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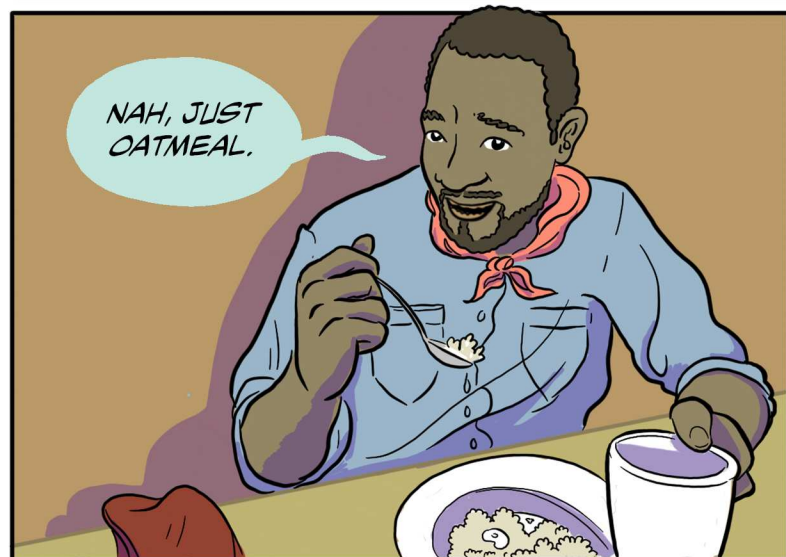
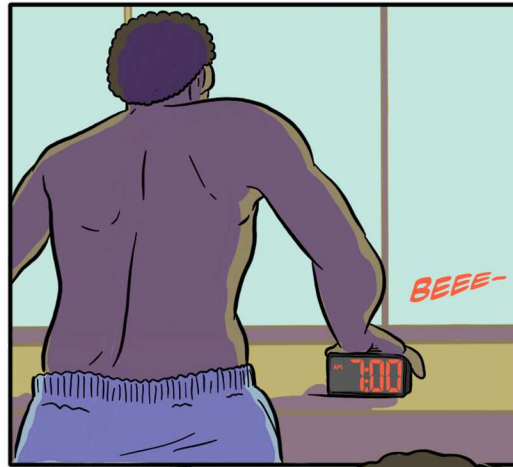
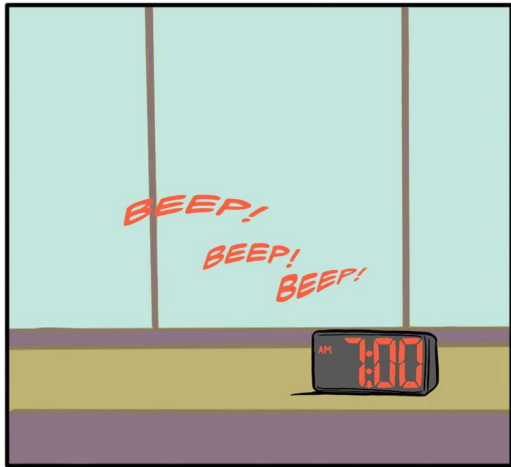
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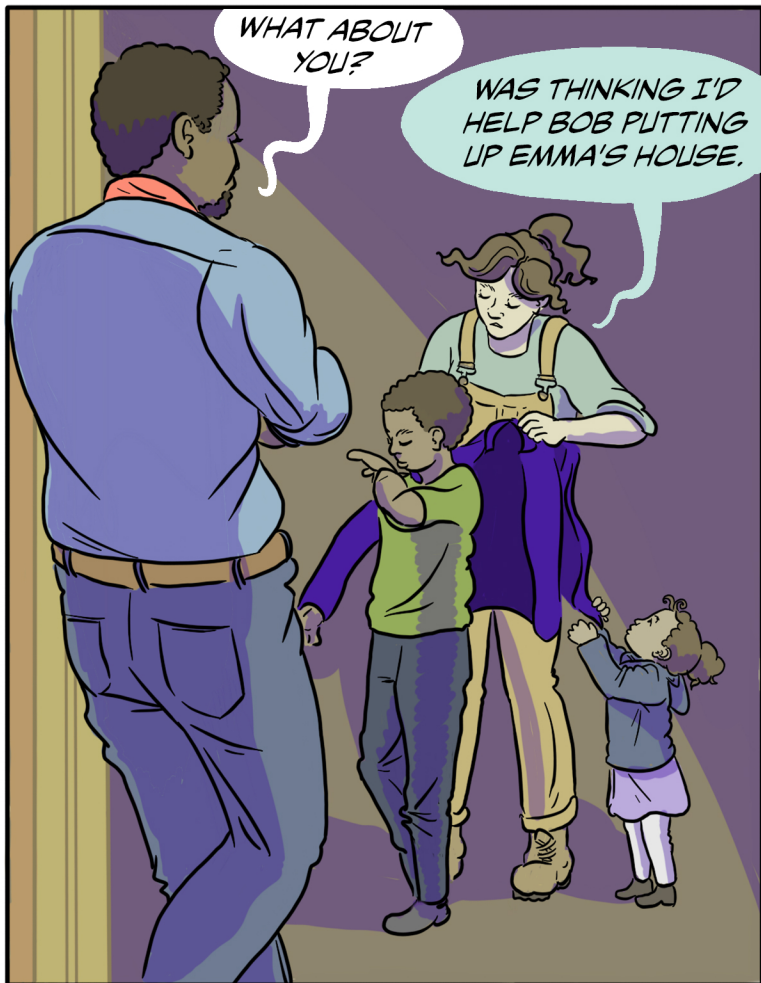
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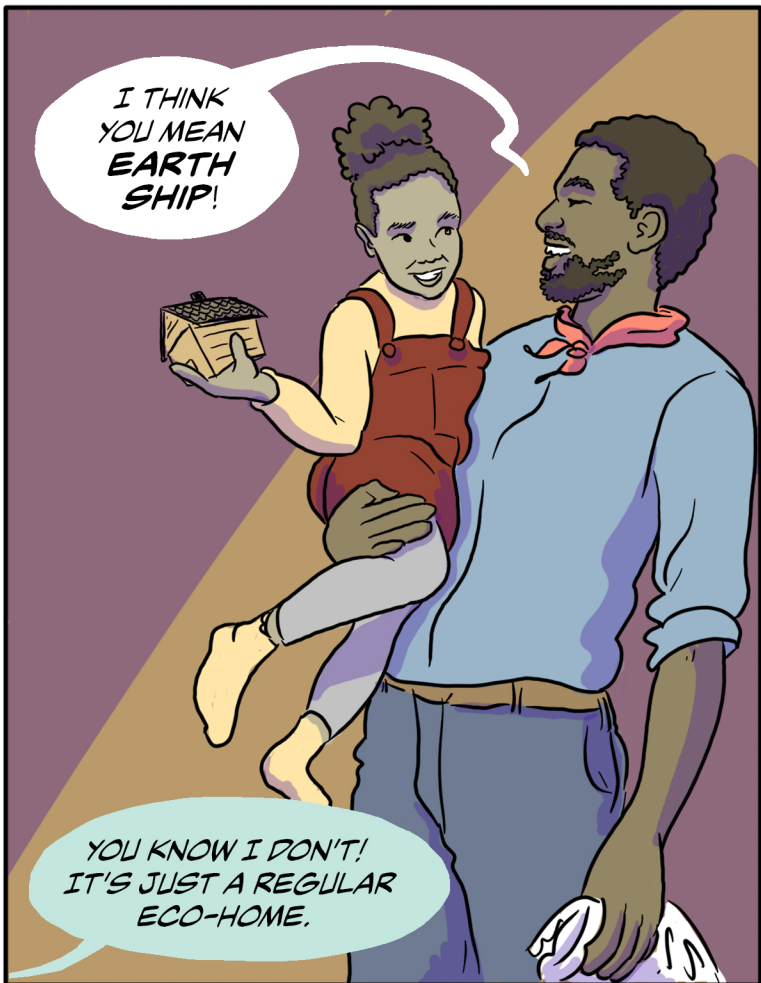
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WHAT ABOUT YOU?

WAS THINKING I'D HELP BOB PUTTING UP EMMA'S HOUSE.



I THINK YOU MEAN EARTH SHIP!

YOU KNOW I DON'T! IT'S JUST A REGULAR ECO-HOME.



A REGULAR ECO-HOME IS A TERRACE HOME WITH SOLAR PANELS AND A RAIN BARREL. THIS IS FULL ON.



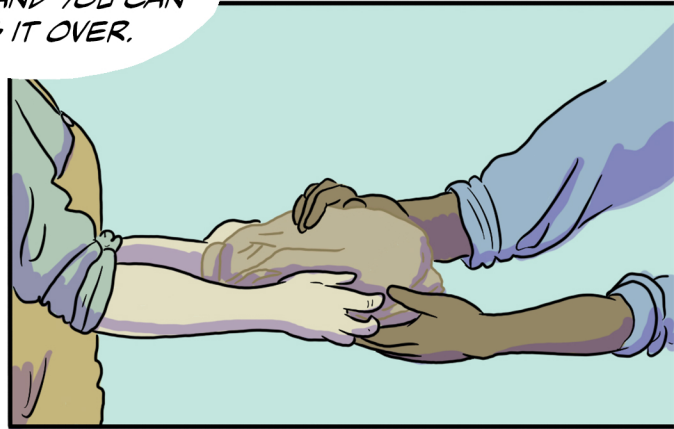
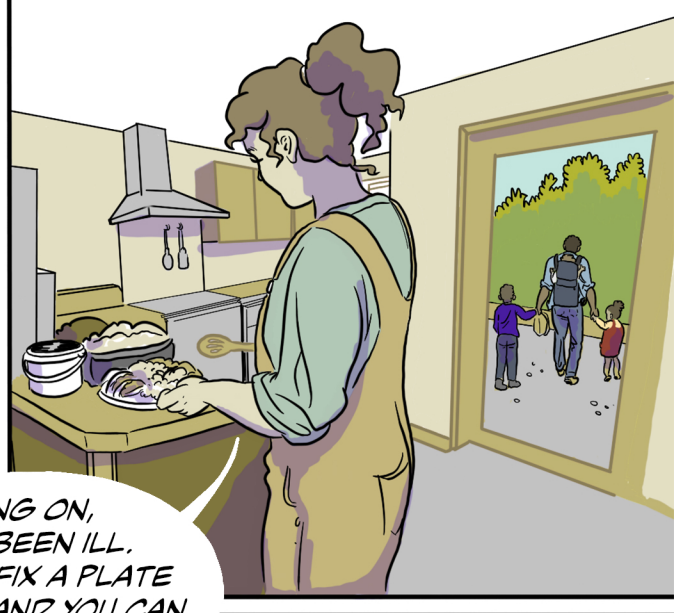
WELL, IF IT'S WORTH DOING-

-IT'S WORTH DOING RIGHT.

ALRIGHT YOU LOT,  
TIME TO GET OVER  
TO SUNNY'S.



HANG ON,  
ED'S BEEN ILL.  
LET ME FIX A PLATE  
FOR HIM AND YOU CAN  
BRING IT OVER.



I'M THE EARTH DEFENDER AND YOU'RE THE EVIL LOGGING COMPANY!

NOT FAIR, HOW COME I ALWAYS HAVE TO BE THE BAD GUY?

KIDS, KIDS, YOU CAN ALL BE EARTH DEFENDERS.

I'M AN OLD-GROWTH MANGROVE SWAMP!

ALRIGHT KIDS, BE GOOD TODAY, OR AT LEAST CREATIVE!

WHAT'S THAT YOU'RE WORKING ON, ALICE?

A NEW WATER FILTRATION SYSTEM. I HOPE.

LOOKS BRILLIANT. NEED A HAND?

I'VE GOT IT, THANKS. IS THAT PLATE FOR ED?

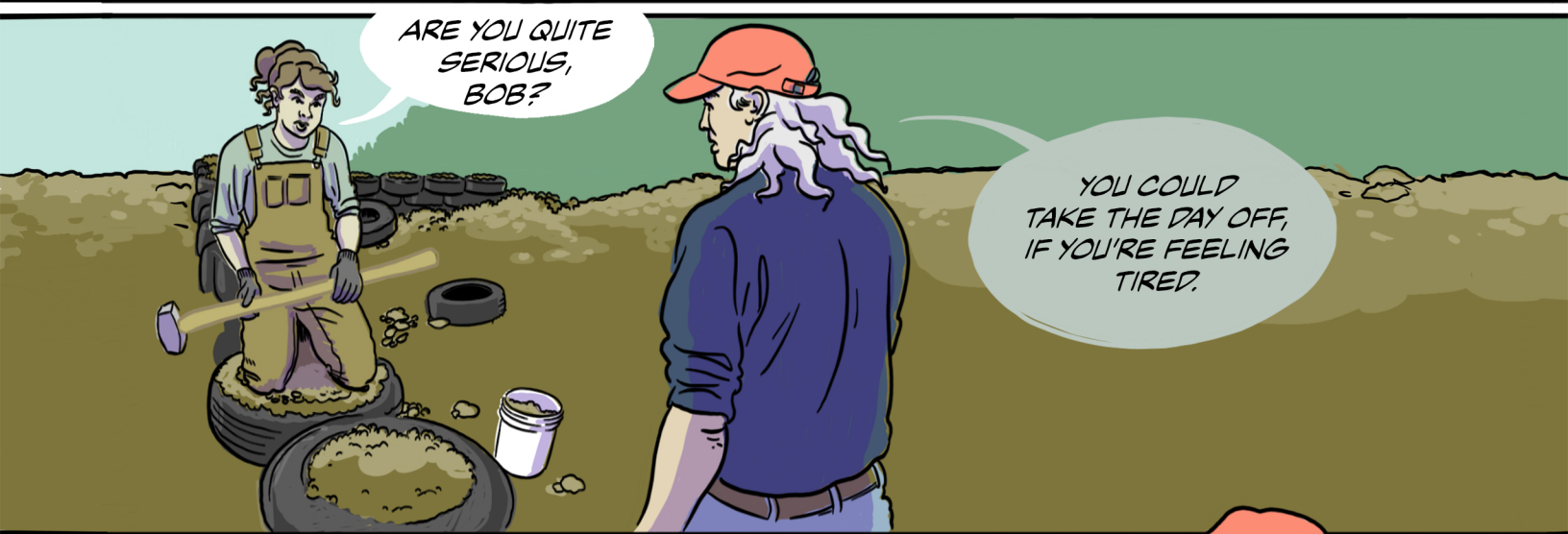
IT IS.

POOR ED! IT'S THE THIRD PLATE HE'S BEEN BROUGHT THIS MORNING. HE MAY BURST.



HERE, LOVE,  
LET ME DO THAT.  
DON'T NEED TO TIRE  
YOURSELF OUT.

SOME OF  
THE OTHER GIRLS  
ARE FOLDING  
CARDBOARD FOR  
LINING.



ARE YOU QUITE  
SERIOUS,  
BOB?

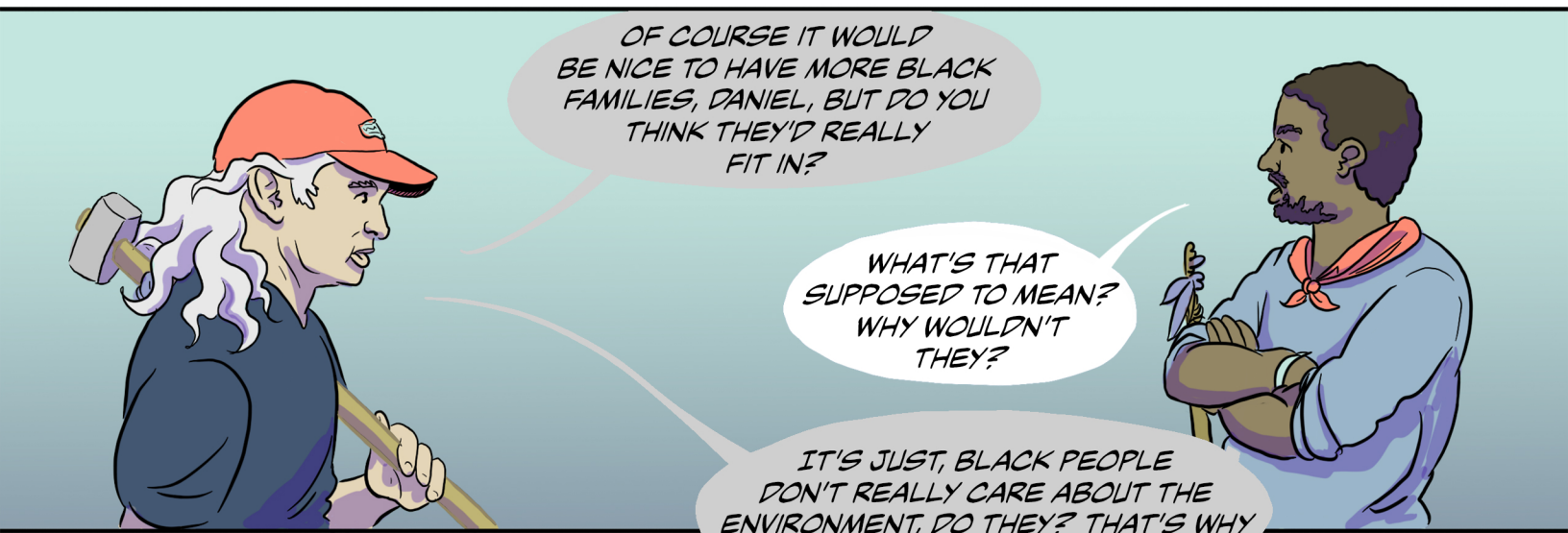
YOU COULD  
TAKE THE DAY OFF,  
IF YOU'RE FEELING  
TIRED.



THIS IS THE KIND OF  
THING THAT MAKES WOMEN  
GO OFF AND START THEIR  
OWN ECO-COMMUNITIES,  
YOU KNOW.



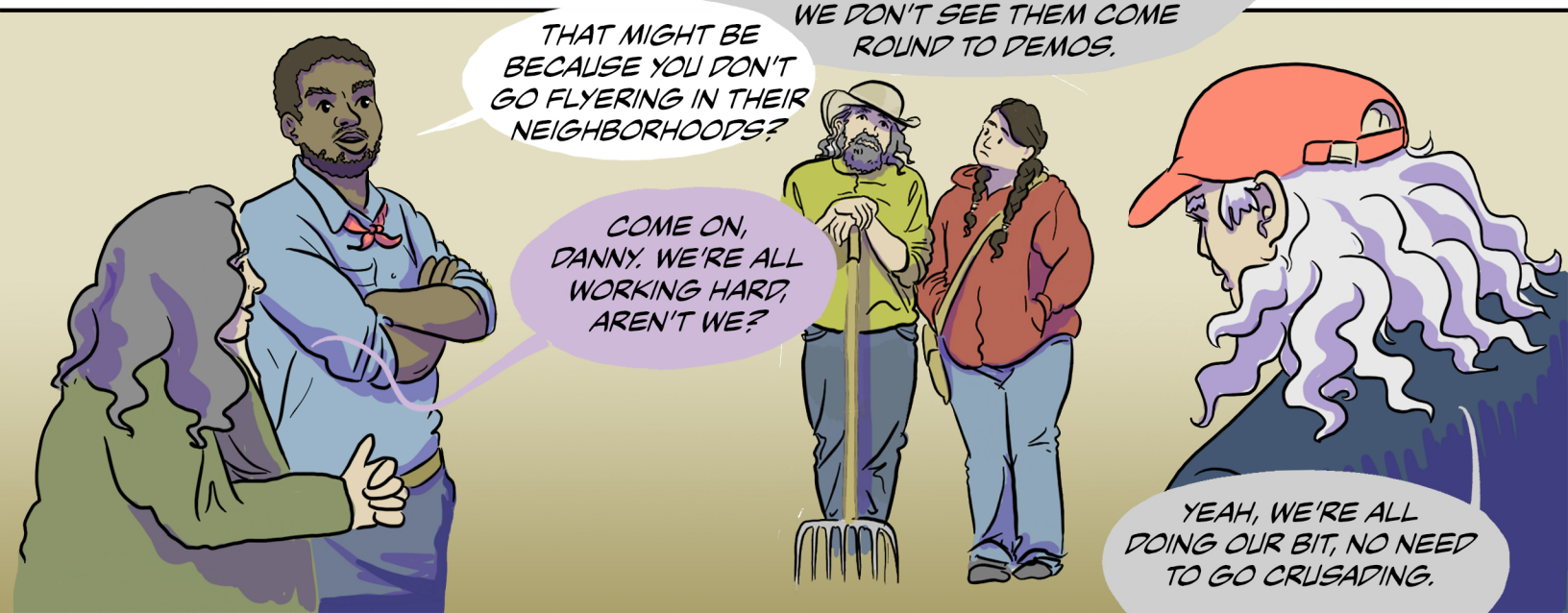
ALL I'M SAYING IS IT MIGHT BE NICE TO THINK ABOUT HOW TO HELP OUR COMMUNITY LOOK A LITTLE MORE LIKE BRITAIN AS A WHOLE.



OF COURSE IT WOULD BE NICE TO HAVE MORE BLACK FAMILIES, DANIEL, BUT DO YOU THINK THEY'D REALLY FIT IN?

WHAT'S THAT SUPPOSED TO MEAN? WHY WOULDN'T THEY?

IT'S JUST, BLACK PEOPLE DON'T REALLY CARE ABOUT THE ENVIRONMENT, DO THEY? THAT'S WHY WE DON'T SEE THEM COME ROUND TO DEMOS.



THAT MIGHT BE BECAUSE YOU DON'T GO FLYERING IN THEIR NEIGHBORHOODS?

COME ON, DANNY. WE'RE ALL WORKING HARD, AREN'T WE?

YEAH, WE'RE ALL DOING OUR BIT, NO NEED TO GO CRUSADING.

IF YOU'RE DONE GANGING UP ON DANIEL, THE NEXT POINT ON THE AGENDA WAS ACTUALLY ABOUT ACCESSIBILITY.



THERE'S STEPS INTO THE KITCHEN. THERE'S STEPS UP TO THE COMMUNITY HALL...



...WE'VE GOT TO GET SOME RAMPS.

CHIN UP DEB, YOU'LL BE BETTER SOON, THEN IT WON'T MATTER.



IT DOES MATTER. I HAVE A FRIEND IN A WHEELCHAIR BUT I CAN'T ASK HIM ROUND BECAUSE LITERALLY EVERY HOUSE IN THE VILLAGE HAS STAIRS TO THE FRONT DOOR THAT YOU CAN'T GET A CHAIR UP.



YOU PEOPLE, ALL YOU CAN DO IS CRITICIZE!

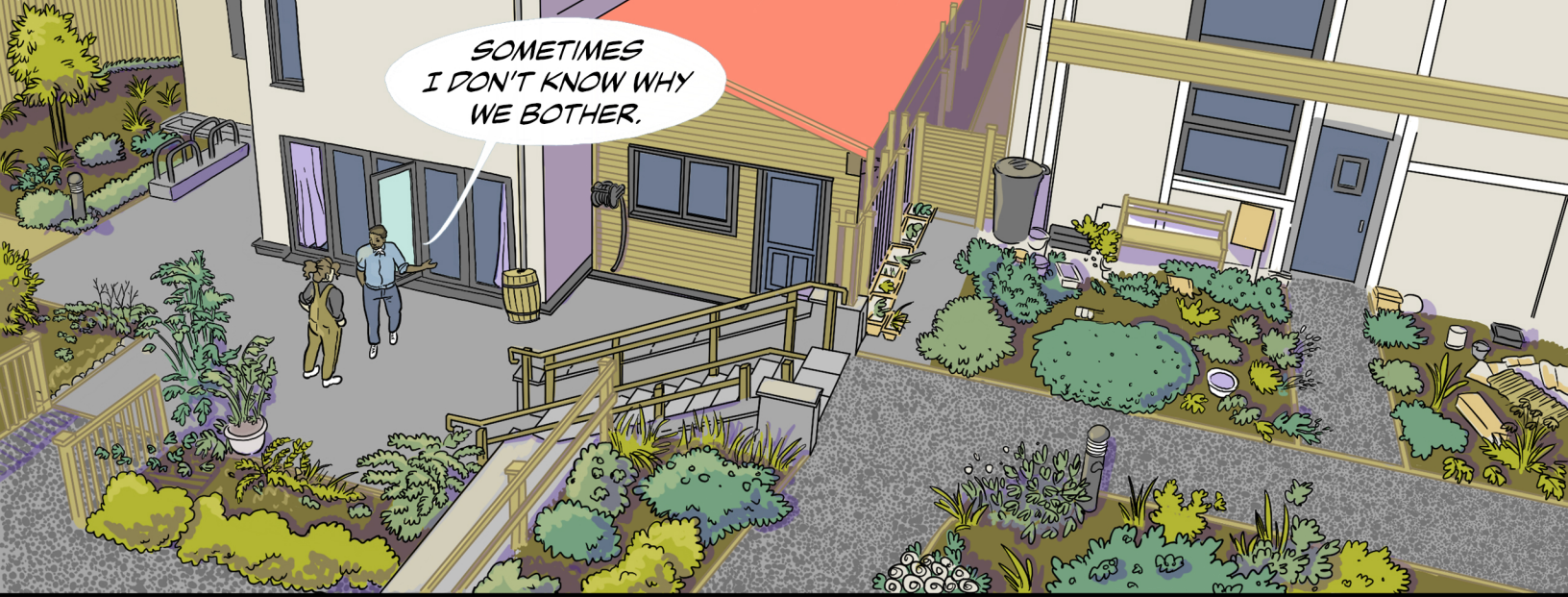


WHAT DO YOU MEAN, 'YOU PEOPLE'?

NAH DON'T ANSWER THAT.







SOMETIMES I DON'T KNOW WHY WE BOTHER.



BECAUSE... IT'S HOME, YEAH?



YEAH.  
WORTH IT.

# Living in an eco-community

**What is it like to live in an eco-community? What are the highlights and the challenges? This short comic explores everyday eco-community life. Based on my experiences of working with eco-communities, in Britain and worldwide over the last 15 years, it captures some of the daily joys and dilemmas of living together ecologically.**

Eco-communities are collective and collaborative projects that seek to balance human with environmental needs. They encompass eco-villages, intentional communities, co-housing and low impact developments among others. They share common concerns for minimising environmental impact, maximising use of renewable energies and materials, self-provision (such as food), and seeking to reshape social lives, with an emphasis on mutual aid, sharing of spaces and resources, and an ethics of collectivity.

Eco-communities seek permanent and lasting shifts in the world. Their interventions are no less radical than the demands of the social justice and environmental activism from which many emerge, but their permanency requires then to negotiate, navigate and at times compromise. At times the ecological rationale of eco-communities overrides and erodes the social justice politics that many of them began with.

Eco-communities make visible the politics of individuals, and in so doing the complex politics of everyday social lives and living together. The negotiations required to share personal spaces, other people's children, the laundry, a neighbours' musical choices, for example, become writ-large in the success or failure of an eco-community.

The comic also purposefully explores the tensions of who lives in these places, asking questions about diversity, inclusion and belonging. There are often gaps between the imagined, the intent and the realisation of these radical projects. This is not a problem of affordability; indeed many residents are not financially well-off and many projects are explicitly structured to enable low income participation. Rather these projects tend to lack racial or class diversity, and gender and disability are sometimes only explored in limited ways. This happens because the lack of this diversity, while noted and anguished over, is not understood as a structural problem of belonging, identity, racism and social justice. Seemingly subtle assumptions about participation, common values, lifestyle and food choices shape who gets to be part of eco-communities, who feels welcome and who sees space for themselves living there.

We made this comic as a hopeful way to open up some of the conversations about eco-communities - their potentials and also elements that need further reflection.

*Jenny Pickerill, University of Sheffield*

The words were written by Hugh Goldring (@ooHugh) and the illustrations are by Nicole Burton (@nicolemcomix), both of Petroglyph Studios [<https://nicolemariecomix.wordpress.com/about/>].

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