

Prima Materia



collaborative graphic novel
edited by Danièle Archambault. 2024

Thank you

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to Fanny Retsek, Studio Program Director at the Palo Alto Art Center, for her unwavering, steadfast, and invaluable support of the visual storytelling classes. We also want to express our appreciation to Rick Stoner, Studio Program Assistant, for his dedication in ensuring that, each week, our classroom environment is welcoming, warm, tidy, and conducive to creativity.



Prima Materia

A collection of nine original stories
by the adult students in the Winter 2024
visual storytelling class
"Creating and Publishing a Graphic Novel,"
at the Palo Alto Art Center, in California

Jilynnette Centeno Millán
Zoe Chung
Karisu
Silviane Man-Willrich
Debby Miller
Sean O'Neill
Juana Serrano
Judy Weiler
Katherine Wood

Edited by Danièle Archambault, Ph.D. Linguist and cartoonist. Class instructor.

Prima Materia

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Since 2012, I have been teaching various classes on the art of visual storytelling at the Palo Alto Art Center. In 2016, I introduced an innovative opportunity for students to delve deeper into the creative process by not only writing a story but also publishing it in a collaborative graphic novel. This initiative led to the creation of a new course titled "Creating and Publishing a Graphic Novel." The class proved successful and was offered again in 2019 and 2022. "Prima Materia" marks the fourth collaborative graphic novel produced by students of the Palo Alto Art Center.

This class project is ambitious yet exciting. Over ten weeks of two-hour classes, students embark on a journey of developing a complete five-page story in the visual narrative style of their choice. First, they learn the fundamental techniques, elements, and concepts available to graphic novel creators. This includes storyboarding, thumbnailing, character design, picture composition, camera works, and page layouts. Then, in the final weeks of the class, participants collaborate to curate the individual stories into a cohesive graphic novel. Topics covered include book layout, cover design, title page, printing styles, barcodes, and ISBN, as well as copyright considerations. The class comprises a diverse range of students, including beginners with minimal artistic experience and seasoned art professionals. While many students preferred traditional techniques, working with pencils, black ink and color on paper, others chose to explore digital tools.



The resulting 2024 final collaborative graphic novel features nine captivating and beautiful stories, ranging from autofiction to fantasy, all of them featuring an element of transformation. The students selected “Prima Materia” for the graphic novel title to reference the primal materials from which narratives emerge through the creative process of the artist, akin to the concept in alchemy referring to the prime matter from which all things are derived. It also alludes to the necessary and inevitable transformation undergone by the characters as well as their creators. Each of the stories in the book is preceded by the student’s self-portrait and their artist statement allowing readers insight into their inspirations, themes, and motivations. Additionally, students included a selection of preliminary work, thumbnails, and sketches at the end of their stories, providing readers with an understanding of their creative process.

The complete digital book is available for free download on DanieleBD.com, under the Collaborative Graphic Novels page, accessible via the provided QR code. Visitors will also find three prior collaborative graphic novels produced by other adult students at the Palo Alto Art Center: “passages. visual journeys” (2022), “Discovery” (2019), and “Voyages” (2016).

Enjoy!

Danièle Archambault, Ph.D.
Linguist and cartoonist
Class instructor



Stories

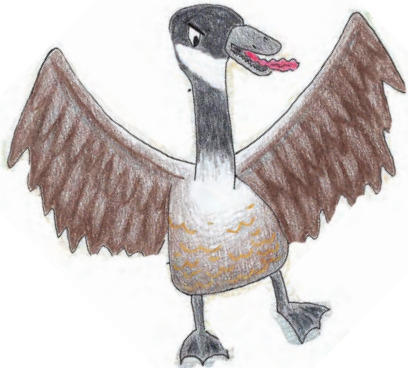
The nine captivating and beautiful stories in this book span across genres from autofiction to fantasy, each of them featuring an element of transformation. Metaphorically, alchemy symbolizes the journey of inner growth and self-discovery, navigating a series of transformations, both physical and spiritual. By structuring the order of stories based on the ages of the characters, the authors aimed to provide readers with a distinct narrative journey mirroring the evolution of life.



1. A Quiet Dream
Sean O'Neill



2. The Babysitter
Karisu



3. Home
Katherine Wood



4. First Day of School
Juana Serrano



5. Sassy
Debby Miller



6. Finding Me and Me
Silviane Man-Willrich



**7. One Bite at a Time:
A Kitchen Journey**
Jilynnette Centeno Millán



8. Vapor
Zoe Chung



9. Uproar Up North
Judy Weiler



A Quiet Dream

By Sean O'Neill

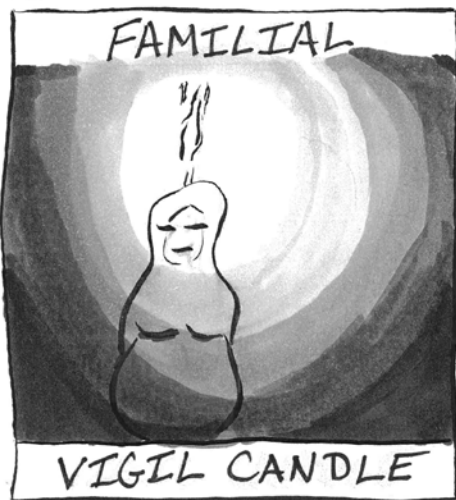
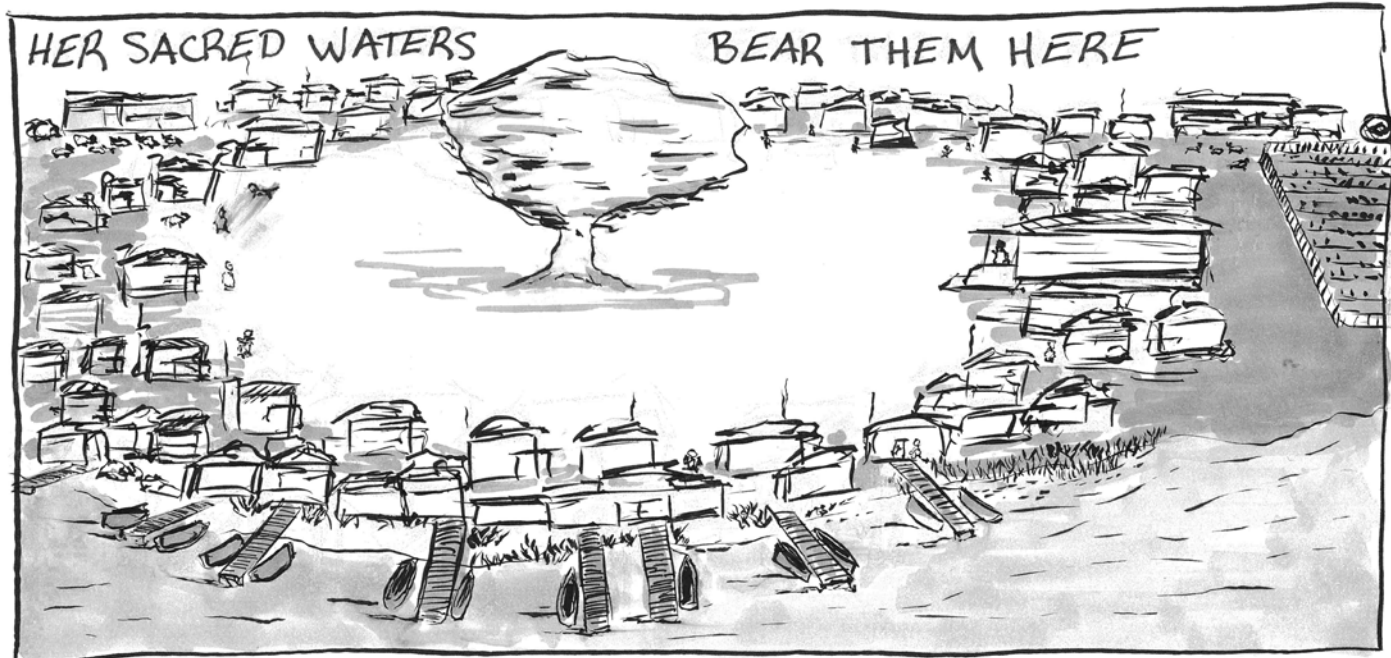
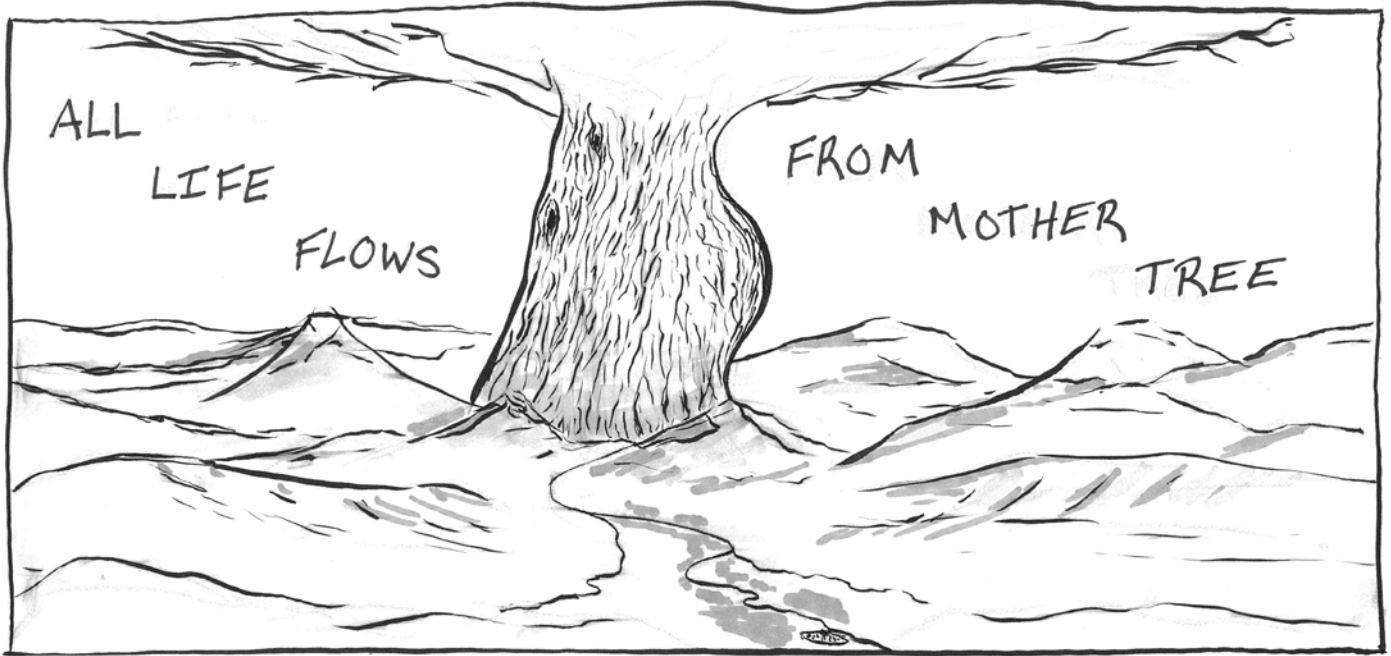
Originally a Maryland native, I moved to the Bay Area in 2012 to work as a high school teacher and thought I'd at least stick it out for 4 years. Now, 12 years later, I think it's time to make a formal, public declaration that I am all in on California...well, here it is!

I've taken a variety of art classes over the years: watercolor, ceramics, drawing, graphic design to name a few. I was first introduced to graphic novels through *Maus* by Art Spiegelman while in college. I decided to sign up for Danièle's course because I've always had my own quiet dream of being a working artist/writer/creator and graphic novels have always appealed to me as a great way to realize my desire to tell interesting stories.

The inspiration for my work *A Quiet Dream* came to me through a series of conversations and quietly shared moments with my wife, Kelly, throughout her pregnancy. The physical, mental and spiritual aspects of pregnancy are full of dichotomies: unification - isolation, personal - public, empowering - vulnerable.

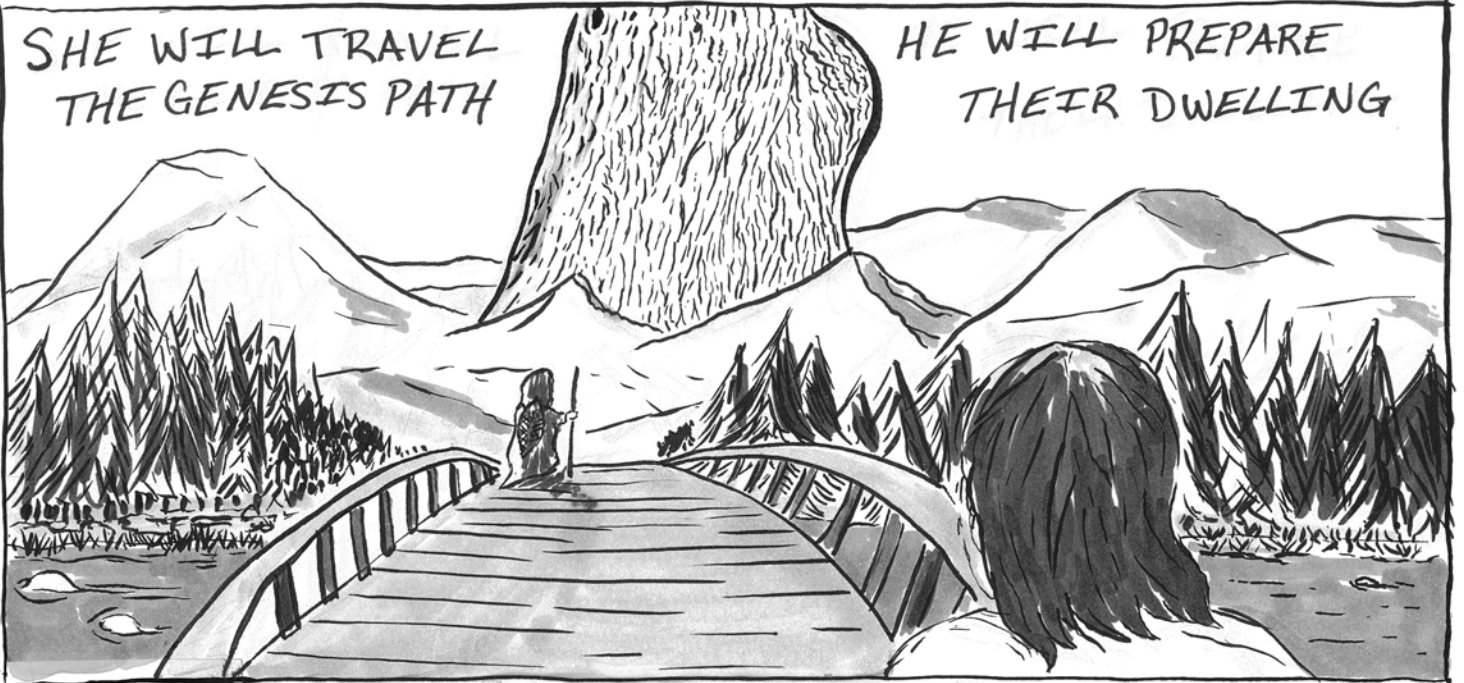
The central motif of the Mother Tree is based on an actual tree in Sonoma, CA that we have anthropomorphized as a pregnant woman.

Medium: Ink and markers



SHE WILL TRAVEL
THE GENESIS PATH

HE WILL PREPARE
THEIR DWELLING

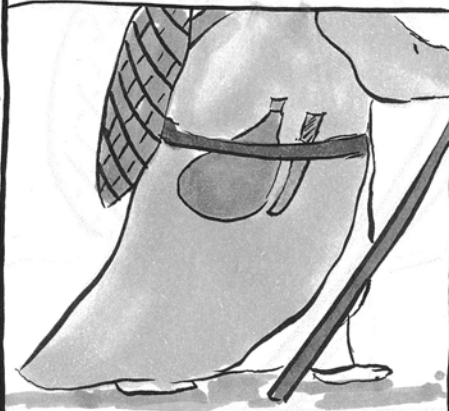


DETERMINED



MIND

LABORED



STEPS

STALKED BY

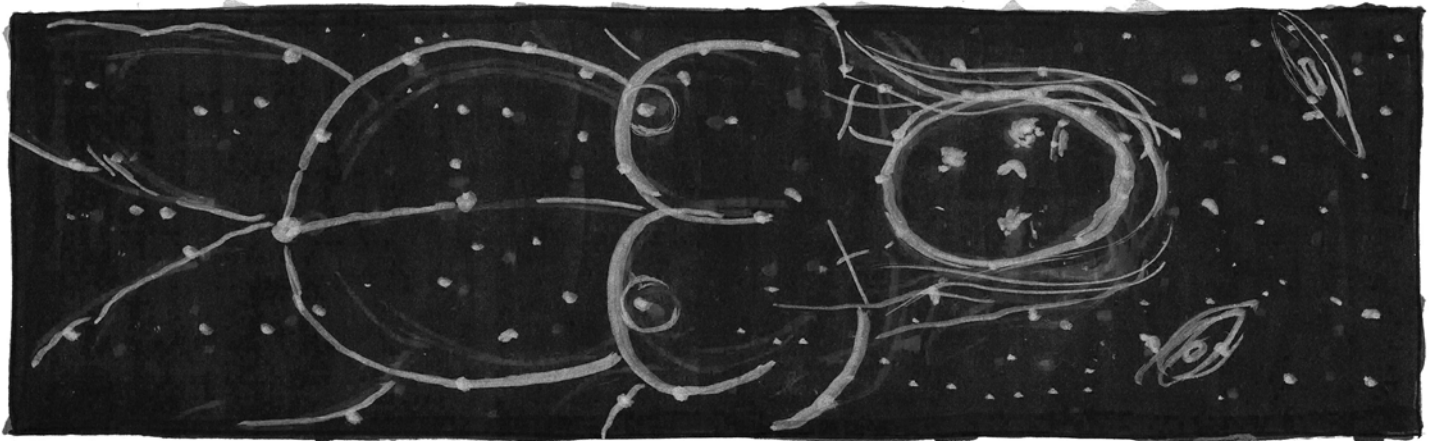
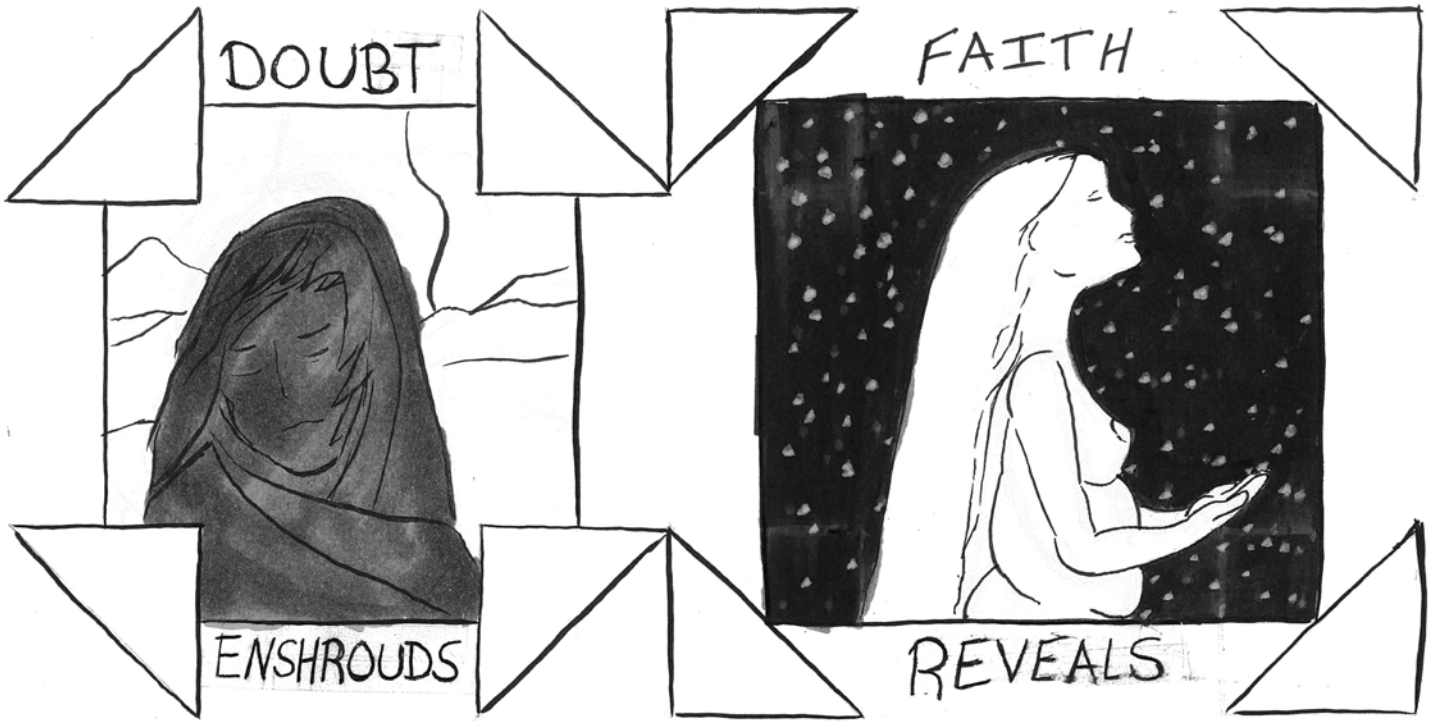


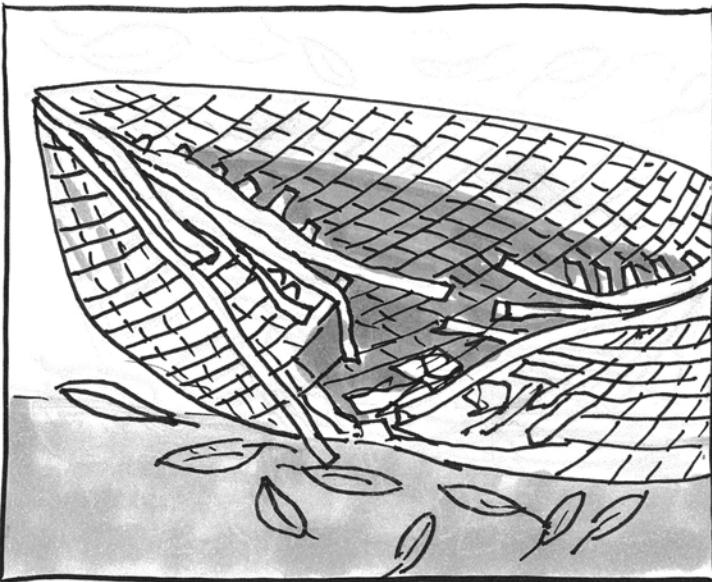
UNCERTAINTY

SHE PUSHES ON ALONE



TRODDING UPON ABANDONED DREAMS



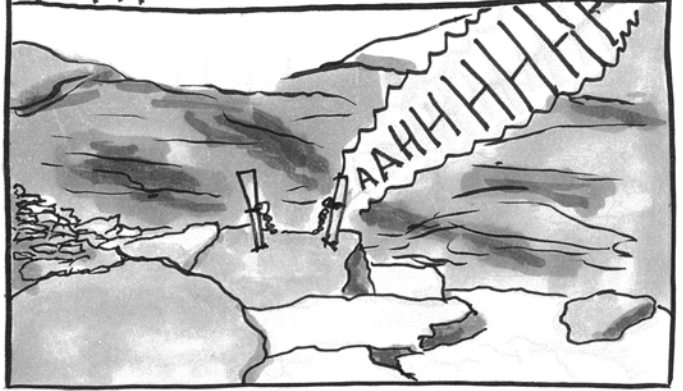


SHE INVOKES THE

STRENGTH OF MATRIARCHS

BREATH
TRUST
AND
AND
BLOOD
TRIAL

A PRIMAL SCREAM

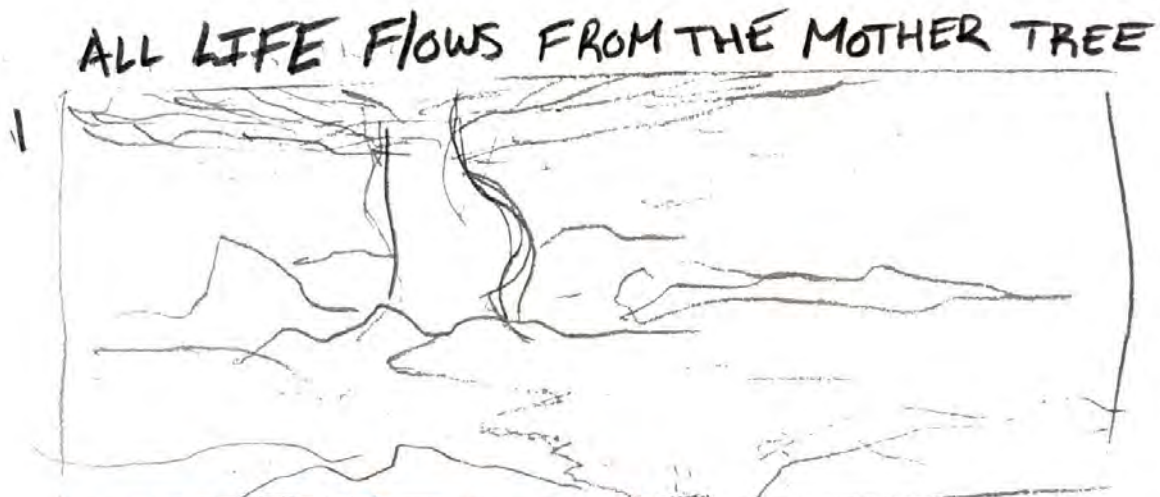


SHE REACHES THE CROWN



AND RETURNS TO THE WOMB...

Sketch Pages



3 PREPARATIONS ARE MADE

PRAYER
SACRED CANDLES

HARVEST
OFFERING

ELDER'S Blessing



MEN TRIED BEFORE + FAILED -
SHE MUST GO ~~TO~~ TO HER MOTHER ALONE



THE THREAT OF FAILURE
LOOMS ABOVE...



CARRYING
BIRDS

SHE PUSHES ON ALONE...



TRODDING UPON SHATTERED DREAMS, DREAMS

BY DAY, DOUBT GROWS



AT NIGHT, FAITH RENEWS



SLEEP COMES



SHE DREAMS OF HER QUIET DREAM



NEW JOY BIRTHS ^{Hope of} LATENT FEARS



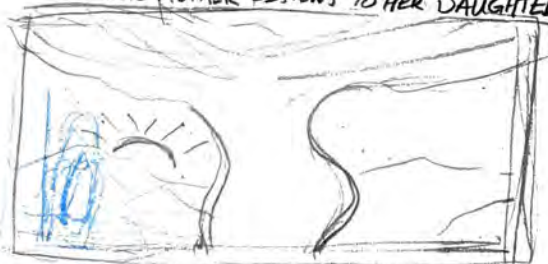
A GIFT RECEIVED



A LOSS ENDURED

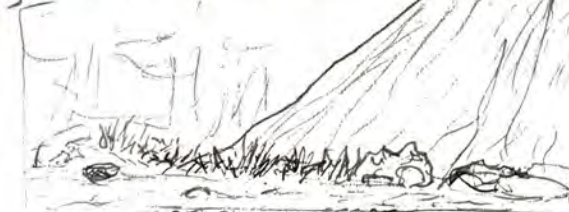


THE MOTHER LISTENS TO HER DAUGHTER



BUT PROVIDES NO ANSWER... ANCE

3 SHE FOLLOWS THE RIVER, FALLS INTO THE SACRED WATER



2 SHE FOLLOWS THE RIVER, FALLS INTO THE SACRED WATER



THE BABYSITTER

by Karisu

digitally drawn using
Clip Studio Paint
with a Wacom Cintiq tablet
on iMac

karisu@imagecraft.com
imagecraft.com
karisu.com

NOTE: This little Science Fiction story is not yet colored/shaded because I'm still learning the software. Also, it has already conceptually expanded well beyond 5 pages, so I'll just have to write more. Hope you like it!

ARTIST STATEMENT:

Our Imagination as graphic novel artists is our "Prima Materia", and we forge our work through the alchemy of our personalities, experiences, interactions with others, and love of creating art. I'm glad to have the opportunity to explore this story-telling medium again.

In my mid-20s, I started working on a Historical Fiction/Fantasy graphic novel. I published 32 pages, sent the issues off to San Diego Comic Con, and remarkably, broke even on my costs. I continued writing and planning to draw more...

Then, LIFE happened. Much, much Life. Job changes, family and health issues, a cross-country move, two children, and plenty more, though I always tried to find time for Art: painting portraits, costume creation / cosplay, interior design, etc., even martial arts.

Fast forward to 2024, when my spousal unit quietly signed me up for this class, telling me about it after the fact (!) So, I then needed a 5-page story...

I don't "create" a story so much as it pops into my head, demands I pay attention, and pokes at me to uncover more details of its virtual reality. Often the initial ideas will come from dreams; occasionally they just barge into my brain out of the blue, as this one did. If I'm lucky, I will find time to take notes that I can expand upon later.

Bits and pieces of my own life always sneak their way in. For example, the non-human child in this story is channeling the personality of our young Cardigan Welsh Corgi dog, who is both cheeky and adorable.

Many thanks to Danièle Archambault for providing this class!



THE BABYSITTER

STORY & ART:
© KARISU 04/2024

"IN 6734, I TOOK A
JOB IN CHILDCARE
FOR A PROVINCIAL
SECURITY DIRECTOR
IN A BORDER TOWN
ON A PLANET IN
CHO HA'NMA SPACE."

- KOSHI

PLEASE SLOW
DOWN, YOUNG
MAIALING; I'M NOT
SO YOUNG,
YOU KNOW!

DON'T WORRY,
KOSHI-MA!

HUMANS ARE
SO SLOW,
EVEN WHEN
YOU RUN!

I'M NOT GOING FAR ENOUGH
TO SET OFF YOUR SILLY ALARM!

SOME TIME LATER,
JUST OUTSIDE THE WALLS OF THE TOWN...

(whirrrr...)

NO, WE ARE *NOT* GOING BEYOND THE FENCE.

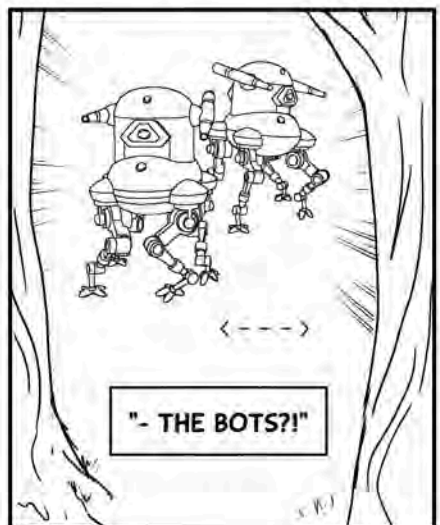
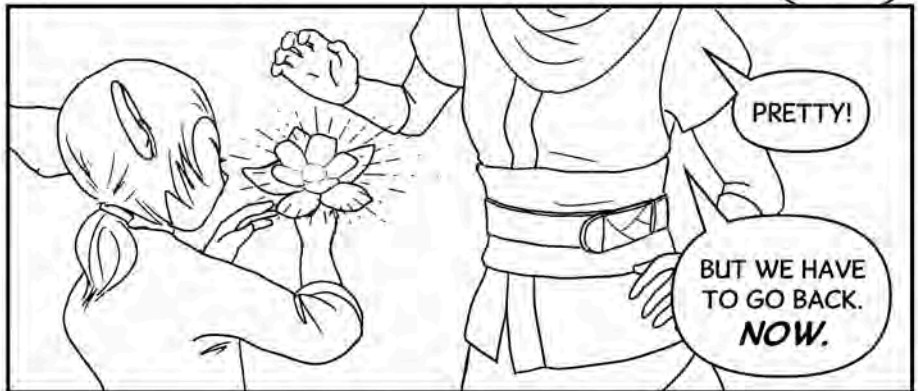
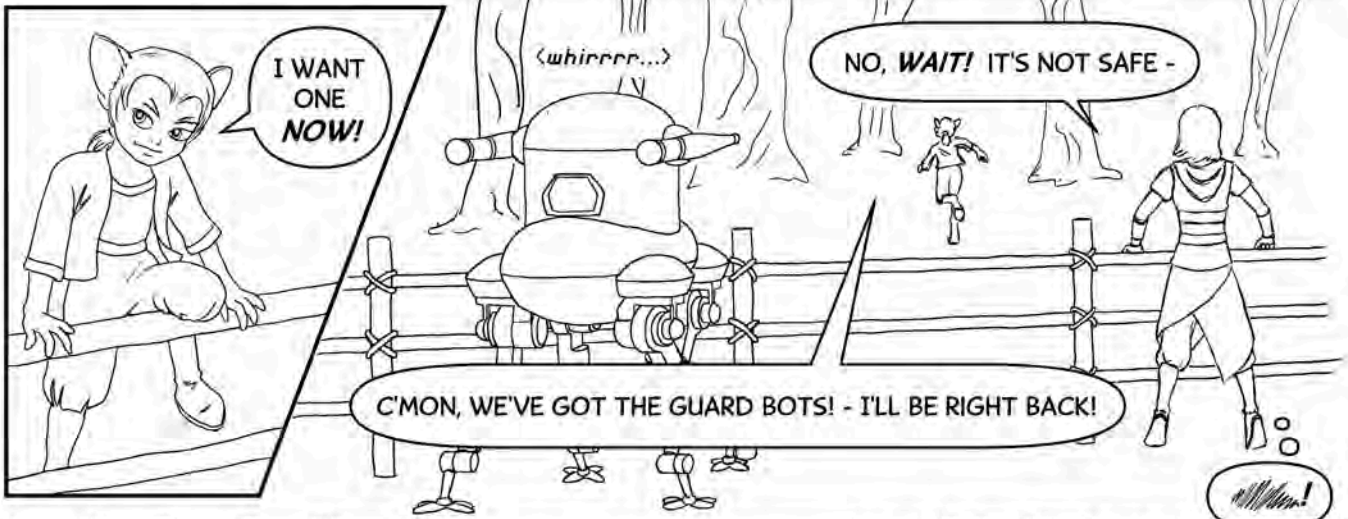
THE AHJ'N MAI SAYS THAT'S TOO CLOSE TO THE PERIMETER.

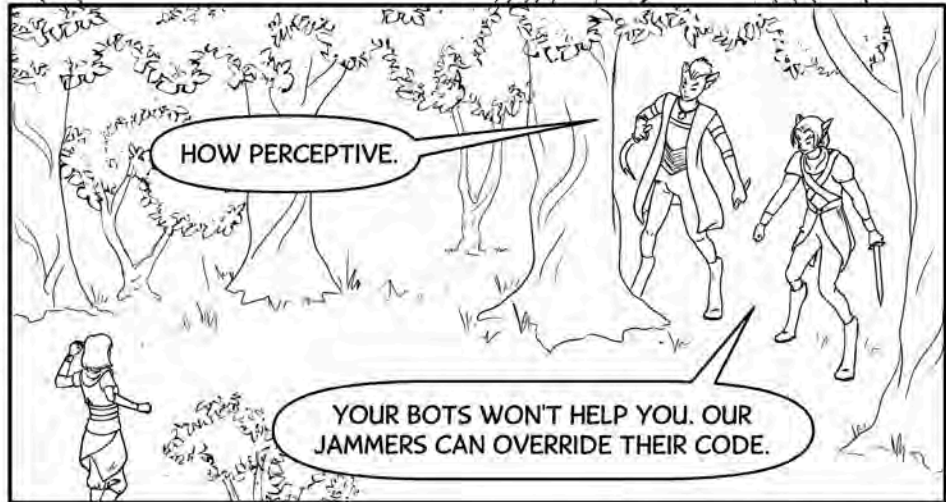
PARENTS ARE THE ENEMY
OF FUN. OTHER PEOPLE
GO IN THE ORCHARD
ALL THE TIME!

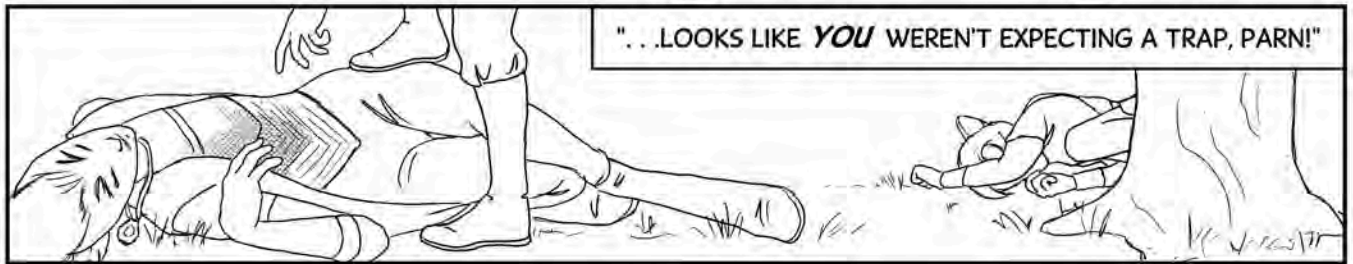
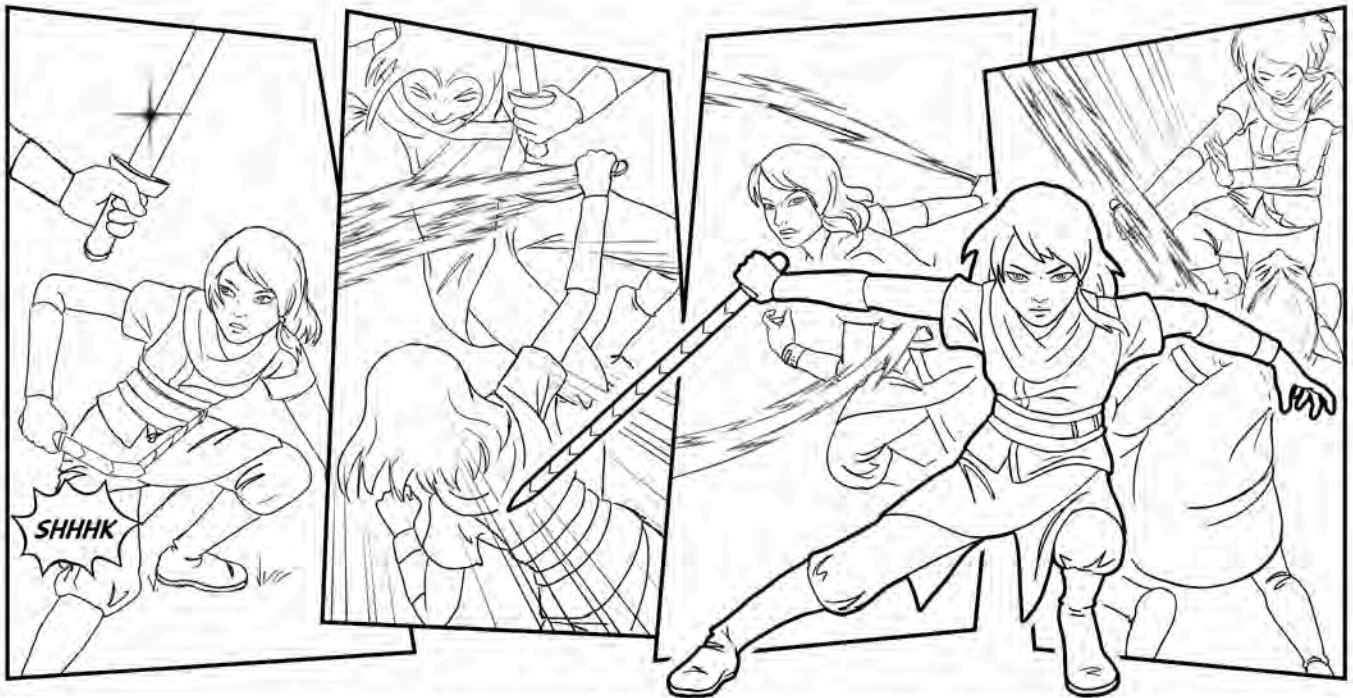
ARBORISTS.

YOU ARE NOT AN ARBORIST.

LOOK!







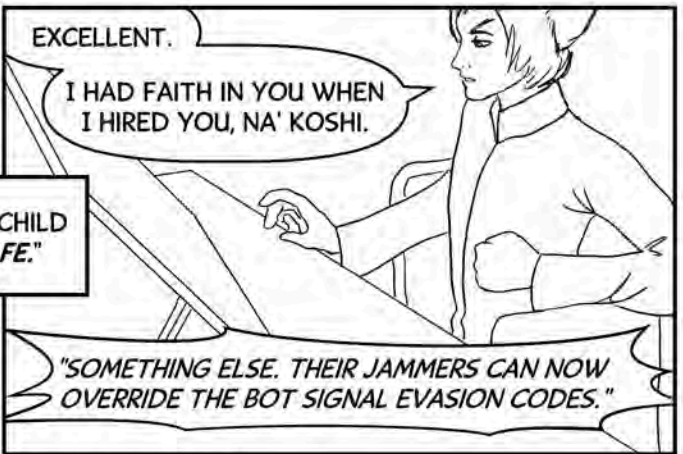
"...LOOKS LIKE *YOU* WEREN'T EXPECTING A TRAP, PARN!"



THE PARN MADE ANOTHER ATTEMPT, AHJ'N SER .

"YOUR CHILD IS SAFE."

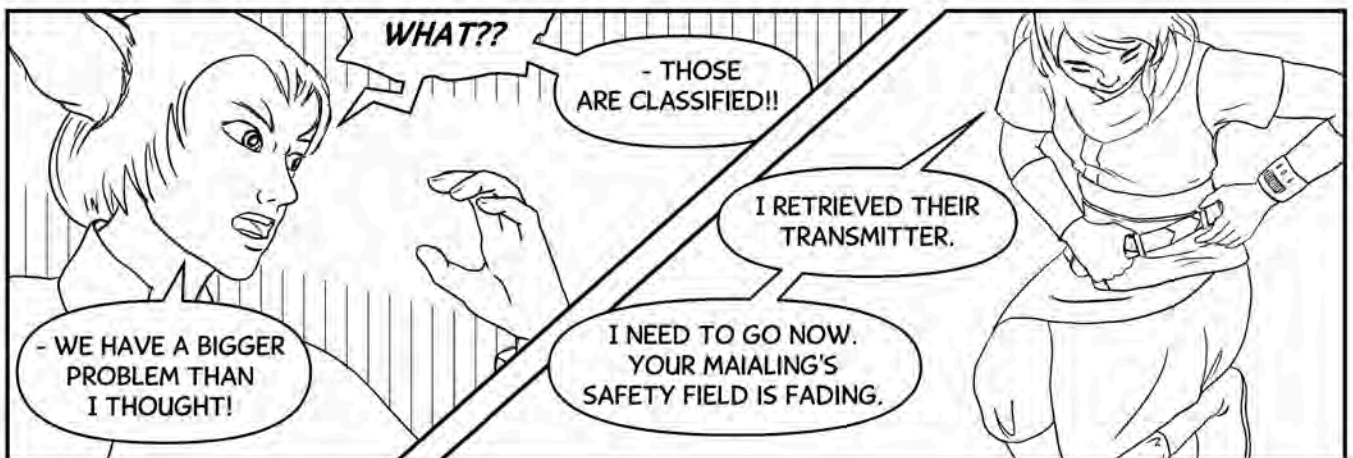
THEY ATTACKED BY THE PERIMETER ORCHARD, BUT I TOOK THEM OUT.



EXCELLENT.

I HAD FAITH IN YOU WHEN I HIRED YOU, NA' KOSHI.

"SOMETHING ELSE. THEIR JAMMERS CAN NOW OVERRIDE THE BOT SIGNAL EVASION CODES."



WHAT??

- THOSE ARE CLASSIFIED!!

- WE HAVE A BIGGER PROBLEM THAN I THOUGHT!

I RETRIEVED THEIR TRANSMITTER.

I NEED TO GO NOW. YOUR MAIALING'S SAFETY FIELD IS FADING.



KOSHI,
HERE'S ONE FOR
YOU TOO!

... YOUR
FACE?!

- OH!



I - I MUST HAVE ...

GOTTEN A SCRATCH FROM SOME TREE BRANCHES.



"YOU ARE SUPPOSED TO STAY WITH ME,
MAIALING."



<whirrrr...>

"THE AHJ'N MAI WILL BE CROSS WITH YOU."



"THE AHJ'N MAI" IS
A SCAREDY-POOP.
NOTHING EVER
HAPPENS.

- YOU KNOW
WHAT?

I DON'T THINK THE
PARN ARE REAL. JUST
A STORY MADE UP
TO SCARE KIDS.



<whirrrr...>

"THEY ARE REAL.
THERE IS MUCH
YOU AREN'T
TOLD YET."



"YOU WILL LEARN
MORE WHEN THE
AHJ'N MAI THINKS
YOU ARE READY."

<whirrrr...>

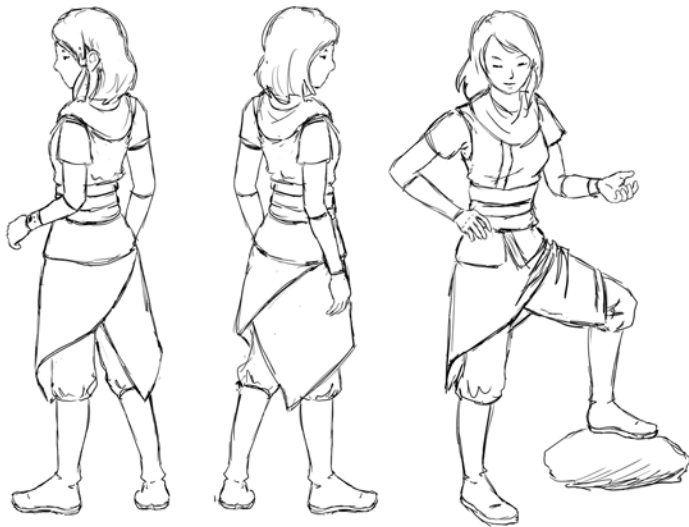
"THAT'S WHAT THEY ALWAYS SAY..."

"I PROMISE, MAIALING."

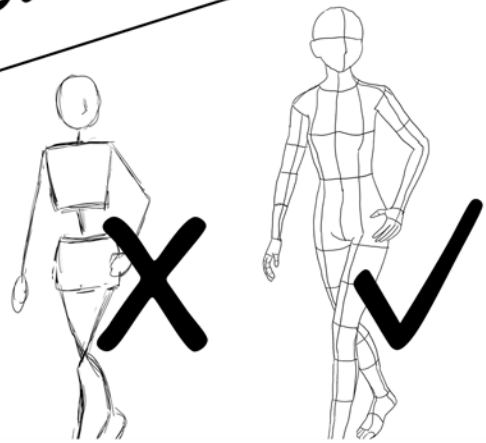
FIN

THE BABYSITTER

"etc." gallery



*COSTUME DESIGN TAKES SOME WORK...
(YES, ONE CAN DO MARTIAL ARTS
IN THIS OUTFIT. I MADE A MOCK-UP
AND TESTED IT.)*



TRADITIONAL
POSE SKETCH

DIGITAL 3D
POSEABLE MODELS IN
CLIP STUDIO PAINT
= TIMESAVER!



<< EARLY (REJECTED)
CONCEPT DESIGN



CONCEPT ART (BEFORE I GOT THE 3D MODELER)

DUE TO PARALLEL EVOLUTION UNDER SIMILAR
PLANETARY CONDITIONS, THESE PEOPLE ARE KIND OF
LIKE HUMANS, BUT IN MANY WAYS NOT AT ALL.

(YES, THERE IS NOW A LOT OF WORLD AND
CULTURE BUILDING BEHIND THIS STORY.

- AS WELL AS MORE STORY.)

THE AHJ'N (HONORABLE) MAI: AND THE MAIALING:
PORTRAIT OF AN OVERWORKED SINGLE PARENT
AND THEIR BELOVED WILLFUL OFFSPRING



SKETCH LEVEL 1 (INITIAL LAYOUT CONCEPT) (PAGE 2)



SKETCH LEVEL 2 (WORK IN PROGRESS) (PAGE 4)

WHAT POSSESSED ME TO WRITE A STORY WITH ROBOTS?? I **HATE** DRAWING ROBOTS!! XD (...AND BACKGROUNDS, AND MOST ANYTHING THAT ISN'T PEOPLE...)

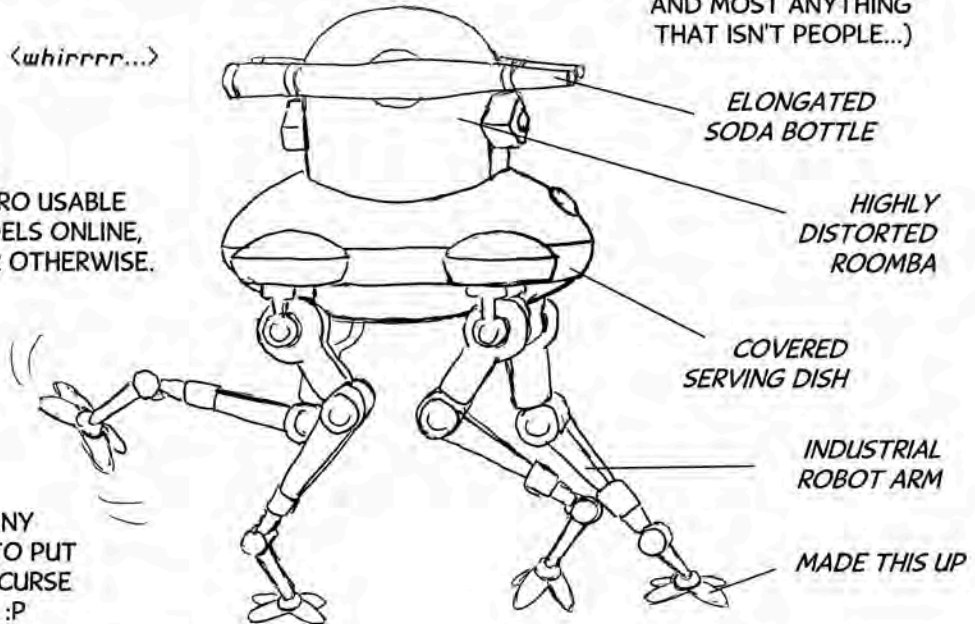
STEP 1: IMAGINE A KIND OF DOG-SHAPED LARGE ROBOT.

<whirrrr...>

STEP 2: FIND ZERO USABLE 3D MODELS ONLINE, FREE OR OTHERWISE.

STEP 3: DESIGN MY OWN FROM A RANDOM COLLECTION OF 3D OBJECT MODELS.

STEP 4: REALIZE HOW MANY PANELS I WANT TO PUT ROBOTS IN, AND CURSE MY COMPLEXITY. :P



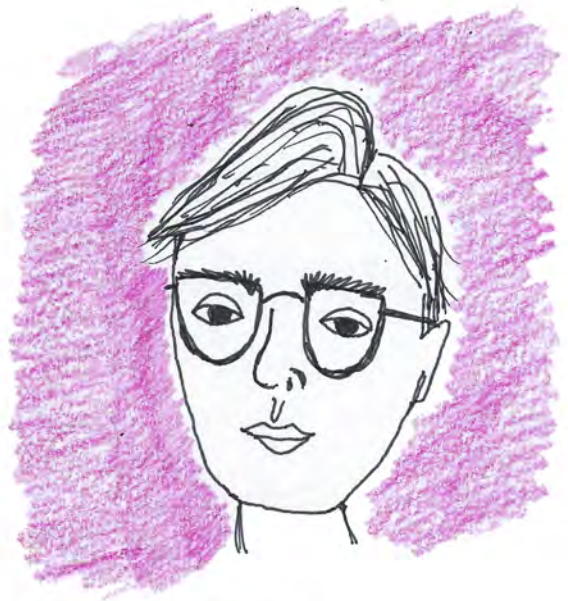
WHO ARE CLAN MAI? WHO ARE THE PARN? AND SPECIFICALLY, WHO IS KOSHI?

HOW OLD IS SHE REALLY? WHERE DID SHE COME FROM? HOW DID SHE GET WHERE SHE IS?

I HOPE TO BE ABLE ANSWER SOME OF THESE QUESTIONS AT SOME POINT, IN A PREQUEL:

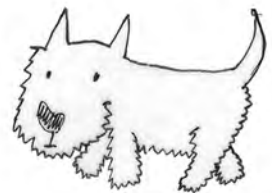
THE JOB INTERVIEW

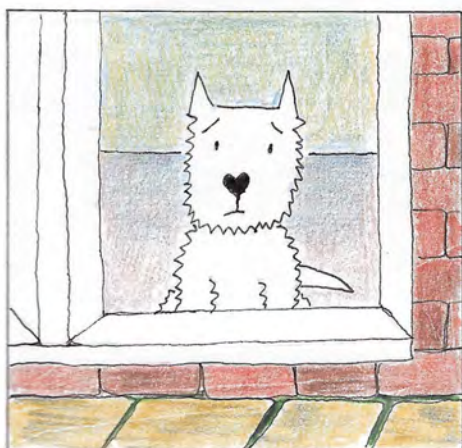


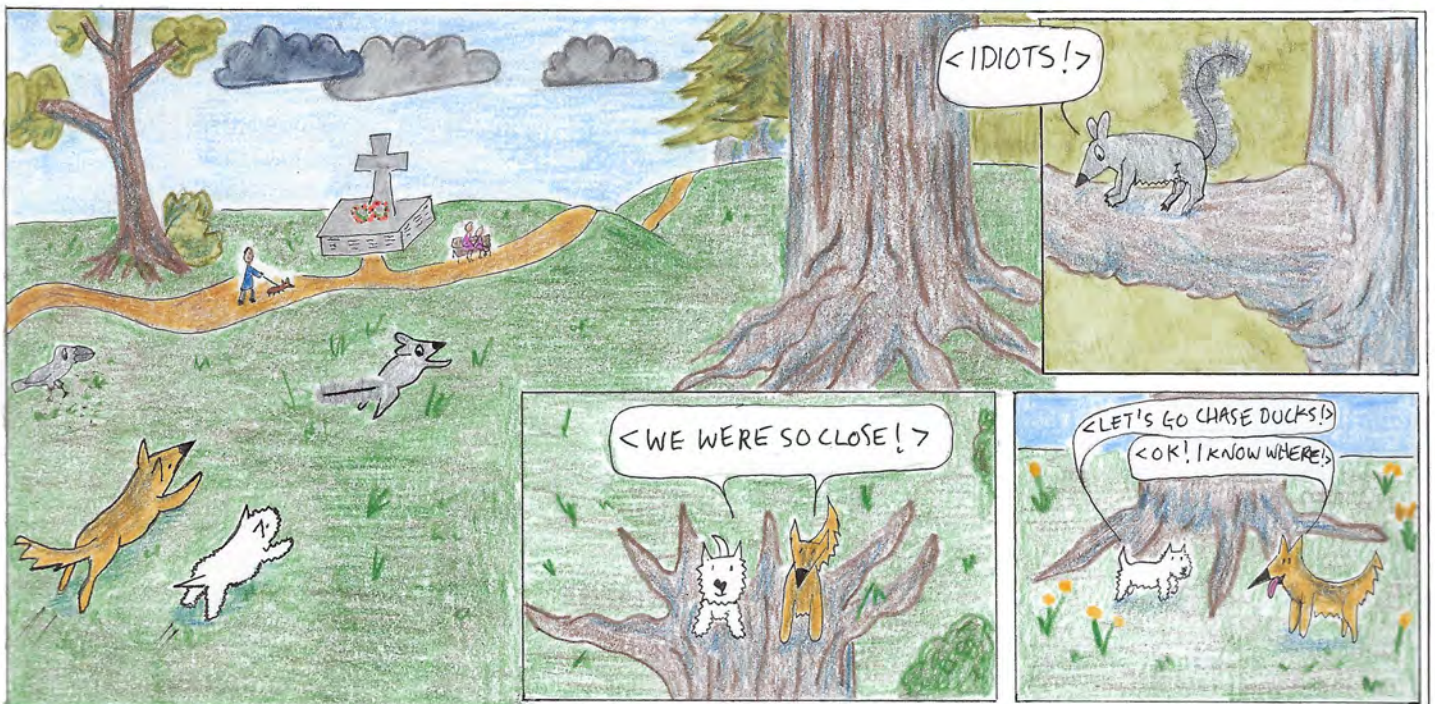
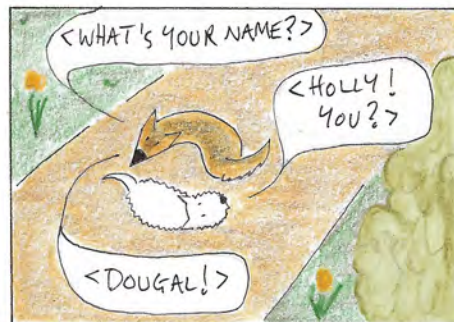


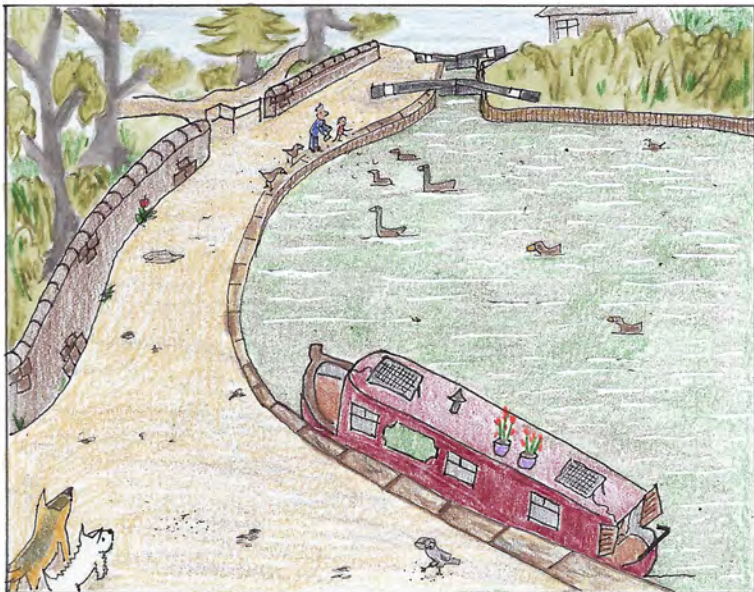
Hello! I am Kath, I am a neuroscientist from the UK. I like to take art classes in my spare time and I especially enjoy drawing, painting and printmaking. I took this class because I was interested in improving and exploring my story-telling. I was nervous about whether I would be able to come up with a good story to combine with drawing! I chose this story after a lot of deliberation! It was hard to find something I wanted to say. In the end I brainstormed my feelings around home and came up with the story of our family dog, Holly. I realised the story resonates with my own journey in America and finally, after 8 years, being able to return home. On face value it is a story about a dog on an adventure, but underneath it is a story about what home is, the people, the place and love. I would like readers to think about their own family and what home is to them. I like the drawings of the animals the most, especially the angry goose. It was fun to imagine what the wild animals thought of two silly dogs chasing them.

Home by Katherine Wood (in colored pencil and ink)







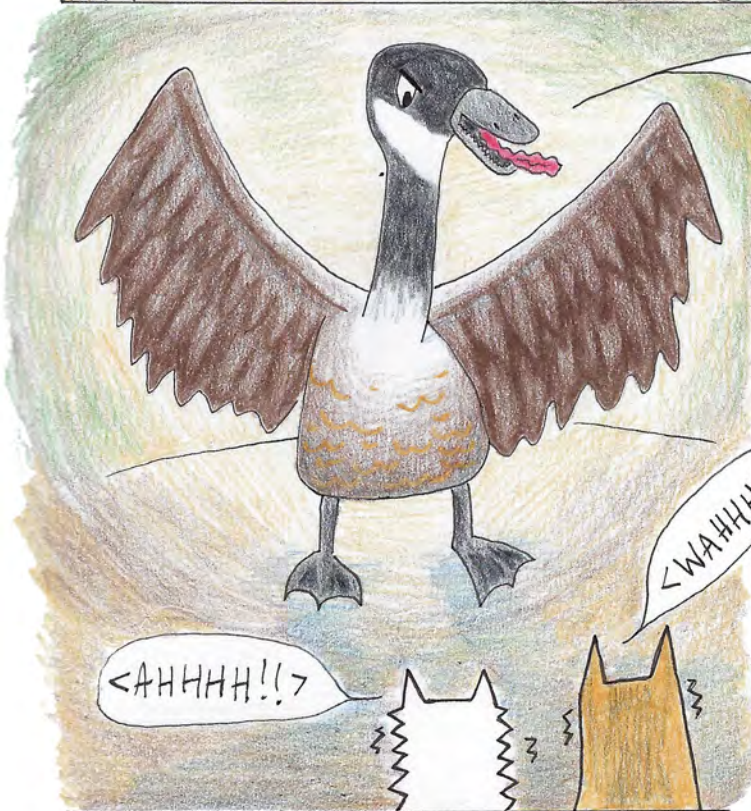


WOOF! WOOF!

QUACK!

QUACK!

WOOF!



<BACK OFF ASSHOLES!>



HISsss! HISsss!

<RUN!>

<WAHHH!>

<AHHHH!!>



<WHERE AM I??>



<THAT WAS SCARY!>

<YEAH! BUT IT WAS FUN!>

DOUGAL!!

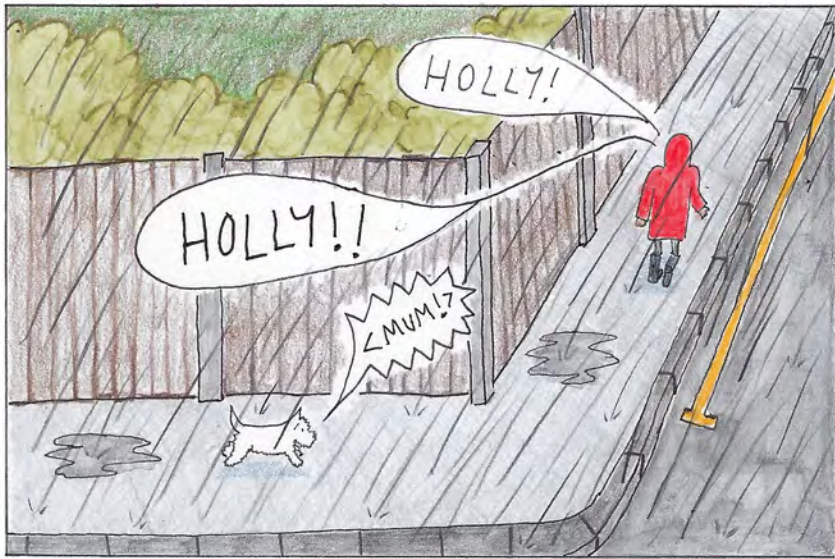
PANT! PANT!

PANT! PANT!

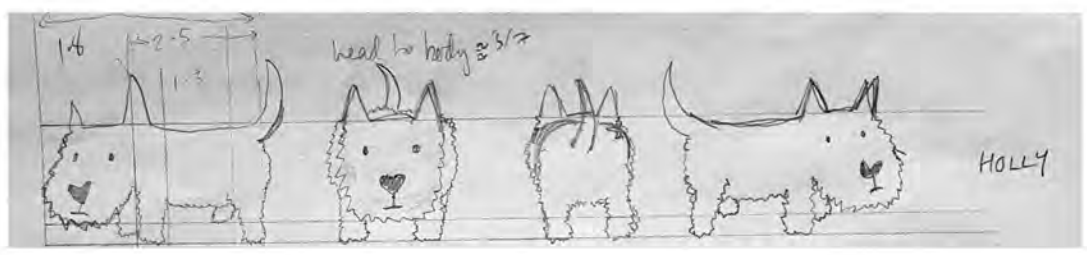
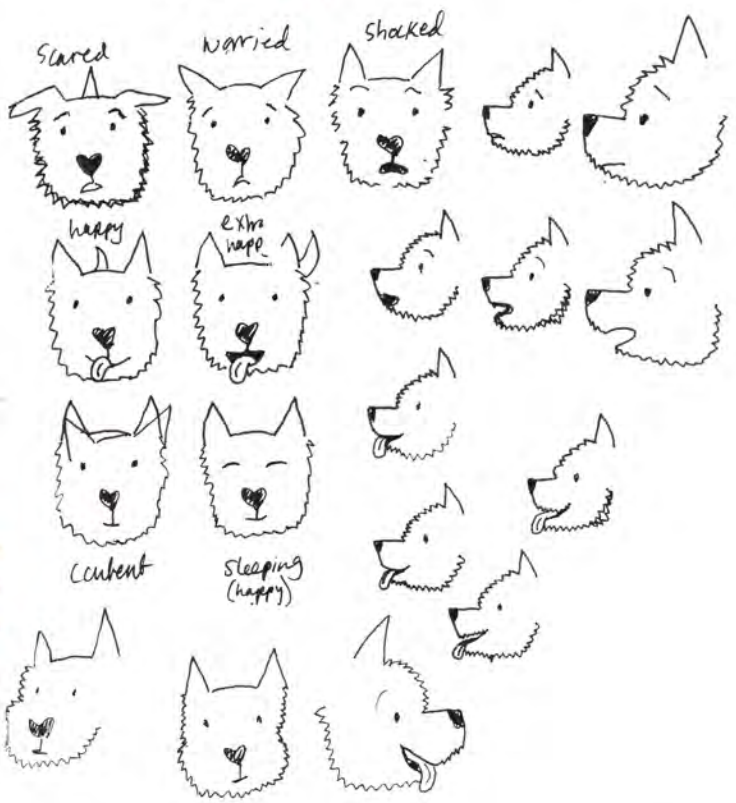
<OH NO! I HAVE TO GO! LET'S PLAY AGAIN SOON!>

<BYE!>





Sketch Pages



The Walk or Home



SETUP

- ① - Out for a walk with the dog
 - been to the supermarket
 - walking via Crosses & then the park
 - Cladgate in the park
 - we need to get home before rain

- ② - Shortcut via the wood park & canal
 - Holly runs off after a squirrel - chase ensues
 - Squirrel gets up a tree & looks down at Holly bawling
 - We shout her & she starts towards us
 - something is blocking the way...

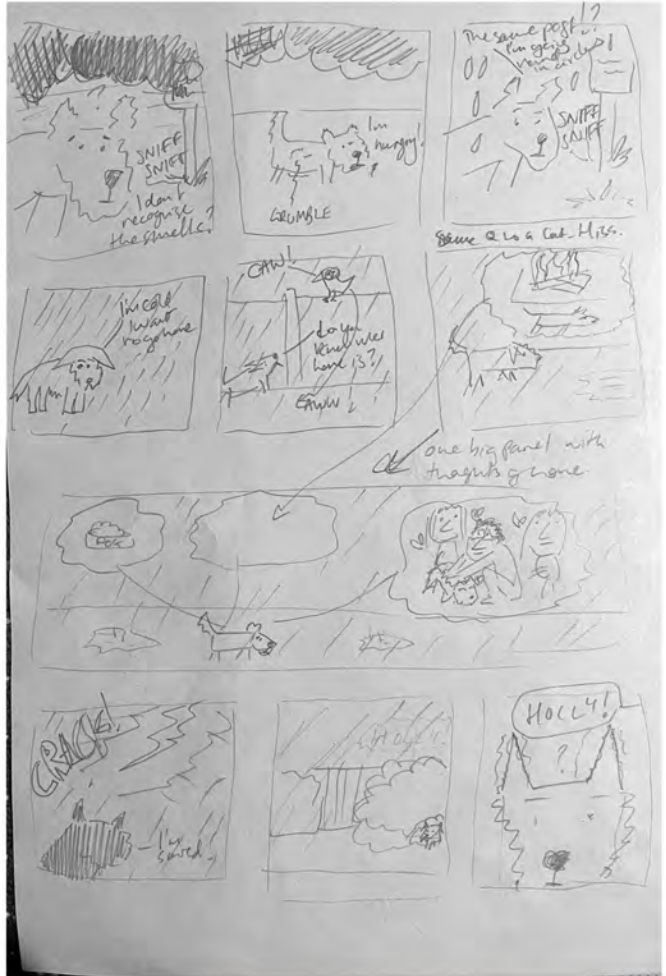
mugging with water

- ③ - a spider on the path
 - It seems big to Holly but she isn't scared
 - Close up of spider
 - Chase against capture
 - Holly eats the legs
 - the spider & runs to us
 - we walk through gate into a town park

CUMMEX + RESOLUTION

- ④ - Boat in canal - boy dog on boat want to play
 - Playing + jumping
 - Gorse starts hissing!
 - Big dog scared + who mugs off - Holly bawls + gorse goes away
 - treats + legs come to us again. Mugges legs

- ⑤ - Walking across Loch 7
 - Starts to rain
 - We all run!!
 - Soaking wet
 - nice warm towels
 - tea + talking
 - Pillow sleep



First day of school

By Juana Serrano



I have lived in the Bay Area for over 30 years but lived in a small town in Kansas for 6 years as a teenager. Migrating from El Salvador to Kansas in 1980, forever marked my life. After several attempts at writing memories and stories from that time, I found through the Graphic Novel class the medium to do just that. As I began sketching the story, I remembered how my grandfather would have me copy cartoons from the newspaper so I would learn how to draw. This ignited an interest that I had long lost, and that now I do not want to lose. The memory I share in The First Day of School is of an event that occurred on the first day of school as I started 9th grade in Liberal, Kansas. I am grateful for the door that this class has opened for me to express myself through comics. I look forward to creating more.

Medium: India ink, brushes and microns.

IN THE BUS ON THE WAY TO SCHOOL



WHY ARE YOU SHAW-ING ME (F) SHE DOESN'T UNDERSTAND?

IS THAT THE NEW GIRL?

SHHH! IT DOESN'T LOOK LIKE SHE UNDERSTANDS WHAT WE ARE SAYING...!!

HMM... THIS IS STRANGE

SOFIA MOVED TO THE UNITED STATES FROM EL SALVADOR IN 1980 DUE TO THE CIVIL WAR THERE



UNITED STATES
LIBERAL, KS

MEXICO

EL SALVADOR

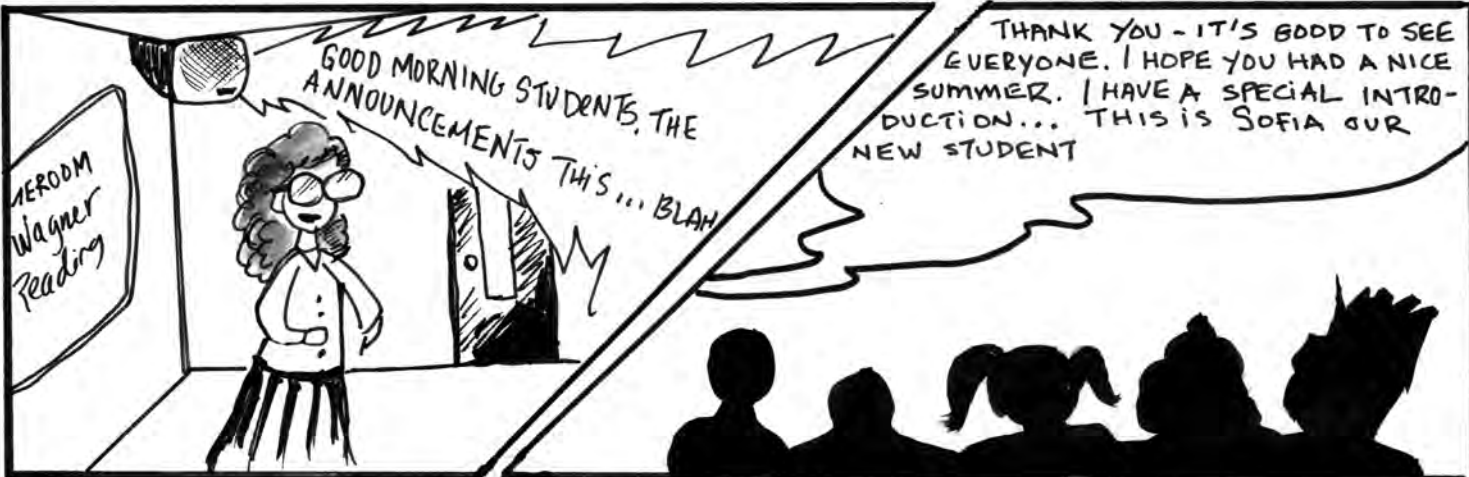
RRRIING!



WEST JR. HIGH SCHOOL

HOMEROOM
MRS Wagner
- Reading

GOOD MORNING!
PLEASE SETTLE DOWN
AND TAKE A SEAT.



HOMEROOM
Wagner
Reading

GOOD MORNING STUDENTS, THE
ANNOUNCEMENTS THIS... BLAH

THANK YOU - IT'S GOOD TO SEE EVERYONE. I HOPE YOU HAD A NICE SUMMER. I HAVE A SPECIAL INTRODUCTION... THIS IS SOFIA OUR NEW STUDENT





I WONDER WHAT HAPPENED TO HER?
I'LL ASK DURING RECESS...

OH, NO! SHE NOTICED MY EYE...



PERO ¿QUÉ DICE ESTA SEÑORA?
ME HABRÉ METIDO EN UN PROBLEMA?

DURING RECESS...
MRS. WAGNER TALKED
WITH SOFIA

BLAH... GEN BLAH...
COMPRENDEZ BLAH...
IIII I ... III III

+11779+BLAH OTH THE
IEP9KT7RSA UNDE
OUP WWYZ XTET
UOUTH BLAH

WORRIED X WH KRST
BUT BLAH...

DON'T WORRY
SOFIA WE WILL
HELP... GO TO
RECESS...

WHAT IS SHE SAYING? AM I IN TROUBLE?



MR WASHINGTON, THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME.
COULD WE SPEAK WITH SOFIA? MAYBE AT LUNCH,
AND WITH AN INTERPRETER?

OF COURSE!
MRS GONZALEZ,
OUR E.S.L.
TEACHER CAN
HELP.

THIS IS A
SENSITIVE
SITUATION. WE
NEED TO ENSURE
THE FACTS
ARE SOLID.

LET'S MEET HERE
SOON AFTER THE
LUNCH BELL RINGS.

IN WHAT TROUBLE AM I IN?

DID YOU SEE HER EYE?

YEAH...

¿EN QUE LÍO
ME HE METIDO?

*E.S.L. = ENGLISH AS
A SECOND LANGUAGE

LUNCHTIME AT THE PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE



SOFIA'S EYE LOOKS REALLY BAD... SHE CRIED WHEN WE TALKED... BLAH... BLAH

WE NEED TO BE CAREFUL WHEN SPEAKING TO HER.

(GASP!) HOW AWFUL!



*HOLA SOFIA! ME GUSTARIA QUE HABLARAMOS EN MI OFICINA. ¿TE PARECE?

*SÍ! CLARO!

*HI SOFIA. I WOULD LIKE IT IF WE SPEAK IN MY OFFICE. IS THAT OKAY?



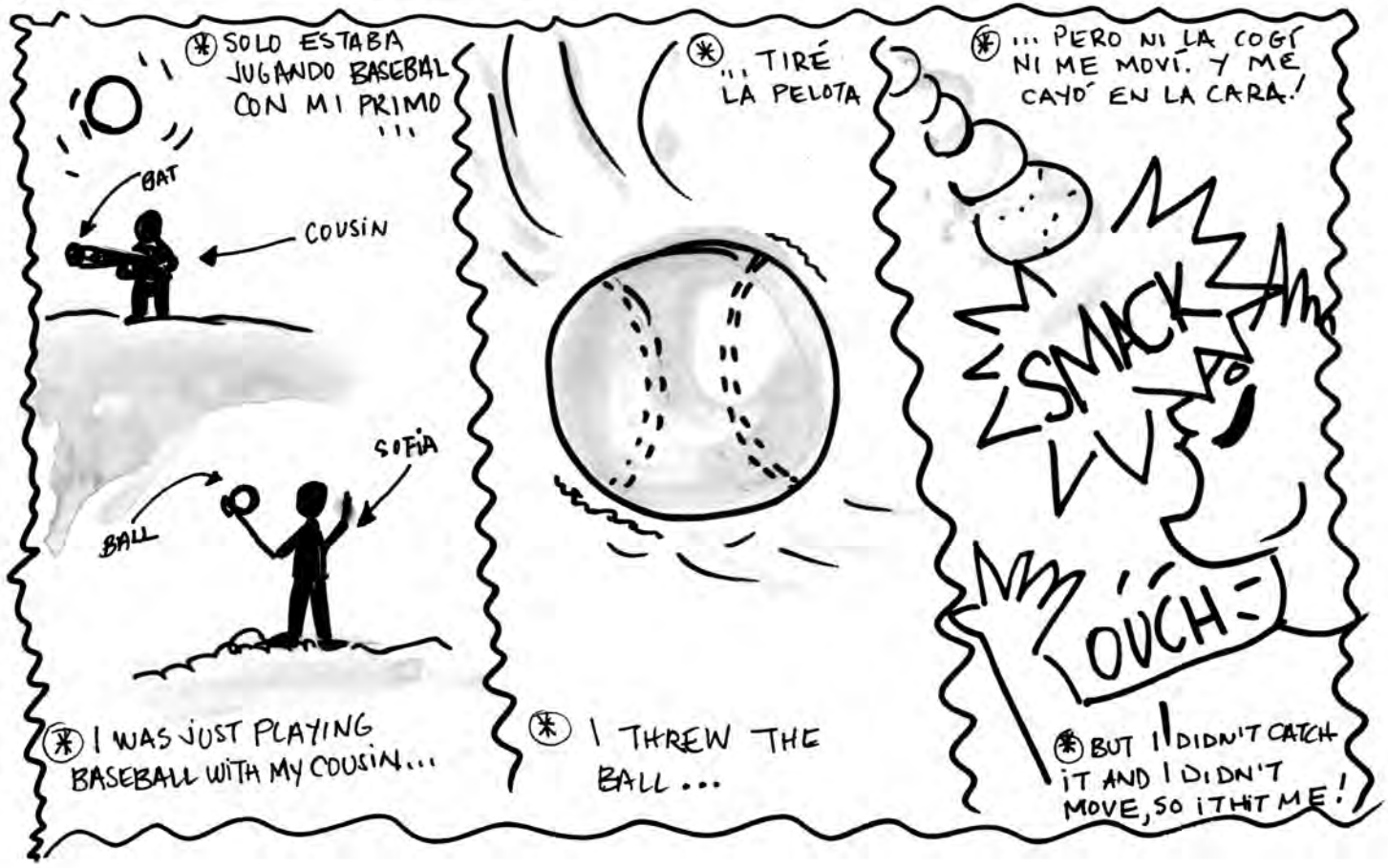
*ESTOY EN ALGUN C PROBLEMA? ¿HICE ALGO MALO?

*NO, NO CLARO QUE NO! ESTAMOS PREOCUPADOS POR TU OJO, ¿QUE TE SUCEDIÓ?

*NO, NOT AT ALL.

WE ARE WORRIED ABOUT YOUR EYE. WHAT HAPPENED?

*AM I IN TROUBLE? DID I DO SOMETHING WRONG?



*SOLD ESTABA JUGANDO BASEBAL CON MI PRIMO



*I WAS JUST PLAYING BASEBALL WITH MY COUSIN...

*... TIRÉ LA PELOTA



*I THREW THE BALL...

*... PERO NI LA COGÍ NI ME MOVÍ. Y ME CAYÓ EN LA CARA!



*BUT I DIDN'T CATCH IT AND I DIDN'T MOVE, SO IT HIT ME!

* LA PELOTA ME GOLPEÓ FUERTE Y EL OJO ME QUEDÓ ASÍ

* WOW! SOFIA, TU PUEDES JUGAR BÉISBOL? C
[* AH, SOFIA, YOU CAN PLAY BASEBALL?]

* SÍ, YO JUGABA EN EL SALVADOR.
[* YES! I PLAYED IN EL SALVADOR.]

* TENDREMOS QUE CONTARLE A LOS DEMÁS PARA QUE TE UNAS AL EQUIPO.
[* WE'LL HAVE TO TELL THE OTHERS SO YOU CAN JOIN THE TEAM]

* THE BALL HIT ME HARD, SO MY EYE ENDED UP LOOKING LIKE THIS.

MRS. GONZALEZ TELLS MRS. WAGNER AND THE PRINCIPAL. THEY ARE ALL RELIEVED. THEY GO BACK TO THE CLASSROOM AND DECIDE TO DO A "SHOW AND TELL." MRS. GONZALEZ TRANSLATED, OF COURSE

DOES YOUR EYE HURT?

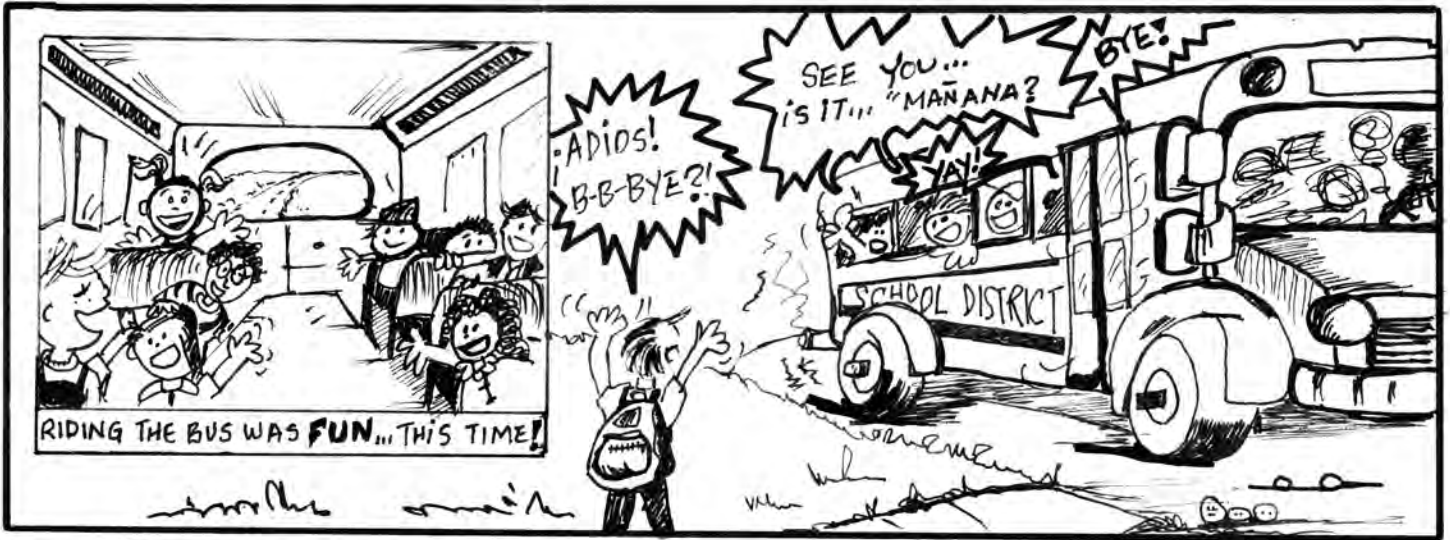
DOES BASEBALL HAVE THE SAME RULES IN EL SALVADOR?

(EVERYONE IS SO EXCITED I MAY HAVE A HARD TIME KEEPING UP WITH THE TRANSLATION.)

I BET IT DOES HURT!

THE SAME THING HAPPENED TO ME.





Sketch Pages

127!



*THIS IS INCREDIBLE! IN EL SALVADOR THERE AREN'T BUSES THAT PICK YOU UP AT HOME AND TAKE YOU TO SCHOOL FREE OF CHARGE.

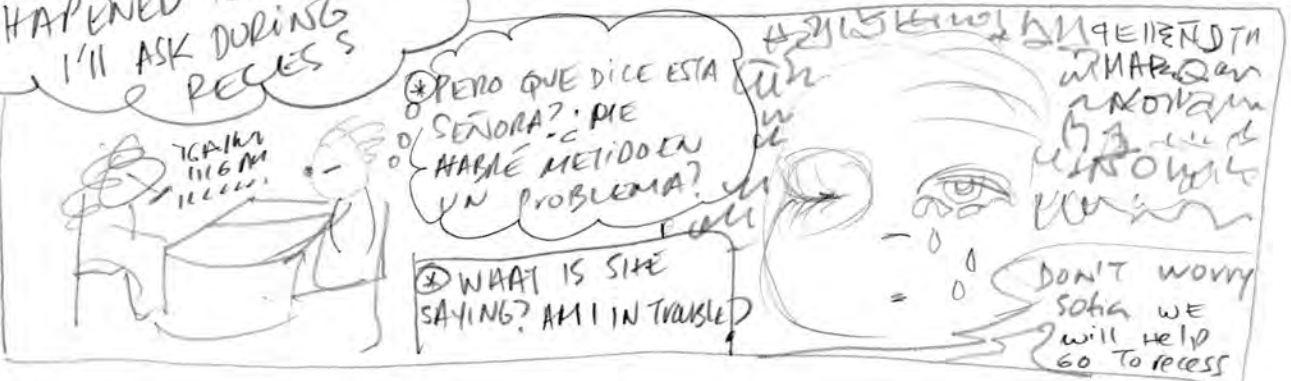




*AY NO!
TAME VIÓ
EL OJO

I WONDER WHAT
HAPPENED TO HER?
I'LL ASK DURING
RECESS

*OH NO! SHE NOTICED MY EYE!



¿CÓMO
LE PASÓ
EL OJO?

*PERO QUE DICE ESTA
SEÑORA? ¿ME
HABÍA METIDEN
UN PROBLEMA?

*WHAT IS SHE
SAYING? AM I IN TROUBLE?

DON'T WORRY
SOHA WE
WILL HELP
GO TO RECESS

MEANWHILE...



kids playing
at recess

DID YOU
SEEHER EYE?

Mr. Washington, THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME.
COULD WE SPEAK AT LUNCH? MAYBE
WITH AN INTERPRETER?



OF COURSE.
MRS. GONZALEZ
OUR ESL
TEACHER
CAN HELP.

THIS IS
A SENSITIVE SITUATION.
WE NEED TO MAKE SURE
THE FACTS ARE SOLID.
LET'S MEET HERE
SOON AFTER THE
LUNCH BELL
RINGS

*PERO
¿EN QUE
LÍO ME
HE METIDO?

*IN WHAT TROUBLE AM I IN?



SASSY

BY DEBBY MILLER

I GREW UP IN A CULTURE IN WHICH THERE WAS NOT ONLY THE EXPECTATION THAT I WOULD BE NOTHING BUT AN OBEDIENT WIFE AND MOTHER, BUT AN ABSOLUTE CERTAINTY OF IT. THE STRICT ENCULTURATION STAINED MY MIND, CENSORING THOUGHTS OF SELF-EXPRESSION AND PREVENTING ME FROM BEING, OR EVEN KNOWING, WHO I AM.

BECAUSE OF THIS OPPRESSIVE FORCE IT WAS ONLY AT AGE 68 THAT I DISCOVERED THAT BOXING WAS A CORE PART OF MY IDENTITY. THAT I COULD DO SOMETHING SO "UNLADYLIKE" WAS A REVELATION, AND THAT IT COULD BE A VITAL PART OF MYSELF WAS AN EPIPHANY.

MY BOXING COACH, ELIZA, WHO IS THE SUBJECT OF THIS STORY, HAS ALSO STRUGGLED TO EXPRESS HER IDENTITY, BUT IN A MUCH MORE EXTERNAL WAY. I HAD INTENDED TO TELL THE STORY OF MY STRUGGLE, BUT I FOUND THAT IN HER STORY WAS A MUCH MORE APPROACHABLE AND DIRECT WAY TO EXPRESS MY OWN. IN THIS WAY, THE STORY IS OF US BOTH.

I PLAN TO INCORPORATE THESE PANELS INTO A LONGER GRAPHIC NOVEL THAT WILL CONTAIN MORE MOMENTS AND A LARGER NARRATIVE.

DEBBYMILLERART.COM

ELIZA OLSON

WORLD LIGHTWEIGHT CHAMPION, 2005

I LIKED PLAYING
FOOTBALL WITH
THE BOYS.

MOM WARNED,
"DON'T BEAT
THEIR ASSES."



I CAUGHT EVERY PASS —



—AND DANCED WITH DELIGHT!



PAUL PUNCHED ME IN THE NOSE.



TO
DEFEND
MYSELF
I
WANTED
TO
LEARN
JUDO.

MOM SAID,
"NO!
YOU'RE
AGGRESSIVE
ENOUGH
ALREADY."



SO I BLEW
BLOODY SNOT
ON HIS NEW
WHITE JERSEY.



Sketch Pages

I liked
playing
football w
the boys.
mom said,
"Don't beat
them over."



I caught
kenny pass &
danced w delight.
Paul punched me
in the nose



I didn't know
how to
defend myself

I was let to
know yida
mom said, "No,
you're aggressive
enough already"



work it!

CHARACTER
DEVELOPMENT





Finding Me and Me By Silviane Man-Willrich

Comic drawn digitally with Clip Studio Paint program and a Wacom Intuos3 Tablet on windows 10

This comic is an autobiography me exploring my gender identity through the years of growing up in the Bay Area

Statement

I am a mixed race autistic AFAB person who identifies as genderfluid. (I am Chinese and European; both my parents are 1st and second-generation immigrants). I use any pronouns to refer to me.

The San Francisco Bay Area is a very LGBT friendly environment. My parents have close gay and transgender friends, some of whom have taken care of my sister and me. The older I got, though, the more I learned about the world outside my experience, where people were hateful not just of another person's race, but of who they loved and even how they affirmed their own identity. I could see how Prop. 8 harmfully affected our friends, and how unfair it was until the Supreme Court finally allowed gay marriage for all across the states.

When I was accepted at Mills College, at the time a women's-only college, the school's liberal intent was to make everyone feel welcome. However, some students went overboard "policing" everything that they felt was a toxic legacy of a problematic society, instead of realizing there were other ways to look at things that might only superficially resemble the oppressive viewpoints they were actually trying to fight. I felt scared of messing up and upsetting someone if something about me didn't fit their idea of "political correctness". I wanted to just vibe in my own bubble without bothering anyone, so I went along with it, even sticking to a default apparent gender identity of a cis woman. By choosing to stick a label on myself to keep the peace, I ended up suppressing my gender identity and expression.

I see myself now as two people in one body, a boy and a girl. Sometimes they meld together to be one person, other times they are separate, but they both make up the whole of me in the end. This comic is meant to be a way to explain some of my journey, and coming to accept myself the way I am, and I wanted to share this experience with others who might be trying to find themselves.

Finding Me and Me
By
Silviane Man-Wilberich

There are often stories about LGBT people growing up seeing oppression and that it's tough and difficult to find their way in the world. My upbringing was different.

Growing up in the Bay Area, my parents never forced me into one gender role.

Just because the toys and clothes are pink doesn't mean you have to like it.

Here, let's shop in the boys section to see if there is anything you like there too.



I never actively thought too hard on being a boy or a girl. I liked to cross-dress as a boy sometimes, play with any kind of toy no matter the gender, chose the female option in a game when given the choice and saw myself as just, "Me".

Crossplaying as a prince!

Dressing up as a warrior princess!



Besides such an open upbringing, I had used angel and devil analogies to describe my emotions and feelings to my therapist to try and understand myself.

Therapist

Child Me



I sorted things into good thoughts and bad thoughts between the two:

Positive
Reserved
Quiet

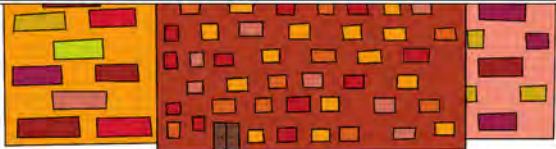
Misbehaving
Negative self-talk
Sad



This helped me when I was diagnosed as autistic too.

Young Adult Me!

Things made sense for me. I was me, I understood me, if I wanted to be a guy, I would cross-dress, and that's the way the world was.



And then I went off to college...



College was very new for me.

Whoa...



To put it simply, it is a place of freedom for some people who grew up very oppressed environments. They were finally given a chance to be who they were against the conservative society.



But because of that...

Hi! My name is [xxx], I'm cis-female, and use she/they pronouns.



I'm [xxx], I'm gender binary and use they/them pronouns.



What about you?



I never thought of needing to announce my gender label or pronouns before. I just went along with it.



I'm cis-female and use she/her I guess?



Label get!

Great!



After that, every time someone asked what pronouns I used, I always said the default to get it over with. Even on my online profiles.



But the more I said I was cis female, it started to feel...weird...



Like I was lying to myself... That I was missing...something...

The internet also started to influence and confuse me as well.

I have noticed the term, "Fujoshi" on the internet.

Its means "Rotten Girl" and it's when a woman is into specifically gay romance of two men.

As a gay man, I have to say this...

STOP FETISHIZING US GAY PEOPLE!

Yeah

Yeah

Internet

Internet



Worry

That label intimidated me. I was anxious and scared. I thought I liked the gay romances not as a woman but as a guy, but I didn't feel completely trans. I still liked being a woman too. I didn't want to give up the woman label.

My angel and demon half were confused as well.



Strict
Quiet
Shaming
Reserved

The angel half kept suppressing things from the demon half that weren't even "bad" thoughts now.



Extroverted
Impulsive
Loud
Sexual

Neither was "good" or "bad" anymore.



I was lost and trying to figure myself out. Nothing quite made sense anymore.



Whenever I played a new game for the first time and if they gave you the option to choose which gender to play as, or to design, I would always choose the female or make my own woman.

Dragon Scale 3

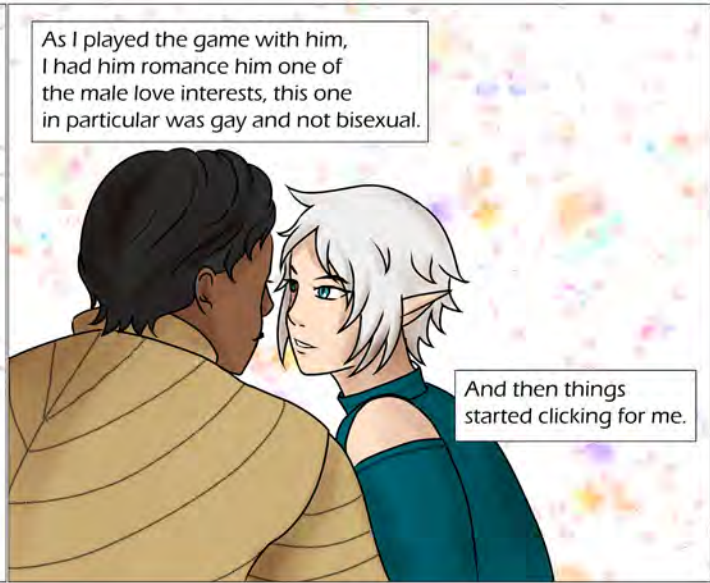
One day, for a new game I got and started to play, I made a guy first.

Choose your gender

MALE OR FEMALE

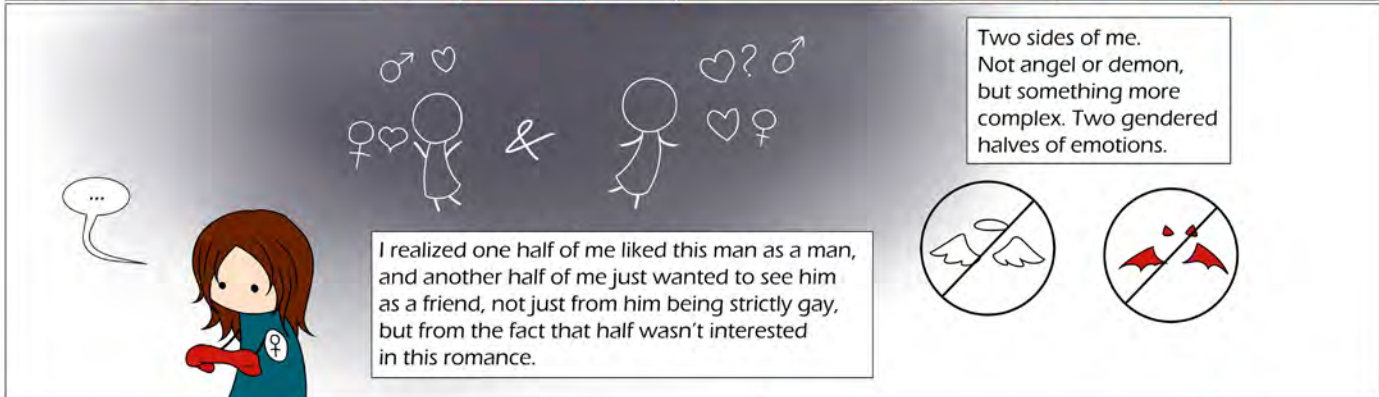


I spent hours creating him and when I was done, I looked at him and noticed I tried to make him similar to me in a lot of ways from the head shape and eyes.



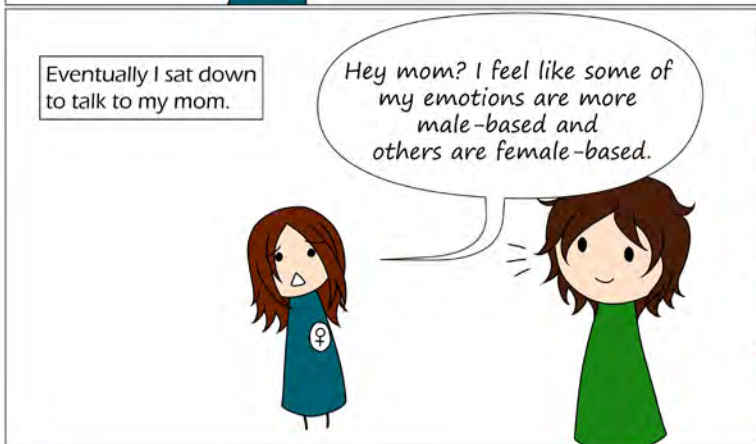
As I played the game with him, I had him romance him one of the male love interests, this one in particular was gay and not bisexual.

And then things started clicking for me.



Two sides of me. Not angel or demon, but something more complex. Two gendered halves of emotions.

I realized one half of me liked this man as a man, and another half of me just wanted to see him as a friend, not just from him being strictly gay, but from the fact that half wasn't interested in this romance.

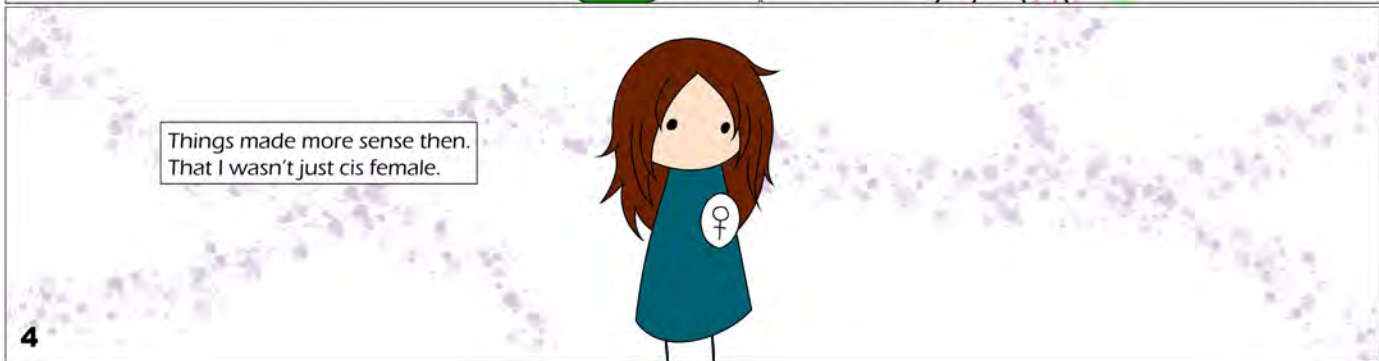


Eventually I sat down to talk to my mom.

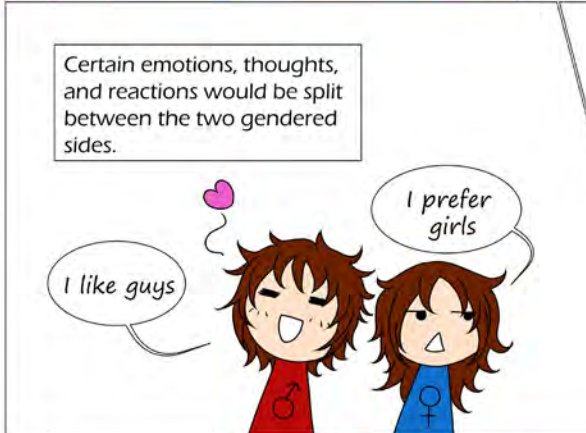
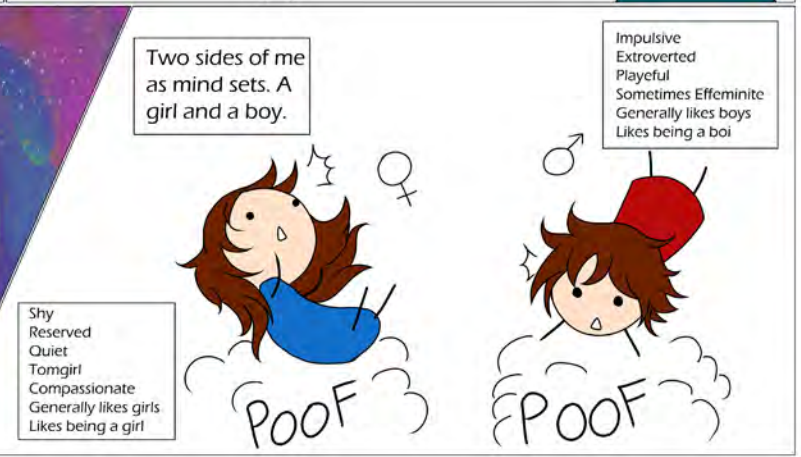
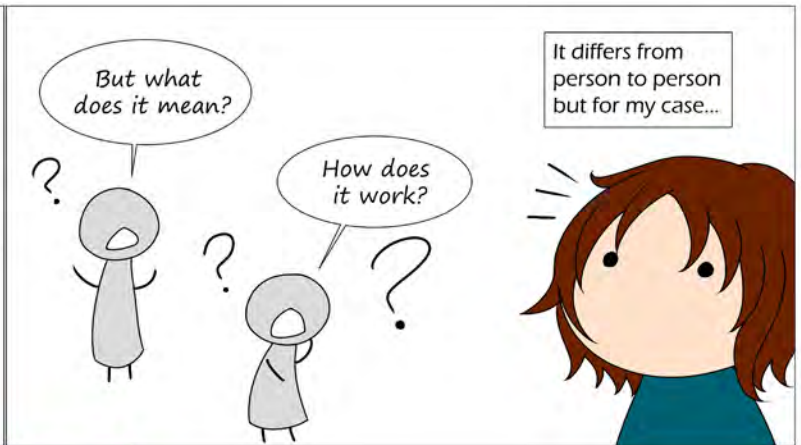
Hey mom? I feel like some of my emotions are more male-based and others are female-based.



My mom listened and understood what I was saying and was supportive of me. This was later followed by the rest of my family.

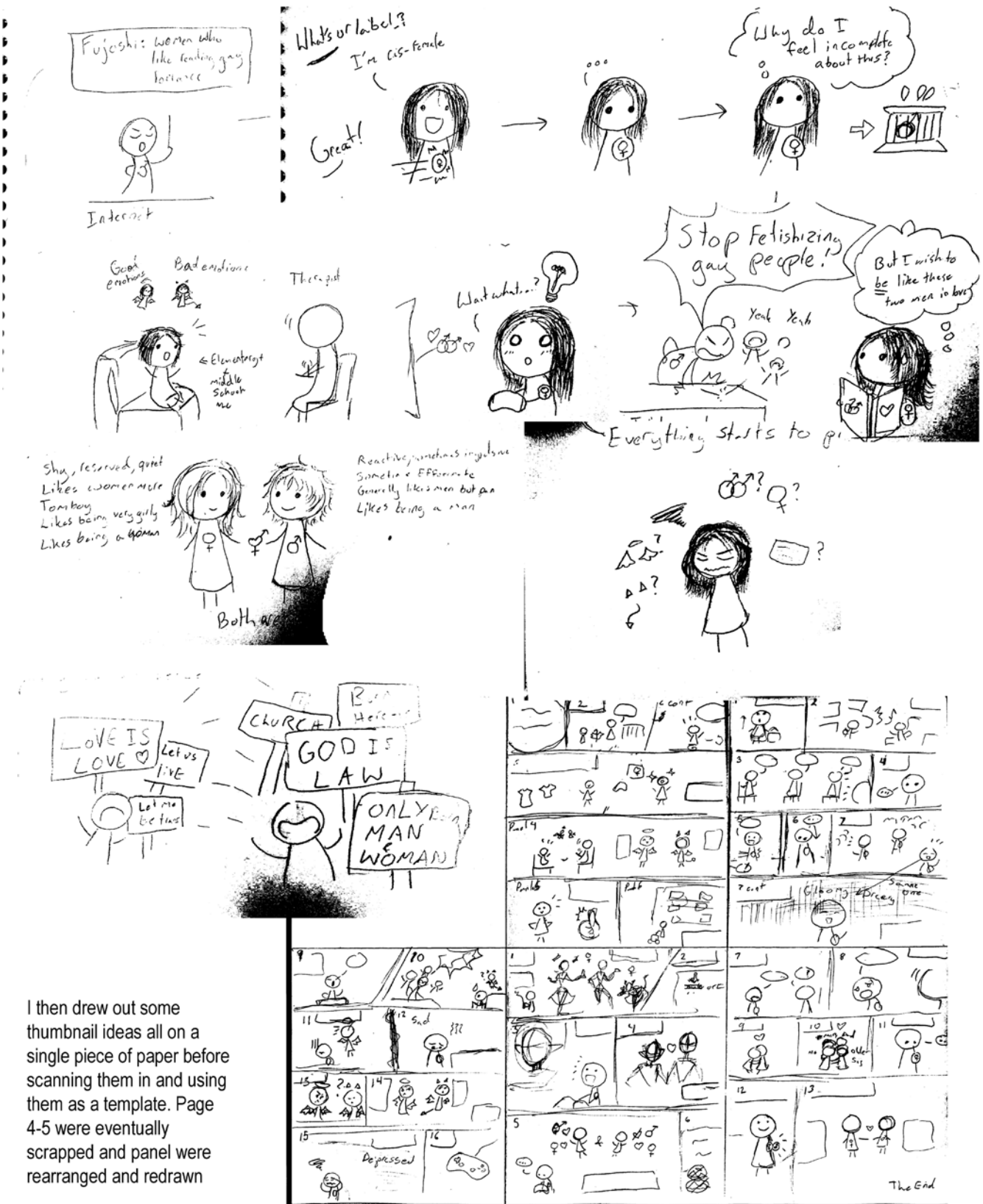


Things made more sense then. That I wasn't just cis female.



Sketch pages

Initially I drew in my sketchbook some ideas of how I wanted a few panels to go. Not all of these ideas made it to the final comic



I then drew out some thumbnail ideas all on a single piece of paper before scanning them in and using them as a template. Page 4-5 were eventually scrapped and panel were rearranged and redrawn

A few doodles I made that would be scaled down for one of the thumbnails. I ended up redrawing the girl in the middle into the elf girl to give a little more variety and closer to some of the characters I ended up creating in video games. I also chibi-fied a couple of the girls for fun and wanted to share that too



While much of my comic is drawn in chibi style to help make the storytelling simple for the reader. Even so, I ended up throwing in my general art style for the moments to depict the video game characters as one way to showcase my art and to also convey how much of an influence those characters have in my designing and drawing.



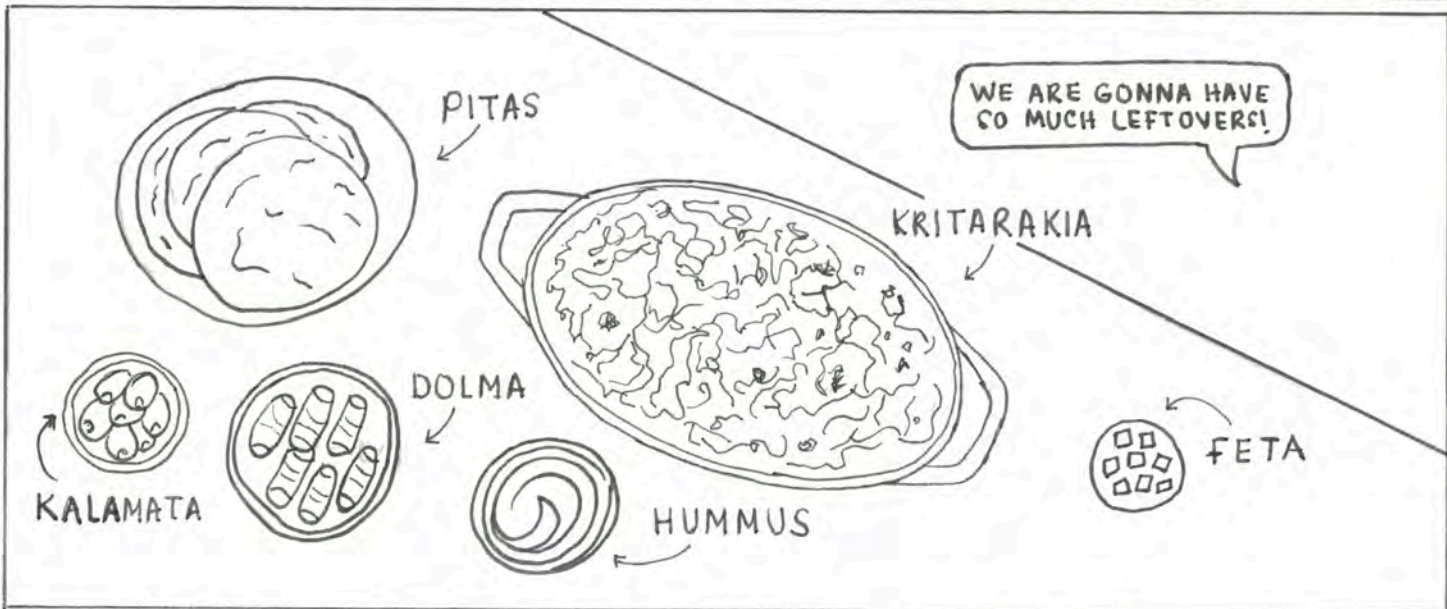
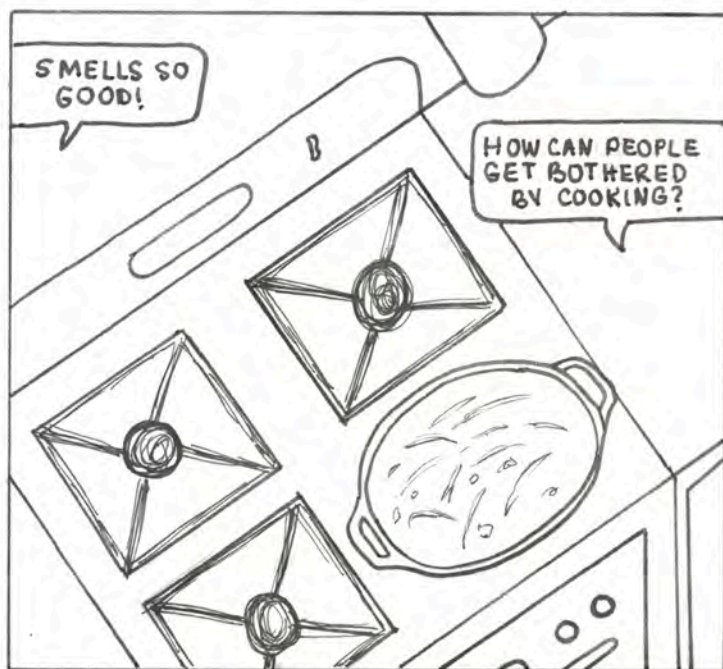


Usually I work on watercolor and am inspired by surrealism and abstract work and enjoy playing with color combinations. I took this class because: I genuinely enjoy learning new things; I am new to the area and thought it might help me ground myself (and it kinda did); I wanted to do something for fun outside of work (and it was fun!)

Beyond the realm of art, another passion of mine lies in the culinary arts. I believe food is medicine and wanted to explore how to convey some of my values and share my thoughts about food and health trends. Lots of new research links seed oils to metabolic disorders. I felt compelled to explore these themes in my work. Rather than prescribing a particular course of action, I aim to spark conversation and critical reflection through visual storytelling.

For this project, my process began with crafting the dialogues, and as I wrote them, I visualized how to represent my ideas. My initial ideas were too complex, so as I started thumbnailing things became more simple, and so the text. Despite the inherent difficulties, I found immense satisfaction in the creative journey of *One Bite at a Time: A Kitchen Journey*. I learnt immensely, and honestly can't wait to do it again.

One Bite at a Time: A Kitchen Journey
By Jilynette Centeno Millán
Medium: Ink



HEY, HUBERMAN HAS A VIDEO ABOUT SUGARS AND PROCESSED FOODS.

COMING!



LET'S SEE HOW LONG

4 HOURS!

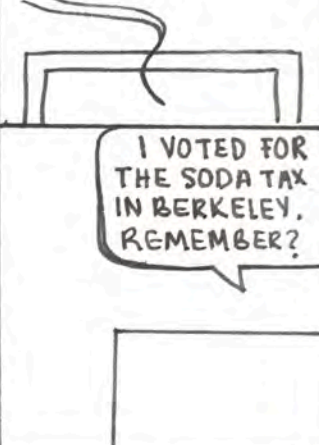
HA, IT'S LIKE HE'S ON A MISSION TO MAKE US FORGET WHAT DAYLIGHT LOOKS LIKE.



BEEP BEEP BEEP

OH, THE BREAD!

I VOTED FOR THE SODA TAX IN BERKELEY. REMEMBER?



WHEN I'M OLD, I DON'T WANT TO HAVE ALL THESE ISSUES... BLOOD PRESSURE, CHOLESTEROL, FATTY LIVER, DIABETES... UGH!

I'M CONFUSED I'M BONNA GET A SNACK.

AND ALL BECAUSE OF YOUR LIFESTYLE TOO, NOT JUST FOOD.



HEALTHY PROBABLY MEANS LESS BREAD, NO?

BUT I LOVE BAKING IT. IT'S SO RELAXING!



WHAT DOES IT TRULY MEAN TO BE HEALTHY?



AND NOW THIS!



14:55 MS

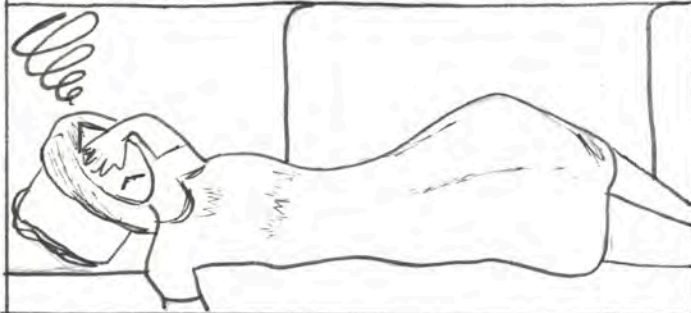
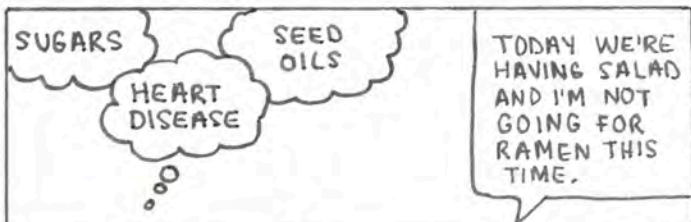
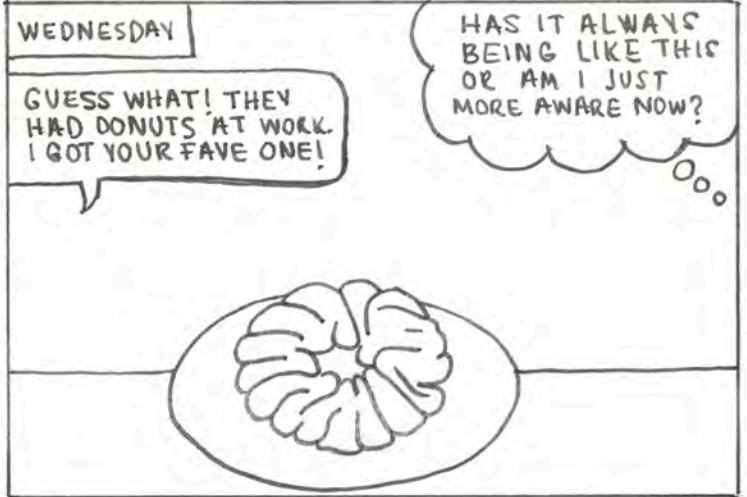
TUESDAY MARCH

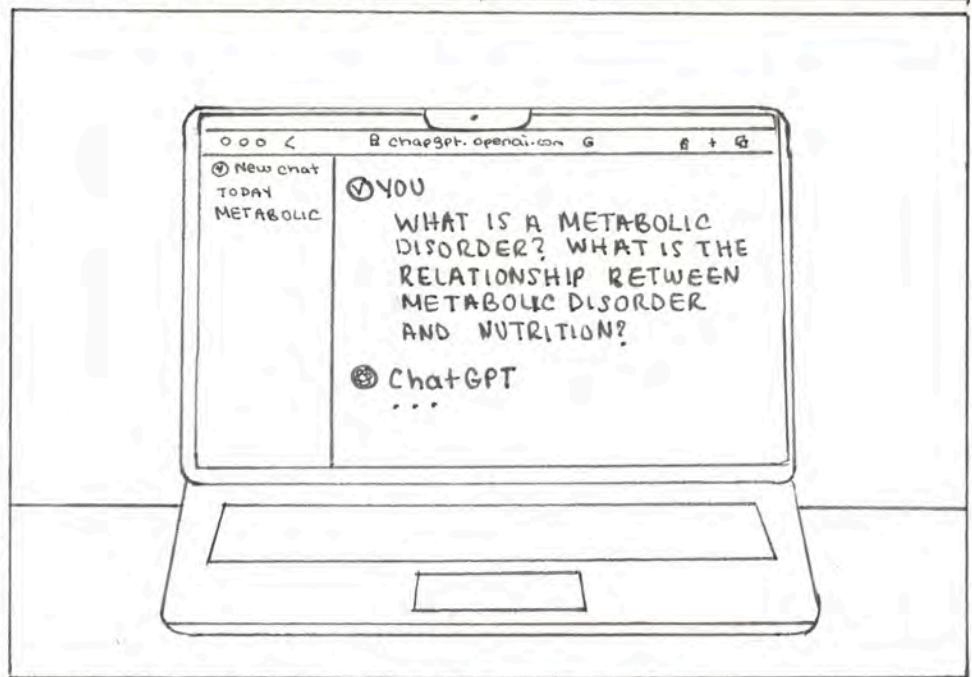
C U TOM

YES ON TMO

HEY

RAMEN ON FRIDAY ???





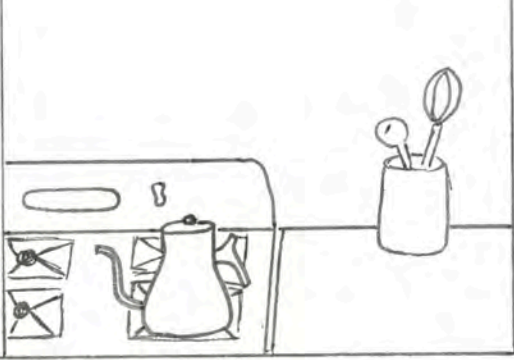
WORRYING ABOUT ALL THIS IS NOT GOOD FOR MY MENTAL HEALTH

I AGREE! ASK YOURSELF WHAT YOU NEED OR WANT OR IDENTIFY ONE GOAL.

I'M DECLARING WAR ON SEEDOILS, ULTRA-PROCESSED FOODS, AND SUGAR, THE VILLAINS OF MY HEALTH SAGA.

SO, NO MORE FRIES?

MAYBE JUST THE CRISPY GREEN KIND



WHAT ABOUT EXERCISE?

I'M LUCKY I CAN WALK TO WORK SO MAYBE SOME STRENGTH TRAINING



- HEALTHY GROCERY LIST
- AVOCADOS
 - SALMON
 - EGGS
 - OLIVE OIL
 - YOGURT
 - CABBAGE
 - MICRO GREENS
 - CHEESE
 - A2 MILK
 - BLUEBERRIES



I'M IN, VIOLET! WE'LL BE PROTEIN WARRIORS.

I WAS THINKING WE CAN DO WEEKLY MEAL PLANS - WE'LL BE THE NUTRITION NINJAS DODGING THE AISLES.



I FEEL SO MUCH BETTER. THANKS FOR YOUR SUPPORT.

OF COURSE, AGAPI!

SO, WHAT'S FOR LUNCH?

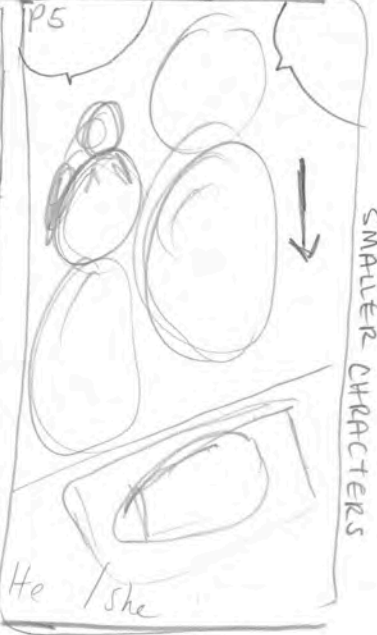
YES, WE'RE LIKE HEALTH HACKERS INFILTRATING THE SYSTEM ONE BITE AT A TIME.

TIME FOR OUR FIRST MEAL PLAN, EXCITING!



Sketch Pages

THUMBNAIL - PAGE 2

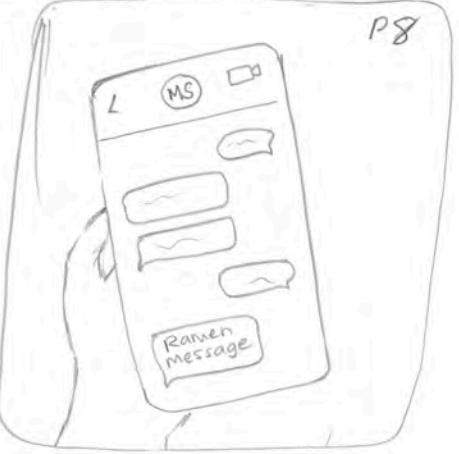


CHANGE SPEECH BUBBLES!!!

SMALLER CHARACTERS

She / He

He / She

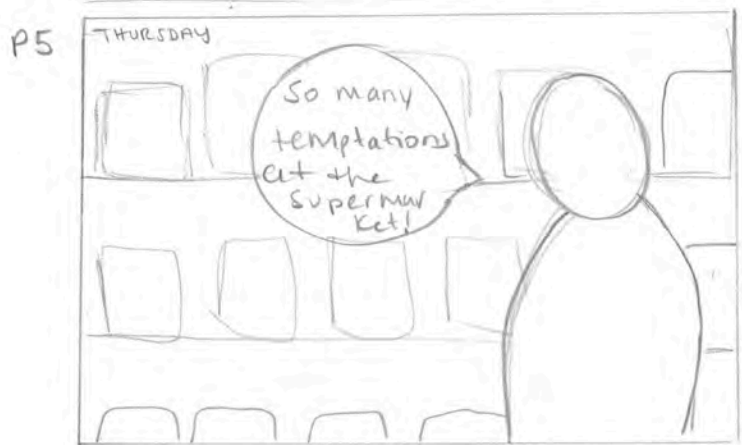
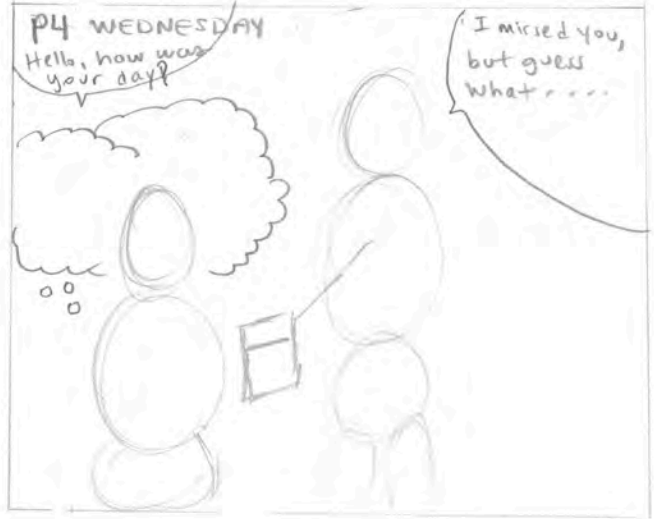
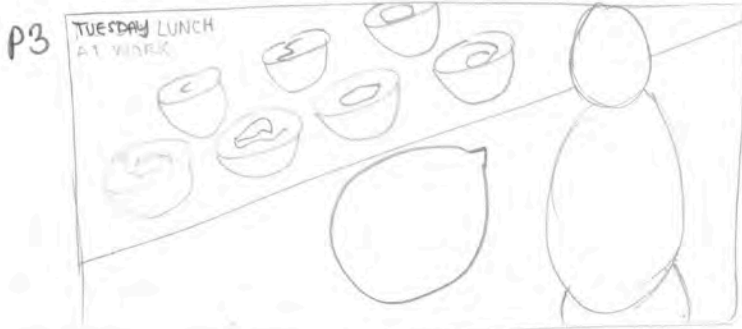
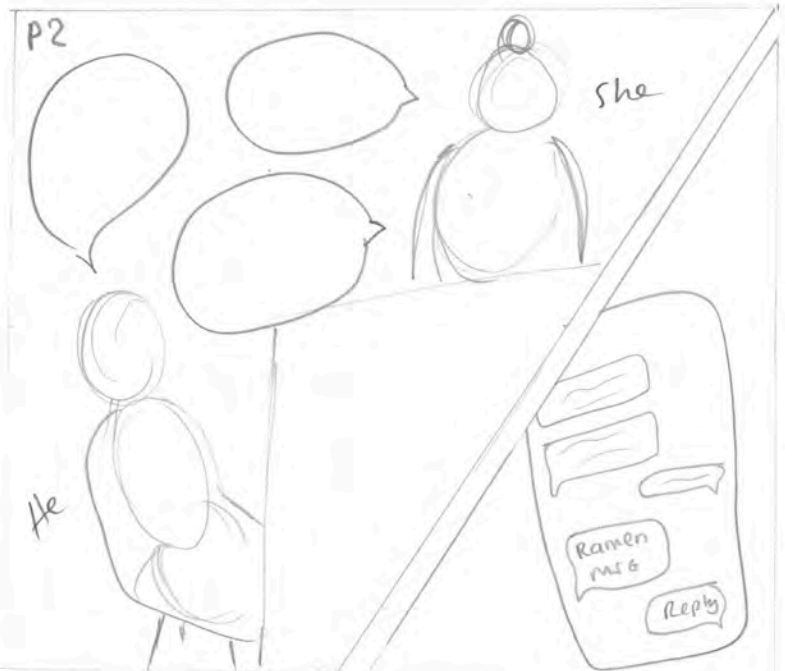


Concerned

overwhelmed

Show emotions

Thumbnail - Page 3





Vapor

Is it wrong to let go of old beliefs that we once held so dearly to our hearts?

By Zoe Chung

Artist Statement

We hold onto many beliefs, obligations, relationships, ambitions, obsessions, and many more throughout our lives because we believe these things can become our source of strength.

"Vapor" was inspired by my trip to Peru in September 2023. During a horseback riding tour through the mountains, the guide, who also owned the business, shared with me how the ancient Andean philosophy had transformed his relationship with himself, his mother, and Mother Nature.

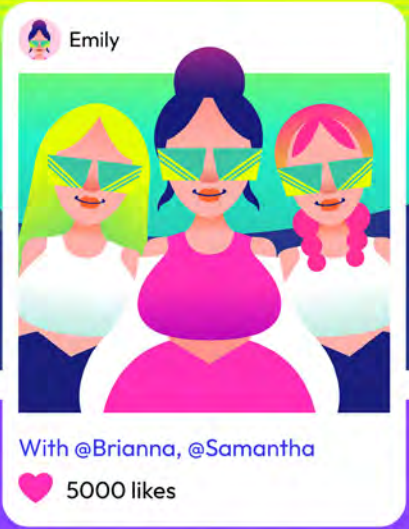
In my story, I wanted to explore how our perception of reality shifts over time as we navigate this ever-changing world.

Synopsis

In a world centered around materialistic values, a man rediscovers and finds solace in ancient healing magic with the help of his grandmother. Combining his entrepreneurial passion with this newfound belief, he decides to start a tourism business, introducing visitors to the magical realm of the Gods.

Sebastian is so amazing.

My name is Sebastian.
I am a tour guide.



Can't wait to soak up the
vibes of the Moon Temple!

I love sharing
my belief
and heritage
with tourists.



Because of blessings
from the divine, my
family and career
have been thriving.





Follow me this way to the chamber of the Moon Temple.

Ladies? Briana? Emily?

Where did everyone go?

What on earth is this?




You must be the source of creation, the divine being who blessed me and my family.

Sebastian, you are a rare one amongst your kind. I'm pleased by your devotion.




To reward your devotion, I am offering you the gift of immortality.


You will take the form of a sacred animal, and guard my temple forever.




This is insane.
What about
my family?



I can't
abandon
them.



I'm not my
father, who
left us in
the cold.



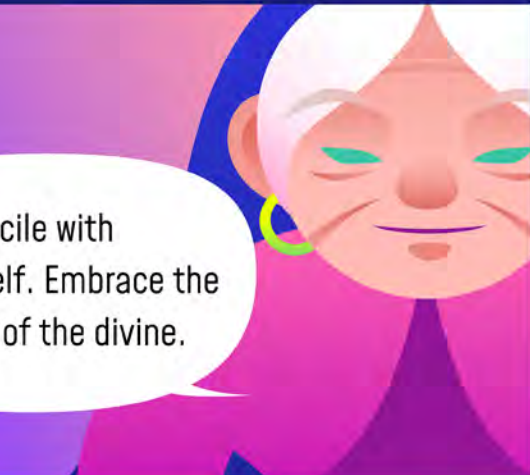
Why did he leave?
How can we survive
without him?

Are we ever going to
see dad again?


Is this all I'm
capable of?

She showed me my past trauma. My lonely childhood, broken family, and the unfulfilling job I once had.

Desperate, I decided to consult my grandma, who was the healer of our family, for her help to be re-connected with the divine. It was five years ago.




Reconcile with yourself. Embrace the power of the divine.




Open your eyes, Sebastian. You shall see what she has prepared for you.

With her help, I was able to reconnect with the source of creation.


I was overflowed with creativity and inspired to start a tourism business with the purpose of showing others the power of my ancestor's belief.



Looking back, my family and business wouldn't have thrived if it wasn't for your guidance five years ago.



Yet I can't give up everything to follow you. I guess, my faith is phony.



No, my child. You've found a new strength in yourself and people who are dependant on you. Be brave, and live a prosperous life thereafter.

Everything returns back to normal. There's no god, no devil, but an empty cave.

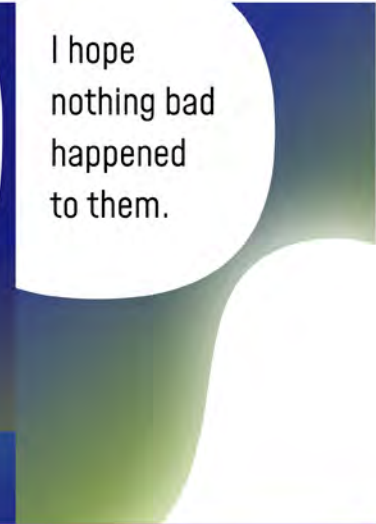
What just happened?



Where's everyone? Emily? Brianna? Samantha?

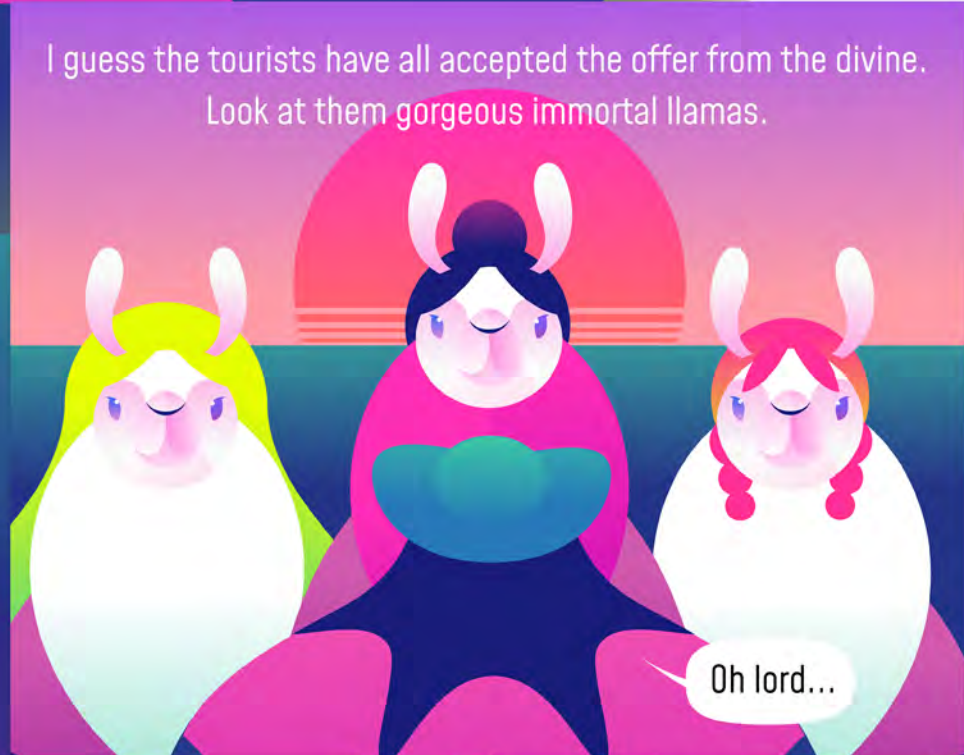
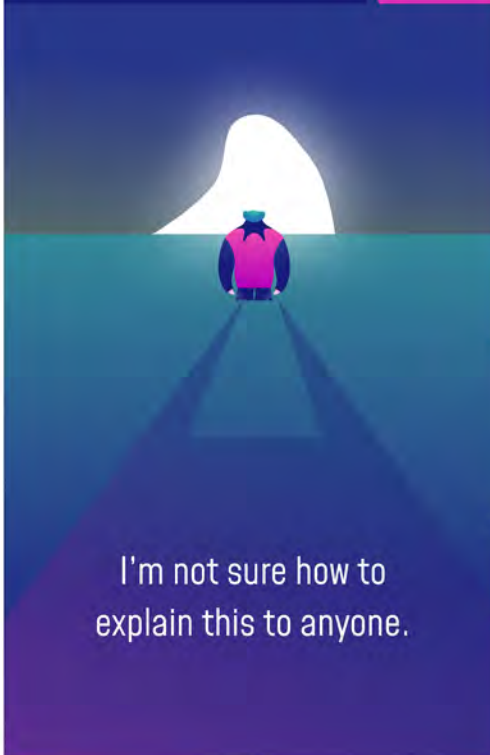


I hope nothing bad happened to them.



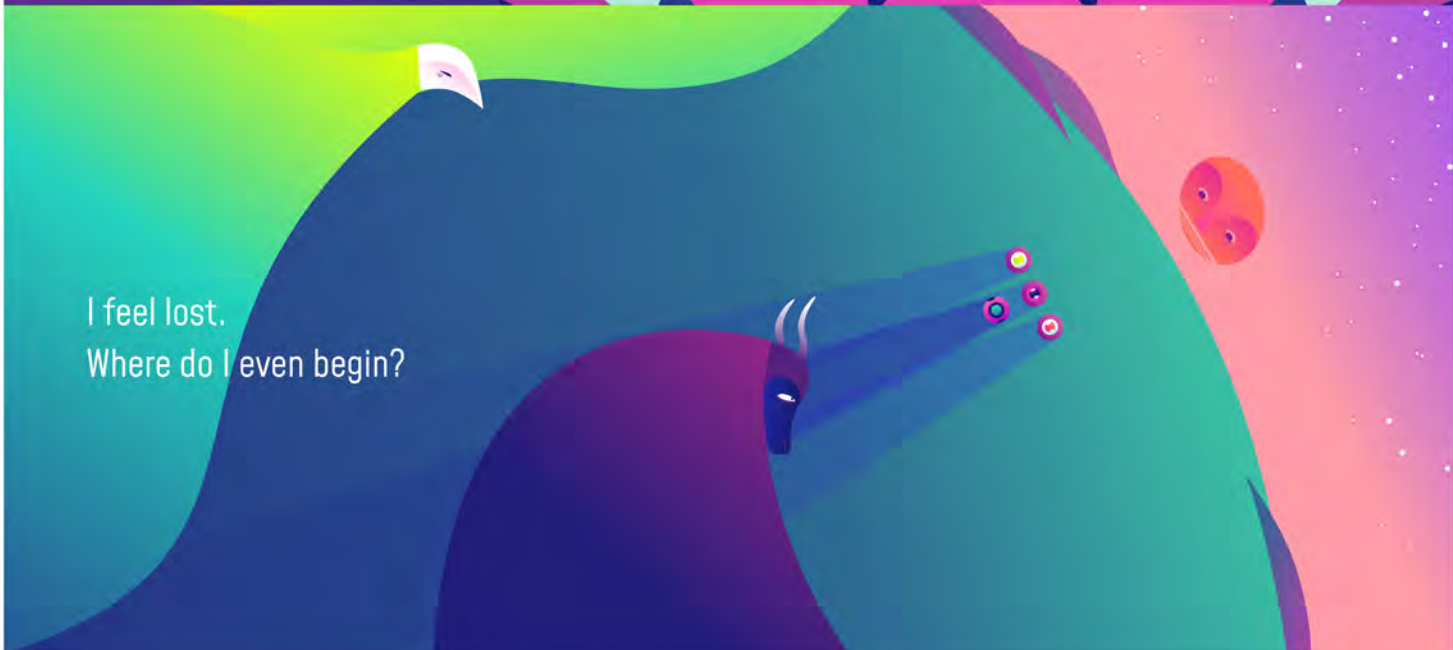
I guess the tourists have all accepted the offer from the divine. Look at them gorgeous immortal llamas.

I'm not sure how to explain this to anyone.

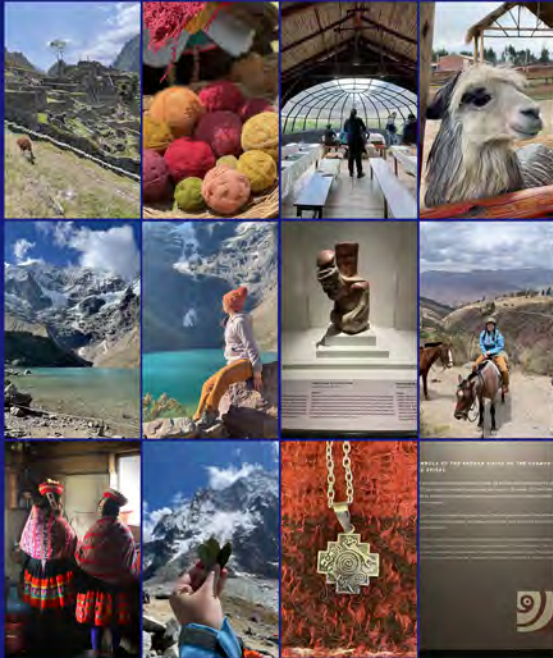


Oh lord...

I feel lost. Where do I even begin?



My Process



Storyboarding your story in five pages

Set-up

Content's presented (Camera, Director) to someone usually closer to the exhibit's story of the exhibit.

How progression and transitions fit an exhibit's room.

Make connections to bottom left corner a series of programs.

Full-size mental storyboard.

garden magic

Ilmas

Make this necessary showing in the room that connects the cap wall, the bottom, the exhibit's theme.

These are the exhibit's stories.

Story summary (events in new order)

The storyboard grid consists of 25 panels. Each panel includes a title, a list of key points or actions, and a corresponding sketch or drawing. The panels are organized into five columns and five rows, with a central flow diagram at the top.

Panel 1: The story of a mountain

- Design for Page 1
- Panel 1: The story of a mountain

Panel 2: Mountain's gift

- Design for Page 2
- Panel 2: Mountain's gift

Panel 3: Mountain's story

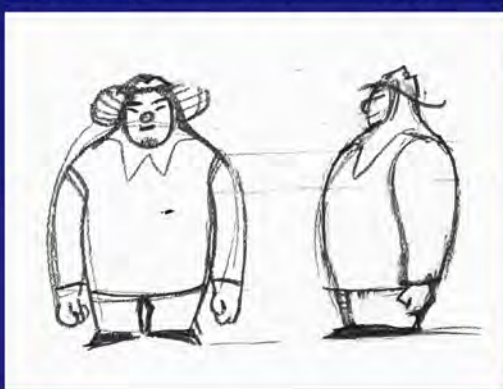
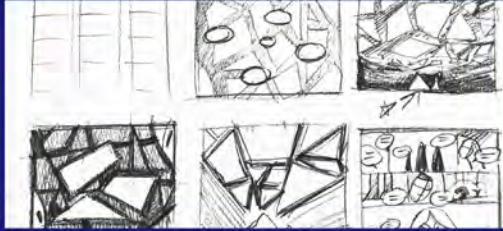
- Design for Page 3
- Panel 3: Mountain's story

Panel 4: Mountain's magic

- Design for Page 4
- Panel 4: Mountain's magic

Panel 5: Mountain's power

- Design for Page 5
- Panel 5: Mountain's power



UPROAR UP NORTH

Judy Weiler

I grew up in Michigan's Upper Peninsula.

Open pit and underground mines spewed out red ores. Lumberjacks roamed the forests.

Today all the mines and Lumber companies are closed. Sagging, abandoned buildings mark their spots.

No Lyme disease yet. We explored the woods, fished in streams, swam in lakes, picniced on bluffs, prowled mine dumps and ate wild strawberries on hill tops.

My story is a work of fiction. A recently widowed, retired professor is living like a hermit. His worried daughter wants him to sell his city house and move into a nice, safe retirement home.

He stalls at every place she drags him to.

One day he opens an old trunk his wife bought in the Upper Peninsula. Inside he finds an 1880 map with directions to a hole with copper chunks. Landmarks on the map are familiar. He drives up north to search for the copper and hole. He doesn't find the pit and gets lost in the woods. The local who rescues him, offers to show him that hole on another day.

When he gets back to town, his daughter is upset. He decides to sell his house. If he moves up north, he can go fishing, eat good food and look for lost mines every day.

Writing this story opened a door, helped me revisit my roots.





City House

Dad, Set up.

We have to start cleaning this place out.

Why did you buy that ugly old chest?

No. I don't want to.

Professor Lemke, a recently widowed, retired history teacher sat in his living room.

His daughter Shelly arrived.



No I don't. I like it here

Dad, you can't live here. You have to sell this house and move into a nice safe retirement home. You need company and good healthy food.

I know you hated the last two places, but I found another one to show you. I'm picking you up at 11:00. You get a free lunch.

I'm not going!

Next Day

The Drive



Back at the House



Dad, how did you like that place?



I want, didnt I?

Good to see Bob. Edie's still bossing him around.

Dad I'm leaving. You have to start cleaning. Why did mom buy that ugly old chest?



You must have been so happy to see Bob.



I better open this trunk first.

It upsets her more than anything else in this house.

looks like a bunch of old papers.

What is this?



Looks like a notebook and map. Name says Walter Ryan.

I prospected all over this place. My labors got crooked Blankrich. I showed him the iron deposit. Today the BLANK mine is the richest one in town. He won't give me a dime. Says he found it all by himself.

I found copper, big chunks in an old hole in the ground. I can't tell. I'm keeping this place a secret.



The Drive to Tula

I want to look for that hole with the copper inside. What if it's one of those 4,000 year old copper pits dotting Lake Superior shores. Nobody knows who was mining copper when the Bronze Age was thriving in the Mediterranean area.

I better leave before Shelly gets here. I left her a note, I said I'm going fishing. More fun than cleaning.



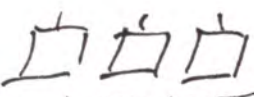
TULA TOWN

HWWE

Hi Ernie. Look what I found in an old trunk. A map to a copper mine.

A map to a copper mine.

His name is Walter Ryan.



Looks like you found Windy Wally's notes.

Secret? No bar bly ever kept a secret.



Sell me a map of Lost Lake.

I want to look for it. He said he kept it a secret.

Thanks for the map.

Don't go out in the woods alone! Don't get lost again!

Good luck

I won't get lost. I think I won't fishing there.

Get back before dark





PL drove out of Tula, turned onto a wooded side road. He stopped when he found the Lost Lake sign.



He followed the path, climbed over logs, crossed the creek, hopping on rocks. He walked forever. He couldn't find the pit. Nothing looked familiar. He couldn't find the car.

Shelly drove to Tula, stamped into the HDWE store.



How could you let my dad go fishing again? If he's lost in the woods again, this is all your fault.

Hilda, Prof is back in town. He went fishing. Tell your son to look in host lake area.

Ernie made a phone call



I'll never see my dad again

A dog is looking for my dad?

Shelly, don't worry. Deezer's mutt is a real hunting dog. Put him on the scent, you better watch what he's after.

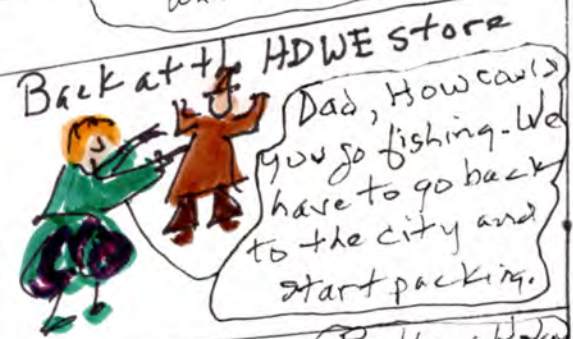


Soon the dog let out a bark

Deezer found PL sitting on a log. Dog had a grip on his pants. He looked at the old map.

I know where that hole is. I'll show you next time.

Deezer drove to the Lost Lake sign, parked behind PL's car, gave the dog the scent and let him go out in the woods.



Back at the HDWE store

Dad, how could you go fishing. We have to go back to the city and start packing.

Pizza PALACE



Professor Watson look. I made your favorite - lasagna. Tomorrow Ravioli

maybe I will sell my house. I'll move up here, I can fish, eat wonderful food daily. I find the pit.

Pages from previous chapters

Professor Lemke remembered his last visit to TULA

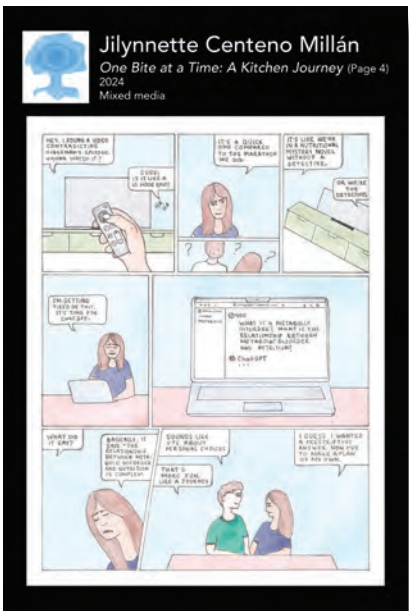




Prima Materia

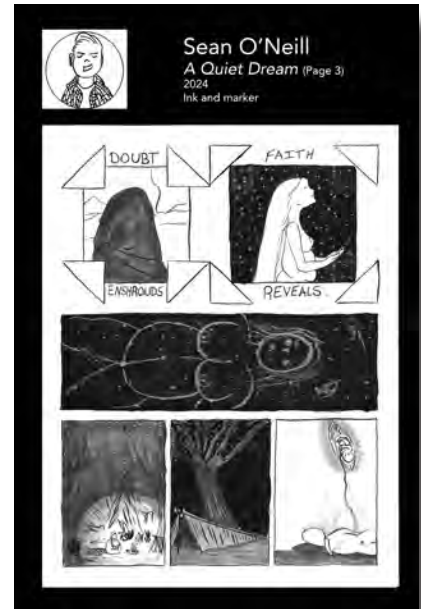
The exhibition

Following the visual storytelling class, an exhibition featuring the graphic novel took place in the Studio Gallery of the Palo Alto Art Center, from April to June 2024. Each participant contributed by selecting one page from their narrative, displaying their unique artwork.





Debby Miller
Sassy (Page 1)
2024
Alcohol art markers



Sean O'Neill
A Quiet Dream (Page 3)
2024
Ink and marker



Juana Serrano
First Day of School (Page 1)
2024
India, brushes and pens



Juana Serrano
First Day of School (Page 1)
2024
India, brushes and pens



Katherine Wood
Home (Page 4)
2024
Colored pencils and ink



I am an artist, researcher and author who uses visual storytelling (graphic novels, graphic memoirs, comic books, etc.) as a way to document a society's cultural and linguistic landscape. Originally from Montréal (Québec), where I held a tenured professorship in the Department of Linguistics at the Université de Montréal, I relocated to Palo Alto over twenty years ago.

In 2009, my interest in comic books, graphic novels, and the European genre, *bandes dessinées*, led me to attend a course at Stanford University on how to create a graphic novel. I discovered an engaging and powerful way to reach people and document culture, language, and life.

Since 2010, I published over nine comics and graphic novels: the *Stairway Stories* series (four books), *Québec-California*, *La sobriété volontaire* (*A Year Without a Drink*), *Calendrier de l'Avent et du temps des Fêtes*, *Smiling through the mask*, *Rire sous masque*, etc. Additionally, I edited and co-edited several collaborative comic books, graphic novels, and artist books. I am a regular guest speaker on documenting culture and dialects through comics at various educational and cultural institutions, ranging from primary school to university level.

From 2014-2022, I was an artist-in-residence in the Cubberley Studio Artist Program, a program of the City of Palo Alto. My artwork has been featured in solo exhibitions as well as juried group shows across Canada and the United States. In addition to my graphic novels, my artistic repertoire encompasses series of drawings and paintings, employing both traditional mediums such as watercolor, pastels, and color pencils, as well as digital art. My latest work include diverse series such as *The Art of Procrastination*, *Life on their Own*, *Reflections on Art*, and adaptations of select fables by Jean de La Fontaine.

For more than 10 years now, I have been teaching the art of visual storytelling at the Palo Alto Art Center and other educational venues in the Bay Area. I take particular pride in the class "Creating and Publishing a Graphic Novel," which I developed at the Palo Alto Art Center in 2016, as well as in the accomplishments of my students.

Danièle Archambault, Ph.D. (Linguistics)
Linguist and cartoonist. Class instructor and editor

www.DanieleBD.com

Creating and Publishing a Graphic Novel at the Palo Alto Art Center

Creating and Publishing a Graphic Novel
 Palo Alto Art Center. Tuesday night 6:30-8:30 pm
 Winter 2024 - Jan. 16 to March 19
 A 10-week class for adults (18 and up)

Wake up the great storyteller in you!

Experience the excitement of creating and publishing a collaborative graphic novel!

Develop your personal toolbox for telling stories that will resonate with audiences

Learn the fundamentals of visual storytelling including storyboarding, thumbnailing, character design, picture composition, camera works, page layouts, etc.

Additional topics include book layout, cover design, promotion, and publishing.

Students can choose to work with traditional or digital tools (must bring own laptop/tablet).

All levels welcome!

Following the class, an exhibition of the graphic novel will be held in the Art Center Studio Gallery.

Instructor: Danièle Archambault, Ph.D.
 Registration and Information: Palo Alto Art Center (650) 329-2366
 Online registration: CityofPaloAlto/Enjoy





Since 2012, I have been teaching various classes on the art of visual storytelling at the Palo Alto Art Center. In 2016, I introduced an innovative opportunity for students to go deeper into the creative process by not only writing but also publishing a graphic novel. This initiative led to the creation of a new course titled "Writing and Publishing a Graphic Novel": A Grand Voyage." The class was a success and the final collaborative graphic novel included eight complete stories of five pages each. At the students' request, an updated iteration of the course, simply titled "Creating and Publishing a Graphic Novel," was offered in 2019 and once more in the fall of 2022. "Prima Materia" stands as the fourth collaborative graphic novel crafted by students of the Palo Alto Art Center.

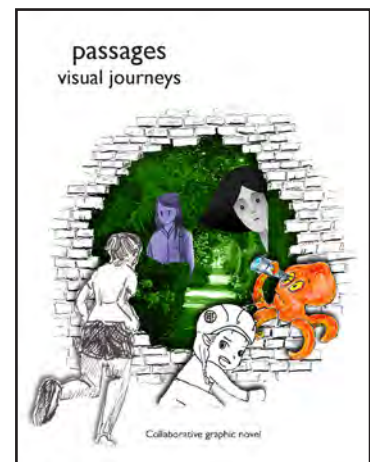
Danièle Archambault



2016



2019



2022

Prima Materia

This collaborative graphic novel created by the adult students in the Winter 2024 visual storytelling class titled "Creating and Publishing a Graphic Novel," at the Palo Alto Art Center in California, features nine captivating and beautiful stories. Ranging from autofiction to fantasy, each narrative incorporates an element of transformation. The students chose "Prima Materia" as the title of the graphic novel to signify the primal materials from which narratives emerge during the artist's creative process, mirroring the concept in alchemy that denotes the prime matter from which all things derive. This title also hints at the necessary and inevitable transformation experienced by both the characters and their creators.



Jilynnette Centeno Millán

*One Bite at a Time:
A Kitchen Journey*



Zoe Cheung

Vapor



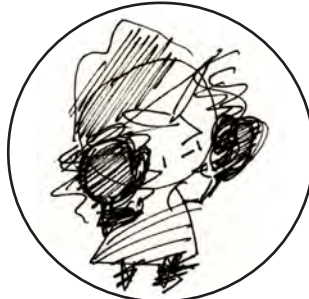
Karisu

The Babysitter



Silviane Man-Willrich

Finding Me and Me



Debby Miller

Sassy



Sean O'Neill

A Quiet Dream



Juana Serrano

First Day of School



Judy Weiler

Upoar Up North



Katherine Wood

Home