

QUEER WHAT IS HOME?

AND WHY SHOULD WE CARE AS SERVICE PROVIDERS?



THIS COMIC FOLLOWS FIVE QUEER VOICES, EACH OFFERING A DIFFERENT ANSWER TO WHAT HOME MEANS, AND WHAT MULTI-AGENCY CARE, HEALTH AND HOUSING PRACTITIONERS MUST KNOW WHEN THEY ENTER SOMEONE'S HOME, OR OFFER ONE.

HOME IS WHERE IT ALL COMES TOGETHER

THIS COMIC, AND THE RESEARCH IT'S BASED ON, APPROACHES **HOME** THROUGH A MULTI-SERVICES LENS.

THAT'S BECAUSE FOR MANY PEOPLE - PARTICULARLY LGBTQ+ FOLK NAVIGATING DIRECT, CULTURAL, AND STRUCTURAL HARMS - **HOME IS NOT JUST A PLACE TO LIVE, BUT A SITE WHERE CARE, SAFETY, HEALTH, AND WELLBEING CONVERGE**, POTENTIALLY MAKING WAY FOR QUEER KINSHIP, JOY AND BELONGING.

SOCIAL CARE, HOUSING, AND HEALTH SERVICES EACH TOUCH THE HOME IN DIFFERENT WAYS, YET TOO OFTEN OPERATE IN SILOS THAT FAIL TO ACCOUNT FOR THE COMPLEXITY OF PEOPLE'S LIVED EXPERIENCES.

A FRAGMENTED APPROACH RISKS REPLICATING HARM - ASSUMING, FOR INSTANCE, THAT SAFE HOUSING ALONE EQUATES TO EMOTIONAL SECURITY, OR THAT HEALTH INTERVENTIONS CAN OCCUR WITHOUT ATTENDING TO DOMESTIC INSTABILITY.



RETHINKING HOME

PRACTITIONERS ACROSS THESE SECTORS MUST WORK COLLABORATIVELY TO SUPPORT HOME NOT ONLY AS A ROOF OVER SOMEONE'S HEAD, BUT AS A **SOCIALLY AND EMOTIONALLY MEANINGFUL SPACE**.

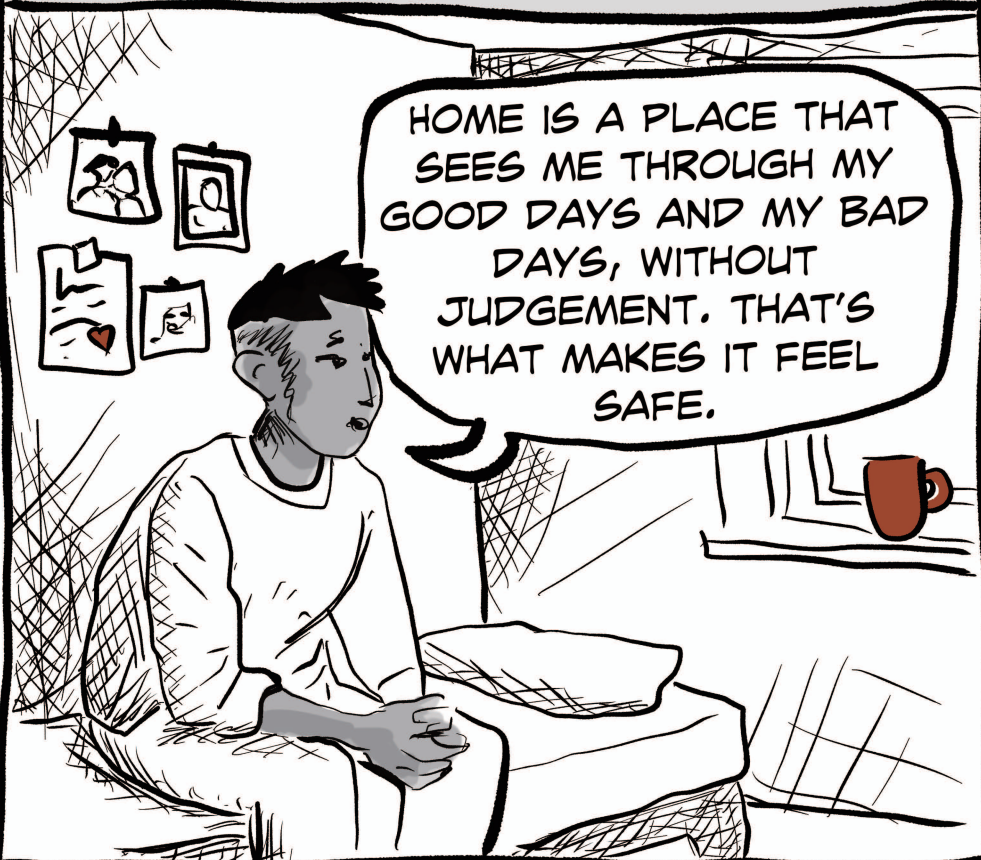
THIS MIGHT MEAN **PRIORITISING CONTINUITY, SHARED DECISION-MAKING, AND THE AFFIRMATION OF DIVERSE IDENTITIES**, AS YOU'LL SEE IN THE VIGNETTES THAT FOLLOW.



WHAT WOULD IT LOOK LIKE IF PRACTITIONERS WERE SUPPORTED TO ASK NOT JUST, "IS THIS PERSON HOUSED?" OR "ARE THEY RECEIVING CARE?" BUT ALSO **"DOES THIS PERSON FEEL AT HOME?"** ... AND TO RESPOND IN WAYS THAT REFLECT THE FULL TEXTURE OF WHAT THAT MIGHT MEAN?

WHAT RESOURCES AND SYSTEMIC CHANGES ARE NEEDED TO HELP US ACHIEVE THIS?

SINCE LEAVING CARE LAST YEAR, RAFI, 26, HAS BEEN MOVED SIX TIMES. FOR THEM, HOME ISN'T A PLACE. IT'S THE EMOTIONAL ANCHOR FOUND IN PRAYER AND RELATIONSHIPS. THESE THINGS LAST EVEN WHEN THEIR SURROUNDINGS CHANGE.



FOR MANY LGBTQ+ FOLK - PARTICULARLY THOSE WHO HAVE KNOWN MIGRATION, FAMILY REJECTION, OR DESTABILISING ENCOUNTERS WITH STATE SYSTEMS AND INSTITUTIONS - **HOME** IS NOT JUST A PLACE, BUT A **THREAD OF EMOTIONAL CONNECTION THAT MAY HAVE BEEN BROKEN.**

WHAT IF SERVICES HELPED PEOPLE FEEL EMOTIONALLY GROUNDED - OFFERING LONG-TERM CARE NOT SHORT-TERM FIXES, AND MAKING SPACE FOR THE PEOPLE AND THINGS THAT MATTER MOST TO THEM?

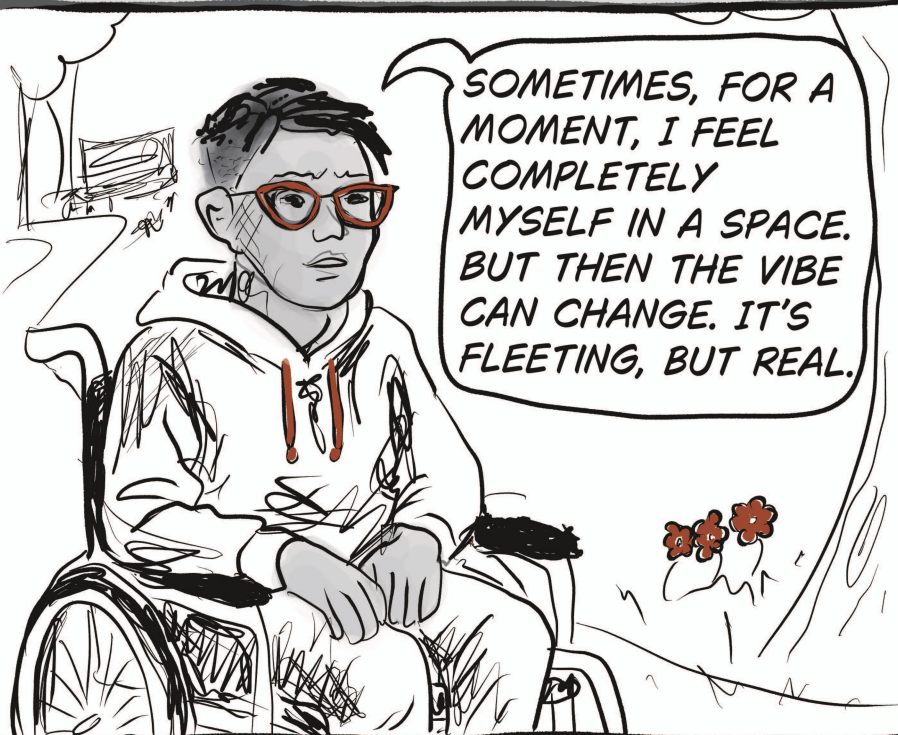
35 YEAR OLD MAC STRUGGLED TO FIND A REFUGE THAT WOULD ACCEPT HER. SHE FOUND A HOSTEL BED, BUT WAS UNSAFE THERE. SHE NOW LIVES IN A PRIVATE RENTED FLAT. FOR HER, HOME IS NOT GIVEN, IT'S MADE.



FOR MANY, **HOME IS SOMETHING HARD-FOUGHT**. SUPPORTING QUEER PEOPLE - ESPECIALLY THOSE WITH EXPERIENCE OF INTERPERSONAL, INSTITUTIONAL, OR SYSTEMIC VIOLENCE - OFTEN INVOLVES RECOGNISING THE CREATIVE, INCREMENTAL WORK OF HOME-MAKING. THAT MIGHT LOOK LIKE SOMEONE GAINING FINANCIAL INDEPENDENCE AND SECURITY, NEGOTIATING WITH SERVICES, OR JUST HAVING CONTROL OVER WHO HAS ACCESS TO THEIR SPACE.

TO WHAT DEGREE CAN YOU SUPPORT PEOPLE'S SPATIAL AUTONOMY IN YOUR OWN WORK?

JULES WAS KICKED OUT AS A TEEN FOR COMING OUT. NOW 48 AND IN SUPPORTED HOUSING, JULES DESCRIBES RARE MOMENTS WHEN THEY FEEL FULLY THEMSELVES AND AT EASE. FOR THEM, HOME ISN'T A LOCATION BUT A FEELING THAT EMERGES BRIEFLY WHEN THEIR WHOLE SELF IS RECOGNISED.



HOME MAY BE A TEMPORARY STATE, SOMETHING FELT. FEELING AT HOME REQUIRES MORE THAN MEETING PHYSICAL NEEDS; **PEOPLE'S FULL EXPERIENCES AND IDENTITIES – DISABLED, QUEER, RACIALISED, OR OTHER – MUST BE AFFIRMED.** WE NEED TO GO BEYOND ONE-DIMENSIONAL APPROACHES AND CONSIDER HOW COMPLEX REALITIES SHAPE A PERSON'S RELATIONSHIP TO SPACE, CARE AND BELONGING.

WHAT ARE THE IMPLICATIONS OF THIS FOR SOCIAL CARE, HOUSING, HEALTH AND WELLBEING SERVICES, OR MULTI-AGENCY PRACTICE?

SINCE ARRIVING IN THE UK 71 YEAR OLD REFUGEE, REY, HAS LIVED IN SQUATS, SHARED ACCOMMODATION AND TEMPORARY CARE HOMES. REY DRAWS STRENGTH FROM HIS INTER-GENERATIONAL QUEER COMMUNITY BUT KNOWS THAT HOME DOESN'T COME EASILY. **IT IS BUILT, NEGOTIATED AND PROTECTED DAILY**, ESPECIALLY WITHIN SYSTEMS THAT WEREN'T MADE FOR HIM.



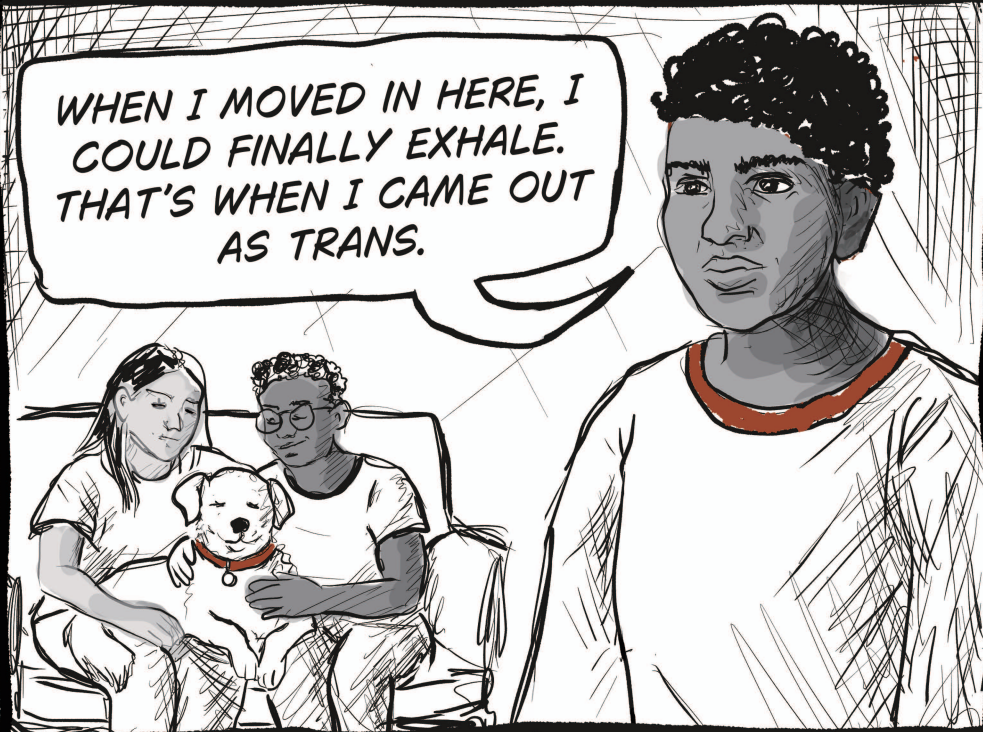
*I NEED RULES AND BOUNDARIES
IN MY HOME - BUT THEY
SHOULD BE MADE WITH ME,
NOT IMPOSED ON ME.*

RULES CAN CREATE STABILITY, SET EXPECTATIONS AND SUPPORT CONSENT - BUT THEY SHOULD NEVER STRIP AWAY A PERSON'S AGENCY OR DIGNITY. FOR LGBTQ+ PEOPLE, ESPECIALLY THOSE NAVIGATING NEW AND UNKNOWN CIRCUMSTANCES, LIVING SITUATIONS AND STATE SYSTEMS, FEELING SAFE DEPENDS NOT JUST ON STRUCTURE, BUT ON HAVING A SAY IN IT.

**WHAT WOULD IT TAKE FOR SERVICE PROVIDERS TO CO-CREATE SPACE
- NOT JUST PROVIDE IT?**

CARE WORKER MAZ SHARES A FLAT WITH HIS PARTNERS AFTER YEARS OF HOUSING INSTABILITY. FOR HIM, HOME IS BUILT ON CARE - NOT JUST THE KIND HE GIVES, BUT ALSO THE KIND HE RECEIVES. HOME IS ABOUT ABOUT LIVING INTERDEPENDENTLY NOT JUST SURVIVING.

WHEN I MOVED IN HERE, I COULD FINALLY EXHALE. THAT'S WHEN I CAME OUT AS TRANS.



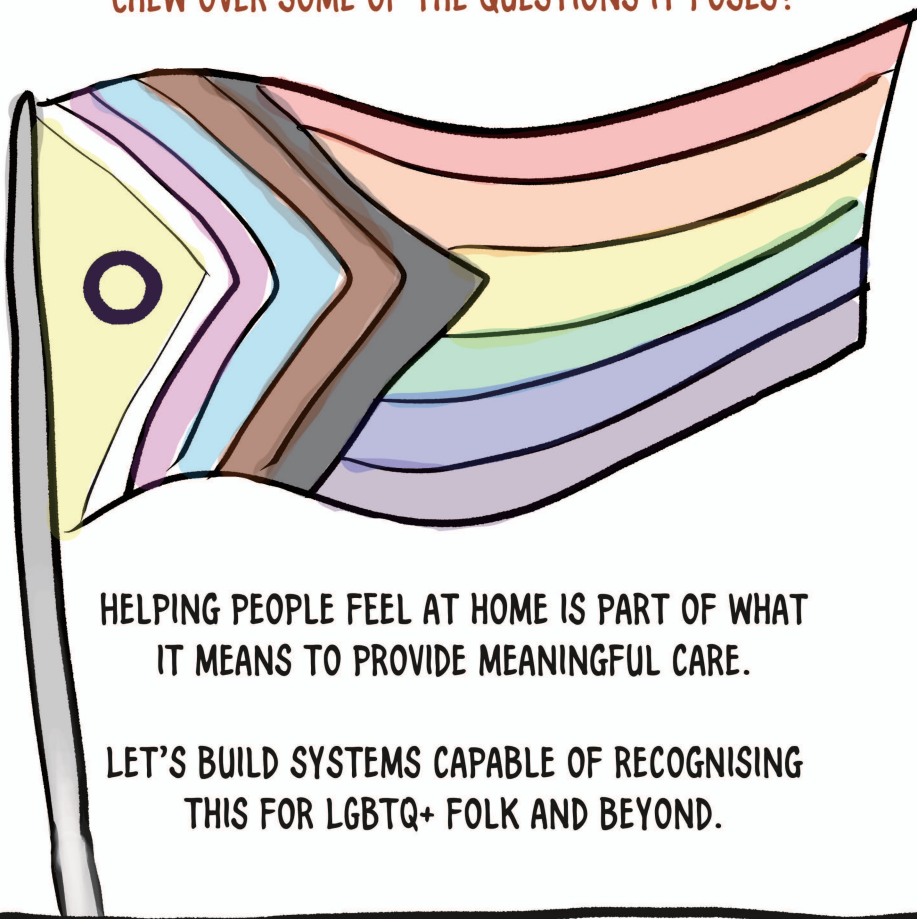
FOR SOME, **HOME IS BUILT THROUGH INTERDEPENDENCE** NOT INDEPENDENCE. AFFIRMING HOME MIGHT MEAN RECOGNISING COLLECTIVE ARRANGEMENTS, VALIDATING NON-NORMATIVE HOUSEHOLDS, AND ASKING: **"WHAT SUSTAINS YOU HERE?"**

HOW CAN CARE SERVICES HONOUR THE HOMES PEOPLE (CO-)CREATE, RATHER THAN THE ONES POLICY IMAGINES? WHAT WOULD IT MEAN FOR US TO REFRAME IDEAS OF CARE AND HOME, MAKING SPACE FOR FLUID DYNAMICS, WHERE PEOPLE CAN GIVE AND RECEIVE CARE IN WAYS THAT **DON'T ALWAYS MATCH, BUT STILL MATTER?**

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO SUPPORT SOMEONE IN FEELING AT HOME?

THIS COMIC IS JUST THE START OF A CONVERSATION.

TAKE IT TO YOUR NEXT TEAM MEETING MAYBE?
CHEW OVER SOME OF THE QUESTIONS IT POSES?



HELPING PEOPLE FEEL AT HOME IS PART OF WHAT
IT MEANS TO PROVIDE MEANINGFUL CARE.

LET'S BUILD SYSTEMS CAPABLE OF RECOGNISING
THIS FOR LGBTQ+ FOLK AND BEYOND.

ABOUT THE ARTIST

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I AM AN ACADEMIC, ARTIST AND ACTIVIST WITH A BACKGROUND IN GENDER AND SEXUALITY, HOUSING, HEALTH AND CARE. MY PAST CAREER WAS IN THE THIRD SECTOR, WHERE I RAN A NATIONAL MENTAL HEALTH SERVICE AND LED POLICY RESEARCH ON SOCIAL JUSTICE ISSUES. NOTHING ABOUT US WITHOUT US.



ABOUT THE PROJECT



THIS COMIC WAS INFORMED BY RESEARCH FROM THE QUEERING SHELTER STUDY. SCAN QR CODE FOR INFO.

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