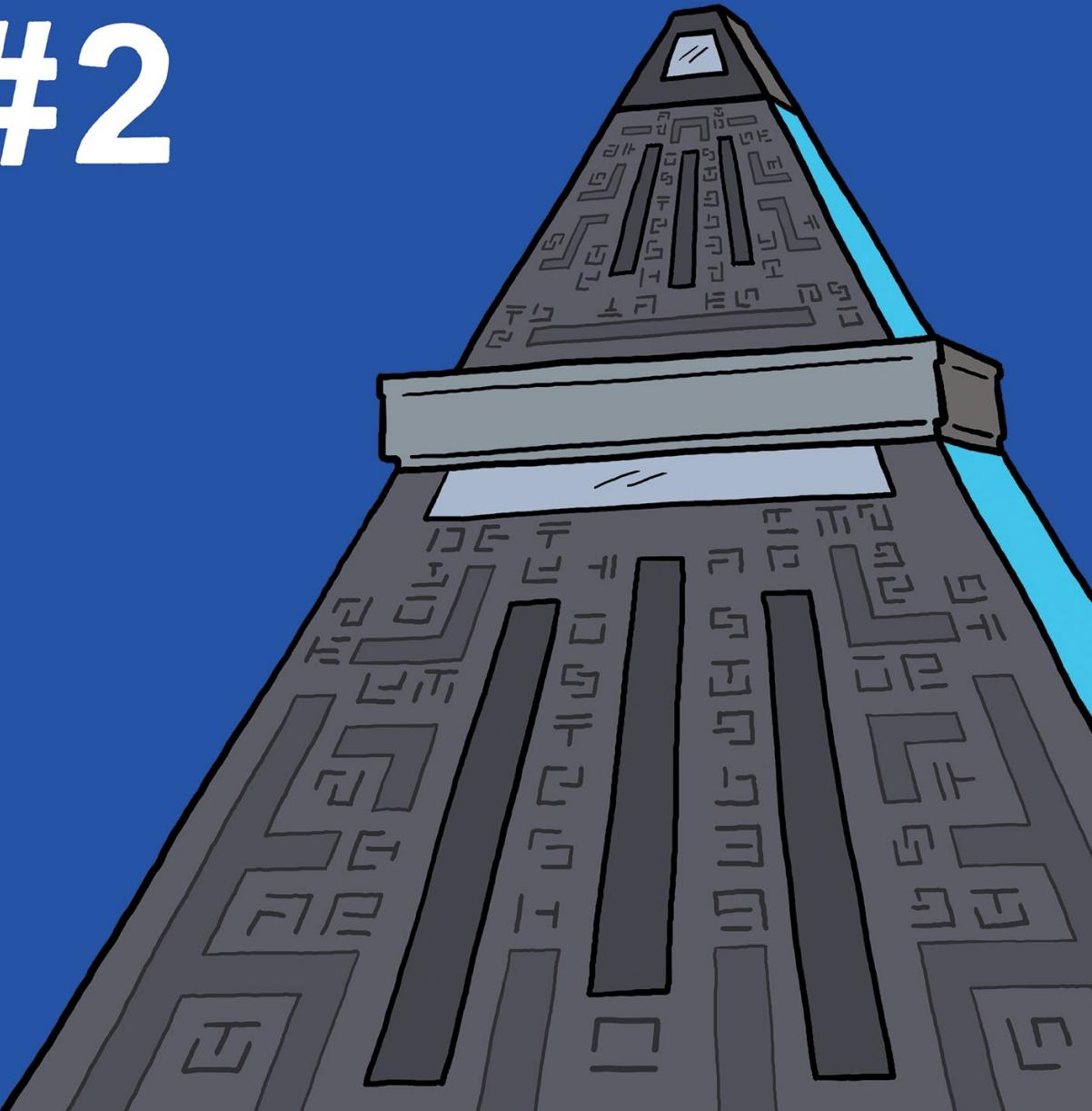


# #2



**Previously...**

**Willy and Froggy were invited to celebrate Environment Week at Dolphina's family's home in Bluepetania—a beautiful, tranquil country located on the neighbouring planet, Aviumia.**

**Willy was super excited to receive this invitation because he has secretly been infatuated with Dolphina for quite some time, and he feels that a week away—on a whole other planet—may be the perfect time to tell her his true feelings.**

**Froggy is equally excited because he has never before traveled off-planet. He was feeling down after circumstances led him to give up on his lifelong dream of becoming a professional explorer, so hopefully this week-long getaway can help him take his mind off of his troubles.**

**Can Willy find true love? Will Froggy find an adventure exciting enough to rekindle his motivation for becoming a professional explorer? And, while they're at it, can they take down an inter-planetary ring of poachers before an endangered plant species goes extinct?**

**Let's find out...**

Willy and Froggy have a long trip ahead of them, so I'll take this time to tell you a little bit about the history of Aviumia.

Who knows?

This may turn out to be an integral part of our story.

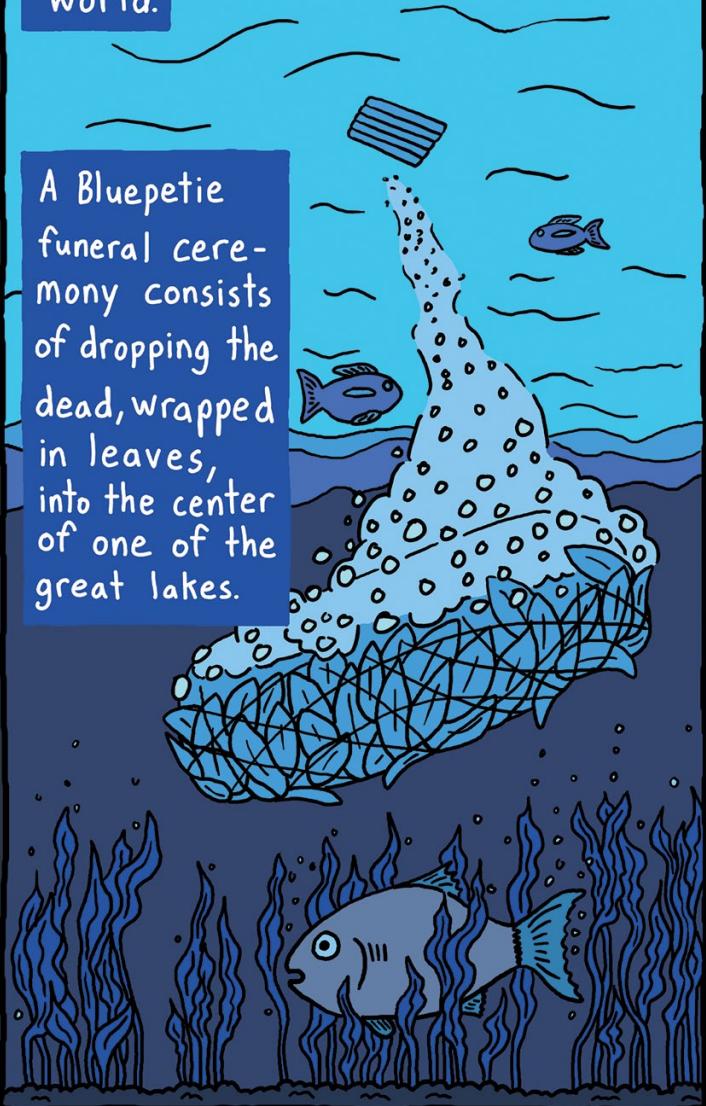
Bluepetania is the largest country on Avumia and the home of five lakes that are said to be the most beautiful in the known universe.

As far back as history goes, Bluepetania has been inhabited by a very spiritual group of people called the Blueeties.

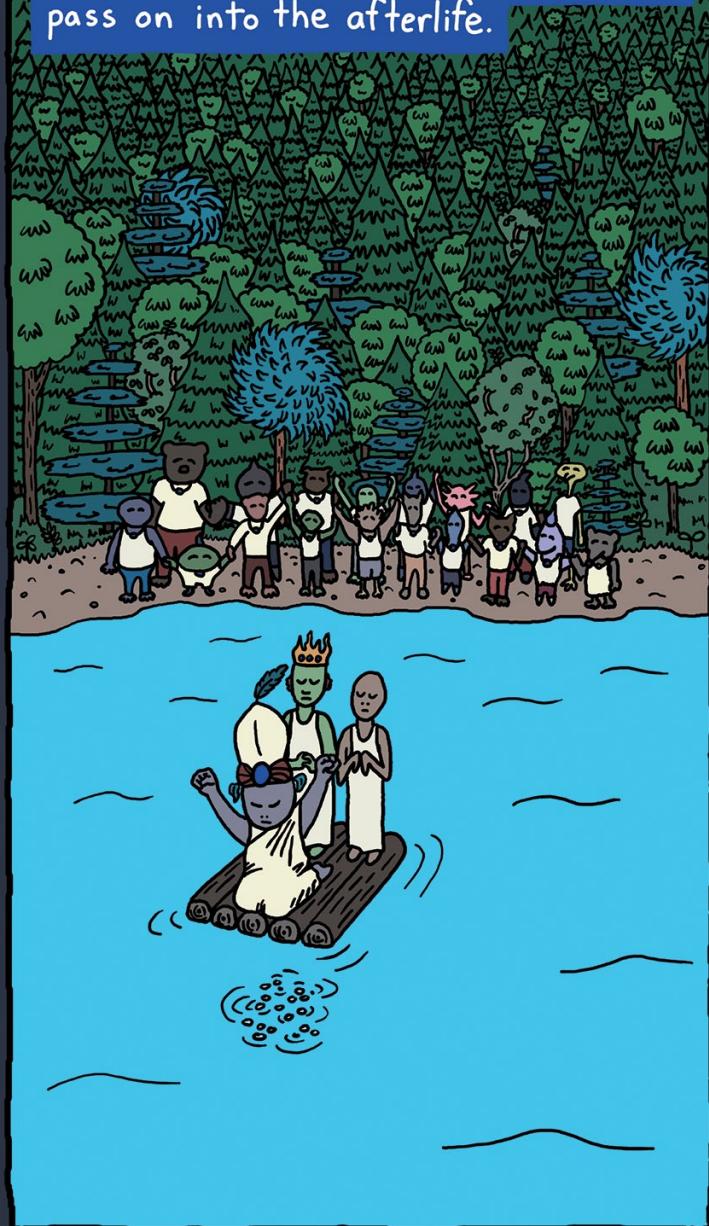
The Blueeties lived as one with nature, treating their five great lakes with the upmost reverence.

These great lakes were at the center of the Bluepeties' spiritual beliefs. It was thought that they glowed with such immense beauty because they were portals into the spirit world.

A Bluepetie funeral ceremony consists of dropping the dead, wrapped in leaves, into the center of one of the great lakes.



It was believed that the offering of the body as a gift to the spirit world would allow that person's soul to pass on into the afterlife.



One day, during the age of space exploration, an explorer named Sasha Squirrelini landed on Bluepetania and told the Bluepeties about science and stuff.



She explained to them that the lakes were beautiful because a rare, blue seaweed that grew within them was altering the colour of the water.



Squirrelini offered to trade the Bluepeties various gadgets for some of the seaweed, but these offers were rejected.



But over the years, disenchanted by the new knowledge that the beauty of their land was due to a plant (and not a spiritual gateway), the Bluepeties began to sell the rare, blue seaweed.



Eventually, environmental degradation became a huge problem.



The then nascent Galactic Union\* reacted by passing strict environmental legislation and appointing five different Bluepetie lineages to be the guardians of the great lakes.



\*the governing body of the solar system

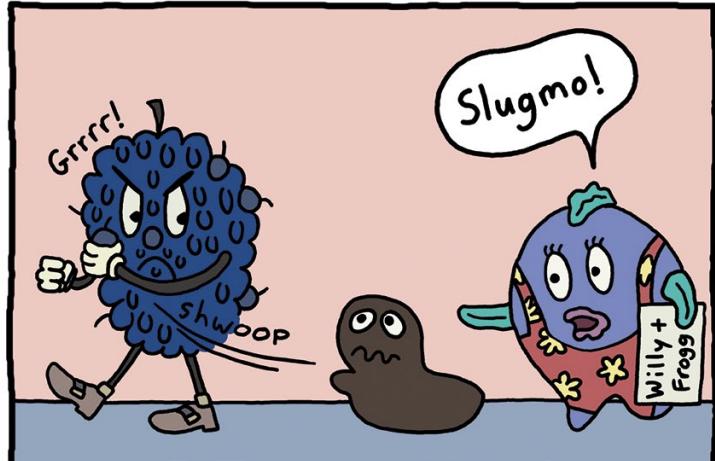
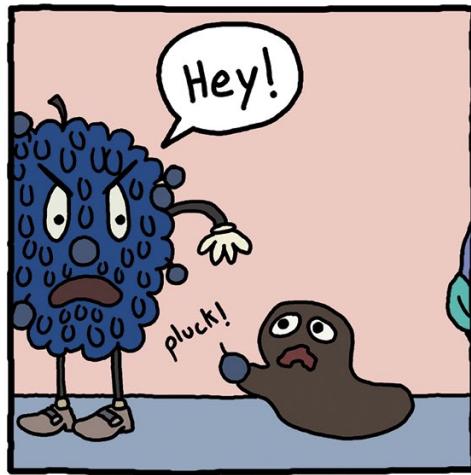
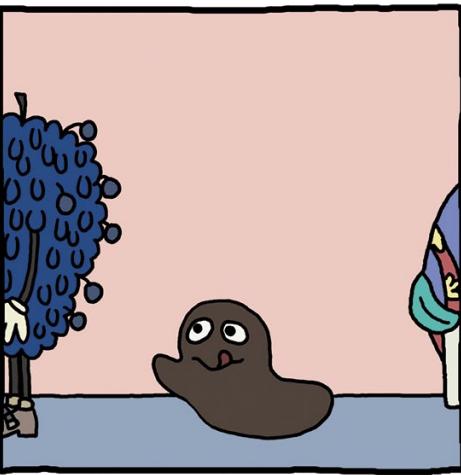
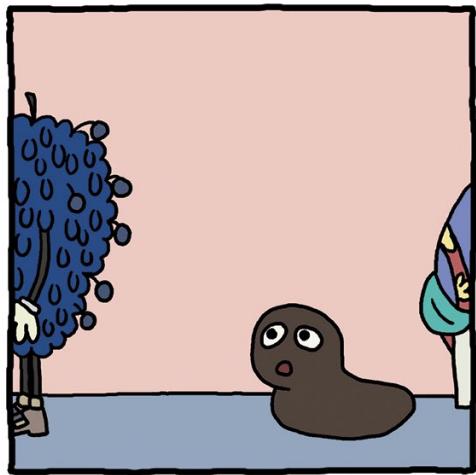
Each guardian-family is responsible for protecting one of the lakes. The second largest (and arguably most beautiful) lake is the one being protected by Dolphina's family.

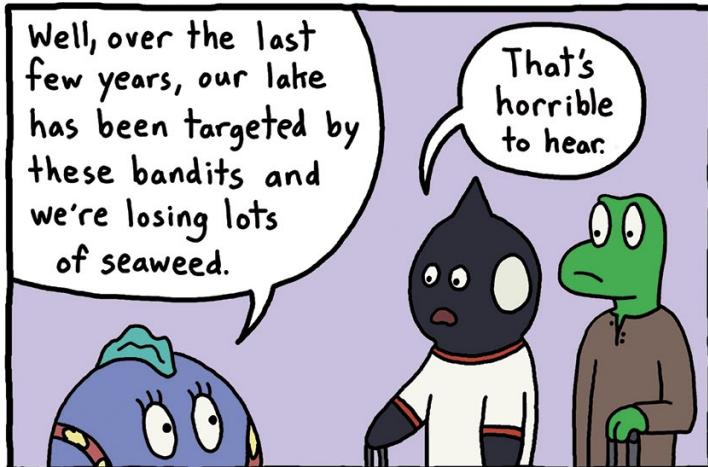
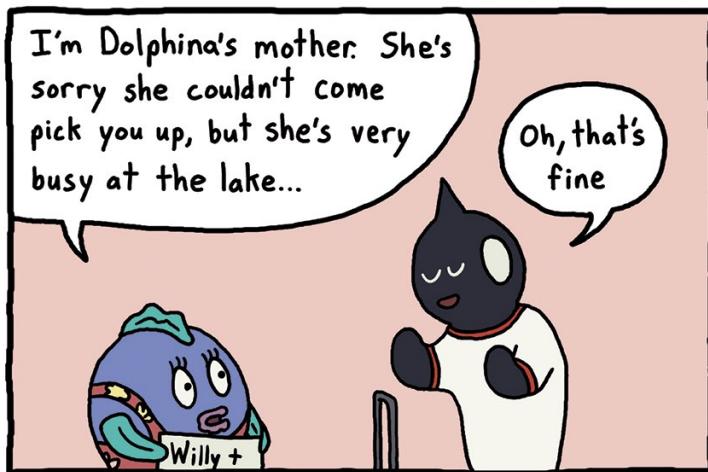


Wow, that story took a long time to tell... Willy and Froggy have already reached Aviumia!!



Let's see  
what they're up to...





The worst part is, if we don't stop the Bluenifferous depletion soon, the Galactic Union's environmental committee will be forced to replace my husband with a new lake guardian!

Anyway, the lake is pretty far from the space station, so we're gonna take a balloon-o-copter there.

Cool. Sounds fun!

Hello. I booked a 3pm balloon-o-copter ride to Royal Lake.

Ah, you must be Mrs. Finlopia

This is Sal Manderino. He'll be your pilot today.

So nice to meet you all!

This way to the balloon-o-copter, folks!

Have a safe trip!

Just in here, folks.  
Watch your step!



I apologize in advance if  
the ride's a bit bumpy...

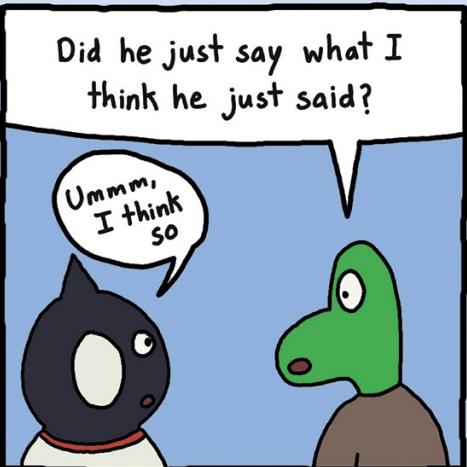


It's my first day back from  
retirement. I haven't flown  
one of these in  
10 years!



Did he just say what I  
think he just said?

Ummm,  
I think  
so



We're all  
gonna die!



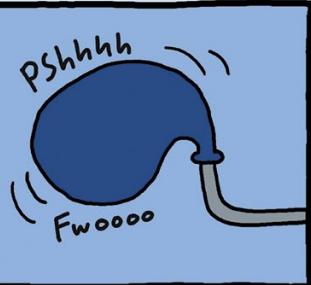
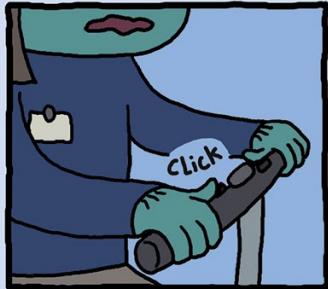
Maybe it's  
like riding  
a bike?

What?! The Explor-  
er's Handbook would  
classify this as a  
Level 1 fan propelled  
buoyantly airborne  
vehicle

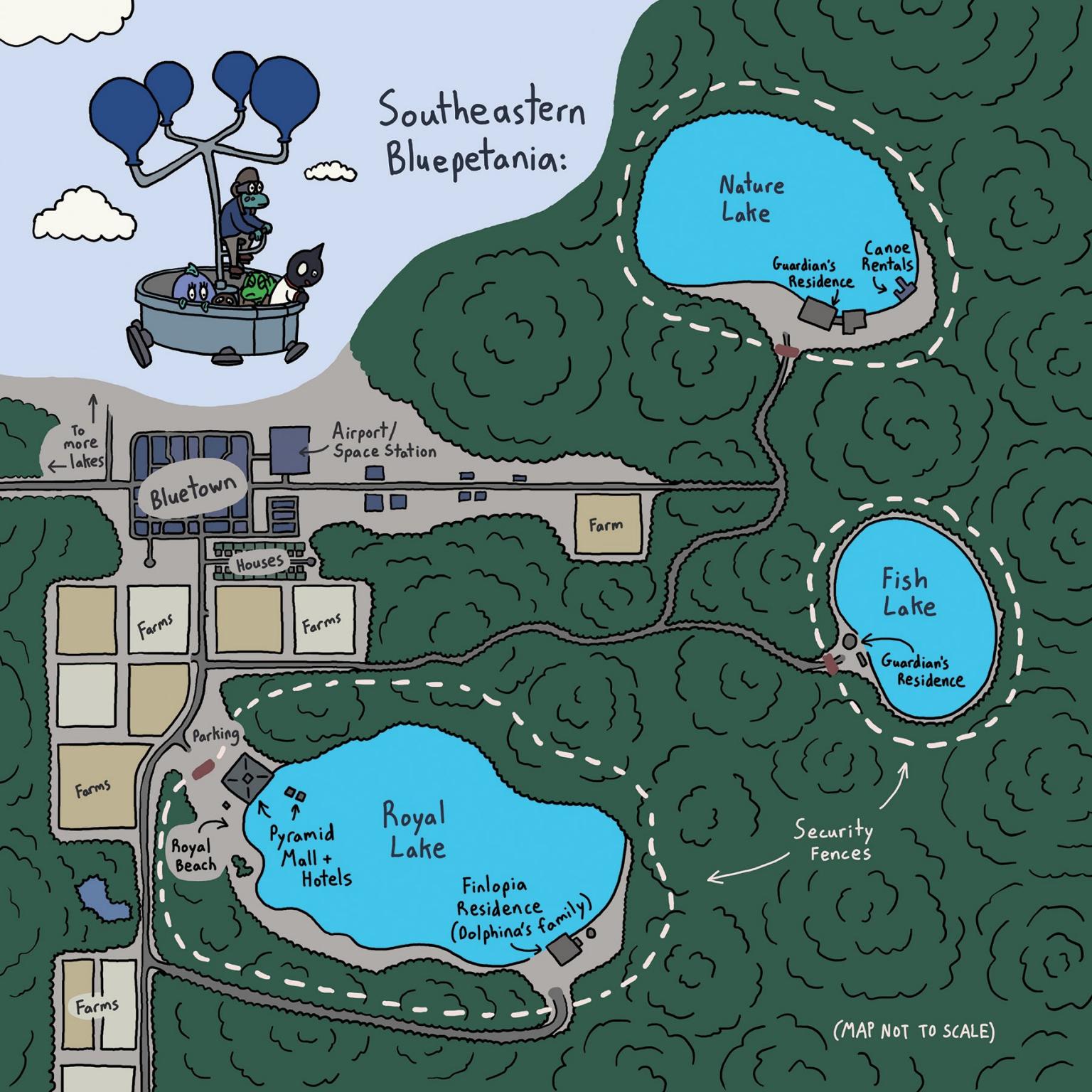


...That's way more  
dangerous than a bike,  
trust me.

No, I mean...  
urgh... never mind



# Southeastern Bluepetania:



Froggy, we're about to land.  
You should take a look at  
this view before it's too late!

...okay

turn

WOW

what is  
that?

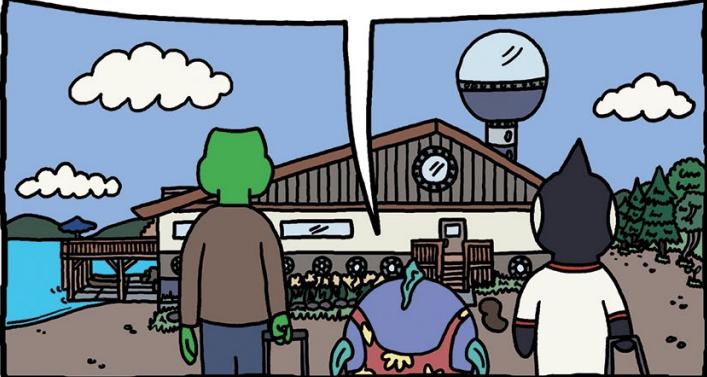
hmmmm...

Thanks for the ride, it was wonderful!

No problem. Have  
a great day!



Here we are. Welcome to our home!



Hopefully you're okay after that flight, Froggy.

What!?

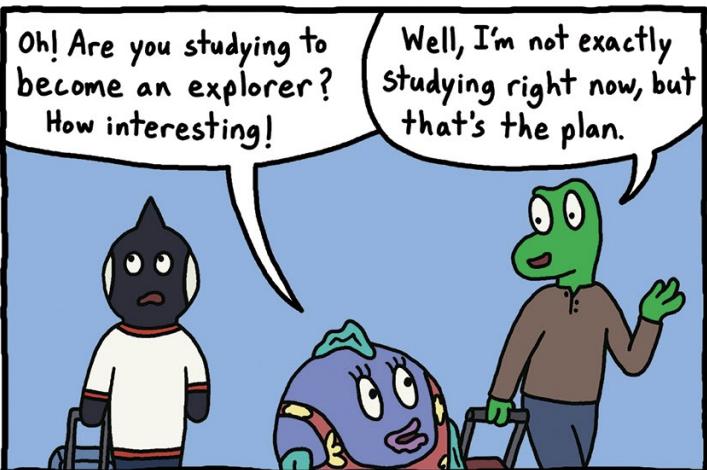


Of course I'm okay! I wasn't scared, I was just...concerned about the condition of our vehicle. As an explorer, you should always make sure your vehicle is safe before operating it.



Oh! Are you studying to become an explorer? How interesting!

Well, I'm not exactly studying right now, but that's the plan.



Oh, the hover car is here

Dolphina's boyfriend must be back from town



Wait - who must be back from town?!

Dolphina's boy- hey!



Oh, how nice. Everyone came out to greet us!



You've already met Dolphina, let me introduce you to the rest of the family:

that's Dolphina's dad  
(you can call him,  
"Mr. Finlopia")

that's her boyfriend,  
Dogminder ("Dogman"  
for short)

that's her grandad (I guess  
he's also "Mr. Finlopia", but  
most people call him,  
"Gramps")

that's  
her older  
brother,  
Sharker

that's her  
uncle, Pluto

that's her cousin, Bluena

that's Hammie  
(Dolphina's  
little sister's  
best friend)

and, of course,  
you've met Dolphina's  
little brother, Slugmo  
(he was adopted  
after Dolphina moved  
out, so she doesn't  
know him that well)

So, how was the balloon-o-copter ride?

It was good.

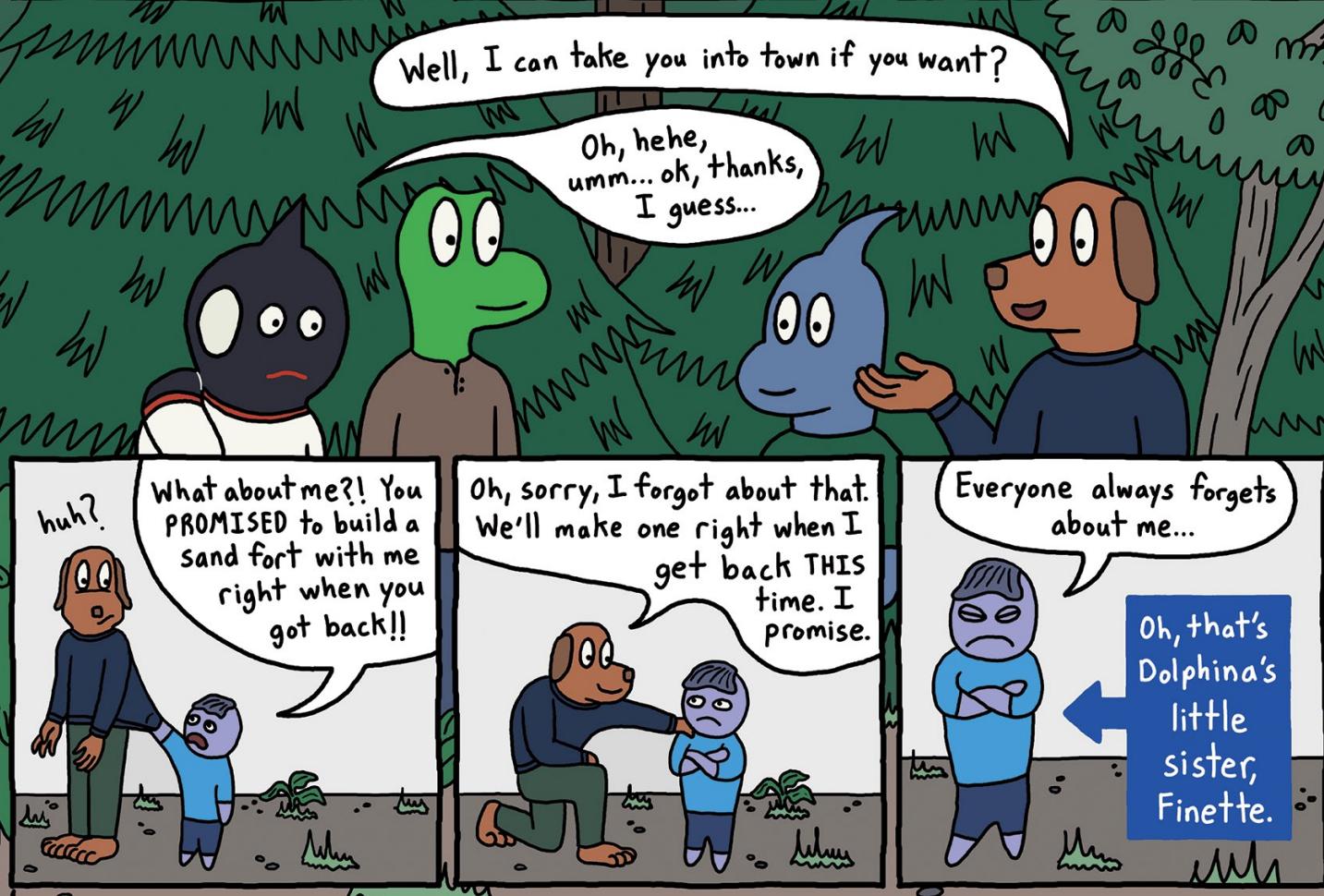
That's good to hear.

I tried that thing  
last year  
and hated it,

so this  
year I rented  
a car

It's a  
hover car, it's  
pretty awesome

So, Willy,  
how's every-  
thing with-



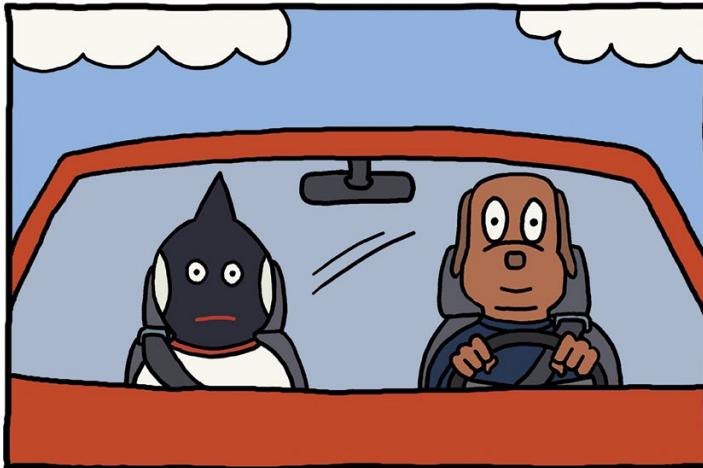
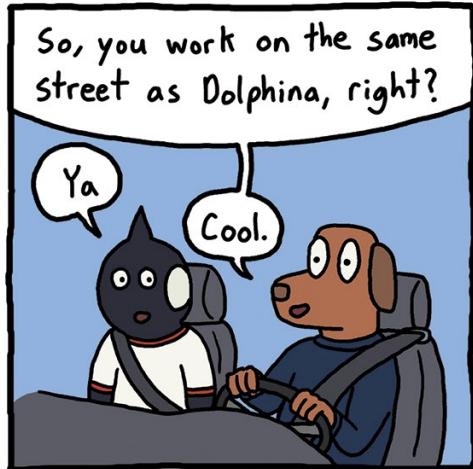
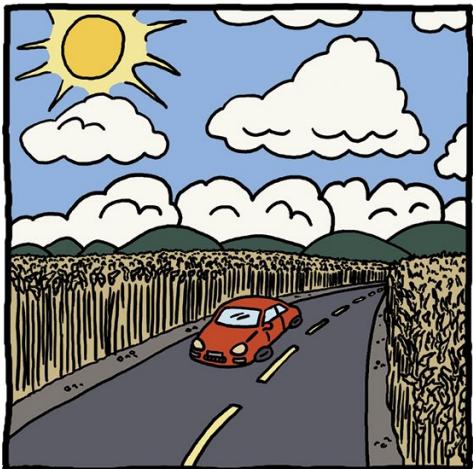
Really, you don't need to do this. I can find some other way to-

Don't worry about it! I love having an excuse to take the hover car out for a spin!

Well, I guess it's not a "spin", since it doesn't have any wheels...

...or is it? I wonder where that expression comes from.



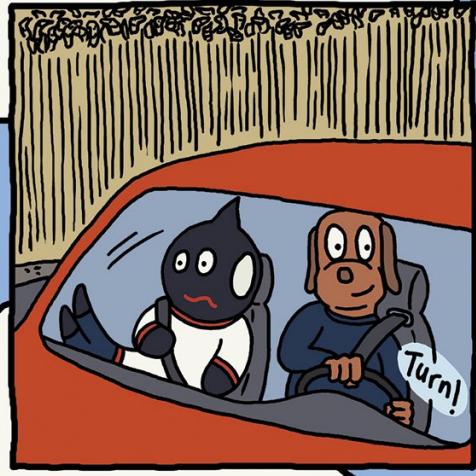




Well, to be honest, I think hover cars are kind of pointless. Since it's only legal to fly them over roads, you may as well just have wheels.



Come on...you've never done anything that was against the law?



Let's go fishing!

Fishing on Bluepetania might be a bit different than the type of fishing you are accustomed to...

The fish in these great lakes are highly intelligent creatures who have lobbied the government for their rights.

It's illegal to use hooks or keep fish out of the water for more than 30 seconds.



legal, suction-powered "hook"

30 second timer



Oh, and you can't barbecue them, but that should go without saying.

I got one!



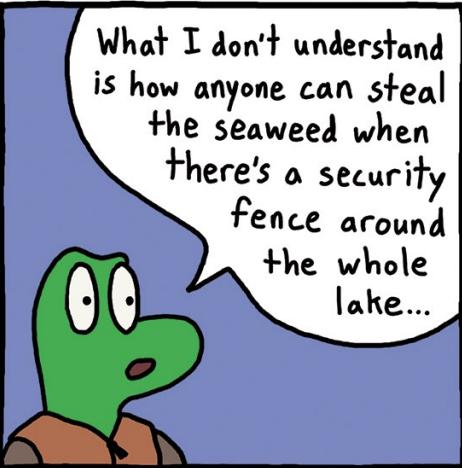
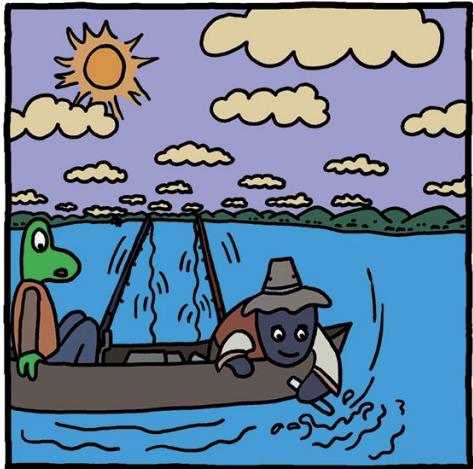
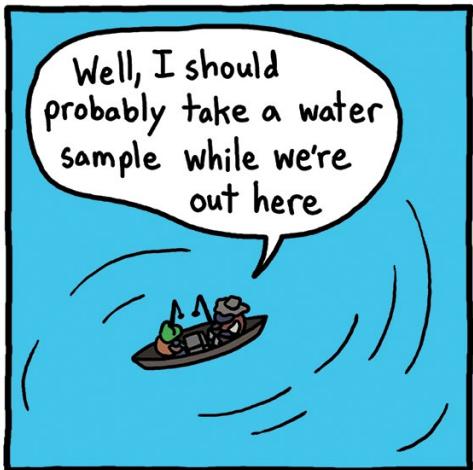
\*smack\*  
\*smack\*...  
a bit salty

Lousy  
ingrate!!

FWOOOO

Hmph!! ... rude fish...  
...insulting my homemade  
bait... grrrr...





The security system was installed by the Galactic Union a few years ago. It's not just the electric fence; there's cameras, heat sensors, drones— it's pretty high-tech stuff.

It hasn't really been helping, though. Our numbers show that we're losing more and more Rare Blue seaweed every year.

And when we check the logs, they say someone's been turning the security system off manually.... but that can't be right....

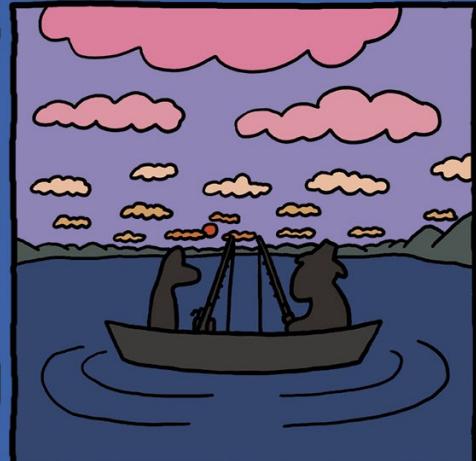
Why don't you just ask the Galactic Union for more help?

I've talked to the other Lake Guardians and none of them are having this problem—and they have the same security system installed.

Even if the Galactic Union believes me—that I'm not the one turning off the security system—they'll fire me for incompetence.

The whole situation is kind of embarrassing. I'm supposed to be the one protecting this lake... I'm not doing a very good job, am I?

Well, I don't want to keep talking about all this depressing stuff... You should be enjoying your time at the lake while you're here



I wonder if Willy and Dogman are back from town yet... Oh, there they are!



Welcome back!!

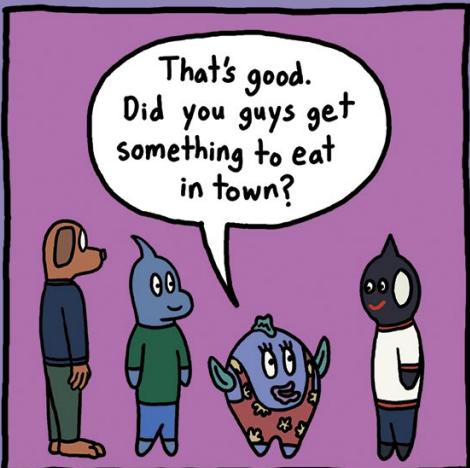


Did you find a toothbrush, Willy?

Yeah... yeah, everything's fine now



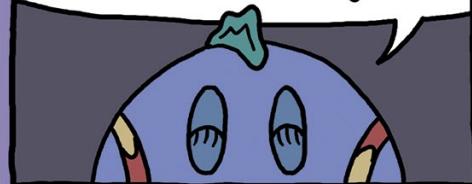
That's good. Did you guys get something to eat in town?



Yeah, we had some pizza



Great! I feel terrible that we didn't feed you tonight, but I'll make it up to you... Tomorrow, I'm going to prepare a big lunch for everyone in honour of all of our guests!



In fact, I'm gonna go pick some vegetables from the garden right now...

I'll help!



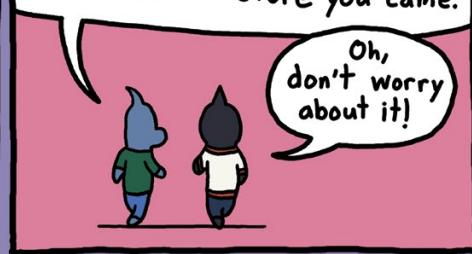
You want a tour of the house?

Sure!



Your room is a little bit messy because it was being used for storage. Sorry, I was supposed to clear the rest of the junk out of there before you came.

Oh, don't worry about it!



A short while later...

Hey Sharker,  
can you analyze  
the sample we  
retrieved?

Sure,  
no  
problem

Well, I better head back inside.  
My legs are gonna run out of  
battery power soon...

Those robotic legs  
your dad has are  
pretty cool!

They're alright.  
Not as good as the  
real thing, though.

KLANK  
KLANK  
KLANK  
KLANK

His old legs were frozen right after the accident, so they can still be reattached...

but the operation is very expensive and Bluepetania insurance only covers the mechanical leg option

I think the whole situation bothers him more than he lets on. He's been different since the accident.

That's too bad... So, how healthy does the lake look?

huh? Oh... not sure. It's a bit too dark outside to tell.

You see, to check the Bluenifferous levels, you're supposed to compare the colour of this vial...

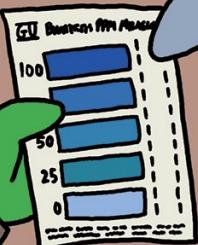
to the colours on this chart...

But you're supposed to hold the vial up to sunlight for about 30 seconds first. The dye needs to be in the sun to fully activate.

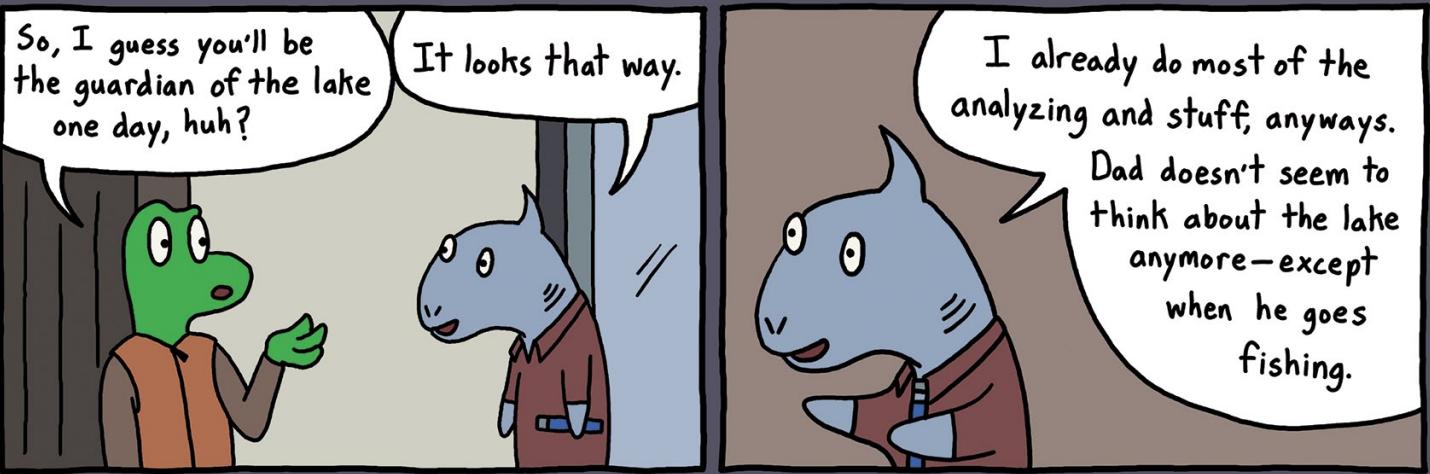
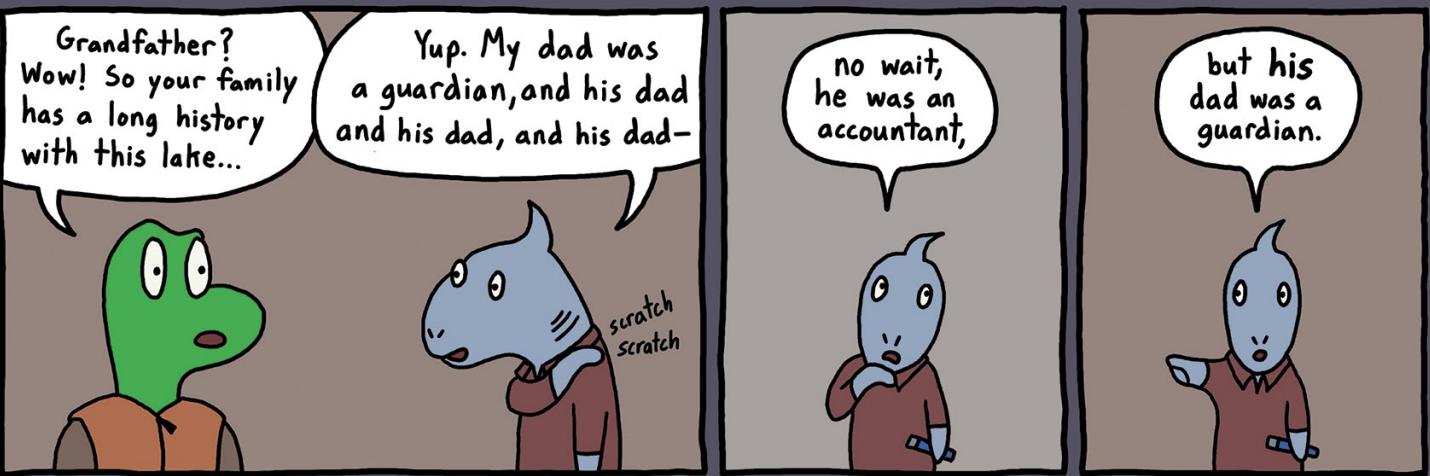
That's why Rare Blue things seem to shine even more so outside.

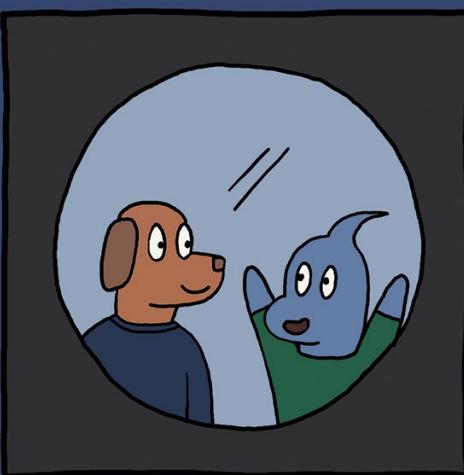
cool!

100 would mean the lake is at its carrying capacity



I don't think the seaweed levels have been that high since my grandfather was guardian...







I dunno...

We weren't invited here to have an adventure,

we came here to have a good time and socialize and stuff.

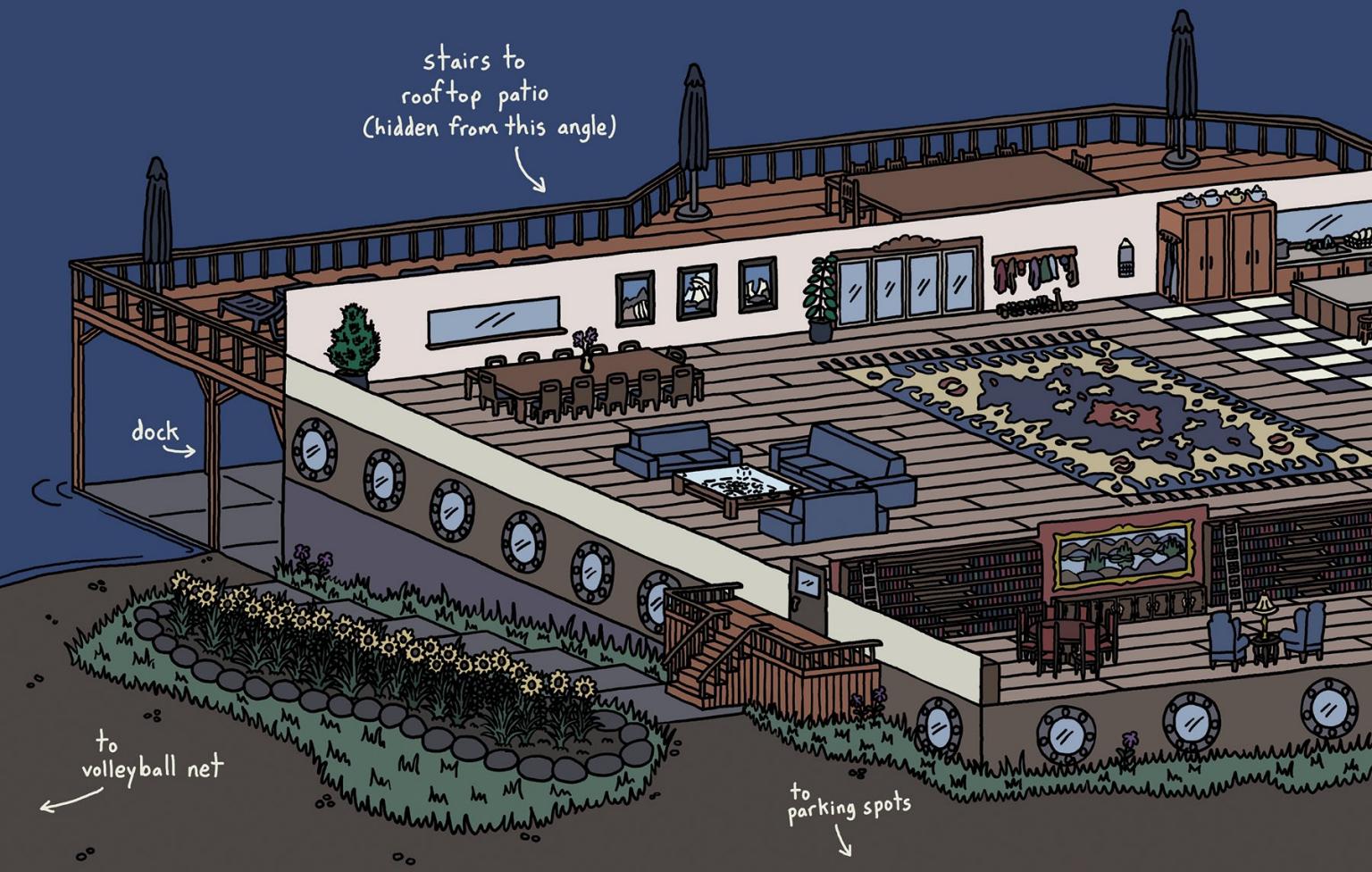
Yeah, but... I'm sure Dolphina and her family would be very grateful if we could solve this mystery

Well, I'm gonna go brush my teeth.... you should think about it.

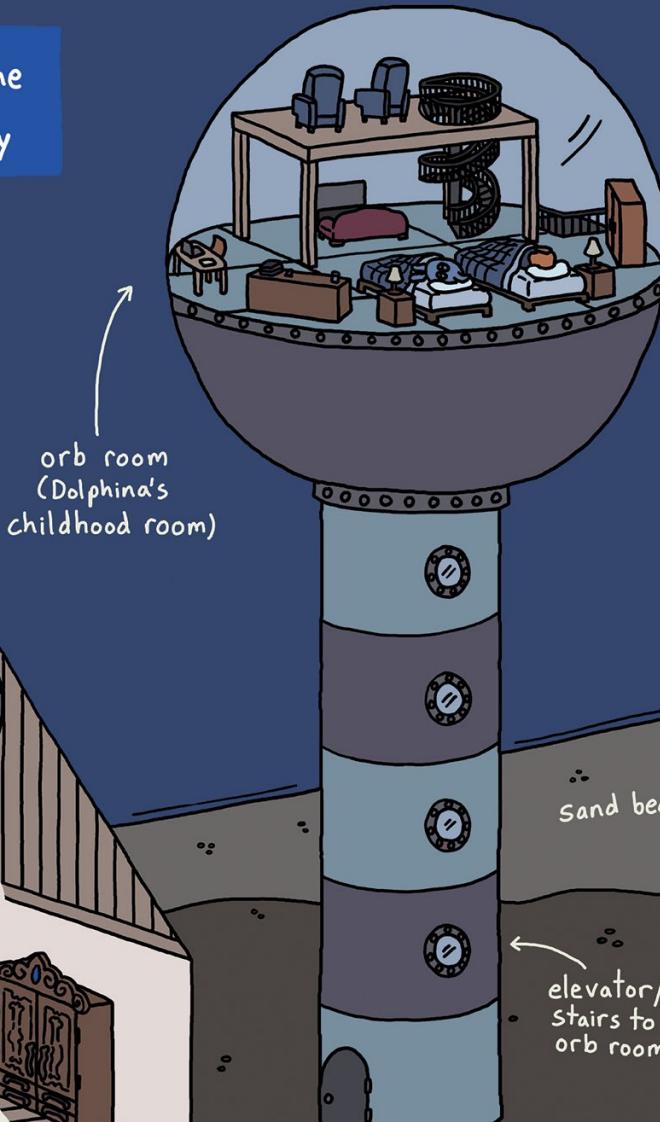
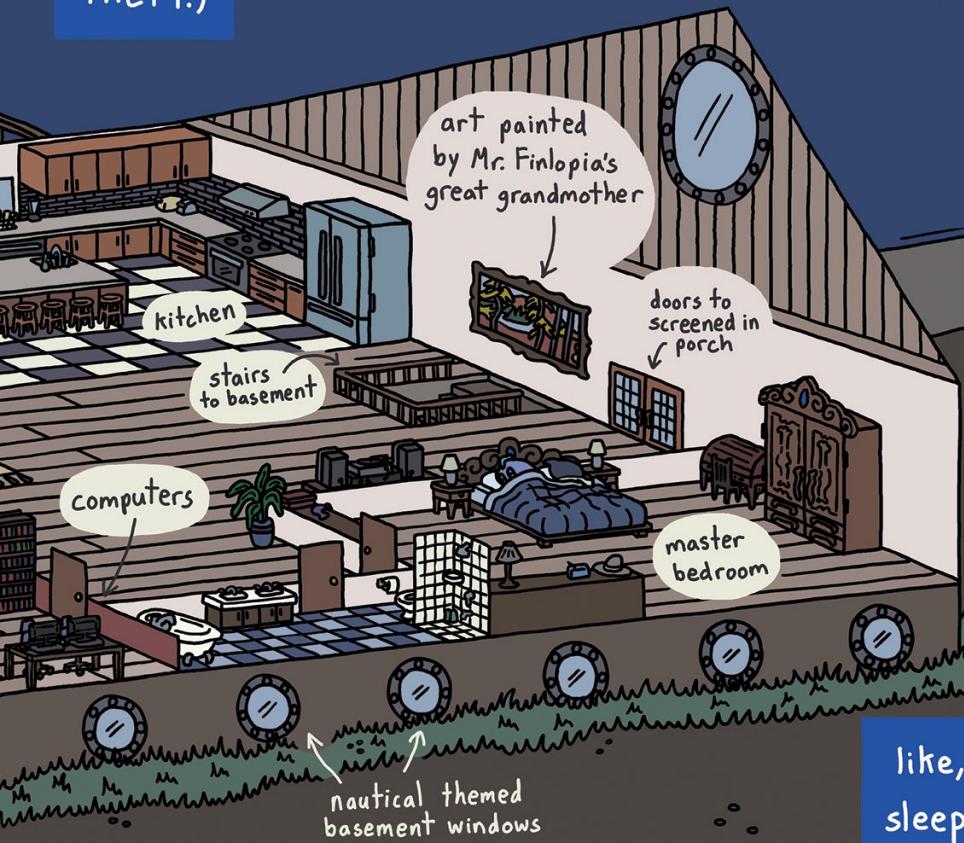
that's true...

hmmmm....

Well, it looks like our first day on Aviumia has come to an end. Now that everyone has gone to sleep, let me take some time to show you around the Finlopia residence...



Everything you see in this house (and the house itself) is, technically, the property of the Galactic Union. If Mr. Finlopia were to lose his job, a new guardian-family would be selected to move into this house. (This is why the Finlopia family is so stressed out about the seaweed theft.)



Anyway...you can keep looking around if you like, but I'm going to get some sleep. See you tomorrow morning!

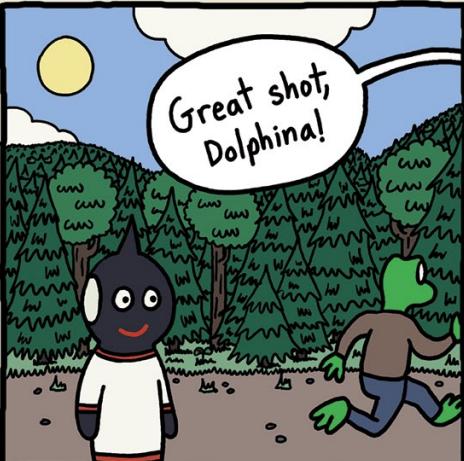


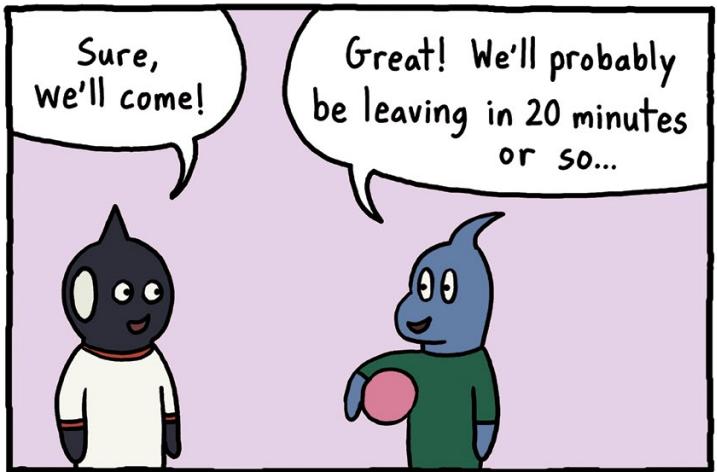
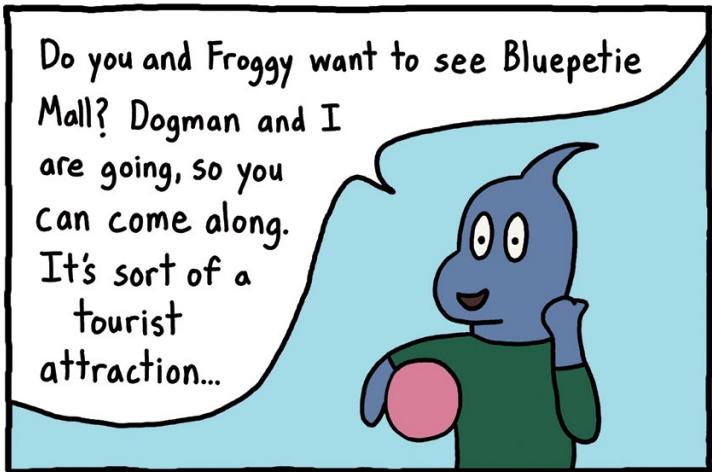
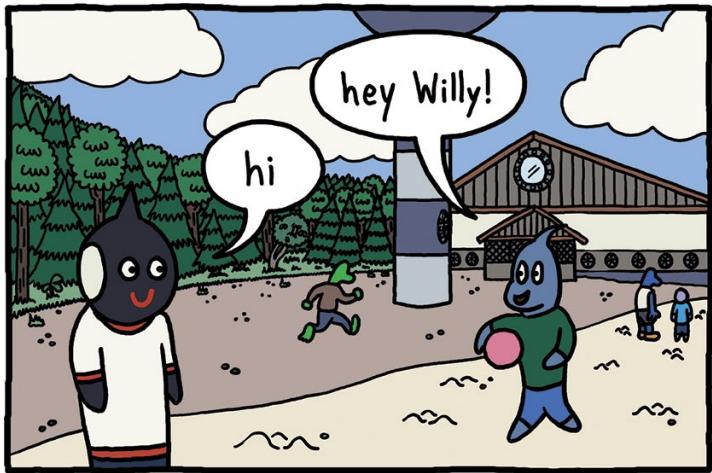
You know what, Froggy? I was thinking... maybe trying to solve this mystery wouldn't be such a bad idea...

Really?!

I knew you would come to your senses! This is great!! I'm gonna go get a pad of paper so we can start listing suspects...

Great shot,  
Dolphina!





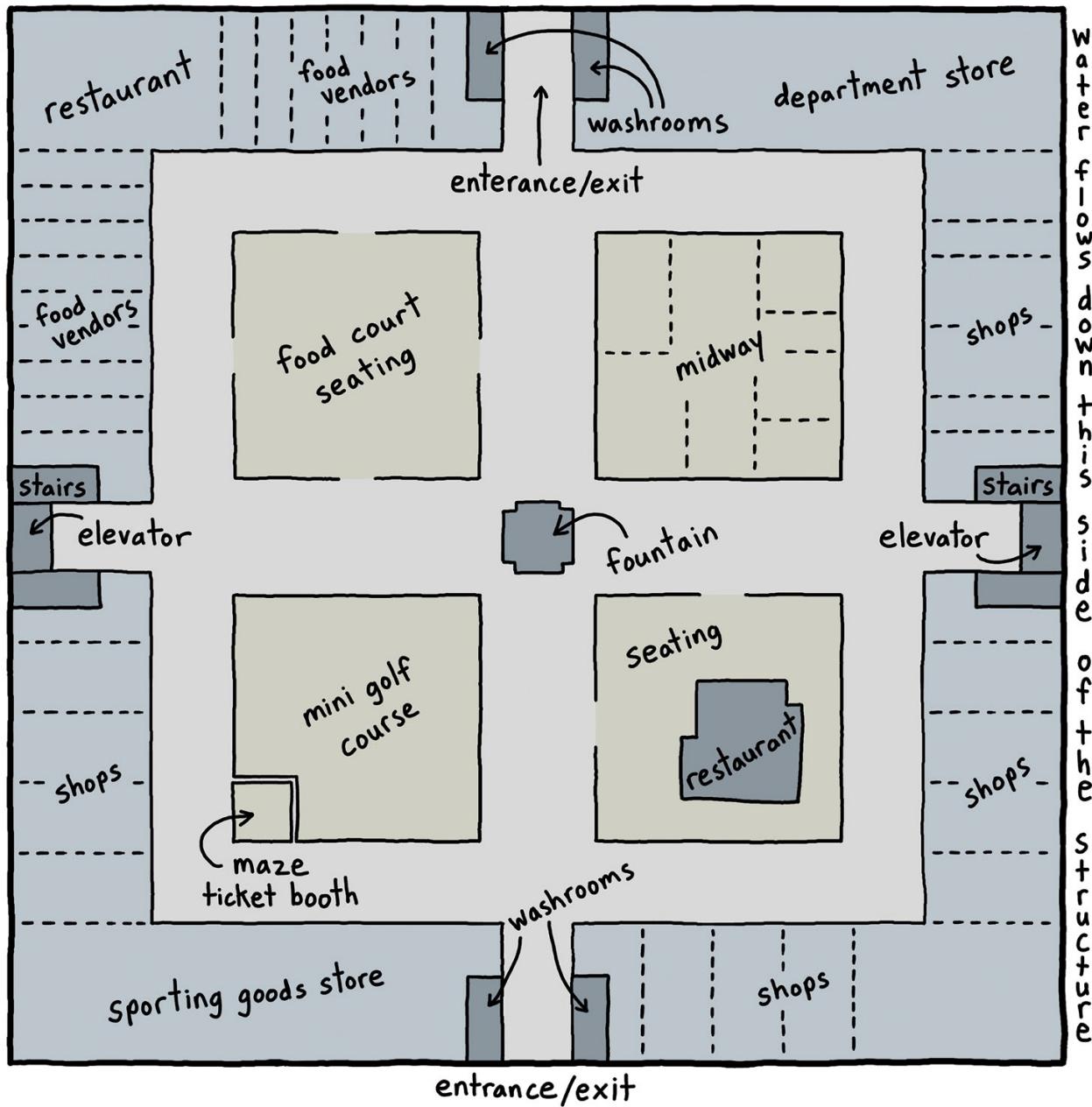


This is Bluepetie Mall. The building used to be a Bluepetie spiritual centre, but it was converted into a shopping mall a few hundred years ago.

Those two buildings shooting out of the water are hotels. They're connected to the pyramid via an underwater tunnel. It's a pretty cool piece of architecture.

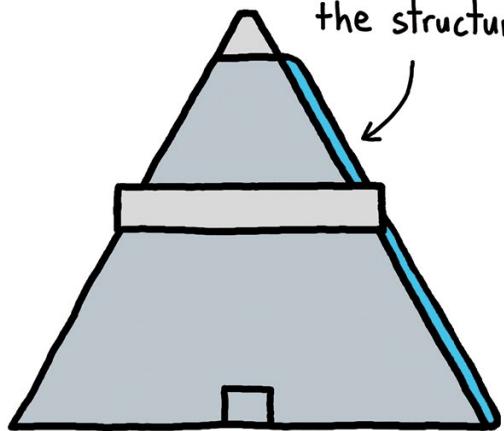
# Bluepetie Mall (a.k.a. "The Pyramid")

## Main Floor- Shops, Food, and Entertainment

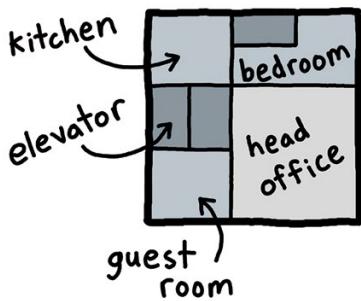


## Second Floor - Balconies

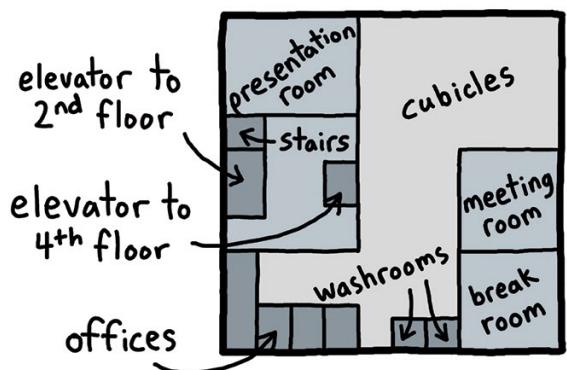
water from the lake is pumped to the top of the pyramid and flows down the glass side of the structure



## Fourth Floor - High Priestess's Quarters



## Third Floor - Employees Only



BLAMMO

This place is so cool!

Hello,  
I'm High  
Priestess  
Blueugana!

WELCOME TO  
BLAMMO MUN  
See it's just us  
For the Party  
Want what a  
Dj, Rave on  
Dance on

Definitely!

CALY

III-en UPSW

ITRE



So, what should we do first?

I was thinking we could try the maze...

Oh, for sure! That sounds awesome!!

Apparently the record is 13 minutes and 2 seconds; If we can beat that, we win a \$500 shopping spree!

Hmmmm... I'm not really a huge fan of the maze. I've tried it so many times already...

Oh... alright.

...but if you really want to, we can-

No, no, don't worry. We don't need to do the maze.

...are you sure?

How about this: Froggy, wanna do the maze with me? And Dolphina and Willy can do mini golf or something? And we can all meet up after?

Yeah, sure!

Sounds good!

Alright, see you guys later!

See ya!

So, is there anything in particular you wanted to do first? Stores? Mini golf?

Oh, anything's fine with me.

How about virtual-sculptor?  
It's pretty fun!

Sure!

Can we have 2 tickets for the maze?

Sure,  
that'll be  
\$10

Here you go.

thanks

thanks

PYRAMID MAZE PRICES  
Single \$7 Double \$10 Senior \$4 Family

Alright, these blue key-cards will keep track of your time in the maze...

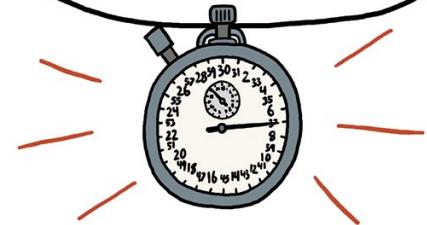
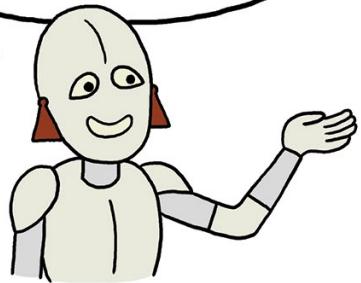
PYRAMID MAZE PRICES

PYRAMID MAZE PRICES

You will swipe your cards at the beginning of the maze, and again when you reach the exit.

There are also 4 card readers hidden throughout the maze that you must find and swipe before exiting.

The average time needed to complete the maze is ~20min, but if you beat the record of 13min 7sec, you will win a \$500 shopping spree.

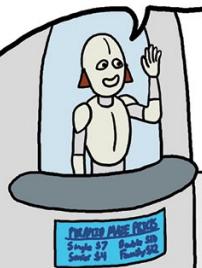


The maze is run by a computer that generates a new pattern each round. This prevents players from using their memories of previous trials to gain an unfair advantage.



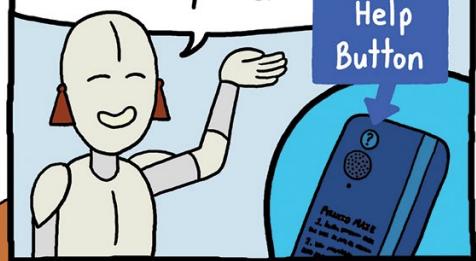
When you're ready, you can take the elevator down to the maze.  
Good luck!

Thanks!



If at any point you have a question, or would like to exit the maze, you can contact me by pressing down the "help" button on your blue card and speaking into the microphone.

Help  
Button





Grab yourselves some sculpting gloves and head over to hologram 4.

Okay, thanks!



So, what do you want to sculpt?

I'm okay with anything



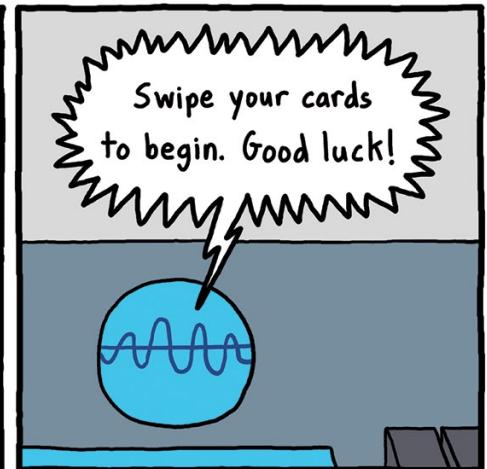
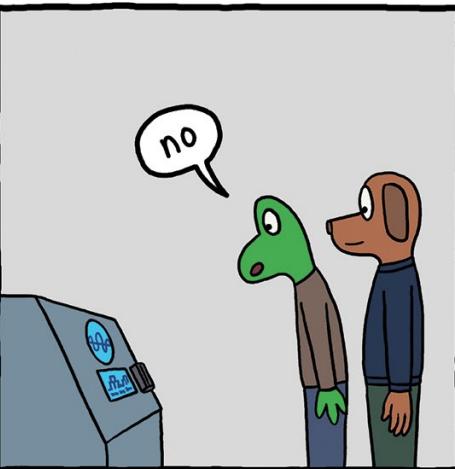
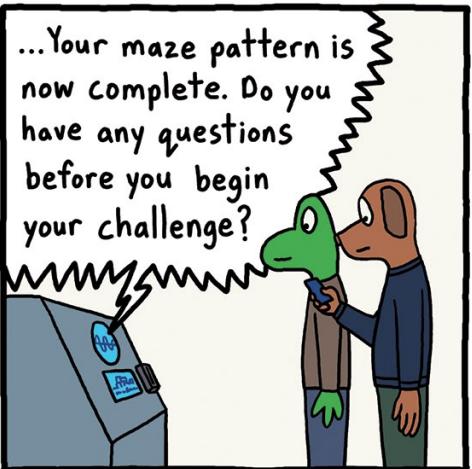
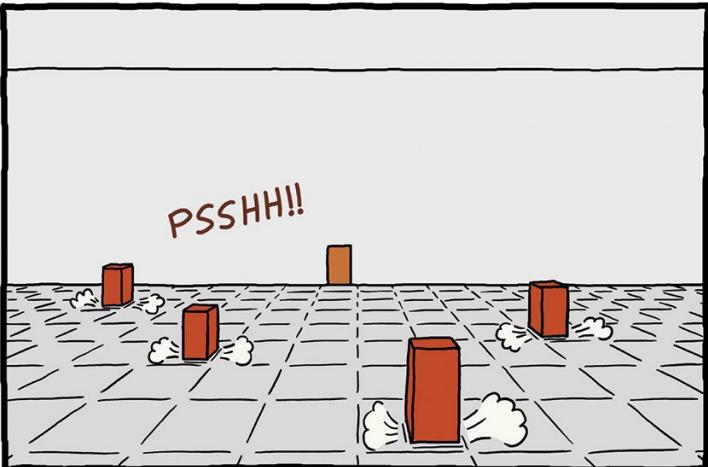
Sure, a building sounds good!

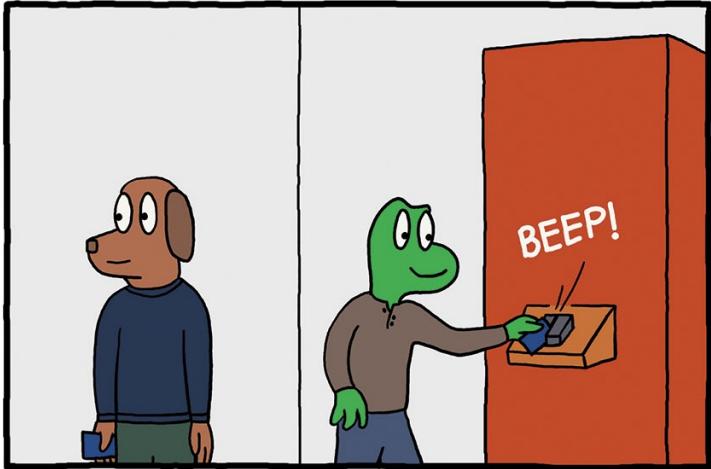
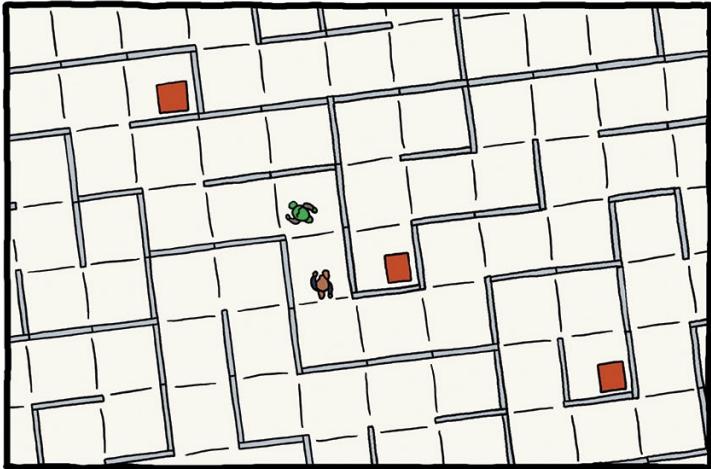
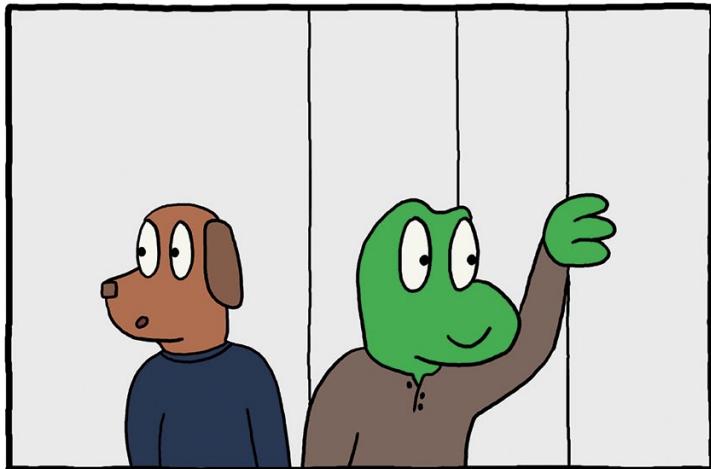
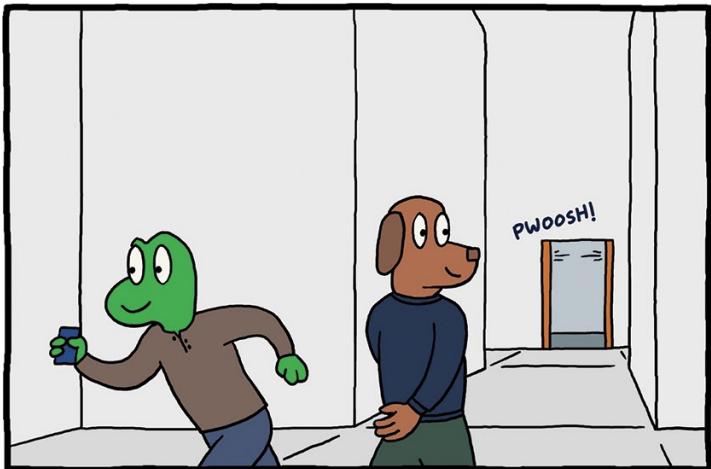
Okay, so we know it's going to be a building of some sort...

Let's just go for it and see what happens, I guess.

Let's make it a castle!







Hey, I think  
I see something  
over there...

Let's  
check  
it out!



RATTLE!

RATTLE!

...it seems to  
be locked.

I don't think that's any-  
thing we're supposed to be  
looking for. It looks like  
the door to an electrical  
room or something...

Yeah, you're  
right...

Let's go find more of  
those card readers!







Wow...

Are you allowed to  
touch the water?

hehehe...  
Yes, you are.



Thanks for taking us here,  
Dolphina. This place is great!

Yeah...I guess  
it is pretty cool!



You know...there's a part of me  
that always dreads coming  
back here... but  
I've been having  
a great time  
so far, this  
year.



You don't  
like travelling  
to Avumia??



Well, no... it IS a great  
place... but for a vacation.

FSSSHH

When I was a kid,  
I spent so much time  
daydreaming about Calyx\*.



You know... going  
to college there...having  
a cool job and living in a  
cool apartment...

FSSSHH

\*Willy and  
Froggy's  
home planet

It seems like everything  
happens on Calyxambulo.  
Avumia just has such  
a slow pace.

FSSSHH

A slow pace can  
be a good thing.

I know...

FSSSHH

I guess I sound a bit selfish, don't I? There are probably lots of people who would LOVE to have been born into a guardian-family

-we barely have to do any work, and the Galactic Union provides us with a beautiful house on a beautiful lake-

But Bluepetania just has this way of making you feel so...

...trapped.

I don't think it's selfish to want to do what you want with your own life-

I mean, as long as you're not hurting anyone along the way, I guess...

hehe... yeah

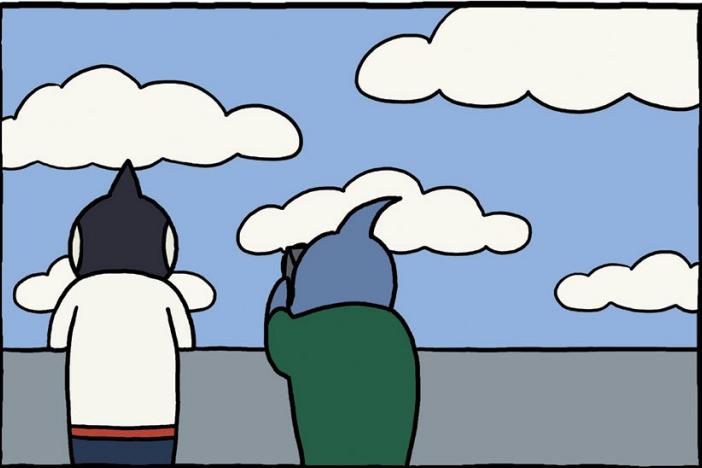
FSSSHH

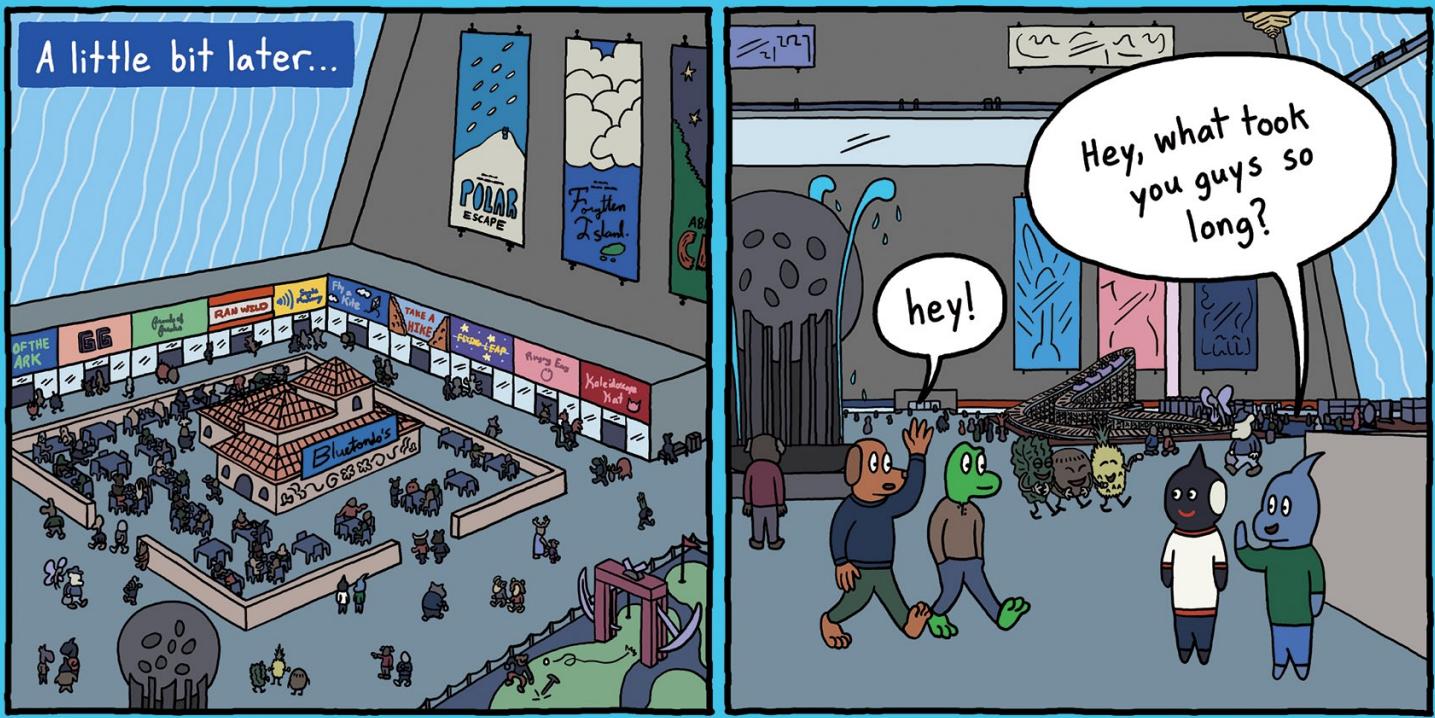
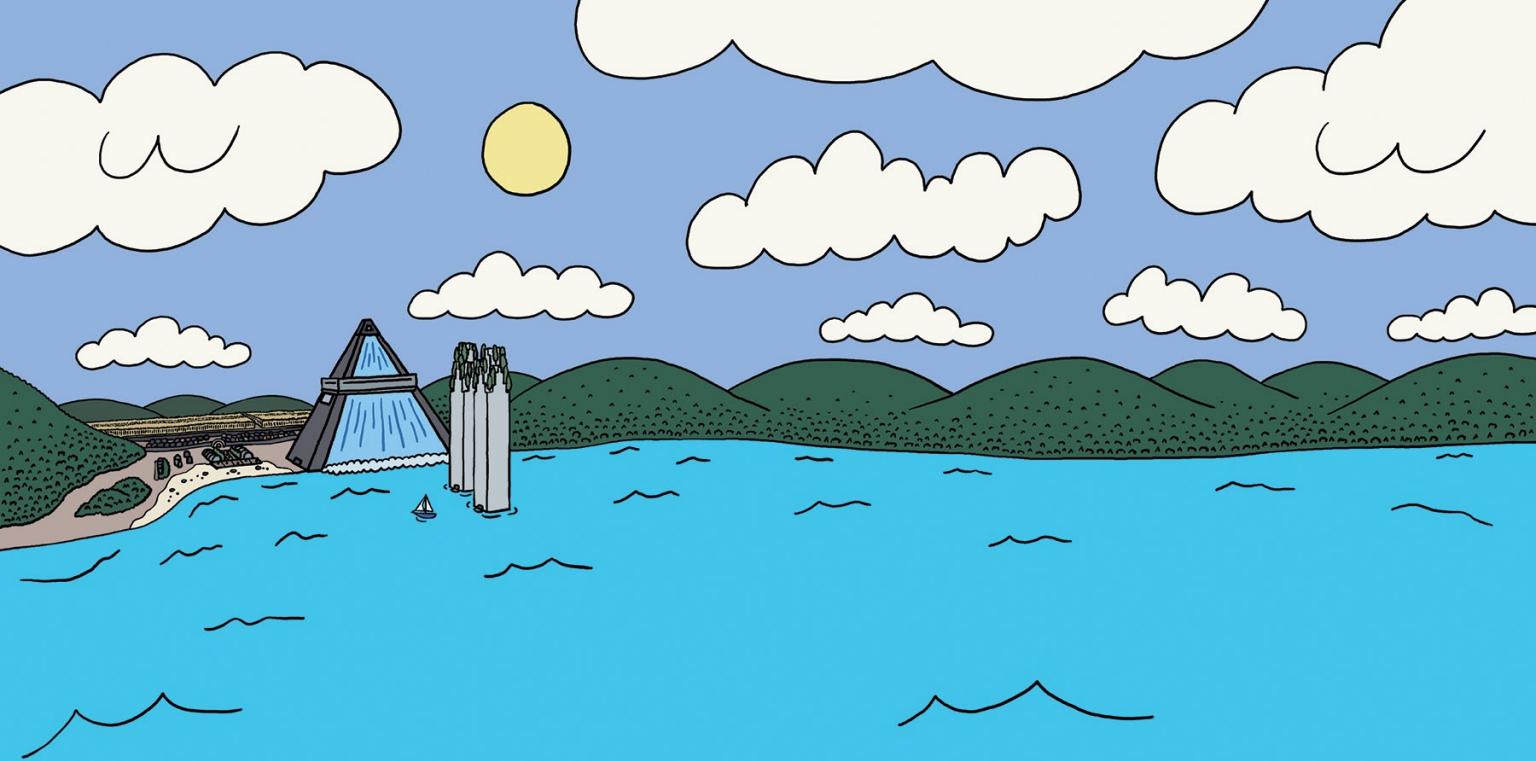
Sorry for making the mood so depressing.

No, no, no, don't worry!

But hey, you're having a good time now, right? That's all that matters.

yeah...





Well, we did the maze in 16min the first time. We were gonna come find you guys right after, but then we decided we had to try one more time... we still couldn't beat the record, though

Sorry... it was my idea to try it a second time



Don't worry,  
we still had fun doing  
our own thing.

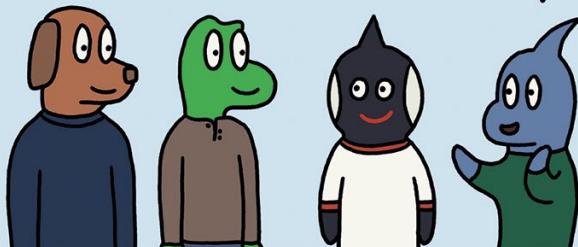
...thanks for giving  
me more alone  
time with Dolphina,  
buddy!

Thanks for  
what?



...nevermind

Well, we should probably  
head back now, to be  
in time for lunch



**To be continued...**

**For more comics, visit:  
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