

# My Lesbian Experience with Loneliness



(True) Story & Art by  
Nagata Kabi

My Lesbian  
Experience  
with  
Loneliness

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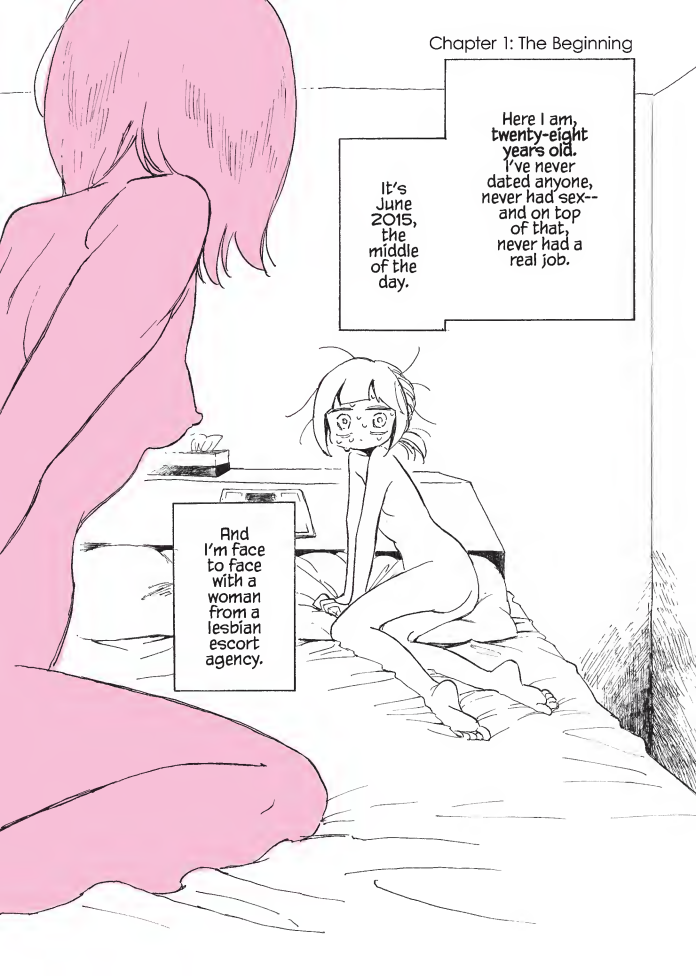


Chapter 1: The Beginning

Here I am,  
twenty-eight  
years old.  
I've never  
dated anyone,  
never had sex--  
and on top  
of that,  
never had a  
real job.

It's  
June  
2015,  
the  
middle  
of the  
day.

And  
I'm face  
to face  
with a  
woman  
from a  
lesbian  
escort  
agency.



When it comes to anything sexual, I'm about as experienced as a newborn-- or something like that.

HEE  
HEE  
HEE!

....

Kree...

And let me be clear here, this is *not* making me feel sexy at all.

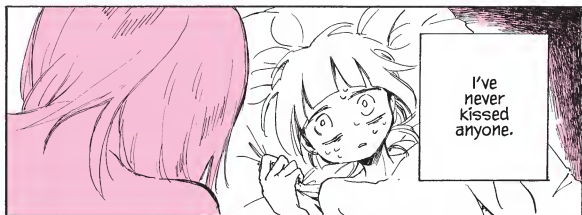
CREEK

LIE  
BACK.

I have a bald spot on my head. (I hide it, but still.)

And my arms are covered in scars from cutting, but there's no way to hide them.

FLOP



I've never kissed anyone.



Obviously I've never been with an escort...



I'm not really sure where I'm supposed to pay after this...

This is the first time I've ever set foot in a love hotel.



SHE<sub>ooo</sub>

I'M REALLY DOING IT.

I ALWAYS SEE THIS HAPPEN IN DOUJINSHI\*.

\*Doujinshi are creator-owned comics and books, similar to fanzines--but generally much more professionally printed, thanks to a proliferation of cheap printing services in Japan. The word is used by English audiences almost exclusively for fancomics, often with a romantic or sexual take on an existing series.



It's a story ten years in the making.

In order to be a grown-up, I was after some sort of "sweet nectar" that's supposed to come with adulthood.

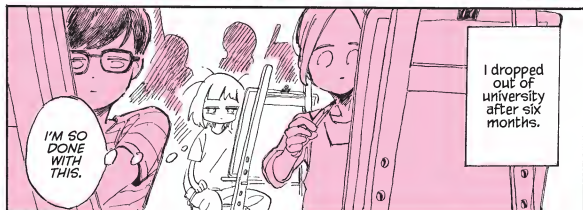
In order to live as myself...

And how did it go?

Why did I suddenly muster up the courage to call an escort agency?

...a  
decade  
ago.

I remember  
when this  
suffering  
began...







LOOKING FOR PART-TIME HELP.

HELLO? I SAW YOUR HELP WANTED AD...

Knowing I didn't belong anywhere-- that I had nowhere to go every day-- made me extremely anxious.



I lost the things that had given me shape, and as they disappeared, I felt like I was dissolving into thin air.

I thought that belonging somewhere, having somewhere to go every day = me.



Fortunately, everyone there was really great.

I found a part-time job, six days a week.



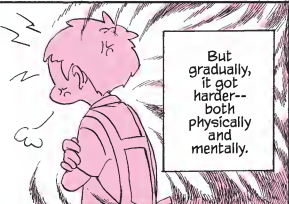
I thought that would make me happy, that everything would get better...

I thought it would be nice if we could be like a family.

I started causing problems for everyone, coming in late, leaving early, calling in sick...



But gradually, it got harder-- both physically and mentally.



IF YOU DON'T MAKE YOURSELF USEFUL, YOU CAN'T STAY HERE.

THIS ISN'T SCHOOL.



I GUESS I GOT THE WRONG IDEA SOMEHOW.

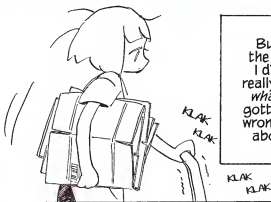
KLAK  
KLAK

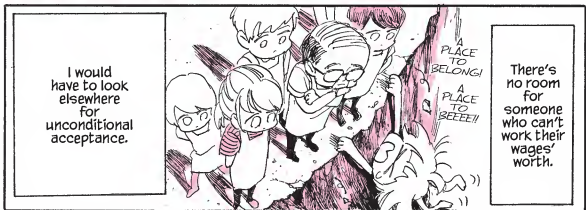
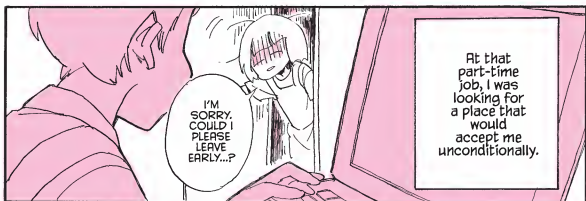
AAH.



...or how it had even happened.

But at the time, I didn't really know *what* I'd gotten the wrong idea about...





I didn't feel hungry, and I didn't think I deserved to eat.

THE SHAPE OF MY LEGS WAS DISTURBING.



Incidentally, I'm 167cm tall, but at the time, I weighed 38kg.

(5'6", 84lbs.)

I still have these thoughts, and I'm sure there are some I haven't noticed yet.



I DIDN'T DESERVE TO EAT OUT.

THAT I'D NEVER BE ABLE TO RECOVER.

SOME THING TERRIBLE WOULD HAPPEN. SOME THING SO TERRIBLE.

IF I BOUGHT CAKE...



I'D DEFINITELY PAY FOR IT.



(UNDER 20)

I DIDN'T DESERVE TO DRINK ALCOHOL.

Others in the "I don't deserve to XX or I will seriously pay for it" series include...

I was twice as sensitive to the cold as a normal person, and when I did eat, I'd sometimes end up feeling sick.



SO COLD!

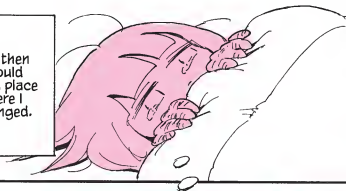
MY CHAPPED SKIN NEVER GOT BETTER AND THERE WAS ALWAYS THIS MYSTERIOUS YELLOW LIQUID Oozing OUT.

IF I BARELY BUMPED INTO THE HEATER, IT WAS A BURN.

At the time, my skin was a mess and my cuts basically never healed. I got low-temperature burns at the drop of a hat.

But I was happy to be falling apart.

And then I could find a place where I belonged.



Getting hurt absolved me of something. I thought it would lower the bar for other people to accept me...

...the welcoming kindness of a hospital bed.



But I still wasn't anywhere close to...

And I totally got it.

"BUT IT'S EASY TO UNDERSTAND THE PAIN WHEN IT'S MY BODY THAT'S BEING HURT. IT CALMS ME DOWN."

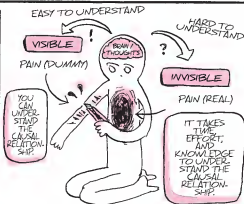


"I DON'T REALLY UNDERSTAND THE PAIN IN MY HEART. IT DOESN'T HAVE ANY REAL FORM."

I read about a person who hurt herself. She said...

Years later...

You can see it; the cause is very clear. Creating and seeing the dummy pain calms you down. You feel better right away.



Putting the invisible pain in my heart into words was a process that took time and effort, and more than that...

I think it was a natural reaction from my body's starvation switch being flipped.



Eventually, I did a one-eighty from not eating at all, and started overeating.

So then, what did I do? I gritted my teeth.



I COULDN'T LEAVE THE REGISTER

But I had no choice in the matter. A desire to eat would suddenly take over my brain, so powerful that it almost drove me mad. I could do nothing in that state of binge eating, which was a serious problem.

HAVE TO GO TO THE BATH-ROOM! (A LIE.)

SORRY! I JUST ...!

And I would pretend to go to the bathroom and race into the staff room.

Which wouldn't be a big deal on its own, but this happened over and over.

I HAVE TO GET BACK ALREADY. AH AH AH AH!

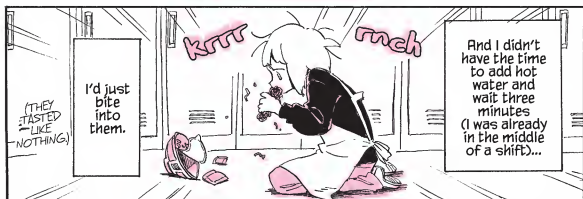


Back there, we had food taken off the shelves for being past the expiry date, and I would frantically stuff it into my mouth.



When there was only instant ramen...

Sometimes...



(THEY TASTED LIKE NOTHING)

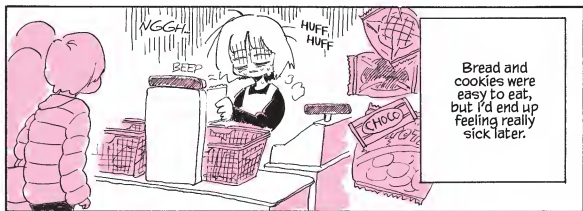
I'd just bite into them.

And I didn't have the time to add hot water and wait three minutes (I was already in the middle of a shift)...



...and if I sprinkled the soup powder on them, it just fell through the cracks and didn't stick at all.

The non-fried noodles are particularly hard, so they'd be speckled with my blood.



Bread and cookies were easy to eat, but I'd end up feeling really sick later.

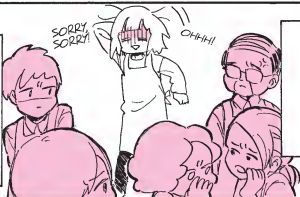
I was sure that if anyone saw me, they'd think I was possessed or something.



(ALTHOUGH IT WAS TRICKY HAVING WATER IN THE PACKAGE THAT HAD TO BE DUMPED SOMEWHERE...)

Finally, I kept a supply of yam cakes in my locker.

So my position there gradually got worse.



In my experience, you can try to do things like this on the sly, but people can basically tell.

My memories from that time probably fuel that.



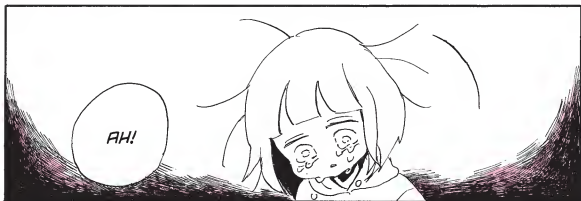
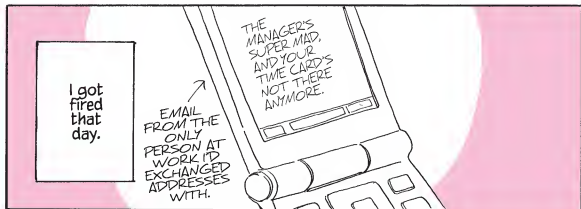
Even now, ten years later, I'm still held prisoner by the thought of what I'll do if I desperately want to run away, but can't leave my post.

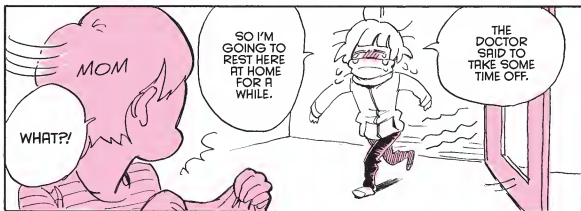
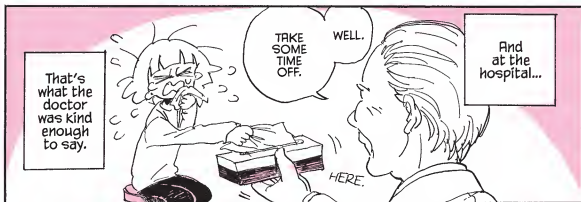
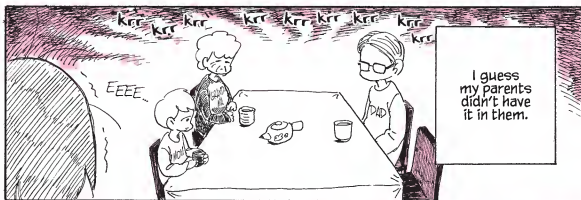
I tried to go to work and collapsed in the hallway of my house. I couldn't move.

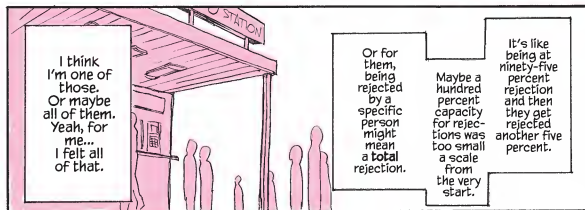


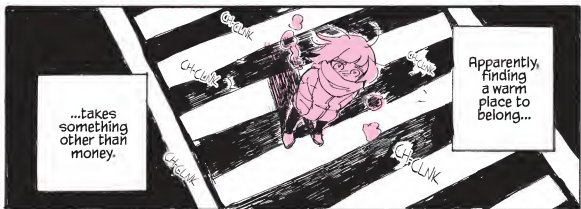
One cold morning, after six months of this...











...was also required to enjoy food, to keep yourself neat and tidy, and to mutually respect people. But at the time, I didn't know that.



Several years later, I realized that this "something" other than money...

So eventually, I went home.

WHAT IS THIS...?



I ran out of the house because I'd had all I could take from my parents. But I actually had no choice but to rely on them.

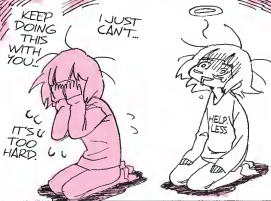
It was pathetic. I hadn't thought I was so helpless. I was disappointed in myself.



I had that thought dozens of times over the next several years.

KEEP DOING THIS WITH YOU!  
CC IT'S TOO HARD.

I JUST CAN'T...



HELPLESS

"I've finally reached the limit; I can't be any more disappointed in myself."

I always think it must be tough for people recuperating at home, too.

BEING DEAD WOULD BE SO MUCH EASIER...

Whatever a binger looks like on the outside, they're seriously suffering on the inside.

But I'd think about the many merits of being dead over being alive...

WHAT'S THE BEST WAY TO JUST DIE?

Each and every day was hard. Twenty-four hours without a moment of respite. No matter how I looked at it, dying was an easier option.

...and it was surprisingly aggravating.

I'LL CLAW MY WAY OUT OF BED WITH MY LAST DYING BREATH!

IF THIS IS HOW IT IS, I'VE GOT NOTHING TO LOSE!

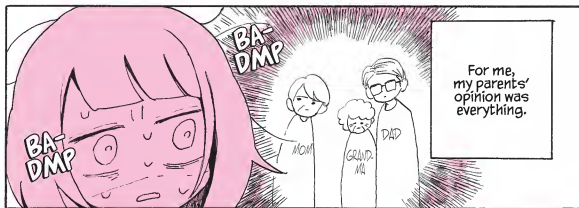
That was how I started to think.

GRARI!

GOD-DAMMIT !!!

The background of the entire page is a repeating pattern of diagonal stripes. The stripes are colored in a light pink and white, running from the top-left to the bottom-right. The stripes are of uniform width and spacing.

My Lesbian  
Experience  
with  
Loneliness





So I ate food, and the bingeing gradually stopped.



If I got my body out of starvation mode, I could get the binge eating under control.

It was hard for me to be in the house, so I went on endless walks.



NORMAL LIFE



I... I DID IT...

IT WAS A SIMPLE THING BUT I FELT SUCH A SENSE OF ACCOMPLISHMENT!

I was finally living a normal life (up in the morning, in bed at night, three meals a day).

Help Wanted!



ALL RIGHT!  
NEXT,  
A JOB!







...are related to when I'm trying to make myself look good due to an inferiority complex, or when I don't understand how I actually feel.



Recently, I've realized that the times when I'm uncomfortable...

TOTALLY BLANK RESUME



SALARIED EMPLOYEE STATUS.

LOOKS LIKE I JUST HAVE TO GO FOR IT.

I only had a high school diploma, but I looked for places that did mid-career hires and went to interviews.



I worked at the bakery for two years, but then I lost the will to work and stopped being able to get out of bed.

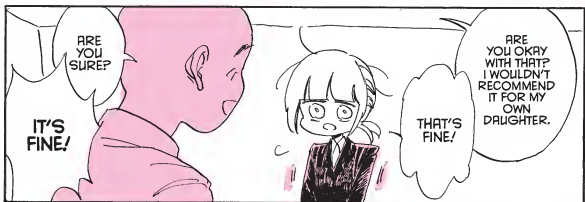
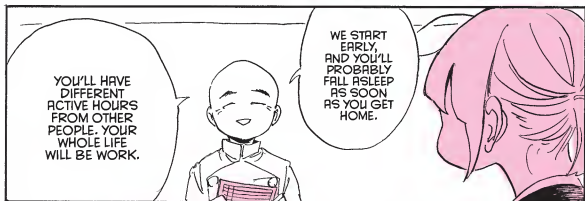
I simply sought my parents' approval.

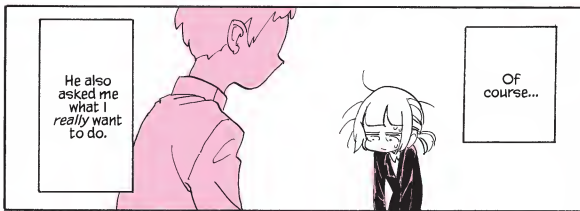


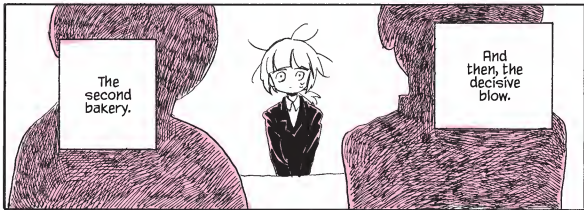
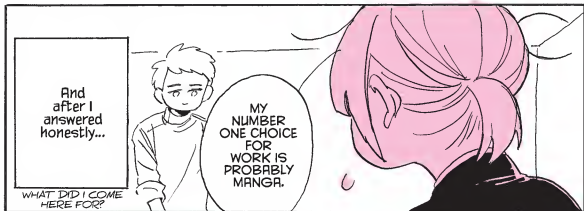
I'M GOING TO A JOB INTERVIEW.

I'M TIRED!  
I TRIED!

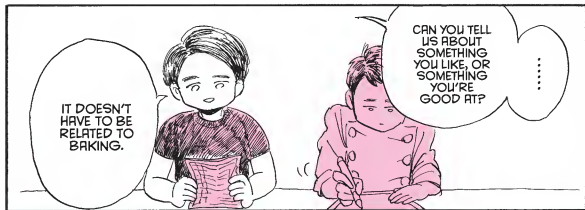
I couldn't listen to my own feelings, or have my own opinions about myself.











IT DOESN'T  
HAVE TO BE  
RELATED TO  
BAKING.

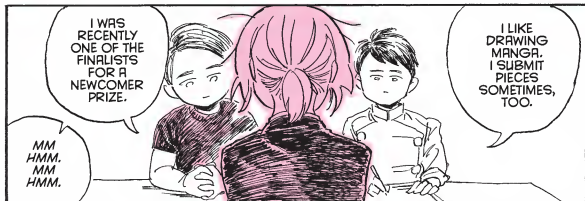
CAN YOU TELL  
US ABOUT  
SOMETHING  
YOU LIKE, OR  
SOMETHING  
YOU'RE  
GOOD AT?

...



UMMM...

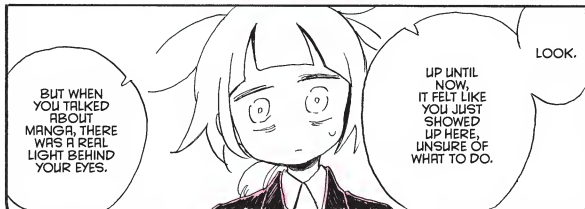
WHAT?!



I WAS  
RECENTLY  
ONE OF THE  
FINALISTS  
FOR A  
NEWCOMER  
PRIZE.

I LIKE  
DRAWING  
MANGA.  
I SUBMIT  
PIECES  
SOMETIMES,  
TOO.

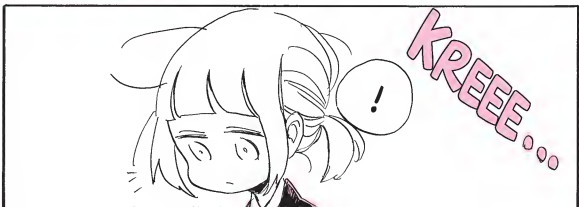
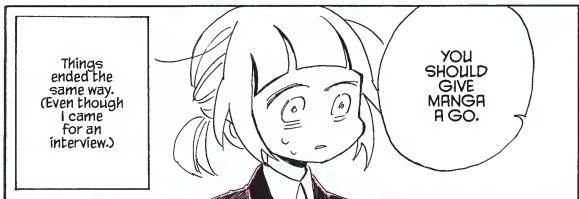
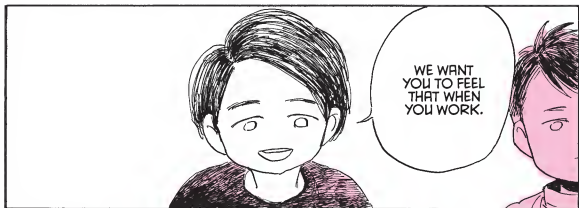
MM  
HMM.  
MM  
HMM.

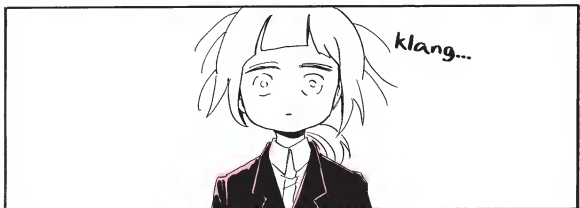
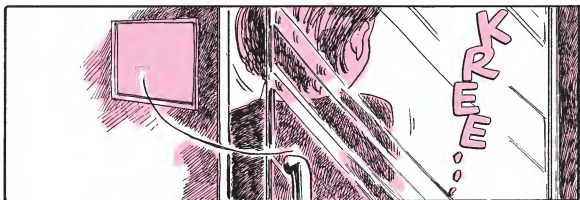
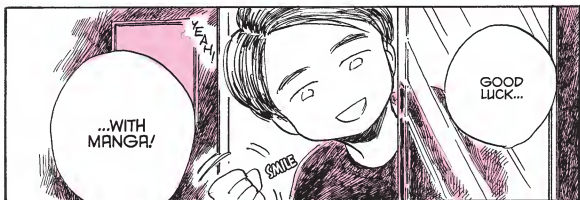
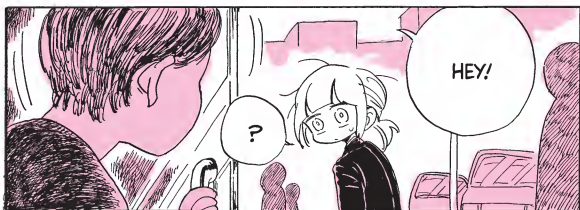


BUT WHEN  
YOU TALKED  
ABOUT  
MANGA, THERE  
WAS A REAL  
LIGHT BEHIND  
YOUR EYES.

UP UNTIL  
NOW,  
IT FELT LIKE  
YOU JUST  
SHOWED  
UP HERE,  
UNSURE OF  
WHAT TO DO.

LOOK.

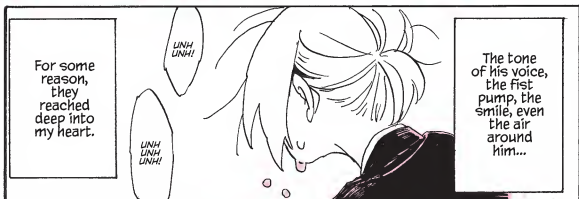






I'd never said yes to it, either.

Although I'd never said no to drawing manga...



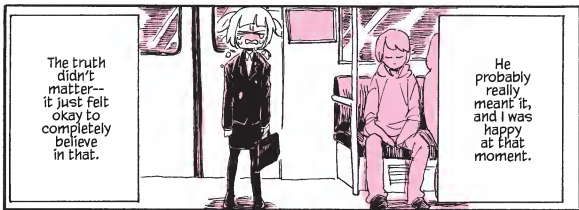
For some reason, they reached deep into my heart.

The tone of his voice, the fist pump, the smile, even the air around him...



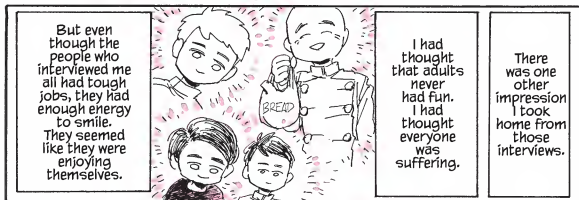
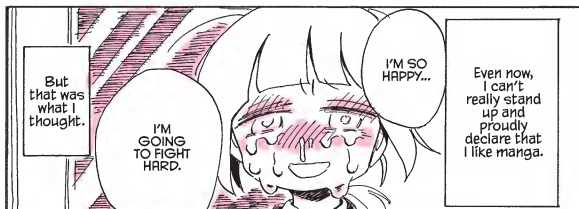
I couldn't stop crying. Not after I got to the station, not after I got on the train.

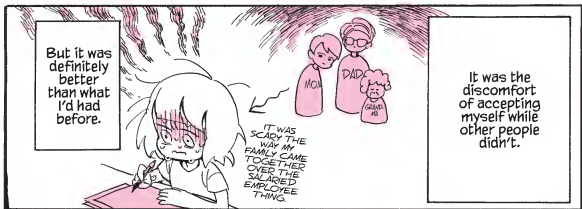
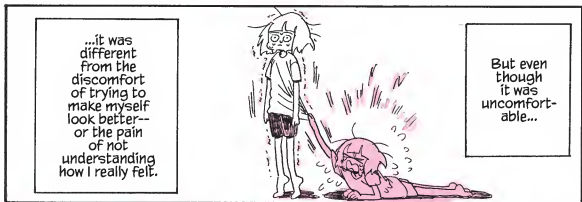
Even though he'd only said, "Good luck with manga"...



The truth didn't matter-- it just felt okay to completely believe in that.

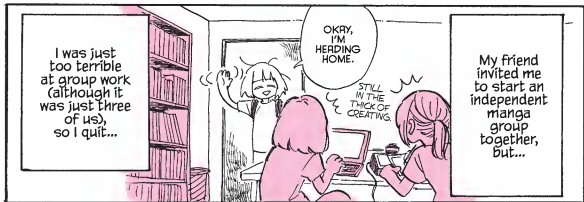
He probably really meant it, and I was happy at that moment.





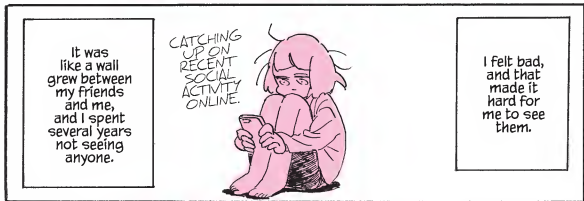


For three years, I submitted to newcomer creator contests while working part-time.



I was just too terrible at group work (although it was just three of us), so I quit...

My friend invited me to start an independent manga group together, but...



It was like a wall grew between my friends and me, and I spent several years not seeing anyone.

I felt bad, and that made it hard for me to see them.



The million yen, plus the money I'd saved from odd jobs, was finally used up.

And then, around that time...

I was even more unemployable.

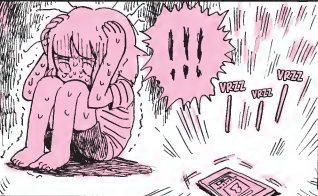


And now that I'd been out of work for two years after quitting my part time job...

I'd make it to the building, but wouldn't go in. Or I'd run away during the break.

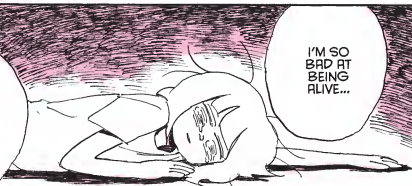


After going to about twenty interviews and getting no job offers, I couldn't even make it to any others. I just gave up right away.



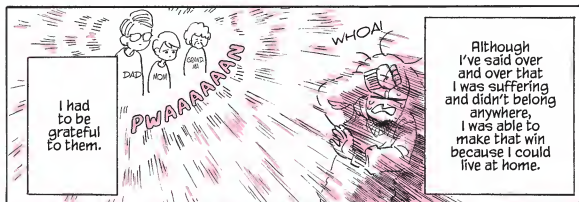
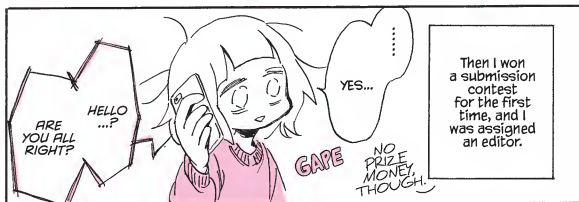
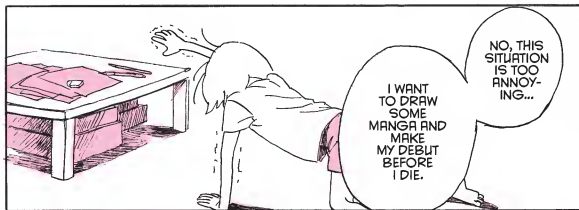
I did too much of that all over the place, so when the phone *did* ring, I was too scared to pick it up.

I GUESS I HAVE TO DIE, AFTER ALL...



I'M SO BAD AT BEING ALIVE...





I was like a new person.



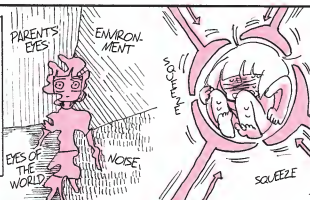
It was almost like I'd made my way out of a deep cave.

I couldn't think at all. It was like everything in my head had fallen out, and I couldn't read text.



But after two years, the spell was broken, and things got really hard again.

I had thought it would be smooth sailing after I made my debut...



It was painful, like I'd been shoved into this tiny space. My own contours seemed uncertain.

I couldn't think anymore.



...but my empty head was flooded with sounds spilling through my ears.



This went on for several months, so I went to a doctor for the first time in ages.



I could read text again.

I CAN READ!  
I CAN REEED!

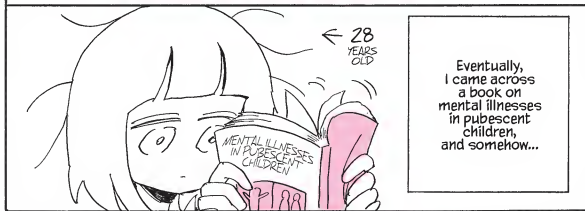
I UNDERSTAND THE MEANING!!

I started taking a prescription, and the first thing to improve...

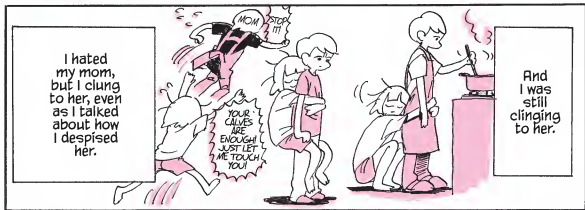
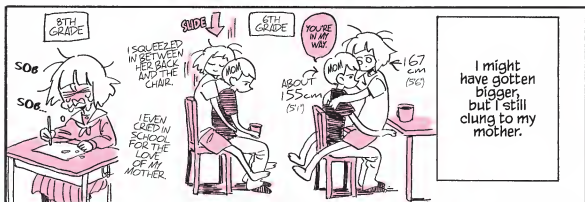


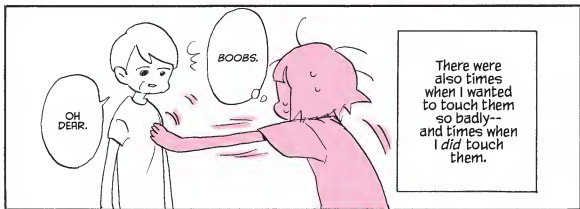
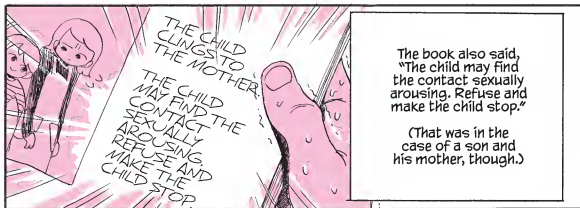
I started reading articles and books that seemed related to the topic.

I wanted to find some hints as to where this pain came from, and how I could resolve it.



Eventually, I came across a book on mental illnesses in pubescent children, and somehow...



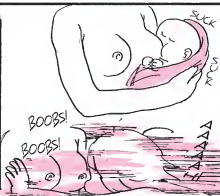


I wondered if I still had desires from when I was a baby.



And I was so happy when my mom would look at my butt or touch it.

...maybe the desire to devour boobs was a regression.



I mean, isn't there some part of sexual desire that resembles a baby's desire? I didn't know, but...

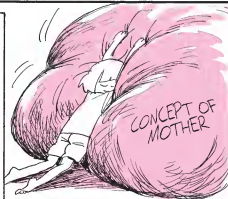
That was all I could think.

THAT'S WHAT I WAAA-AAANT !!

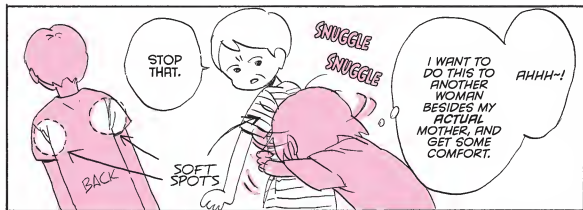
AAAAH !!

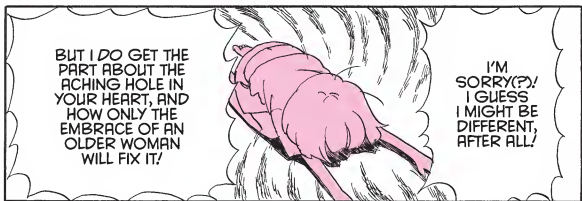
I saw a woman write on Twitter (or something) that maybe what men seek in women is a mother who lets them have sex with her.

But I wanted something *more*, like the general concept of a mother-- a presence that would accept me, which is something everyone wants.



I'll just say this: a "mother" might be the person who takes care of the house.









ALL I WANT IS TO BE HELD.

START WHERE THE BAR ISN'T TOO HIGH...

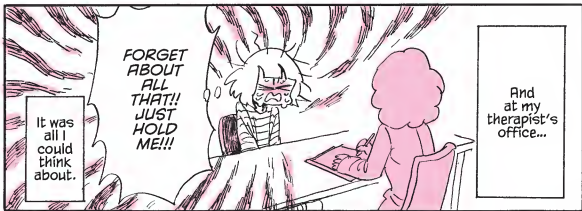
At any rate, thanks to that article, I was able to view my desire head-on.



When I thought about it, I had a long history of wanting to be held.



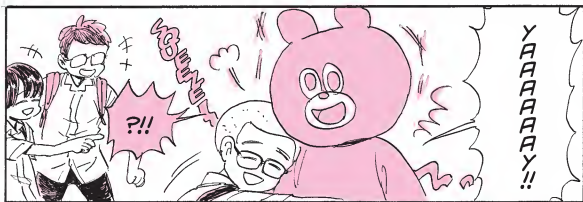
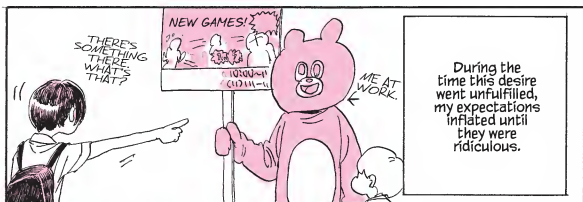
When I was nineteen, I'd be behind the register, thinking anyone would do, for just two seconds of it--or *one* second. I only wanted someone to hold me.



It was all I could think about.

**FORGET ABOUT ALL THAT!! JUST HOLD ME!!!**

And at my therapist's office...



And having my back touched did make me feel calm and happy.



Which reminds me. When I worked at the bakery, I went for massages a lot.

The other forty percent was my desire to relax under someone's touch.



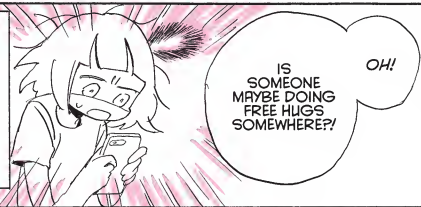
Sixty percent of why I went was my sore neck and shoulders.

But my neck and shoulders weren't particularly sore.



I thought about maybe going for massages again.

I searched Twitter daily for "free hugs" and the name of a location, thinking I might find something.



IS SOMEONE MAYBE DOING FREE HUGS SOMEWHERE?!

OH!

And I never actually ran into any, either.



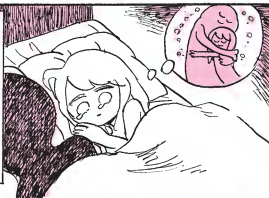
In the end, I didn't find any info on free hugs.

AAAH!



Recently, I read an article online that described feelings of confusion teenage girls have the first time they try sex. That sometimes all the girl really wanted was an embrace, cuddling up in bed, or even just a nice meal.

In the pursuit of that comfort, some people even end up hurting themselves mentally and physically, like clinging to bad sexual relationships.



I had this feeling like, oh, everyone wants to be held.

HOW HARD IS IT, EXACTLY?

GETTING SOMEONE TO HOLD YOU, AND FEELING SAFE...

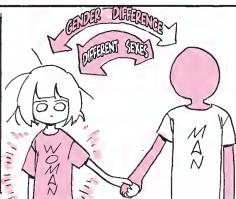


But for anything more than that, I'd only want to pursue it with a woman. And the reason behind that...



By the way-- when it comes to free hugs, gender doesn't matter to me.

It wasn't that I wanted to be a man; it was more like I hated belonging to a gender at all.



...was that I didn't want to accept that I was a woman.

...before I was seen as myself.



I was excessively afraid of being defined as a woman...

SAVING THIS!!

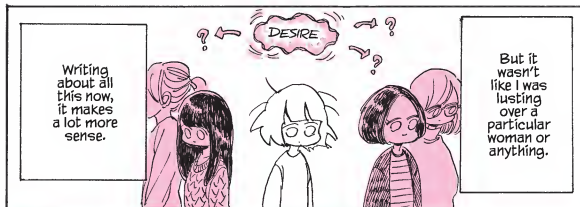
FEMALE BODY

HE SURE IS NAKED.

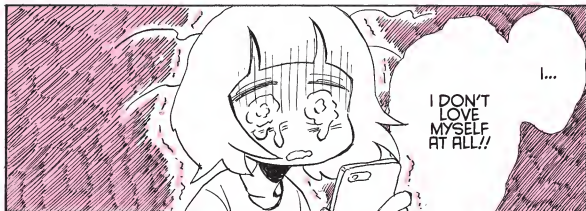
MALE BODY

NOTE THE DIFFERENCE.

Plus, I was more sexually interested in women's bodies than men's.



※Life's Mountains and Valleys [人生山あり谷あり] (LEED Publishing), Chapter 13



I DON'T LOVE MYSELF AT ALL!!

I...



That was it.

I WON'T LET YOU BE USELESS!

I DON'T WANT TO TRY

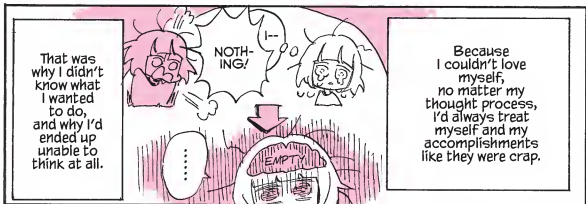
I DON'T WANT TO DO ANYTHING ANYMORE

Or...

SO NO EATING FOR YOU.

YOU DON'T DESERVE TO EAT ANYTHING.

Once I started thinking about it, I realized I'd only ever told myself...



That was why I didn't know what I wanted to do, and why I'd ended up unable to think at all.

NOthing!

I--

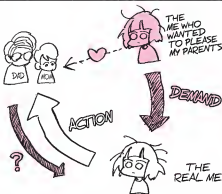
Because I couldn't love myself, no matter my thought process, I'd always treat myself and my accomplishments like they were crap.



CONNECTING WITH PEOPLE THROUGH WORK, MAKING FRIENDS, HAVING FUN WITH PEOPLE...

AND THEN I LET GO OF EVERYTHING ELSE, LIKE...

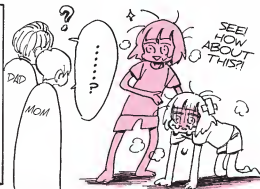
But wasn't I actually responding to the demands of the me who wanted to please my parents?



I had thought I wanted to live up to my parents' expectations.

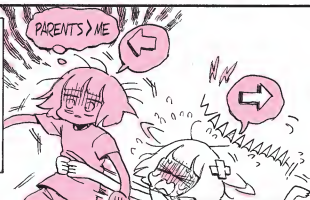
Oh! What if...

It was all because that wasn't what they wanted. The me who wanted their approval--who was making me do all this work--had totally missed the mark...



The fact that they weren't the least bit satisfied even though I was supposedly doing all this for them...

Was that why I'd been suffering for so long?



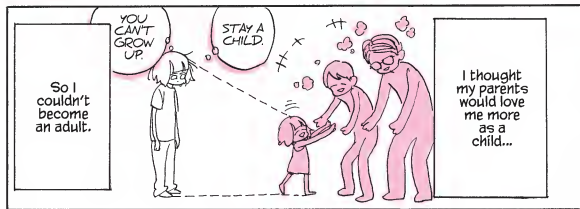
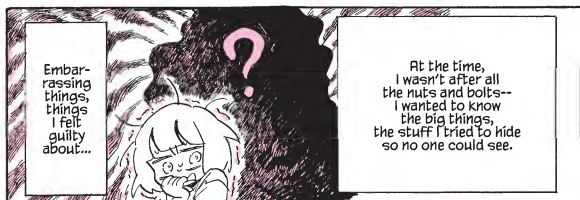
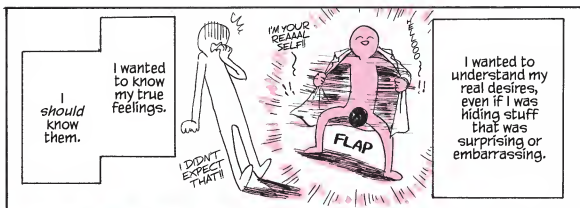
And the me trying to please my parents was the only version of me I'd listened to.

I WANT TO BE ABLE TO UNDERSTAND MY OWN FEELINGS!!



I WANT TO LOVE MYSELF.







Maybe it was *this*.

DON'T GROW UP. STAY A KID!

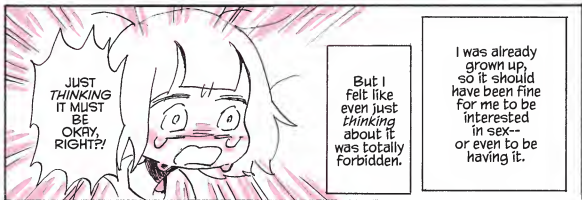
SQUISH

WAAAAAAH!

SQUISH

NOOOO

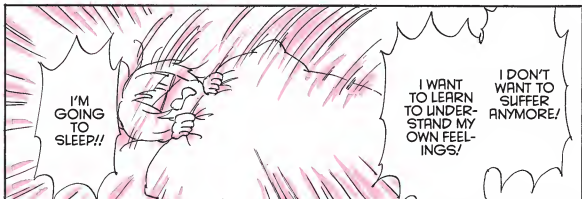
The pain of being pushed into a tiny place...



JUST THINKING IT MUST BE OKAY, RIGHT?!

But I felt like even just *thinking* about it was totally forbidden.

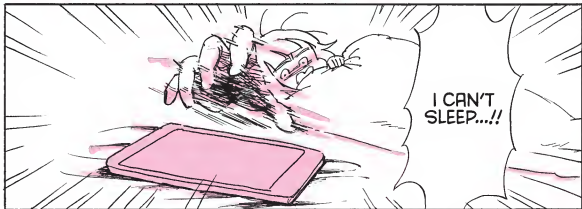
I was already grown up, so it should have been fine for me to be interested in sex-- or even to be having it.



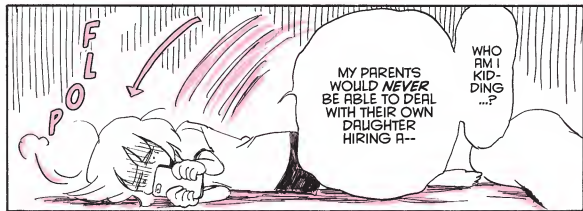
I'M GOING TO SLEEP!!

I WANT TO LEARN TO UNDERSTAND MY OWN FEELINGS!

I DON'T WANT TO SUFFER ANYMORE!



I CAN'T SLEEP...!!

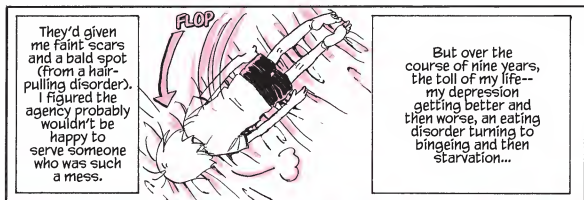




...THINKING LIKE THAT ANY-MORE!!

I SAID THAT I'M NOT...

AH  
....!!



They'd given me faint scars and a bald spot (from a hair-pulling disorder). I figured the agency probably wouldn't be happy to serve someone who was such a mess.

FLOP

But over the course of nine years, the toll of my life-- my depression getting better and then worse, an eating disorder turning to bingeing and then starvation...

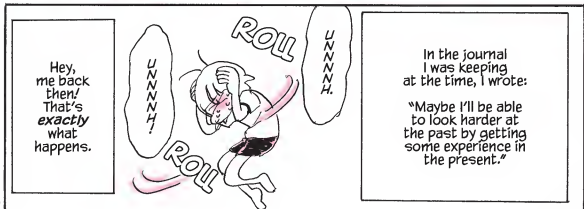


LURCH

IT WOULD GIVE ME MORE THINGS TO WRITE ABOUT, AND THAT WOULD BE HANDY, RIGHT?

BUT...

(THE MAGIC EXCUSE)



Hey, me back then! That's *exactly* what happens.

U N N N H !

ROLL

U N N N H .

ROLL

In the journal I was keeping at the time, I wrote:

"Maybe I'll be able to look harder at the past by getting some experience in the present."

The background of the entire page is a repeating pattern of diagonal stripes. The stripes are a light pink color and are set against a white background. The stripes run from the top-left corner towards the bottom-right corner. The width of the stripes is consistent throughout the image.

My Lesbian  
Experience  
with  
Loneliness



THEN I'LL  
THINK  
HARDER  
ABOUT  
THIS.

AND INFO  
ON HOW  
TO USE THE  
AGENCY,  
WHO'S  
THERE...

I-I CAN  
JUST  
START BY  
LOOKING  
UP THE  
PRICES,  
RIGHT?



THEY'RE  
SO PRETTY  
AND CUTE  
AND  
YOUNG...  
WOW.

HUH?  
EVERY-  
ONE'S  
SO  
YOUNG.

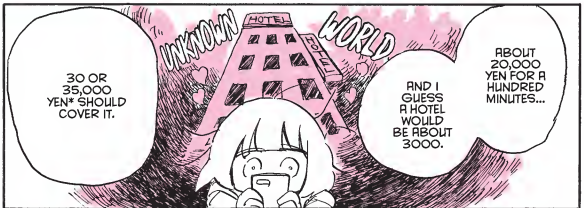


I WANT  
AN  
OLDER  
GIRL TO  
SPOIL  
ME!

(30)

THERE'S  
SOMEONE  
OLDER  
THAN ME!

AAH!

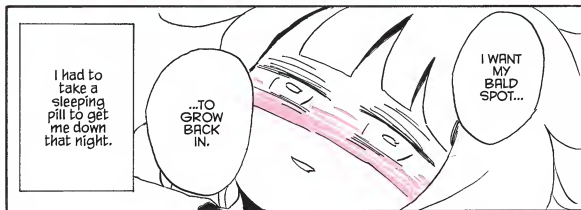


30 OR  
35,000  
YEN\* SHOULD  
COVER IT.

AND I  
GUESS  
A HOTEL  
WOULD  
BE ABOUT  
3000.

ABOUT  
20,000  
YEN FOR A  
HUNDRED  
MINUTES...

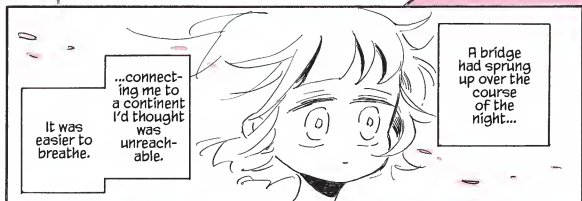
\*About \$250-\$300 U.S. Dollars.





The next day...

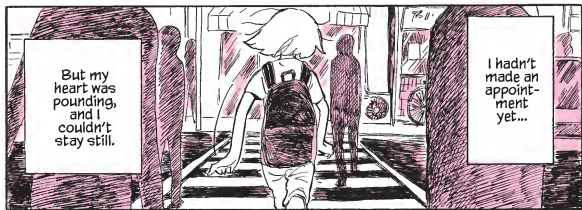
...the world was a bigger place.



It was easier to breathe.

...connecting me to a continent I'd thought was unreachable.

A bridge had sprung up over the course of the night...



But my heart was pounding, and I couldn't stay still.

I hadn't made an appointment yet...



Instead of bowing to the demands of the me who wanted to please my parents, I was thinking and acting for my own sake.



Since I'd looked at the place's website--no, since I'd run the first search...

I couldn't believe how fulfilling it felt.



My physical body hadn't changed, even if the world had opened.

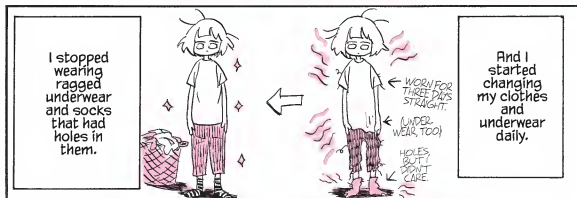


I finally realized something.

So I could go anywhere I wanted in this bigger world.



I had to clean up.



...and keeping neat and clean was loving myself.



I thought spending time, effort, and money on myself...

...the people around me were nicer, too.



And when I was able to love myself...

LOVE MEEE  
!!!



When I relied on other people for everything, it was hard for me and it burdened everyone else.

And yet, all that time, I hadn't been able to do it.

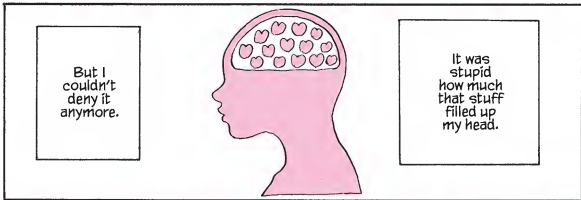


Taking care of myself was good for me and for the others, and it was more effective in all kinds of ways.



It exploded, finally freed.

My longing for the sexual contact I'd denied up until then...



But I couldn't deny it anymore.

It was stupid how much that stuff filled up my head.



...into my work.

I channeled that bottled-up energy...



I was even able to make those work calls I was so bad at.

I HOPE TO HEAR FROM YOU ABOUT THIS SOON.

HELLOP HOW'S IT GOING?

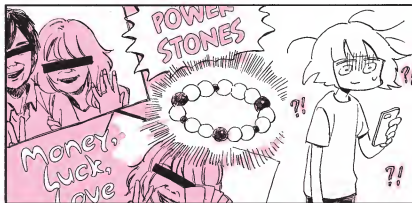
I was so eager to work.

...for the first time in over a year, I got the go-ahead for one of my pitches.



OKAY, PLEASE START ON A DRAFT OF THIS.

And...



Things kept going almost magically well--like I was in one of those dodgy advertisements you see in the back of magazines.

Maybe I hadn't had the motivation to try before that point.

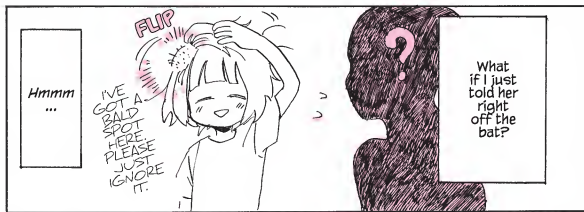
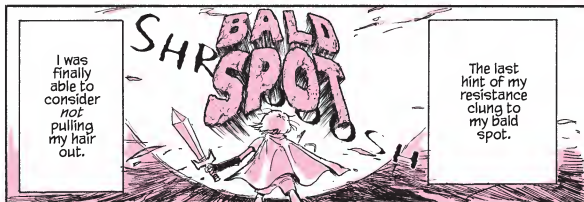


I was getting those results just because I was trying.

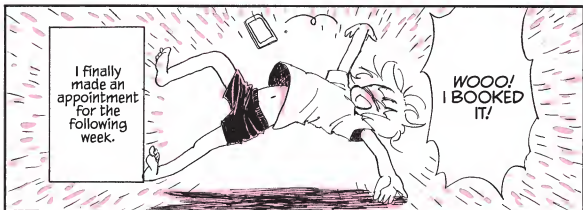
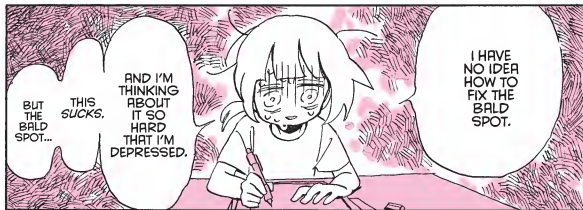
My mind kept wandering. I couldn't concentrate.



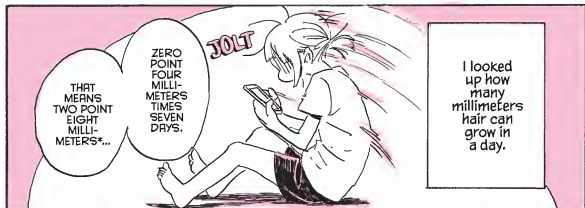
But even when I was working...



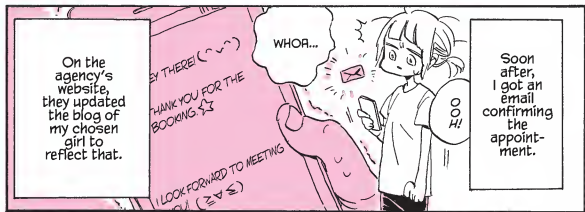
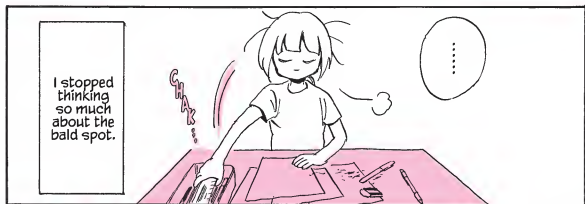


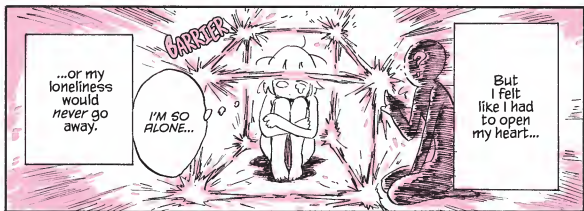
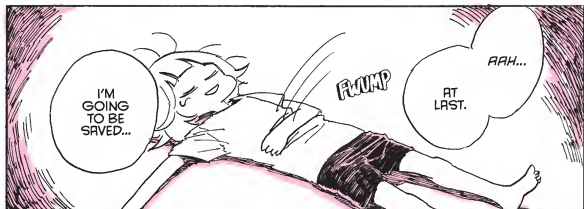


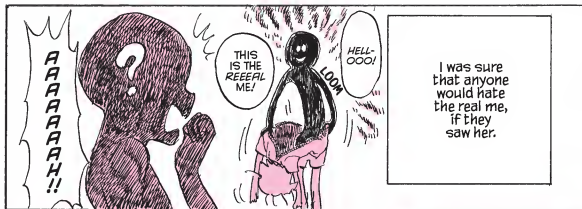


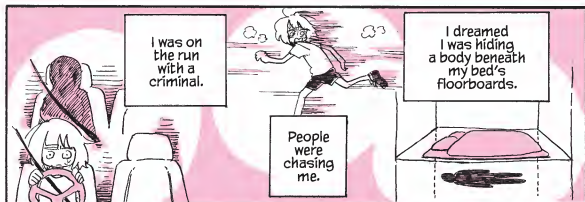


\*About a tenth of an inch.







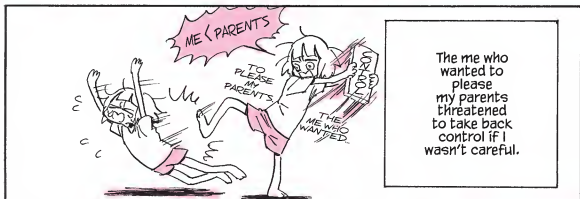




IT'S MY LIFE!  
I'M A GROWN-UP!

I DON'T HAVE TO FEEL GUILTY ABOUT THIS!!

COME OOOON!



ME (PARENTS)

TO PLEASE MY PARENTS

THE ME WHO WANTED

The me who wanted to please my parents threatened to take back control if I wasn't careful.



Would I have to fight for it forever?

ME (PARENTS)

ME (PARENTS)



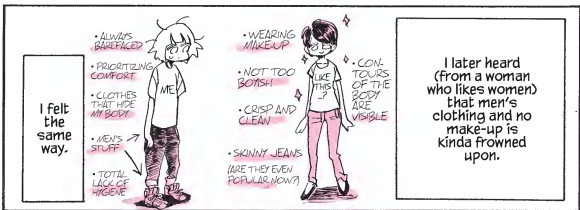
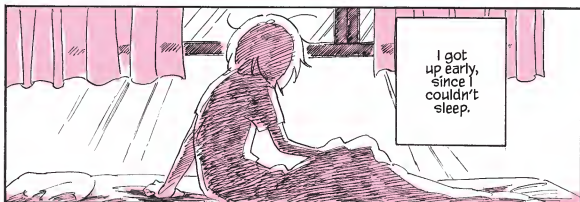
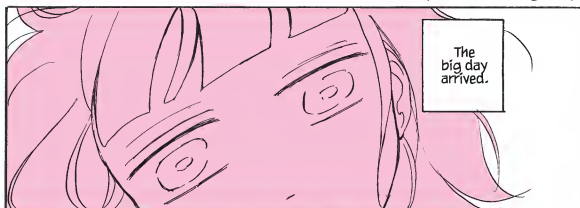
I HAVE GOT TO GET IT TOGETHER.

...would always be a battle inside of me.

I was afraid that the right to think and act for my own sake...



My Lesbian  
Experience  
with  
Loneliness

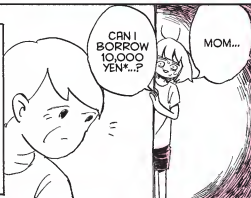


It was like I'd fallen so low that I couldn't bounce back fast, no matter *what* I did.



But I'd given up on a "proper" life for so long that I didn't have any clothes.

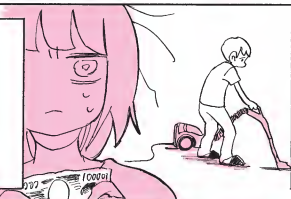
I ended up borrowing money from my mom to hire an escort, i.e. the worst thing ever.



And because the temporary income I'd been counting on was less than expected...

\*About \$100 US

I wasn't hiring this woman for fun. I thought I had to do it for something far more important.



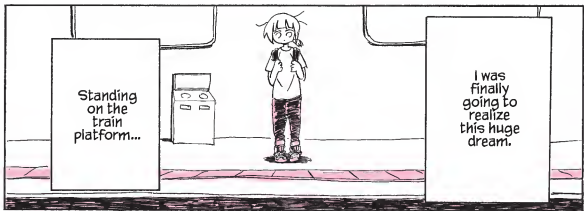
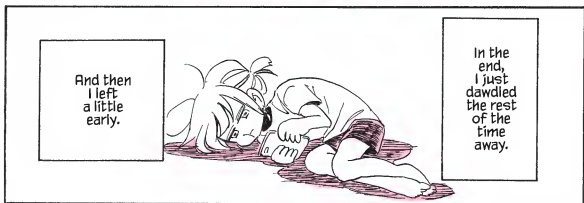
To be honest, though, I didn't feel guilty about it.

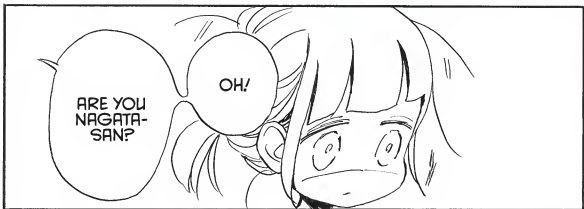
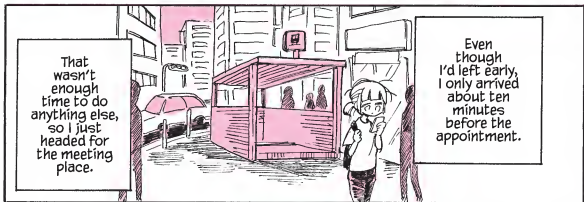
I needed to step into a place I'd thought I could never go.

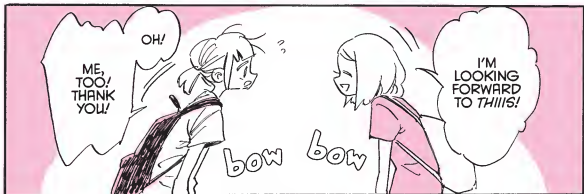
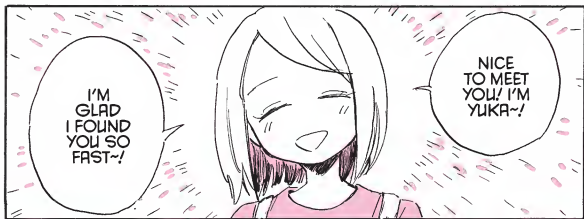
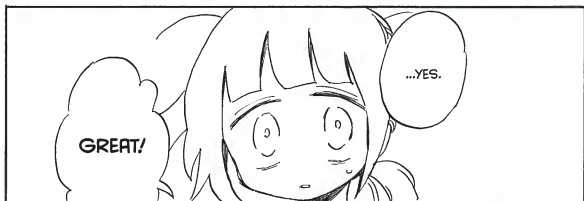
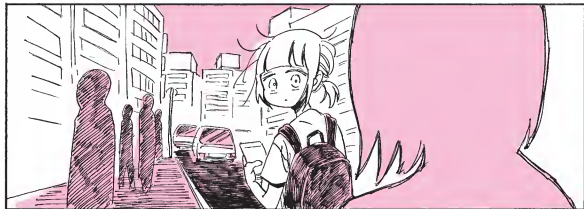


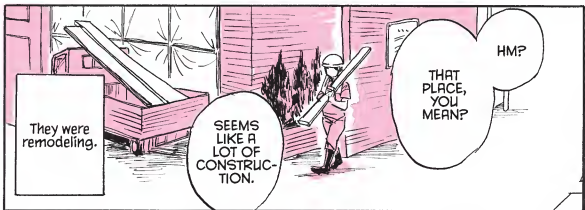
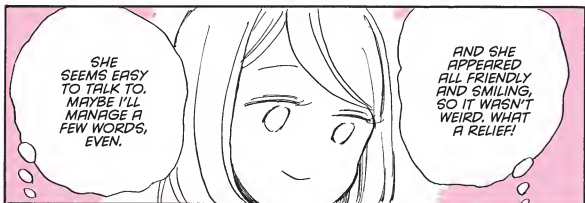
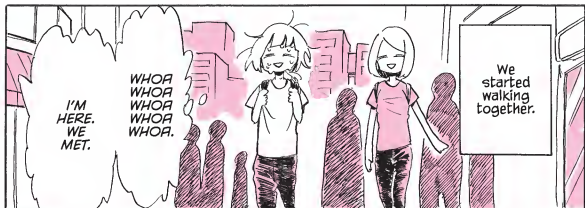
I needed to affirm the things I hadn't been able to.

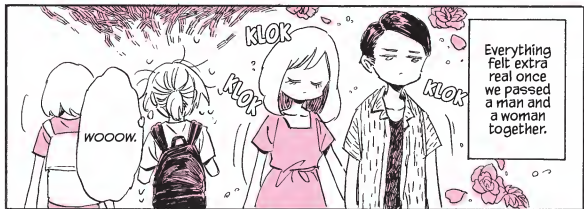
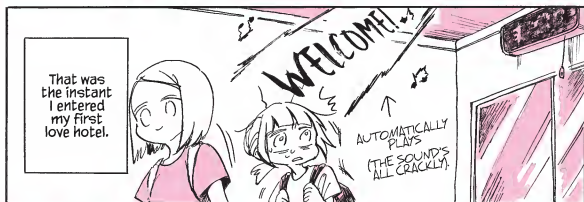




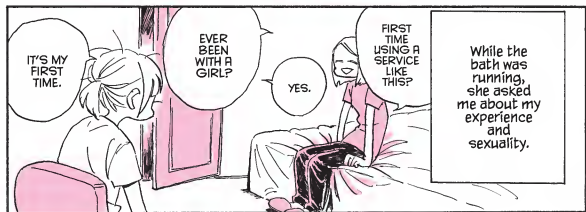
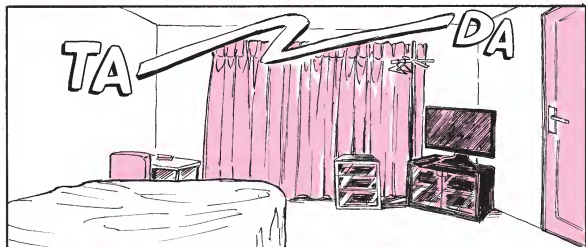
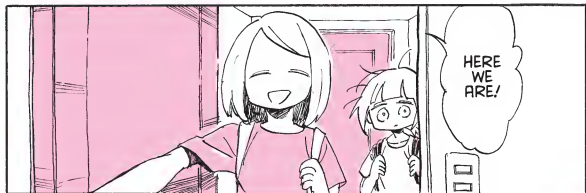




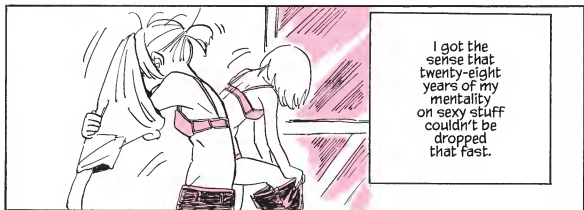
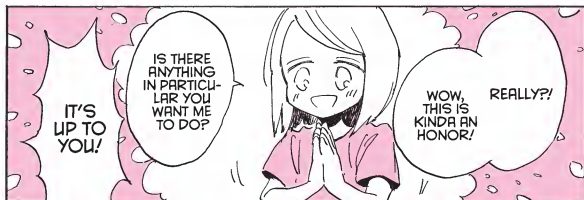








While the bath was running, she asked me about my experience and sexuality.







I'd actually been looking forward to that since I'd seen it on the agency's website.

We got in the bath together!

COME ON IN!  
♥



YOUR HANDS ARE COO-OLD!

She washed me first.



And then we got in the tub, with her holding me from behind.

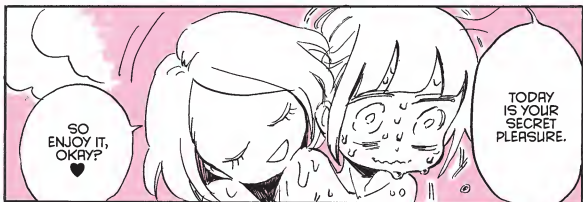
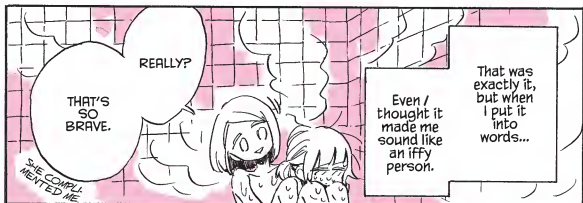


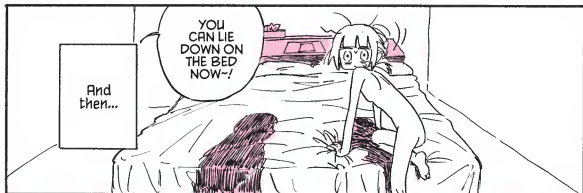
N-NO.

RIGHT, A CRUSH, THERE'S NO ONE...

DO YOU HAVE A CRUSH ON ANYONE RIGHT NOW?

A CRUSH ...?!







I responded to her smooth smile with an indescribable expression.

Since I lacked a lot of human contact, I couldn't move my face the way I wanted.

MY FACE... ISN'T REALLY MOVING.

MY EXPRESSION'S FREEZING HERE.



SHHF

! THIS...!

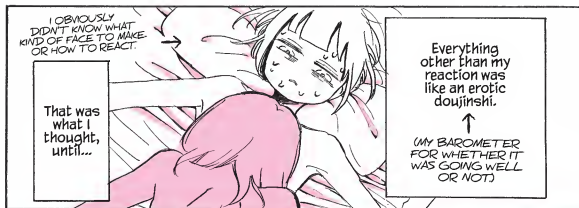
I didn't know if she realized it, but...

smooch

...was the first time I'd ever been kissed.

That...





I OBVIOUSLY DIDN'T KNOW WHAT KIND OF FACE TO MAKE OR HOW TO REACT.

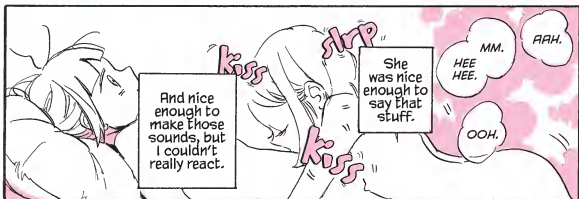
That was what I thought, until...

Everything other than my reaction was like an erotic doujinshi.  
↑  
(MY BAROMETER FOR WHETHER IT WAS GOING WELL OR NOT)



If that was bad, didn't that mean it wasn't going well?

Wait.  
"Other than my reaction?"



And nice enough to make those sounds, but I couldn't really react.

She was nice enough to say that stuff.

MM.  
AAH.  
HEE HEE.  
OOH.



I CAN'T EVEN HANDLE A NORMAL CONVERSATION.

HAH!

WHY DID I THINK... THAT I'D BE OKAY HERE?

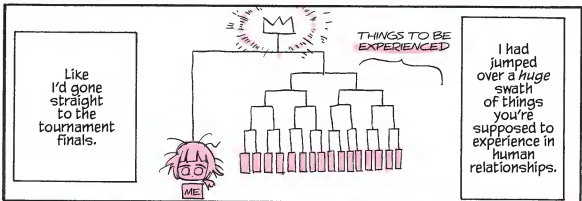


...I'M TRYING TO DO SOMETHING SERIOUSLY ADVANCED (LIKE HIGH-LEVEL COMMUNICATION)?

WHAT IF RIGHT NOW...

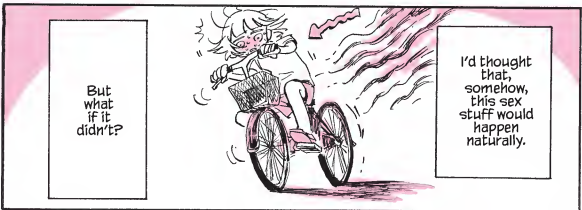


It was as if I couldn't play catch or speak English, but I was suddenly taking on a Major League baseball team.



Like I'd gone straight to the tournament finals.

I had jumped over a huge swath of things you're supposed to experience in human relationships.

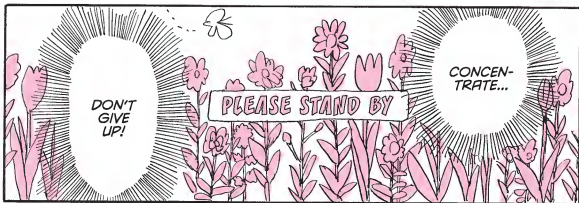
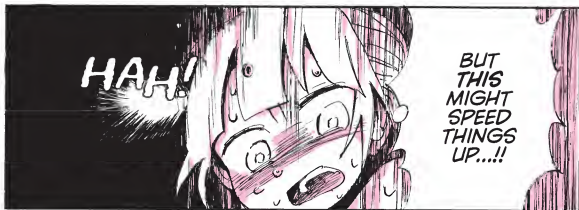


But what if it didn't?

I'd thought that, somehow, this sex stuff would happen naturally.

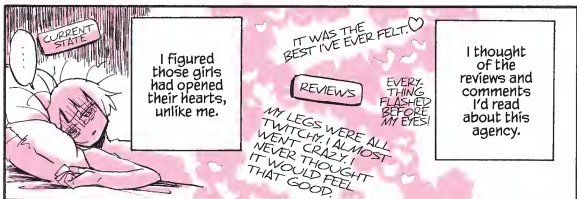








Things started to feel hopeless.



CURRENT STATE

I figured those girls had opened their hearts, unlike me.

IT WAS THE BEST I'VE EVER FELT.♡

REVIEWS

EVERY THING FLASHED BEFORE MY EYES!

MY LEGS WERE ALL TWITCHY, I ALMOST WENT CRAZY, I NEVER THOUGHT IT WOULD FEEL THAT GOOD.

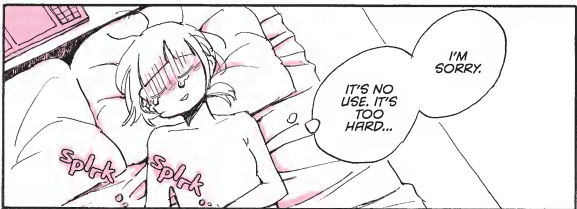
I thought of the reviews and comments I'd read about this agency.



Someone who failed at being a person?

HUMAN CONTACT

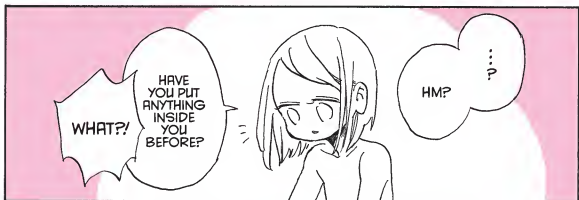
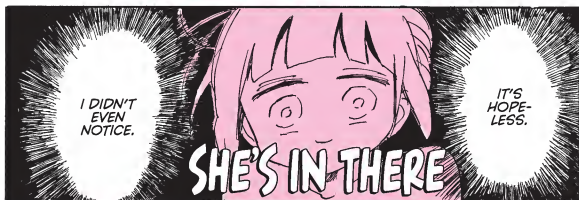
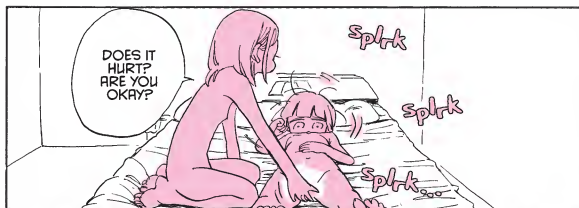
What was I?

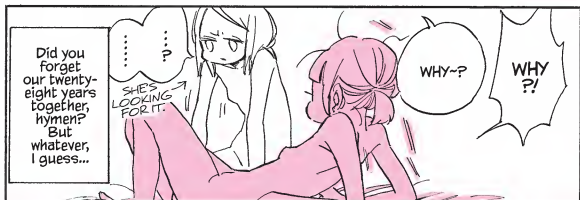


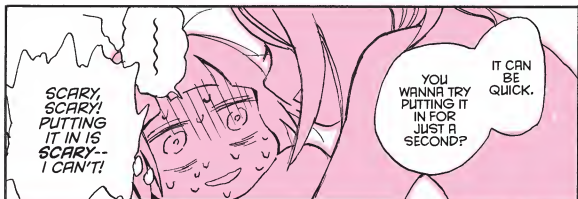
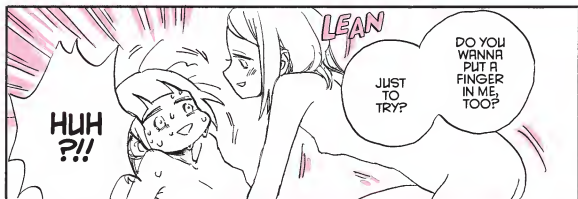
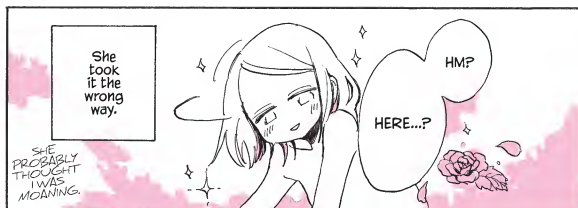
I'M SORRY.

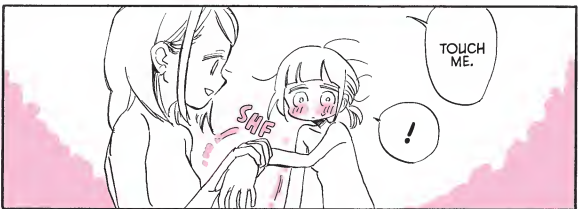
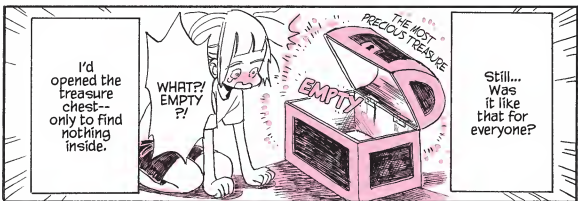
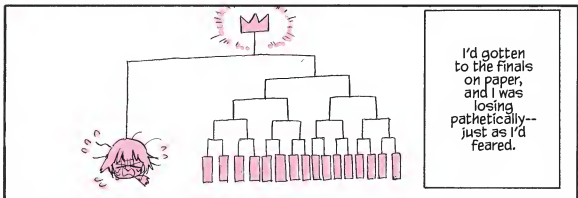
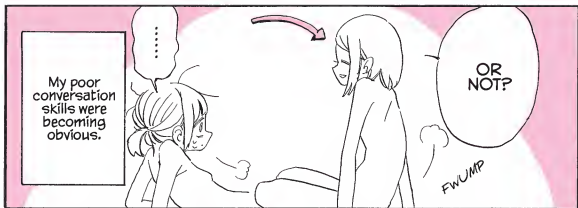
IT'S NO USE, IT'S TOO HARD...

SPLT SPLT

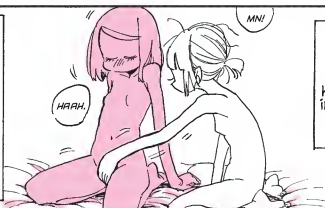




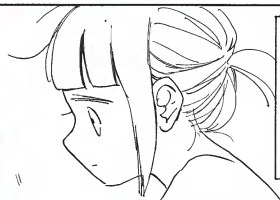




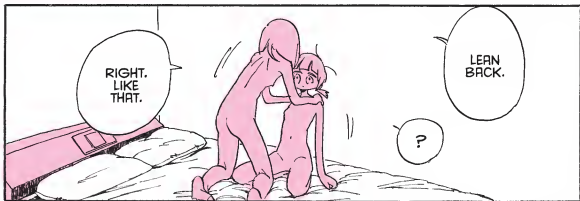
But it didn't seem real. I almost didn't believe it was happening.



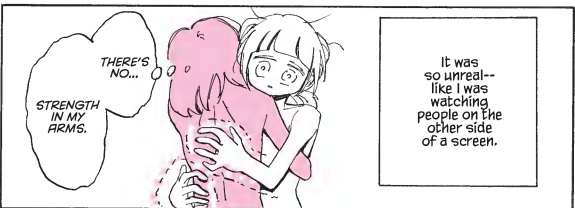
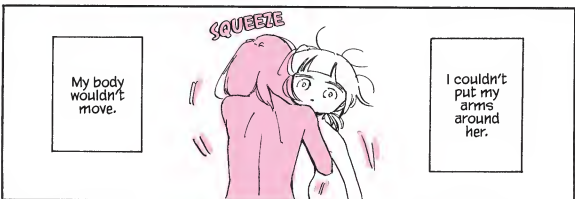
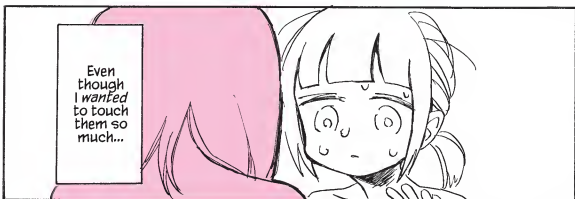
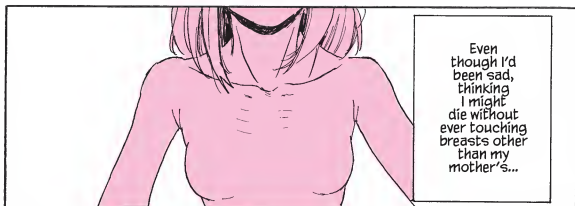
It should have been incredible.



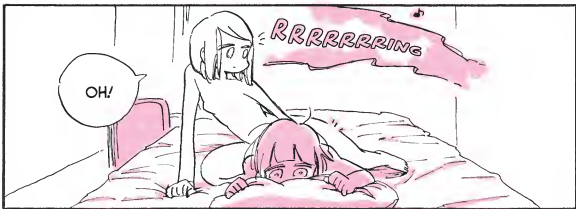
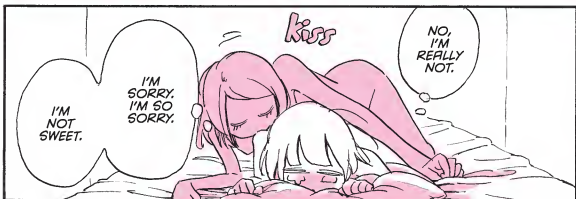
I was touching another person's body, but it didn't feel like reality.

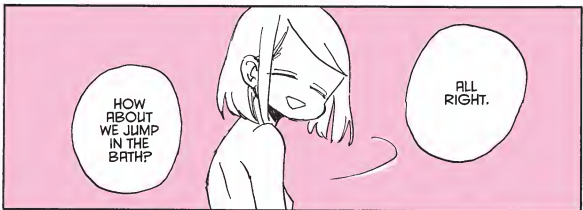
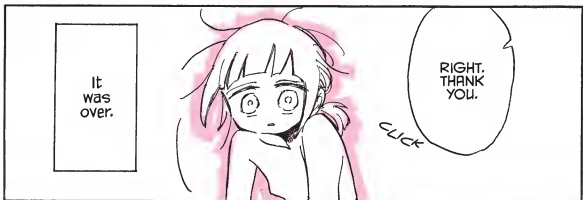
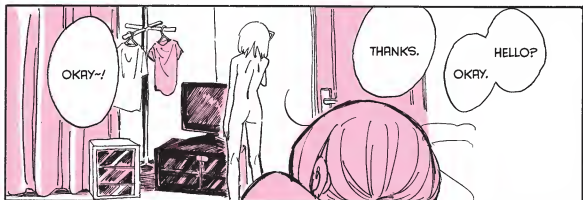


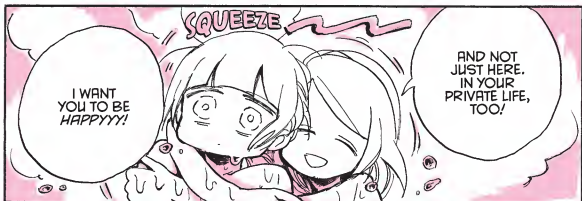
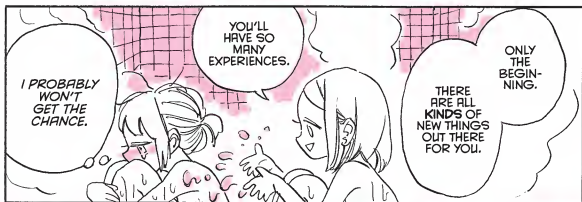
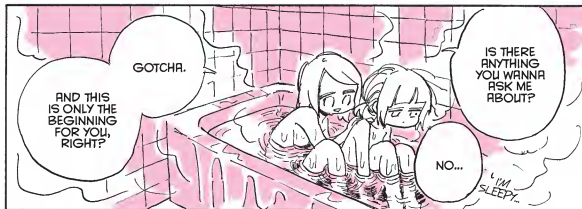
Her breasts, her body-- everything was right there in front of me, but I couldn't touch any of it.

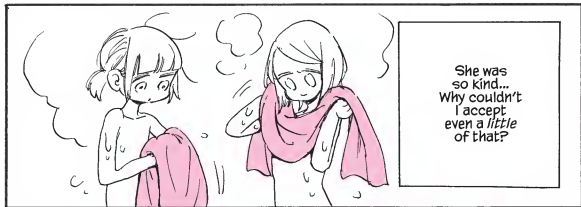




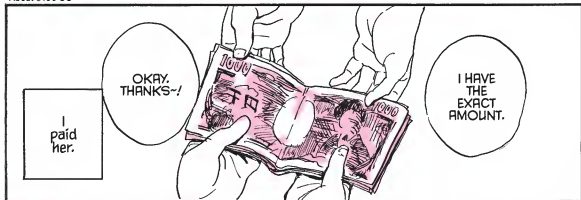


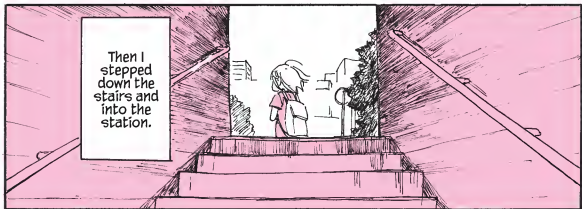
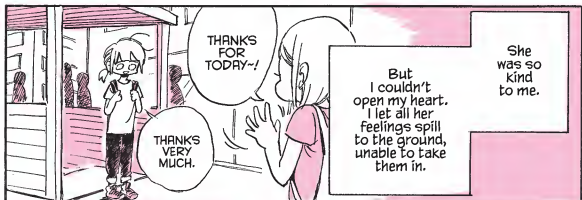
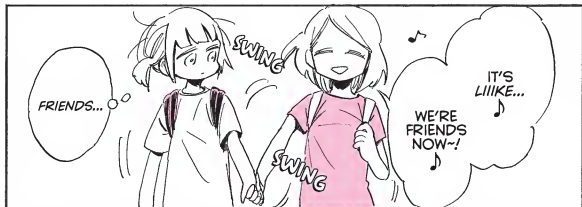






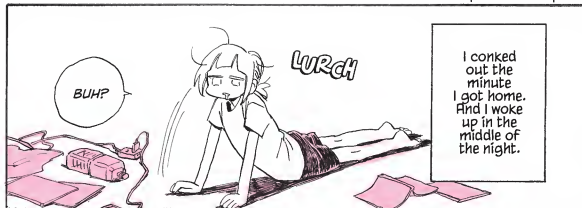
\*About \$190 US

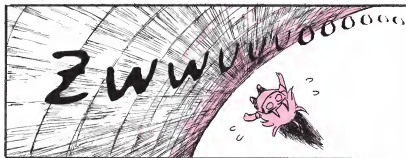






My Lesbian  
Experience  
with  
Loneliness





The experience was like running up to the massive wall that stood between other people and me.

OH!  
MOM LEFT  
SUPPER  
FOR ME.

I'd been so nervous that day that I'd basically eaten nothing.

GOMPI!

TOMATO

THANKS  
FOR THE  
FOOD!





They say  
your first  
kiss tastes  
like lemons.

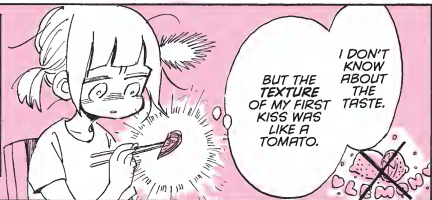


I'd  
thought  
maybe  
it was  
true.

WELL,  
I HAVE  
NO  
IDEA.

So many  
people in  
this world  
have been  
kissed--  
and I'd  
heard  
it a lot.

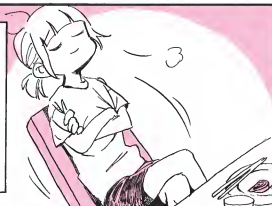
Or that  
it would  
amount to  
more than  
a limp fruit  
in my supper,  
at least.



The  
experience  
had put me  
on the side  
of the people  
who know.



And now  
I'd finally  
moved over  
to the  
"done it"  
column.



For  
twenty-eight  
years,  
I'd fought  
against a  
value system  
that  
emphasized  
sexual  
experience.

**HA  
HA  
HA  
HA  
HA!**

HEH  
HEH  
HEH.

HEH  
HEH HEH...  
MWAH HA.  
HEH HEH...  
NGAH!

THE ME  
WHO SAID  
ALL THAT  
STUFF,  
WHO  
WORRIED  
ABOUT ALL  
THIS...!!



I'M  
FREE~!!  
I'M  
TOTALLY  
FREEEE  
~!!!

**HA  
HA  
HA  
HA  
HA  
HA!**

BUT IT'S  
ALL GOOD  
NOW. I DON'T  
HAVE TO GO  
THAT FAR--  
I CAN STILL  
CALL  
SOMETHING  
"WEIRD" IF  
IT *IS* WEIRD.



**AAAAH~!  
I LOST!  
THIS TIME,  
I LOST.  
THE PULL  
OF THE  
WORLD  
IS TOO  
STRONG~!**



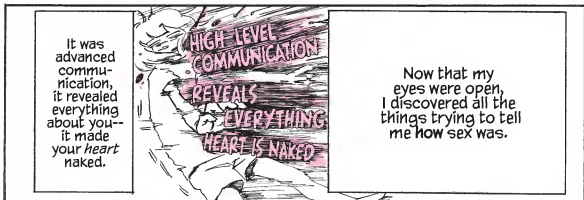
LESBIAN MAGAZINE  
**Carmilla**  
(NO LONGER BEING  
PUBLISHED,  
APPARENTLY)

All the things  
that alluded to sex,  
the things I'd thought  
I could never touch  
and didn't even have  
the right to look at--  
I could reach for  
them now.



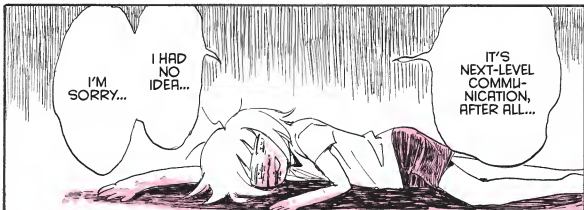
Drawing  
this manga  
was basically  
the first time  
I wrote it.  
I'd been  
excessively--  
childishly--  
conscious  
of sex.

Before that,  
I hadn't even  
been able  
to say the  
word "sex"--  
much less  
write or  
type it.



It was  
advanced  
commu-  
nication,  
it revealed  
everything  
about you--  
it made  
your heart  
naked.

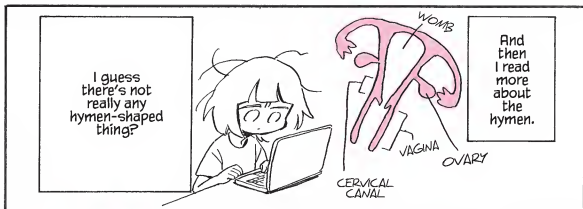
Now that my  
eyes were open,  
I discovered all the  
things trying to tell  
me how sex was.



I'M  
SORRY...

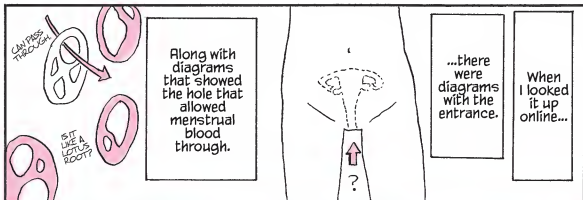
I HAD  
NO  
IDEA...

IT'S  
NEXT-LEVEL  
COMMU-  
NICATION,  
AFTER ALL...



I guess there's not really any hymen-shaped thing?

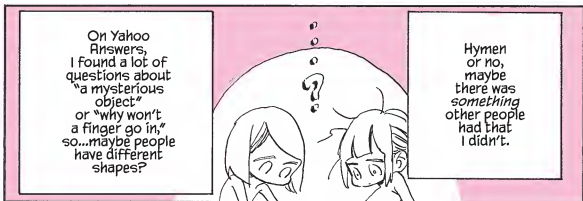
And then I read more about the hymen.



Along with diagrams that showed the hole that allowed menstrual blood through.

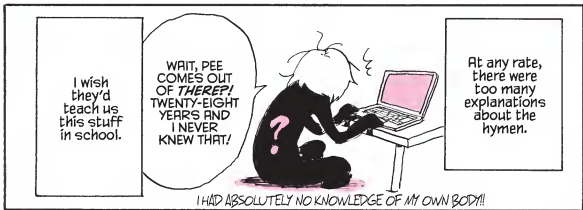
...there were diagrams with the entrance.

When I looked it up online...



On Yahoo Answers, I found a lot of questions about "a mysterious object" or "why won't a finger go in," so...maybe people have different shapes?

Hymen or no, maybe there was *something* other people had that I didn't.



I wish they'd teach us this stuff in school.

WAIT, PEE COMES OUT OF THERE?! TWENTY-EIGHT YEARS AND I NEVER KNEW THAT!

At any rate, there were too many explanations about the hymen.

I HAD ABSOLUTELY NO KNOWLEDGE OF MY OWN BODY!!

And now that I think about it with a clear head, the erotic doujinshi I'd used as reference had been man x man-- so of course things wouldn't end up like that.



By the way, the sex was *nothing* like an erotic doujinshi.

Had I been seeking something I could never get with my body? Something that didn't even exist in reality?

### WHAT IS THE YAOI HOLE?

• A MYSTERIOUS ORGAN IN MUCH OF BL (BOYS LOVE) THAT DOESN'T APPEAR TO BE THE ANUS IN POSITION, SHAPE, OR FUNCTION.

WHEN THEY BONE, STUFF GOES IN. IT GETS WET, ETC. HIGH PERFORMANCE.

Had I actually been looking for the eroticism of the yaoi-hole fantasy?

WHY NOT...?!

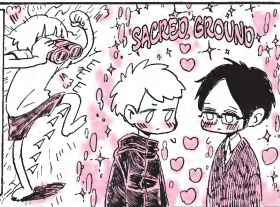


!!

WHOA!

I realized I'd never read any works with girl x girl sex.

Since I'd resisted thinking about sexual things, maybe boy x boy had been the only erotica I'd been able to accept.



SACRED GROUND

Rather than boy x girl or girl x girl, I only had the completely unrelated boy x boy.

But maybe it had had an effect on me as my only point of reference, and that had led to hurting my partner.



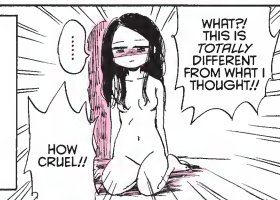
I didn't think I'd been *that* influenced by those works.

It's weird to learn about your own life and bodily functions through nothing but fantasy.



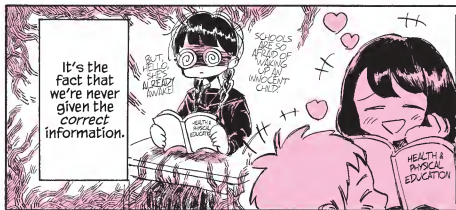
The problem was that I didn't know anything other than the sex in that kind of fiction.

...I'd be seriously shocked when I learned about women.



Sometimes I think that if I were a guy, surrounded by this insufficient education and tons of fantasy sex...

It's the fact that we're never given the correct information.



I'm repeating myself here, but the problem isn't the stuff in fiction.



But since I didn't know anything about other people, I thought: "What about me?"



I wondered how to make it so people would want to read it, even if they had to pay for it.

I realized that everything I read was that kind of thing.



I'd want to read something about the secrets people hide. I'd pay money for that, too.

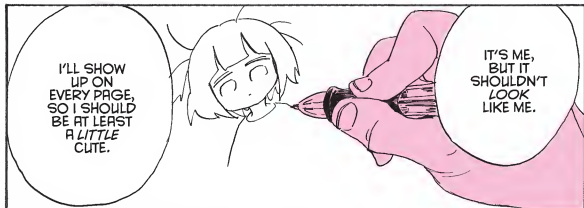
**AH!**

STUFF THAT SHAKES PEOPLE UP.

I WANT TO WRITE THAT STUFF, TOO.

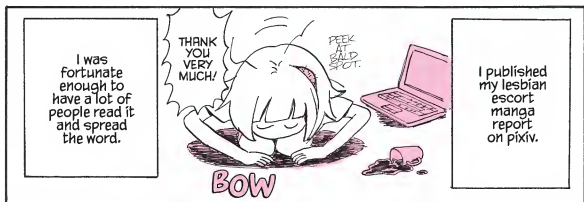
STORIES ABOUT MY TRUE SELF...!





I'LL SHOW UP ON EVERY PAGE, SO I SHOULD BE AT LEAST A LITTLE CUTE.

IT'S ME, BUT IT SHOULDN'T LOOK LIKE ME.



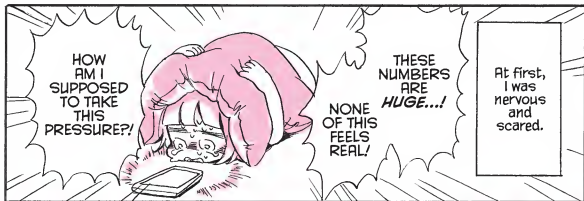
I was fortunate enough to have a lot of people read it and spread the word.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH!

PEEK AT SAID SPOT.

I published my lesbian escort manga report on pixiv.

**BOW**



HOW AM I SUPPOSED TO TAKE THIS PRESSURE?!

THESE NUMBERS ARE **HUGE...!**  
NONE OF THIS FEELS REAL!

At first, I was nervous and scared.

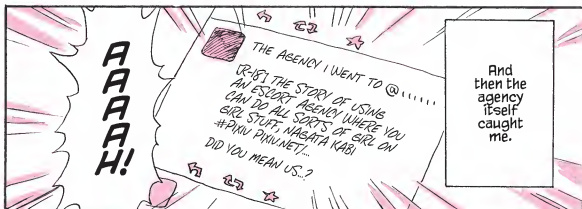


READ MORE, PLEASE!

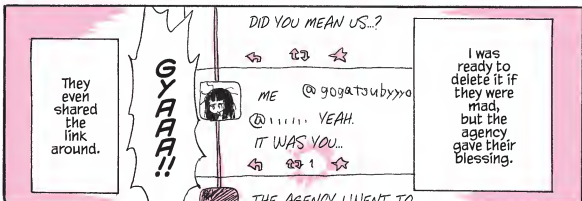
I'M TRULY LIVING!

I'VE ALWAYS WANTED TO DO THIS!

But that quickly turned into joy.



And then the agency itself caught me.



They even shared the link around.

I was ready to delete it if they were mad, but the agency gave their blessing.



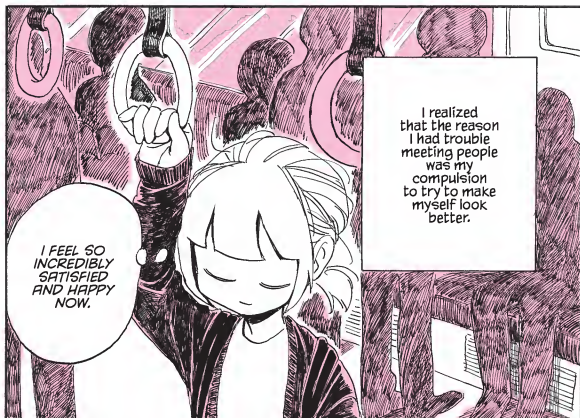
...and going to meetings with publishers.

Without fully grasping the impact of the manga, I spent my days reading the incoming emails...



Maybe the manga helped my crappy conversational skills-- it was like I'd submitted materials about my personality in advance.

Since the meetings were after they'd already read my personal (and admittedly embarrassing) manga, the interactions felt fun and easy.



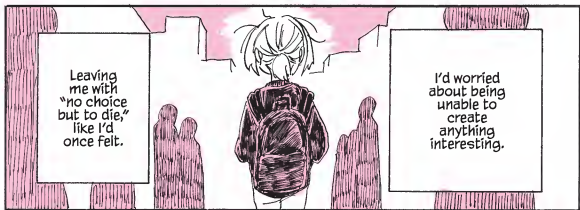
I FEEL SO  
INCREDIBLY  
SATISFIED  
AND HAPPY  
NOW.

I realized  
that the reason  
I had trouble  
meeting people  
was my  
compulsion  
to try to make  
myself look  
better.



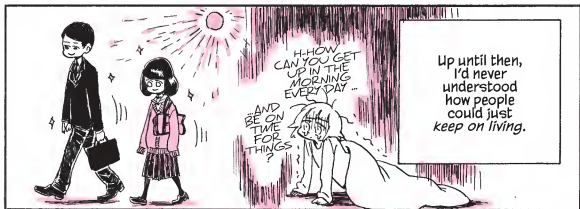
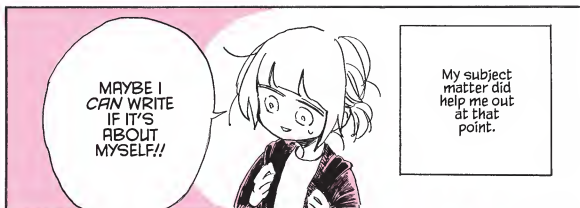
I COULD  
NEVER REALLY  
SHOW MYSELF  
TO PEOPLE  
BEFORE THIS.

YEAH.  
I MEAN...



Leaving  
me with  
"no choice  
but to die,"  
like I'd  
once felt.

I'd worried  
about being  
unable to  
create  
anything  
interesting.





I'd thought that everyone had to be lapping up some sweet nectar I didn't know about.

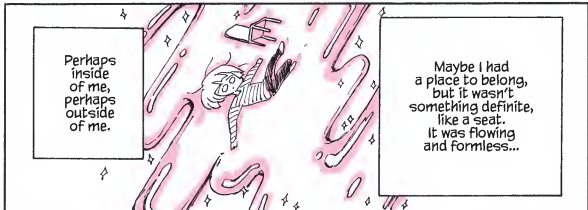


Now it was like that nectar was suddenly being poured into my mouth.



I think the essence of that sweet nectar varies from person to person.

A reason to live, the power to live, a place to belong in this world...

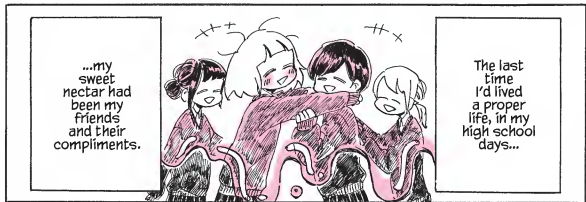


Perhaps inside of me, perhaps outside of me.

Maybe I had a place to belong, but it wasn't something definite, like a seat. It was flowing and formless...

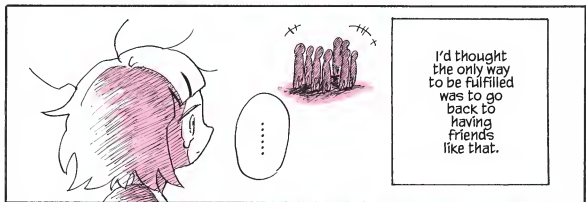


At any rate, I think "sweet nectar" is a good way to describe it.

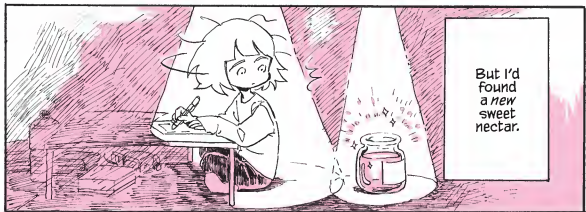


...my sweet nectar had been my friends and their compliments.

The last time I'd lived a proper life, in my high school days...



I'd thought the only way to be fulfilled was to go back to having friends like that.



But I'd found a *new* sweet nectar.

All the people who pass my work on even further...



Having something with feedback to write about, having so many people look at what I draw...

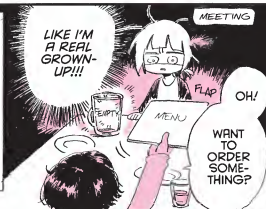
Transmitting my signal, having people receive it, being recognized by people.



I think I know how to fill up my heart now.

And being treated like an adult was a sweet nectar like a drug.

LIKE I'M A REAL GROWN-UP!!!



MEETING

OH!  
WANT TO ORDER SOMETHING?

And at that point, I didn't have to push my work out into the world. The (publishing) world came to me.

I still had basically no friends-- and I hadn't seen my old ones in years-- but I wasn't lonely.



It stopped feeling like I was being pushed into a narrow space, or like I was the only one who couldn't grow up.

I'd prayed like that. Maybe my wish had been granted.

PLEASE LET ME DO GOOD WORK.

I DON'T NEED FRIENDS OR LOVE.

Actually, in the few years before that, whenever I'd gone to the shrine...

### COMPARISON BY APPEARANCE



CAN'T TRY

BEING LAZY

By the way-- "being lazy" and "being unable to try" might look the same, but they're not.

I think that starving for a sweet nectar you can't drink-- being unable to try-- is because you can't love yourself.

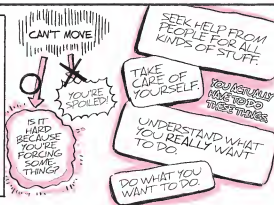
BUT I CAN TRY NOW.

IT'S NOT LIKE I WAS BEING LAZY, YOU KNOW.

Being lazy is when you don't take your work or other people seriously, and you don't try even when you're drinking the sweet nectar.



Maybe the times when I couldn't move were the times I needed to take better care of myself?



The things I'd once thought were hopeless, were actually things I had to do.

That's totally different from what you need to live your own life. I had to study and learn about this.



The things my parents have said to me are for protecting children, and disciplining them to do as they're told.

HA HA HA!  
WHAT EVEN IS THIS?

l...

At that point, I thought I might be able to finally draw some sexy stuff, but the first thing I drew was...

Which is why I haven't been able to draw erotica--but why I did draw this story.



Lately, I've realized that drawing my creative fiction is way more embarrassing than drawing personal thoughts and actions.



I wrote "thesex"...

Incidentally, when I published the report on pixiv, I still didn't quite have the courage to write "sex."



...meticulously quoted me on that word. It was simple and humiliating.

And everyone who offered their opinions, pulling from the text...

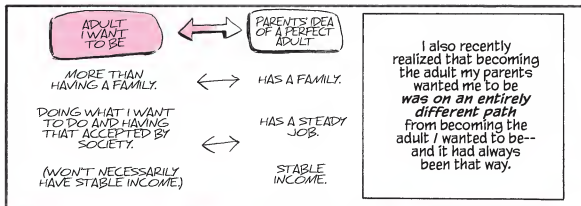


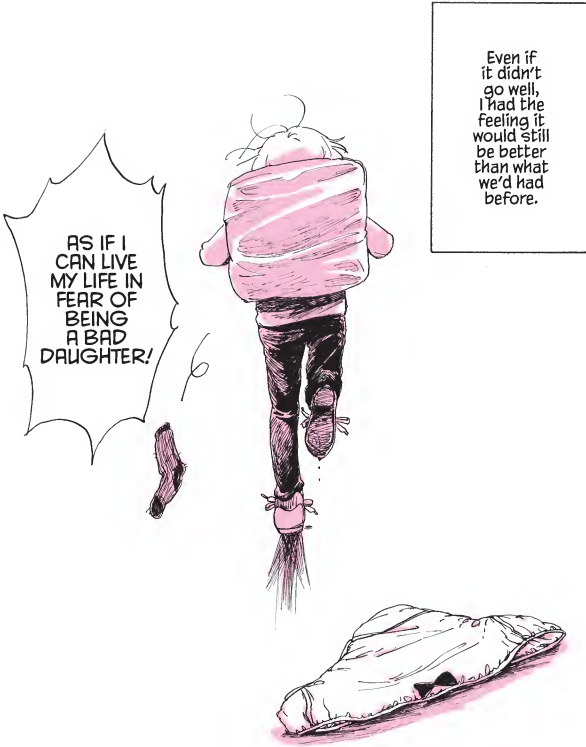
I also figured my relatives would die from shock if they read it.



I decided not to think about the shock-induced death of my family.

WELL, IF I WORRY ABOUT MY RELATIVES DYING FROM SHOCK...





AS IF I  
CAN LIVE  
MY LIFE IN  
FEAR OF  
BEING  
A BAD  
DAUGHTER!

Even if  
it didn't  
go well,  
I had the  
feeling it  
would still  
be better  
than what  
we'd had  
before.

The background of the entire page consists of a repeating pattern of diagonal stripes. The stripes are colored in a light pink and white, running from the top-left to the bottom-right. The stripes are of uniform width and spacing, creating a consistent, textured background.

My Lesbian  
Experience  
with  
Loneliness

## ~ BONUS CHAPTER ~

I asked  
for a  
different  
person.

In November  
of 2015,  
I went for  
the second  
time.

My mobile  
phone address  
was unintentionally  
super gay,  
so I didn't want  
to use that.  
I considered  
a disposable  
account...

BEFORE THE  
BOOKING

WHAT  
SHOULD  
I DO ABOUT  
MY EMAIL  
ADDRESS  
WHEN I MAKE  
THE APPOINTMENT?

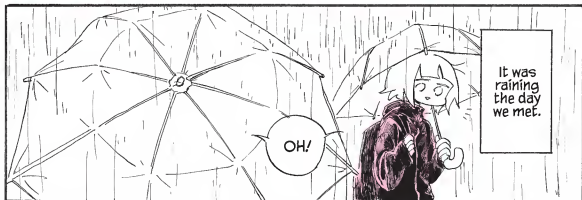
It was  
totally  
obvious  
to the  
people at  
the agency  
that it  
was me.

I'M  
SO  
EM-  
BAR-  
RASS-  
ED!!

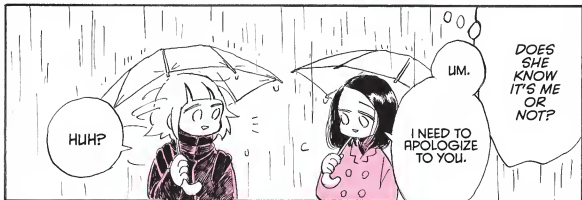
Unable to deal  
with the hassle,  
I cracked and  
made the  
appointment  
with the address  
I use for work  
(even though I  
could've used  
my pen name).



I tried to read between the lines of my requested girl's blog-- to see if they'd told her.



It was raining the day we met.

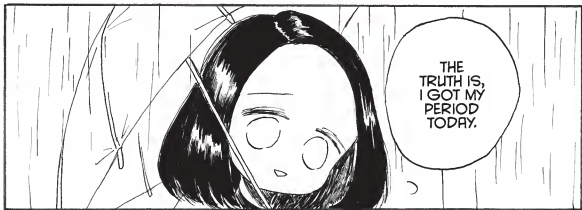


HUHP?

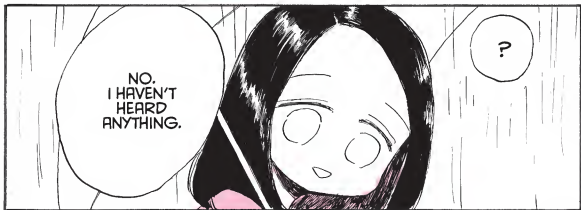
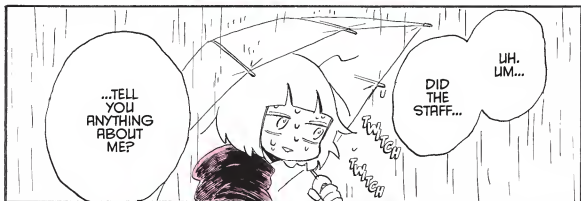
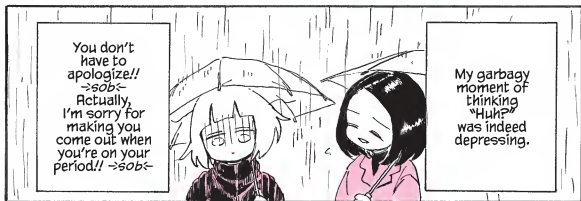
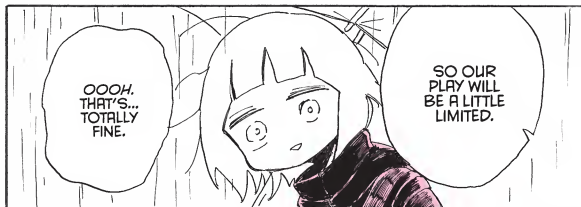
I NEED TO APOLOGIZE TO YOU.

UM.

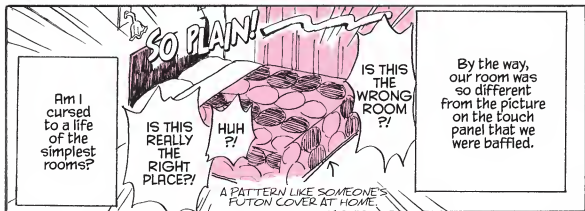
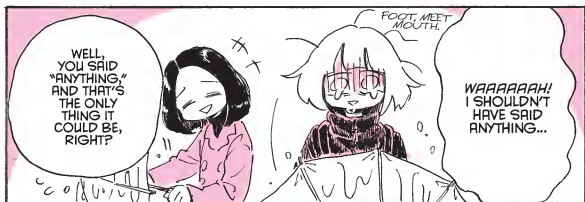
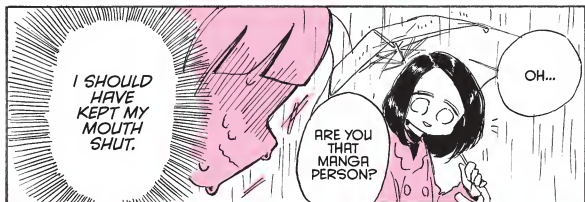
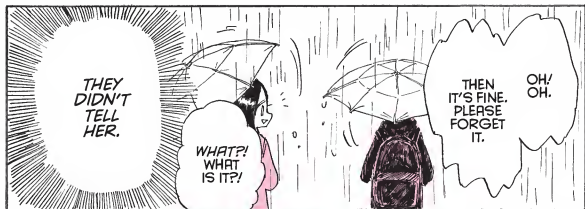
DOES SHE KNOW IT'S ME OR NOT?

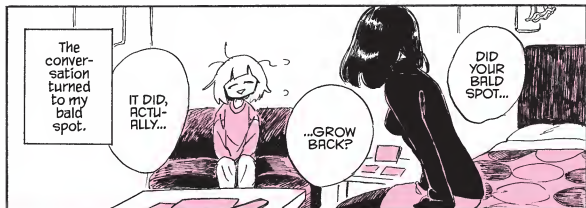


THE TRUTH IS, I GOT MY PERIOD TODAY.









The conversation turned to my bald spot.

IT DID, ACTUALLY...

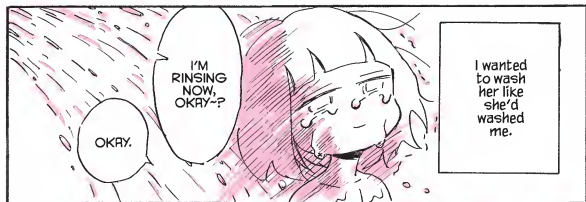
...GROW BACK?

DID YOUR BALD SPOT...



And, of course, once I thought about how I couldn't touch her, how I wanted to touch her, how I should just touch her... my head didn't move.

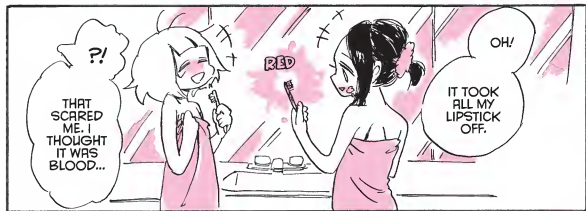
We chatted for a bit, and then she washed my whole body with her hands!



I'M RINSING NOW, OKAY~?

OKAY.

I wanted to wash her like she'd washed me.



?!  
THAT SCARED ME. I THOUGHT IT WAS BLOOD...

RED

OH!

IT TOOK ALL MY LIPSTICK OFF.

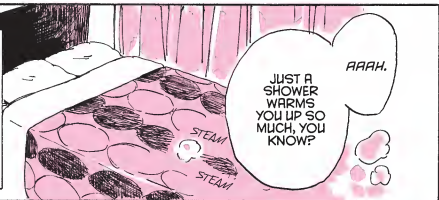
I decided to stop making fun of my own small breasts.

SMALL BOOBS HAVE A CHARM ALL THEIR OWN.



I wondered if I could do a little better than the first time.

AAAAH.  
JUST A SHOWER WARMS YOU UP SO MUCH, YOU KNOW?



THERE WE GO!



Smooch

MN!

MM.

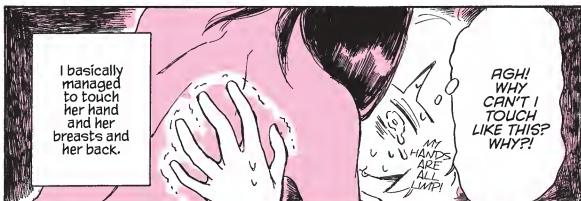




I basically managed to touch her hand and her breasts and her back.

AGH! WHY CAN'T I TOUCH LIKE THIS? WHY?!

MY HANDS ARE ALL LUMP!



Even though she touched me everywhere, there was a chasm between our bodies.

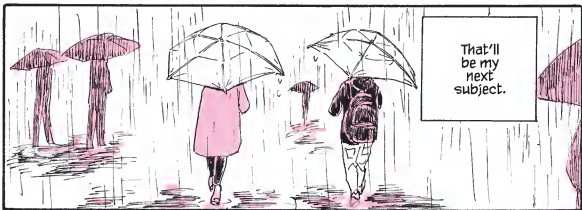
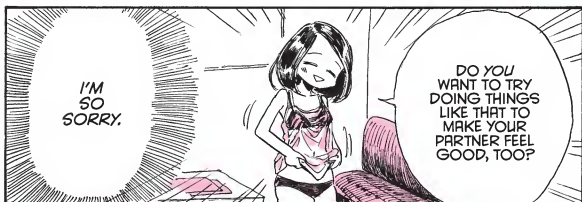
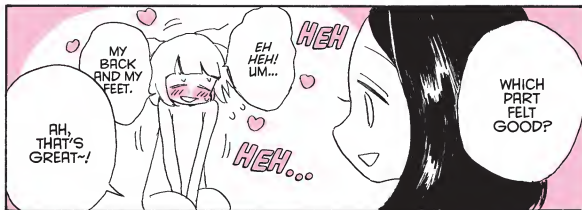
Even though I wanted to touch more.

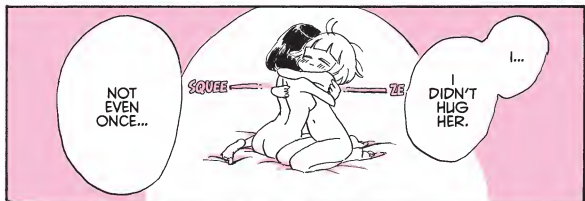
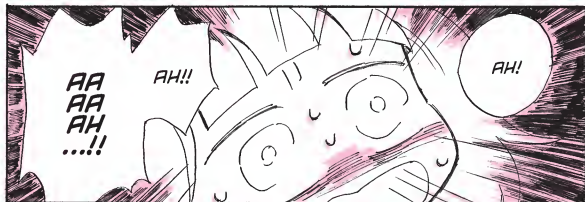


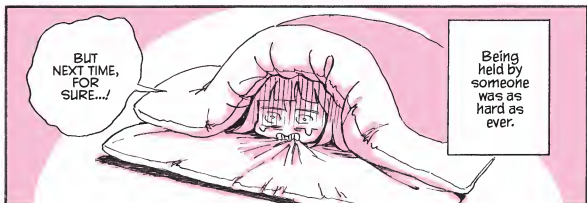
I'd chosen a seventy-minute session this time, so it was over in the blink of an eye.

OH!









BUT  
NEXT TIME,  
FOR  
SURE...!

Being  
held by  
someone  
was as  
hard as  
ever.



It looks  
like *this* is  
still my life  
for now...  
and I'll keep  
living it.

Every time  
I see the  
words  
"amateur  
virgin,"  
it's a shot  
to the  
heart.

SOMEONE  
WHOSE ONLY  
SEXUAL EXPERIENCE  
IS WITH SEX  
WORKERS.

~ BONUS CHAPTER: END ~

SEVEN SEAS ENTERTAINMENT PRESENTS

# My Lesbian Experience with Loneliness

(true) story & art by **NAGATA KABI**

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Sabishisugite Rezu Fuzoku ni ikimashita repo

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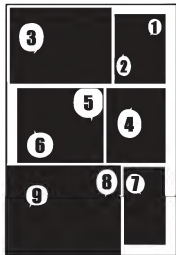
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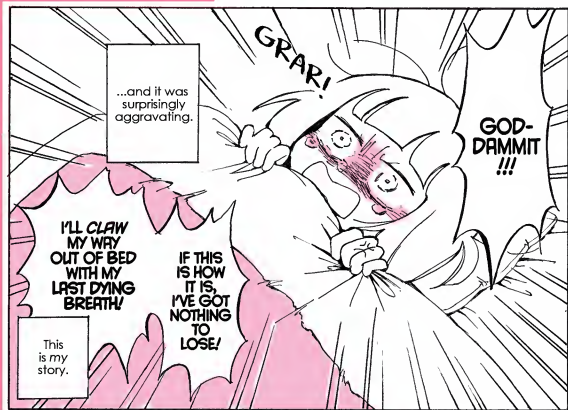
## READING DIRECTIONS

This book reads from *right to left*, Japanese style. If this is your first time reading manga, you start reading from the top right panel on each page and take it from there. If you get lost, just follow the numbered diagram here. It may seem backwards at first, but you'll get the hang of it! Have fun!!





28 years old.  
No confidence.  
No direction.  
Never had sex...



The candid tell-all of a young woman's struggles with depression and sexuality that has taken the internet by storm!

OLDER TEEN (16+)

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