

Hmmburger



Calibrating

2026.01

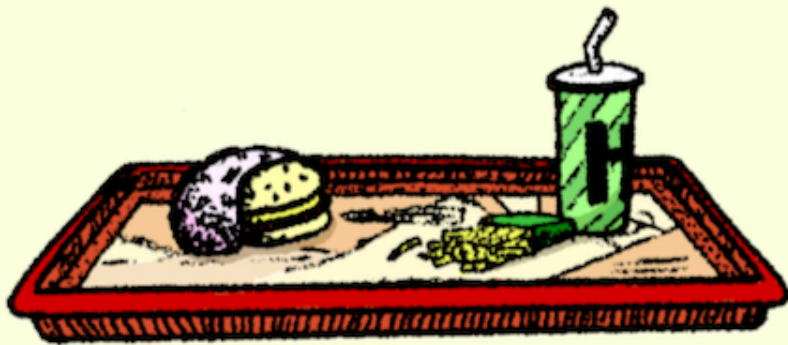
Yum!



Calibrating

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Stories and art by Vincent Gonzalez



hmm...



Greetings Burgerheads

The stuff inside of this issue is from the latter half of 2025 and early 2026 (January - March). The reality is my day-to-day changed and it has changed working on this project.

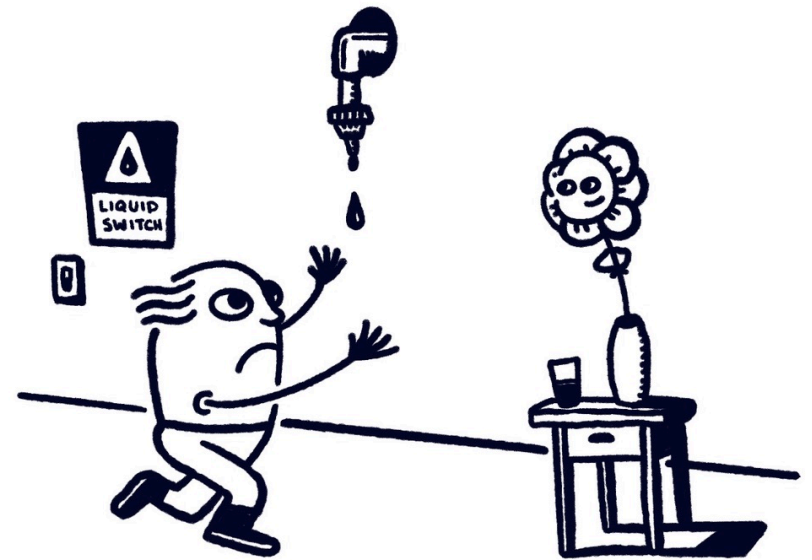
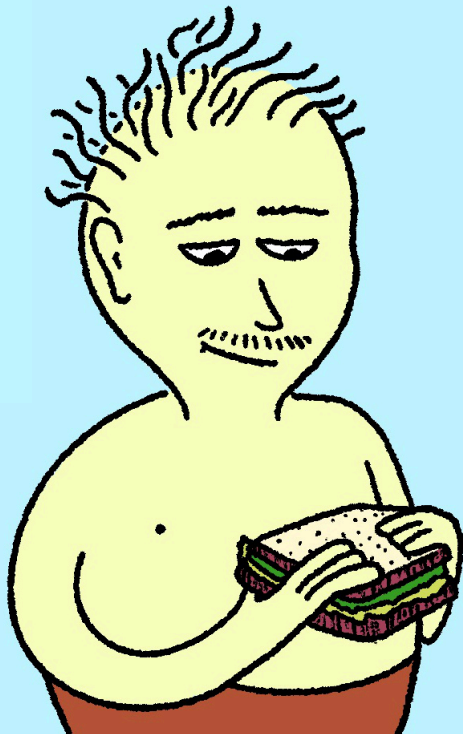
I don't have too much to say other than enjoy the visual treat that is this issue.

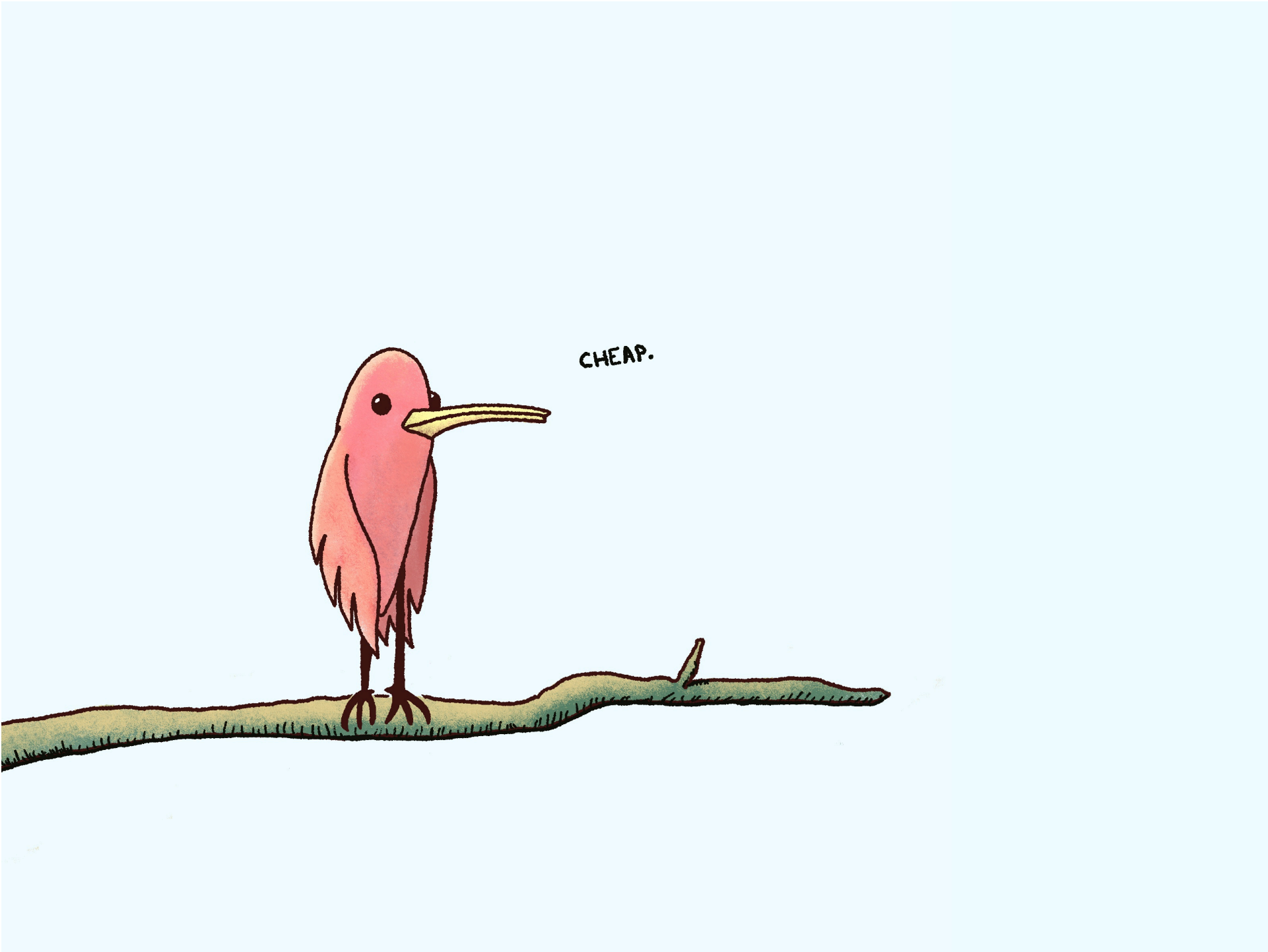
Breaking these pieces from the web to a print layout, wonderful. You should do it.

Have a wonderful day!

Vincent

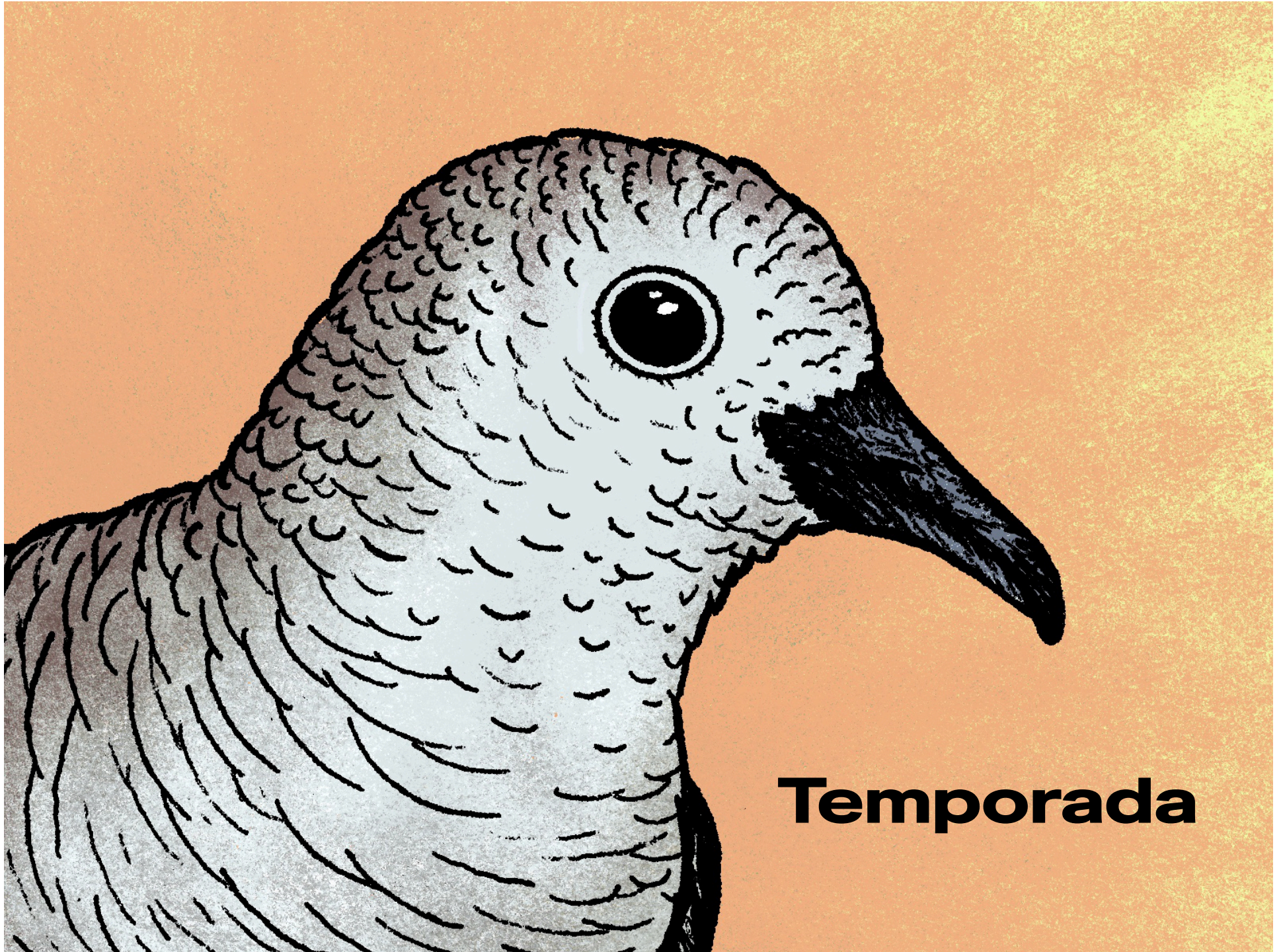
Yes, finally, a place for
this mess.







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It's not entirely nice out, but I am enjoying being in my yard on this borderline hot day.

Decades of living in the desert turns you into an inverse lizard. You look for the best shade you can find and stay still. If you're lucky, a cool breeze will delight the senses.

A wall of mechanized sound reverberates behind me reminding me that it is indeed not nice out. In front of me, the sounds of my makeshift birdbath, wind chimes swinging in the breeze, and birds chirping at each other about what's good today.

Soon the mimosa tree begins to dance in the afternoon breeze, its shadow barely casts over the bottom of the solar panel causing my lovely birdbath to sputter and slow. Of course, I picked the worst solar panel money could buy.

As quickly as that breeze came, so did the afternoon crawl. The breeze turned into a whisper, the chimes stood still, but the spring was reinvigorated.

Then they swooped down. I didn't see them, but a gang of house sparrows in the mimosa tree decided to claim the shredded bread butts. I wasn't going to use them and they were a bit stale, truly prime for the birds.

It wasn't long until the chirping made way for cooing as now there is a dove family reunion. The darling Inca doves, the soothing mourning doves, a couple of collared doves, and of course our maligned friend, the rock dove.

The sparrows kept lookout for the neighborhood cats. One in the tree and one on the power line watched as the feast

turned into the neighborhood social. They kept their eyes on me, so I kept *still to let the rest get that bread.*

The larger doves had a crumb too many and began to bully the smaller ones. Most of them ignored them while the remaining hopped up onto the rocks to bathe in the plant saucer of water next to the bird bath.

The spring seemed to struggle for a moment but I didn't see what caused it. The remaining birds, hopping around looking for crumbs, were nowhere near the solar panel. Not a cloud in the sky. The air is still.

Just as quickly as it slowed, it was back to filling the yard with its soothing splashing.

"Never buy another cheap solar panel." I think and begin to trail off, "I wonder how hard running low voltage is?"

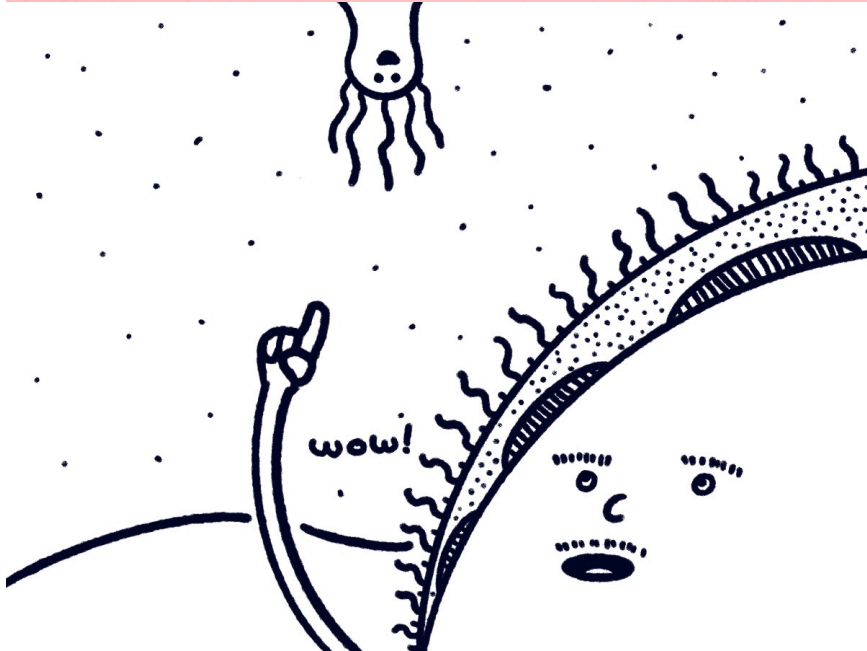
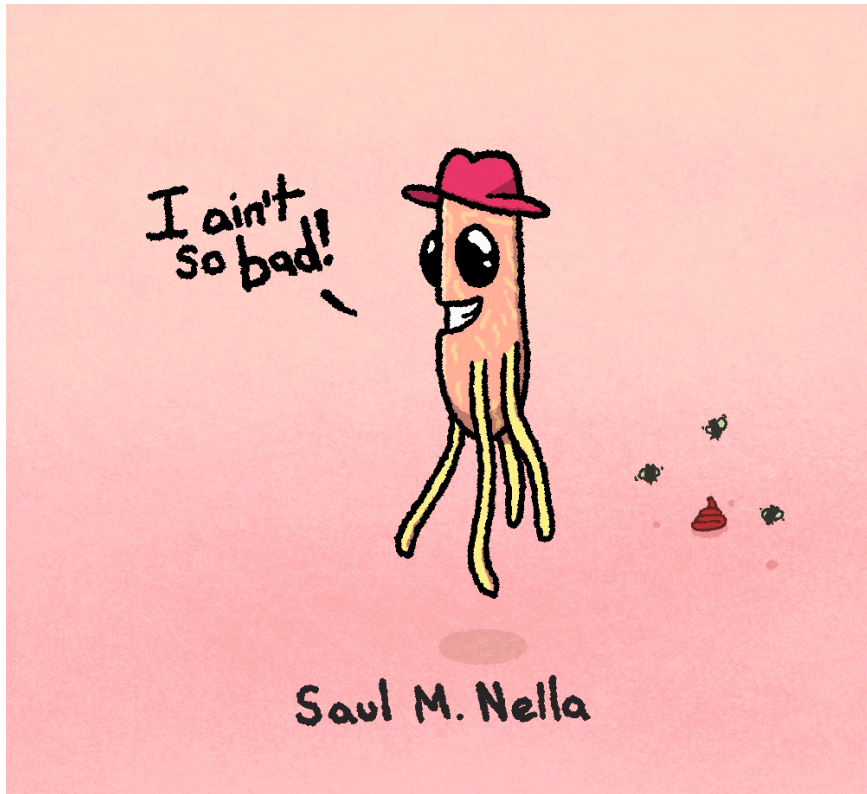
Again, the lively splashing of the birdbath turned to a trickle.

I look up again, "Oh."

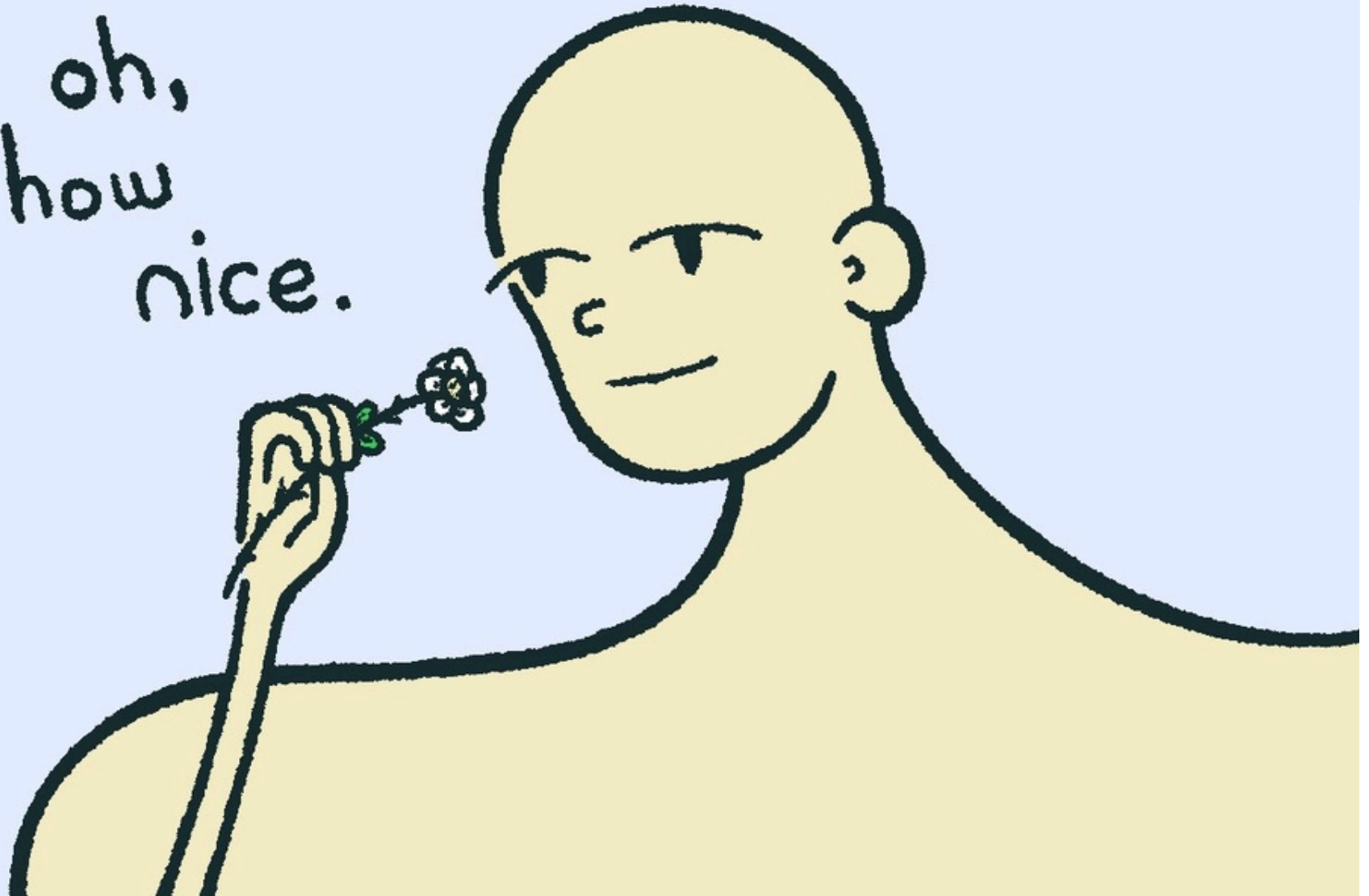
I can get up and that'll cause them to scatter. Or I can let them wait and find out there is a hawk circling above.

Do I let them know? Who am I feeding?

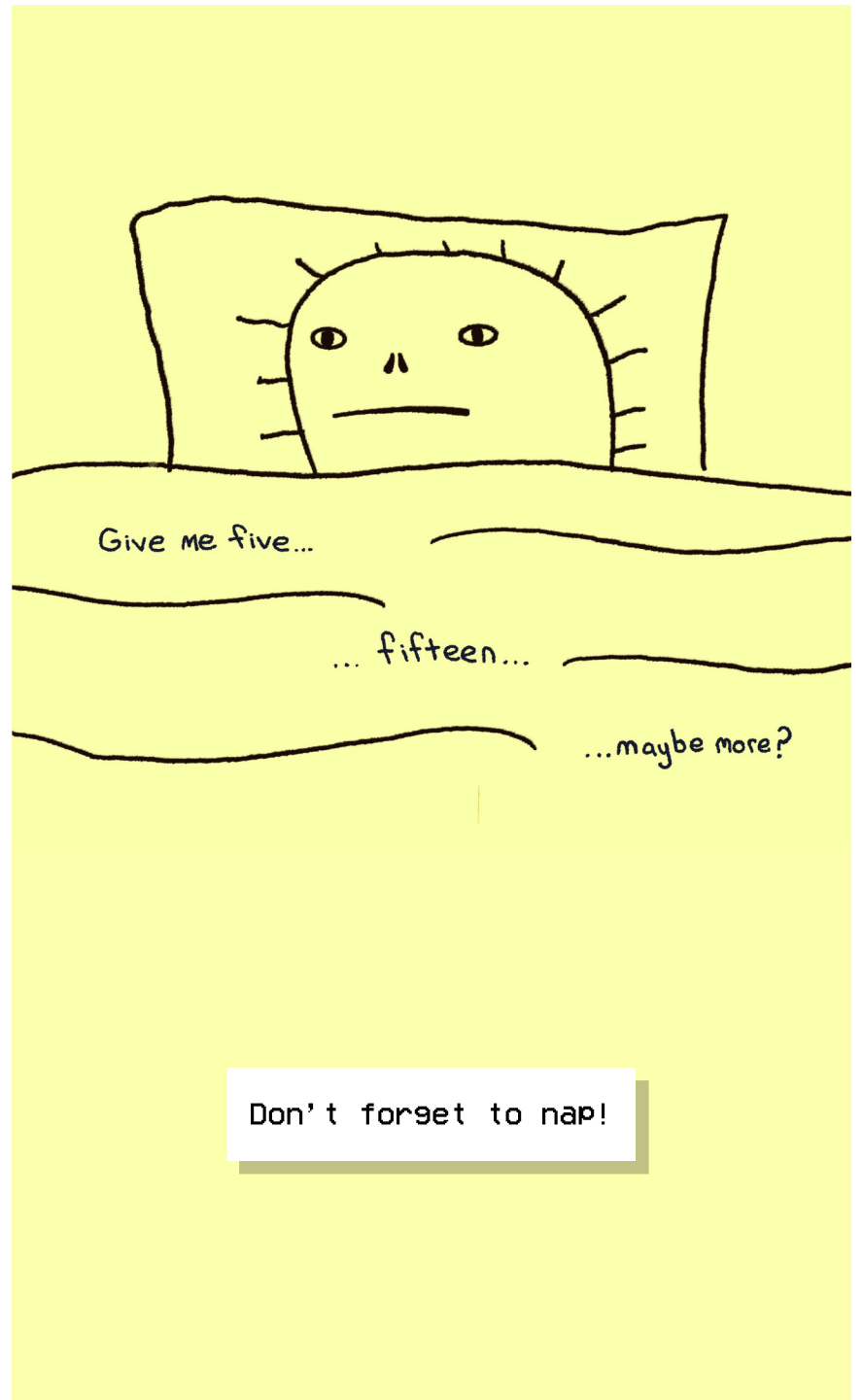


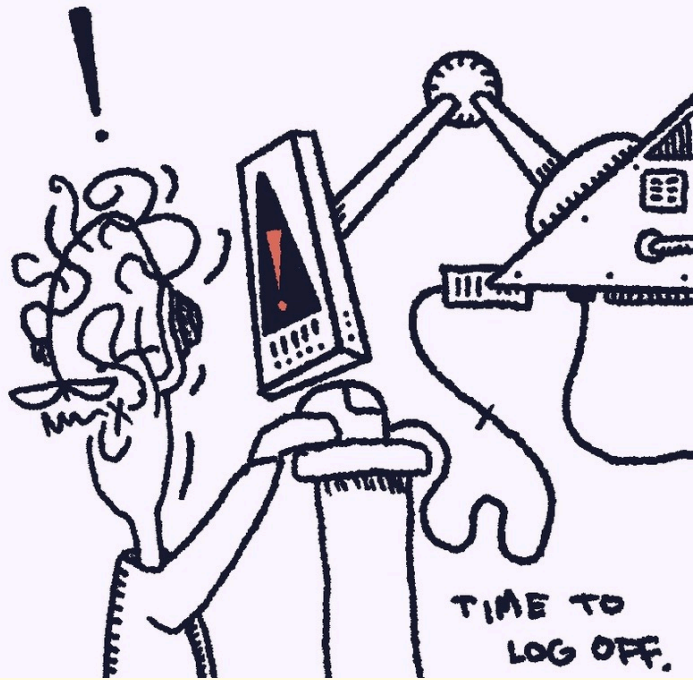


oh,
how
nice.





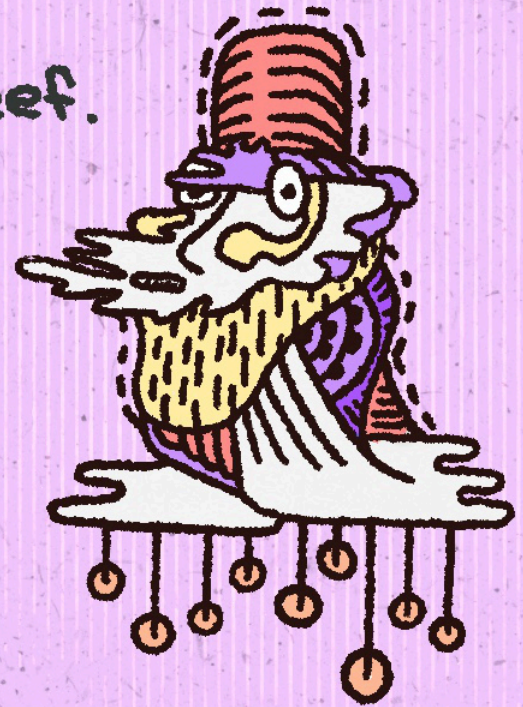


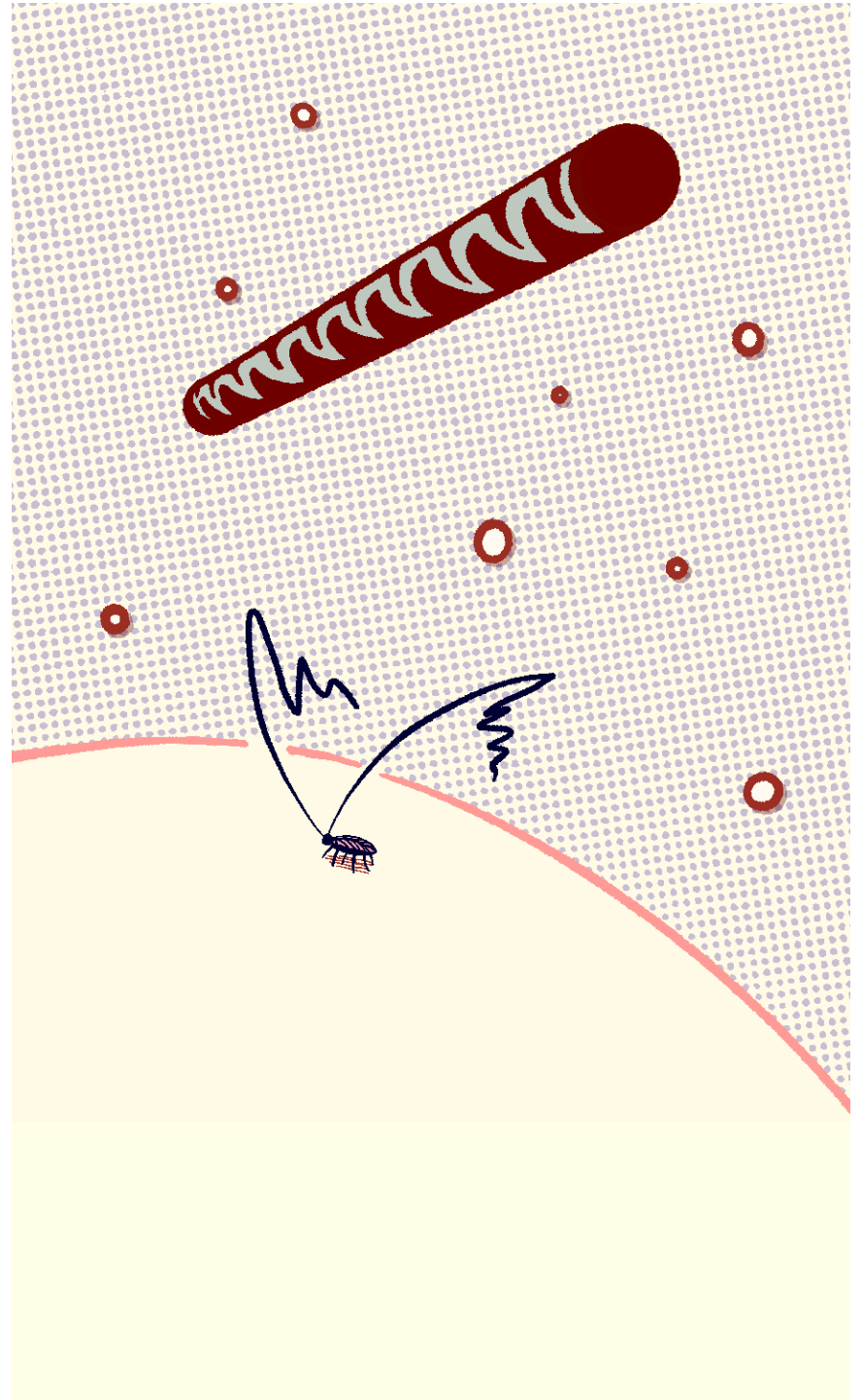
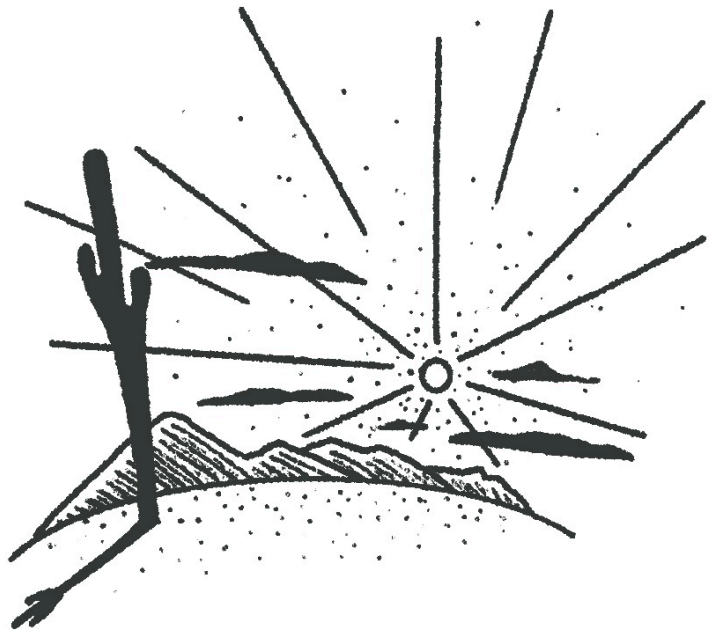


Shhh...
I'm thinking.



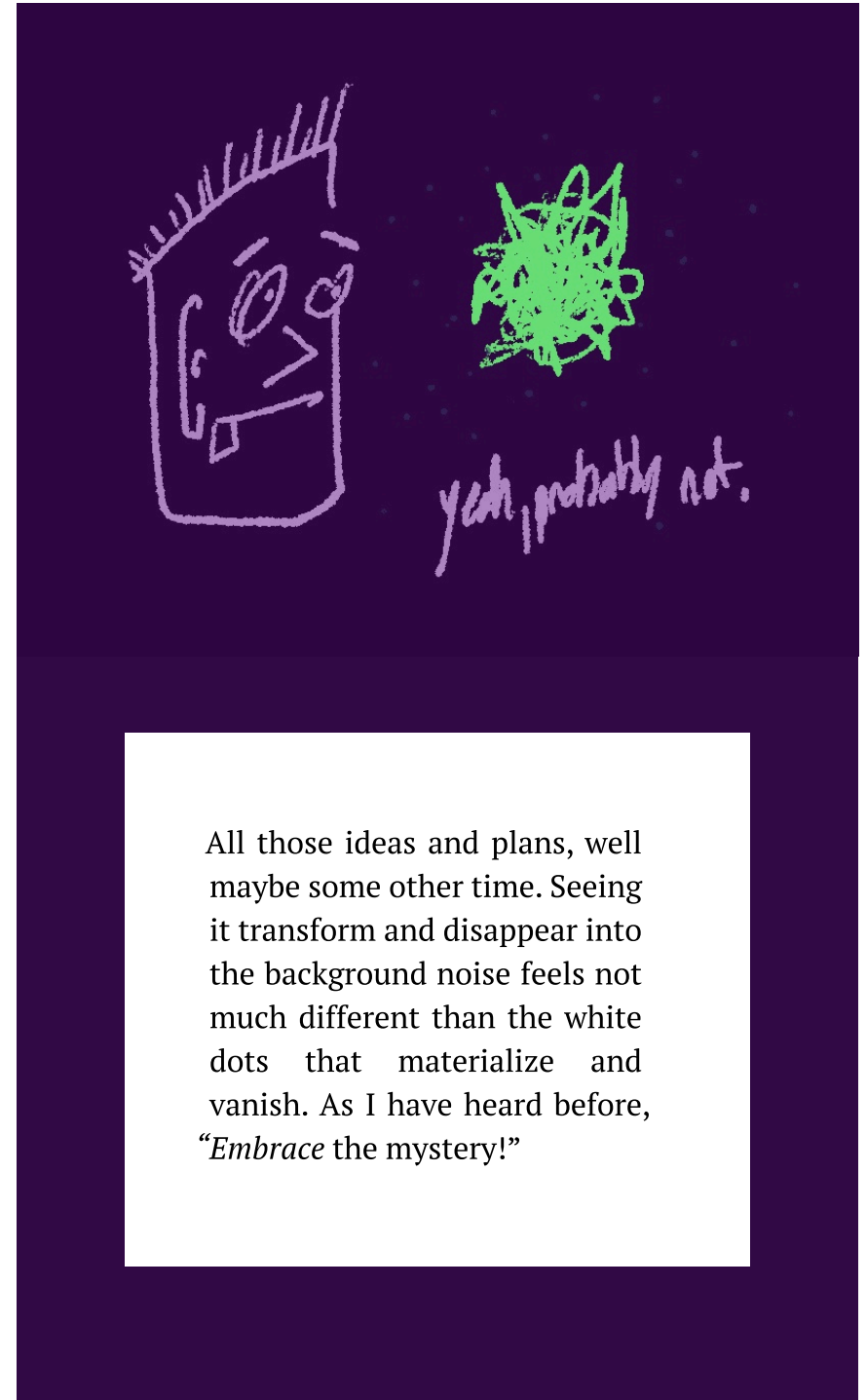
beef.

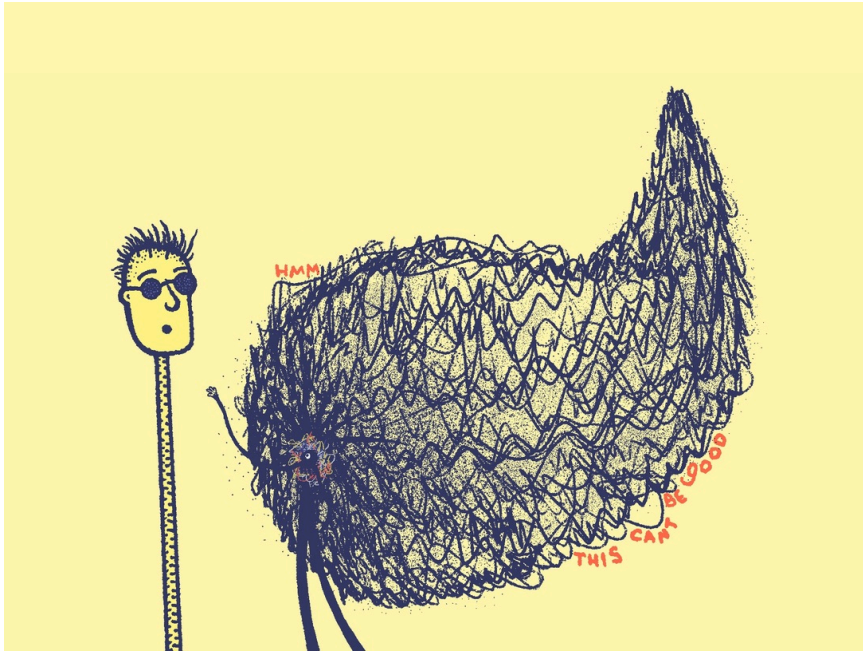






Even in the darkness, one should try to grow.





hmm.

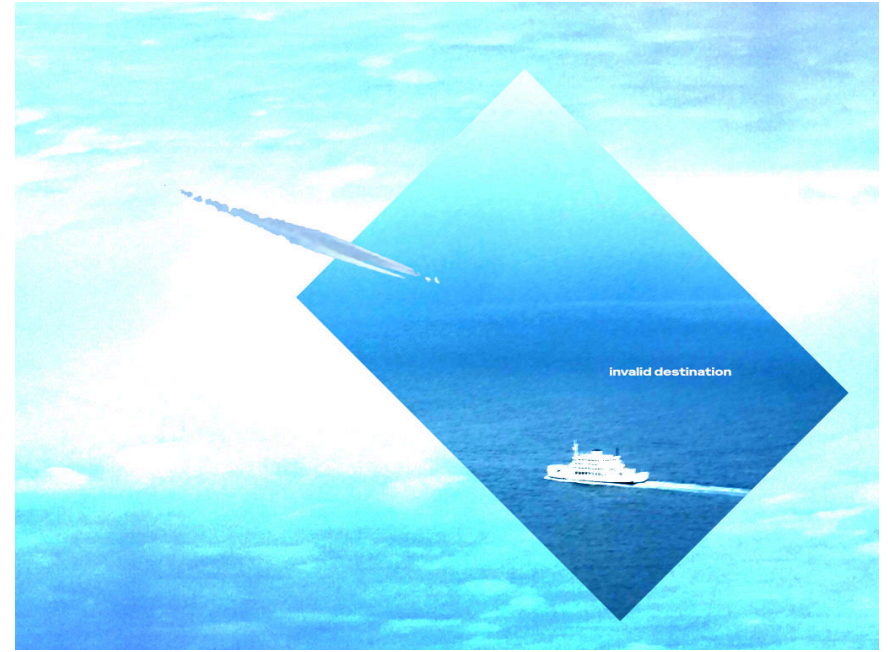
when it first appeared as a bunch of random dots, we thought nothing of it.

now each dot seems to connect and has developed a bigger dot that looks like it's looking at me. it reaches out its little hand. a gesture of goodwill?

that doesn't feel right.

its other hand rests on what i think is its hip as the space around it tears into itself.

this can't be good.



How did you get here?

Like, it's not a problem that you are here, but you seem like you meant to be somewhere else.

I'm not sure if there are any ways to get to where you thought you were going. It probably doesn't make sense to think about where you wanted to go because you're here now.

Since you're here now, you may as well enjoy the sights and sounds. There are many wonderful things here for you, made especially for you.

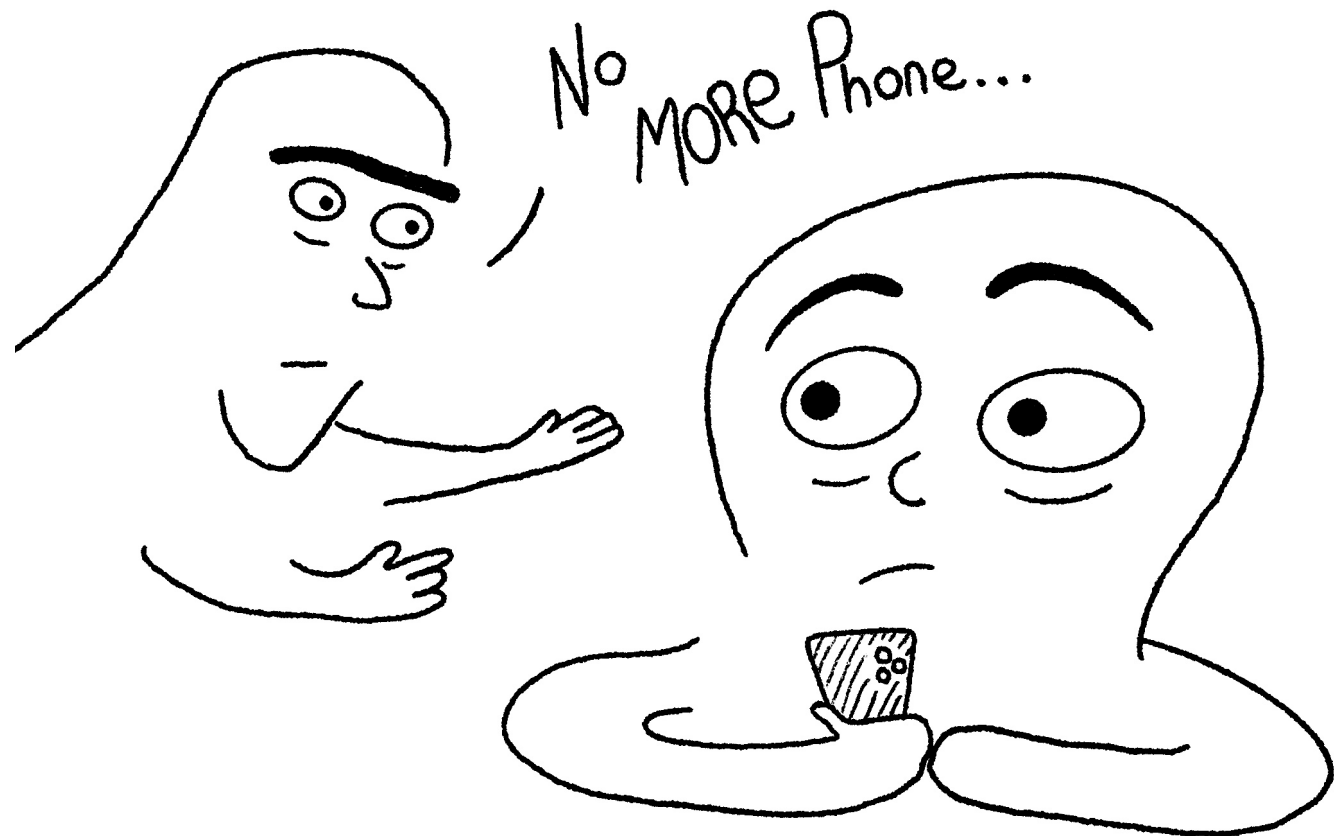
A lot of this should feel natural to you. Maybe, this is only a temporary invalid destination to hold you over until the next boarding time.

Enjoy your stay.

It's time to leave.

Did you see the time?

I am going to be late.





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