.

...AND AS THE LENGTH-
ENING DAYS TRIUMPH
OVER THE DARKNESS,
MAY PEACE TRIUMPH
OVER WAR, MAY...

STUART? D'YOU REALLY WANT
TO APPLY THAT SOLAR MODEL
TO HUMAN BEHAVIOR? AFTER
ALL, DARKNESS TRIUMPHS
OVER THE LIGHT IN JUNE.

UNLESS YOU **MEAN** THAT
WAR IS INEVITABLE, A KIND
OF CYCLICAL, BATAILLEAN
SQUANDERING OF EXCESS
ENERGY - A VIEW WITH WHICH
I'M INCLINED TO AGREE.

I'M JUST
SAYING.

AND NOW I'D LIKE
YOU ALL TO JOIN ME
IN A SONG I'M SURE
YOU KNOW....

♪ HERE COMES
THE SUN, DOO
DO DO DO...

I'M GOING OVER TO
THE DARK SIDE NOW.

WHEN DID YOU
EVER LEAVE THE
DARK SIDE?

have your- self a high def little christmas

12/26

518

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BLOW,
BLOW,
THOU
WINTER
WIND.

JUST
DON'T
KNOCK
OUT THE
CABLE.

YOU'RE GONNA LOVE THIS,
DAD! YOU'LL BE ABLE TO
COUNT JIM LEHRER'S NOSE
HAIRS....WHAT TH'?

YOU DON'T HAVE
THE CABLE BOX
HOOKED UP RIGHT.

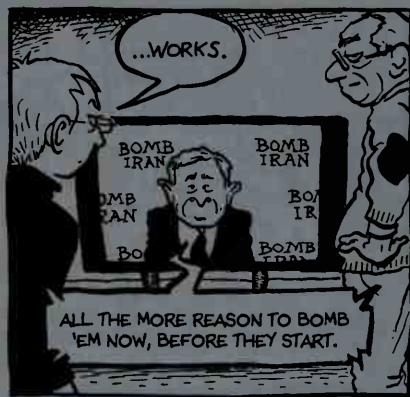
SO JENNIFER...
HOW'S PAUL'S
MEMORY?



HE'S BEEN A LITTLE DEPRESSED,
THAT'S ALL. THAT CAN AFFECT MEM-
ORY. BESIDES, HE MIGHT FORGET A
NAME HERE AND THERE, BUT HE STILL
QUOTES SHAKESPEARE FLAWLESSLY.
IN THAT ANNOYING WAY HE HAS.

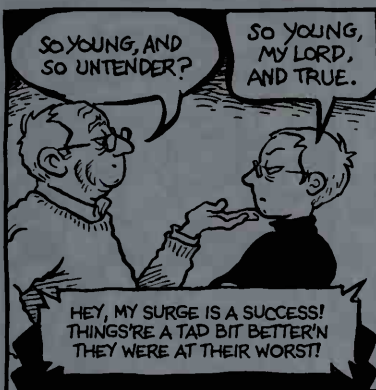


DAD! QUIT MESSING
WITH IT! YOU DON'T UN-
DERSTAND HOW THIS...



SO YOUNG, AND
SO UNTENDER?

SO YOUNG,
MY LORD,
AND TRUE.



HOW SHARPER THAN A
SERPENT'S TOOTH IT IS TO
HAVE A THANKLESS CHILD.



CLARICE IS HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS, TOO. SORT OF.

IF THAT'S ALL THE PRES-
ENTS, I'M GOING OVER TO
BILLY'S. I WANNA SEE WHAT
HALO 3 LOOKS LIKE IN HD.

WELL... GUESS I
SHOULD BE GET-
TING BACK TO THE
BOARDING HOUSE.



NOO! I WANT
YOU TO BE HERE
FOR DINNER!

SURE, WHY DON'T YOU
STAY. IT WOULD GIVE ME AN
EXCUSE NOT TO GO TO THE
MCLAUGHLIN-FARKASES'
OPEN HOUSE.

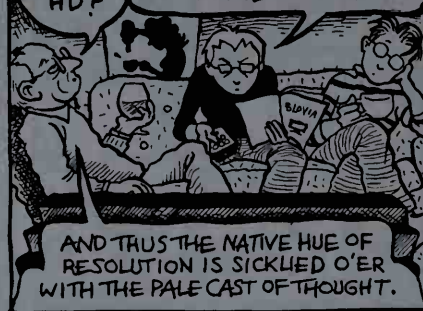


YAY! SEE
YA LATER!



HD?
OR NOT
HD?

DAD, SHUT UP. I'M TRYING
TO FIGURE OUT HOW TO
CALIBRATE THIS THING.



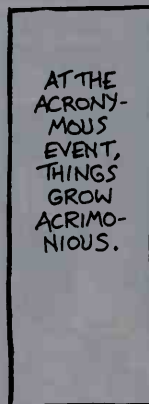
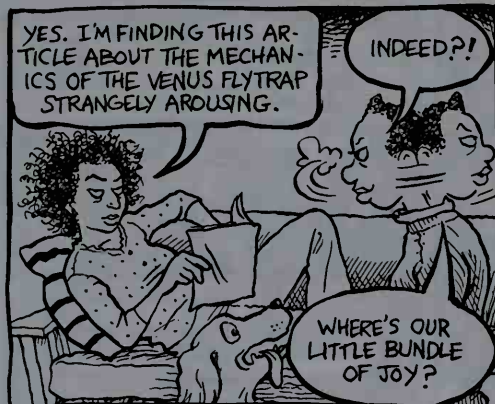
THE FUNDAMENTAL THINGS

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©AT AN LGBTQA GRAD STUDENT MIXER...

©AND IN AN ACRONYMLESS LIVING ROOM...

519



come-back Kids

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DID YOU SEE THE LATEST VIDEO I POSTED? OF J.R. DOING HER CHINESE FLASH CARDS? I THINK SHE HAS A REAL KNACK FOR LANGUAGES.

1/23

520

SNURRP!

THAT'S GREAT, SWEETIE. BUT I DON'T HAVE TIME TO CHECK YOUR BLOG EVERY TWENTY MINUTES. I'M PREPARING MY COMMENTS FOR THIS PANEL TONIGHT ON THE HYDE AMENDMENT.

HYDE:
30 YEARS IS
ENOUGH!
FUND
ABORTION

DAMN, I FORGOT ABOUT THAT! I HAD A SPECIAL DINNER PLANNED!

MEANWHILE...

SO DO YOU WANT TO COME OVER FOR DINNER FRIDAY? STELLA HAS A SLEEP-OVER.

OH. GOD, I REALLY HAVE TO GET STARTED ON MY TAXES. IT'S GONNA BE SO COMPLICATED SORTING THINGS OUT THIS YEAR...

NETHER HEAVEN'S MIDDLE SCHOOL

THUNK

WELL, AT LEAST THAT'S A NEW ONE.

HUH?

NOW THE NEWS. IRANIAN SPEEDBOATS DELIBERATELY PROVOKED A U.S. NAVY CONVOY IN...

FIRST YOU WERE TRYING TO WORK THINGS OUT WITH CLARICE. THEN YOU BROKE UP, BUT YOU WERE STILL LIVING TOGETHER. NOW SHE'S GONE AND YOU HAFTA DO YOUR TAXES?

...THE GULF OF TONKIN. EXCUSE ME, THE STRAIT OF HORMUZ.

GOD, I'M AN IDIOT.

GLORIA, THINK OF THE KIDS. THEY'VE HAD SO MUCH UPHEAVAL IN THEIR LIVES. THEY CAN'T HANDLE ANY MORE CHANGE RIGHT NOW.

I BET WE'LL LIVE AT YOUR HOUSE BECAUSE IT'S BIGGER. AND SINCE I'M THE ONE MOVING, YOU'LL HAVE TO BE NICE AND GIVE ME YOUR ROOM AND YOUR TV. YOU CAN HAVE THE GUEST ROOM.

OR WE COULD LIVE AT YOUR HOUSE AND I'D GET YOUR ROOM AND YOU COULD SLEEP IN THE CUPBOARD UNDER THE STAIRS.

DUMBASS.

SMEGMAFACE.

MUCUSOID MOUTHBREATH.

LATER, AT THE BLOGGERS...

YOU SEEM HAPPIER, CLARICE. NO DOUBT IT'S OUR LOCALVORE DIET.

ACTUALLY, I AM FEELING BETTER. IT WAS SO RIGHT TO MAKE A CLEAN BREAK WITH TONI. TWO MONTHS AGO I FELT LIKE MY LIFE WAS OVER, BUT NOW I FEEL THIS SENSE OF FREEDOM AND POSSIBILITY...

SWEETIE, USE YOUR WORDS.

SCREECH!

WHOA. IS THAT ACTUAL WINE? OR SOMETHING YOU MADE IN THE TUB?

IT'S LOCAL RHUBARB WINE AND IT'S NOT FOR YOU. TONIGHT I'M TELLING SPARROW I'M READY TO HAVE ANOTHER BABY.

DADDY IS A DODOHEAD!

sufferin'
suffrage

2/6

521

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HMM.

WHAT IF WE
CONDUCTED
OUR EVERY-
DAY LIVES
THE SAME
WAY WE DO
OUR
ELECTORAL
SYSTEM?

WITH TAUTOLOGICAL REASONING...

THE LIVING ROOM
WOULD LOOK PERFECT
IN AUBERGINE!

I KNOW. BUT I'M
VOTING FOR TAUPE
BECAUSE IT'S MORE
ELECTABLE.

WITH FRONT-LOADED
PRIMARIES...

COME ON, J.R. **Focus!** WE DON'T
HAVE TIME FOR YOUR "INDEPENDENT"
INTERESTS TO EMERGE. IF YOU HAVE
ANY HOPE OF COMPETING SUCCESS-
FULLY WITH YOUR PEERS, YOU NEED
TO DECLARE A MAJOR **NOW**.

BY MEANS OF AN ELECTORAL COLLEGE...

SINCE I WAS BORN IN NORTH DAKOTA, MY VOTE'S
PROPORTIONALLY MORE INFLUENTIAL THAN BOTH
OF YOURS COMBINED. THEREFORE, WE'RE
WATCHING "GOSSIP GIRL."



LABORING UNDER THE DELUSION WE HAVE FREE CHOICE.

ENTRUSTING VITAL PROCEDURES TO SHODDY TECHNOLOGY...

REALLY?
ANYTHING I
WANT?

ABSOLUTELY. ANYTHING IN THIS
STORE. THAT'S UNDER \$25. AND
ISN'T TOO BAGGY. GO CRAZY.

AWESOME.

OLD
MAYBE
SAFE

Nation
NBC/G.E.
BARS OFF-
MESSAGE
KUCINICH
COMBATE

OF COURSE THERE'S NO REAL WAY TO BE SURE
THE SCAN REFLECTS YOUR ACTUAL BRAIN, AND
THERE'S A ONE IN TEN CHANCE THE MACHINE
WILL FAIL ALTOGETHER. BUT HOP ON UP HERE!

SOUNDS
GOOD,
HUH
DADDY?

TIPS O' THE NIB TO VAL ROHT & KATIE SULLIVAN



...AND JUST HOPING THERE ARE NO ALTERCATIONS.

BUT I DID
PAY! ONLINE! TWO
WEEKS AGO!

YOU'RE S.O.L.,
SISTER. WE GOT NO
RECORD OF IT.

CUTOFF
NOTICE

BUSH V.
GORE FOR
DUMMIES

VIOLENCE FOLLOWS
DISPUTED ELECTION
IN KENYA

DEMANDING
CHANGE!

WORKING
FOR
CHANGE!

HOPING
FOR
CHANGE!

AND...

IT LOOKS PRETTY
MUCH THE SAME AS
BEFORE.

HUH. WE COULD
TRY REARRANGING THE
DECK CHAIRS.



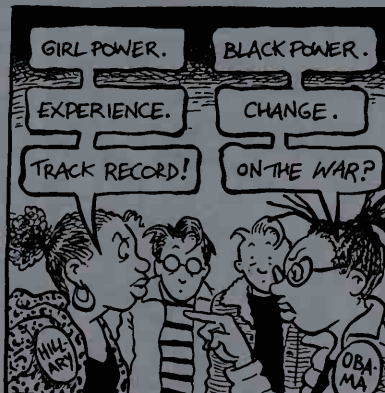
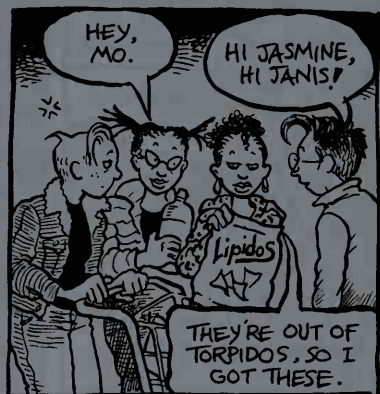
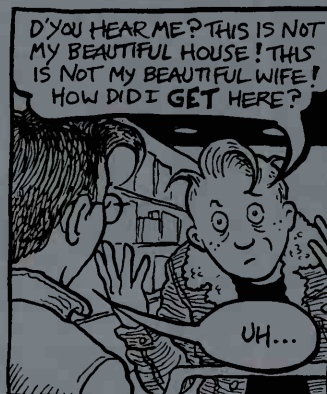
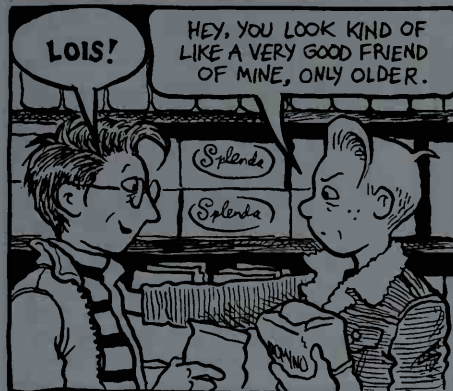
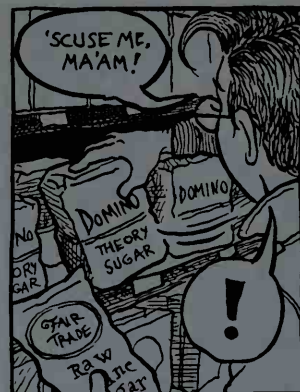
decisions decisions

2/20

OH,
THE
RAREFIED
CHOICES
FACED
BY THE
MODERN
CONSUMER...

522

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BEDROOM FARCE

(A TIP O' THE NIB
TO DR. SEUSS)

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Sleep
thoughts
are
spreading
through-
out the
whole
land.

3/5

523

The time for night-brushing
of teeth is at hand.



WHO'S
THAT? IT'S
LATE!

CLARICE CALL-
ING TO KVETCH.



The number of sleepers is steadily growing.
Bed is where more and more
people are going.

Ninety-nine zillion,
nine-trillion and two
creatures are sleeping.
So... how about you?



SWEETIE! WAKE UP! WE AGREED
WE WERE GONNA TALK.

TIRE.
TOO TIRE TO
HAVE A BABY.



BUT WHAT ABOUT
ADOPTION?



STUART, YOU'RE JUST FEELING LOST
NOW THAT J.R.'S GETTING MORE INDE-
PENDENT. MAYBE YOU SHOULD GO
BACK TO WORK. C'MERE, LIE DOWN.



DON'T PA-
TRONIZE ME.

WHAP!

OW! WHEN ARE WE GONNA
WEAN HER OUTTA THIS BED?

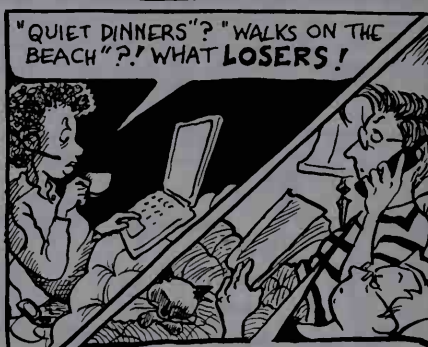
It's a
great
night
for sleep-
ing.
It
must
be the
air...

SHE'LL WEAN HERSELF WHEN
SHE'S GOOD AND READY!



TELL ME, MO. WHAT
ARE THESE PEOPLE
THINKING?

"QUIET DINNERS"? "WALKS ON THE
BEACH"? WHAT LOSERS!



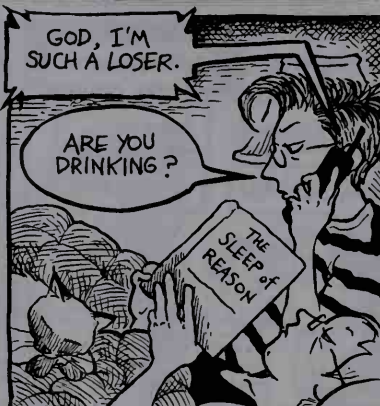
CLARICE, PERSONAL ADS ARE
A FORM OF MASS DELUSION.

IT'S WEIRD SLEEPING IN THIS
ROOM. THIS IS WHERE I HAD
THAT AFFAIR WITH GINGER
TWENTY YEARS AGO, REMEM-
BER? WHEN TONI WAS AT
HER GRANDMA'S FUNERAL?



GOD, I'M
SUCH A LOSER.

ARE YOU
DRINKING?



DOES RHU-
BARB WINE
COUNT?

GO TO
SLEEP.



Good
night.

parental unit

OUR CAREER GALS HAVE TAKEN THE SAME BUS AFTER WORK.

YOU NEED TO TALK TO HIM EVERY DAY! I CAN'T DO THIS ON MY OWN.

TONI, I DO TALK TO HIM EVERY DAY! I SAID I'D CALL BACK. HE WAS WITH HIS FRIENDS...

524

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HIS STONER FRIENDS. OH. I GOTTA GO, GLORIA'S CALLING.

WHAT-EVER.

TROUBLE?

NOT AS MUCH AS I HAD LIVING THERE. I KINDA LIKE PARENTING VIA REMOTE.

SOUNDS APPEALING.

DON'T GET ME WRONG, I MISS RAFFI. BUT I DON'T MISS THE NUCLEAR FAMILY MADNESS.

IT'S SO NICE TO KNOW I HAVE THE WHOLE EVENING TO MYSELF. NO RELATIONSHIP DRAMA! NO KID ANGST!

WHY NOT? YOU DID IT!

THAT WAS A TOTALLY DIFFERENT SITUATION. PLUS I WAS IN COLLEGE! YOU'RE ONLY SIXTEEN!

YOU'RE SUCH A HYPOCRITE! HOW DO YOU EXPECT ANYTHING TO EVER CHANGE?

STOMP STOMP SLAM!

UH... DRUGS? OR SEX?

NEITHER.

BOTH.

SHE WANTS TO JOIN THE SPEAKER'S BUREAU OF THE QUEER YOUTH GROUP AND GO INTO SCHOOLS TO TALK ABOUT BEING TRANS.

UHH... SO WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?

WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?

GOD, A HIGH SCHOOL'S THE LAST PLACE YOU'D WANT TO SEE JANIS.

THANK YOU, CLARICE. I'M GLAD SOMEONE GETS IT.

UHH... SURE, JASMINE.

525

OUR
RESOURCEFUL
FRIENDS
HAVE
A FEW
TIPS ON
WEATHERING
THE
FINANCIAL
PANDE-
MONIUM!

Risk

THE GAME
OF GLOBAL
DOMINATION

OH, YEAH, AND THANK GOD
THE WAR IS PAYING FOR
ITSELF, LIKE THE NEOCONS
SAID IT WOULD.

HEALTHCARE
OUT OF REACH
INFRASTRUCTURE
INTEGRATING
CENT LOANS
PEAR

**IRAQ WAR
PRICE TAG:**
\$3,000,000

YEAH,
TO T.G.I.
FRIDAY'S!

HE ADDRESSED THE AMERICAN PEOPLE AS IF THEY WERE INTELLIGENT ADULTS, NOT ONCE RESORTING TO AN EMPTY SOUND BITE.

FIVE YEARS
INTO IRAQ...
★
9,995 TO GO

I'M JOHN MC CAIN
AND I APPROVE
THIS MESSAGE.

rent

AS THE CAMPAIGN SEASON DRAGS ON, CIVILITY IS BEING STRETCHED TO A GOSSAMER FILAMENT.

4/16

526

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ANTIWAR ACTIVISTS GROW BELLCLOSE.

OBAMA DOESN'T HAVE THE EXPERIENCE TO BEAT MCCAIN. AND BELIEVE ME, ONCE THE BUSHIES START A WAR IN IRAN, WE'RE GONNA **NEED** TO BEAT MCCAIN.

SPARROW, ARE YOU ON OXYCONTIN? RED STATERS HATE HILLARY WITH THE WHITE HOT PASSION OF A BILLION BILIOUS RUSH LIMBAUGHS. THEY'LL MAKE MINCEMEAT OF HER.



LOOK. I DON'T EVEN CARE THAT HILLARY'S SUCH A HAWK. WE NEED A WOMAN PRESIDENT BECAUSE IT'LL EMPOWER GIRLS TO BE LEADERS, AND THAT'S OUR ONLY HOPE FOR **EVER** DISMANTLING THE PATRIARCHY.

EXES ARE GETTING EX-IER.

GOD, MADELEINE, CONDOLEEZZA RICE IS A WOMAN. WOULD YOU VOTE FOR **HER**? I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU'VE FALLEN PREY TO THE ESSENTIALIST FALLACY!

AT LEAST I HAVEN'T FALLEN PREY TO THE **SAVIOR** FANTASY. IF I HEAR ONE MORE PERSON WAX RHAPSODIC ABOUT HOW OBAMA INSPIRES THEM, I'LL COUGH UP A GIANT HAIRBALL OF **HOPE**.



A TIP-O'-THE-NIB TO HOLLY RAE TAYLOR



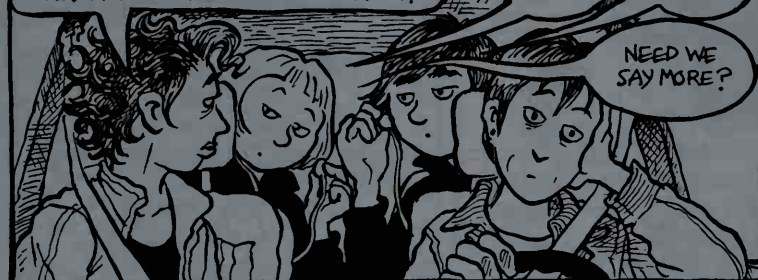
CHILDREN ARE DIVIDED AGAINST THEIR PARENTS.

I JUST WANT TO UNDERSTAND. IF THEIR POSITIONS ARE VIRTUALLY IDENTICAL, WHY ARE YOU SO SOLD ON OBAMA?

HE'S A MAC!

SHE'S A PC!

NEED WE SAY MORE?



PROFESSIONALS ARE NOT SO PROFESSIONAL.

I JUST CAN'T SUPPORT HER, NOT AFTER SHE AND BILL SACRIFICED THE WELL-BEING OF MILLIONS OF KIDS AND SINGLE MOMS WITH THEIR "WELFARE REFORM" PLAN.



BUT WHAT ABOUT WHAT SHE TRIED TO DO FOR HEALTH CARE? WHY DOES OBAMA GET THE BENEFIT OF THE DOUBT JUST BECAUSE HE'S AN UNKNOWN QUANTITY?

HOW WILL IT ALL **END**?

GIRLIE MAN, MANLY GIRL. IT'S ALL THE SAME TO ME.

J.R., SING THE SONG I TAUGHT YOU.

YES WE CAN! YES WE CA-A-N!

I NEED TO GO LOOK AT THIS BUT I THINK YOU HAVE A YEAST INFECTION.



sing,
cuccu

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527

SUMER
IS ICUMEN
IN.
BUT IT
DOESN'T
LOOK LIKE
OUR
FRENETIC
FRIENDS
WILL BE
GETTING
MUCH OF
A FUR-
LOUGH.

SYD'S DONE READING...BUT NOT WRITING.

In conclusion, I think the main factor underlying
the spread of the protestant work ethic has been
the fact that it's such a widely pervasive concept.

FINITO!

HEY, DR. K. I WAS HOPING
TO TAKE THE SOCIAL CON-
STRUCTION OF LEISURE
FROM YOU NEXT FALL, BUT
IT'S NOT LISTED.

UKOWSKI
Nok
Nok

SORRY, TIFFANY. NO
LEISURE NEXT YEAR. I'M
GOING ON SABBATICAL
TO WRITE A BOOK.

I'M
MEGAN.

Toc
Toc

WHATEVER.

LOIS IS A FRESH AIR FIEND...

WHERE IS
THAT THING?

ARE YOU SURE YOU
CAN'T COME TO CAMP
TRANS WITH US THE
FIRST WEEK IN AUGUST?

Misc.
gear

I'D LIKE TO, BABE, BUT I
DON'T HAVE ENOUGH VACATION
TIME TO DO THAT AND PRO-
TEST AT BOTH CONVENTIONS.

ESPECIALLY IF
YOU END UP MAIMED
OR IN JAIL.

OR BOTH. AH,
HERE WE GO.

IF STU CAN'T HAVE A SECOND CHILD...

NO, THERE'S NO
ROOM FOR YOUR
POOL, SWEETIE.

WE NEED THAT SPACE FOR THE TOMA-
TOES IF WE WANT TO BE COMPLETELY
FOOD SELF-SUFFICIENT THIS YEAR.

BELIEVE ME,
YOU'LL THANK ME
IN FEBRUARY.

MO'S GOT HER WORK CUT OUT FOR HER.

HERE'S TO
YOUR SAB-
BATICAL!

AND A PULITZER FOR THE
CONVERSION OF A DEADLY
SIN: FROM SLOTH TO
MODERN LEISURE.

A SCHOLARLY NIB CITATION TO VAL ROHY!

WHAT A LIFE.
NOTHING TO
DO BUT
RELAX, AND
WRITE!

HEY, I SENT IN THE
SECURITY DEPOSIT FOR
THE CABIN ON LAKE
MINNEKOOPA! WE'RE
ALL SET FOR JULY.

WAIT! IS THERE INTERNET
ACCESS? CAN I AT LEAST USE
MY iPhone? I'VE GOTTA PUMP
OUT A CHAPTER A MONTH
TO MAKE THIS DEADLINE!

CAFE
CUCKOO

CAN I GET
A SABBATICAL
FROM MY GIRL-
FRIEND?

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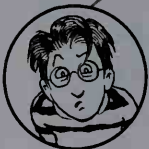
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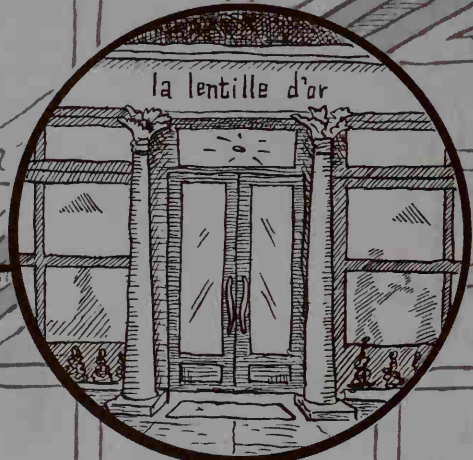
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Alison Bechdel is the author of the best-selling *Fun Home: A Family Tragicomic*, *Time*'s number one Best Book of 2006 and a National Book Critics Circle Award finalist. Since 1983 Bechdel has been chronicling the lives of a small universe of cartoon characters in *Dykes to Watch Out For*, named by the *Utne Reader* as "one of the greatest hits of the twentieth century." She lives and draws in Vermont and maintains a website at www.dykestowatchoutfor.com.

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