

ALMOST
CLOSED THIS
ACCOUNT... CAN'T
LET HER
DOWN...

HERE I
AM AGAIN,
THE ONLY
EMPLOYEE
WORKING
THROUGH
MY LUNCH
BREAK...

THE PAY ISN'T
THE BEST, AND
THE WORKPLACE
ISN'T WHAT
COULD BE
CONSIDERED
A MERITOCRACY.

I'M ALWAYS
THE ONE TO
BE VOLUNTEERED
WHENEVER MY
TEAM DOESN'T
MEET THEIR
TARGET QUOTAS.

CLICK

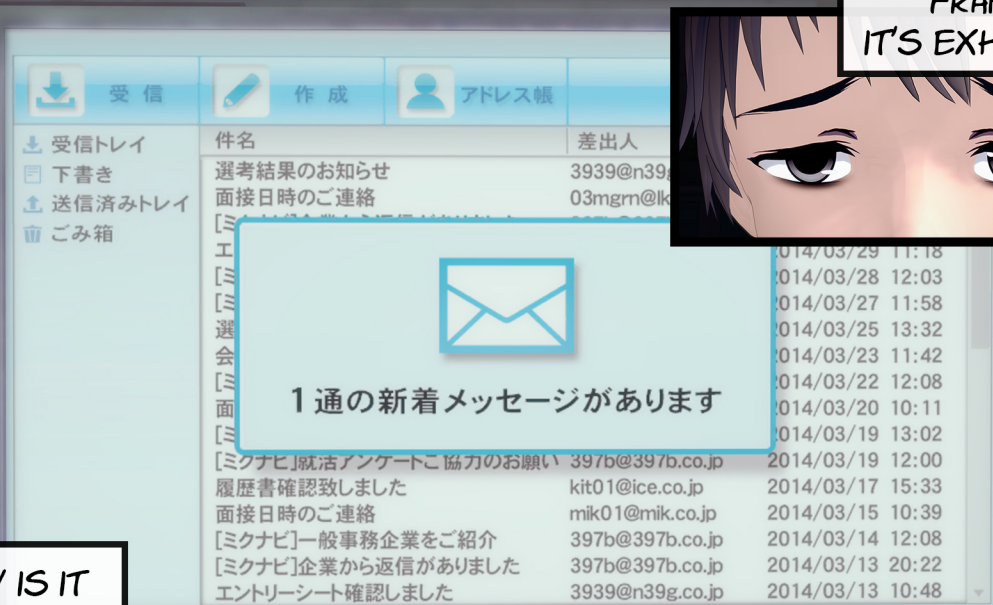


CLICK

THE
WORKLOADS
ARE UNREASONABLE,
YET THERE'S A
CULTURAL
EXPECTATION TO
WORK THROUGH
BREAKS TO MEET
DEADLINES.

FRANKLY,
IT'S EXHAUSTING.

SO WHY IS IT
THAT I STAY?



I'VE EVEN BEEN GRACIOUS ENOUGH TO INSERT THE STRAW.

YOU NEEDN'T WORRY: I HAVEN'T TAKEN A SIP.

HA... ANOTHER DONE...

WIGGLE

WAGGLE

ORDER UP!
A VITAMIN C HIT FOR MY CUTE KOHAI.

THIS IS WHY- THE EMBODIMENT OF MY MOTIVATION TO CONTINUE MY EMPLOYED MISERY.

KUZUHONA.

SHAKE SLOSH

WHICH MAKES ME HAPPY, BUT...

THANKS...

SHE'S ONLY GIVEN POSITIVE ATTENTION TO ME IN MY PRISON CUBICLE, UNLIKE MY OTHER COLLEAGUES.

TAKE IT!

TAKE IT!

IF I CANNOT CONVINCE YOU THEN MAYBE I SHALL PARTAKE IN THIS DELECTIBLE BEVERAGE.

THIS DIMINUATIVE CONTAINER IS CHOCK FULL OF VITAMIN C. IT'S REALLY GOOOOOOD!

SHE SEEMS WISE BEYOND HER YEARS, AND OFTEN SLIPS INTO OLD-FASHIONED DIALECT. BEING AROUND HER FEELS LIKE I HAVE A GRANDMA- A SILLY GRANDMA WATCHING OVER ME. IT BORDERS ON CONDESCENDING AT TIMES, BUT I APPRECIATE HER, I KNOW SHE HAS MY BEST INTERESTS IN MIND.

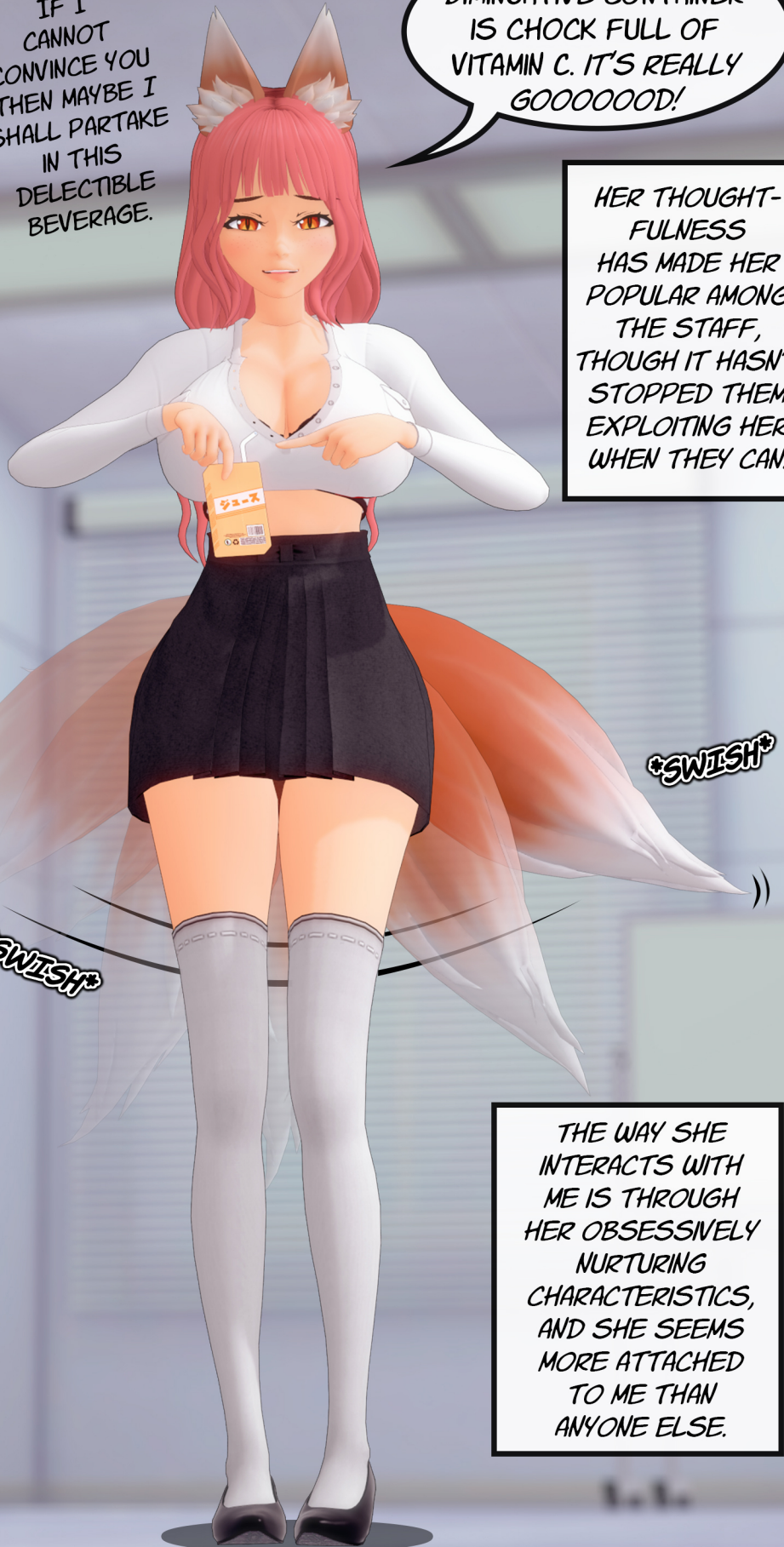
HER THOUGHT-FULNESS HAS MADE HER POPULAR AMONG THE STAFF, THOUGH IT HASN'T STOPPED THEM EXPLOITING HER WHEN THEY CAN.

SWISH

SWISH

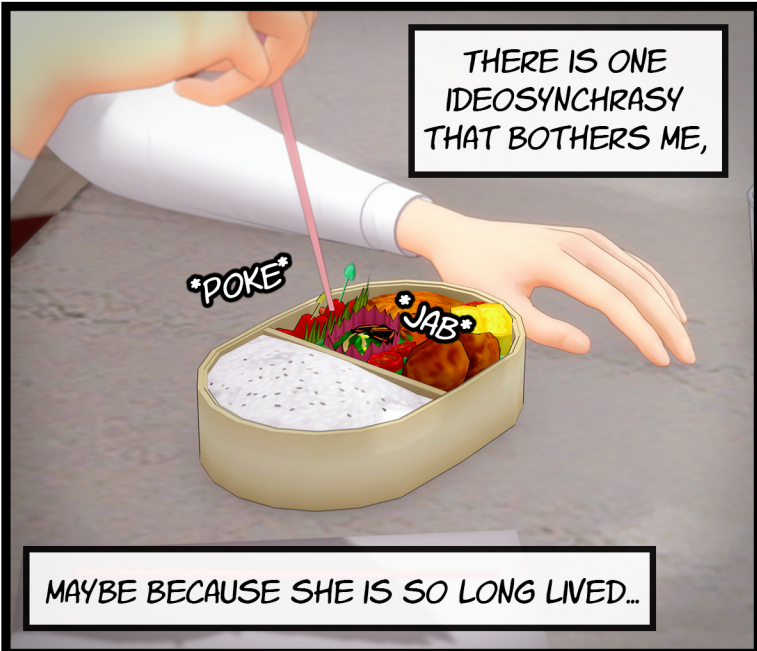
IF HER MANNERS DON'T GIVE IT AWAY THEN HER EARS AND TAILS DO- SHE'S OF A LONG-LIVED RACE CALLED 'KITSUNES'. I'VE NOTICED THAT HER TAIL WAGS INVOLUNTARILY WHENEVER SHE TRIES TO CONVINCE PEOPLE OR GETS EXCITED. IT'S ENDEARING.

THE WAY SHE INTERACTS WITH ME IS THROUGH HER OBSESSIVELY NURTURING CHARACTERISTICS, AND SHE SEEMS MORE ATTACHED TO ME THAN ANYONE ELSE.



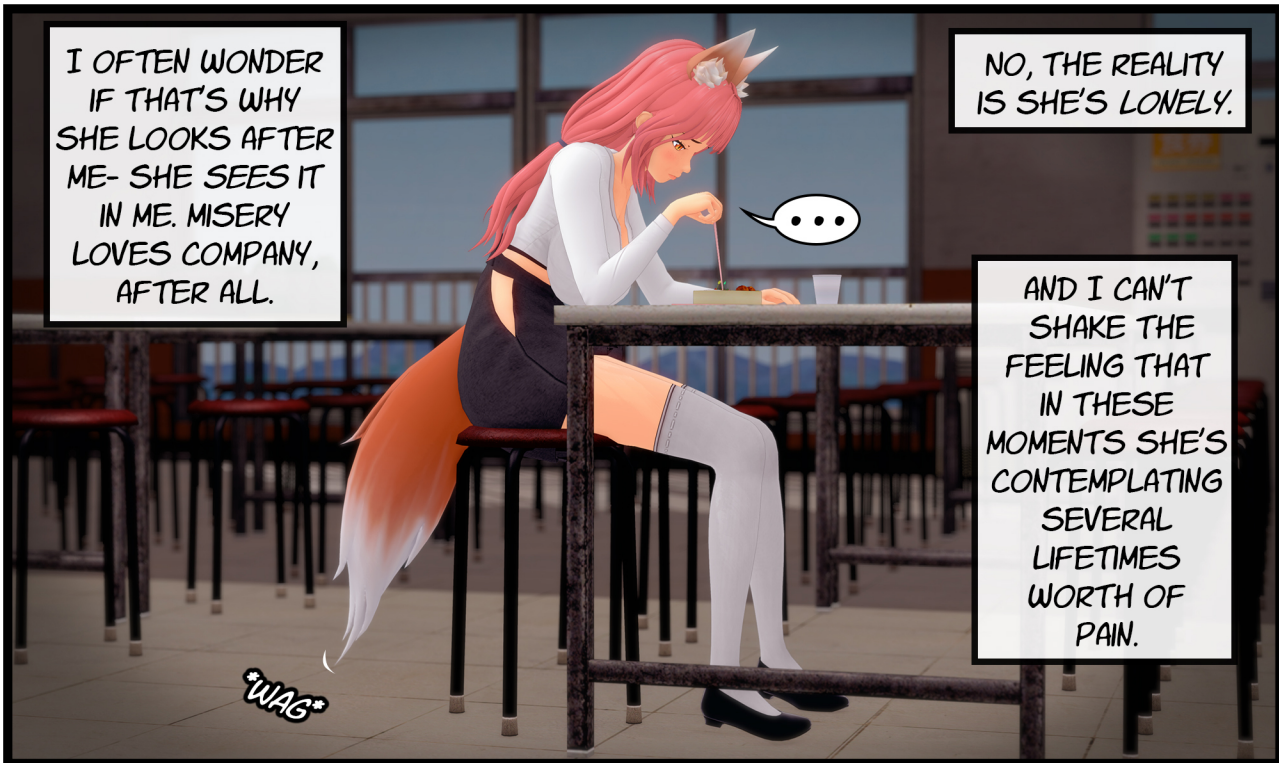


...SHE'S GETS QUIET, DISTRACTED.



THERE IS ONE IDEOSYNCRASY THAT BOTHERS ME,

MAYBE BECAUSE SHE IS SO LONG LIVED...

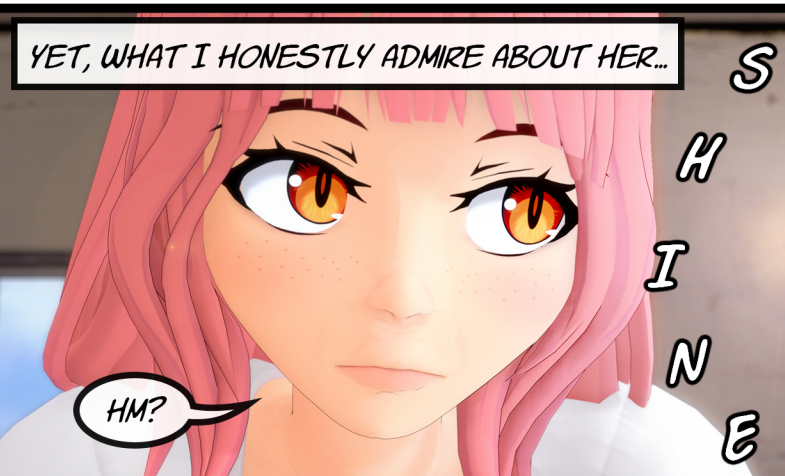


I OFTEN WONDER IF THAT'S WHY SHE LOOKS AFTER ME- SHE SEES IT IN ME. MISERY LOVES COMPANY, AFTER ALL.

NO, THE REALITY IS SHE'S LONELY.

AND I CAN'T SHAKE THE FEELING THAT IN THESE MOMENTS SHE'S CONTEMPLATING SEVERAL LIFETIMES WORTH OF PAIN.

WAG



YET, WHAT I HONESTLY ADMIRE ABOUT HER...

HM?

S
H
I
N
E

SHE STILL, AFTER SO MANY YEARS, HAS RETAINED HER APPETITE FOR LIFE. I COULDN'T IMAGINE NOT SEEING THINGS AS MUNDANE IN HER WELL-WALKED SHOES.

TWITCH

MY, WHAT A FINE RAINBOW.
THOU'RT INVARIABLY GRAND REGARDLES OF LOCALE, NEH?

PECULIARLY, WHEN SHE HITS A LOW MOOD, SHE PLAYS WITH THIS BALL. SOMETHING TELLS ME IT'S MORE THAN JUST SOME KITSUNE TOY...

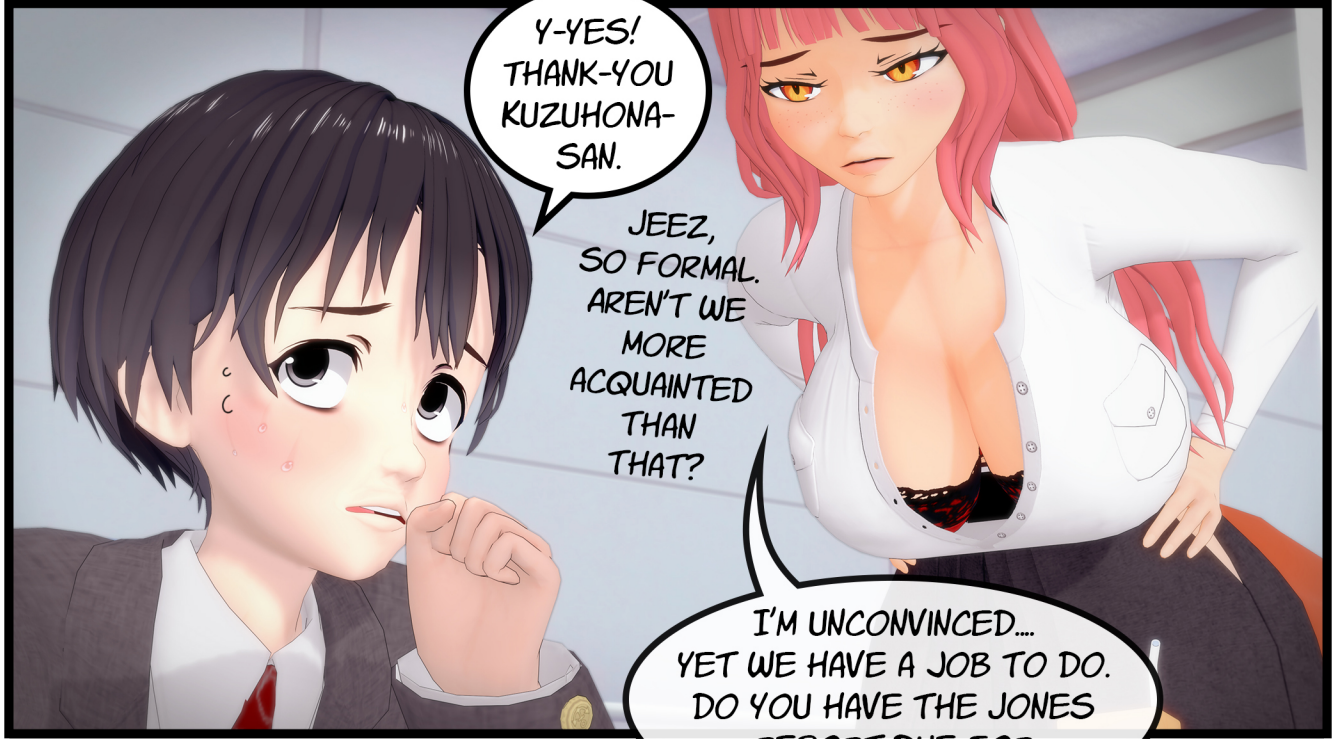
AND I DO INDEED HAVE THE COMPANY OF A DEAR ONE, IN SPIRIT.

I SHOULD NOT FORGET THAT I AM BLESSED.

THOU WOULDST ADMONISH ME FOR SUCH SELF-PITY, DOUBLY SO ALONG-SIDE MY SLOVENLY POSTURE!

ANYWAY, THESE ARE THE REASONS I WORK AS HARD AS I DO- I WON'T LET HER TAKE THE FALL FOR HER LAZY SUBORDINATES. BUT... TO TELL THE TRUTH... SHE'S A BIT TOO STIMULATING FOR THE WORKPLACE.

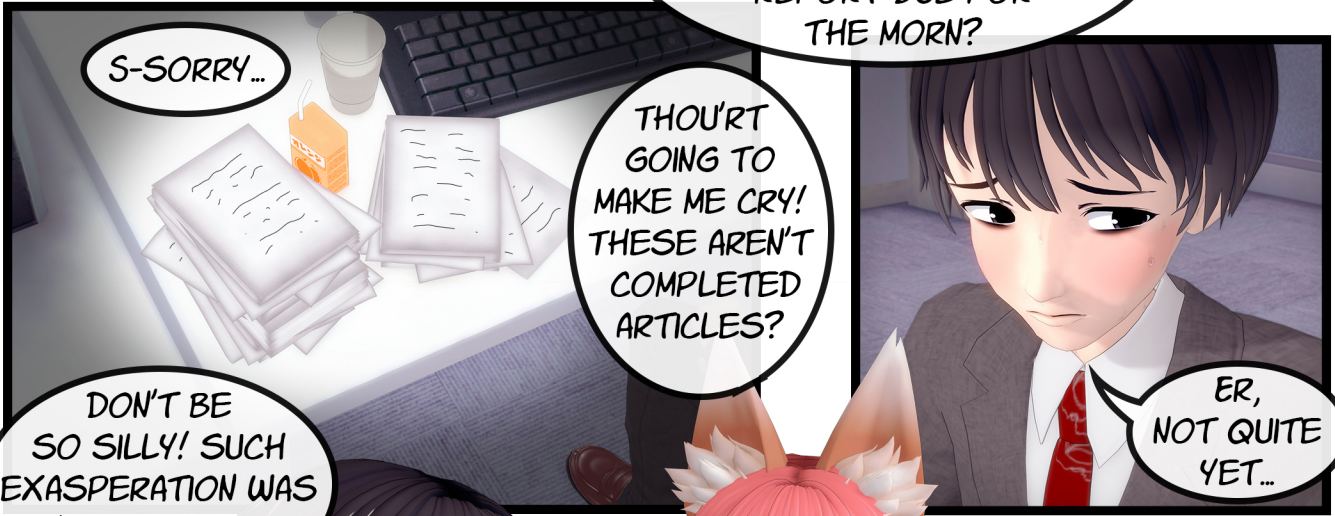




Y-YES!
THANK-YOU
KUZUHONA-
SAN.

JEEZ,
SO FORMAL.
AREN'T WE
MORE
ACQUAINTED
THAN
THAT?

I'M UNCONVINCED...
YET WE HAVE A JOB TO DO.
DO YOU HAVE THE JONES
REPORT DUE FOR
THE MORN?



S-SORRY...

THOU'RT
GOING TO
MAKE ME CRY!
THESE AREN'T
COMPLETED
ARTICLES?

ER,
NOT QUITE
YET...

DON'T BE
SO SILLY! SUCH
EXASPERATION WAS
NOT DIRECTED
AT YOU!



Y-YEAH.
FIRM.

IT LOOKS AS
THOUGH OVERTIME
IS IN OUR IMMEDIATE
FUTURE TONIGHT
THEN, NEH?

IF
TIME PERMITS
I'LL TREAT YOU TO
A DRINK AFTERWARDS.
SOUND GOOD?
I'M FIRM BUT FAIR
AFTER ALL.

YOU LIKE TO THINK THAT,
BUT I KNOW DIFFERENT.



GLANCE

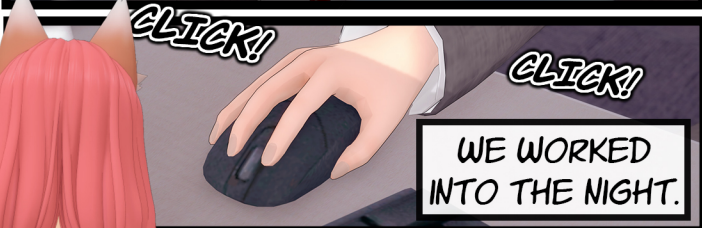
AND AS I EXPECTED...



AND SO...



OOF, THESE ARE STACKED HEAVY.



CLICK!

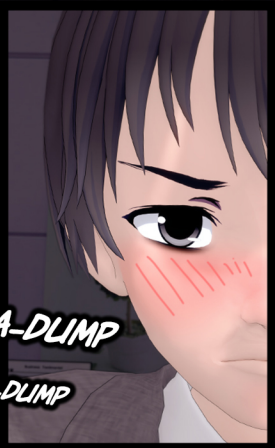
CLICK!

WE WORKED INTO THE NIGHT.

HAVE THEY BECOME MISCHIEVOUS TSUKUMOGAMI?

IT IS CONCERNING HOW THESE DOCUMENTS TRY TO TOPPLE ME.

...BEING ALONE WITH SUCH A TOTAL BEAUTY CAUSED A LOT OF ONE-SIDED TENSION.



BA-DLIMP

BA-DLIMP

SWAY~



SASHAY ♡

FLICK!

SEVERAL HOURS LATER, SOMEHOW...

12:16 A.M.

...WE WERE DONE.

HAH...
NOW...
IF I RUSH
HOME I CAN
MAYBE GET A
THREE HOUR
NAP BEFORE
RETURN-

YAAAAAANNNNNNNNNN!

...DESPITE THE
DISTRACTIONS...

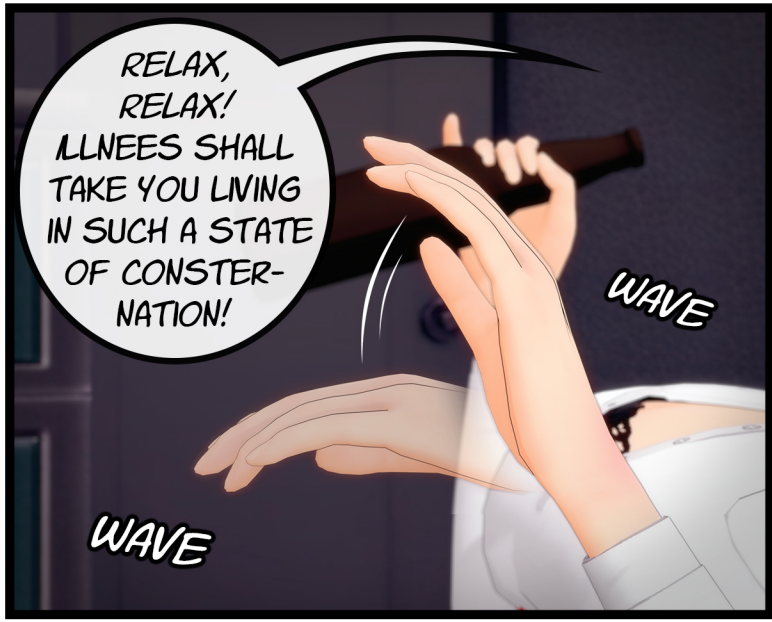
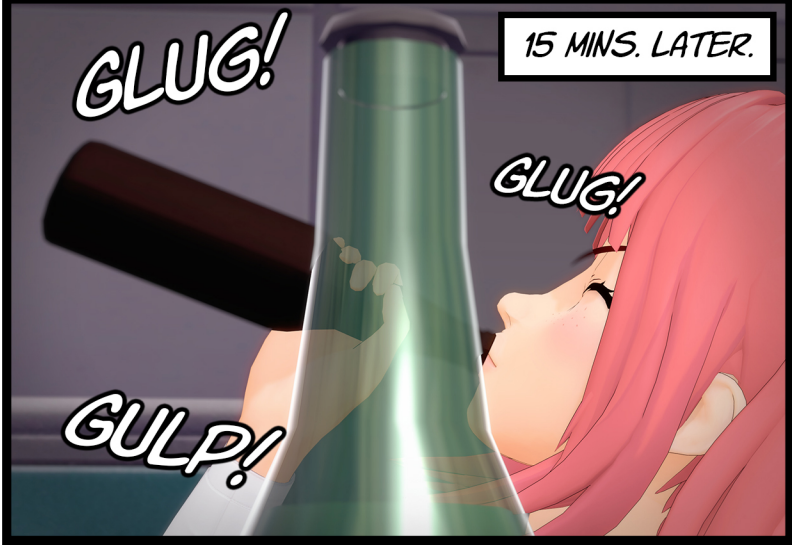
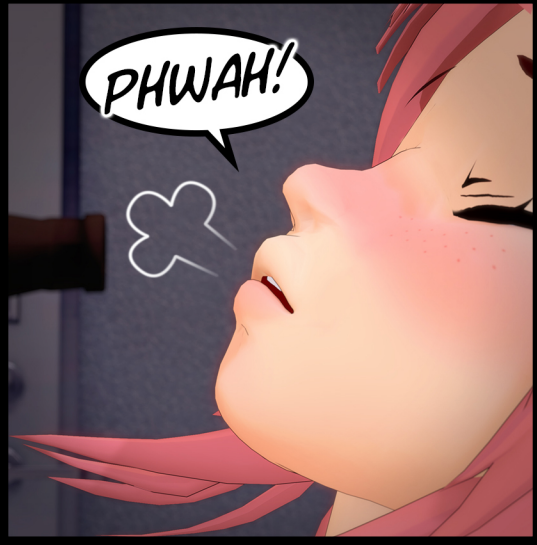
HN?

GUH,
CHEST PAINS
AGAIN..?

B-DUMP!

DA-DUM!

BEVERAGE
TIME,
BEVERAGE
TIME~



I'M NOT SURE IF THIS IS WISE KUZUHONA-SAN...

SHAKE

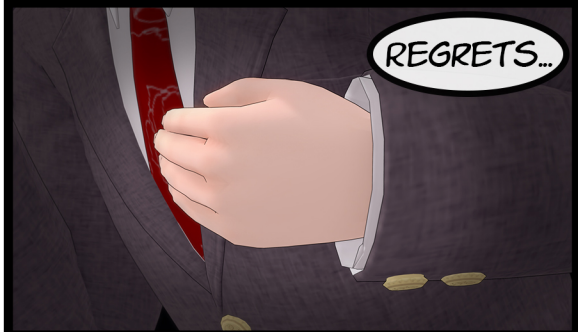
SHAKE

KOUHAI... YOU HAVEN'T PARTAKEN? THIS EVE WAS INTENDED FOR YOU... AND I REQUIRE ANOTHER BEVERAGE...



YEAH...

AW... AND THERE YOU GO AGAIN ADDRESSING ME SO COLDLY...



REGRETS...

BEING WISE IS PAINFUL... 'TIS WHAT ALCOHOLS FOR...



TEN MINUTES OF NEGATING SOBRIETY LATER.

A DISTRACTION.



GLANCE

DISTRACTION...

BWONG