



My Tri-C Life:
illustrated scenes and stories

edited and curated by jimi izrael for Cuyahoga Community College's Center for Creative Arts

cover art by Gilberto Rivera



THE “MY TRI-C LIFE” (MTL) graphic novel project invites student writers to script scenes from their lives while our visual art students bring them to life in an interdisciplinary collaboration. The artists and writers don’t meet and aren’t identified until the work is published.

Given reference materials and an eight-paneled primer in comic strip format based on the classical three-act structure from Aristotle’s “Poetics,” students illustrate these stories in a cartoon form much like you’d find in any Sunday newspaper.

As Artist in Residence, I curated the project for Tri-C’s Center for Creative Arts. Scripts were edited for form, clarity and continuity. Some stories will make you laugh, some will make you think. But they are all from the lives of our students.

The MTL project was inspired by the work of Clevelander Harvey Pekar (1939–2010), writer of the award-winning comic book (and movie) “American Splendor.” Pekar chronicled his everyday life as a file clerk, husband and father. Artists like Gary Dumm, Frank Stack, Robert Crumb, Dean Caspiel and many, many others illustrated his scripts into comic-book form.

I’d like to thank all the students who participated and contributed. Also, thanks to Dr. Michael Schoop, Dr. Paul Cox, Pat Stansberry, Valerie Fales, Anne Hanrahan, Simone Barros, Daniel Levin, Wendy Shabazz, Jack Hagan, John Kerezy, Julie D’Alosio, David Kennedy and Paul Miklowski. Without their collegial assistance, encouragement, advice and cooperation, this project could have not materialized.

We can all be heroes of our own stories. It can all start right here at Tri-C.

–j. izrael, MFA

Positive Change, Negative People art by Santasia Woodby story by Joi Westbrook

In high school I met a new friend named Alicia and we hit it off well.

EAST HIGH BULLDOGS!



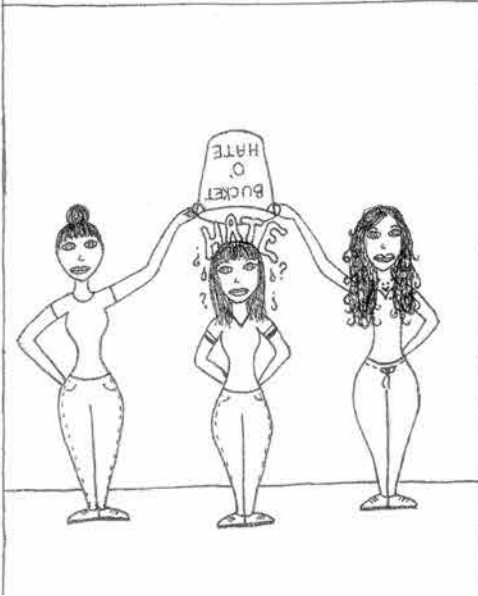
We hung out together and worked together around the high school.



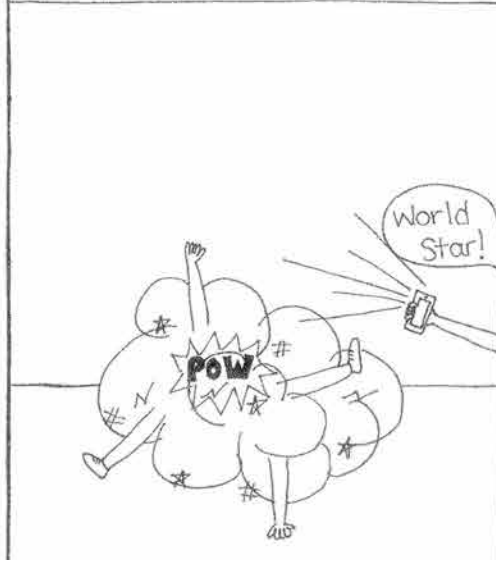
Alicia and I got into an argument and she tells me what she really thinks.

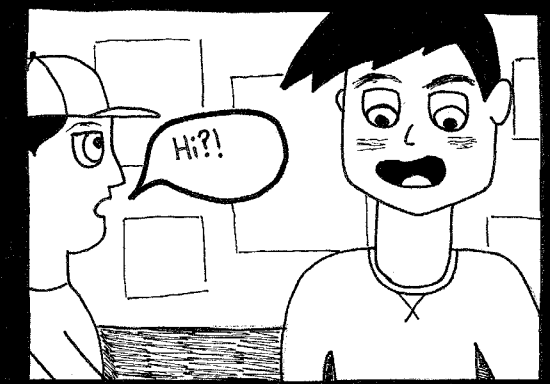
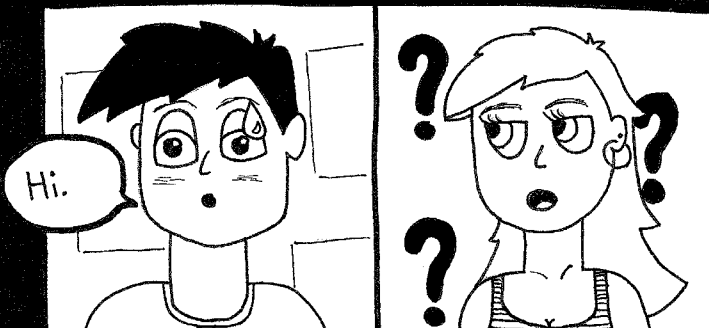
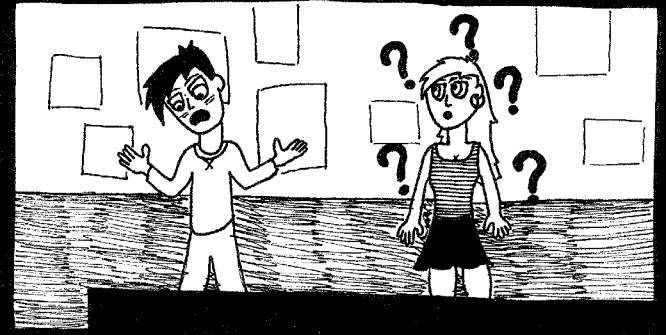
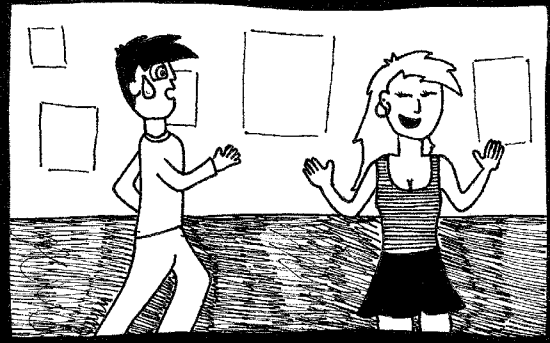
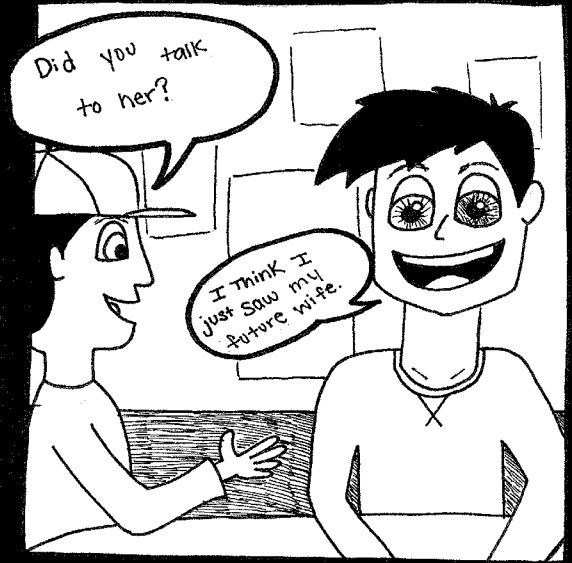
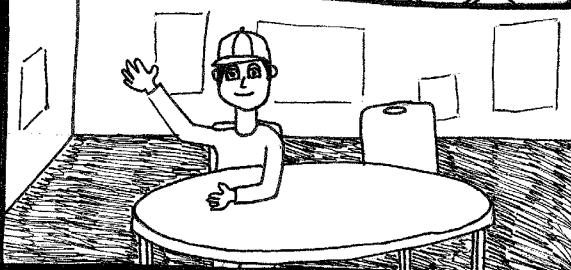
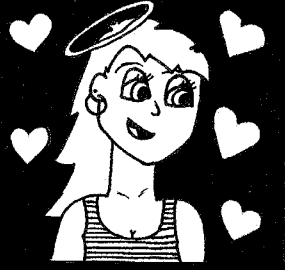
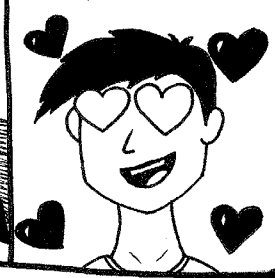
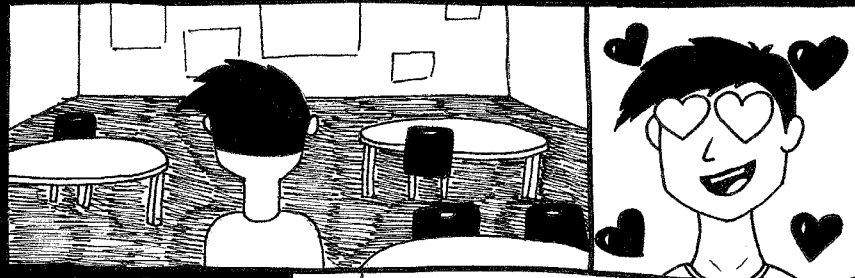


Alicia gets another girl and they pour the hate on me.

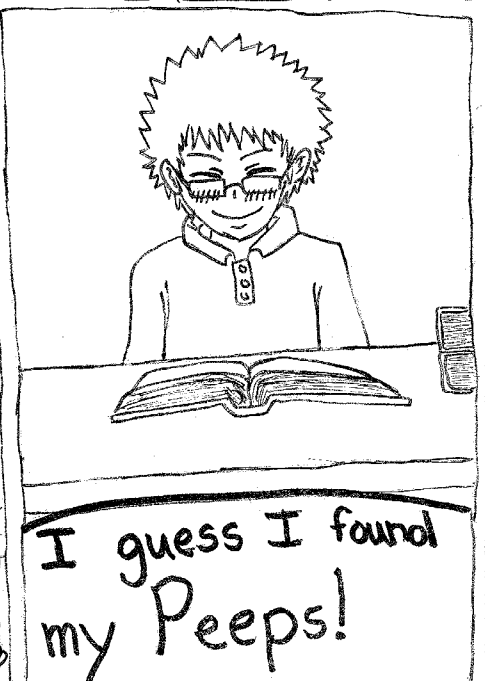
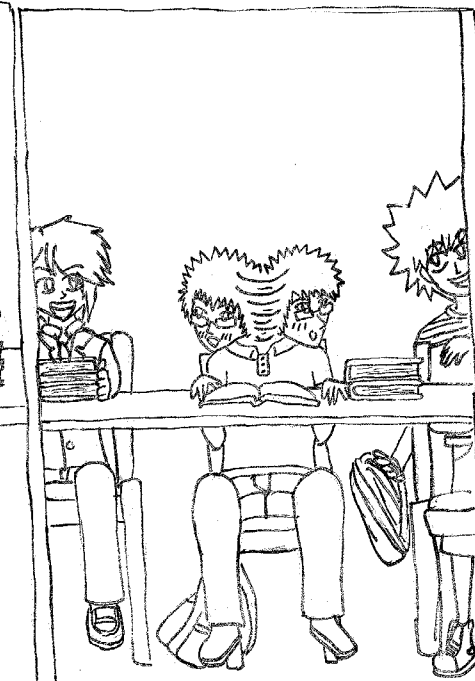
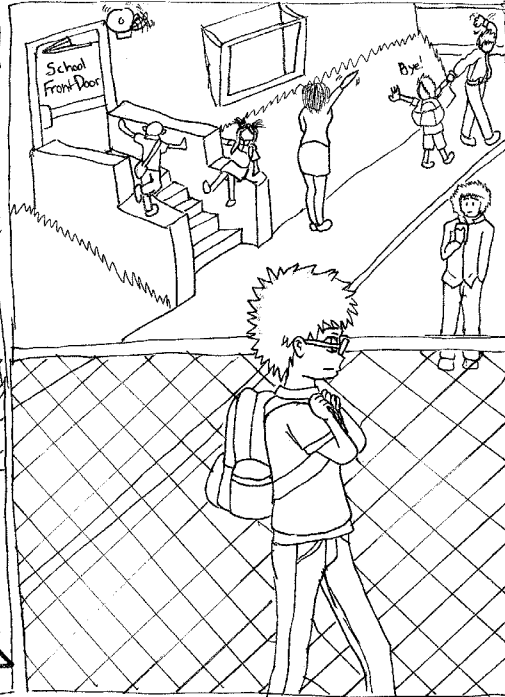
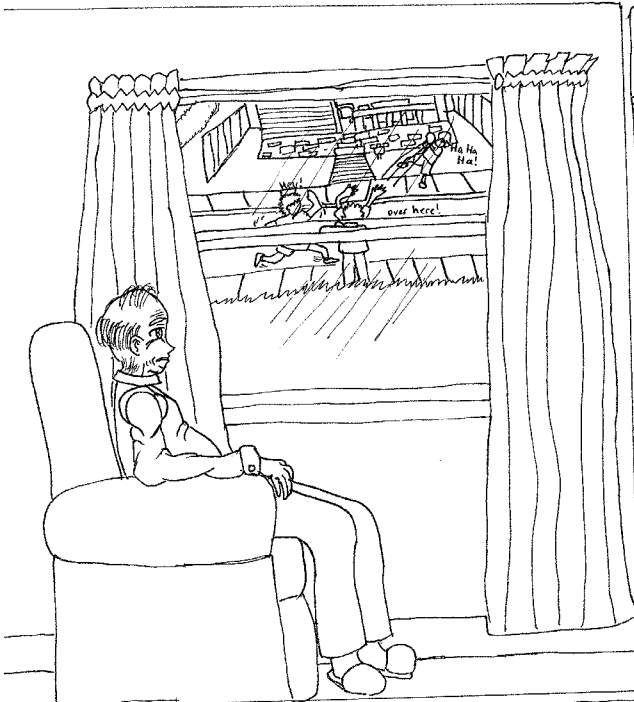


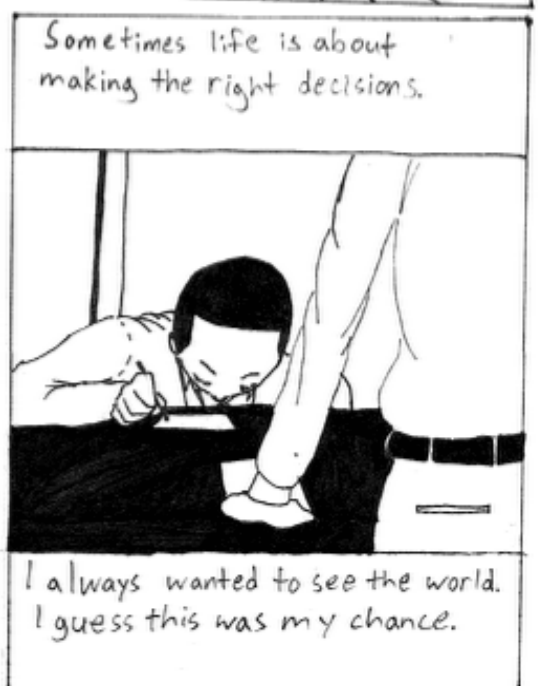
I try to patch it up with Alicia and the next thing I know, we get into a fight.



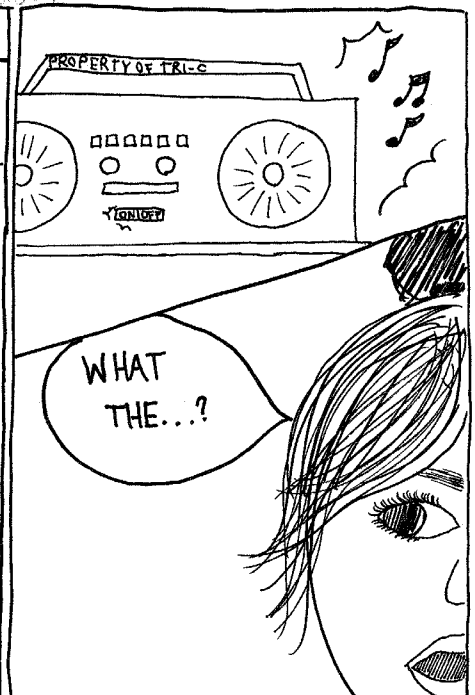
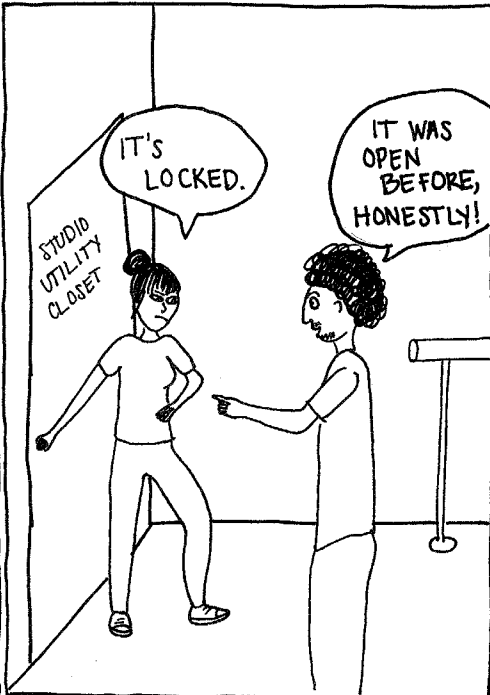


Finding My Peeps art by Andrew Langford story by Jimmy Williams

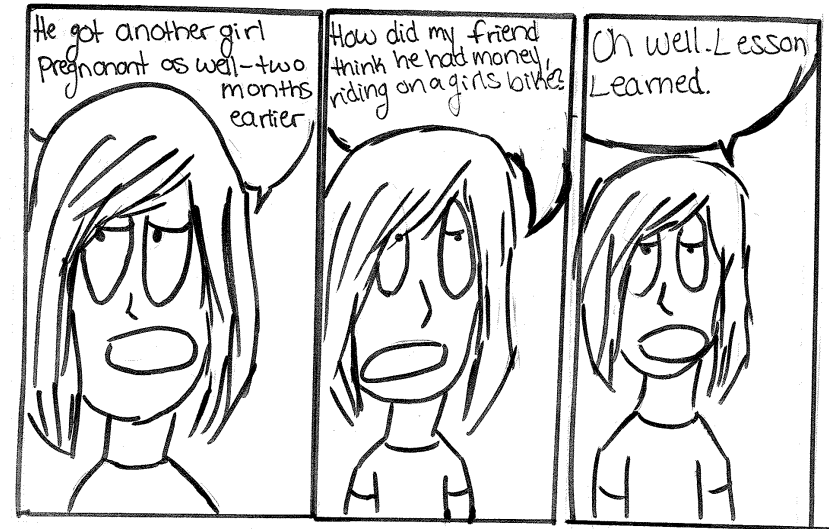
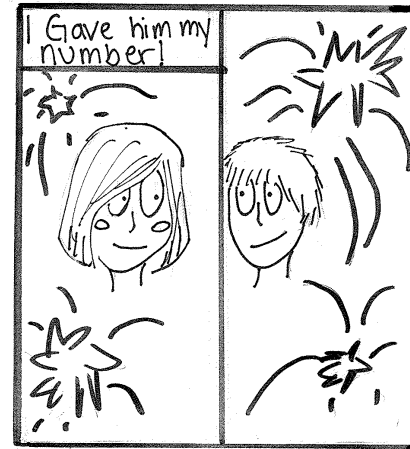
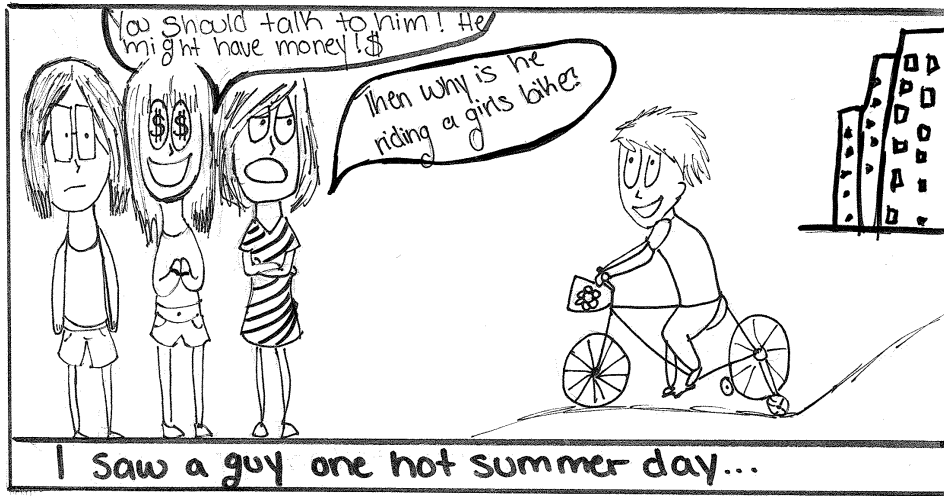




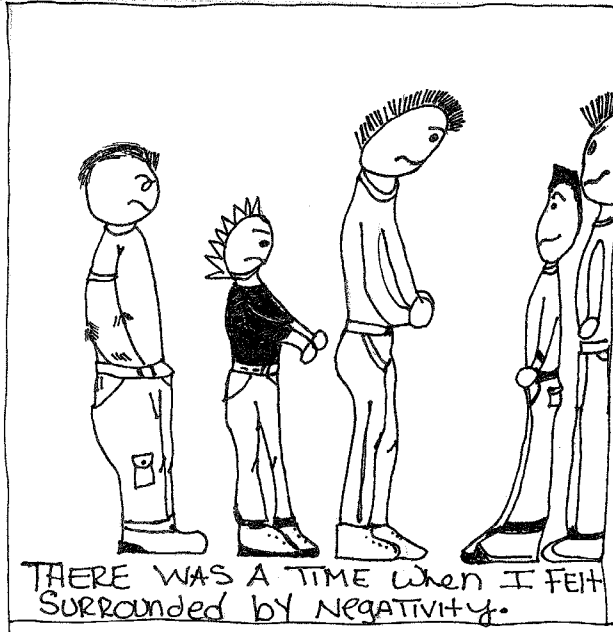
A GHOST STORY



The Lure of Prosperity art by Marianne Wehmann story by Shalanda Harris



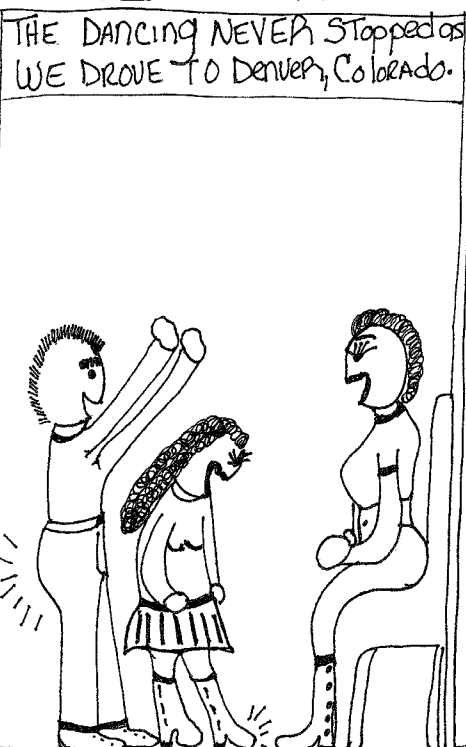
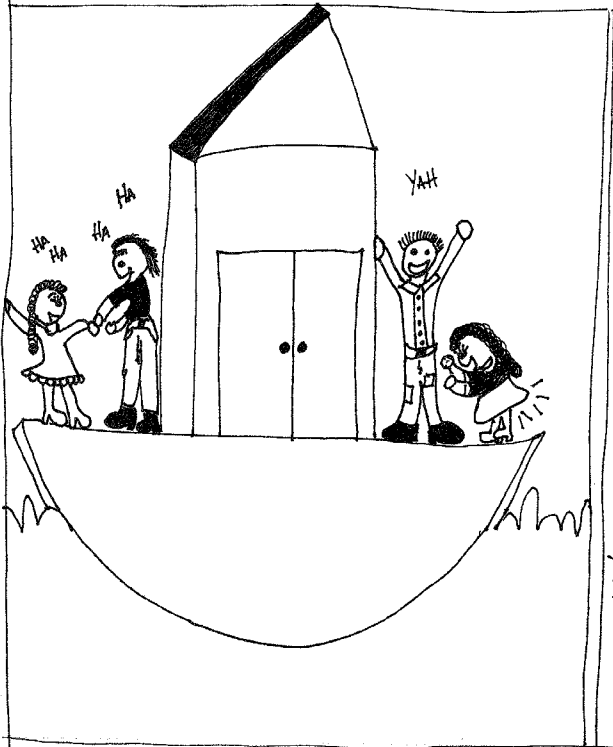
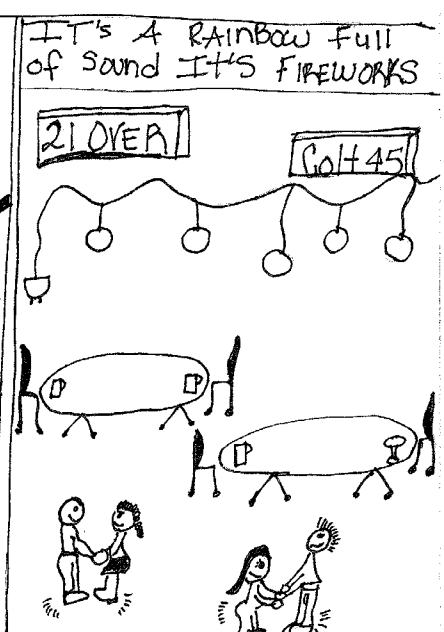
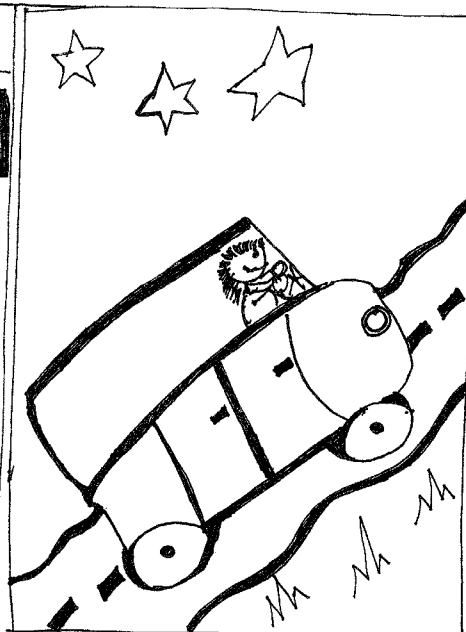
A Grateful Journey art by Shanda Harris story by Anthony Travagilante



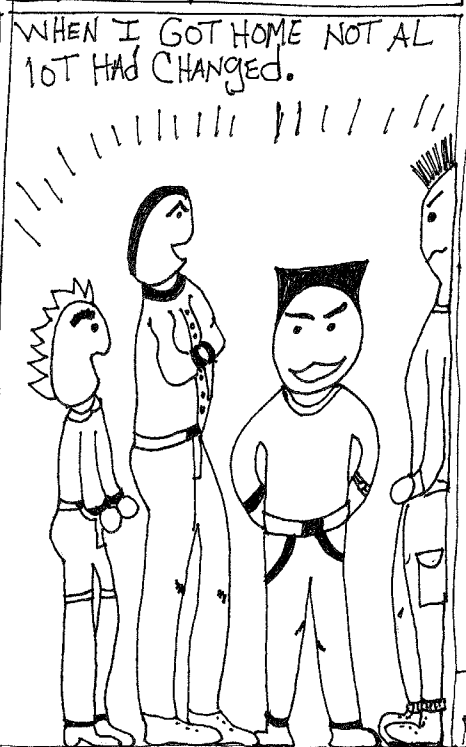
THERE WAS A TIME WHEN I FELT SURROUNDED BY NEGATIVITY.



MY BUDDY JOE COAXED ME ON A ROAD TRIP WHY NOT?



THE DANCING NEVER STOPPED AS WE DROVE TO DENVER, COLORADO.

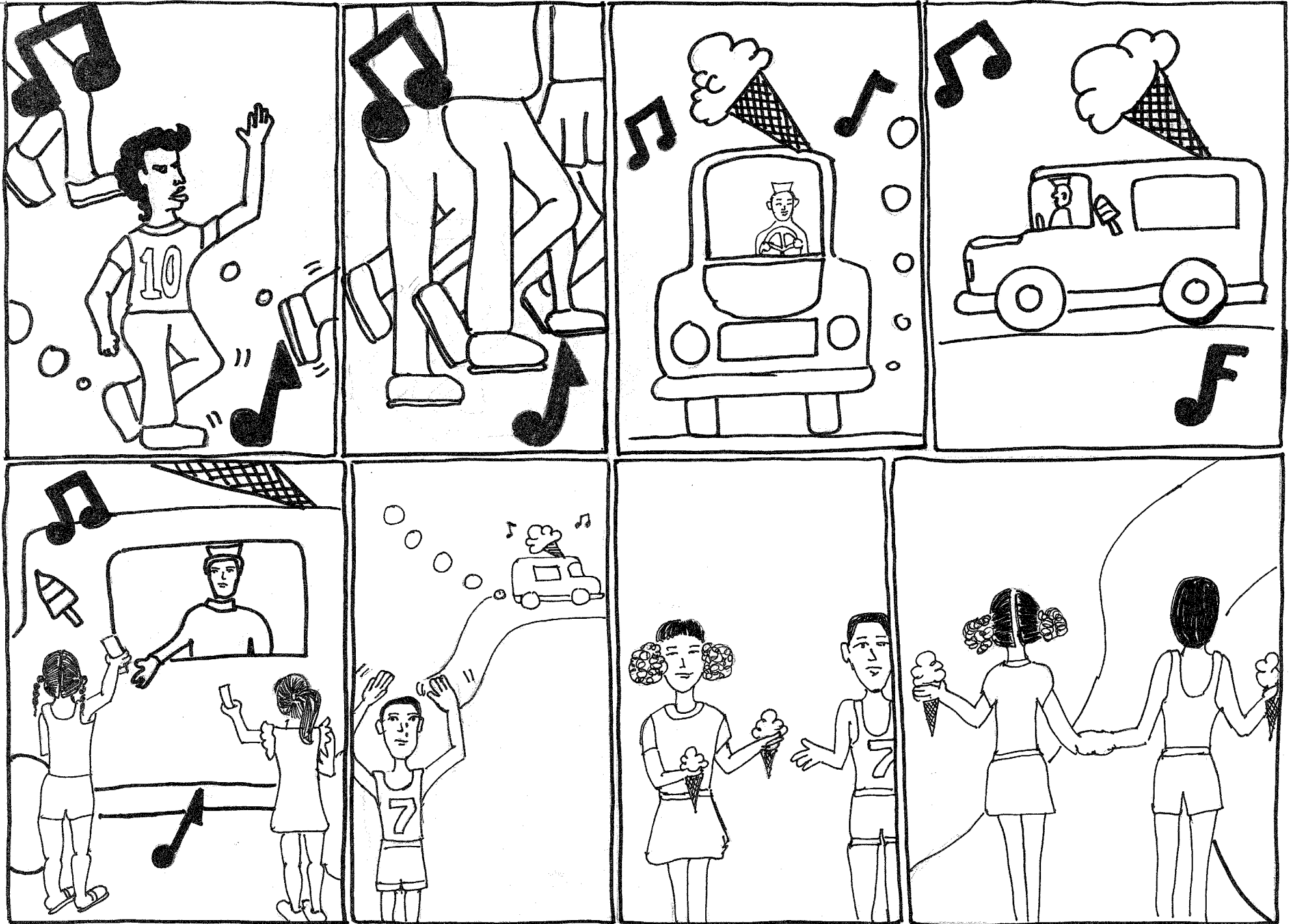


WHEN I GOT HOME NOT A LOT HAD CHANGED.



NOTHING ACCEPT FOR ME

BY SHANDA HARRIS



Titanic Cruise

art by Felecia Scarbro story by Tonia Burnett

In 2012 I planned my first cruise.



I mostly didn't want to go because of my kids.



When it came time to go I was scared.



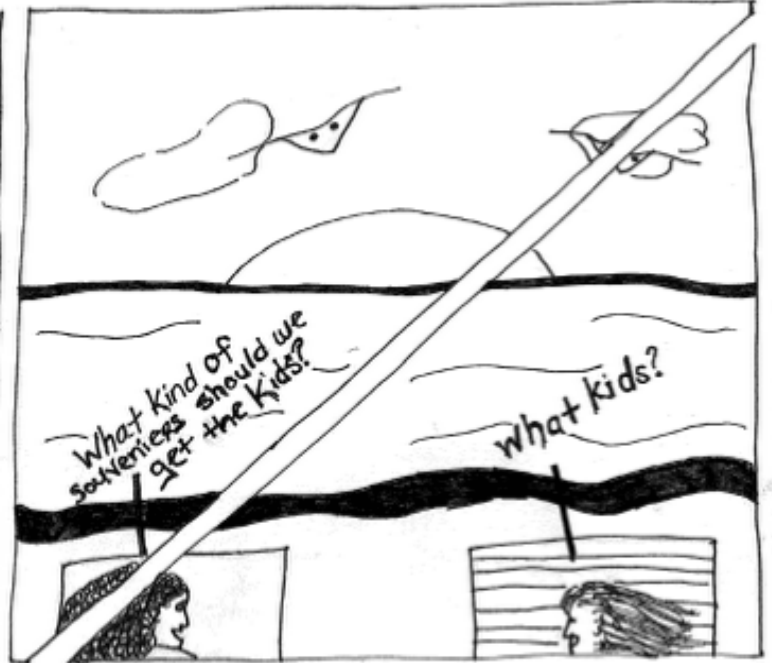
And then I saw the ship in Puerto Rico



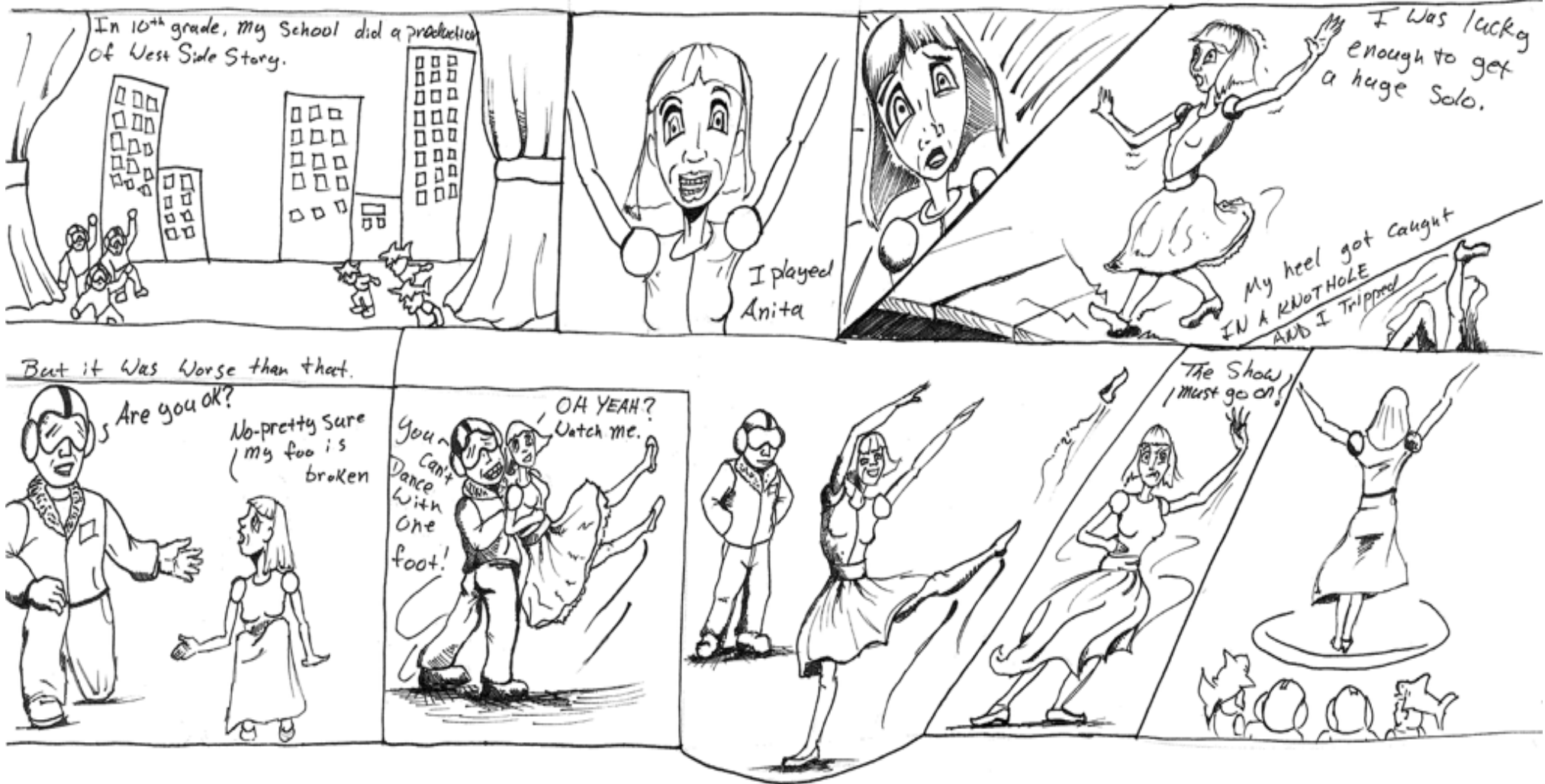
The Islands in Barbados were so beautiful.



There was so much food, we ate everything!



The Show Must Go On art by Timothy Duncan story by Connie Wynn





photos by Mallory Sanmarco story by Santo Dublo

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Erol, 31, sits on his porch on a hot summer with his radio with his mother.



Erol whips out his phone.



Sun setting outside on a Holiday Inn. Parking lot, Erol swinging his guitar case runs hastily toward the door.



Erol, inside the building signs in at a table with Disney Banner over it.



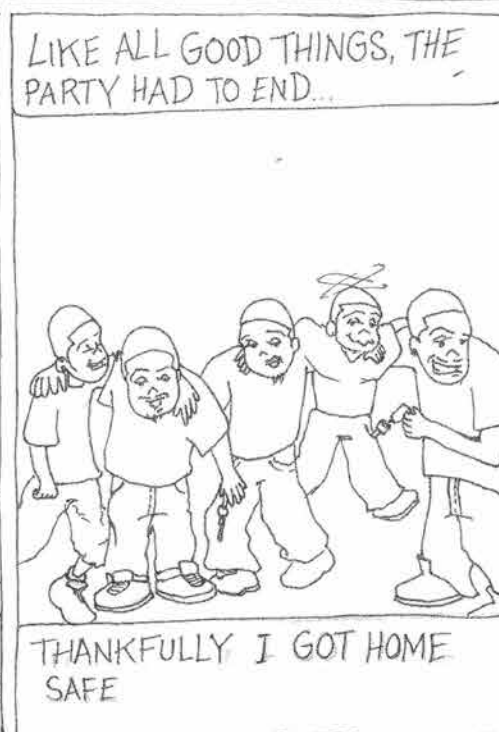
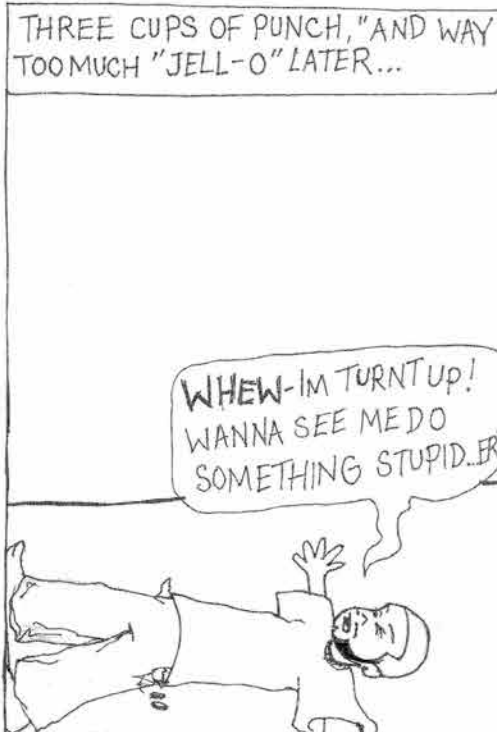
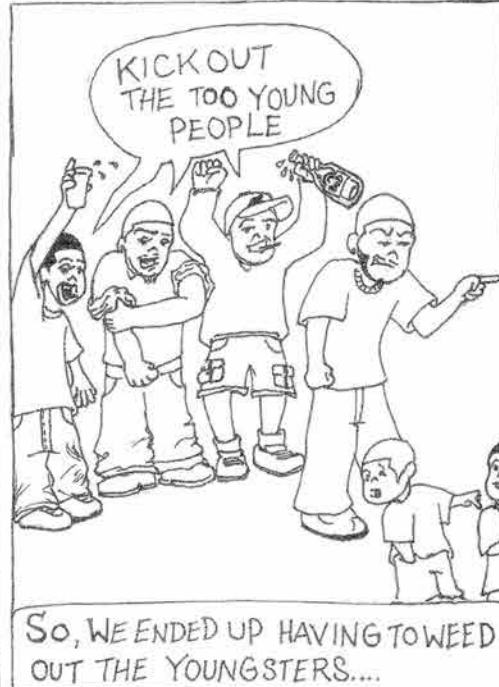
Erol stands in a hotel conference room in front of three judges.



Erol looks sheepish and scared. The judges give Erol the stink-eye.

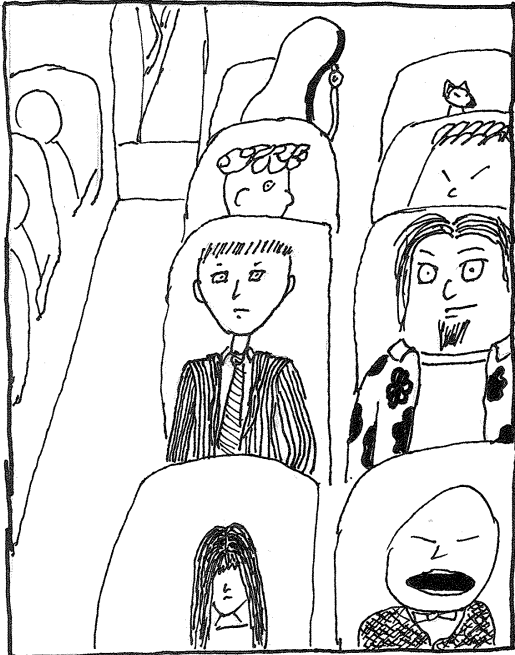


My First RESPONSIBLE Hangover art by Michael Walker story by Graham Kristensen



Hot Coffee

art by Jake Hsu Story by Sam Brookner



photos by Julianne Schewert story by Mike Black



MIKE turns off the scale and the display case.



MIKE mops the grimy floors while a CUSTOMER comes in.



Mike meets them at the deli counter, steaming.

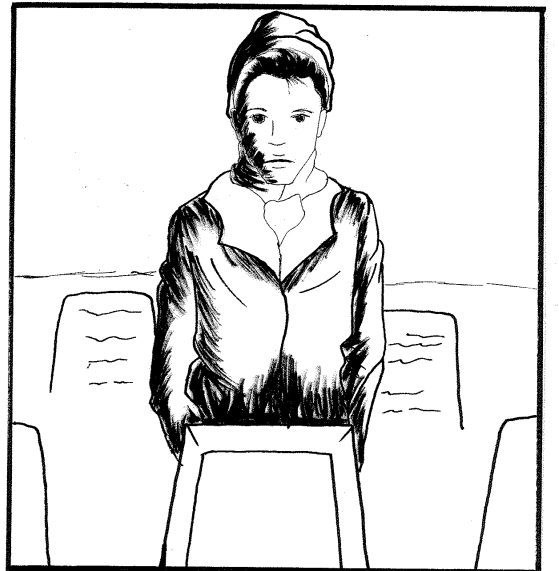
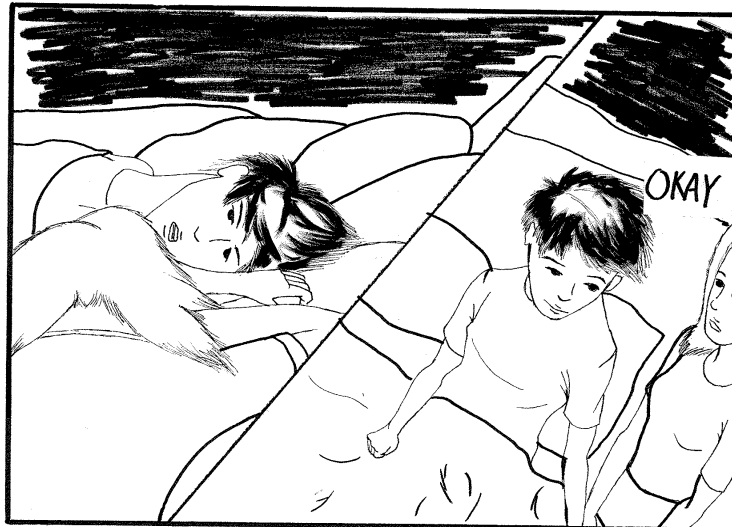
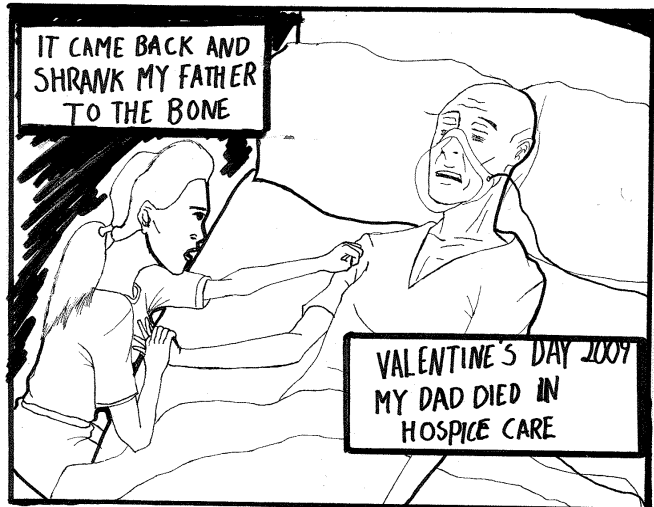
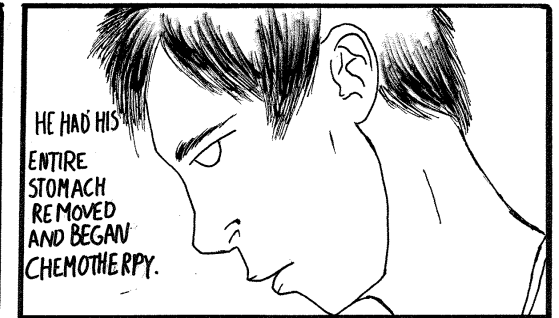
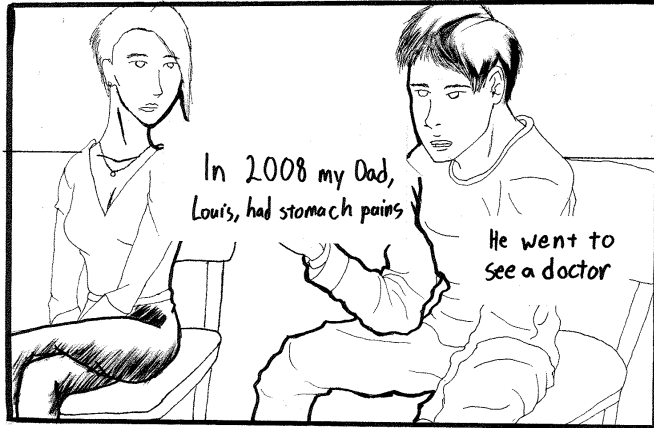


Mike steaming grabs the meat and cuts it.

Finding Me, Finding Mom art by Shari Hunter story by Katy Downey



Moving On art by Jalin Wiley story by Chris Incorvati



Not Enough Hours in the Day

photos by
Sunitra Heer
story by
Demetrius Long



12:30 pm



2:30 pm



I'm gonna be late for work, I need the gas money!

I'm on my way.

3:30 pm



I'm in the bathroom, Mama! I'll be out in a minute.

Netflix?

4:30 pm



I'm running late!

I'm out front -- I got you.

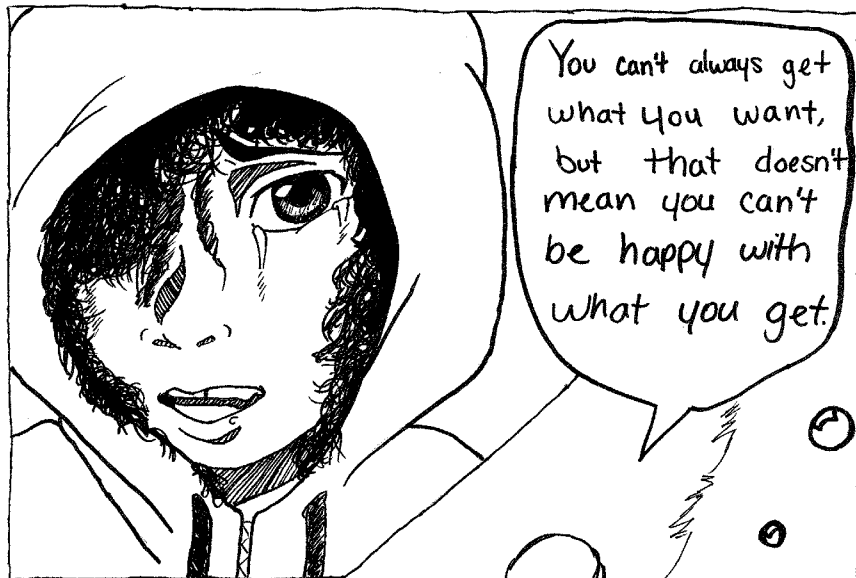
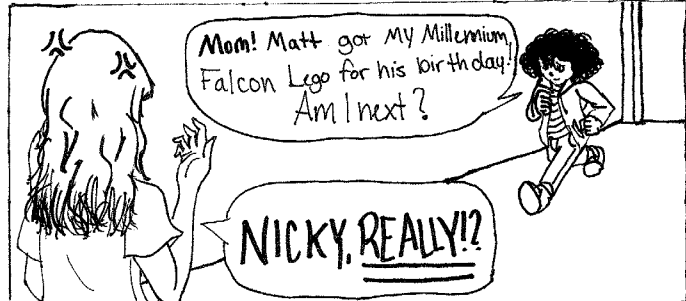
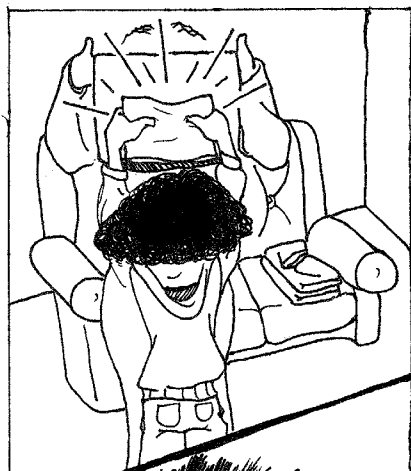
4:45 pm

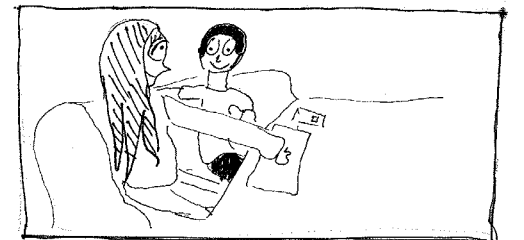
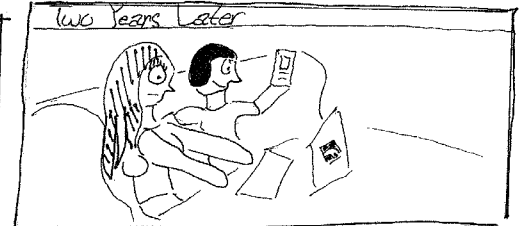
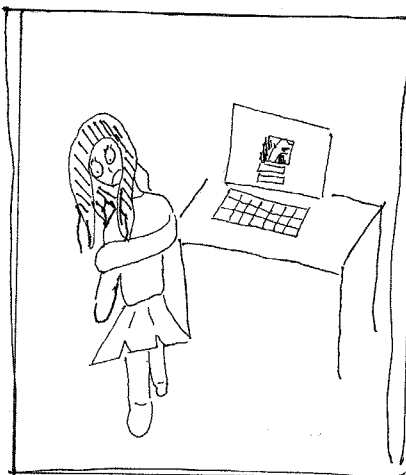
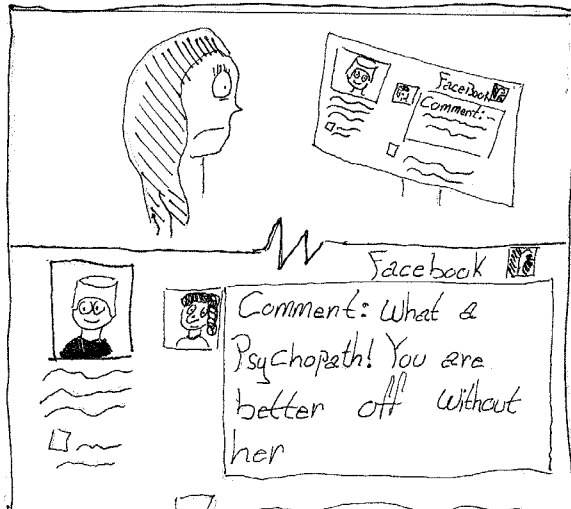
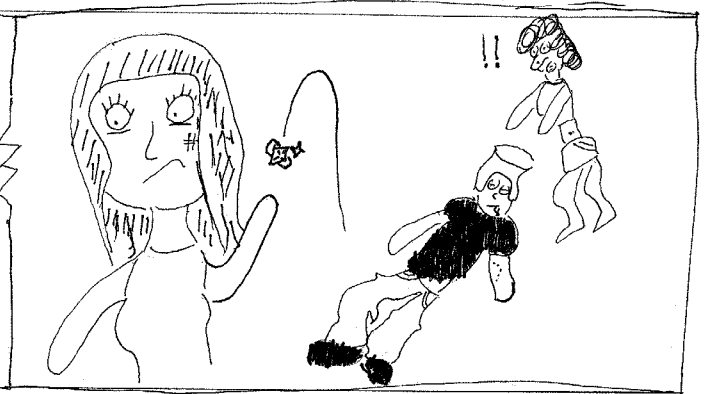
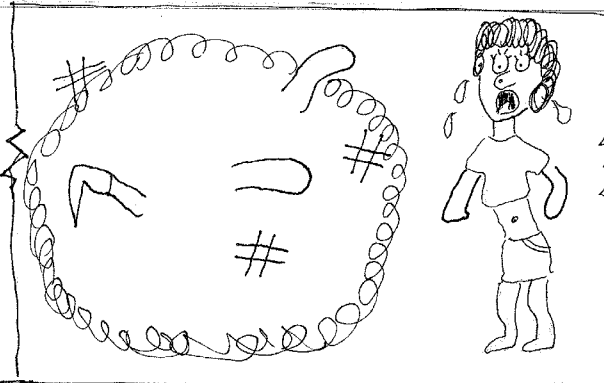
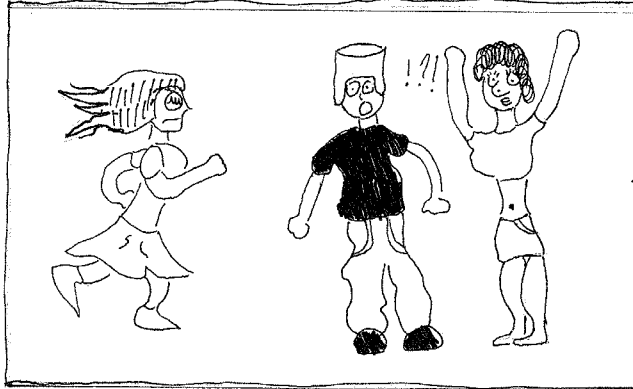
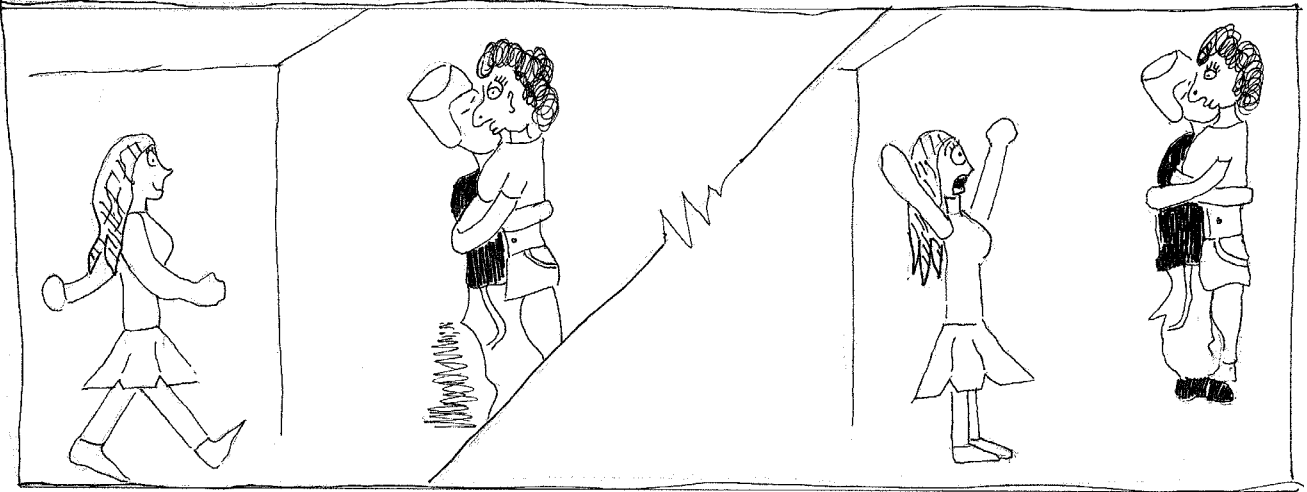


Wait-- you aren't my sister!

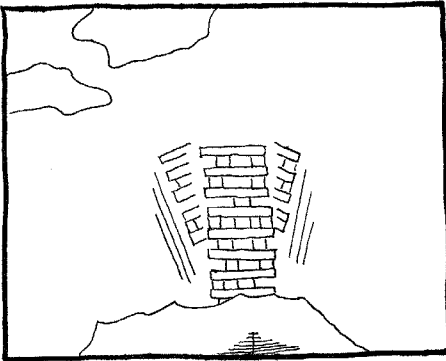
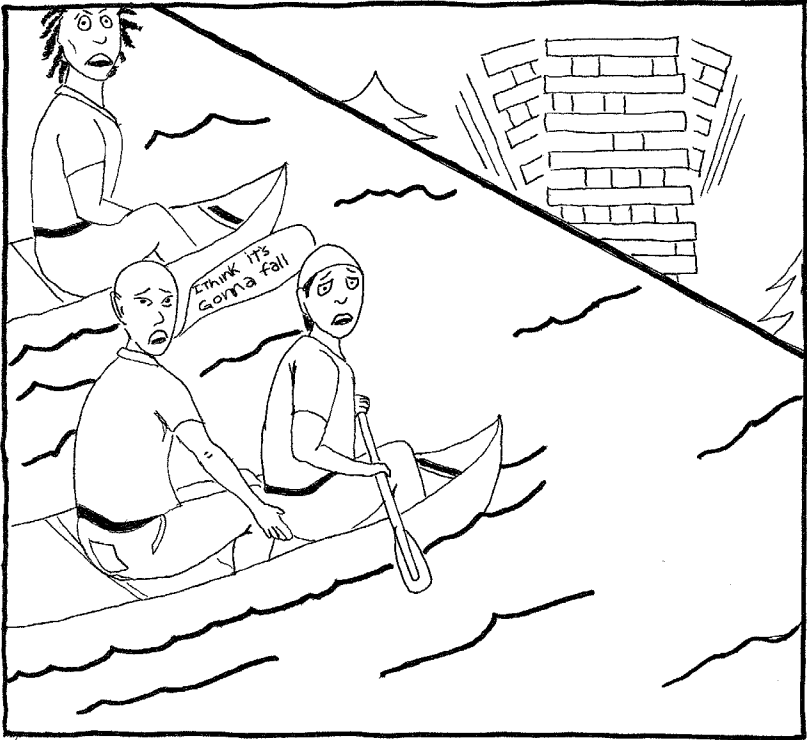
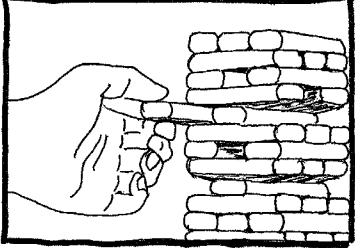
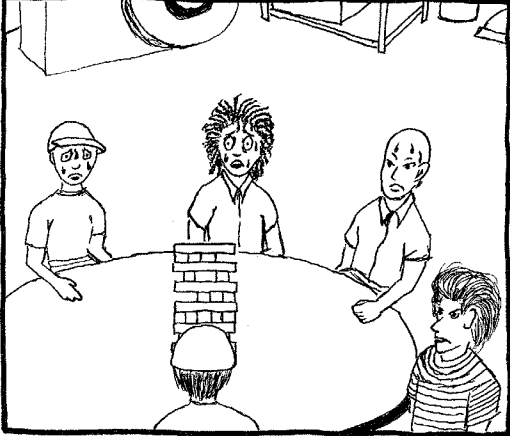
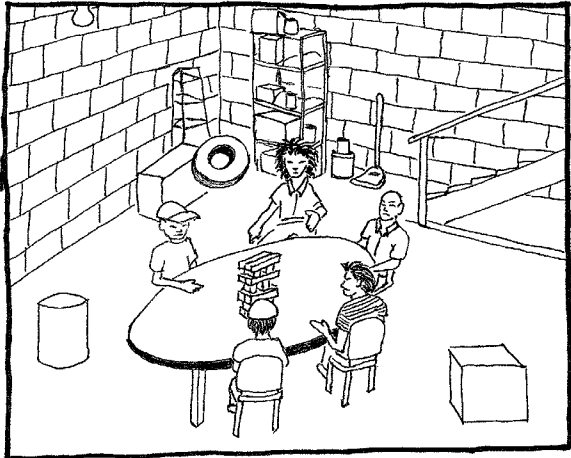
There's Not Enough Time In One Day

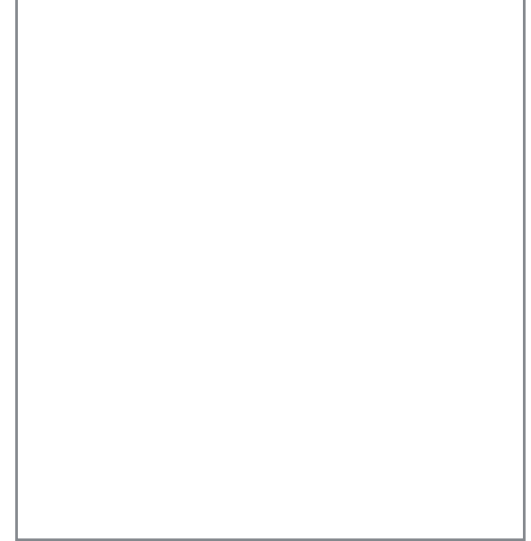
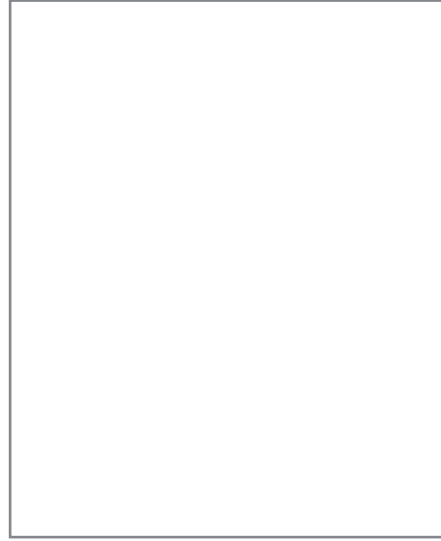
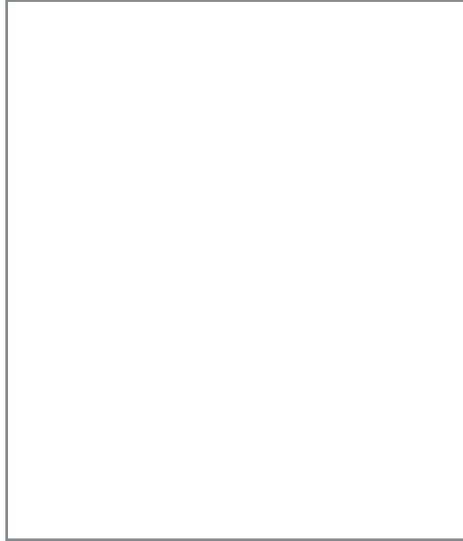
The Gift art by Lonche Thrash story by Nick Grynieqicz





Jenga Adventure art by Victor Gaston story by Gary Walaszewski



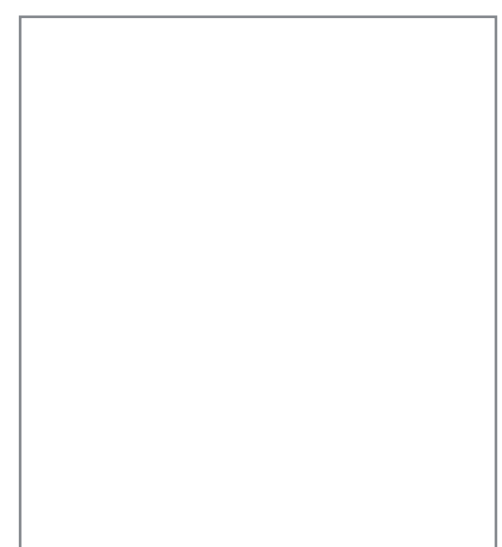
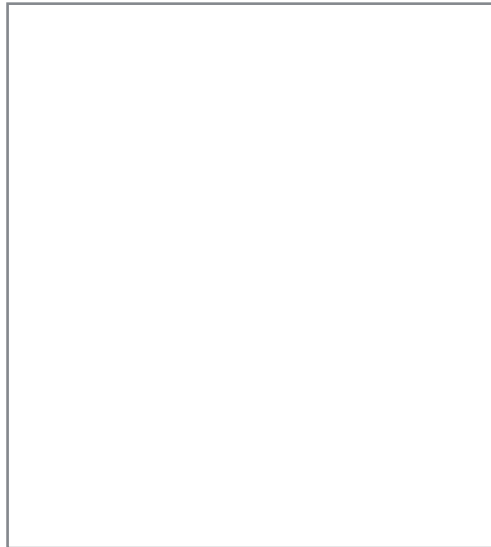


ACT ONE:
THE STORY BEGINS ON AN
ORDINARY DAY.

ACT ONE CONCLUSION:
SOMETHING HAPPENS THAT
CHANGES EVERYTHING -
PROBLEM IDENTIFIED.

ACT TWO:
THERE IS A PROBLEM THAT
MUST BE SOLVED.

ACT TWO:
HOW TO SOLVE THE PROBLEM?
TRIAL AND ERROR, ET AL.



ACT TWO:
A SOLUTION IS EVIDENT

ACT TWO CONCLUSION:
A CHANGE OCCURS, FOR
GOOD OR BAD.

ACT THREE:
THE STORY TURNS —
THINGS ARE DIFFERENT.

ACT THREE CONCLUSION:
MORAL OF THE STORY.

Learning to Fly art by Gilberto Rivera story by jimi izrael

In 1989, I knew everything, so I dropped out of high school. Dumb move.

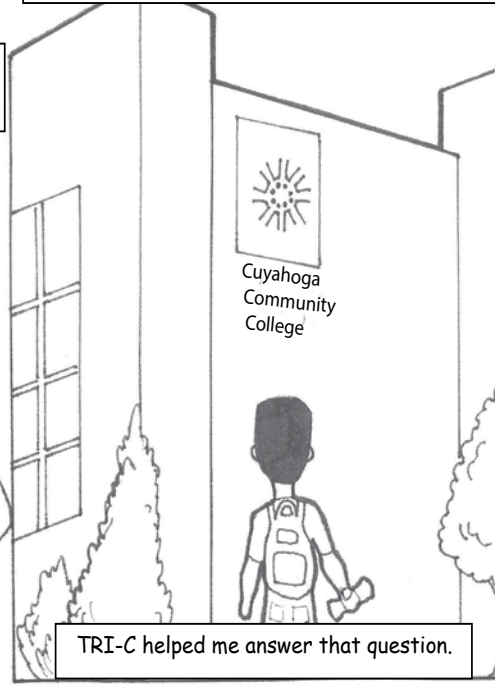


I wanted to be a DJ, and I did for a while.



BUT I NEEDED A LIFE-PLAN.

I got my GED- But was I COLLEGE material?

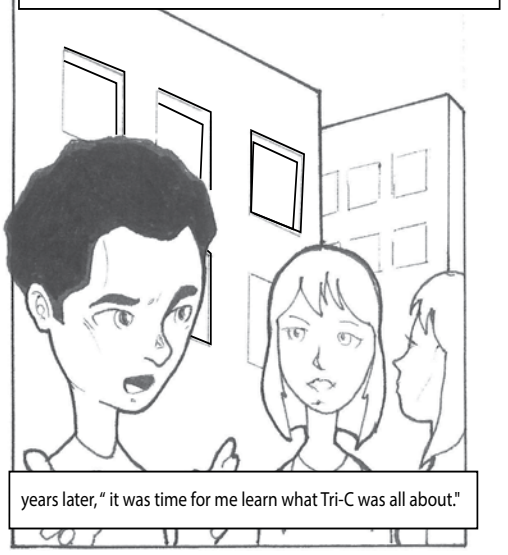


TRI-C helped me answer that question.

1985

Jimi, 15 enjoys doing theater during summer camp.

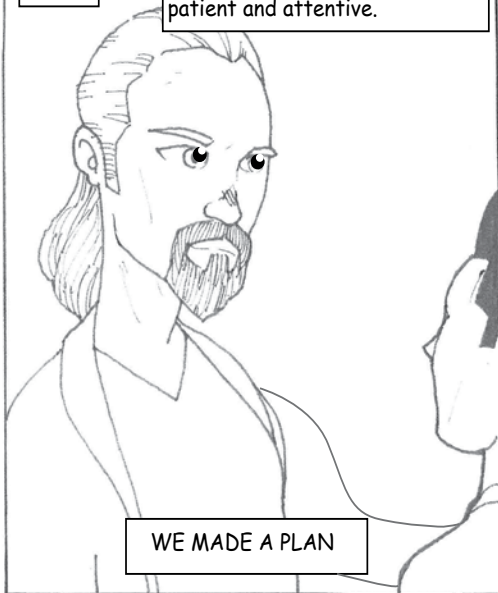
I'd spent a lot of summers on Campus on the Jesse Owens Program



years later, "it was time for me learn what Tri-C was all about."

1996

Tim Dodds, my advisor, was very patient and attentive.



WE MADE A PLAN

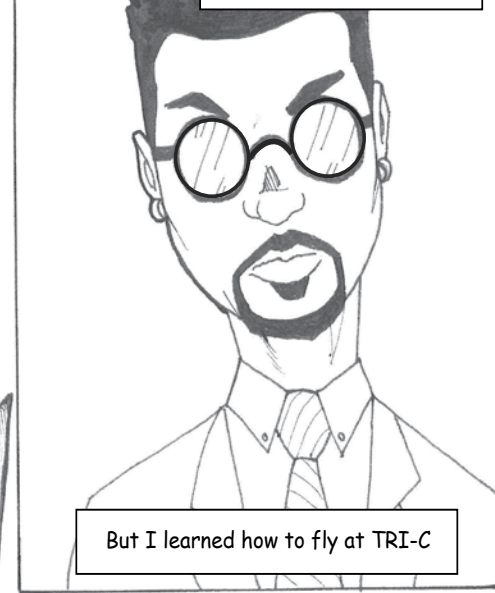
I went to Cleveland State and Spalding University



I became a journalist, author and a college instructor.

2014

I owe a lot to my family.



But I learned how to fly at TRI-C

