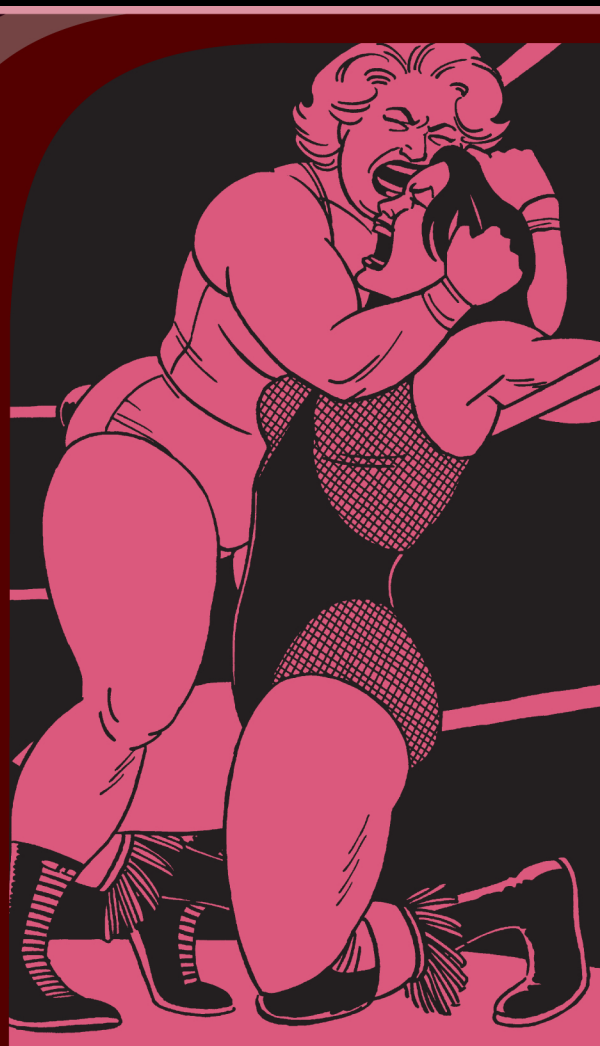




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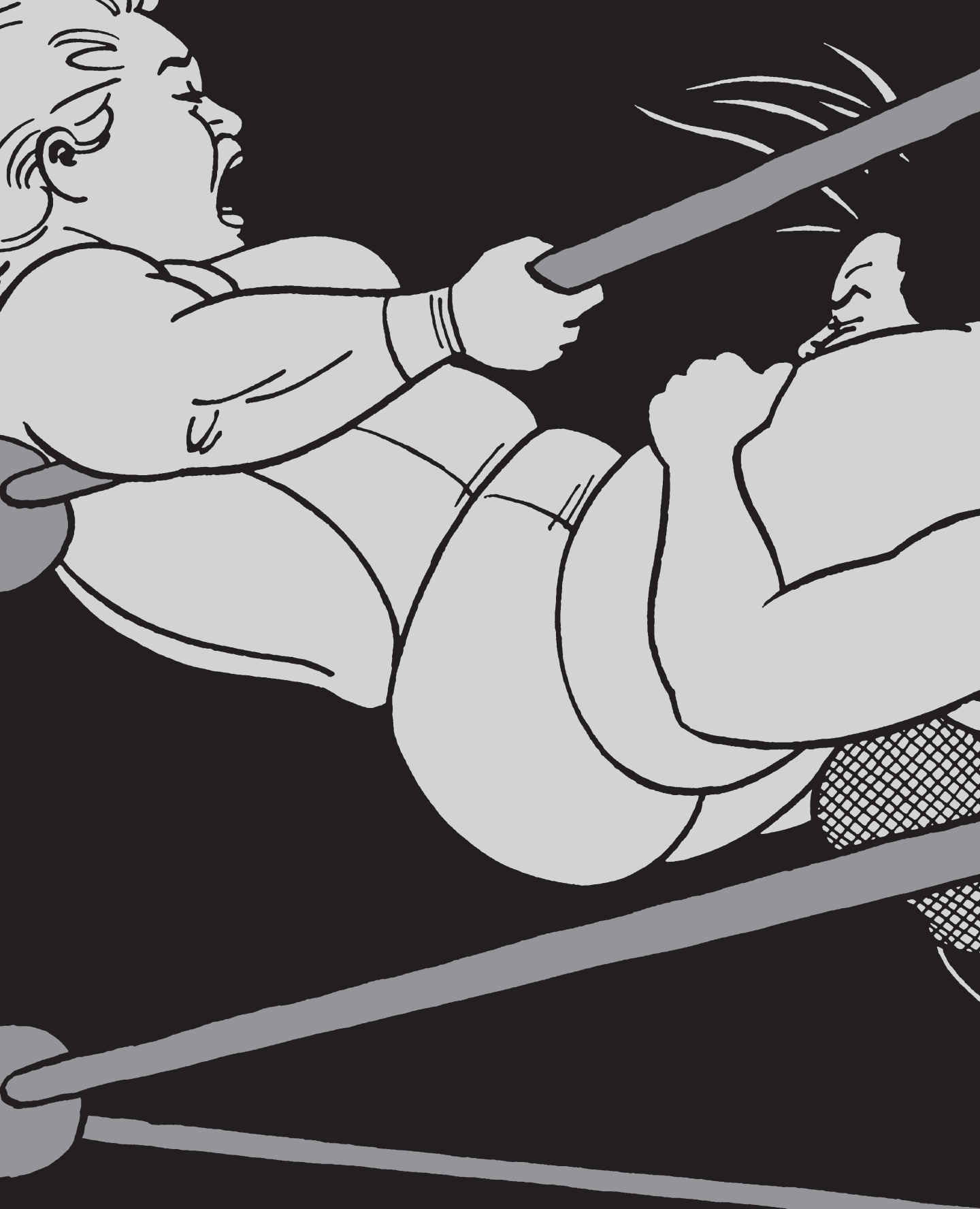


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Hernandez

PENNY CENTURY

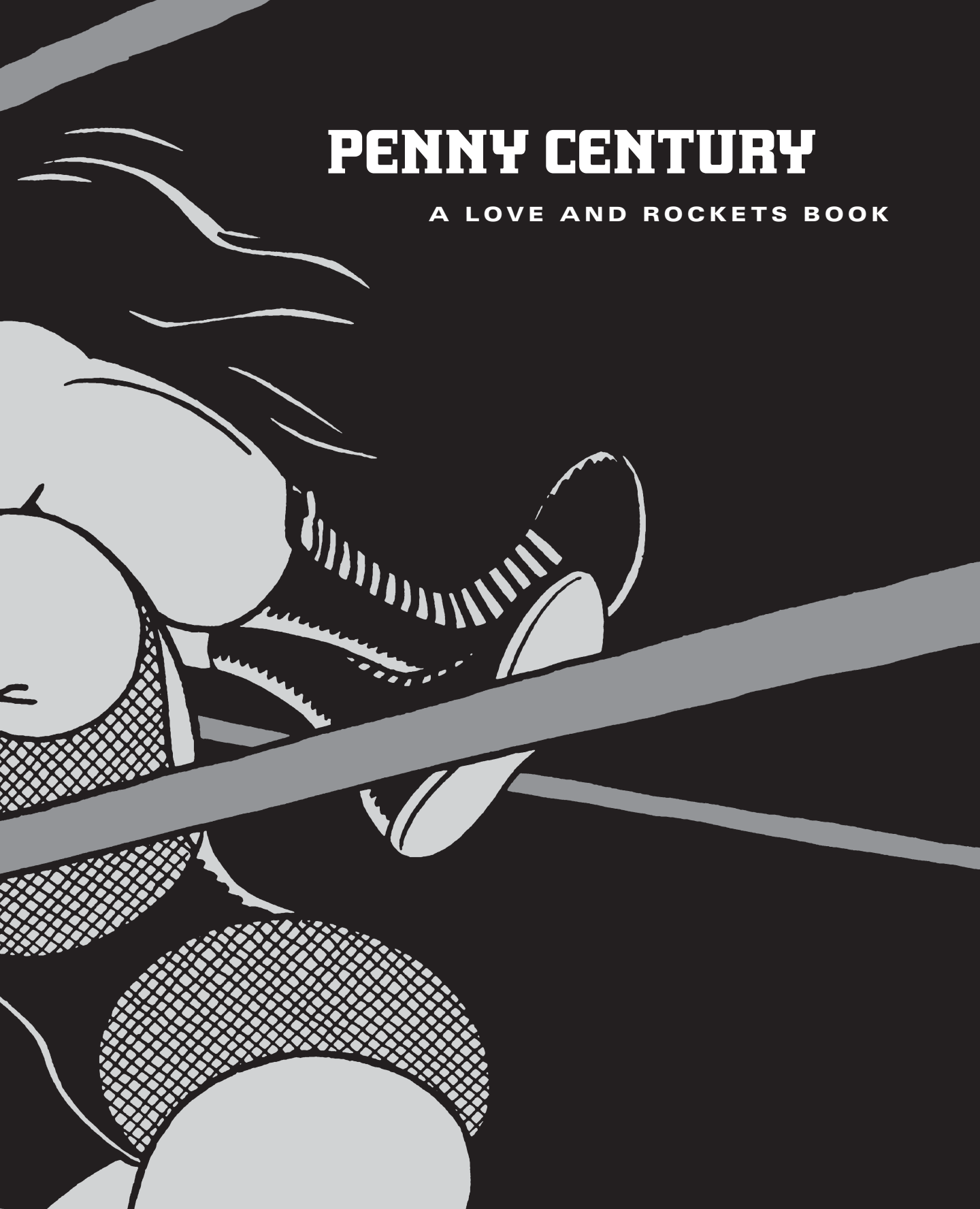
A LOVE AND ROCKETS BOOK

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PENNY CENTURY

A LOVE AND ROCKETS BOOK



PENNY CENTURY

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**WHO-HO-HOA
NELLIE!**





LA
PANTERA
NEGRA



TEXAS
TONI
BELLE



VICKI
GLORI



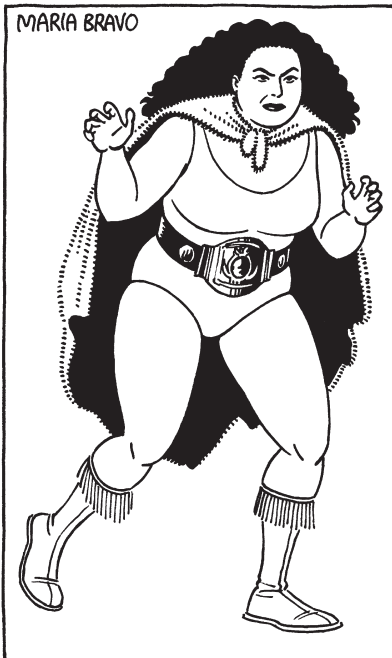
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QUEEN RENA TITANO

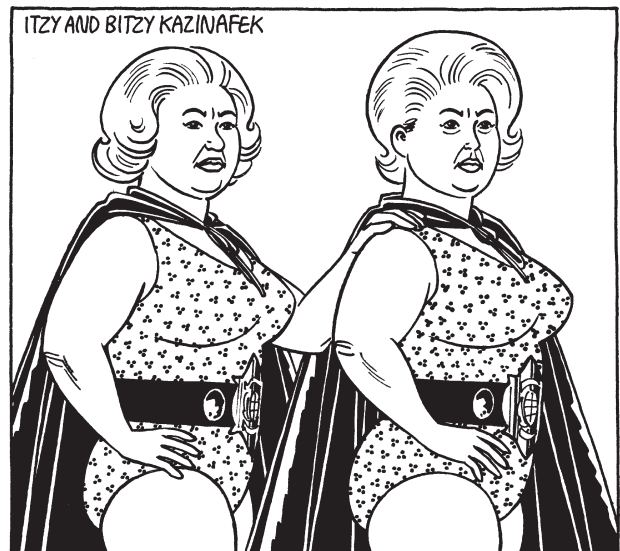


TIGER ROSA



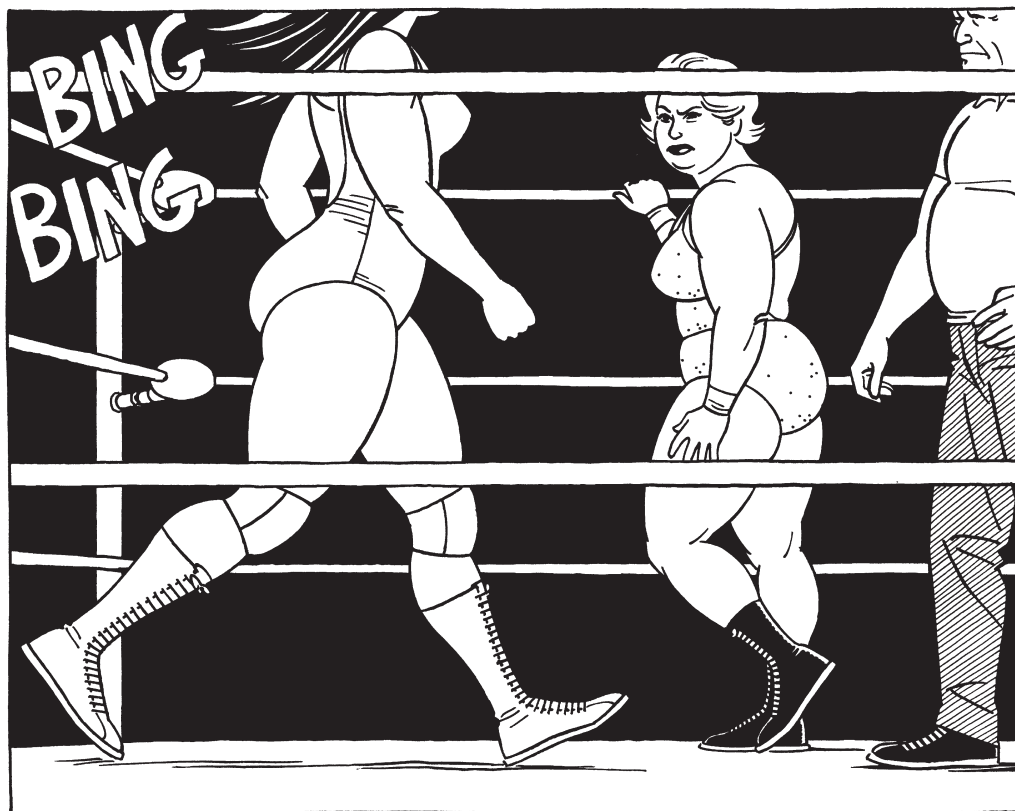
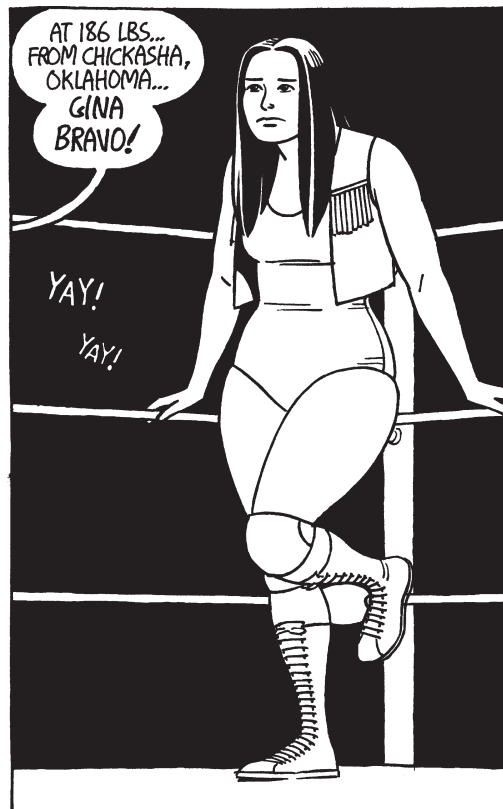
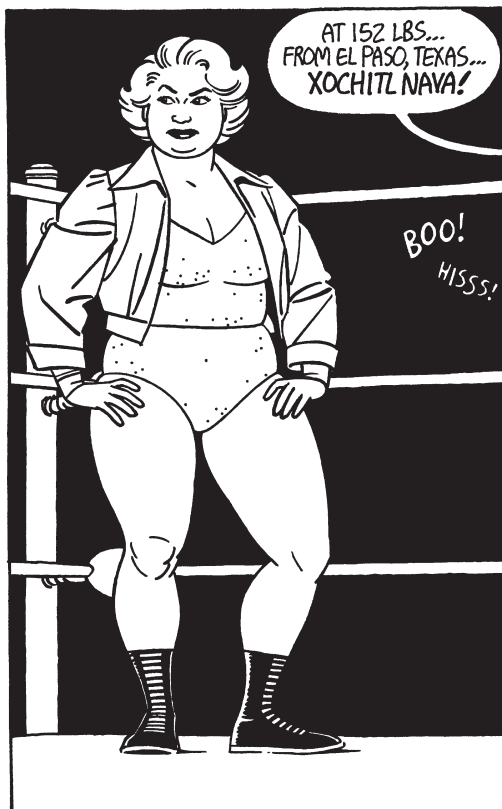
MARIA BRAVO

FEMALE WRESTLING
GREATS FROM
THE PAST

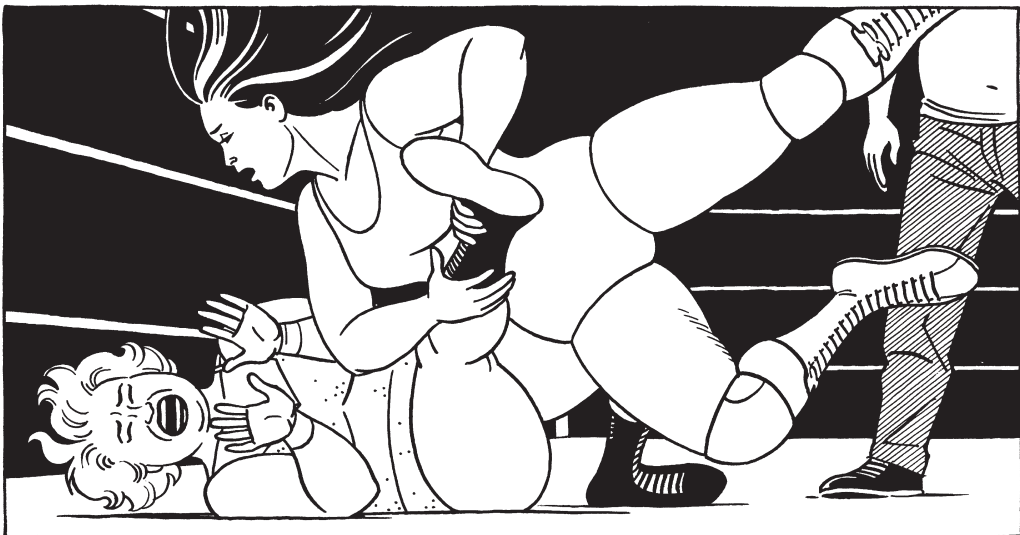
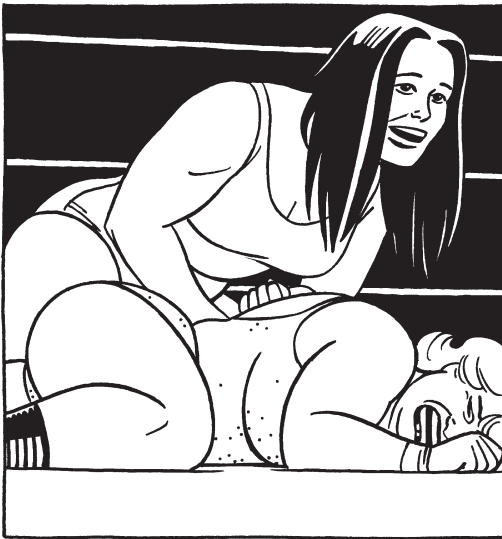
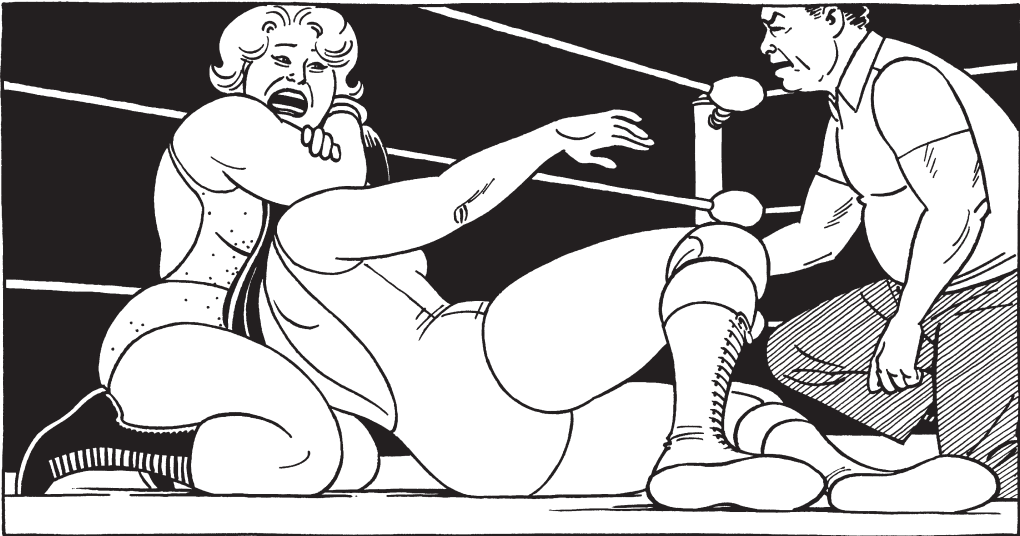


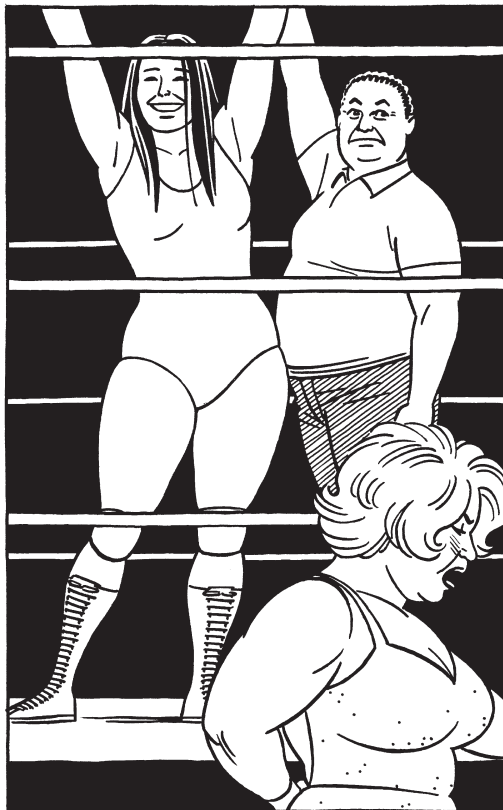
ITZY AND BITZY KAZINAFEK



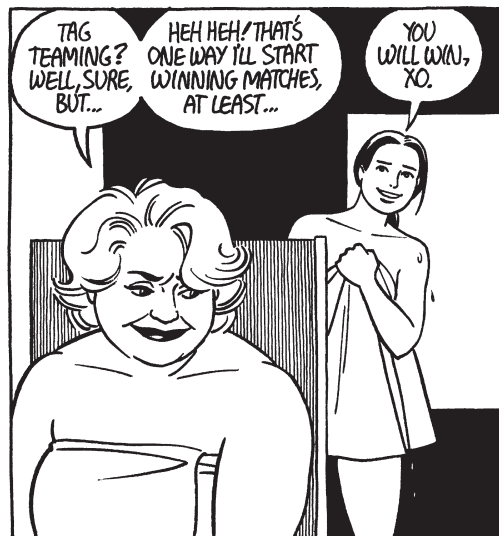
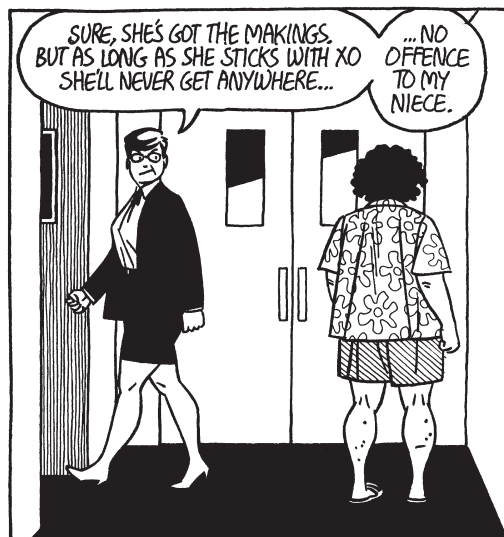


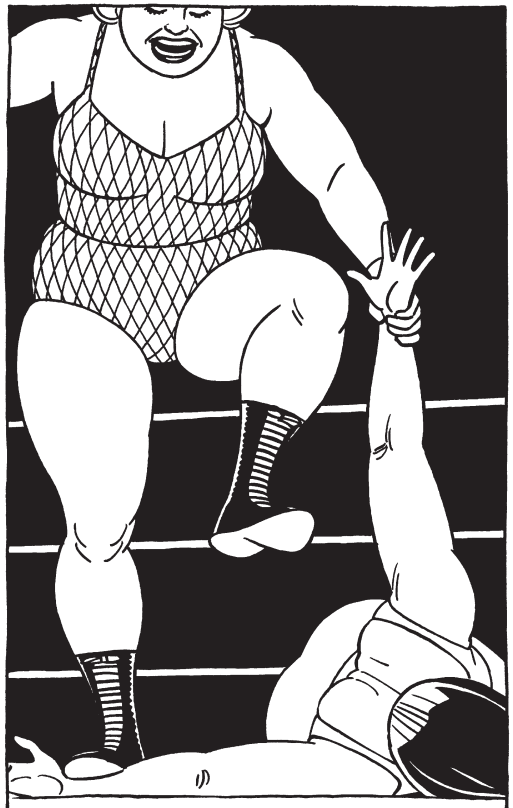
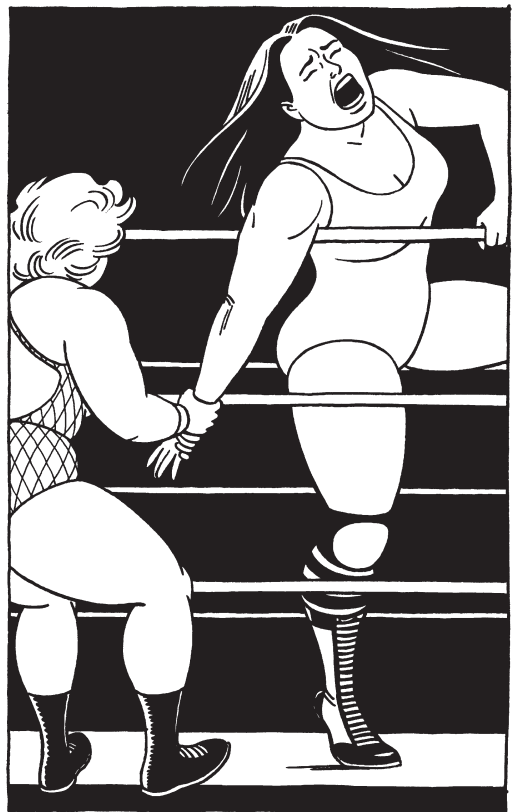
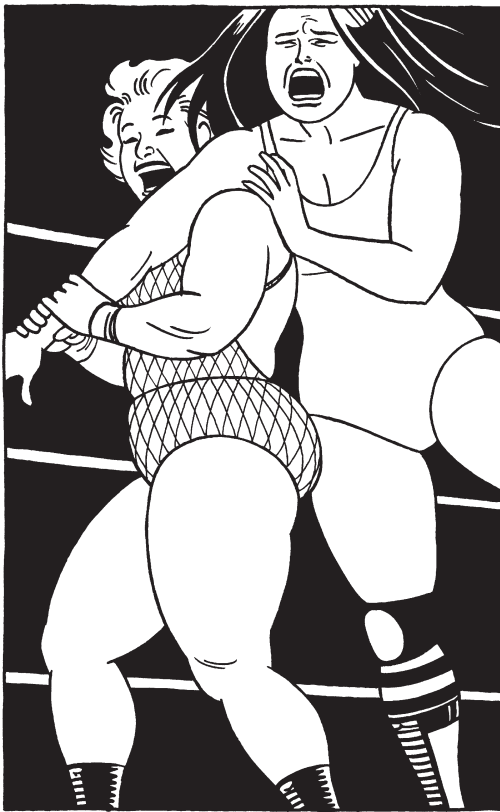


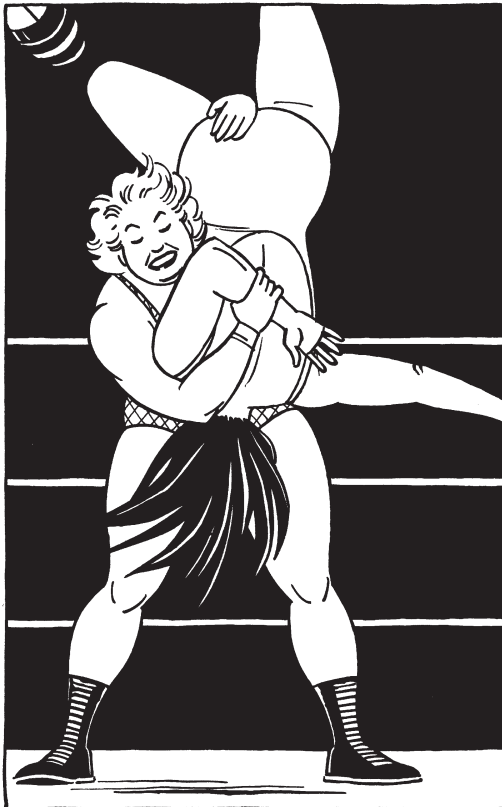
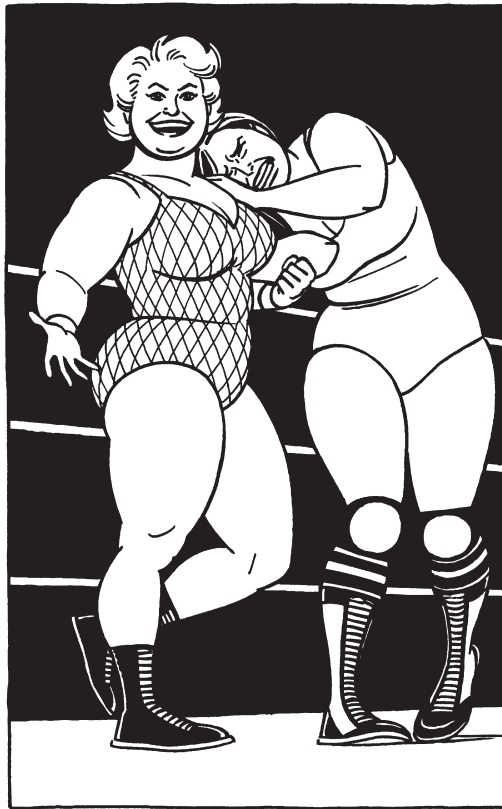




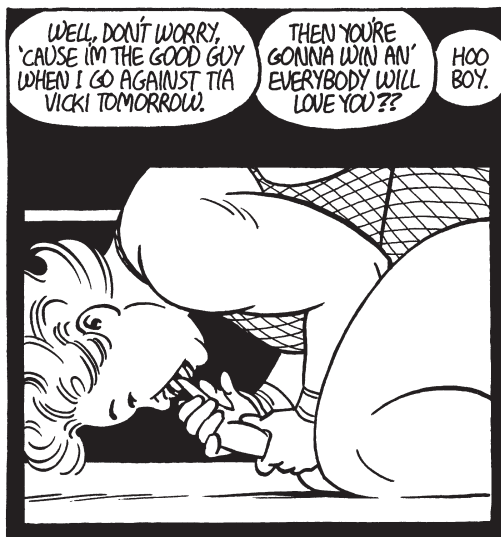
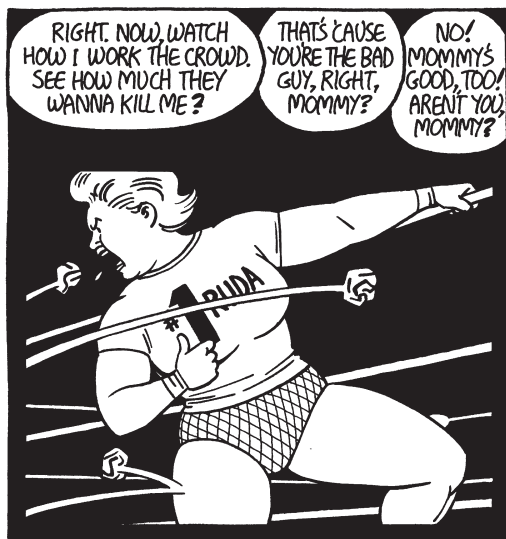
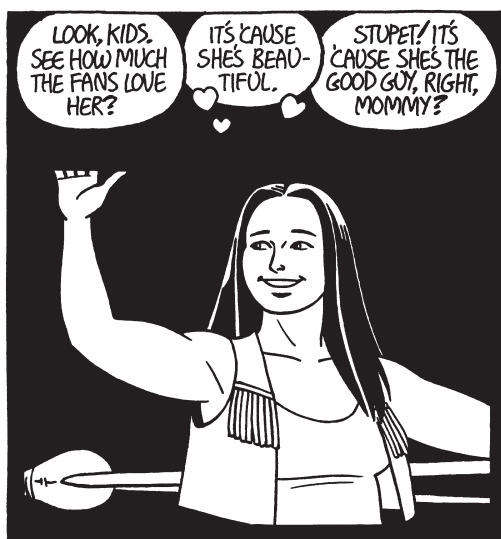


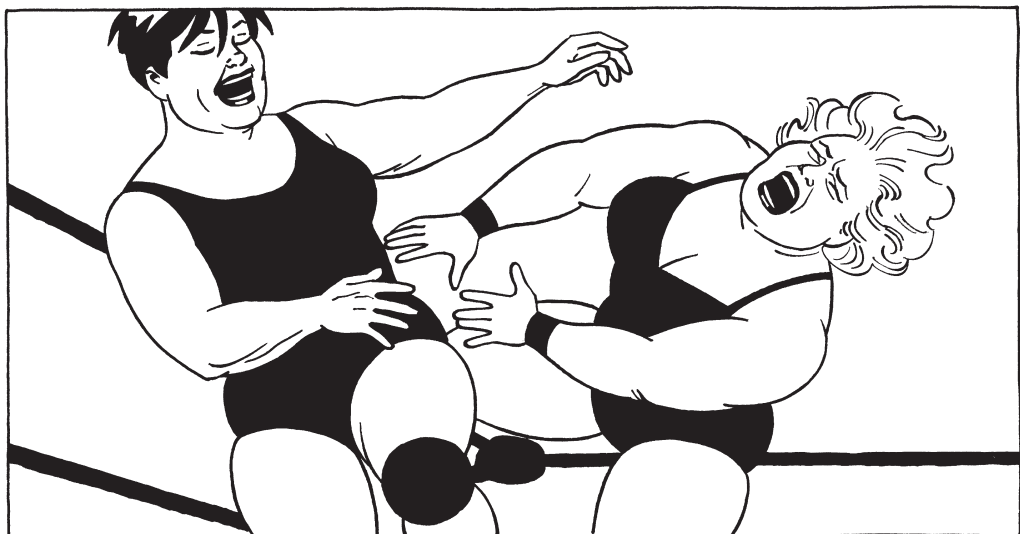
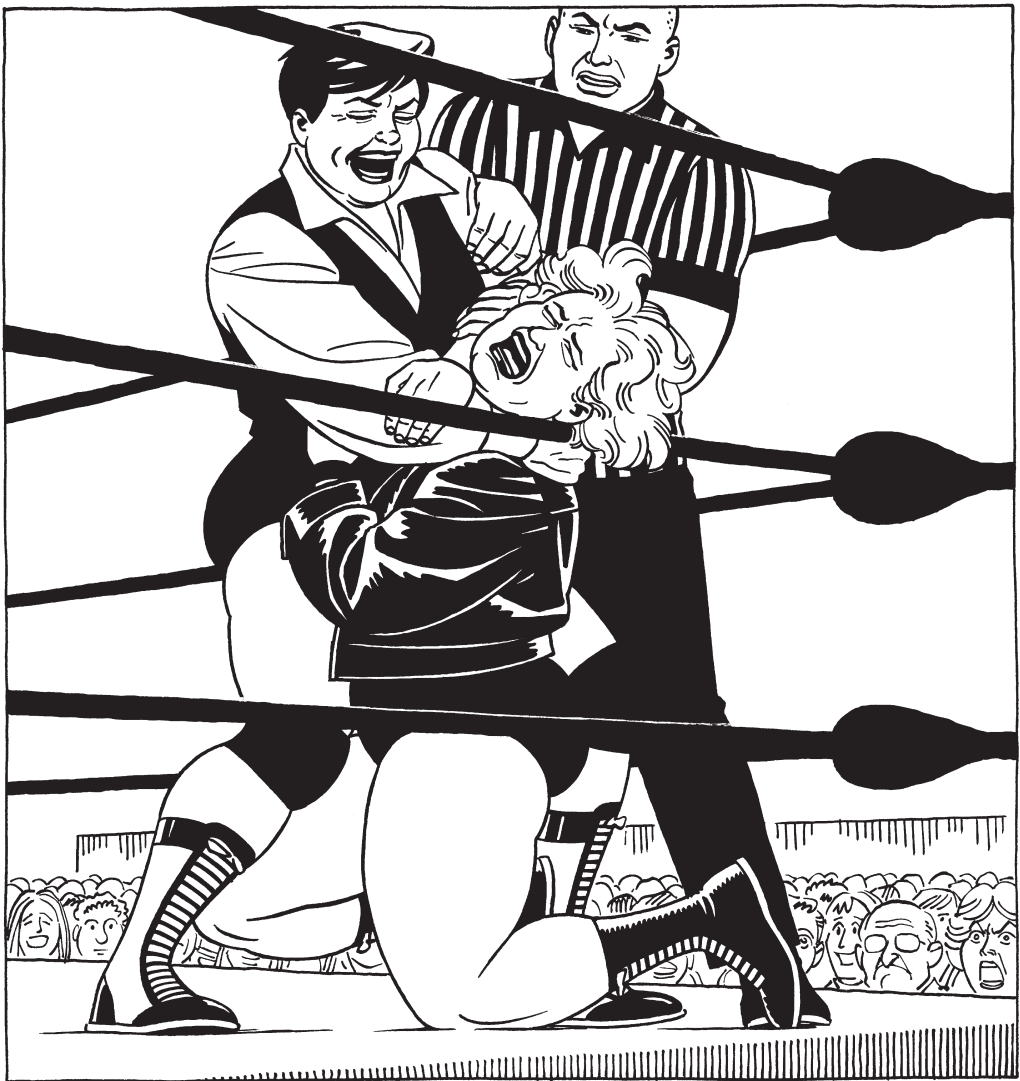


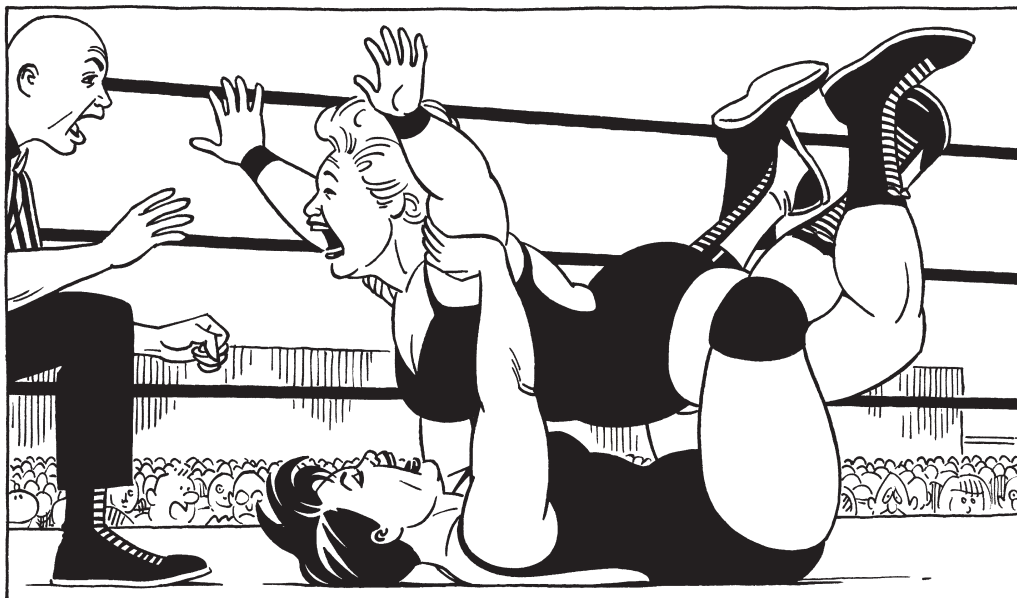
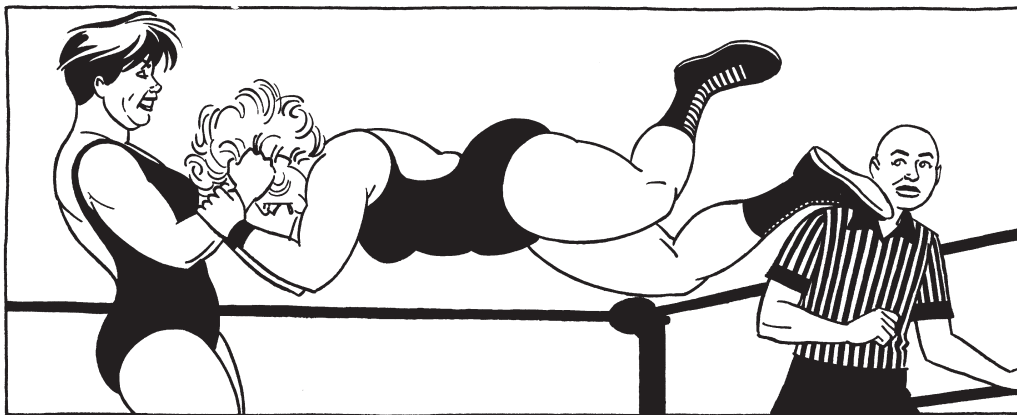
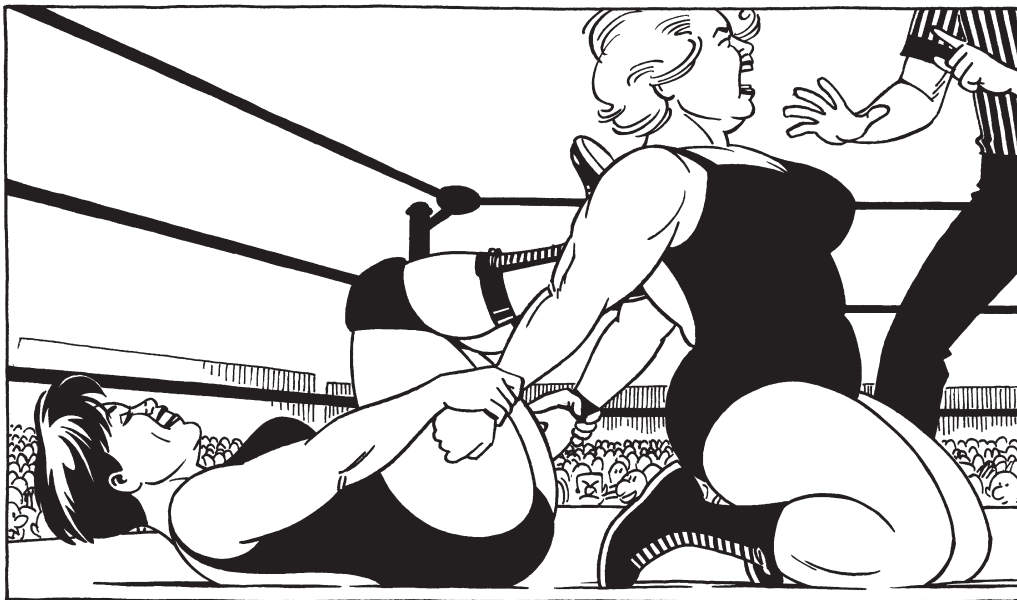


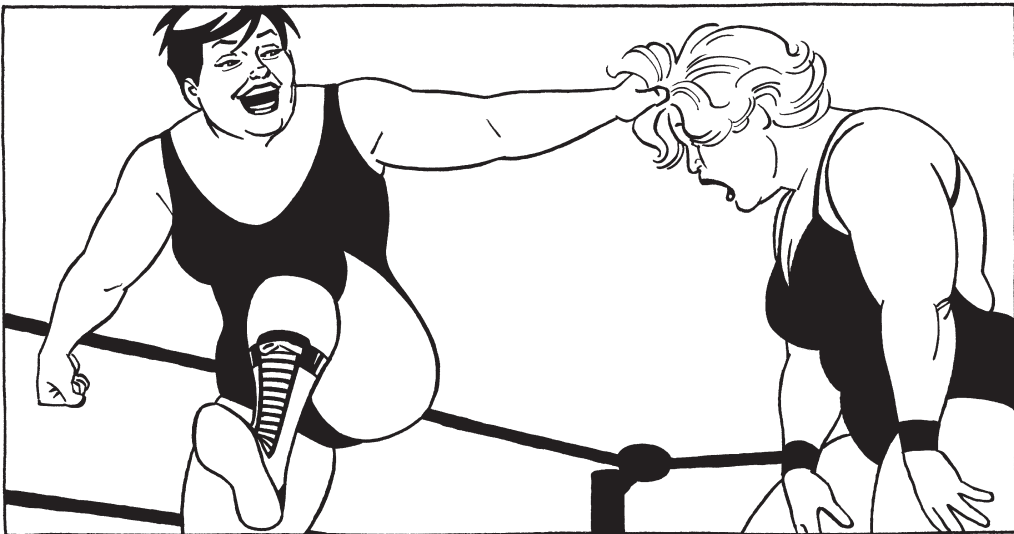
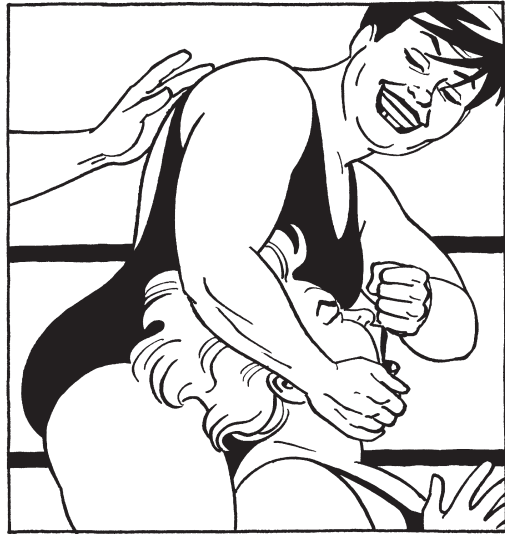
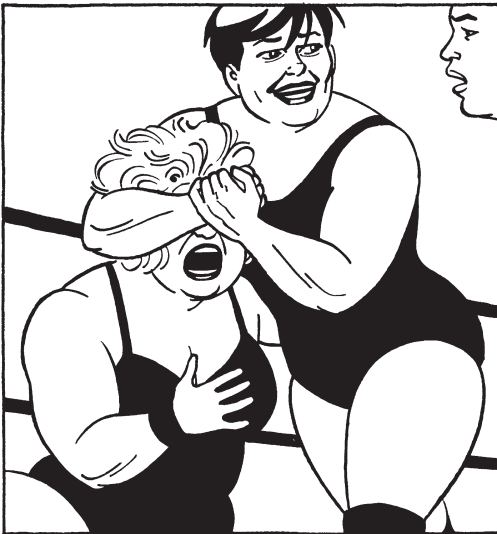
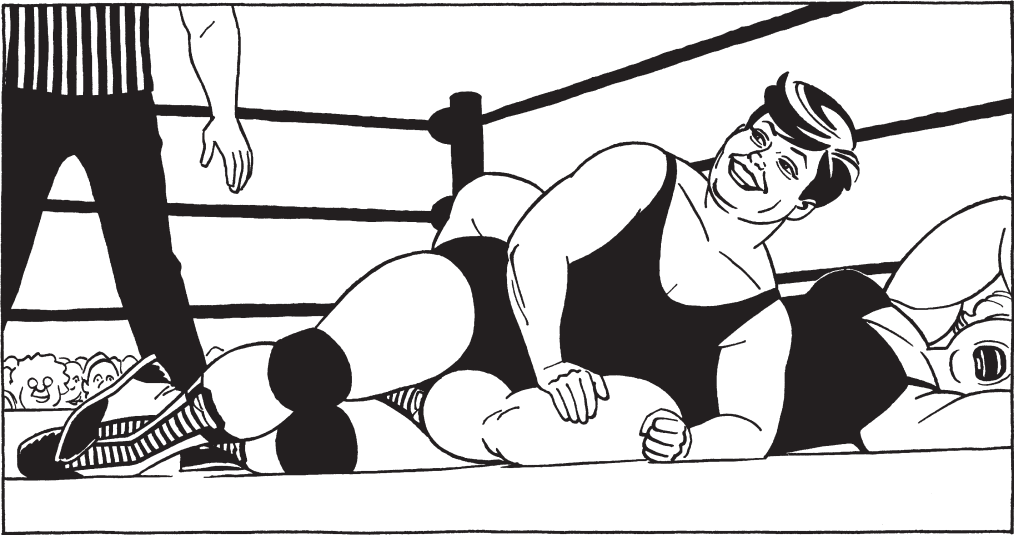


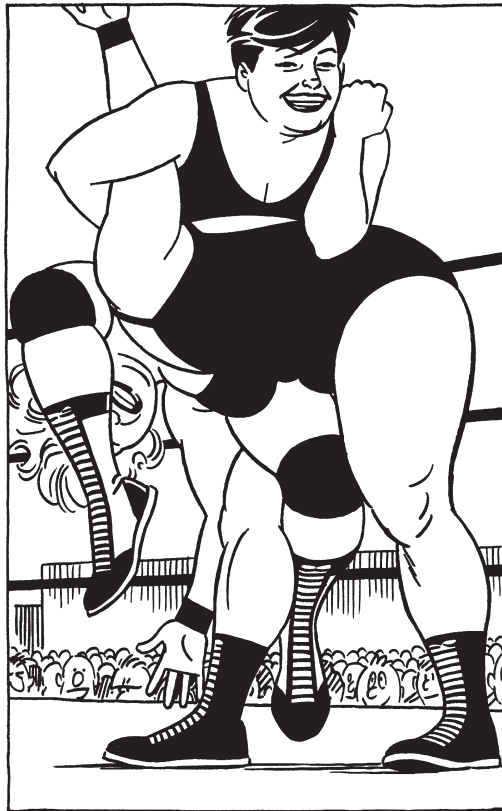
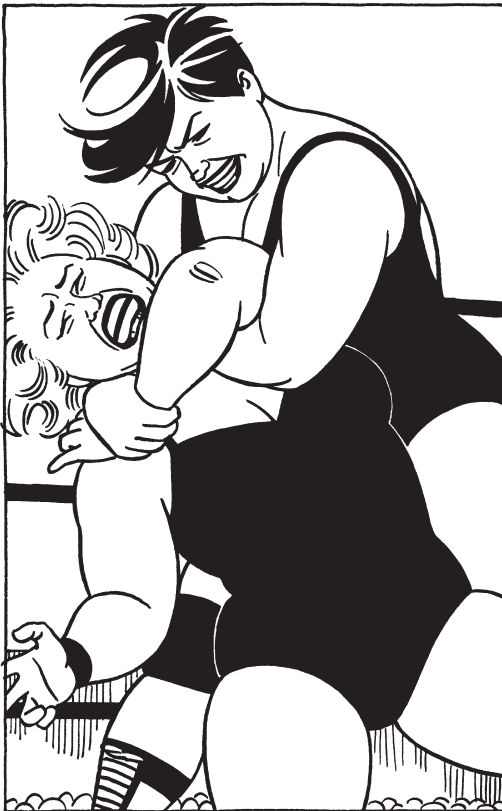
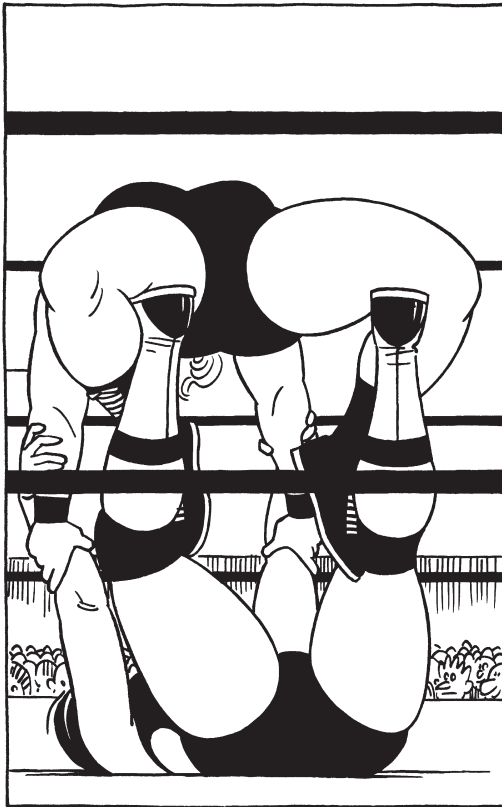
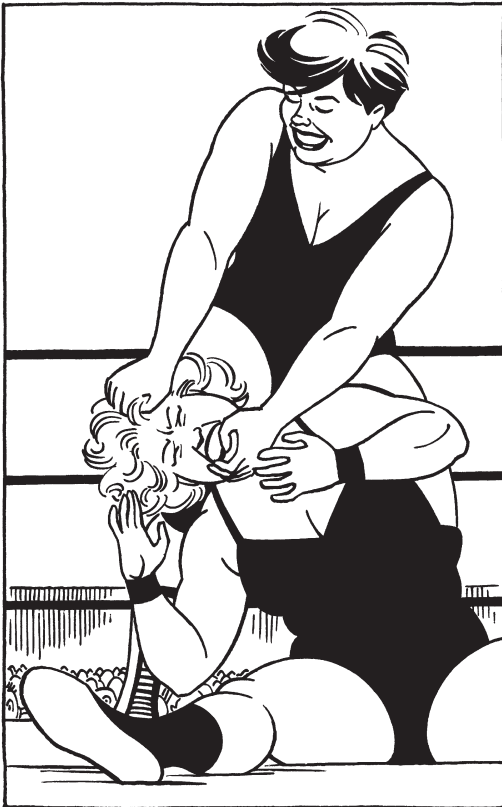


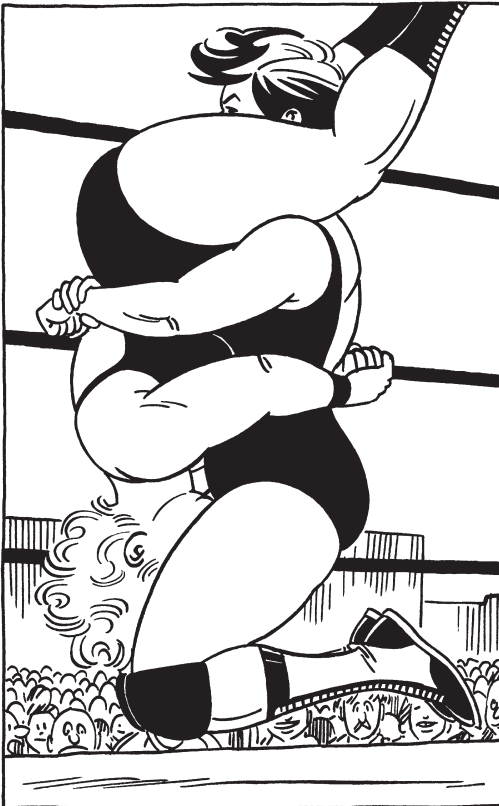
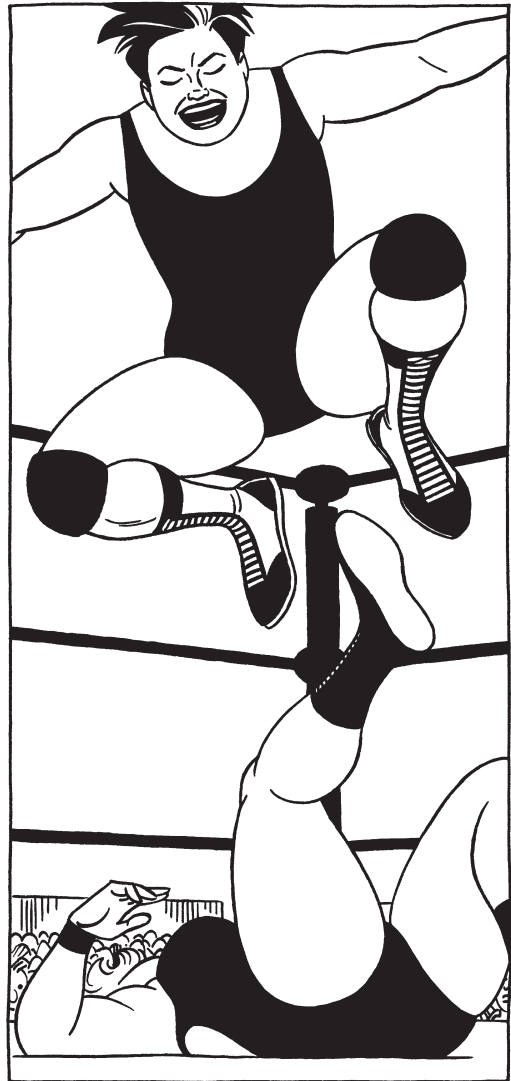


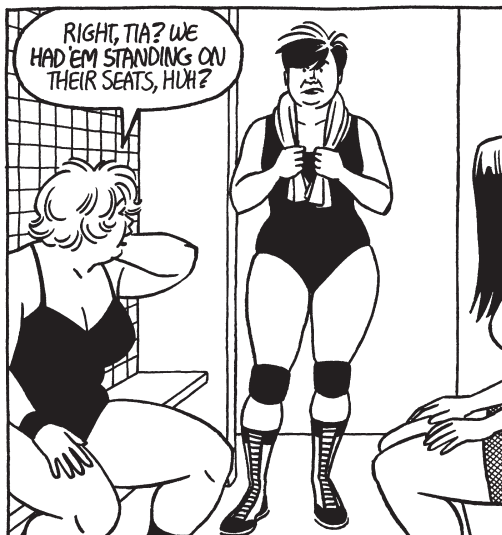


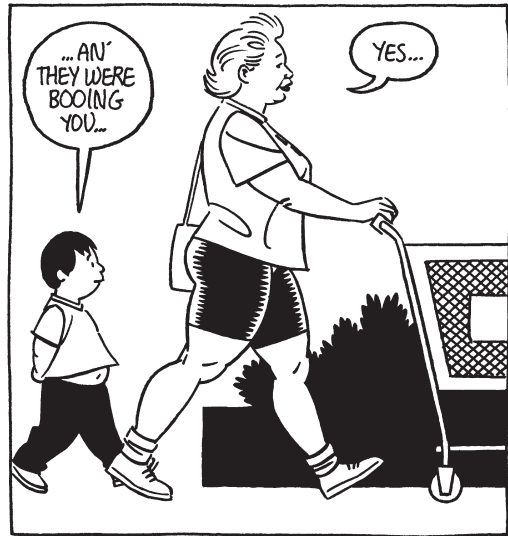
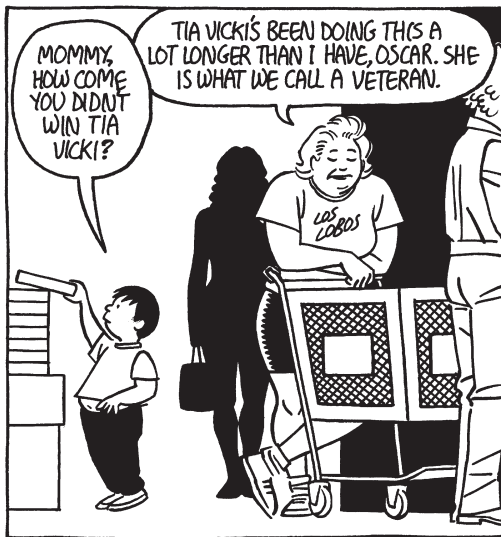


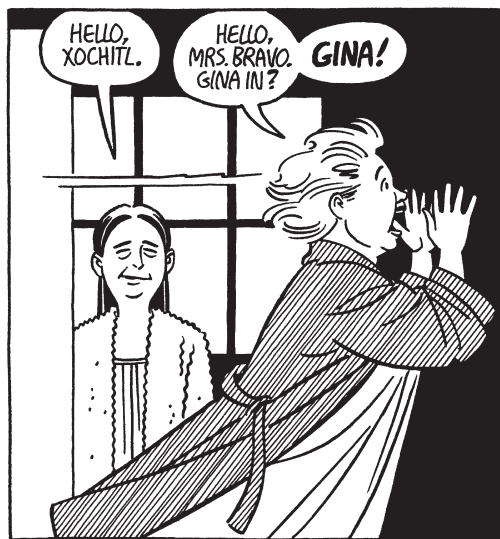


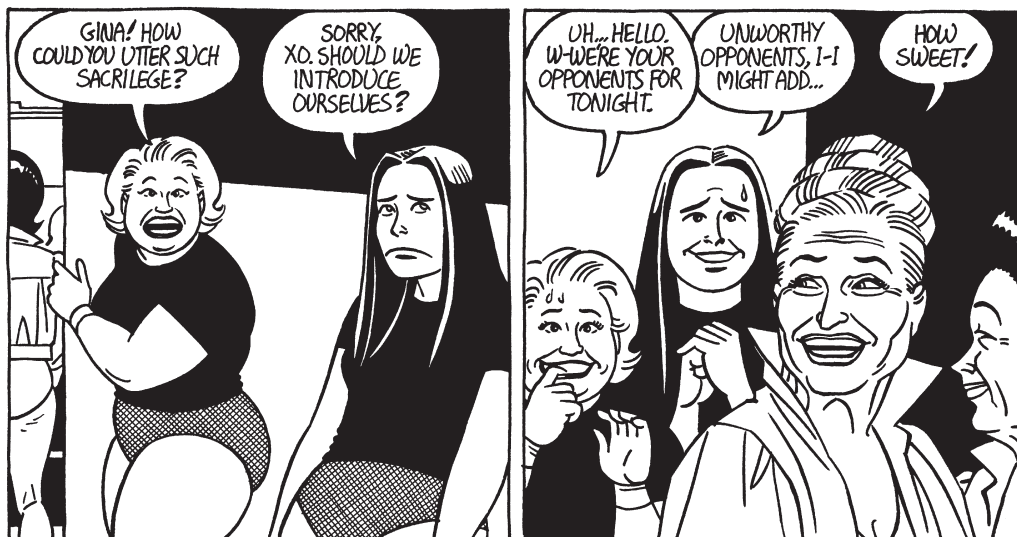
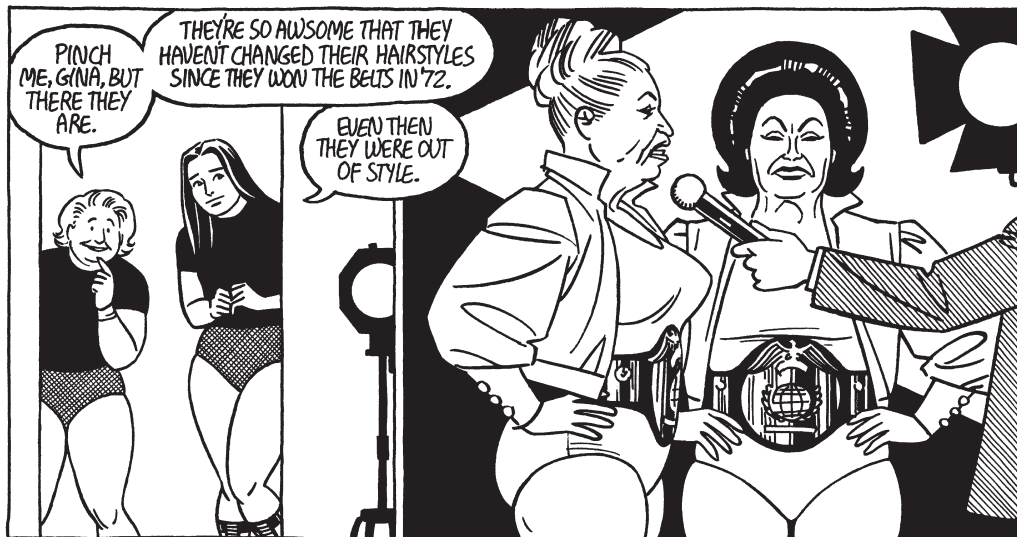
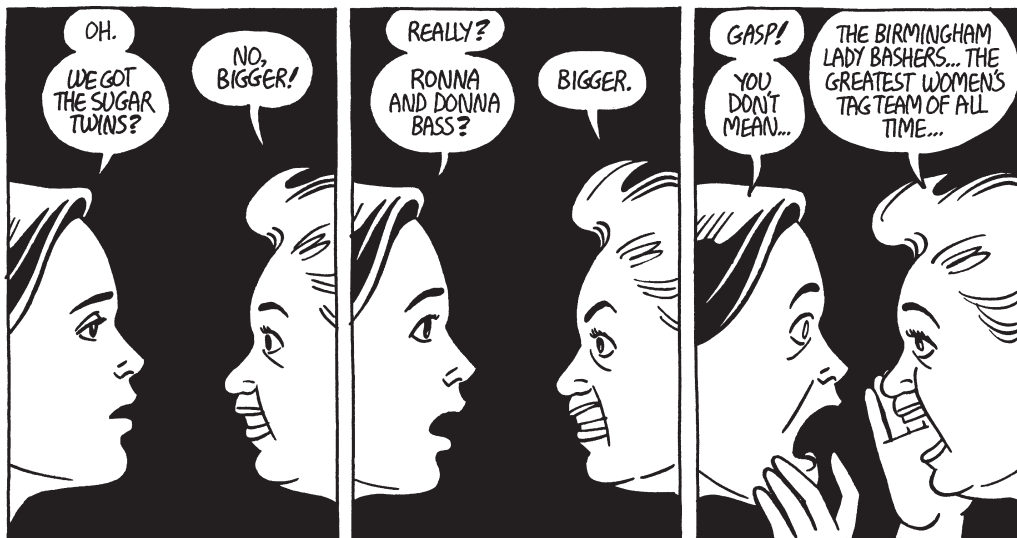




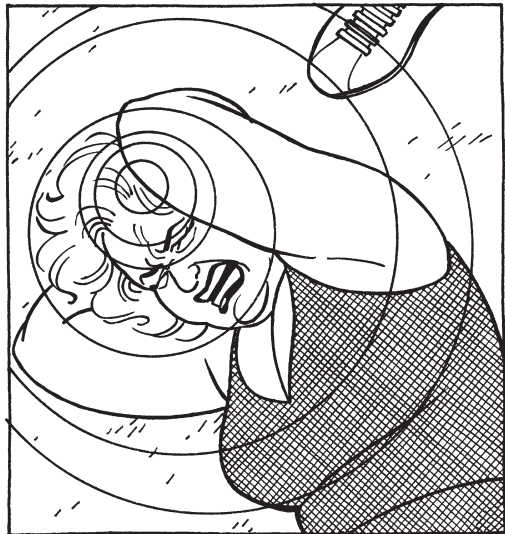
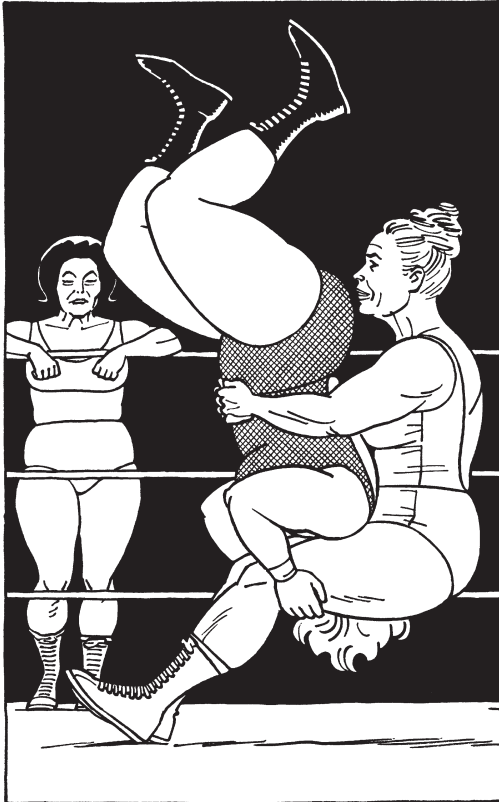
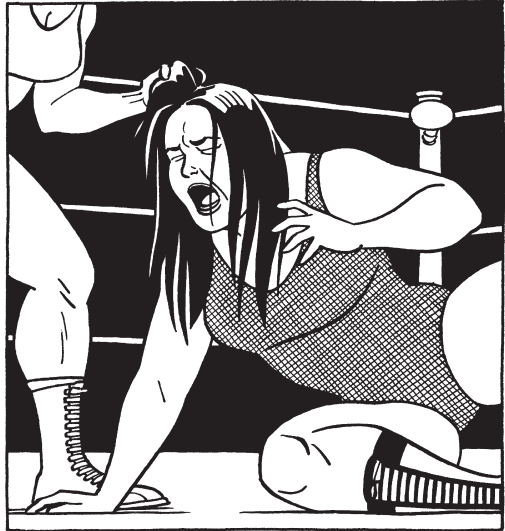
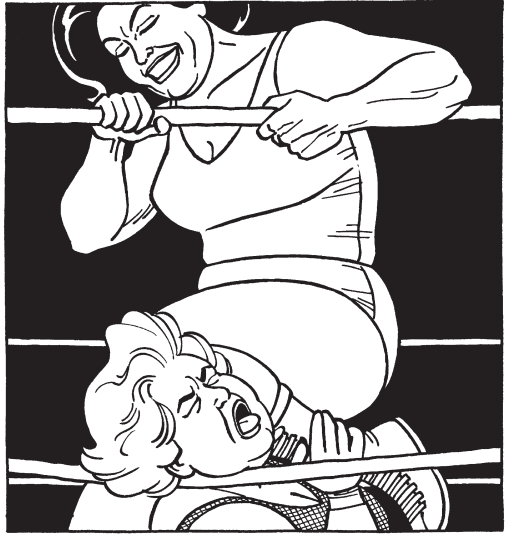
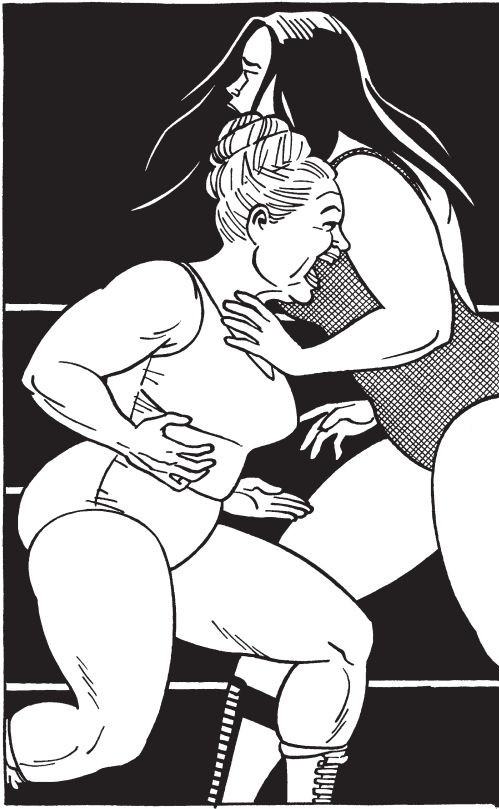












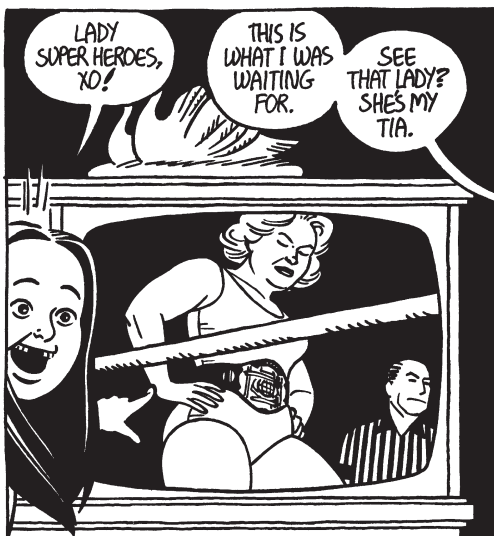
FROM ABOUT THE AGE OF THIRTEEN XOCHITL NAVA WOULD OCCASIONALLY BABYSIT THE BRAVO CHILDREN NEXT DOOR.



GINA, THE OLDEST OF THE KIDS, WAS A GOOD ARTIST WHO LEARNED FROM COPYING SUPER HERO COMICS. SHE WOULD DRAW PICTURES OF XOCHITL AND HERSELF AS A DYNAMIC DUO.



ONE DAY WHILE BABYSITTING, XOCHITL TURNED THE T.V. ON TO A PROFESSIONAL WRESTLING PROGRAM.

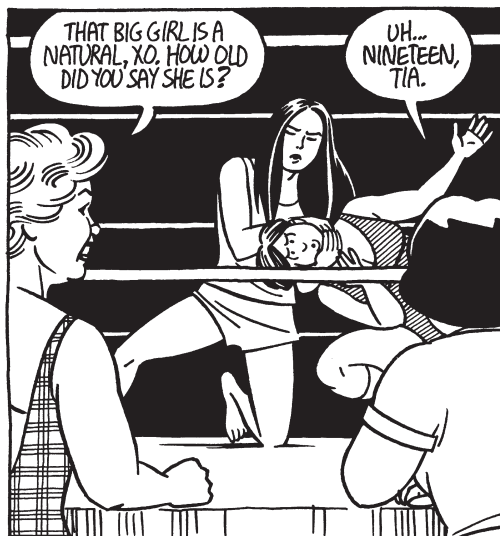
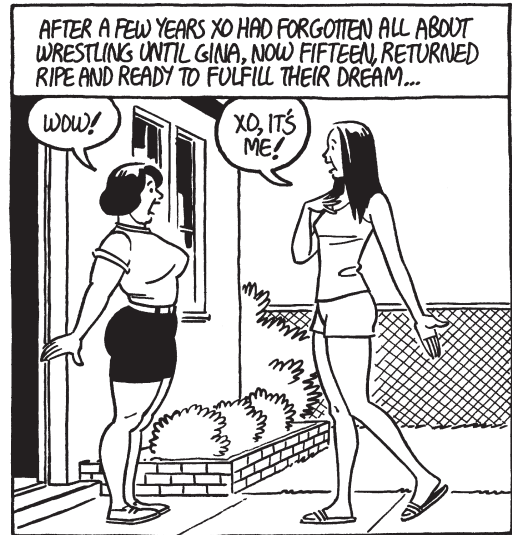


YEP, TIA VICKI HAS A GYM OUT IN CALIFORNIA. I'M THINKING OF JOINING ONCE I TURN EIGHTEEN. I THINK I'D MAKE A PRETTY GOOD WRESTLER. TSK!



AND SHORTLY AFTER XOCHITL'S EIGHTEENTH BIRTHDAY...

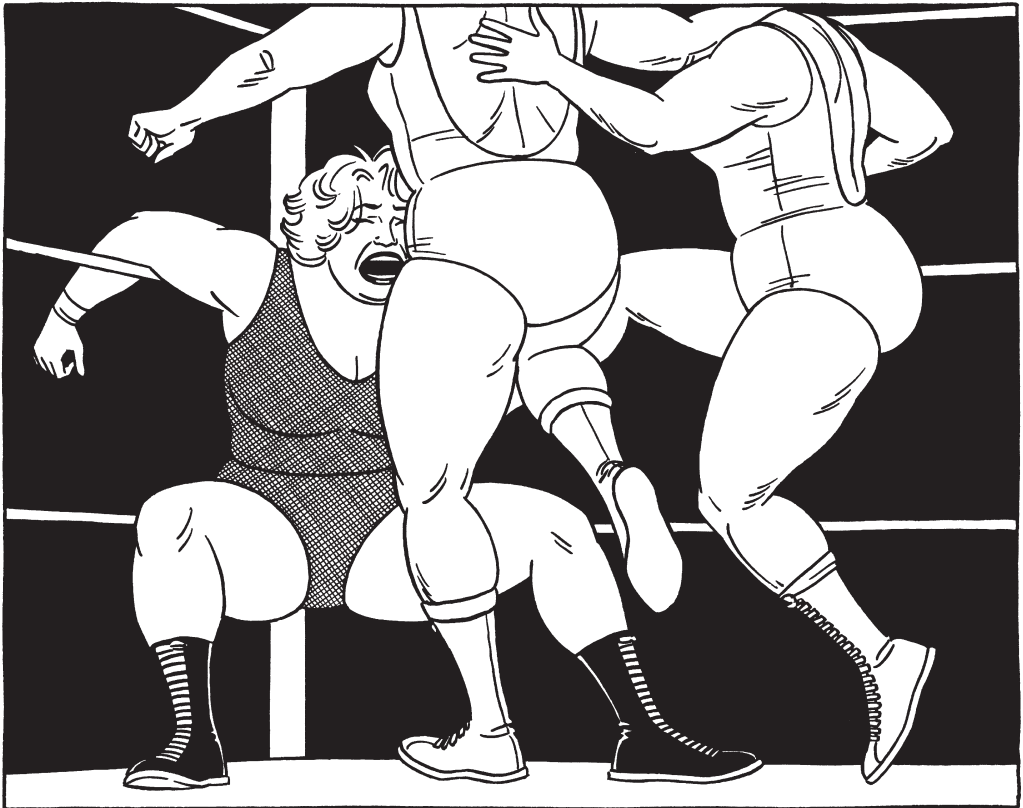
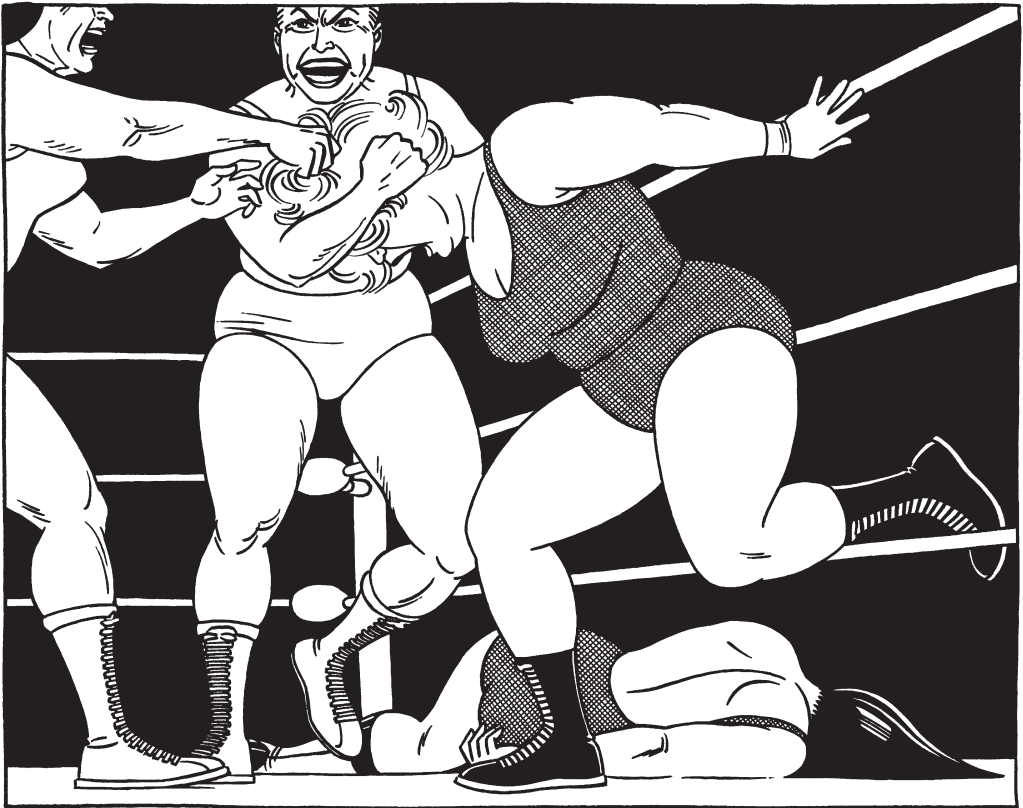


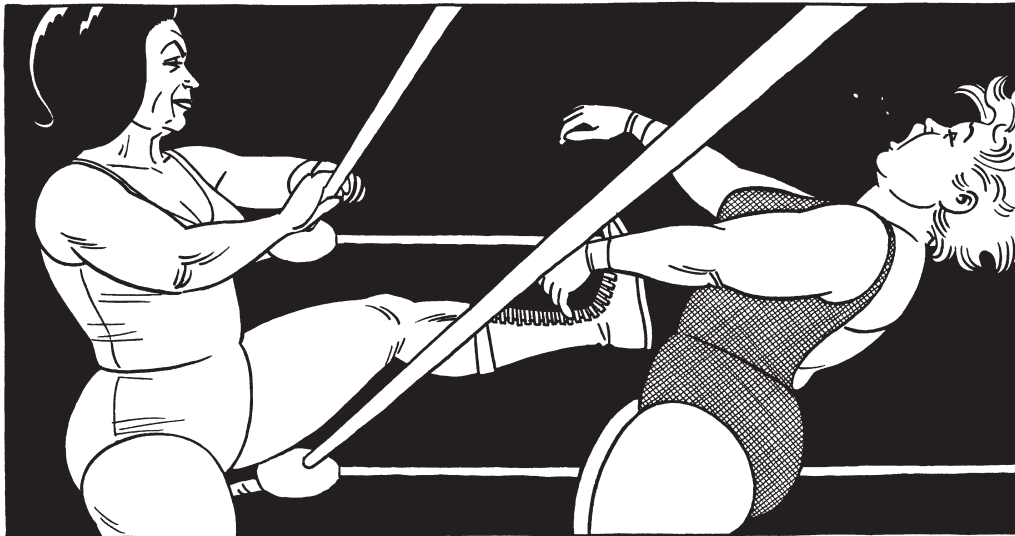
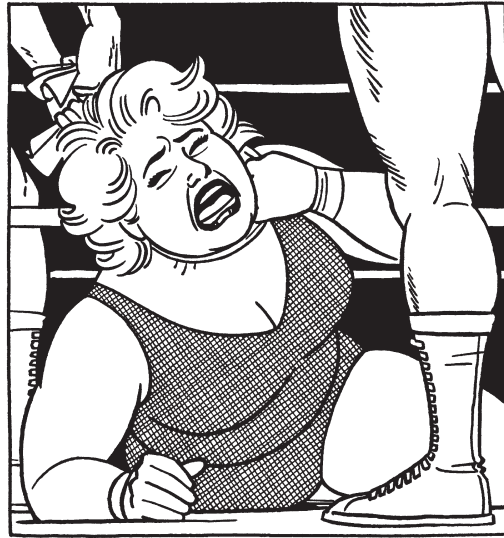
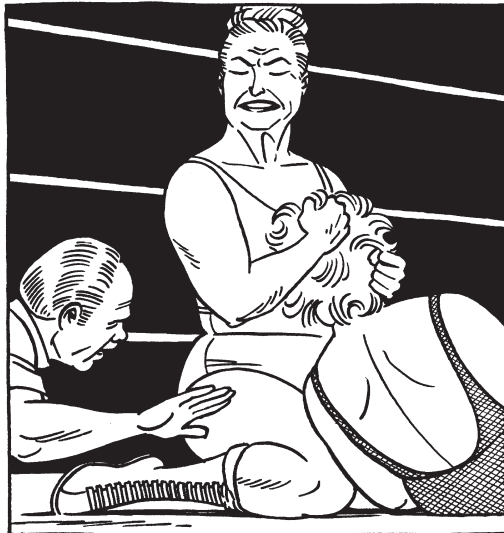
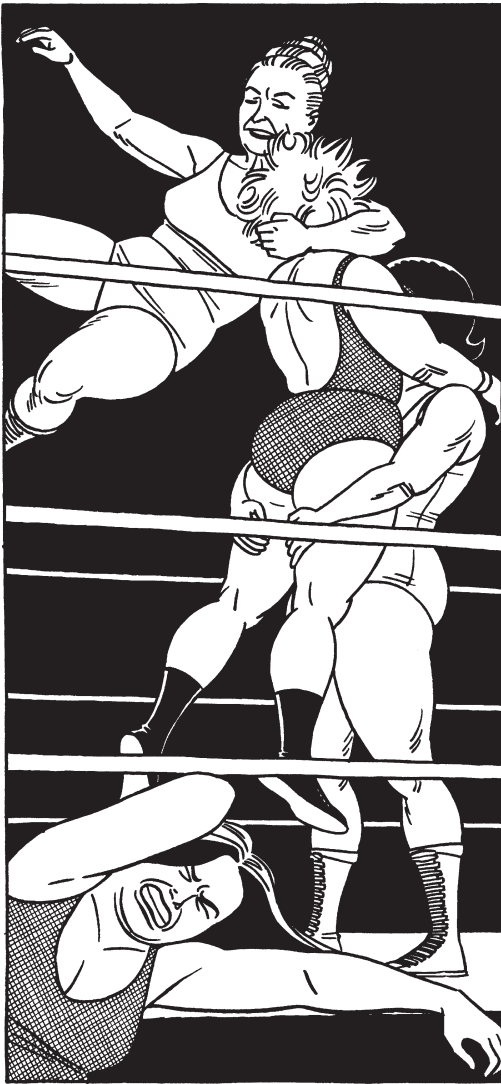


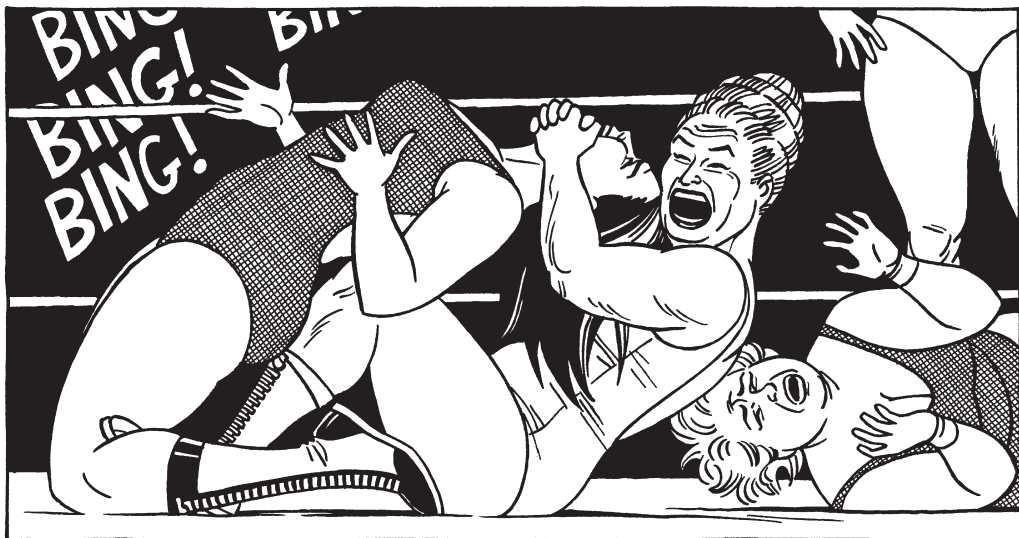
A PAIR OF LOCAL GRAPPLETTES NAVA AND BRAVO ARE GETTING A WRESTLING LESSON HERE TONIGHT FROM THE TAG TEAM LEGENDS BIRMINGHAM LADY BASHERS IN TYPICAL SOUTHERN FASHION!

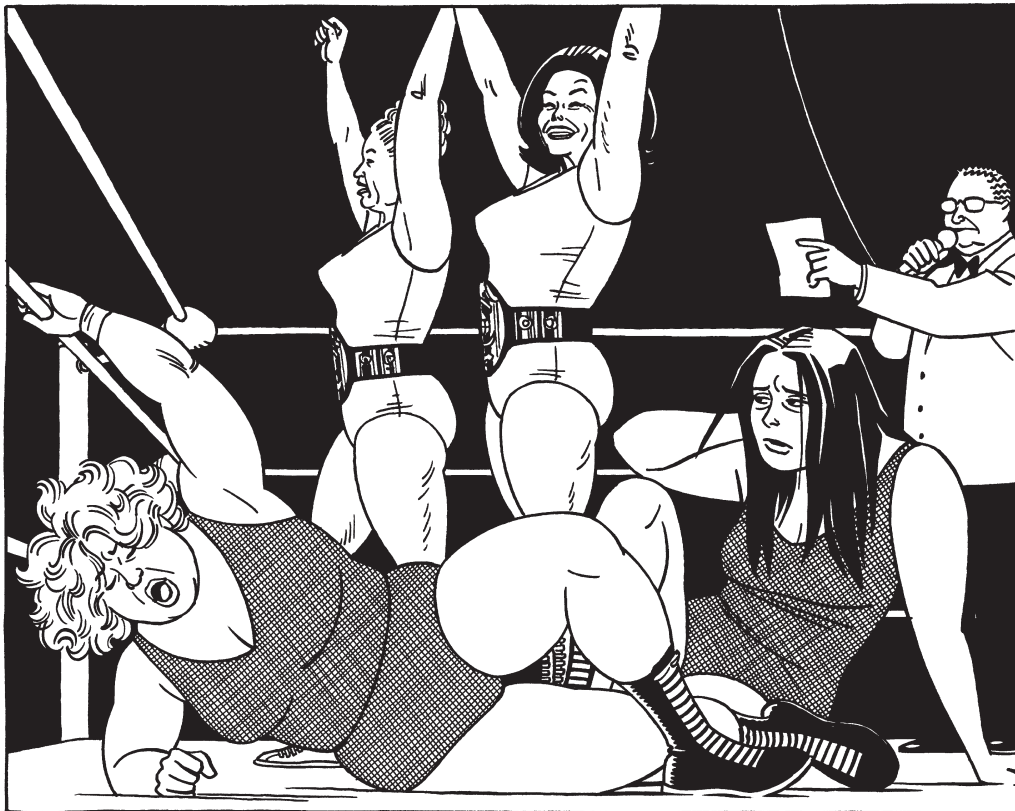
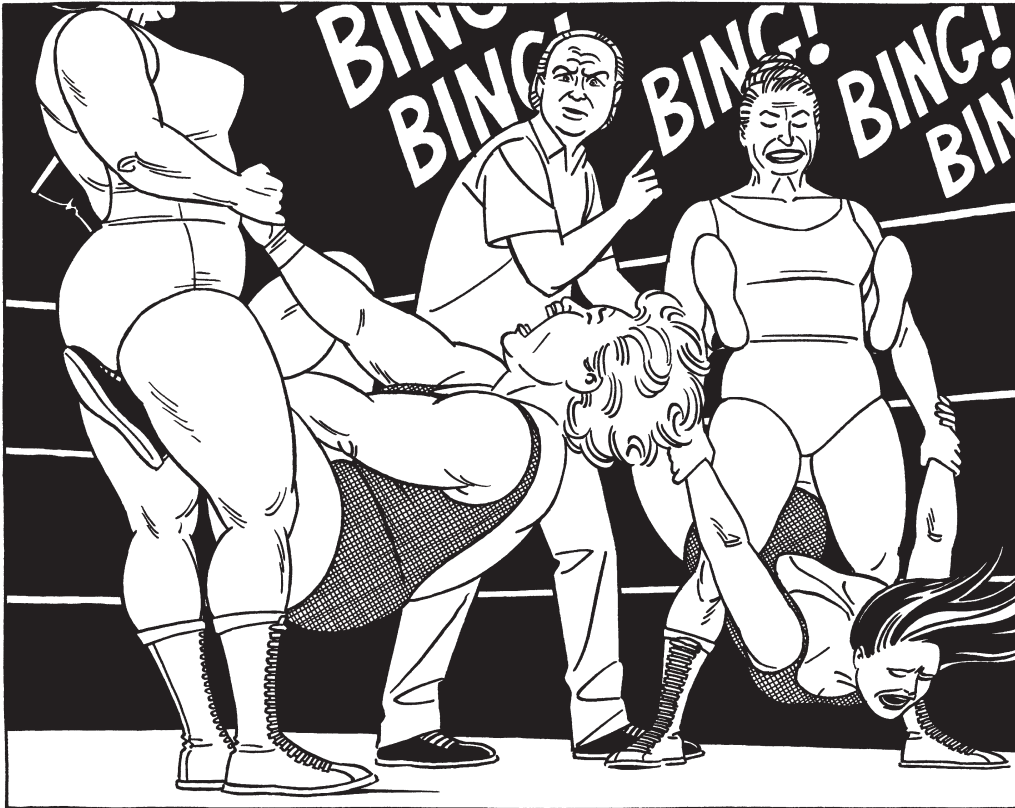
THAT HADDA HURT!

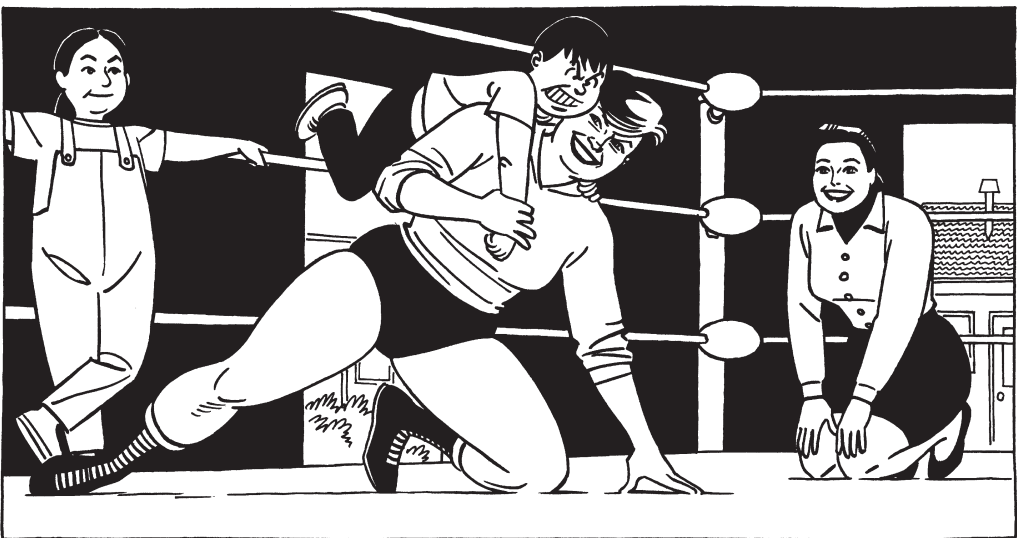
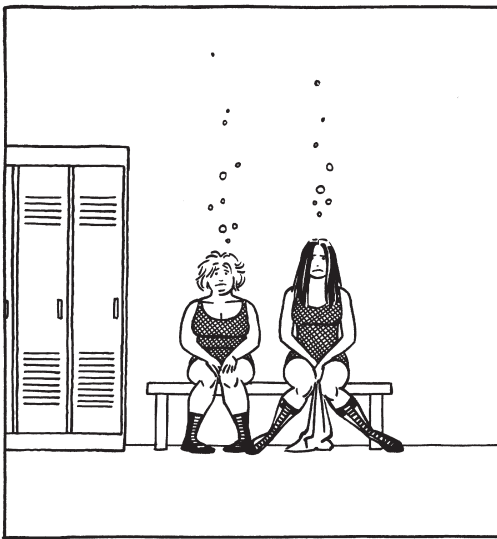


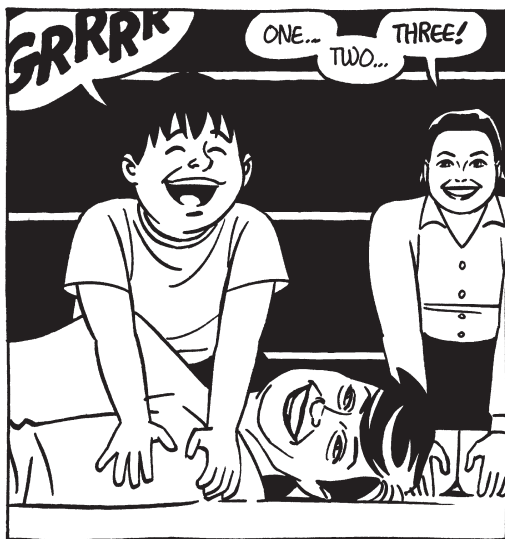


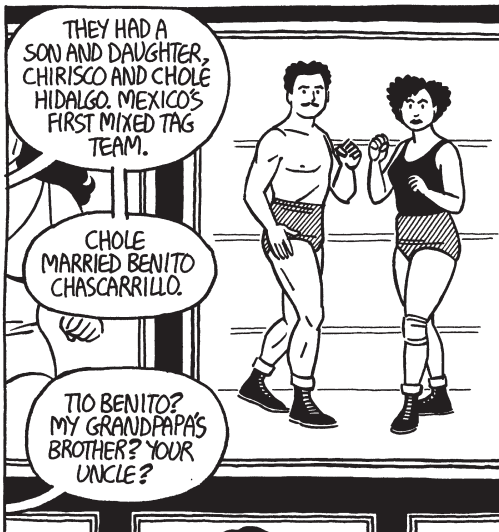


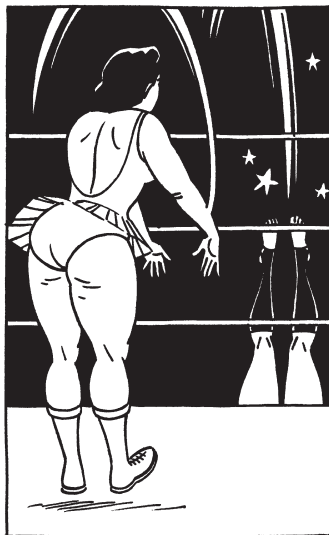
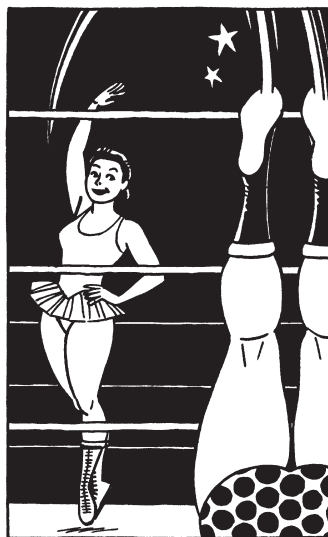


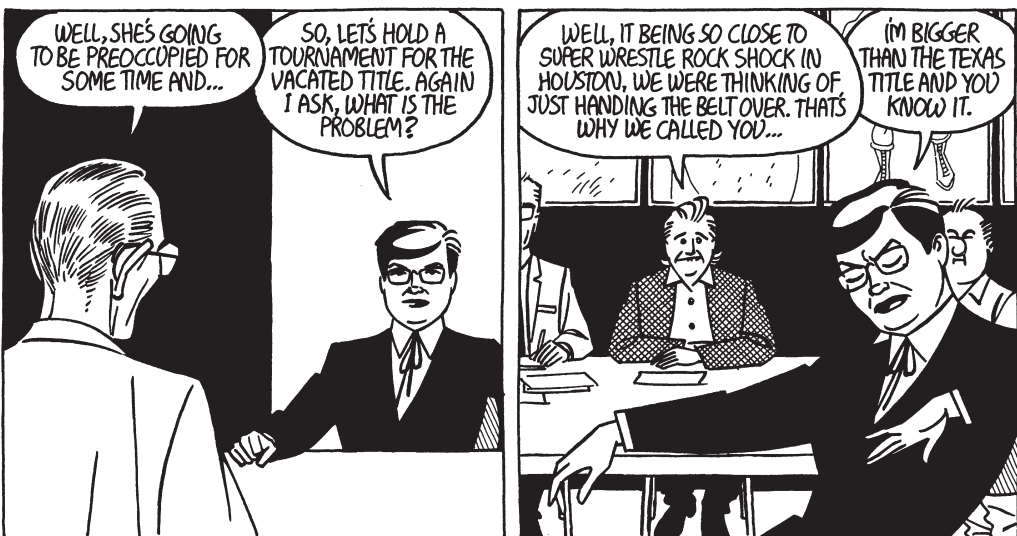


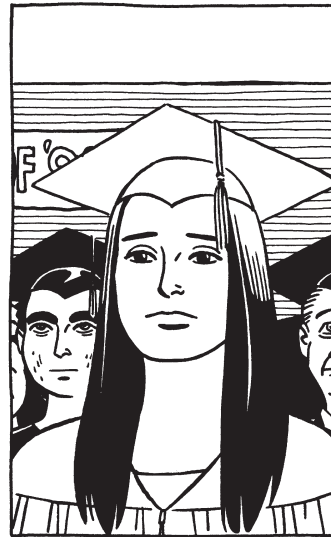








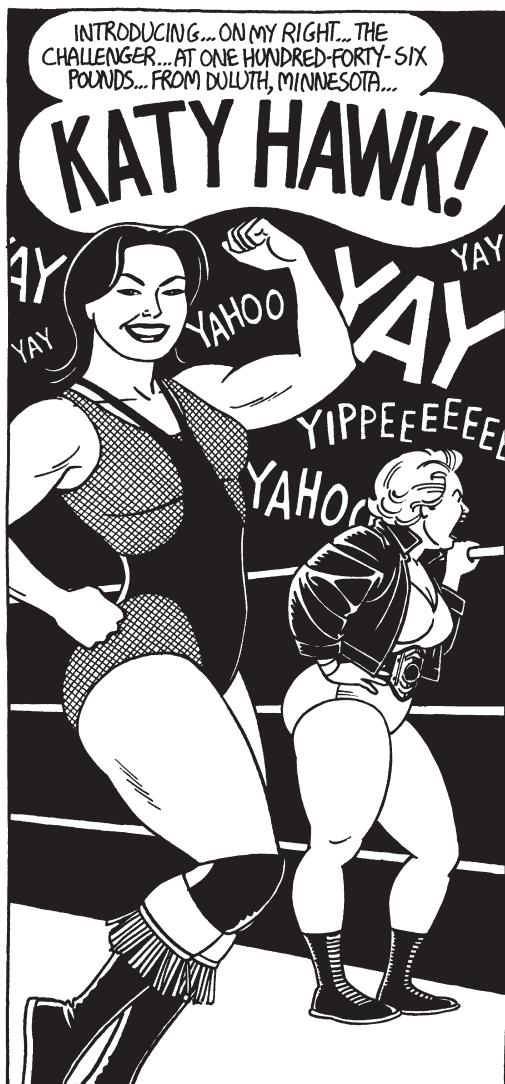


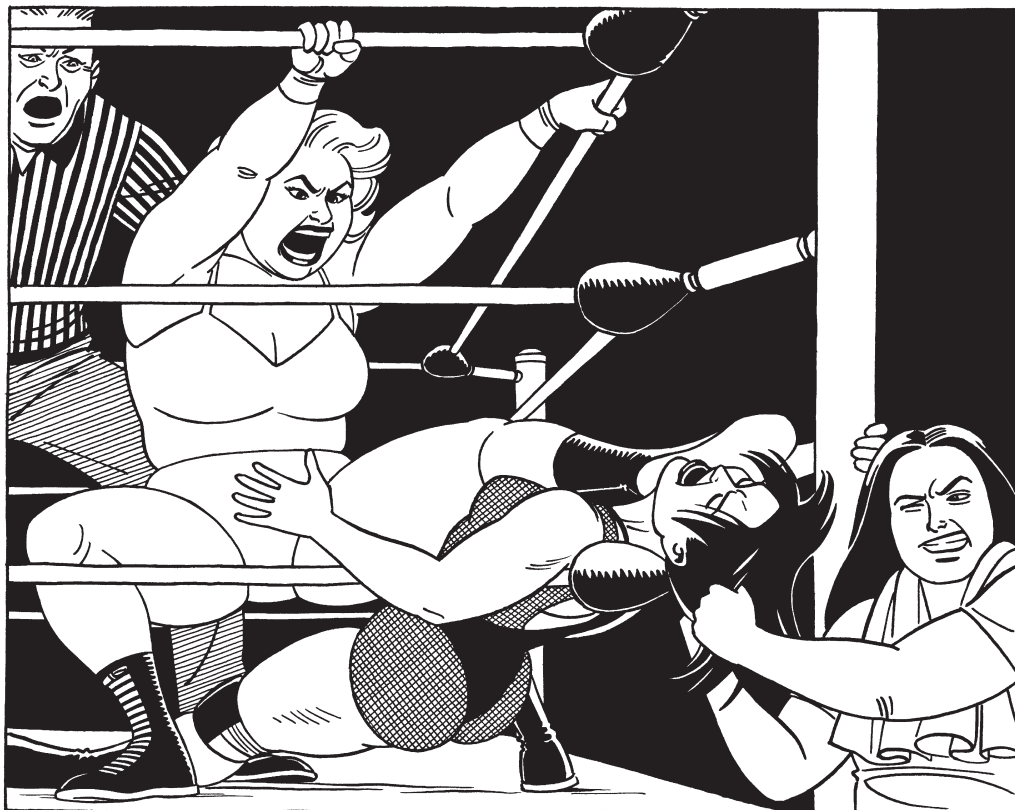
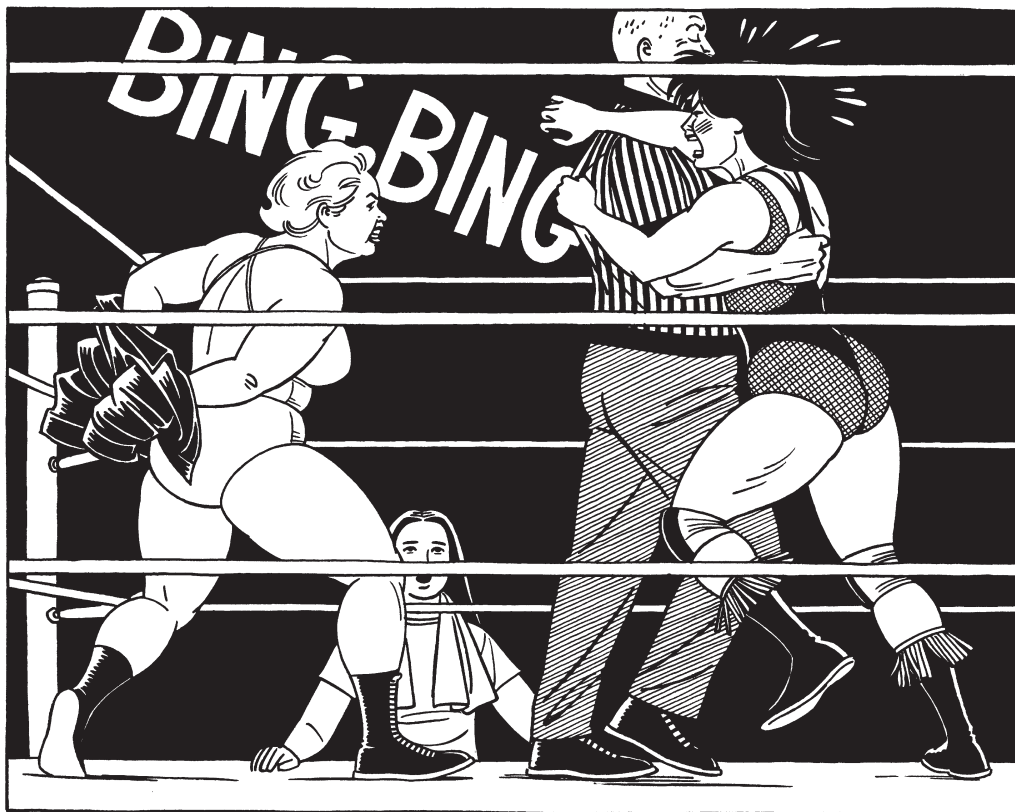


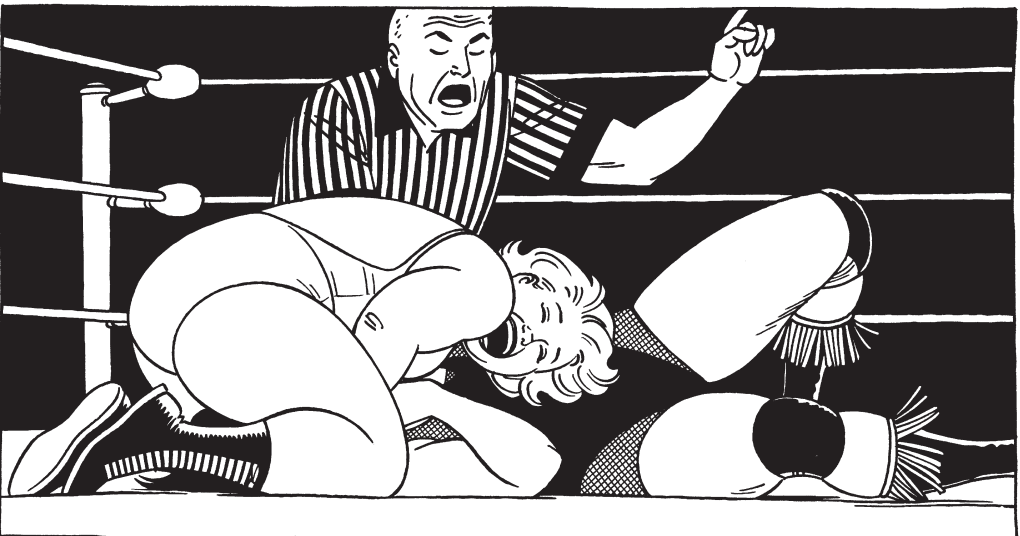
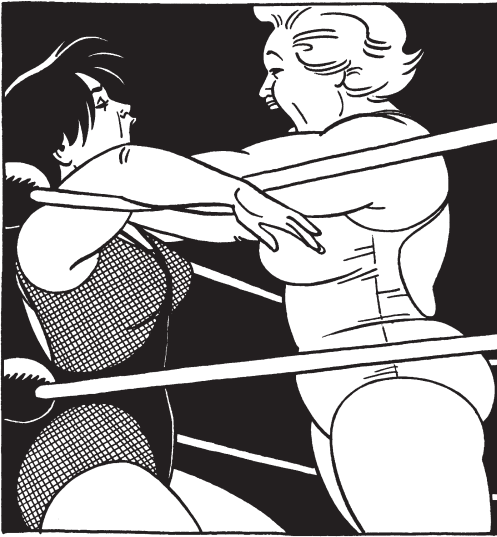
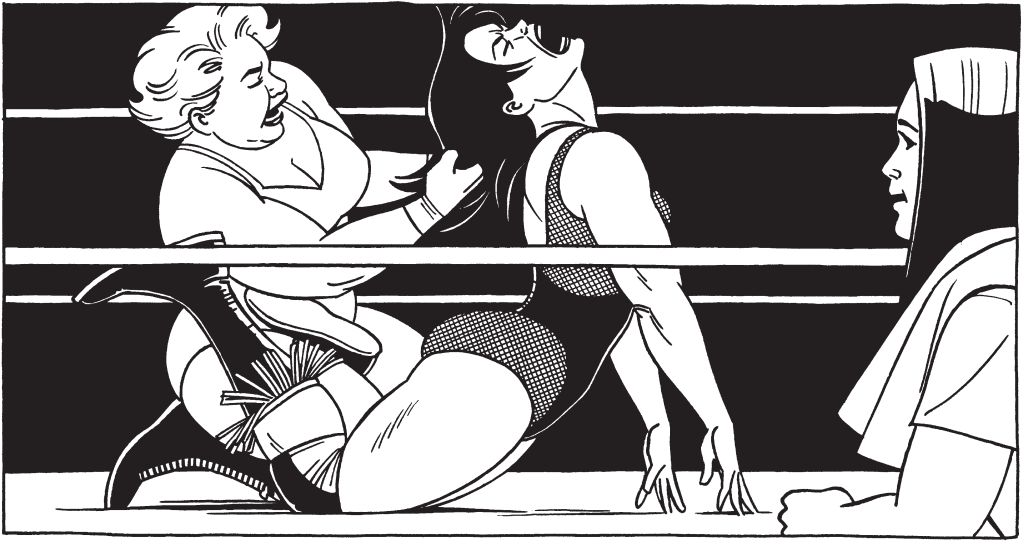


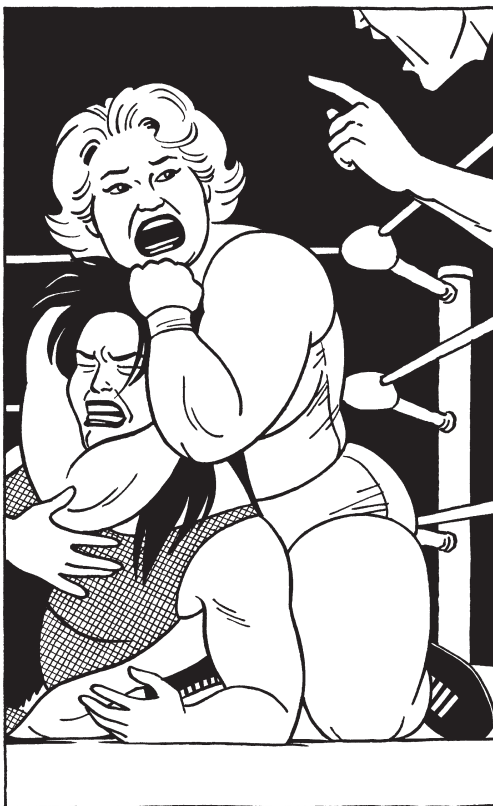
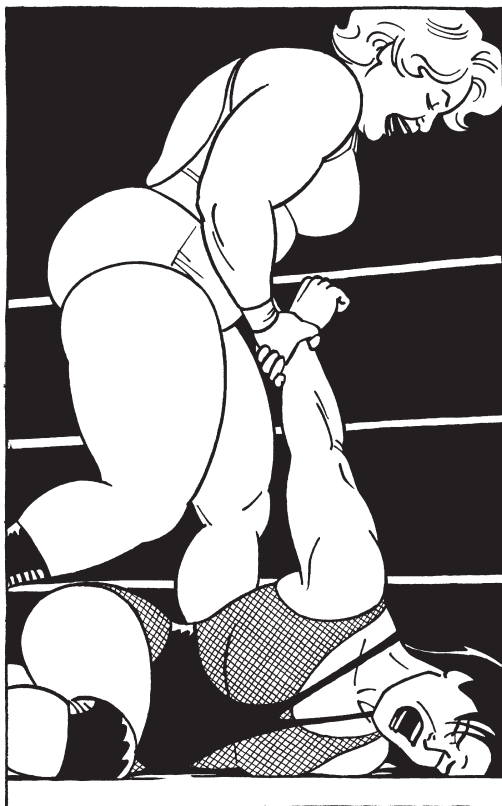
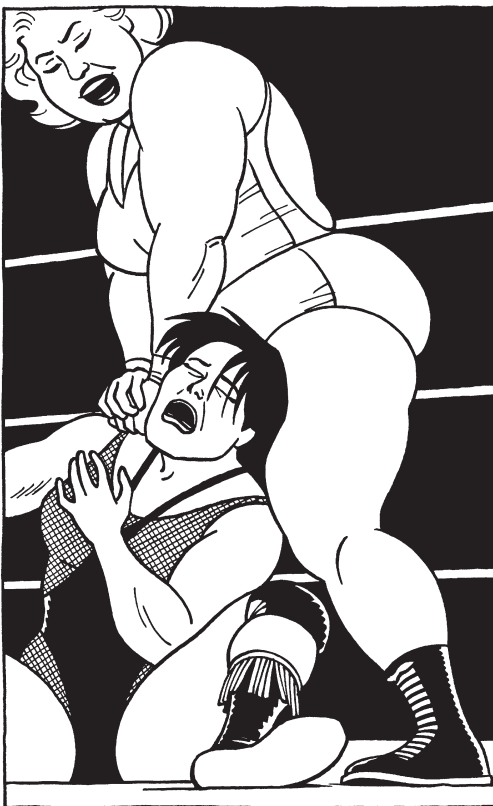
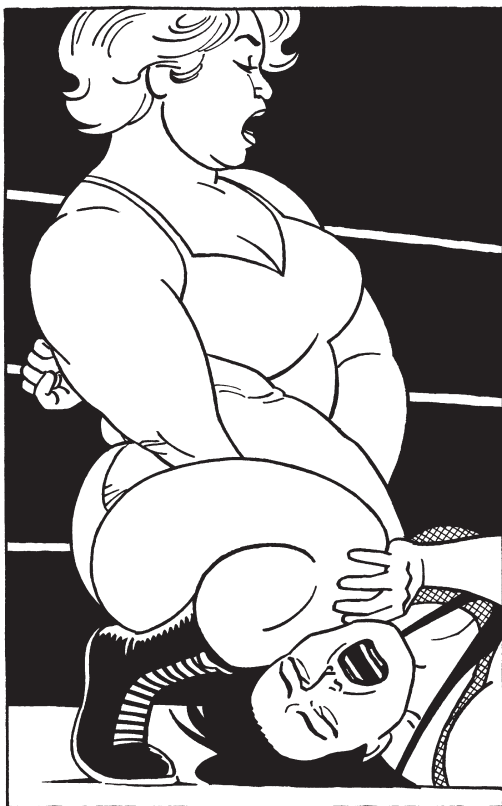
PREEEEEEEESENTING..
**THE WOMEN'S TEXAS
CHAMPIONSHIP!**

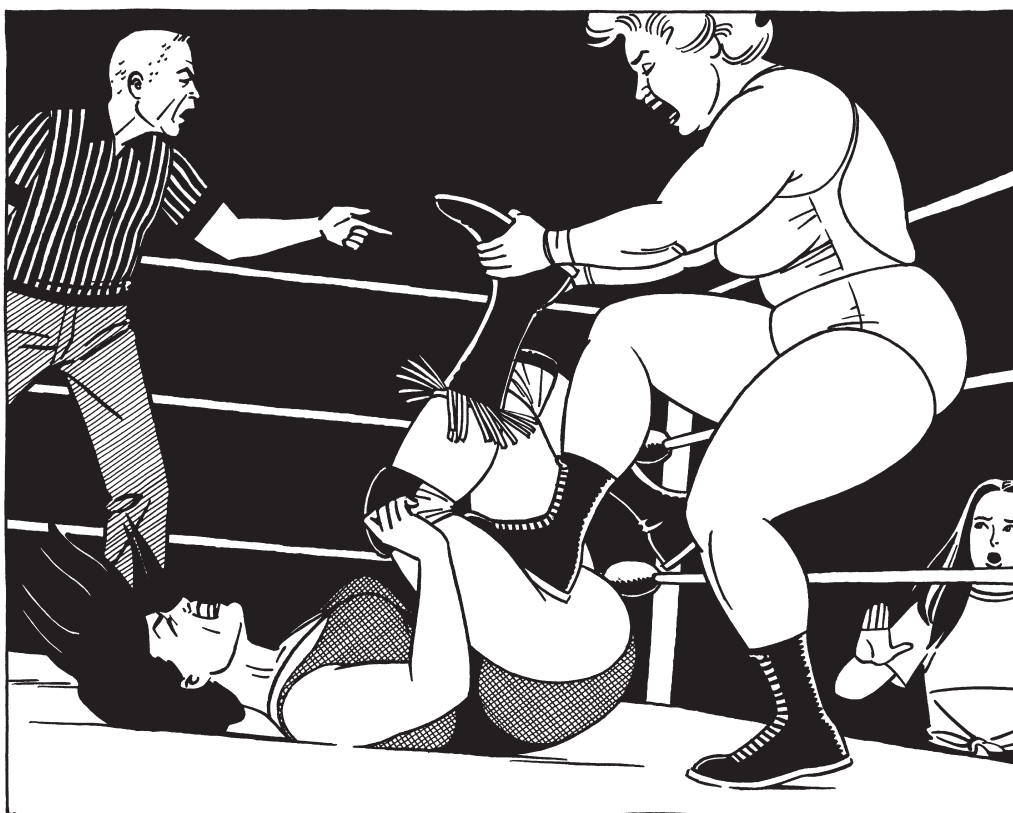
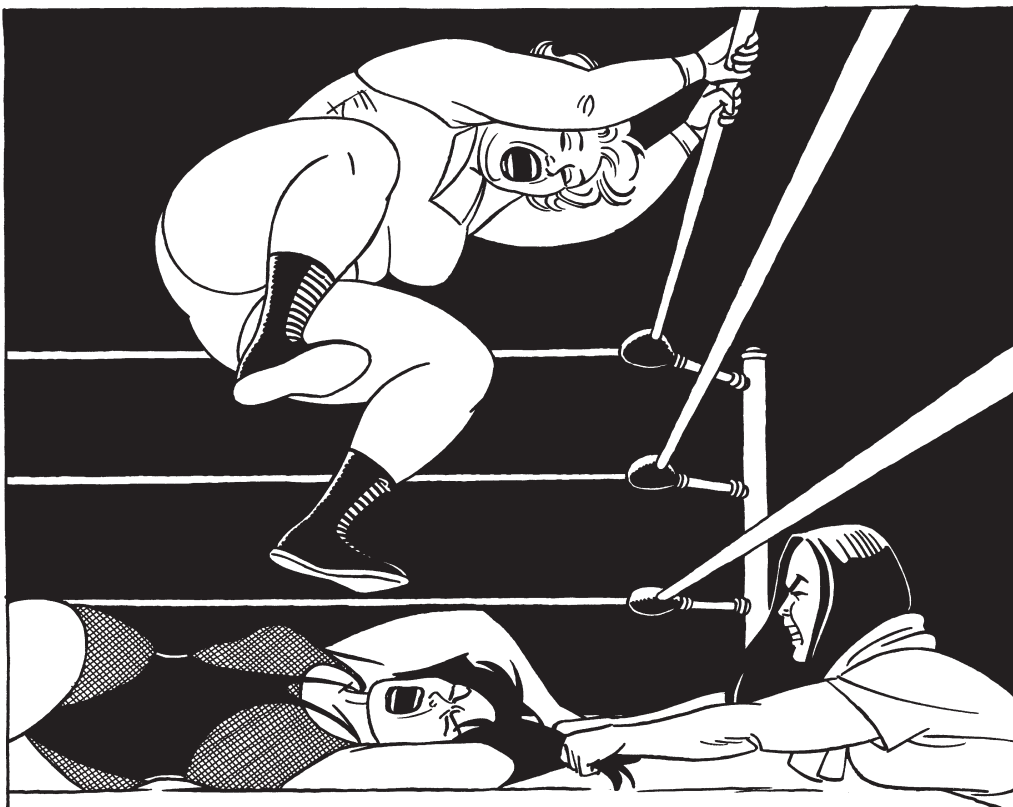


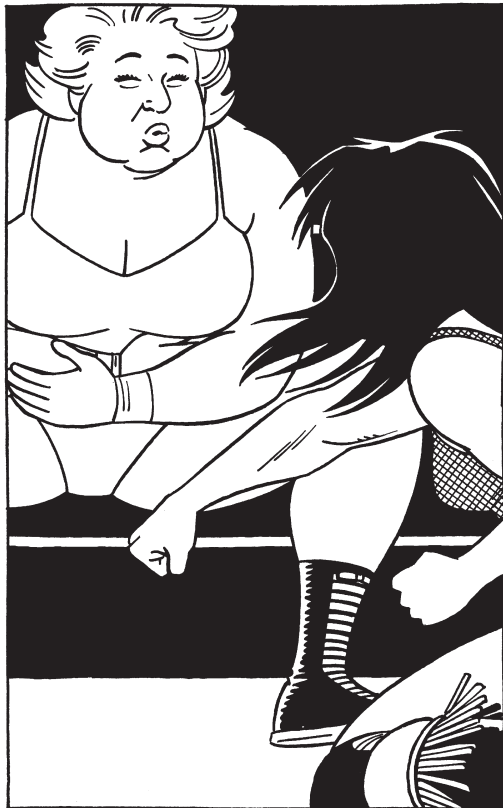
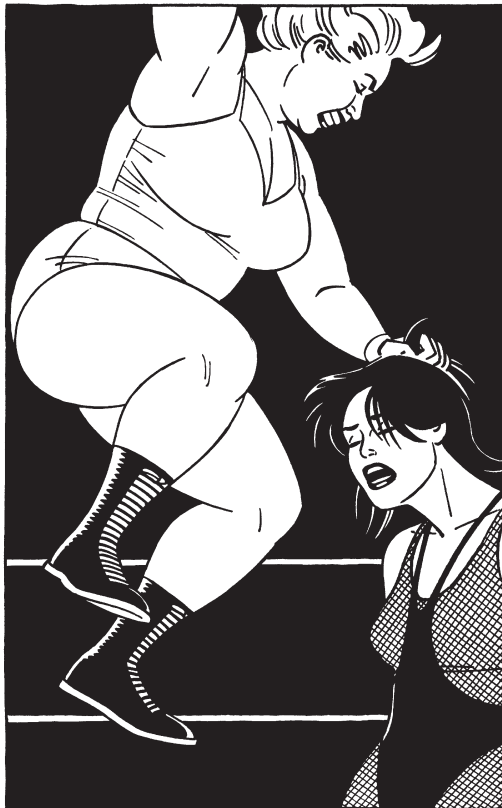
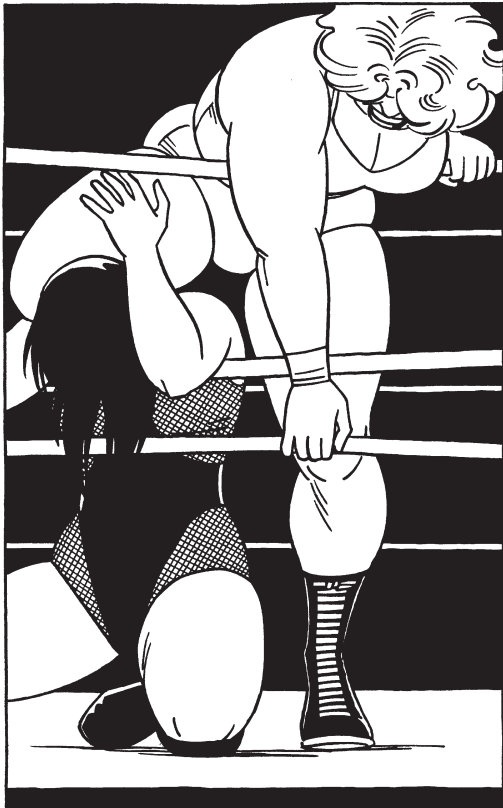
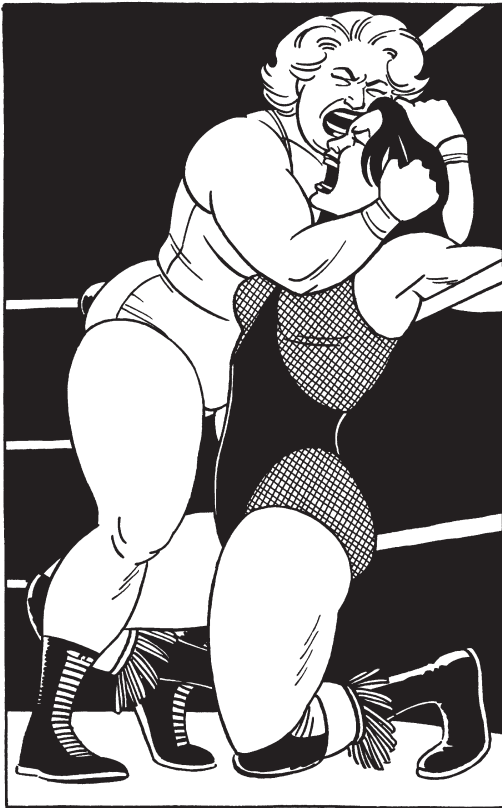


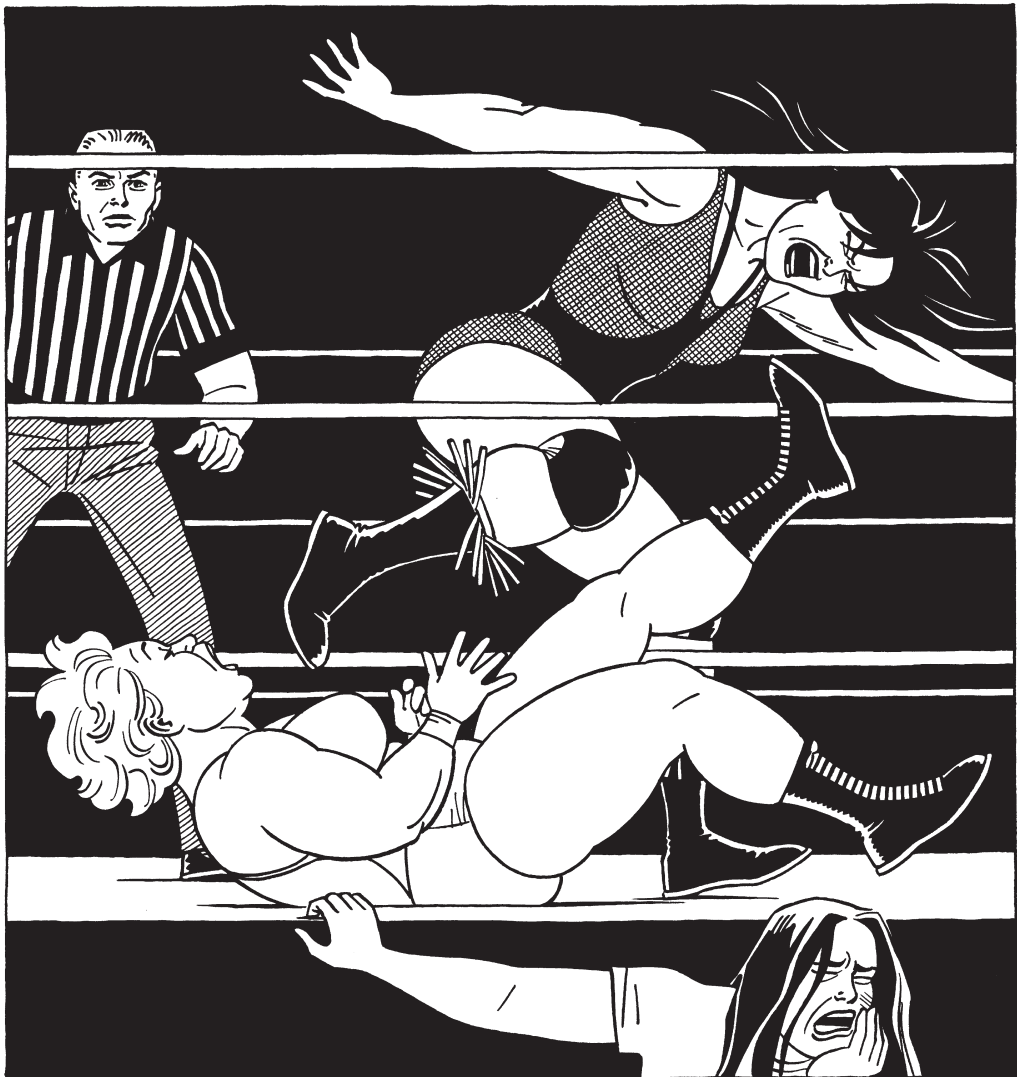
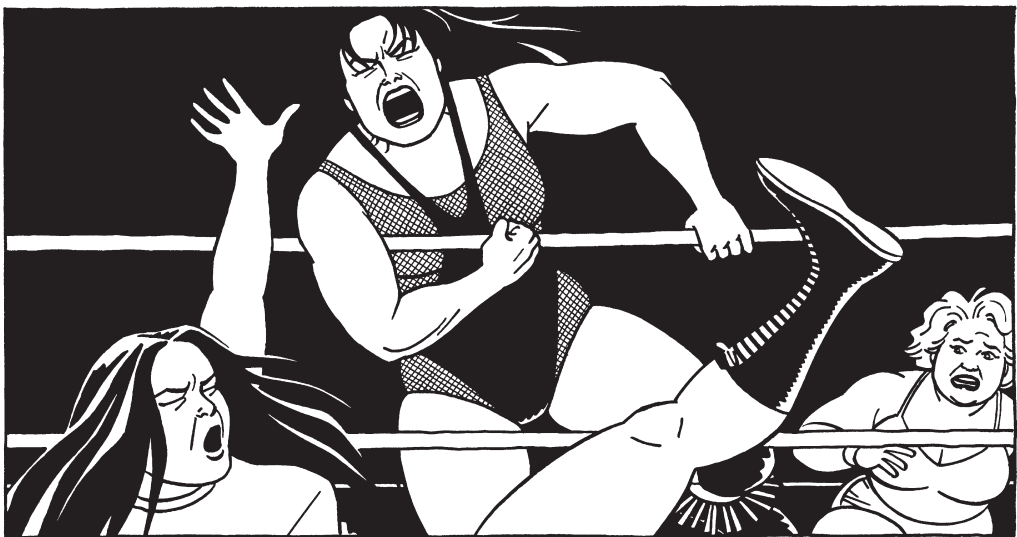


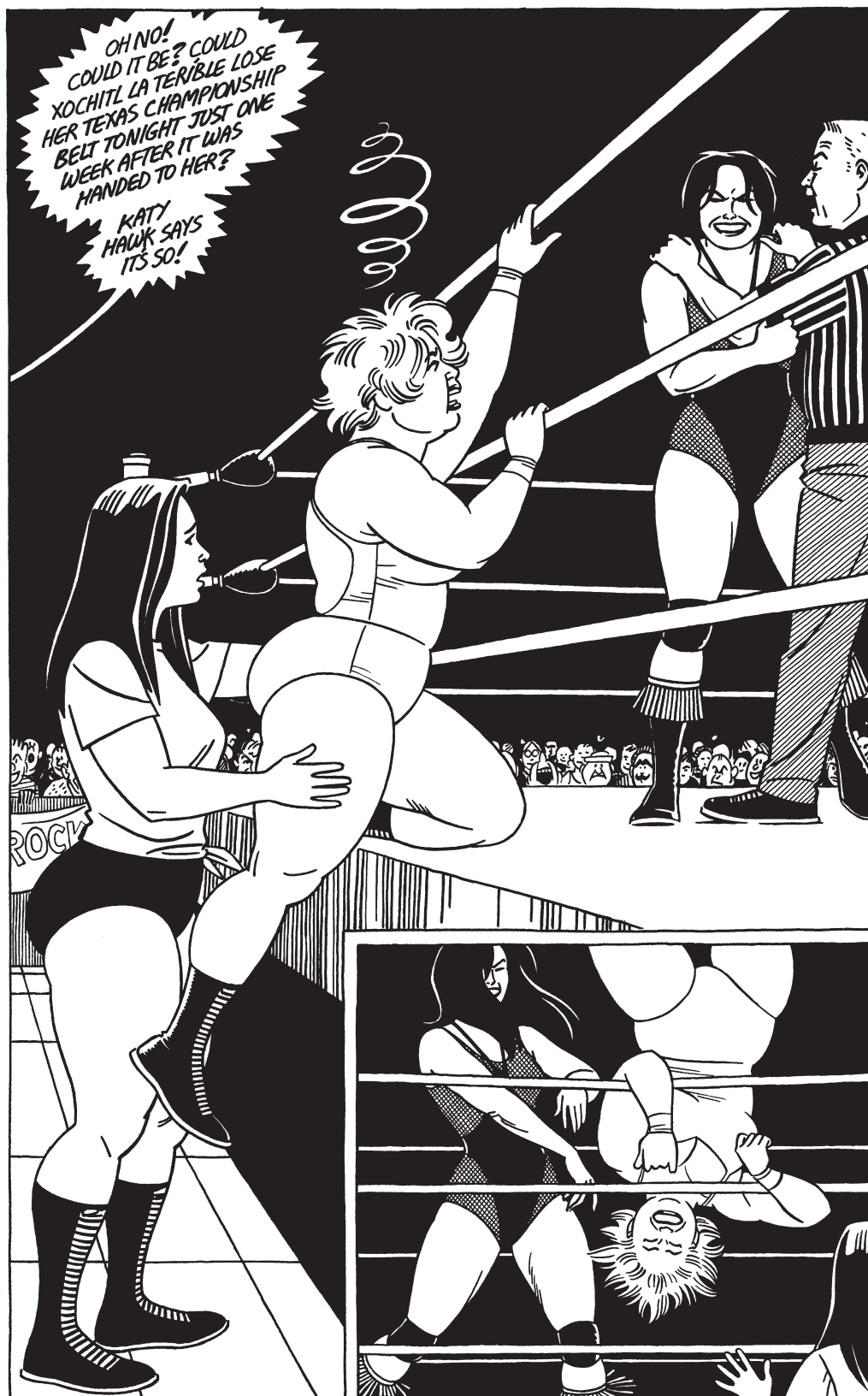


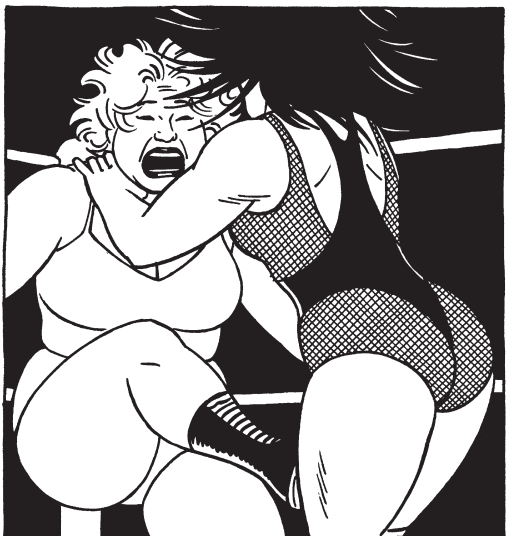
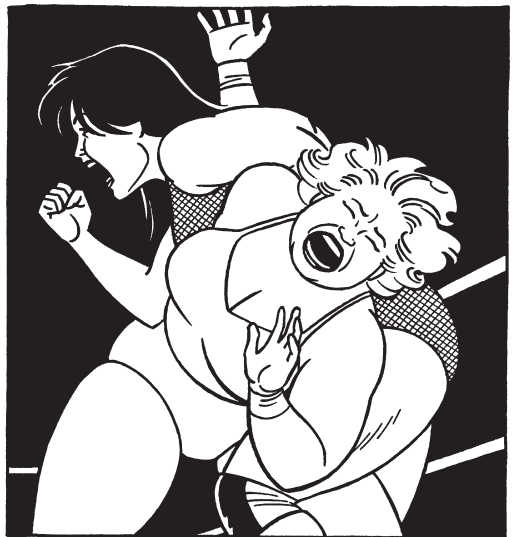


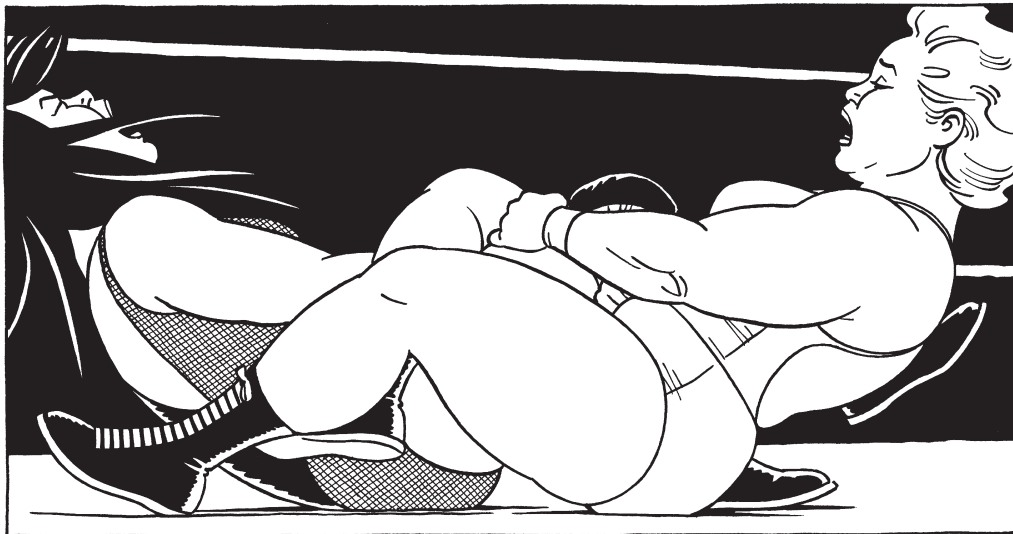
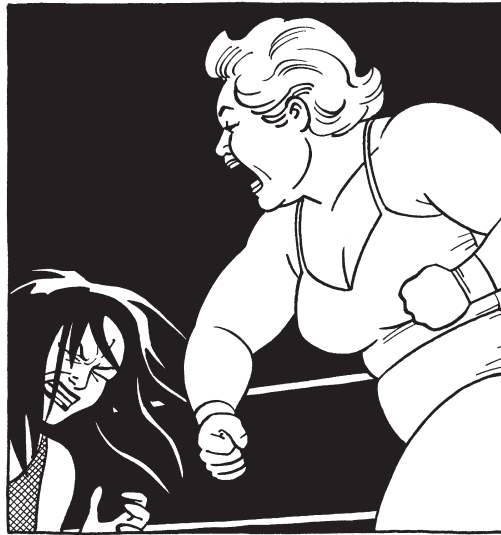
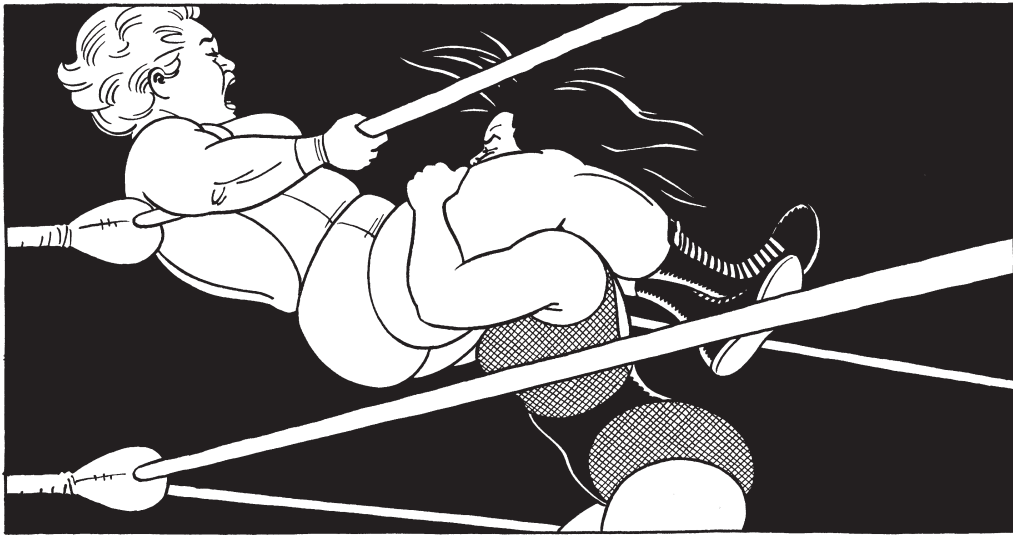


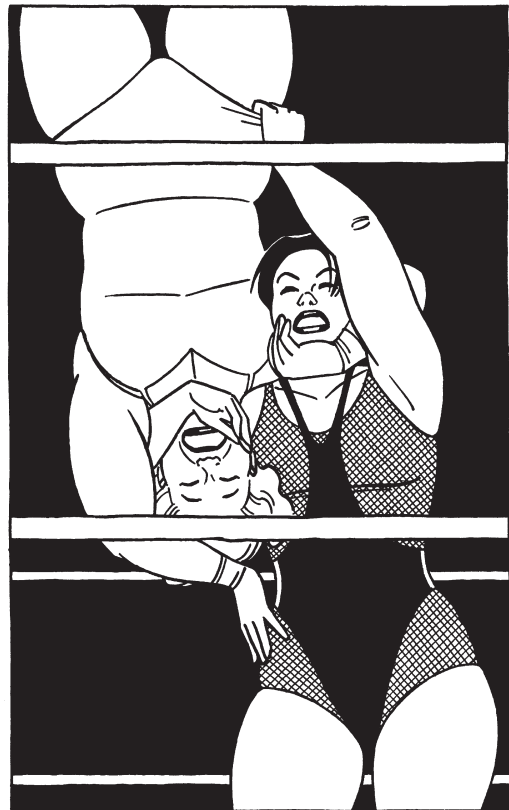
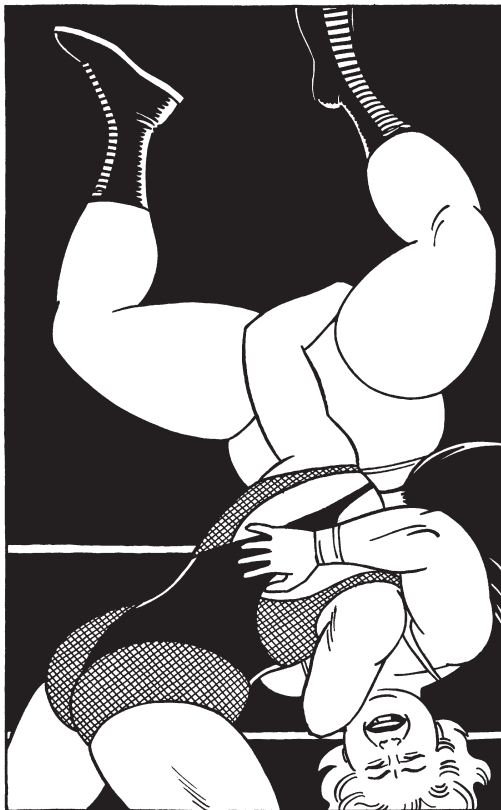
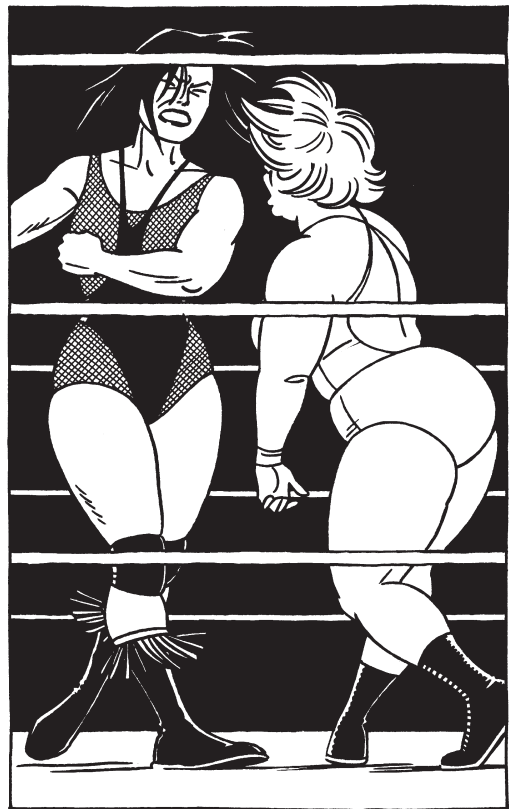


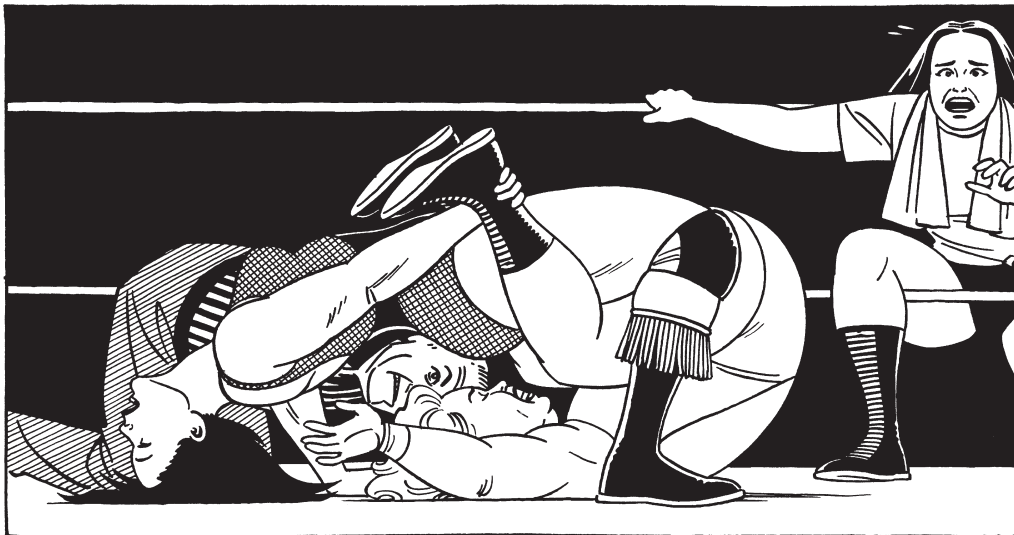
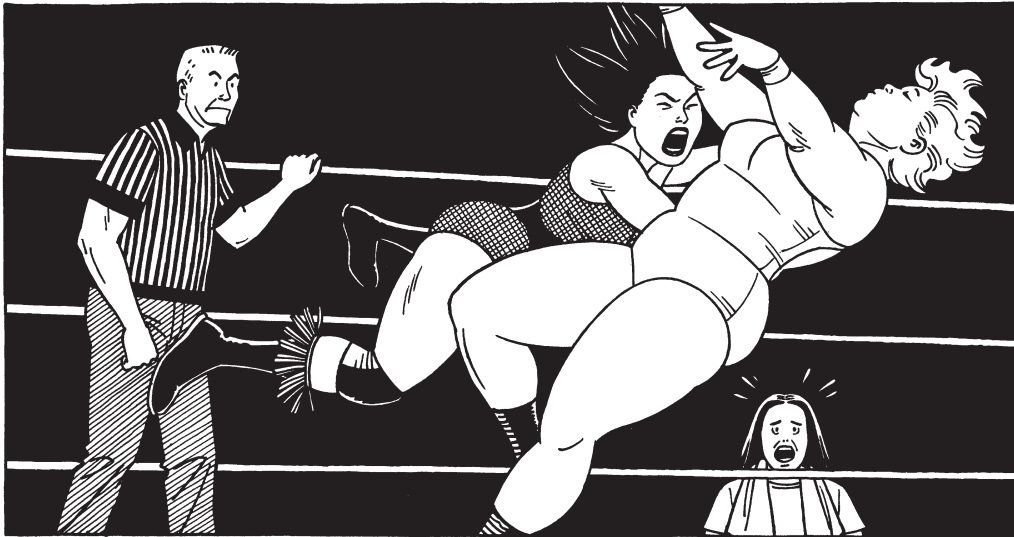
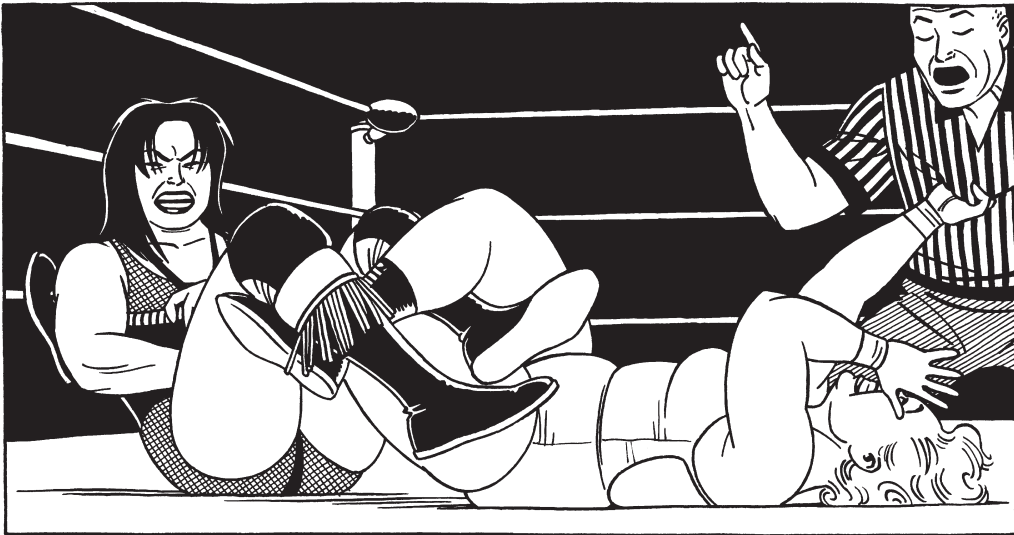


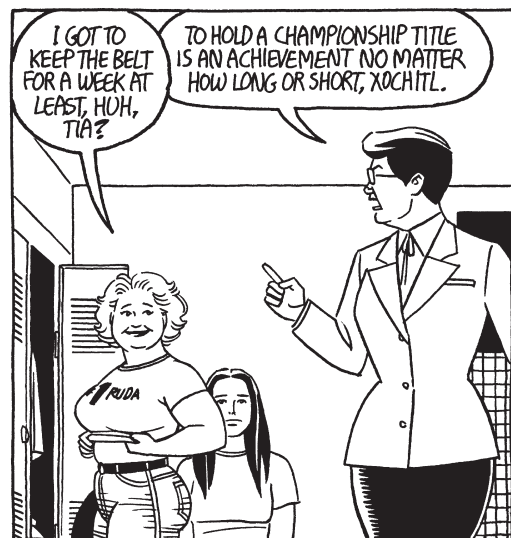
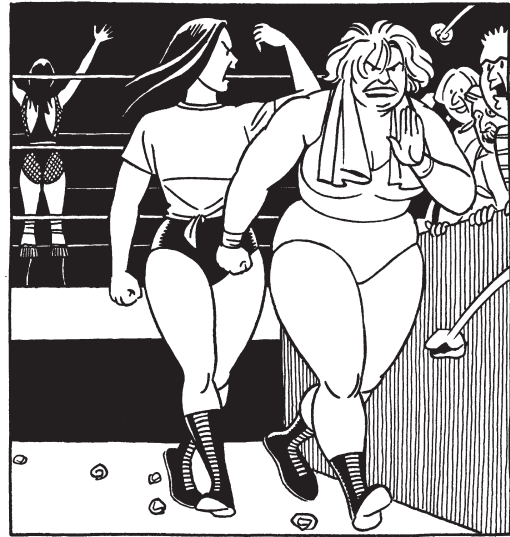
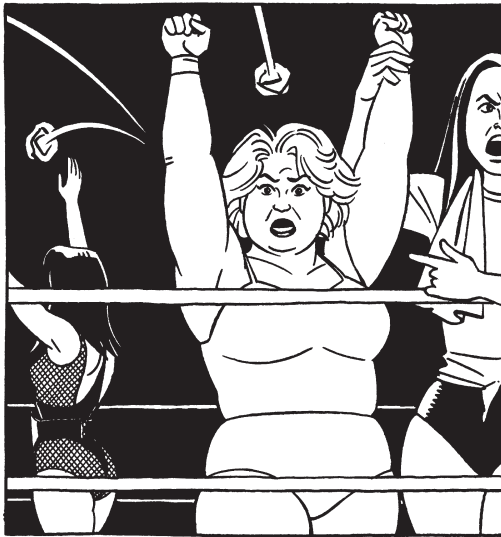
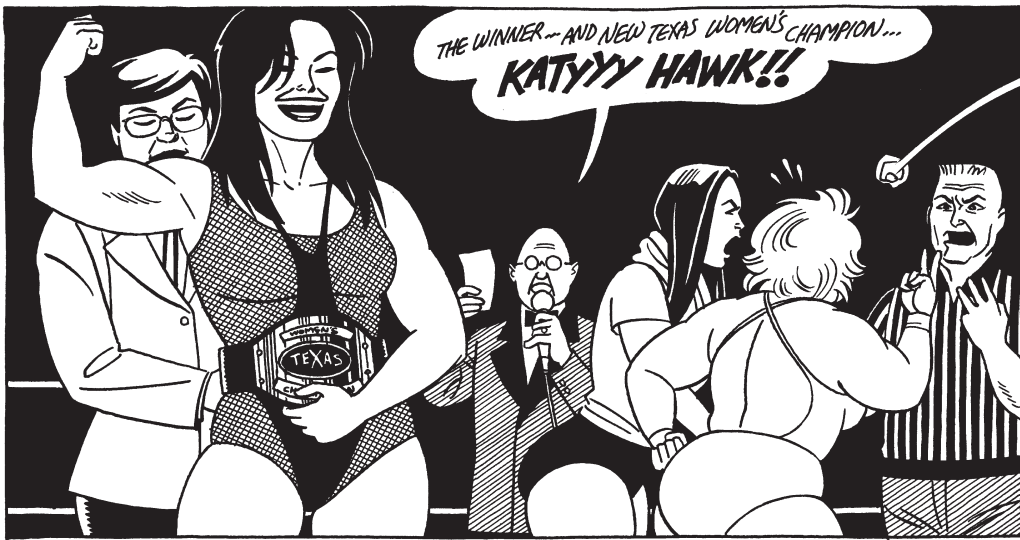


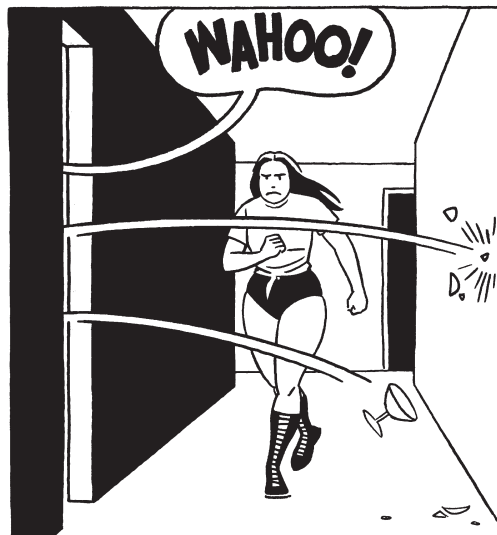
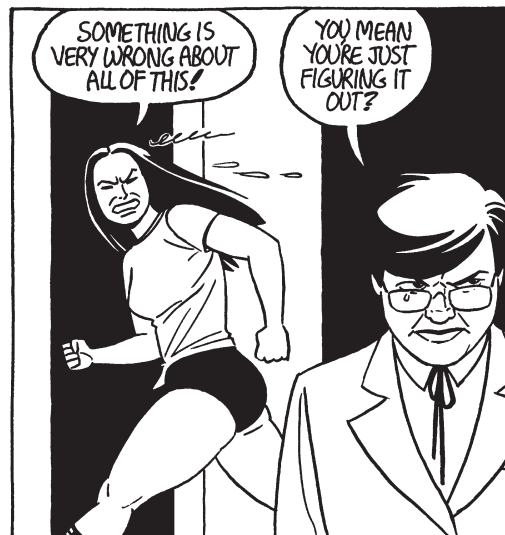


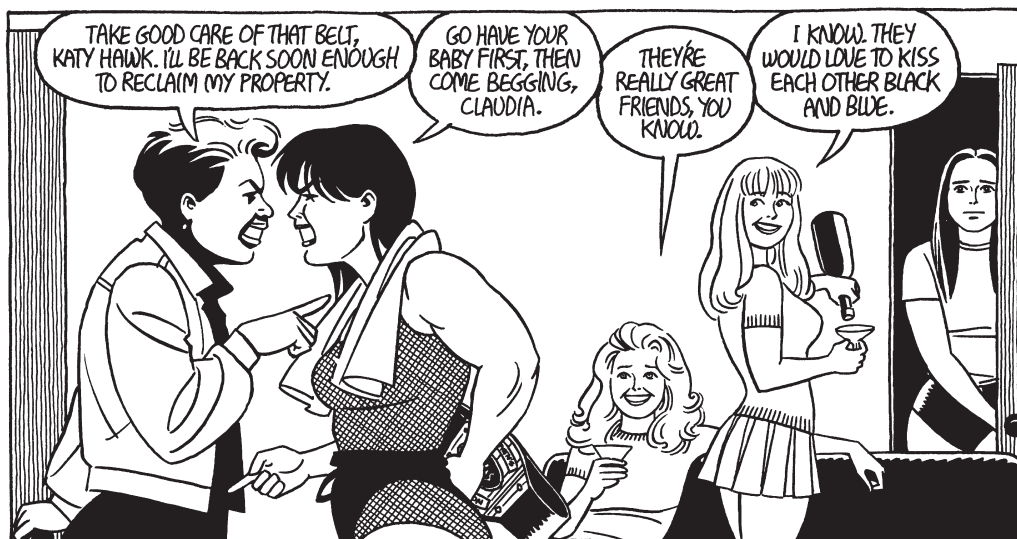


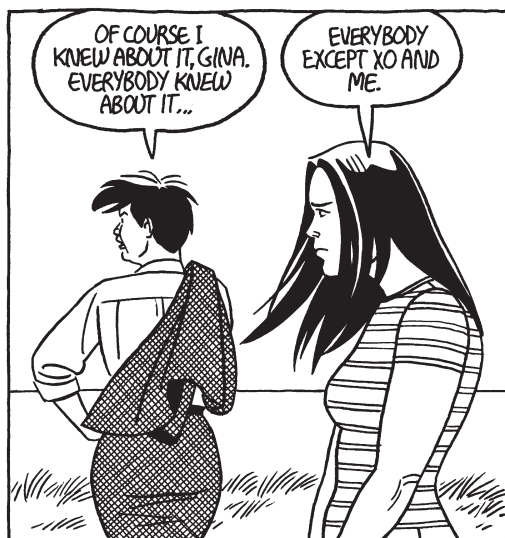


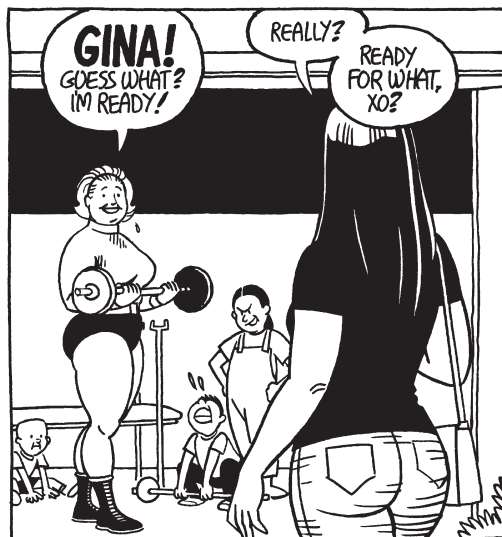
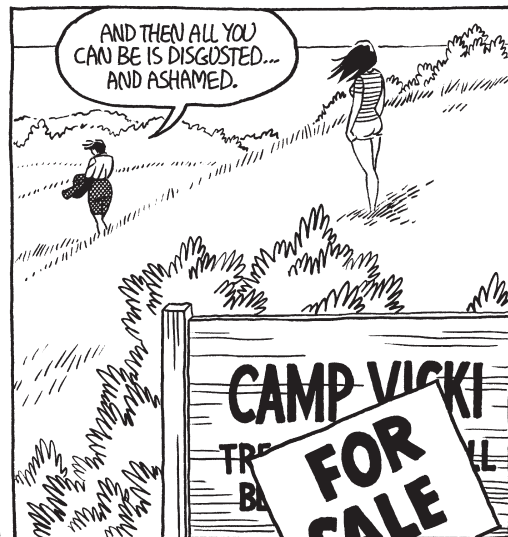
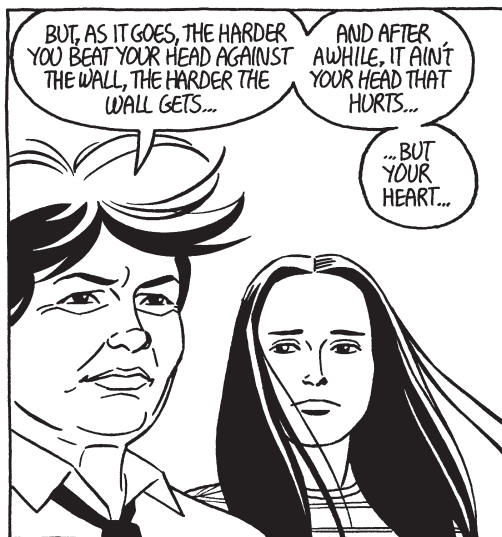
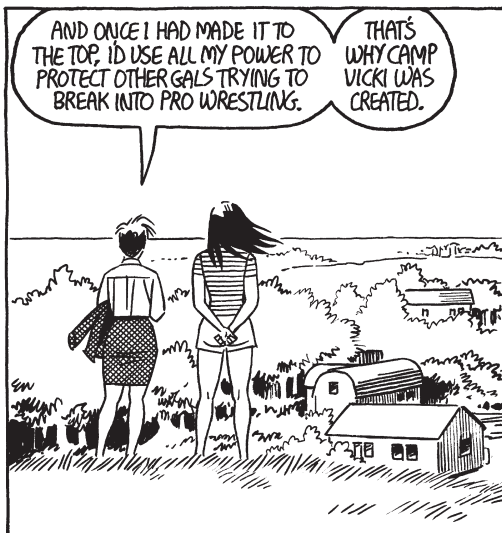


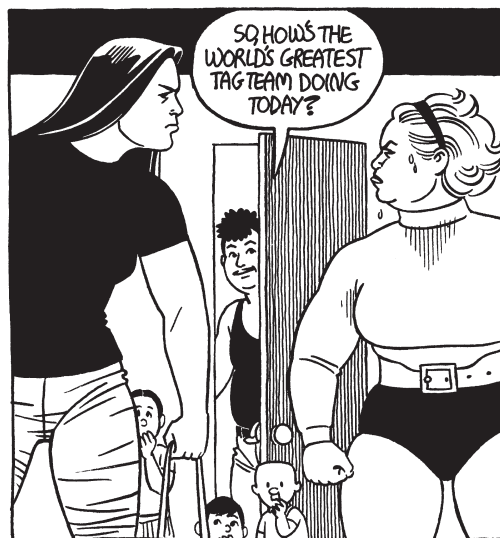


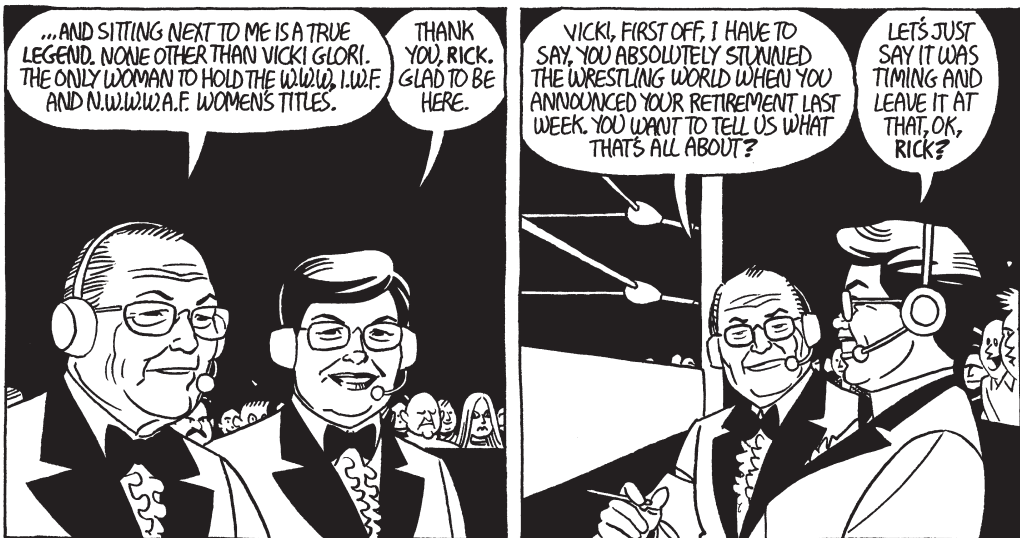




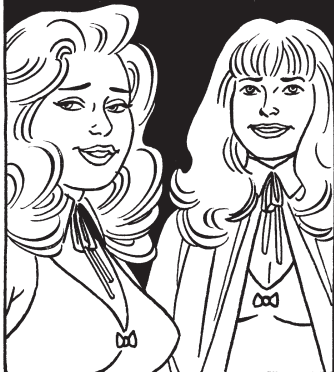








FIRST OFF, WE HAVE BOTH SUGAR TWINS, SUNNY AND SUMMER DANISCH FROM PROVO, UTAH. BOTH FINE COMPETITORS TOGETHER OR APART. LOOK OUT, BOY.



NEXT, FROM TOA BAJA, PUERTO RICO WE HAVE PEPPER MARTINEZ WHO HOPES A VICTORY HERE TONIGHT WILL GET HER A SHOT AT THE W.W.W. WORLD BELT SHE ONCE OWNED. WOW.



NEXT IS STATEN ISLAND, NEW YORK'S KITTY KATZ WHO IS NO STRANGER TO TEXAS FANS. SHE WON THE TEXAS TITLE TWICE IN THIS VERY ARENA. FANTASTIC.



NEXT, MAKING HER DEBUT TONIGHT IS SISTER SIN FROM ANAHEIM, CALIFORNIA. WHAT A KISSER. LOOK OUT.



NEXT UP, WE HAVE A RARE TREAT. BOTH DAVIS AND ROBERTS, THE LEGENDARY BIRMINGHAM, ALABAMA LADY BASHERS ARE IN THE BATTLE ROYALE TONIGHT. YEP.



NEXT, FROM SPRINGFIELD, MISSOURI, A FORMER BATTLE ROYALE WINNER, THE ALWAYS EXCITING LORETTA COX. MHMM.



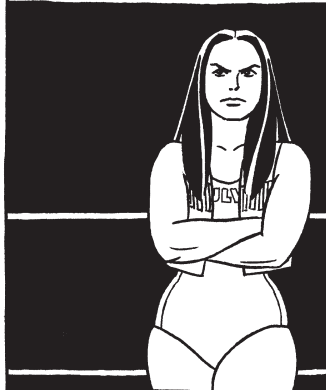
NEXT, WE HAVE DULUTH, MINNESOTA'S KATY HAWK, WHO MUST BE FLYING HIGH RIGHT NOW SINCE SHE RECENTLY WON THE TEXAS TITLE...



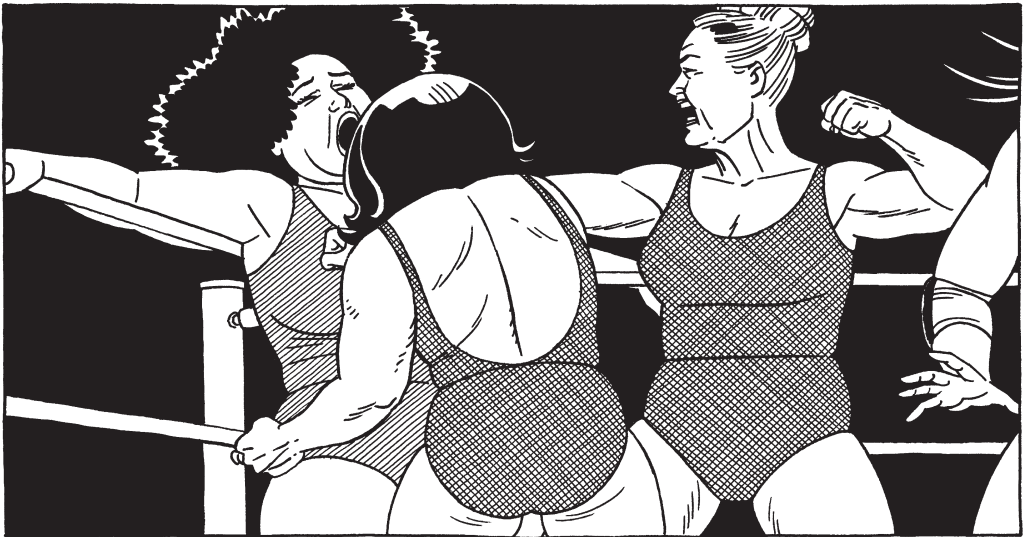
...FROM THIS LOCAL TEXAS GAL. EL PASO'S OWEN XOCHITL LA TERIBLE. I HOPE I'M PRONOUNCING IT RIGHT. OH HUH.

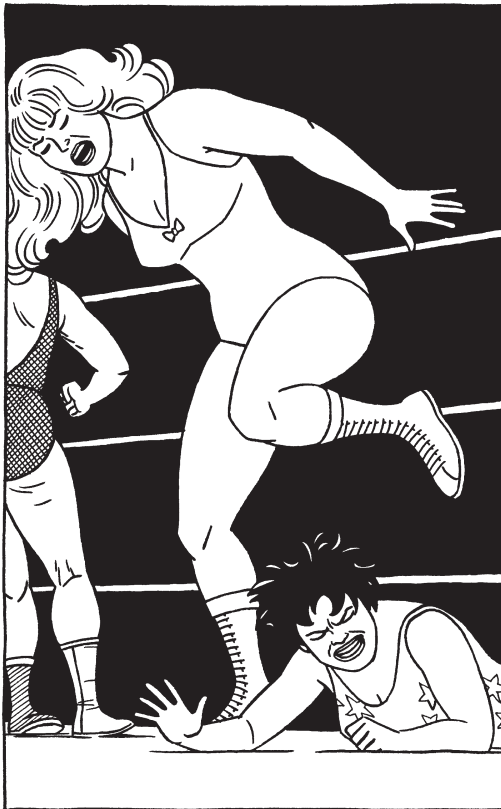
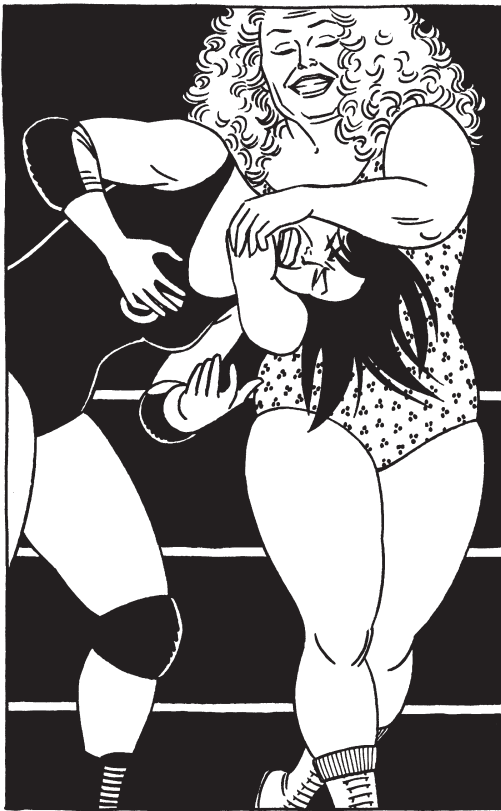


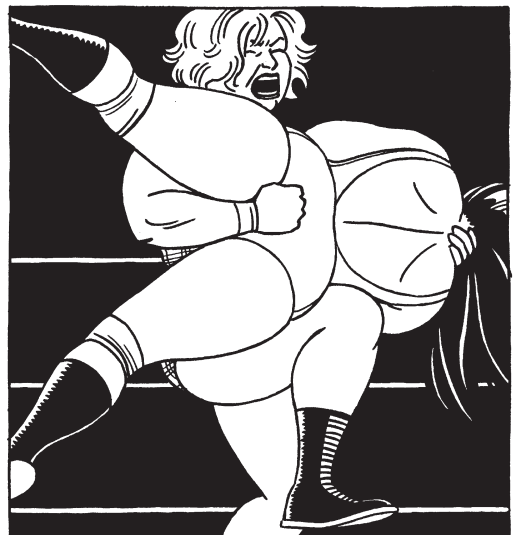
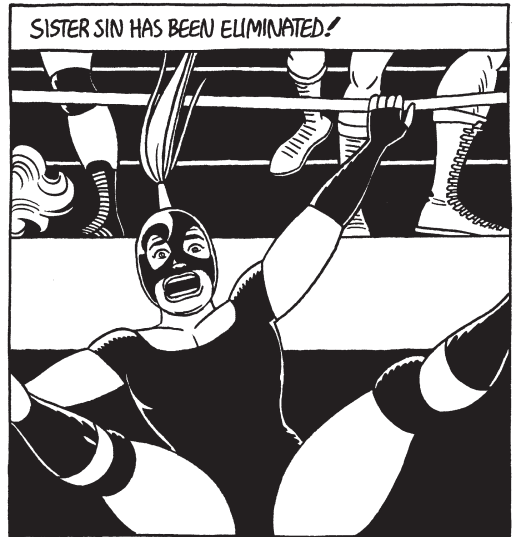
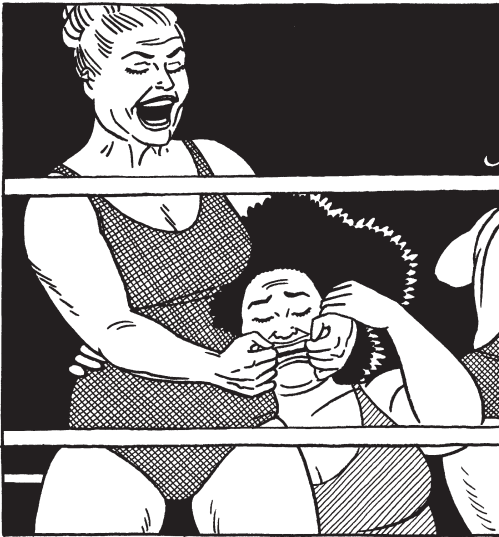
AND FINALLY, CHICKASHA, OKLAHOMA'S GINA BRAVO. NOW, WE SHOULD KEEP AN EYE ON THIS YOUNGSTER IN THE FUTURE AS SHE IS SIX FEET OF PURE DYNAMITE!

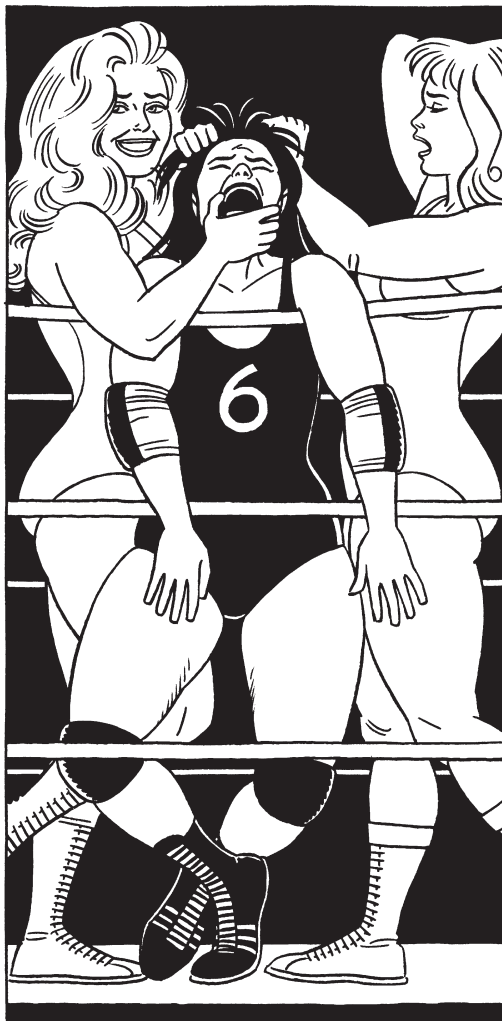
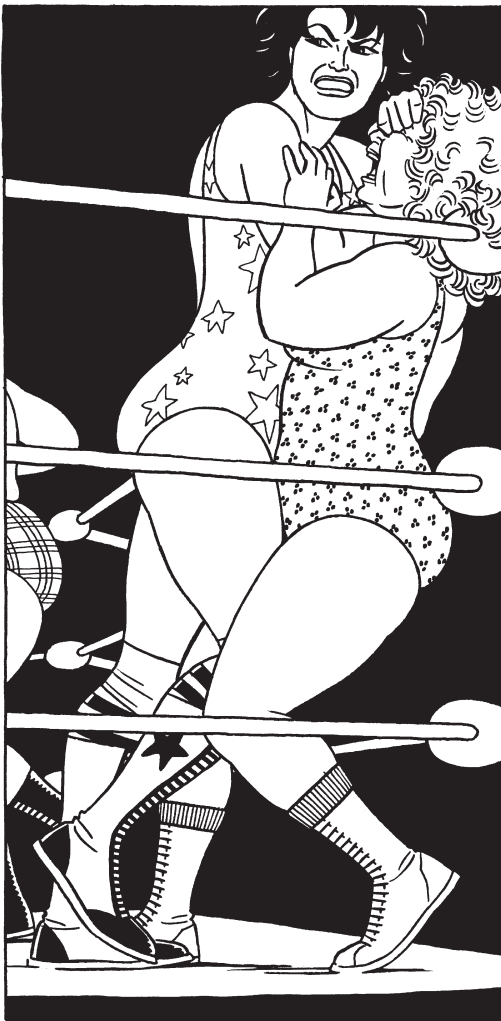


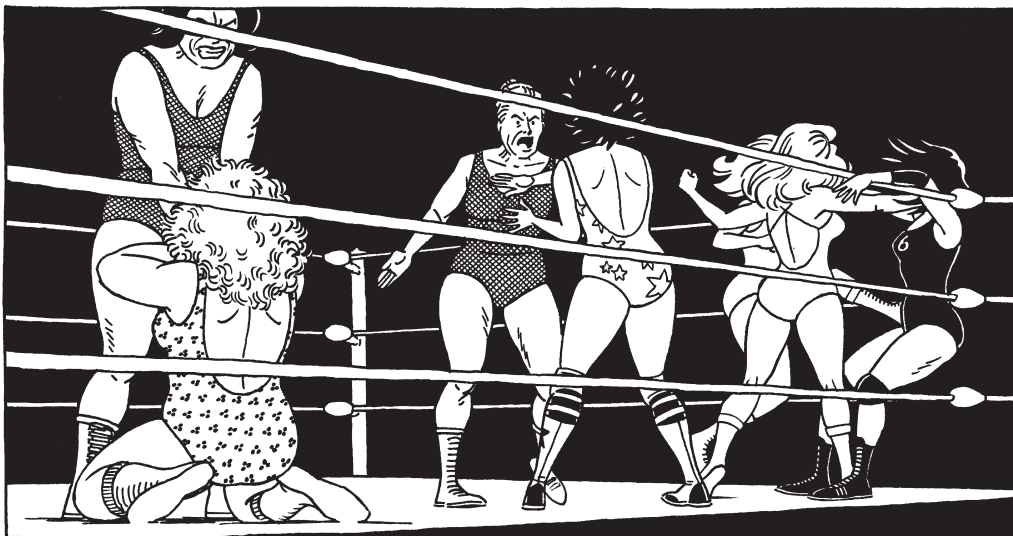
AND HERE WE GO! YOU MUST BE THROWN OVER THE TOP ROPE AND TOUCH THE FLOOR TO BE ELIMINATED! LAST PERSON REMAINING IN THAT RING GOES HOME WITH TWO THOUSAND DOLLARS! WHO-HO-HOA, NELLIE!!







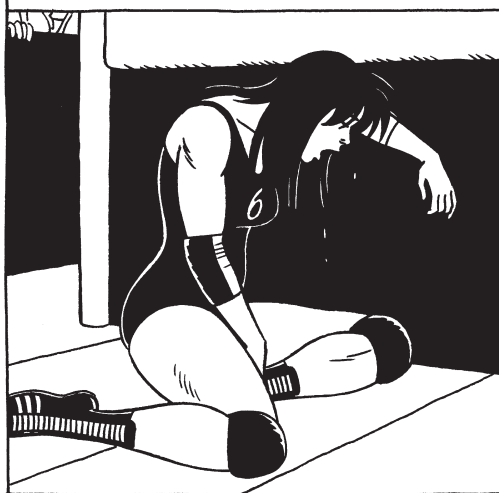




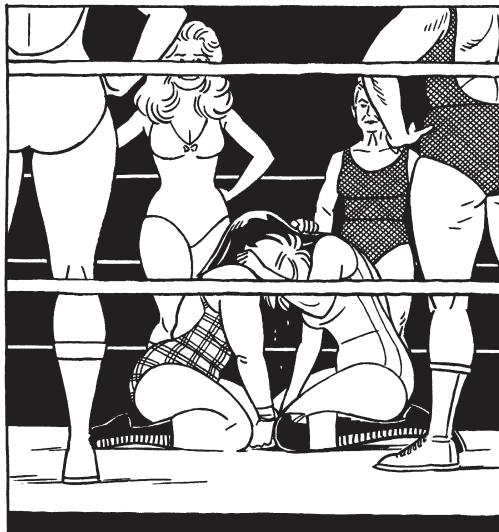
LORETTA COX HAS BEEN ELIMINATED!

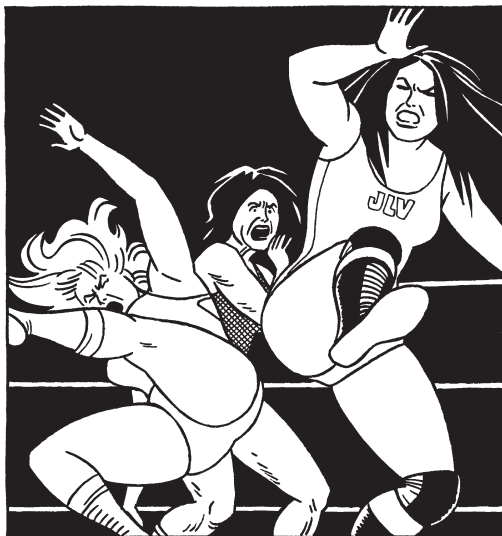
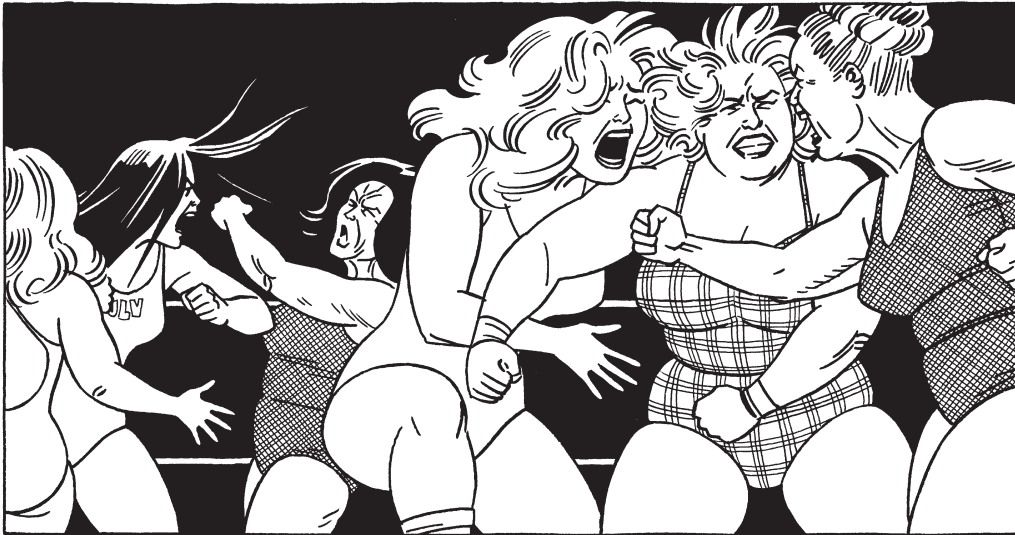
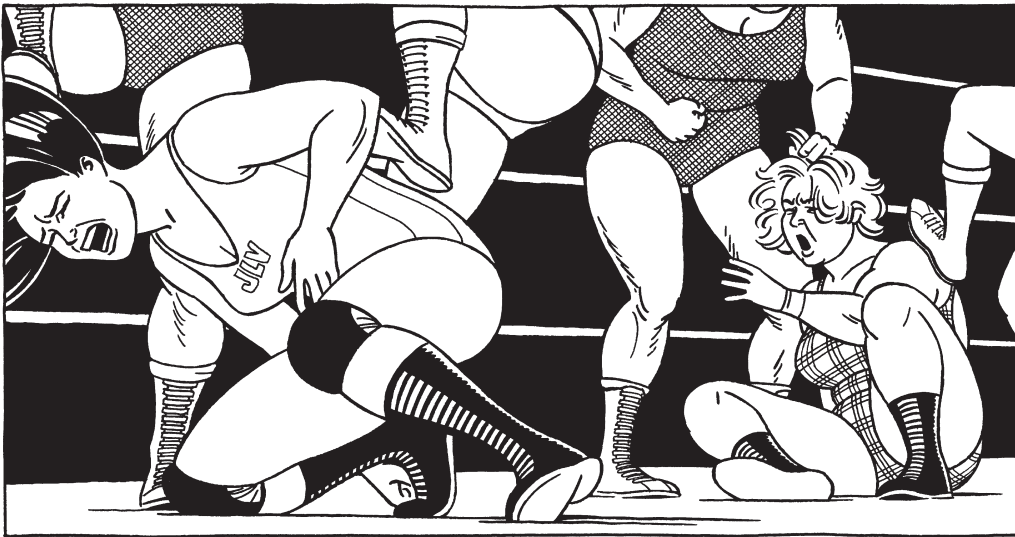


KATY HAWK HAS BEEN ELIMINATED!



KITTY KATZ HAS BEEN ELIMINATED!

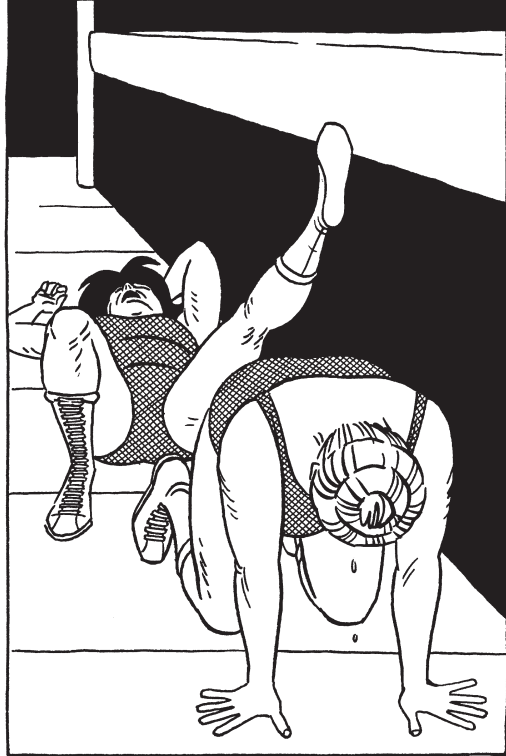




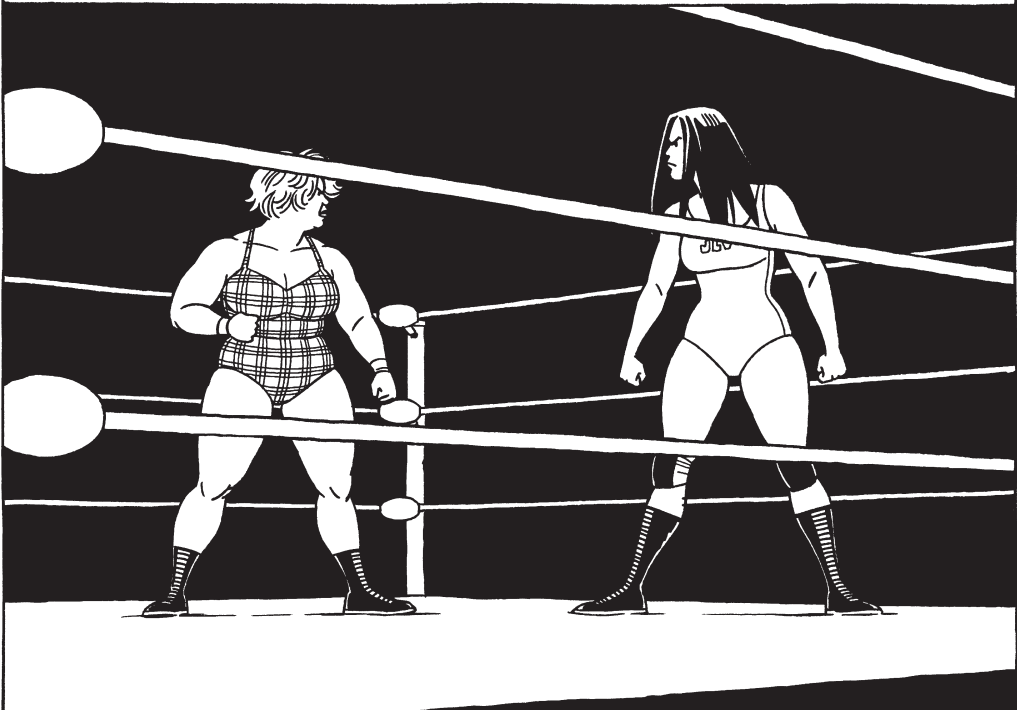
SUNNY AND SUMMER, THE SUGAR TWINS HAVE BEEN ELIMINATED!

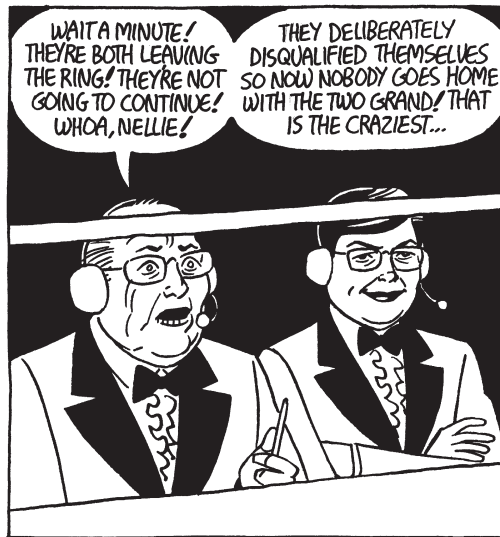


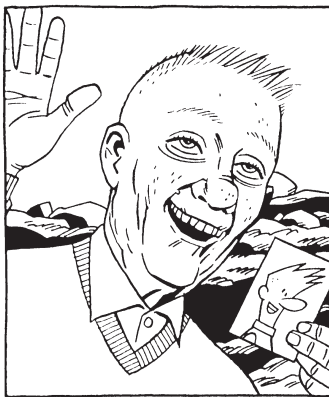
AND SO HAVE THE LADY BASHERS, DAVIS AND ROBERTS!

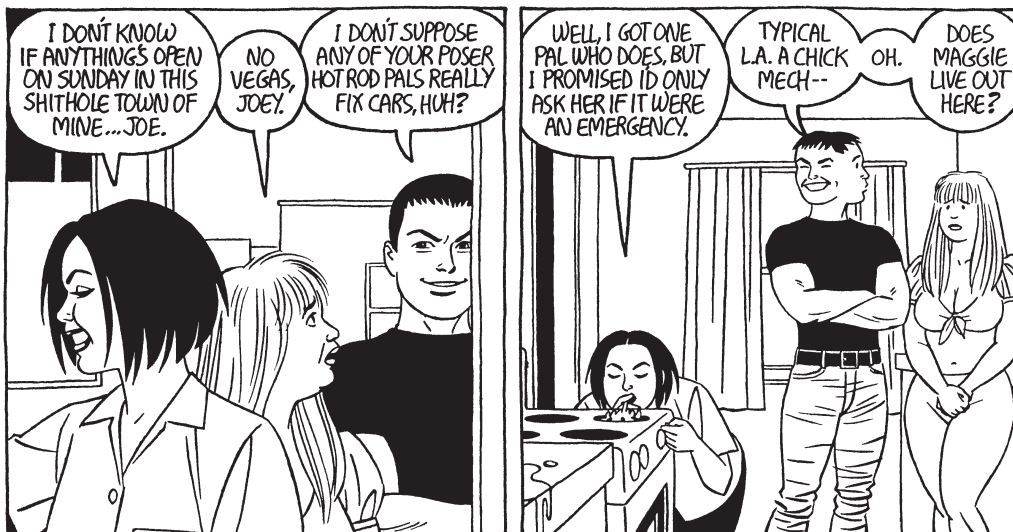


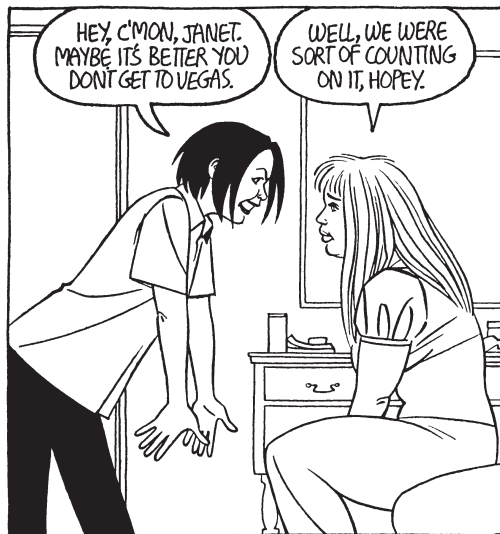
AND WOULD YOU LOOK AT WHO'S LEFT ?? IT'S XOCHITL AND GINA!! OH, MY!! WHO WOULD HAVE THOUGHT WITH ALL THAT WORLD CLASS COMPETITION IN THERE...? LOOK AT THEM SIZE EACH OTHER UP! BOY, TWO THOUSAND DOLLARS IS A LOT OF MONEY FOR ONE OF THESE TWO YOUNGSTERS!

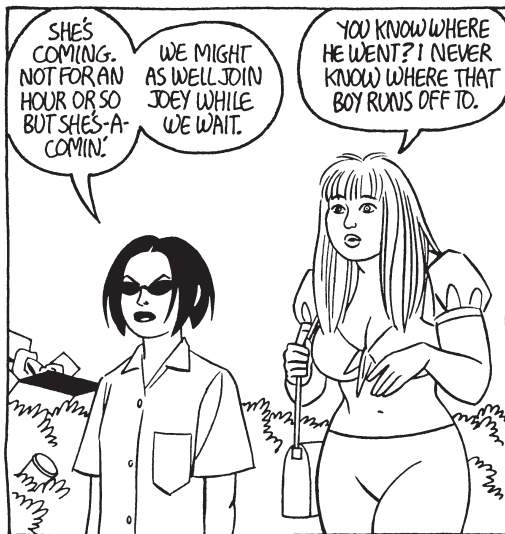
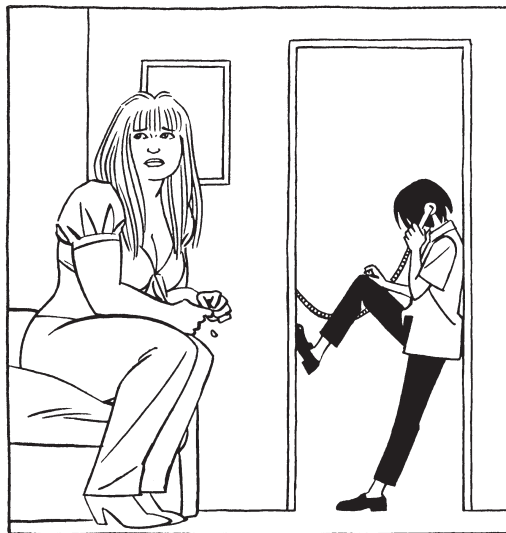
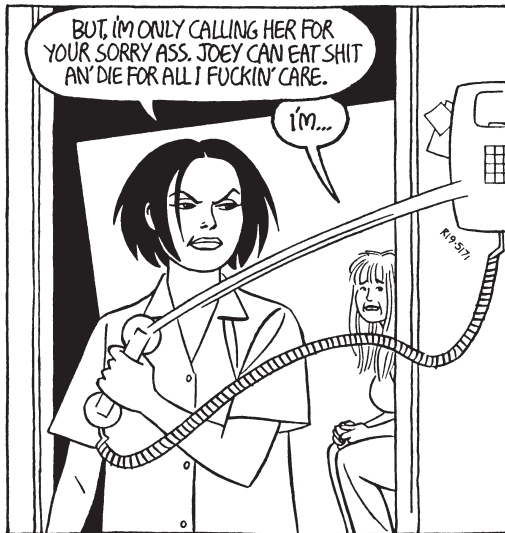
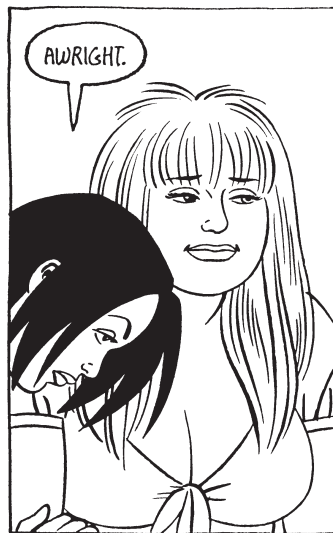


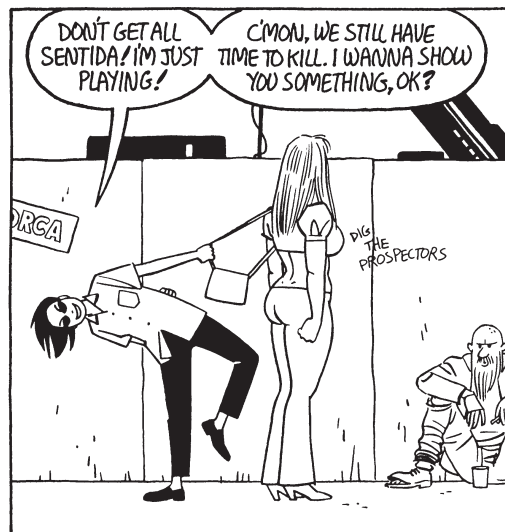
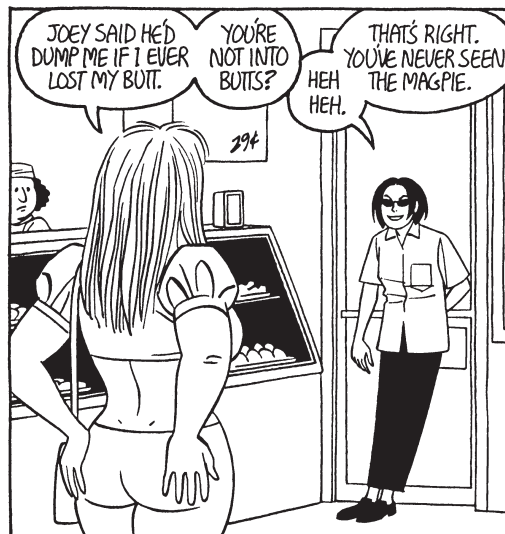
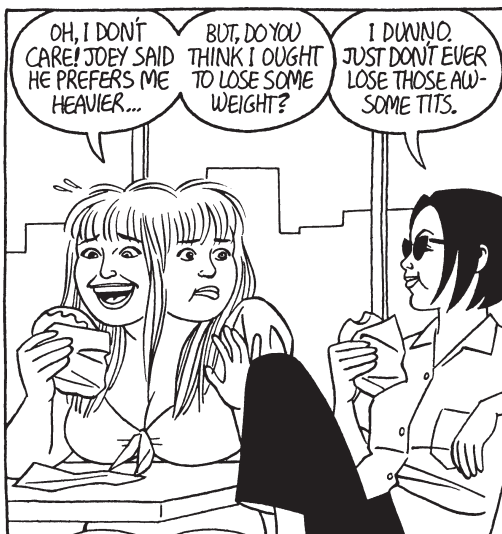
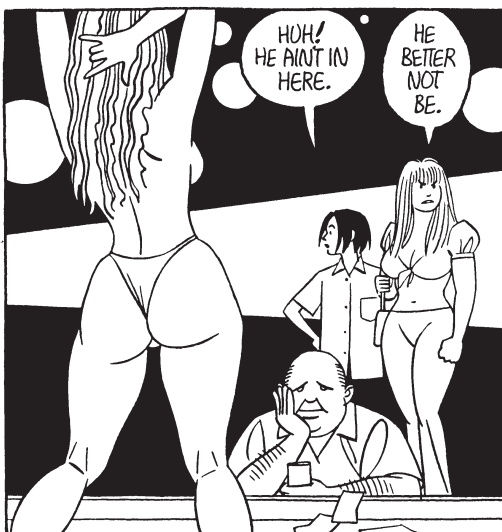


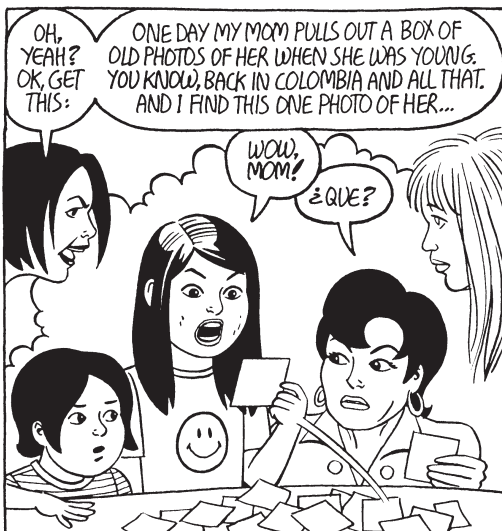
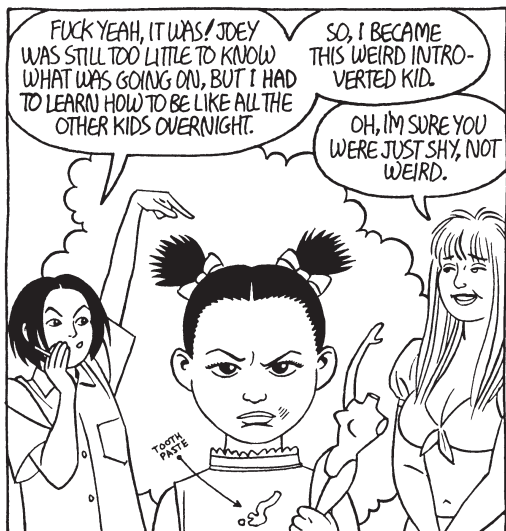
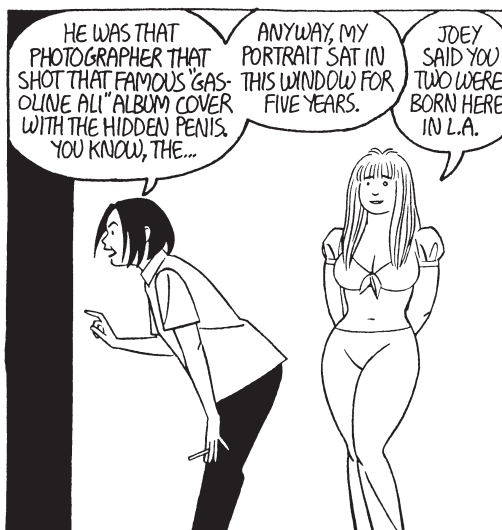


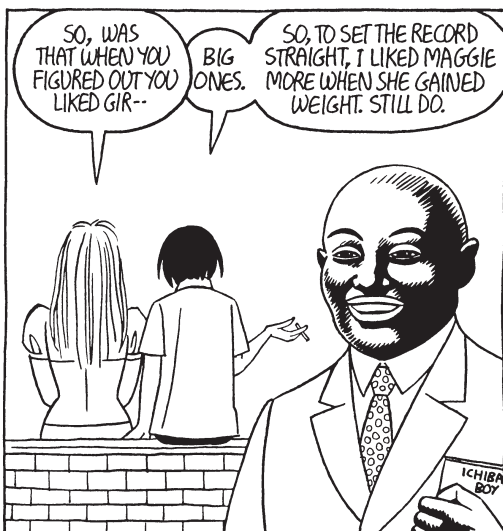
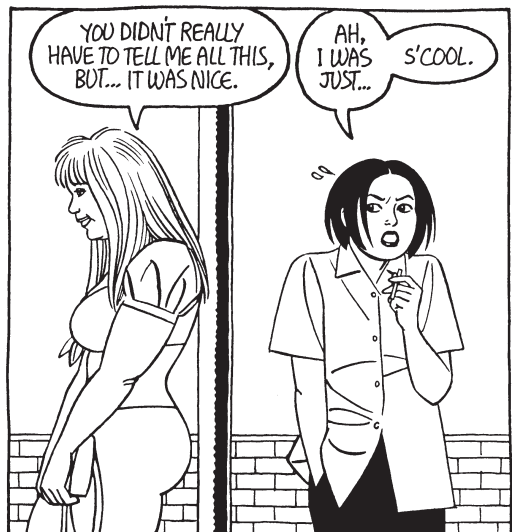
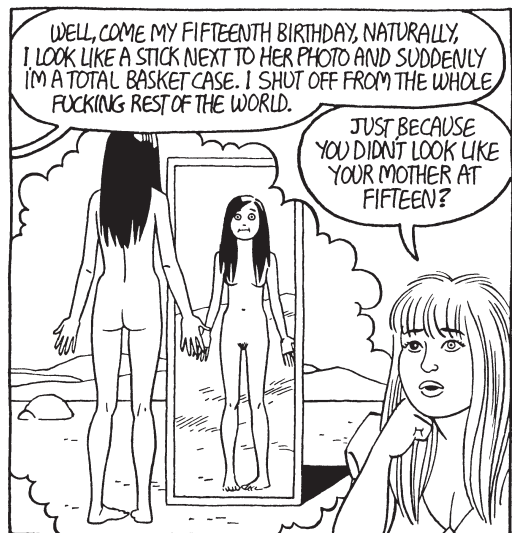




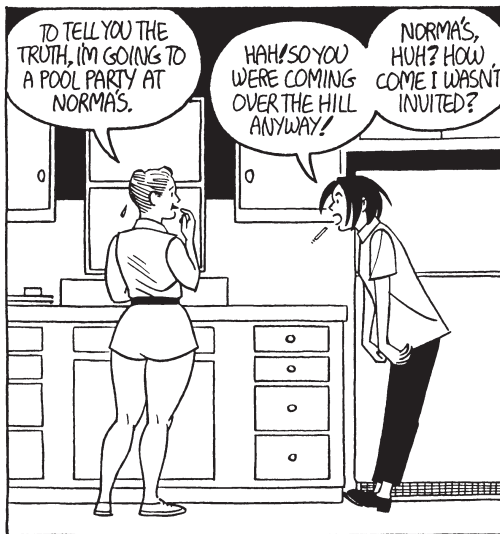


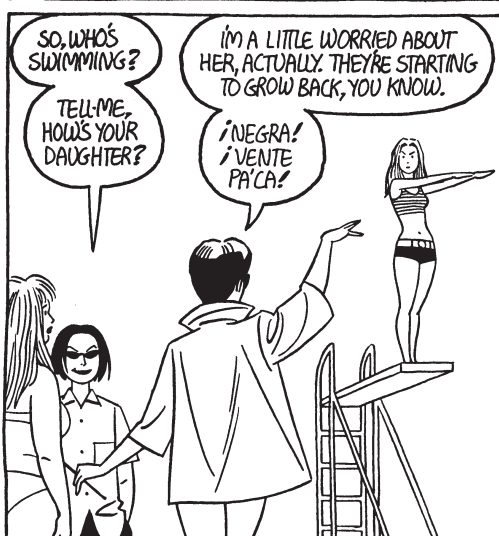
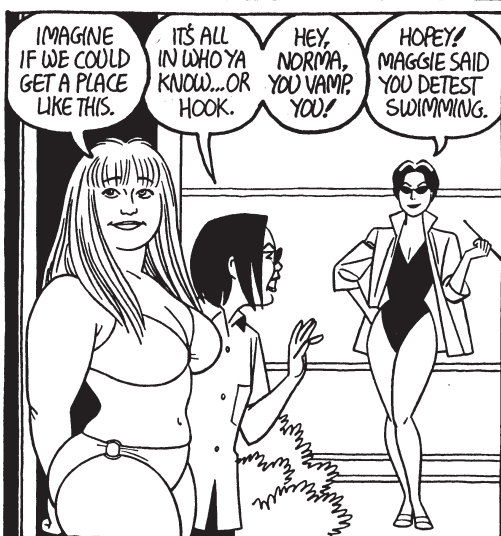
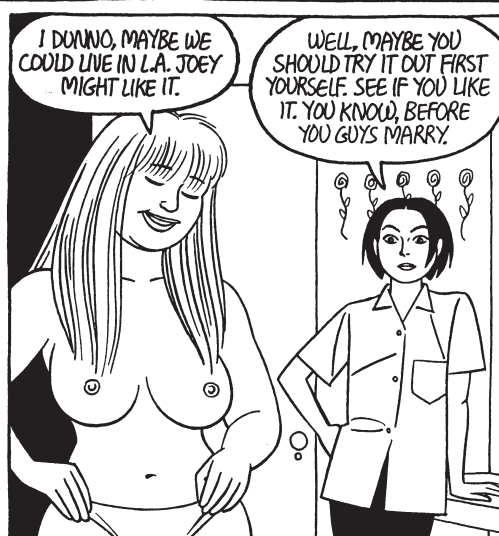


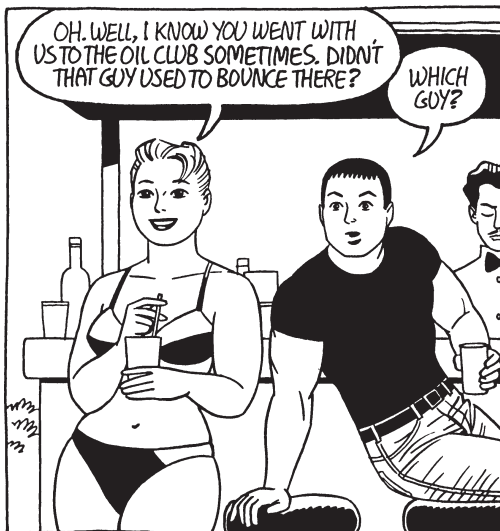
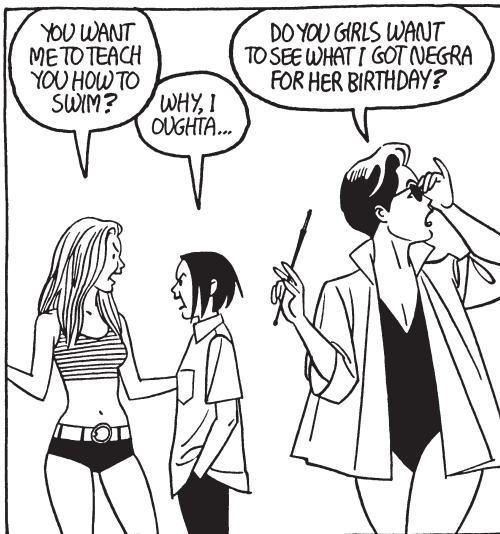
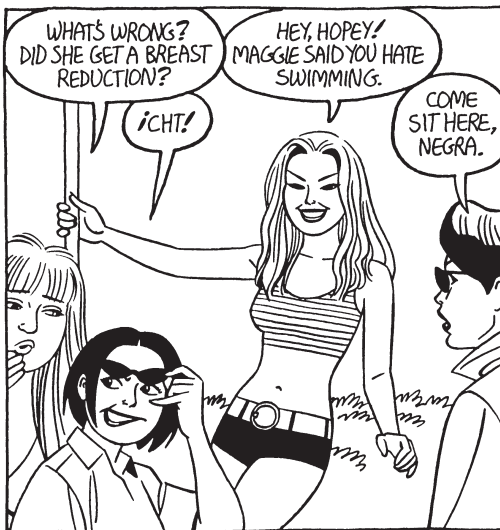


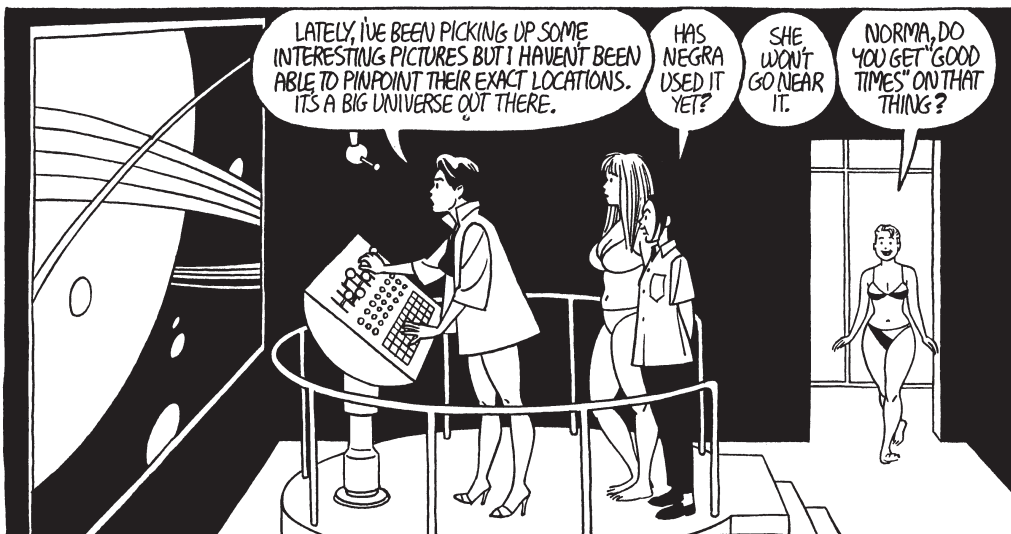


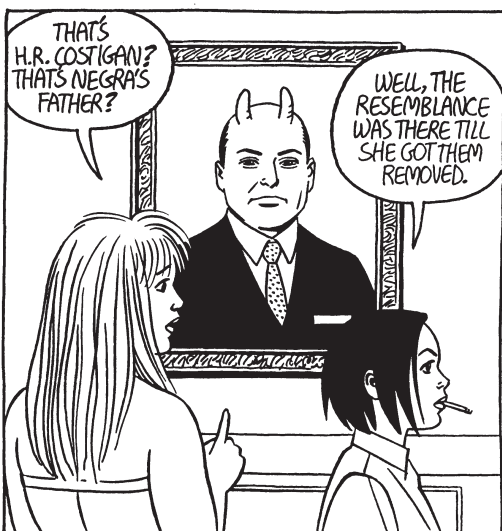
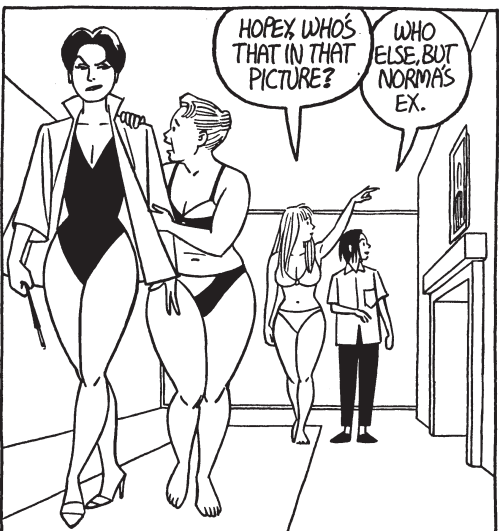
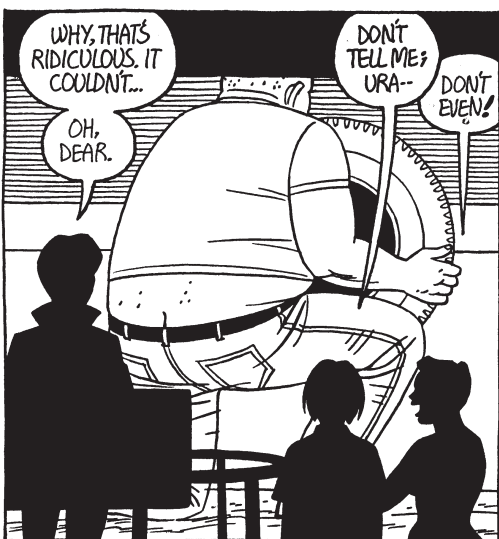


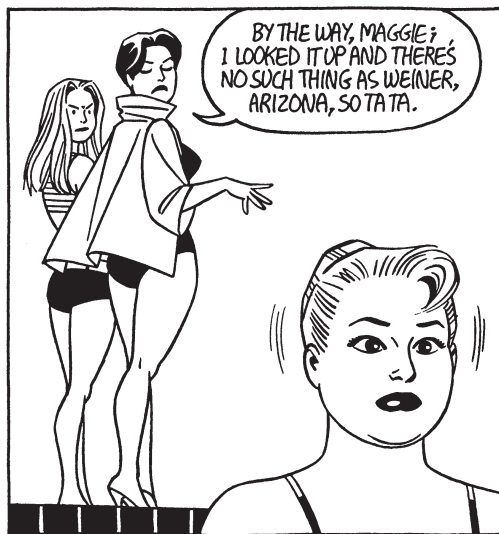
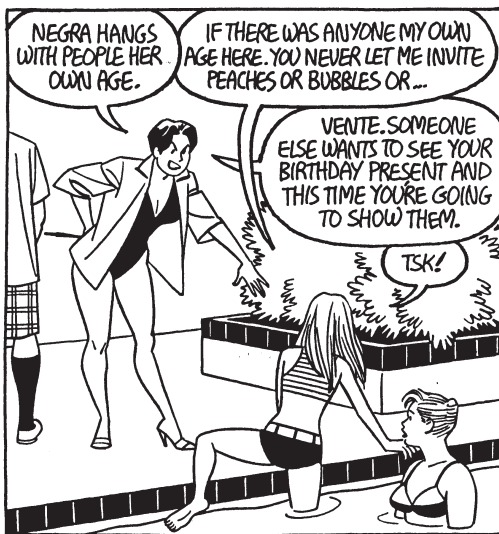
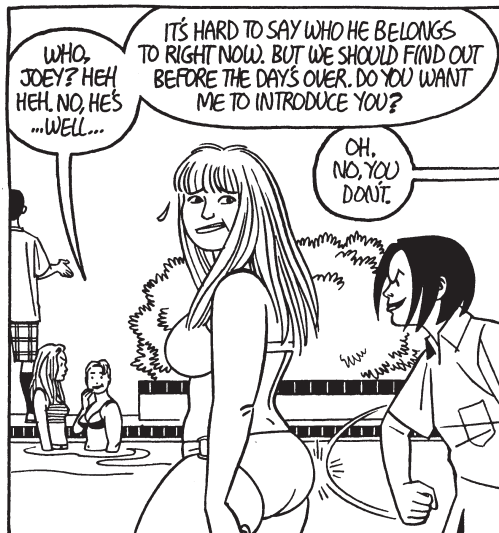
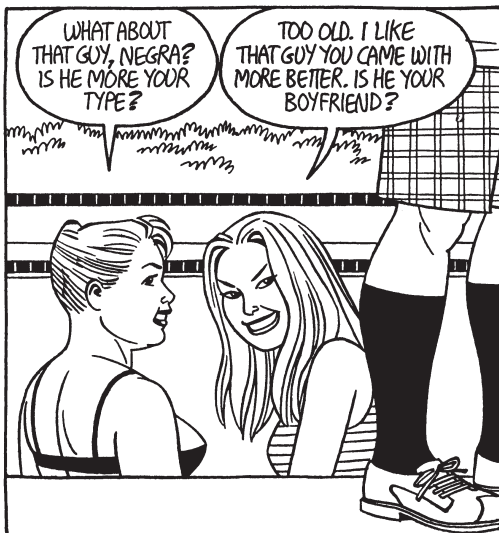


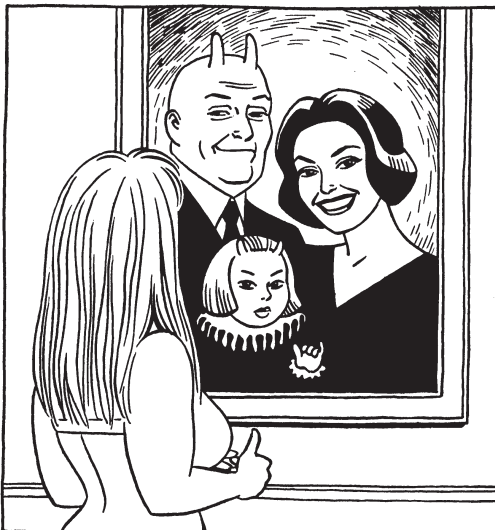
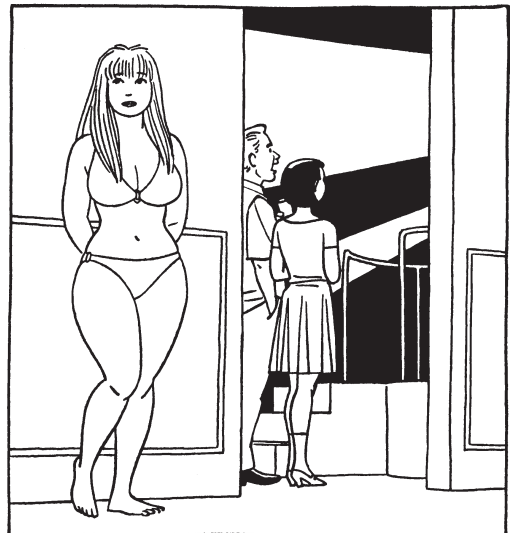


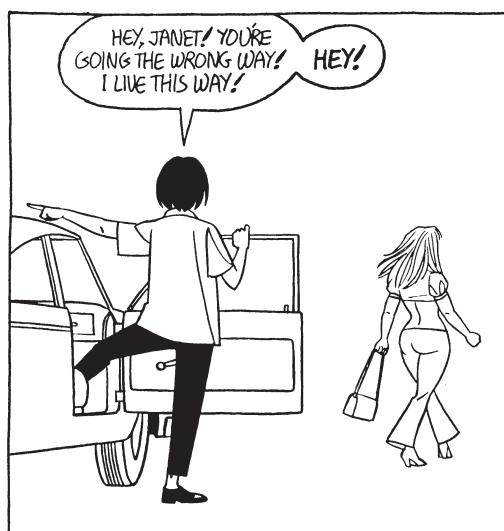


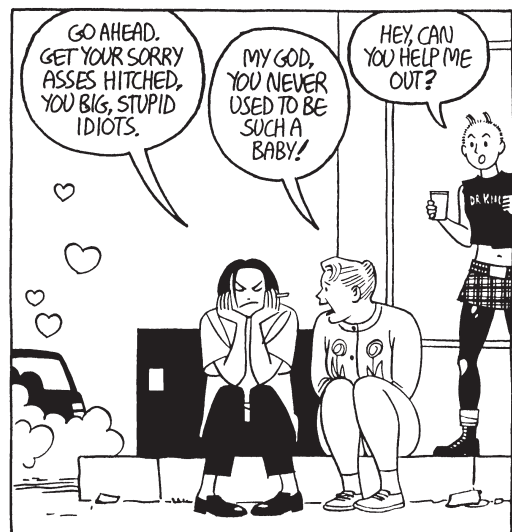
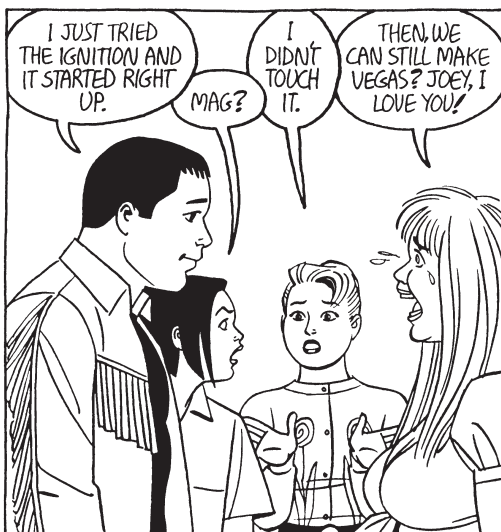
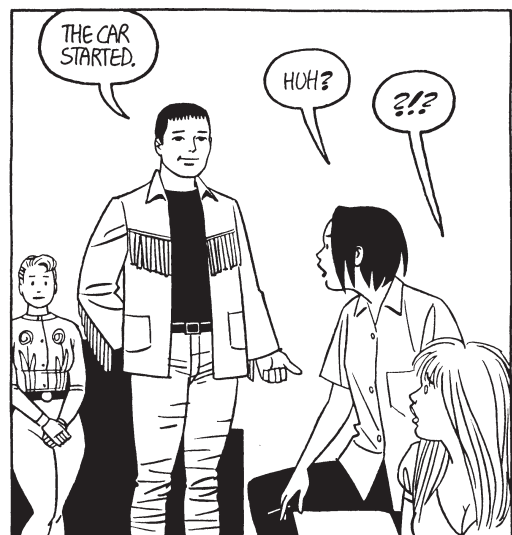


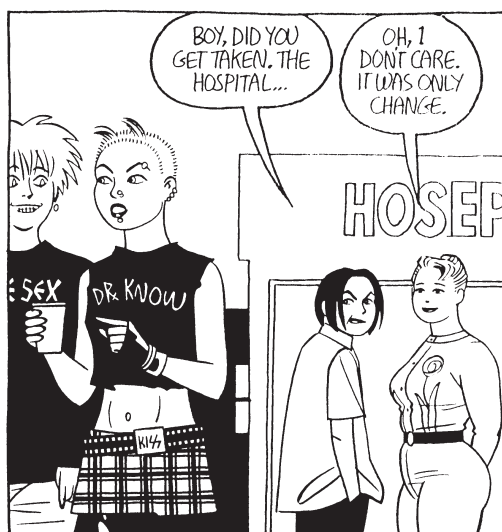


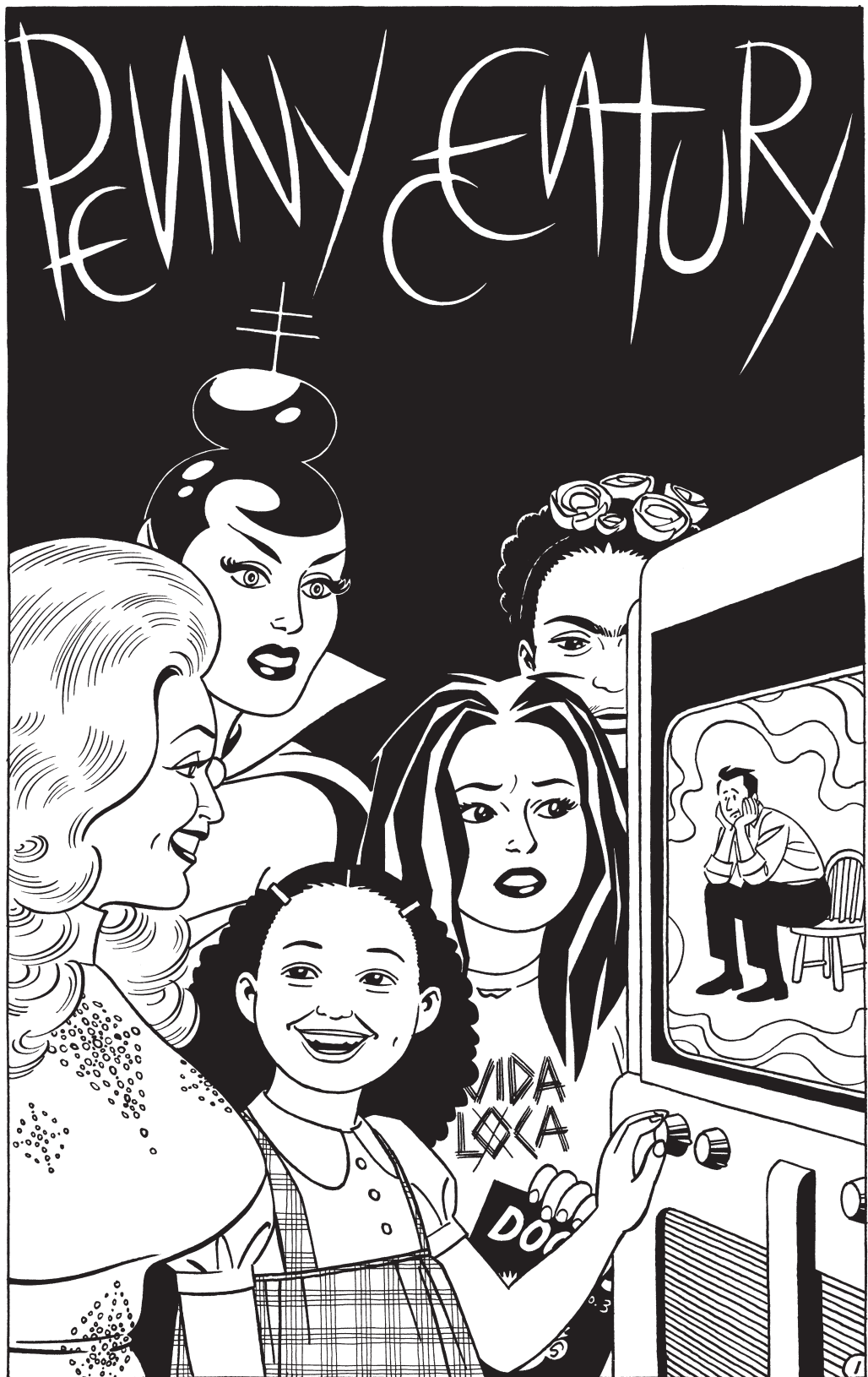


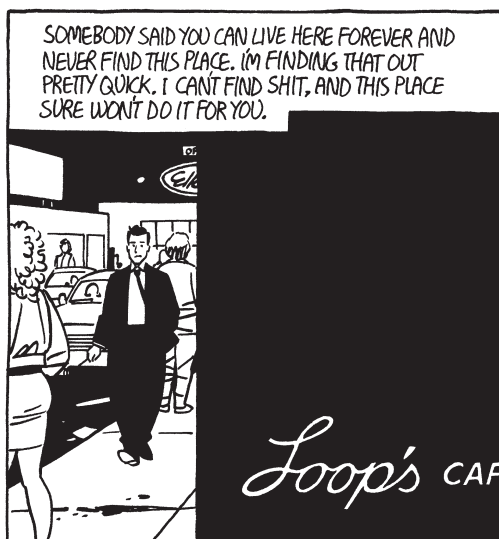
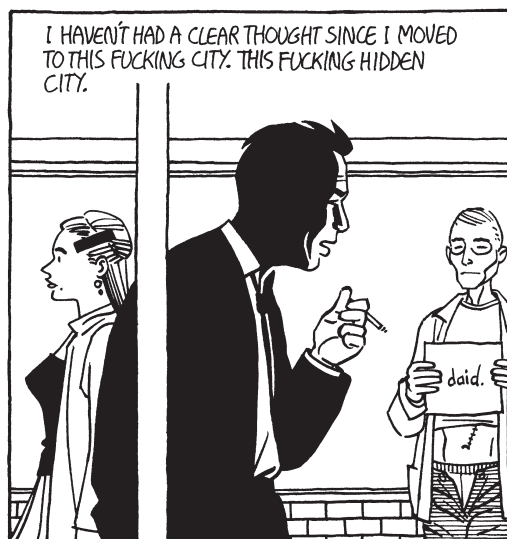


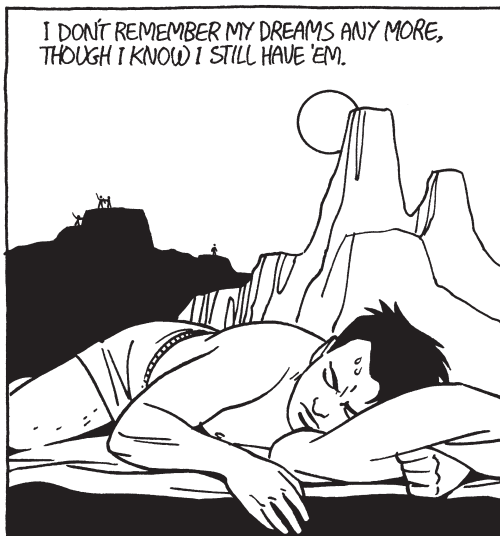












HEARD SOMEBODY BITCHING ABOUT SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA AGAIN. THIS TIME IT WAS ABOUT THE LACK OF SEASONS. I'M SURE NEW HAMPSHIRE'S GREAT THIS TIME OF YEAR, LADY. HINT, HINT.



GAVE SOME HOMELESS GUY ALL THE CHANGE FROM MY POCKET. HE CALLED ME BACK TO GIVE ME BACK THE PENNIES.



THEY KNOCKED DOWN ANOTHER OLD BUILDING FROM THE GLORY DAYS OF THIS PLACE. I WAS THINKING HOW THEY THOUGHT IT WAS JUST A BUILDING IN THEIR DAY.



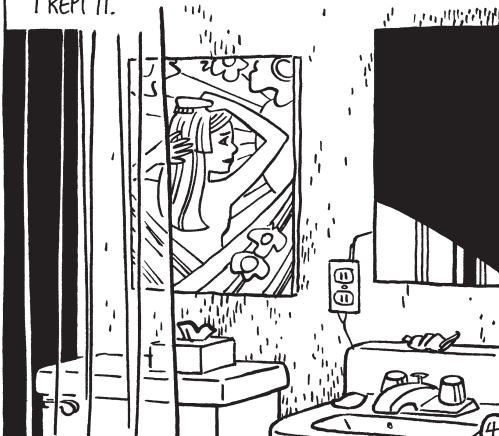
THOUGHT I SAW SOMEONE FROM MY HOMETOWN DRIVING A TRUCK. ONLY LOOKED LIKE HIM. HE THOUGHT I WAS A FUCKING WEIRDO FOR STARING.



NEARLY GOT KILLED ON FOUNTAIN YESTERDAY. THANK GOD FOR THE OLD STONE FACE.



FOUND A PAINTING IN THE TRASH DONE BY A YOUNG NEIGHBOR GIRL. I HUNG IT IN MY BATHROOM. I WONDER IF SHE'D BE MAD IF SHE KNEW I KEPT IT.



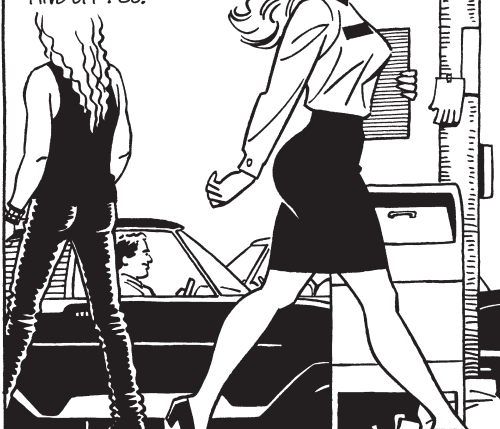
RAN INTO A GUY ON HOLLYWOOD BLVD. WHO SAID HE KNEW ME BACK EAST. I DIDN'T REMEMBER HIM BUT HE TREATED ME TO A SLICE OF PIZZA. COULDN'T TURN HIM DOWN.



HE WENT ON TALKING ABOUT PEOPLE I USED TO KNOW IN ART SCHOOL. MY GOD, I DIDN'T REMEMBER A SINGLE PERSON HE MENTIONED. WELL, I WAS ONLY THERE A SEMESTER.



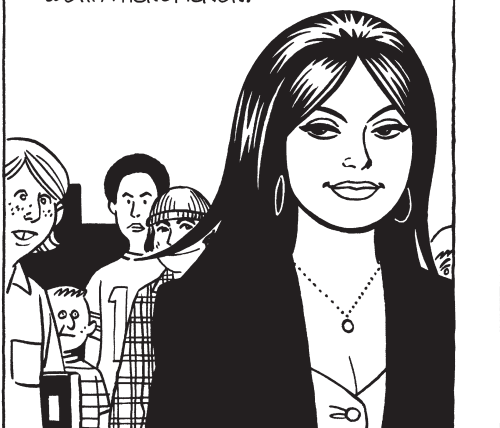
THEN HE STARTS ON ABOUT THE ANIMATION BUSINESS. BUT BY THAT TIME I'M TOTALLY FIXATED ON A WOMAN ACROSS THE STREET. SHE REMINDS ME OF PENNY AND OFF I GO.



STILL CAN'T GET HER OFF MY FUCKING MIND. SHIT, WHEN WAS IT? JUNIOR HIGH. THE PLACE WHERE GIRLS ARE WOMEN AND BOYS ARE STILL... WELL, PROTOPLASM.



WE GOT THIS NEW STUDENT ALL THE WAY FROM TEXAS NAMED BEATRIZ GARCIA. I COULD HAVE SWORE SHE FLUNKED LIKE, EIGHT TIMES, BOY. WOTTA PHENOMENON.



SHE HUNG OUT WITH BLACK GIRLS SO IT SEEMED OBVIOUS SHED HAVE A BLACK BOYFRIEND. SHIT, WHO COULD COMPETE WITH THAT? COME TO THINK OF IT, I COULDN'T COMPETE WITH A GOD DAMN TREE.



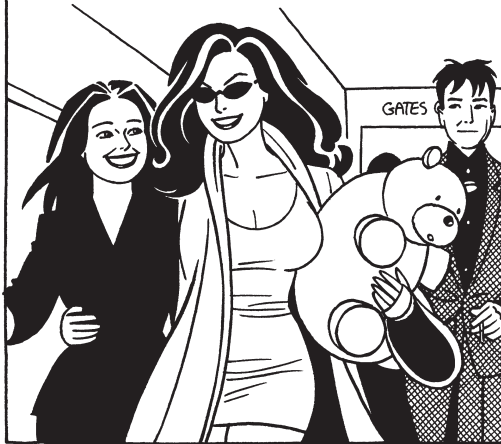
BY THE TENTH GRADE SHE STOPPED GOING TO MY SCHOOL AND I EVENTUALLY LEARNED TO LIVE WITHOUT HER AWESOME PRESENCE.



THEN ONE DAY YEARS LATER, MY LIVE (N GIRLFRIEND AND I ARE INVITED TO STAY A FEW DAYS AT THE HOME OF HER FRIEND PENNY CENTURY. WHAT A NAME. I WASN'T SURE I WANTED TO DO THIS.



SO BEATRIZ GARCIA BECAME PENNY CENTURY. SHE DIDN'T REMEMBER ME, THOUGH. HOW COULD SHE? IT WAS JUST LIKE JUNIOR HIGH. I WAS INVISIBLE.



UNTIL, OF COURSE, MY GIRLFRIEND BLABS TO PENNY/BEATRIZ ABOUT THE CRUSH I ONCE HAD ON HER WAY BACK WHEN. WHAT FOLLOWED WAS JUST PLAIN WEIRD.



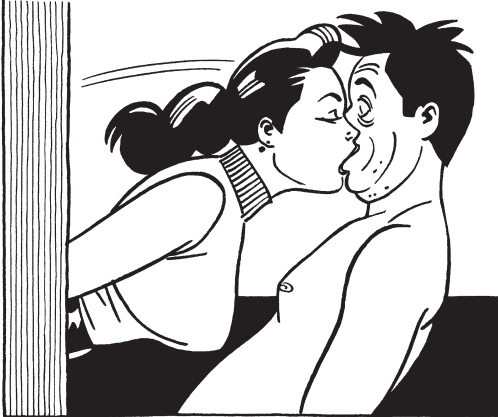
THE GIRL WOULDN'T LET ME OUT OF HER SIGHT. I GUESS SHE WANTED TO HEAR ME SAY HOW MUCH I STILL COULDN'T LIVE WITHOUT HER. BUT I DIDN'T. IT WAS KIND OF FUN BEING THE PURSUED FOR ONCE.



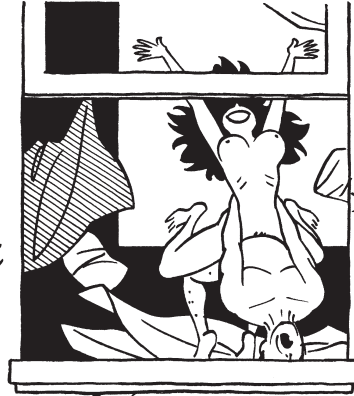
EVEN AFTER I LOST MY GIRLFRIEND AND FOUND ANOTHER ONE, PENNY WOULD OCCASIONALLY SHOW UP AT MY DOOR WITH SOME LAME EXCUSE JUST TO SEE ME. I WOULDN'T BUDGE AND IT DROVE HER NUTS.



THE NIGHT I LOST MY OTHER GIRLFRIEND PENNY COULDN'T HAVE TIMED IT MORE PERFECTLY. DID SHE FEEL THIS WAS HER LAST CHANCE? I SURE DIDN'T LET ON.



THAT NIGHT THE ANIMALS TALKED. I WAS SPEAKING IN TONGUES. MY DAD UP IN HEAVEN GLANCED UP FROM HIS PAPER. THE ANGELS WENT ON STRIKE.



COULDN'T TAKE IT ANY MORE. I GAVE IN. I TOLD HER YES, I COULDN'T LIVE WITHOUT HER. THEN, IN AN INSTANT... POOF! SHE'S GONE.



IN THE WEEKS AND MONTHS THAT FOLLOWED, I BECAME THE BITTER, LONELY WOMAN HATER SUCK GUY. CURSE YOU, PENNY CENTURY.



IN TIME I COULD SENSE MYSELF DETERIORATING SO I TRIED TO GET BACK TO NORMAL BUT IT WAS PRETTY PATHETIC. I COULDN'T MEET A GIRL IF I PAID HER.



ONE DAY I GET THE COURAGE TO ASK A YOUNG CHICA THAT I WORK WITH OUT TO LUNCH. SHE POLITELY AGREES AND I FEEL THERE'S HOPE FOR ME YET.



OL' PENNY MUST HAVE RADAR OR SOMETHING BECAUSE LATE THAT NIGHT SHE SHOWS UP READY FOR ACTION. I DIDN'T DARE TELL HER MY LUNCH DATE WAS JUST THAT: A LUNCH DATE.



WHEN PENNY LEFT IN THE MORNING SHE TOLD ME I HAD NO NEED FOR SILLY LUNCH DATES. FINE WITH ME. SEE YOU REAL SOON, HUH, BABY?



BOY, DID I FEEL LIKE A SUCKER WITH A CAPITAL "X" WHEN MONTHS PASSED WITHOUT A WORD FROM PENNY. AND I DIDN'T KNOW HOW TO GET A HOLD OF HER! FUCK! SHE IS SUCK!



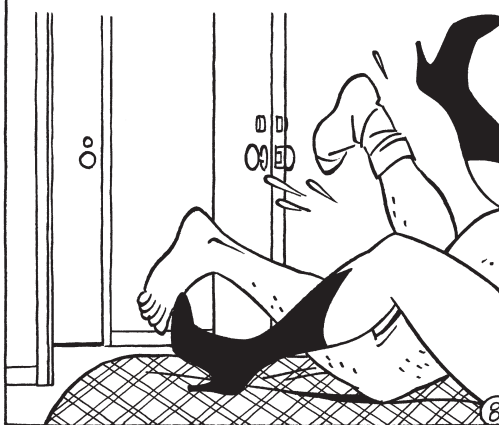
SHE EVENTUALLY SHOWED UP, BUT WITH A TWIST. HOW COULD I REPRIMAND A SILVER HAired SUPER WOMAN FOR BEING TARDY?



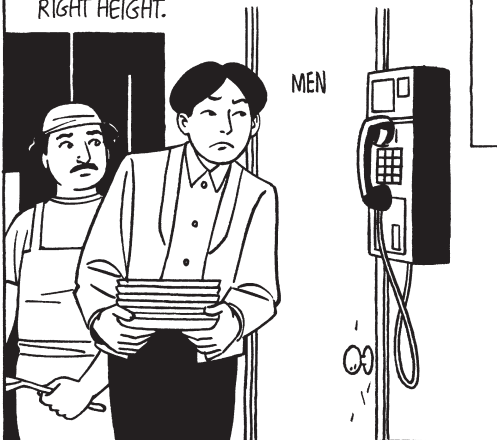
AFTER ALL THAT SHE SETTLED IN AND STARTED TO DROP IN REGULARLY. YOU KNOW, ONCE EVERY TWO OR THREE WEEKS. REGULARLY FOR PENNY CENTURY.



EACH VISIT WAS ANYTHING BUT DULL. FOR INSTANCE, ONE TIME SHE MADE ME KEEP MY FRONT DOOR WIDE OPEN JUST DURING MY NEIGHBORS TO CATCH US HAVIN' THANGS.



ANOTHER TIME SHE TOOK ME TO THIS THAI RESTAURANT JUST TO BONE ME IN THE BATH-ROOM. SHE SAID THE SINK WAS JUST THE RIGHT HEIGHT.



ANOTHER VISIT SHE SPOKE ONLY SPANISH THE WHOLE TIME. NEVER HAD SEXO EN ESPAÑOL.



ANOTHER TIME SHE DIDN'T SPEAK AT ALL.



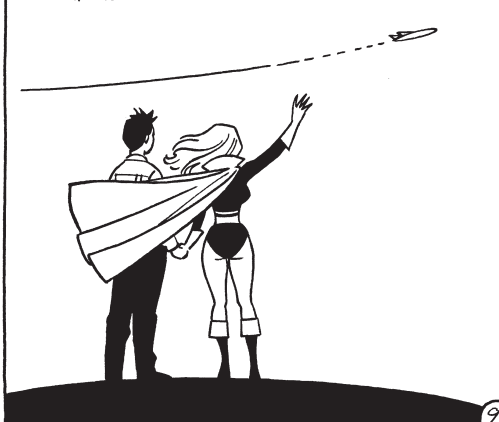
SOMETIMES WE'D GET DRESSED UP JUST TO TAKE A WALK THROUGH TOWN. EVERY GUY WANTED TO KNOW HER NAME IF THEY DIDN'T ALREADY KNOW.



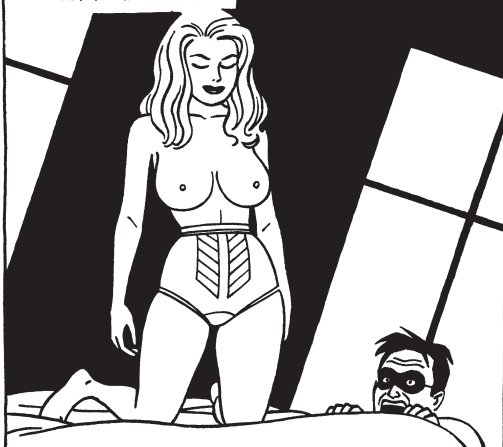
ONE TIME I OVERHEARD SOMEBODY ASK WHY A WOMAN LIKE HER WOULD BE INVOLVED WITH A LOSER LIKE ME. I TOOK IT AS A COMPLIMENT.



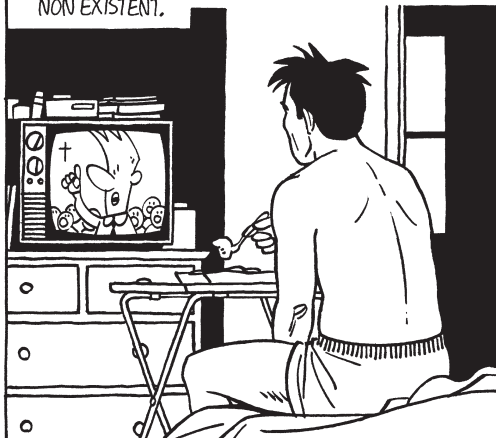
SOMETIMES I'D ASK MYSELF THAT SAME QUESTION. WHY ME? AND THEN I'D ASK WHY NOT ME? AND THEN I'D ASK AGAIN... WHY ME?



I MEAN, THE GIRL WAS A NUT. BUT I DIDN'T CARE. AREN'T THEY ALL? OK, OK. AREN'T WE ALL JUST PLAIN NUTS?



THOUGH I GOTTA ADMIT, THE IN BETWEENS WERE PRETTY DAMN DEPRESSING. NORMAL EVERYDAY LIFE WITHOUT PENNY WAS DULL AND NON EXISTENT.



BUT THE HIGHS WERE SKYIN'. SHE'D MAKE ME FORGET THOSE LOWS REALLY QUICK. WHAT MORE COULD I ASK FOR? OH OH, SHOULD I HAVE SAID THAT?



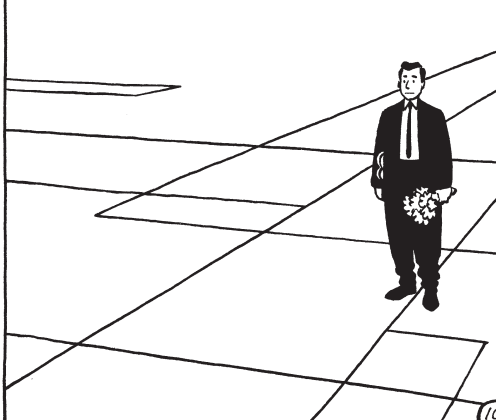
ONE NIGHT, OUT OF THE BLUE, SHE ASKED ME IF I MISSED BEATRIZ GARCIA. I ANSWERED "ARE YOU KIDDING?" VAGUE ANSWER TO VAGUE QUESTION, RIGHT? YOU SHOULD HAVE SEEN HER VAGUE SMILE.



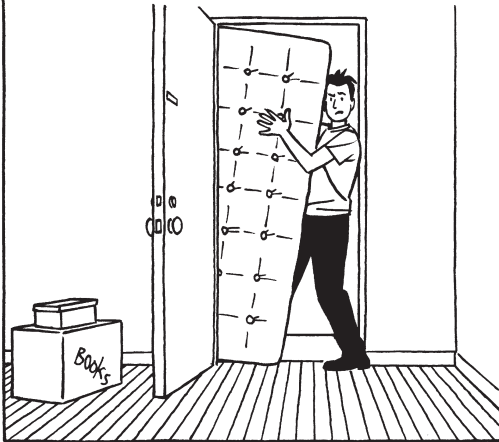
PENNY WAS GETTING BORED. SHE WANTED ME TO MOVE TO A BIGGER CITY, MEANING L.A. I TOLD HER I WOULD BUT THE TRUTH WAS I WAS JUST TOO DAMN LAZY. I WOULD JUST MEET HER THERE.



SHE STARTED GETTING SASSY. EVERY TIME WE MET SHE WOULD TELL ME THAT THIS WAS PROBABLY OUR LAST TIME. ONE OF THE TIMES I LAUGHED. SHE STOPPED COMING. STORY OF MY LIFE.



SO, THERE I WAS. WASN'T EVEN GIVEN THE OPTION TO APOLOGIZE. I MOPED AROUND FOREVER TILL I DECIDED TO MOVE MY SORRY ASS OUTTA TOWN.



SOMEBODY ASKED ME WHY I PUT UP WITH PENNY'S BULLSHIT FOR SO LONG. MAN, THEY JUST HAD NO CLUE.



SO, I'VE BEEN HERE FOR A FEW MONTHS AND I STILL HAVEN'T HEARD FROM PENNY. I DON'T KNOW WHETHER SHE CAN'T FIND ME OR JUST DOESN'T CARE TO FIND ME. MAYBE I'D RATHER NOT KNOW.



TOLD SOME GUYS AT A BAR MY PENNY STORY AND THEY RAZED ME FOR FEELING SORRY FOR MYSELF. OR MAYBE THEY JUST PLAIN DID NOT BELIEVE ME. AH, WHADDAYA GONNA DO?

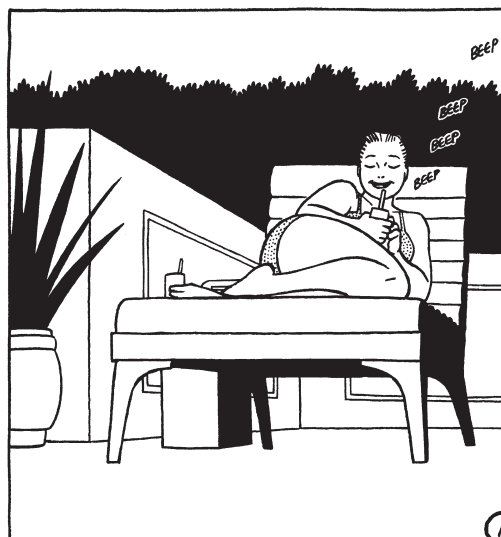
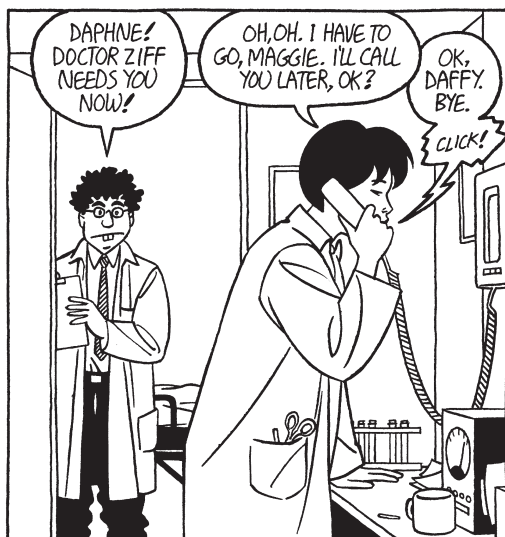
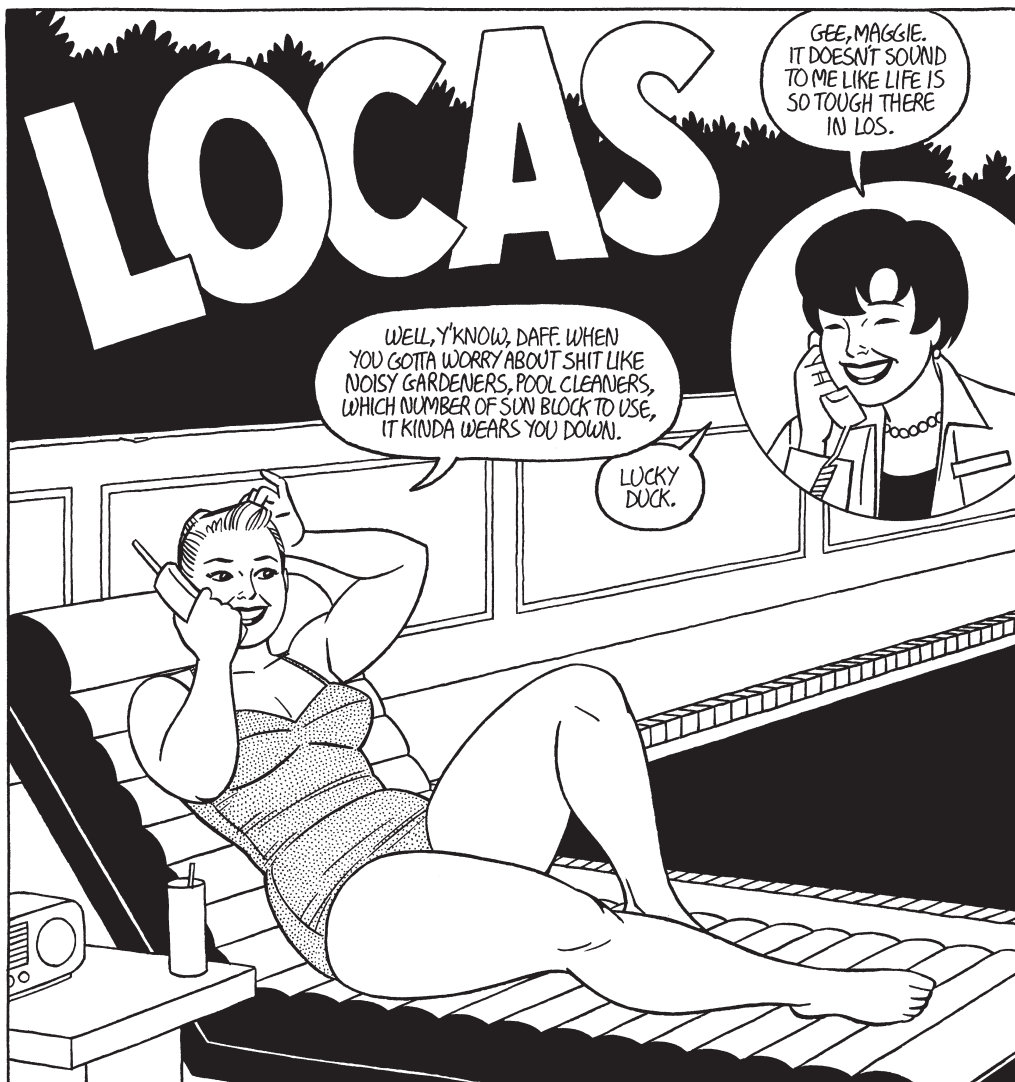


AS I DISAPPEAR INTO THIS FUCKING HIDDEN CITY I WONDER TO MYSELF IF I'LL EVER SEE PENNY CENTURY AGAIN.

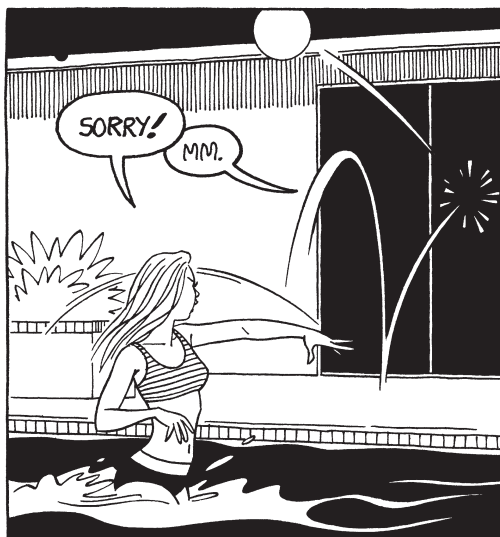
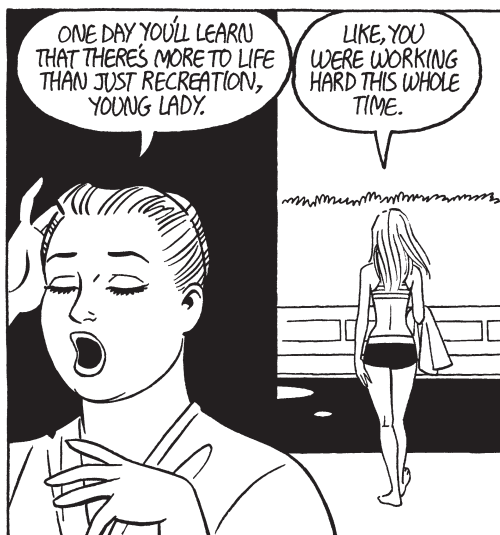
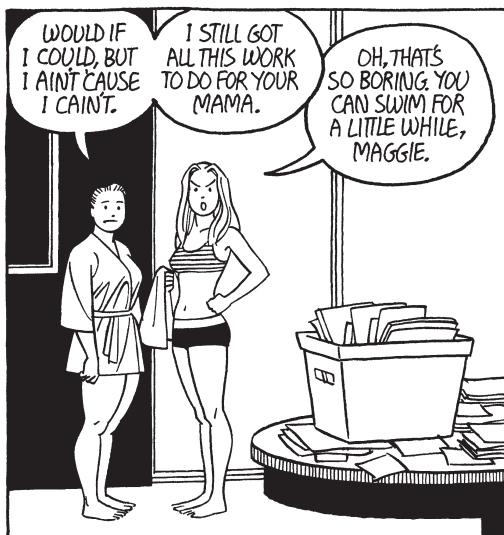
WOTTA NAME.

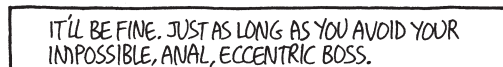
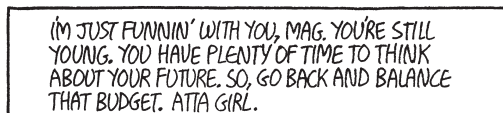
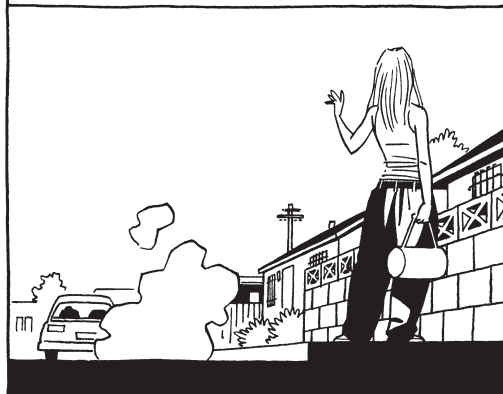
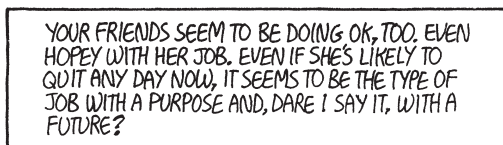
WOTTA PHENOMENON.

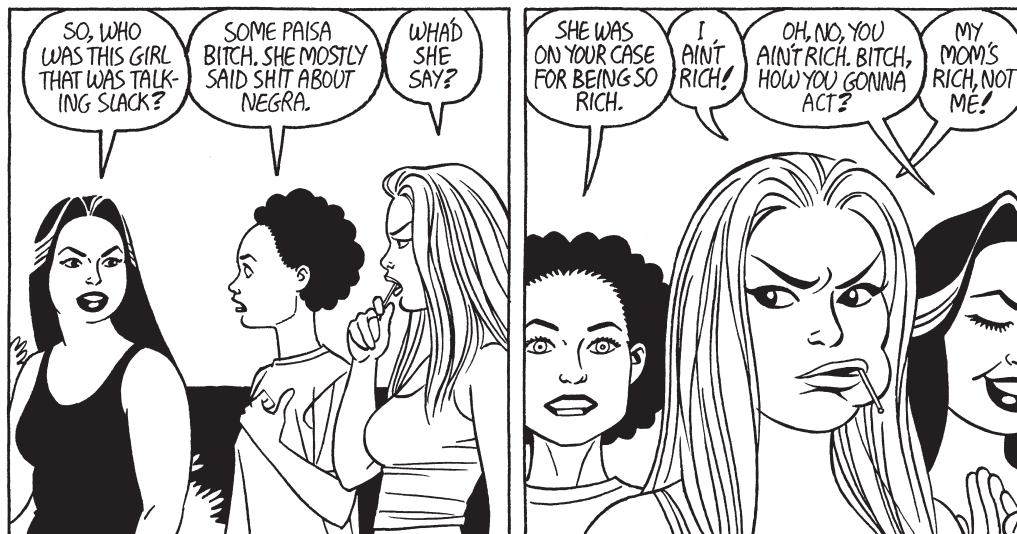


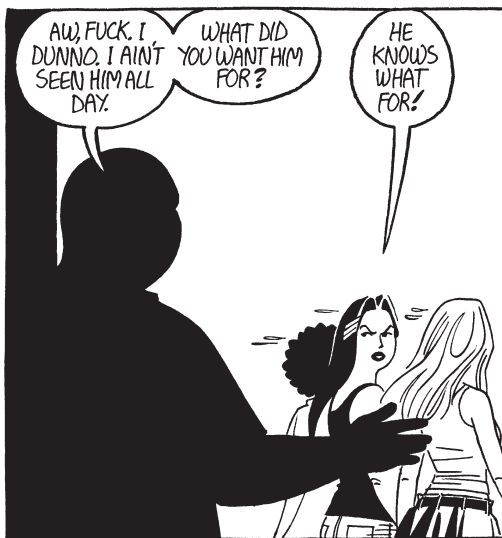
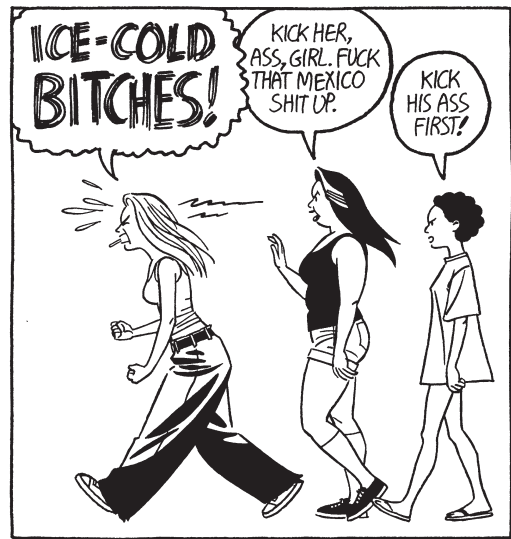


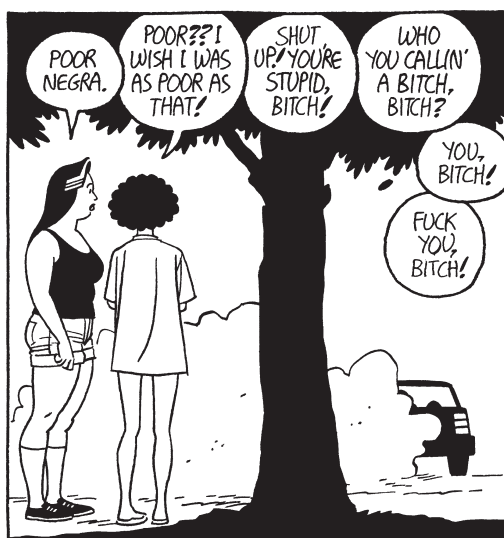


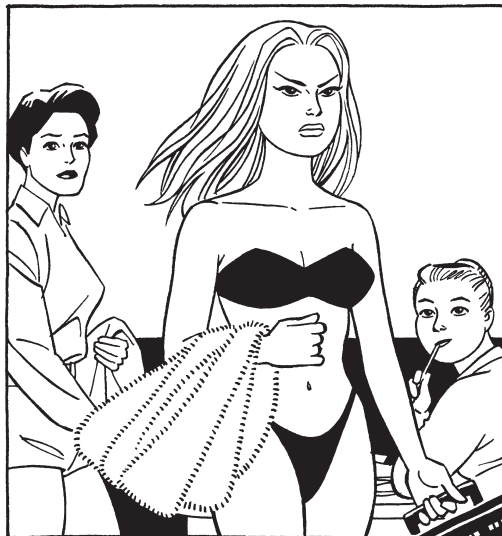


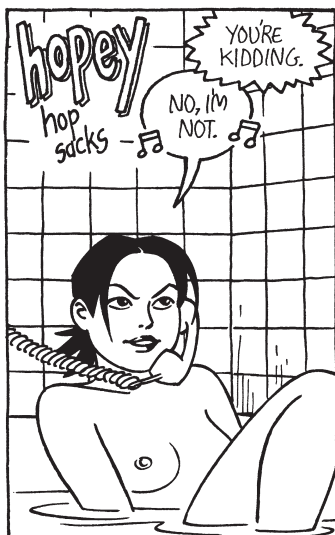


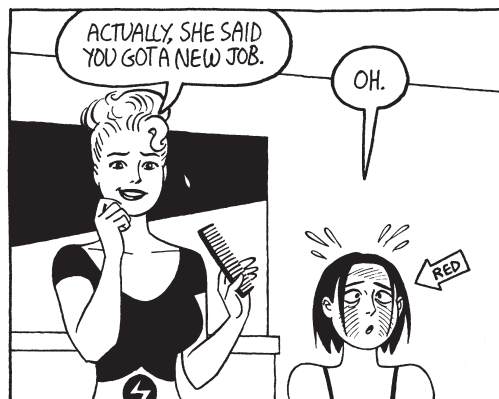
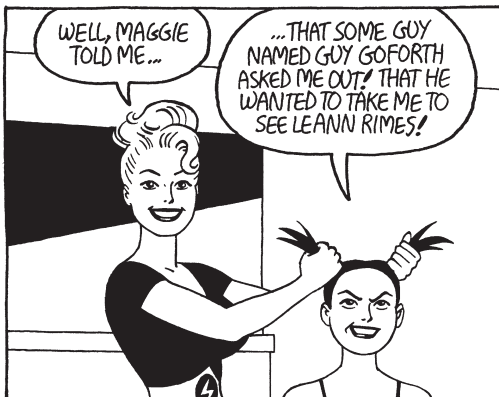




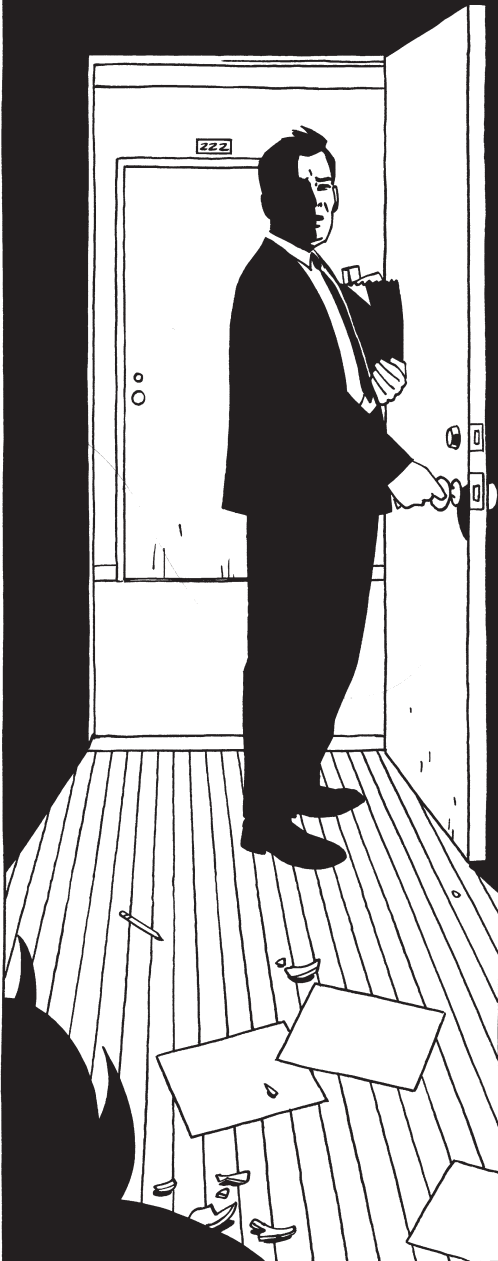




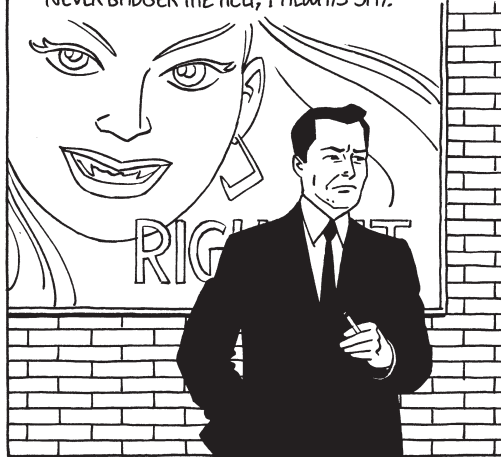




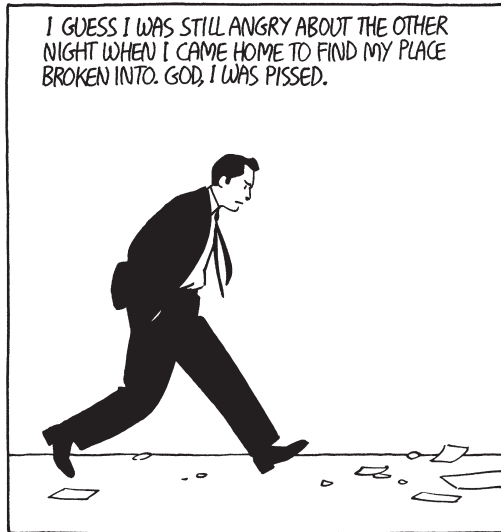
LOOK OUT



NEARLY BIT THE HEAD OFF A WAITRESS THIS AFTERNOON. DON'T KNOW WHAT CAME OVER ME. NEVER BADGER THE HELP, I ALWAYS SAY.

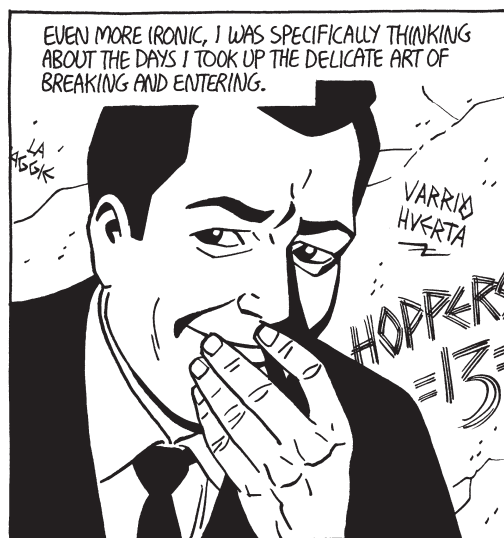


I GUESS I WAS STILL ANGRY ABOUT THE OTHER NIGHT WHEN I CAME HOME TO FIND MY PLACE BROKEN INTO. GOD, I WAS PISSED.

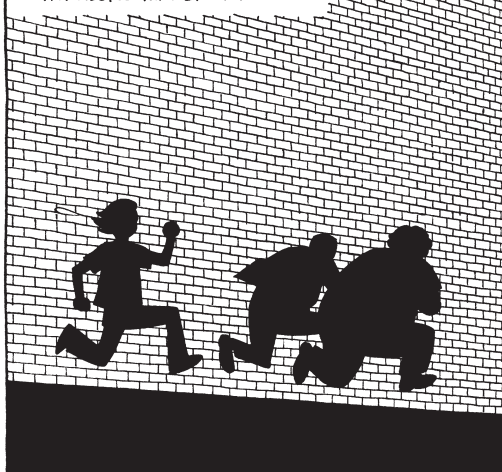


I WASN'T SO PISSED BECAUSE THEY TOOK MY JUNKY OLD TV OR THE CUP OF QUARTERS I USED FOR LAUNDRY. JUST HAVING SOME STRANGE FUCK IN MY HOME IS REASON ENOUGH IF YOU ASK ME.





THEY NEVER CAME OUT WITH MUCH. IT WAS THE ACT ALONE THAT EXCITED ME.



FOR EXAMPLE, ONE NIGHT WHEN NOBODY WAS AROUND I VENTURED OUT AND DECIDED TO TACKLE A HOUSE BY MYSELF. I WASN'T LOOKING FOR LOOT. JUST SOMETHING TO KILL THE FUCKING BOREDOM.



APING MY COMPAS I GOT THE WINDOW OPEN IN LESS THAN A MINUTE.



I WALKED AROUND THE DARK HOUSE LIKE I WAS STROLLING THROUGH A GARDEN. OBSERVING THE MARIGOLDS, ETC...



I MADE MY WAY INTO THE MASTER BEDROOM WHERE A LADY SLEPT. I REMEMBER IT SMELLED LIKE HAIR PRODUCTS.



I WAS CHECKING OUT THE STUFF ON HER BUREAU WHEN SHE WOKE UP AND LET OUT A SCREAM TO WAKE THE DEAD AND THEN SOME.



COMPAS - COMPANIONS

I TURNED MYSELF AROUND AND CALMLY MADE MY WAY OUT OF HER BEDROOM AND OUT THE BACK DOOR AND ON DOWN THE STREET.



DAYS PASSED AND I NEVER HEARD A THING ABOUT IT SO I GUESSED I GOT AWAY CLEAN. THAT WAS THE LAST TIME I'D DO THAT SORT OF THING, ANYWAY. HO HUM.



SURE, I NEVER WENT TO JAIL FOR THOSE INCIDENTS BUT YEARS LATER I WOULD LAY IN BED AT NIGHT THINKING ABOUT IT IN TOTAL SHAME. I STILL DO.



SO, THEY FINALLY GOT ME. WHAT'S THE MATTER, WERENT MY CLOTHES GOOD ENOUGH FOR YOU?



I'LL BET MY ROBBERS WERE NO MORE THAN FIFTEEN AND HAVE NO REMORSE WHATSOEVER FOR WHAT THEY DID.

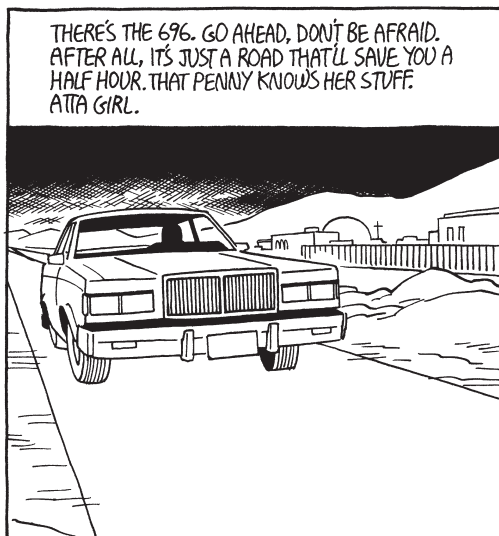
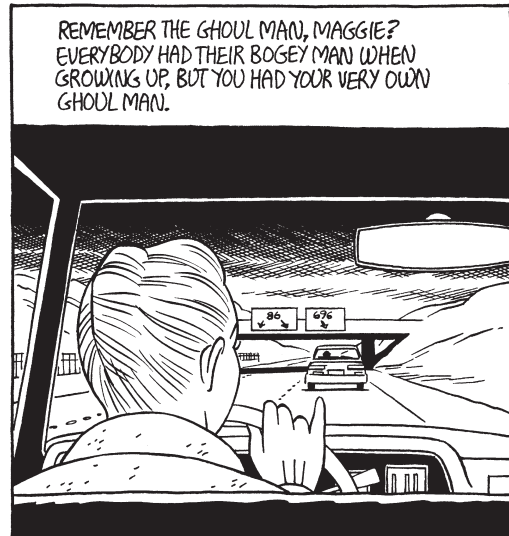
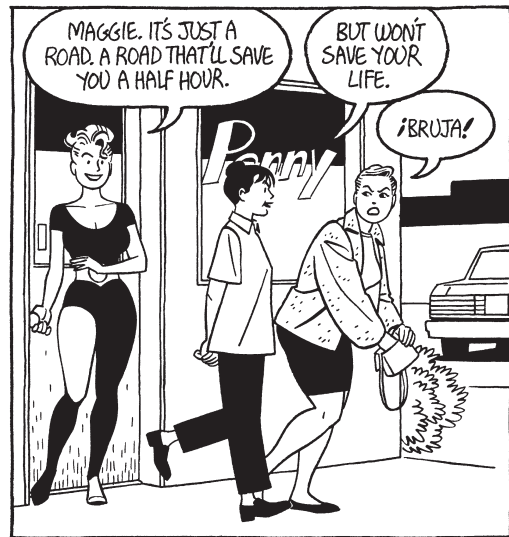


WELL, HELL. NEITHER DID I WHEN I WAS THEIR AGE.



CHILLER!





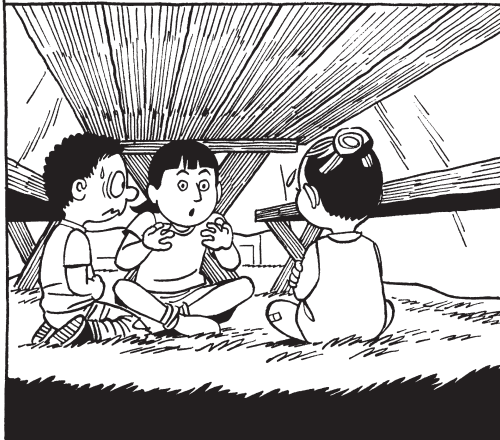
JUST WHAT WAS HE GONNA DO IF YOU OPENED THE CURTAIN? IF I CAN RECALL, HE WAS A PRETTY SICKLY KINDA GUY WHO COULD BARELY STAND.



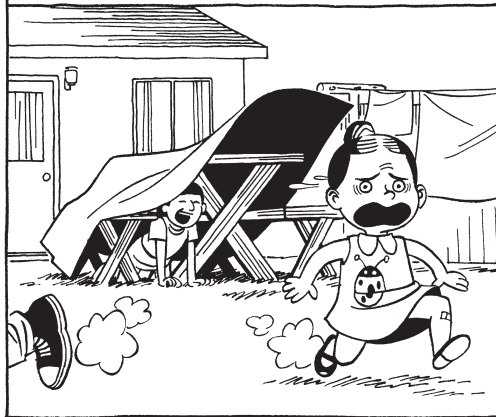
I GUESS JUST SEEING HIM FACE TO FACE WAS BAD ENOUGH, HUH? JUST LIKE THE TWILIGHT ZONE LADY, MR. UGLY, THE BLACK SABBATH LADY, THE MAN FROM THE SCARY NEWSPAPER. BOY, WHAT A LINE UP. ALL FIGHTING FOR A SPOT AT YOUR BEDROOM WINDOW.



BUT YOU COULDN'T GET ENOUGH OF THOSE SPOOKY STORIES AS A CHILD, COULD YOU? AND THAT IZZY TOLD SOME REAL DOOZIES.



IN MANY CASES THE STILL OF THE DAY WAS A LOT CREEPIER THAN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT. YOU ALWAYS ENDED UP RUNNING HOME SCREAMING BUT ALWAYS CAME BACK FOR MORE LATER.



HEY, IT GOT DARK PRETTY QUICK. NOW THE FUN BEGINS, HUH, MAG? HEY, WHAT ARE YOU DOING? HOW COME YOU'RE GETTING OFF THE HIGHWAY?



HUNGRY? I DUNNO, MAG. AN EMPTY STOMACH HAS BEEN KNOWN TO CAUSE BAD DECISION MAKING. BUT, YOU'RE ALREADY HERE SO GO TO IT, GIRL.



IGNORE THE MAN AT THE PAY PHONE, MAGGIE. HE'S ONLY THE GOON THAT'S GONNA RAPE, ROB AND MURDER YOU WHEN YOU LEAVE THIS DUMP.



CANDY?? YOU SAID YOU WERE HUNGRY!! I SWEAR, YOU... WHAT? WHAT'S WRONG? WHAT? WHAT??



OH, SHIT! THE GOON! HE'S THAT ONE GUY THAT TERRORIZED YOU AND YOUR FRIEND BACK IN TEXAS! SHIT, HE'S THE LAST GUY YOU WANTED TO SEE OUT HERE. IT IS HIM, ISN'T IT?



WELL, HE HASN'T NOTICED YOU SO GET YOUR CANDY AND GET THE FUCK OUT OF THERE, QUICKLIKE! STEADY, GIRL. YOU'LL BE OK. DON'T FORGET TO PAY. THAT'S IT.

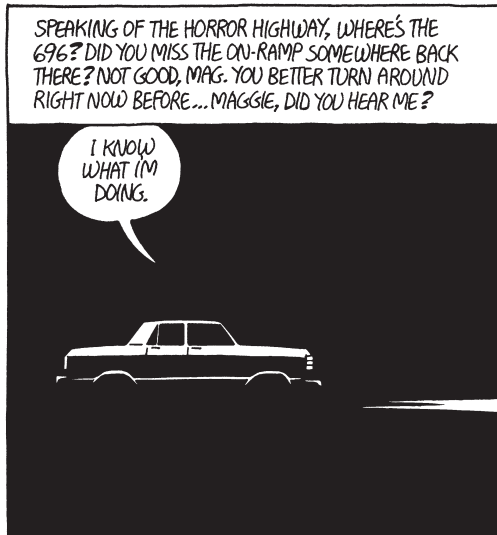


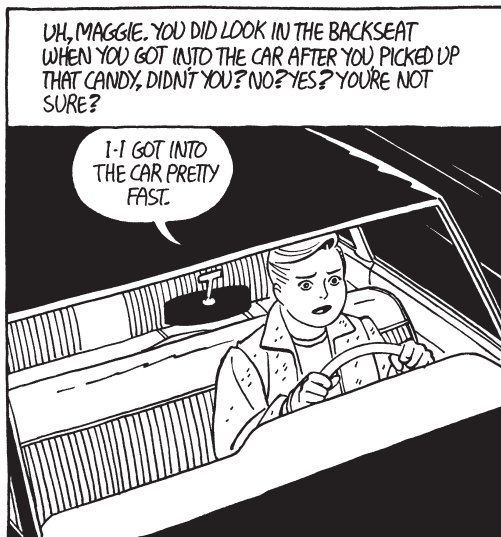
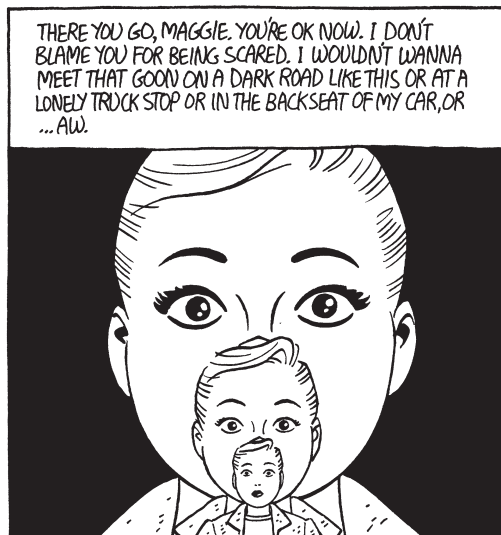
SEE? YOU'RE COOL. THE GOON SPLIT. NOW, GET TO YOUR CAR AND DRIVE THE FUCK BACK TO THE HIGHWAY, OK, MAG?



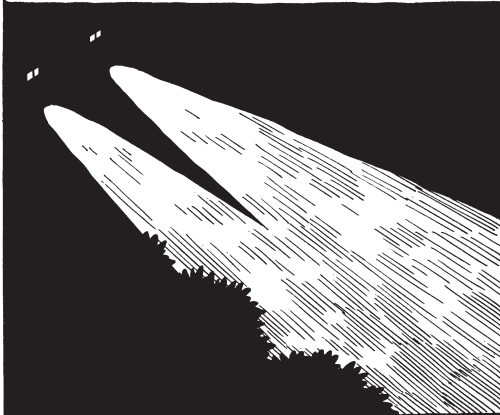
WHAT NOW, MAG? THE OL' "CAR WON'T START" BIT? C'MON, MAG. DON'T FUCK AROUND! MAG-GIE...







C'MON. TRY AGAIN. ONE MORE TIME. MAGGIE! YOU GOT TO KNOW! YOU HAVE OVER AN HOUR TILL YOU GET HOME AND RIGHT NOW YOU'RE PASSING THE LEMON ORCHARDS!



OOH, THE LEMON ORCHARDS. THE PERFECT PLACE TO STASH A BODY. HEY, ARE THE DOORS LOCKED? WHAT ABOUT THE BACK DOORS? WELL, NO MATTER. IF HE'S IN, HE'S IN.



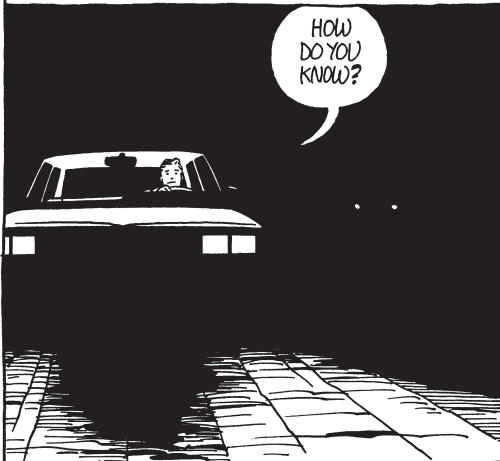
WAIT, THERE ARE THOSE HEADLIGHTS AGAIN. AND THEY'RE COMING AWFUL FAST, TOO, MAG. SAY, MAYBE IT'S A COP.



YOU'D BE PRETTY RELIEVED IF IT IS A COP READY TO PULL YOU OVER, HUH? THEN YOU COULD SETTLE THIS BACKSEAT BUSINESS. WELL, IT AIN'T A COP! SO THERE! YOU GOTTA HANDLE THIS YOURSELF! LOOK IN THAT BACKSEAT, FOR CRYIN' OUT LOUD!



WHAT ARE YOU DOING? WHY ARE YOU PULLING OVER? IT'S NOT A COP, MAGGIE! MAG-GIE!!



SEE? IT WAS JUST A TRUCK. NOW... WHAT'S WRONG? DON'T TELL ME, THE CAR KONKED OUT. FABULOUS.



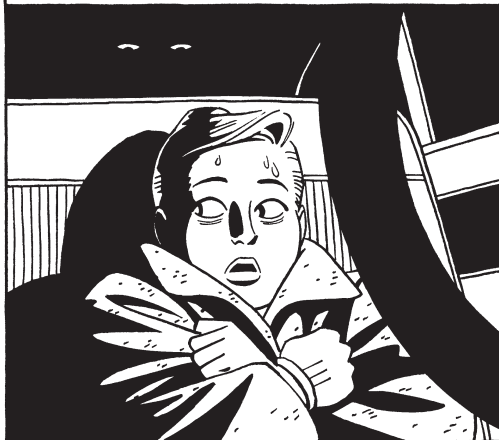
WE BOTH KNOW YOU KNOW HOW TO FIX IT BUT I'M BETTING YOU'RE NOT GONNA GET OUT AND DO IT EVEN IF YOU GOT A FUCKING KILLER IN THE BACKSEAT! MAGGIE, WOULD YOU PLEASE TAKE A LOOK SO WE CAN STOP THIS NONSENSE RIGHT NOW?



SO YOU'RE JUST GOING TO SIT THERE AND WAIT FOR THIS GHOUL MAN TO REACH OVER AND SLICE YOUR THROAT WHEN ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS TAKE A LOOK IN THE BACKSEAT. THAT'LL END THIS FOR SURE, ONE WAY OR ANOTHER. WAIT, WHAT ARE YOU DOING NOW?



FOR CRYIN' OUT LOUD, MAGGIE! LOOK IN THE BA-- MAGGIE! HURRY, BEFORE HE MAKES HIS MO-- OH OH, NOW YOU DID IT...

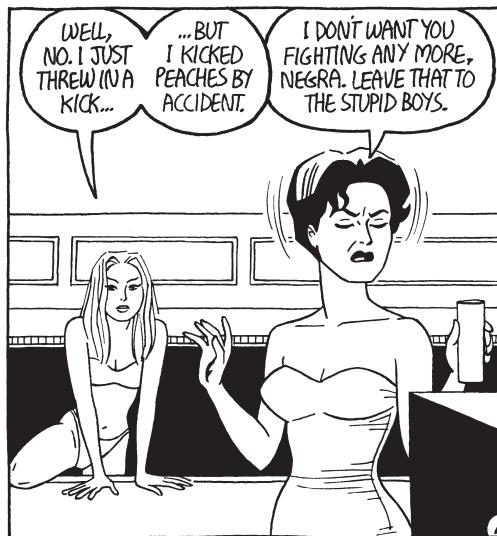
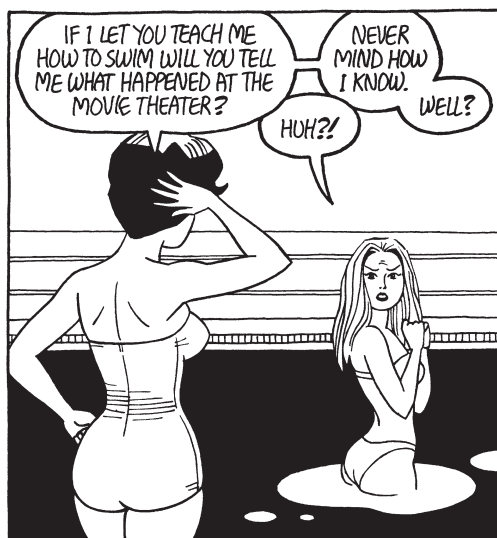


HERE HE COMES... HE'S MAKING HIS MOVE... SLOWLY... MAGGIE, PLEASE... DO SOMETHING, ANYTHING... BEFORE HE... OH, MY GOD... OHHH...

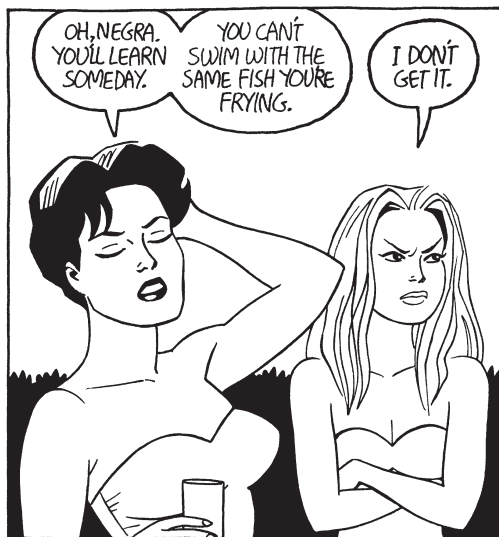
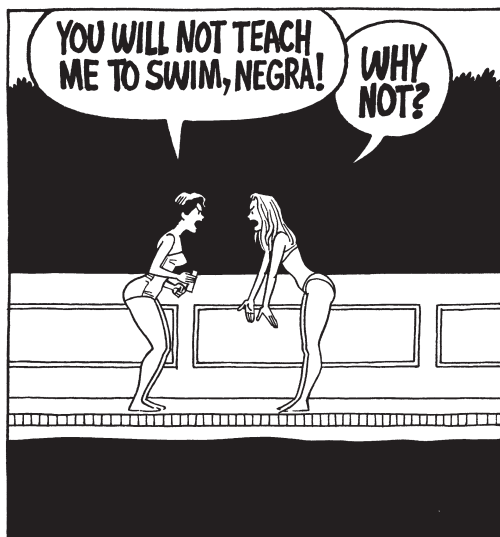
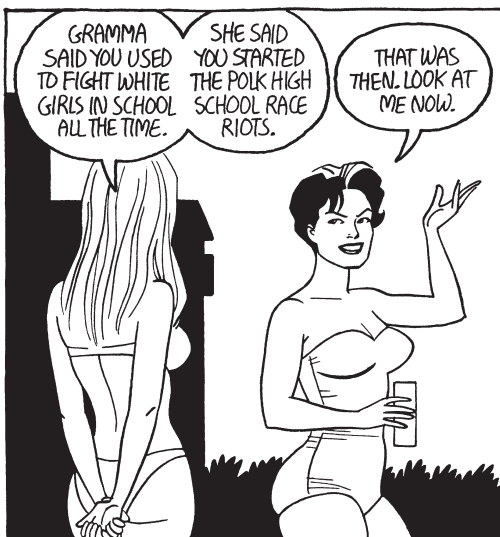


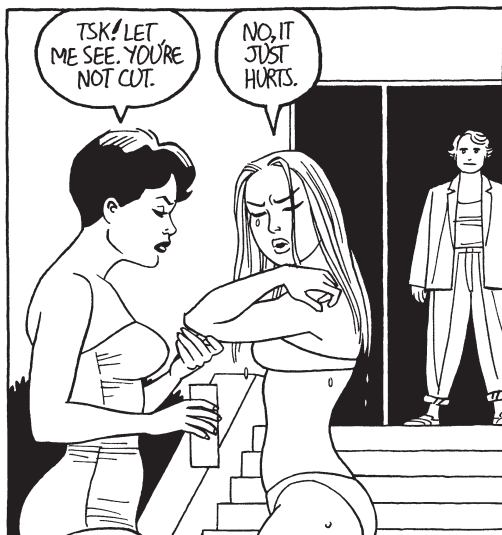
MAGGIE, FOR THE LOVE OF

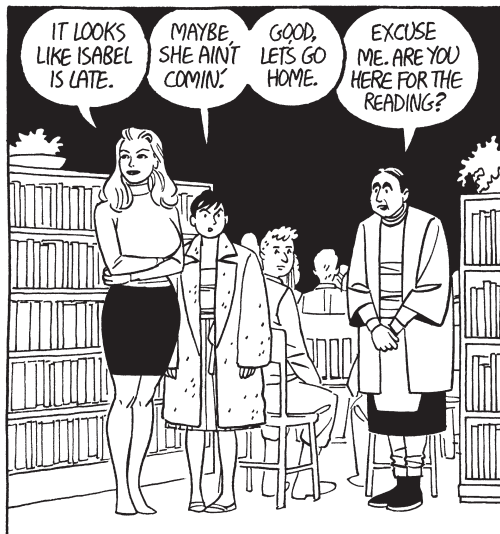
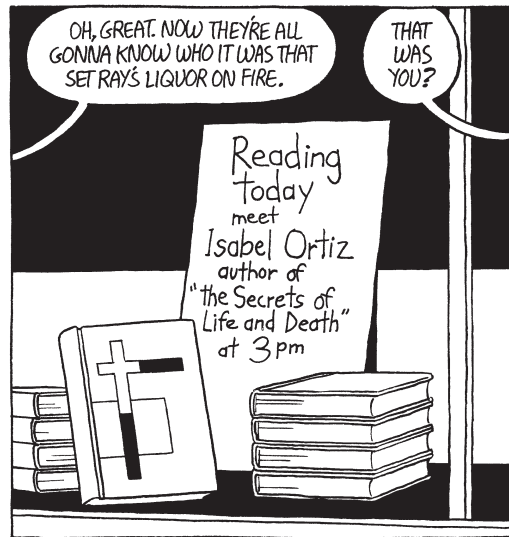
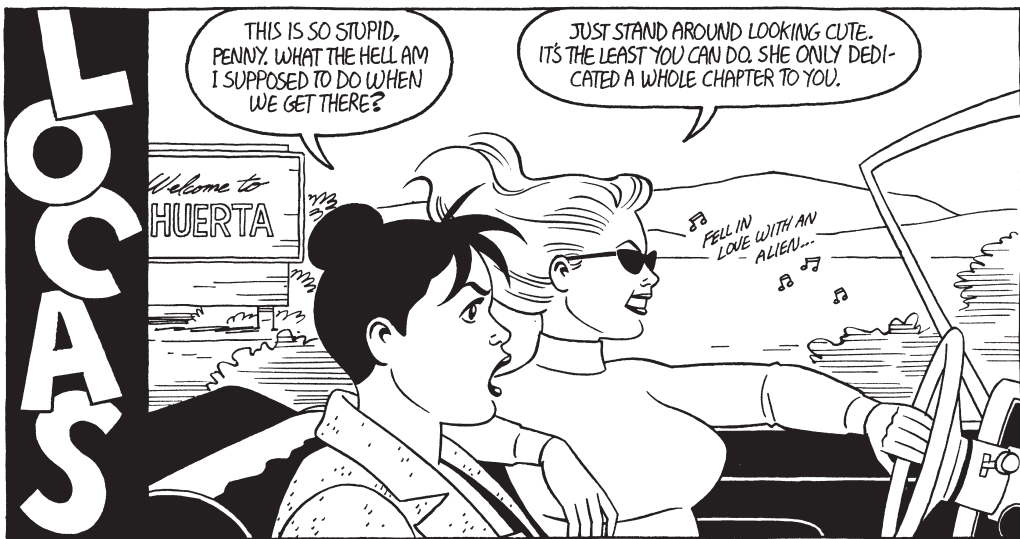


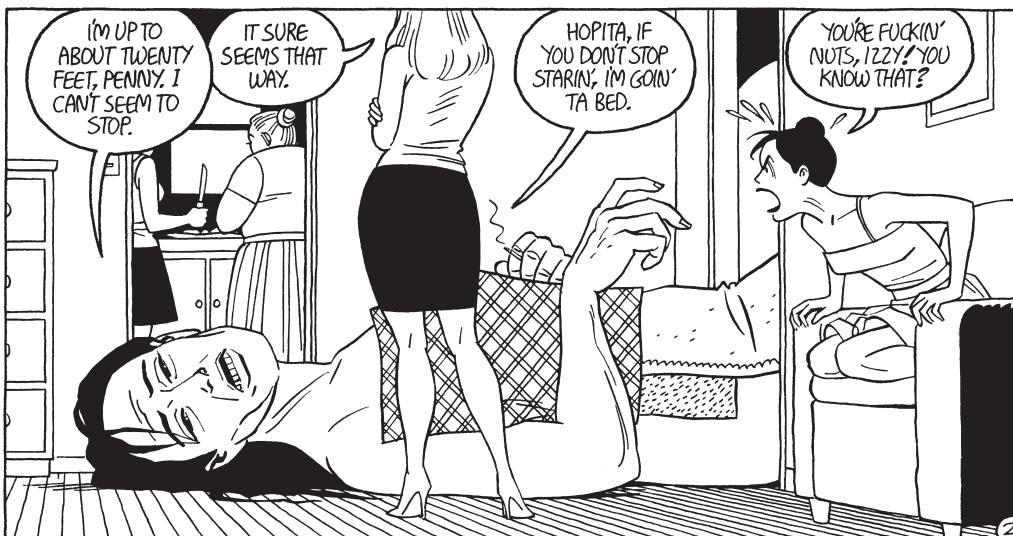
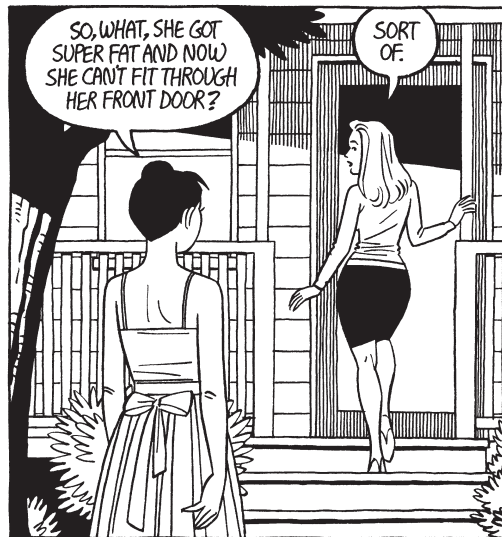


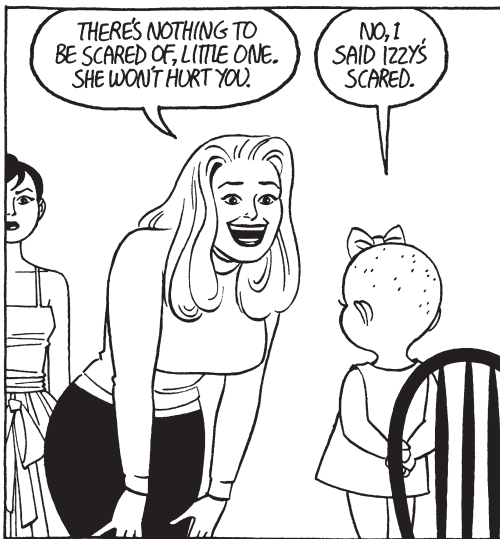
GORDA - FAT GIRL





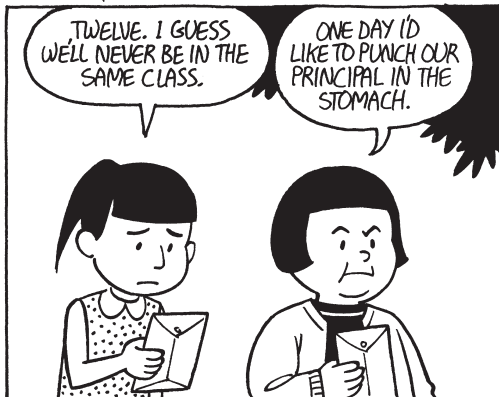
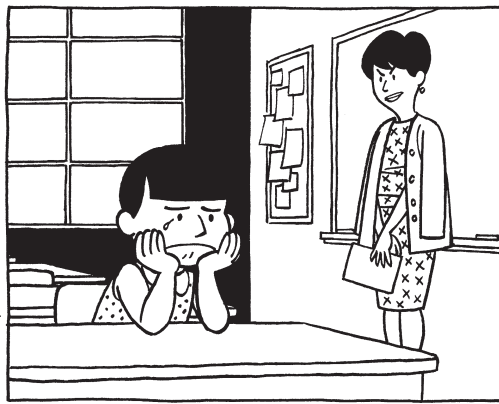


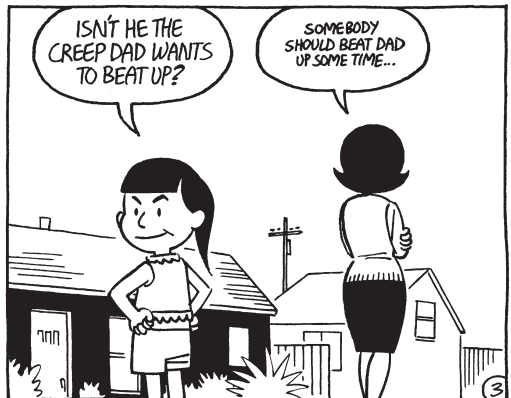
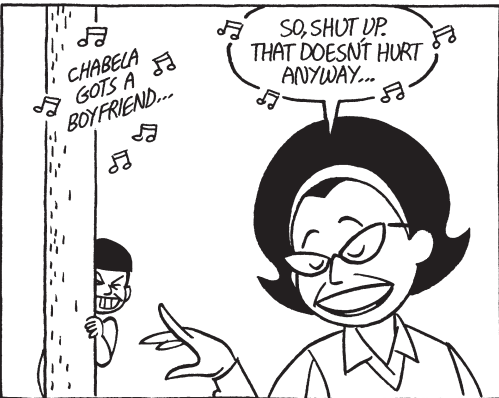
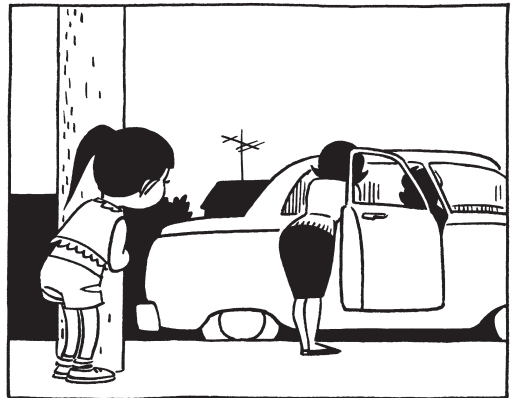
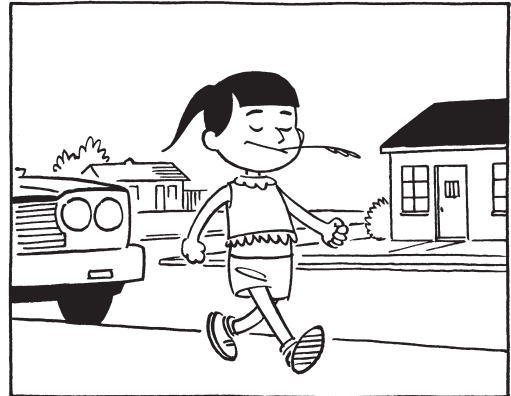
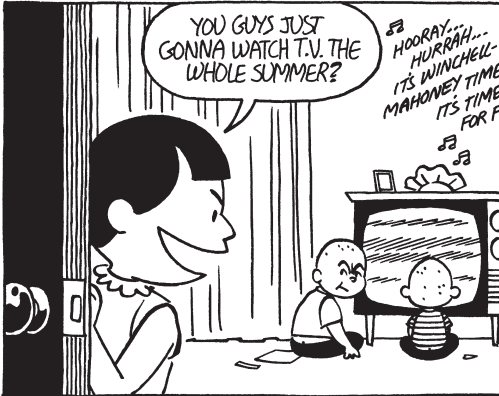
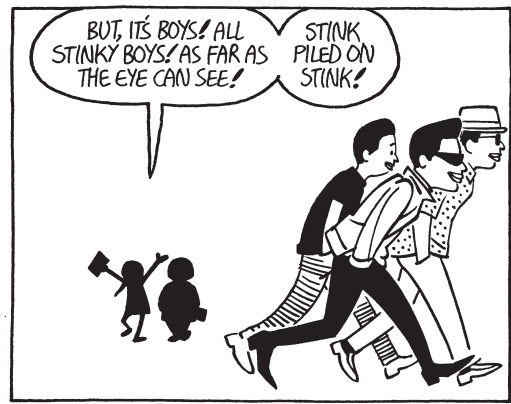
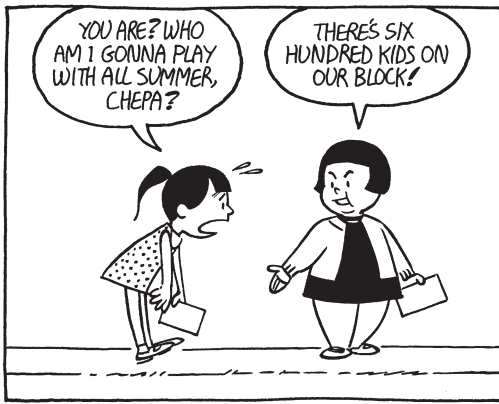


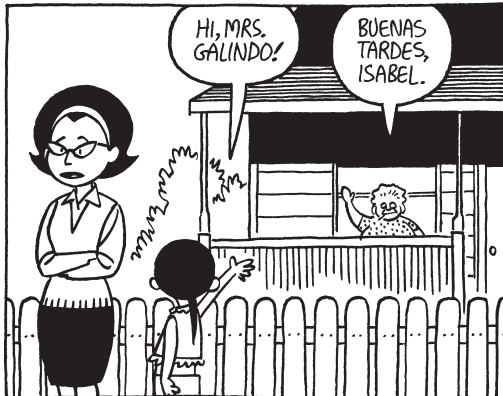


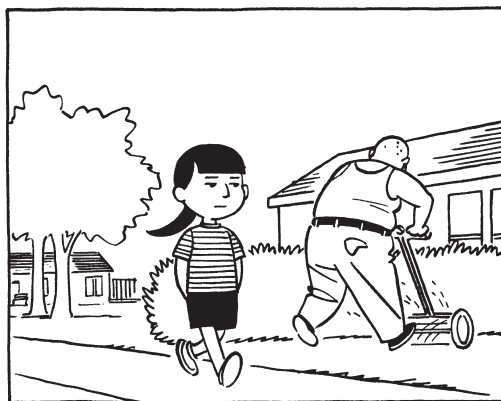
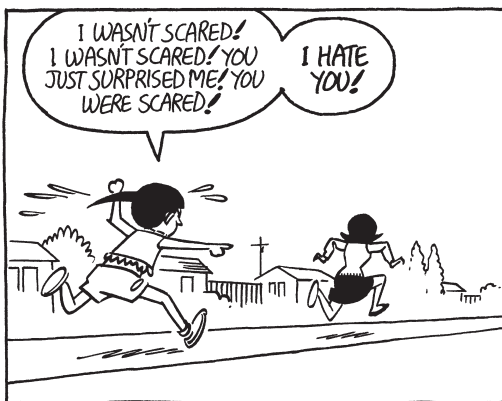
HOME SCHOOL

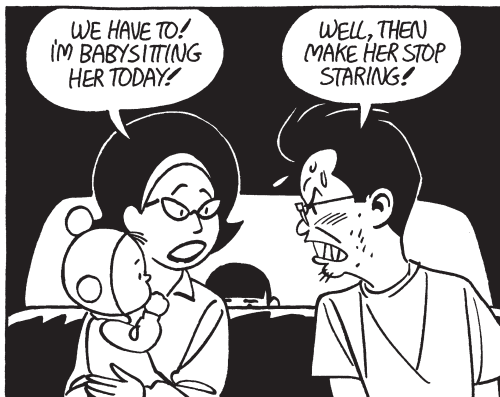
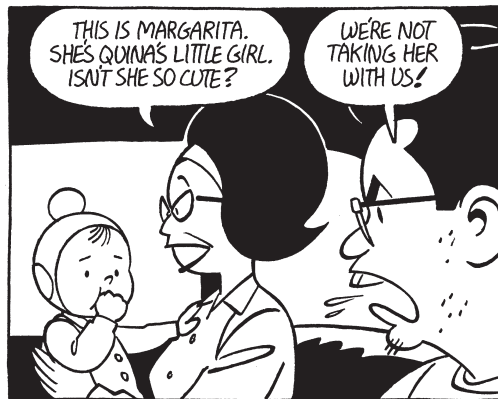
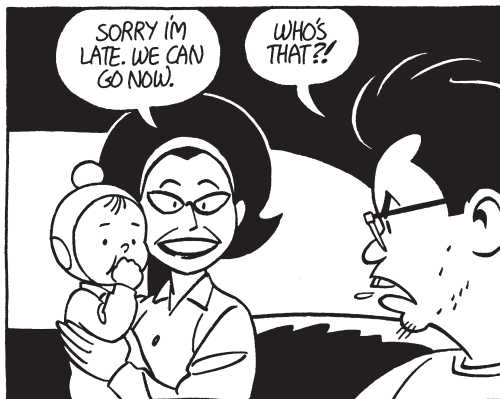


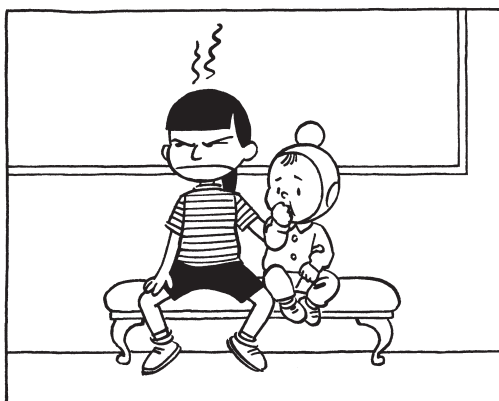
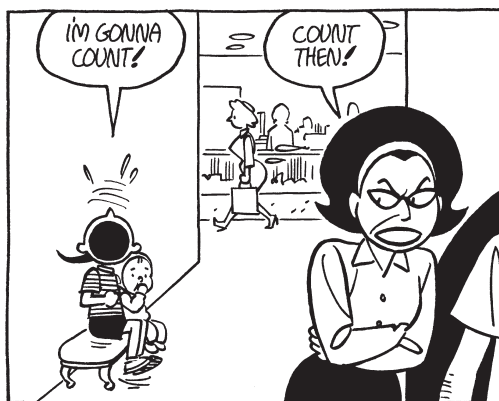
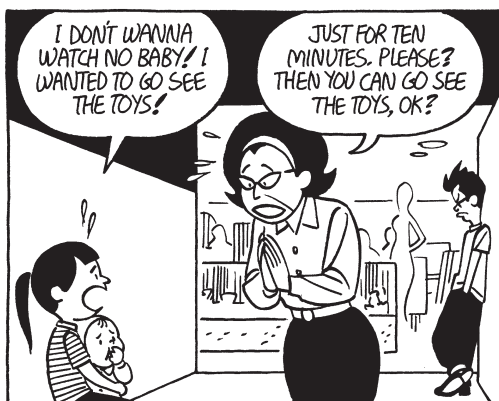
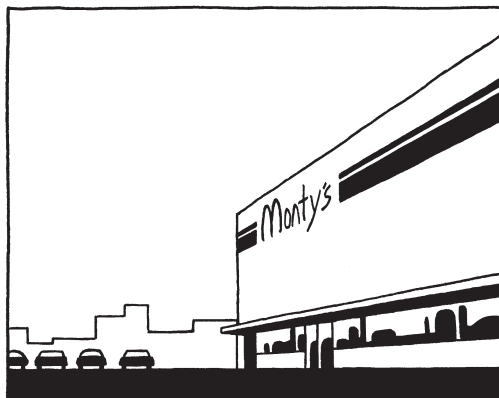
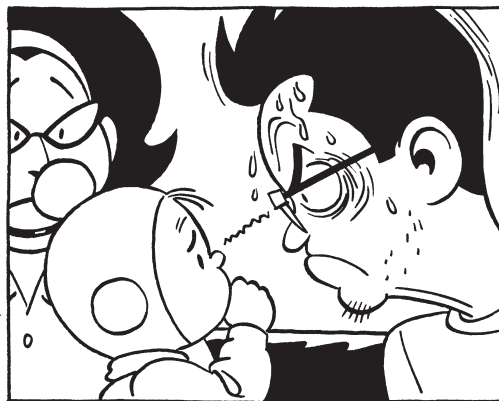
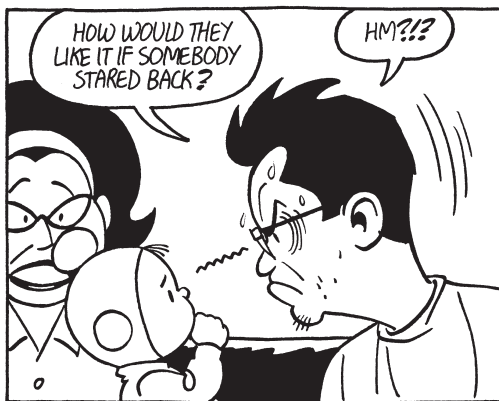


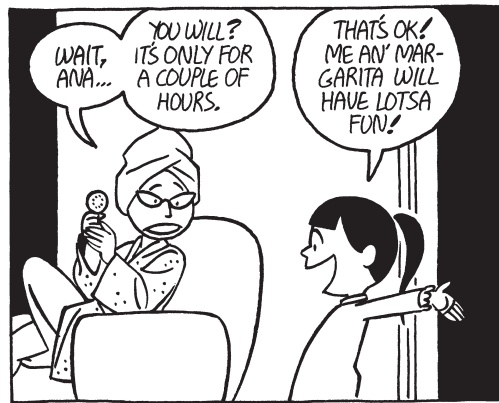
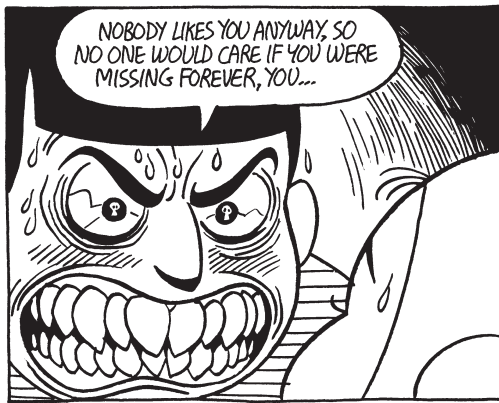


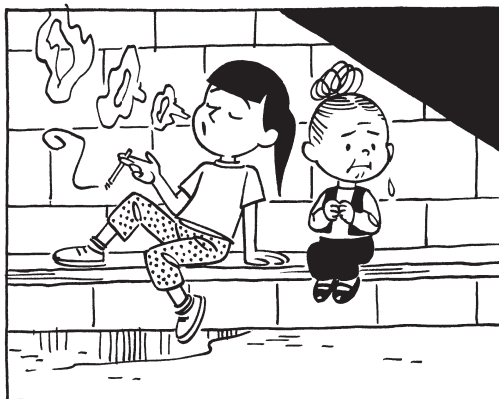
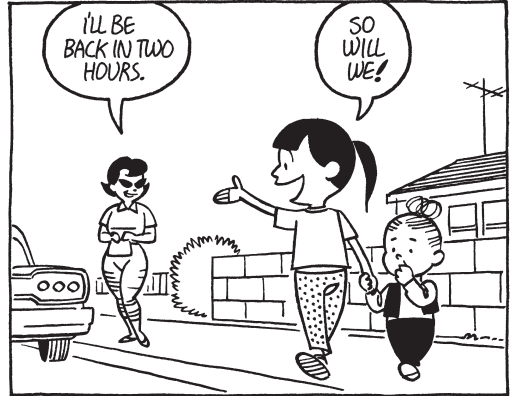
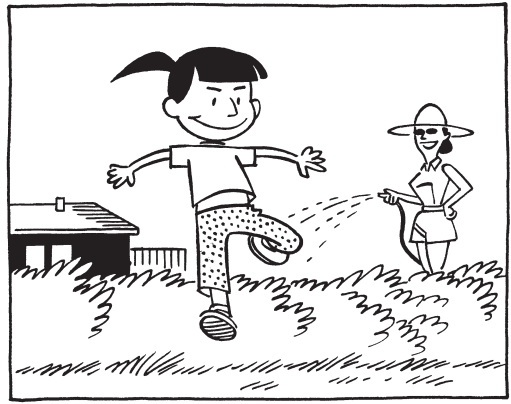


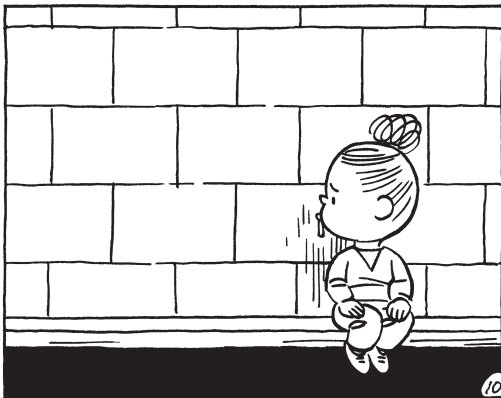
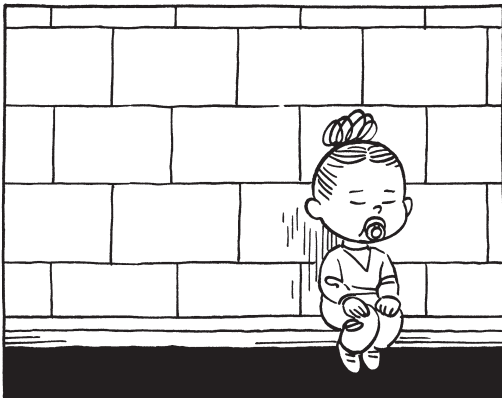
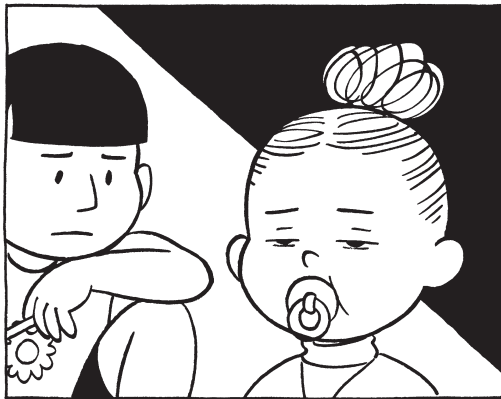
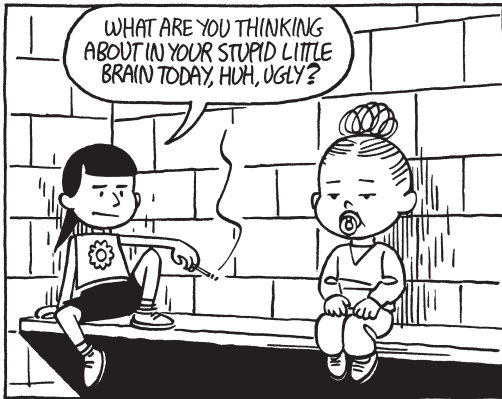
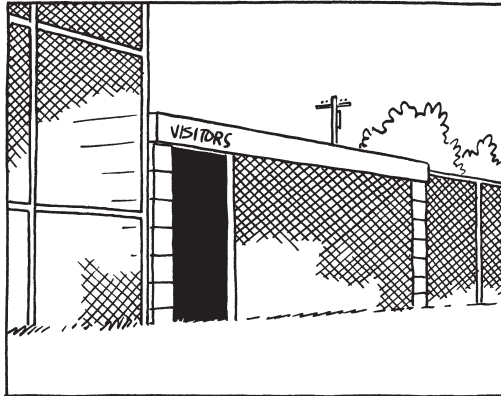
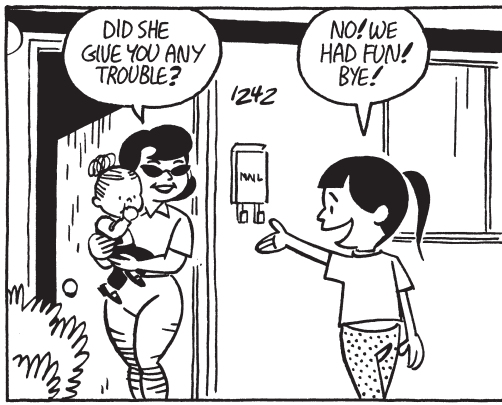


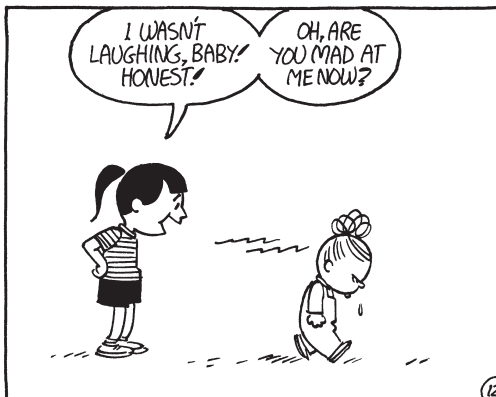
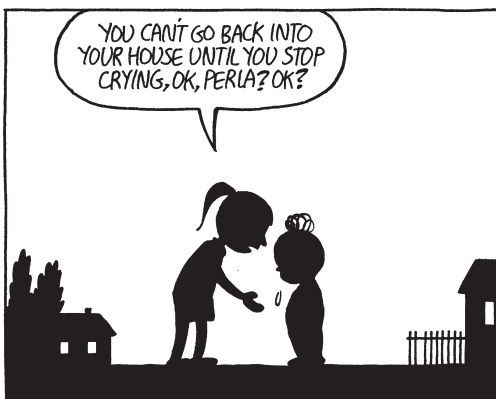
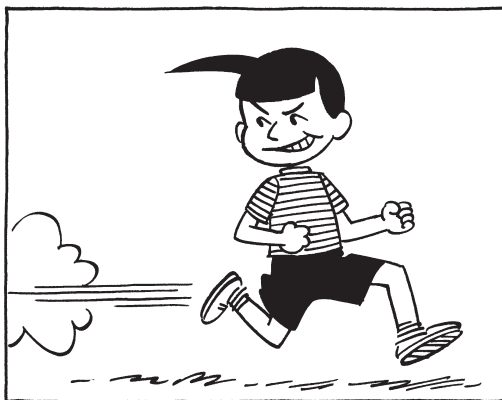


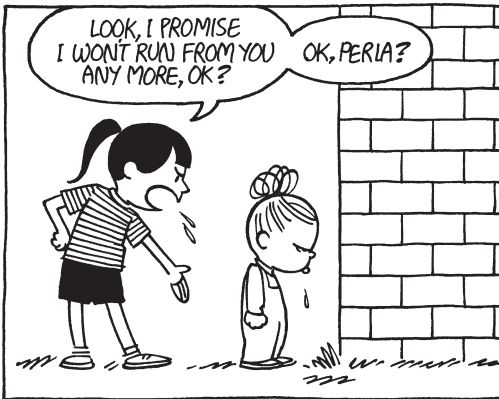


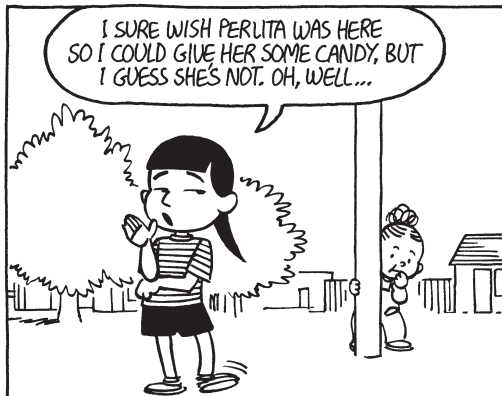


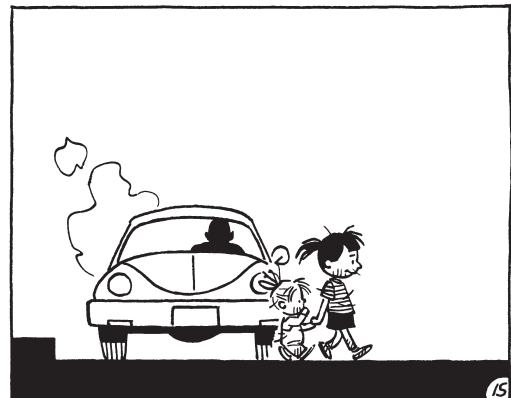
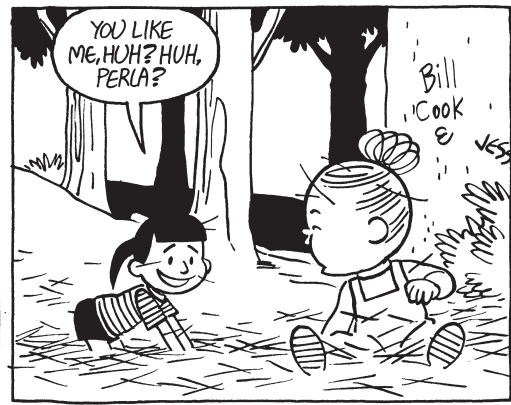


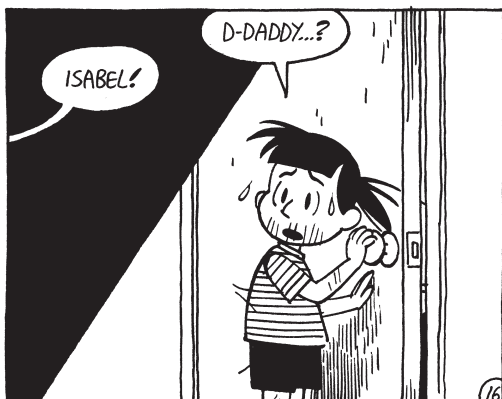
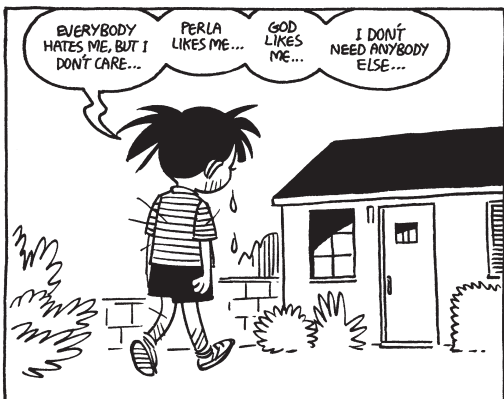
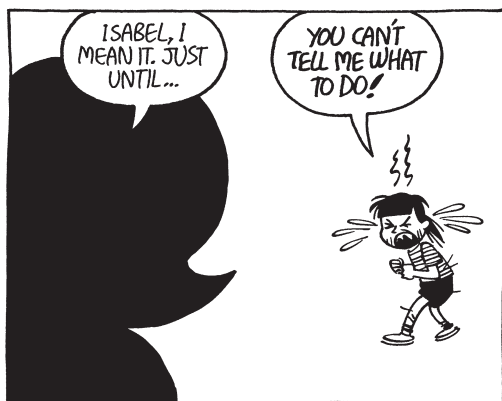
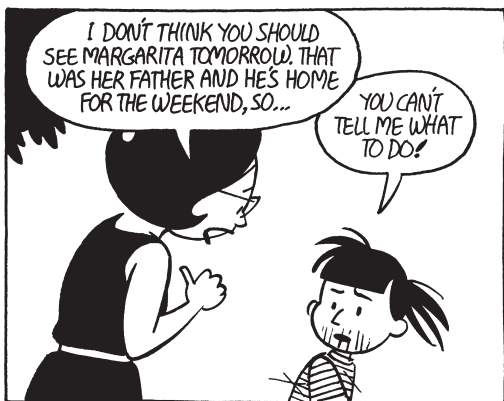
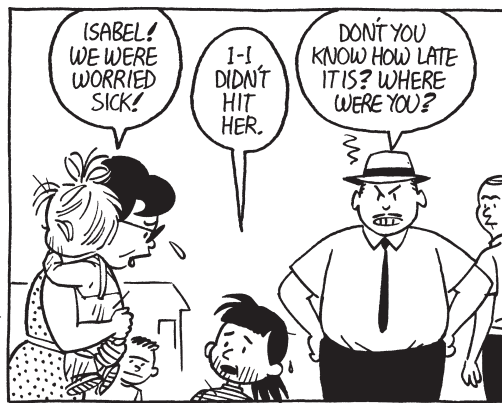


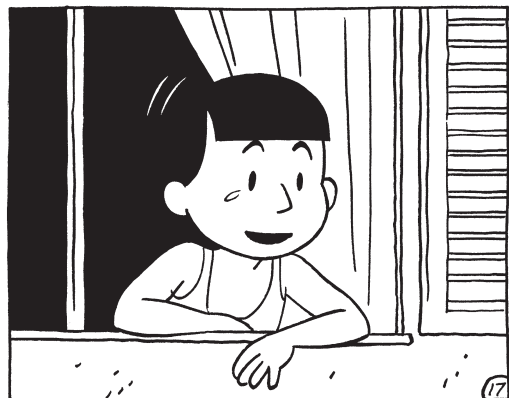
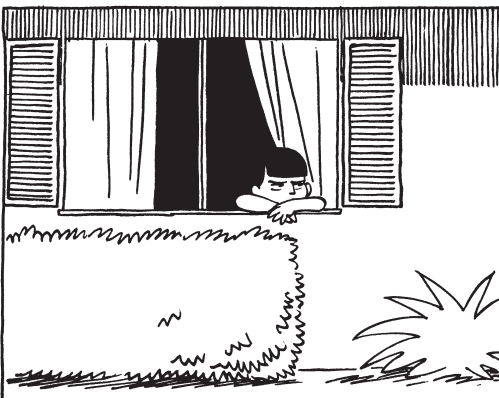
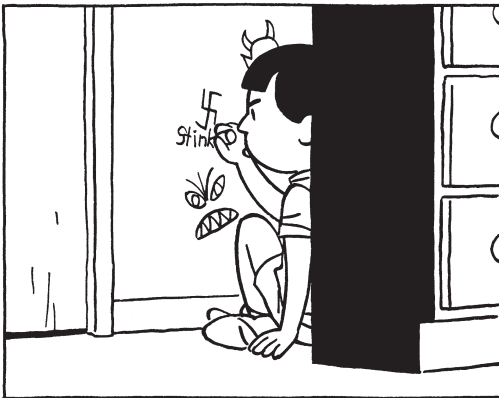
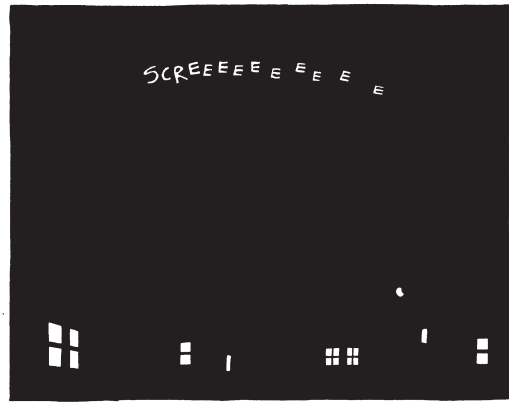
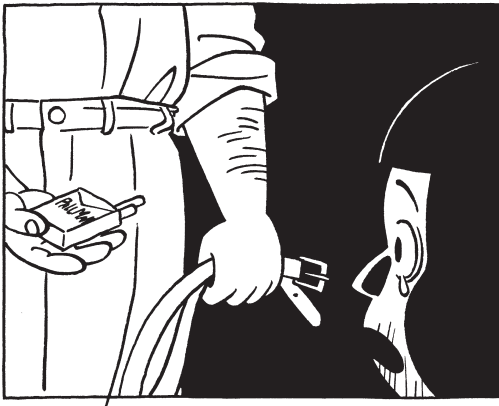


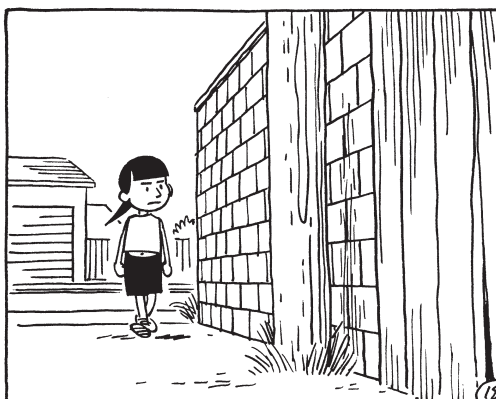
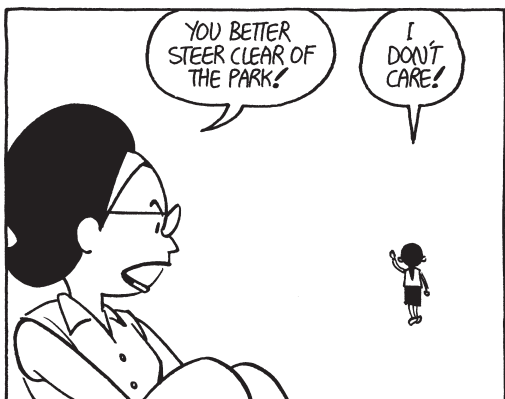
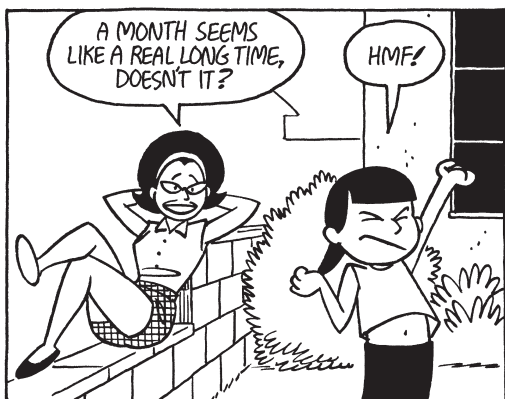
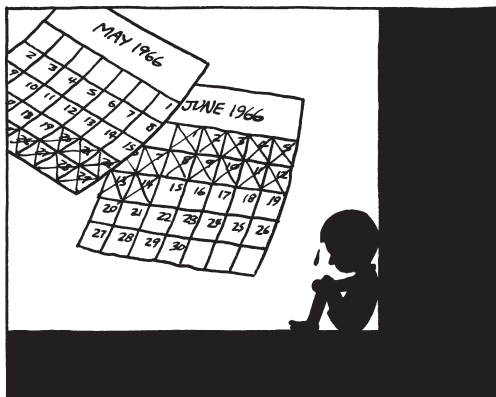
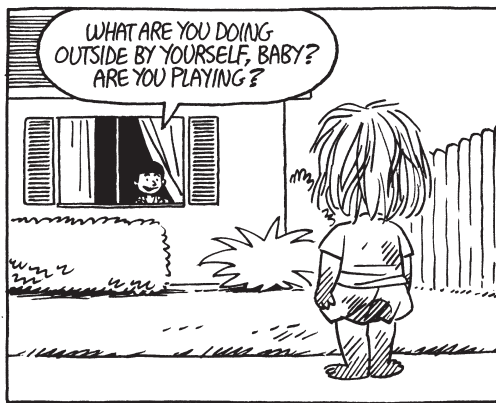


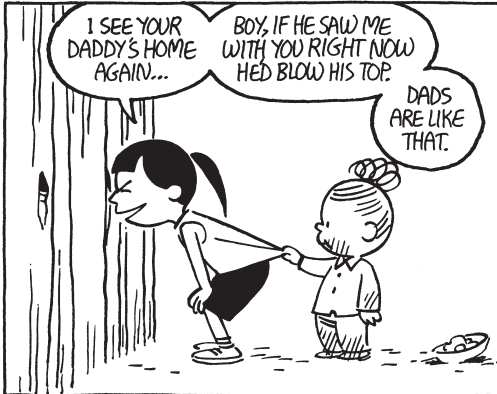
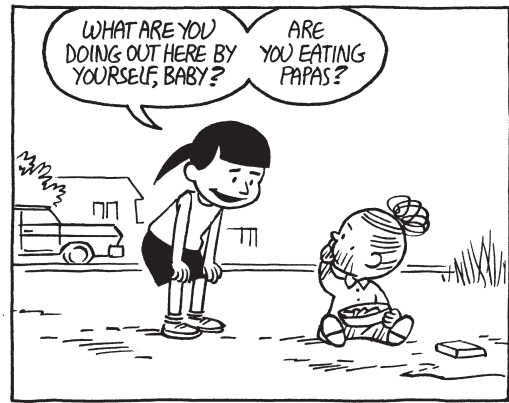
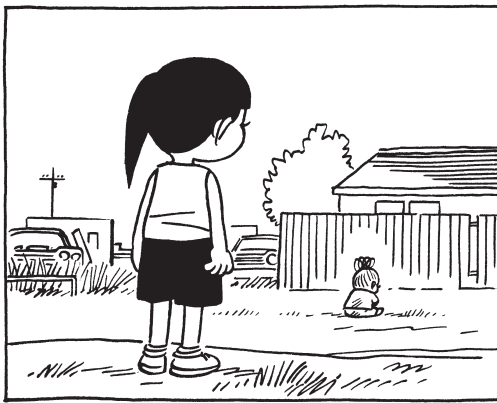


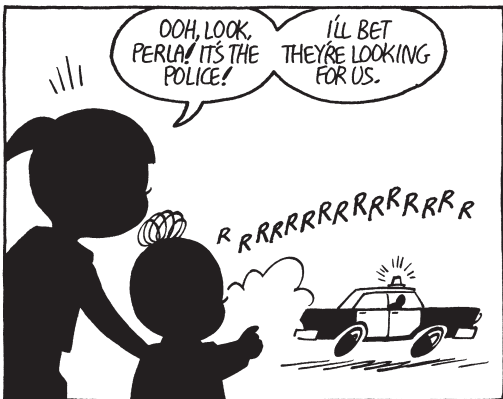
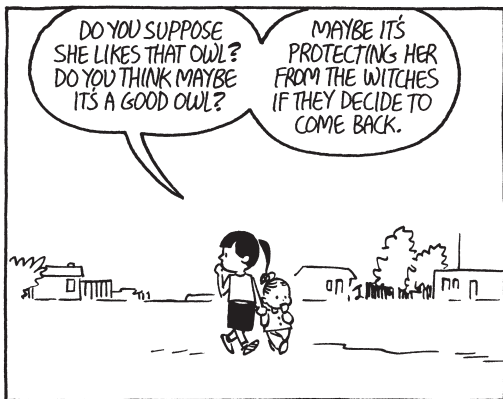
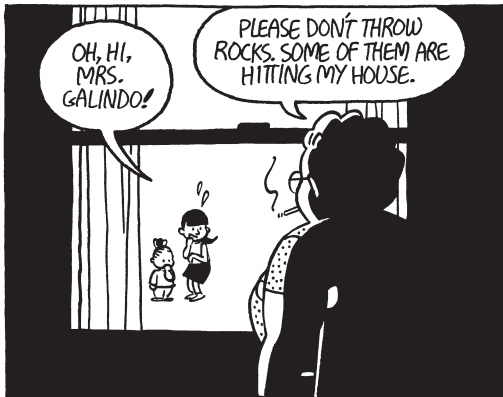


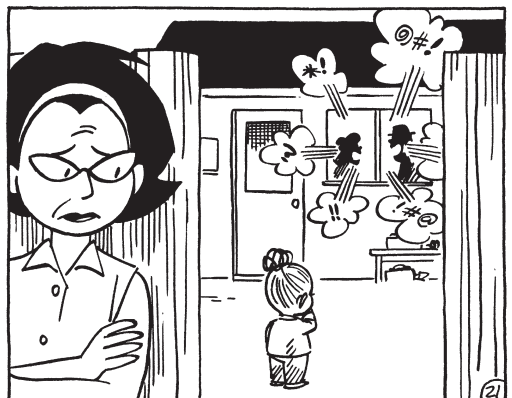
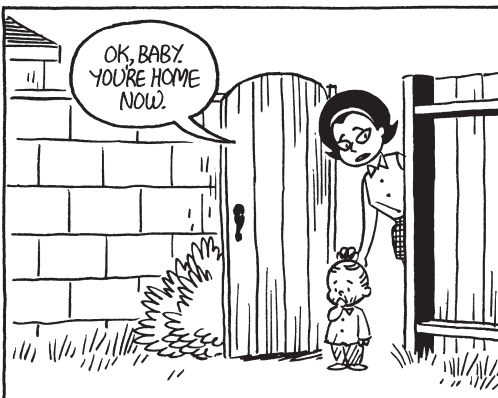
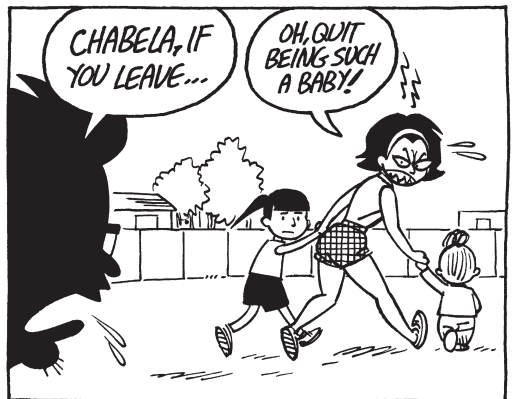
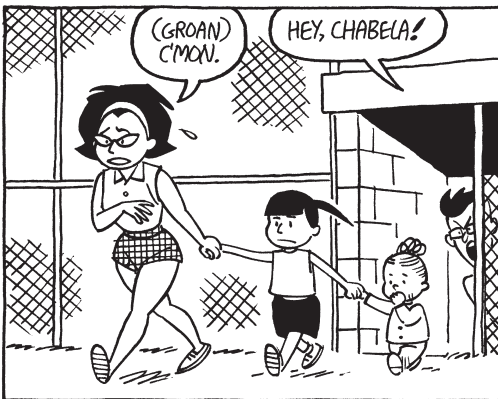
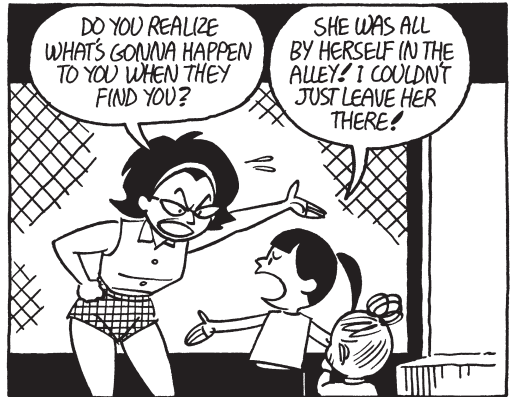


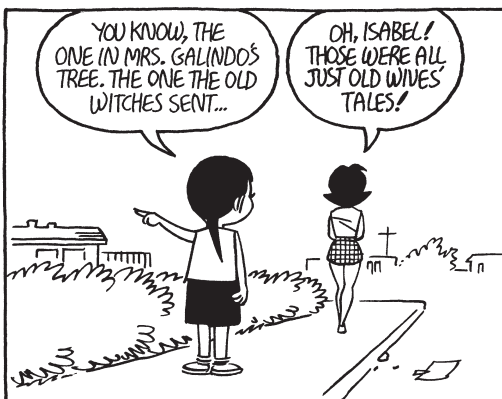
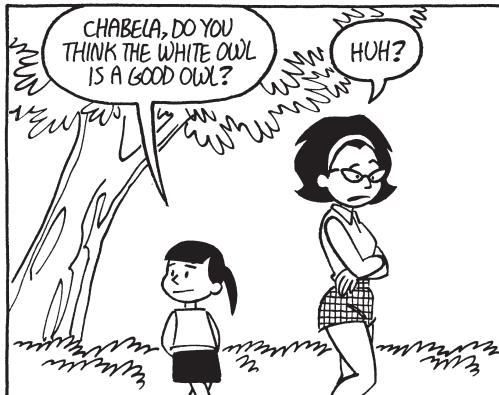
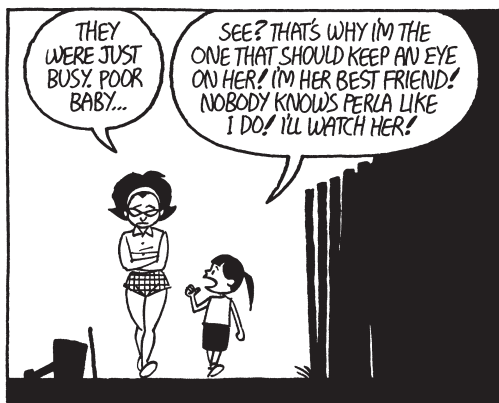




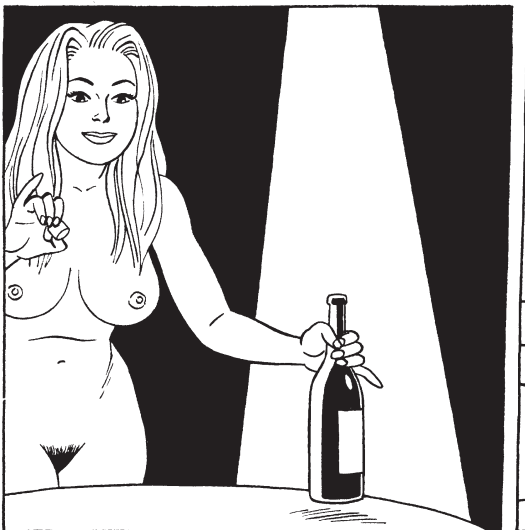
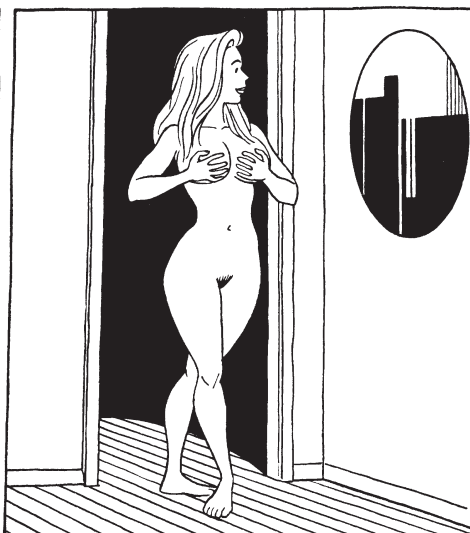




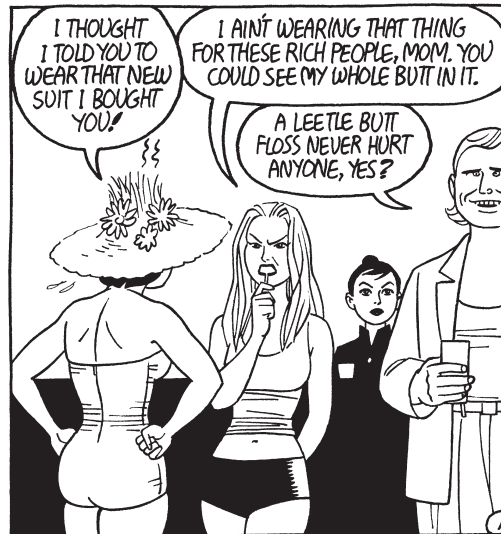
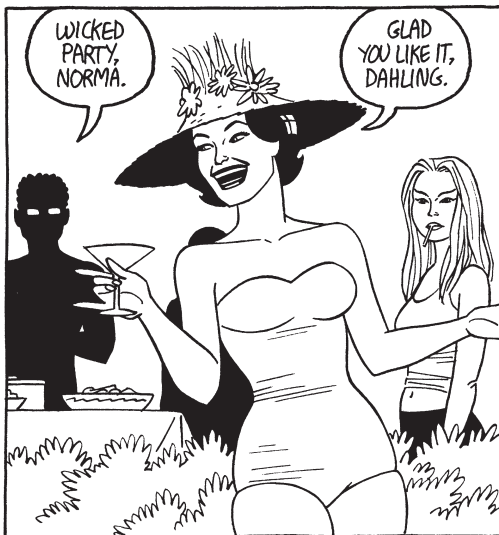
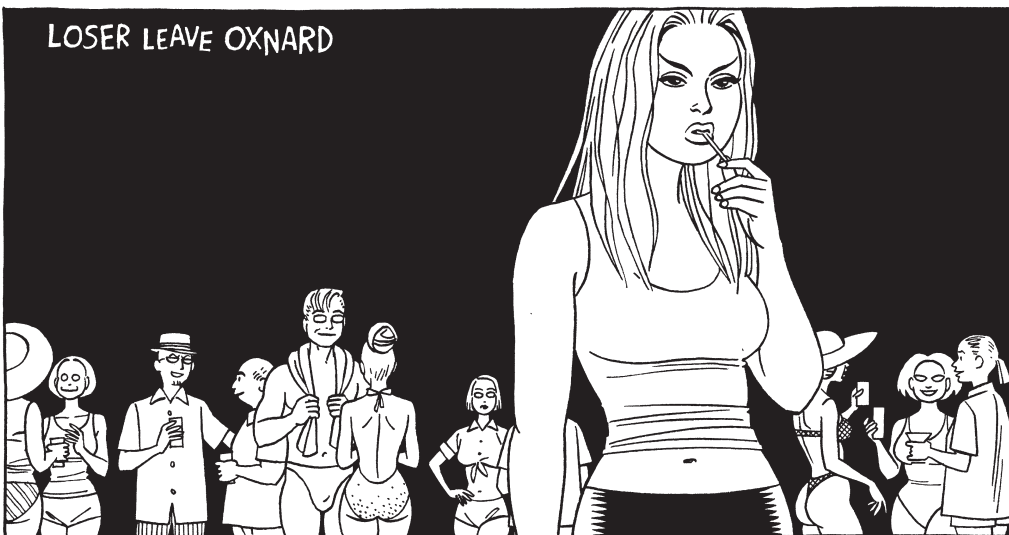


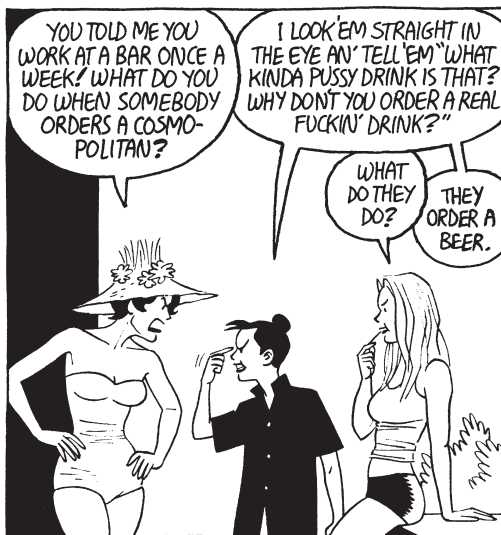


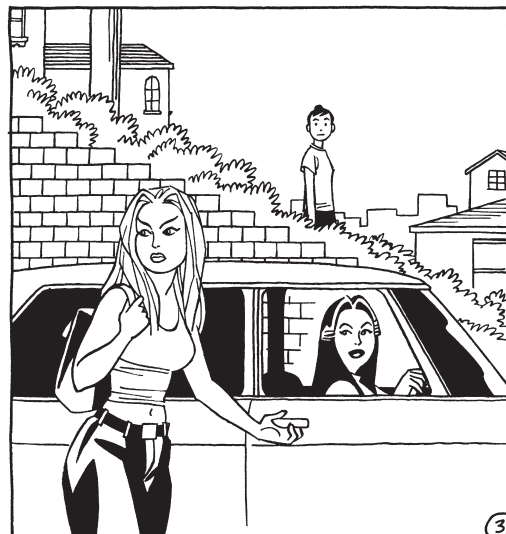


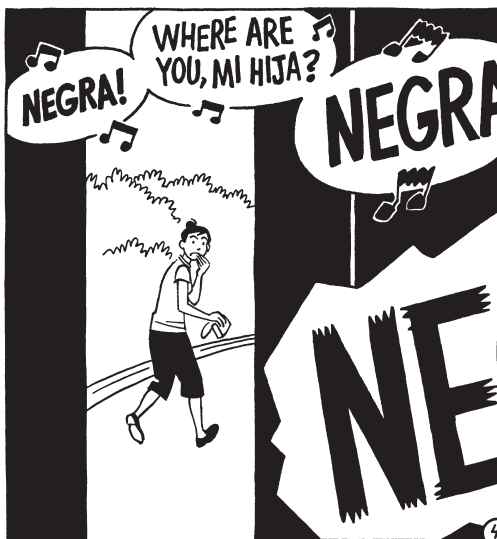


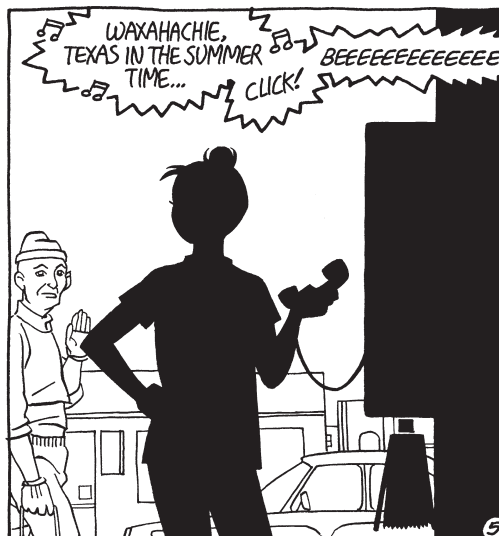
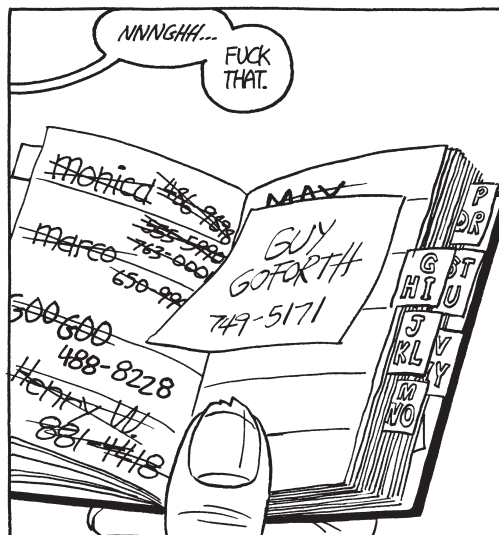
LOSER LEAVE OXNARD

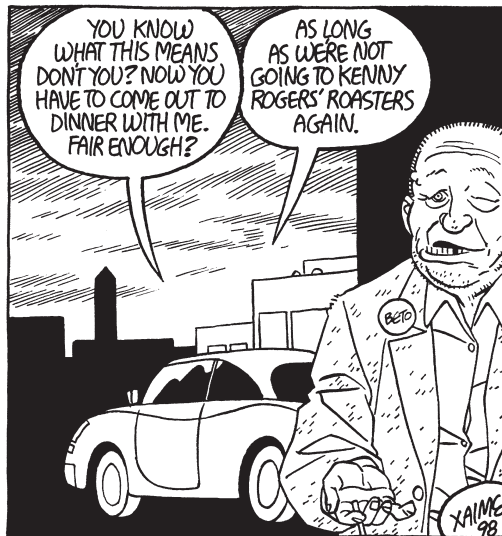
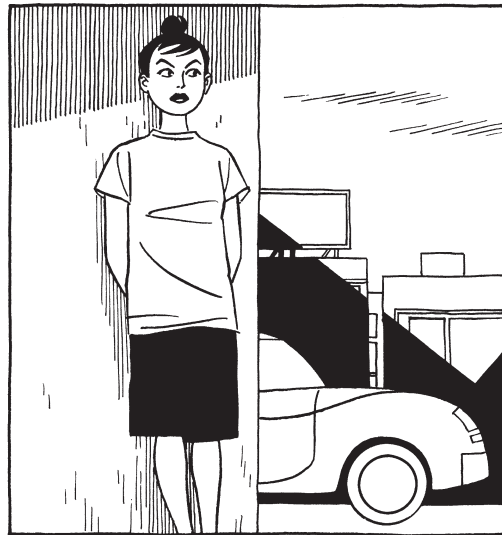


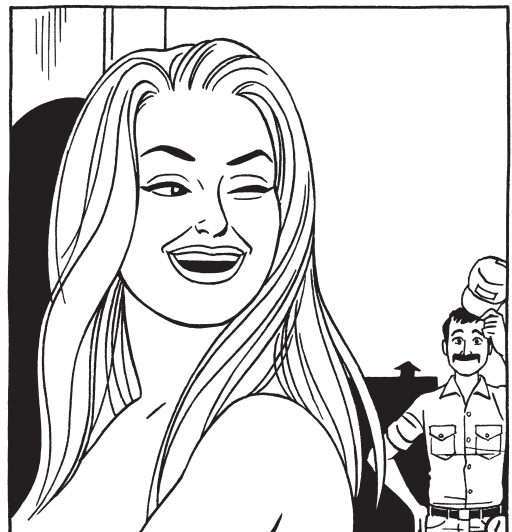
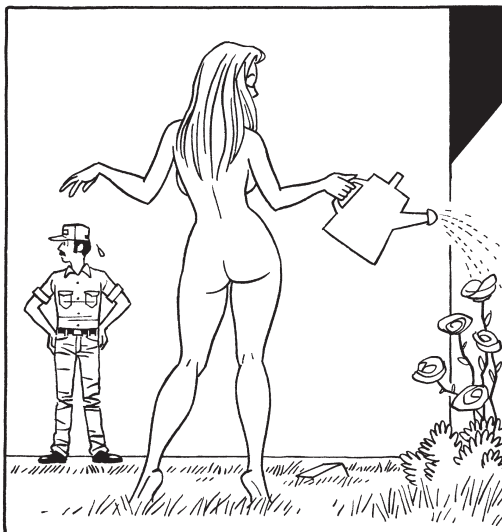
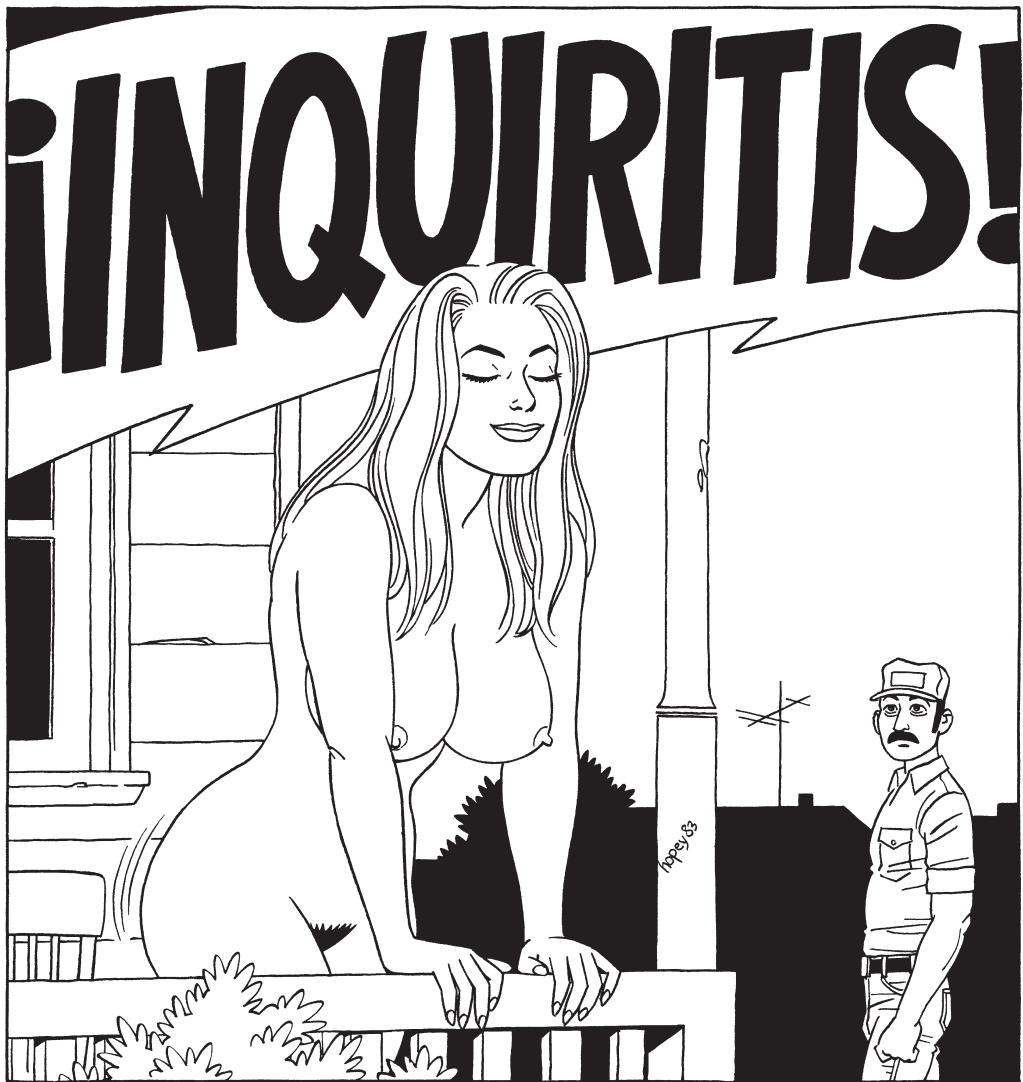


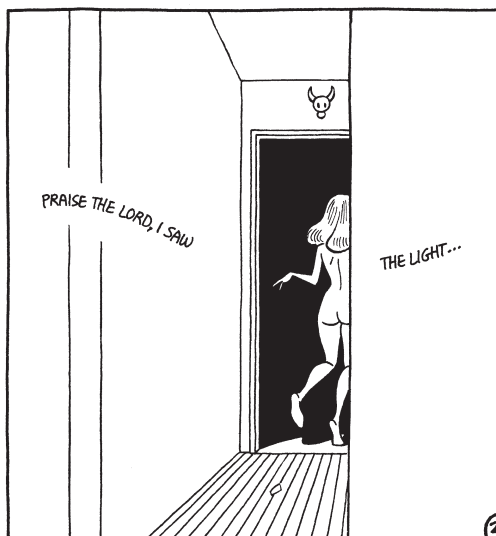
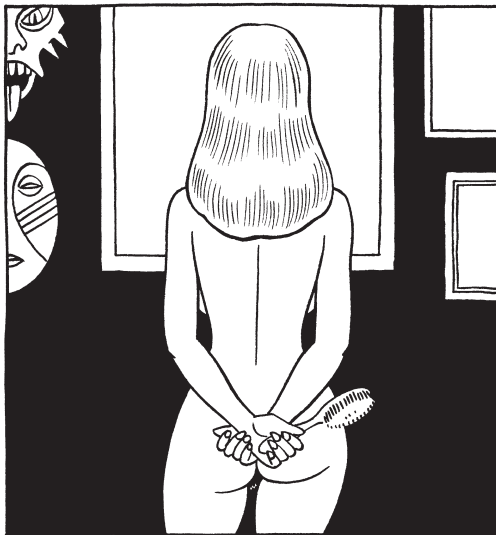
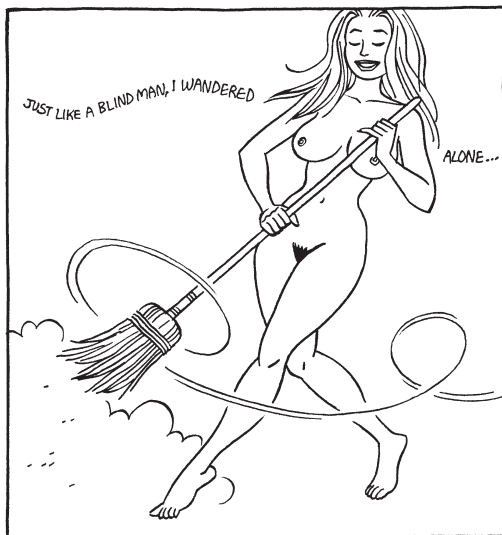


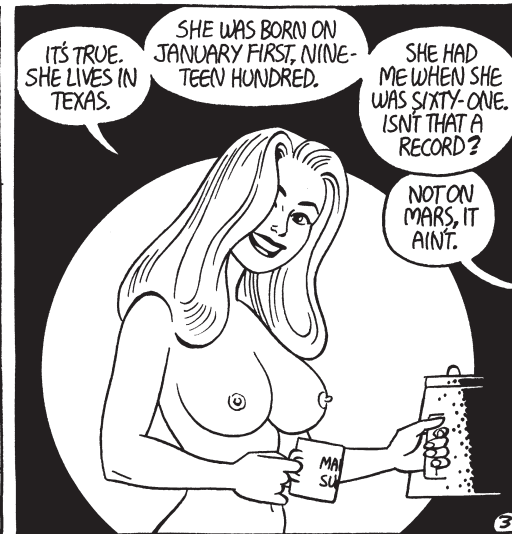
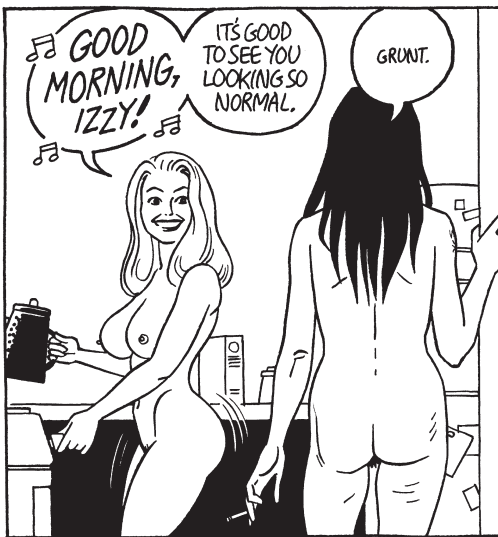


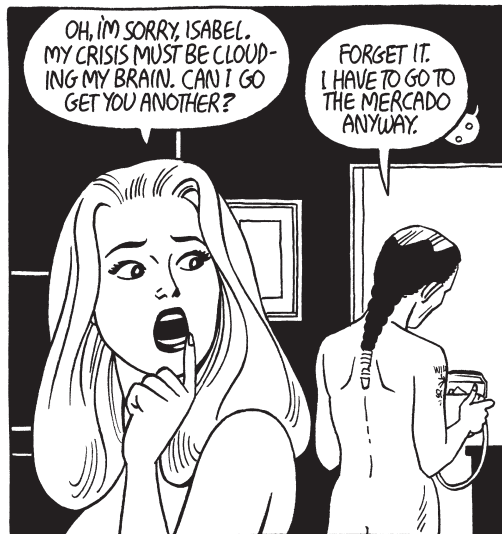
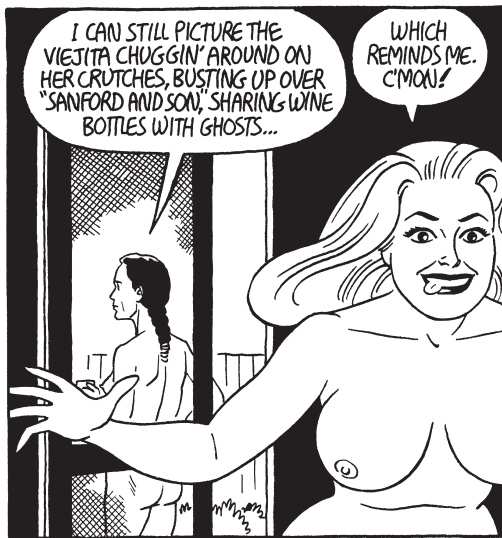
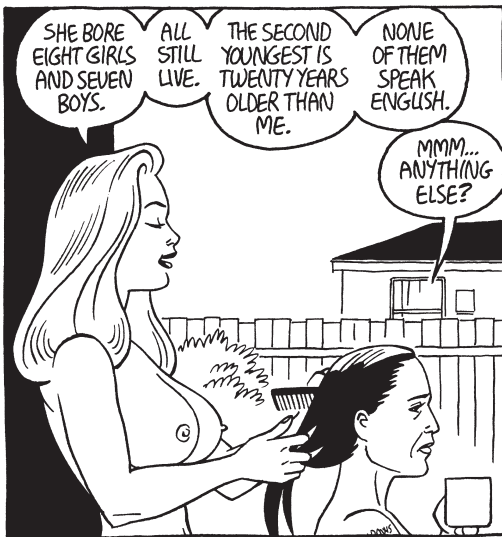


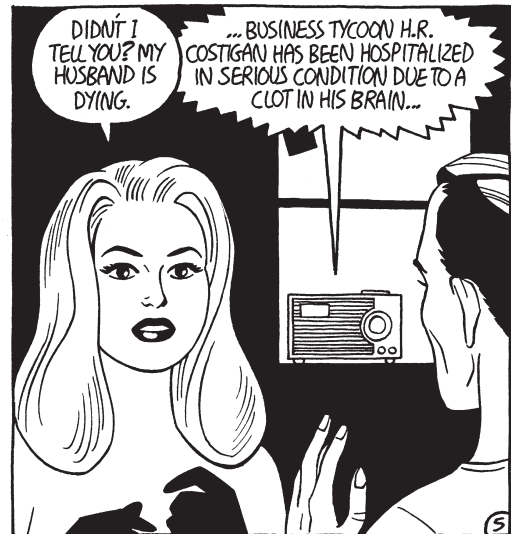
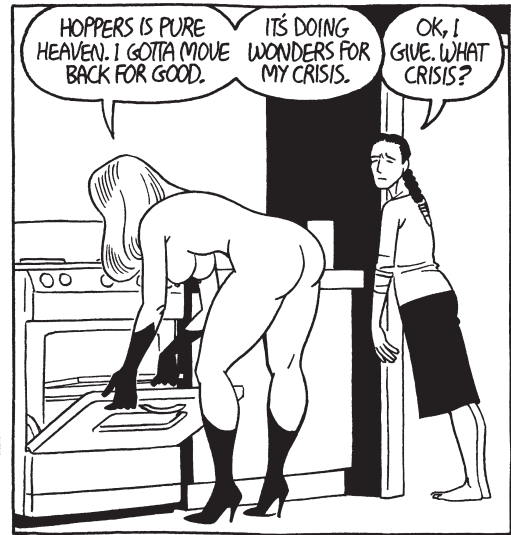
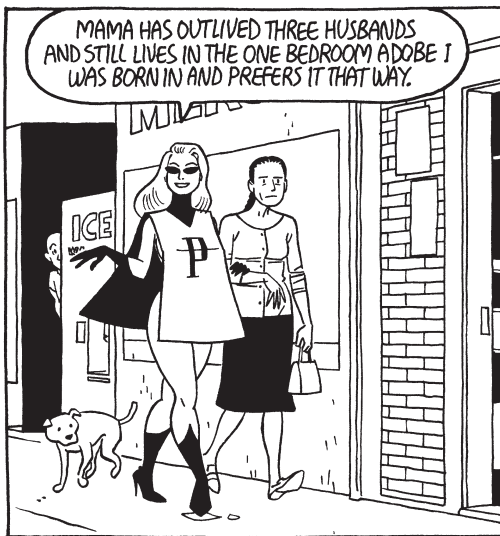


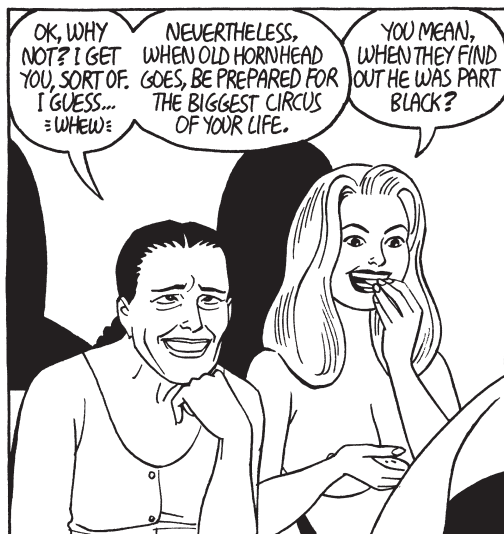
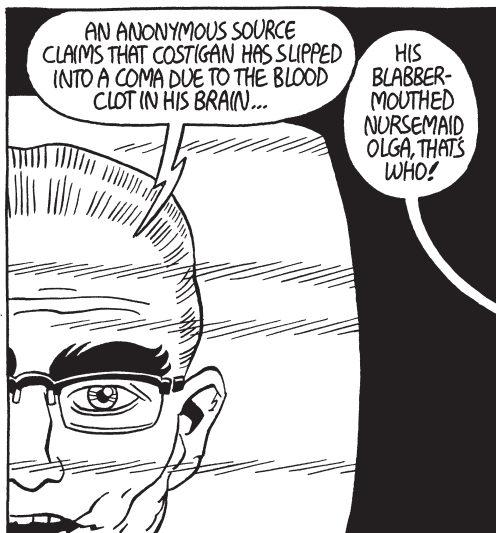












ONE MORE LADIES' MAN

BEEN FEELING EXTRA SORRY FOR MYSELF LATELY SO JOE FROM WORK SUGGESTS WE HIT UP A TITTY BAR TONIGHT. SAYS IT'LL DO ME GOOD.



I SUGGEST CHEETAH TORPEDA'S. JOE COMPLAINS IT AIN'T FULLY NUDE. I SAY AT LEAST WE CAN DRINK THERE AND IT'S FREE ON WEEKNIGHTS. IT'S ALSO A MERE THREE BLOCKS FROM MY HOUSE.



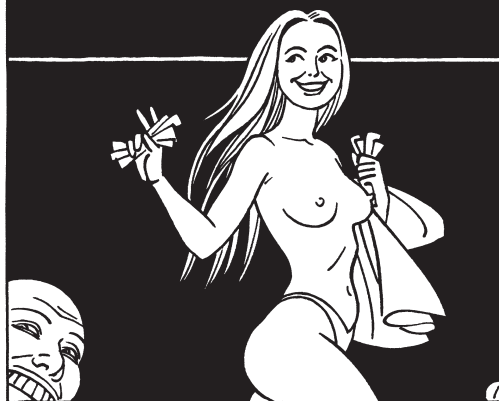
LOOKS PRETTY FULL FOR A SCHOOL NIGHT. THE BIKERS ARE HERE HOGGING THE POOL TABLE. THE LESBIANS ARE HOGGING THE STRIPPERS. THE COCKTAIL GUYS ARE HOGGING THE FUN OF GOING TO A STRIP BAR.



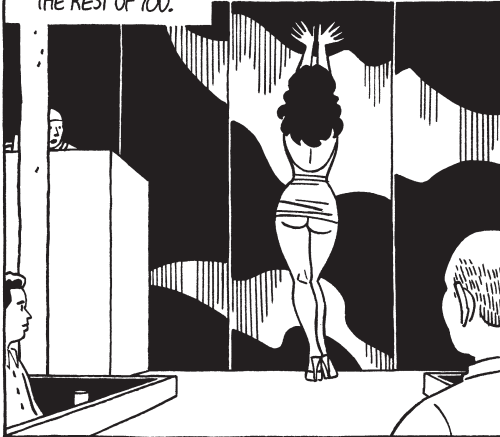
I PLAY IT THRIFTY (CHEAP) BY TIPPING THE DANCERS A BUCK EACH. JOE ONLY TIPS THE ONES HE LIKES. HE GETS UP AND WANDERS AWAY FOR THE ONES HE DOESN'T.



GOTTA ADMIT, THE QUALITY OF DANCERS THESE DAYS HAS PICKED UP A GOOD PERCENTAGE. OR AM I JUST LESS PICKY IN MY OLD AGE? OR MAYBE I SHOULDN'T USE BUMPERS AS A YARDSTICK.



HOLD UP. WHO'S NEXT? NEVER SEEN YOU BEFORE. VELVET, HUH? DANCING TO "SHOOK ME ALL NIGHT LONG." AN OLD STANDBY. SO FAR SO GOOD. LET'S SEE THE REST OF YOU.



OH, SHIT! OK, TAKE ME HOME, RIGHT NOW. BREAK MY HEART. MAKE MY LIFE MISERABLE. HOLY FUCKING COW, GIRL!



SHE DOESN'T SEEM TO BE THE CROWD FAVORITE. GOOD, SHE'S ALL MINE. MAYBE IT'S HER BREATH. MAYBE IT'S 'CAUSE SHE AINT BLONDE. TOO BAD. FOOLS.



ALL DONE? OH, LORD. IF I ONLY HAD ENOUGH FOR A TABLE DANCE. SHIT, AND I'M DOWN TO MY LAST DOLLAR! GO AHEAD, SHOOT ME NOW.



WHAT WOULD I SAY TO HER, ANYWAY? "DUH, I'DA GIVEN YA TWO DOLLAHS, BUT..." AH, I'D STILL HAVE GOTTEN THE SAME COLD RESPONSE I'M GETTING RIGHT NOW. MOAN...



OK, NO MORE DOUGH, TIME TO GO. HAVE FUN WITH MY FUTURE WIFE WHILE YOU STILL CAN, YOU FUCKS. SHIT, SHIT, WHIMPER, WHINE...



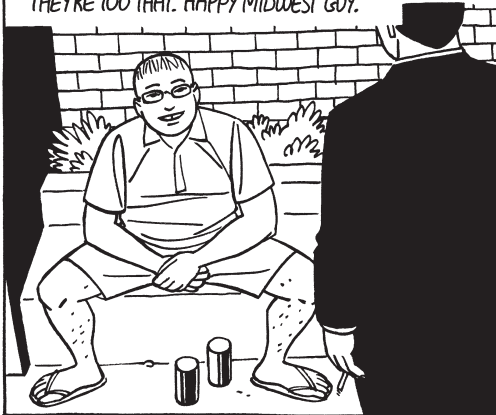
OUTSIDE, I BITCH HOW UNFAIR LIFE IS TILL JOE REMINDS ME HE HAS TO DRIVE TO HUNTINGTON PARK. OK, THANKS, JOE. A LOTTA GOOD THIS NIGHT DID ME. ARGHH!



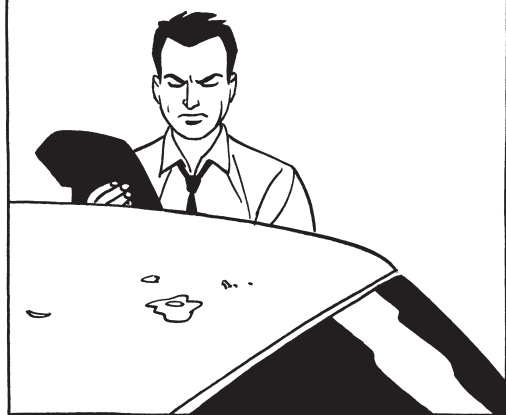
THREE BLOCKS LATER AND I'M HOME. TOO SHORT A WALK TO GET OVER HOW I FEEL. FRUSTRATED, BITTER, HORNY. ANGRY, HORNY. CANT GO BACK. ITS AFTER TWO SO THE JOINT IS CLOSED.



I RUN INTO A GUY WHO LIVES IN MY BUILDING. I TRY TO DAZZLE HIM WITH MY VELVET EXPERIENCE. IN RETURN, HE GOES ON HOW I DONT WANT A GIRL LIKE THAT OR ANY GIRL IN L.A. FOR THAT MATTER. THEYRE TOO THIS, THEYRE TOO THAT. HAPPY MIDWEST GUY.



SO, I'M OUTTA HERE. DONT FEEL LIKE BEING AT HOME SO I'LL JUST DRIVE. BUT WHERE DO I GO? I DUNNO. WHO CARES? JUST GO. ANYWHERE'S GOTTA BE BETTER THAN HERE.



PICKED UP A BUTTERFINGER AND AN AIR FRESHENER FOR MY CAR AT ONE OF THE MILLION 7-11'S IN TOWN. MAYBE I CAN GO HOME NOW.



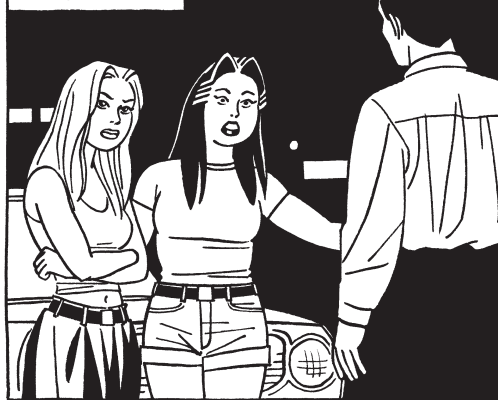
ON THE WAY BACK I SPOT TWO YOUNG LADIES ON THE SIDE OF THE ROAD NEXT TO WHAT LOOKS LIKE A BROKEN DOWN CAR. THEY TRY TO WAVE ME DOWN.



AT FIRST I PASS THEM BY BUT TEN SECONDS LATER I'M FLIPPING A BITCH AND HEADING BACK TO THEM. HEY, THIS NIGHT MAY TURN OUT AFTER ALL.



TO MY SURPRISE (CHAGRIN) THEY CAN'T BE MORE THAN FIFTEEN OR SIXTEEN. ONLY ONE OF THEM SPEAKS. SHE ASKS ME IF I WOULD HELP THEM PUT GAS IN THEIR CAR. YES, OFFICER. I ONLY HELPED THEM PUT GAS IN THEIR CAR, YESSIR.



THEY HAVE A FULL CAN OF GAS BUT THEIR MAKESHIFT CARDBOARD FUNNEL DOESN'T WORK. THE TALKER ASKS IF I WOULD TAKE THEM TO HER BOYFRIENDS. I COMPLY WITH A PINCH OF APPREHENSION.



WE DRIVE INTO ANGELINO HEIGHTS TO LOVERBOY'S HOUSE. THEY BOTH EXIT THE CAR AND THE TALKER TELLS ME TO WAIT. PRETTY BOLD, I THINK. SO, WHAT DO I DO ABOUT IT? I WAIT.



FIVE MINUTES LATER THEY RETURN AND THE TALKER TELLS ME THE BOYFRIENDS ASLEEP AND THEN ASKS (ORDERS) ME TO DRIVE TO A PAY PHONE SO SHE CAN CALL HER MOM. BY THIS TIME I'M PRETTY ANNOYED, BUT I DO IT ANYWAY.



WE STOP AT 7-11 NUMBER ONE MILLION AND TWO. THE TALKER (OL' BOSSY) JUMPS OUT TO USE THE PAY PHONE AND LEAVES HER SILENT PARTNER TO WAIT WITH POOR PISSED OFF PUT-UPON ME.



AT FIRST I'M GONNA PROTEST THE SITUATION TO HER AND THEN CONTINUE TO DUMP ON HER THE REST OF MY ANGER, BITTERNESS AND FRUSTRATION, BUT THEN I DECIDE AGAINST IT.



THEN I'M GONNA TRY TO BE CHARMING AND CHAT HER UP BUT I CAN'T HELP FEEL SHE SEES ME AS AN OLD, PERVERTED, LONELY MAN. WE SIT FOR ANOTHER FIVE MINUTES OR SO IN PITIFUL SILENCE.



OL' BOSSY FINALLY RETURNS AND TELLS HER SIDEKICK THAT HER MOM SAYS TO FORGET THEIR CAR TILL MORNING AND HAVE ME BRING THEM HOME. THEN SHE ADDS THAT HER MOM YELLED AT HER TO "AT LEAST THANK THE MAN!" BOSS LOOKS MY WAY BUT SAYS NOTHING.



AS I WATCH THEM RUN INTO THE HOUSE, I AMUSE MYSELF BY HOW I'D PRESENT MY STORY TO SOMEBODY. EVER HEAR THE ONE ABOUT THE OLD, PERVERTED, LONELY MAN WHO WAS BOSSSED AROUND BY TWO CHILDREN?



IT'S 3:35 AM AND I'M STILL NOT READY TO BE HOME. I TAKE A SHORT SPIN BY THE ALL NIGHT DENNY'S ON SUNSET. THAT'S THE ONE WHERE I SAW ICE-T.



I'M SEATED IN A BOOTH WHERE I CAN VIEW THE ENTIRE CITY CAPSULATED IN THIS BUILDING. WHEN I RECOGNIZE SOMEONE IN THE DISTANCE. IT'S MY OLD GIRLFRIEND'S GIRLFRIEND. HOPEY'S HER NAME.



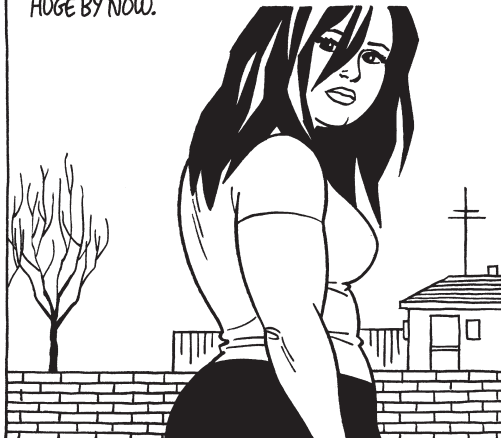
AND WHO'S THAT GUY SHE'S WITH? HE'S PRACTICALLY PROPOSING. HUH? MAGGIE ALWAYS TOLD ME HOPEY WAS A LESBIAN. JUST SHOWS TO GO YA.



WHAT A BURN. MAGGIE DUMPS ME FOR THE LITTLE MUNCHKIN AND THE LITTLE MUNCHKIN GOES AHEAD AND GOES STRAIGHT. FULLY? PARTLY? HARD TO TELL.



HEY, COULD THIS MEAN MAGGIE LIVES IN TOWN? ALL I GOTTA DO IS ASK, HUH? HELL, I AIN'T TOO PROUD TO LOOK UP AN OLD GIRLFRIEND. I'LL BET HER BUCKET IS HUGE BY NOW.



OUR BREAK UP WAS STUPID IN THE FIRST PLACE. NEVER SHOULDA HAPPENED. MAGGIE AND I WERE JUST LIKE AN OLD MARRIED COUPLE. LIKE TWO BUGS IN A RUG. AND WE LIKED IT.



BUT NO, HOPEY HAD TO REENTER THE PICTURE AND FUCK IT ALL UP. HAD TO LIGHT THAT FIRE (N MAGGIE. THAT AMOROUS, OUT OF CONTROL FLAME THAT CAN ONLY BE EXPLAINED WITH HORSESHOES AND HAND GRENADES.



IT MAKES ME WONDER WHAT IT'S LIKE TO LIGHT A FIRE LIKE THAT IN A PERSON. ME, I'VE ALWAYS BEEN THE MORE "CONVENIENT" STYLE BOYFRIEND. A REST STOP ALONGSIDE THE HIGHWAY ON YOUR WAY TO VEGAS, THAT'S ME.



WHAT TEARS ME UP THE MOST IS THAT AT ANY GIVEN TIME A PERSON MAY CHOSE TO NO LONGER "WANT" THEIR DARLING COMPANION AND ITS PERFECTLY FAIR AND THERE'S NOTHING YOU CAN DO ABOUT IT. WITHIN THE LAW, THAT IS.



PENNY CENTURY LEFT ME THAT WAY, AS DID MAGGIE CHASCARRILLO. DANITA LINCOLN, I DON'T KNOW WHAT WAS ON HER MIND, BUT SHE ENDED IT JUST THE SAME. THEY WERE ALL FIRE GIRLS TO ME. EVEN MAGGIE.



SOMETIMES I SIT AND FANTASIZE ABOUT MYSELF SURROUNDED BY ALL THE FEMALES IN THE WORLD THAT HAVE LIT THE FIRE IN ME SINCE BEFORE I COULD SPEAK. HELL, THEY'RE ALL THERE.



BUT, IT ALWAYS TURNS OUT WITH EACH AND EVERY ONE OF THEM LETTING ME HAVE IT. TELLING ME WHAT A BIG, FUCKING LOSER I AM. I GUESS I REALLY BELIEVE I DESERVE IT, HUH?

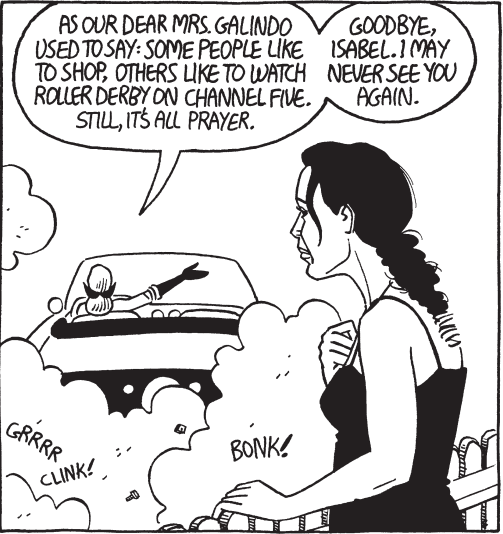
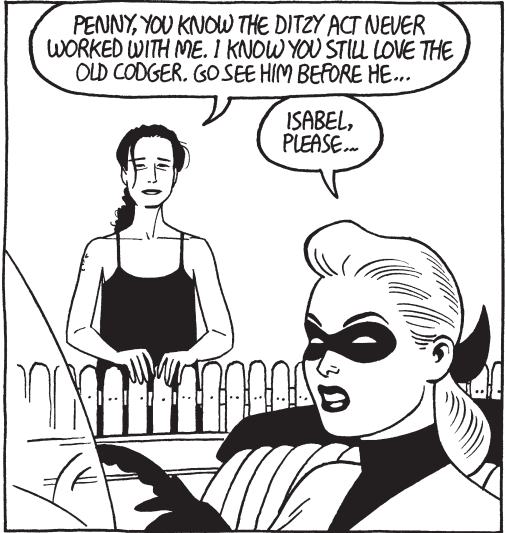
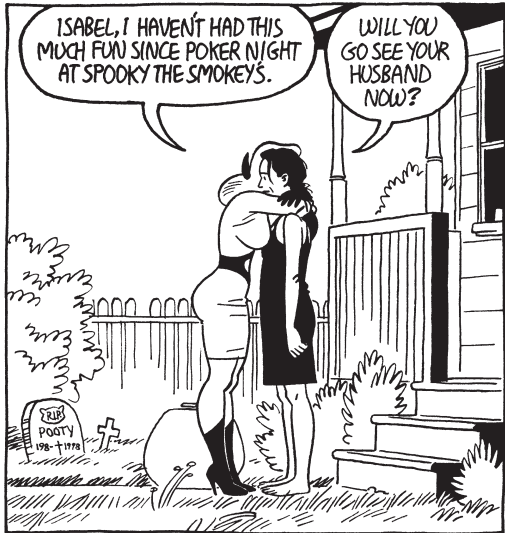


THEN AGAIN, WHO CARES? THERE'S A NEW FIRE GIRL IN TOWN AND I DON'T EVEN KNOW HER REAL NAME. VELVET WILL DO JUST FINE FOR NOW, SEÑOR.



AND THEY CAN GET MAD AND SNIPPY AND POINT THEIR FINGER ALL THEY WANT, BUT SHE'S ALL MINE. AND SHE ONLY COSTS A DOLLAR. OK, TWO DOLLARS.





Penny century

DON'T ASK ME HOW BUT I'M SITTING WITH THESE TWENTY-SOMETHING KNOW-IT-ALLS AND SOMEBODY'S TALKING ABOUT MUSIC, HOW ROCK 'N' ROLL IS DEAD, HOW PUNK ROCK WAS THE LAST REVOLUTION.



IN MY INFINITE WISDOM, I EMPHATICALLY INTERJECT THAT I BELIEVE RAP IS (WAS) THE LAST TRUE ROCK REVOLUTION AND HOW I FOUND IT FITTING THAT AFTER ALL THESE YEARS ITS FINALLY GIVEN BACK TO THE BROTHERS. BOY, DID THAT PUT A LULL IN THE CONVERSATION.



THEN THE SUBJECT TURNS TO GANGSTA RAP AND TO PROTECT MY OLD SCHOOL CHICANO HERITAGE, I MENTION HOW I FIND IT CURIOUS THAT THE BROTHERS GOTTA ADOPT SOMEBODY ELSE'S STYLE (LOW-RIDERS, CHICANO DRESS) WHEN THEY HAVE CREATED PRACTICALLY EVERYTHING THAT IS CONSIDERED COOL IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY.



THAT'S WHEN THIS WHITE GIRL EXPLODES AND GOES OFF FOR THE NEXT TEN MINUTES CALLING ME EVERYTHING FROM A RACIST TO A SERIAL KILLER. THEN SHE EXITS IN A HUFF, NATURALLY BEFORE ANY CHANCE OF REBUTTAL.



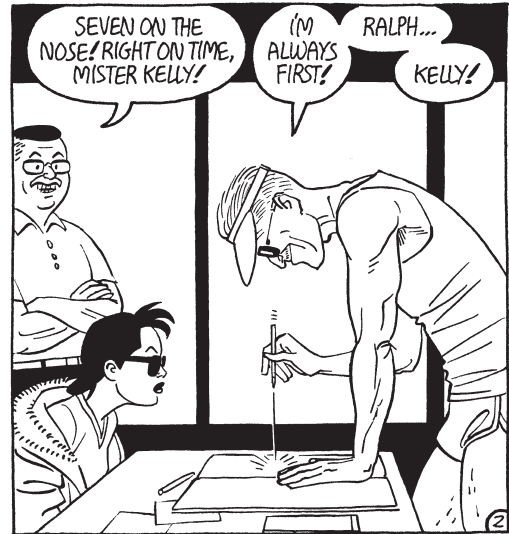
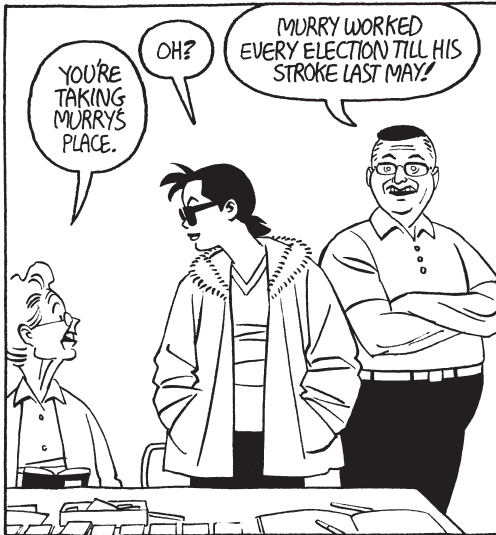
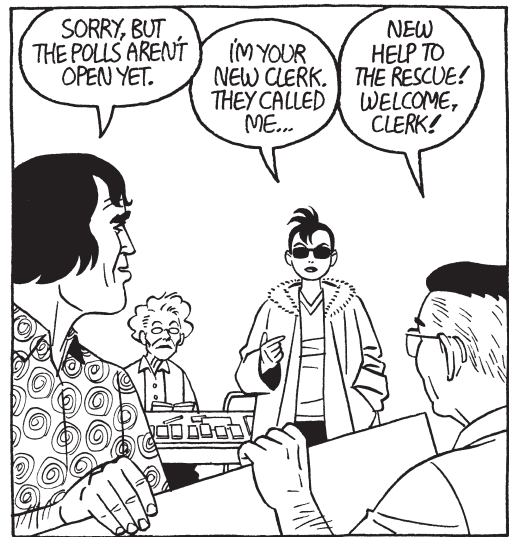
AFTER THE SMOKE CLEARS, I APPROACH HAROLD, THE BLACK GUY WHO WAS SILENT THE WHOLE TIME, AND I TRY TO MAKE CLEAR THAT I WAS TRYING TO SAY THAT I WAS COMPLEMENTING AFRICAN-AMERICANS FOR AN OVERWHELMING PERCENTAGE OF CULTURAL AND ARTISTIC INFLUENCE. THAT'S WHEN HE TURNS TO ME AND SAYS, "RAP. HUH? IT ISN'T EVEN MUSIC."

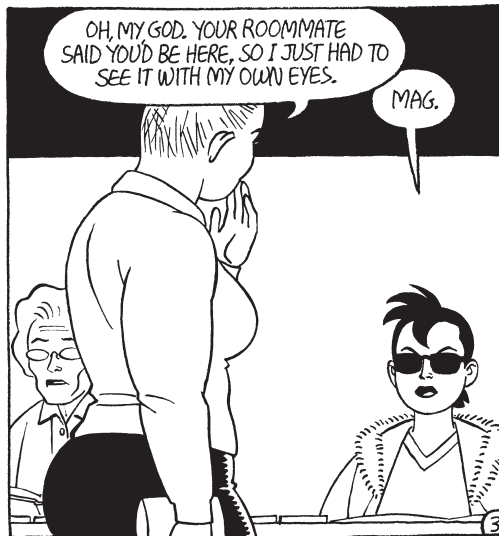
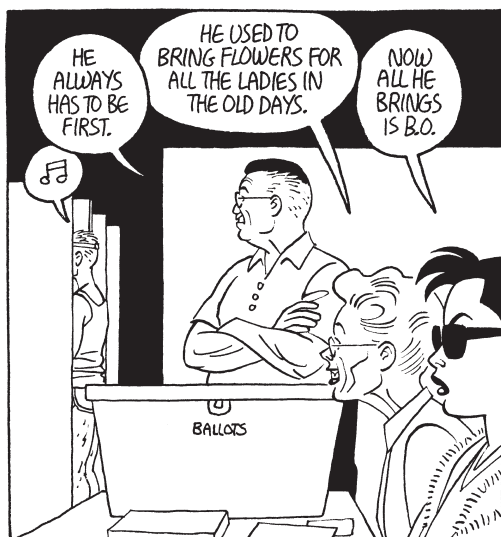


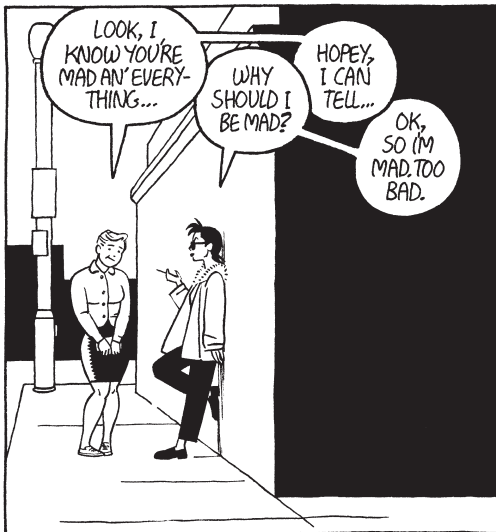
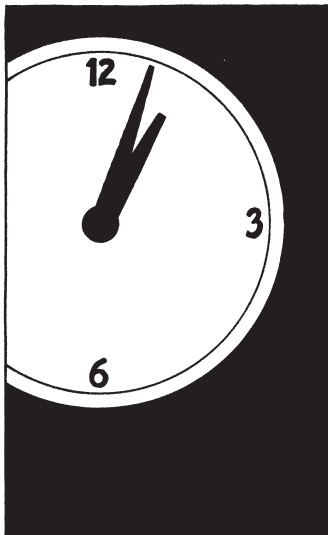
IF THAT WASN'T SOBERING ENOUGH, A DAY LATER I'M WATCHING SOME VIDEO CHANNEL AND I NOTICE THAT THE LAST THREE OUT OF FOUR VIDEOS WERE BY WHITE ROCK GROUPS DOING RAP SONGS. OH WELL, SHUT MY OLD KNOW-IT-ALL MOUTH.

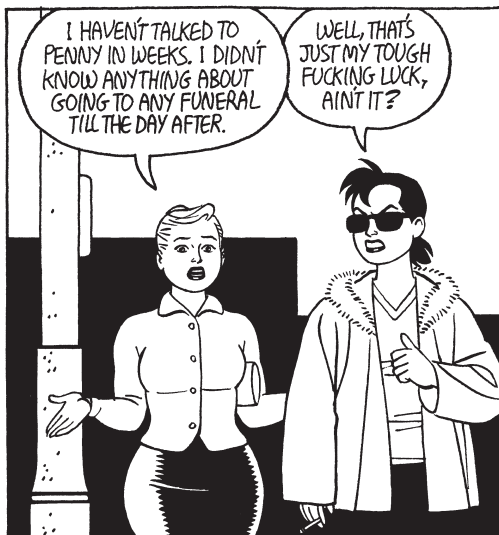






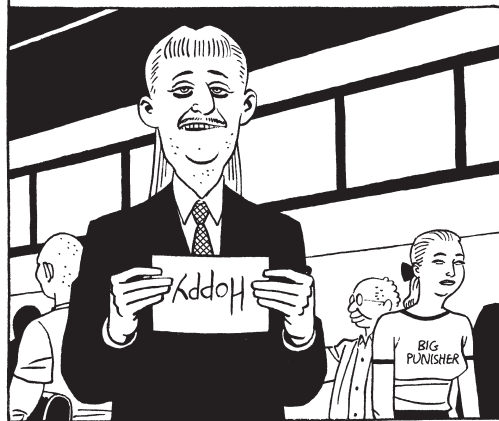






"OK, SO I FLY INTO GAMBOA, COLORADO (I'M SURE YOU'VE HEARD OF IT), I'M PICKED UP BY SOME DORKY LIMO DRIVER WHO TAKES ME TO SOME HOTEL. YOU'RE NOT THERE. FINE, I GO TO SLEEP.

"THE NEXT DAY I SPEND THE WHOLE DAY IN THE ROOM WATCHING BORING CABLE AND ORDERING ROOM SERVICE. YOU'RE STILL NOT THERE. FINE. AT NIGHT, THE LIMO DRIVER CALLS....



"HE PICKS ME UP TO TAKE ME TO THE WAKE. WE ARRIVE AT THIS LIKE, ARMY BASE. FINE, I FIGURE BY THIS TIME YOU AIN'T COMING. FINANDANDO. SO, I PREPARE MYSELF FOR THIS BIG, EXTRAVAGANT MEDIA CIRCUS.

"BUT IT TURNS OUT TO BE JUST THE OPPOSITE. NO PRESS, NO PRESIDENTS, NO PENNY. NO NORMA, NO NEGRA, NOBODY. JUST A FEW WEIRD PEOPLE IN THIS ROOM! BARELY BIG ENOUGH FOR A FUCKIN' COFFIN.



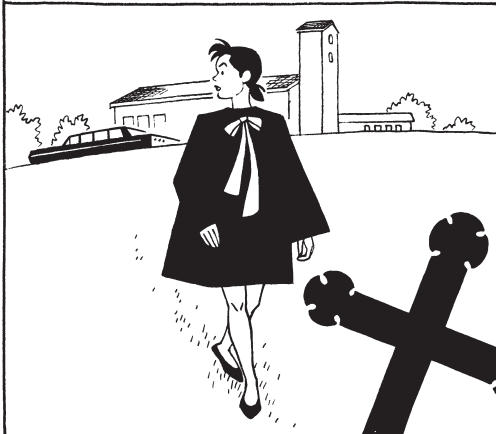
"SO, WHAT THE FUCK? I'M HERE. I GO UP TO LOOK AT THE DEAD GUY AND THERE HE IS, HORNS AND ALL, WITH THE WORST MAKE UP JOB EVER. MAG, HE WAS LIKE, THE TINIEST, LITTLE PUMPKIN MAN SLEEPING IN A BOX.



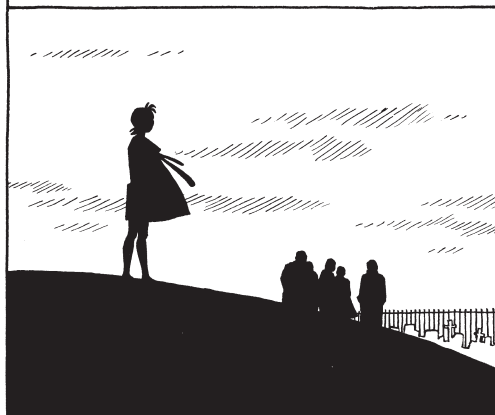
"THEN THE WEIRD FOURSOME TELLS ME TO SPLIT, THAT THIS NIGHT IS FOR FAMILY ONLY. SO, I SPLIT AND TELL TARZAN (MY FAITHFUL LIMO DRIVER) TO DRIVE ME TO A BAR SOMEWHERE AND I END UP GETTING DRUNK BY MYSELF FLIPPING OFF ALL OF YOU WHO HAVE DESERTED ME. FINE.



"NEXT MORNING, TARZAN PICKS ME UP AND TAKES ME TO THE FUNERAL. THIS TIME I'M EXPECTING A LITTLE MORE OF A PARTY... OR ELSE!



"BUT, NO. I GET THERE AND IT'S THE SAME FOUR WEIRDOS! ME, A PRIEST, AND THE FOUR FUCKING WEIRDOS AT WORLD REKNOWNED BUSINESS TYCOON HERV ROVICK COSTIGAN'S MOTHER FUCKING FUNERAL! FINE!!!



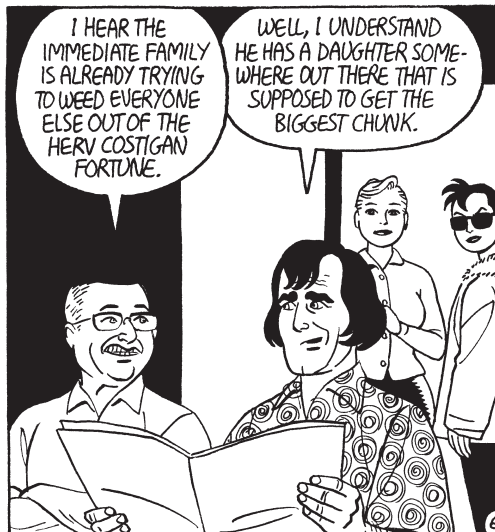
WOW.
THAT IS SO
WEIRD.

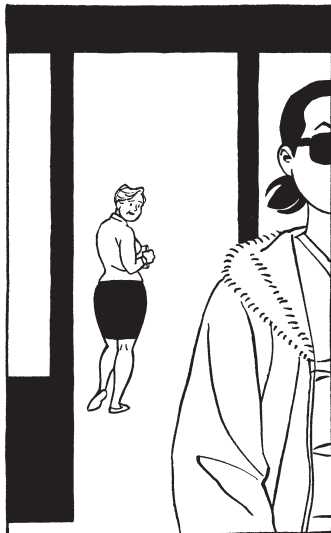
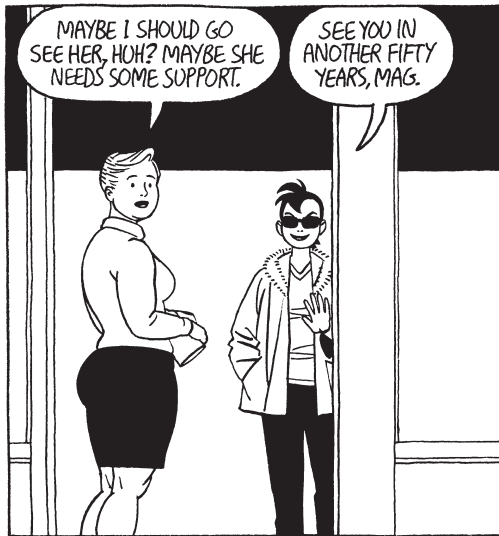
WHAT'S SO WEIRD ABOUT IT?
PENNY REMEMBERED TO FORGET
TO PAY MY ROOM AND FLIGHT.

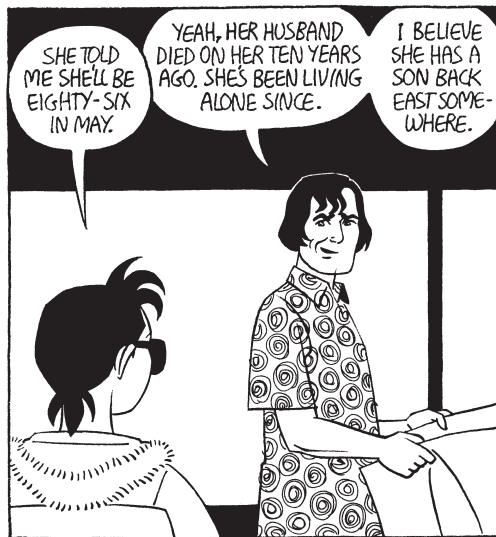


I HEAR THE
IMMEDIATE FAMILY
IS ALREADY TRYING
TO WEED EVERYONE
ELSE OUT OF THE
HERV COSTIGAN
FORTUNE.

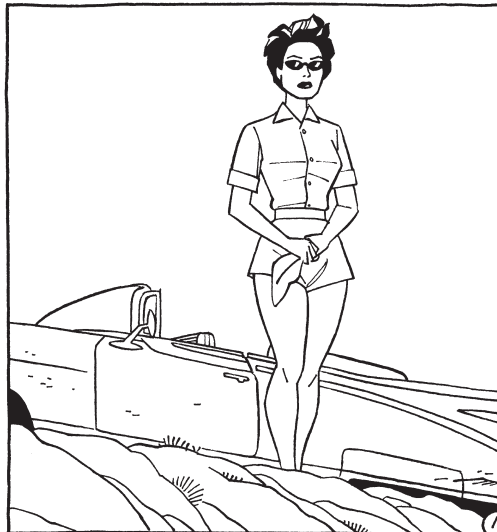
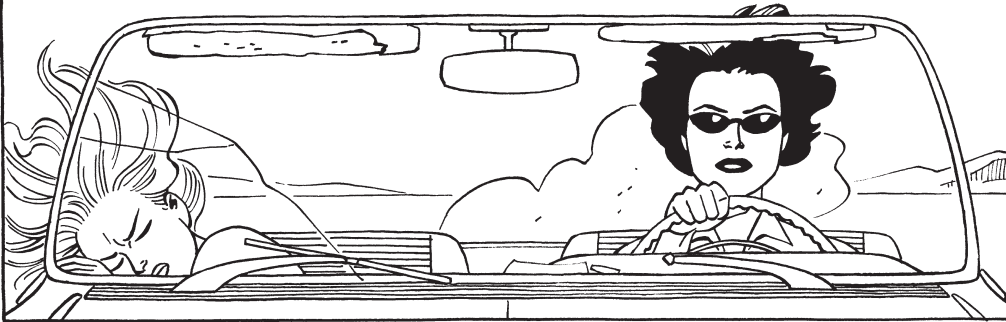
WELL, I UNDERSTAND
HE HAS A DAUGHTER SOME-
WHERE OUT THERE THAT IS
SUPPOSED TO GET THE
BIGGEST CHUNK.

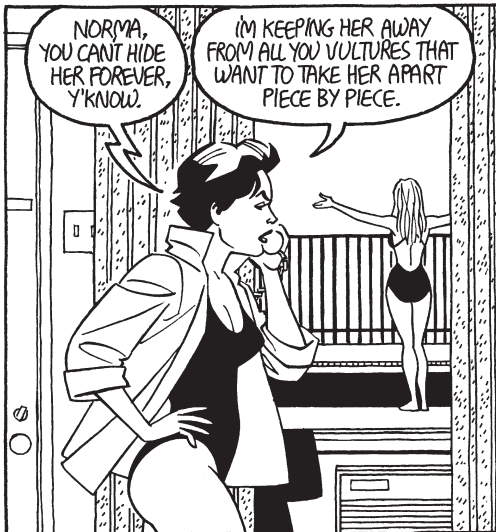
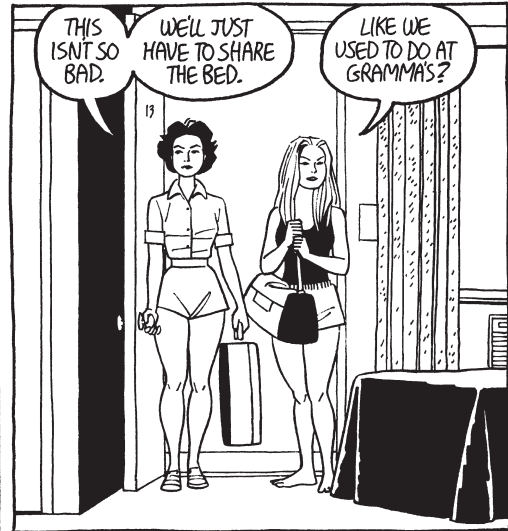
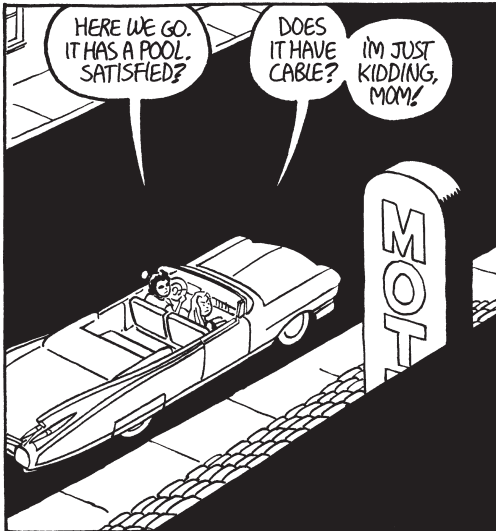
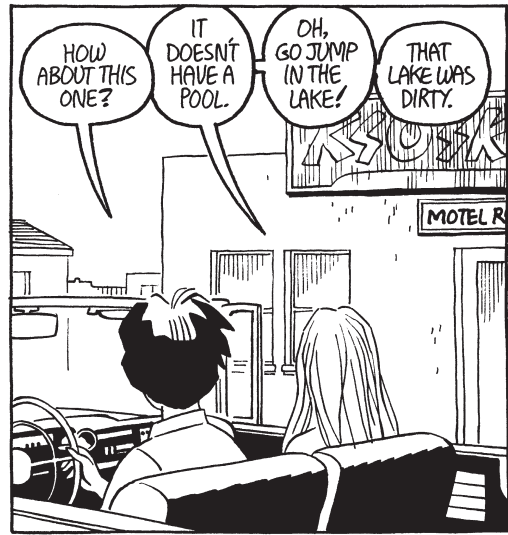
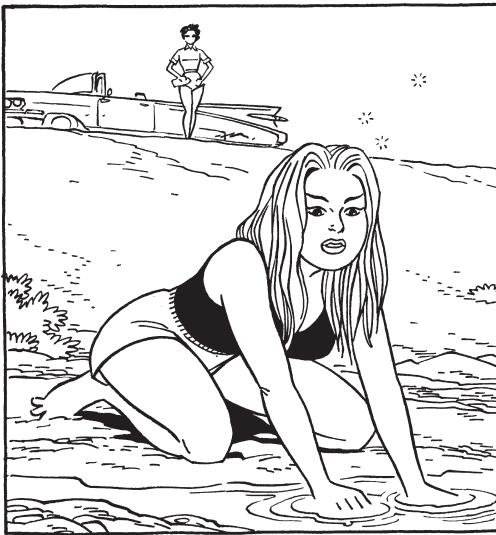


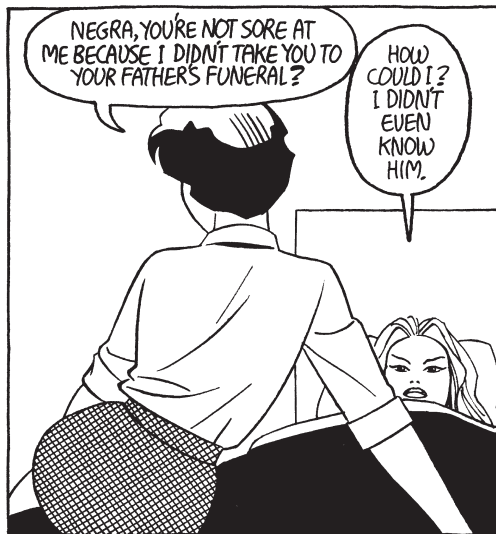


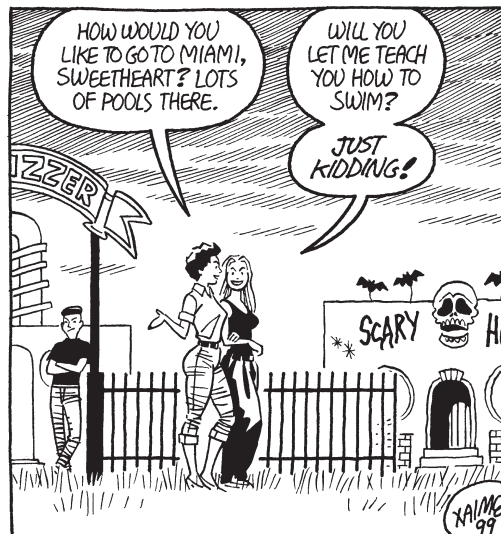
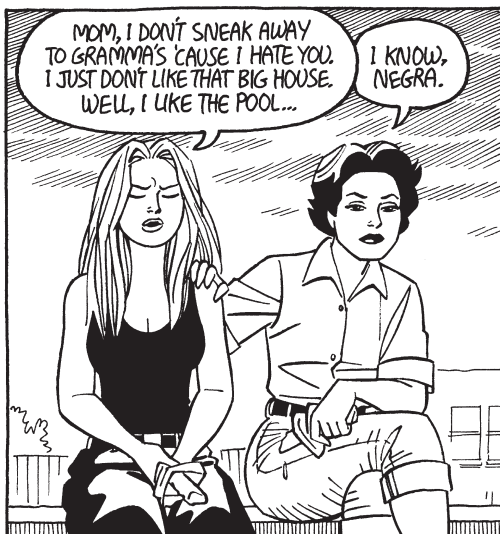
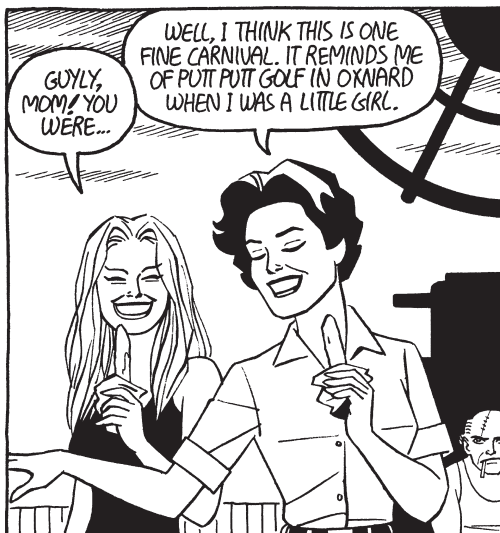
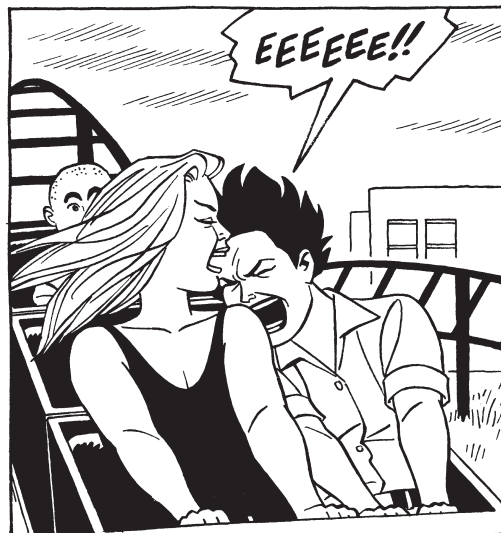


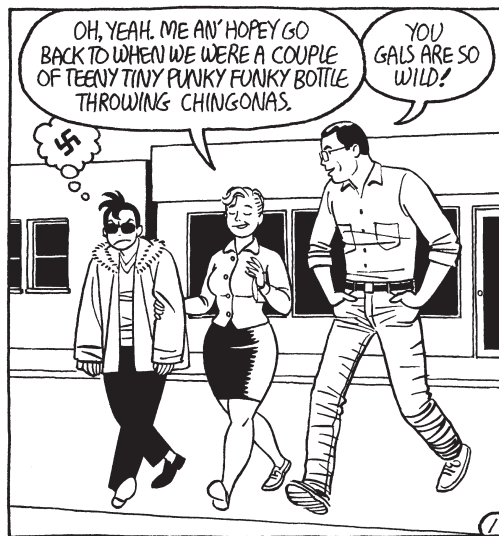
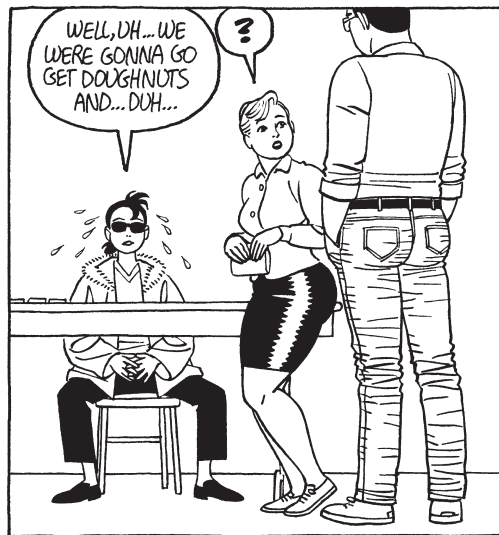
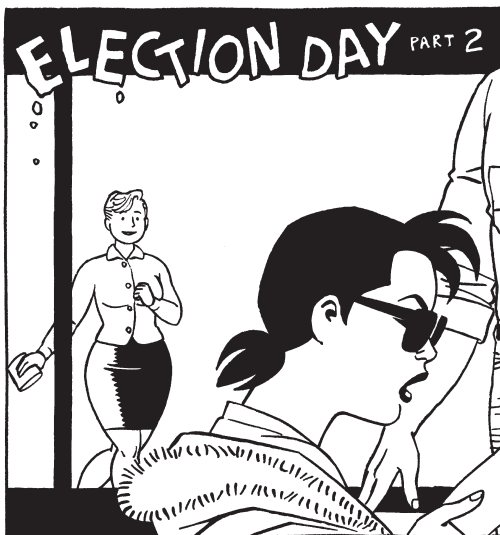
THE LITTLEST MERMAID PRINCESS DOE

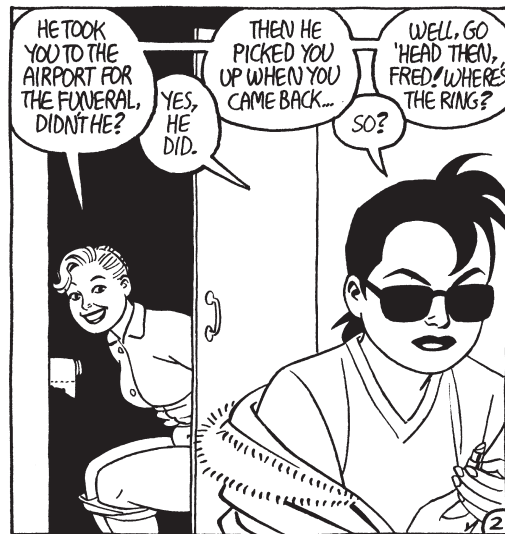
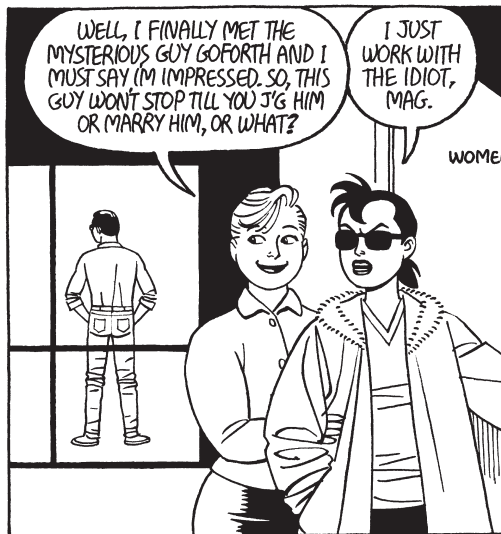
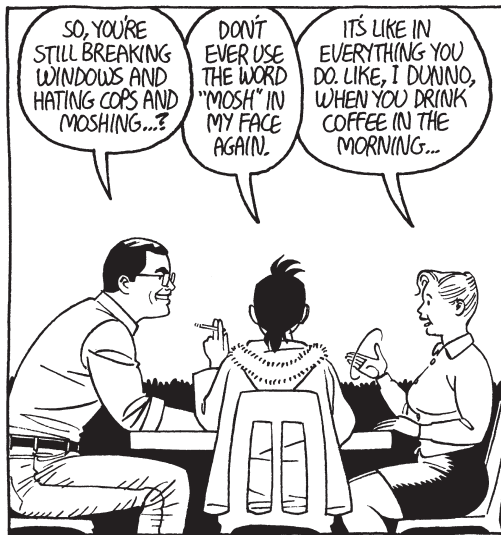
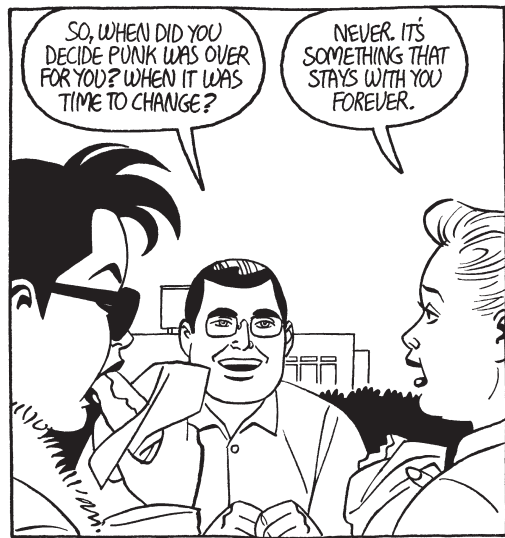




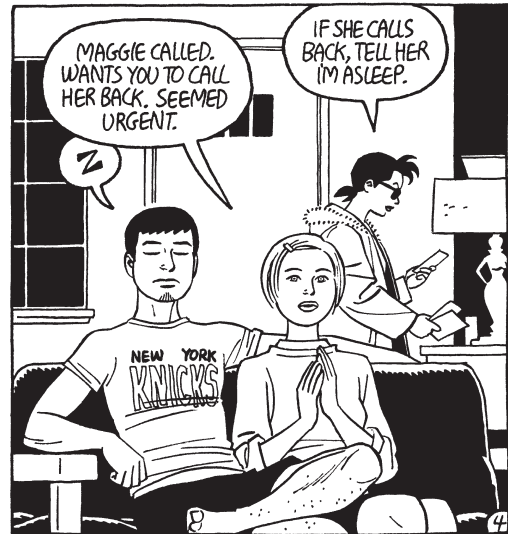
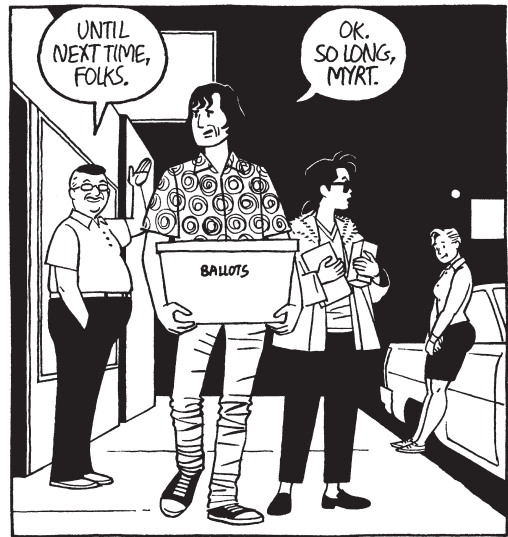
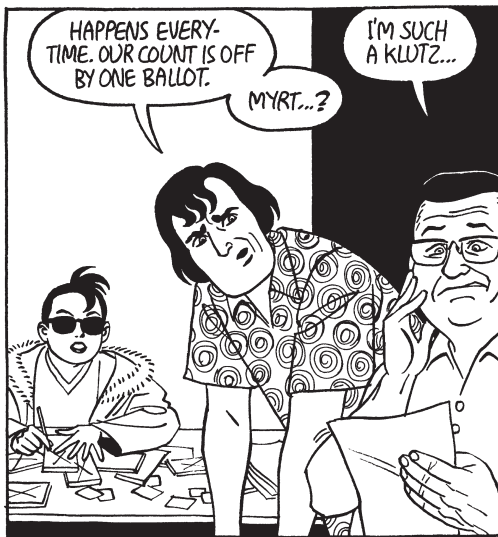






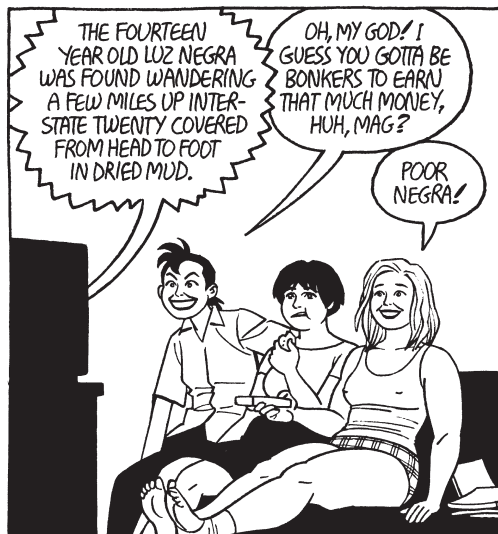


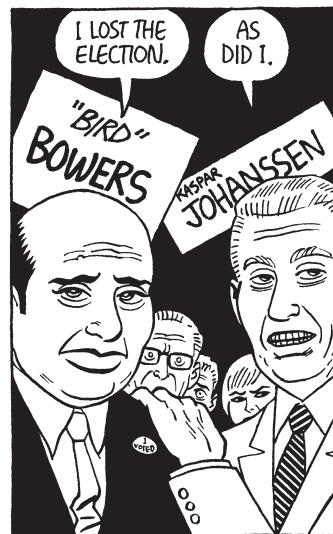
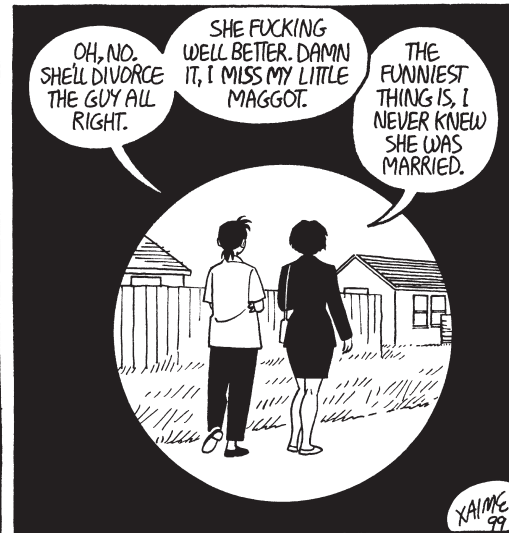








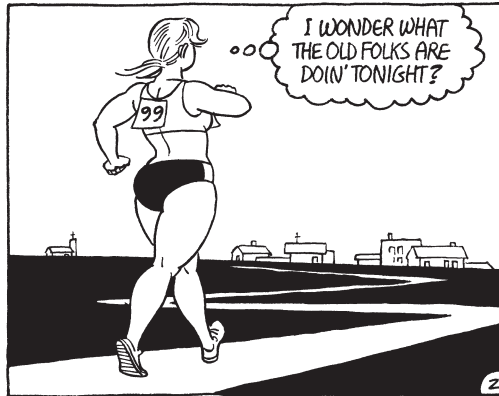
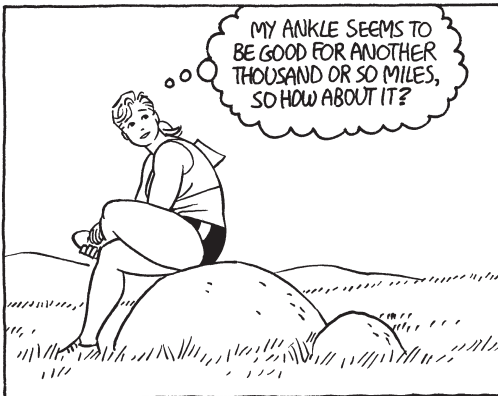
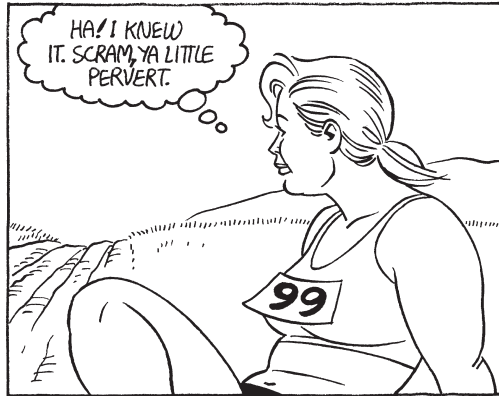
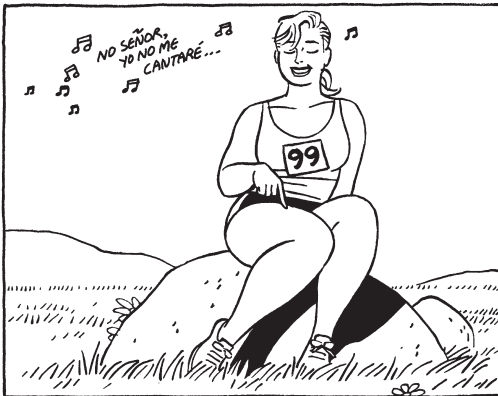
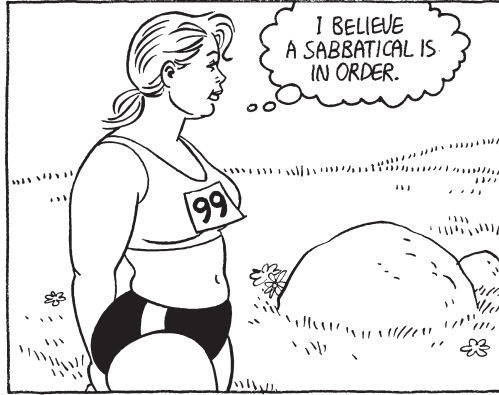


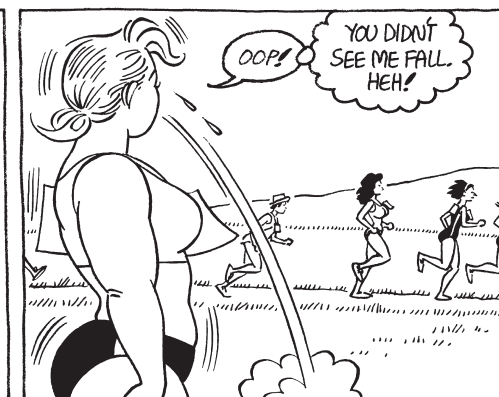
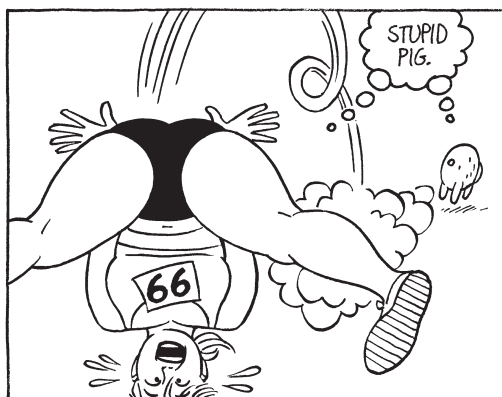
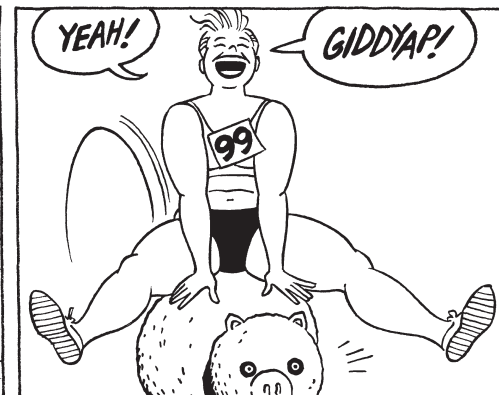
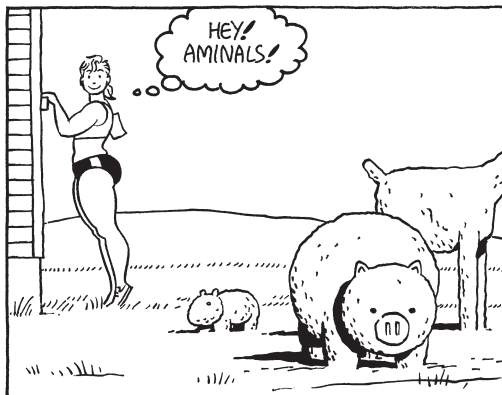
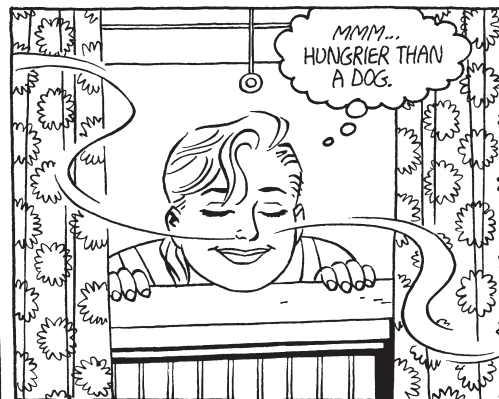
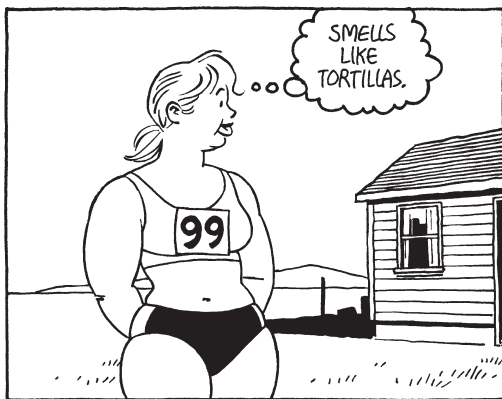


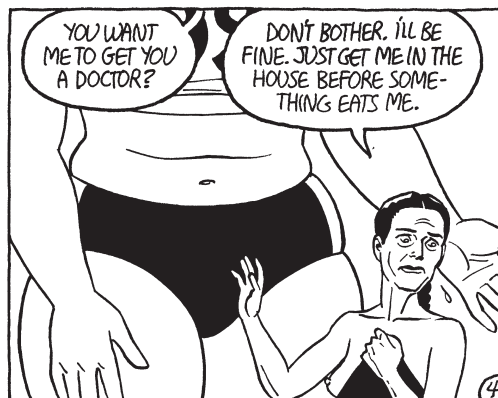
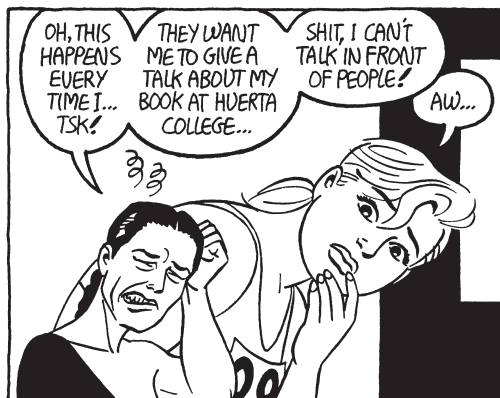
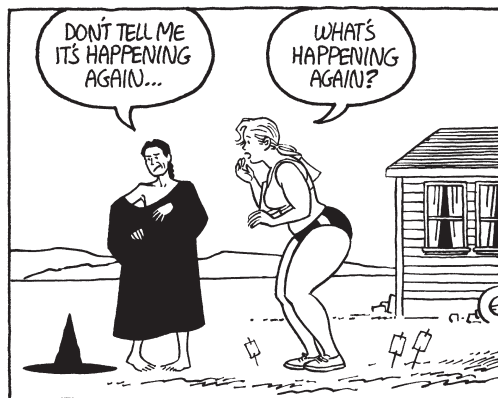
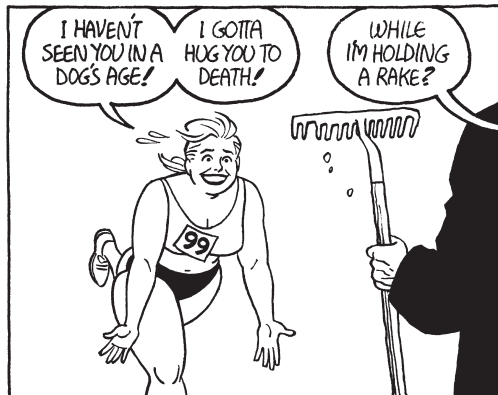
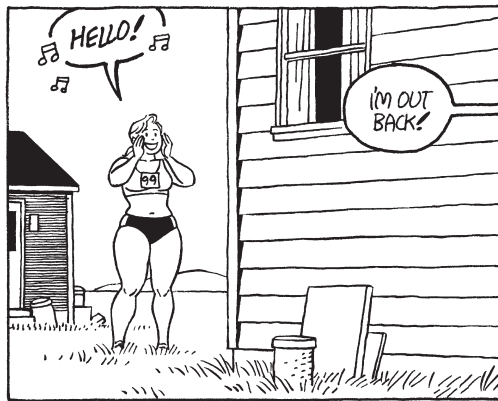
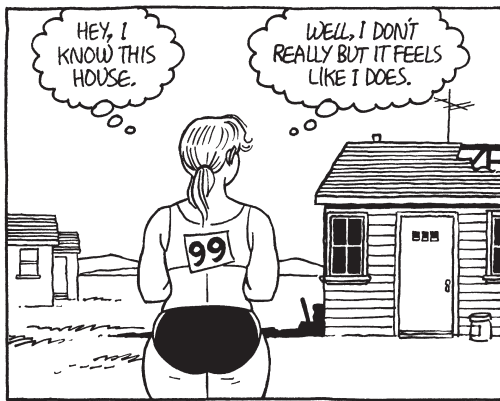
THANKS TO RICKA. AND ARIEL B. FOR THEIR CANDIDATES...

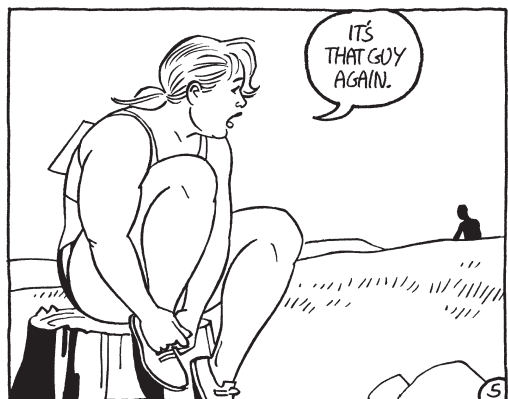
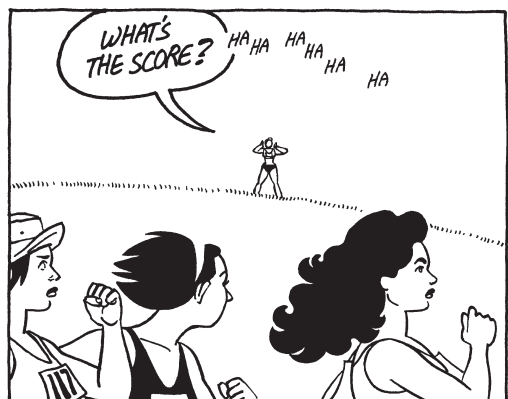
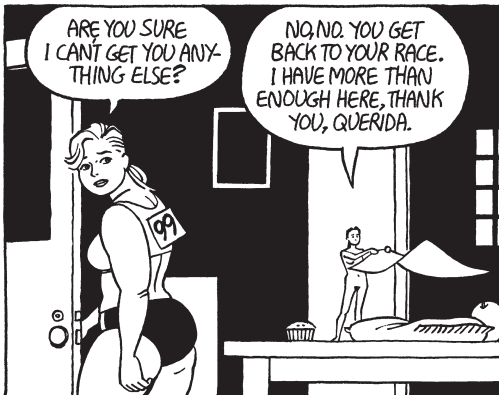
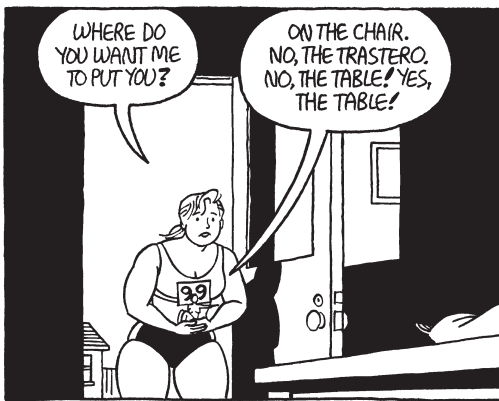


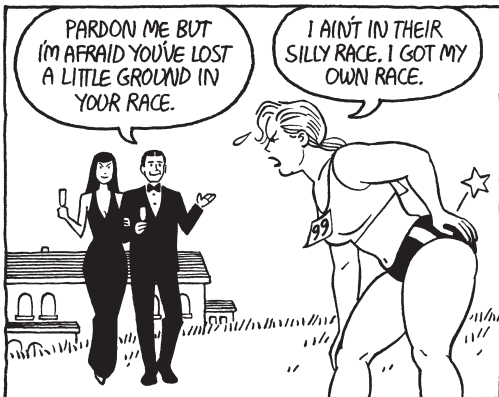
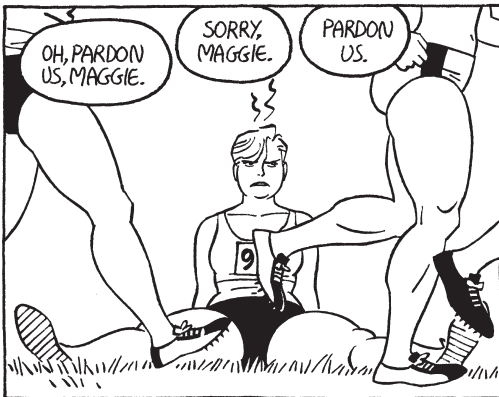
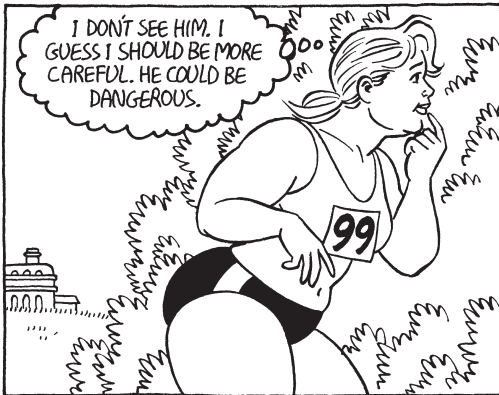


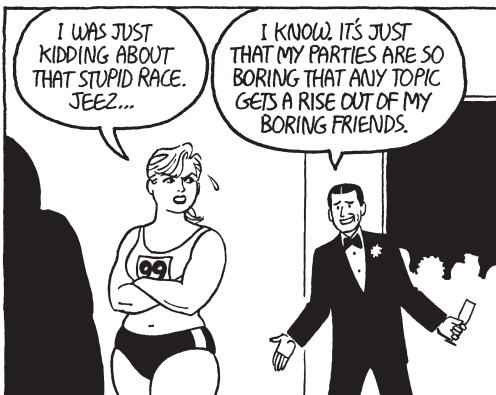
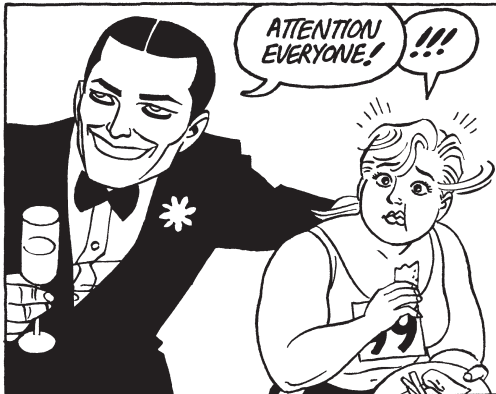
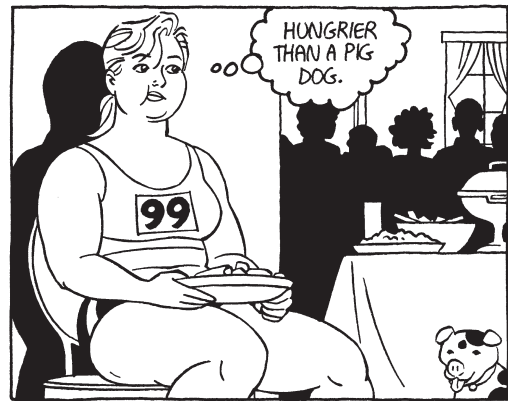


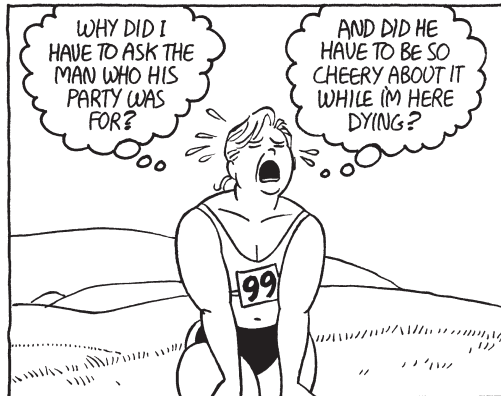
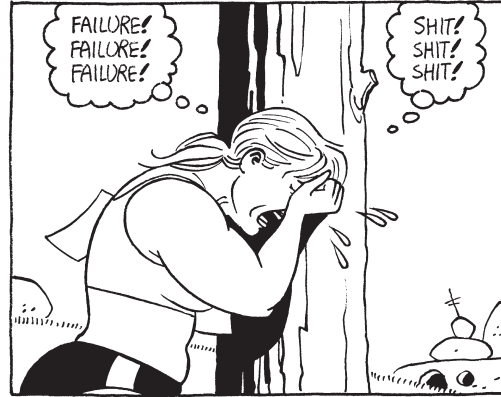
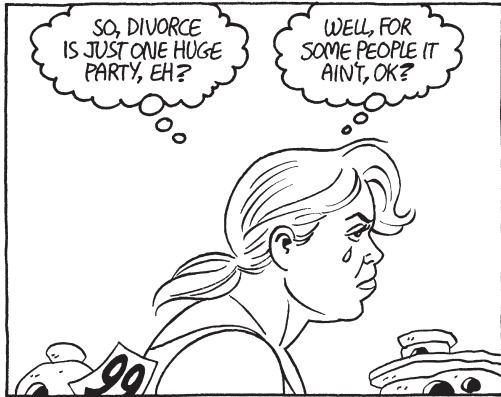
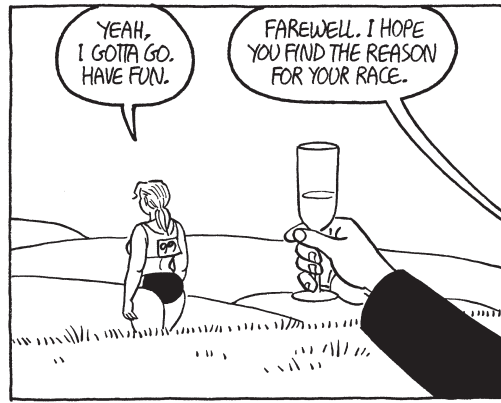
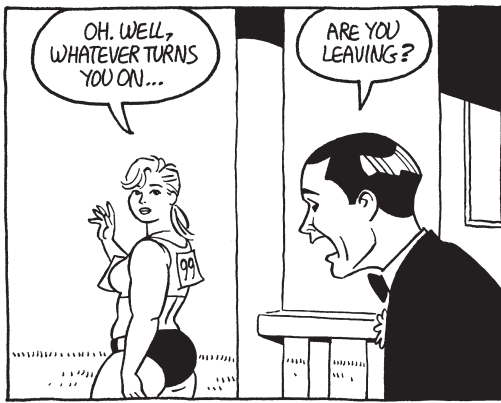


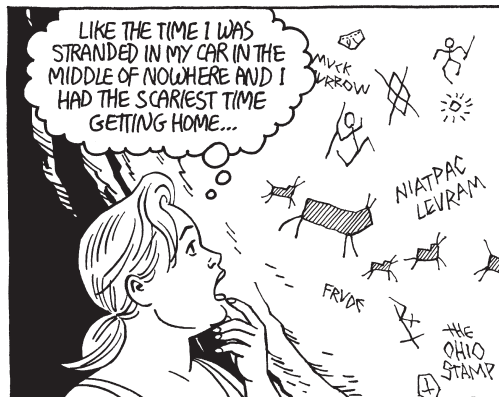
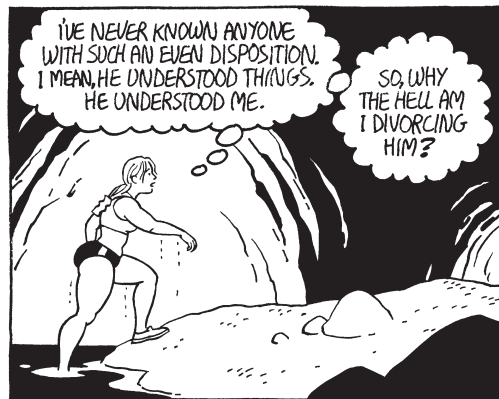
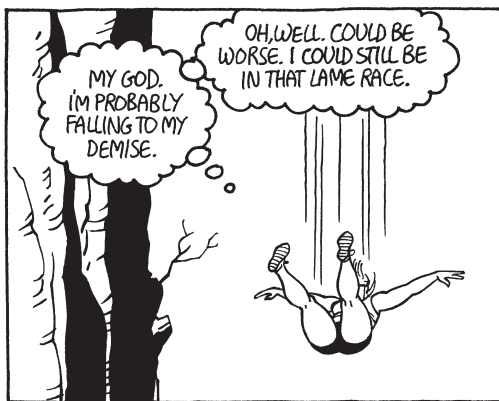


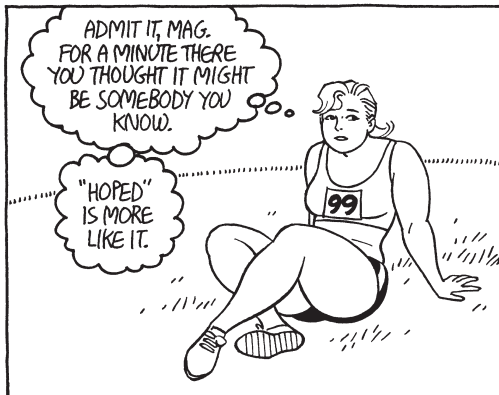
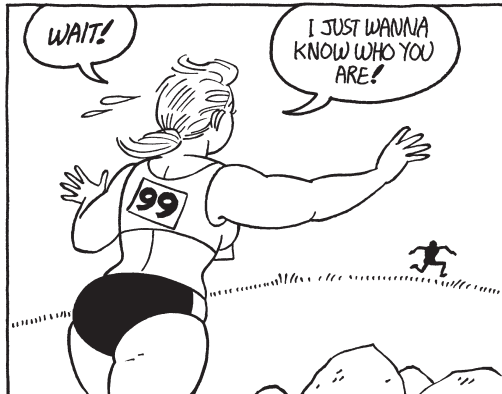
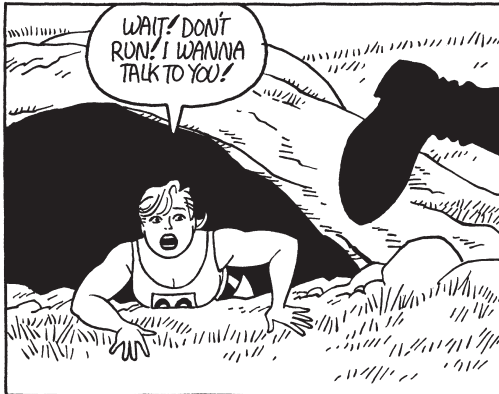


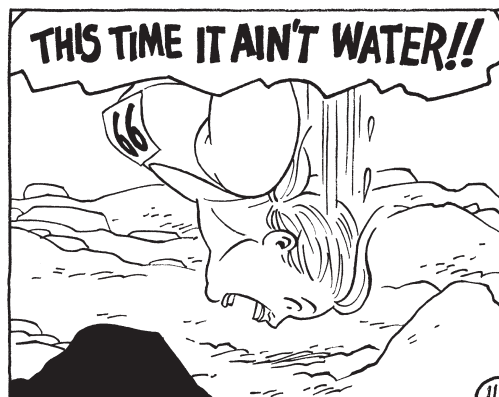
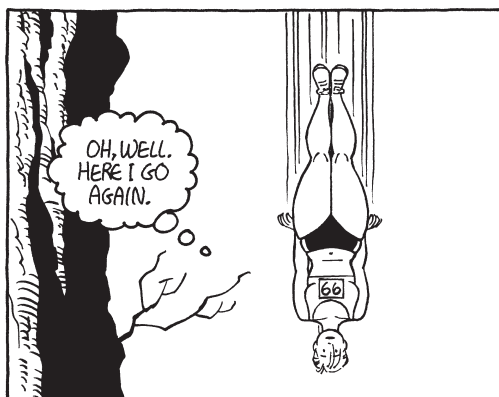
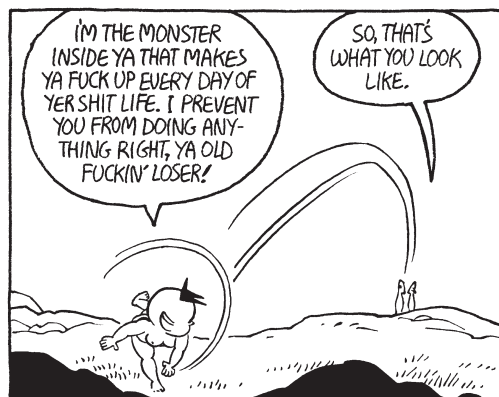
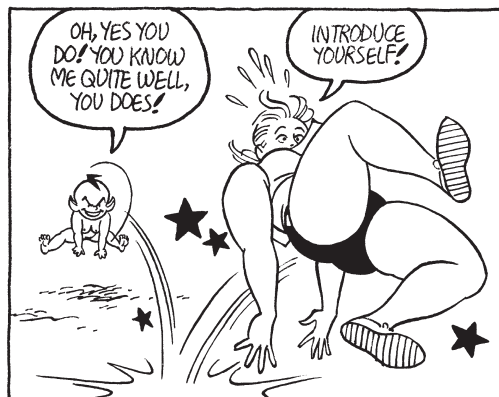
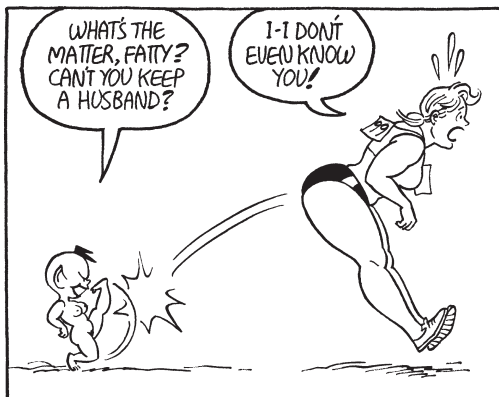
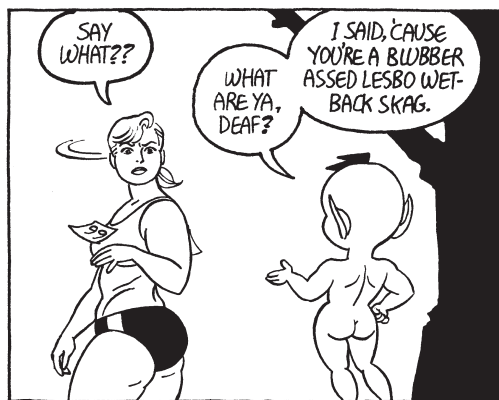


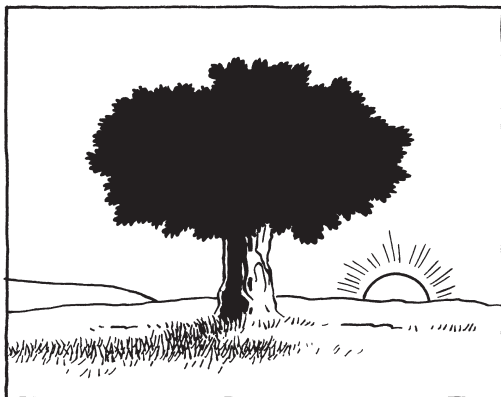
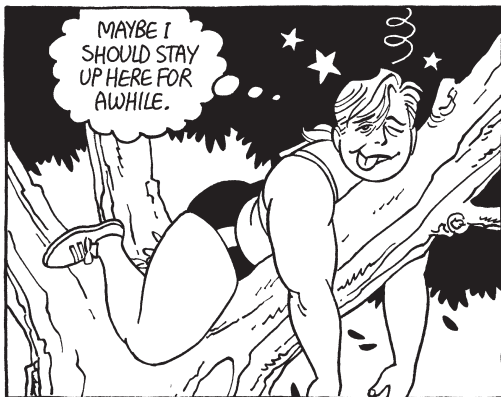
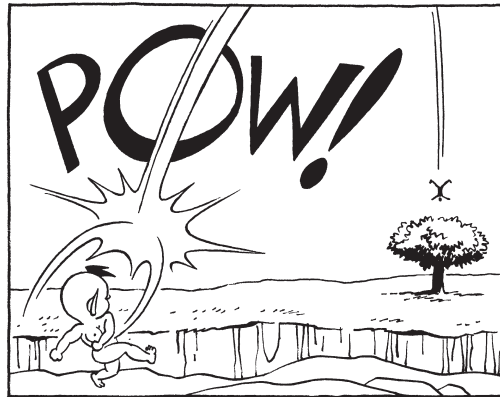
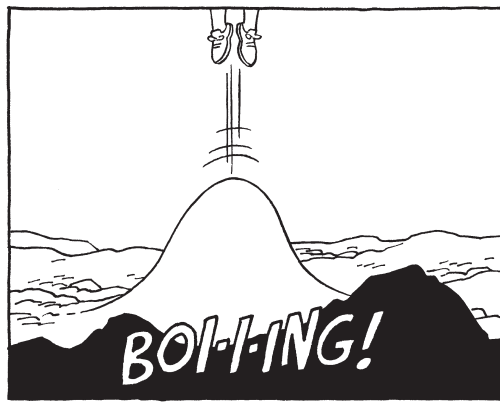
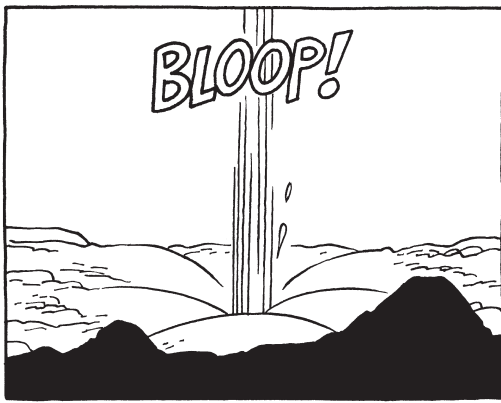


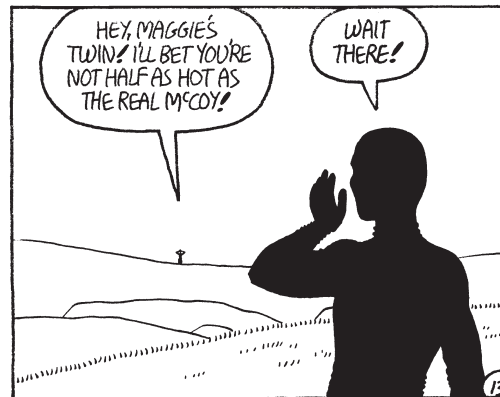
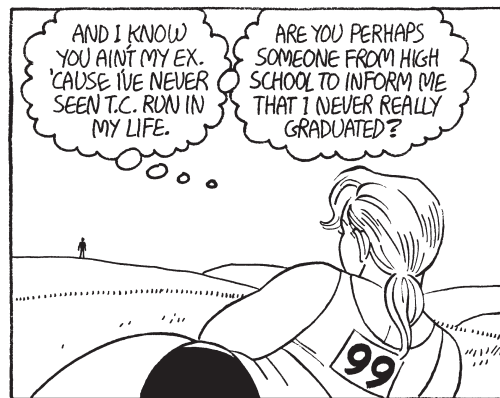
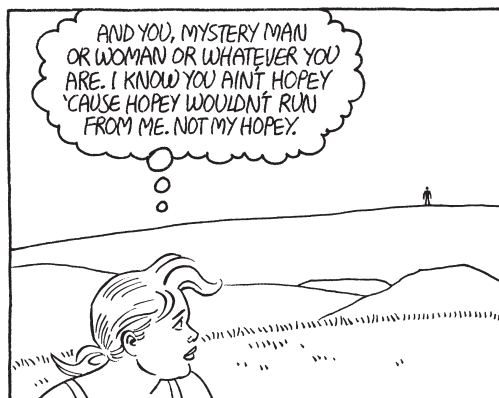
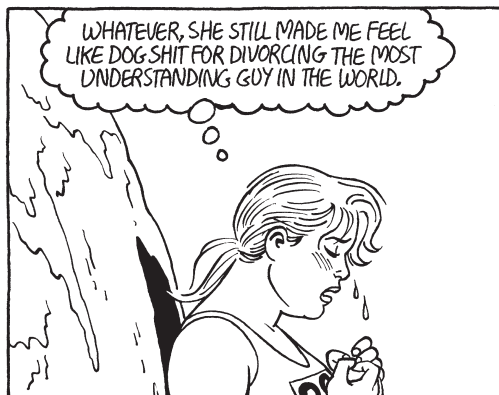
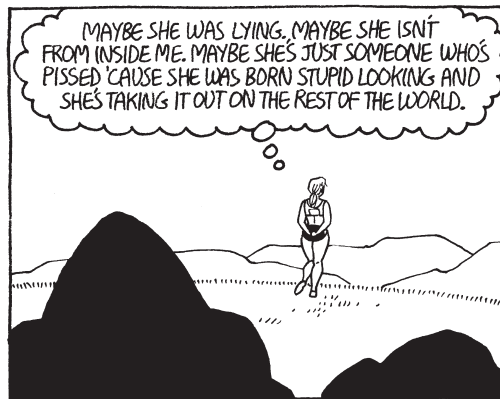
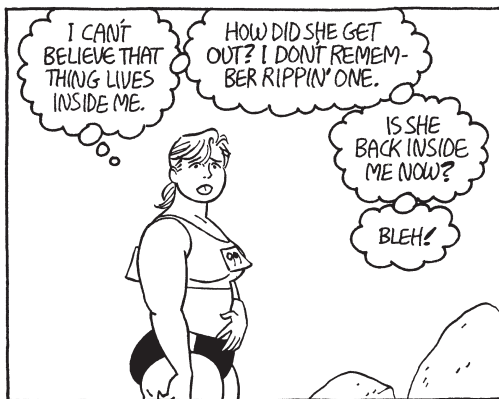


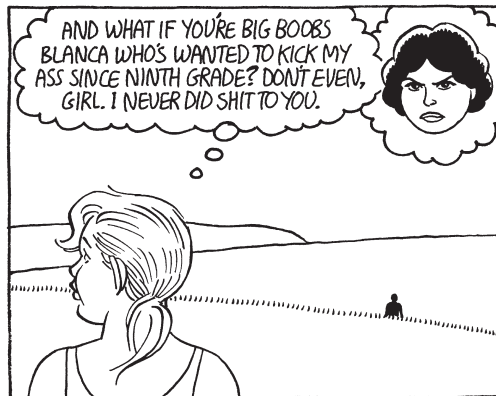
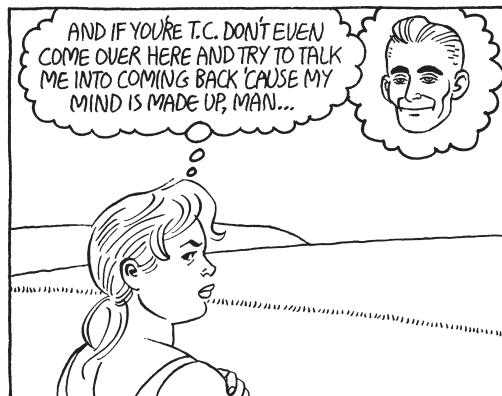


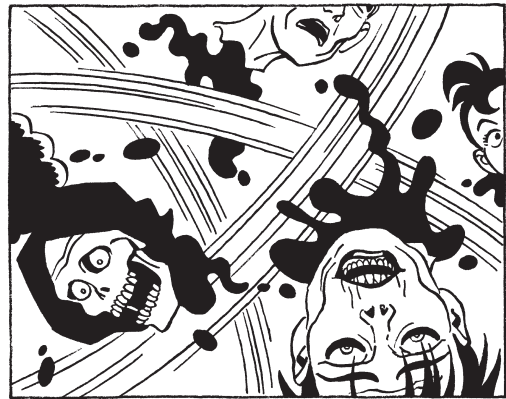
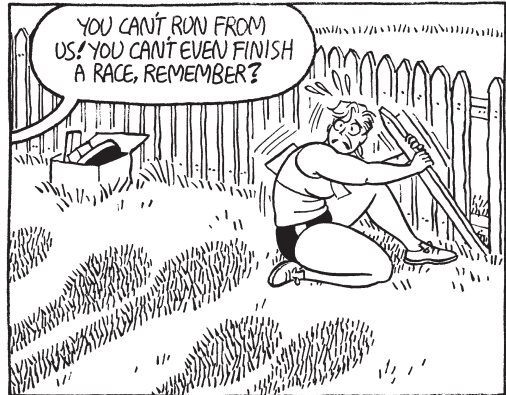
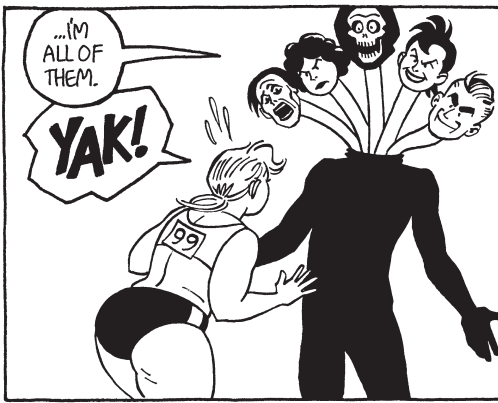


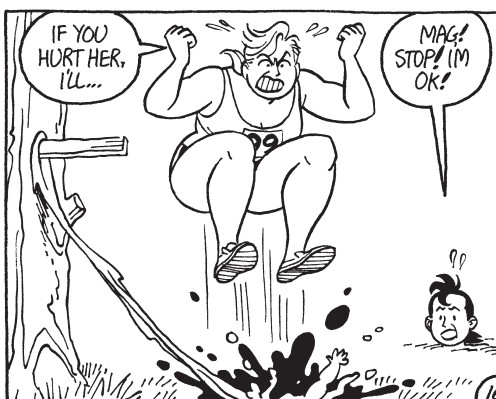
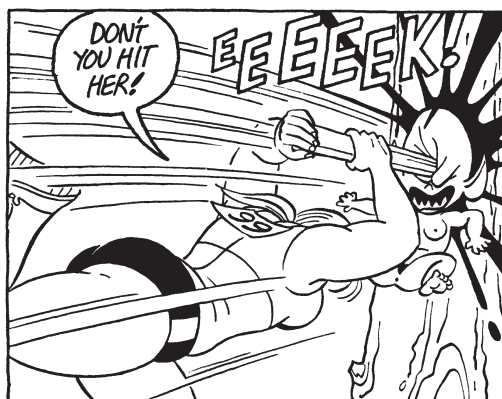
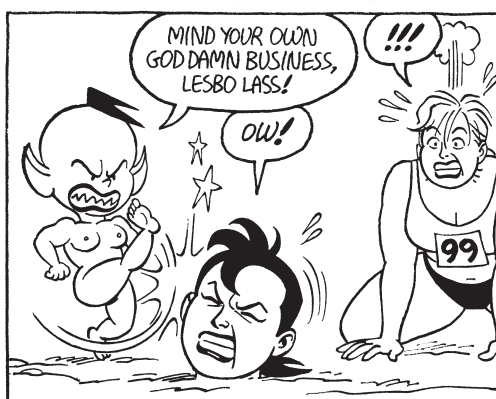
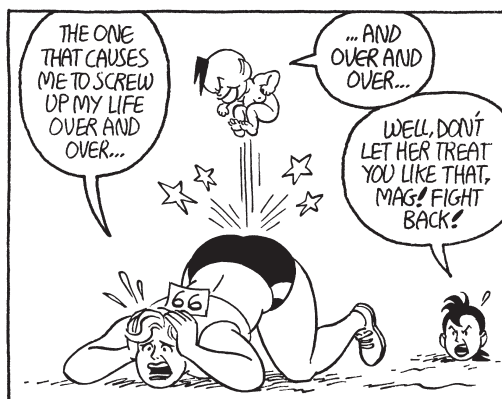
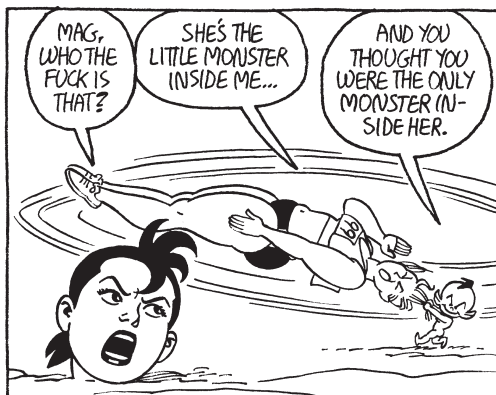
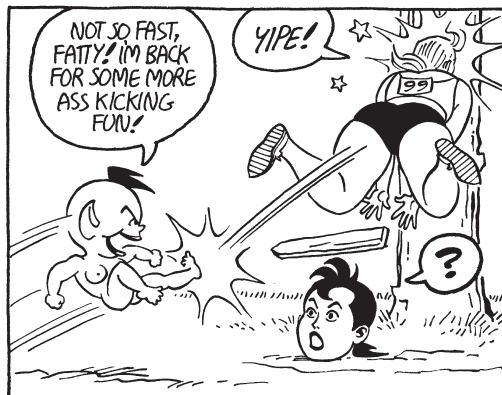
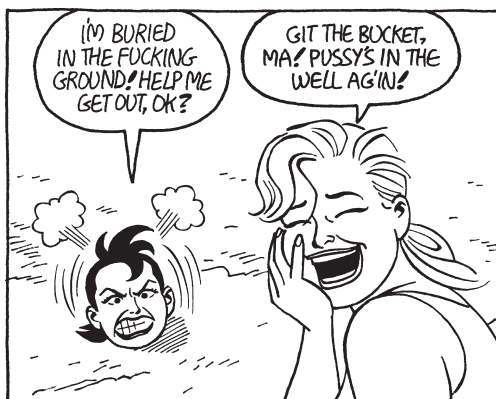


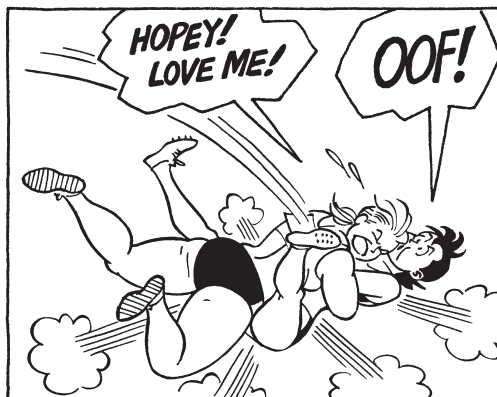
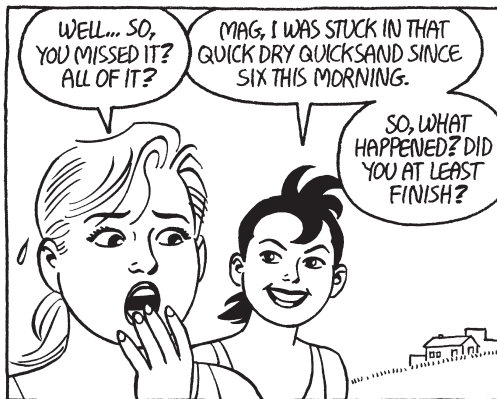
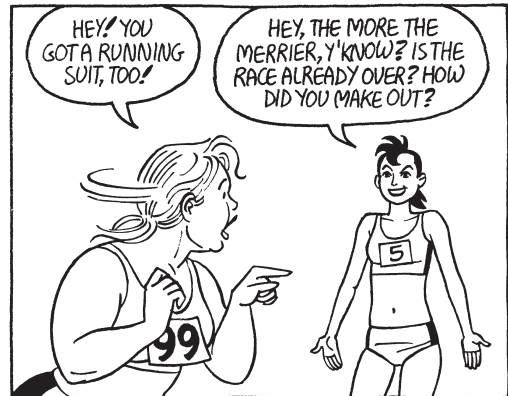
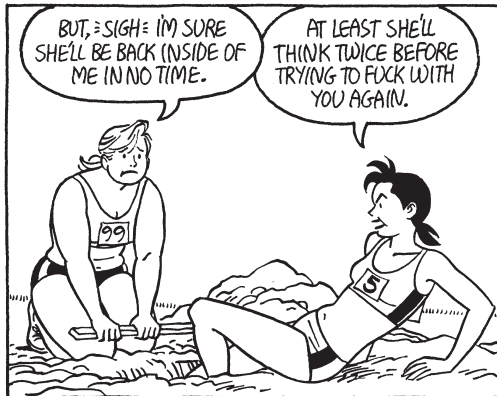
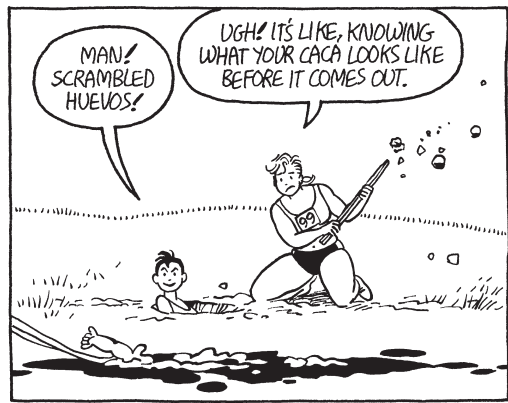
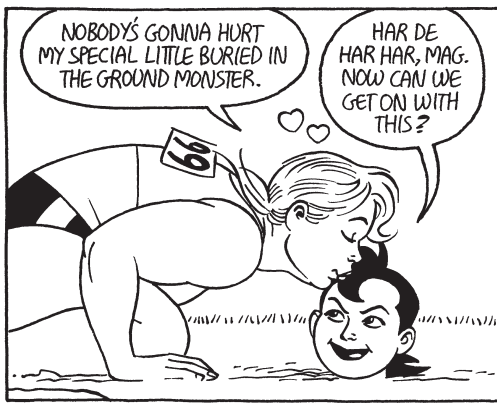


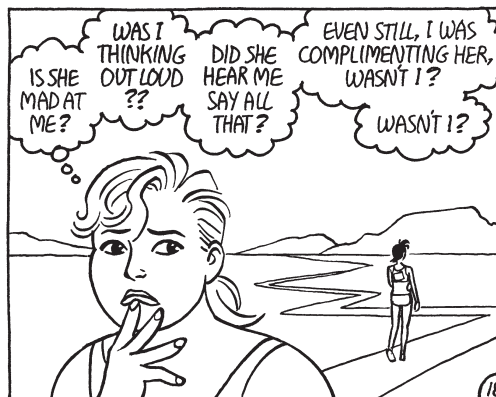
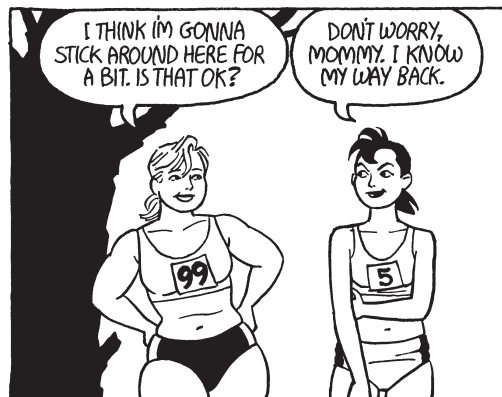
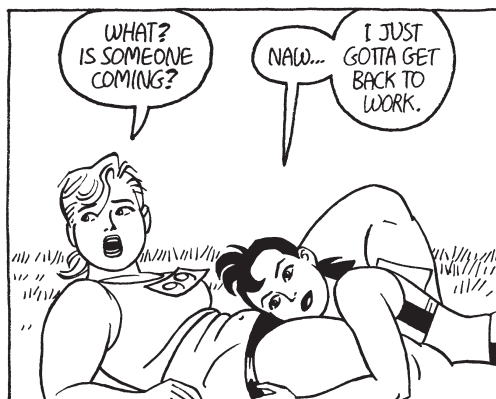
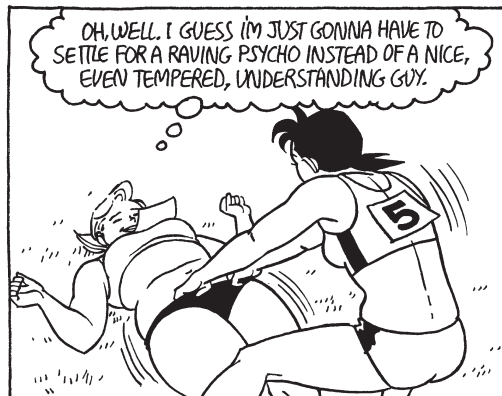
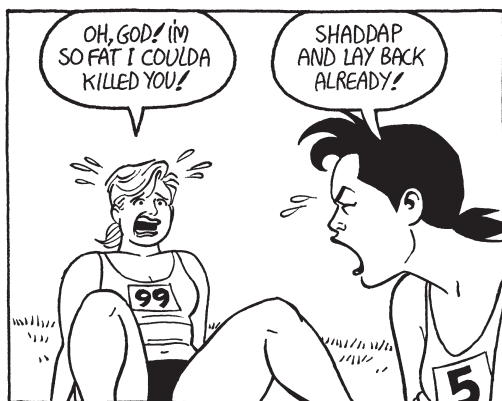


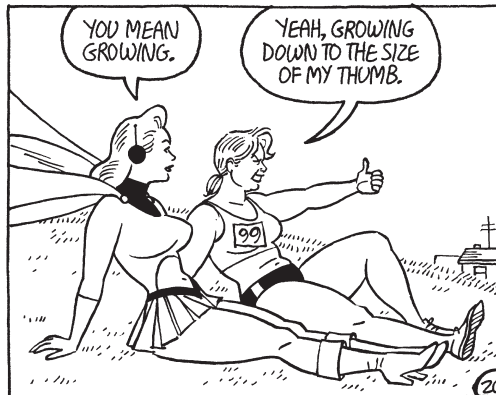
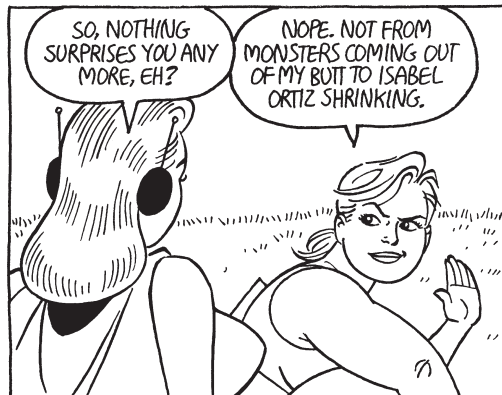
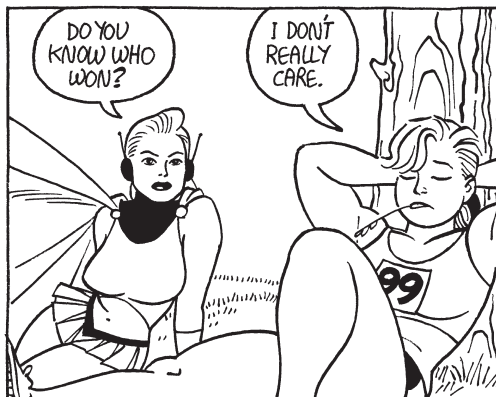
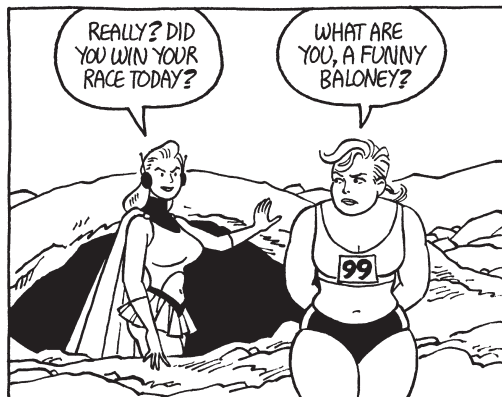
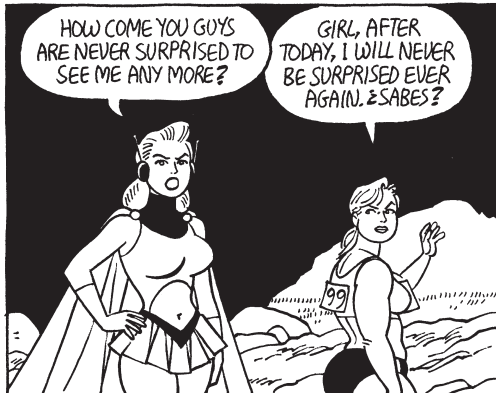
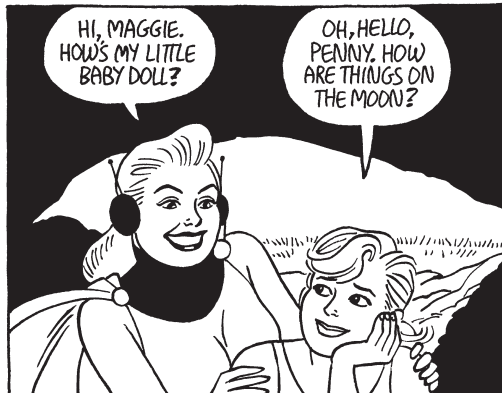
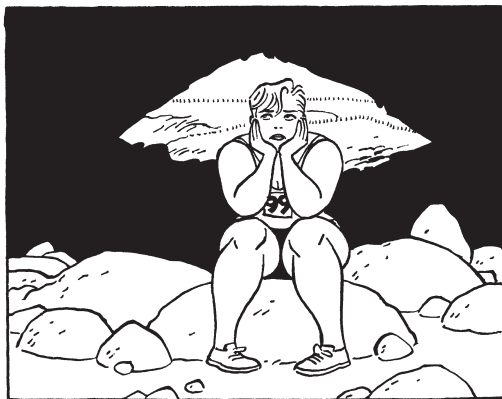


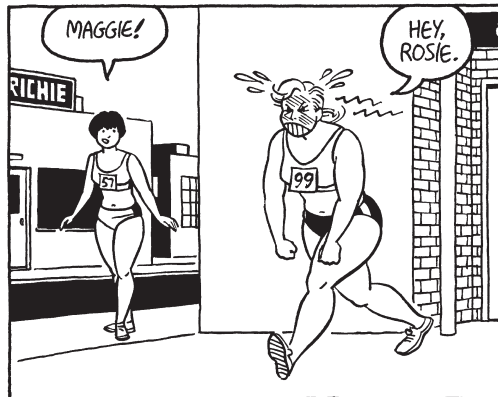
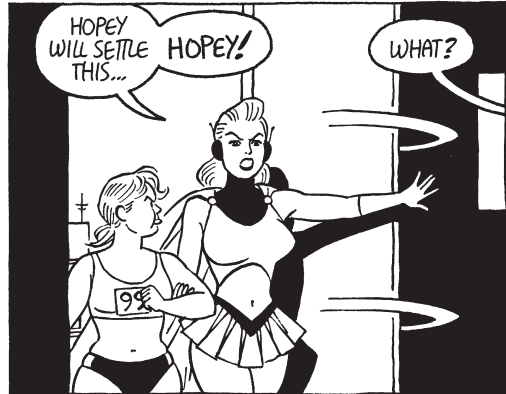
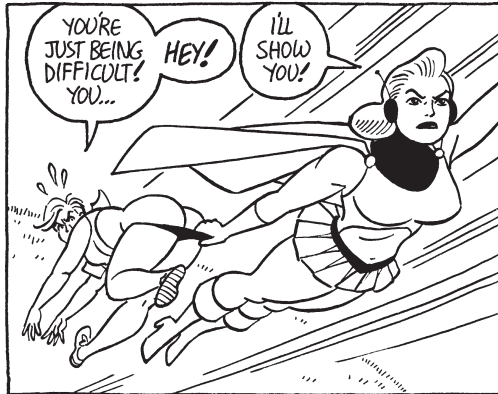
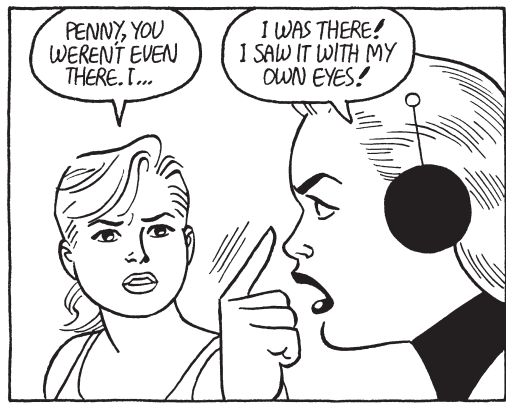


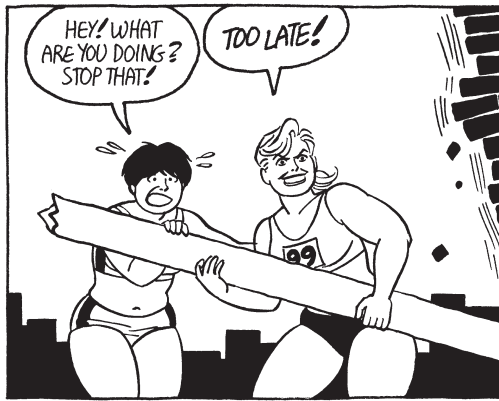
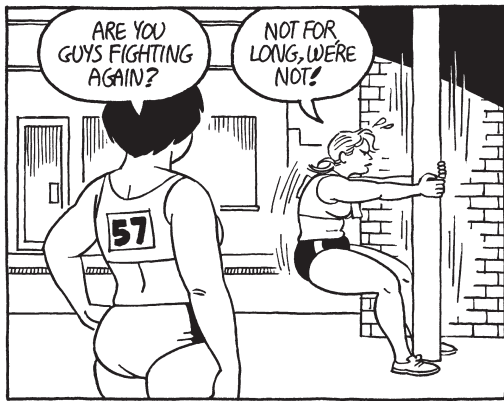




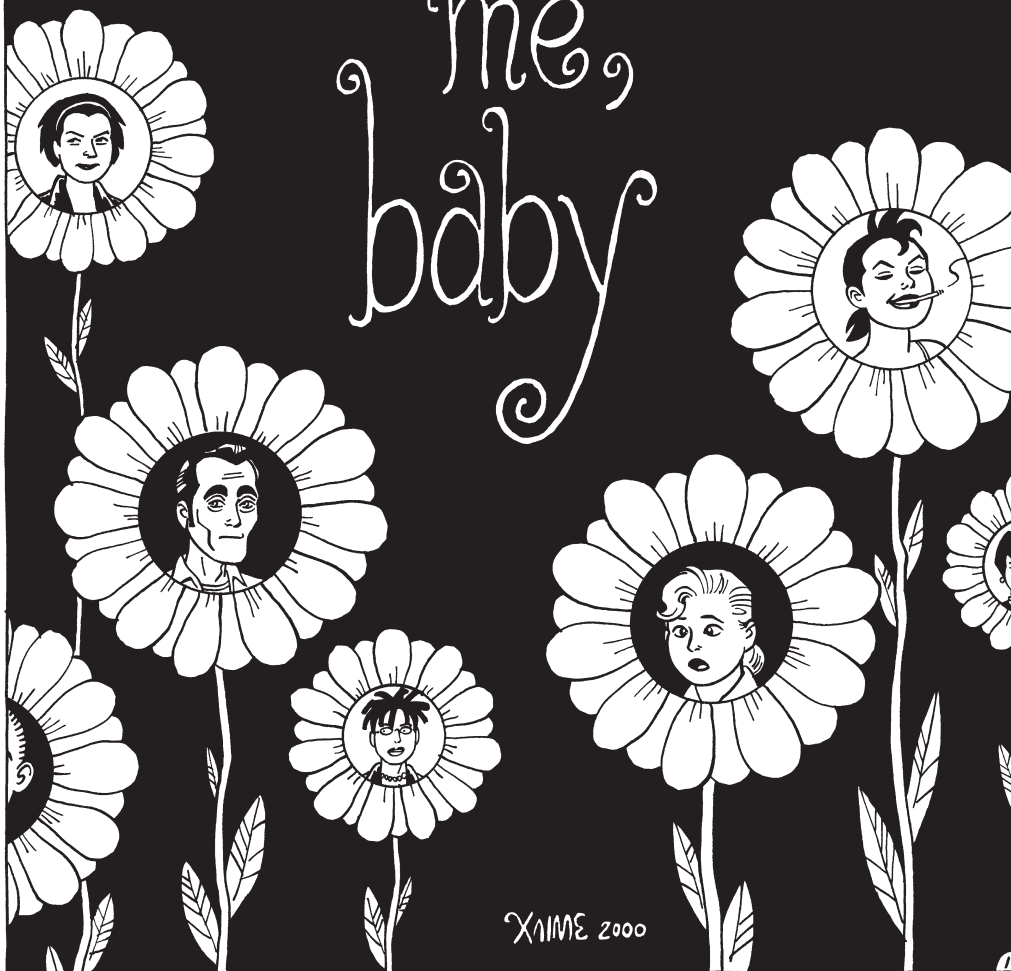




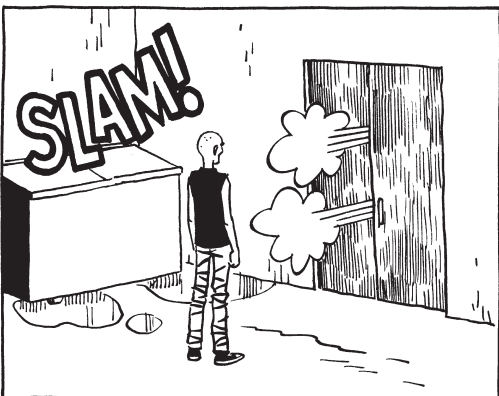
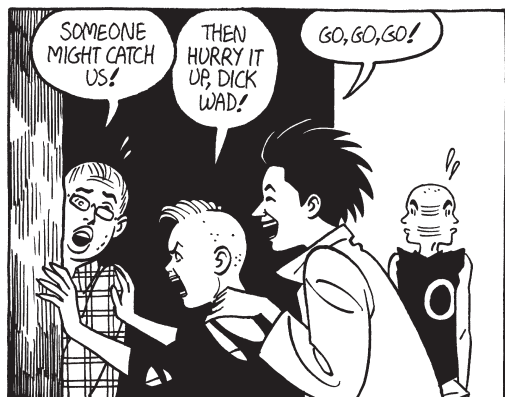
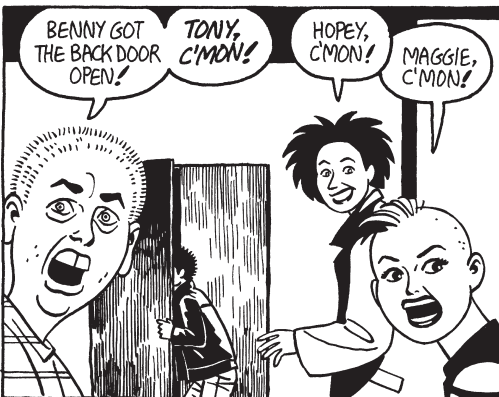
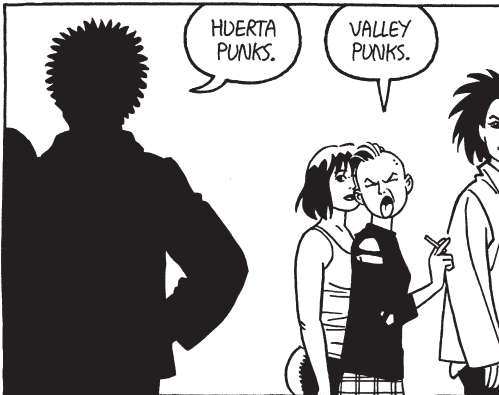
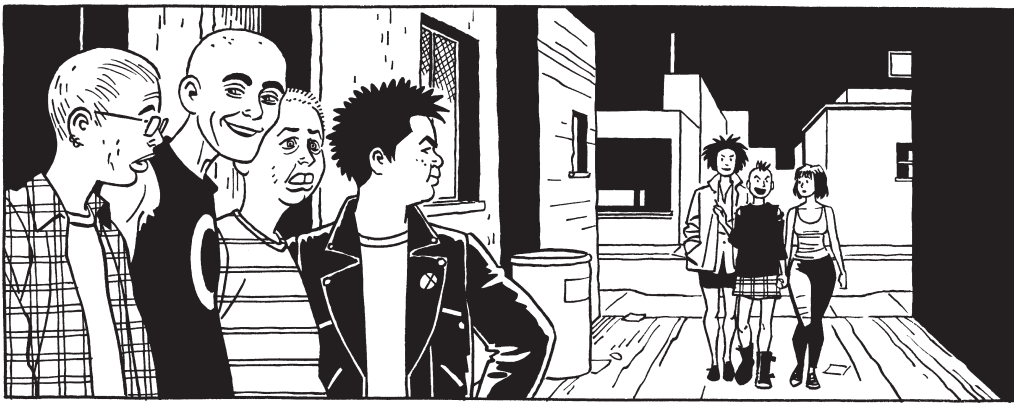


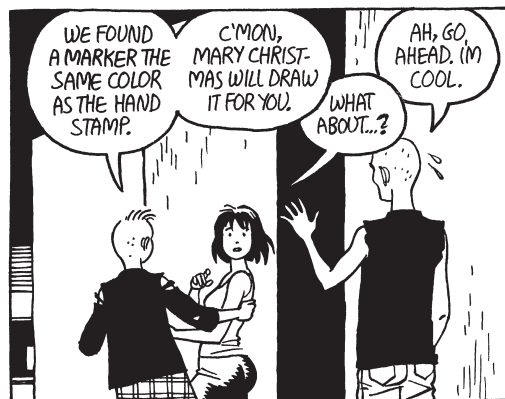
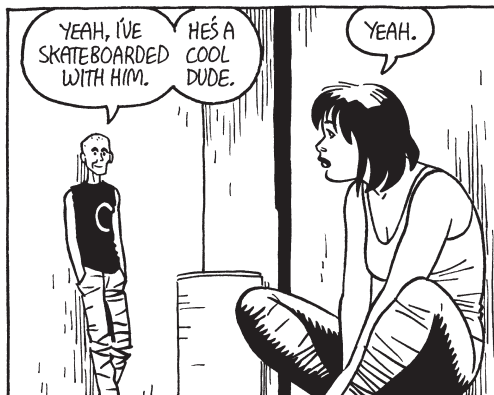
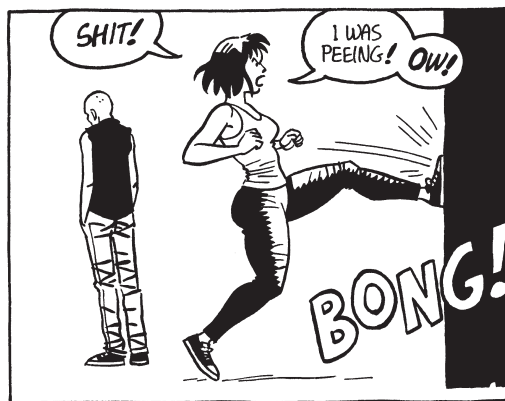


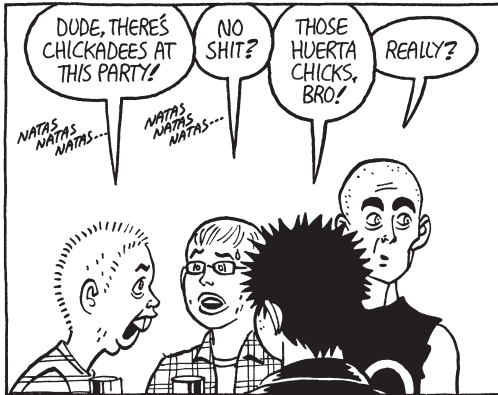
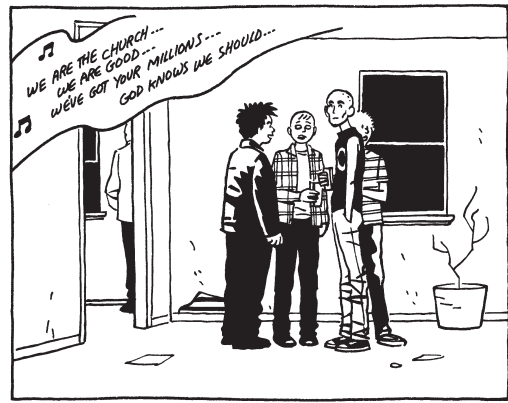
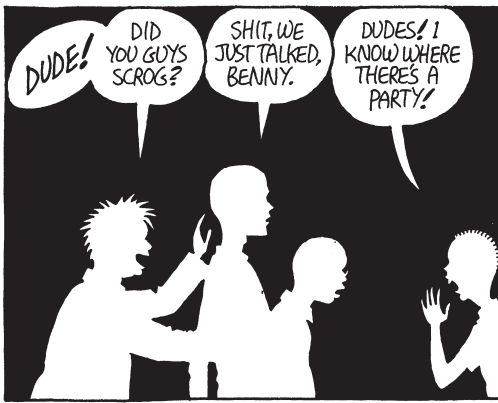
Everybody
Loves
me,
baby



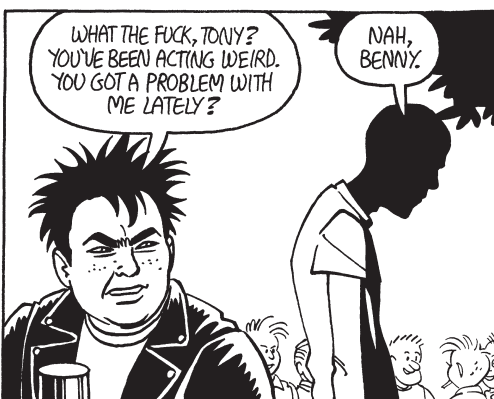
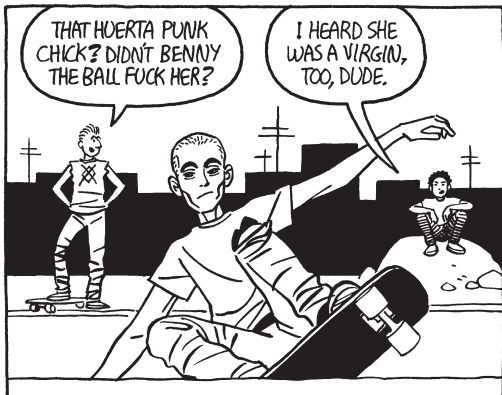


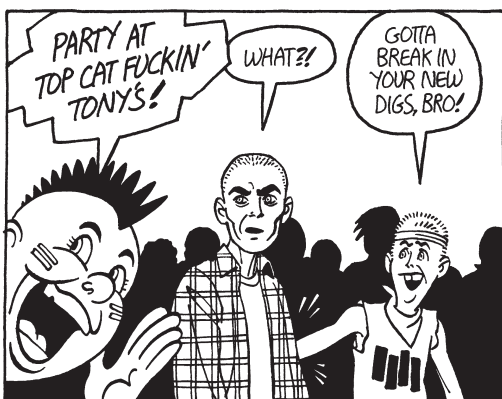


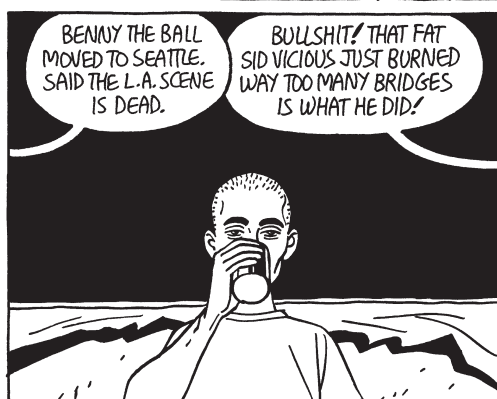
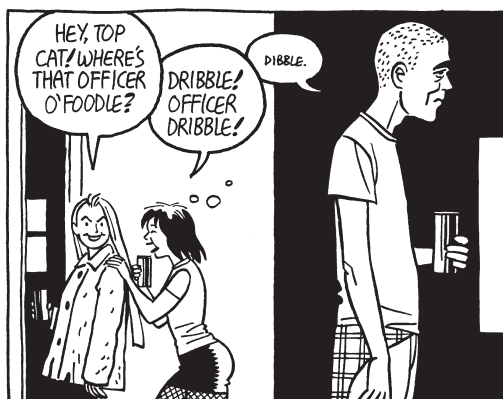


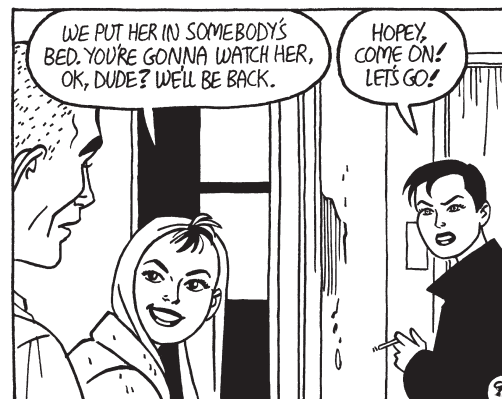
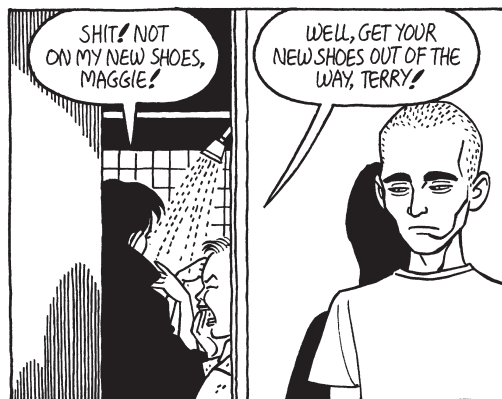
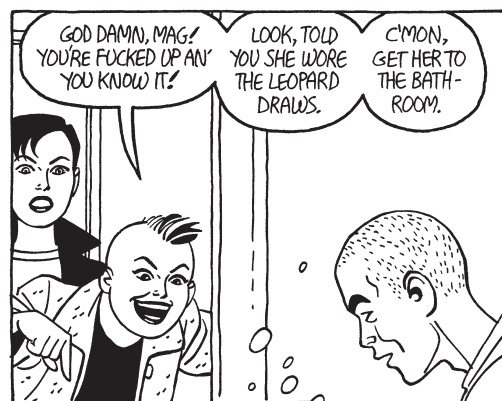


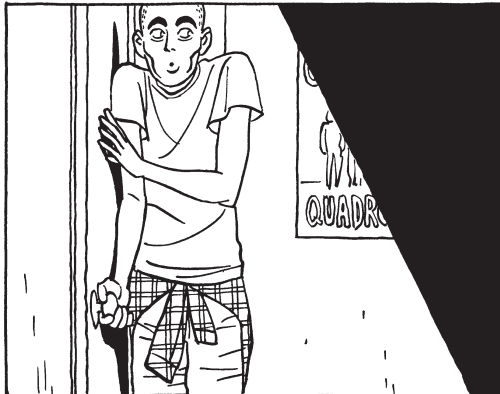
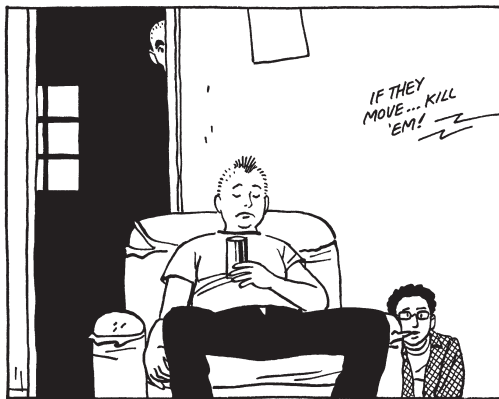
SONG - "NO GOD" BY THE GERMS

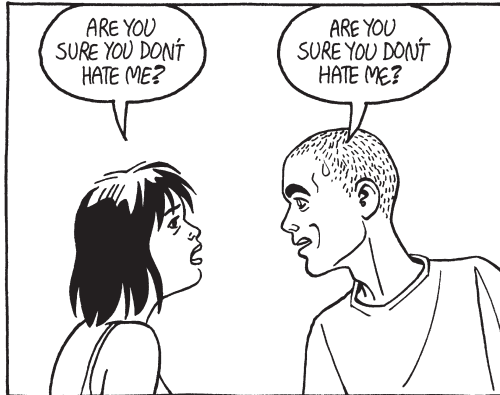
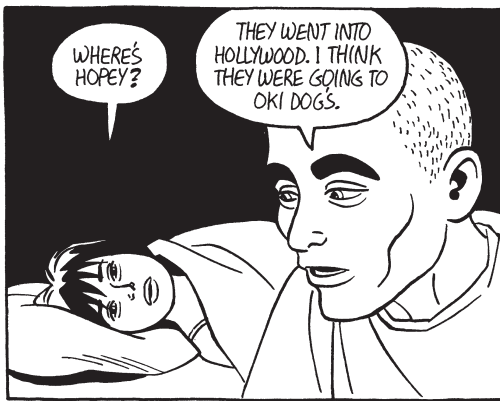


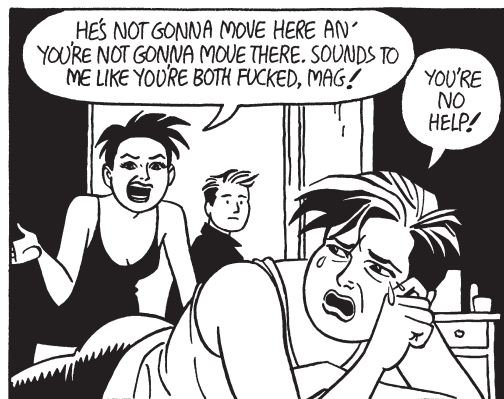
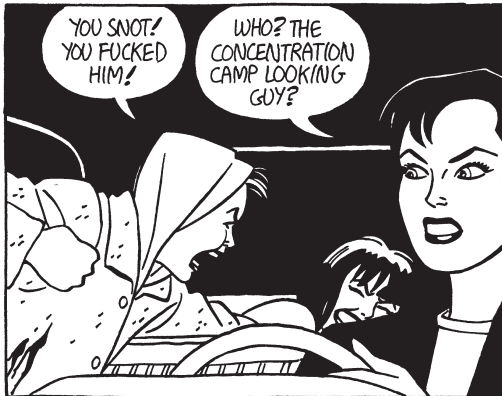
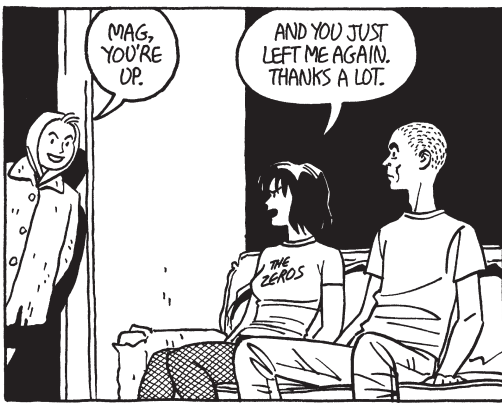




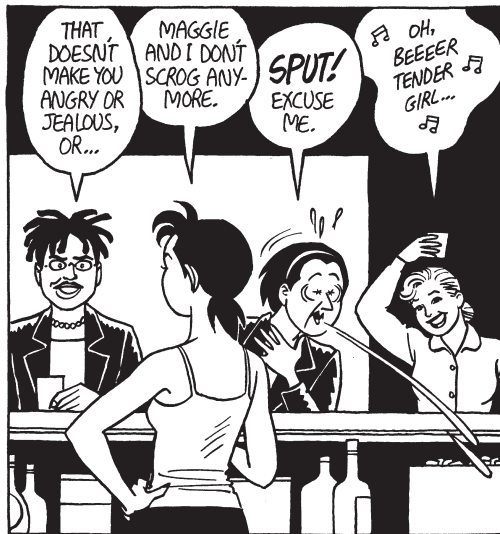
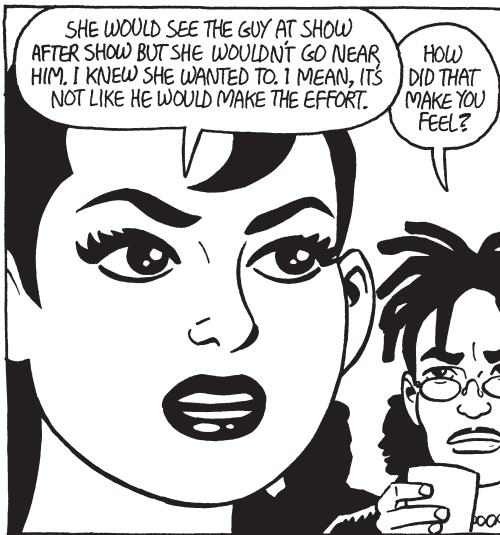


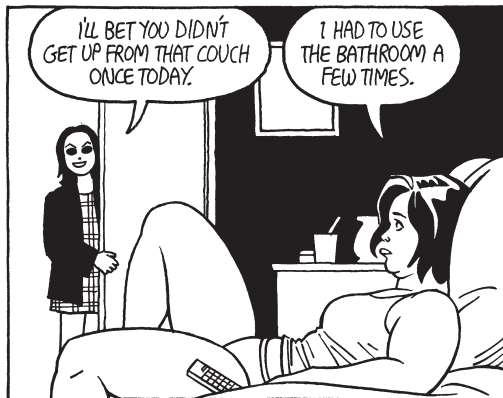
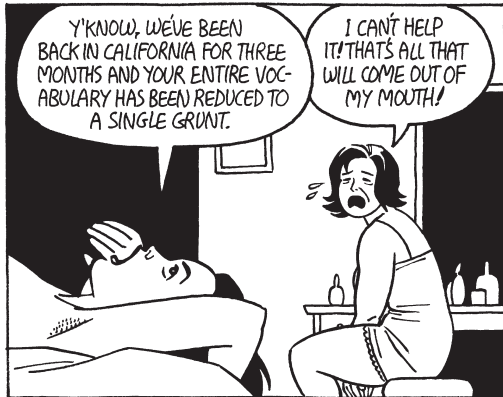




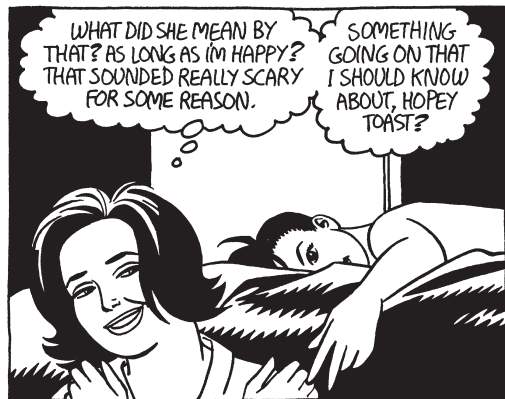


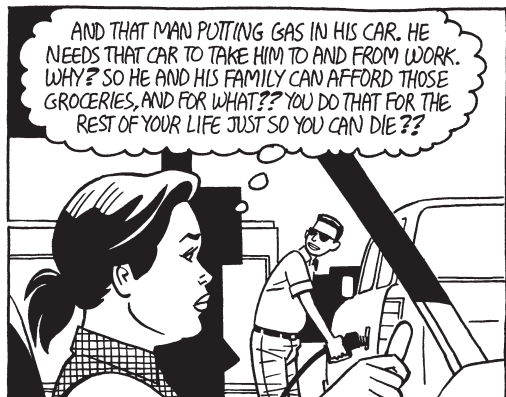
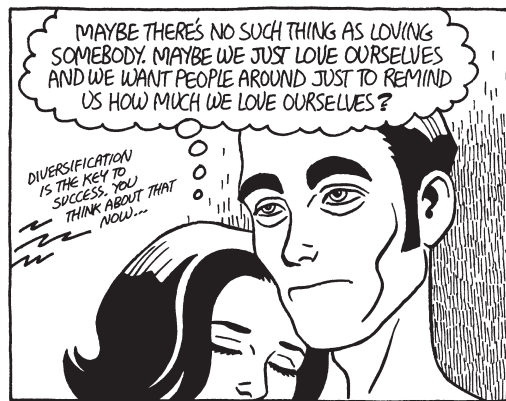
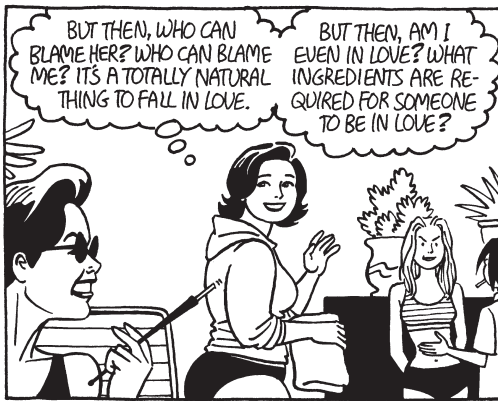
SONG - "DEAD AT BIRTH" BY THE SUBHUMANS (CANADIAN)

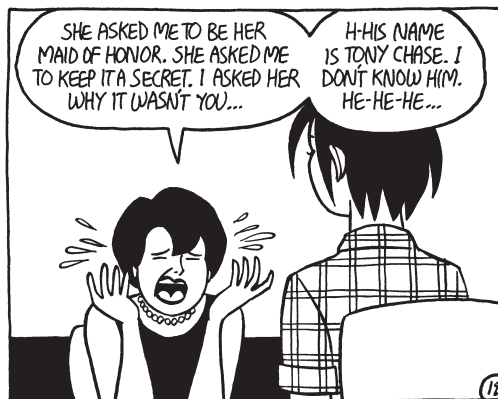
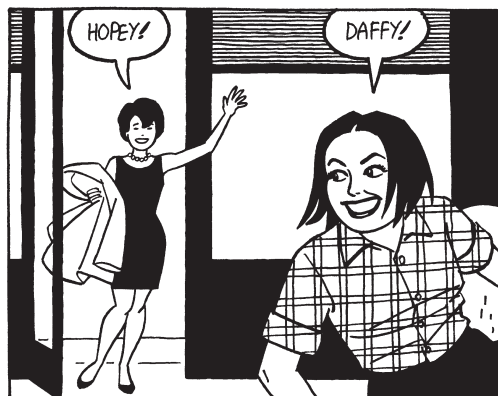
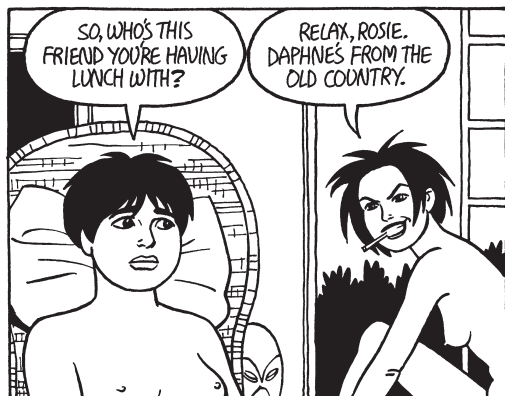
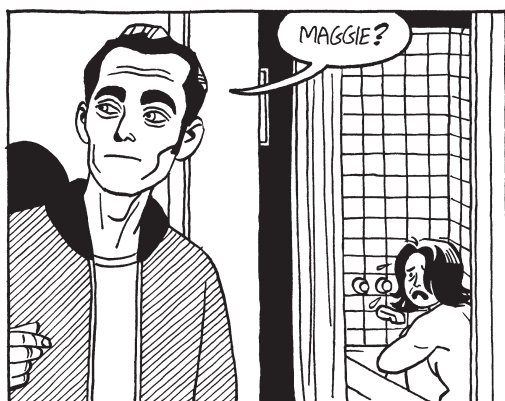


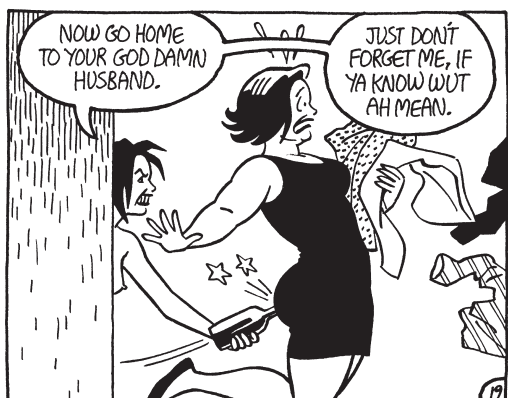


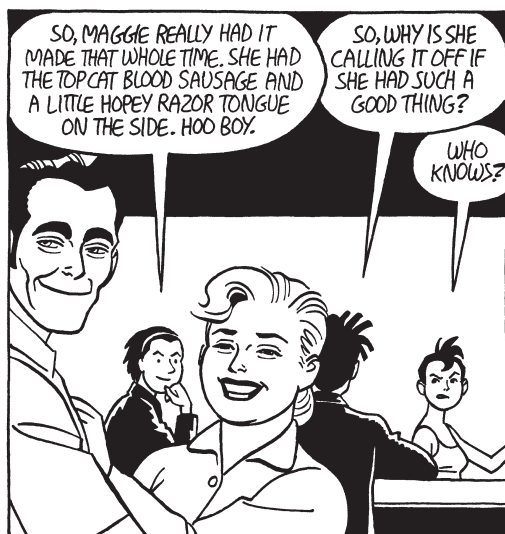


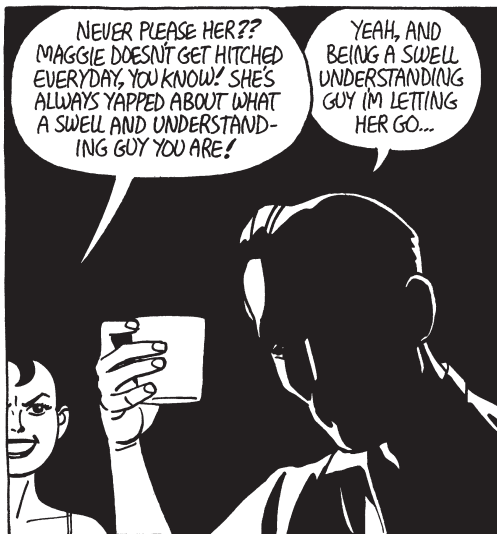
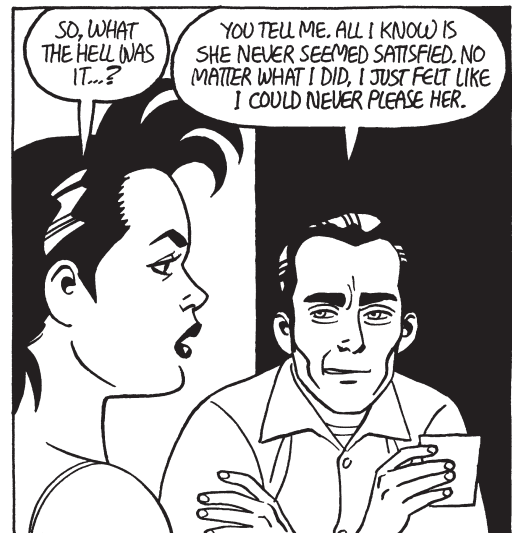


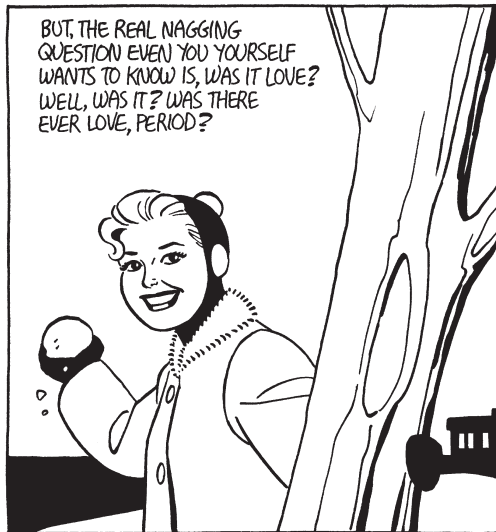
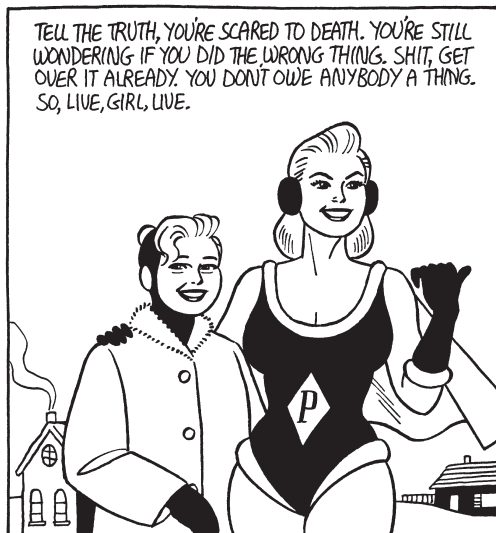








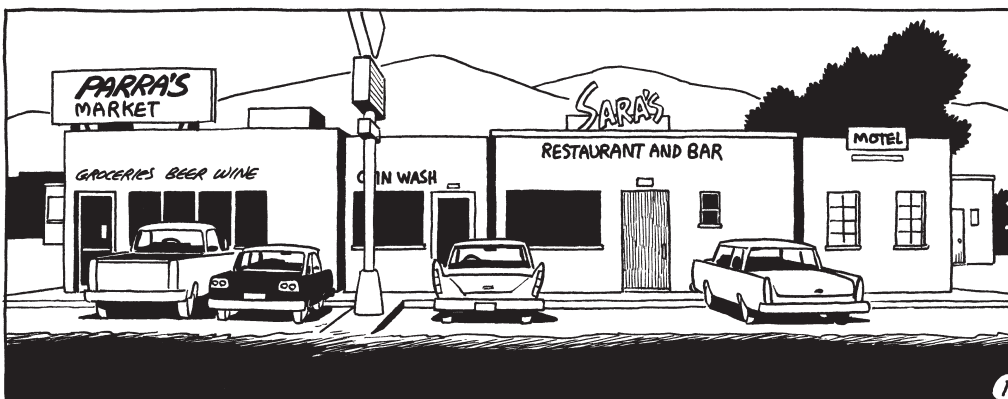


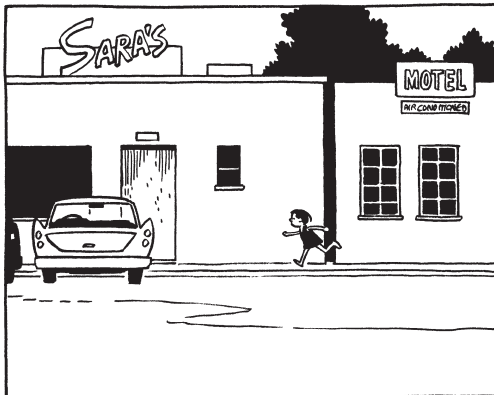
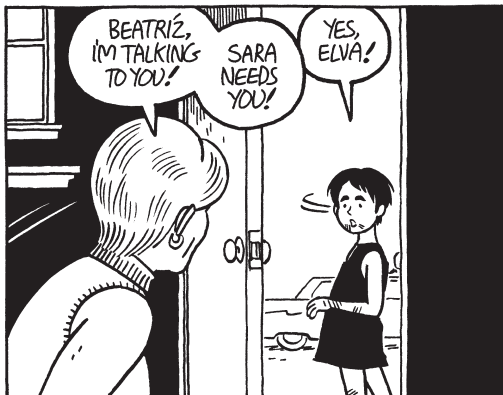
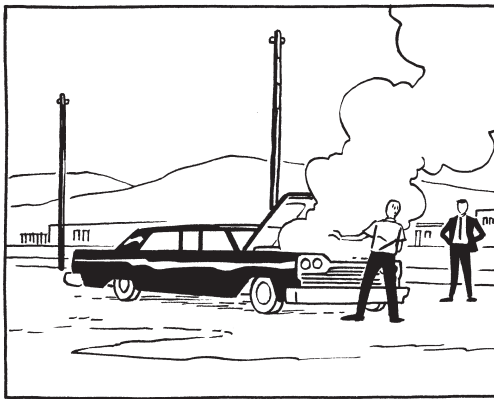


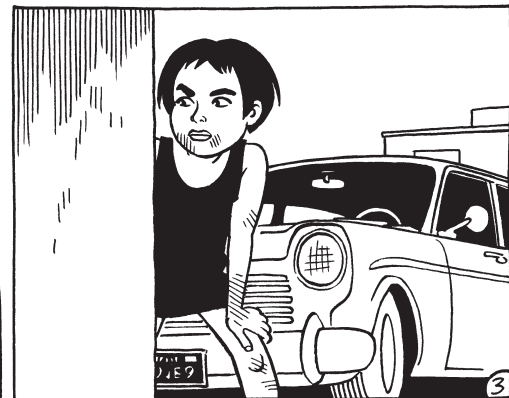
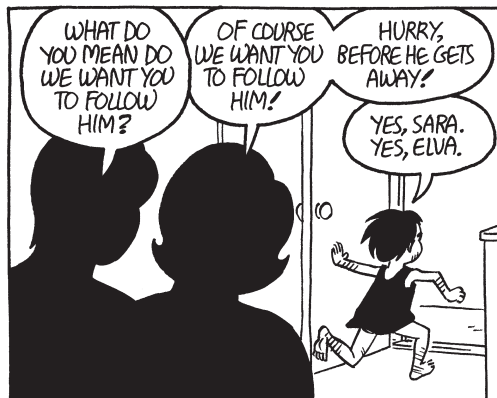
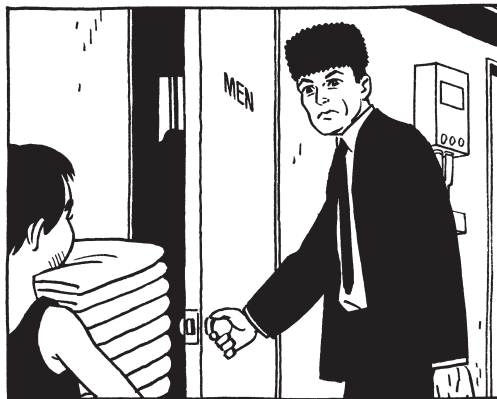
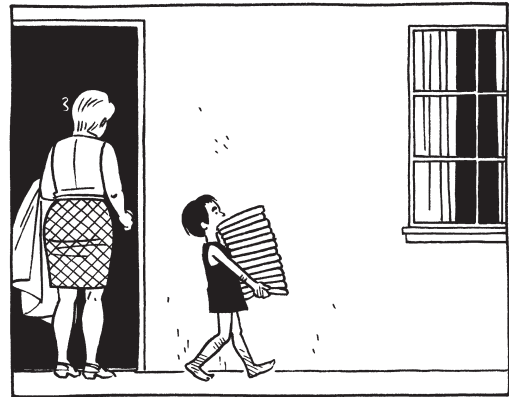
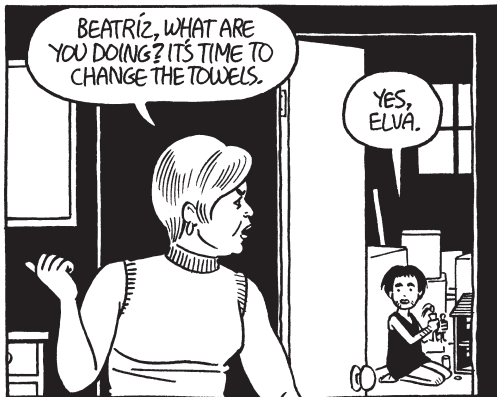


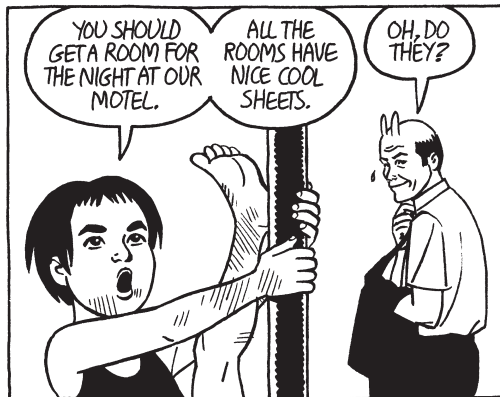
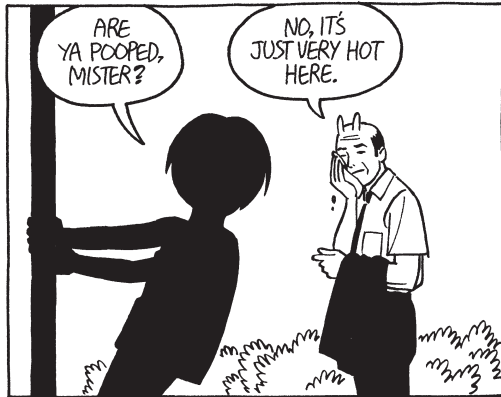
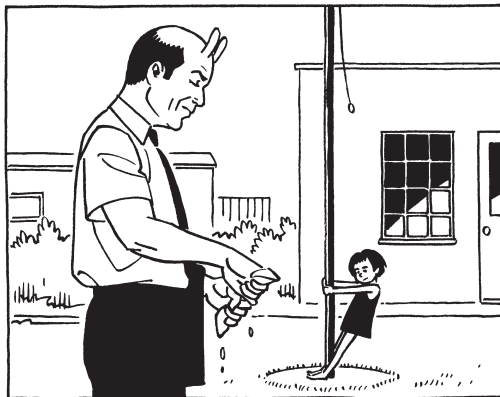
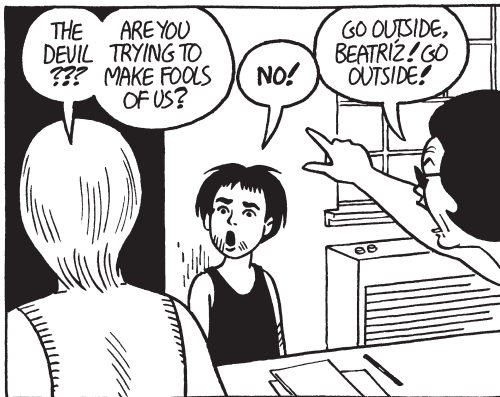
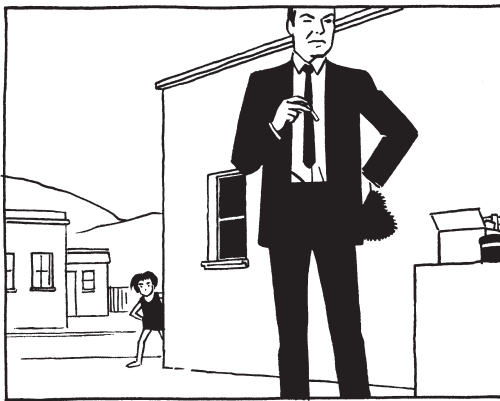
BAY OF THREES

"SAY IT FAST THREE TIMES"

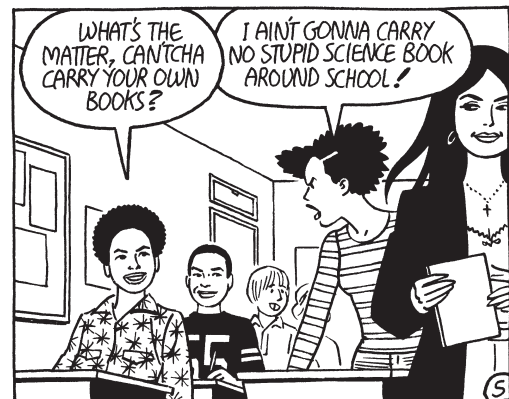
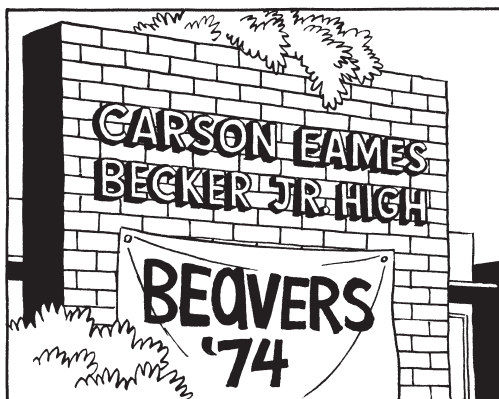


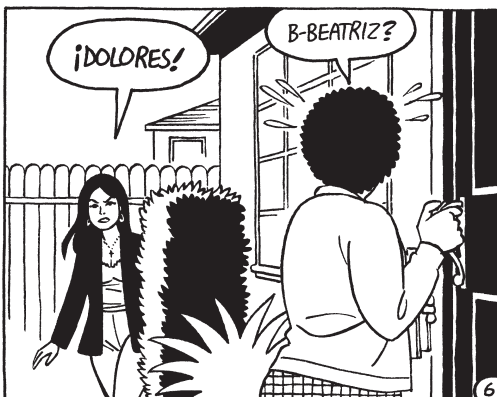
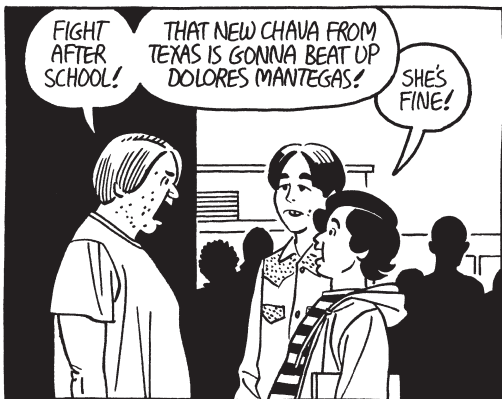
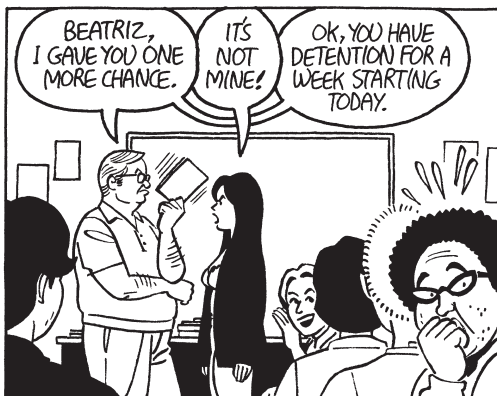
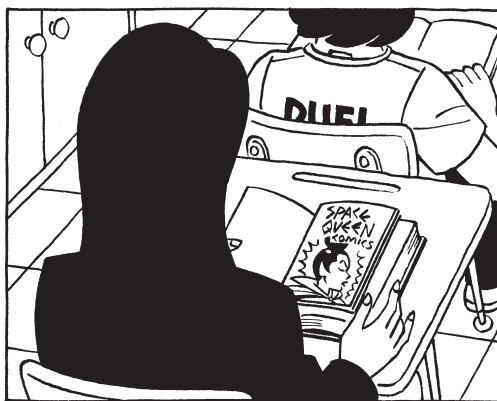


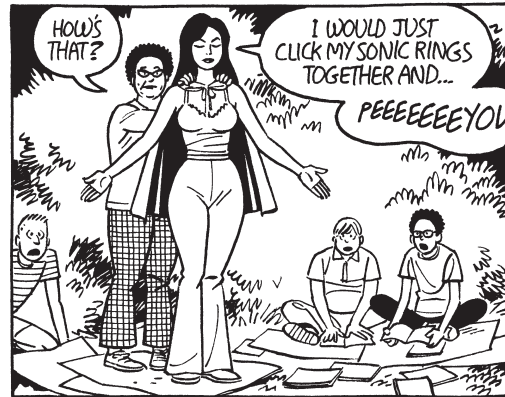
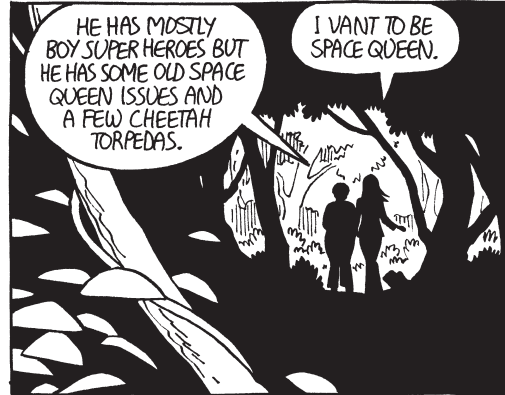
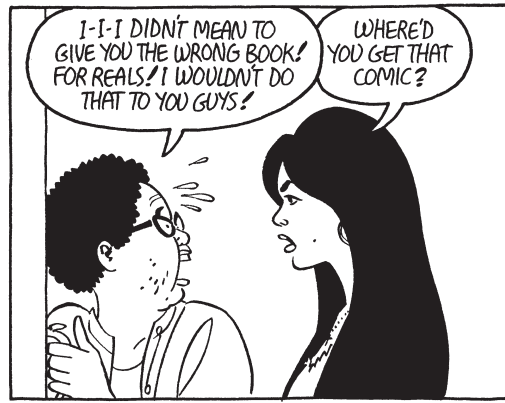


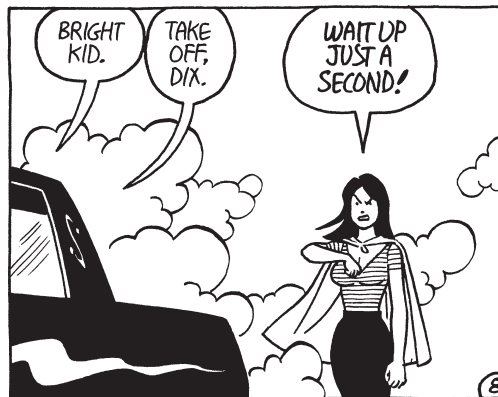
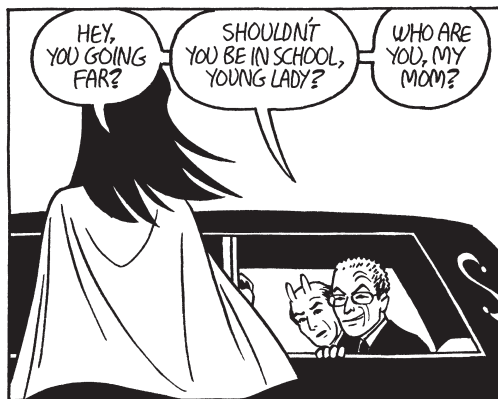
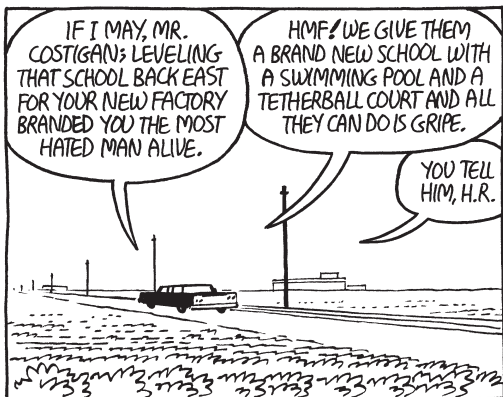
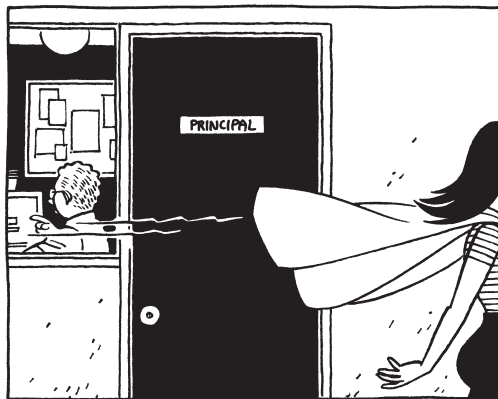


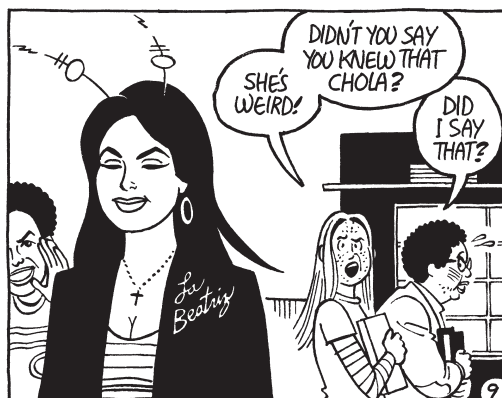
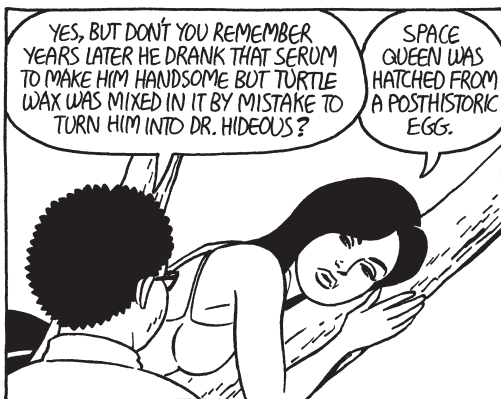
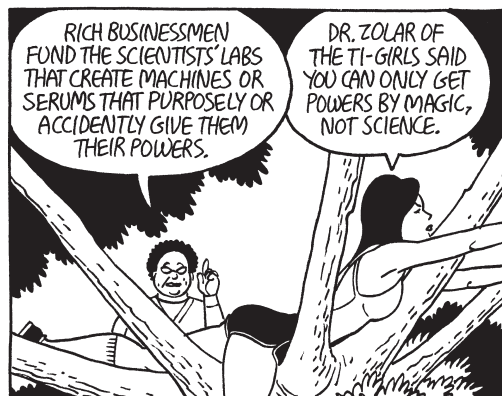
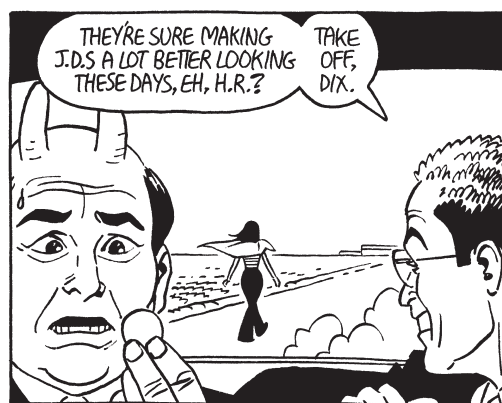
CINTO - BELT

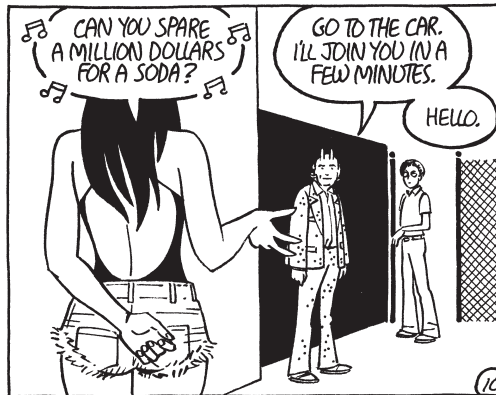
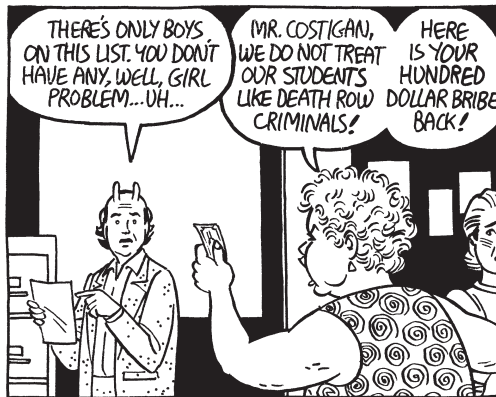
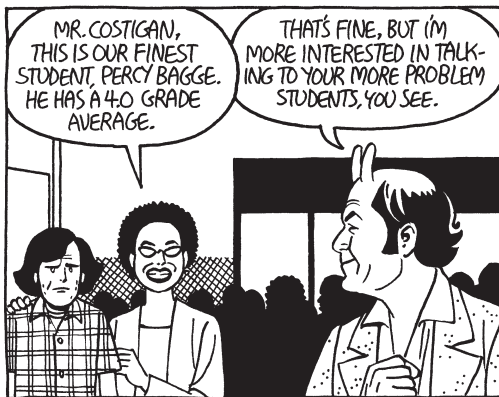
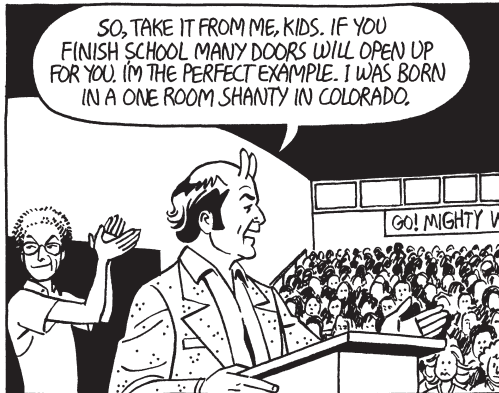
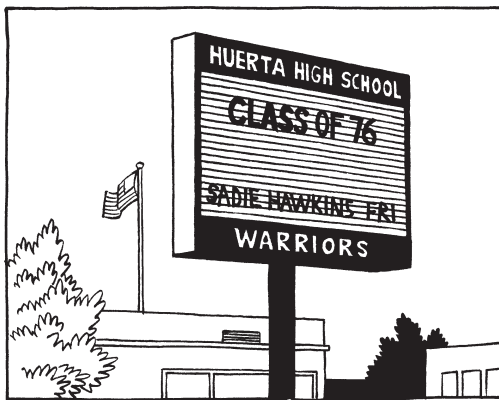


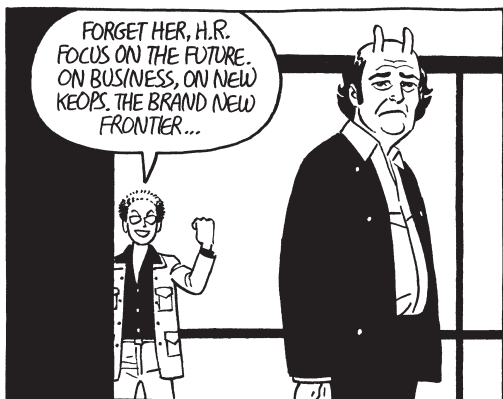
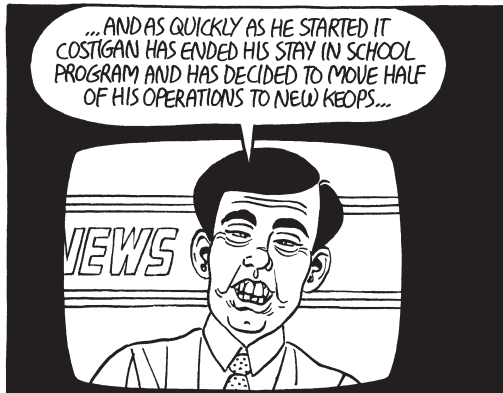
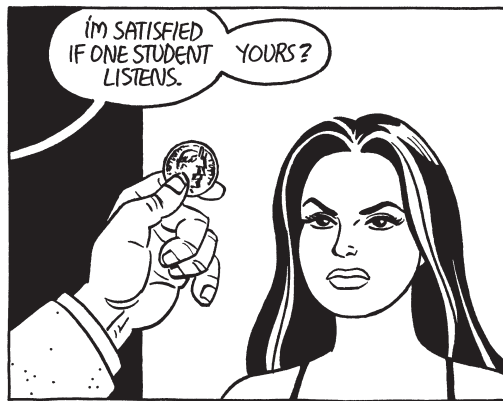


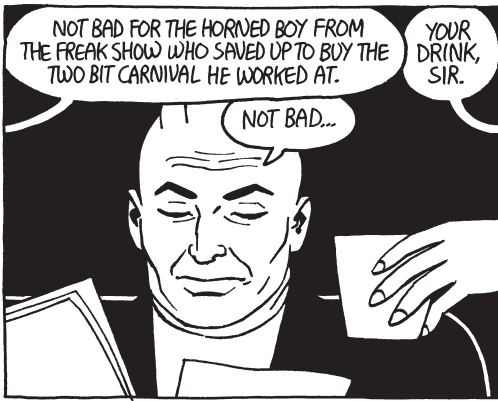


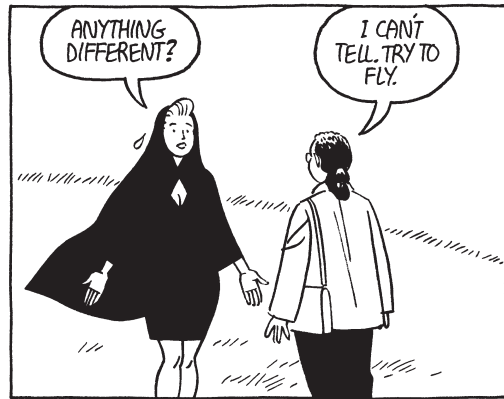
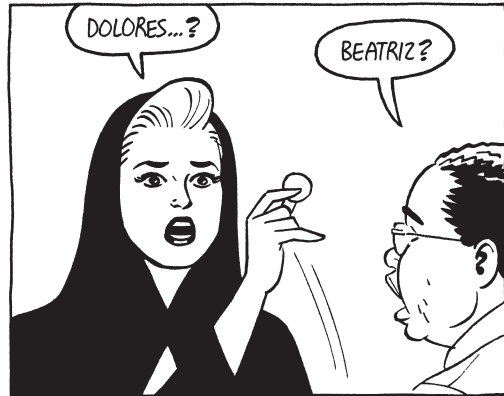
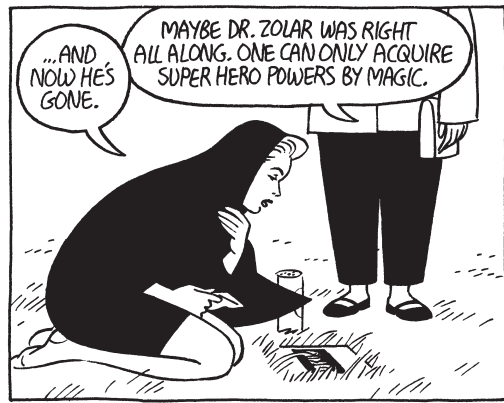
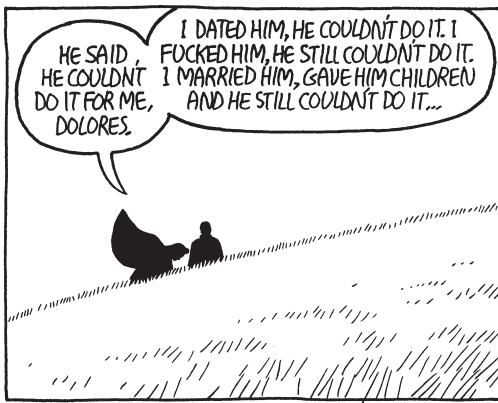


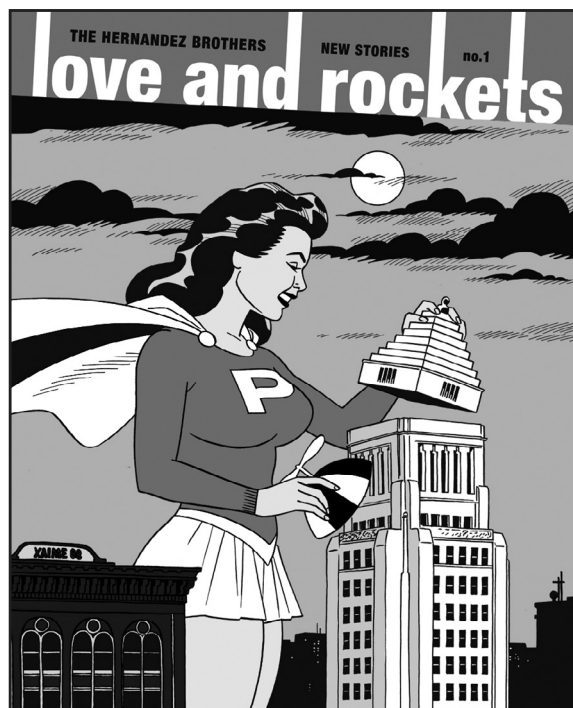
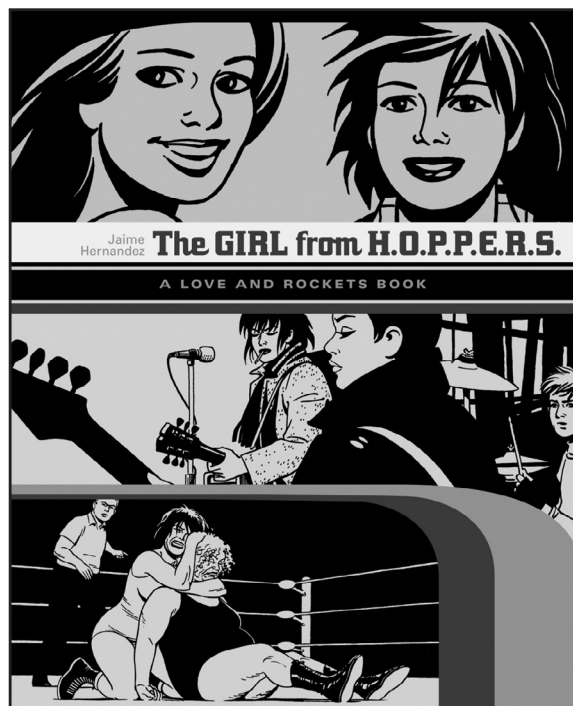
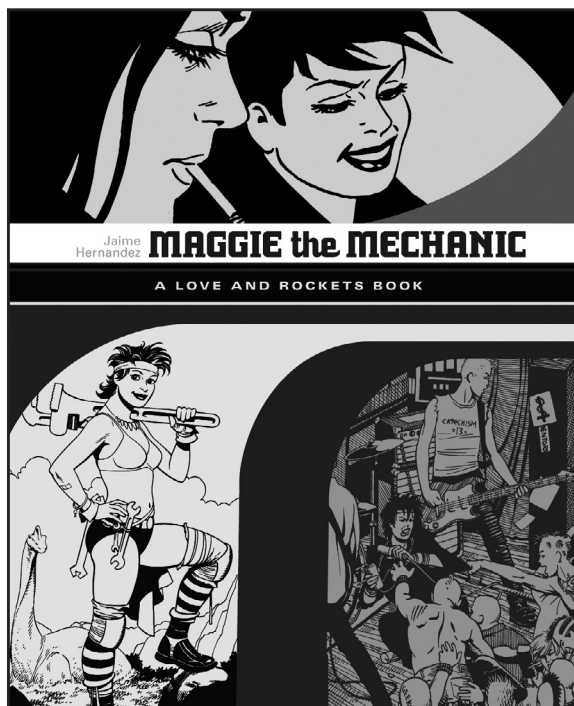




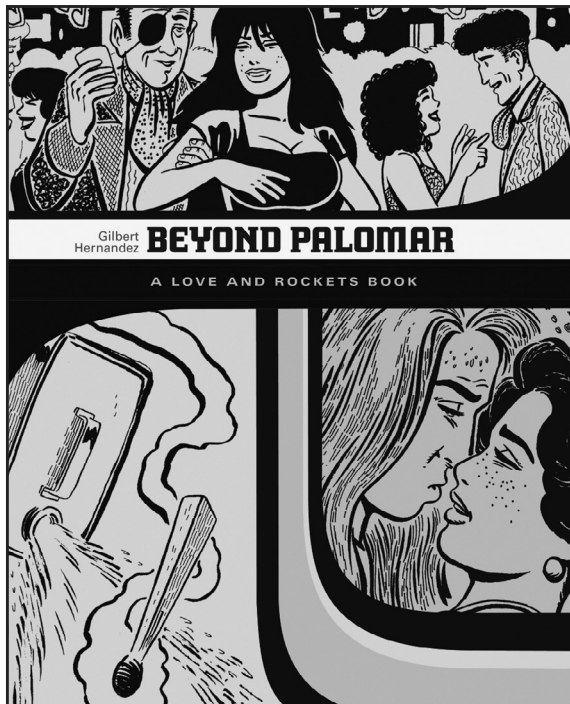
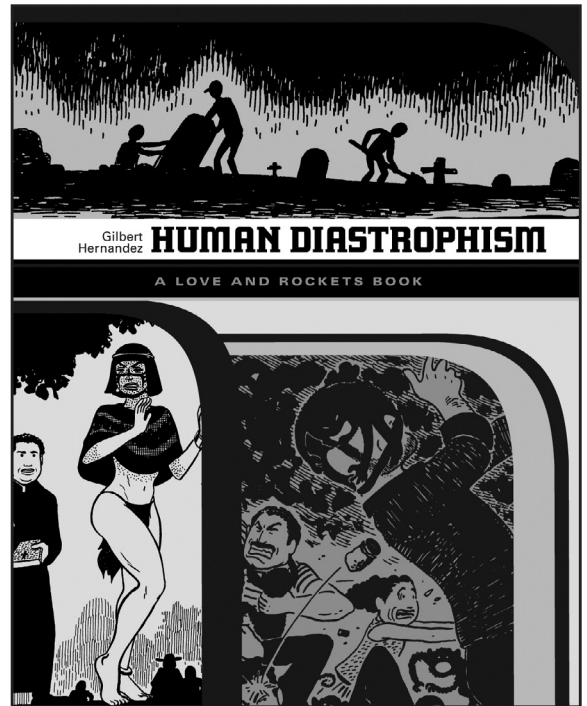
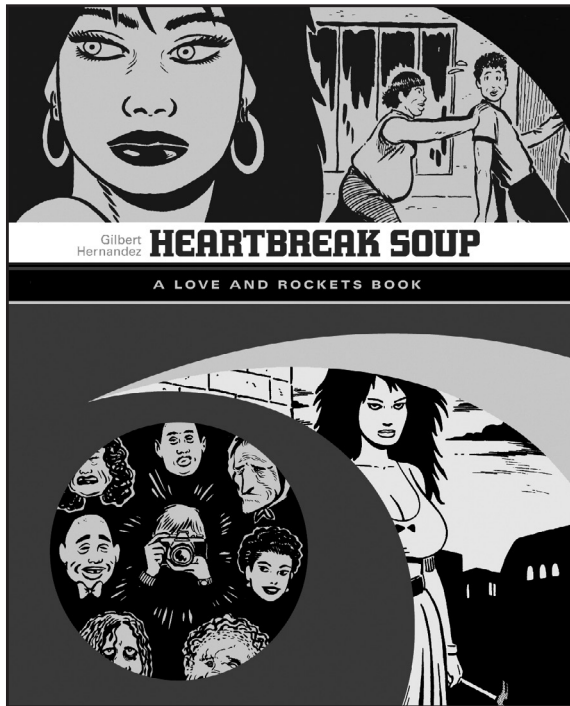








If you've enjoyed this book, you can follow the earlier adventures of Maggie, Hopey, Penny, Ray and the rest of the Locas gang in *Maggie the Mechanic*, *The Girl From H.O.P.P.E.R.S.*, and *Perla La Loca*; new installments appear every year in the ongoing *Love & Rockets: New Stories*.



Gilbert Hernandez's "Palomar" stories appeared in *Love and Rockets* side by side with Jaime's tales of the Locas. *Heartbreak Soup*, *Human Diastrophism*, and *Beyond Palomar* collect these stories, while *Amor Y Cohetes* is a catch-all compendium of Gilbert, Jaime and Mario Hernandez's short stories.

JAIME HERNANDEZ



Born in 1959, Jaime Hernandez enjoyed a pleasant childhood in Oxnard, California, with four brothers and one sister. Their mother had been an avid comic book fan as a girl, and she passed onto them a love of Jack Kirby and Steve Ditko's Marvel comics, Hank Ketcham's (and Al Wiseman's) *Dennis the Menace*, and the Archie comics line. A further strain of DNA was added when an older brother smuggled R. Crumb's *Zap* into the house.

As puberty and other interests invaded, Jaime's enthusiasm for mainstream comics waned. The Los Angeles punk rock scene began to thrive, and this anarchistic and gritty aesthetic invaded Jaime's approach to writing and drawing. Mostly self-taught (although he cites the significant impact a figure-drawing instructor had on his skills), Jaime assimilated these influences, and in his hands the much-hyped and often misunderstood punk netherworld became a very real, habitable place populated with human beings rather than stereotypes.

Such were the humble beginnings of *Love & Rockets*, the internationally acclaimed series Jaime created with his brothers, Gilbert and Mario, in 1981. Twenty-five years later, *Love & Rockets* has been translated into many languages, won numerous awards for excellence, and is one of the defining post-underground comic book titles of the last quarter century.

Jaime's crisp, elegant, instantly recognizable style has made him an in-demand illustrator whose work has appeared on CD and DVD covers, and in magazines from *Hustler* to *The New Yorker*; in 2006, a new "Maggie" story, "La Maggie La Loca," was serialized in the *New York Times Magazine*'s "Funny Pages" section. He continues to chronicle the adventures of his now ageing "Locas" Maggie and Hopey (and their friends) in the pages of the ongoing annual *Love & Rockets: New Stories*. The career-spanning *The Art of Jaime Hernandez* is scheduled to appear from Abrams ComicsArts in April 2010.

Jaime Hernandez resides in Los Angeles, California, with his wife and daughter.