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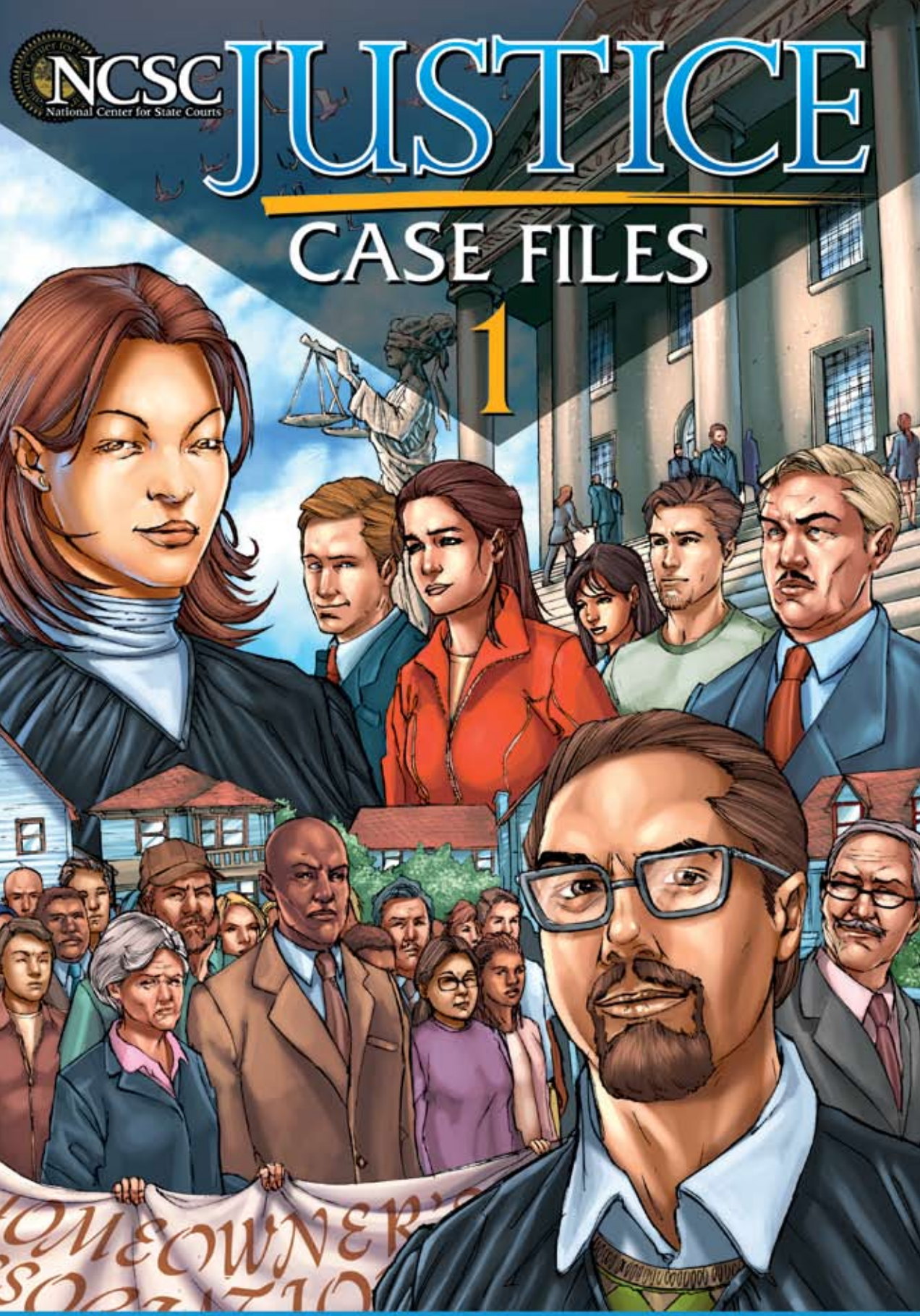
JUSTICE

CASE FILES

1



The Case of Internet Piracy

Dear Readers,

When the Founding Fathers established our nation's system of self government, they skillfully and deliberately drafted a system of three separate but equal branches of government, with built-in limits on each branch's power. This separation of powers divides the government into the executive branch; the legislative branch; and the judicial branch, the courts.

Today, more than 200 years later, the judiciary is the least understood of the three.

To remind the public of the important role courts play in our democratic society, the National Center for State Courts has created "Justice Case Files," a series of stories told in the form of graphic novels to engage and to educate readers about our justice system. Through these story lines, readers will learn the role of courts in our society, how judges make decisions, and how our courts work.

The "Case of Internet Piracy" is the first in this series, and we hope you discover and enjoy a deeper awareness for your Third Branch of government, the judiciary.

Sincerely,

Mary Campbell McQueen
President
National Center for State Courts

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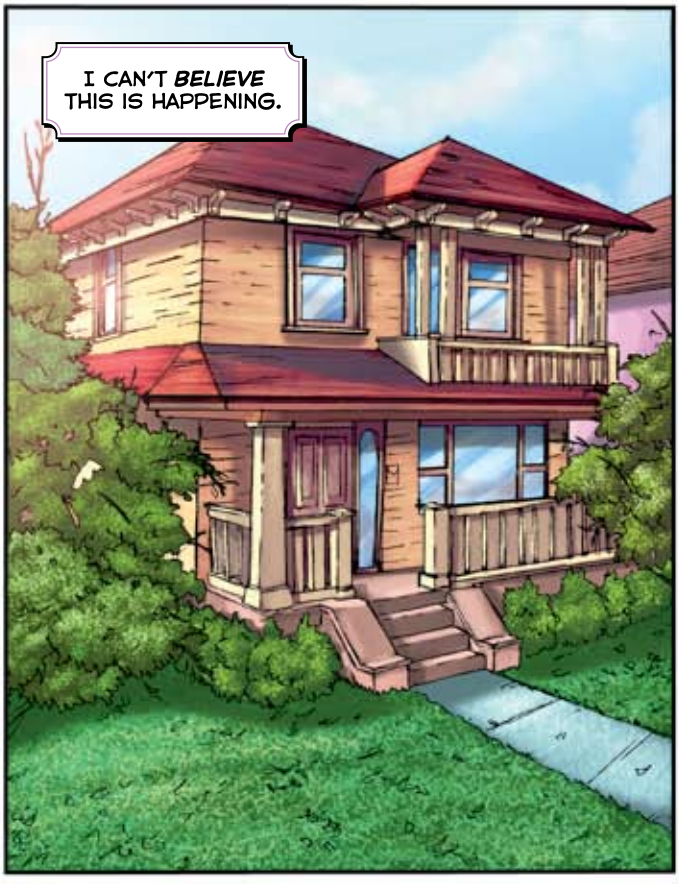
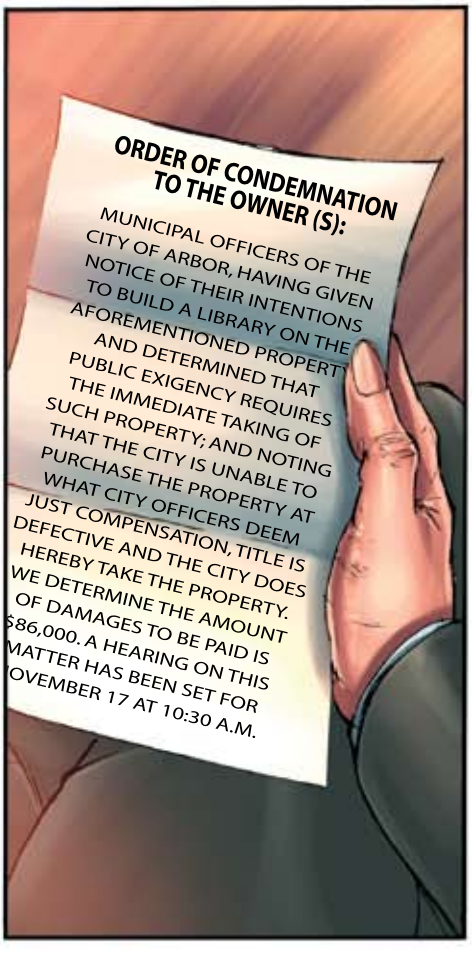
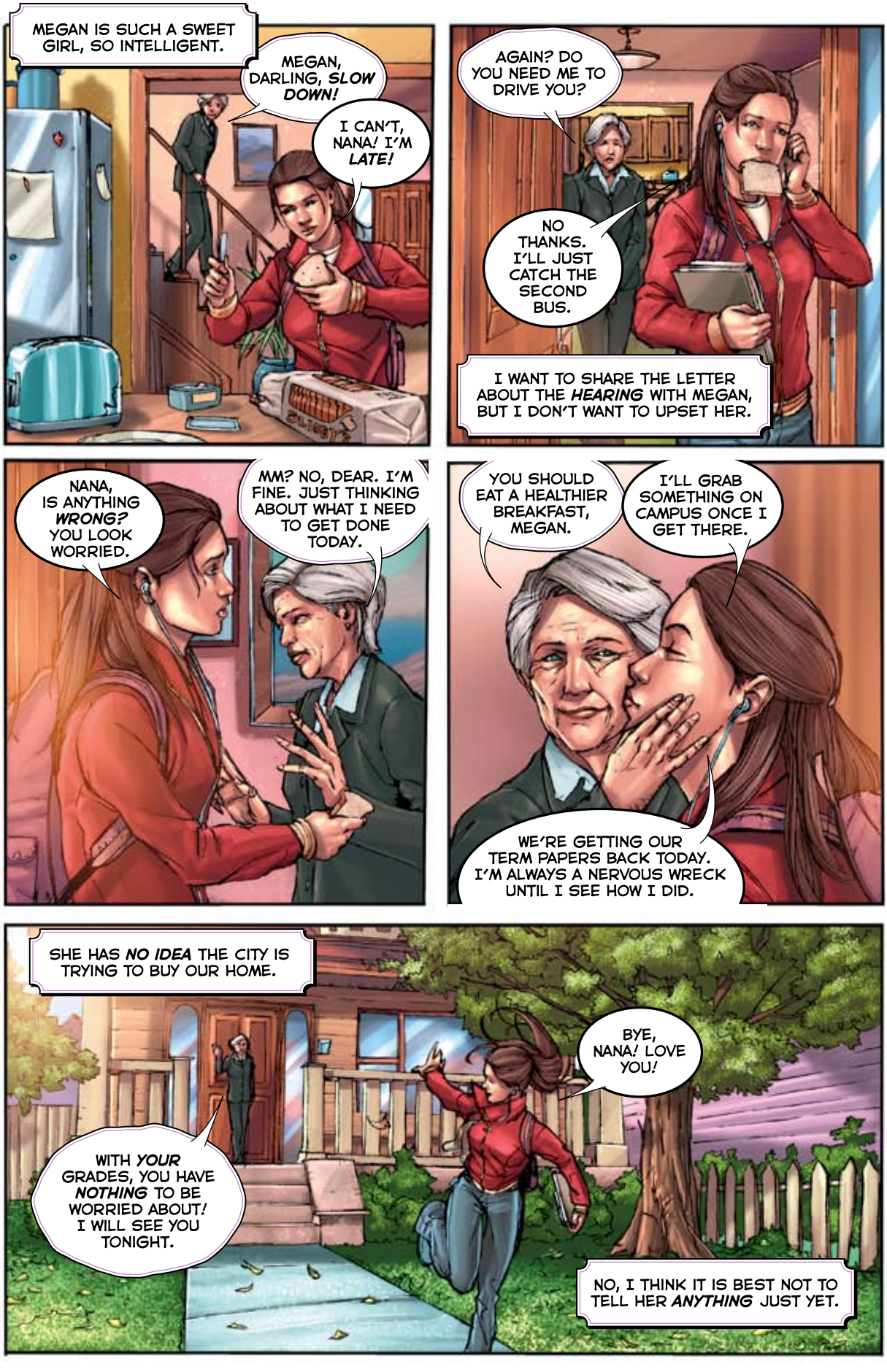

I CAN'T *BELIEVE* THIS IS HAPPENING.

THIS HAS BEEN MY *HOME* FOR MORE THAN *FORTY YEARS.*

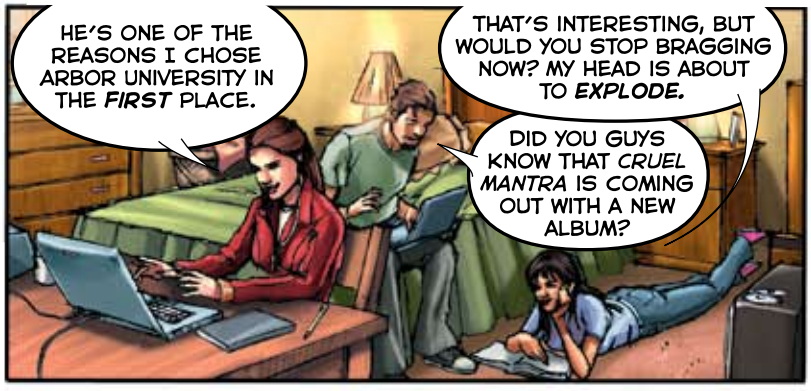

ORDER OF CONDEMNATION TO THE OWNER (S):
MUNICIPAL OFFICERS OF THE CITY OF ARBOR, HAVING GIVEN NOTICE OF THEIR INTENTIONS TO BUILD A LIBRARY ON THE AFOREMENTIONED PROPERTY AND DETERMINED THAT PUBLIC EXIGENCY REQUIRES THE IMMEDIATE TAKING OF SUCH PROPERTY; AND NOTING THAT THE CITY IS UNABLE TO PURCHASE THE PROPERTY AT WHAT CITY OFFICERS DEEM JUST COMPENSATION, TITLE IS DEFECTIVE AND THE CITY DOES HEREBY TAKE THE PROPERTY. WE DETERMINE THE AMOUNT OF DAMAGES TO BE PAID IS $86,000. A HEARING ON THIS MATTER HAS BEEN SET FOR OVEMBER 17 AT 10:30 A.M.

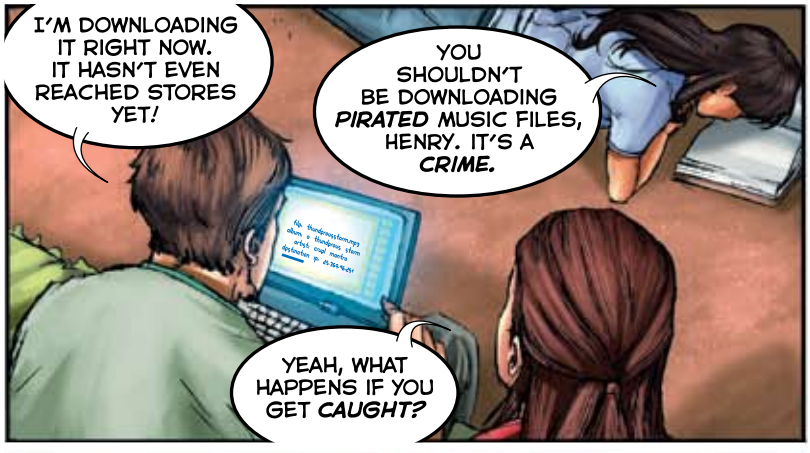
I DON'T UNDERSTAND. I ALREADY TOLD THE CITY I *WOULDN'T* SELL FOR THAT AMOUNT. HOW CAN THEY TAKE ME TO *COURT?*
OH, *MORGAN ...* I WISH YOU WERE *HERE* WITH ME NOW.
I WILL *NOT* QUIETLY STAND BY AND *LET* THEM TAKE OUR *HOME.* NOT WITHOUT A *FIGHT.*

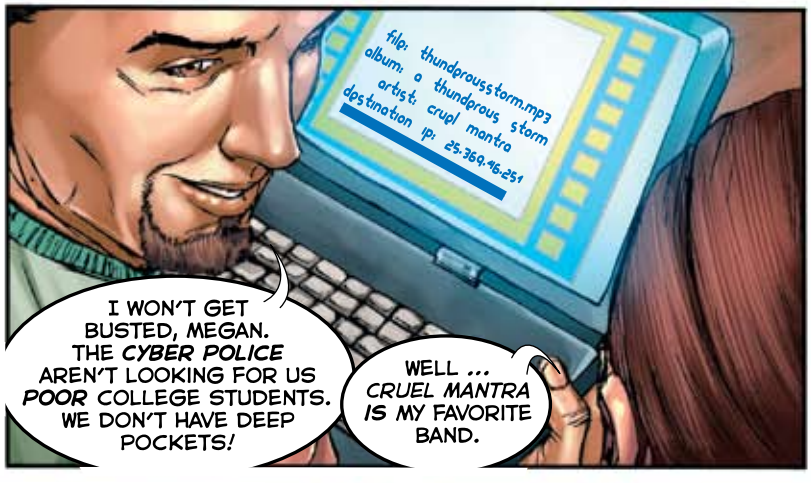

MEGAN IS SUCH A SWEET GIRL, SO INTELLIGENT.
MEGAN, DARLING, SLOW DOWN!
I CAN'T, NANA! I'M LATE!
AGAIN? DO YOU NEED ME TO DRIVE YOU?
NO THANKS. I'LL JUST CATCH THE SECOND BUS.
I WANT TO SHARE THE LETTER ABOUT THE HEARING WITH MEGAN, BUT I DON'T WANT TO UPSET HER.
NANA, IS ANYTHING WRONG? YOU LOOK WORRIED.
MM? NO, DEAR. I'M FINE. JUST THINKING ABOUT WHAT I NEED TO GET DONE TODAY.
YOU SHOULD EAT A HEALTHIER BREAKFAST, MEGAN.
I'LL GRAB SOMETHING ON CAMPUS ONCE I GET THERE.
WE'RE GETTING OUR TERM PAPERS BACK TODAY. I'M ALWAYS A NERVOUS WRECK UNTIL I SEE HOW I DID.
SHE HAS NO IDEA THE CITY IS TRYING TO BUY OUR HOME.
BYE, NANA! LOVE YOU!
WITH YOUR GRADES, YOU HAVE NOTHING TO BE WORRIED ABOUT! I WILL SEE YOU TONIGHT.
NO, I THINK IT IS BEST NOT TO TELL HER ANYTHING JUST YET.

-- AND DON'T FORGET YOUR PROBLEM SET FOR NEXT WEEK. I WON'T TAKE ANY LATE ASSIGNMENTS!
SO, MEGAN, I SUPPOSE YOU WOULD LIKE TO SEE YOUR TERM PAPER?
YES, PROFESSOR MULHERN. HOW DID I DO?
I WAS VERY IMPRESSED, MS. ROBBINS.
I DIDN'T EVEN TEACH THE TECHNIQUE YOU USED!
Very creative and advanced understanding of your data. Congratulations!
MY FATHER WAS A PHARMACIST. I FOUND THE METHOD IN ONE OF HIS OLD BOOKS.
IS HE RETIRED?
NO, MY PARENTS DIED IN A CAR ACCIDENT WHEN I WAS SIX YEARS OLD. I LIVE WITH MY GRANDMOTHER NOW.
WELL, I AM SURE THEY WOULD HAVE BEEN QUITE PROUD OF YOU.
MEGAN, IF YOU KEEP UP THIS KIND OF WORK, WE MIGHT HAVE A PLACE FOR YOU IN OUR RESEARCH LAB NEXT YEAR.
I WOULD LOVE THAT! THANK YOU PROFESSOR MULHERN!

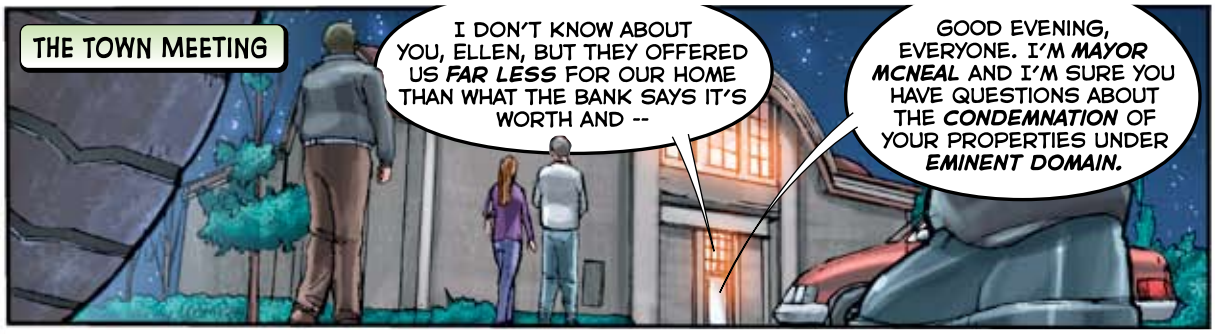
"UNDERGRADS ARE *RARELY* ACCEPTED, BUT FOR YOU, WE MIGHT BE WILLING TO MAKE AN EXCEPTION."
HE PRACTICALLY *GAVE* ME THE POSITION! PROFESSOR MULHERN IS ONE OF THE LEADERS IN THE FIELD -- AND HE WANTS *ME!*


HE'S ONE OF THE REASONS I CHOSE ARBOR UNIVERSITY IN THE *FIRST* PLACE.
THAT'S INTERESTING, BUT WOULD YOU STOP BRAGGING NOW? MY HEAD IS ABOUT TO *EXPLODE.*
DID YOU GUYS KNOW THAT *CRUEL MANTRA* IS COMING OUT WITH A NEW ALBUM?


I'M DOWNLOADING IT RIGHT NOW. IT HASN'T EVEN REACHED STORES YET!
YOU SHOULDN'T BE DOWNLOADING *PIRATED* MUSIC FILES, HENRY. IT'S A *CRIME.*
YEAH, WHAT HAPPENS IF YOU GET *CAUGHT?*


file: thundrousstorm.mp3
album: a thundrous storm
artist: crupl mantra
destination ip: 25.369.46.251
I WON'T GET BUSTED, MEGAN. THE *CYBER POLICE* AREN'T LOOKING FOR US *POOR* COLLEGE STUDENTS. WE DON'T HAVE DEEP POCKETS!
WELL ... *CRUEL MANTRA IS* MY FAVORITE BAND.

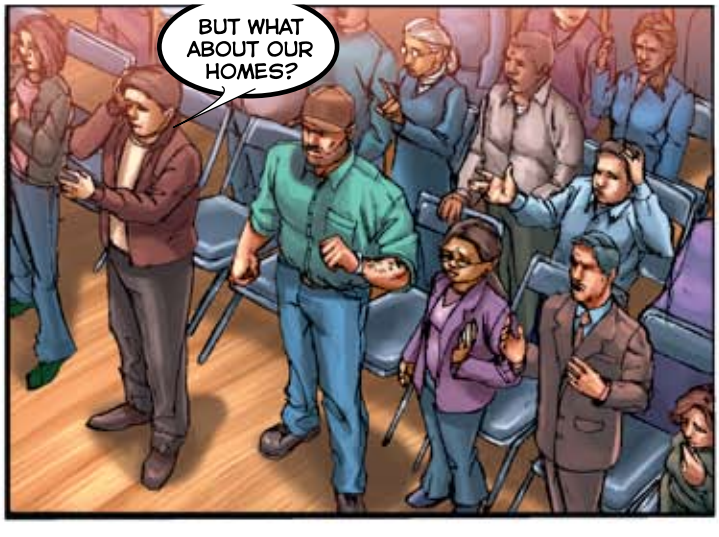
CAN YOU SHOW ME HOW TO GET IT ON MY COMPUTER?
YOUR WISH IS MY COMMAND. WELCOME TO THE *DIGITAL AGE,* M'LADY.
OH, *ICK!*


THE TOWN MEETING
I DON'T KNOW ABOUT YOU, ELLEN, BUT THEY OFFERED US FAR LESS FOR OUR HOME THAN WHAT THE BANK SAYS IT'S WORTH AND --
GOOD EVENING, EVERYONE. I'M MAYOR MCNEAL AND I'M SURE YOU HAVE QUESTIONS ABOUT THE CONDEMNATION OF YOUR PROPERTIES UNDER EMINENT DOMAIN.

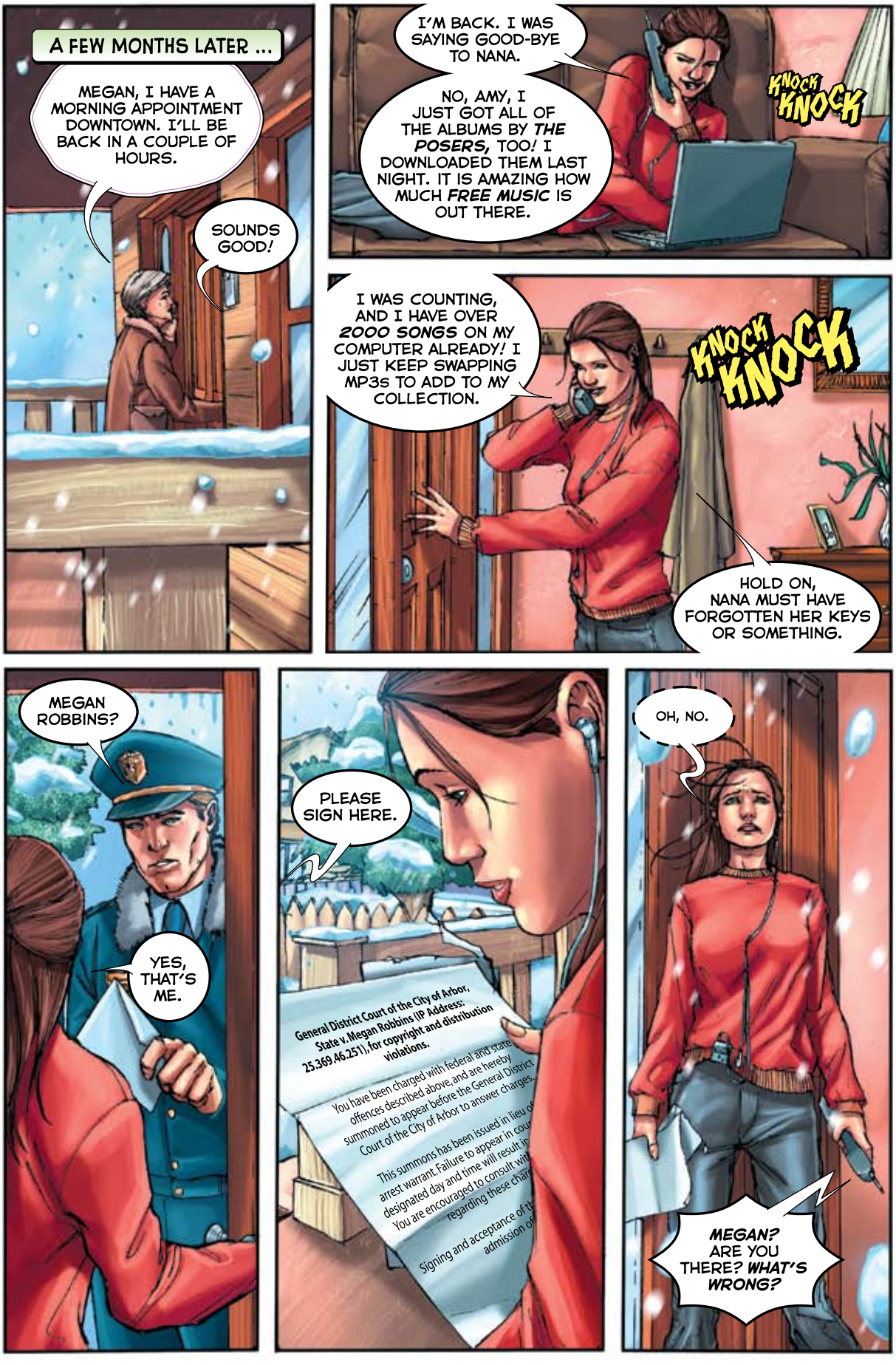
MR. MAYOR, THE CITY IS SUPPOSED TO GIVE US FULL VALUE FOR OUR PROPERTIES. INSTEAD, WE'RE BEING OFFERED FAR LESS THAN WHAT OUR HOMES ARE WORTH.
SIR, YOU'VE HAD AMPLE TIME TO CONTEST THIS PROJECT.

YOU DIDN'T SETTLE, SO WE HAVE HAD NO OTHER ALTERNATIVE THAN TO TAKE YOU TO COURT.
I ASSURE YOU THAT YOUR HOMES HAVE BEEN PROPERLY APPRAISED AND THE FIGURES YOU HAVE BEEN OFFERED ARE FAIR.

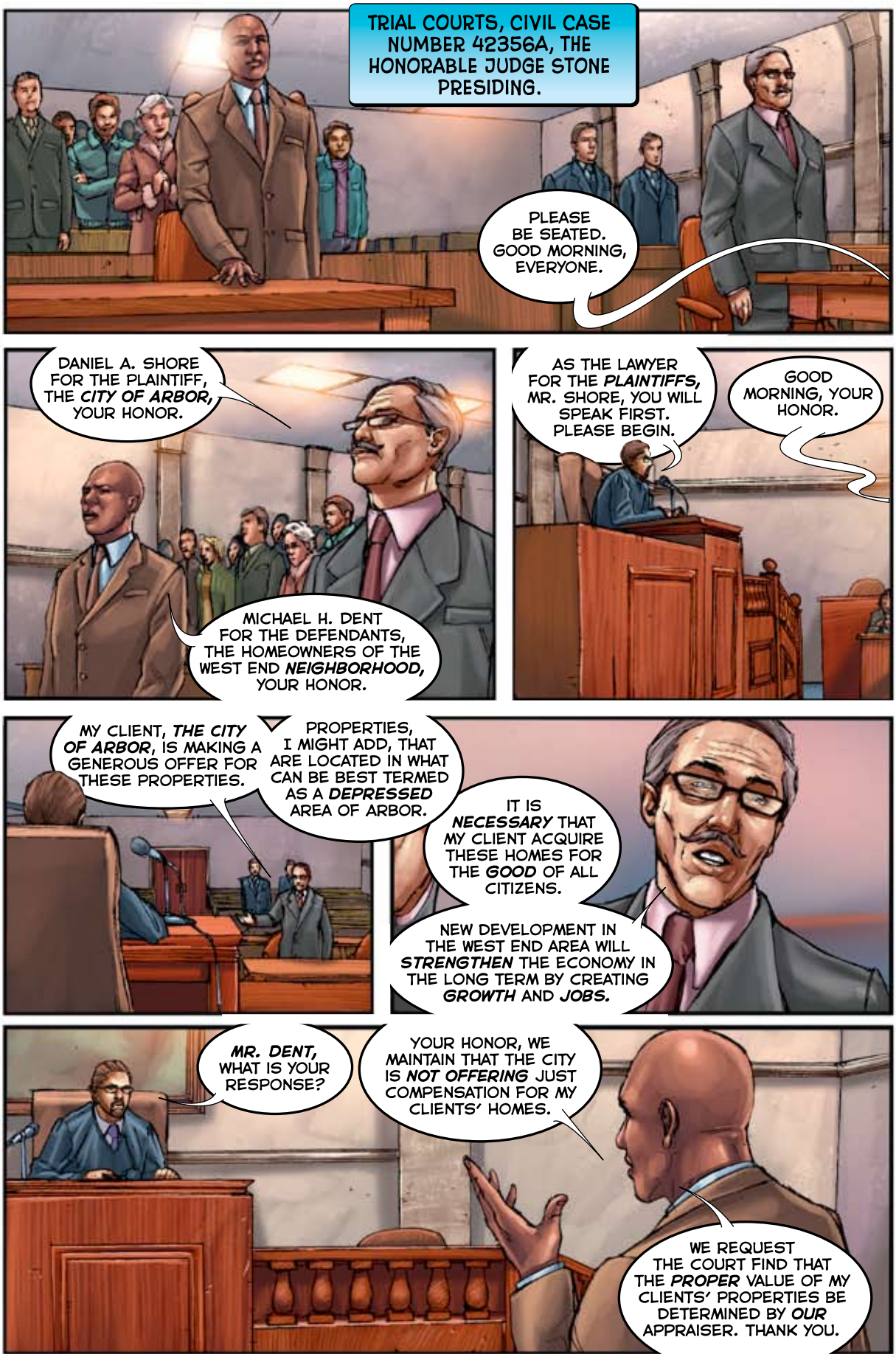
WHAT WE MUST REMEMBER IS THAT OUR CITY NEEDS THIS.
THE NEW LIBRARY DEVELOPMENT WILL CREATE JOBS AND EXPAND OUR ECONOMY, HELPING US ALL.

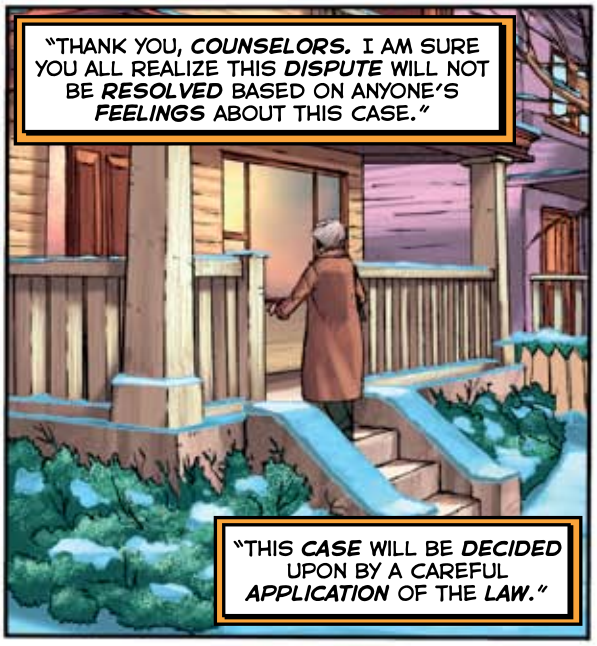

BUT WHAT ABOUT OUR HOMES?

MR. MAYOR ...
MY LATE HUSBAND MORGAN BOUGHT OUR HOUSE ALMOST FORTY YEARS AGO. HE WORKED EVERY DAY OF HIS LIFE FOR IT, AND FOR OUR FUTURE SECURITY.
I CAN ASSURE YOU THAT AT THESE PRICES, WE WILL BE SEEING YOU IN COURT!


A FEW MONTHS LATER ...
MEGAN, I HAVE A MORNING APPOINTMENT DOWNTOWN. I'LL BE BACK IN A COUPLE OF HOURS.
SOUNDS GOOD!
I'M BACK. I WAS SAYING GOOD-BYE TO NANA.
NO, AMY, I JUST GOT ALL OF THE ALBUMS BY THE POSERS, TOO! I DOWNLOADED THEM LAST NIGHT. IT IS AMAZING HOW MUCH FREE MUSIC IS OUT THERE.
KNOCK KNOCK
I WAS COUNTING, AND I HAVE OVER 2000 SONGS ON MY COMPUTER ALREADY! I JUST KEEP SWAPPING MP3s TO ADD TO MY COLLECTION.
KNOCK KNOCK
HOLD ON, NANA MUST HAVE FORGOTTEN HER KEYS OR SOMETHING.
MEGAN ROBBINS?
YES, THAT'S ME.
PLEASE SIGN HERE.
General District Court of the City of Arbor, State v. Megan Robbins (IP Address: 25.369.46.251), for copyright and distribution violations.
You have been charged with federal and state offences described above, and are hereby summoned to appear before the General District Court of the City of Arbor to answer charges.
This summons has been issued in lieu of arrest warrant. Failure to appear in court designated day and time will result in
You are encouraged to consult wit regarding these char
Signing and acceptance of th admission of
OH, NO.
MEGAN? ARE YOU THERE? WHAT'S WRONG?

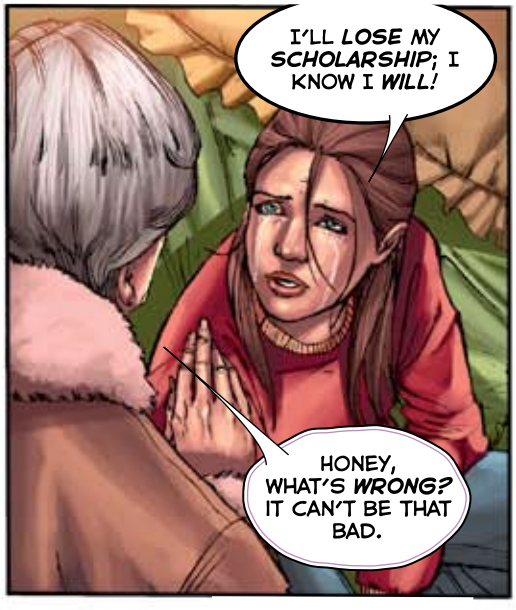
MR. DENT, DO YOU THINK THE CITY WILL BE FOUND GUILTY?
NO CRIME HAS BEEN COMMITTED. THIS WILL BE A CIVIL CASE, NOT A CRIMINAL CASE.
WE'RE LOOKING AT A FINANCIAL DISPUTE BETWEEN THE CITY, WHO WANTS A NEW LIBRARY, AND HOMEOWNERS, WHO DON'T WANT TO GIVE THEIR HOMES AWAY.
EMINENT DOMAIN CLEARLY ALLOWS LOCAL, STATE, OR FEDERAL GOVERNMENTS TO SEIZE PRIVATE PROPERTY FOR PUBLIC USE, EVEN WITHOUT THE OWNER AGREEING TO IT.
HOWEVER, THE FIFTH AMENDMENT OF THE U.S. CONSTITUTION SAYS THAT JUST COMPENSATION MUST BE GIVEN TO THOSE HAVING THE PROPERTY TAKEN.
IN THIS CASE, WE ARE ARGUING THAT THE CITY OF ARBOR IS NOT PROVIDING THE FAIR MARKET VALUE OF THE HOUSES.
MY CLIENTS BELIEVE THE APPRAISALS OF THEIR PROPERTIES ARE FAR LESS THAN FAIR MARKET VALUE.
THEREFORE, WE HAD A SECOND APPRAISAL OF THE PROPERTIES, WHICH THE CITY HAS REFUSED TO ACCEPT.
THAT IS WHY WE ARE HERE TODAY. WE WILL NOW RELY ON THE COURT SYSTEM TO HELP US COME TO A JUST RESULT.
MA'AM, ARE YOU FEARFUL OF FIGHTING THE CITY OF ARBOR?
I BELIEVE IN WHAT IS RIGHT. I KNOW IN MY HEART THAT THE JUDGE WILL PROPERLY INTERPRET THE LAW BASED ON THE EVIDENCE WE HAVE, AND TREAT US EQUALLY AND FAIRLY.


TRIAL COURTS, CIVIL CASE NUMBER 42356A, THE HONORABLE JUDGE STONE PRESIDING.
PLEASE BE SEATED. GOOD MORNING, EVERYONE.
DANIEL A. SHORE FOR THE PLAINTIFF, THE CITY OF ARBOR, YOUR HONOR.
MICHAEL H. DENT FOR THE DEFENDANTS, THE HOMEOWNERS OF THE WEST END NEIGHBORHOOD, YOUR HONOR.
AS THE LAWYER FOR THE PLAINTIFFS, MR. SHORE, YOU WILL SPEAK FIRST. PLEASE BEGIN.
GOOD MORNING, YOUR HONOR.
MY CLIENT, THE CITY OF ARBOR, IS MAKING A GENEROUS OFFER FOR THESE PROPERTIES.
PROPERTIES, I MIGHT ADD, THAT ARE LOCATED IN WHAT CAN BE BEST TERMED AS A DEPRESSED AREA OF ARBOR.
IT IS NECESSARY THAT MY CLIENT ACQUIRE THESE HOMES FOR THE GOOD OF ALL CITIZENS.
NEW DEVELOPMENT IN THE WEST END AREA WILL STRENGTHEN THE ECONOMY IN THE LONG TERM BY CREATING GROWTH AND JOBS.
MR. DENT, WHAT IS YOUR RESPONSE?
YOUR HONOR, WE MAINTAIN THAT THE CITY IS NOT OFFERING JUST COMPENSATION FOR MY CLIENTS' HOMES.
WE REQUEST THE COURT FIND THAT THE PROPER VALUE OF MY CLIENTS' PROPERTIES BE DETERMINED BY OUR APPRAISER. THANK YOU.


"THANK YOU, COUNSELORS. I AM SURE YOU ALL REALIZE THIS DISPUTE WILL NOT BE RESOLVED BASED ON ANYONE'S FEELINGS ABOUT THIS CASE."
"THIS CASE WILL BE DECIDED UPON BY A CAREFUL APPLICATION OF THE LAW."

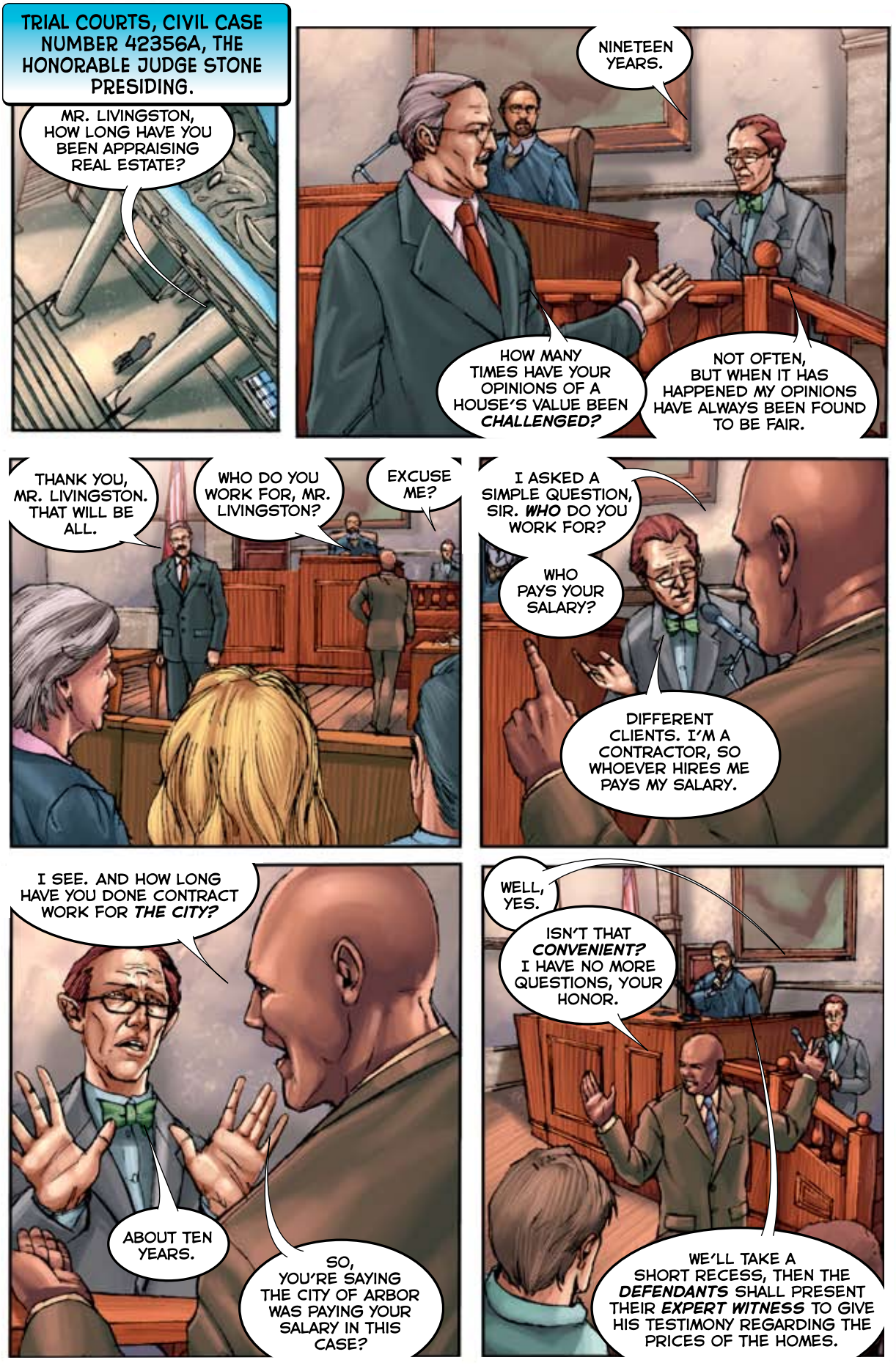
MEGAN, I'M HOME!

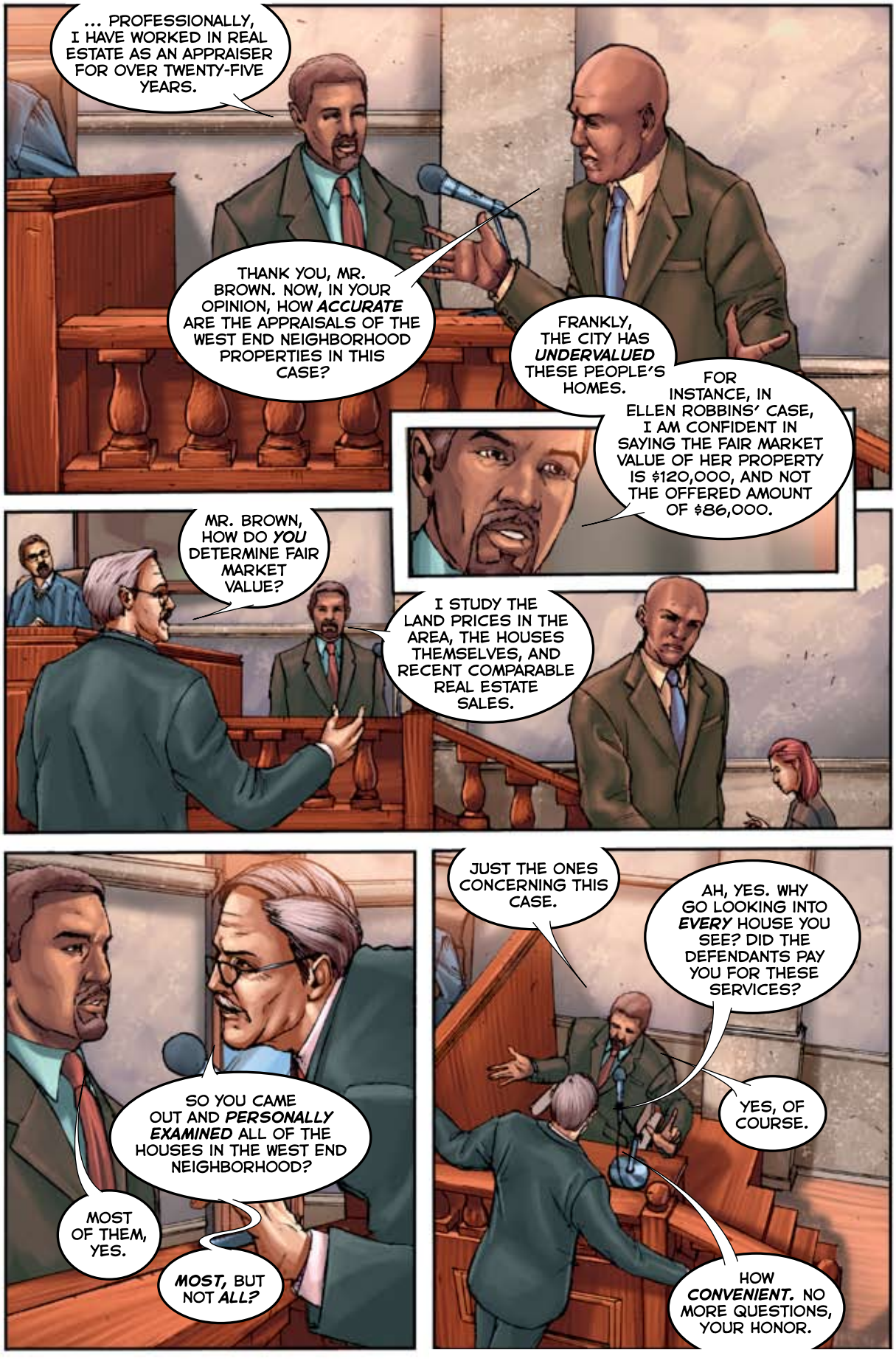
MEGAN? WHY ARE YOU CRYING?
OH, NANA. WHAT HAVE I DONE? I'VE RUINED EVERYTHING!

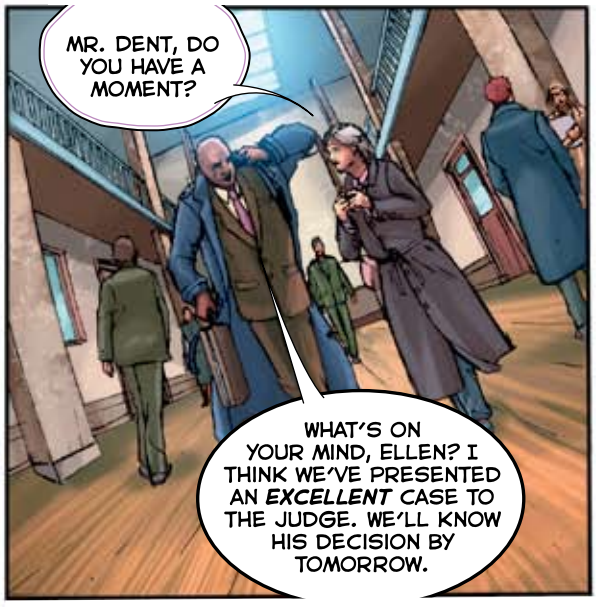

I'LL LOSE MY SCHOLARSHIP; I KNOW I WILL!
HONEY, WHAT'S WRONG? IT CAN'T BE THAT BAD.

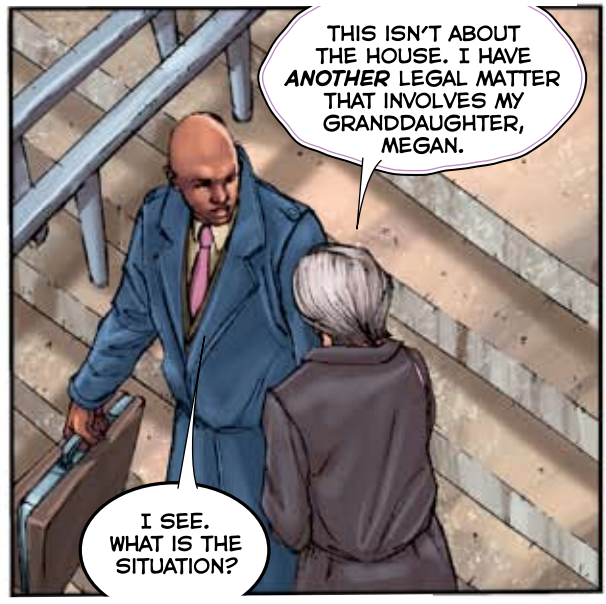
I'M SO SORRY, NANA ...
I NEVER WANTED TO DISAPPOINT YOU.

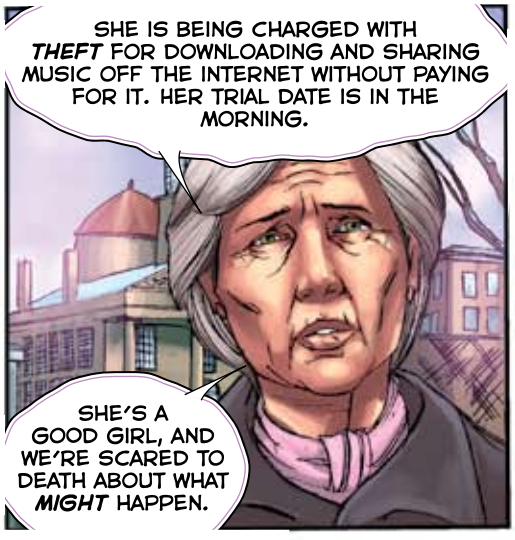
HUSH NOW. WE WILL FIND A WAY TO GET THROUGH THIS.
I PROMISE.

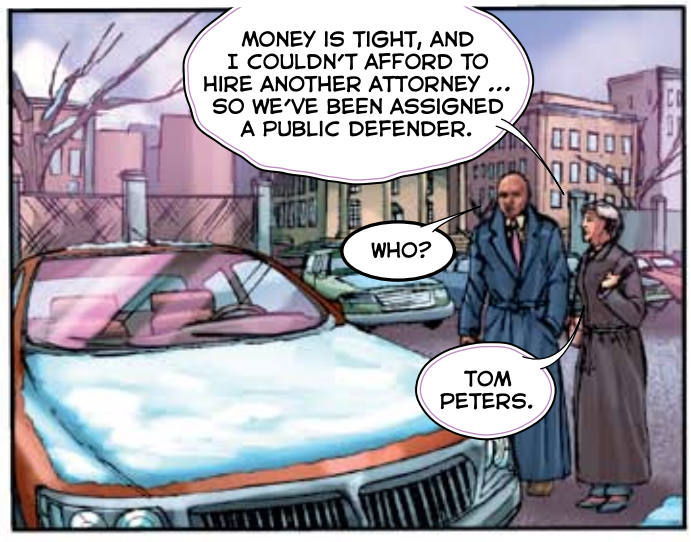

TRIAL COURTS, CIVIL CASE NUMBER 42356A, THE HONORABLE JUDGE STONE PRESIDING.
MR. LIVINGSTON, HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN APPRAISING REAL ESTATE?
NINETEEN YEARS.
HOW MANY TIMES HAVE YOUR OPINIONS OF A HOUSE'S VALUE BEEN *CHALLENGED?*
NOT OFTEN, BUT WHEN IT HAS HAPPENED MY OPINIONS HAVE ALWAYS BEEN FOUND TO BE FAIR.
THANK YOU, MR. LIVINGSTON. THAT WILL BE ALL.
WHO DO YOU WORK FOR, MR. LIVINGSTON?
EXCUSE ME?
I ASKED A SIMPLE QUESTION, SIR. *WHO* DO YOU WORK FOR?
WHO PAYS YOUR SALARY?
DIFFERENT CLIENTS. I'M A CONTRACTOR, SO WHOEVER HIRES ME PAYS MY SALARY.
I SEE. AND HOW LONG HAVE YOU DONE CONTRACT WORK FOR *THE CITY?*
ABOUT TEN YEARS.
SO, YOU'RE SAYING THE CITY OF ARBOR WAS PAYING YOUR SALARY IN THIS CASE?
WELL, YES.
ISN'T THAT *CONVENIENT?* I HAVE NO MORE QUESTIONS, YOUR HONOR.
WE'LL TAKE A SHORT RECESS, THEN THE *DEFENDANTS* SHALL PRESENT THEIR *EXPERT WITNESS* TO GIVE HIS TESTIMONY REGARDING THE PRICES OF THE HOMES.

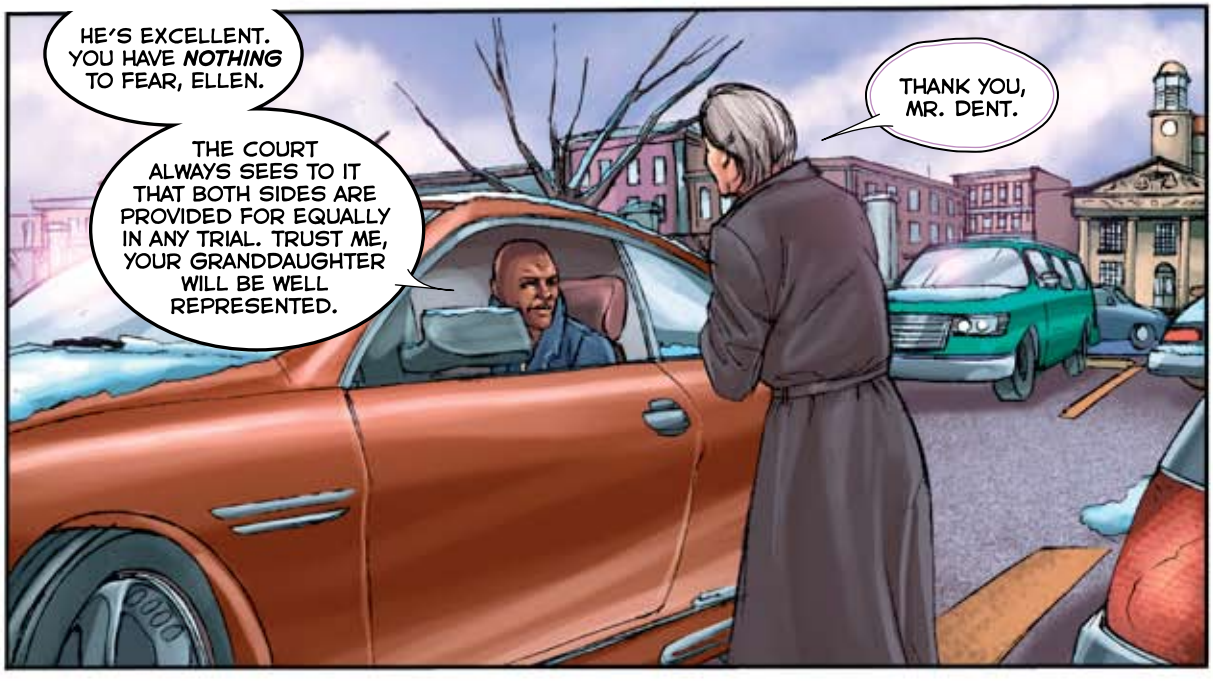

... PROFESSIONALLY, I HAVE WORKED IN REAL ESTATE AS AN APPRAISER FOR OVER TWENTY-FIVE YEARS.
THANK YOU, MR. BROWN. NOW, IN YOUR OPINION, HOW ACCURATE ARE THE APPRAISALS OF THE WEST END NEIGHBORHOOD PROPERTIES IN THIS CASE?
FRANKLY, THE CITY HAS UNDERVALUED THESE PEOPLE'S HOMES.
FOR INSTANCE, IN ELLEN ROBBINS' CASE, I AM CONFIDENT IN SAYING THE FAIR MARKET VALUE OF HER PROPERTY IS $120,000, AND NOT THE OFFERED AMOUNT OF $86,000.
MR. BROWN, HOW DO YOU DETERMINE FAIR MARKET VALUE?
I STUDY THE LAND PRICES IN THE AREA, THE HOUSES THEMSELVES, AND RECENT COMPARABLE REAL ESTATE SALES.
SO YOU CAME OUT AND PERSONALLY EXAMINED ALL OF THE HOUSES IN THE WEST END NEIGHBORHOOD?
MOST OF THEM, YES.
MOST, BUT NOT ALL?
JUST THE ONES CONCERNING THIS CASE.
AH, YES. WHY GO LOOKING INTO EVERY HOUSE YOU SEE? DID THE DEFENDANTS PAY YOU FOR THESE SERVICES?
YES, OF COURSE.
HOW CONVENIENT. NO MORE QUESTIONS, YOUR HONOR.

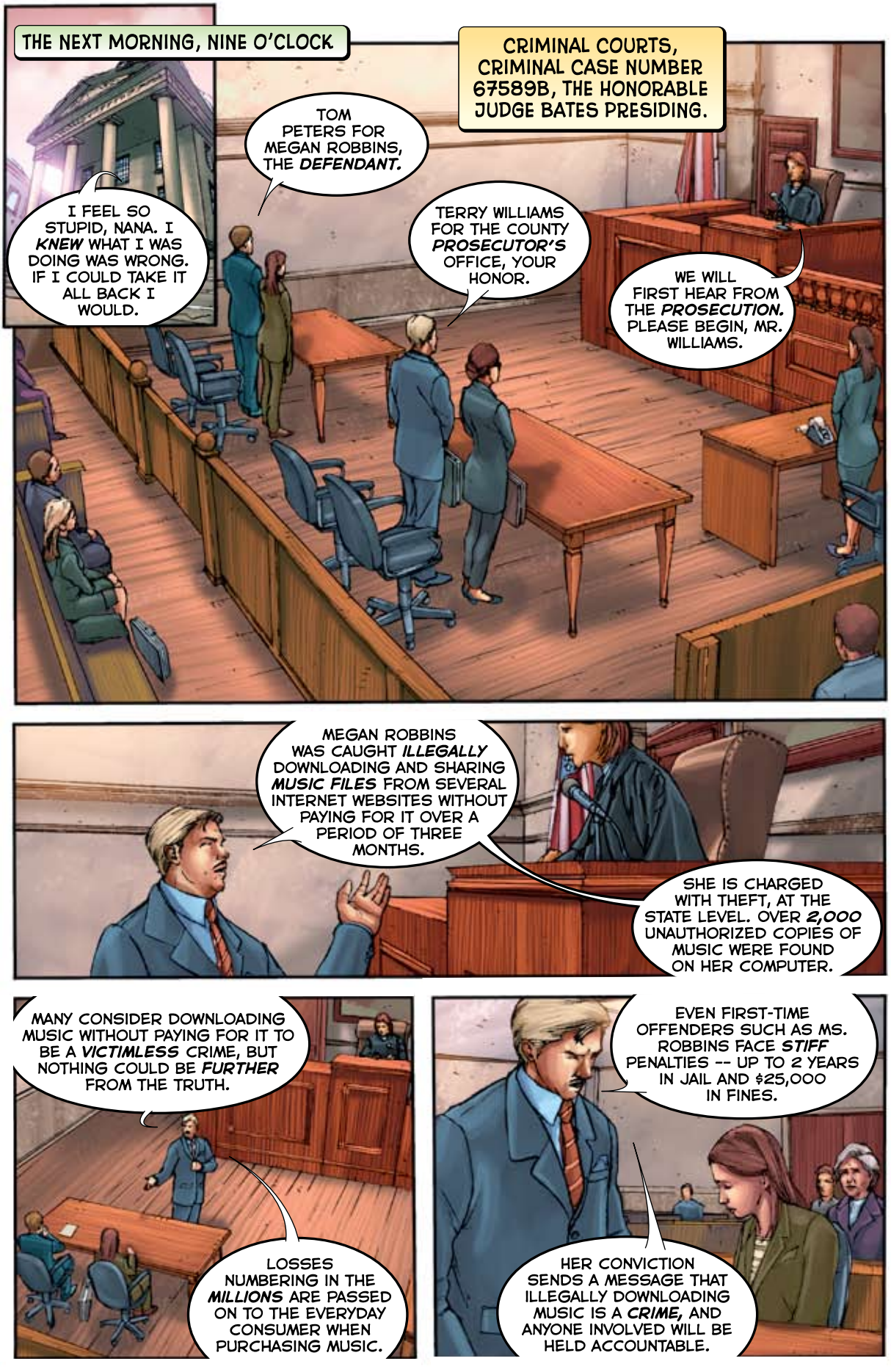

MR. DENT, DO YOU HAVE A MOMENT?
WHAT'S ON YOUR MIND, ELLEN? I THINK WE'VE PRESENTED AN *EXCELLENT* CASE TO THE JUDGE. WE'LL KNOW HIS DECISION BY TOMORROW.

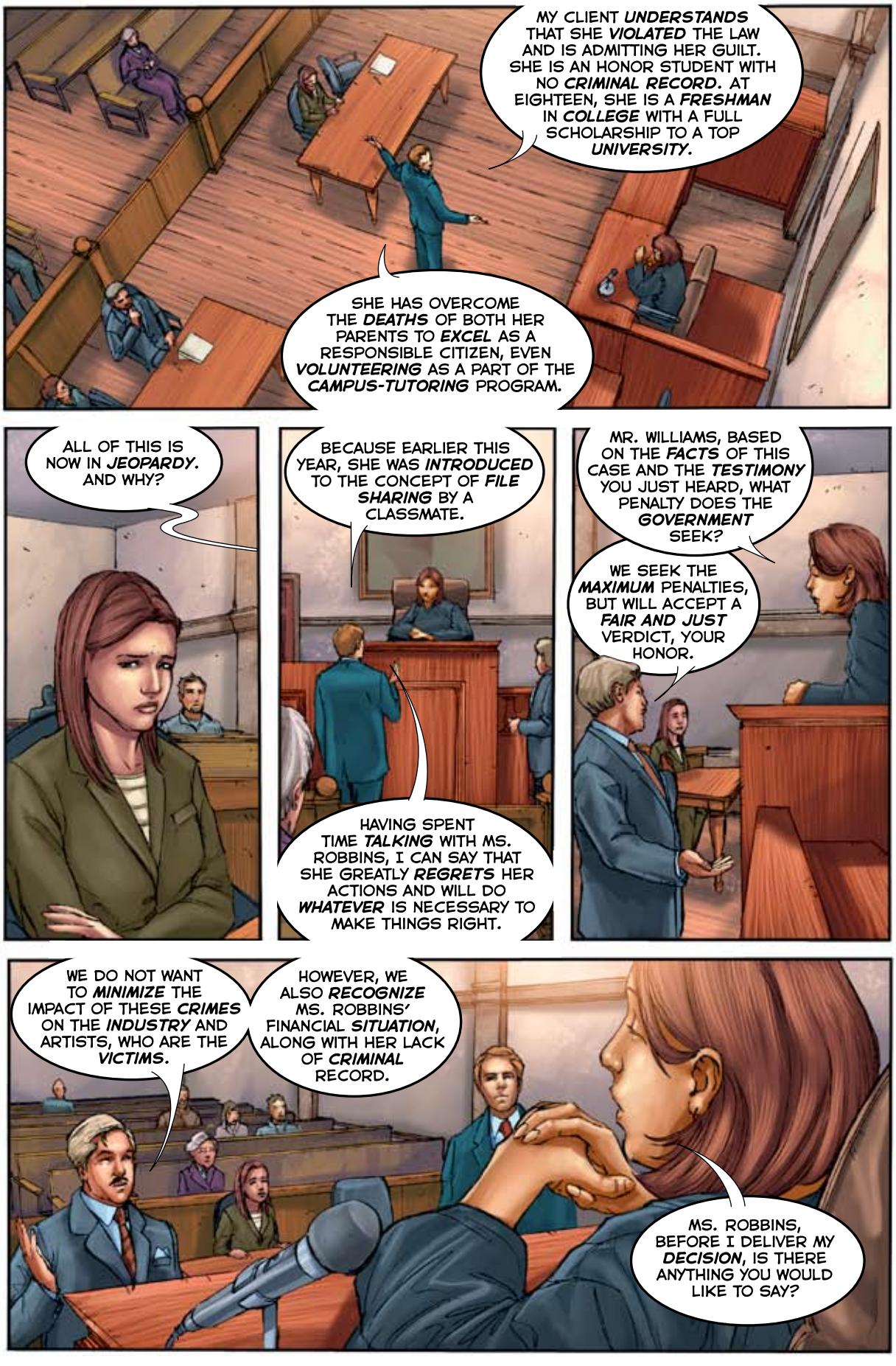

THIS ISN'T ABOUT THE HOUSE. I HAVE *ANOTHER* LEGAL MATTER THAT INVOLVES MY GRANDDAUGHTER, MEGAN.
I SEE. WHAT IS THE SITUATION?

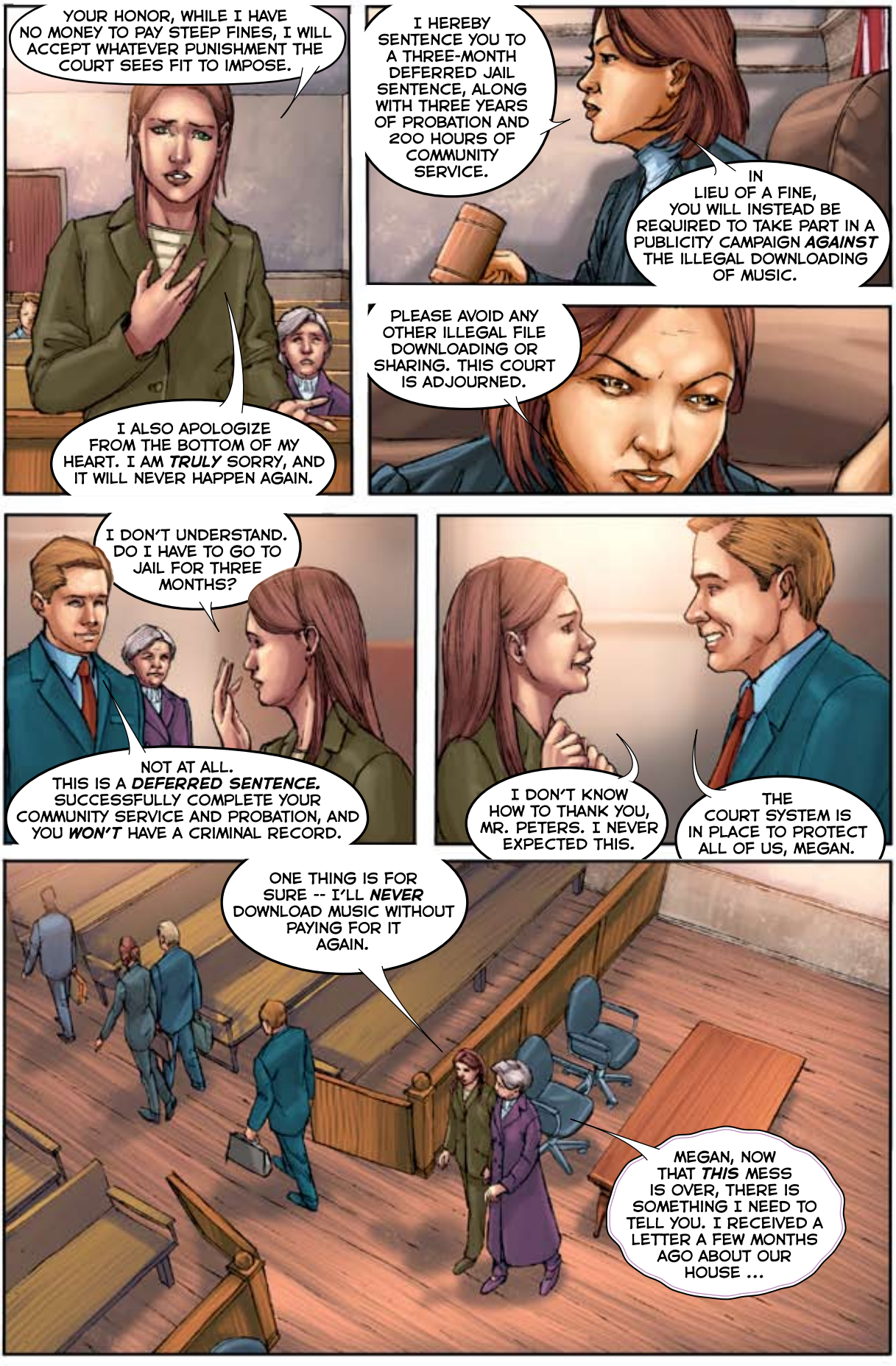

SHE IS BEING CHARGED WITH *THEFT* FOR DOWNLOADING AND SHARING MUSIC OFF THE INTERNET WITHOUT PAYING FOR IT. HER TRIAL DATE IS IN THE MORNING.
SHE'S A GOOD GIRL, AND WE'RE SCARED TO DEATH ABOUT WHAT *MIGHT* HAPPEN.

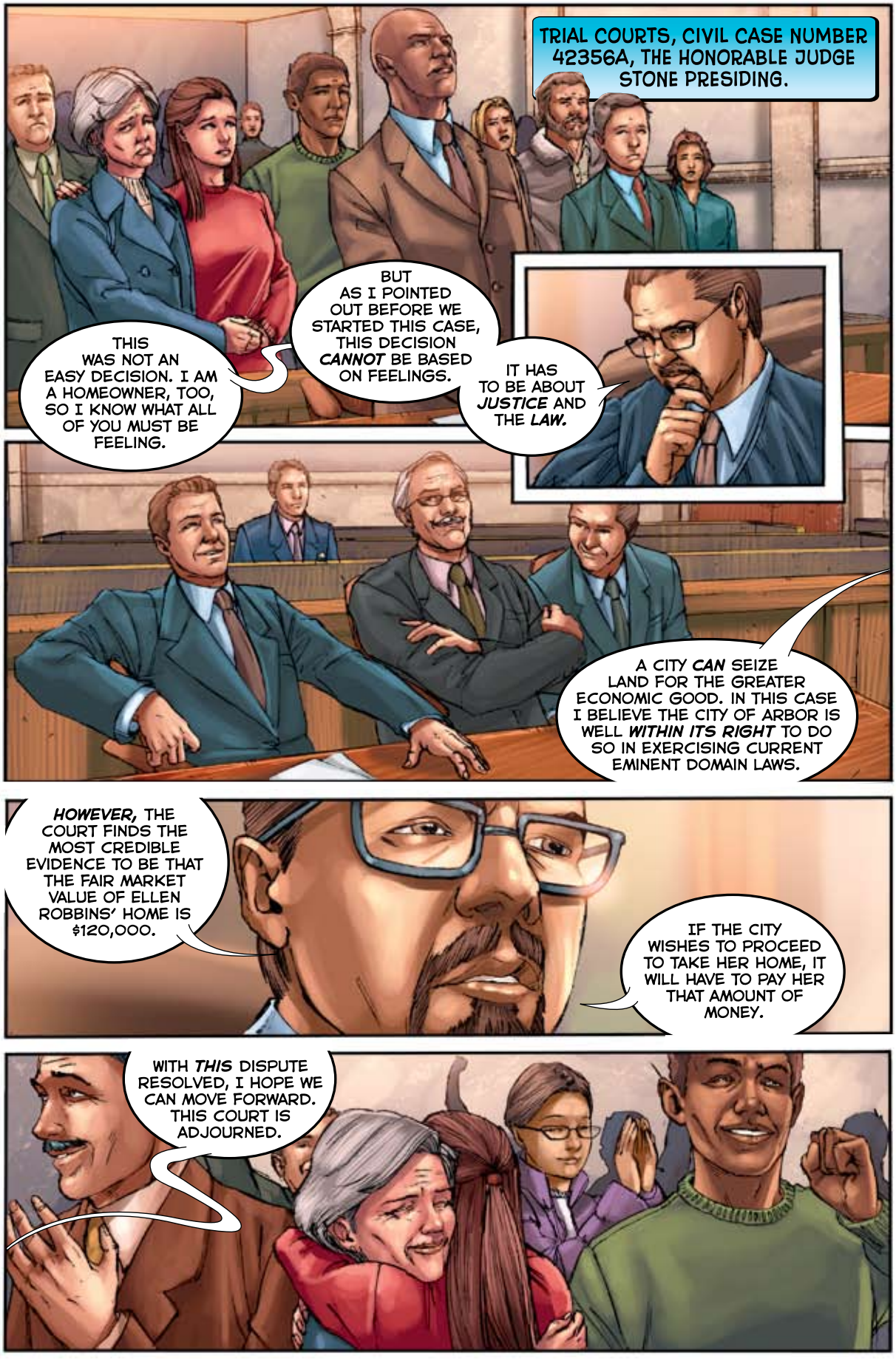

MONEY IS TIGHT, AND I COULDN'T AFFORD TO HIRE ANOTHER ATTORNEY ... SO WE'VE BEEN ASSIGNED A PUBLIC DEFENDER.
WHO?
TOM PETERS.


HE'S EXCELLENT. YOU HAVE *NOTHING* TO FEAR, ELLEN.
THE COURT ALWAYS SEES TO IT THAT BOTH SIDES ARE PROVIDED FOR EQUALLY IN ANY TRIAL. TRUST ME, YOUR GRANDDAUGHTER WILL BE WELL REPRESENTED.
THANK YOU, MR. DENT.

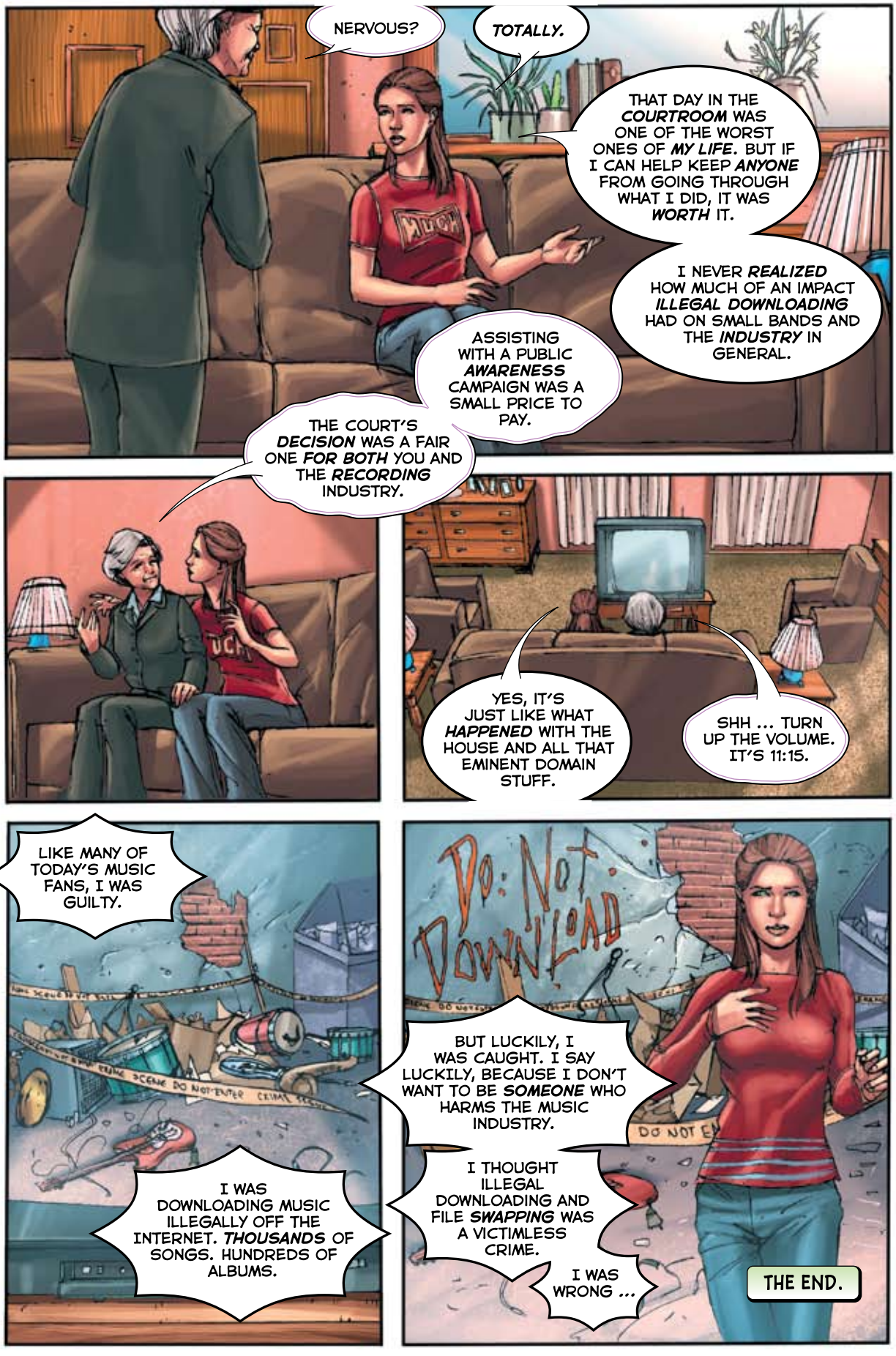

THE NEXT MORNING, NINE O'CLOCK.
I FEEL SO STUPID, NANA. I KNEW WHAT I WAS DOING WAS WRONG. IF I COULD TAKE IT ALL BACK I WOULD.
CRIMINAL COURTS, CRIMINAL CASE NUMBER 67589B, THE HONORABLE JUDGE BATES PRESIDING.
TOM PETERS FOR MEGAN ROBBINS, THE DEFENDANT.
TERRY WILLIAMS FOR THE COUNTY PROSECUTOR'S OFFICE, YOUR HONOR.
WE WILL FIRST HEAR FROM THE PROSECUTION. PLEASE BEGIN, MR. WILLIAMS.
MEGAN ROBBINS WAS CAUGHT ILLEGALLY DOWNLOADING AND SHARING MUSIC FILES FROM SEVERAL INTERNET WEBSITES WITHOUT PAYING FOR IT OVER A PERIOD OF THREE MONTHS.
SHE IS CHARGED WITH THEFT, AT THE STATE LEVEL. OVER 2,000 UNAUTHORIZED COPIES OF MUSIC WERE FOUND ON HER COMPUTER.
MANY CONSIDER DOWNLOADING MUSIC WITHOUT PAYING FOR IT TO BE A VICTIMLESS CRIME, BUT NOTHING COULD BE FURTHER FROM THE TRUTH.
LOSSES NUMBERING IN THE MILLIONS ARE PASSED ON TO THE EVERYDAY CONSUMER WHEN PURCHASING MUSIC.
EVEN FIRST-TIME OFFENDERS SUCH AS MS. ROBBINS FACE STIFF PENALTIES -- UP TO 2 YEARS IN JAIL AND $25,000 IN FINES.
HER CONVICTION SENDS A MESSAGE THAT ILLEGALLY DOWNLOADING MUSIC IS A CRIME, AND ANYONE INVOLVED WILL BE HELD ACCOUNTABLE.


MY CLIENT UNDERSTANDS THAT SHE VIOLATED THE LAW AND IS ADMITTING HER GUILT. SHE IS AN HONOR STUDENT WITH NO CRIMINAL RECORD. AT EIGHTEEN, SHE IS A FRESHMAN IN COLLEGE WITH A FULL SCHOLARSHIP TO A TOP UNIVERSITY.
SHE HAS OVERCOME THE DEATHS OF BOTH HER PARENTS TO EXCEL AS A RESPONSIBLE CITIZEN, EVEN VOLUNTEERING AS A PART OF THE CAMPUS-TUTORING PROGRAM.
ALL OF THIS IS NOW IN JEOPARDY. AND WHY?
BECAUSE EARLIER THIS YEAR, SHE WAS INTRODUCED TO THE CONCEPT OF FILE SHARING BY A CLASSMATE.
HAVING SPENT TIME TALKING WITH MS. ROBBINS, I CAN SAY THAT SHE GREATLY REGRETS HER ACTIONS AND WILL DO WHATEVER IS NECESSARY TO MAKE THINGS RIGHT.
MR. WILLIAMS, BASED ON THE FACTS OF THIS CASE AND THE TESTIMONY YOU JUST HEARD, WHAT PENALTY DOES THE GOVERNMENT SEEK?
WE SEEK THE MAXIMUM PENALTIES, BUT WILL ACCEPT A FAIR AND JUST VERDICT, YOUR HONOR.
WE DO NOT WANT TO MINIMIZE THE IMPACT OF THESE CRIMES ON THE INDUSTRY AND ARTISTS, WHO ARE THE VICTIMS.
HOWEVER, WE ALSO RECOGNIZE MS. ROBBINS' FINANCIAL SITUATION, ALONG WITH HER LACK OF CRIMINAL RECORD.
MS. ROBBINS, BEFORE I DELIVER MY DECISION, IS THERE ANYTHING YOU WOULD LIKE TO SAY?


YOUR HONOR, WHILE I HAVE NO MONEY TO PAY STEEP FINES, I WILL ACCEPT WHATEVER PUNISHMENT THE COURT SEES FIT TO IMPOSE.
I ALSO APOLOGIZE FROM THE BOTTOM OF MY HEART. I AM *TRULY* SORRY, AND IT WILL NEVER HAPPEN AGAIN.
I HEREBY SENTENCE YOU TO A THREE-MONTH DEFERRED JAIL SENTENCE, ALONG WITH THREE YEARS OF PROBATION AND 200 HOURS OF COMMUNITY SERVICE.
IN LIEU OF A FINE, YOU WILL INSTEAD BE REQUIRED TO TAKE PART IN A PUBLICITY CAMPAIGN *AGAINST* THE ILLEGAL DOWNLOADING OF MUSIC.
PLEASE AVOID ANY OTHER ILLEGAL FILE DOWNLOADING OR SHARING. THIS COURT IS ADJOURNED.
I DON'T UNDERSTAND. DO I HAVE TO GO TO JAIL FOR THREE MONTHS?
NOT AT ALL. THIS IS A *DEFERRED SENTENCE.* SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETE YOUR COMMUNITY SERVICE AND PROBATION, AND YOU *WON'T* HAVE A CRIMINAL RECORD.
I DON'T KNOW HOW TO THANK YOU, MR. PETERS. I NEVER EXPECTED THIS.
THE COURT SYSTEM IS IN PLACE TO PROTECT ALL OF US, MEGAN.
ONE THING IS FOR SURE -- I'LL *NEVER* DOWNLOAD MUSIC WITHOUT PAYING FOR IT AGAIN.
MEGAN, NOW THAT *THIS* MESS IS OVER, THERE IS SOMETHING I NEED TO TELL YOU. I RECEIVED A LETTER A FEW MONTHS AGO ABOUT OUR HOUSE ...


TRIAL COURTS, CIVIL CASE NUMBER 42356A, THE HONORABLE JUDGE STONE PRESIDING.
THIS WAS NOT AN EASY DECISION. I AM A HOMEOWNER, TOO, SO I KNOW WHAT ALL OF YOU MUST BE FEELING.
BUT AS I POINTED OUT BEFORE WE STARTED THIS CASE, THIS DECISION CANNOT BE BASED ON FEELINGS.
IT HAS TO BE ABOUT JUSTICE AND THE LAW.
A CITY CAN SEIZE LAND FOR THE GREATER ECONOMIC GOOD. IN THIS CASE I BELIEVE THE CITY OF ARBOR IS WELL WITHIN ITS RIGHT TO DO SO IN EXERCISING CURRENT EMINENT DOMAIN LAWS.
HOWEVER, THE COURT FINDS THE MOST CREDIBLE EVIDENCE TO BE THAT THE FAIR MARKET VALUE OF ELLEN ROBBINS' HOME IS $120,000.
IF THE CITY WISHES TO PROCEED TO TAKE HER HOME, IT WILL HAVE TO PAY HER THAT AMOUNT OF MONEY.
WITH THIS DISPUTE RESOLVED, I HOPE WE CAN MOVE FORWARD. THIS COURT IS ADJOURNED.

THE COURT ACCEPTED THE VALUES FOR ALL OF THE HOMES AS TESTIFIED TO BY THE HOMEOWNERS' EXPERT WITNESS.
BECAUSE OF THIS, THE CITY HAS REEVALUATED THE PLAN TO SEIZE THE PROPERTIES ON THIS SIDE OF THE STREET.
WE REGRET TO INFORM YOU THAT DUE TO THE REVISED ESTIMATES OF THE VALUE OF YOUR PROPERTY (CURRENT MARKET VALUE OF $120,000), PLANS TO ASSIGN IT FOR PUBLIC USE HAVE BEEN CHANGED. AS A RESULT, THE CITY WILL NOT BE PURCHASING YOUR PROPERTY AT THIS TIME, AND INSTEAD WILL BE SEEKING A NEW LOCATION FOR THE ARBOR CITY LIBRARY ....
WE DID IT, MORGAN.
NANA ... IT'S TIME.
THANK YOU, DEAR. I'LL BE RIGHT DOWN.


NERVOUS?
TOTALLY.
THAT DAY IN THE COURTROOM WAS ONE OF THE WORST ONES OF MY LIFE. BUT IF I CAN HELP KEEP ANYONE FROM GOING THROUGH WHAT I DID, IT WAS WORTH IT.
I NEVER REALIZED HOW MUCH OF AN IMPACT ILLEGAL DOWNLOADING HAD ON SMALL BANDS AND THE INDUSTRY IN GENERAL.
ASSISTING WITH A PUBLIC AWARENESS CAMPAIGN WAS A SMALL PRICE TO PAY.
THE COURT'S DECISION WAS A FAIR ONE FOR BOTH YOU AND THE RECORDING INDUSTRY.
YES, IT'S JUST LIKE WHAT HAPPENED WITH THE HOUSE AND ALL THAT EMINENT DOMAIN STUFF.
SHH ... TURN UP THE VOLUME. IT'S 11:15.
LIKE MANY OF TODAY'S MUSIC FANS, I WAS GUILTY.
I WAS DOWNLOADING MUSIC ILLEGALLY OFF THE INTERNET. THOUSANDS OF SONGS. HUNDREDS OF ALBUMS.
DO NOT DOWNLOAD
BUT LUCKILY, I WAS CAUGHT. I SAY LUCKILY, BECAUSE I DON'T WANT TO BE SOMEONE WHO HARMS THE MUSIC INDUSTRY.
I THOUGHT ILLEGAL DOWNLOADING AND FILE SWAPPING WAS A VICTIMLESS CRIME.
I WAS WRONG ...
THE END.

COURT CASES

CIVIL CASE FILE

number 42356A

Civil Law: This area of the law deals with non-criminal matters, such as contracts, property, domestic/family relations, or personal injury. In a civil case, a person (plaintiff) goes to court to seek a remedy (correction) from something that the defendant allegedly has/hasn't done that has violated the rights of the plaintiff.

Damages: The amount of money which a plaintiff (the person suing) may be awarded in a lawsuit.
Complaint/Lawsuit: Common terms for a legal action by one person or entity against another person or entity, to be decided in a civil trial.
Punitive Damages: Damages awarded to the plaintiff by a court against a defendant as a deterrent or punishment.
Restitution: The act of returning something belonging to a person.
Settlement: The resolution of a lawsuit before the court has actually made a decision.

CRIMINAL CASE FILE

number 67589B

Criminal Law: This area of law prohibits certain kinds of actions. If someone commits a crime, they may be tried in court. In a criminal trial, the government (prosecutor) charges a person (defendant) for allegedly violating the law. If the defendant is found guilty, he/she will face a punishment decided by the court.

Acquittal: When a defendant is found not guilty in a criminal case.
Conviction: When the defendant has been found guilty of a crime in a criminal case.
Felony: A crime sufficiently serious to be punishable by death or a term in state or federal prison.
Misdemeanor: A lesser crime punishable by a fine and/or county jail time for up to one year.
Plea: Statement made by the defendant either as to his/her guilt or innocence to the charges made against him/her.
Prosecute: To charge a person with a crime and pursue the case through trial on behalf of the government.
Warrant: an order (writ) of a court which directs a law enforcement officer (usually a sheriff) to arrest and bring a person before a judge.

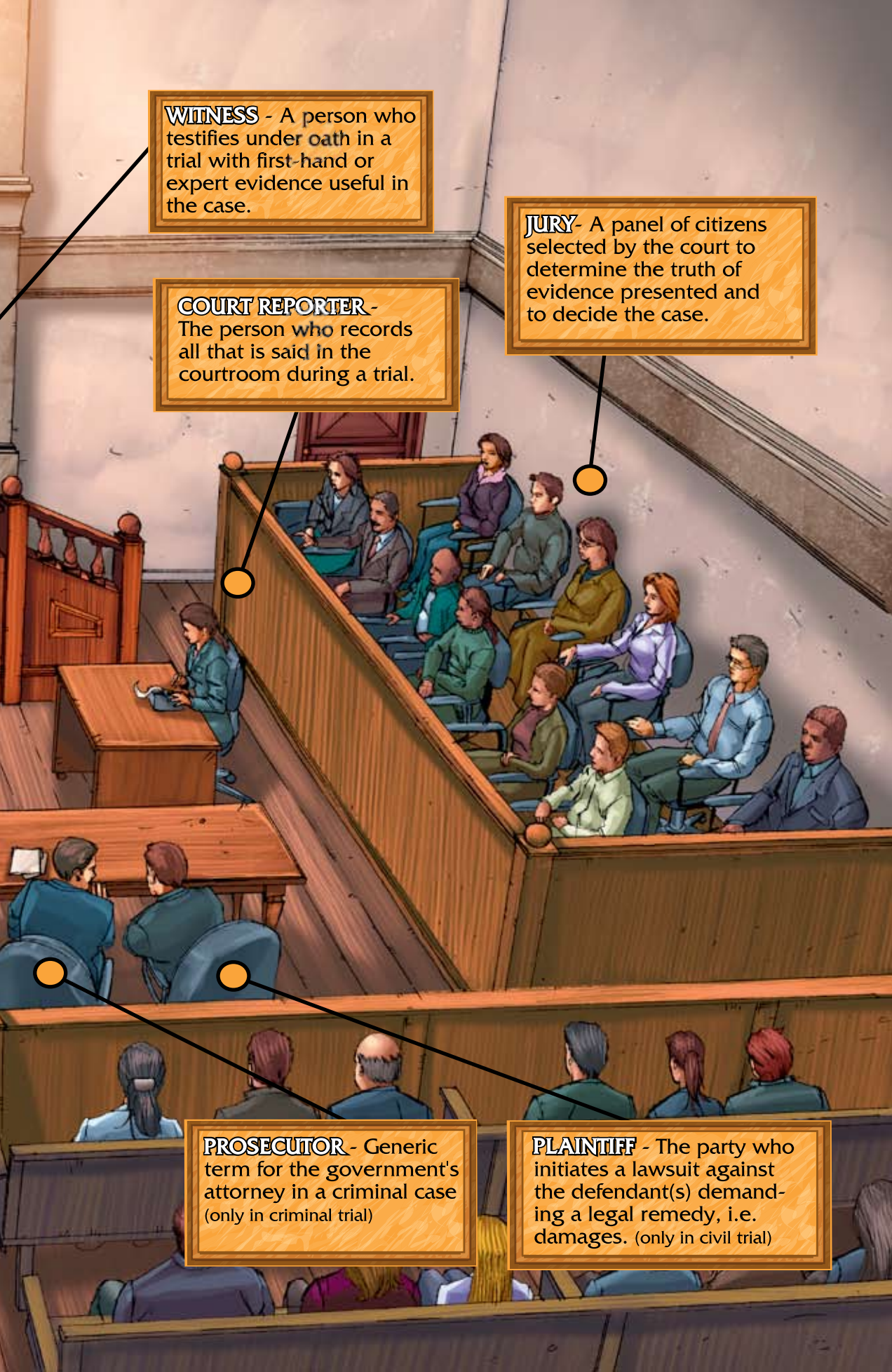
WHO IS IN THE COURTROOM?

JUDGE - An elected or appointed public official with the authority and responsibility to preside in a court, try lawsuits, and make legal rulings.

BAILIFF -A court official, usually a deputy sheriff, who keeps order in the courtroom.

DEFENDANT - The party sued in a civil lawsuit or the party charged with a crime in a criminal prosecution.

DEFENSE ATTORNEY - An attorney who is employed by the defendant or who is assigned at public expense, to represent people accused of crimes. (criminal trial only)


WITNESS - A person who testifies under oath in a trial with first-hand or expert evidence useful in the case.
JURY- A panel of citizens selected by the court to determine the truth of evidence presented and to decide the case.
COURT REPORTER - The person who records all that is said in the courtroom during a trial.
PROSECUTOR - Generic term for the government's attorney in a criminal case (only in criminal trial)
PLAINTIFF - The party who initiates a lawsuit against the defendant(s) demanding a legal remedy, i.e. damages. (only in civil trial)

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