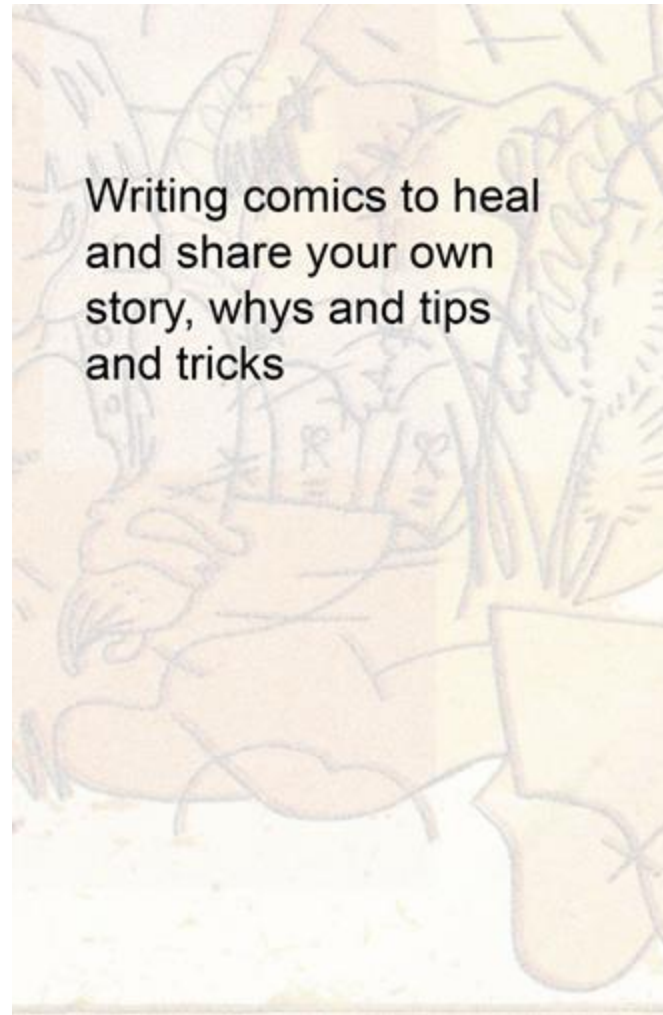


You are a flower and I care for you not because you are beautiful, but because I appreciate you



Writing comics to heal and share your own story, whys and tips and tricks

Writing comics to heal
and share your own
story, whys and tips
and tricks



I give myself a flower

I hold it like a prayer, to know that I am here and always
have been

There is a house at the top of the hill, it is where I grow my
flowers, this is my gift to you

Because I care

And because I love you



As a teen when the horrors felt never ending
I didn't know what to do
So I wrote a comic
In that comic I wrote that I was brave
In that comic I could say anything I wanted
Including the abuse



Including all the things my abusers told me to be quiet about

It was the one place they could not silence me



And as more people read that comic

My story became mine

My story travelled from person to person

My abusers were able to silence me (temporarily)

But-



They could not silence a community of people who cared

And in doing so, I became brave



More and more so other survivors would come up to me

We had a shared sense of solidarity

A shared lived experience

We would nod on the streets

We would hold each other and cry



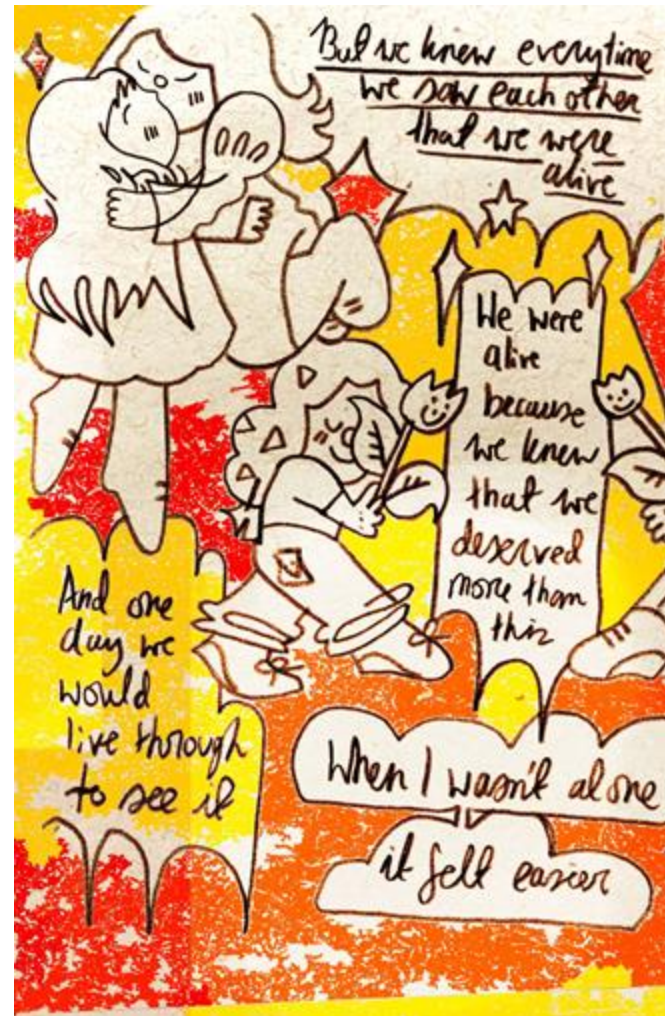
But we knew everytime we saw each other that we were alive

We were alive because we knew that we deserved more than this

And one day we would live through to see it

When I wasn't alone

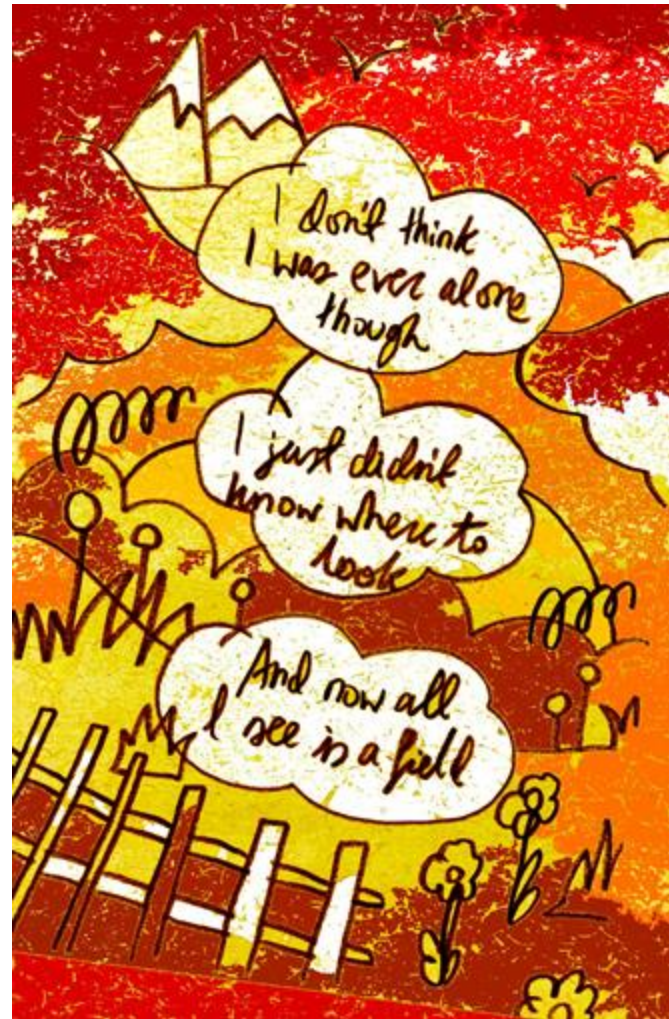
It felt easier



I don't think I was ever alone though

I just didn't know where to look

And now all I see is a field



And in that field I lay my head
Amongst the trees and the bugs
And know I belong



I remember one survivor telling me that they read my zine so much it-

-became old and worn, stained with tears

And loved so dearly

Another told me that they put my work on their windowsill so every morning they'd wake up and know we were surviving together



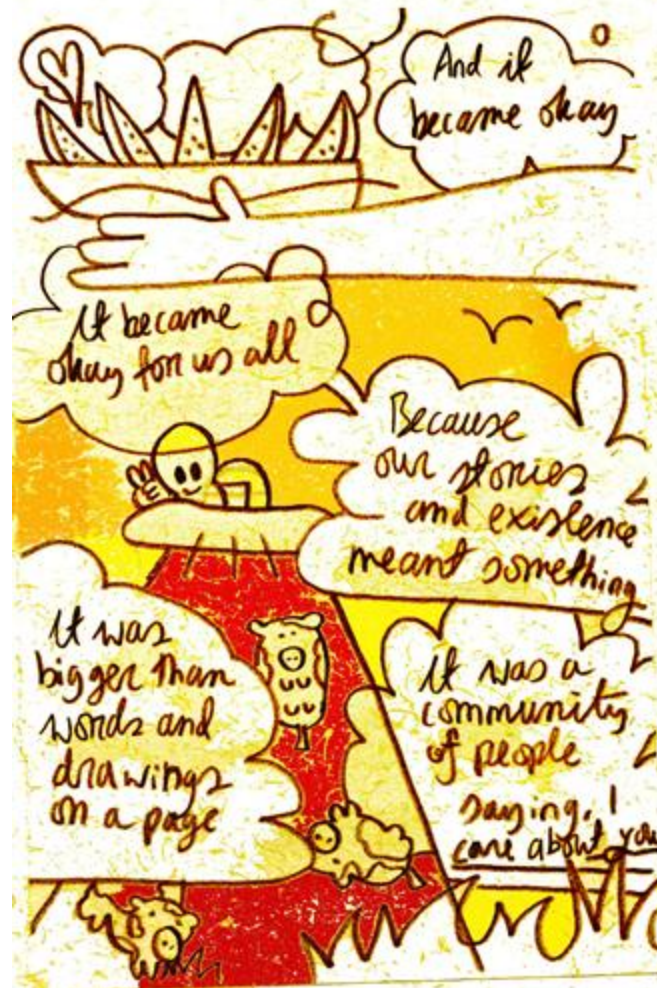
And it became okay

It became okay for us all

Because our stories and existence meant something

It was bigger than words and drawings on a page

It was a community of people saying, I care about you



And with that care, came freedom

I left

And I cried deeply

I am happy now



Be stubborn with your freedom and know you are deserving

You are deserving

You are deserving

You are deserving



When you write, write freely

Write knowing you are deserving of love

Write knowing your past, your present

And knowing that there's a future for you



That things will shift and change
And find hope and peace in that
You do not always have to be positive
But knowing that there is hope-
-I want you to write with hope



Know that when you draw the world is before you

Every mark you create is yours that you have birthed into the world

And it can be ugly

Just like your emotions they can be rough, harsh, and crude



But know it is yours

You do not have to please anybody



Pace yourself

Pace yourself & hold yourself dear

You do not need to write trauma unless you feel

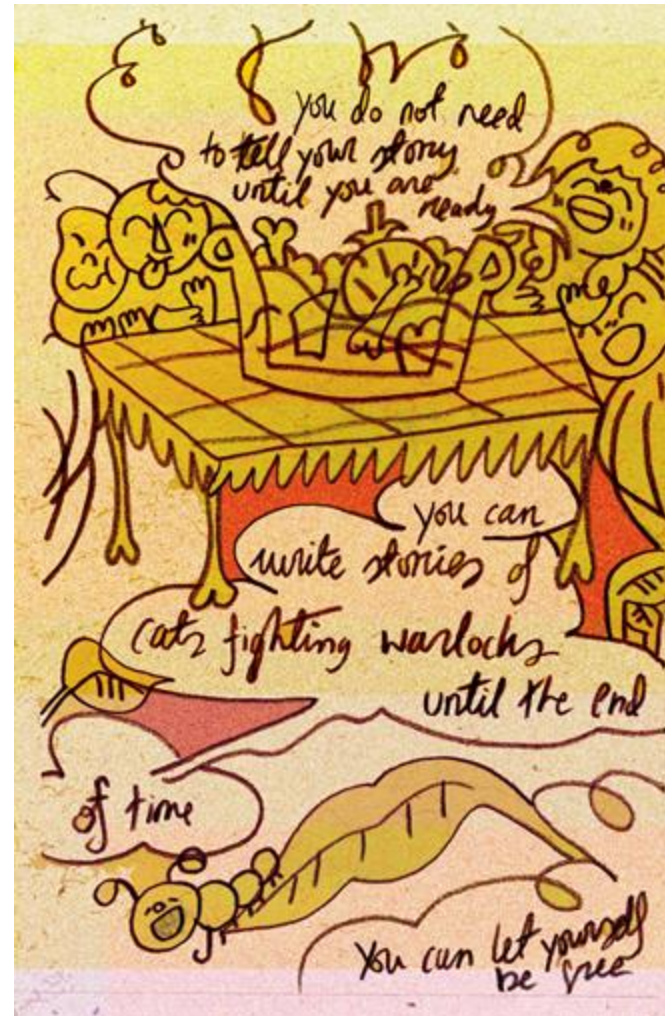
Comfortable with it



You do not need to tell your story until you are ready

You can write stories of cats fighting warlocks until the end of time

You can let yourself be free

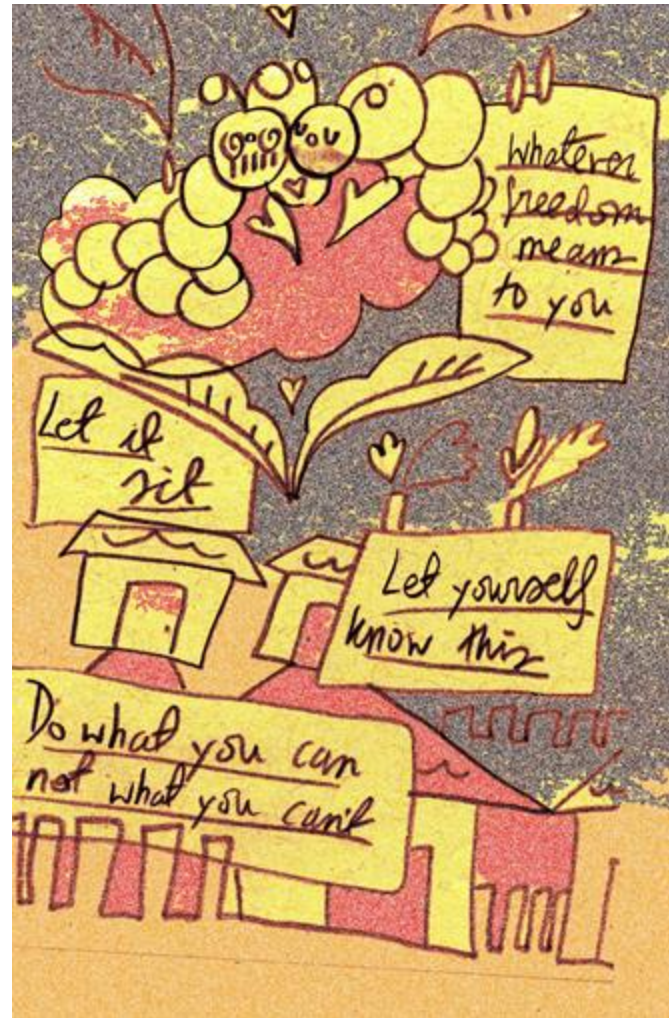


Whatever freedom means to you

Let it sit

Let yourself know this

Do what you can not what you can't



And make sure you take care along the way

This journey cannot happen without you

You are the most important



When you create, you create for yourself

And sometimes,

For others

You can become all powerful in your creations

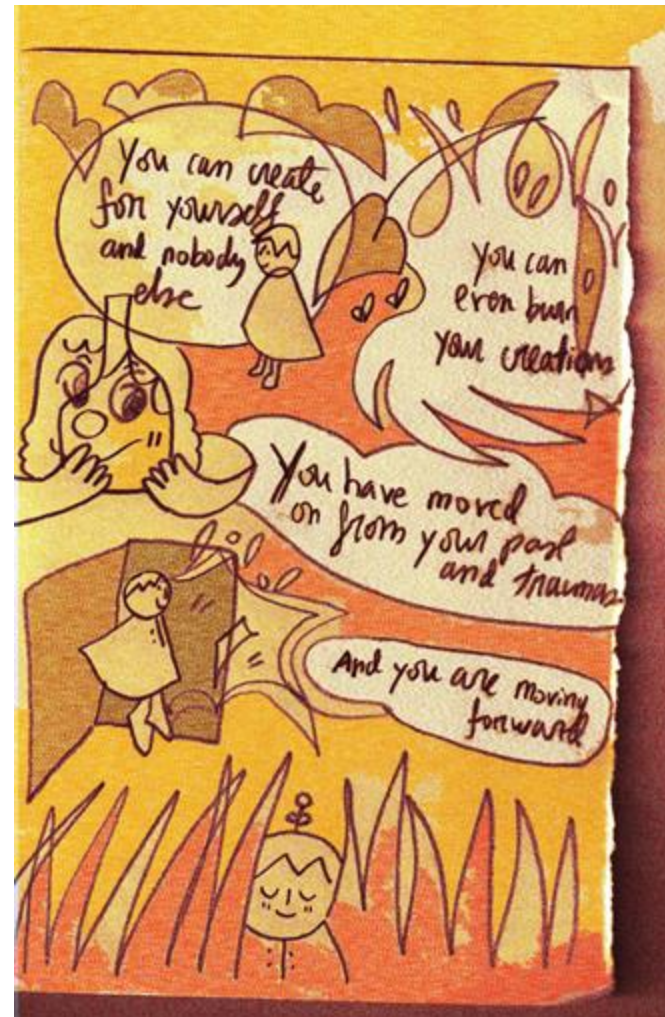


You can create for yourself and nobody else

You can even burn your creations

You have moved on from your past and traumas

And you are moving forward



But you can also share and see what happens

See if others will say

“And I see you”

Maybe just like myself

You can make your own community



Create from the heart

When I create I write - my writing impacts my drawing

Going into it with no plan

So my thoughts, jumbled and cruel to me

Become grounded and contained into a feasible tangible form

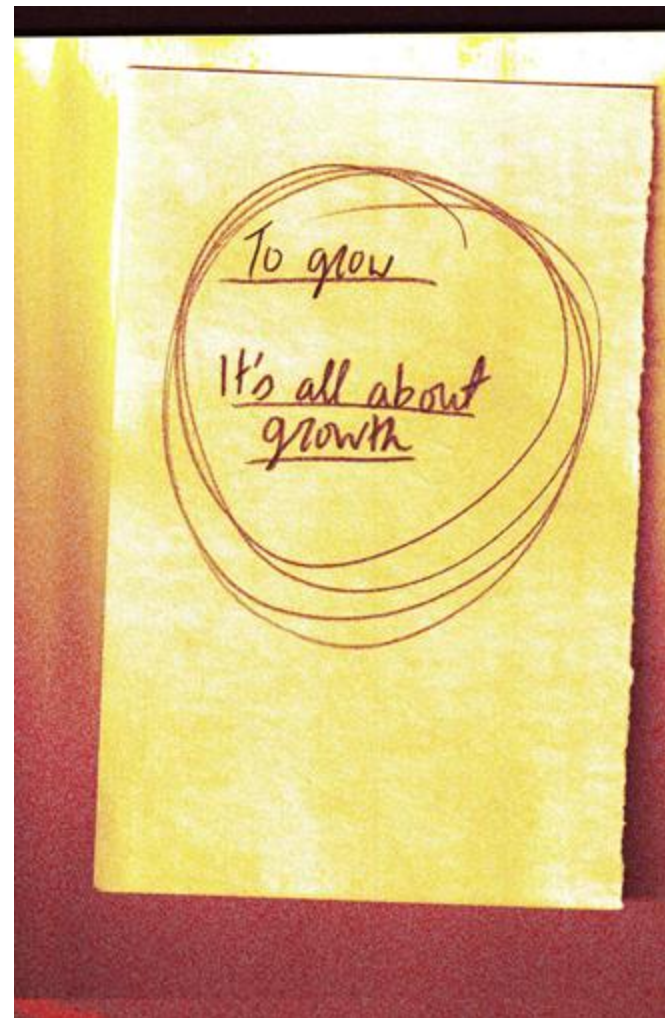
That I can read and access

And realize how to process and change



To grow

It's all about growth



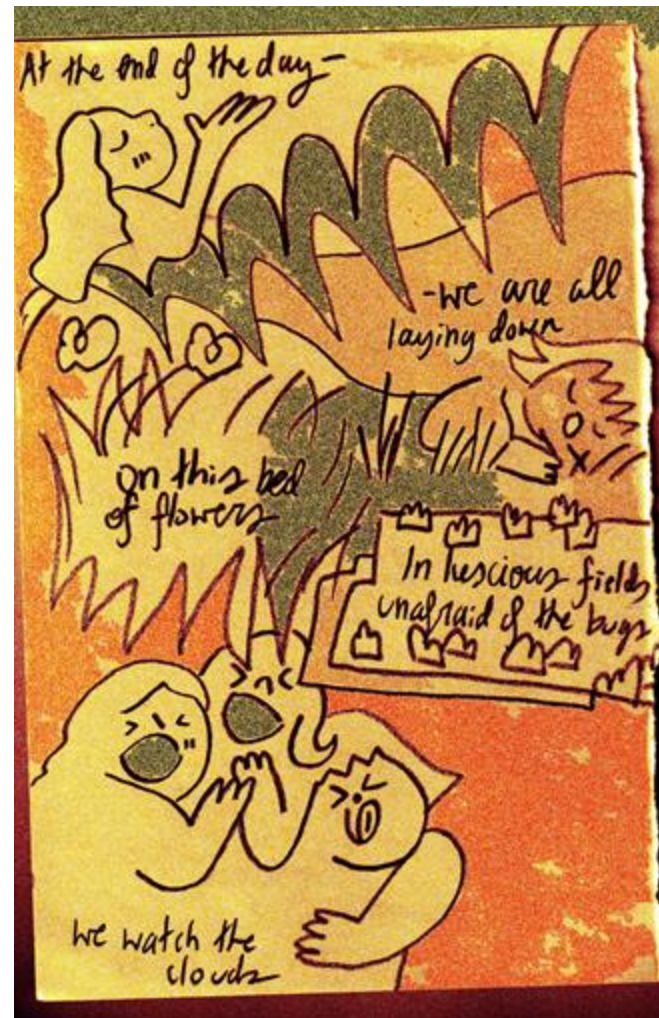
At the end of the day-

-We are all laying down

On this bed of flowers

In luscious fields unafraid of the bugs

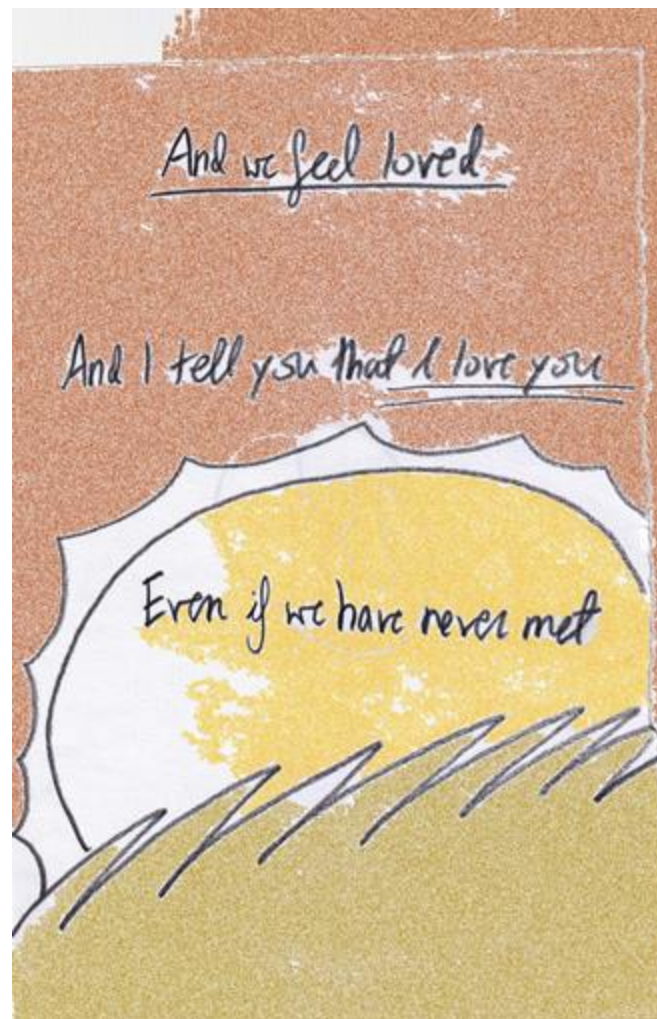
We watch the clouds



And we feel loved

And I tell you that I love you

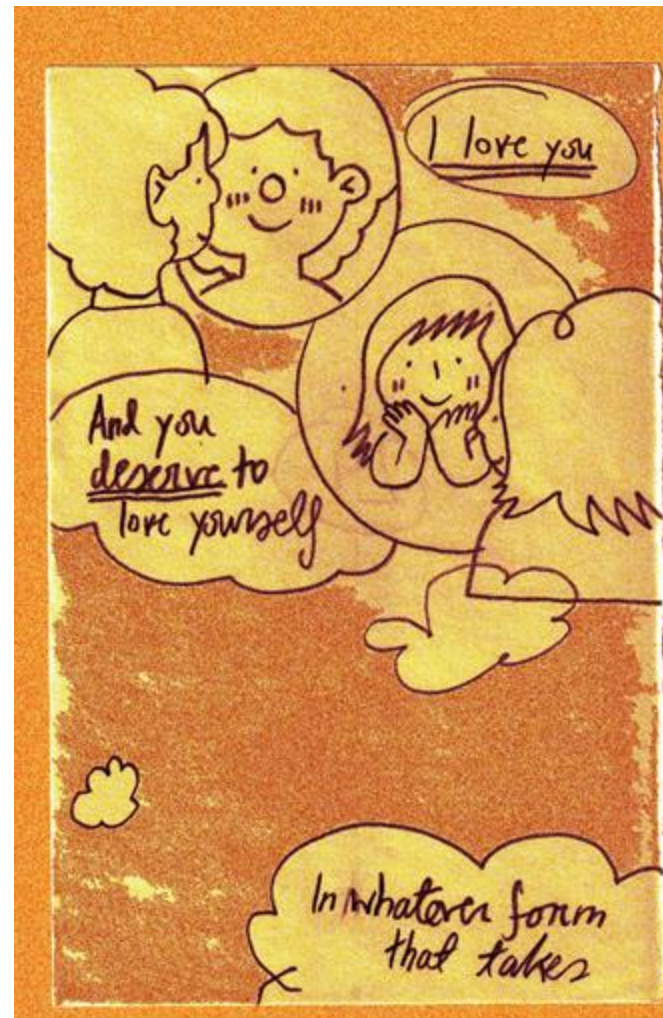
Even if we have never met



I love you

And you deserve to love yourself

In whatever form that takes



With warmth and care,

Vincy



Thank you for reading "You are a flower.." first and foremost!! :) This is a comic in collaboration with Learning Network at Western University (Thank you for taking a chance on me!) <3 It's been such a fun journey creating this comic! I wanted to talk a little bit about the art style I use in this comic, as it's an interesting one for comics for sure.

As you've probably noticed, the colouring is splotty, grainy, and imperfect. It's intentionally done that way to pay homage to the origins of zine culture, something I really adore. Which is, in short, marginalized people not seeing themselves in publishing and creating self-published works that represented them. It was a way for marginalized people to share their voices, their stories, their passions and woes to the world without being hushed down. Which feels very aligned with speaking out against abuse and sharing one's story in my opinion. Zines are imperfect, and I think they're beautiful for that. I love their photocopied, messy and smudged looks. How sometimes they're a bit pixelated, but we love them all the same. Because self-published works like zines mean something to people! It means so much to us because sometimes, still to this day, we can't find works that speak to us about what we want to see in the world, and it's comforting to know that anybody and everybody can just...make a thing! And be that person to make that thing!

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A lot of my imagery is pretty naive too, I really enjoy working in such a loose almost childish style of drawing, it makes the drawings feel like anybody could do this, draw and share your story through comics! It makes it less intimidating and more approachable. Something easy, simple, and clear to understand. As well, when drawing heavy content my simple drawings make it easier to feel okay. Personally, when drawing heavy subjects I don't want to ever visually depict actual violence, ever. So instead I draw my feelings and emotions surrounding these topics. There is no sense of time because of the lack of panel structures, which is something I always find interesting. It's fun to explore and experiment! I love it very much! It's also reassuring to make comics that are a bit "simple," just bucket tool dropping colours simple, and nice to know it never has to be "beautiful" because it's existence, our existence, is beautiful already.

That's about it! Thank you again for reading through this, I hope it keeps you safe and warm. I look forward to reading your comics into the future if you choose to make them! I will display them proudly in my bookshelf <3

With love,

Vincy

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With love,
Vincy

Vincy (they) is a Chinese Canadian non-binary lesbian disabled award-winning cartoonist, multimedia illustrator, and workshop programmer. Blurring the line between memories, the subconscious, and day to day actions, they create dreamy worlds which we are invited into for an intimate heart to heart conversation. Striving for community care and connection for survivors by a fellow survivor, growing and learning to love and accept the love given to them wholeheartedly.

As an escapee of abuse, human trafficking, and attempted murder, Vincy wishes to highlight the ability to move onwards and feel content with one's life despite their past or current situations. They strive to create artwork and stories that speak to those who are living in fear, both in and out of abuse, and let them know that there is hope and happiness at the end of it all.

Vincy currently lives happily with their friends and their feisty loving cat Whisper and no longer thinks it is a curse to be alive, in fact, they are excited to live their life for many more years to come with the loving support of their found family and communities.

~

Vincy Lim 2025

vincylim.ca | @kiwimii | vincylimx@gmail.com

Made in loving collaboration with Learning Network <3

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Acknowledgements

The Learning Network would like to thank guest author and comic illustrator, Vincy Lim, for their time, expertise, and creativity in bringing this project to life.

Guest author and comic illustrator:

Vincy Lim

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Centre for Research & Education on
Violence Against Women & Children

LEARNING NETWORK

More about the Learning Network

The Learning Network is a knowledge mobilization initiative that bridges the gap between current gender-based violence (GBV) research, practice-based knowledge, and lived experience to enhance the capacity of the GBV sector and movement (e.g., legal help, shelter support, advocacy, education, sexual assault counselling). This knowledge is essential to preventing violence across diverse communities, supporting survivors and allies, and promoting gender equity.

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