



By HANNAKO LAMBERT 2019







THIS IS HANNAKO

SEVEN YEARS

BY HANNAKO LAMBERT



100% MATCH
100% FRIEND
100% ENEMY

YOU.

22 · M · STRAIGHT · S

ABOUT PHOTOS

YOUR SUMMARY:

WE MET IN 2010, 2 DAYS AFTER MY 21ST BIRTHDAY. I ANSWERED YOUR MESSAGE OUT OF BOREDOM WITH OKC. WE AGREED TO GET SMOOTHIES. YOU SHOWED UP WITH FLOWERS, AND I ALMOST RAN AWAY. I STAYED.

YOU MADE ME LAUGH, AND YOU WERE
CONFIDENT. SO WHEN YOU SAID:



OH, I'M ACTUALLY
FROM CANADA, I JUST
SAID SEATTLE SO PEOPLE
WOULD GIVE ME A CHANCE.

I'M ACTUALLY SUPER
ALLERGIC TO CATS AND
DOGS, BUT I DIDN'T
WANT TO BE, Y'KNOW,
DISCRIMINATED
AGAINST FOR MY
DISABILITY*.

*QUOTE



O H.

I'D STRUCK OUT A
LOT BY THIS POINT,
AND THOUGHT: "WELL, I
HAVE NOTHING BETTER
TO DO."

AND EVENTUALLY,

AND EVENTUALLY.



I MEAN... MY
INTERNSHIP IS ONLY
4 MONTHS, AND I LIVE
IN TORONTO, AND I
DON'T WANT TO DO
LONG DISTANCE.



AND EVENTUALLY:



WHAT? I HAD
ALREADY MOVED
ON IN MY MIND.
IT WASN'T EVEN
A QUESTION;
A NEW REALITY
HAD BEEN
ANNOUNCED.



BUT MY HANDS
WERE TIED. I'M WEAK
TO CRYING MEN,
AM I SUPPOSED
TO CRUSH HIM WHILE
HE CONFESSES?
HOW UN-SHOJO
OF ME.

2011-2012

WE DID LONG DISTANCE FOR A YEAR.
THERE WERE A FEW VISITS INBETWEEN
WHILE WE FINISHED OUR DEGREES.
EVERYTHING FELT DISTANT BUT OKAY.

EVENTUALLY, TECH COMPANIES STARTED
MAKING YOU OFFERS FROM ALL OVER THE
COUNTRY. YOU WAFFLED BETWEEN HERE
AND CALIFORNIA. I WAS BITTER THAT YOU
TOLD ME I WASN'T A FACTOR, BUT SO IT GOES.

THE HIGHEST BIDDER TURNED OUT TO
BE IN SEATTLE, SO WE MADE PLANS FOR
YOU TO STAY WITH ME UNTIL WE COULD
GET AN APARTMENT TOGETHER.
FINALLY TOGETHER.

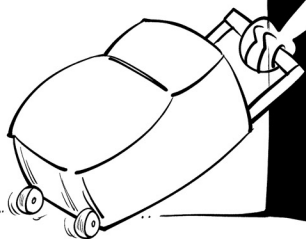
BAD POSTURE
GREMLIN

~~yeah~~, if I didnt get a job at a
washington company I would have
ended things

~~just~~ too hard to keep doing it.

OH. OKAY.

JULY 2012 YOU
MOVED TO SEATTLE.



YOU DON'T REALLY KNOW
HOW YOU FUNCTION IN A
RELATIONSHIP UNTIL YOU
LIVE WITH THEM IN CLOSE
QUARTERS. I KNEW YOU,
BUT FROM A DISTANCE.
YOUR SHAPE WAS UNCLEAR
TO ME.

AND
FOR
A
MOMENT



IT
WAS
NICE.

UNTIL ONE NIGHT, IN
FRUSTRATION, YOU GRABBED
MY WRIST.

I'M A
MESSY PERSON.
YOU COULDN'T
FIND YOUR WALLET.
YOU HAD JUST TOLD ME
ABOUT HOW YOU HAD
INSTINCTIVELY BEATEN
SOMEONE IN THE FACE
WHO HAD KNOCKED YOU
DOWN BY ACCIDENT.

YOU TAUGHT
ME TO
FEAR YOU.



I FELT TRAPPED.
WE'D COME SO FAR!
I SHOULD BE HAPPY.
BUT I'M SCARED
MY OPINIONS DIDN'T MATTER.
DEPRESSION SOON CAME
FOR ME, KNIFE IN HAND.



I WAS TRYING TO
BREAK INTO COMICS
AT THE TIME. I FELT
LOST. MY DAYJOB WAS
ERODING MY SELF-WORTH.
HE COULD NOT SEE VALUE IN
MYSELF. I HAD DEBT. I
WAS MISERABLE. I DRANK
TO ESCAPE BECAUSE I
COULDN'T LEAVE.

HOW DO I TELL MY FRIENDS
WHEN I REFUSED TO BE HONEST WITH
MYSELF? I COULDN'T FACE ANOTHER FAILURE.
IF I LEAVE, ANOTHER FAILURE. SO I KEPT
THESE THOUGHTS DISTANT AND BURIED. IT'S
STRESS TALKING. ISN'T THIS HAPPINESS?

YEARS PASS. YOU BOUGHT
A HOUSE. WE MOVED AGAIN.
I CAN STILL REMEMBER
WHERE YOU STOOD IN ~~YOUR~~
KITCHEN TO TELL ME:

I DON'T WANT TO GET
MARRIED. I DON'T WANT TO
PAY YOU ALIMONY IN THE
FUTURE. MAYBE IF YOU MADE
AS MUCH AS ME... ~~I'M AN ARTIST.~~
~~YOU KNEW IT WAS IMPOSSIBLE~~

MEN GET SCREWED
OVER IN DIVORCE COURT,
YOU KNOW. ~~WHAT~~

THANK YOU! FOR
REMINDING ME MY VALUE
IS PHYSICAL AND MONETARY!
HOW COULD I FORGET!

OK.

OUR RESENTMENT WAS
MUTUAL. EVERY ARGUMENT
I MADE FOR MYSELF, TOO
"EMOTIONAL." SOMETHING
ROTTEN IN ME GREW.

EMOTIONAL; ANYTHING I COULDN'T PROVE WITH FACTS FROM A CIS MAN WAS TOO EMOTIONAL. BUT A PODCAST WITH WOMEN DECRYING FEMINISM WAS FINE. YOUR FRIENDS PLAYING YOU AS A NAÏVE SUCKER AND FEEDING YOU BAD INFORMATION AS AN EXPERIMENT, WAS FINE. AS LONG AS YOU HEARD WHAT YOU WANTED TO HEAR.

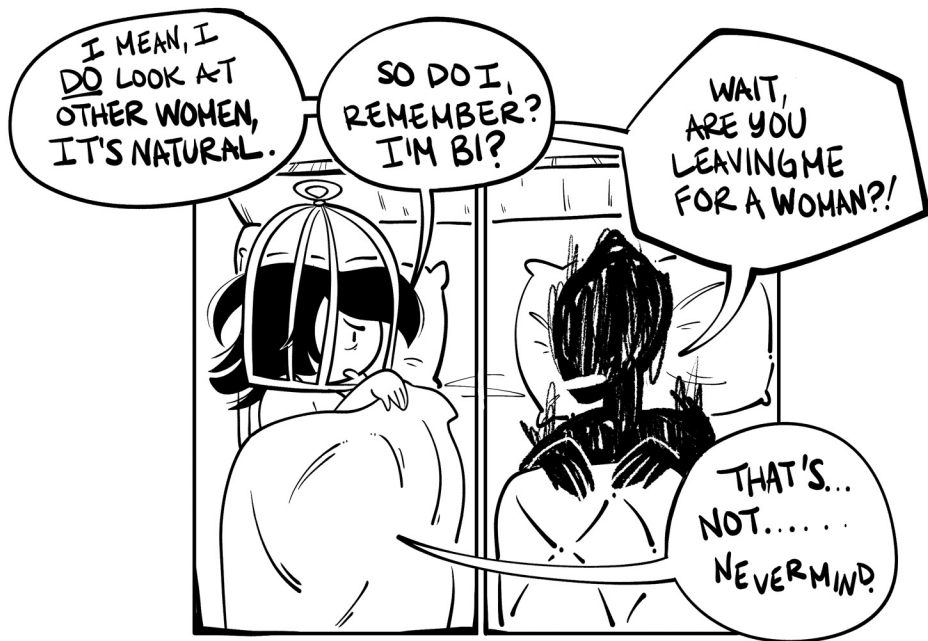


I LOST MY VOICE.

YOU NEVER NOTICED.

I WAS JUST A SOUNDING BOARD.

WE LIKED TO HURT EACH OTHER.



YOU WERE BETTER AT IT THAN ME.

(I STILL SLEEP ON THE EDGE OF THE BED BECAUSE OF YOU.)

DO YOU REMEMBER
THE HOT WATER?
THE TANKLESS WATER
HEATER STARTED TO FLUCTUATE
FROM VAGUELY HOT TO FREEZING.

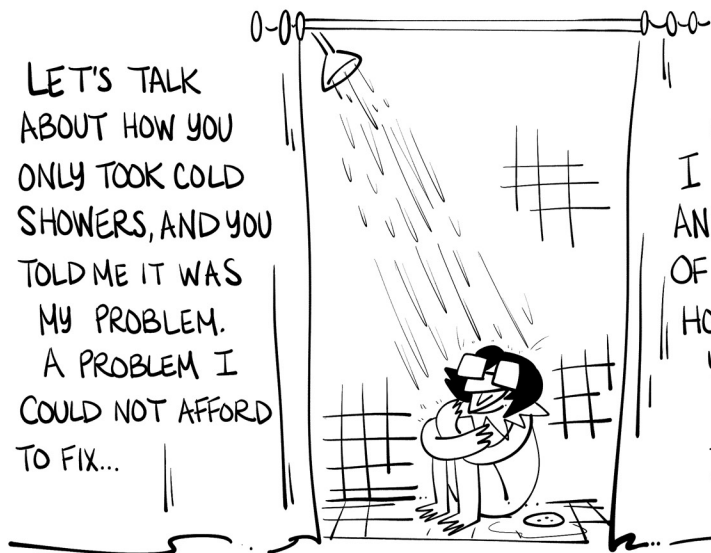
(LET'S NOT TALK ABOUT
WASHING DISHES LIKE THAT...)



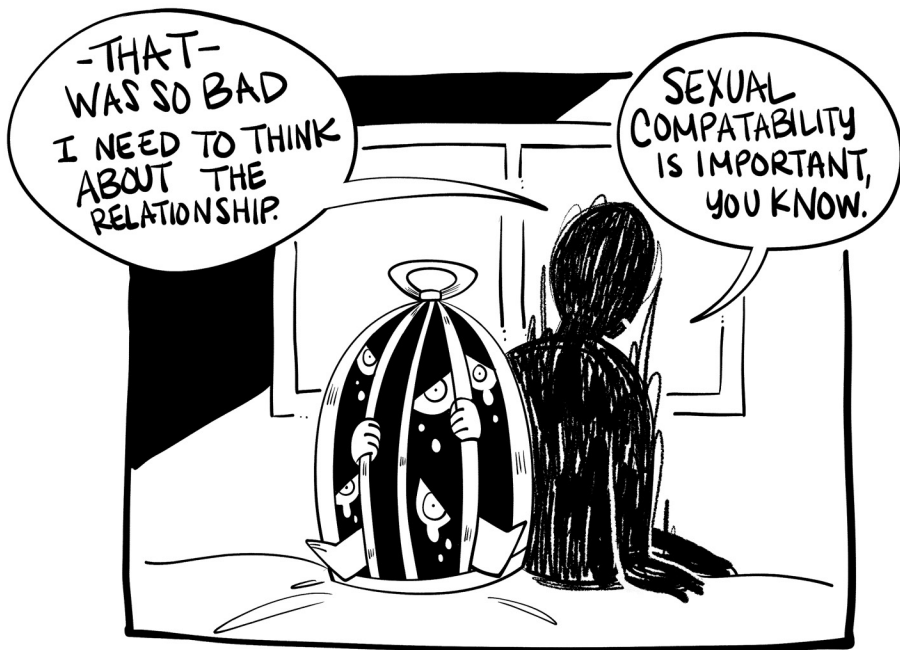
LET'S TALK
ABOUT HOW YOU
ONLY TOOK COLD
SHOWERS, AND YOU
TOLD ME IT WAS
MY PROBLEM.
A PROBLEM I
COULD NOT AFFORD
TO FIX...

MY ANXIETY WAS
OUT OF CONTROL;
I LACKED THE WORDS.
AND I WAS AFRAID,
OF DAMAGING YOUR
HOUSE, OF UPSETTING
YOU TOO MUCH...

I ADAPTED.



BUT SOMETHING ROTTEN IN ME STILL GREW.
WHEN YOU TOLD ME:



I THOUGHT I WAS ~~NUMB~~ **STRONG** ENOUGH.
I STILL FELT MY HEART BREAK.
I STILL STAYED.
THEN WE FOUND ROCK BOTTOM.

2015. I GOT A NEW JOB.

I FORGOT MY PHONE AFTER CLOSING.

YOU LET ME BORROW YOUR PHONE.

ALL I WANTED WAS TO DO WAS

SET AN ALARM CLOCK.



you got into it
eventually.

I
WILL
NEVER
FORGET
HOW
YOU
HURT
ME
IN
THE
DARK.

i mean, porn
stars can do it,
you can learn so
it won't hurt.

IT DIDN'T MATTER THAT YOU HURT ME.

IT ONLY MATTERED THAT I NOTICED.





I EMBRACED MY EMPTINESS.
WHAT ELSE COULD I DO?

I MADE THE
CONSCIOUS CHOICE
TO MARRY MYSELF
TO MY WORK.

IF I WAS TO
CONTINUE COASTING
IN A RELATIONSHIP
LACKING COMMITMENT,
I COULD AT LEAST
COMMIT TO MYSELF.



IT BECAME A CORE
PART OF ME; A COPING
MECHANISM FOR STRESS.
A STATE OF ZEN:

"IT'S FINE BECAUSE
I DESERVE THIS.
IT DOESN'T
MATTER BECAUSE
I DON'T MATTER."

WORK FILLED THE
RESULTING VOID.

SPRING 2016

A BIG EYE-OPENER THAT PULLED
ME OUT WAS STARDREW VALLEY.



... A LOT OF STARDREW VALLEY.
OFTEN UNTIL 4AM.



I BECAME FIXATED.
IT TOOK ME AWHILE
TO FIGURE OUT WHY;
THE SCRIPTED IN-GAME
RELATIONSHIPS WERE MORE
SATISFYING THAN MY OWN.
I EVEN GOT INVESTED
IN FAN-FICTION.



COULD IT BE THAT
I'M STARVED FOR
EMOTIONAL SUPPORT?

OR DO I FIND THE
STRICT TIMETABLE OF
THE SEASONS COMFORTING
AS I LACK DIRECTION?



I STARTED TELLING MYSELF
NEW LIES. "YOU'RE NOT
PACKING, YOU'RE CLEANING"
'FORWARDING PACKAGES
IS NORMAL.' MY BRAIN
WAS ATTEMPTING SURVIVAL.

THE NEED TO ESCAPE
ROSE THE MORE HE
TALKED ABOUT WHAT
WE WOULD DO
"WHEN KIDS HAPPEN."
NOT THAT ANYONE
ASKED ME.



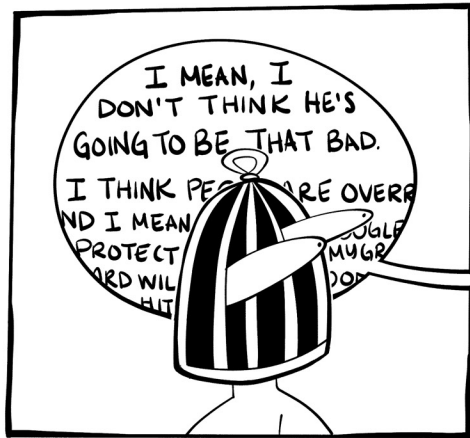
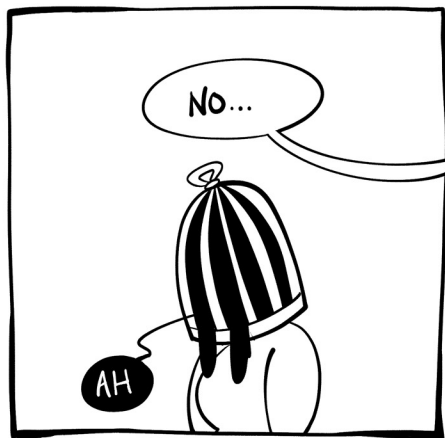
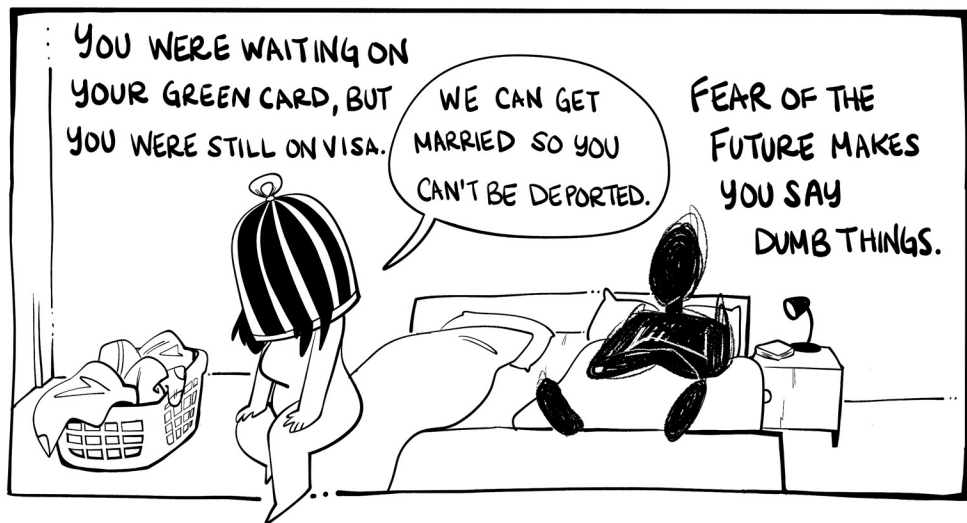
AND THEN

NOVEMBER 2016



MY POOR MOM STUCK IN
JAPAN AT THE TIME:

M: <Are you and your
sister okay?>
M: <Please be safe.>





AAAAA

WE BROKE UP
TWO MONTHS
LATER.

IT WASN'T IMMEDIATE. THERE WERE SEVERAL FACTORS THAT RESULTED IN [THE END]. I STARTED TALKING AND CONFIDING MORE IN A LONG-TERM INTERNET FRIEND.

WE WOULD TALK FOR HOURS, SOMETHING I HADN'T DONE IN A LONG TIME. WE WOULD GO INTO LONG TALKS ABOUT OUR STARDEW VALLEY OCS.

I DEVELOPED A CRUSH. IT WAS THE FIRST TIME I'D FELT ANYTHING IN A LONG TIME. WANTING TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT WAS A BIG PUSH TOWARDS GETTING OUT.



TERRIBLE
SON



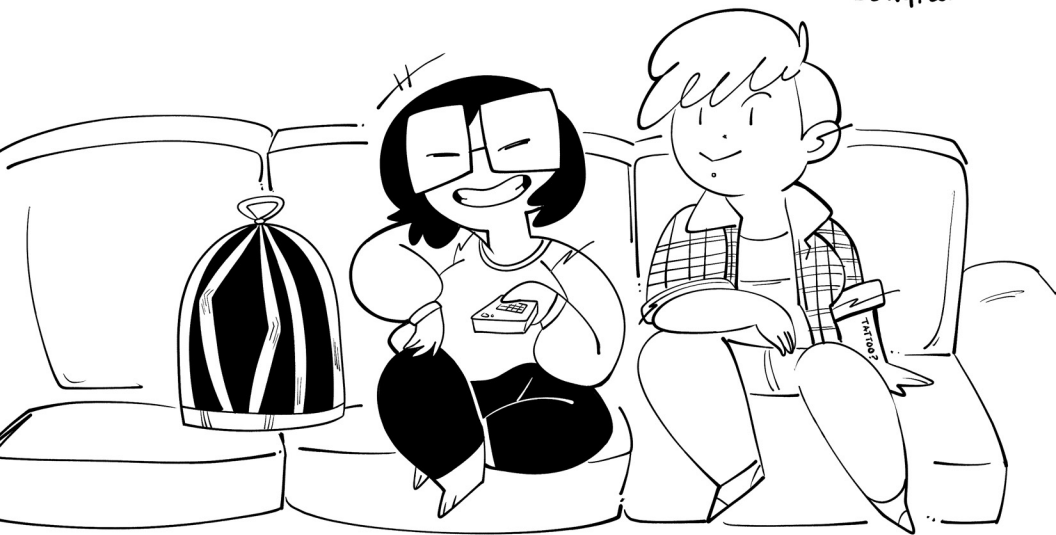
WRITING ABOUT OUR DUMB GAY VAMPIRE SONS SAVED ME. IT HELPED OPEN MY EYES TO WHAT WAS HAPPENING INSIDE ME, AND

HELPED ME TO OPEN UP AND EXPLORE MY OWN SEXUALITY IN A SAFE SPACE.

[TO YOU: I'M SORRY. I MISS YOU.]

YOU HAD A DEATH IN THE FAMILY AND TOOK VACATION
EARLY, AND I WAS LEFT ALONE FOR A MONTH. I DID NOT MISS
YOU. I DID NOT MISS HIDING YOU FROM FRIENDS WHO I KNEW WOULD
TRY TO DESTROY YOU I DID NOT
MISS APOLOGIZING FOR WHAT WOULD
COME OUT OF YOUR MOUTH.

Turns out I just missed ^{BEING ALIVE}
~~MYSELF~~
^{BEING ALONE}



2017. 2 DAYS BEFORE
MY 28TH BIRTHDAY,
I SAID THE WORDS
THAT ENDED IT:

AT THE TIME, I 100%
BELIEVED IT.



I'M GAY.
I'M SORRY.



TURNS OUT

I WAS STILL
VERY BISEXUAL.

SELF HIGH
FIVE!



BUT BEING WITH THE
SAME MAN FOR SEVEN
YEARS CAUSED HIM TO TURN
INTO MY DEFINITION OF
MASCULINITY.

TURNS OUT: I'M JUST
REPULSED BY ~~YOU~~

I ALMOST WENT BACK.
SAD, I KNOW.
I'M BAD AT
CHANGE, AND
I'M BAD WITH
CRYING MEN.



MY FUTURE
PLANS ARE GONE!
I WOULD HAVE GOTTEN
MARRIED IF WE HAD KIDS!
I CAN'T BELIEVE THIS
IS HAPPENING... I
KNEW THIS WOULD
HAPPEN WHEN YOU
SAID YOU WERE BI.



SEVEN YEARS
MADE ME OLDER
AND WISER. AND
THE SIMPLE ACT
OF TAKING A
STEP FORWARD
HELPED ME TO
ACTUALLY HEAR
WHAT YOU WERE
SAYING: IT WAS
ONLY EVER ABOUT
THE LIFE ~~YOU~~
WANTED.

4 CARS OF DONATIONS.
2 FUTONS.
3 COUCHES I SURFED ON.
MANY, MANY FRIENDS.

FOR A BRIEF TIME, I WAS
HOMELESS. I WOULD HAVE
BEEN S.O.L. WITHOUT Y'ALL.



I GOT A ROOM WITH A
DOOR EVENTUALLY.
ADJUSTING TOOK A
WHILE.

SOMETIMES I WOULD
BE FOUND FURIOUSLY
SWEEPING THE FLOOR
IN THE DARK.

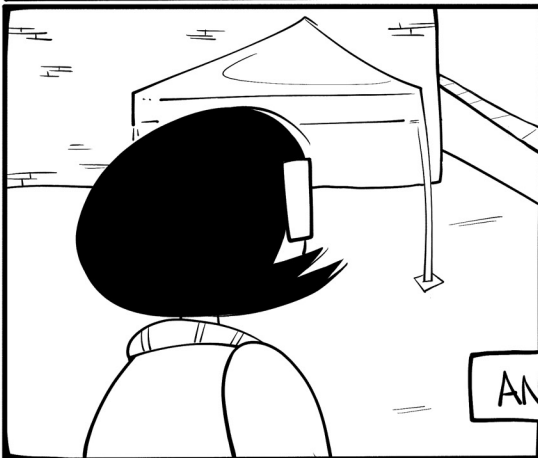
I ONLY SAW YOU ONE MORE
TIME AFTER THAT.



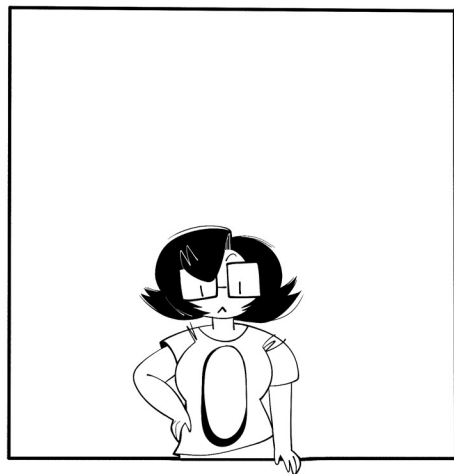
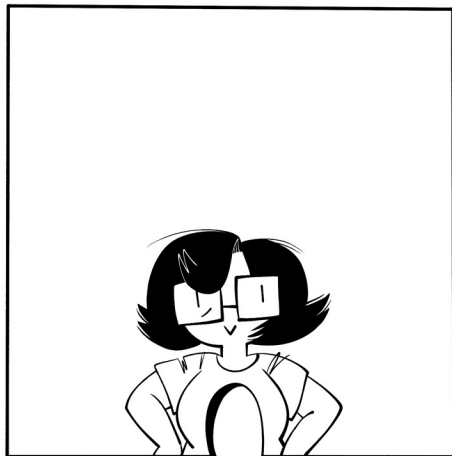
I WAS INVITED TO YOUR OFFICE
FOR AN ART FESTIVAL. I WASN'T
SURE IF I SHOULD GO; BUT HEY,
FREE TABLE. AND I DIDN'T WANT
TO BE AFRAID OF YOU.

YOU SHOWED UP BEFORE I WAS
DONE SETTING UP.

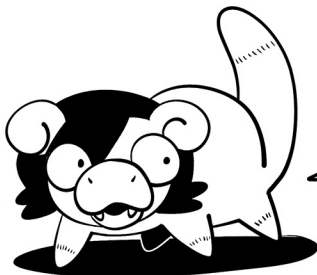
YOU WERE AT A DISTANCE,
FIDGETING WITH YOUR HOODIE.
I PRETENDED NOT TO NOTICE.



AND THEN YOU WERE GONE.



HERE'S THE
THING: I ALWAYS
ASSUMED I WAS
OKAY. BAD THINGS
DON'T HAPPEN
TO ME!



LOOK AT HOW
STRONG AND
WELL-ADJUSTED
I AM!
HA HA HA!!

TRAUMA

TURNS OUT I'M
JUST
SLOW



TO REACT.

I SURVIVED YOU, AND I LEFT
YOU BEHIND, BUT YOUR WORDS
STAYED WITH ME, BURIED IN THAT
ROTTEN THING INSIDE ME.

EVERY ATTEMPT
TO FIX ME, CORRECT
ME, MAKE ME
"BETTER."



IT DOESN'T GO AWAY.





YOU CAN BREAK THE BARS
OF A CAGE, BUT THAT DOESN'T
MEAN YOU LEAVE IT.

I WASN'T TRAPPED
ANYMORE; I WAS TRYING
TO CONTAIN THAT ROTTEN
THING THAT GREW INSIDE
ME OVER THE YEARS.

CARELESS WORDS,
TRYING TO PRETEND
I'M FINE, ALL BROUGHT
OUT ONE EMOTION:





I HATE
YOU

I HATE
YOU

HOW
COULD
YOU

HOW
DARE
YOU





I'M
A
MONSTER

I
DESERVED
IT

IT
WAS MY
FAULT

... BUT I WAS NEVER
THE REAL MONSTER.

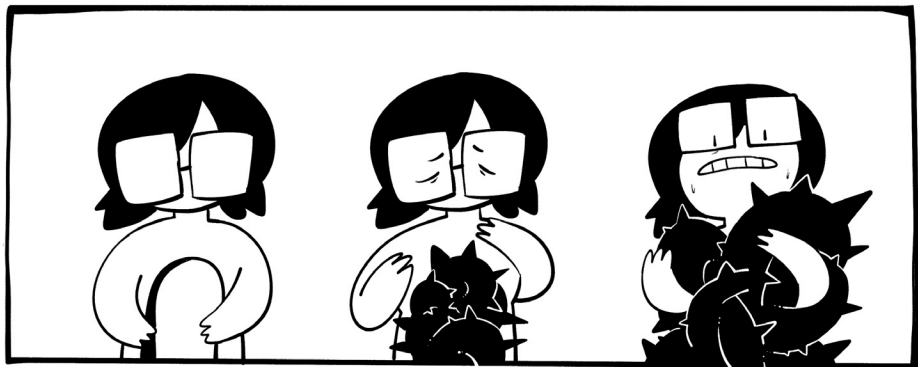
RIGHT? ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~?



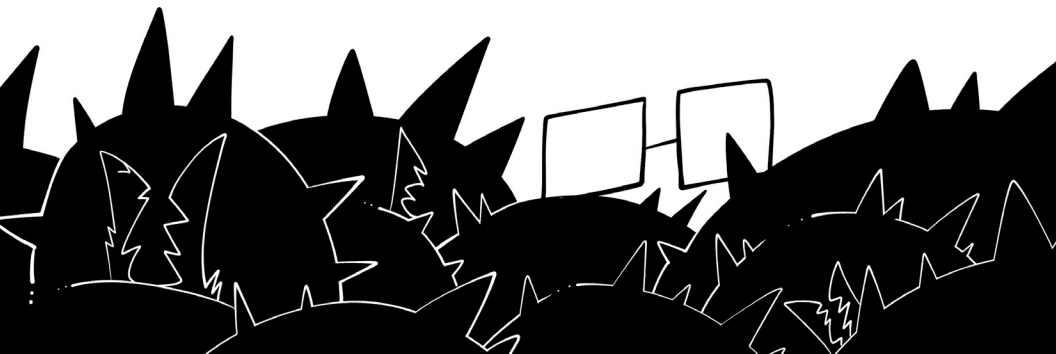
SO WHERE DO WE
GO FROM HERE?



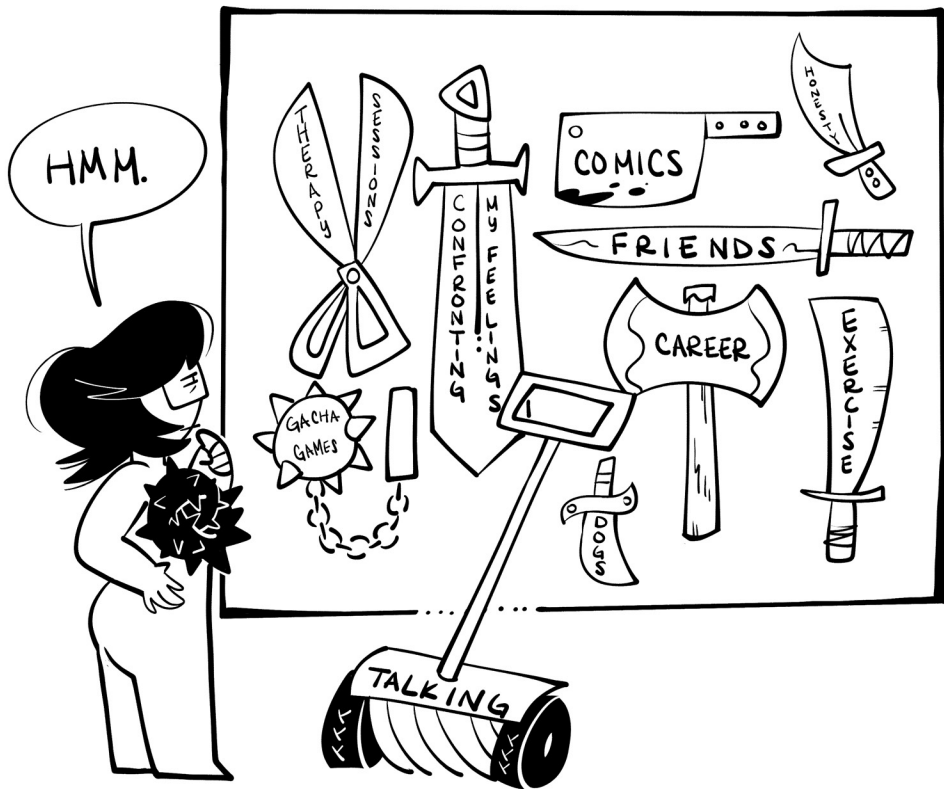
THESE DAYS, THE VOID EASILY FILLS UP WITH
ANGER AND STRESS. IT CAN DRIVE ME.



BUT IT CAN BURN ME UP OR CONSUME ME.



LUCKILY, I NOW HAVE AN ARMORY OF
OPTIONS TO TACKLE THAT ANGRY KNOT:



BUT SOMETIMES:



i wasn't
done yet.



SOME DAYS
IT'S NOT
ENOUGH.



TRYING TO KEEP
MYSELF AWAY FROM
CRUTCHES THAT FEED
INTO IT HELPS.

C'MON, WE HAVE
SELF-RESPECT AT
HOME...



YOU KNOW, I WENT
BACK TO THE HOUSE.
(I WAS SCARED TO
FOR A WHILE. WOULD
I SEE YOU? DID YOU
KEEP THE GINKO?)

I COULD SEE THE
WINDOW WHERE I
USED TO SIT AND DRAW.
IT WAS DARK.

DID YOU
EVER FIND
A WAY TO
FILL YOUR
OWN, SAD VOID?



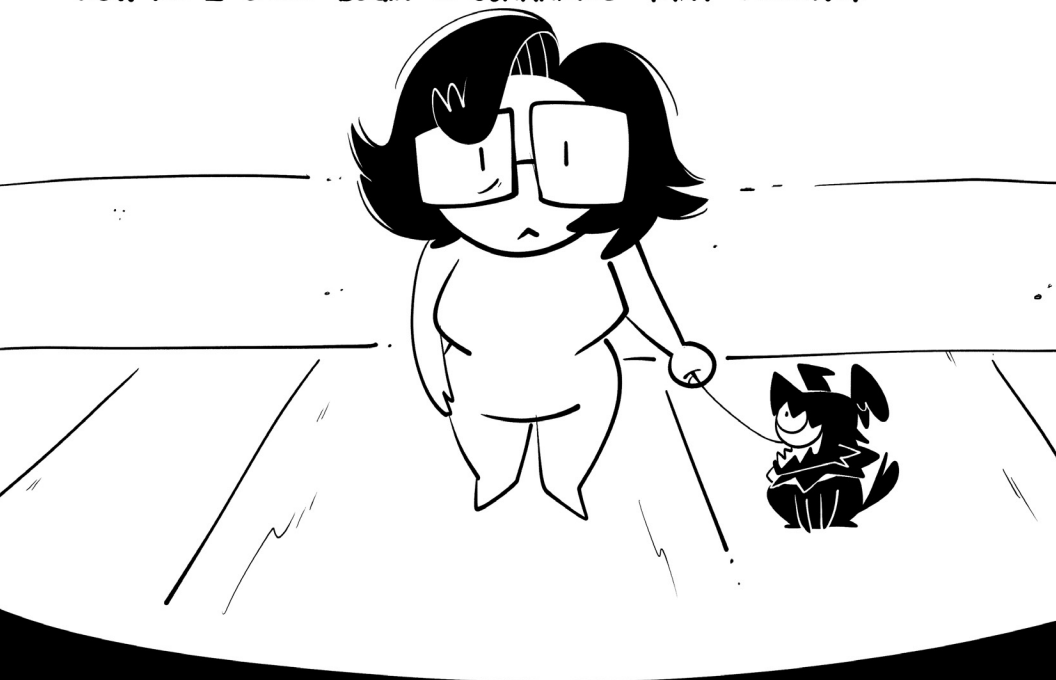
I CAN'T REMEMBER YOUR FACE ANYMORE.

I CAN REMEMBER YOUR LAUGH, AND I CAN REMEMBER THE TONE
IN YOUR VOICE WHEN YOUR TEMPER WOULD RISE.

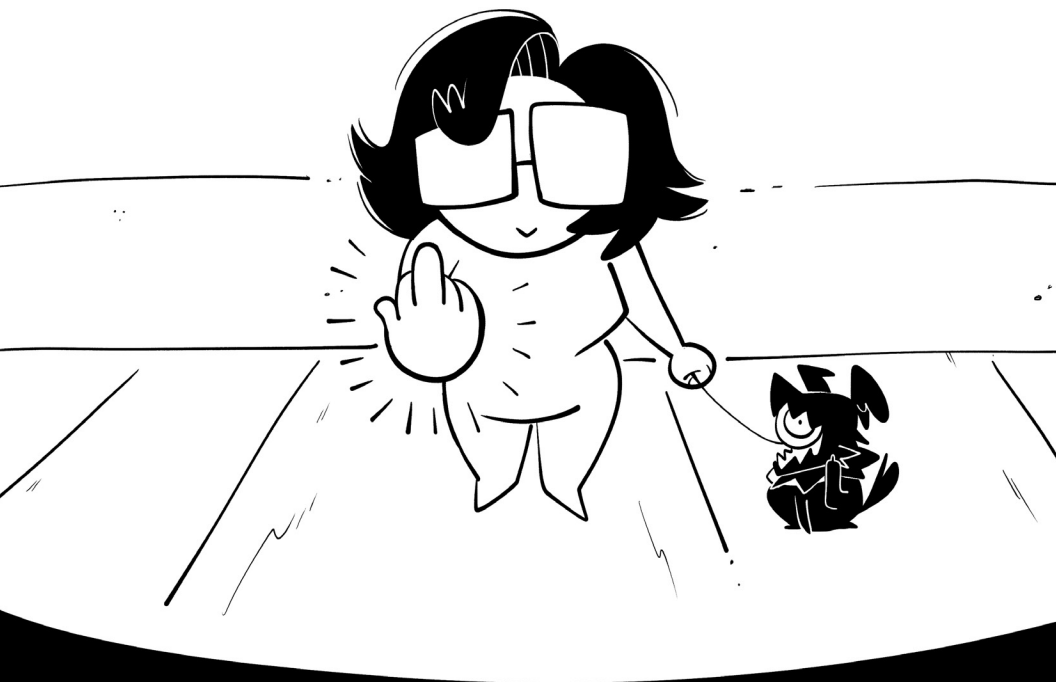
I REMEMBER THAT FEAR.

AT THAT TIME, 25% OF MY LIFE WAS SPENT WITH YOU.

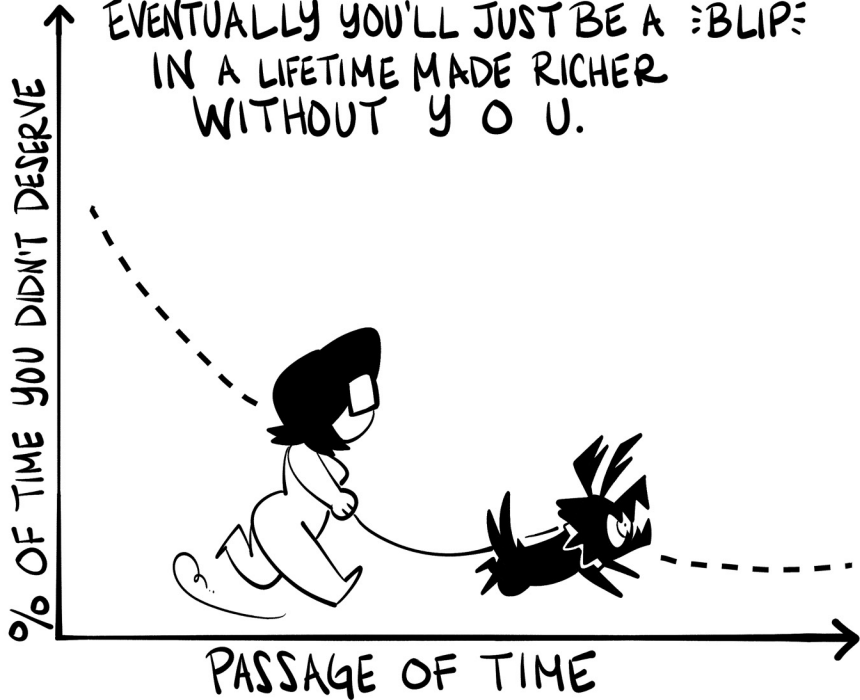
HOW DO I EVEN BEGIN TO SUMMARIZE THAT FEELING?



WHOOPS NEVERMIND, FIGURED IT OUT.



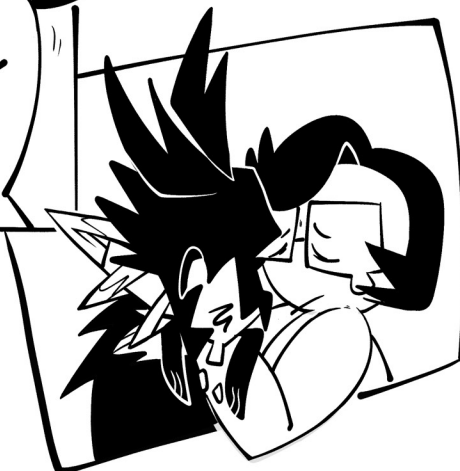
EVERY DAY THAT PASSES MAKES THAT
PERCENTAGE A LITTLE SMALLER.
EVENTUALLY YOU'LL JUST BE A "BLIP"
IN A LIFETIME MADE RICHER
WITHOUT YOU.





I USED TO TREAT MY
ANGER AS WRONG,
UNREASONABLE.

NOW I RECOGNIZE
IT AS A SIGNAL THAT
SOMETHING IS WRONG.



ANGER UNCHECKED IS DANGEROUS.

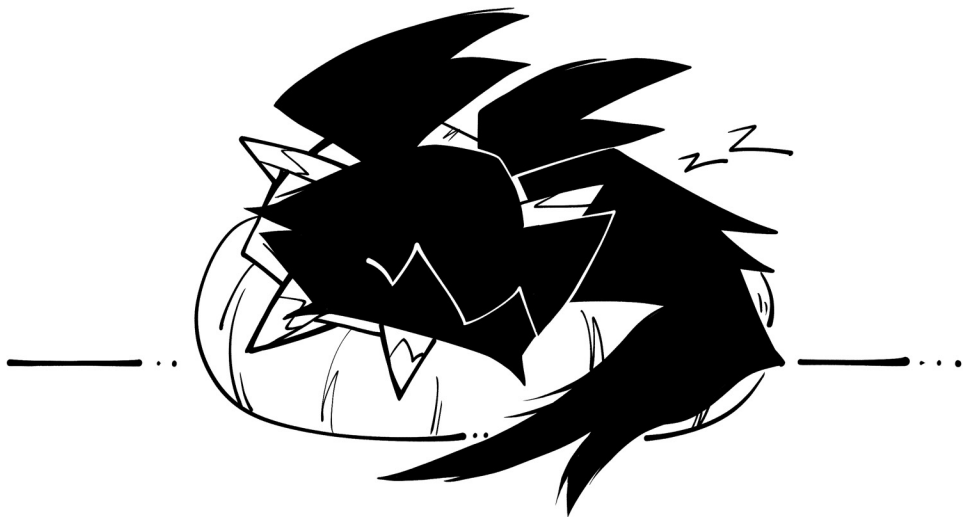


BUT IT CAN BURN A PATH TO THE TRUTH.



MY ANGER WILL NEVER LEAVE ME.
MAYBE WITH TIME IT WILL
LEARN TO SOFTEN.

BUT FOR NOW I WILL
WALK WITH MY ANGER, SHARP
AND FULL OF TEETH.



✓✓
an epilogue;
or
to those who remain
at sea: ✓





... ALL OF THEM.





I HAD TO STOP RESPONDING.
WITH EVERY KIND WORD, MORE
HEARTBREAK ROLLED IN.

SO TO THOSE PAST AND FUTURE
MESSAGES: THANK YOU FOR BEING
BRAVE, THANK YOU FOR SHARING.

I'M SO SORRY THAT THIS
IS HOW WE MET.

TO THOSE STILL IN THERE:
I HOPE I CAN GIVE YOU SOMETHING.





TWITTER COMMENTARY

The following is the original twitter/instagram commentary from when the comic was first posted back in March 2019. While not required reading by any means, this is intended more as a record that adds a little context and a little...flavor to certain pages. It can be read together or separately, as you choose.

Note: Page 49/the original last page of the comic's commentary stands but the original has been replaced with a new page in the final version. Originally the final page, the page was replaced with what I found to be a more satisfying ending. The tweet still stands: thank you for reading.

-New autobio: Seven Years. This will run for at least as long as my 2018 Inktober.

Page 1.

(TW suggested domestic violence, biphobia, emotional abuse, bad relationships, depression, and other red pill-induced pain. I tried to make it as light as possible.)

-Page 2. On compatibility, wanting pets, and yes he said all this.

-Page 3. And eventually.

-Page 4. AND EVENTUALLY.

-Page 5. I miss my kotatsu.

-Page 6. A moment.

-Page 7. CW: domestic violence, abuse.

"Yeah, the dude rammed into my shoulder and I faceplanted. I blacked out and next thing I knew I was wailing on his face."

-Page 8. Internal logic.

Yes I know there's a typo in the second bubble, I'll fix it down the road.
(Note: I did.)

-Page 9. His real face.

-Page 10. Wrong until proven right by a man.

-Page 11. We couldn't even share blankets, let alone how we really felt.

-Page 12. Shower thoughts.

-Page 13. CW abuse.

-Page 14. 1/3 page update.

-Page 15. 2/3 cw abuse. Don't look.

-Page 16. Cw abuse, racism. 3/3.

-Page 17. Welcome back, and PSA kids: this is a terrible coping method!

-Page 18. Stardew Valley feelings.

-Page 19. Danger danger.

-Page 20. A bad deal.

-This one should have been captioned "did you know white men are the most oppressed demographic in America?"

-Page 21. Beginning of the end.

-I'm at Anime Boston this weekend so these will be back Monday morning.

-Page 22. Good morning, we're back and early.

-Page 23. A good time.

-Page 24. There it is.

-Page 25. It's always raining.

-Page 26. A gremlin

-Page 27. Time moves slow.

-Page 28. Always the coward.

-Page 29. Whoops.

-Page 30. Reaction time: poor.

-Page 31. Words.

-Page 32. Oh irony.

-Page 33. Sorry for the cliffhanger but I need one more weekend to prep the next part. Also hey: maybe, think about what you say to those in dark places. See you Monday.

-Page 34, welcome back and phew let's get through this together.

-Page 35, it's Tuesday.

-Page 36, it's Wednesday.

-Page 37 cw trauma and mental health.

-Page 38. You don't get to have a name anymore.

-Page 39.

-Page 40. Thorny state of mind.

-Page 41. An armory.

-Page 42.

-Page 43. Yikes.

-Page 44. MCDONALDS MCDONALDS MCDONALDS.

-Page 45. Empty spaces.

-Page 46. What can I say?

-Page 47. Human language is incredible in that there are so many ways to express yourself without saying a word.

-Page 48. I swear I know some math.

-Page 49. Thanks for reading. (Note: this page no longer exists in this version.)



A M Ebert, Ai Nakamura, Alana Hanada, Amanda Lynn, Amy Lynn Dzura, Anastasiya Kochetova, Andrea Demonakos, Andy Kurnia, Anon, Ariel, Arledge Comics, Ashley Joanne Leckwold, Bree Gold, Bryon Yamada, Caitlin Hobbs, Carolyn Sontag, Casey, Cat Whitney, Chloe Hinds, Chris Guion, Correl Roush, Dame, Damien/Alex :3, Dana I., Dara Alegrano, David Webster, Dean Sexton, Derek D, Dewdlepies, Dorseus, Dr Serenity Serseci3n, Emma Lord, Eric, Eric Meadows, Erin Hamilton, Evelyn Barnes, George Rohac, Guillaume Garnier, Haley Boros, HazardousLiquids, Heidi, Ian "raggy" Moore, J.R.Foley, Jared Walske, JasZ, Jax!, Jeff Vogeles, Jess Turner, Joe Jubb, John Lucien Grillo, Jonathan Wirth, Kaity Moy, Katya Blakey, Kirsten K, Kristal Jean, Lauga, Lissa, Liz Hyde & Jordan Alsaqa, Louise, Lyndsay Peters, Mandsand, Margherita DiGregorio, Margrith, Matt Jacobus, Matthew Noe, Michael Hill, Mittie Paul, mrmike, Natasha Reh. M., Normandy Helmer, Rem, Rhodora Jacob, Ruth Holloway, Sam Pryor, Sam Sussman, Sashah Li, Shadoe Morante, Skitty, Starlightslk, Taliaferro Stuyvesant Doom, The Gorgonist, The Wandering Chaos, William Taylor Lashbrook, Xavier Clark, Xib, and Zac.

AFTERWORD

When I first conceived this comic, I thought to myself: this sure is a lot of awful, but it'll be a good story. Then it spun wildly out of control and outside of the scope I originally wanted to do and became my longest comic to date. I had a breakdown. I got a therapist. I improved a little. I finished.

Revisiting my past in this format was both incredible and miserable. It's easier to see where the cracks are when you can stand at a distance from what happened and be honest with what you see. I'm still learning to be honest with myself, and comics have been my greatest asset and enemy in getting there. This comic helped me realize that no, I AM traumatized actually. Bad things HAVE happened to me. But I can address it now, and face the reality, and find my way out. Comics! They're great.

The response has also been beyond what I could have imagined. I had previously done *That's Not My Name!* a few months prior. Before, it was stories of people in the same unusual name boat. With *Seven Years*, suddenly I had people sharing their struggles, their sympathies. It was a lot. I cried a lot.

Crying is good, though. Crying is honest. Crying is admitting something, someone, broke something in you. And now you get to try and fix it because you know there's a problem. Like kintsugi, the Japanese art of repairing broken ceramics with gold. This thing that broke will never be the same again. But you DID fix it, in a way that's beautiful on its own. Reborn, not the same as before, but just as good if not better. That's wonderful.

I owe too many thanks for this comic in your hands and eyes at this very moment. To the 397 Kickstarter backers that brought the physical edition to life, thank you. To Stasia, thank you for being my rock and kicking my ass every day. I owe you everything. To Rhiannon and George, thank you for your advice on the campaign and kicking me into finally doing this, both of you are wonderful. To Rhiannon again, for doing pre-press on this book, you are a wizard. (But you knew that already.) To Denise, Nancy, Molly, Stasia, Leah, thank you for giving me shelter. To countless friends, including Pedalyte ABO, which I will not be explaining, thank you for cheering me on to the very end. To those who shared with me, thank you for being brave.

And to you, finishing this sentence, thank you for reading.

Hannako

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Seven Years is a humorous and painful autobiographical comic about toxic relationships, coming to terms with your trauma, and learning how to move on. Original posted online via social media, this book collects the original 48 pages, alongside extra reading material and pages created exclusively for the print edition of the book.

