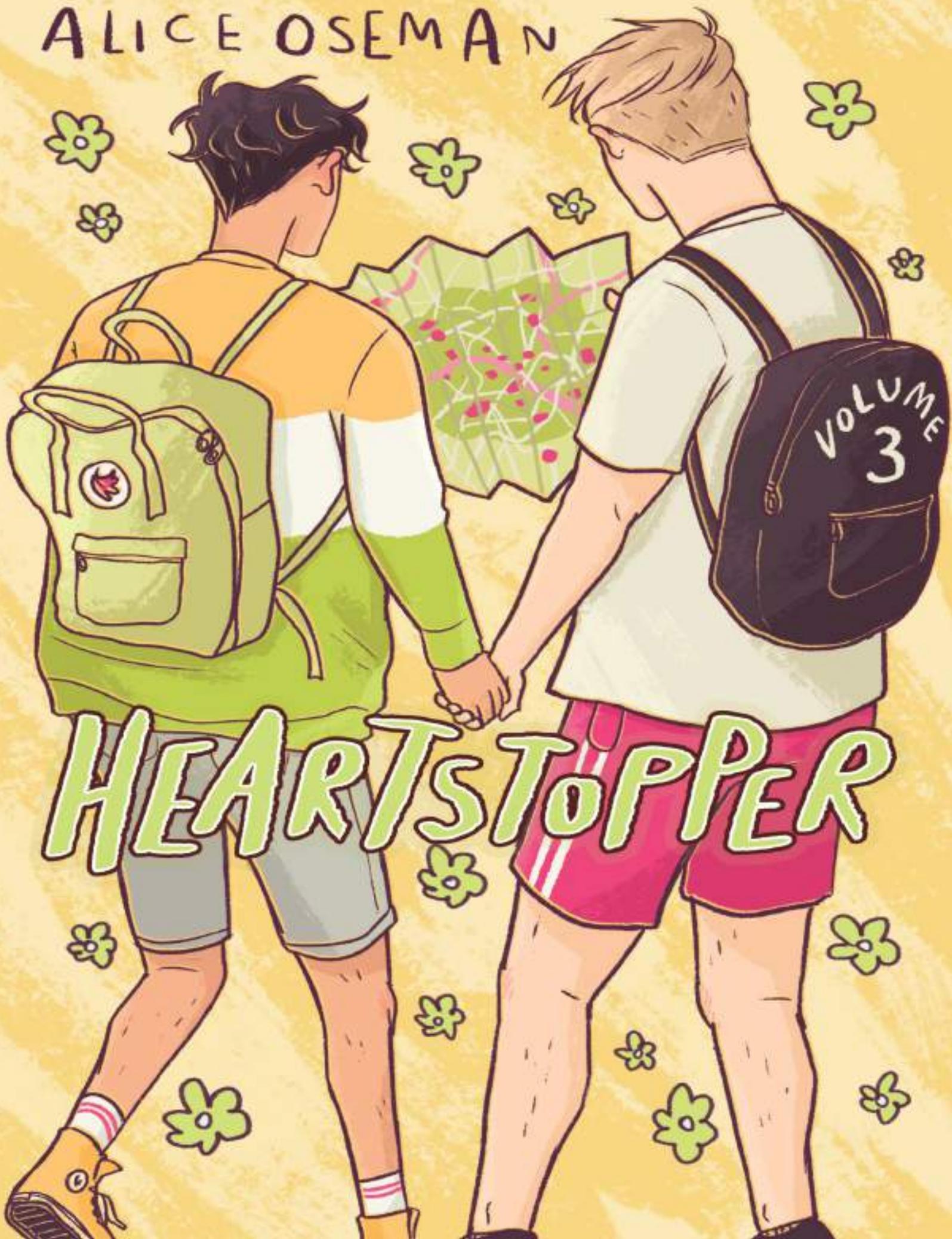


ALICE OSEMAN



HEARTSTOPPER



4. OUT















3 DAYS EARLIER



He told me it went well!

AAH!

Nick! Is that y-

Guess what



I came out to my mum last night





Charlie?



Yeah!!
Yeah, it
went
well!



APPEAR



Who said
anything
about
GRANDCHILDREN!?

He told you about
Nick, then. You
won't be
grandchild-less
after all.

Oh, Nick's definitely banned from sleepovers forever now.



WHAT!!



Yup. There will be no hanky panky in this house.



Please don't say 'hanky panky'.



Bedroom door open at all times!!



No hanky panky
until you're
married!!



Stop saying
'hanky panky'

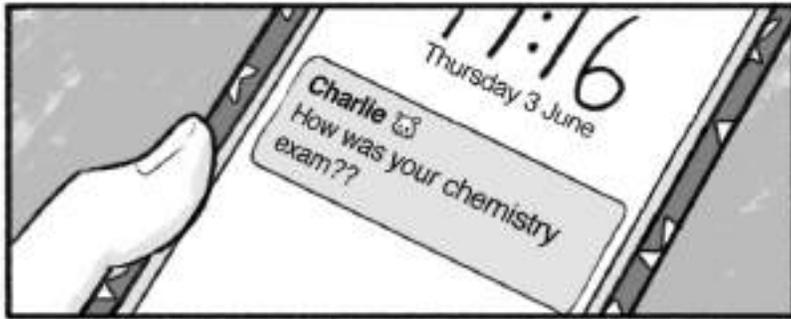








JUNE



I can't, I'm at a biology revision session 😞 I also need hugs pls



Sneak out and come home with me 🥰

Soz I love energy flow and plant growth more than you



I have some ideas for things we could do involving energy flow...

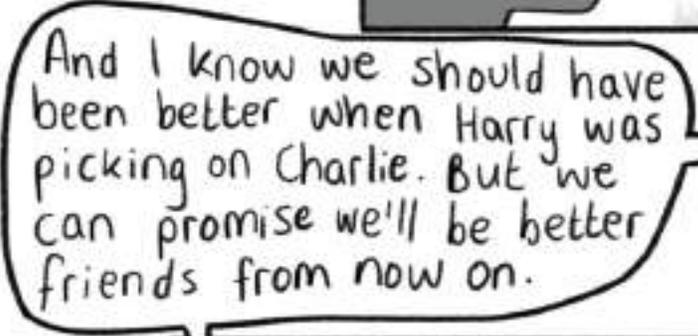
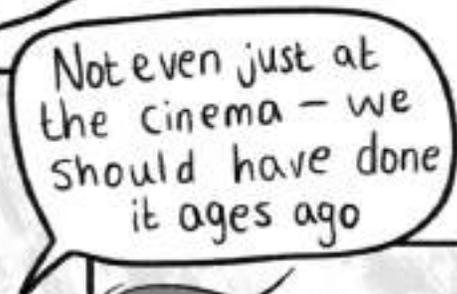
Asldfkjghkfygh STOP



Nick!







And we really like Charlie! He's a nice guy and I don't want him to think we're like Harry.



We're on your side, Nick. We're your friends, if you still want us to be.







Has Harry been pestering either of you since that weekend?

No, not really. We haven't seen him because of exams and study leave, to be honest.

I seriously don't blame you for punching him. I know you and Charlie are really good mates!



REALLY GOOD MATES REALLY GOOD MATES







ONE WEEK LATER



Nick, it's fine, there's no deadline!



I know, but- it's annoying when people think we're just...

Best platonic bros?



Oh my god



I'm not sure I could handle us being fully out right now anyway





being fully out as a couple... everyone talking about us... I think that would finish me off

ha
ha



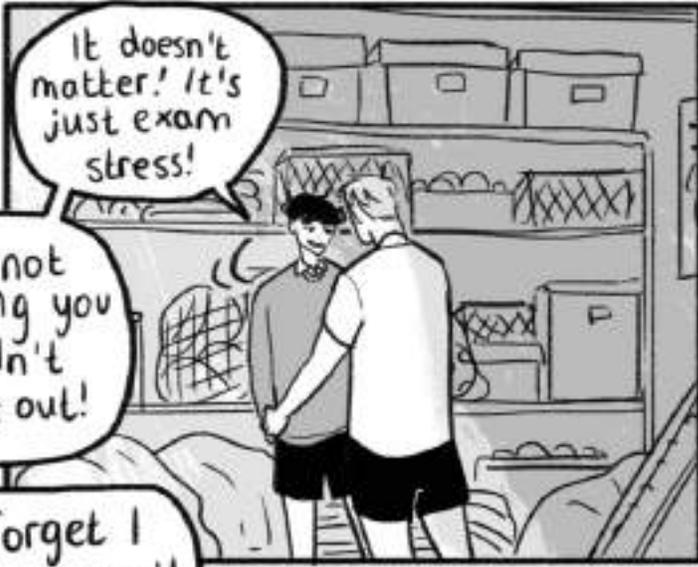
Hey... when did you start feeling like that?



It doesn't matter! It's just exam stress!

I'm not saying you shouldn't come out!

Just... forget I said anything!!



Charlie...





You can talk to me about it...?

Can you just...
kiss me
again...





KISS



KISS



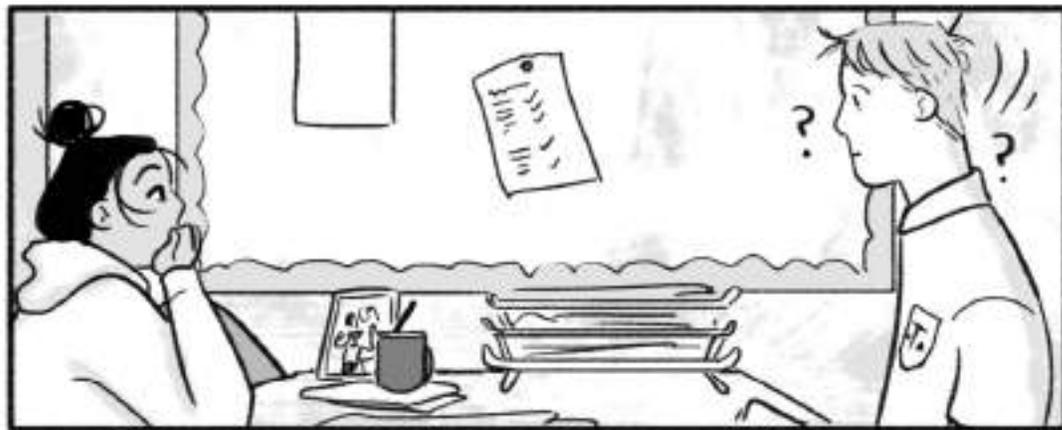
I can always
do that





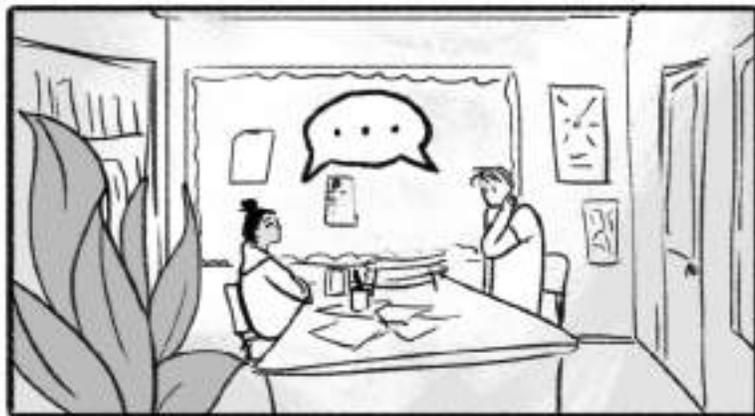








You're the heart and centre of this team, Nick. You have the talent to pursue rugby beyond school, if you want to.





I'm glad Charlie's settled into the team. I've been keeping an eye on him. I know he's been a target of some pretty severe bullying in the past.

If I hear you've done anything to hurt him, we'll be having words, all right?

Y-yeah-I mean-I wouldn't-



And if any of the other boys do or say anything spiteful to you or Charlie, you just come straight to me, okay?



I met my wife playing university sport in the early noughties.



People gave us a lot of shit.



Things are a little better now, but... you never know.





Hey babe

I missed you today

Haha, yeah, I'll be home soon

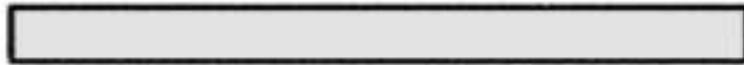


What was that all about?









THE NEXT MORNING...





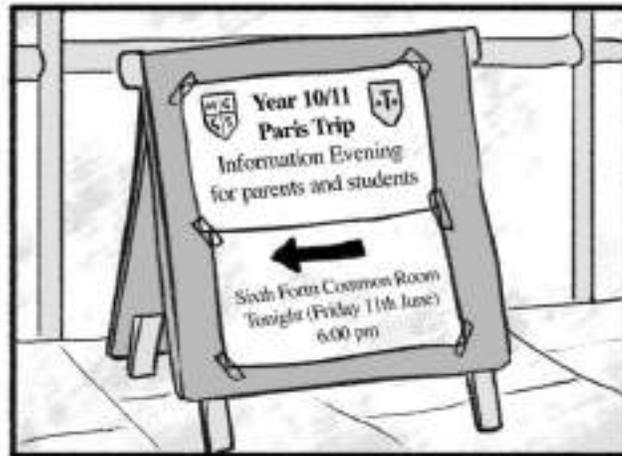


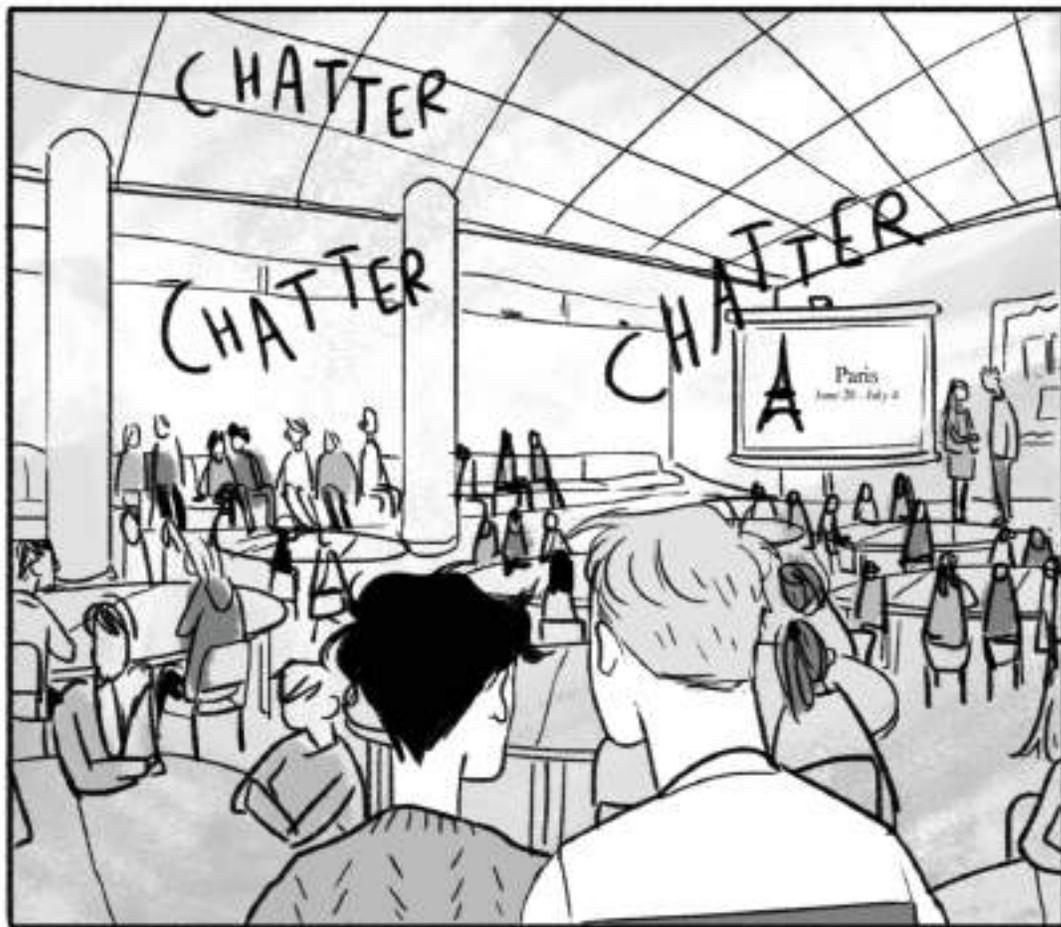




-but I still need to be able to hear myself to take the register...















Do you think now's the right time to tell them about us?

Maybe it would encourage them to actually deal with their feelings.



What are you whispering about and can I be involved?



We're trying to work out how to tell Charlie's friends about us.

Just say it, man. It's not like they'll react badly, is it?

Well no, but-

Good evening, Year 10s and 11s of Truham and Higgs, and good evening parents!



We've got a lot of information to get through this evening.



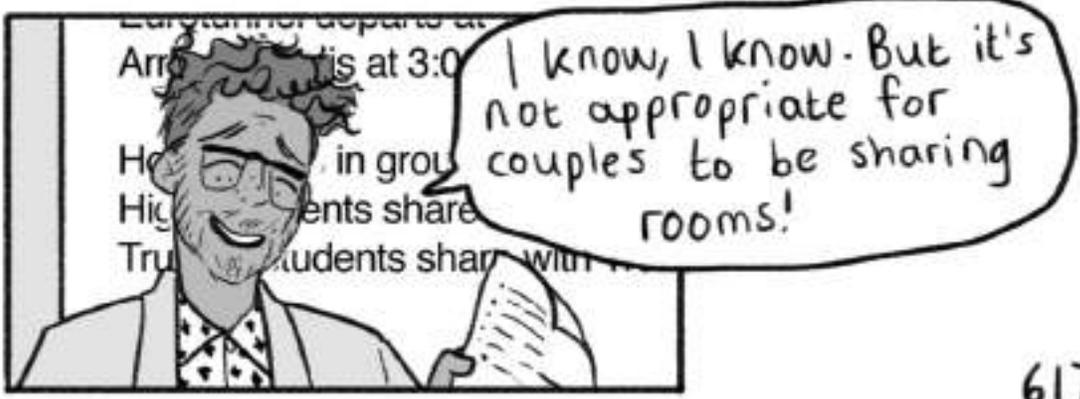
My name is Mr. Ajayi! I teach art at Higgs.



And I'm Mr. Farouk. I teach physics at Truham.



We'll be supervising the Paris trip this year...





Now, we need one person from each group to come up to the front to write down your names.







You haven't been quite as subtle
as you think you have.



Elle knows
too. I think
we worked
it out when
we all
went bowling.



But -

Don't tell Tao yet.





What?
Why??



He...he might
have been the
reason you
got outed
last year.

It was an
accident! We
were just chatting
in the corridor...
he was saying how
happy he was that
you decided to
tell us...



...but
someone
might
have
overheard.



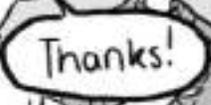
He would never
ever tell anyone
deliberately, but
he's loud and
chatty and can't
keep secrets.

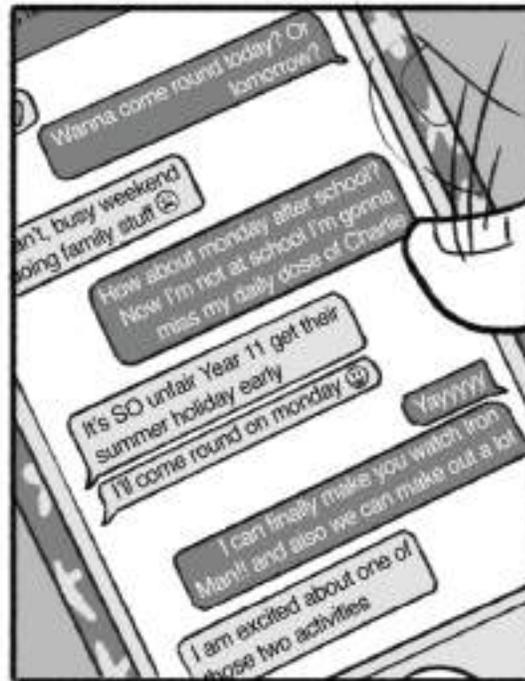
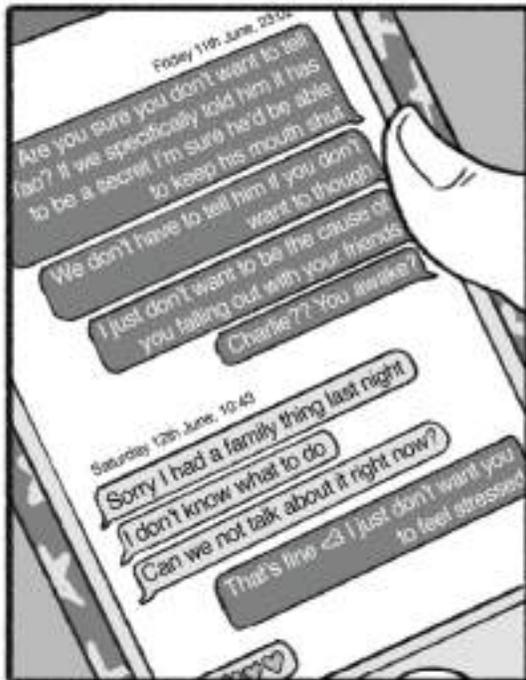
Don't
tell him
right before
the Paris
trip.

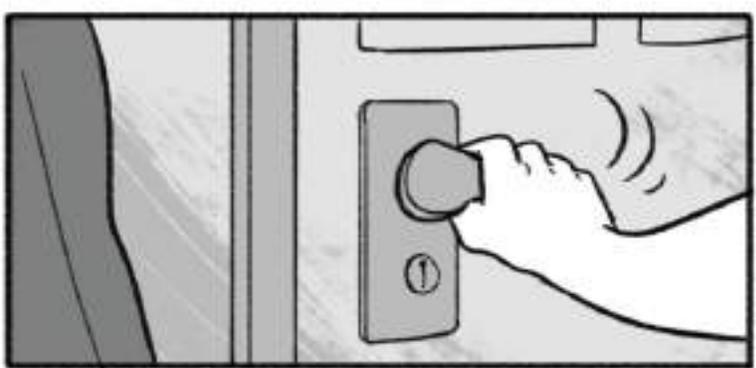




623











I hate you



이
아





Hey,
Char...



Mm?

Are you annoyed
at Tao?





He's one of my best friends. He never would have done it deliberately.

I still don't really get how people found out, though.



I dunno... I guess someone just told me.



Exactly.



At the time, there weren't any other out gay kids in school, so it was the most exciting news of the week.

People either thought I was a novelty or I was just gross. It... it really surprised me how many people are still homophobic.



They'd tell me I was disgusting. Right to my face.





It got better after a few months and some Sixth formers got the worst bullies to stop.

And then it was like everyone started waking up and realising that I was a real person with real feelings.



But the damage had already been done, I guess.

This is why you're stressed about us being out.





Yeah...
The bullying...
It was really bad,
and...



I started to believe
what they were
saying.

It made me
really hate
myself.



So much
that
I...



I used
to...
um...







Do you still do that now?



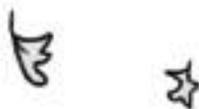
N-No!!
I mean-
hardly
ever



Sorry

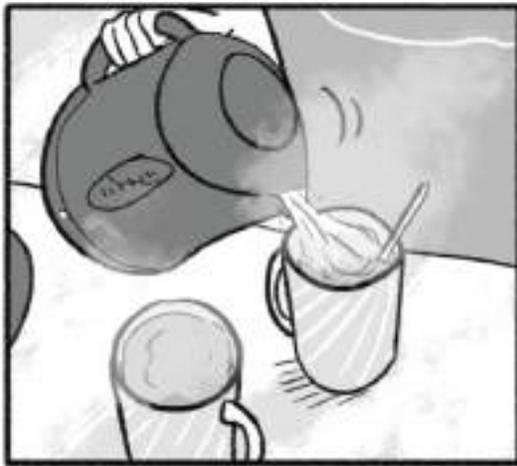
Hey, no
apologising!















I just wanted to meet the guy who turned my little brother gay







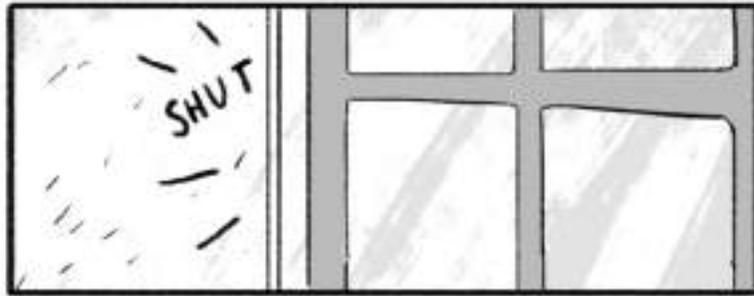




Nick...









23:18

Why is being out so complicated?





Are you awake?



652





SHIT sorry I meant to message you!!!

My brother's being a dick, he literally won't stop pestering me

Might be better if you don't come round here until he's back at uni





It was my fault for not telling him sooner tbh

No! You shouldn't have to tell him if you didn't want to



I guess he would have found out eventually one way or another. I should probably call my dad soon and tell him too

You don't have to! you can take your time!



I want him to know about you!! Plus I want to be the one to tell him, not David





I'm so sorry, this is all my fault



You shouldn't have to feel rushed or pressured by anybody



Charlie this is NOT your fault!!!!!!!

Coming out is HARD and COMPLICATED, right???

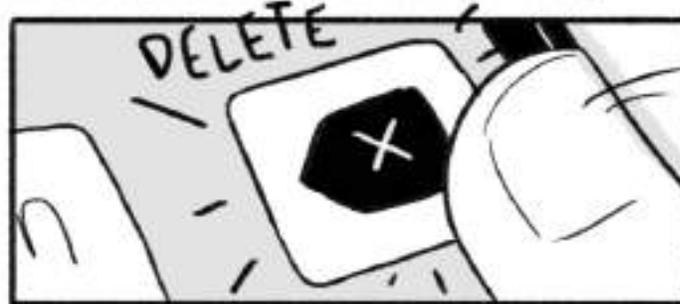
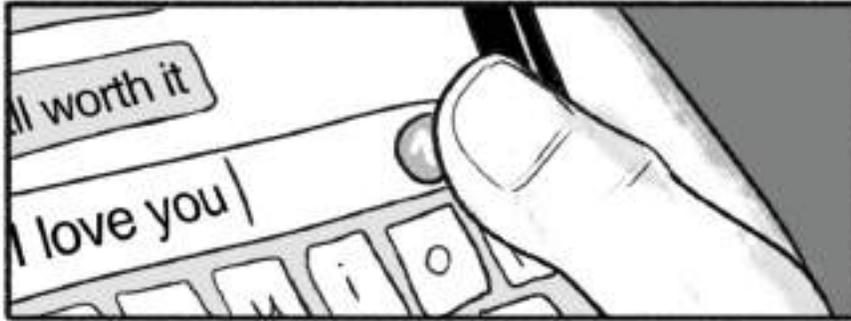
And it doesn't all happen at once! And it doesn't always go right! Sometimes it probably doesn't even happen at all!! Coming out to my mum was amazing but I never expected it to go super well with everyone!! And it's not YOUR fault! I just want people to know who I am and know that you're my boyfriend and I know that not everyone will like it but I'm ready for that. We're probably gonna have to come out hundreds more times in our lives!!



It might be shitty sometimes but I promise I'm okay

And it's all worth it











ONE WEEK LATER

Thank God
it's nearly
the summer
holidays!



And nearly the
Paris trip!



I've got drama
now so I'll
see you at
lunch!







But we don't want or need to tell anyone about it. For now, anyway.

Because right now it's just our thing.



Aled... you could have told me...



I know. But this is my point.

This whole deal with you and Nick being out to people... I think you need to stop worrying about anyone else's feelings.





I know Tao's one of your best friends. But if you don't think now is a good time to tell him...



It was different for you because you were outed and you didn't have any control, but this time, you do.



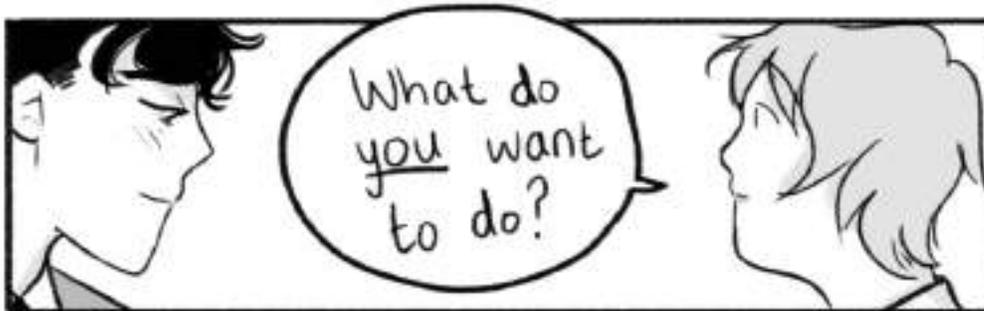
... you don't have to.



There's this idea that if you're not straight, you **HAVE** to tell all your family and friends immediately, like you owe it to them. But you don't. You don't have to do anything until you're ready.



This is about you and Nick.





I just...



I don't want what happened to me to happen to Nick



Anyway... tell me about this boy



Wha-no



Come onnn... not even his name?

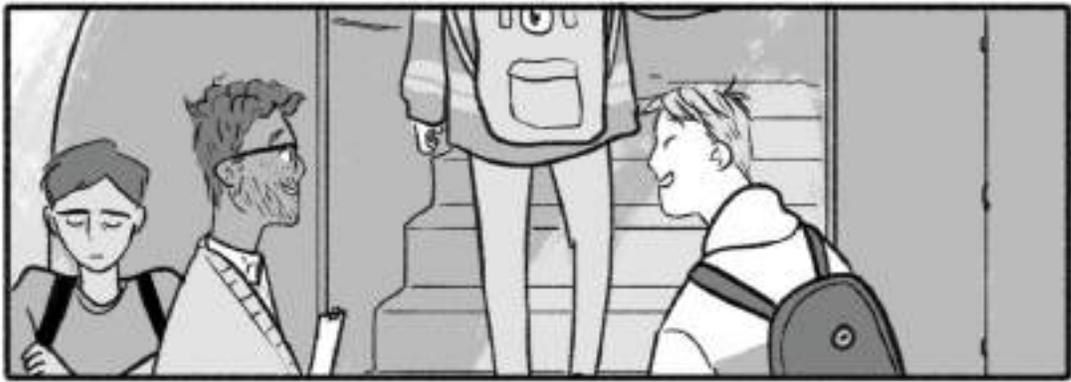


Um... it's Daniel...













O-okay... thank you, Mr Farouk. Now, if you could answer when I call out your name, please.











677





Well I want the other bed, then!
I hate getting woken up by the sun.



Um... I guess ... I'll go with Tao and you go with Aled?

Yeah...



KNOCK
KNOCK
KNOCK

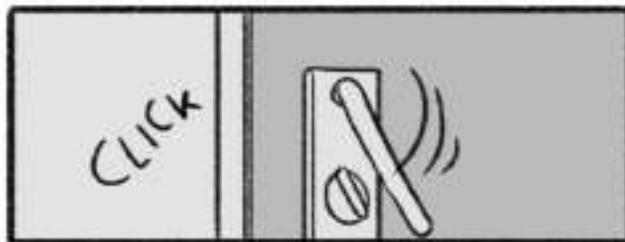


Aled? Is this your room? I still have your phone charger!

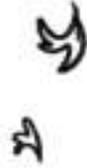


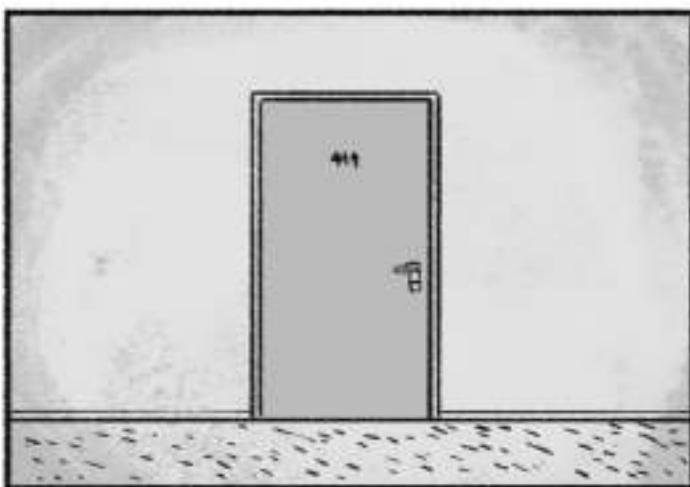














Paris - Day 2



Are you guys awake yet?



It's nearly time to go for-





⁴¹⁴
SLAM







That's 'museum' for all the students on this trip who don't even take French

Okay, gang! This afternoon you're going to be exploring Montmartre by yourselves for a couple of hours.

There are lots of shops and places to visit, like the Sacré-Cœur church and the Musée de Montmartre.

Meet back here
at 5pm, please.
You have our phone
numbers if you
get lost.
Have fun!

And stay in
your groups.





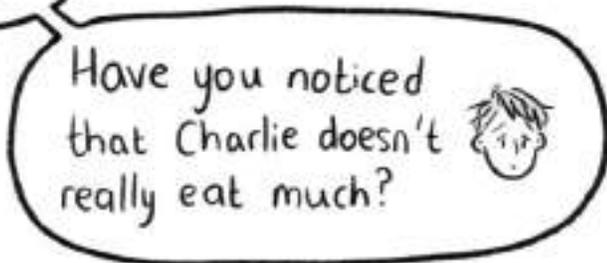
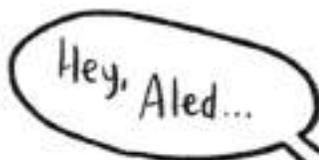
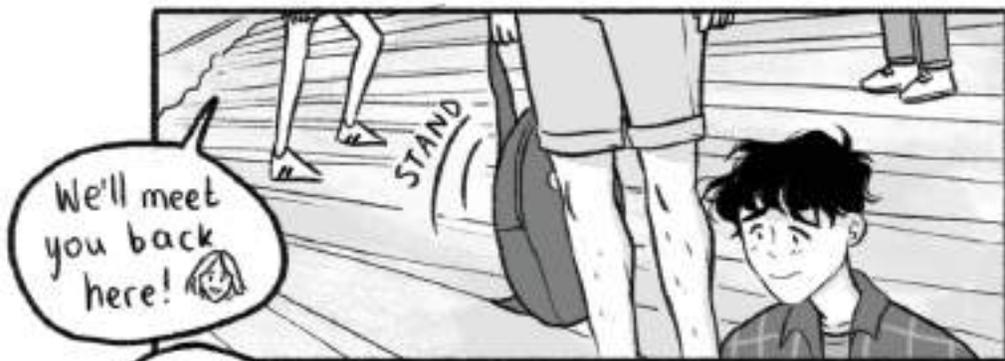




















So how are things with you and Nick?





Oh! Really good!

Haha... sometimes I still can't believe he's actually my boyfriend

Really? Why?



I dunno... There was a time where I was super jealous of you because I thought you and Nick might... you know...



HA
HA
HA



There's no way that would have ever happened. Aside from the fact that I am absolutely not into guys-

-Nick's so in love with you it's a little unbearable to watch sometimes







Darcy was already out. We'd been dating for a while and most of our friends knew. But other people were starting to guess too.



At our school, 'lesbian' was used as an insult all the time. I probably even used it once or twice when I was younger.

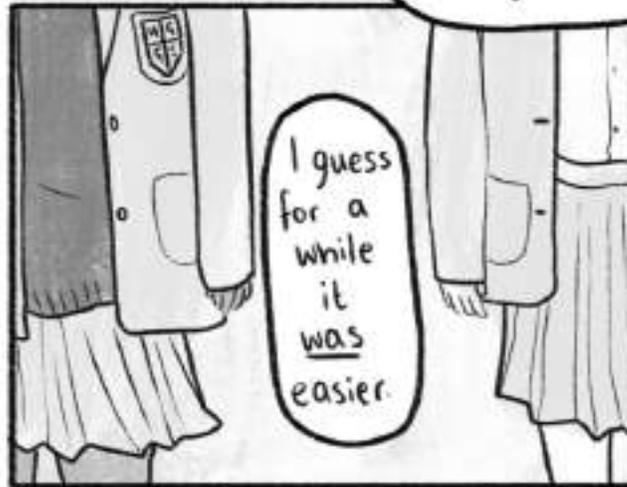


We were terrified.



It took me a long time to even feel comfortable calling myself a lesbian.

And for a while, we thought it'd be easier to pretend we were just friends.



I guess for a while it was easier.

But, in time, we got more comfortable being us.

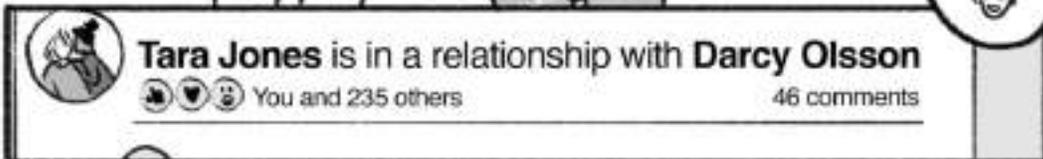


We reached the point where we knew that
whatever people said or thought about us,
we knew who we were



And we loved ourselves anyway.

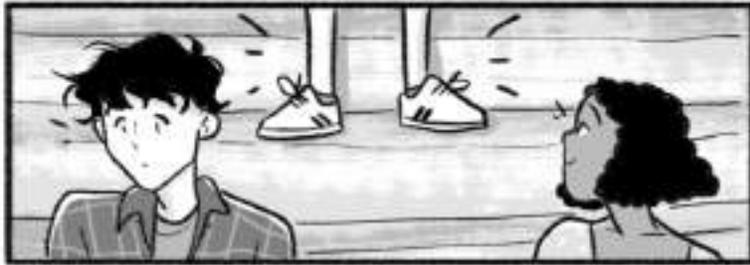








So, absolute disaster,
Jonesy-









There they are!



Oh my God, d'you think anything happened?

I hope so, or Tao is gonna pine to death



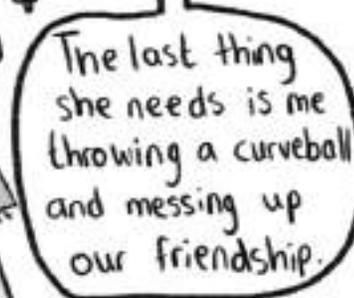
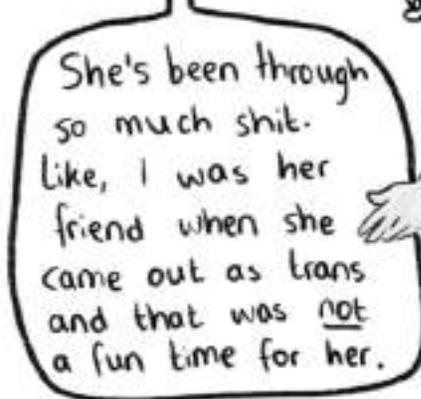
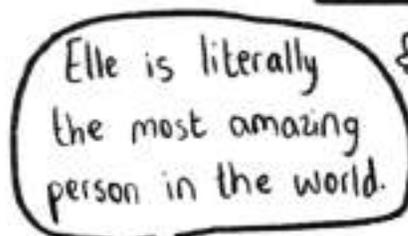


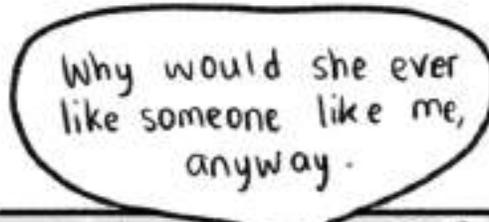
Later that night...

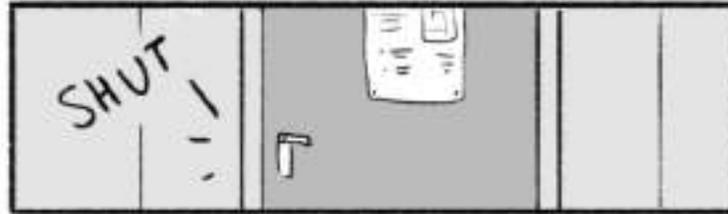


Hey Tao... how'd it go with Elle today?























You taste like toothpaste... Like the first time we kissed at your house...



Well I have literally just brushed my teeth, so-



S-so... Um...

What are you doing?



Kissing your neck... is that okay?



Um OBVIOUSLY



Thought so



Oh my God



KISS KISS



Oh my God

KISS KISS



You really are obsessed with me



maybe a bit



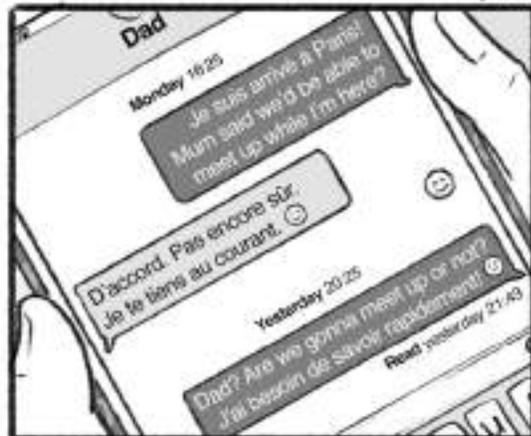
Nick... we're gonna get caught. We should stop.



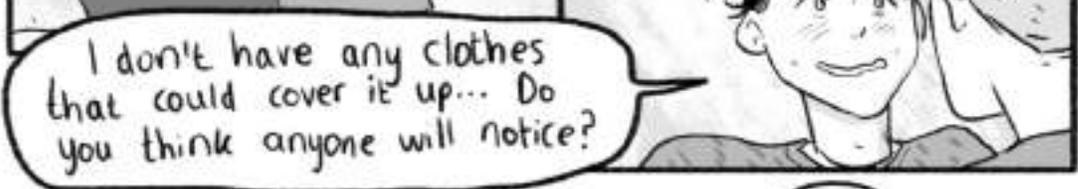


Paris - Day 3

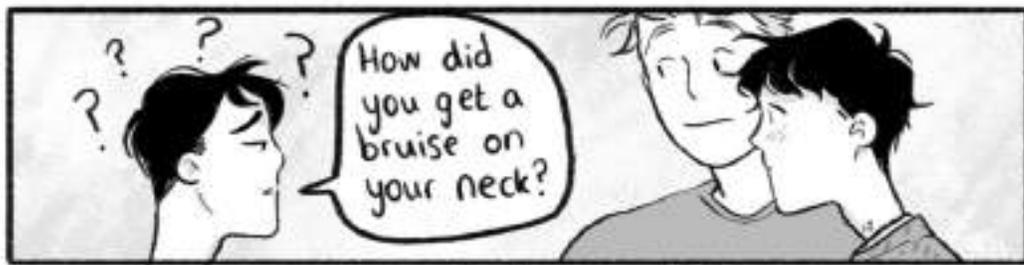














Aled! We have like fifteen minutes to get ready so WAKE UP



You could have told him if you wanted to



It's hard.

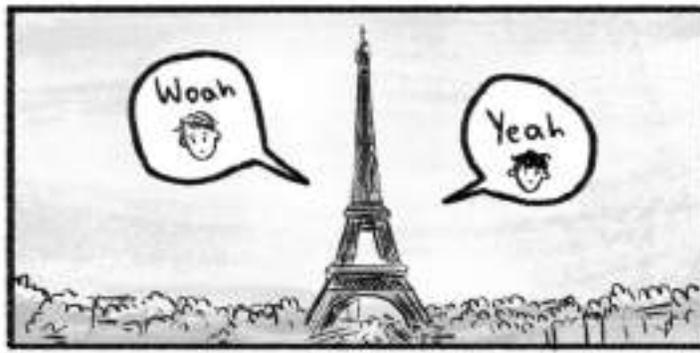


I'm gonna tell him today.

Yeah?

Yeah.





All right, lads.
Fucking leave them alone.





I was thinking about it and...
I don't think I even mind if
people find out it was me.



I honestly think it'd be a
relief to just... be out.

I was talking to Tara about it yesterday. She told me how she and Darcy came out and it made me feel like...



Even if things are harder when people know about us, we'll be okay, because we've got each other.



That is literally the soppiest thing you've ever said.



Ha ha!! Oh God, it really is



Charlie!
Get over here,
I need a photo
of me, you,
and Aled!





RING
RING
RING

The person you are calling is unavailable. Please leave a message after-







Me and Nick are dating.

...



Dating... who?

Each other. We're dating each other.



750

I thought... I thought you liked him but he's straight.

Yeah, same, but... it turns out he's bi and... now we're going out.



Actually... it's been going on for a few months. We've been going out since April.













Paris - Day 4









I'm gonna pack you a croissant.



So if you get hungry later you'll have a snack!













This place goes on FOREVER

And it's SO HOT I'm dying



Where even are we?



I have the map!







Charlie??



SIT



Someone
get
Mr Farouk!







You're sure you feel okay, Charlie?

Yeah, I just- I haven't eaten enough today



And you didn't hit your head or hurt yourself?

No!! Nick kind of caught me



Okay. But if you feel ill at any time on the trip, you can come and tell me, okay? If you need to sit down or just want to rest on the coach, that's absolutely fine.

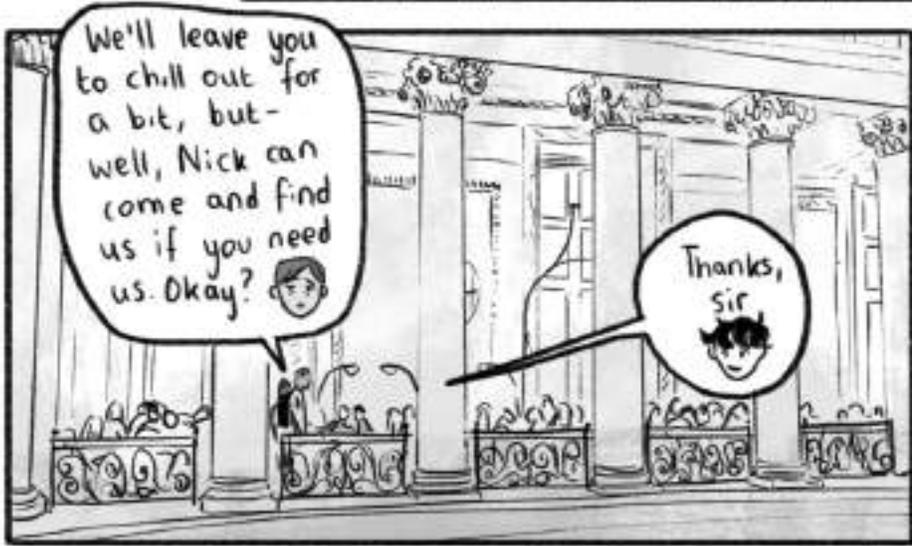
NOD

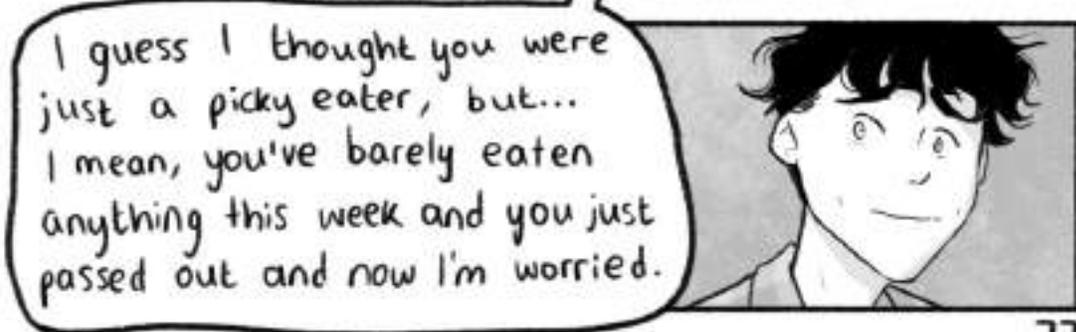
THIS UPDATE MAY TRIGGER SOME PEOPLE. TO SEE A DESCRIPTION OF THE TRIGGERING MATERIAL, PLEASE SCROLL DOWN TO THE UPDATE NOTES. THANKS!



There you go, Mr Spring!

Get those in your belly!

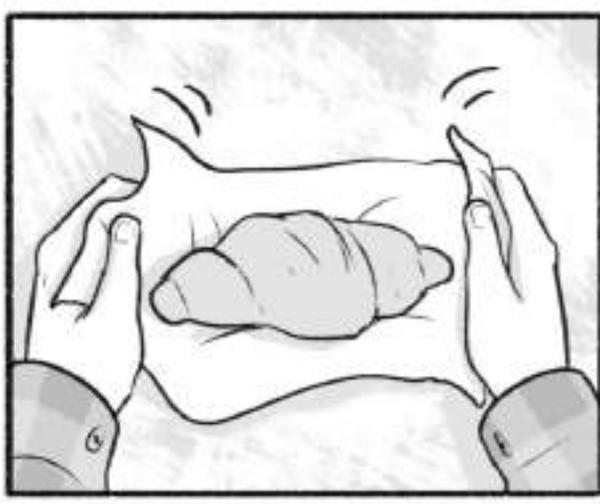




Hey! No. There's nothing to be sorry about, okay?

Yeah. Fuck. I'm sorry. I'm really sorry.

I just want to understand.



I know I don't ... eat like normal people





No, that does make sense

You can always tell me stuff like that.



I dunno, I...
I don't wanna, like, annoy you or burden you.



Ever since I told you about... you know, how bad I felt last year... I've been scared you'd-



I just don't want you to feel like you need to look after me, like I'm some fragile, broken mess. Like you need to fix me. I would hate that.





780



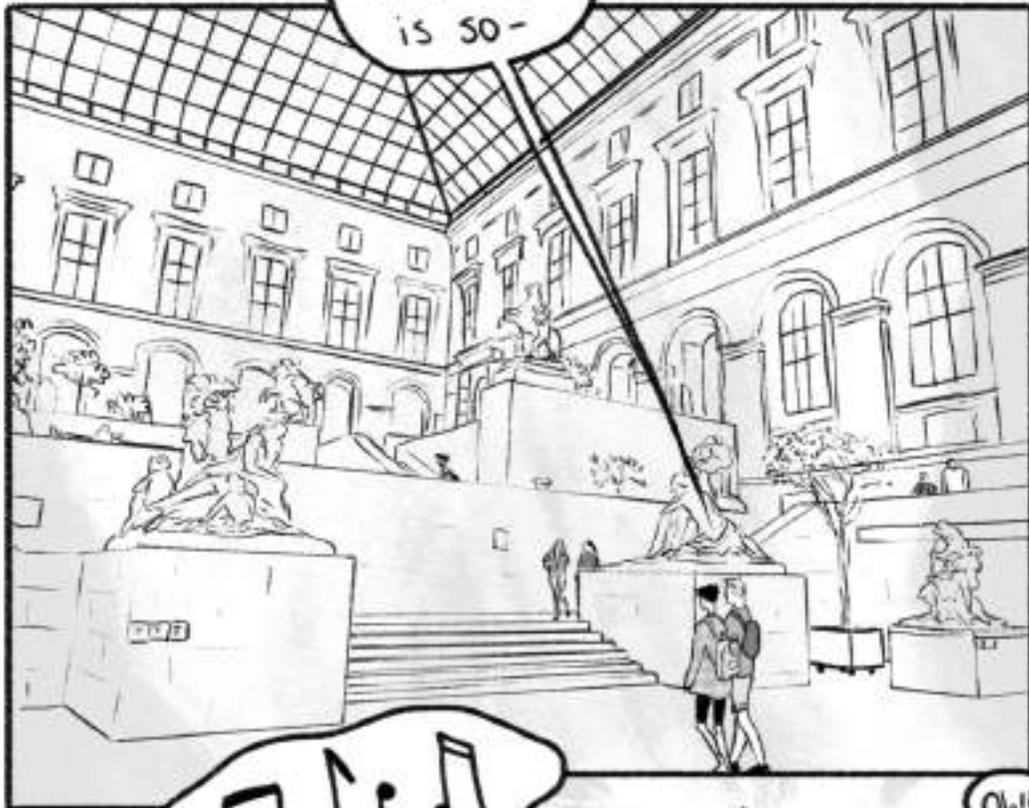




Let's go!



Wow, this is so-



Ah - that's my phone!!

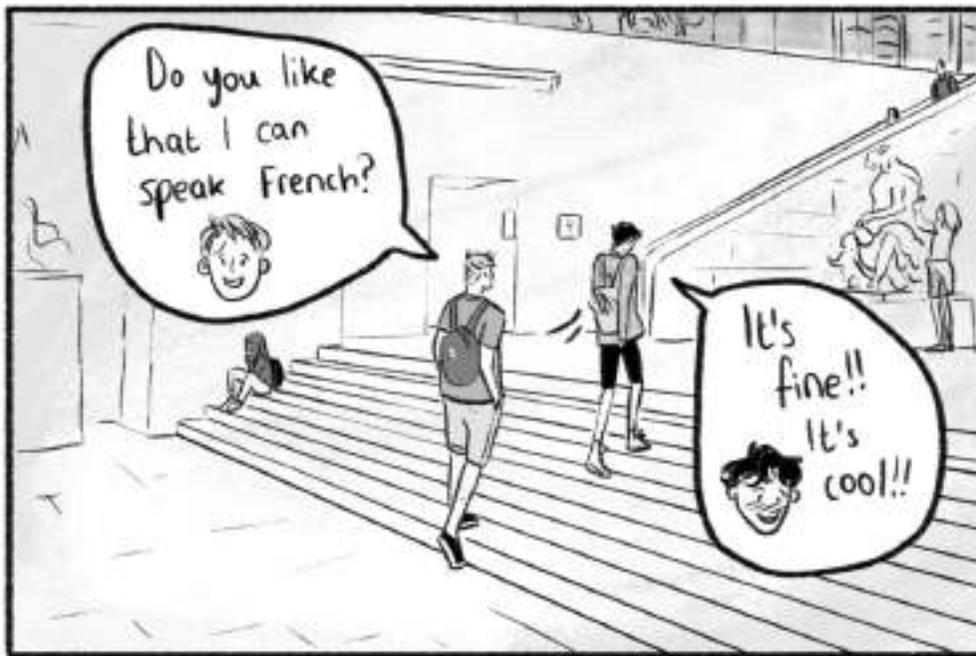


Oh!!







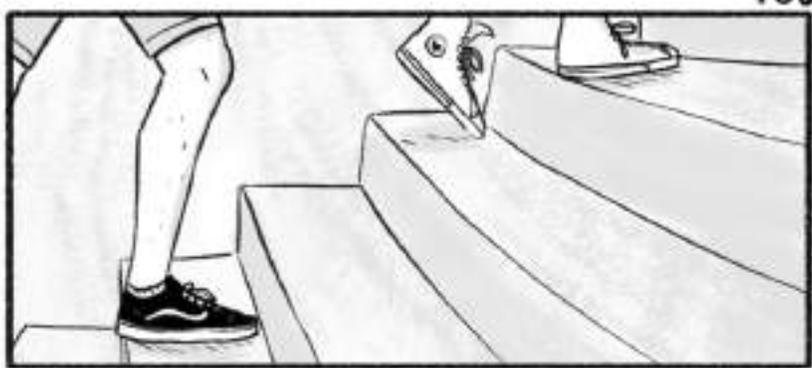






Anyway, what did your dad want? I can't believe I didn't know he was french!

Oh yeah! I wanted to try and meet up with him but he said he's too busy with work.





That sucks

Yeah. He's not the most reliable, but...



Look, that's him

He's still my dad, you know? I wanted to tell him about you. In person.





This has been stressing you out... You should have told me about it!

Yeah, I... I didn't want to make you worry.







I love you
I love you

Okay, back
on the coach,
everyone!







I feel horrible about fucking up last year but I shouldn't pass that guilt onto you. I made a really stupid, idiotic mistake and you suffered really badly because of it.



I don't think I even understood how hard it must have been for you to come out to me.



So...

I will be a better friend and less of an idiot. I promise.



Okay
😊









Paris - Day 5







← Did not think of that →



HALF AN HOUR LATER



My skin's a bit lighter than yours but this'll probs be fine

You could mix it with some of mine!

Yeah, that might work!





How did this even happen?
kind of a bad time to get
a love bite.



It's my fault

NO!! It
was both
our faults!!

Kinda
TMI,
guys

Done!



Can you
see it?



Nope!

Well, Charlie, I'm glad
you've found a boyfriend
as idiotic as you.

Tao.

Ha ha!









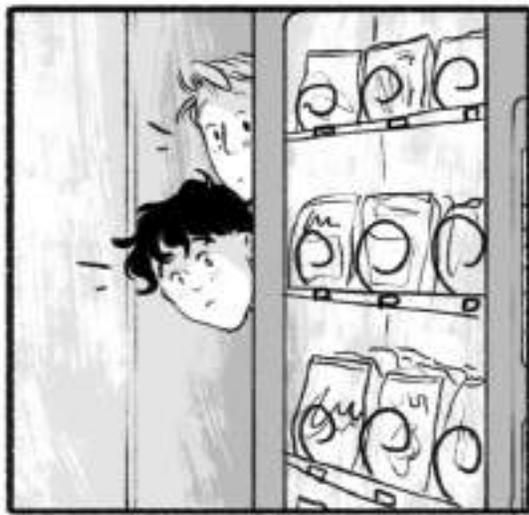
chatter chatter

chatter chatter

chatter

805





Off you go.





Seems fairly obvious to me!



WHRRRR

I'm pretty sure I did the exact same thing at that age. Sneaking around like that with a boy.

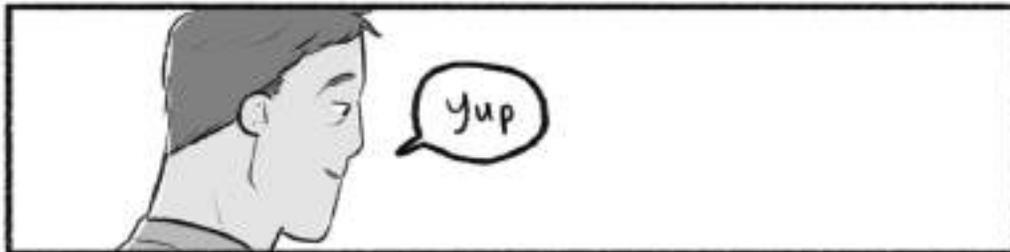


807



Come on.

You never snuck off with a boy on a school trip when you were their age?







Paris - Day 6

Haaaappy Biiiiirthdaaaay ☑
♪ toooooo yooooouuuu!!



I am literally so embarrassed right now

811







And it's Tara's birthday. So I know you might all want to have a little... party tonight in your rooms.

Well, we're not going to ban that, but please make sure that you're being safe and please keep the noise down, okay?



A party?



A PARTY!!



Yay!



You can buy snacks and drinks while we're out today, but-











Tara Jones + 39 others



Tara Jones

Casual party in my room from 9pm!!
Room 317!! Everyone's welcome 😊
and you can wear PJs!



Darcy Olsson

PLEASE BRING SNACKS IF YOU HAVE
ANY. ESPECIALLY IF YOU HAVE PRINGLES

also I have vodka 🍷



Katie Lee

Yassss we'll be there!



Tom Jaeger

CAN'T WAIT



Aleena Bukhsh

omg darcy how did you get vodka



Darcy Olsson

i have my ways



Jared Lambe

YEEEEEE LET'S GET LIT

Charlie Spring

we'll be there!!!!!!



That night ...





You sure you don't mind me borrowing this?

As long as you don't steal it like the other three you've "borrowed". I actually quite like that one.

I didn't STEAL them!!



I- I just forgot to give them back!













Teasing you is so fun! 😊

I actually hate you.

Nah, you like me.



I really don't





THIS UPDATE MAY TRIGGER SOME PEOPLE. TO SEE A DESCRIPTION OF THE TRIGGERING MATERIAL, PLEASE SCROLL DOWN TO THE UPDATE NOTES. THANKS!











Ahem.



Sorry to interrupt your very obvious flirting, BUT-











835





Maybe you have to learn to like it.

That's what my mum says about red wine.



Oh well. I don't need to be drunk right now.



Same.





A little while later...



837







I wanted to say sorry. For all the shit I said at the cinema. It wasn't cool.



Char, we don't have to listen to this.

I know I said some homophobic shit. Honestly my family's pretty homophobic. But I feel like I know better now and I won't say shit like that anymore.

What do you want from us??







You don't get to ambush me into forgiving you in front of everyone.

One "sorry" doesn't make up for all the things you said.

So Congrats on your incredibly difficult realisation that gay people actually do have feelings



and have a nice life ♡





.. TOUCH





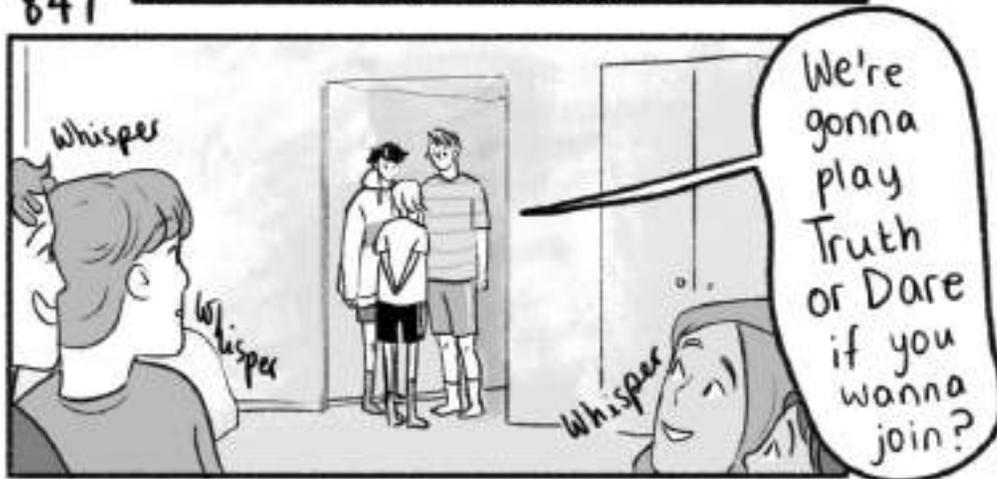
THIS UPDATE MAY TRIGGER SOME PEOPLE. TO SEE A DESCRIPTION OF THE TRIGGERING MATERIAL, PLEASE SCROLL DOWN TO THE UPDATE NOTES. THANKS!



Ahem~♡



847





Tara!!

Ooooooh

Uh
Oh!!







Tao!





Obviously dare.



I dare you... to kiss James.

...

What!?!

I'm up for it!!
Ha ha!!



You have to do it!!
That's the dare!



Go ooon! It's just one little kiss!



853





Oh!! Um-
okay, that's
fine, I-

I didn't
care
anyway
so...
ha
ha

Okay, but
you have
to do a
truth
instead



Fine!!



Who gave you the love bite?







I know who it was.







Oh my God!! I knew it!

Really!? How long have you been going out?

Don't say that, that's so rude!

But we were saying the other day-

Sshh

A few months

Nick, I didn't know you were gay!

That's so crazy, I never would have guessed Nick was gay

I'm bi, actually, but yeah

Did you turn him gay??

Awww you two are so cute together!

Um, no, and he's bi

um... thanks?

So that's why you wouldn't kiss James!

Do you want us to keep it a secret?



We're okay with being out.

We haven't been keeping it that secret anyway.

Ahem.

I hate to interrupt this very lovely moment, but-









I WANT EVERYONE OUT EXCEPT TARA AND DARCY. EVERYONE ELSE GET BACK TO YOUR ROOMS NOW.



Well... no having sex in our room. 864













I think...
I'm okay
with that.

Nervous, yeah,
but...
I'm
okay.



Are you
feeling okay
about it?



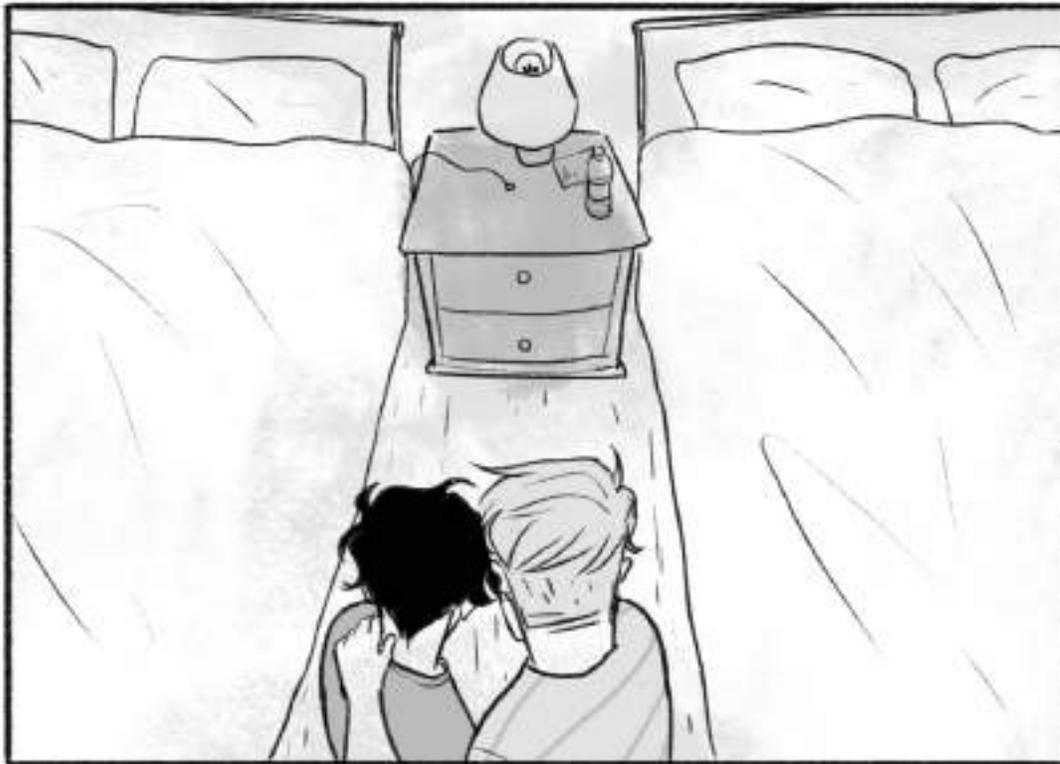
About us
being
out?



Um...
I... I was
scared.









I could sleep in this bed with you?



Since we wanted to on Monday, but... then Tao was being Tao, and... yeah, haha





Yeah! I always sleep on this side!



Well I got here first ♡



Okay ☺

AAAAAH

SLUMP













Kiss



Kiss



kiss













And I'd only want to if you wanted to as well.



If you didn't ever want to then I wouldn't either.



ARGH I'm interrupting our make out time by talking about deep stuff

No I started it!

I'm so embarrassing!!

I think we both are to be honest

Pfft





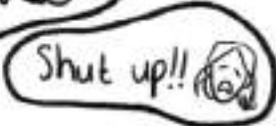


sniff
Am I gonna
get in trouble,
sir?



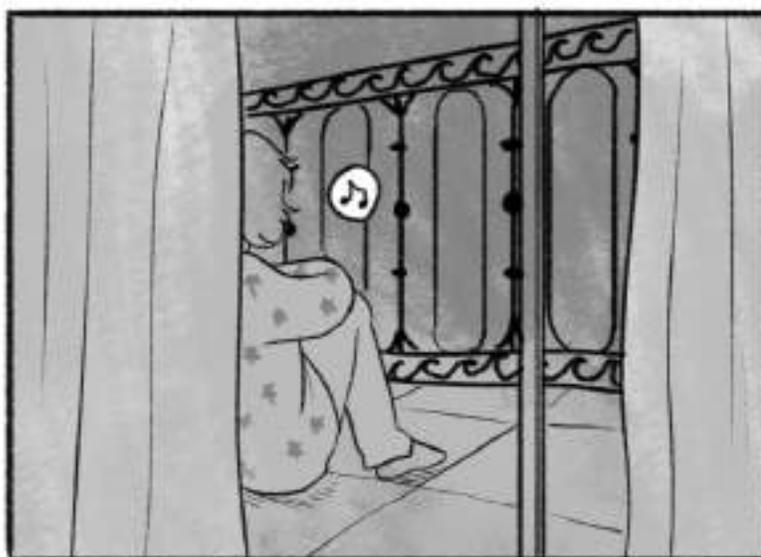
You can't get in trouble for
having food poisoning, can you?





giggle
giggle





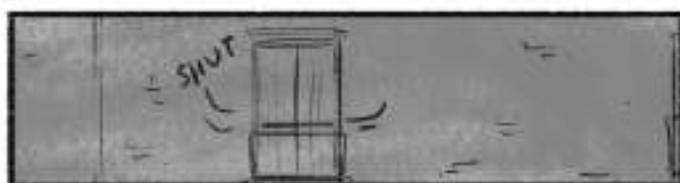












I wanna
stay up
all night

Same





901



Paris - Day 7

Come on.
Onto the bus.
We have a
train to catch.





903













