

Maggie Mercury

**TEENAGE
EXTRAORDINAIRE**



You might be going through a lot right now, and things may feel really confusing. It's normal to have many questions and different feelings about what's going on.



This book is here to help you figure some of that out. These things happen to other young people, too.



In this book you'll find some information about:

- What could happen next
- People you might see or talk to
- Ways to manage your feelings



You can keep this book.
Read it, write in it, ask questions,
whatever. Hopefully it helps.



This is Maggie's story.



Something happened in her life and she had to go to court to testify in a criminal case. In this story, Maggie shares her experiences with other Native young people and they discuss what it's like to be a victim or witness in a criminal case.



She also talks about the importance of learning about one's feelings, asking for help, and what young people can do to feel better.

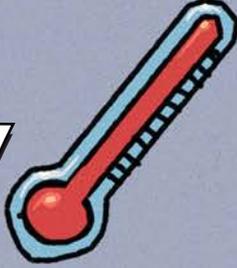
Some of Maggie's experiences might be different from what you're going through. Maggie might not look like you, she might not come from the same tribe as you, and she might live somewhere different than you.

But some of Maggie's experiences and feelings might be similar to yours.

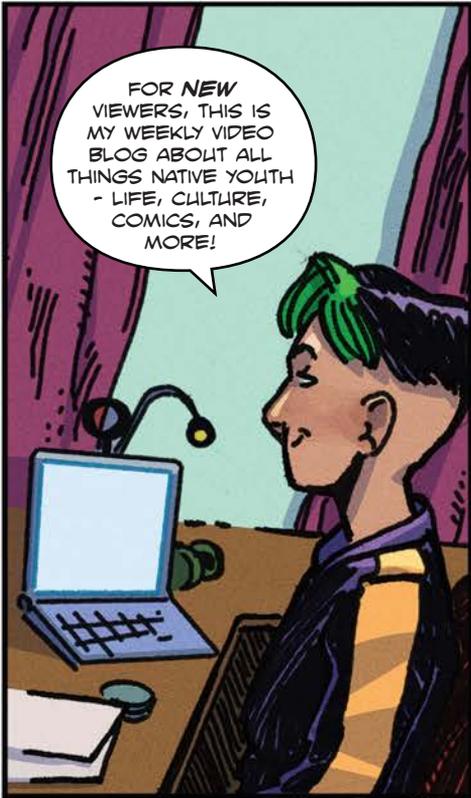
We hope this book can help you better understand what's going on and remind you that you are not alone.

DEEP WITHIN A MAJOR METROPOLIS IN THE MIDWESTERN U.S....

MERCURY RISING



HEY, Y'ALL!
BIG-CITY-GIRL, MAGGIE MERCURY HERE WITH MY LATEST EPISODE OF "MERCURY RISING!"



FOR NEW VIEWERS, THIS IS MY WEEKLY VIDEO BLOG ABOUT ALL THINGS NATIVE YOUTH - LIFE, CULTURE, COMICS, AND MORE!



FOR MY **REGULAR** VIEWERS, YOU'LL SEE THAT THIS WEEK'S EPISODE IS GOING TO BE A BIT DIFFERENT...
...I'M TALKING ABOUT A SUBJECT THAT'S SENSITIVE AND CLOSER TO HOME. SOMETHING THAT HAPPENED TO ME.



IT'S NOT GOING TO BE EASY TO SHARE, BUT HOPEFULLY IT CAN HELP SOME OF YOU OUT THERE WHO HAVE HAD TO DEAL WITH A SIMILAR SITUATION.



AS Y'ALL KNOW, I'M A NATIVE TEEN LIVING IN THE 'BIG CITY.'

BEFORE I STARTED MY 'MAGGIE MERCURY' CHANNEL I ACTUALLY HAD A BLOG ABOUT FOOD, IF YOU CAN BELIEVE IT!

IT WAS CALLED 'REZ-IPES': AMAZINGLY DELICIOUS FOODS FROM RESERVATION COMMODS.'



"I STARTED IT TO CELEBRATE OUR FAMILY TRADITIONS AND CULTURE. WHENEVER MY GRANDMOTHER CAME TO VISIT, I WOULD RECORD US COOKING TOGETHER."

"SHE IS AMAZING IN THE KITCHEN, COMBINING THE COMMODITIES SHE RECEIVES ON THE RESERVATION WITH FRESH LOCAL INGREDIENTS!"



IT'S GREAT HOW FOOD CAN CREATE STORIES AND TRADITIONS THAT CAN LAST A LIFETIME.



THE BLOG IS STILL ONLINE IF ANYONE WANTS TO SEE IT. I'LL POST THE LINK IN THE COMMENTS.

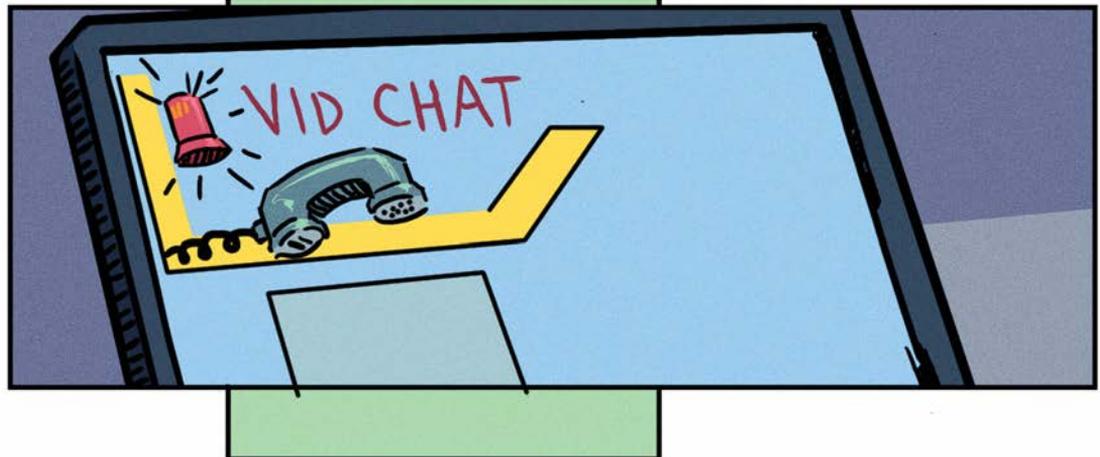
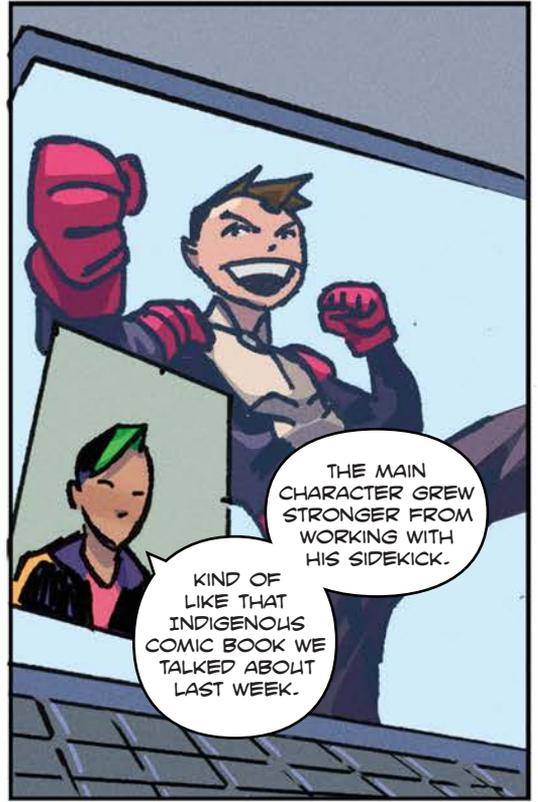
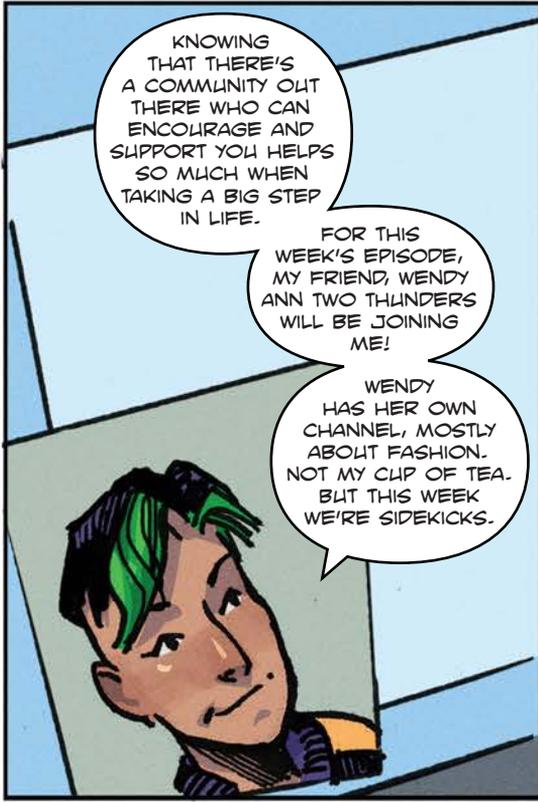
THE LINK HAS MORE OF MY BACKSTORY, AND EVEN SOME GREAT PHOTOS OF GRANDMA'S DISHES.

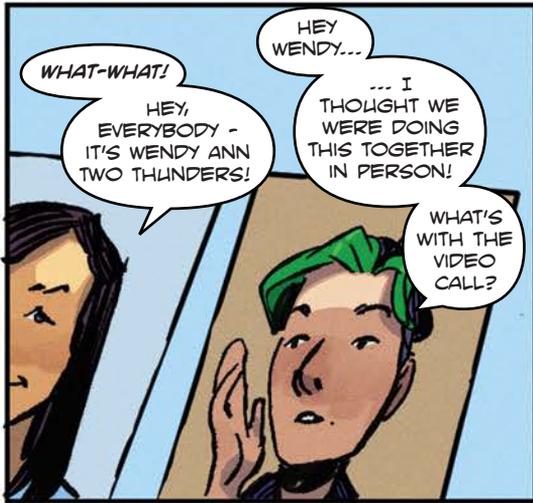


ANYWAY, THE BLOG WAS A WAY FOR ME TO CONNECT THE WORLD WITH MY COMMUNITY THROUGH FOOD.

EVEN THOUGH I'VE NEVER LIVED ON THE RESERVATION MYSELF, I WAS HONORED TO SHARE TRADITIONAL RECIPES FROM OUR TRIBE.

I ENJOYED CONNECTING WITH MY BLOG COMMENTERS, AND THAT GAVE ME THE COURAGE TO START DOING VIDEOS ON OTHER COMMUNITY-RELATED TOPICS.





WHAT-WHAT!

HEY, EVERYBODY - IT'S WENDY ANN TWO THUNDERS!

HEY WENDY...

... I THOUGHT WE WERE DOING THIS TOGETHER IN PERSON!

WHAT'S WITH THE VIDEO CALL?



I'M ALMOST READY TO HEAD OVER!

BUT I WANTED TO CALL IN FROM MY PLACE FIRST...

...SO YOUR AUDIENCE KNOWS WHAT A REAL CHANNEL LOOKS LIKE. WINK.

HA HA. VERY FUNNY.



WELL, WE'RE ALREADY LIVE STREAMING...

...SO WE MIGHT AS WELL INTRODUCE THIS WEEK'S TOPIC WHILE YOU'RE ON THE LINE.

I CAN DO THAT!

TODAY WE'RE GOING TO TALK ABOUT BEING A VICTIM OR WITNESS IN A CRIMINAL CASE.



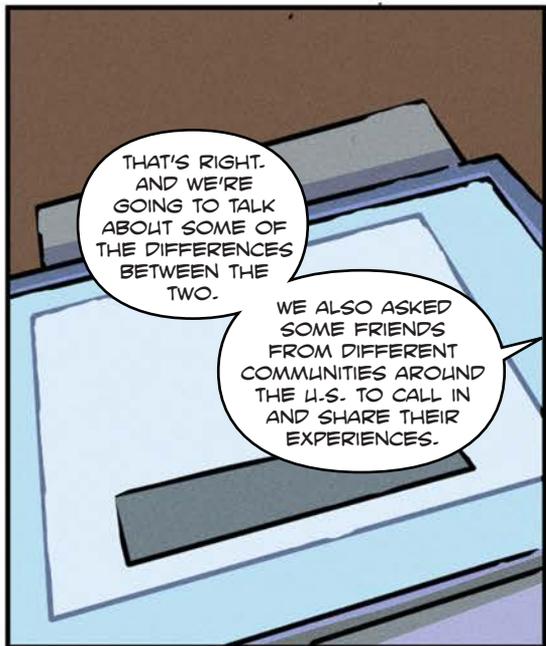
A WITNESS IS SOMEONE WHO SAW OR HEARD A CRIME TAKE PLACE OR WHO HAS OTHER INFORMATION ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED.

A VICTIM IS SOMEONE WHO WAS HARMED BY A CRIME. WENDY WAS A WITNESS, AND I WAS BOTH A VICTIM AND A WITNESS.



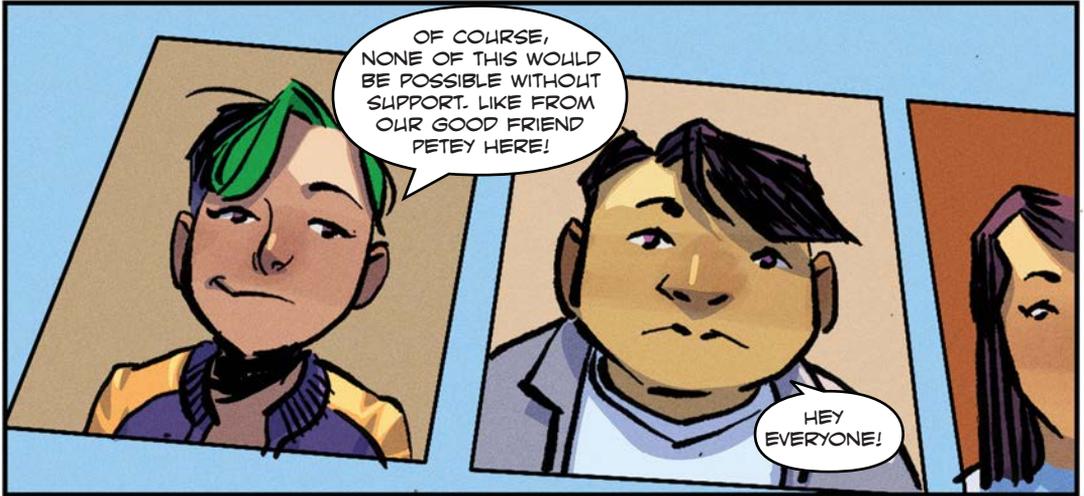
GOOD EXPLANATION, MAGGIE.

WE BOTH HAD TO TESTIFY IN COURT, BUT MY CASE WAS IN TRIBAL COURT. MAGGIE'S WAS IN FEDERAL COURT.



THAT'S RIGHT. AND WE'RE GOING TO TALK ABOUT SOME OF THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE TWO.

WE ALSO ASKED SOME FRIENDS FROM DIFFERENT COMMUNITIES AROUND THE U.S. TO CALL IN AND SHARE THEIR EXPERIENCES.





THIS WILL REALLY HELP PEOPLE WHO DON'T HAVE A GOOD WI-FI CONNECTION WHERE THEY LIVE. SOME NATIVE YOUTH LIVE IN REMOTE OR RURAL COMMUNITIES WHERE INTERNET ACCESS ISN'T THAT GREAT.



ACTUALLY, WE HAVE ONE OF OUR FRIENDS CALLING IN RIGHT NOW. WENDY, ARE YOU OK TO TAKE THE CALL FROM YOUR PLACE?

SURE, LET'S GET THE BALL ROLLING! AND THEN I'LL HEAD OVER TO YOUR PLACE, MAGGIE.



SOUNDS LIKE A PLAN! PETEY, GO AHEAD AND CONNECT THEM...

I'M ON IT!



HEY SUSIE, THANKS SO MUCH FOR CALLING IN.

WE KNOW IT'S NOT EASY TO SHARE THIS KIND OF THING WITH SUCH A WIDE AUDIENCE.

SUSIE

"OF COURSE, I APPRECIATE BEING INVITED TO TALK WITH YOU."



"I'M ACTUALLY INTERESTED IN HEARING YOUR STORY LATER, WENDY...WHAT HAPPENED TO ME TOOK PLACE IN MY COMMUNITY, TOO. ALSO, I'M A HUGE FAN OF YOUR SHOW!"

WHY, THANK YOU!

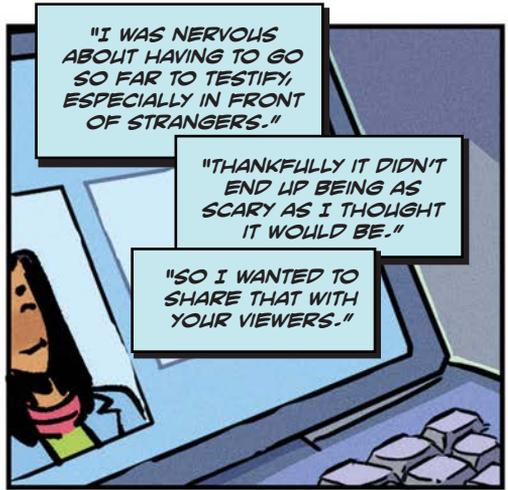
AND SO SORRY ABOUT YOUR SITUATION, SUSIE. IF YOU'RE COMFORTABLE, CAN YOU TELL US ABOUT YOUR EXPERIENCE?



"SURE. WELL, UH, I WON'T GO INTO DETAIL, BUT I WAS A VICTIM-WITNESS IN A TRIAL.."

"BUT I'M IN ALASKA, AND WE DON'T HAVE A TRIBAL COURT."

"THE STATE COURT IS REALLY FAR AWAY FROM OUR VILLAGE. EVERYTHING IS!"



"I WAS NERVOUS ABOUT HAVING TO GO SO FAR TO TESTIFY, ESPECIALLY IN FRONT OF STRANGERS.."

"THANKFULLY IT DIDN'T END UP BEING AS SCARY AS I THOUGHT IT WOULD BE.."

"SO I WANTED TO SHARE THAT WITH YOUR VIEWERS.."



"BUT I DID HAVE TO TALK TO SO MANY DIFFERENT PEOPLE! I WASN'T EXPECTING THAT. IT FELT LIKE THEY WERE ALL UP IN MY BUSINESS.."

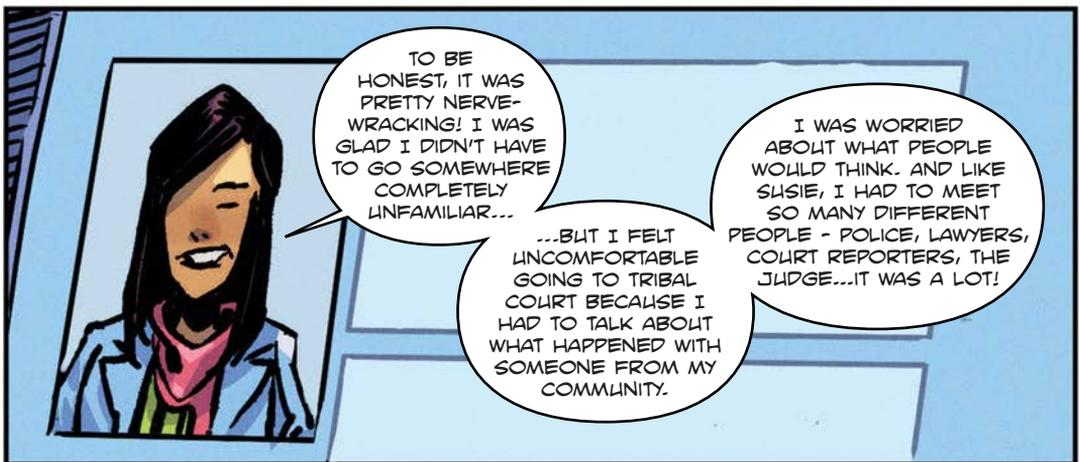
I TOTALLY GET IT, SUSIE. THAT HAPPENED TO ME, TOO, AND EACH TIME, I WAS LIKE, ANOTHER ONE?! WHO ARE YOU?!



LIKE YOU, ONE TIME WHEN I WAS ON THE RESERVATION, SOMETHING HAPPENED WITH PEOPLE IN MY TRIBE...

...I WON'T GET INTO THE SPECIFICS EITHER, BUT I DID END UP HAVING TO GO TO TRIBAL COURT TO TESTIFY ABOUT WHAT I SAW AND HEARD.

WHAT WAS IT LIKE HAVING TO GO TO TRIBAL COURT?



TO BE HONEST, IT WAS PRETTY NERVE-WRACKING! I WAS GLAD I DIDN'T HAVE TO GO SOMEWHERE COMPLETELY UNFAMILIAR...

...BUT I FELT UNCOMFORTABLE GOING TO TRIBAL COURT BECAUSE I HAD TO TALK ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED WITH SOMEONE FROM MY COMMUNITY.

I WAS WORRIED ABOUT WHAT PEOPLE WOULD THINK. AND LIKE SUSIE, I HAD TO MEET SO MANY DIFFERENT PEOPLE - POLICE, LAWYERS, COURT REPORTERS, THE JUDGE...IT WAS A LOT!

ON THE DAY I HAD TO TESTIFY I DIDN'T KNOW WHAT TO DO OR SAY. I FELT KINDA FROZEN.

TALKING WITH THE PROSECUTOR WASN'T A BAD EXPERIENCE - BUT IT STILL MADE ME REALLY ANXIOUS. BEING ASKED QUESTIONS BY THE LAY ADVOCATE, WHO'S LIKE A DEFENSE ATTORNEY, WAS EVEN SCARIER.

BUT LUCKILY THE PROSECUTOR PREPARED ME FOR THAT AND EVEN SHOWED ME THE COURTROOM BEFOREHAND, WHICH HELPED.

SOMETHING MY GRANDPPA TOLD ME IS THAT FEELING ANXIOUS IS OK, AND THE MOST IMPORTANT THING IS TO SHARE ONE'S TRUTH. REMEMBERING THAT AND DOING THIS MEDITATION ACTIVITY HE TAUGHT ME HELPED ME TO GET THROUGH IT.



THANKS SO MUCH FOR SHARING THAT, WENDY. IT'S GOOD TO KEEP IN MIND THAT WE ARE NOT ALONE IN THIS.

AND THANK YOU FOR SHARING, TOO, SUSIE! I'M GLAD THAT THE STATE COURT WASN'T AS BAD AS YOU THOUGHT IT WOULD BE.

WE ARE ALL THINKING OF YOU AND WISH YOU THE BEST IN YOUR HEALING PROCESS.



Relax

MINDFULNESS MEDITATION

There are moments in Wendy's and Maggie's stories — and there will be in your life — when you feel scared, anxious, angry or sad.

This meditation exercise can help calm your thoughts, and can be done anywhere.



Have you ever seen the mist cover a field early in the morning? When the sun rises and the light shines, the mist calmly disappears leaving a clear, calm natural scene.

If your thoughts are swirling and you need to be calm, whether you are lying down, sitting or standing, close your eyes and imagine a field. That field is you, and your thoughts are the mist.

Notice that the mist — as it does in nature — has its own sense of stillness. Now imagine the sun slowly rising in your mind, and the light from the morning sun begins to warm up the calm mist and allows it to evaporate.

The mist disappears into the light and all you can see is your field.



I BROUGHT SNACKS! WHO WANTS BUFFALO CHICKEN WRAPS?

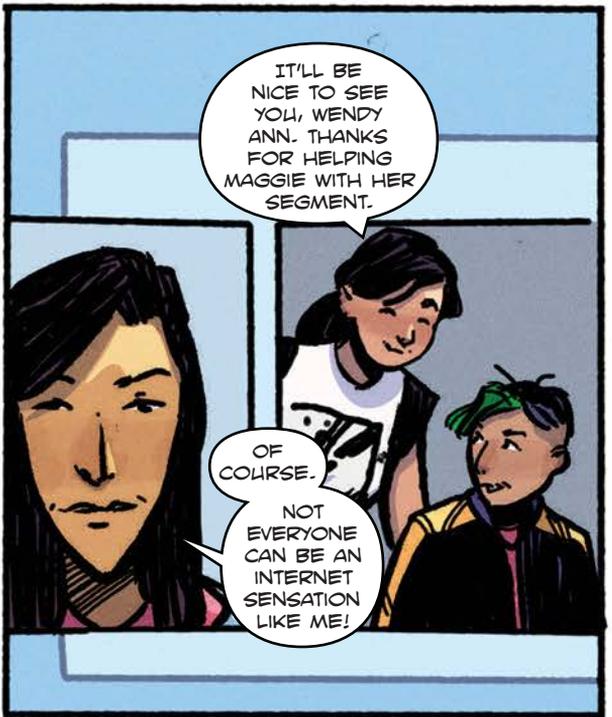
AUNT CASSIE, WE'RE LIVE STREAMING! OUR AUDIENCE MIGHT HEAR YOU!

OOH! THOSE LOOK DELICIOUS!



IS THAT WENDY ANN'S VOICE ON THE COMPUTER? I THOUGHT SHE WOULD BE HERE BY NOW?

HEY AUNT CASSIE! I'M ON MY WAY, I'LL BE THERE SOON!



IT'LL BE NICE TO SEE YOU, WENDY ANN. THANKS FOR HELPING MAGGIE WITH HER SEGMENT.

OF COURSE.

NOT EVERYONE CAN BE AN INTERNET SENSATION LIKE ME!



OH, OF COURSE!

WELL, SEE YOU SOON! MAGGIE DEAR - THOSE WRAPS ARE HOT, DON'T BURN YOURSELF.

THANKS, AUNT CASSIE.



LET ME KNOW IF YOU NEED ANYTHING ELSE, MAGGIE.

KNOCK KNOCK

OH, SOMEONE'S AT THE DOOR...

IF THAT'S PETEY, TELL HIM HE CAN JUST COME IN. NO NEED TO KNOCK.



SIGH. I SAID YOU CAN JUST COME IN, PET-



HEY HEY!



HOW DID YOU GET HERE SO FAST? I THOUGHT YOU WERE AT HOME!



WHAT DO YOU MEAN 'FAST?' I'M FASHIONABLY LATE, AS ALWAYS!

HA HA, OF COURSE YOU ARE.



ACTUALLY, I WAS WALKING HERE THE WHOLE TIME WHILE LIVE STREAMING.

SELFIE!



LOOK WHO'S TALKING. HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN HERE?

BEEN HERE THE WHOLE TIME...

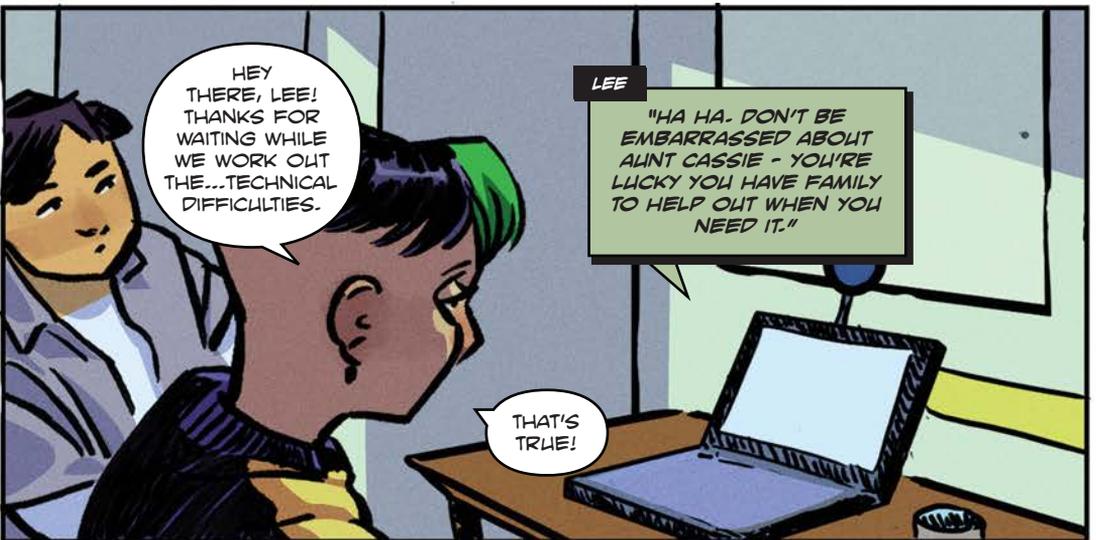
WELL LOOK WHO FINALLY SHOWED UP.

...WHO DO YOU THINK HELPED MAKE AUNT CASSIE'S SNACKS? I'M NOT JUST A COMPUTER NERD, YOU KNOW.



ANYWAY, THANKS FOR BEING HERE WITH ME, BUT WE HAVE AN IMPORTANT TOPIC TO GET BACK TO...

...AND OUR SECOND CALLER IS TRYING TO GET THROUGH. PETEY, ARE YOU READY TO RESTART THE LIVE STREAM?





AND THANKS FOR SAYING THAT. IT ACTUALLY LEADS RIGHT INTO MY STORY...

...BECAUSE OF MY SITUATION, I HAD TO GO TO FEDERAL COURT AS A VICTIM-WITNESS.

"IT WAS SCARY, BUT LIKE YOU SAID, I WAS LUCKY I HAD AUNT CASSIE WITH ME FOR SUPPORT."

"OF COURSE, SHE WAS NERVOUS, TOO - SHE'D BEEN TO TRIBAL COURT BEFORE, BUT SOME OF OUR FAMILY HAD TOLD HER HOW DIFFERENT FEDERAL COURT IS."



"IT'S NOT ANYTHING LIKE WHAT WE SEE ON TV AND IN THE MOVIES."

"ONE THING I DIDN'T KNOW IS THAT SOME KIDS DON'T HAVE TO TESTIFY BECAUSE THEIR CASE EITHER DOESN'T GO TO TRIAL, OR THE CASE CAN MOVE FORWARD WITHOUT THEM SPEAKING IN THE COURTROOM."

"SO, THEY MIGHT SPEAK TO THE PROSECUTOR ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED INSTEAD."

"BUT AUNT CASSIE AND I WERE ALREADY TOLD I'D HAVE TO TESTIFY IN THE COURTROOM, WHICH WAS SCARY FOR ME."



I HAD SOMEONE CALLED AN **ADVOCATE** WHO REALLY HELPED ME.

SHE REMINDED ME THAT NONE OF THIS WAS MY FAULT, AND THAT MY JOB WAS TO TELL THE COURT WHAT I REMEMBER ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED.

SHE ALSO EXPLAINED MY RIGHTS AS A VICTIM-WITNESS.

"WAITING FOR THE TRIAL TOOK A REALLY LONG TIME. IT KEPT GETTING POSTPONED! THE ADVOCATE TOLD US THAT HAPPENS SOMETIMES."

"WHEN THE BIG DAY FINALLY ARRIVED, WAITING AT COURT MADE ME FEEL EVEN MORE NERVOUS."



"I USED AN EXERCISE THE ADVOCATE TAUGHT ME TO TRY AND RELAX. AND LOOKING AT HER OR AUNT CASSIE WHEN I FELT NERVOUS ALSO HELPED."

"BUT I WAS STILL REALLY WORRIED ABOUT SEEING THE DEFENDANT."

"HONESTLY, I HAD MIXED EMOTIONS ABOUT SAYING ANYTHING... TO ANYONE."

"NO ONE WANTS TO BE SEEN AS A SNITCH."



"TOTALLY. SO MANY PEOPLE IN OUR COMMUNITY HAVE BEEN THROUGH HARD THINGS, AND EVEN IF SOMEONE HURT THEM, THEY MIGHT BE PRESSURED TO KEEP IT QUIET."

Relax

MUSCLE SQUEEZE

When people are stressed, their muscles can feel really tight! Maggie did this 4-step exercise to help relax her body. You can try this too when feeling anxious or worked up.

- 1 Curl up and squeeze just your toes, and hold for two seconds. Then relax your toes and shake them out!
- 2 Squeeze your entire foot (both feet!) for two seconds. Then relax your feet.
- 3 Squeeze your legs for two seconds, and then relax and shake them out.
- 4 Then for two seconds squeeze your whole body - including your shoulders, arms, hands, stomach, legs, feet and toes! Then, release to relax.

You can repeat all of the steps until you start to feel calm.



"BUT WE ARE NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR OTHER PEOPLE'S ACTIONS, AND IF SOMEONE HAS HURT US, WE DESERVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO SAY SOMETHING."

"ANYWAY, I'M SORRY YOU HAD TO GO THROUGH THAT, MAGGIE."

THANKS LEE, I APPRECIATE THAT.

AND YOU'RE TOTALLY RIGHT. WHEN I WAS IN COURT I KEPT LOOKING AROUND AT ALL THE OTHER PEOPLE, THINKING, 'AM I REALLY GOING TO TELL ALL THESE STRANGERS WHAT HAPPENED TO ME?'

'WHAT ARE THEY EVEN GOING TO THINK?'

THEN MY NERVES REALLY SHOT UP WHEN I HAD TO TESTIFY.

BUT I TOOK A DEEP BREATH AND REMINDED MYSELF OF EXACTLY WHAT YOU SAID, LEE. WHAT HAPPENED WAS NOT MY FAULT...

...AND IT WAS NOT RIGHT. I SOMEHOW FOUND THE STRENGTH TO TALK ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED...

...AND I ANSWERED THE QUESTIONS FROM THE PROSECUTOR AND DEFENSE ATTORNEY AS BEST AS I COULD.

AFTER I FINISHED TESTIFYING, I WASN'T REALLY SURE HOW I FELT. BUT AUNT CASSIE TOOK ME TO THAT BIG COMIC BOOK STORE DOWNTOWN TO DO SOMETHING FUN...

...AND TO END THE DAY ON A MORE POSITIVE NOTE.

"... I WAS A VICTIM-WITNESS AND THOUGHT THE CASE WOULD BE AT TRIBAL COURT, BUT BECAUSE OF THE TYPE OF CRIME AND SOMETHING TO DO WITH JURISDICTION, IT WAS IN FEDERAL COURT, TOO."

"LIKE YOU, I WAS WORRIED ABOUT TESTIFYING."

"BUT IN THE END, I DIDN'T HAVE TO TESTIFY BECAUSE THE DEFENDANT TOOK A PLEA DEAL, WHICH IS WHERE THEY ADMIT TO COMMITTING THE CRIME AND AGREE TO CERTAIN CONSEQUENCES."

"I WAS RELIEVED BUT ALSO DISAPPOINTED THAT I DIDN'T GET A CHANCE TO STAND UP FOR MYSELF AND MY FAMILY IN COURT."

"I HAD AN ADVOCATE THOUGH, WHO WAS REALLY SUPPORTIVE, AND THEY HELPED ME TO READ MY VICTIM IMPACT STATEMENT AT THE SENTENCING HEARING. THIS GAVE ME THE CHANCE TO SHARE HOW EVERYTHING AFFECTED ME AND WHAT I WANTED TO HAPPEN WITH THE CASE."

"THANKS FOR SHARING, MAGGIE! MY SITUATION WAS DIFFERENT..."

"IT'S TAKEN SOME TIME, BUT WITH THE SUPPORT OF FRIENDS, FAMILY, AND SEEING A THERAPIST THAT THE ADVOCATE LINKED ME WITH, I'VE STARTED TO MOVE ON FROM WHAT HAPPENED."



THANKS SO MUCH FOR SHARING, LEE. THIS IS WHY WE HAD YOU AND SUSIE CALL IN.

HOPEFULLY IT WILL HELP OTHERS TO KNOW THAT WHILE WE MAY HAVE DIFFERENT EXPERIENCES AND GROW UP IN DIFFERENT COMMUNITIES...



...WE ARE ALL CONNECTED. WE CAN FIND STRENGTH WHEN WE NEED IT THE MOST...

...WITHIN OURSELVES AND BY REACHING OUT FOR SUPPORT FROM FAMILY, FRIENDS, COMMUNITY, AND EVEN PEOPLE WORKING IN THE SYSTEM.



"YOU ALL SAID IT PERFECTLY. AND IT REMINDS ME OF A TRADITIONAL STORY THAT I CAN SHARE WITH YOUR AUDIENCE, IF YOU DON'T MIND?"

OF COURSE, LEE, GO AHEAD!

"IT'S A VERSION OF THE CADDO PEOPLE'S ORIGIN STORY."

"IT REALLY HELPED ME WHEN I WAS GOING THROUGH ALL THIS."

THE CADDOS BELIEVE HUMANS FIRST LIVED BELOW THE SURFACE OF THE EARTH.

IN THE DARKNESS THEY WORKED TOGETHER WITH THE ANIMALS TO MAKE THEIR OWN LIGHT AND WARMTH. IT WAS HARD, AND THEY KNEW THEY COULD NOT STAY IN THE DARK FOREVER.

ONE DAY THEIR LEADER, NAMED NEEESH, DISCOVERED A TUNNEL LEADING UP TO THE SURFACE WHERE THERE WAS A GREAT LIGHT. IT WAS GOING TO BE A TOUGH JOURNEY, HE TOLD THE PEOPLE. SOME WERE FEARFUL. OTHERS DID NOT WANT TO GO, EVEN THOUGH IT MEANT A BETTER LIFE.

NEESH EASED THEIR FEAR BY REMINDING THEM TO ALWAYS LOOK FORWARD - NEVER LOOK BACK - AND THEY WILL MAKE IT TO THE SURFACE.



SO ONE-BY-ONE THEY LEFT THE DARKNESS AND CLIMBED UP THROUGH THE TUNNEL. EACH MEMBER OF THE COMMUNITY HOLDING THE HAND OF THOSE IN FRONT AND BEHIND THEM. ALWAYS LOOKING AHEAD. PEOPLE AND ANIMALS TOGETHER.

AT THE SURFACE, WHEN EVERYONE WAS OUT OF THE TUNNEL, NEEESH ASKED THE WOLVES TO CARRY UP THEIR BELONGINGS FROM INSIDE THE TUNNEL. BUT ONE OF THE WOLVES LOOKED BACK AT THE TUNNEL, INTO THE DARKNESS, AND FROZE.

THE WOLF WAS AFRAID TO GO BACK, AND THE TUNNEL CLOSED. THEIR BELONGINGS WERE LOST.

THE PEOPLE WERE SAD AT FIRST, HAVING NOTHING TO START WITH ON THE SURFACE OF THE EARTH.

NEESH THEN SPOKE TO THE PEOPLE, "LOOK AT WHO WE ARE *WITH*, NOT WHAT WE HAVE IN OUR HANDS. WE HAVE OUR WORDS AND OUR TRUTH."

"WE ARE *STRONGER NOW* BECAUSE OF WHAT WE'VE BEEN THROUGH. AND WE HAVE EACH OTHER. THAT IS THE ONLY TYPE OF 'BELONGING' WE NEED."



IF I WERE THERE, I WOULD HAVE PUNCHED THAT CLOSED TUNNEL UNTIL IT CRACKED OPEN AND I COULD GET OUR STUFF!



GEEZ, PETEY!

THAT'S NOT THE POINT. IT'S ABOUT FACING DIFFICULTIES HEAD ON AND MOVING FORWARD, NOT FIGHTING.



FEAR AND ANGER CAN SOMETIMES MAKE US FREEZE. WENDY AND I FELT THAT WAY WHEN WE HAD TO TESTIFY.

BUT LIKE THE CADDO WOLVES, WE HAD TO CHOOSE BETWEEN LOOKING BACK INTO THE DARKNESS, OR LOOKING AHEAD FOR LIGHT, STRENGTH AND HEALING.



I GET IT. BOTH OF YOU HAD YOUR FEARS, BUT YOU WERE STILL ABLE TO SHARE YOUR TRUTH.

AND WE WEREN'T ALONE.

WE HAD HELP FROM OTHERS.

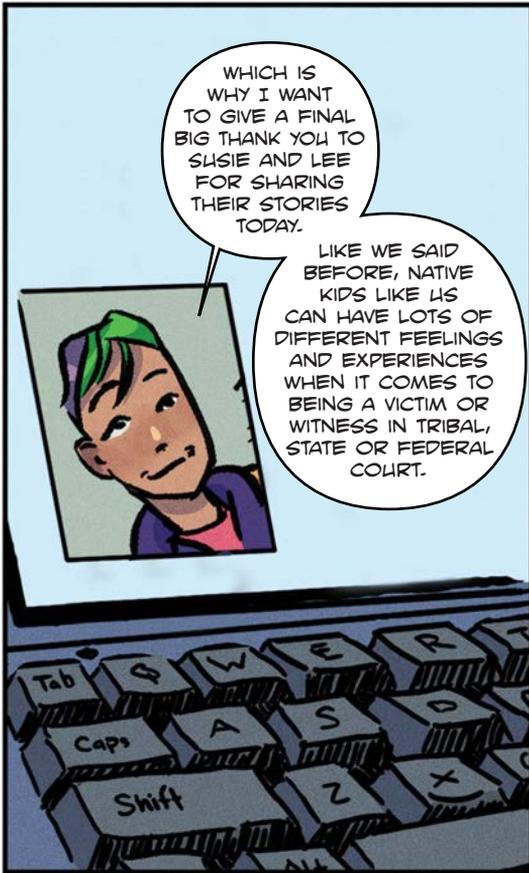
EXACTLY.



ALL OF US NEED HELP FROM OTHERS SOMETIMES.

EVEN WHEN WE FEEL SCARED OR ALONE.

IT'S A SIGN OF **STRENGTH** TO ASK FOR HELP WHEN YOU NEED IT.



WHICH IS WHY I WANT TO GIVE A FINAL BIG THANK YOU TO SUSIE AND LEE FOR SHARING THEIR STORIES TODAY.

LIKE WE SAID BEFORE, NATIVE KIDS LIKE US CAN HAVE LOTS OF DIFFERENT FEELINGS AND EXPERIENCES WHEN IT COMES TO BEING A VICTIM OR WITNESS IN TRIBAL, STATE OR FEDERAL COURT.



AND SOMETIMES IT CAN BE HARD TO TRUST PEOPLE WHO WORK IN THE JUSTICE SYSTEM, TOO.

ESPECIALLY GIVEN WHAT SOME PEOPLE IN OUR COMMUNITIES HAVE BEEN THROUGH.

FOR SURE, PETEY.

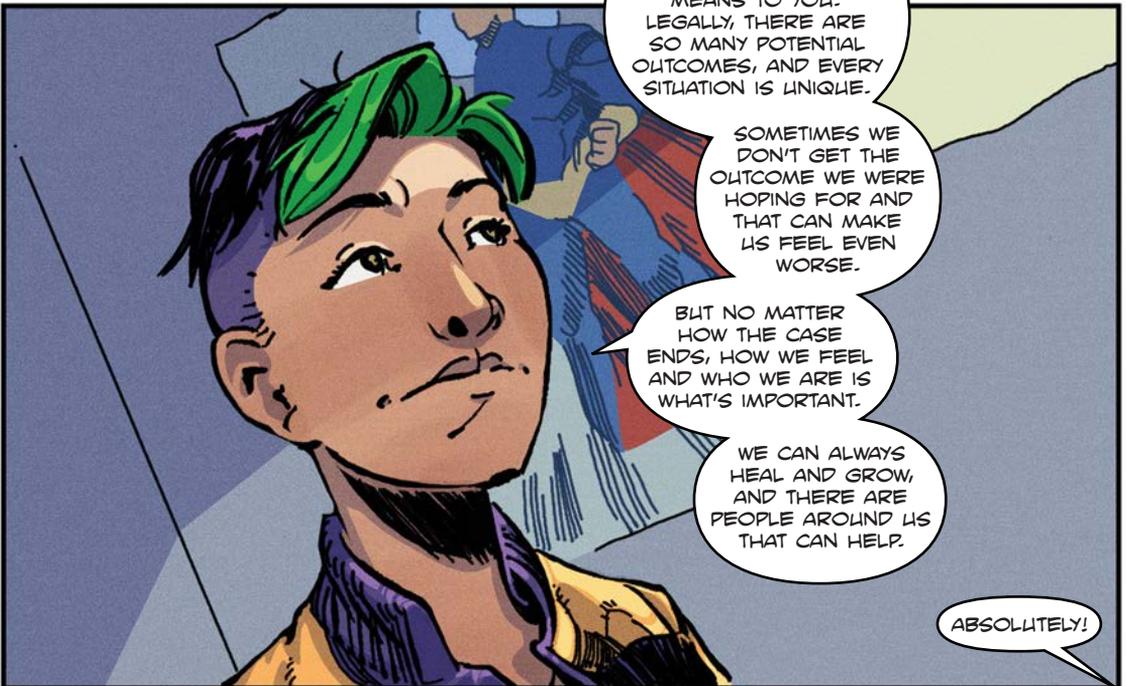
THERE'S ALSO THE QUESTION OF WHAT 'JUSTICE' MEANS TO YOU. LEGALLY, THERE ARE SO MANY POTENTIAL OUTCOMES, AND EVERY SITUATION IS UNIQUE.

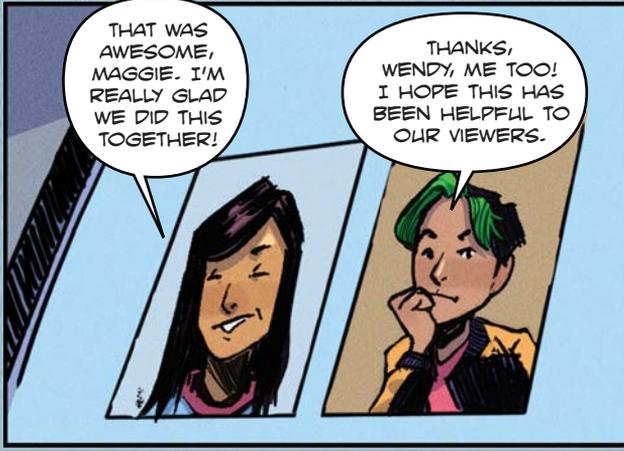
SOMETIMES WE DON'T GET THE OUTCOME WE WERE HOPING FOR AND THAT CAN MAKE US FEEL EVEN WORSE.

BUT NO MATTER HOW THE CASE ENDS, HOW WE FEEL AND WHO WE ARE IS WHAT'S IMPORTANT.

WE CAN ALWAYS HEAL AND GROW, AND THERE ARE PEOPLE AROUND US THAT CAN HELP.

ABSOLUTELY!





THAT WAS AWESOME, MAGGIE. I'M REALLY GLAD WE DID THIS TOGETHER!

THANKS, WENDY, ME TOO! I HOPE THIS HAS BEEN HELPFUL TO OUR VIEWERS.



WELL BYE, EVERYONE - THANKS FOR JOINING US ON THIS EPISODE OF **MERCURY & TWO THUNDERS** -

- HEY! THAT'S **NOT** THE NAME OF MY SHOW!

BUT ANYWAY, BAD THINGS HAPPEN SOMETIMES AND IT'S EASY TO GET OVERWHELMED, SCARED, OR UPSET.

BUT WE DON'T HAVE TO FACE THINGS ALONE.

I HAD AUNT CASSIE AND MY ADVOCATE, WHO HELPED ME GET THROUGH IT, AND WENDY HAD HELP FROM THE PROSECUTOR AND HER GRANDPA.

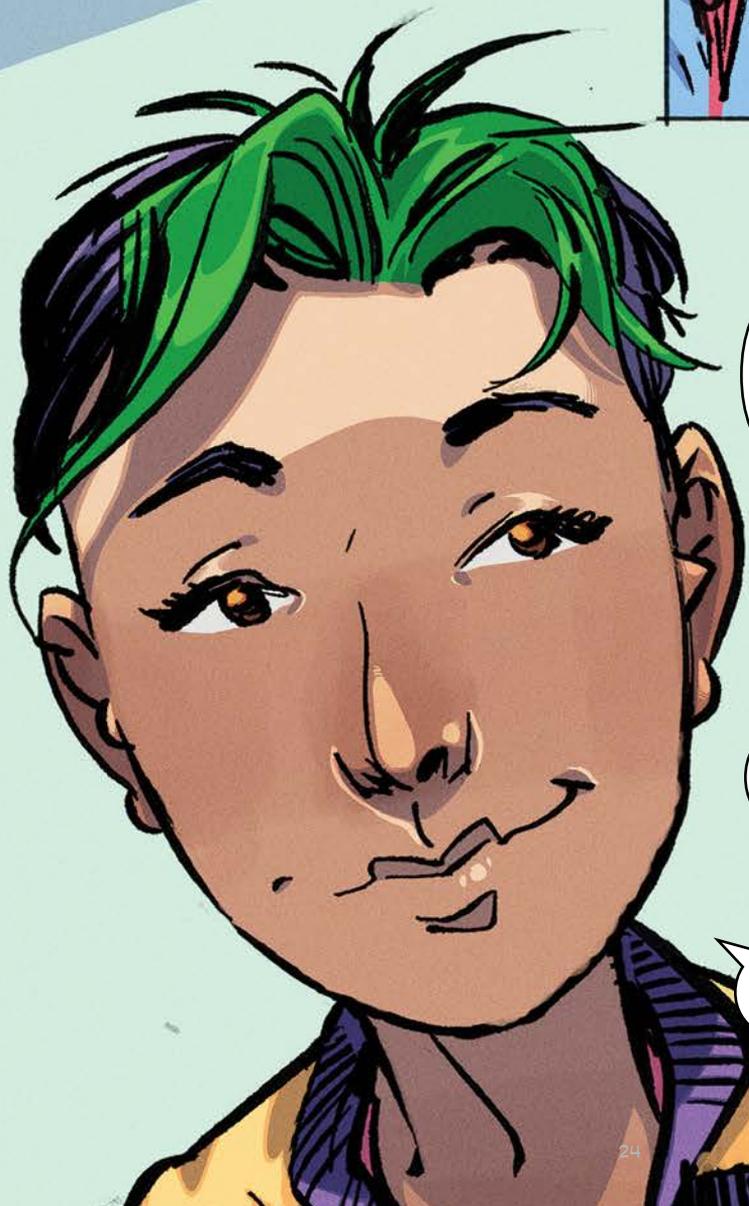
WHO CAN YOU ASK FOR HELP?

THANKS AGAIN TO ALL THE VIEWERS. KEEP WATCHING AND KEEP THOSE COMMENTS COMING IN!

UNTIL NEXT TIME, THIS IS MAGGIE MERCURY -

- AND WENDY ANN TWO THUNDERS!

SIGH. AND WENDY ANN. **BYE!**



In Maggie's story, she testified in federal court about what happened to her, in front of a judge and jury, and she was supported by a victim advocate throughout that process. Maggie also talked about some of the things that can happen with criminal cases, including postponements and different outcomes, as well as tips for preparing for court.



Things like this happen to other young people and their families, but every situation is different. For example, some young people aren't required to testify, and share what happened to them with the police or a prosecutor instead. Some young people, like Lee, don't have to testify because the case is resolved before trial. And some young people go to tribal court, like Wendy, or state court, like Susie, instead of federal court.

No matter what your situation, please remember that you are not alone, and you are not responsible for what has happened. Like Maggie and her friends, you can ask for help from the adults working with you and from your family, friends and community.

DID YOU KNOW?

The medicine wheel has different forms, uses and influences from tribe to tribe.



The circular shape represents continuous connection to the stages of life and across seasons and elements of wellbeing. Different tribes use medicine wheels in different ways, with the common theme of connection and kinship.

You. Family. Friends. Community.

CIRCLE OF SUPPORT

The characters in this story had people in their lives who supported them. Their friends, family members, advocates, therapists and others helped them in different ways.

These people can make up a circle of support for you. It can be helpful to remind yourself of the people in your life who you can ask for help when you need it.

Who is in your circle of support?



My Taking Care of Me CHECKLIST

It's good to check in with yourself and mentally scan how you're feeling. When you're feeling upset or overwhelmed, doing one or more of these activities can help you feel better.



Read a book
(like this one!)

Think of a happy
memory or a
peaceful place

Chat with friends
in person or online

Help someone
or do a chore

Ask for a hug

Write or type
in a journal

Get a drink (water,
tea or hot chocolate)

Ask for
help

Spend time outdoors
or in nature

Say a prayer or do a
spiritual activity



What other activities make you feel good? Is there someone in your community you can ask about other kinds of traditional coping skills?

AND REMEMBER

IT'S OK
TO...

Take time
for **YOU**

SAY no

CELEBRATE
the small victories

Not have **ALL**
the answers

Do what is
BEST for **YOU**



This book is just one in a series produced by the Center for Court Innovation.



AIYANA'S JOURNEY

Aiyana is a little girl whose story is an example of a child welfare case. She meets some new grown-ups, goes to some new places and learns about things she can do to feel better.



MARVIS & ROCKEE

Marvis is a little boy who is a witness in a criminal court case. He meets with different grown-ups who ask him questions about what happened, and help him to do things to feel better.



EDGAR'S JOURNEY

Edgar is a school-age kid whose story is an example of a child welfare case. He meets some new adults, goes to new places, learns about asking for help, and things he can do to feel better.



MARVELOUS MITCH

Mitch is a school-age kid who is a witness in a criminal court case. She meets with new adults who ask her questions, teach her how the legal system works, and help her feel better.



BRANDON'S PATH

Brandon is a teen whose story is an example of a child welfare case. His story follows a 'choose your own adventure' style where he meets new adults, learns to ask for help and things he can do to feel better.

We recognize that Native children and families have diverse experiences with the child welfare and criminal legal systems, and some of these may not be positive.

While we unfortunately cannot guarantee that you will have the same experience as the characters in this story, it can be helpful to remember that you always have the right to request what you need, and that there are people working to make these systems better, who will listen and take the time to understand your situation.

Maggie Mercury

TEENAGE EXTRAORDINAIRE

WRITTEN BY

Michael Sheyahshe

Tribal Community | Caddo Nation of Oklahoma

About

As an author and creator, Michael created the popular comic book character Dark Owl for INC, and he has authored work for *What the Stars Must Think of Us*; *Illusions*; *Trauma Magazine*; *Native Peoples Magazine*; *New Plains Review*; *First American Art Magazine*; written for *MOONSHOT: The Indigenous Comics Collection Volumes 1-3* and co-edited *Volume 3*, and served as a cultural consultant for Darkhorse Comics.

His book, *Native Americans in Comic Books: A Critical Study*, takes an in-depth look at the world of comic books through the eyes of a Native American reader and offers frank commentary on the medium's cultural representation of Indigenous people.

ILLUSTRATED BY

Kyle Charles

Cree, Whitefish Lake First Nation

About

Kyle has been a comic book illustrator for some of the largest publishers in the world including Image Comics, Heavy Metal, Aftershock and Marvel. His artwork can be seen on the popular titles *Roche Limit*; *Her Infernal Descent*; *Warpath*; '68: *Hallowed Ground*, and *Marvel's Voices*.

He is also an illustration teacher to local students, and has sat on the Board of Directors for a Charter High School for at-risk youth.



The Center for Court Innovation's Child Witness Materials Project is a collaborative effort between the Center for Court Innovation and Alternate History Comics, Inc. and is supported by cooperative agreement #2018-V3-GX-K069, awarded by the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Office for Victims of Crime. The opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this document are those of the contributors and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the U.S. Department of Justice.

The characters, names, events, and likenesses thereof are fictitious. Any relation to real events, people, or locations is unintentional and used in a fictitious manner.

The Center for Court Innovation works to create a more effective and humane justice system by performing original research and helping launch reforms around the world. www.courtinnovation.org

Alternate History Comics is a multiple award-winning publishing company that creates original graphic novels and cultural comic collections. <http://ahcomics.com>

The Center for Court Innovation is grateful to the project partners and stakeholders; justice system practitioners; and young survivors from all over the country who contributed to the development of this product.

NCJ 305313

The Office for Victims of Crime is committed to enhancing the Nation's capacity to assist crime victims and to providing leadership in changing attitudes, policies, and practices to promote justice and healing for all victims of crime.

www.ovc.ojp.gov

The Office of Justice Programs is a federal agency that provides federal leadership, grants, training, technical assistance, and other resources to improve the Nation's capacity to prevent and reduce crime, assist victims, and enhance the rule of law by strengthening the criminal and juvenile justice systems. Its six program offices—the Bureau of Justice Assistance, the Bureau of Justice Statistics, the National Institute of Justice, the Office for Victims of Crime, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, and the Office of Sex Offender Sentencing, Monitoring, Apprehending, Registering, and Tracking—support state and local crime-fighting efforts, fund thousands of victim service programs, help communities manage sex offenders, address the needs of youth in the system and children in danger, and provide vital research and data.



Office for Victims of Crime
OVC