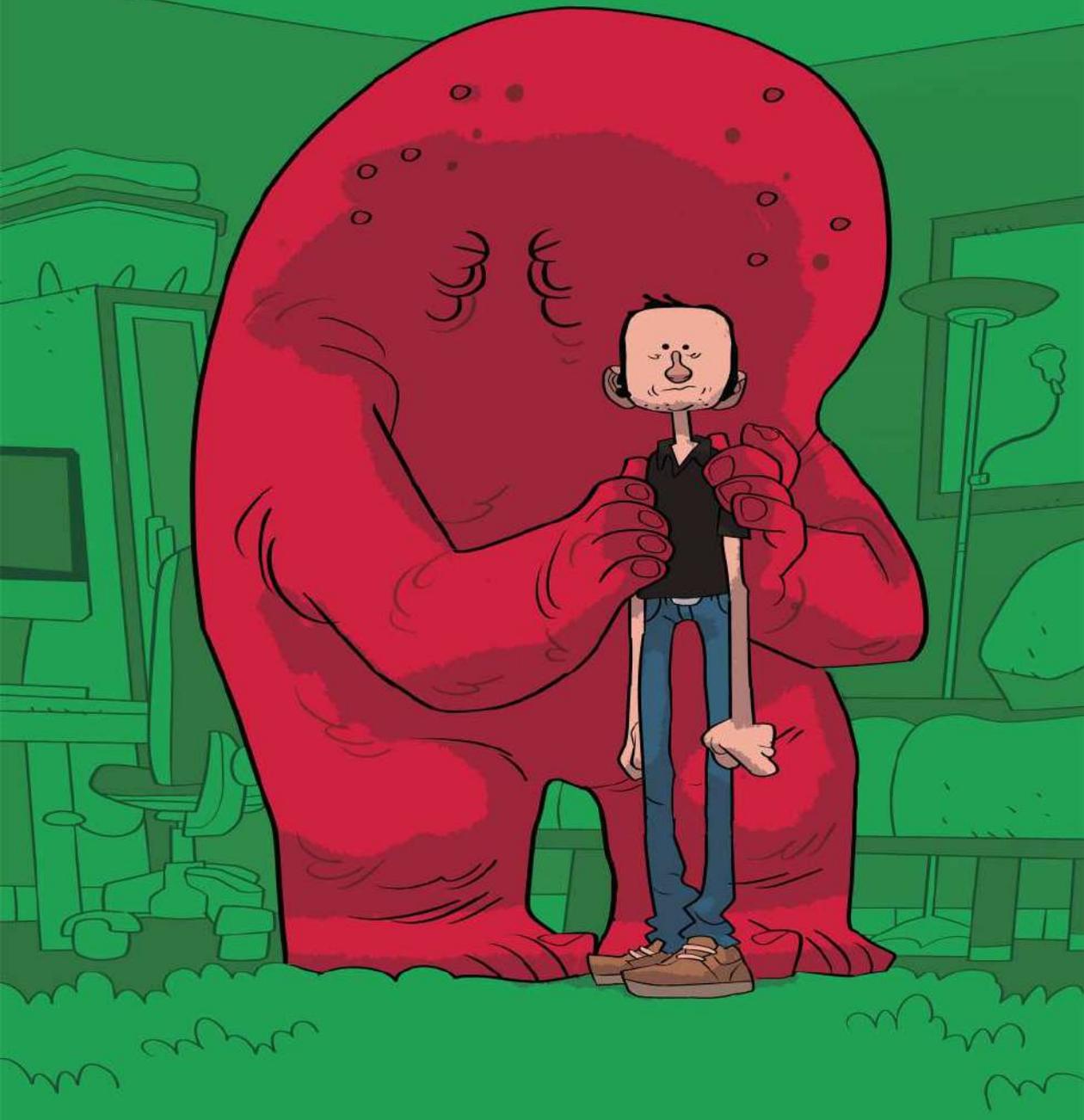


SPLEEN

ESTEBAN HERNÁNDEZ



SPLEEN

Esteban Hernández.
One-shot 85 pages.

Le Spleen est une émotion endémique, une sorte de malaise parfois léger, tamisé. Dans la première moitié de Spleen, Matías, le protagoniste, parfois borderline, essaie d'expliquer cette émotion qu'il a mal gérée toute sa vie. Il parvient à la mettre par écrit et, ce faisant, il réussit à se faire comprendre. À partir de la seconde moitié du livre, en exposant accidentellement ses petites réussites, cette émotion se cristallise en un être vivant qui apporte la rédemption de cette émotion à celui qui le regarde, le touche, et, comme cela se produit dans la dernière partie du livre, le boit. Matías et sa petite amie, Olga, se rencontrent entre-temps et cohabitent avec l'être.

Matías est au chômage et elle est rentière grâce à sa famille, mais vers la fin du livre, lorsque les revenus et les économies s'épuisent, après très peu de circonstances atténuantes, ils décident d'essayer de faire fermenter, de distiller et d'embouteiller ce que la créature excrète. Les résultats finissent par être commercialisés à l'échelle internationale, c'est un véritable succès, et lorsque la rédemption arrive au monde en buvant de l'urine, l'être lui-même, presque muet, confie au lecteur sur très peu de pages, les dernières, où se trouve le piège, et reconnaît avant de disparaître que cette émotion de spleen, ce qu'il est, est endémique, aussi naturelle que le soleil et la soif, et suggère ainsi que le calme, la mélancolie et la tristesse sont humains et satisfaisants.

Définition du Spleen:

Le mot spleen tire son origine du grec splên. En anglais, il désigne la rate. En français, spleen représente l'état de mélancolie sans cause définie ou d'angoisse vitale chez une personne. Il a été popularisé par le poète Charles-Pierre Baudelaire (1821-1867) mais avait été utilisé auparavant, notamment dans la littérature du Romantisme, au début du XIXe siècle. Le lien entre le spleen (la rate) et la mélancolie provient de la médecine grecque et du concept des humeurs. Les Grecs pensaient que la rate sécrétait la bile noire dans tout le corps et que cette substance était associée à cette émotion. Bien qu'aujourd'hui le spleen soit scientifiquement réfuté, l'idée demeure dans la langue.

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Je crois...





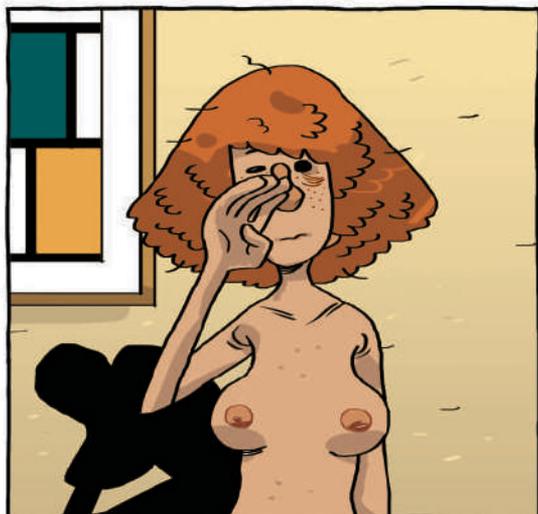


Au contraire, en m'obligeant à beaucoup et à souvent baiser, tout partait toujours en couilles et mon moral s'écroulait après.

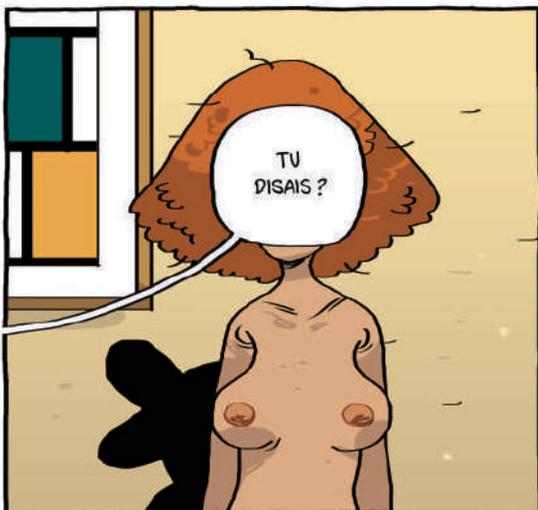
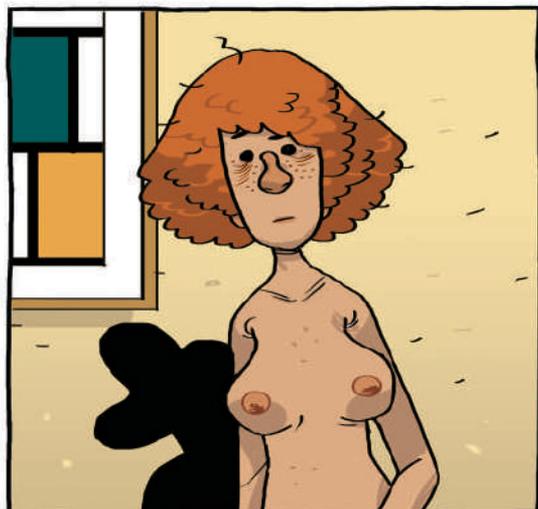


Provoqué par mon insécurité et mon côté extravagant, je finissais par douter dans mes pires moments, si j'étais avec une personne qui me plaisait vraiment.





Presqu'à chaque fois
j'essayais de me souvenir
de ce que je pouvais bien
être en train de penser
qui me faisait perdre le fil
après le deuxième coït.



Parfois je ressassais l'abc hétérosexuel.



Voilà comment, quelques heures plus tard, le résidu que mon trou de mémoire me laissait restait en tête à tête avec moi-même.



Quel imbécile, cette sensation m'accompagnait pendant si longtemps que finalement, le manque de perspective me faisait croire que cette sensation avait toujours été avec moi et qu'elle ne me laisserait jamais progresser, que rien de ce que je pourrais décider ne me remettrait en selle.



Il semblait, je le jure, qu'à partir de là, le vide et la faiblesse que je ressentais avalerait tout.

Je croyais que cela faisait partie de mon caractère.



Les stimuli sexuels sont partout, nombreux et sans limites, mais plus vrai encore, le sexe en lui-même pour ceux qui le pratique, se devrait d'être toujours satisfaisant.



La sexualité et ses mécanismes me bousillaient le moral, jusqu'à que je comprenne, comme je l'ai dis, l'importance exagérée que l'on donne au sexe.

DEUX

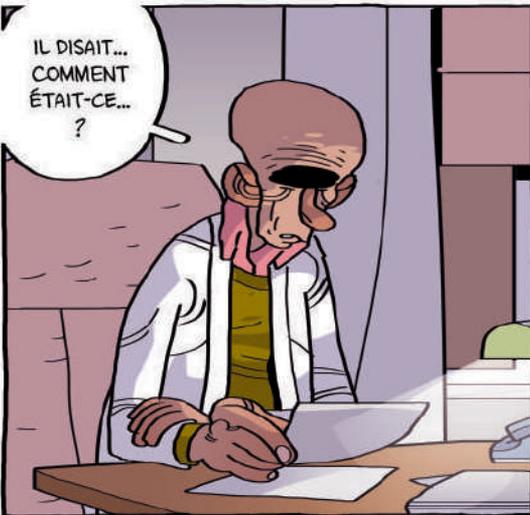


Je suis parvenu plus tard à d'autres conclusions, il y a des années. En ce qui concerne cette tristesse avec laquelle j'avais toujours cohabité avec ou sans sexe dans l'équation.

Cette sensation qui systématiquement, à chaque nouvelle asthénie printanière, augmentait et me faisait chuter comme une pierre.



Cette petite grosse gêne était dans tous les livres qui me sont encore utiles et qui m'émotionnent.







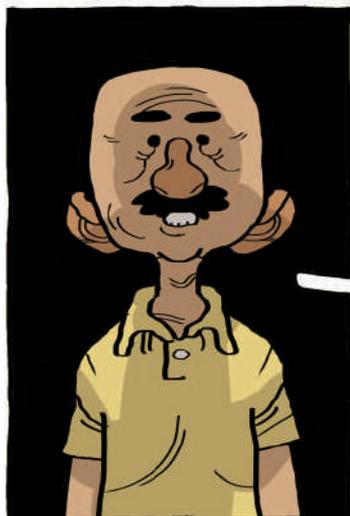
« J'AI L'IMPRESSIION QUE CERTAINES ABSTRACTIONS N'ONT JAMAIS BEAUCOUP CHANGÉES CHEZ MOI, CHEZ MES AMIS OU CHEZ QUICONQUE QUE J'AI UN PEU CONNU. TOUTE MA VIE A ÉTÉ SEMBLABLE, TOUTE, ET LE PLUS ÉTRANGE, C'EST DE SE RAPPELER QUE MÊME LE PIRE ÉPISODE DE MON PASSÉ A EU DE NOMBREUX MOMENTS RYTHMÉS PAR LE MÊME BATTEMENT DE PROFOND ENNUI, D'INERTIE ET D'ABSURDITÉ GÉNÉRALE.

IL EST ÉTRANGE QUE CETTE ABSTRACTION, CE MAL-ÊTRE, CETTE TRISTESSE, MALGRÉ LA PRATIQUE CONTINUE, NE ME SOIT JAMAIS DEVENUE ENTÈREMENT FAMILIÈRE NON PLUS, OU QU'ELLE NE M'A JAMAIS POUSSÉ AU BOUT DU BOUT, JUSQU'À L'EXPLOSION.

CE BOURDONNEMENT LÉGER EST LE MOTEUR DE L'ENSEMBLE DE TRISTESSES ET D'EUPHORIES QUI REPRÉSENTENT LA VIE PENDANT QU'ELLE PASSE. J'EN SUIS SÛR. »

QUATRE

J'étais devenu un parfait imbécile.
J'avais essayé de remplacer l'entourage
que j'avais, raté mon coup, et j'étais re-
venu en arrière en demandant conseil.



LE
PERSUADEUR
DEMANDANT
REFUGE.

Mais ma famille
proche s'effondrait.



Mes études universitaires
échouèrent lamentablement.



Et vous le savez déjà, cette
fille et moi, on ne baisait
pas, et on ne s'aimait pas.



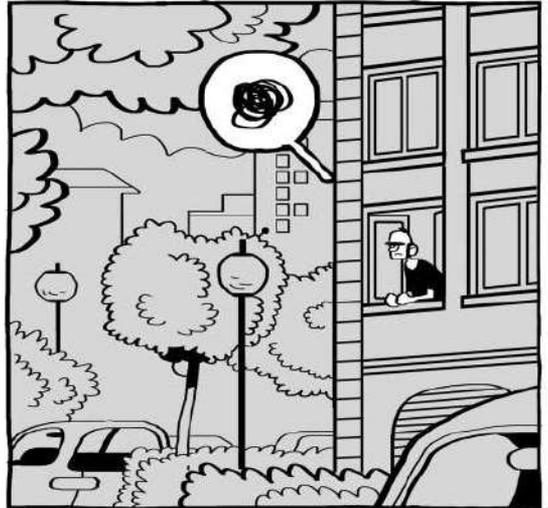
IL VAUDRAIT
MIEUX QU'ON
ARRÊTE.

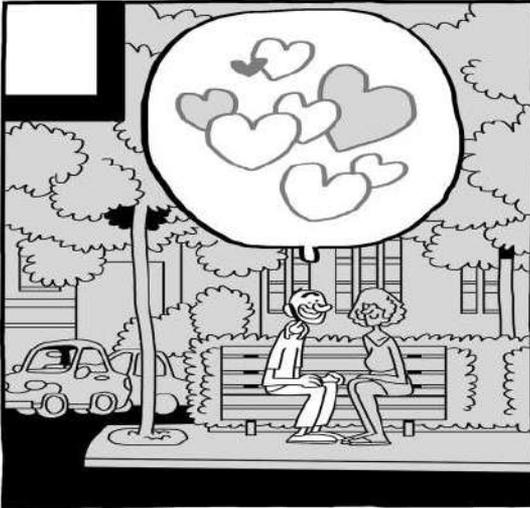
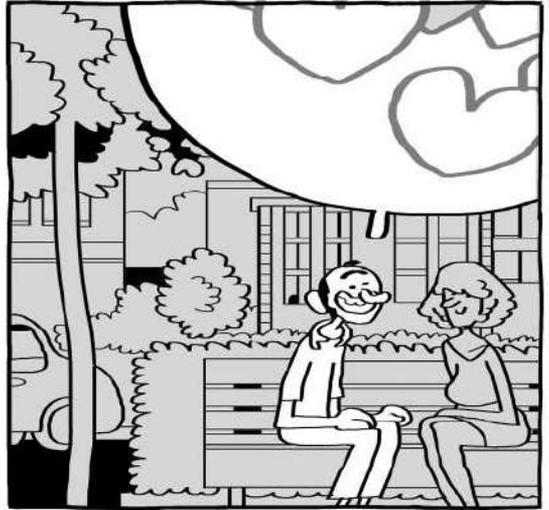
Cheval
gagnant.

FIVE



I've been rereading what I just wrote and it barely makes any sense. So, allow me to lay my cards on the table: I am simply trying to clearly explain what this uneasiness that sweeps over me feels like, just that. But I'm aware that, even if I manage to express it perfectly well, I'll never be able to get this feeling across as I experience it. So, here comes my explanation.





I think my explanations,
my words, my drawings,
can't really convey the
uneasiness I'm feeling.
Even if we were talking
face to face, my emotions
would be lost in the
words themselves.





Even if I try to communicate -now, again and again- my reflections about my uneasiness, they are everything but precise and only I will experience, in essence, how it feels.





Nothing but new explanations, new layers which take me even further away from what I'm trying to explain.



And so,
it was just
my uneasiness
and myself.



Again
and again.



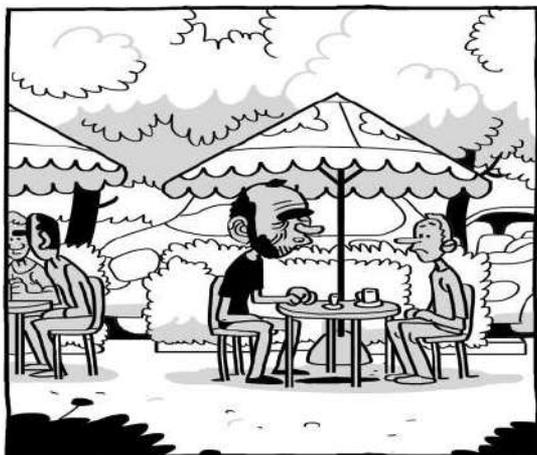
SIX



SEVEN

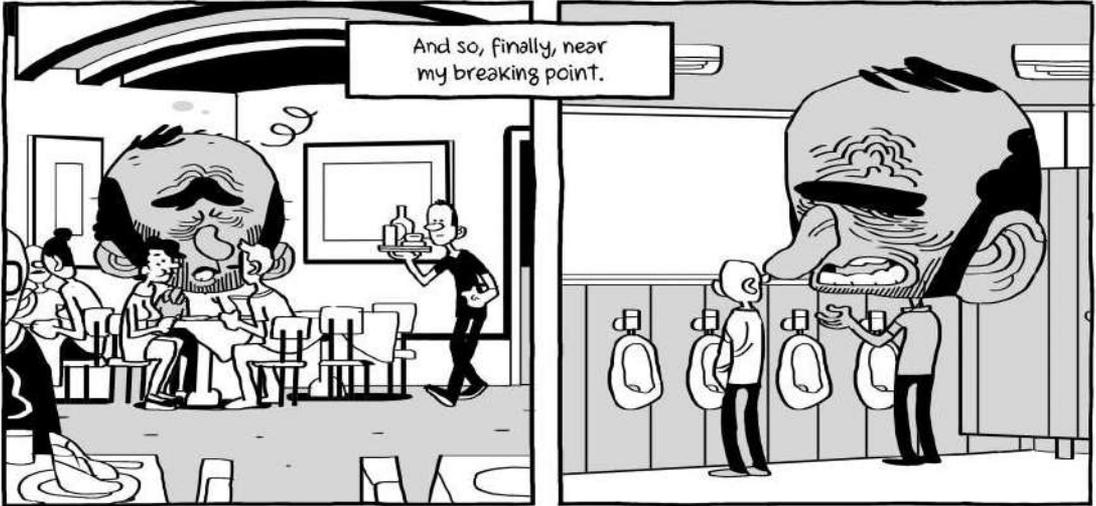


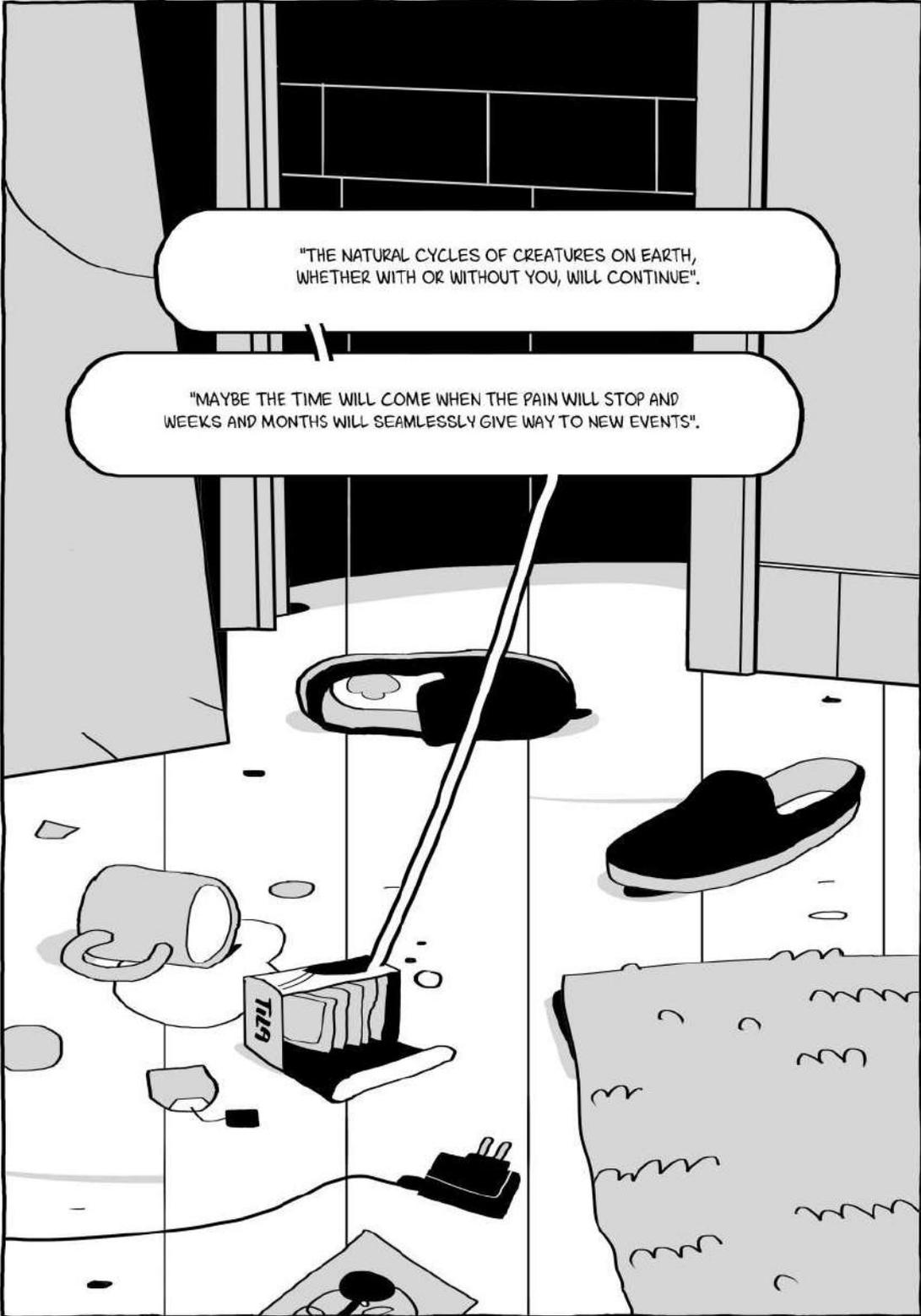
I tried to explain how I felt to the people I met, to those I considered my friends, but all that energy seemed to vanish too quickly.



At that time, I could only vaguely sense the solution for my problems, ideas which never fully materialised. But talking about them did nothing but nurture my ego and my pride.







"THE NATURAL CYCLES OF CREATURES ON EARTH,
WHETHER WITH OR WITHOUT YOU, WILL CONTINUE".

"MAYBE THE TIME WILL COME WHEN THE PAIN WILL STOP AND
WEEKS AND MONTHS WILL SEAMLESSLY GIVE WAY TO NEW EVENTS".

EIGHT



Yes, this small period of darkness was followed by something else.

First, I started getting impatient with this uneasiness that would never pass. The first thing I noticed was that this senselessness would not go away anymore. It had even gotten worse.

Besides, I was going bald.



Me and my uneasiness again.

But this time I began to realise it was going to be there for the rest of my life. And, surprisingly, that made me feel better.

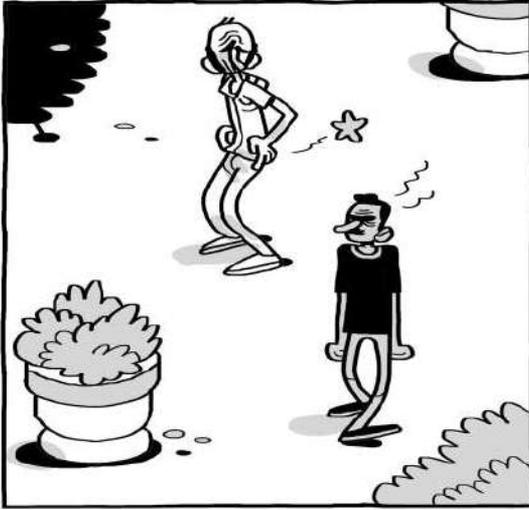


Sometimes, walking along a street in the city centre or through a train station during rush hour, I would fantasise about spotting a relatively hairy head, surreptitiously following it around and plucking out some hair.

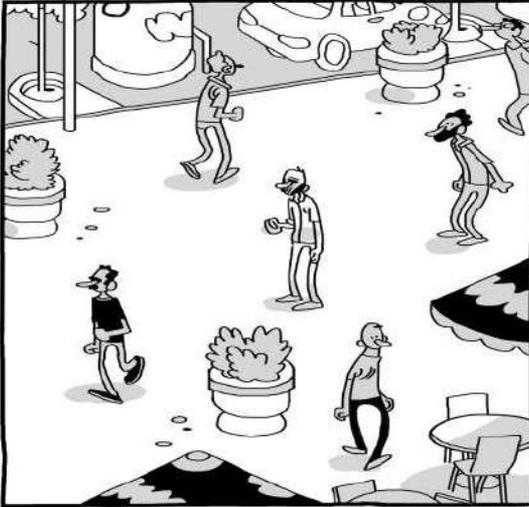


I thought: there's nothing to be gained from things which depend solely on my own will.



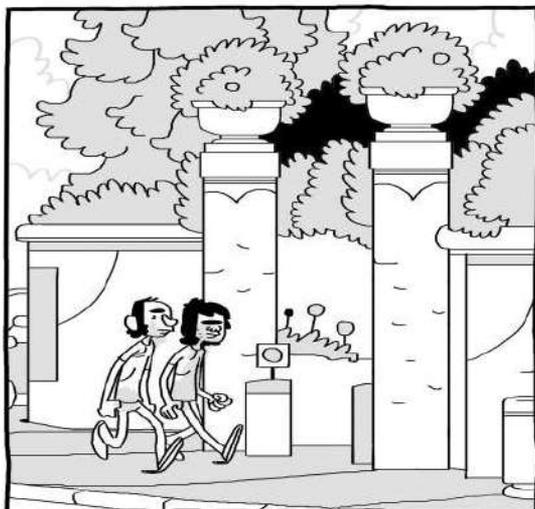


But I decided
I had to go back to
resorting to my own will.
My obsession with
hair long one,
I wondered: what did
I have before that?



NINE

Although, as I said, I was incredibly foolish as a teenager, there were some people around me I admired. Sensitive people who treated others attentively and solicitously, who managed not to drive me crazy or to awfully bore me.





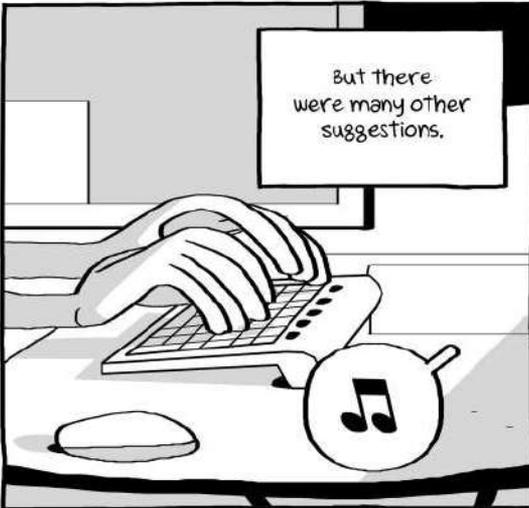


TEN





By setting out on the task of explaining this unremitting feeling to myself, I managed to cheer myself up.



But there were many other suggestions.



People kept telling me:
"Learn how to play music".

"Get out there and fuck all the girls you can"

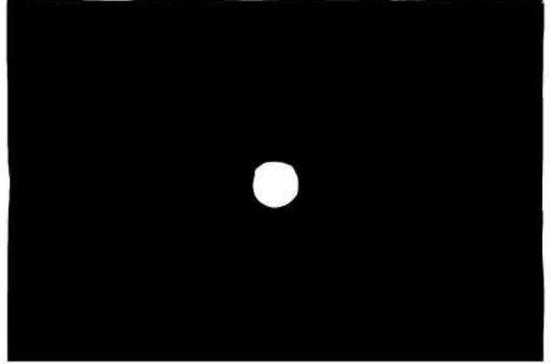
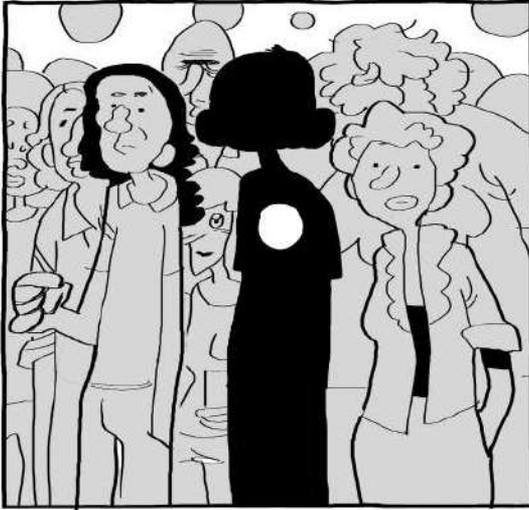


"Travel"

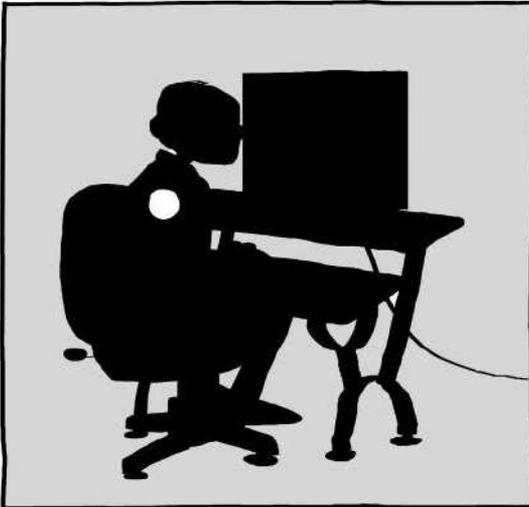
"Get drunk"



"Have a kid"

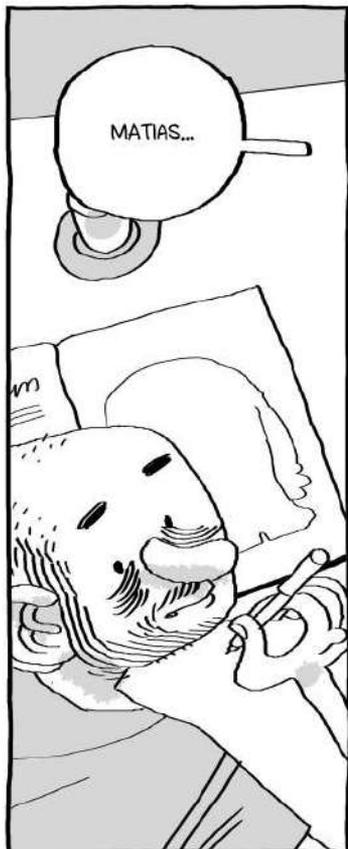


And I did feel a longing for the good side in all these things, but at the same time, I felt like saying "Fuck everything" would be more beneficial.



I made the physical certainty of my uneasiness the guiding light of my existence.

ELEVEN



At the time, I used to feel somewhat misunderstood: whenever I tried talking to someone about my worries, they usually ended up telling me with irritation: "we are all the same and we are all different".



Little by little, at my own pace, I stopped becoming annoyed at every little thing and even began to enjoy these unoriginal clichés. "Nobody knows about these things", They would say.



Paradoxes,
abstractions,
ambiguities...

Things that
helped me begin
to understand
my uneasiness by
proxy, and which,
as soon as anyone
tried to make any
adjustment in
them, seemed to
dissolve entirely
into the daily
events
of life.





I felt I was making progress. I had found a way of explaining myself.



But, even though these abstractions and paradoxes finally allowed me to convey my thoughts, I was wandering deeper into a labyrinth and the signs were beginning to show on my body.



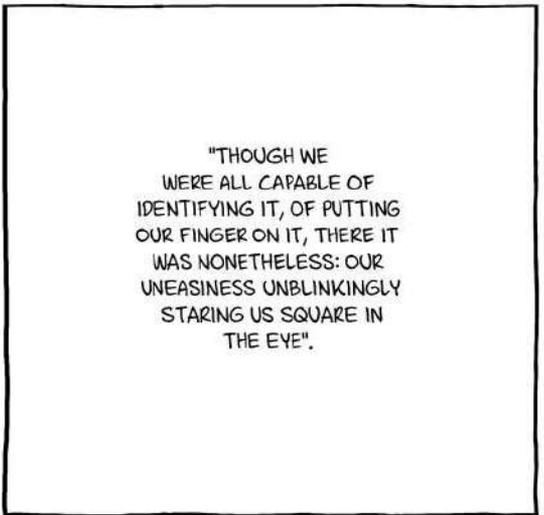
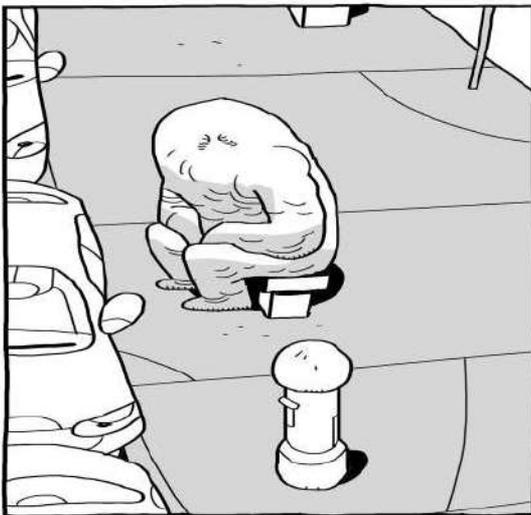
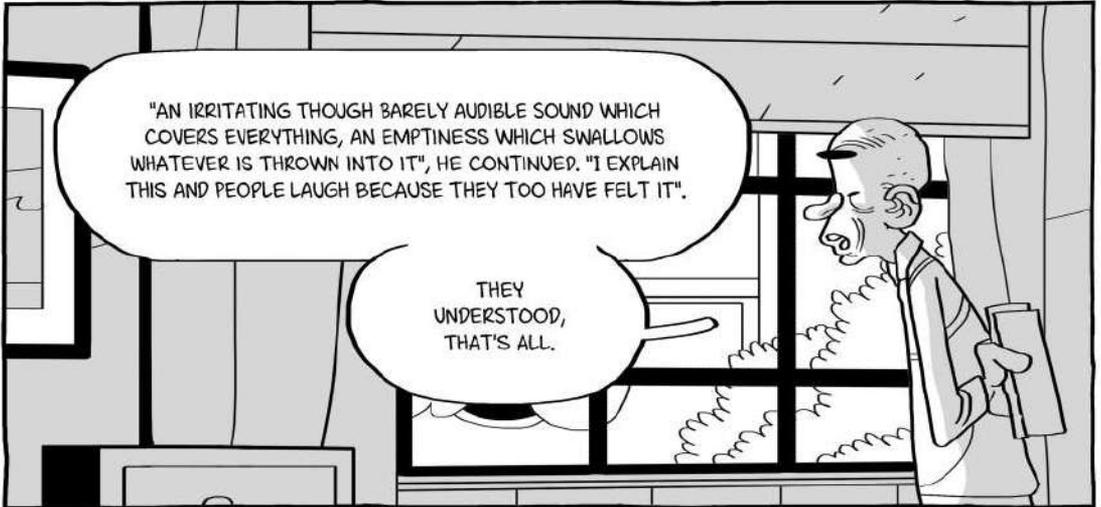
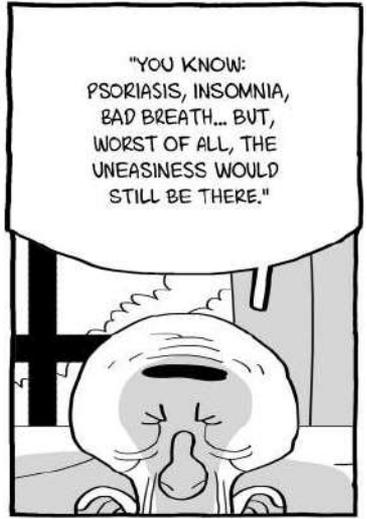
I still had my unemployment benefits. I started to drink too much coffee, I barely cooked and rarely showered.



I still believe tiny handwriting and the length of one's toenails, though they might seem ordinary issues totally unrelated to spiritual matters, are in fact telltale signs of one's state of mind.



MY WAY OF DOING THINGS HAS AN IMPACT ON MYSELF, ON MY BODY.



TWELVE

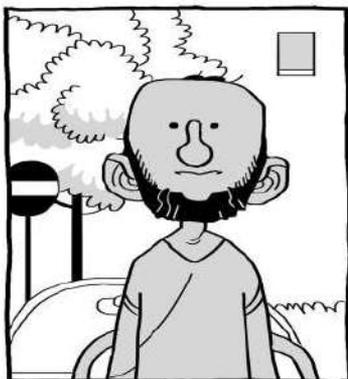


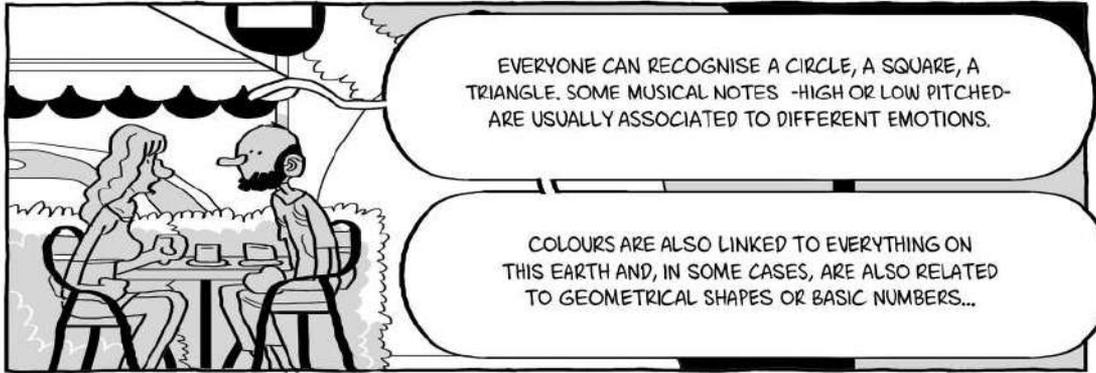
FORTUNATELY, I MET A GIRL I FELT AT EASE WITH, QUITE AN ACHIEVEMENT FOR ME AT THE TIME.

WE ARGUED WITH EACH OTHER EVEN WHEN WE AGREED, BUT WE BOTH NEEDED A PARTNER TO SHARE OUR TIME WITH, AND WE HIT IT OFF RIGHT AWAY.



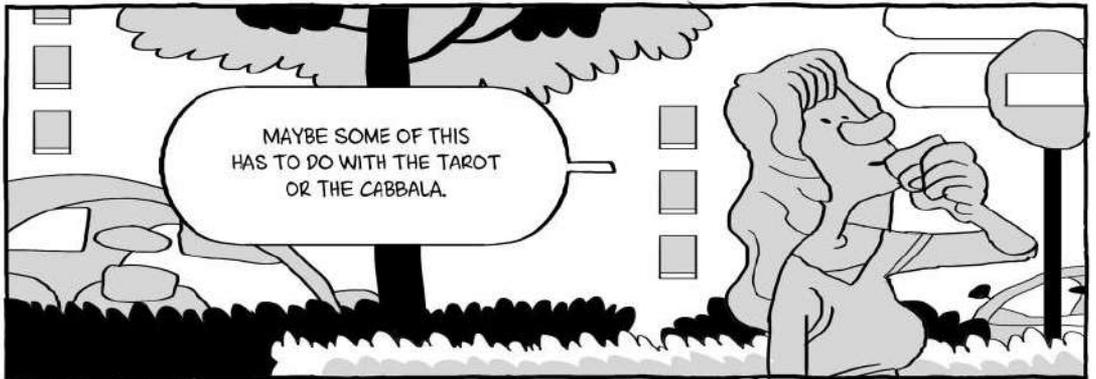
ONCE I TOLD HIM THAT PERHAPS SUNLIGHT, WATER, DEATH AND SEX WERE THE ONLY THINGS DIFFERENT RACES, CULTURES, TIMES AND, WHY NOT, EVEN SOCIAL CLASSES, HAD IN COMMON.





EVERYONE CAN RECOGNISE A CIRCLE, A SQUARE, A TRIANGLE. SOME MUSICAL NOTES -HIGH OR LOW PITCHED- ARE USUALLY ASSOCIATED TO DIFFERENT EMOTIONS.

COLOURS ARE ALSO LINKED TO EVERYTHING ON THIS EARTH AND, IN SOME CASES, ARE ALSO RELATED TO GEOMETRICAL SHAPES OR BASIC NUMBERS...



MAYBE SOME OF THIS HAS TO DO WITH THE TAROT OR THE CABBALA.



RASCAL
RASCAL

I GUESS, LATER, EACH CULTURE TRIES TO EXPLAIN WHAT EACH THING MEANS AND FINDS OUT HOW THEY RELATE TO EACH OTHER...

WELL...



OR SO IT SEEMS.



THE WAY WE ASSOCIATE THE COLOUR
BLUE TO THE SEA, TO COLD WATER, AND
THAT ELEMENT TO WHAT WE HEAR WHEN WE
DIVE UNDERWATER, TO LOW PITCHED SOUNDS,
TO DEPTH... DON'T YOU THINK?



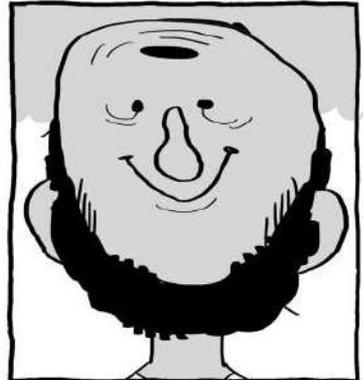
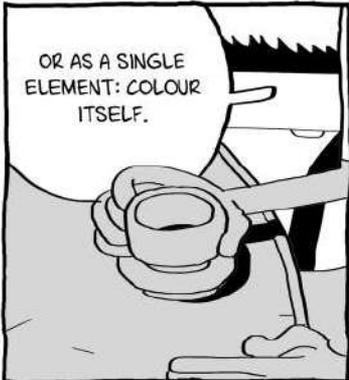
AND THE
SAME COULD BE
TRUE FOR EVERY
COLOUR, EVERY
SHAPE AND EVERY
MUSICAL NOTE.

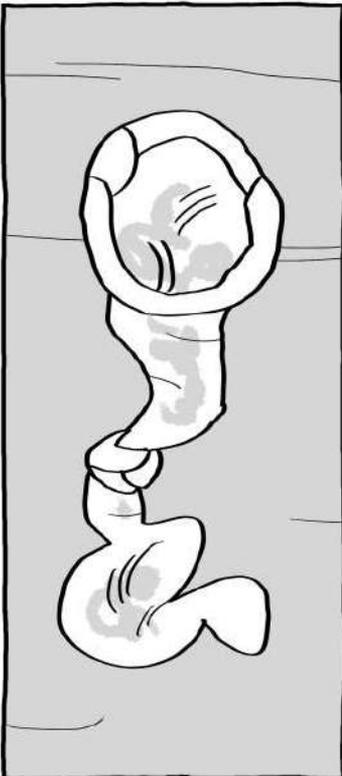


IT'S EASY TO
FIND LINKS.



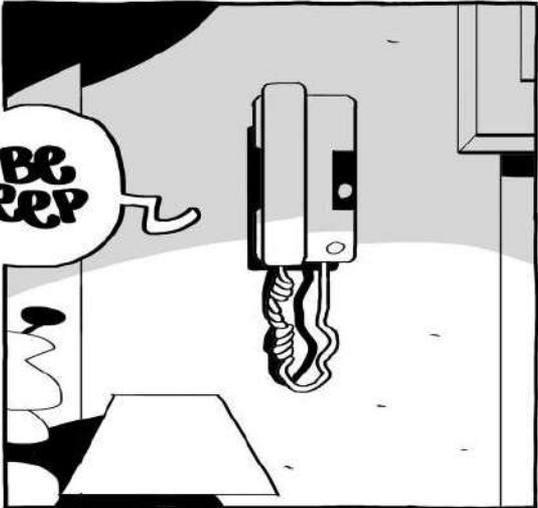
ALTHOUGH I'M SURE WE WOULD
ALL IMAGINE DIFFERENT COLOURS
FOR THE SAME SQUARE.





We fucked whenever we felt like it, which was not often, to tell you the truth. But we didn't need any more or any less.

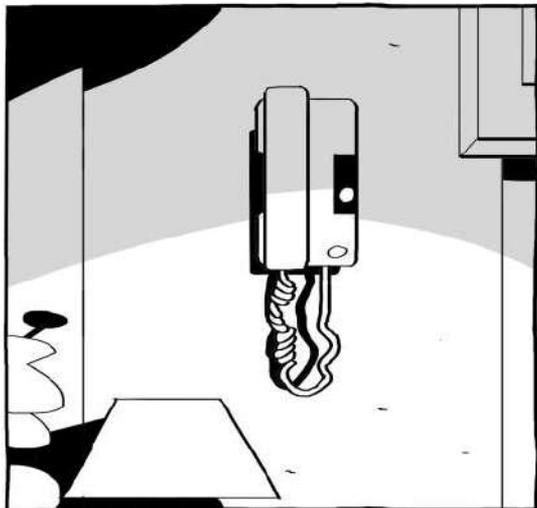


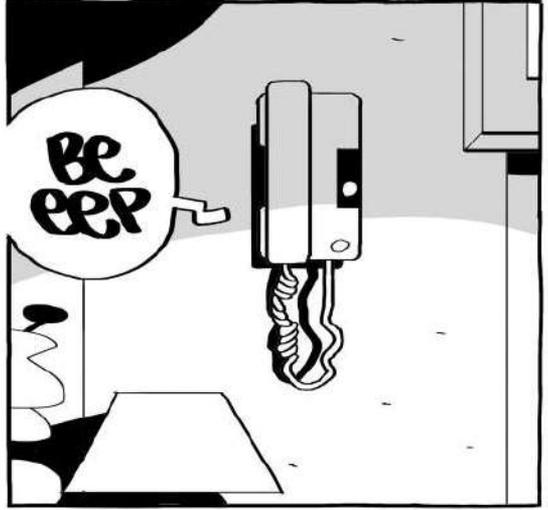


Sometimes
I felt like I was losing
my mind, although,
officially, I have never
been diagnosed.



While I was gone, my girl, looking
for an online dictionary on my computer,
accidentally stumbled on the diagrams
I had been working on for some time.

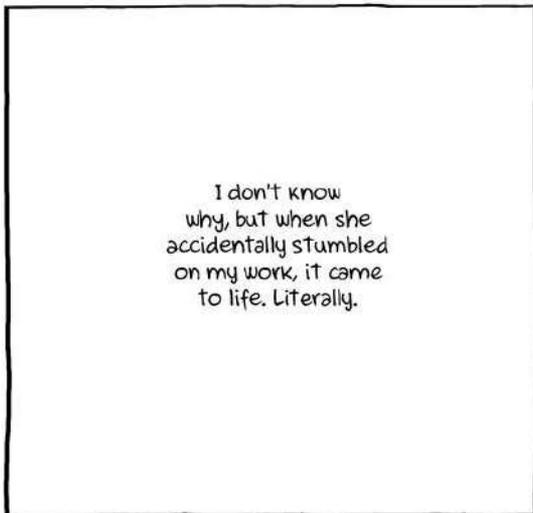
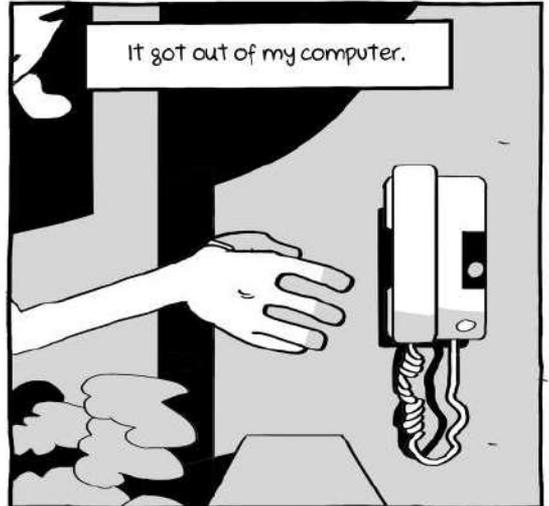
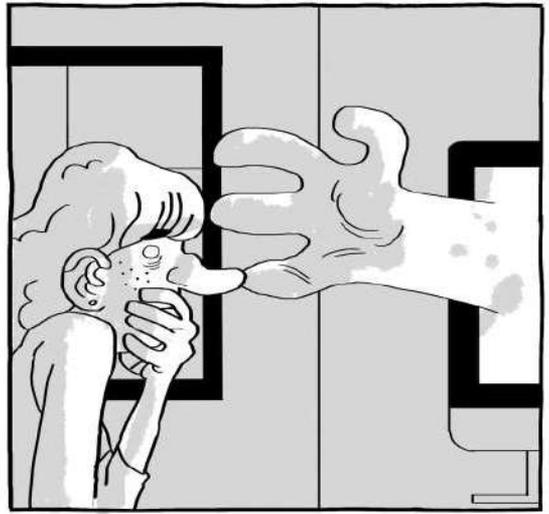




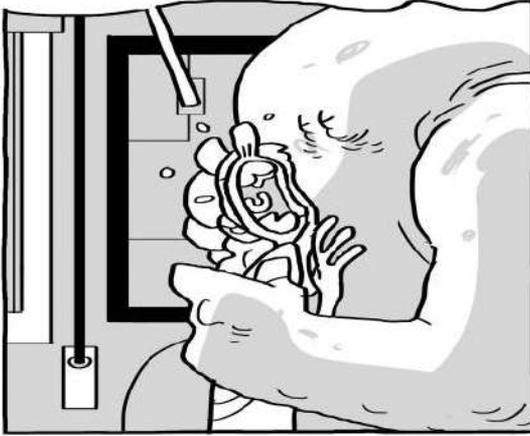
I always let the entry phone ring a few times before picking it up. It's a good way of measuring how determined the stranger at the door is.

But then, it did something weird.



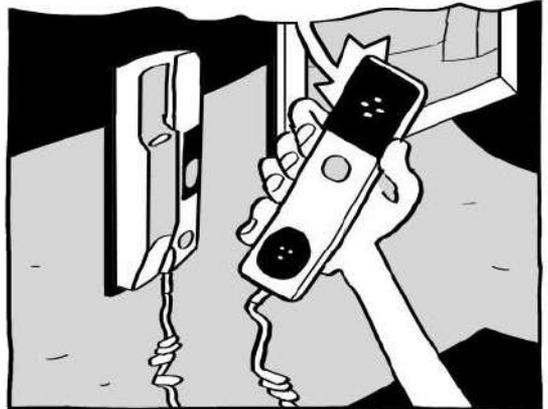


YAAAAAAAHYAHAAAAAAAYYAGGH



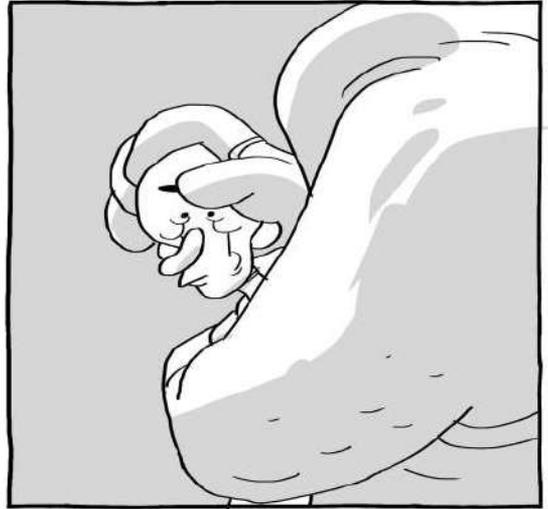
A guttural sound emerged from the throats of my girlfriend and victor, my therapist. They were shouting, yes, but also modulating their voices to produce a sound similar to an ovation. It was all so strange. And the fact that my therapist was there remained a mystery for a long time.

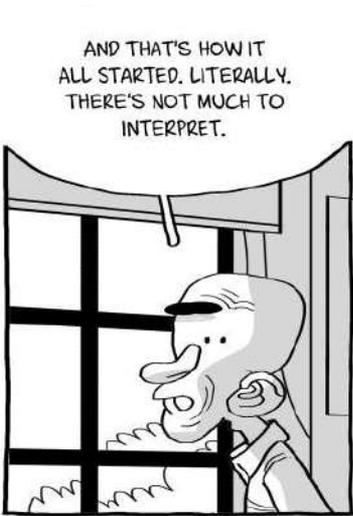
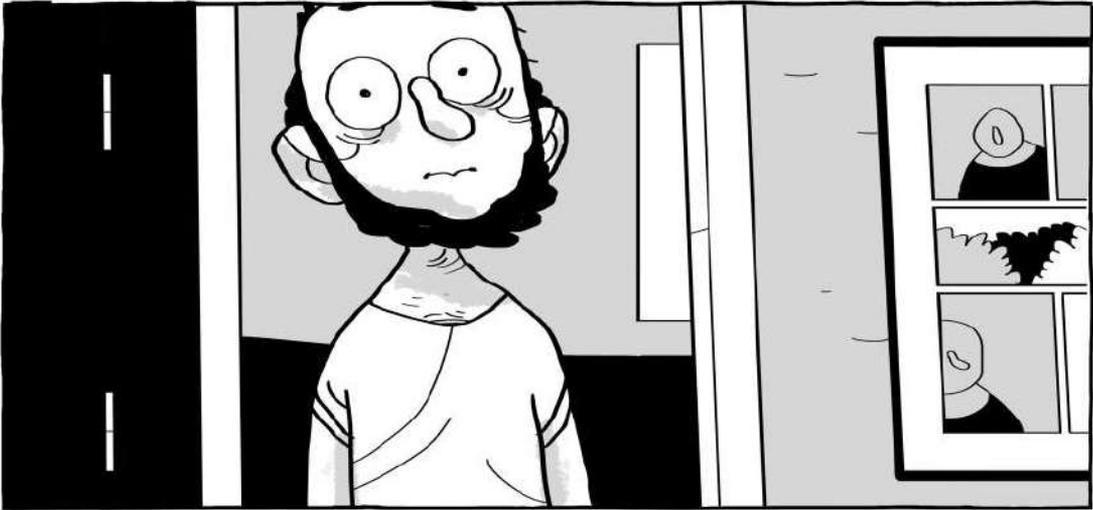
GHAARAGYARHA



I have a very vague recollection of what happened, because it all happened so fast and all at once.

YAAARRRGHYAAA
CLAP CLAP CLAP CLAP CLAP CLAP





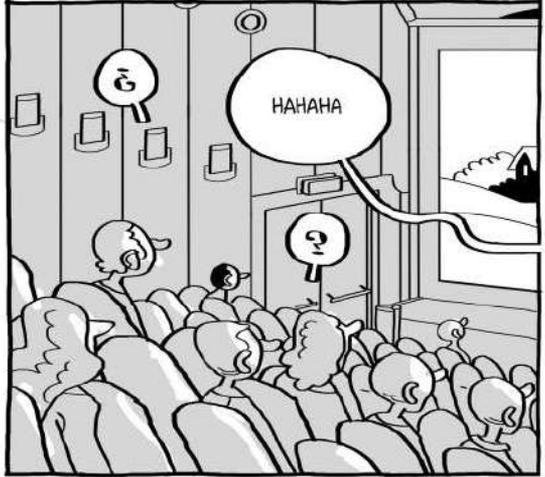
FOURTEEN



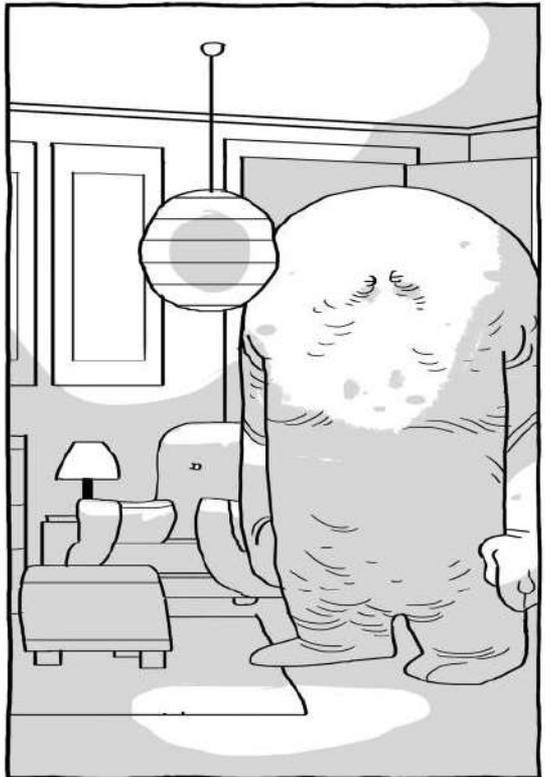
The first improvement I noticed was a strong desire, which I gave in to, to look at everything out of the corner of my eye.



But, don't get me wrong. I wasn't looking slyly at everything, I wasn't losing my mind. That wasn't it. It's simply that if I was watching a film, I never looked where I was supposed to be looking or if I was talking to my girlfriend, I didn't look at her eyes. That sort of thing.



I wasn't going crazy. In fact, this made me feel content and happy.



I was always using my entire field of view, and the spot where my eyes settled didn't really matter that much.

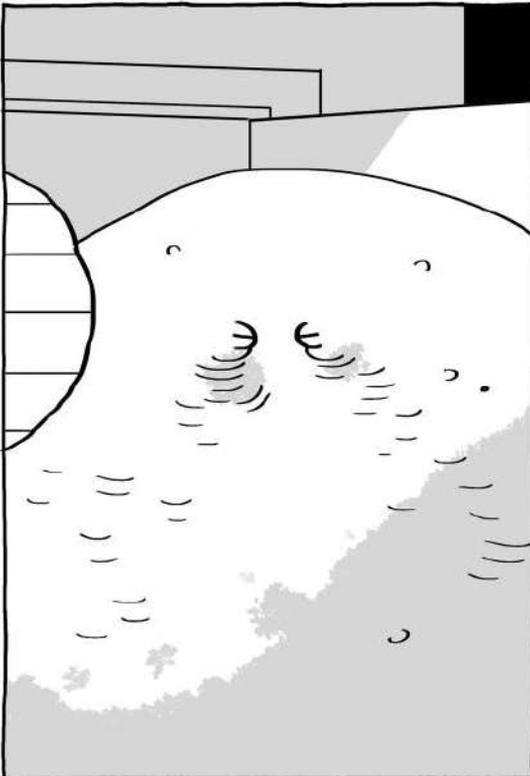


I realised that the less I focused, the better. I wasn't focusing my vision on anything in particular, physiologically speaking, but I had a broader vision of everything.





I had to stop reading, though, but things were going well.



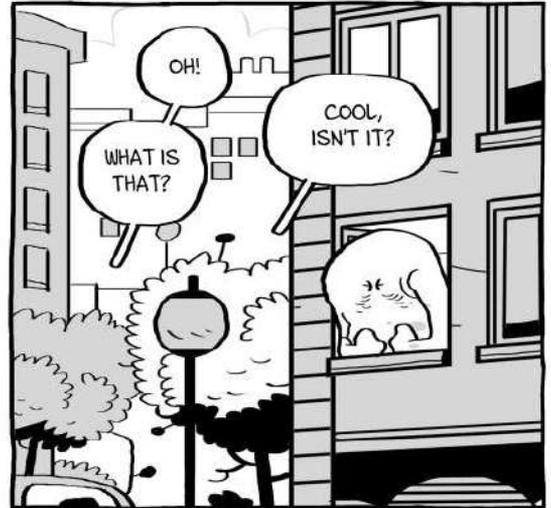
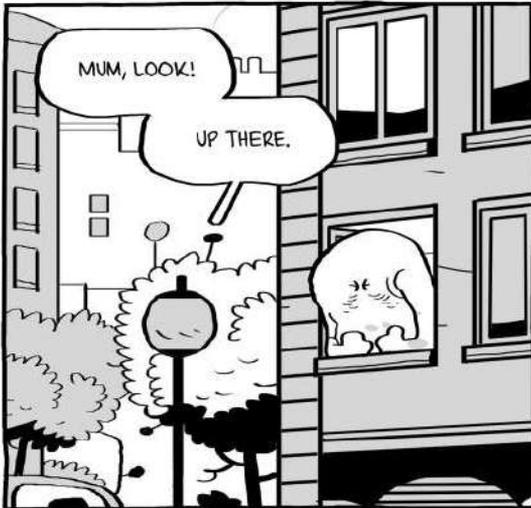
They were going delightfully well.

FIFTEEN





SIXTEEN

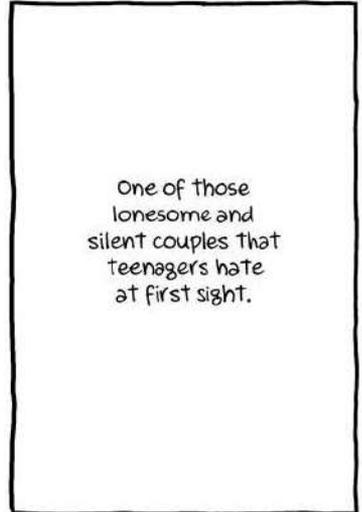
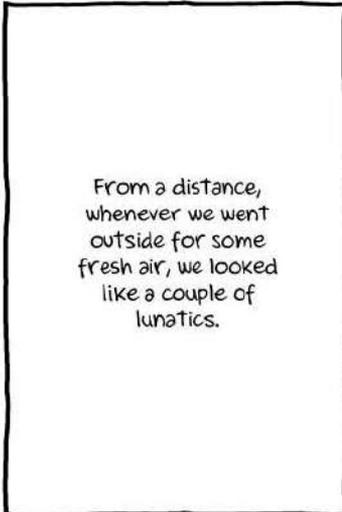


Days were getting shorter. Autumn. My girlfriend wouldn't stop taking showers compulsively.



She seemed to enjoy spending her free time at the supermarket, smelling shampoos, beauty creams and cleaning products. She used to absolutely hate air fresheners.

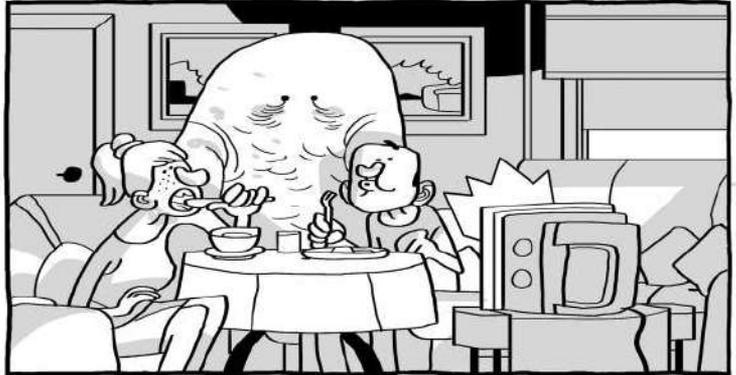




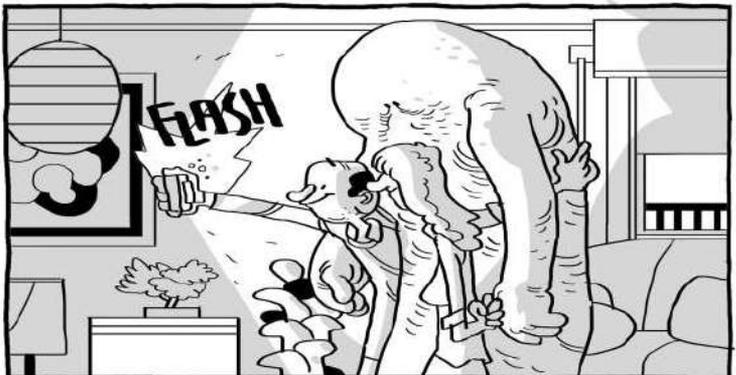
SEVENTEEN



Don't get me wrong; things were going well. I had just stopped pushing and fighting them.



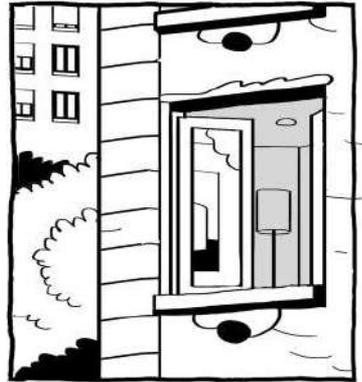
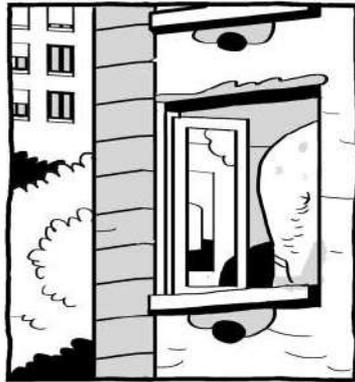
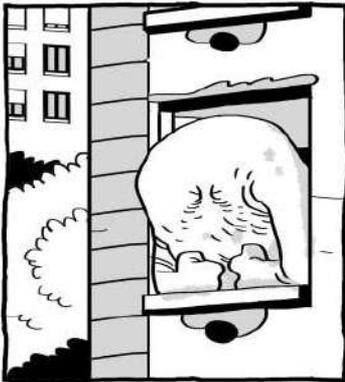
I didn't feel the uneasiness anymore, because the thing was uneasiness in the flesh. My thoughts were tidy and neat, and whenever I became aware of something through my senses, I recognised it simply for what it was. Nothing else. What had previously consumed me had come to life and it was strangely comforting. My unemployment benefits would still last me for some time. And the thing absorbed, contained and balanced the senselessness I had been feeling as if it had fallen into a bottomless pit.





Soon, having to go out to the supermarket or my psoriasis stopped stressing me out.

And feeling good about myself, in turn, made my outward symptoms and appearance rapidly improve.



Everything seemed to flow effortlessly, everything seemed more naturally structured. My thoughts were totally compartmentalised. My uneasiness had become something I could contain and had ceased to be a problem. Life was, and there was nothing I could do about it. Only to be.



A few weeks later, my girlfriend started feeling insatiably thirsty. It was impossible to quench her Thirst. Water, wine, liquor, everything seemed to agree with her.

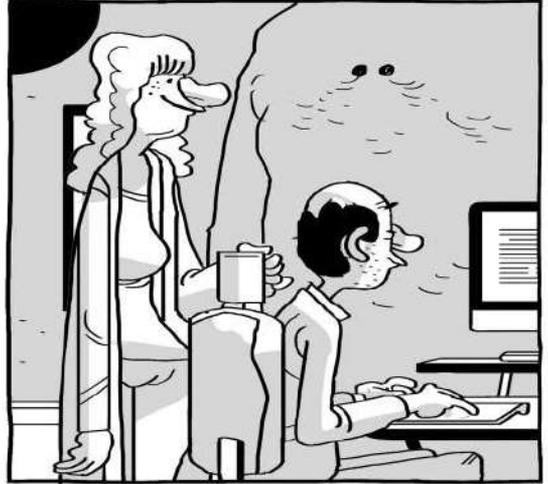


And, whenever she walked into my room, the song that was playing at that time would suddenly end. Invariably and almost magically.





Not that the music stopped in the middle of a song, but rather, it seemed that as soon as the album stopped playing, there she would be, having something to drink.



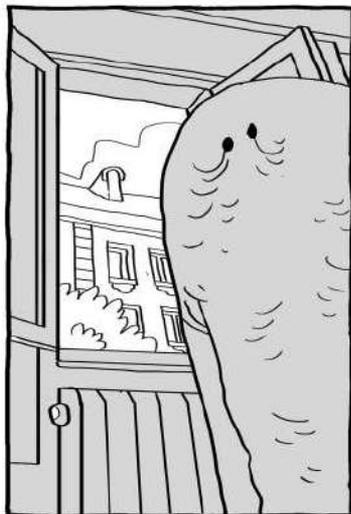
Most of the time,
water or coffee.



NINETEEN



WE'RE GOING FOR A WALK. WE'LL BE RIGHT BACK.



It was as if we belonged to a sect, but with none of the negative stuff.

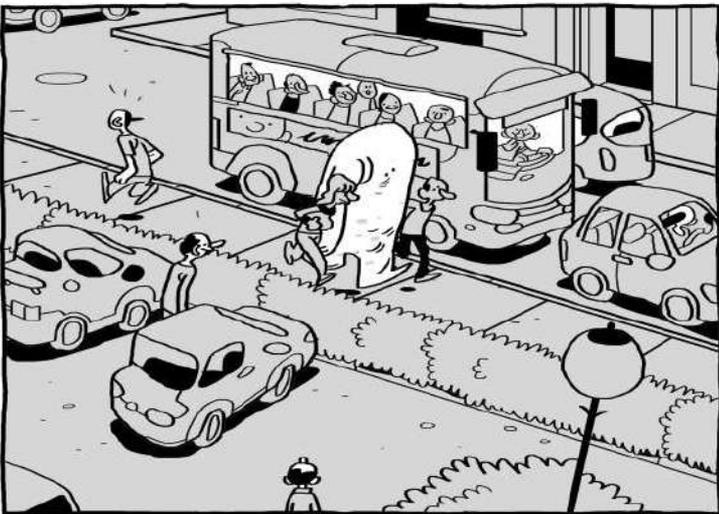


Sometimes I wondered how long it would take for us to run into trouble

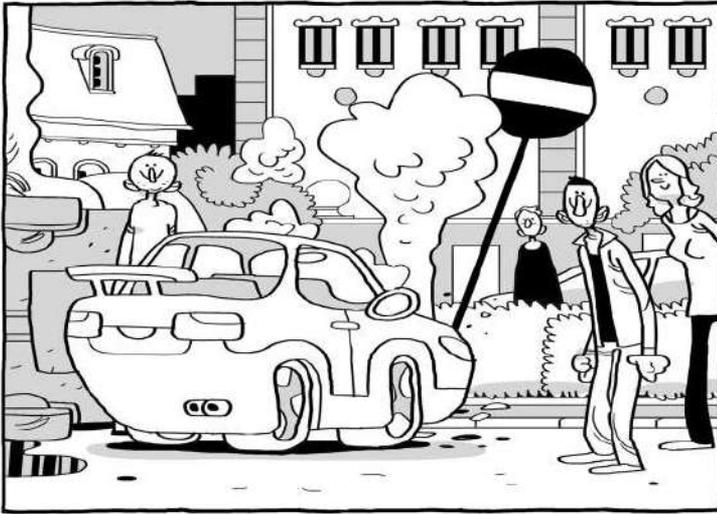




It wasn't like Frankenstein's monster. It wasn't like the Jewish Golem. It was something real, something that was there and -strangely enough- at the same time, conversely, something that was everywhere. Inside me, my girlfriend and virtually anything that had been touched by it before.



It was real and it didn't scare anybody. Like taking a shower.



And all who saw it agreed that this thing which existed right before their eyes had to be alive.

Its very existence, unprejudiced and radiant, suggested it would outlive us all.

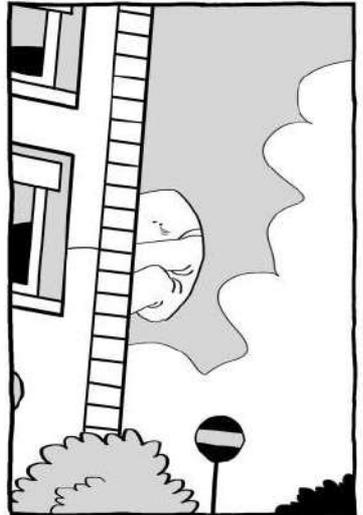


The advent of this thing was the best thing that could have ever happened, and though I'd had something to do with it, I really didn't know how I had done it.





I had no idea where the spark, the leap, the momentum that led me to this new life had come from.



There was just an intense, prolonged and synchronised jolt-ovation from my girlfriend and my shrink.



I couldn't find any explanation for it, but I felt completely at ease with that.

TWENTY



I DON'T THINK ANYONE HAS MENTIONED THAT, WHEN IT HAPPENED, WHEN THE BEING WAS BORN, THE PERSON SHOUTING INTO THE ENTRY PHONE, MY BOYFRIEND'S SHRINK, WAS COMING OVER FOR SOMETHING THAT WE COMPLETELY FORGOT ABOUT, BUSY AS WE WERE.



IT'S UNUSUAL FOR A DOCTOR TO VISIT HIS PATIENTS.

THAT DAY, HE HADN'T COME UP.



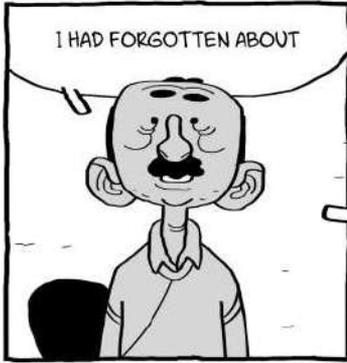
WHEN WE SAW HIM AGAIN, MATIAS ASKED HIM WHAT THE REASON FOR HIS VISIT THAT DAY WAS, AND WE TRIED TO EXPLAIN WHAT HAD HAPPENED.



OUTRAGED, HE ACCUSED MY BOYFRIEND OF LYING BECAUSE HE WOULDN'T LOOK AT HIM IN THE EYES AND SAID HE WAS A SHAMELESS FREELoader. HE SAID HE DIDN'T WANT HIM NEAR HIM AGAIN.



MATIAS STILL OWED HIM THE FEE FOR SOME OF THE SESSIONS.



SO I PAID HIM, WHILE MY SHRINK INSISTED OVER AND OVER THAT HE DIDN'T RECALL ANY SHOUTING OVER THE ENTRY PHONE THAT DAY... I DIDN'T UNDERSTAND A THING, BUT COULDN'T CARE LESS ABOUT IT.



After that, whenever we met we greeted each other politely. No hard feelings, it simply ended, that's all.

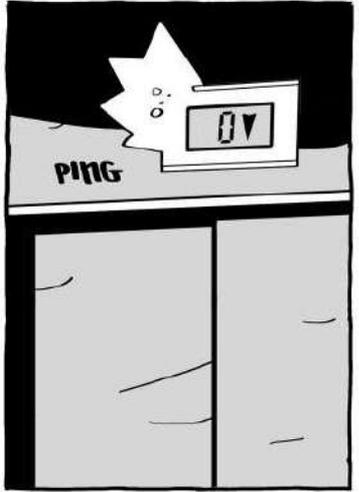
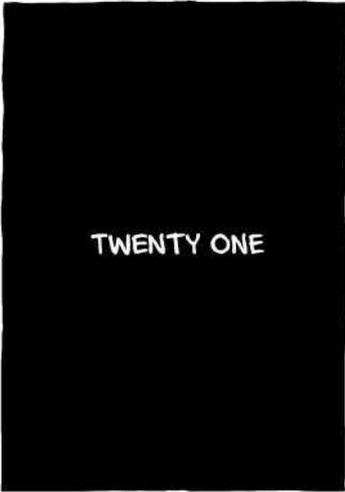


In time, the relationship improved a little.

That day he was shouting at me over the entry phone. And what he shouted had nothing to do with anger over an unpaid debt.



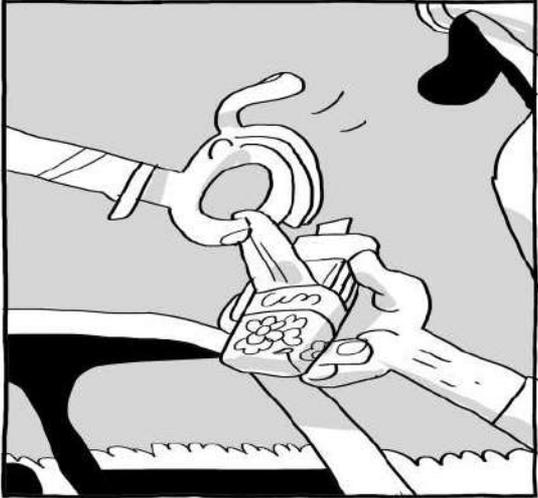
I'm probably overstating a little, but I remember his voice turned the entry phone into a powerful device targeted directly at me.

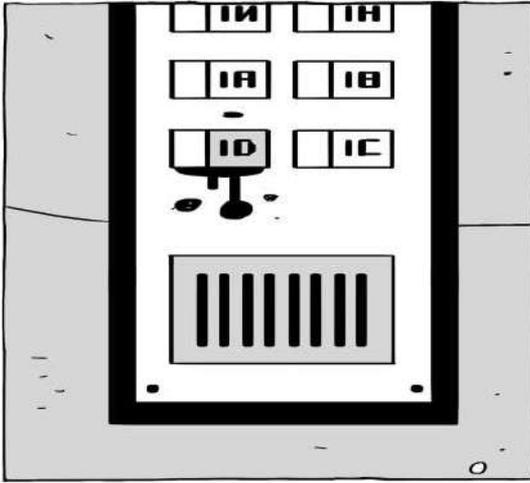


That afternoon, the day of the genesis, as we went out we noticed there was blood next to the entry phone button.

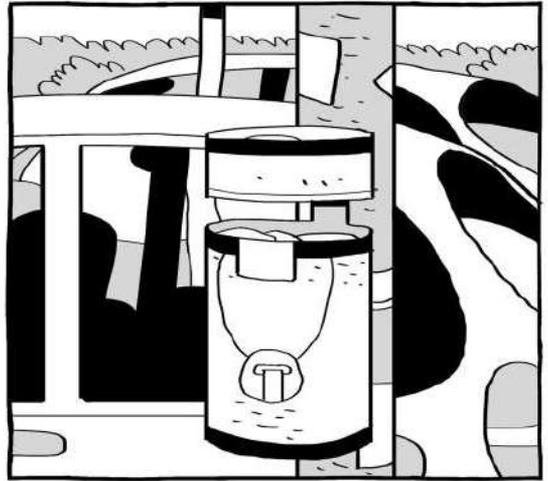
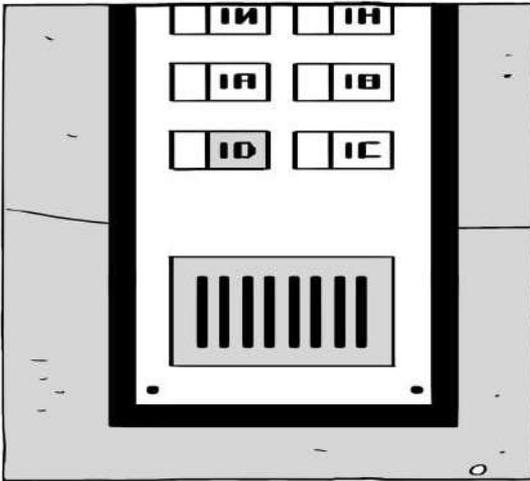


Just a drop. It was all very strange. Just that, strange.

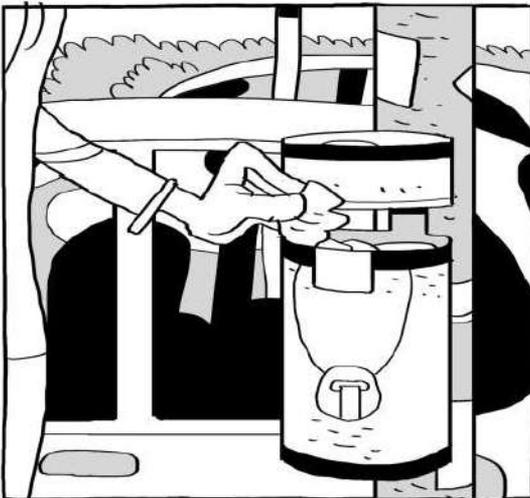




The following time I saw my shrink, he wasn't missing a finger or anything like it.



We couldn't figure it out. Things are just weird sometimes.

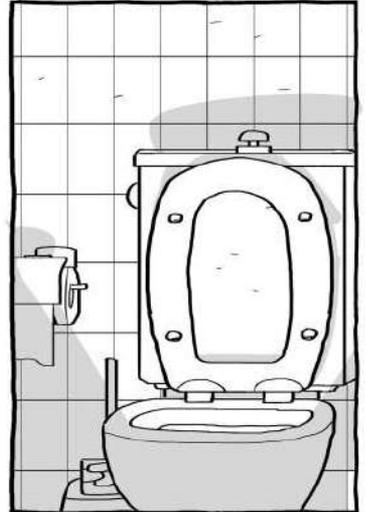


Just that.

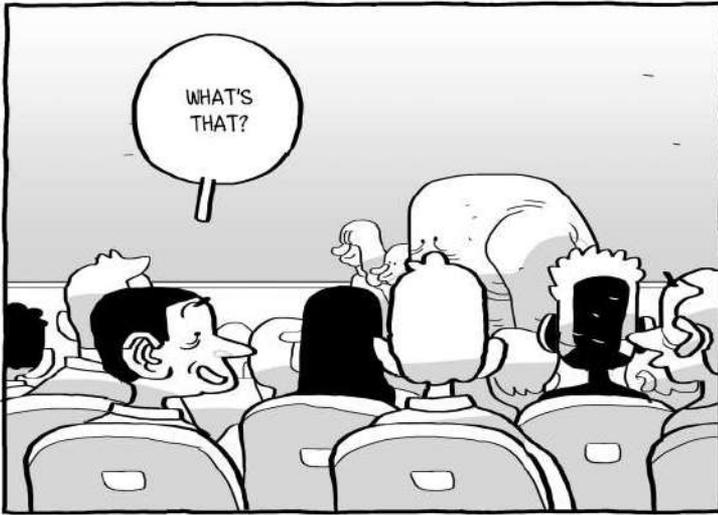
TWENTY TWO



We decided to go to the cinema together. I felt like it. I remember the three of us actually dressed up for the occasion.



Over the years I've lost interest in films and it has now become very hard for me to sit still and pay attention to what goes on in the screen. But that evening, even though I couldn't fix my eyes on the right spot, I enjoyed the film very much.



I found the film inspiring, lyrical.



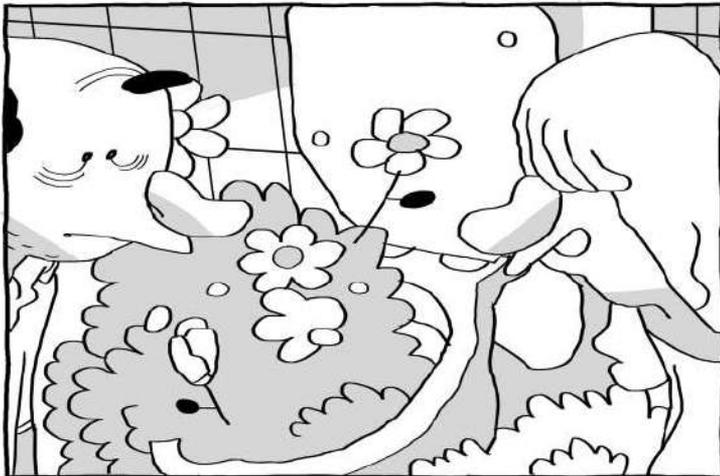
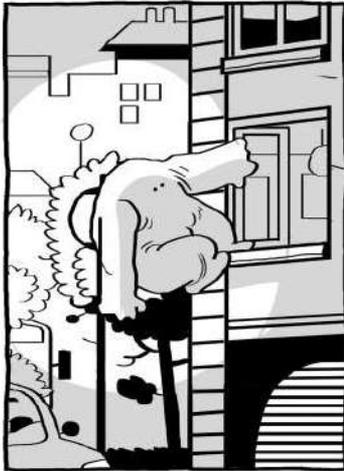
Under different circumstances, I would have found those two hours entertaining and enlightening. But, nearing the end of the film, I was distracted: the creature spoke.



After we left the cinema, on the way home, the being was greeted by perfect strangers who usually wished him well. In the meantime, I tried to understand what he had meant by those words.



I remembered a painting by Magritte, *Ceci n'est pas une pipe*, and I decided that, for the creature, the human beings in the film were not actors or characters, not even an image of people talking and moving, they were just lights and shadows on a screen. Maybe for the being, the whole experience had just been absurd.



It must have been very strange for the creature to see us both burst into tears of happiness simultaneously for the second time.

TWENTY
THREE



I should brush my teeth. I can feel the acids in my mouth attacking them. The streets are silent. And I don't know if I have become a convert, and have finally been welcomed into a natural order full of the good things that those who feel content have always preached about.

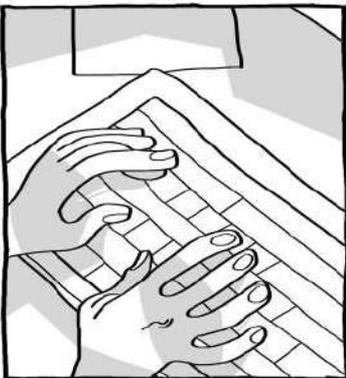


I will not turn to others in order to finish this. I'm not going to rely on my memory of the uneasiness or the emptiness just to continue, my dear monster.

I feel at peace with myself, and I will not let it go to waste by searching for something within me which has disappeared since I have you, long gone or perhaps just asleep. We will see.



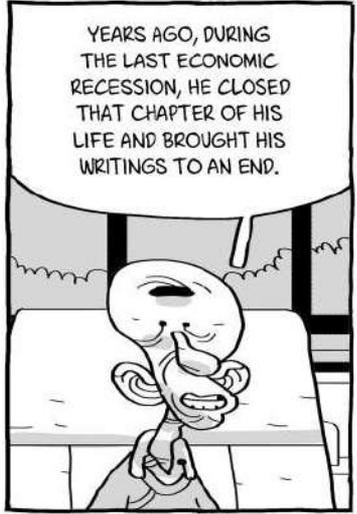
It feels kind of sad to end my work like this. I'm not making any progress, but clearly, it doesn't really matter to me. I can feel it. Although, if it were so obvious, I wouldn't be here writing this, would I?



I'm getting bored with this, so this is the end. It's time to finish this and I need the money. I can draw and I need to find a job.



TWENTY FOUR



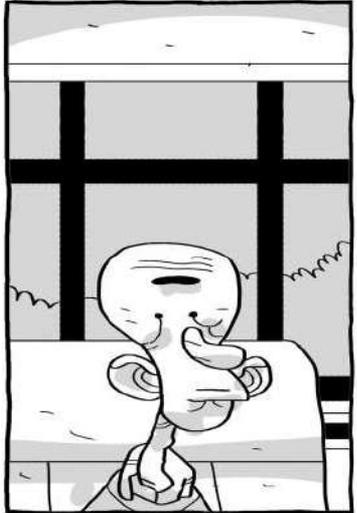
YEARS AGO, DURING THE LAST ECONOMIC RECESSION, HE CLOSED THAT CHAPTER OF HIS LIFE AND BROUGHT HIS WRITINGS TO AN END.

BUT SINCE MATIAS AND HIS GIRLFRIEND COULDN'T FIND A JOB, THEIR UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS WERE NEARLY CONSUMED AND THEIR SAVINGS WERE RUNNING OUT, THEY DECIDED TO COMBINE ALTRUISM AND ENTREPRENEURIAL SPIRIT, RATHER PARADOXICALLY, TO SORT OUT THEIR SITUATION. THEY DECIDED TO TASTE AND THEN BOTTLE UP WHAT THE CREATURE...

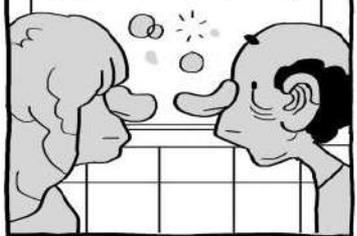


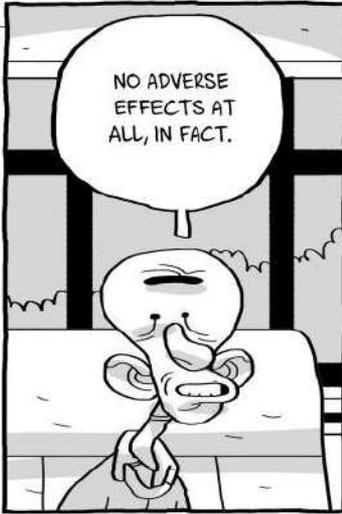
UH, WELL...

EXCRETED.



BELIEVE ME, THE EFFECT WAS SIMILAR TO ALCOHOL'S BUT WITH LESS ADVERSE EFFECTS.





NO ADVERSE EFFECTS AT ALL, IN FACT.



IS TASTE WAS QUITE BITTER, BUT IN COMBINATION WITH SODA OR OTHER SWEET DRINKS, IT WAS QUITE SATISFYING.



HELLO?

YOUR SIX O'CLOCK PATIENT IS NOT COMING. HE JUST CANCELLED.

OK.



SURPRISINGLY, THE STUFF, DISTILLED AND FERMENTED - A PROCESS THAT THE COUPLE MANAGED TO DO AT HOME - HAD THE SAME EFFECT AS HAVING THE CREATURE BESIDE YOU.



AND I'M NOT MAKING THIS UP. ON A GLOBAL LEVEL, NEGOTIATIONS WERE HELD ABOUT THE ETHICAL, MORAL AND, ABOVE ALL, ECONOMICAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUFF.



YOU KNOW, THEY MADE A LOT OF MONEY FROM THIS. AT LEAST UNTIL SOMEONE, WITH MORE MONEY THAN THEM, ACTIVELY ARGUED AGAINST THE FERMENTED PISS OF THE CREATURE.

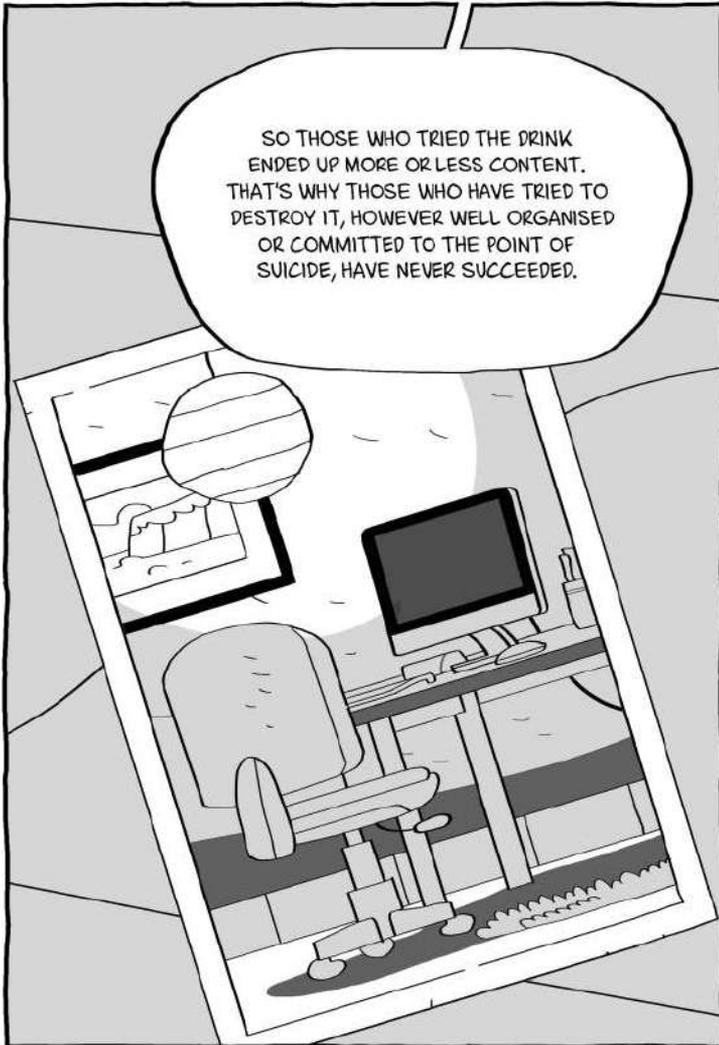


BUT NONE OF ITS OPPONENTS WERE ABLE TO DO ANYTHING ABOUT IT, BECAUSE THE DRINK WAS ALREADY WIDELY DISTRIBUTED IN PHARMACIES, SUPERMARKETS AND PETROL STATIONS. BESIDES, SOON ENOUGH, PEOPLE STARTED USING IT FOR COOKING.





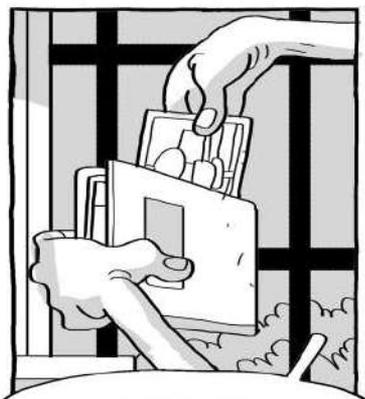
BIG OR SMALL,
EXPLICIT OR HIDDEN,
THE UNEASINESS
WOULD DISAPPEAR
AND WITH IT, ANY
DARK DESIRE.



SO THOSE WHO TRIED THE DRINK
ENDED UP MORE OR LESS CONTENT.
THAT'S WHY THOSE WHO HAVE TRIED TO
DESTROY IT, HOWEVER WELL ORGANISED
OR COMMITTED TO THE POINT OF
SUICIDE, HAVE NEVER SUCCEEDED.



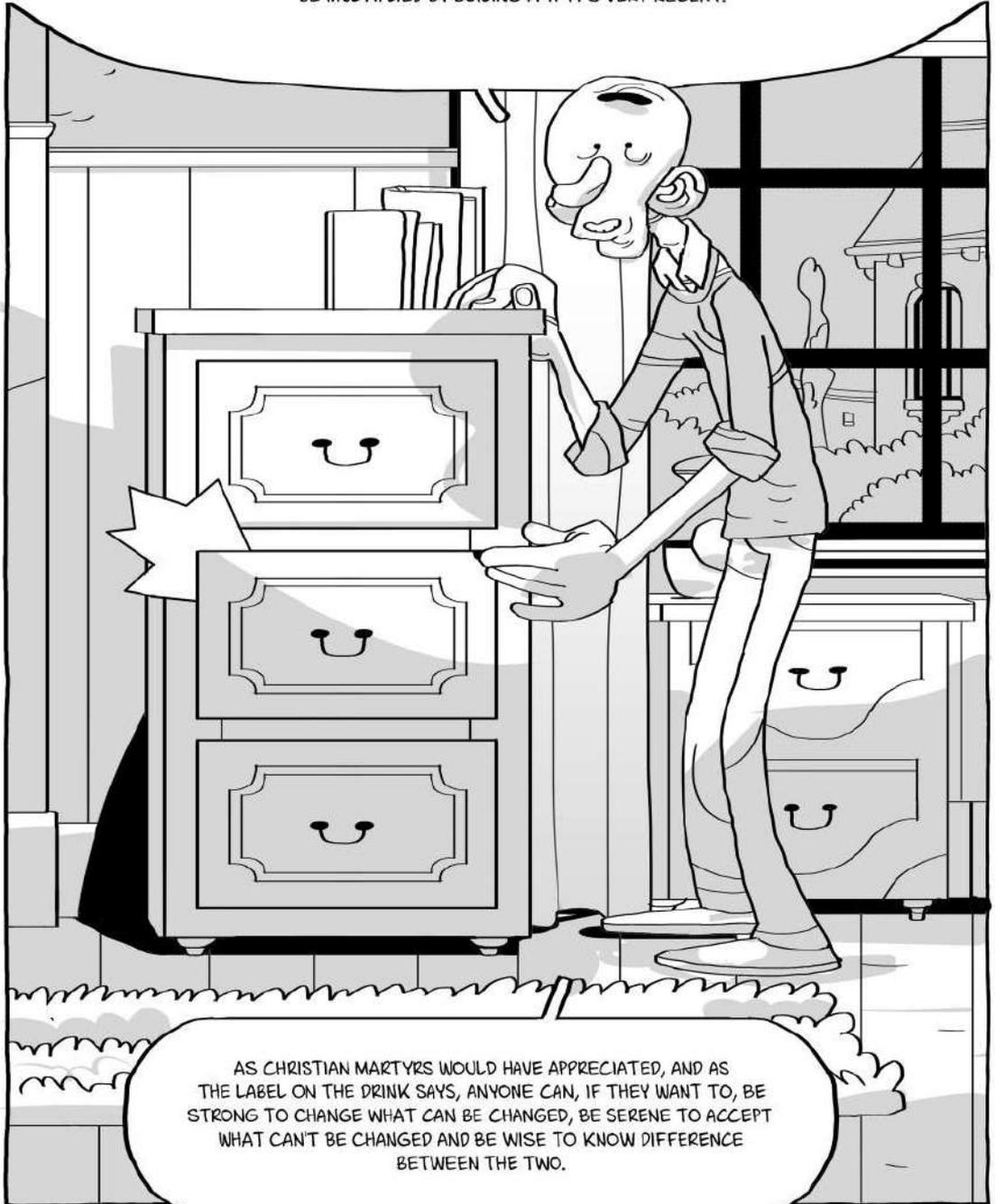
AND NO MAGICAL NEMESIS
EVER MATERIALISED.



NO DEMON TO
BALANCE THINGS OUT.

NOW, PEACE OF MIND IS WITHIN REACH OF EVERYONE WHO VISITS THE BEING OR DRINKS ITS PISS. PEOPLE WHO DON'T WANT TO RESORT TO IT, WHO PREFER SOMETHING MORE TRADITIONAL, COME TO MY OFFICE OR TO THE OFFICE OF OTHER PSYCHIATRISTS AND PSYCHOLOGISTS FOR THERAPY AND TO LISTEN TO THIS STORY.

THEY ALL END UP TASTING THE DRINK. ITS PROPERTIES CAN IN FACT BE MULTIPLIED BY BOILING IT IF IT'S VERY RECENT.

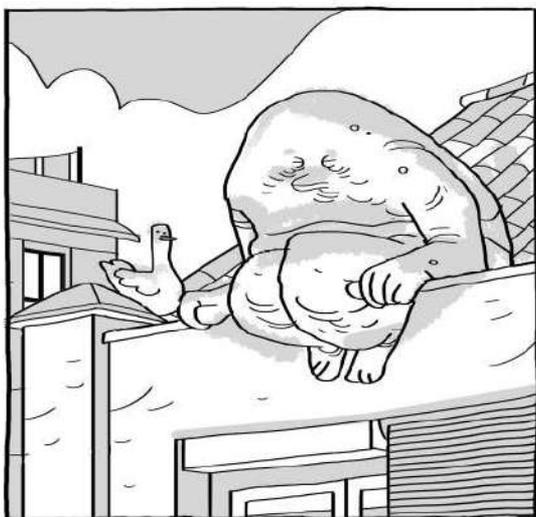


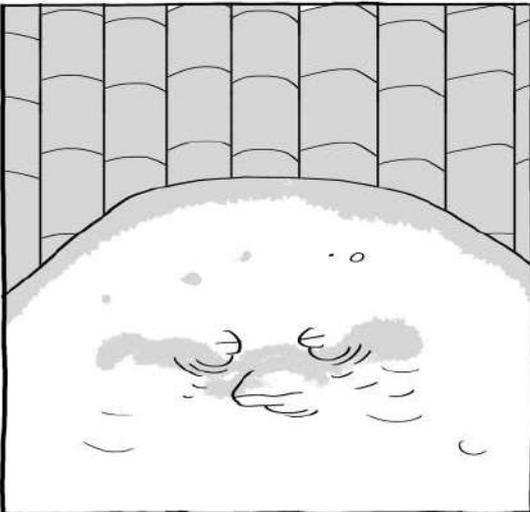
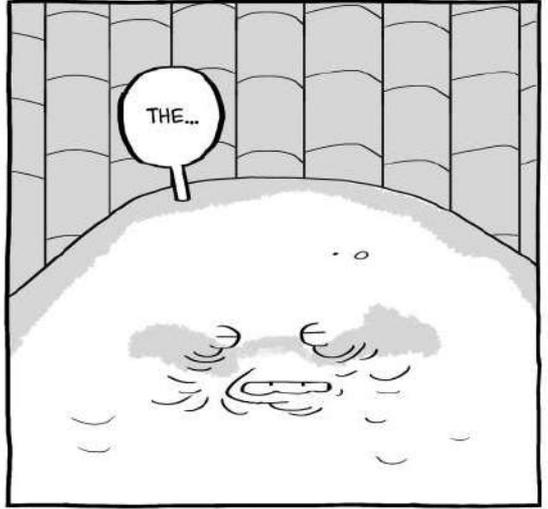
AS CHRISTIAN MARTYRS WOULD HAVE APPRECIATED, AND AS THE LABEL ON THE DRINK SAYS, ANYONE CAN, IF THEY WANT TO, BE STRONG TO CHANGE WHAT CAN BE CHANGED, BE SERENE TO ACCEPT WHAT CAN'T BE CHANGED AND BE WISE TO KNOW DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE TWO.

AN UNSPOKEN AND
FINAL PEACE IN THE WORLD
ORIGINATING FROM A
GULP OF PISS.

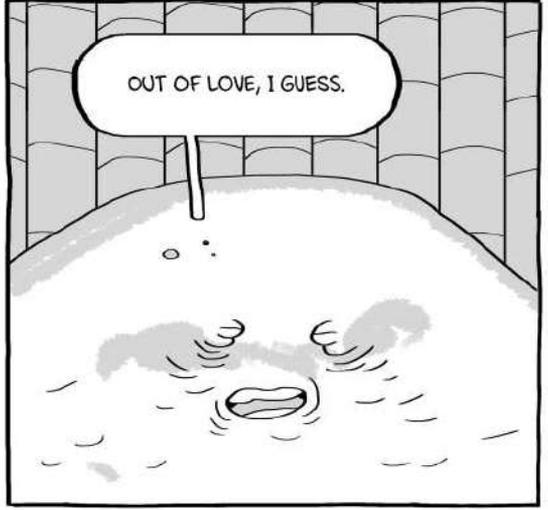
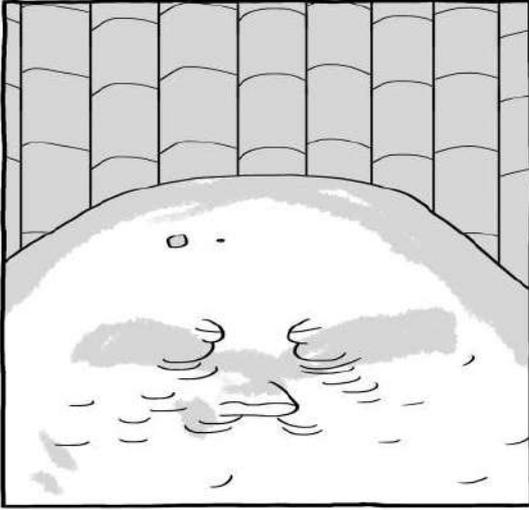


THE END





LAST TIME I SAW HIM, THAT MAN,
MATIAS, WEPT INCONSOLABLY.



HIS INNER CONFLICT HAD VANISHED
AND THE SAME HAPPENED OUTWARDLY. BUT
SOMETHING ELSE WAS LOST ALONG THE WAY
TOO. A LONGING, A MELANCHOLY, THE
MECHANISMS OF THE SUBLIME AND AN
INFINITE BUT VALUABLE SADNESS.

