

MEG

AUTHENTIC HEART



BY APEX AURA ART

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**WARNING: CONTAINS BIG BELLIES, AMAZING BURPS,
AND ZERO SHAME ABOUT IT. 😏**

READ AT YOUR OWN CICCLY RISK!

BY APEX AURA ART

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BLUBULL64
BLUEFIRE121
BORA
BROSEPHEROUS
CEH JOTA
CHIPS
CHRISTIAN SCHULTHEISS
CLARP BLARPKISS
COSMOSCASTAWAY
COZMOS
CYRIC
DARKFLAME
DARKNIGHT
DIEGO DUNN-HUMPHREY
DIRTY-DYRAD
DOUBLE02
DUBSTEPROCK
EDWARD WOOD
EL PACHA2
EL VATO
ETHAN REEVES
FISPARI
FLORP ツ
GAMINGCHANNELWSTCOAST
GARRET HAMBY
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JUMBO THE ELEPHANT
JUSTIN JONES SMITH

KEVTRAP05
KILLERINU
KOORELL
LARRY THE LEOPARD
LEO PANZANI
LINCOLN
MACKZACK
MASHTER POTATO
MASON COOPER
MICHAEL HORNSBY
MICHAEL STARK
MRLOCUSON 456
NATHANATOS
NINJA
NOBOD
ODDPLANET
PASTRAMI ENJOYER
REDGRAVE
REG
ROCKDECAY
ROCKY SAVANNAH
SAMUEL
SHATNERFAN42
SLEEPY
SLIPPYSLAPPYANGELEYES
SOUP TASTIC
SPARKS SAGE
SPIDER 710
STAR VOID
STINKBUG
SWIMMER
TEZ
THEONE
THIAGO RODRIGUEZ
TIE-DYE SHYGUY
TOXICJOLT14
UNKNOWN
VINCENT GOMES
WILLIAM WARNOCK
YABOIBLAZE5891
ZORBA

WORCESTER UNIVERSITY, MA

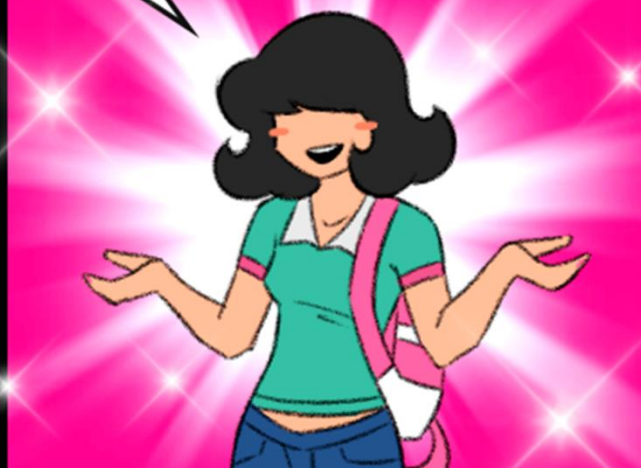


BAARP!

DUDE, AREN'T YOU SUPPOSED TO BURP AFTER EATING? NOPE — SHE DOES IT BEFORE LUNCH. SERIOUSLY, WOMEN MAKE NO SENSE.

YOU MEAN MEG DOESN'T MAKE SENSE, RIGHT? HAHHA...

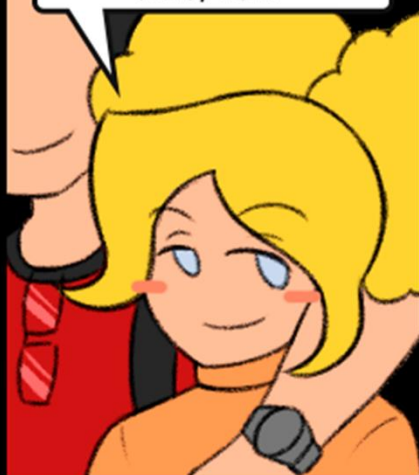
YEAH, YOU GUYS KNOW ME... I WAS BORN WITH THIS NATURAL TALENT! THESE JUST POP OUT WHENEVER—IT'S NOT MY FAULT... HEHEHE...



'NATURAL TALENT'? SOUNDS MORE LIKE A SUPERPOWER! HAHA...

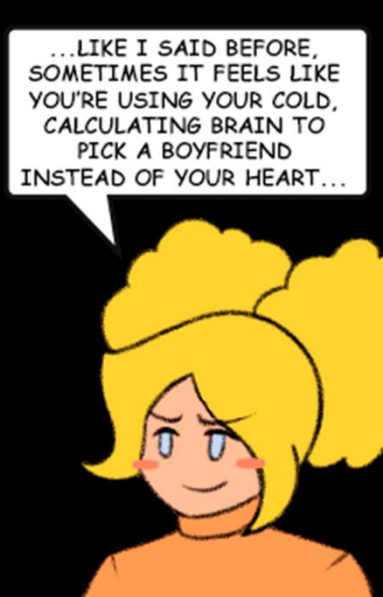


...SO, THE COUNTRY GIRL'S DATING THE FANCY BOY NOW, HUH?



EAH, JUST WHEN EVERYONE THOUGHT YOU AND MY BOY JASON WERE BASICALLY PERFECT TOGETHER, THIS PLATINUM-BLOND GUY SWOOPS IN AND STEALS MEG'S HEART...





MAYBE YOU'RE SAYING THIS BECAUSE YOU THINK I SHOULD'VE GONE WITH JASON... OKAY, WE GOT ALONG REALLY WELL, HE'S SWEET, SUPER FUNNY, AND HE'S GOT SUCH AN EXCITING PERSONALITY... I'LL ADMIT, THERE MIGHT'VE BEEN A CHANCE FOR SOMETHING TO HAPPEN BETWEEN US...



BUT THEN ETHAN SHOWED UP, AND... YOU KNOW... AS AN ADULT, I HAVE TO MAKE TOUGH DECISIONS, AND ETHAN WAS MY CHOICE...



YEAH, YOU SEEM PRETTY SURE ABOUT THAT! IF YOU SAY SO, MAYBE YOU'RE RIGHT! I JUST HOPE YOU FIND HAPPINESS...



THANKS... WELL, I'M MAKING LUNCH AT HIS PLACE TOMORROW, HE'S INVITING SOME FRIENDS! I HOPE THEY LIKE ME... AND MY PIZZAS...



OH, THEY'LL DEFINITELY LIKE YOU! YOU'RE COOL, FRIENDLY, AND A GREAT COOK! THEY'LL LOVE YOU! JUST 'BE YOURSELF,' LIKE YOU ALWAYS SAY!



THANKS! HEHE...❤️



LADIES AND GENTLEMEN! I PRESENT TO YOU THE LATEST ATTRACTION ON THE HILL'S LEGACY MENU, THE TITAN BLAST! IT'S THE BIGGEST BURGER I'VE EVER MADE!



AND CUPCAKE, I KNOW THAT GREEN MAYO'S YOUR KRYPTONITE, SO I WENT ALL OUT ON THIS ONE! IT'S PERFECT FOR SOMEONE WITH A MONSTROUS APPETITE LIKE YOURS! HOPE YOU LIKE IT!



IT'S PERFECT! JASON, YOU'RE THE GREATEST SUPERCHEF IN THE WORLD...





ETHAN'S HOME



HEY, MEG! WELCOME! MAKE YOURSELF AT HOME!



HEY! I BROUGHT THIS CAKE I MADE, IN CASE ANYONE PREFERS SOMETHING SWEET FOR DESSERT! IT'S PASSION FRUIT FLAVOR!



GREAT! WELL, MY FRIENDS WILL BE ARRIVING LATER WITH THEIR GIRLFRIENDS, SO YOU'VE GOT TIME TO MAKE THE PIZZAS! I BOUGHT ALL THE INGREDIENTS YOU ASKED FOR, EVERYTHING'S IN THE KITCHEN!



ALRIGHT!

SMACK!!



WOW! DELICIOUS! HER LIPS FEEL LIKE THEY'RE MADE OF CARAMEL.



WELL, LET ME INTRODUCE YOU TO THE BEST SISTER IN THE WORLD! I THINK YOU MUST HAVE SEEN HER AT THAT PARTY!



GIANNA SALVATORE! MOTIVATIONAL, FUN, AND SHE JUST GRADUATED IN LAW! SHE KNOWS HOW TO LIVEN UP A PARTY LIKE NO ONE ELSE!



HEY! MEG, RIGHT? I SAW YOU AT THE PARTY! I WAS DYING TO MEET MY LITTLE BROTHER'S NEW GIRLFRIEND! NICE TO MEET YOU, MEG! I LOVE YOUR HAIR!



HEHE! THANKS! NICE TO MEET YOU TOO!

AND THAT'S ALESSIA,
MY OTHER SISTER,
THE OLDER ONE...



ALESSIA'S KINDA
OLD-FASHIONED! DOESN'T
LIKE FUN, DOESN'T WANT
ANYONE TO HAVE FUN!
SOMETIMES SHE EVEN ACTS
LIKE MOM...



OH MY GOD... ALL THEY
EVER THINK ABOUT IS
PARTIES, DATING, AND
PUNCH—THEN MORE
PARTIES. WHY CAN'T MY
SIBLINGS EVER GROW UP?



WELL, NICE TO MEET
YOU, GIRLS! UH, DO
YOU LIKE PIZZA?



GIRL! WE'RE ITALIAN
DESCENT, WHAT DO
YOU THINK? PIZZA'S
IN OUR BLOOD!



HAHAHA! GREAT! I'LL MAKE
A FEW EXTRA... AND I
BROUGHT A CAKE! IN CASE
YOU'RE INTERESTED, IT'S
IN THE FRIDGE...



ALRIGHT, MEG, LET'S GO!
LET'S MAKE SOME PAN
DOUGH PIZZAS, NICE
AND FLUFFY WITH AN
EXCELLENT TEXTURE...



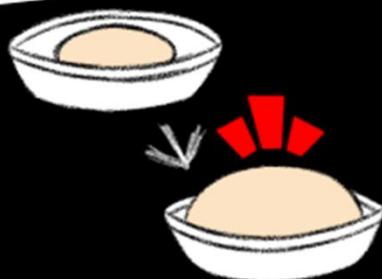
THIS RECIPE'S SUPER SIMPLE: 3 AND
A HALF CUPS OF FLOUR, 1 CUP OF
WARM WATER, 1 TABLESPOON OF
SUGAR, 1 TABLESPOON OF YEAST, 2
TABLESPOONS OF VEGETABLE OIL,
AND HALF A TEASPOON OF SALT. TO
MAKE MORE, JUST MULTIPLY THE
INGREDIENTS PROPORTIONALLY...



KNEAD FOR AT LEAST 10
MINUTES, THE DOUGH
NEEDS TO BE SMOOTH AND
EVEN. THEN LET IT REST...



AFTER THE DOUGH HAS DOUBLED IN SIZE, TIME TO KEEP GOING! I GREASE THE PAN WITH OIL, AND STRETCH THE DOUGH IN THE PAN BY HAND. EACH BATCH OF THIS RECIPE MAKES 2 INDIVIDUAL PAN PIZZAS, AND SINCE I'M MAKING A BUNCH FOR ETHAN'S FRIENDS, I'LL JUST MULTIPLY THE INGREDIENTS...



SO, AFTER SHAPING THE DOUGH IN THE PAN, YOU ADD SAUCE, A LOT OF MOZZARELLA, AND WHATEVER TOPPINGS YOU WANT! PEPPERONI, CHICKEN, MARGHERITA, SHRIMP...



AND VOILÀ! I'VE GOT A PEPPERONI PAN PIZZA, A PERFECT PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN USA AND ITALY!



THE SMELL IS AMAZING! HOPE ETHAN'S FRIENDS LIKE IT!



DING DONG

HEY GUYS! WELCOME...



MEG, THESE ARE MY FRATERNITY BROTHERS, BRANDON AND CRUNCHER, AND THEIR GIRLFRIENDS, OLIVIA AND MIA...



HEY, MEG, RIGHT? ETHAN'S NEW CHEF GIRLFRIEND? I HEARD THERE'S PIZZA! CAN YOU SAVE LIKE FIVE WHOLE ONES FOR ME?



HAHA, CRUNCHER, BEHAVE!

WHAT? I MAY NOT BE A CHEF, BUT I'M DEFINITELY A FOOD ENTHUSIAST! THAT'S WHY I'VE GOT THIS AMAZING BEER BELLY PHYSIQUE!



HAHA, BEER BELLY PHYSIQUE! NICE ONE!



SORRY FOR THE JOKES, MEG, I'M ALL ABOUT THE FUN! NICE TO MEET YOU!

HAHA, NO WORRIES! I LOVE PEOPLE WITH A GOOD SENSE OF HUMOR! THEY BRIGHTEN UP ANY ROOM!



WELL, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, I HOPE YOU ENJOY THE PIZZAS! OFF TO THE TABLE!



YO, THESE PIZZAS ARE AMAZING!

SORRY, BUT I GOTTA SAY IT, THIS PIZZA'S LIKE OLIVIA! BEAUTIFUL, HOT, AND LEAVING ME WANTING MORE!



OH, COME ON! HERE COMES BRANDON AGAIN... HAHA...

BRANDON'S THE ONLY GUY I KNOW WHO CAN MAKE HIS GIRLFRIEND JEALOUS OF A PIZZA!



WHAT CAN I DO? I HAVE A SOFT SPOT FOR MOZZARELLA AND REDHEADS!



WELL, OLIVIA, LOOKS LIKE BRANDON TURNED OUR PIZZA LUNCH INTO A LOVE TRIANGLE! WHAT DO YOU HAVE TO SAY ABOUT THAT?



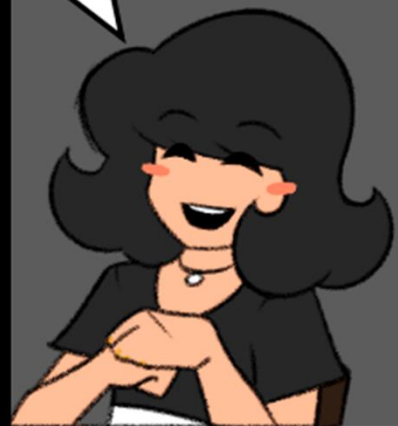
UH... LOOKS LIKE I MIGHT
NEED A PEPPERONI LINGERIE
TO COMPETE WITH THIS
PIZZA! MEG, CAN YOU MAKE
ONE FOR ME WITH LOTS OF
MOZZARELLA?



OHH, HOT!!!
SHE'S GONNA
BE DELICIOUS!

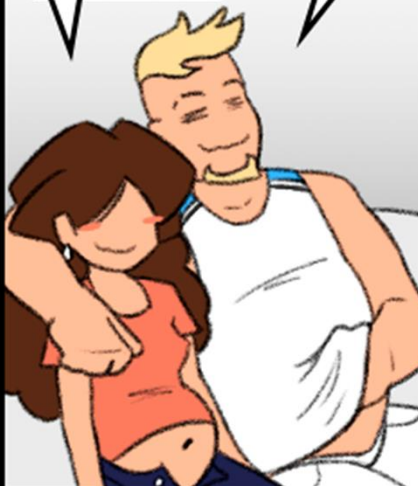


HAHAHA, THESE GUYS ARE
HILARIOUS! WITH PEOPLE
LIKE THEM, THE VIBE IS
ALWAYS LIGHT AND FUN!

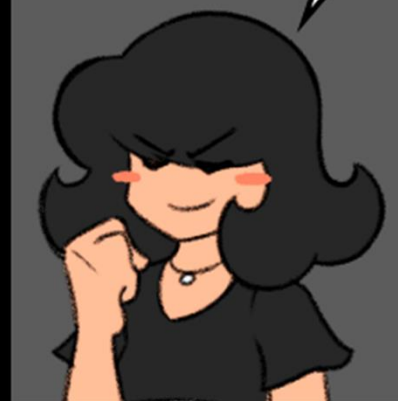


MAN, I CAN'T EAT ANOTHER
BITE! I'M STUFFED!

YO, ME TOO!



HA! UNBUTTONED PANTS
ARE ONE OF THE BIGGEST
SIGNS THAT THE FOOD WAS
GOOD! POINT FOR ME!



HAHAHA! YEAH!

ETHAN, YOUR
GIRLFRIEND IS A
KITCHEN MASTER!



SHE REALLY IS! SHE
EVEN SURPRISED ME!
HAHA...



THANKS, GUYS! I'M GLAD
YOU LIKED IT! I CONFESS
I WAS A BIT NERVOUS
BECAUSE...



BURP!!



OH YEAH!
MY BAD...



HAHAHA! GEEZ
CRUNCHER, BEHAVE!

HAHAHA, COME ON,
CRUNCHER! WE HAVE A
NEW GIRL HERE... AT
LEAST PRETEND YOU HAVE
SOME MANNERS! HAHA...



DON'T WORRY! IT'S FINE! AS
A GOOD COUNTRY GIRL, I'M
ALL FOR FREE BURPS! AND
THAT WAS A REALLY GOOD
ONE, BY THE WAY...

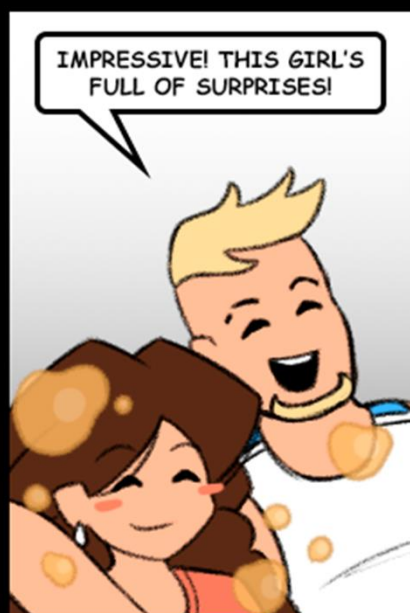


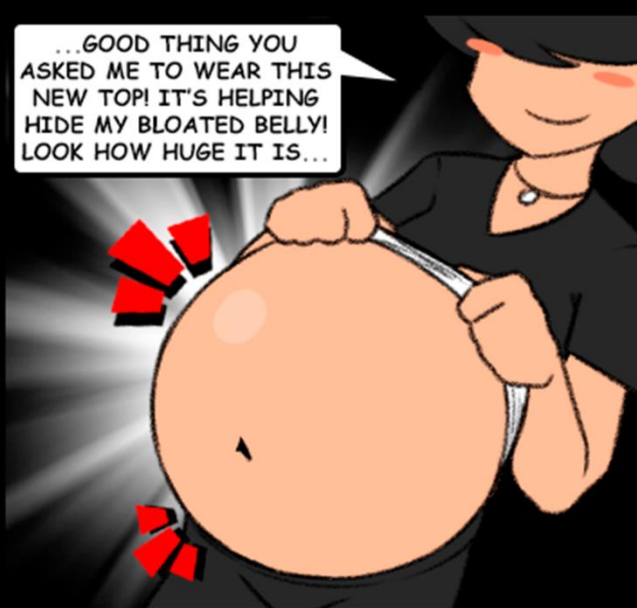
SEE, ETHAN? SHE'S
COOLER THAN YOU,
YOU GRUMP! HAHA...



CUT IT OUT, YOU
IDIOT! SHE ONLY SAID
THAT BECAUSE SHE'S
NICE AND POLITE! SHE
WOULD NEVER...







WTF... WHY IS IT SO...
BIG... AND... HARD? WHERE'S
THAT FLAT MODEL STOMACH
YOU USUALLY HAVE?



YOU WOULDN'T EXPECT
THAT FROM A GIRL
AFTER A FEW PIZZAS,
RIGHT? HEHEHE...



WELL, GO AHEAD AND
SET UP THE MOVIE WHILE
I FINISH PUTTING AWAY
THE LEFTOVERS AND...



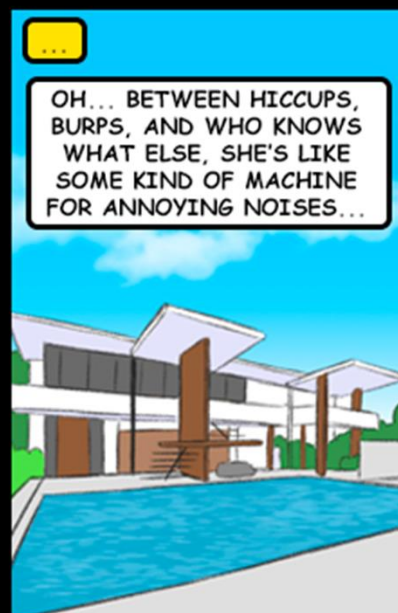
BAARF!



...WASHING
THESE DISHES!



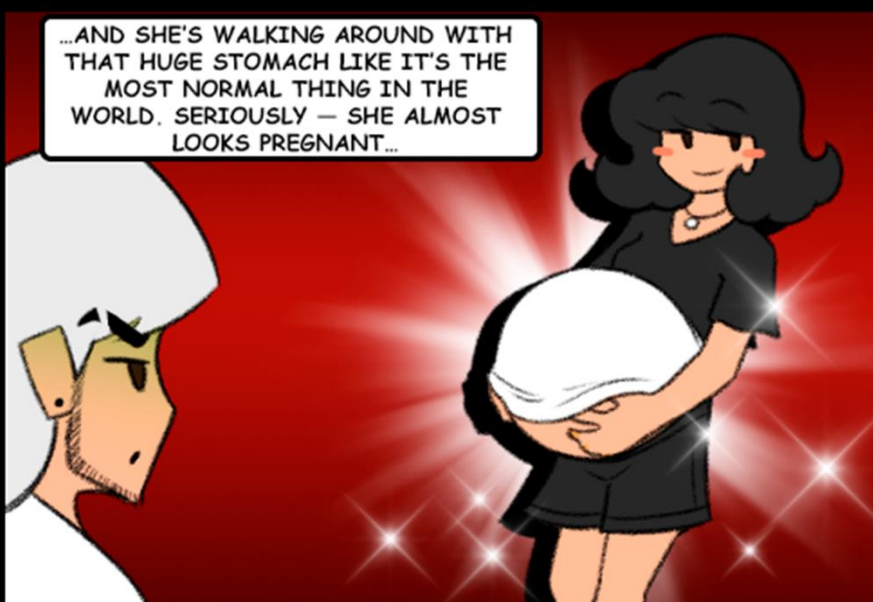
OH... BETWEEN HICCUPS,
BURPS, AND WHO KNOWS
WHAT ELSE, SHE'S LIKE
SOME KIND OF MACHINE
FOR ANNOYING NOISES...



...HOW CAN SUCH A PRETTY
GIRL EAT AND BURP LIKE
THAT? SHE SOUNDS LIKE A
SAILOR WITH GERD! AND
THAT HUGE BELLY... OH,
THAT'S JUST UNACCEPTABLE
FOR A WOMAN...



...AND SHE'S WALKING AROUND WITH
THAT HUGE STOMACH LIKE IT'S THE
MOST NORMAL THING IN THE
WORLD. SERIOUSLY — SHE ALMOST
LOOKS PREGNANT...



HEY, BIG GUY, DIDN'T WE AGREE TO WATCH THAT KOREAN ROMANCE MOVIE?



WE DID, BUT... KOREAN MOVIES DON'T REALLY APPEAL TO ME! THE ACTORS ALL LOOK THE SAME, THERE'S TOO MUCH FLUFF, AND THE OVER-THE-TOP ROMANCE JUST FEELS... DULL.



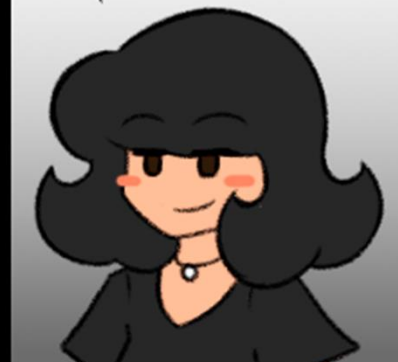
BUT... WHEN WE WENT TO THE CINEMA, YOU PICKED THAT ONE WITH EXPLOSIONS AND GUNFIGHTS, THE KIND OF MOVIE THAT DOESN'T REALLY INTEREST ME! DON'T YOU THINK IT WOULD BE FAIR FOR ME TO CHOOSE THIS TIME?



TECHNICALLY, THAT MOVIE WAS A MUTUAL DECISION. I EXPLICITLY STATED MY PREFERENCE, AND YOU RESPONDED, 'IF THAT'S WHAT YOU WANT, THAT'S FINE WITH ME.' BOTH PARTIES EXPRESSED AGREEMENT. IT WAS, BY DEFINITION, A JOINT CHOICE.



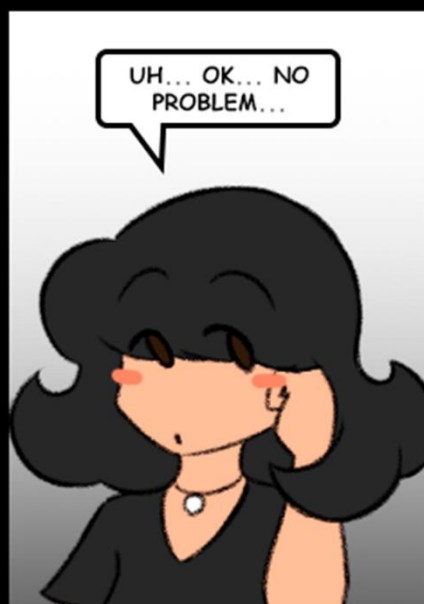
UGH, LAWYERS... ALWAYS SO PERSUASIVE... FINE, THEN. PICK ONE YOU PREFER...



AS LONG AS I CAN CLING TO THAT STRONG ARM OF YOURS, JUST LIKE IN THE CINEMA, BREATHING IN THE SCENT OF YOUR CHEST... I LOVE MEN'S BODY SPRAY!



OH! WHAT THE...



UH, MEG, WHAT I'M TRYING TO SAY IS... YOU'RE A PRINCESS. THESE BURPS DONT MATCH WITH YOUR PERSONALITY. IT... TAKES AWAY YOUR SHINE, IT DOESN'T FIT YOUR BEAUTY... IT'S IMPOLITE, AND IT BOTHERS ME! YOU KNOW WHAT I MEAN?



OH, BURPS BOTHER YOU? SORRY! I THOUGHT IT COULD SOUND FUNNY, OR SOMETHING... LIKE IT DID WITH YOUR FRIENDS...



NO, I DON'T FIND IT THAT FUNNY! BURPING LIKE A TRUCKER DOESN'T FIT A BEAUTIFUL GIRL LIKE YOU! YOU KNOW, I WANT TO FEEL LIKE I'M WATCHING A MOVIE WITH A "FINE AND DELICATE PRINCESS", NOT... WITH... UH... PRINCESS FIONA...



SORRY IF I'M COMING OFF TOO PICKY ABOUT THIS, BUT I THINK IF SOMETHING BOTHERS US IN A RELATIONSHIP, WE SHOULD SHARE IT WITH EACH OTHER, RIGHT?



OH! WOW! SORRY... YEAH, YOU'RE RIGHT! IT'S NOT THE BEHAVIOR OF A LADY... I'LL AVOID DOING THIS KIND OF THING...



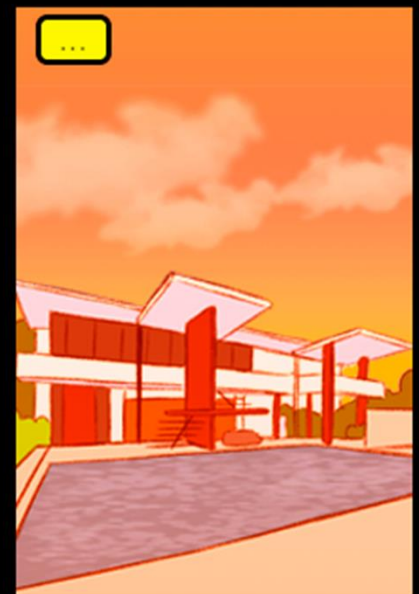
THANKS FOR UNDERSTANDING... YOU'RE A QUICK LEARNER! SOON ENOUGH, YOU'LL HIT THE SALVATORE STANDARD...



HE'S RIGHT... WHO WOULD WANT TO DATE AN OGRE THAT LETS OUT AWFUL BURPS LIKE MINE? WHAT WERE YOU EXPECTING, MEG? FOR HIM TO THINK THAT WAS ATTRACTIVE? OH, I STILL HAVE SO MUCH TO LEARN ABOUT HOW TO BE SOPHISTICATED!

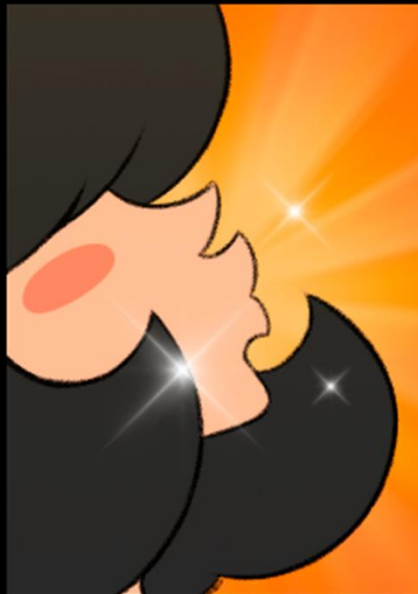


HE'S DEFINITELY NOT IN THE MOOD FOR SOME KISSES RIGHT NOW! SERVES YOU RIGHT, MEG! NEXT TIME, IF YOU WANT TO KISS A GUY OR SNIFF HIS CHEST, ACT LIKE A PRINCESS...

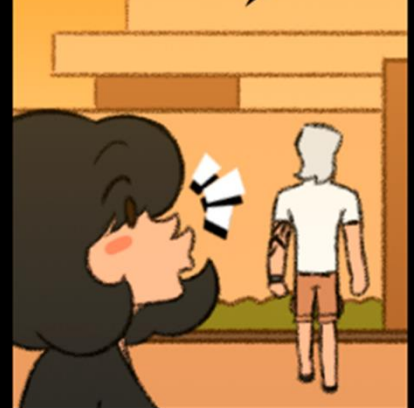


IT WAS A GREAT LUNCH, MEG!
THANKS! THE PIZZAS WERE
DELICIOUS!

NO PROBLEM!
IT WAS GREAT
MEETING YOUR
FRIENDS!
SEE YOU!



UH, HE STILL DOESN'T
WANT TO KISS ME?



HE MUST HAVE A BIG ISSUE
WITH BURPS! MAYBE EVEN AN
EXAGGERATED AVERSION...
BUT THAT'S OKAY! A ROMANCE
REQUIRES SOME ACCEPTANCE
OF EACH OTHER'S QUIRKS,
RIGHT?



WOW, GIRL! GOOD
THING HE DIDN'T HEAR
THAT...



NEXT DAY...

...SO, DEAR STUDENTS,
THAT'S ALL FOR TODAY! WE'RE
ALMOST AT THE END OF THE
SEMESTER, AND I JUST WANT
TO SAY THAT I'M REALLY
PROUD OF YOU ALL!



YOU'RE A CLASS WITH A LOT
OF PERSONALITY AND
ORIGINALITY! I CAN'T WAIT
FOR THE NEXT SEMESTER...
SEE YOU NEXT CLASS!

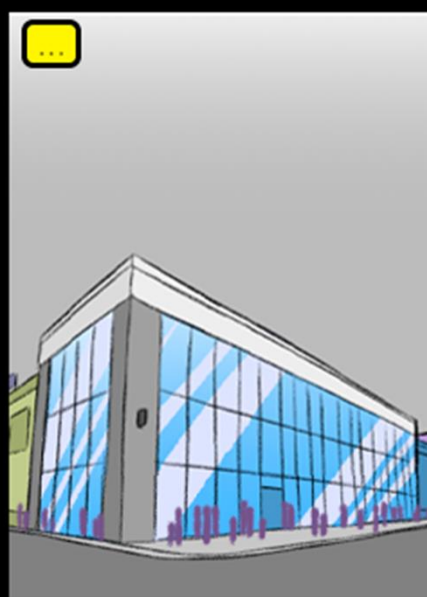


HEY, MEG, TELL ME HOW
LUNCH WITH ETHAN WENT!
IT MUST'VE BEEN A BIG
CHALLENGE MAKING PIZZA
FOR AN ITALIAN FAMILY!
HAHAHA!









FINISHED!? LET'S GO! WE NEED TO GET YOUR DRESS.



SURE! LET'S GO!



HHGG... THAT'S A BIG ONE... HOLD IT IN, MEG! YOU DON'T WANT TO LET OUT ONE OF YOUR BIZARRE THUNDERBURPS IN THE MIDDLE OF THE MALL...



UH... IS SOMETHING WRONG?



UH, NOTHING... HEHE...

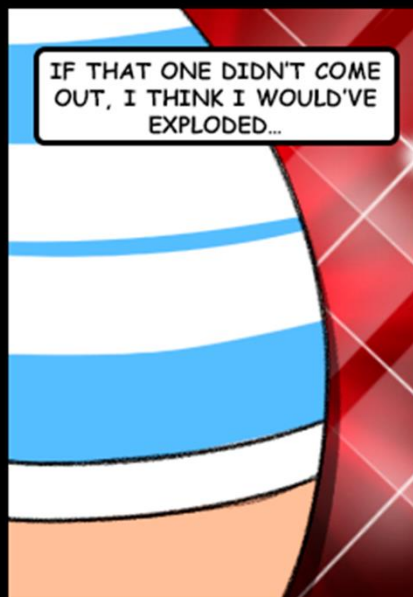
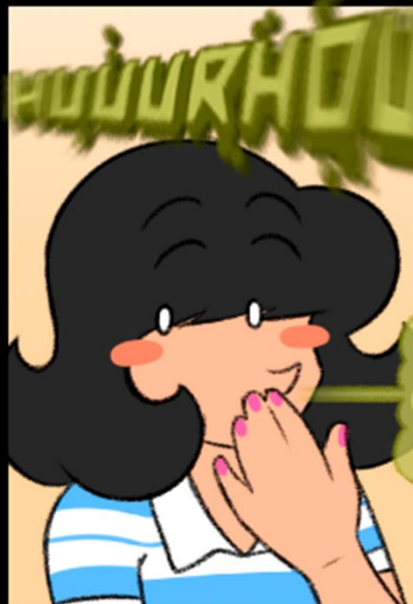
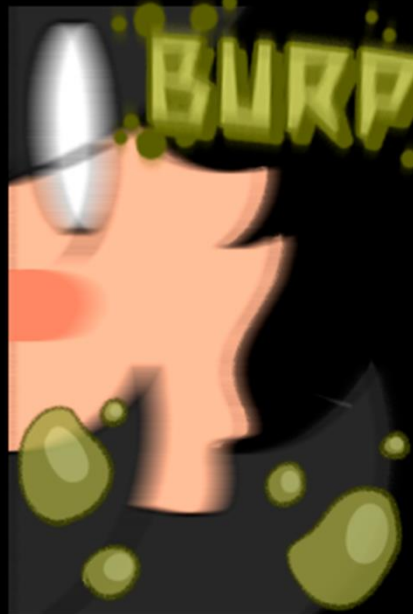


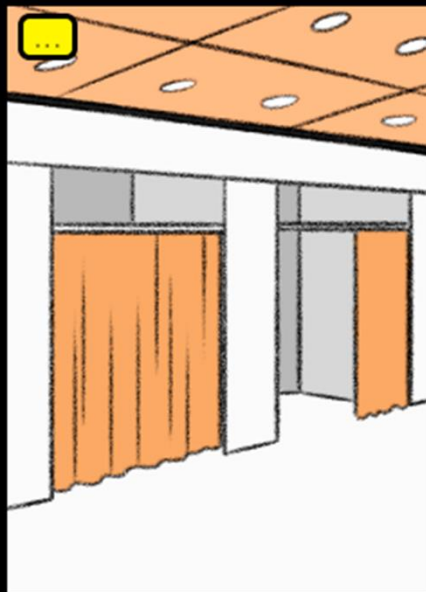
OH, THIS HEARTBURN! ETHAN HATES BURPS, BUT THIS HAS TO COME OUT! I CAN'T HOLD IT IN MUCH LONGER...



HMM... THIS ONE LOOKS GREAT! CUTE AND SIMPLE, AND IT'S MY SIZE... I THINK I'LL TRY IT ON...









HEY, MEG! I BET THAT ITALIAN JOHNNY BRAVO'S GONNA LOVE YOUR NEW 'RICH SKIN.' YOU LOOK LIKE YOU JUST WALKED OUT OF A BLACK CARD COMMERCIAL!



HEHEHE, ETHAN LIKES THIS LOOK! DO YOU THINK IT'S TOO WEIRD OR FLASHY?



NAH, GIRL, YOU LOOK GREAT! JUST DIFFERENT FROM THE USUAL. ANYWAY, IT'S NICE TO SWITCH IT UP ONCE IN A WHILE...



THANKS! WELL, ETHAN ASKED TO HAVE LUNCH WITH US TODAY! I THINK HE WANTS TO MEET YOU GUYS! IS THAT A PROBLEM?



NAH, GIRL, OF COURSE NOT! IF HE'S YOUR BOYFRIEND, HE MUST BE WICKED COOL! WHAT COULD POSSIBLY BE THE PROBLEM?



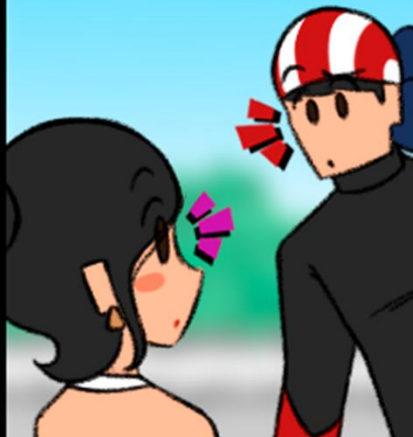
HERE'S THE TITAN BLAST, MEG! ENJOY!



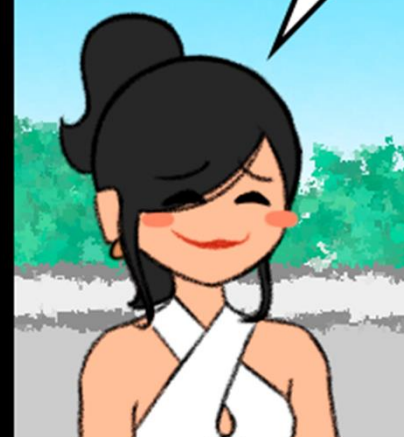
HAHAHA, WHAT'S UP, FRIEND? ARE YOU HIGH OR SOMETHING? MEG AIN'T GONNA WANNA EAT THAT CALORIE BOMB!



?????????



UH, JASON, I THINK I'LL STICK WITH THE LEAF FURY TODAY...



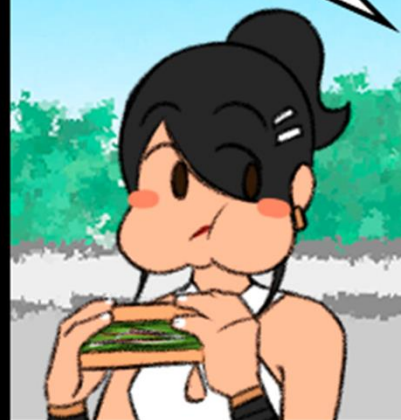
ALRIGHT... HERE YOU GO...
LEAF FURY, MEG! MADE IT
WITHOUT PICKLES SINCE I
KNOW YOU DON'T LIKE 'EM!



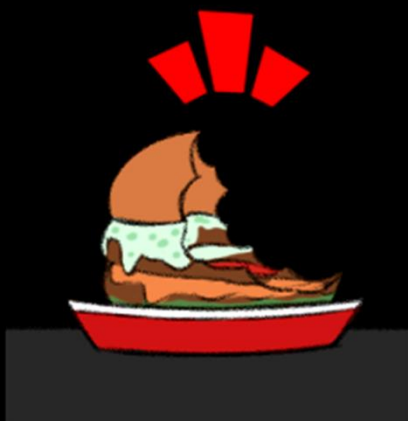
WOW, THAT'S HUGE! THIS
BURGER'S MASSIVE, BUT DID
IT REALLY NEED TO BE SO
RIDICULOUS?



NO WAY TO EVEN BITE
THIS PROPERLY! IT'S LIKE
THE BUN'S FALLING APART
WITH EVERY BITE...



HOW CAN SOMEONE EVEN
FINISH ONE OF THESE? I
CAN'T HANDLE IT ANYMORE!



WHAT? YOU CAN'T FINISH A
TITAN BLAST, MAN? THOUGHT,
BEING ALL BIG AND MUSCULAR,
YOUR DIET WOULD BE MORE
CALORIE-PACKED...



NAH, MAN, I'M NOT REALLY
INTO JUNK FOOD! I GO FOR
WHEY, PRIME CUTS OF MEAT,
AND QUALITY FOODS! CAN'T
KEEP MUSCLES LIKE THIS
EATING FOOD TRUCK STUFF...



HONESTLY, THIS BURGER'S
SO BIG, ONLY A BULL
COULD EAT IT WHOLE!
WHO HAS SUCH A BIZARRE
APPETITE? HAHHA...



HEHEHE...



BUT IF YOU'RE INTERESTED IN MY HYPERTROPHY DIET, I CAN SHOW YOU MY NUTRITIONIST! THIS SUPER-CHEF BURGER COSPLAY OF YOURS MIGHT NOT HELP MUCH, BUT SOME WELL-DEVELOPED MUSCLES CAN'T HURT...



...WHO KNOWS, YOU MIGHT EVEN IMPRESS A BEAUTIFUL GIRL, LIKE MEG! HEHEHE... THEY LOVE THAT!



OR, IF YOU'RE LUCKY, YOU COULD MEET A GIRL LIKE VAL, WHO PROBABLY LIKES CHICKEN GUYS! HAHHA...



BUT SHE COULD ALSO USE SOME WORKOUTS TO LOSE A FEW POUNDS, RIGHT? HAHHA...



WELL, GUYS, I'M JUST KIDDING! IT WAS GREAT MEETING YOU! NOW, HEADING HOME TO WATCH A MOVIE WITH MY GIRL! GOOD WORK AT THE FOOD TRUCK, BUDDY! CATCH YOU LATER!



VROOOM!!!



IS IT JUST ME, OR IS THAT GUY A TOTAL JERK?



WITH THAT ATTITUDE, HE PROBABLY THINKS THE WORLD REVOLVES AROUND HIS ROLEX!

I'M REALLY DISAPPOINTED IN MEG! I THOUGHT SHE USED TO VALUE THE ESSENCE OF PEOPLE, BUT SHE DIDN'T EVEN VALUE HERSELF...



BUT IS SHE REALLY OKAY WITH THIS RELATIONSHIP? SHE JUST SEEMS SO INSECURE, FAKE... NOT AT ALL LIKE THE MEG I USED TO KNOW! SHE WOULD NEVER ORDER A LEAF FURY...





UH... ETHAN... DON'T YOU THINK YOU WERE A BIT TOO HARSH WITH THOSE "JOKES" ABOUT MY FRIENDS?



HEHEHE... OH, COME ON, ADMIT IT! YOU LIKED IT! YOU GIRLS CAN'T RESIST A DOMINANT MAN.



WHAT? DOMINANT MAN? WHAT DO YOU MEAN?



YEAH, YOU CAN'T RESIST A MAN WITH CONFIDENCE AND POWER—AN ALPHA, WITH A CAPITAL A! YOU GIRLS GO CRAZY OVER DISPLAYS OF DOMINANCE... ADMIT IT! IT'S CUTE!



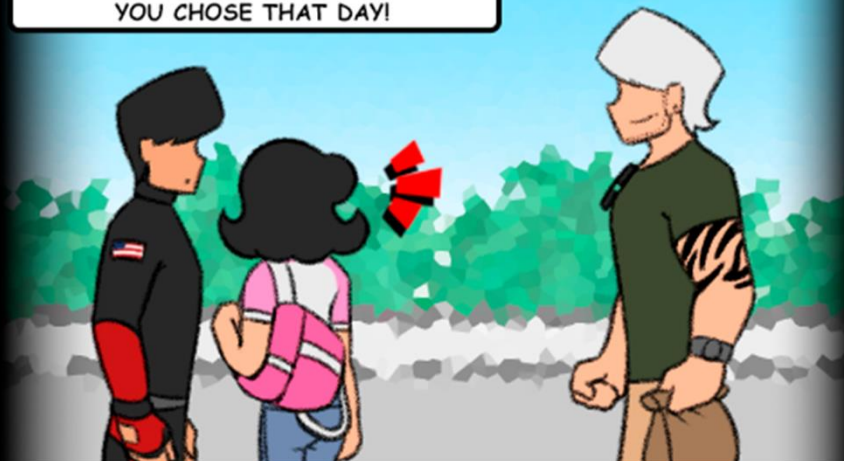
ETHAN, WHAT ARE YOU EVEN TALKING ABOUT?



HEHE, DON'T TELL ME YOU DIDN'T NOTICE! THAT DAY, WHEN YOU WERE CHATTING WITH THAT LOSER COOK WHO WAS TOTALLY CRUSHING ON YOU AT THE FOOD TRUCK... POOR GUY...



THEN SUDDENLY, BOOM! A REAL MAN SHOWED UP—TALL, 6'2", RIPPED ABS, 18-INCH BICEPS... A SALVATORE! IT WAS OBVIOUS TO BOTH OF US WHO YOU CHOSE THAT DAY!



YOU JUST MELTED RIGHT THERE. DON'T DENY IT—I KNOW THE LOOK OF A GIRL COMPLETELY SMITTEN WITH ME. AND HONESTLY? SEEING THE DEFEATED FACES OF THOSE OTHER GUYS? PRICELESS!



THAT'S THE GAME OF POWER, BABE. WITH CONFIDENCE AND DOMINANCE, WE CAN HAVE EVERYTHING WE WANT. WE JUST HAVE TO MAKE IT CLEAR WHO'S DOMINANT AND WHO'S... NOT. THAT'S WHY I'M SHOWING YOU WHAT IT'S LIKE TO BE WITH A MAN LIKE ME. AND YOU'RE LEARNING FAST!



THE LIFESTYLE, THE CLOTHES, THE MUSIC, THE ATTITUDE, THE FOOD—IT ALL REFLECTS HOW SOPHISTICATED YOU ARE. A SALVATORE'S GIRLFRIEND SHOULD MEASURE UP TO THAT STANDARD!



YOU'VE GOT SO MUCH POTENTIAL, MEG. YOU'RE SMART. YOU KNOW HOW TO RECOGNIZE A DOMINANT, POWERFUL MAN. GIRLS LIKE YOU ARE GREAT BECAUSE YOU'RE ALWAYS WILLING TO ADAPT TO WHAT I NEED.



WHAT? IS THAT REALLY HOW YOU SEE OTHER PEOPLE? AND... WILLING TO ADAPT? DON'T YOU THINK RELATIONSHIPS WOULD BE BETTER IF COUPLES JUST ACCEPTED EACH OTHER FOR WHO THEY ARE? I MEAN, SOMETIMES IT FEELS LIKE YOU'RE TRYING TO CHANGE ME COMPLETELY...



BUT, MEG, DON'T YOU AGREE THAT FOR A RELATIONSHIP TO WORK, WE NEED TO GIVE UP CERTAIN THINGS? WE ALWAYS HAVE TO ADAPT TO OUR PARTNERS, RIGHT?



UH... I MEAN, YEAH, BUT...



TRUST ME, I KNOW WHAT I'M TALKING ABOUT! JUST LISTEN TO ME AND FOLLOW MY TIPS! IF YOU LEARN TO BE A LITTLE MORE DOMINANT AND SOPHISTICATED, YOU'LL SHINE LIKE A TRUE SALVATORE! JUST TRUST ME!





"LOOSER COOK WHO WAS TOTALLY CRUSHING ON ME"... WAS JASON REALLY INTO ME THAT MUCH? DID I MAKE A COLD, MATERIALISTIC, CHOICE FOR A BOYFRIEND?



OH! ALESSIA!



HEY, ALESSIA! DID YOU LIKE THE PASSION FRUIT CAKE I BOUGHT?

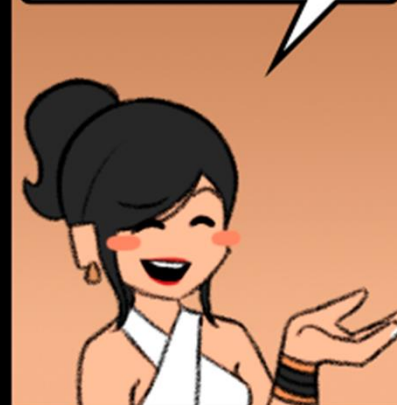
UH... YEAH! IT'S REALLY GOOD...



HEHE, THANKS! UH... ETHAN TOLD ME YOU'RE A DESIGNER, JUST LIKE YOUR MOM! HEHE, GUESS THE TALENT FOR ART REALLY RUNS IN YOUR FAMILY...



...AND, WELL, CONSIDERING THAT GASTRONOMY HAS BEEN CONSIDERED AN ART SINCE THE MIDDLE AGES, I CAN SAY YES. I THINK WE'RE BOTH ARTISTS... HEHEHE...



UH... SO YOU'RE ALSO AN ARTIST?



YEAH, FROM THE PASTRY WORLD... THIS PASSION FRUIT CAKE WOULD BE MY 'PORTFOLIO'... UNLESS IT'S BAD! HEHEHE...



NO WAY! IT'S GREAT! DID YOU MAKE IT?



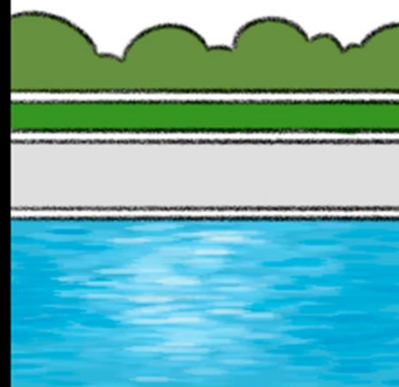
YEP! BEING A PASTRY CHEF IS MY BIGGEST DREAM! ONE DAY, I WANT TO OPEN A CUTE, ALL-PINK CAKE SHOP... IT'D BE LIKE HAVING A HIGH-FASHION ATELIER, BUT FOR CAKES AND PIES!



HAHAHA...



..AND MY MOM ALWAYS SAID TO COOK WITH YOUR HEART, AND NEVER GIVE UP ON YOUR OWN SHINE... IT SOUNDS LIKE A CLICHÉ SPEECH, BUT IT WORKS FOR ME!



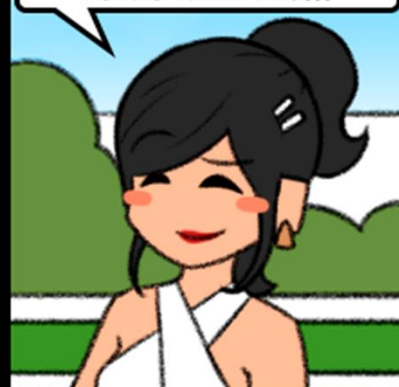
EVERY LITTLE CAKE IS A CHANCE TO MAKE SOMEONE'S DAY A LITTLE SWEETER, THAT'S WHY I'M SO PASSIONATE ABOUT BAKING...



WOW, I'M IMPRESSED, MEG! YOU'RE AUTHENTIC, WITH DREAMS AND KINDNESS. I'VE NEVER SEEN ETHAN WITH A GIRL LIKE YOU—USUALLY, IT'S SHALLOW GIRLS DOING EVERYTHING FOR STATUS AND FANCY DINNERS...



WELL, YOU SEEM PRETTY COOL TOO, ALESSIA! AND IT LOOKS LIKE YOU'RE PASSIONATE ABOUT WHAT YOU DO AS WELL! I DON'T UNDERSTAND WHY ETHAN DOESN'T GET ALONG WITH YOU...



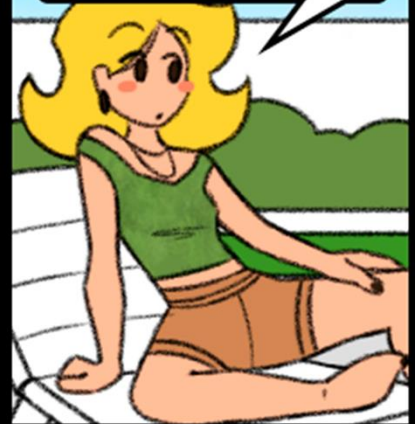
UH... ETHAN'S COOL WHEN HE WANTS TO BE, BUT HE THINKS HE CAN CONTROL EVERYONE. HE'S BEEN TALKING ABOUT BEING THE DOMINANT GUY SINCE MIDDLE SCHOOL, LIKE EVERYONE'S A SUBJECT AND HE'S THE SUPREME LEADER...



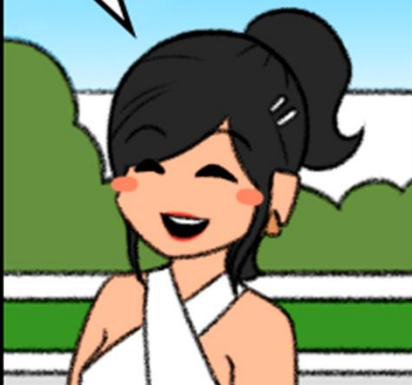
HE SAYS I'M OUTDATED JUST BECAUSE I LIVE A MORE NATURAL LIFESTYLE INSTEAD OF FOLLOWING HIS TRENDS WITH PARTIES, DRINKS, AND FLAUNTING. LIKE LIVING WITHOUT MAKEUP AND HEELS IS FROM ANOTHER PLANET...



OK, IT'S FINE IF YOU LIKE AN UPGRADE LIFESTYLE! I JUST THINK IT'S WRONG WHEN THEY DON'T RESPECT YOUR INDIVIDUALITY AND FORCE YOU TO CHANGE...



RELAX! I GET YOU! MY MOM SAYS EVERYONE HAS THEIR OWN SHINE, AND IT'S UNIQUE. I ADMIRE THOSE WHO SHOW THEIR TRUE SELVES...



AND YOU KNOW, I GREW UP IN THE COUNTRYSIDE! I LOVE WALKING BAREFOOT ON THE GRASS, TALKING TO PLANTS, CHEWING STRAW... IT'S THOSE LITTLE QUIRKS AND PREFERENCES THAT MAKE US WHO WE ARE.



HEHE... TRUE!



MEG? WHERE ARE YOU?



WELL, GOTTA GO! SO, NEVER LET ANYONE TRY TO CHANGE YOUR TRUE ESSENCE! TRUE LOVE SEES YOU FOR WHO YOU ARE, NOT WHO THEY WANT YOU TO BE.



IF ETHAN STARTS PLAYING DICTATOR, JUST BREAK HIS LITTLE RULES! HIS VANITY IS HIS WEAK POINT! PEOPLE LIKE THAT CRUMBLE WITHOUT ADMIRATION. AUTHENTICITY IS WHAT SHAKES UP THOSE LIVING FOR APPEARANCES!



WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE, ALESSIA? TEACHING MEG SOME PREHISTORIC 'ELEGANCE'? YOU SHOULD LEARN FROM HER HOW TO HAVE THE CLASS OF A MODERN WOMAN INSTEAD OF PLAYING WITH PLANTS AND DRESSING LIKE THE WORLD IS STILL A FARM.



HAVE YOU SEEN THE "NATURALIST DRESSES" ALESSIA DESIGNS, MEG? THEY LOOK LIKE SOMEONE WRAPPED THEMSELVES IN A LETTUCE LEAF!



AND DON'T EVEN GET ME STARTED ON HER PERFUME... IT SMELLS LIKE IT CAME STRAIGHT FROM A BUSH!



WELL, MEG, I'LL ORDER SOME CAKES FROM YOU LATER! GOOD LUCK WITH MR. FORMALITY OVER HERE. CAREFUL, OR HE MIGHT MAKE YOU WEAR A WEDDING DRESS JUST TO GO TO THE MOVIES!



SAYS THE GIRL WHO DRESSES LIKE A BULBASOUR! YOU'RE A SALVATORE, YOU'VE GOT SO MUCH POTENTIAL BUT INSIST ON COSPLAYING AS A SALAD! IF YOU LISTENED TO ME, YOU'D BE MORE ELEGANT AND GET WAY MORE ATTENTION...



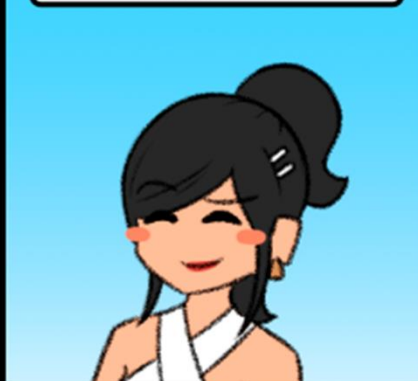
BAARP!



UGH... SEE HOW RIDICULOUS SHE IS? SHE KNOWS I HATE BURPS AND DOES IT JUST TO ANNOY ME! SHE NEVER LISTENS TO MY TIPS...



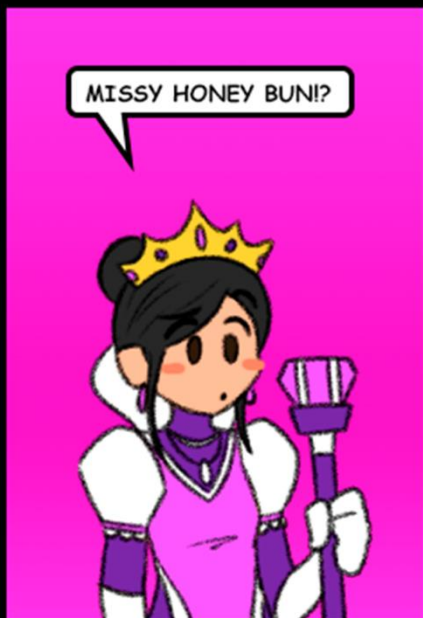
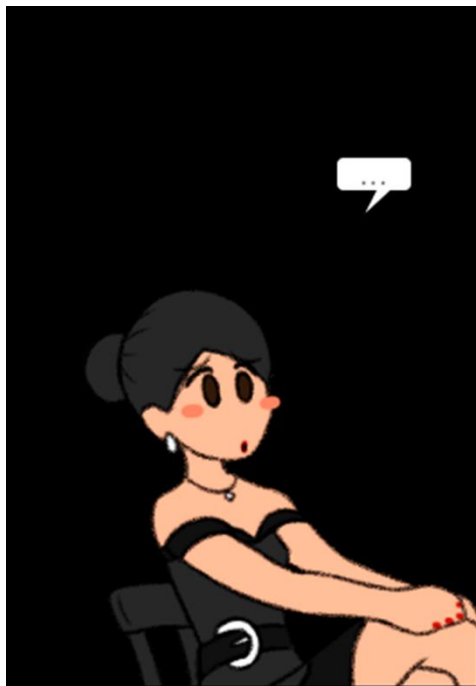
"IF ETHAN STARTS PLAYING DICTATOR, JUST BREAK HIS LITTLE RULES!" LOOKS LIKE HIS OLDER SISTER KNOWS EXACTLY HOW TO HANDLE HIM! HEHE...



GOOD THING YOU'RE NOT LIKE HER! THAT'S WHY YOU'RE MY GIRLFRIEND. STICK WITH ME, AND I'LL TEACH YOU HOW TO BE TRULY SOPHISTICATED! YOU'LL OUTSHINE HER AS A TRUE SALVATORE!







MAKE A CHOICE, MARGARET;
BLUE PILL OR RED PILL! LEMON
RISOTTO OR STREET BURGER!



I... I'D PREFER A STREET
BURGER, MR. CHARACTER-
-FROM-ETHAN'S-MOVIE!



GORDON!! MARGARET
CHOSE A STREET
BURGER!



GORDON?



OH, PISS OFF, YOU COW! ARE YOU
REALLY GONNA GIVE UP EVERY-
THING YOU LOVE JUST TO STROKE
THAT BRAT'S EGO? WAKE THE HELL
UP, YOU IDIOT! WHAT'VE YOU
BECOME? A LUXURY LAPDOG FOR
THAT WANNABE JOHNNY BRAVO?



YES, CHEF...
(I'M YOUR FAN.)

YOU CHOSE ETHAN JUST
'CAUSE HE'S RICHER AND HAS
MORE MUSCLES. YOU WANNA
LIVE FOR APPEARANCES, YOU
SUPERFICIAL COW? YOU'VE
ABANDONED YOUR TRUE SELF
TO BE HIS DESIGNER PUPPY!



YOU'RE OVERCOOKED ON THE
OUTSIDE AND ICE COLD ON
THE INSIDE. YOUR HEART IS
RAW!! F***ING RAW!!! NOW TAKE
THIS BLOODY BURGER AND GET
THE HELL OUT OF MY KITCHEN!



STREET BURGER... MY
TRUE CHOICE!



WAIT... IT'S THE
BANDANA JASON
GAVE ME!?



HEY, CUPCAKE! YOU KNOW THIS BANDANA IS A SIGN OF WHAT TRULY MATTERS TO YOU! YOU MIGHT FEEL A BIT CONFUSED RIGHT NOW, BUT...



DEEP DOWN, YOU KNOW HOW YOU FEEL WHEN YOU'RE WITH ME! YOU'RE COMFORTABLE, RELAXED, ACCEPTED. YOU KNOW I LIKE YOU JUST THE WAY YOU ARE...



SHUT UP, YOU IDIOT! SHE KNOWS HOW TO RECOGNIZE AN ALPHA MALE. SHE'S NOT A CUPCAKE ANYMORE! SHE'S A SALVATORE NOW! SHE PREFERS LEMON RISOTTO!



I DECIDE WHAT'S GOOD FOR HER! MEG, TASTE THIS LEMON RISOTTO!



OH...



HRR... I'M GOING TO LOSE MY MIND...



...



THANK YOU, MA'AM! HAVE A GOOD NIGHT!



IT'S BEEN A PRODUCTIVE AFTERNOON DRIVING FOR AN APP, BUT I'M STARVING... AND I REALLY MISS A GOOD BURGER. AND SINCE ETHAN'S NOT WITH ME TODAY, I MIGHT AS WELL TAKE THE CHANCE...





ETHAN HAS THIS THING ABOUT BEING PICKY WITH EVERYTHING. FOR HIM, EVERYTHING HAS TO BE AS "SOPHISTICATED" AS POSSIBLE, EVEN BURGERS... HE WANTS ME TO GO FOR LIGHTER DISHES LIKE THE LEAF FURY.



HAHAHA, I HIGHLY DOUBT HE COULD EVER CHANGE YOU! YOU'VE GOT ONE OF THE STRONGEST PERSONALITIES I'VE EVER SEEN! HEHE...



REALLY?



WAIT, IS THAT K-POP ON THE SPEAKER? SINCE WHEN DO YOU LISTEN TO THAT?



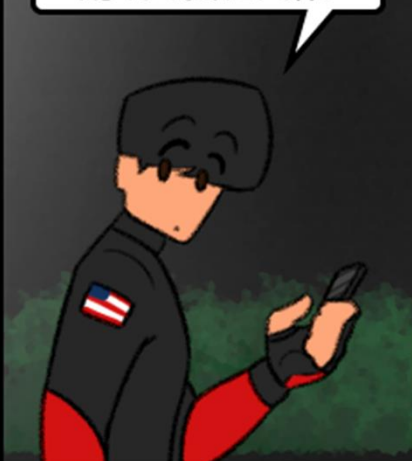
HAHA, I DON'T! BUT I KNOW YOU LOVE IT!



YOU PUT IT ON... JUST BECAUSE I LIKE IT?



UH, YEAH!? I THOUGHT YOU'D ENJOY IT... WANT ME TO TURN IT OFF?



HAHAHA! OF COURSE NOT, YOU IDIOT! THANK YOU! YOU... REALLY KNOW HOW TO MAKE PEOPLE FEEL GOOD... BEING THEMSELVES.



YEAH! THE MAN WHO HAS THE SUPERPOWER OF BRIGHTENING PEOPLE'S DAY WITH THE FLAVOR OF HIS BURGERS! AND, HEY, SOME GIFTS ARE WORTH MORE THAN A BILLION BUCKS! THIS MUG YOU GAVE ME? IT'S ONE OF THEM!



YOU WROTE 'JASON HILL,
THE HERO OF WORCESTER.' I
THINK IT'S OFFICIAL NOW:
I'M A LEGEND! I DIDN'T EVEN
CRY, JUST PURE
MASCULINE PRIDE!



HAHAHA...



I THINK MY DREAM WAS RIGHT...
I FEEL WAY MORE RELAXED AND
AT EASE HERE... I CAN EVEN
UNBUTTON MY PANTS WITHOUT
WORRYING ABOUT BEING JUDGED...



AND EVEN WITH THIS HUGE
BELLY, I CAN STILL FEEL AT
PEACE... AND SOMETIMES, I
EVEN GET A WEIRD AND FUNNY
LITTLE COMPLIMENT...



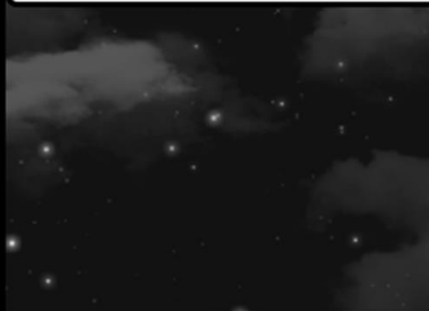
UNBUTTONED PANTS ARE A
UNIVERSAL SIGN OF
HAPPINESS, HUH? AND
BETWEEN US, A SIX-PACK
WILL NEVER BE AS
FABULOUS AS A
POST-BURGER BELLY...



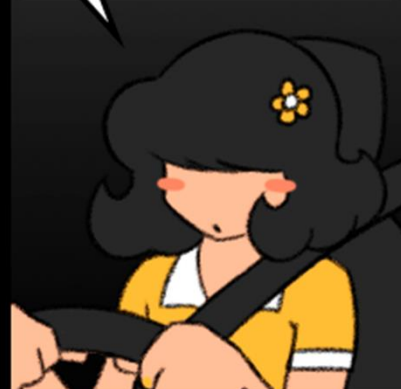
VAL USED TO FEEL UGLY COS OF
HER WEIGHT, BUT WHEN SHE
MET DUSTIN, SHE REALIZED
THAT WHEN A GUY TRULY LIKES
YOU, HE ACCEPTS YOU AS YOU
ARE. NO ONE SHOULD TRY TO
CHANGE ANYONE!



THAT KIND OF ACCEPTANCE IS
KEY TO A HAPPY RELATIONSHIP,
BUT ETHAN DOESN'T ACCEPT
ME... I LEARNED THAT A STREET
BURGER IS WORTH MORE THAN A
MOISSANITE NECKLACE, AND
STATUS DOESN'T DEFINE
WORTH. BUT I THOUGHT MONEY
AND A FANCY LIFE MATTERED
MORE THAN TRUE ACCEPTANCE...



UGH, CHOOSING HIGH CLASS
OVER WHAT I REALLY LOVE
WAS SUCH A MISTAKE. NOW I
HAVE TO FACE THE
CONSEQUENCES. TOMORROW'S
A PARTY WITH SPOILED RICH
KIDS, AND I HAVE TO GO...



YES! MY DAD IS ONE OF THE OWNERS OF A LOCAL TV STATION... SOON, I'M PLANNING TO BECOME THE EDITOR-IN-CHIEF, MAYBE EVEN THE WEATHER GIRL!



UH, COOL! NICE TO MEET YOU, ZVEE... ZVYNA...



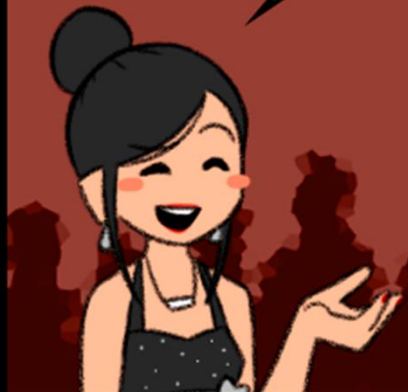
ZVENYSLAVA! HAHA, DON'T WORRY! IT'S UKRAINIAN, SO SOME PEOPLE HAVE TROUBLE WITH THE PRONUNCI...



THIS IS MEG! SHE'S STUDYING CULINARY ARTS! SHE PLANS TO BECOME ONE OF THE TOP CHEFS IN MASSACHUSETTS AND OWN HER OWN FIVE-STAR RESTAURANT, RIGHT, MEG?



YES, UH, ACTUALLY, IT WOULD BE A CAKE SHOP! PASTRIES HAVE BEEN MY PASSION SINCE I WAS A KID! I LOVE WORKING WITH CAKES AND CUPCAKES!



PASTRIES!?



PASTRIES!?



PASTRY, SERIOUSLY? PASTRY? YOU'RE EMBARRASSING ME IN FRONT OF MY FRIENDS! COULDN'T YOU SAY SOMETHING MORE... SOPHISTICATED?



BUT... YOU KNOW I WANT TO SPECIALIZE IN PASTRIES! WHAT'S SO WRONG WITH THAT?



MAYBE YOU SHOULD RECONSIDER, MEG. A PASTA BISTRO OR SOMETHING MORE REFINED SOUNDS BETTER. A CAKE SHOP SOUNDS LIKE... BAKING BIRTHDAY CAKES FOR KIDS. IT'S A DUMB, LOW-PRESTIGE DREAM!



WHAT? A DUMB, LOW- PRESTIGE DREAM?



IT'S NOTHING PERSONAL, MEG, BUT YOU SHOULD AIM FOR SOMETHING MORE SOPHISTICATED! YOU'VE GOT A LOT TO LEARN...



LOOK, I DON'T LIKE YOUR ATTITUDE! YOU'RE BELITTLING MY DREAM—MY BIG DREAM—AND CALLING IT A 'DUMB DREAM'? WHY ARE YOU ALWAYS SO HARSH WITH YOUR WORDS? CAN'T YOU DISAGREE WITHOUT BEING OFFENSIVE?



YOU CALLED MY MUSIC HILLBILLY, SAID MY SHIRTS LOOKED LIKE 'HOTEL RECEPTIONIST UNIFORMS,' SAID PREGNANT WOMEN LOOK LIKE WHALES, INSULTED JASON'S FOOD, AND NOW... YOU'RE CALLING MY ASPIRATION DUMB!



I'M JUST BEING HONEST WITH WHAT I SAY! I DON'T LIE ABOUT MY OPINIONS! IS HONESTY WRONG TO YOU?



BEING HONEST DOESN'T MEAN BEING RUDE AND OFFENSIVE! I REALLY WISH YOU'D STOP ACTING LIKE THIS!



WELL, I JUST SAY IT LIKE IT IS! THAT'S WHO I AM, AND YOU KNOW WHAT?



...YOU SHOULD ACCEPT ME FOR WHO I AM!



'ACCEPT ME FOR WHO I AM,' HUH? ALRIGHT! YOU'RE ABSOLUTELY RIGHT ABOUT THAT! WE SHOULD ACCEPT EACH OTHER FOR WHO WE ARE...



SEE? YOU'RE A QUICK LEARNER! I LIKE THAT ABOUT YOU! NOW, LET'S FORGET ABOUT THE CAKE SHOP THING AND ENJOY THE PARTY...



NOM, NOM, NOM! WOW! SHRIMP IN TARTAR SAUCE... THIS IS DELICIOUS!



OH, I WAS STARVING! BUT I'D RATHER BE MYSELF... THE BUFFET'S ALWAYS BEEN MY FAVORITE PART OF PARTIES AND EVENTS!



IT'S NOT EVEN MY FAULT, ONCE, I WENT TO THE DOCTOR, AND HE SAID MY METABOLISM IS FASTER THAN NORMAL, WHICH MAKES ME BURN MORE CALORIES THAN THE AVERAGE PERSON...



AND IF HE SAYS WE SHOULD ACCEPT OURSELVES FOR WHO WE ARE, THIS WOLF-LIKE APPETITE IS PART OF WHO I AM! WONDER IF HE'LL ACCEPT THAT?



OH! MEG!?



HEY, MEG! GLAD YOU MADE IT! HOW'S IT GOING? ENJOYING THE PARTY?



EATING SHRIMP IN TARTAR SAUCE AND LOBSTER CANAPÉS... OF COURSE I'M ENJOYING THE PARTY! HAHA! HOW ABOUT YOU, ALESSIA?



DID ETHAN TRY TO STOP YOU FROM EATING THE PARTY SNACKS? THAT'S NEW FOR ME! I THINK MY LITTLE BROTHER'S FINALLY EVOLVING...



ACTUALLY, NO... HE... SAID THAT...



'DUMB, LOW- PRESTIGE DREAM'? SERIOUSLY? ETHAN REALLY KNOWS HOW TO OUTDO HIMSELF WHEN IT COMES TO INSULTING SOMEONE... ALWAYS TOXIC AND RUDE, AS IF HE COULDN'T CARE LESS ABOUT HOW OTHERS FEEL...



LOOK, MEG, IF HE WANTS TO CHANGE HOW YOU DRESS, YOUR HAIR, WHAT YOU EAT, THE MUSIC YOU LISTEN TO, AND STILL BELITTLES YOUR DREAMS, THAT JUST SHOWS HE DOESN'T ACCEPT YOU FOR WHO YOU ARE!



ANYWAY, LIKE I SAID, IF HE WANTS TO PLAY DICTATOR, JUST BREAK HIS RULES! HE'LL CRUMBLE! SO, DO ME A FAVOR AND ENJOY THAT BUFFET TO THE FULLEST! HEHE...



YOU GOT IT! I'M NOT
LEAVING HERE HUNGRY!
HEHEHE...



...



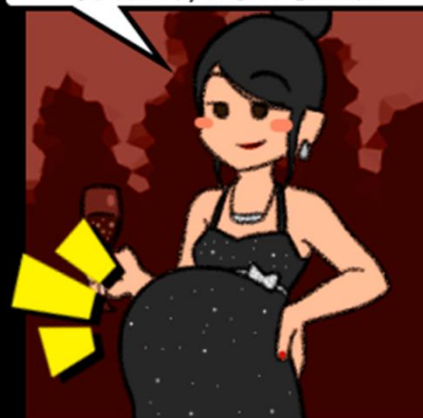
SO, ETHAN, THIS IS MY
GIRLFRIEND, VIVIAN SINCLAIR.
BESIDES BEING BEAUTIFUL AND
FRIENDLY, SHE'S A LUXURY REAL
ESTATE AGENT LIKE HER DAD...



NICE! LET ME INTRODUCE
YOU TO MINE. MEG IS THE
DAUGHTER OF A LOCAL
FARMER, AND SHE WANTS
TO BE A FIVE-STAR
RESTAURANT CHEF IN THE
FUTURE, RIGHT MEG?



WELL, NOT EXACTLY. ACTUALLY,
MY DREAM IS PASTRY. I WANT TO
OPEN AN AUTHENTIC CAKE SHOP
WITH MY OWN IDENTITY.
BECAUSE THE MOST IMPORTANT
THING IS ACCEPTING WHO WE ARE
AND DOING WHAT TRULY MAKES
US HAPPY, RIGHT ETHAN?



YEAH, YEAH, WHAT
MAKES US HAPPY... A
CAKE SHOP! HEH... VERY
INTERESTING. WELL...
AUTHENTIC, I'D SAY...



...



MEG, COME ON! ARE YOU
TRYING TO EMBARRASS ME
IN FRONT OF MY FRIENDS?
NOT THIS CAKE SHOP
THING AGAIN...

EMBARRASS YOU? WHY CAN'T
YOU ACCEPT ME PURSUING
MY TRUE DREAMS? WASN'T
IT YOU WHO SAID WE
SHOULD ACCEPT OURSELVES
AS WE ARE?



YOU'RE GETTING TOO COCKY!
YOU'RE DATING A FAMILY GUY,
MANY GIRLS WOULD LOVE TO
HAVE A BOYFRIEND LIKE ME!
YOU SHOULD APPRECIATE ME
INSTEAD OF STUFFING YOUR
FACE WITH FOOD...



YOU SEE THAT BLONDE OVER
THERE? SHE'S BEEN EYEING ME
ALL NIGHT. IF I WANTED TO,
SHE'D BE MINE IN A BLINK OF
AN EYE. AND YOU, WITH THIS
BEHAVIOR, THINK YOU
DESERVE TO BE WITH ME?



I THOUGHT YOU LIKED ME,
MEG. BUT YOU'RE NOT
SHOWING IT. YOU KNOW
HOW MUCH THIS AFFECTS
ME, RIGHT? IF YOU DON'T
CHANGE, YOU'LL MAKE ME
GROW FURTHER
AWAY. AND...



???????



THAT'S ENOUGH! I'M NOT FALLING
FOR THIS EMOTIONAL BLACKMAIL.
THIS NECKLACE MAY BE EXPENSIVE,
BUT IT MEANS NOTHING TO ME! I'M
NOT GOING TO BE SOME TROPHY
FOR A SPOILED MAMA'S BOY WHO
LIKES TO HUMILIATE OTHERS... IF
HE DOESN'T ACCEPT ME AS I AM, HE
DOESN'T LOVE ME...

HEY, ALESSIA, COULD
YOU GIVE THIS TO
ETHAN? THANKS...



MEG! HRR! MEG! WAIT!
STOP PRETENDING YOU
DON'T HEAR ME...



MEG... MEG!

HEY! STOP PLAYING DEAF! CAN YOU HEAR ME?

YOU'RE NOT MAKING THIS EASY! I GAVE YOU THE CHANCE TO BE MY GIRLFRIEND, I GAVE YOU A NECKLACE, I GAVE YOU A DRESS, I INVITED YOU TO...

...TREATED ME LIKE A MERE TROPHY IN FRONT OF YOUR FRIENDS, BELITTLED MY DREAM OF BECOMING A PASTRY CHEF, AND SPENT THE WHOLE TIME TRYING TO CHANGE WHO I AM AND WHAT I LOVE!

YOU'RE IMMATURE AND SHALLOW! YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT A REAL RELATIONSHIP IS. YOU DON'T ACCEPT ME FOR WHO I AM—YOU JUST TRY TO CHANGE ME! I'VE HAD ENOUGH! GO FLIRT WITH THAT BLONDE YOU'VE BEEN EYEING. WE'RE DONE!

RGG! WHO DO YOU THINK YOU ARE TO TALK TO ME LIKE THAT? YOU'RE GETTING WAY TOO FULL OF YOURSELF, HUH? ACTING LIKE A SMARTASS NOW? LET ME TELL YOU, THAT WON'T FLY WITH ME, OKAY? I'M NOT JUST ANYONE...

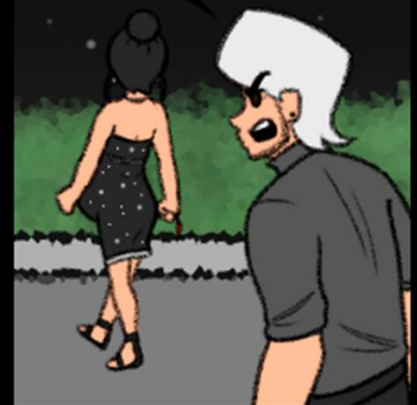
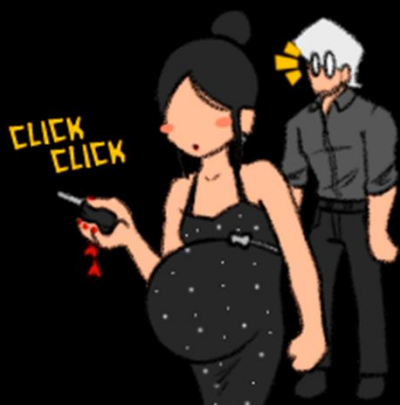


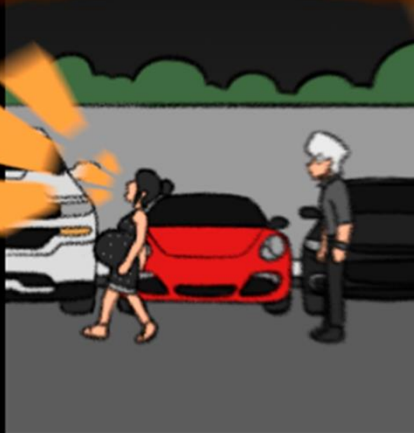
...

HEY!!! I'LL GIVE YOU ONE MORE CHANCE, MEG. COME BACK TO THE PARTY AND STOP ACTING LIKE A SPOILED BRAT, OR FORGET ABOUT ME FOR GOOD. I'M EVEN BEING GENEROUS GIVING YOU A CHANCE TO APOLOGIZE. SO, WHAT'S IT GONNA BE?

WELL? WHAT'S YOUR ANSWER? YOU'RE NOT GONNA SAY ANYTHING?

CLICK
CLICK





AHH! I REALLY LOVE HOW AGGRESSIVE MY BURPS SOUND WHEN I'M ANGRY! I HOPE HE GOT THE MESSAGE!



FINE! YOU KNOW WHAT? WHATEVER! YOU... YOU'LL REGRET NOT APPRECIATING ME! GOT IT? I'M DONE!



YEP! I THINK HE GOT IT!



ALESSIA WAS RIGHT: "BREAK HIS LITTLE RULES, AND HE'LL CRUMBLE!" WHO'D HAVE THOUGHT A BURP COULD BE A SYMBOL OF FREEDOM AND SELF-CONFIDENCE? OK, MAYBE I WENT OVERBOARD WITH THAT ONE, BUT... I FEEL AMAZING! DOES THAT MAKE ME WEIRD?



OH WELL, I COULDN'T STAY IN SUCH A SUFFOCATING RELATIONSHIP ANYWAY. MOM ALWAYS SAID EVERYONE HAS THEIR OWN WAY TO SHINE, AND NO ONE SHOULD EVER GIVE UP THEIR SPARKLE.



THIS IS ME: A DREAMER WITH A LOVE FOR PASTRIES, K-DRAMAS, COUNTRY MUSIC, AND STREET BURGERS—EVEN IF THEY LEAVE ME A LITTLE BLOATED. AND YEAH, I BURP BETTER THAN MOST GUYS. THAT'S MY SHINE, AND I'M NOT LETTING ANYONE DIM IT.

I MADE THE WRONG CHOICE. I WAS IMMATURE... I THOUGHT WEALTH AND SOPHISTICATION WERE THE MOST IMPORTANT THINGS, BUT THERE ARE THINGS THAT MATTER SO MUCH MORE THAN THAT! STREET BURGERS, FOR EXAMPLE? A THOUSAND TIMES BETTER THAN LEMON RISOTTO...



I WAS SO UNFAIR TO JASON... A MATERIALISTIC FOOL! I KNOW WE CARED ABOUT EACH OTHER, BUT... I NEED TO FIX THIS. HE DESERVES SO MUCH BETTER THAN MY INDIFFERENCE.



THANKS, EVERYONE! SEE YOU NEXT TIME!

THANKS, JASON! THE BURGERS WERE AMAZING AS ALWAYS!

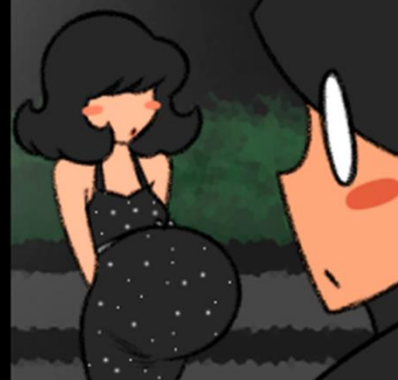


HEY, SUPERCHEF!

CUPCAKE!?



I... NEED TO TALK TO YOU. I KNOW IT'S CLOSING TIME, BUT DO YOU HAVE A MOMENT?



...

YOU KNOW, I REALLY ADMIRE YOU! I ADMIRE HOW YOU BRIGHTEN PEOPLE'S DAYS. I ADMIRE HOW YOU MAKE ME FEEL GOOD JUST BY REMEMBERING A SONG I LIKE, KNOWING MY FAVORITE BURGER, OR WITH THOSE SIMPLE COMPLIMENTS THAT ALWAYS CATCH ME OFF GUARD.



...LOOK, JASON, I WANTED TO APOLOGIZE. I'M NOT THIS AMAZING PERSON YOU THINK I AM...

I ADMIT I FELT SOMETHING FOR YOU... SOMETHING THAT, IN MY IMMATUREITY, I DIDN'T KNOW HOW TO RECOGNIZE. AND I ENDED UP BEING UNFAIR. I TRADED MY SUPERHERO FOR A GOLDEN VILLAIN. I LET MYSELF BE FOOLED BY SUPERFICIAL SHINE AND IGNORED THE ONE WHO TRULY CARED ABOUT ME.



I DON'T EXPECT YOU TO TRUST ME AGAIN. I JUST WANTED TO SAY I'M SORRY. AND... THANK YOU FOR SHOWING ME WHAT REALLY MATTERS. YOU DESERVE BETTER THAN ME.



OH...



EVERY CHOICE HAS CONSEQUENCES. I CHOSE WRONG AND PAID THE PRICE, BUT I LEARNED SOMETHING: A SINCERE APOLOGY CAN CHANGE EVERYTHING, LIKE MY DAD ALWAYS SAID.

I CHOSE A BOYFRIEND BASED SOLELY ON SUPERFICIAL AND TRIVIAL THINGS LIKE MONEY AND LOOKS, AND I REAPED WHAT I DESERVED, A HIGHLY UNCOMFORTABLE AND TOXIC RELATIONSHIP.



I MADE BAD CHOICES AND DEALT WITH THEIR CONSEQUENCES. BUT I LEARNED THAT OWNING UP TO MY MISTAKES AND ASKING FOR FORGIVENESS CAN BRING SOMETHING MUCH BETTER THAN I EXPECTED.



DID JASON TEXT ME?



LOOK, CUPCAKE... I WON'T LIE, I WAS REALLY HURT SEEING YOU WITH THAT GUY. IT FELT LIKE ALL THOSE MOMENTS WE SHARED HERE AT THE FOOD TRUCK DIDN'T MEAN ANYTHING.



WELL, EVERYONE MAKES MISTAKES, BUT WHAT MATTERS ISN'T THE MISTAKE ITSELF—IT'S WHAT WE DO AFTERWARD. YOU HAD THE COURAGE TO RECOGNIZE IT, TO COME BACK HERE AND TRY TO MAKE THINGS RIGHT.



I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE PLANNING NOW, BUT IF YOU'D LIKE TO START OVER... WELL, I'M ALWAYS IN NEED OF A GOOD HELPER DURING SCHOOL BREAKS, AND I THINK WE'D MAKE A GREAT TEAM.



"A SINCERE APOLOGY CAN CHANGE EVERYTHING!"
THANK YOU, DAD!

NEXT DAY...



WHAT WOULD CUPCAKE THINK OF THE MESSAGES I SENT HER LAST NIGHT? SHE HASN'T REPLIED YET... DID I SAY SOMETHING I SHOULDN'T HAVE?



HUH?



CUPCAKE!?



HEY, SUPERCHEF! READY TO MAKE SOME BURGERS?



I DON'T HAVE MUCH EXPERIENCE WITH THEMED FOOD TRUCKS, BUT BASED ON MY HALLOWEEN COSTUMES, THIS WAS THE CLOSEST I COULD GET TO A SUPERCHEF!



SO, WHAT DO YOU THINK OF MY "HILL'S LEGACY SKIN"? HEHE...



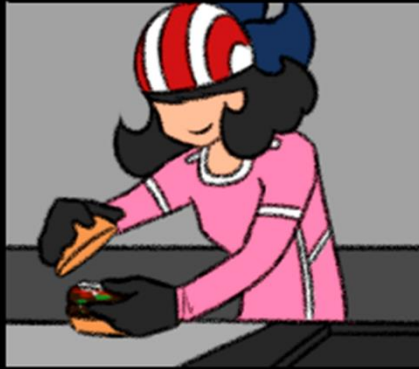
...HE LOVED THE SURPRISE! I COULD SEE IT ON HIS FACE. IT MADE ME SO HAPPY TO GET A FRESH START AFTER A MISTAKE. IT GOT ME THINKING...ABOUT THE IMPORTANCE OF LEARNING FROM MISTAKES...



INSTEAD OF CHOOSING A BOYFRIEND WITH MY HEART, I CHOSE ONE WITH MY COLD, CALCULATING MIND. I PRIORITIZED SUPERFICIAL THINGS AND A SOPHISTICATED LIFE, BUT I LEARNED THOSE THINGS HAVE NO VALUE.



WHAT REALLY MATTERS IS BEING WITH SOMEONE WHO MAKES YOU FEEL GOOD. SOMEONE WHO ACCEPTS YOU AS YOU ARE. WHO'S HAPPY TO SEE YOU. WHO GIVES YOU COMPLIMENTS EVEN WHEN YOU'RE NOT AT YOUR BEST. I NEEDED TO LEARN THAT...



BUT I ONLY LEARNED BECAUSE I MADE MISTAKES. IT'S NORMAL TO MAKE MISTAKES; IT'S PART OF LIFE, BUT WHAT'S IMPORTANT IS LEARNING FROM THEM. I REALIZED THAT WHO WE TRULY ARE ISN'T DEFINED BY OUR MISTAKES, BUT BY HOW WE HANDLE THEM AFTERWARD.



OWNING OUR MISTAKES AND ASKING FOR FORGIVENESS IS ONE OF THE MOST VALUABLE THINGS A PERSON CAN DO BECAUSE FORGIVENESS HAS THE POWER TO HEAL WOUNDS AND GIVE US A SECOND CHANCE.



"LEARN FROM YOUR MISTAKES" IS THE MOST VALUABLE LESSON I LEARNED THIS SEMESTER AT COLLEGE...



...
I KNEW I HAD TO FIX SOME THINGS...



VAL, I'M SORRY. YOU WERE RIGHT... I WAS SO SHALLOW. I REALLY SHOULD'VE LISTENED TO YOU.

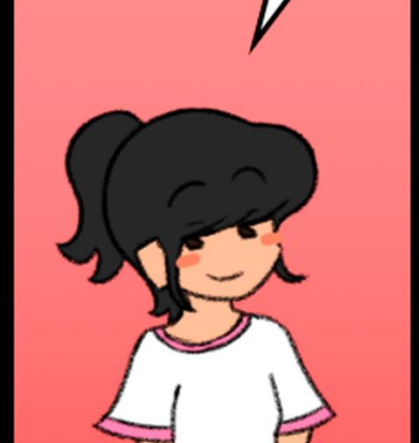


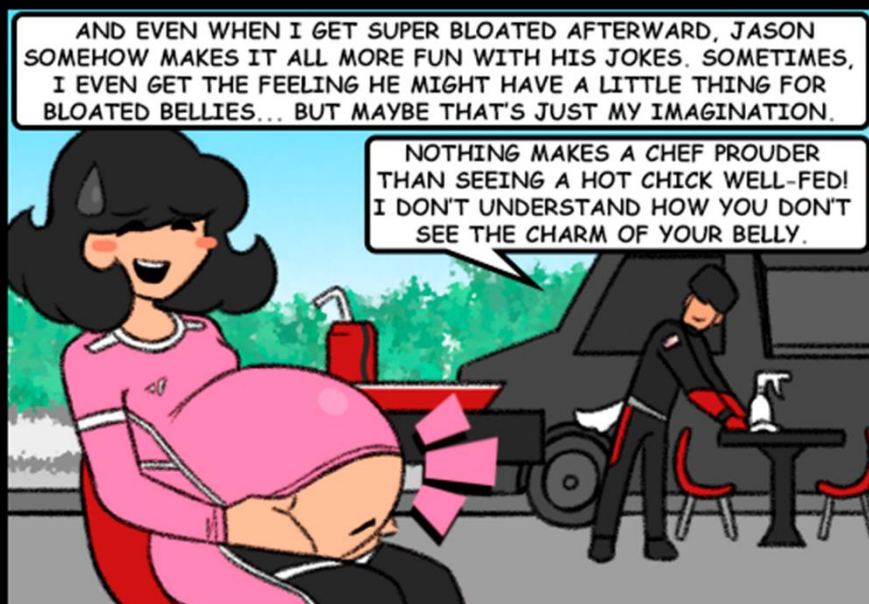
OH, DON'T WORRY. WHAT MATTERS IS THAT YOU REALIZED IT.

SO... TELL ME. WHAT ABOUT YOU AND JASON? GOSSIP TIME?



ME AND JASON? HEHE...





I TRIED TO LET IT OUT A BIT MORE DISCREETLY, BUT...



BADURRP!



THERE WAS TOO MUCH GAS. THE RESULT? ANOTHER ONE OF MY TRUCKER BURPS; LOUD, BASSY, AND ANYTHING BUT POLITE. BUT WHAT HAPPENED NEXT REALLY CAUGHT MY ATTENTION...



SEE? THAT'S WHY I CAN'T RESIST YOU! THIS IS EVERYTHING A MAN COULD WANT IN A WOMAN.



UH... BURPS?



AUTHENTICITY! THERE'S NOTHING MORE ATTRACTIVE IN A WOMAN THAN OWNING HER OWN SHINE!



SMACK!



NOW, LET'S GET BACK TO WORK. I'D SPEND THE WHOLE AFTERNOON KISSING THOSE SOFT LIPS OF YOURS, BUT I NEED TO MAKE SOME MONEY TO PAY RENT... HEHEHE.



HE WANTED TO KISS ME RIGHT AFTER I LET OUT A MASSIVE BURP! WOULD HE REALLY FIND ME ATTRACTIVE WITH MY TRUCKER BURPS, MY GORILLA APPETITE, AND THESE HUGE FOOD BABIES (UNLIKE ETHAN)? I'M NOT SURE IF THAT'S NORMAL, BUT I LIKED IT! I GUESS THAT KISS WAS HIS WAY OF ACCEPTING ME!



MAYBE I'M WEIRD FOR THIS, BUT IN A WAY, I LIKED IT. I EVEN GOT A LITTLE TURNED ON, I CONFESS. A MAN WHO ACCEPTS ME AS I AM, AND STILL FINDS ME ATTRACTIVE EVEN AFTER A BURP THAT BAD. NOW THAT'S ACCEPTANCE!



ETHAN WOULD NEVER KISS ME AFTER A BURP LIKE THAT. WITH ALL HIS ALPHA MALE TALK, HE WOULDN'T KISS ME BECAUSE OF A BURP. BUT JASON? HE DOESN'T HAVE THAT KIND OF FUSS. HE'S THE KIND OF MAN I LIKE...



BURPS ARE GROSS, I KNOW! BUT THAT KISS MEANT A LOT TO ME. OF COURSE, I'LL NEVER TELL JASON THAT, HE'D THINK I'M THE WEIRDEST GIRL IN THE WORLD, BUT I ADMIT IT... HEHE... I LIKED IT...



THAT ROUND BELLY OF HERS DRIVES ME CRAZY. AND THOSE BURPS? THEY REALLY GET TO ME. AND HER SOFT LIPS... IT'S LIKE SHE DOESN'T EVEN REALIZE HOW EFFORTLESSLY SHE SEDUCES ME.



HERE YOU GO, SUPERCHEF! YOU FORGOT TO GRAB THE MAYO BOTTLES...



GEEZ... I THINK I'VE FOUND THE WOMAN OF MY LIFE. THESE KISSES ARE GONNA BE THE END OF ME!



I THINK I'VE FINALLY FOUND SOMEONE WHO TRULY ACCEPTS ME. I HAD TO LEARN THE HARD WAY, BUT... IT FEELS GOOD TO BE COMFORTABLE AROUND SOMEONE YOU LIKE...



HUGHES FARM...

IN THIS FIRST SEMESTER, I LEARNED MORE THAN I EXPECTED. IT WASN'T JUST COOKING TECHNIQUES, BUT NEW LIFE VALUES...



YOU WERE RIGHT, MOM... BEING OURSELVES IS THE BEST, BECAUSE OUR OWN SHINE BRINGS OUR OWN REWARDS. I LEARNED THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN PEOPLE WHO TRULY CARE ABOUT US AND THOSE WHO ARE ALL ABOUT APPEARANCES. I ALSO REALIZED HOW IMPORTANT IT IS TO OWN OUR MISTAKES AND THE HEALING POWER OF FORGIVENESS. AND OF COURSE, STREET BURGERS ARE WAY BETTER THAN SALMON!



HEHEHE! THAT'S MY MEG! MY BABY IS GROWING UP AND BECOMING A MATURE AND BEAUTIFUL WOMAN! AND NOW SHE'S DATING! HEHEHE... I'M ALREADY LOOKING FORWARD TO MEETING THIS JASON YOU'VE TALKED ABOUT...



I TOLD YOU, MEG! YOU HAVE SUCH A SWEET HEART! BESIDES BEING BEAUTIFUL, KIND, AND REALLY COOL! I SAID THE BOYS WOULD FALL FOR YOU IN COLLEGE!



YEAH! YOU WERE RIGHT, WHEN SOMEONE LIKES US, THEY ACCEPT EVERYTHING ABOUT US!

JUST LIKE WE TALKED ABOUT, SIS! ACCEPTANCE IS ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT THINGS IN A RELATIONSHIP! IT'S ESSENTIAL FOR DEVELOPING GOOD INTIMACY AND A COMFORTABLE COMPANIONSHIP! THAT ETHAN, AS YOU SAID, SEEMED LIKE A JERK! GLAD YOU FIXED THINGS!



AS FOR YOU, MISS FELICITY? YOU'RE 15 NOW! YOU'RE A PRETTY GIRL! HOW ABOUT A LITTLE BOYFRIEND, HUH? WHAT DO YOU THINK OF O'BRIEN? YOU SEEM TO LIKE HIM! COME ON, TELL ME!



MOM!!! MEG IS SAYING THAT AGAIN!

MEG, DARLING...

HAHAHA...



...

THE WINTER BREAK WAS FUN AND REFRESHING. BUT LIFE GOES ON, AND THE NEXT SEMESTER PROMISES TO BE EXCITING!





