



# Bánh Mi

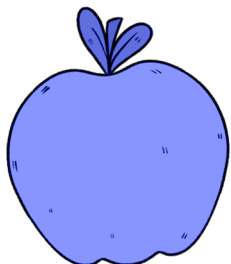
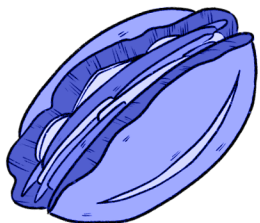
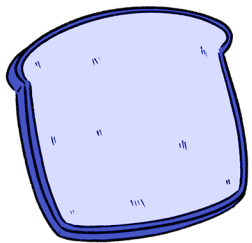
&

# BUTTER

A Series of  
Personal Comics  
About Being  
a Queer Asian American

Written and Illustrated  
by Jasper Luu

# BANH MI & BUTTER







Hello Reader!

I hope you enjoy reading my senior thesis “Banh Mi and Butter!” As a Vietnamese American nonbinary lesbian illustrator, I really wanted to put representation out there that I didn’t see as a kid. This is my first time creating anything so personal and I hope some of these bread-and-butter experiences can resonate with you as an Asian American, a queer kid, or maybe just someone with a much-to-be-desired home life. If you aren’t any of these things, I hope you enjoy reading it regardless and find something to relate to in these eight comics.

While these stories do paint my parents in a bad light, I want to clarify that I’ve appreciated everything they’ve done for me. I have a roof over my head, clothes to wear, and lots of good food to eat. These are the things I am forever grateful for, but that is constantly balanced out with emotional neglect, controlling behavior, and ignorance. My feelings about them have constantly been reduced to explaining every nuance and exception, but these stories are not made with that in mind. Frankly, I am tired of having to package my feelings in a box that perfectly encapsulates every situation and because this is my project, this letter is the only time you will see me make any excuses for them. This is a very common experience for immigrant/first-generation children and they deserve to tell their stories freely without needing to make their emotions palatable.

I really want to thank all of my loved ones that made this possible with their support and relentless belief in me. I could not have made it here without them! I went from a lonely 10 year old that was constantly told I would never be able to create anything worthwhile to a senior in art school creating art everyday. My wonderful friends know who they are and are the most incredible people I have ever met. My lovely partner has been here for the whole project and it would not look as polished without her honest critiques. Last but not least, my brother Andy, who is the most awkward and best brother anyone could ask for.

To be honest, this entire project has been really scary and I’ve had a lot of internal battles about it. I was always worried that my parents would find this somehow, that no one had interest in this, or that I didn’t cover enough experiences to make this worthwhile. However, this is what I have, and it is the most genuine and raw thing I have ever made. If you are a person who has always been afraid of taking up space and have had similar fears, I need you to know that it’s okay. Please continue creating and know that your stories are important to the world.

Jasper Luu (they/them)

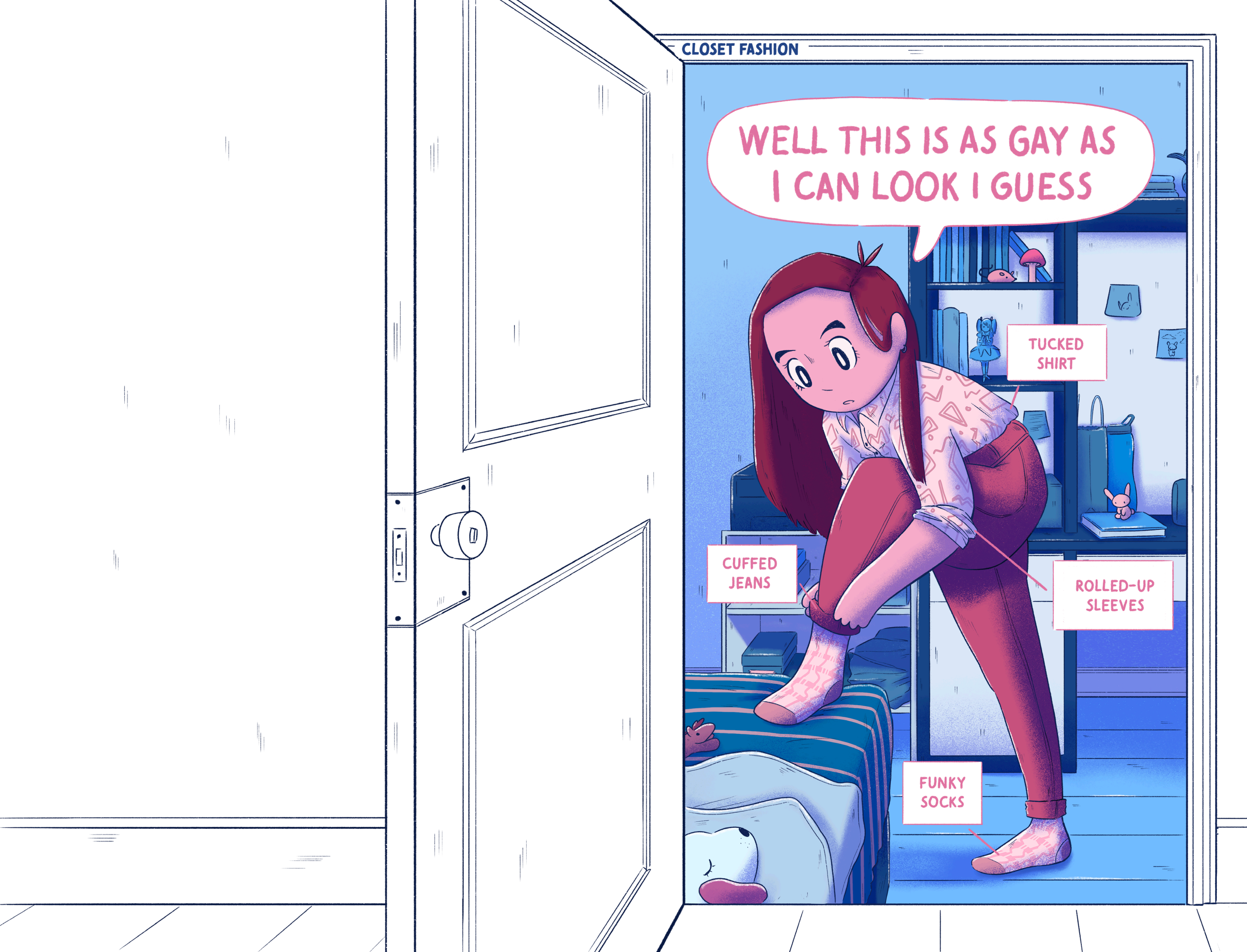
WELL THIS IS AS GAY AS  
I CAN LOOK I GUESS

TUCKED  
SHIRT

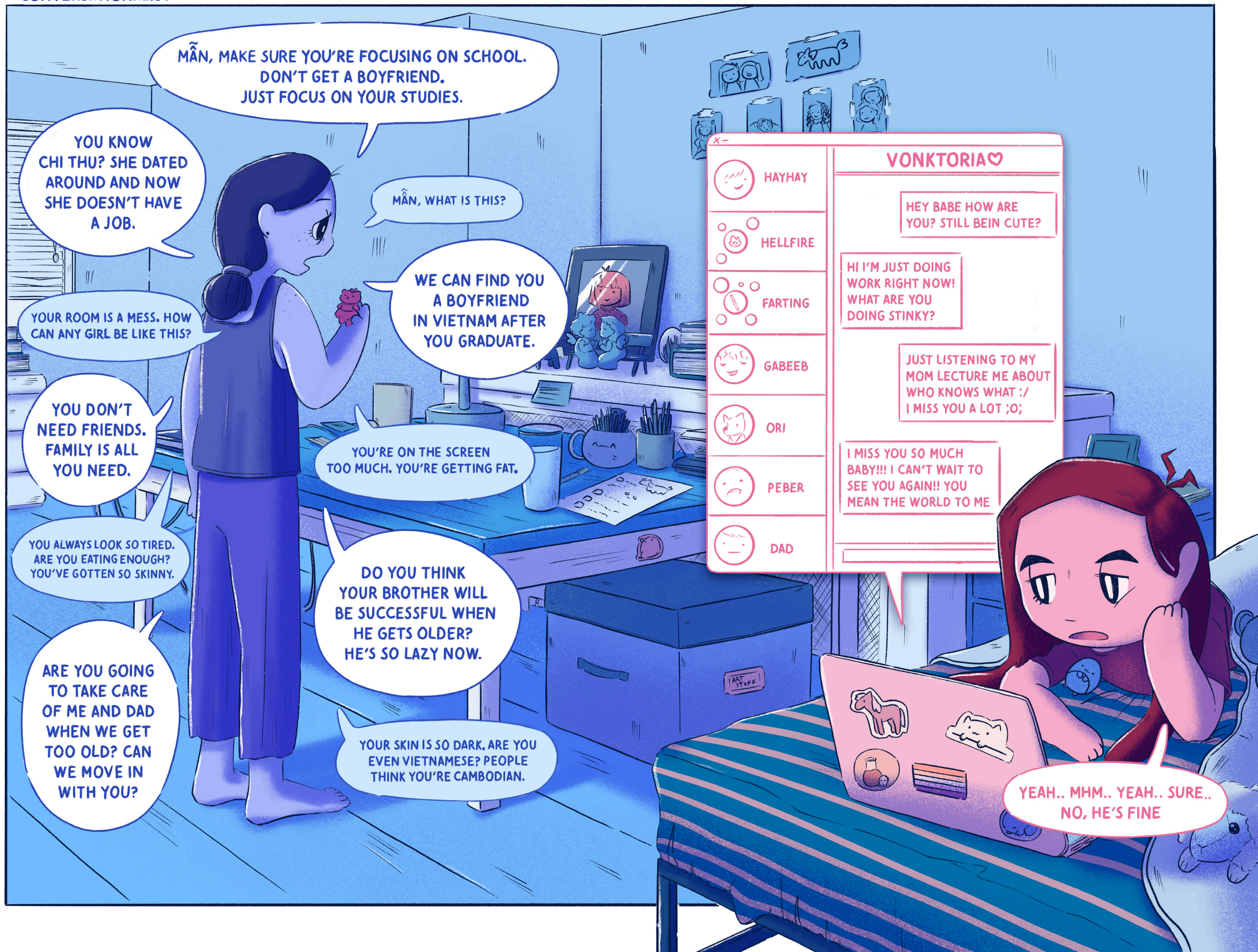
CUFFED  
JEANS

ROLLED-UP  
SLEEVES

FUNKY  
SOCKS







MÃN, MAKE SURE YOU'RE FOCUSING ON SCHOOL.  
DON'T GET A BOYFRIEND.  
JUST FOCUS ON YOUR STUDIES.

YOU KNOW  
CHI THU? SHE DATED  
AROUND AND NOW  
SHE DOESN'T HAVE  
A JOB.

MÃN, WHAT IS THIS?

WE CAN FIND YOU  
A BOYFRIEND  
IN VIETNAM AFTER  
YOU GRADUATE.

YOUR ROOM IS A MESS. HOW  
CAN ANY GIRL BE LIKE THIS?

YOU DON'T  
NEED FRIENDS.  
FAMILY IS ALL  
YOU NEED.

YOU'RE ON THE SCREEN  
TOO MUCH. YOU'RE GETTING FAT.

DO YOU THINK  
YOUR BROTHER WILL  
BE SUCCESSFUL WHEN  
HE GETS OLDER?  
HE'S SO LAZY NOW.

YOU ALWAYS LOOK SO TIRED.  
ARE YOU EATING ENOUGH?  
YOU'VE GOTTEN SO SKINNY.

ARE YOU GOING  
TO TAKE CARE  
OF ME AND DAD  
WHEN WE GET  
TOO OLD? CAN  
WE MOVE IN  
WITH YOU?

YOUR SKIN IS SO DARK, ARE YOU  
EVEN VIETNAMESE? PEOPLE  
THINK YOU'RE CAMBODIAN.

HAYHAY

HELLFIRE

FARTING

GABEEB

ORI

PEBER

DAD

VONKTORIA♡

HEY BABE HOW ARE  
YOU? STILL BEIN CUTE?

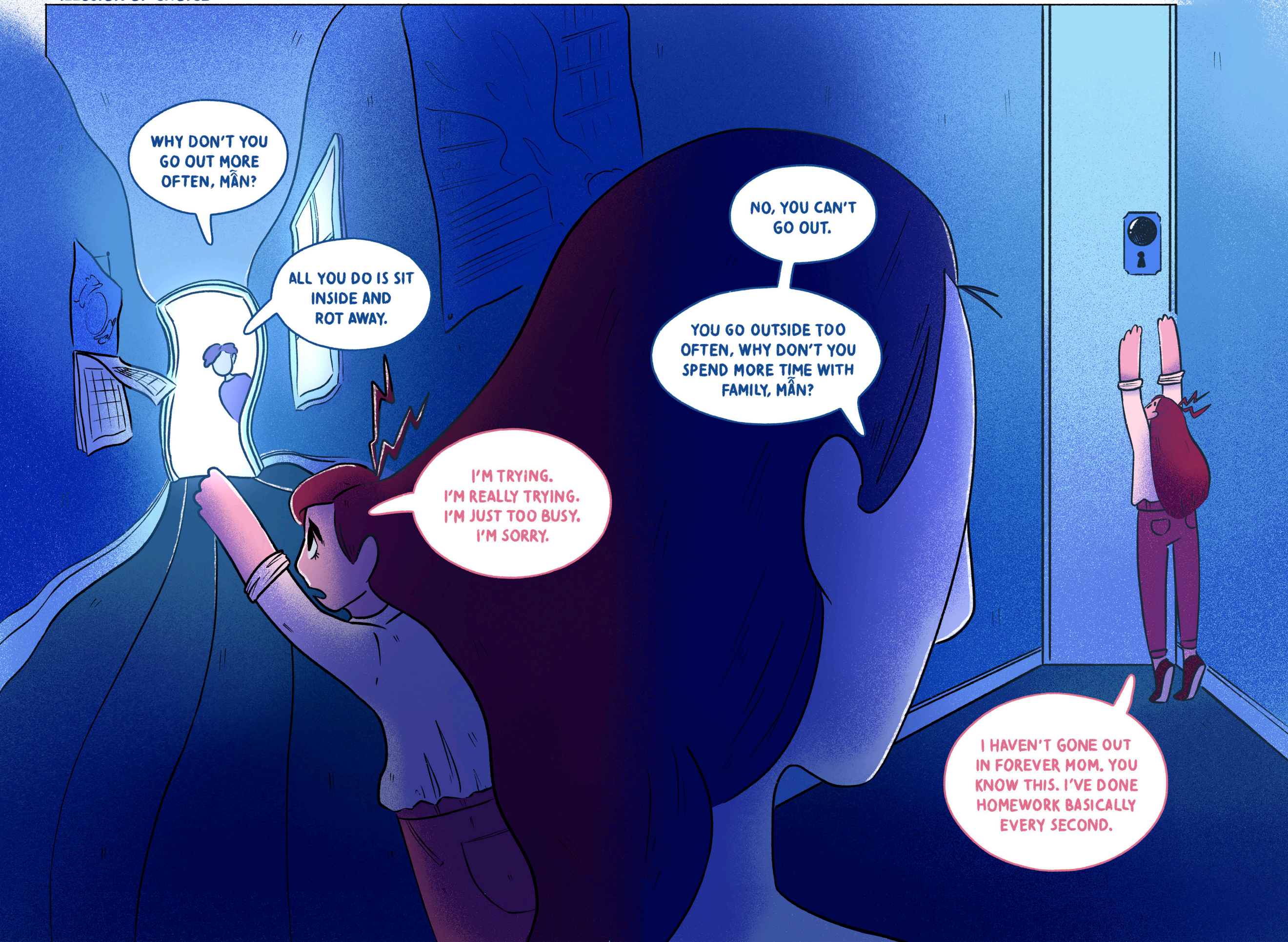
HI I'M JUST DOING  
WORK RIGHT NOW!  
WHAT ARE YOU  
DOING STINKY?

JUST LISTENING TO MY  
MOM LECTURE ME ABOUT  
WHO KNOWS WHAT :/  
I MISS YOU A LOT ;O;

I MISS YOU SO MUCH  
BABY!!! I CAN'T WAIT TO  
SEE YOU AGAIN!! YOU  
MEAN THE WORLD TO ME

YEAH.. MHM.. YEAH.. SURE..  
NO, HE'S FINE





WHY DON'T YOU  
GO OUT MORE  
OFTEN, MÃN?

ALL YOU DO IS SIT  
INSIDE AND  
ROT AWAY.

I'M TRYING.  
I'M REALLY TRYING.  
I'M JUST TOO BUSY.  
I'M SORRY.

NO, YOU CAN'T  
GO OUT.

YOU GO OUTSIDE TOO  
OFTEN, WHY DON'T YOU  
SPEND MORE TIME WITH  
FAMILY, MÃN?

I HAVEN'T GONE OUT  
IN FOREVER MOM. YOU  
KNOW THIS. I'VE DONE  
HOMEWORK BASICALLY  
EVERY SECOND.



## FRUIT APOLOGY



## FABRICATED FRIENDS





20 LATE TEEN

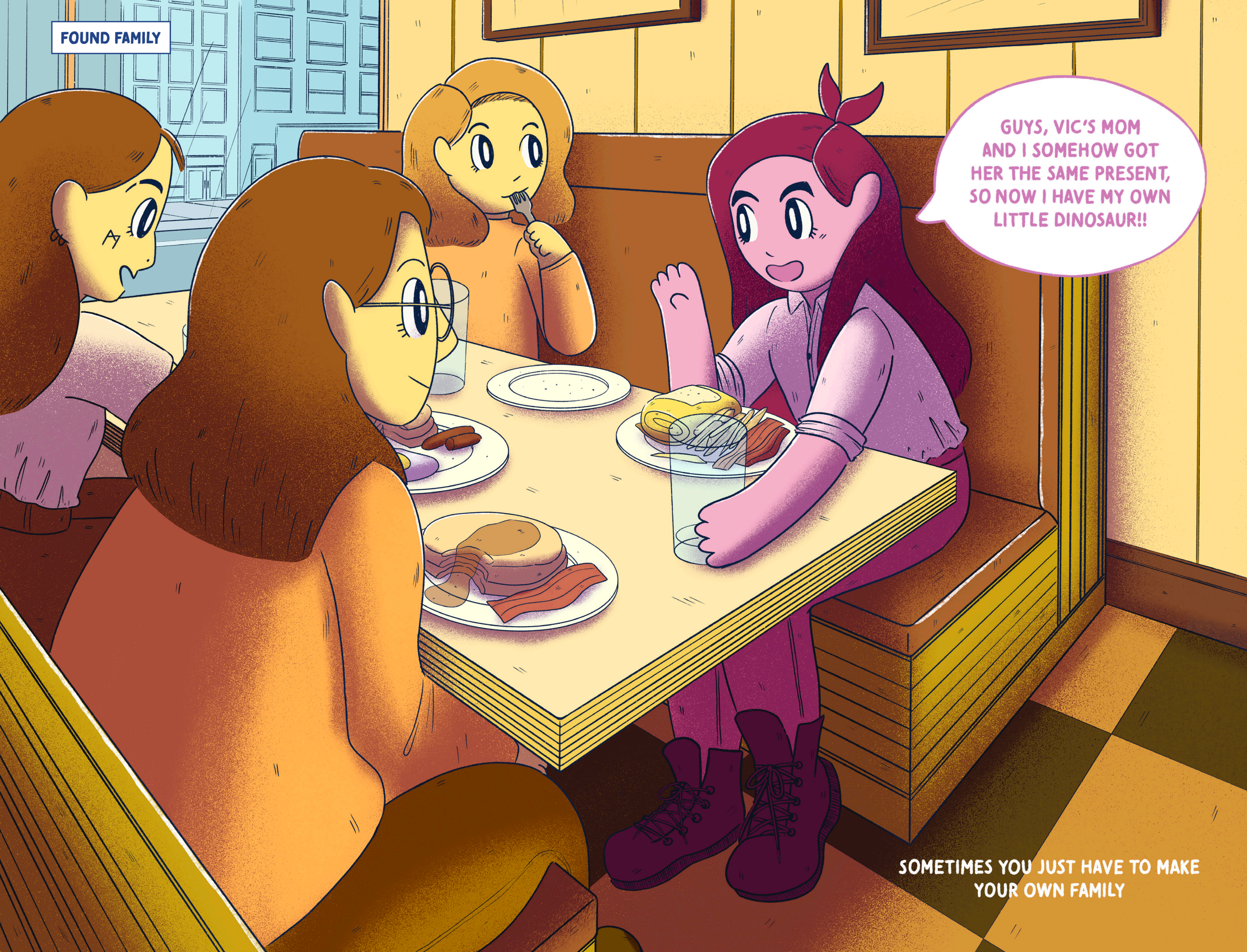


WHEN I THINK ABOUT THE THINGS I LACKED AS A TEENAGER, I START TO UNDERSTAND...

THAT ALL I REALLY NEEDED WAS SOME KIND

OF CONNECTION



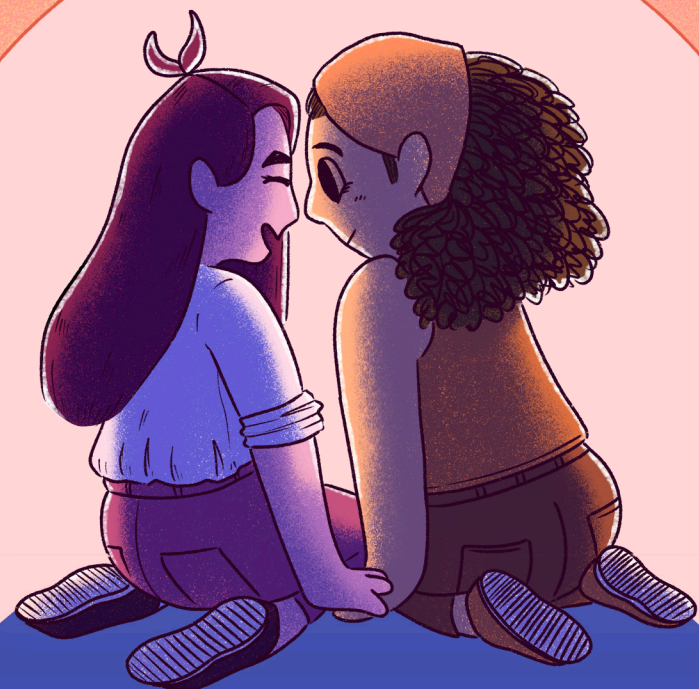


GUYS, VIC'S MOM  
AND I SOMEHOW GOT  
HER THE SAME PRESENT,  
SO NOW I HAVE MY OWN  
LITTLE DINOSAUR!!

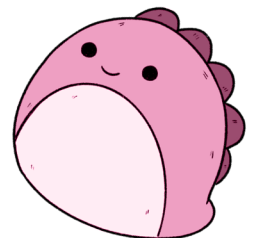
SOMETIMES YOU JUST HAVE TO MAKE  
YOUR OWN FAMILY



VICTORIA IS  
A GOOD FRIEND TO  
YOU, ISN'T SHE?



"JUST A FRIEND"





Banh Mi and Butter is a heartfelt autobiography of a queer Asian American trapped in their home. Jasper Luu's story is that of a non-binary lesbian who has to fight the restrictive boundaries set by their parents in order to live their life. This series of comics tells an artist's story of growing up in a strict household. Torn between two worlds, multiple cultures, and their passions. Jasper must figure out a way to navigate the chaotic environment created for them.

Jasper Luu (they/them)  
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