

The Adventures
of the
FORTIAN
LEAGUE



Trouble Royale

Written and Illustrated by

Belotes

Printed and published by

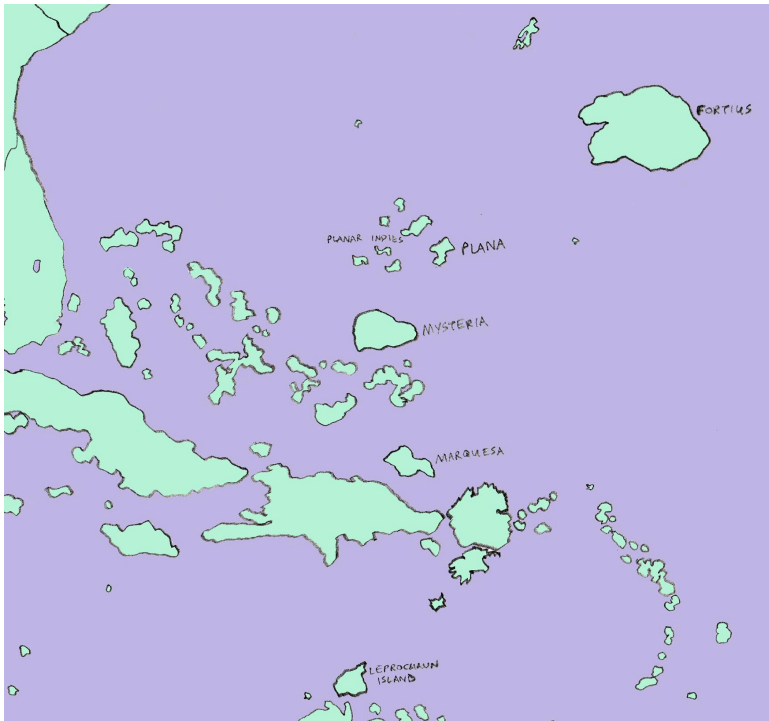
CORA-D

2023

Disclaimers:

These events happen in the far future - don't worry about it.

These pictures are not idols, please don't worship them.



Welcome back to the future, where anything is possible. Islands even appear out of nowhere!

Are you hungry?

Learn more about the future on the web at: <https://chadbelote.wixsite.com/chad/fortian-league>

Did you meet Lu yet?

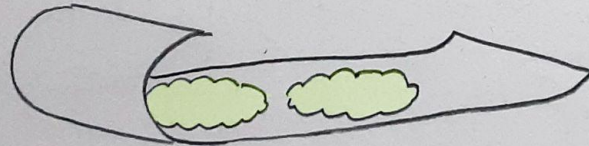
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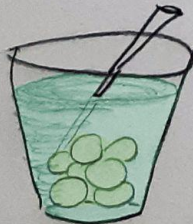
Posta con
carne

Cornfish stick



Pastecakes

Malteada
Baboo



Chocoladadado



The heroes sat in a waiting room, surrounded by the king's royal attendants. One attendant had some food menus. Miss Sparkle stared at the menu. They had assumed this would be quick.

Inside an annex of the courthouse, Judge Fred Pattinson AKA Tony Noir AKA The Inquisitionator, had been retained by King Enrique to get answers.

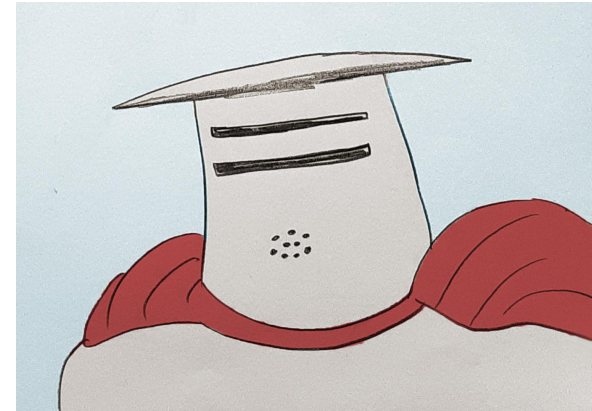
"Inquisitionator's Challenge!" he yelled at his assistants. "BRING THEM IN, ONE BY ONE. SEPARATE THE REST, AND REMOVE ALL THEIR EQUIPMENT." The attendants did his bidding, and returned with a hero.

"Ahhhhh... MISS SPARKLE, We are here to examine your possible ties with anyone who has colonized the sun. HOW DO YOU PLEAD?"

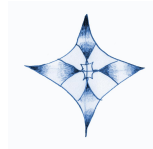
"What does that meeeaaan?" Miss Sparkle started laughing. She was nervous because of the way they had treated her and her compatriots. They had not been allowed to sleep or eat for more than 24 hours! She usually ate every 30 nutos (minutes in future slang).

"Put on the BRAINWAVE SCANNER!" the Inquisitionator shrieked. The attendants jumped and quickly complied. Miss Sparkle was so tired that she didn't resist. They switched it on, and saw her innermost thoughts! There was a cloud floating very slowly, on by... it was filled with rain and the sky was dim. They zoomed in and saw a bunch of Miss Sparkles eating from a buffet.

"DO YOU WORSHIP THE SUN?" Then the Inquisitionator turned to the scanner screen and expected something heretical. But there was almost no response, the cloud just floated on, and it was getting dark... Miss Sparkle had never gone more than a day without food before. The cloud was storming now. Miss Sparkle slowly, ever so slowly, looked upward. Her angry eyes met The Inquisitionators, through the mask. He was sweating, he realized he was making a huge mistake. He looked over, his attendants were shaking.



"You have been found INNOCENT, for TODAY! (Keep up the good work, Miss Sparkle, it was an honor to meet you.)" They took off the brainwave scanner and the attendants led her out. She was released out the back door where there was a large courtyard. She was immediately given a strawberry milkshake and led to the cafe. They gave her pie. Then a turkey sandwich. Then some iced tea, and mango juice. Then some chili and pea soup, some chorizo tacos, chickerpillar churros with chocolate drizzle, berry scones and.....



Fred was shaken. "She is a little scary. Are they all like that?" The attendants looked at each other, mumbled, and bided their time. They were being paid handsomely. "OK, bring it. Next!" The attendants exited and brought in the next hero. The Inquisitionator stood up and said loudly, "MISS FARIN..."

"I'm not a miss!" Farin countered.

"Umm.." *ahem* "Isn't it true... you once had... A POOL PARTY?"

"No! It was probably Everest's..."

"AND... at this pool party... did you not shoot FIREWORKS that were UNLICENSED?"

"Oh. Well.. I need help..." Farin said feebly.

"WHO? WHO HELPED YOU?"

"Miss Sparkle!"

The Inquisitionator's mouth dropped then. Behind the mask he hoped no one could tell. He was sweating so much, and realized he could do nothing to her for the fireworks, since he already pronounced Miss Sparkle innocent.. and certainly didn't want to bring Miss Sparkle back here (he recalled her burning eyes looking into his soul, through the mask (!) and shivered).

"Innocent! (Keep up the good work, and please let your coordinators know next time you are going to shoot fireworks.)"

They led out Farin. She wobbled over to the cafe, and apologized to Miss Sparkle for telling on her for the fireworks, and they had to get approval before using fireworks. Miss Sparkle laughed, and then they talked about how weird he was. Farin felt bad, and vowed to never tell on her teammates again.



"Next!" The attendants led in the team leader, Whirl. "MISS WHIRL... Do you or do you not think actions or thoughts AGAINST HIS OR HER MAJESTIES, your sworn rulers?" Miss Whirl looked around at the attendants, some of whom she had met before, but they did not look at her. She didn't want to say she didn't understand all of what he said, because she had to be smart as team leader. "Well? What is your answer? ARE YOU GUILTY?"

"No." She hoped that would be enough.

"OK good. You're free to go. Nice job at the wall. And getting Zydi. The world is in your debt." They led Whirl out. She flew over to her friends and they got milkshakes. The waiters had left the bus-cart for their dishes, because Miss Sparkle was going through things so fast.



They led in Fleea. The Inquisitionator was shaking his head, flipping through her huge file. "MISS FLEEA..... I... you thought it would be OK to smash two holes in the Royal Mansion?"

"I was angry," Fleea said. That was true.

"WHO PUT YOU UP TO IT? Tell the TRUTH, I can TELL!" He had a limited ability to detect lies, given his own sketchy past. The king promised him a bonus if he could find any of the items.



Fleea started fake crying. "They wouldn't let me in the parade... The Queen... She wouldn't let me."

"OK... OK... OK... Where did you put all the stuff from the king's armory?"

"I don't know."

"Did you take down the power?"

"No," Fleea said, though her plants did in fact do it, by accident. She didn't know that for sure.

"You don't know where any of the items you took went? There's rotted plant stuff everywhere."

"Would you like to refill my tea?" The Inquisitionator smacked the cup, and Fleea was fake crying really hard.

"WHERE ARE THEY?" the Inquisitionator yelled.

"My plants wrecked them, probably!"

"The plants?"

"Yeah."

The Inquisitionator was considering putting the brainwave scanner on her. He wondered if it would interact with her new bracelet that prevented plants from spontaneously growing. As he started to give the order, Fleea's mom Heirme entered the room, smacked the closest attendants, and punched the Inquisitionator directly in the face. He tumbled backward.

"I am the head of security for Fortius! Do you think you can interrogate my daughter under my nose?" She pushed a force bubble over top of the Inquisitionator, pinning him in the corner. Then she picked up Fleea and floated outside. They had a long conversation. Heirme would help Fleea later, to hunt down the items. Fleea joined her friends.

The Inquisitionator got up when the field dissipated. "Oh man, I need a drink!"



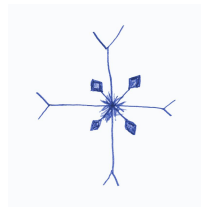
The attendants brought in the next hero. "MISS EVEREST... have you and Fierce ever used your powers to change the weather FOR YOUR OWN BENEFIT?" Everest froze the sweat on her before it accumulated. "Those powers belong to the STATE, young lady."

"That's not nice," Everest said.

The Inquisitionator went on. "Did you FREEZE the Royal Mansion's batteries?"

Everest frowned. "No!"

"INNOCENT! NEXT!" Everest hopped on a cloud and rode over to the cafe, and got a huge cheeseburger.



They led in the next hero. "MISS CAROLINE... or is it Carolin-A?"

"It's Caroline."

"That cat is not licensed!"

"He is too."

"Is it?" He pulled her pet's record out of her file, showing her cat was not paid up. "YOU OWE THE STATE 15 SLICKS*!"

*Fortian currency

"...OK."

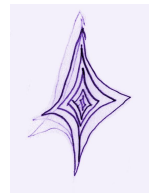
"Could your bad luck powers affect someone for ... a long time?"

"Forever, I think."

The Inquisitionator quaked in his boots at that. His mouth was dry. "Can you feel later, even faraway, when the bad luck turns off?"

"No." He sucked in air, and almost doubled over. Caroline went on. "Sometimes, even in my dreams..."

"INNOCENT! You have a GREAT day!" He cowered as the attendants hurried her out. Caroline ran over to the cafe.



They led in the last hero available to be interviewed. "MISS FIERCE... those powers... could be dangerous, no?"

"Only if they need to be." She smiled at him, but her eyes were full of hate. He shivered under his mask... what a day!

He swallowed. "Is that your signature on the League rulebook agreement?"

"Yes."

"Ahhh... it's good to get the TRUTH out... DID YOU TAKE DOWN THE ELECTRICITY at the Royal Mansion?"

"No way!"

"OK. Innocent! Court is adjourned!"

Fierce was led out. The Inquisitionator hurried out a hidden back door, down a deserted hall, and around the corner. He unlocked his judge's chamber, disrobed, and put his costume in a box in a closet. Then he dressed casually and left in a hurry.

Whirl, Miss Sparkle, Farin, Fierce, Flea, Everest, and Caroline had a blast at the cafe, but Miss Sparkle ate everything they had!

They were relaxing at sunset with the wind in their faces, holding their milkshake, smoothie, or snackup. When Fred walked across the street to his car, Miss Sparkle and Fierce recognized him. He looked at them. They were all pointing and laughing. Fred burnt rubber taking off.

FORTIAN LEAGUE

When the Diamond group arrived back on Fortius for vacation, King Enrique met him at the airport and demanded they complete the contract they had signed. Mr. Diamond reviewed the contract and noted the many places where the king also did not follow-through on his promises. The king was outraged, and they began to have a lively argument that had nothing to do with the contract at all. Mrs. Diamond was shocked by the language, and covered Julianna's ears, like she was a tiny child.

After a while, King Enrique handed him the updated bulletin. The king assured them, "They are not dangerous!... at all!" The king was bored. He had been stripped of his royal duties in the few weeks he was in Mysteria.

The king and Mr. Diamond stared each other down. They bitterly agreed that Mr. Diamond would deliver the Fortians they found in the file. The Fortian police were also on the lookout. Mr. Diamond secretly wanted to meet a few of these individuals to try to recruit them, if they were of suitable temperament.

Julianna flew over to the Fortian League headquarters, and submitted an application to join the team. They told her it would take 6-8 weeks to process the request, and she would hear back within 3 months.

after that. Julianna did not want to argue with those that she would work for... so she just stood there blinking for a minute. She asked if they were sure several times, then went to find her Mom. As Mr. Diamond had requested, a team of his scientific staff soon arrived and met him at the hotel. They showed him the new generation equipment. The team went to the roof to do testing.

Shortly after, the Queen arrived with her advisers. A small armed group took over the roof, putting down a brief scuffle. Then the Queen appeared.

Queen Persa walked straight up to Mr. Diamond, and knighted him, then his family. Then she announced that Julianna would be joining the Fortian League!

Before Mr. Diamond could say anything, the heroes showed up and showered them with glitter and shot fireworks just over their heads in a kaleidoscope of color and sound.

Julianna hugged him and Hortence and then flew off with her new team.



Some Fortians from the watchlist did not have secret identities. The Diamonds found a few right away. They sat them down and “discussed their future.” These were soft recruits for Diamond. He gave each a small journal with encouraging quotes.

When the Diamonds let the first villains go, the king sent two “helpers” along.



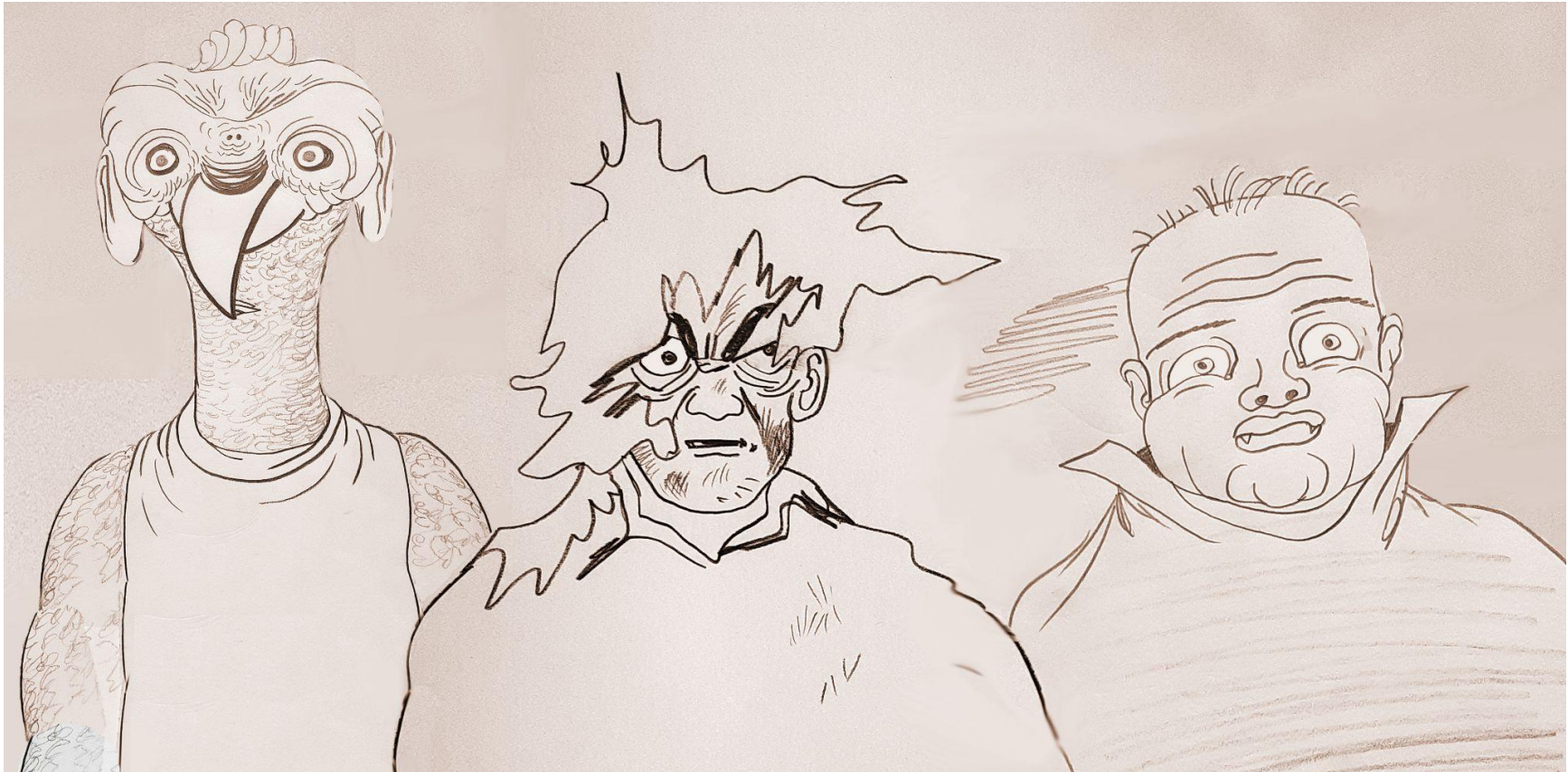
Mr. Diamond did not like the look of them, so he had them work together in a separate area.

They did well, finding and subduing Kwayin a.k.a. the Plan Man. He was in the middle of intensive planning, with photos of bank vaults and diagrams all over many huge tables.

“How did you get in here?” Plan Man cried. “Nooooo!”

CHARGE:
Conspiracy to commit crimes

Some of the Fortians were truly startling in appearance. But they were not very strong compared to the Diamonds. Their attacks backfired. A bite would turn into broken teeth.



CHARGES:

Assault
Robbery
Burglary

Assault
Attempted murder

Assault
Terrorizing
Drinking blood

The Diamonds worked well together, as usual.



Esposito did not like working with Esclanto.



Most of the supposed criminals had face and skin coverings, or were unknown.

They had comprehensive vid-log access for the city. With that, they tracked some villains backward from last known position footage. Some were not too difficult to track back to their homes or bases.

Others required a plan to unveil them. Dr. Judge and his accomplice were revealed on the night of a fake movie release based on Dr. Judge. The Diamonds knew he could not resist crashing “the party” for his own (fake) movie.



CHARGES: Assault, intimidation, impersonating a judge

Jonose and Mandero were out buying tacos. Wosim was stealing groceries. Everyone's got to eat. They all went down without a fight.



CHARGES:

Gang-related activities, arson



Theft, burglary

Some villains came from outside the city, or from underground. Flars appeared from out of nowhere, and flailed and throttled a whole football team. Mr. Diamond tracked him back to an illegal laboratory, where Flars had smashed some scientists and all their equipment. The 10 feet tall hunger-beast was darted and placed in the care of stress and nutrition specialists.



CHARGES: Assault, terrorizing



Denny Blonchar AKA Tornus was much stronger than Mr. Diamond. They approached him like fans, and ended up hiring him for security assistance on an as-needed basis.

Some in the bulletin had no photo or drawing, only a nickname and rumors.



“Twisting Blade of Justice? This is not real!” Mr. Diamond laughed nervously.

Dr. Yanéz was an interesting case. “Her charges are Magician, Alchemist, and possible connection to a murder,” Mr. Diamond read sarcastically. “Sounds like a witch hunt!” They went to her house, a large custom home with multiple levels. Mr. Diamond assumed incorrectly that many people lived here. But it was just Dr. Yanez, she answered the door herself.

She laughed when Mr. Diamond read her bulletin, and asked them to come in. Hortence smiled with the lady, who had a horrible hump. They walked together and Hortence got Mr. Diamond tea. “He is much calmer when he has his tea,” Hortence said. Mr. Diamond questioned her about the charges, and the doctor said she does work with very high-tech designs that can mimic magic. She was trying to redefine what was “impossible.” She showed him a special bracelet she wore. When she moved her hand around, it left trailers, so that her hand appeared to be everywhere at once.

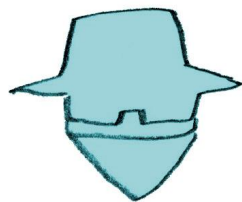
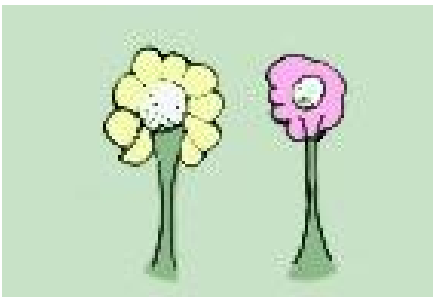


Mr. Diamond took a glance around the room, saw her Harvard doctorate, and then bowed to her. “Here is my card in case you need anything. My apologies for the intrusion, Doctor.” He turned and walked out. Hortence thanked the doctor and cleaned up, before catching up.

Hortence Diamond took several tours of the island. She was a history buff and had a near perfect memory. Fortius history was cloudy however, and stories of the old days that were wild disagreed on some details. The detective in her kept her looking for more. Hortence especially enjoyed the historical re-enactments, which were part acting, part animatronix, and part virtual reality. She noticed they usually had strange dark endings. In one, King Enrique cried very convincingly, begging for his life, before being murdered by his advisors. History and present politics collided.

After they had completed the contract to the king's satisfaction, the Diamonds were not sure where to go. The weather was so nice that some wanted to stay and enjoy the city more. Espono and Esclanto returned to Spain and would rendezvous with them again in a couple months. Julianna wanted to try out for the Fortian League.

Mr. Diamond's artifacts and relics arrived from Mysteria. He smiled, playing with all these strange objects. Most of them were either broken, uncharged, missing parts, or difficult to understand – all challenges that drove him to understand. Diamond set a bot scanning them. He was very pleased. He resumed knocking golfball flowers from his penthouse patio into the east harbor.



Julianna explored the city with Whirl, Miss Sparkle, and Everest. Julianna pried into their powers. Whirl could fly and float objects. She generated long-lasting winds and could pile up extreme bursts as Julianna had witnessed at the wall.

Everest could control the local weather, but especially loved the cold. She can fly, and she can make flying snowballs or ice spears at will.

Miss Sparkle was born in a solar pod. Her parents were scientists that raised her to be morally upright first. Miss Sparkle had a huge range of powers – flight, invulnerability, megastrength, light powers, laser eyes, revival, can energize others, telepathy, planetary supersenses, energy absorption, gravity manipulation, force field, . She could melt things and mold metals with her bare hands. Miss Sparkle was also an accomplished scientist and engineer, having fabricated numerous devices for the team and the Fortian defense. She could enter into a subject's dreams, and bring others along. She could make you see things in the dream world with full lucid control of the environment. She sometimes used this on villains to make them see their worst nightmares. When the heroes were with her in their dreams, the heroes sometimes discovered new powers of their own, or were able to break past their old limits, or address old traumas. Miss Sparkle could generate will-o-wisps that had rudimentary intelligence and could do simple tasks. The wisps lasted many hours before they either faded away or she re-empowered them.

The heroes stopped over at their cousins' house, to see if they wanted to fly along. But Sasha, Velvet, and Ashley were too busy doing chores.



Sasha, being the oldest, took charge since their mom and dad were mostly incapable of taking care of anyone.



Aunt Quavi did not care about eating and bathing.



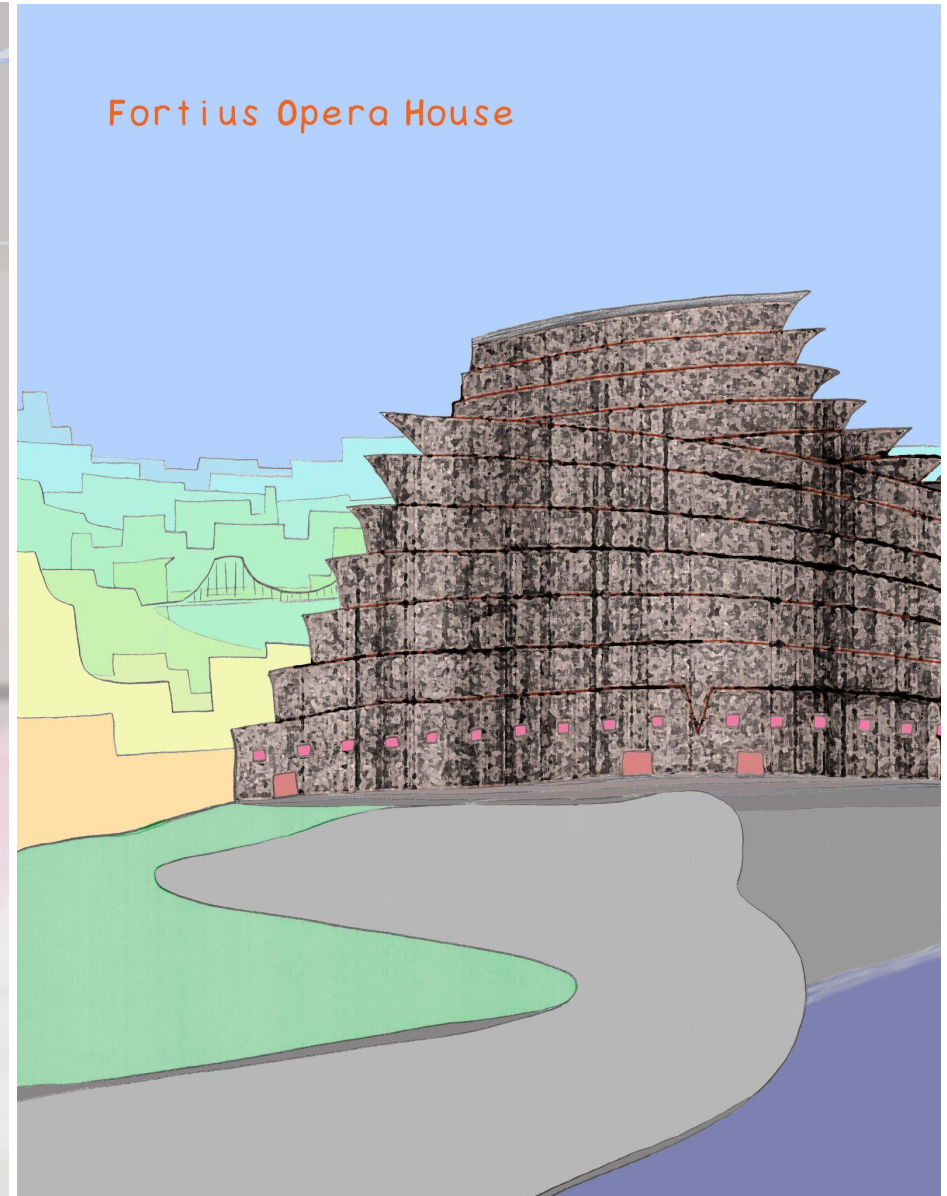
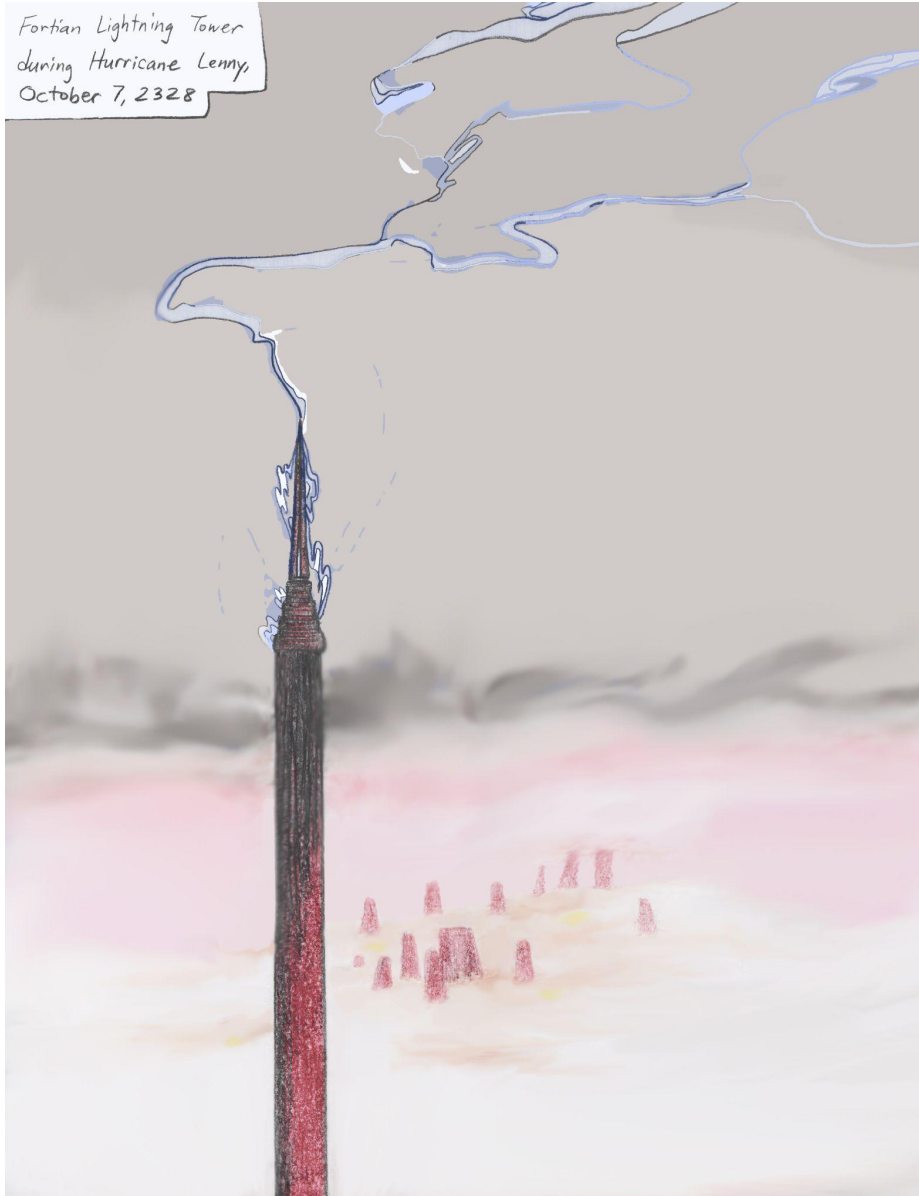
Aunt Quavi was very kind, and smiled all day.

Uncle Gorp had dementia. The children took good care of him.

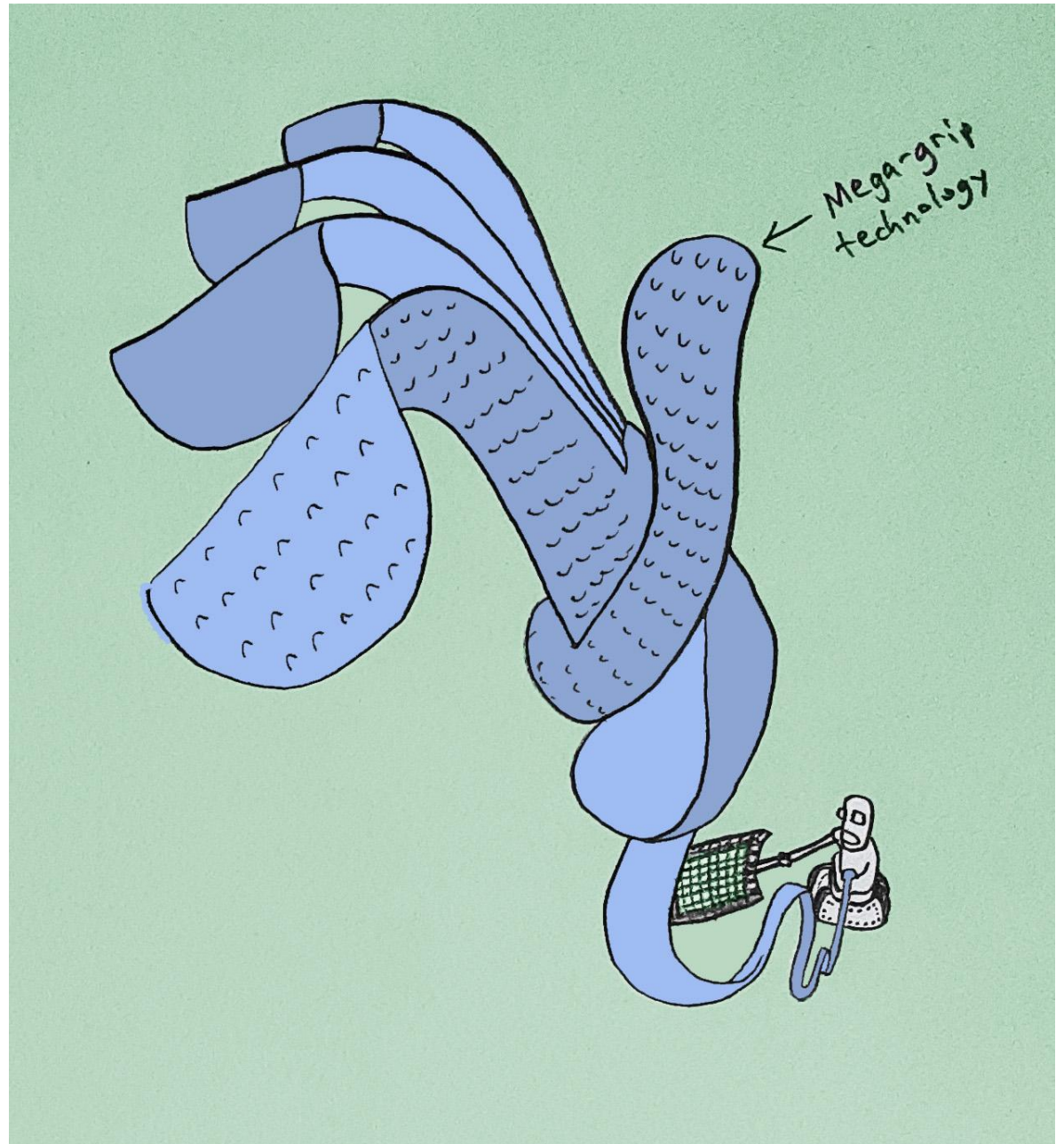


Uncle Gorp was the former queen's son, a true prince!

Julianna picked up a few postcards to send her friends.



The Fortians were animal lovers. They spent their time inventing things to make their pets safe, like the cat catcher bot.



Feeding time at Hartree farm!

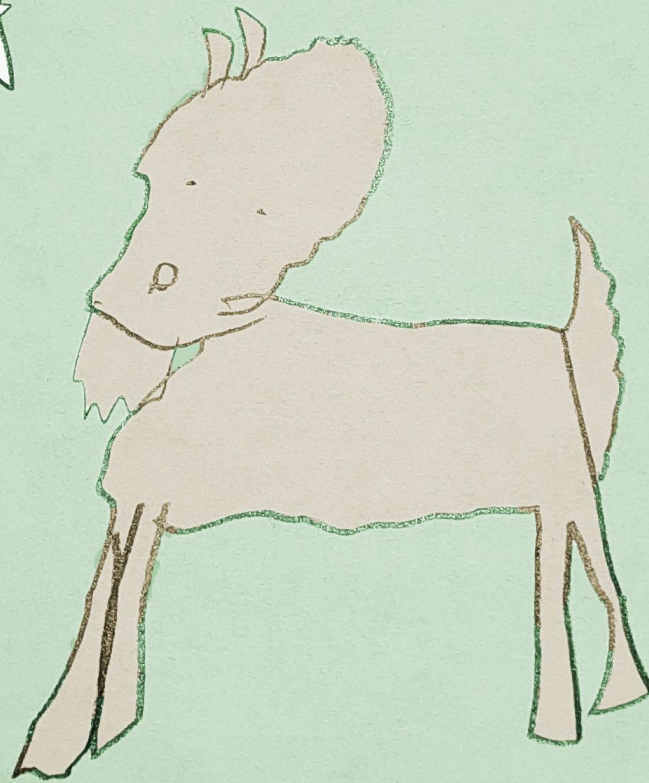


The bearded llamas of Schmeckly ranch

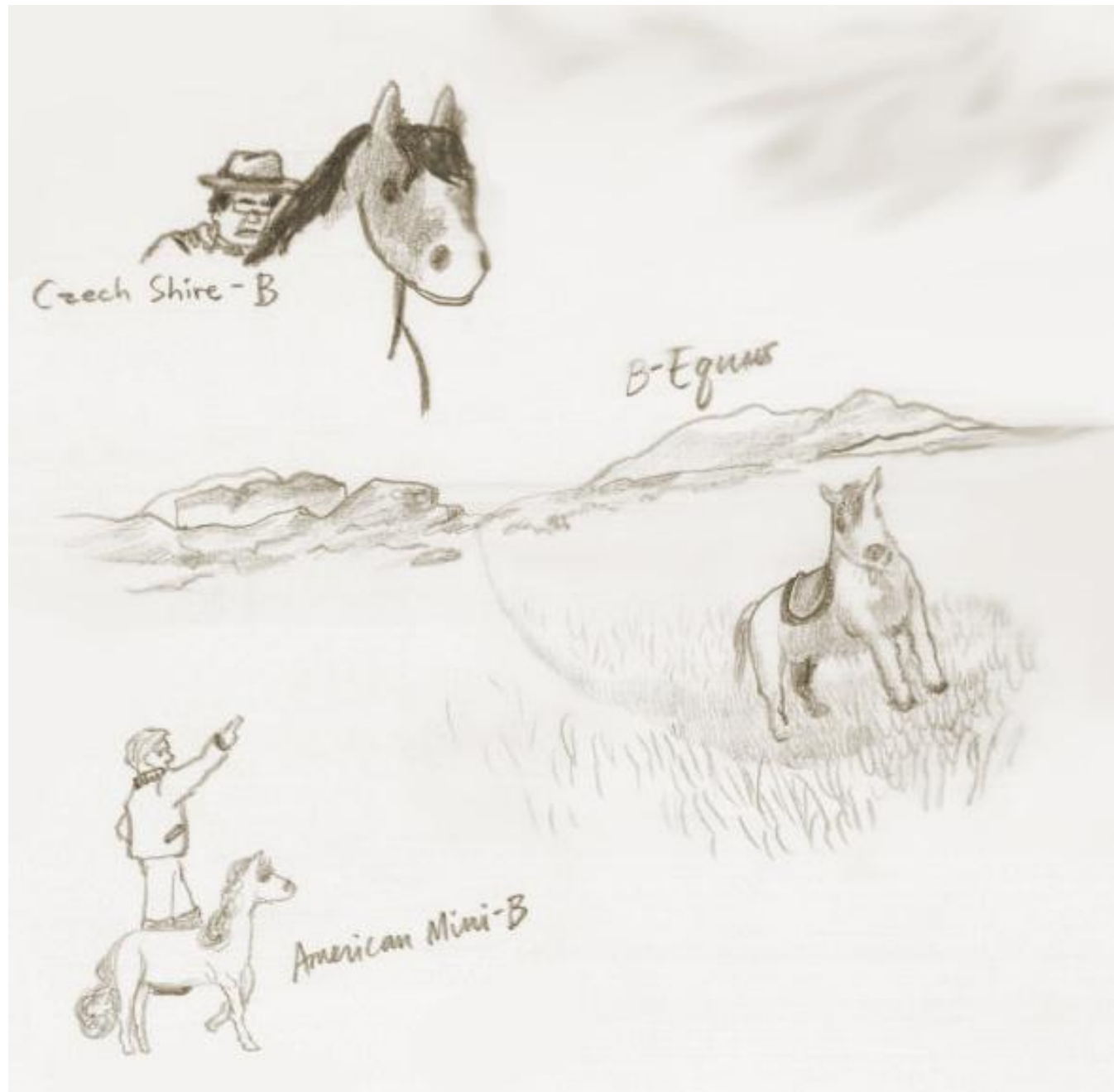


Llama
Call

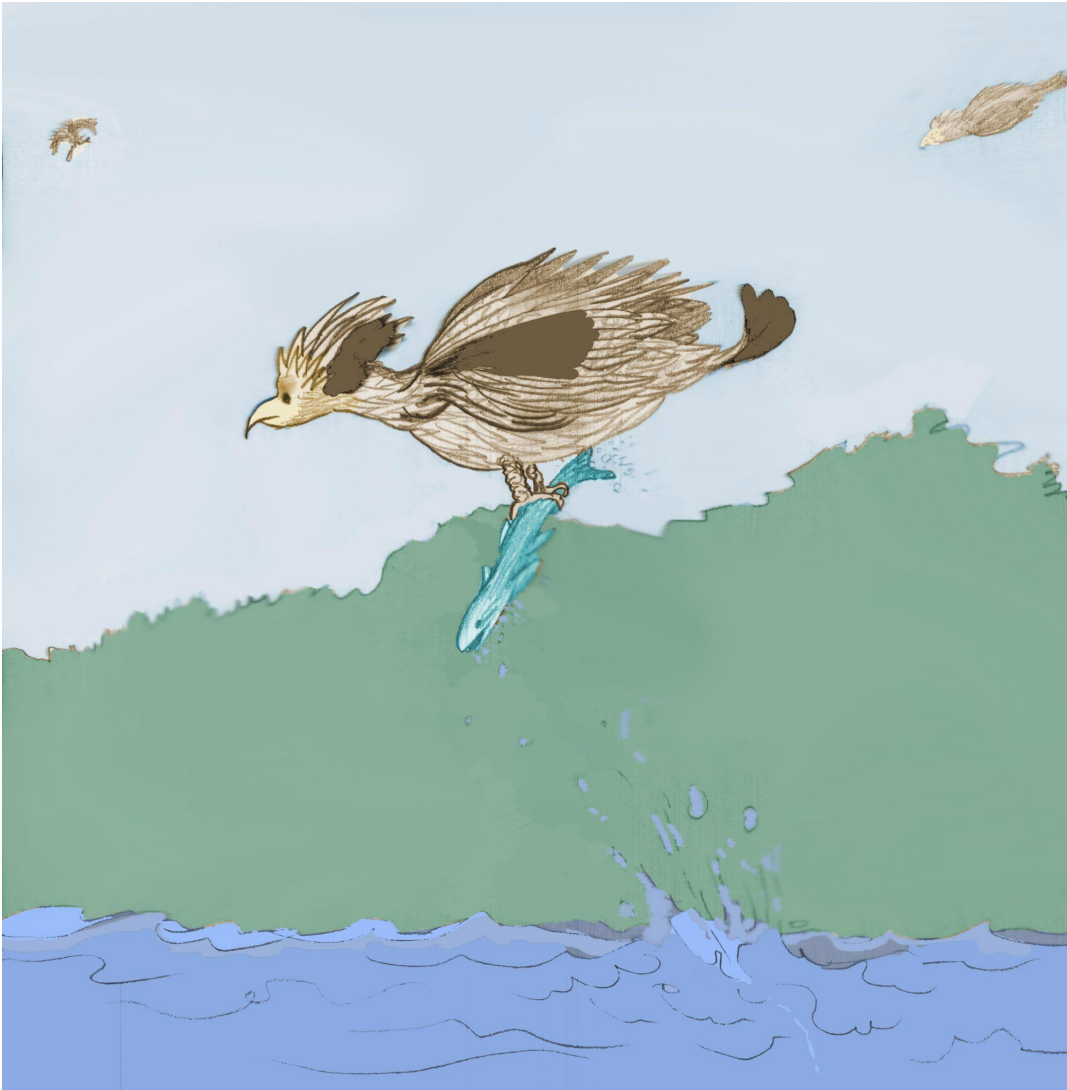
Hoi Hr
Her Hr
Hoi



Most popular horses on Fortius



Kwinkles



Chuckie the fat bird-e (6 feet tall)

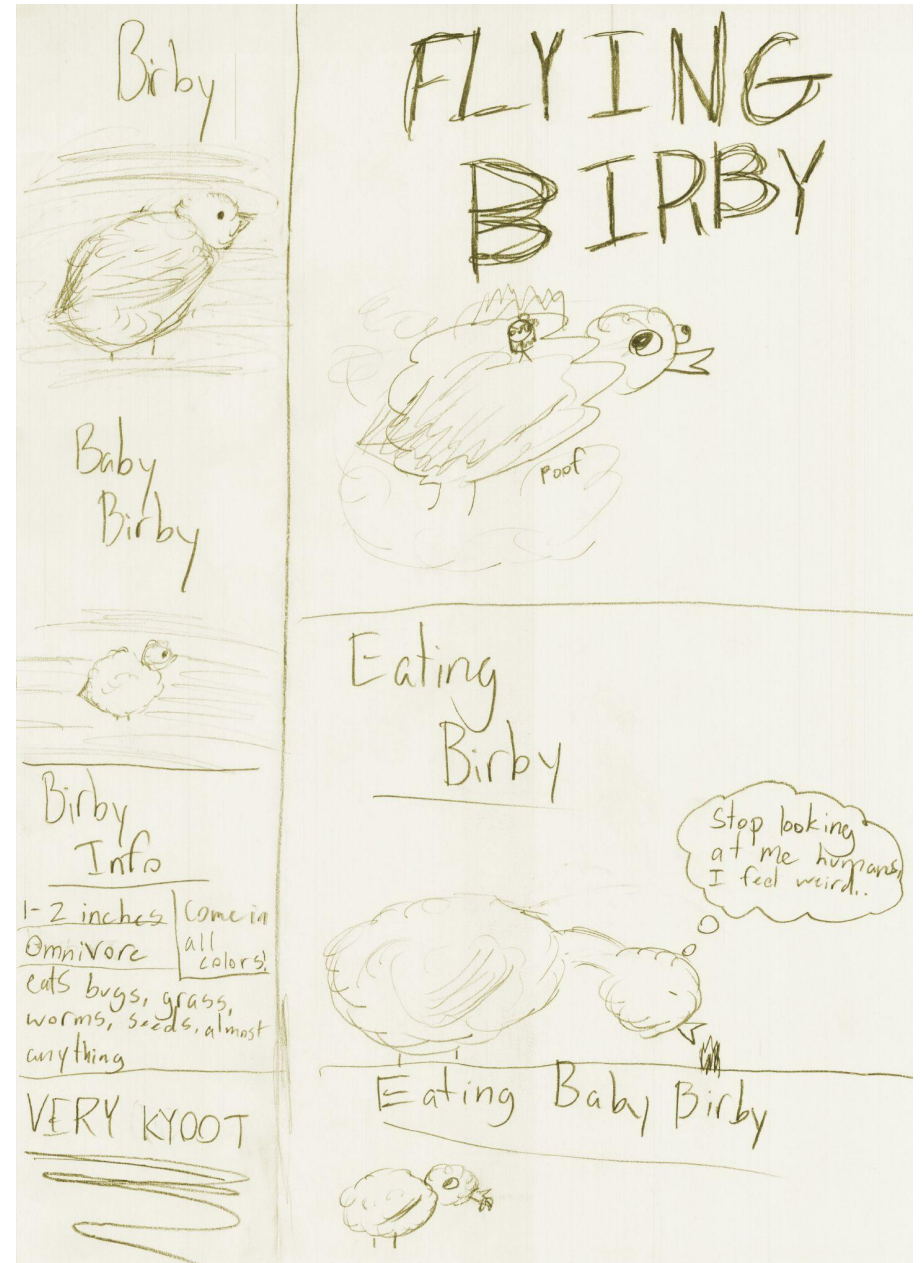




Fortian beasts

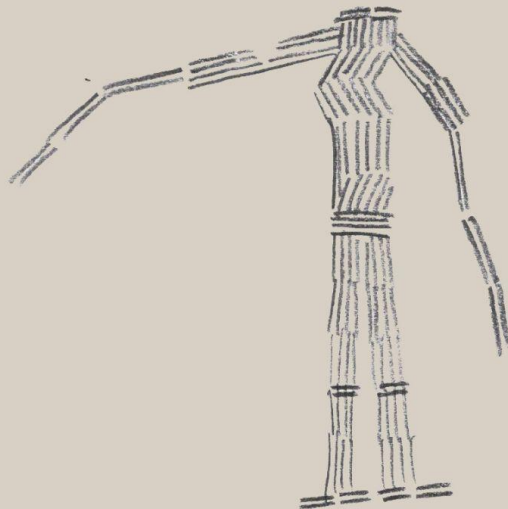
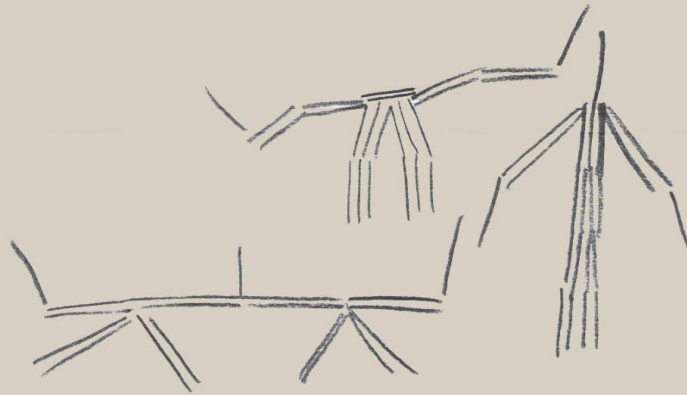
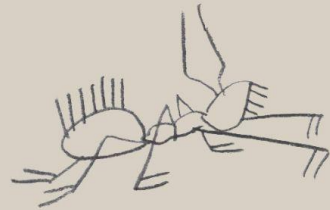


The Reeking Contrich



Interlocking Ants

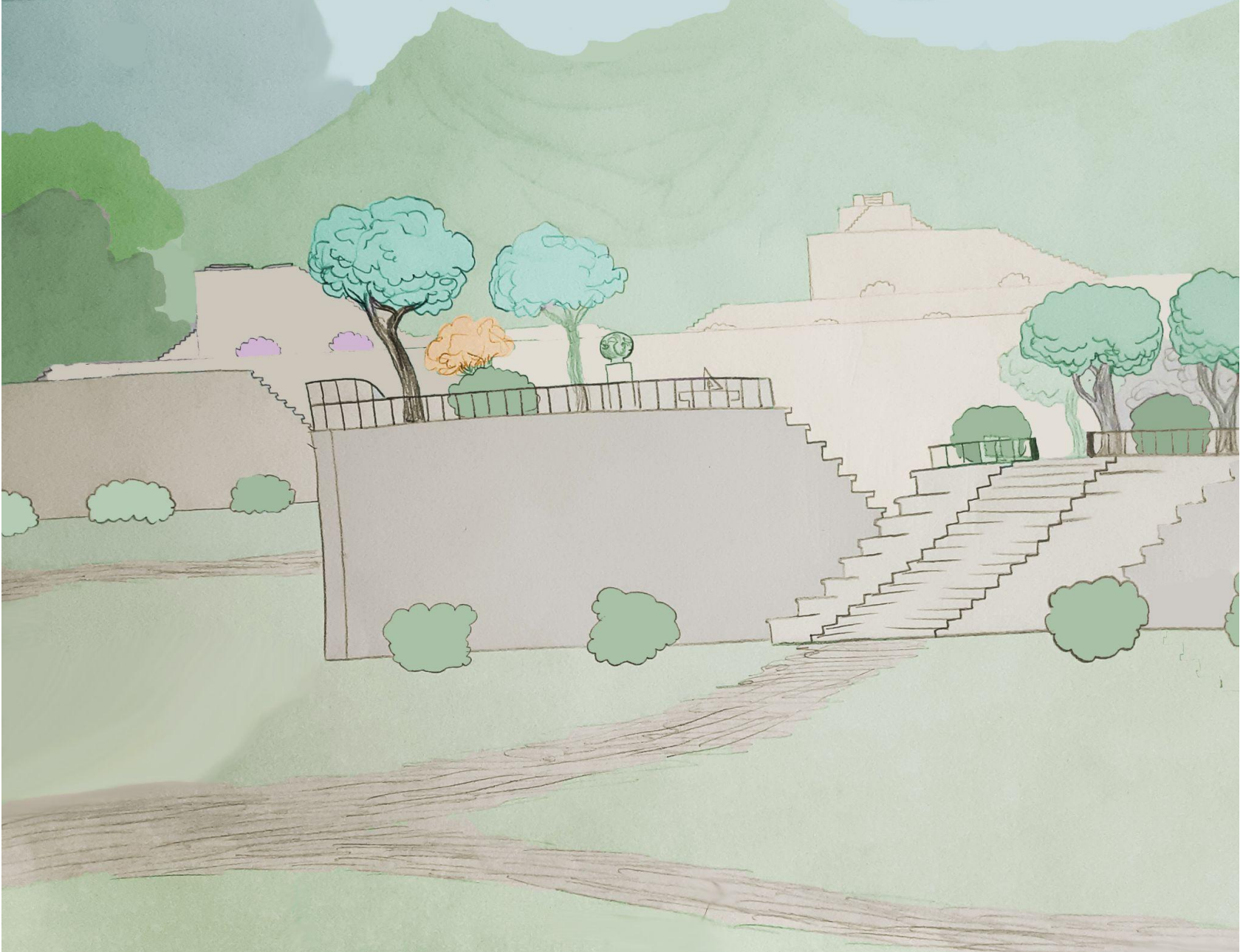
These deadly ants can combine together to form larger shapes.



Fortius had a lot of snakes, so the pop-out snake-fighting robots (POSRs) were a big seller.



The team flew on over to Falendra gardens.



It was so peaceful in the southwest park, Julianna began to doze. Then, G.H. Ribbert marched over, sweating profusely. “You need to leave! You can’t skip admissions! Security! I will complain to the queen!”



The garden security appeared, two scraggly old-timers. The heroes stood up and got ready to fight. Julianna was horrified that the heroes would fight these elders. She stepped into the middle and said, “Let’s go!” and then put a force bubble around them all and took off.

When the heroes landed, they walked by some Fortian police. The policeman stared awkwardly at them as they walked by. Julianna wondered if Ribbert had reported them. Maybe she would be arrested for trespassing!

Farin laughed when Julianna mentioned her troubles. “Don’t worry about that. The queen protects us, as long as we are honorable. That man doesn’t own the gardens. His complaint against us could backfire.”

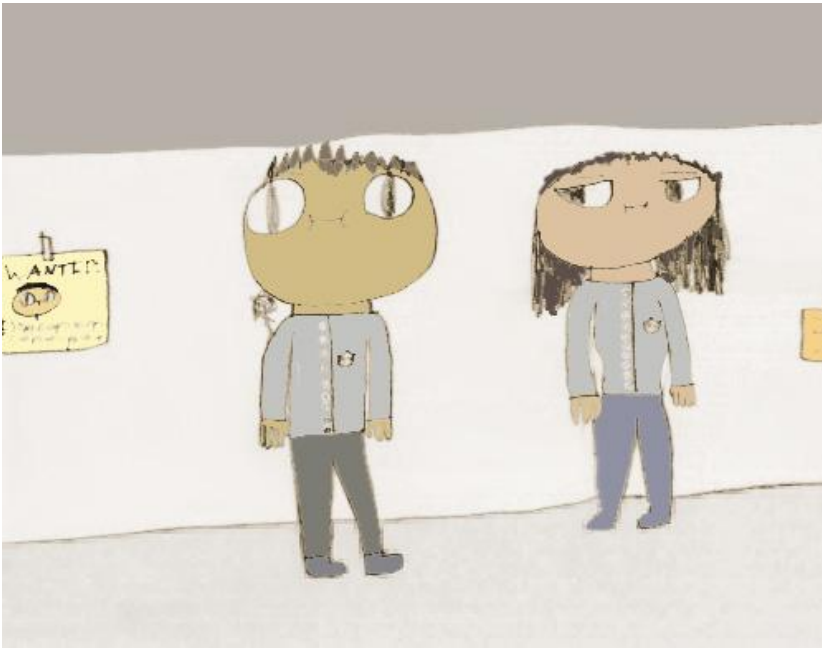


The heroes flew over the corn trees of Fortius. The corn was enormous because of Glion ore surface deposits.

They flew to the floaty coaster park, and enjoyed the water rides. It was hot out, so the heroes provided air conditioning. Then the park owner admitted everyone for free for the rest of the day!



The next day, some of the heroes took Julianna around to the official parts of the city. She met the mayor, the police commissioner, some of the detectives and other special operations folks that worked with the Fortians on a regular basis. Some of the police were strange, and people quieted down when they walked past them.



Fleeta needed a haircut, so some of the league tagged along. She was complaining about her bracelet and having to hunt down the king's dumb artifacts. "The bracelet takes away my powers. Hello, I need my powers to talk to the *plants*!" Fleeta asked Miss Sparkle to fly them up to Glenny's, one of the many floating shops.



Fleeta picked her usual "pig-tails troll" trim.

girls section



flower crown with two flowers sticking up



flower hair

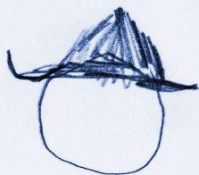


Pineapple bun



sprout hair braid

boys section



Cowboy hair



Mountain Mohawk



Normal hair



cactus hair

AlfioX



Random section Cowboy Shave



Straight razor available

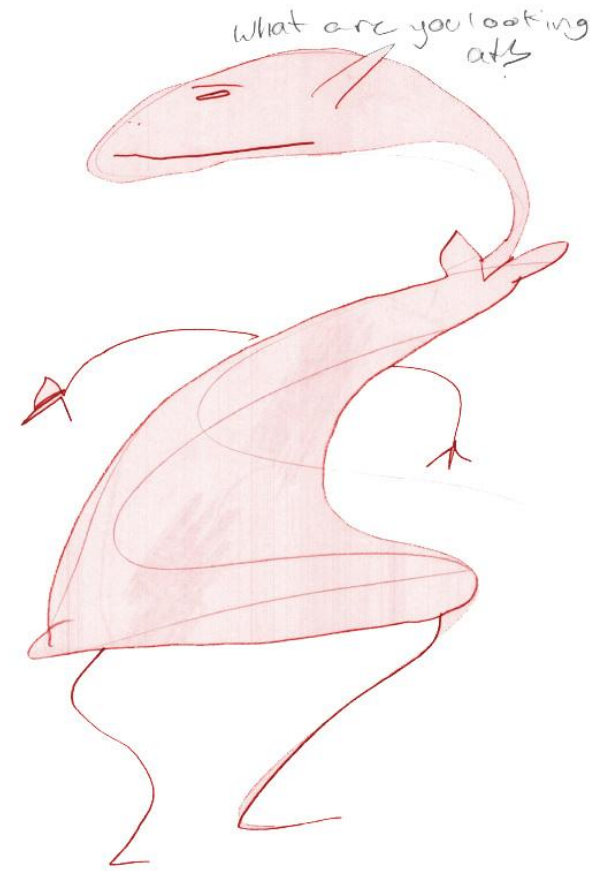
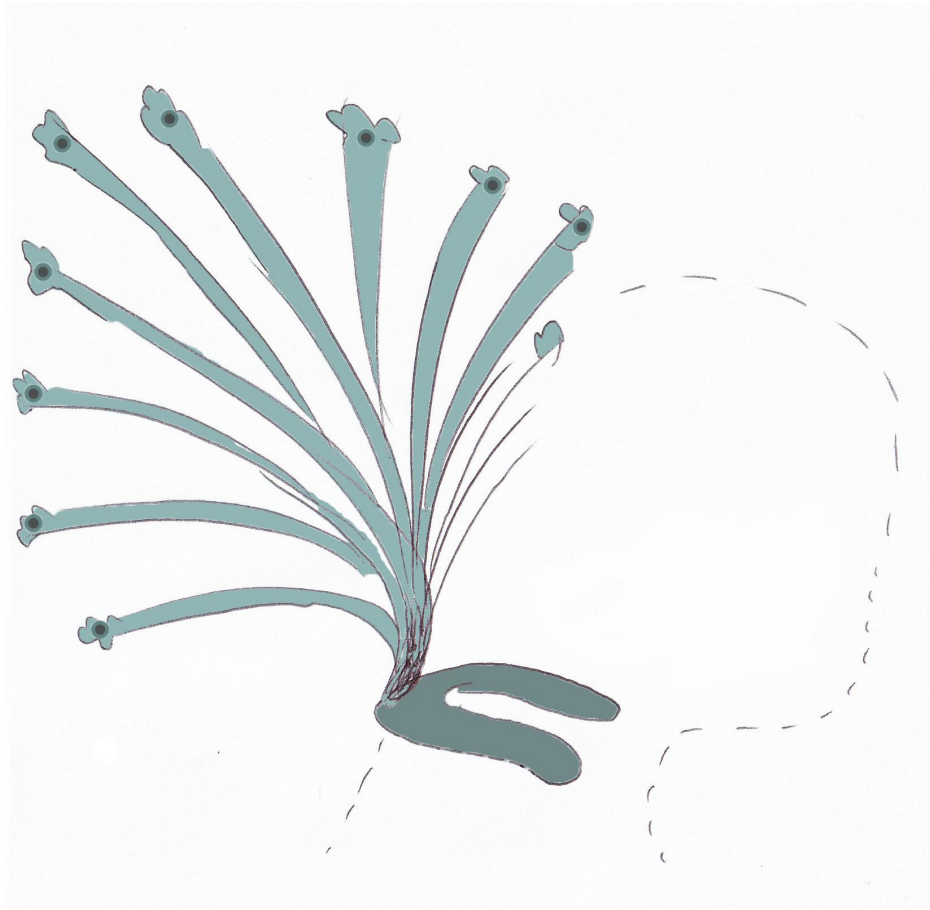
Monstera Ponytail



Stick the sunscreen
Glass of water, brush
and type in what
want to do with it
it'll do what you need
to do with it!



Ladies with clipped-on peacock hair dryers sat on one side, their hair wooshing into their faces.



The girls struggled to not stare at some of the customers.

Enrique's Haircut



My stash?



THE

END



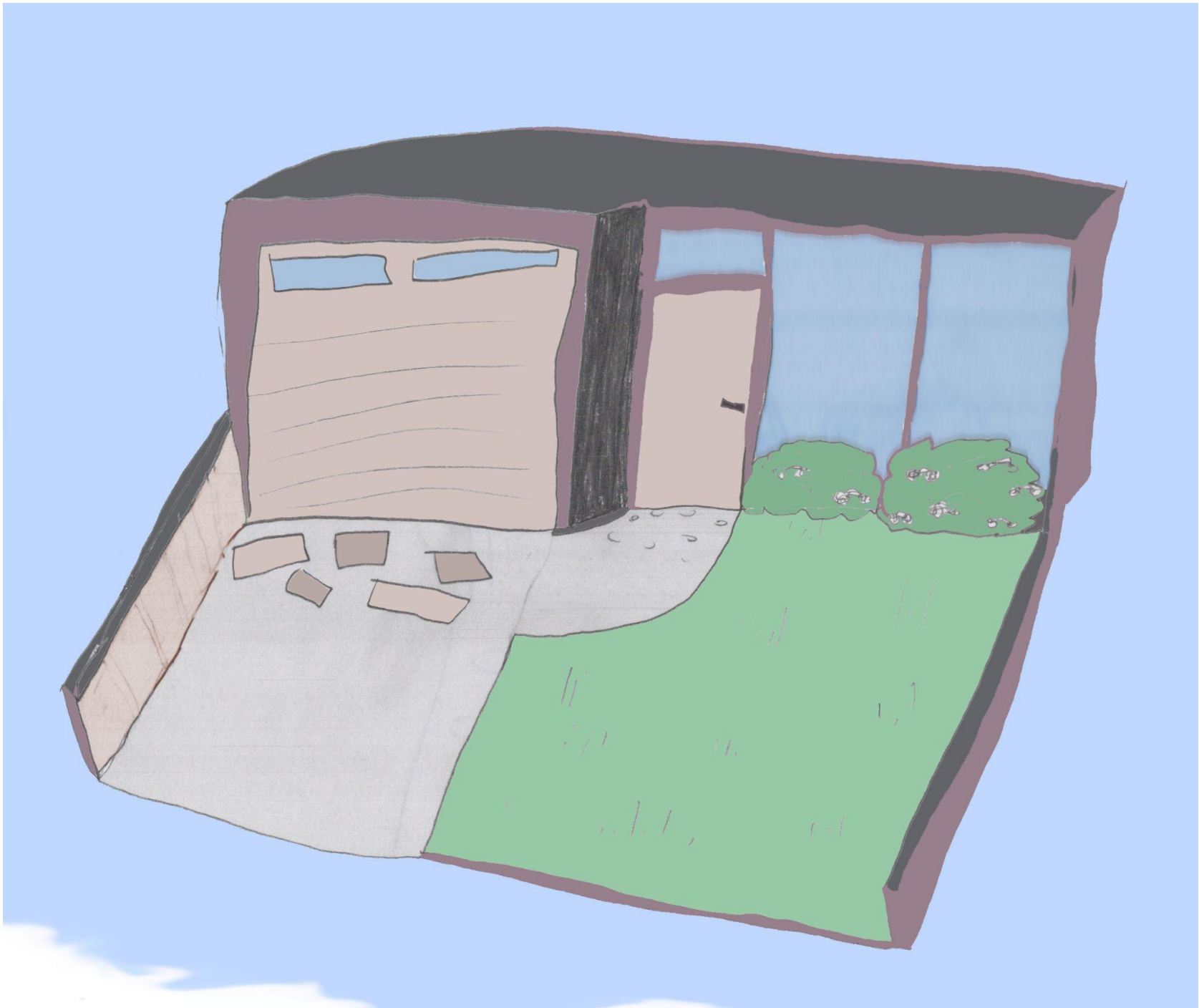
Farin, Jamiira, and Brody (Farin's brother) saw the team and ran over. They had come from the movie theater, where Brody had his heroic moment.

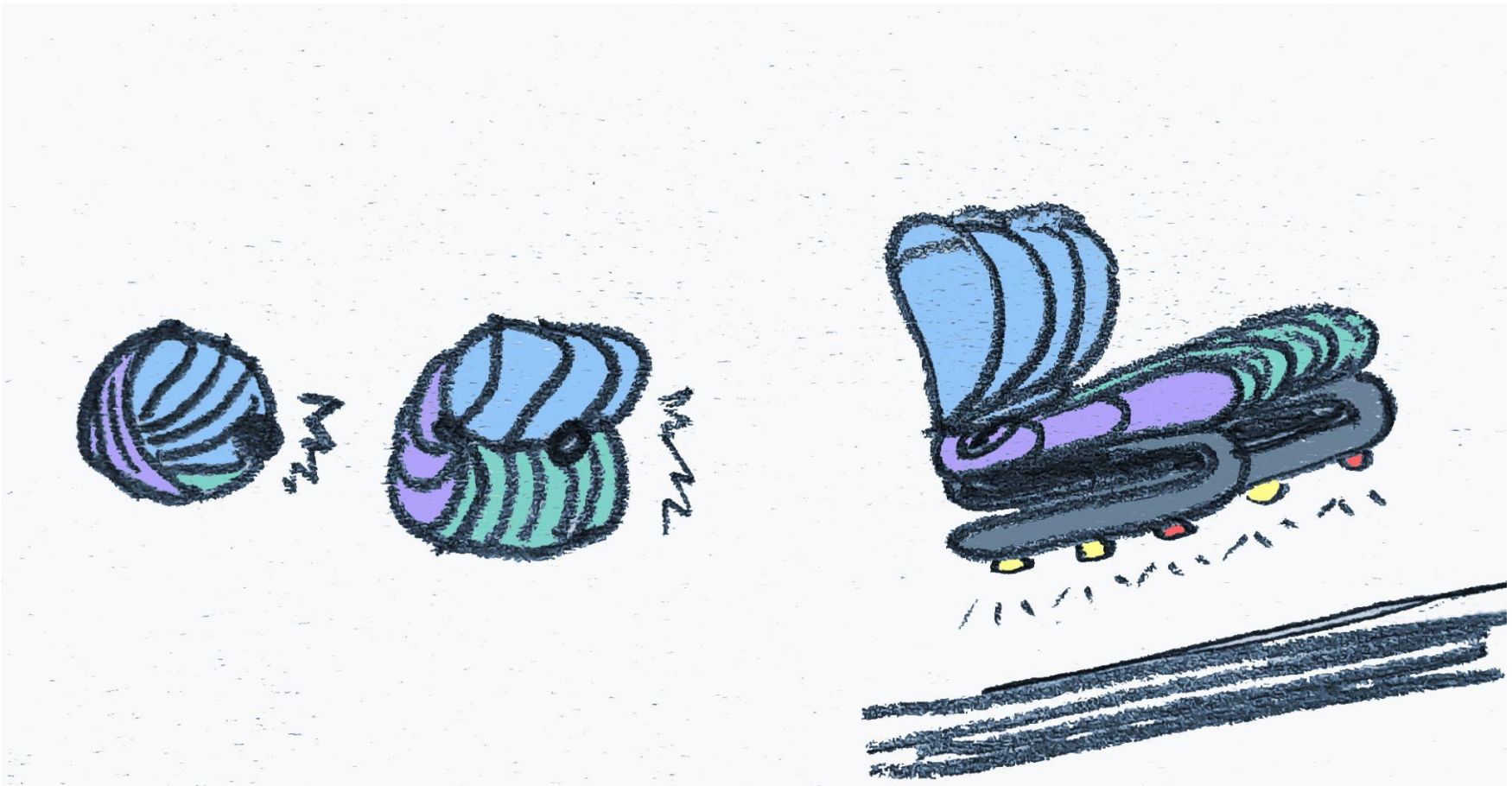


He talked about it until the heroes got bored.

Houses and furniture floated around Fortius. Because of the meteor and its special metals, levitation was easy.







Pop-out floating chair



Fortius's main food source is.....

Bugs



Bugs are attracted to the spice/meat combination.
They stick and are stirred in.

Pastecakes
Meatcrumbs
Meatzy

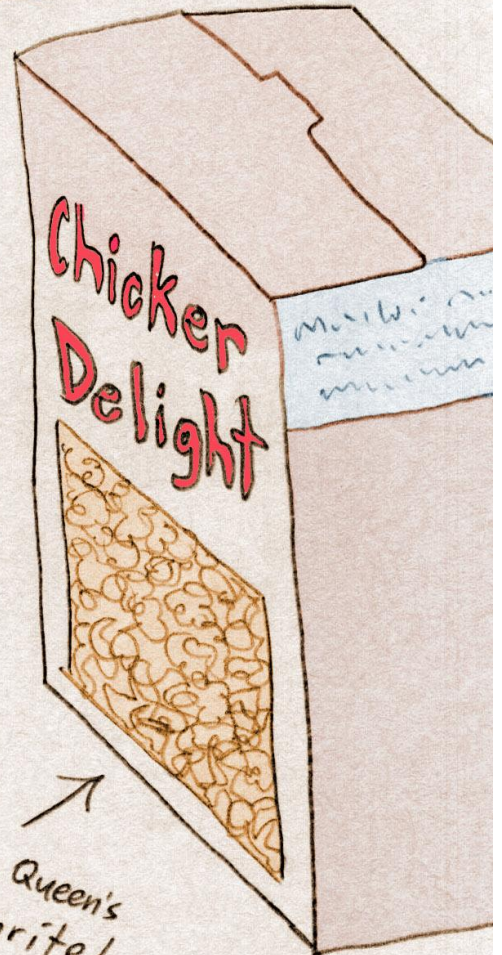
(All your favorite products.)

MUCH PROTEIN!!

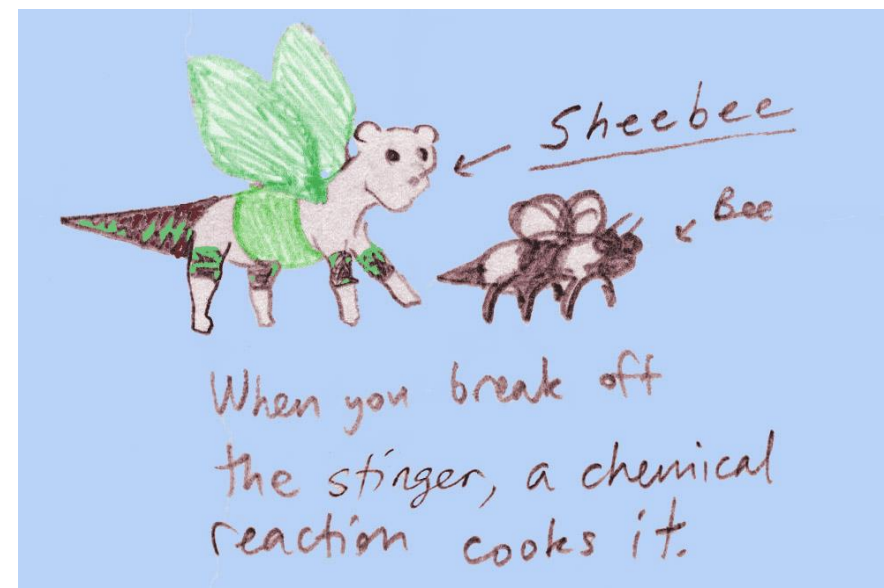
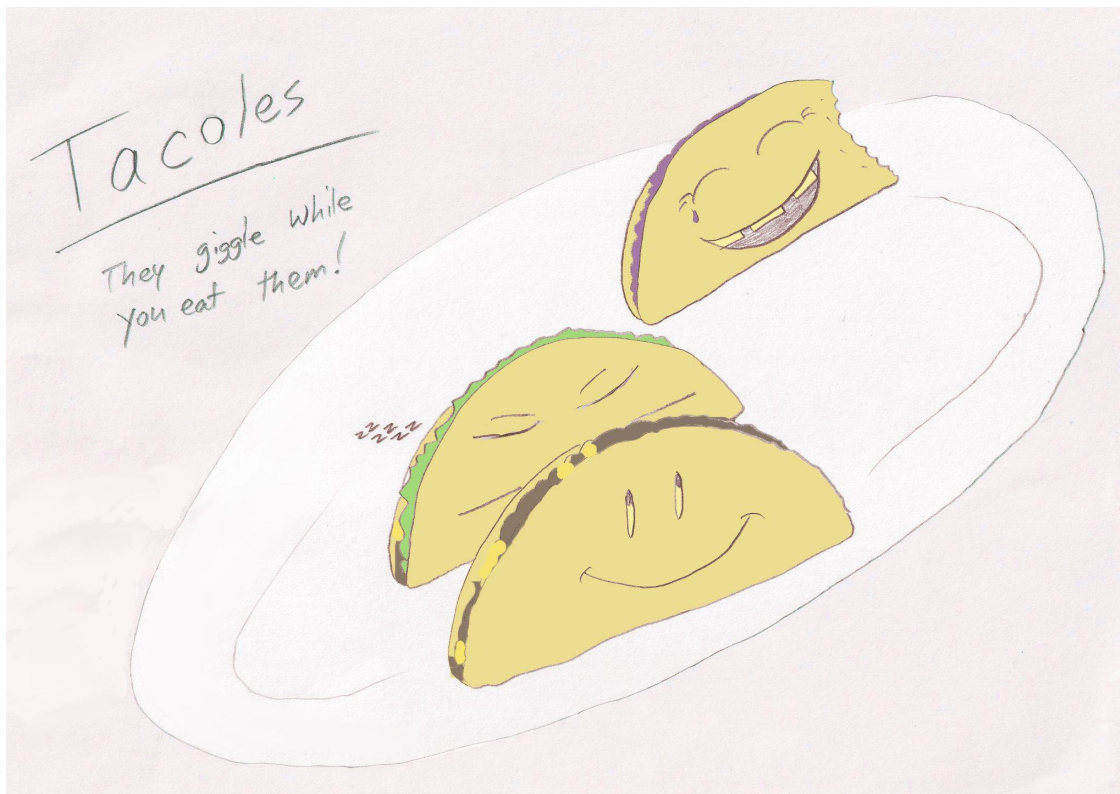


She **FINALLY**
Said it!

Chickerpillar

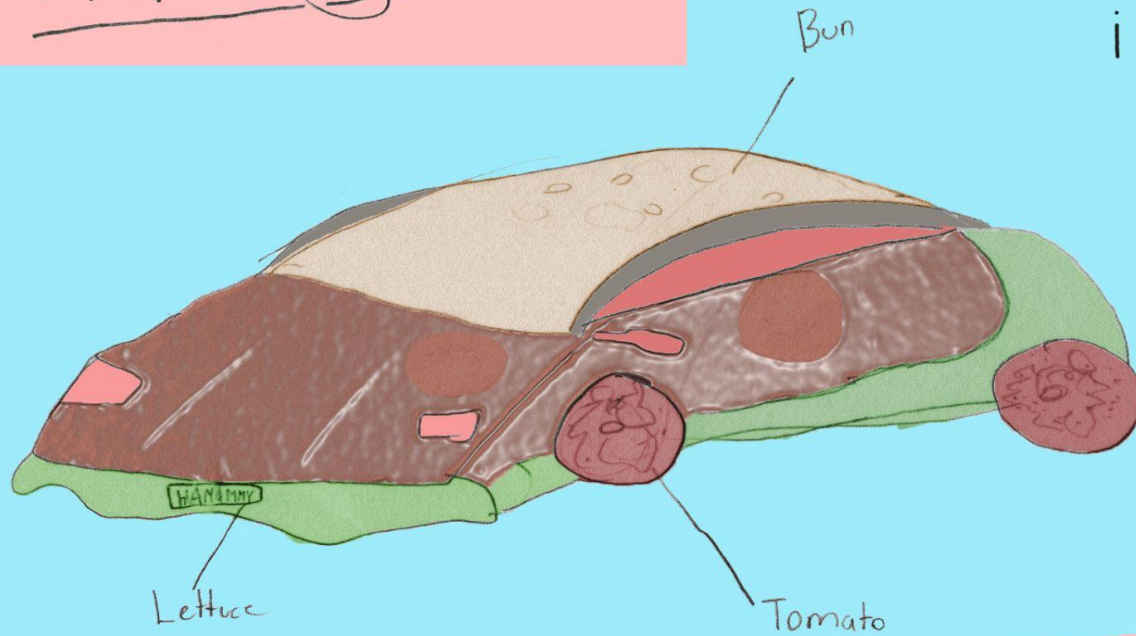


The Queen's
favorite!



Hamborghini!

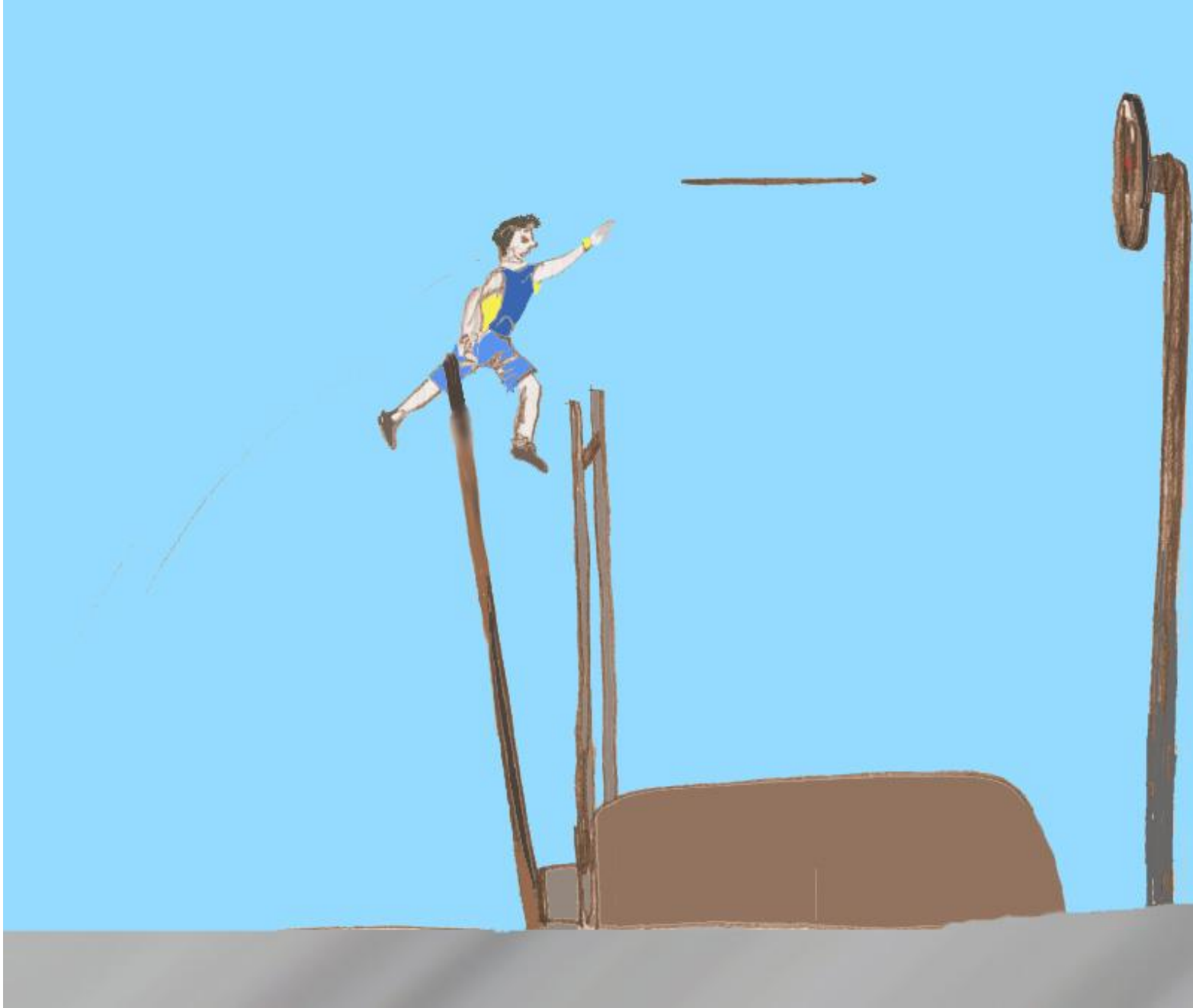
Flies right
into your
mouth!



PRICE: 10 PENTILLION
LIMITED TIME!

ONLY FOUND ON THE ROYAL
ISLAND! FLY-THROUGH ONLY!

The team watched some local sports.



Javelin vault



Ice-skate bowling



Fierce and Caroline enjoy their day off outside.



PSHHH!

RED ALERT!

Fierce and Caroline
report at once!

NOT AGAIN!



The heroes trained together almost every day. Julianna kept up with the Diamonds afterward, and on her days off. Mr. Diamond loved the south shore park, where people played strategy games and hundreds of friendly critters stalked the grounds for scraps.



The queen received confirmation that some nasty rumors were true. A huge treasure had been discovered and many teams were already looking for it. They came from all over the Caribbean and some of the European breakaway areas. She imagined what they looked like, and though she would never see them, she was 85% correct. The queen initiated plans that she and her cabinet had agreed on.

If you were wondering, Ferlin had survived. He enjoyed the relaxation after Zydi was arrested. Ferlin went home to rest and relax, then slipped into a long hibernation.





“Hey ladies! The queen asked for you!” called their main team coordinator.

The Fortian League hurried over, floating in an air bubble to Queen Persa’s chamber. All the Fortian League advisors and attendants were spread out on both sides – hero coordinators, king’s and queen’s liaisons, counselors, coaches, trainers, public relations, and accounts.

The queen waited for everyone to calm down, very gracefully, very patiently. Then she made a short speech about how much the Fortian League meant to her and to the people of Fortius, as well as to the people of the whole Earth! Then she had cupcakes passed out, with little bags commemorating the 30th anniversary of the League. There were prizes and rewards in the bag, to be opened later.

They ate their cupcakes, and laughed together, enjoying the moment, before Queen Persa quietly brought out a projector. Her assistants helped her do a short presentation on the treasure, who the various search teams were, where they were headed now, and where the treasure probably was based on their courses.

The Fortian Leaguers were confused at first, but excited when they realized she was “asking” them to search for the treasure. “Treasure! It’s a treasure hunt!” They ran around in circles for a while.

The queen took her leave, mission accomplished. Her assistants gave the team the many files and holovids with the details, and they would beam them updates. A messenger would check on them each evening. Rose and Severa were still in Mysteria, unfortunately.

The queen made various other moves that the League did not know about. She had also dispatched the Fortian detective squad taskforce (FDST), to find the treasure if it was real, and assist as needed in the field. They had already gone to their assumed treasure location and were studying map fragments, about three steps ahead of the other teams.



Dr. Judge was in court today. Doctor Teeroy Clyde and Lord Croix Matin were found guilty of intimidation, but got off with 2 years probation. No one was actually harmed, so the assault charge was dropped.

The others would face justice later on, but Mr. Diamond would be watching them. Mr. Diamond reached out to a mutual third party, an old recruiter. They needed some new blood on the team, and Fortius had deep benches.

Lanin appeared to Diamond one evening, to tell him about the treasure hunt. “If there is treasure, you will surrender any books to me.” Mr. Diamond agreed. “Get a crew. I will rendezvous with you in 3 days.”

After a few days, the ship pilot on team Diamond had noticed a man in a small jet-boat that had been following them, and pointed him out. They scanned him – a private detective from Bermuda. “Jaimel Ortega. P.I.”

“Do you know anyone from Bermuda, sir?”

“Not yet,” Mr. Diamond said.

Some of the Fortians floated behind an artificial cloud not far away. They were to follow the Diamonds from afar, and get the treasure for Fortius. The Diamonds had been identified as the primary competition by the FDST.

Julianna was busy with a training mission. Flea would stay behind, still collecting the king’s artifacts. Of the handful they found, only one was still functional, being made of solid steel. She hated boats anyway. The battling hammies had escaped into the ground. No one had noticed... yet.

The king did notice that his cash was almost gone, and he was already deeply in debt to various people. The queen was not seeing him and refused to send him even a slixer (1,000 slix bill) for lunch. He had to eat and entertain in the mansion. And soon he would need to move into the queen’s palace. He grinned at the idea.

The king had accumulated vast debts, though he was always able to slip through in the past, borrowing from another new friend, playing off one debt against another, reassigning funds, confidence scams, little gambling streams. Those were in addition to his normal pay as king, his endorsements, board pay for several corporations, and subverting other job roles.

He was not able to spend like he once was, but he made a show of it. His butler sewed holes, and the maid let go of some of the staff. People noticed, and others wanted to be paid. Legal summons came. He ignored it. Enrique's advisors distanced themselves. He found himself in a corner alone a few times, and narrowly escaped.

Trouble came by more frequently. Eventually, it became dangerous to have parties, and they closed up the gates. The king's pocket dimension was cleared out with the help of the queen's staff and the Fortian League. The news footage of the event was highly embarrassing to the whole royal family.

The king was becoming more erratic. Queen Persa watched in horror as he turned. She was past the times of pleading and begging him. She had cut him off in response. The kids did notice his wild behavior as well.

Now, don't assume Enrique wasn't wild in the past. Lucky little Enriquito had more than his fair share of brushes with death.

When the king was very young, he was treated as a prince, his royal line going back generations. He was a stubborn, spoiled little boy. At night, he would climb over his crib rail, to silently go play and eat snacks. One night, a tarantula climbed up on him. When he screamed, the staff ran out and caught him with Ee-Ohs and Canellio-knots.

Enriquito would not share how many close calls he had with death. Usually, after his mother warned him to not do something... the foolish rebelliousness would creep up his spine, and lodge there, until he did it.

Many times he came near death. He skated in front of a cleaner truck, almost getting flattened. He was clawed and pecked by contriches while trying to steal their eggs. He fell off a dirt bike and into a canyon. He wrestled young bulls, and fought duels with his friends using real broadswords.

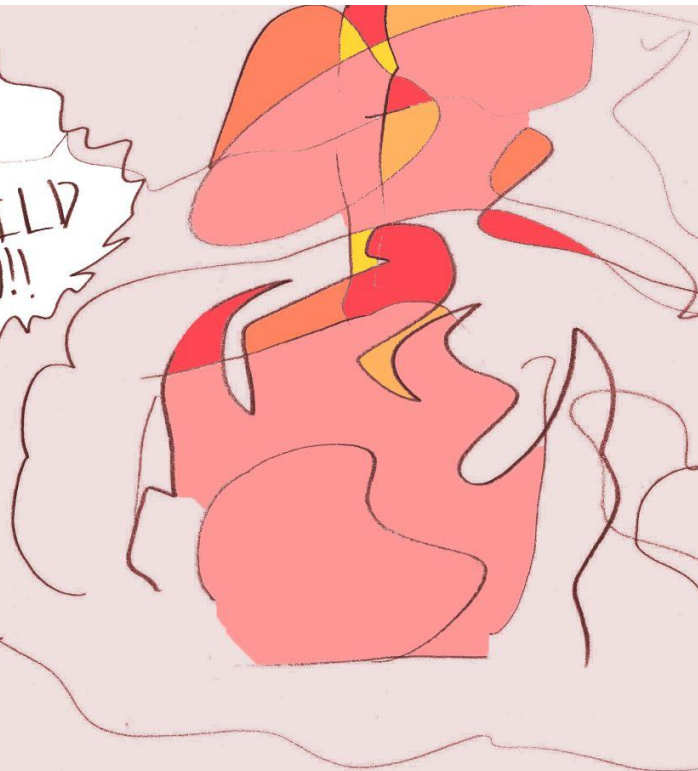
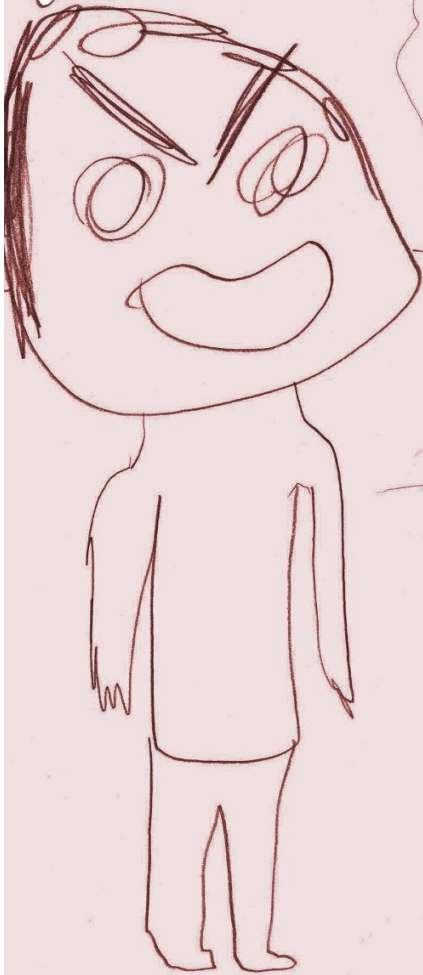




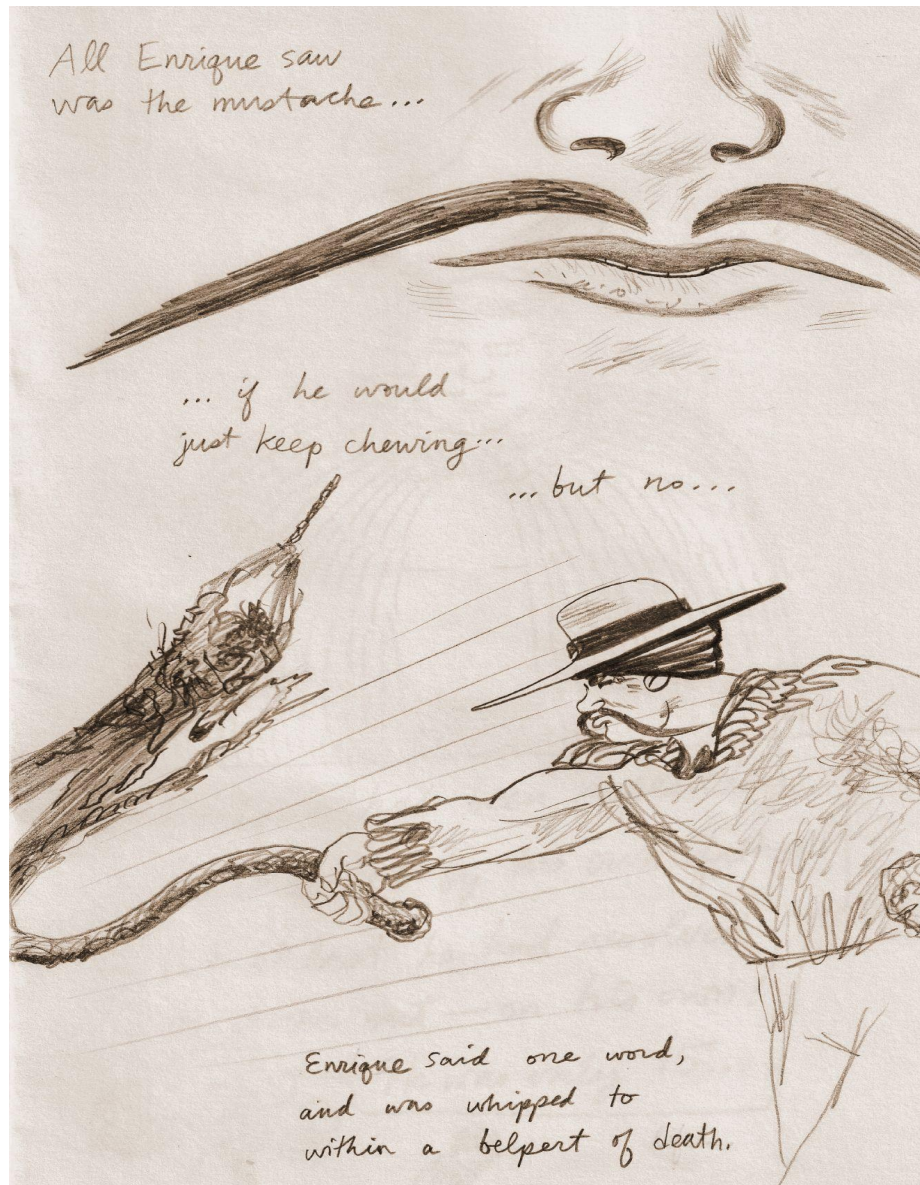
THIS IS
WHY I TOLD
YOU TO NOT BUILD
IT OUT OF STRAW!!

With Enrique's
brothers...

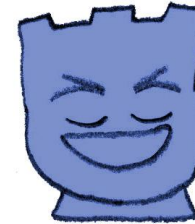
THE FIRE
PLACE IS ON
FIRE!!



Enrique's dad was not a good man, though he is famous and has an entry in the school text books. He was the terror of lil Enriquito, and why he spent so much time outdoors. If he just didn't come back... then he couldn't be punished.



Enrique was only 15 when he struck out on his own (with a suitcase of cash from his ma). He went to Beanixwood, where he was cast in some films and fortoons.



The queen always had to work for everything. Her family were very poor refugees, but they stayed close. Her father had been wounded by rampaging bandits in their exodus. He could barely walk, requiring a cane. But he built a new life on Fortius by fixing old broken equipment and robots.

The queen's mom opened some websites to help find staff, starting with laundry and clothes mending, which she did herself at first. Later she hired staff and Persa helped also. It was a family business.



Persa grew up pursuing her dream to be queen, like a shooting star. She still worked hard at everything, to keep up on technological breakthroughs. She had a vast spy network, which kept track of military movements around the world.

The queen knew how to run things, and she had the real dough. The core of the Fortius economy was the ore. There were various alien metals, which they mined at glacial pace. This caused extremely high demand / prices. But the queen had secret reserves.

Vion metals were extremely dense and resonated. Their ship engines levitated using these metals. But those ships did not float in other parts of the world. Fortius exported different types of more conventional ships. With their resources and technology, Fortius had risen to a leadership role in the 24th century world.

Fortius is hit with a lot of storms due to the island's density and location. The Fortians harness those forces with their absorption towers. The raw energy is dispersed into a salty gel suspension, which then feeds into the power hubs.

Deep underground, the main part of the metal was still intact. The metal hummed up close, drawing things to itself. The queen had wrested control from a corrupt corporation (she was still fighting appeals). Since then, she shaped things up. Miner safety came first, which was aided by new robots from Plana and Mysteria. The queen toured the mine periodically, so the 2,309 employees had mostly met her before.

FOSI (Fortius Organization of Science and Industry) revisited lost science and artifacts with an eye for creating something new. Fortian subs raked the ocean floor, constantly dredging up old marvels. Most of the old knowledge had been lost, so they created it anew.

At the lichen docks, specialized teams harvested space matter. Lichen absorbed viox from metal-rich rock, and then men harvested the lichen.

FOSI-SE, a security team, monitored the docks at all hours. They were hardcore green. FOSI-SE had installed special plates that had an extremely dense outer layer. The lichen could be scraped off easily. From sensors in the plates, they measure the lichen's density, electrical conductivity, chemical makeup, and atomic structure.



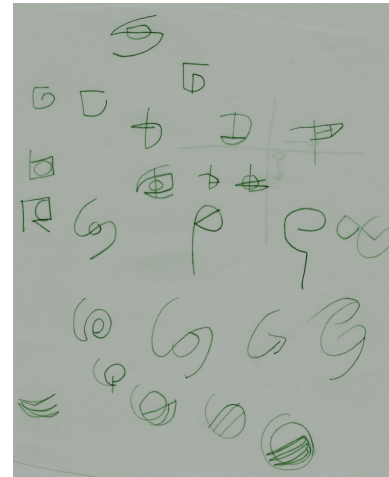
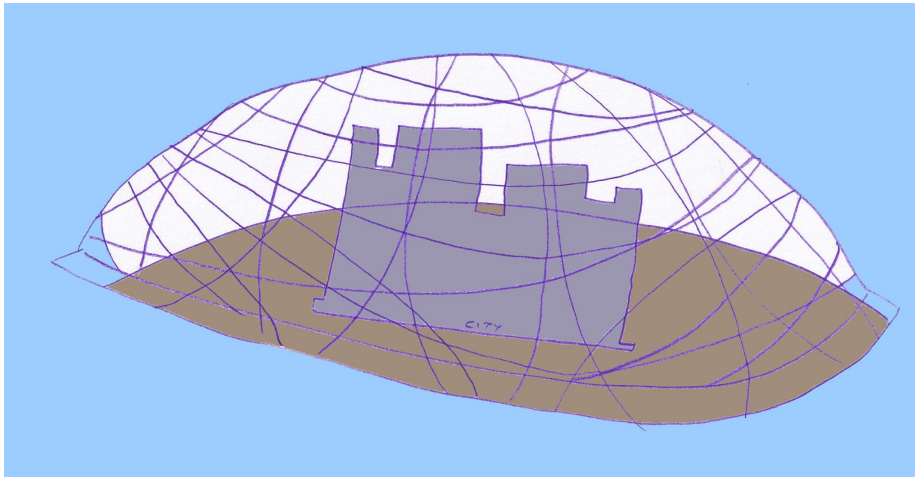
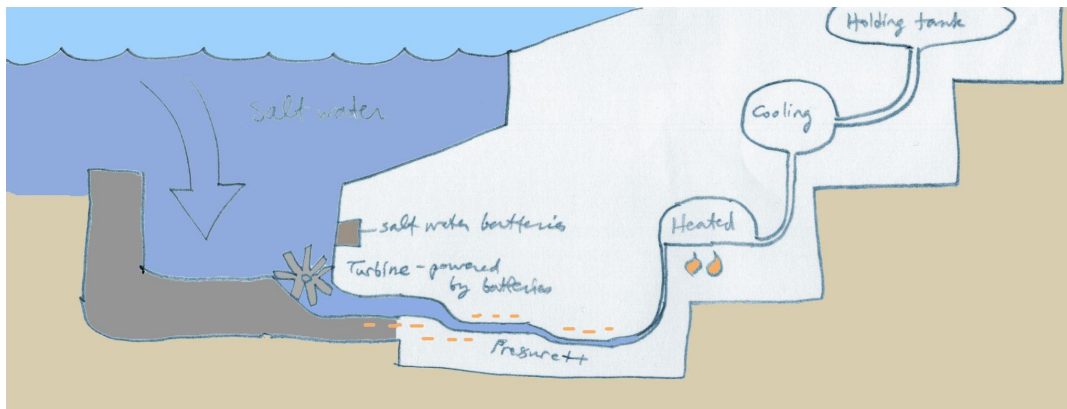
Let's let Lu explain!



"Umm, so, they mix it into

spices... AND teas. It can spark fire!... SO is it is it it is... used in matches and fireworks! Expeh-ruh-mints are onging. They cut out likey with new props and vacoom seal... this is a lot of words!... them and send them back to the lab. It is purp-or-ted to be healthful. EVEN being labehlet as Vitamin V! (These claims are unverfuhled by the FFA (Fortian Food Authoritah)). Thank yaw."

Fortian scientists were inventing new things, and building larger and more complex projects.



The queen had set up the Fortius for the next forty years with her policies. She had accumulated vast hordes of world currencies, and built up their surpluses across the board. Every district was now prosperous - poverty was on the verge of eradication.

The Fortian military contained Asian and European aggression outside of their alliance boundaries, and more joined their alliance each year. It was a force of such great power that could overwhelm any country within two hours. But they held back, always offering a better way, leading by example. The queen was a good leader, but her family did not appear to care about that.

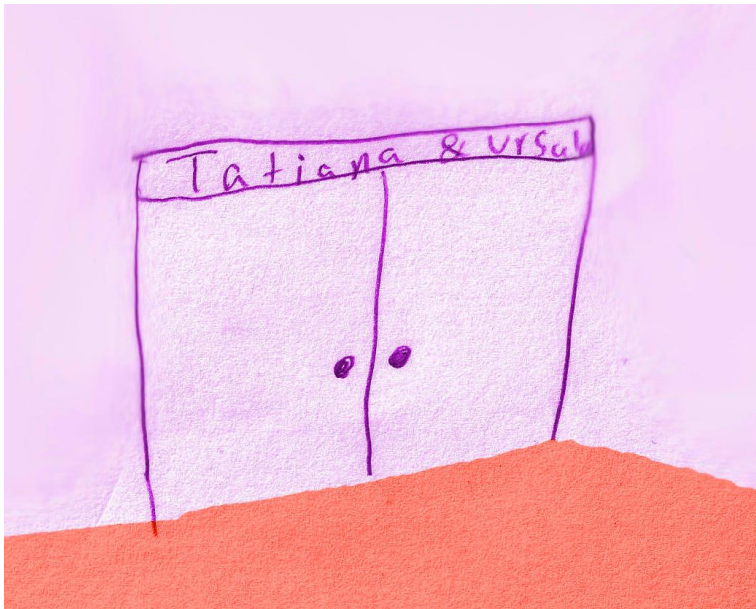
The princes and princesses had returned after "Royal Camp," where they learned how important royalty was. They were exhausted.



The boys were quiet in their rooms. Leonardo was napping.

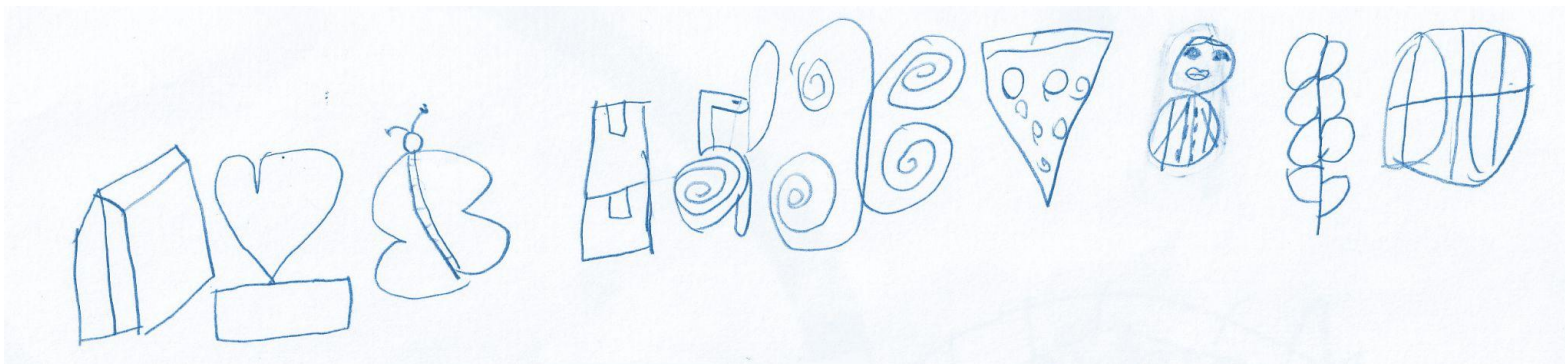


Rose was still away at Mysteria. Experia had stayed over for extra credit. Teressa was doing her make-up again. It was very quiet.



It's too quiet, the nanny thought. But then some music and other noises came from Tatiana and Ursula's room, and she relaxed.

Tatiana and Ursula had their own language. The queen or her attendants would just see a message like this –



and laugh.

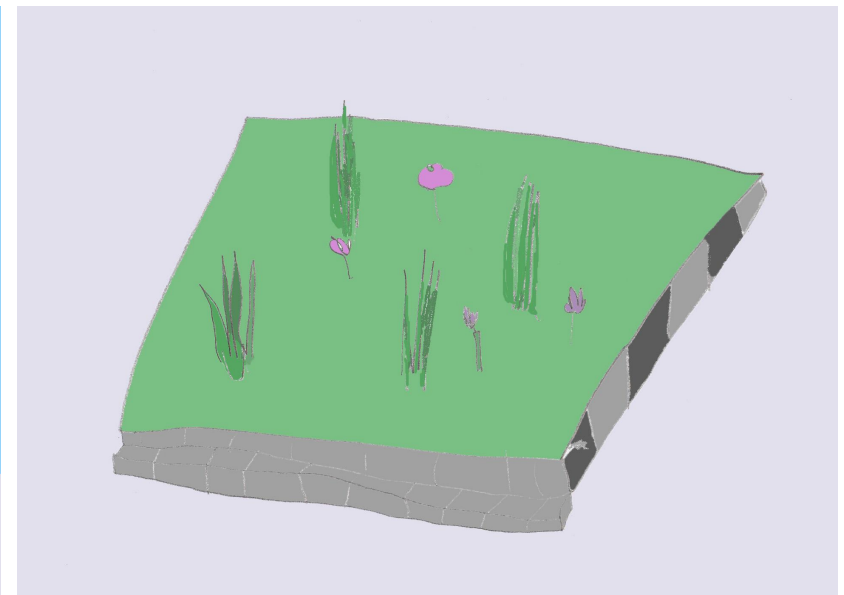
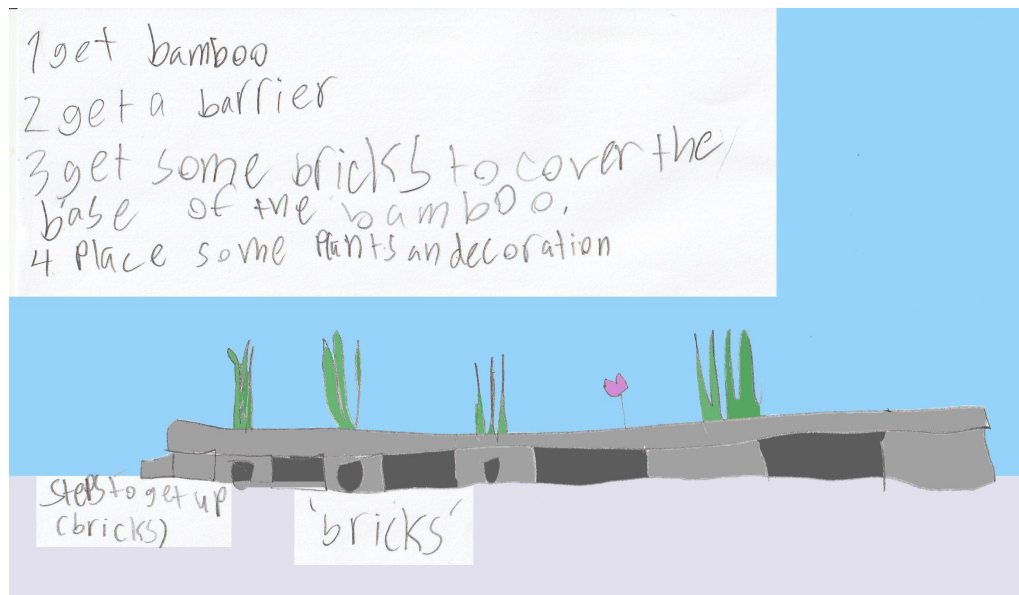
“It's so cute!”

But that message had a specific meaning. “Come to the tent, I will hug you. We can play with the bugs in their hotel, play number cards, set free the butterflies, and get pizza. The butler is not to be trusted. We will pick flowers and play basketball too.”

The upward slant of the message indicated that the message could be read both ways. The message is mostly the same, but the upside-down butler indicated they would pull a prank on him to make him angry. They always thought it was so funny when he got red and veins appeared.

Today, Ursula couldn't decide if she would have mozzadar or swolby cheese on her sandwich. Her face was smooshed up with frustration, until Tatiana threw a slice of each on the bread and slammed it into Ursula's grill. Ursula munched on it and began to smile again.

Tatiana was working on her bamboo plants. “They're growing too slow!” she whined. She reviewed her plans again.



Ursula lifted up the Tilt Box out of a crate in the corner. “What’s this?”

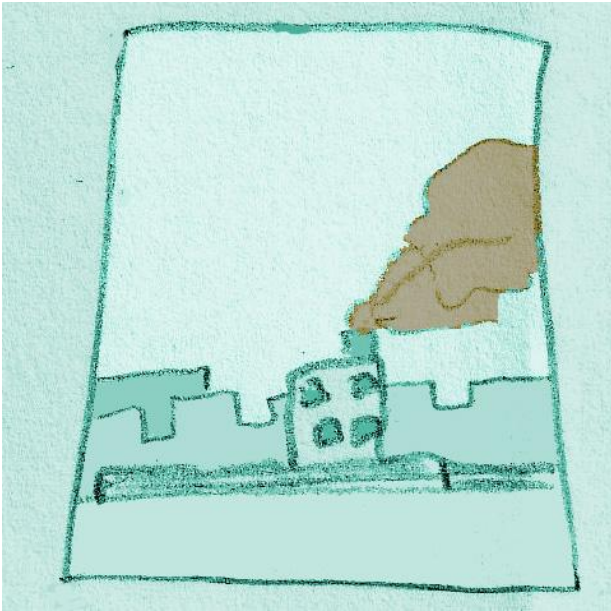
Tatiana looked over and replied, “Daddy was moving some things and they left that big crate. What is it?”

Ursula yelled, “It looks pretty cool, huh?”

Tatiana grabbed it from her and turned the tilt box from side to side, then inspected the bottom. Ursula felt like she was on a ship, the ocean throwing the boat around. She slid from her chair and slipped around on the floor, on an invisible wave. When Tatiana righted the box, the wave subsided. Ursula begged to go again, so Tatiana did so. This time they both caught the wave, floating around the room. Tatiana learned to control it, so she could tumble them in a certain direction. The wave enveloped and cushioned them as they sloshed around the palace.

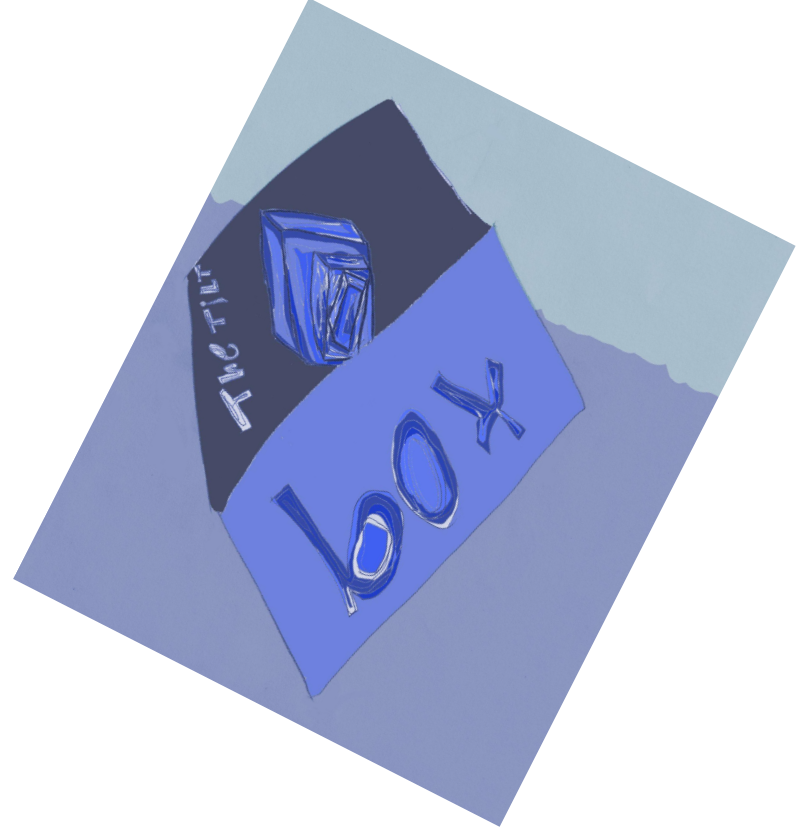
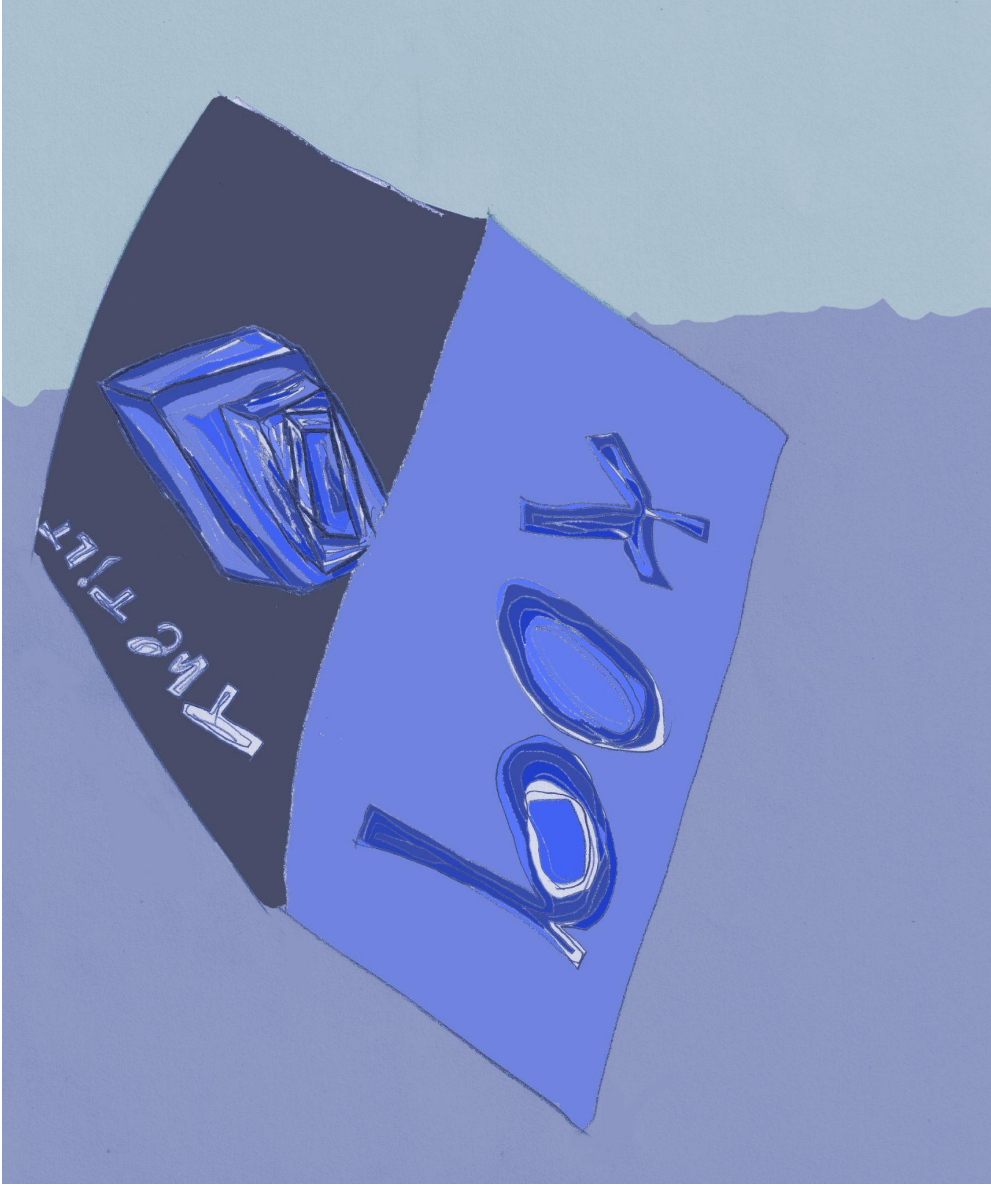
Tatiana settled the box. “Should we open it?” Ursula’s head pumped up and down furiously.

They both felt so much excitement that it came up out of them in shrieks of anticipation. Tatiana held it up, so they could open it together. They gently pried at the clasp on the box, and it popped off with a little hiss. There was nothing inside.



Ursula looked out the window. She yelled, shaking the tilt box, “I hate the smoke from that factory!” Then, there was a bang, some electrical sparking, and then the smoke cut off. The last of the smoke floated away lazily. Tatiana cheered and grabbed the box.

Tatiana shook the tilt box and turned some of the staff into bumper cars. The princesses bumped into each other and zoomed around the mansion.





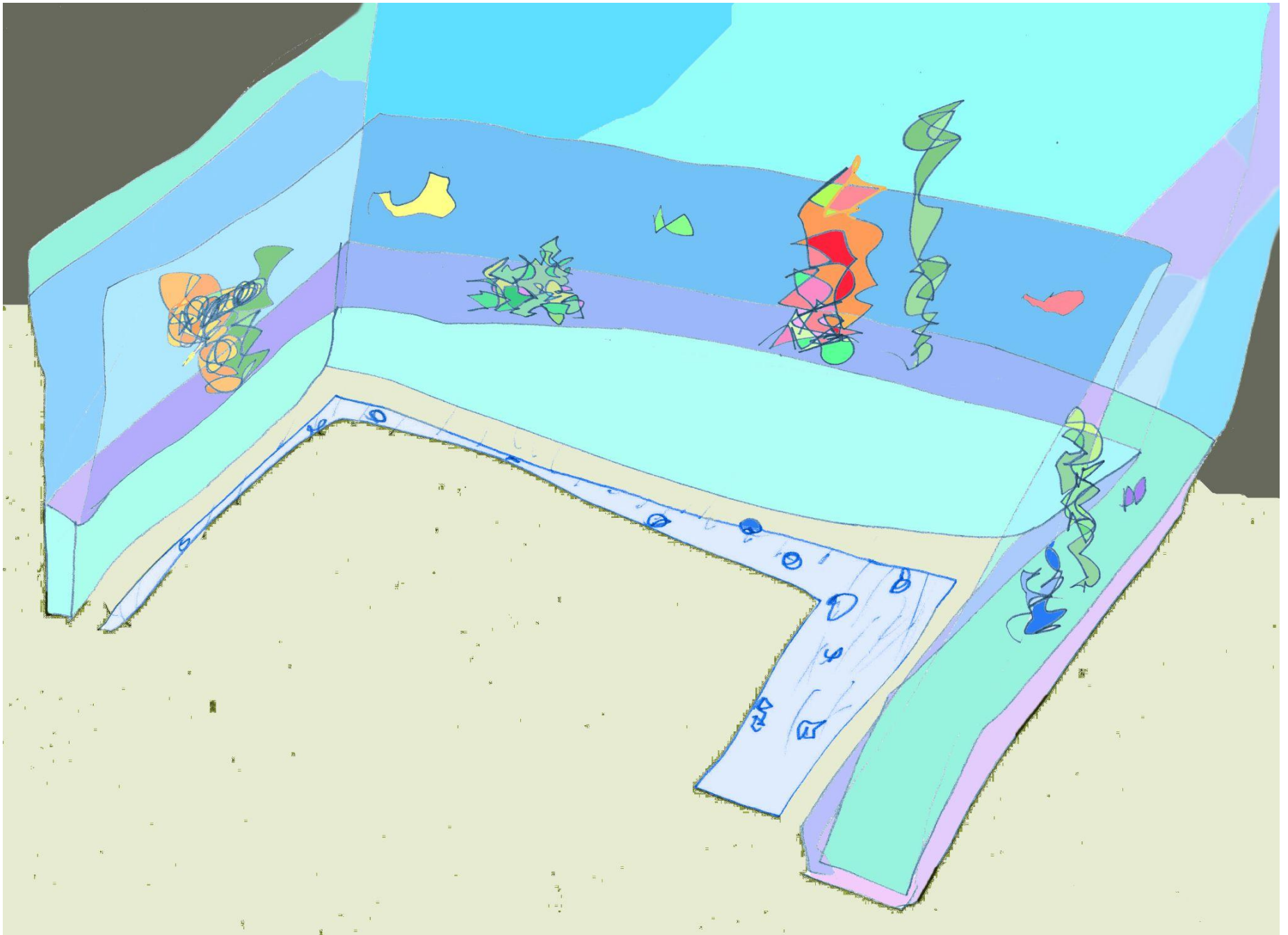
"I don't like my room. I want new stuff!" The room was re-made, and their dog which had been missing, was there!





They went through the mansion, fixing broken fixtures with a gesture, cleaning and purifying everything, making old furniture like new.

The princesses were really getting the hang of it. They remade the fish tank to be more colorful and with air bubbles. The tank spread out into the ceiling and adjoining rooms.



Tatiana complained, "These plants are boring!" and flipped the tilt box.



The plants came to life and danced.



The princesses looked at each other with crazy grins, then screamed, “floating palace!” Their rooms transformed and floated up in a misty cloud. The girls watched the inner palace float about a hundred feet above the rest of the royal mansions.





“Oh, this is so much cooler!” Tatiana shrieked.

“Woooo! Let’s throw a party!” Ursula begged. As she shook the box, everything changed.

Tatiana had a great idea. “The Fortian League is having a party today. We’ll take over their party!”

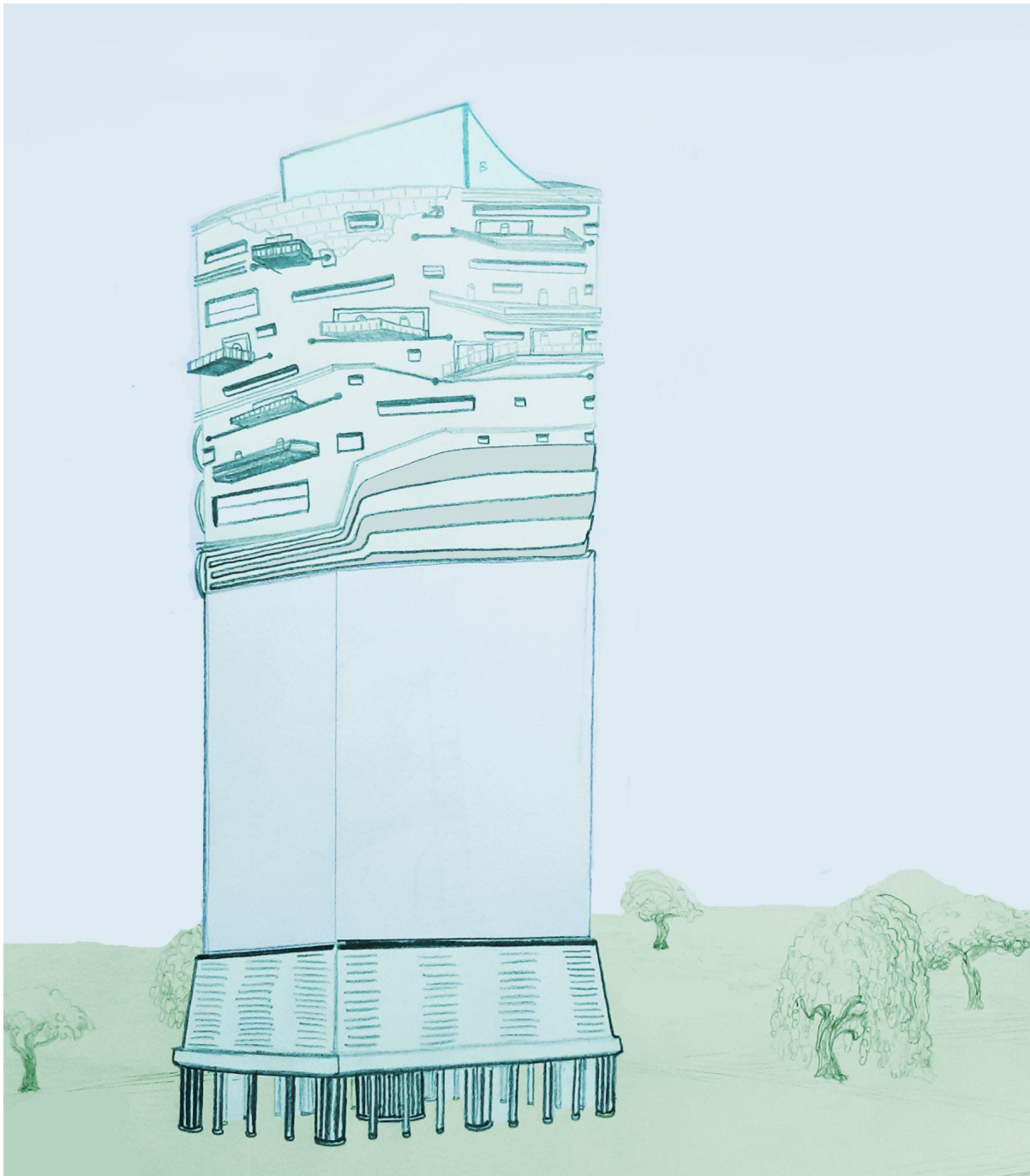
Harly and Caroline were throwing a surprise party, but the sign guy spelled it wrong.





Suddenly Tatiana and Ursula spilled through the door on a force-wave, and plowed into the heroes. Tatiana twisted the tilt box when Caroline looked at them angrily, and the tilt box flipped their emotions. They started singing, and continued to set up for the party, but with a will. They found out the party was for tomorrow. “Nooooooooo!”

The heroes sang along with Tatiana’s derp song. “Sing the sowing and long goes the apple piiiies in heeees face! La la lee doo! Facies and me’s sowong ish woooooooo”

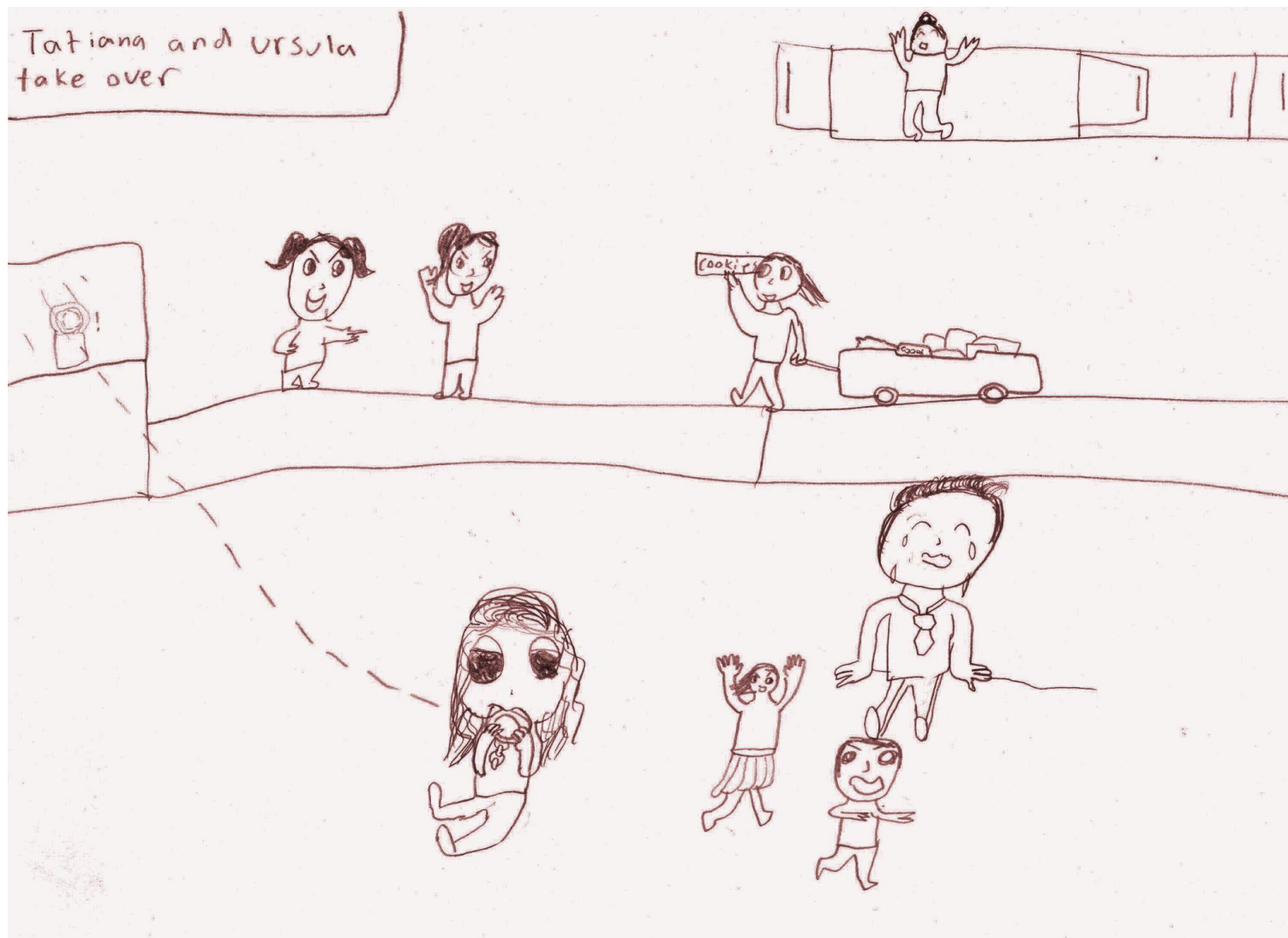


Tatiana and Ursula
made the heroes take
them for a ride in
"daddy's skycoupe."

They zipped off
toward downtown.

They homed in on
the Yagami tower.

Landing on top, the princesses threw the tilt box hard. People from inside, forgetting everything they were doing, burst from the roof access door, and fawned over them. “How can we serve you?” they asked in unison. The princesses loved it. They ran ahead with their strange group following loyally and turned the place upside-down.



The queen soon heard of all these things that had happened. She sent a drone up, something they couldn't mind-control. The drone approached slowly, then projected the queen's hologram in front of the princesses. The queen could see them through a small camera.

"What do you think you are doing, young ladies?" The queen was the only one who didn't call them "princess." The girls were shaking already, having been caught in the act. They couldn't answer, but only squirmed around.

Tatiana panicked and started rolling the tilt box. The background changed, carpet turned into wood, turned into pavement. People were crying, then laughing, then running, while their clothes changed shape and color.

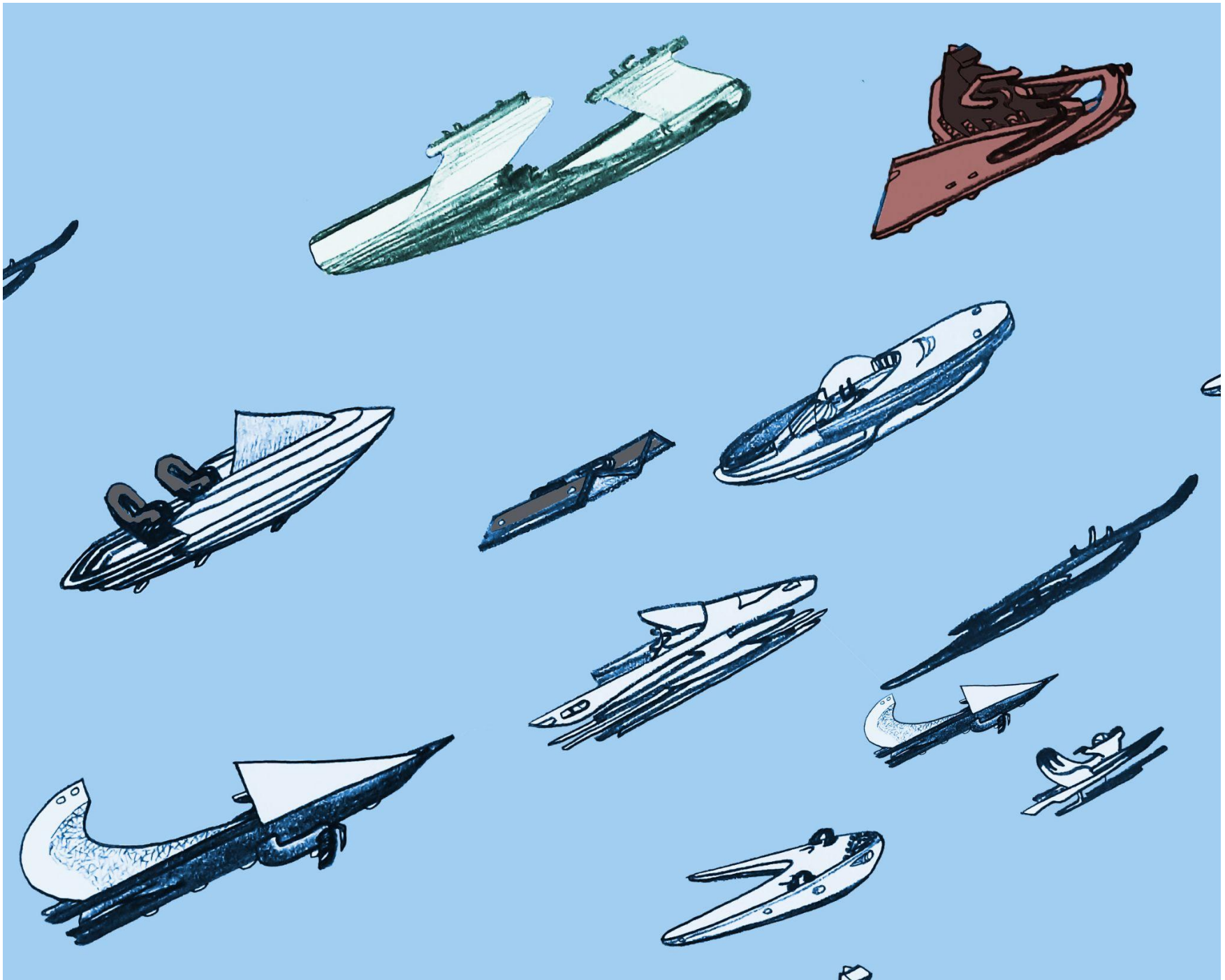
"Stop that at once!" the queen roared.

"Oh no!" the girls cried out.

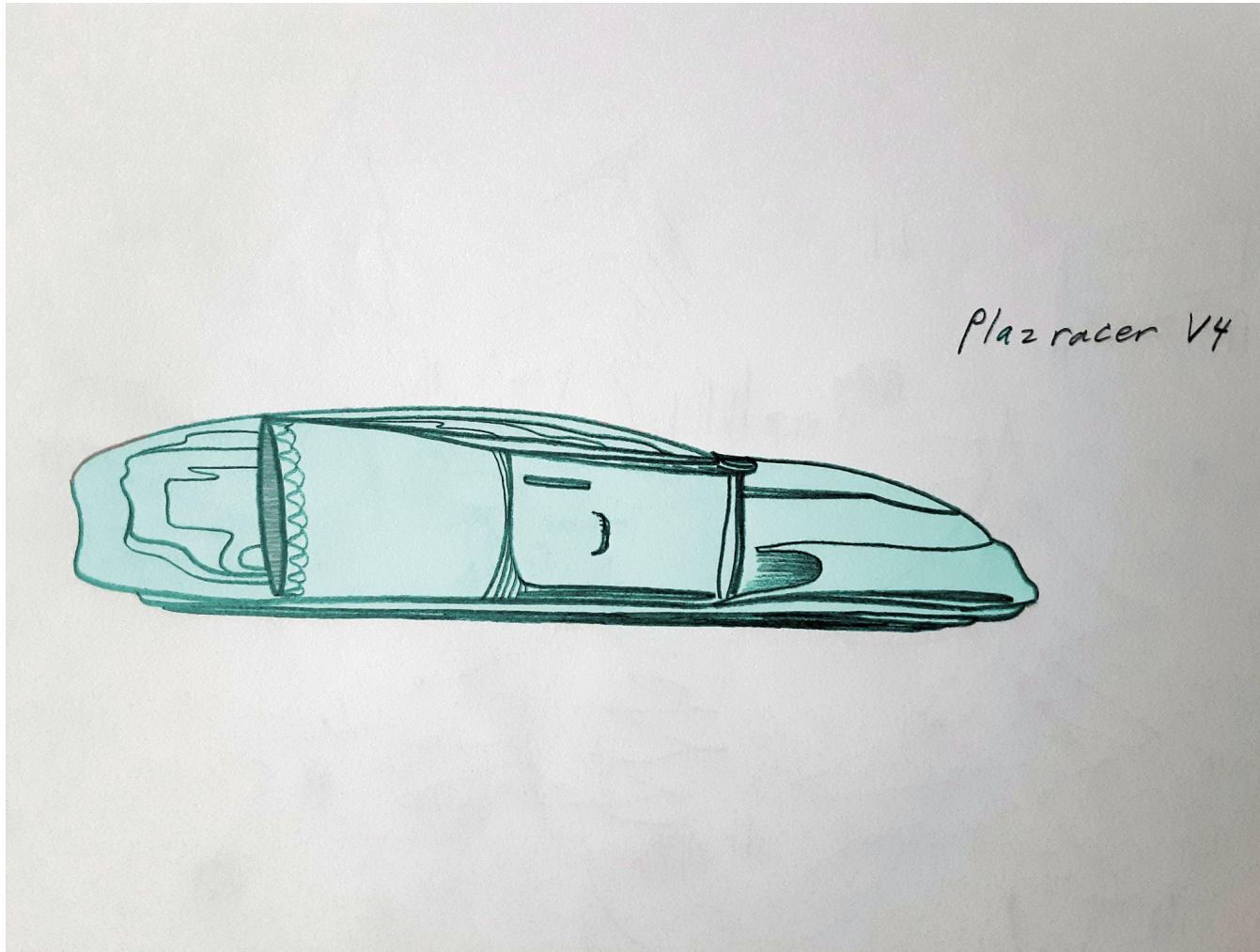
The queen sighed and straightened her dress. "Girls, pass that box to Caroline please, and have her roll it."

The girls did so, and the environment rotated backward toward normal. Caroline started to snap out of it, and rolled the tilt box again. Each time, her and Harly started to come back to normal, along with the building. Caroline tilted it gently, learning to control it. Before long, things were normal.

The queen said, "Thank you, dear Caroline. Now, please return the princesses back to the mansion. They will be grounded for the next 50 years!"

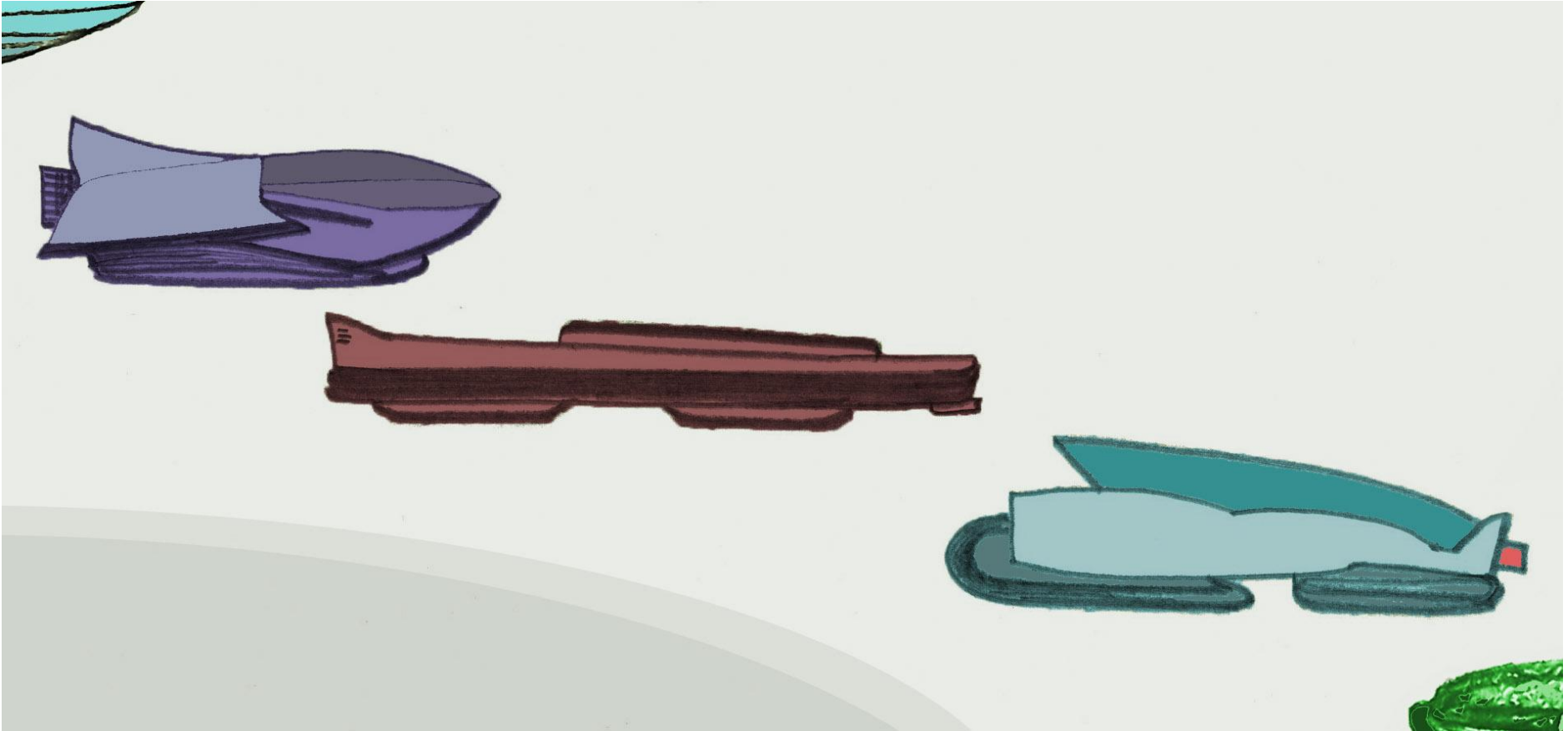


The heroes called a friend who sent them a few fortian racers for the day. The heroes could fly along with Miss Sparkle, but it was nice to have a backup plan. Their own ship had been broken weeks before they were able to fly it the first time. The people were trying to sabotage the queen, but she had insurance so it barely affected her.

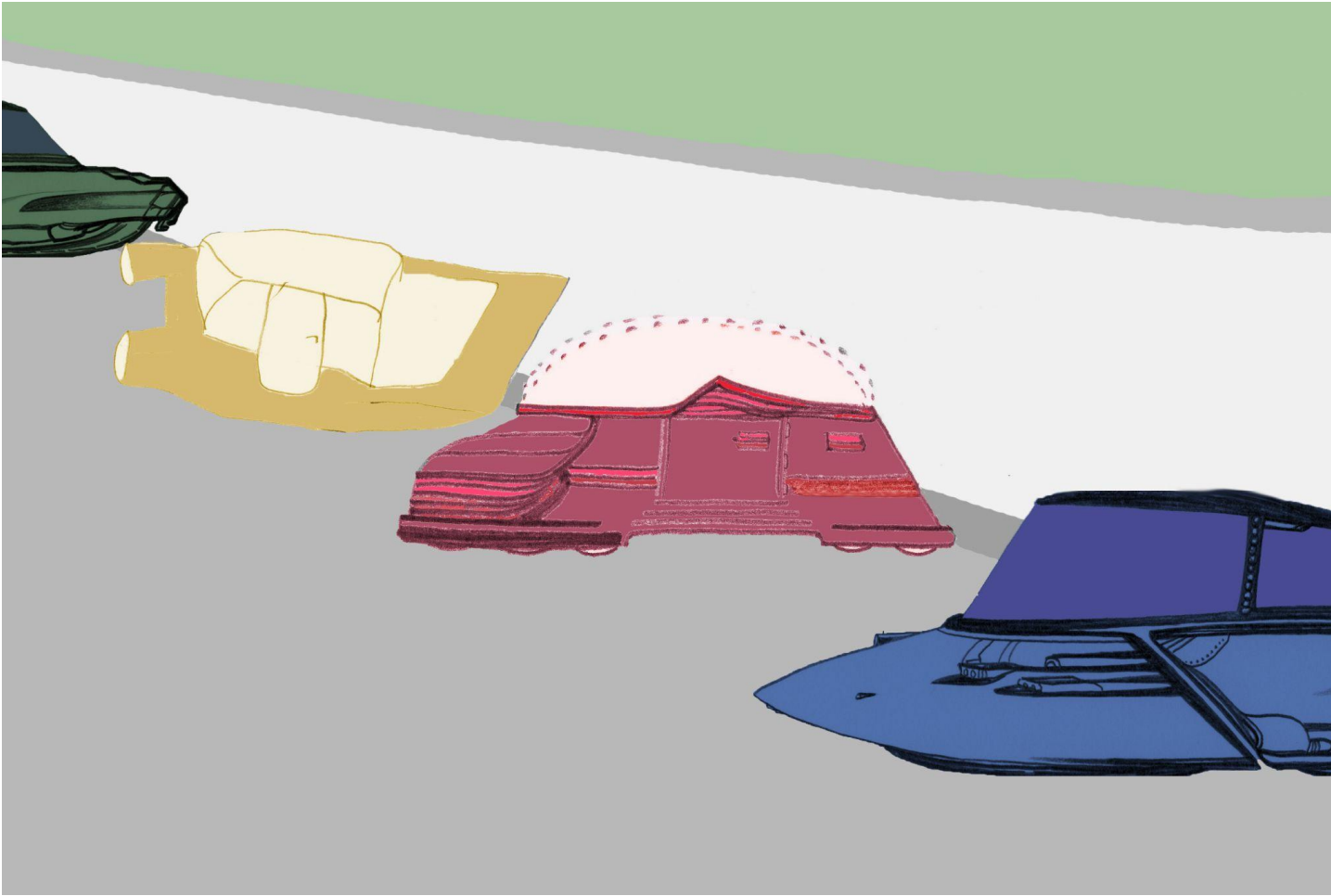


The Plazracer V4 glided from the fog, a sleek herald. Behind it was a Metalcruiser with turbos. They made a slick pair. Then a giant Crushbot floated out coughing smoke, with ugly rusted crane and treads full of mud. It could just barely float behind at the minimum limit.

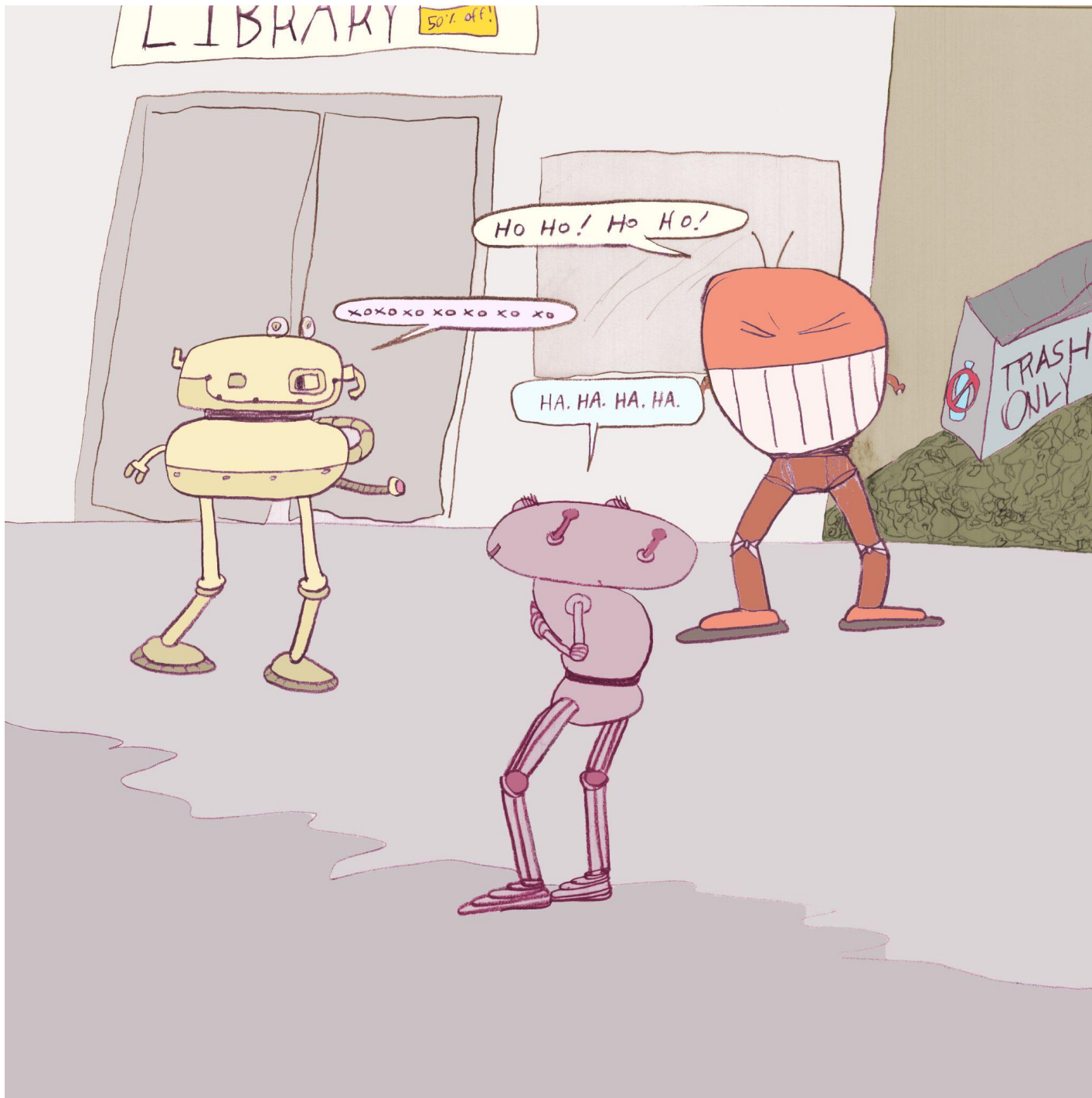
They picked out their rides, and got the radios tuned. The pilots got set while the front rider set the music at a comfortable level, and then they took off. The Crushbot was quickly left behind while the racers did zig-zags all over the sky, disappearing into the fog.

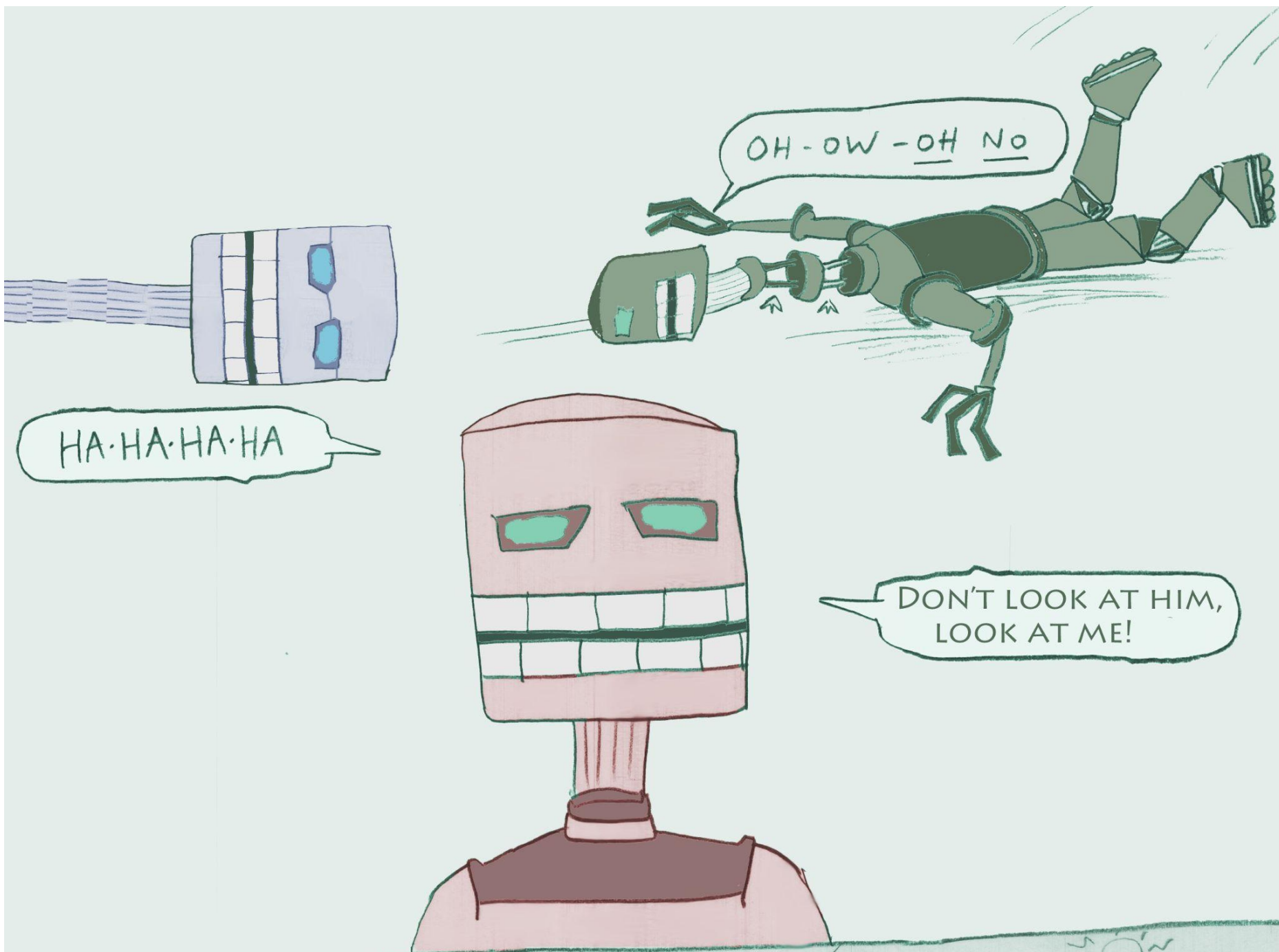


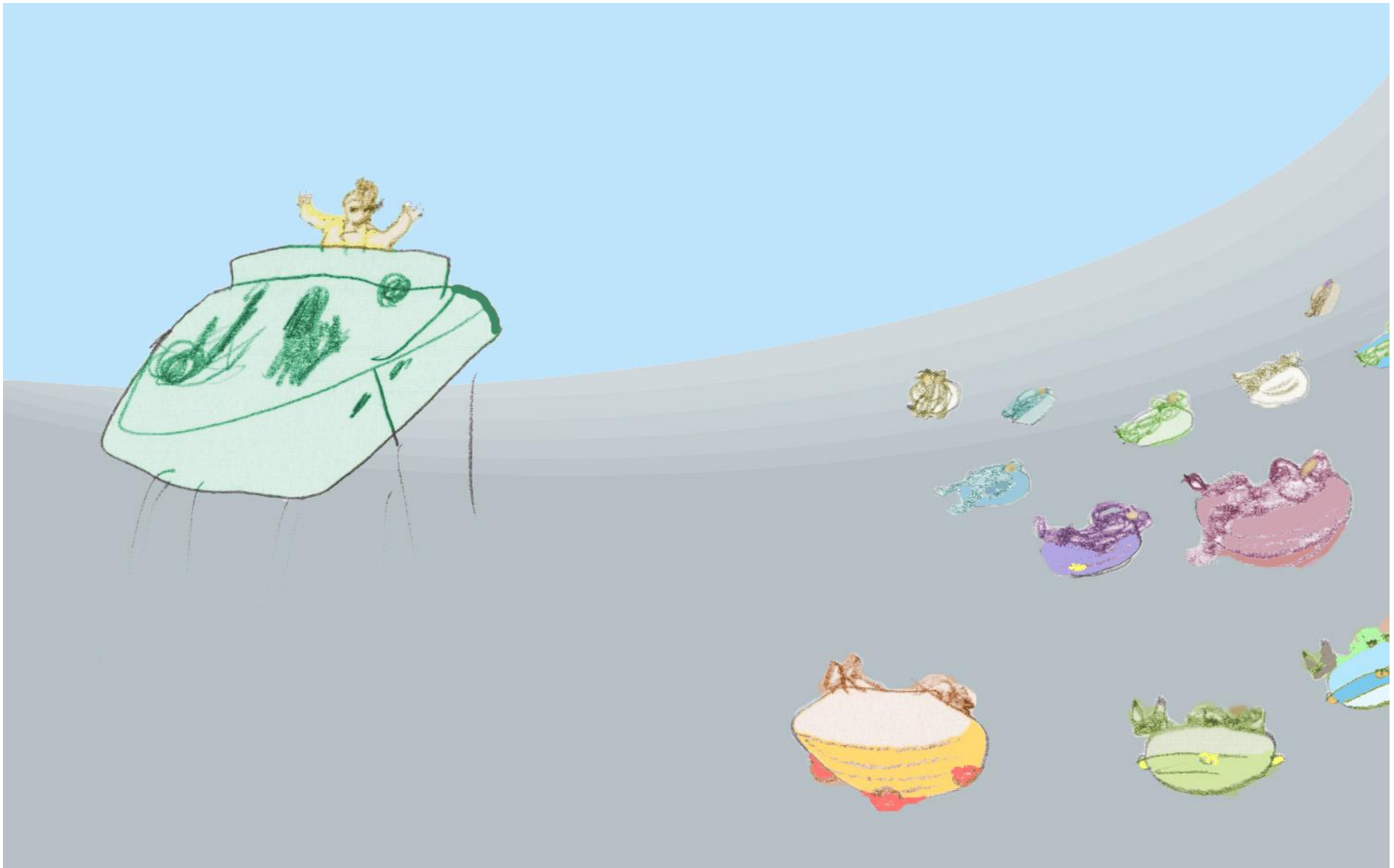
The Fortians followed the traffic, looking for evildoers. They really wanted to get back at the sect who wrecked their ship. They would not find those truly responsible for a long time.



It was a light day, and Miss Sparkle suggested that she could handle things for a bit while they enjoyed a comedy show. Two groups of comedy bots did skits and slapstick to warm up the crowd.





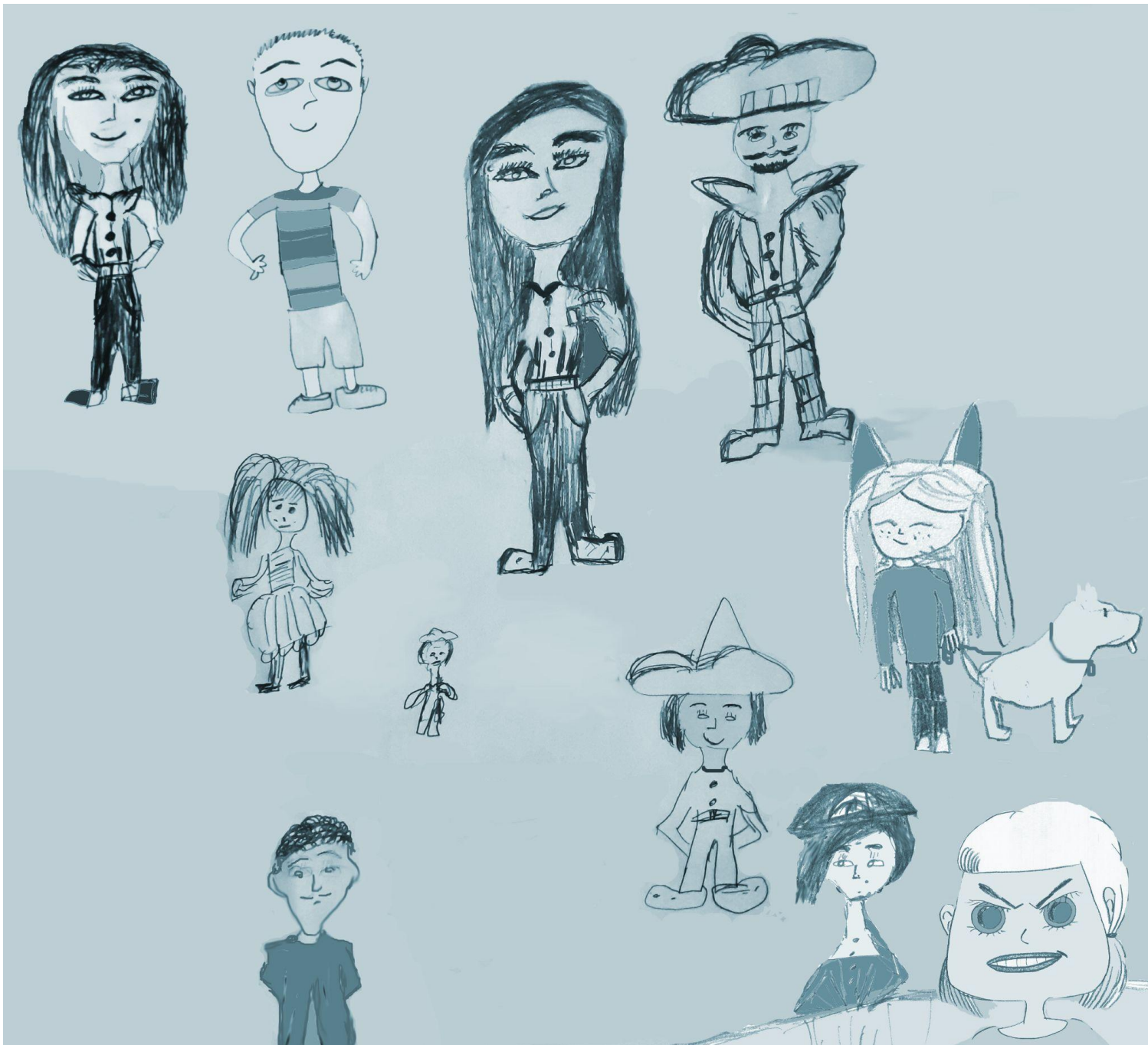




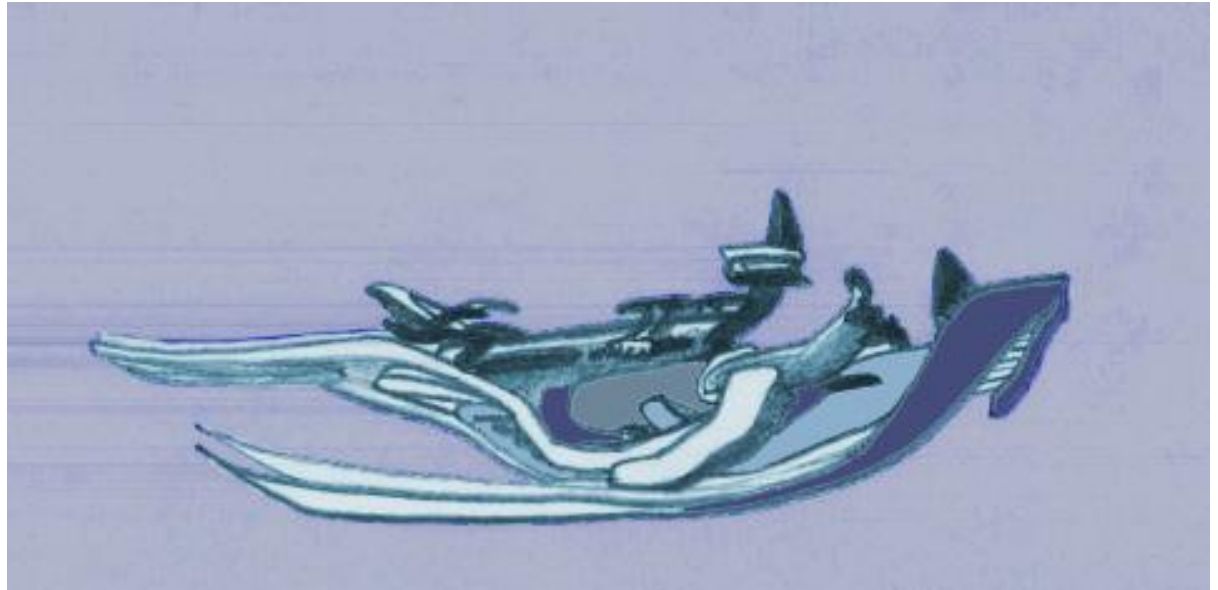
Fleeta was laughing at her holovid, so Julianna watched over her shoulder. It was that game show, Weather Feather. One contestant was threatening the other contestants, and so winning most rounds.







At the R&R Angler headquarters, the gatekeeper gave them a free pass. They saw Rejj-A and El Rojo, the old terrors of the west side, posing for photos. They were grizzled veterans. Once violent, they usually just hang out now. Their biker gang was made up of their fans.



Julianna stood in awe of the pair of racers. They were two-of-a-kind, and then the mold was destroyed. They tapped and could trace the Fortian ore that the island depended on (vion and trynkium metals).

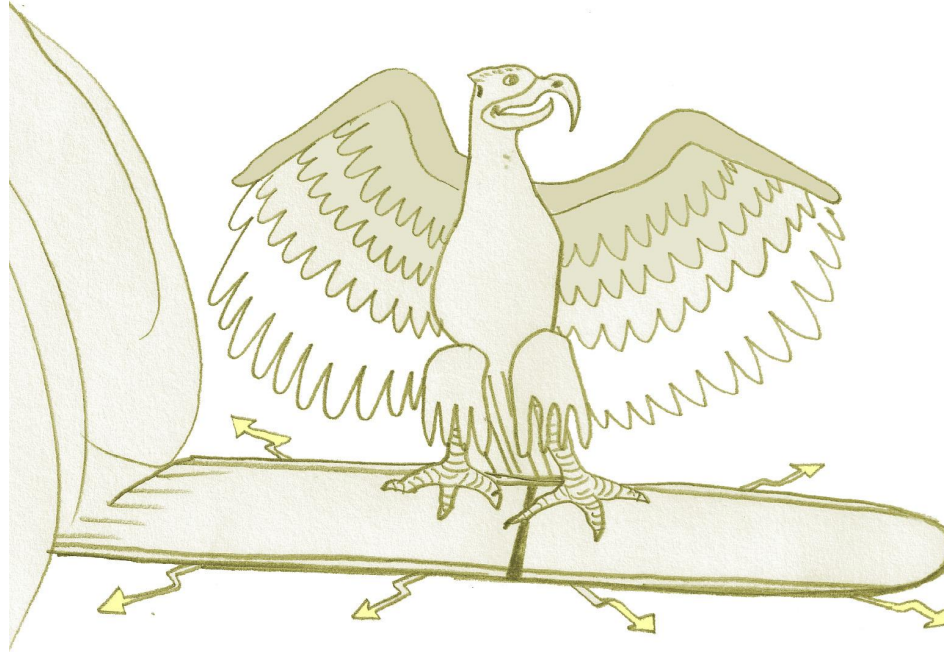
The racers' top speed was so fast that other racers could barely keep track with radar. It was theorized that they could get to space in them, given a strong enough force generator. They had built in raksyan speakers, which made impromptu music from the wind.



Rejj-A raced off over the ocean with no apparent destination.

King Enrique's troubles were getting worse. He sat in his enormous parlor in his pocket dimension with Lord Muncton, a real estate kingpin, and some cronies. Muncton did not get the respect he once did, especially since he so frequently had to run to the bathroom. The bartender brought more drinks. Enrique drank his in one huge gulp, then grabbed two other drinks, growling a little.

Enrique was doodling on his new royal insignia



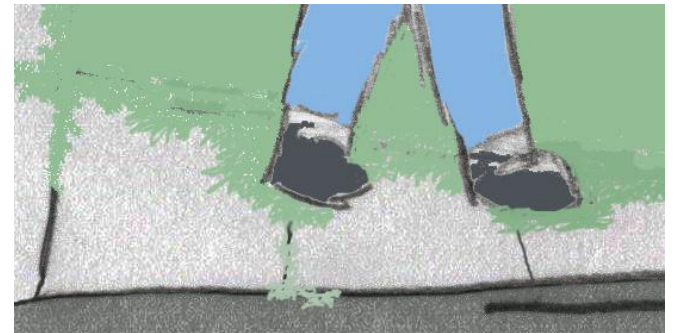
Outside, more of the King's people were cleaning off graffiti of him with horns. Imagine! Someone had come into the belly of the beast and thumbed his noses at him. Enrique's weakness was obvious nowadays. He could feel the wolves closing in.

The king recalled the day his advisors told him that Fleea had destroyed his artifact room. He still couldn't believe she accidentally destroyed everything.



Enrique felt his wildness creeping up again.

He took it out on random people that wandered by the mansion.



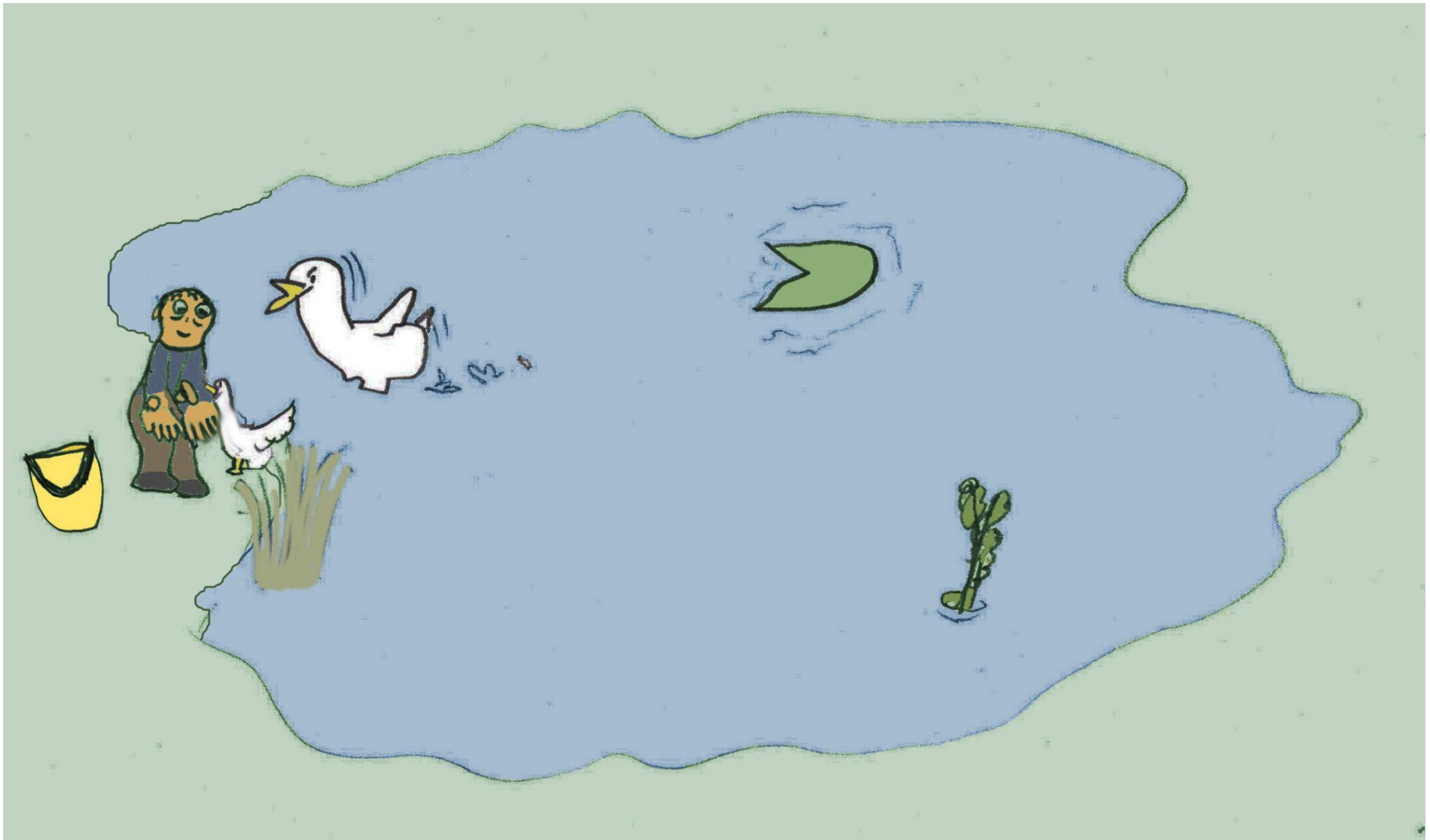
King Enrique went to go smell the world's best-smelling flower that he had recently stolen from a family.

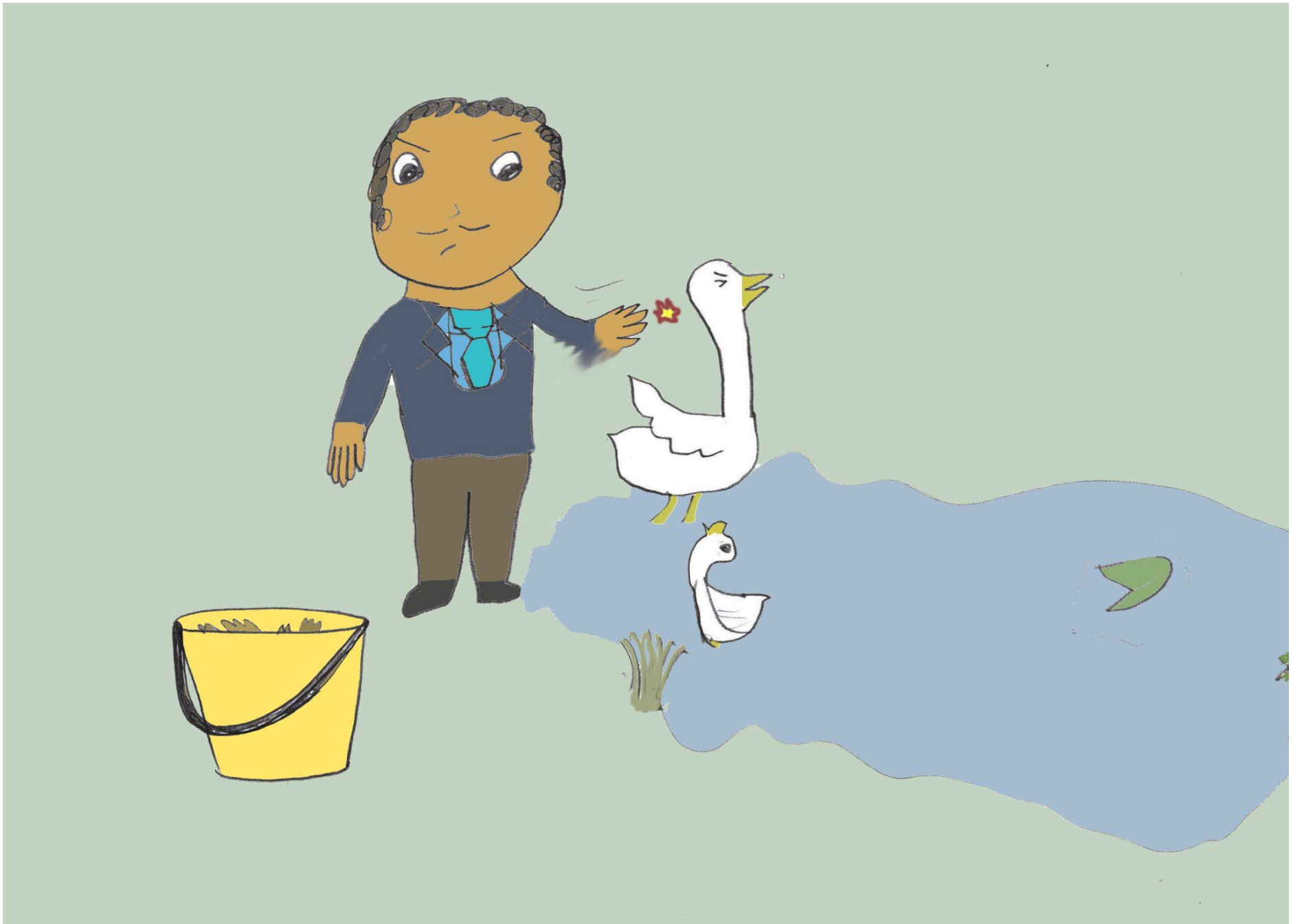


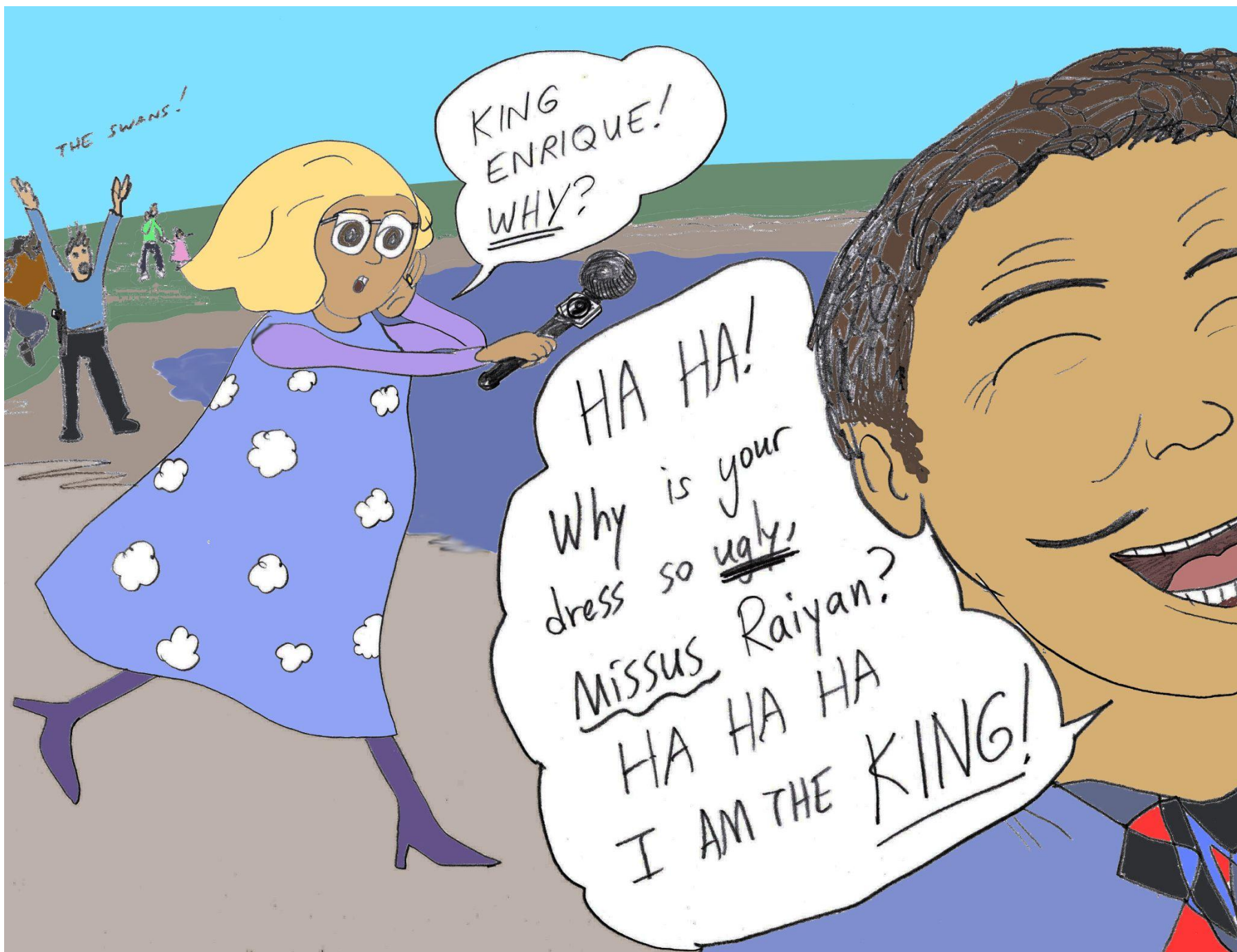
Your majesty!
Your face is
bleeding!



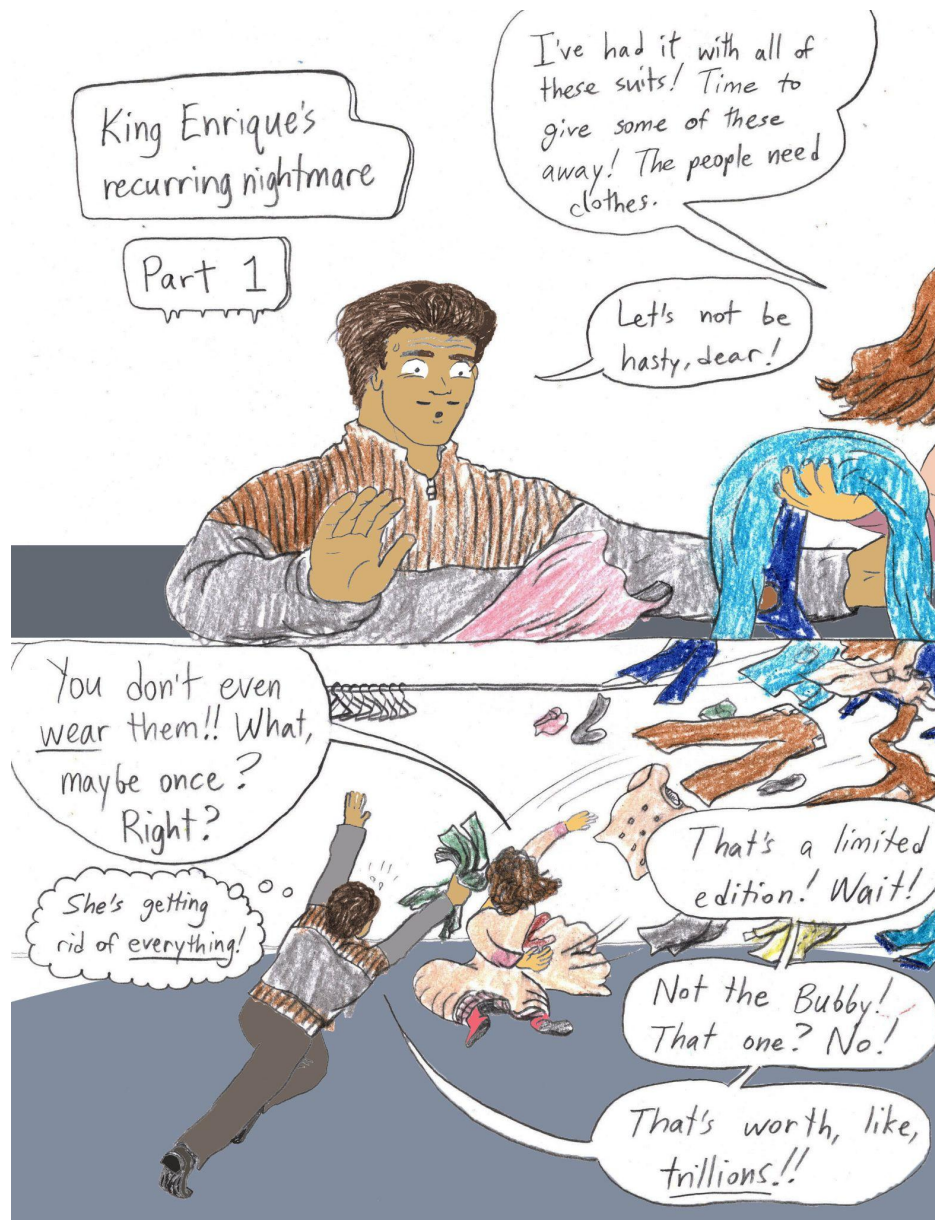
Sir..?







Enrique has recurring nightmares.







In some ways, Enrique was the same as ever.

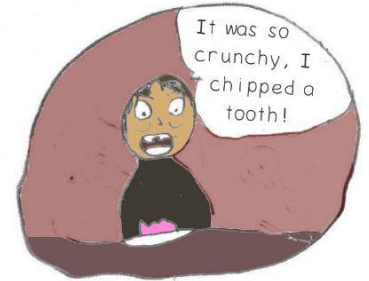
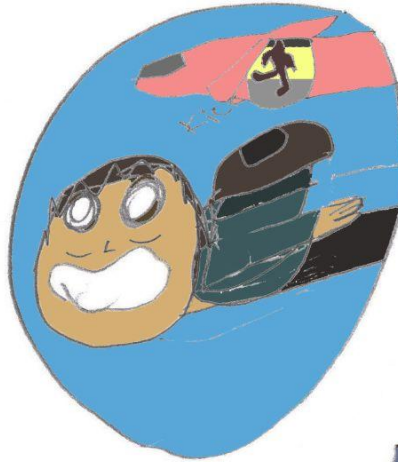
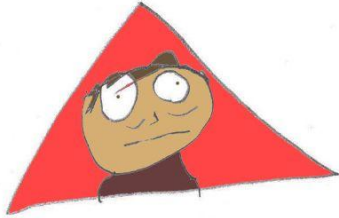




But his luck did seem to be running out.

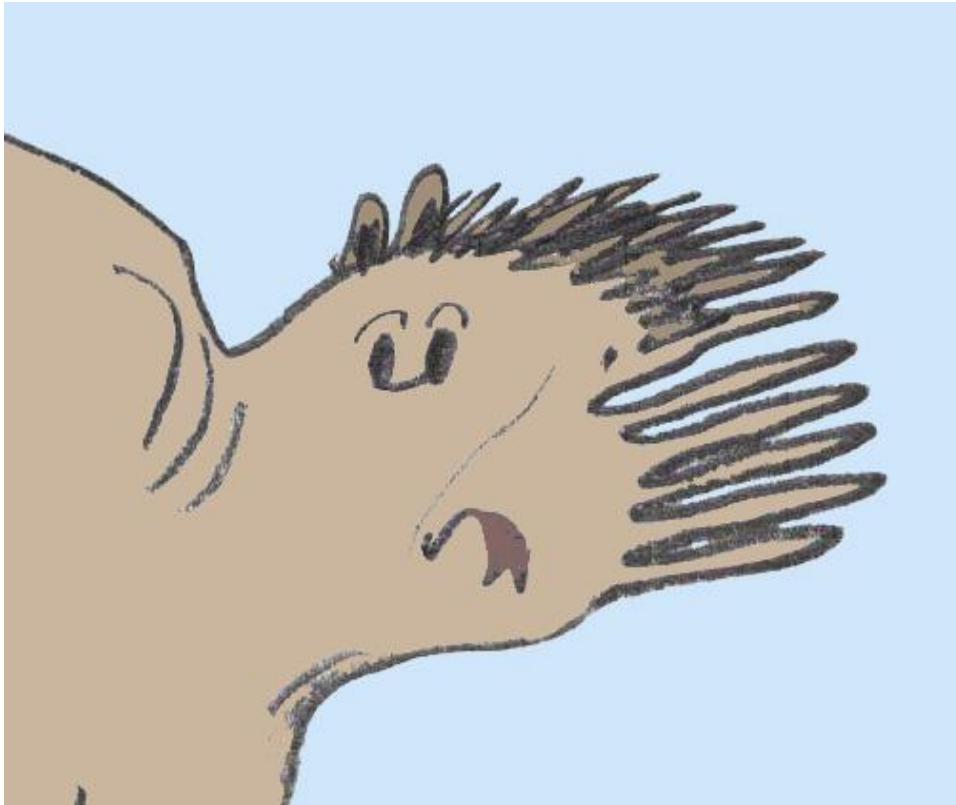
King Enrique's trip to the market.





Unbeknown to his family, Enrique had recently been colonized by this little, tiny guy.

It leaned crazy, and exuded evil.



Under the beast's influence, King Enrique had a mutiny inside his mind. The evil parts took over.



His sins had caught up to him. The evil "cut out" the good DNA, and cast it into prison.



The king accumulated vast debts. To pay off some debts, he agreed to do pranks. He even was forced to prank famous boxers and wrestlers, which did not turn out well.



The family had varied views on him, all negative.

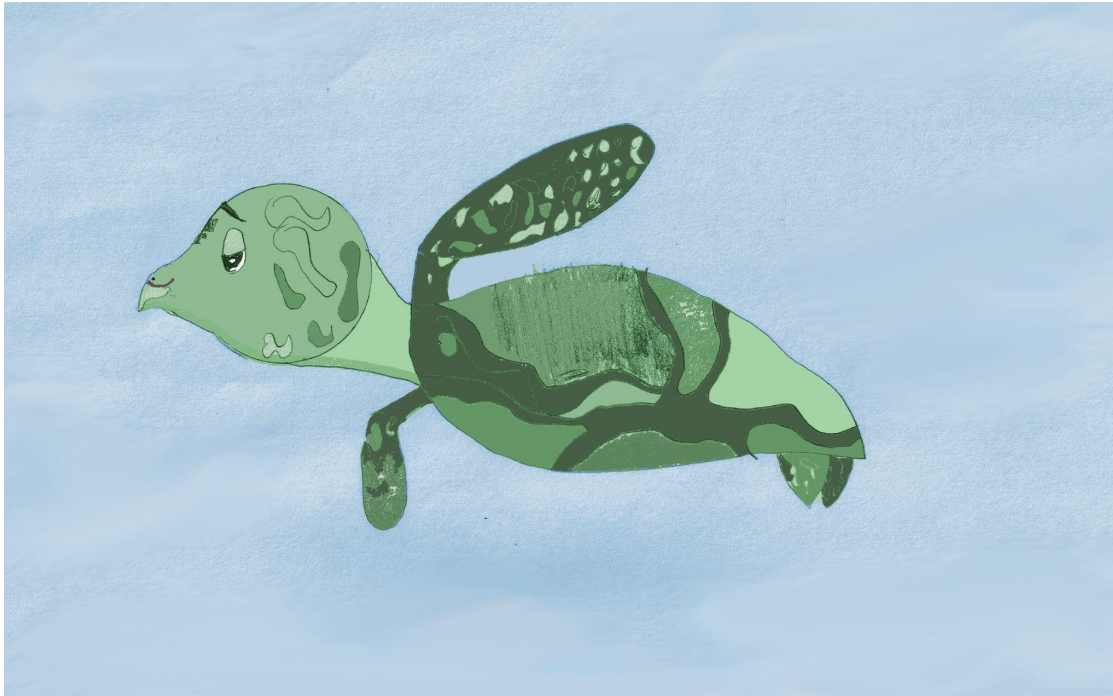
Rose remembered
how her dad
used to look...



Now he looked...



Enrique tried to relax for a day, it turned into a waking nightmare.



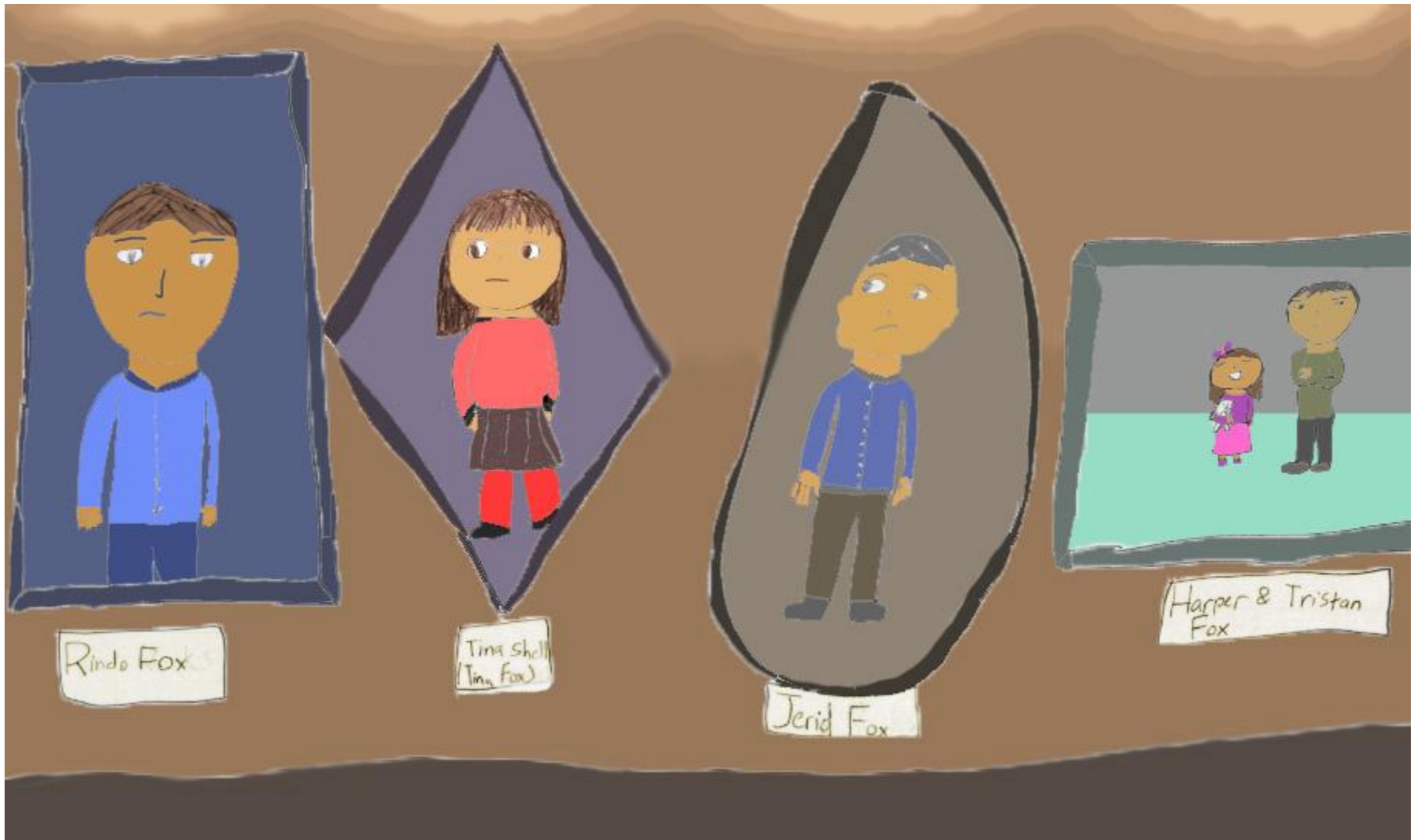
He wished he was a sea turtle.

Enrique had to pay more debts. He went into the wrestling ring for a huge sum, and won barely. He was able to pay 1/32 of his debts. He was afraid to go again, his body wracked with pain and injuries. Then he got the summons to court.

Enrique was able to dodge his creditors for the short week until trial, usually by hiding in his pocket dimension. His friends were always there nowadays, along with a long roster of shady figures. It was a like a self-contained town.

Enrique was hiding in a closet deep in the maze of his mansion. He snuck out quietly and hurried to the royal family hall of elders and locked himself in. Enrique approached the heads of the family,

who had died long ago. He began ranting to his ancestors. “The factions hate us. They want revenge! They want to steal our resources, our technology! Many want to steal the throne. They can not earn it, like me. I was #1 in a dozen categories at the Concorso, I won by a large margin! Why do I have to pay these debts?”





The ancestors had nothing to say.

King Enrique goes to court

King Enrique arrived at court with his normal entourage and standard erratic behavior.



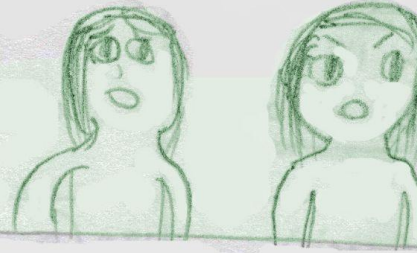
He walked into the courtroom, and posed for a camera crew doing a watch commercial. "I need cash!" he yelled when they wrapped it up, and they passed him an envelope. A judge stood by red-faced.

Testimony

The king took
my **baby's** toy
and some of
my money!



King Enrique took out **plant**,
it's worth a billion slix!



It's
unique!

I saw the king steal the money
out of the poor box!



He took my glasses, then he
pushed me to the ground!



I was there,
I saw it!

He ripped up
my whole lawn
and **FINED ME**
FOR IT!



King Enrique claimed
my property as his
own and kicked me
out of my house!

**I'M HOMELESS BECAUSE
OF HIM!**





Hundreds of people testified against the king, including the famous Jack Flare YK. There had long been controversy between Jack and the king. The king had tried to hire Jack, but Jack had refused. Then the king started insulting Jack on social media.

That turned out badly for the king over the months of comments. He read every comment and responded to many. It was one of the first times people had stood up to Enrique, and since then they usually did.

Yargon testified that Enrique and he were trying to whip some Mysterian soldiers into shape, but never actually saw the wall. Enrique had made himself to be a hero of Mysteria, so this one really stung.

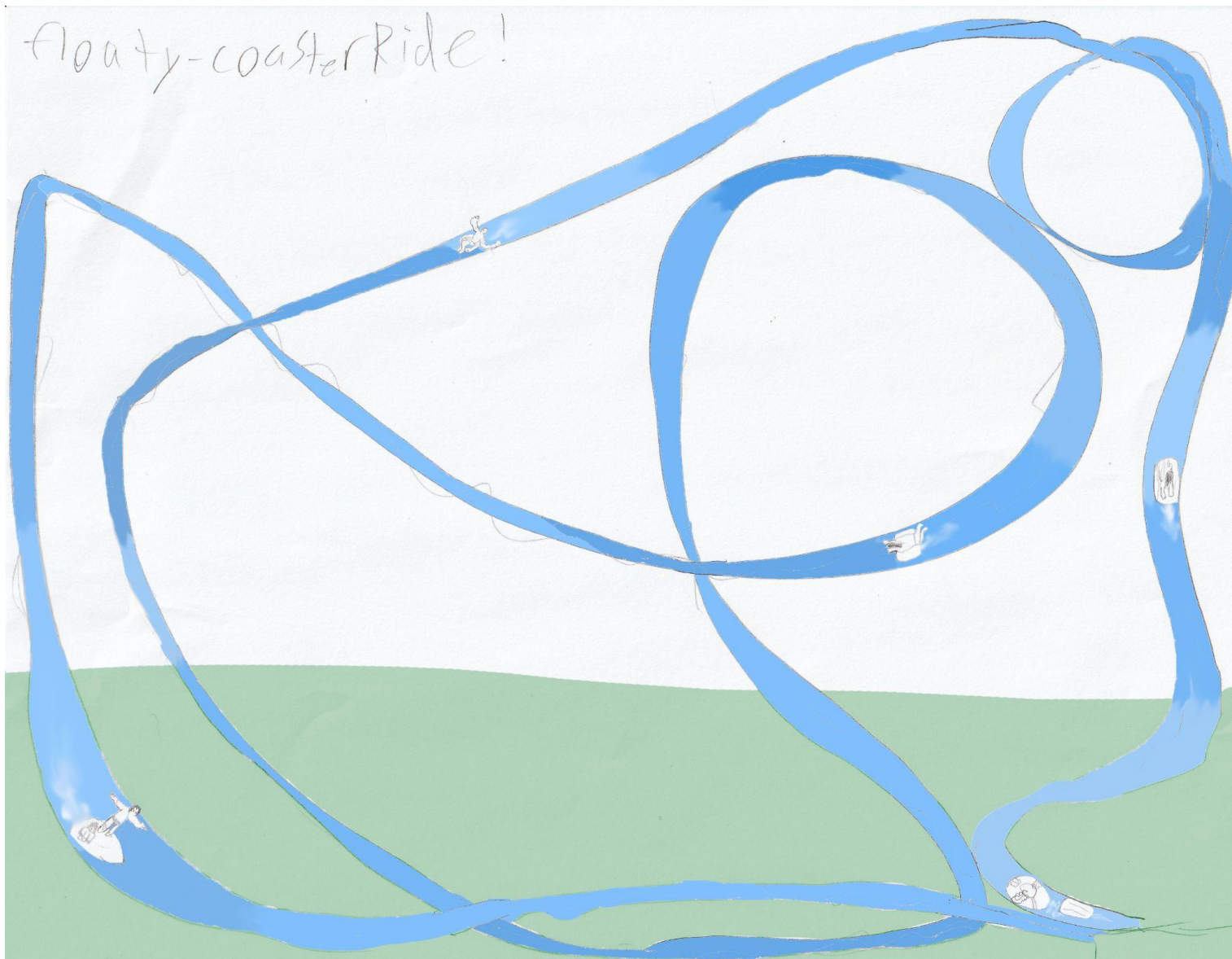


Exhibit 1A

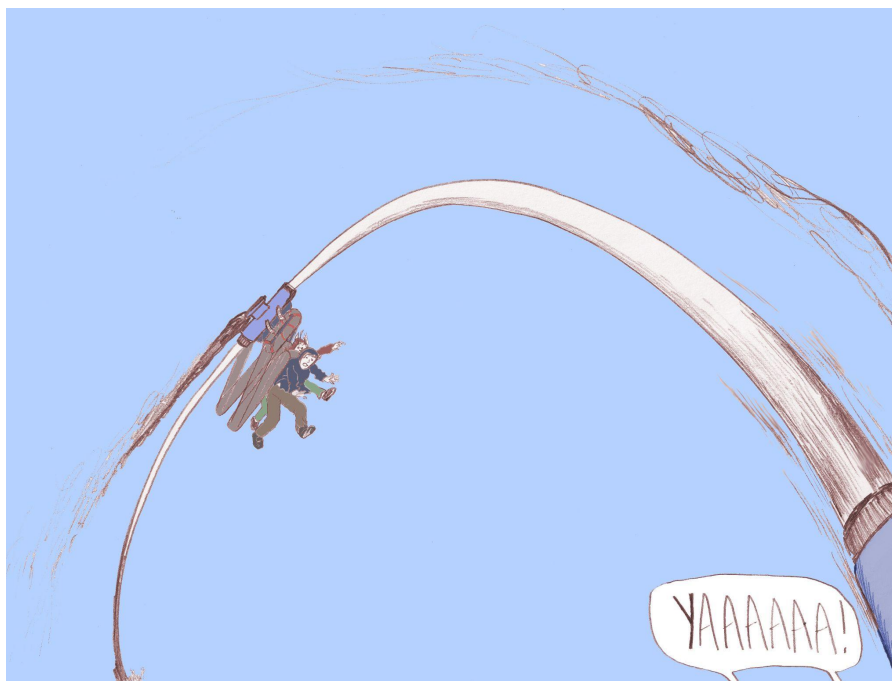
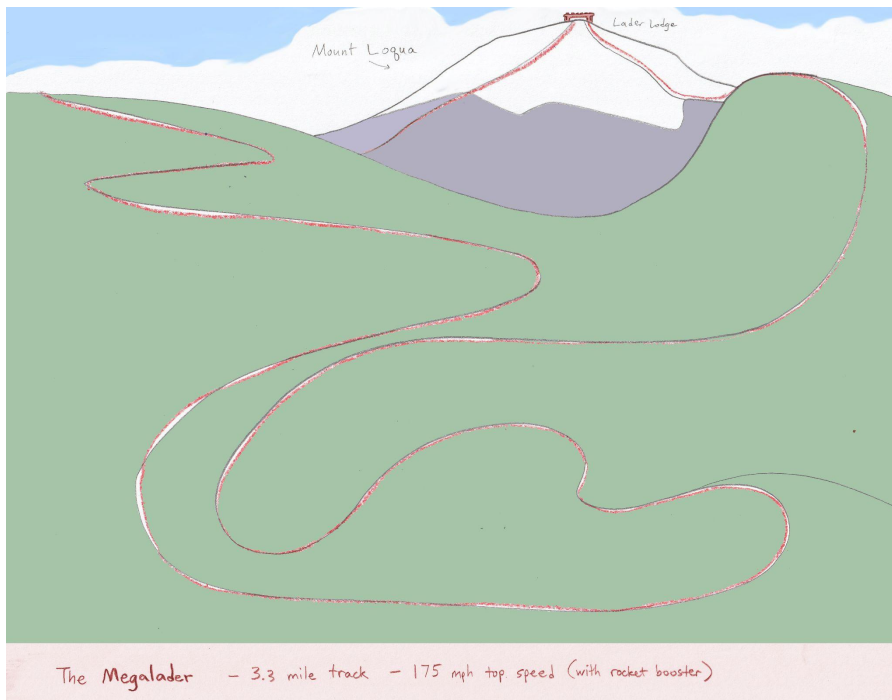
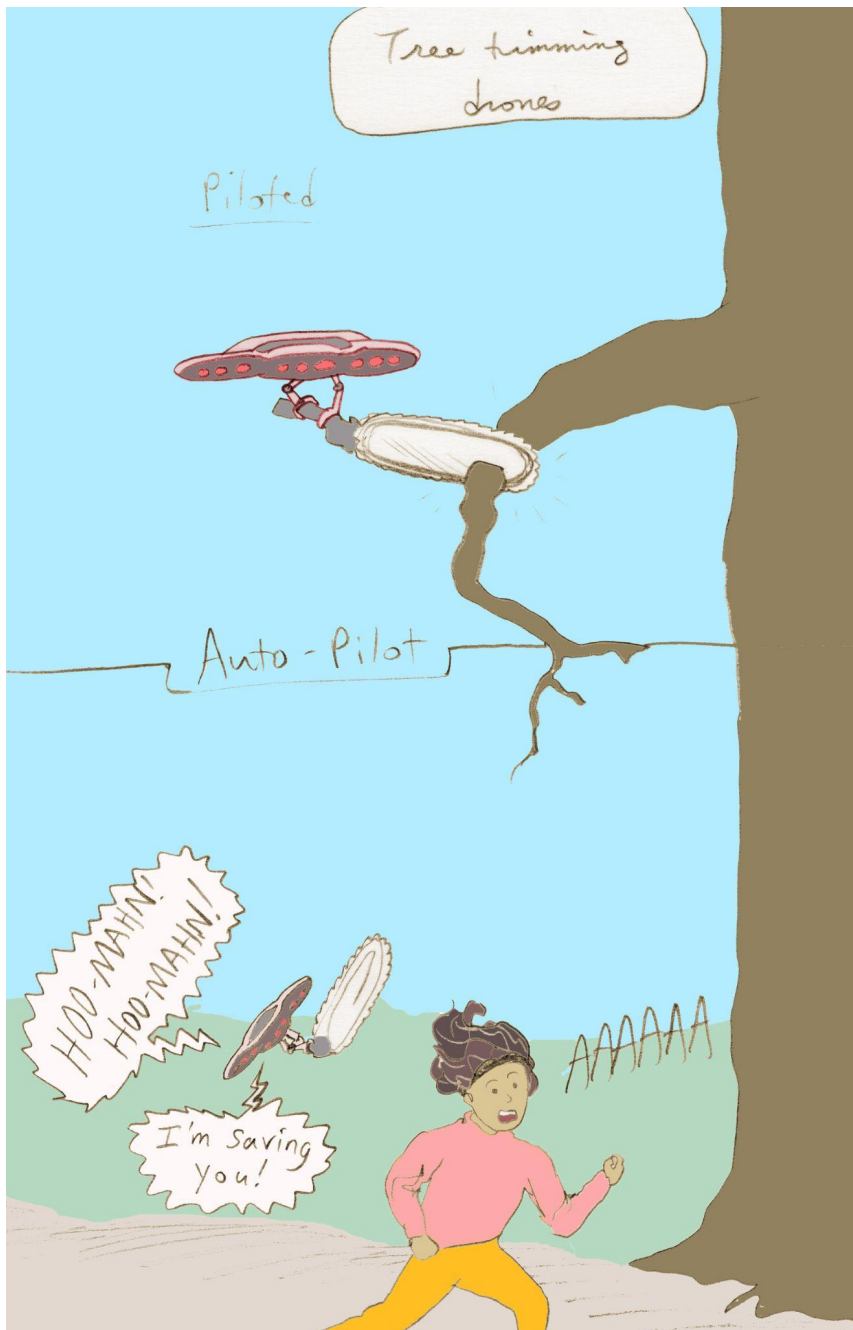


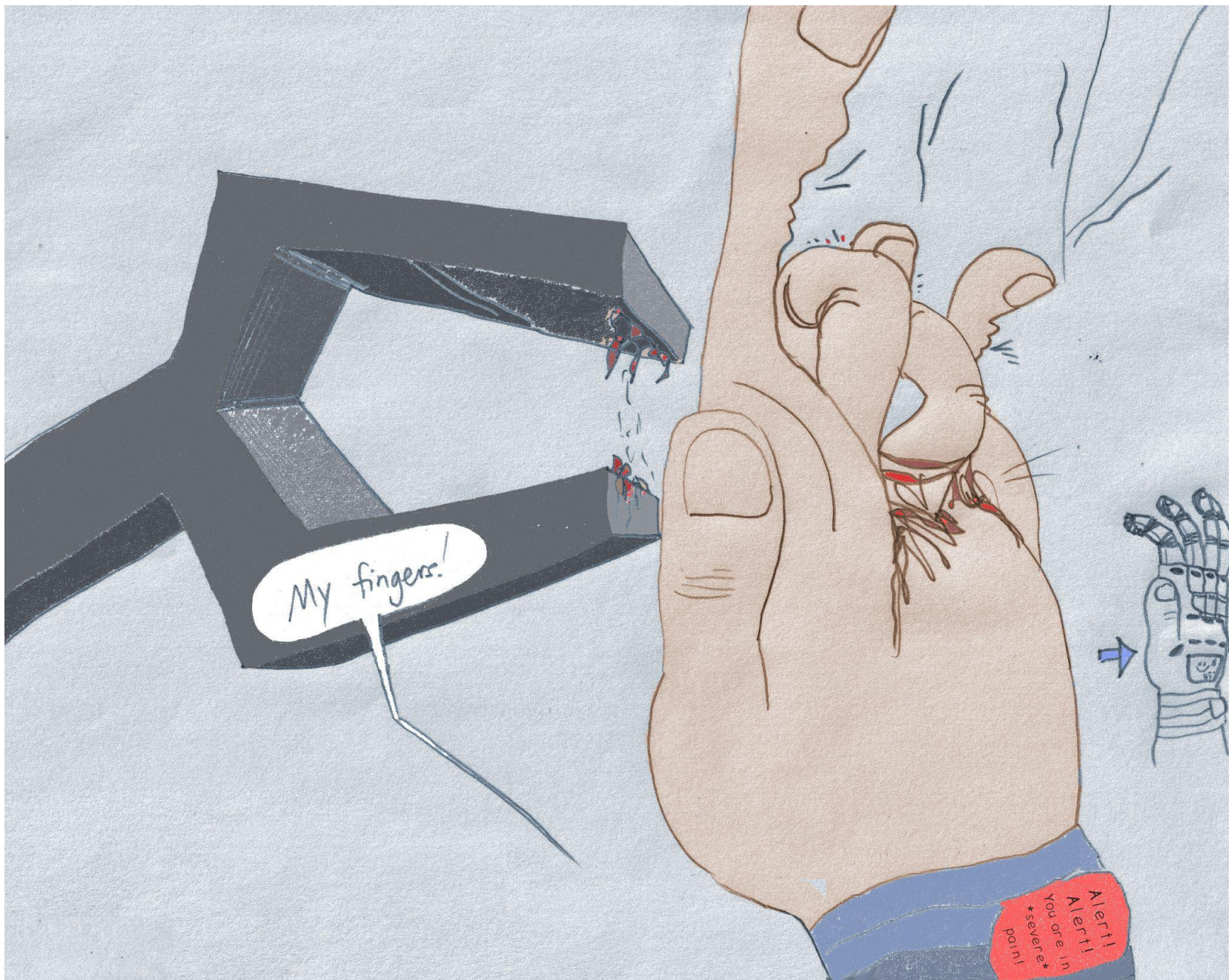
Exhibit 1B, videos 2A and 3A - regarding the Megalader ride



Video C3.45



Video 7B



The king's "helping hand" bot, which was released without sufficient testing, crippled dozens.



The king had his chance to defend himself, and he tried his best.

But his mind was not functioning at full capacity. People mostly recalled random quotations that stood out in his long rant.

“Fools! I am in charge!”

“You didn’t believe I could do that? Oh ye of little faith.”

“Surely you jest!”

“I am the king! Why would I NOT want to do that?”

“Vivo numero uno!”

“Hold on, let me get someone to punch you.”

“Forget all this nonsense – vamanos a la playa!”

“SOMOS NUMERO UNO! UNOOOOOOOOOOOO!”

After he grew too tired to continue, the jury left to deliberate. Enrique’s advisors were sitting around waiting along with everyone else, getting ready to be bored when the jury returned. The jury read the result – guilty, no confidence.

The judge ordered the king to be held under house arrest in the mansion pending further instructions. Enrique sat still but developed a wicked, insane grin.

When the authorities came to the mansion later, he led them on a goose chase, and trapped them in his pocket dimension. When they finally broke out, he was long gone.

Mr. Diamond spent some time with the new recruit, Wosim. He liked this kid. Wosim's short stint in jail did him good. He was much more cooperative, and saw how his life situation had taken a fortunate turn.



Wosim

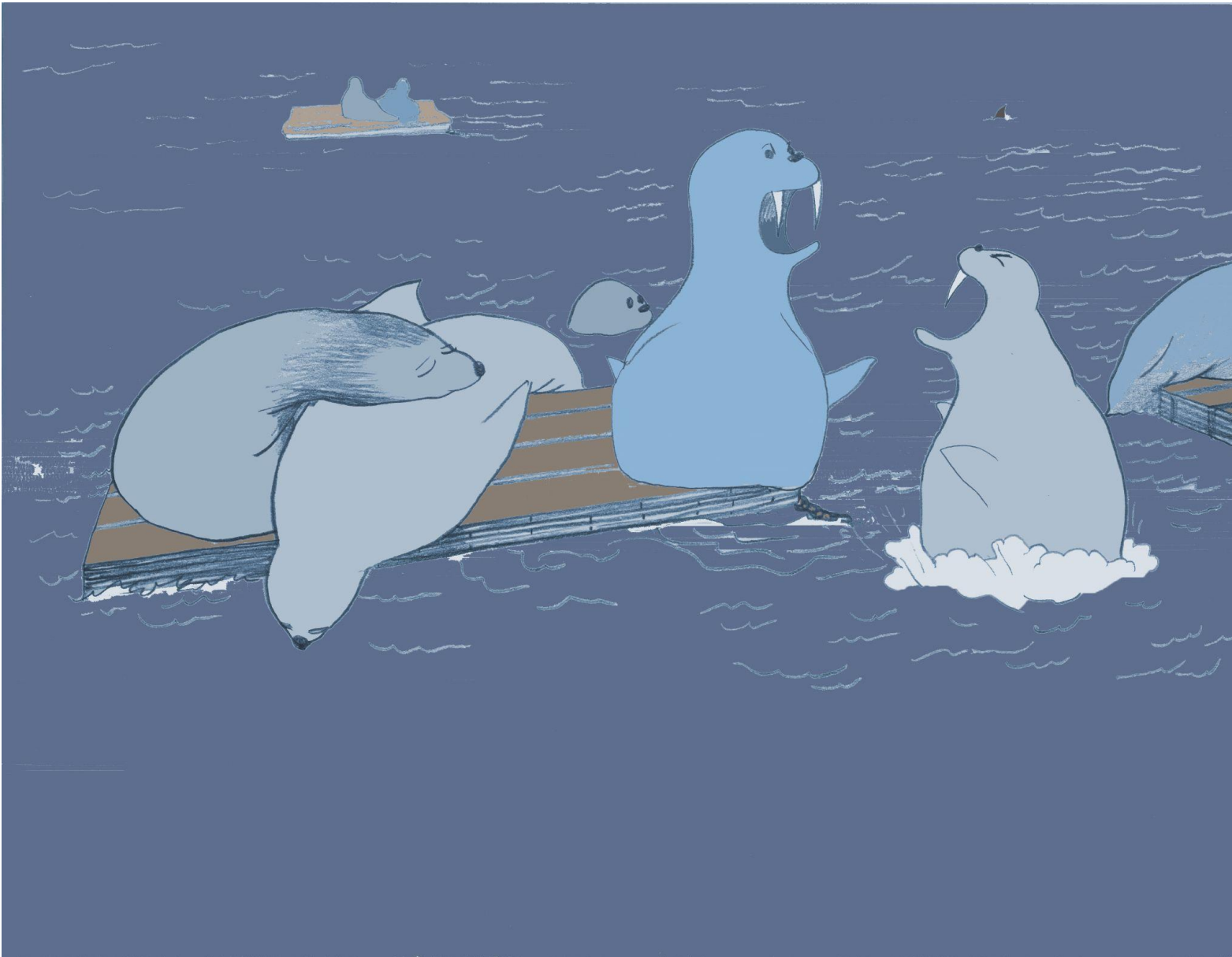
AKA Kachoolin

Ability to manipulate and project water at high velocity

Can breathe underwater or out of water

Limited telekinesis

Aura has healing properties

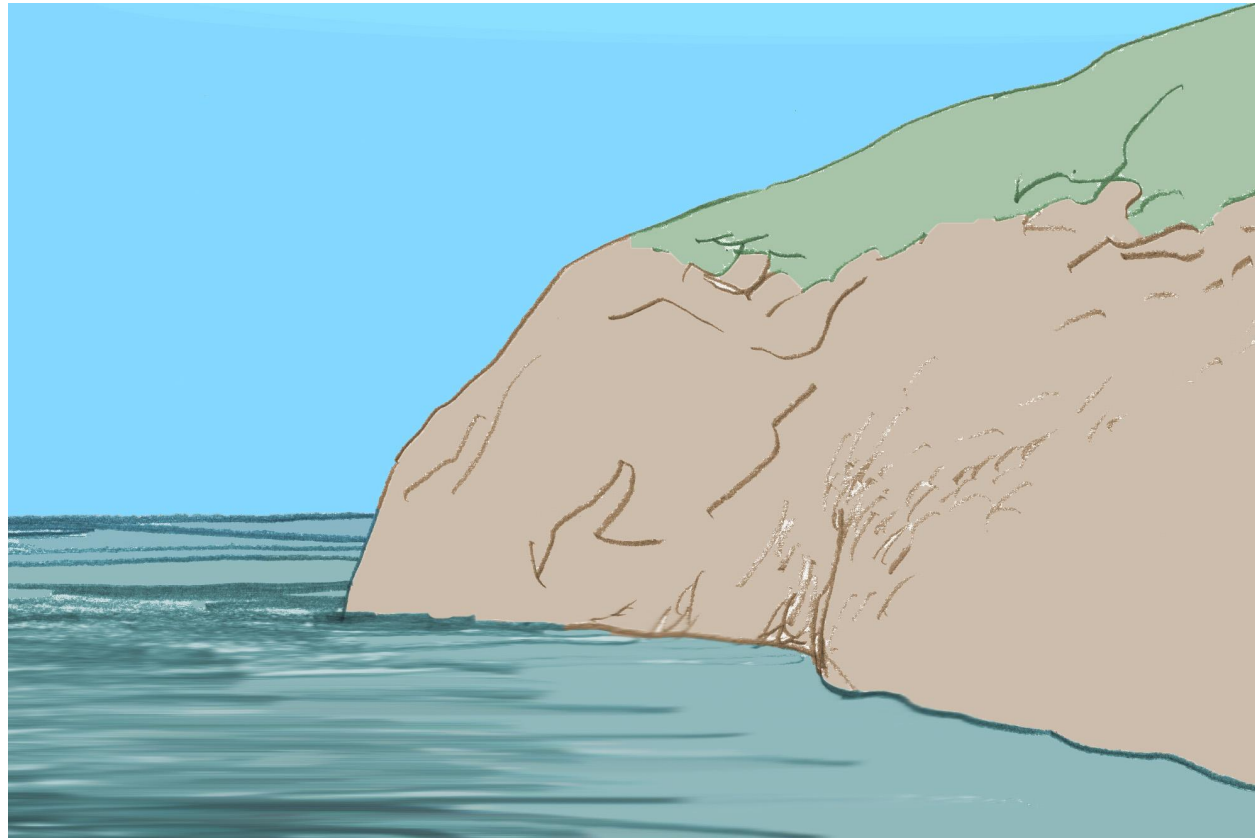


Meanwhile, on Marquesa, it is another quiet, irradiated day.

Suddenly, a strange villain appeared from a hidden pocket dimension! He was hunting another traveler from afar, an injured, young lady who was fleeing persecution. But he was temporarily paralyzed by the toxic atmosphere. He fell on his side, convulsing.



The giant recalled returning to Marquesa, back around the same bend of island. Annorie was not waiting like he had thought she might be. But she did burst from her door shrieking that wonderful off-key scream that he loved, the moment she saw him.



They had raced around the island together, wrapping up her projects, and he had started on his own before she made up a new list. They sometimes zoomed up and down the island, looking for more secrets of the island.

Now Blaire and Annorie were deep in the mines. They had biosuits made from organic matter that Blaire had chemically bonded. The suits charged in the sun and lit up in darkness. The organic material breathed air into the suit, purifying it.

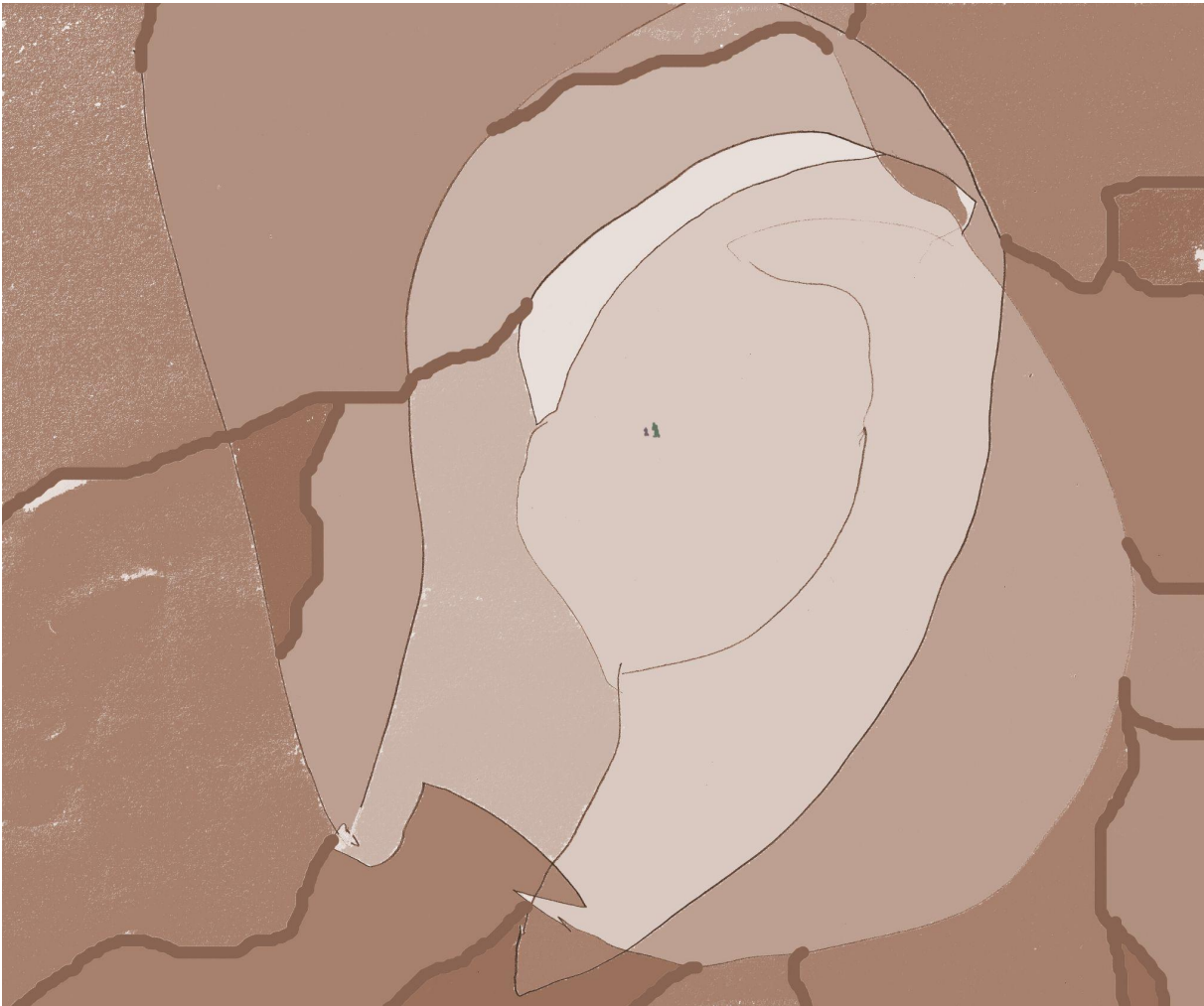
Since Blaire had returned, he had also retrofitted a processing plant for the old ore. The ore crumbled easily, so belts ran the rocks over shakers and tumblers, and dumped them into a container. When the container weight reached the limit, the platform rotated, spinning up an empty container. When all containers were full, it shut down. They zoomed down the tunnel in a rocket cart, scavenged from the previous miners' leftover inventory. After some repairs, the mine was in good working condition. The cart shot upward and emerged into the night. Annorie loved the view of the moon and stars, they were ever so clear on this desolate island.

Blaire had cut and stabilized a new tunnel system approaching their house, and then constructed several gates underground with new entrances. He liked having multiple exits. They rolled up past the canals he had dug, where her dad rowed his new boat.



The family helped Blaire set up some brick sheds to contain air conditioning motors. The giant ran pipes for the natural air conditioning from a deep underground river, right up into their home and nearby, pushing the bad Marquesan air away.

Blaire had huge plans that Annorie didn't understand, but she stood by in awe at his works. She kept a careful journal with every detail of his work, and every word he spoke. She asked many questions about processes she didn't understand fully.

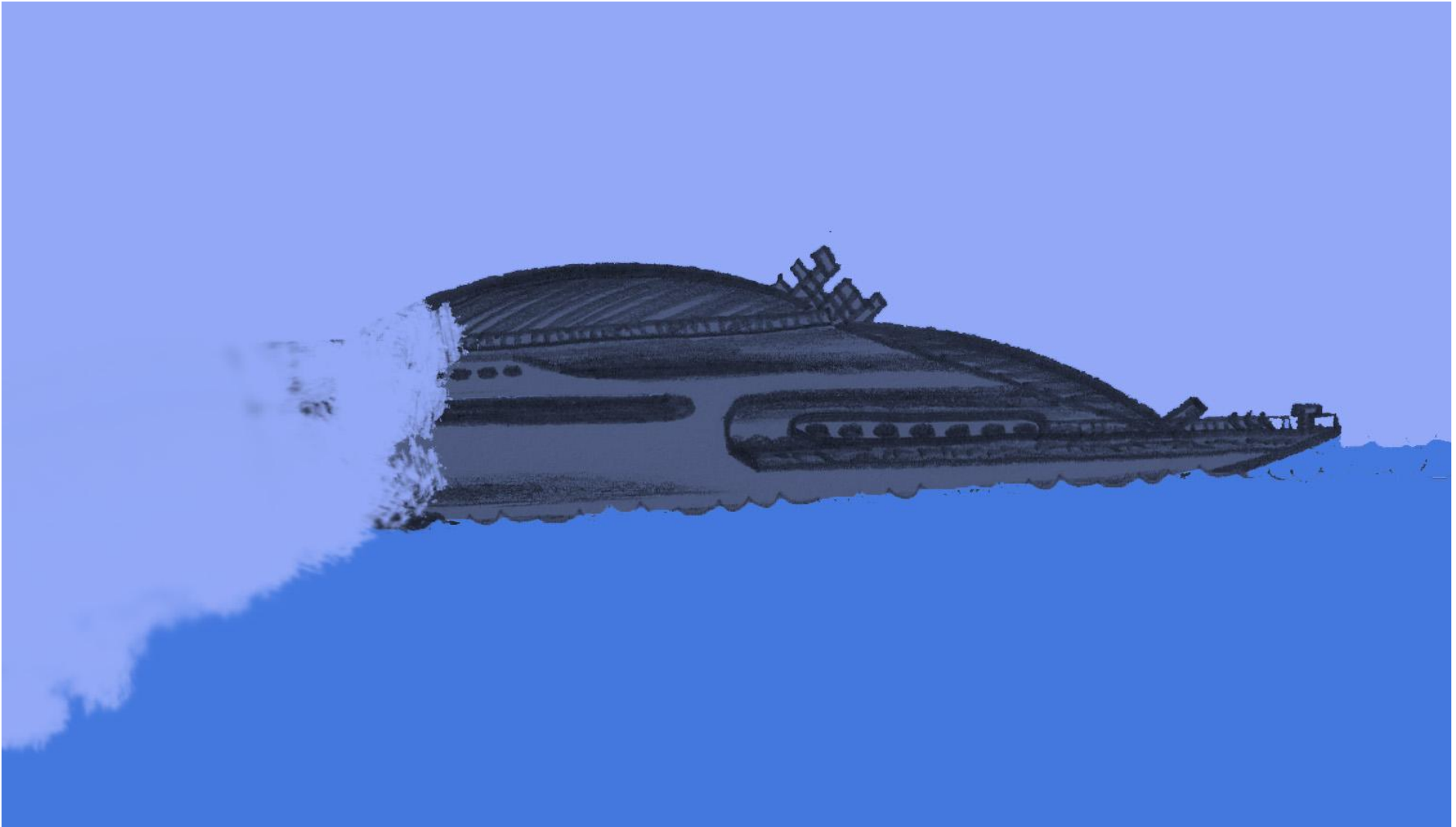


The giant led Annorie to a nearby plateau, burnt rock surrounded by irradiated sand. "I will bring this land back," he promised.

In Bermuda, pirates from all corners of the globe were assembling. Dozens of cutthroats and mercs were eager to get the treasure hunt started! The leaders Woop and Wibby Bluke, Poorard Thayro, and the Bkook brothers (Brokk and Broko) led their gangs.



Out deep in the triangle laid a massive predator in the fog,
monitoring for signs of their prey - *the Fortian League!*

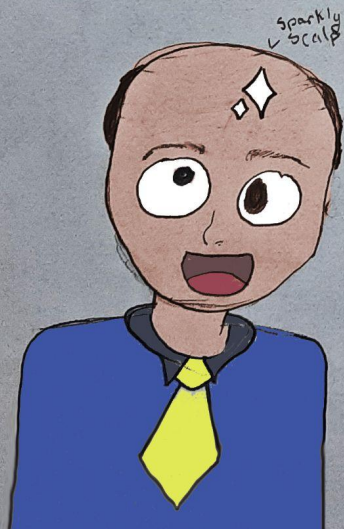


GOOD MORNING, FORTIUS



 FBC
YOUR LOCAL
NEWS TEAM

MORNING



FORTIAN
WEATHER

80 degrees
AND...
HUMID!

HA HA



Next time in Fortius:

Will the heroes find the treasure the Queen sent them to find?

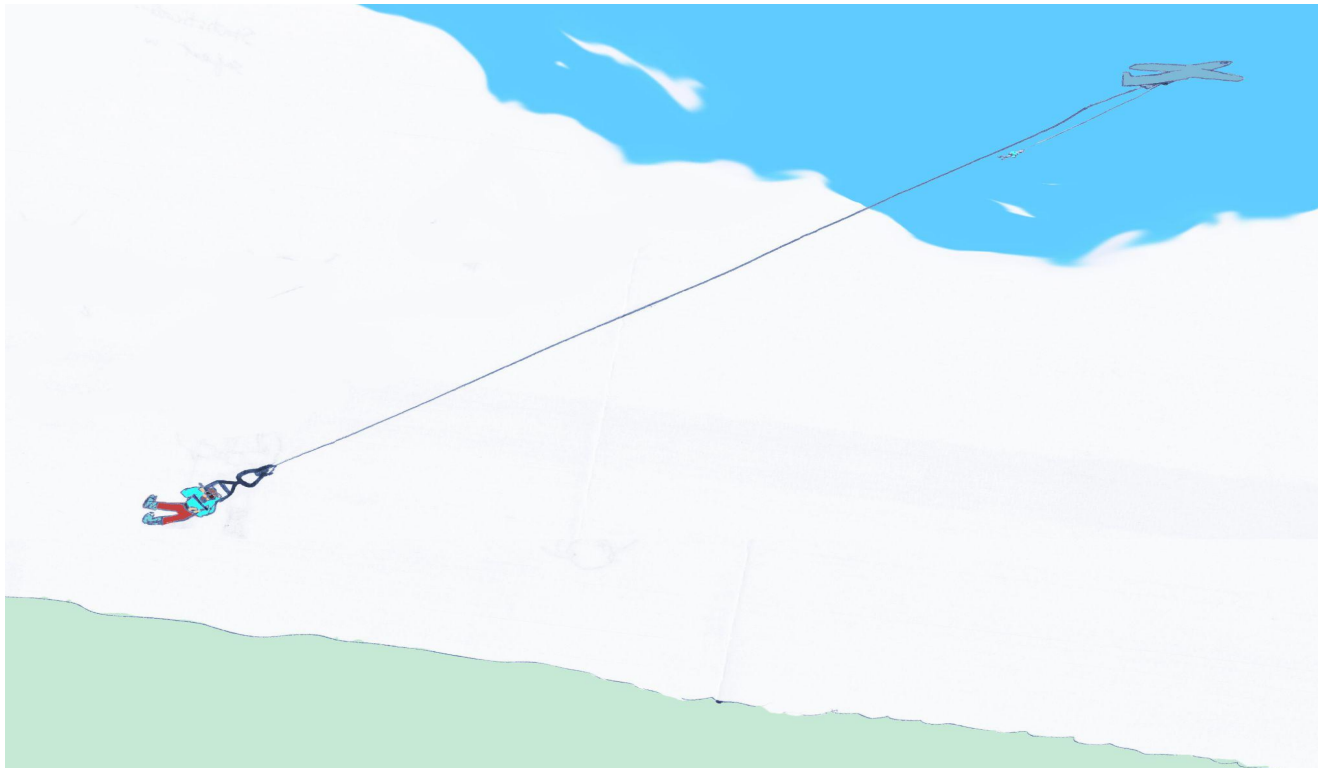
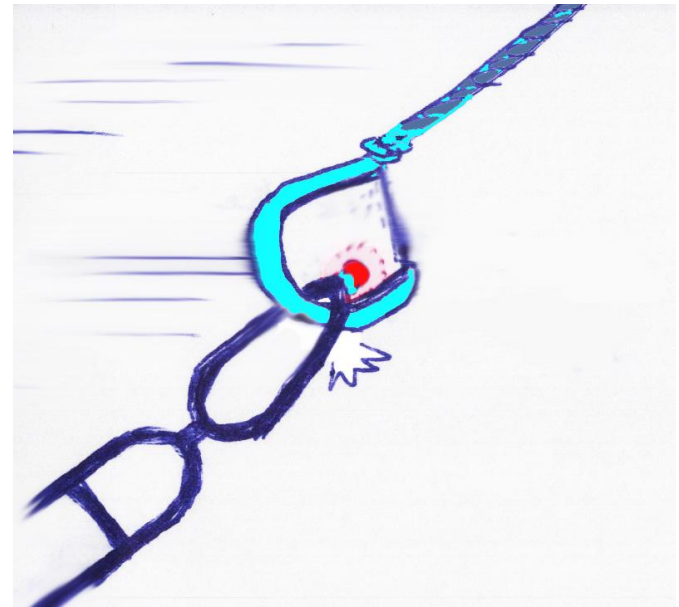
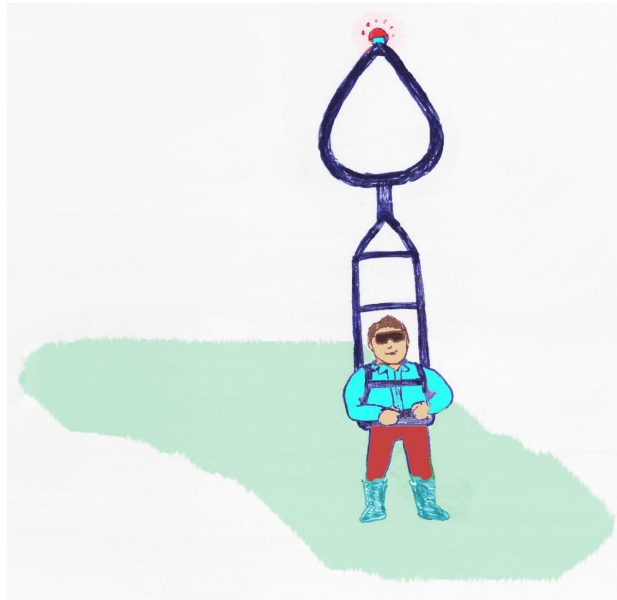
What are all those pirates doing in Bermuda?

Where did the king go? Will he face the consequences of his crimes?



The battling hammies have multiplied!

HOOKSTOR



It's **FAST!**

