

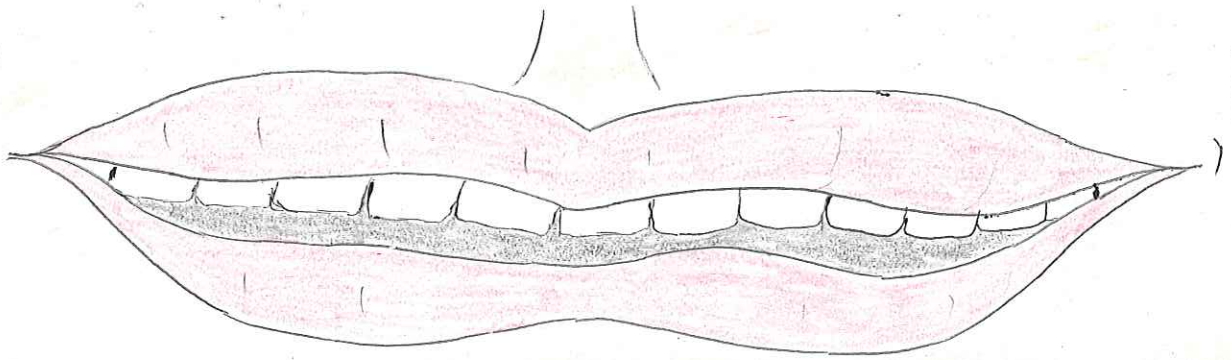
THE ADVENTURES OF UNCLE TOM

In this episode...

“Uncle Tom Gets the Cold Shoulder”

**A Comic Strip by,
Zachary Kaplan & Melissa Cusanello**

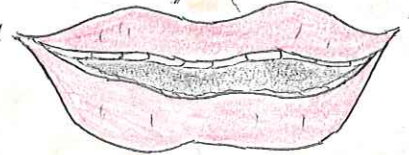
In a not-too-distant land, not so different from our own, the all-mighty Evangeline summons, yet again, that famed, gallant hero of our times.



And they always be
hungering, and complaining
so; mighty 'fraid were
they at such a loss!

Oh, if I
don't know
that voice,
I'd be a
sinner!

Uncle Tom, calling
Uncle Tom. I have a
dire task for which
only you can help!



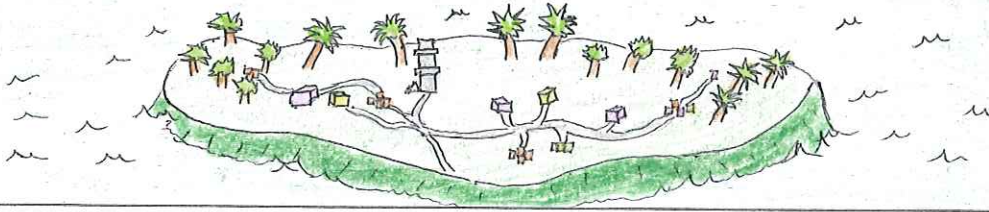
Quick, now,
run off to bed
in the meanwhile.

Papa's gonna'
go on out a
piece and find
some sense.

Oh, dear Miss Eva,
what trouble ails
ye to call so?



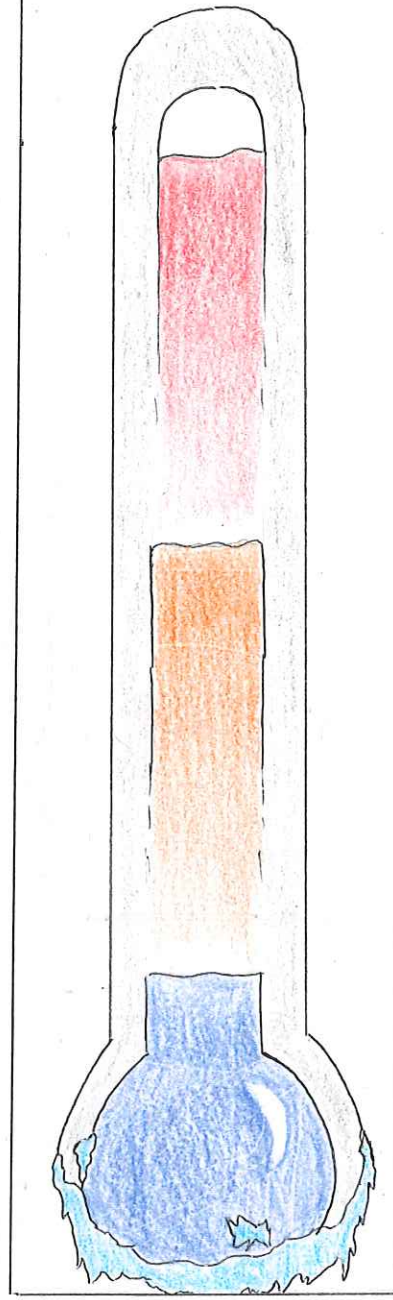
Quite far off from here, there was a beautiful tropical island home to a peaceful, friendly populace. This is Ened.



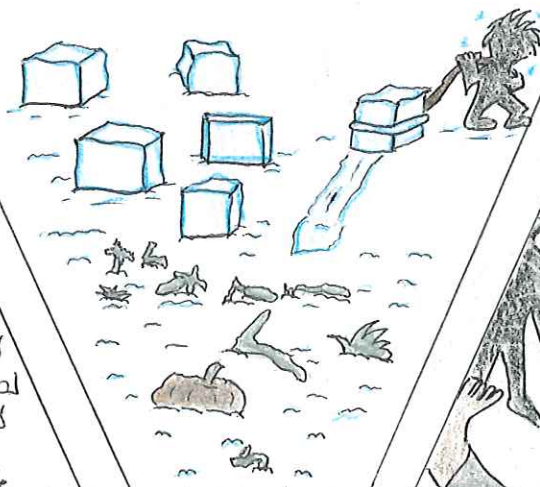
Alas, the terrible winds and the dreadful storms began to inexplicably move towards the island, frightening the inhabitants, chilling the earth.



Eventually, the frost was followed by its tyrannous creators. They took control of Ened, ensnaring it inside a frigid tempest.

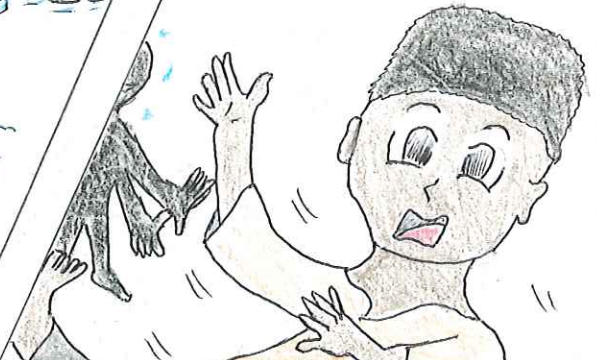


They use the Enedian farmlands for ice cultivation.

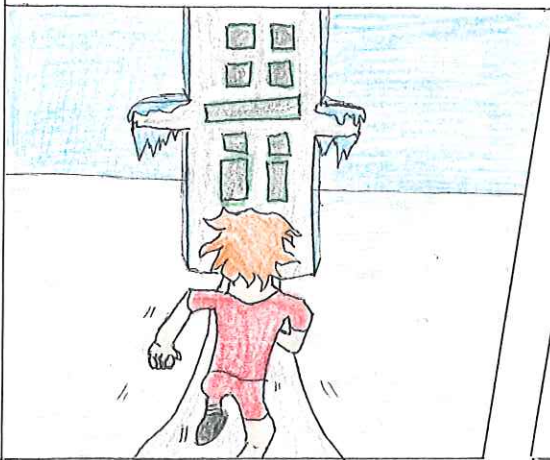


The inhabitants are oppressed by the eternal winter - and those who brought it.

They intimidate the local citizens, and have forced their way into total authority.



We have already sent Might Man to rise up and dethrone the commander.



THOW!



Haha! Might Man might win after all!

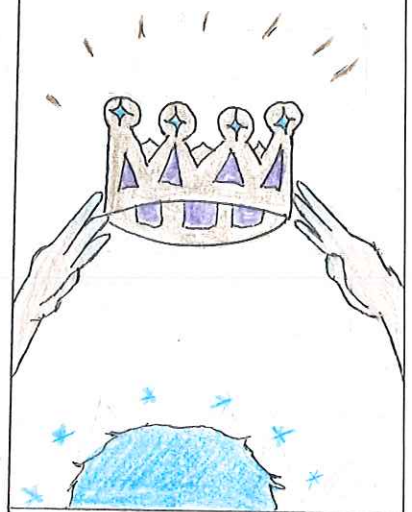
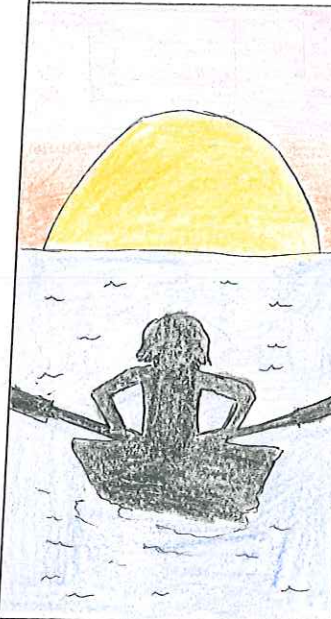


And so his fellow Eneadians cheered for him,



But the island still remained frozen.

And Might Man has taken his escape.



And now a new leader has arisen.

Dearest Tom, we need your powers more than ever to save Ened's people.

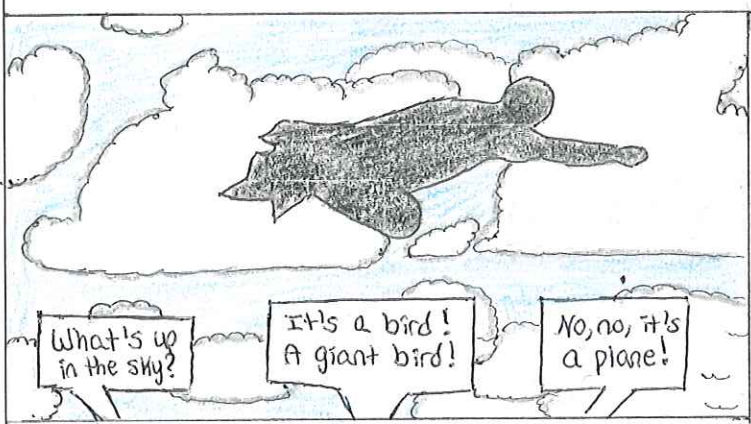
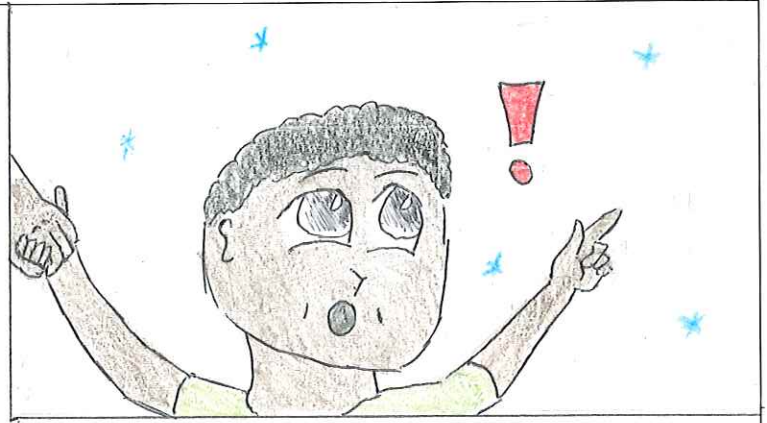


Miss Eva, I swear I'll do my best, helpin' others as they would help me!



And so Uncle Tom prepared to journey forth to Ened and the rescue.



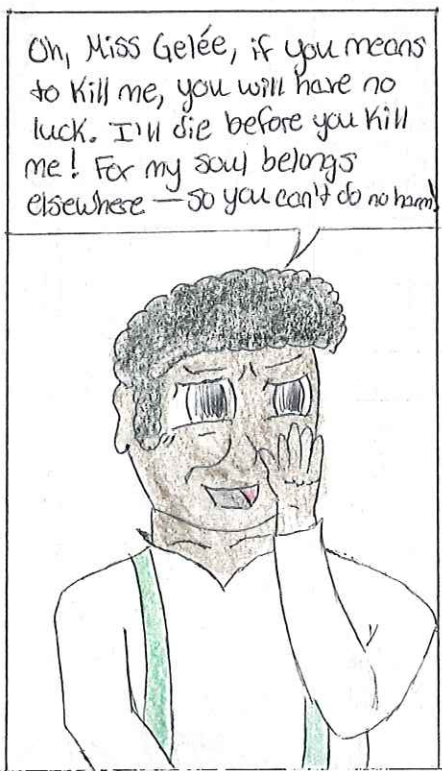
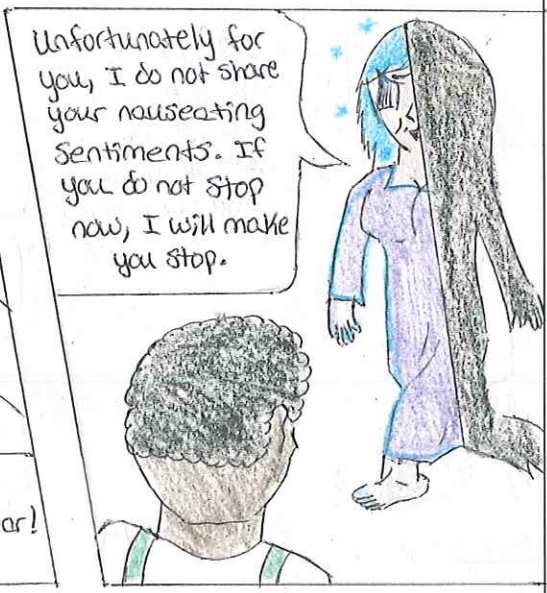
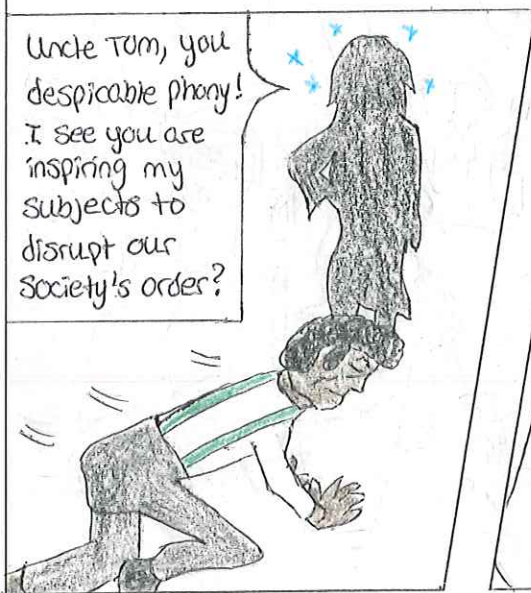
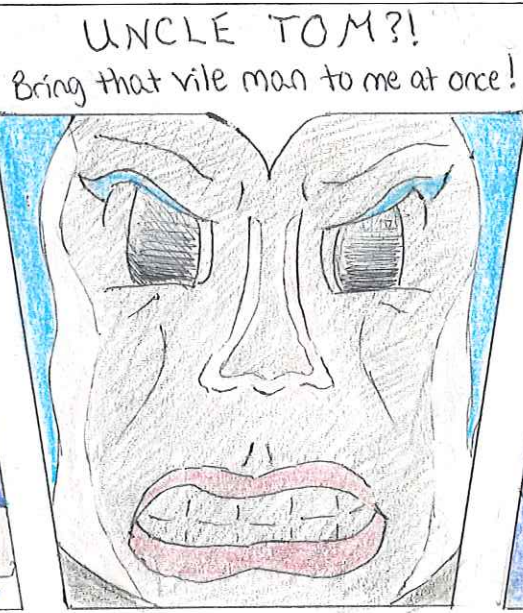




And as the number of good deeds grew, so too did the Eneidians' trust in Uncle Tom.



And so too did his followers.



No, Miss Gélée,
I forgive ye!
You're a poor,
miserable,
cold-hearted
thing. If all
it takes were
my warm blood,
I'd gladly save
you!



But it is already
won! The true
victory is when
we can love our
enemies - even you!



You should correct
your mistakes now,
but I don't need saving.
And you will never beat
me, Uncle Tom!

Get your filthy
hands off of me!

Wait, what - what
is happening? What is
this warm feeling? Ah,
what destructive
curse is this?!

But, I don't
think it's too bad -
it's enjoyable even.
Right?



Am I... being
loved? Am I... loving
someone else?

No, no, I can't
be doing that. No -
NEVER!

GUARDS! GUARDS!
Get him off of me!
Get him away!



Put him in a
nice, quiet
cell!



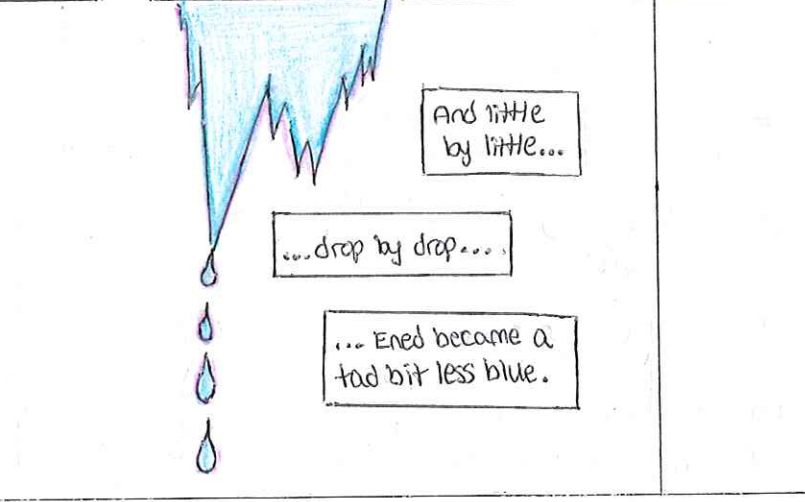
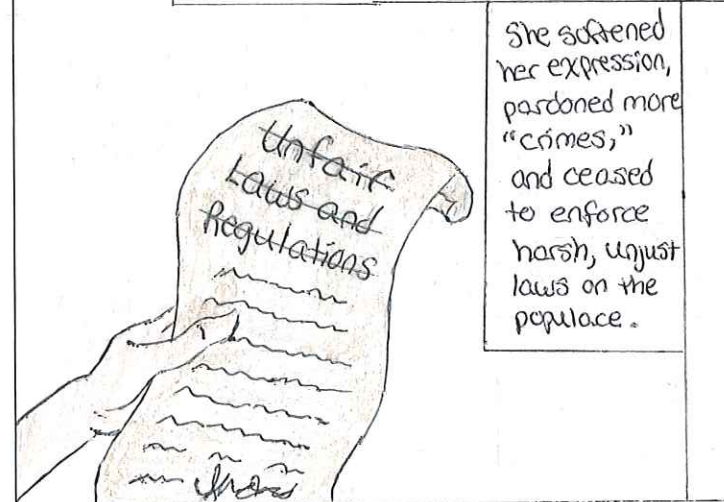
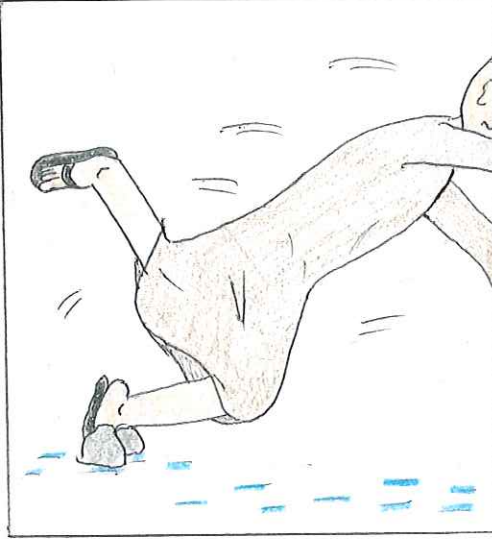
But despite her attempts, Gélée could
not suppress that sensation in her mind.

Did you hear that? "Bonus"?
"Good"? Is the boss being...
nice? She's never done that!

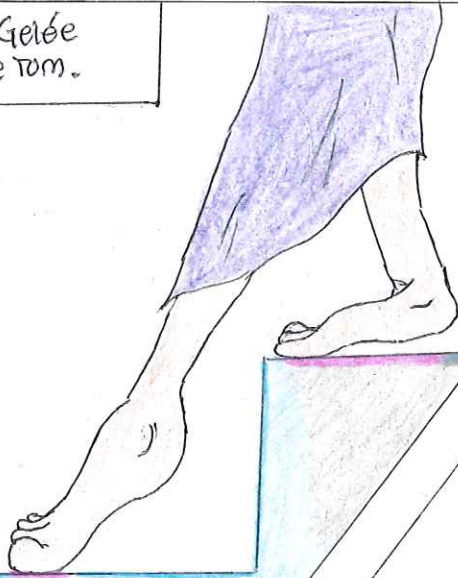
And bonus
pay for all
the good
work!



We get
paid?



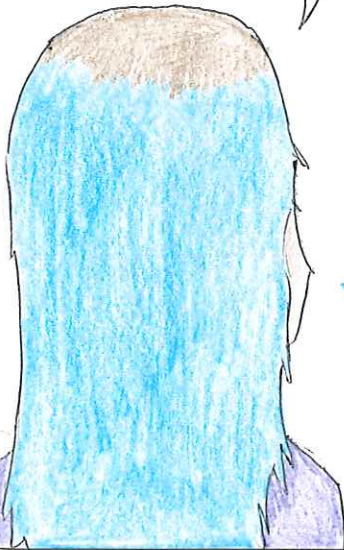
One day, Getée visited Uncle Tom.



Ever since, I have been motivated to do good for my people. Thus, you must be free!

Oh, Miss Getée, I allays had faith that you'd find your true heart - and I forgive ye!

I've been thinking about what to do with you, Uncle Tom. And for some reason, I have this weird inclination to set you free. Although I did not realize it before, something touched me that day, that I could not shake from my very being.



I am no longer frozen!

What a wonderful feeling this is! Thank you, Uncle Tom, for your unwavering love for all!

Outside...

Ah, I do not remember a time that the sun felt so curiously delicious.

Or when a crowd was so joyous!

Thank you, thank you, Uncle Tom! You have shown us the true power of compassion!



I have done nothing when ye look at yourselves. You all were the real heroes in your own skins!



I've gotta be heading home, but remember to all:

S.S. Home

The true power to save lies in self-denying, sufferin' love!

Finally, returning to his humble abode...



Now, how about we go on and finish tha' story?

Melissa Cusanello

Zachary Kaplan

THE ADVENTURES OF UNCLE TOM:

"Uncle Tom Gets the Cold Shoulder"

This comic strip seeks to portray the conception of Uncle Tom in popular culture in a new light. We believe that the idea of an "Uncle Tom" as a subservient figure who betrays his race is a misinterpretation of Harriet Beecher Stowe's original intentions in *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. As Jane Tompkins argues in "Sentimental Power: *Uncle Tom's Cabin* and the Politics of Literary History," this misinterpretation stems from the modern belief that Stowe intended Uncle Tom to be a model for how to be a black slave hero. Instead, Stowe intends for Uncle Tom to be a hero for *all*, and that the greatest power to save is presented when one is able to love their enemies and show selfless love for all. Christian love and a "change of heart" is requisite for social change, for in order to truly abolish slavery, society must eradicate the moral conditions that produced it in the first place (Tompkins, 276). Uncle Tom is the only character in the novel to incite social change, as his commitment to faith and love is what causes Master George to experience a "conversion in the spirit" and free his slaves (276). Therefore, in order to bring to light Uncle Tom's true heroic qualities, we have created a comic strip in which Uncle Tom is the super hero and his "power" is that of selfless love.

We chose to produce our story in the medium of a comic strip because comic strips are traditionally associated with popular culture, and our purpose is to change the conception of Uncle Tom in popular culture. The story is set in a world where people see race, but race is not the issue in this society. Instead, the problem is hate vs. love, which we believe to be the root of the "race problem." For this reason, the characters' races in our story are random, and are not meant to hold any particular meaning. Disassociating the characters from race puts more emphasis on the problem of hate vs. love. Moreover, we have removed Uncle Tom from the system of slavery to further emphasize Uncle Tom's qualities as heroic for all people rather than just black slaves. Otherwise, Uncle Tom's personal qualities are the same as in the novel. For example, he is still black, speaks in the same dialect, and maintains the same Christian conscience. In this way, we keep the natural Uncle Tom and do not force artificial alterations. After all, it is the real Uncle Tom that we are valorizing. Other aspects of our project to point out are: the metaphor of a frozen society as having a "frozen heart," the name Gélée means "frozen" in French (also a play on "Legree"), and the idea that a gradual conversion in spirit (rather than a quick, violent fix) will bring about widespread social change.

In terms of the process for creating our comic strip, both of us came up with the story line and we created a rough outline together. Melissa created a more detailed script with dialogue, and Zachary transformed the text into visuals. Melissa then added color to the drawings and Zachary inserted text and dialogue.