

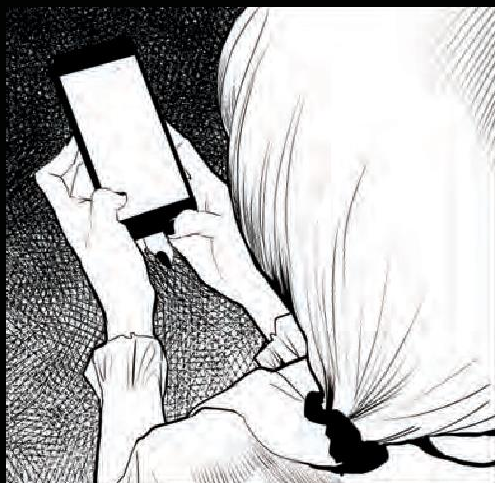


Gary Panter  
in conversation with  
Leslie Stein

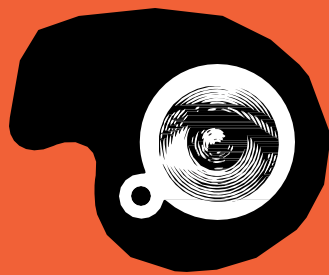
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The Meathaus Collective  
by Robyn Chapman

bfa.comics 2024







• BFA COMICS •  
2024

**S**eventy-six years ago, Silas H. Rhodes and illustrator Burne Hogarth (of Tarzan fame) co-founded the Cartoonists and Illustrators School, with New York City-based art professionals as faculty. Reflecting the belief that there is more to art than technique, the institution changed its name to School of Visual Arts in 1956.

Our department's direct connection to this long SVA legacy manifests itself, firstly, in our legendary faculty that, through the years, has included artists such as Will Eisner, Harvey Kurtzman, Art Spiegelman, Jessica Abel, Gary Panter, David Mazzucchelli, Bill Griffith, Diane Noomin and Klaus Janson. Second, that legacy has been carried on by distinguished alumni like Wally Wood, Steve Ditko, Peter Bagge, Kyle Baker, Ray Billingsley, Leslie Stein, Becky Cloonan, Raina Telgemeier, Dash Shaw, Nate Powell and Molly Ostertag. Lastly, the legacy has been shaped by the department's contribution to changing perceptions toward this unique genre of storytelling.

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*Comics, other than a powerful industry with some of the most devoted fans and tight-knit art communities, has established itself as a deeply respected language of sequential expression, as an art discipline, as a field of academic study and as a career path.*

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Our 2024 edition of COMX showcases notable senior accomplishments, representing but a tip of the iceberg for all the ink, sweat and tears that go into this process, speech bubble by speech bubble, frame by frame, page by page. To accompany this visual celebration, we also commissioned critical essays and interviews between respected SVA faculty mentors and alumni they've impacted.

This introductory note would be incomplete without recognizing the many talents going into a publication like this, from our gifted students to our long list of outstanding faculty and department team. Thank you to SVA President David Rhodes for his trust, meaningful guidance and ongoing support. I am deeply grateful to the tireless Carolyn Hinkson-Jenkins, Matthew Bustamonte, Jason Little, Kelsey Short, Heaven Boles and their passion for this project, their ideas and care in introducing our brilliant 2024 graduating class to industries they are about to dramatically transform.

As challenging as it is to crystallize the spirit of a department and provide a tangible memento of the work, talents and passion that make BFA Comics tick, this publication will come as close as it gets.

See you at school,  
Viktor Koen  
Chair  
BFA Comics BFA  
Illustration



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## BFA Comics Senior Thesis Faculty

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NICHOLAS BERTOZZI

DAVE ROMAN

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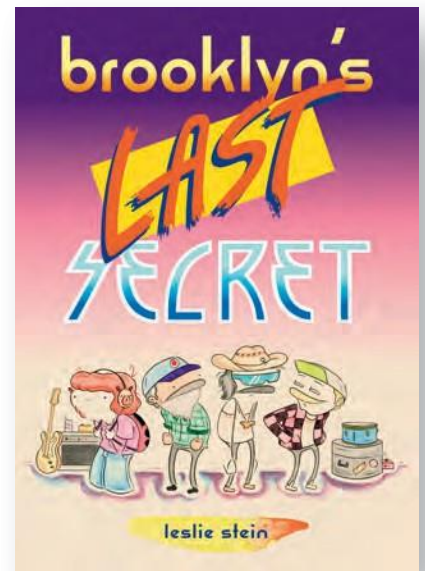
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[alice-blackwood.com](http://alice-blackwood.com)

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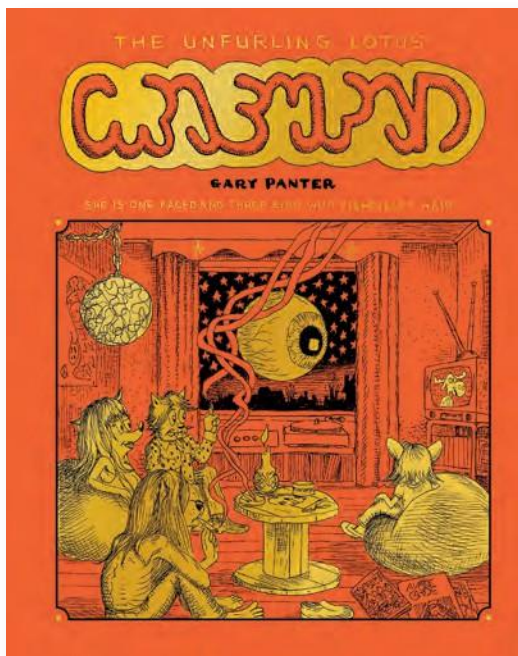
*A conversation with*

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Leslie  
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C

and  
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Leslie Stein (BFA 2004 Cartooning) and faculty member Gary Panter gave a talk and Q&A for fourth-year BFA Comics and Illustration majors on January 28, 2022. Cartoonist Curtis Edwards hosted and facilitated questions from the audience. What follows is an edited excerpt from that event.

**GARY PANTER:** Hi, everybody. I came from Oklahoma and Texas. I was a weirdo in town, and I had to leave Texas, so I moved to California. I didn't get into grad school, but, because I didn't, I drove my exploding pickup truck to California in time for punk rock to happen. And my comics had not been published until that time. But since punk rock happened right at that moment, my weird comics found a place.

I always like to do all kinds of things; I like to be creative in many areas because I can, because life's short, let's make stuff. Let's make it interesting. And let's help the world if we can, with our own small butterfly-wing efforts. I'm a little bit famous as an artist, but I don't really make much money from selling my books. I might work on a page for like a month. I might sell 1,000 comics, work on a comic for three years, and make 4,000 bucks.

I'm analog—I am not digital—so I end up with a physical product. Since I have it on a piece of paper, I can sell [each page] for \$10,000 10 years later and make a living that way.

Leslie's in a band [Prince Rupert's Drops], and I'm in a band [Devin, Gary & Ross] occasionally. You must have a guitar in your life. You must make music. You must make beads. You must sing and dance and not be boring. Okay, Leslie, it's your turn.

**LESLIE STEIN:** Thanks, Gary. Hi, guys. My name is Leslie Stein. I attended SVA, and I graduated in 2004. Since then, I

never stopped drawing comics. During the time I was at SVA, there were only a couple of schools in the country that were even offering comics programs. So for me, it was a fun way to get to New York and experience the city as a kind of education. I worked at a record store on St. Mark's Place—that was my first job here. I learned about film and found a lot of different perspectives on making comics and storytelling in general from punk rock.

I've done about seven published books since then. I did a fun diary comic; I did a page every day for a year. It starts off with these super messy drawings, but ... I developed a whole new style within



a year just by playing, and, fortunately, I got to put out a book showing that.

I liked to play around with collage. My older stuff had really detailed drawings, lots of stippling. That wasn't really sustainable, though, so that's why I switched over to more expressive, loose watercolor comics.

I used to draw a weekly comic for *Vice* magazine when that was a thing. And it was cool, they let me do whatever I wanted. A connection I made at SVA, Nick Gazin, was their editor. So you know, you make friends here, and then you never know when they're going to come in handy for you.

[My future band and I] met when I worked at the record store on St. Mark's Place. I met some really cool people, and I started a band to play guitar in. We put out a couple of records. The comic I'm working on right now [*Brooklyn's Last Secret*] is about a band. So I feel it's very connected to having had those experiences. Also I do find, Gary, that, if there's not a guitar in the room, sometimes I feel really uncomfortable.

**GARY:** I taught Comics seniors at SVA for almost 20 years. I told them you have to go talk to people now. So many things in the world are really from getting in touch with human beings and collaborating with them, making allies, not making enemies, playing fair, sharing, cooperating, and getting your stuff out one way or another.

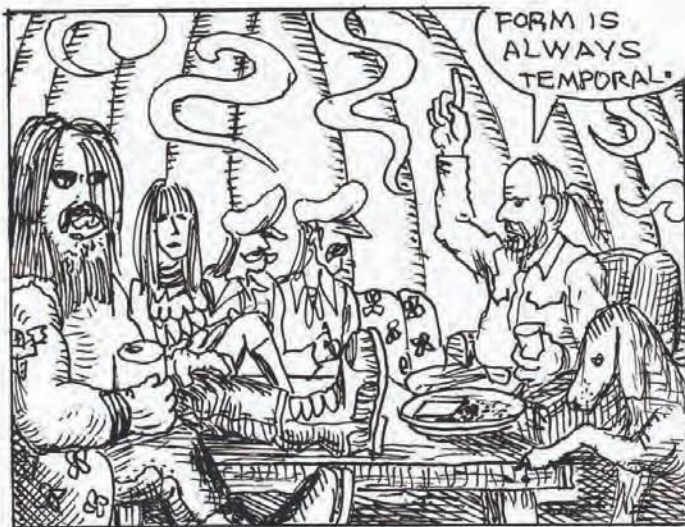
Another thing I would recommend that worked for me: Put your stuff in the

“Another thing I would recommend that worked for me was: put your stuff in the wrong place. If everyone else is putting it in one place, go put your stuff somewhere else. Even on a fence, you know, just do it the wrong way.”

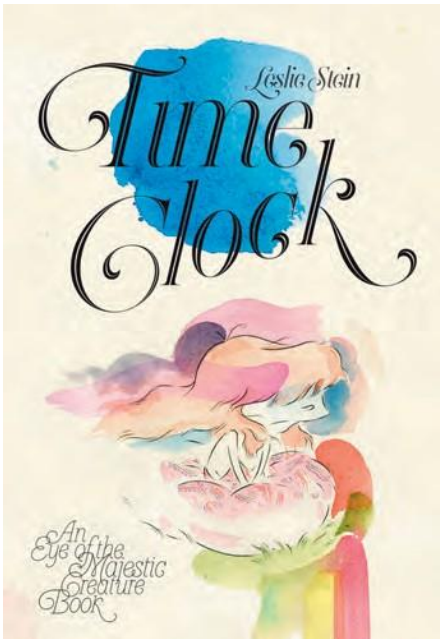












ics, and, like I said, putting them in the wrong places. I tried to put them in dress shops, where people didn't normally see comics.

**LESLIE** I think you need to have creative friends, too. If you have a friend that is doing well, together you create a little scene. That's a good way for people to know who you are. Because if you like this person, you might like *that* person, you're building off each other. So I feel like the friendships you make are really important.

**GARY** Most people, especially in America, think there's a giant scene happening *somewhere else* and have got to find out where it is. But really, it could be with you and your friends. I had about six students from SVA who were kind of a scene. I'm still friends with them. They're very creative, out in Ridgewood [Queens], or wherever they are. The world will have to notice them somehow; they're not standing in their rooms, they're doing stuff.

**CURTIS EDWARDS** Gary, do you want to talk a little bit about your gallery world experience, and how that came to be?

**GARY** Leslie and I both do paintings as well as comics. I was always interested in fine art. In college, I was majoring in painting when I discovered hippie comics. And I had known comics from childhood. But, at first, I was just trying to enter the world of pop art. That's a real interesting world. My love of art

moved me to show my art in alternative spaces. My stuff was weird, it didn't fit, so I didn't get a good foothold in the art world, but I persisted. I have fine art painting shows every few years at my gallery, Fredericks & Freiser in Manhattan and many other galleries before that. You can have, like, 50 paintings, and everyone thinks you're rich and famous and everything, [without having] sold anything at all. Fame and money are an illusion, but your rent is not an illusion.

What I found in the art world is a lot of sincere people willing to risk a lot of money and time in order to do art and put it on the walls and put it in front of people. But not so many people collect it. A lot of the people that collect it are rich and collecting it for different reasons, most of them just because they love the thing. But speculation on art is a whole industry. It's an industry you can go into if you want. Former SVA student KAWS is one of the biggest artists in the world now. But he's playing a game that he's suited to play. It's better in the fine art world if you're sociable. If you want to be sold for lots of money, you have to meet a lot of millionaires and be their friends and spend time with them. But I want to be alone. I just want to get my ideas into the world, I don't want to hang out at barbecues with rich people. I don't want to fly on someone's private jet. I've done it, but it's not something I would want to do all the time. Then you have to hear them talk about their richness. That part of the art world, to me, is kind of ugly.

I went to ask my friend Fred Tomaselli, "Why aren't I doing better in the art world?" He said, "Well, they're only going to love you as much as you love them." And I didn't love them enough. I didn't go to all those shows. I didn't know all those new artists. I stayed home and made more art. It's a choice. I chose to be a more obscure artist. I'm happy with that choice, as long as I don't starve.

But you need to have a broader aesthetic sense than comics; you really, really need to have a lot more going on besides comics.

**AUDIENCE MEMBER** What are your experiences with indie publishers and/or self-publishing?

**LESLIE** I'd always wanted to work with Fantagraphics, because they put out all my favorite artists in the 90s. Just to

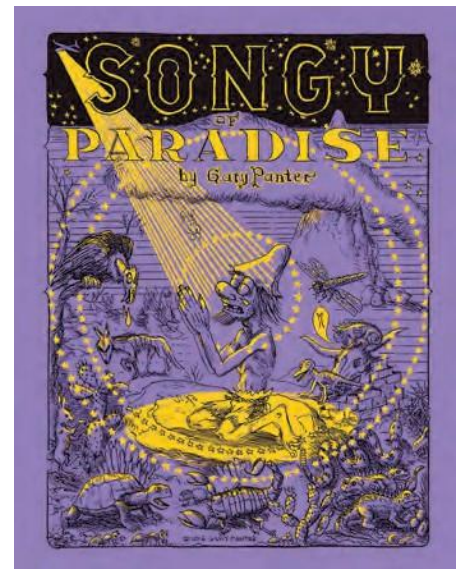
be alongside some of these cartoonists was a goal in and of itself. But I started self-publishing.

You have these ideas, like, "As soon as I become published, that will start the ball rolling." But it's really up to you to keep working after that. It's not very life-changing, in my opinion, and, like Gary says, you don't really make a lot of money off these books. To me the physical book is the most fun thing about publishing. And if you can get a publisher that really cares about making the object really cool, it's the best feeling in the world when your box of books comes in the mail.

Drawn & Quarterly is my current publisher. They're from Montreal, and they put out a lot of autobiographical comics and very feminist works. One of their biggest authors is Adrian Tomine. They're great people, I really love working with them, that's really important. The editor I work with has a lot of great ideas. We've become friends too, which is such an added bonus.

**CURTIS** You both worked with Fantagraphics. Were these projects that you pitched to them? Did they approach you? How did that work?

**LESLIE** I approached Fantagraphics. I was at a convention and someone asked, "What do you want to do with these comics?" I didn't really know anyone at that time, and I said, "I want to do something with Fantagraphics." He pointed to Gary Groth, who is the founding editor, and said, "Then you have to show him." So I did, and I remember he said, "This



“Success in art is in the making of art and the joy you find in it. And if you can hold on to that, no matter what happens, you’ll have your own thing for the rest of your life that you know no one can take away from you.”

—LESLIE STEIN

is great work, just keep sending stuff.” But it took me a long time to get published by them. I feel like it was a few years later when he thought I was good enough. I think sometimes it’s hard to take that initial chance on a cartoonist; maybe they don’t know if they’re in it for the long run, or whatever. Then, I did four books with them.

I was really curious about working with another publisher. I still am curious about working with Pantheon, or something, down the line so that I can see all the different experiences I can have. The only problem you have with jumping around is that the publishers don’t like it, they don’t want to lose books. So you have to be prepared. I’m lucky that Fantagraphics wasn’t angry that I made a deal with Drawn & Quarterly, but I seem to have had a charmed relationship with them, so I’m lucky in that way. It’s about being respectful to them.

**GARY:** I got noticed by drawing *Jimbo* for *Slash* magazine. That was the first gig I had where I drew—for free—every month for a punk rock magazine. People all over the world noticed pretty quickly. So I was there with the right stuff, in some obscure right place at that moment. It led to me being in *Raw* magazine, and Art [Spiegelman] and Françoise [Mouly], the editors of *Raw*, got me a deal at Pantheon.

The creative thing is not doing what’s expected of you. I invented my *Jimbo* world when I was a janitor in an insur-

ance building; I had imaginary adventures with the desktops of the people whose desks I was cleaning. There’s not really much excuse for not being creative, you know. Finding a way to manifest it is hard. But you have to be embarrassment-proof, really, to be an artist. You have to be very bullheaded.

**LESLIE:** I’m constantly embarrassed. But I think it’s a strength. A lot of my work is autobiographical. When I used to do work for *Vice*, I’d send it in every Sunday, and I would immediately get stomach pains because, “Oh my god, what did I just do?” A lot of what I do ... it’s guiltless. I think there’s a strength to that, saying, “This is who I am, this is sincere.” You don’t know how it’s going to land. But by putting out vulnerable parts of yourself, so many people over the years end up thanking you for it.

**AUDIENCE MEMBER:** What are some things that either of you notice about the comics world today?

**LESLIE:** It feels very inclusive, it feels like there are more voices than ever before, more different kinds of voices, which is really great. It seems like there are so many different types of comics now, so many hybrids—you see so many different influences on people that you weren’t seeing before.

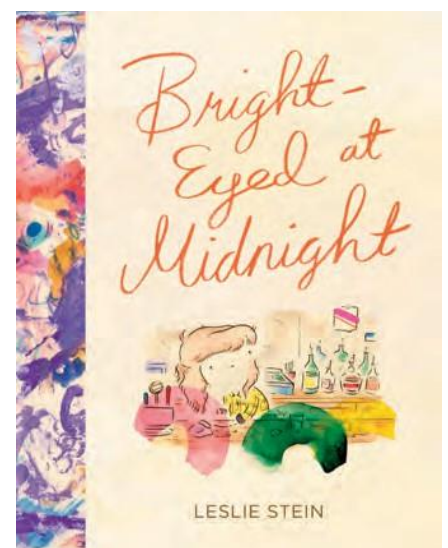
The thing about comics that’s so awesome is that it’s a direct communication with your reader. You can really

laser beam your own ideas into someone else’s mind, just on a piece of paper. I think the more people are doing it, the cooler it can get.

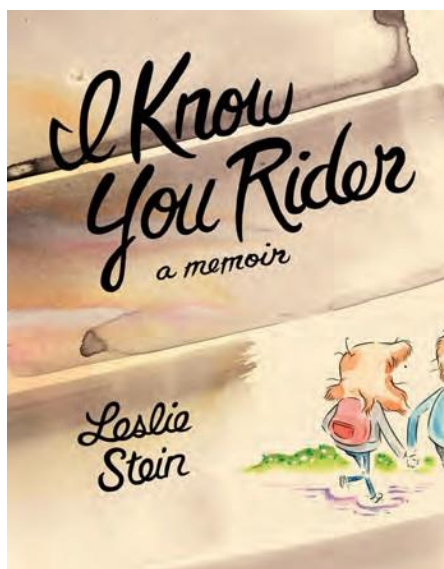
**CURTIS:** Do either of you have insight that you feel would be helpful for someone worried about what’s going to happen after they graduate?

**LESLIE:** First of all, I remember that feeling really well. Success in art is in the making of art and the joy you find in it. And if you can hold on to that, no matter what happens, you’ll have your own thing for the rest of your life that you know no one can take away from you. Focus on the work and try to find the [ways] that it makes you happy.

**GARY:** I think you have to trust your-



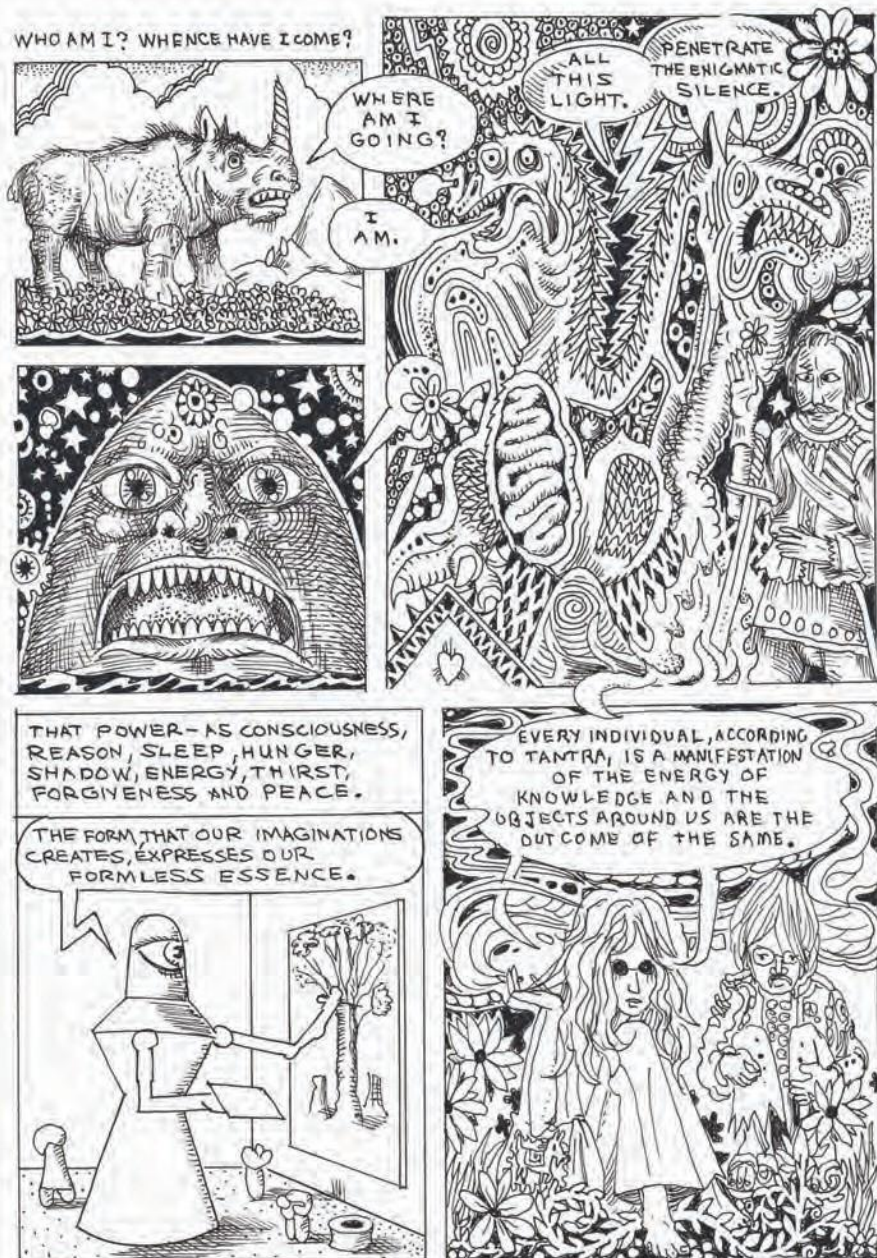




self, really trust your instincts. I was in London, and I'm not a good traveler. I was about to miss a train. It was the last train of the day, and I was running for the train. Some guy behind me said, "Go on, lad, you can do it!" I ran, and I caught the train. I completely freaked out because no one had ever said that to me before. But it's true that you *can* do it. You just have to risk talking to people. Make all lies. And again, don't compete with other people, just compete with yourself. The main thing you need to know is: *What do you love?* And what do you hate? And *act*, see if you can do something about it.

**LESLIE** I think it's great to try different things. It's important to figure out what you like, and what you *don't* want to do. I remember at SVA, I worked as an intern for Cartoon Pizza, on a show called *Stanley* for preschool kids. I remember I was just doing all the grunt work there. I was looking at all these in-house animators with various levels of happiness, even within that job that was sustaining them. They looked at me and said, "You're living the dream because you're making your own content." They were jealous of me, even though I wasn't anything and not making any money. I realized I wouldn't want to go in that direction, it's just not for me. I don't think it would make me happy. So your whole life, you're going to be drifting around trying to figure out what makes you happy and what works. It's just the nature of life.

Enjoy this last year and try to milk it for all it's worth, do the work that you're really excited about. What you need as



an artist is mostly time. So the time you have here that you can dedicate to it, really treasure it.

**GARY** I was crazy about art school, and I ended up being at the right place at the right time. No teacher is really more of an authority than you. Ultimately, you're the boss of your work. You can learn all kinds of things from all kinds of teachers and all kinds of approaches. But, ultimately, it's about you and your life and how you're going to spend it. I think artists can help humanity, so I think it's part of our job to try to help. Sometimes as an artist, you can be helpful by being selfish and stealing time and hiding out alone and making something valuable. After you spend 10 more years making

art, it's going to have changed you, and the art will have changed. That's what life is about: transformation and learning. [There's] not an endpoint as long as you're alive. ♦

#### CAPTIONS

1. Courtesy Gary Panter
2. Courtesy Leslie Stein.

**Meathaus**

**and the  
Comics**

by  
Robyn  
Chapman

**Landscape  
in the Early  
Aughts**



The early aughts were an exciting era for the independent cartoonist. The term graphic novel was fairly commonplace by then, and many bookstores had, at last, devoted entire sections to them. A small but growing number of colleges—including the School of Visual Arts—offered bachelor’s degrees in comics. By 2000, the idea that a comic could *be* about anything—could be anything—was established. (Well, at least within the comics community. The rest of the world was still catching on.)

This moment also became an exciting time for self-publishers. Just a few years earlier, zine culture had reached its peak. The movement had started in the 1920s with science fiction zines, and, by the mid-nineties, zines expanded to represent every subculture and genre imaginable. Comic-zines, or mini-comics, were a vital part of this movement, and, in the mid-nineties, two comics conventions were launched to cater to this crowd: the Small Press Expo in Bethesda, Maryland, and the Alternative Press Expo in San Francisco.

In this comics landscape, the Meathaus comics collective was born. Meathaus began with a group of artist-friends living in New York City in 1999—most of them undergrads at SVA. Surprisingly, few of them were in the BFA Comics program—several studied illustration, a few studied animation or graphic design. The founding members included Farel Dalrymple (BFA 1999 Illustration), Chris McDonnell (aka Chris McD, BFA 2001 Animation), Tomer Hanuka (BFA 2000 Illustration), James Jean (BFA 2001 Illustration), Stephen Halker (aka Stardog, BFA Illustration), Jay Sacher and Theo Edmands (BFA 2000 Cartooning). Meathaus would grow and change over the years, but these seven co-conspirators were there at the beginning and were involved in every (or nearly every) issue. James and Farel were roommates. Farel and Jay worked at the same vegan restaurant. This loose collection of friends grew over time as members invited more friends to join.

The idea to create a comics anthology came about in 1999 when Farel, Tomer and James attended the Angoulême International Comics Festival—one of the world’s most renowned comics festivals—held annually in a small village in France. There, they discovered and were inspired by a group of Belgian artists who published a weekly comics zine titled *Le Spon* (“Spon” as in “spontaneous.”) Soon after, the Spon collective founded L’Employé du moi, a Brussels-based artist collective and publishing house. L’Employé du moi is still active today and has an extensive catalog of French-language graphic novels.

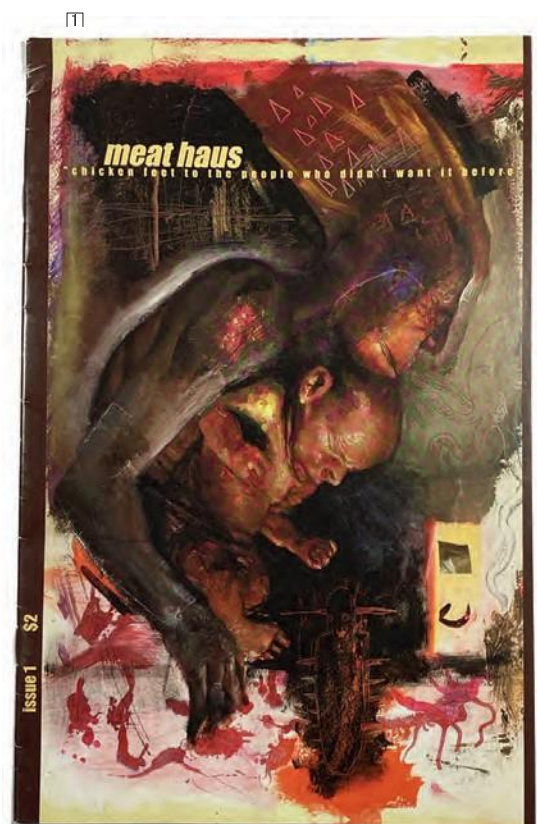
Farel and his friends quickly made plans to publish their own anthology. They titled it *Meathaus*—or sometimes *Meathäus*. (The umlaut wasn’t grammatically correct. It was just for laughs.) The idea was to get a bunch of friends together and make something fast and casual, ideally completed in a single night. At their first get-together, about 10 of them crammed into Chris McDonnell’s Brooklyn apartment. Huddled on the floor, they each attempted to draw several pages of comics before calling it a night. The bulk of issue one was created in one sitting. The resulting comics were raw and energetic with sardonic humor and stream-of-consciousness narratives typical of free-form cartooning.

The group would go on to hold more all-night drawing parties in other Brooklyn apartments, often in the Greenpoint and Williamsburg neighborhoods. Brandon Graham, then an

up-and-coming cartoonist living in New York, attended several of these get-togethers (he began contributing to the anthology with the fourth issue). He described these all-nighters in his 2011 interview with *The Comics Journal*, calling the Meathaus approach, without affection, “24-hour comics.”

Meathaus hit the ground running, publishing three issues in 2000. It was a grassroots effort, with the team collectively deciding who would contribute to the anthology or illustrate the cover. They pooled their money to cover the printing cost. They tabled at San Diego Comic-Con and sold their issues through Diamond Comic Distributors. At that time, it was possible, though difficult, for an independent artist to get their comic placed in the Diamond catalog—now it’s completely unheard of. What money the collective earned was put towards the next issue (or, at least, that was the plan—sometimes, it was spent on rent). There was no real power structure to the group and no one in charge, though Farel Dalrymple was arguably the most steadfast and involved member. He usually took care of editing, printing and distribution. As he told me, “I think I was just the most pushy about collecting everyone’s work and getting it published.”

The editor changed from issue to issue—Farel Dalrymple, Chris McDonnell and Jay Sacher most often played the role. The design roles were constantly shifting, too—Tomer Hanuka, Chris McDonnell, Steven Halker and Serge Marcos (BFA 2000 Cartooning) often took part. Partly due to the changing cast, the anthology seemed to reinvent itself with every issue. And its shape and size shifted constantly. At its smallest, *Meathaus* was a 5.5” x 8.5” mini-comic. At its largest, it was 6.5” x 10.25” book.





[2]

Some Meathaus members, like Farel Dalrymple and Tomer Hanuka, grew up reading comics, and their contributions tended to have solid storytelling. Other contributors had stronger foundations in graphic design or illustration and were more focused on creating compelling visuals than traditional narratives. This variety resulted in an eclectic anthology that looked more like an art magazine than a comic book. It was a content-dense anthology, especially in the early days. Issues one and two were standard-sized, 24-page “floppy” comic pamphlets with black-and-white interiors. Each artist had only two or three pages to work with. Some of the comics lacked a typical plot structure. Some rambled and ended mid-thought.

Around the third issue, the anthology began to mature. The page count doubled. The contributors crafted their comics with more time and care. They were moving away from the 24-hour comics model, but the work remained experimental and, at times, downright weird.

Their book design became more sophisticated. Issue three featured cover artwork by Tomer Hanuka that earned him a gold medal from the Society of Illustrators. Hanuka’s winning illustration featured a surreal image of a boy covered in black

spots like a dalmatian, a burly man and a barking dog straining at its leash. The barking dog head became the Meathaus logo and appeared on most of the issues that followed.

A big change came in 2001 with the fifth issue, when *Meathaus* transformed from floppy comic to square-bound book. Their page count now topped 100, and contributors had the space to tell a story with a beginning, middle and end—should they choose to. Some contributors, like James Jean and Stephen Halker, would continue to create comics with a dreamlike approach.

With each new issue, the Meathaus collective grew. New SVA students joined the mix, including Becky Cloonan, Tom Herpich (BFA 2002 Cartooning) and Dash Shaw (BFA 2005 Illustration). NYC local Jim Campbell became a regular. Non-locals joined, too, like Vincent Stall and Jim Rugg. Members moved away from the city, and the group became less New York-centric as time went on. Farel Dalrymple summed it up in his introduction to *Meathaus 8*: “The overall look of our comic anthology I have heard described as ‘New York art school.’ Fair enough, but the group we had built from a few New York art school chums has expanded to a considerable web of artists from around the world, tendrils extending from Brooklyn to the Midwest, the South, the West Coast, Canada, London, South America.”

The Meathaus collective is even more vast when you take into consideration meathaus.com, an innovative website created by Chris McDonnell in the early aughts (it is now defunct, unsurprisingly, considering 20 years have passed). Meathaus.com was a pioneering webcomic platform and a valuable community hub. The website had a longer lifespan than the comic, and it became a way for members to keep in touch after they drifted away from New York.

After the seventh issue, the anthology became too expensive for the collective to handle on its own. Going forward, they partnered with publishers, who handled the burden of printing and distribution. *Meathaus 8: Headgames* (2006) was published by Alternative Comics. The ninth and final volume, *Meathaus: SOS* (2008), was published by Nerdcore. *SOS* was their most polished product yet, with French flaps, a large trim size and 272 pages of content—and for the first time, Meathaus was printed in full color. *SOS* contained a playful mishmash of styles and mediums (including a few pages of photography and collage) that take advantage of large page size, with artwork often bleeding off the page.

The story of *Meathaus*, in many ways, parallels that of *Kramers Ergot*, an art comics anthology edited by Sammy Harkham. *Kramers Ergot* also published its first issue in 2000, and, like *Meathaus*, it was initially a black-and-white floppy but grew more sophisticated and artistically ambitious over the years. But to me, *Meathaus* always had a slickness that was

all its own, due in large part to drawing virtuosos Farel Dalrymple, James Jean and Tomer Hanuka. Another hallmark of the Meathaus style is their irreverent humor, often paired with cartoony art that harkens to a bygone animation era. This is especially present in Chris McDonnell’s artwork.

Remarkably, what started out as a small group of “art school chums” ended up being a who’s who for the world of comics and illustration. Today, Dalrymple has an impressive body of comics work, including creator-owned titles published by Image and a Marvel comic series penned by bestselling nov-



[3]



elist Jonathan Lethem. Hanuka is an in-demand illustrator and a bestselling cartoonist who is currently working in television and film. Jean—a highly celebrated illustrator whose clients list includes Apple, Target and Prada—now works primarily as a fine artist. McDonnell is an animation director and teacher who has done work for Cartoon Network, Comedy Central, HBO and Nickelodeon. Jay Sacher, the sole non-SVAer who contributed to every issue, is the author of several books and is a senior editor at publishing house Union Square & Co.

Taking into account its 80 contributors, nine issues and a vast website, was Meathaus still a collective at the end of its run? Maybe not, but it was definitely a cool club that cartoonists were eager to claim membership in. Twenty-four years have passed since its inception, and a few of its founding members still name-drop it in their author bios. Meathaus provided a generation of cartoonists the chance to prove themselves, and its nine issues act as a time capsule of independent comics publishing at the start of the 21st century. ♦



4

#### CAPTIONS

1. *Meathaus* 1 front cover by James Jean.
2. *Meathaus* logo.
3. *Meathaus* 5 back cover by Chris McDonnell.
4. Comics from *Meathaus* 3 by James Jean.
5. Comics from *Meathaus* 7 by Fael Delymple.



5

## A TEACHER'S CALLING

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I write this introduction in the final days of the spring semester, a time when we teachers feel quite sentimental about the end of the school year. We are bursting with pride at the accomplishments of our students and are sad to see them go, especially the graduating fourth years. A couple of days ago, I happened to notice an instructor hastily departing the final meeting of his course, muttering a command to himself: "Don't cry!" Teaching is very much like parenting, and we experience an emotional journey similar to that of parents—but concentrated into 30 short weeks. We look forward to the summer—like the students do—but, somehow, from this vantage point, the quiet of the summer looks a little lonely.

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*There is much corporate pressure to conform, and we must struggle against it. My highest priority as a teacher is to lead each student to individual stylistic excellence on their own terms.*

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Typically, in the final meeting of studio art courses, the students hang all the finished work from the whole semester, making a brief but spectacular retrospective exhibition. We did this exercise in my classroom, and I was struck by the fantastic diversity of drawing styles visible on all the comics pages. The way the students accepted and embraced all their idiosyncrasies and quirks added up to create their own compelling personal styles. What made the collection so strong was being able to see how their work was distinctly their own.

I had the privilege and honor of seeing all of them prioritize this individuality and move beyond a compulsion to conform to the stylistic norms that dominate social media. There is much corporate pressure to conform, and we must struggle against it. My highest priority as a teacher is to lead each student to individual stylistic excellence on their own terms. I very much look forward to the opportunity to do it again this fall.

Jason Little  
Comics Coordinator  
BFA Comics



2024  
BFA COMICS

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# Portfolio Selections

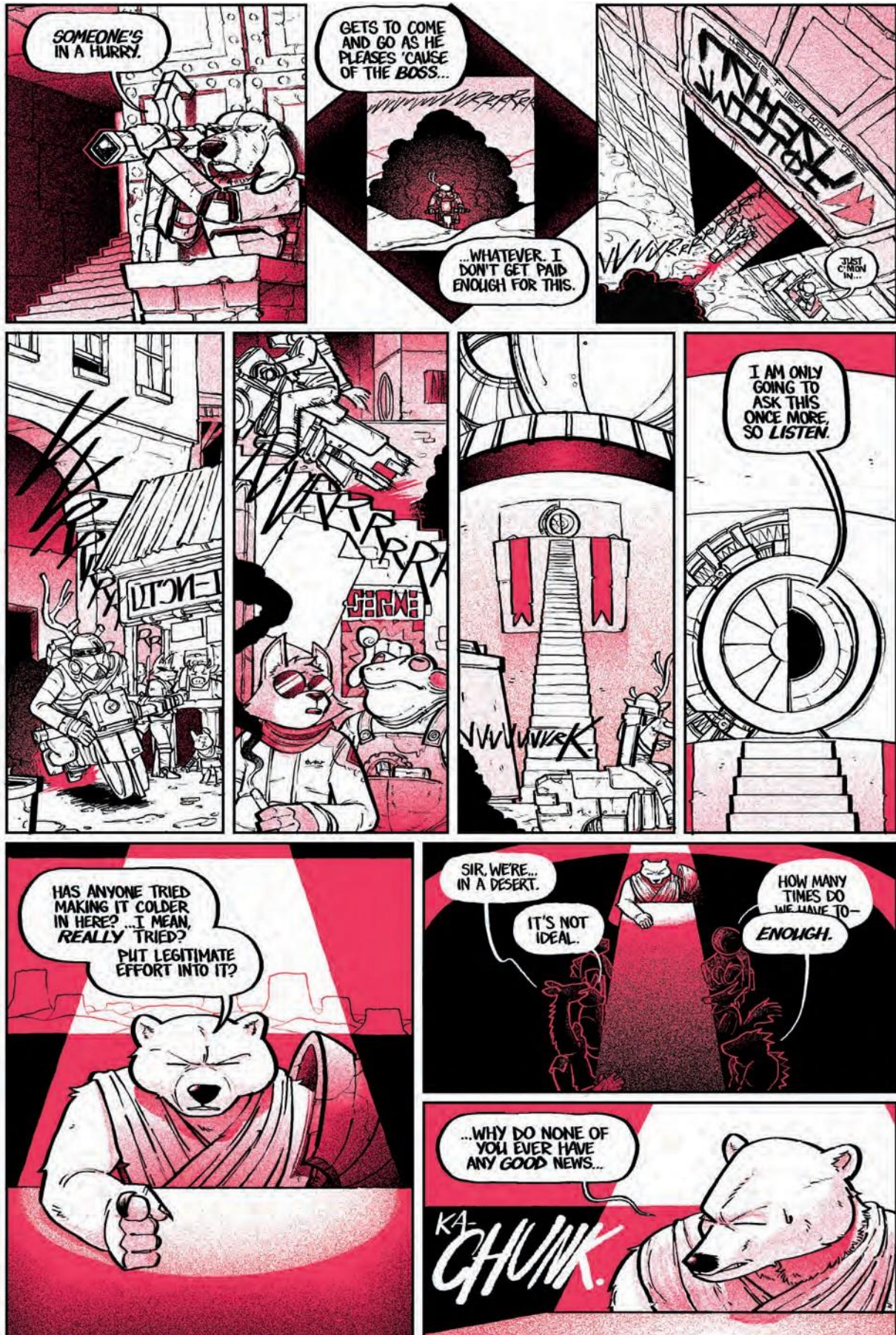




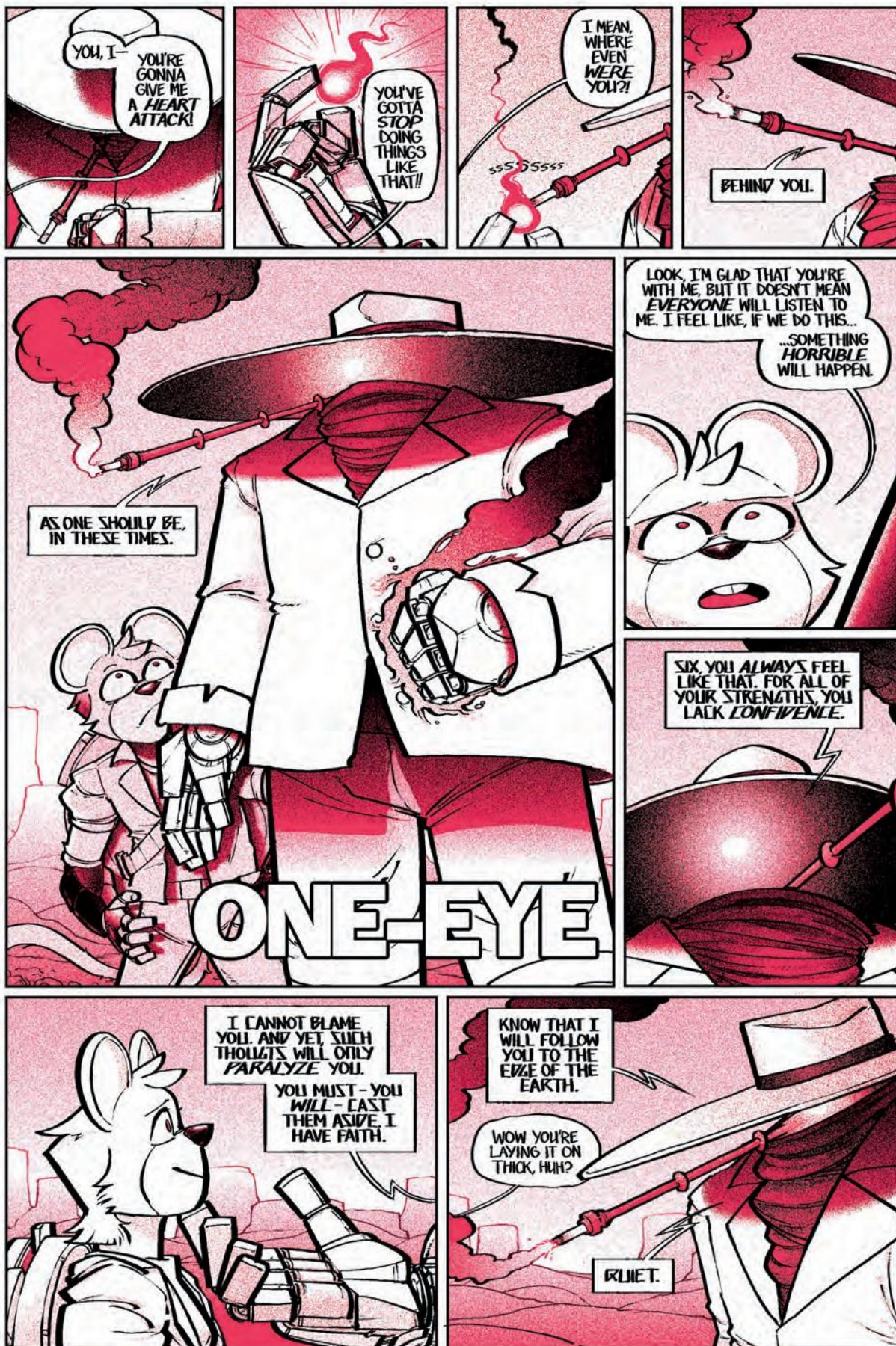
























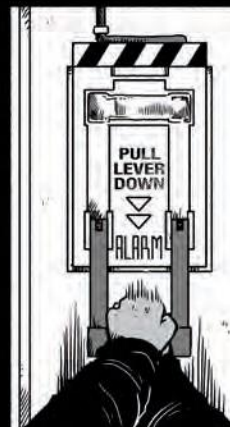






















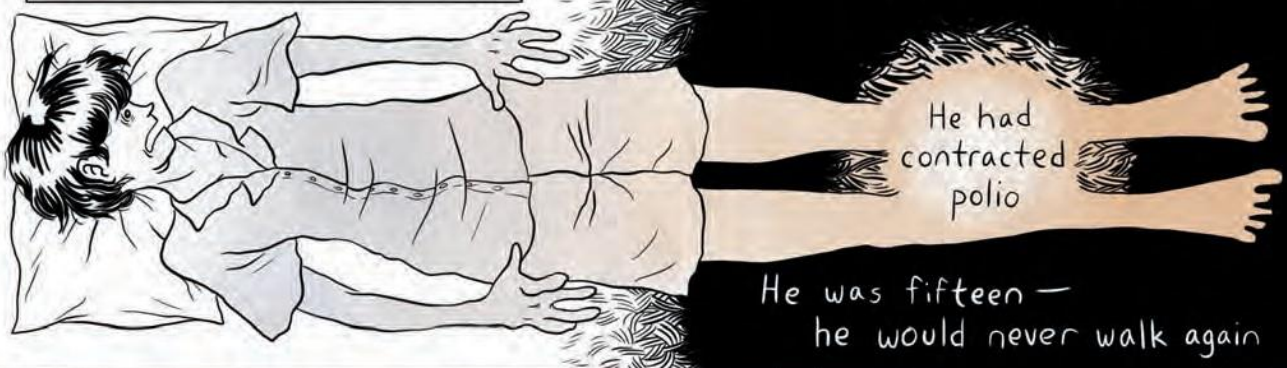
Cheltenham, PA, 1937 — my grandfather, *Donald Bullock*, was a hard-working paper boy.



Hey, could one of you take over my route? My legs are killing me



So he ignored the pain — but when he awoke the next morning...



He was fifteen — he would never walk again

Donald spent the next 3 years in a sanatorium



He needed an iron lung to help him breathe

A local paper reported on his case — but it made a glaring falsehood

"...despite the protests of his friends, brave Donny insisted on finishing his paper route."

Donny's friends hadn't "protested" at all. They'd jeered at him and brushed him aside



He lost faith in the world

For one's life could shatter overnight

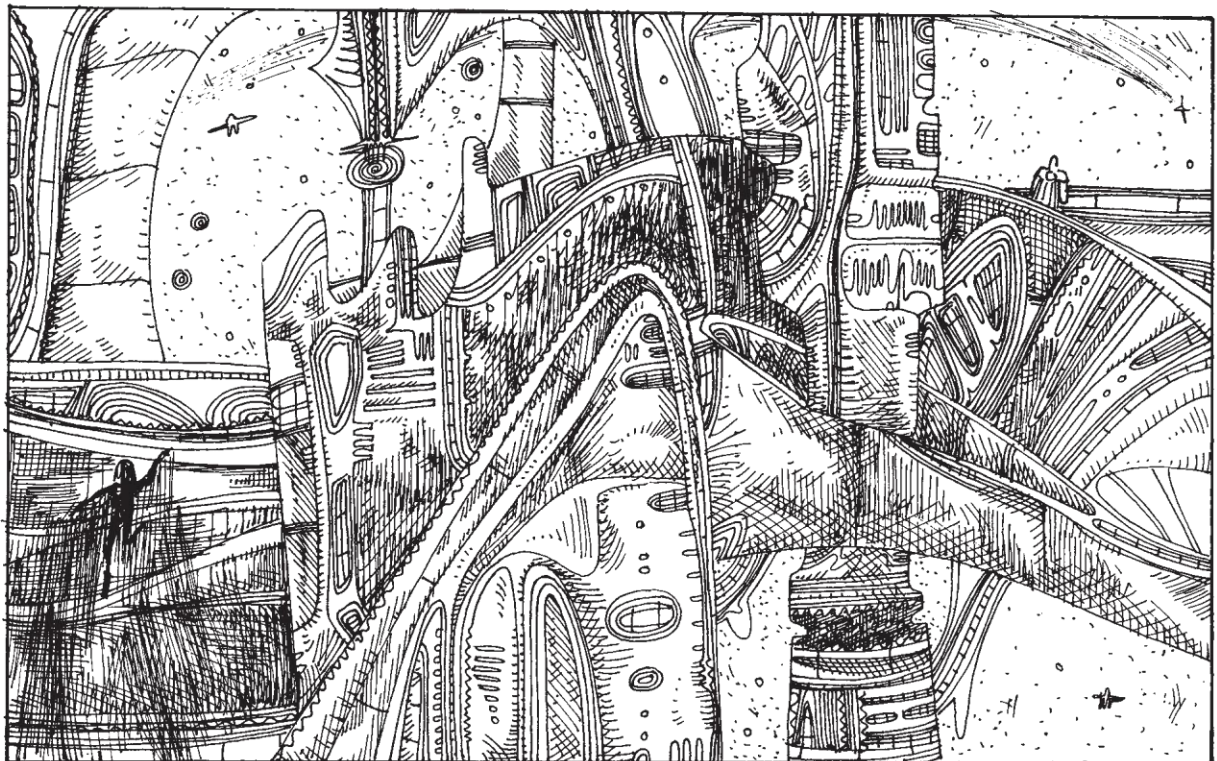
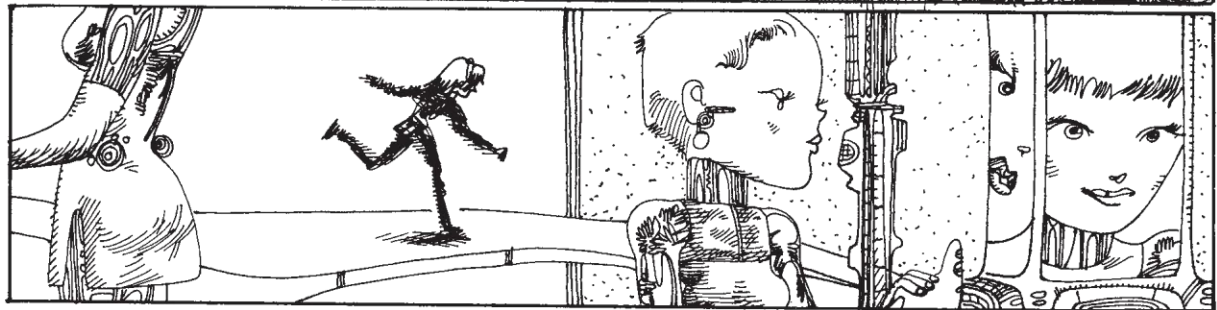
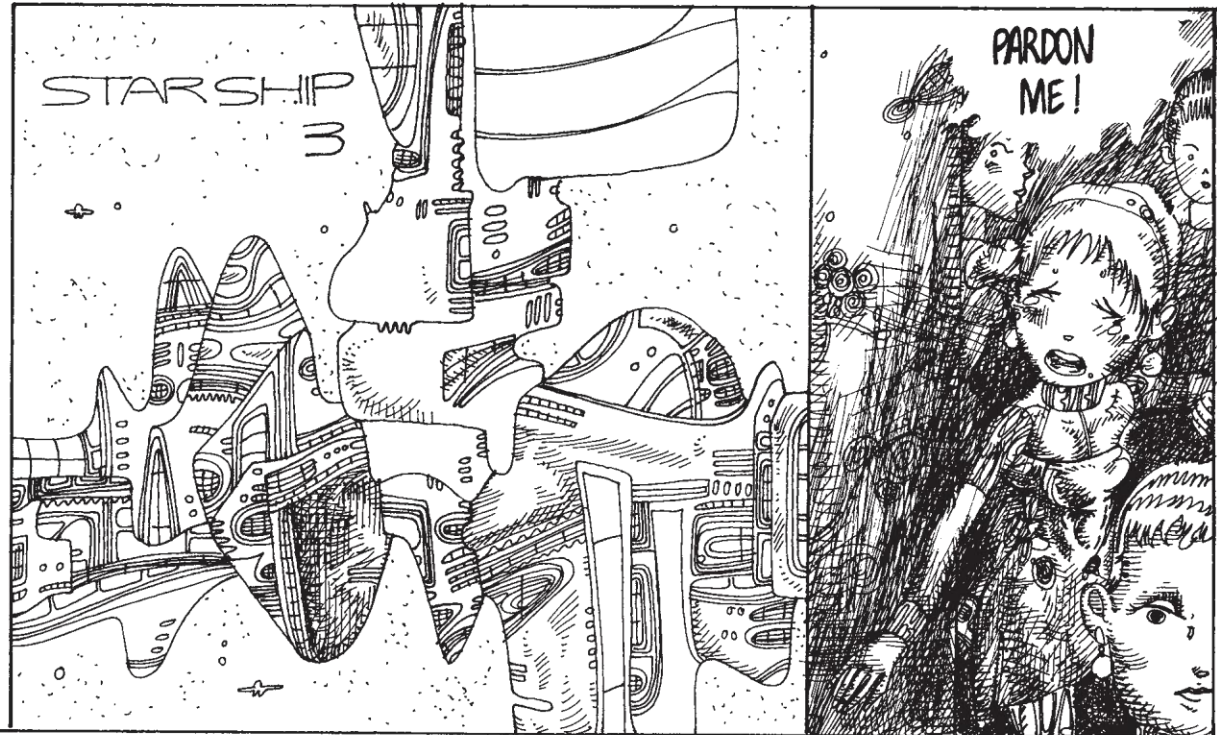


...and then the paper could lie about it

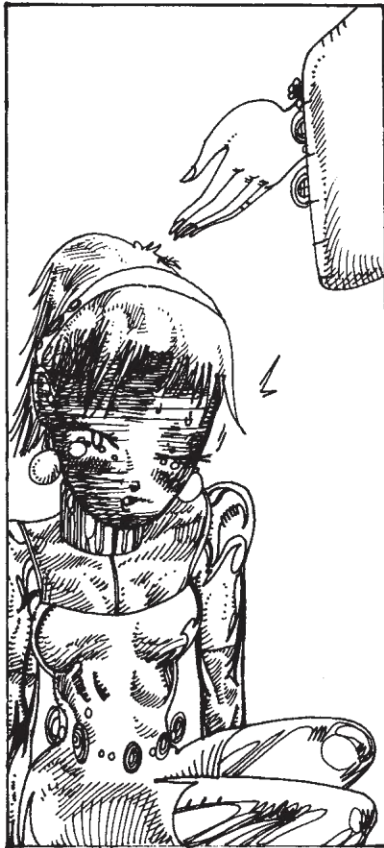
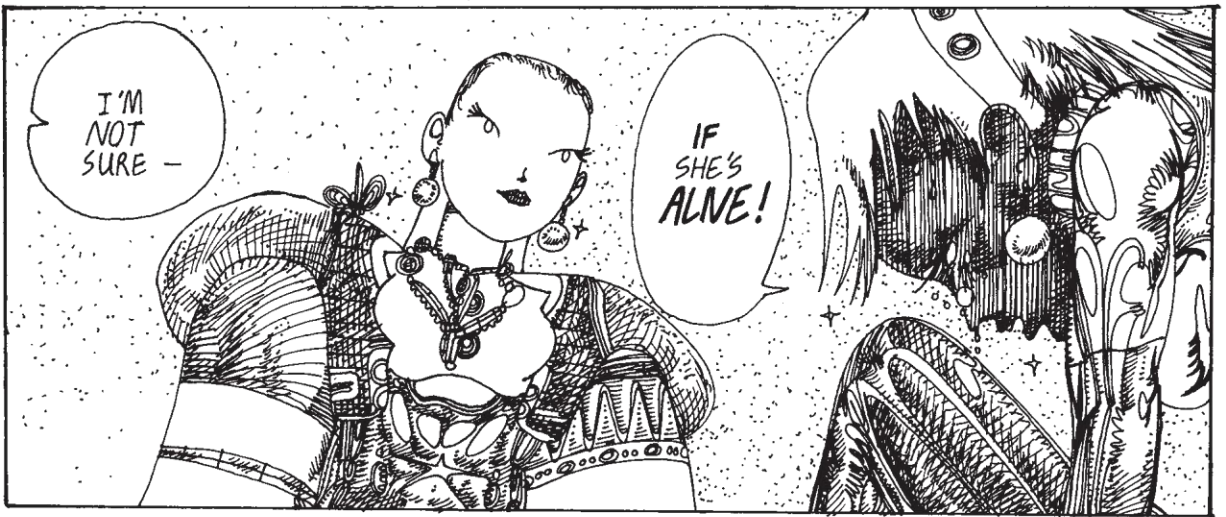
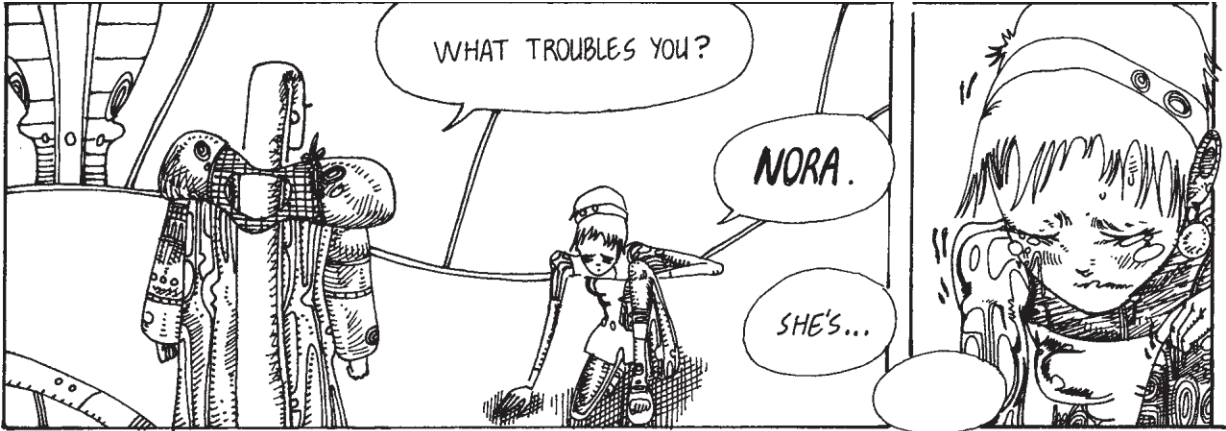
























AHEM

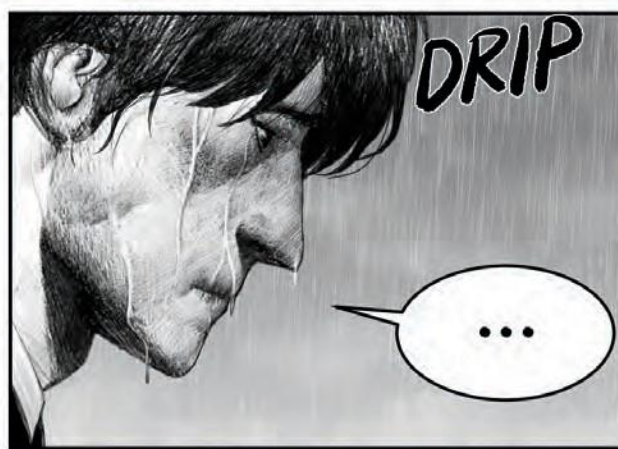
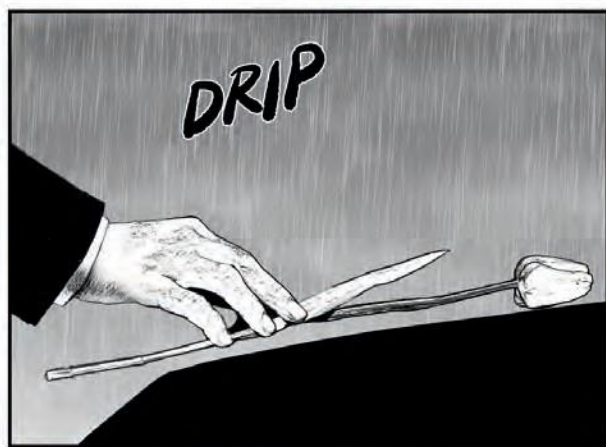


WE ARE GOING TO  
BE RICH!



SHE'S READING  
THE WILL.





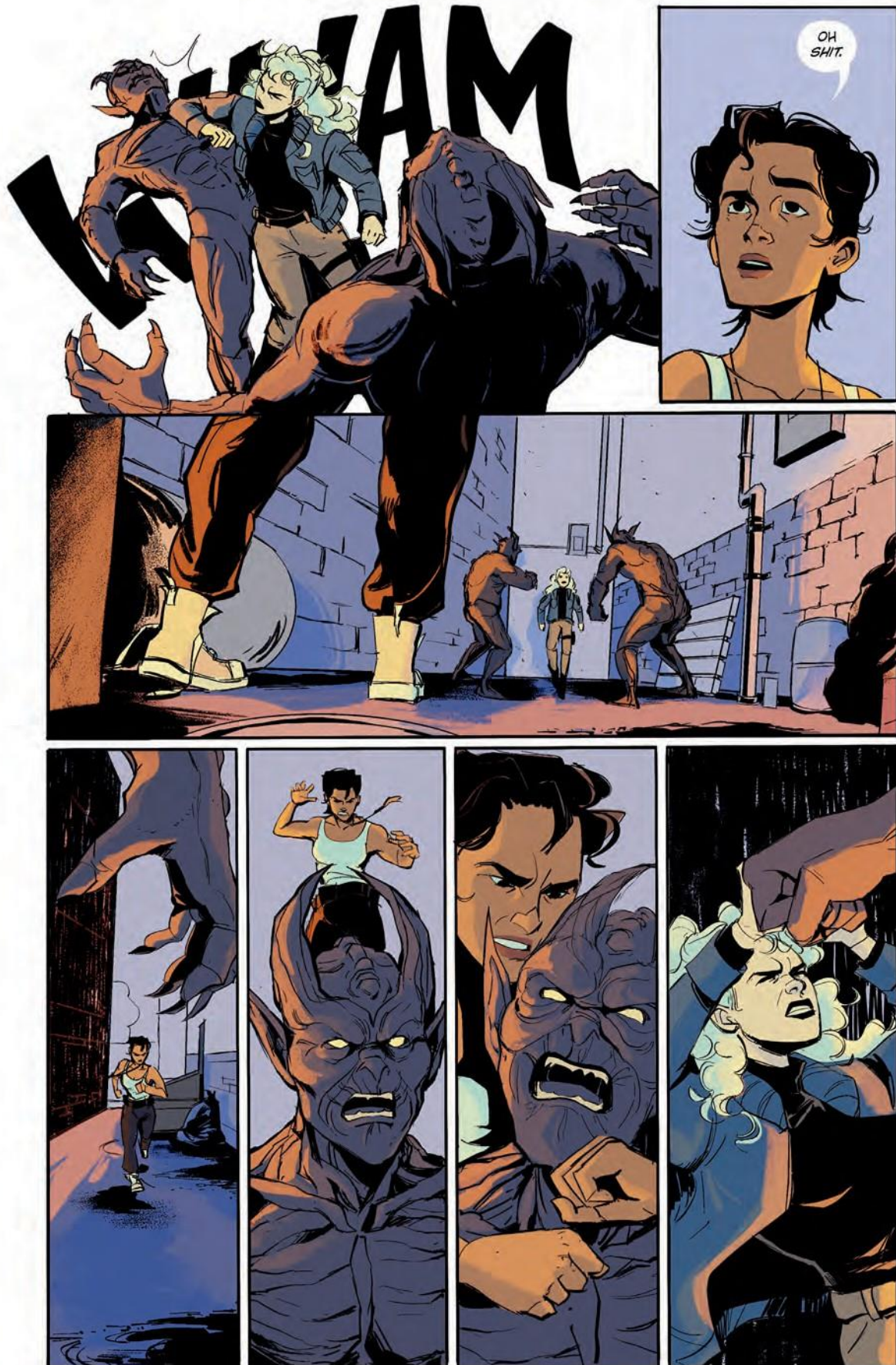


















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