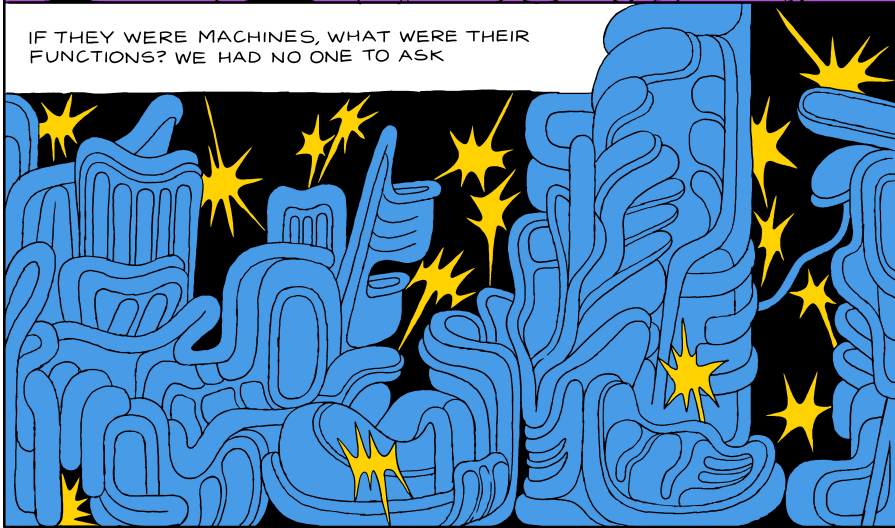


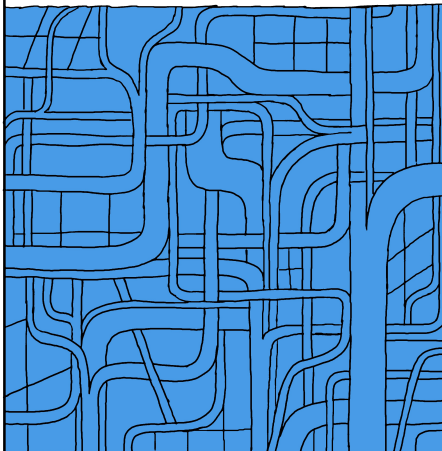
OUR CITIES, TOO, HAD BECOME OPTIMIZED. THEY WERE FINELY TUNED, HIGHLY EFFICIENT MACHINES. BUT EFFICIENT HOW?



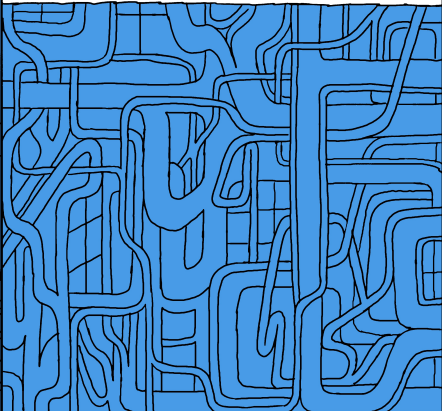
IF THEY WERE MACHINES, WHAT WERE THEIR FUNCTIONS? WE HAD NO ONE TO ASK



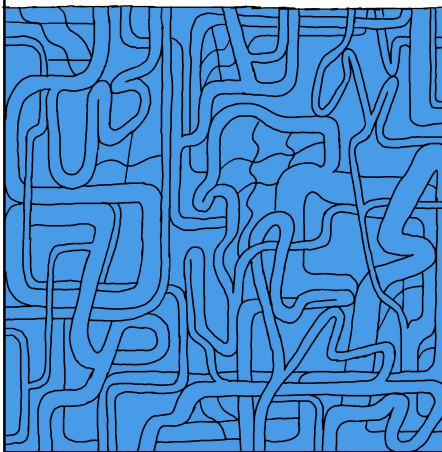
THEY'D BE UPDATED DAILY... WEEKLY,
EVEN. ERRORS WERE CORRECTED



THE NATURE OF THESE ERRORS
WAS NEVER DISCLOSED, BUT WE
WERE ASSURED PATCHES HAD
BEEN INSTALLED



MAPS WOULD REARRANGE
THEMSELVES WITH EVERY UPDATE



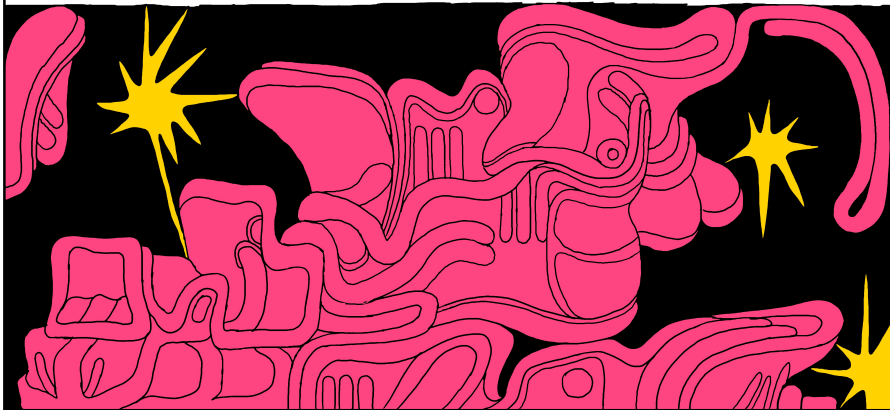
THE STREET YOU WERE DRIVING
ON WOULD FOLD IN ON ITSELF
WITHOUT ANY WARNING



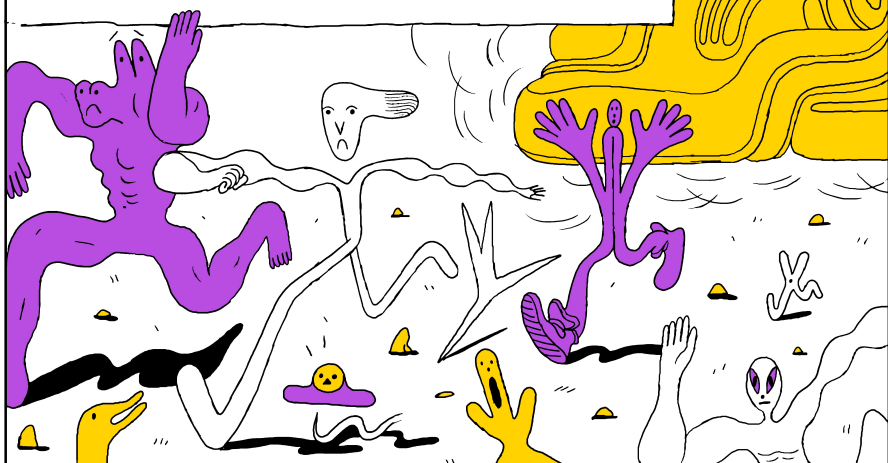
YOU'D FIND YOURSELF TRAPPED IN A CUL-DE-SAC WITH NO VISIBLE EXIT FOR DAYS... SOMETIMES MONTHS



IT WAS THE SAME WITH BUILDINGS. THE HALLWAY YOU WERE WALKING IN WOULD COME TO AN ABRUPT END. A DOOR THAT PREVIOUSLY LED TO A PUBLIC WASHROOM WOULD SUDDENLY OPEN TO A SWIMMING POOL, OR TAPAS RESTAURANT, OR YOUR PARENTS' BEDROOM



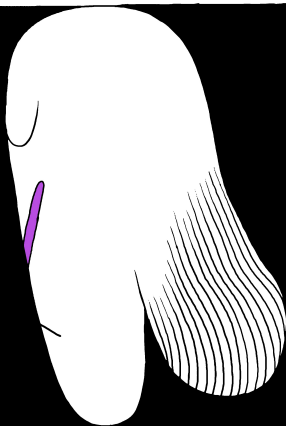
YOU'D BE SIGNALLED IF THE BUILDING YOU WERE
IN WAS SCHEDULED TO COLLAPSE



YOU HAD TO BE SURE YOUR SETTINGS WEREN'T ON "SLEEP"
MODE. MISS THE VIBRATION AND RISK YOUR ROOF CAVING IN ON YOU



OR BEING SUCKED INTO
OBLIVION ALONGSIDE YOUR
LIVING ROOM FLOOR



YOU MIGHT BE HOMELESS FOR
A TIME, BUT USUALLY -
EVENTUALLY - PROVIDED
WITH A NEW ABODE

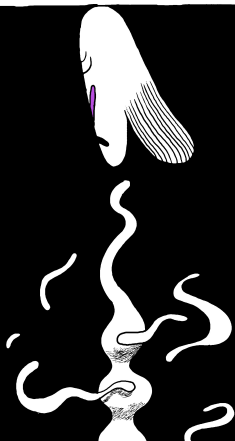


TRANSFORMATIONS TO YOUR
BODY WOULD OCCUR AT A
SIMILAR FREQUENCY

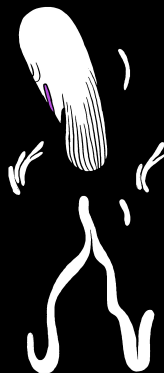
THE UPDATES OCCURRED WHILE
YOU WERE SLEEPING, WITH NO
ADVANCE WARNING



YOU'D GET SOME PRETTY
MESSED UP DREAMS



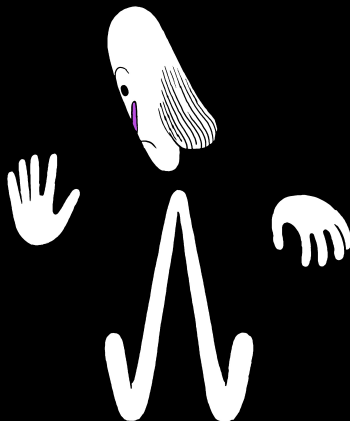
THE CHANGES WERE UNPREDICTABLE.
YOU'D WAKE UP WITH A NEW NECK. OR
AN EXTRA RIB. NO ARMS



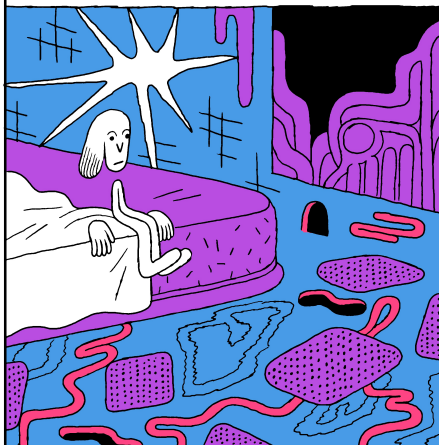
FIVE LEGS. TWELVE. AN INCH TALLER.
A FOOT SHORTER. WITH A TAIL



FACIAL HAIR, A POPPED PIMPLE. DARK
CIRCLES UNDER YOUR EYES



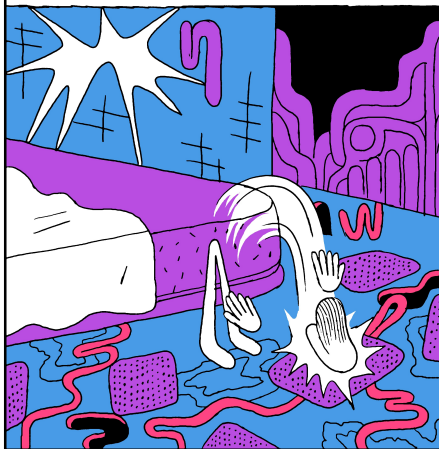
EACH UPDATE WAS, ALLEGEDLY,
AN IMPROVEMENT



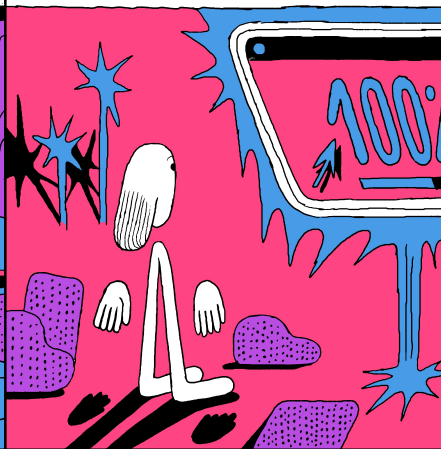
STILL, IT WAS DISORIENTING



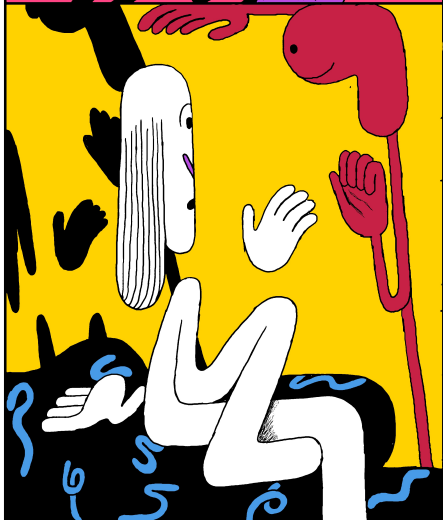
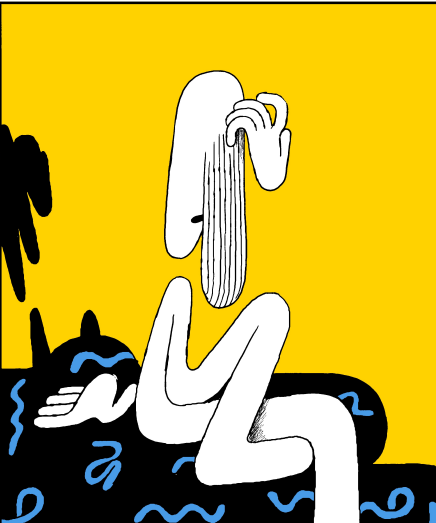
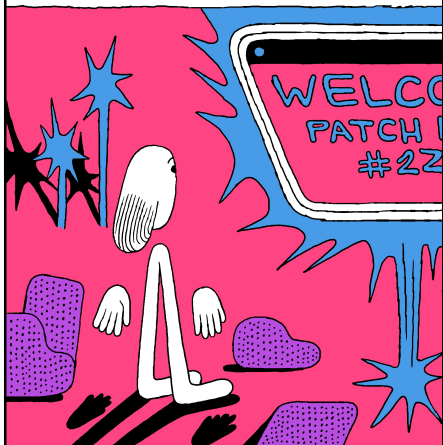
YOU'D STEP OUT OF BED AND
IMMEDIATELY FALL ON YOUR FACE



THIS IS WHY MOST APARTMENTS ARE
COVERED WITH CUSHIONS

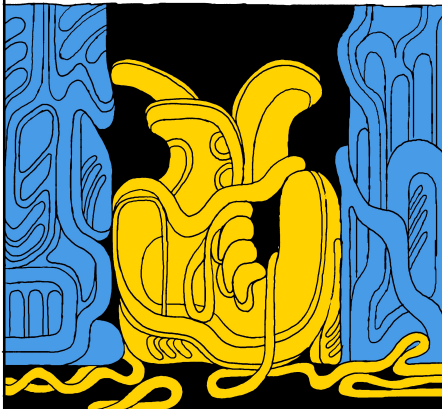


FIGURING OUT YOUR NEW BODY WAS
SUPPOSED TO BE INTUITIVE

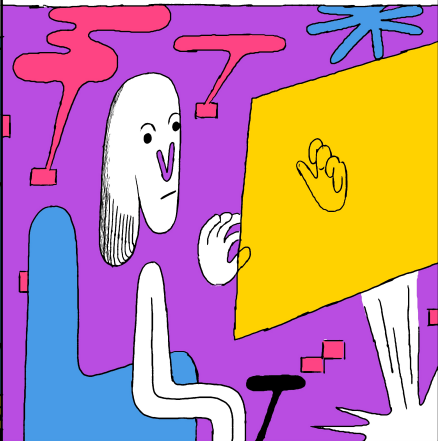




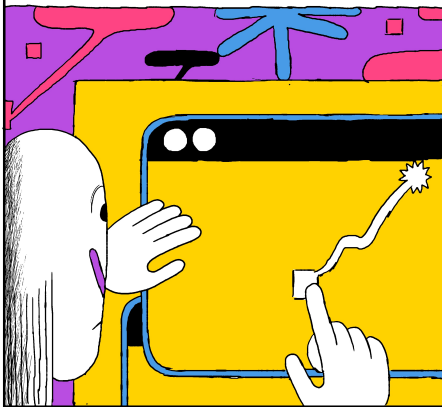
IF YOU HAD AN ISSUE WITH ANY OF THESE CHANGES, YOU COULD SUBMIT A COMPLAINT. I WORKED FOR THE COMPLAINTS DEPARTMENT



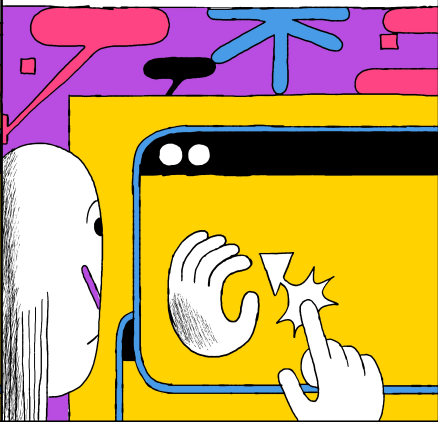
MY JOB AT THE DEPARTMENT WAS TO SIMPLY READ COMPLAINTS



I WAS NOT IN CHARGE OF PROCESSING OR RESPONDING TO COMPLAINTS. THOSE SYSTEMS WERE AUTOMATED. I JUST READ THEM

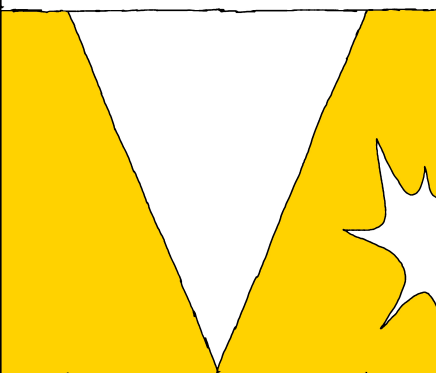
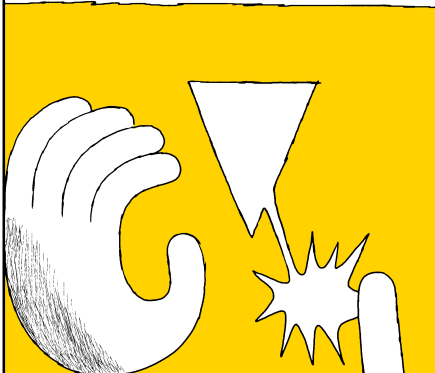


IN FACT, MANY OF THE COMPLAINTS HAD ALREADY BEEN PROCESSED BY THE TIME THEY REACHED MY DESK



THE AUTOMATED SYSTEM CAME UNDER FIRE A FEW YEARS BACK FOR BEING TOO OPAQUE. MY JOB WAS CREATED IN RESPONSE TO THOSE CRITICISMS, AS PART OF AN ACCOUNTABILITY EFFORT

EVEN WHEN THEIR COMPLAINTS WERE LEFT UNADDRESSED, PEOPLE FELT MORE COMFORTABLE KNOWING THERE WAS AT LEAST A PERSON ON THE OTHER END READING WHAT THEY HAD TO SAY



I WAS NEVER TOLD WHEN OR IF A COMPLAINT WAS RESOLVED

THE COMPLAINTS WERE RANDOMIZED AND ANONYMIZED BEFORE THEY WERE GIVEN TO ME

