Nature & NERD-TURE

Comics by the 2014 Animal Behavior class
at Juniata College

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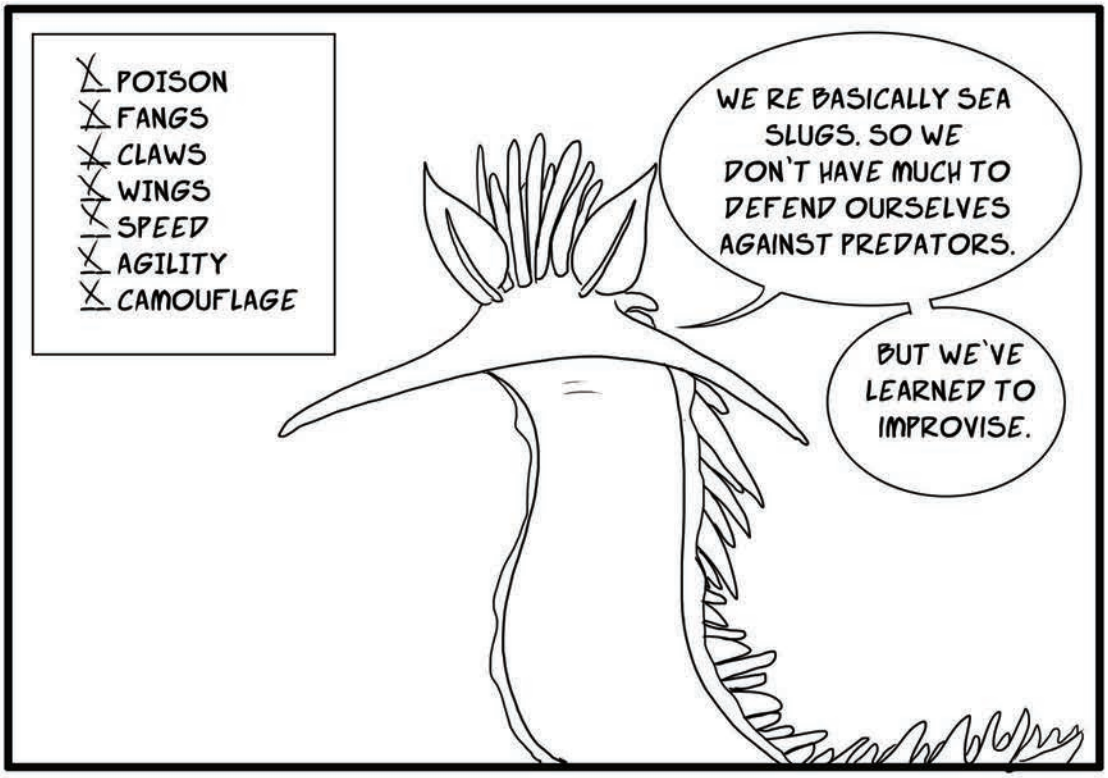
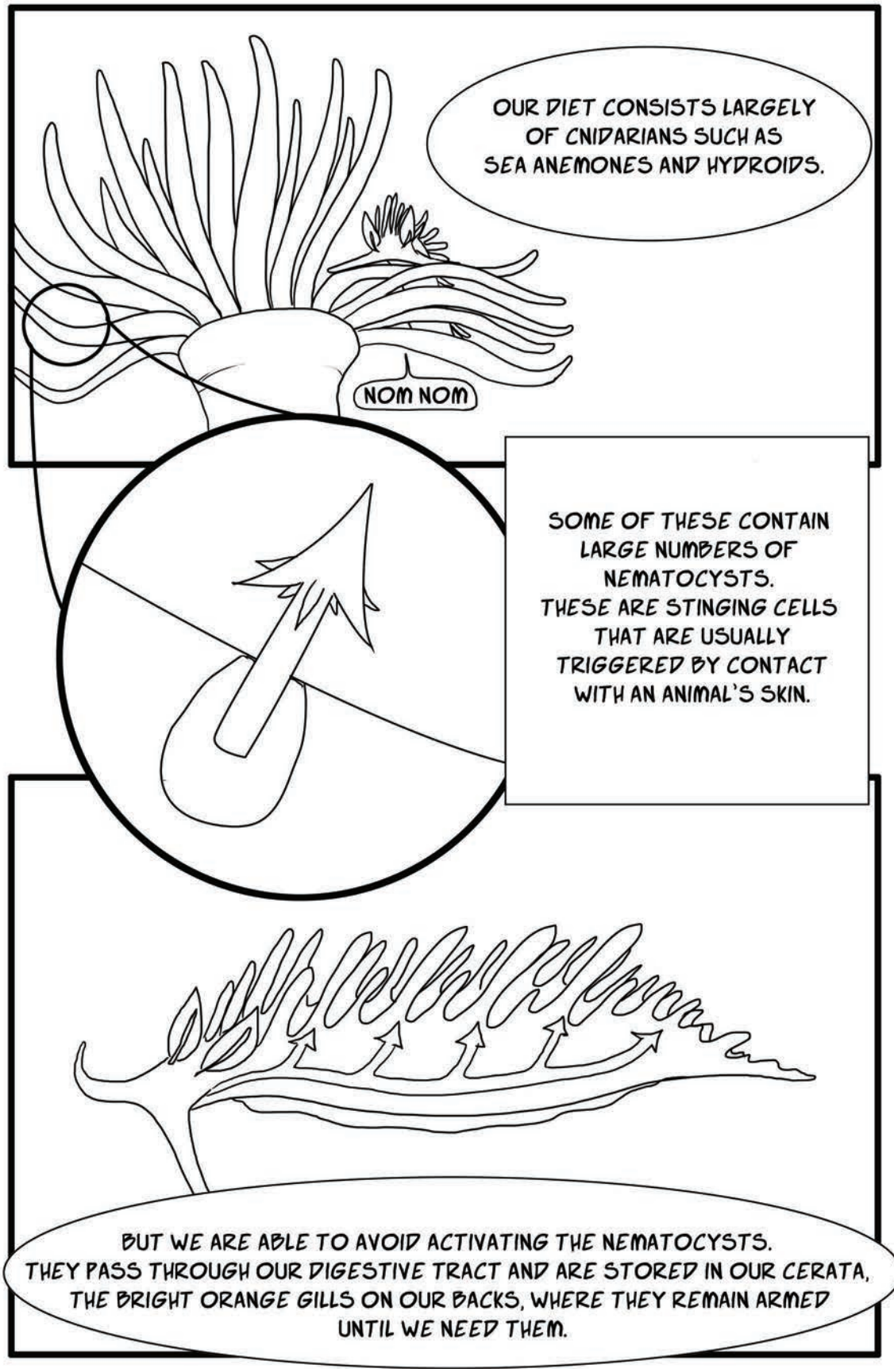
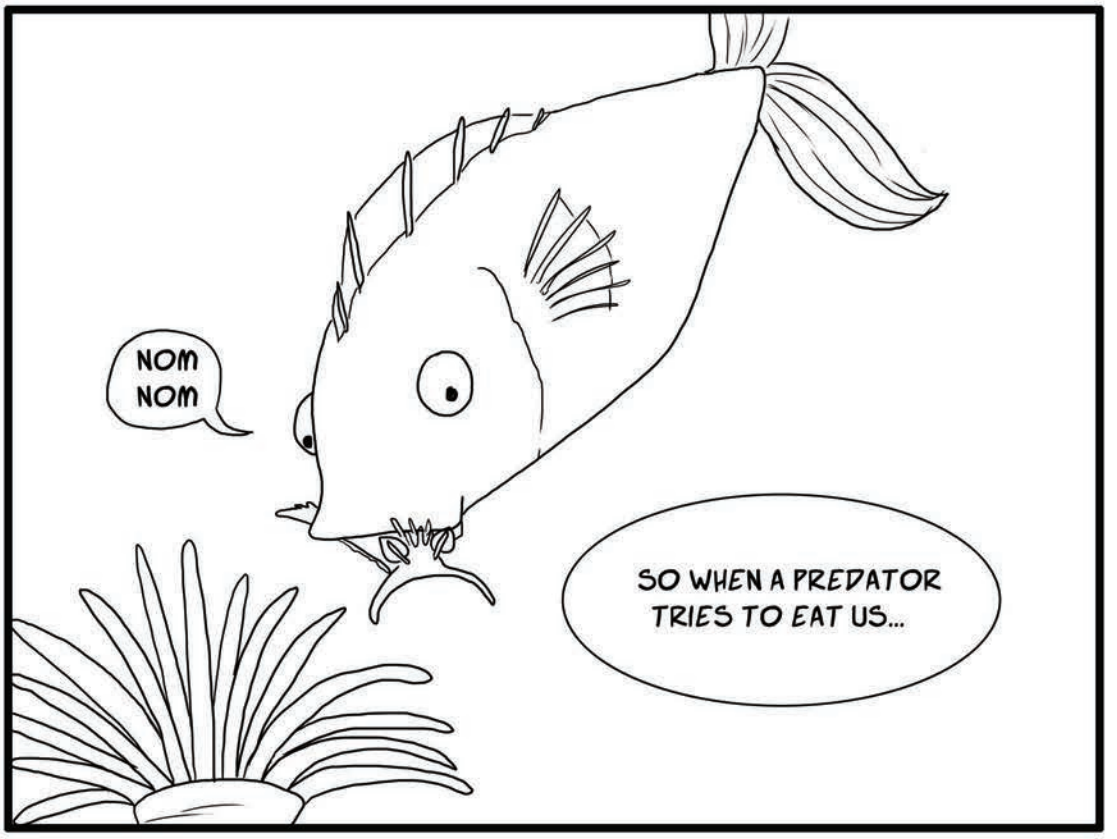
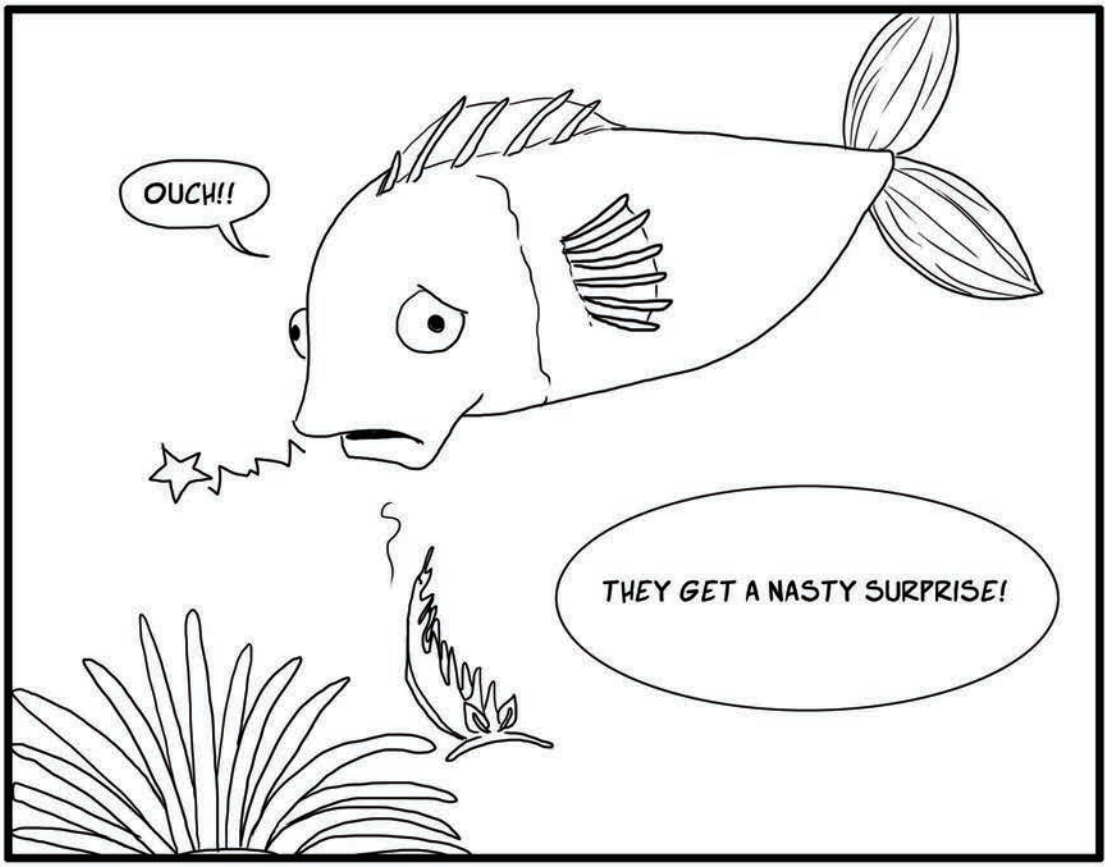
PREDATORY DEFENSE MECHANISMS OF THE SPANISH SHAWL

SOPHIE CHAMBERS

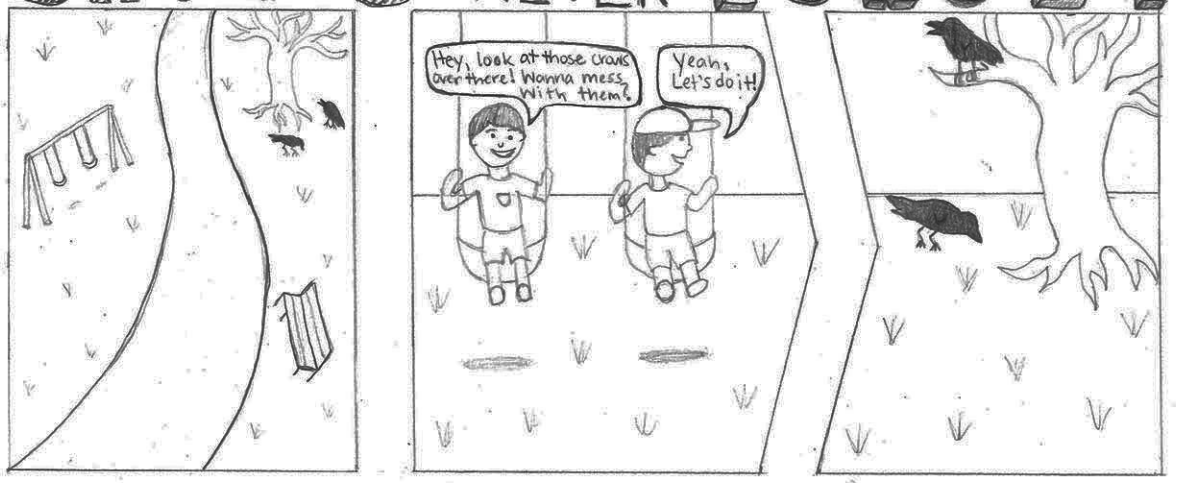


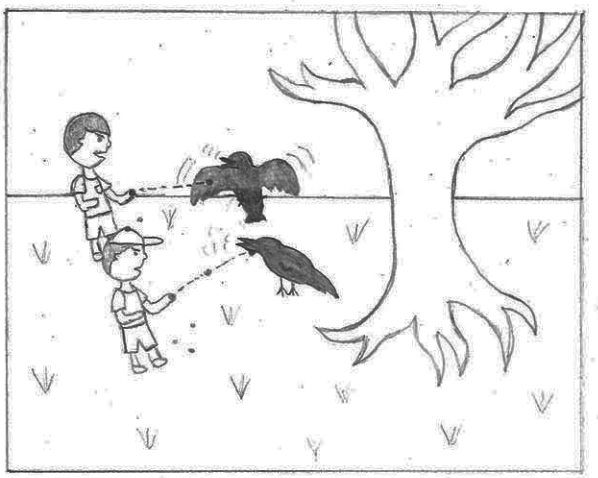

OUR DIET CONSISTS LARGELY OF CNIDARIANS SUCH AS SEA ANEMONES AND HYDROIDS.
NOM NOM
SOME OF THESE CONTAIN LARGE NUMBERS OF NEMATOCYSTS. THESE ARE STINGING CELLS THAT ARE USUALLY TRIGGERED BY CONTACT WITH AN ANIMAL'S SKIN.
BUT WE ARE ABLE TO AVOID ACTIVATING THE NEMATOCYSTS. THEY PASS THROUGH OUR DIGESTIVE TRACT AND ARE STORED IN OUR CERATA, THE BRIGHT ORANGE GILLS ON OUR BACKS, WHERE THEY REMAIN ARMED UNTIL WE NEED THEM.


NOM
NOM
SO WHEN A PREDATOR TRIES TO EAT US...

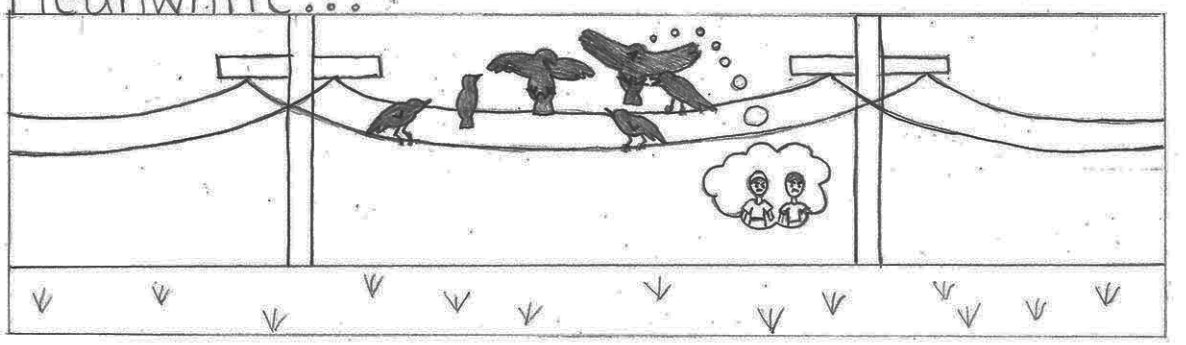

OUCH!!
THEY GET A NASTY SURPRISE!

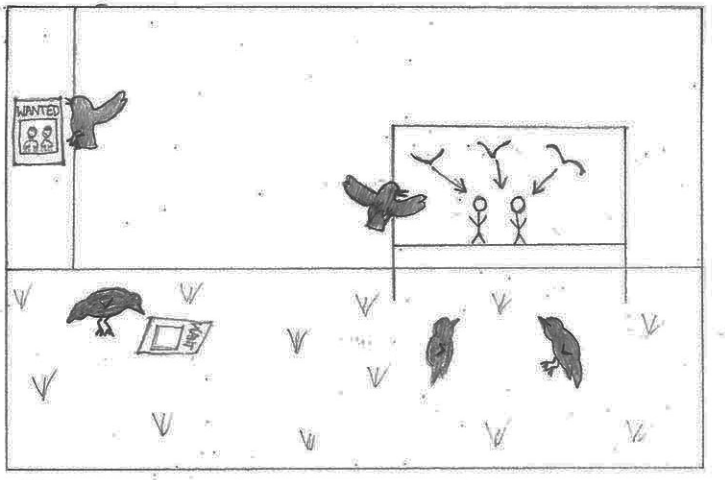
CROWS NEVER FORGET

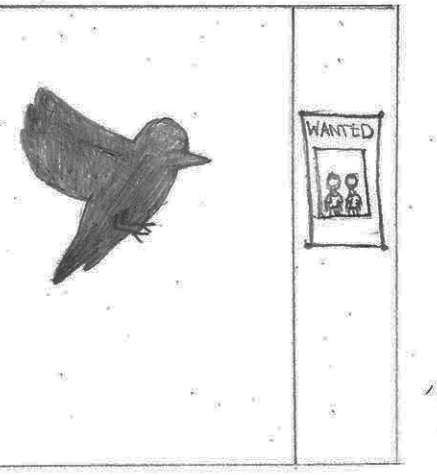




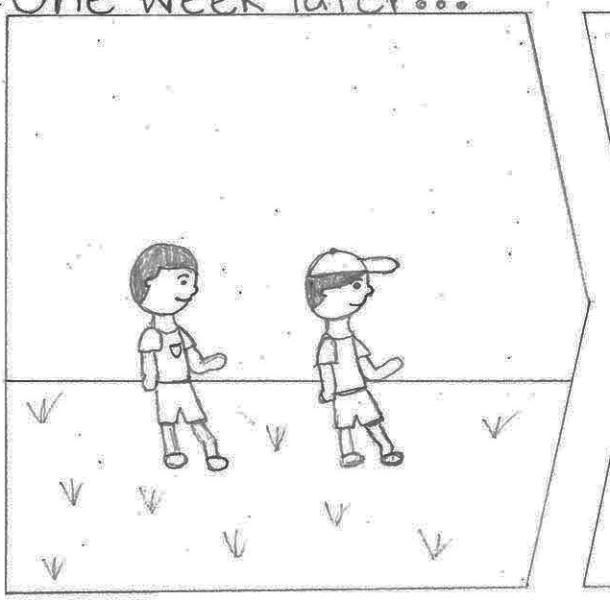
Meanwhile...

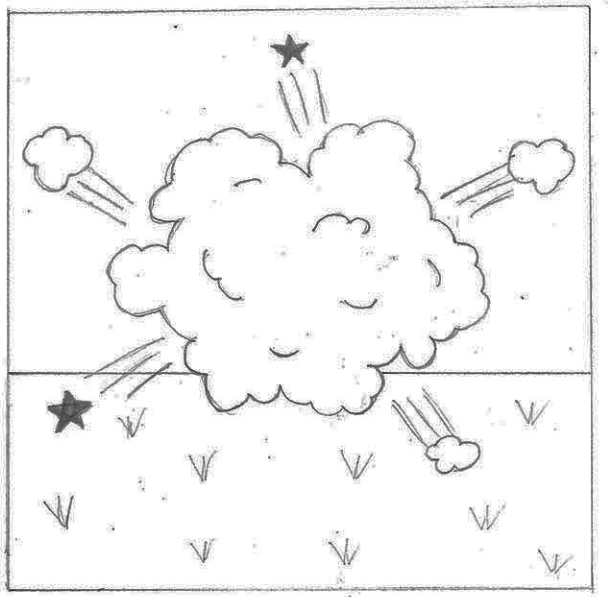


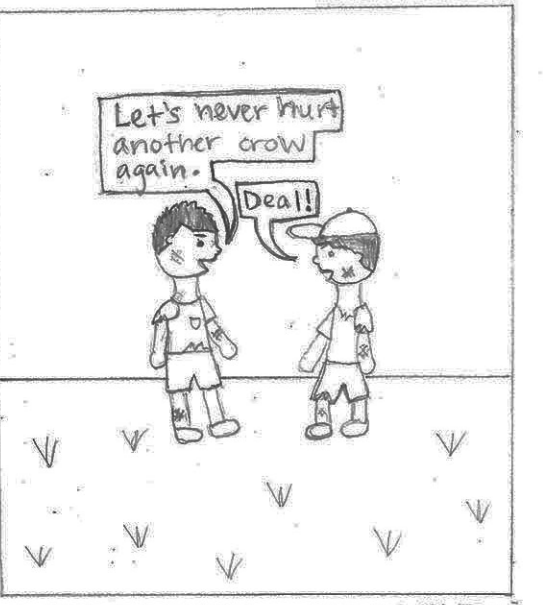




One week later...



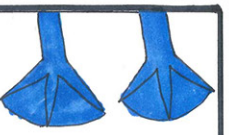


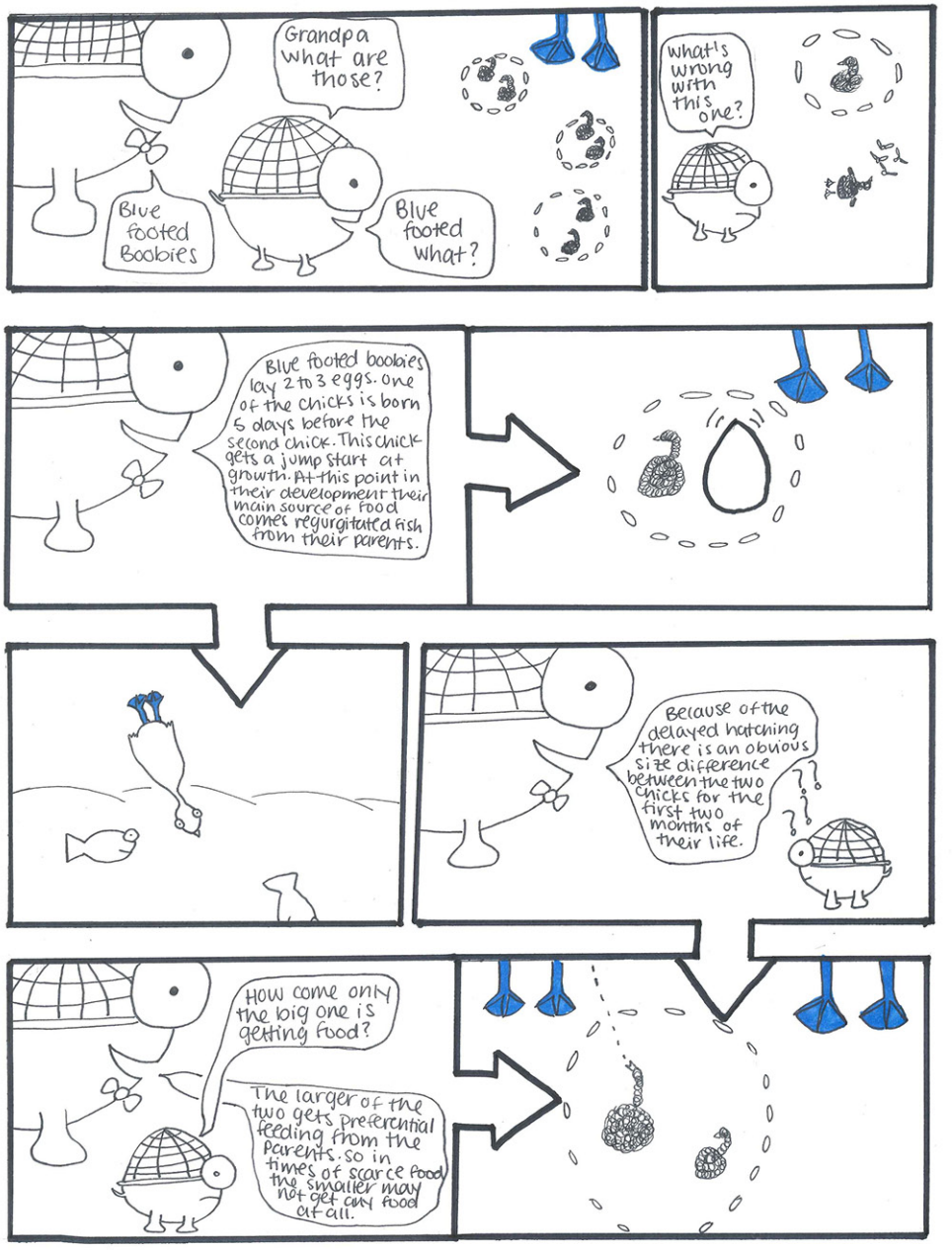


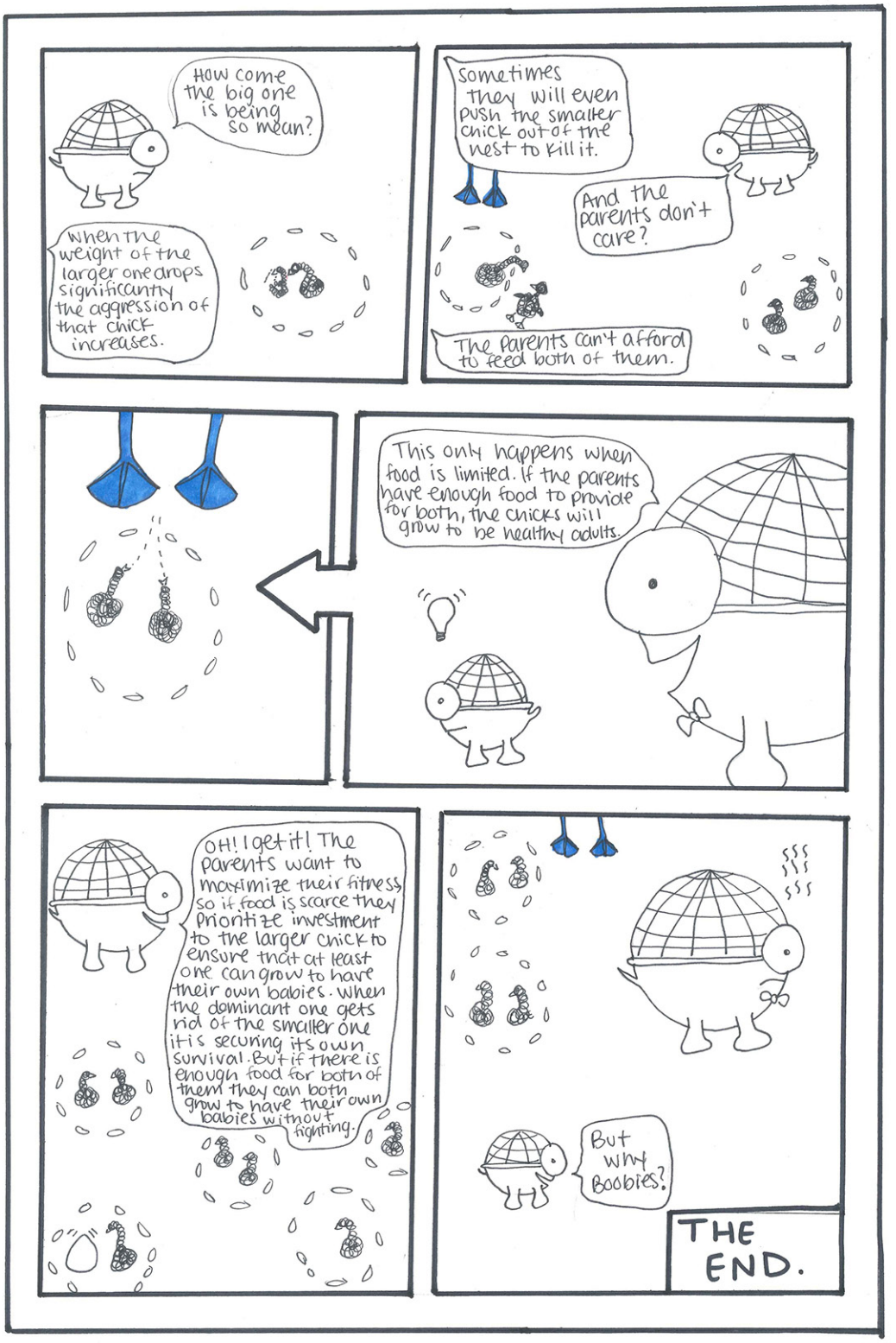
THE END

FACULTATIVE SIBLICIDE IN THE BLUE FOOTED BOOBY

By: Andrea Villaran Zariquiey





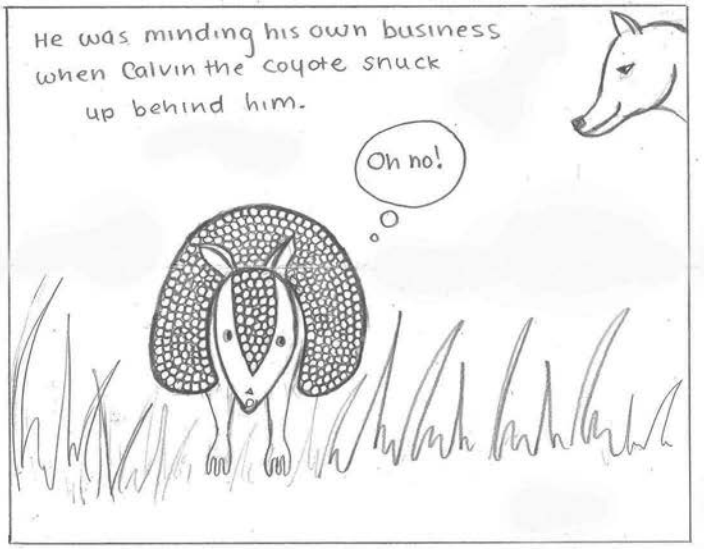

How come the big one is being so mean?
When the weight of the larger one drops significantly the aggression of that chick increases.
Sometimes they will even push the smaller chick out of the nest to kill it.
And the parents don't care?
The parents can't afford to feed both of them.
This only happens when food is limited. If the parents have enough food to provide for both, the chicks will grow to be healthy adults.
OH! I get it! The parents want to maximize their fitness so if food is scarce they prioritize investment to the larger chick to ensure that at least one can grow to have their own babies. When the dominant one gets rid of the smaller one it is securing its own survival. But if there is enough food for both of them they can both grow to have their own babies without fighting.
But why Boobies?
THE END.

Ballin' Butch

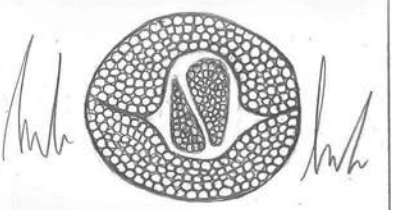
By: gabrielle ooyama

One day, Butch, the southern three-banded armadillo was munching on some termites and fruit in the tall grasses of Bolivia.

He was minding his own business when Calvin the coyote snuck up behind him.



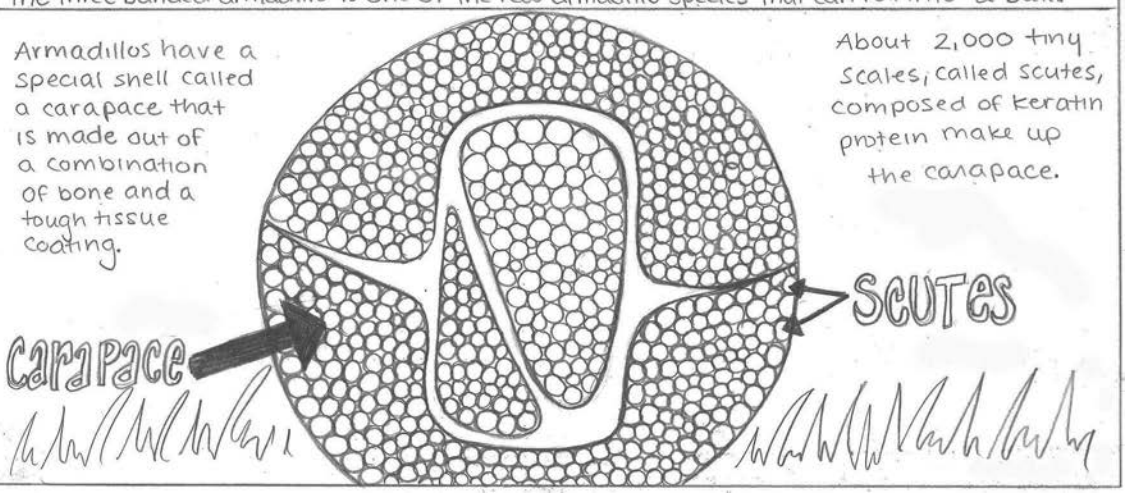
Even though Butch was perfectly capable of running away, he took the easy way out and curled himself into a ball.



The three-banded armadillo is one of the few armadillo species that can roll into a ball.

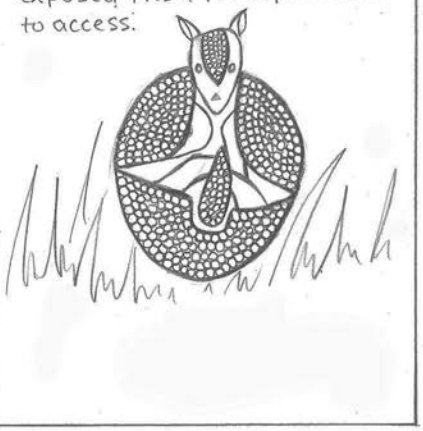
Armadillos have a special shell called a carapace that is made out of a combination of bone and a tough tissue coating.

About 2,000 tiny scales, called scutes, composed of keratin protein make up the carapace.

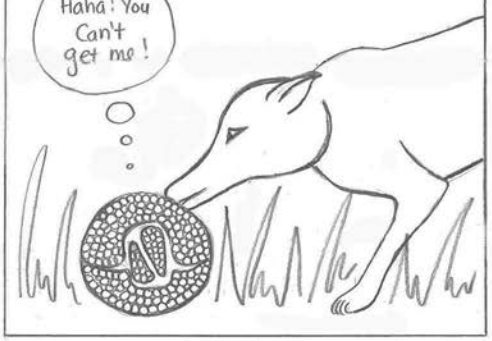


When in danger, a three-banded armadillo can fold its body in half and tuck its head and legs into its shell. This protects its soft underbelly, nose, eyes, ears and limbs from potential predators.

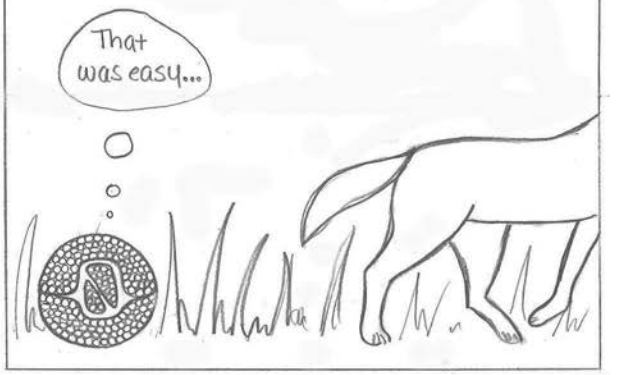
The top of its head is armored as well, so when it is in a ball the armadillo leaves no exposed flesh for a predator to access.



Calvin is hungry and tries to bite through Butch's hard carapace.

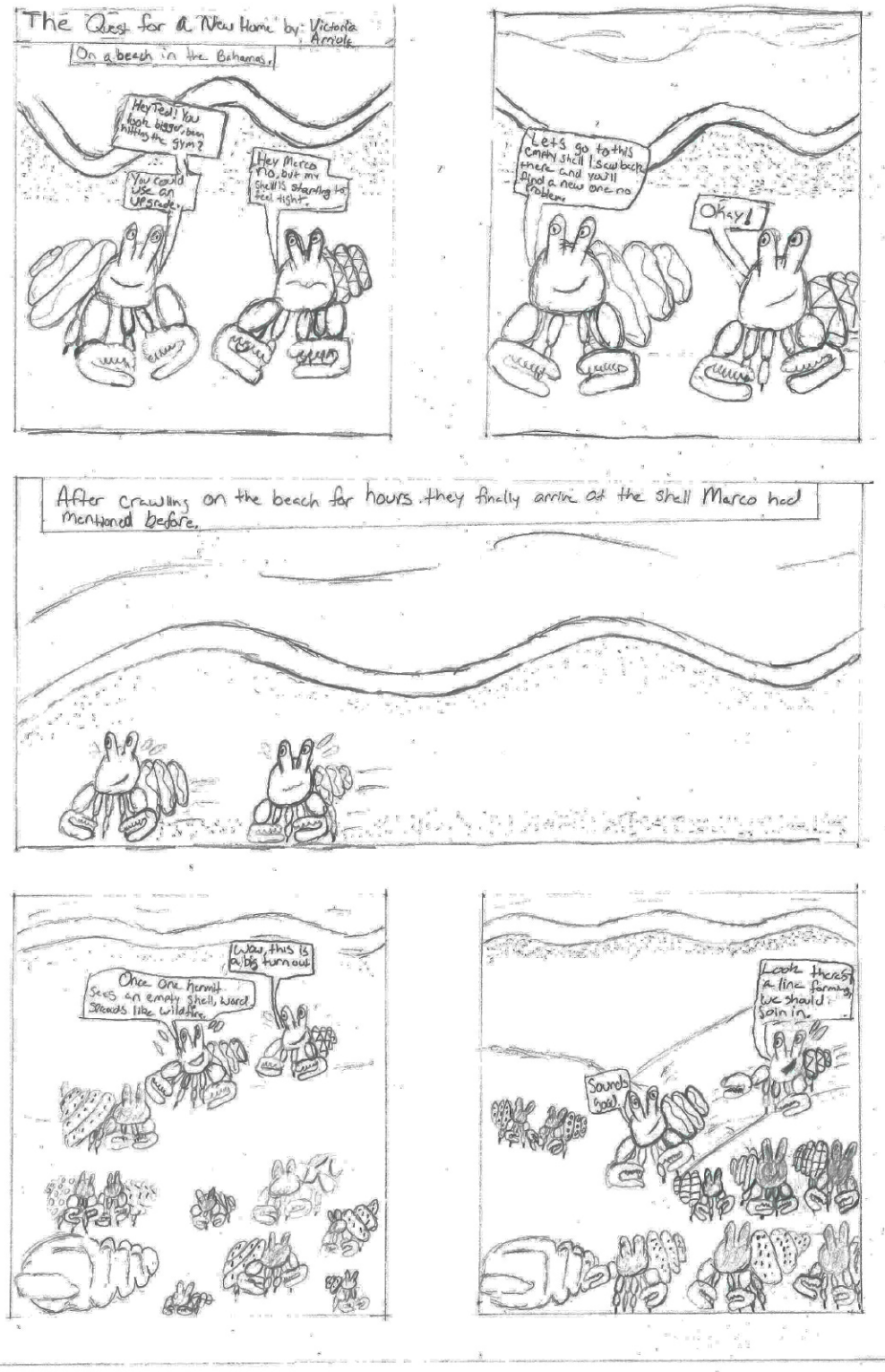


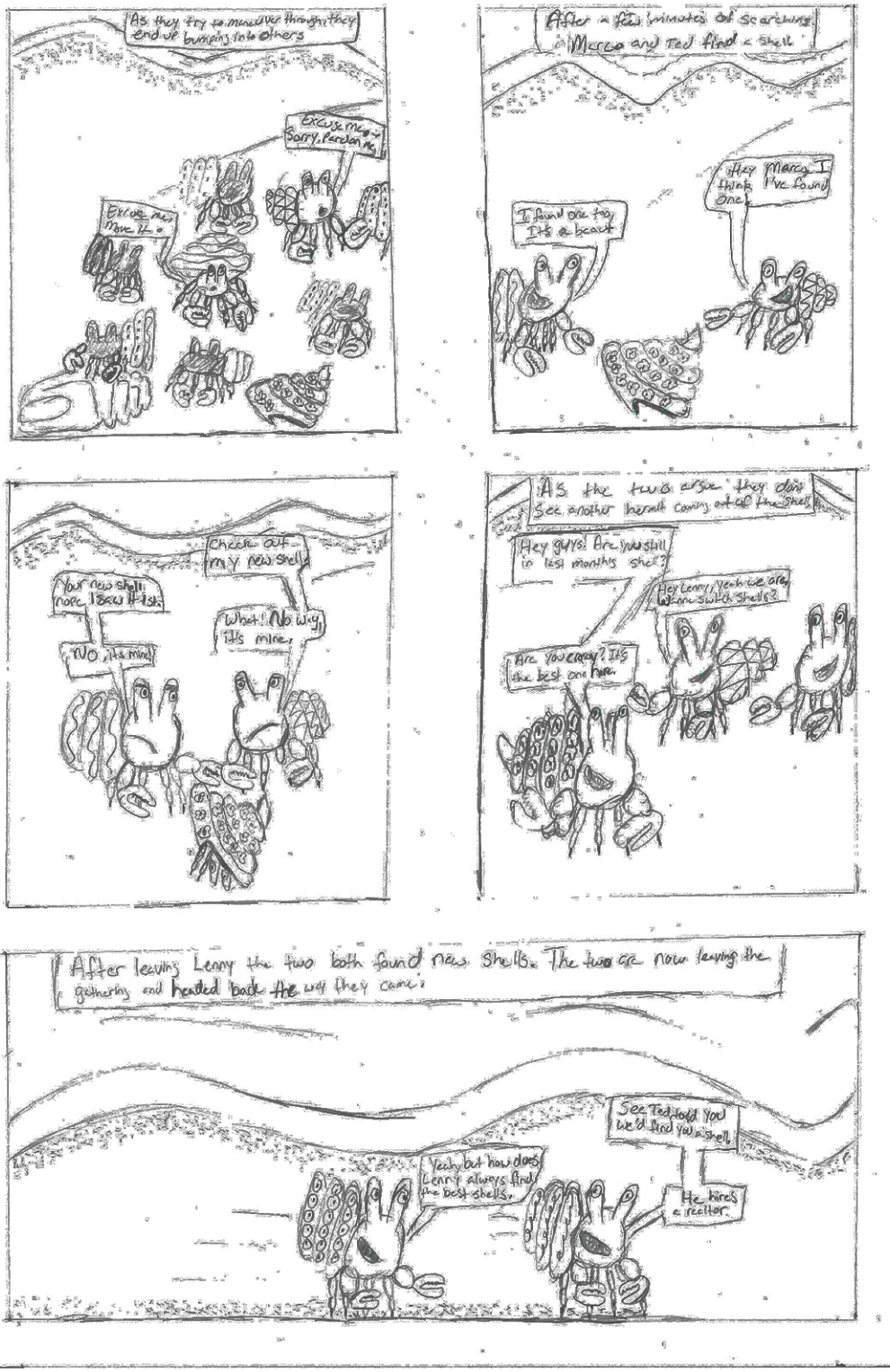
Calvin then gives up after many tries and he trots away.



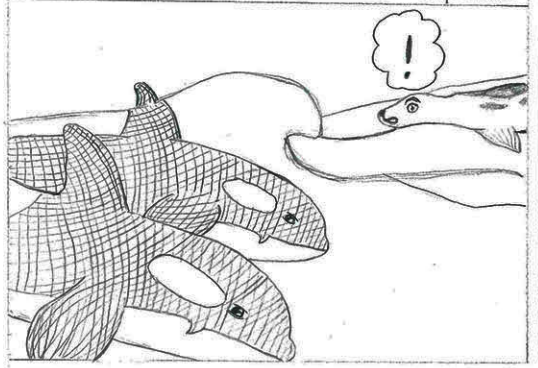
Butch survives to see another day!

the end.

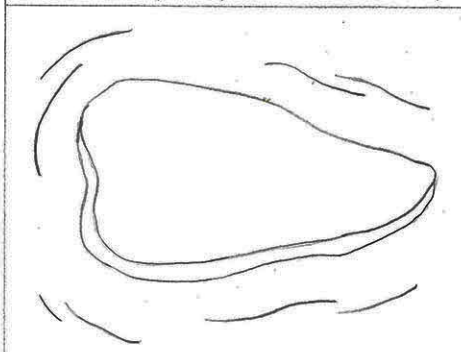

The Quest for a New Home by: Victoria Arriola
On a beach in the Bahamas.
Hey Ted! You look bigger, been hitting the gym?
You could use an upgrade.
Hey Marco no, but my shell is starting to feel tight.
Let's go to this empty shell I saw back there and you'll find a new one no problem.
Okay!
After crawling on the beach for hours they finally arrive at the shell Marco had mentioned before.
Wow, this is a big turn out.
Once one hermit sees an empty shell, word spreads like wildfire.
Look there's a line forming we should join in.
Sounds good.


As they try to maneuver through they end up bumping into others
Excuse me
Sorry, Pardon me
Excuse me, Move it.
After a few minutes of searching Marco and Ted find a shell
Hey Marco, I think I've found one.
I found one too, It's a beaut
Check out my new shell
Your new shell, more like your 4th.
NO, it's mine
What! No way, it's mine.
As the two arse they don't see another hermit coming out of the shell
Hey guys! Are you still in last months shit?
Hey Lenny, you wise old man, switch shells?
Are you crazy? It's the best one here.
After leaving Lenny the two both found new shells. The two are now leaving the gathering and headed back the way they came.
See Ted, told you we'd find you a shell.
Yeah, but how does Lenny always find the best shells.
He hires a realtor.

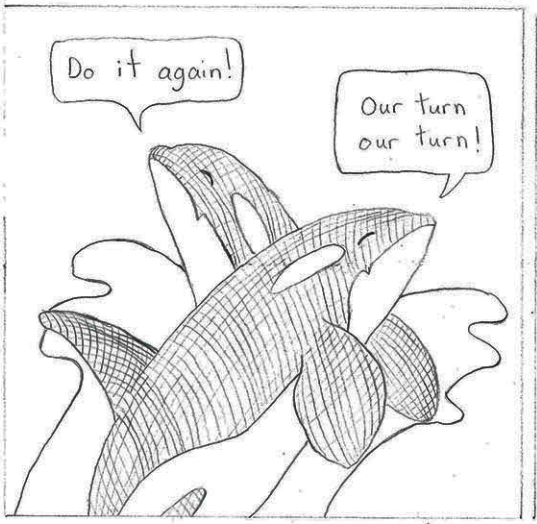
Cooperatively charging and diving under the iceberg, the pod can generate a wave. This will knock the seal into the water where it can be captured.



Don't panic yet, the seal escapes.

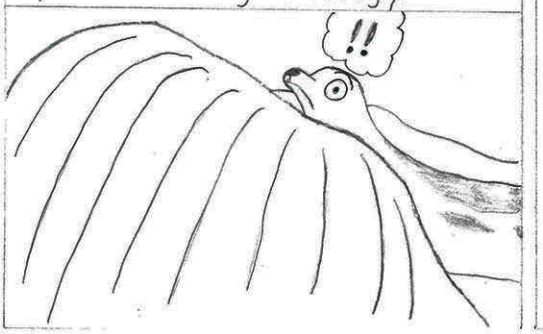


Sometimes, this is done on purpose so that the offspring can learn how to execute the hunt.

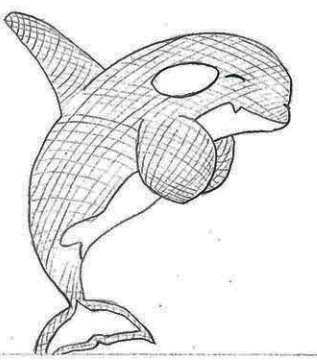


Working as a group reduces the amount of energy each one has to exert. This fulfills the **optimality theory** because cooperation yields a greater ratio of **fitness benefits**.

Their predatory tactics are also an example of **operational conditioning**. Successful capture acts as a reward increasing the likelihood of a specific hunting strategy.



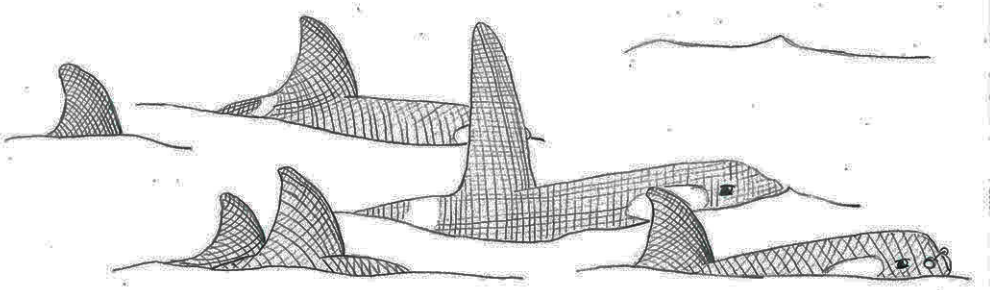
Due to its graphic content, actual capture is not depicted. However, the orcas enjoy a nutrient-rich meal.



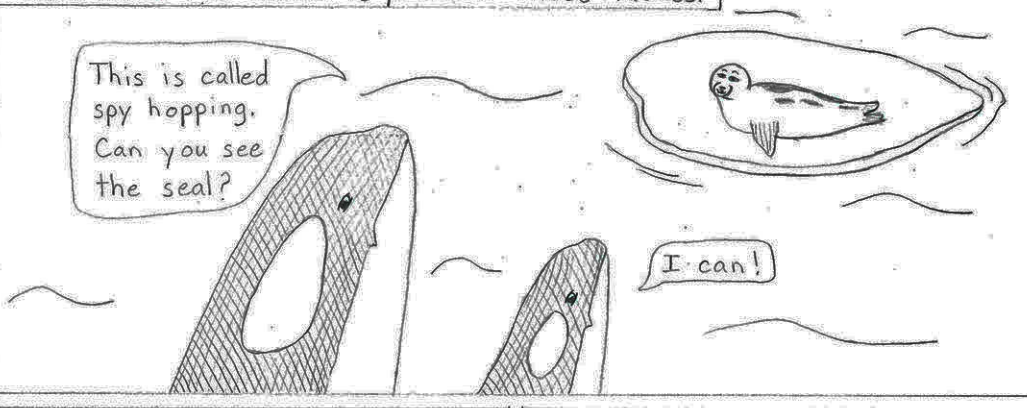
By Courtney Bickel

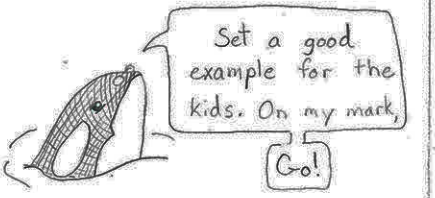
It's Just Black and White

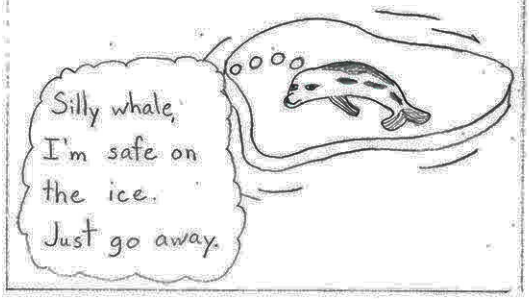
Orcinus orca, most commonly known as the killer whale, is the largest species of dolphin. It is one of the top predators found across all of the world's oceans. These are highly intelligent, **social** creatures that travel in familial pods made up of a matriarch, her daughters, her grandchildren, and usually a dominant male escort.



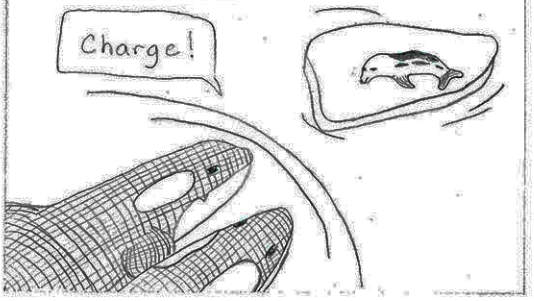
Orcas obtain their hunting skills and many other behaviors from **social learning**, where older, more experienced adults **model** proper behavior and then allow the calves to practice these tactics.







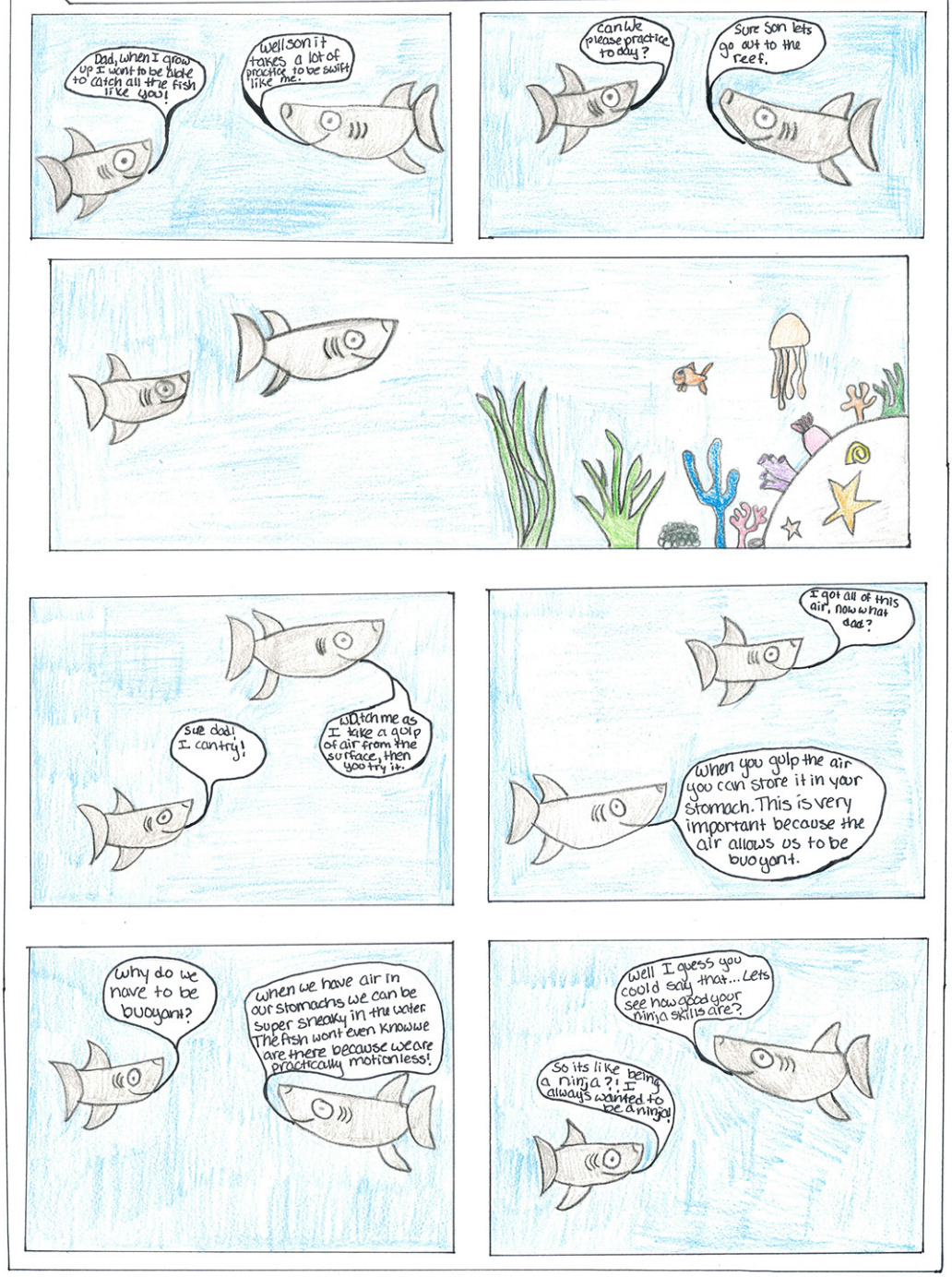
The pod works together to hunt their prey. **Cooperation** helps each member gain **direct fitness**. If they can capture their prey, they secure energy for survival, reproduction, and care for their offspring.

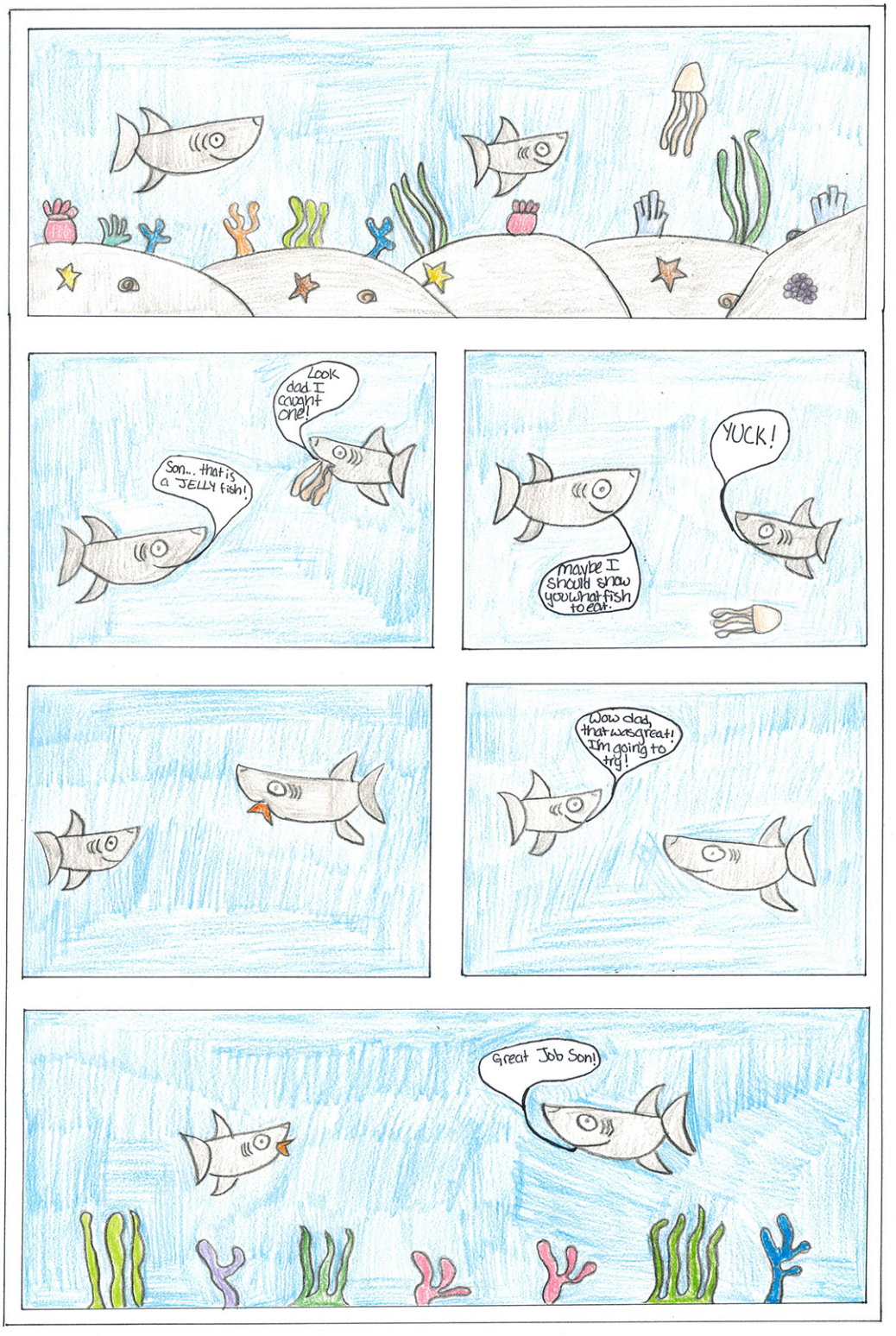


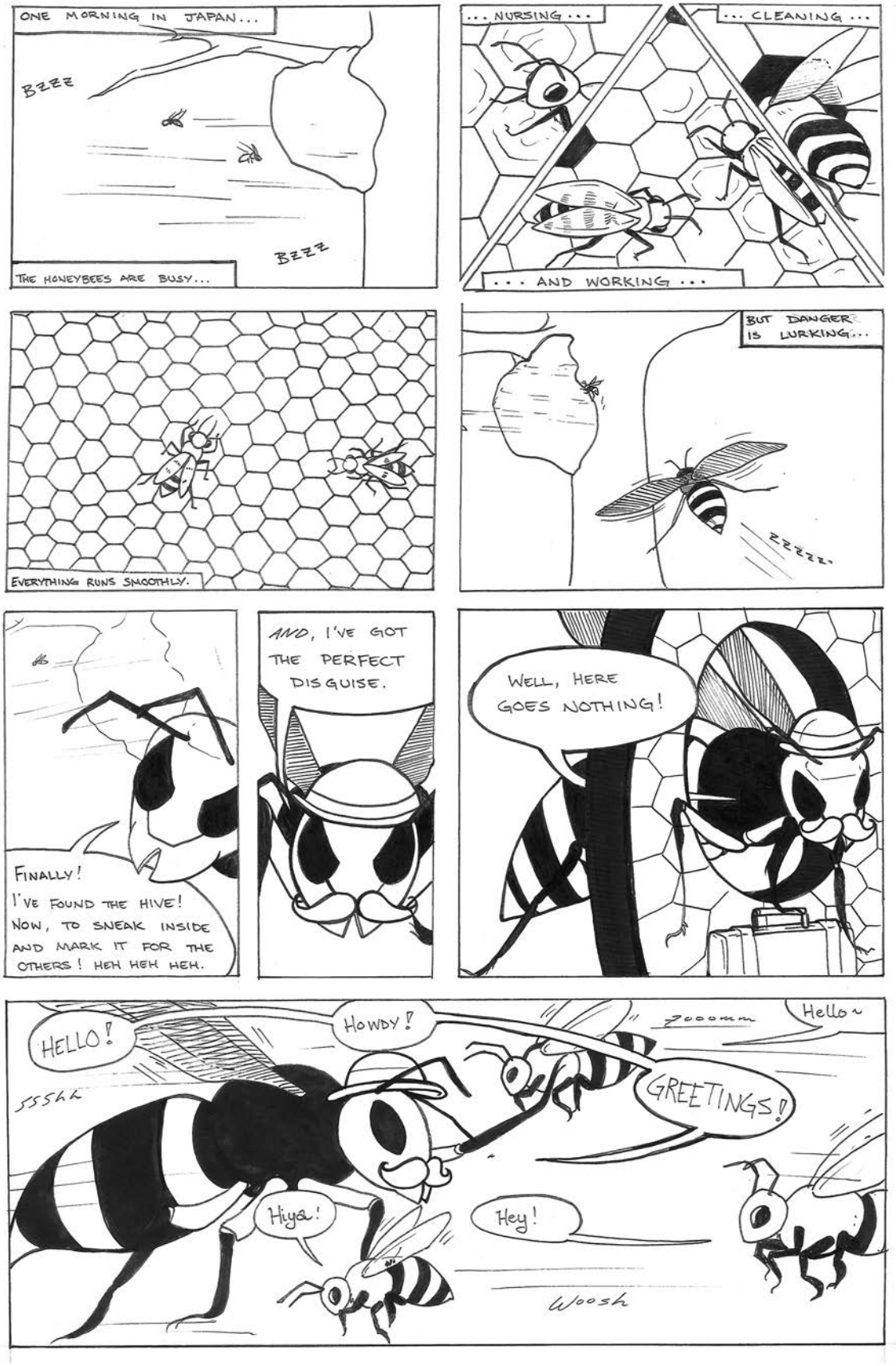
Adventures with Tiny Tony the Sand Shark

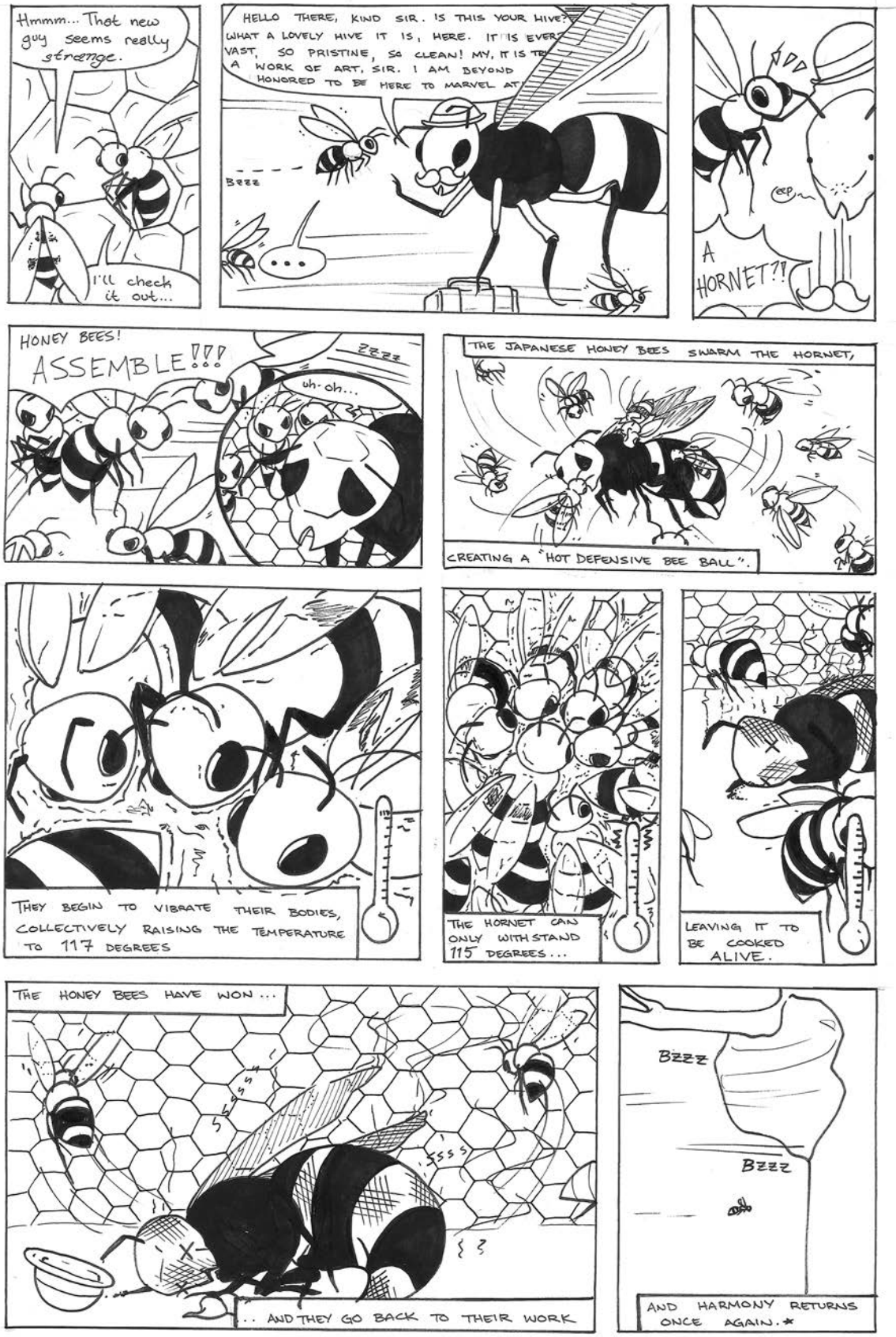
"Featuring Tiny Tony: His Dad Swift Stan"

By: Taylor Eadline



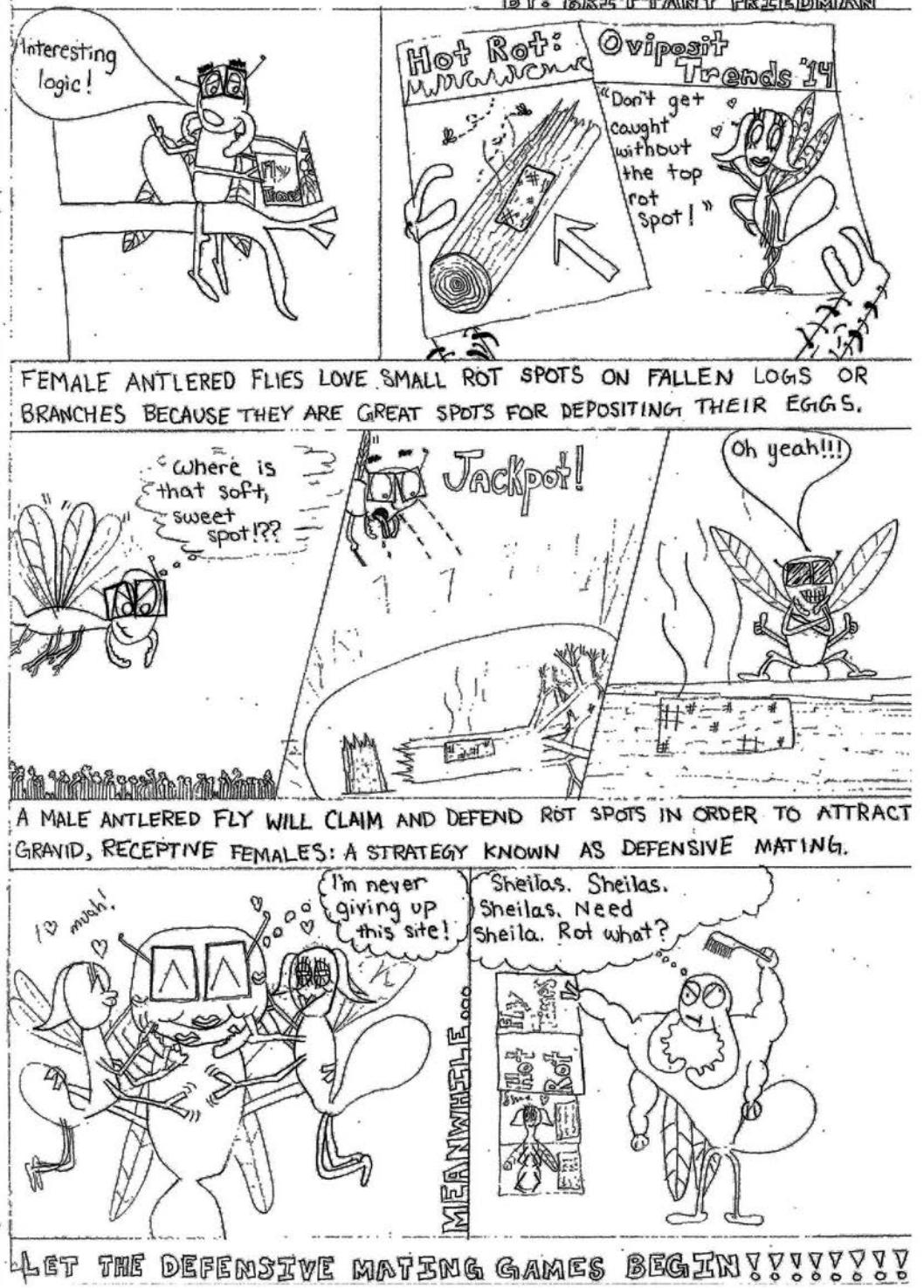

Look dad I caught one!
Son... that is a JELLY fish!
YUCK!
Maybe I should show you what fish to eat.
Wow dad, that was great! I'm going to try!
Great Job Son!

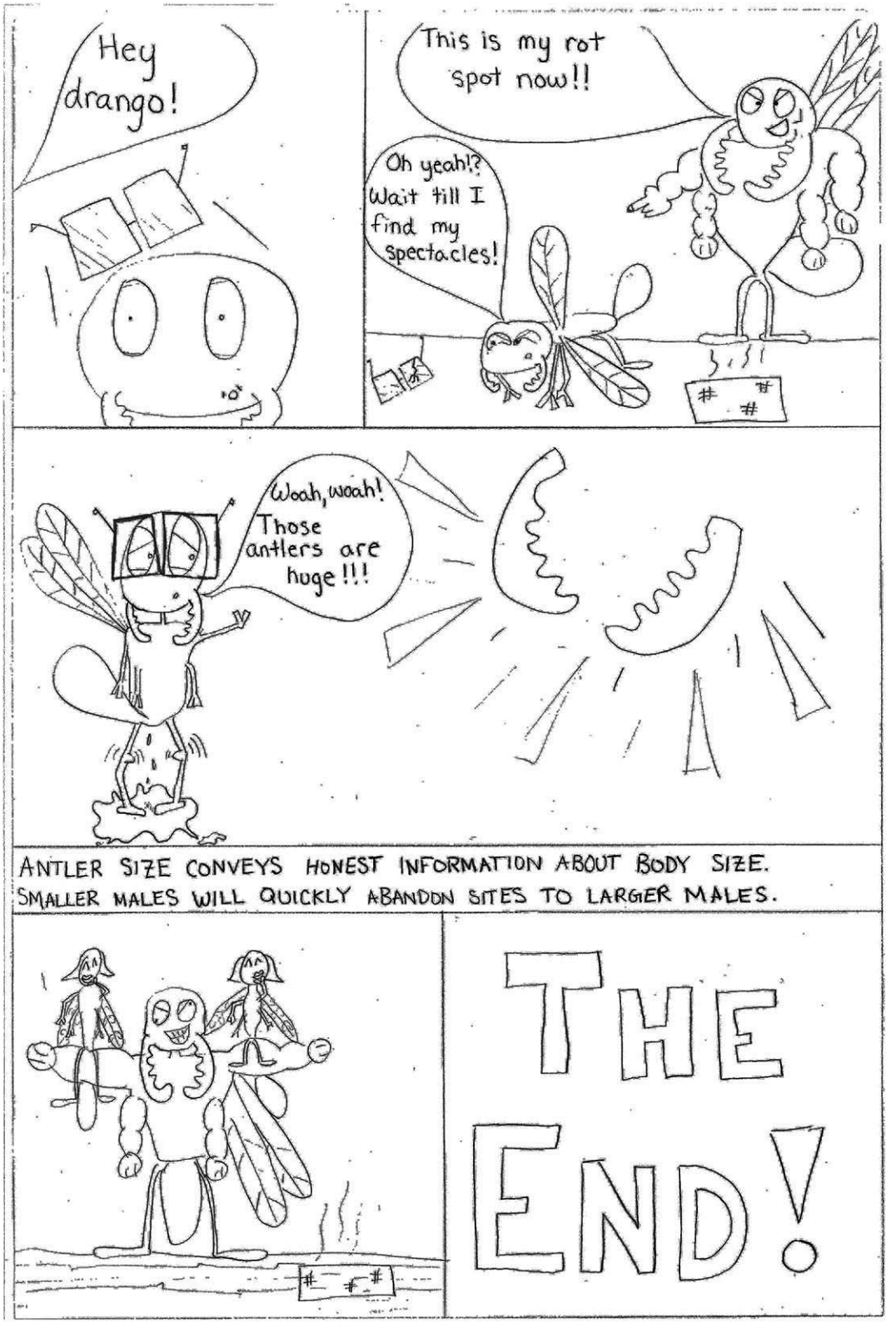

ONE MORNING IN JAPAN...
BZZZ
BZZZ
THE HONEYBEES ARE BUSY...
...NURSING...
...CLEANING...
...AND WORKING...
EVERYTHING RUNS SMOOTHLY.
BUT DANGER IS LURKING...
ZZZZZZ
FINALLY! I'VE FOUND THE HIVE! NOW, TO SNEAK INSIDE AND MARK IT FOR THE OTHERS! HEH HEH HEH.
AND, I'VE GOT THE PERFECT DISGUISE.
WELL, HERE GOES NOTHING!
HELLO!
SSSHH
HOWDY!
ZOOOMM
HELLO~
GREETINGS!
HIYA!
HEY!
WOOSH


Hmmm... That new guy seems really strenge.
I'll check it out...
HELLO THERE, KIND SIR. IS THIS YOUR HIVE? WHAT A LOVELY HIVE IT IS, HERE. IT IS EVER VAST, SO PRISTINE, SO CLEAN! MY, IT IS TR A WORK OF ART, SIR. I AM BEYOND HONORED TO BE HERE TO MARVEL AT
Bzzz
...
EEP
A HORNET?!
HONEY BEES! ASSEMBLE!!!
Zzzz
uh-oh...
THE JAPANESE HONEY BEES SWARM THE HORNET,
CREATING A "HOT DEFENSIVE BEE BALL".
THEY BEGIN TO VIBRATE THEIR BODIES, COLLECTIVELY RAISING THE TEMPERATURE TO 117 DEGREES
THE HORNET CAN ONLY WITHSTAND 115 DEGREES...
LEAVING IT TO BE COOKED ALIVE.
THE HONEY BEES HAVE WON...
Sss
Ssss
.. AND THEY GO BACK TO THEIR WORK
Bzzz
Bzzz
AND HARMONY RETURNS ONCE AGAIN.*

Australian Antlered Flies

BY: BRITTANY FRIEDMAN

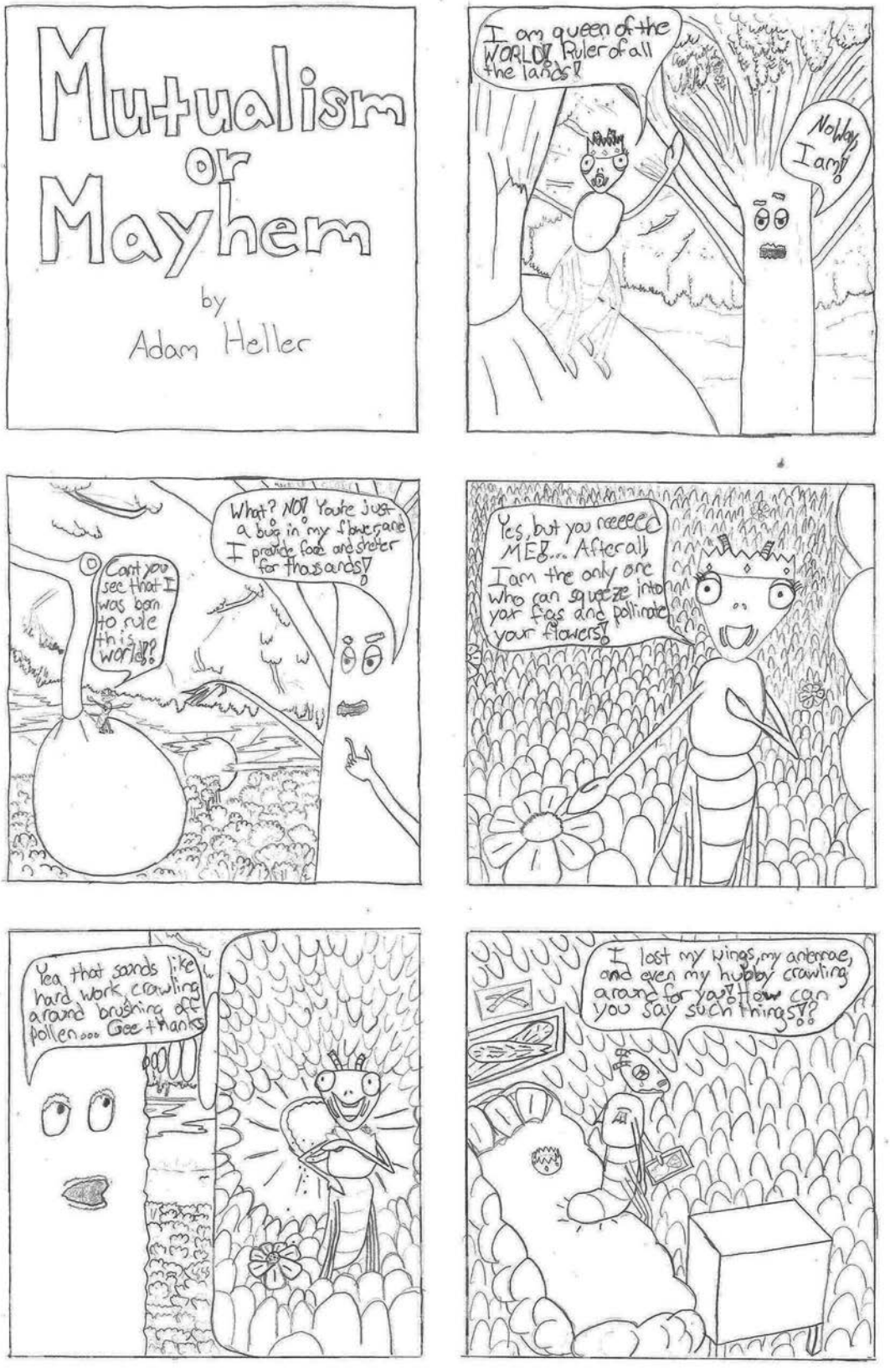


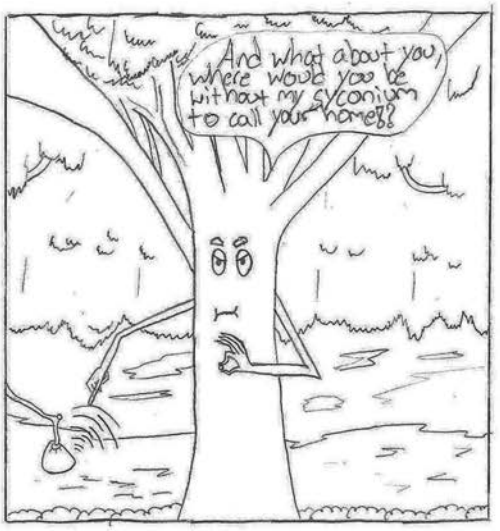

Hey drango!
This is my rot spot now!!
Oh yeah!? Wait till I find my spectacles!
Woah, woah! Those antlers are huge!!!
ANTLER SIZE CONVEYS HONEST INFORMATION ABOUT BODY SIZE. SMALLER MALES WILL QUICKLY ABANDON SITES TO LARGER MALES.
THE END!

The Friendly Baboon

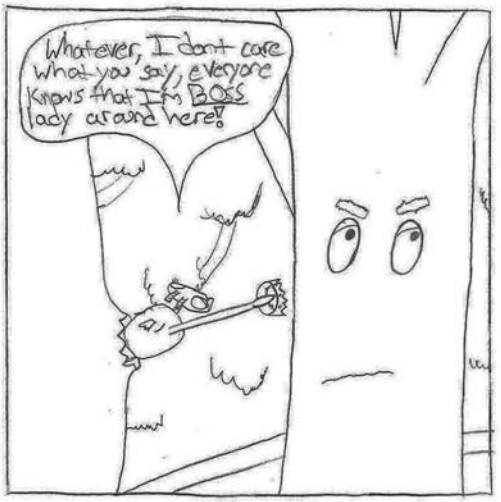
By: Brandon Hark

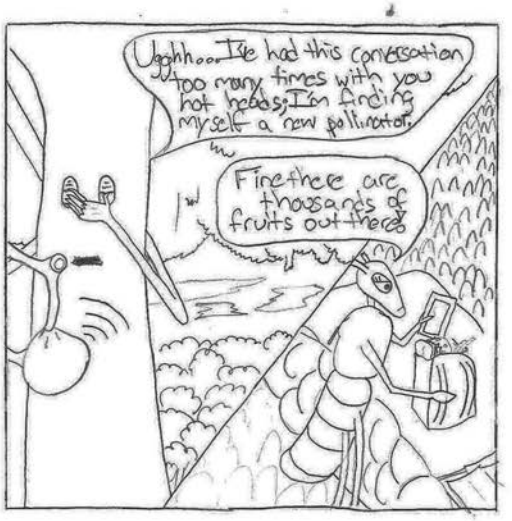
So what else does he do?
He not only protects Rafiki and I from infanticidal males and females, but he also helps me to actually raise and care for him as well.
Plus with him around, I can focus on other things such as foraging.
AAA
Yes, it does! I know that Sarah has never had a male friend to protect her offspring. She has lost 3 out of 5 offspring, while I have only lost 1 out of 5!
Does that work? It seems like a great deal!
Wow, that is so amazing, Janet, I think we need to go make a couple friends
I like the way you think, Dolores

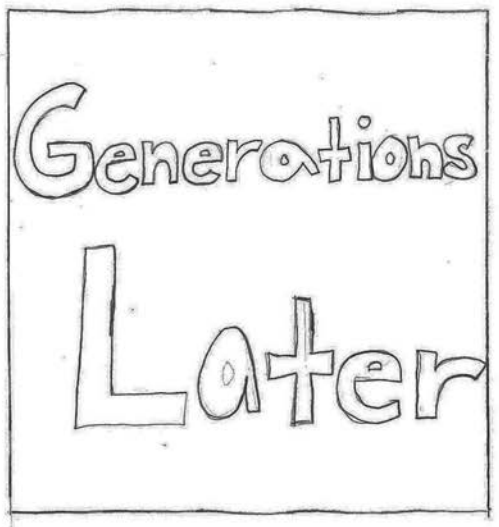

Mutualism or Mayhem
by
Adam Heller
I am queen of the WORLD! Ruler of all the lands!
No Way! I am!
What? NO! You're just a bug in my flowers and I provide food and shelter for thousands!
Can't you see that I was born to rule this world!?
Yes, but you reeeeed ME!... After all I am the only one who can squeeze into your flos and pollinate your flowers!
Yea that sounds like hard work crawling around brushing off pollen... Gee thanks
I lost my wings, my antennae, and even my hubby crawling around for you! How can you say such things!?


And what about you, where would you be without my syconium to call your home??

Oh, is that what you call this cozy fruity flower...thing.?


Whatever, I dont care what you say, everyone knows that I'm BOSS lady around here!

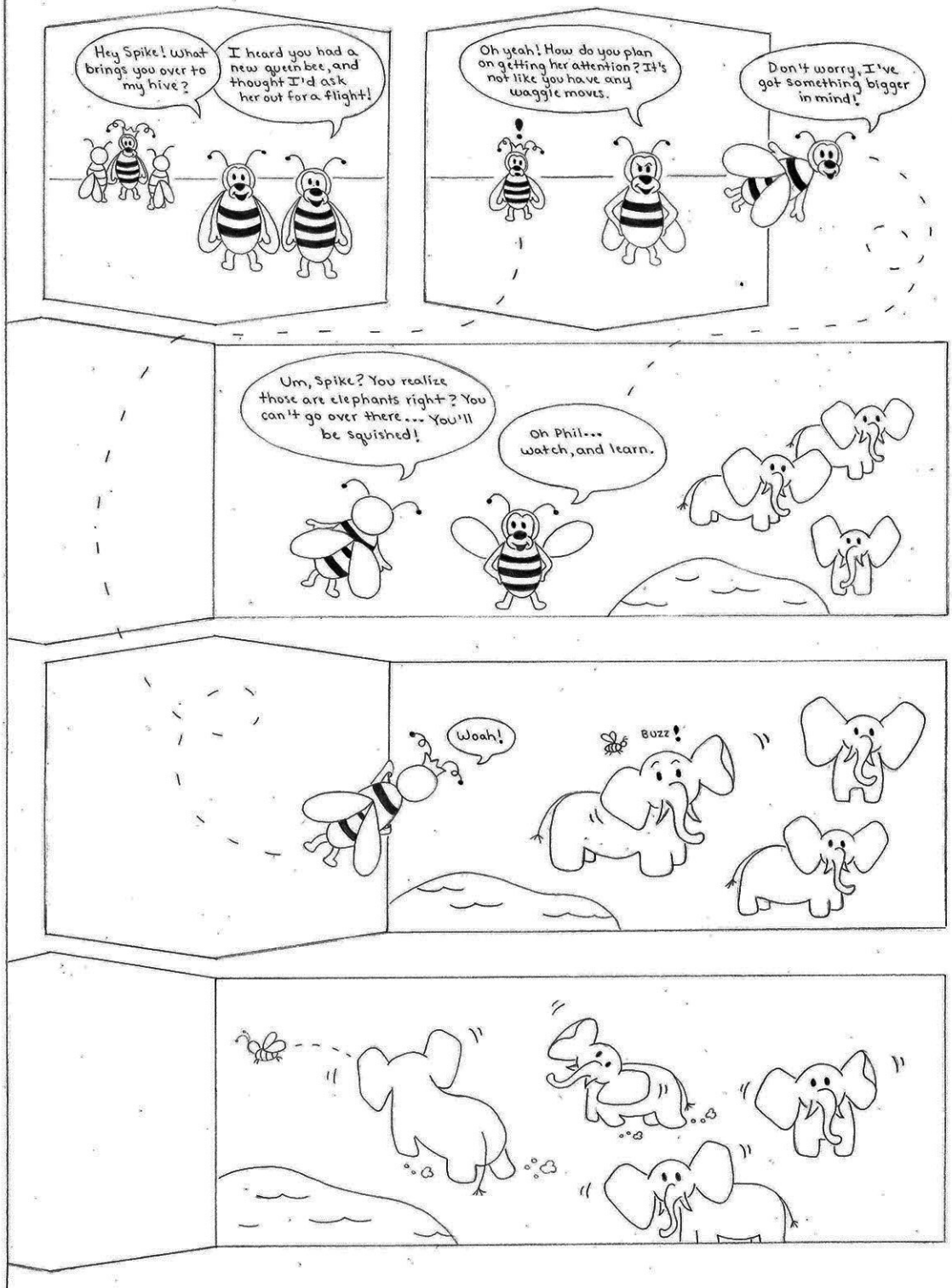

Ugghh... I've had this conversation too many times with you hot headed, I'm finding myself a new pollinator.
Fine!!! there are thousands of fruits out there!

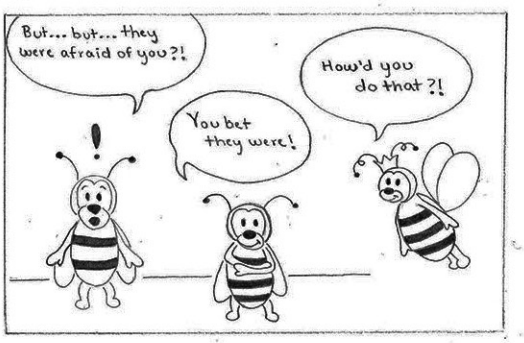

Generations
Later

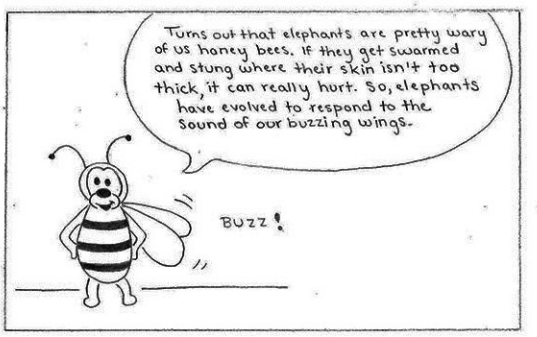
What have we done!?

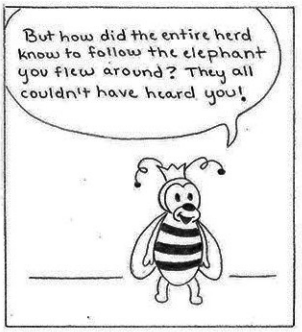
Elephants Bee-ware

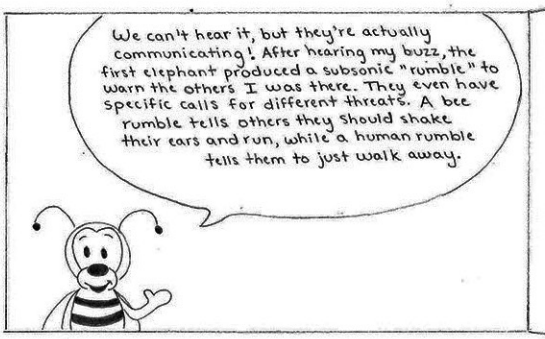
By: Kate Sabey

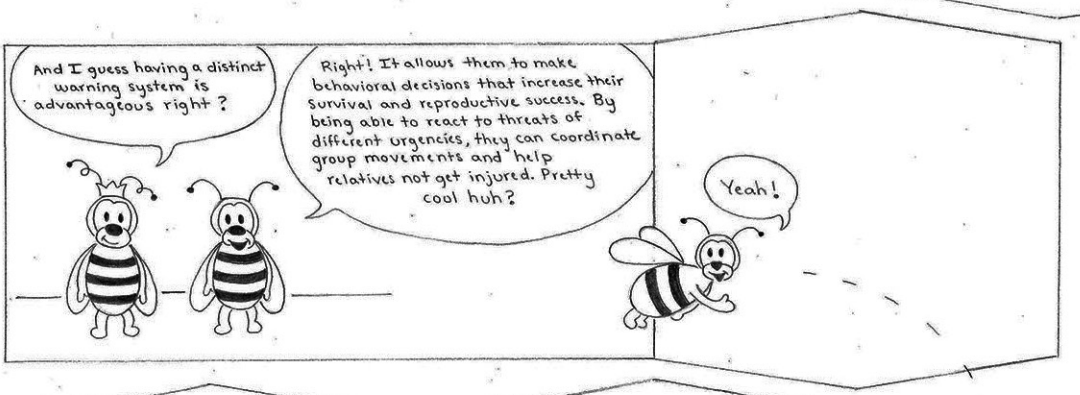


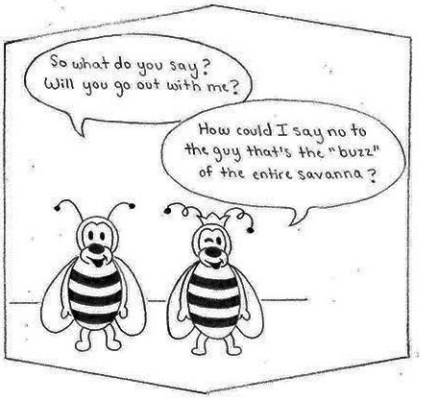

But... but... they were afraid of you?!
!
You bet they were!
How'd you do that?!

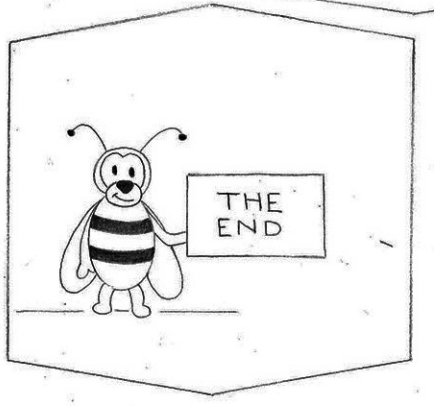

Turns out that elephants are pretty wary of us honey bees. If they get swarmed and stung where their skin isn't too thick, it can really hurt. So, elephants have evolved to respond to the sound of our buzzing wings.
BUZZ!


But how did the entire herd know to follow the elephant you flew around? They all couldn't have heard you!

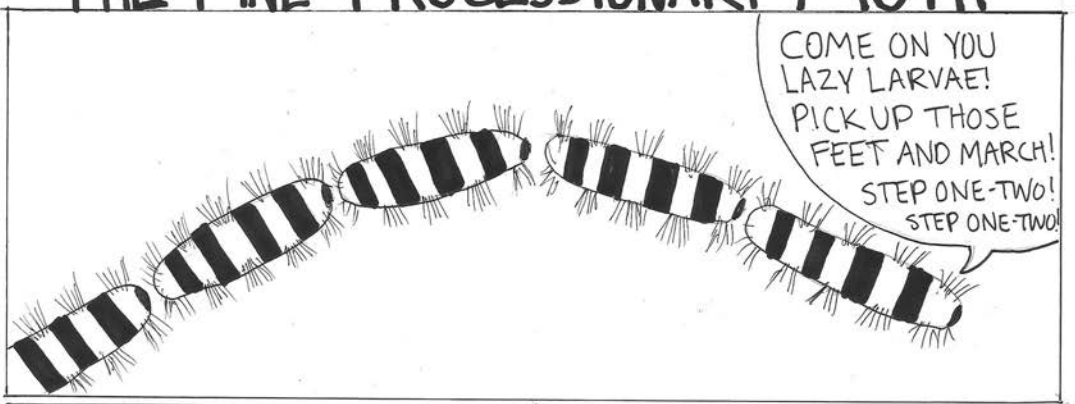

We can't hear it, but they're actually communicating! After hearing my buzz, the first elephant produced a subsonic "rumble" to warn the others I was there. They even have specific calls for different threats. A bee rumble tells others they should shake their ears and run, while a human rumble tells them to just walk away.


And I guess having a distinct warning system is advantageous right?
Right! It allows them to make behavioral decisions that increase their survival and reproductive success. By being able to react to threats of different urgencies, they can coordinate group movements and help relatives not get injured. Pretty cool huh?
Yeah!

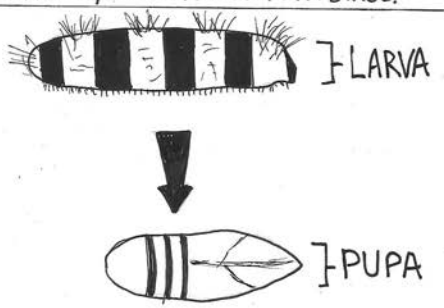

So what do you say? Will you go out with me?
How could I say no to the guy that's the "buzz" of the entire savanna?


THE END

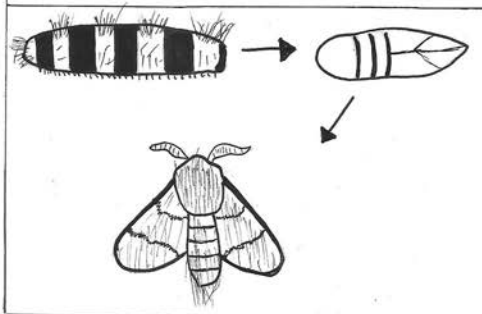
THE PINE PROCESSIONARY MOTH



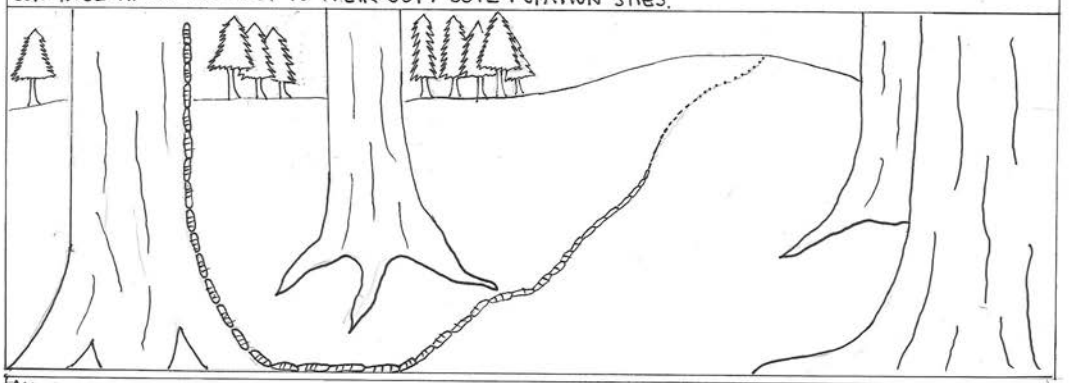
WHY ARE THESE LARVAE MARCHING YOU ASK? WELL, IT'S BECAUSE THEY ARE IN SEARCH OF A PLACE TO UNDERGO THE THIRD STAGE OF THE PROCESS OF METAMORPHOSIS, KNOWN AS THE PUPA STAGE.



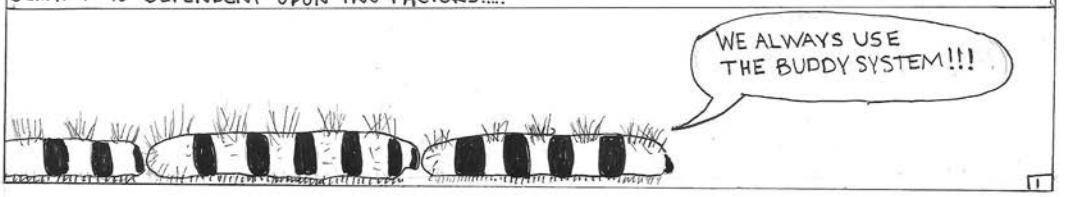
DURING THIS STAGE, THE INSECT'S LARVAL STRUCTURES ARE BROKEN DOWN WHILE THEIR ADULT STRUCTURES FORM. AFTER PUPATION, THE INSECT EMERGES AS AN ADULT THAT IS CAPABLE OF PROPAGATING ITS GENES TO SUBSEQUENT GENERATIONS.



AT THE END OF MARCH, THE MOTH LARVAE FIRST LEAVE THEIR NEST, LOCATED HIGH UP IN THE FOREST'S PINE AND CEDAR TREES AND FOLLOW EACH OTHER IN A HEAD TO TAIL MANNER AS THEY CONTINUE THEIR JOURNEY TO THEIR SOFT SOIL PUPATION SITES.

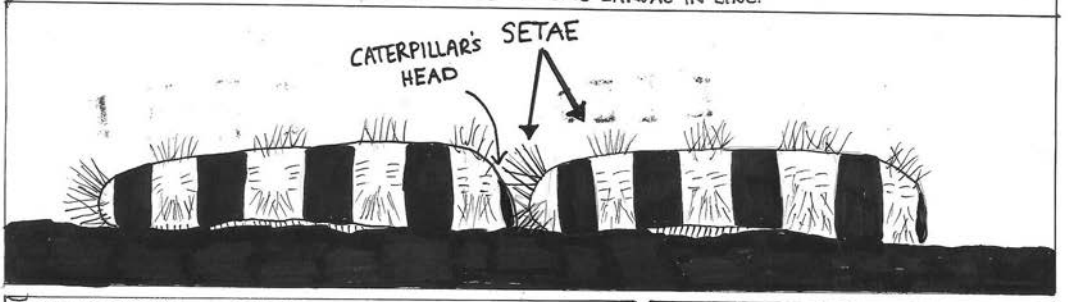


AMAZINGLY, THESE LITTLE GUYS RARELY LOSE EACH OTHER FROM THE TIME THEY LEAVE THEIR CONIFEROUS NESTS, TO THE MOMENT THEY BURY THEMSELVES IN THE SOIL. THEIR TRAIL FOLLOWING BEHAVIOR IS DEPENDENT UPON TWO FACTORS.....

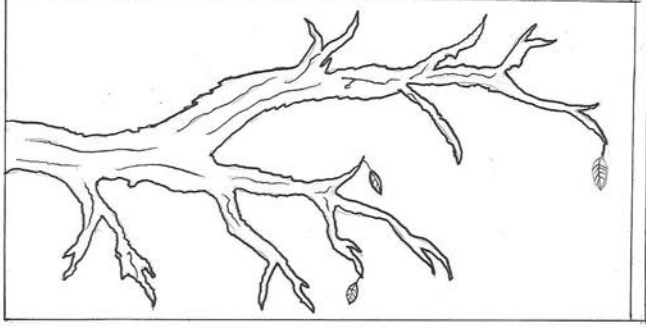


THE FIRST FACTOR THAT CONTRIBUTES TO THEIR PROCESSIONARY BEHAVIOR IS THE SECRETION OF A PHEROMONE. THE PHEROMONE TRAIL GUIDES THE CATERPILLARS TO THEIR DESTINATION. QUITE REMARKABLY, THE CATERPILLARS ARE ABLE TO DISTINGUISH BETWEEN NEW AND OLD TRAILS.

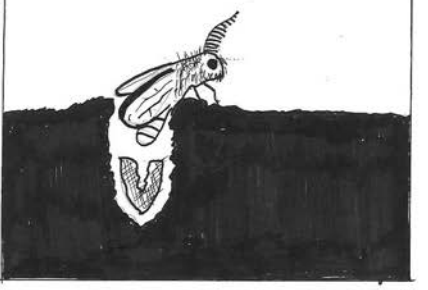
THE SECOND FACTOR THAT CONTRIBUTES TO THEIR PROCESSIONARY BEHAVIOR IS THE STIMULI ASSOCIATED WITH THE CONTACT OF BRISTLE-LIKE STRUCTURES KNOWN AS SETAE. SPECIFICALLY, THE STIMULI FROM SETAE ON THE LEAD CATERPILLAR'S ABDOMEN KEEPS THE TRAILING LARVAE IN LINE.



ALTHOUGH THIS BEHAVIOR SEEMS RATHER HARMLESS, IT ACTUALLY IMPACTS THE ECOSYSTEM QUITE SUBSTANTIALLY AS THESE CATERPILLARS SERIOUSLY DEFOLIATE TREES, THEREFORE WEAKENING THEM AND LEAVING THEM MORE SUSCEPTIBLE TO DISEASE.

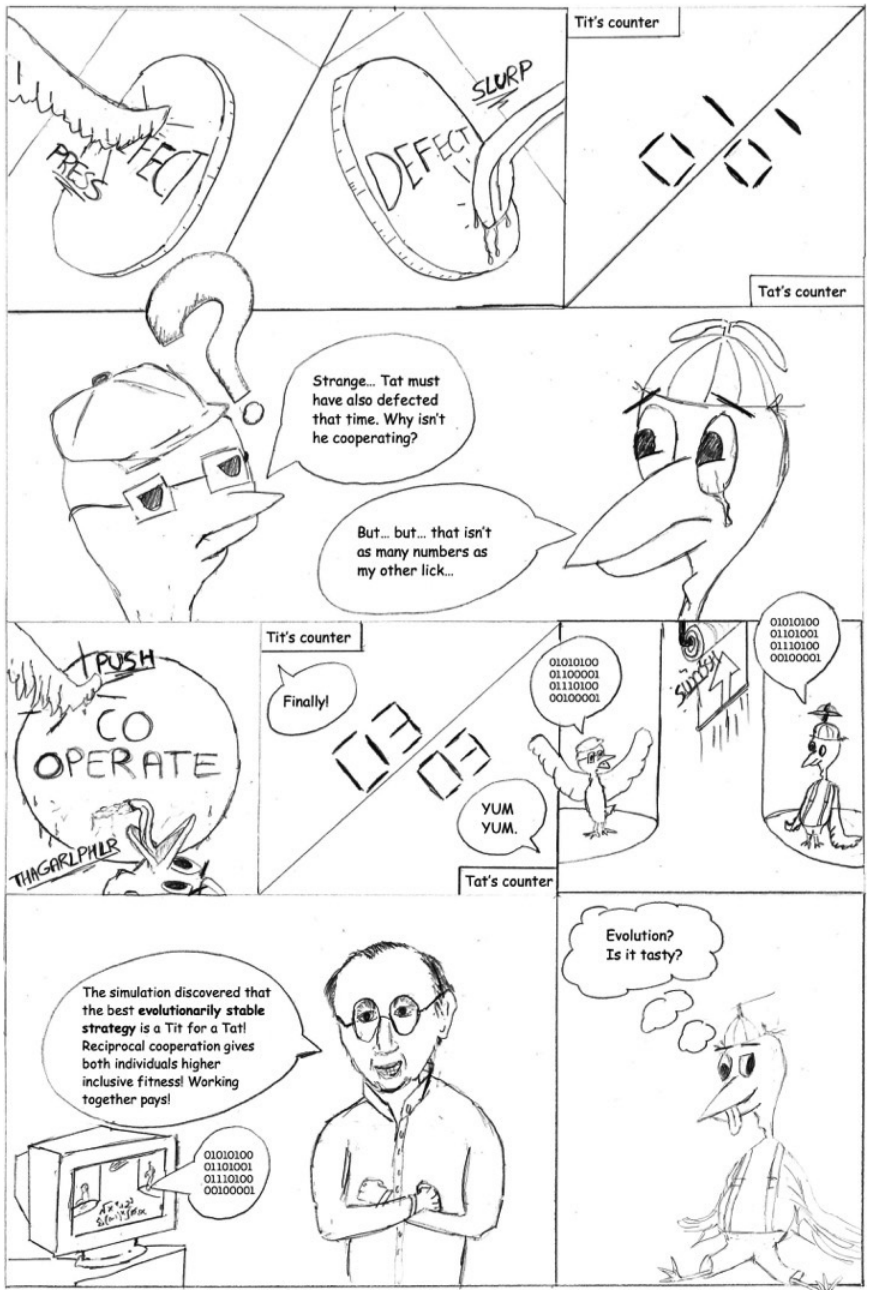


AFTER THEIR PROCESSION, THE CATERPILLARS BURY INTO THE SOFT SOIL WHERE THEY REMAIN UNTIL THEIR EMERGENCE AS FULL-GROWN MOTHS AT THE END OF SUMMER.

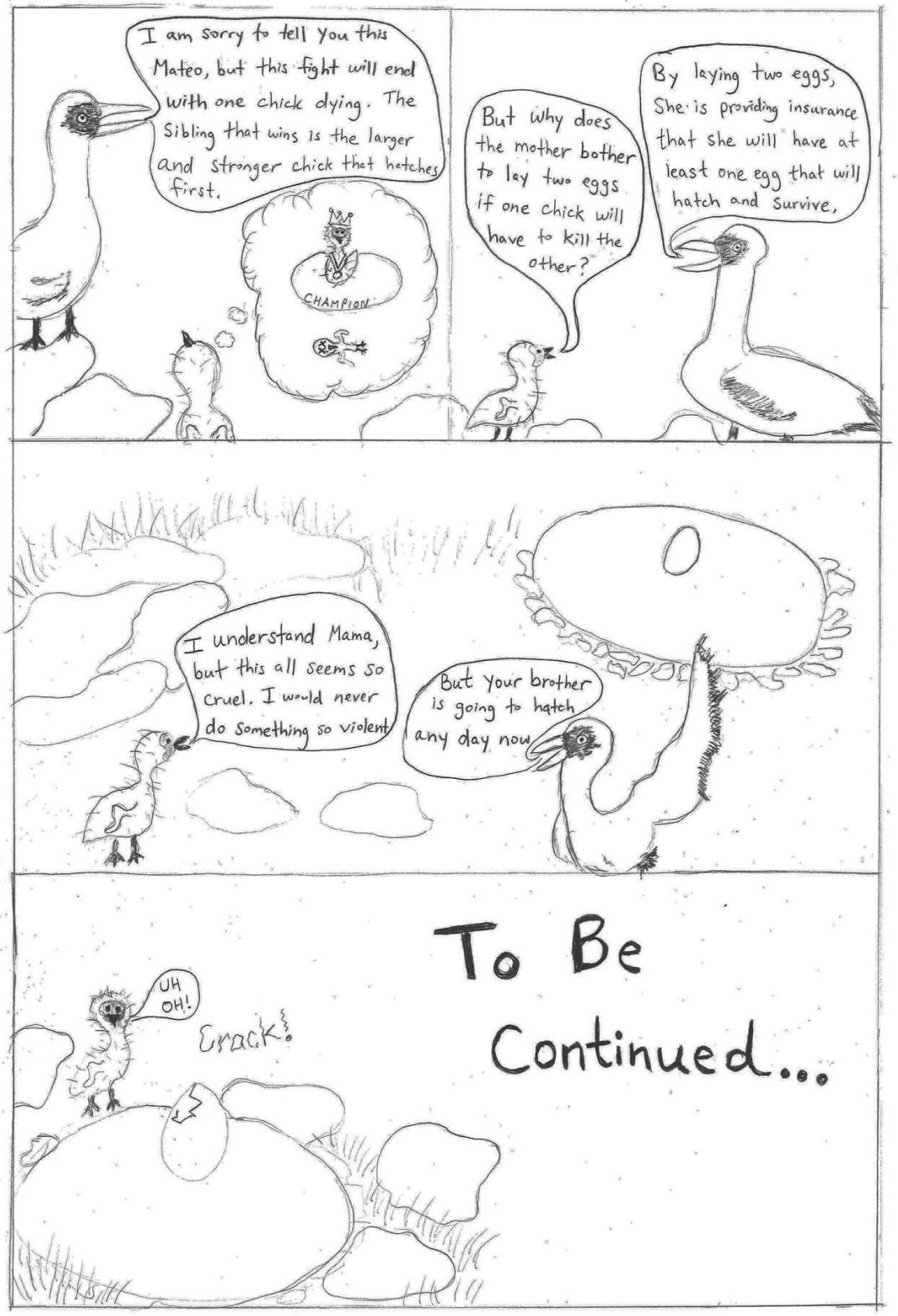


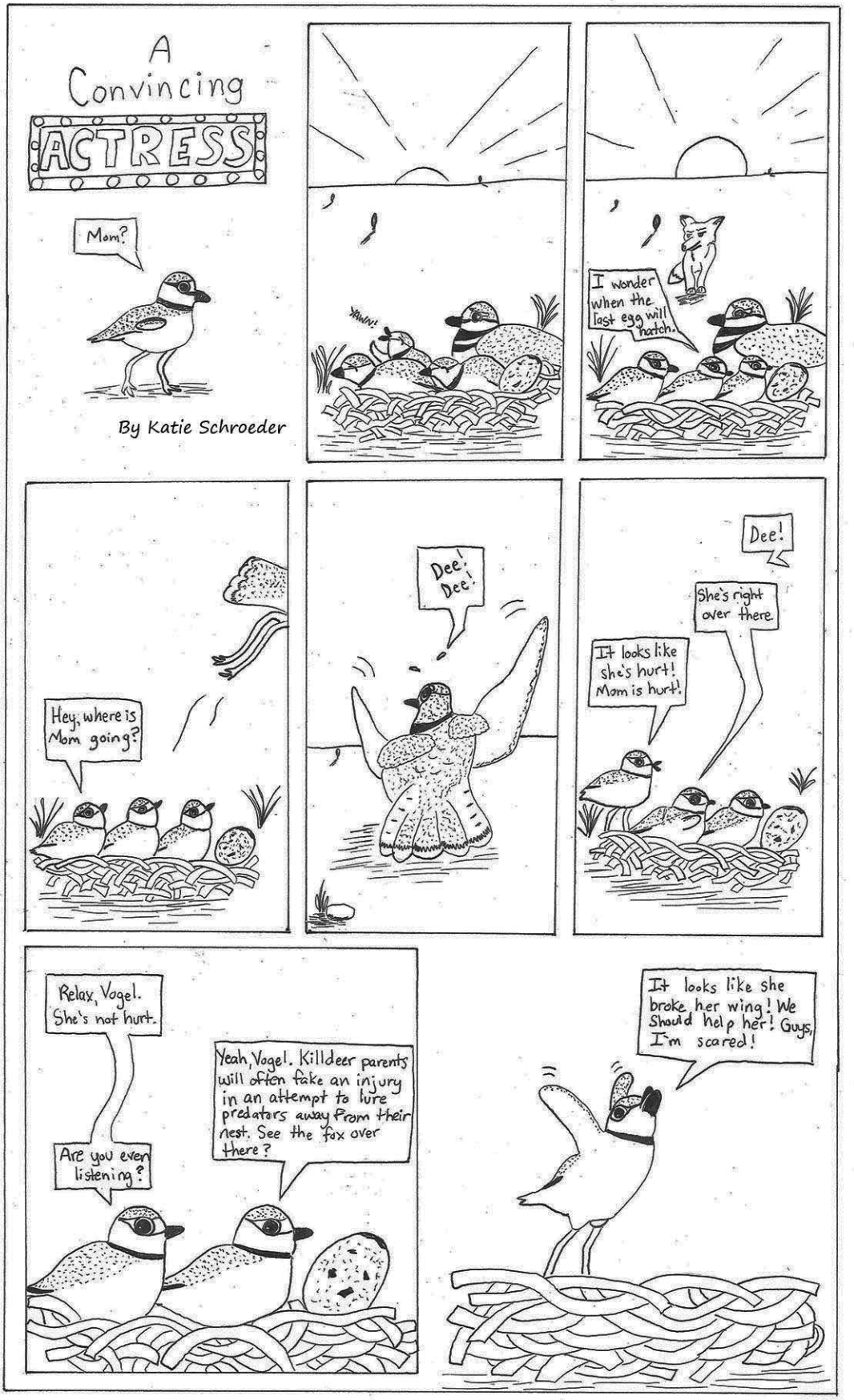
THE ADULT PINE PROCESSIONARY MOTH LIVES FOR ONLY ABOUT A DAY. AFTER THEIR EMERGENCE FROM THE GROUND! THEREFORE, IF THEY PLAN ON PASSING ON THEIR GENES TO THE NEXT GENERATION, THEY MUST DO SO IN A TIMELY MANNER BEFORE THEIR IMMINENT DEATH.

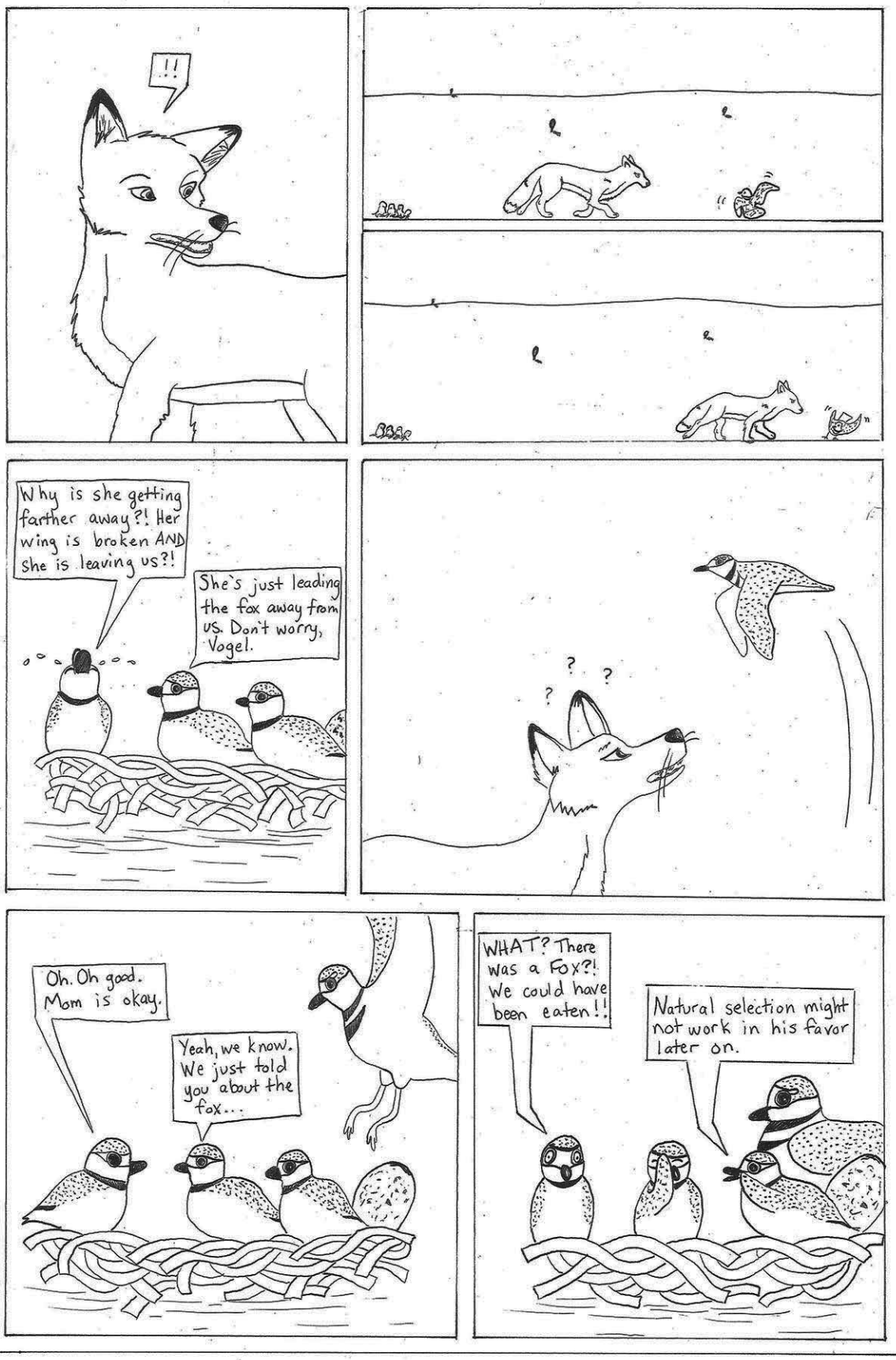
One day in the Axelrod laboratory...
Tat! Take a look a this! Most fascinating!
I got me one of them things too, Tit!
DEFECT
TIT
CO OPERATE
Suddenly, a curtain falls between the cages!
WHOOSH
TAT!
TIT!
He can't hear or see me!
Hmmmm...
I wonder...
BOOM
DEFECT
TIT
CO OPERATE
TAT
LICK
Tit's counter
00
05
Treason! He must not be cooperating!
That don't taste any good...
Tat's counter


DEFECT
PRESS
DEFECT
SLURP
Tit's counter
0
1
0
1
Tat's counter
Strange... Tat must have also defected that time. Why isn't he cooperating?
But... but... that isn't as many numbers as my other lick...
PUSH
CO
OPERATE
THAGARLPHLR
Tit's counter
Finally!
0
3
0
3
YUM
YUM.
Tat's counter
01010100
01100001
01110100
00100001
SUCCESS
01010100
01101001
01110100
00100001
The simulation discovered that the best **evolutionarily stable strategy** is a Tit for a Tat! Reciprocal cooperation gives both individuals higher inclusive fitness! Working together pays!
01010100
01101001
01110100
00100001
Evolution?
Is it tasty?

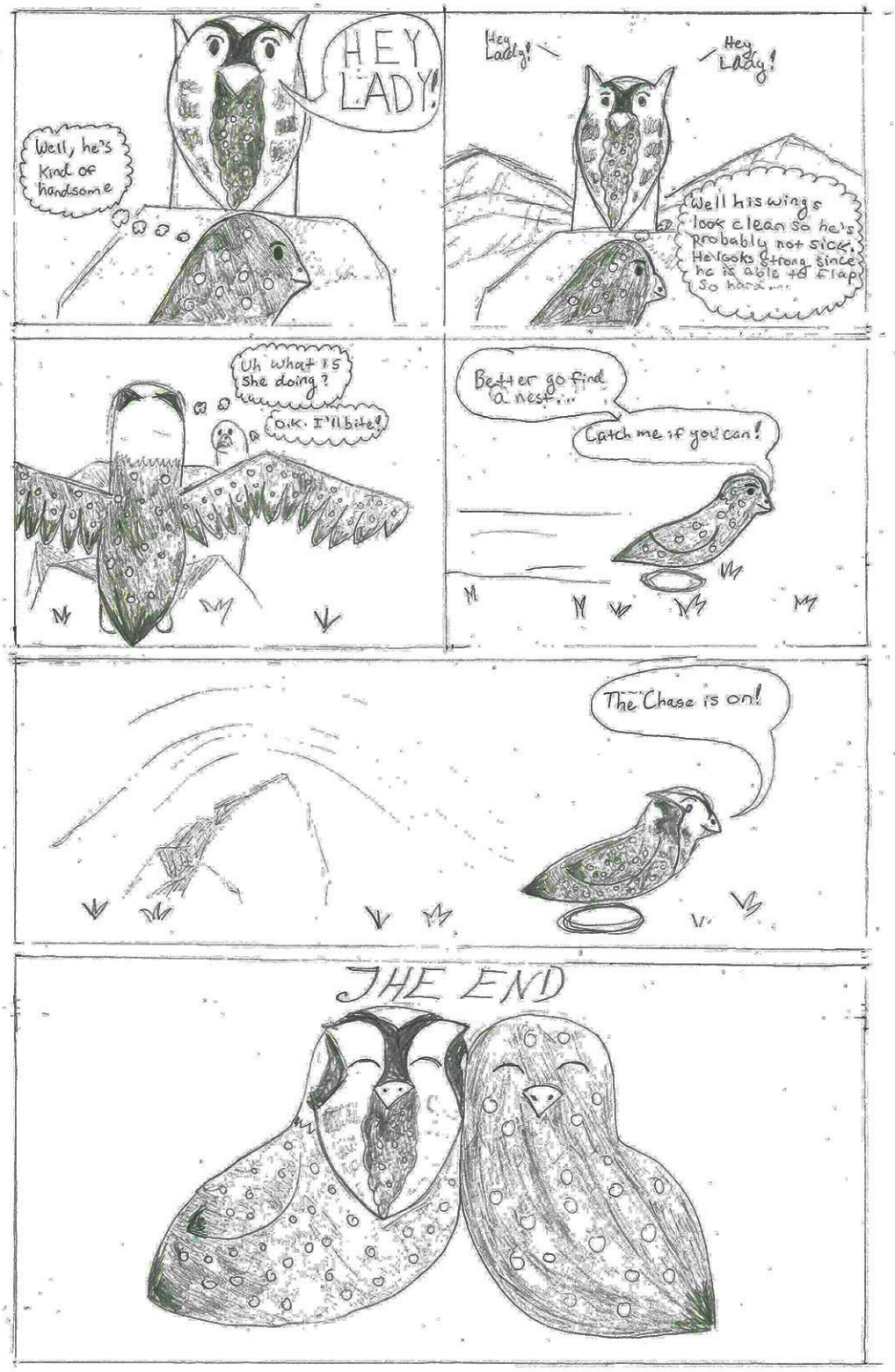
Thou Shall Kill Your Brother:
Obligate Siblicide in Nazca Boobies
by Heather Reau
Fight!
Fight!
Fight!
Fight!
Fight!
Fight!
Fight!
Fight!
Mama! Mama! What's going on?
The Delgado brothers are fighting.
But why Mama?
They are partaking in obligate siblicide my son. It is a part of our nature and it is what birds of our kind do. Let me explain.
You see, the mother lays two eggs and if both eggs survive, they will hatch about 5 days apart. Since resources are limited, the chicks will attack and try to push its sibling out of the nest.
But who wins? How does the fight end? Mama, please tell me there is a happy ending!

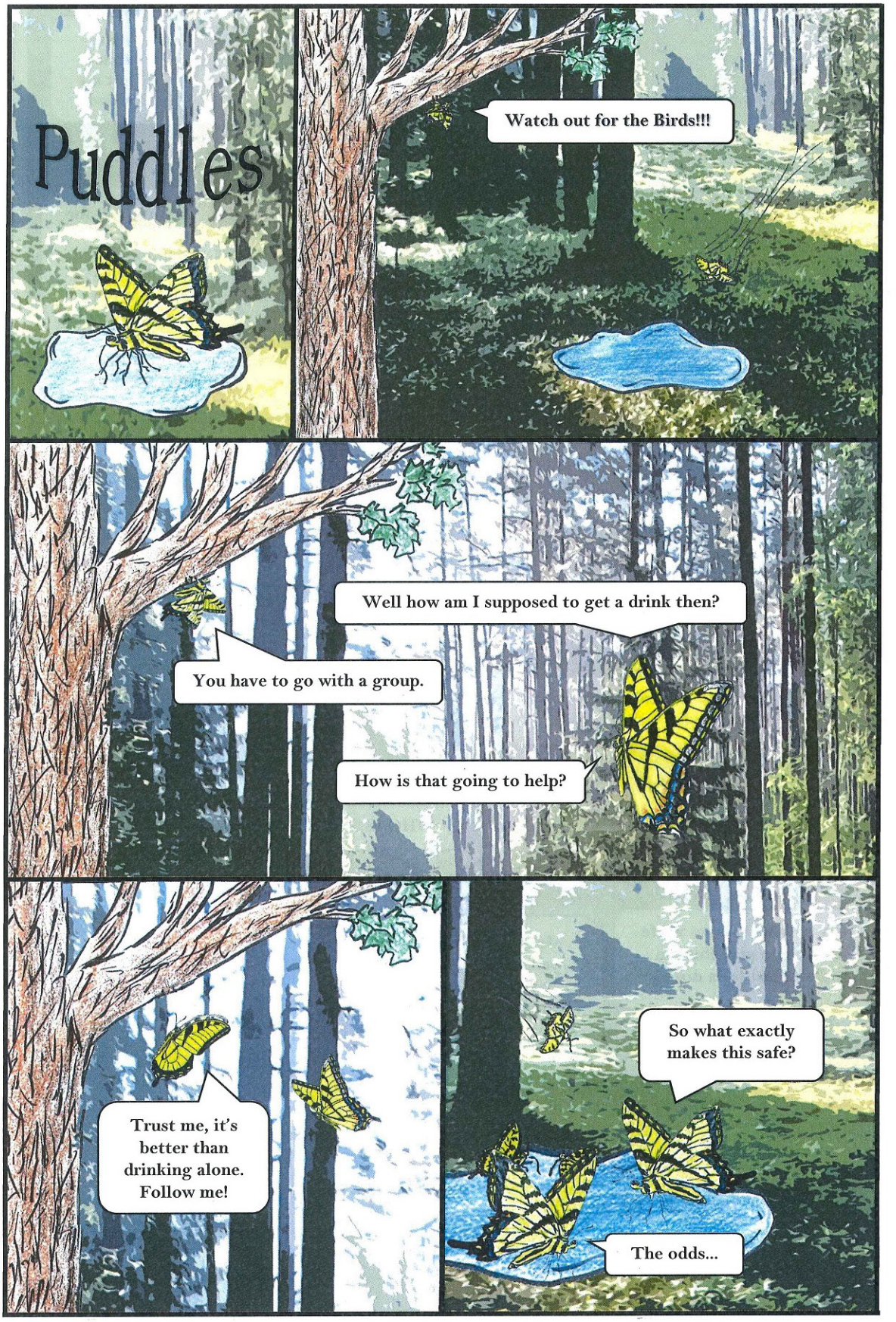

I am sorry to tell you this Mateo, but this fight will end with one chick dying. The sibling that wins is the larger and stronger chick that hatches first.
CHAMPION
But why does the mother bother to lay two eggs if one chick will have to kill the other?
By laying two eggs, she is providing insurance that she will have at least one egg that will hatch and survive.
I understand Mama, but this all seems so cruel. I would never do something so violent.
But your brother is going to hatch any day now.
UH OH!
Crack!
To Be Continued...

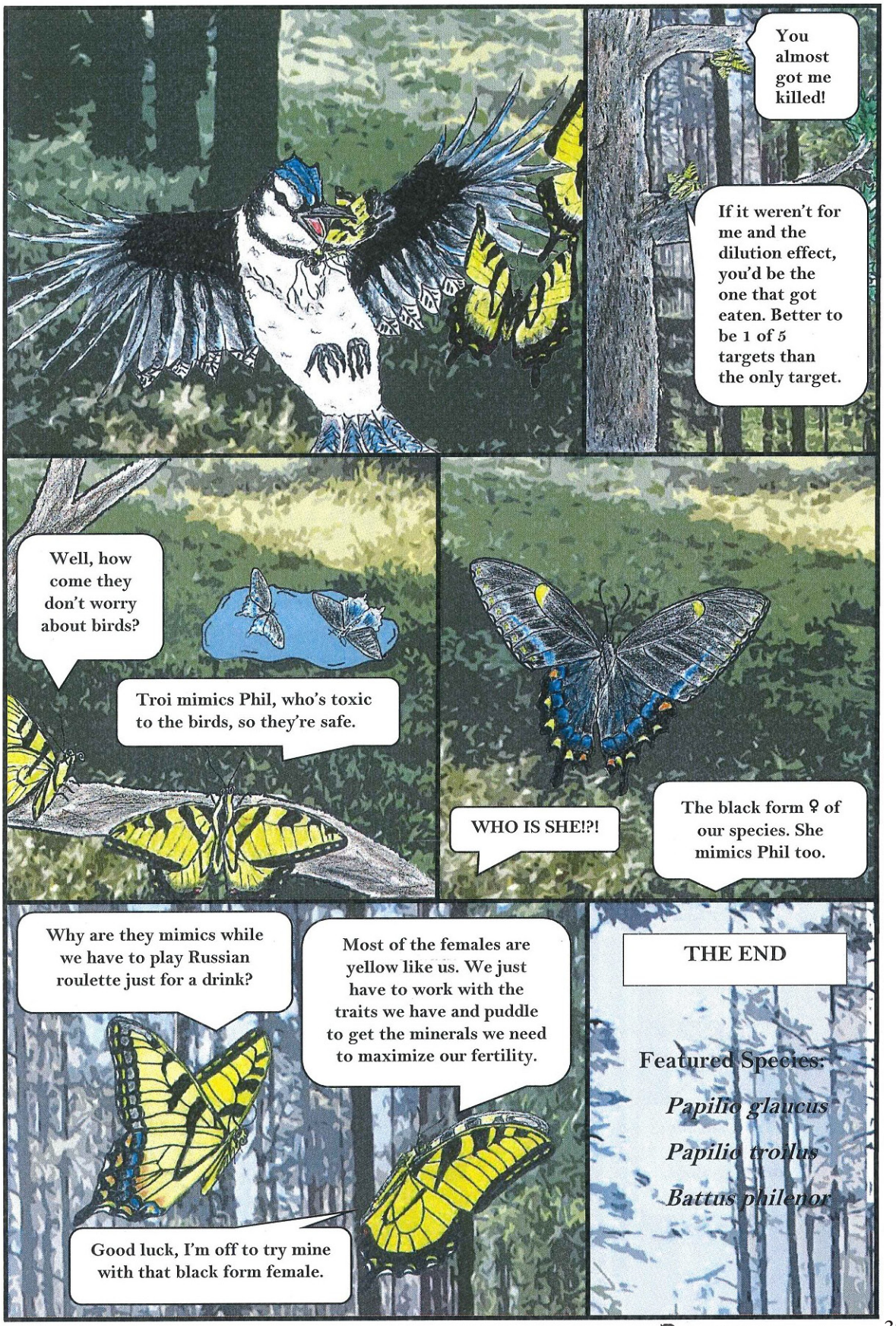

A Convincing
ACTRESS
Mom?
By Katie Schroeder
YAWN!
I wonder when the last egg will hatch.
Hey, where is Mom going?
Dee! Dee!
Dee!
She's right over there.
It looks like she's hurt! Mom is hurt!
Relax, Vogel. She's not hurt.
Are you even listening?
Yeah, Vogel. Killdeer parents will often fake an injury in an attempt to lure predators away from their nest. See the fox over there?
It looks like she broke her wing! We should help her! Guys, I'm scared!


!!
Why is she getting farther away?! Her wing is broken AND she is leaving us?!
She's just leading the fox away from us. Don't worry, Vogel.
? ? ?
Oh. Oh good. Mom is okay.
Yeah, we know. We just told you about the fox...
WHAT? There was a Fox?! We could have been eaten!!
Natural selection might not work in his favor later on.

Temminck Mating
Ah! This looks like a good spot.
Oh! There she is. Show time!
HEY LADY!
Uh Oh!
SWOOSH
HEY LADY!
Good grief
SWOOSH
HEY LADY!
SWOOSH

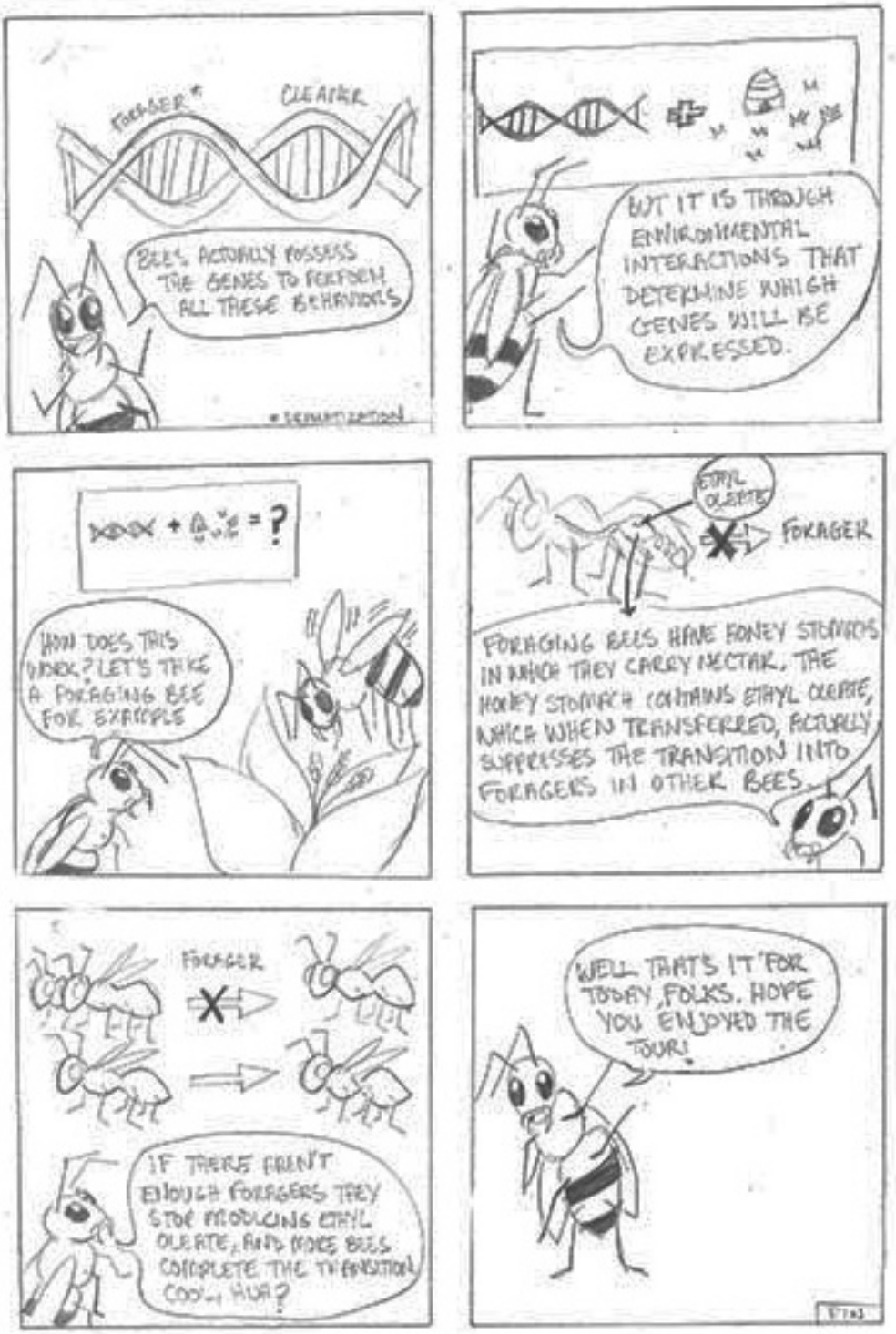

HEY LADY!
Well, he's kind of handsome
Hey Lady!
Hey Lady!
Well his wings look clean so he's probably not sick. He looks strong since he is able to flap so hard...
Uh what is she doing?
O.K. I'll bite!
Better go find a nest...
Catch me if you can!
The Chase is on!
THE END

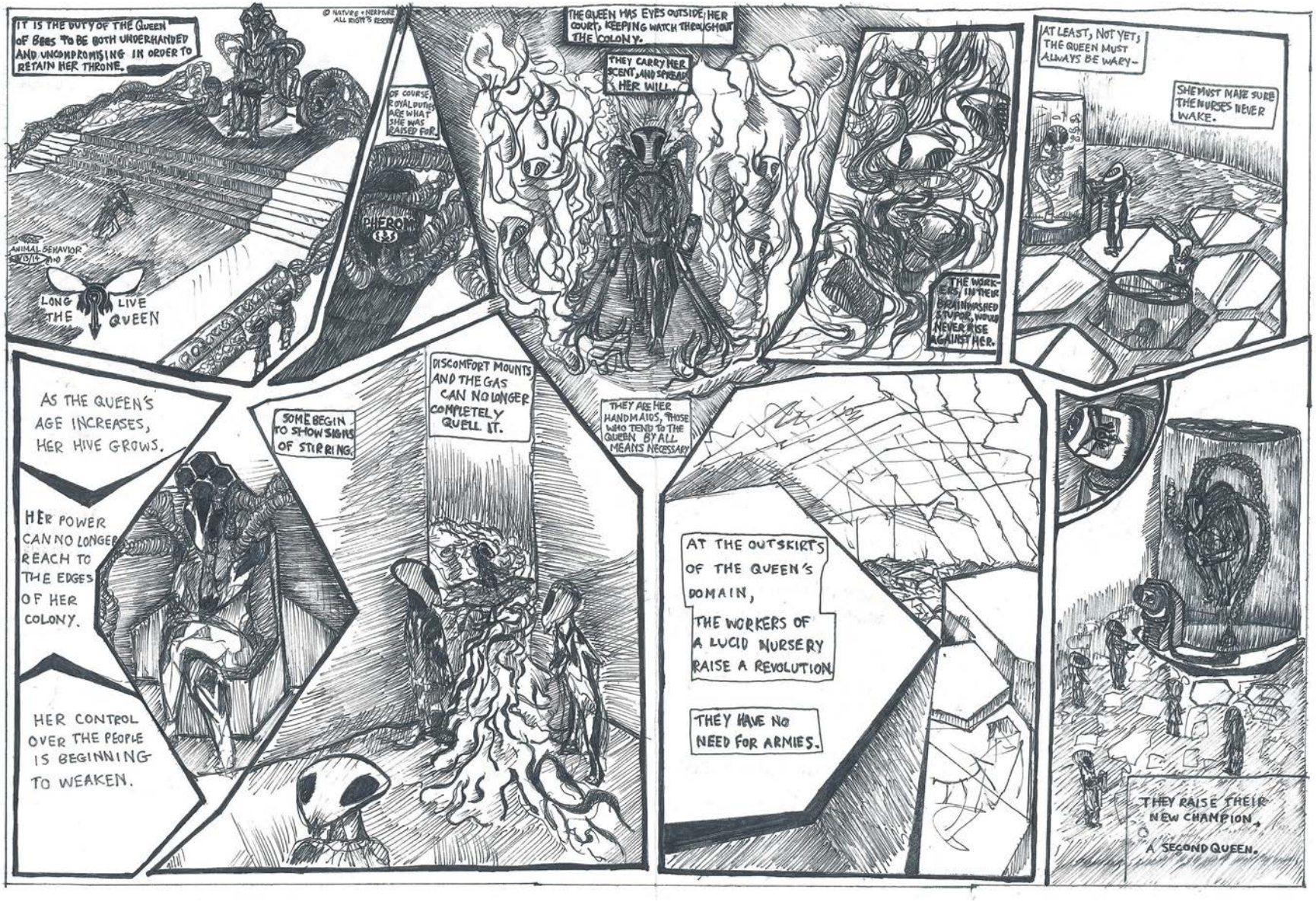

Puddles
Watch out for the Birds!!!
Well how am I supposed to get a drink then?
You have to go with a group.
How is that going to help?
Trust me, it's better than drinking alone. Follow me!
So what exactly makes this safe?
The odds...

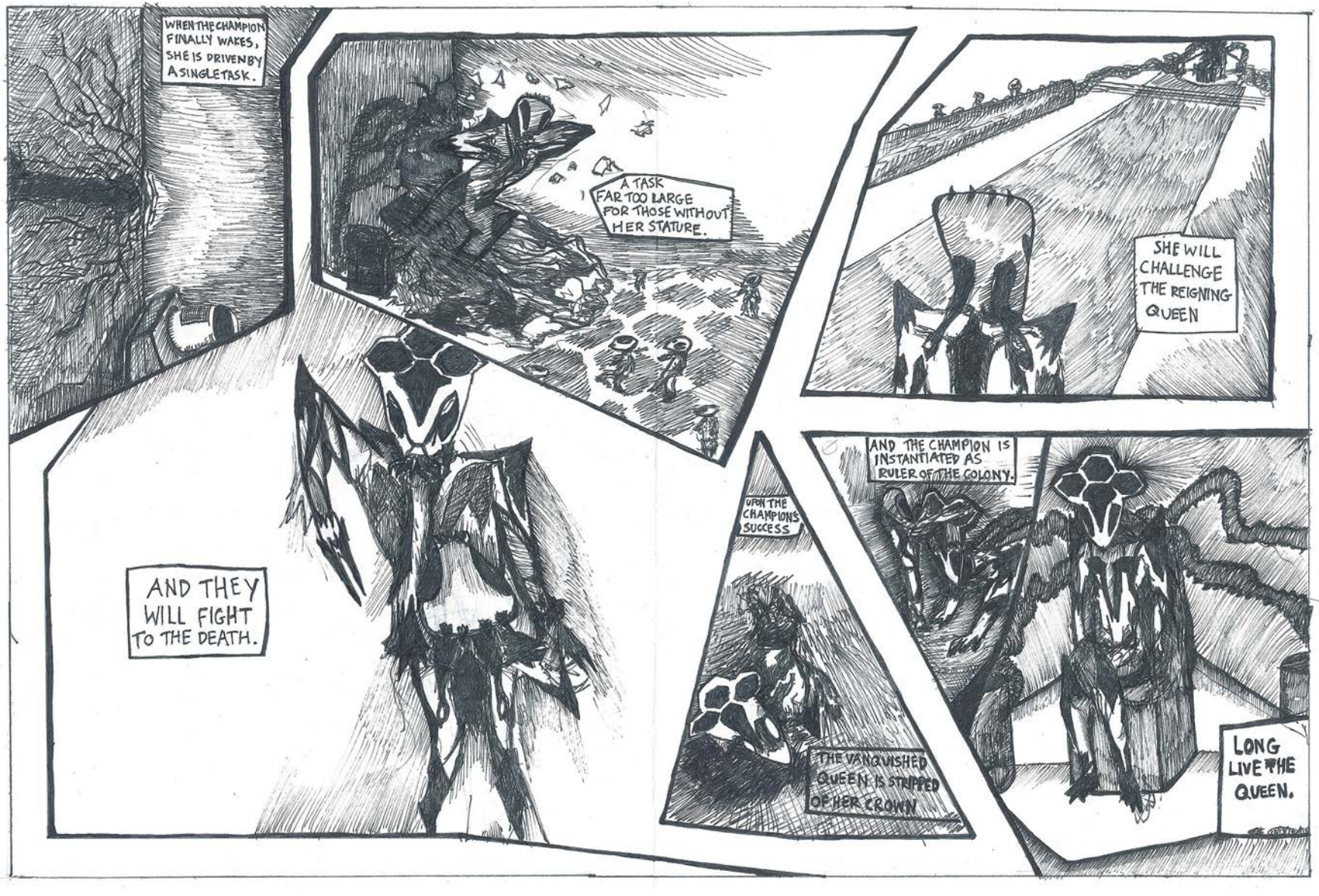


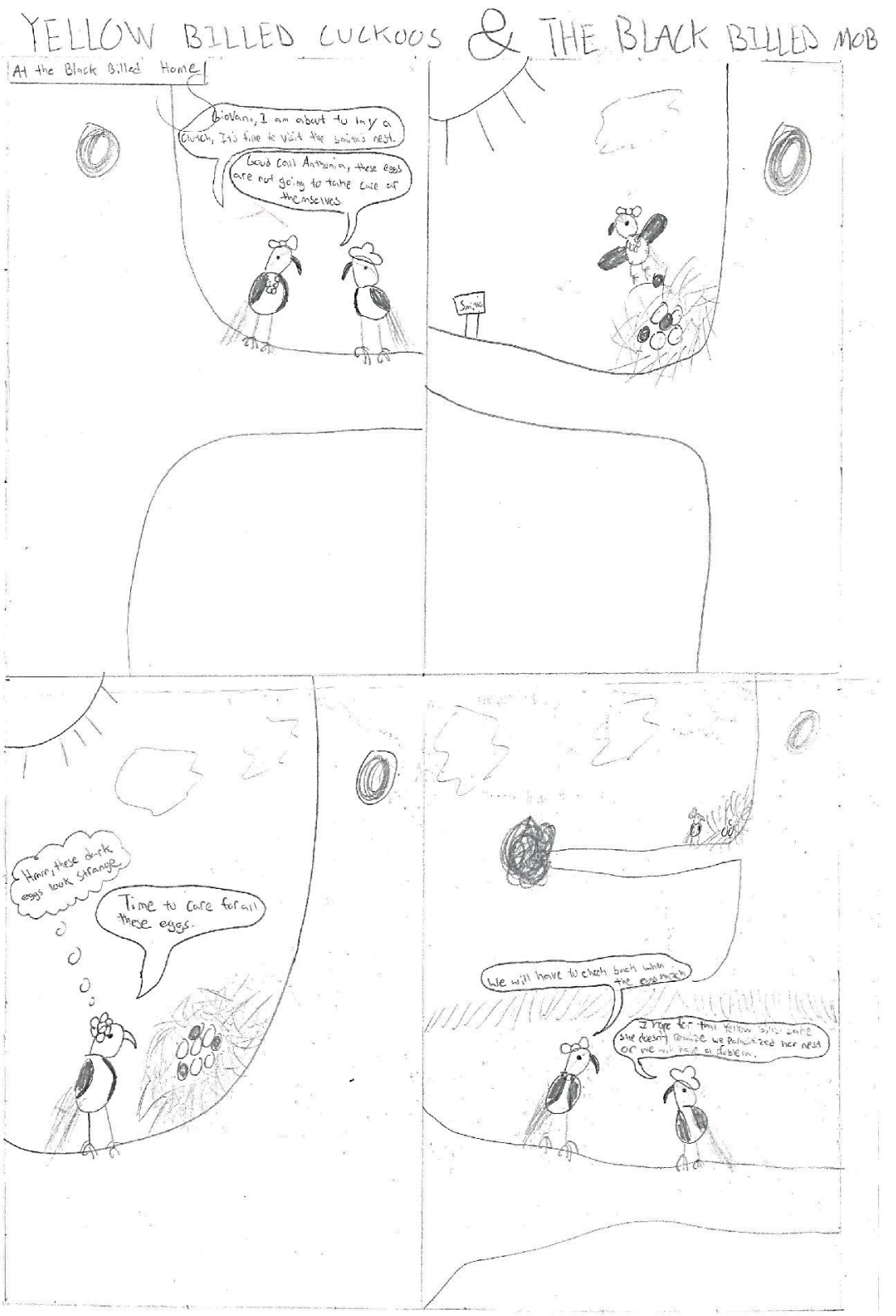
Ryan Wickes 2014

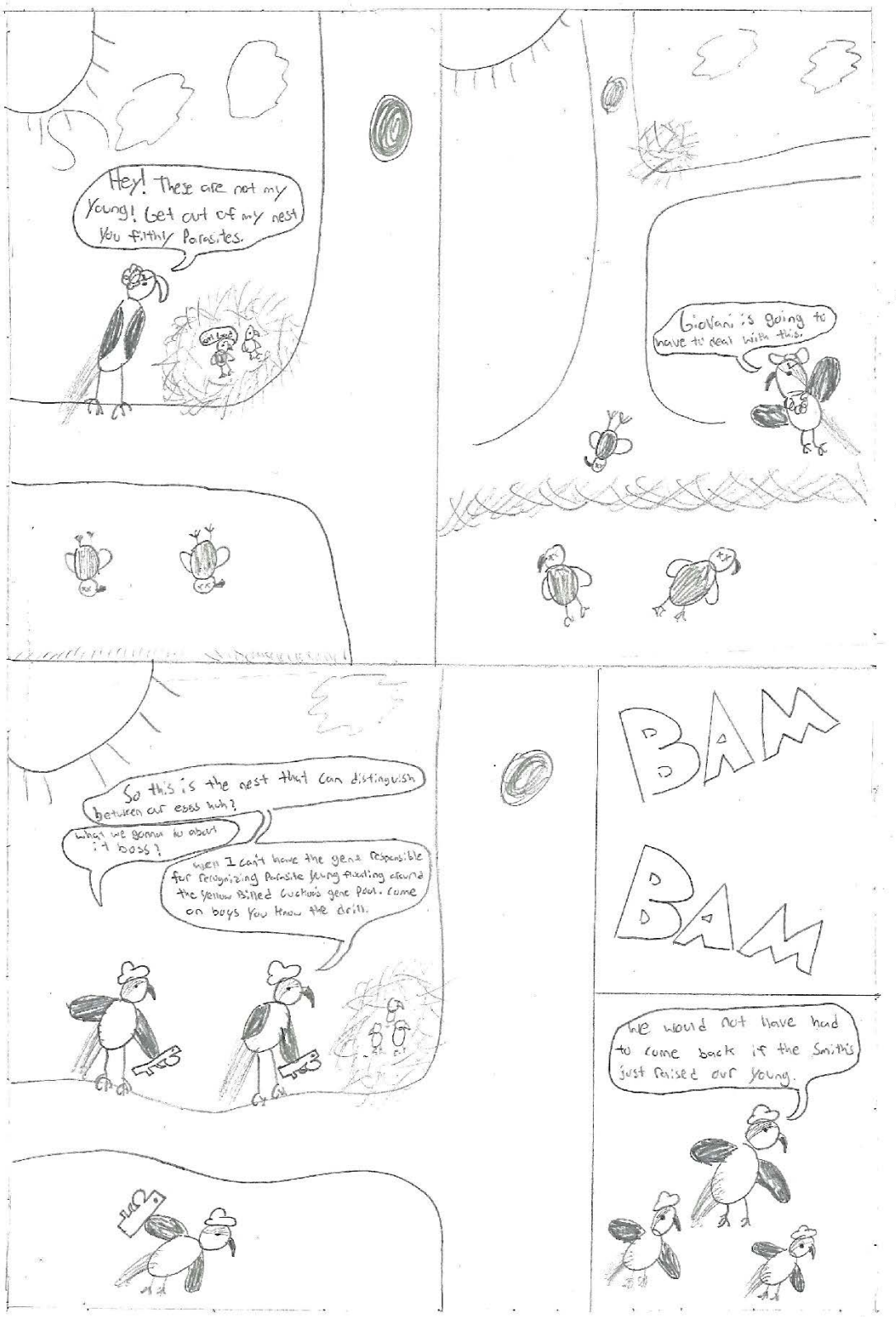
BEEHIVE BY: SIHAM ZNIBER
WELCOME TO THE EMERGENCY HIVE IS HERE KID! YOU'LL BE FINE. TAKE A SIT. GET USED TO LEARN ABOUT ALL THAT HAPPENS IN A BEEHIVE!
TO ENSURE THE SMOOTH RUNNING OF A BEEHIVE, EVERY SINGLE BEE HAS A TASK TO PERFORM. WE EITHER CLEAN CELLS...
...FEED LARVAE HOW'S IT GOING BETH?
...FEED YOURSELF OK
PSSST
PHEW!
BUT HOW DO BEES KNOW WHAT TASK TO PERFORM?
GREAT QUESTION!

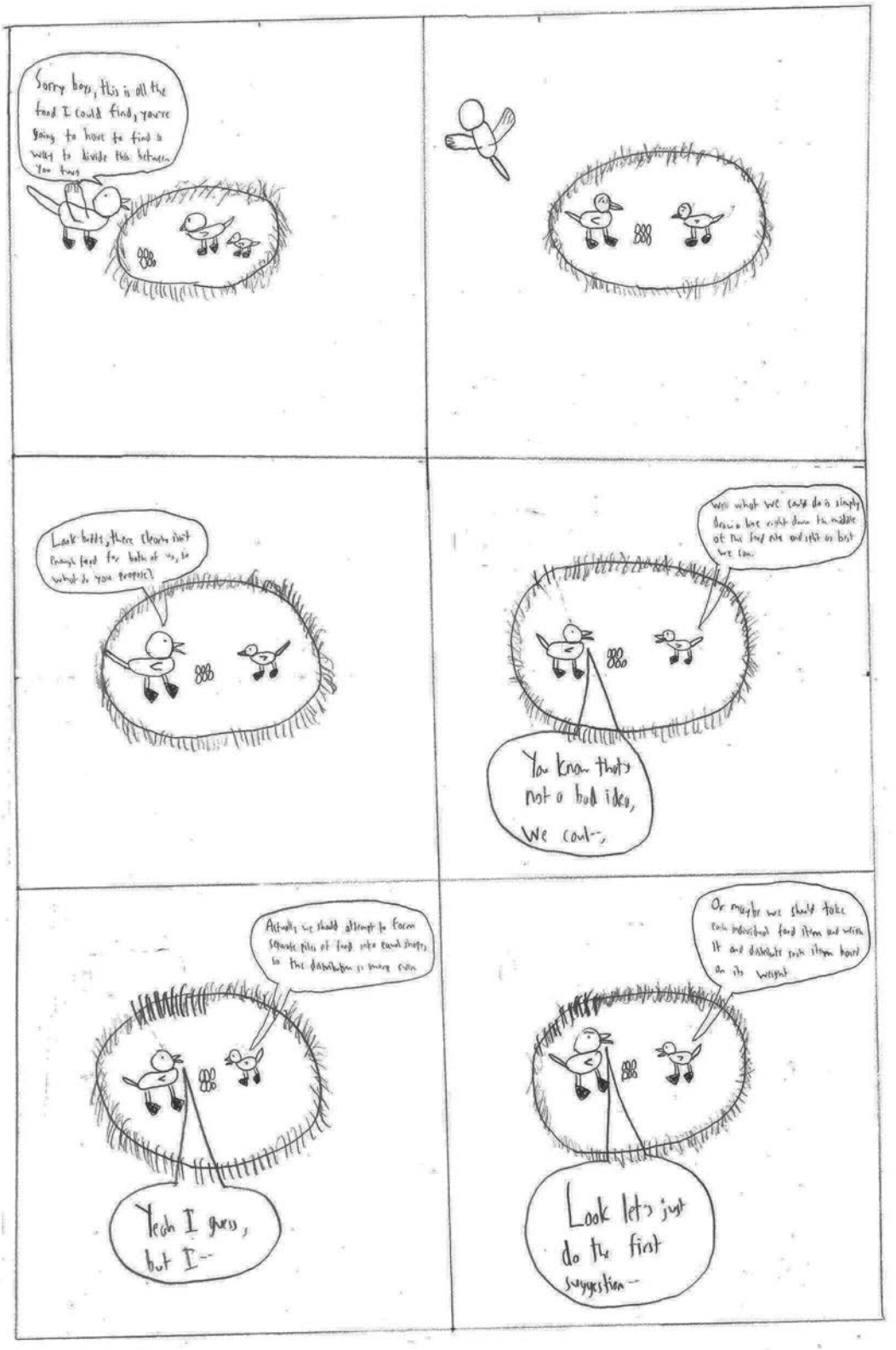

FORAGER
CLEANER
BEES ACTUALLY POSSESS THE GENES TO PERFORM ALL THESE BEHAVIORS
* DEVIANT ARTIST
BUT IT IS THROUGH ENVIRONMENTAL INTERACTIONS THAT DETERMINE WHICH GENES WILL BE EXPRESSED.
+ =
HOW DOES THIS WORK? LET'S TAKE A FORAGING BEE FOR EXAMPLE
ETHYL OLEATE
FORAGER
FORAGING BEES HAVE HONEY STOMACHS IN WHICH THEY CARRY NECTAR. THE HONEY STOMACH CONTAINS ETHYL OLEATE, WHICH WHEN TRANSFERRED, ACTUALLY SUPPRESSES THE TRANSITION INTO FORAGERS IN OTHER BEES.
FORAGER
IF THERE AREN'T ENOUGH FORAGERS THEY STOP PRODUCING ETHYL OLEATE, AND MORE BEES COMPLETE THE TRANSITION! COOL, HUH?
WELL THAT'S IT FOR TODAY, FOLKS. HOPE YOU ENJOYED THE TOUR!

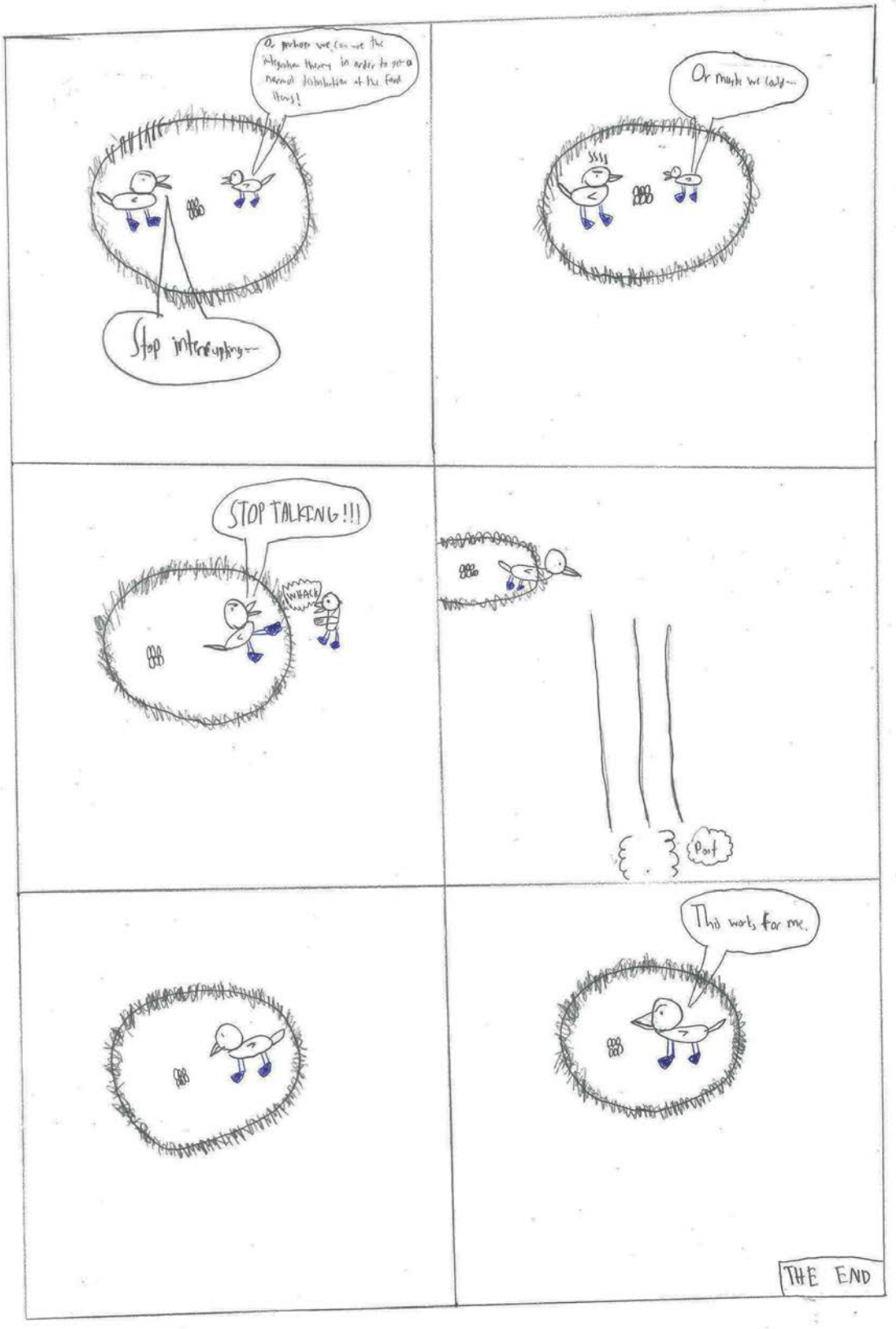

IT IS THE DUTY OF THE QUEEN OF BEES TO BE BOTH UNDERHANDED AND UNCOMPROMISING IN ORDER TO RETAIN HER THRONE.
© NATURE + NURTURE ALL RIGHTS RESERVED
OF COURSE, ROYAL DUTIES ARE WHAT SHE WAS RAISED FOR.
PHEROMONES
ANIMAL BEHAVIOR 2/13/14
LONG LIVE THE QUEEN
THE QUEEN HAS EYES OUTSIDE, HER COURT, KEEPING WATCH THROUGHOUT THE COLONY.
THEY CARRY HER SCENT, AND SPREAD HER WILL.
THE WORKERS, IN THEIR BRAINWASHED STUPOR, WOULD NEVER RISE AGAINST HER.
AT LEAST, NOT YET; THE QUEEN MUST ALWAYS BE WARY-
SHE MUST MAKE SURE THE NURSES NEVER WAKE.
AS THE QUEEN'S AGE INCREASES, HER HIVE GROWS.
HER POWER CAN NO LONGER REACH TO THE EDGES OF HER COLONY.
HER CONTROL OVER THE PEOPLE IS BEGINNING TO WEAKEN.
SOME BEGIN TO SHOW SIGNS OF STIRRING.
DISCOMFORT MOUNTS AND THE GAS CAN NO LONGER COMPLETELY QUELL IT.
THEY ARE HER HANDMAIDS, THOSE WHO TEND TO THE QUEEN BY ALL MEANS NECESSARY
AT THE OUTSKIRTS OF THE QUEEN'S DOMAIN,
THE WORKERS OF A LUCID NURSERY RAISE A REVOLUTION.
THEY HAVE NO NEED FOR ARMIES.
THEY RAISE THEIR NEW CHAMPION,
A SECOND QUEEN.


WHEN THE CHAMPION FINALLY WAKES, SHE IS DRIVEN BY A SINGLE TASK.
A TASK FAR TOO LARGE FOR THOSE WITHOUT HER STATURE.
SHE WILL CHALLENGE THE REIGNING QUEEN
AND THEY WILL FIGHT TO THE DEATH.
UPON THE CHAMPION'S SUCCESS
THE VANQUISHED QUEEN IS STRIPPED OF HER CROWN
AND THE CHAMPION IS INSTANTIATED AS RULER OF THE COLONY.
LONG LIVE THE QUEEN.


YELLOW BILLED CUCKOOS & THE BLACK BILLED MOB
At the Black Billed Home
Giovanni, I am about to lay a clutch, It's time to visit the yellows nest.
Good call Antonio, these eggs are not going to take care of themselves
Sunset
Hmm, these dark eggs look strange
Time to care for all these eggs.
We will have to check back with the eggs later.
I hope for their sake she doesn't realize we replaced her nest or we will have a problem.

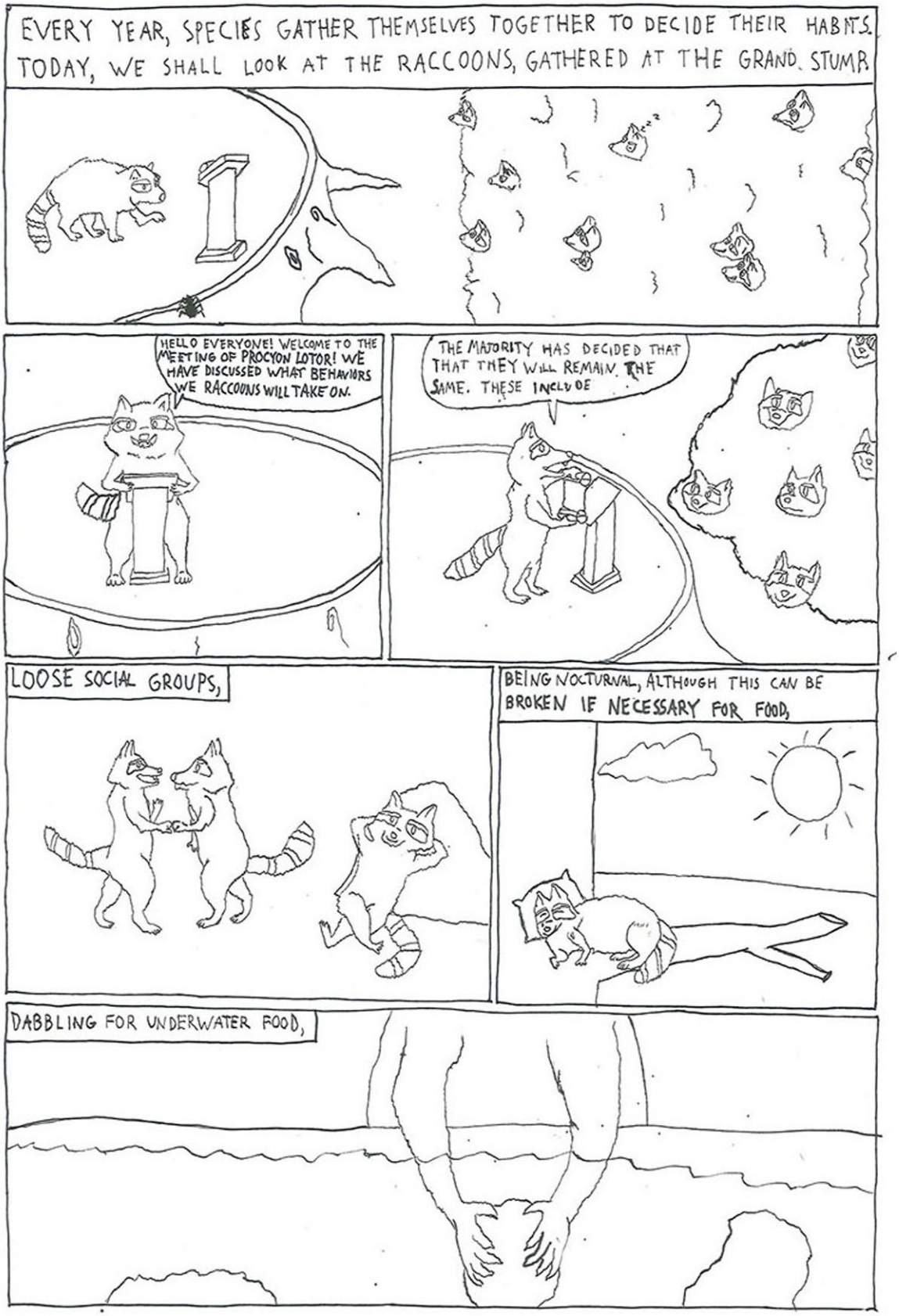

Hey! These are not my young! Get out of my nest you filthy Parasites.
Giovani is going to have to deal with this.
So this is the nest that can distinguish between our eggs huh?
What we gonna do about it boss?
Well I can't have the gene responsible for recognizing parasite young stealing around the yellow billed cuckoo's gene pool. Come on boys you know the drill.
BAM
BAM
We would not have had to come back if the Smith's just raised our young.

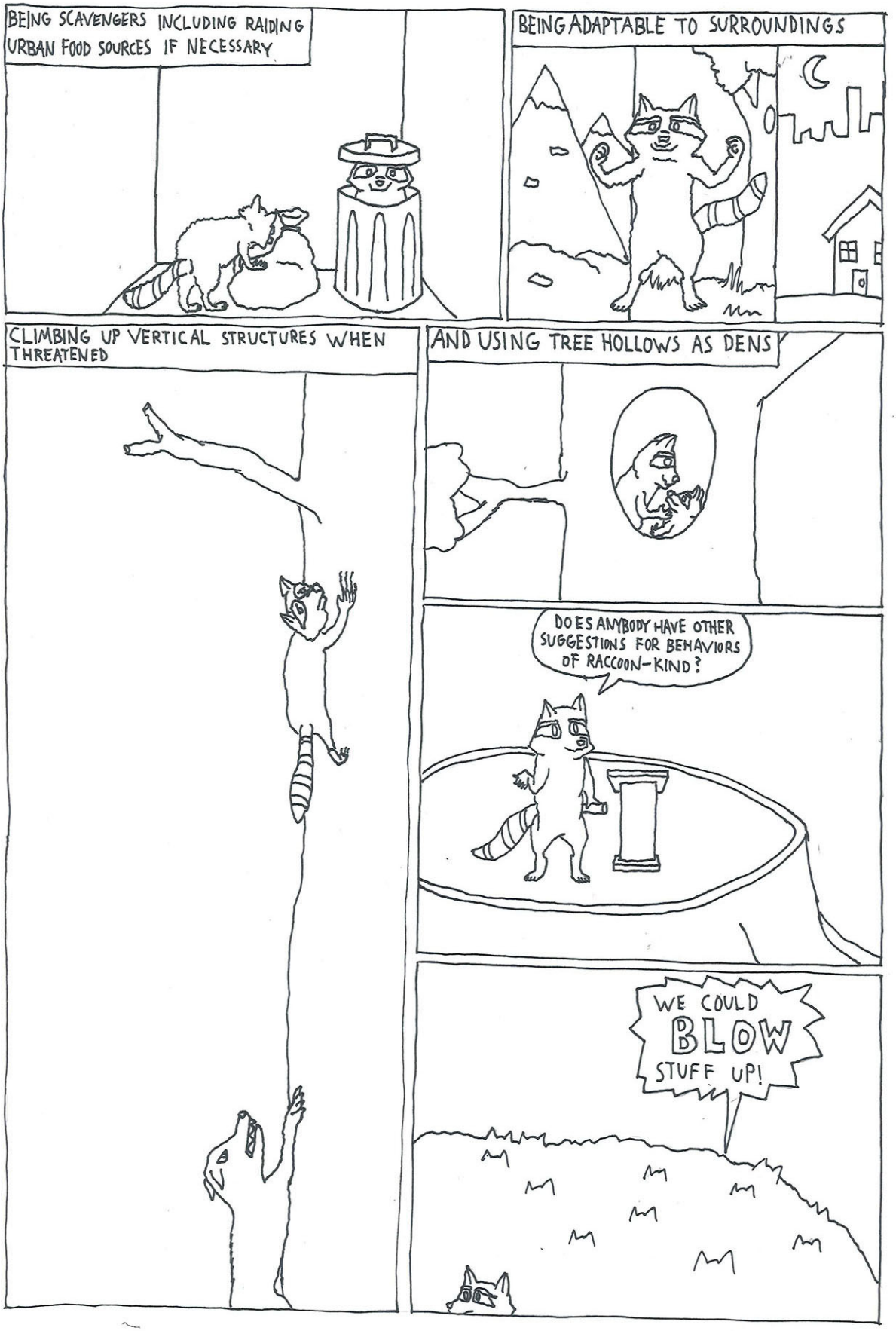

Sorry boys, this is all the food I could find, you're going to have to find a way to divide this between you two
Look kids, there clearly isn't enough food for both of us, so what do you propose?
Well what we could do is simply draw a line right down the middle of the food pile and split as best we can.
You know that's not a bad idea, we could--
Actually we should attempt to form square piles of food into equal shapes, to the distribution is more even
Yeah I guess, but I--
Or maybe we should take each individual food item and weigh it and distribute each item based on its weight
Look let's just do the first suggestion--

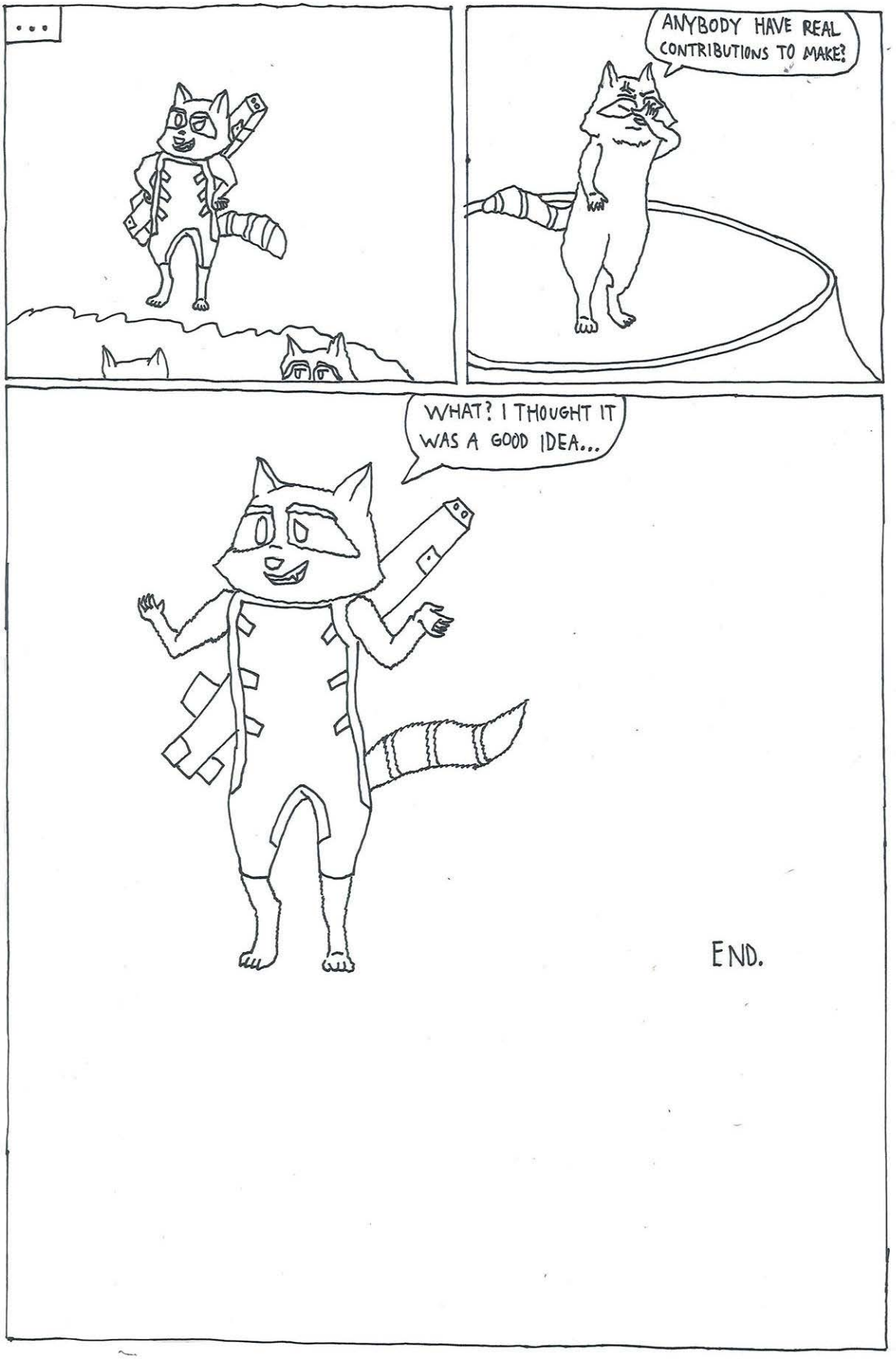

Or maybe we could--
STOP TALKING!!!
WHACK
Poof
This works for me.
THE END

CHALLENGE
Dude check her out
Get out of my territory! You annoying satellite
We most be swift as the coursing River, Be a Man, with all force of a great typhoon
Stupid boys...
With all the strength of a raging fire,
You should ignore those hot heads
I am a lone ranger!
come with me and we can have adventure.
ROUND 1
FIGHT
FINISH HIM
page 1

I AM KING!
#1
well this sucks
page 2


EVERY YEAR, SPECIES GATHER THEMSELVES TOGETHER TO DECIDE THEIR HABITS.
TODAY, WE SHALL LOOK AT THE RACCOONS, GATHERED AT THE GRAND STUMP.
HELLO EVERYONE! WELCOME TO THE MEETING OF PROCYON LOTOR! WE HAVE DISCUSSED WHAT BEHAVIORS WE RACCOONS WILL TAKE ON.
THE MAJORITY HAS DECIDED THAT THAT THEY WILL REMAIN THE SAME. THESE INCLUDE
LOOSE SOCIAL GROUPS,
BEING NOCTURNAL, ALTHOUGH THIS CAN BE BROKEN IF NECESSARY FOR FOOD,
DABBLING FOR UNDERWATER FOOD,


BEING SCAVENGERS INCLUDING RAIDING URBAN FOOD SOURCES IF NECESSARY
BEING ADAPTABLE TO SURROUNDINGS
CLIMBING UP VERTICAL STRUCTURES WHEN THREATENED
AND USING TREE HOLLOWS AS DENS
DOES ANYBODY HAVE OTHER SUGGESTIONS FOR BEHAVIORS OF RACCOON-KIND?
WE COULD BLOW STUFF UP!


...
ANYBODY HAVE REAL CONTRIBUTIONS TO MAKE?
WHAT? I THOUGHT IT WAS A GOOD IDEA...
END.