

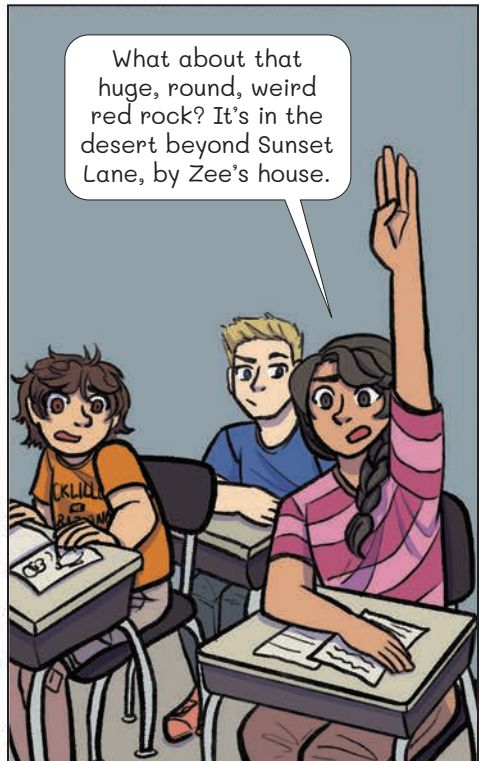
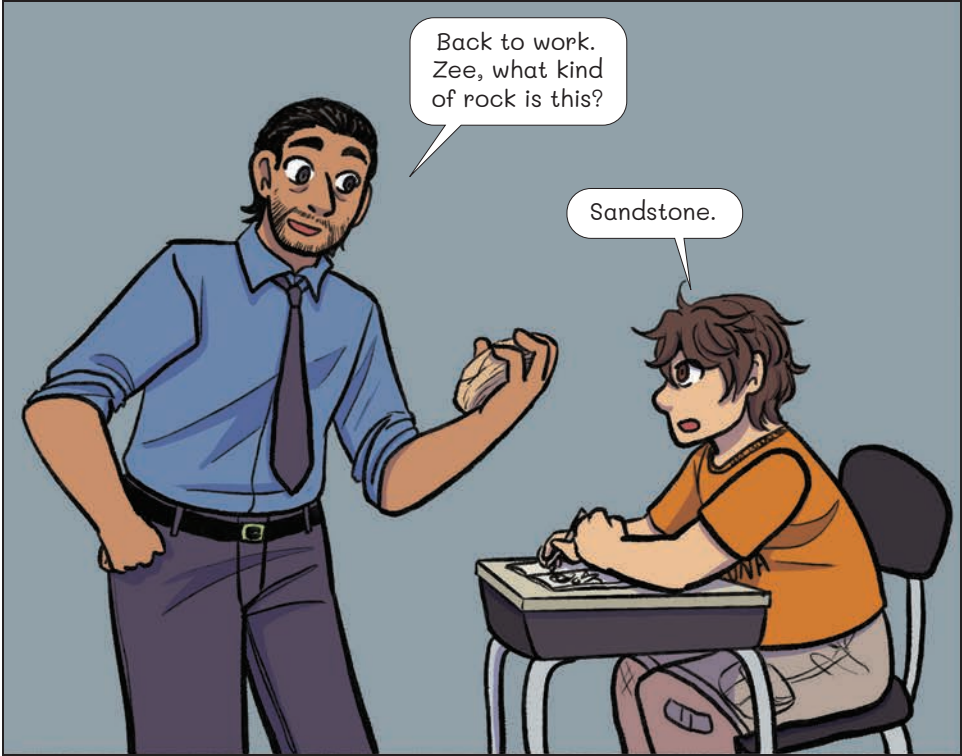
# ZEE AND THE MYSTERIOUS RED ROCK



Class! Today we're going to talk more about rocks. But first I have a very important question.  
*Class!* Is Zee the only one listening to me?!









Is that so? What does your grandma say about the rock, Zee?



Zee?

For a moment, lying seems like a good idea. But Grandma Max had told lots of people.



She thinks the rock is an alien.

Do you mean she thinks it's a meteorite? A rock from space?



No. She thinks the rock is a *living thing* from outer space.

Quiet, class!



Zee knows Grandma Max's ideas sound weird. But he knows the rock is powerful and does amazing things.

Later that afternoon...



Get it, girl!



Ninja, you're scared of everything!



How was your day, Mom?

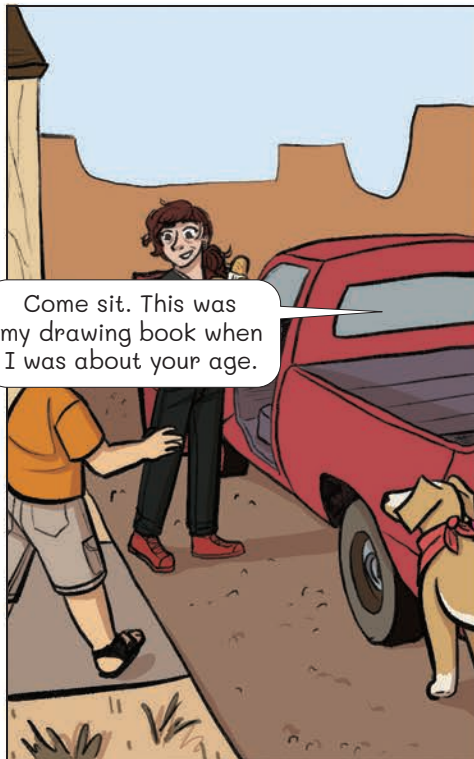
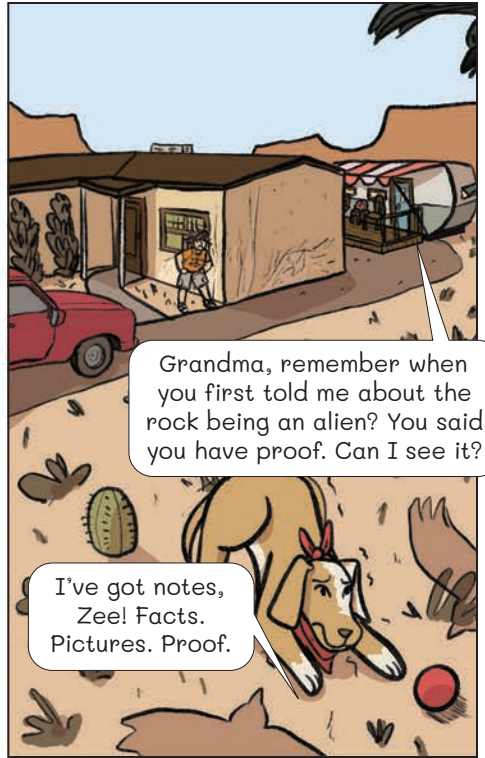
Another long day at work. Now it's time to make dinner.



Zee wishes his mom would ask him about school. But she doesn't feel like talking.

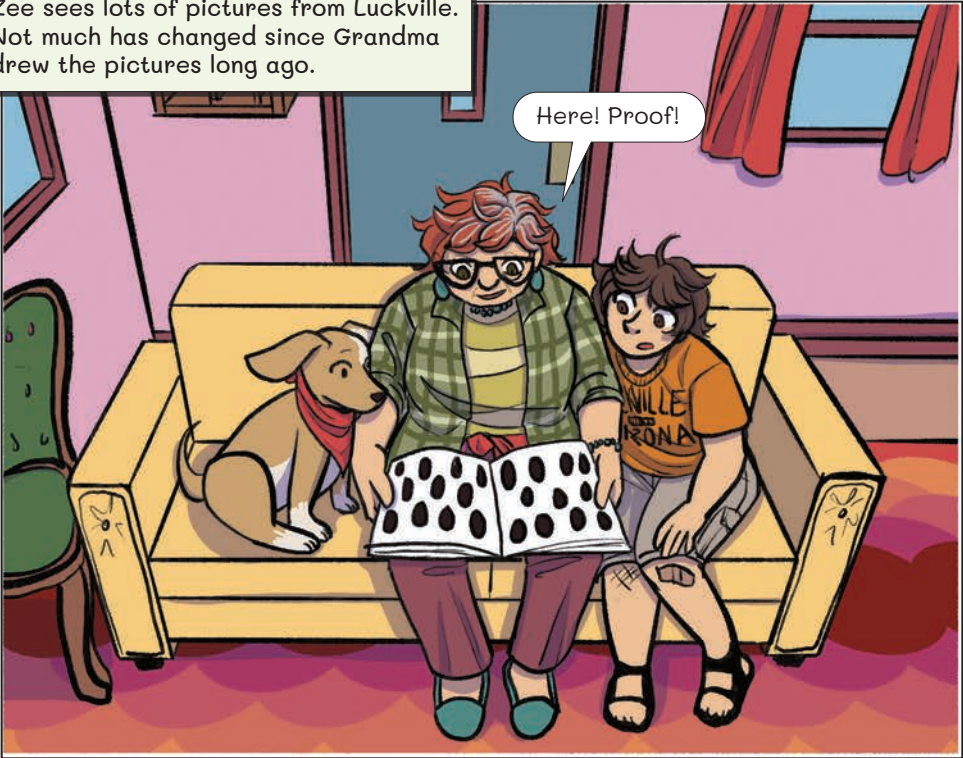






Zee sees lots of pictures from Luckville. Not much has changed since Grandma drew the pictures long ago.

Here! Proof!

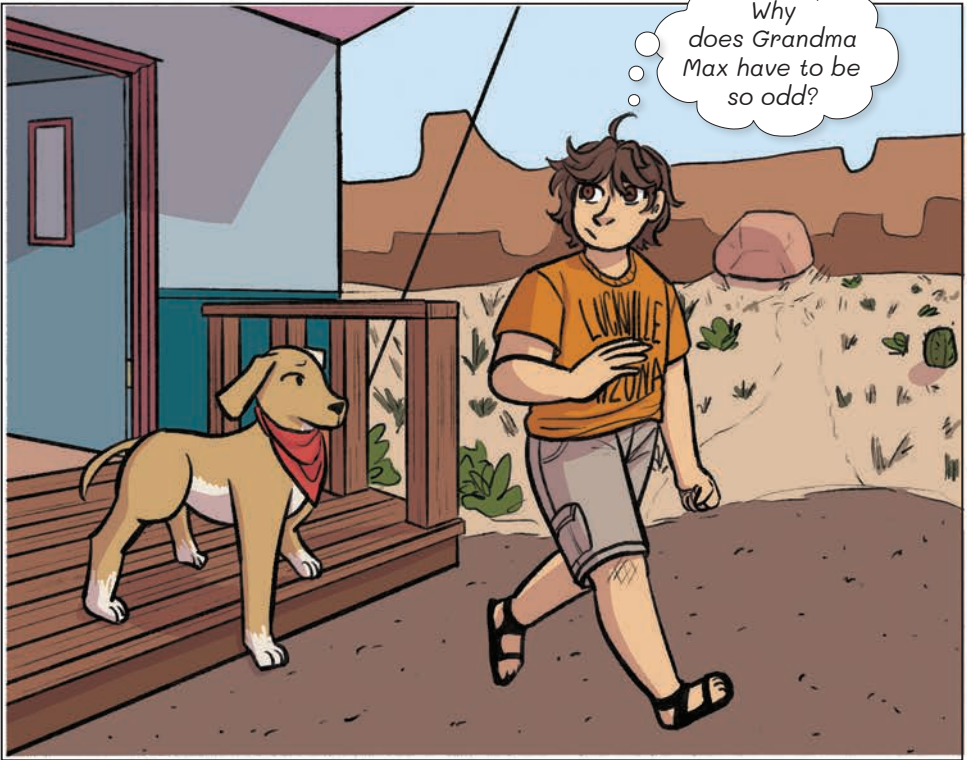


Grandma, this is just a drawing of black shapes—shapes like eggs. How does this prove that the rock is an alien?



It's all there, Captain Zee! You're just going to have to figure out the rest yourself. Back to the game now!





The rock seems to pull Zee toward it. He's felt this pull before.



Zee feels the heat of the rock go through his body.

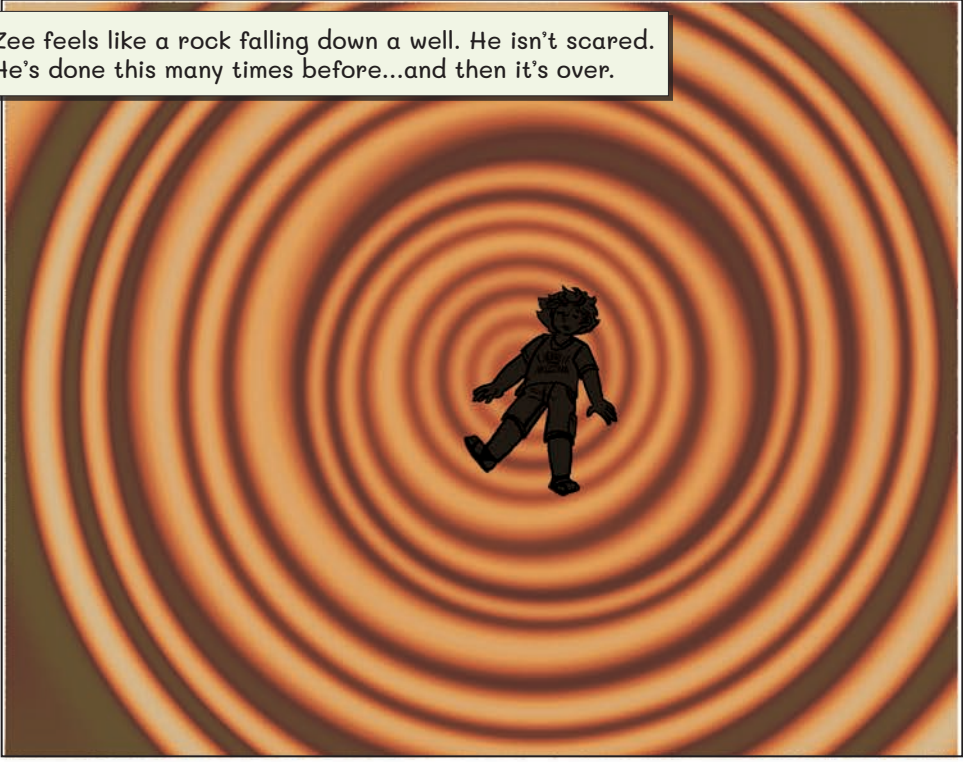


Zee takes deep breaths. Ninja stops feeling so heavy in his lap. The sound of Grandma Max's TV fades away. His mind clears.

Then it happens, as it has before...



Zee feels like a rock falling down a well. He isn't scared. He's done this many times before...and then it's over.







How are we going to get home?



A monster!  
No, that looks like...a dinosaur!



Ninja, I think we've traveled millions of years back! We've never traveled this far into the past before. It looks like dinosaurs lived in Luckville before we did!





That looks like Grandma Max's drawings!



What in the world?!

The outside is cool and hard at first. Then Zee feels energy coming from the egg. It makes his hand hot.





Watching them makes Zee feel weak. He tries to take it all in, but they are changing too fast.



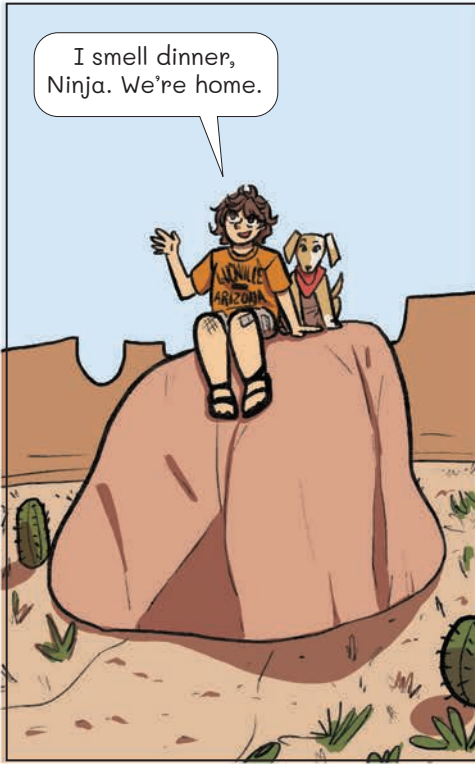
...and the egg turns into the rock.

Grandma Max's drawing was just like that egg before it turned into the rock. She must have seen it when she was a girl—an alien vessel!



Zee feels the heat of the rock. All his questions about Grandma Max and the aliens go away. His mind is blank. The falling feeling begins...



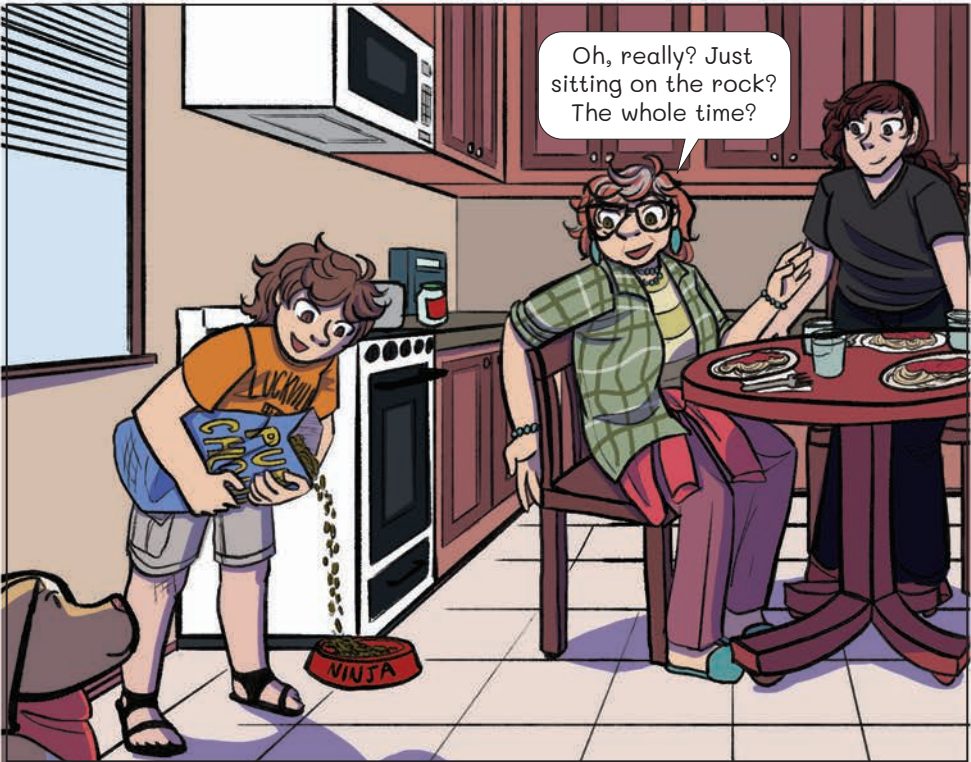


I smell dinner, Ninja. We're home.

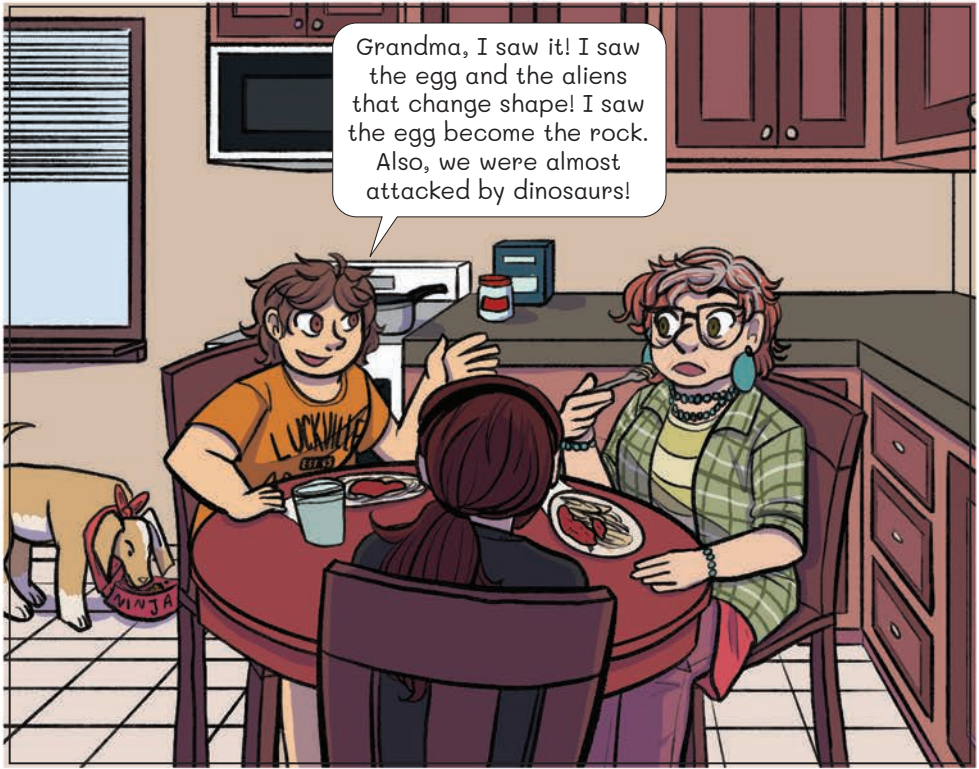


Where have you been, Captain Zee?

He was out on the rock. I saw him sitting there with Ninja on his lap.



Oh, really? Just sitting on the rock? The whole time?



Grandma, I saw it! I saw the egg and the aliens that change shape! I saw the egg become the rock. Also, we were almost attacked by dinosaurs!



Wow! It's been a long time since I could time travel like that. But I remember like it was yesterday—all of it!

You two...



Mom, this is real! Grandma Max used the rock to time travel when she was a girl. Now I can do it. We've told you this.

I've lived by that rock my whole life. If time travel is real, why can't I do it? Why couldn't I do it when I was a girl?



I don't know, Cindy.



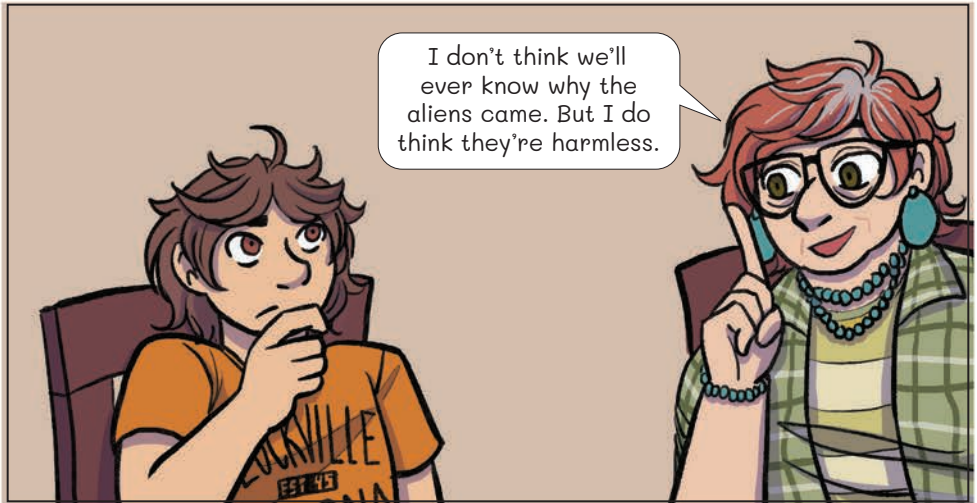
Zee knows his mom doesn't believe their stories about the rock.



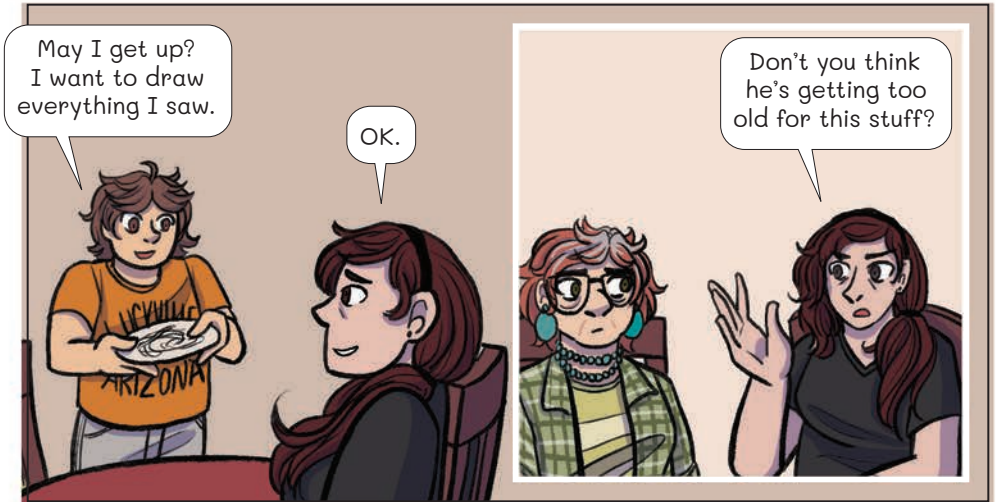


Well, where did you go this time? What did you learn?

Zee knows she doesn't believe he went back in time. But he wants to talk about his trip. He tells his mom the whole story.



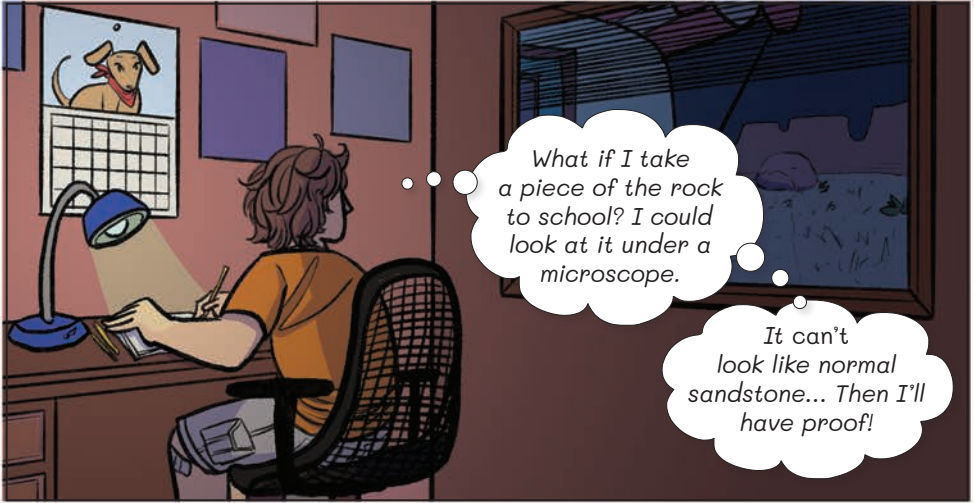
I don't think we'll ever know why the aliens came. But I do think they're harmless.



May I get up? I want to draw everything I saw.

OK.

Don't you think he's getting too old for this stuff?



What if I take a piece of the rock to school? I could look at it under a microscope.

It can't look like normal sandstone... Then I'll have proof!



The next morning...

What if something happens when I break off a piece of the rock?



Phew! No aliens.



When will this day end? I wish I could use the rock to make it 3:00.

The day wears on...



At last! The final bell rings.





What is this, Zee?  
Where did you get it?

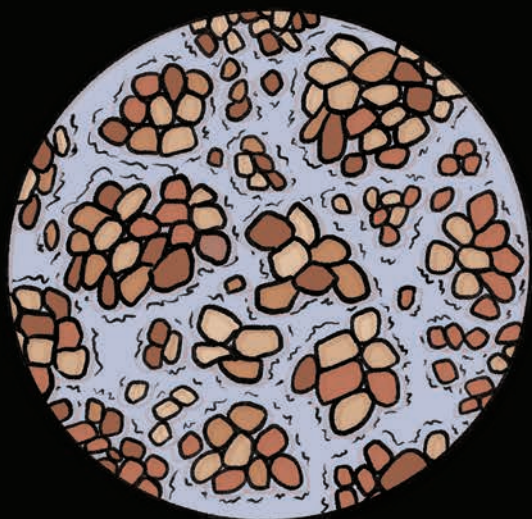
It's sandstone. I  
got it by my house.



I've never seen sandstone  
like this! In fact, it doesn't  
even look like a rock. Look!



Hello, Dr. Johnson! It's Eduardo  
Lopez. One of my students  
brought in a very odd piece of  
sandstone. Bits of it are moving!



Dr. Johnson is a scientist.  
She's going to come see  
your odd rock tomorrow.



It'll be  
safe here.

What have I  
done?! Dr. Johnson  
will want to see the real  
rock. She'll call more  
scientists. They'll call  
reporters...



Lots of  
people will come  
to Luckville to study the  
rock. They'll break it  
into pieces and take  
it away.

Why didn't I  
keep it a secret?  
What was I  
thinking?!







Bye!  
Have fun!

Before he'd left his house, Zee put a normal piece of sandstone in his pocket.



Zee,  
is that  
you?



Oh! Hi, Ida.

What  
are you  
doing?

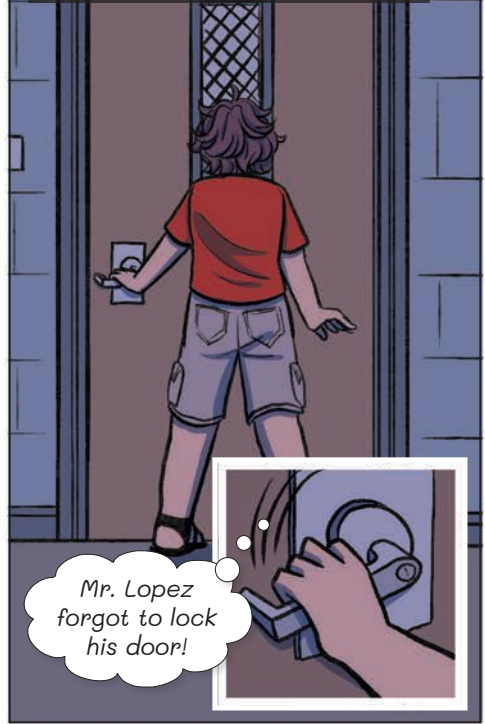
Just getting something from my locker.

I forgot something, too, in the library. But the door was locked. Oh, well. Bye!



Zee hadn't thought about the doors. What if Mr. Lopez's door is locked?!

Zee's heart pounds in his chest.



Zee replaces the sample with regular sandstone.





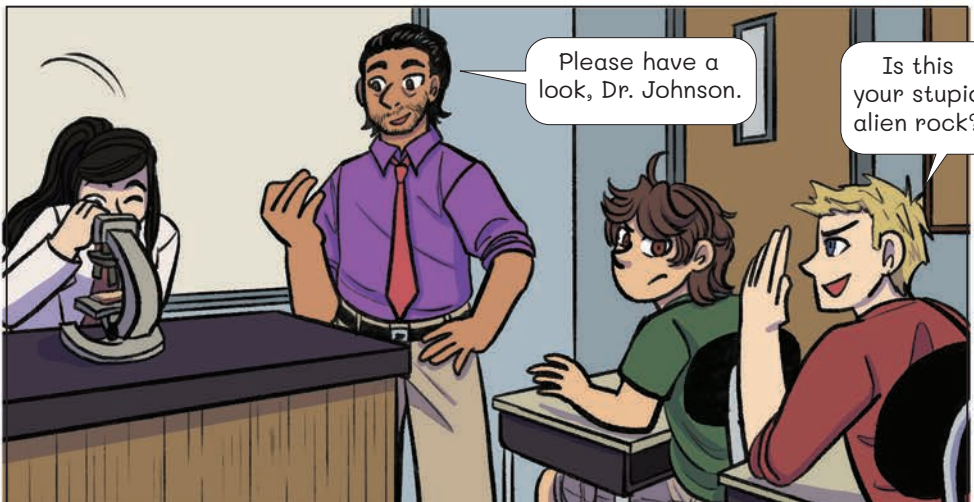
Sorry,  
Mr. Lopez!



The next day...

Dr. Johnson

Zee showed me a rare rock. I've never seen anything like it. So I asked Dr. Johnson to take a look at it.



Please have a look, Dr. Johnson.

Is this your stupid alien rock?



Zee can breathe again—his rock is safe.



*I don't care if Blister laughs. But I am sorry for Mr. Lopez.*

Maybe Zee will get proof for his mom another day.



OK, class. Let's get to work.



*Everything is back to normal.*