

ERIK THURMAN

The Intellectual
Ramblings of
Samuel Flower



The Intellectual Ramblings of Samuel Flower

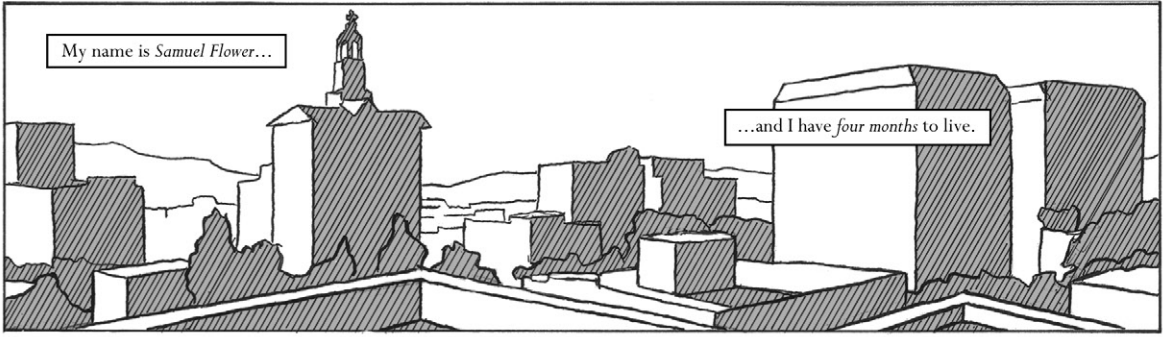


WRITTEN AND ILLUSTRATED BY ERIK THURMAN WITH
MAJOR WRITING/EDITING BY LAUREN DOYLE.

ALL CHARACTERS, EVENTS, AND SITUATIONS ARE PURELY
A WORK OF FICTION. ANY SIMILARITIES BETWEEN ANY
ACTUAL EVENTS ARE BY PURE COINCIDENCE.

THE INTELLECTUAL RAMBLINGS OF SAMUEL FLOWER IS
THE SOLE PROPERTY OF ERIK THURMAN, ALL RIGHTS
RESERVED. NO PART OF THIS PUBLICATION MAY BE
REPRODUCED WITHOUT THE PERMISSION OF THE CREATOR,
EXCEPT FOR PURPOSES OF REVIEW.

TO SEE MORE OF ERIK'S WORK PLEASE VISIT
WWW.ERIKTHURMANCOMICS.COM.



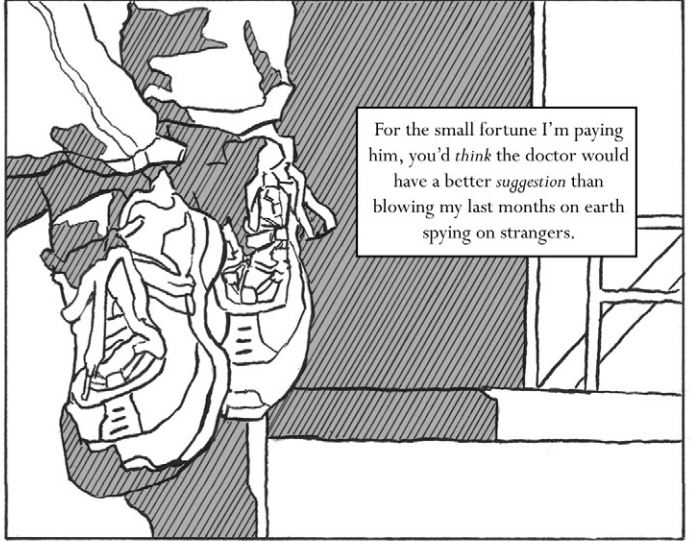
My name is *Samuel Flower*...

...and I have *four months* to live.



So what the *hell* am I doing here?

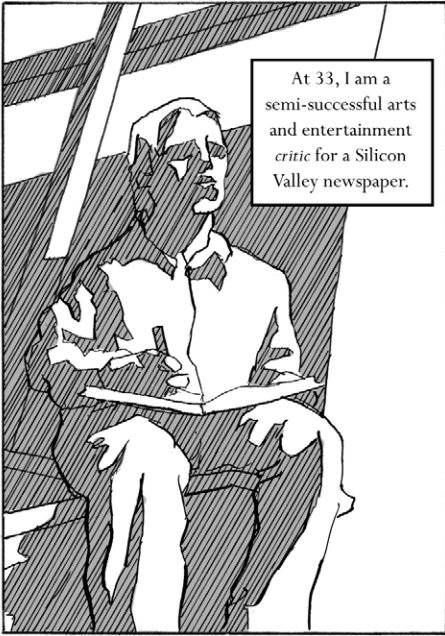
el Flower
olive



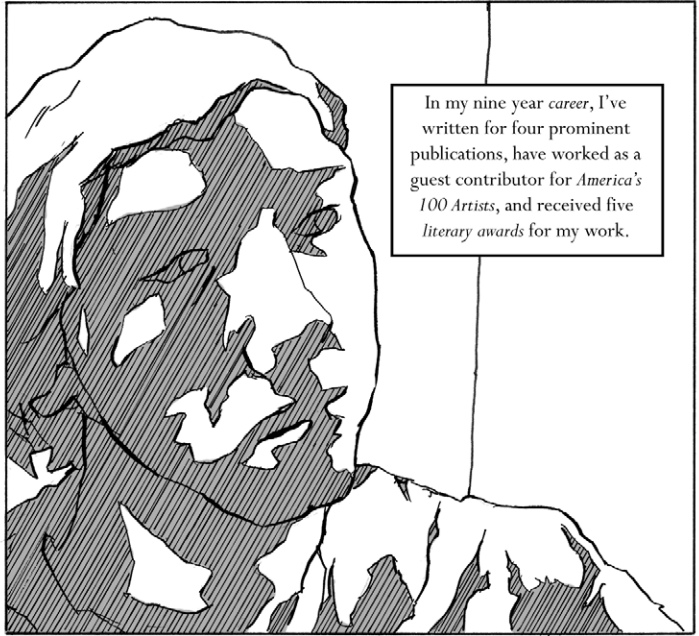
For the small fortune I'm paying him, you'd *think* the doctor would have a better *suggestion* than blowing my last months on earth spying on strangers.



On what planet is this *therapeutic*?



At 33, I am a semi-successful arts and entertainment critic for a Silicon Valley newspaper.

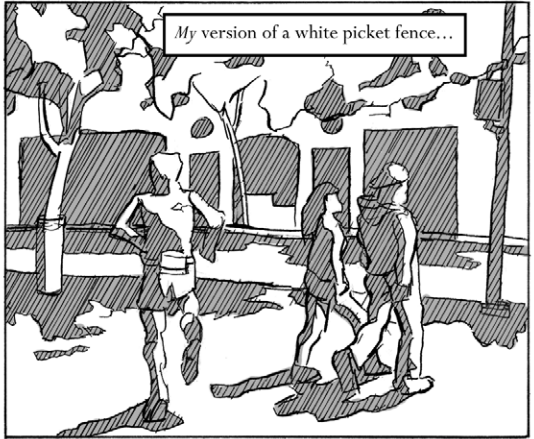


In my nine year career, I've written for four prominent publications, have worked as a guest contributor for *America's 100 Artists*, and received five literary awards for my work.

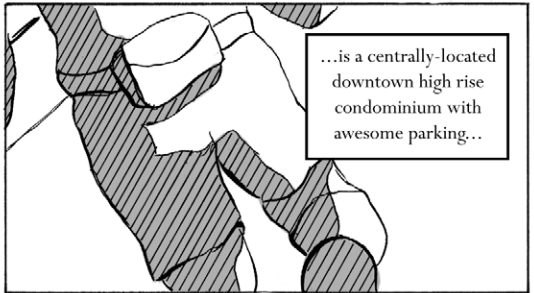


I've reached that part of my life where I've attained everything I always knew I deserved.

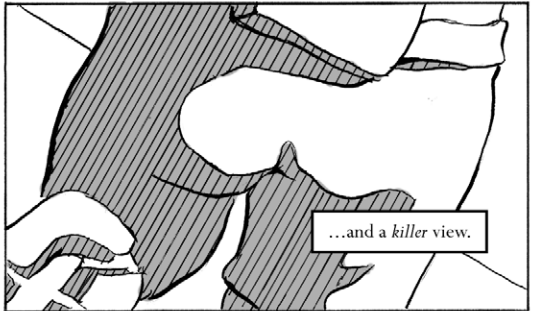
Minus the dog and the white picket fence.



My version of a white picket fence...



...is a centrally-located high rise condominium with awesome parking...



...and a killer view.



Not that I have *time* to enjoy it.

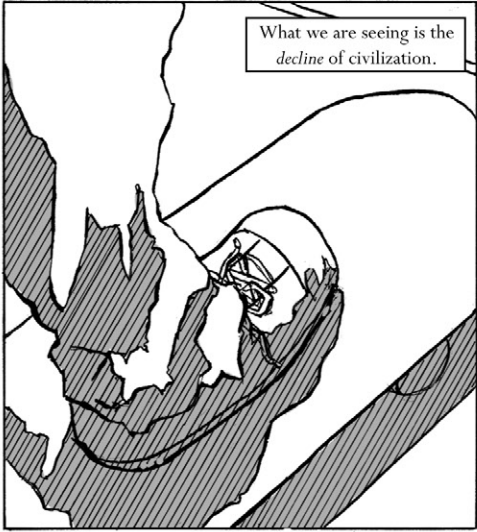


Why does it have to be *me*? Why can't this be somebody else's problem?
Over seven *billion* people on this planet and I had to be the unfortunate smuck that fate decided to *fuck* with.

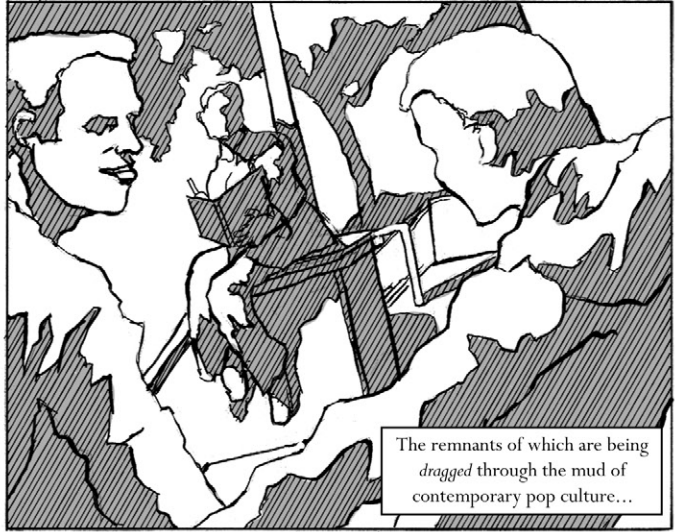


Why not some undeserving *crybaby* too weak to accomplish anything?

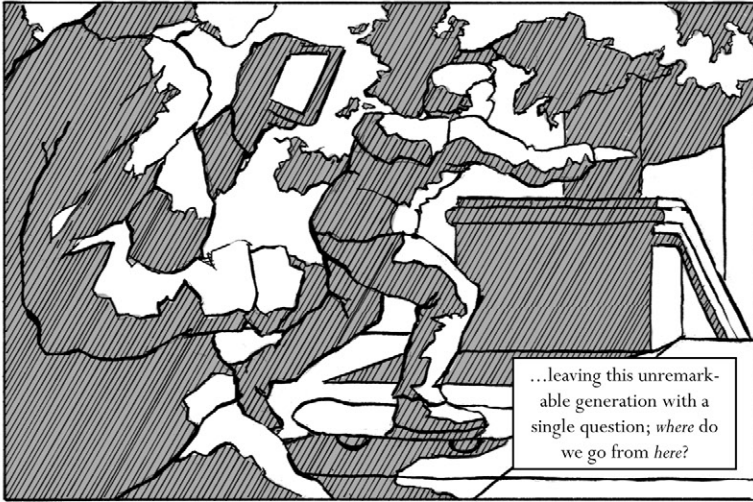




What we are seeing is the decline of civilization.



The remnants of which are being dragged through the mud of contemporary pop culture...



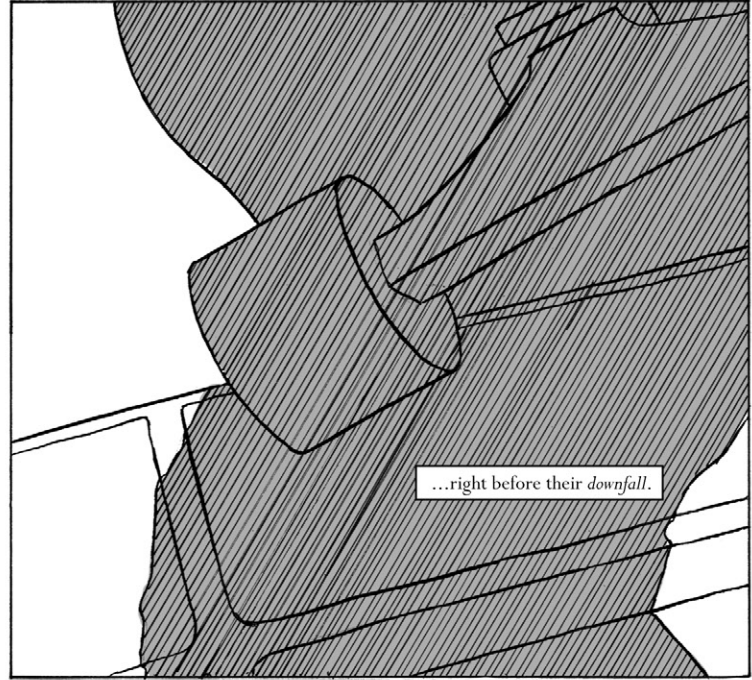
...leaving this unremarkable generation with a single question; where do we go from here?



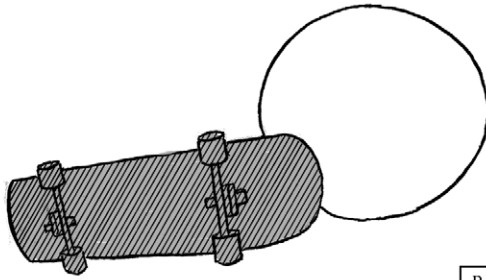
"Morons."



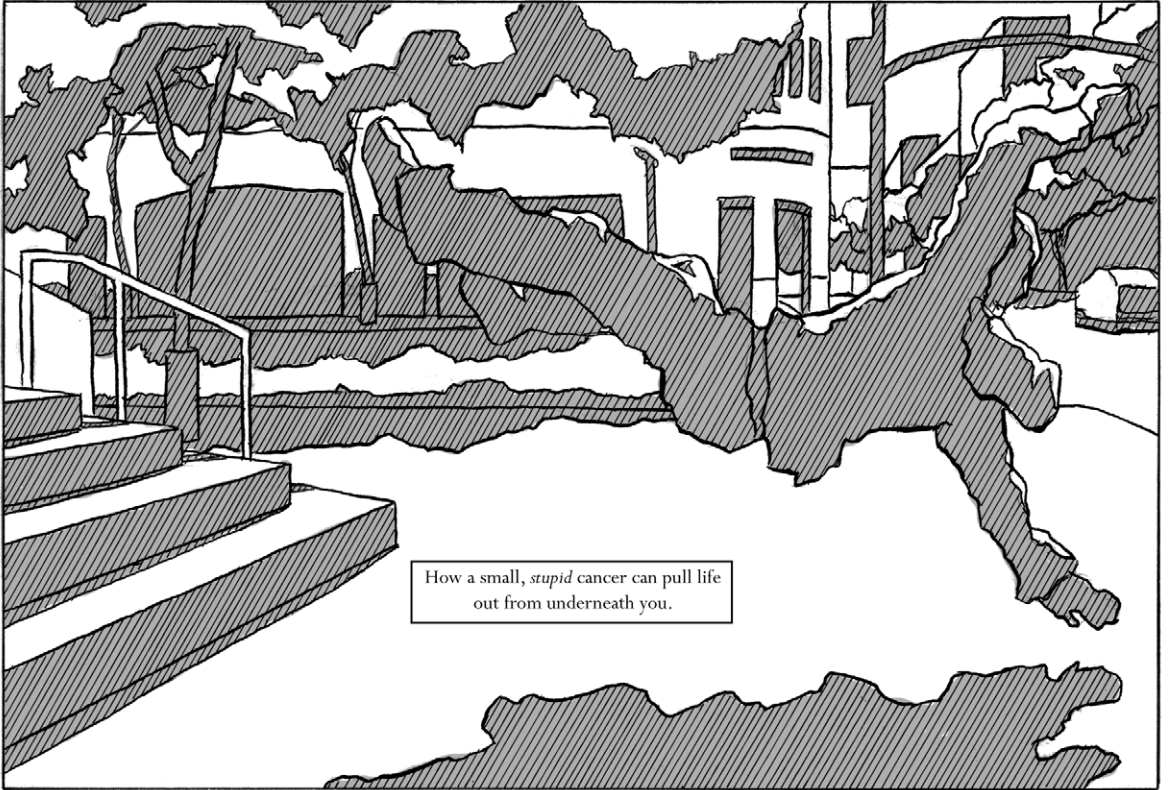
It's the same question that all great civilizations had to ask themselves, from the Mesopotamians to the Romans...



...right before their downfall.



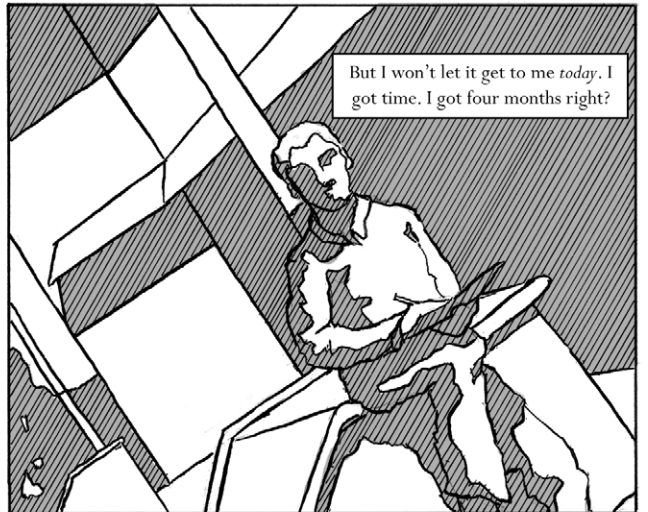
Reminds you how death is never far away.



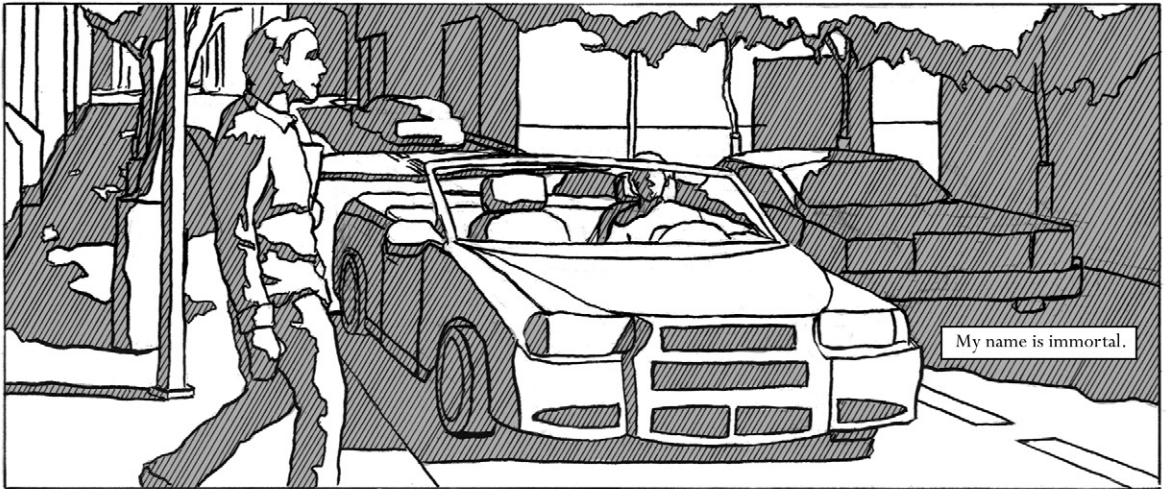
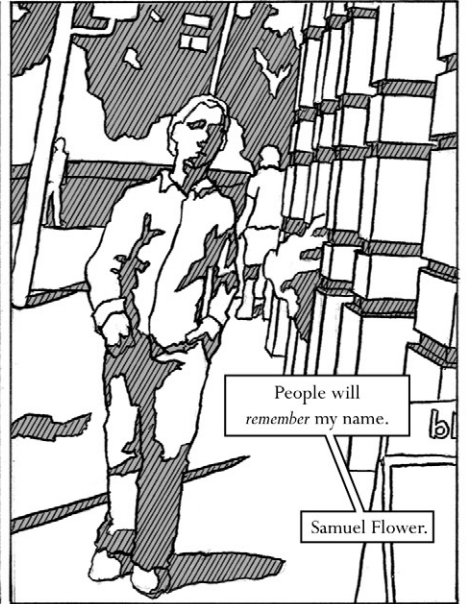
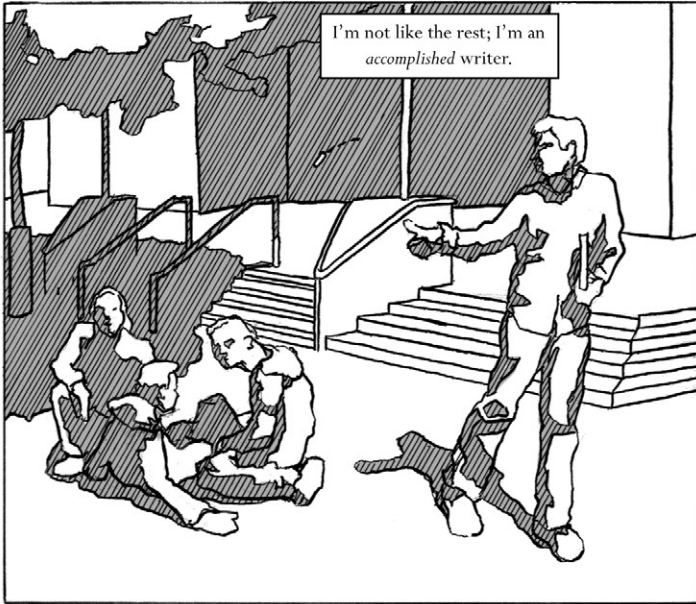
How a small, *stupid* cancer can pull life out from underneath you.

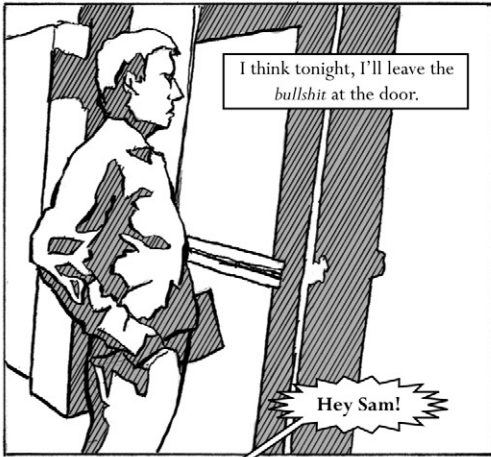


And send you head first into your grave.



But I won't let it get to me *today*. I got time. I got four months right?





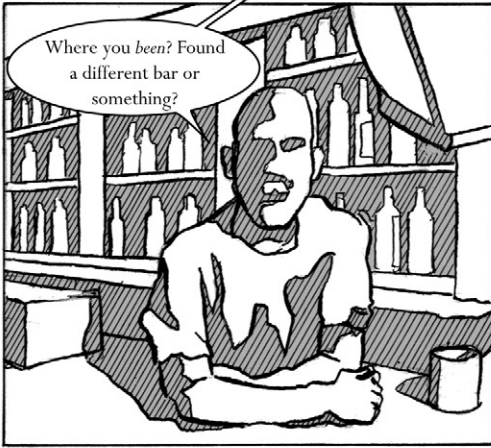
I think tonight, I'll leave the *bullshit* at the door.

Hey Sam!



Tried to man, but your watered-down shit's still the *cheapest* in town.

Hilarious. You done loitering in my doorway?



Where you *been*? Found a different bar or something?



What can I getcha tonight? The usual *cheapskate* special?

Naw, you know, I'm going *top shelf* tonight.



What?



Did Sam just say "*top shelf*"?



Great, just what I needed.



The resident bar ditz, *Ms. Cindy*. Why is it that the people with the *least* in their head always have the *most* to say?

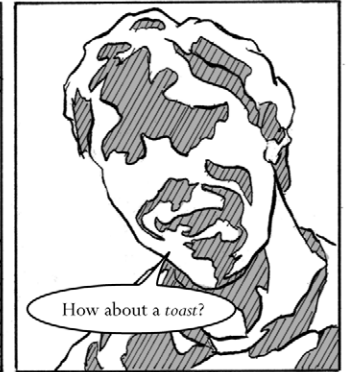


Timmy, you mind getting me and the lady some drinks?

And why don't you just keep them coming tonight?



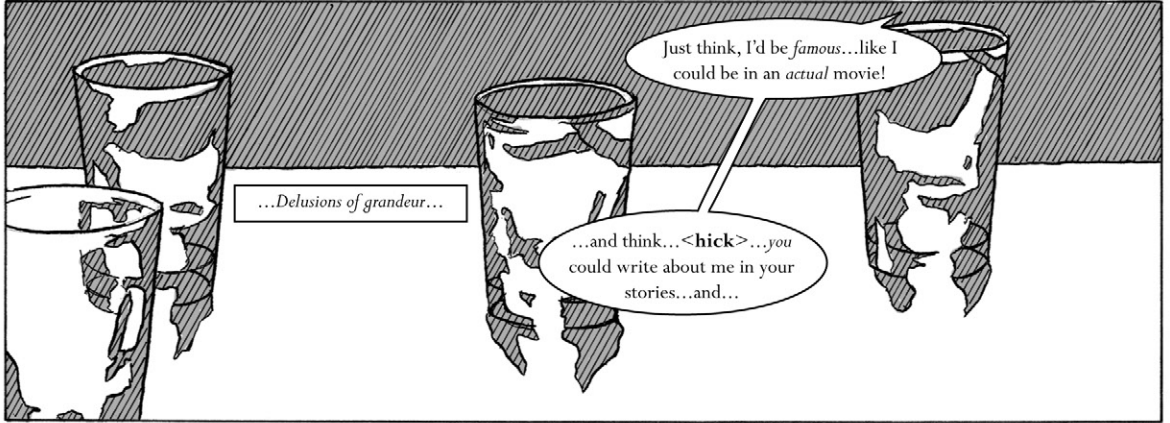
Why don't I start you both off with some *bourbon* and we can go from there.





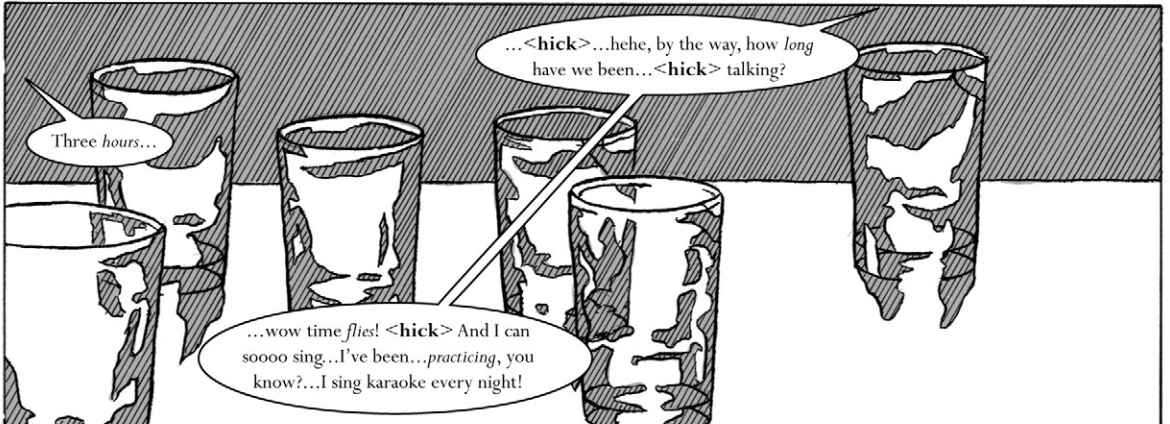
Really huh?

Oh yeah, wouldn't that be *awesome*?



...Delusions of *grandeur*...

...and think...<hick>...you could write about me in your stories...and...



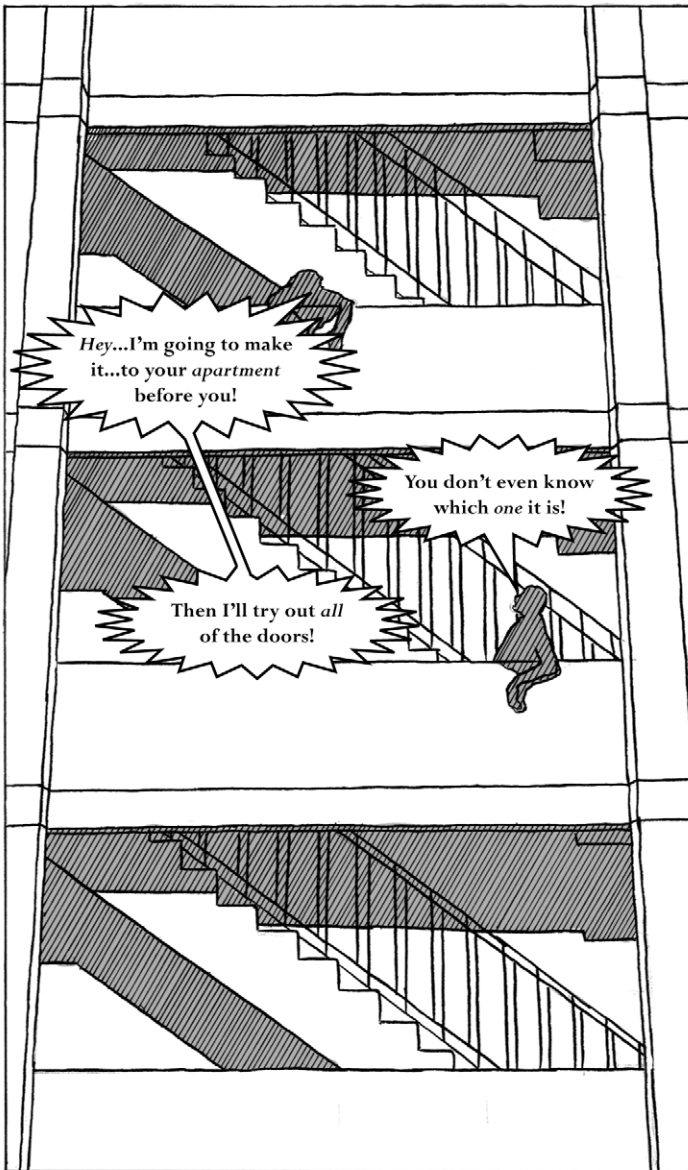
...<hick>...hehe, by the way, how *long* have we been...<hick> talking?

...wow time *flies*! <hick> And I can soooo sing...I've been...*practicing*, you know?...I sing *karaoke* every night!



I *KNOW*! Hahaha you're so *funny* you know that?

...What time is it again?





The rest of the night lasted an eternity.

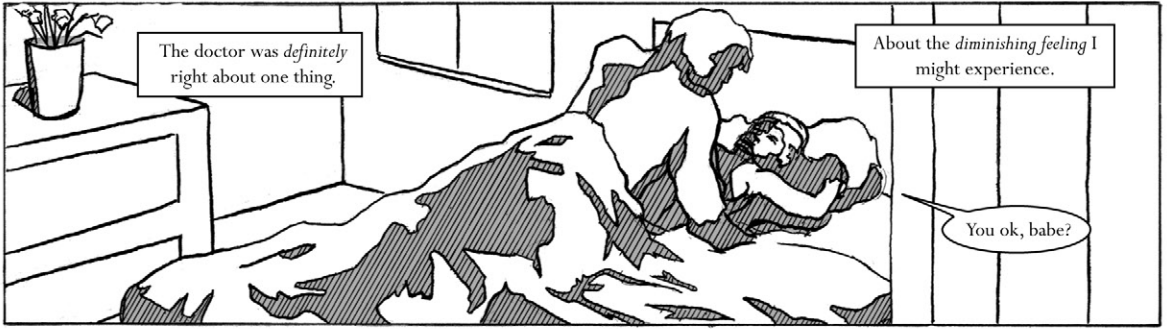


It didn't take long for her to get to the point.



Not long at all.





The doctor was *definitely* right about one thing.

About the *diminishing feeling* I might experience.

You ok, babe?



Yeah, I'm loving this.

Not only was that a *lie*, it was the furthest thing from the *truth*.

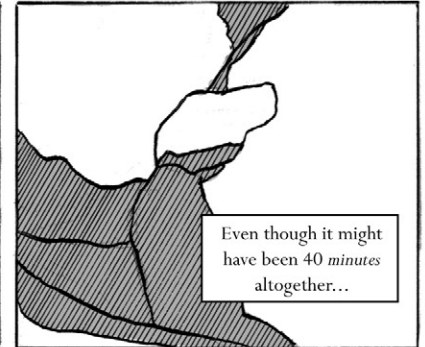
The feeling was...



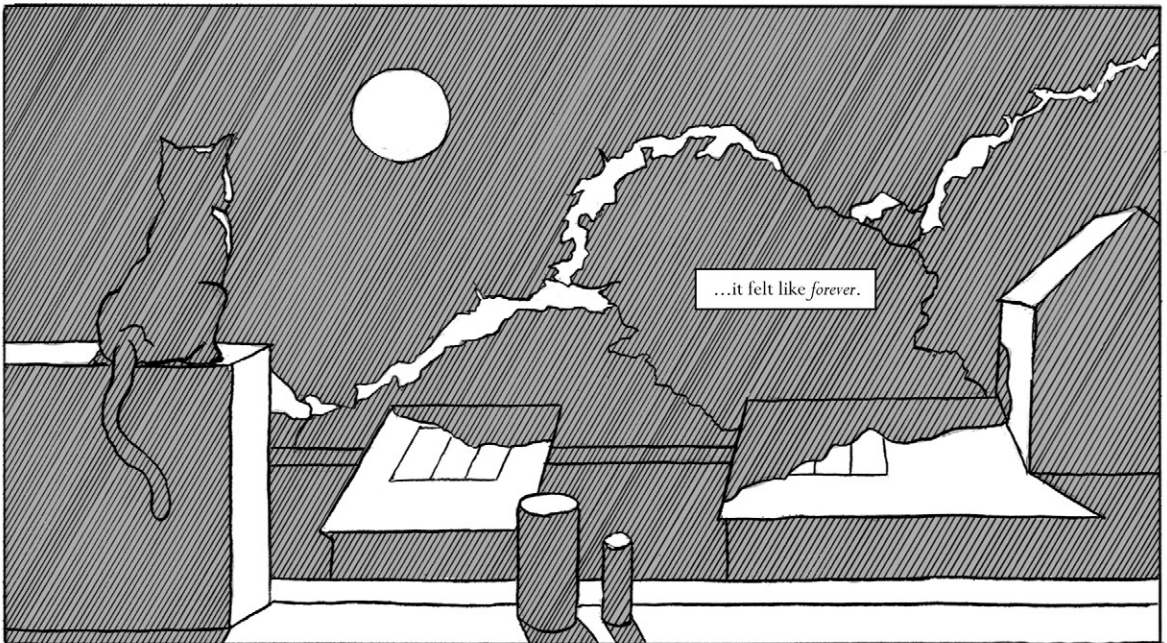
Unbearable.



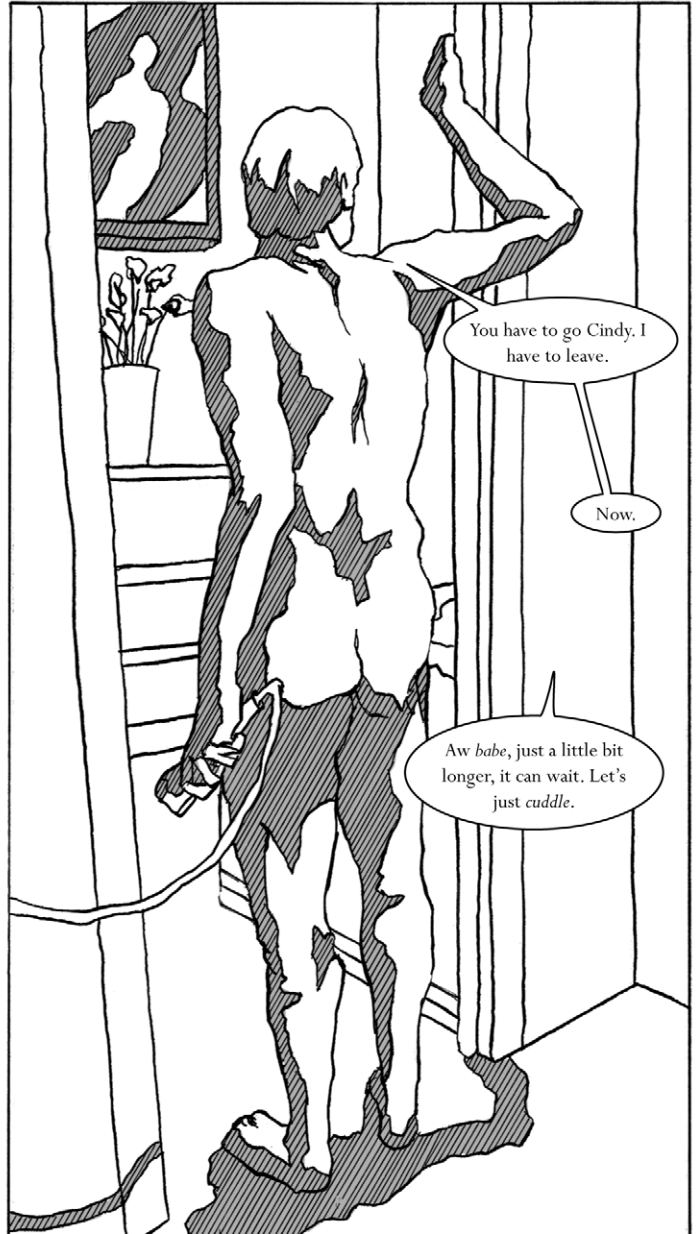
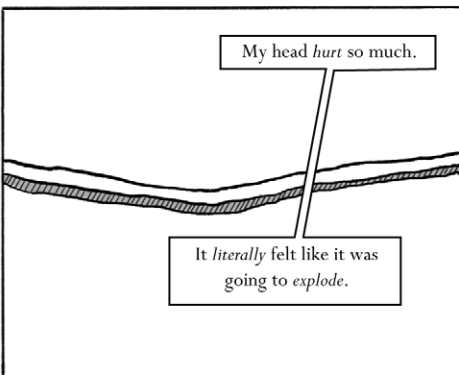
I couldn't stop *staring* at this repulsive *chunk* of food in her mouth.

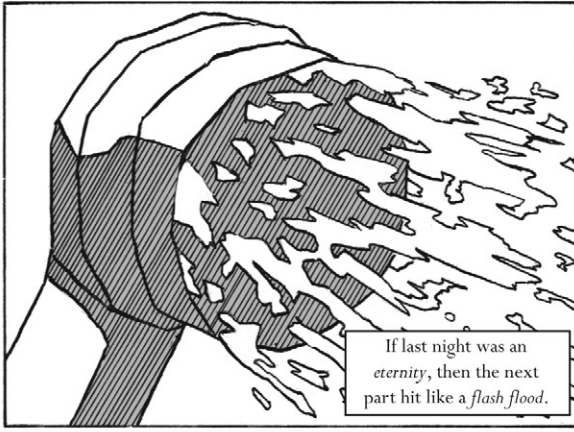


Even though it might have been 40 *minutes* altogether...



...it felt like *forever*.

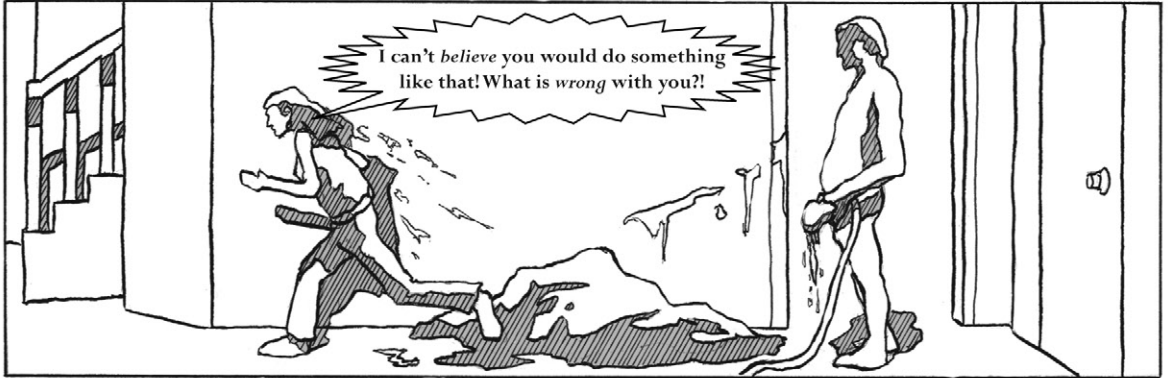




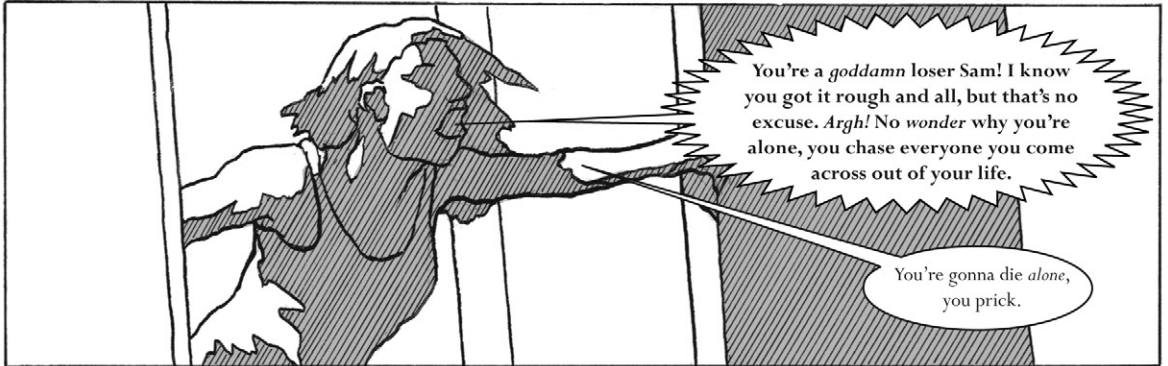
If last night was an eternity, then the next part hit like a *flash flood*.



You asshole! What the hell are you thinking?!



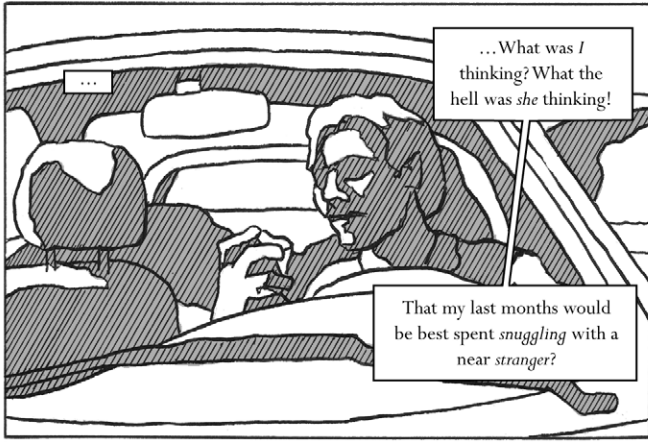
I can't believe you would do something like that! What is wrong with you?!



You're a *goddamn* loser Sam! I know you got it rough and all, but that's no excuse. *Argh!* No wonder why you're alone, you chase everyone you come across out of your life.

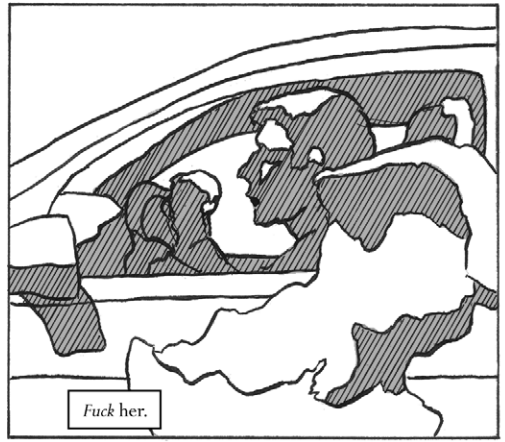
You're gonna die alone, you prick.



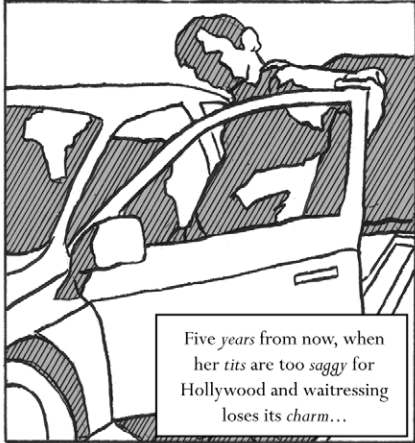


...What was I thinking? What the hell was she thinking!

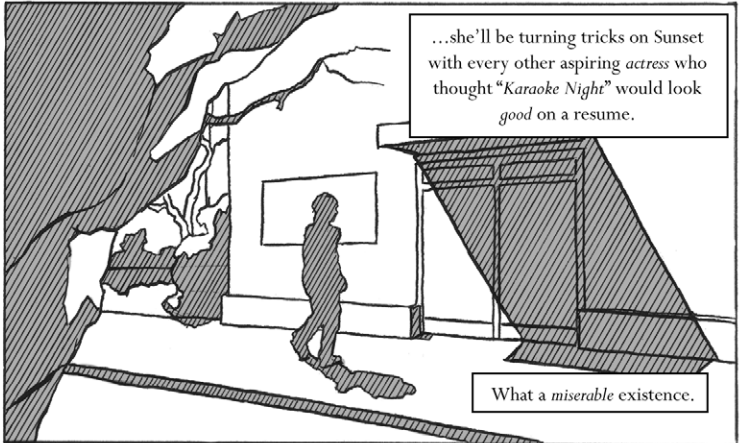
That my last months would be best spent *smuggling* with a near stranger?



Fuck her.

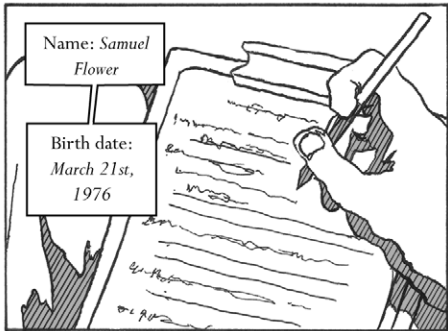


Five years from now, when her tits are too *saggy* for Hollywood and waitressing loses its *charm*...



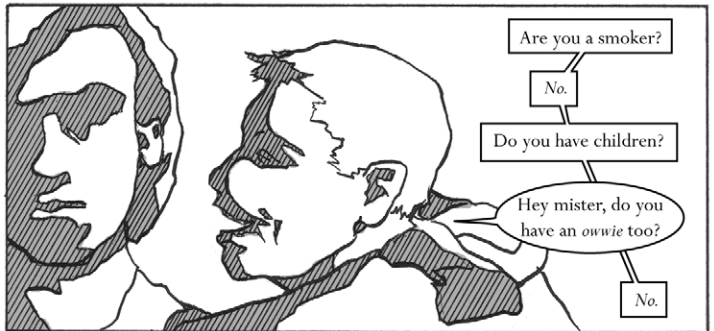
...she'll be turning tricks on Sunset with every other aspiring *actress* who thought "Karaoke Night" would look *good* on a resume.

What a *miserable* existence.



Name: Samuel Flower

Birth date: March 21st, 1976



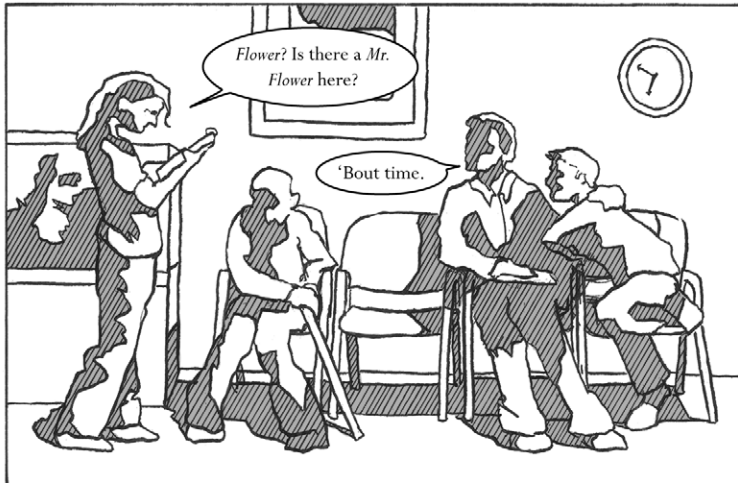
Are you a smoker?

No.

Do you have children?

Hey mister, do you have an *owwie* too?

No.



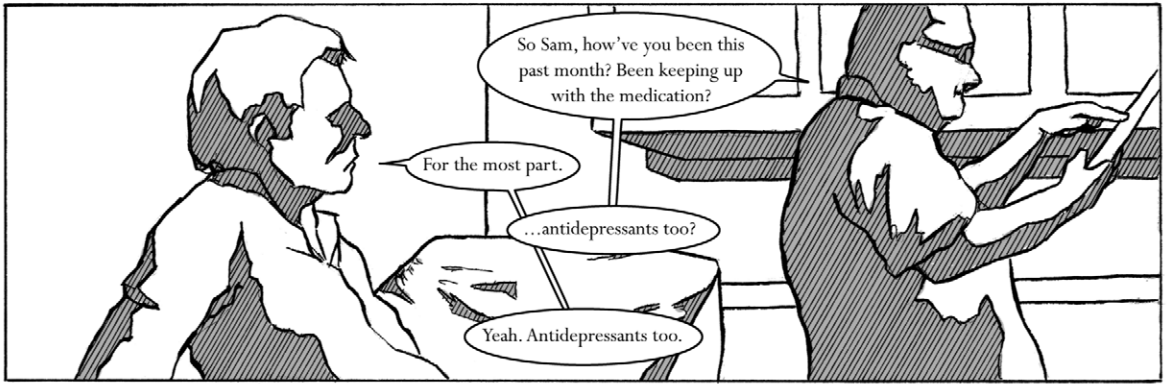
Flower? Is there a Mr. Flower here?

'Bout time.



We've set up your EKG.

Follow me.

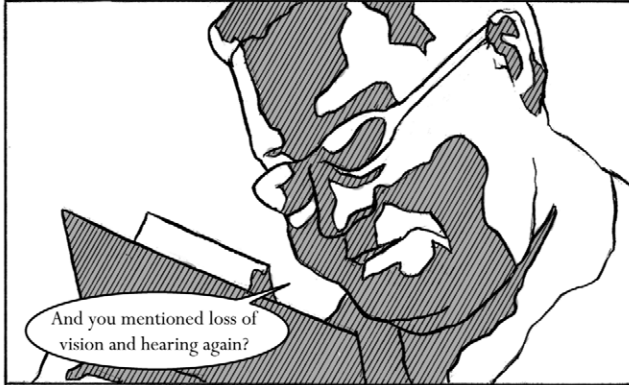


So Sam, how've you been this past month? Been keeping up with the medication?

For the most part.

...antidepressants too?

Yeah. Antidepressants too.



And you mentioned loss of vision and hearing again?

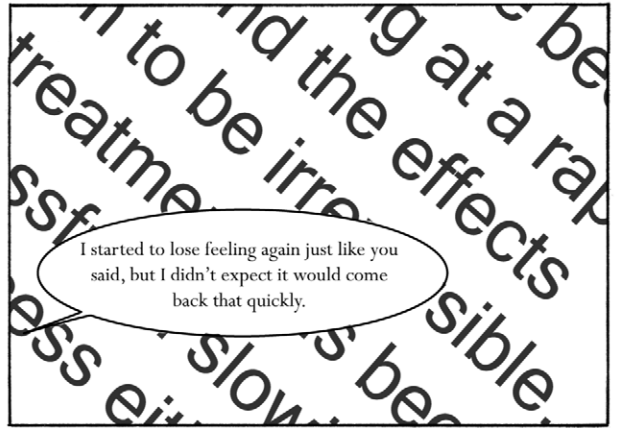


Yup.

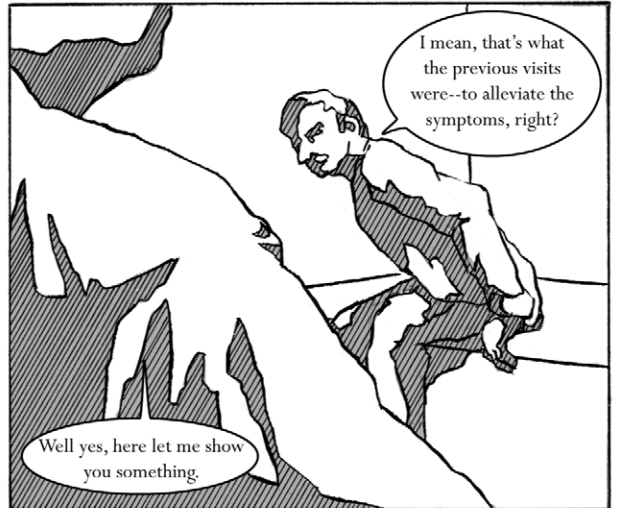
And those headaches--how frequent are they?



Well after the first treatment, things seemed fine for...maybe a few weeks. But then things just kept getting worse.



I started to lose feeling again just like you said, but I didn't expect it would come back that quickly.



I mean, that's what the previous visits were--to alleviate the symptoms, right?

Well yes, here let me show you something.



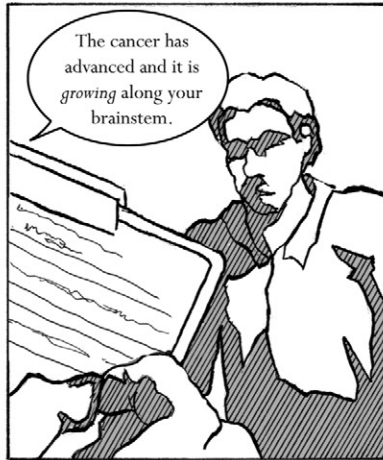
This pear-shaped mass is the *Schenemwia* tumor, where we focused treatment before.

The most common strain is typically less aggressive, but there have been complications.



Complications?

Well, your prognosis was *six months* before we suspected the cancer might be the more aggressive form.



The cancer has advanced and it is growing along your brainstem.



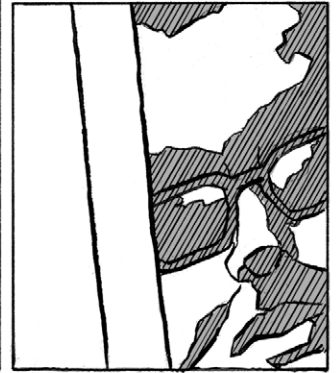
I'm afraid that conventional treatment is far too dangerous at this point.



There isn't much we can do.



I'm sorry.



It wasn't until I got home that the *gravity* of those words really hit me. When I realized that, for the first time, there wasn't anything I could do to control my life...I completely broke *down*.

<Tick-Tock>

I ended up crying myself to sleep every night; stopped returning phone calls, and let the mailbox fill up with bills.

<Tick-Tock>

How did my *successful* life collapse so quickly? I had everything...*right*?

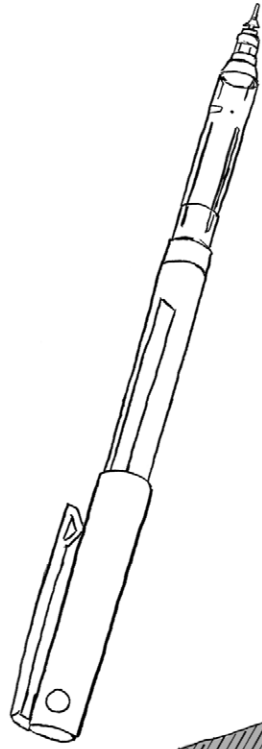
<Tick-Tock>

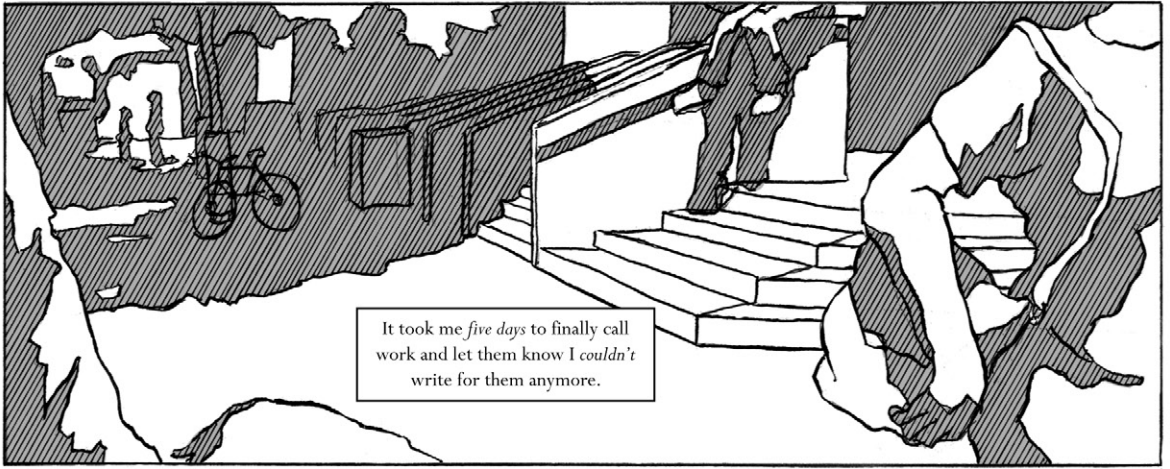
I'm *alone*, and *afraid*. I don't want to *die*.

<Tick-Tock>

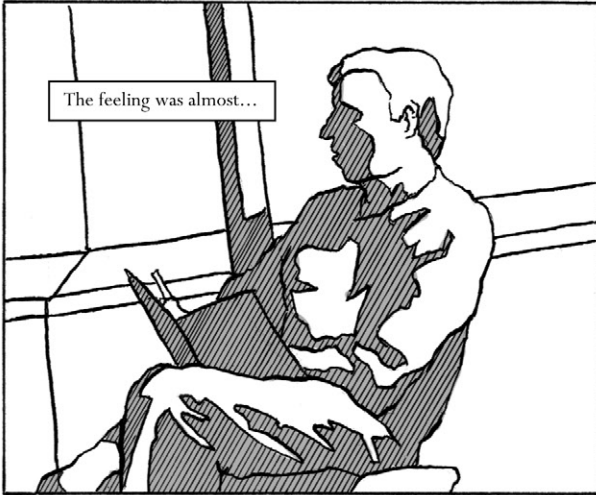
It's so *quiet*--nobody's calling anymore. I don't want to die in this *musky* condo. I need *sunlight*.

<...tick.>





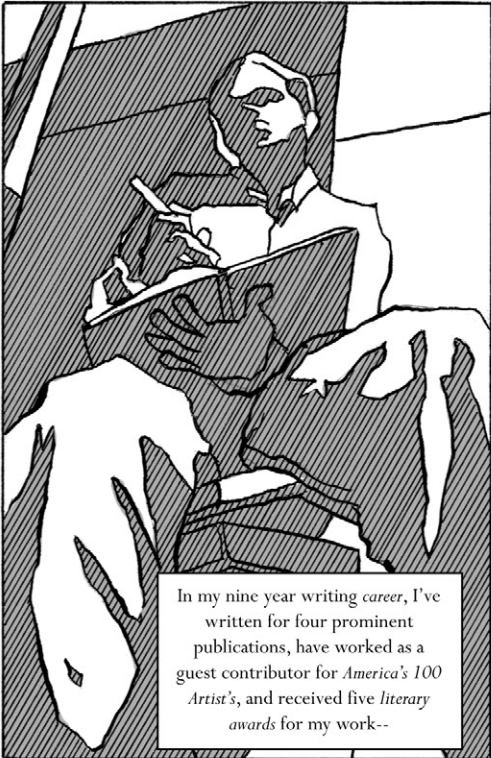
It took me *five days* to finally call work and let them know I *couldn't* write for them anymore.



The feeling was almost...



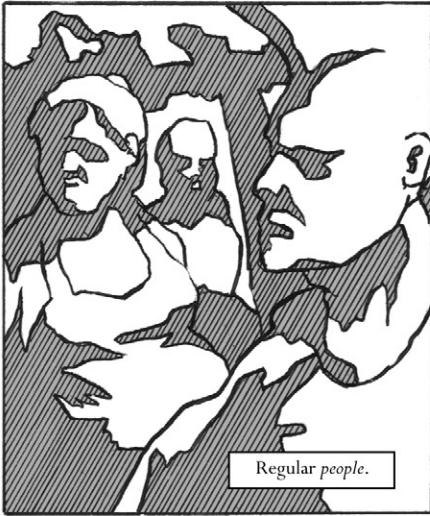
...liberating?



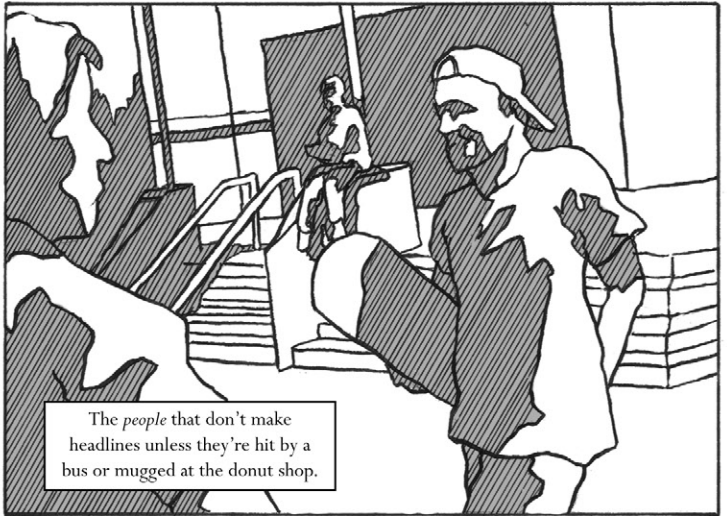
In my nine year writing *career*, I've written for four prominent publications, have worked as a guest contributor for *America's 100 Artist's*, and received five *literary awards* for my work--



--But not *once* have I written about the people right in front of me.



Regular people.



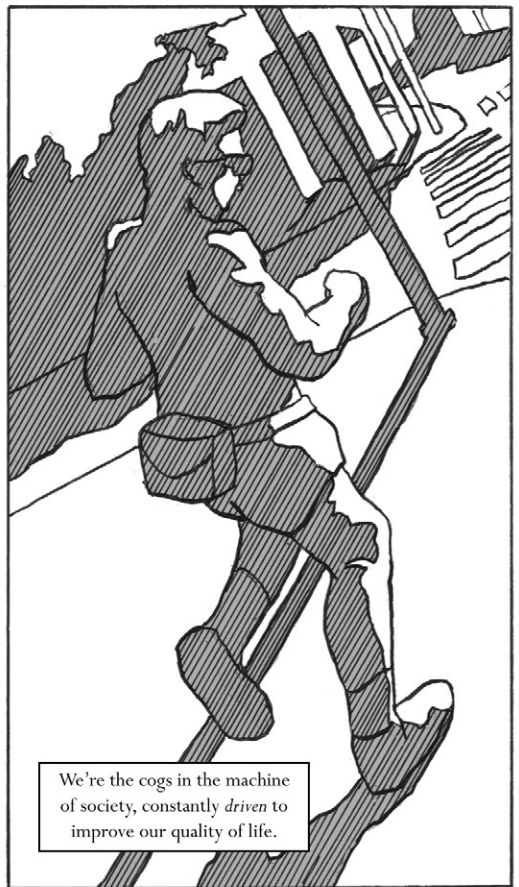
The people that don't make headlines unless they're hit by a bus or mugged at the donut shop.



The ones that wander the streets like face-less zombies after the nine-to-five grind.



Well, it's *unfair* to say that their lives have any less value.



We're the cogs in the machine of society, constantly *driven* to improve our quality of life.



Each person is living their own story.



Every *relationship* is worthwhile.



Even the *smaller* ones we tend to take for granted.



Sure, every connection we make comes with its disagreements.

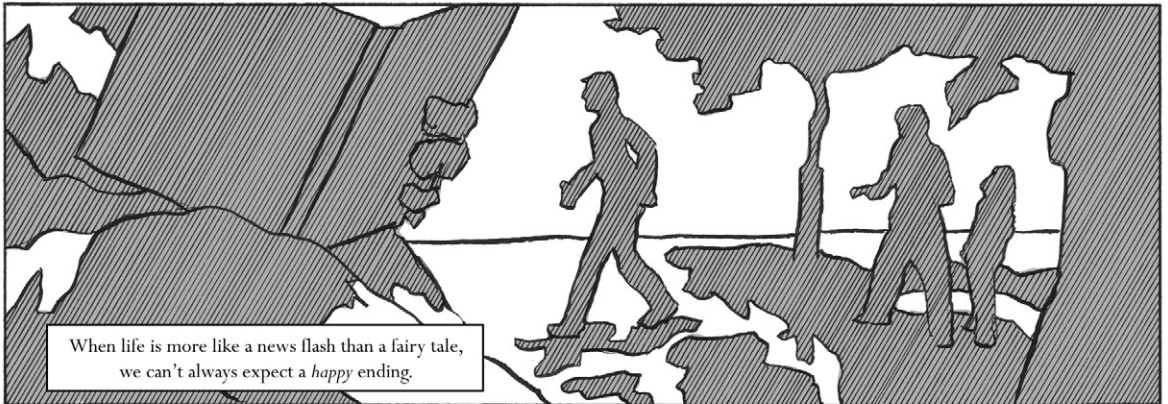


But that's the *price* we pay for human interaction.

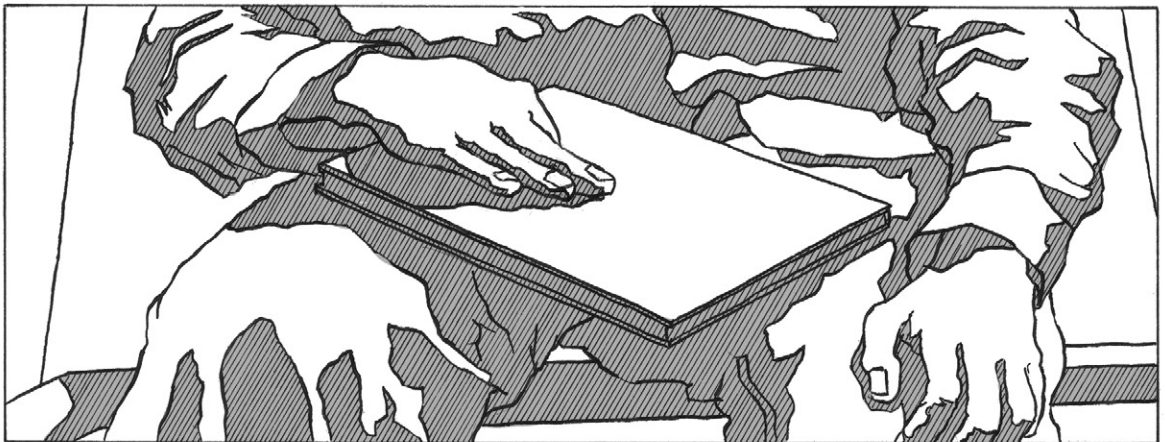
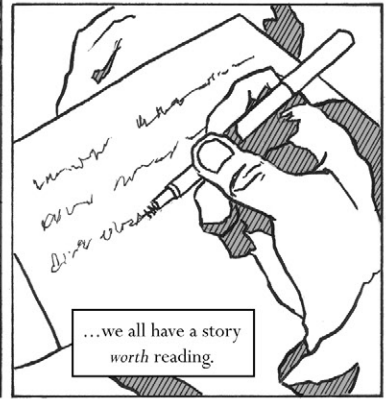
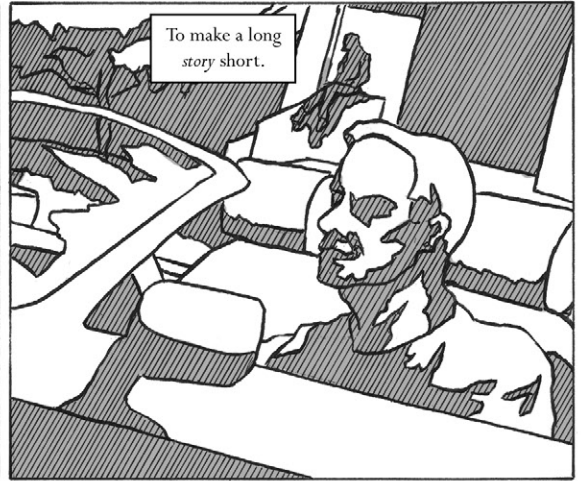
Problems that can't be solved by walking *away* from people in your life.

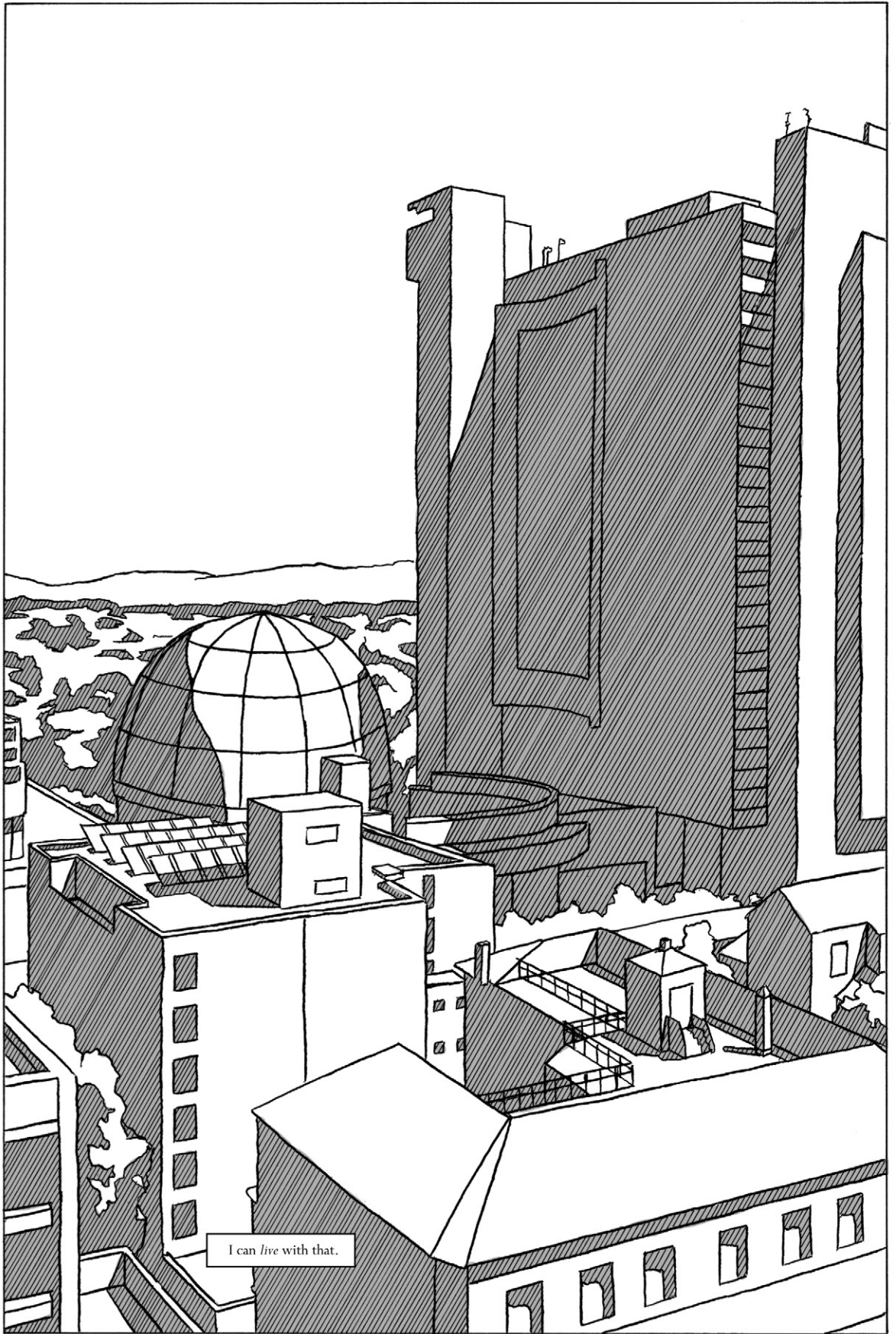


Even if they are *ditzy* little girls and nothing but trouble.



When life is more like a news flash than a fairy tale, we can't always expect a *happy* ending.





I can *live* with that.

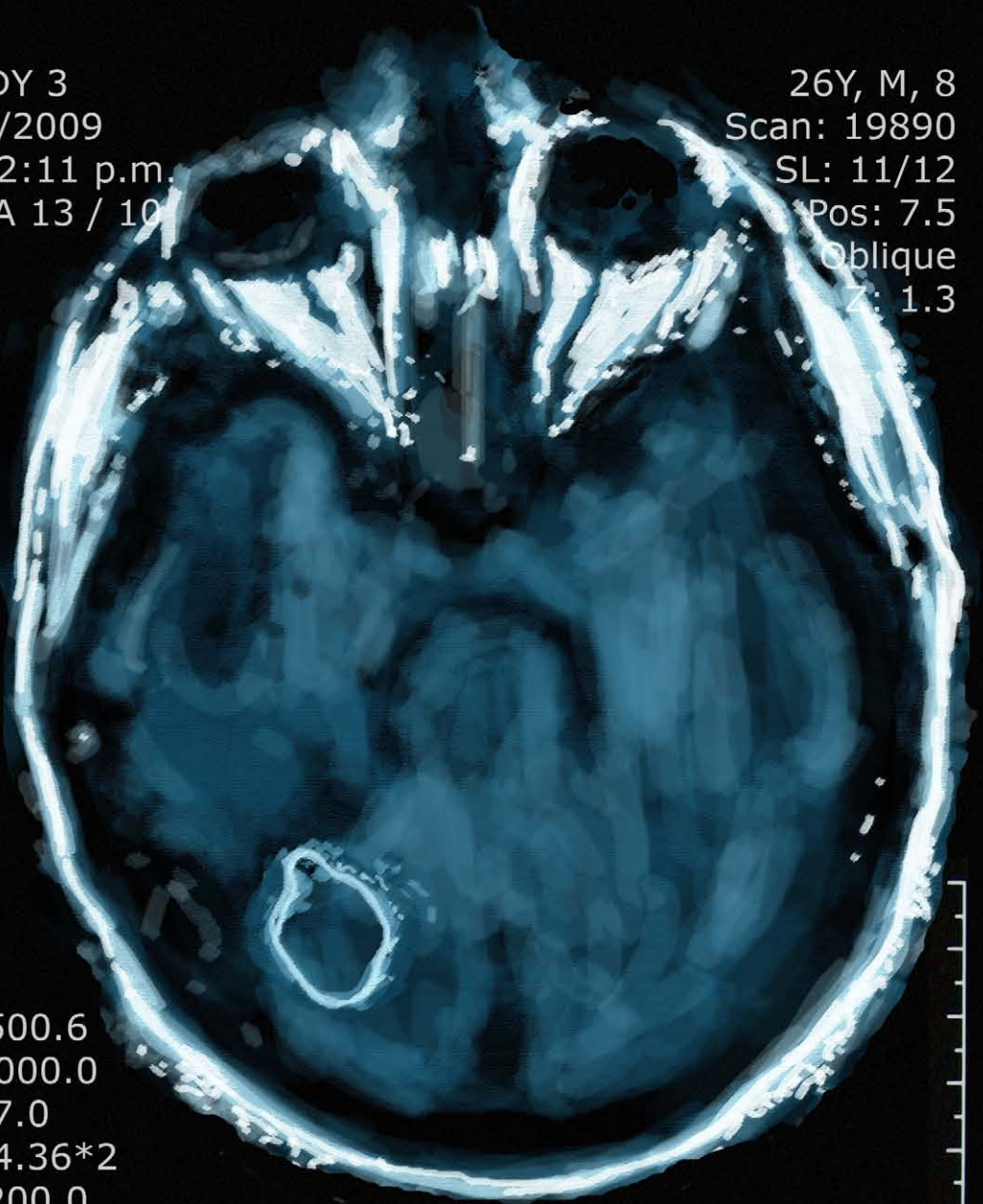
STUDY 3
19/8/2009
09:32:11 p.m.
7 IMA 13 / 10

26Y, M, 8
Scan: 19890
SL: 11/12
Pos: 7.5
Oblique
Z: 1.3

RPH

TI 2500.6
TR 9000.0
TE 87.0
TA 54.36*2
BW 200.0
p2 M/ND/NORM

5cm



Erik Thurman is a writer, illustrator, and teacher who travels around the world writing about social and political issues. His hobbies include backpacking, drinking coffee, and fighting corruption.

More information can be found on
www.erikthurmancomics.com.