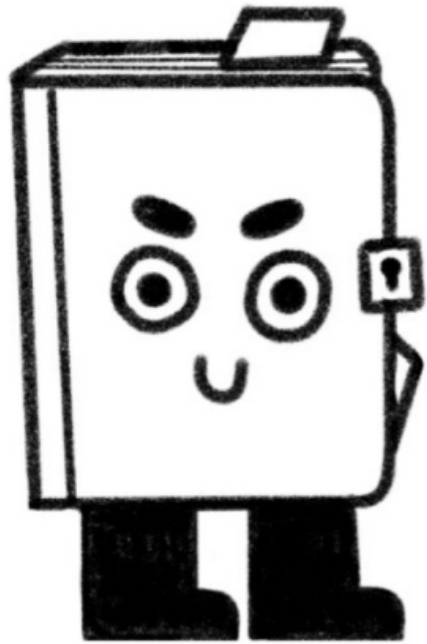


Volume №1

Illustrated Diaries



A digital zine of written diary & journal submissions,
interpreted as illustrations by talented artists.



Illustrated Diaries is a digital zine of written diary & journal submissions, interpreted as illustrations by talented artists. Illustrated Diaries is edited by Molly Hensley.

Molly started this project to connect people with art, to help bring personal diaries to life, and to hopefully* ease the boredom & pain caused during quarantine.

Diary Entry by: EZ

Give us your soul

Seattle, WA + Originally written April 24, 2021

I'm an indoor cat, so biking in Seattle in the rain and cold in the winter is not my cup of tea. Craving going for a bike ride, I finally succumbed to the Sirens call that haunts so many 20-something white women: I began taking spin classes.

A SoulCycle studio opened just a few blocks from my work, and I decided to give it a try. What was I in for...

The bikes were uncomfortably close to each other, compared to the other studios I had visited. Due to the close proximity, there was not an easy egress to slide through the narrow aisle of bikes, once a rider was seated. Getting situated on my bike in the back row, I began feeling a bit uneasy without the ability to quickly tap out, if I hated this ride.

The theater decor of many other studios I tried featured soothing blue or clubby multicolor lighting. Not this studio... The lighting was completely dark, save for the bright red Exit sign, draping an unsettling red glow on the riders. The other lighting source? A line of candles in front of the spin instructor.

Halfway through the workout, and the club bangers and empowering platitudes were booming through the studio. This particular workout featured a lot of "push-ups," where you lean over your handle bars and push yourself up for many reps. My discomfort and anxiety was in full form, as I sweat in the back of the studio. I stopped briefly doing push-ups to catch my breath.



Reflecting on my life decisions, I took stock of the situation. Basking in the red light, gazing upon my candle-ensconced spin instructor, as 50 other riders did push-ups in unison, I could

not divorce from the idea that we were bowing down to our almighty Spin Lord.

- EZ, 32

Diary Entry by | Carolyn L. Pellegrino

I still carry your name in my conversations

Houston, Texas + Originally written December 31, 2020

I still carry your name in my conversations.

It's heavy on my jaw, but the phantom pains allow me to feel as though you're still apart of my day-to-day.

It's how a whiskey-filled cup imitates the relief of your kiss, so I keep my lips to the glass until I'm able to find your smile at the bottom.

I wonder if you look for those same comforts in my absence.

And with that, I do a lot of things alone now and that's OK; I just hope this isn't one of those times.

-Carolyn L. Pellegrino, 29
@abeautifulmess24



Diary Entry by | Ali

I am on the plane headed for Seattle

Seattle, WA + Originally written August 6, 2015

Well Journal, I am starting to write about my adventure out west. I am on the plane headed for Seattle with my mom and dad. As I look out the plane window I am shocked by Earth. The land seems to be swirling and mixing together, green mountains in cracked desert. I believe we are over Montana, but I don't know. There doesn't seem to be many streets around... I am just shocked because all the terrain I've ever

flown over is farmland or cities. LAND PARCELS. Thinking a lot about the removal of Native People. How hard it must have initially been to travel through this terrain by horse or foot. So many deaths. My perception of the West is pretty non existent so I am excited to slowly shape truth. That's enough for now... getting a little sickie."

-Ali, 23



Diary Entry by: M. A. Dubbs

I want to be normal.

Indianapolis, IN + Originally written March 23, 2021

After my therapy session today, I couldn't help but want to be like my therapist. I want to be so compassionate, so kind, so smart, so stable

I want to be normal.

Before I log on to start my client's session I pause and wonder if anybody thinks that about me. I can't linger on this thought, though; there's work to be done. So, lights, camera, action, therapy!

-M. A. Dubbs, 30
melindadubbs.wordpress.com



Diary Entry by: Joyce | Illustration by: Molly Hensley

Overachieving Adolescent to Underperforming Adult

Los Angeles, California + Originally written September 28, 2020

The descent can look steep if your nose is too high
Obstructed view, limited perception adhering to a standard that
measures your worth in gold
your weight in air-fried kale

Still the birds sing for you
They look down on everyone
Benevolent lords sparing the fortunate
of drops of blessings in disguise
Or are they indiscriminate acquaintances
caring not that your car is new from a wash
or a decades-old sedan that refuses to die but stalls

-Joyce, 34



Diary Entry by: B

Full of wine, butter & happiness

Brooklyn, NY + Originally written August 26, 2019

Today, Alex and I worked from home and made mussels for dinner. I am full of wine, butter and happiness <3 I can't wait to marry this man!

- B, 27



Diary Entry by: Madeline

Haunted Thrift Store Find



Brooklyn, New York + Originally written April 6, 2020

I am thoroughly convinced that Jason's apartment is now haunted by a ghost who lives in one of his thrift store finds. He recently bought a BEAUTIFUL backgammon set from goodwill. I think it's faux leather but it looks so damn classy. Like....you should be drinking a whisky and smoking a cigar with it. Since

he bought it, it's been untouched for awhile. But since quarantine has started Jason and I have been playing more board games to try and ease our minds. We decided to finally play the backgammon set. When we did, he kept rolling really lucky dice, when it was my turn I got epically bad rolls. There was one point where I was about to win, but he literally rolled 2 insanely rare rolls in a row. We joked that I had the unlucky dice so we switched. But guess what? The same thing happened AGAIN. We played like 20 more times and I literally lost ALL of the games. We came to the conclusion that the ghost was probably an old man, and that for whatever reason I got on his nerves. So we started calling the ghost "grandpa ghost".

Today I was in the bathroom minding my own business in the bathroom when the door MYSTERIOUSLY opened. I think grandpa ghost was being super judgemental about me spending too much time in the bathroom plucking my facial hair. The door opening has never happened to either of us.



Jason has lived in this apartment for 3 years, i've lived here off and on for a while and this has never happened to me either.

Other than those strange happenings, I have no other evidence as of today. But will continue to write down any strange activity I see. Overall I don't think grandpa ghost is a threat, I just don't think he likes women with strong personalities. But guess what grandpa ghost? Because of quarantine, I'M NOT GOING ANYWHERE.

-Madeline, 29

Diary Entry by | Jailene Xitlali Diaz (they/them)

I'm happy with my life, I just don't like my circumstances.

West Seattle, Washington + Originally written January 14, 2021

I recently discovered a YouTube ASMR series where the set up is the owner is massaging her cat BUT she's being very snarky and scamming her cat as well. I'm a massage student and been practicing on my roommates (I live in a gay hippie commune of 6 folks and a service dog) and so this little series registers in my mind as a bit of representation. I don't know when I'll graduate as the course

is self paced and well...we're living in a pandemic but I think and I hope after this year I will be done with school. I currently work as a florist and it doesn't pay much and I don't get more than 12hrs a week. I keep telling myself it's all just temporary and I have savings in case I need a bit of cushion. I'm happy with my life, I just don't like my circumstances.

- Jailene Xitlali Diaz, 21



Diary Entry by: Leela

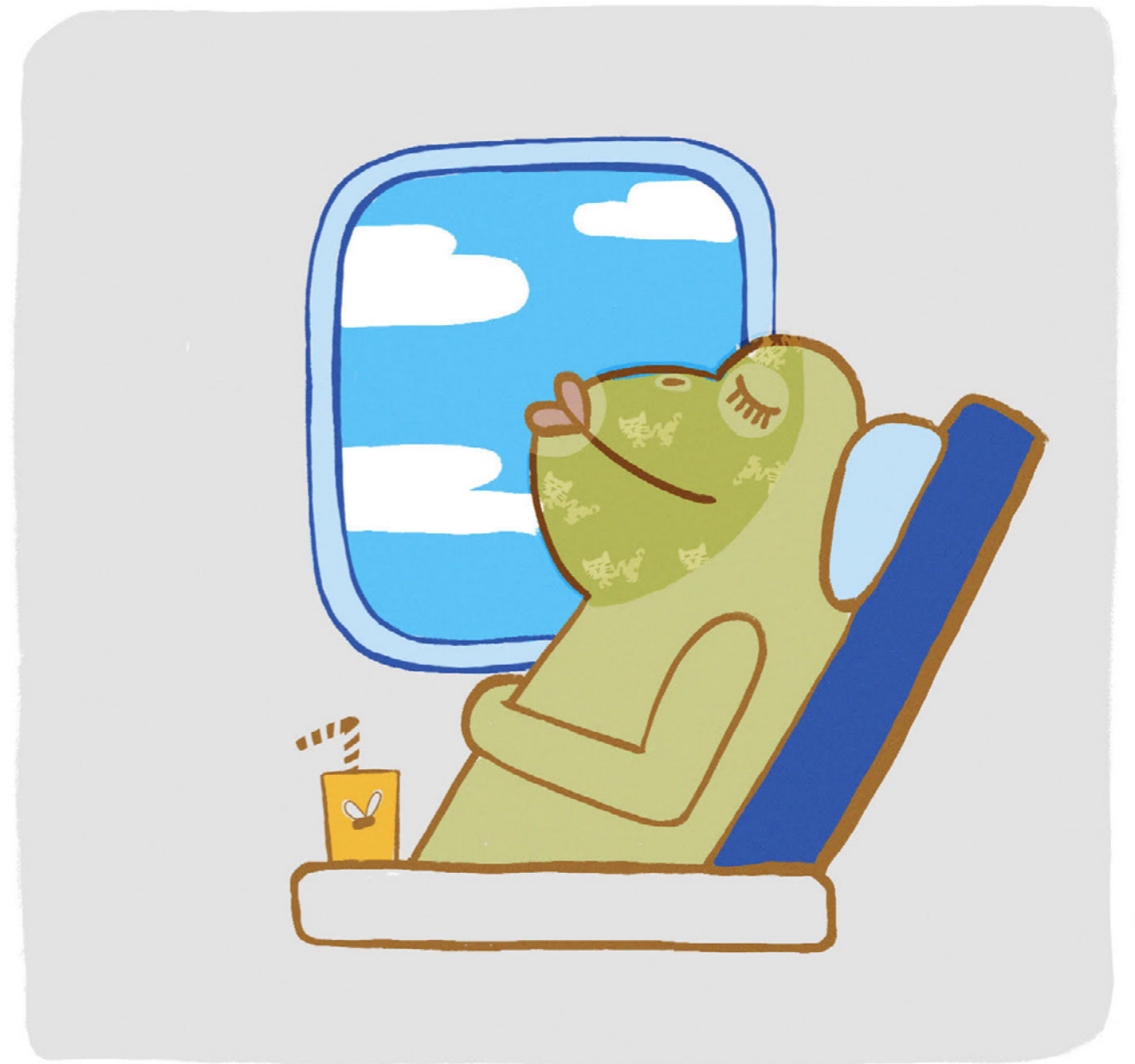
I'm giving up on that one

Austin, TX + Originally written October 24, 2019

I'm on a plane, and on my way to my friends wedding! Can't believe she is getting married. I'm going to cry so much hahahaha, I've known her since the 2nd grade, we go way back. Also glad to be taking a few days off too, I've been getting lots of tension headaches, think it's related to stress from work. They are in the process laying people off, hope I'm not next. To try and de-stress I bought some facial masks for the trip. They didn't have much of a selection (I guess everyone is having a weird week). But I found some silly facial masks with

tigers printed on it.

As I prepare for this wedding (I'm also a bridesmaid) I've been more conscious of my body hair. Not in a bad way, more in a way of like wow I'm glad I don't have to go to fancy events like this all the time!!!! I get a lot of stiff hairs on my chin, I tried to pluck a few but more just sprouted up over the week. So I've giving up on that one! I also have a mustache, but sometimes I can just smear foundation over it, and it does the trick.



Diary Entry by: Vikki

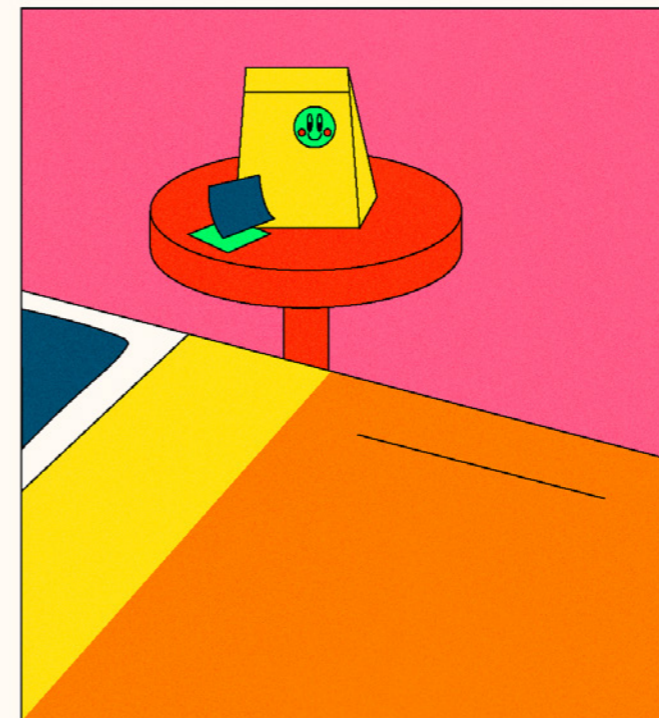
It's been a hard day

Brooklyn, New York + Originally written April 15, 2020

It's been a hard day. The rain was torrential and while I usually love that, today I could have done without it. I ended up walking the streets all day till I found somewhere to spend the night. Just a run-down hotel in a back alley of the city (London), but heaven after the cold and wind and rain.

The room is small, but warm and clean, and it's kind of nice to just sit on the bed and watch the rain pour down the window. I brought snacks and a takeaway meal in with me so now I can finally get settled for the night.

- Vikki, 19



Diary Entry by: CC

We scouted for a well-lit hill where sun rays hit perfectly.

Brooklyn, New York + Originally written April 15, 2020

I rode a citibike to the park that's close to his apartment, as well as the college I attended 2 years ago. Fort Greene park. My forehead ached against the cool breeze while riding down Clinton Ave. I found the parking spot for citibikes and thought about how I would go to this park by myself when I was in college, how I would sit on the bench and people watched the guys skating, with an open sketchbook placed my lap. I'd sit there with my sketchbook until the sun set behind the trees and darkened the sky.

I'd observe couples walking their dogs, as well as the couples walking their toddlers.

When I finally met up with him at Fort Greene, we scouted for a well-lit hill where sun rays hit perfectly. We laid in the grass, our hands covering our eyes. I placed my jacket underneath my head. The warmth embodied me.

-CC, 25

@connie.cordon



Diary Entry by: Mason

It's Sunday afternoon & I'm having a pretty good weekend.

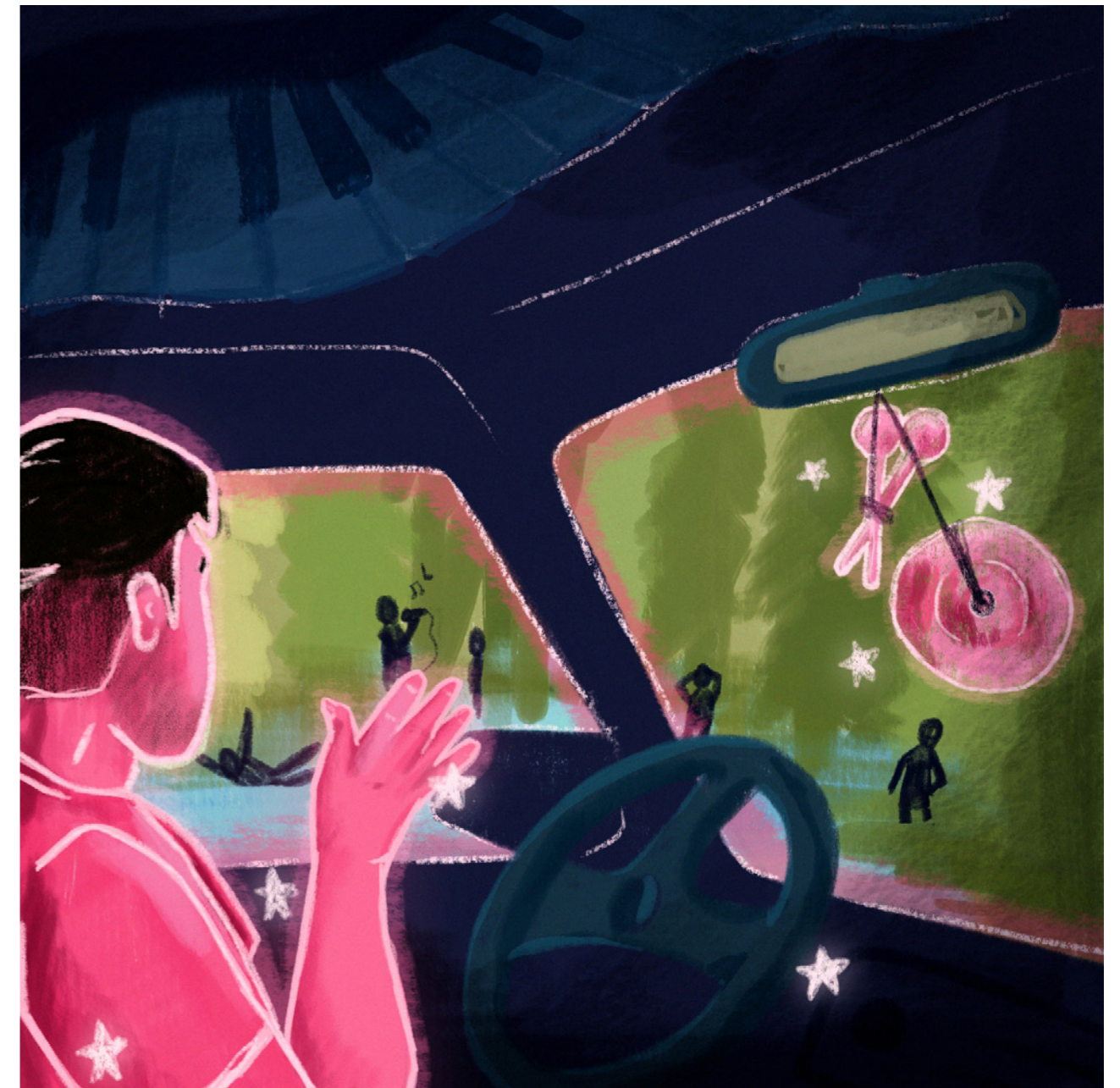
Brooklyn, New York + Originally written April 15, 2020

It's Sunday afternoon and I'm having a pretty good weekend. Yesterday Molly and I walked around UW for a bit, I worked on my music stuff for a while, Molly and I had a vocal lesson, and I made fried rice (and Molly liked it!). I organized a Zoom Karaoke hang with my friends and it was a lot of fun! I saw JM and JB & Kristen and Ronan and Hannah & Taylor and Claire and Alison and the 2020 house and Mary! Sometimes the audio was a little weird but it was really fun to put on a show for everybody and laugh and dance with everybody and see everyone's faces after a long time. I think everyone had a

great time and enjoyed seeing each other. Molly and I drank some wine and sang My Favorite Mistake and Head Over Heels.

On Friday I think I forgot about Modern Ensemble... because I was so focused on working on music stuff. I'm not totally sure we had class but I'm pretty sure we did. I just got really focused on working on NY Counterpoint and I talked to John to figure out how to get a sustained marimba 8th note sound from one note.

I had Music of Indonesia on Thursday and that class still feels like it takes forever but I am liking it so far. We



talked about the concept of Power in Javanese culture and discussed it with classmates in breakout rooms. I did most of the reading so I was prepared to talk about it; seems like I'll need to do the reading every week to be prepared for breakout room discussions. In class I can

sort of zone out if I need to or want to, and turn the camera off to eat food or look at social media or whatever.

- Mason, 27
@clashplaid

Diary Entry by | urks io

Don't mind me, it's just a phase

Portland, OR + Originally written April 4, 2020

I still have my tussles with love— setting myself up for failure and disappointment. It's partial truth, partial fabrication.

Maybe they did forget about me, maybe I just wanted to know they were thinking of me and the plans we made. Wanted to know I'm worth remembering. Wanted to know I'm worth calling back from the dead — My (sometimes anxious, sometimes depressive) inner world that sucks me into myself and projects an image of false death to whom ever comes across me. Don't mind me, it's just a phase. This pattern, this repeating loop, this course of action that draws me toward it like moth to bug zapper, and I know it'll hurt, but hurting is so much safer than letting myself love and receive love. If I can't wallow in my self-made pit of rejection and hurt, then—?

Why do I bring this upon myself? I want someone to prove me wrong, to wade through all my shit and pull me back toward dry land.

Don't let me drown.

Don't let me drown..

{Urks, you're not drowning. It's like 1 1/2 inches of water, you just have to stand up so you can catch the life vest we're throwing you.}

Illustration by | Vicky Hughes + vickyhughes.co.uk



Oh.

(okay, so then what's the every one else's deal? Are they convinced they're forgotten and alone in this world, too? Are we all just layers of trauma and healing bumping into each other's tender parts, hoping someone will kiss it better when we say "ouch"? How much of this is my own to deal with (all of it)? But how much can I share with others so they know I'm just pre-reacting to anticipated pain (some of it)? How much can I carry with me into a future of overflowing abundance (none of it)? How much can I turn into art and share with others so they know they're not drowning alone (much of it)?)

-urks io, 31

@urks.io

Diary Entry by: Kyleene

A sleep paralysis dream

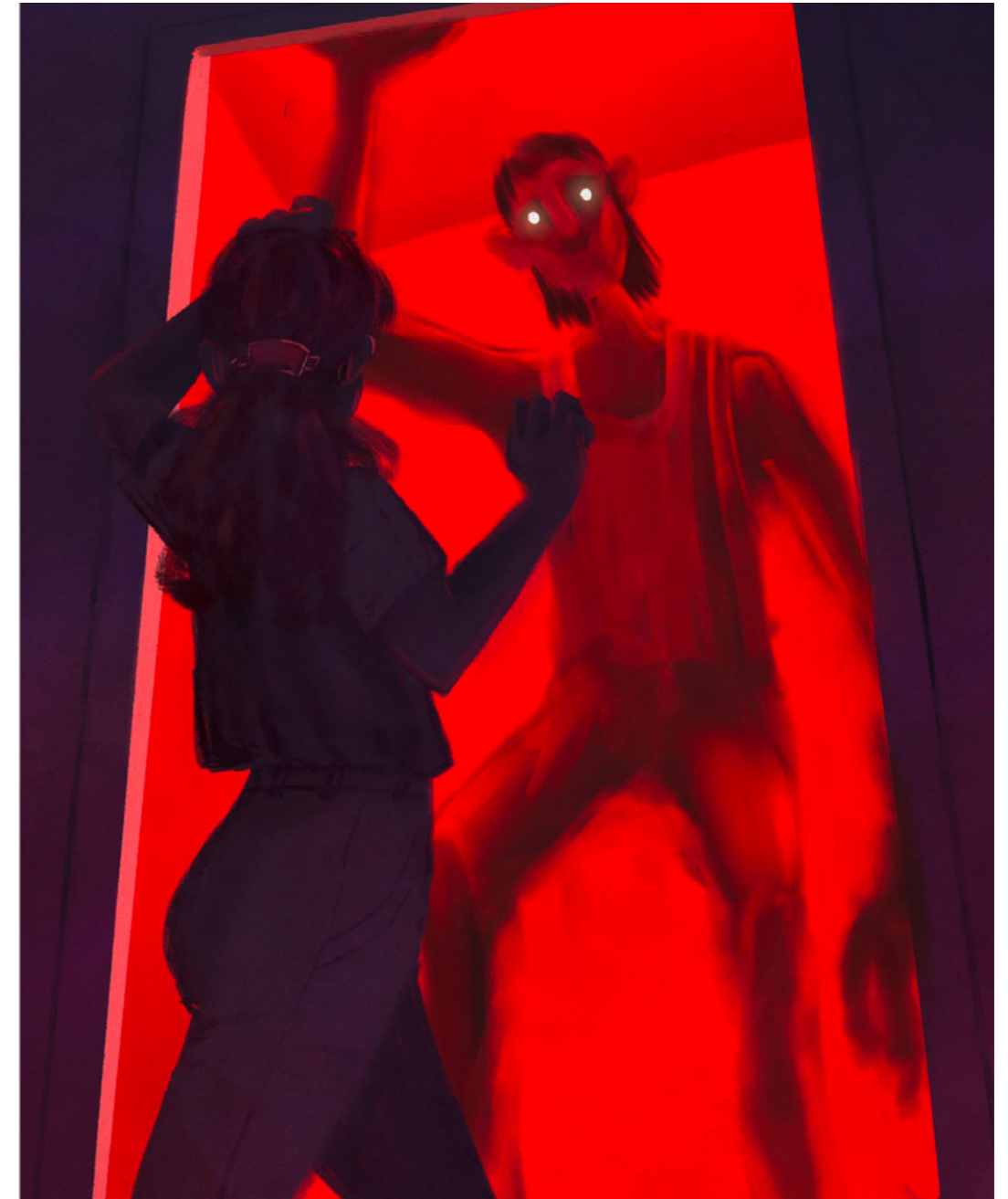
Lakeshore Hotel Chicago + Originally written Nov 18, 2018

Laying on the hotel bed for real I start to fall off it, through it. On to the floor. But the carpet is an ugly dark brown hotel carpet instead of the black and white current one. The bed is suddenly much smaller than a king. It's now a full? I guess now that I was sleeping on the missing part, so I slide off and fall face down into the floor.

I stand up and am now facing a mirror in a bathroom. In the current real life room there's a wall that separates the bathroom by the bed, but there used to be a door there. It's dimly lit in this new hotel room.

I stand to face a brown framed mirror. The walls are similar in color. The lighting is dimmer. As I look in the mirror a white man with medium long

medium brown hair and a stained off-white wife beater and brown pants straps over his shoulders stands in the mirror. He sees me in the mirror as he stands behind me. I get scared. I try to yell but I can only let out a murmur. I try to confront him. To not be afraid. I've never met this young man. White. Pale face. I look him right I'm the eye instead of trying to wake up and run. I try to face him. This is just a dream. I control this dream. Right? He starts to get angry. His mouth opens. His pupils go dark. It seems like his mouth has opened unnaturally large. He let's out a roar saying "NOOOOOOO" as he stares at me in the mirror. I try to will my dream self to punch him in the face, punch his reflection in the mirror, anything.



It's like I'm in the mirror and he's in the room. In a different time, same place. I try to move my arm but I can't move. He takes a fist and punches me from behind. An uppercut to my lady parts. When he does, it's somehow from behind me in the mirror and I know it's

also at my current real life backside as I lay face down on the bed. I feel it in my bones when I wake up. Not pain, a vibration. I wake up shuddering. My body buzzes.

-Kyleene, 28

Diary Entry by: Iris Wang

Wow last week was bad...

Austin, TX + Originally written December 10, 2007

Wow last week was bad...I acted so grumpy and mean to like everyone.. thankfully everyone put up with my immature attitude. Hopefully this week won't be as stressful and bad. D:

Anyway, I've got alotta homework to do but I'd rather be here so...here I am lol. I don't understand PreCal, maybe I should teach it to myself using the textbook..I didn't understand how my teacher was getting the answers..>:0

Spanish class depressed me a lot today, but when I got to APUSH and saw my name on the board for the Professor Awards, I almost screamed in delight. I have never been on the board before, I came close once by a point, but

yea today was the first time my name was written on the board. I got a 96 raw score.(We get 5 point curves). A 96 was the highest grade in all the classes, and three other people, all geniuses, got a 96 too. Man I am proud of myself.

Unfortunately I received a C on my quiz but it didn't dampen my high spirits. :]

So yeahhhh. Threadless has been real disappointing lately. They've got that \$10 sale going on but all the shirts are... not appealing. They aren't like really ugly or anything..they're just....not my style I guess.

Today I played Connect Four in PE and I beat my friend :D I'm really competitive in Connect Four(Yes, I



know, I am a loser xP) so I was happyyy. Oh. I saw Gabelle today. That was a bad point in my day. I was rushing downstairs to 5th period and when I turned my head, and there was Gabelle, a half smile plastered onto his handsome face, and he was looking at me, I think? It was such a surprise and it sure startled me. And me, being an idiot, quickly turned back around and ran the other way to my class. Gabelle must have been like, "Wow, she must be scared of me

or something." I mean, I was going to go through that door and then I saw Gabelle and then I went to the other door on the other side of the buidling. What kind of idiot does that? Uh, me, apparently. D:

AHHHHHHHHHHHHHH. Why is Gabelle still so good looking? D:

*-Iris, written when she was 17
unsplash.com/@irishappens*



Meet Erin Zingré

The illustrator who created
our cover.

Q. Hi Erin! Thank you for talking with ID, tell us about yourself.

Erin: Hi there! I'm an illustrator based in Seattle. I grew up in Kansas and graduated from the University of Kansas in 2013, where I studied Art History and Visual Communication. After college, I moved to Dallas where I was fortunate to work with so many talented folks and there discovered my passion for illustration. I moved to Seattle in 2015 and still can't get over how beautiful the PNW is. During my spare time here, I enjoy sipping fancy tequila, fantasizing about getting a dog, riding my bike, and watching trash reality TV.

Q. This cover is ridiculous in the best way possible. Tell us more about the concept and thinking behind this illustration!

Erin: Haha thank you! I was fortunate you wanted to embrace the weirdness with this cover. When I was developing the concept for the illustration, I wanted to convey what Illustrated Diaries means to me. Reading these vignettes from people's lives and excerpts from their diaries to me feels voyeuristic in some ways, which drives much of the intrigue of what people are sharing. I wanted the illustration to feel like a glimpse into someone's private thoughts. When I was sketching out different concepts, I did some self-reflection and thought "what might my private thoughts look like, if someone peeked into them?" I'm very passionate about ice cream, self care, and art history... this scene thus became a bastardized conflation of all of those great passions. Voilà we have a sultry ice cream sundae lounging in a glass dish caught in a private moment, yielding some sort of Candy Land eroticism. Overall, I think that's a pretty accurate snapshot of my private thoughts!

Q. It's really clever that you combined classical art with your delightfully absurd cartoon style. Could you point out the classical art details and how you adapted that to your own style?

Erin: Most definitely! For the pose of the character, I was heavily influenced by *Reclining Nude* by Mary Cassatt and portraiture by Berthe Morisot. What I appreciate most about their works is that they reclaim female agency through their depictions of women. Their representations of women and the female nude are sensitive, seek to challenge the male gaze, and often demonstrate how badass these women are—navigating traditional expectations of women and

"Voilà we have a sultry ice cream sundae lounging in a glass dish caught in a private moment, yielding some sort of Candy Land eroticism."

celebrating how they actively subvert them. For the background, the cloth drapery is a trope in art history. It can serve as a metaphor for the artist and the audience's relationship, concealing and revealing the significance of the painting. It encourages the spectator to

look at the work of art and try to discern its meaning, probing the question "what is it hiding?". I then wanted to include the drapery in the background to: 1) provide visual cues that the illustration was winking to old paintings, and 2) underscore this voyeuristic concept of peeking at something that is hidden. I wanted to distill these older visual cues through a more contemporary style. For the color palette, I was inspired by Wayne Thiebaud's paintings of cakes, ice cream, and pastries. I aimed to supplement the absurdity of the imagery through poppy, unexpected colorways. You take all of these ingredients, and you get a surreal image of a sensual ice cream sundae. She's powerful, delightfully weird, and having an incredible spa day.



Q. Can you tell us a bit more about your process?

Erin: My process begins with a lot of list-making. I like to pinball around in my sketchbook doing a lot of mind-mapping. I've found that mind-mapping is a quick method that helps me get the creative juices flowing and think of solutions or connections that I would have never imagined when I started. After I latched onto a couple directions that I wanted to explore, I got

to sketching and pulling lots of visual research. Once I get alignment on the chosen sketch, I bring the illustration into the computer. Adobe Illustrator is still my software of choice, where I can iterate most quickly and explore different executions. After I get started on illustrations like this, I tend to enter a Red Bull- and Spotify-fueled illustration frenzy... emerging when the art feels just right.

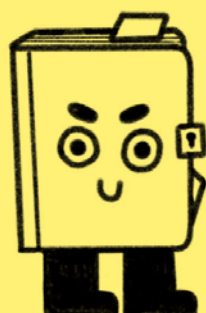


Q. What kind of snacks did you consume while making this cover?

Erin: Ice cream! In order to truly understand the character, it was important I did some field research ;) The flavor I had on hand was Honeycomb by Van Leeuwen, which is my all-time favorite.

Q. Can you give us a sample playlist of what you listened to while making this cover?

1. Go to Town by Doja Cat
2. Maneater by Nelly Furtado
3. L.E.S. Artists by Santigold
4. Paradise by Clementine & the Galaxy
5. Delicate by Taylor Swift
6. Good News by Mac Miller



ILLUSTRATED DIARIES