

Atopika is a publication of Allergienet and GAAPP



**GLOBAL ALLERGY  
& AIRWAYS**  
PATIENT PLATFORM

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Hulststraat 9, 9280 Lebbeke, Belgium







OMG!!

LENU!  
GET TO SCHOOL!!!

BUT...

NO BUTS!  
OUT! AND DON'T FORGET  
YOUR LUNCH!

I'M SURE  
I SMELL SMOKE

LENU HAD HAD ECZEMA  
HER WHOLE LIFE, HER SKIN  
FEELS OFTEN IRRITATED,  
ITCHY AND SOMETIMES  
VERY HOT...

WHATEVER!!

WHAT  
JUST HAPPENED?!



WHAT  
WAS THAT?!!?

...

THAT GIRL!

HAVE A  
GOOD FIRST DAY  
AT SCHOOL...

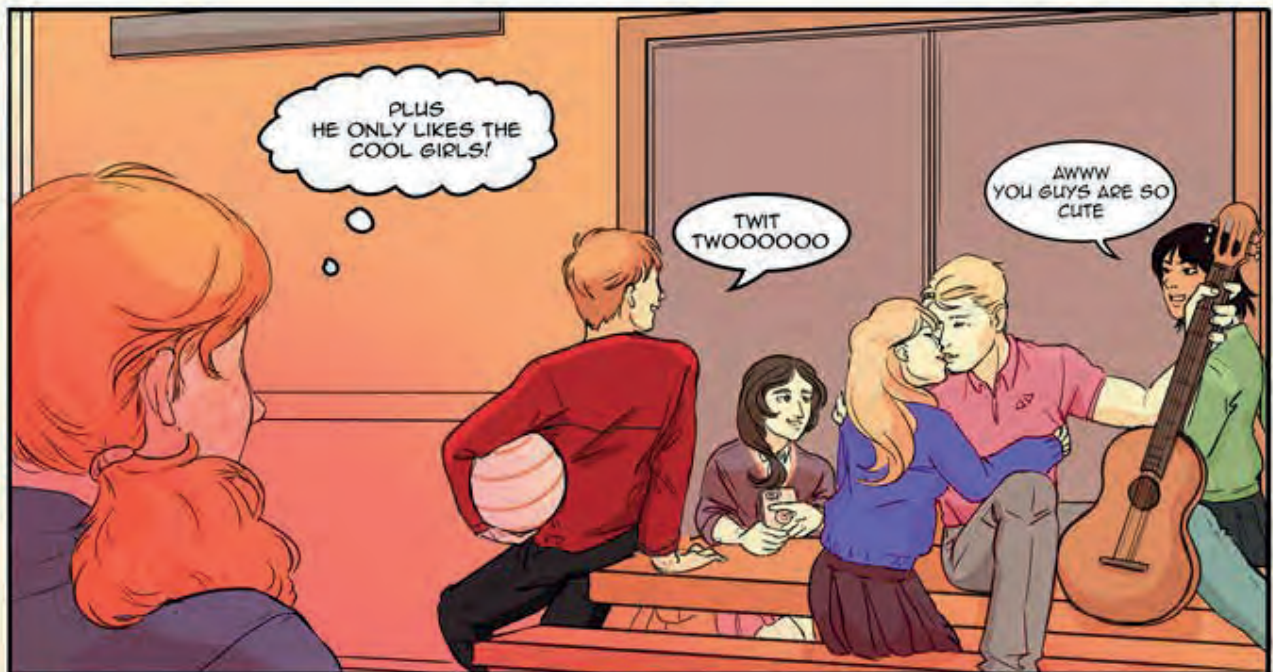
**SLAM!**

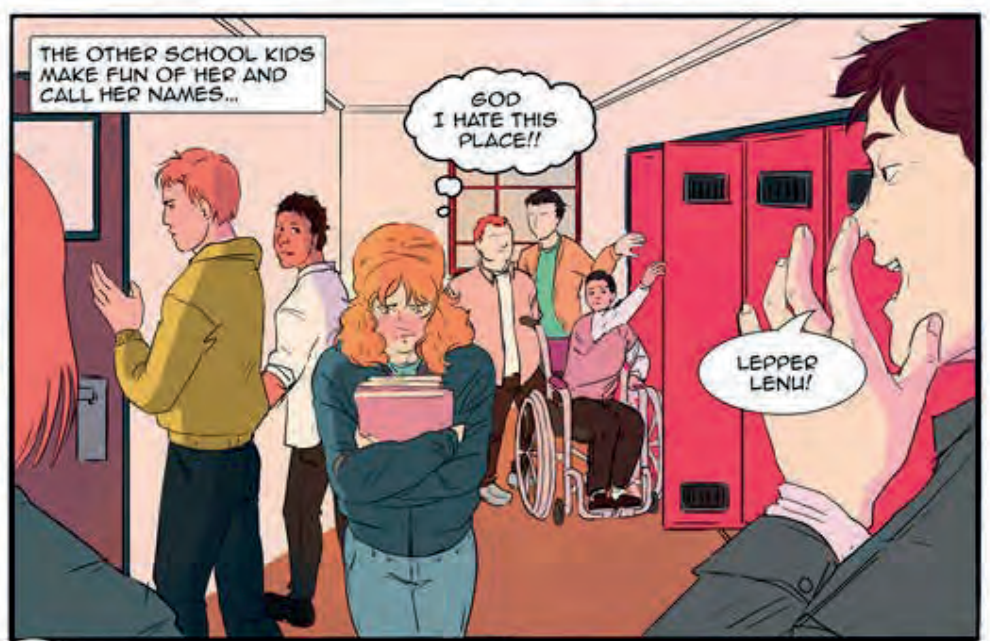
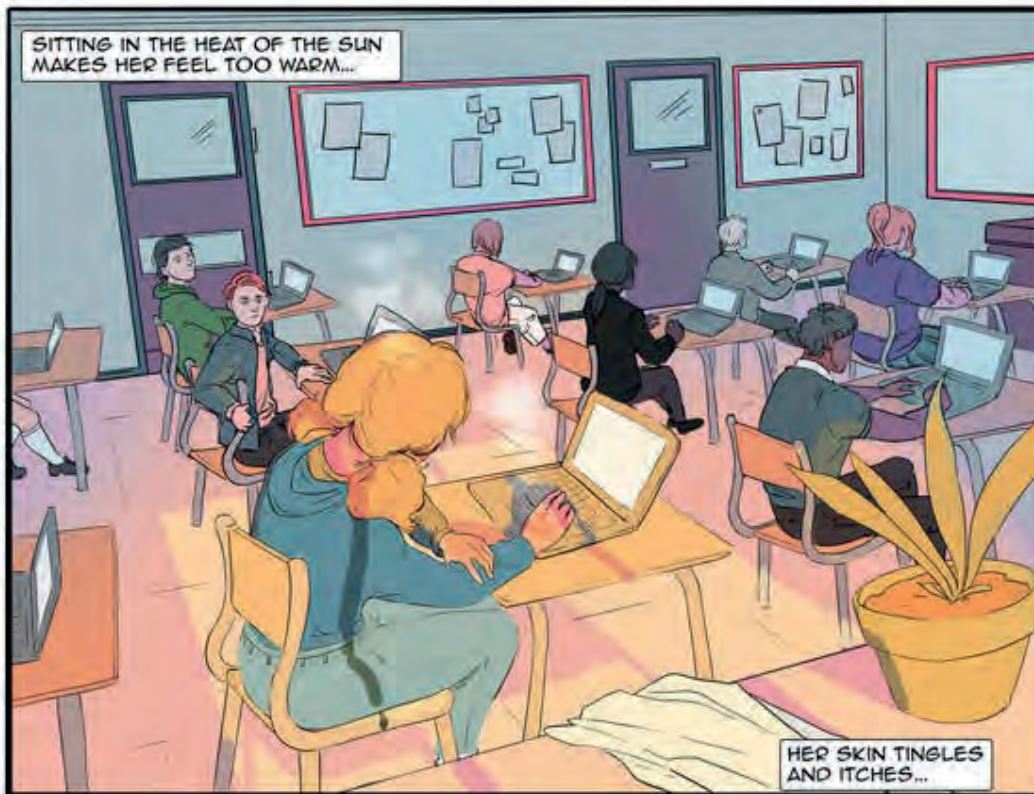




SHE KEPT TO HERSELF...  
WISHING SHE COULD BE  
ONE OF THE COOL KIDS...









IT HADN'T BEEN A GOOD DAY FOR LENU...

SHOULD I SAY HI?

I'M NEVER GOING TO FIT IN...

SHE COULDN'T WAIT TO GET TO THE SAFETY OF HER HOME AND HER DAD...



DAD?

BUT DAD WASN'T HOME...

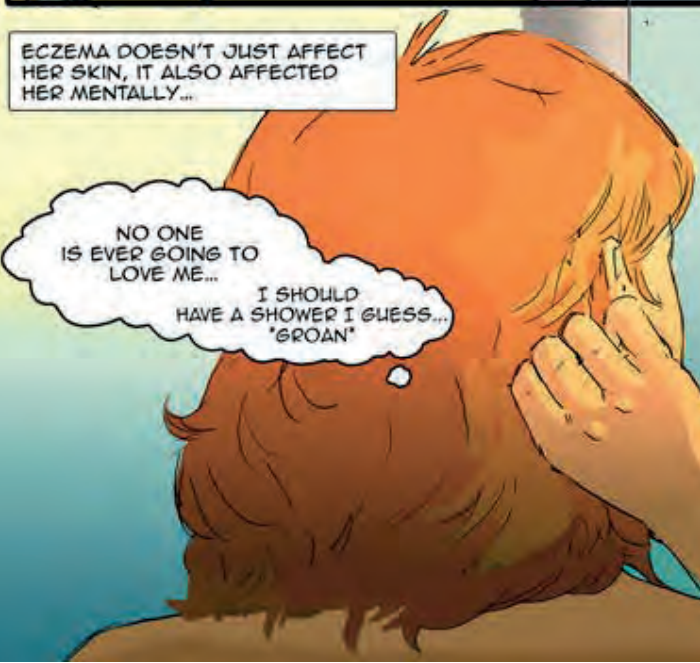


LENU'S ECZEMA MAKES HER FEEL VERY INSECURE...



I FEEL SO ALONE...

SHE FINDS IT SO HARD TO INTERACT WITH OTHER PEOPLE BECAUSE SHE IS SELF CONSCIOUS ABOUT HER SKIN...

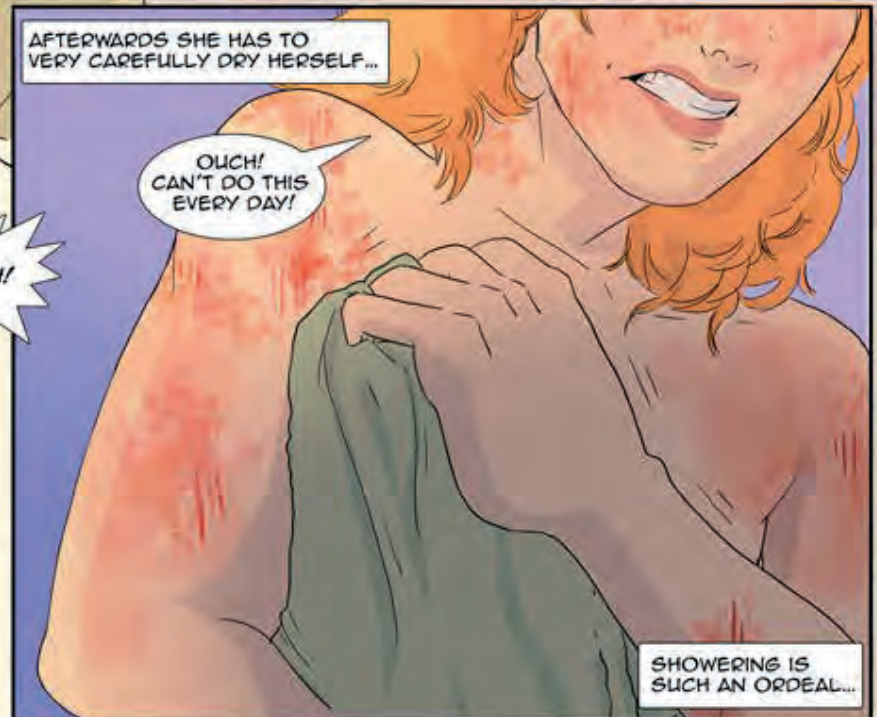
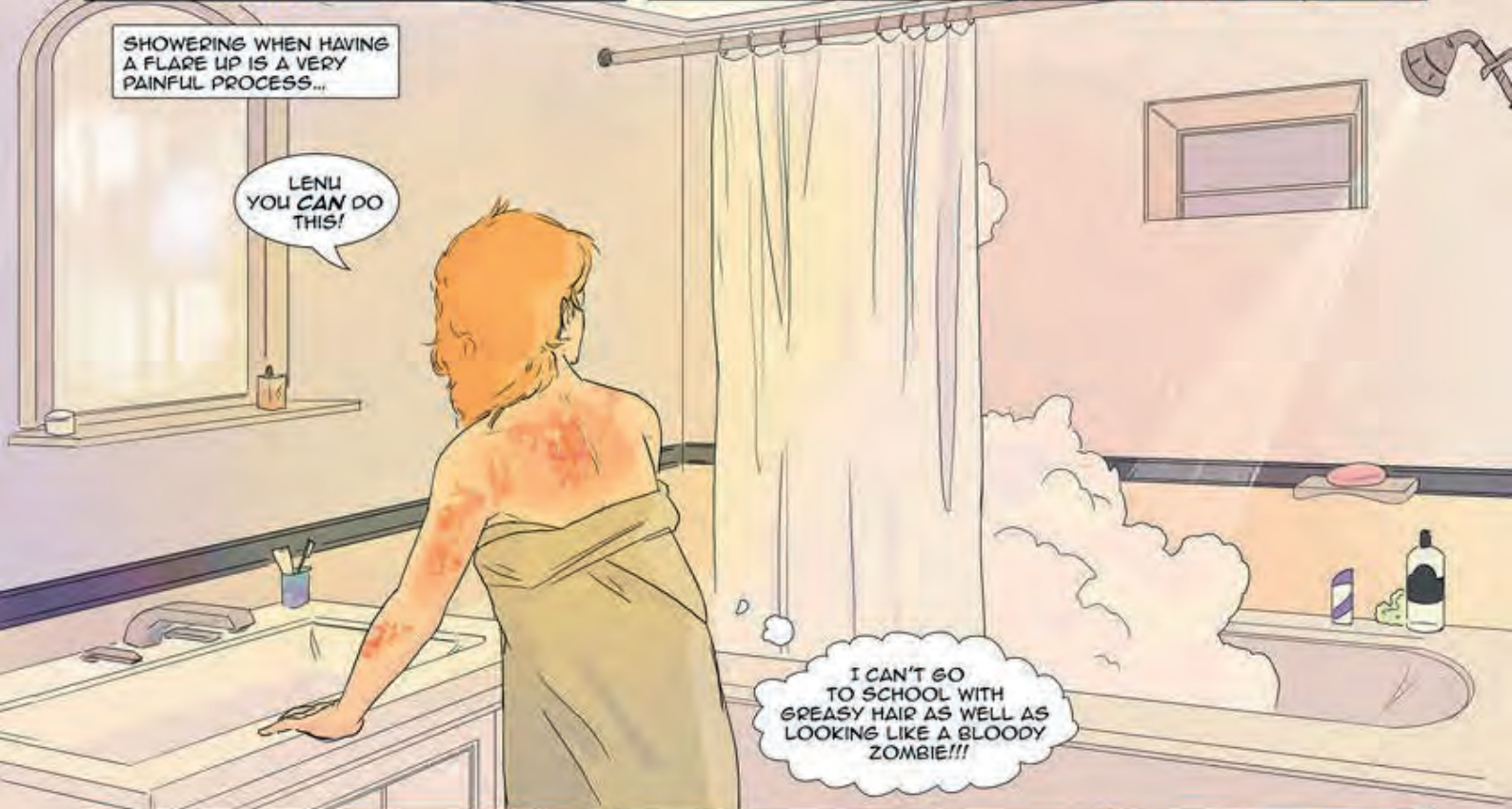


ECZEMA DOESN'T JUST AFFECT HER SKIN, IT ALSO AFFECTED HER MENTALLY...

NO ONE IS EVER GOING TO LOVE ME...  
I SHOULD HAVE A SHOWER I GUESS... "GROAN"



LENU?





THREE TIMES A DAY SHE HAS TO RUB OINTMENT INTO HER SKIN...

UGH  
THIS IS SO GREASY!  
GREASE MONSTER!



LENU'S DAD HAS TAKEN HER TO THE DOCTORS MANY TIMES...

USE STEROIDS AGAIN  
AND TAKE THESE ANTIHISTAMINE  
MEDS TO KEEP YOUR ATOPIC  
ECZEMA CALM....

NO WAY!  
BEEN THERE DONE  
THAT!!!



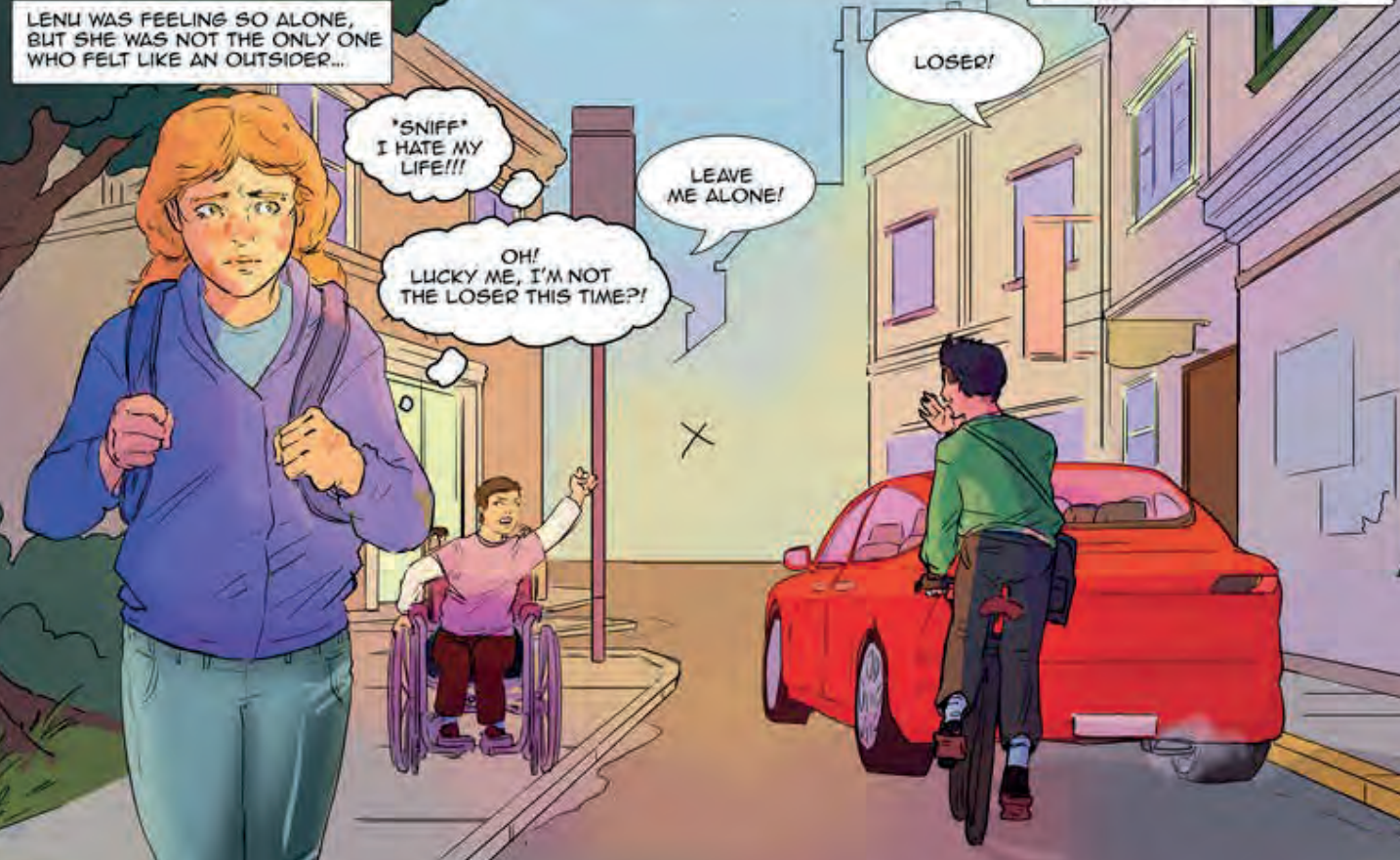
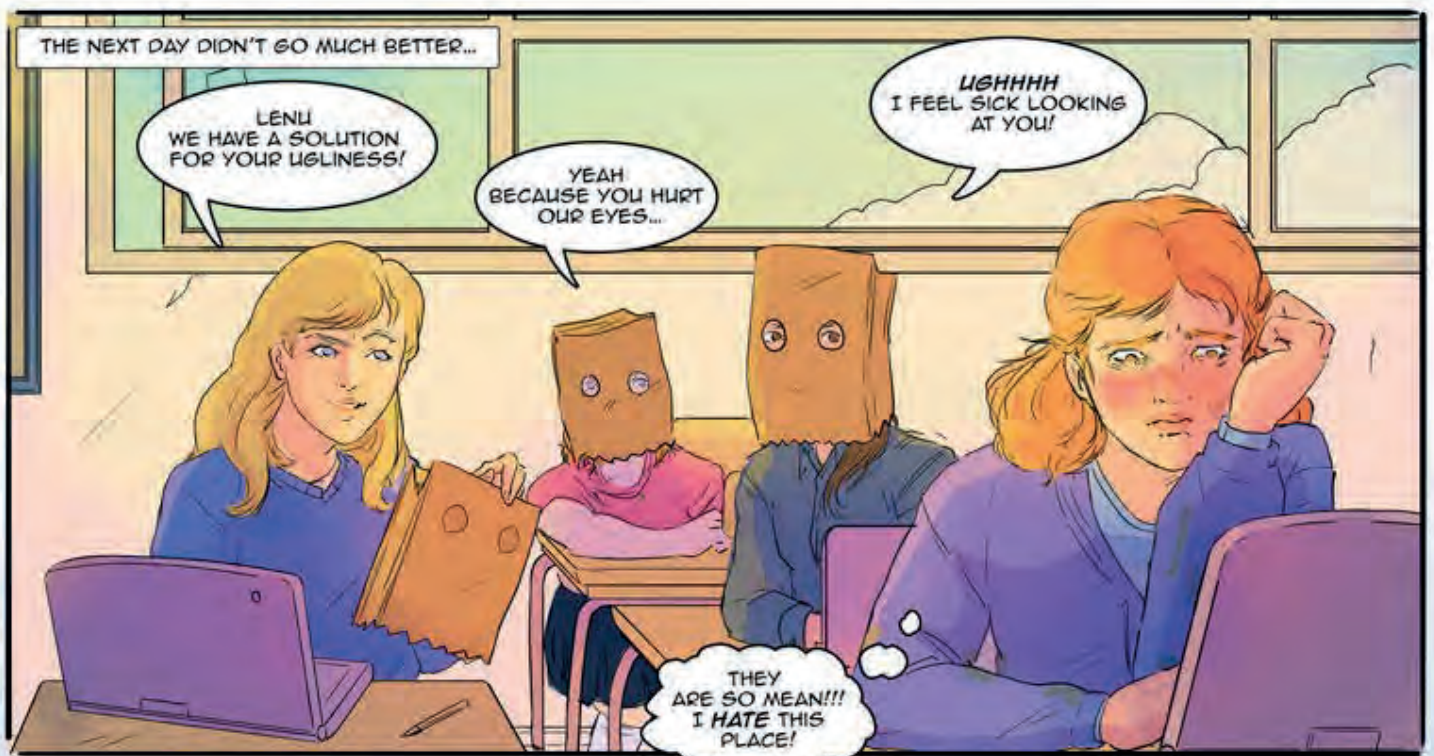
YOUR  
NEXT PATIENT IS  
HERE

HMMM  
GOT TO KEEP  
A CLOSE EYE ON  
YOU LENU!

BE PATIENT,  
DON'T STRESS, IT WILL  
GET BETTER!

YOU TRY  
NOT TO BE STRESSED  
WHEN YOU ITCH  
ALL DAY!!!

BUT THEY HAVEN'T FOUND  
A SOLUTION FOR HER...



LENU LIVED ALONE WITH HER DAD,  
HER MOM HAD DIED WHEN SHE WAS  
JUST A LITTLE GIRL...

HOW WAS  
SCHOOL?

FINE

DID YOU  
MAKE FRIENDS  
YET?

STOP  
WITH THE 3RD  
DEGREE  
ALREADY!!!

I REALLY  
DON'T UNDERSTAND  
HER...

HE  
MAKES ME  
SO MAD!!!

HE DID HIS BEST TO UNDERSTAND HER  
BUT SOMETIMES IT WAS HARD AS SHE  
GOT SO ANGRY WITH HIM...

AND UNFORTUNATELY ECZEMA  
IS AFFECTED BY STRESS AND  
ANGER...

GOD  
HE'S SO  
ANNOYING!!!

AS THE SKIN GETS HOT AND  
STARTS TO ITCH BIG TIME!



TODAY SHE GOT PARTICULARLY ANGRY...

SHUT UP!!!

LENU?

ANGRIER THAN SHE HAD EVER BEEN BEFORE...



SHE WAS ON FIRE?!?!?

AGGHHHHHHH!  
WHAT'S HAPPENING TO ME!




AND HAD UNLEASHED HER ALTER-EGO!

LET ME OUT...  
SET ME FREE!  
AND YOU WILL NEVER  
BE ALONE AGAIN!

WWAHAAAAHAHAHA!



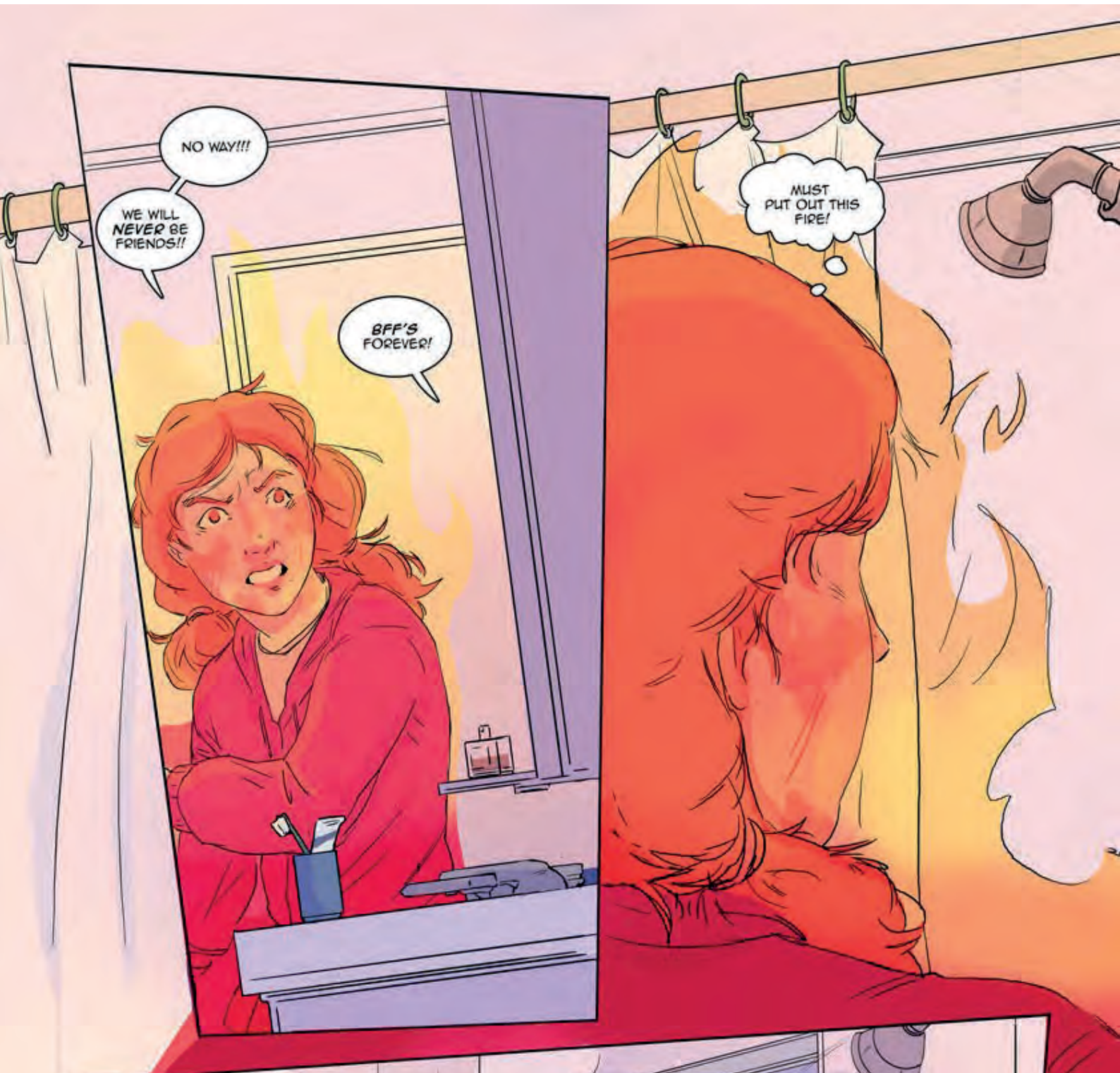
WHA-  
WHO ARE  
YOU?



I AM  
YOUR BEST FRIEND...  
LET ME OUT AND I'LL MAKE  
YOU HAPPY!!!

MWAHAHAHAHAHA!

OMG!  
WHAT IS  
HAPPENING?!



NO WAY!!!

WE WILL  
NEVER BE  
FRIENDS!!

BFF'S  
FOREVER!

MUST  
PUT OUT THIS  
FIRE!

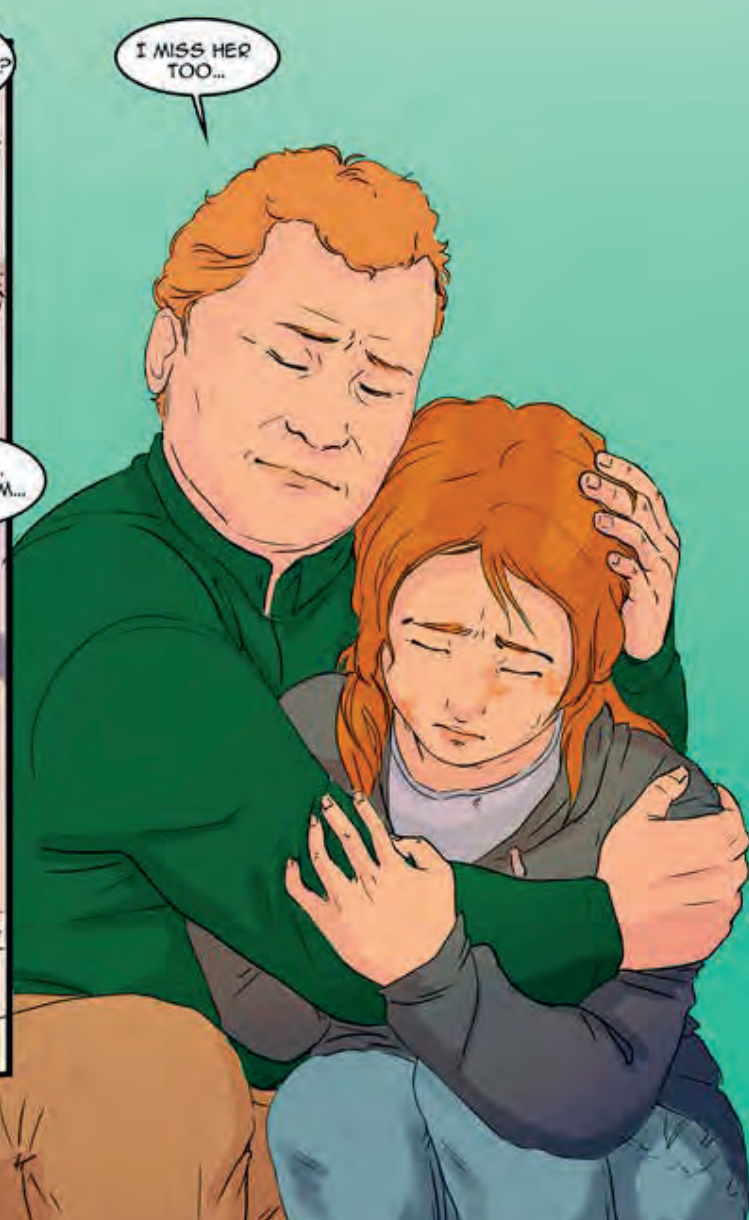
IN A FLASH SHE JUMPED  
IN THE SHOWER...

OUCH!!

THE COLD WATER QUICKLY COOLED  
THINGS DOWN...IT WAS WORTH THE PAIN...



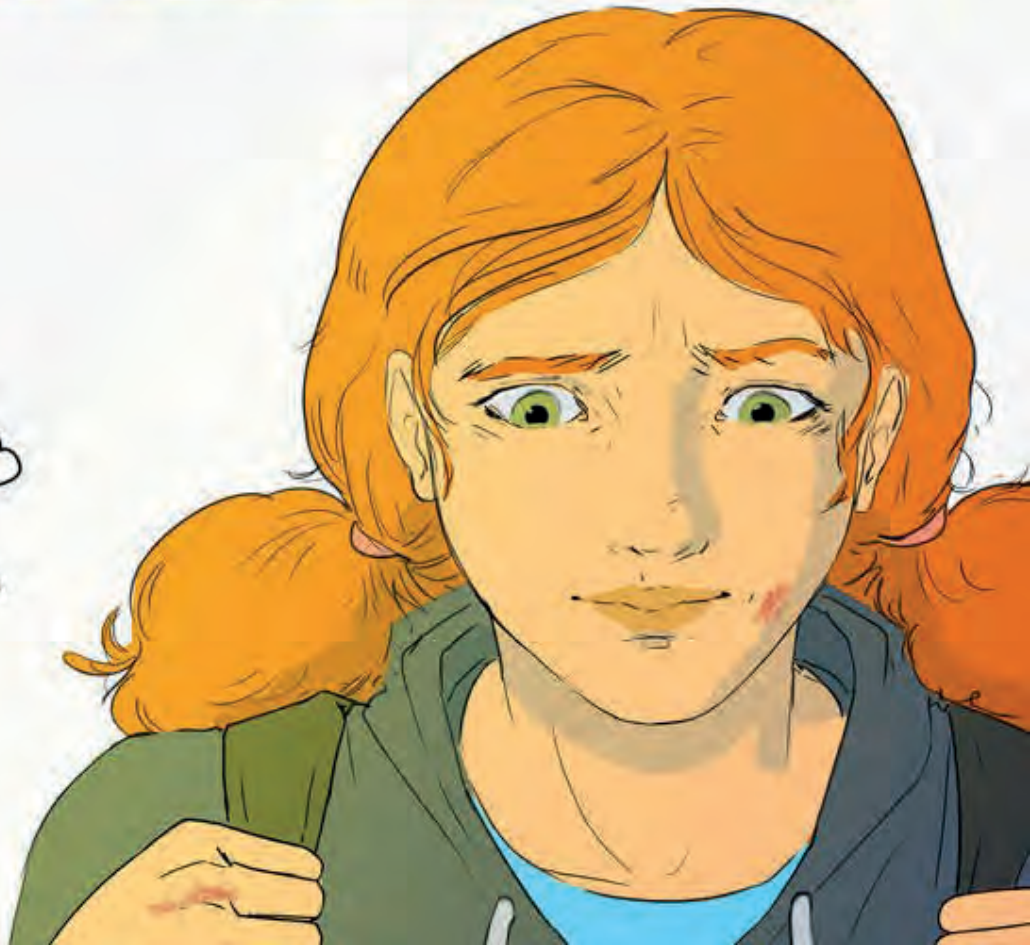
REMEMBERING A SONG SHE USED TO SING...

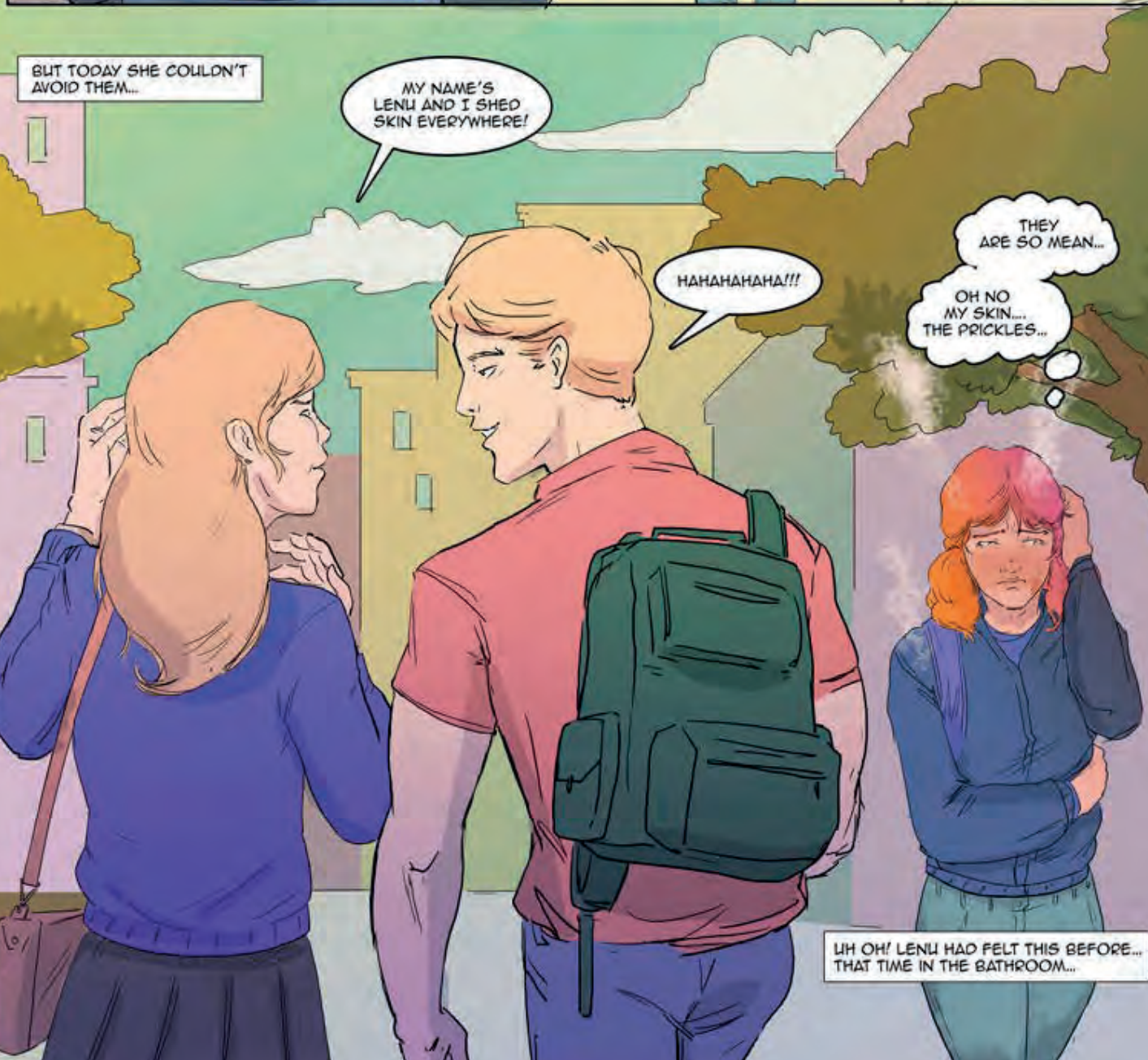






SHE WAS VERY HAPPY JUST BEING HERSELF...





SHE HAD TO GET HOME  
AND QUICKLY!

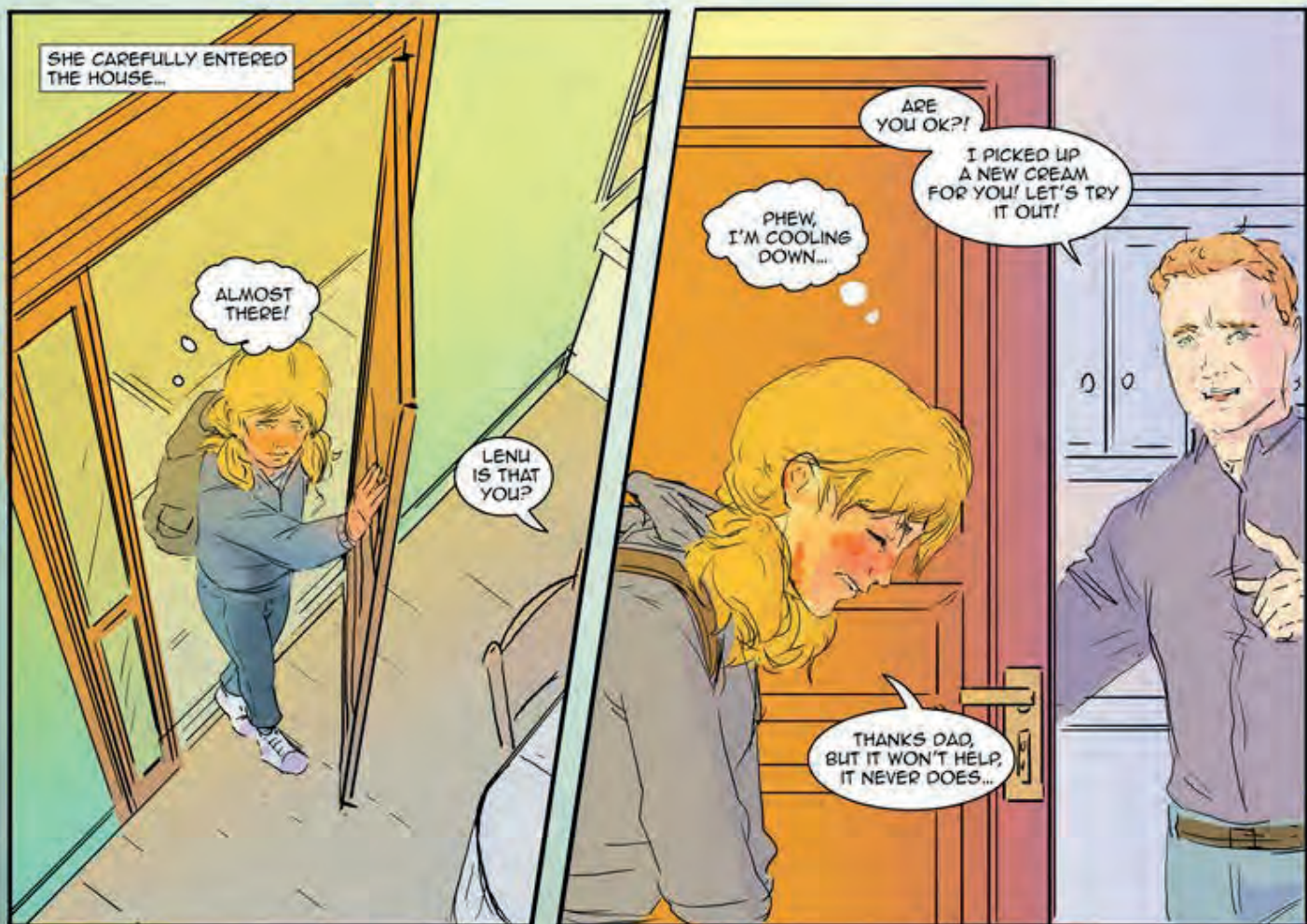
AGGHHH  
MY SKIN!!!

SHE LEFT A FIERY  
PATH OF DESTRUCTION...

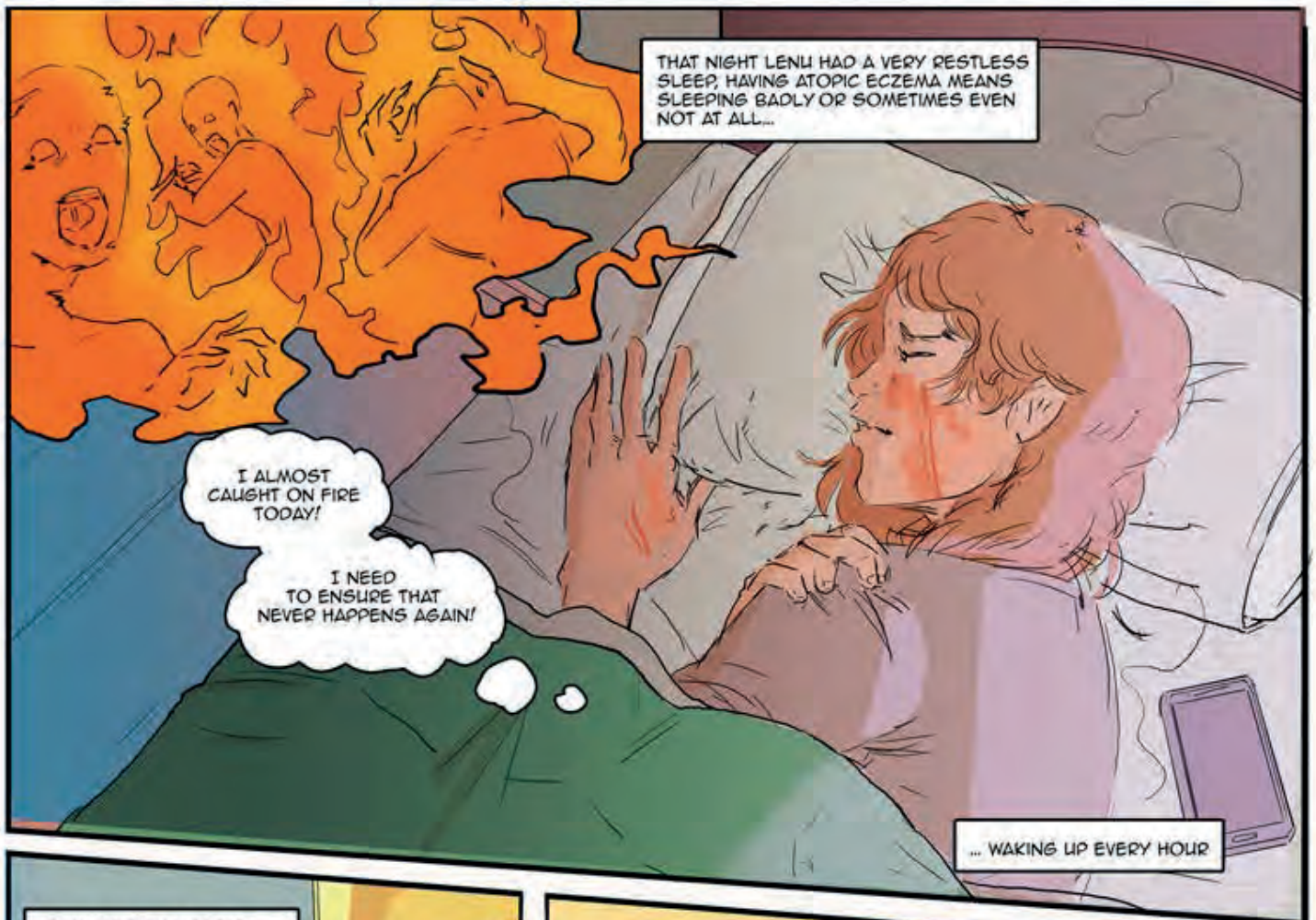
MUST GET  
TO COLD WATER!

MUST CALM  
DOWN!

BUT SHE DIDN'T CARE...







THAT NIGHT LENU HAD A VERY RESTLESS SLEEP, HAVING ATOPIC ECZEMA MEANS SLEEPING BADLY OR SOMETIMES EVEN NOT AT ALL...

I ALMOST CAUGHT ON FIRE TODAY!

I NEED TO ENSURE THAT NEVER HAPPENS AGAIN!

... WAKING UP EVERY HOUR



THAT MORNING DAD'S WORDS REALLY SUNK IN...

I SCORCHED THE SHEETS!!!

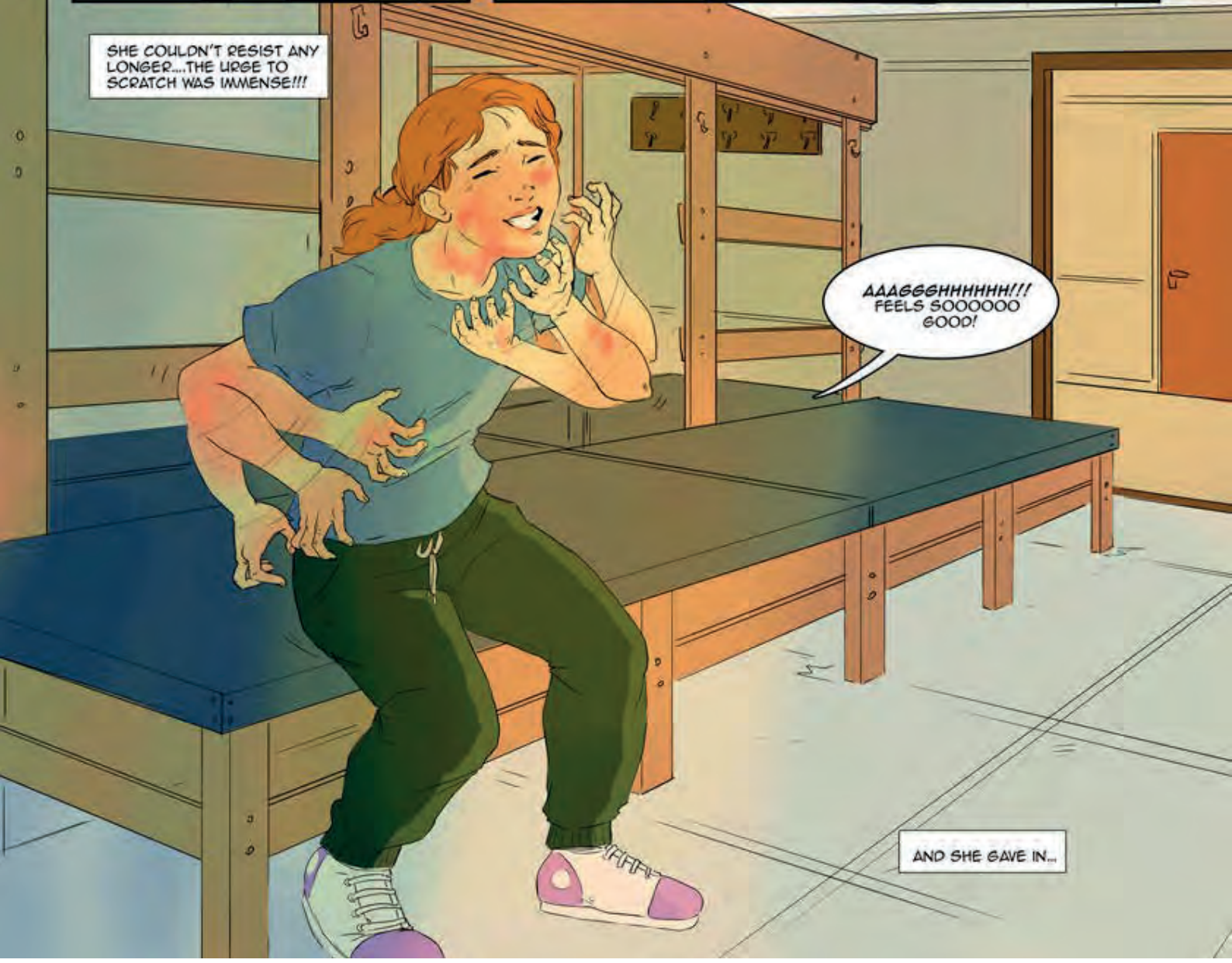
RIGHT THAT'S IT, FROM TODAY I WON'T LET THOSE COOL KIDS GET TO ME!



THE FOLLOWING FEW WEEKS WENT BY WITHOUT ANY MORE FIRES...

DAD ALWAYS GIVES THE BEST ADVICE...

LIFE HAD GOT BACK TO NORMAL AND LENU WAS SINGING MORE AND MORE...





HER QUICK EXIT HADN'T GONE UNNOTICED...

DID YOU SEE HER RUN!?

WHO? LENU THE LEPPER?!

HAHAHAHA!

DAD'S WORDS WENT OUT THE WINDOW AND LENU GOT MAD!!!

GOD I HATE THEM!!!

I WON'T GO NEAR HER! SCARED I'LL CATCH SOMETHING!

SHE'S SO UGLY!

NO BOY WILL EVER FANCY HER!

I WISH THEY COULD *FEEL* THE BURNING OF MY SKIN...

AND WITH THAT MADNESS  
SOMETHING OVERCAME  
HER!

RAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA!!!

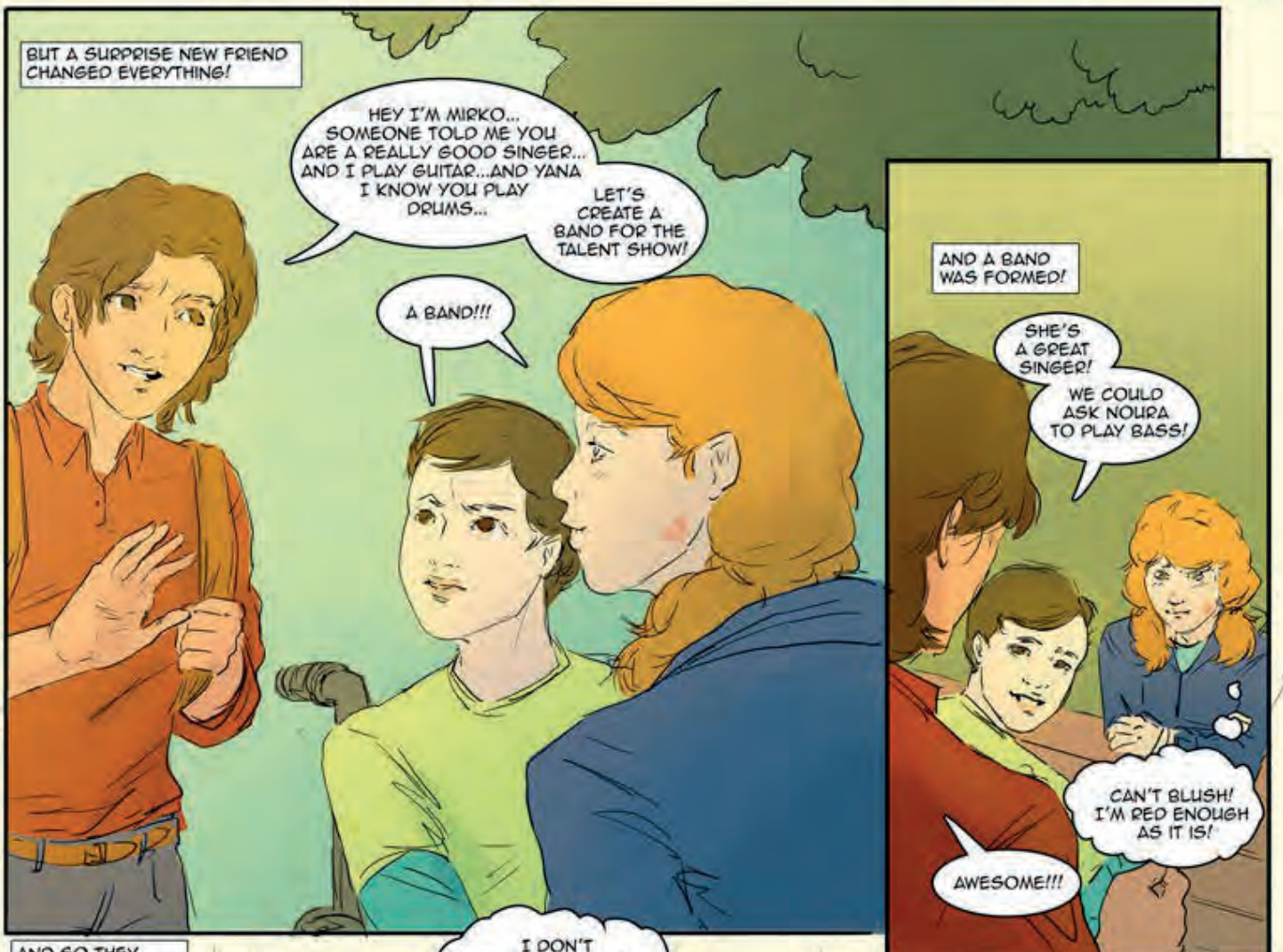
THEY WILL REGRET  
THE DAY THEY EVER  
PICKED ON ME!

SHE WAS NO  
LONGER LENU...





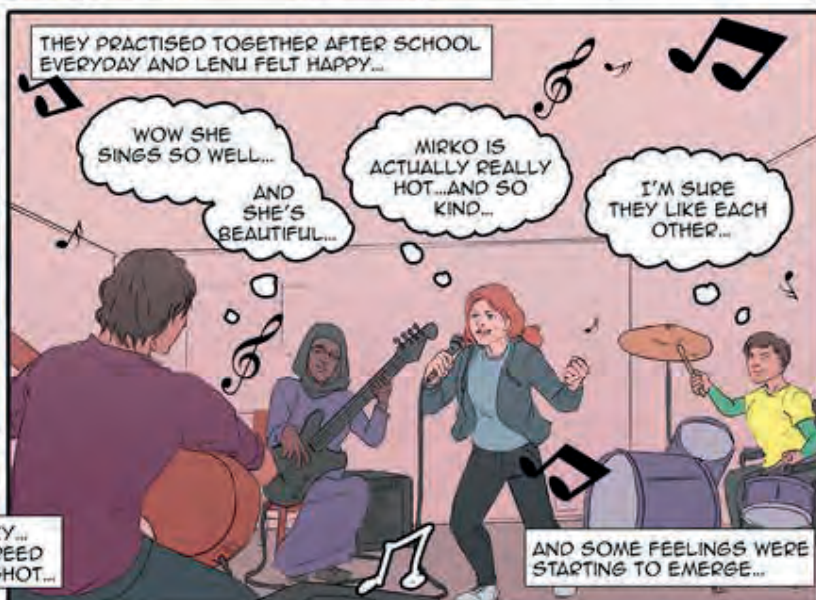
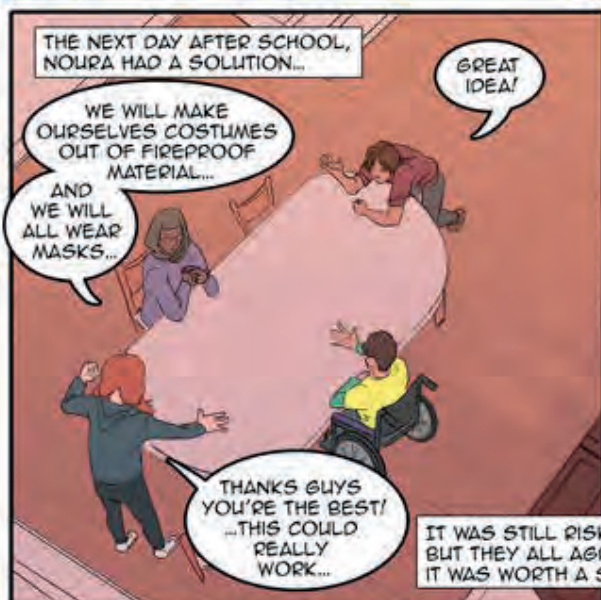
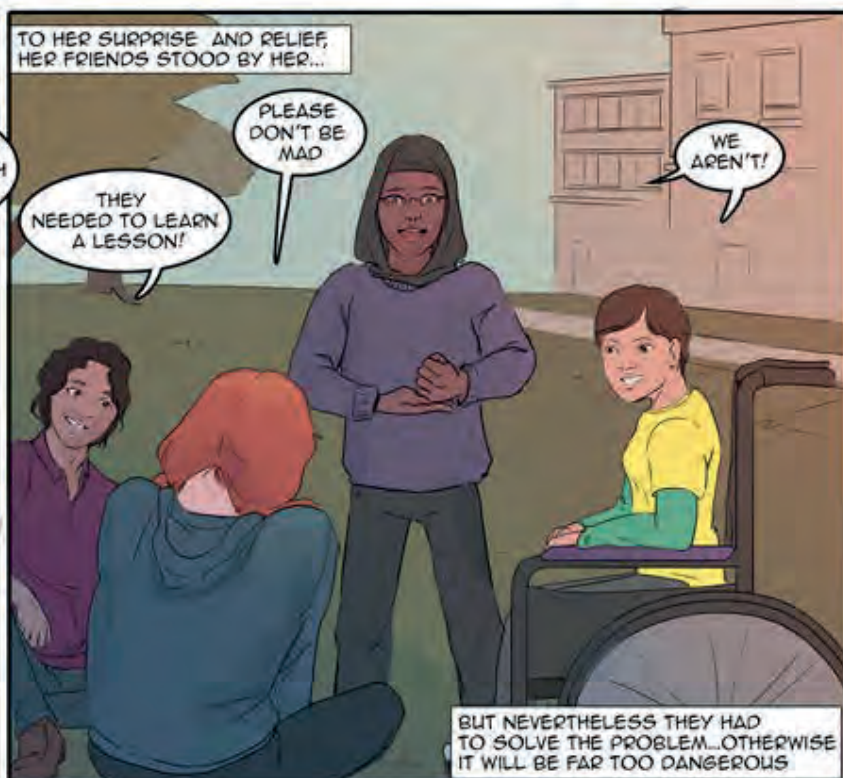




AND SO THEY STARTED PRACTISING AND FRIENDSHIPS GREW...

BUT THERE WERE STILL SOME THINGS THAT NEEDED TO BE TALKED ABOUT.









NOT EVERYONE WAS  
HAPPY ABOUT THAT...

HEY  
LENU...

GRRR  
THAT DAM MIRKO...  
LENU'S MINE!

I'LL  
SHOW HIM!



IT WAS THE DAY BEFORE THE  
CONTEST AND A ROMANCE  
WAS BREWING...

I LIKE  
HIM SO MUCH...  
BUT DOES HE FEEL  
THE SAME...

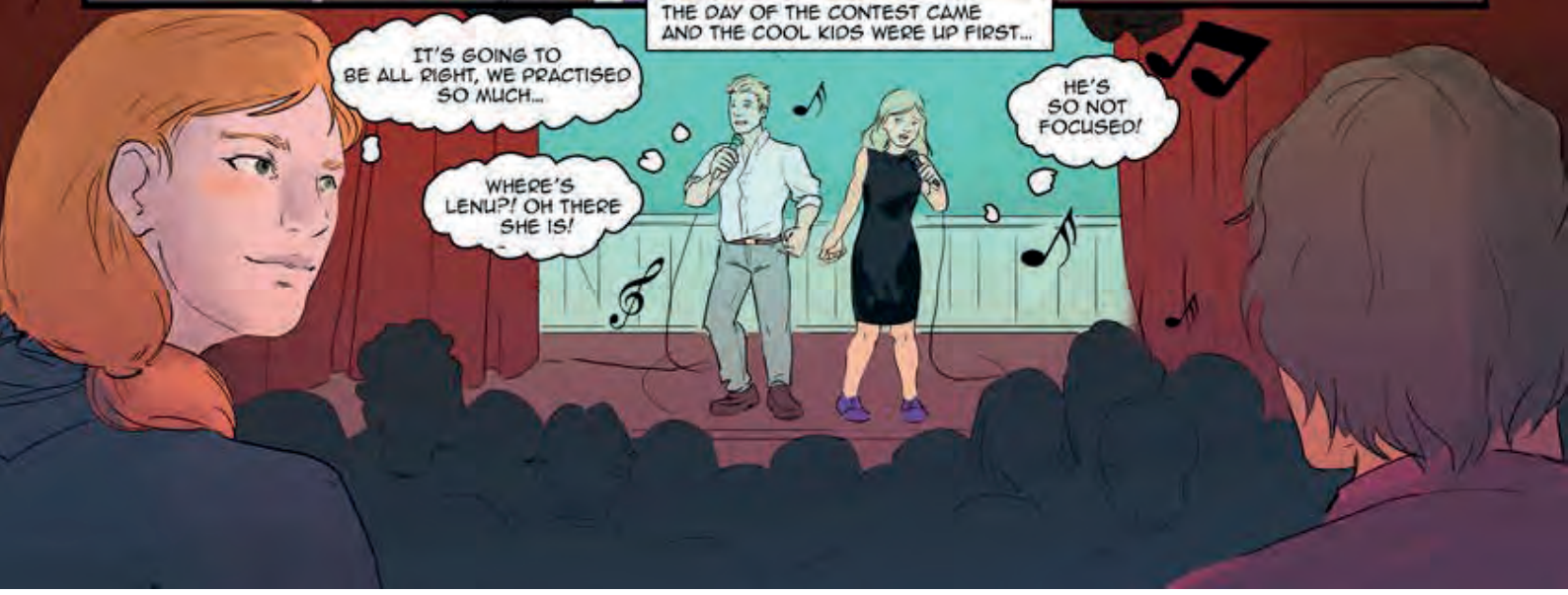
DOES SHE  
LIKE ME? I THINK  
SHE MIGHT...



IT SEEMED THEIR  
BANDMATES KNEW  
THEIR FEELINGS FOR  
EACH OTHER BEFORE  
THEY DID!

WHEN  
ARE THEY GOING  
TO KISS?!

I KNOW!!!  
I'M DYING FOR THEM  
TO GET TOGETHER!!

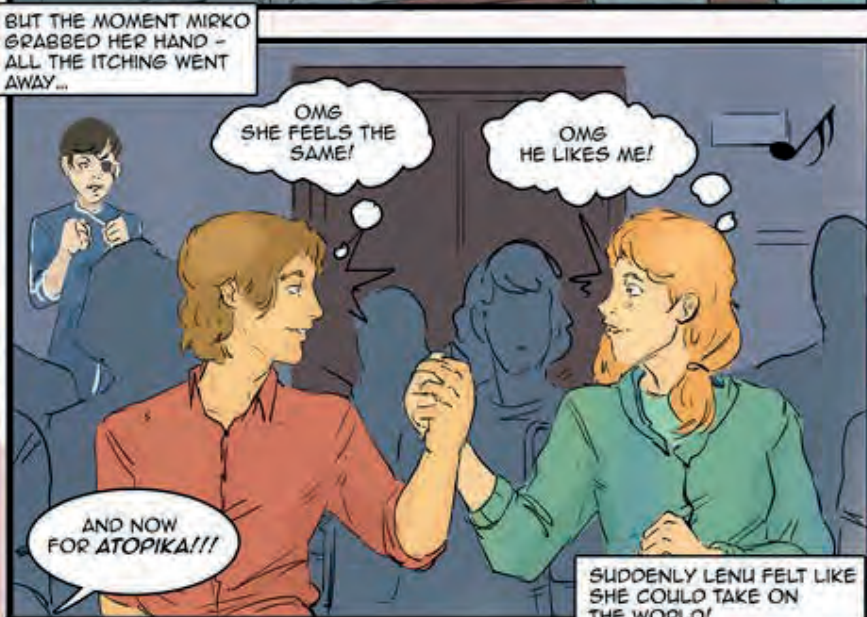
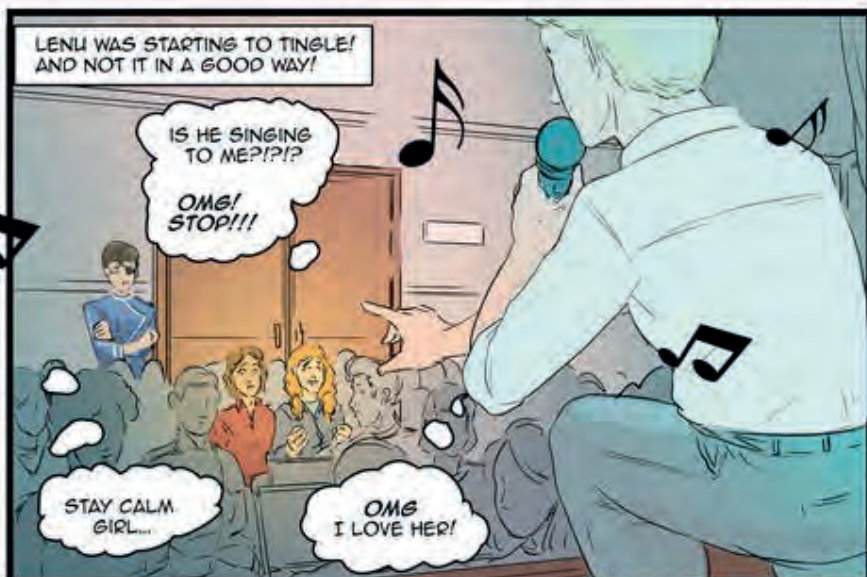


THE DAY OF THE CONTEST CAME  
AND THE COOL KIDS WERE UP FIRST...

IT'S GOING TO  
BE ALL RIGHT, WE PRACTISED  
SO MUCH...

WHERE'S  
LENU?! OH THERE  
SHE IS!

HE'S  
SO NOT  
FOCUSED!



AND WHEN LENU STARTED SINGING  
THE WHOLE ROOM GOT TO THEIR  
FEET!

THEY  
ARE LOVING  
US!

WOOHOOOOO!!!

WOW  
WHAT A VOICE!

BUT NOT EVERYONE WAS  
MESMERISED BY THEIR  
PERFORMANCE...

ARE YOU  
THAT UGLY YOU  
NEED MASKS?!

HAHAHA!  
PAPER BAG WOULD  
HAVE LOOKED  
BETTER!

UGH  
I BET YOU ARE  
ALL GROSS!!!

THEIR COMMENTS REALLY  
GOT UNDER LENU'S SKIN...

I WISH  
THEY WOULD  
SHUT UP!

OH NO...  
THINGS ARE HEATING  
UP!

IS THAT  
SMOKE COMING  
FROM LENU?!

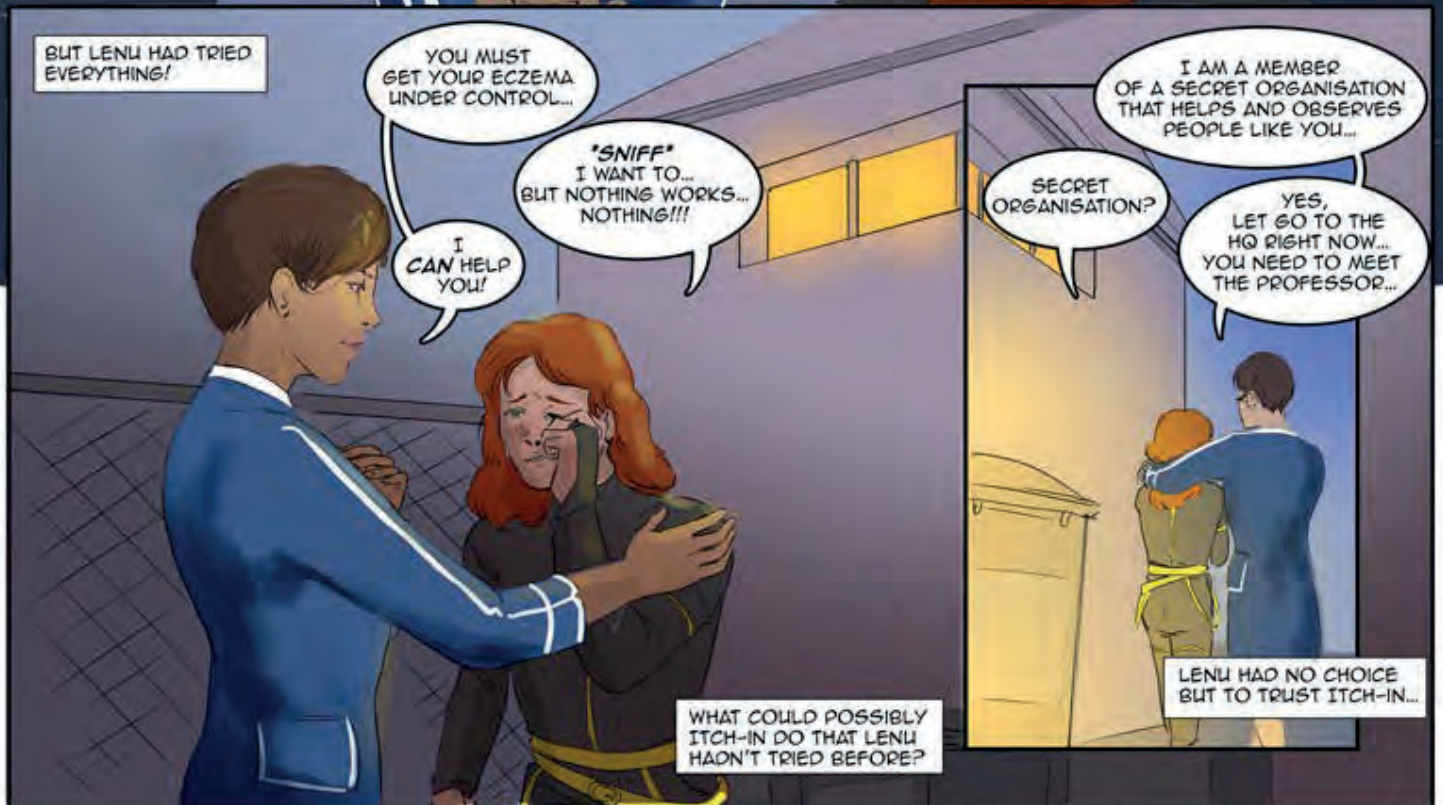
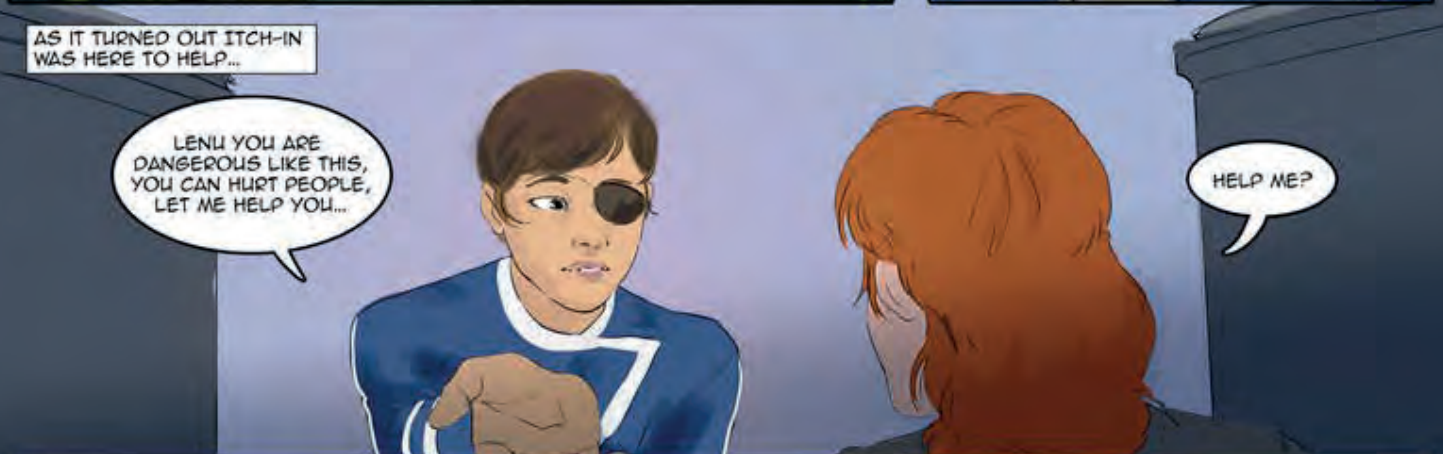


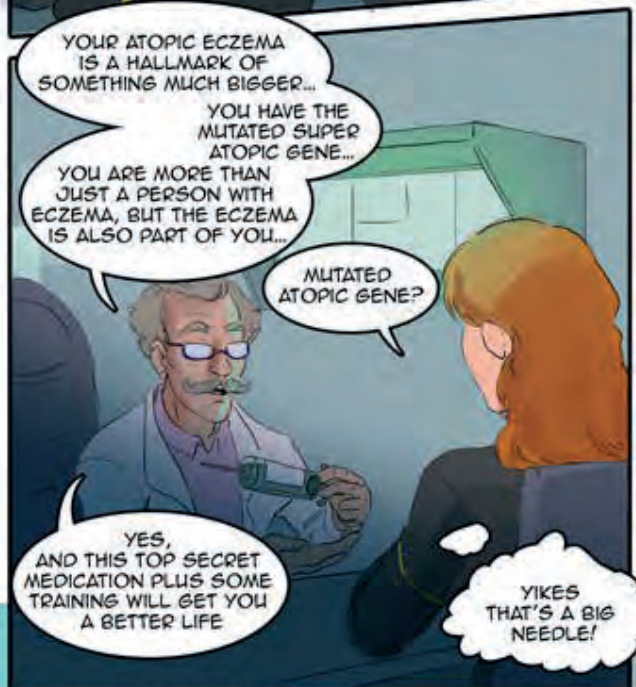
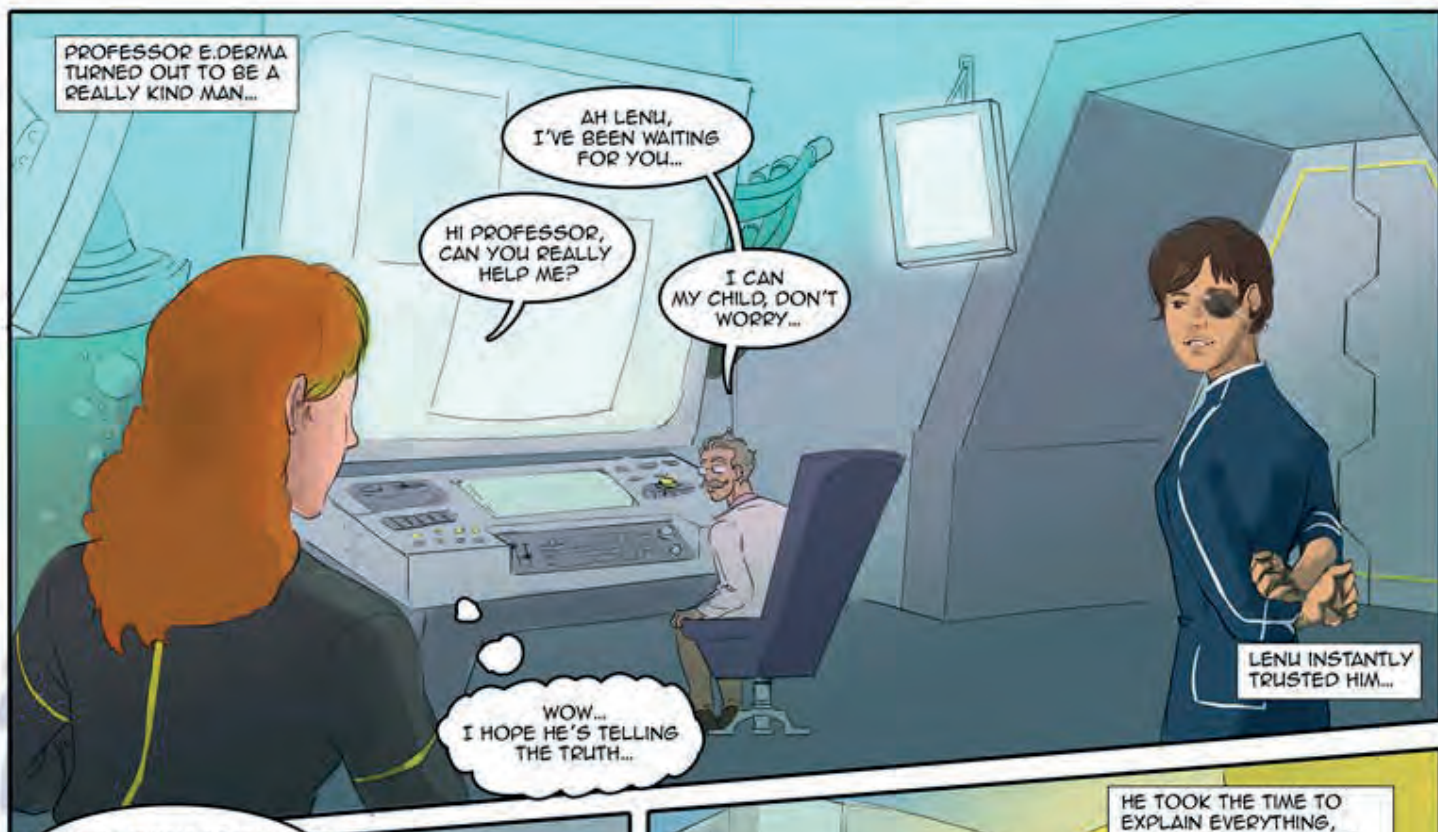
AND THE MORE SHE LET THEM GET TO HER,  
THE HOTTER AND HOTTER SHE GOT!

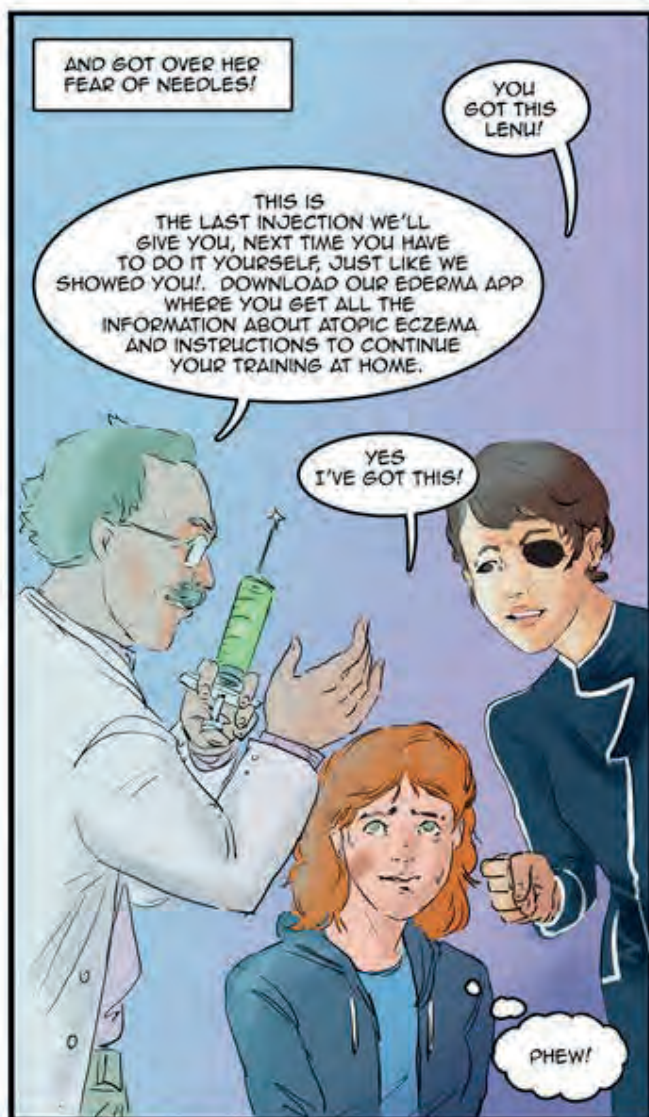
KEEP SINGING...  
CALM DOWN...  
BREATHE!













THE BEST BIT IS LENU DOESN'T  
NEED A FIREPROOF SUIT AND  
MASK ANYMORE!

THIS IS  
AWESOME!

PLEASE  
WELCOME  
ATOPIKAAAAA!

WOOHOOOOO!!!

HELL  
YEAH!

BECAUSE SHE IS FULLY  
IN CONTROL OF HER  
EMOTIONS...

NOT EVERYONE WAS  
HAPPY THOUGH...

I HATE HER,  
SHE THINKS SHE'S  
SO COOL!

AND LENU'S DAD  
HAD A GIRLFRIEND...

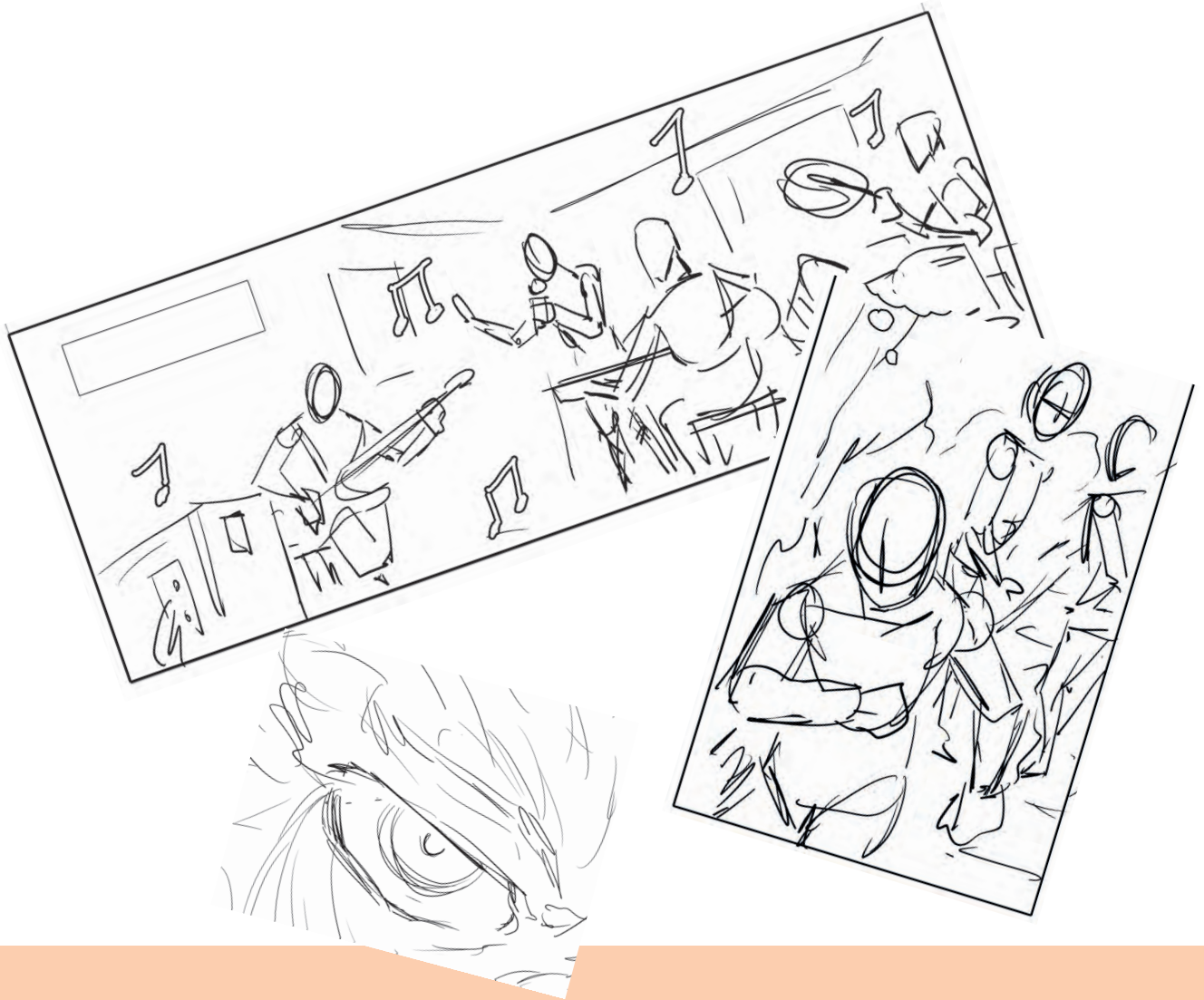
THAT'S  
MY GIRL!

WHICH LENU IS  
THRILLED ABOUT!

I LOVE HER,  
I'M NEVER GOING TO GET  
OVER THIS!







Did you enjoy Atopika and are you curious to learn more about atopic eczema? We'll be happy to explain it briefly for you.

Eczema is not a single disease but a collective name for a number of inflammatory skin diseases with common symptoms such as redness, scaling and itching.

Atopic eczema, also called atopic dermatitis, is a chronic condition. This form is a manifestation of an atopic predisposition, i.e. a tendency to react allergically due to an overactive immune system.

Atopic dermatitis causes a lot of itching. The hypersensitive skin is additionally damaged by repeated scratching or rubbing. Scratching provides temporary relief, but also worsens the inflammation and itching. This is why we speak of the itch-scratch cycle. It's often difficult for a patient to get out of this vicious cycle. Moreover, due to the scratching wounds and the disrupted skin barrier, there is a risk of secondary infection.

Atopic eczema occurs in about 1 in 5 children and in an estimated 3% of adults. Atopic eczema cannot be cured. You can only try to control it as best you can by taking daily care of your skin, following a prescribed treatment carefully and learning to live with the symptoms.

Just a reminder that eczema is not contagious. Is a person having a flare-up? Then don't shy away from them. A kind word or gesture can mean so much if someone is struggling with the symptoms of eczema.

Get to know Allergienet and GAAPP!

Allergienet is a Belgian patient association and self-help group for people with atopic, allergic conditions such as (food) allergies, urticaria, eczema and asthma. Since 2008, Allergienet has been advocating for more recognition of the disease burden and supporting patients and their families.

Moreover, Allergienet also defends the interests of its patients at different stakeholders and informs the general public.

To find out more about Allergienet, be sure to take a look at one of its websites, follow them on social media and be sure to check out their YouTube channel!

Meanwhile, getting all excited about Allergienet's mission? You can support Allergienet by becoming a member!



[www.facebook.com/Allergienet](https://www.facebook.com/Allergienet)



[www.instagram.com/allergienet/](https://www.instagram.com/allergienet/)



[www.youtube.com/@allergienet3578](https://www.youtube.com/@allergienet3578)



[www.allergienet.be](http://www.allergienet.be)





## Introducing GAAPP: A Global Voice for Allergy and Airways Patients

The Global Allergy & Airways Patient Platform (GAAPP) is an international network that unites patient advocacy organizations from around the world. Whether dealing with allergies, asthma, atopic dermatitis, urticaria or other immunological and airways-related conditions, GAAPP brings together the voices and experiences of individuals and communities who live with these often invisible but life-impacting health challenges.

Founded with a vision of improving the quality of life for people with respiratory, allergic and atopic diseases, GAAPP has over 180 member organizations (in 2025) across all continents. This broad and inclusive network provides a platform where patient groups can collaborate, share best practices, and learn from one another — fostering a global community rooted in respect, responsibility, and strong relationships.

At its core, GAAPP stands for empowerment. The organization works tirelessly to ensure that patients are not only heard, but also represented in decisions that affect their health. By partnering with healthcare professionals, researchers, policymakers, and governments, GAAPP helps shape a better world.

### Mission and Vision

GAAPP's mission is to support and empower patients around the world through advocacy, education, research, and awareness-raising. The organization believes that everyone living with an allergy, atopic or airways disease deserves to live fully — without stigma, unnecessary delays in care, or barriers to treatment.

The vision is simple but powerful: a world where patients with allergies, asthma, and atopic diseases can live better lives.

### What GAAPP Does

To achieve its goals, GAAPP works across four key pillars:

- **Awareness** – Promoting greater understanding of allergic and atopic diseases worldwide.
- **Education** – Providing resources for patients, caregivers, and professionals.
- **Advocacy** – Giving a voice to patient communities in healthcare policy and research.
- **Research** – Supporting patient-centered science and innovation.

GAAPP creates evidence-based educational tools, drives policy change, supports research involvement, and amplifies the patient voice across all levels.

### GAAPP member organizations

Members of GAAPP, patient organizations receive support on many different levels, such as finance, mentoring, knowledge resources and access to an international network of like-minded advocates. Members also participate in global awareness campaigns such as World Asthma Day, World Eczema Day, World Lung Day, and more — all with access to high-quality communication materials and promotional support.

Participation in GAAPP is more than a membership — it's a step toward building a stronger, more connected voice for patients around the world.

### Join the Global Community

Whether you are part of a patient group, a caregiver, a healthcare provider, or someone living with allergies or atopic diseases, GAAPP offers tools, support, and a global family that shares your journey.

To learn more, visit [www.gaapp.org](http://www.gaapp.org) or reach out to [info@gaapp.org](mailto:info@gaapp.org). Together, we can build a better future for everyone affected by allergy, atopic and airways diseases.



