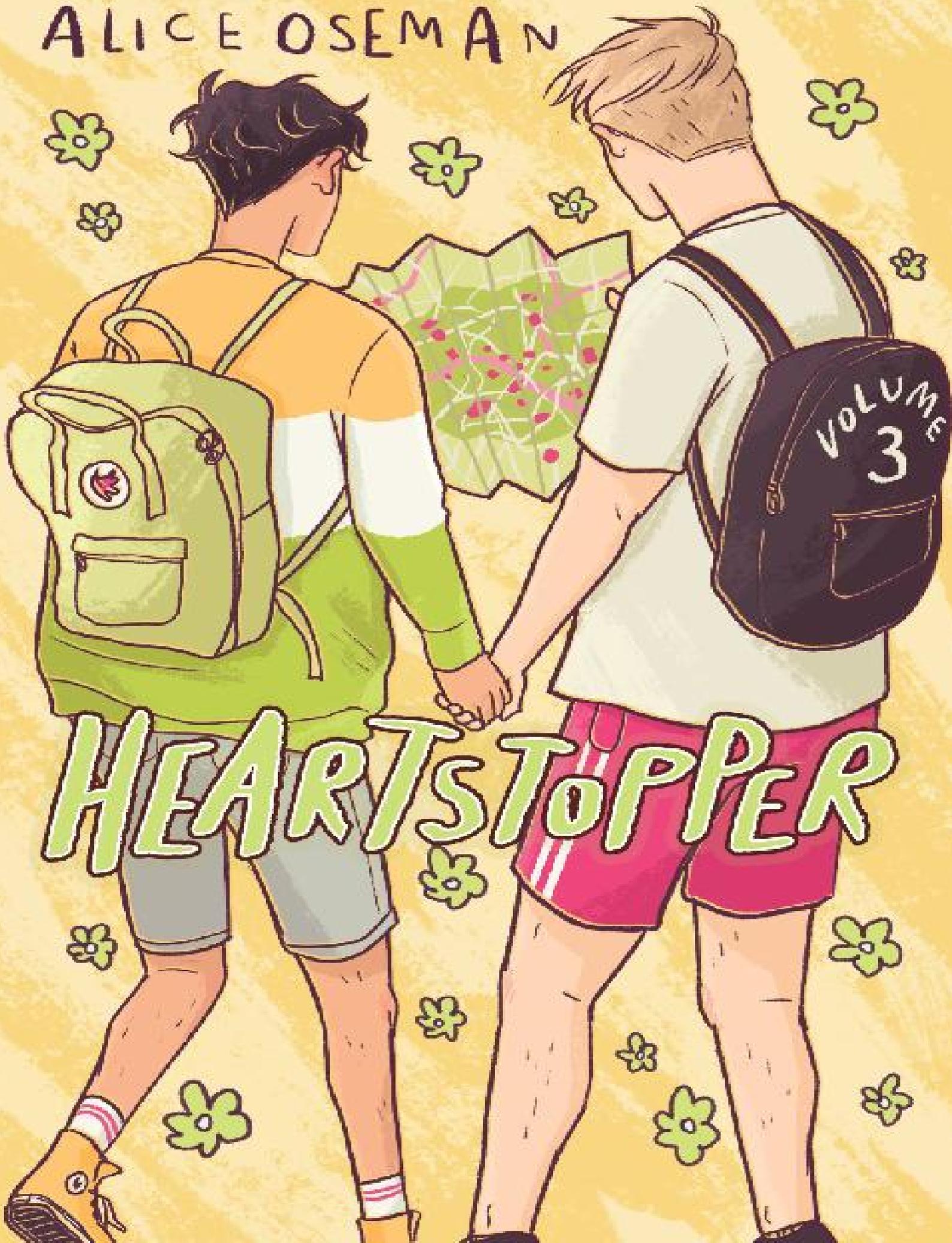


ALICE OSEMAN



HEARTSTOPPER

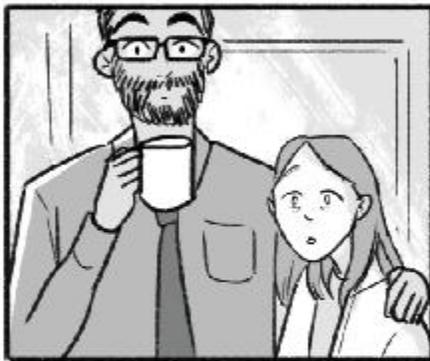


4. OUT





















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



WHAT!!



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



Please don't say 'hanky panky'.



Bedroom door open at all times!!

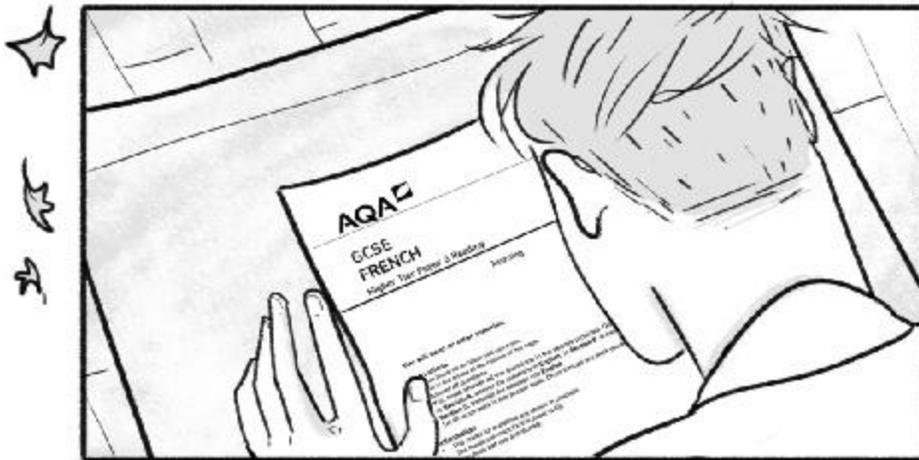
I've got to go, I have an exam

No hanky panky
until you're
married!! 

 Stop saying
'hanky panky'

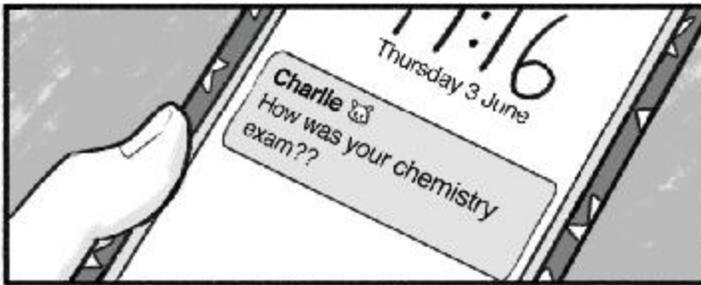








JUNE



Not too bad, but... not great 🙄
Are you on study leave? Can
you come round mine? I badly
need hugs



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



Sneak out and come home with me 😊

Soz I love energy flow and plant growth more than you



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

Asldfkjghkfygh STOP



Nick!













Has Harry been pestering either of you since that weekend?

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



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



REALLY GOOD MATES REALLY GOOD MATES



yeah



Uh- anyway,
I've got to
catch my
bus! See
you guys
at rugby!







ONE WEEK LATER





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





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



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

Just... forget I said anything!!



Charlie...





You can talk to me about it...?

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





I can always
do that

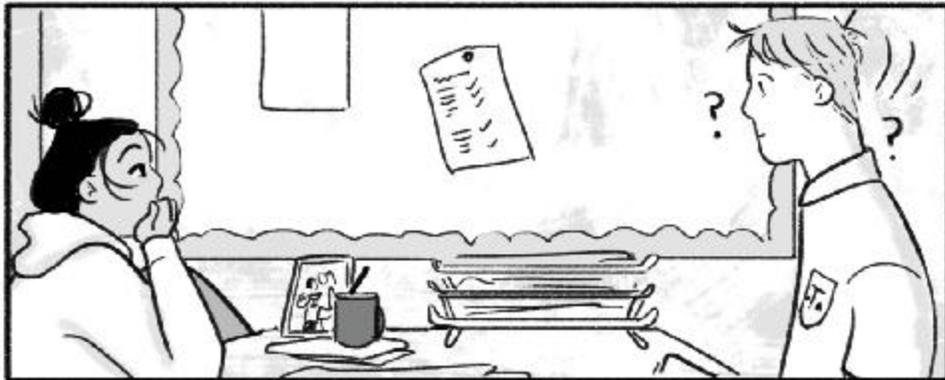


How bloody long does it take you boys to put away the-











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





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

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

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

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



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



People gave us a lot of shit.



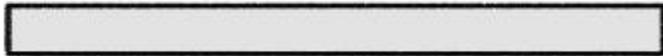
Things are a little better now, but... you never know.









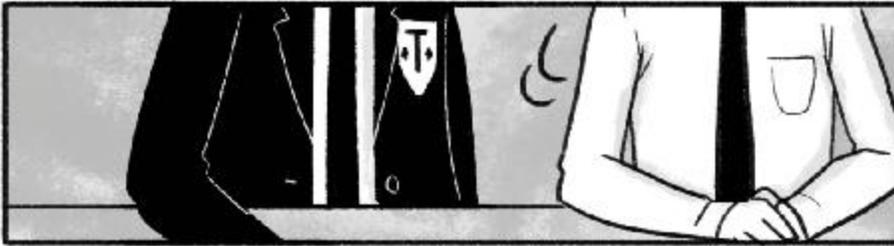


THE NEXT MORNING...





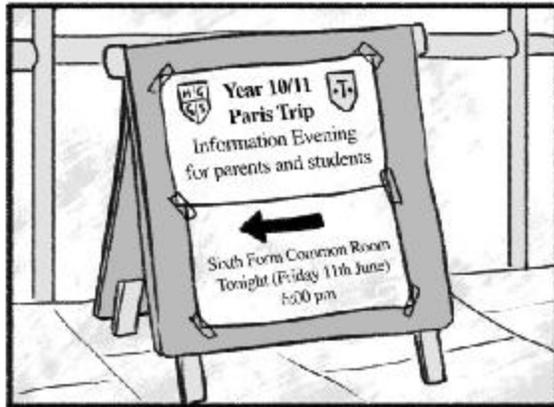


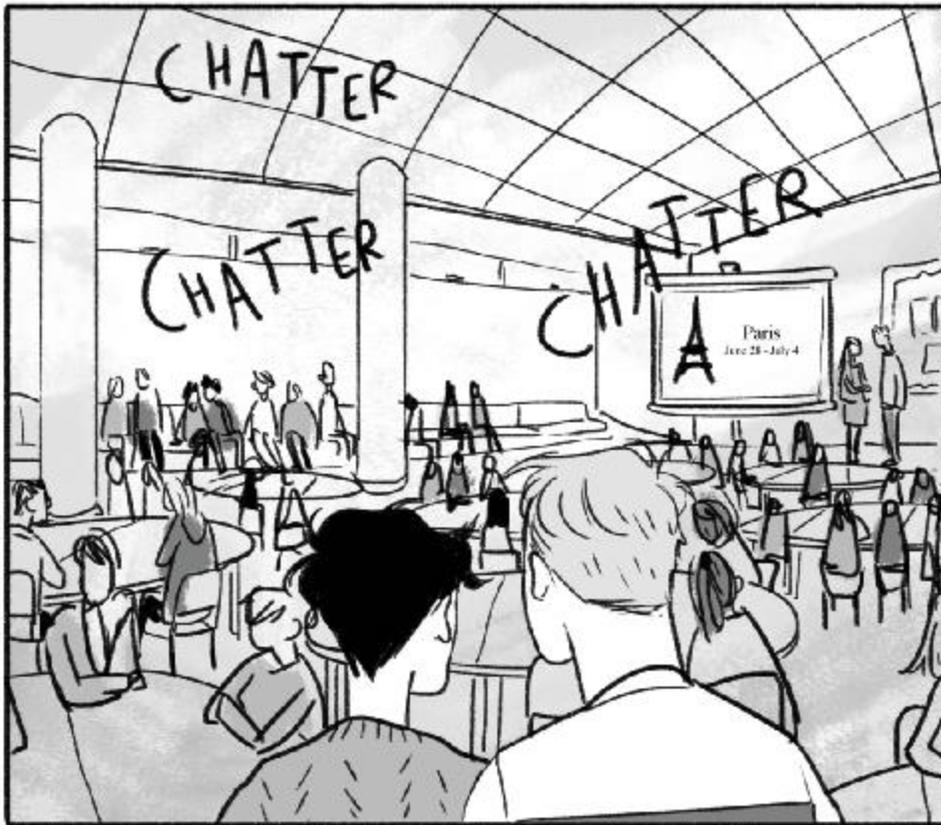




-but I still need to be able to hear myself to take the register...















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



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



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



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



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





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











What?
Why??



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

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



...but
someone
might
have
overheard.



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

Don't
tell him
right before
the Paris
trip.





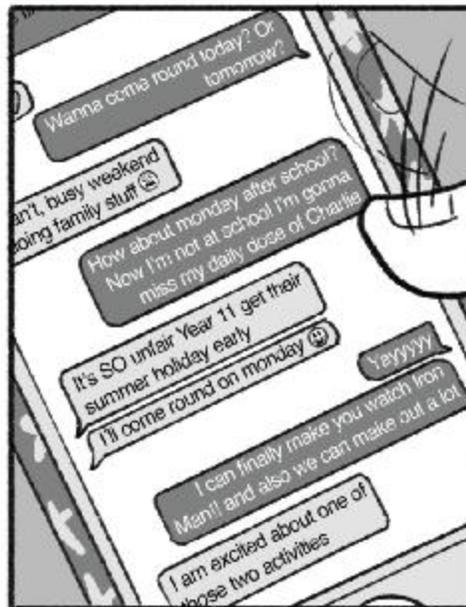
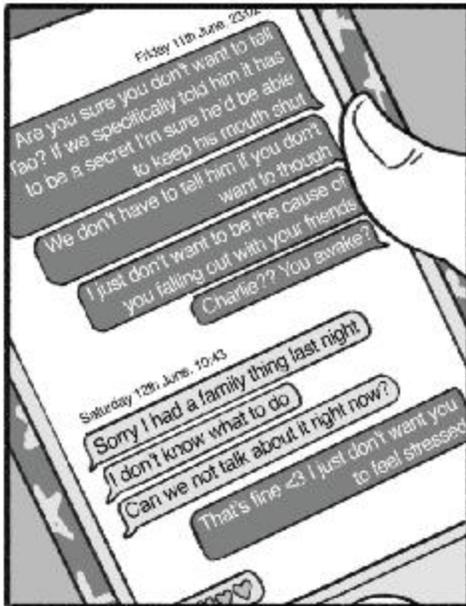
Okay!

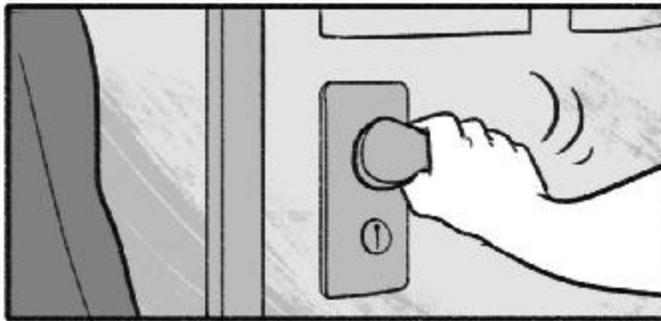


Also got us some itineraries

623











श
श





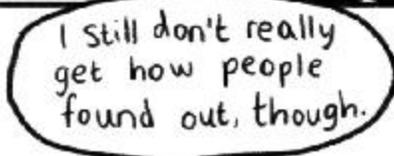
Hey,
Char...



Mm?

Are you annoyed
at Tao?







Exactly.



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

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



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





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

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



But the damage had already been done, I guess.

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





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



I started to believe
what they were
saying.

It made me
really hate
myself.



So much
that
I...



I used
to...
um...







Do you still do that now?



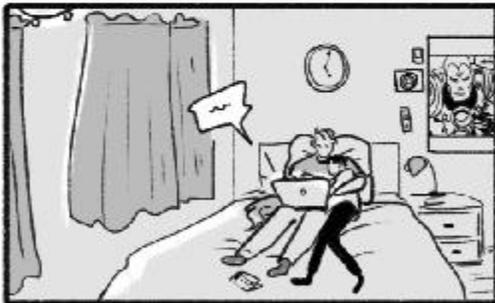
N-No!!
I mean-
hardly
ever



Sorry

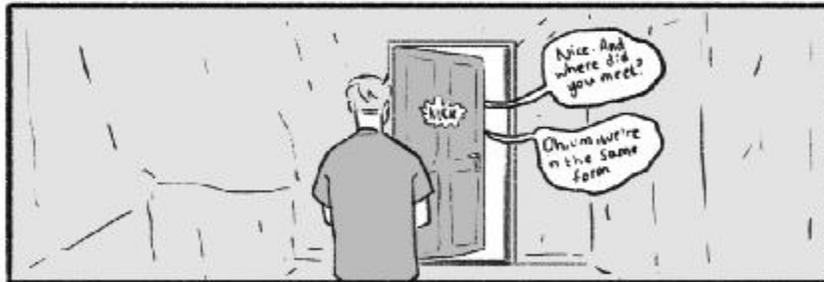
Hey, no
apologising!

















I'm bi, actually.

And so what?



"I'm bi, actually!!"
If you're gonna be gay, at least admit you're gay



This is why I didn't want to tell you!!

Haha, too late now!





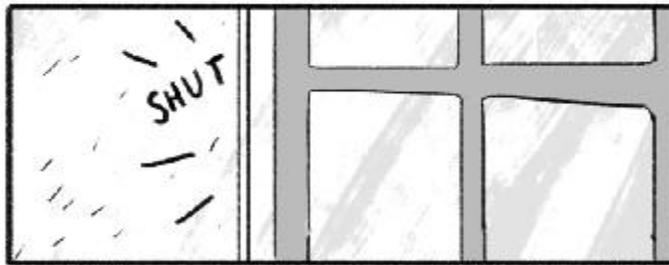




Nick...









23:18

Why is being out so complicated?





Are you awake?



✂ ✨ ✂ 652





SHIT sorry I meant to message you!!!

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

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





It was my fault for not telling him sooner tbh

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



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

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



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





I'm so sorry, this is all my fault



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



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

Coming out is HARD and COMPLICATED, right???

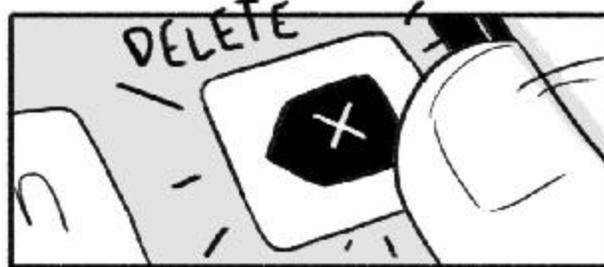
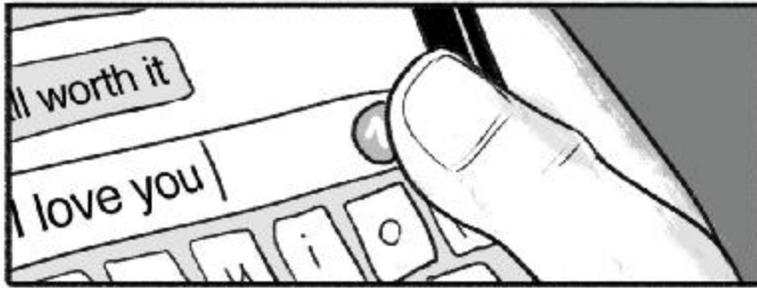
And it doesn't all happen at once! And it doesn't always go right! Sometimes it probably doesn't even happen at all!! Coming out to my mum was amazing but I never expected it to go super well with everyone!! And it's not YOUR fault! I just want people to know who I am and know that you're my boyfriend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



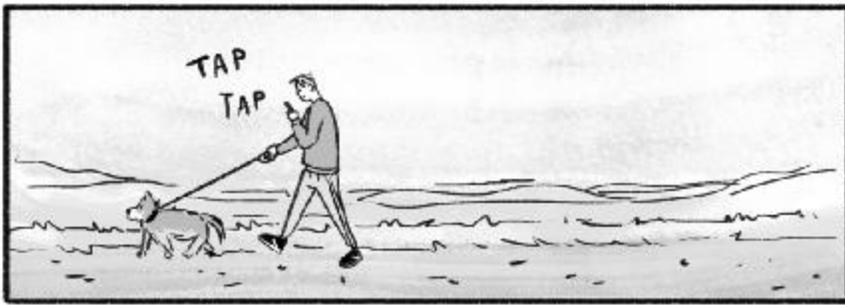
It might be shitty sometimes but I promise I'm okay

And it's all worth it











ONE WEEK LATER

Thank God
it's nearly
the summer
holidays!



And nearly the
Paris trip!



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







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

Because right now it's just our thing.



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



I know. But this is my point.

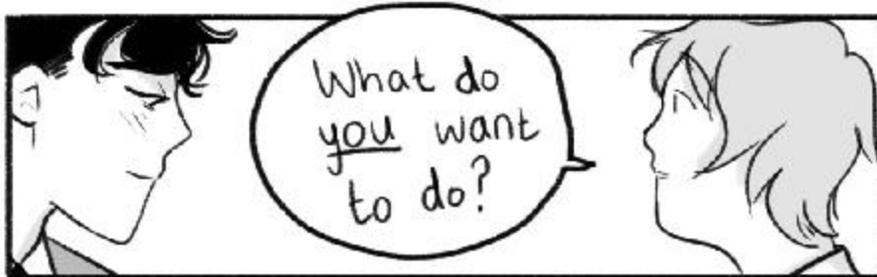
This whole deal with you and Nick being out to people... I think you need to stop worrying about anyone else's feelings.







This is about you and Nick.





I just...



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



Anyway... tell me about this boy



Wha-no

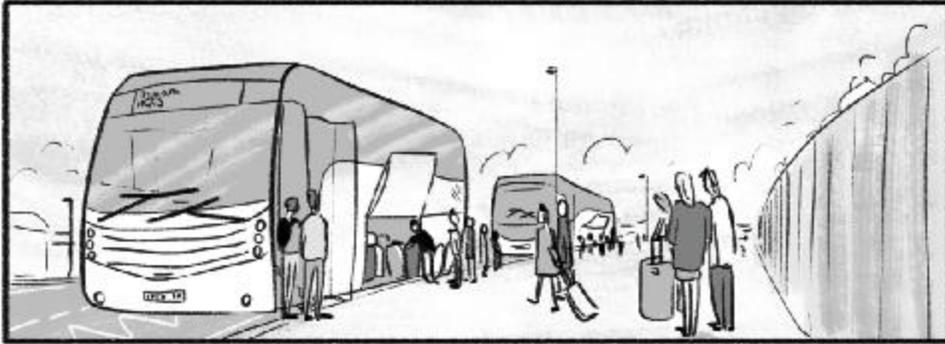


Come onnn... not even his name?



Um... it's Daniel...













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











677





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



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



Yeah...



KNOCK
KNOCK
KNOCK



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



Oh!!
Just coming!



WOAH your room is so small



Thanks for letting me use it!

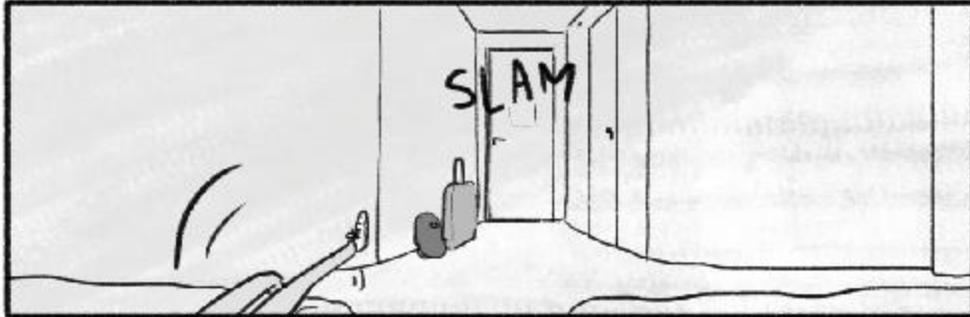
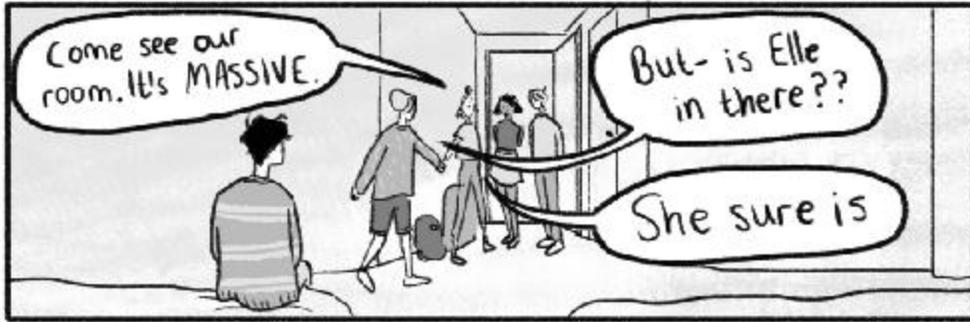


No prob!

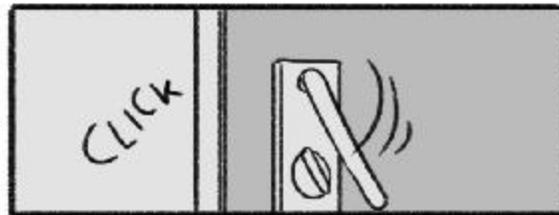


Is Elle out there?? Tell me if Elle is out there!!



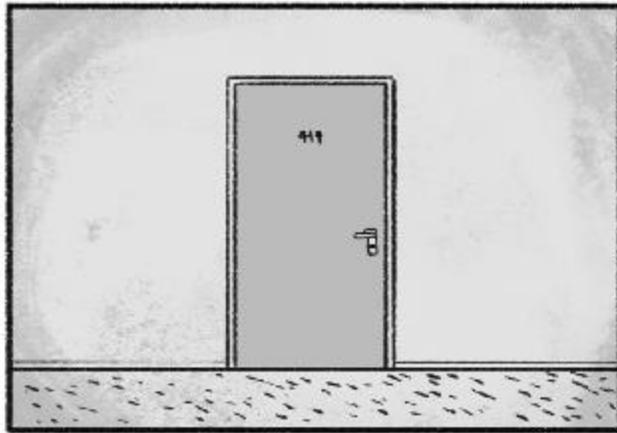














Paris - Day 2











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

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

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



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

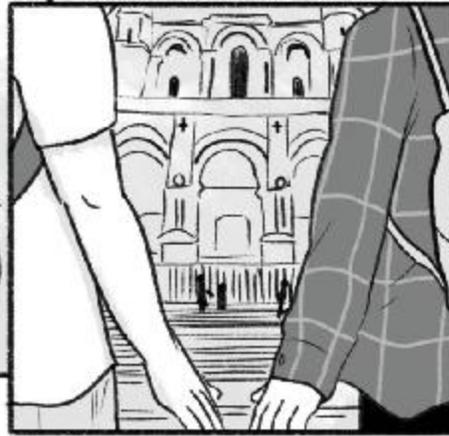
And stay in
your groups.





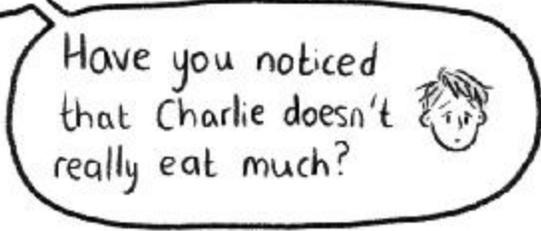
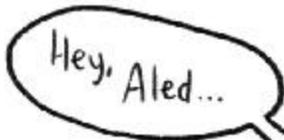
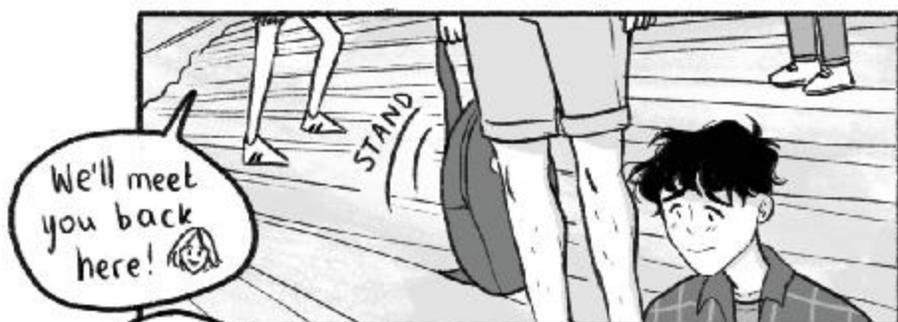








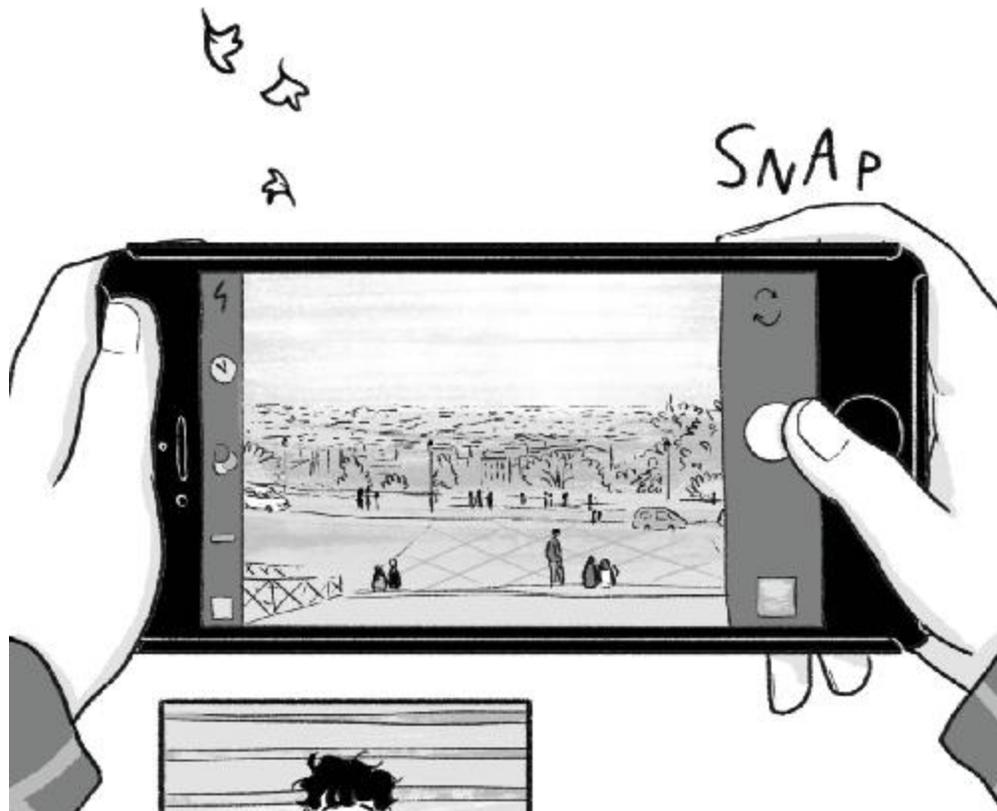












So how are things with you and Nick?





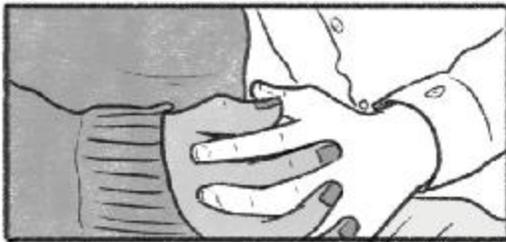




Darcy was already out. We'd been dating for a while and most of our friends knew. But other people were starting to guess too.



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



We were terrified.



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

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



I guess for a while it was easier.

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



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



And we loved ourselves anyway.





 **Tara Jones** is in a relationship with **Darcy Olsson**
   You and 235 others 48 comments





So, absolute disaster,
Jonesy-









There they are!



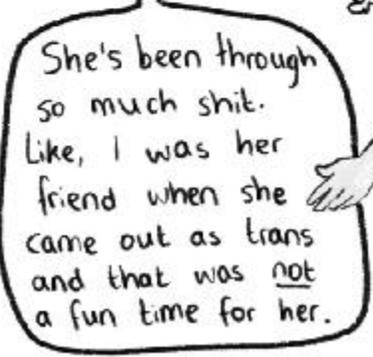
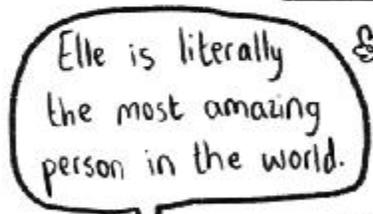
Oh my God, do you think anything happened?

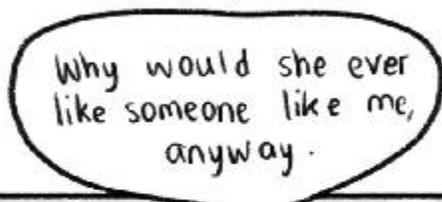




Hey Tao... how'd it go with Elle today?







120



















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



Well I have literally just brushed my teeth, so-



..KISS!



S-so...
Um...



You really are obsessed with me



Maybe a bit



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



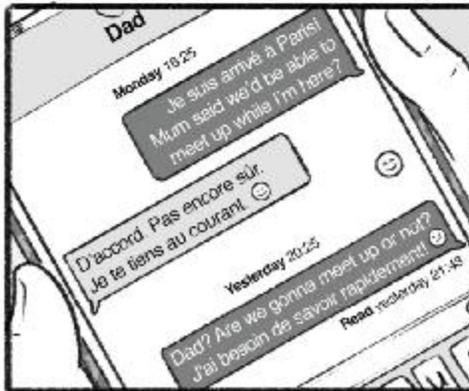


Paris - Day 3





733





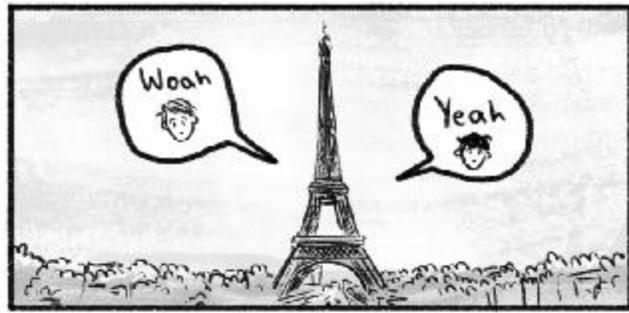












All right, lads.
Fucking leave them alone.





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



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



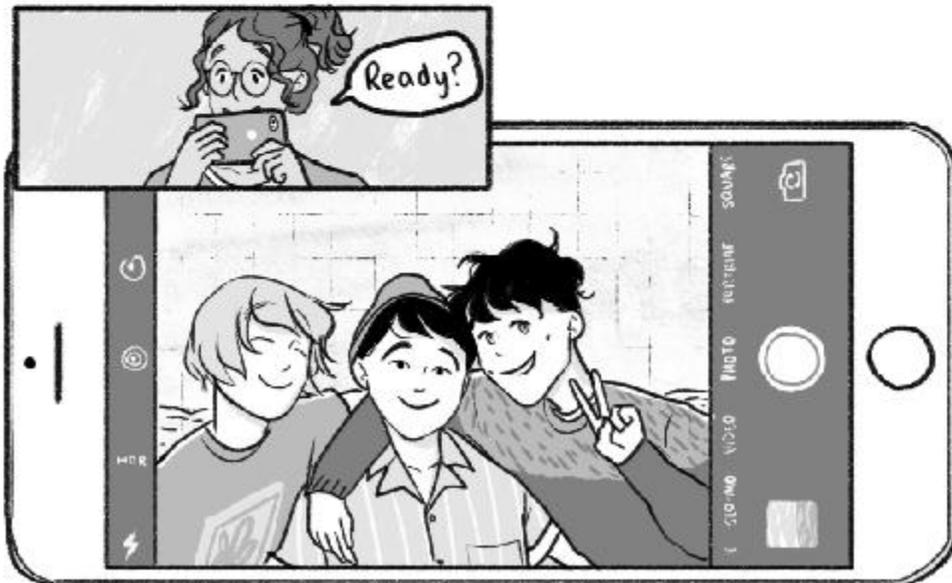


Charlie!
Get over here,
I need a photo
of me, you,
and Aled!





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





That's a good one!





Me and Nick are dating.



750



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

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



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













Paris - Day 4

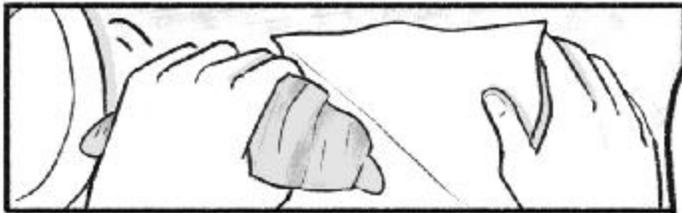








I'm gonna pack you a croissant.



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













This place goes on FOREVER

And it's SO HOT I'm dying



Where even are we?



I have the map!













You're sure you feel okay, Charlie?

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

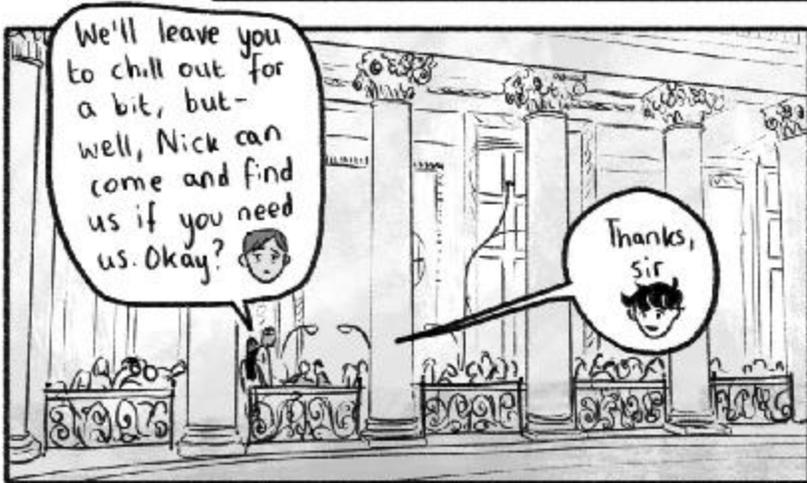


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There you go, Mr Spring!

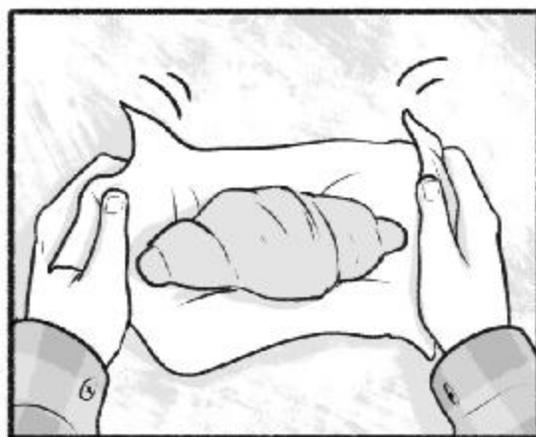
Get those in your belly!



We'll leave you to chill out for a bit, but—well, Nick can come and find us if you need us. Okay?

Thanks, sir





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





No, that does make sense

You can always tell me stuff like that.



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



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



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





780



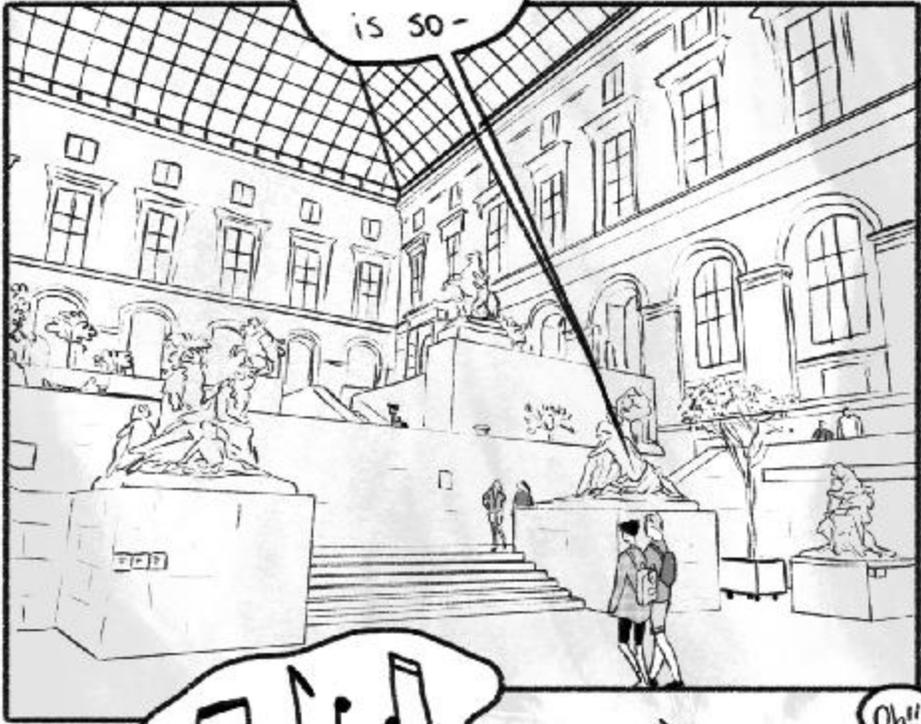




Let's go!



Wow, this is so-



Ah- that's my phone!!

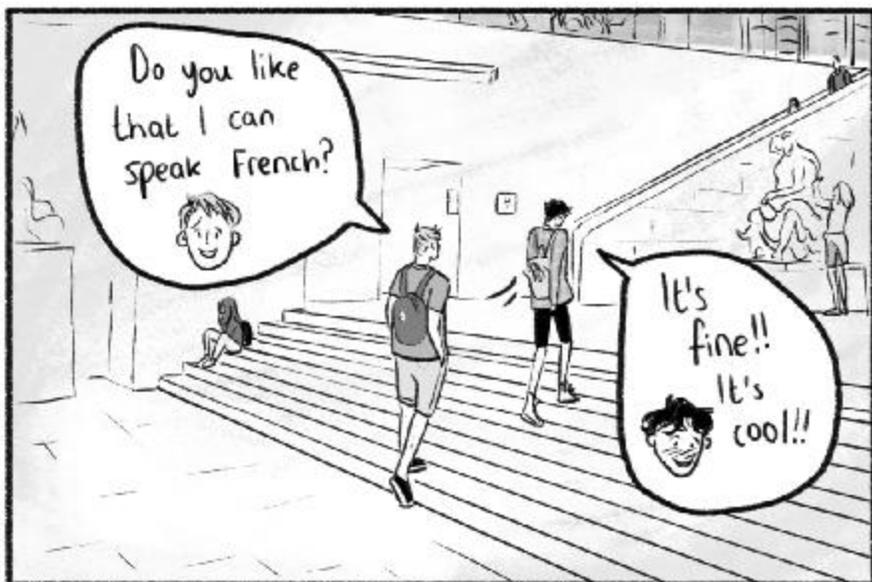


Oh!!







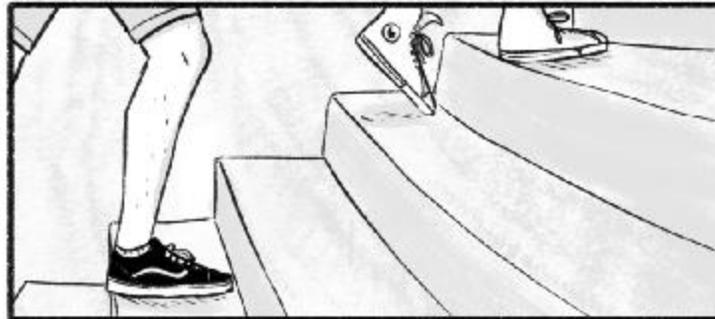






Anyway, what did your dad want? I can't believe I didn't know he was french!

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





That sucks

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

Look, that's him

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





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



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







I love you
I love you

Okay, back
on the coach,
everyone!







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



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



So...



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









Paris - Day 5







Did not think of that



HALF AN HOUR LATER



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

You could mix it with some of mine!

Yeah, that might work!





Done!



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

Tao.

Ha ha!





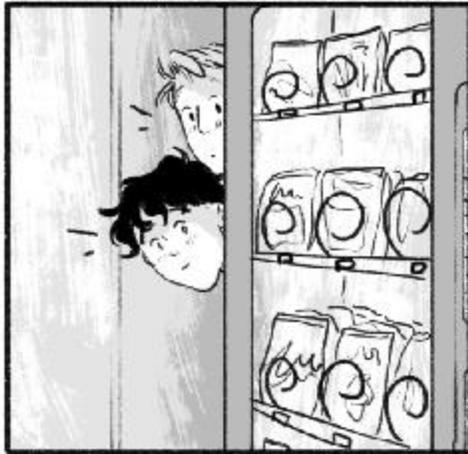




chatter chatter
chatter chatter
chatter

805





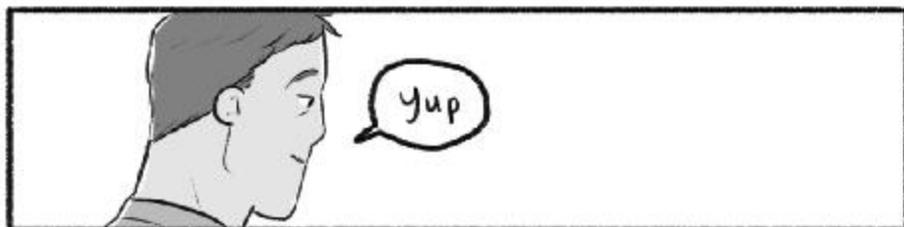
Off you go.



You couldn't let them off? They're clearly dating.











Paris - Day 6

Haaaappy Biiiiirthdaaaay 🎵
♪ toooooo yooooouuuu!!



I am literally so embarrassed right now

811







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

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



A party?



A PARTY!!



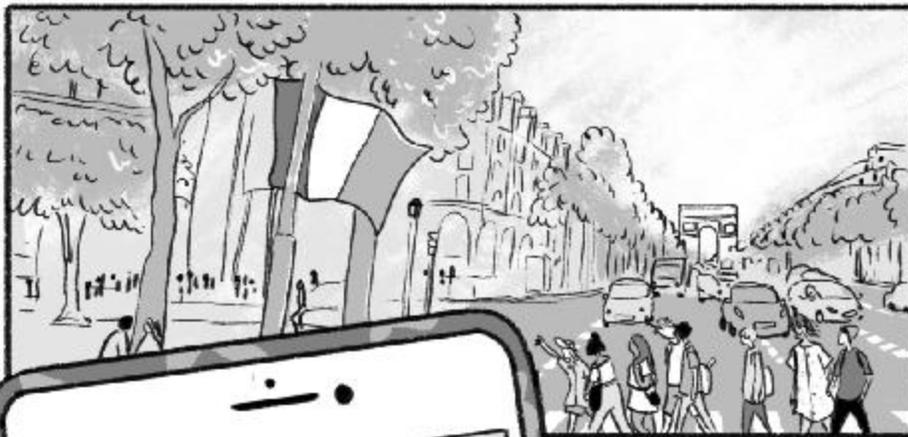
Yay!



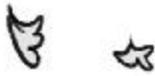
You can buy snacks and drinks while we're out today, but—











Tara Jones + 39 others

-  Tara Jones
Casual party in my room from 9pm!!
Room 317!! Everyone's welcome 😊
and you can wear PJs!
-  Darcy Olsson
PLEASE BRING SNACKS IF YOU HAVE
ANY. ESPECIALLY IF YOU HAVE PRINGLES
also I have vodka 🍷
-  Katie Lee
Yassss we'll be there!
-  Tom Jaeger
CAN'T WAIT
-  Alena Bukhsh
omg darcy how did you get vodka
-  Darcy Olsson
i have my ways
-  Jared Lambe
YEEEEEE LET'S GET LIT
- Charlie Spring
we'll be there!!!!!! 



That night ...





You sure you don't mind me borrowing this?

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

I didn't STEAL them!!



I- I just forgot to give them back!













Teasing you is so fun! :)

I actually hate you.

Nah, you like me.



I really don't





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Ahem.



Sorry to interrupt your very obvious flirting, BUT-











835







A little while later...



837

















TOUCH





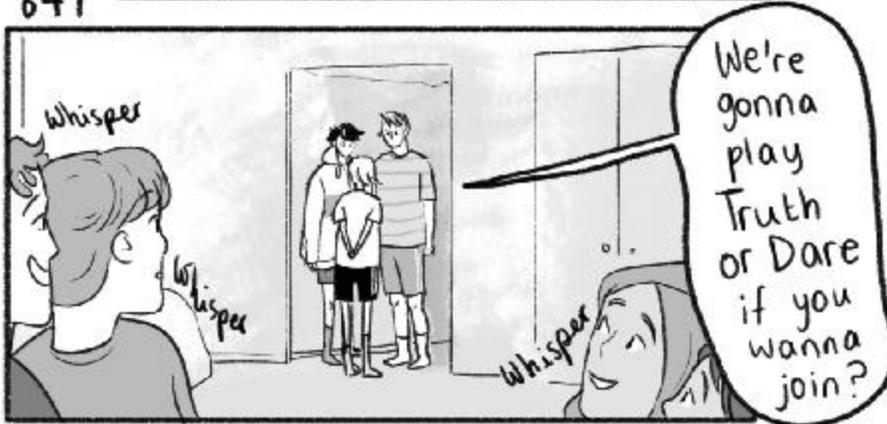
THIS UPDATE MAY TRIGGER SOME PEOPLE. TO SEE A DESCRIPTION OF THE TRIGGERING MATERIAL, PLEASE SCROLL DOWN TO THE UPDATE NOTES. THANKS!



Ahem~♡



847





Tara!!

Ooooooh

Uh oh!!







Tao!



Truth or dare?

Well there's no way I'm doing a dare, so...





Obviously dare.



I dare you...
to kiss
James.

...

What!?!

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



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



Go ooon! It's
just one
little kiss!



853





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

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

Okay, but
you have
to do a
truth
instead



Fine!!

Who gave you the love bite?







SQUABBLE



I know who it was.







Oh my God!! I knew it!

Really!?! How long have you been going out?

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

A few months

But we were saying the other day-

Sshh

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

Nick, I didn't know you were gay!

Did you turn him gay??

I'm bi, actually, but yeah

Um, no, and he's bi

Awww you two are so cute together!

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

Um... thanks?

Do you want us to keep it a secret?



We're okay with being out.

We haven't been keeping it that secret anyway.

Ahem.

I hate to interrupt this very lovely moment, but-









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



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

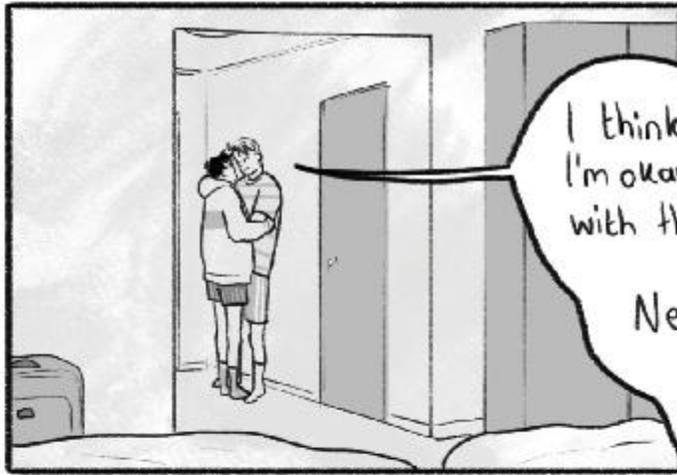












I think...
I'm okay
with that.

Nervous, yeah,
but...

I'm
okay.



Are you
feeling okay
about it?



About us
being
out?

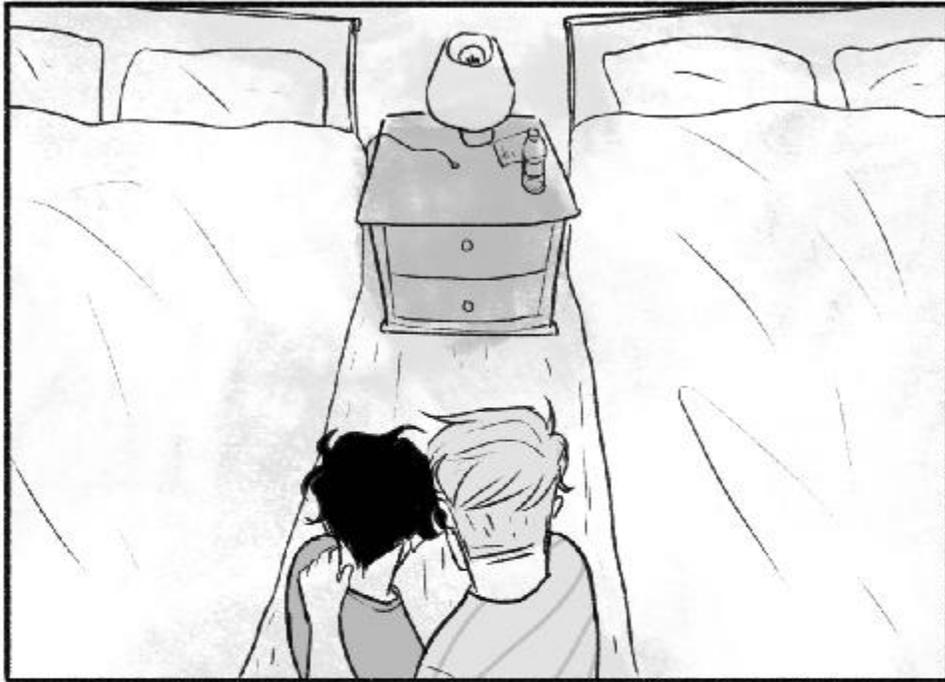
869



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







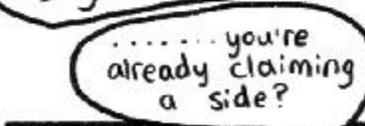
Since the room is ours tonight...



I could sleep in this bed with you?



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



























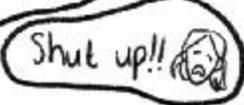


Kissing's still good though, right?



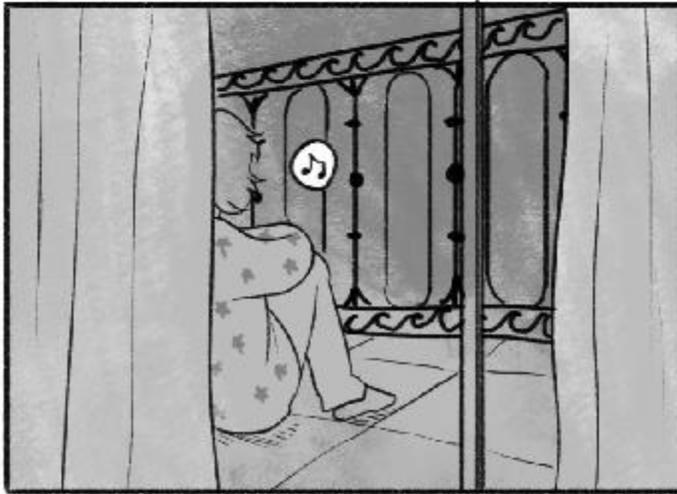
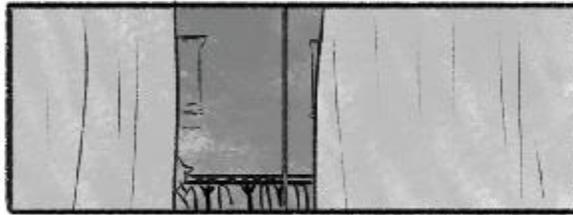






giggle
giggle

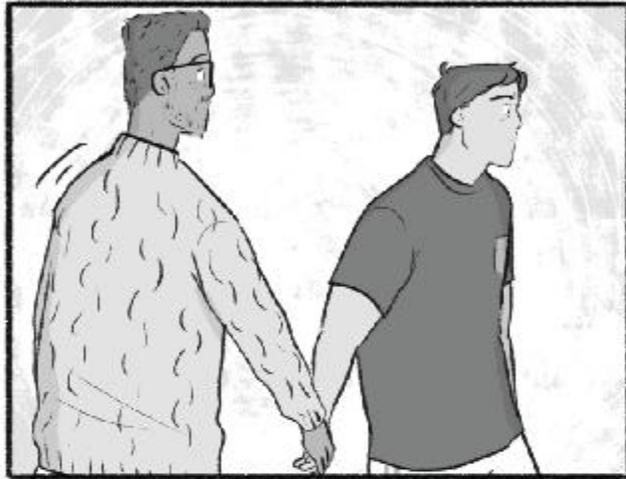




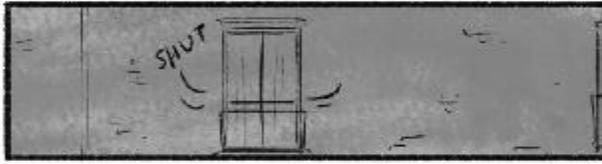














I wanna
stay up
all night

Same





Paris - Day 7

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





903



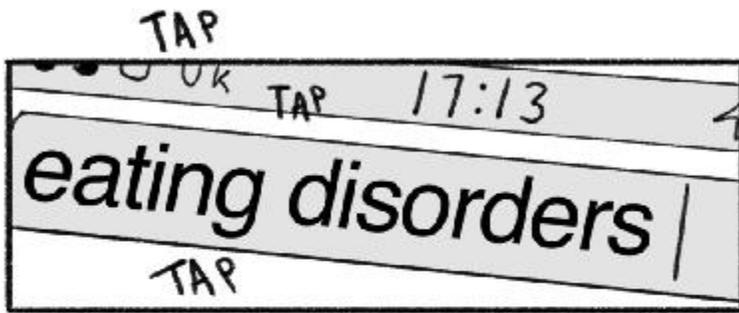












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