

Elevation


Part 4

Preview

By Sumner

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A woman with blonde hair, wearing a red V-neck top, a black blazer, and blue jeans, stands in a modern hallway with wood flooring and glass railings. A thought bubble is positioned to her right.

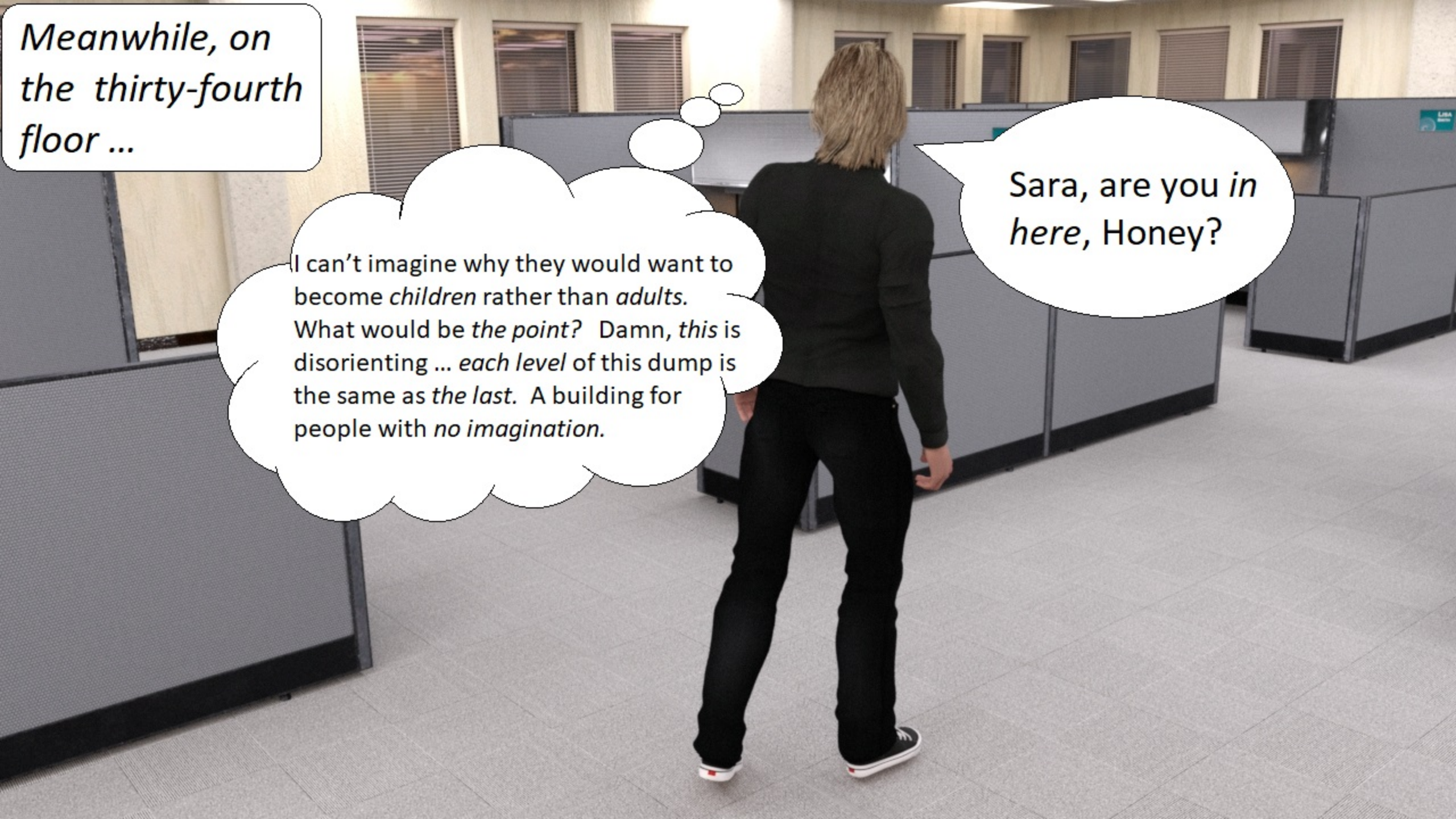
I wish I could have seen my husband's *face* when he first discovered *the changes*. Wide eyes... his mouth agape... *terrified* I'm sure.



How *fitting*. The *same look* I had on *my* face when I saw that bimbo *Sara* give him a little pat on the tush at work. An *innocent gesture* he called it. *Innocent ...*

I'll *make sure* it's
innocent *next time*.






Meanwhile, on
the thirty-fourth
floor ...

I can't imagine why they would want to become *children* rather than *adults*. What would be *the point*? Damn, *this* is disorienting ... *each level* of this dump is the same as *the last*. A building for people with *no imagination*.

Sara, are you *in here*, Honey?


A man with light brown, wavy hair and a black turtleneck sweater stands in an office hallway. He has a questioning expression on his face. A speech bubble above him contains the text "Honey?". The background shows a hallway with light-colored walls, a grey carpet, and a glass-walled office area with a desk and chair visible inside. To the left, there is a dark grey cabinet and a black mesh screen.

Honey?

On the 8th
Floor...

Keep searching. I can't
believe there's a woman who
can *bend time* and no one on
the internet *has heard* of her.



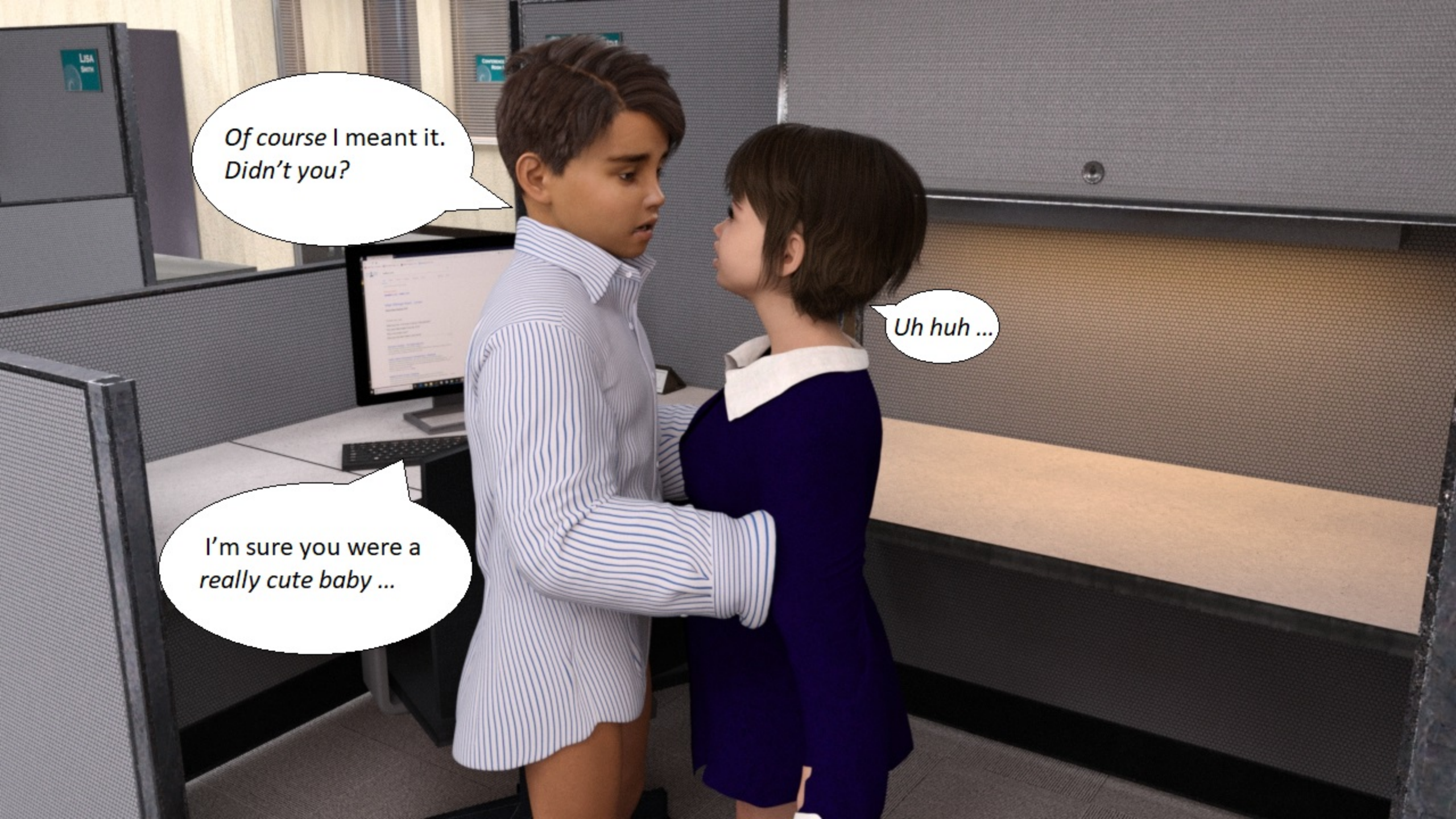


That's your answer?
Give up? Daniel, look
at me.

Well, this is the stuff of
tabloids, Sara. Maybe we
should just *fess up* and
take *what's coming* to us.




What we almost *did* back there ... when we were *older*. I don't want to *give that up*. Even if can't do it for *years* ... until we *grow up* again... I can't give that up. Did you *mean* what you said up there ... that you *love me*?

A young man and woman are standing in an office cubicle. The man, on the left, is wearing a blue and white vertically striped short-sleeved shirt and is looking at the woman. The woman, on the right, is wearing a dark blue dress with a white collar and is looking back at him. They are standing close together. In the background, there is a computer monitor on a desk and grey cubicle walls. Three speech bubbles are overlaid on the image, containing text from a conversation.

*Of course I meant it.
Didn't you?*

Uh huh ...

*I'm sure you were a
really cute baby ...*



I'm going to have to talk to Devra *one way or another* and *you* will have to talk to *Stephen*, but *whatever happens*, we *can't go back*. I can't go back. *Not now*.

Keep trying then. Try a different search engine. *Anything*.

SHERI
RAWLIN

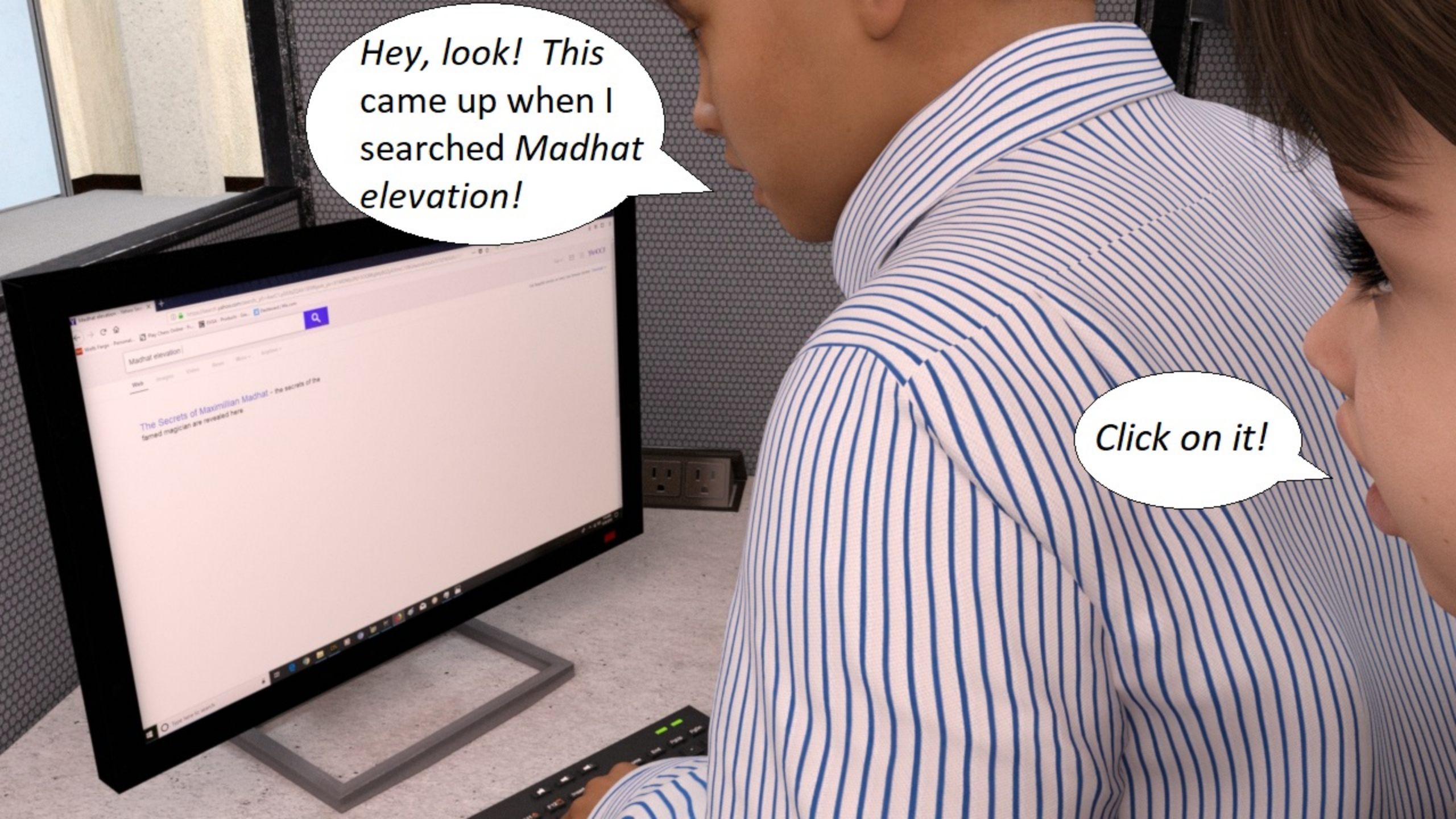
I'll try *Yahoo* ...

Not *Bing*?

Yeah, *right*. We want to
actually find *an answer*.

*Hey, look! This came up when I searched *Madhat elevation*!*

Click on it!



MAGIC SECRETS EXPLAINED

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When it comes to magic, there are three types of people. The first type is the person who just has to know how it was done. If you can't sleep well for a week after seeing a magic trick, you're in the first category. The second type is the person who just has to know how it was done. If you can't sleep well for a week after seeing a magic trick, you're in the first category. The third type is the person who just has to know how it was done. If you can't sleep well for a week after seeing a magic trick, you're in the first category.

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most rational explanation and let you decide for yourself. We don't claim we know exactly how it was done, but we can tell you how it could be done and how it was most likely done. We hope your curiosity will be satisfied and your questions answered. Meanwhile, enjoy the magic.

We have 63 guests and no members online

Alright! This might have what we need!

Try hexes!

A young man with dark hair, wearing a blue and white vertically striped button-down shirt, is leaning forward and looking intently at a computer screen. Behind him, a young woman with dark hair and bangs, wearing a dark blue top with a white collar, also looks on with a concerned expression. They are in an office cubicle with a grey perforated wall and a light-colored desk. A speech bubble originates from the man.


It's either a *hex* or a *curse* ...
whatever the difference is.
There's a *brief abstract* of sorts
at the foot of page. *Huh?*
There's an *ambiguous caveat*:

MAGIC SECRETS EXPLAINED

Maximillian Madhat: Hexes


Applications and Limitations of Hex #114

As with any hex involving time-space, exercise extreme caution when concentrating energies on the receiving party. The Madhat Methodology, as you have likely surmised, implies that balance must be maintained at all costs, ergo the secondary subject cannot and should not under any circumstances question the modus operandi. Sublimation of the secondary subject remains paramount, for it is the "method of the madness." As always, a chance, however small, will exist that the hex may be broken (usually within the initial 24 hours). If the modus operandi becomes evident, the hex constant becomes null and the primary subject may be implicated in order to bring balance ...

A man and a woman are in an office cubicle. The man, on the left, has dark hair and is wearing a light blue and white vertically striped button-down shirt. He is looking down at a computer monitor. The woman, on the right, has short dark hair and is wearing a dark blue V-neck top with a white collar. She has her hand on the man's shoulder and is looking at him. The cubicle walls are grey with a perforated pattern. A window with blinds is visible in the background.

*Modus operandi ... hexes, sublimation... I don't understand *any* of this.*

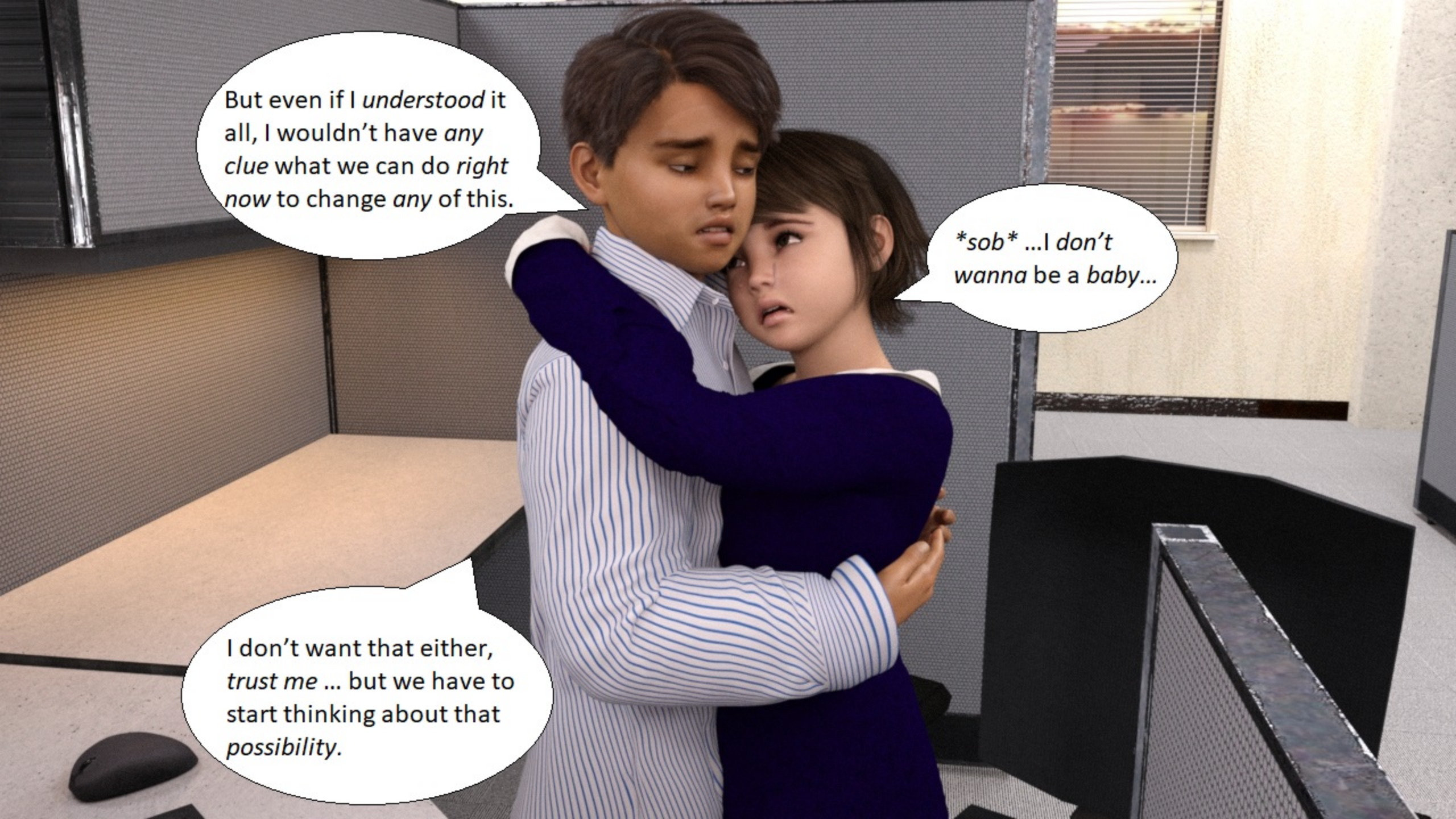
C'mon ... you went to school. You can figure it out!



You went to school *too*!

Well, you went *longer*.

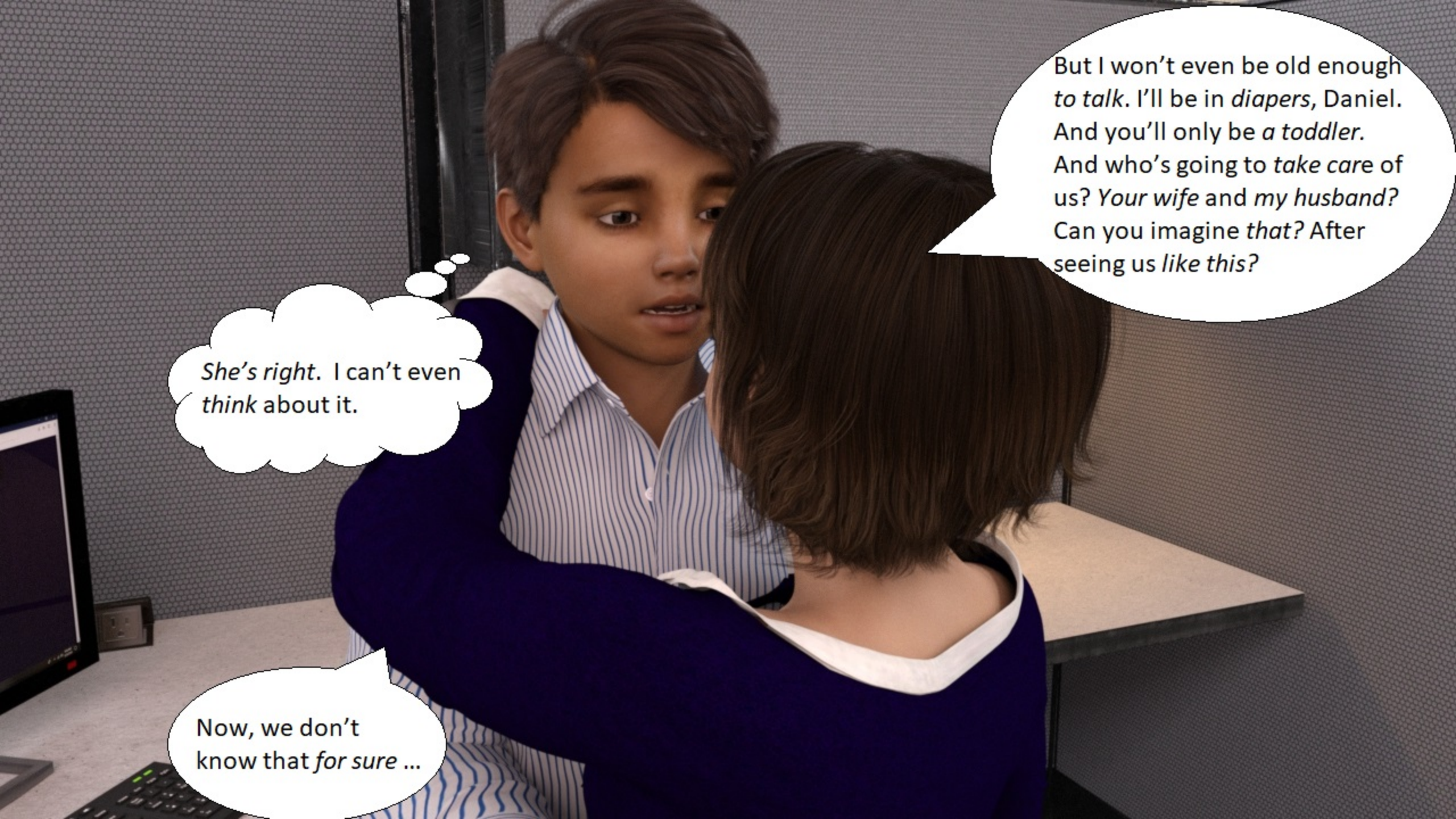
Words aren't *the problem*. I just don't have any *reference point* here. This is all *theoretical* language. It mentions a *timeframe*, though. *Twenty-four hours*.



But even if I *understood* it all, I wouldn't have *any clue* what we can do *right now* to change *any* of this.

sob ...I don't wanna be a *baby*...


I don't want that either, *trust me* ... but we have to start thinking about that *possibility*.



But I won't even be old enough to talk. I'll be in *diapers*, Daniel. And you'll only be a *toddler*. And who's going to *take care* of us? *Your wife* and *my husband*? Can you imagine *that*? After seeing us *like this*?


She's right. I can't even think about it.

Now, we don't know that *for sure* ...



But *hey* ... it's like a *second lifetime*. A *second chance*. That can't be *all* bad. It's like we've discovered the *fountain of youth*. People all over the world spend their lives *looking* for...

People want to be *sixteen* again. *Nobody* wants to be *really* young. Just look at *us* now. And there are *seven more floors* to go.


A young man and woman are standing in an office cubicle, facing each other. The man is wearing a light blue button-down shirt, and the woman is wearing a dark blue sweater. They appear to be in a conversation. The cubicle has grey patterned walls. In the background, there's a window with blinds and a black office chair. The floor is covered with grey carpet tiles.

I know... maybe there's some hope in this *after all*. If she put the hex on us that *we think* she did, then we know it can be *broken*. We just have to figure out *how*.

It's probably not a great time to mention it, but *I'm starving*. I haven't eaten since lunch *at noon*.

Well, there's always the *snack lounge*...

Daniel, *you know* where that is. God, I'm *so hungry* though ...



You're not *thinking* about ... *you can't!* It's *too risky*. What if you *run into* one of them?


... I'll go *get us* something. It wouldn't be for *that long*, I guess ...

I'll be careful.

No, no, no. I shouldn't have let you go down the stairs alone *before* and I'm not gonna *now*. Let *me* go. I'm older. *I should go*.

Are you *sure*?


I'll be fast. You just stay here *and hide*!

A man and a woman are embracing in an office cubicle. The man, with short brown hair, is wearing a blue and white vertically striped short-sleeved shirt. The woman, with short dark hair and bangs, is wearing a dark blue long-sleeved dress with a white collar. They are standing in the center of the cubicle, with grey cubicle walls and a grey carpeted floor visible. A desk with a keyboard is partially visible on the right. Three speech bubbles are overlaid on the image.

*Hey ...watch
the cooties ...*


*You're my hero!
Thank you.*

*Oh! Sorry
'bout that.*

A man with short brown hair, wearing a blue and white striped button-down shirt, is looking down at a woman with long dark hair. The woman is wearing a dark blue sweater and has her back to the camera. They are in an office cubicle with grey partitions. In the background, there are windows with horizontal blinds and a grey carpeted floor.

I'm just teasing. This brings a whole new meaning to '*I want to grow old with you,*' doesn't it?

If we ever *get out* of this, I owe you one.




Be really careful
Danny ...and see if
they have *corn
chips*.

Corn chips it is. You hide
right now and don't come
out for *anything* until I get
back.

Ok. And if they don't
have *corn chips* see if they
have *Cheetos*.

Got it.

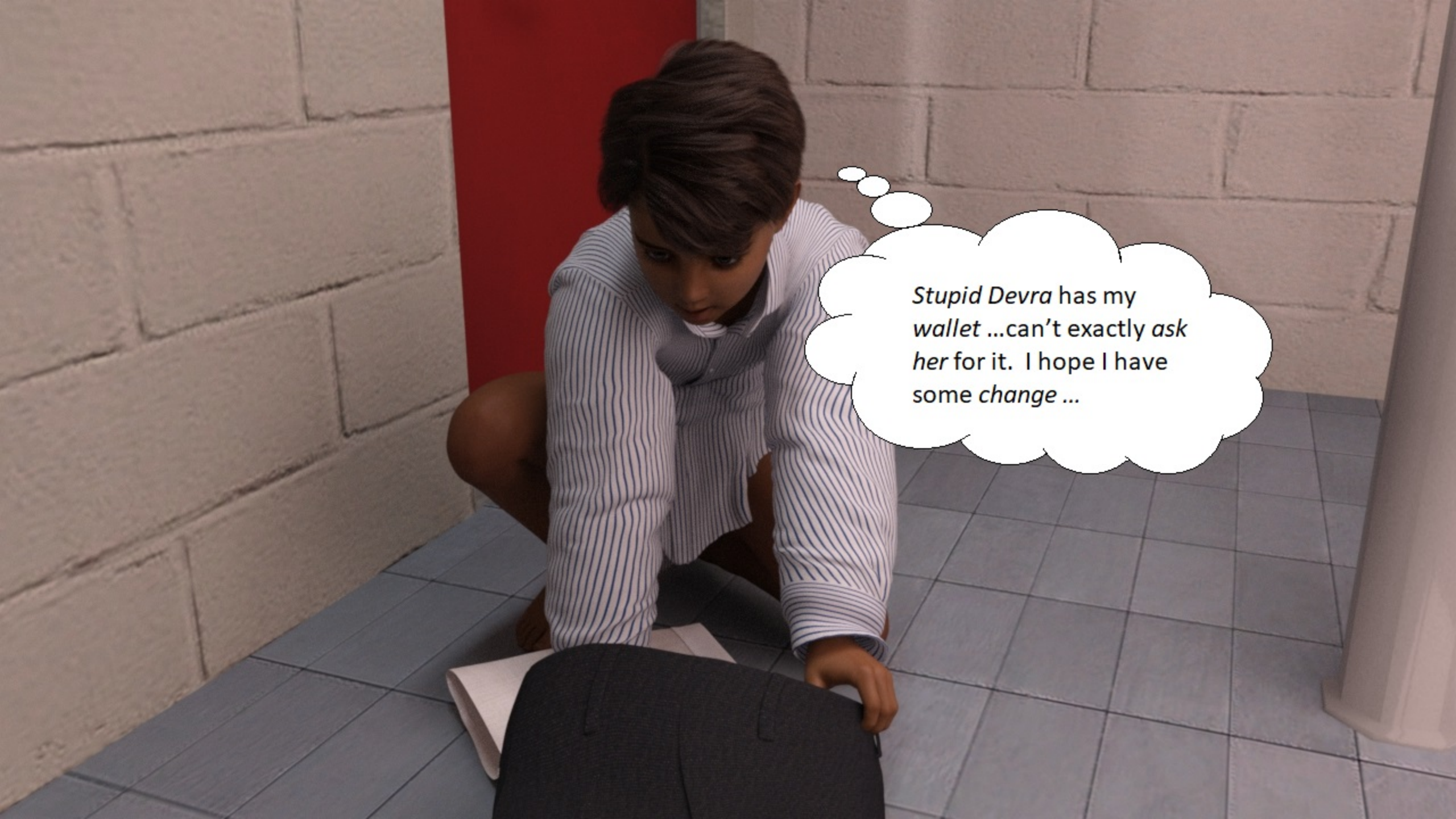


I *can't believe* what I'm about to do ... for *corn chips!* At least Sara *can't eat much* as big as she is. Maybe a bag of Fritos can hold her 'til morning.


FLOOR 8

FIRE DOOR
KEEP CLOSED

I don't *hear anything*
up there ... guess the
coast is clear.

A man with dark hair, wearing a light blue and white vertically striped long-sleeved shirt and dark trousers, is crouching on a grey tiled floor. He is looking down at a dark-colored wallet or bag that is lying on the floor in front of him. The background consists of a light-colored stone wall and a red door frame. A thought bubble is positioned to the right of the man's head.


*Stupid Devra has my
wallet ...can't exactly ask
her for it. I hope I have
some change ...*

A woman with short brown hair, wearing a long-sleeved blue and white vertically striped button-down shirt, is standing in a room with grey square tiles on the floor and a light-colored stone wall. She is looking down at her hands, which are holding a small object. A thought bubble is positioned above her head, containing the text "... bingo. Well, it's not much ...".

*... bingo. Well, it's
not much ...*



...but enough for *corn chips* ...and maybe even *Funyuns*.

A young man with dark hair and a concerned expression stands in a hallway. He is wearing a long, light blue and white vertically striped button-down shirt that is open at the collar and has long sleeves. He is barefoot. The hallway has light-colored stone walls and a grey tiled floor. A red door is visible behind him, with a green sign above it that partially reads '8' and 'DOOR CLOSED'. To his right is a white metal railing. On the floor in front of him lies a dark-colored garment, possibly a jacket or pants. A thought bubble originates from his head, containing text.

Ok ... let's get this
over with. Man, I
must *really like* this
girl to be *doing this* ...