

The Future of Multi-modal Mobile Communication:

A Love Story

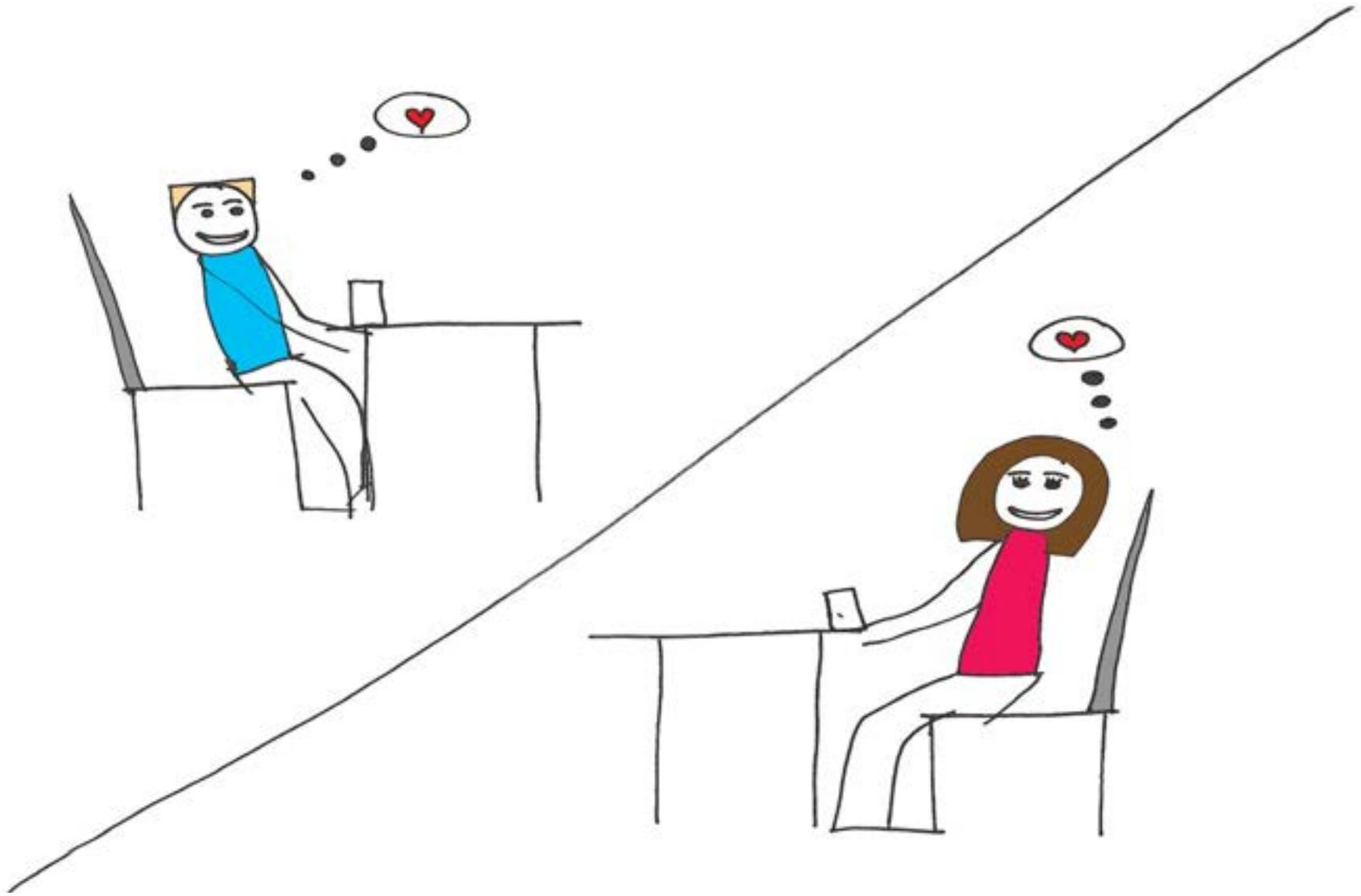
The Story

I created this storybook as an independent study project under the supervision of Professor Anind Dey at Carnegie Mellon University. Many thanks to Anind for his support, as well as to Haakon Faste for additional guidance.

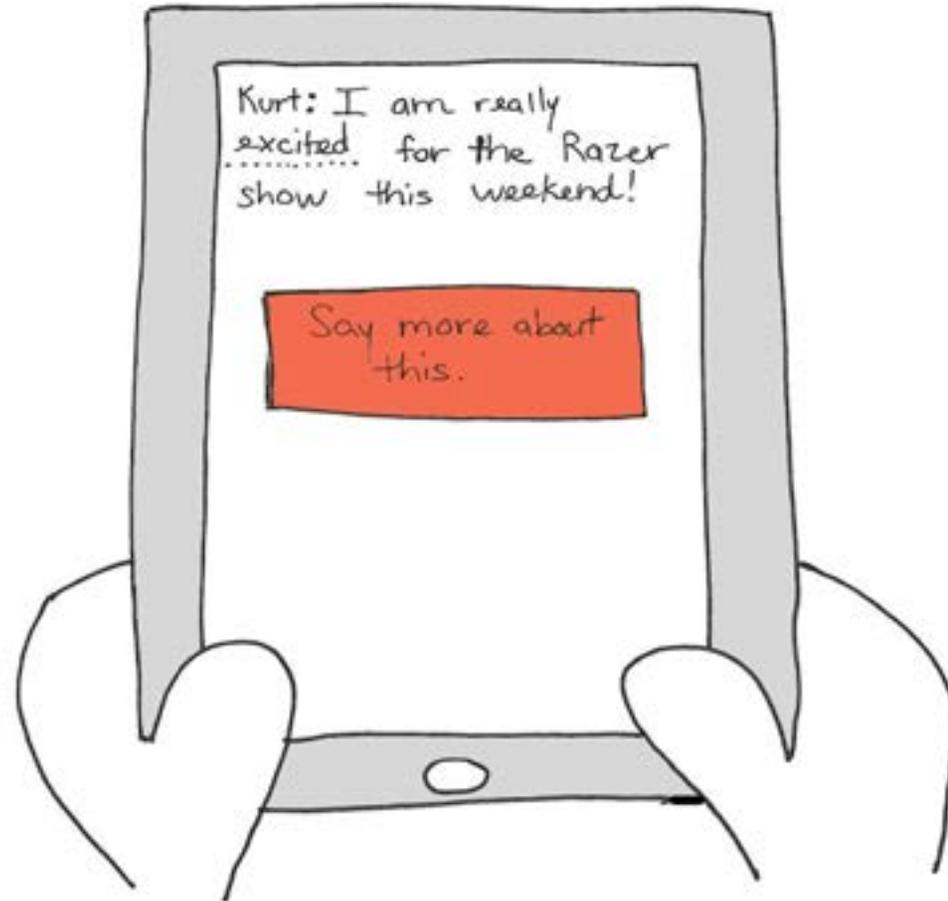
Through extended storytelling, I seek to posit a future of mobile communication that is grounded in both exploratory research and focused research with young couples.

The story of Kurt and Nina shows that technology can be a powerful tool within the context of close relationships. Rather than seeking to eliminate or ignore problems, these scenarios illustrate how people might be better equipped to deal with the issues they face by utilizing multi-modal communication devices.

Kurt and Nina are seniors in college, and they often text back and forth in class. They both like each other, but are having a hard time "reading" each other in short text messages.



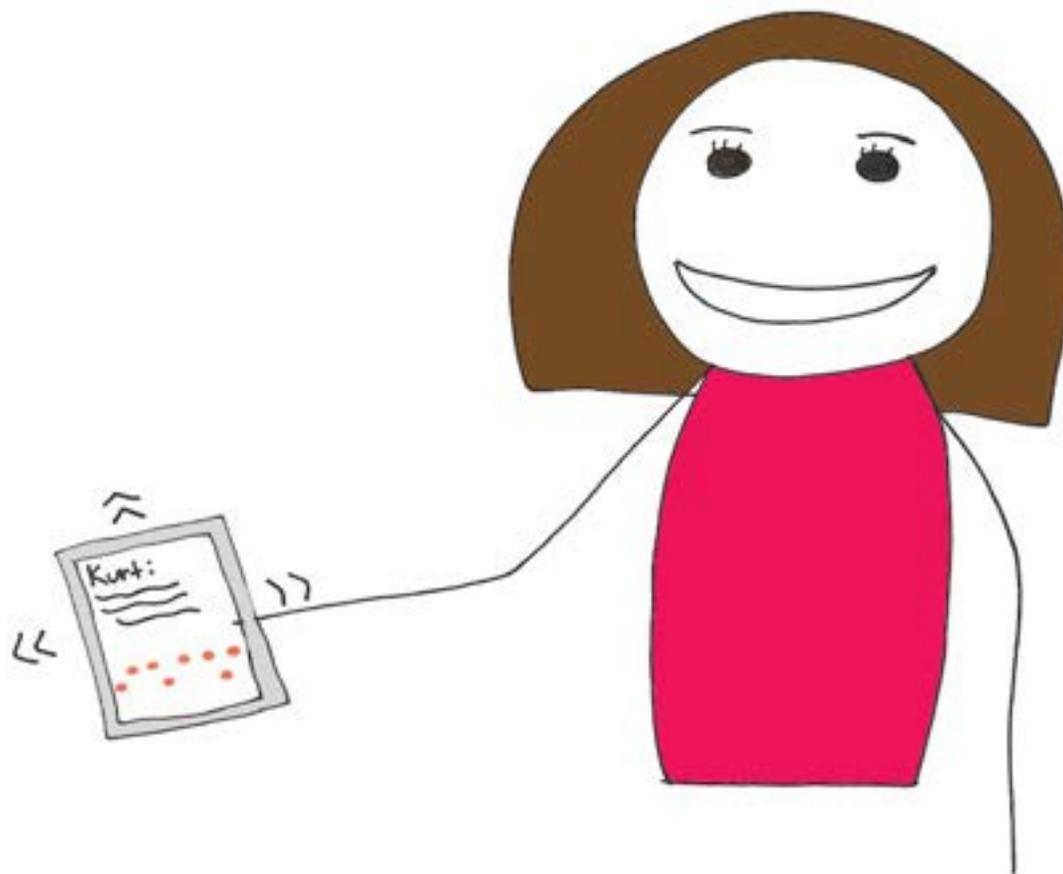
The next time Kurt uses an emotional word, his sense phone detects this and encourages him to write more.



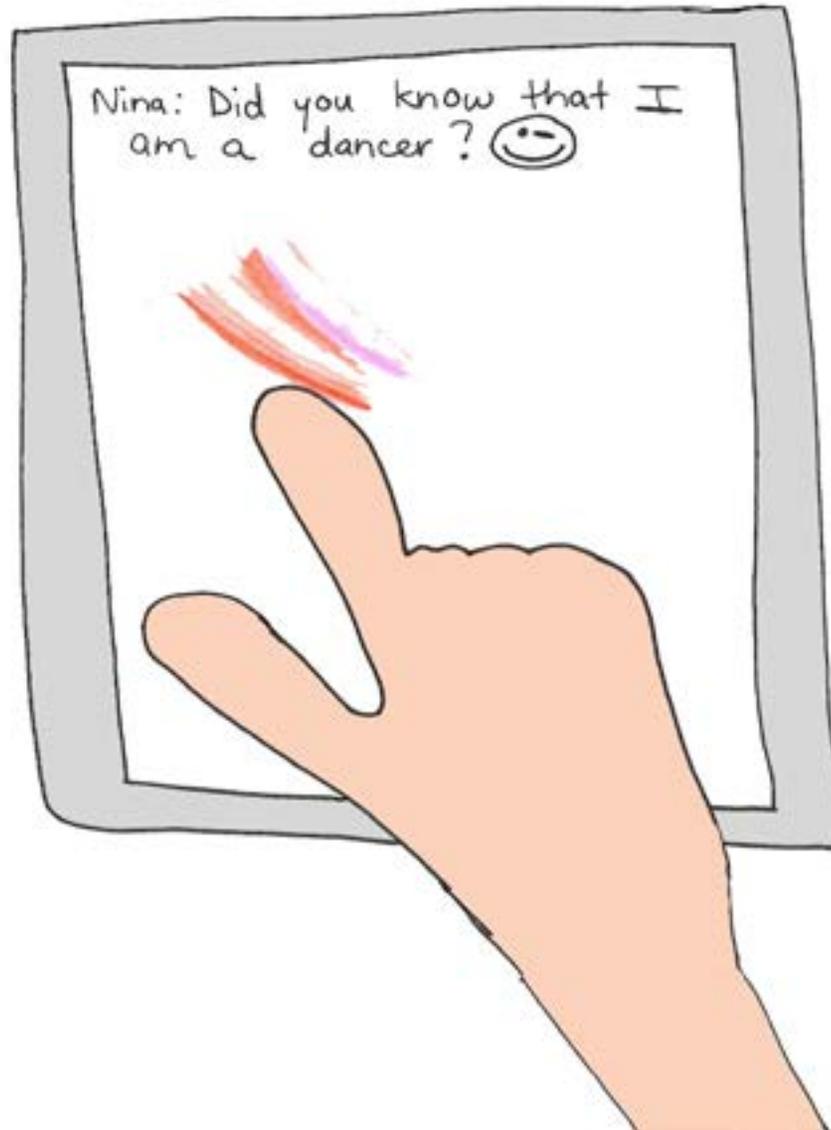
His phone notices the word "danced" and the band "Razer." It suggests including a vibration of one of Razer's songs that Kurt has on his phone.



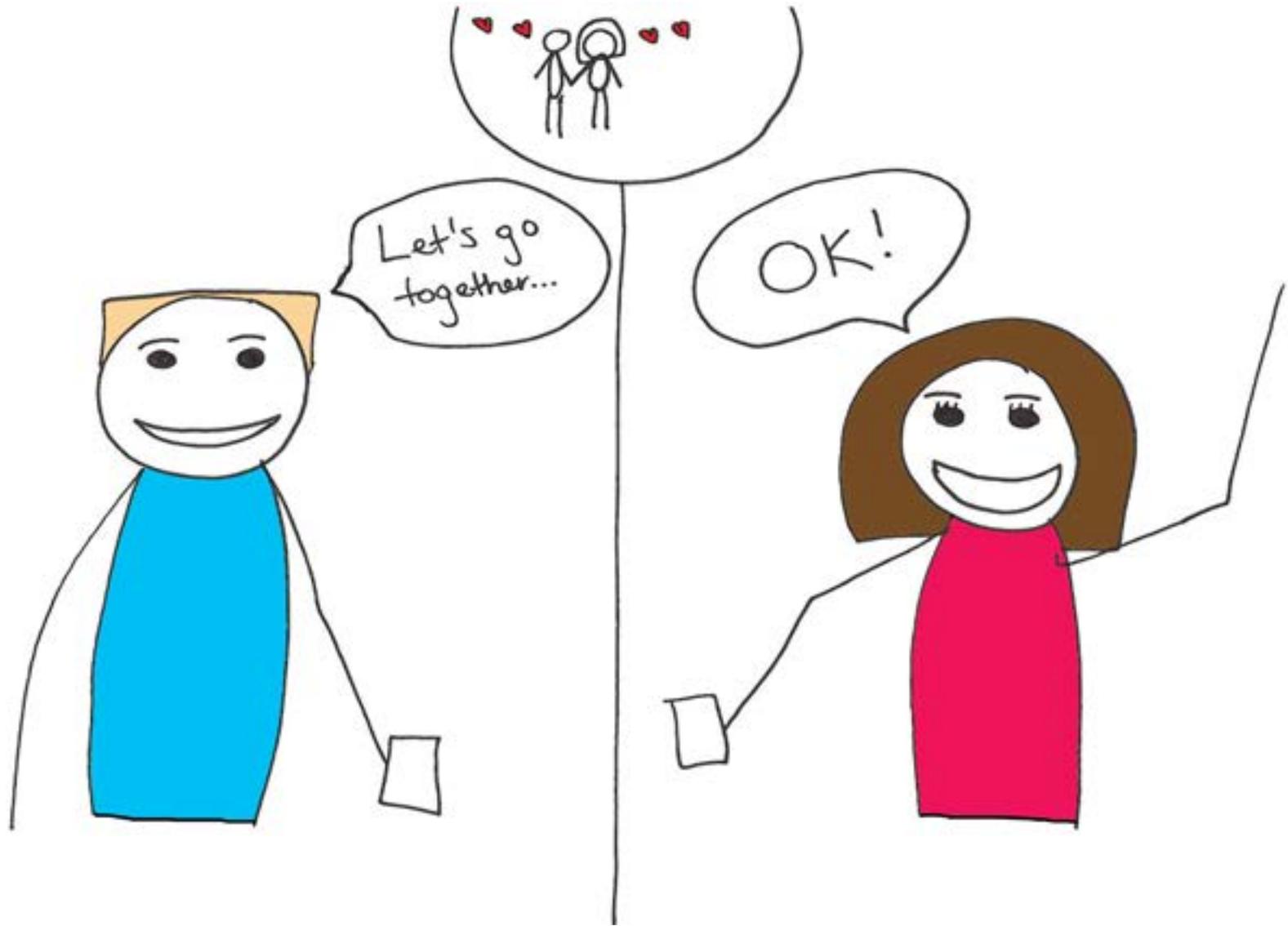
Nina feels the vibration of the song when placing her hand on her phone's screen, and gets the hint.



She responds with a flirtatious text message and a flashy visual effect, which she creates by pressing on the screen with varying degrees of force.



Kurt asks Nina to accompany him to the show, and they are both excited about their plans.



Nina has a great time with Kurt that weekend, but falls behind on her work. When Kurt texts her to see how she is doing, Nina is a little bit moody.



Nina sends a sarcastic response and a vibration that ends with a crashing explosion.



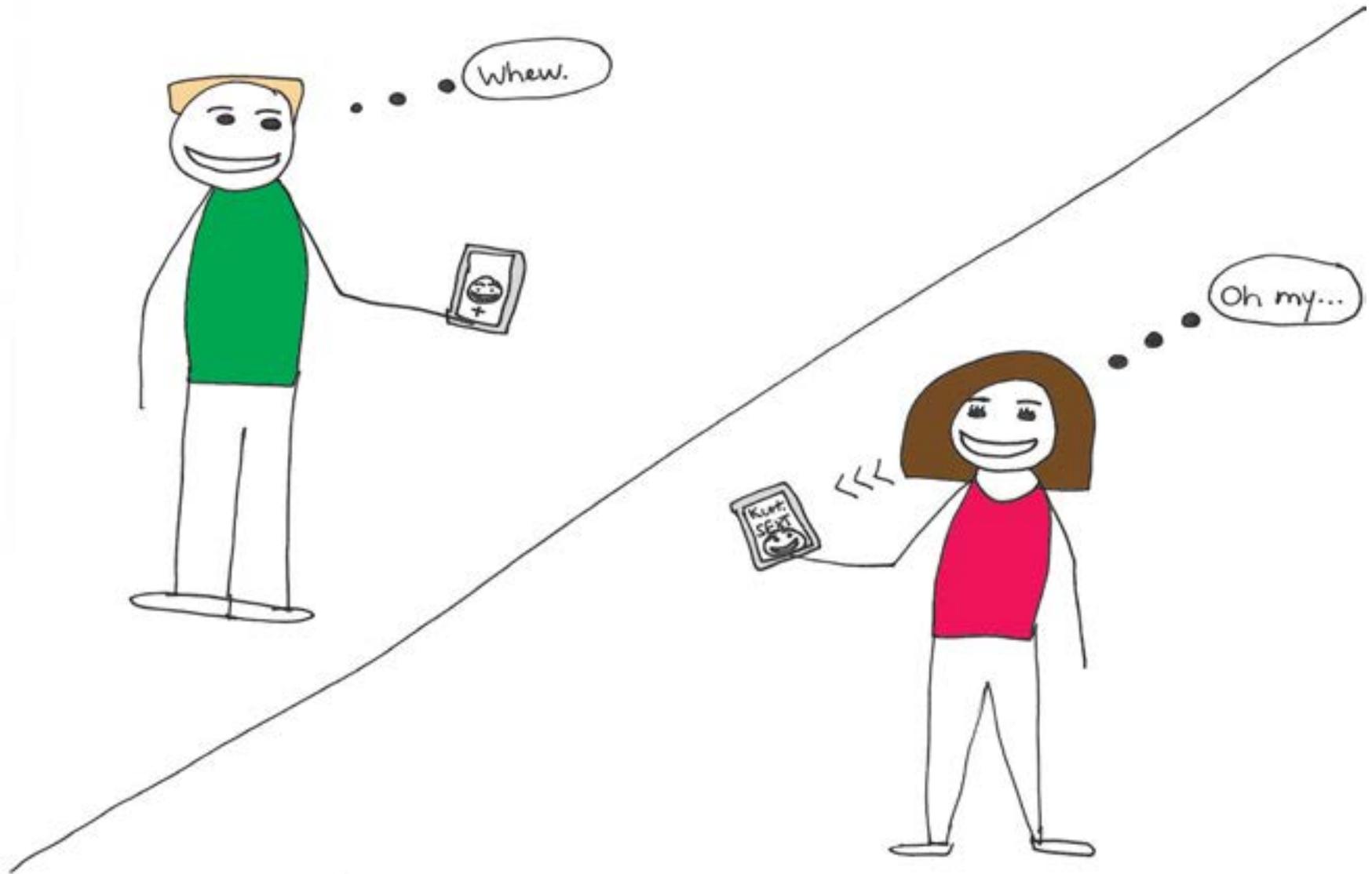
Kurt picks up on the sarcasm, and takes her out to their favorite restaurant later that evening.



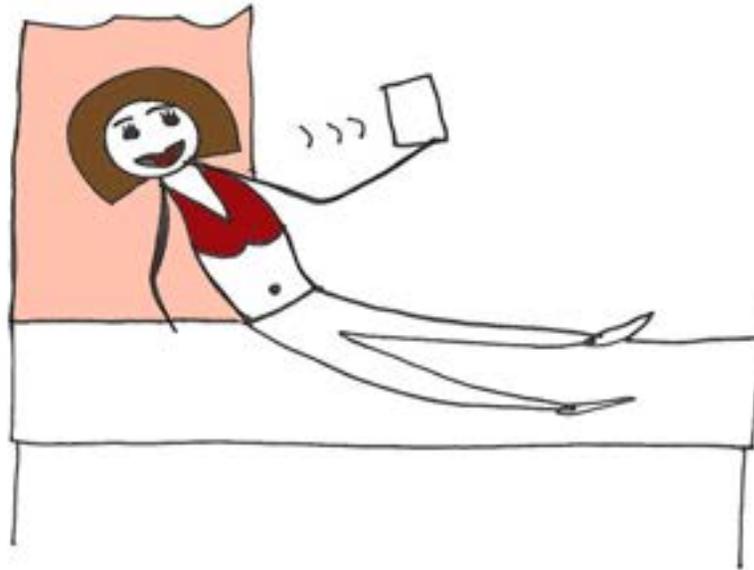
After they graduate and begin working full-time, Kurt and Nina's sex life slows down a little bit. Kurt decides to send Nina a sext, and anxiously awaits her reply.



Luckily, Nina has emotion recognition enabled on her mobile device and Kurt is able to see an outline of her positive reaction.



Nina decides to send a sexy photo of herself in return.



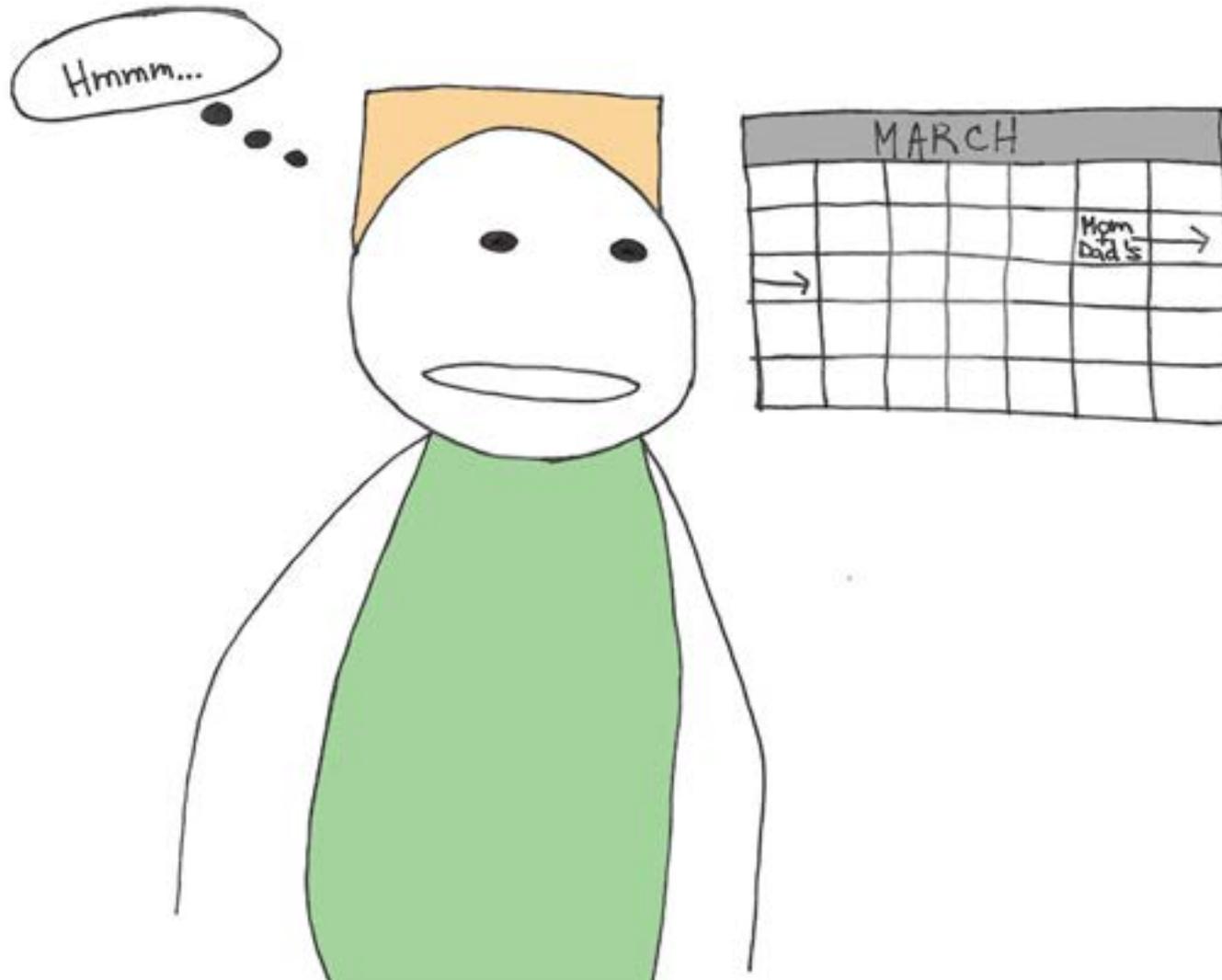
She marks the photo as private, so that Kurt doesn't get in trouble when receiving it at work.



Kurt receives the photo. When his co-workers walk by, his phone senses their proximity and eye gaze and the photo temporarily disappears.



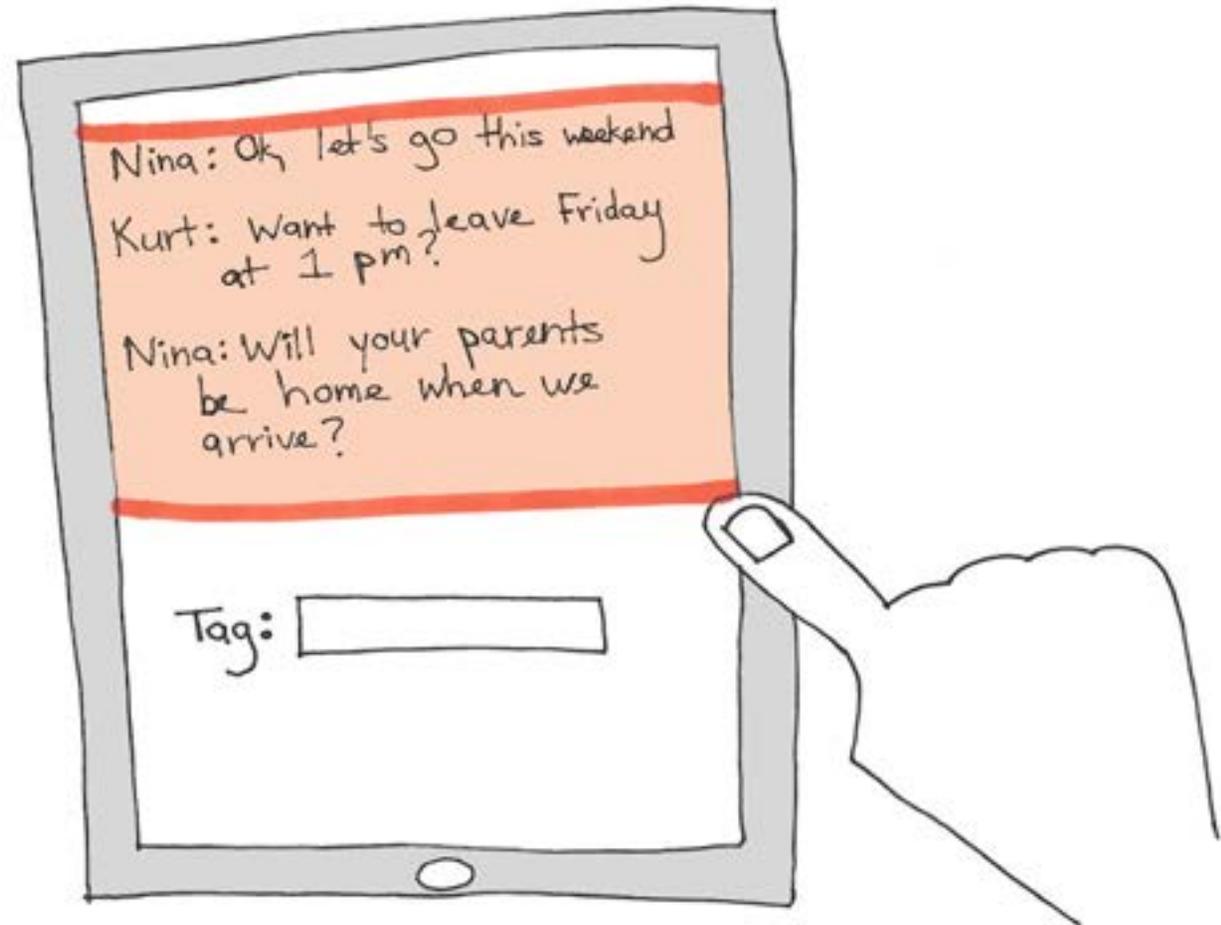
Kurt begins to feel that his and Nina's relationship is getting more serious, and decides to invite her to accompany him in visiting his parents the following weekend.



The idea of meeting Kurt's parents makes Nina a little nervous. She needs some time to decide, so she marks the message as "Thinking about it."



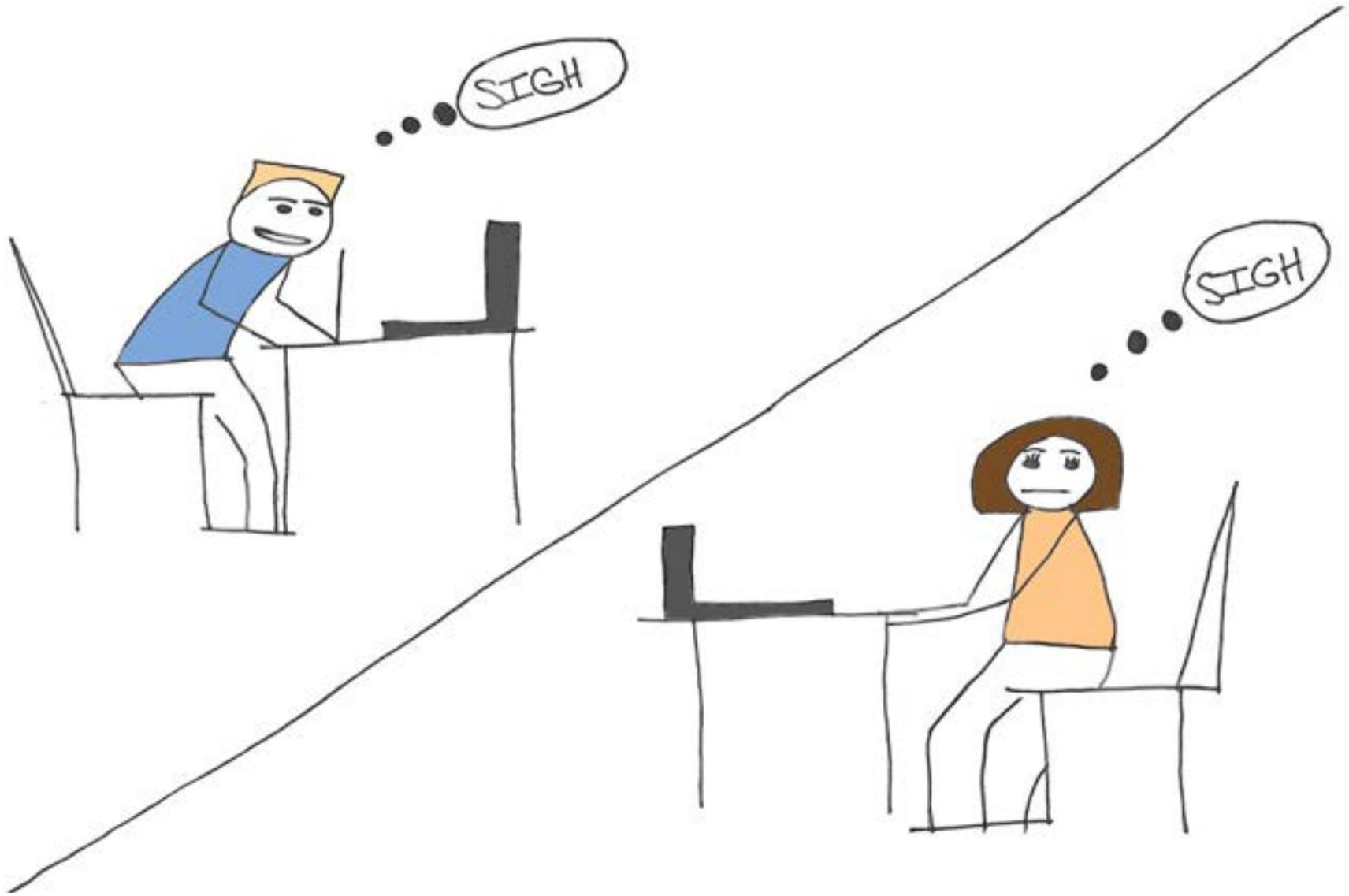
Nina finally agrees, and they begin making plans. Kurt decides to bring his parents into the conversation by marking the relevant start and end points, and tagging them in.



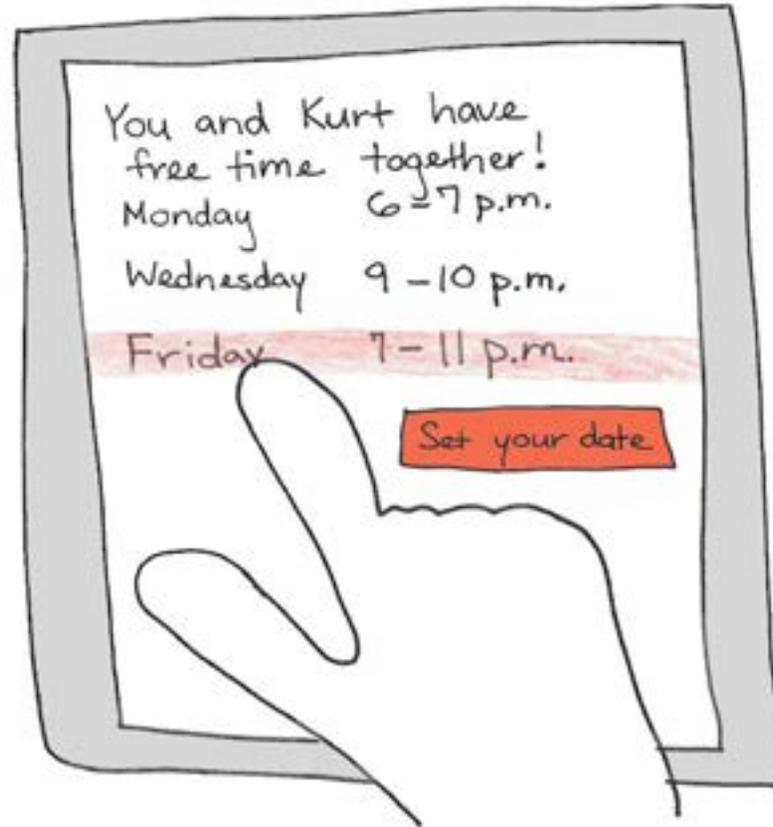
Nina, Kurt, and Kurt's parents finalize their plans together in one conversation.



Kurt and Nina have a great weekend, but come home to their busy and hectic lives. They barely have time to go out and have fun with each other anymore.



Nina checks their shared calendar and notices a chunk of free time on Friday that they both have available. She clicks on it to set a date.



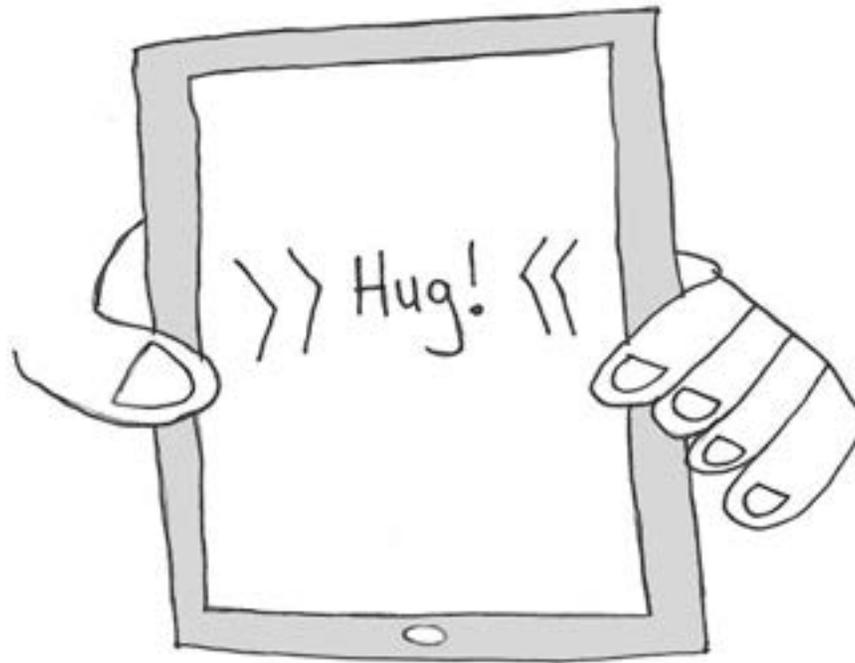
Kurt receives a photo of Nina along with a notification of their upcoming date.



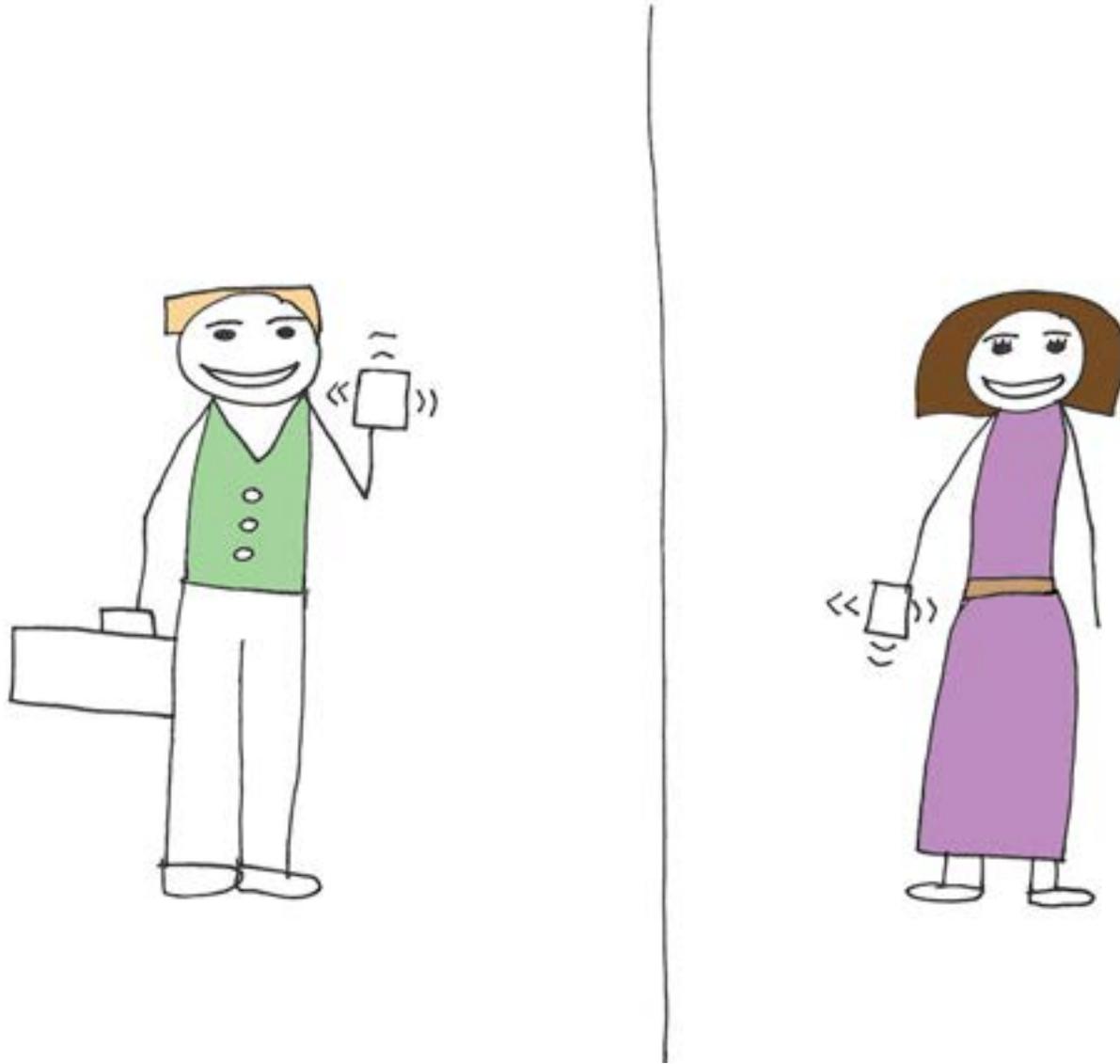
The following week, Kurt goes away on a business trip. Nina is upset about her job. Kurt usually hugs her when she is upset, and wants to make her feel better.



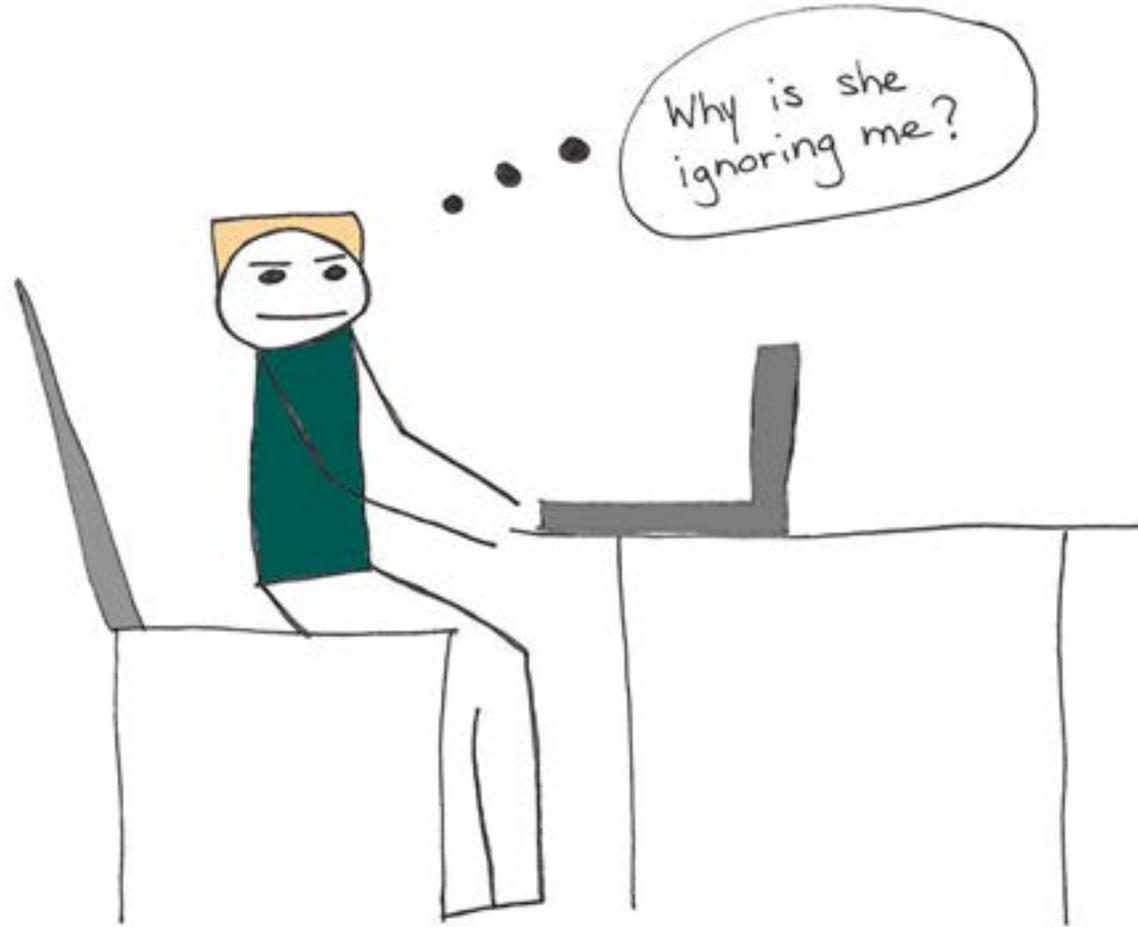
He squeezes his phone to initiate a 'hug.'



They both feel vibratory resistance as they squeeze each other.



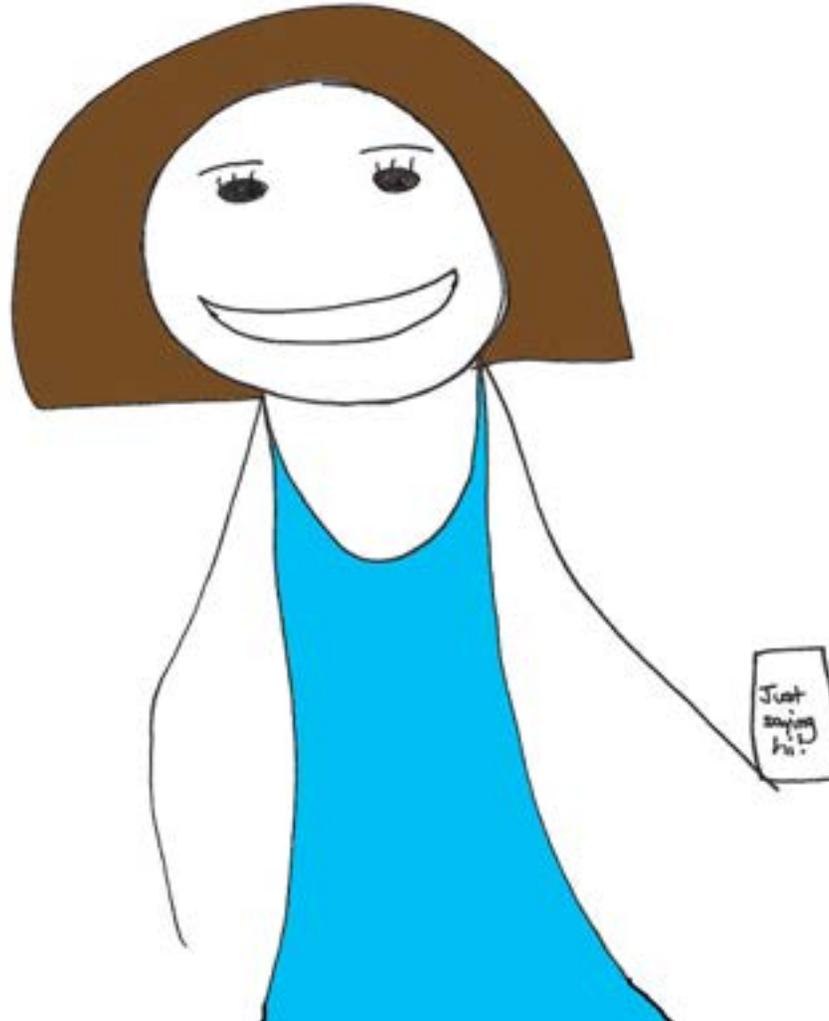
Kurt and Nina sometimes have their differences. Kurt prefers communicating via e-mail, but his messages often get lost in the pile when Nina is busy at work.



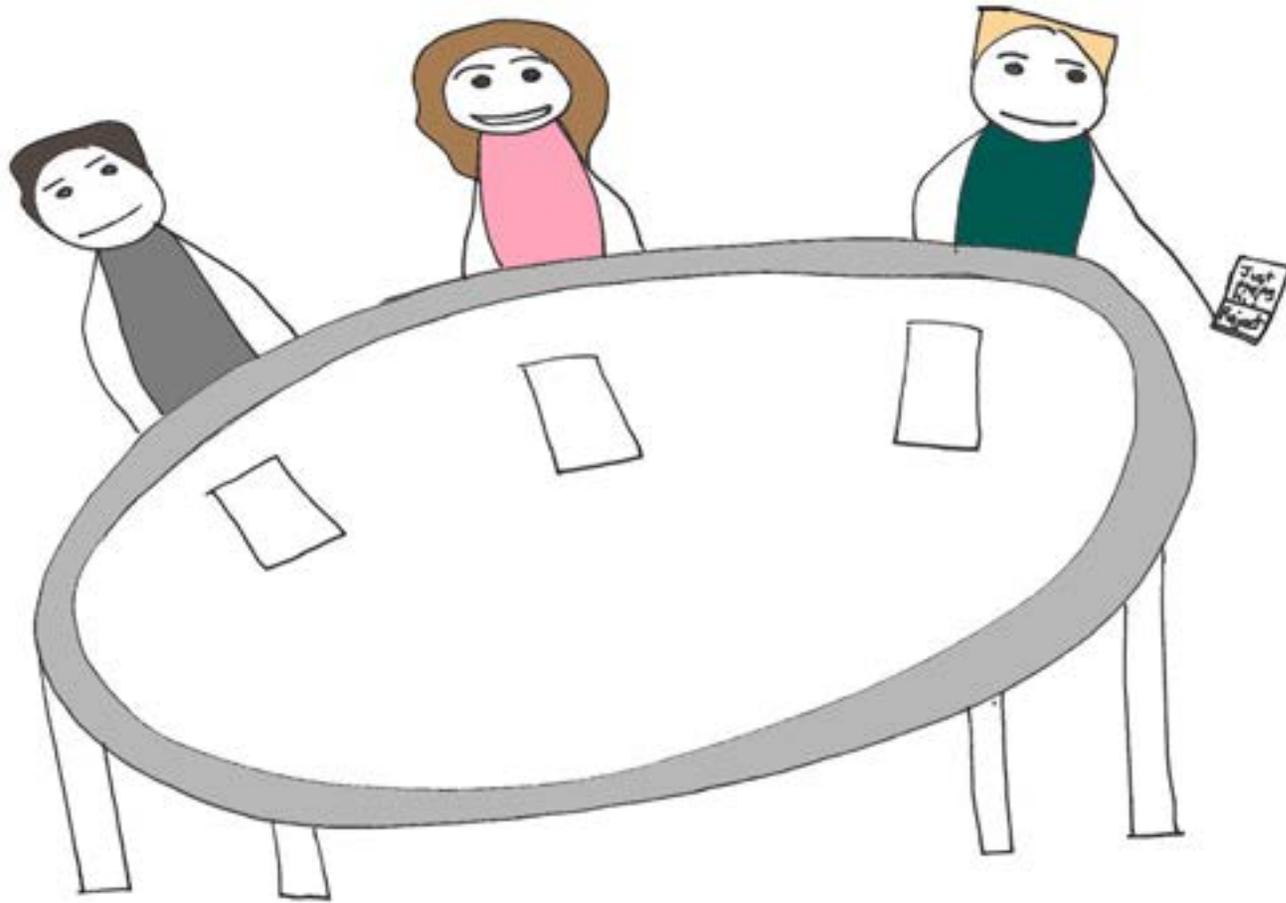
As Nina scrolls through her messages, Kurt's e-mail vibrates and flashes red.



Nina reads the e-mail and gets the impression that Kurt misses her. She presses the "Just calling to say hi" option on her phone.



Kurt is in a meeting when his phone vibrates. He notices that Nina is just calling to say hi, so he rejects her call.



Kurt calls Nina back when his meeting is over, and they have a nice conversation.



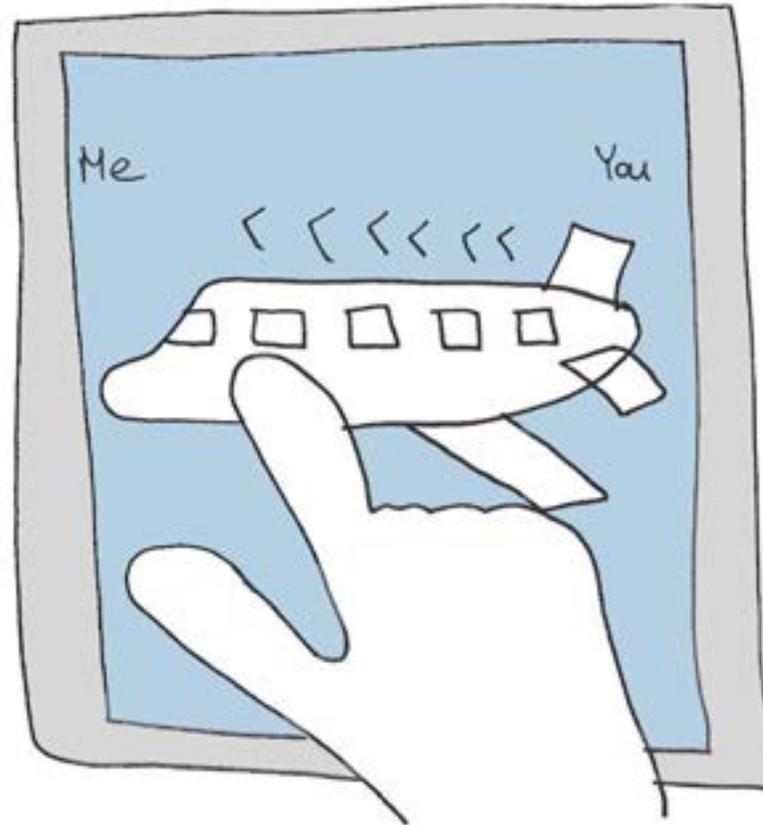
Nina receives the opportunity to transfer to a higher position in a different city. She is thrilled that things are looking up. Kurt decides to stay behind in their hometown.



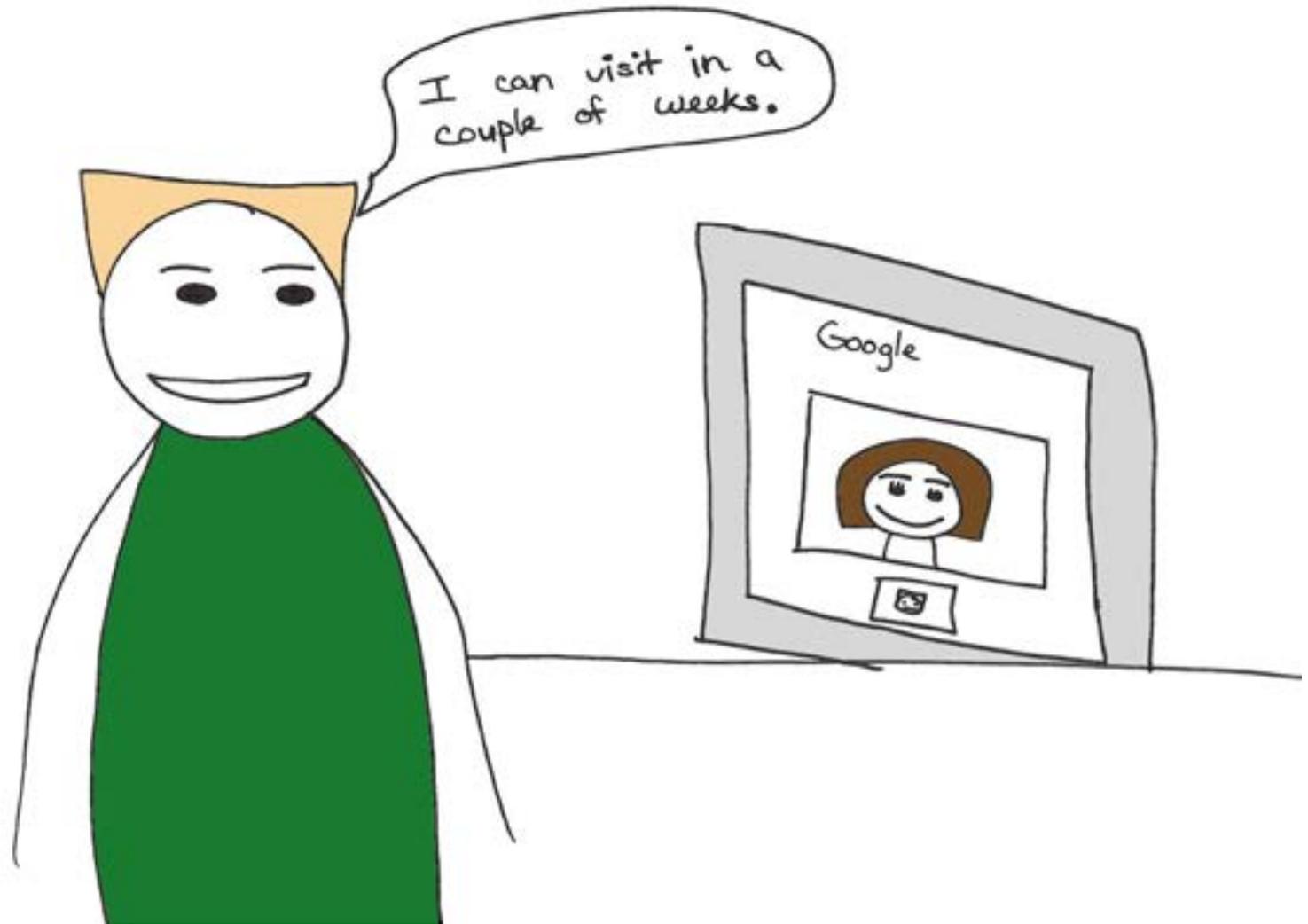
Nina makes the move, but misses Kurt a lot. She wants him to visit her as soon as possible.



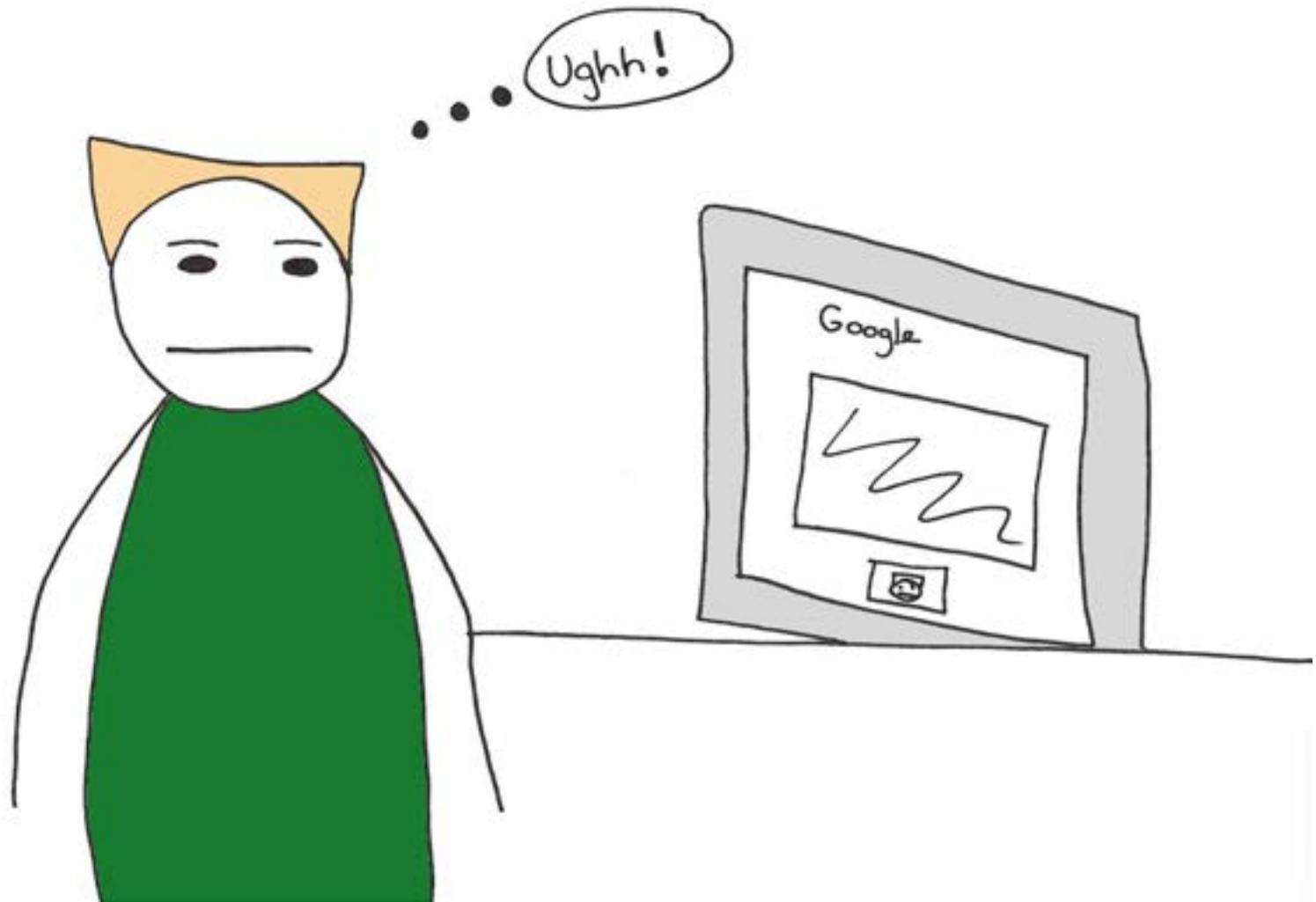
She draws a quick sketch of an airplane flying between him and her, including a screen vibration that travels in her direction.



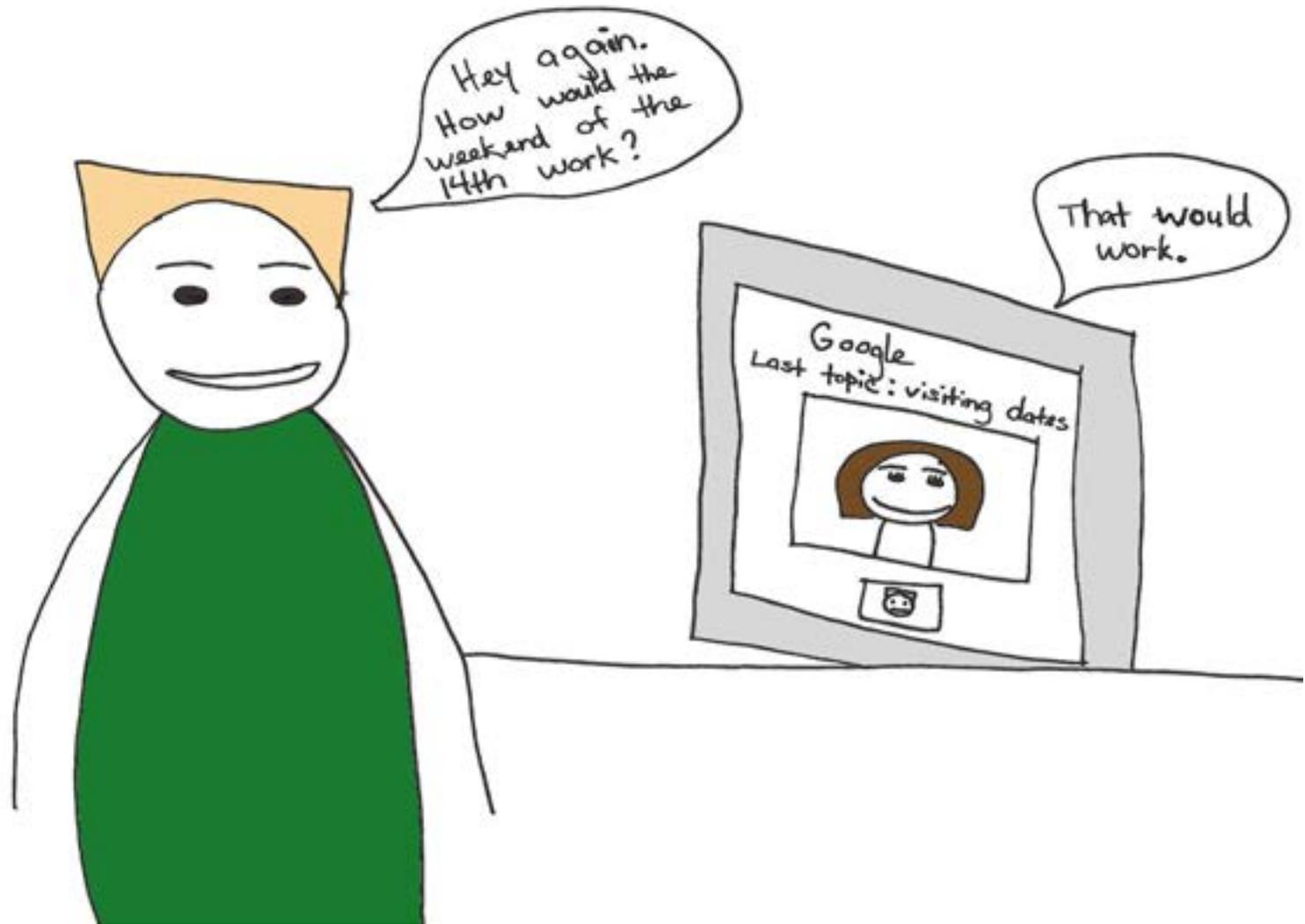
Later that evening while video chatting, they discuss the best dates for his visit.



As usual, their connection is lost.



When they start video chatting again, Kurt receives a textual cue about their previous conversation.



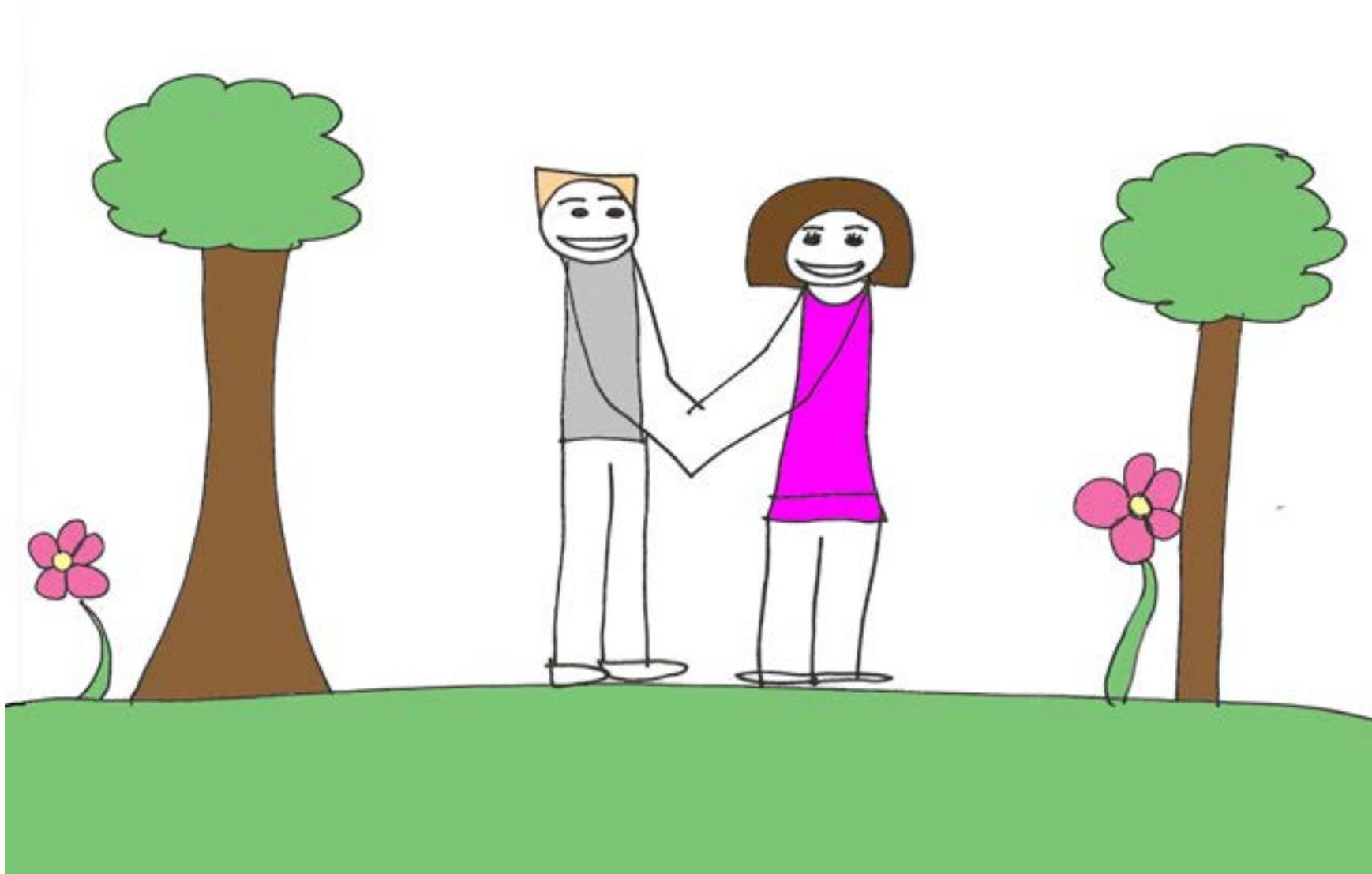
Kurt begins working overtime to compensate for the time he must take off to visit Nina. As he has his typical evening chat with Nina, he begins to drift asleep.



His phone senses his loosening grip, and vibrates. Kurt remains awake to finish the conversation.



Kurt and Nina are happily re-united, and have a nice weekend sightseeing in Nina's new city.



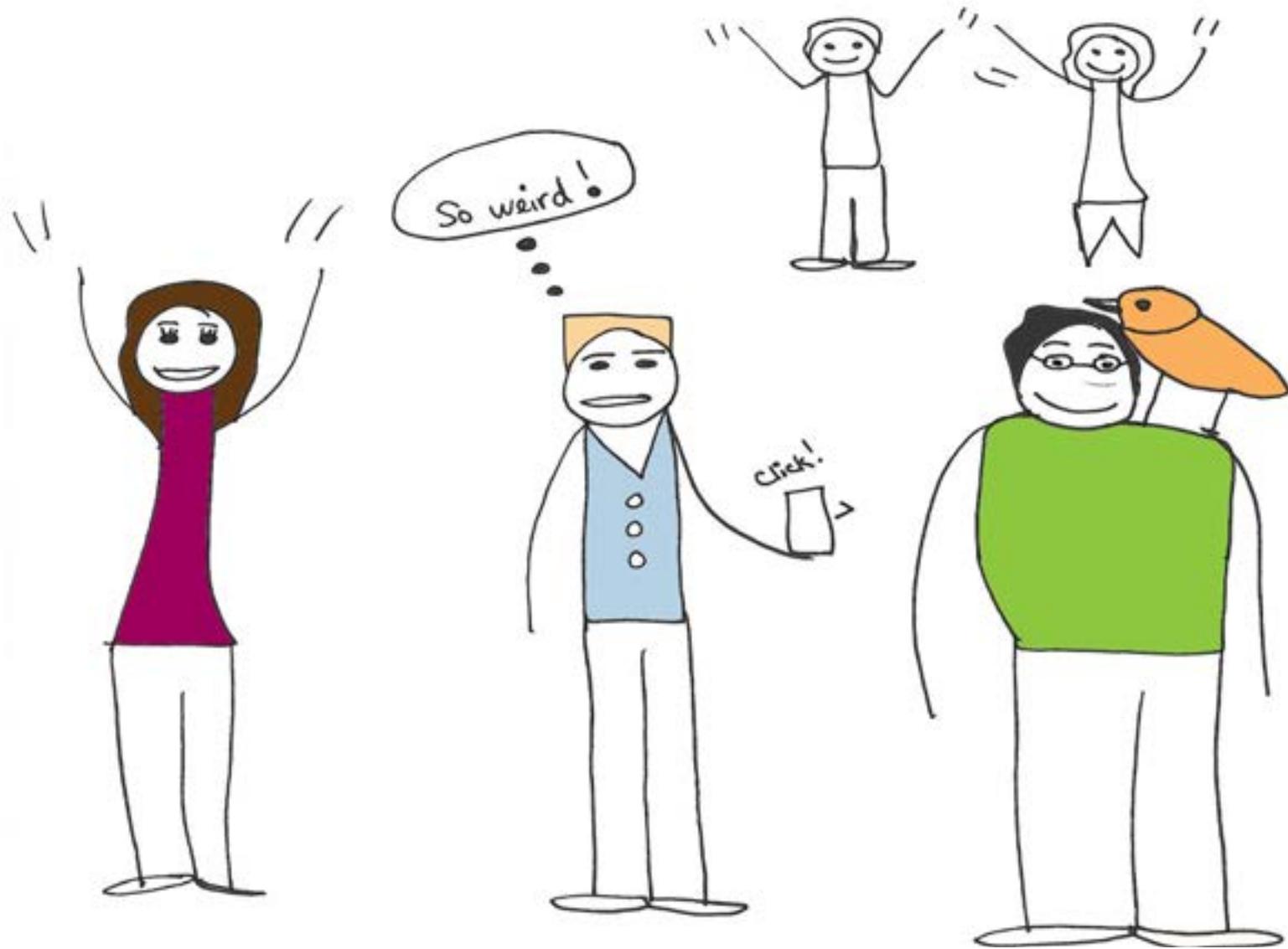
The following week, Kurt must travel for business and has less time than usual to talk to Nina.



Nina is home alone, thinking of all the fun Kurt must be having with his co-workers.



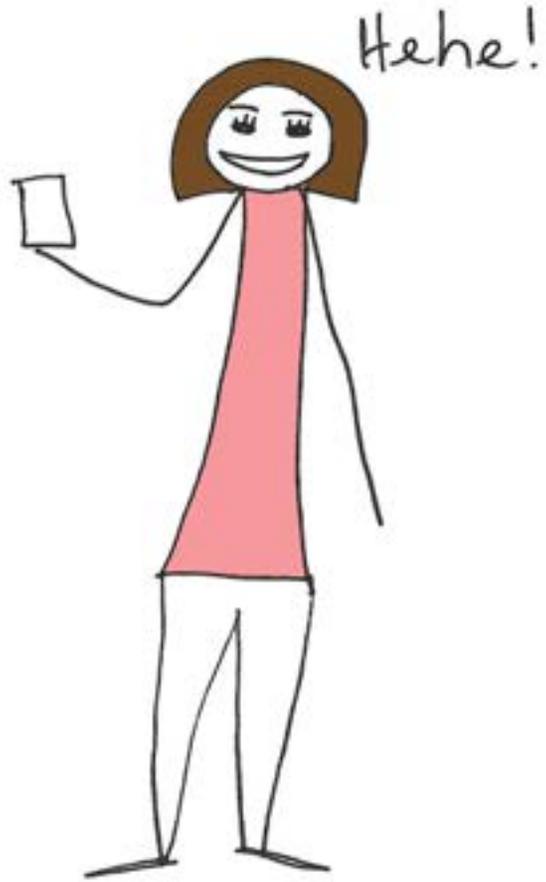
Kurt doesn't want Nina to feel left out, so he sends her a live video stream of the bar he is partying at.



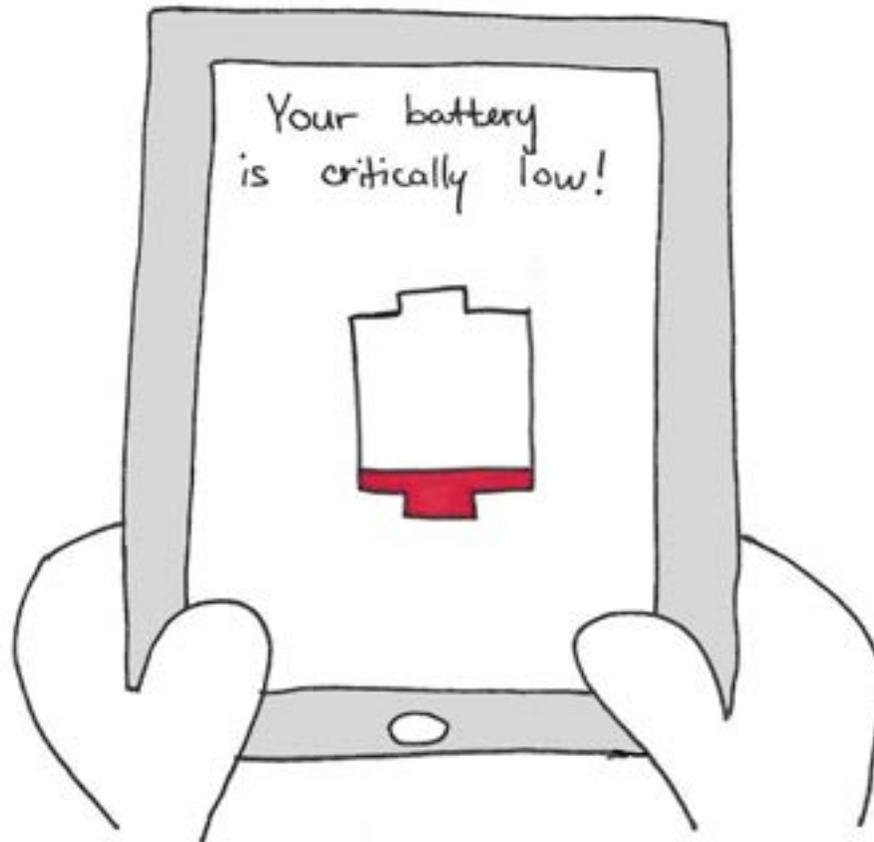
Nina notices a guy with a bird on his shoulder. Bizarre! She circles the bird and makes a comment about it.



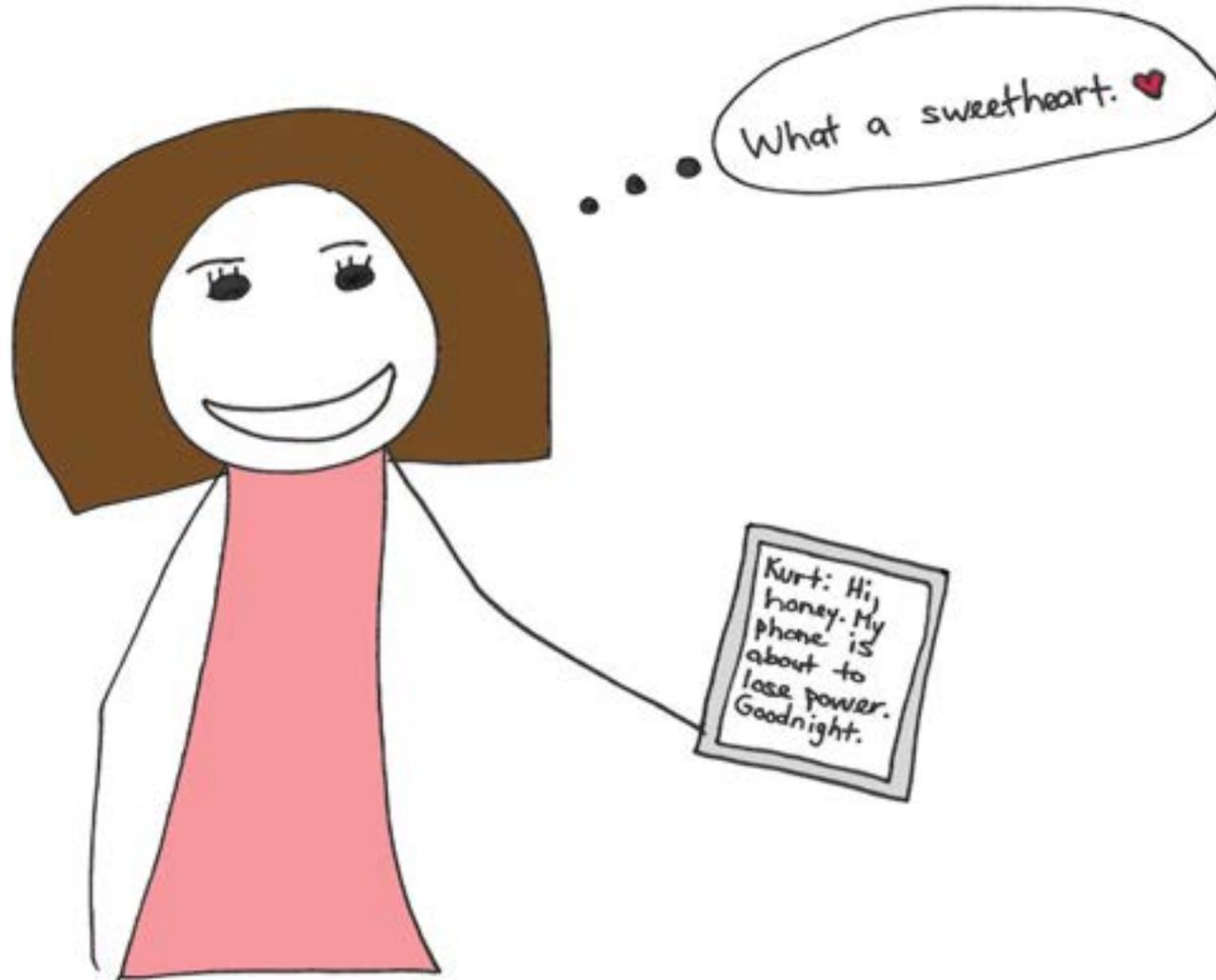
The bird vibrates on Kurt's screen. Kurt and Nina joke back and forth about the odd situation. It feels like they are together.



Later that evening when Kurt's phone is about to die, it automatically sends a "Goodnight" message to Nina.



Nina goes to bed, happy that Kurt texted her goodnight and knowing that he is alright.

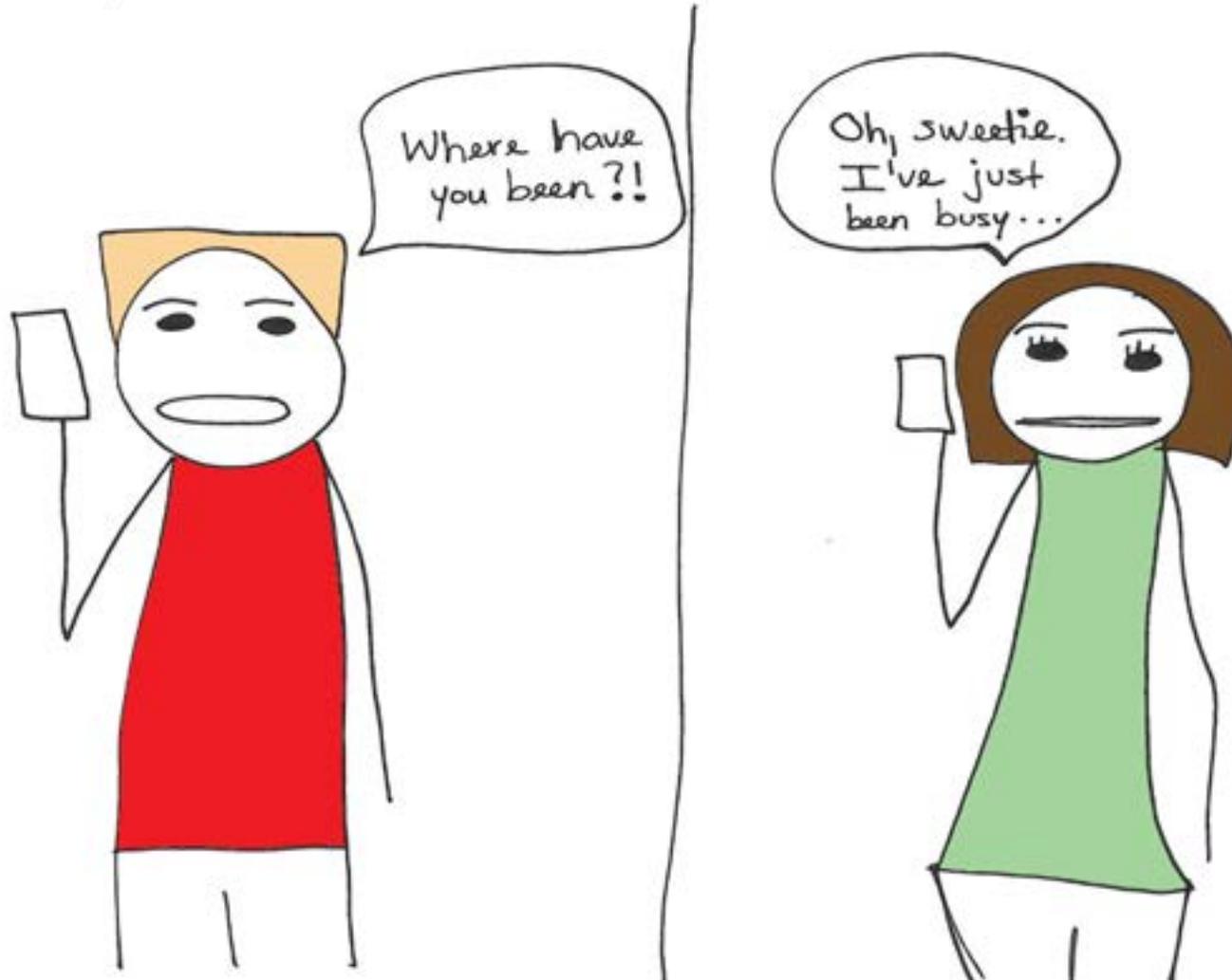


As time goes on, Nina makes friends in her new city and becomes less available to talk to Kurt.

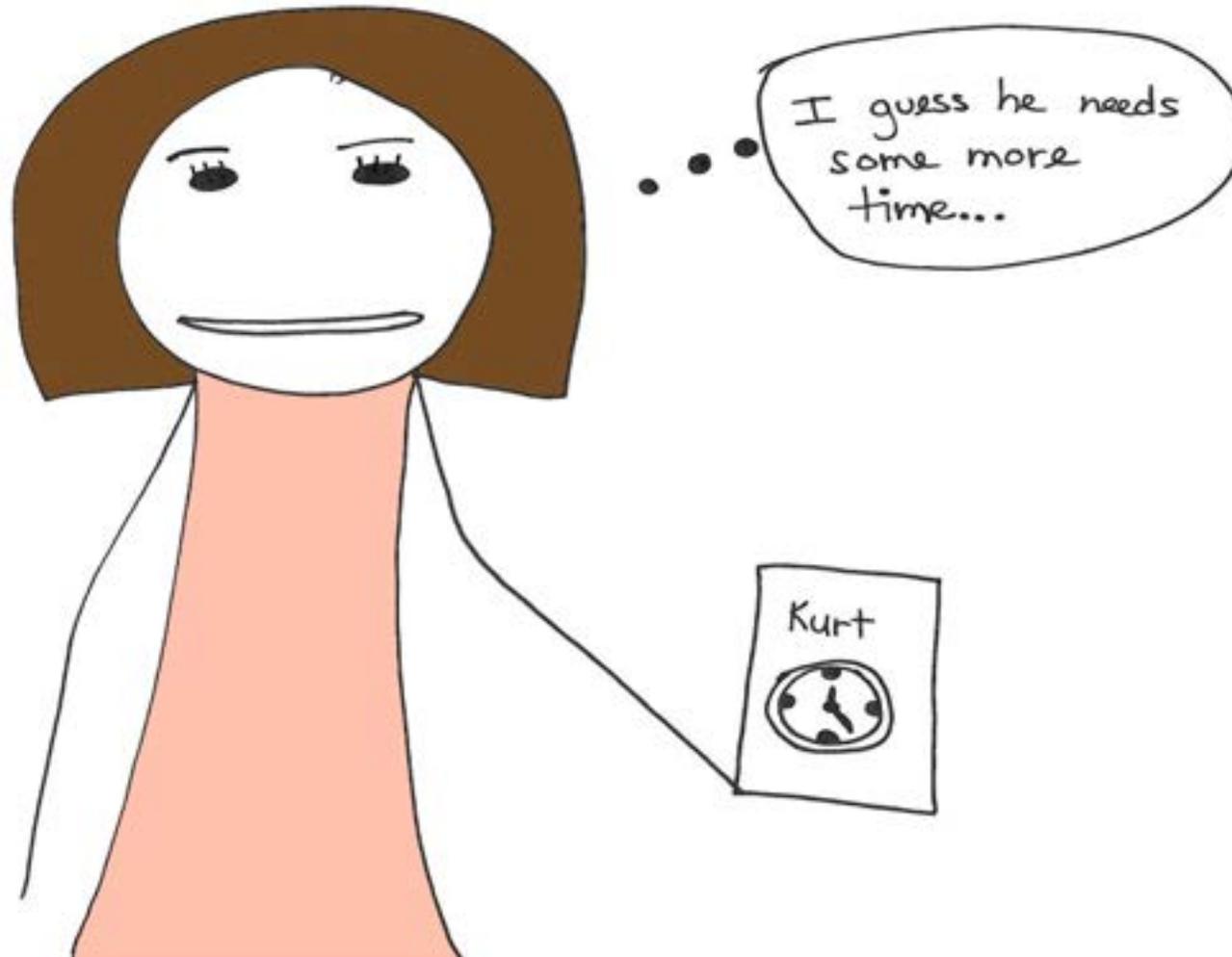


After not hearing back from Nina for 2 days, Kurt calls her again and they have a big fight.

2 days later...



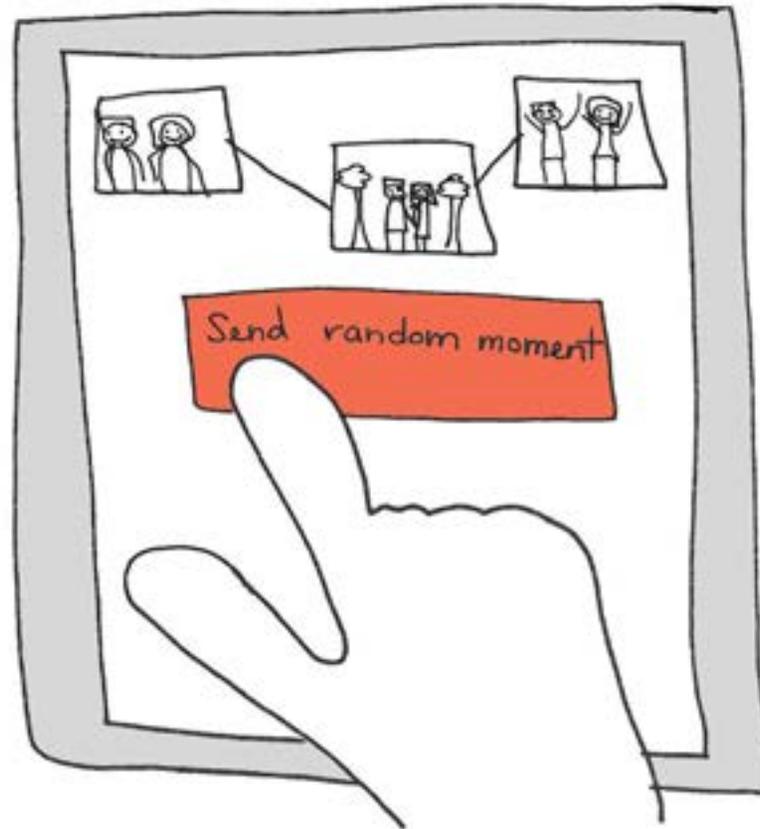
Kurt is upset and turns on the "Need some time" icon. Nina decides to give him his space.



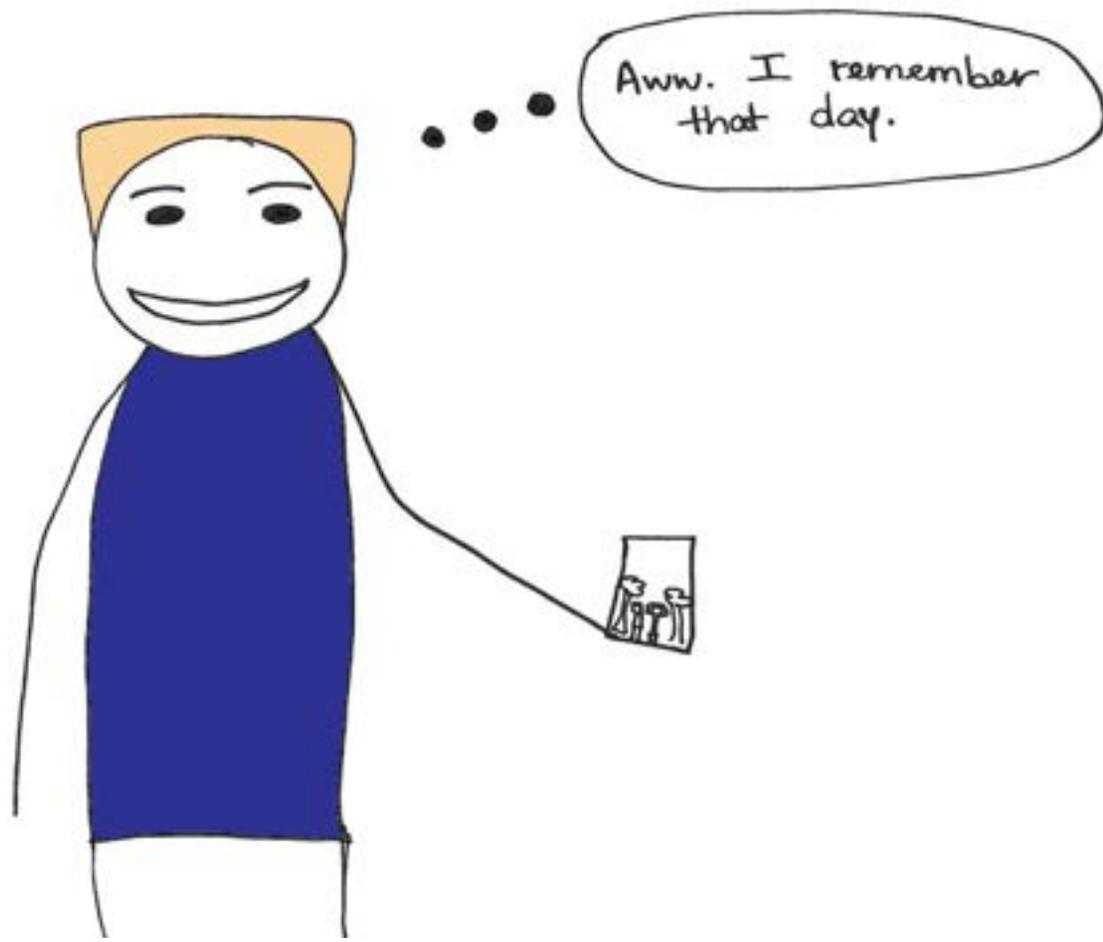
A few days later, Nina notices that the icon is almost completely faded away and that Kurt has listed his preferred method of communication as text message.



Nina decides to send Kurt a random moment from their past.

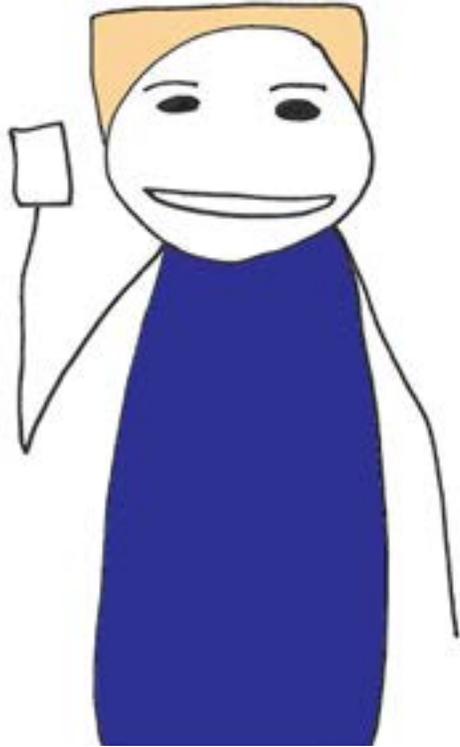


Kurt receives a photo from a vacation they were on, and it makes him smile.



Kurt calls Nina, and they begin planning another weekend when he can visit her.

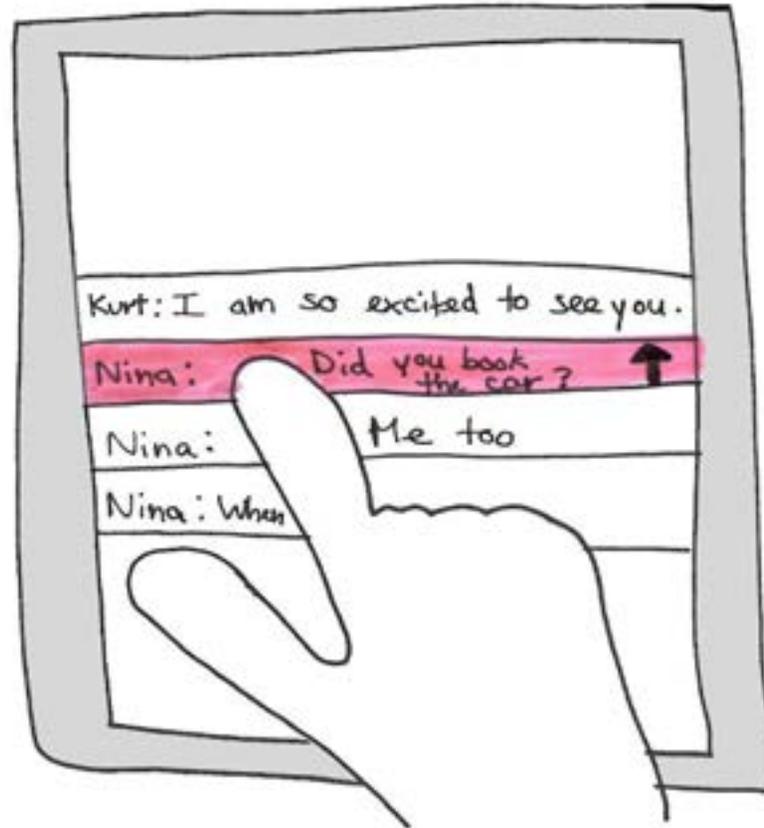
I'm coming to see you.
We'll get a rental car
and take a small
trip. It will be fun.



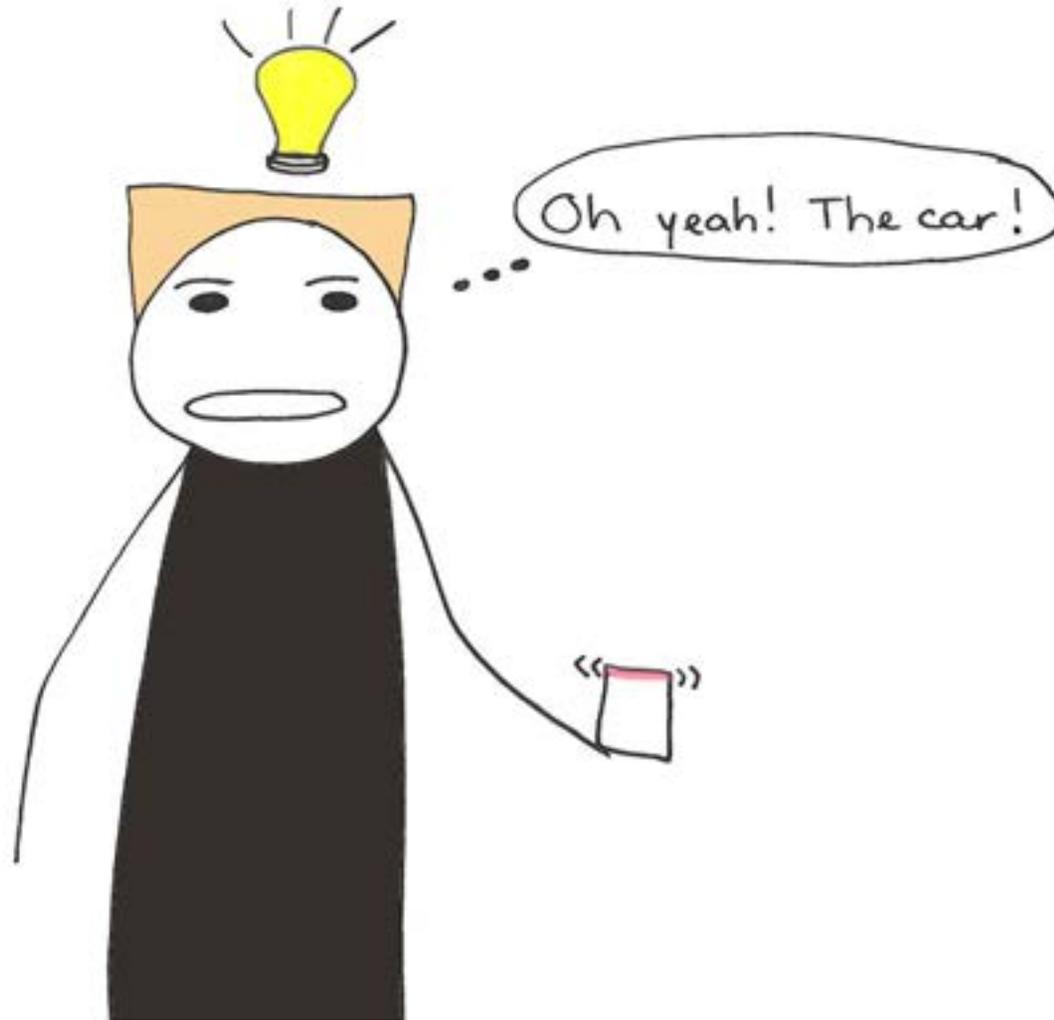
Ok, sweetie. Let
me know when
you book the car.



The next day, Kurt still hasn't responded to Nina's inquiry about the rental car among their many texts. Nina "bumps" the text message by dragging it upwards.



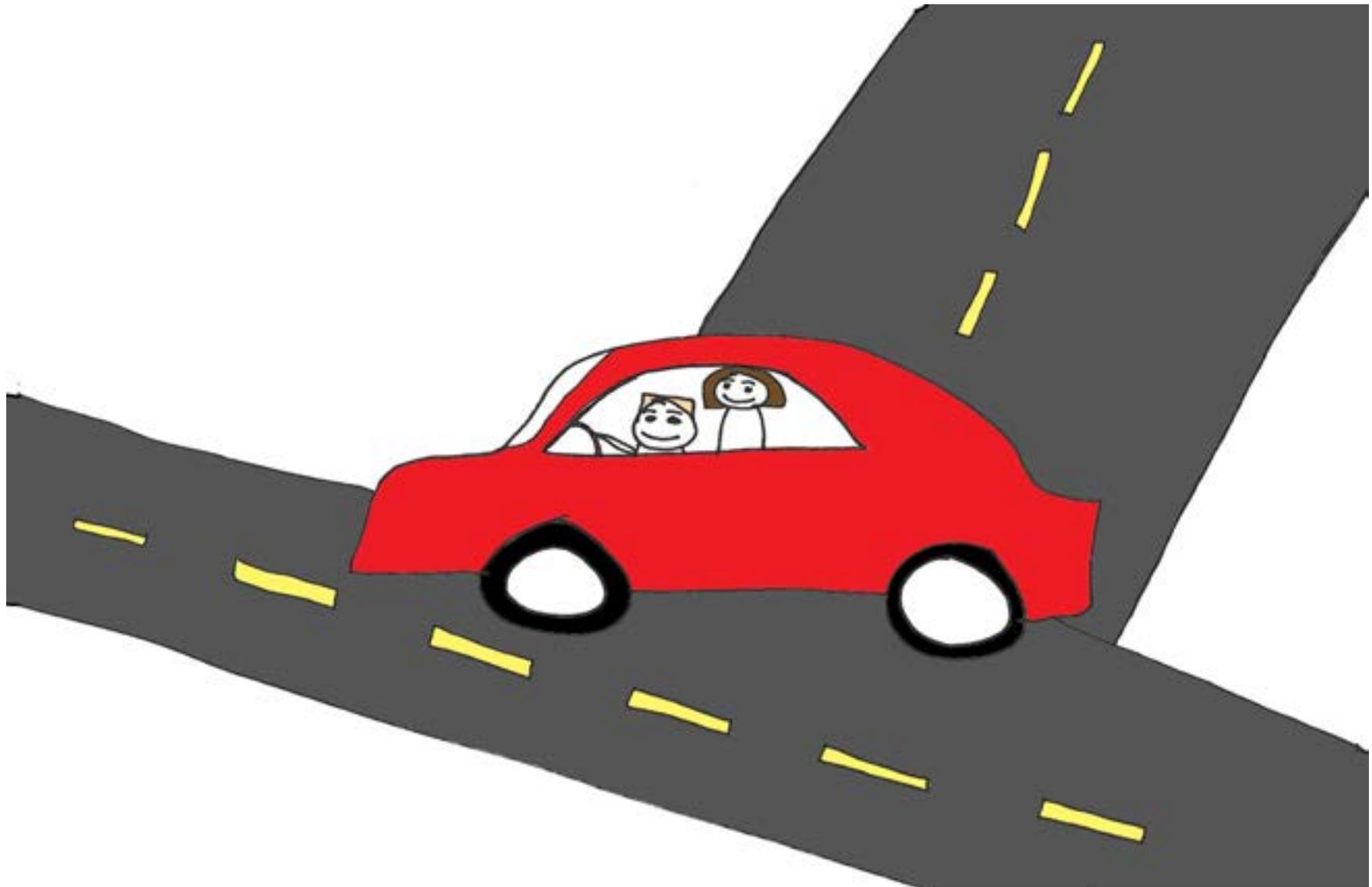
The message vibrates and is highlighted at the top of their conversation so that Kurt notices.



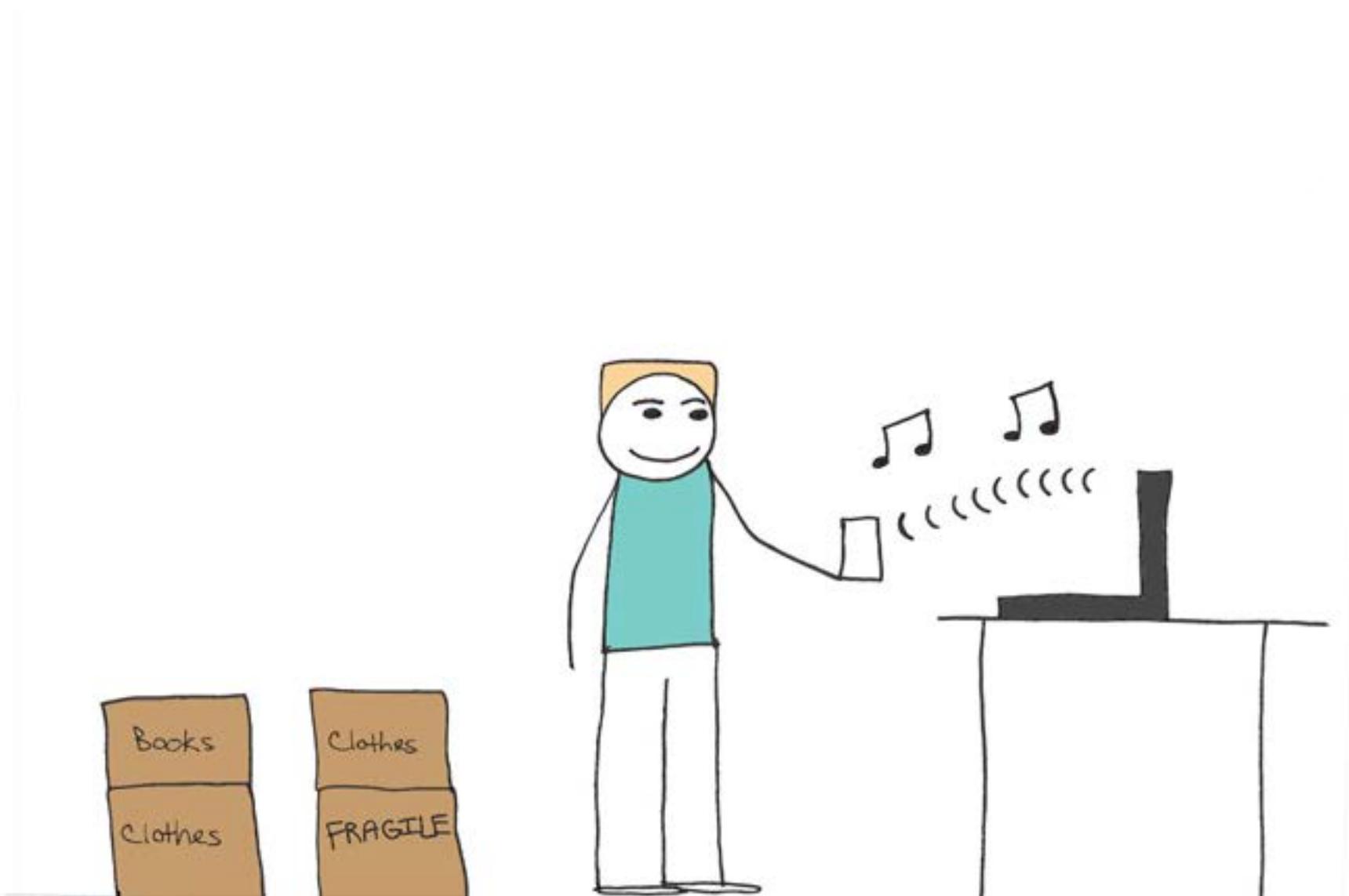
Kurt and Nina are thrilled to be with each other in person again. Kurt breaks the news that he has decided to move to her city.



They have an amazing weekend, exploring sites and nearby towns.



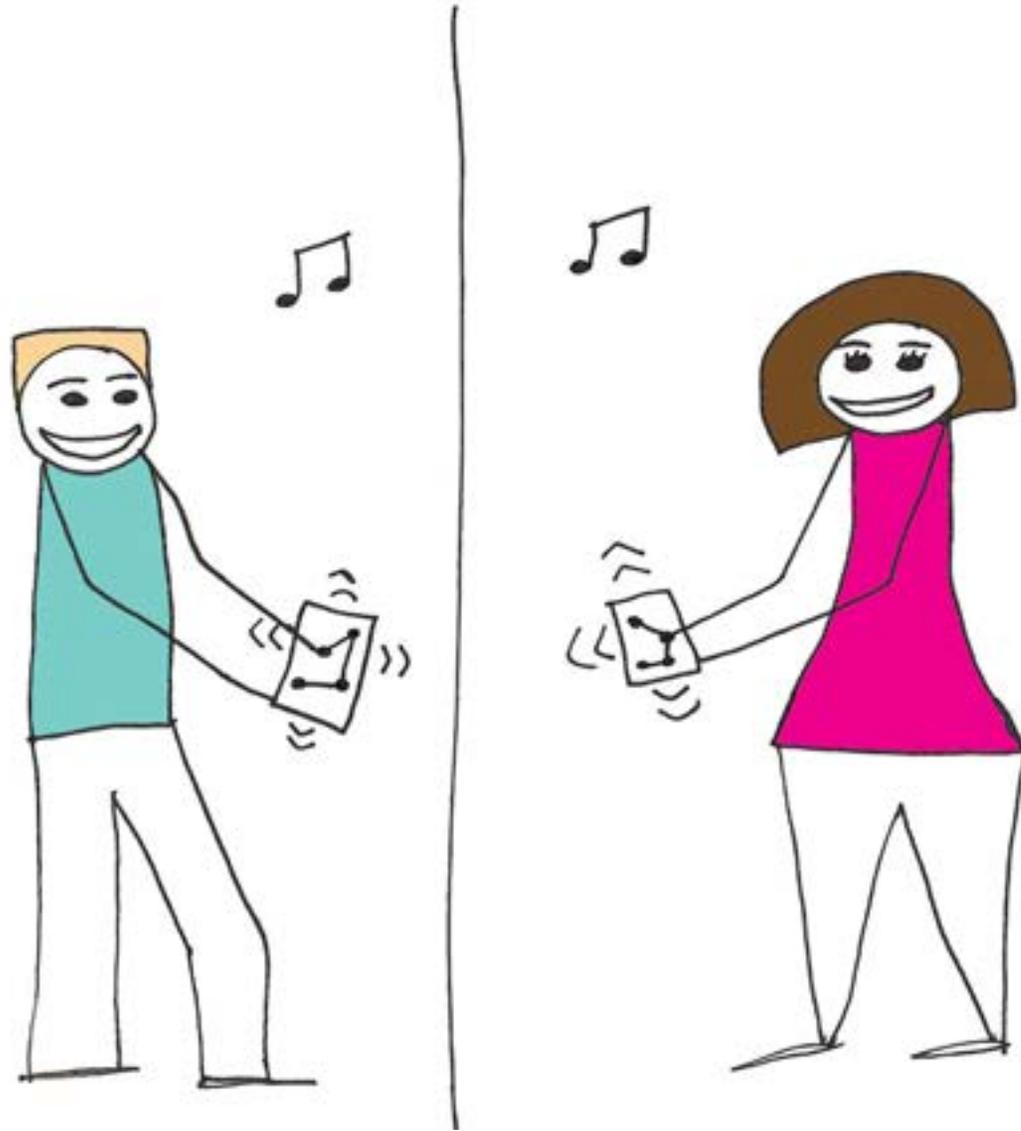
When Kurt arrives home, he begins packing. The Razer song from his first date with Nina comes on Pandora. Kurt sends the song as a ringtone to Nina.



Nina hears the song. When she answers her phone, a dance floor appears.



Kurt and Nina move their fingers around the screen and touch each other as they "dance" to the song by making vibrations.



When the song ends, Nina opens up her drawing pad to send a message to Kurt.



The End.

