

SAMARA GAN

How to Date a Dozen Men



How to Date a Dozen Men



SAMARA GAN

How to Date a Dozen Men

COPYRIGHT © 2023 BY SAMARA GAN
AUTHOR PHOTO BY SAMARA GAN. USED WITH PERMISSION.

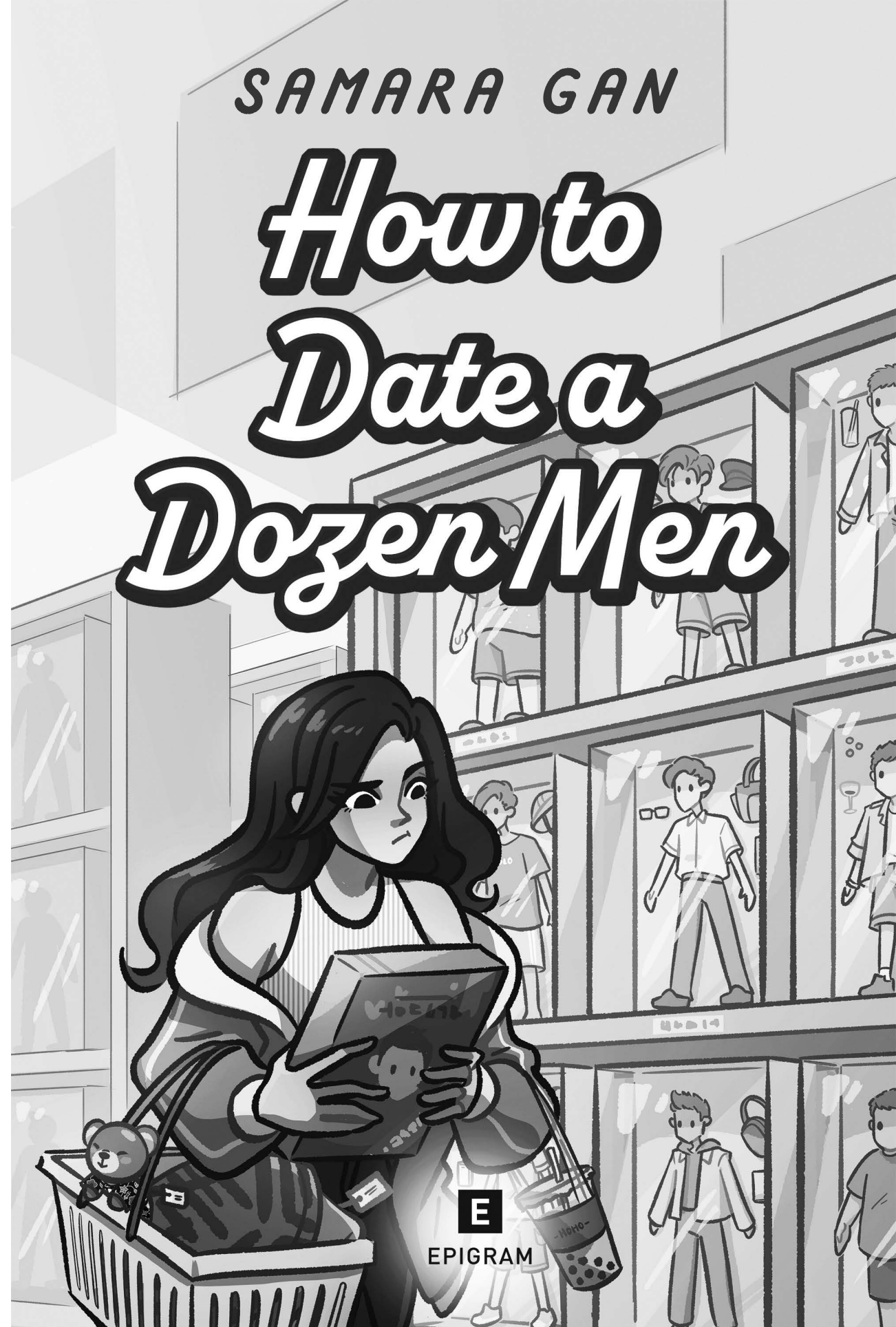
PUBLISHED IN SINGAPORE BY EPIGRAM BOOKS
WWW.EPIGRAM.SG

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. NO PART OF THIS PUBLICATION MAY BE REPRODUCED,
STORED IN A RETRIEVAL SYSTEM OR TRANSMITTED IN ANY FORM OR BY
ANY MEANS, ELECTRONIC, MECHANICAL, PHOTOCOPYING OR OTHERWISE
WITHOUT THE PRIOR WRITTEN PERMISSION OF THE PUBLISHER.

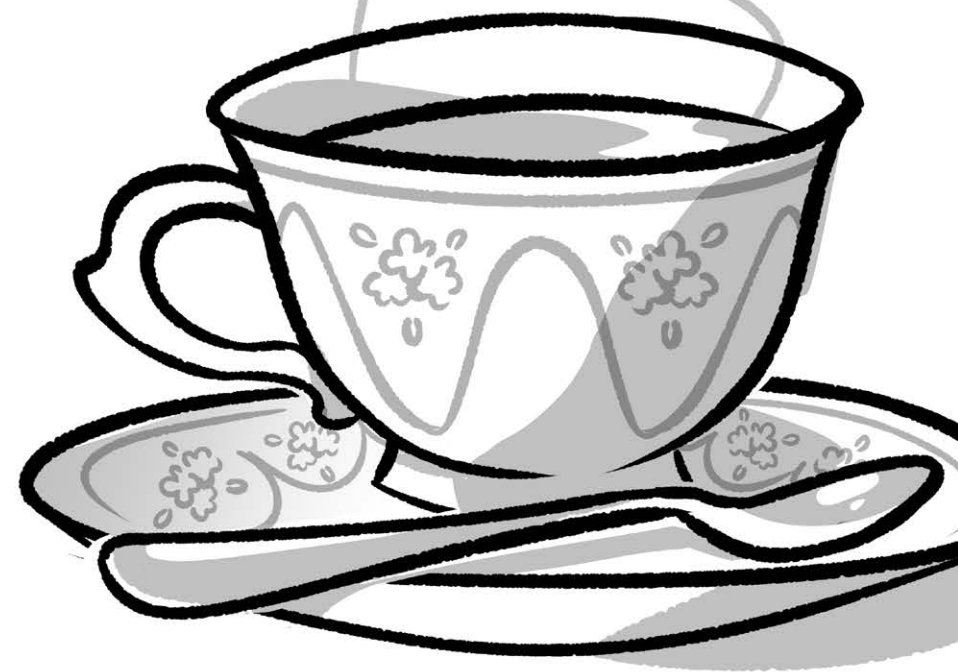
**NATIONAL LIBRARY BOARD, SINGAPORE
CATALOGUING-IN-PUBLICATION DATA**

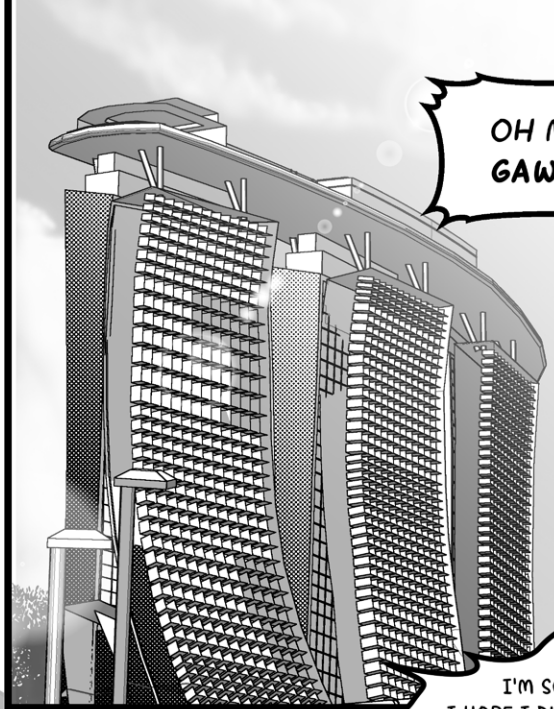
NAME(S): GAN, SAMARA, 1996-
TITLE: HOW TO DATE A DOZEN MEN / SAMARA GAN.
DESCRIPTION: SINGAPORE : EPIGRAM BOOKS, 2023.
IDENTIFIER(S): ISBN 978-981-5105-08-7 (PAPERBACK) | 978-981-5105-09-4 (EBOOK)
SUBJECT(S): LCSH: DATING (SOCIAL CUSTOMS)—SINGAPORE—COMIC BOOKS, STRIPS, ETC. |
DATING (SOCIAL CUSTOMS)—SINGAPORE—FICTION. | MATE SELECTION—SINGAPORE—COMIC
BOOKS, STRIPS, ETC. | MATE SELECTION—SINGAPORE—FICTION. | GRAPHIC NOVELS.
CLASSIFICATION: DDC 741.595957—DC23

FIRST EDITION, JULY 2023.



CHAPTER ONE

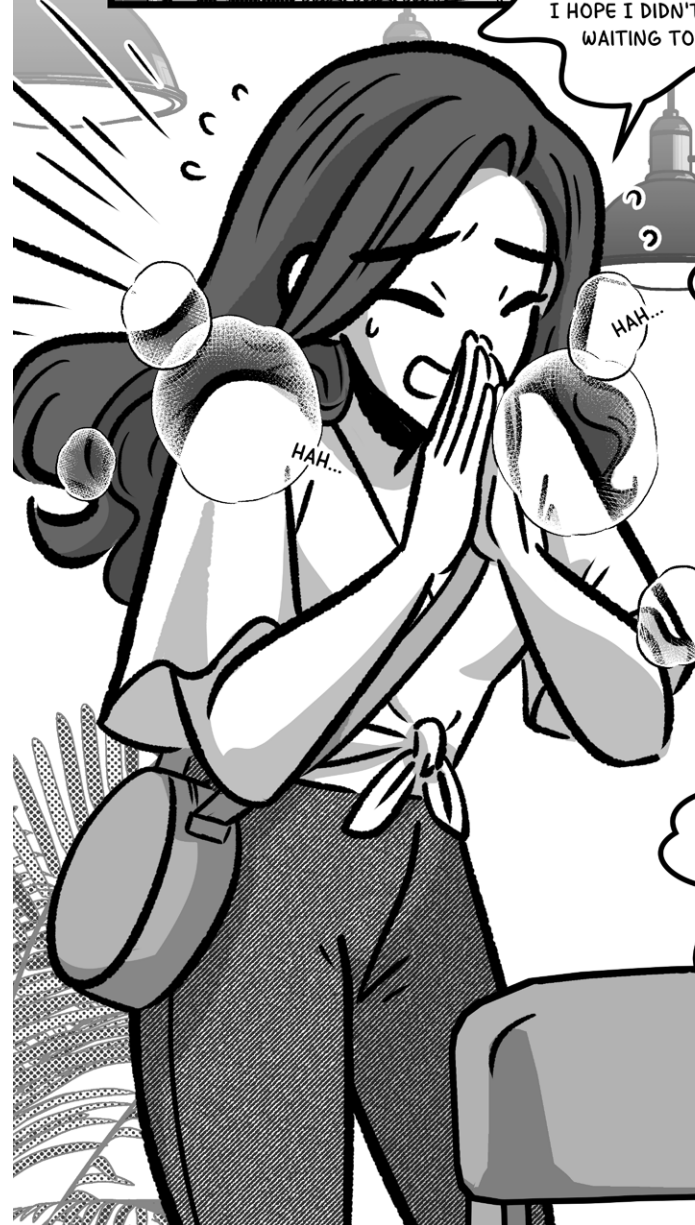




OH MY GAWD!



I CAN'T BELIEVE I'M LATE AGAIN!



I'M SO SORRY!! I HOPE I DIDN'T KEEP YOU WAITING TOO LONG!

IT'S OKAY, SAM.



I ALSO ARRIVED NOT TOO LONG AGO.

I GOT US BOTH TEA. HOPE YOU DON'T MIND.



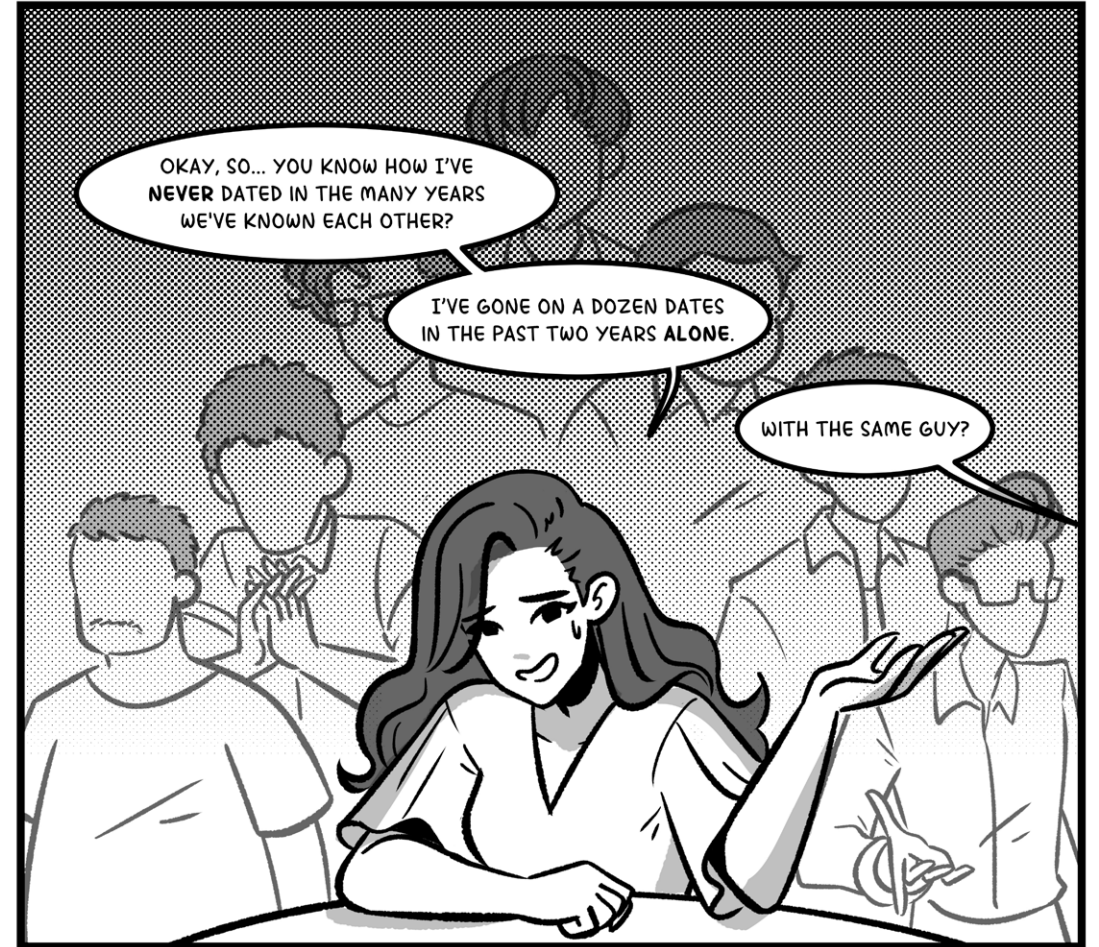
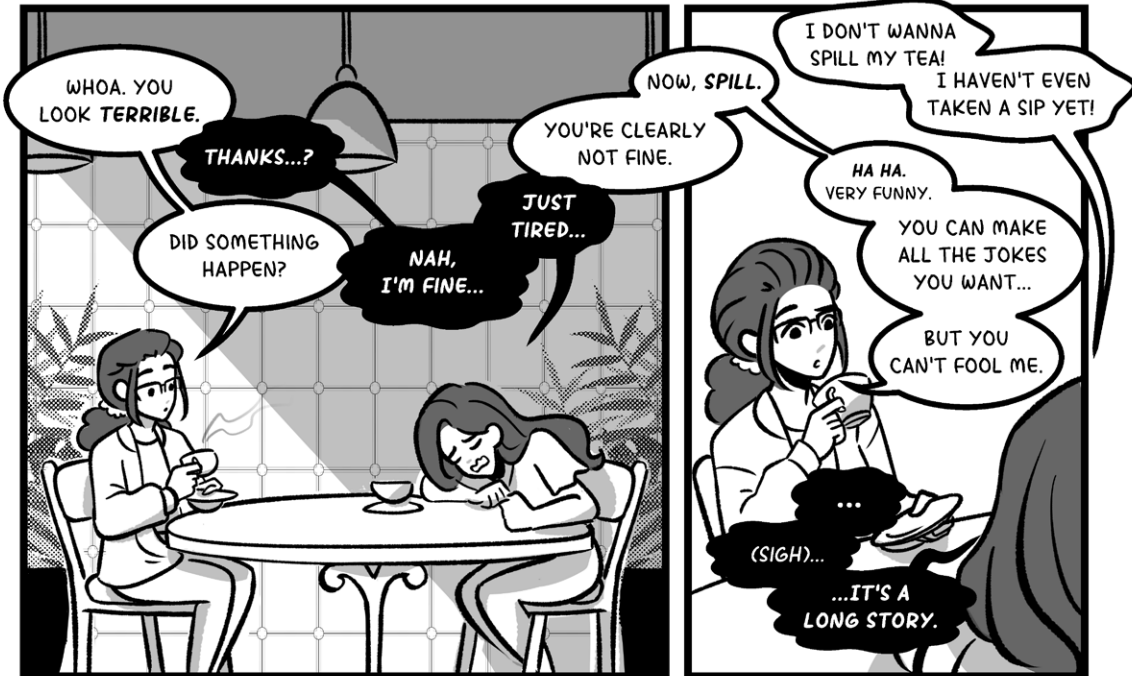
OF COURSE NOT!

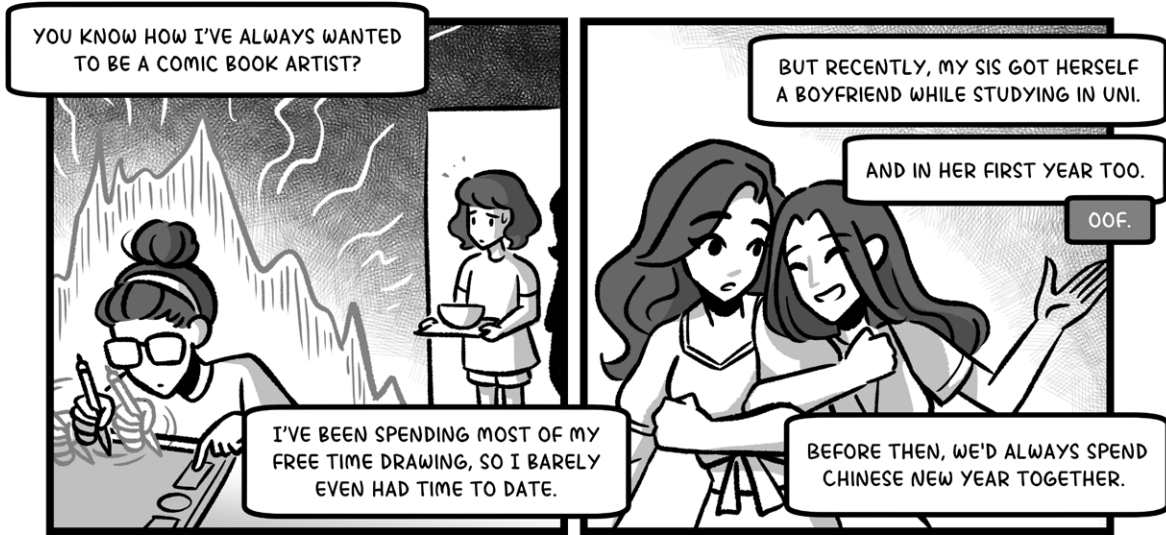
YOU ALWAYS KNOW WHAT I WANT!

HAHA... WHAT ARE BESTIES FOR?

HOW LONG HAS IT BEEN SINCE WE LAST MET UP?

A YEAR? TWO?





YOU KNOW HOW I'VE ALWAYS WANTED TO BE A COMIC BOOK ARTIST?

BUT RECENTLY, MY SIS GOT HERSELF A BOYFRIEND WHILE STUDYING IN UNI.

AND IN HER FIRST YEAR TOO.

OOF.

I'VE BEEN SPENDING MOST OF MY FREE TIME DRAWING, SO I BARELY EVEN HAD TIME TO DATE.

BEFORE THEN, WE'D ALWAYS SPEND CHINESE NEW YEAR TOGETHER.

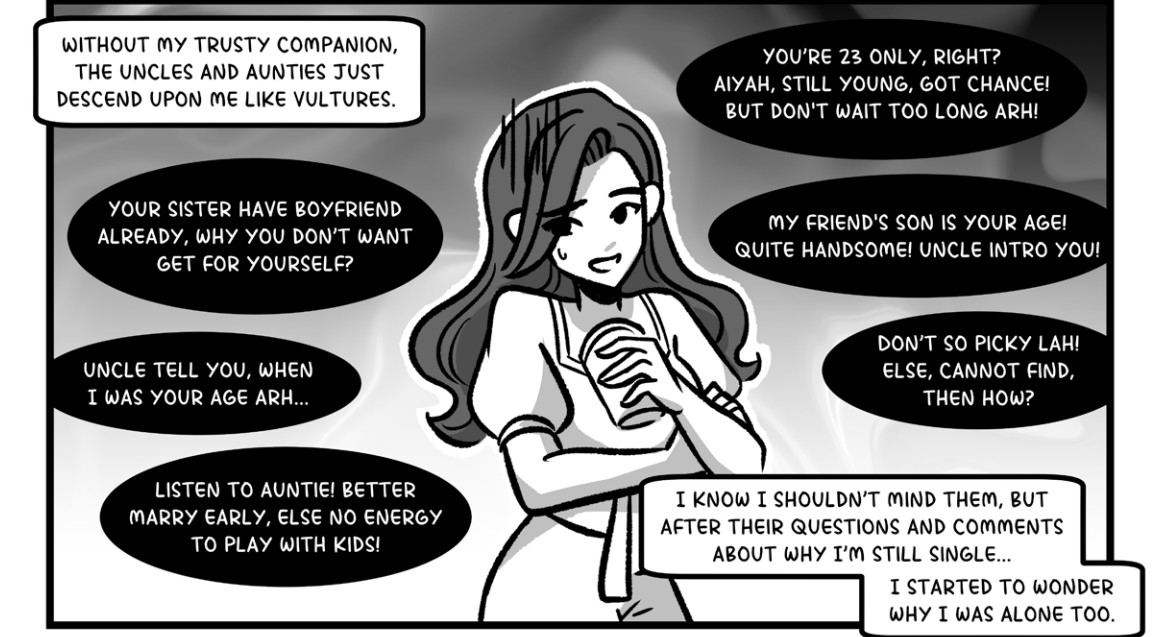


WE'D PROTECT EACH OTHER AGAINST THE FORCES OF OUR NOSY UNCLES AND AUNTIES.

WHILE I'M LEFT ALONE...

BUT NOW, SHE'S GOT A BOYFRIEND TO SPEND IT WITH.

WELL, NOT REALLY.



WITHOUT MY TRUSTY COMPANION, THE UNCLES AND AUNTIES JUST DESCEND UPON ME LIKE VULTURES.

YOU'RE 23 ONLY, RIGHT? AIYAH, STILL YOUNG, GOT CHANCE! BUT DON'T WAIT TOO LONG ARH!

YOUR SISTER HAVE BOYFRIEND ALREADY, WHY YOU DON'T WANT GET FOR YOURSELF?

MY FRIEND'S SON IS YOUR AGE! QUITE HANDSOME! UNCLE INTRO YOU!

UNCLE TELL YOU, WHEN I WAS YOUR AGE ARH...

DON'T SO PICKY LAH! ELSE, CANNOT FIND, THEN HOW?

LISTEN TO AUNTIE! BETTER MARRY EARLY, ELSE NO ENERGY TO PLAY WITH KIDS!

I KNOW I SHOULDN'T MIND THEM, BUT AFTER THEIR QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS ABOUT WHY I'M STILL SINGLE...

I STARTED TO WONDER WHY I WAS ALONE TOO.

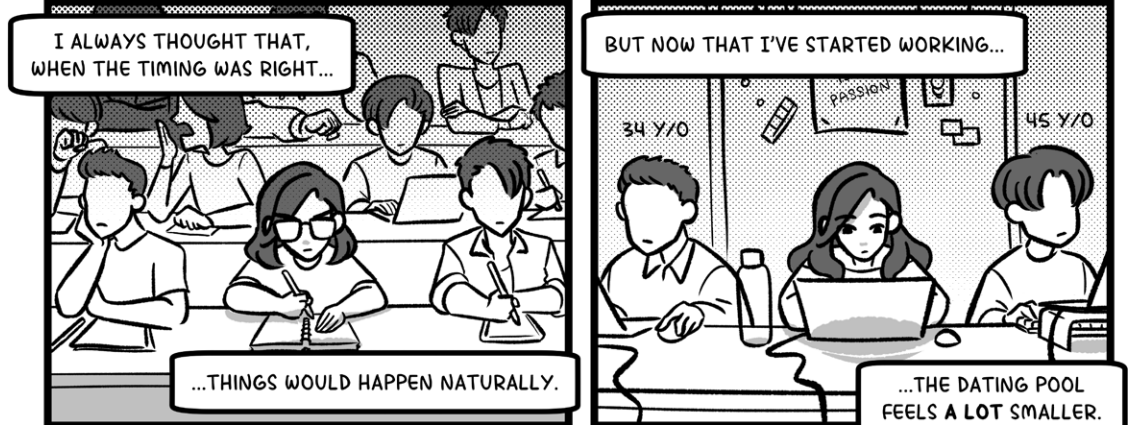


TO BE HONEST, I DON'T REALLY KNOW WHAT "DATING" EVEN MEANS.

I'VE HAD CRUSHES BEFORE...

HECK, YOU'VE SEEN ME CRUSH ON JUST ABOUT ANYONE...

BUT I ALMOST NEVER ACT ON THEM.



I ALWAYS THOUGHT THAT, WHEN THE TIMING WAS RIGHT...

BUT NOW THAT I'VE STARTED WORKING...

...THINGS WOULD HAPPEN NATURALLY.

...THE DATING POOL FEELS A LOT SMALLER.



IT FELT LIKE IF I CONTINUED ON LIKE THIS, I'D PROBABLY DIE ALONE.

SO I DECIDED TO TAKE MATTERS INTO MY OWN HANDS.

I'VE GOT THIS!

IS SHE OKAY? I HEARD SHE'S GOING THROUGH A LOT OF STRESS AT WORK...



I DID SOME RESEARCH AND SIGNED UP FOR A DATING APP.

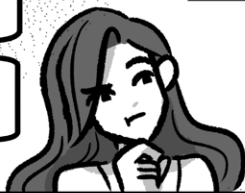
A LOT OF MY COLLEAGUES KNEW PEOPLE WHO FOUND THEIR PARTNERS THROUGH THE APPS.

BUT FILLING OUT A DATING PROFILE IS HARD.



WHICH PHOTOS SHOULD I USE? DO THEY SHOW WHO I AM? CAN MY SIDE HUSTLE BE MY OCCUPATION?

BUT AM I EVEN FIT TO CALL MYSELF AN ARTIST? AFTER ALL...



WHAT MY FRIENDS THINK I DO...



WHAT MY FAMILY THINKS I DO...



WHAT SOCIETY THINKS I DO...



AND WHAT I ACTUALLY DO ARE COMPLETELY DIFFERENT.



FILLING OUT A PROFILE WAS SO HARD. I FELT LIKE I WAS IN THE MIDDLE OF A JOB INTERVIEW.

WHOA, THAT INTENSE?



WHAT DO YOU LIKE TO DO IN YOUR FREE TIME?

ANY HOBBIES?

HMM... YOU LOOK DIFFERENT FROM YOUR PROFILE PIC. I WASN'T EXPECTING YOU TO BE SO...

...TALL.

IT'S WORSE.



I'D NEVER FELT MORE UNCERTAIN OR INSECURE ABOUT MYSELF IN MY LIFE.



AFTER HOURS OF OVERTHINKING, I FINALLY SUBMITTED IT.

WITHIN THE FIRST 24 HOURS, MY PHONE WAS PINGING WITH NEW PROFILES AND DM'S.

AT ONE POINT, I WAS TALKING TO AS MANY AS FOUR DIFFERENT GUYS AT ONCE.

DO YOU LIKE MUSEUMS TOO? :)

I WAS SO BUSY WITH WORK THAT I BARELY HAD TIME TO READ OR REPLY.

BUT THE MESSAGES JUST KEPT COMING...

PING!

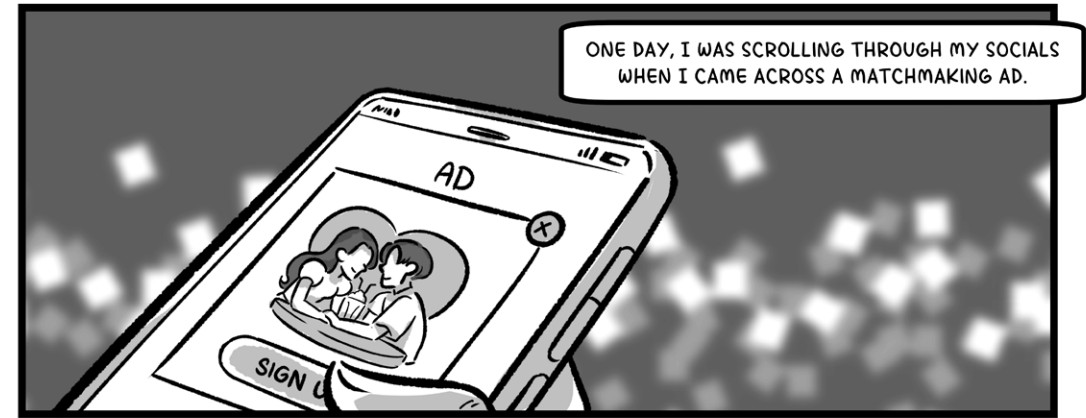
PING!

AND COMING...

PING!

ENOUGH!

EVENTUALLY, I WAS SO BURNT OUT FROM ALL THE TEXTING AND REPLYING THAT I HAD TO QUIT THE APP.



ONE DAY, I WAS SCROLLING THROUGH MY SOCIALS WHEN I CAME ACROSS A MATCHMAKING AD.

AND THAT'S WHEN IT HIT ME.



INSTEAD OF SPENDING SO MUCH TIME FILTERING THROUGH THE PROFILES TO FIND A MATCH...



I COULD JUST OUTSOURCE IT TO A MATCHMAKER!

WOW, SAM. THAT'S SUCH A BUSINESS-Y WAY OF LOOKING AT THINGS.

I KNOW. BUT EVEN YOU HAVE TO ADMIT...

IT WAS A STROKE OF GENIUS.

WELL...





ANYWAYS, I SIGNED UP AND ARRANGED FOR AN INTERVIEW-

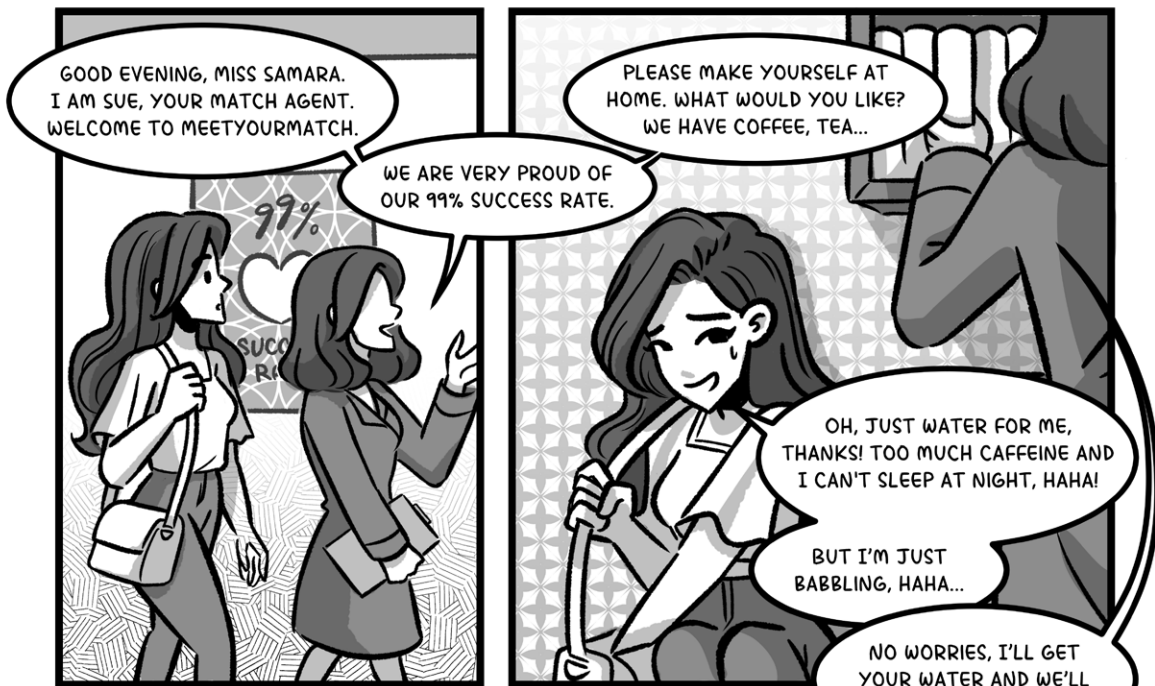
NOT ANOTHER INTERVIEW!

MEET YOUR MATCH!

MISS SAMARA?

YES!

IT'S NOT THAT KIND OF INTERVIEW...



GOOD EVENING, MISS SAMARA. I AM SUE, YOUR MATCH AGENT. WELCOME TO MEETYOURMATCH.

PLEASE MAKE YOURSELF AT HOME. WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE? WE HAVE COFFEE, TEA...

WE ARE VERY PROUD OF OUR 99% SUCCESS RATE.

OH, JUST WATER FOR ME, THANKS! TOO MUCH CAFFEINE AND I CAN'T SLEEP AT NIGHT, HAHA!

BUT I'M JUST BABBLING, HAHA...

NO WORRIES, I'LL GET YOUR WATER AND WE'LL START STRAIGHT AWAY.

ONCE THE WATER ARRIVED, SHE ASKED ME A BUNCH OF QUESTIONS.

I LIKE A STRONG SENSE OF JUSTICE! IT'D BE NICE IF HE'S HANDSOME, TOO!

HMM... THAT CAN BE PRETTY SUBJECTIVE...

WORLDWIDE HANDSOME, THEN!

EH? WHAT DOES THAT...?

NEVER MIND...

WHAT KINDS OF QUESTIONS?

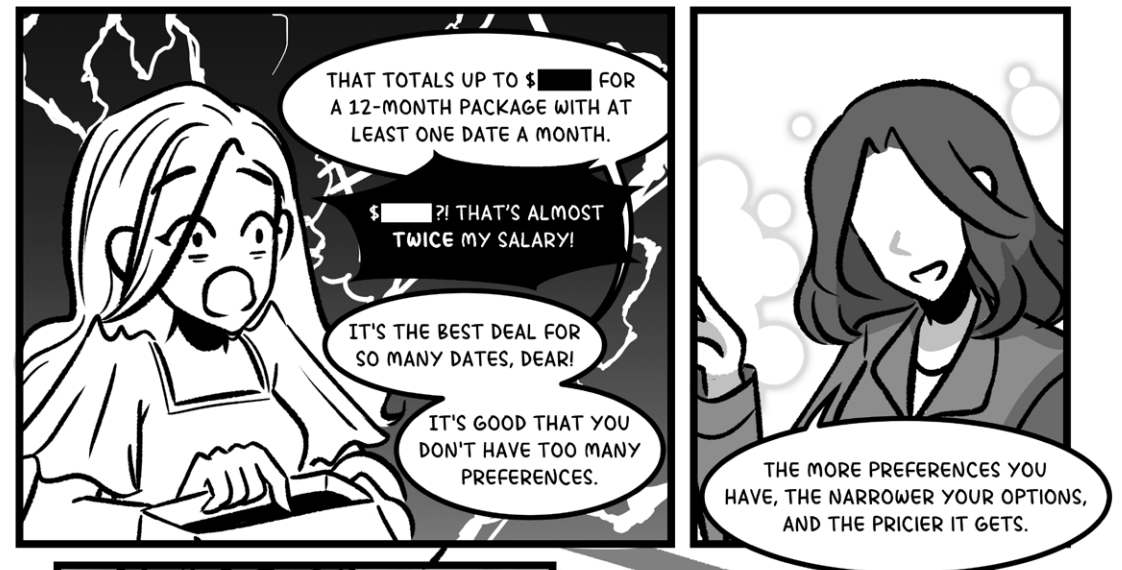
LIKE, WHAT MY GOALS AND PRIORITIES ARE IN LIFE, WHAT MY VALUES ARE, AND WHAT I VALUE MOST IN A PARTNER.



AS I TALKED AND TALKED, SHE JUST CLICKETY-CLACKED AWAY ON THE KEYBOARD, WRITING OUT SOME KIND OF DATING PROFILE FOR ME.

AHH... I SEE...

ALL RIGHT, SO... AFTER INCLUDING ALL OF YOUR PREFERENCES...



THAT TOTALS UP TO \$█████ FOR A 12-MONTH PACKAGE WITH AT LEAST ONE DATE A MONTH.

\$█████?! THAT'S ALMOST TWICE MY SALARY!

IT'S THE BEST DEAL FOR SO MANY DATES, DEAR!

IT'S GOOD THAT YOU DON'T HAVE TOO MANY PREFERENCES.

THE MORE PREFERENCES YOU HAVE, THE NARROWER YOUR OPTIONS, AND THE PRICIER IT GETS.



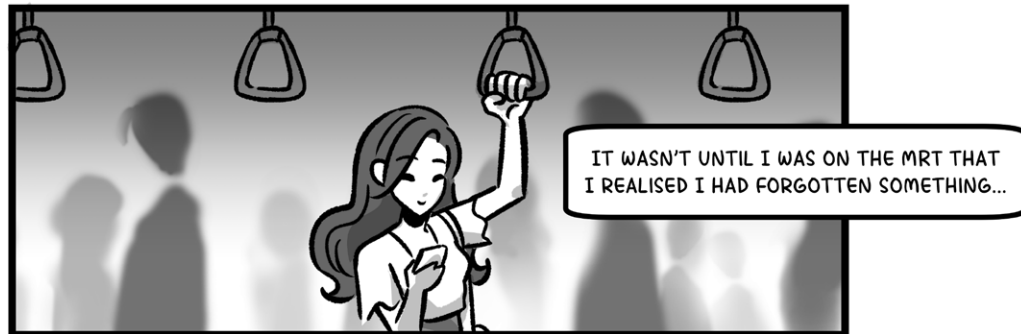
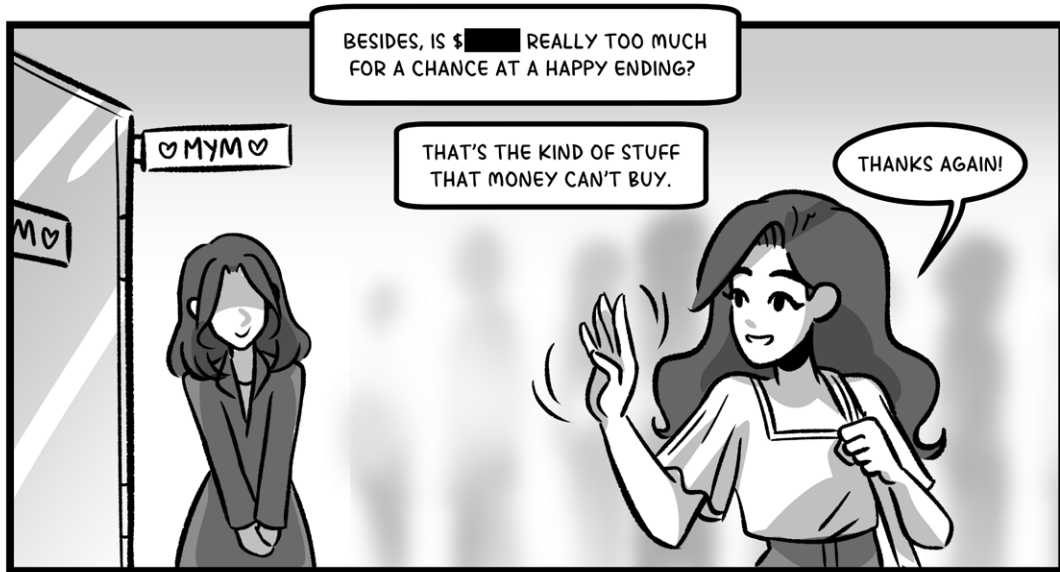
IT WAS A TOUGH DECISION TO MAKE. AFTER ALL, IT WAS A LOT OF MONEY.

BUT WHEN I THINK ABOUT THE TIME I'D BE SAVING AND HOW MUCH MORE DRAWING I'D BE ABLE TO DO...

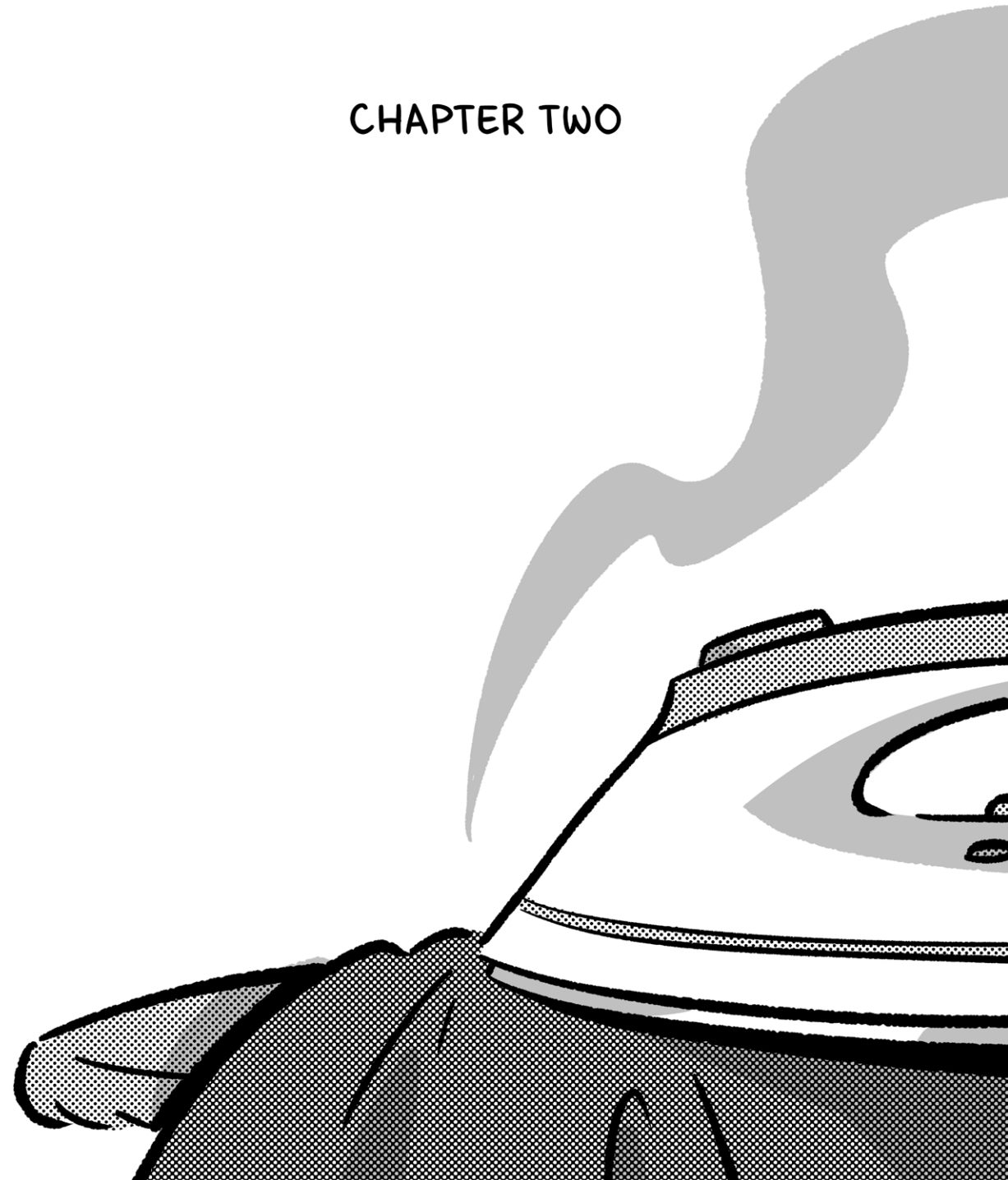
WITHOUT HAVING TO SPEND COUNTLESS HOURS SWIPING THROUGH DATING APPS...

SAM

I FIGURED THAT THE MONEY WOULD BE WORTH IT.

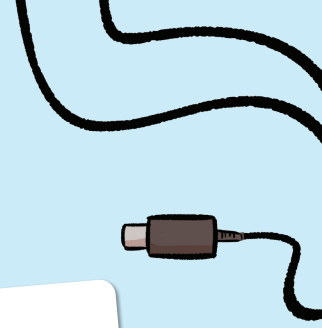


CHAPTER TWO





BETTER KNOWN AS **SAMARASKETCH**, SAMARA GAN IS A SELF-TAUGHT WRITER AND ARTIST FROM SINGAPORE. SHE IS AN UNAPOLOGETIC FANGIRL WHO LOVES CREATING FANART OF HER OTP'S (ONE-TRUE PAIRINGS) FOR HER FOLLOWERS. SHE BURIES HER INADEQUACY AND INSECURITIES UNDER LAYERS OF HUMOUR AND FALSE BRAVADO, AND TRIES NOT TO THINK TOO MUCH ABOUT HER MORE-THAN-LIKELY FUTURE OF DYING ALONE. HER DEBUT GRAPHIC NOVEL, *HOW TO DATE A DOZEN MEN*, BEGAN AS A FOUR-PAGE DRAFT FOR A CONTEST, AND IS BASED LARGELY ON HER PERSONAL EXPERIENCES IN THE DATING SCENE.



SAMARA IS IN HER MID-TWENTIES,
AND ALL HER FRIENDS ARE GETTING MARRIED.
SHOULD SHE FIND HERSELF A BOYFRIEND AS
WELL? IT WOULD CERTAINLY GET HER RELATIVES
OFF HER BACK AND GIVE THEM SOMETHING ELSE
TO TALK ABOUT OVER CHINESE NEW YEAR.

SHE ENTERS THE DATING SCENE, BUT SOON
REALISES THAT SHE KNOWS NOTHING ABOUT
DATING OR RELATIONSHIPS. JOIN SAMARA IN
THIS SEMI-AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL GRAPHIC NOVEL
ON HER QUEST FOR TRUE LOVE.



"A HIGHLY RELATABLE BOOK
FOR ANY PERSON WHO HAS GONE
THROUGH THE PAINFUL TRIALS
AND TRIBULATIONS OF MODERN-DAY
DATING. WILL HAVE YOU LAUGHING AND
CRINGING IN EQUAL MEASURE!"

—ANNJEE NEO,
AWARD-WINNING ILLUSTRATOR
OF *THE ROCK AND THE BIRD*

GRAPHIC NOVEL

ISBN 978-981-51-0508-7



9 789815 105087

www.epigram.sg