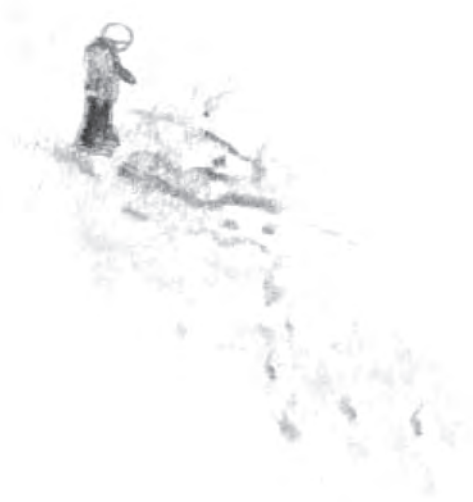


yesterday and maybe tomorrow too

JEFF BENHAM *and* COURTNEY ANGERMEIER





yesterday and maybe tomorrow too

SHORT COMICS *by*

JEFF BENHAM *and* COURTNEY ANGERMEIER

Yesterday and Maybe Tomorrow Too

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Courtney's family, Seth Woods, Philip Welsh, and Gregg Weiss.

12,000 Stars

JEFF BENHAM



Really?

Yep.

That's how many
you can see.

With the naked
eye?

Yep.

Seems like
much more.





Seems like
an ocean shimmering,
You can fall in
and bathe
in it.

Fall up.

Fall up.
And bathe.





Mmm.

Starbathing?





Shooting stars,

Gotta watch out
for those.



Keep
your eyes
open.



or they'll land on
you when you're
starbathing.

With my eyes
closed, they can't see
me. They pass right
through me.

They'll get
you even so.

They don't exist.





You're right,
They don't exist.



They're not
in fact stars
at all.



Sure they
are.

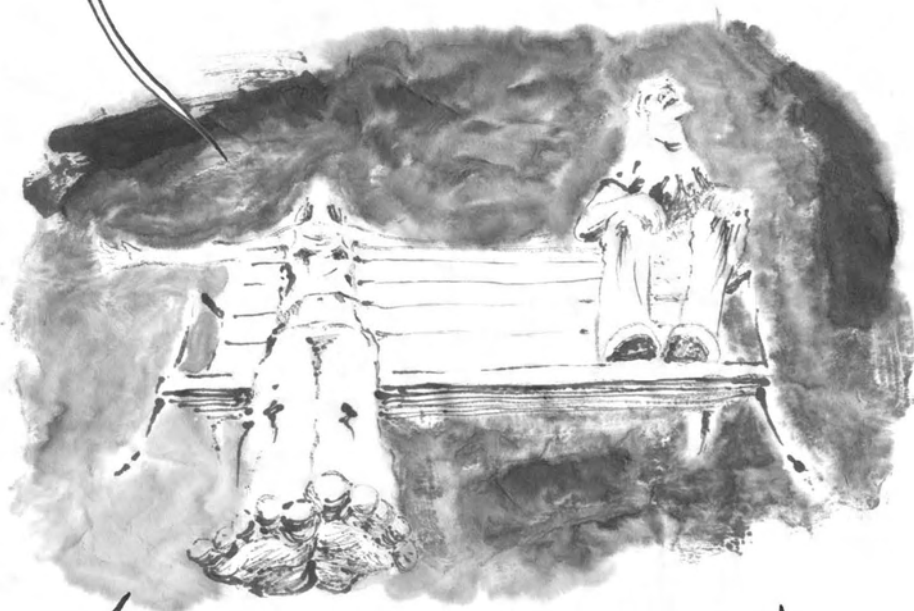
Nope.
Falling stars are
just bits of
debris

Caught in the
atmosphere.

Burning
up.



Not
at all. A star
is any point
of brilliance in
the night
sky.



A sparkle on that ocean you can fall up to bathe in.

Burning debris,



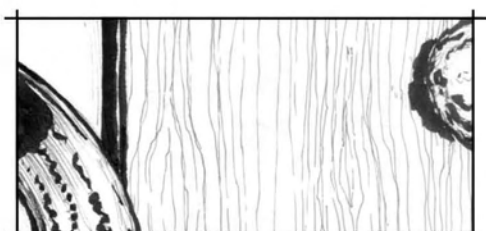
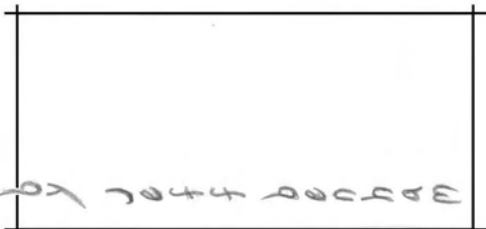
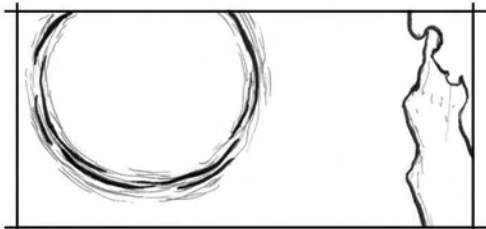
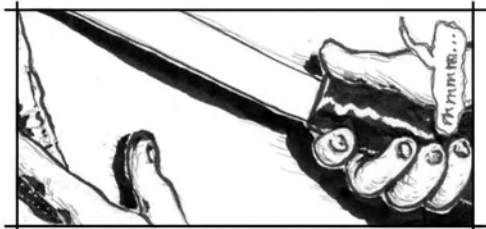
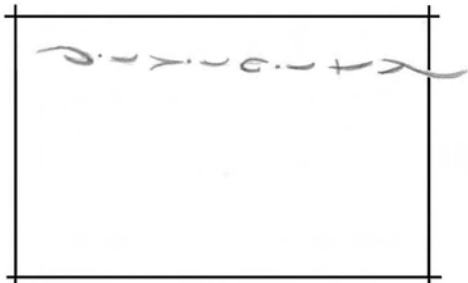
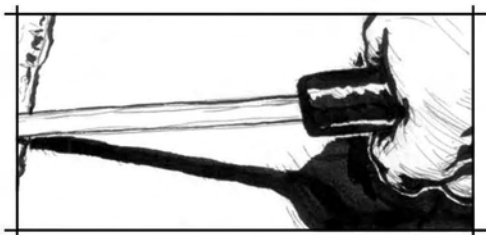
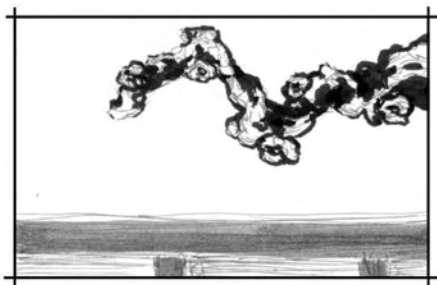
A
splash in the
water.

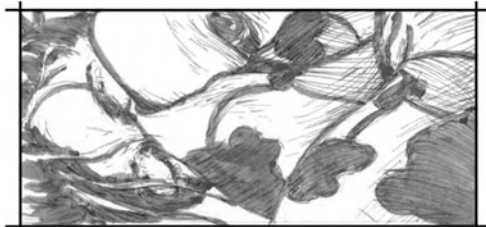
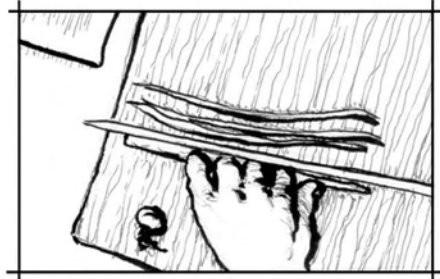
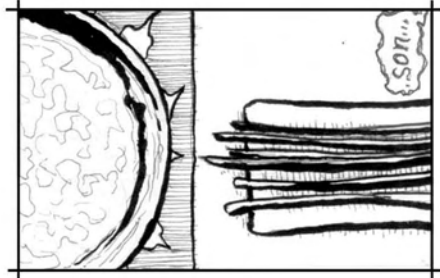


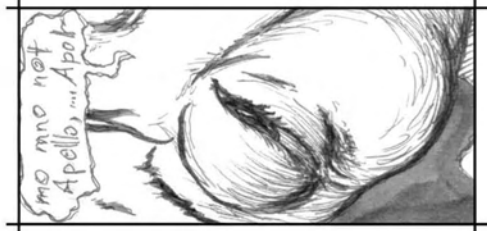
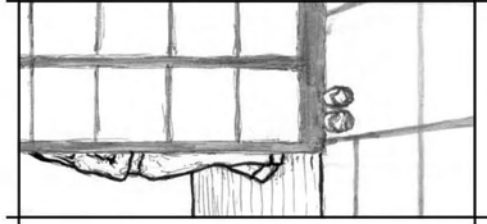
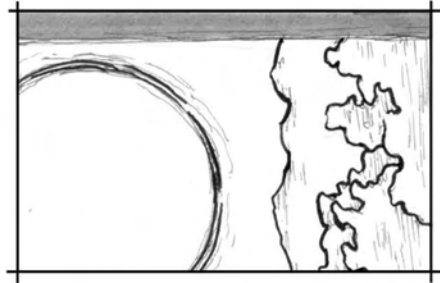


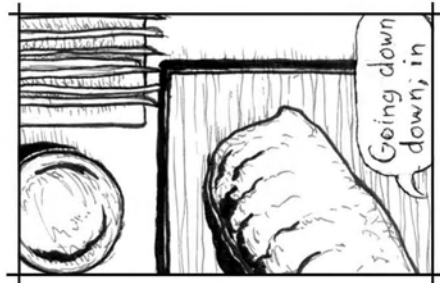
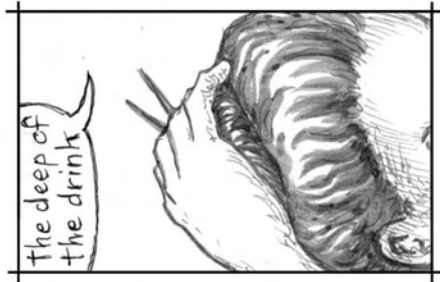
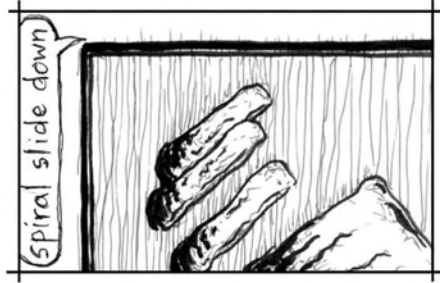
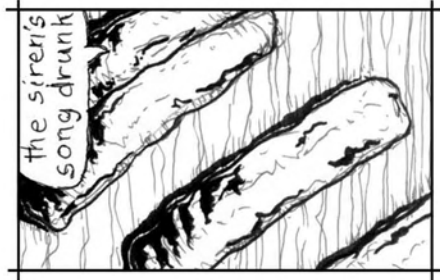
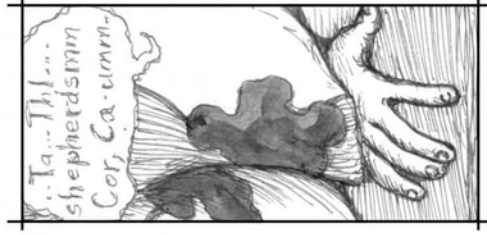
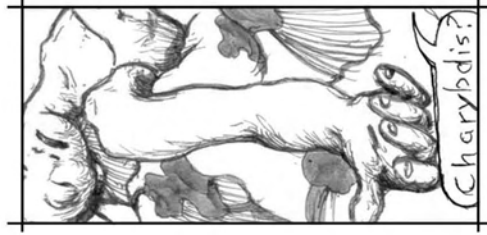
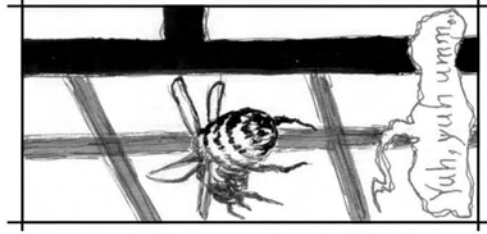
divinity

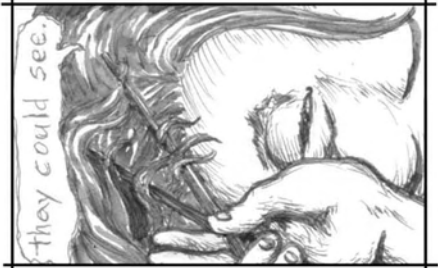
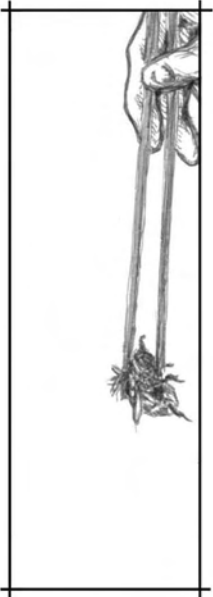
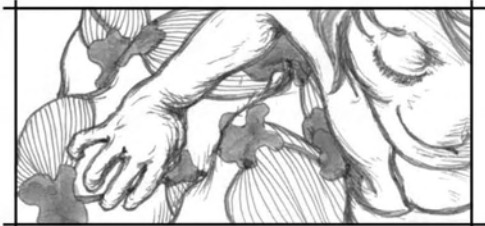
JEFF BENHAM













In ancient
Crete

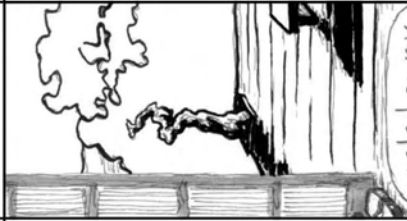


there was a
ceremony.

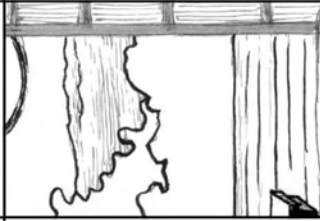
On the spring
equinox,



the people
would gather
as the shadow
of the sun



peeled away
the night sky.



At the moment
the sun itself
bit the lip
of the earth,



a boy was
crowned king.

And for that
one day he
was king. He
ruled all Crete.



The boy king was
given knuckle bones
and bits of wool,
golden apples for
admission to heaven.

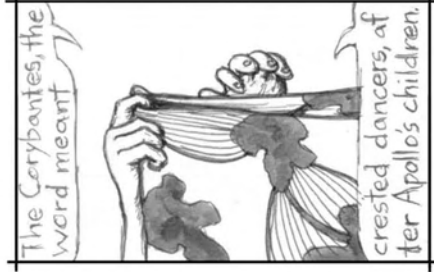
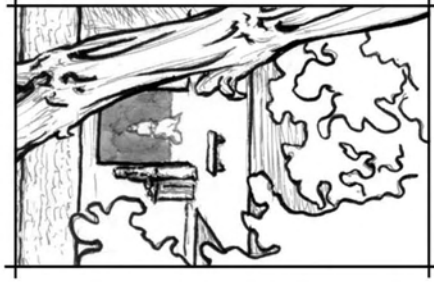


They brought him
a bull-roarer and
taught him how
it whirled.



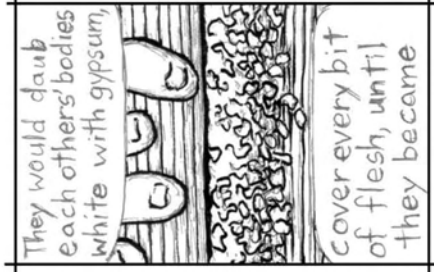
Boys
like that growling
rush, of breath
and fury spinning
at their beck.





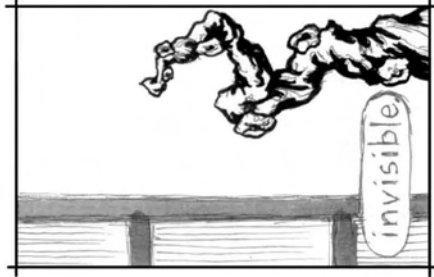
The Corybantes, the word meant

crested dancers, after Apollo's children.



They would daub each others' bodies white with gypsum,

cover every bit of flesh, until they became

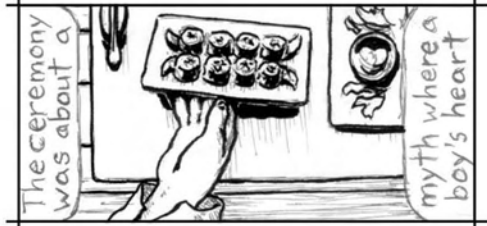


invisible



Then the Corybantes brought the boy king a mirror,

So that he might see himself as a ghost.

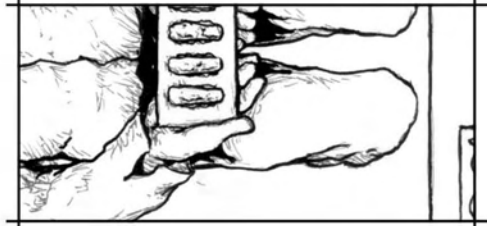


The ceremony was about a

myth where a boy's heart



was immortalized inside a gypsum body.





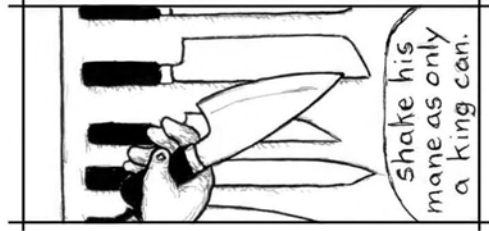
So the boy king
would dance



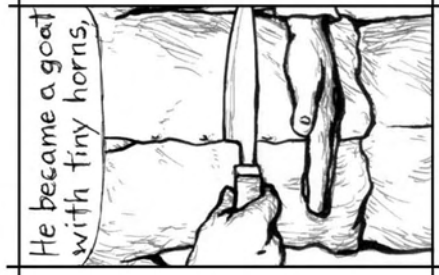
pursued by the
invisible white
crested dancers.



He would dance
as a lion,



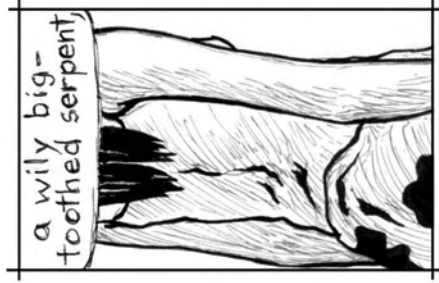
shake his
mane as only
a king can.



He became a goat
with tiny horns,



a tall-legged horse



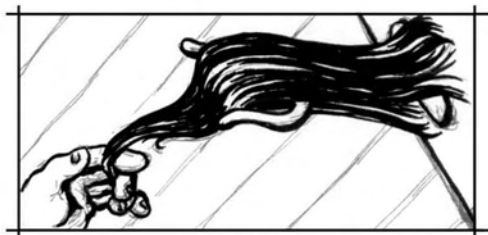
a wily big-
toothed serpent,

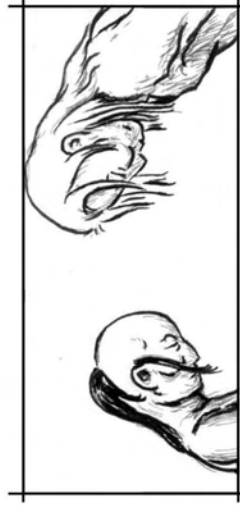


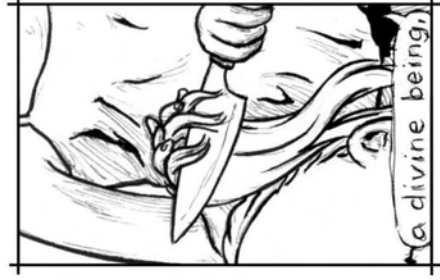
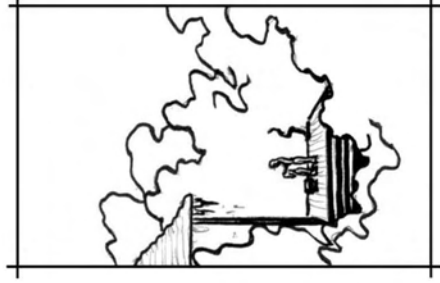
And with all of his
breath, the boy-
king would rooear
like a bull-calf.



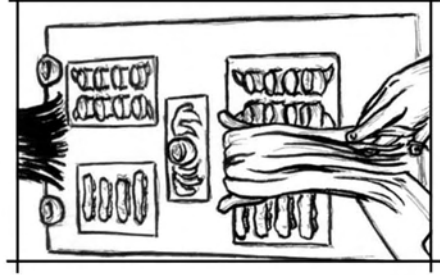
Then he was
devoured raw.



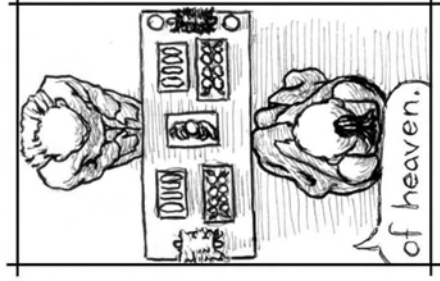




a divine being,

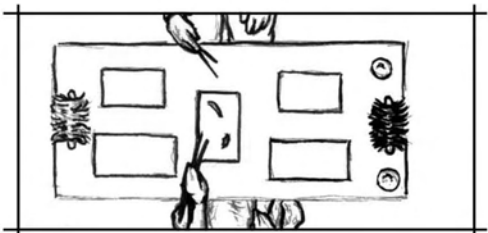
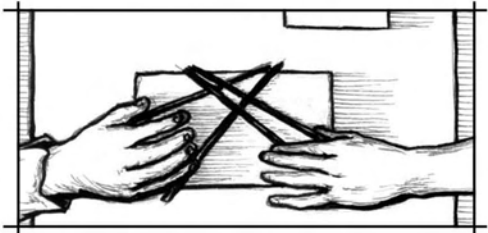
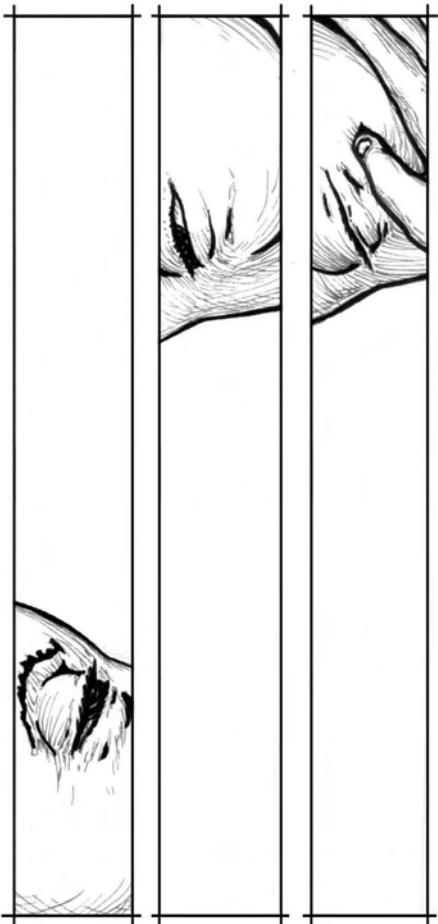


inherently

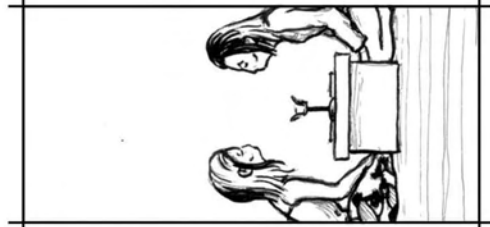
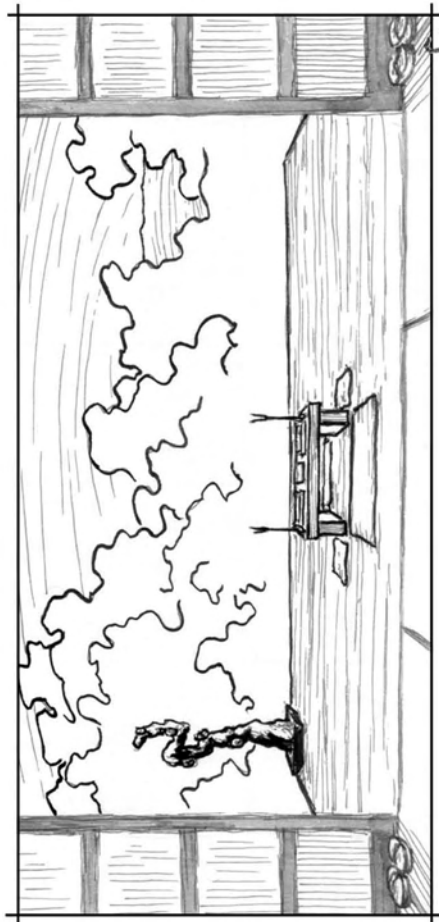


of heaven.









Love Is Not All

COURTNEY ANGERMEIER



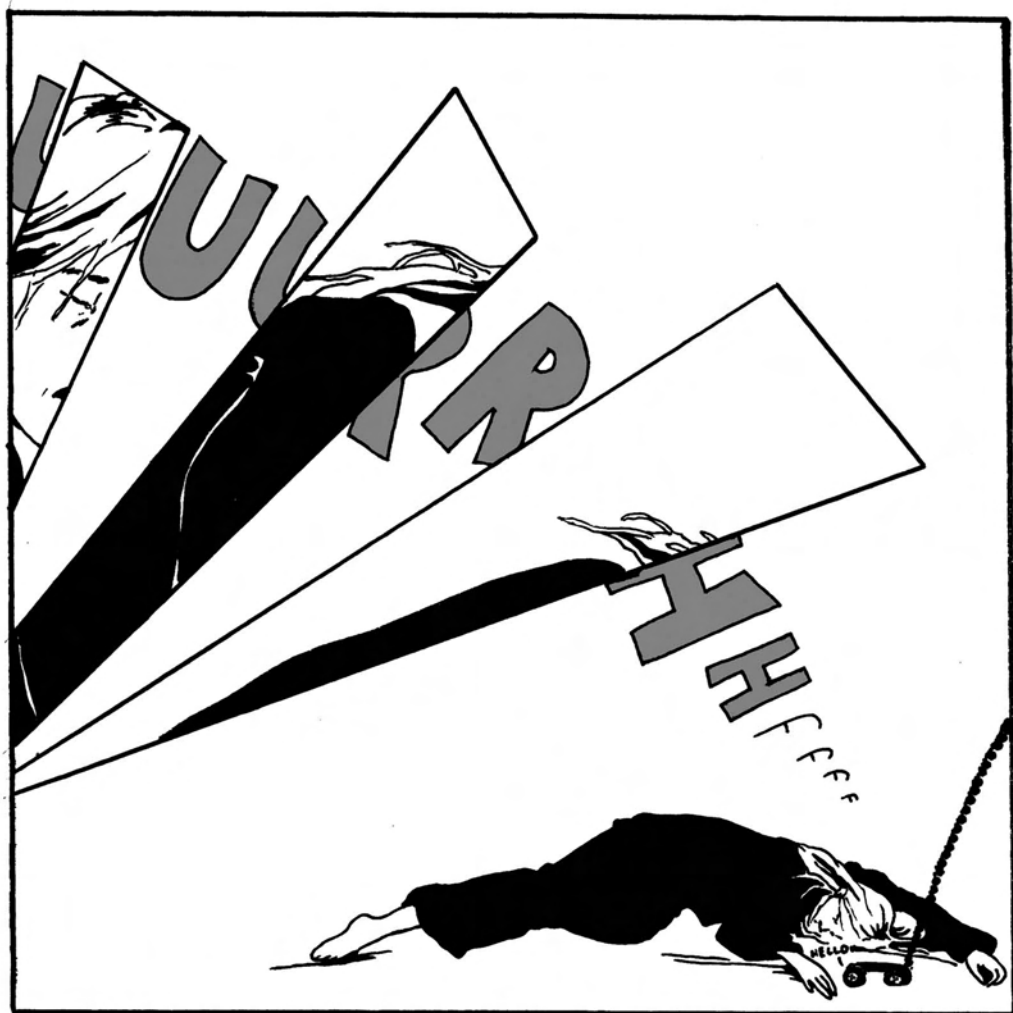
NO. I CAN'T
AFFORD TO. NO.

ALL DIZZY.

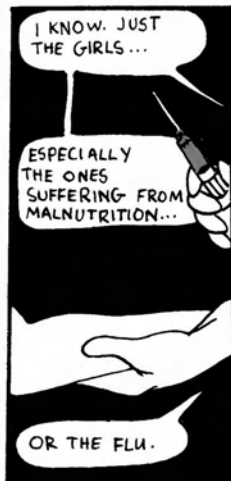
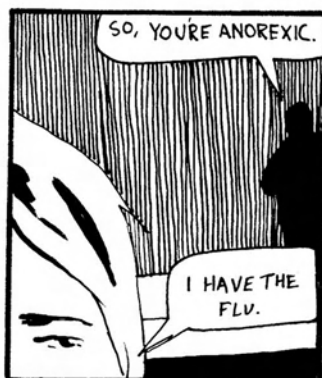
Uhhh...

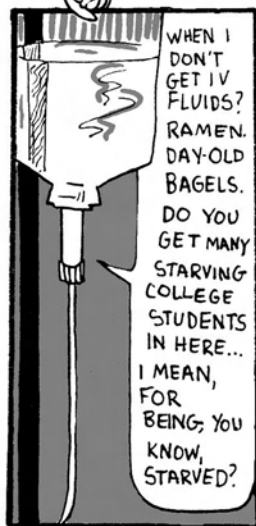
HOLD ON....
I.... uh...

I CAN'T. I'M
REALLY SICK. YES.

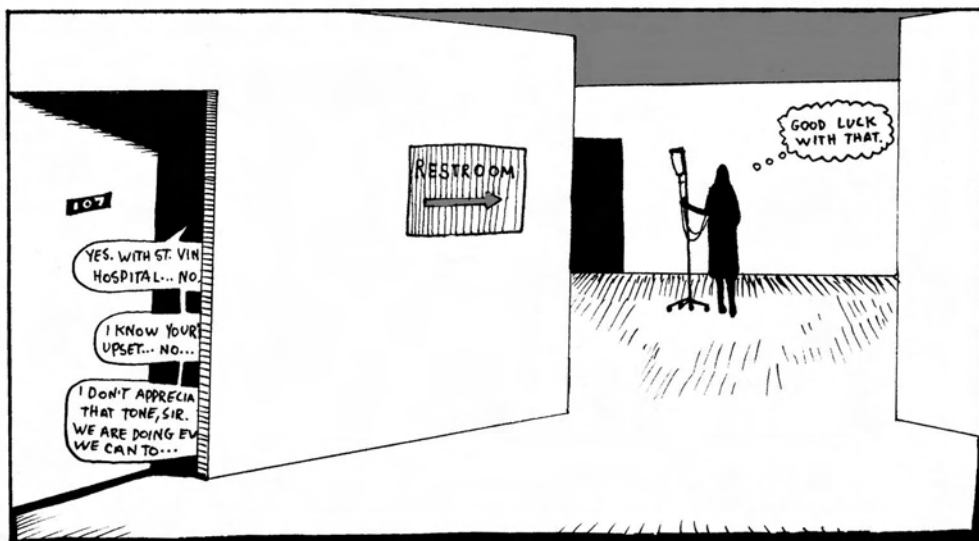










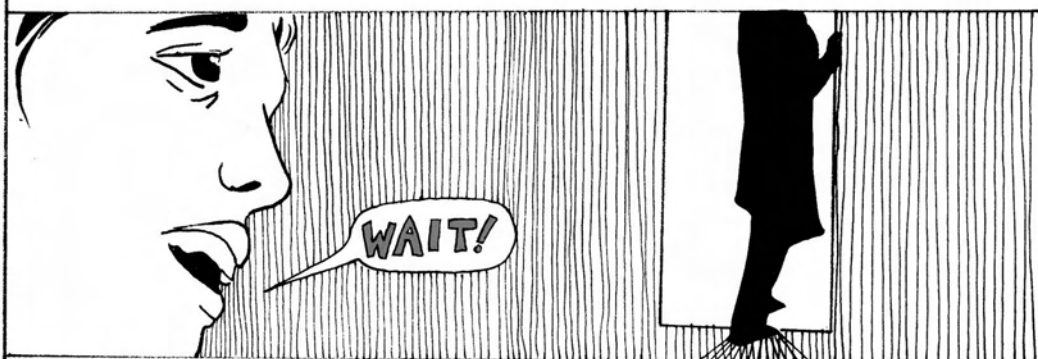














THE END


In the Bleak Midwinter

COURTNEY ANGERMEIER



DO YOU REMEMBER
ME GETTING ATTACKED
BY A DOG?

NO. YOU KNOW
I CAN'T REMEMBER
ANYTHING ABOUT
YOU KIDS' CHILDHOOD.




LET'S TRY
HERE.

COURTNEY SAID IT
WAS IN OMAHA, WHEN
I WAS IN THE
BACKYARD.

COME ON. HELP DIG.
YOU'RE NOT DOING
ANYTHING

SHE SAID DAD TOLD HER
I WAS IN A STROLLER OR
SOMETHING IN THE YARD
AND DAD WAS UP ROOFING
THE HOUSE.


OH, I REMEMBER
YOUR DAD DOING
THAT.



THEY SAY THAT FREEZING
TO DEATH IS THE BEST
WAY TO DIE.

WELL, YEAH. SO, I GUESS
DAD WAS UP ON THE ROOF,
AND I WAS DOWN IN THE
STROLLER AND THIS DOG
RAN INTO THE YARD
AND STARTED TO ATTACK
ME AND DAD THREW
THE HAMMER AT
THE DOG FROM
THE ROOF!


REALLY. THAT'S
FUNNY. I DON'T
REMEMBER...
EXCEPT ABOUT
HIM ROOFING
THE HOUSE.



THEY SAY YOU GET
ALL WARM AND SLEEPY
AND HAPPY.

ARE YOU EVEN LISTENING?
HE THREW A HAMMER AT
ME FROM THE TOP OF THE
HOUSE. I WAS IN A STROLLER.
I COULDN'T EVEN MOVE!

NO. I DON'T REMEMBER
THAT. WERE YOU WEARING
YOUR RED COAT? I
REMEMBER THAT COAT.



NOW GET IN.

DO YOU REMEMBER
THAT COAT?

I LIKED THAT COAT.


STOP SUCKING.
YOU GOTTA PUT YOUR MITTEN
BACK ON OR YOUR HAND
WILL GET COLD.

THAT WAS
COURTNEY'S
COAT.





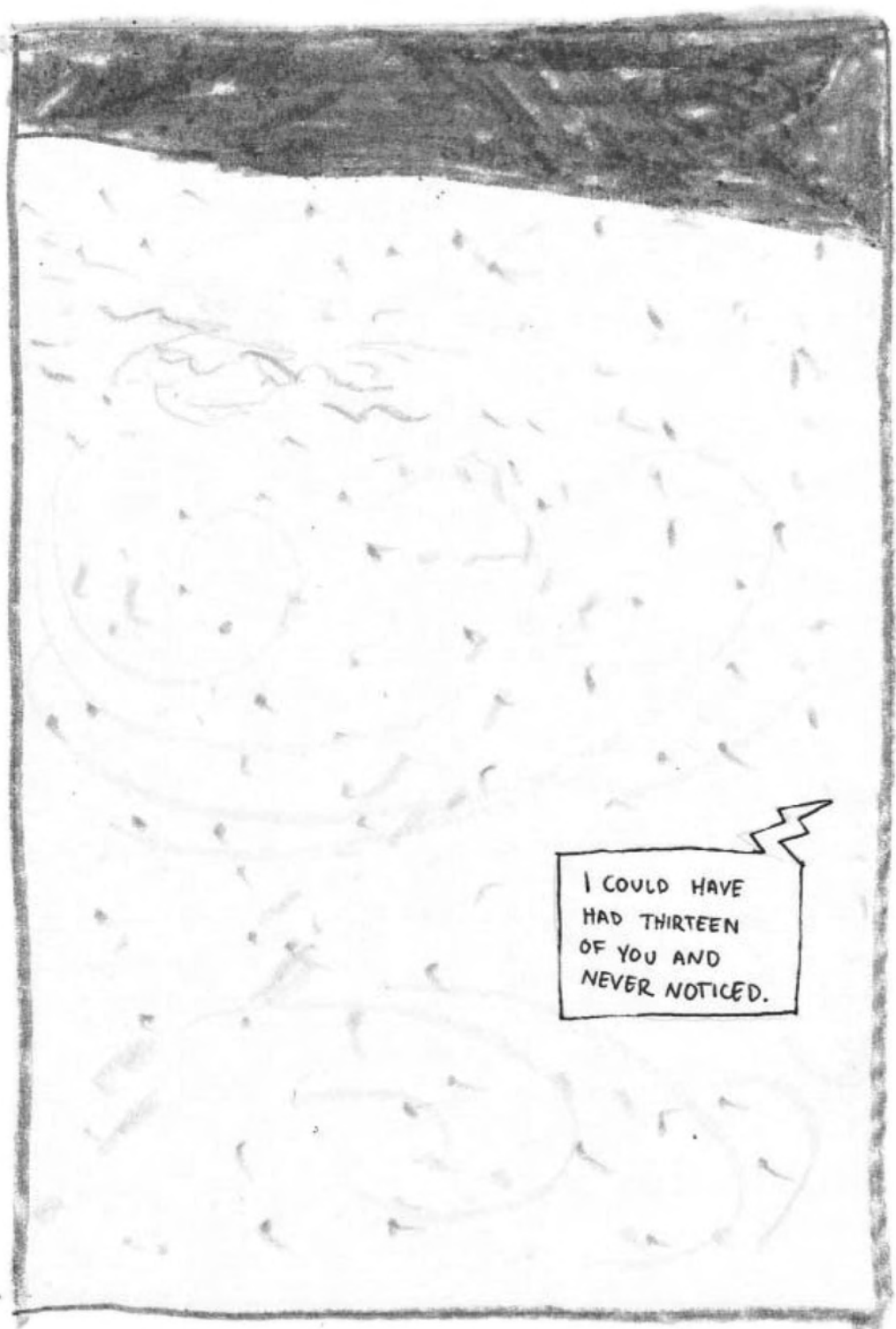




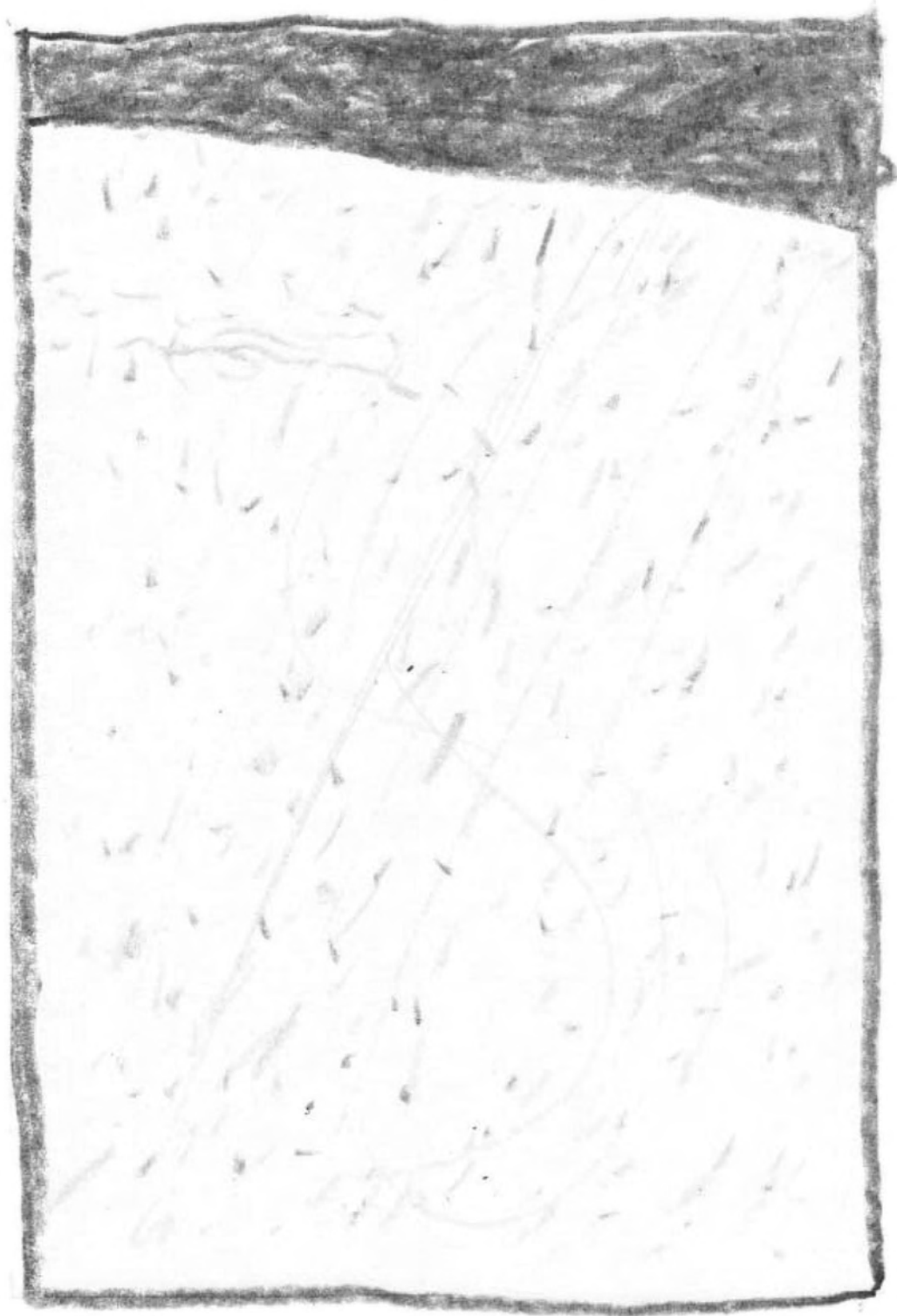
I'M POKING
YOU SOME AIR HOLES.

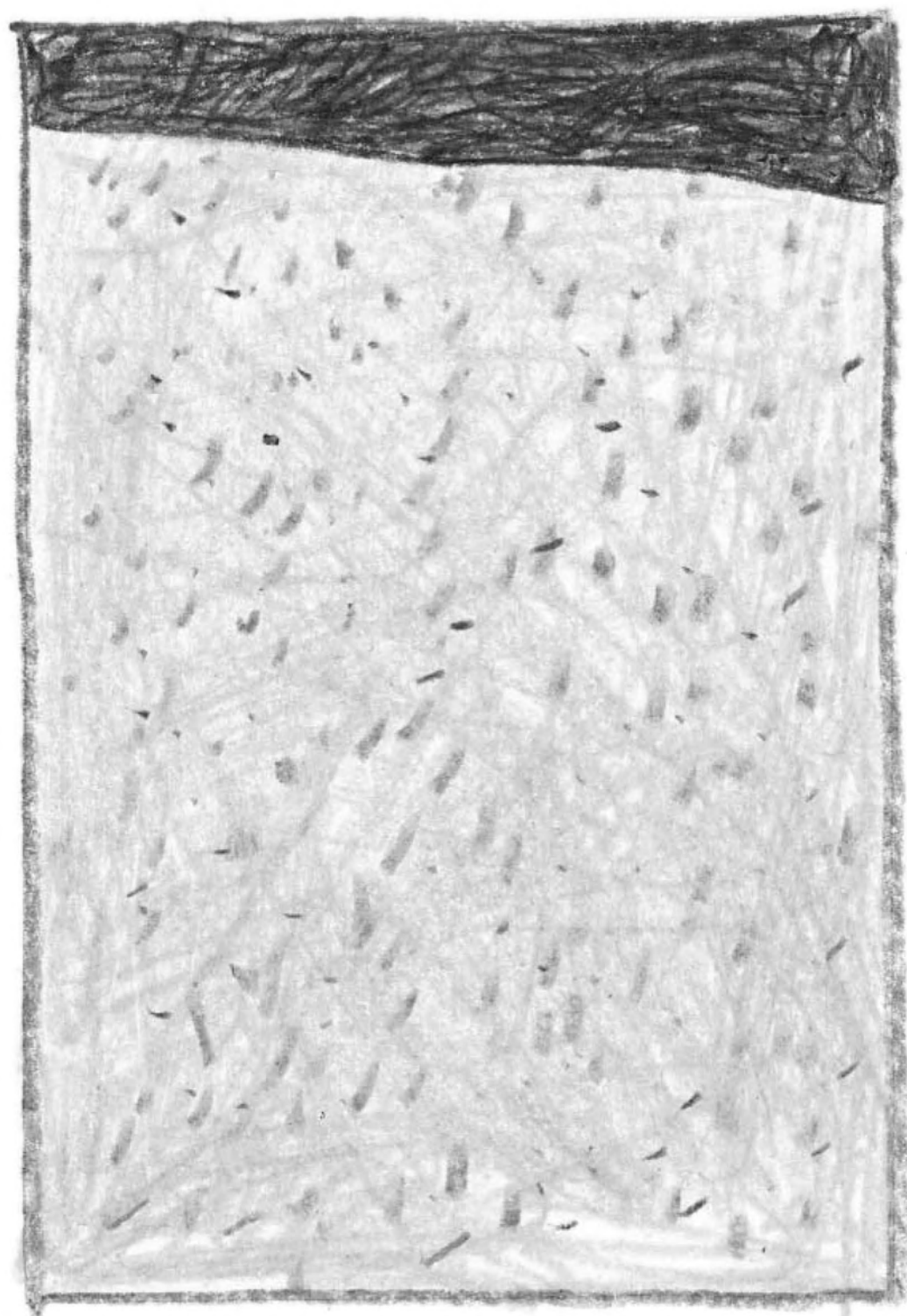
NOW TRY AND
GO TO SLEEP.


YOU WERE
ALWAYS SO QUIET
AND GOOD...



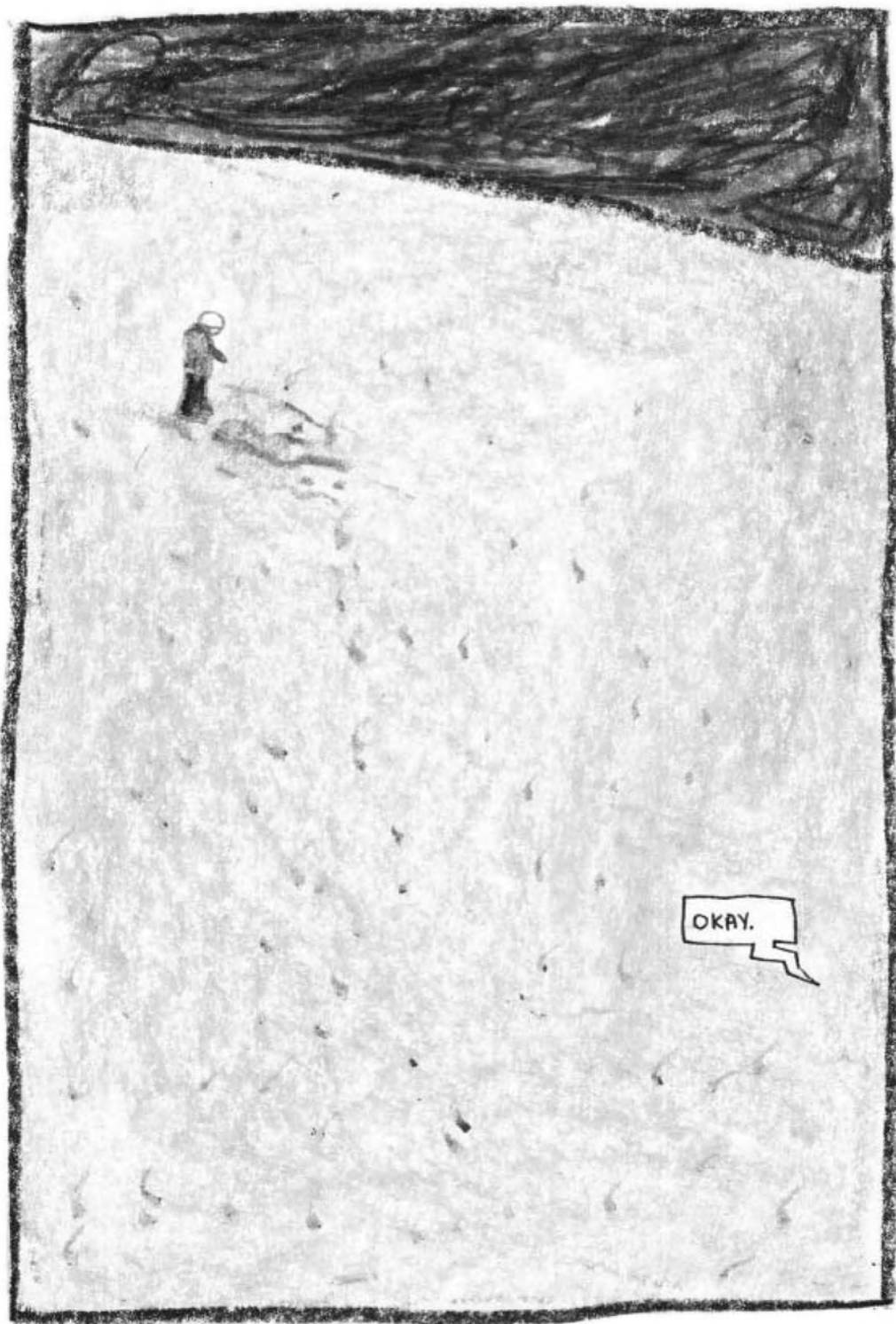
I COULD HAVE
HAD THIRTEEN
OF YOU AND
NEVER NOTICED.

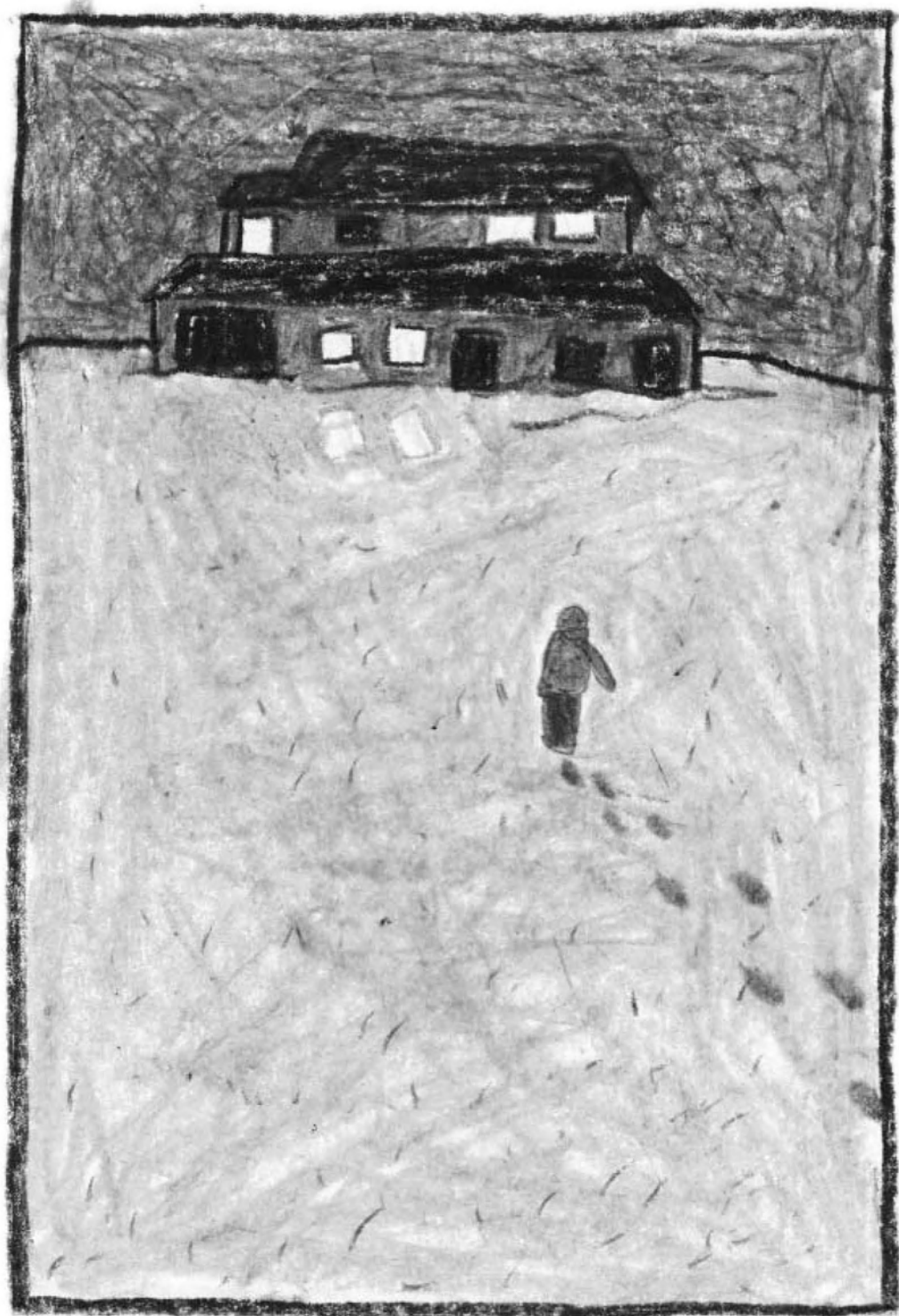






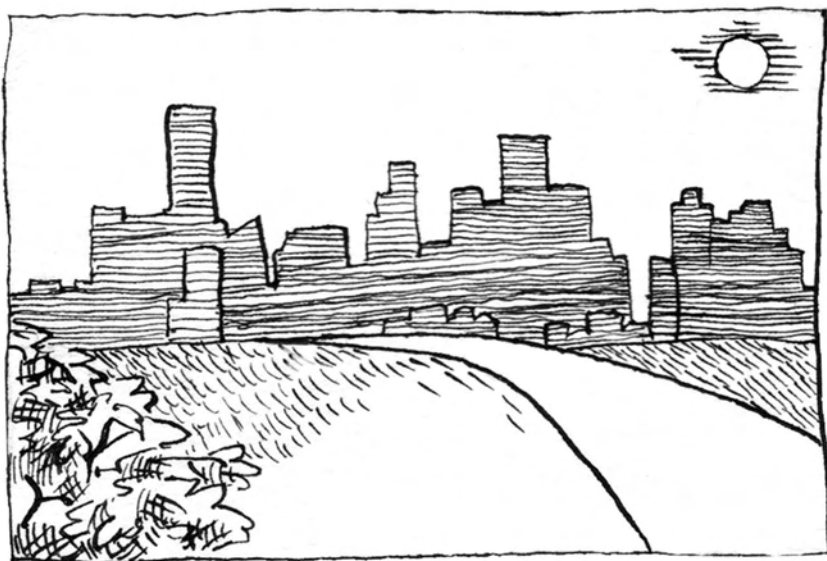
MOM? WE CAN'T
TALK ABOUT THAT
COAT, OK?



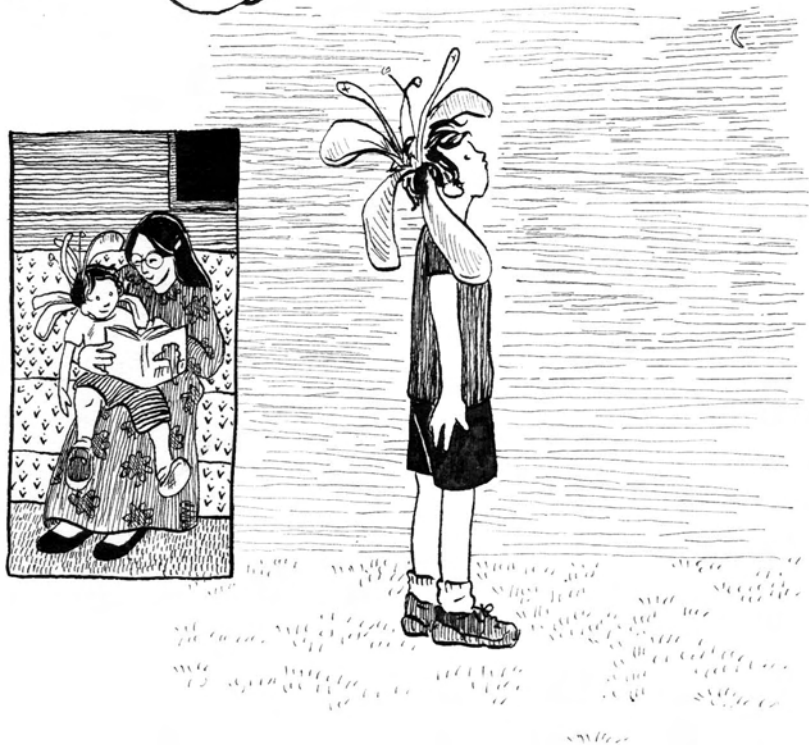


Luno

COURTNEY ANGERMEIER



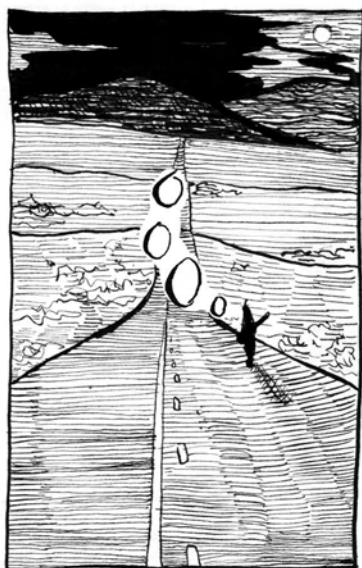




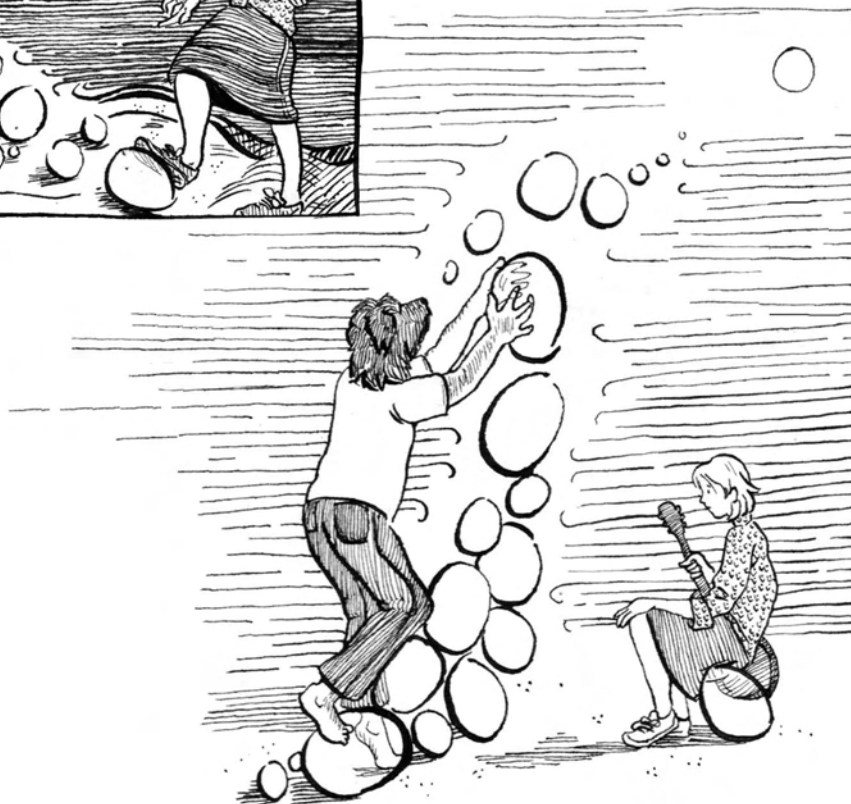
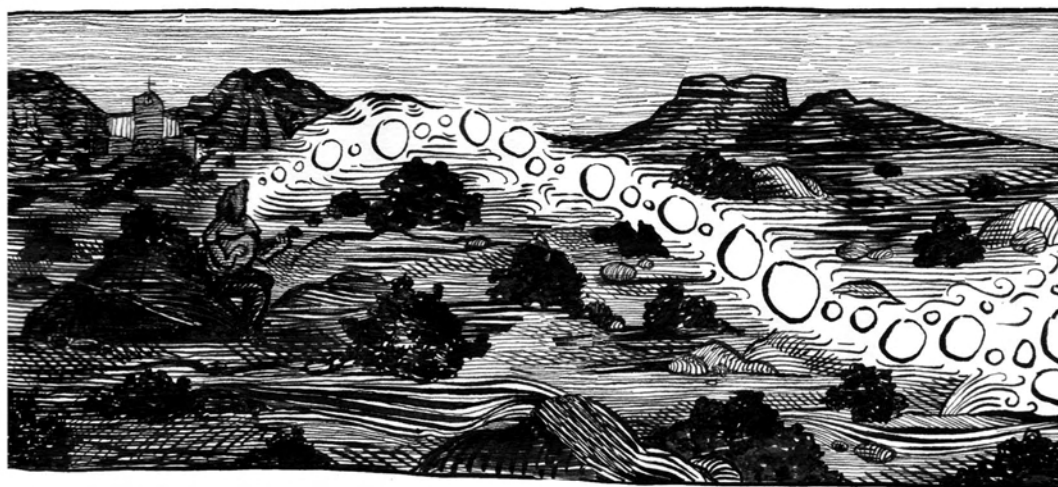


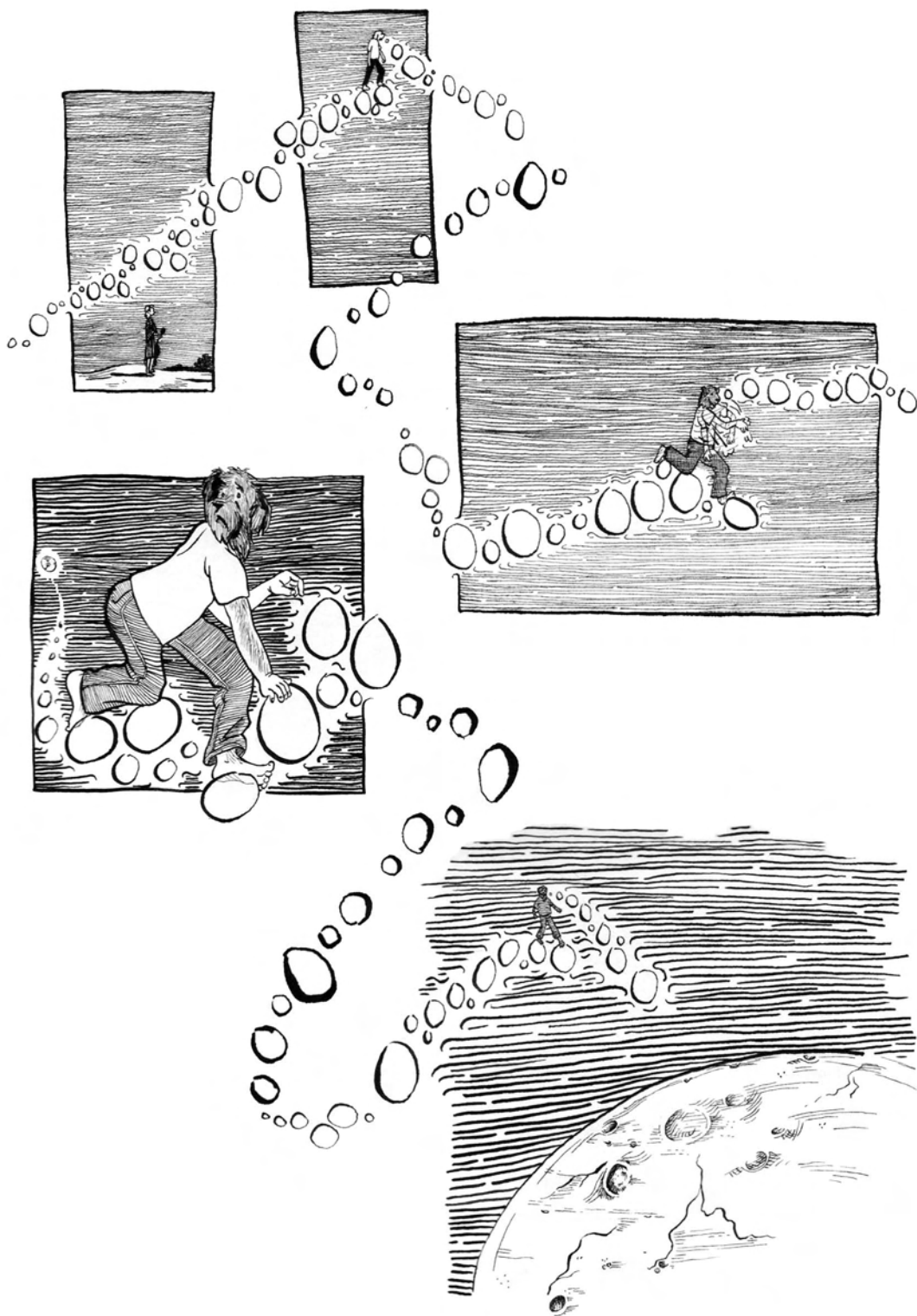


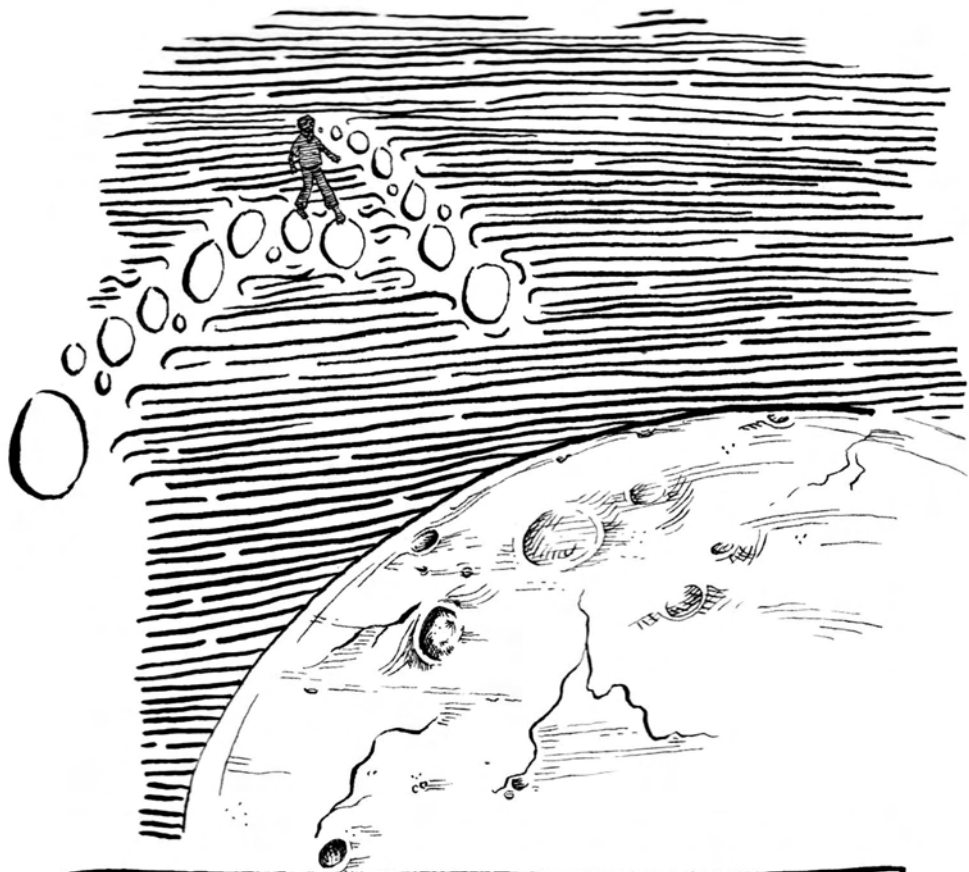






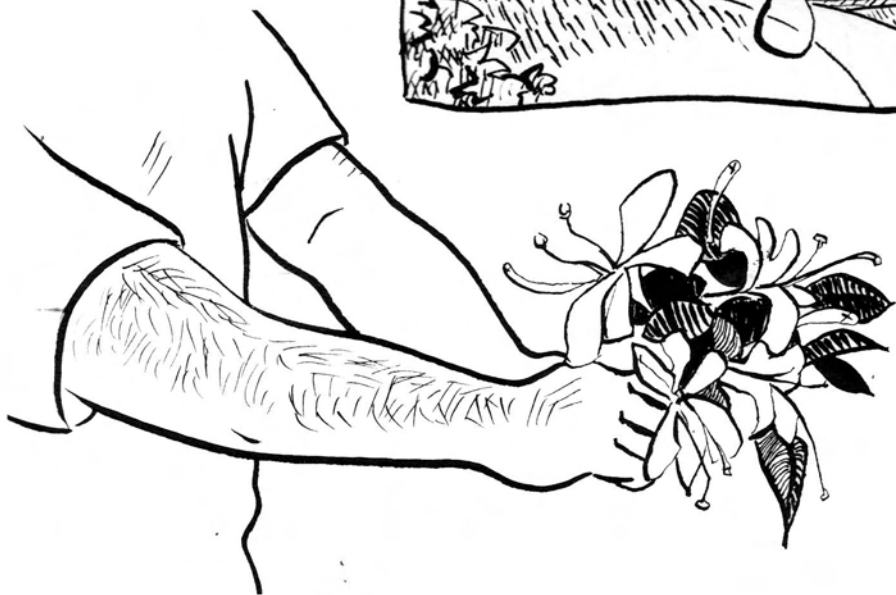
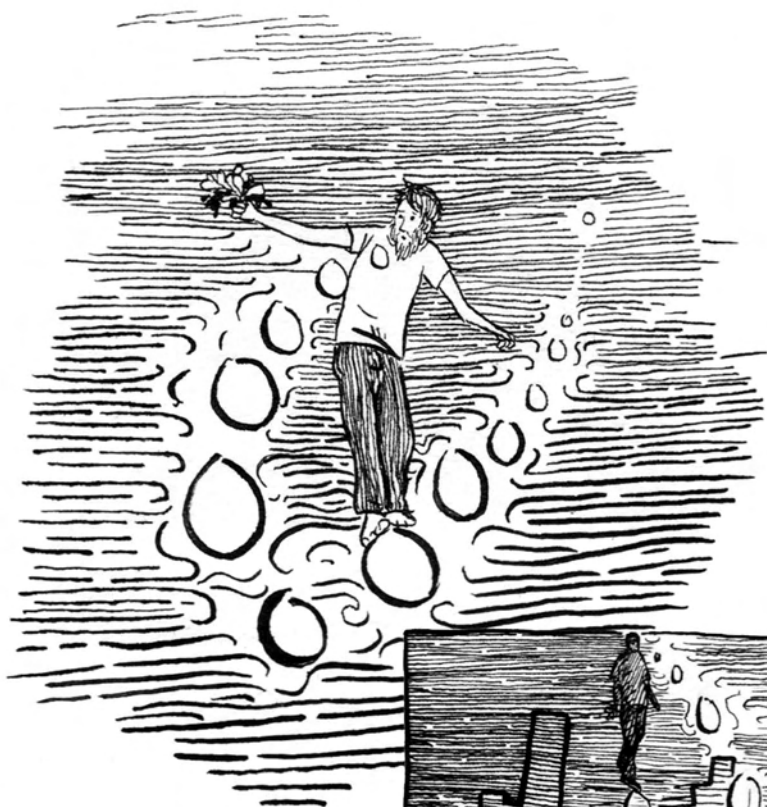














Huck

JEFF BENHAM

Huck Finn was hangin' on the fencepost by the barn a-hootin' and a-laughin', tryin' ta slap his knee through the slats causin' him ta a-hoot an' a-laugh all the that much further.

"What's all the holler, Huck?" I asked.

"I swear by Aunt Ginnie's pipe, some days I'm Tom and some days I'm Huck. Yesterday I done took a shinin' ta ol' Becky, an' tomorra I may again, but today I ain't nuthin' but a lazy ol' Huckleberry jest a-giddy as this right fence post," An' he slapped at the post an' doubled up some again.



I started laughin' too like Huck had give me a laughin' sickness an' we both was sick as a sinner on Sunday for a spell. We slapped at each others' knees through the slats an' I tousled his hair with a shore. He wrestled me ta the ground an' after a short spell I kicked him right off.

"Aw, Huck," I said, catchin' my breath, "You are a devil."

"That may not be a right way ta talk," he giggled, "but it sure may be truth."



Huck got real silent then an' started pickin' at the fence. He climbed up an' bent at his belly ta pick a stalk of grass upside down. Then he sat up top the fence, spun about ta face the barn an' chewed.

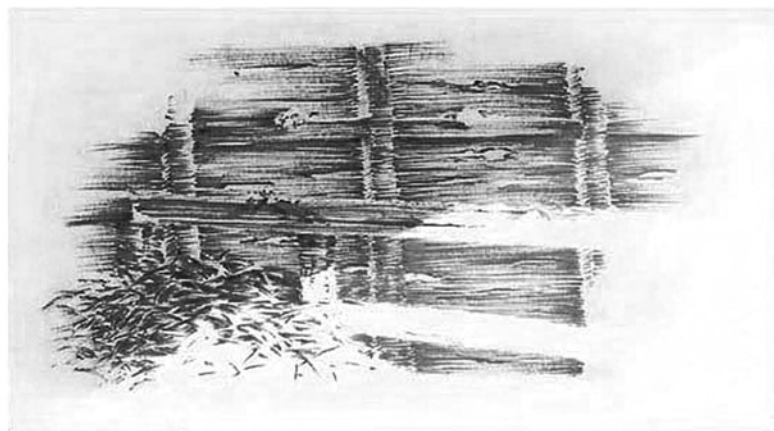
"I got sumthin' today." His head nodded forward. "I got sumthin' today," jest his eyes turned to me an' one eyebrow pricked, "an' I'll show it to ya."

"Alright," I said. He hopped off the fence, tossed the stalk, an' the grin come back.

"It's in the barn."



We walked, but we weren't quick enough at that so we scuttled an' jigged an' started wrestlin' up the path. Before we know what had happened, we wrestled our way right against the barn door, an' it creaked so loud as to froze us right up an' the barn door swung far throwin' a light like dust on the straw an' the posts an' the earth.



It was like the heat was a tree pulled against us by a hurricane all the fiery leaves surroundin' us separate. In them patches between the leaves there was cool sparkles like the breeze come through the knotholes was lights on the night river an' we was the river stewin'. Huck an' me held our breath not wantin' ta let go of the last bit of outside we had in us. The barn was still an' silent such that I was sure that birds couldn' fly in there if they tried.

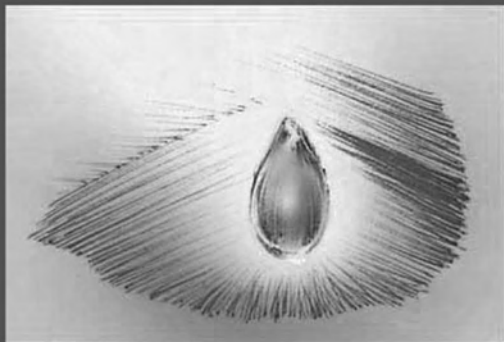
Huck punched me in the arm and laughed but I didn't punch back and Huck stopped laughin'. He breathed in heavy and stood up. "It's in the loft," he said.



We walked like we was scoutin' fer injuns all the way to the back of the nuggy barn an' up the ladder. There was a wood box with a pinch of rope wrappin' it an' holdin' a lid on that was too big for it. "I swear to you on the most honest pirate treasure there ever was that it is exactly as I found it under a stone in the burned out cabin on Devil's Island. You gotta swear a blood oath across your heart never to tell noone about this," Huck said an' pulled out his knife an' cut it across my palm.

"I swear, Huck." I hiked up my shirt an' drug my hand over my heart. "I won't never say nuthin' else let a hail storm pluck my eyes out."

Then Huck untied the rope, pullin' the lid off the box.



Now we was in the hottest part of the barn, like we'd climbed up the ladder to hell itself, but when Huck moved that lid I felt cold from my spine to my hair and then back to my heels and toenails.



There was a bullfrog in that box. He was a big one sure though not as big as some I'd seen. But this bullfrog had a cane like ol' Colonel Standish an' a hat like the president of the United States an' a coat an' necktie like the undertaker.

At first I thought it was the undertaker's coat that was chillin' me so much an' I was about ta grab the lid from Huck an' put it back on ta keep the undertaker from takin' me when the bullfrog croaked an' I could feel Huck grinnin' right at the back of my neck. This weren't no ordinary croak an' Huck knew it. It was low like the eastern wind like a bullfrog does but it was like a song somehow. When I heard that song I realized that it weren't the undertaker's coat that was makin' me cold, it was the president's hat. This bullfrog deserved that hat because his song made him as respectable an' as honorable as the President himself. An' it weren't that I was cold from bein' afraid, it was that his song was coolin' me off like it was pullin' the roots of that stuffed heat right from my chest.



We sat an' listened ta that bullfrog, me an' Huck, like when you turn a frog over an' rub its stomach an' it turns limp only the bullfrog was doin' it ta us with its singin'. I could feel the air coolin' all through the barn makin' it like the damp bullfrog's home. It was a bullfrog song sure but that bullfrog had a voice like, heaven's trumpets.



I was movin' all around that barn like breeze made of song an' floatin' just listenin'. Then that bullfrog song floated me right out the big barn door an' I realized how much hotter it was outside the barn now than inside. An' then I noticed how bright that hot was. Bright an' hot but hot in acres not like the barn had been. Hot in cornfields an' hot along fencelines an' hot along the Mississippi all the way to the ocean. Shinin' bright like Tom's pirate treasure. Shinin' bright like the mornin' after you been out adventurin' all night. An' that got me ta thinkin' how bright Becky's dress had been Easter day. I swear that I aint never seen nuthin' so bright as that.



An' then it come to me. If what Huck was sayin' was true about yesterday an' about maybe tomorra too, well then I know I reckoned I knowed one thing.

Me an' Huck was a-goin' ta be wrastlin' tomorra sure.

about us

JEFF BENHAM

is an award-winning freelance artist and theatrical designer. His comics include the elegant philosophical journey *forever all*, the woeful outrageousness of *The Salmonilla Chronicles* (with Enrique Martinez), and contributions to *Raised by Squirrels*. As a member of the non-profit comics collective 7000 BC, he works to educate and create awareness of comics in New Mexico and beyond. More of his work can be seen at **belmondotomato.com**.

COURTNEY ANGERMEIER

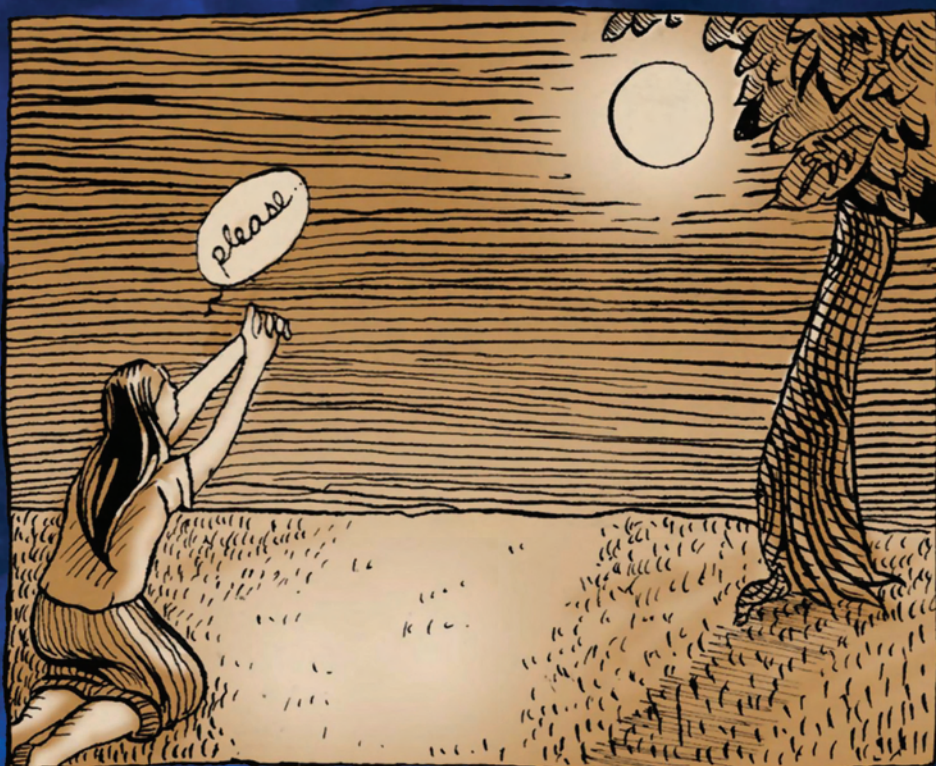
is a mammal. She resides in New Mexico and has been drawing comics for the past three years. She has shown and published work both locally and nationally. Some of her work can be viewed at **cangermeier.com**.

Courtney and Jeff are collaborating on *Peoplings: Autism, Education, and the Savage of Aveyron*. *Peoplings* is a full-length graphic novel which looks at autism and special education through the stories and perspectives of two boys; Max, a contemporary kindergartner on the autism spectrum, and Victor, a feral child from post-revolutionary France. *Peoplings* will be available in 2012. Learn more about *Peoplings* at **peoplings.com**.

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**TWO FRIENDS GAZE AT THE STARS.
TWO SISTERS STAND IN THE SNOW.
A BOY SHARES THE SECRET HIDDEN IN THE BARN.**

Yesterday and Maybe Tomorrow Too is a collection of short comics by Jeff Benham and Courtney Angermeier that explores alienation, loss, and the mystery and wonder of coming into one's self.



BELMONDO TOMATO