

I WISH I DIDN'T THINK ABOUT THIS

DARYA FOROOGHAR

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I WISH I
DIDN'T
THINK ABOUT
THIS



BY DARYA FOROOGHAR BY DAR
FOROOGHAR BY DARYA FORO

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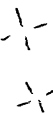
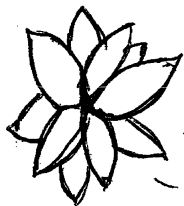
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TO
MASKIN
THANK YOU FOR
EVERYTHING





AND TO THINK I WOULD HAVE WRITTEN
* A COMIC ABOUT YOU ...

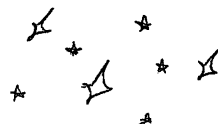


YES, I'M DOING THAT NOW, BUT IT WOULD
HAVE BEEN YOU IN A MORE POSITIVE LIGHT.
VERY MELANCHOLIC.

META!



AM I DRAWING OR WRITING? LATELY I HAVE TO TRICK
MYSELF INTO THE LATTER, WELL ANYTHING CREATIVE
REALLY, BUT THIS I DO BY DOING BOTH. NOT THAT
IT MAKES SENSE. BUT I DON'T HAVE TO SHOW
ANYONE. * BUT IF I DON'T, WHAT'S THE POINT?



I THINK I CARED TOO MUCH, AND THAT WAS WHY
I DIDN'T LEAVE YOU SOONER. MAYBE YOU CARED TOO
MUCH, AND THAT WAS WHY YOU DIDN'T TELL ME WHAT
YOU WANTED FROM ME. BUT WHY AM I BEING
CHARITABLE NOW, HERE? ESPECIALLY NOW THAT YOU
HAVEN'T BEEN - TO PUT IT GENEROUSLY.



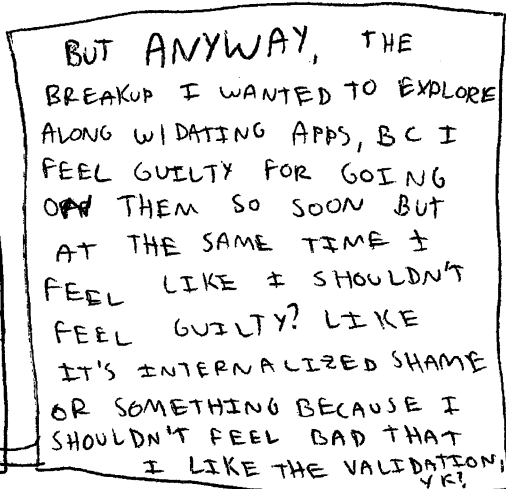
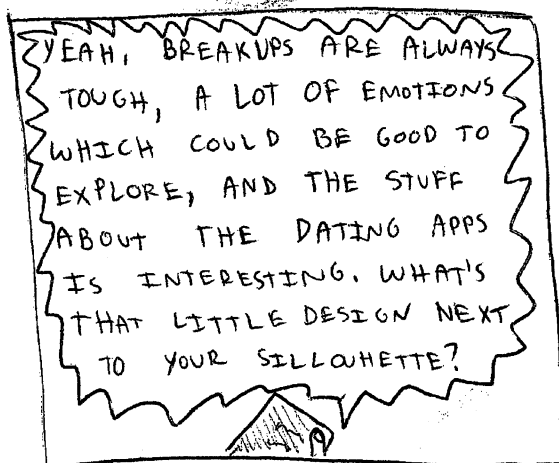
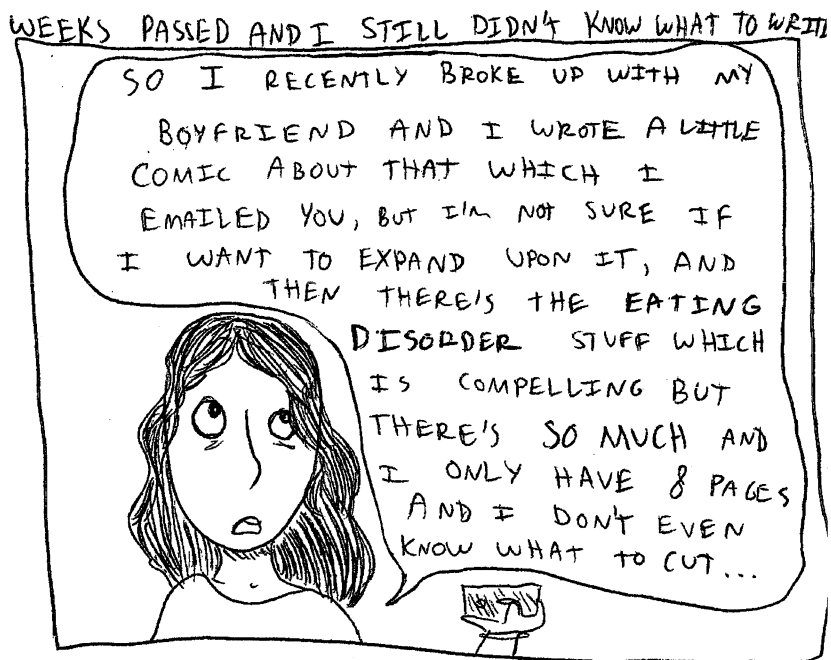
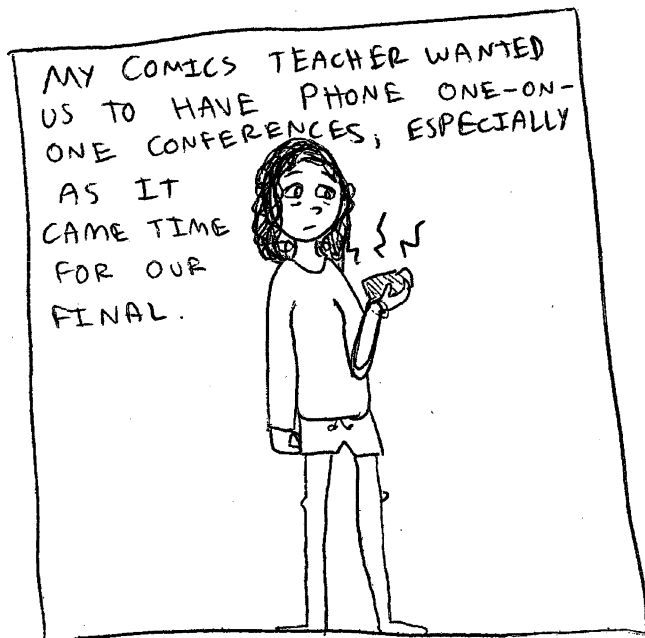
I DON'T KNOW WHO I WANT TO SEE THIS.

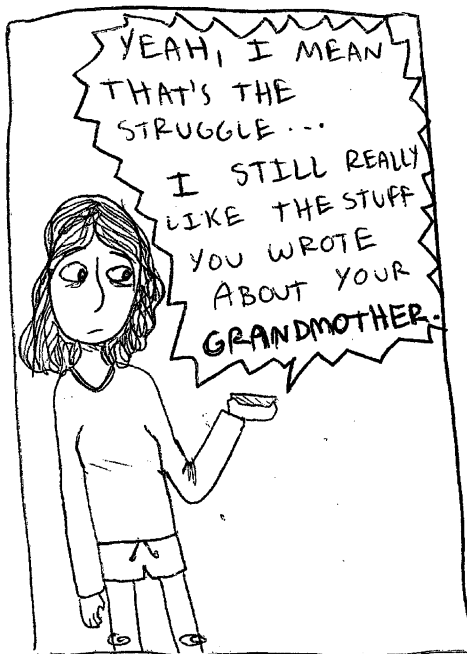
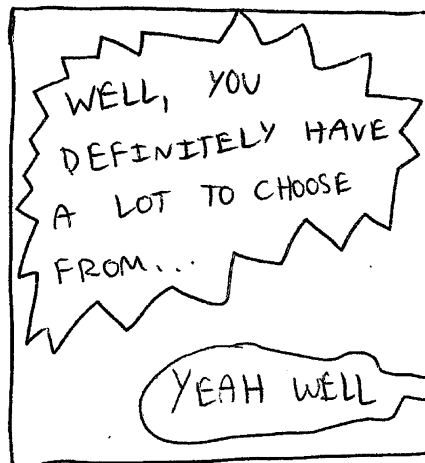


HANDWRITING ALWAYS SEEMS MORE VULNERABLE.
BUT MAYBE I'M USING TOO MANY WORDS.



I. AND TO THINK I WOULD HAVE WRITTEN A COMIC ABOUT YOU





II. YES, I'M DOING THAT NOW (META!), BUT IT WOULD HAVE BEEN YOU IN A MORE POSITIVE LIGHT

SO I DIDN'T END UP WRITING THAT BREAKUP COMIC.



I'M OVER THIS

A LOT CAN HAPPEN IN A WEEK.



I'M OVER THIS!

BESIDES, AS TIME PASSED, AS YOU DID MORE AND MORE THINGS THAT SURPRISED ME BY THEIR CRUELTY, I DIDN'T EVEN WANT TO GIVE YOU THE TIME OF DAY.

I THOUGHT HE WAS SLIMY BUT DIDN'T WANT TO TELL YOU BUT NOW HE'S JUST BEING SO

DRAMATIC LIKE-



OKAY I KNOW I SAID I'D STOP TALKING ABOUT CASEY BUT HE'S JUST BEING SUCH A PIECE OF SHIT - I MEAN, DO YOU WANT TO HEAR THIS?? WELL HE KEEPS SAYING YOUR NEW BF IS A REBOUND AND THAT YOU GUYS ARE GONNA BREAK UP AND THAT HE DOESN'T CARE ABOUT YOU AT ALL AND



HE WOULDN'T STOP TALKING ABOUT YOU. I TOLD HIM TO STOP BECAUSE IT WAS AWKWARD AND EVERYONE WAS UNCOMFORTABLE BUT WHEN I WENT TO THE BATHROOM I HEARD WHISPERS SO I CAME OUT AND THERE THEY ALL WERE, CORNERED ME, ASKING "DO YOU THINK DARYA'S NEW BF IS A REBOUND?"



I SAID I DIDN'T KNOW. IT WAS WEIRD...

OH...

HE ALSO CALLED YOU A

IS IT TRUE YOU GUYS NEVER HAD SEX?? BECAUSE I ASKED (BECAUSE I SUCK HAHA) AND HE SEEMED KINDA UPSET ABOUT IT BUT YEAH HE WAS KINDA INTO ME EVEN BEFORE YOU GUYS BROKE UP I THINK BC HE'D ALWAYS GIVE ME FREE WEED. ALSO HE CALLED YOU



AN ASSHOLE TO THE ENTIRE GROUPCHAT OF LIKE 50 PEOPLE AND SAID YOU ABANDONED HIM DURING A MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS - NO ONE RESPONDED, BY THE WAY - AND ALSO SAID YOU MADE UP SOMEONE BEING RACIST TO TRY AND

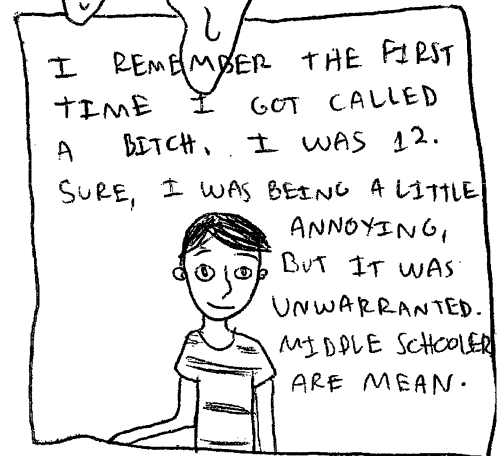
MANIPULATE A BREAKUP - THOSE ARE THE SCREENSHOTS I GOT. SEEMS LIKE HE'S PRETTY PISSED. IMAGINE DATING THE NEXT COLUMBINE GUY, HAHA...



BITCH.

I ABSOLUTELY DESPISE MEN— OR PEOPLE WHO IDENTIFY MORE STRONGLY WITH MALENESS— THAT USE 'BITCH' TO INSULT WOMEN. IT'S GRIMY, SLIMY, AND REEKS OF MISOGYNY.

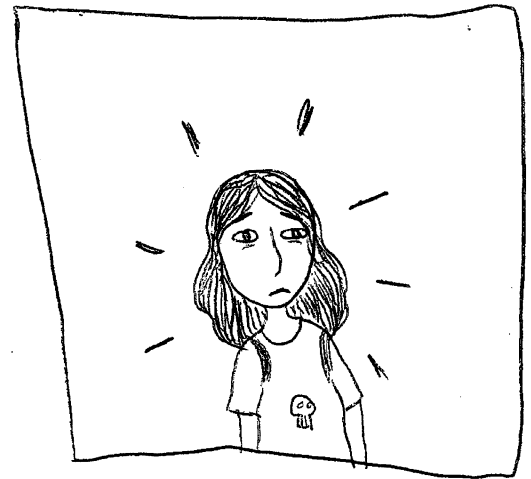
EVEN IF IT'S TO SOMEONE I DON'T LIKE.



IT WAS BY A GIRL.



I LAUGHED IT OFF. BUT IN THAT MOMENT, I WAS STUNNED SILENT.



YEAH, I THINK HE REALIZED HE'D OVERSTEPPED, BECAUSE EVERYONE LOOKED REALLY UNCOMFORTABLE, AND LATER HE TEXTED ME AND WAS LIKE 'I SHOULDN'T HAVE SAID THAT,' AND I SAID 'I KNOW.'

THAT'S NOT A LIE. I'VE ALWAYS BEEN ONE OF THOSE
AND MEAN WHISPERS HEAD-ON... EVEN IF IT ONLY MADE
THINGS MORE DIFFICULT FOR MYSELF.



AS I GREW OLDER, I LEARNED IT WAS BETTER - MORE
FREEING, EASIER, LESS DRAINING, SIMPLER - TO JUST
IGNORE THINGS SAID ABOUT YOU, ESPECIALLY IF YOU KNOW
IN YOUR HEART THEY'RE NOT TRUE AND ADDRESSING THEM
WOULD BE TO GIVE THEM STRENGTH.

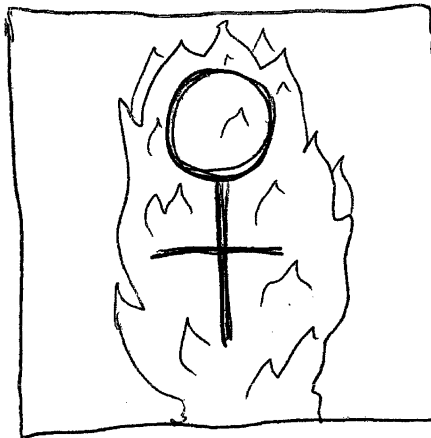
SO ALL THE OTHER INSULTS NEVER BOTHERED ME - IN FACT, I
COULD LAUGH THEM OFF AS I TRIED TO SEE HOW THEY COULD
EVEN SEEM PLAUSIBLE.



BUT I'VE ALWAYS HAD A STRONG SENSE OF HONOR.
IT SOUNDS LAME, I KNOW - I'M NOT IN GAME OF THRONES - BUT
THERE ARE CERTAIN THINGS I CAN'T IGNORE IF I WANT
TO MAINTAIN MY DIGNITY. I WANT TO BE GOOD, JUST,
HONORABLE, SOMEONE WHO KEEPS THEIR WORD.



SO I CAN'T LET
- BITCH -
GO UNNOTICED,
BECAUSE IT'S MORE
THAN A DIG AT MY
CHARACTER.



BY BEING SPECIFICALLY
DESIGNED TO HURT WOMEN,
IT TAKES AWAY THE
HUMANITY—~~OR~~ OR WANTS
TO— FROM THE REC-
IPIENT OF THE
INSULT.

^AT^ LEAST^ RESPECT^ ME^ ENOUGH^ TO^ GIVE^ ME^ A
GENDER-NEUTRAL INSULT, MAYBE EVEN SOMETHING MORE
SPECIFIC. OH, WELL.

IF WE WERE IN GAME OF THRONES, I'D CHALLENGE
YOU TO A DUEL TO THE DEATH FOR DARING TO USE BITCH
AS AN INSULT—OR AT ALL, REALLY.



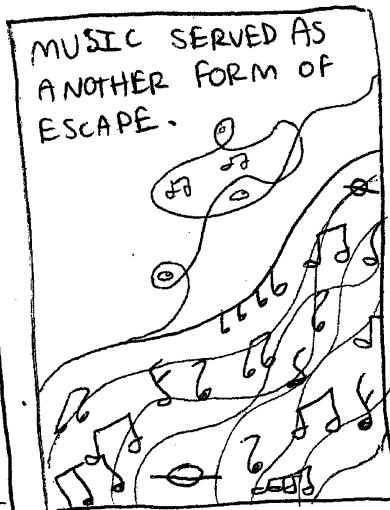
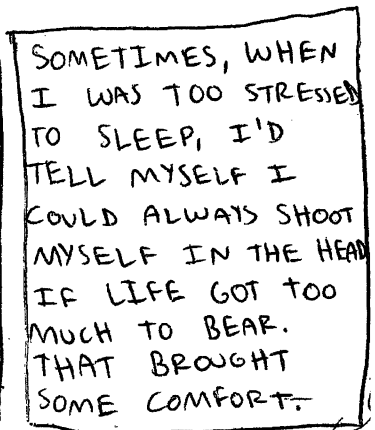
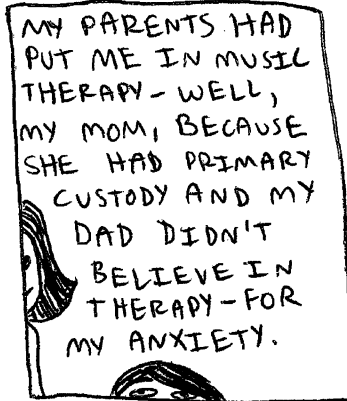
EITHER THAT OR I'D CUT OUT YOUR TONGUE.

III. AM I DRAWING OR WRITING?

A. LATELY I HAVE TO TRICK MYSELF INTO THE
LATTER. . .



. . . WELL, ANYTHING CREATIVE, REALLY



MELODIES AND LYRICS ALWAYS CAME TO ME IN BURSTS, WITHOUT WARNING . . .



THEY ALWAYS DO
EVENTUALLY.



GROWING OLDER AND
GAINING ACCESS TO
MORE MEDIA WAS BOTH
A BLESSING & A CURSE.



BECAUSE WHILE THE ART &
MUSIC I CONSUMED WOULD
FILL ME WITH INSPIRATION
AND A
DESIRE
TO
CREATE,



BUT IT'S JUST SO EASY
TO SLIP INTO LAZINESS,
CONSUMING MEDIA INSTEAD
OF CREATING IT. IT'S
RIGHT THERE, AND
SURELY SO
MUCH BETTER
THAN ANYTHING
I COULD
MAKE.
RIGHT?



MAKING MUSIC TAKES
HARD WORK! JUST
BECAUSE I CAN WRITE
SONGS DOESN'T MEAN
I CAN PRODUCE, EDIT,
AND MASTER RECORDINGS.
OR I'M - GASP -
LAZY...



YUP, YOU HEARD ME.
(WELL, READ, REALLY)

EVERYTHING I DO THAT ISN'T MOTIVATED BY EXTERNAL
REQUIREMENTS OR DEADLINES RESULTS FROM AN INTERNAL BATTLE:

YOU DON'T ALWAYS HAVE TO
PRODUCE! TAKE A BREAK!
OR TWO. OR TEN.

DO YOU REALLY
THINK WHAT YOU
MAKE IS GOING
TO BE AS GOOD AS
YOU WANT? YOU
WILL ALWAYS
BE DISAPPOINTED.

THINK ABOUT
HOW MUCH WORK
IT IS! IF YOU WERE
A REAL ARTIST IT WOULDN'T
FEEL LIKE WORK. GUESS
YOU'RE
NOT.

I WISH I
DIDN'T HAVE TO
THINK ABOUT THIS

IT'S NEVER TOO LATE
TO START!!!

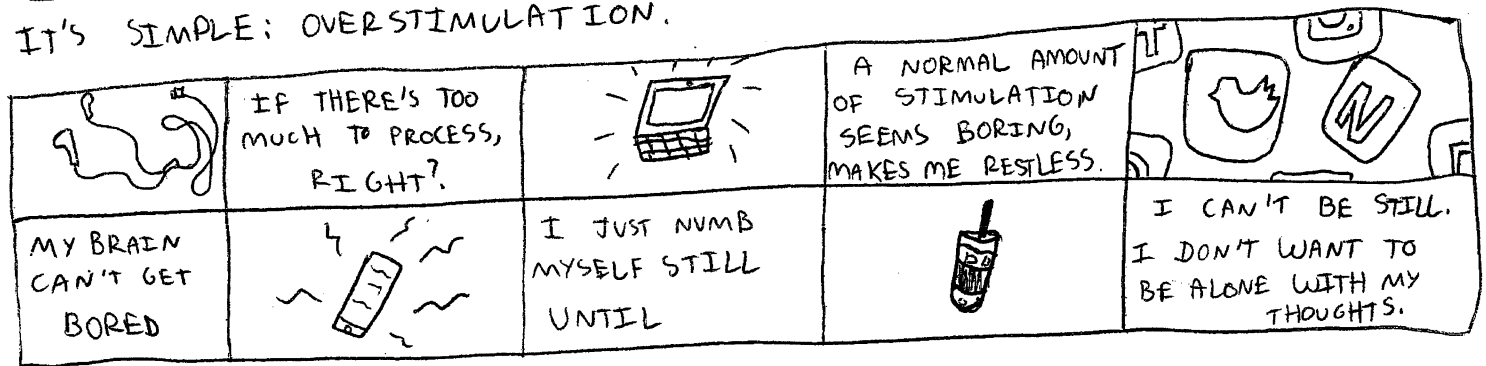
EVERY SECOND YOU SET
HERE IS A SECOND
YOU'RE WASTING.

YOU HAVE
GOOD IDEAS- IT'S
A SHAME IF YOU
DON'T USE THEM-
YOU'LL BE A
DISAPPOINTMENT

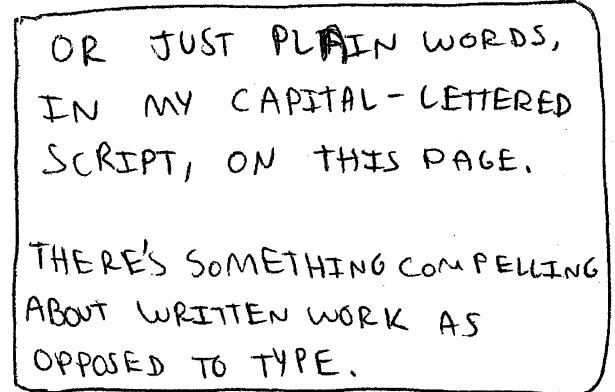
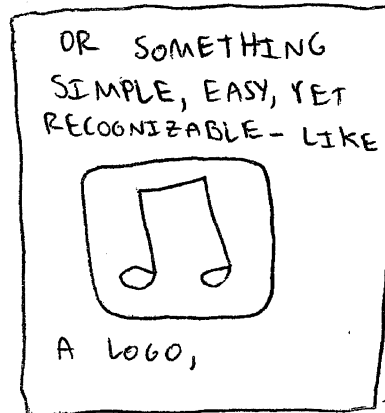
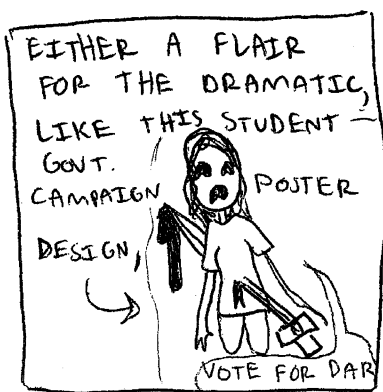
YOU NEED PEOPLE TO
SEE HOW CREATIVE
YOU ARE, OTHERWISE IT
DOESN'T MATTER.

B. BUT THIS (THIS COMIC) I DO BY DOING BOTH (DRAWING AND WRITING)

I GUESS I NEVER EXPLAINED HOW I TRICK MYSELF INTO BEING PRODUCTIVE. IT'S SIMPLE: OVERSTIMULATION.



I KNOW I'M NOT THAT SKILLED OF AN ARTIST, SO I NEED STORIES TO SUPPLEMENT IT— MY DRAWINGS— AND I THINK I CAN DO THAT.



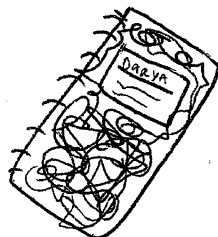
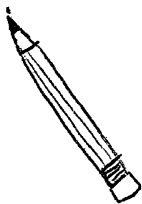
MAYBE THAT'S WHY I DO IT— BECAUSE I FEAR MY WRITING WON'T HOLD UP ON IT'S OWN.

TOO LAZY TO DRAW (WELL), TOO BORING TO WRITE (WELL).

BUT TOGETHER — HEY! — THIS ISN'T TOO BAD. IT SORT

OF MIMICS OVERSTIMULATION, IN A WAY, FOR I'M TOO FOCUSED ON MIXING BOTH MEDIUMS TO GET SICK OF

ONE.



C. BUT I DON'T HAVE TO SHOW ANYONE (NOT THAT IT MAKES SENSE)

ONE THING THAT DOES GET ME TO CREATE ART IS THE PROMISE OF EXTERNAL VALIDATION.



THE PERKS OF RECOGNITION, BE THEY MONETARY COMPENSATION OR ADMIRATION FROM MY PEERS, WAS ENOUGH TO SPUR ME ONWARDS.



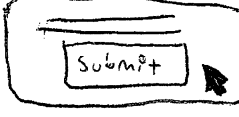
IT'S ALWAYS HARD TO MAINTAIN, THOUGH.

I SINK BACK INTO



INSTEAD OF CRAFTING THOUGHTFUL PIECES OF WRITING OR ART, I'D SEND HALF-FINISHED, UNEDITED, OR UNRELATED WORKS TO WHATEVER ONLINE CONTESTS I COULD FIND.

THE ACT OF SUBMITTING WORK GAVE ME A SENSE OF PURPOSE.



I NEVER WON ANYTHING WITH THESE SLOPPY WORKS. OBVIOUSLY.

EVENTUALLY, I REALIZED:

OH, HORROR! IN ORDER TO GAIN EXTERNAL VALIDATION, I HAVE TO WORK FOR IT!

AND, WORST OF ALL:



BUT INSTEAD OF PUSHING ME TO WORK HARDER, THIS REALIZATION PARALYZED ME.

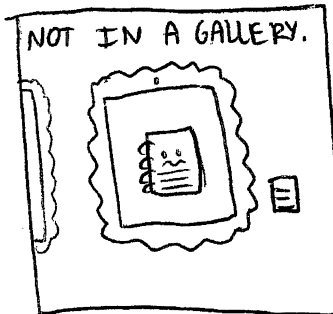
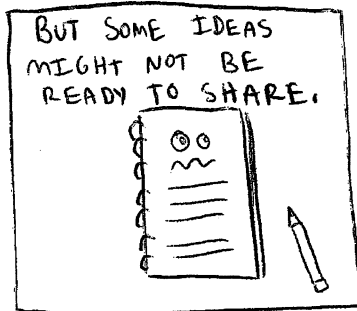


I'D NEVER BE EFFORTLESSLY TALENTED, NEVER CREATE ART AS BEAUTIFUL AS I WANTED, NEVER BE PERFECT.

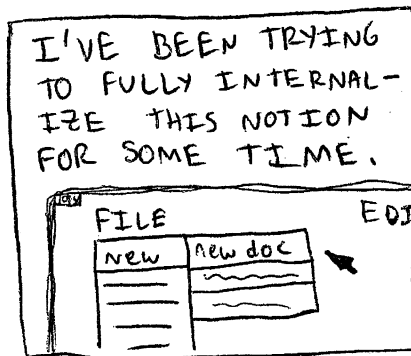
SO WHY EVEN TRY?

BUT AS MUCH AS I TRIED TO MOVE PAST THEM, MY HEAD WAS ALWAYS FULL OF IDEAS.

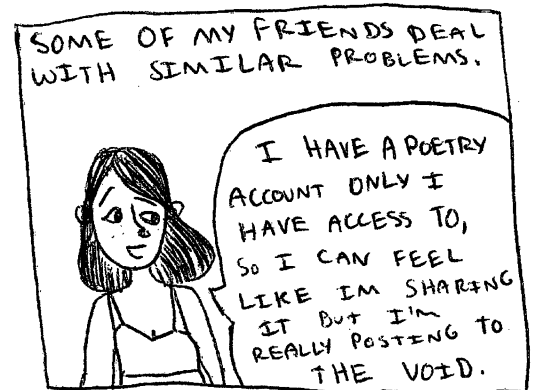




BUT THAT DOESN'T MEAN I SHOULDN'T PURSUE THEM!



BECAUSE JUST THE ACT
OF CREATING CAN BE
CATHARTIC!
INSPIRING! FUN!
JOYFUL!
CONTEMPLATIVE!
USEFUL! SOOTHING!
NECESSARY!



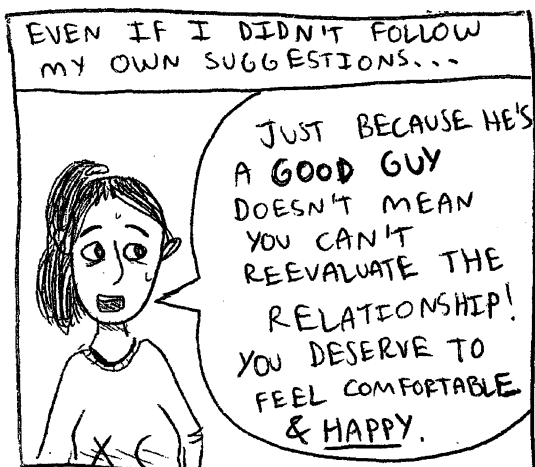
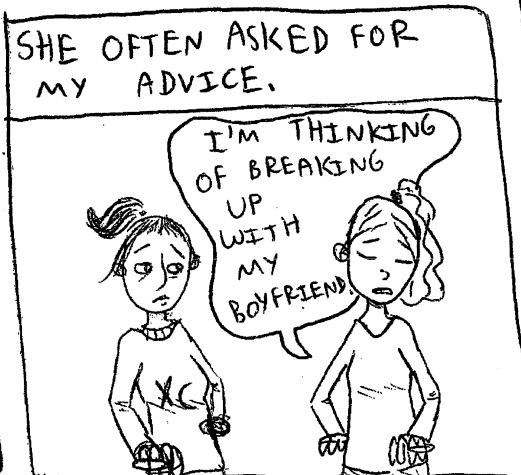
IT'LL TAKE A WHILE FOR ME TO REACH A POINT WHERE I'M TRULY COMFORTABLE WITH MAKING ART JUST FOR ME.

BUT I THINK THAT ALLOWING MY ART- AND MYSELF - TO BE IMPERFECT IS A GOOD STARTING POINT. BECAUSE WHILE I MAY INTEND TO SHARE SOMETHING, I CAN ALWAYS CHANGE MY MIND. I DON'T OWE ANYONE PERFECTION. I CAN ALWAYS REDO SOMETHING WITHOUT FEELING LIKE I'M LETTING ANYONE DOWN.

THIS MAY NOT BE A PERFECT STARTING POINT, BUT IT'S GOOD ENOUGH FOR ME.

D. BUT IF I DON'T (SHOW ANYONE MY ART),
WHAT'S THE POINT?

IV. A. I THINK I CARED TOO MUCH, AND THAT WAS WHY I DIDN'T LEAVE YOU SOONER.



WE DIDN'T BREAK UP UNTIL MAY.



IS IT KINDER TO KILL SOMETHING THAT'S SLOWLY, PAINFULLY DYING? EVEN IF YOU KNOW IT'S DOOMED, IT'S HARD TO BE THE ONE TO END THINGS, ESPECIALLY IF YOU'RE LYING TO YOURSELF, SAYING THAT MAYBE IT'LL SURVIVE AFTER ALL.



IN FACT, I VIEWED THESE AS MY OWN PERSONAL FAULTS, ASHAMED AT HOW SHALLOW I WAS THAT I HAD THESE MEAN, NEGATIVE THOUGHTS ABOUT YOU.



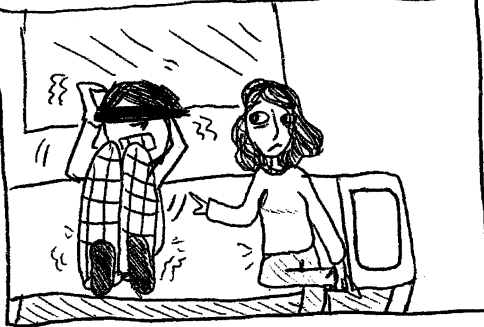
IT'S NORMAL TO NOT WANT TO SLEEP WITH YOUR BOYFRIEND, RIGHT?? OR IS IT? MAYBE I'M ACE. MAYBE I'M GAY! BUT I LIKE MEN. OR DO I? GOD, I CAN'T REMEMBER WHAT IT FEELS LIKE TO REALLY WANT TO BE WITH SOMEONE. BUT HOW DO I EVEN SAY THAT? I CAN'T! IT'S HUMILIATING. MAYBE I'M JUST STRESSED. MAYBE THIS WILL SOLVE ITSELF EVENTUALLY AND I'M JUST OVERTHINKING...

WHAT KIND OF PERSON BREAKS UP WITH THEIR BOYFRIEND JUST BECAUSE THEY'RE NOT ATTRACTED TO HIM?? WHAT! HE'S SO SWEET, HOW COULD YOU LEAVE BECAUSE OF THAT? YOU CAN'T RUN AWAY FOREVER, YOU KNOW - YOU NEED TO DEAL WITH THIS PROBLEM AND STOP IGNORING YOUR RELATIONSHIP. HE WANTS TO BE WITH YOU, WHY CAN'T YOU FEEL THE SAME? - THERE MUST BE SOMETHING WRONG WITH YOU - SOMETHING BROKEN.



I DIDN'T TELL YOU BECAUSE I KNEW IT WOULD BE PAINFUL,
AND I WAS WORRIED ABOUT YOU — ABOUT HOW FRAGILE
YOU COULD BE; I FELT I NEEDED TO ALWAYS BE THERE
TO COMFORT YOU, TO KEEP YOU FROM SLIPPING OVER THE EDGE.

WHETHER IT WAS STAYING
BY YOUR SIDE DURING
BOUNTS OF ANXIETY,



OR TRYING TO PULL YOU OUT
OF A DOWNWARD SPIRAL,



I MADE YOUR MENTAL
HEALTH A PRIORITY,



ESPECIALLY AS YOU TOLD
ME HOW MUCH IT MEANT.



I KNEW HOW DANGEROUS
IT WAS TO BE SOMEONE'S
MAIN SUPPORT SYSTEM,

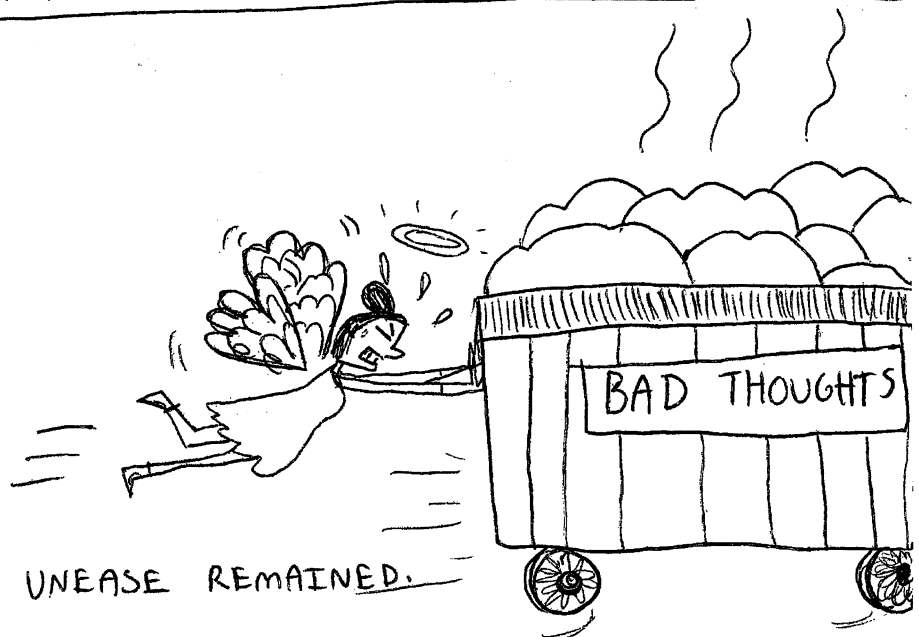


AND WHILE I TRIED TO
OFFER OTHER FORMS OF HELP,



I DIDN'T WANT TO DO ANYTHING TO HURT YOU.

SO I DIDN'T LET ~~MY~~ MYSELF DWELL ON THOUGHTS I WOULD
NEVER SHARE. I BURIED THEM AWAY, DEEP DOWN UNTIL IT WAS
HARD TO REMEMBER WHAT I WAS WORRIED ABOUT — UNEASY ABOUT.



BUT THE UNEASE REMAINED.

WHEN I WAS IN MIDDLE SCHOOL, I WAS SO ASHAMED OF MY THOUGHTS ABOUT SEX THAT ONE DAY I DECIDED TO SIMPLY NOT THINK THEM.

I WOULD 'SWEEP' THE
BAD THOUGHTS OUT OF MY
MIND, WHERE THEY COULDN'T
PLAGUE
ME.

I COULDN'T
EVEN
THINK
ABOUT
KISSING.

A drawing of a person with a sad expression looking up at a cloud containing two brooms. The background is filled with the word 'NO' repeated many times.

TO AVOID FALLING INTO
DESPAIR, I TOLD MYSELF
I WAS BEING DISCIPLINED
AND STRONG.

BEING IN LOVE WAS
WEAK.

SUCCUMBING TO LUST, EVEN WORSE.

HEY, WANNA SEE
THIS MUSIC VIDEO?

UH... I
DUNNO.
IS IT...
INAPPRO-
PRIATE?

BESIDES, SCHOOL WAS MORE IMPORTANT.



ONCE I
GOT INTO A
GOOD COLLEGE,
I COULD FOCUS
ON OTHER THINGS.
I COULDN'T

BE A DISAPPOINTMENT.

AND SO I BURIED
MYSELF INTO MY WORK,

FOLDING INTO MYSELF UNTIL
THERE WAS NOTHING LEFT.

I WAS ON AUTOPILOT
FOR ALL OF NINTH
GRADE.

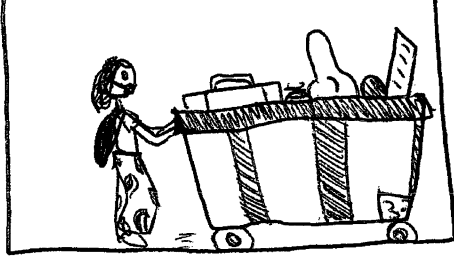
IF I HAD A WBAD
THOUGHT, I'D PUNISH
MYSELF THROUGH PAIN.

SO I DIDN'T THINK
OF ANYTHING AT ALL.

I DON'T REMEMBER
FEELING A SINGLE
POSITIVE EMOTION.

"P" *PINCH*

I SWORE I WOULDN'T MAKE THE SAME MISTAKES MY FRESHMAN YEAR OF COLLEGE.



I SIGNED UP FOR A WIDE VARIETY OF CLUBS, TOOK ADVANTAGE OF DORM EVENTS,



AND FORCED MYSELF TO GO TO (OFTEN AWKWARD) HANGOUTS.



NOT TO SAY IT WASN'T FUN! I MET PEOPLE I REALLY LIKED, AND DIDN'T SPEND EVERY WAKING MOMENT ON SCHOOLWORK.



BUT IT WAS ALL TOO EASY TO DISAPPEAR INTO MY EXTRACURRICULARS...



INSTEAD OF BEING ALONE WITH MY THOUGHTS.



AND SO, IRONICALLY, I REPEATED THE BEHAVIORS OF DISTRACTING MYSELF FROM SELF-REFLECTION...



ONLY THIS TIME, I DENIED THAT I NEEDED TO SELF-REFLECT AT ALL.



AFTER ALL, I COULDN'T WASTE THE YEAR BY DOING NOTHING, RIGHT?.



... WHICH IS TRUE. I'VE ALWAYS BEEN GOOD AT WORKING UNDER PRESSURE, AT GETTING THINGS DONE. AND I DID SIGN UP FOR ACTIVITIES I WAS GENUINELY INTERESTED IN, AS MUCH AS I LIKED TO MOAN AND GROAN TO MY FRIENDS. THAT JUST MADE IT HARDER TO SEE THAT I WAS ESCAPING INTO THESE ACTIVITIES WHEN I NEEDED TO THINK ABOUT OTHER PARTS OF MY LIFE, USING THEM AS AN EXCUSE WHEN I DIDN'T WANT HIM TO COME OVER, AND ALWAYS TAKING ON MORE THAN I COULD THINK ABOUT SO THAT NOTHING ELSE WAS ON MY MIND.

AND THEN THERE'S THE MOMENT I WOKE UP.

IN TENTH GRADE I THOUGHT OF IT AS MY "FALL FROM GRACE," BECAUSE THE MORAL PILLARS THAT KEPT ME INTACT WERE CRUMBLING AS I BEGAN TO REALIZE THEY DIDN'T MATTER.

THIS TIME, I DIDN'T CALL IT ANYTHING. BUT I TALKED ABOUT MY FEELINGS TO MY ROOMMATE A LOT, AND SOMETIMES EVEN WROTE THEM DOWN - A TERRIFYING FEAT, AS THERE WAS NO ONE ELSE WHO COULD VALIDATE MY EVERY EMOTION.

BUT THAT WAS AFTER THE BREAKUP. RIGHT BEFORE, I SIMPLY ALLOWED MYSELF TO THINK WHAT HAD BEEN BUILDING FOR A LONG, LONG TIME: I'M NOT HAPPY IN THIS RELATIONSHIP.

~~Y~~ET ONE PIECE OF THE AWAKENING'S^W AFTERMATH DID REMAIN THE SAME,

A REALIZATION THAT QUICKLY SPIRALED OUT OF CONTROL.



ONCE AGAIN, I COULD NOT STOP IT.

B. MAYBE YOU CARED TOO MUCH, AND THAT WAS WHY YOU DIDN'T TELL ME WHAT YOU WANTED FROM ME.

YOU WERE ALWAYS SO KIND TO ME.

EVEN IF YOU DIDN'T KNOW HOW TO MAKE ME FEEL BETTER, I KNEW YOU CARED.

WHICH IS WHY IT WAS SO HARD TO KNOW I WASN'T DOING ENOUGH.

HM.
MAYBE I'M BEING A BIT HARD ON MYSELF. AFTER ALL, YOU SAID I WAS PERFECT
BEAUTIFUL WONDERFUL FUNNY

I JUST KNEW I WASN'T DOING ENOUGH, AND I KNEW YOU WERE TOO CAUTIOUS TO ASK ME TO DO ANYTHING THAT WOULD MAKE ME UNCOMFORTABLE.



BUT IT WAS ONE THING I COULD NEVER MAKE MYSELF DO. MAYBE OUT OF SELF-RESPECT, THOUGH I DIDN'T KNOW WHY. I FELT INTENSE ANGER TOWARDS MEN. I HATED THEIR ARROGANCE, THEIR ENTITLEMENT, THEIR SELFISHNESS...

BUT I DIDN'T HATE YOU.



BUT I NEVER FELT
WE WERE TRULY
CONNECTED.

NEITHER DID YOU -
OR AT LEAST THAT'S
WHAT I ASSUMED
WHEN YOU FINALLY TOLD
ME YOU THOUGHT WE
WERE DRIFTING APART.
STILL, YOU DIDN'T
END IT.



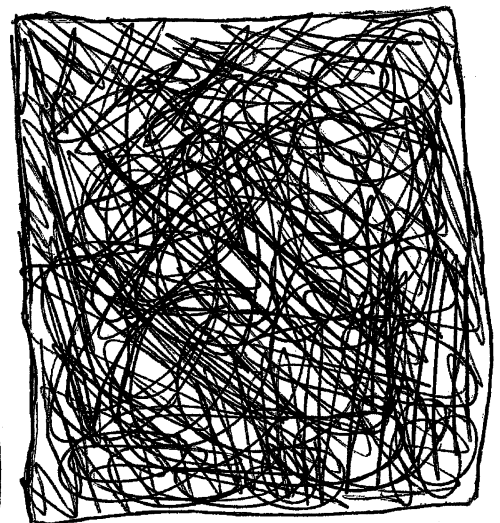
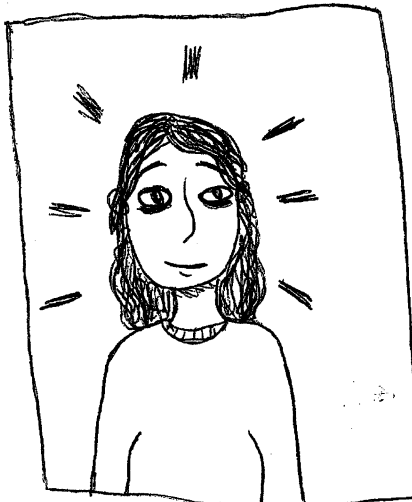
I KNEW, DEEP DOWN, THAT
I COULD NEVER GIVE YOU ALL YOU
WANTED.

SO I CERTAINLY WASN'T GOING TO IF
YOU DIDN'T EVEN ASK.

I NEEDED TO BE SURE, SO I COULD
RESPOND IN KIND.

[^]
SELFISH? MAYBE. BUT BEING TOO SELFLESS
HAS YOU SLIP OUT OF YOURSELF.
THAT I WOULD NEVER DO.

BUT I ALSO DIDN'T WANT TO ABANDON SOMEONE WHO CARED.
SOMEONE WHO SAID



C. BUT WHY AM I BEING CHARITABLE. YOU
HAVEN'T BEEN.

YOU WERE ALWAYS SO KIND TO ME.

EVEN IF YOU DIDN'T KNOW HOW TO MAKE
ME FEEL BETTER, I KNEW YOU CARED.

WHICH IS WHY IT WAS SUCH A **BETRAYAL** WHEN
YOU DID EVERYTHING YOU COULD TO HURT ME.



SOMETIMES I GET
WORRIED THAT I'M
TOO NOSY.

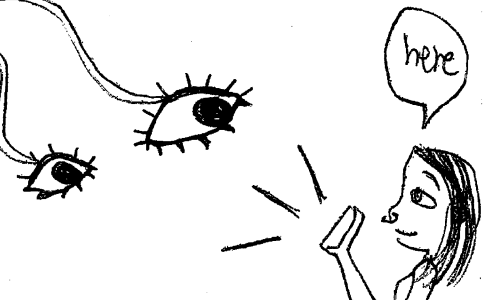


I WANT TO KNOW
WHAT PEOPLE THINK OF
ME! IS THAT
BAD? INSECURE?

MAYBE.



BUT IN
THIS CASE, I
THINK I WAS
JUSTIFIED.



I ABANDONED HIM! HE THANKED ME FOR BREAKING UP WITH HIM BECAUSE HE SAID OUR RELATIONSHIP WAS MAKING HIS MENTAL HEALTH WORSE!

I KNOW THERE'S A LOT OF PEOPLE IN THIS CHAT BUT FUCKIT MWM I'M POSTING THIS BECAUSE SOME OF YOU MAY KNOW DARYA SHE ABANDONED ME DURING A MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS... SHE LEFT THE RELATIONSHIP WITH NO TRAUMA AND ANYWAY I THINK YOU ALL SHOULD KNOW HOW MUCH OF AN ASSHOLE SHE IS.

READ BY EVERYONE

NO TRAUMA... NO TRAUMA?? I HAD STUFF GOING ON THAT I JUST DIDN'T WANT TO BURDEN HIM WITH!

ALSO, WHAT? WHY DOES HE WANT YOU TO HAVE TRAUMA?

I KNOW, RIGHT? PATHETIC.

PFFFT

OH, AND YOU MISSED THE BEST PART: "SHE BROKE UP WITH ME TO GO FUCK SOME SENIOR FROM VIC."

IS IT MEAN TO LAUGH? MAYBE. BUT AGAIN,

I THINK IT'S JUSTIFIED. AFTER ALL, I DID EVERYTHING I COULD TO BE YOUR FRIEND.

I WANT US TO BE FRIENDS, REALLY!

OF COURSE.

HEY, NICE OUTFIT! IS THAT A NEW SHIRT?

PLEASE DON'T TELL CASEY I'VE BEEN SEEING SOMEONE - I DON'T WANT HIM TO FEEL WEIRD OR HURT

OF COURSE NOT!

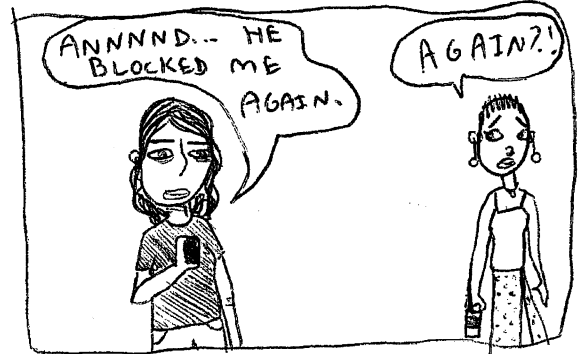
AND IT STUNG WHEN MY EFFORTS WERE IGNORED.



AFTER ALL, YOU SAID YOU WANTED TO BE FRIENDS.



SLOWLY I BEGAN TO GET SICK OF YOUR MIXED MESSAGES.



NOT EVERYONE HAD THE BEST ADVICE. ESPECIALLY MY PARENTS.



YET I THINK I THINK I FOUND PEACE OF MIND ANYWAY.

IT'S EASY TO BE IN
DENIAL.

IT'S EASY TO BE
ANGRY.

BUT WHAT IS IT WHEN YOU'RE
BOTH ANGRY AND IN MOURNING
FOR THE PERSON YOU THOUGHT
YOU KNEW?

I'M NO LONGER IN
MOURNING, SO I
GUESS I DON'T QUITE
KNOW.

IT'S HARDEST OF ALL
TO ACCEPT THAT THE
PERSON YOU THOUGHT YOU
KNEW
NEVER EXISTED.

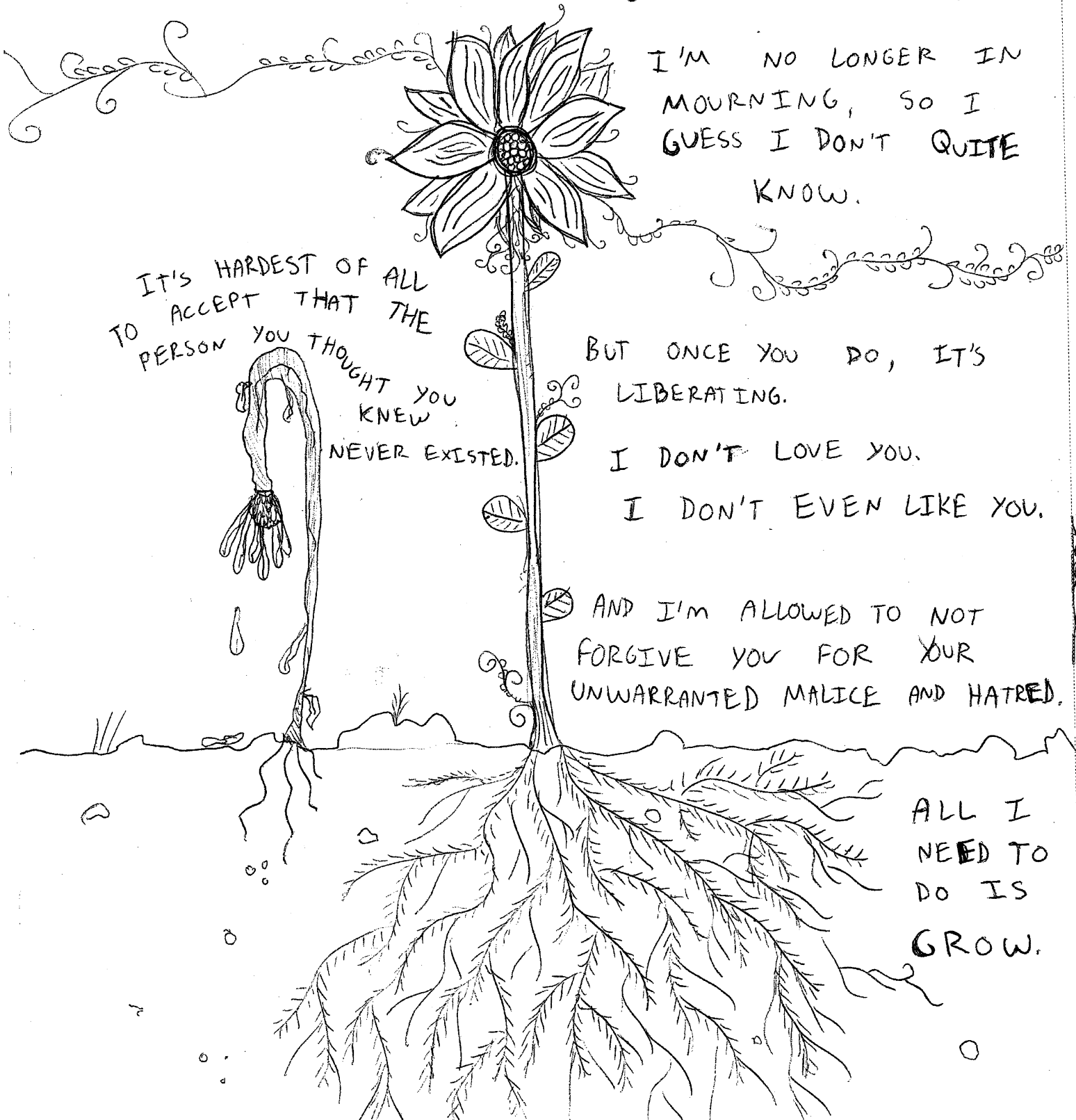
BUT ONCE YOU DO, IT'S
LIBERATING.

I DON'T LOVE YOU.

I DON'T EVEN LIKE YOU.

AND I'M ALLOWED TO NOT
FORGIVE YOU FOR YOUR
UNWARRANTED MALICE AND HATRED.

ALL I
NEED TO
DO IS
GROW.



X. I DON'T KNOW WHO I WANT TO SEE THIS



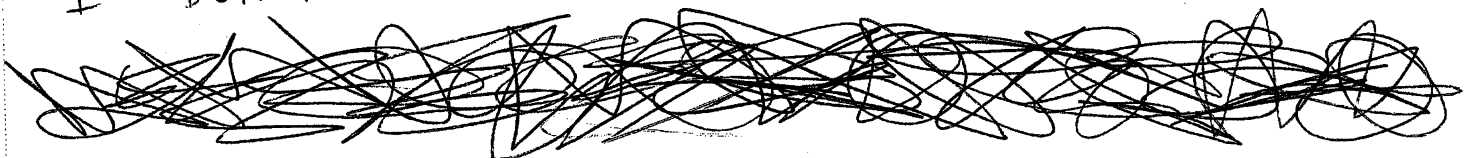
THE ONLY WAY I CAN REALLY SHOW PEOPLE IS THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA, BUT EVEN THEN IT DOESN'T SEEM LIKE THEY REALLY SEE IT. NOT IN THE WAY I WANT THEM TO.

I WANT PEOPLE TO LEAVE STARRY-EYED, WOWED, FOREVER CHANGED BY WHAT I'VE MADE. THEN THEY'D... THEY'D... THEY'D... WHAT?



DO I JUST MAKE ART FOR SOCIAL CLOUT?
DO I THINK PEOPLE NEED TO BENEFIT IN SOME WAY FROM ME, THAT MY PRESENCE ISN'T ENOUGH?

I DON'T KNOW. I'VE NEVER REALLY THOUGHT ABOUT IT.



WHAT I DO THINK ABOUT. IS WHO I'D MOST WANT TO SEE THIS, READ THESE WORDS, AND SEE ME IN A **NEW LIGHT.**

THE GIRL I HAD A CRUSH ON

IN HIGH SCHOOL WHO EVERYONE SAID WAS MEAN,

THE GUY

WHO RAN THE ARTS CLUB I JOINED WHO MADE ME INSECURE ABOUT MY OWN ART AND THEN LATER ASKED ME OUT BUT WE ONLY HELD HANDS AND THEN DIDN'T SPEAK FOR SIX MONTHS,

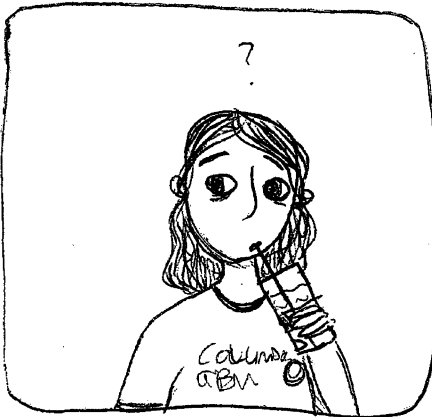
OR THE GIFTED MUSICIAN AND POET A GRADE ABOVE ME WITH THE VOICE OF AN ANGEL WHO ALWAYS SEEMED SO COOL.

MAYBE MY MIDDLE SCHOOL DRAMA TEACHER, OR THE GIRL THAT BULLIED ME IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, OR PEOPLE AT UNIVERSITY WHO, WHEN WE MEET AT A PARTY, CAN TELL ME,

YOU'RE SO COOL!

ACTUAL
REAL LIVE
COOL PERSON

I RECENTLY TOLD MY FRIEND THAT MY ART- AND MY LIFE-
FEEL PERFORMATIVE.

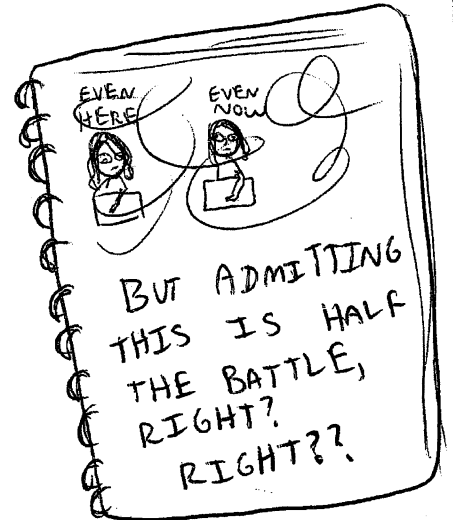


I GUESS I FEEL LIKE I'M WEIRD OR OFF-PUTTING
IN SOCIAL SITUATIONS, SO I NEED MY CREATIVITY TO
MAKE UP FOR IT.

EVEN HERE.



EVEN NOW.



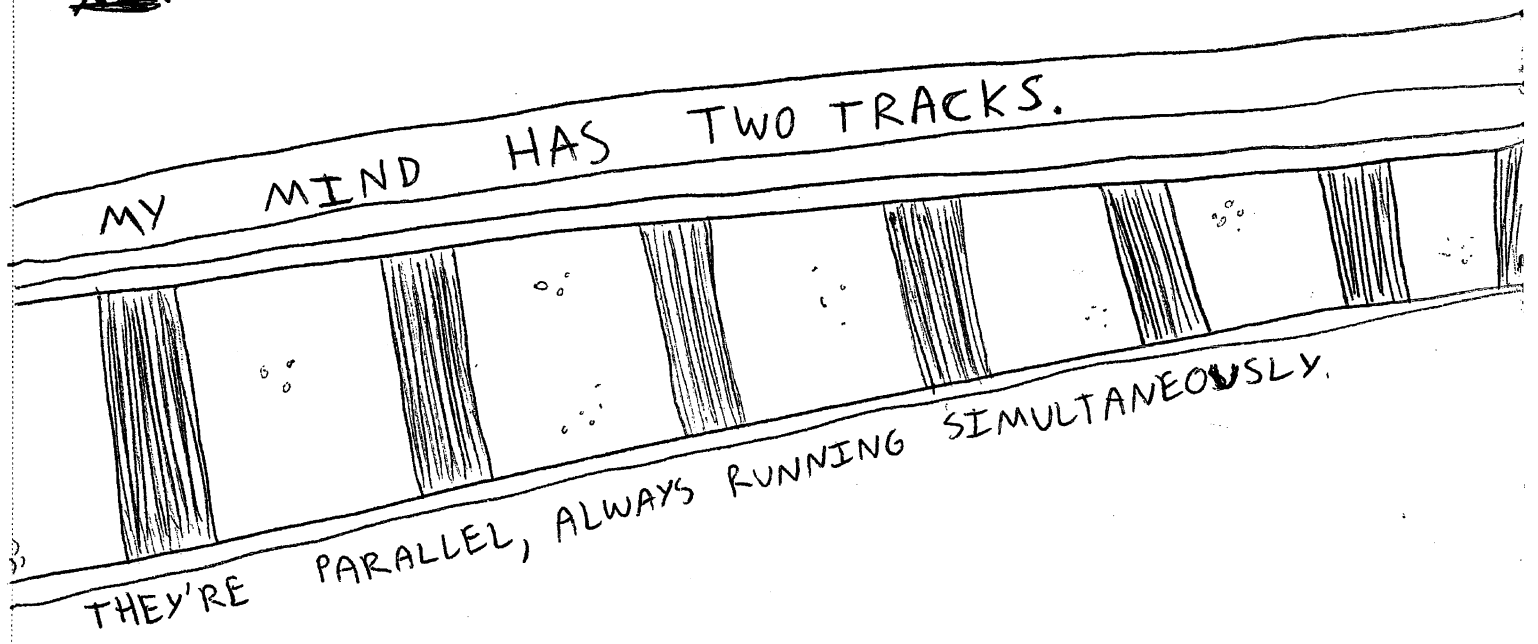
IT'S BETTER THAN
DENYING I GET ANY
SATISFACTION FROM PRAISE.



META, RIGHT? IT'S JUST BECAUSE I CAN'T
ESCAPE MY MIND.

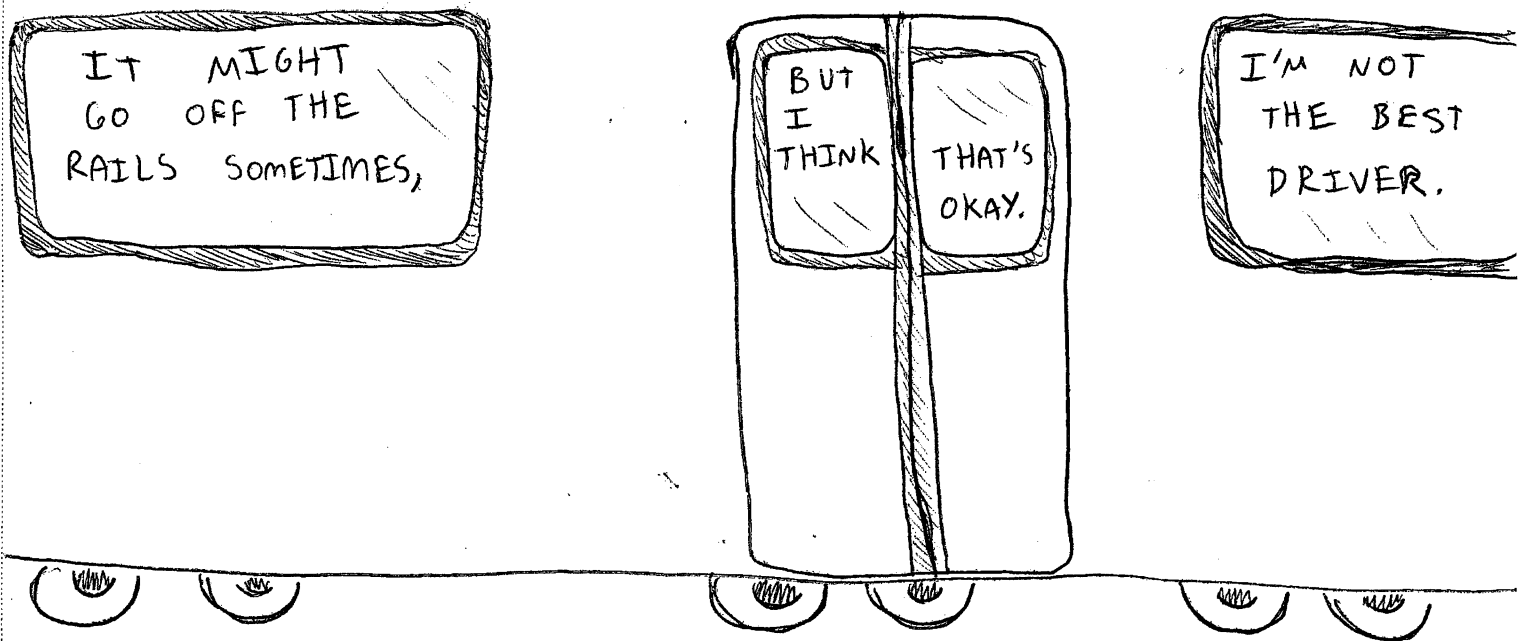
BUT I CAN REIN IT IN LONG ENOUGH TO
FINISH WHAT I STARTED.

~~XI~~. I'M USING TOO MANY WORDS

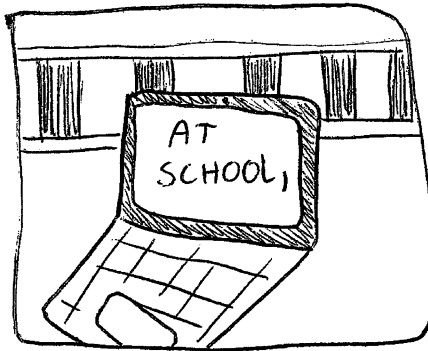
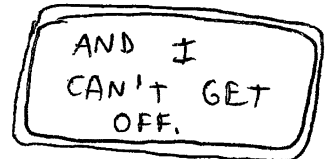
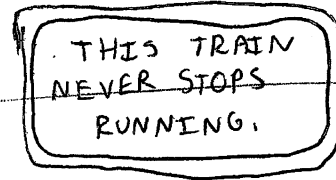
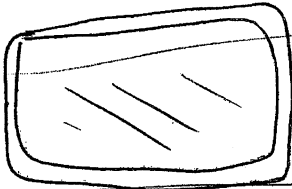
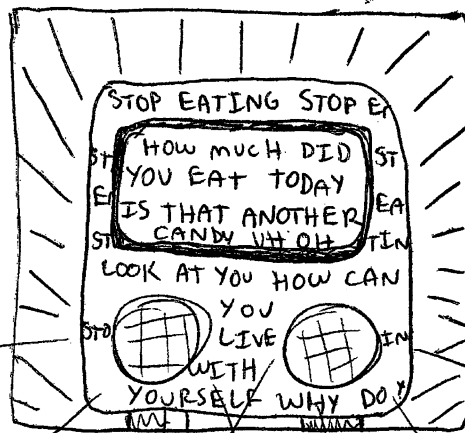
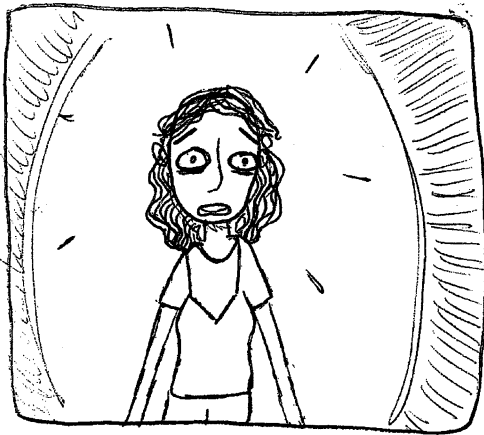


THE FIRST ENCOMPASSES EVERYTHING I'VE SHARED SO FAR. IT'S MY DAILY LIFE, MY RELATIONSHIPS, MY GOALS, MY FEARS, MY PLANS FOR THE FUTURE AND MEMORIES OF THE PAST.

ON THE TRACK COMES A TRAIN.



THE OTHER TRACK IS DIFFERENT.



I DON'T WANT TO THINK ABOUT IT.

THERE'S SO MUCH I WANT TO SAY.

BUT EVERY TIME
I TRY TO
ORGANIZE
MY THOUGHTS,



THEY ALL COME
FLOODING OUT.

THERE'S TOO MUCH.
I CAN'T TELL IT
ALL,



AND I'LL ALWAYS FEEL
LIKE I'M MISSING
SOMETHING.



I'M LOST DOWN THE
RABBIT HOLE OF MY OWN
CREATION.

I CAN'T GET OUT.

I CAN'T
I CAN'T



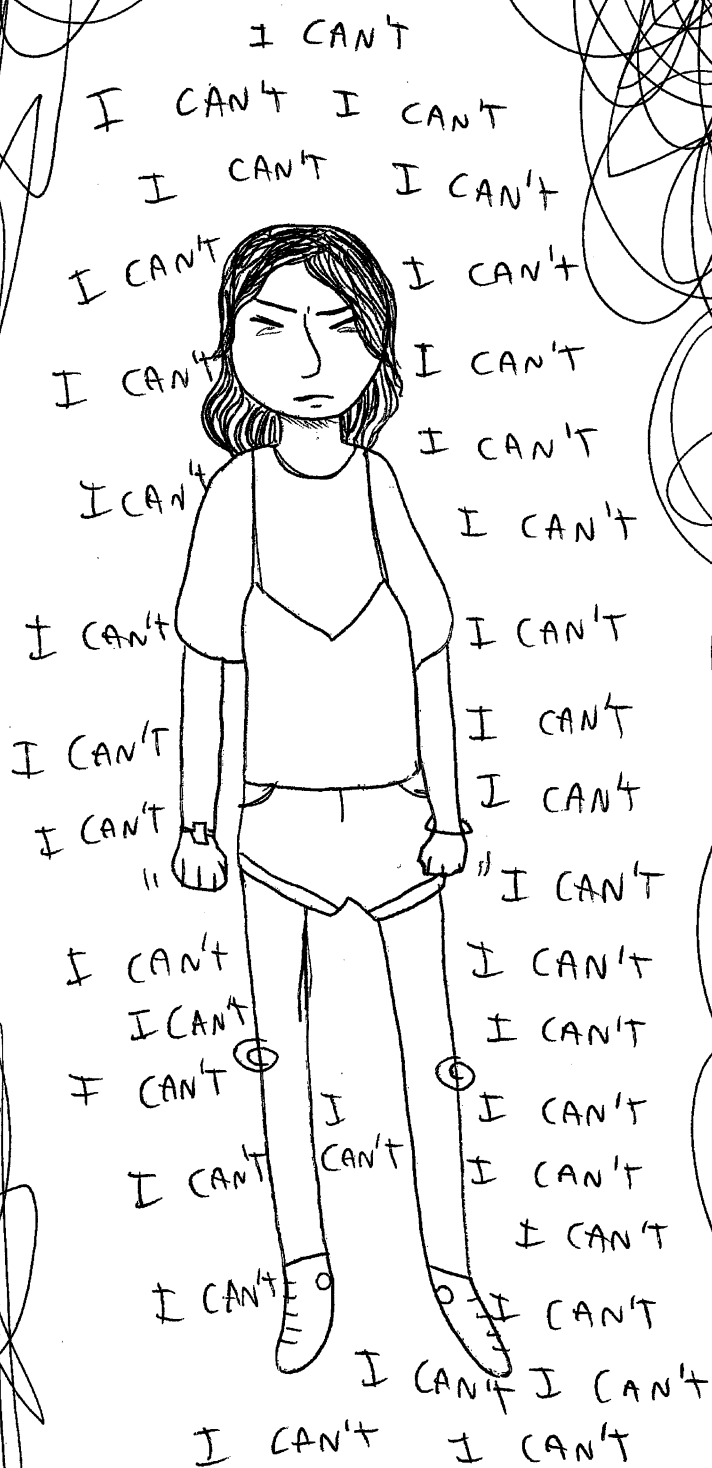
IT'S TOO MUCH, AND NOT ENOUGH. THE
BINGING, THE CALORIE-COUNTING, THE
MINIMIZING IT SO PEOPLE DON'T
PITY ME, THE REALIZATION THAT
LIFE ISN'T WORTH LIVING IF
EVERY DAY IS LIKE THIS
BECAUSE EVEN THOUGH I HAVE SO MUCH
TO LIVE FOR IT'S ALWAYS OVER-
SHADOWED BY THE NON-STOP OB-
SESSION THAT IS MY EATING DISORDER.

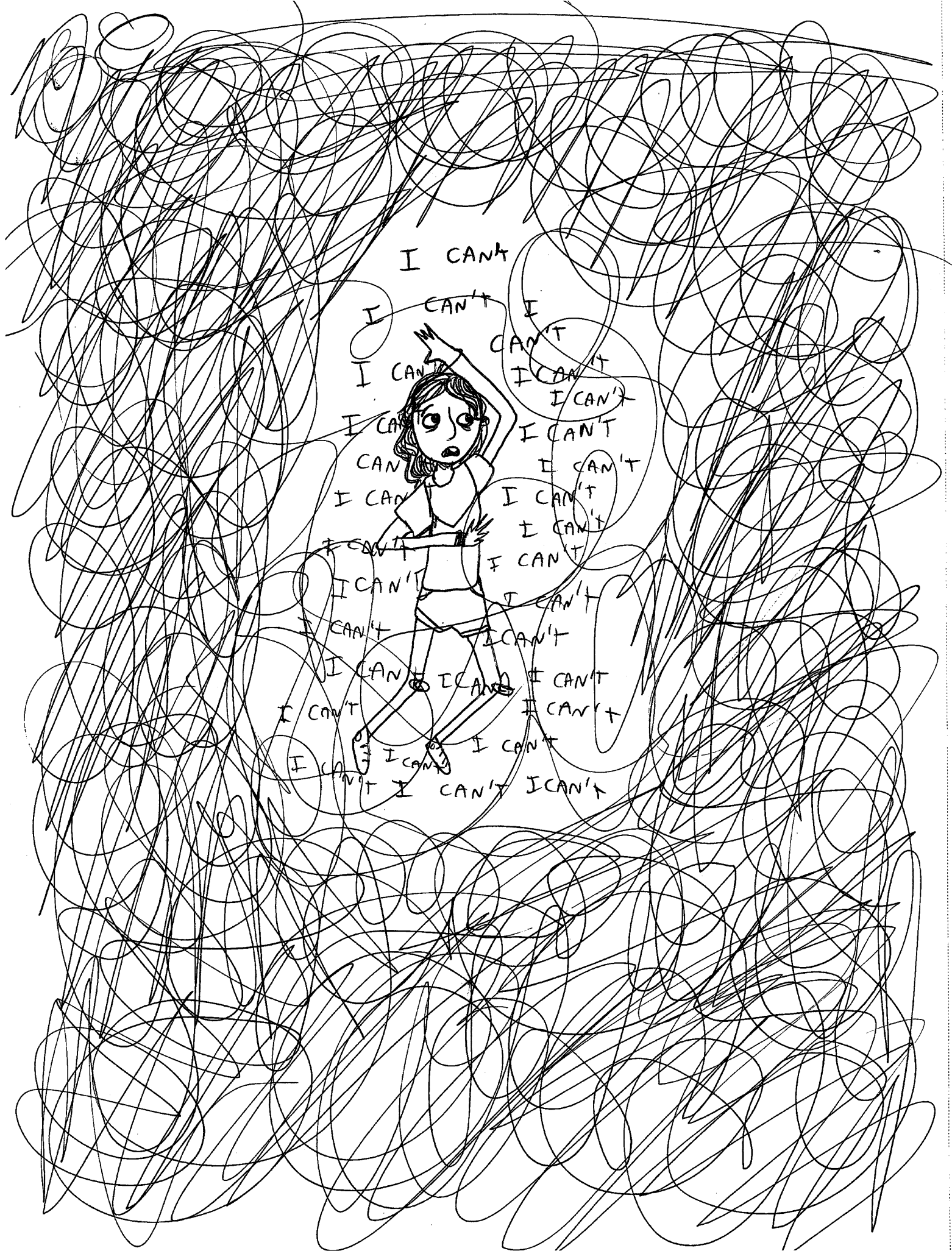
IT'S HUMILIATING, SHAMEFUL, THE
WAY I'LL EAT AND EAT AND EAT EVEN
THOUGH I FEEL SICK AND MY BODY'S
BEGGING ME TO STOP, TO WAIT, I'M
NOT EVEN HUNGRY BUT JUST TRYING
TO FILL A HOLE INSIDE MYSELF
TO FEEL AT PEACE BUT I DON'T
KNOW WHAT PEACE FEELS LIKE SO
I REPLACE IT WITH HANDFULS
OF CHIPS UNTIL
I'M STUFFED AND
SKIPPING DINNER TO
HAVE A HEARTY HELPING
OF SELF-LOATHING.

I CAN'T DO IT
ANY MORE. I CAN'T
I CAN'T I CAN'T
I CAN'T I CAN'T
I CAN'T I CAN'T



I CAN'T I CAN'T
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