



Describe a meaningful experience that still has an effect on you today.

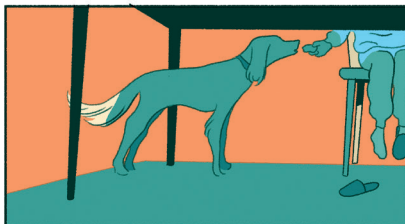
OKAY.
I CAN DO THIS...

CHRIST, WHY IS
THIS SO HARD?

OKAY.

TAP

I'LL START FROM
THE BEGINNING.
BECAUSE THE
STORY ONLY
MAKES SENSE
THIS WAY.



BABA.

BABA WAS CALLED BABA BECAUSE MY AUNT AND UNCLE'S DOG WAS NAMED BOBBY. I CHOSE HER NAME, SIMPLY BY CHANGING ALL THE VOWELS.



I WAS TWO YEARS OLD.
I HAVE NO MEMORY OF
THE NAME THING. MY
MOM TOLD ME.



WHEN I WAS SEVEN...



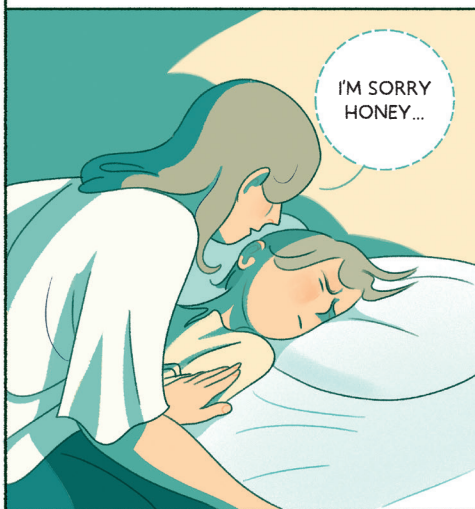
BABA RAN AWAY.



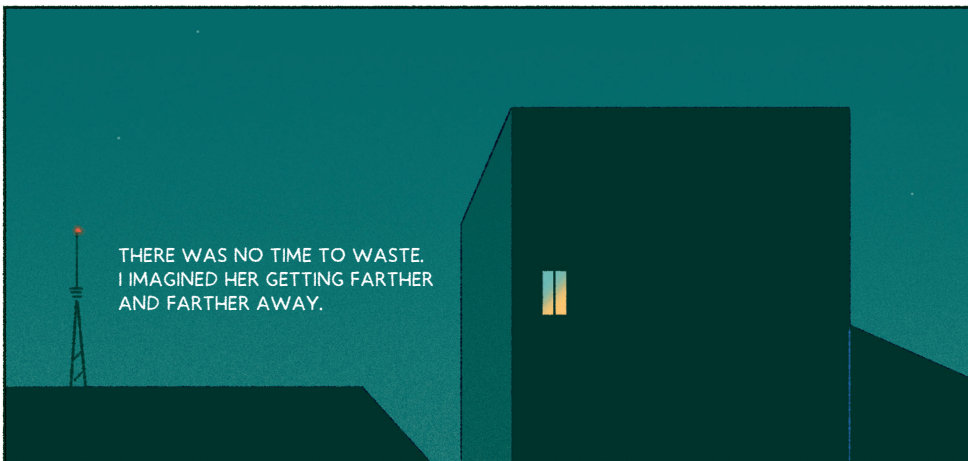
THAT EVENING, AFTER A DAY SPENT SEARCHING FOR HER, GOING TO BED FELT WRONG. WE HAD TO STAY OUT, KEEP LOOKING.



OUTSIDE IT WAS DARK AND SCARY, WE HAD TO FIND HER AND BRING HER BACK INSIDE. TO SAFETY.



THERE WAS NO TIME TO WASTE.
I IMAGINED HER GETTING FARTHER
AND FARTHER AWAY.





THE NEXT DAY, SOMEONE CALLED
TO SAY THAT THEY FOUND HER.



SHE WAS STUCK ON THE ROOF OF A
SHED. NO ONE COULD FIGURE OUT HOW
SHE GOT UP THERE, AND SHE WASN'T
ABLE TO COME DOWN BY HERSELF.



I REMEMBER MY DAD. BALANCING
ON A LADDER, REACHING OUT
TO PICK HER UP.



WHEN WE MOVED FROM
THE COUNTRYSIDE TO
THE CITY, I FELT IT WAS A
GREAT LOSS OF FREEDOM
FOR BOTH OF US.

THEN MY PARENTS
SEPARATED AND I WENT
TO LIVE WITH MY MOM.

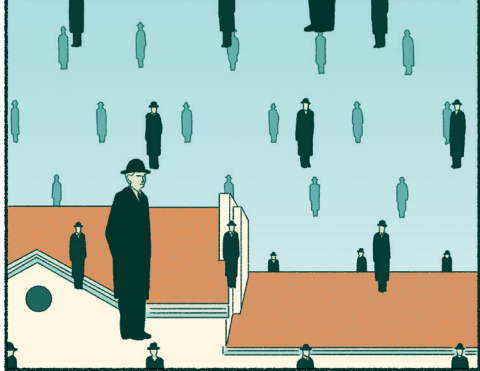
EVERYTHING WAS
CHANGING, BUT BABA
STAYED THE SAME.



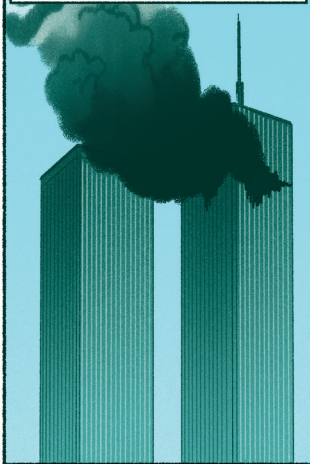
IN MY ROOM, ABOVE THE BED, THERE WAS A MAGRITTE POSTER. GOLCONDA.



I ASKED MY MOM TO BUY IT FOR ME, I LIKED THE COLORS.



IT ALSO HAD SOME CONFUSED POLITICAL MEANING IN MY TEENAGE BRAIN.



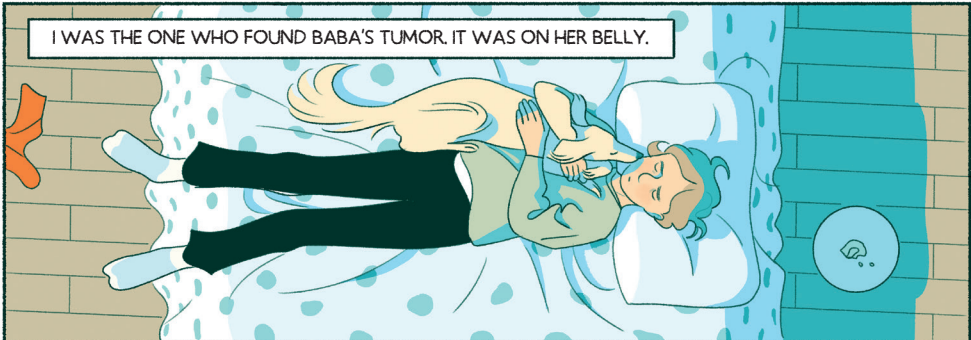
ALL THOSE TINY FIGURES DRESSED FOR THE OFFICE, FALLING OUT OF THE SKY.



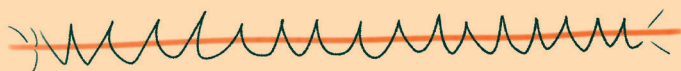
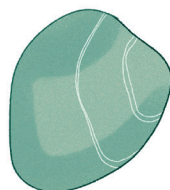
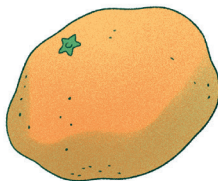
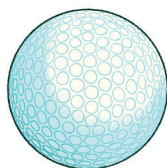
ONE NEXT TO THE OTHER.



I WAS THE ONE WHO FOUND BABA'S TUMOR. IT WAS ON HER BELLY.



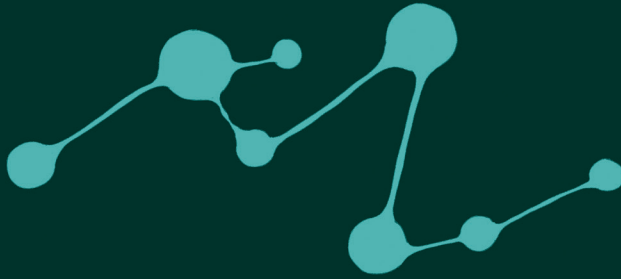
A ROUND BULGE, AS
BIG AS A GOLF BALL.



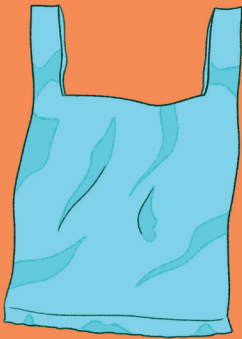
AFTER HER SURGERY, I KEPT HAVING THE SAME NIGHTMARE, WHERE A MAN FROM THE PAINTING LANDED IN FRONT OF ME AND UNRAVELED THE STITCHES ON HER STOMACH WITH HIS UMBRELLA.



THE OPERATION DIDN'T HELP MUCH, THE TUMOR HAD ALREADY SPREAD EVERYWHERE...



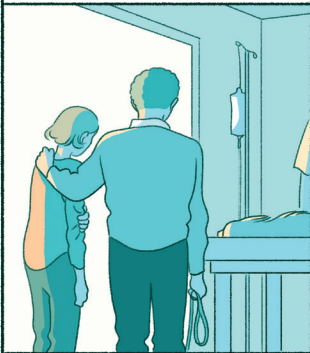
AFTER THE INJECTION, THEY PUT HER IN A BLUE PLASTIC BAG.



HER BONES MADE A SINISTER SOUND.



I'VE HAD OTHER PETS SINCE THEN, AND I ALWAYS TRIED TO GIVE THEM A BETTER END...

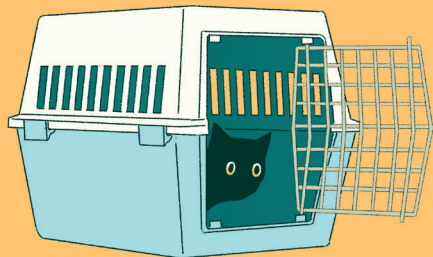


BETTER THAN HERS, WHICH I REMEMBER AS RUSHED, IMPERSONAL, AND COLD.

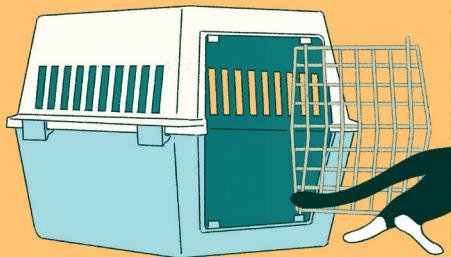


ARE YOU JUSTIFYING YOURSELF?

SIX MONTHS LATER MY MOM GOT A CAT.



NO. MY MOM'S **BOYFRIEND** GOT A CAT.



HE HAD MOVED IN
A YEAR PRIOR.



HE DIDN'T TRY TO PARENT ME
AND PRETTY MUCH MINDED
HIS OWN BUSINESS.



BUT HE USED THIS VERY
STRONG AFTERSHAVE THAT
LEFT BEHIND A THICK SMELL.



IT ALWAYS GAVE ME A HEADACHE.



THE CAT WAS BLACK WITH WHITE SOCKS.

IT'S NOT THAT I DIDN'T LIKE IT.

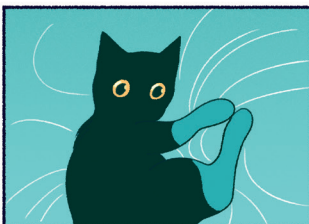
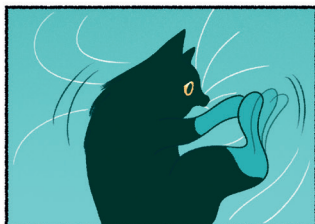
BUT I WAS ALSO NOT
THRILLED ABOUT IT.

IT JUST WASN'T BABA.
AND THAT WAS ENOUGH
TO MAKE IT ALIEN TO ME.

THE CAT SPENT HOURS CLEANING ITSELF.

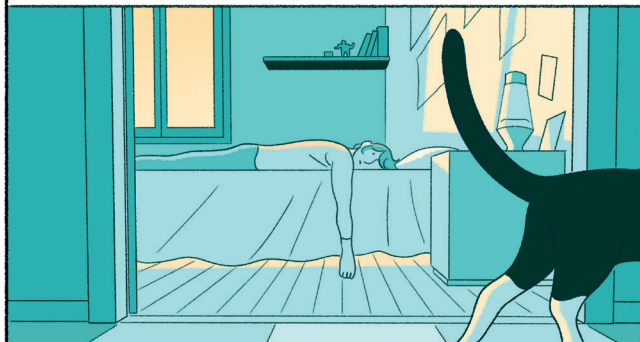


AT NIGHT YOU WOULD WAKE UP – A JOLTING PAIN IN YOUR LEGS – AND FIND IT CLENCHED TO THE SHEETS, TRYING TO KILL ONE OF YOUR CALVES.



IT WAS JUST A CAT
DOING CAT THINGS.

WHEN I CAME HOME FROM ONE OF THE LONG, DEPRESSING AFTER-NOONS WITH MY DAD, IT DIDN'T COME TO GREET ME AT THE DOOR, NOR TO CHECK ON ME IF I LAID STILL IN BED FOR HOURS.



LIKE MY MOM'S BOYFRIEND,
IT MINDED ITS OWN BUSINESS.