



New Orleans

HEAT

WRITTEN BY
DEX O'DONALD

STORY BY
BENJAMIN MARSHALL

ILLUSTRATED &
COLORED BY
MR. RUSHY



EVER SINCE HE'D GRADUATED FROM THE PRESTIGIOUS SAN FRANCISCO SCHOOL OF MUSIC, MALCOLM MULBERT HADN'T MANAGED TO PLAY A SINGLE GIG.

NOT A SOCIAL HOUR, NOT A RESTAURANT, NOT EVEN A DIVE BAR. THOUGH HE LOOKED UP TO LEGENDS LIKE CHARLIE PARKER AND MILES DAVIS, MALCOLM KNEW DEEP DOWN THAT HE JUST DIDN'T HAVE WHAT IT TOOK TO MAKE IT AS A GREAT JAZZ MUSICIAN. MALCOLM WAS ON THE VERGE OF SELLING HIS HORN WHEN STRINGER, HIS MOM'S BOYFRIEND, BROUGHT UP THE IDEA OF NEW ORLEANS...



THANKS AGAIN FOR PUTTING IN A GOOD WORD FOR ME WITH OUR PEOPLE DOWN IN THE BIG EASY, STRINGER.

IT SEEMS ALMOST TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE THAT I'LL HAVE NIGHTLY GIGS AND A PLACE TO CRASH RIGHT FROM HE GET GO.

THEM BOYS DOWN SOUTH OWE ME A FAVOR OR TWO. AND BESIDES, MOVING TO THE BIRTHPLACE OF JAZZ IS JUST WHAT YOU NEED TO HONE YOUR SKILLS AND LEARN TO WORK YOUR MOUTH ON AN INSTRUMENT.

I'M SURE YOU'LL LEARN ALL THE TUNES, MALCOLM...
WHISPERS TO STRINGER:
 MEANWHILE WE'LL MAKE SOME SHEET MUSIC OF OUR OWN.

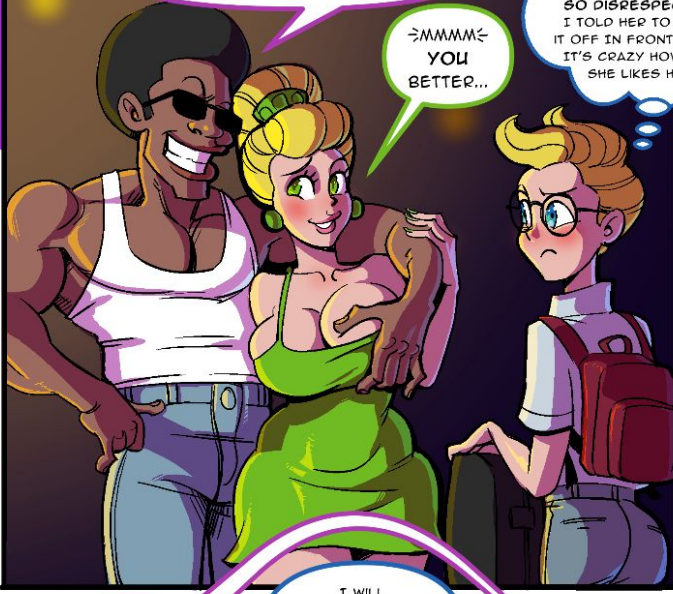
GIGGLES



DON'T WORRY ABOUT YOUR MAMA ONE LICK, NOW, YOU HEAR? DADDY STRINGER WILL TAKE REAL GOOD CARE OF HER WHILE YOU'RE AWAY.

~MMMM~ YOU BETTER...

I HATE WHEN HE'S SO TOUCHY WITH MY MOM. IT'S SO DISRESPECTFUL. I TOLD HER TO KNOCK IT OFF IN FRONT OF ME... IT'S CRAZY HOW MUCH SHE LIKES HIM...

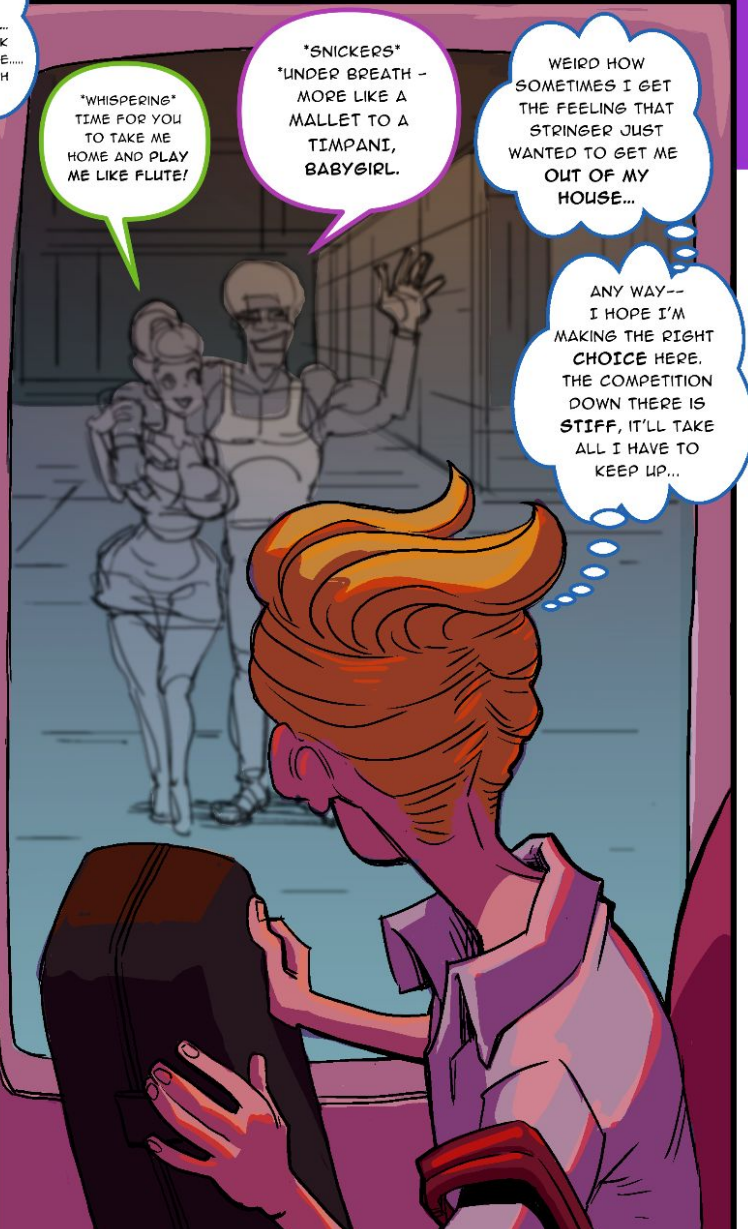


"WHISPERING" TIME FOR YOU TO TAKE ME HOME AND PLAY ME LIKE FLUTE!

"SNICKERS" "UNDER BREATH - MORE LIKE A MALLETT TO A TIMPANI, BABYGIRL.

WEIRD HOW SOMETIMES I GET THE FEELING THAT STRINGER JUST WANTED TO GET ME OUT OF MY HOUSE...

ANYWAY-- I HOPE I'M MAKING THE RIGHT CHOICE HERE. THE COMPETITION DOWN THERE IS STIFF, IT'LL TAKE ALL I HAVE TO KEEP UP...



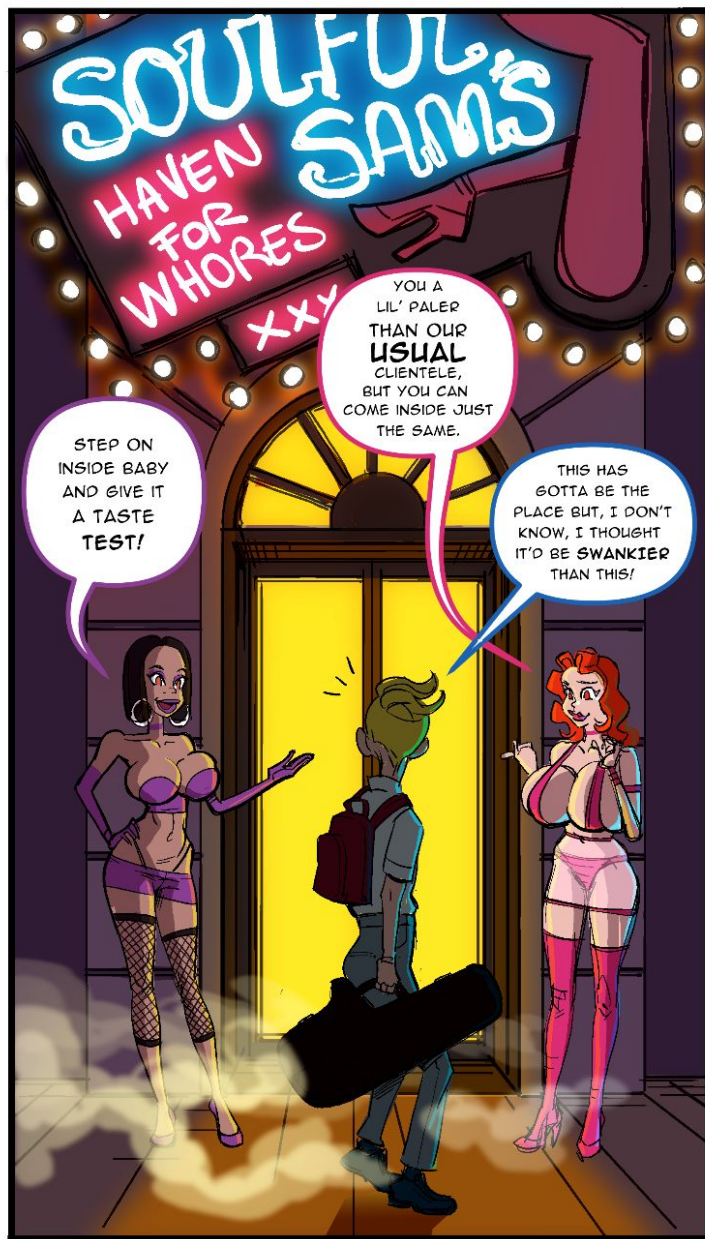
I WILL STRINGER! THEY'RE GONNA KNOW THAT MALCOLM MULBERT ISN'T SCREWING AROUND!

NOW REMEMBER, MALCOLM, YOU GOTTA WALK IN THERE WITH CONFIDENCE! SHOW THEM CATS YOU'RE ONE OF THE GANG! SHOW EM YOU CAN REALLY BLOW!

THAT'S THE FIGHTIN' SPIRIT, KID. NOW I BETTER GET YOUR MAMA HOME, YOU KNOW HOW CRANKY SHE IS WHEN SHE DOESN'T GET HER "NAP TIME" WITH ME.



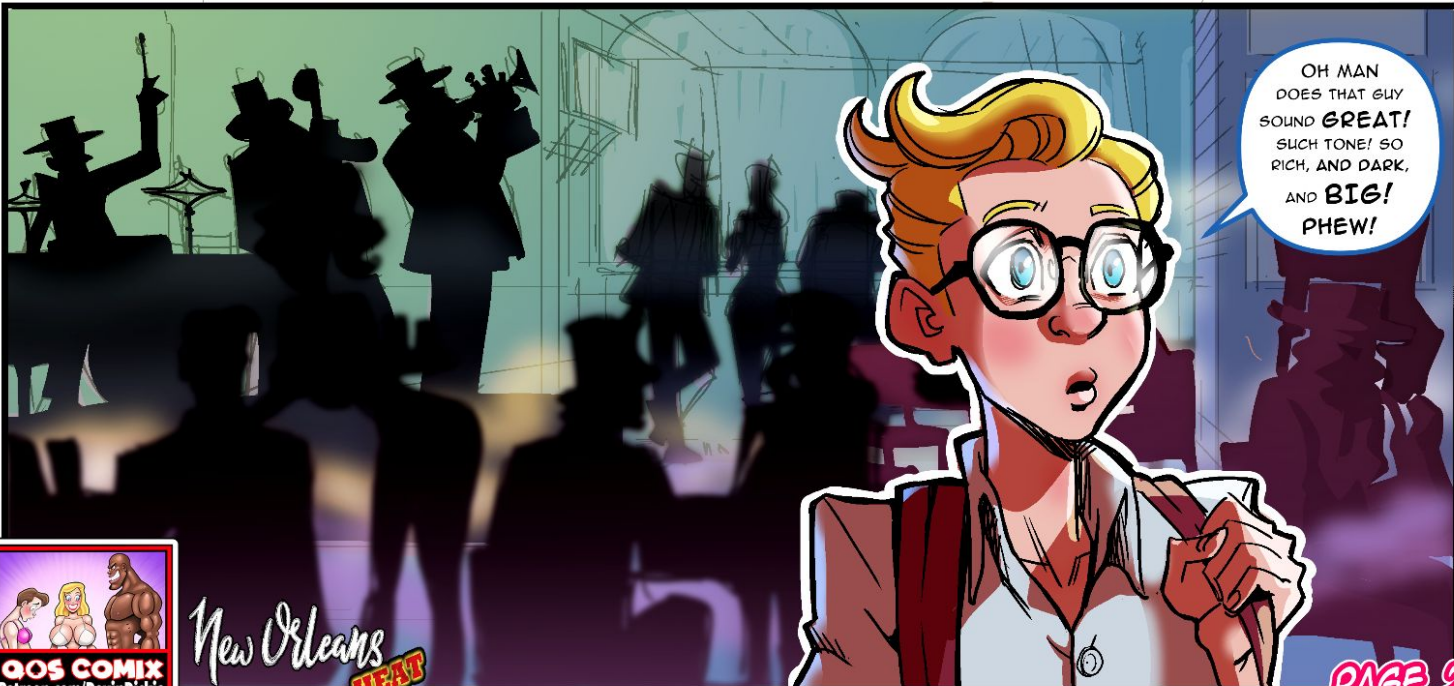
WHEN HE STEPPED OFF THE BUS DOWN IN THE FRENCH QUARTER, MALCOLM WAS SO OVERCOME BY THE STIMULATION OF IT ALL THAT FOR A MOMENT, HE FORGOT WHO HE WAS. MUSIC POURED OUT OF EVERY CLUB AND FLOODED THE DIRTY STREETS. THE SCENT OF FOOD VENDORS AND BOOZE FLOODED HIS NOSE, AND THE THICK HUMIDITY OF THE AIR SEEMED TO STICK TO HIS VERY SKIN. HE WAS LOOKING FOR A CLUB, A PLACE OWNED BY STRINGER'S FRIEND, SAM SAMPSON. THE CLUB THAT MALCOLM WAS ABOUT TO START WORKING SEVEN NIGHTS A WEEK...



STEP ON INSIDE BABY AND GIVE IT A TASTE TEST!

YOU A LIL' PALER THAN OUR USUAL CLIENTELE, BUT YOU CAN COME INSIDE JUST THE SAME.

THIS HAS GOTTA BE THE PLACE BUT, I DON'T KNOW, I THOUGHT IT'D BE SWANKIER THAN THIS!



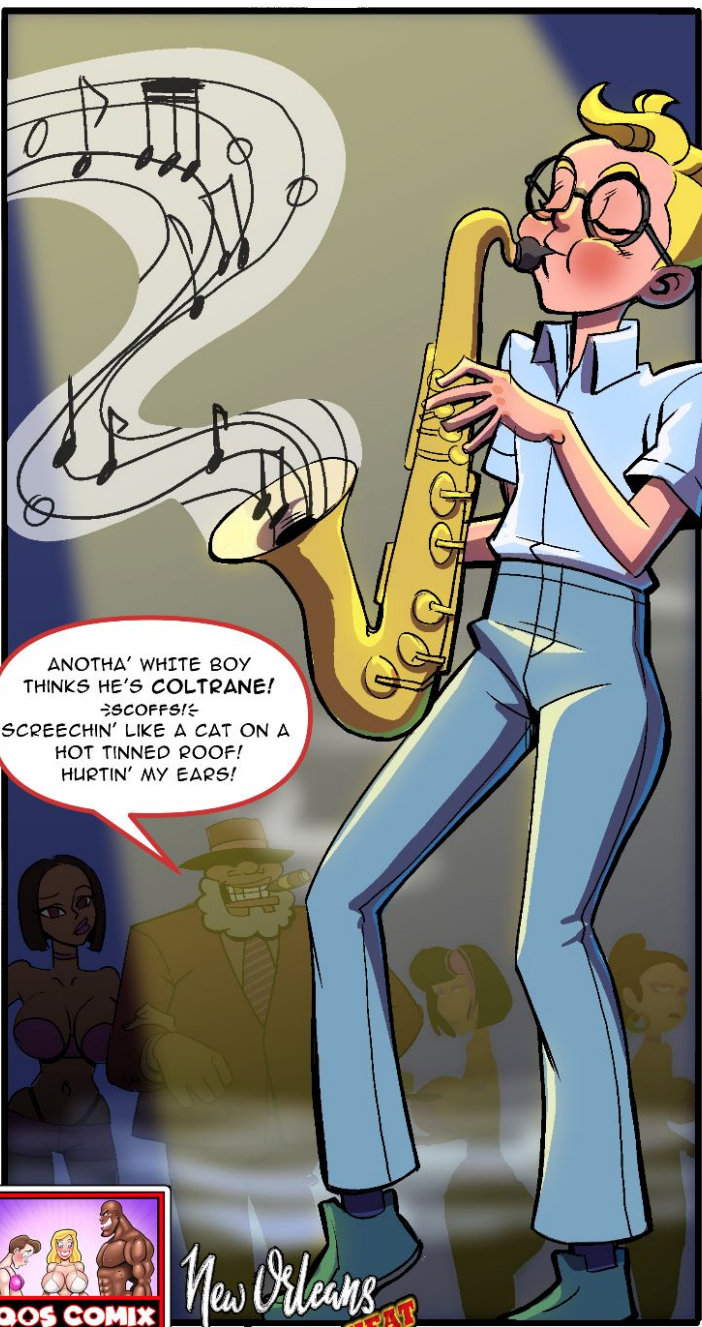
OH MAN DOES THAT GUY SOUND GREAT! SUCH TONE! SO RICH, AND DARK, AND BIG! PHEW!

YOU MUST BE THE NEW GUY! STRINGER SAID YOU WERE GONNA BE PERFECT FOR THE JOB AND I CAN SEE HE WASN'T KIDDIN'!

STRINGER REALLY TOLD YOU ABOUT MY SAX PLAYING? FUNNY, HE NEVER SEEMED TO ENJOY IT VERY MUCH BACK HOME...

OH YEAH-- SURE KID, WHATEVER YOU SAY. YOUR SAX, RIGHT, SNICKERS!

LISTEN UP EVERYBODY! THIS YOUNG MAN CAME ALL THE WAY TO NEW ORLEANS TO MAKE IT BIG. SHOW HIM SOME RESPECT AND GIVE HIM A CHANCE! TAKE IT AWAY, KID!



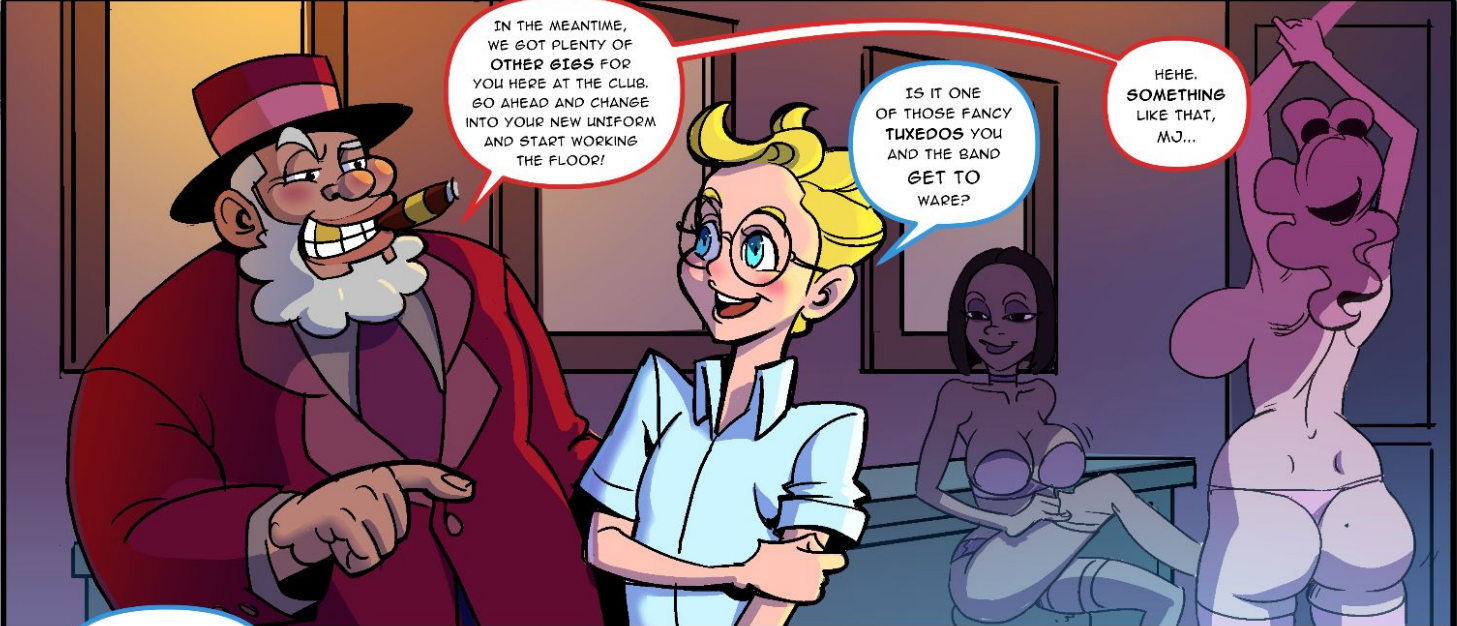
ANOTHA' WHITE BOY THINKS HE'S COLTRANE! SCREECHIN' LIKE A CAT ON A HOT TINNED ROOF! HURTIN' MY EARS!



DAT'S ENOUGH BOY UH - UHM-- WHAT DID YOU SAY YOUR NAME WAS AGAIN? WHATEVER-- WE GONNA CALL YOU "MJ", OKAY? "SNICKERS"

UM, SURE, MJ IS FINE I GUESS. BUT WHEN CAN I SIT IN WITH THE BAND??

"CHUCKLES" SOON ENOUGH... I'VE GOT OTHER PERFORMANCE WORK FOR YOU, BOY. FOLLOW ME...



IN THE MEANTIME, WE GOT PLENTY OF OTHER GIGS FOR YOU HERE AT THE CLUB. GO AHEAD AND CHANGE INTO YOUR NEW UNIFORM AND START WORKING THE FLOOR!

IS IT ONE OF THOSE FANCY TUXEDOS YOU AND THE BAND GET TO WARE?

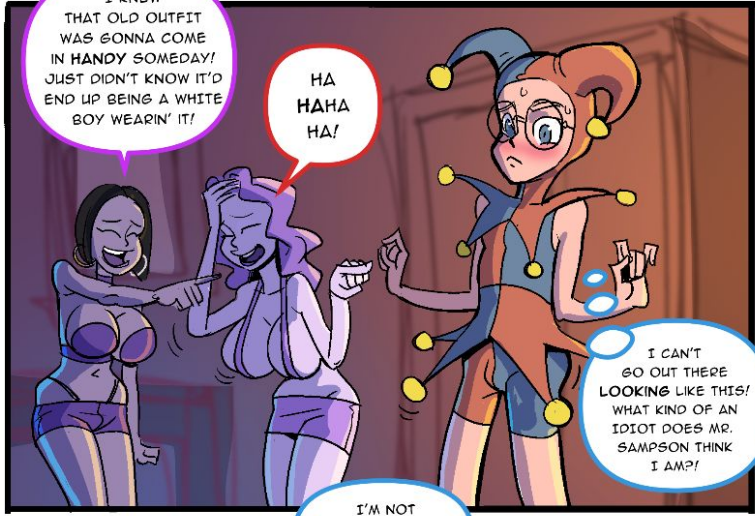
HEHE. SOMETHING LIKE THAT, MJ...



BUT MR. SAMPSON! THIS SORT OF THING MAKES ME OUT TO LOOK LIKE SOME KIND OF JOKE!

HUSH YOUR COMPLAININ' BOY! GET DRESSED AND LISTEN FOR YOUR QUE!

CAN YOU TWO PLEASE TURN AROUND? I'M STARTING TO FEEL UNCOMFORTABLE...



I KNEW THAT OLD OUTFIT WAS GONNA COME IN HANDY SOMEDAY! JUST DIDN'T KNOW IT'D END UP BEING A WHITE BOY WEARIN' IT!

HA HAHA HA!

I CAN'T GO OUT THERE LOOKING LIKE THIS! WHAT KIND OF AN IDIOT DOES MR. SAMPSON THINK I AM?!

I'M NOT SO SURE I SHOULD BE DRINKING ON THE JOB...



CAREFUL HONEY, YOUR PICCOLO IS SHOWING! *GIGGLES*

HAVEN'T SEEN ONE THAT SMALL IN A DOG'S AGE! BUT WOULD YOU LOOK AT HIS CHUBBY CHEEKS, GIRL! *GIGGLES*

CAN YOU TWO PLEASE TURN AROUND? I'M STARTING TO FEEL UNCOMFORTABLE...



HAVE SOME LIQUID COURAGE, MJ. GO ON - WE ALL DO IT.

I'M NOT SO SURE I SHOULD BE DRINKING ON THE JOB...

WET YOUR WHISTLE AND YOU'LL FIND COURAGE, BABY!



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