

# a GLITCH in the GARDen

story by Shelby Forma & Daisy Sheps

art by Elisar Haydar & Samuel Phippen



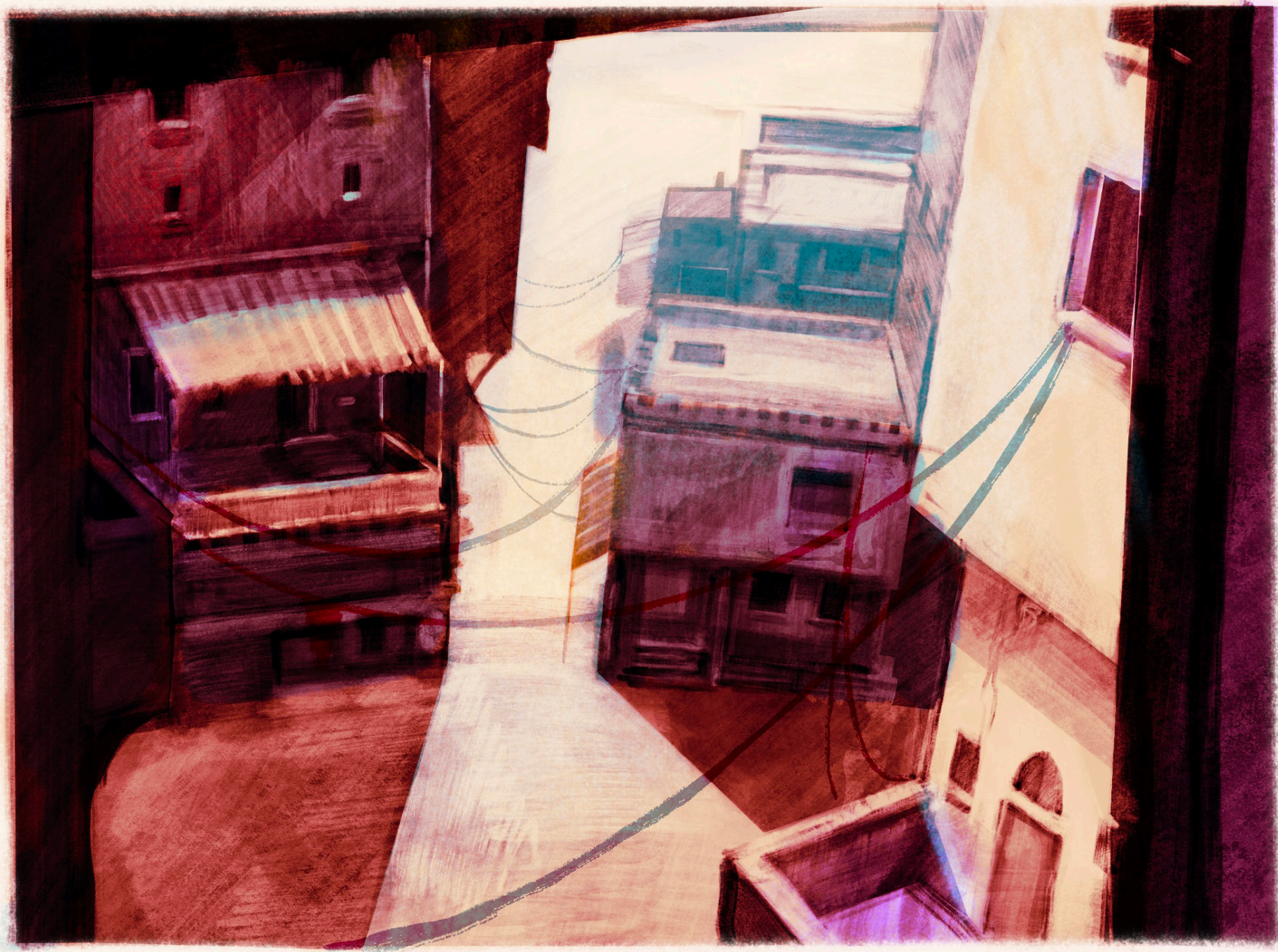
This book is dedicated to

Alex, Becca, Benjamin, Mark, Sarah, Sawyer, Sierra, and Sydney,

And to all the gardeners everywhere.











# A Glitch in The Garden

Written By  
Daisy Sheps & Shelby Forma

Illustrated by  
Elisar Haydar & Samuel Phippen

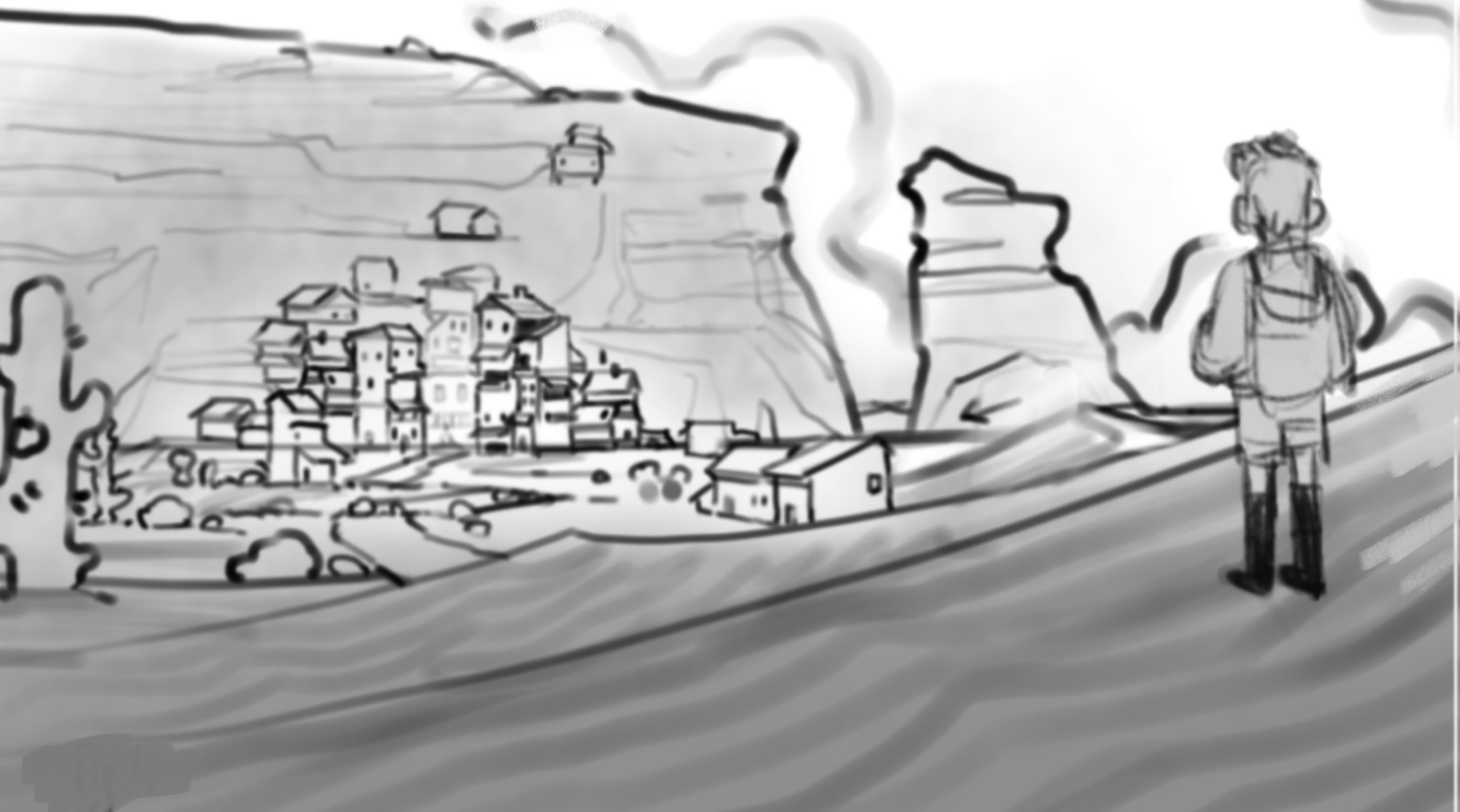
Oh, hi there! My name is Kai, and if you have a moment, I'd love to tell you a story about a very special place.

I spent a long time travelling the world looking for somewhere to call home. Then one day, I found a city unlike any other...



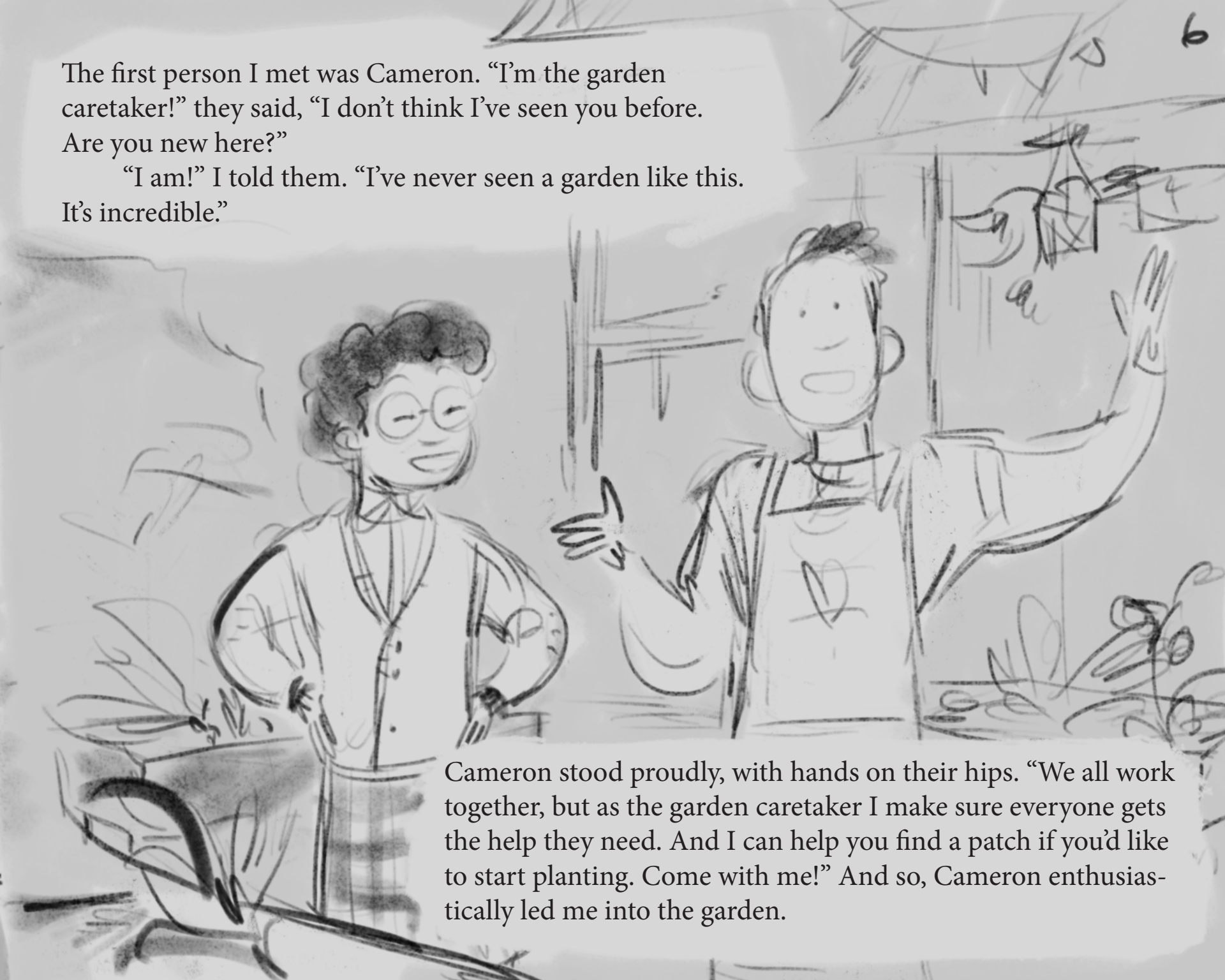


The city slouched against the side of a rocky mountain in the middle of a dry desert. You would never believe anything could grow in such a large place, but in the heart of this city was a large community garden! The city was impossible to ignore, and when I saw it, I knew I had to investigate.



The first person I met was Cameron. "I'm the garden caretaker!" they said, "I don't think I've seen you before. Are you new here?"

"I am!" I told them. "I've never seen a garden like this. It's incredible."

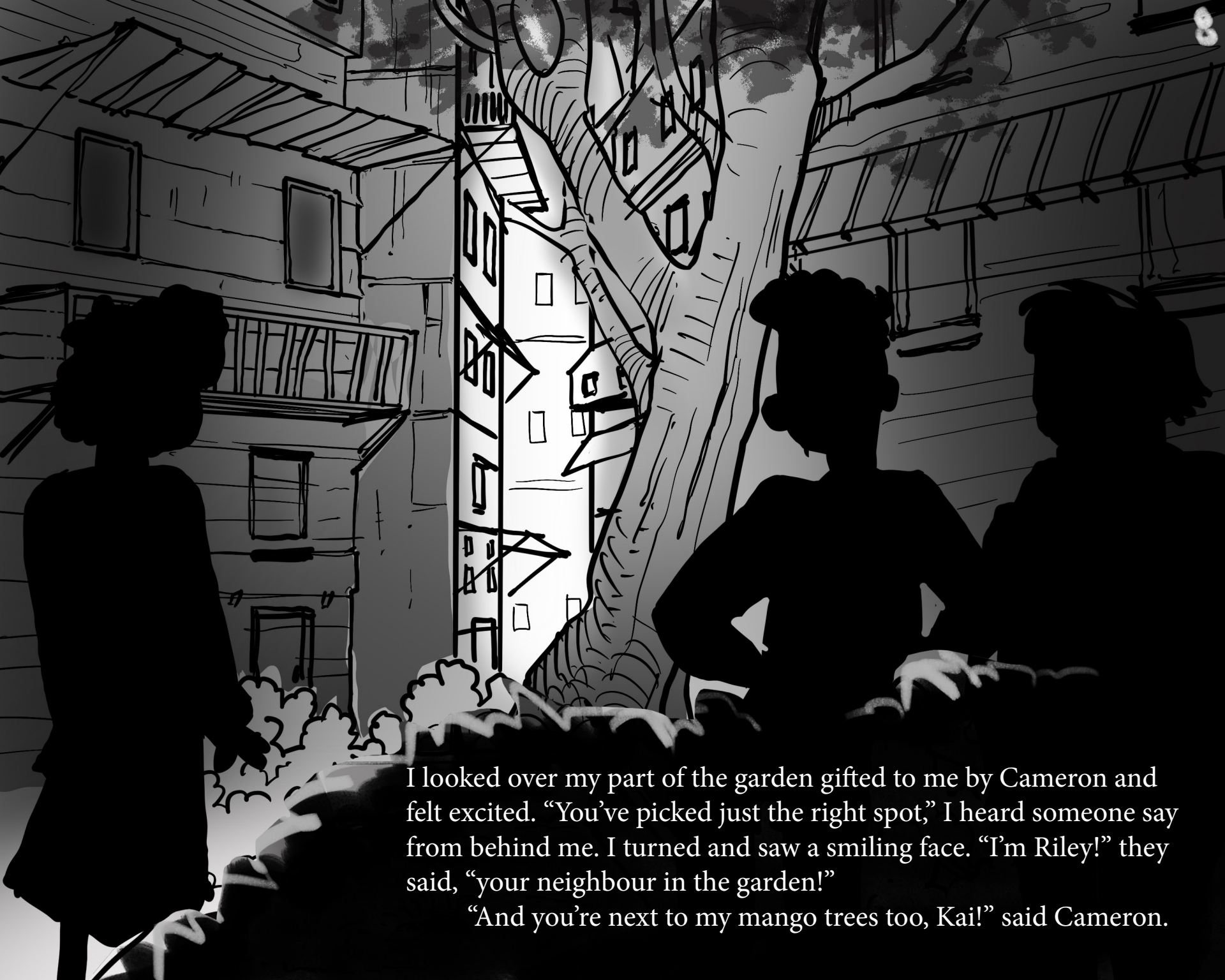


Cameron stood proudly, with hands on their hips. "We all work together, but as the garden caretaker I make sure everyone gets the help they need. And I can help you find a patch if you'd like to start planting. Come with me!" And so, Cameron enthusiastically led me into the garden.

Cameron introduced me to all kinds of people who were growing many different plants like papayas, wildflowers, succulents, and more! Everyone was friendly, and everyone had a complete garden too. I almost thought we would never find a spot for me until Cameron pointed to an empty plot.







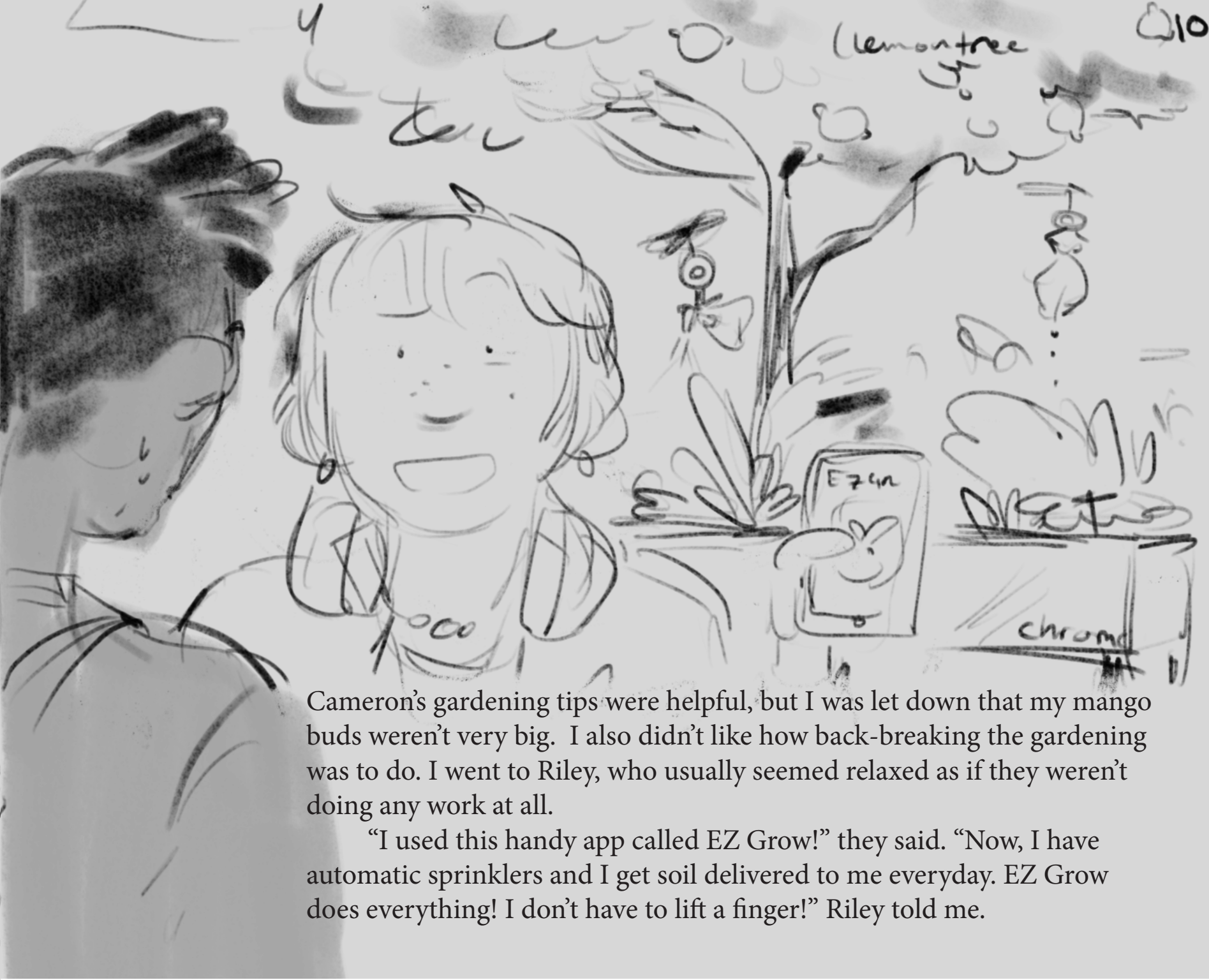
I looked over my part of the garden gifted to me by Cameron and felt excited. “You’ve picked just the right spot,” I heard someone say from behind me. I turned and saw a smiling face. “I’m Riley!” they said, “your neighbour in the garden!”

“And you’re next to my mango trees too, Kai!” said Cameron.

I was so overwhelmed by how incredible Cameron's mangos were and how much lilac Riley was growing. "I don't know how to get started," I admitted.

"Oh!" Cameron exclaimed. "It's easy. I'll help you." Using Cameron's homemade compost and leftover mango seeds, the two of us worked together to plant the fruits in my garden patch. I had fun working with Cameron. However, when we were finished, I felt the results were not that impressive.





Cameron's gardening tips were helpful, but I was let down that my mango buds weren't very big. I also didn't like how back-breaking the gardening was to do. I went to Riley, who usually seemed relaxed as if they weren't doing any work at all.

"I used this handy app called EZ Grow!" they said. "Now, I have automatic sprinklers and I get soil delivered to me everyday. EZ Grow does everything! I don't have to lift a finger!" Riley told me.



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Riley's app surprised me. Why would Cameron work so hard if the EZ Grow app could complete the job for them? "It's called EZ Grow?" I asked.

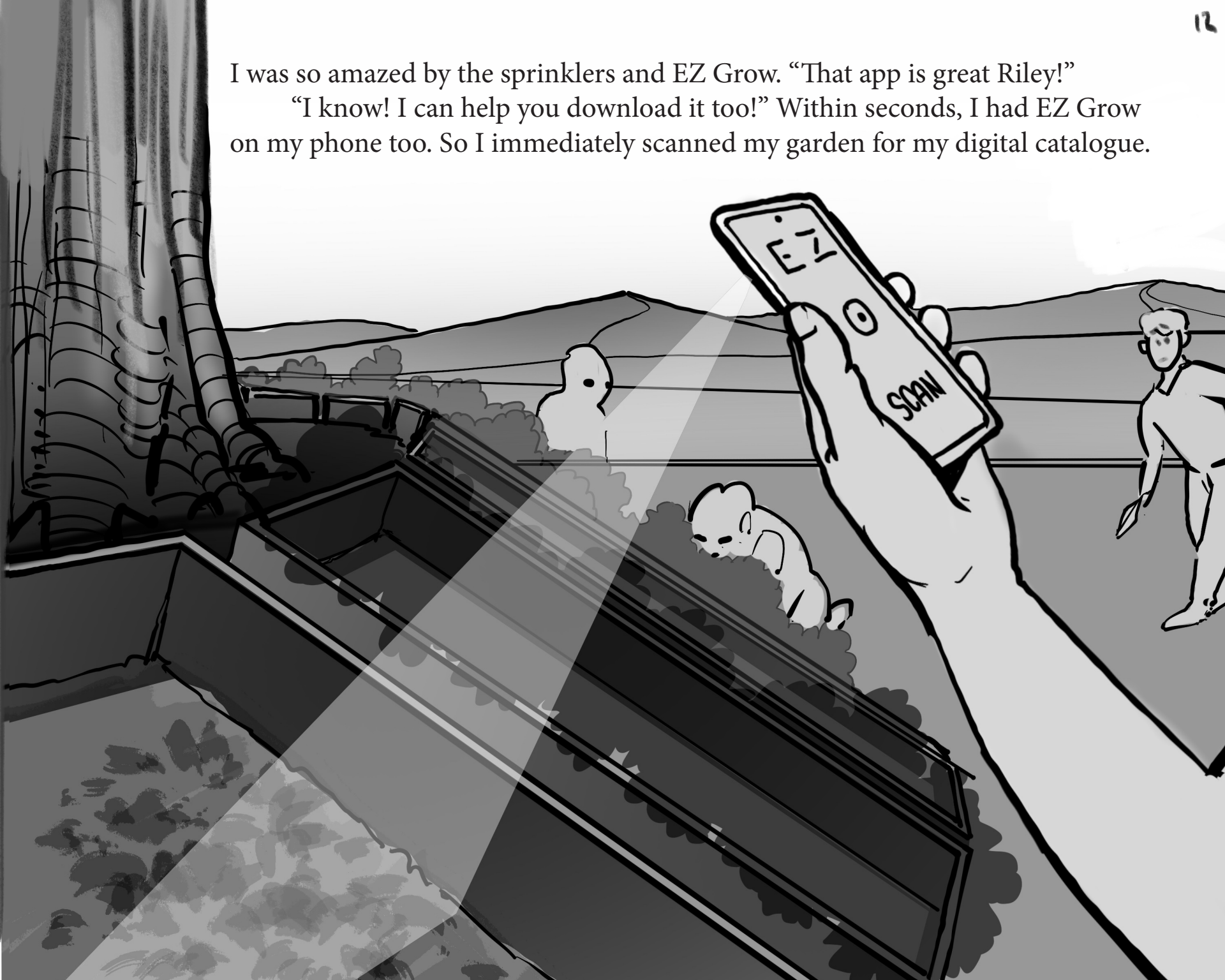
Riley nodded. "Let me show you!" They opened the app and held their phone up to my freshly planted fruit.

A melodic, robot voice spoke out from their phone: Fruit, water level 0. Commencing hydration process. Riley's sprinklers shot to life, moving at just the right angle to get my baby seeds watered.



I was so amazed by the sprinklers and EZ Grow. "That app is great Riley!"

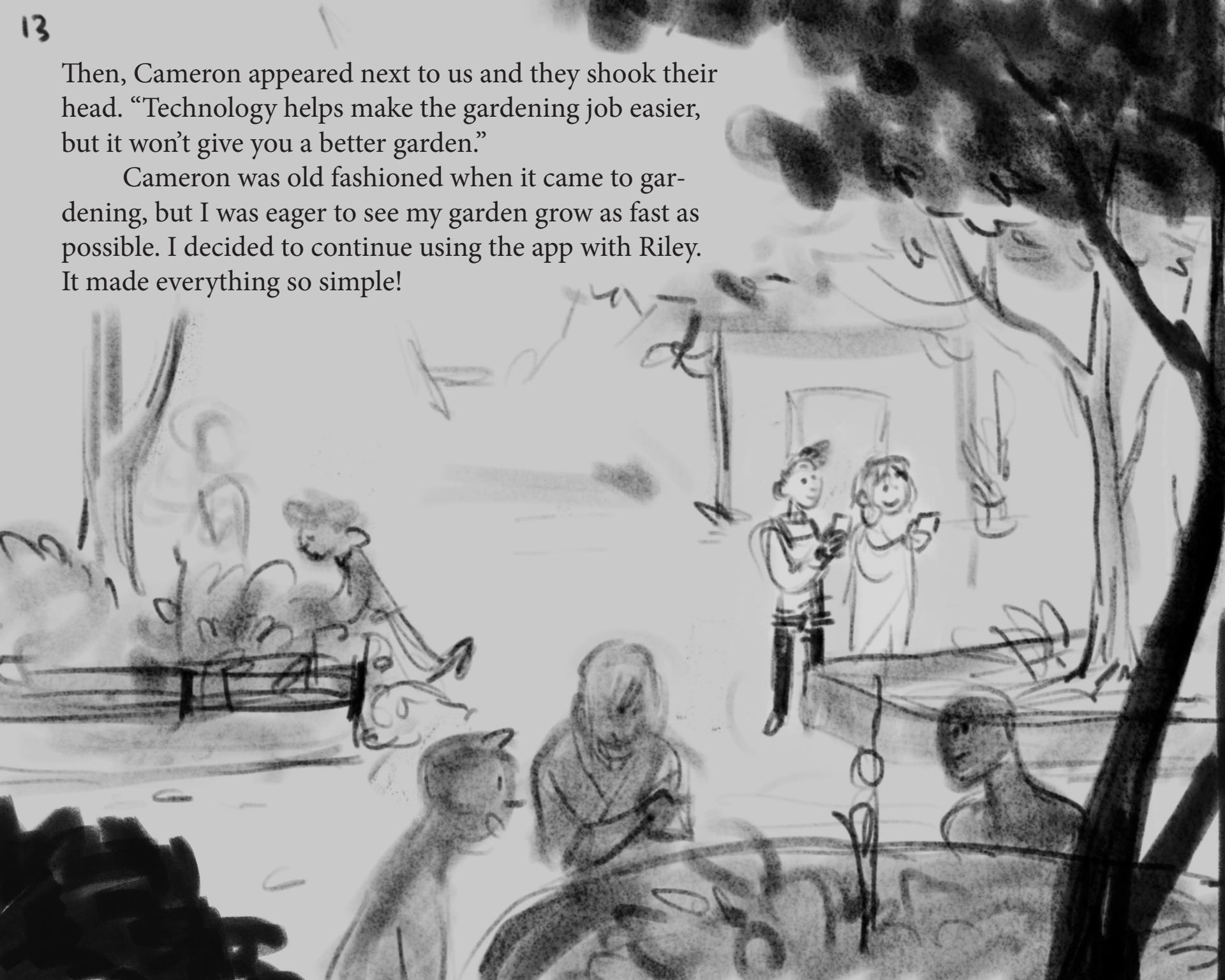
"I know! I can help you download it too!" Within seconds, I had EZ Grow on my phone too. So I immediately scanned my garden for my digital catalogue.



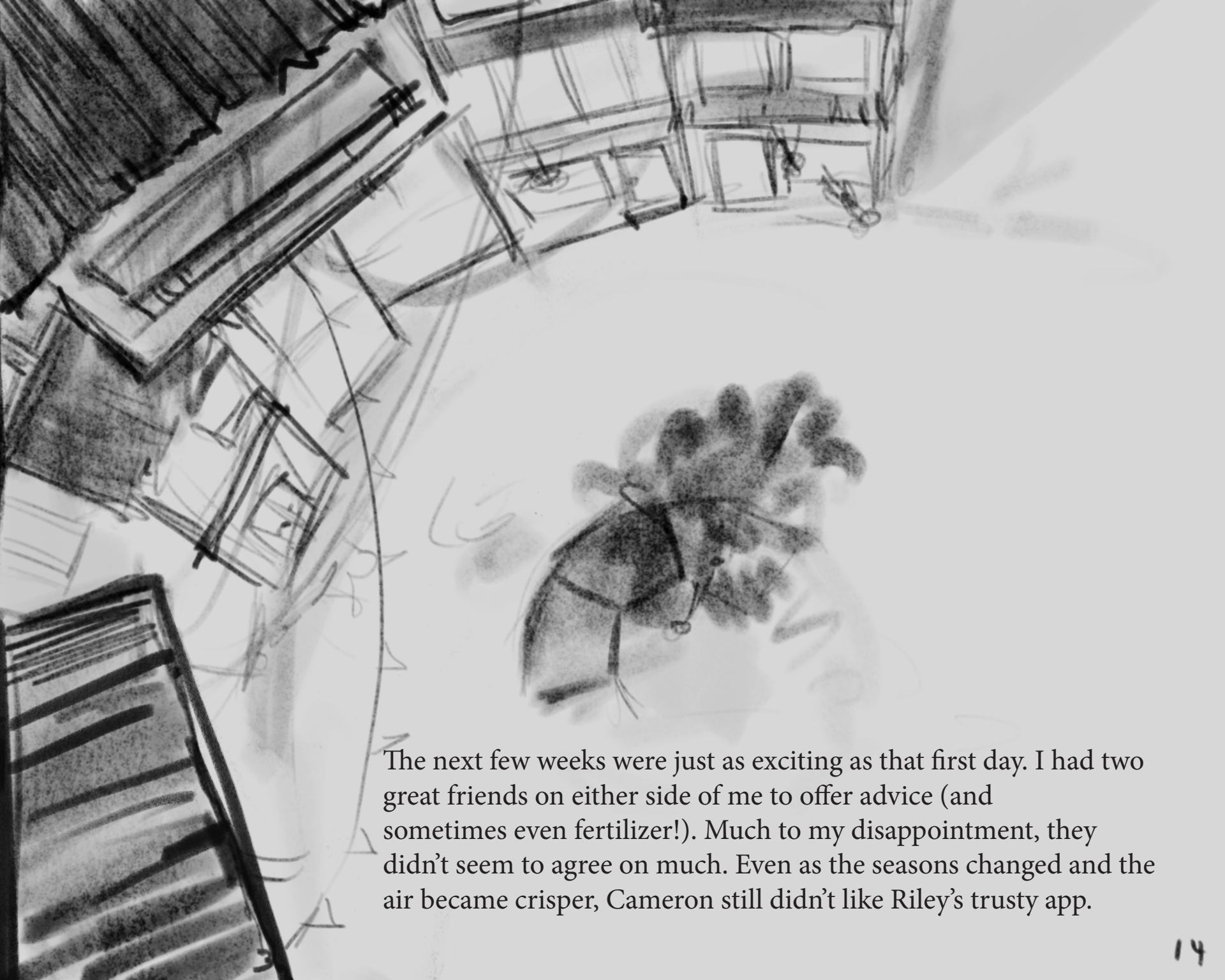


Then, Cameron appeared next to us and they shook their head. "Technology helps make the gardening job easier, but it won't give you a better garden."

Cameron was old fashioned when it came to gardening, but I was eager to see my garden grow as fast as possible. I decided to continue using the app with Riley. It made everything so simple!



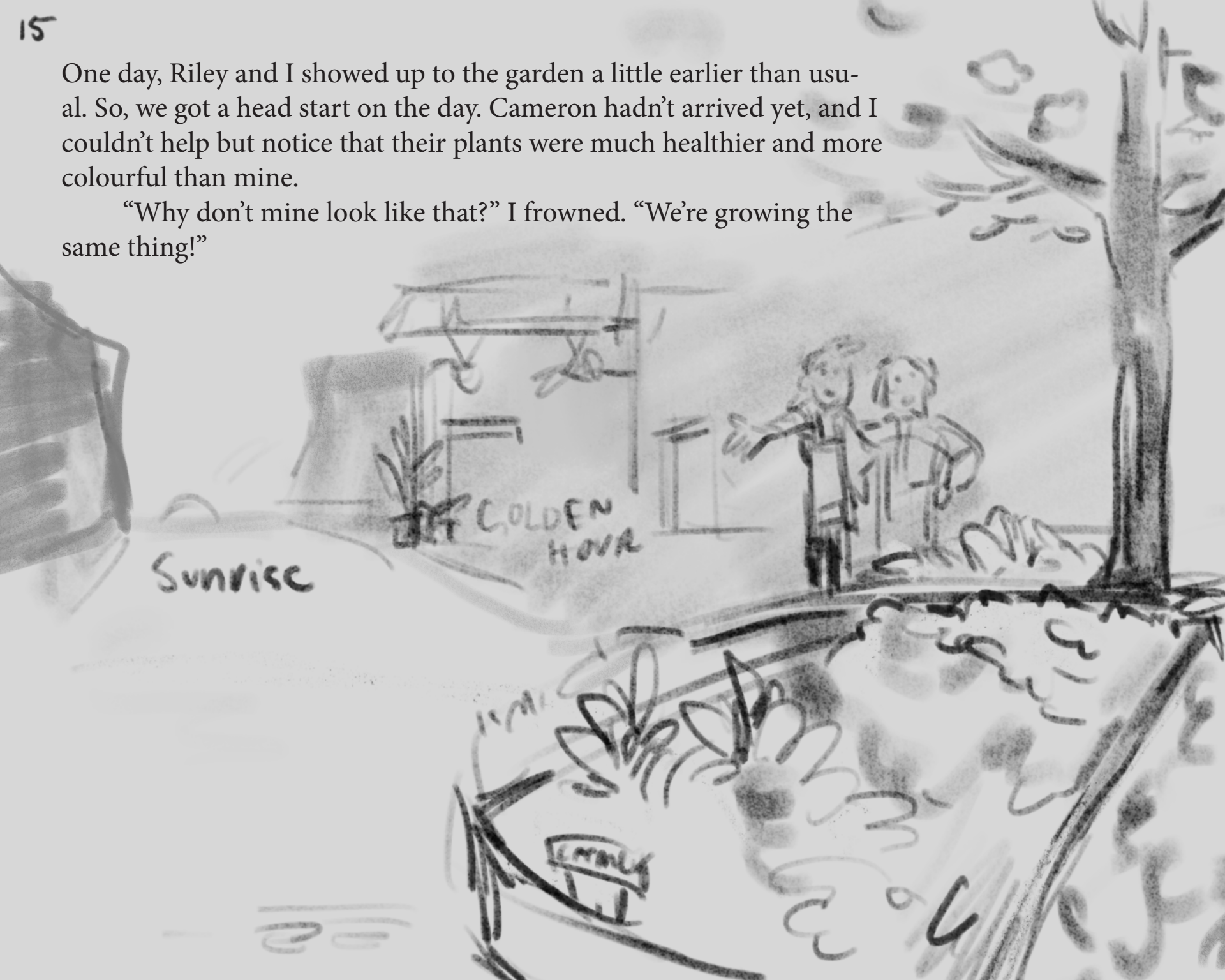




The next few weeks were just as exciting as that first day. I had two great friends on either side of me to offer advice (and sometimes even fertilizer!). Much to my disappointment, they didn't seem to agree on much. Even as the seasons changed and the air became crisper, Cameron still didn't like Riley's trusty app.

One day, Riley and I showed up to the garden a little earlier than usual. So, we got a head start on the day. Cameron hadn't arrived yet, and I couldn't help but notice that their plants were much healthier and more colourful than mine.

"Why don't mine look like that?" I frowned. "We're growing the same thing!"





"I've never been able to keep up with Cameron," Riley said. "But I think I have just the thing. Look, EZ Grow just updated!"

I glanced down at my phone to see a pop-up message. EZ Grow APP UPDATE: Advanced garden scanning, more accurate recommendations and NEW automatic ordering.

"Let's do it!" Riley grinned and quickly scanned their plants before I could say anything.



Artificial light dir  
contrast to Nat. golden hr



Suddenly, the wind picked up. Sand flew throughout the garden and leaves were tossed around wildly.

“Riley, what’s happening?” I asked.

“There’s an order coming through!” I heard a faint whirring noise from far away that was slowly getting louder. I looked up. I was shocked to see a fleet of helicopters had filled the sky. They covered the sun and blanketed our beautiful garden in darkness.





I saw Cameron arrive at the garden just as the helicopters were touching down. “What is going on? What are they doing here?”

“I made an order,” Riley said nervously.





Riley, Cameron and I all watched as EZ Grow helicopters landed everywhere. The garden beneath was crushed by the delivery copters. Several kids in EZ Grow uniforms rushed out with the gardening supplies that Riley and I had ordered.



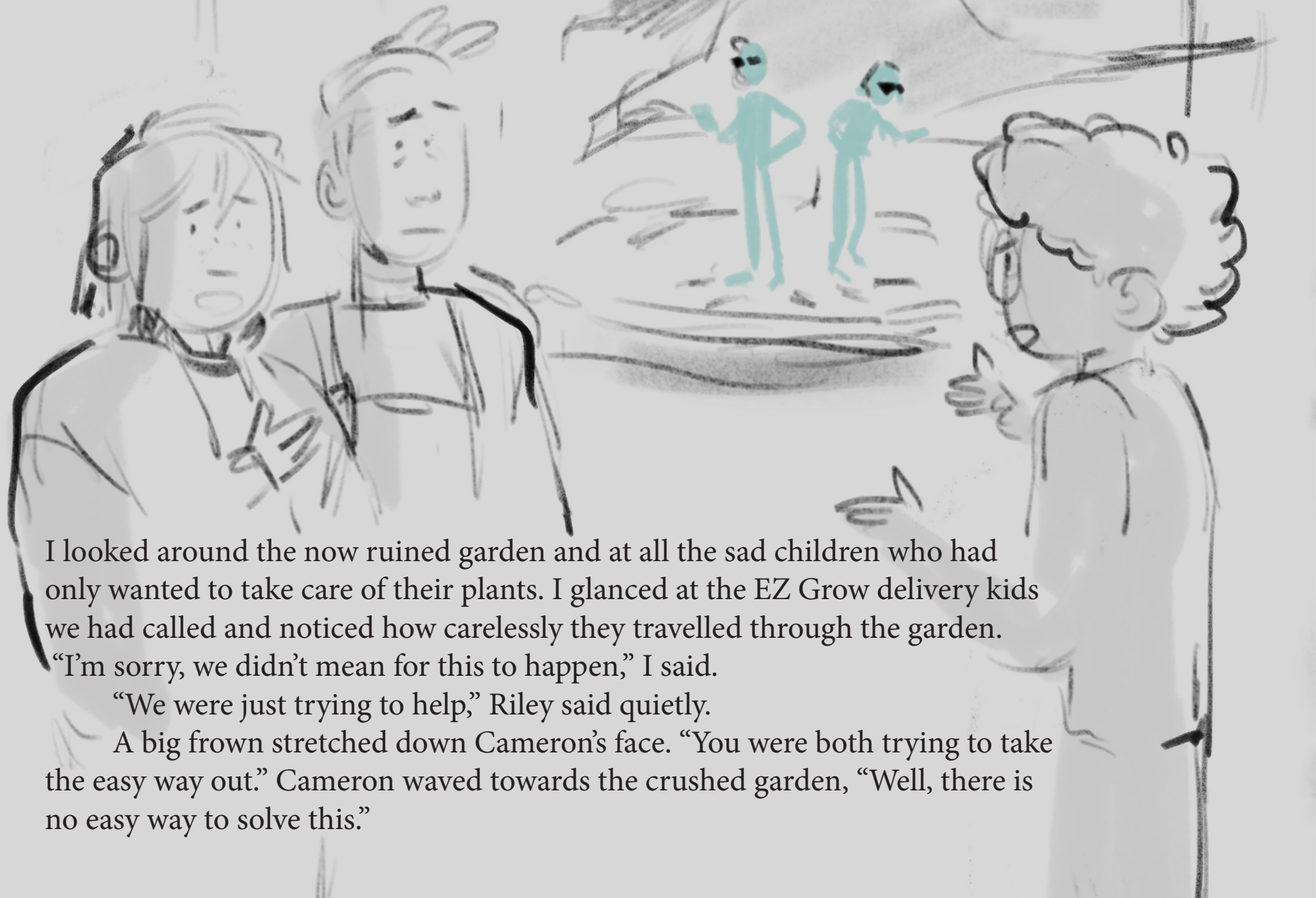




Cameron turned to Riley and me, “Do you realize what you’ve done?” Riley looked ready to say something, but Cameron interrupted them. “Look around, everyone’s plants are destroyed. You’ve ruined the garden!”



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in bg

I looked around the now ruined garden and at all the sad children who had only wanted to take care of their plants. I glanced at the EZ Grow delivery kids we had called and noticed how carelessly they travelled through the garden.

“I’m sorry, we didn’t mean for this to happen,” I said.

“We were just trying to help,” Riley said quietly.

A big frown stretched down Cameron’s face. “You were both trying to take the easy way out.” Cameron waved towards the crushed garden, “Well, there is no easy way to solve this.”

Before Riley and I could say anything more, Cameron told the delivery kids to go. Then they left, along with the other gardeners who had come to be our friends. Riley and I were left alone with the mess we had made.





Riley looked defeated, and their shoulders drooped. "I just wanted to make the job a little easier. It feels like everyone is always working so hard! No one ever has any time to have fun."

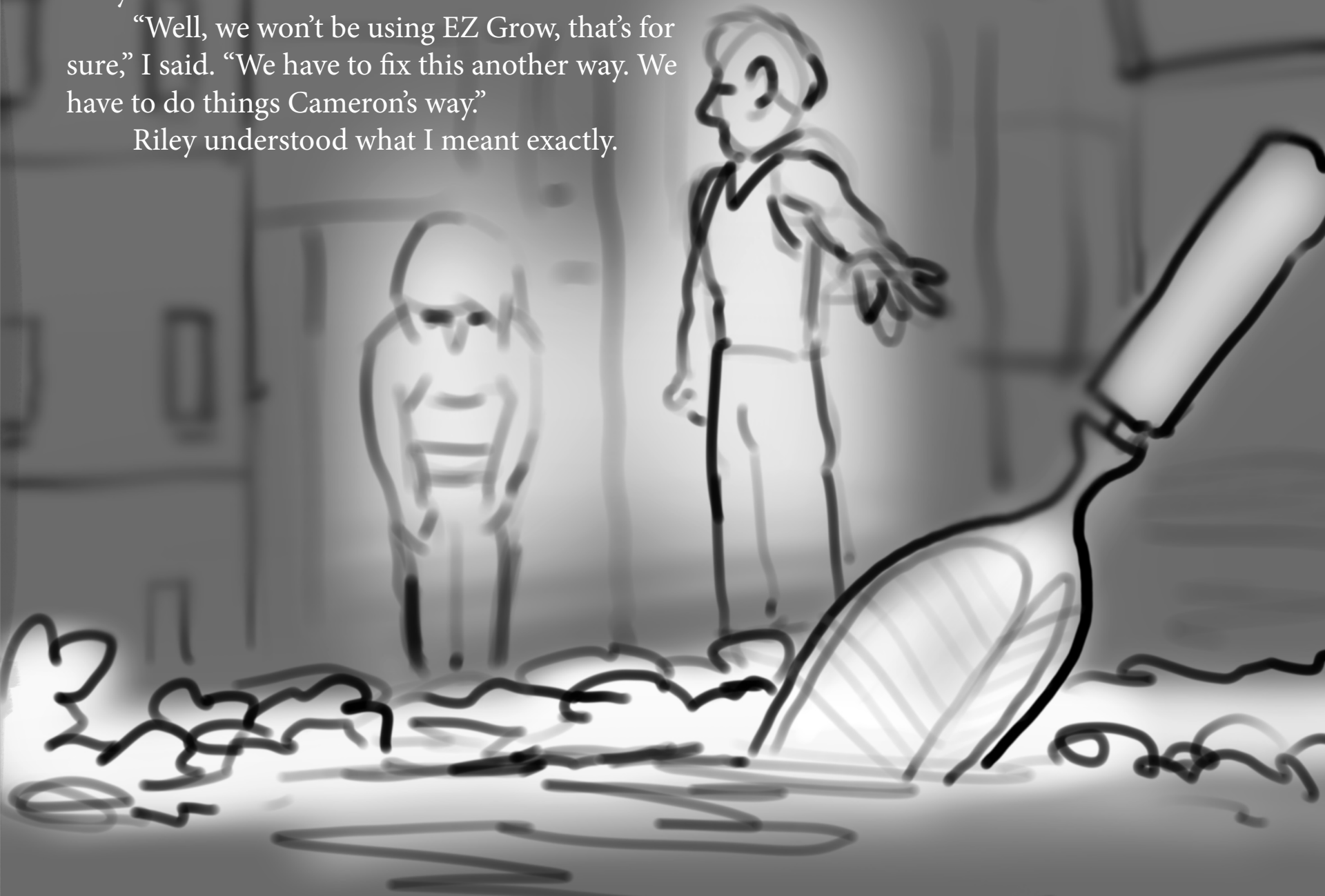
"Maybe you and I were having too much fun," I said to Riley, and they nodded.



I looked once more at the wrecked garden and the ruined plants. “How are we going to fix this?” asked Riley.

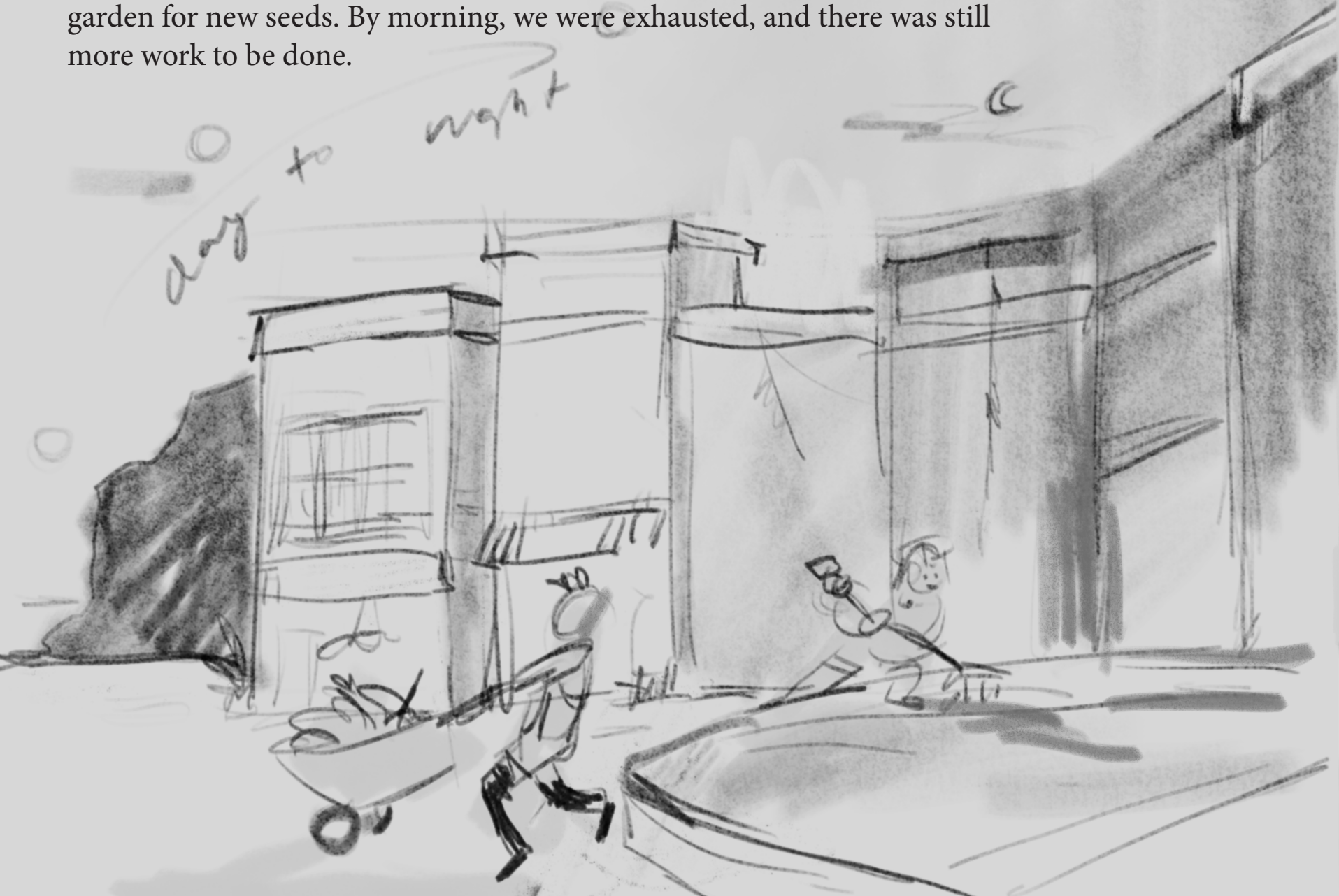
“Well, we won’t be using EZ Grow, that’s for sure,” I said. “We have to fix this another way. We have to do things Cameron’s way.”

Riley understood what I meant exactly.





We knew it would take a lot of elbow grease to get the garden back to the way it was, but we were determined to make things right. Riley and I worked (ALL NIGHT!) to clear the old plants, turn the soil, and prepare the garden for new seeds. By morning, we were exhausted, and there was still more work to be done.





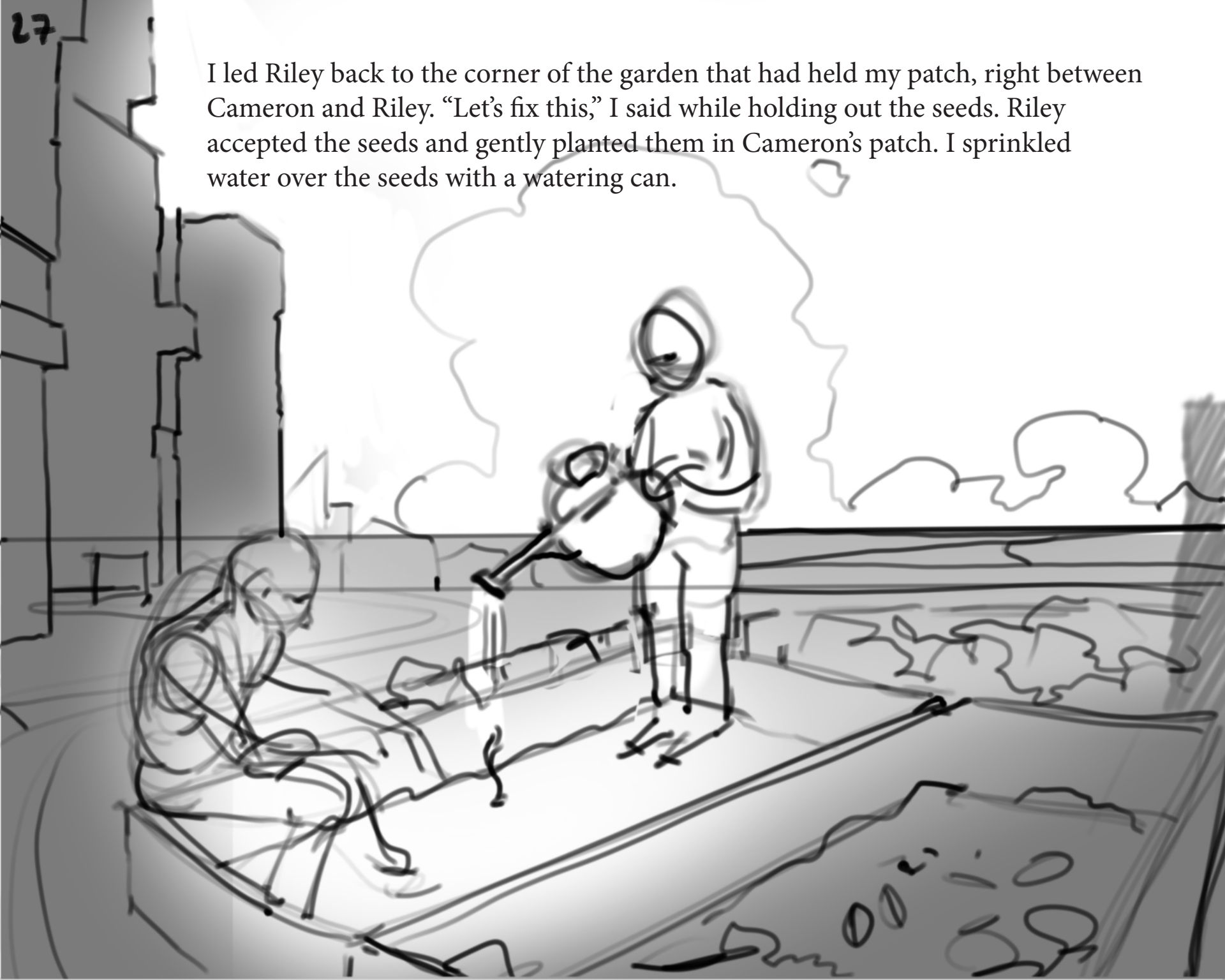
At that moment, I thought back to the day I arrived at the garden. I remembered Cameron showing me around and helping me plant my very first seeds.

I reached deep into my pocket and pulled out a crumpled packet of mango seeds, the ones Cameron had given me on that first day. “Hey, Riley?” I said. “Why don’t we start over here?”



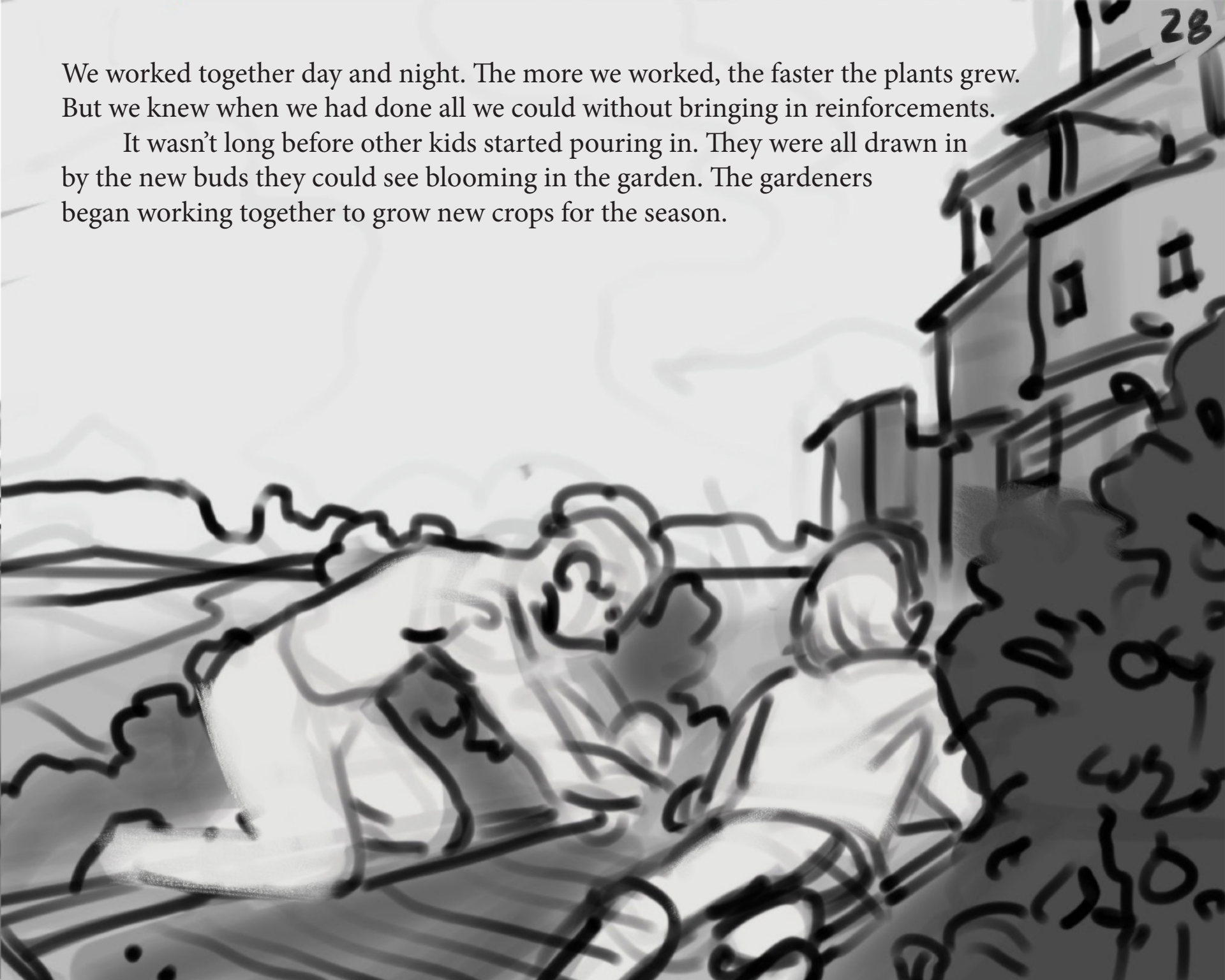
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I led Riley back to the corner of the garden that had held my patch, right between Cameron and Riley. “Let’s fix this,” I said while holding out the seeds. Riley accepted the seeds and gently planted them in Cameron’s patch. I sprinkled water over the seeds with a watering can.




We worked together day and night. The more we worked, the faster the plants grew. But we knew when we had done all we could without bringing in reinforcements.

It wasn't long before other kids started pouring in. They were all drawn in by the new buds they could see blooming in the garden. The gardeners began working together to grow new crops for the season.





An illustration of three children in a courtyard. On the left, a girl with blonde hair and freckles, wearing a white shirt with blue stripes, is crying and smiling. In the center, a child with dark curly hair is being hugged. On the right, a boy with dark skin and curly hair, wearing a green shirt, is smiling and hugging the other two. The background shows a courtyard with a cobblestone floor, a green tree on the left, and multi-story buildings with balconies and awnings. The sky is a clear, bright blue.

Finally, Cameron returned to the garden, watching in disbelief.

“How did you do this?” They asked.

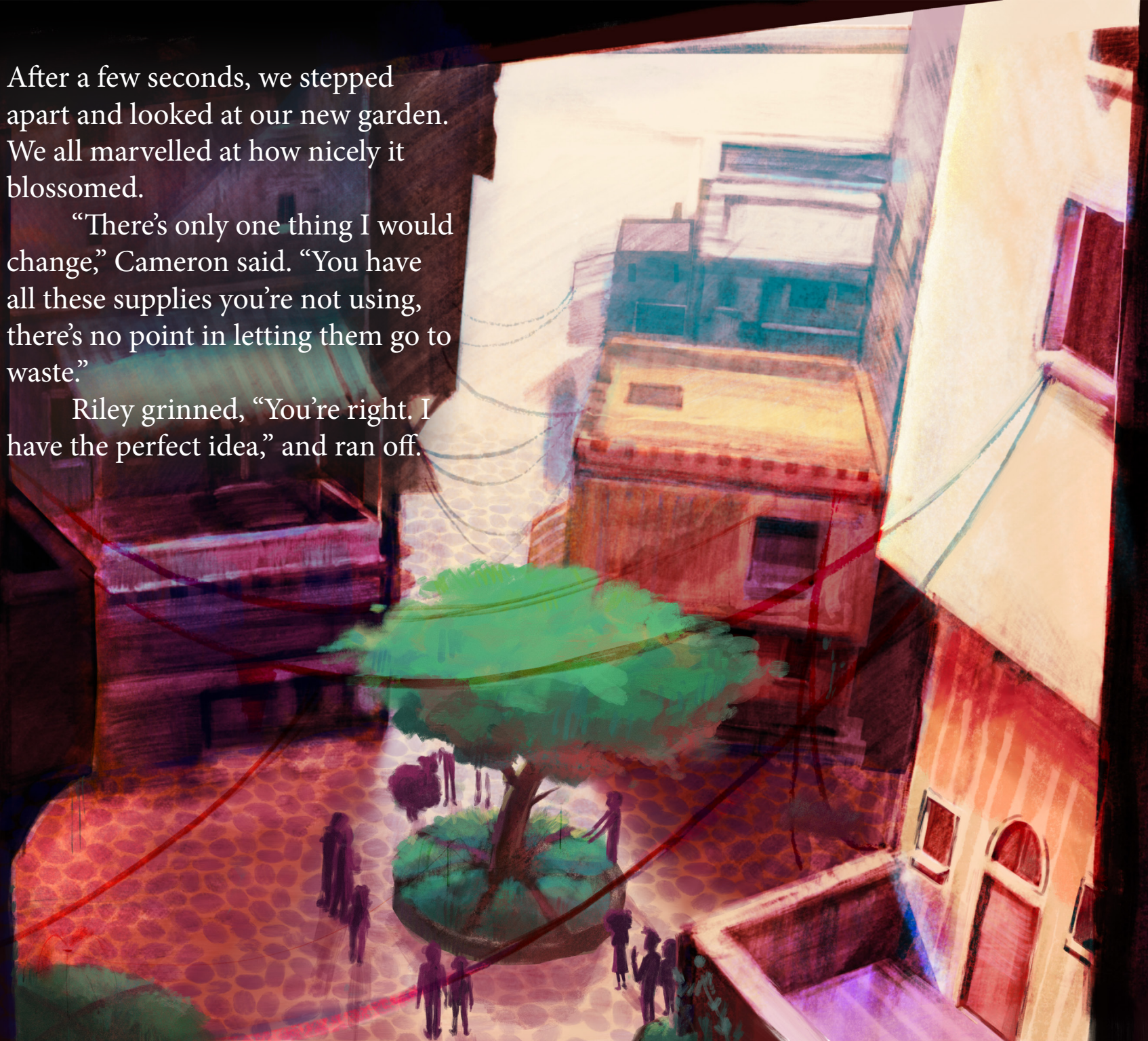
“We followed your instructions, like we should have from the beginning. I’m sorry I didn’t listen to you sooner,” Riley said. Cameron smiled and pulled us into a group hug.



After a few seconds, we stepped apart and looked at our new garden. We all marvelled at how nicely it blossomed.

“There’s only one thing I would change,” Cameron said. “You have all these supplies you’re not using, there’s no point in letting them go to waste.”

Riley grinned, “You’re right. I have the perfect idea,” and ran off.





Riley returned with a long hose dragging behind them.  
“We can still use my sprinklers. They should be big  
enough to water everyone’s plants!”  
There was no time to waste. Cameron and I lent a  
hand, and in no time the sprinklers were  
fully set up.





“Will you do the honours, Kai?” Riley asked. I nodded and turned the dial, allowing the sprinklers to begin softly showering the garden with water. We all admired our hard work.

Standing next to my best friends and our thriving garden, I felt happy. From that moment, I knew I would stay.





