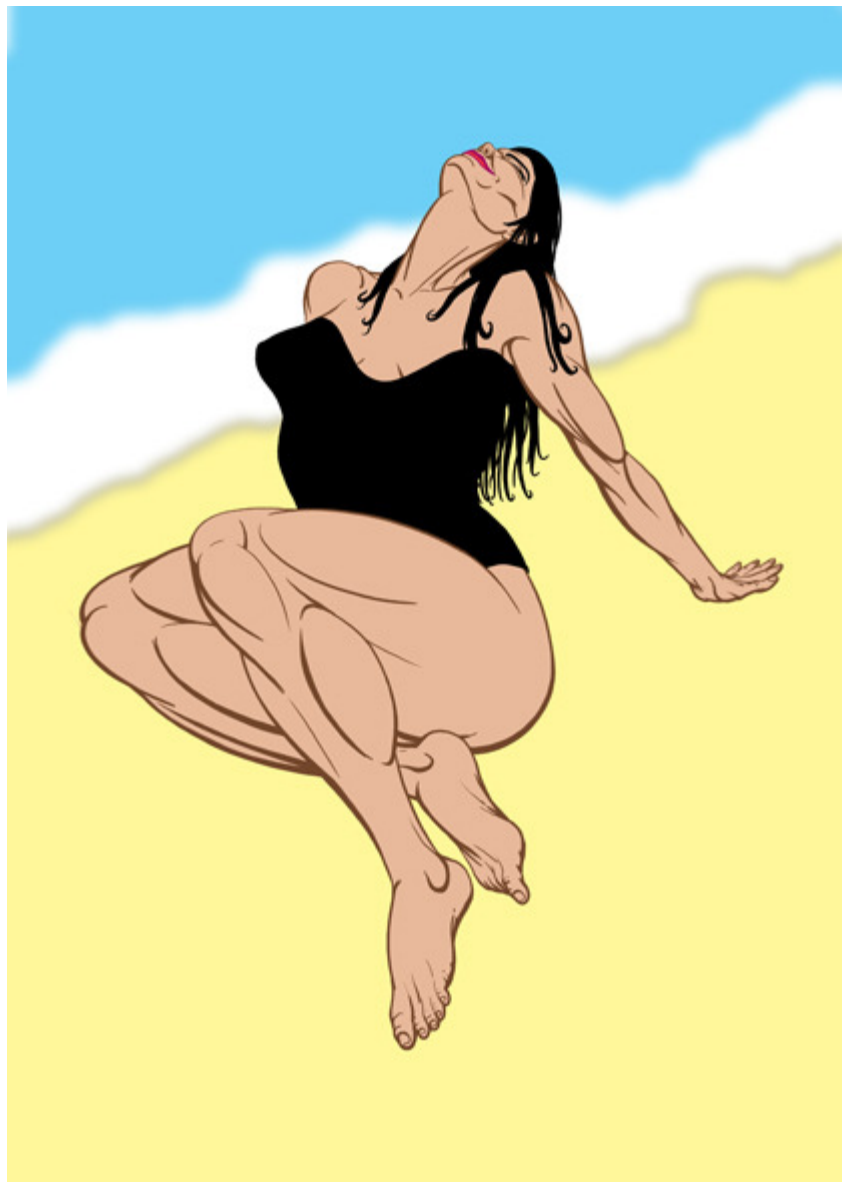




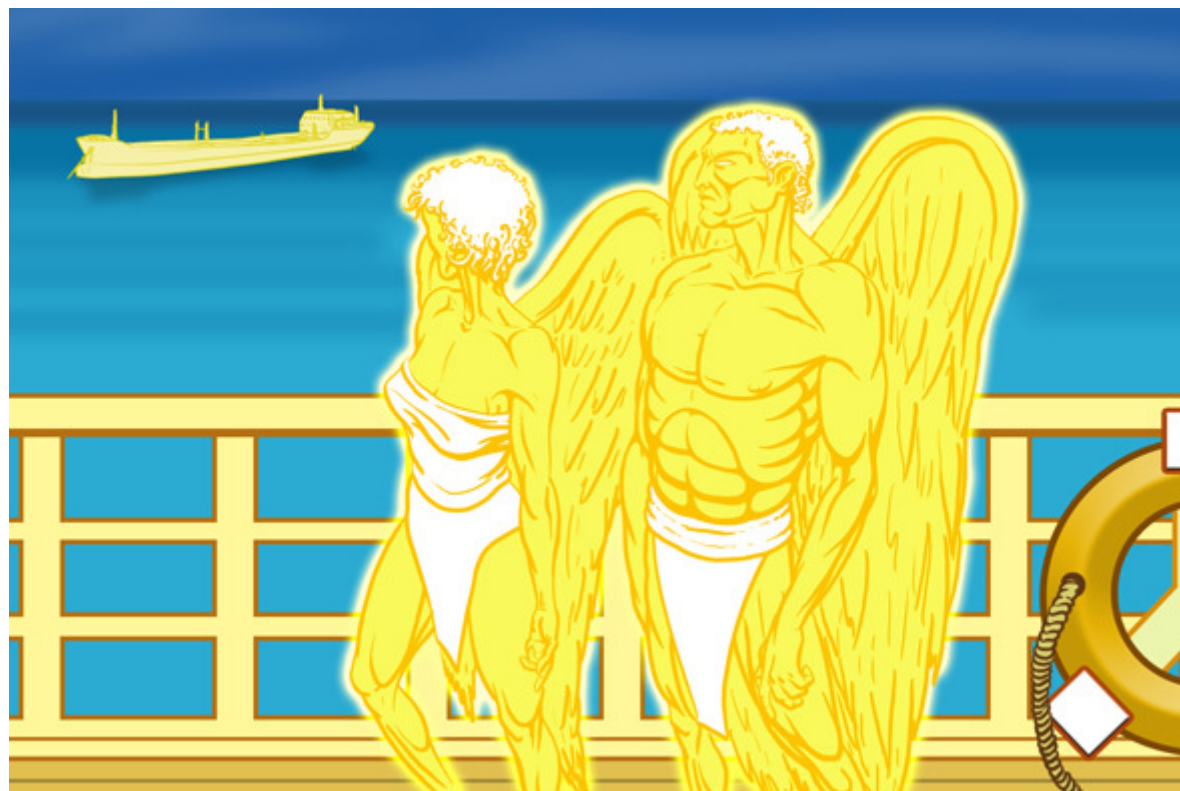
So, I finally feel like I'm getting somewhere. The Alameda script took the best part of 2 months to plan, write, and edit. It's 77 pages long/ short, depending on what you expect from a graphic novel. But the story is there in its entirety, and there's no flab. Personally I think it's 77 pages well filled, an emotional roller-coaster ride, and hopefully noone will feel short-changed once they've read it!



The whole time I was writing I was also drawing the conceptual art, and working on an approach for the final comics pages. The character designs came pretty easily, as they're loosely based on real life...Alameda is semi-autobiographical, after all.



There's some weirdness going on in Alameda too...so designs and concepts for other kinds of characters/ beings have been worked on...



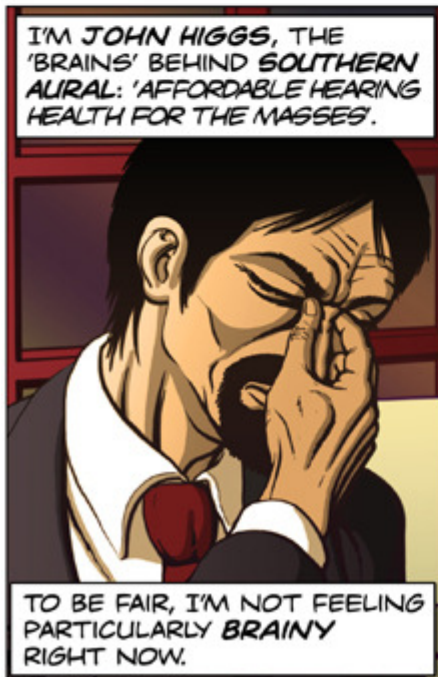
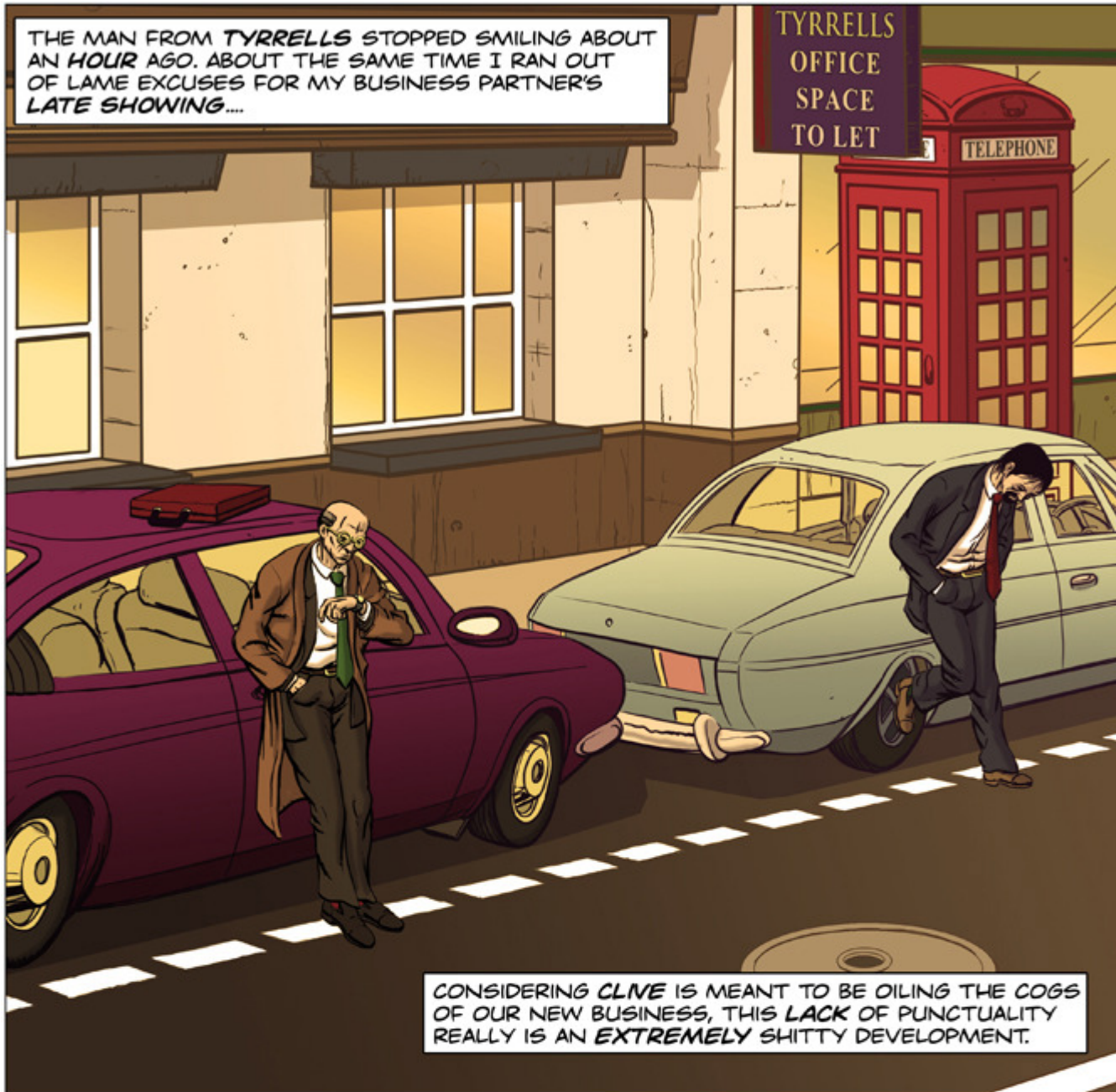
While all this has been going on I've been trying to sort out an approach for the colouring that doesn't reflect the use of digital tools such as the Wacom pad and Photoshop. I want the whole thing to be as organic in style as Jack in the Box, which, despite being wholly digital in execution, came out looking pretty home-grown, almost as if I'd got my hands dirty with traditional pen and inks. So I rattled off a quick sketch, which took an hour in all, as opposed to the two hours + the other concepts have taken...just to get that sense of energy back into it, both in the line and the colour:



Once I did this I'd pretty much cemented in my mind the techniques I was going to use for page one...which incidentally had been left semi-pencilled until such time as I felt happy to finish it off. Jack in the Box was the same, and I recall Last of the Chickenheads causing me similar agonies. The first page is always the toughest on any new project, because it sets the tone and style for the entire project. You can't go changing mid-novel, or it will look like you went in completely unprepared.

So, thankfully I've got it all clear as to how Alameda is going to look as a finished project. Right, enough waffle...here's page one (please scroll down), finished just before Christmas takes over and leaves me unable to draw 'til the seasonal madness abates. I hope you like it!

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