

#1



# DREAMON



MORPHINATOR

FOOBAR

VOLUME

5

8

2

0

10

?



HARLEY SANGER  
AMERICUS MOORE

MERRILY, LIFE IS BUT A DREAM



# DREAM ON



WRITTEN BY  
**HARLEY SANGER**  
**AMERICUS MOORE**

ILLUSTRATED BY  
**HARLEY SANGER**

spiritual guidance by



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OUR STORY BEGINS BACK IN THE DAYS OF YORE, WHEN THE EMPIRE WAS STRIKING BACK, ET. WAS PHONING HOME, & THE EPIC BATTLES OF THE 8-BIT ERA WERE JUST BEGINNING. DEEP INSIDE A HIDDEN SUBTERRANEAN COMPLEX, A QUIXOTIC YOUNG TRODE\* STARTS HIS DAY, UNAWARE THAT HE IS ABOUT TO BECOME THE INSTIGATOR OF A CATACLYSM THAT WOULD FOREVER ALTER THE NATURE OF MUSIC REALITY "UP THERE."

\*TECH JARGON FOR "ANTHROPOMORPHIC THERMIONIC VALVE."

**WAKE UP!!!**

<groan> I need just five more minutes...

Tick tock time, bim—  
I'm running out of snooze  
cycles! Now get up! HEY!  
THAT HURTS!

THERE ARE MORNINGS WHEN THE ALARM CLOCK'S WARNING HERALDS ANOTHER BRIGHT, SHINY DAY, BRIMMING WITH EXCITING PROSPECTS AND NEW WORLDS TO CONQUER—BUT TODAY WAS NOT ONE OF THOSE DAYS. MY HEAD WHIRRED LIKE A JUDGMENTAL GYROTRON, AND I DIDN'T NEED A DIAGNOSTIC TO TELL ME I HAD ONE HELLUVA HANGOVER.

...dim, buddy, you got to stop  
burning your grid at both ends...

SWAT!

YAWN

IT WAS MONDAY. I  
ROLLED OUT OF BED.

ZZZZZ!

ZZZZZT!

AMPPICCHINO

CUP O' CURRENT

Right-o. Feeling  
perky now!

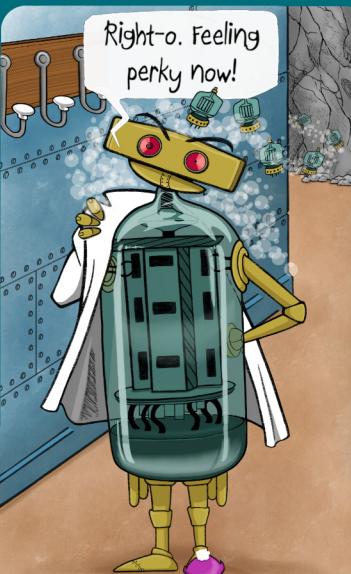
I NEEDED AN EXTRA-DOUBLE  
JOLT OF AC TO GET ME  
THROUGH THE DAY.

STAY  
GROUNDED

ZZZZZT!

Glug  
Glug

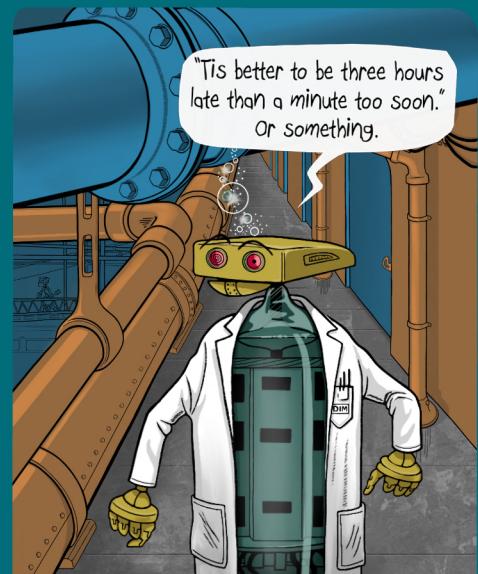
AT THE TIME IT SEEMED SMART, BUT  
IN HINDSIGHT WAS A TOTALLY BONE-  
HEADED MOVE—BECAUSE EXACTLY  
26 MINUTES LATER, THAT DECISION  
WOUND UP RUINING MY LIFE.



I DIDN'T CARE THAT MY INTERNALS HAD SUDDENLY AMPED TO OVERLOAD 1. I GRABBED MY LAB COAT, IGNORING THE WARNING SIGNS OF IMMINENT ELECTRON DERANGEMENT.



AS I HEADED OUT TO WORK, I MADE A MENTAL NOTE TO GO FOR THE FOUR LIGHTNING BOLTS MORE OFTEN. I HADN'T FELT THIS TUBULAR SINCE I GREW OUT OF MY RETAINER!



HEY HO, BEN FRANKLIN! THERE WAS A NEW APHORISER ON THE BLOCK! IF THERE HAD BEEN ROSES DOWN IN THAT INDUSTRIAL DUNGEON I CALLED HOME, I WOULD'A STOPPED AND SMELLED 'EM. THE DAY WAS DEFINITELY LOOKING BRIGHTER.

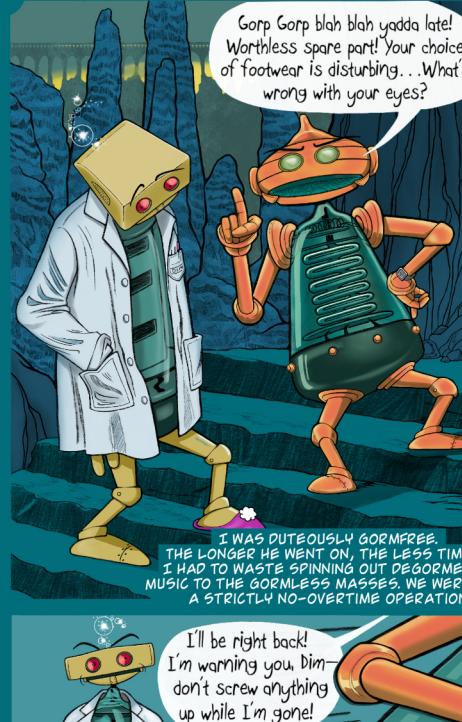
AT WORK I WAS KNOWN AS THE LOOSE SOLDER JOINT, ALWAYS A MISTEP AWAY FROM THE DISASSEMBLY LINE. BUT THANKS TO MY FAMILY

CONNECTIONS, I HAD A CHERRY GIG FEEDING HQ-APPROVED RECORDINGS INTO BIG M (OUR RESIDENT SONIC-BROADCASTING MOREPHINATOR), WHICH LEFT ME WITH WAY TOO MUCH TIME TO COME UP WITH NEW WAYS TO SCREW UP MY LIFE.

# INSOMNIA HQ



STILL JACKED ON AMPLICCHINO, I WALKED INTO THE BUILDING FEELING LIKE A GAMBLING JUNKIE ON A HOT STREAK—BETTING MYSELF THAT, GIVEN HALF A CHANCE, I'D FINALLY DO THE THING THAT... WELL, YOU'LL SEE. TO MAKE MATTERS WORSE, I'D CONVINCED MYSELF THAT WHEN THE TECH TERRARIUMS UP ON THE HOT FLOOR FOUND OUT WHAT I'D DONE, THEY'D BE BLOWING THEIR SPARK CHAMBERS TO SEE WHO COULD UPSIZE ME THE FASTEST!



I FLIPPED FROM LOAD MODE TO BROADCAST & JAMMED THE MASTER CONTROL HARD RIGHT. SUDDENLY, THE OVERCOOKED YIN I'D JUST FED INTO BIG M BEGAN SPWING ONTO THE AIRWAVES LIKE A RAW HANG SLUDGE REGURGITATE! I HAD TO ADMIT—IT WAS AWESOME!

WAH HA HA!  
I AM DIMBUL-BEX,  
APEX THERMONIC  
VALVE, THE ONLY  
TRODE TO BREACH  
THE FORBIDDEN  
FOOBAR ZONE!

HE IS BEEN A GOOD FRIEND  
OF MINE!

LOOK  
ON MY WORKS,  
YE MIGHTY, AND  
DESPAIR!

WOO HOO!

(Then without warning:  
a bad thing happened.)

KA-BOOM!

CRACK!

CRACK!

CRACK!

## AFTERMATH

WELL, THE HARDWARE SURVIVED THE EXPLOSION, BUT BIG M WAS A HOT MESS OF BLOWN CIRCUITS. SHE COULDN'T BE RESTORED; NOT THEN, NOT EVER. HEY, I MIGHT MESS UP, BUT I DON'T MESS AROUND! EVEN SO (AS I TOLD THEM DOWN IN THE INTERROGATION ROOM), IT DIDN'T SEEM FAIR THAT I SHOULD BE HELD RESPONSIBLE, WHEN IT WAS CLEARLY MANAGEMENT'S JOB TO PREVENT THE CATASTROPHE IN THE FIRST PLACE. AS YOU CAN IMAGINE, THAT DIDN'T GO OVER TOO BIG WITH THE BOSSSES. INSTEAD OF CONGRATULATING ME FOR DARING TO GO WHERE NO TRODE HAD GONE BEFORE, THEY SENTENCED ME TO HARD LABOR IN ALCATRODE PRISON!! AFTER THEY WERE DONE WITH ME, INSOMNIA HQ REPLACED THE MOREPHINATOR WITH A NEW EXPERIMENTAL DEVICE, CODENAMED "EMPTY VEE."

NOW I SPEND THE LONG DAYS CURATING MY GROWING COLLECTION OF DUST PARTICLES AS I WAIT FOR NEWS FROM THE OUTSIDE WORLD. JAILHOUSE SCUTTLEBUTT SAYS THAT THE INSTALLATION OF EMPTY VEE OVER THE RUINS OF BIG M HAD CREATED **STRANGE TRANSMOGRIFICATIONS** IN THE SURFACE WORLD'S MUSIC—BUT MAYBE THAT'S JUST A TRAGIC RUMOR INTENDED TO KEEP ME—PUBLIC ENEMY #1—LOCKED UP FOREVER.

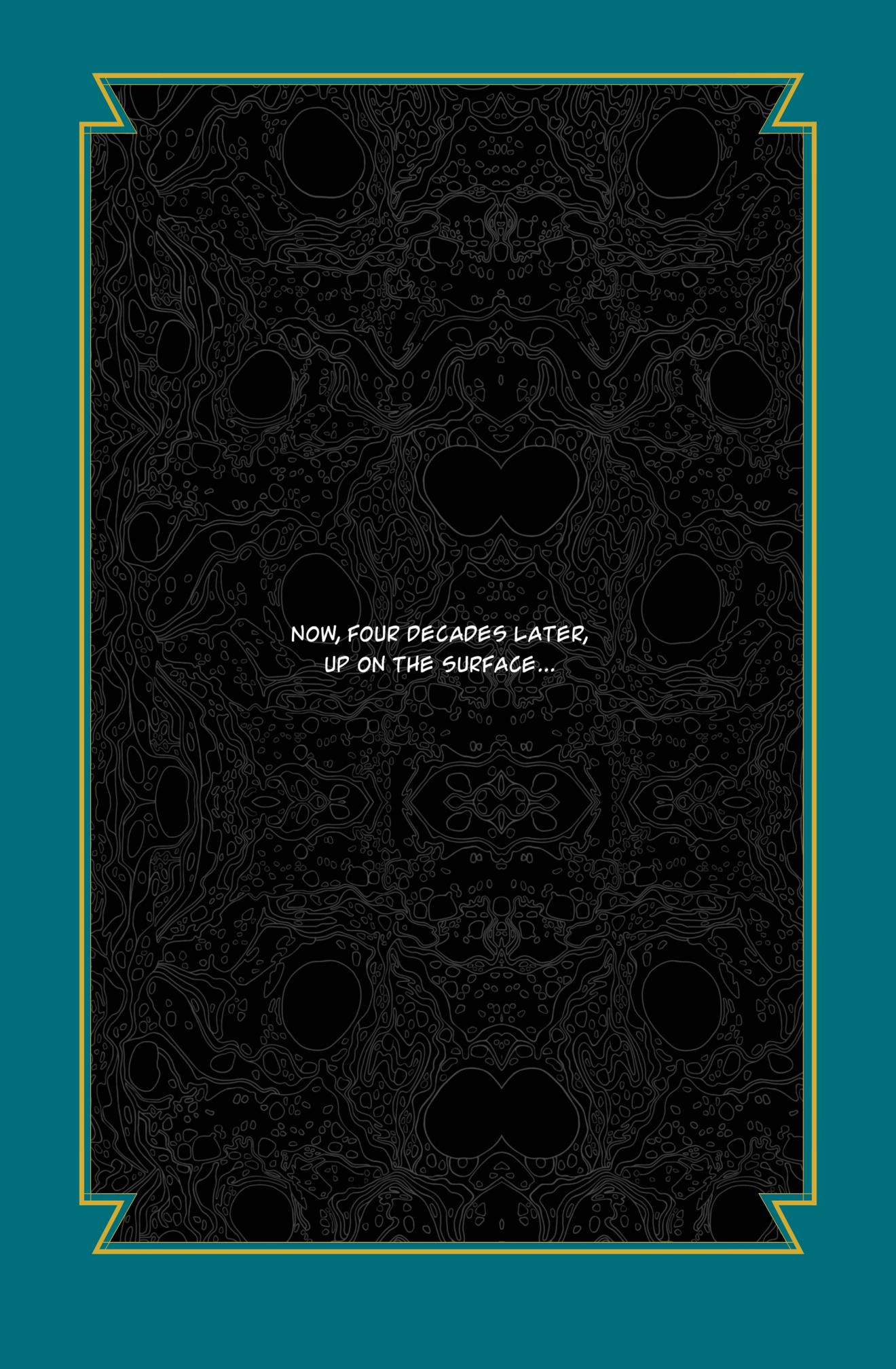
FOR NOW, MY DREAMS ARE MORE OFF THAN ON, BUT WHO KNOWS? SOMEDAY MY FATE MAY CHANGE—AND I WILL BE A FREE TRODE ONCE MORE.

—DIMBULBEX

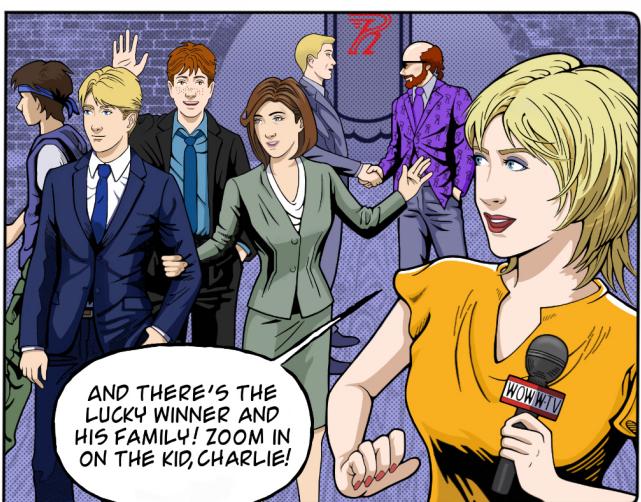
P.S. YOU CAN WRITE YOURS TRULY, PRISONER #8675309, C/O ALCATRODE SUPER MAX. MEANWHILE, STAY GROUNDED, MY FRIENDS.

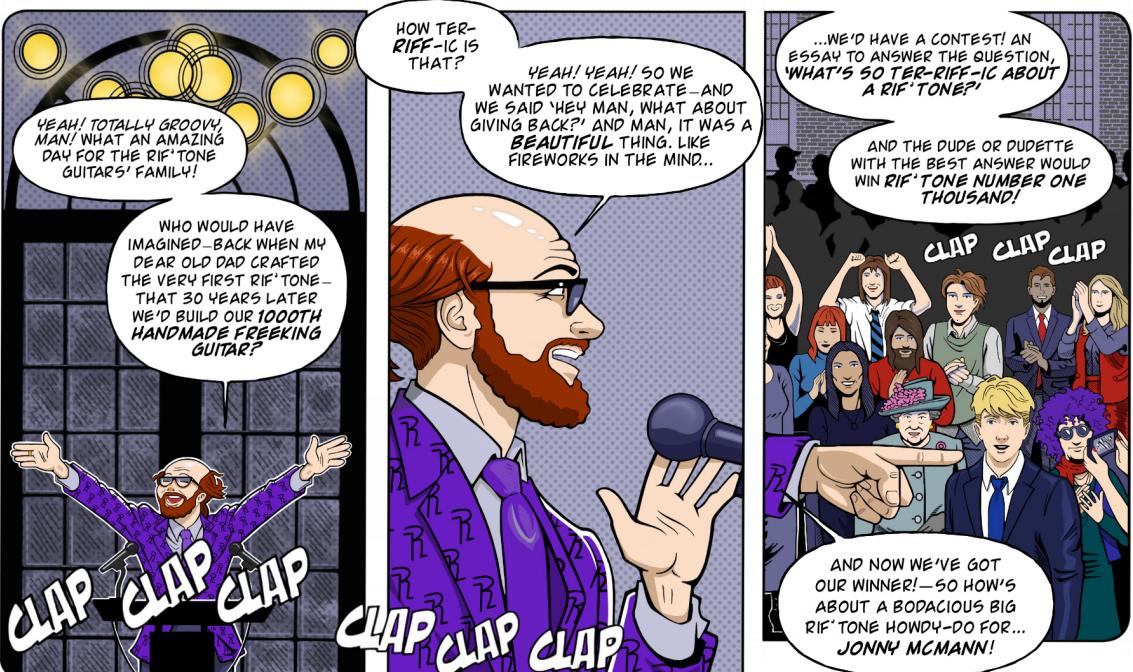
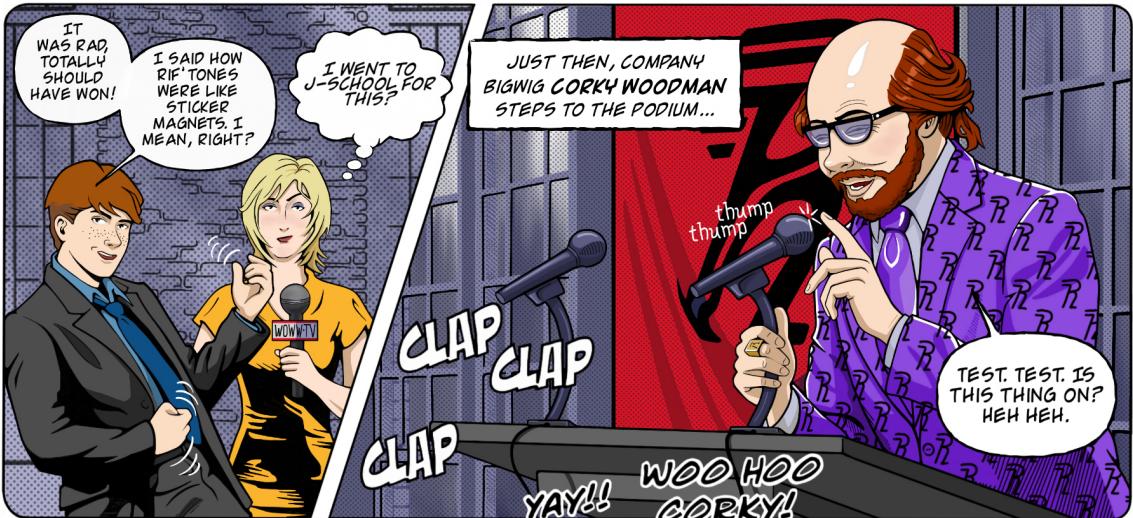
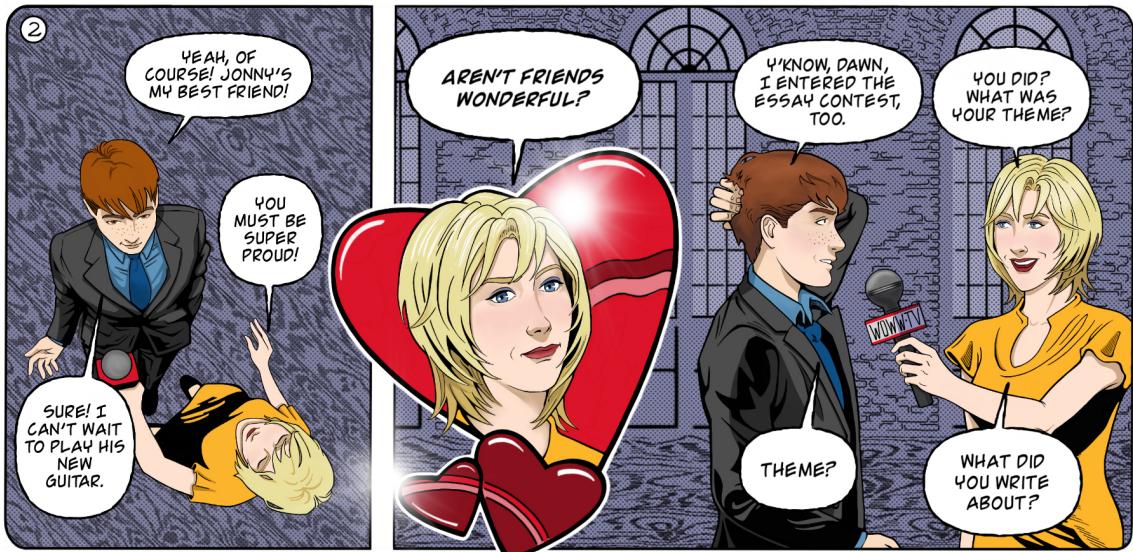
P.S. WHILE I DO NOT CONSIDER MYSELF A CONSPIRACY THEORIST, I CAN'T HELP BUT WONDER: WAS IT JUST A COINCIDENCE THAT JESSIE'S GIRL, WRITTEN & PERFORMED BY MR. RICK SPRINGFIELD, HIT #1 ON AUGUST 1, 1981, THE SAME DAY HQ LAUNCHED THE EMPTY VEE?

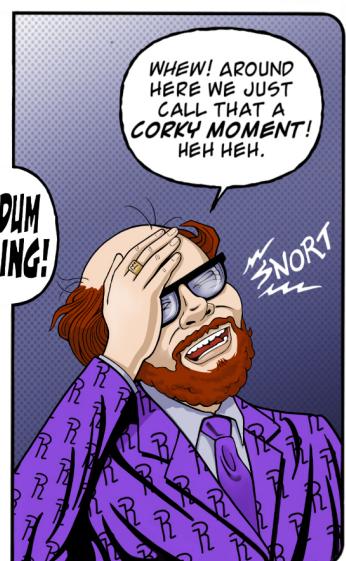
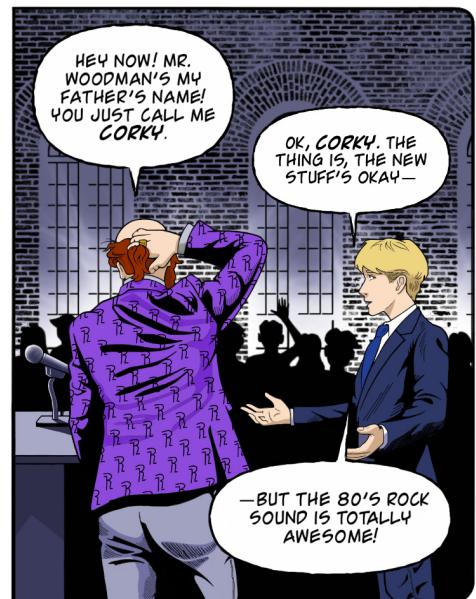
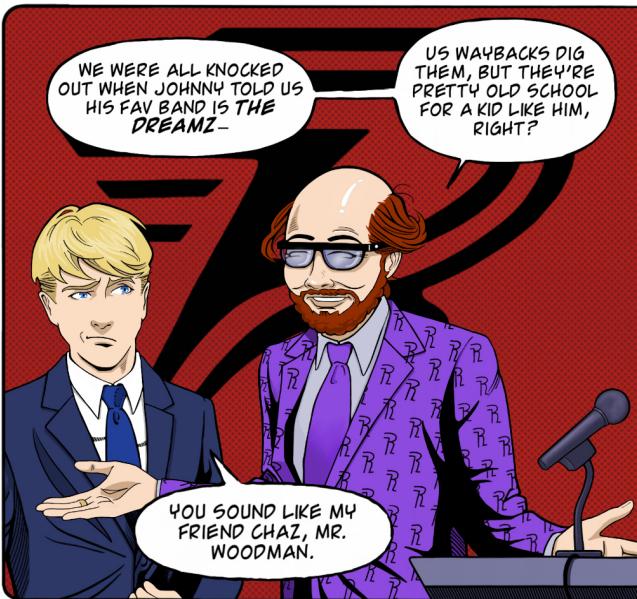
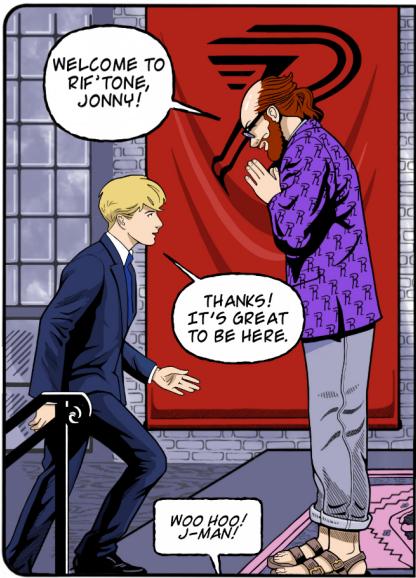


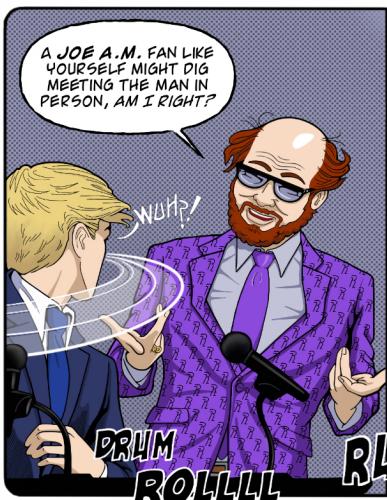


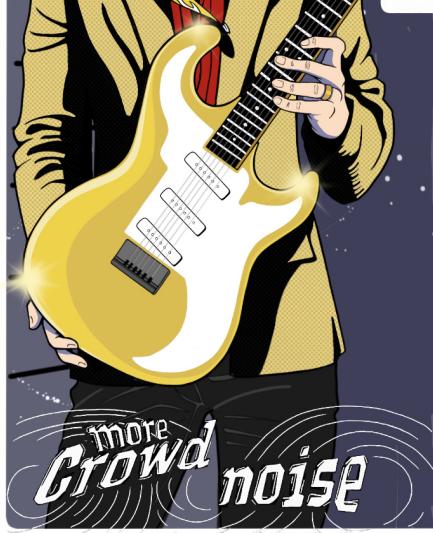
NOW, FOUR DECADES LATER,  
UP ON THE SURFACE...













AT HOME LATER THAT NIGHT, JONNY IS ON CLOUD NINE—HE WON THE RIF'TONE 1000TH GUITAR, WHICH HE NAMED “*RIFF*”, AND HE GOT TO MEET HIS GUITAR HERO, JOE A.M. OF THE DREAMZ.

NIGHT, EVERYONE!

“I KNOW JONNY, I USED TO PLAY GUITAR BACK IN THE DAY. ‘WILD THING’ WAS MY SIGNATURE SONG! I’LL TEACH IT TO YOU!”

“CAN I PRETEND I DIDN’T HEAR THAT?”

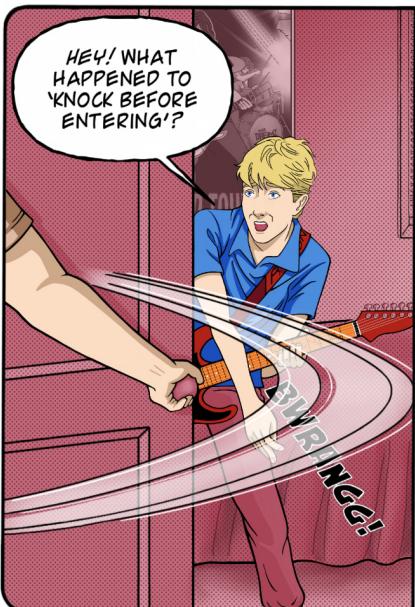
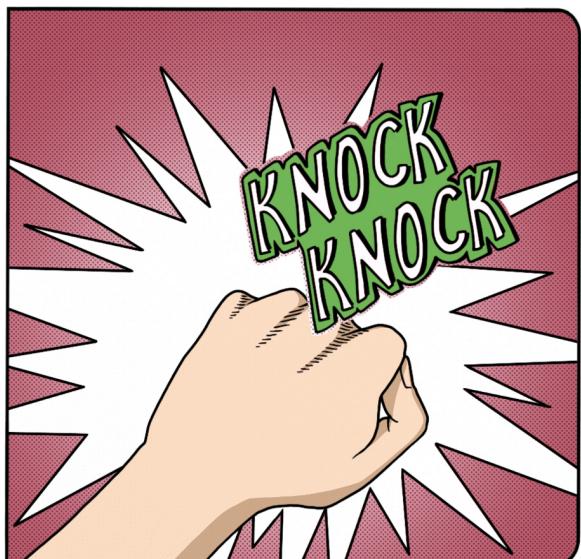
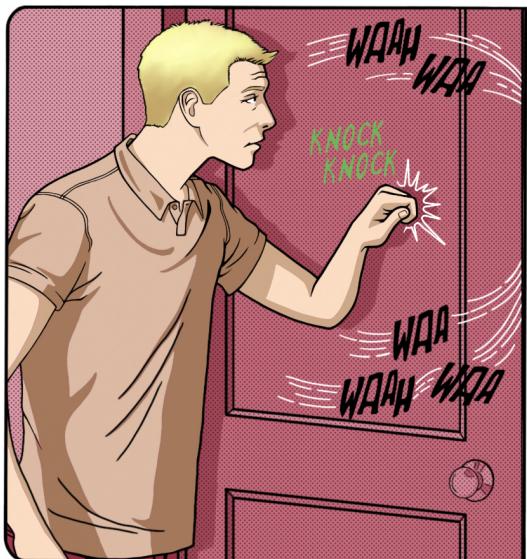
“UM...THANKS, AUNT LUCILLE, BUT—HEY! PRETTY COOL FIESTA TONITE, HUH?”

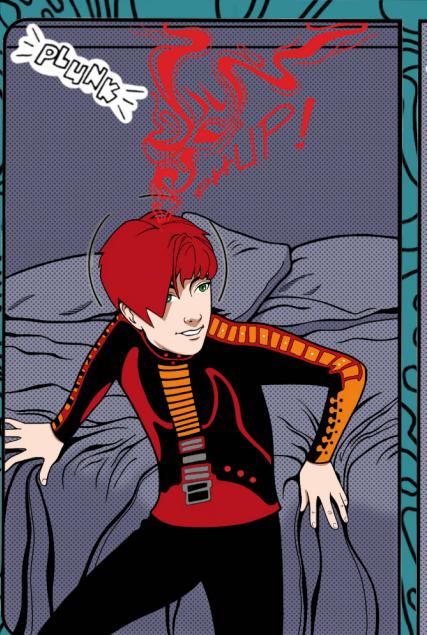
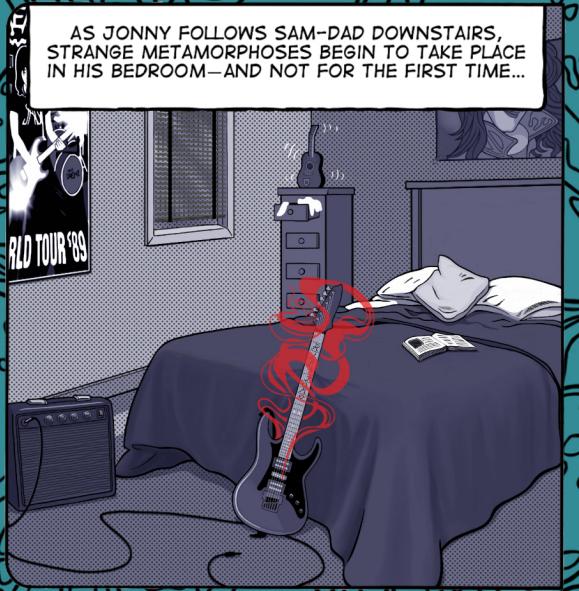
THE WEEKS GO BY AS JONNY PRACTICES ENDLESSLY WITH HIS NEW GUITAR, DRIVING EVERYONE NUTS.

“JUST THINK OF IT, *RIFF*! SOMEDAY WE’LL BE AS GOOD AS JOE A.M. AND LORETTA—AND THAT’LL BE UP THERE ON SOME KID’S WALL!”

“BWEOW WEDHH”  
“EVENTUALLY, EVEN WENDY’S SUPERMOM-ABILITY TO WITHSTAND HER ELDEST’S AMPLIFIED GUITAR NOISE FINALLY REACHES ITS LIMIT!”

**SHREK!**  
“JONATHAN ANDERSON MCMANN! STOP THAT RACKET RIGHT NOW!!”









DON'T EVER  
CALL ME THAT! MY  
NAME IS ERNEST!  
AND I'M NOT A  
TOY!

CAN A TOY  
DO  
THIS?

FWOOSH!

FWHISSH!

FHSSHH!

Wow! How'd  
you learn to play  
like that?

It's magic,  
I guess!

...but I'm never  
gonna live up to my potential!  
Jonny doesn't take me seriously.  
All he sees is my puny size and  
plastic strings.

Aw, that's okay.  
\*sigh\* I wish I lived in a world  
where I didn't have to hide myself  
when humans are around.

Do you think there  
is a place like that?

When I was at Wonder World  
Amusement Park, before I came here, I met an  
old guitar who said he'd seen it. But he was a  
habitual string snapper too, so...



WHILE NOT NEARLY AS NIFTY AS RIFF AND ERNEST'S TRANSMOGRIFICATION, THE MC MANN GARAGE GETS A MAKEOVER.

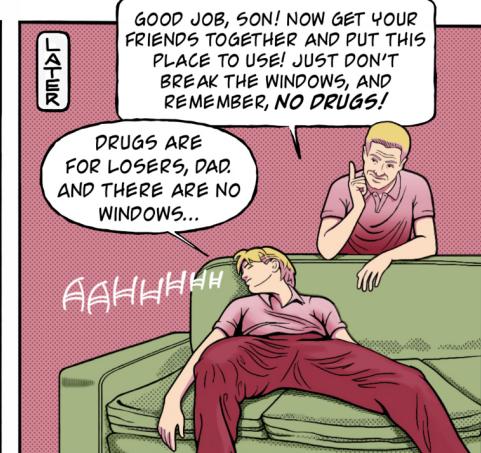
SURE, IT IS NOW—  
BUT YOU'RE MY SON AND  
I HAVE FAITH THAT YOU'LL  
CLEAN IT UP AND MAKE IT A  
FIRST-RATE GARAGE  
BAND CRIB!

13

BUT DAD! HOW'M I  
SUPPOSED TO PLAY  
OUT HERE? IT'S  
FULL OF JUNK!

'CRIB'??  
THAT'S  
DINOSAUR  
TALK, DAD.

GREAT HEAPS  
OF DESICCATED DINO  
DUNG! THAT REMINDS ME!  
I'VE GOT A MOVIE  
TO WATCH! NOW GET CRACKIN'  
MC MANN! HEH HEH!



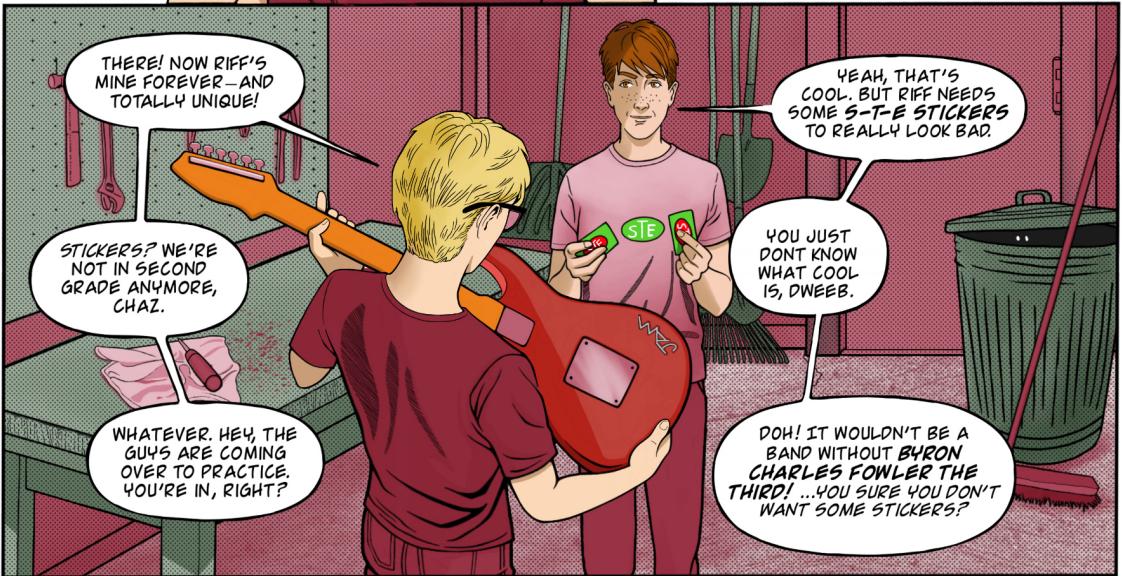
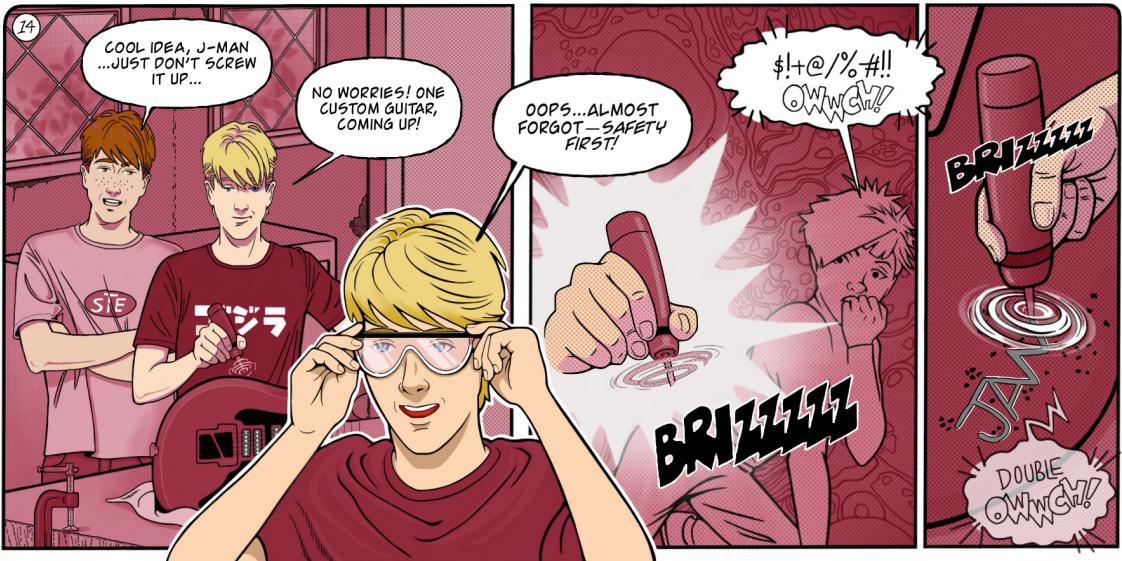
GOOD JOB, SON! NOW GET YOUR  
FRIENDS TOGETHER AND PUT THIS  
PLACE TO USE! JUST DON'T  
BREAK THE WINDOWS, AND  
REMEMBER, NO DRUGS!

JONNY AND HIS BEST FRIEND CHAZ FOWLER  
MAKE A NEW HANGOUT AND INVITE SOME  
FRIENDS TO JOIN THEIR BAND. BUT ENVY  
INFECTS CHAZ, AND JONNY RISES TO THE BAIT.

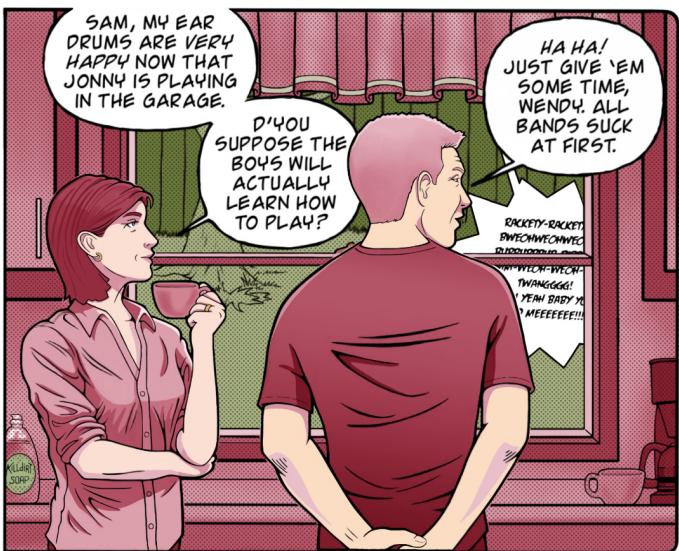
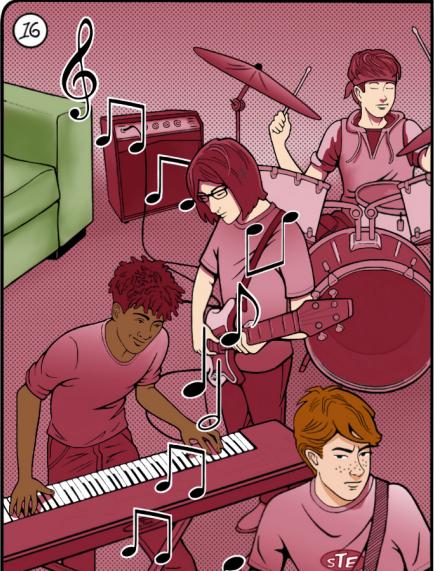
UH, I KNOW RIFF  
IS SPECIAL AND ALL,  
BUT TO TELL THE TRUTH,  
YOU'D NEVER KNOW IT  
BY LOOKING AT HIM.

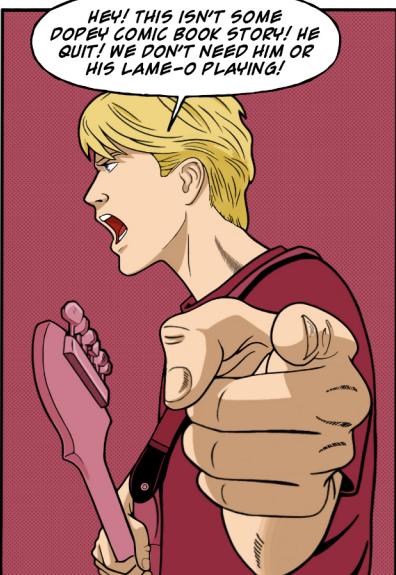
WHADDAYA  
MEAN?





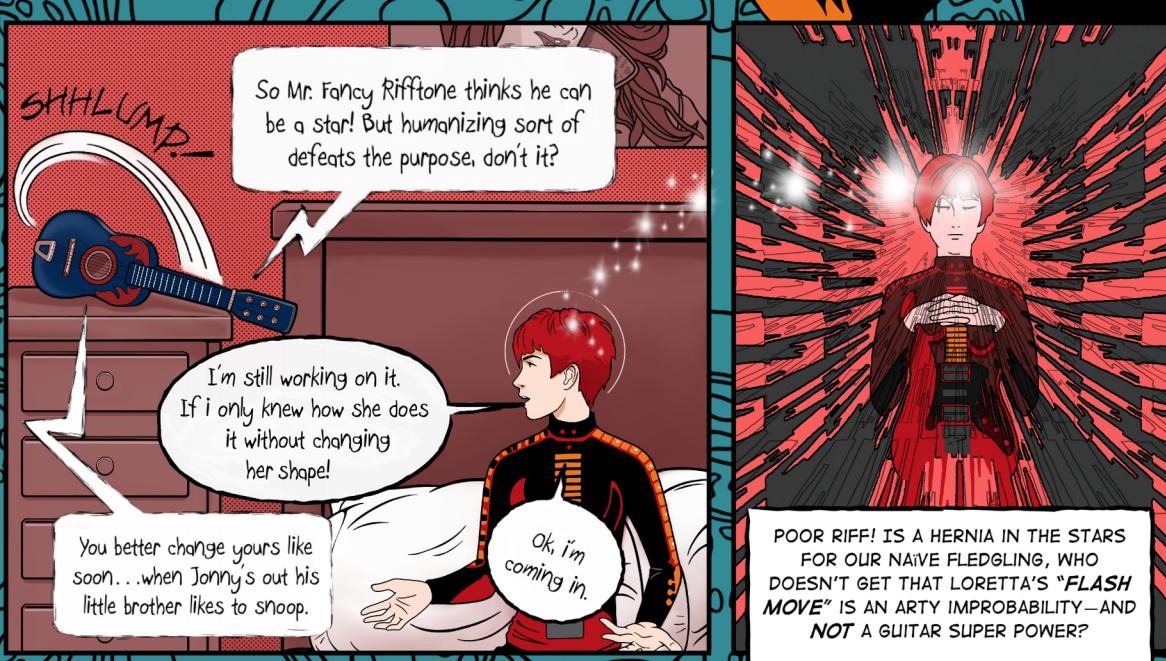
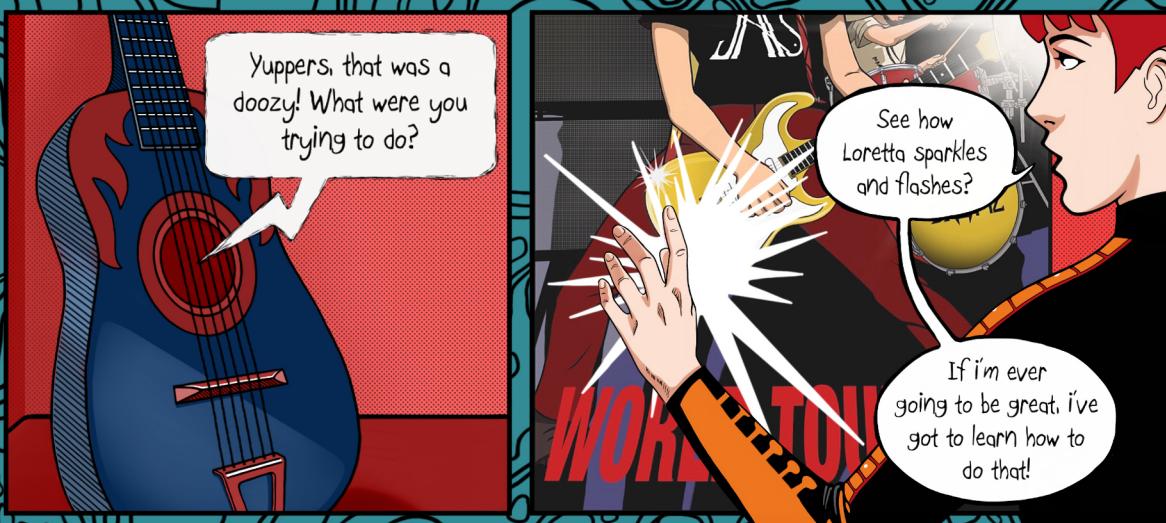






LATER THAT NIGHT...





YOUR ANGEL EYES ELECTRIFY  
SILVER GLASS GLINTS OF YOUR OBSESSION  
WHILE WE BURN ON BORROWED TIME  
YOU SURRENDER TO YOUR REFLECTION  
A RIVAL STEALING WHAT'S MINE

LIKE THE MIRROR MIRROR ON THE WALL  
YOU ONLY SHINE WHEN THE SPOTLIGHT FALLS  
AND PRETEND IT'S LOVE YOU'RE CHASING  
IF I ONLY KNEW NOW WHAT I KNEW THEN  
SHATTERED VISIONS OF WHAT COULD HAVE BEEN

THIS LOVERS' TRIANGLE I COULDN'T SEE  
COULDN'T SEE OUR TWISTED GEOMETRY  
YEAH, A LOVERS' TRIANGLE IN THREE-DEE  
BABY, IT'S YOU ME AND YOUR VANITY

THREE MONTHS SINCE THE  
RIF'TONE GUITAR GIVEAWAY,  
IN THE STUDIO OF 80'S ROCK  
LEGEND JOSEPH ANTHONY  
MORNING (JOE A.M.) OF  
THE DREAMZ.

NO LONGER TOURING, JOE SPENDS MOST  
OF HIS TIME SLACKING, BUT A DREAM LAST  
NIGHT BECKONS HIM TO THE PIANO TO  
ARRANGE THE BAND'S BIGGEST HIT FOR A  
SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA.

LOOK WHAT  
THE POSTMAN  
BROUGHT, JOE!

IT'S FROM  
CORKY OVER AT  
RIF'TONE GUITARS!  
A FRAMED PHOTO  
OF THE GUITAR  
GIVEAWAY.

I'M GOING TO  
HANG IT ON YOUR  
"I LOVE ME"  
WALL.

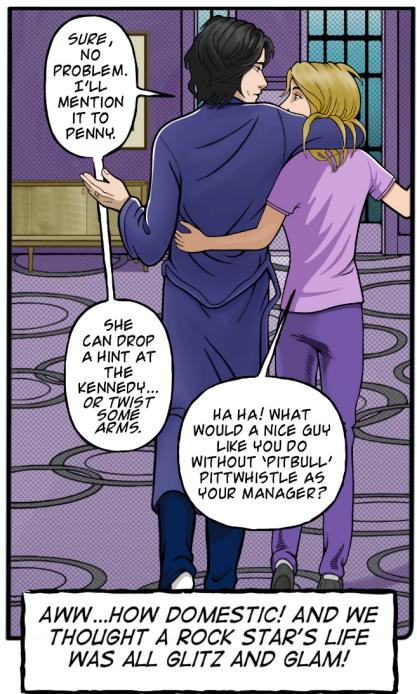
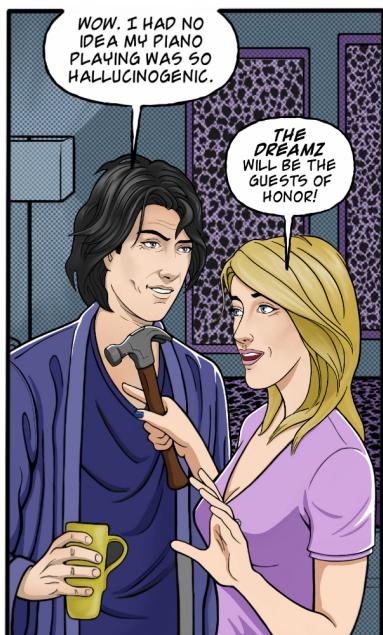
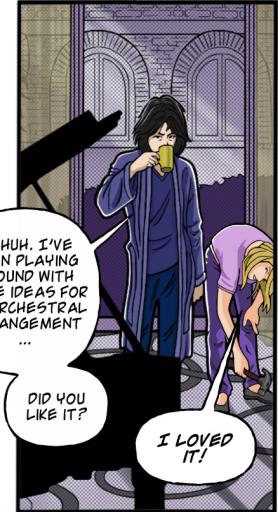
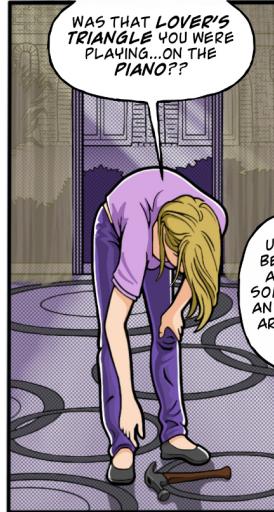
—ERK!—NOT  
NOW, JULES!

A GUITAR  
GIVEAWAY?

THE  
DREAMZ

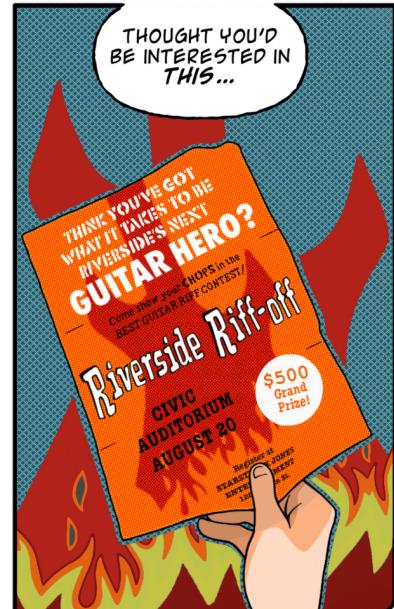
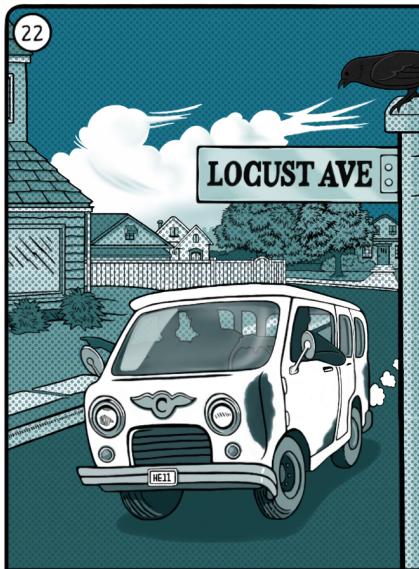
Roll over  
beethoven!

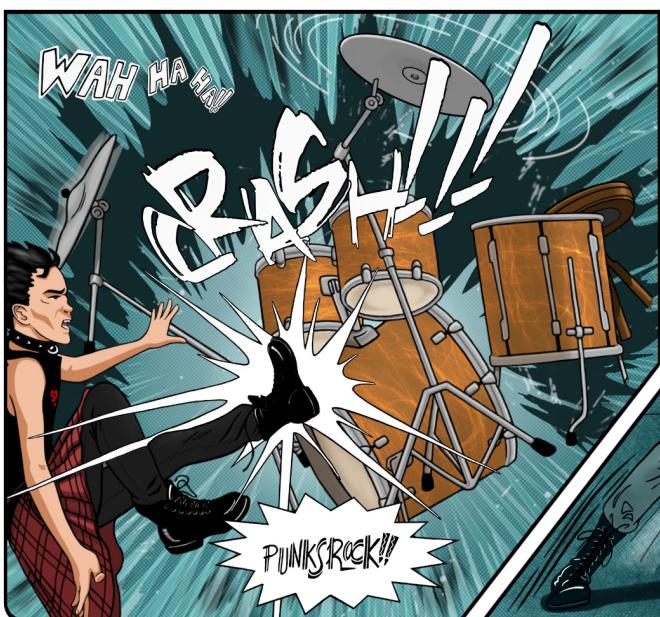
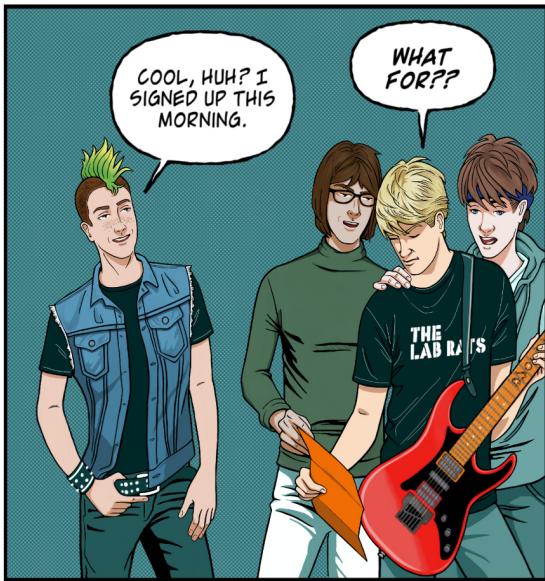




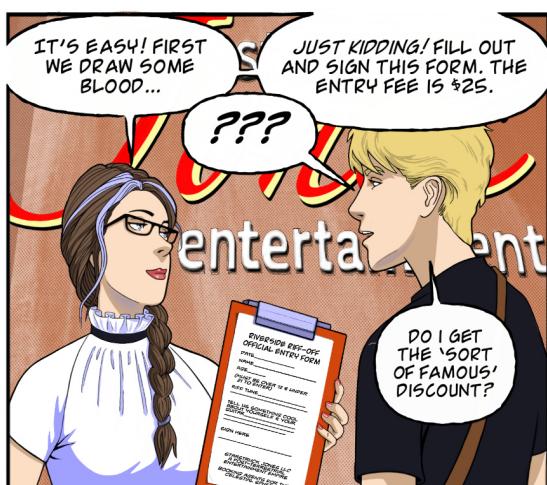
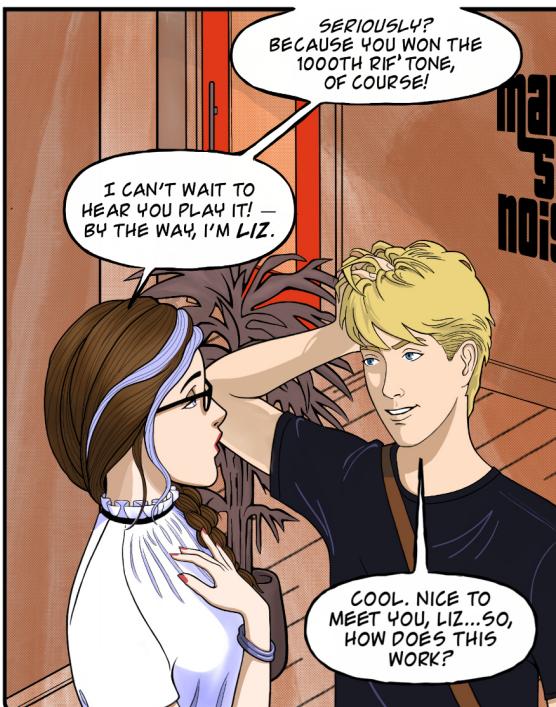
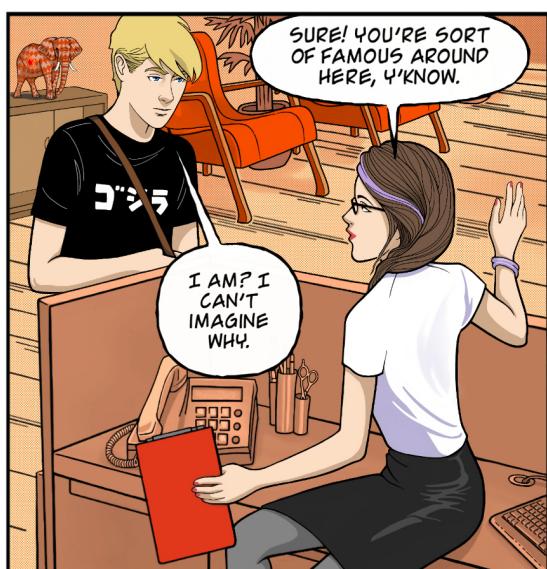
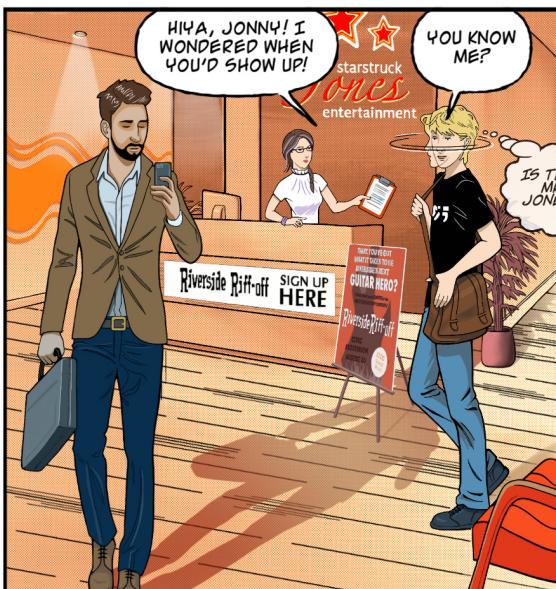
THREE MONTHS AFTER HIS ANGRY DEPARTURE FROM THE LAB RATS, *CHAZ IS BACK*, WITH A SPANKING NEW HAIRDO, TWO RADICAL NEW BANDMATES, AND A FLYER FOR A *GUITAR RIFF CONTEST*.

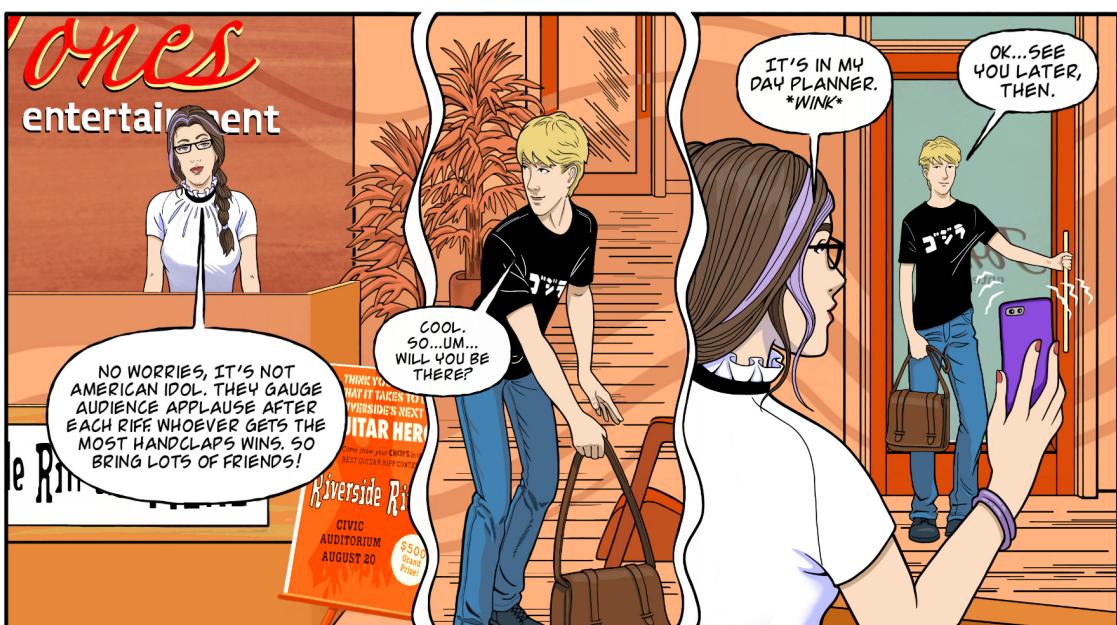
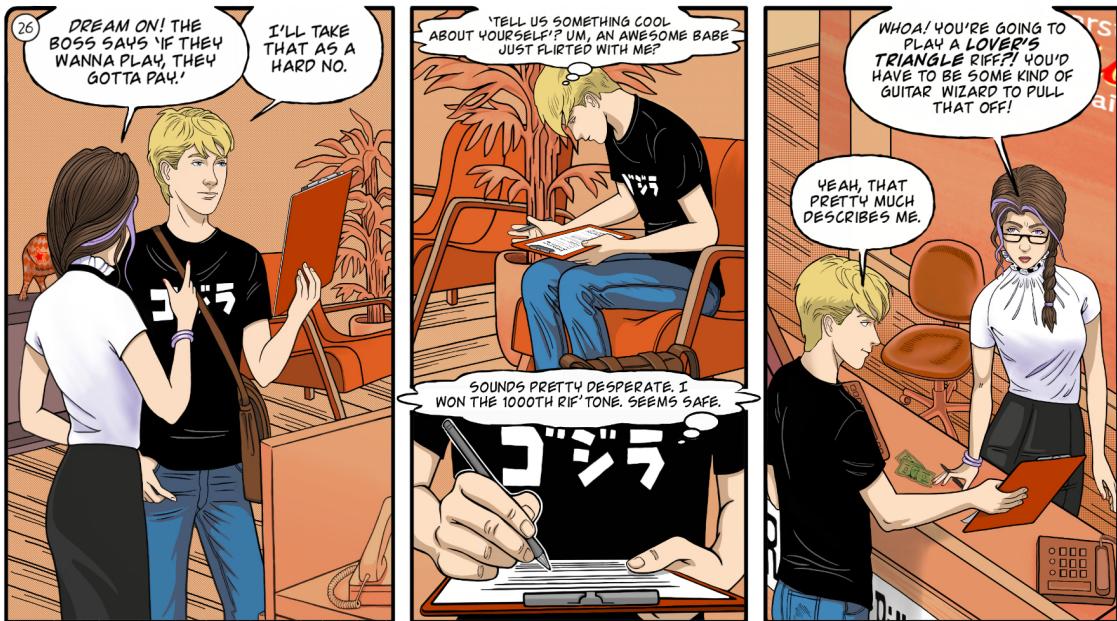
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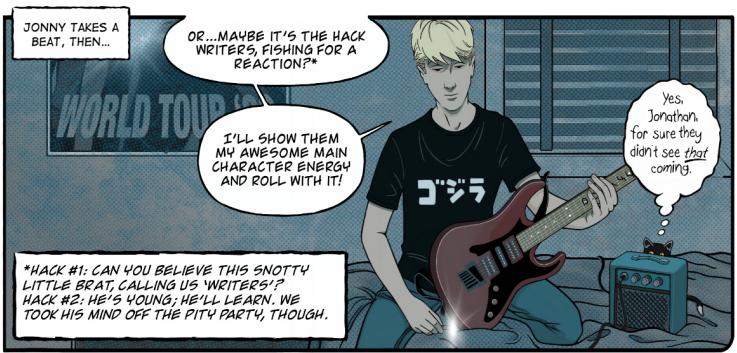


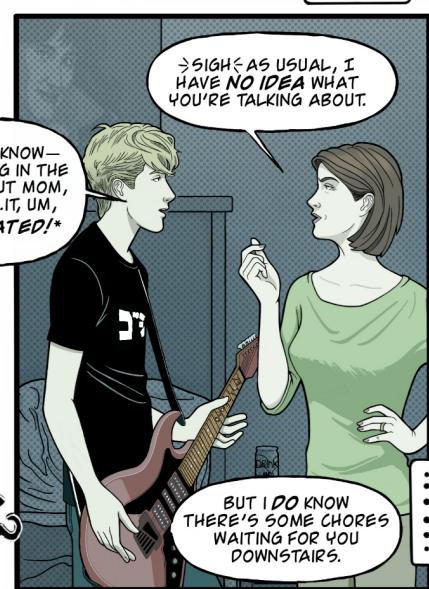
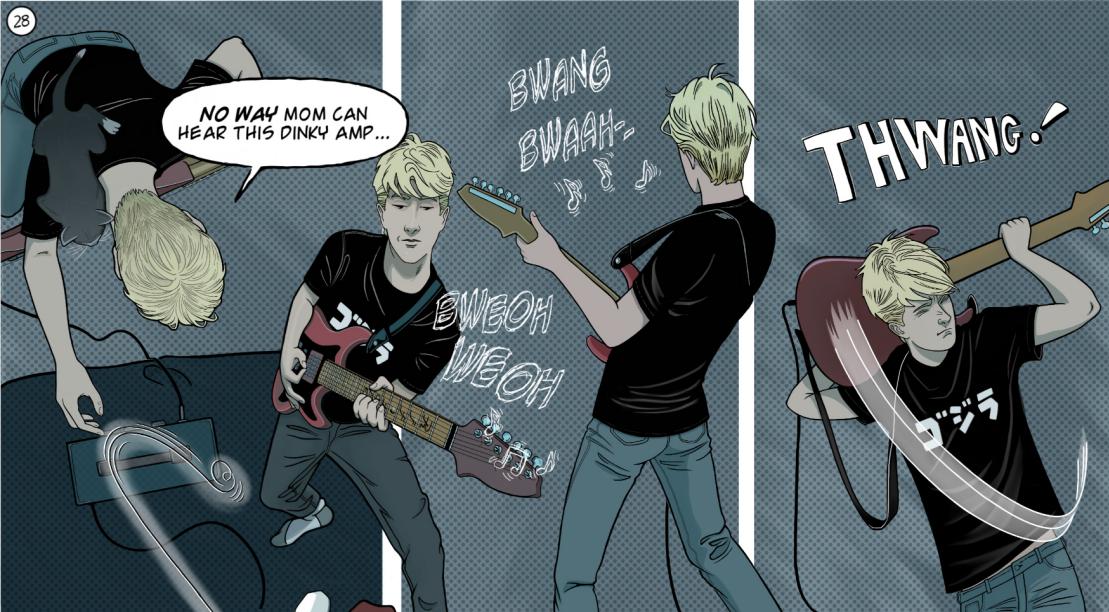




**B**ACK AT HOME, LATER THAT DAY—

AS JONNY WATCHES HIS FAVORITE CONCERT VIDEO OF THE DREAMZ AT THE HOLLYWOOD BOWL, A SUDDEN PANIC HITS HIM THAT HE SORTA-KINDA-MAYBE OVERSOLD HIMSELF AT THE STARSTRUCK JONES OFFICE. BUT THEN—A CURIOUS SOMETHING HAPPENS...





\*SPARKLED BRIGHTLY

NOW ALONE IN THE BEDROOM,  
RIFF AND ERNEST  
TRANSMOGRIFY.

Did you  
hear that,  
Ernest?

I got ears.

I'm going to  
be in a contest!  
Yippee!

29  
A potential epic fail,  
Big Red...you're playing  
the Lover's Triangle solo,  
remember?

So?

Have you tried string  
lubricant? Very calming.

So... if you keep  
breaking strings, you're  
gonna blow it.

I overreacted! That  
upside-down thing  
freaks me out!

I'll be all right! I  
just need to practice my  
flash move.

You know,  
Loretta's move! Like on  
the poster.

Your  
what?

You big red-  
headed doofus! That's  
a reflection!

Whatever! If she can do it,  
I've got to do it, too!

You really  
don't get  
reality, do  
you?

Stand back,  
Ernest!

I'm going to try it again!

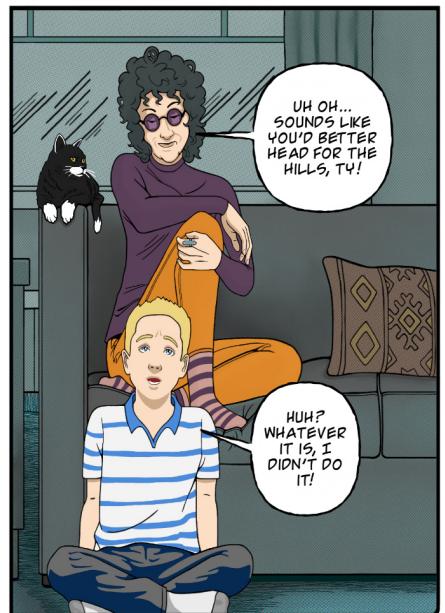
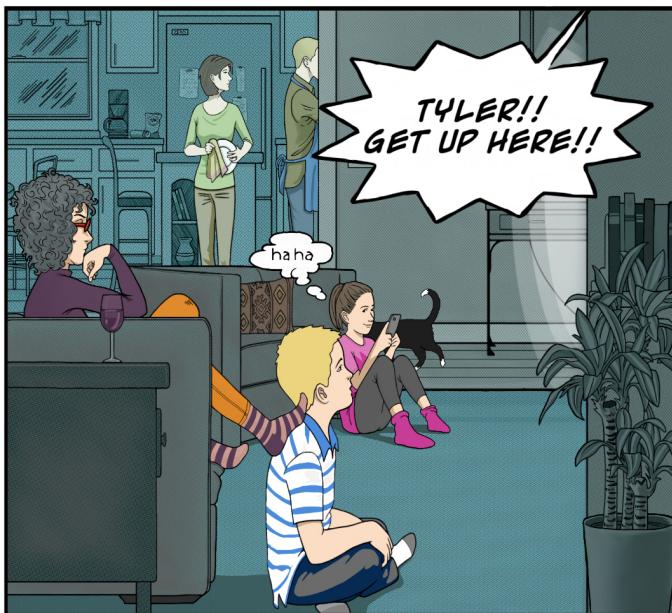
...WITH DISASTROUS  
EFFECT!

RIFF GOES FOR IT...

AAAKKKH!!

SCREEBARK!

RIFF GOES FOR IT...



T

HAT NIGHT, AFTER  
HEARING WHAT TYLER  
DID OR DIDN'T DO  
AND WHEN HE  
DID OR DIDN'T  
DO IT

THINK YOU'VE GOT  
WHAT IT TAKES TO BE  
RIVERSIDE'S NEXT  
GUITAR HERO?

THANK YOU  
WHAT IT TAKES  
RIVERSIDE'S NEXT  
GUITAR HERO?

Buy a Riff-off  
GUITAR RIFF OFF  
\$500 Grand Prize!

Riff-off  
CIVIC  
AUDITORIUM  
AUGUST  
30  
500  
Grand  
Prize!

THINK YOU'VE GOT  
WHAT IT TAKES TO BE  
RIVERSIDE'S NEXT  
GUITAR HERO?

Come show your CHOPS in  
BEST GUITAR RIFF CONTEST

Ride Riff-  
CIVIC  
AUDITORIUM  
AUGUST  
30  
500  
Grand  
Prize!

WOW! YOUR KID BROTHER  
SWEARS HE DIDN'T TRASH YOUR  
ROOM-EVEN THO YOU PROMISED  
THAT IF HE CONFESSED YOU'D LET HIM  
PLAY CALL OF DUTY IN DISTURBING  
CONTENT MODE? HOW CAN YOU  
NOT BELIEVE HIM!

IS SHE WACK?  
THERE'S SOMETHING  
SERIOUSLY MESSED UP  
WITH A KID WHO CAN'T  
BE BRIBED!

IGNORE HIM,  
JONNY. HE'S JUST  
JEALOUS. I THINK YOU'VE  
GOT A POLTERGEIST, BUT THERE'S  
NO TIME JUST NOW TO FIND OUT-THE  
RIFF-OFF CONTEST IS ONLY TWO  
WEEKS' AWAY, AND YOU NEED TO NAIL  
DOWN THE 'LOVER'S TRIANGLE' RIFF!  
YOU DON'T WANT TO BOMB OUT IN  
FRONT OF YOUR CREEPY EX-BEST  
FRIEND CHAZ, DO YOU? OR ME,  
EITHER, CUZ YOU KNOW HOW  
TOTALLY HOT I AM!

AND SINCE THIS  
IS YOUR DREAM-DID  
I MENTION HOW  
MAJORLY AWESOME  
YOU ARE?

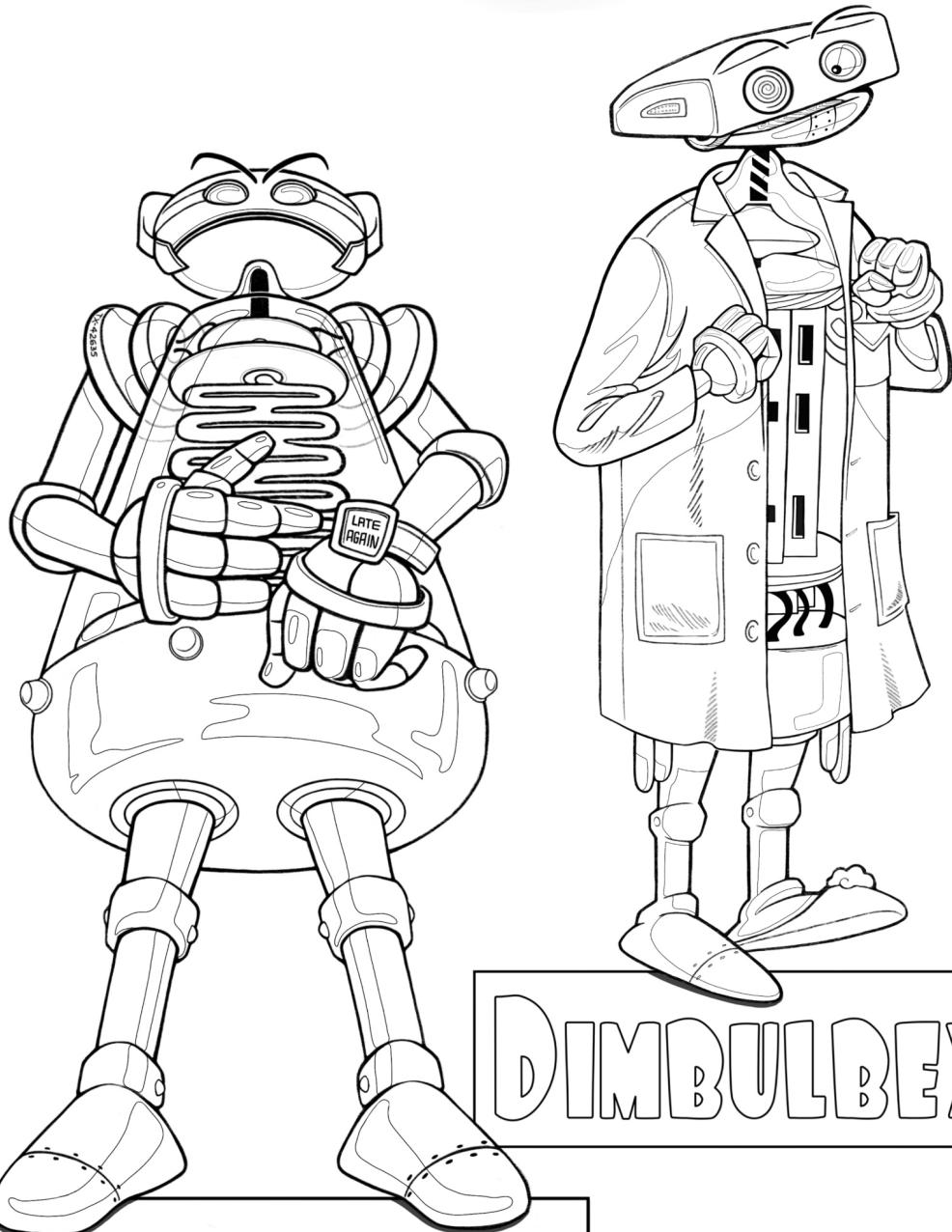
HAH! YOU'RE ABOUT AS  
AWESOME AS A CASE OF 3-  
DAY DIARRHEA, MCSLICK! LET'S BE  
REAL-YOU DON'T DESERVE THAT  
COOL GUITAR-PLUS THE LAB RATS  
ARE COUNTING ON YOU, AND YOU'RE  
GONNA LOOK LIKE AN EPIC JERK IF-  
I MEAN WHEN-YOU SCREW UP.  
WHAHA HAHA HAH!

TO BE CONTINUED

ZZ ZZZ ZH



DREAM  
COMIX  
EXTRAS



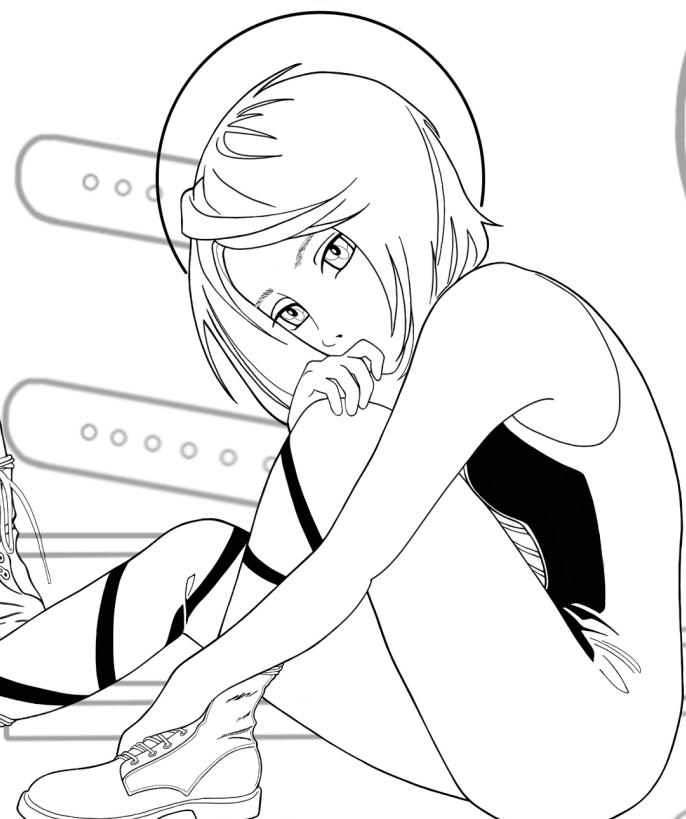
DIODOREX



ELVIS  
IMPERSONATION  
NITE AT  
ALCATRODE  
PRISON

FUN FACT: ELVIS IS BELIEVED TO HAVE  
STYLED HIS HAIR LIKE CAPTAIN MARVEL JR.,  
A COMIC BOOK WORKING CLASS SUPERHERO.

LORETTA  
THE ORIGINAL RIF'TONE™



# IN THE NEXT ISSUE

OH WOW! HASN'T THIS BEEN FUN? I SURE THINK SO!

BUT NOW THAT DREAM ON ISSUE #1 IS IN THE CAN, IT'S TIME FOR ME TO REJOIN THE LEGIONS OF THE UNDRAWN.

NO WORRIES, THO! MY REPLACEMENT FOR THE NEXT ISSUE IS THE DELIGHTFULLY DRAWABLE ZAP MURPHY!

AND WE'RE REAL SORRY TO SEE DAWN GO, AREN'T WE READERS? BUT ENOUGH ABOUT THAT.

LET'S TALK ABOUT ME! MY NAME IS ZAP, BUT MY FRIENDS CALL ME THE TALENTED ZAP MURPHY™—YOUR HOST FOR THE AWESOME RIFF-OFF CONTEST—which BTW is SPONSORED BY THE HOTTEST NAME IN IMAGINARY MEDIA: STARSTRUCK JONES ENTERTAINMENT!

—COMING UP IN THE NEXT ISSUE OF DREAM ON!

LIKE THE ANXIOUS GUITAR PLAYER SAID TO HIS GUITAR: "STAY TUNED!!"



**Dream On** is a wacky coming of age tale with a *fantasy twist*. Music fans both young and old will dig it. —*Standingstone Magazine*

*The comic book version of a grownups-friendly kid flick, **Dream On** has it all—fantasy, drama, comedy, satire, music, and even some bad guys. But best of all is its positive messaging about the power of true friendship.—*CementHead Comics Review**

*Addictive! We can't wait to see **Dream On: The Musical!** — *My Kingdom For A Guitar Podcast**

# DREAM ON

*“Friendship is like a great musical masterpiece, there’s nothing like it in the whole world.” — *Generic Wise Woman**

Overlapping realities coalesce as the shadow worlds of music overlords and transmogrifying instruments set the stage for Jonny’s adventures with his guitar Riff. While Jonny believes that his dream of following in the footsteps of his 80’s rockstar hero is all but realized, Riff is less sure, and together they discover that it truly is “A Long Way to the Top (If You Wanna Rock n’ Roll)!”

Sanger and Moore have teamed up to craft a new American classic! **Dream On** is rated G for Groovy and F for Fun!

