

I Will Never Be Happy

by Amanda Nazario

The panels of this comic strip are not of a uniform size; they, and what is in them, seem to have been drawn by an amateur or someone under duress. All twelve of the panels feature a cartoon woman wearing a striped sweater, sitting at a table.

PANEL 1

The woman sits with arms folded. In front of her is a can of soda with a straw in it. A scalloped-edged thought balloon over her head reads: I will never be happy.

PANEL 2

A hand in the lower left corner of the panel holds a plate with small cylinders on it, as if to place them on the table. The plate is labeled, with an arrow pointing at it: SPRING ROLLS. The woman looks at the plate.

PANEL 3

A scalloped-edged thought balloon above the woman's head reads: Maybe I should amend that. Her cartoon hand holds two long cartoon line segments; these (chopsticks) grip one of the cylinders.

PANEL 4

*The woman's face bulges on one side to signify that she is eating. A scalloped-edged thought balloon above her reads: I will **sometimes** be happy.*

PANEL 5

*The hand in the lower-left-hand corner reaches for the plate, which is empty. The woman's scalloped-edged thought balloon is larger than previous ones. Inside, the text reads: This principle can be applied in other situations too! I just figured it out! It's AMAZING! *She is smiling.**

Available online at [«http://fictionaut.com/stories/amanda-nazario/i-will-never-be-happy»](http://fictionaut.com/stories/amanda-nazario/i-will-never-be-happy)

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PANEL 6

A smaller thought balloon; the plate absent. The woman's face calm.

Text: I will never have a hovercraft.

PANEL 7

The woman's face stern, triumphant. Text: No! I will **sometimes** have a hovercraft!

PANEL 8

Stern and triumphant as before. Text: Jeff will never want to sleep with me again.

PANEL 9

Even sterner and more triumphant. Text: Jeff will **sometimes** want to sleep with me again.

PANEL 10

*The woman's arm is lifted, her hand holding the soda can. Her face is expressionless. Inside the thought balloon: I will **sometimes** be considered a genius in my lifetime.*

PANEL 11

The scalloped-edged thought balloon is wider, more pillowy, than previous ones. The woman's arm is lifted, the soda can in front of her face and the straw in her mouth. Text: My peers will **sometimes** encounter a talent remotely like mine.

PANEL 12

A small legend in the lower right-hand corner reads: END. The hand reappears in the lower left-hand corner, holding a black rectangular dish with a bill inside it. Above the woman's head, a comet descends toward Earth, its tail made up of tiny five-pointed stars with minuscule lines radiating from each star to signify that it is glittering. Behind the hindmost star is an issue of smoke, depicted

with curly, chaotic scribbling—this smoke fills the rest of the frame and obscures the woman's head and body, the tabletop, and all of the surrounding space.

