

# OUR MODERN TROUBLES

## THE STORM BEFORE THE CALM



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Art by Jim Lavery Lettering by Danny McLaughlin

Our Modern Troubles: The Storm Before the Calm tells the hard hitting story of teenagers Sophie and Amelia.

The book illustrates what domestic abuse looks like in a teenage relationship; how it can be physical, verbal, psychological and emotional.

Through the experiences of Sophie and Amelia, the book illustrates how difficult it can be to identify signs of domestic abuse, especially when a relationship can be loving to begin with. While Amelia and Sophie are fictional characters, unfortunately, the domestic abuse they experience is all too real for some young people in our community.

The book is the work of young people from Derry/Londonderry, aged between 14 and 17.

It highlights domestic abuse as one of the modern troubles in communities for young people, and is a powerful reminder that domestic abuse isn't only abuse between adult couples that only ever occurs in a home setting.

Domestic abuse can happen to anyone, including young people in intimate relationships.

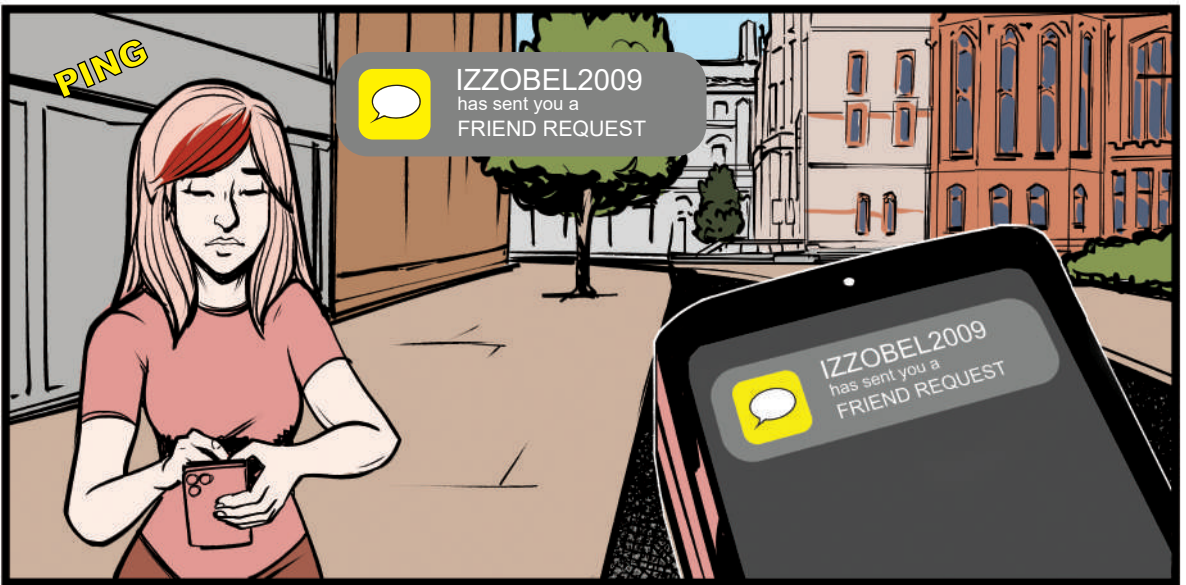
The book aims to help young people spot the signs of domestic abuse, and create an understanding about what they think of as healthy behaviour in a relationship. It is to encourage conversations among young people, and between young people and their parents, carers or other adults about domestic abuse.

It is to reassure young people so they know help and support is available and, importantly, to know that it is never your fault.

Thank you to the young people, and all those involved, in this project and working so hard to make a difference.

**Disclaimer: This story is a work of fiction. All characters, names, events, places and incidents in this story are purely fictional, or are the product of the writers' imaginations. Characters are not based on any actual persons, living or dead, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, or to any actual events, places and incidents is fictitious and completely co-incidental.**





PING



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has sent you a  
FRIEND REQUEST

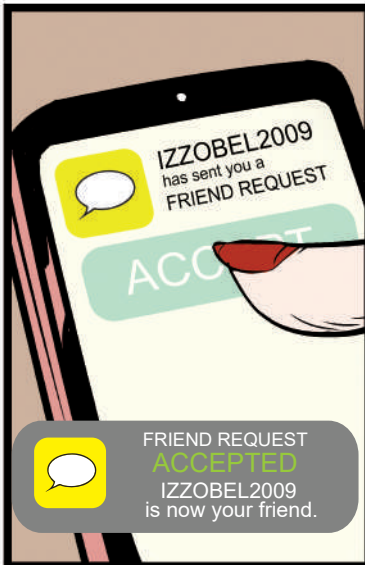


IZZOBEL2009  
has sent you a  
FRIEND REQUEST

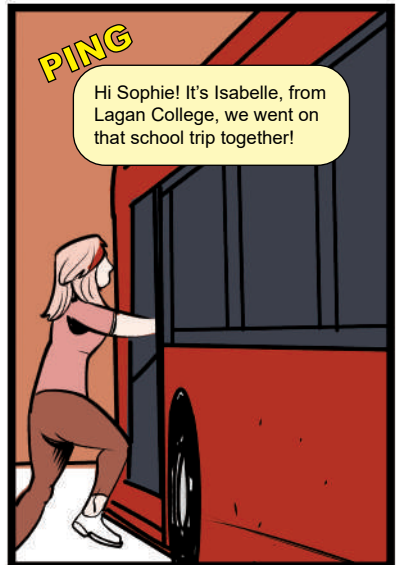


WHO'S  
SENDING ME  
A FRIEND  
REQUEST ON  
CHATAPP?

IZZOBEL?

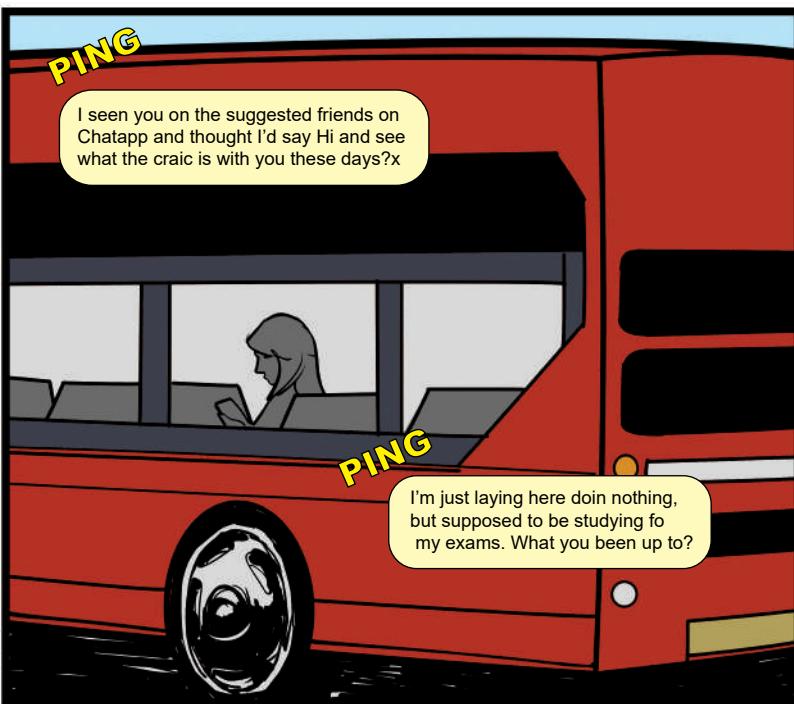


FRIEND REQUEST  
**ACCEPTED**  
IZZOBEL2009  
is now your friend.



PING

Hi Sophie! It's Isabelle, from  
Lagan College, we went on  
that school trip together!



PING

I seen you on the suggested friends on  
Chatapp and thought I'd say Hi and see  
what the craic is with you these days?x

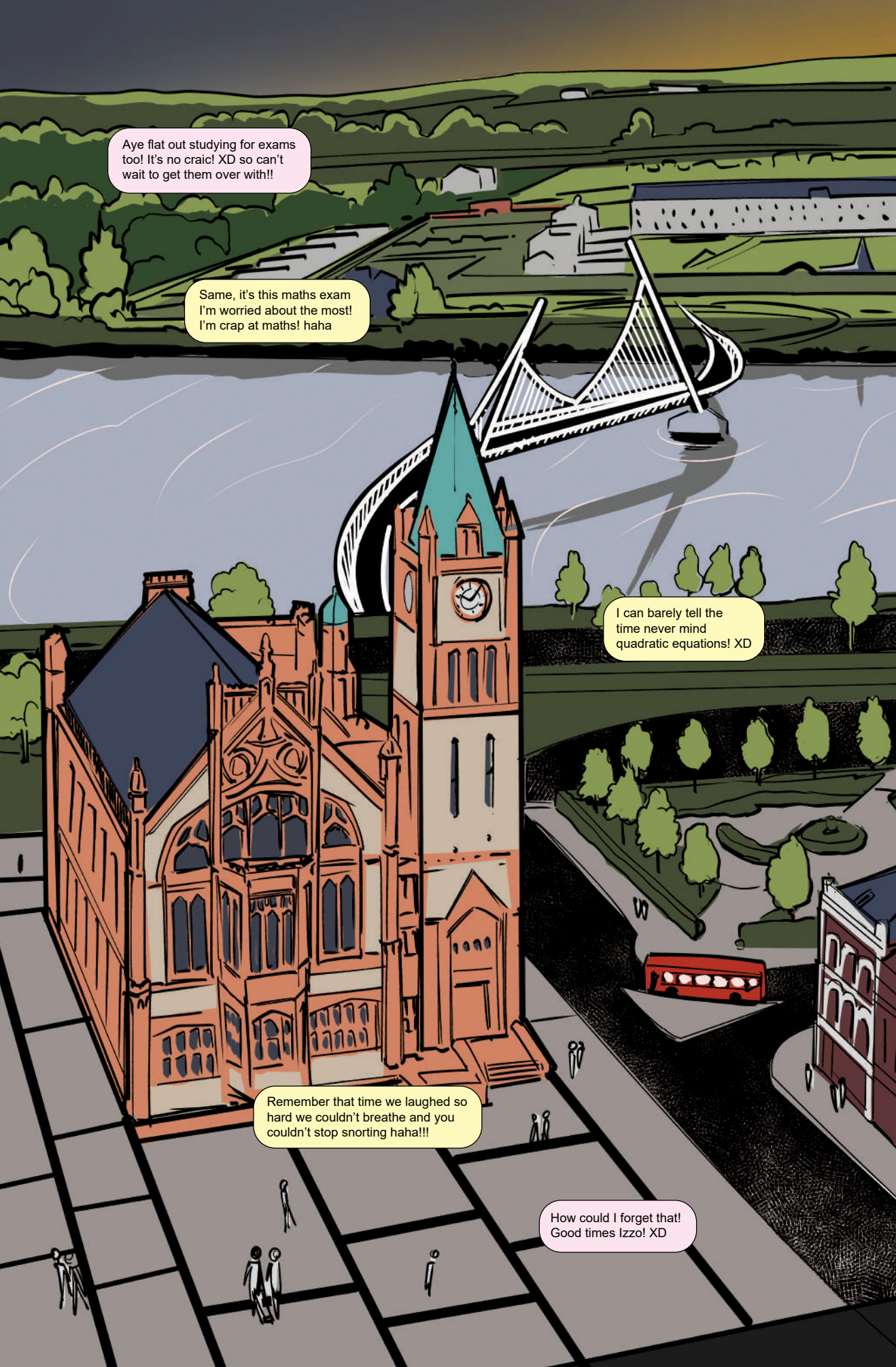
PING

I'm just laying here doin nothing,  
but supposed to be studying fo  
my exams. What you been up to?



AWW,  
HAVEN'T HEARD  
FROM IZO  
IN AGES!

Aw hey Izo, been ages!!  
Hope youre alright!xx



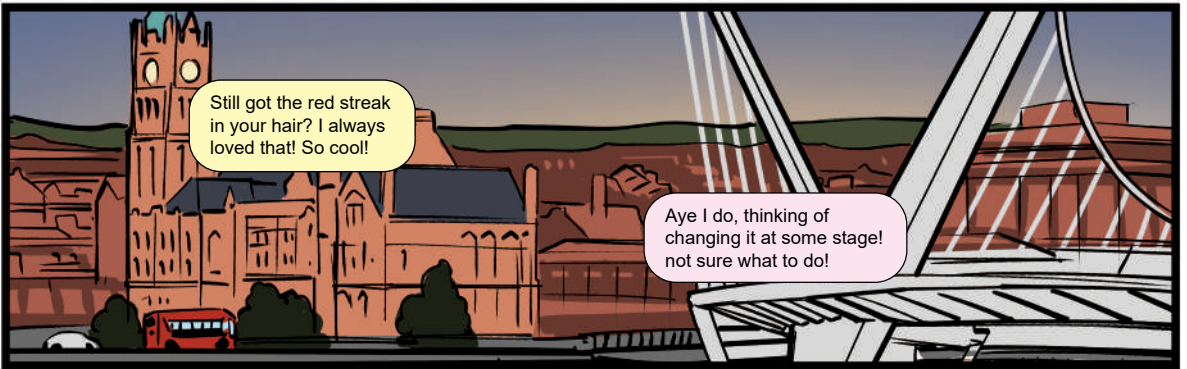
Aye flat out studying for exams too! It's no craic! XD so can't wait to get them over with!!

Same, it's this maths exam I'm worried about the most! I'm crap at maths! haha

I can barely tell the time never mind quadratic equations! XD

Remember that time we laughed so hard we couldn't breathe and you couldn't stop snorting haha!!!

How could I forget that! Good times Izzo! XD



Still got the red streak in your hair? I always loved that! So cool!

Aye I do, thinking of changing it at some stage! not sure what to do!



Never change it, it's so you! So you going out with anyone these days?

Ha thanks, aye seeing a guy called Theo! Only dating a wee while!



Lucky you :P I'm single, Do you like this guy Theo?

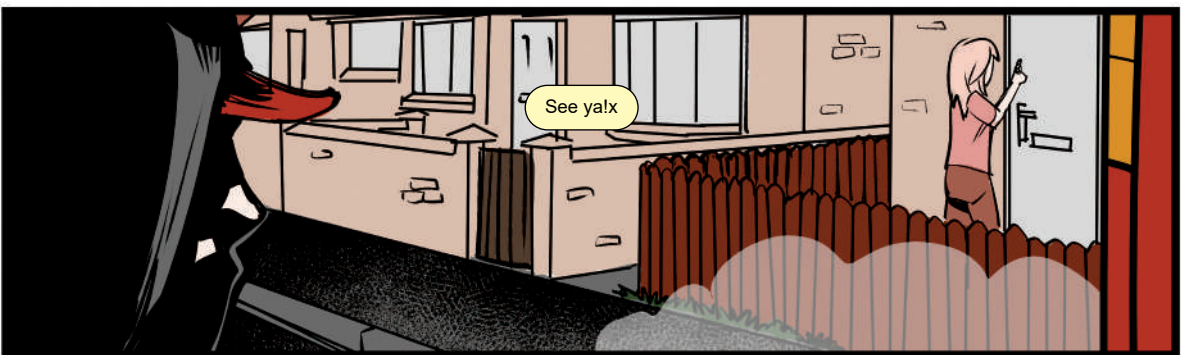
Yeah, he's a nice guy so far, gonna see how it goes just!



Stick with Theo! Good guys are hard to find! I know!

Gotta go, at home now! I'll catch up with you again soon Izo!x

Ok Sophie! Catch up with you later!x



See ya!x



NEXT DAY IN SCHOOL...

HEAD'S UP, AMELIA!

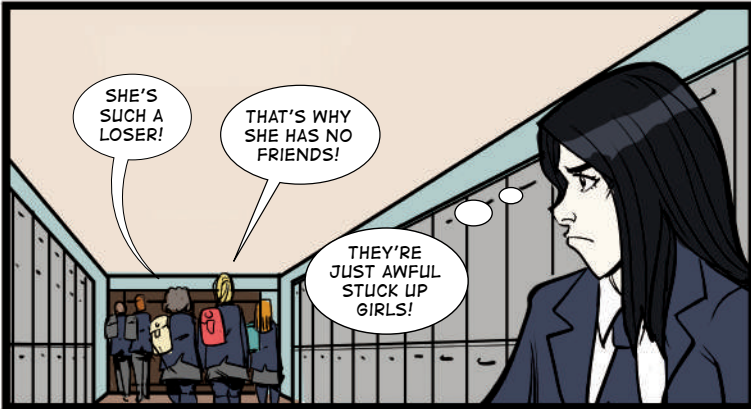
HA HA HA

HA HA

I HATE THOSE GIRLS!

THEY THINK THEY ARE SO SPECIAL.

THEY THINK THEY ARE SO COOL.



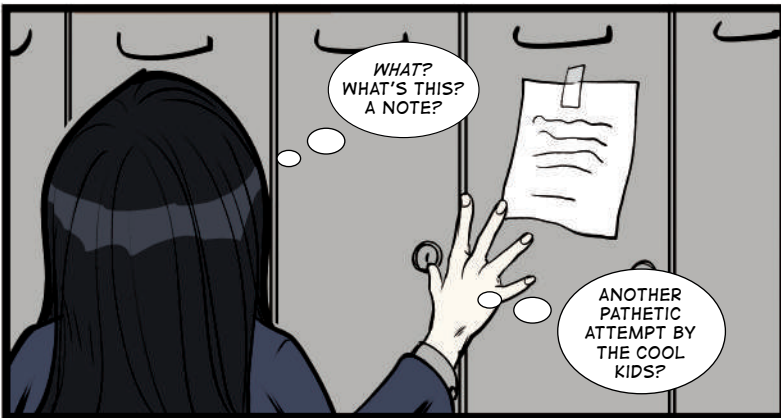
SHE'S SUCH A LOSER!

THAT'S WHY SHE HAS NO FRIENDS!

THEY'RE JUST AWFUL STUCK UP GIRLS!



I HATE EVERY FIBRE OF THEIR BEING.



WHAT? WHAT'S THIS? A NOTE?

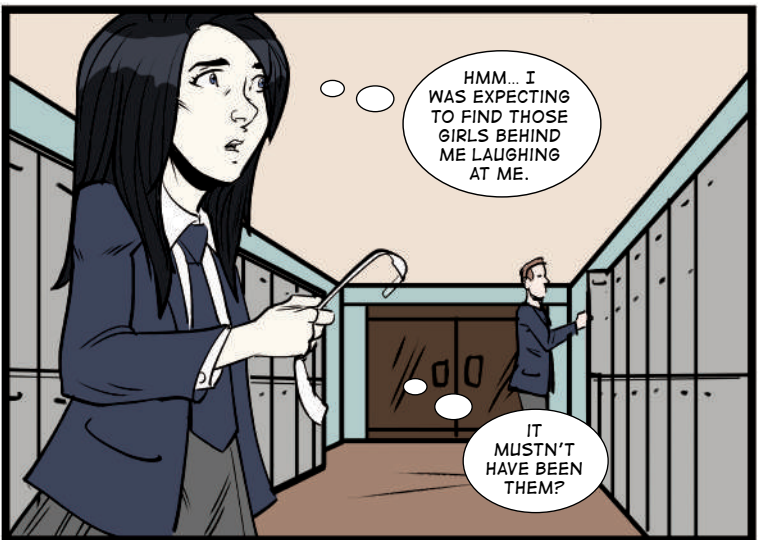
ANOTHER PATHETIC ATTEMPT BY THE COOL KIDS?



HUH?

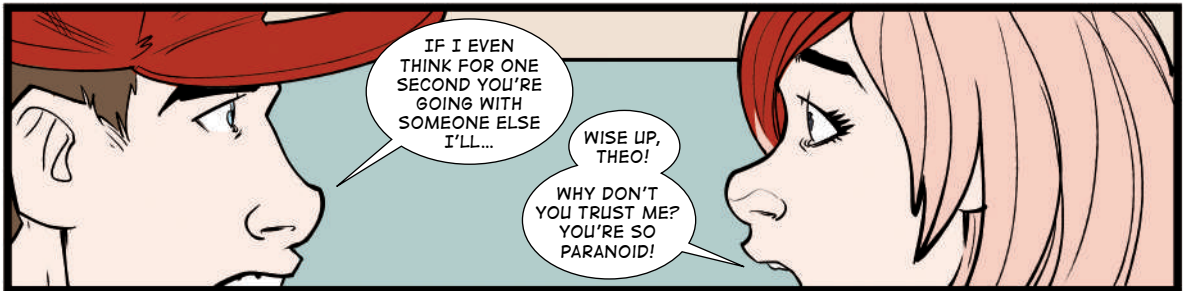
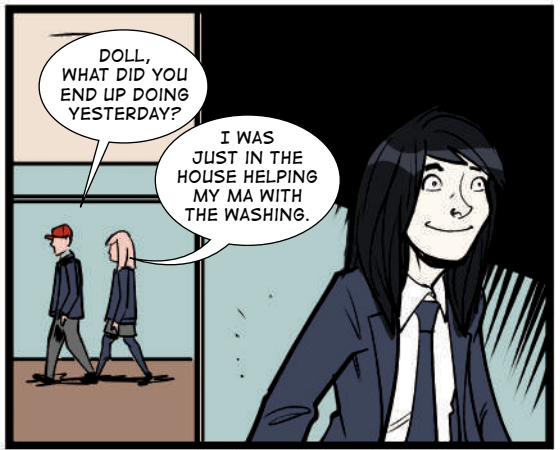
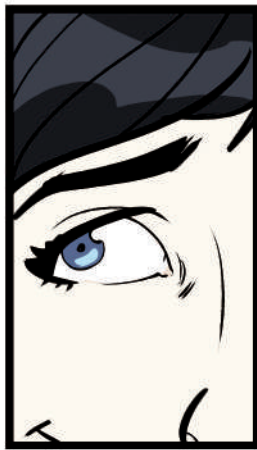


I think you're Class Amelia xoxo



HMM... I WAS EXPECTING TO FIND THOSE GIRLS BEHIND ME LAUGHING AT ME.

IT MUSTN'T HAVE BEEN THEM?



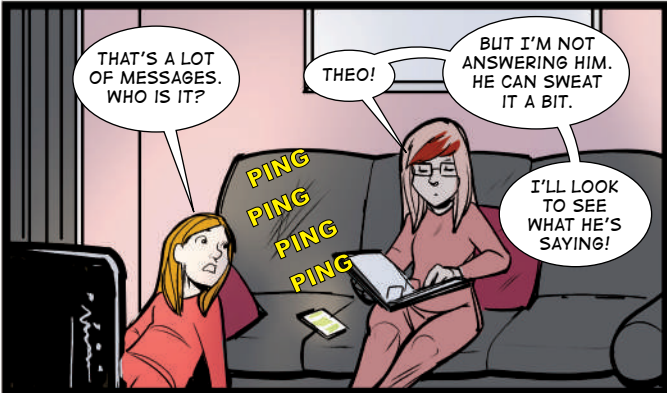


Sophie, what you doing tonight?x

Wanna come meet me?x

PING  
PING  
PING

Please Soph, text me back!x



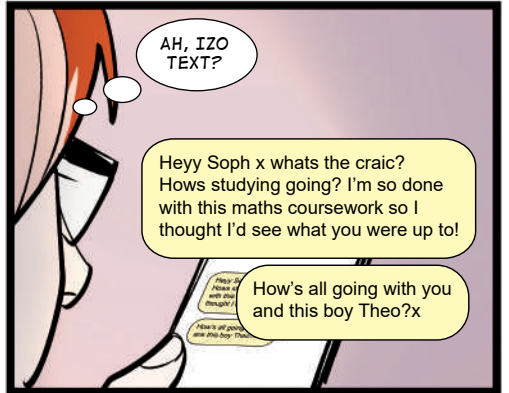
THAT'S A LOT OF MESSAGES. WHO IS IT?

THEO!

BUT I'M NOT ANSWERING HIM. HE CAN SWEAT IT A BIT.

I'LL LOOK TO SEE WHAT HE'S SAYING!

PING  
PING  
PING  
PING



AH, IZO TEXT?

Heyy Soph x whats the craic? Hows studying going? I'm so done with this maths coursework so I thought I'd see what you were up to!

How's all going with you and this boy Theo?x



Hey Izo! Doin my English coursework but its stressing me out! :( Theo's been a weirdo, he's sooo jealous!

He thinks I'm two-timing him, he essentially threatened me earlier.. he's being so rare!

Not sure what to do. Thinkin maybe I should finish with him?

Coursework is a pain XD Ye know what, you're lucky to have someone who cares for you, I bet he just really likes you! And you know how boys are! Maybe you should give him another chance?

You're right! Maybe I will give him another chance. Thx Izo x



AMELIAAAA!!

WHAAAT?

THERE'S A DELIVERY HERE FOR YOU, YOU'LL WANT TO COME DOWN AND GET IT!

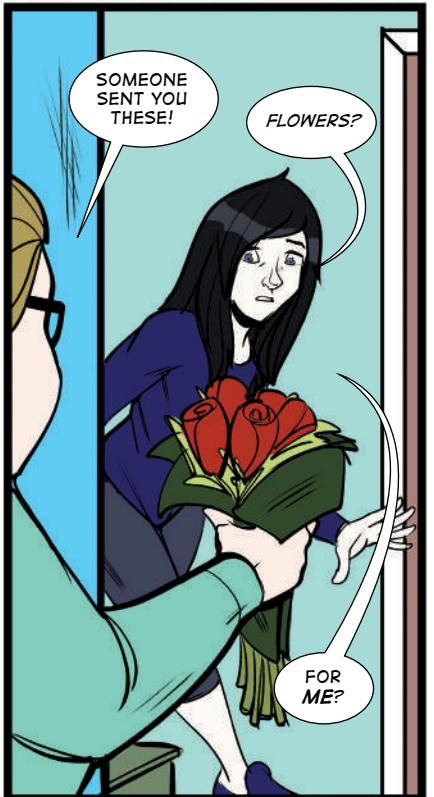


A DELIVERY? I DIDN'T ORDER ANYTHING!



YOU DIDN'T TELL ME YOU HAD A BOYFRIEND!

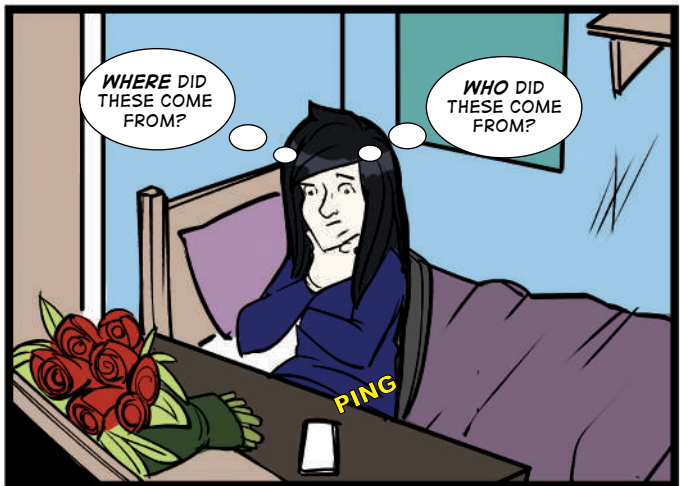
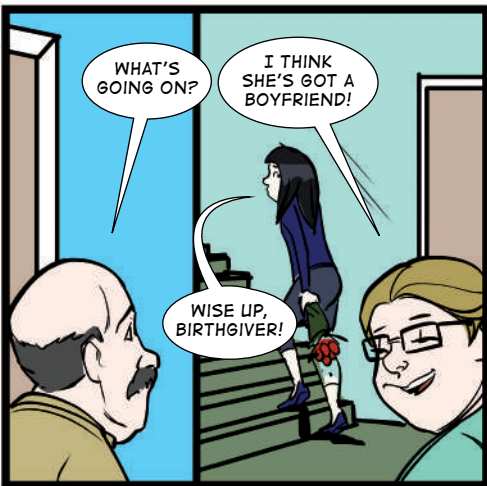
WHAT?



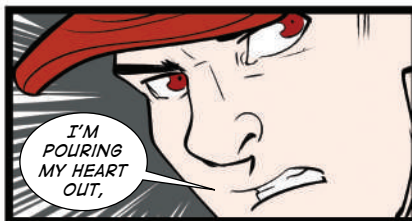
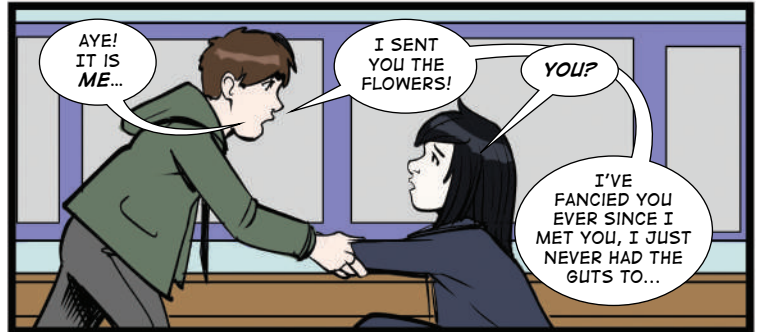
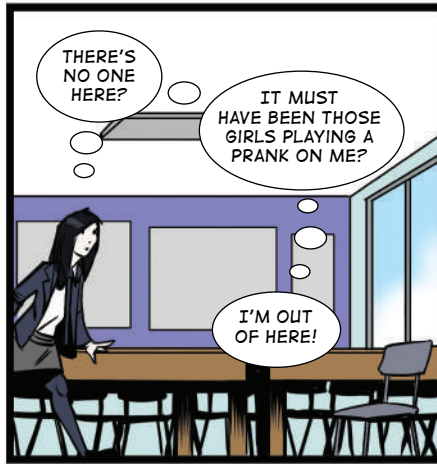
SOMEONE SENT YOU THESE!

FLOWERS?

FOR ME?



NEXT DAY AFTER  
LAST CLASS...





PING

Why aren't ye replying to me? 😘 xo

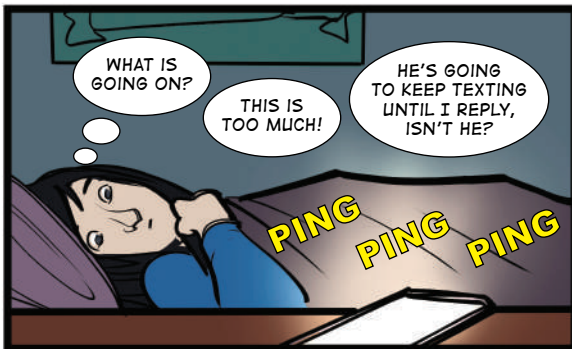
PING

Why aren't you coming to school? Its been over a week now. Is everything okay? I wouldn't want anything to be wrong with you.. 😘 xoxo

PING

You're an amazing girl 🥰 xo Did I do something wrong? I was trying to be romantic. ❤️

PING



WHAT IS GOING ON?

THIS IS TOO MUCH!

HE'S GOING TO KEEP TEXTING UNTIL I REPLY, ISN'T HE?

PING

PING

PING



Sorry Jacob, I haven't been well... its nothing to do with you. I just need time.



Aww sorry to hear you're sick. Want me to come round and bring you something? 🍷🥰

I just wanted to make my move, I have been having feelings for you for ages and worked up the courage to tell you and wanted it to be really romantic ❤️ xx



I'm just so crazy about you. 🥰 xxx

I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO, THIS IS ALL NEW TO ME, I JUST FEEL OVERWHELMED. MAYBE IT'S JUST ME?



Look at everything I did for you. 🥰 You mean the world to me. At least meet me for a coffee some day... ❤️ xo

It's the least you can do. 🥰



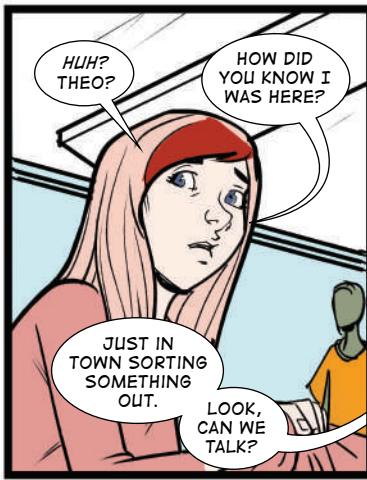
Okay, Jacob. This is all new to me but I'll meet you for a coffee.

Alright 🥰 you'll not regret it. 🥰 It's a DATE oxoxo



HEY SOPHIE!

IMAGINE RUNNING INTO YOU!?



HUH? THEO?

HOW DID YOU KNOW I WAS HERE?

JUST IN TOWN SORTING SOMETHING OUT.

LOOK, CAN WE TALK?

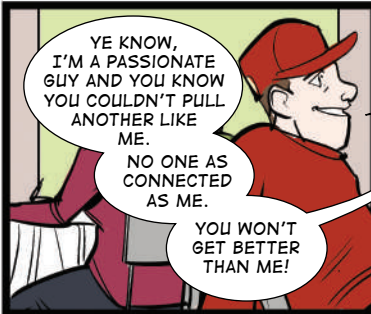


MAYBE GET TOGETHER TONIGHT?

I'LL TREAT YE TO YOU FAV CHINESE?

UMM, I WAS SURPRISED YOU SAID YOU LOVED ME!

OKAY, BUT JUST A CHAT IT'S NOT A DATE OR ANYTHING!



YE KNOW, I'M A PASSIONATE GUY AND YOU KNOW YOU COULDN'T PULL ANOTHER LIKE ME.

NO ONE AS CONNECTED AS ME.

YOU WON'T GET BETTER THAN ME!



AND I KNOW YOU CAN BE A BIT OF A TEASE, NO ONE ELSE WOULD TAKE THAT!

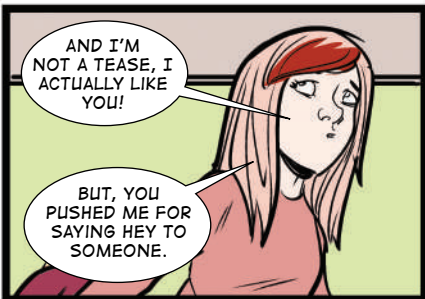
BUT I CARE, I JUST WANT US MOVE FORWARD NOW!

I'M SO GLAD WE'RE GETTING BACK TOGETHER!



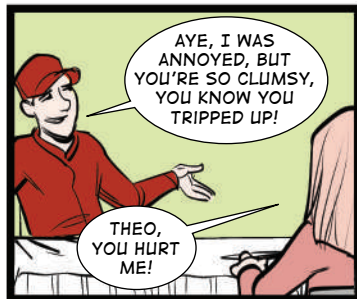
WE SAID WE WERE JUST GOIN DE CHAT...

...NOT JUST CONTINUE FROM WHERE WE LEFT OFF!



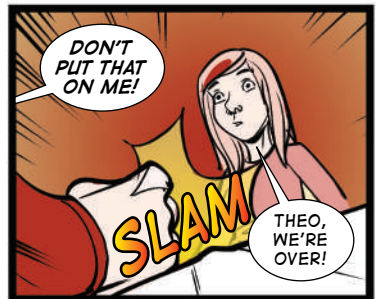
AND I'M NOT A TEASE, I ACTUALLY LIKE YOU!

BUT, YOU PUSHED ME FOR SAYING HEY TO SOMEONE.



AYE, I WAS ANNOYED, BUT YOU'RE SO CLUMSY, YOU KNOW YOU TRIPPED UP!

THEO, YOU HURT ME!



DON'T PUT THAT ON ME!

SLAM

THEO, WE'RE OVER!



GRRRR!



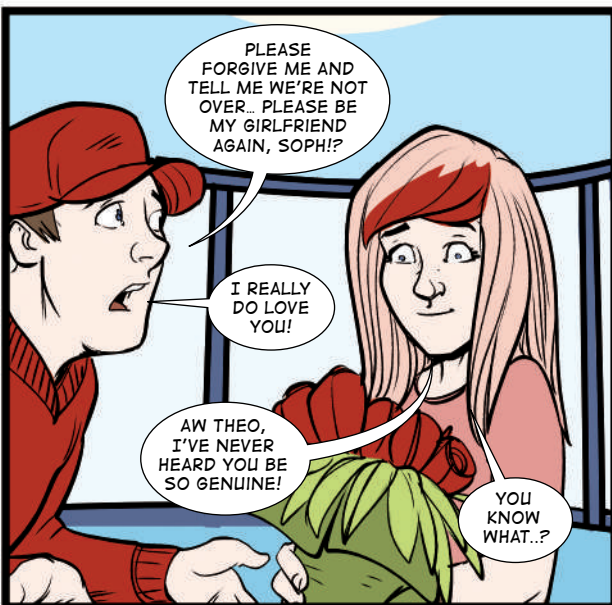
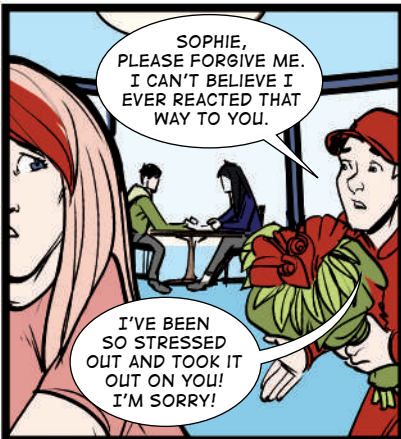
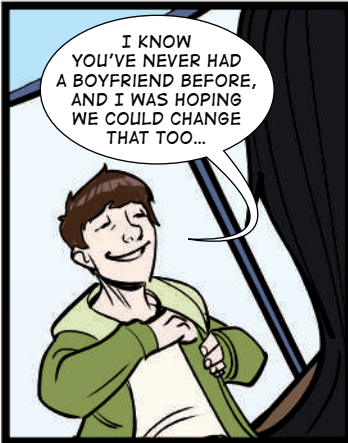
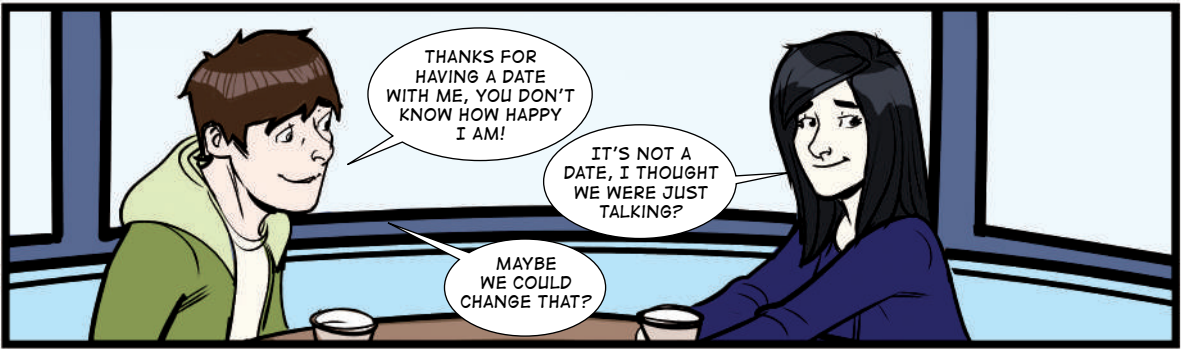
THIS WAS A MISTAKE, THEO!

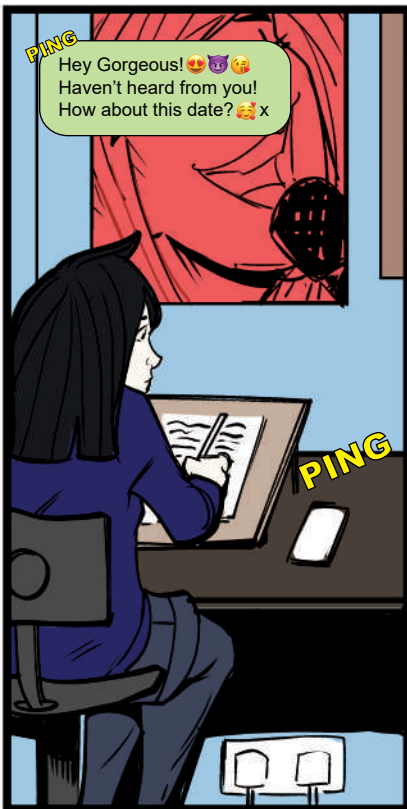
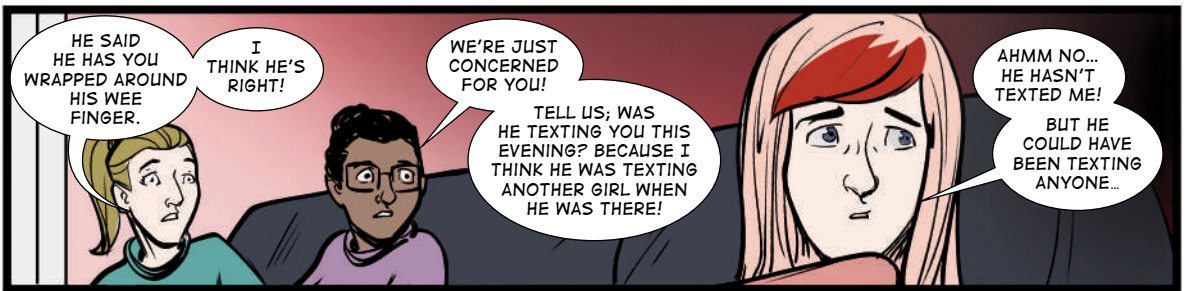
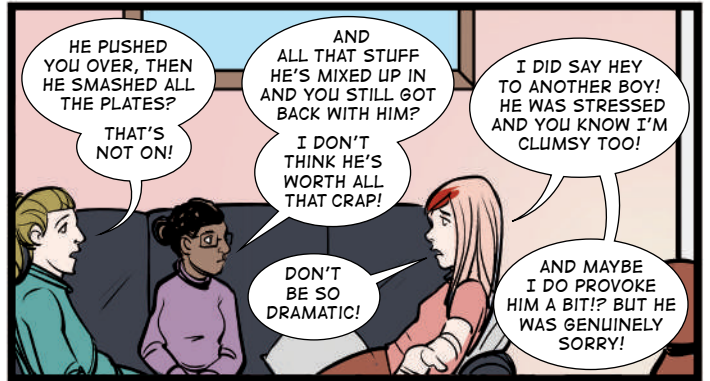
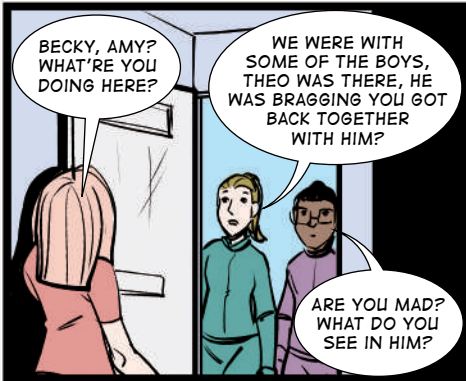
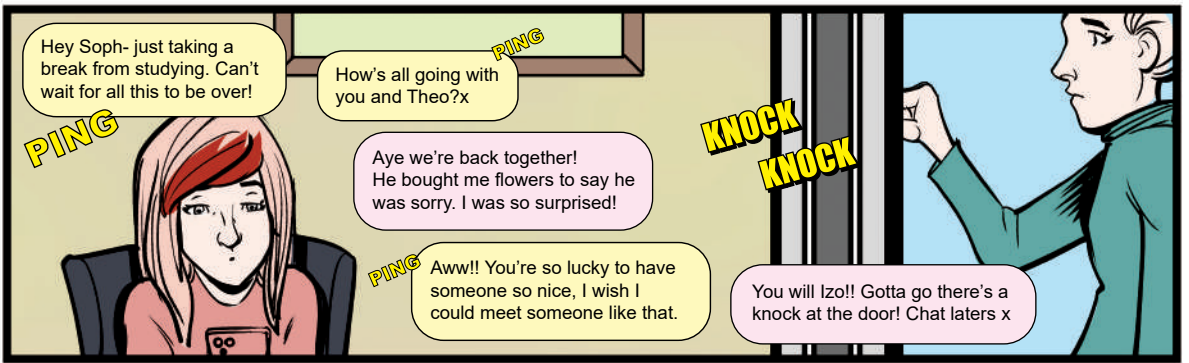
WE ARE DONE!

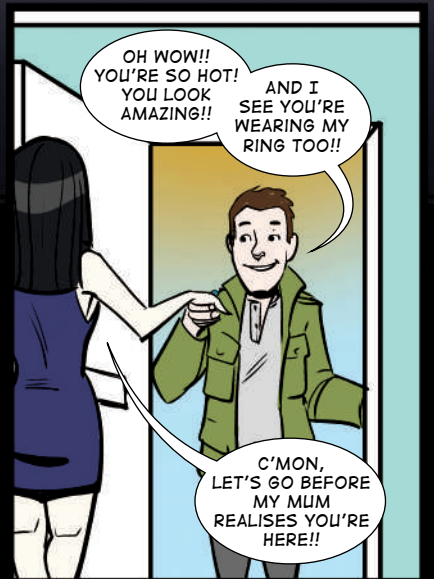
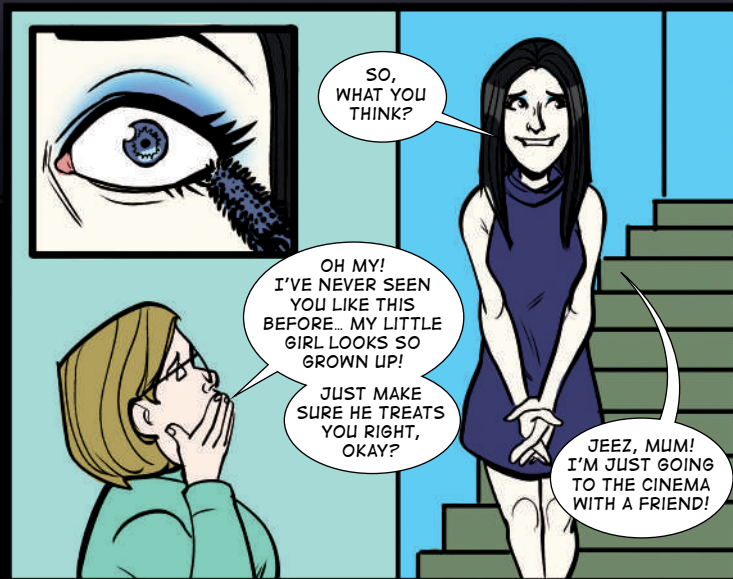
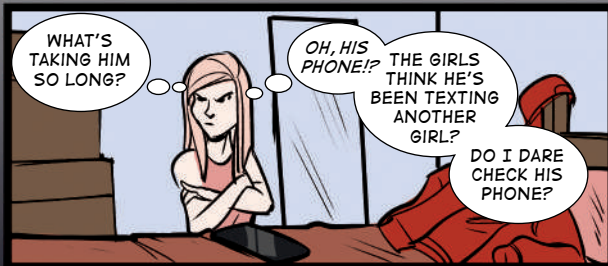
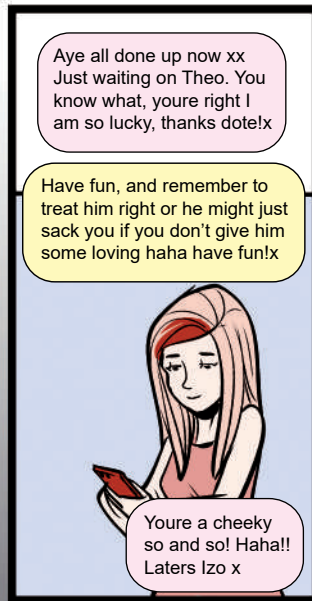
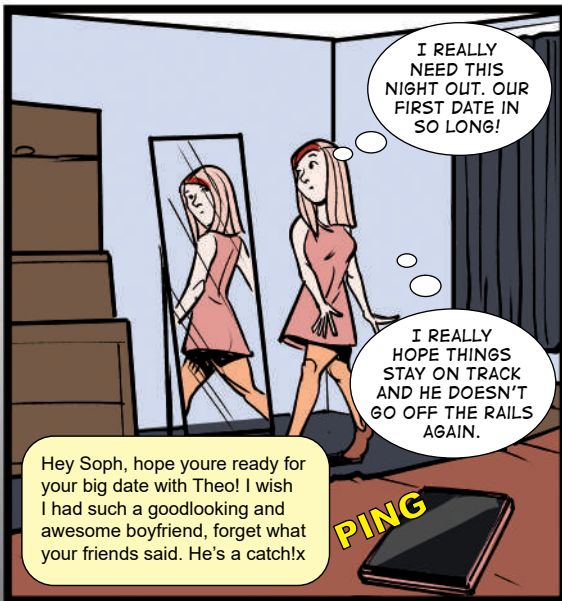
AYE, GONE AWAY! YOU'RE JUST KEEPING ME ON THE HOOK CAUSE NO ONE ELSE WANTS YE!

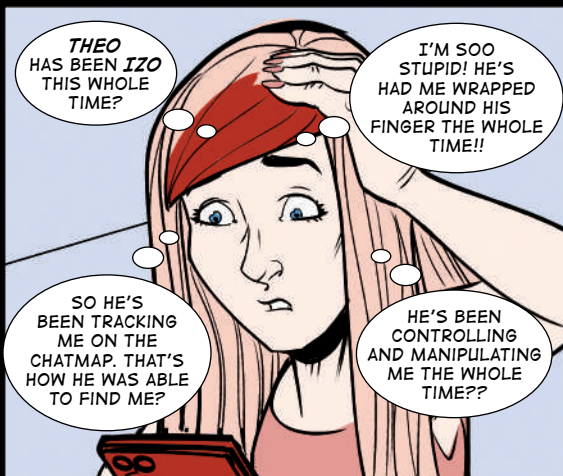
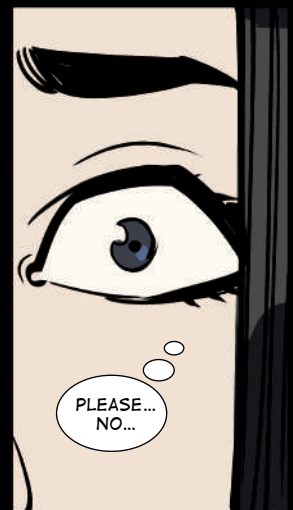
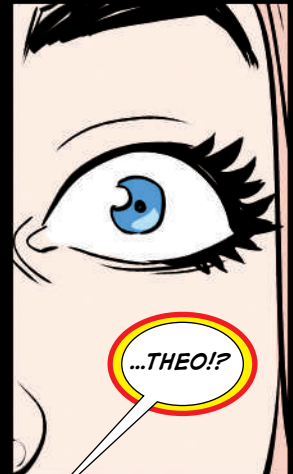
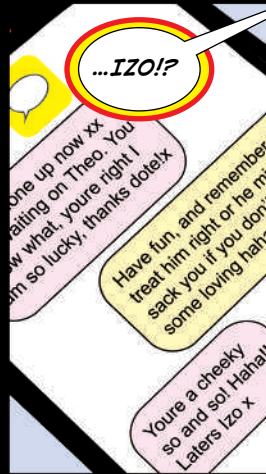
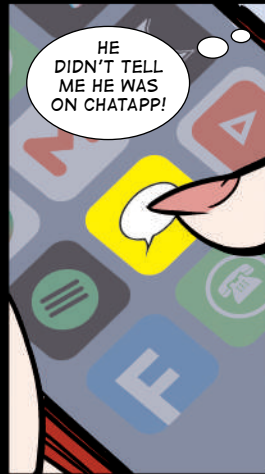
NO ONE LIKES YE! NOT EVEN YOUR FRIENDS! THEY TOLD ME!

BEAT IT, SOPHIE!











SNOOPING AROUND IN MY PHONE, EH?

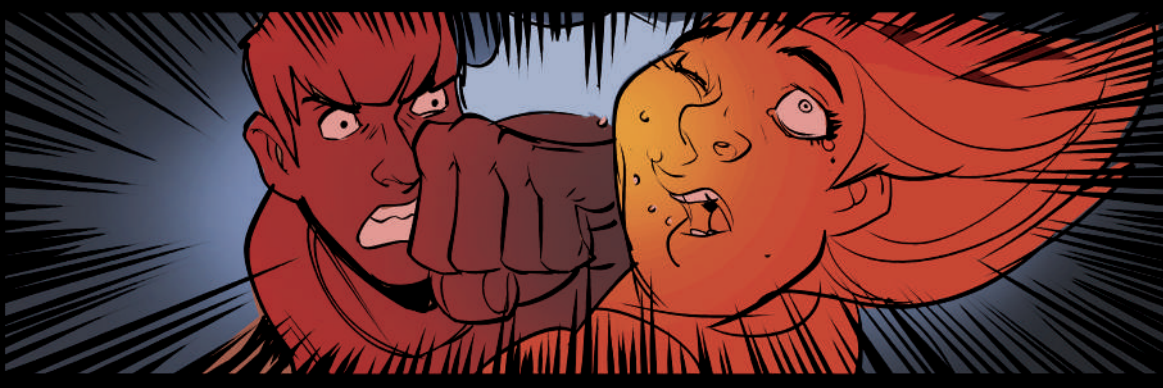
YOU WERE PRETENDING TO BE IZO!

STALKING ME AND MANIPULATING ME THIS WHOLE TIME?



GET YOUR HANDS OFF ME!

HUH?



I SHOULD NEVER HAVE TRUSTED YOU!

WHAT DID I DO?

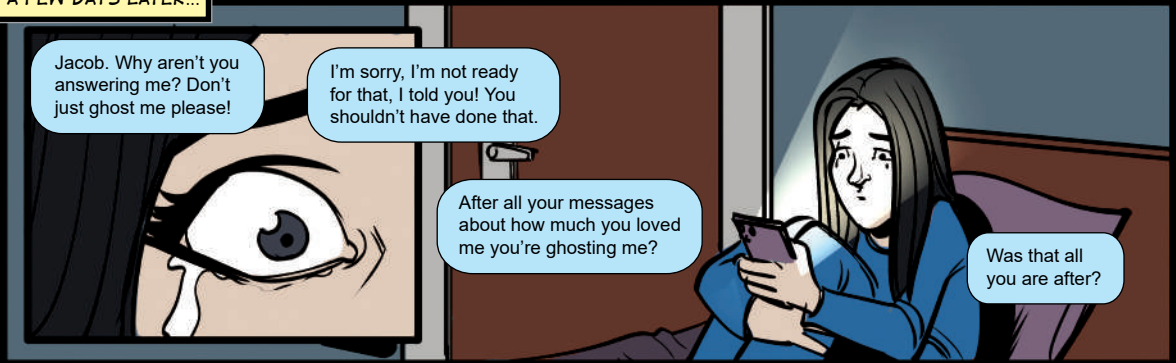
I THOUGHT YOU WERE ENJOYING IT!?



I'M GETTING OUT OF HERE! BUT...

...YOU KNOW YOU DESERVED THAT, RIGHT!?

A FEW DAYS LATER...

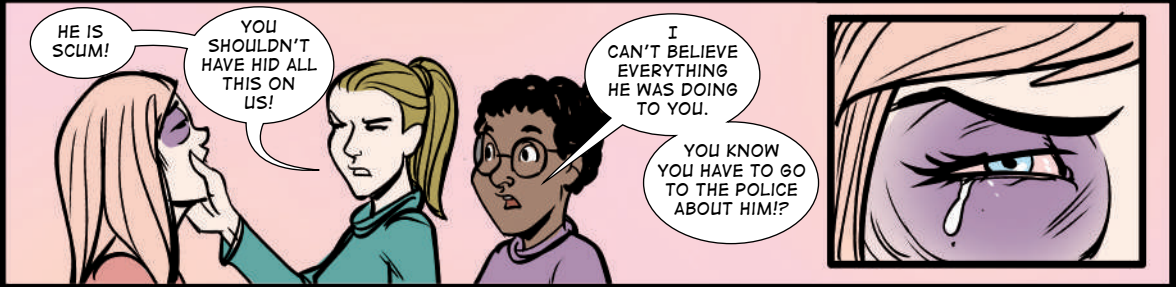


Jacob. Why aren't you answering me? Don't just ghost me please!

I'm sorry, I'm not ready for that, I told you! You shouldn't have done that.

After all your messages about how much you loved me you're ghosting me?

Was that all you are after?

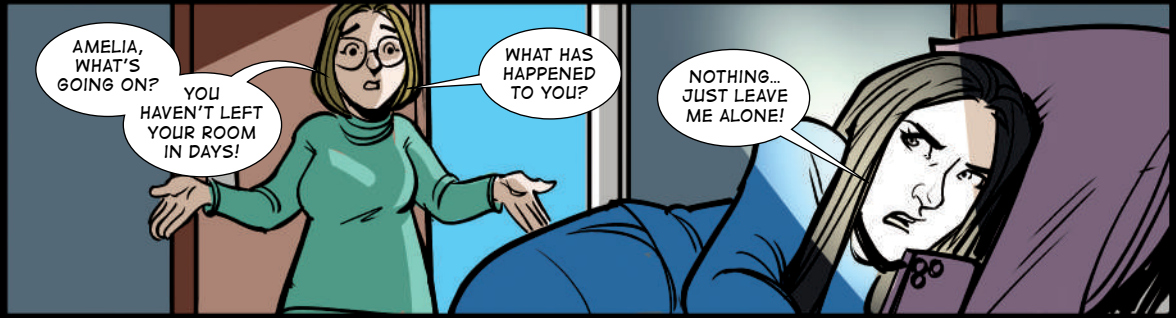
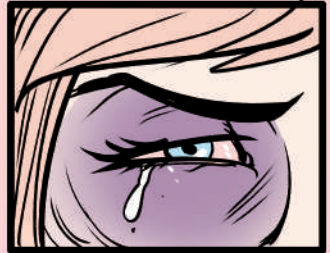


HE IS SCUM!

YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE HID ALL THIS ON US!

I CAN'T BELIEVE EVERYTHING HE WAS DOING TO YOU.

YOU KNOW YOU HAVE TO GO TO THE POLICE ABOUT HIM!?



AMELIA, WHAT'S GOING ON?

YOU HAVEN'T LEFT YOUR ROOM IN DAYS!

WHAT HAS HAPPENED TO YOU?

NOTHING... JUST LEAVE ME ALONE!



HE'LL GET WHAT HE DESERVES SOPHIE!

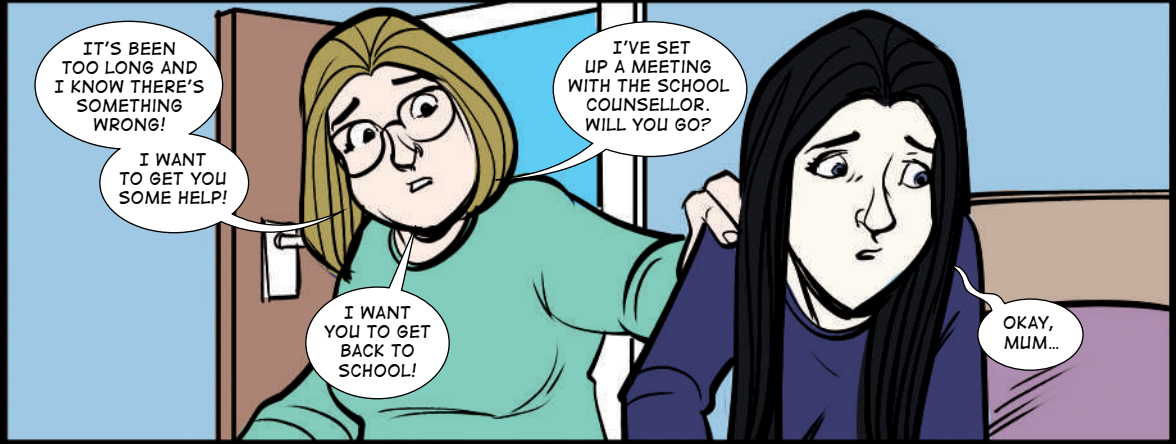
YOU KNOW YOU DID THE RIGHT THING.

I THINK YOU SHOULD TALK TO SOMEONE ABOUT ALL THIS!

WHAT A SCUMBAG, HE HIT THAT GIRL!

WORD IS HE'S BEEN UP TO ALL SORTS WITH THEM OTHER FELLAS,

YOU KNOW THE ONES I'M ON ABOUT!



IT'S BEEN TOO LONG AND I KNOW THERE'S SOMETHING WRONG!

I WANT TO GET YOU SOME HELP!

I WANT YOU TO GET BACK TO SCHOOL!

I'VE SET UP A MEETING WITH THE SCHOOL COUNSELLOR. WILL YOU GO?

OKAY, MUM...

A FEW DAYS LATER...



HEY, WHAT YOU LISTENING TO?

HUH?  
OH, JUST SOME ROCK MUSIC! I'M TRYING TO DISTRACT MYSELF BEFORE GOING IN HERE!



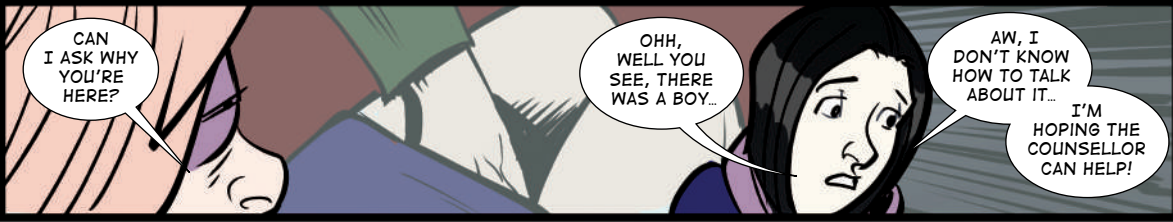
AYE, ME TOO, THAT'S WHY I ASKED!

IT'S PRETTY HEAVY, YOU PROBABLY WOULDN'T LIKE IT...

CAN I ASK, WHAT HAPPENED YOUR EYE?



OH MY EYE?  
A GIFT FROM MY EX! THAT'S WHY I'M HERE...



CAN I ASK WHY YOU'RE HERE?

OH, WELL YOU SEE, THERE WAS A BOY...

AW, I DON'T KNOW HOW TO TALK ABOUT IT...  
I'M HOPING THE COUNSELLOR CAN HELP!

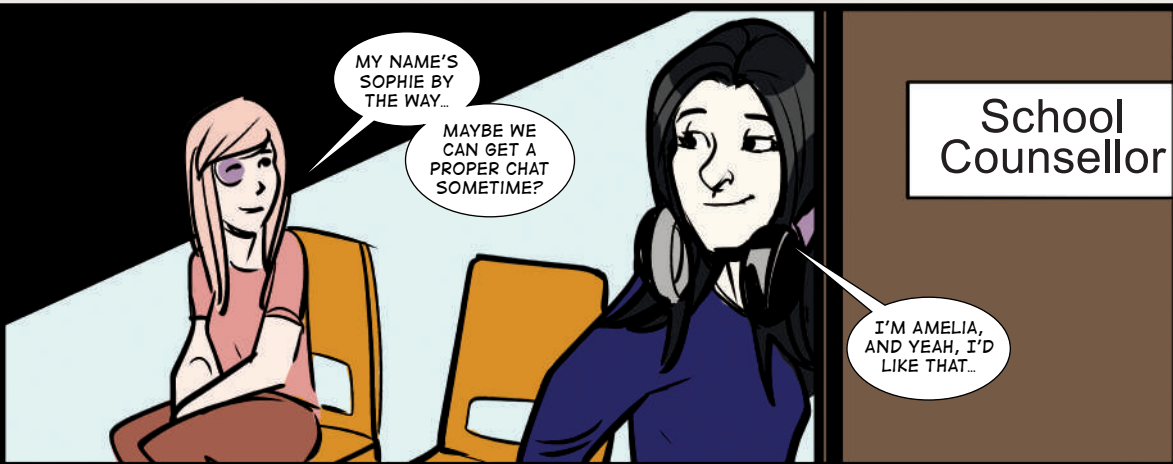


ME TOO, I'M SURE SHE CAN HELP BOTH OF US!

GOOD LUCK!

THANKS! YOU TOO!

AMELIA? COME ON IN...



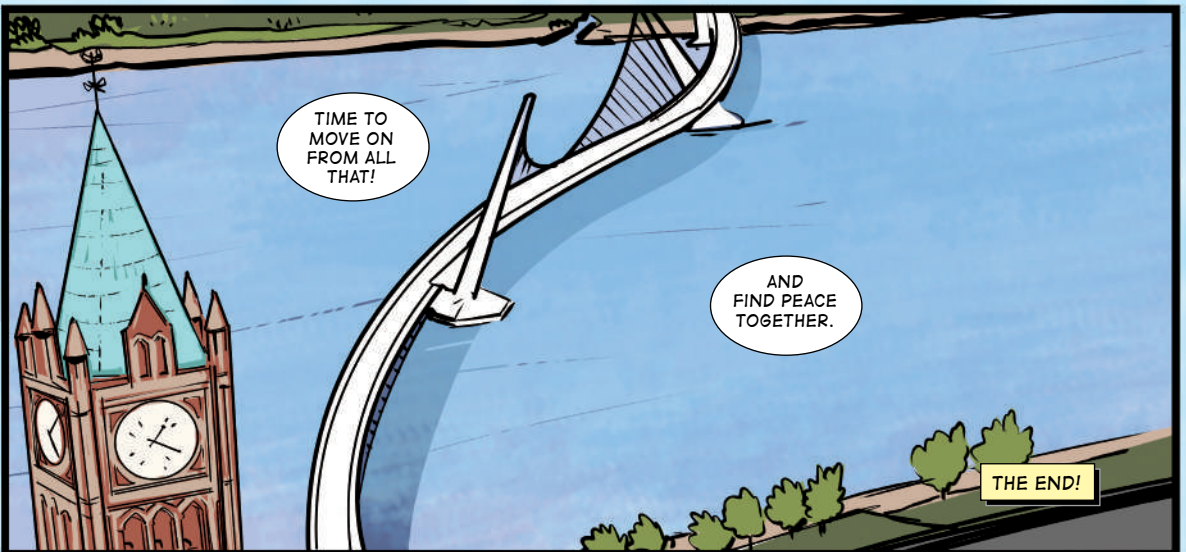
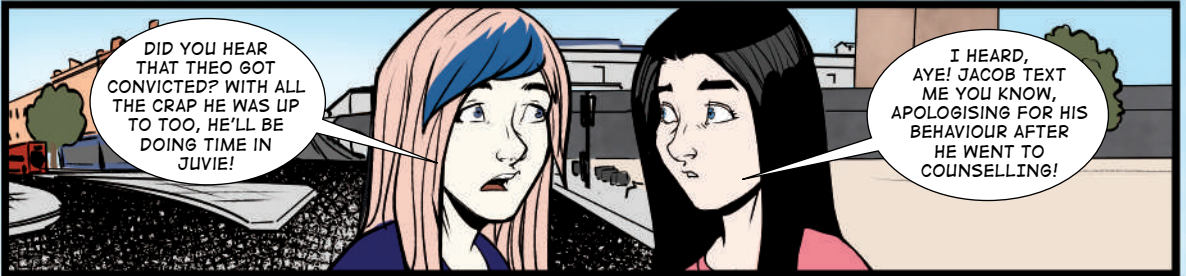
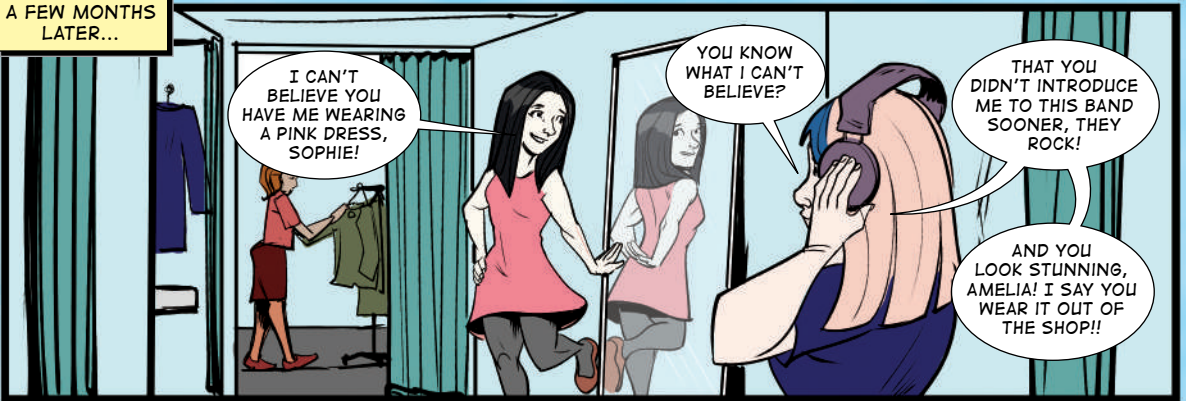
MY NAME'S SOPHIE BY THE WAY...

MAYBE WE CAN GET A PROPER CHAT SOMETIME?

School Counsellor

I'M AMELIA, AND YEAH, I'D LIKE THAT...

A FEW MONTHS LATER...



The ***Our Modern Troubles: The Storm before the Calm*** Comic was born from the vibrant minds of young people, aged between 14 and 17, from schools across the Derry~Londonderry area; St Mary's College, St Cecilia's College, Thornhill College, Oakgrove Integrated College, Foyle College, Lumen Christi College, St Joseph's Boys' School, St. Patrick's & St. Brigid's College Claudy, & Churches Trust. They came together learning how to create characters and build storylines while learning about the issues of Ending Violence Against Women. This comic is their combined vision. Thank you to all the young people involved.

We asked them about the comic, their experiences on the process of telling their story and the things that they learned along the way. This is what they had to say.



*I LEARNED ABOUT WHO TO GO TO ABOUT VIOLENCE AND WHAT TO DO IN THAT SITUATION, AND I THINK IT'S A GOOD MESSAGE TO SHARE IN SCHOOLS.*



*THE WORKSHOPS WERE VERY INTRUIGING AND THE CONVERSATIONS REALLY MADE ME THINK. EVERYONE WAS SUPER NICE AND I ENJOYED IT A LOT.*



*IT WAS FUN TO MEET NEW PEOPLE AND TO BE A PART OF THIS PROJECT.*



*CREATING THIS COMIC HAS BEEN AN AMAZING EXPERIENCE. I HAVE MET SO MANY NEW PEOPLE THROUGH THIS AND LEARNED SO MANY NEW THINGS.*



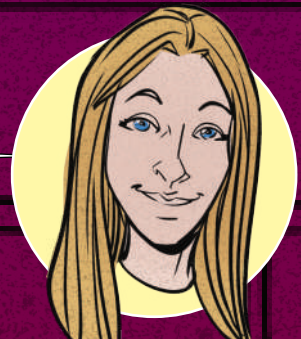
*THE COMIC USES MODERN LANGUAGE FOR YOUNGER READERS TO HELP THEM UNDERSTAND AND RELATE TO THE THEMES WITHIN AND IS SOMETHING A LOT OF PEOPLE GO THROUGH.*



*IT WAS REALLY FUN TO WORK WITH AND GET TO KNOW NEW PEOPLE. MAKING NEW FRIENDS WAS AMAZING. WORKING ON THIS PROJECT WAS A DREAM.*



*THIS COMIC REALLY HIGHLIGHTS THE STUFF WE NEED TO TALK ABOUT.*



*I THINK THIS COMIC IS A GOOD WAY TO SPREAD AWARENESS AND INFORM YOUNG PEOPLE ABOUT THE CURRENT ISSUES.*

Now it's your turn to be creative... have a think after reading the comic!  
Draw a character, write a story, create your own character or even make your own comic?  
The choice is yours... and have fun!

# OUR MODERN TROUBLES

WANT TO LOOK UP SOME HELP?

Thank you to **Foyle Women's Aid** for their involvement in the workshops with the young people which helped them learn more about the issues around

Ending Violence Against Women.

Check them out online for further information!

**Working to End Domestic Abuse:**  
*Women's Aid is the lead voluntary organisation in Northern Ireland addressing domestic abuse and providing services for women and children.*



Web: foylewomensaid.org  
Email: info@foylewomensaid.org  
Tel: (028) 71 416 800  
Address: C/o Foyle Family Justice Centre  
7-9 Bishop Street  
DERRY/LONDONDERRY  
BT48 6PL

HERE'S THEIR CONTACT INFO!

AND YOU CAN **SCAN** THIS QR CODE TO THE FAMILY JUSTICE CENTRE TO GET IN TOUCH AND MORE INFO!



foylefamilyjusticecentre.org

AND THIS QR CODE GOES TO THE WOMAN'S AID NI SITE!



www.womensaidni.org

AND YOU CAN GET FURTHER INFORMATION AND ADVISE FROM THESE LINKS HERE:



www.nidirect.gov.uk/campaigns/  
domestic-and-sexual-violence



www.health-ni.gov.uk/articles/  
domestic-and-sexual-violence



CHECK OUT THE FIRST OUR MODERN TROUBLES COMIC AT THE QR CODE HERE!



revolvecomics.com/our-modern-troubles



# OUR MODERN TROUBLES

**END** VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN & GIRLS



Women's Aid  
FOYLE

**PSP** Policing & Community Safety Partnership  
making Derry & Strabane safe



The Executive Programme on Paramilitarism & Organised Crime



Derry City & Strabane District Council  
Comhairle Chathair Dhoire & Cheantar an tSraibh Bala  
Derry City & Strabane District Council



COMMUNITY RESTORATIVE JUSTICE IRELAND

