

ANNY'S BAND OF BRAVE



For every person who's ever felt small.
You're stronger than you know.

About The Author

Anoushka Jolly is a 16-year-old changemaker who has been working to prevent bullying since the age of nine. She is the founder of Anti Bullying Squad, an anti-bullying platform that has reached over 2 million students across 20,000+ schools in India and beyond. For her shark-tank funded adolescent mental health app Kavach and work in mental health advocacy,

Anoushka was honored with the Pradhan Mantri Bal Puraskar by the Prime Minister of India. Through Anny's Band of Brave, her first comic book, Anoushka combines her passion for storytelling with her mission to help every child feel safe, strong, and heard. When she's not writing, she's dreaming up ways to make the world a kinder place: one story at a time.

MORNING

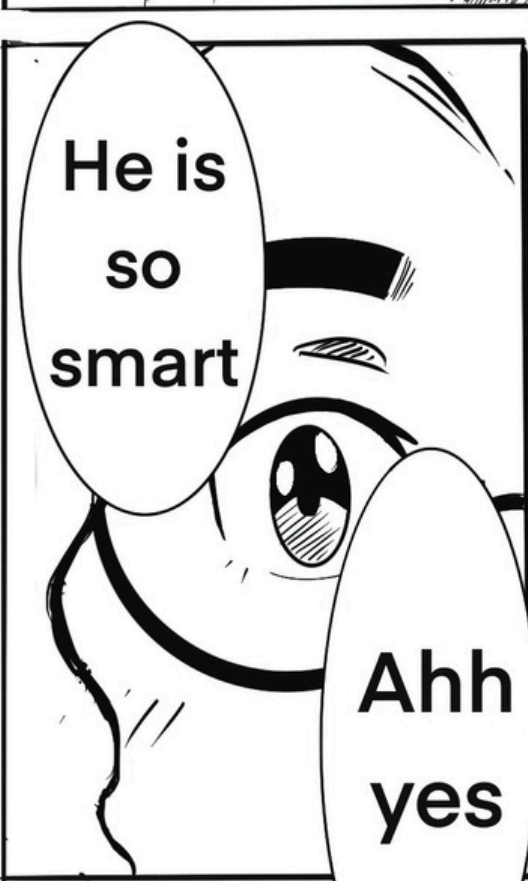
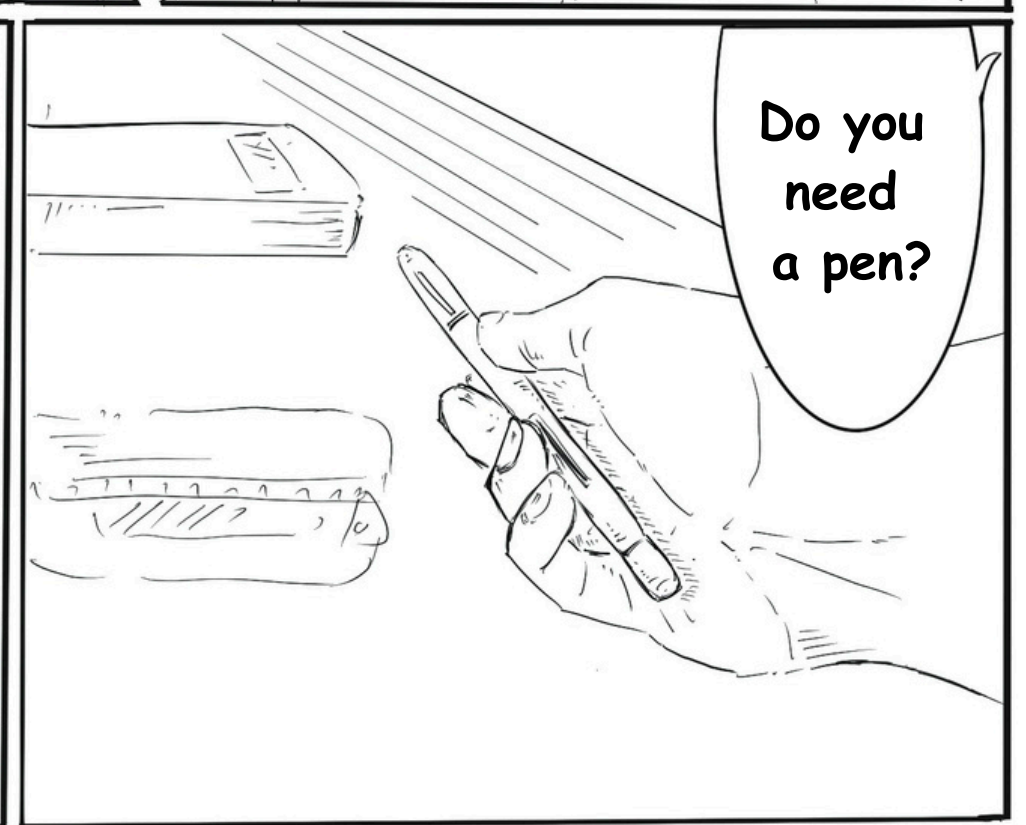
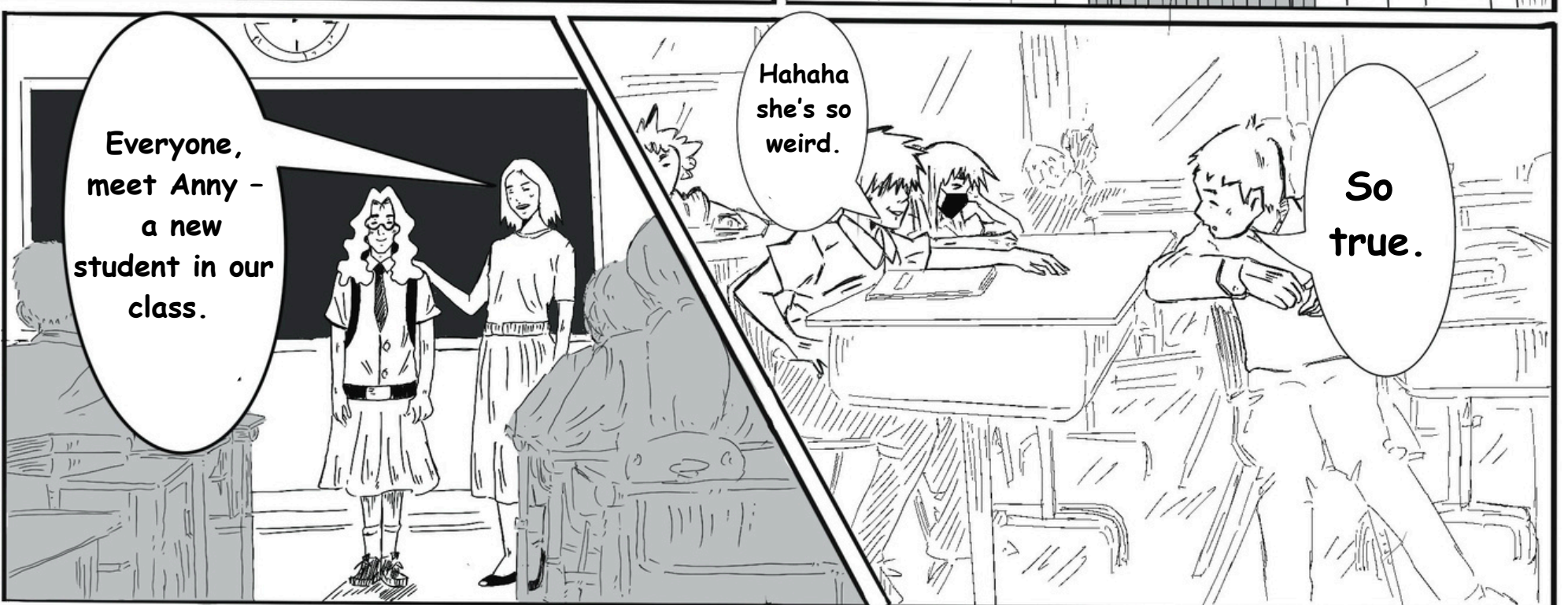
Anny,
wake up.
You'll be
late for
your first
day of
new
school.

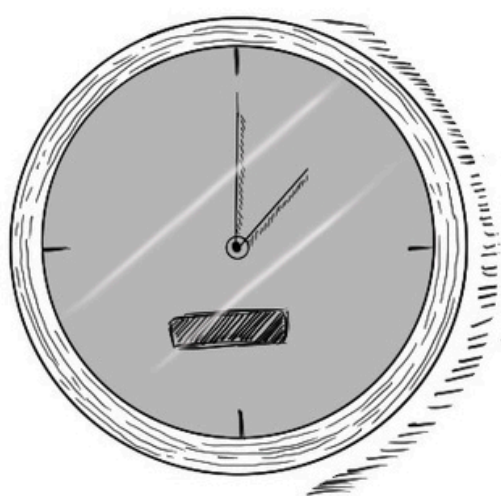
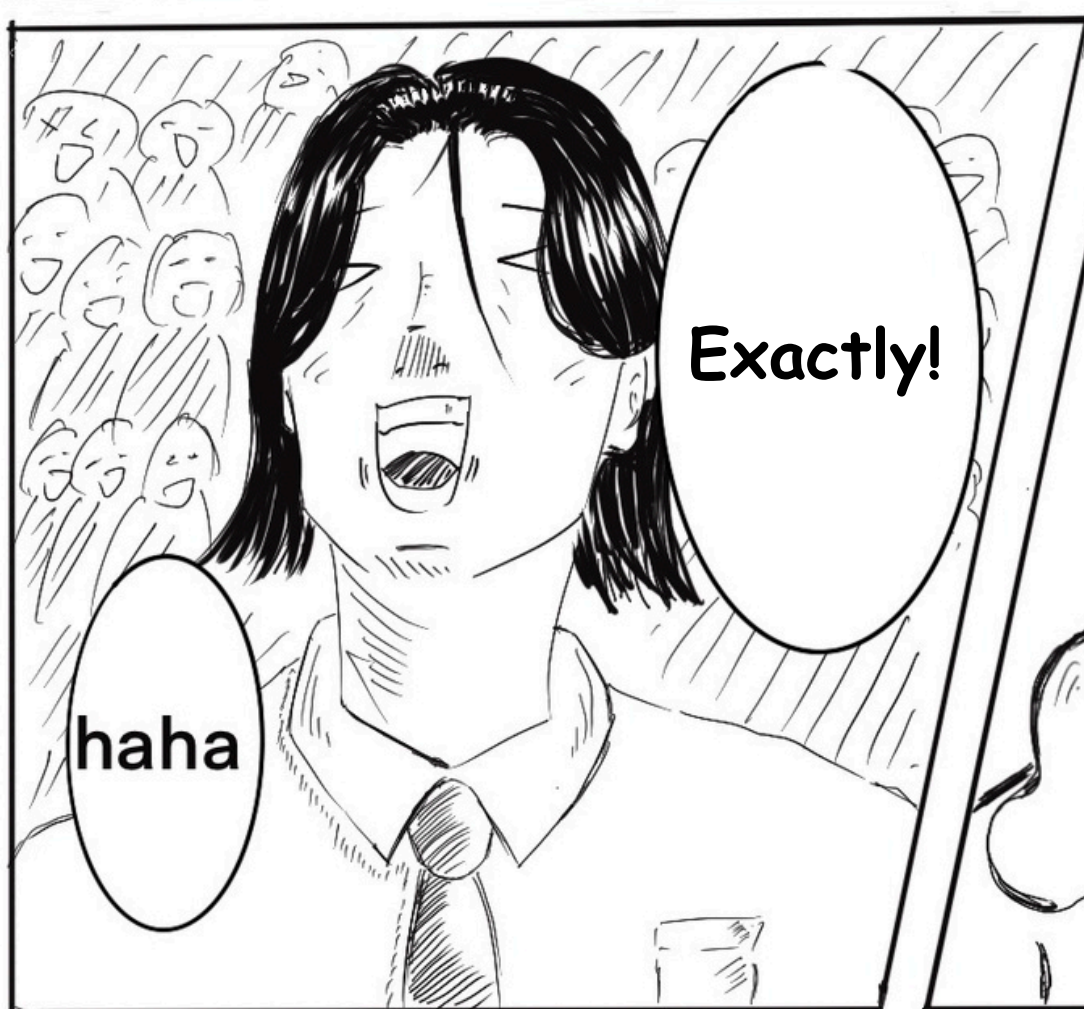
Hurry
up!

Yes,
mom.

Bye!

I really don't
want to be
late for
school.





LUNCH!!!





I'll just
head home
and finish
my homework.
Maybe I'm
thinking
too much
of it.



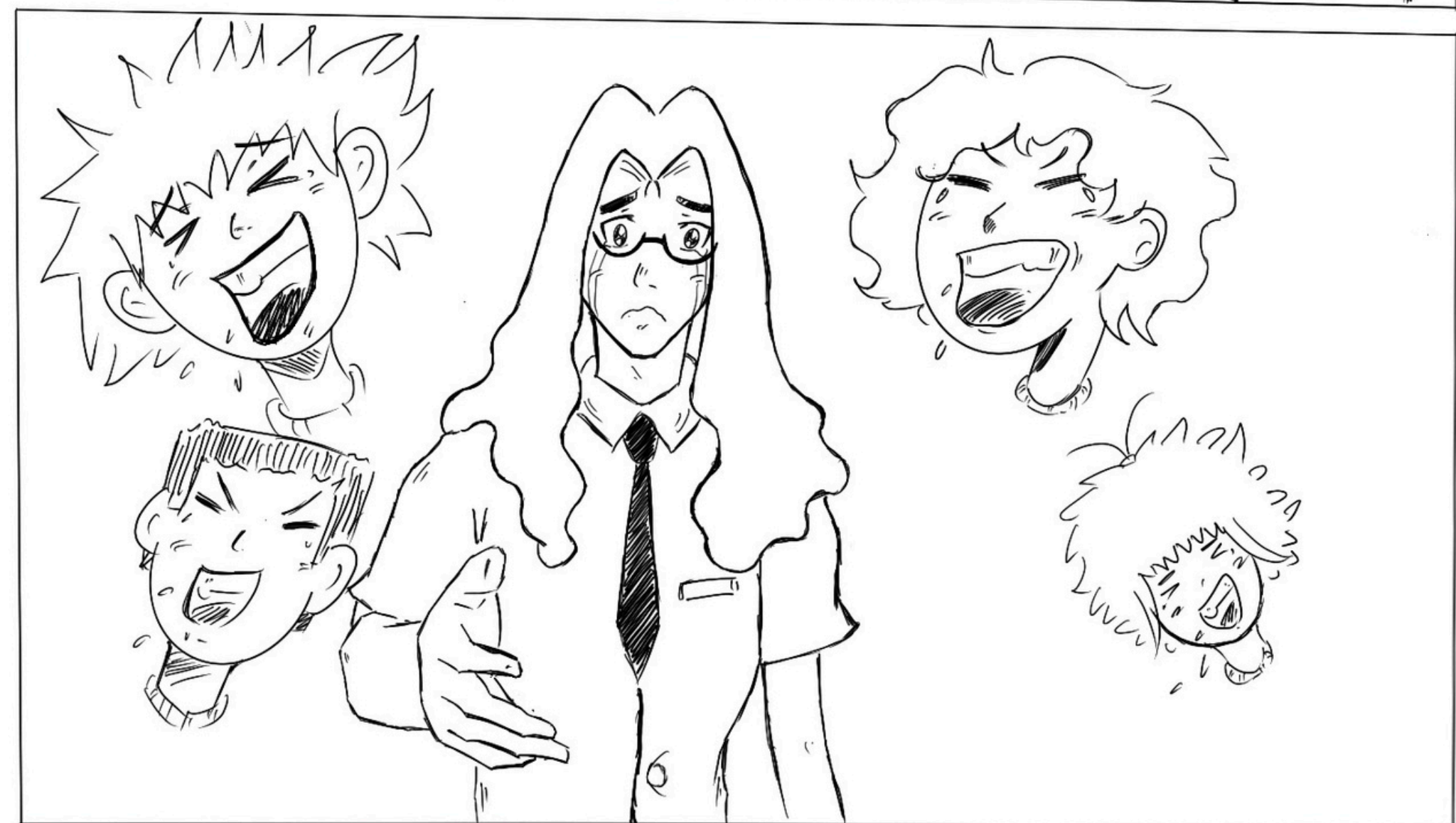


It's time

**To do
work**



**Let's
go**



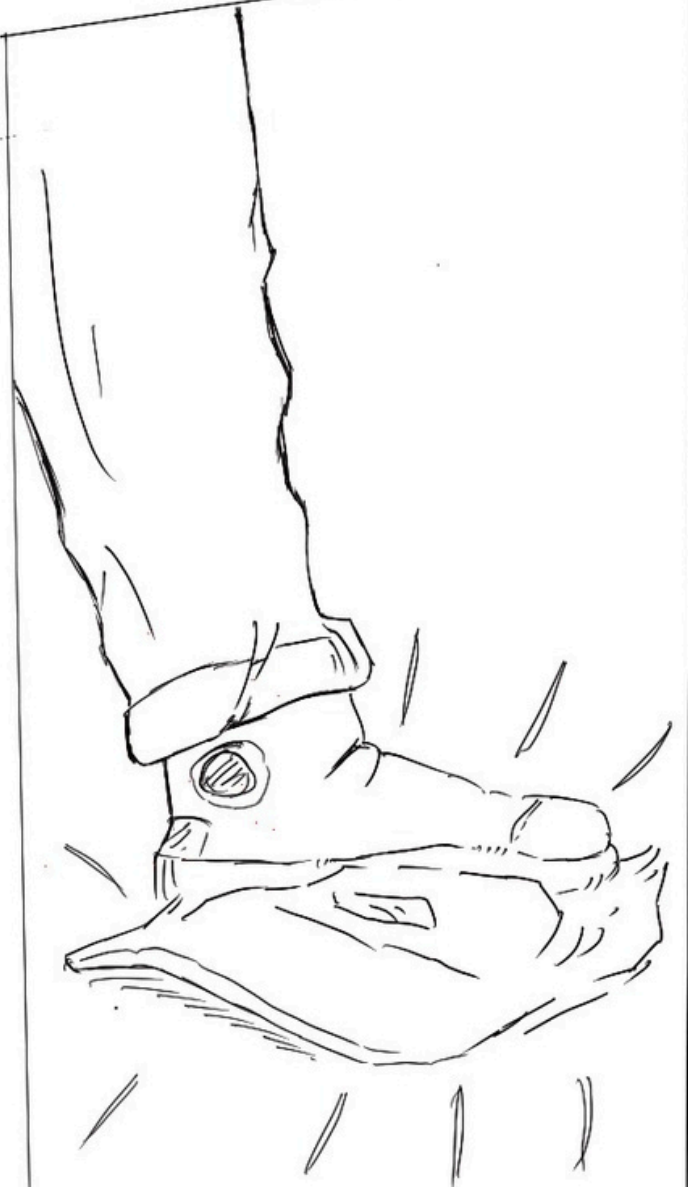


Max!
Teach
this
idiot a
lesson!

Thanks
for the
hat,
idiot!

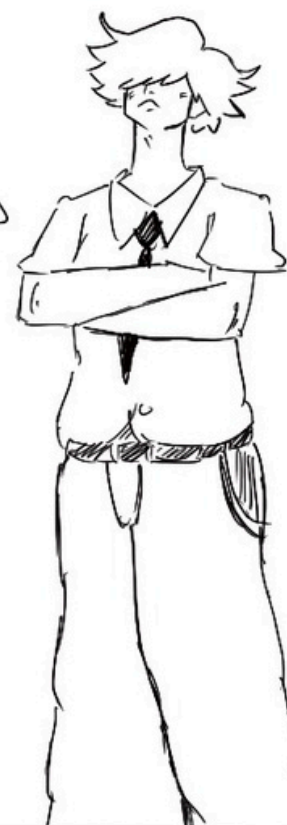
Ahhhh!
No!
Stop!

no

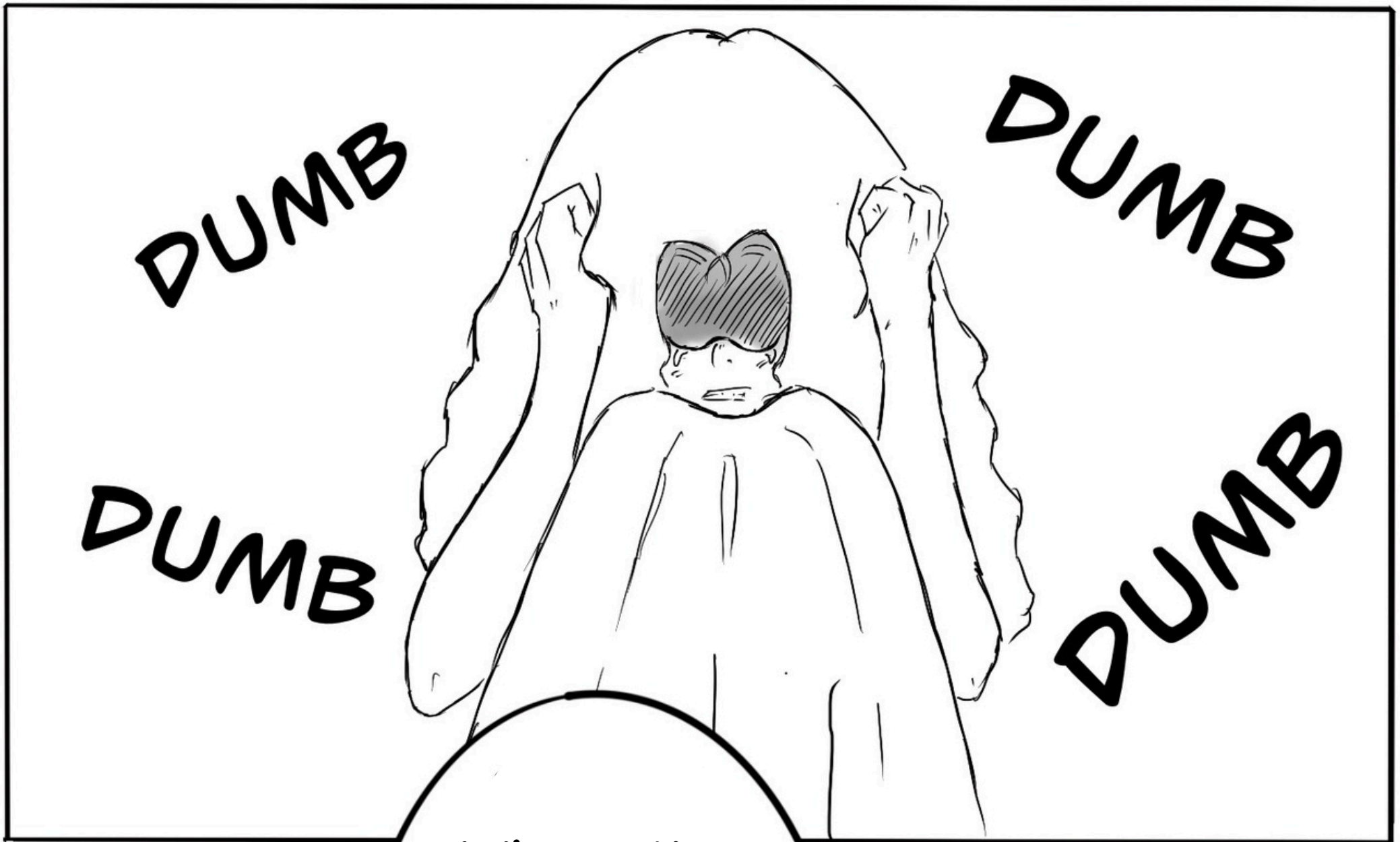


ugly

And
if you
tell
a teacher
about this,
I'll ruin
your life.

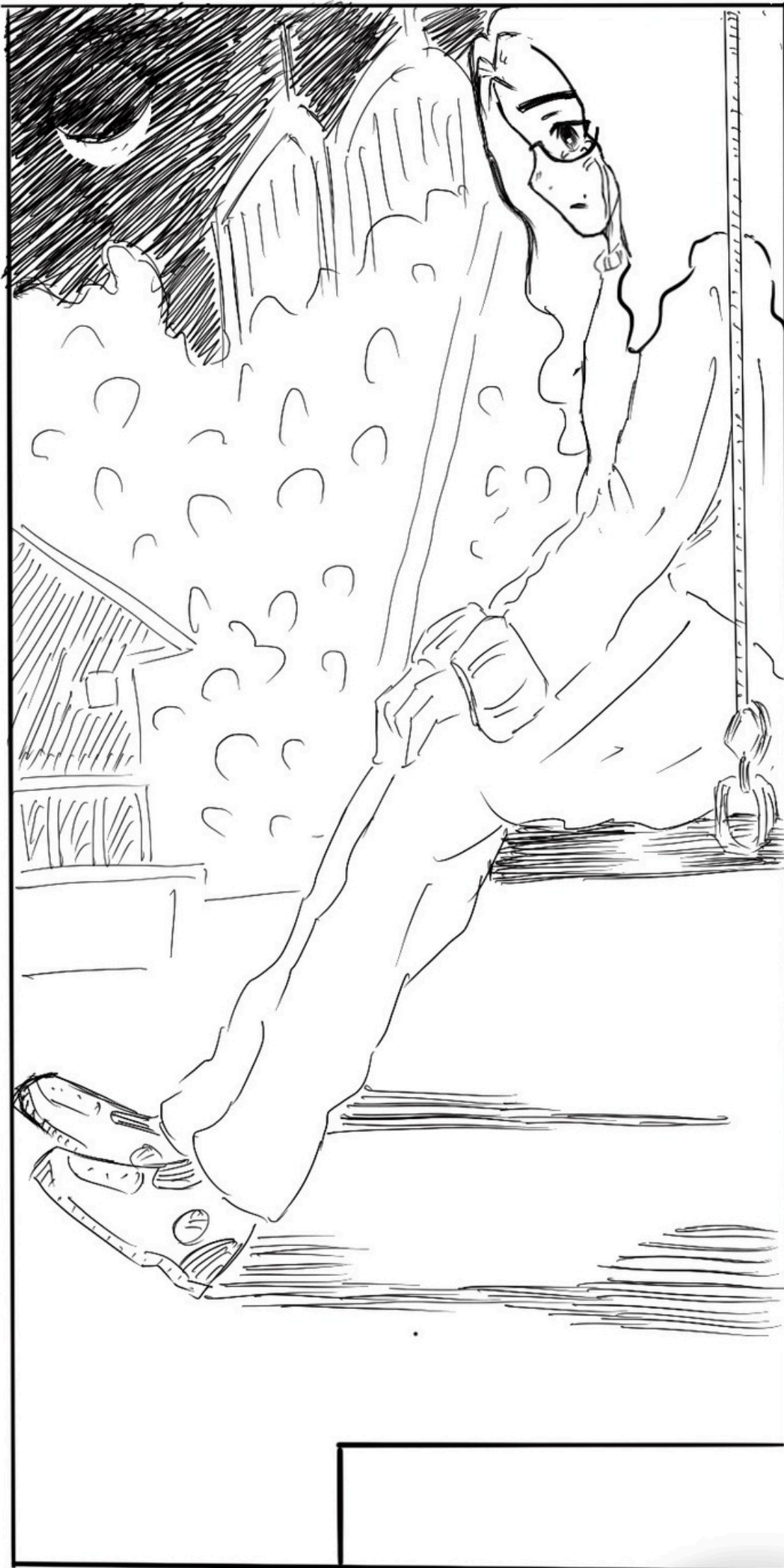




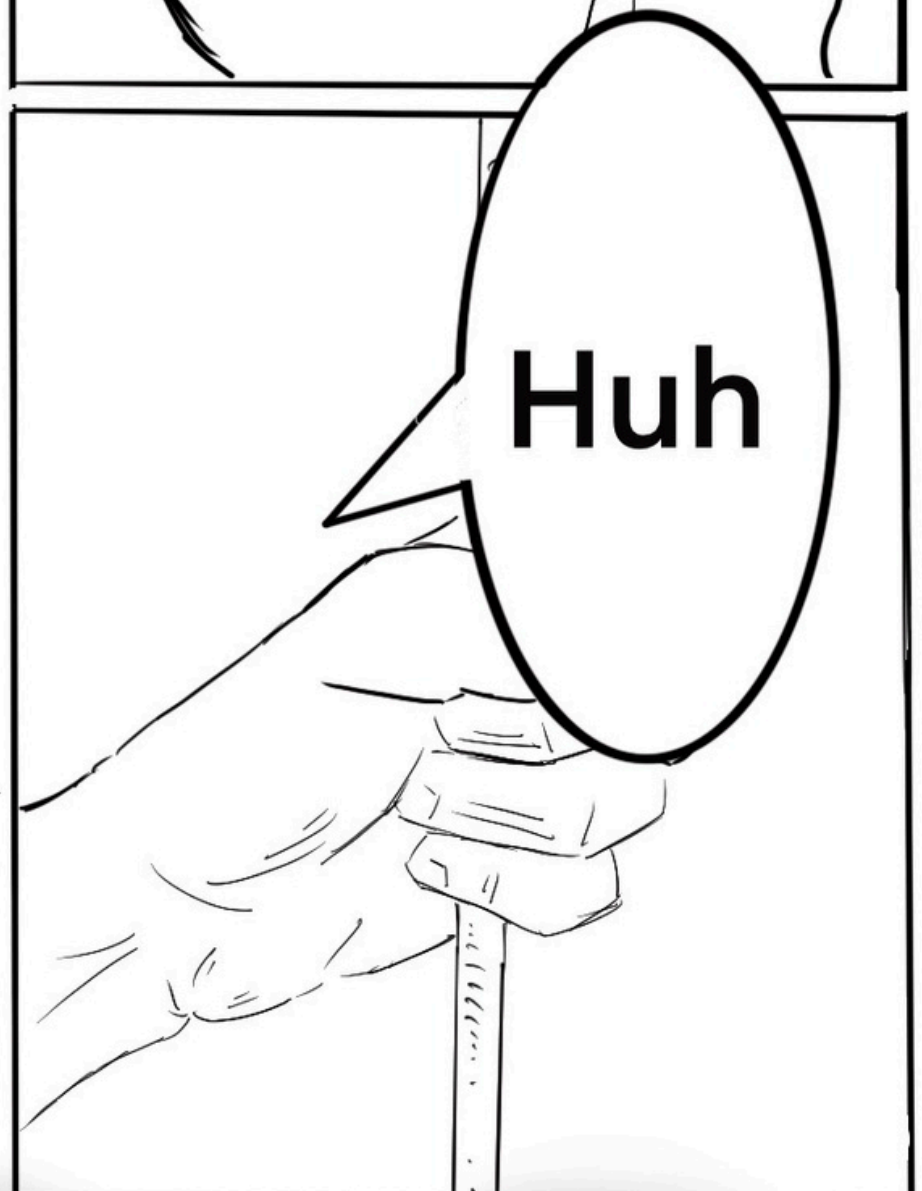


Why is Max
doing this to
me? What did
I even do to
him? Or any
of them?

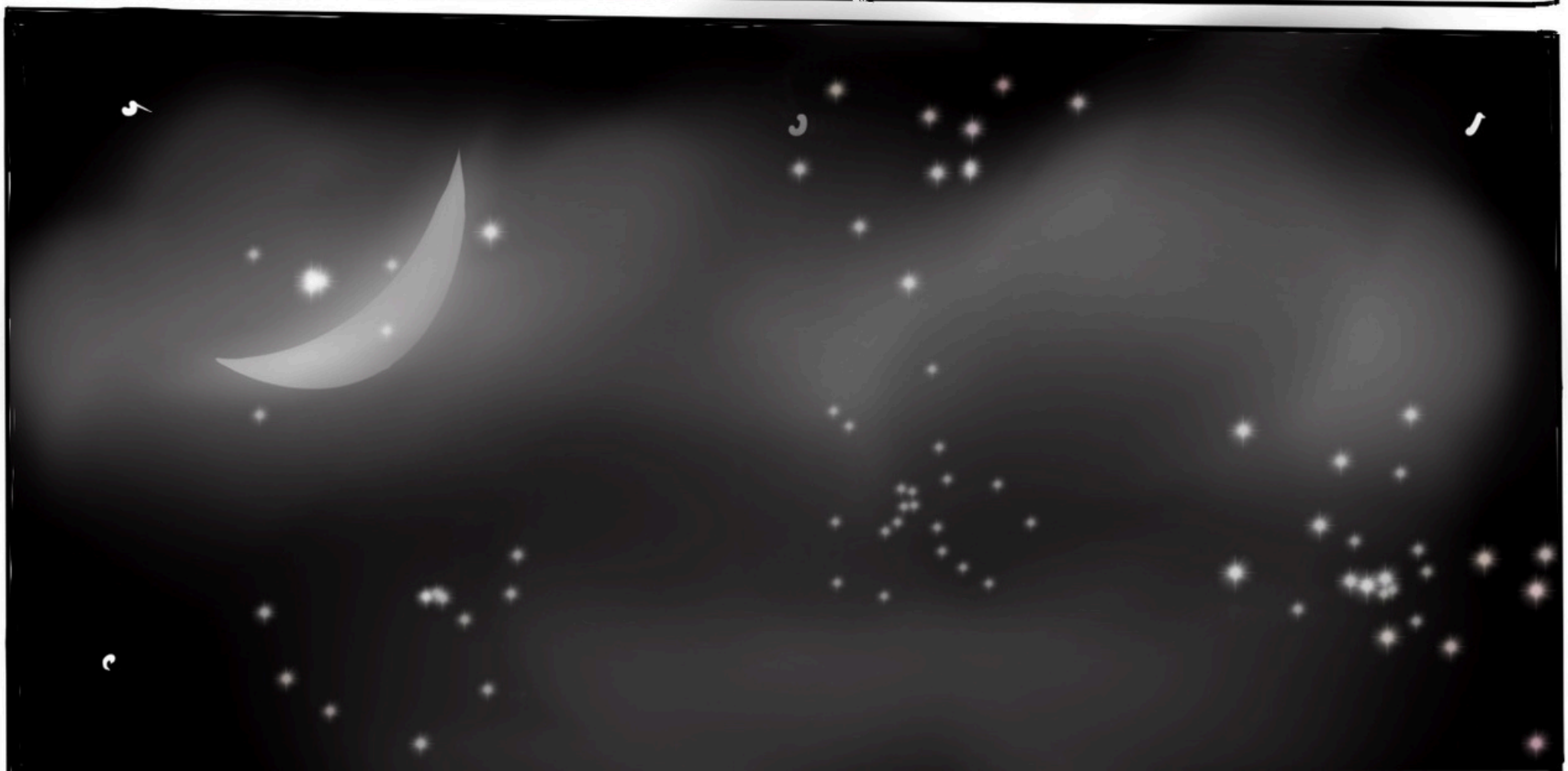


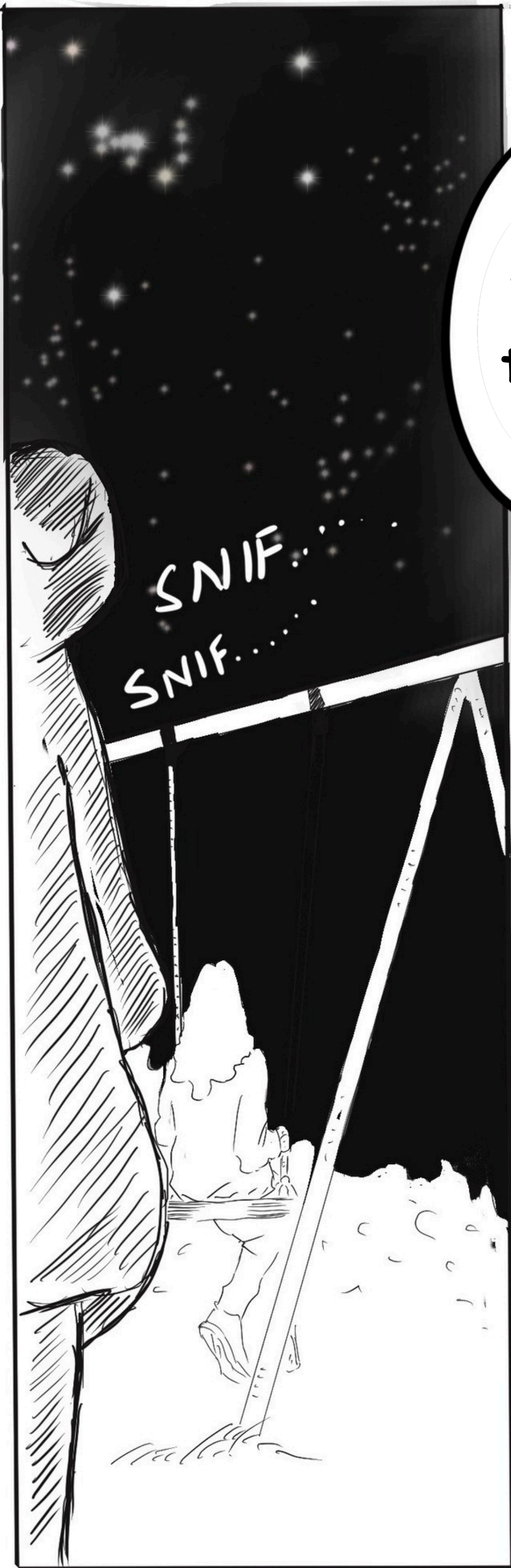


I don't
know
why.

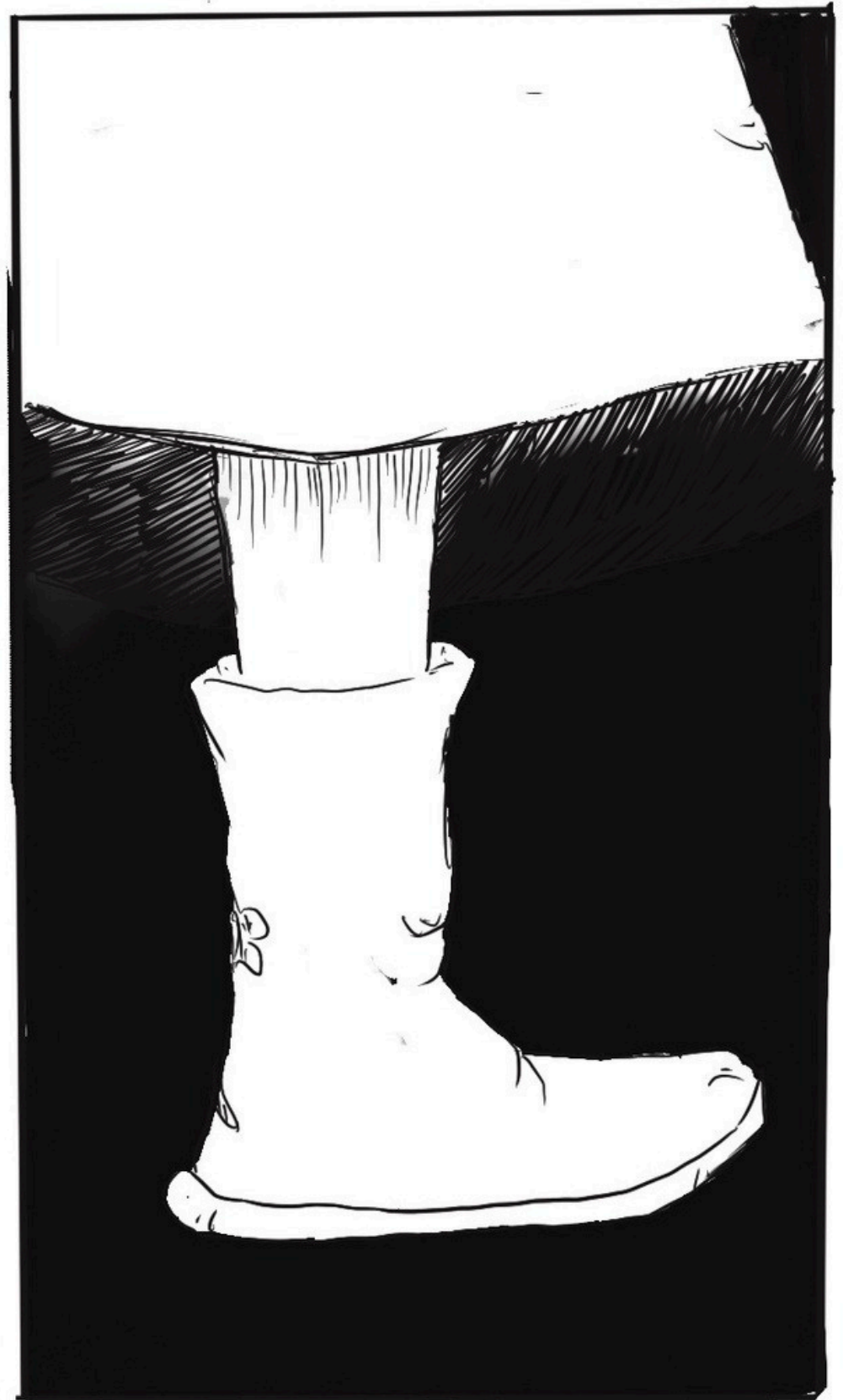


Huh





Who's
there?



A black and white illustration of a girl standing under a starry night sky. She is wearing a long, hooded dress with a pattern of small dots. Her hair is short and spiky. The background is dark with many bright stars and a crescent moon in the upper left. A large, light-colored oval speech bubble is on the right side of the image.

Hi!
Will you
be my
friend?





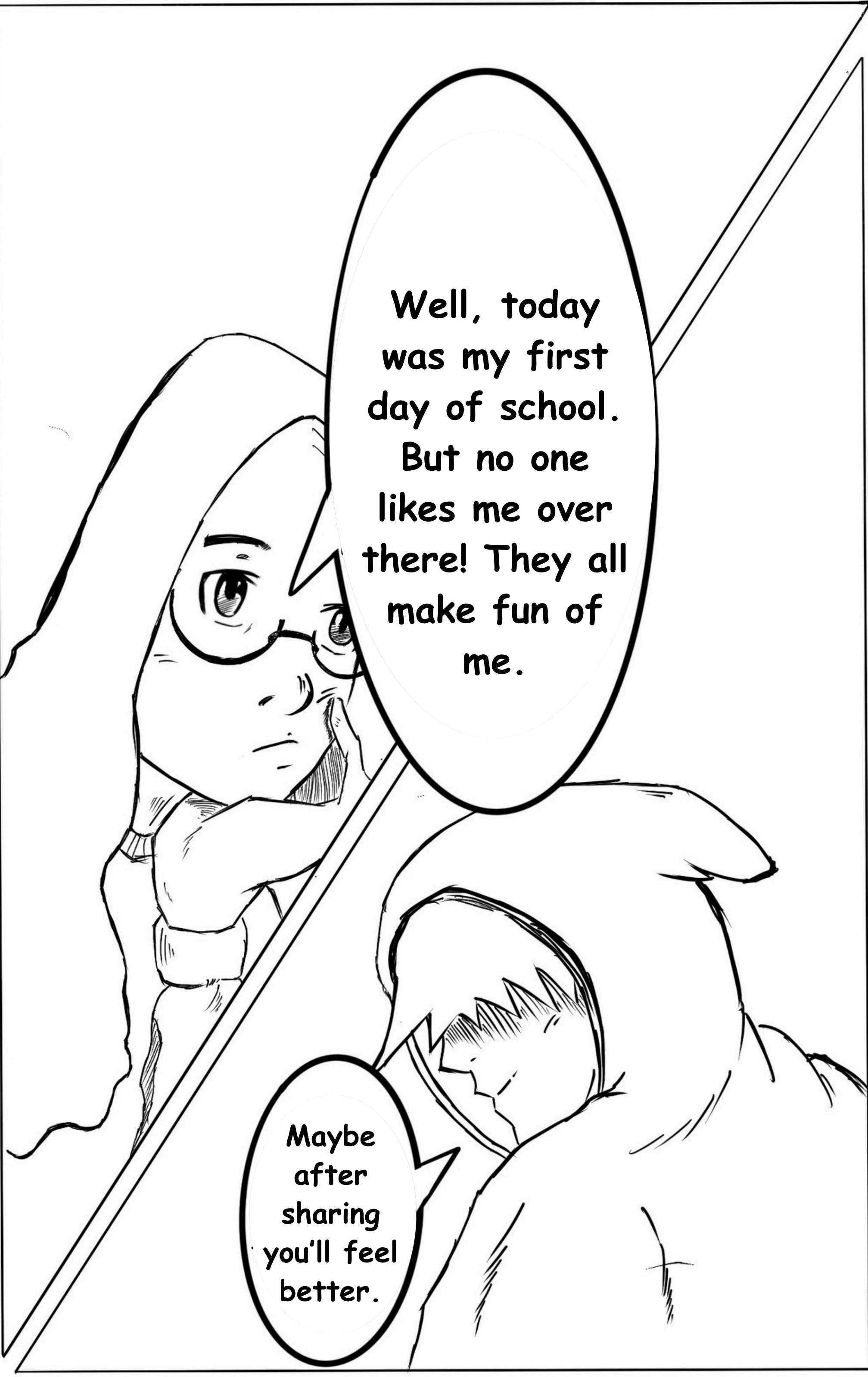
Maybe I
can talk to
you about
something



Don't be
scared.

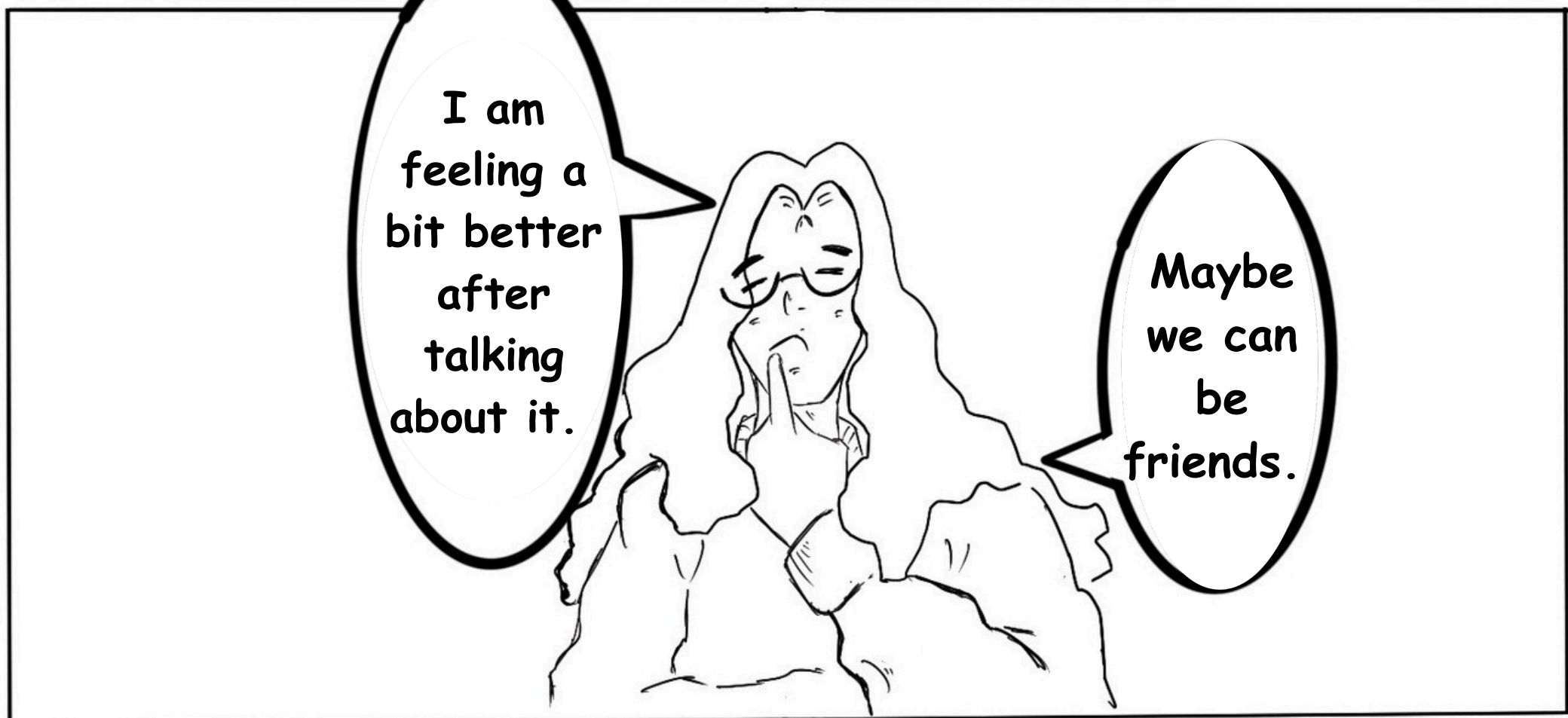


YES YES
YOU CAN
SHARE
ANYTHING



Well, today
was my first
day of school.
But no one
likes me over
there! They all
make fun of
me.

Maybe
after
sharing
you'll feel
better.

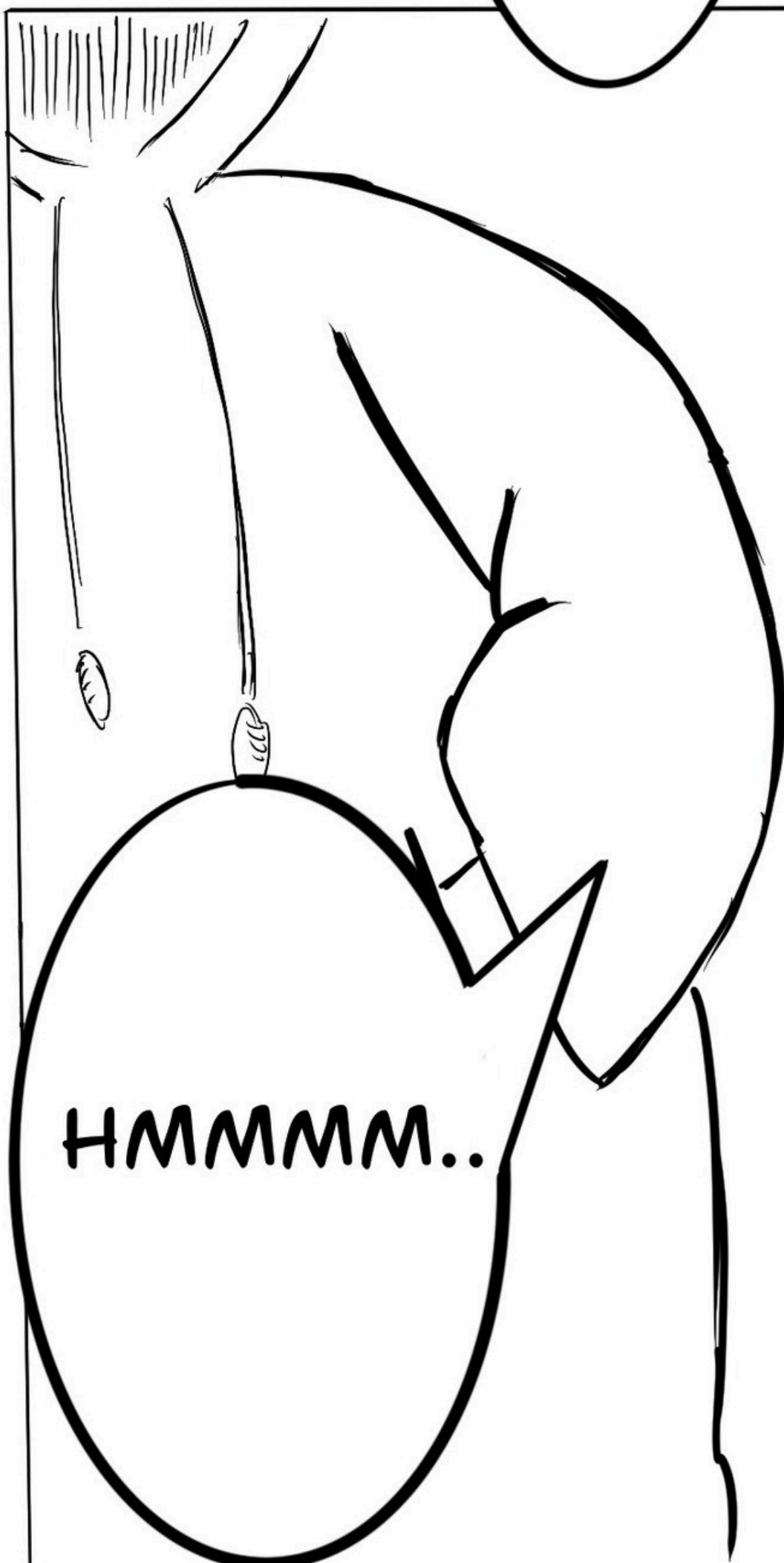




I want to
give you a
gift.



I hope
you like
it!



HMMMMM..



AWW GIFT

HERE
YOU GO





**Wow! This
friendship
band is
glowing. Is it
magical?**

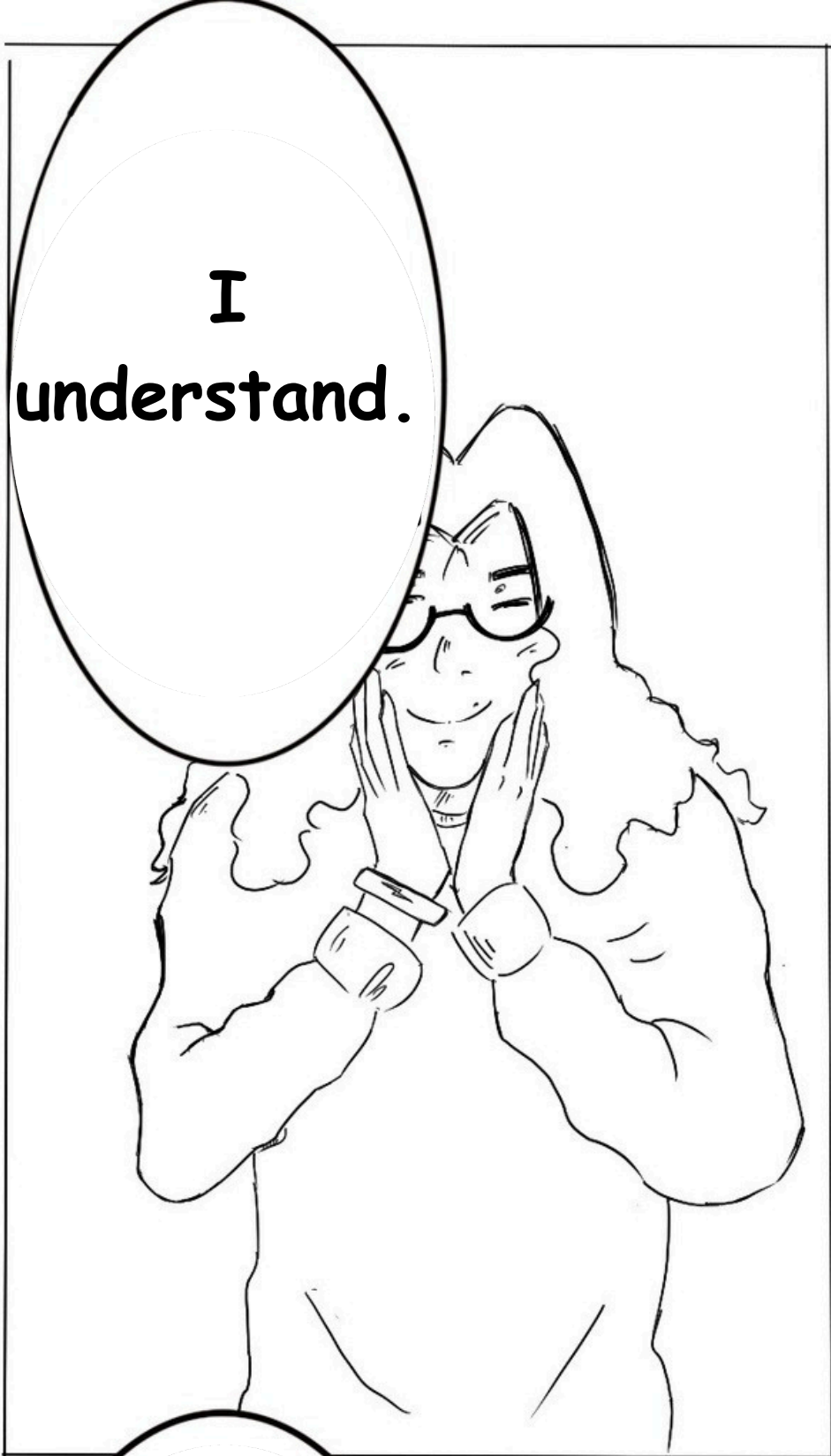




There's no
magic here.
You have to
make the
magic!

Rub your
fingers on
the band.

JUST
LIKE
THIS





**Where
did he
go?**



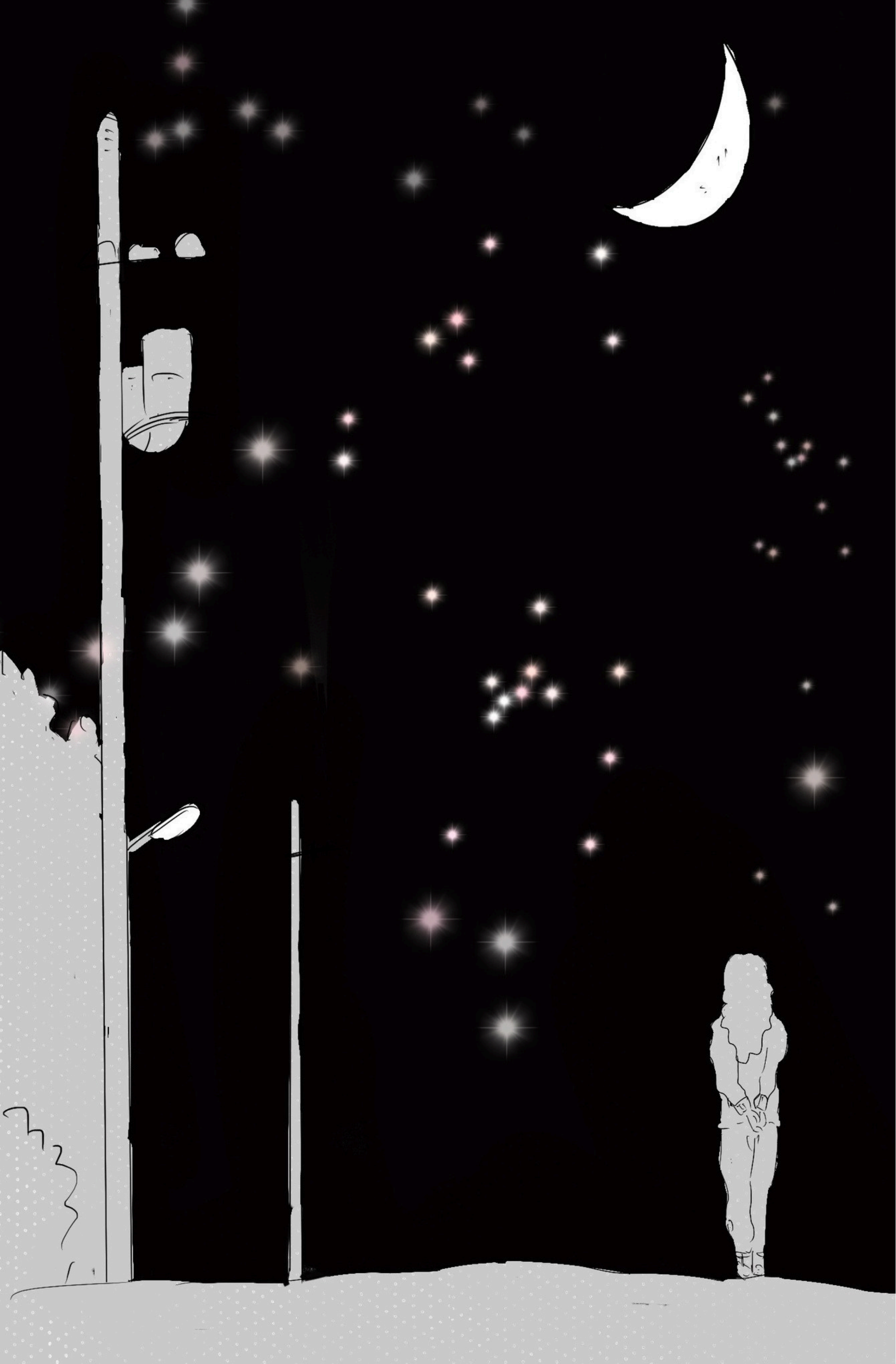
**It was
looking so
nice when
it glowed.**



**Where
is he?**



**It's
nighttime.
Maybe I
should sleep.**



NEXT DAY



HELLO
DUMBO
HAHA



What's
up
dumbo?



Gosh! I hate
your dumb
face.





**Hey! Stop
that! Don't
tease her!**



**Why don't
you mind
your own
business?**

**I like
teasing her
a lot! So
I'll do it!**

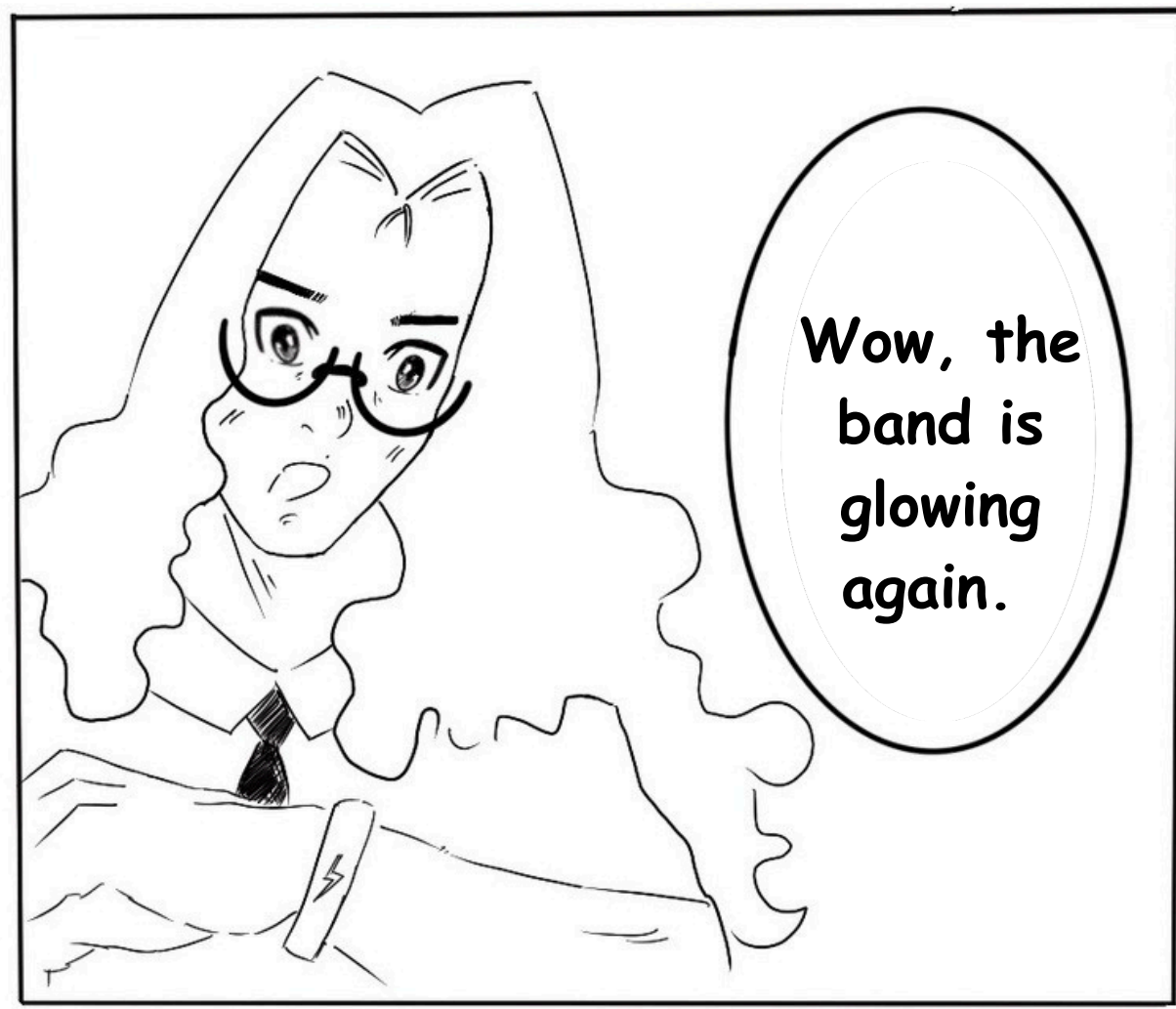
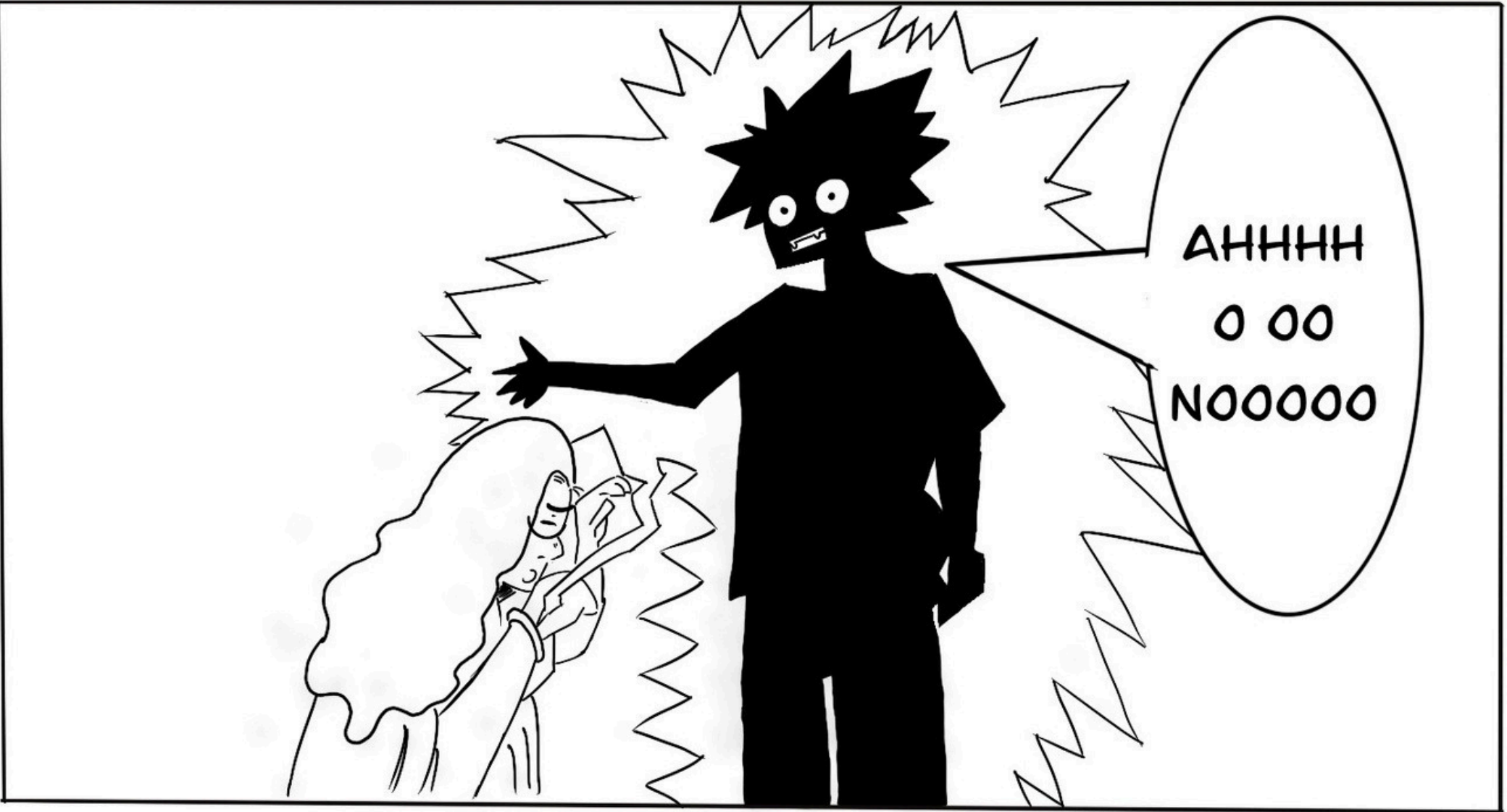


But I didn't
do
anything.
Why are
you doing
this?

I don't
care.

Your hair
looks bad
today. Let
me fix it.

NO
PLEASE



Dear Diary

Today was the most humiliating moment of my life. It happened during lunch, in front of everyone. I was sitting with my friends, making fun of Annie like I always do. I don't even know why I picked her this time. Maybe it was the way she was walking, looking all nervous like she always does. I called her a dumbo, and people laughed. That laugh- it made me feel good, like I had some kind of control.

But then, everything flipped. I leaned down to ruffle her hair and tease her. That's when it happened. Somehow, before I knew it, I felt an electric shock run down my spine. My chair tipped over, and I hit the floor hard. The cafeteria burst out in laughter. Only this time, they weren't laughing with me. They were laughing at me.

As I sat there on the floor, trying to pull myself together, their laughter felt so loud. It made me feel something I hadn't felt in a long, long time- this heavy, awful feeling. It reminded me of what it was like when everyone stared at me, when they used to laugh at me like I was just some big joke. This exact moment and feeling was one I'd tried to forget for years and years. Now, it's come back to haunt me.

I could feel my face burning, my hands shaking as I tried to stand up. I wanted to yell or run or disappear, but I just sat there for a second, frozen. When I looked up, Annie was already walking away. She didn't even look back. She didn't say a word.

It wasn't the shock or the fall that hurt the most. It was the look in her eyes before. She wasn't scared anymore. She wasn't sad. She wasn't crying. She just looked... tired. As if she had nothing left to say to me. I wasn't worth her time anymore. Her expression reminded me of the irritated look on my old teacher's face whenever I complained about kids picking on me.

I don't know why it bothered me so much. Annie is the quiet one, the one no one really notices unless I'm making them notice her. But now, I can't stop thinking about her. And for the first time, I wondered if she feels the same way I used to feel- like the whole world is against her, like no one cares.

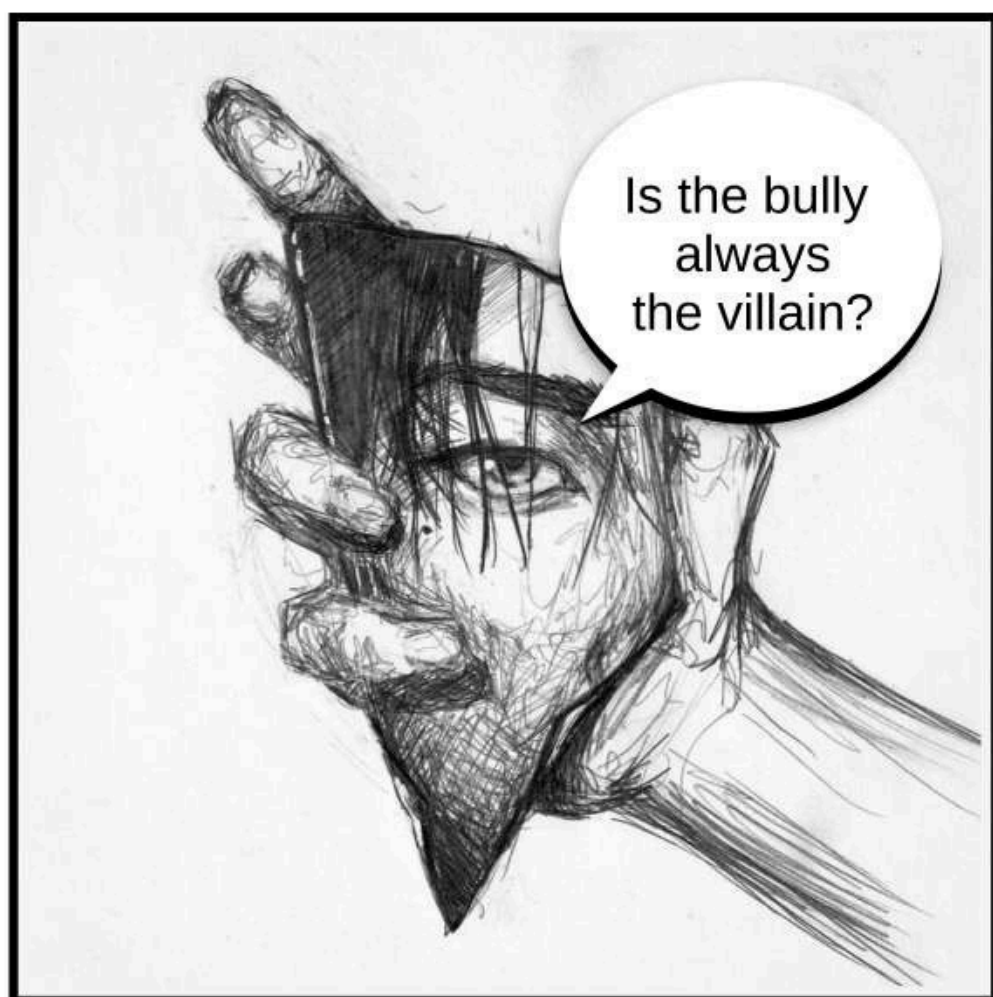
It's weird because I never thought about it like this before. I never stopped to wonder what it's like for Annie. I just liked the way teasing her made me feel. It gave me this little rush, like I was the one in charge for once. Like I wasn't the kid everyone picked on anymore.

But today, when I was lying there on the floor, it hit me. All those times I teased her, all those times I made people laugh at her... I was doing to her what those kids did to me. I became the thing I hated the most.



And the worst part is, I don't even know why I started doing it. Maybe because it was easier to be the one making the jokes than the one they were laughing at. Now I feel like the biggest idiot. I thought teasing her made me strong, but it didn't. It just made me weak in a different way. I don't want to be that person anymore. I don't want to be the reason someone feels inferior.

Just like I used to feel.



While their actions are wrong and hurtful, bullies are often struggling with their own personal issues. Many times, they act out because they don't know how to cope with emotions like anger, frustration, or sadness.

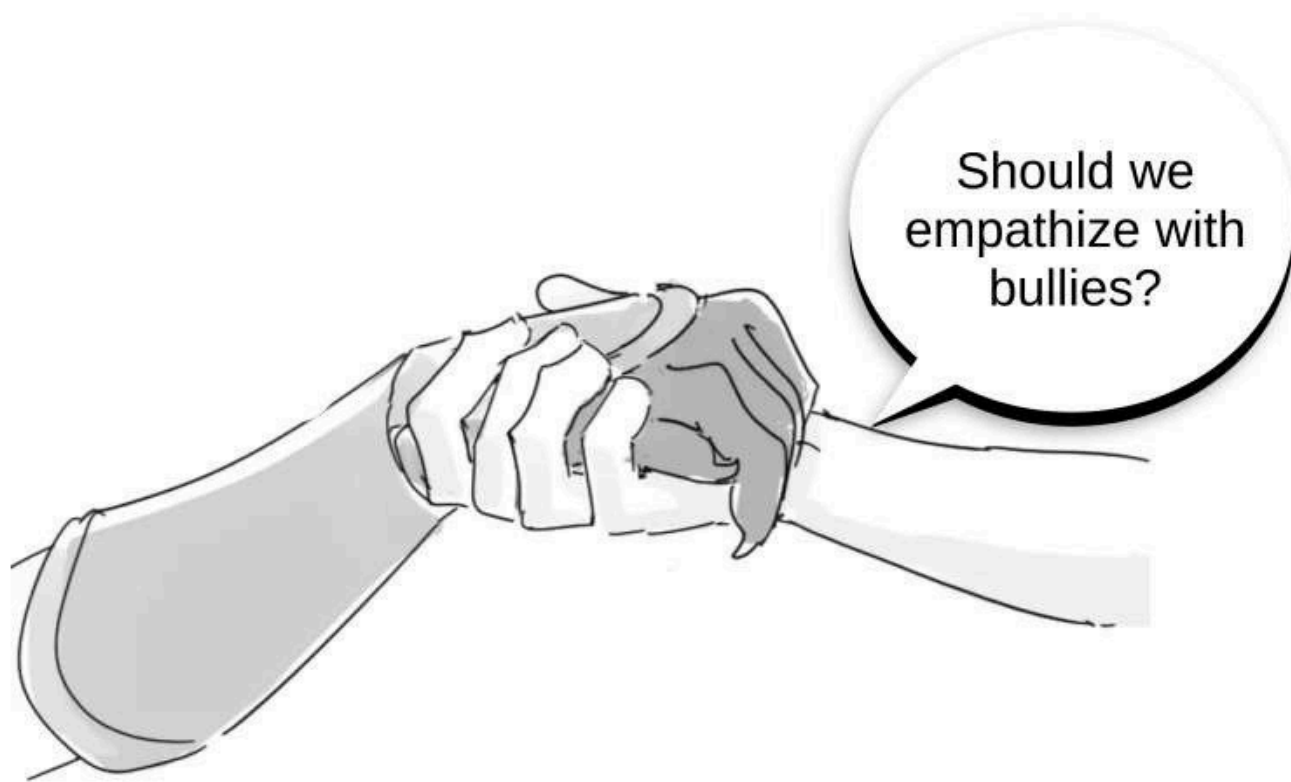




Bullies might be dealing with:

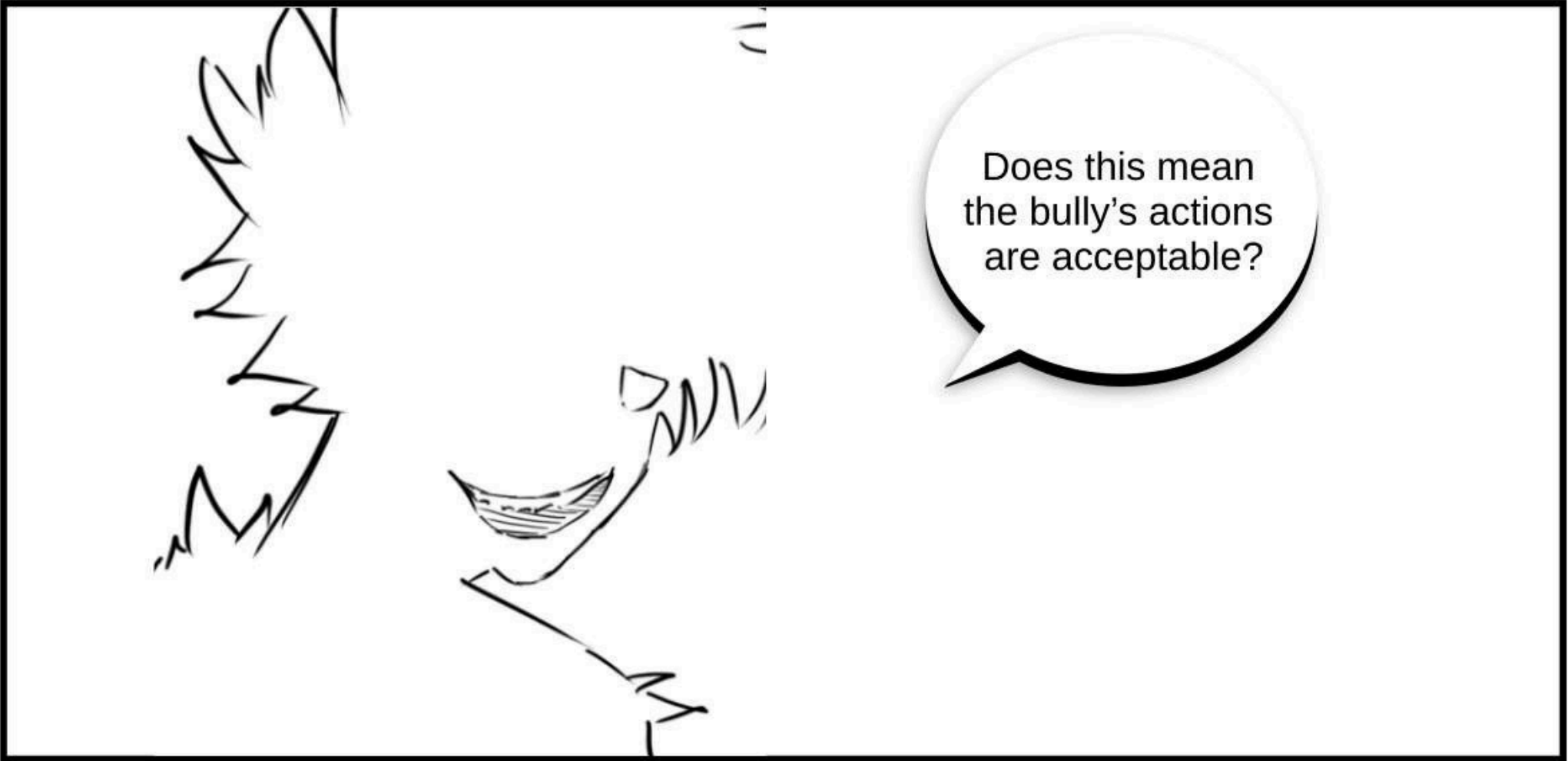
- Low self-esteem or insecurities.
- Difficult home environments, such as conflict, neglect, or violence.
- A need to feel powerful or popular, especially in social groups.
- Personal pain or unresolved trauma, which they project onto others.





Yes.
Understanding that bullies often act out because they are struggling with their issues can help us empathize with them. This doesn't mean excusing their behavior. However, identifying that their problems will guide us to more meaningful solutions.





Absolutely not.
While we should empathize with their struggles, the actions of a bully are harmful and must be stopped. Bullying causes serious emotional and physical harm to victims and affects everyone involved, including the bully themselves.



What is bullying?

Bullying is when someone intentionally hurts another person repeatedly, either physically, verbally, or emotionally. It often involves a power imbalance, where the bully holds more power over the victim.

For example, have you heard any of these phrases in your classroom:

1. How can you be so dumb? You'll never get into a good college with marks like that.
2. You're so fat; no wonder you always come last in races.
3. Looks like someone's been eating too much lately.

If you have, then I am sorry to learn about that. Please flip through the pages of this comic book to learn how to deal with these situations.



Where does bullying
usually happen?

Bullying is common among young people and typically takes place in schools, campuses, and even online (cyberbullying).



What are the roles involved in a bullying situation?

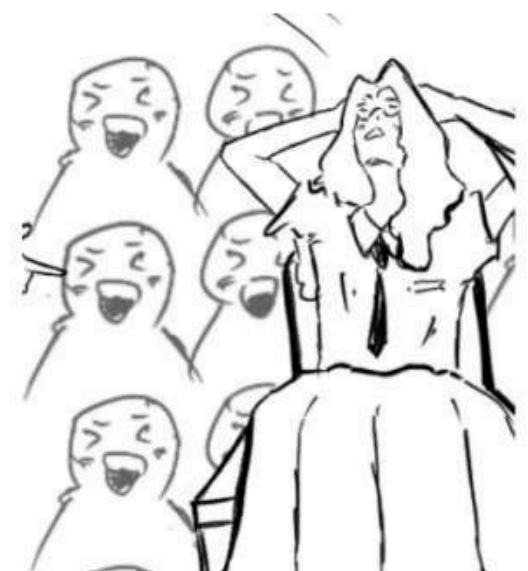
There are three key roles:



The Bully –
the person who
hurts others.



The Victim –
the person who is
bullied.



The Bystander –
the person who
witnesses the
bullying.

Is every fight or argument bullying?

No. Not every incident is bullying. For it to be classified as bullying, it must meet these four criteria:

1. It causes emotional, physical, or mental harm to the victim.
2. It is intentional on the bully's part.
3. It occurs repeatedly.
4. There is a power imbalance between the bully and the victim.



How can you
recognize bullying?

Look for these characteristics:

1. The victim looks upset, scared, or humiliated.
2. The bully deliberately uses hurtful words or actions.
3. The behavior occurs multiple times, not just once.
4. The bully appears more confident or has a group backing them, while the victim seems powerless or isolated.



Can you give examples of bullying situations?

Yes

Example 1: A group repeatedly makes fun of a boy, calling him “dumb” and using insults that show they’ve **done this before**. The boy **looks humiliated**.

This is **likely bullying** because it’s intentional, repetitive, and there’s a **power imbalance**.



Example 2: Three **friends** **joke** with among each other by calling names. The person being teased **rolls her eyes** and tells them to stop. This is likely not bullying because the teasing **seems mutual** and the person **doesn’t cause any one distress**.



How does bullying
affect victims?

Victims often feel:

- Sadness, anxiety, and embarrassment.
- Helplessness and humiliation.



What are the
long-term
effects on victims?

Bullying can lead to:

- Low self-esteem and trust issues.
 - Poor performance in school.
- Mental health issues like depression, PTSD, and anxiety.
- Physical problems like headaches, stomach-aches, and sleep disorders.
- Social difficulties, such as trouble forming relationships or



Can bullying affect victims in adulthood?

Yes. Some adults develop Adult Post-Bullying Syndrome (APBS), where they struggle with:

- Negative self-image.
- Difficulty trusting others.
- Long-term physical and mental health problems.



What to Do If You See Someone Being Bullied?

When you witness someone being bullied, the worst thing you can do is nothing. Simply standing by or pretending not to see it can fuel the bully's confidence.

Instead, **STEP IN**. Even a small act, like walking over to the victim and showing them you care, can make a world of difference. Lead them away from the situation or find a moment to talk privately. Let them know they're not alone, and what's happening isn't their fault.



What to Do If You See Someone Being Bullied?

If you feel safe, **SPEAK UP**. A calm but firm “This isn’t okay” or “Leave them alone” can be enough to disrupt the bully’s behavior. But if you sense the situation might escalate, it’s wiser to **SEEK HELP**. Find a trusted teacher, counselor, or parent and explain what’s happening. Adults have the authority and experience to handle these situations effectively.

Pro tip: Encourage others to **STAND UP** as well! Bullies often back down when they see a group of people against them. Remember, on the inside, they are scared and insecure. If multiple people support the victim, they have no choice but to back down.



What to Do If You're Getting Bullied?

If you're being bullied, the first step is to recognize what's happening. Ask yourself, "Is this bullying, or is it a one-time misunderstanding?"

Identify the patterns and the type of bullying – whether it's verbal, physical, social, or online.

It's natural to feel hurt, angry, or even helpless, but bottling up those emotions will only make things worse. **Find someone you trust** – a parent, teacher, friend, or counselor – and talk to them. Expressing your feelings, through journaling or blogging, can be a powerful release.



What to Do If You're Getting Bullied?

To combat the negativity, focus on building your confidence. **TAKE CARE** of yourself. Do things that make you **HAPPY** and remind yourself of your **WORTH**.

No one deserves to be treated poorly, and the problem lies with the bully, not you.

When you're ready, **TAKE ACTION**. Speak to an adult who can intervene – a teacher, counselor, or parent. Surround yourself with a support system of friends and family who will stand by you.

If you feel safe, you might confront the bully. A confident “This stops now” or “I’m not okay with this” can sometimes disarm them.

But remember, walking away calmly is often the best response, as bullies thrive on reactions.



What If You're the Bully?

Recognizing that you might have hurt someone is a tough but important step. Reflect on your actions. Did you make a comment or take an action that could have hurt someone, even unintentionally? It's okay to admit you've made a mistake—what matters is what you do next.

Start by apologizing. A sincere "I'm sorry for what I said/did. I realize it was wrong, and I'll do better," can go a long way. The person you've hurt may not forgive you right away, and that's okay. Earning back trust takes time.



What If You're the Bully?

Take a moment to understand the impact of your behavior. Words and actions can leave deep scars. Educate yourself about the effects of bullying and use that knowledge to grow.

Think about why you acted the way you did. Were you feeling insecure, angry, or frustrated? Addressing those feelings is key to changing your behavior.

Finally, **shift your energy** toward positivity. Be an advocate for kindness and inclusion in your school or community. Your journey from bullying to building bridges can inspire others and make a real difference.



