



wait

What is Waif.

When that noise is so white you can't even hear it.

Messy hair is waif, but so are bangs.

Waped Veed is Vaify.

Waif is when you fall down the stairs but still can't scrape your knee.

Waif is when you play the piano & you don't know how to play the piano.

Waif is when you play piano really well. And drums. Because you were taught.

Kix is Waif. So is special K. Trix is not Waif.

Whores are Waif. Prudes are Waif. Dudes are Waif. Nudes are Waif.

Your Grandmother is Waif, only when she's knitting a hat for you, you Waif.

Waif is when your corn shows up later.

Gardening is Waif. Love your dead plants.

Waif is when you shave every single hair on your body. Waif is when you've never cut a single hair on your body since birth.

Talent shows are Waif. Throw a talent show. Invite us.

Arms that jiggle like hot jello are Waif.

Zit Scabs are Waif.

Chicken feet are Waif.

Beady eyes are Waif.

You can't spell Waif without I.

Leave the taps dribbling overnight if it's below 30 degrees fahrenheit.

You, me, all, we're all Waif. If we want to be. And we want to be.

waif

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Misha Brooks, Zach Donovan, Brigitte Lundy-Paine, Mina Walker

This issue of Waif Magazine features the talents of

Mark Bryan

Savannah DesOrmeaux

Imaginary Futures

Matt Keim

Jen Kuczynski

Stefanos Marinopoulos

Estora Marshall

Daria May

Sebastian Perez

Ryan Roberts

Marc Rosner

Gabriel Wickline

Lex Young

Cover Photography by

Stefanos Marinopoulos

Interns

Joan Flaherty

Justine Engel

Anna Campion

Charlotte Grimm

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Table of Contents

CULTURE MATRIX The Proverbial Waif

ARTICLE I've Learned No New Skills in Quarantine and I Refuse to Feel Bad About That
By Savannah DesOrmeaux

EDITORIAL Estora Marshall

INTERVIEW Warding Off the Wolves
Featuring Mark Bryan
Interview by Gabriel Wickline

EDITORIAL For My Spicy Ones
By Stefanos Marinopoulos

INTERN'S CORNER Reconstruction: A Zine
By Intern Joan Flaherty

ART Jen Kuczynski

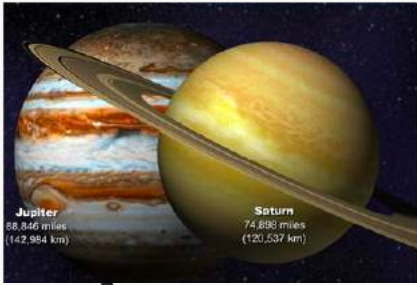
INTERVIEW Imaginary Futures
Featuring Imaginary Futures
Interview by Matt Keim

EDITORIAL Ryan Roberts & Sebastian Perez

ARTICLE Mildly Acid Pulpy Fruit Eaten as a Vegetable
By Marc Rosner

ART Daria May

WAIF



*** AGE OF AQUARIUS**
Throw your iPhone in a pot of boiling water; kill your plants, pets and superfluous friendships; It's time to take off your watch and be one with absurdity - besides everything, what have you got to lose?



*** STAMPS**
We support you if you don't want to write letters ... but have you tried it?



*** APPLE A DAY**
Word of advice - no matter how many apples you have a day will still be able to contract (most) STDs



*** RETAINERS**
Are you still wearing yours? If not - do us a favor. Force them on. Grin and bear it. Life is long but teeth are everything.



*** CLOVED FOOT**
You always want what you can't have & there is simply nothing happier than a hoofed henry - tough luck!



*** MINK MASSACRE**
7 million minks, slaughtered for fear of spreading covid, have just been dug back up - apparently a mink in the ground is worth two by the pound



*** CALIFORNIA**
She has to be the center of everything now doesn't she



*** TRENDY HAIR STYLE**
Even Tech billionaire & google co-founder, Larry Page is rocking a sick late stage pandemic look

*** VACCINE JOE**
President Elect Joseph Biden received the vaccine a day too late, our prayers are with his family



NOT WAIF

TRUE

TRIED

***I'VE LEARNED
NO NEW
SKILLS IN
QUARANTINE
AND I REFUSE
TO FEEL BAD
ABOUT THAT//***

By Savannah DesOrmeaux

I didn't learn how to make my own sourdough starter, or grow my own little onions in a mason jar. I didn't learn to knit a granny square or land an ollie. No reupholstering of chairs, no manuscripts.

For one calendar week I got better at drinking the daily suggested intake of water (which IS a skill actually) and then gave up on that even though it made me feel better than I ever had in my young adult life. I'm not worse than I was when this started, but I cannot confidently say if I am any better.

The first two weeks of quarantine were what I now refer to as "boring vacation." I earnestly thought to myself "thank god i have some time to wind down," after only living through two months of a year. Another month passed, and things started to....shift, no? Suddenly I felt like one of those damsels in a silent film screaming for help while she's being tied down to a railroad track by a hot villain with a mustache. The oncoming train (the **novel** coronavirus, in this loose metaphor) chugging along with the conductor (u kno who lol) at the wheel, eyes wide, arms flailing. A title card comes up saying "Uh oh! I suddenly DON'T know how to stop this train!"

Culture, society, humanity, etc began to unravel into something resembling more of a primordial ooze. And in a fascinating turn of events, humans took that to be the Perfect Opportunity for self betterment. In a word? Mania. We became Hobbies-R-Us, because if we were working on

something, *anything* it meant we weren't tobogganing towards the great unknown that Deepak Chopra has been warning our moms about for years.

"I think it says a lot about us little humans that we became so absolutely bored and restless that we collectively thought: 'i guess i'll grow during this time?'"

I asked my friends if they had learned any new skills in the quarantine and the responses came flooding in: "Embroidering" "dance cardio" "curbing my mom's CNN addiction" "guitar!" "chess lmao" "cutting hair" "french omelettes" and "coding" I even asked my mother if she learned a new skill this year and she said she's been teaching herself how to "bird by ear" which is identifying different bird species with only the sound of their call. Ok, she's a full on hunter gatherer mom! Ever heard of a triple threat??

Nevertheless, I resisted. I started nary a tik tok, nor a podcast. Despite the people (one person) begging for it. You're welcome <3

I thought to turn "decorating my bare apartment" into a fun new personality but then learned quickly that every picture frame costs no less than \$571 dollars so stopped that one in its tracks as well.

As a radical act of self-empowerment, I even tried momentarily to get better at taking nudes (not to be sent but rather, for myself. Think boudoir shoot for my husband who's going off to war but my husband is also me). When I went to take the nudes, I legit, not a joke, threw my back out. The lord....she giveth, she taketh away.

I won't feel shame for having not added tools to my toolbox. Come to think of it, the idea of having to learn something new during a global shutdown after eons of being mentally stable enough to learn something new and still sort of....not....doing it.....the science just doesn't back it up, love.

I think it says a lot about us little humans that we became so absolutely bored and restless that we collectively thought: "i guess i'll grow during this time?" It's endearing honestly. Cute, almost.

And I want to make clear that i am in no way recommending ignorance or stagnancy of mind, it would be foolish--nay violent--of me as a white woman to discourage learning/



unlearning from my people. I'm merely wanting to scream from the rooftops that this IS undoubtedly the worst global crisis of our young lives. You may feel like you're making lemonade out of lemons with your newly learned skill but *samantha jones voice* honey, the lemons are *rotten*!

At one point I thought, maybe, I'm no longer skilled at "picking up" "new things" or even "creating" new "habits." My therapist always reminds me that adolescence in females stops in their mid-twenties (males stop in their 50s) so Big Science would support that perhaps my brain stopped developing many moons ago.

But perhaps a better, more forgiving explanation is that my favorite time to weave anything new into the folds of my smooth little brain is when i see, on average, more than four walls a day. What a conc! (concept) For now, taking zinc and skirting illness will be hobby enough for moi.

EDIT: Admittedly, there were some gentle attempts to create better habits. For example, I have a slight tendency to sleep until 2pm and stay up until 4am. My brain loves to do that and loves to live with those consequences. What i'm trying to say is: I'm quirky. To break my habit of looking at a screen for every waking moment of my godforsaken day, I decided to take up reading. You read that right: "Take up" "reading." I usually don't read (because I don't know how to). And ever since becoming the first girl in the world to ever pick up a book, I've decided that novels are only good if there's a chapter in which someone goes missing or a man apologizes for something he's done. This applies to movies and tv too. Unfortunately, i'm right about this.

There's also the mourning of our former lives to contend with. How am I, a grieving

window, to move on to a new paramour so quickly. The pandemic took away my passion: screaming at top volume, close to a friend's face, in a crowded bar. Hobbies like these and so many others (sneezing in a cafe, crying openly on the subway, etc) have been ripped from my arms and replaced with new pastimes that simply are not as good as the original, such as watching a netflix original that I actively hate. It's like that scene in *Changeling* starring Angelina Jolie in a 1920s hat, which should have gone straight to DVD but i *did* see in theaters. Her son goes missing and they replace the original son with a new boy who only sorta looked like him because they were both brunettes? Angelina Jolie yells "THIS IS NOT MY SON!" and that's how i feel about my favorite things being replaced with my less favorite things. Please know, moving forward, that this reference from 2008 was completely worth it to me.

I have *learned* to be clear. I'm not a monster. here are some of the things I've learned in no

particular order:

-it's way cooler if you end an email with a dash and the first letter of your name like "-S" instead of your full name like "-Silly Bitch!"

-i have the capacity to love and care for other living beings (i got 2 foster cats) (both are males, though, & caretaking men is a skill i've cultivated carefully over many decades)

-we never logged off of AIM; hourly dm's & texts carry its legacy, the only thing that died was the away message and ohhhhhh how i would love to go away!

-sometimes a part of the writing process is not writing (i actually don't think this is true



“This year isn’t wasted and we are not wasting away. I refuse; I’m too young, and frankly? too pretty.”

but a friend said it to me recently and now i use it anytime i don’t want to write! Even for this very article!)

-Little Caesars have what’s called “Crazy Bread” and “Crazy Sauce” on their menu and it’s actually just absolutely regular breadsticks and marinara. When people speak of poor representations of mental illness in the media, i’ll think of this.

-i’ve learned that in no way should i ever put coffee into my body despite doing it every day. (One time i lived with a model who said that drinking coffee was the same as drinking water bc coffee has water in and i’ve had GI issues ever since)

-sometimes people you love and cherish will say that they are “doing the work” but actually what they’re doing is something more akin to making an infographic

-retroactively, after being fired from my job(s) (shoutout gig economy!) I learned that I should’ve asked out my hot, former coworkers. But hindsight is, as they say, useless.

-lastly, romaine lettuce will circulate in the news every 4 months for poisoning a fourth of the country. romaine, like humans, is a creature of habit.

I think about time and our categorization of it all the.....time. Whether I’m wasting it or using it wisely. Whether it’s a straight line or a flat circle (i’m told this is a true detective reference by some of the straight men I talk to but in this article I’ll claim it as MY words). 7 days a week, 30 days a month, etc is as we know just a game of the floor is lava-esque make believe. Gregorian calendars were named after a famously Christian pope and frankly my dear, I don’t even believe there in god, much less the calendar of god’s people. The quarantine has taken up 10 months of



2020, perhaps, but in an alternate world it’s only taken up 1 month or 1 week. To me, according to my calendar, this has been only one very long, deeply painful, emotionally taxing day. Time feels like it’s flown because actually it’s only been one day. This year isn’t wasted and we are not wasting away. I refuse; I’m too young, and frankly? too pretty.

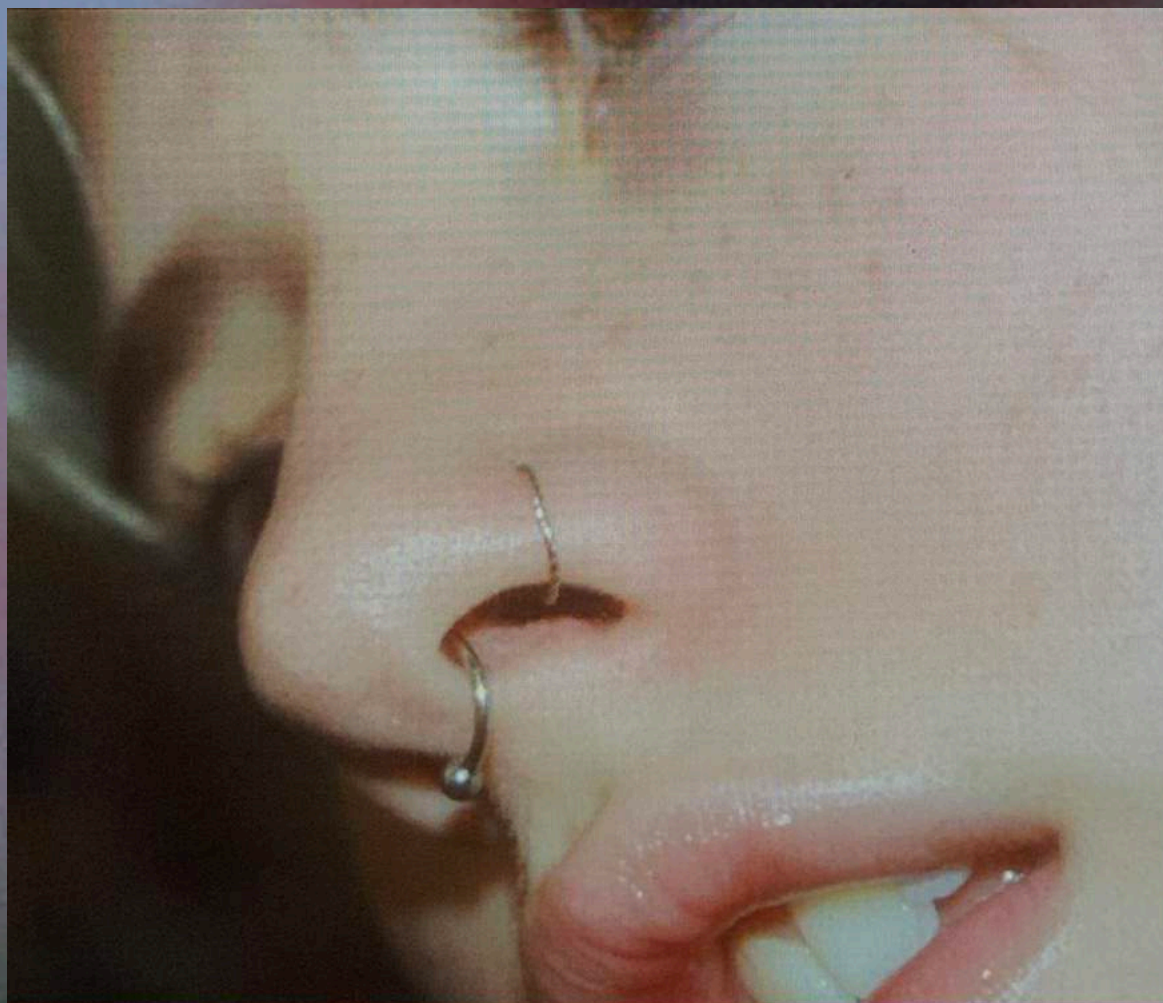
There’s no denying, however, that this purgatory, waiting for godot-ian day has given us an inordinate, unprecedented, uncomfortable amount of time. Time to do and time to hobby, SURE. But also time to think, and time to be still (or in my case, comatose). To self-reflect, or unpack, or pack back in. Zip it up. Throw it onto a megabus. Leave town mysteriously. Never to be seen again. Someone write a goddamn book about this! (That’s right, a callback, in this economy!)

On the one hand, I’m certain that I’m a completely different person than I was in the before times. One could argue that my cells have regenerated 7 times since then (they too have nothing better to do). I’m grateful for the forced slow down and feel cosmically, in some way, there was a reason that this is how the third act of this bad seven act play is coming to pass. And on the other very similar hand, I yearn for the light at the end of the tunnel to give us all our livelihoods back. Until then, I will not be partaking in any tiny little activity for my tiny little hands. I will just sit in the discomfort of this slow down. And by that I mean, starting up another 45 episode season of *Love Island*. ♦

ESTORA
MARSH
ALL //













WARDING OFF THE WOLVES//

An Interview with @markbryan911 //
by Gabriel Wickline

Gab:

Mark, your online presence is exploding recently...

Mark:

I know, it's mind-boggling. I mean, considering a couple of weeks ago I was only at like 200 to 300 followers, and now I just hit 250,000... it's just...

Gab:

That's amazing. We love to see it. You're in Germany correct?

Mark:

Yep.

Gab:

So your Instagram username is @MarkBryan911, isn't Germany the Porsche motherland?

Mark:

Oh yeah. They're all built in Stuttgart.

Gab:

Okay, right on.

Mark:

At least the Porsche 911 and Cayman are built in Stuttgart, and the Cayenne and Macan I believe are built in Leipzig.

Gab:

Interesting. Have you always been into Porsche automobiles?



Mark:

I have indeed. Back in the late fifties, my dad was one of the first German-trained, Porsche mechanics in the United States.

Gab:

That's incredible. Are you a mechanic now yourself?

Mark:

No, I'm a mechanical engineer. But while I was going to school, I worked part-time at a Porsche dealership.

Gab:

I see! So as an engineer, what have you been designing lately?

Mark:

I'm in the robotic business, so basically I develop robotic assembly lines.

Gab:

How fascinating. I would love to pick your brain another time.

Mark:

Of course.

Gab:

Going back, you've gone viral on the internet for your fit pics on Instagram. When did you start incorporating the skirts and heels into your daily wardrobe?

Mark:

Full-time out in public, probably about four years ago. With so many different styles and color options, I started my Instagram account to document what I'd been wearing, so I wouldn't repeat myself or get in the habit of wearing the same thing over and over again.

Gab:

Okay, and what would you say is your favorite heel to wear?

Mark:

Oh, I enjoy the five-inch stiletto heels. I think they're the ones that look the best. I don't wear platform shoes because to me they're not office appropriate. They're more of a party shoe.

Gab:

Do you have a favorite designer?

Mark:

No, not really.

Gab:

Not really?

Mark:

Not really. I don't buy designer clothes.

Gab:

Awfully expensive.

Mark:

Yep. Of course. Although, lately I've had a lot of designers saying they want to design something for me. So that may change in the future.

Gab:

Oh yeah. I'm sure it will. And that'll be so cool for you.

Mark:

Yeah! We'll see. We'll see.

Gab:

Have you always been interested in fashion? Or is this more of like a recent thing?

Mark:

I've always took pride in what I wore, even when I was wearing "men's clothes" per se. However, I really wouldn't call myself a fashion expert at all or anything.



Gab:

Yeah, well I don't know if those truly exist.

Mark:

Yeah, and everybody's got their own opinion these days too.

Gab:

Oh for sure. I appreciate the call Mark. What is one thing that you want to leave with Waif today?

Mark:

What I'd tell anyone is that people shouldn't judge a person, nor what their sexual orientation is by the clothes they wear. I get called gay quite a bit and stuff. But I'm a straight guy. Or as my friends have taught me, I'm a cis male. And yeah, you really

shouldn't concern yourself with what a person wears, nor what their sexual orientation is, especially based on their choice of clothing.

Gab:

Oh yeah, that's so toxic and strange that people still do that.

Mark:

But they do, and I'd say this is a big issue to me. Another thing, people really shouldn't just say, "Those are women's clothes"...

Gab:

Ok I'm listening.

Mark:

Because they're not. They're just pieces of fabric.

Gab:

Absolutely.

Mark:

Lastly, if you're going to do something out of the ordinary, then just do it. At the end of the day, most people don't care. Realistically they're too concerned with themselves. Have

confidence in what you're doing too. If you're going to wear heels, then practice walking in heels...

Gab:

I hear you.

Mark:

I find that if you have confidence, people tend to leave you alone for the better. If you show weakness, that's when what I call the "wolves" tend to come in. They're always going to prey on those they see as insecure, and a lot of the time this even stems from their own insecurities. So you have to emit that confidence to pull these things off. To an extent, you have to not care, and you have to have fairly thick skin. Just do it. ♦

That's some great insight Mark, you are Waif-approved. Go follow [@markbryan911](#) to keep up with his latest outfits, and remember Waifs — no matter what shoe you choose, always put your Waif foot forward.



FOR MY SPICY ONES //

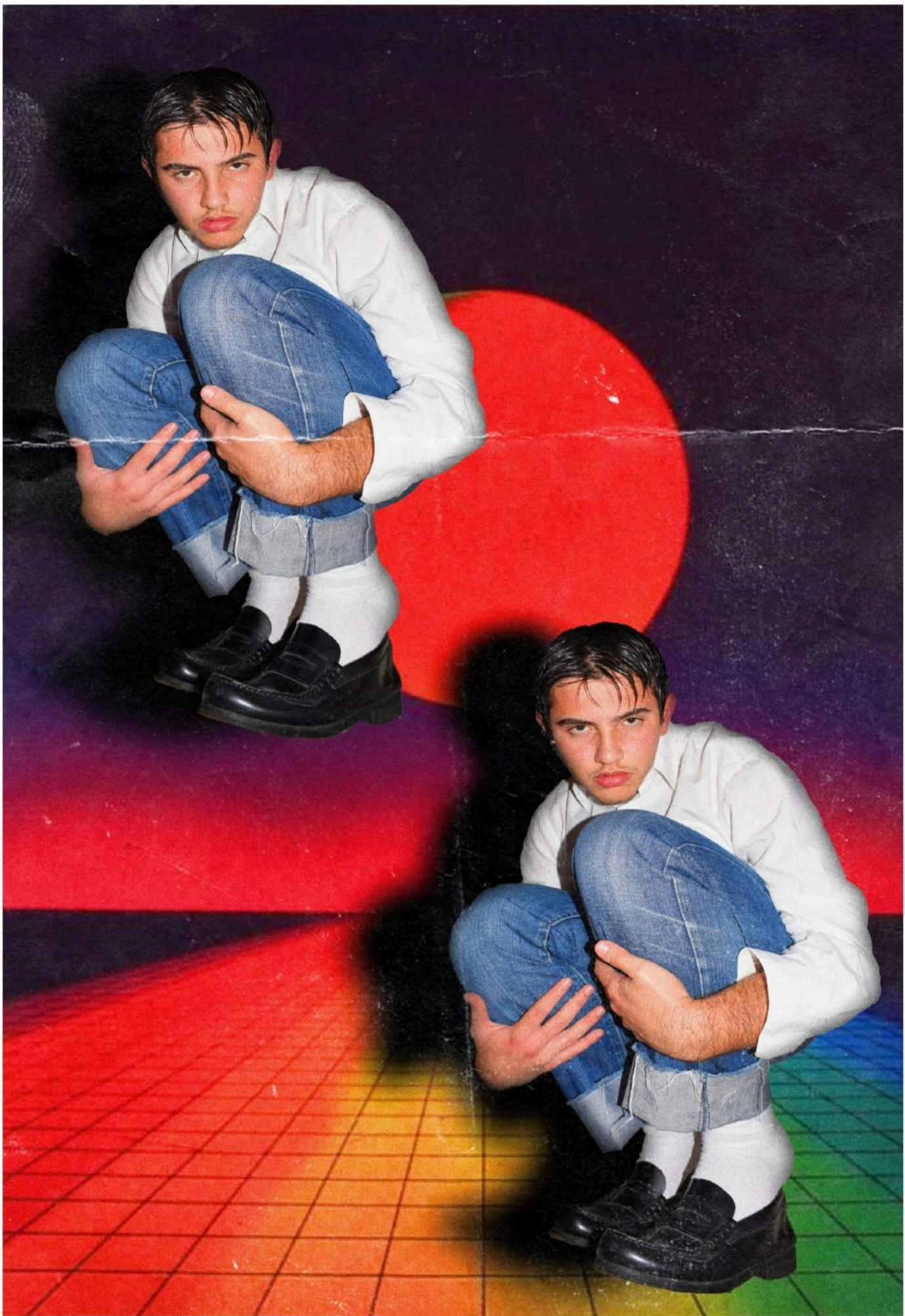
BY STEFANOS MARINOPOULOS

To my spicy dudes: I just want them to know that I love them and I miss them everyday. I'm so proud of them being those perfect and adorable human beings.

Guys I love you all so much and you are the inspiration for everything I do. I'm so proud of you all and I can do so nothing but to admire you every single day. I love you and this whole gallery is devoted to you. It is the least I can do for you guys.

YOU DESERVE THE WORLD. I LOVE YOU<3









Windows Media Player



File View Play Tools Help



Ready















RECONSTRUCTION



I live in the intersection of two realities. If I could I would go back and at one point I wanted to capture my world and freeze it in time. I talked about change and discovery, yet I just wanted my pictures recolored. My life wasn't more just a scrapbook page in a sketchbook - constantly rearing and replacing - giving down photos chosen by others. I want a worthwhile, named life but that life wasn't mine. What's the advantage in shaping my decisions but letting someone else touch the clay. I wanted to reveal the world but only if I had the security I wouldn't be missing anything in other people's lives. I had friends, I went to class, I had fun and I was afraid to question. I had satisfied on a form I couldn't recognize as mine.

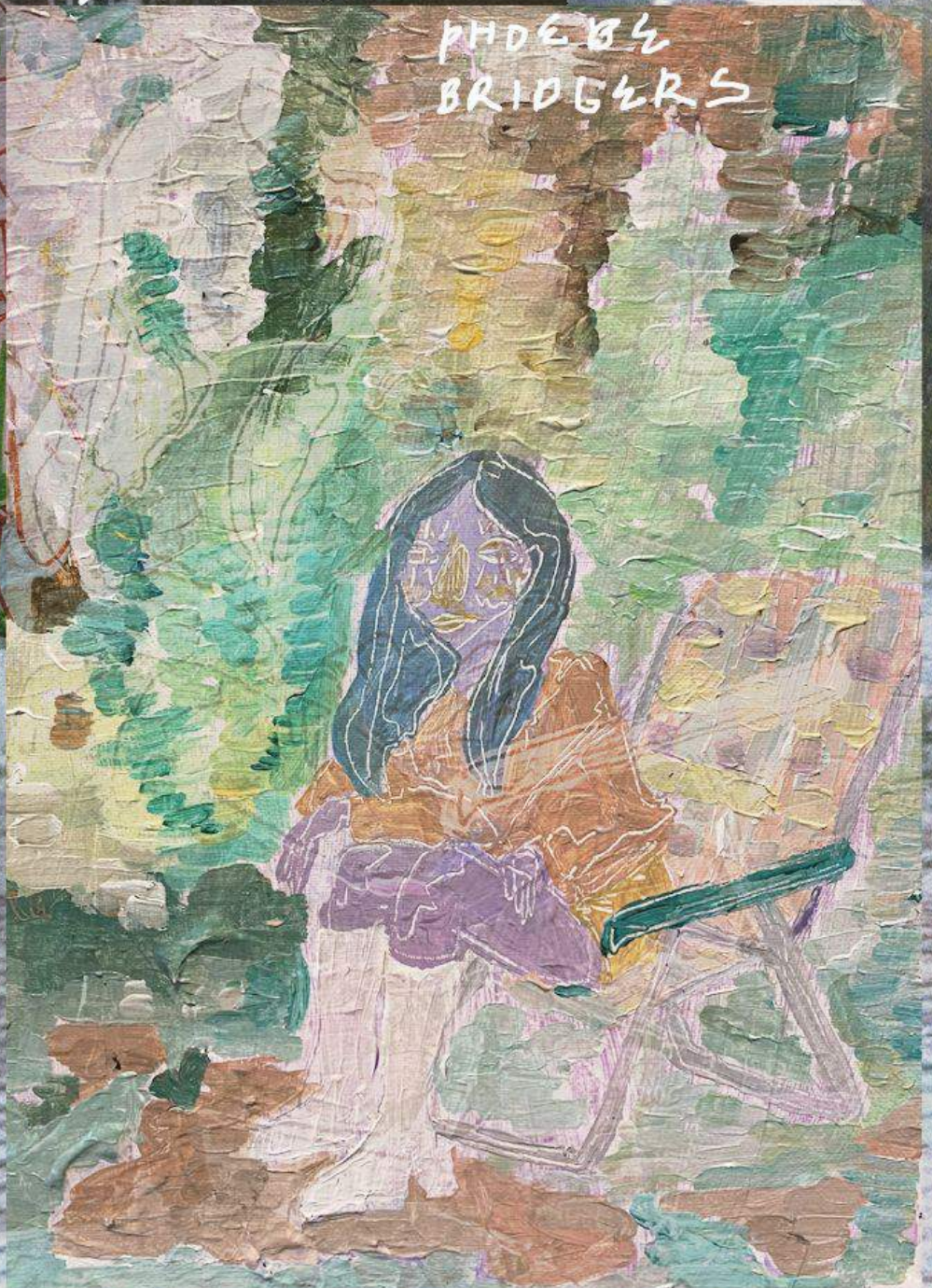
Now, I am returned to a home that is in variables. PAPA'S food the game, the gun gets still, yet there's a constant reminder that the world is not the same. The new moral. As if it was all dream hard know the next was a worst than the first but worse. I don't want my life a war. I am abundant a home. I am meeting myself. And I am beginning to construct a life from the ruins of the world around the city. I am choosing the best I pick up and getting many for. I don't know what this is all means but I am into construction and so is this world. Maybe that's all life is - constructing.

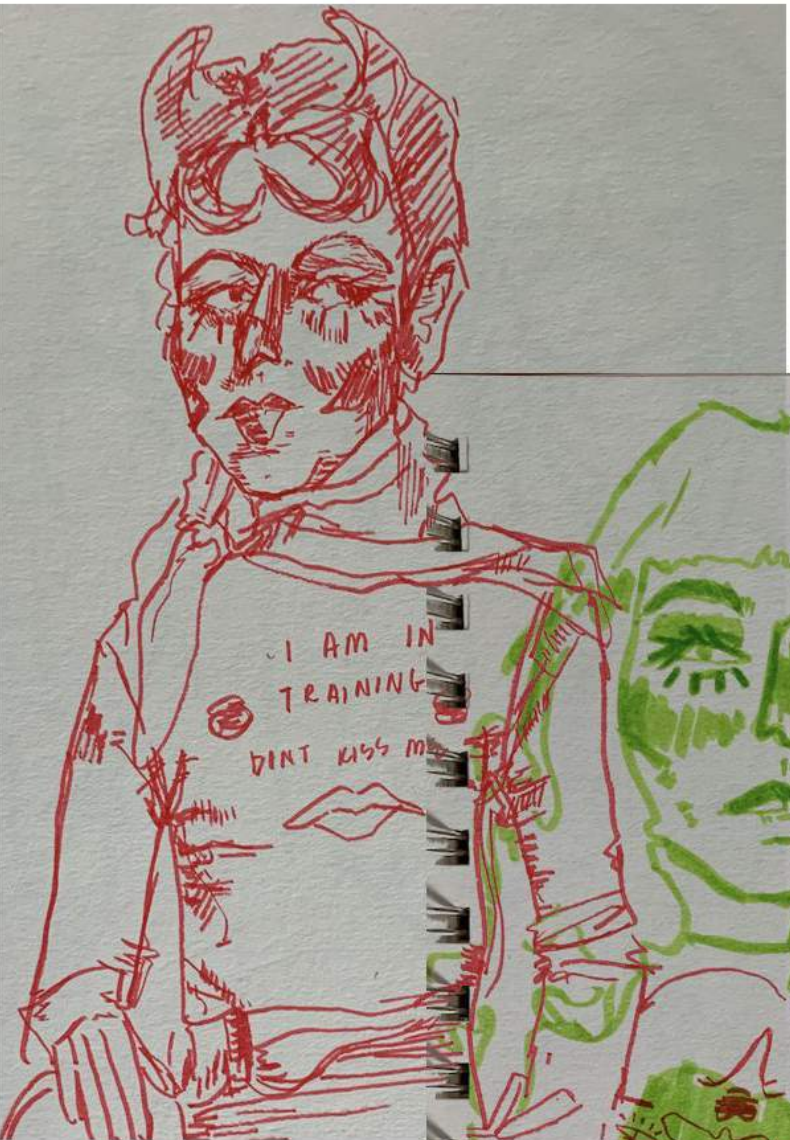
[illegible]

i listen to

a lot of

PHOEBE
BRIDGERS





1:00 PM
 I CAN SAY NOW
 THE WORLD IS
 BECOMING
 HAS A SECRET.





SOVBN DOUVN BREAD

A CRASH COURSE

HOW I MAKE SOURDOUGH (I'M NOT A "PRO")

60% LRVAIN → PASTE WATER FOR SORRODUGH STARTING.

IT'S LIKE SORRODUGH STARTER THAT HAS HAD PROOFPLAY.

510% ALL PURPOSE FLOUR (I USE LOW WHEAT II POWDS RATHER LB)

80% WATER (WHAT FLOUR)

240% WATER (I ADD UP FREQUENTLY ADDING MORE)

8% SALT

① MAKE AUTOGRAPH - WATER & FLOUR 50% IS CRILL WORKED FOR 2 HOURS

② MAKE GROW YOUR STARTER 19 PRO MINT BROWN 4, @ OR WASH TO PARE

③ ADD 50% LRVAIN TO AUTOGRAPH, BAKED IN BOWL 6 MINUTES

④ GET FOR 40 MINUTES

⑤ ADD SALT - MAKE GROW YOUR STARTER 40% ARE PARE WITH PAREING
W/ BOWTH OF 40% II 60% ARE 60% ON TON!! BAKED 5 MINUTES

⑥ REST 30 MINUTE

⑦ STARCH & FLOW GROW 30 MINUTE - HOUR FOR TOTAL 4.5 HR

⑧ PARE SALT - REST 30

⑨ SALT & PUT IN BOWL I COOK W/ PLASTIC BAG 3 IM RAR
@ THIS "SHAPING"

→ CRILL IN FRIDGE OVER NIGHT

⑩ FRESHEN GROW W/ CRILL 100% GROW IN @ 500 FOR 1 HOUR

⑪ NO DOUGH OF FREQUENT - GROW II W/ A RABOR PARE, MAKE CRISTY
GROW 100

⑫ COOK IN CRILL 100% (TOP IN) @ 500 FOR 10 MIN

⑬ TOP TOP! COOK IN 450 COOK 31 MINUTES

⑭ COOK IT!!! NO HOT SORRODUGH BAKING BAKING!

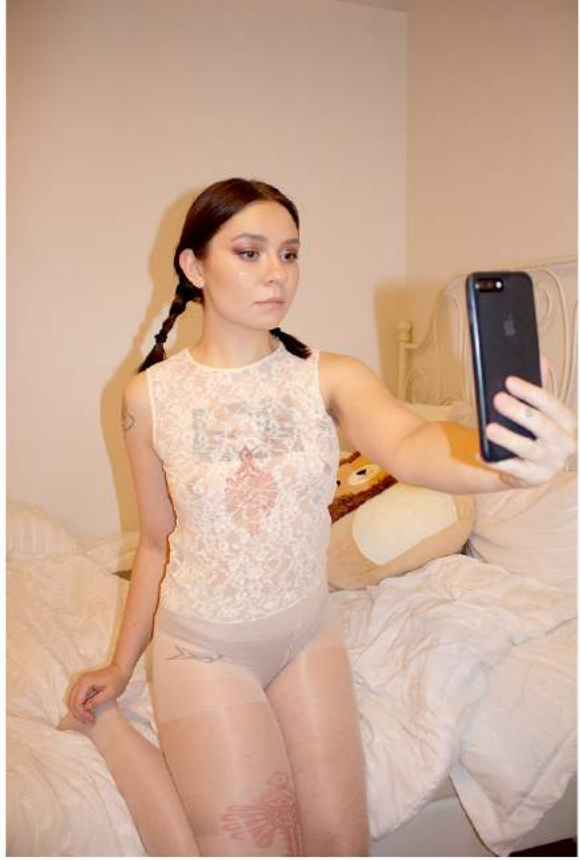
⑮ CUT II 5 OR HAPPY OR SAD

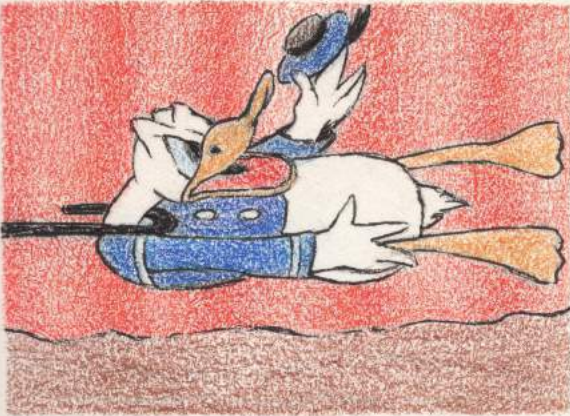
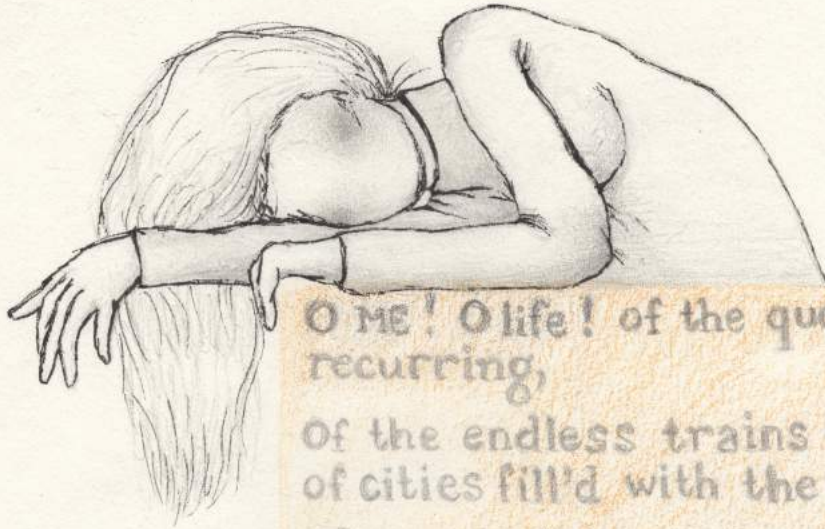
JEN

KUCZ

YNSKI

//





O ME! O life! of the questions of these
recurring,

Of the endless trains of the faithless,
of cities fill'd with the foolish,
Of myself forever reproaching myself,
(for who more foolish than I, and who
more faithless?)

Of eyes that vainly crave the light, of
the objects mean, of the struggle
ever renew'd,

Of the empty and useless years of
the rest, with the rest me inter-
twined,

The question, O me! so sad,
recurring — What good amid
these, O me, O life?

Answer.

That you are here — that life exists
and identity,

That the powerful play goes on,
and you may contribute a verse.





I WALKED TO THE WINDOW
MY EYES WERE FUZZY
MY HEAD WAS HEAVY
A SUBTLE SENSE OF DREAD
CREPT OVER MY SHOULDER
THE HOUSE WAS DARK
EXCEPT FOR A SLIVER OF LIGHT
ILLUMINATING THE KITCHEN PHONE
IT STARTED RINGING
THERE WAS BLOOD ON IT
IN THE SHAPE OF A HANDPRINT
MY HEARTBEAT PULSATED
THROUGH MY EARS
I PICKED UP THE PHONE
THERE WAS NOTHING BUT STATIC
I QUICKLY HUNG UP
THERE WAS BLOOD FROM THE PHONE
ON THE PALM OF MY HAND



IMAGINA

-RY

FUTURE

-S//

Interviewed by Matt Keim

A portrait of a person with short, curly hair, wearing a patterned shirt. The background is a vibrant, abstract mix of pink, purple, and blue. The person is looking slightly to the right.

J

I'm born and raised in NYC. I'm an artist, a singer-songwriter. Creative. I play many roles in Imaginary Futures, but one of them is definitely through my writing, and what I can offer with gathering ideas and building them into a central stream-of-consciousness. I'm really passionate about building a community, but also collecting voice through that.

A portrait of a person with long, dark hair, wearing a patterned shirt. The background is a vibrant, abstract mix of pink, purple, and blue. The person is looking directly at the camera.

Starr

I'm an experimental video artist, tech-nerd, lover, big love energy, and all-around weirdo. I moved to New York around two, almost-three years ago. I moved into this co-op, so initially I had already known Lorenzo and Berlin because we lived together for two years.

A portrait of a person with short, curly hair, wearing a patterned shirt. The background is a vibrant, abstract mix of pink, purple, and blue. The person is looking slightly to the right.

Berlin

I'm a person to rely on. I'm a person that's going to make you laugh. I'm the person we're going to go get drunk together, smoke together. I'm the person that's going to keep you in tune. Meditate with you. I'm a person who loves fashion, too, so I'm always looking cute. I'm going to be the cute one in the group. Even though we're all cute. When we link up it's like, make sure, be cute, be cute, be cute.

Waif: How did you meet all these people?

Berlin: Me, Starr, and Lorenzo all lived together in this co-op here. Two-and-a-half years ago I moved here and Starr and Lorenzo were already living here.

Starr: Everyone else in the room I have gotten to connect to through music.

Berlin: I got to meet through Starr and Lorenzo DJ-ing out in the community in Bushwick. I met Donis out and about - he's a DJ. Shavonne actually moved in with us. They became my roommate. Clam was a friend of Starr's. Giselle is the partner of Lorenzo. Crystal's also a DJ in Bushwick. Like I said, we all met here.

Crystal: There is actually such a huge community right on Myrtle Avenue. Which is Bushwick, which is where we are now, for the people listening. When I started DJ-ing in 2015 I was just sort of DJ-ing in my basement. Wasn't really ever intending on going out or playing anywhere, because I was doing it for fun. Then I moved to Brooklyn from Long Island in 2018. I wasn't very familiar with any DJ scenes, except the Dancehall/Reggae/Hip Hop scene.

Donis: Then Half Moon happened.

Starr: I know Half Moon has been mentioned a lot. It's a black-owned radio station in Brooklyn, which I did programming and studio managing for with Clam, who did photography for Half Moon. Donis played, Crystal played. A lot of us met through music.

Clam: I met Starr through Half Moon, and we were just two little idiots in the studio, just being dumb, but really passionate about music and curating and wanting to bring something to a central thesis of putting on for POC musicians and underground DJs and bringing life to NYC dance and nightlife. From

there, we fell in love, and met a bunch of other people. I met Crys and Donis through Half Moon and then we kept spiraling towards each other closer and closer. We went upstate and kind of naturally fell into these roles and it all was so cohesive. We were all like, "Yo, should we do this? Should we put a ring on it?"

J: We might all have slightly different stories about [how we met]. I think the grand opus was in celebration of Starr and their birthday. I think we were all feeling kind of burnt out with just the state of the world and it gave us a really brilliant time to really relax and just escape it all a little bit. Which made space for us to dream a bit, too. To do it in really organic ways. I feel like it was very much an open stage for us to meet each other from a really authentic space.

Waif: You mention being a steward - a steward of the land, a steward in general. I was wondering what that means to you?

Shavonne: I definitely don't think I fully embody it yet. I do think that it's something that makes up my drive. I think that we exist as a part of nature and our role is to help maintain the flow of it. I think that's something that has been disrupted through Western individualism and city-living. Nature is something we have existed outside of, so I think being a steward of the land is recognizing your role in relation to land. Seeing yourself as a piece of something for the land to utilize. The native people to this land who really understood the idea that we are just a part of nature and not separate from it. That's something that's been inspiring me a lot. Reconceptualizing how I exist in relation to everything else.

Waif: Has it been difficult breaking away from Western thought processes and society?

Shavonne: It's been slow but certain. It's been a whole bunch of ideology building over the last couple of years. Then there was just a moment of rupture where I was given the opportunity for it to fully actualize itself.

Waif: Can you describe the specific moment where that rupture happened?

Shavonne: We went to this AirBnB in Cornwallville, [NY]. There was this super-beautiful porch and this spot with a wooden bench and a swinging chair and a couple of other chairs that people were resting on, and I remember one of those conversations coming up again. Like, "Oh we could totally just buy this house right now." You could tell in that moment that everyone was actually being serious. That was the moment for me. It felt super peaceful, but certain.

Crystal: The day after we got there, there was this excursion. We took a trip to Kaaterskill Falls. Shout out Kaaterskill Falls. That was the moment for me. We were all just in this watering hole on the side of a mountain. Smoking. Little fishies were there, chilling, kicking it with us. The sun was hitting everyone just right. It was a little oasis. It was steaming. We were also high, so that added to the experience. It was very pleasurable.

Waif: Did you have a specific moment where you were like, "This is working."?

Clam: When we were upstate, just seeing it. I met some of the people for the first time while we were up there, like J. Seeing how we all moved, and when I took a step back to see how cohesive our energies were together, I was like, "Holy shit, this could be it." I think we all collectively had that moment while we were up there, and then we took it seriously when we came back to New York. Like, "Ok. We're back from the honeymoon. Are we really down to do this?" It's been like that since August.

J: I think an important thing to bring up in the space of inspiration is a feeling of non-inspiration, like actual hopelessness. I think I've always been a person who's been actively trying to see the better-in and the possibility-of-things-changing and things-being-better-for-all-of-us, but I think when Imaginary Futures found me I was in a particularly dark place. Emotionally, spiritually, obviously we're in the age of a global pandemic. My father had Covid and was hospitalized for a minute, which took a toll on me, but it really helped to put into perspective what legacy is and looks like for me. What happens when I leave this earth and what do I leave behind? I think what occurred to me was that the uprisings happening across the nation and the world were a calling for me to return to my roots and return to community and return to the streets, because we have the answer ultimately. I think for me, returning to that opened a space to be reunited with beautiful spirits. For us to all align and get into a space together to create a new possibility outside of the hopelessness that existed. To really gain a sense of confidence in each other and in our spirits collectively. What is possible, what can be created out of that hopelessness?

Waif: I was wondering what The Technique is?

J: Where did The Technique come from? What is The Technique? Hmmm. It's a lifestyle. The Technique is a lifestyle. You either have The Technique, or you do not have The Technique. I think it's as simple as that. The way that you acquire The Technique is through The Work. If we're not allowed to do That Work we'll never reach The Technique. We will only be practicing.

Waif: You have talked about wanting this space to be a safe place for immigrants. What would you tell someone who was immigrating here to help them out?

A portrait of a person with short, curly hair, wearing a patterned shirt. The background is a warm, textured orange-brown color.

Clam

I'm an artist, a photographer first and foremost, that's one of my mastery skills, but I'm such a life path nine, not to make it about this, but I'm really passionate about several things, so whatever calls to me, whatever feels like I can pour my heart into, or just navigate from a pure space, I'm really into that. That's really consistently been art for me, photography, or capturing the moments in between. That's really my zhuzh.

A portrait of a man with short hair, wearing a dark jacket over a light-colored shirt. The background is a solid blue color.

Donis

I'm from Brooklyn. I'm from Bushwick, specifically. I'm a DJ. I'm just getting into producing. I'm a photographer, brother, friend. My dad is a Latin percussionist. He put me on to a lot of music. I ended up DJing kind of through coincidence. Going to parties and stuff.

A portrait of a person with long, wavy hair, wearing a colorful, patterned shirt. The background is a vibrant, abstract mix of colors.

Lorenzo

I grew up in Atlanta. I now live in New York. Love it here. I lived in Chicago for a bit. I'm a DJ. I studied acting, so I'm also really into acting/film/theater. I'm definitely one to explore the possibilities of mixing film with my music.

Giselle: I came to this country in a very privileged way. My dad lives here, but also I came as an international student. I had a visa to enter the country. Maybe I didn't have the money, but maybe my dad worked really hard to help me come here. So there's privileges in-between being an immigrant and how you got to whatever country you're immigrating to. I've become part of a very big international community. I go to school with people who are from all over the world. I have friends who are here legally and illegally. I can see how that shapes their world. Through learning how everybody gets by. How you work without a work visa. How you don't have status of residency or citizenship, or you just stayed here with your tourist visa. There's so many challenges with being an immigrant in whichever capacity you got here. It's important you have a network already. It really depends on if you have someone who can offer a safe space. A shelter is something that's so important. Especially moving to New York, which is such an expensive city. Just moving couch to couch. Not having stable housing is just another problem added to your other problems. Providing a space where they could stay while figuring out their situation. That is so important. I've been in that position, and my friends have been, too.

Donis: I've seen so much of the community that was originally here [in Bushwick] be displaced. I've always thought, in what way can I create space for people? Growing up here has made me think a lot about property ownership and creating space for people who don't have anywhere to be.

Waif: What does feeling safe mean to you? Or what are some places that you've felt safe and happy?

Donis: I think it boils down to security. Having a place to sleep. Having a place to eat, you know? That's the foundation of feeling at home.

Starr: [My own] wanting permanent stability comes from moving around a lot growing up with my mom. We'd move from place to place out of a lack of financial security. It's something I've always really longed for. The lack of permanency I've experienced really pushes me in this work. That passion. This is really for us, you know? We don't ever have to feel that any more. A domino effect is created. We have this thing. This first project together. We're all working on it. The legacy will come from it, but also the skills from taking it on. When we're even older and we have families of our own and want to build houses, we'll already have the skills from doing that kind of work, you know what I mean? Then, Imaginary Futures, that house that exists upstate, will just be for the community. Maybe we'll not all be there to see it, and maybe our kids are, or our nieces and nephews, or our homie from down the street who just needed a place to be. Just to be able to have somewhere to go. If I get kicked out of this co-op right now, where am I going to go?

Waif: Growing up in Atlanta, in a Colombian household, in a Black neighborhood, did you deal with shifting perceptions of who you are, Lorenzo?

Lorenzo: That upbringing was interesting for me. I went to an international school. My whole kindergarten through twelfth grade, my mother put me in this school. There were a lot of European kids. A lot of rich European kids mostly. Also people from around the world. It was very different from your regular private school or public school. Meanwhile, I'm growing up in a different part of town from everyone I go to school with. I realized I'm at this school because my mom was lucky to get me in there financially when I was five-years-old. Otherwise, I would have never gone there. Seeing how different those micro-pockets of cultures could be. Growing up on the street I was always around Black

people. I was always one of the few white people in my neighborhood. Then, when you're at parties that are very open to marginalized people, those parties are central spaces for them. That whole scene - techno, house - was created by Black, queer, and Latino people. So being in those spaces, and fully integrating and respecting the space for what it is, being around that energy, that also shapes the way you see things and the things you care about. I've always felt the need to empower those around me. Me being the one white guy in this group. The one white man. That carries weight. It's a time when white people in this country need to think about what is going on. Really open our minds and think about all the ways we've been engrained to think a certain way - whether it be our society, our family, or our friends - and just try to do the necessary work for the people you care about.

Waif: When you imagine what this space will be like, what are some of the things you see or feel?

J: Prioritizing rest and living outside of a hustle mentality. It's not bringing you steps back, but allowing you to make clearer steps forward. For us to change and shift the culture around what it means to actually rest and to find respite is something I really want to explore on the land. From our experiences together so far, we know how to really chill, so that feels like it's naturally going to come. I feel really empowered and see the beauty in us being able to exist outside of really strict boundaries - around really oppressive systems that are not built for us at all. To create a space for the experiment of what it looks like to live outside of that. Taking the responsibility as stewards of the land to be responsible for creating that new future, for others, and for who we want to invite into the space.

Lorenzo: Do you want to know how Technique actually started?

Waif: Yeah I do.

Lorenzo: There actually is a thing that happened.

J: I was waxing poetic

Lorenzo: Which is important, too. But the history books are also important. In that moment in Kaaterskill Falls, where we were just in the pool, heavily spiraling, we started skipping rocks. I started skipping rocks, but you got to do it with the right technique. People were just throwing them in or whatever. Some people have this technique, others have this technique (miming throwing techniques). There were also a lot of people in the way, so we were trying to adjust how we were throwing it. Before you know it we were just ten people chucking rocks. Launching boulders. "Oh here's my technique." "Watch my technique." "Under the leg technique."

Shavonne: For like an hour

J: It was a dense spiral.

Crystal: It was very performative, but it said a lot about our roles.

J: It's so crazy that something as silly and insignificant as that ended up becoming this whole super-poetic thing about the technique with which we live our lives

Shavonne: Absolutely

J: There was layers to that technique. That was a great time. Honestly, that trip is the reason we're all here. All of us were enlightened and reawakened from that trip. Time to do some crazy shit and harness that energy. So here we are.

Shavonne



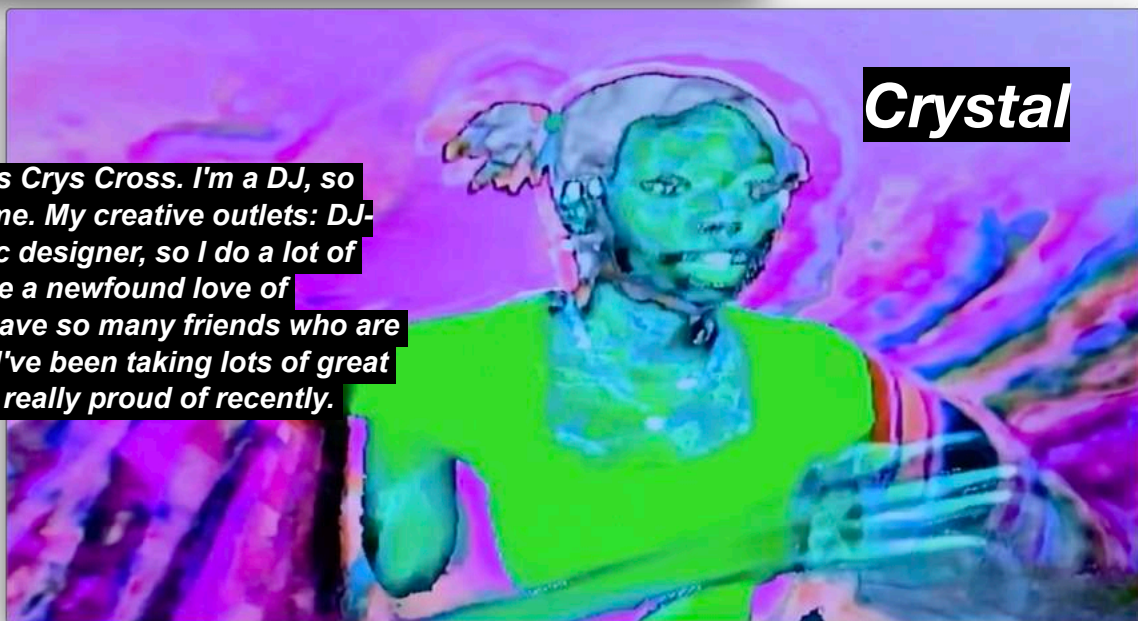
I'm a writer and photographer. Those are some of the mediums I communicate with. In terms of Imaginary Futures, I manage social media. Community engagement is kind of my thing. Other than that I think I'm a pretty cool human.

Waif: *Who's the bunny?*

This is Chunk. I really love stuffed animals and this is the most recent addition. Really sweet, very comforting, and I just love bunnies.

Crystal

My nickname, it's Crys Cross. I'm a DJ, so that's my DJ name. My creative outlets: DJ-ing, I'm a graphic designer, so I do a lot of digital media. I've a newfound love of photography. I have so many friends who are photographers. I've been taking lots of great pictures that I'm really proud of recently.



Giselle



I went to school for graphic design. Where I come from your title, your diploma, means so much. I'm Colombian and in Colombia there is such a pressure to become a professional. I feel like that kind of makes you be in a box, and you just start describing yourself as that title that you have. Being here has been such a journey for me to experiment with other fields. I've started bringing all the knowledge that I have from graphic design into other practices, such as fashion. I see myself as different people within who I am. It's good for you to just be one person in one moment, but let yourself evolve and transform whenever it feels necessary.

Shavonne: If you have an idea, you should act on it. Your community is waiting on you somewhere out there. I was feeling really uninspired and alone for a long time, but through trial and error and especially tribulation it kind of just fell into my lap, so I think there are blessings waiting on everyone, everyday, and they're just waiting on us to walk into it.

Clam: There's a community waiting for you. [Imaginary Futures] is definitely a testament to that. Had I not been verbal or expressive of who I am they wouldn't have found me - we wouldn't have found each other. I see that a lot of people in my personal life who don't have a community, and it makes me sad, because I do. I know how powerful it is, so I would tell everyone who just feels weird to just fuck it and ride it out, man. It's gonna be uncomfortable, but it's way more uncomfortable to fake that shit and walk around trying to be square, when you're not. Cuz that shit's really lame. I've tried doing that to appease family members for a very small moment in time - like super small, a sliver in time. After that they had just such a hard time living with me. I've had to move places after that. It comes with so much shit, but had I not been truthful about that, I wouldn't have found people who get it, who really provide space and can have the dialogue and the conversation, cuz they're out there.

Berlin: We're bold people just based on the fact of our skin tone in this world, our skin color in this world. We stick out. Imaginary Futures is a bold idea. It's a bold thought to basically renege the system and do it our way. This is something they don't want us to do is live together as a collective. Especially in America, we've been taught you do everything on your own. In other countries they do have co-operative-type of living, but here in America it's very rare to hear of something like that. To live together as a

collective. We got all of us gay, queer af, people of color in white upstate. You get no more bolder than that to be honest. ♦

imaginary futures

imaginary futures is a queer bipoc led collective with

aims to build a shared equity cooperative in upstate ny.

CASHAPP/VENMO: IMAGINARYFUTURES



RYAN

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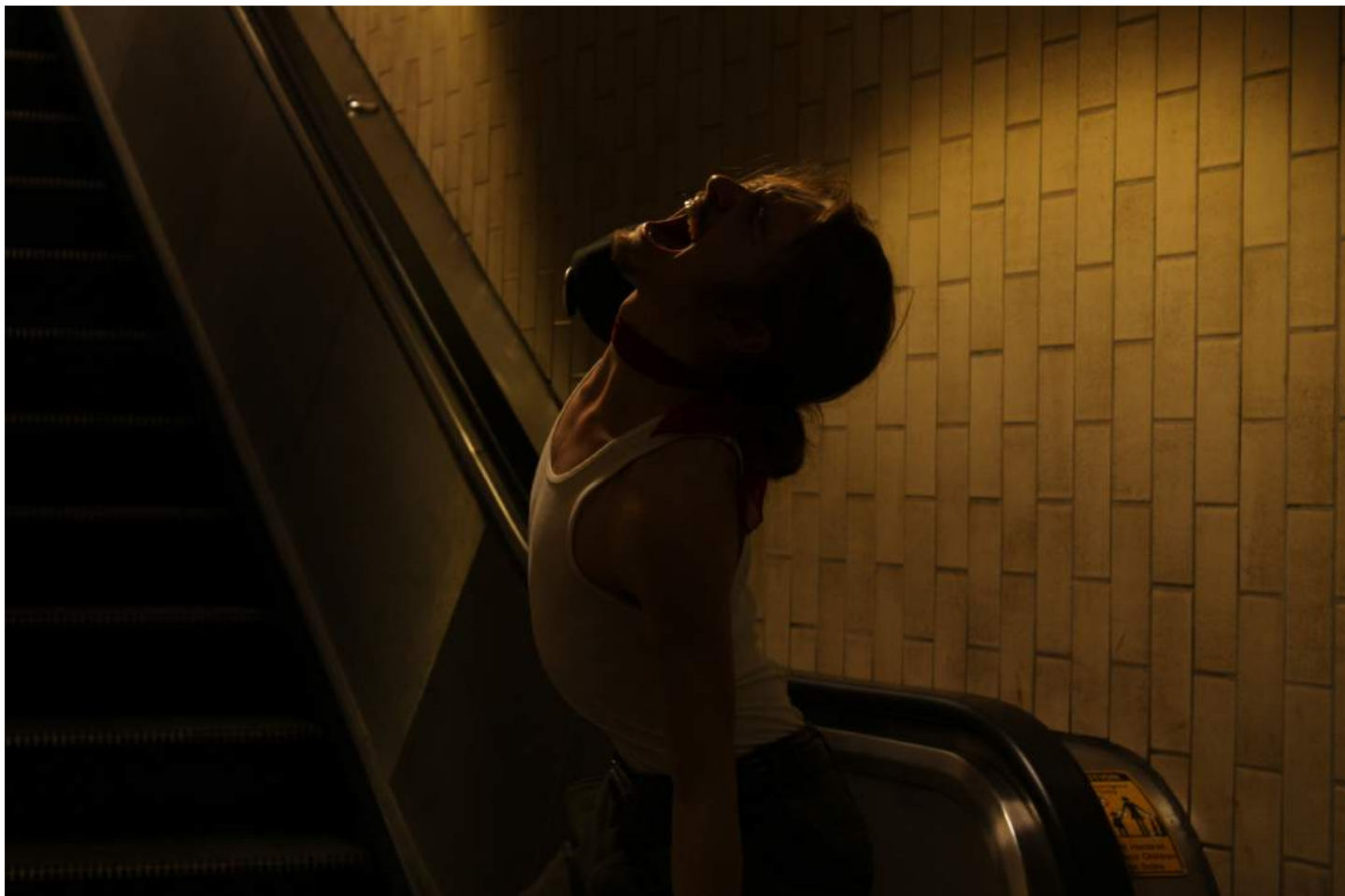
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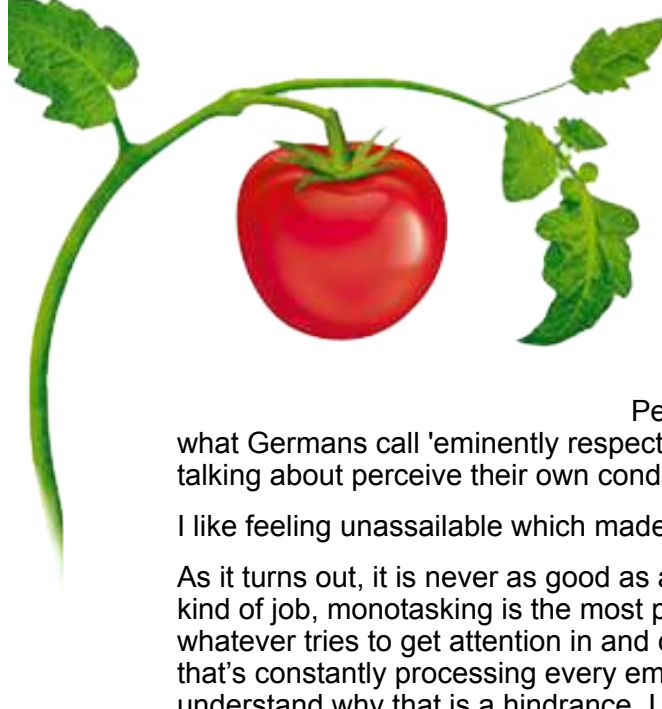






***MILDLY ACID
PULPY FRUIT
EATEN AS A
VEGETABLE//***

By Marc Rosner



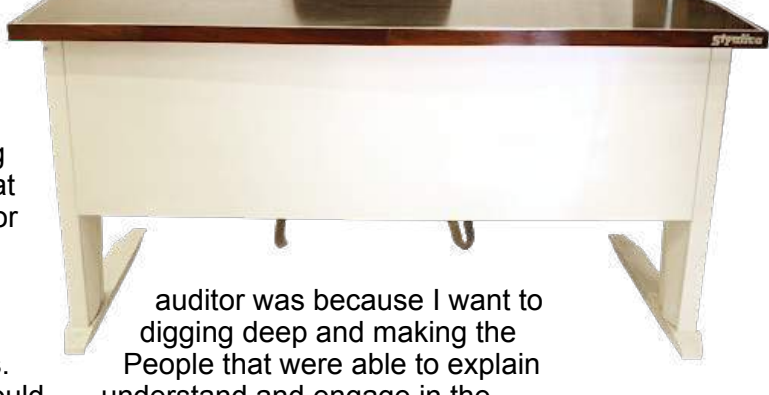
The way I decided which industry I wanted to work in is probably not what the average person would think. After six years of studying, four in the U.S. and two more in Germany, I decided to work as an auditor and tax counselor. I thought that was the perfect job for me to finally learn how to structure my thought and work process.

People who work in that business belong to the stereotype of what Germans call 'eminently respectable.' Well, that is probably not true but the brood I am talking about perceive their own condition as just that.

I like feeling unassailable which made me want to work there even more.

As it turns out, it is never as good as advertised and I soon became keyed up at work. For that kind of job, monotasking is the most productive way. That would require me to say "NO" to whatever tries to get attention in and outside of my head. Add a never-stopping inner voice that's constantly processing every emotional transmission from people around and you understand why that is a hindrance. I realized I don't work for my own well being. Some colleagues and clients expect a certain reliability of giving assistance in whatever they are doing. There is this very fine line that separates an honest need from just being lazy enough to get someone to do the thinking. Whenever I interact in that setting I feel I will be held accountable for whatever the person I am talking to makes of it, which forces me to consider the capacity of the respondent. If you get caught in other people's thoughts makes "the more people need you the less you are able to take care of your own things" true. The longer the struggle prolonged the stress would translate into my leisure time which would then ward me from regeneration. No hope of escape from that vicious cycle.

I really started questioning the purpose of the journey I was on. I have always questioned the system we live in. At the age of 14 I struggled in school and got away with justifying my laziness with the injustice the workforce faces. My understanding of how people choose their profession based on my observation that most people choose between security and freedom instead of listening to their heart. I believe that most people do not see their jobs as a craftsmanship that is worth being fully lived. Maybe there isn't much joy and honor in some jobs but there is always honor and fulfillment in being good at a craft. Being responsible informed and to be engaged is desirable but not everybody gets the chance, which is not just. At that time we were told how important discipline, courage, confidence, and work ethic are but they all could not argue why. The abyss of what they dreamed of compared to the present stage of their lives made the struggle of the journey become too much to handle. Their lingering frustration and regret about their lacking grit opened the door to actually get away with being lazy for a while. What we need is validation but what we get is competition. Life makes you pay, sooner or later.



I guess the reason why I ended up working as an auditor was because I want to find the essence of things. I have struggled with effort of explaining the backgrounds of my thoughts. People that were able to explain complex topics in easy words, so that everybody could understand and engage in the discussion, have always been my idols because it made them seem reliable at pulling things off. In my opinion the essence of life is the discourse among human beings. Unforeseen, an opinion's acceptance among peers is dependent on the person's reputation. The better you are the more people believe in what you have to say. It must feel amazing being perceived as reliable in a discourse because that is a trait that sticks to your name as long as the credibility is being upheld. In my professional world, that is a precious good.

Being in the office is like commencing into multiple universes at once. Our office consists of various rooms in which no more than two colleagues work. Since every colleague services their own clients, communication style and working environment varies depending on the room.

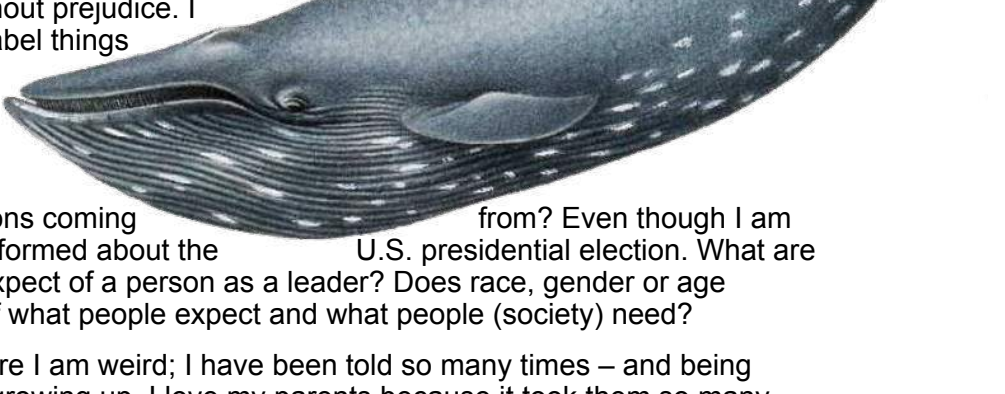
Our clients have crystal clear expectations of how an auditor's habitus must be. Still it is not that one role model they are all expecting. For most people that means being the jack of all trades device for them but it varies depending on the client's value system.

Working suddenly becomes a stage. We perform as what we assume our clients expect us to be. While working in that industry I have become an actor by accident. The parts I play are not overly broad yet well prepared and distinct. Most of my communication with clients consists of demanding or correcting work as well as explanations of how something must be done ideally. People tend to emotionalize when they are being defensive.

Coordinating the consultancy and the interpersonal relation creates some challenges for me. I am a "highly sensitive person", also called HSP, which means my filter is more permeable than average which leads to constant stimulus satiation if not dealt with accordingly. For instance, as I am revising my piece and making some changes, because I spoke to the person editing it, I can not deny the feeling that I am more interested in what I have to say than he is. Well, of course I am. Nobody asked me to write something, and wait - - -, why should anybody? Hmmm, he said he liked it but maybe he was just being polite. He's busy working on the content for the magazine and I don't know better than calling him up, to see why he did not respond as fast as he did before, using a stupid pseudo reason to disguise my actual concern. While he said he had lots of submissions he had to review, I wonder how many of those are much better than mine. There is a chance that he might read this passage, at least I hope he does, but I wonder why I can not deal with it in an appropriate way. The reason is, the feelings and impressions are too deep. I can not help but to be distracted by them and then have to deal with attention residue. Don't get me wrong, I am aware of the fact that I am not the centre of the world, unfortunately ;). Nevertheless, the urge of trying to find ways to engage in the outside world interferes with my focus. In consequence, ego depletion is inevitable if I am not able to set boundaries and actually stick to them.

To be honest, that is fucking weird. I am part of a culture and civilization that does not understand my point of view as much as I understand theirs. Elsewise - I am not sure if understanding is the best word - sensing a person's gravitation or aptitude before that person perceives it on their own describes it pretty well too and that happens on a daily basis. It makes me feel like an alien in disguise on planet earth. As a matter of fact, trying to escape from being atypical I sometimes pretend I am an MIB agent whose job it is to detect anomalies.

Picture being in the shoes of the 52-Hertz whale (presumably a hybrid of fin and blue whale). In case you haven't heard of the story yet, this particular whale sings a different tune than the blue or fin whales around it. Instead of chiming in at the typical 15 to 20 hertz, the 52 hertz whale sings a couple pitches higher, meaning the 52 hertz whale never in its life received an answer from another whale. Welcome to my world. If I want to interact with my fellows, I must change bandwidth.



Floating around in an attempt to suppress social anthropology, the ideas of an impartial life arouse. To me, impartial does not mean without prejudice. I believe that individuals have to label things to get by, which always leads to prejudice. What I mean is taking responsibility in getting an informed opinion about stuff.

Where are all those preconceptions coming from? Even though I am German I feel compelled to be informed about the U.S. presidential election. What are voters prone to? What do they expect of a person as a leader? Does race, gender or age matter? Is there a discrepancy of what people expect and what people (society) need?

Being as weird as I am – I am sure I am weird; I have been told so many times – and being afraid of it is not the place to be growing up. I love my parents because it took them so many years until they finally threw in the towel. I used to be good at tennis. The reason I was not winning as much as I should have was lacking confidence. I never fully understood why I should believe in my victory. My opponent still had an equal chance of winning and who am I to despise another human beings' ability to succeed. After all, competition is only an extract. Competition, in the way most of us do it, measures only to a certain point of time. Instead, competition is a way of finding your best version by giving yourself the chance to fail. Opponents are no enemies. They should be called playfellows because they share the same interest and also just want to improve, like we do. Without anybody to play with and to share the experience how much fun would it really be?

Still, people tend to measure other humans' capabilities on what they have already achieved as opposed to what they are capable of. I have always found that ridiculous.

I wonder what would happen to society if people would stop categorizing their own child into gender, race, ethnicity etc. and instead would treat their traits as an extension of their soul. I am not even sure if growing children would care about their gender if it were not inflicted on them. Obviously, they wonder about the physical differences, but would they also discuss and cultivate gender roles in the way we do?



This is Ethyl. It is the outcome of our cultivation sowed on our balcony and harvested at last of them all. Now E has been sitting on the kitchen island transforming into that perfect little thing.

Life has been draining lately. Office hours have been long. Squeezing out the last minutes of focused work to study for that heinous examination to become a licensed tax accountant were nerve wrecking.

Tomatoes, strangely enough, are fruits. They sprout as leaves from the ovary of the carpel. That is why they start out green because leaves as chloroplast inhibit the dyestuff chlorophyll.

Walking by the kitchen in a state of miserable degradation and social exclusion, my loneliness expresses itself through a deep stare into the world of my introverted self. My vision settles on Ethyl. It seems like we have transforming times ahead of us. E is yellowish.

Fruits change their color to lure predators to distribute their seeds. The ripening is influenced by Ethen and fosters enzymes that turn starch into fructose. It almost feels like Ethyl has an extroverted idea of how E's representation triggers the yearning of the prey.

The emerging tempest deep down my guts does not bear for anything considered to be most excellent. My inner voice is silent. Stimulus satiation is restraining my so far ongoing journey. Detect, label, balance and leave it be. Four simple steps to get me back to that thin border between internal and external. Detect, label, balance and leave it be.

All those different compartments glued by the middle lamella that shape the structure inside of Ethyl suddenly expose as partitions in my head. It is impossible to cope anything if it is not stored at the right place.

Ethyl's stained dress alters to reddish. Every day I pass by E's red becomes deeper and deeper. There is no reversal for Ethyl. The ongoing process unfolds as a one-way road. E's path is predetermined.

Within the loneliness, I find myself battling the lurking self-doubt. There is no fear of being physically violated in the sense of getting punched in the face. It more a feeling of detachedness from the outside world. Anxiety is rising within me; the self-inflicted harm of over-thinking, over-feeling, over-identifying does not stop the vast silence in my head. Trying to juggle all those dreamcatchers in my head I lose control of the light that is meant to sift out my vision and purpose in that moment. My preconceived vision of life becomes subordinate to those externally influenced that I unconsciously oppress on me.

Meanwhile, Ethyl just been staring at me without pause or movement, but I know what E is thinking. I reached the top of ivory tower on cold mountain.

Being climacteric is a special feature of Ethyl. Climacteric fruits can speed up ripening by releasing ethylene production and a rise in cellular respiration.

While studying, overwhelmed by the idea of what would happen if I pass, I realize I will have to face a world with a different perception of who I am. I have become so goal oriented that I turn into that one-dimensional epigone. The level of self-assuredness drops in mutual dependence to my progress. "...They know not well the subtle ways I keep, and pass, and turn away. ...They reckon ill who leave me out; When me they fly, I am the wings."

Ethyl has no trouble whatsoever to change roles in life. One day a leaf, the next day a dingy debaucher trying to spread the next generation. I wish I did not care about how I represented myself to the world. I wish I could be like Ethyl. Just be. The wail I am.

Unthought of, I miss being cared about. Looking out for kindred spirits, I pine for sensing an earnest soul. No prejudices, no preconceived notion of allocated behavior. Grant me the sweetness of your presence. Make me endure the suffering.

I had to slaughter Ethyl.

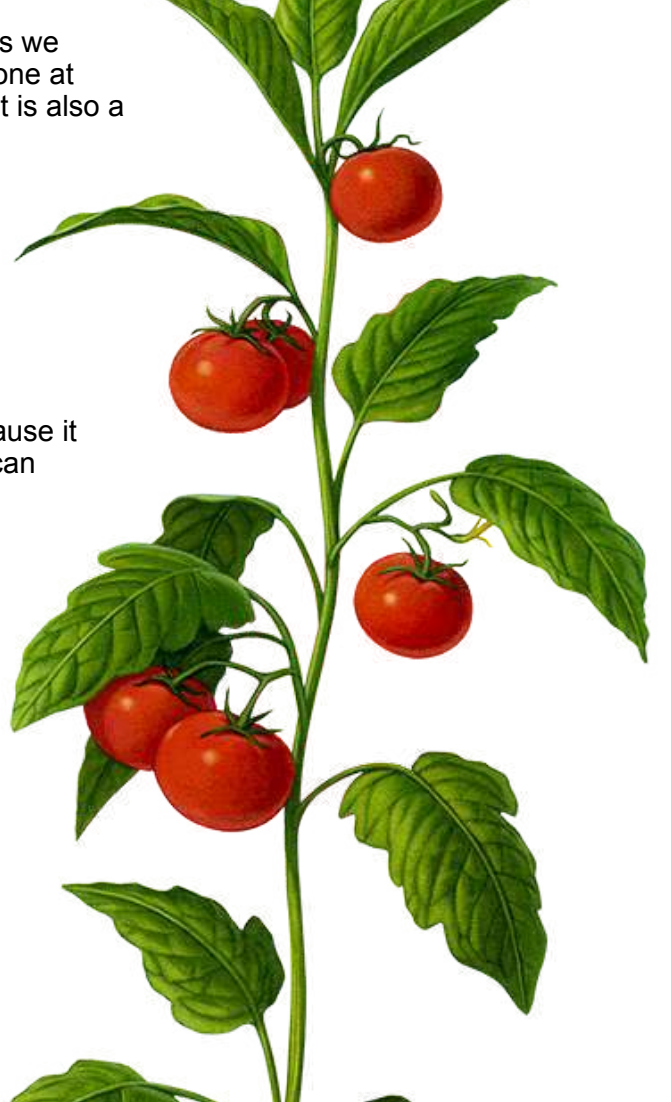
Sorry.

To get rid of all the bullshit we carry and all the assumptions we make to justify our world, it is good and necessary to be alone at times. It can hurt to face what we really think about us but it is also a chance to heal. So within that solitude there is a chance of getting rid of all the solitudes.

I obviously doubt, mistrust and deny like we all did before. It feels miserable to see that I am not capable of forming a reasonable understanding of the world and that I have to experience the feeling of being abandoned and not cared about. It has nothing to do with arrogance or intelligence. It is just very sad.

I dissociate in order to see the world how I like it to be because it takes courage, responsibility and effort to reflect on how I can engage and take responsibility for my life in a respectful manner. Whenever I realize that, time and time again, I do not feel alone. I feel as part of the communion we all together shape. I stop seeing enemies and start seeing opportunities to engage, to act and to be free. I am able to receive validation.

To me, that is the difference of the pain of feeling isolated and the healing of solitude. It both hurts but the second one allows me a chance to trust, to live and to love. ♦



DARIA

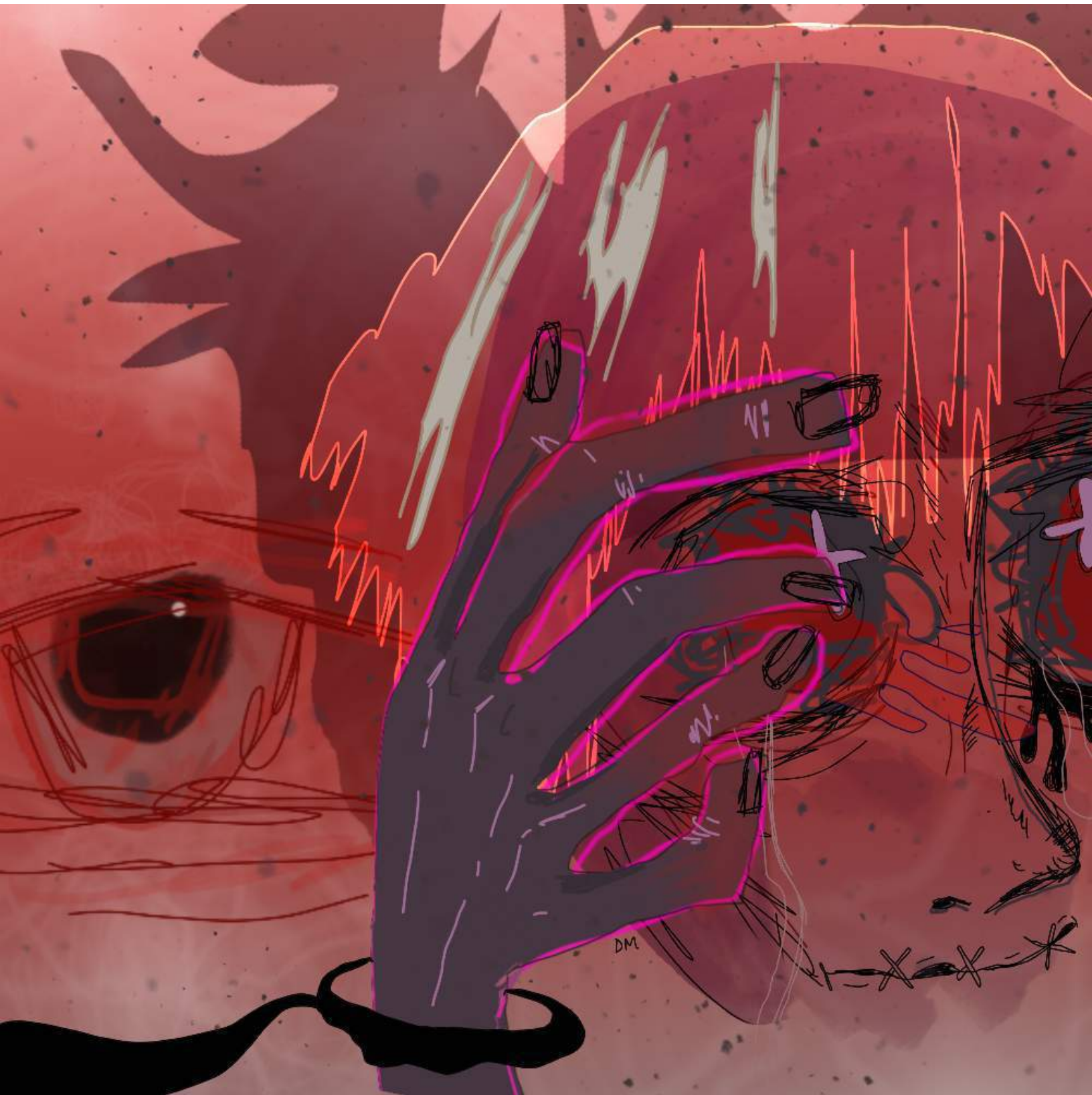
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Thank you for reading The Proverbial Waif. The next issue will be about how we influence others and how we ourselves are influenced. A Waif Under the Influence.

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?

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