Just wait until you find out that your corporate firewall strips the pictures from incoming email. – Ed.

As a developer, you’ve probably, at some unfortunate point in your life (possibly several points, actually), been handed an Excel file that has been crammed full of “data” by someone in marketing and been told to “do something with it.”

Columns probably didn’t line up, and a thousand different fonts were used. Every feature of Excel was probably abused and abused again to avoid having to use an actual database application for storage of the data.

Of course, it’s up to you to make sense of the layout, and marketing could just give a bleepity-bleep about what a pain it is to suck weird data out of Excel and “do something with it” when little or (more often) no thought has been given to possibly making the data consistent or, dare I say, orderly.

To this end, I’ve put together an art project to illustrate the process. What you will see unfold before your peepers is a process of discovery—my thoughts on how these files are created.

Note  I wound up drawing one of the characters with fangs and, eventually, “crazy eyes”—I don’t know why I did this. It just felt right.²

2. It’s because you’re a complete lunatic, Rory. – Ed.