

HOSTEL OF LOST FUNCTION

失能旅社

What if you lived in a perfect hostel that took care of all your needs? And how would you cope if one day that hostel disappeared? Through the central metaphor of the hostel, this understated graphic novel guides us on a nuanced journey through of the issues of love, loss, and letting go.

Orphaned from birth, X has no place to go until a mysterious hostel agrees to take him in. This Hostel of Lost Function has services to meet all the needs of its guests. There are always extra comforters, to keep the cold at bay. One room is packed with telephones, and at the other end of the line there is always someone who will listen patiently to tales of heartache and woe. The hostel takes in guests, no questions asked, feeds them nourishing food, and never asks for payment. Within the hostel's sheltering embrace, X slowly loses the ability to feel negative emotions and sensations.

But one day, a storm carries away the hostel. When X returns from work, he cannot find a single trace of its existence. Consumed with self-reproach and regret, he becomes isolated by a suffering he believes no one else can understand. Yet he also comes to recognize the depth of the love he had for the place that gave him a sense of home. As his lost functions return to him, he has no choice but to face the pains and discomforts of living, and in doing so, finds that accepting loss may be the only way to reconnect with others.

A symbolic tale told through a surreal mixture of collage, printmaking, and illustration, *Hostel of Lost Function* was created as a tribute to the author's late mother. Though somber in tone, this strikingly original work proposes that suffering and loss, if properly embraced, can become gateways to greater wisdom and compassion.



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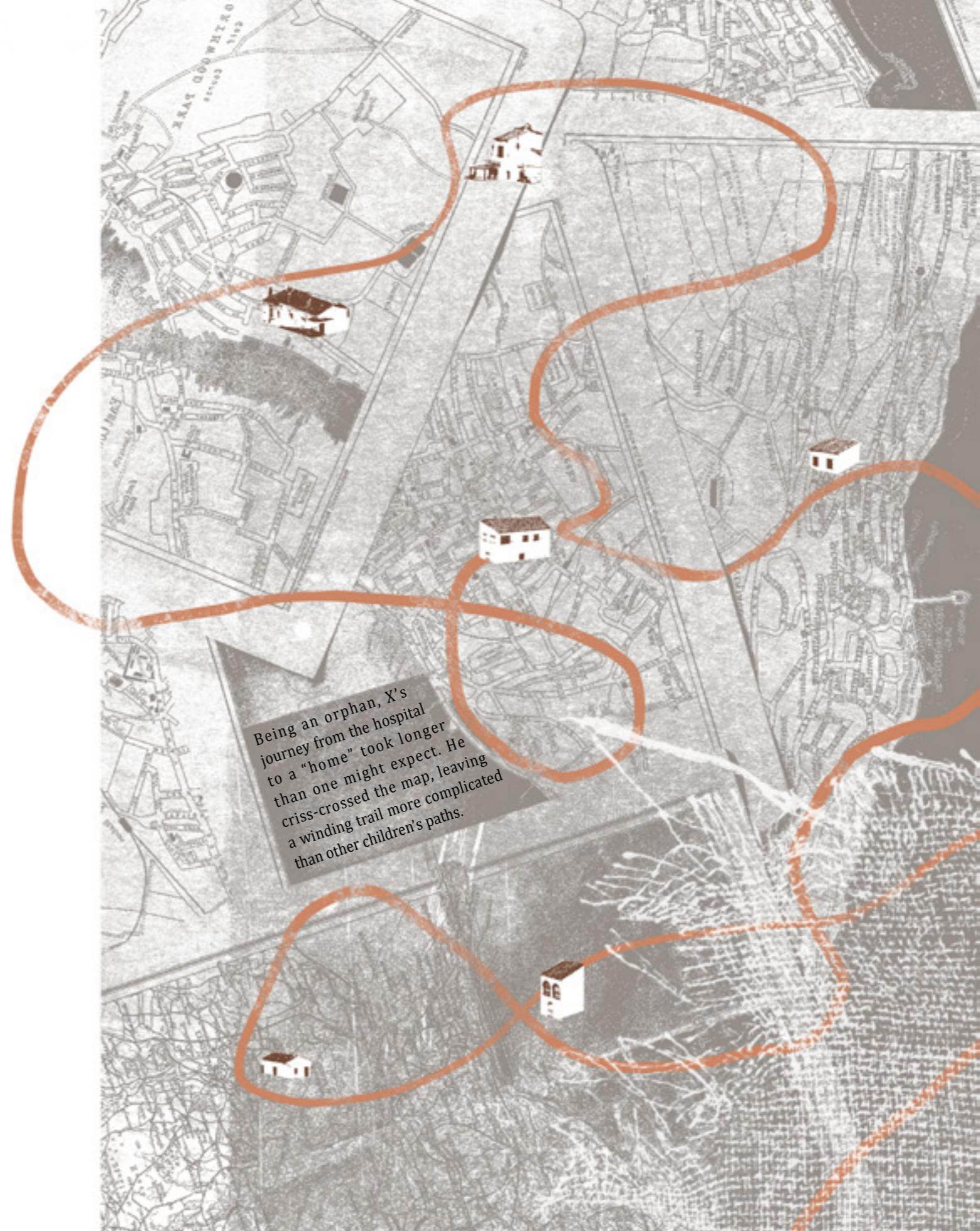
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Gami

In the work of freelance illustrator Gami, intensely emotional stories become approachable through simple visual forms and a matter-of-fact narrative style. Gami's previous comics include *The Person Who Said No*, *An Art Project*, and *The Insignificant Exhibition*, which she independently published in London.



Being an orphan, X's journey from the hospital to a "home" took longer than one might expect. He criss-crossed the map, leaving a winding trail more complicated than other children's paths.

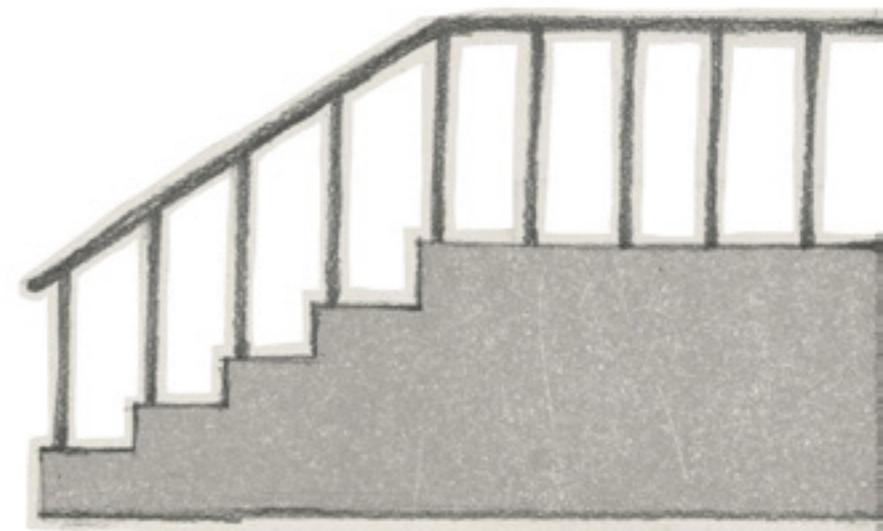
When X was born the world didn't seem to have space for him.



Finally, they found a hostel that would take him.

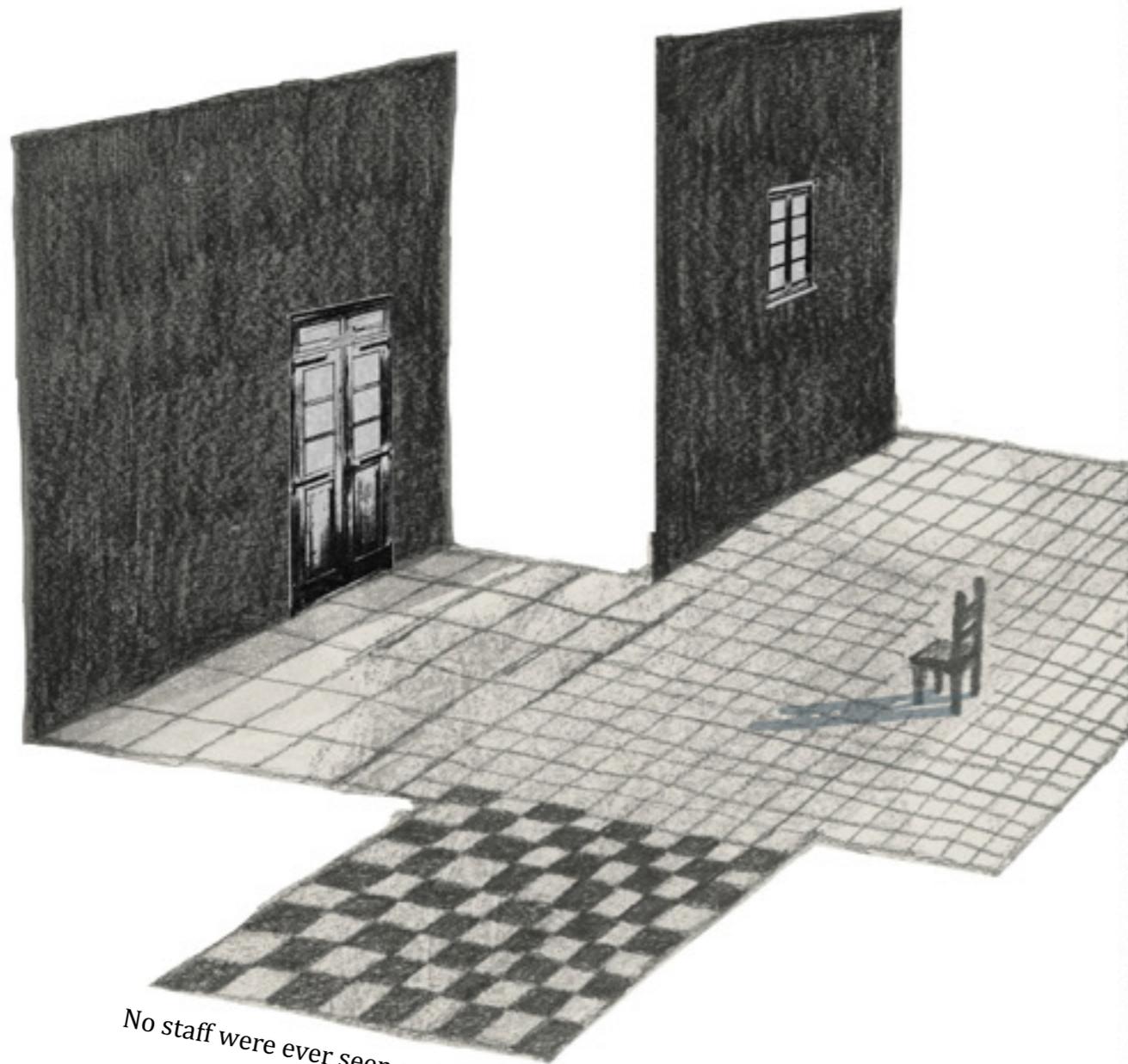


The Hostel of Lost Function did not refuse him,
even though X was just a baby.

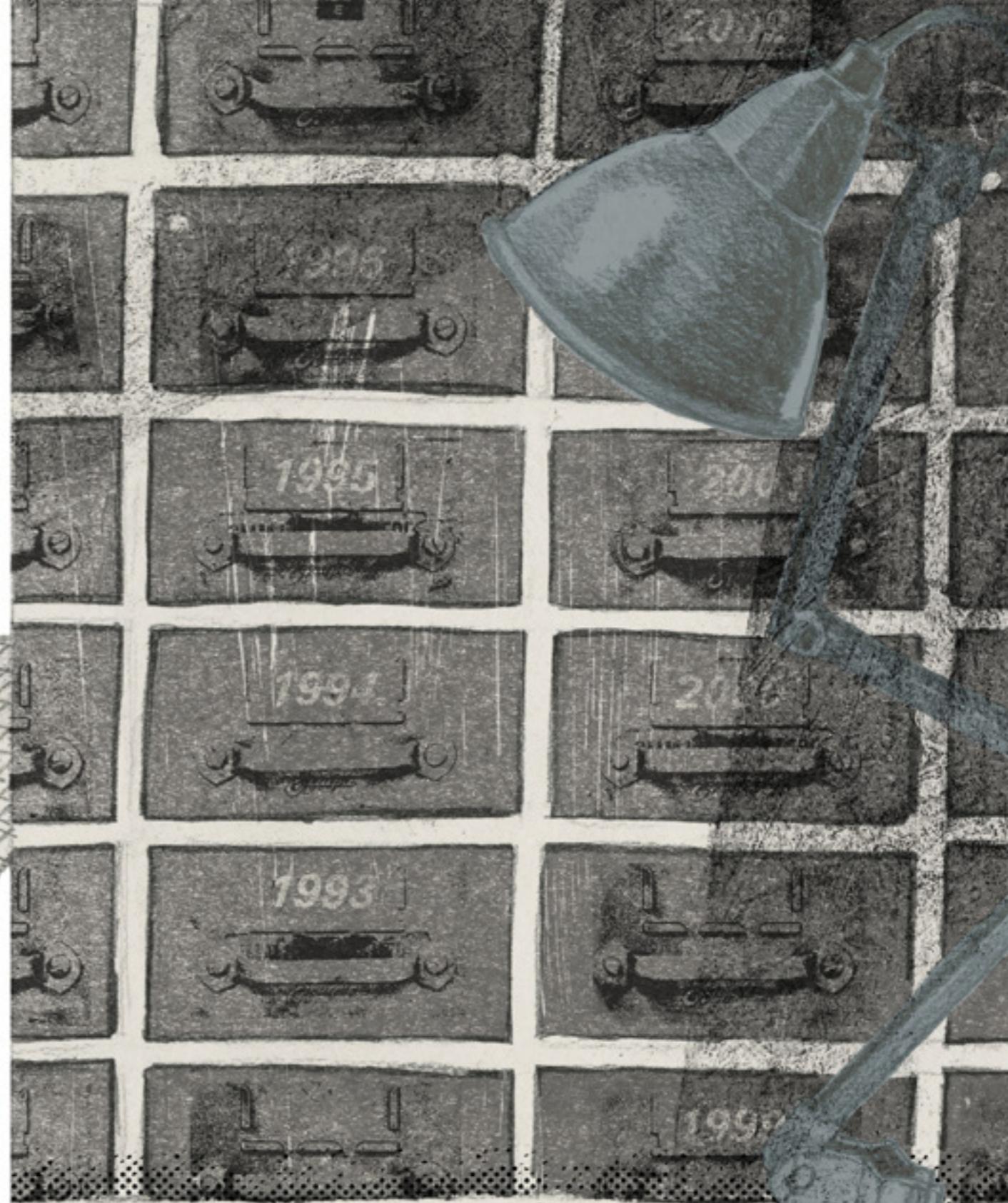


As X grew his stay at the hostel was extended again and again.





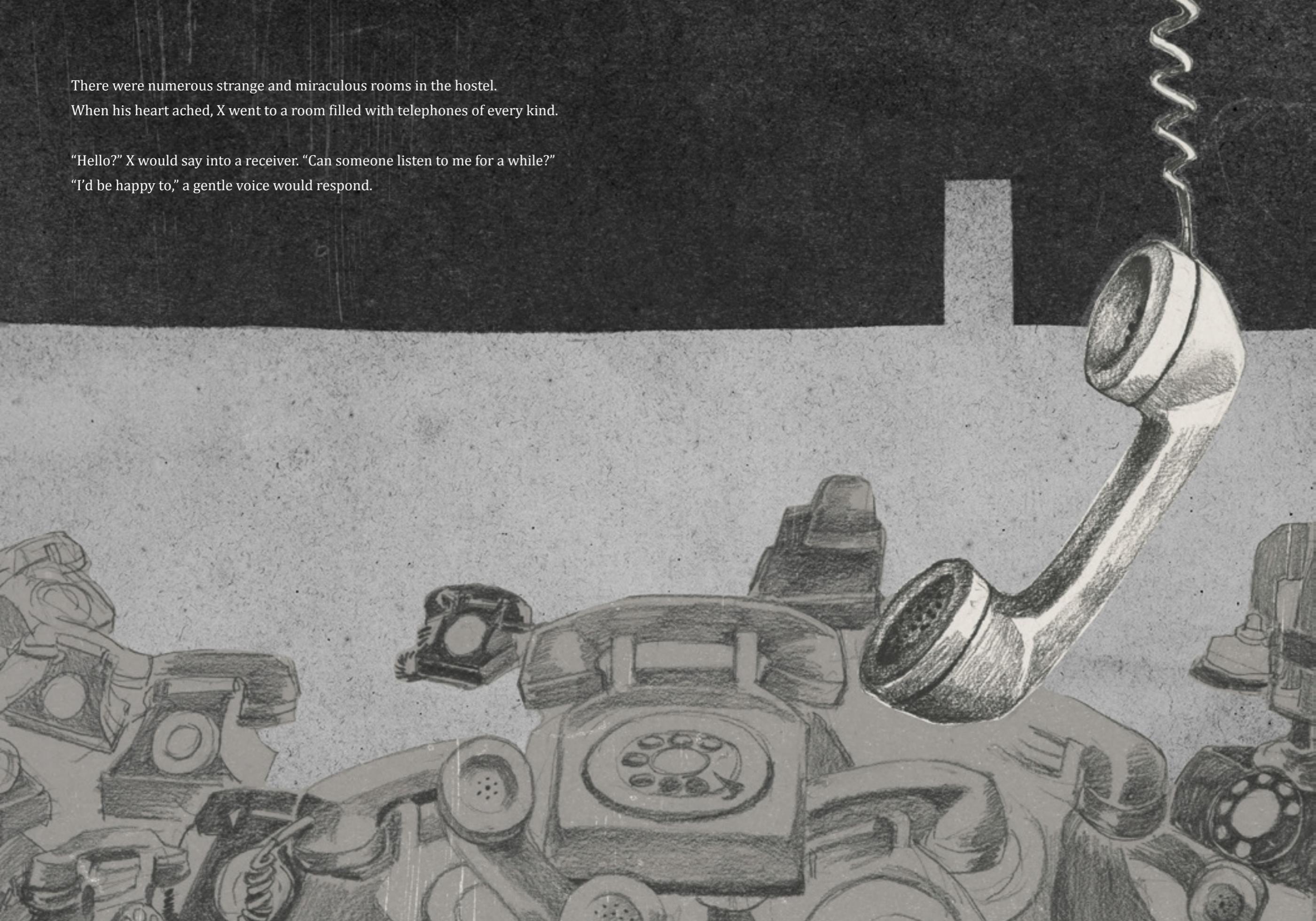
No staff were ever seen at the hostel,
and it apparently collected no fees.



It just quietly took in each guest,
never asking the reason for their visit.

There were numerous strange and miraculous rooms in the hostel.
When his heart ached, X went to a room filled with telephones of every kind.

“Hello?” X would say into a receiver. “Can someone listen to me for a while?”
“I’d be happy to,” a gentle voice would respond.

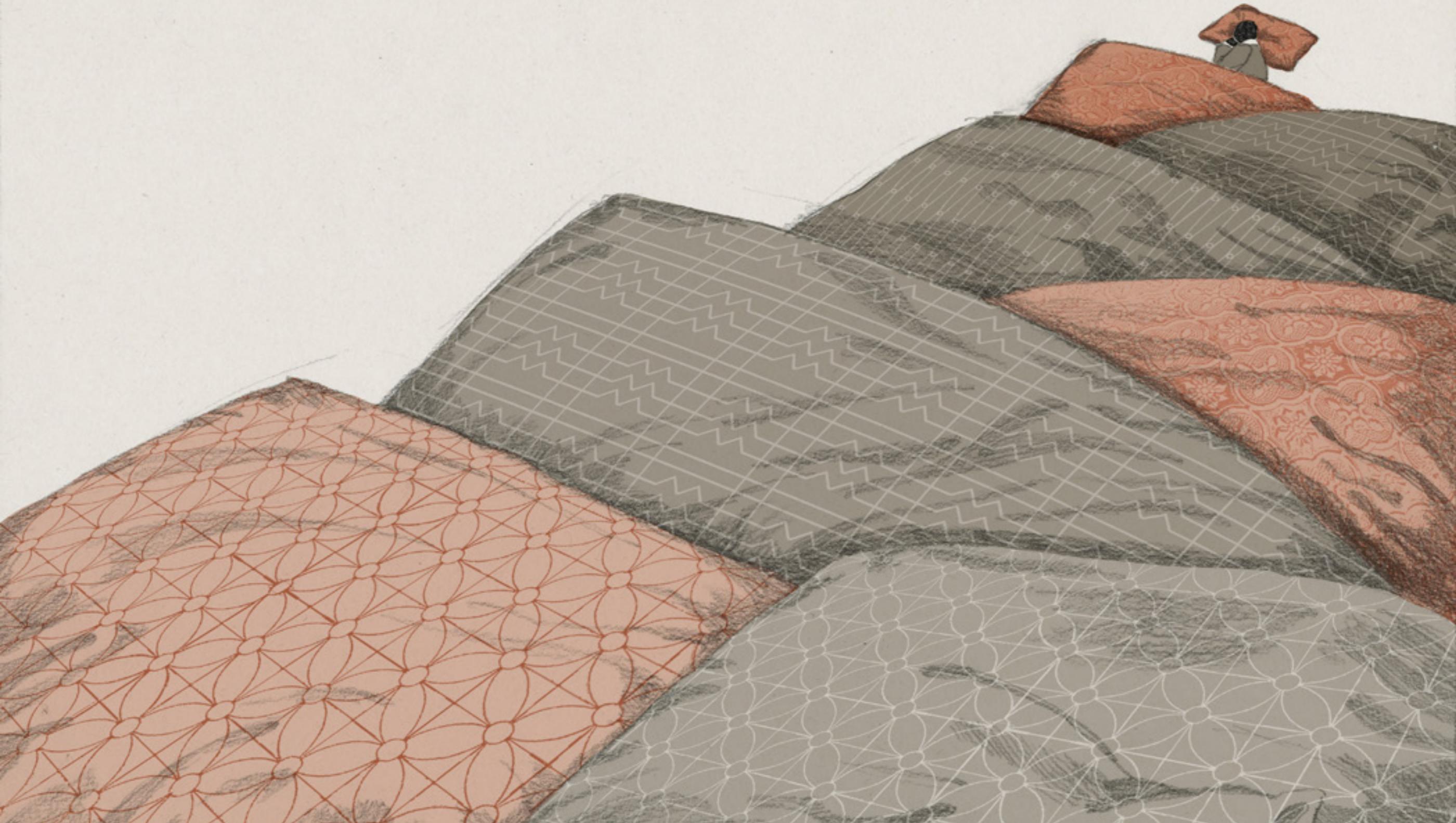


X would pour out all of his heartache.
Sometimes he cried as he spoke, and mechanical
tubes extended to collect his tears, like a life form
drawn to human emotion.



After being collected, X's tears were used to flavor
a myriad of culinary delights.

The Hostel of Lost Function satisfied all of X's needs.
There was a bed and a warm comforter ready for him at all hours,
and slowly he lost the function of feeling the cold.



There was always someone to listen to him
at the other end of the receiver,
and slowly he lost the function of feeling lonely.



Tears of heartache and joy were collected,
and made into wonderful dishes.
Slowly, X lost the function of feeling hunger.





It happened one evening
when X was working overtime at the office.

The storm built silently.
No one suspected it would be so destructive.

