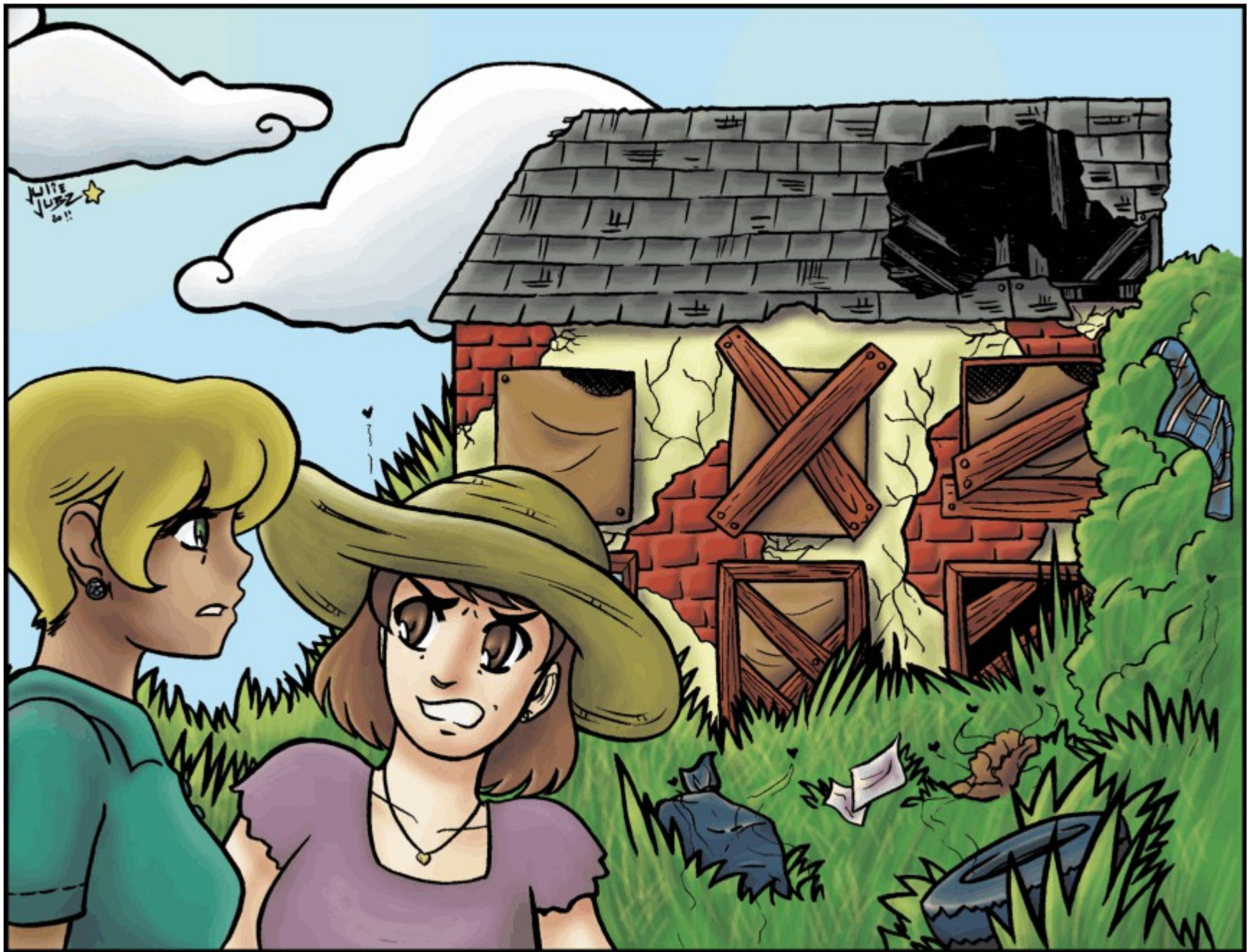


# Eyesore

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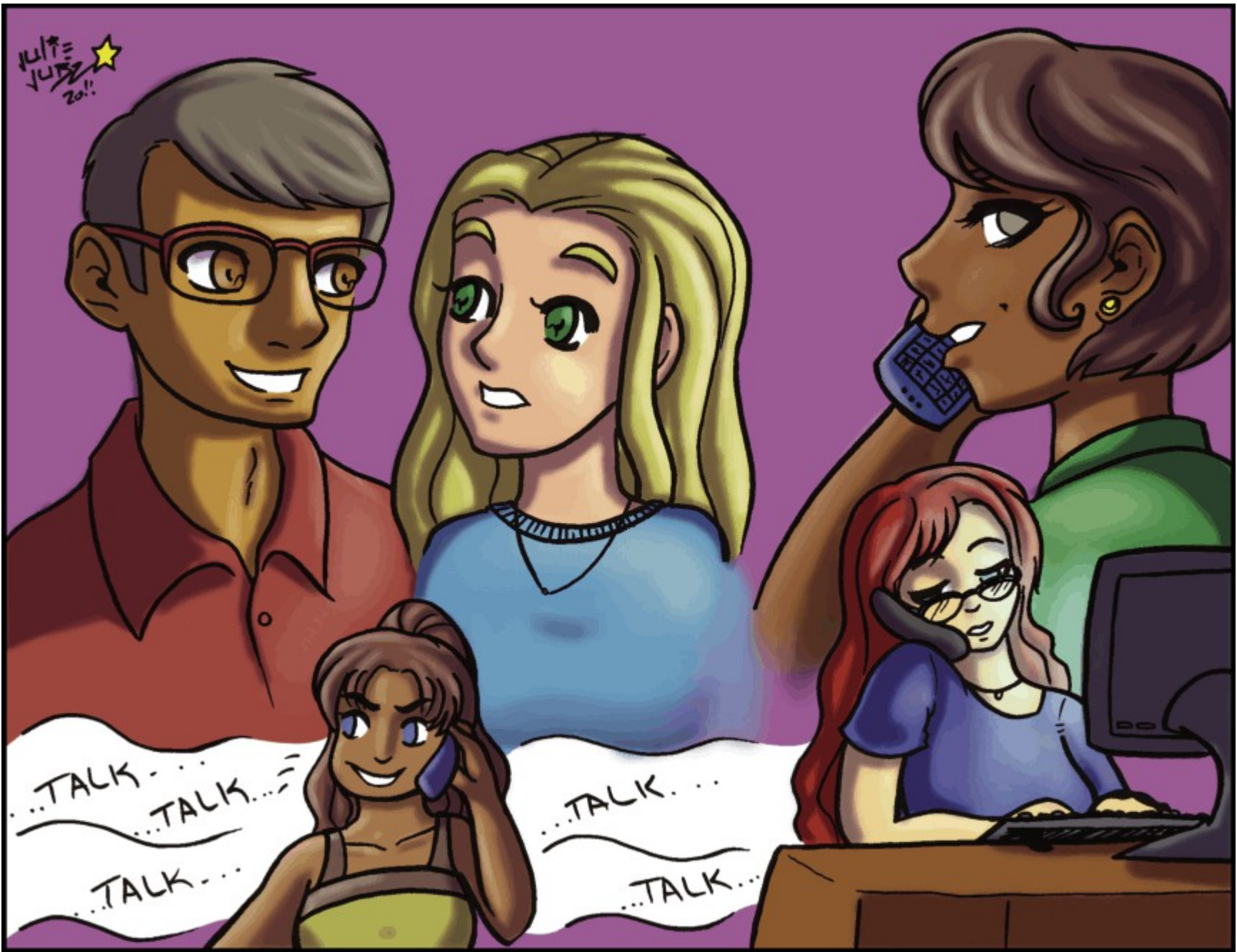




The lot was filled with weeds, rocks, and broken glass. More than a few people had dumped their trash in the old abandoned lot. To make matters worse, a dilapidated house sat right in the middle of the grounds. The windows had been broken out years ago. Rumor had it that the house was filled with rats and mice and other creepy things. People went out of their way to avoid this spot. It was hopeless. The only thing that could fix this lot was a bulldozer.



One beautiful spring morning, a lady known only as "The Gardener" walked by the old lot. The weeds were now waist high and flies were buzzing around the trash. The poor house looked sadder than it ever had. The woman paused, then began to walk around the outside of the lot. A few of the townsfolk watched as she took down several pages of notes, then quickly walked away. The Gardener had seen enough.



Word quickly spread throughout the town that the woman was going to demand the city clean up the lot, bulldoze the house to the ground, and plow it under. Why, how could anyone be upset with her? After all, the lot gave the whole town a bad reputation. It didn't matter if it would be very costly to clean it up, the city would just have to find the money. "It just wasn't right having an eyesore like that in our town," the people would say. "Someone had to do something!"



Several days later the Gardener walked into City Hall. The clerk behind the desk braced himself for a fight. He knew the city didn't have the money that it would take to clean up the lot. The Gardener walked up to the desk, pulled out her notes and asked something the clerk would never forget.

"How much is the abandoned house and lot at 371 Beacon street?" she asked. "I'd like to buy it."

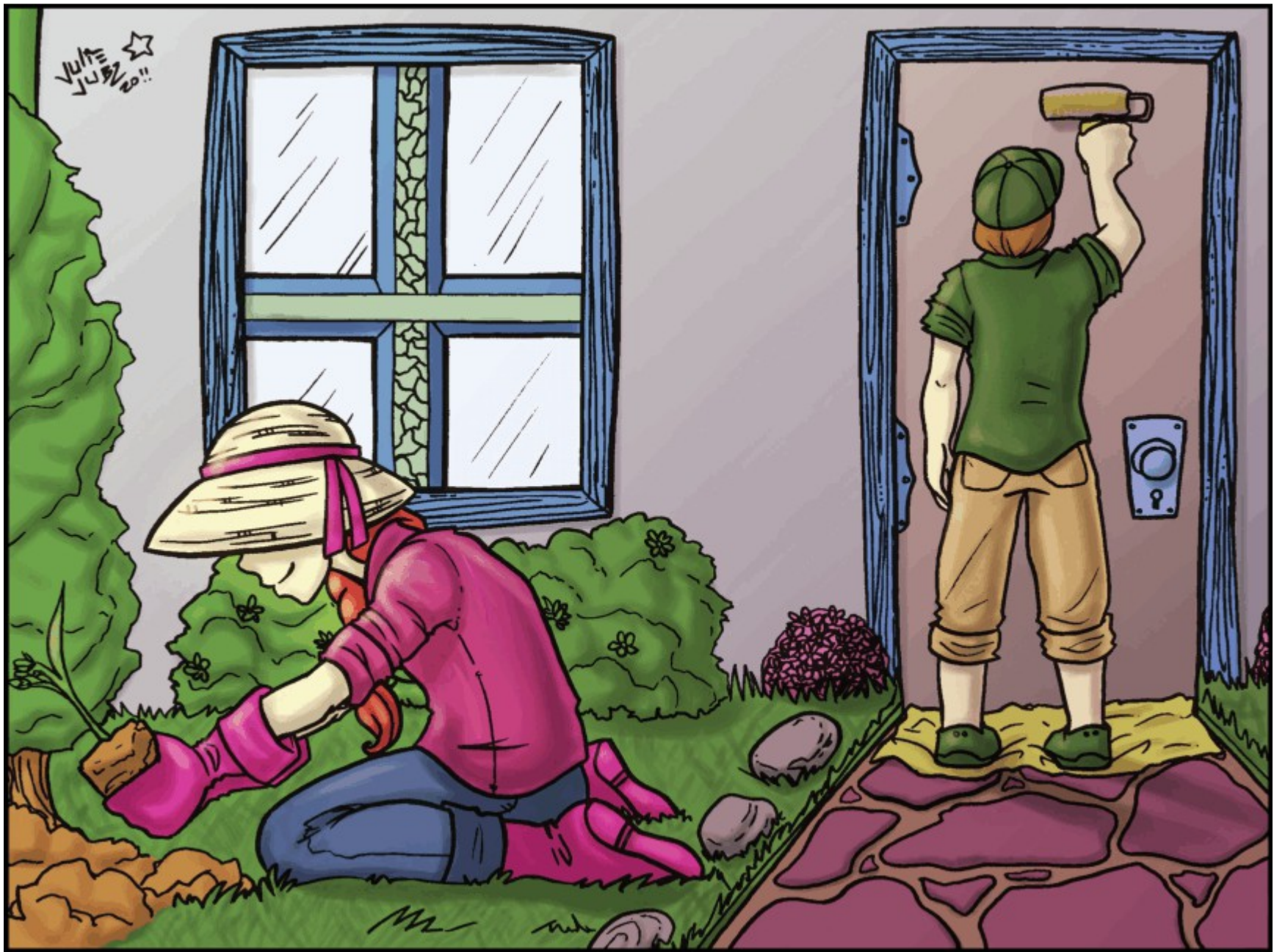
The rumors going through the town couldn't have been further from the truth. The Gardener didn't want to destroy the lot, she wanted to buy it.



The clerk found the few records there were for the property and looked carefully at them. "There are a lot of back taxes due. It would be quite costly to buy it, let alone the expense to clean it up."

"Never you mind that, is the property for sale or not?" the Gardener replied.

The clerk scratched his head. "Yes Ma'am, the lot is for sale." Hearing that, the Gardener bought the worthless eyesore right then and there.



All summer long, she and her husband worked extra hard. They cleared weeds, removed trash, and made major repairs to the house. Then, they trimmed the trees and bushes, and planted many kinds of beautiful flowers. They even added a cobblestone walkway leading up to the front door. Out back, behind the house, they added a small pond with a fountain. The lot that was once such an eyesore had now become a beautiful showplace. Love, time and a little work had transformed the lot. Now, people went out of their way just to walk by and take a look at the beautiful view of the property.



What the Gardener did next really surprised the whole town. She hung a sign out front that read:  
THE GARDEN CENTER - NOW OPEN - FREE GARDENING LESSONS

She knew her lot could be restored because when she was younger, someone else taught her how to do it. Now, she wanted to teach others how to transform eyesores into things of beauty. And before long, the whole town was indeed a place of beauty.





Some people are like the old dilapidated house sitting in the middle of a trashy lot. They look worthless and many people go out of their way to avoid them. The Bible says that we all have trash in our lives. The trash in our life is called sin.

The Good News is that none of us are worthless in God's eyes. In fact, His will is that none of us perish. (2 Peter 3:9) He wants us to get rid of the sin in our lives, but we can't get rid of the sin by ourselves. We need to ask Jesus to forgive us and give us a new heart. When we do, we become "Born Again" to follow God. Then, just like the gardener, you will want to share the good news with others. You can let others know about the wonderful work God has done in your life, and that He can do the same for them. Think about this: When you look at others do you see an eyesore or a garden?