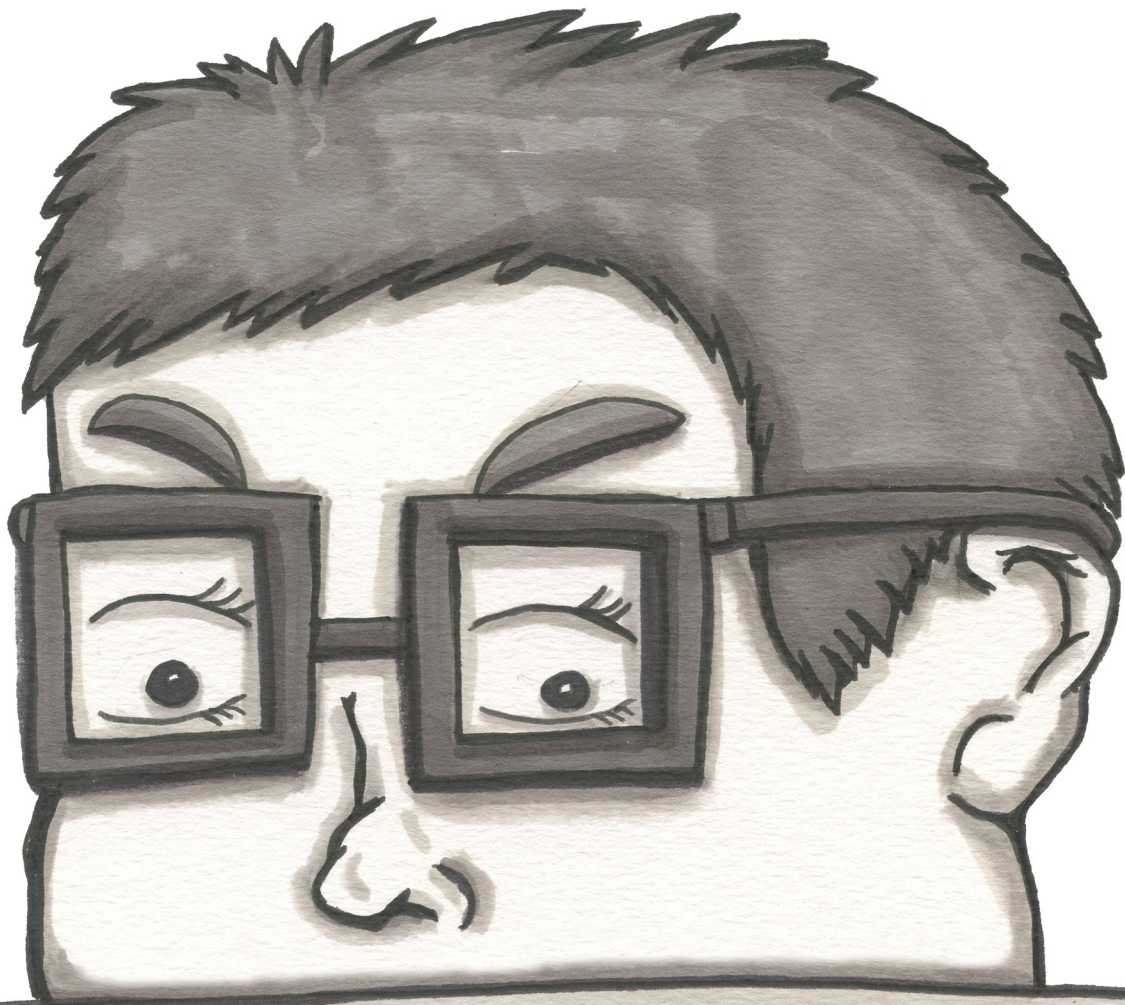
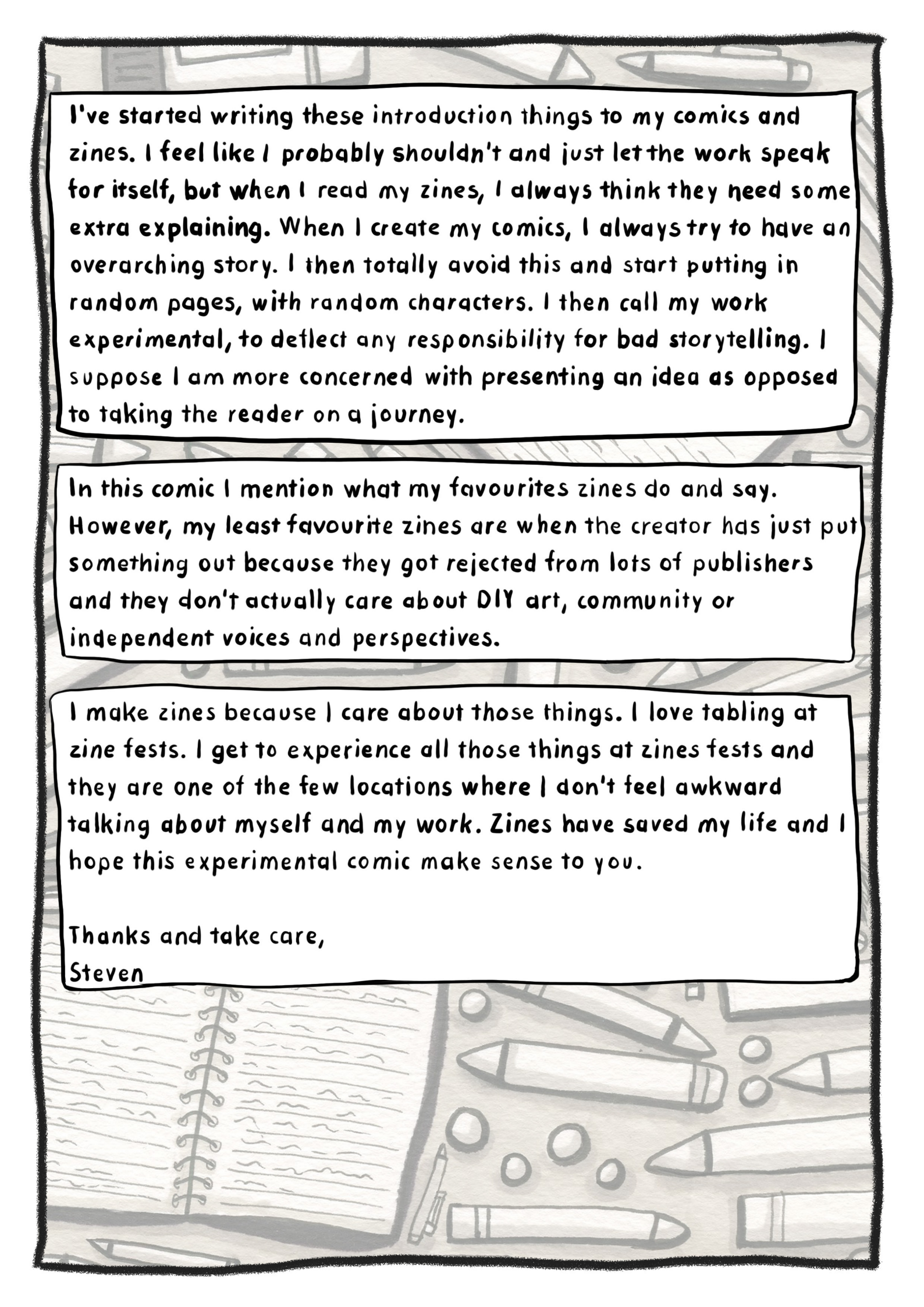


ZINES SAVED MY LIFE



A comic about zines
Created by Steven Fraser

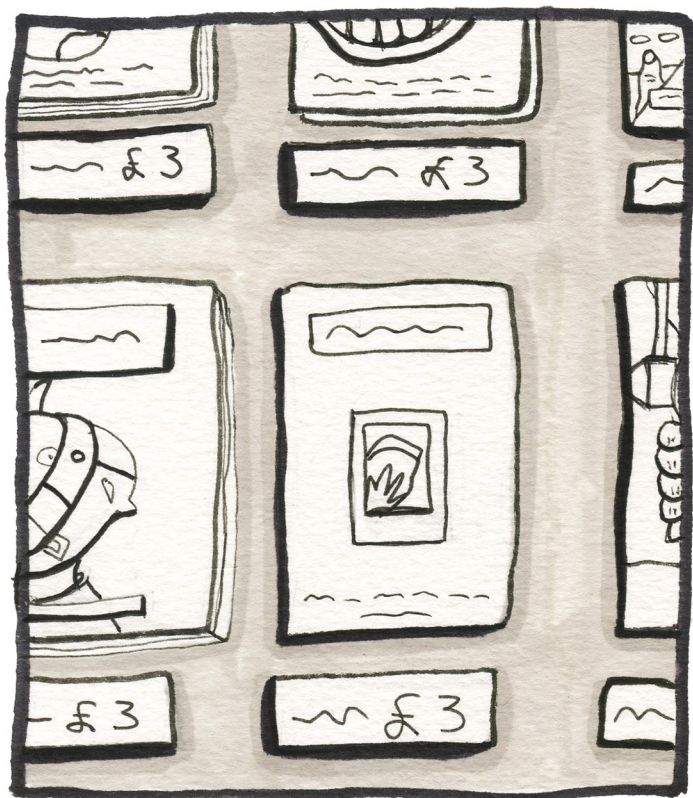
The background of the entire page is a light grey illustration of various drawing tools. At the top, there are several pencils and pens. In the middle, there are some geometric shapes like triangles and circles. At the bottom, there is a spiral-bound notebook with wavy lines representing text, and more drawing tools like pencils and pens scattered around it.

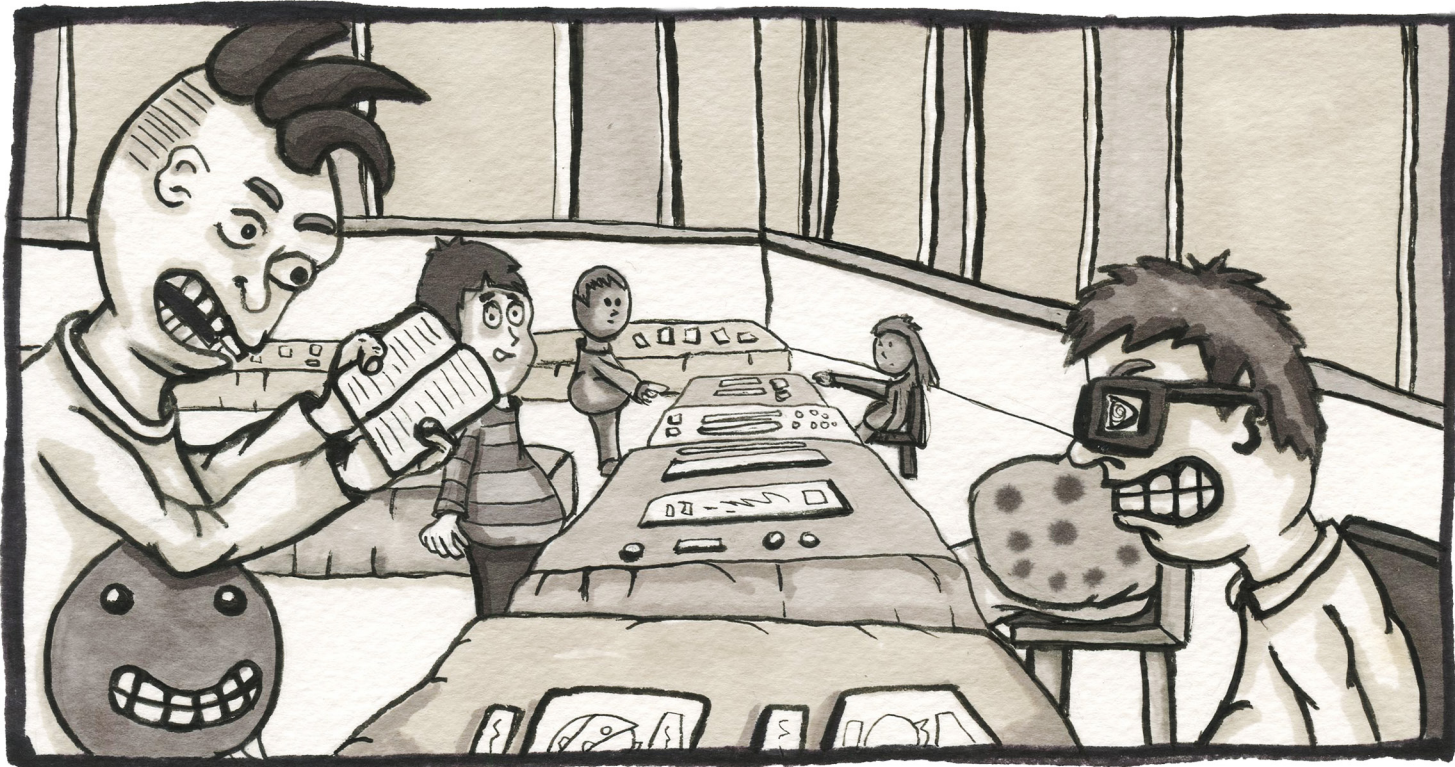
I've started writing these introduction things to my comics and zines. I feel like I probably shouldn't and just let the work speak for itself, but when I read my zines, I always think they need some extra explaining. When I create my comics, I always try to have an overarching story. I then totally avoid this and start putting in random pages, with random characters. I then call my work experimental, to deflect any responsibility for bad storytelling. I suppose I am more concerned with presenting an idea as opposed to taking the reader on a journey.

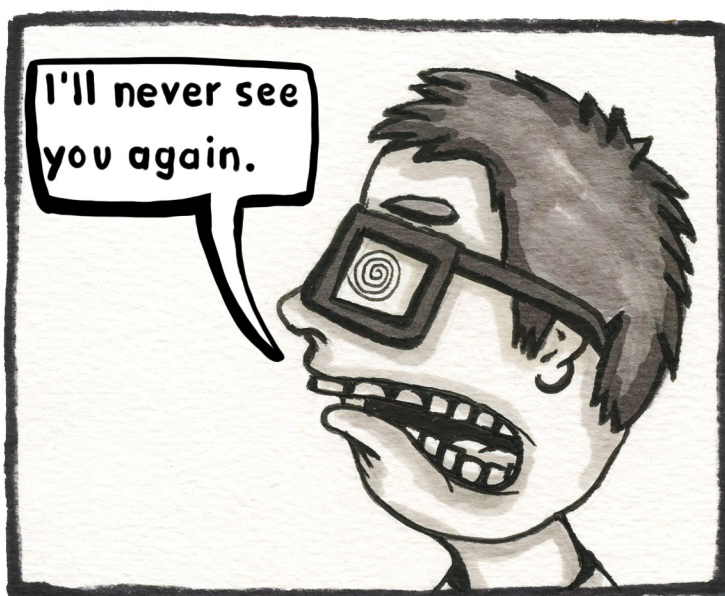
In this comic I mention what my favourites zines do and say. However, my least favourite zines are when the creator has just put something out because they got rejected from lots of publishers and they don't actually care about DIY art, community or independent voices and perspectives.

I make zines because I care about those things. I love tabling at zine fests. I get to experience all those things at zines fests and they are one of the few locations where I don't feel awkward talking about myself and my work. Zines have saved my life and I hope this experimental comic make sense to you.

Thanks and take care,
Steven









I make autobiographical work.

So, I have to pretend that my life is more interesting than it actually is.

Sometimes I act like I am doing better than I actually am.

But I care about my work.

And I put my thoughts and feelings into my zines, comics and animation.





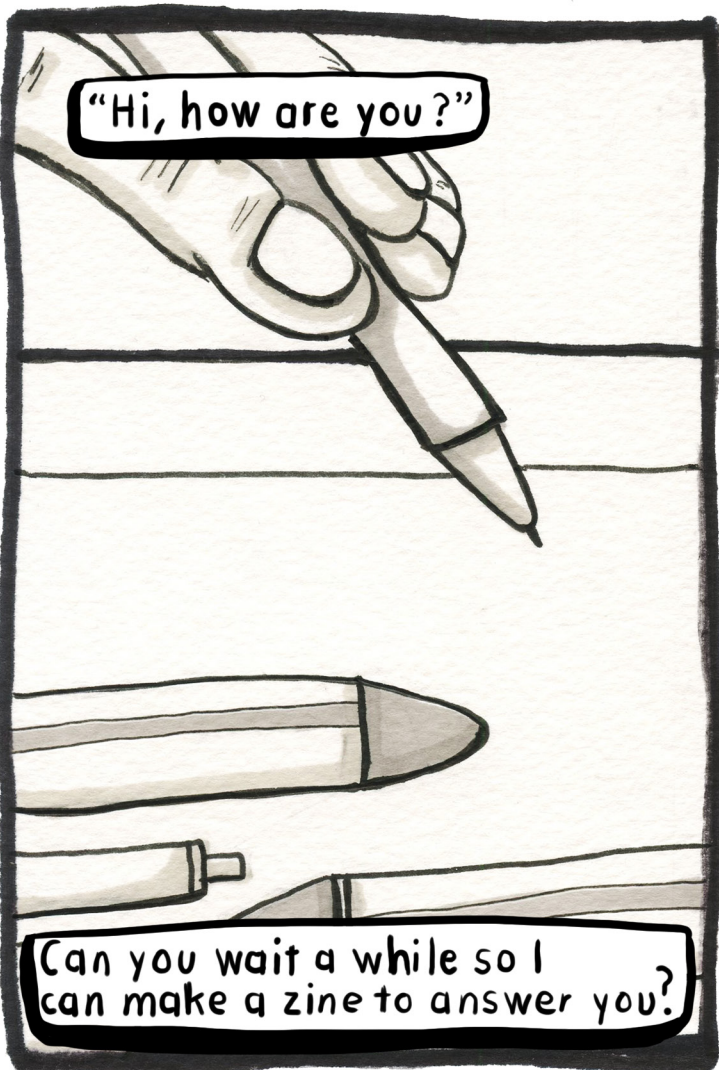
Of course zines aren't a great way to communicate in everyday situations.



It would be completely impractical to communicate in this way.

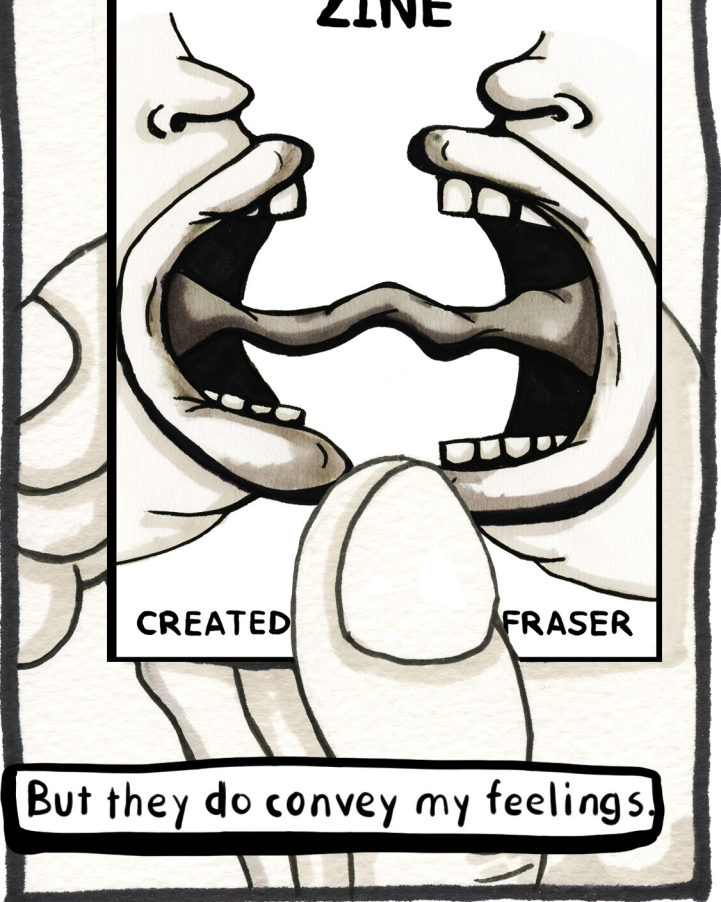


"Hi, how are you?"



Can you wait a while so I can make a zine to answer you?

COMMUNICATION ZINE

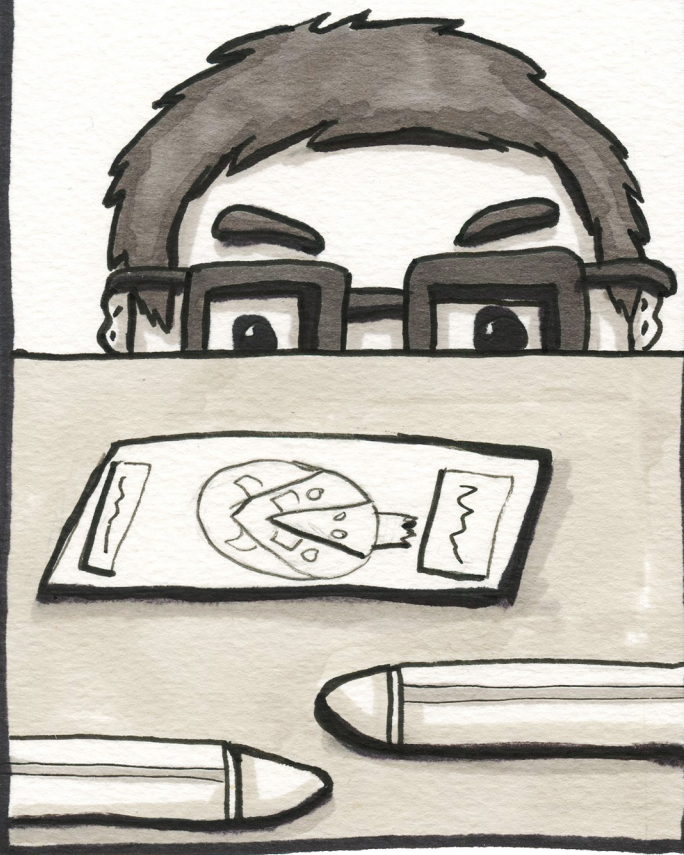


CREATED

FRASER

But they do convey my feelings.

Sometimes it is
hard making zines.



It takes a lot of effort to
plan, write, draw and put
everything together.



I enjoy it, but why do I
bother putting it out?

And managing my
online shop ...



I sell so few zines
and comics, I
wonder if it is
worth the effort.

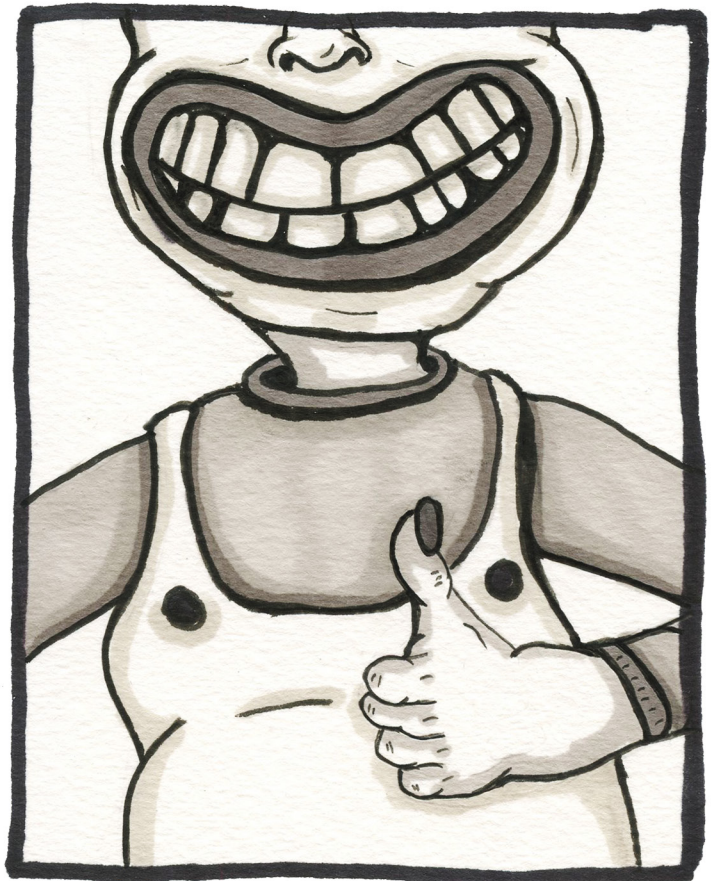
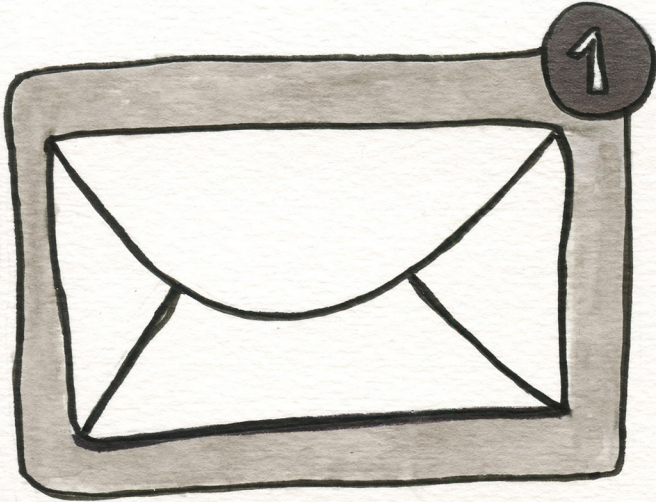


It is stressful
attending Zine and
Comic Fests ...



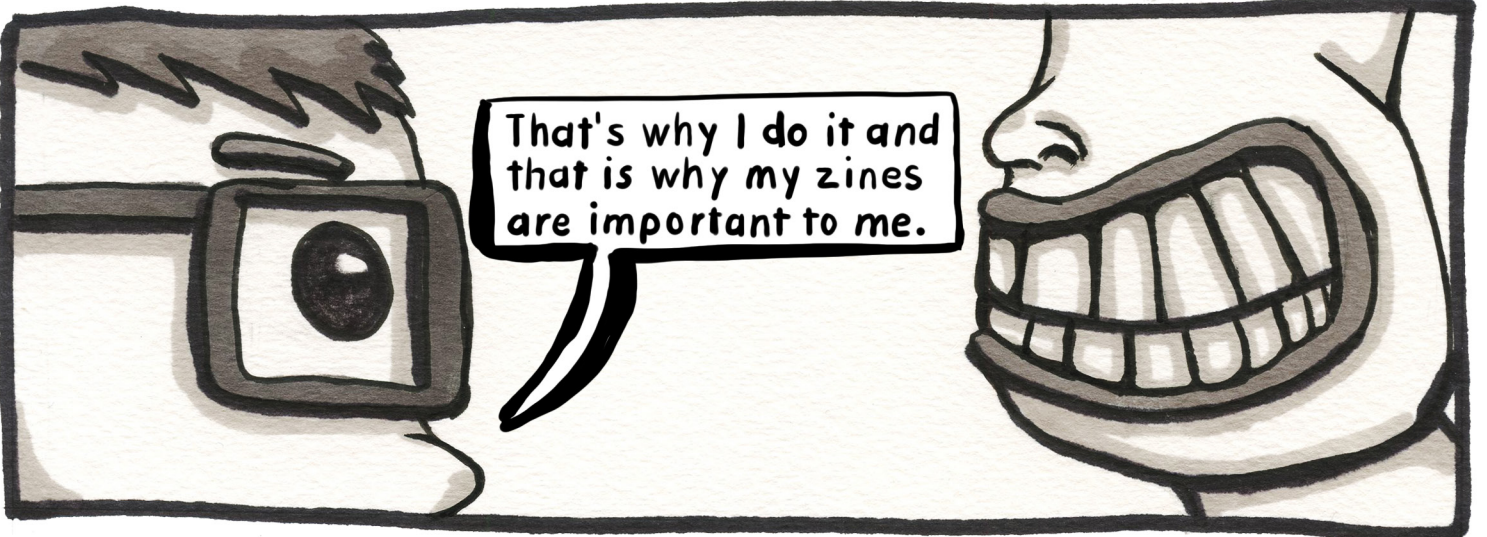
Then I get an email ...

From a young, queer and autistic kid, thanking me after reading one of my zines.



Then I remember that this is what success is. It is not selling more Zines than other people, it is helping the people who take time to read them.

That's why I do it and that is why my zines are important to me.



I want my zines to be quiet.



I want them to be read in quiet places.



I want them to be an intimate experience ...



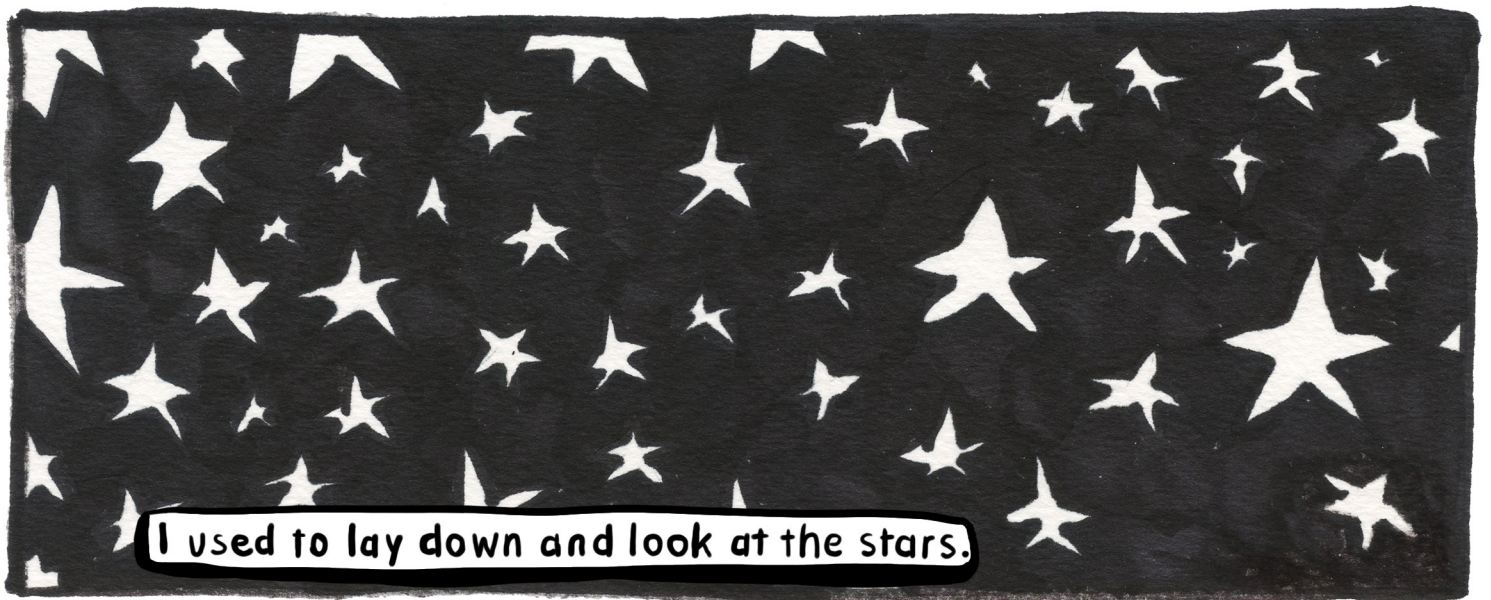
The last thing that people read before going to bed at night.



The thing that keeps you safe ... and also give you nightmares.





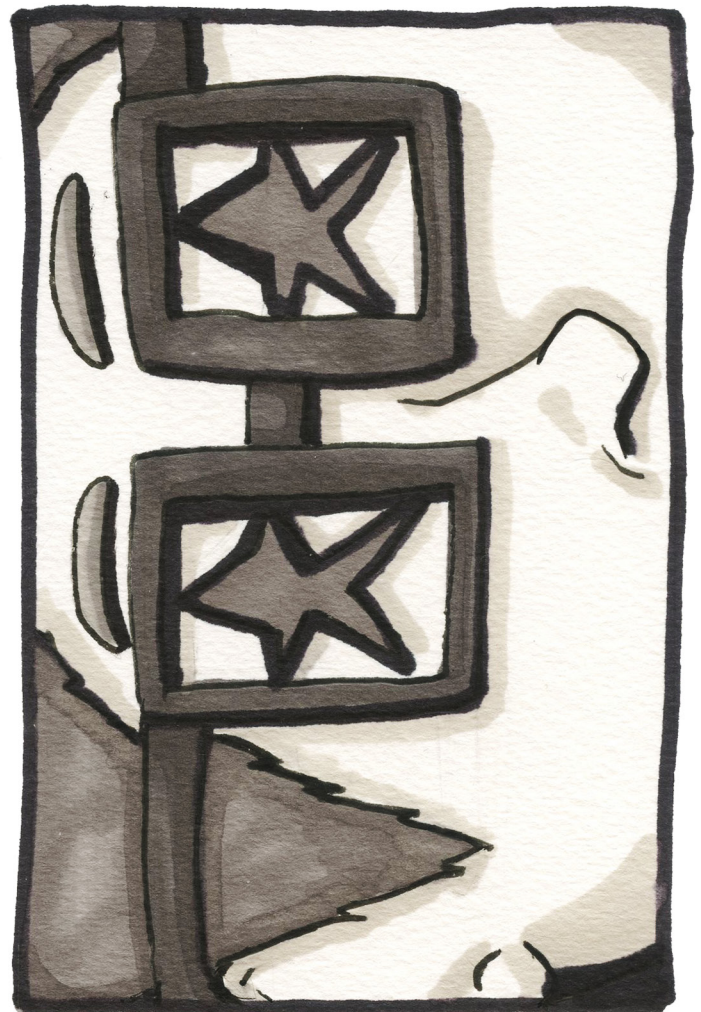


I used to lay down and look at the stars.



I saw how brilliant they looked.

But I soon started to think about how I have messed up my life. I should have spent more time looking at the stars and less time working.



Labour will never be as amazing as the stars.

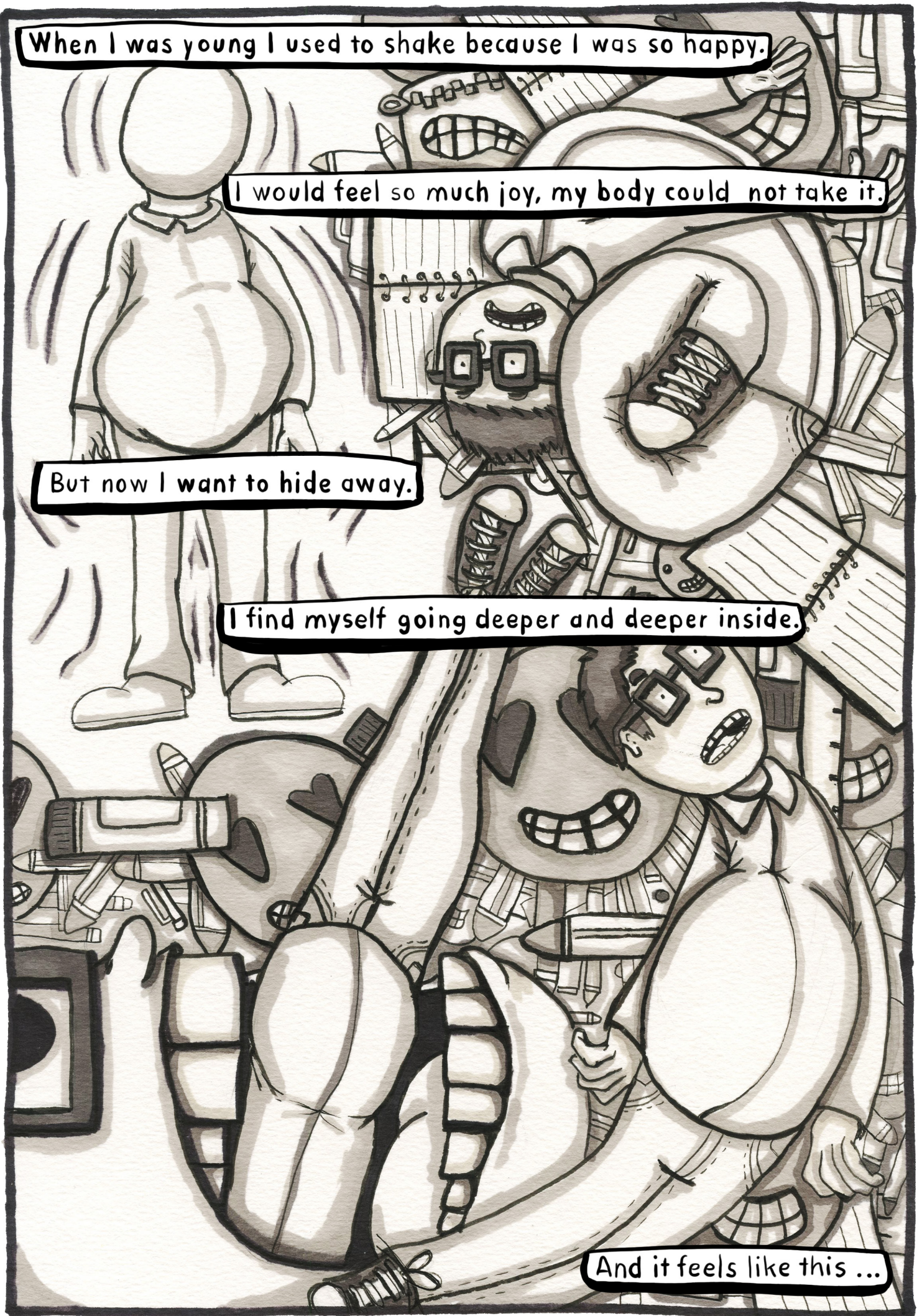
When I was young I used to shake because I was so happy.

I would feel so much joy, my body could not take it.

But now I want to hide away.

I find myself going deeper and deeper inside.

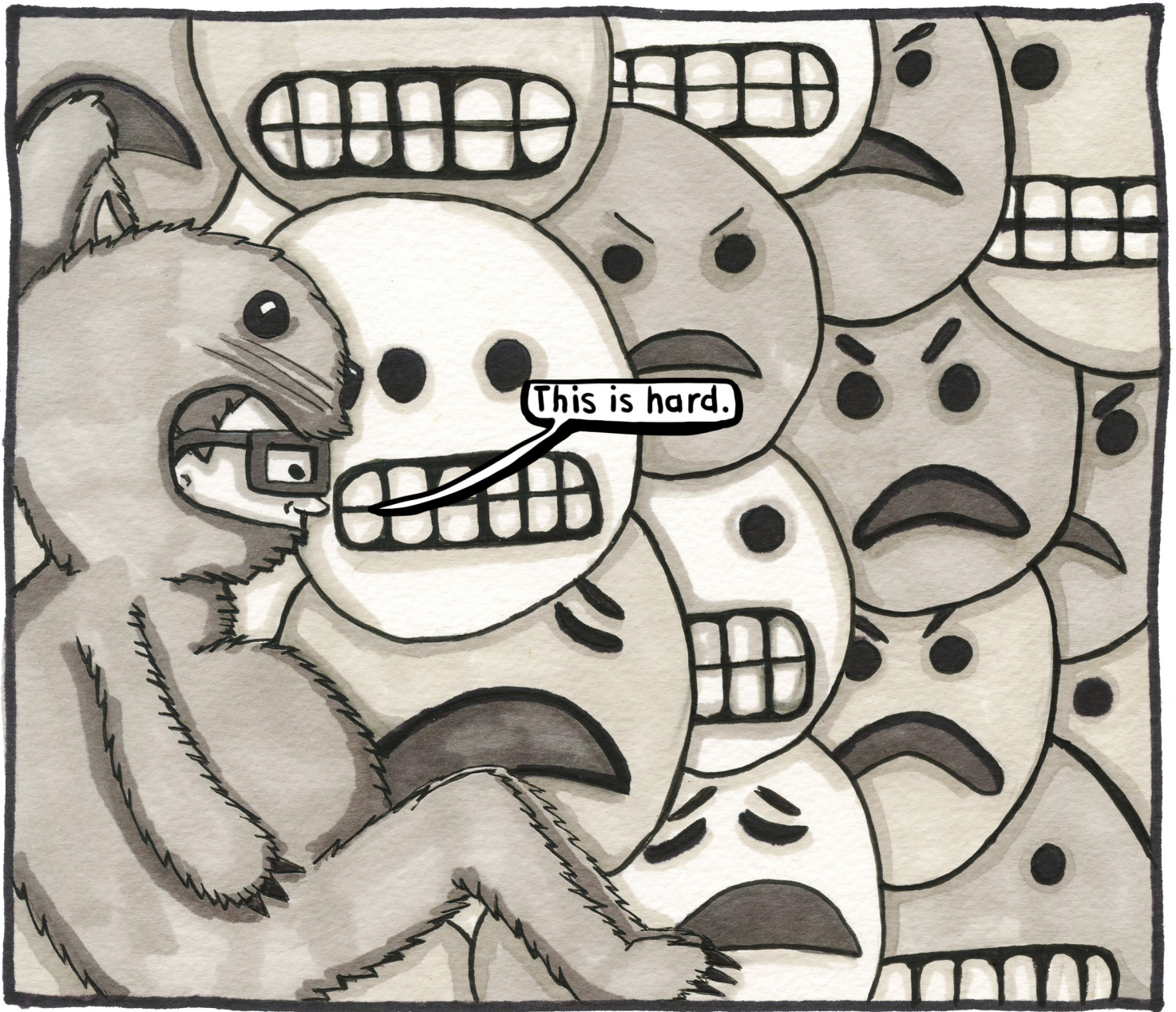
And it feels like this ...

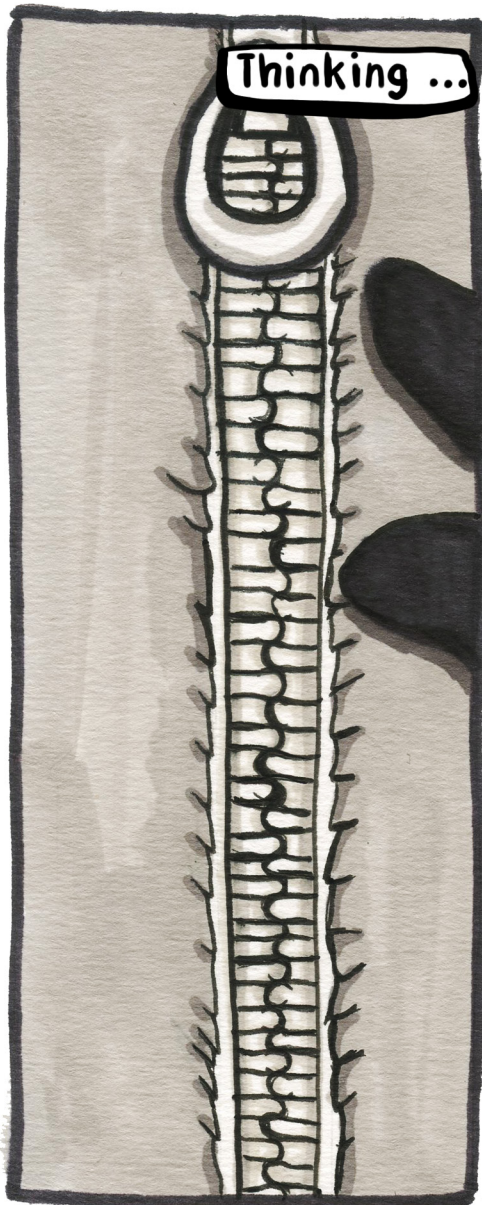


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[illegible]







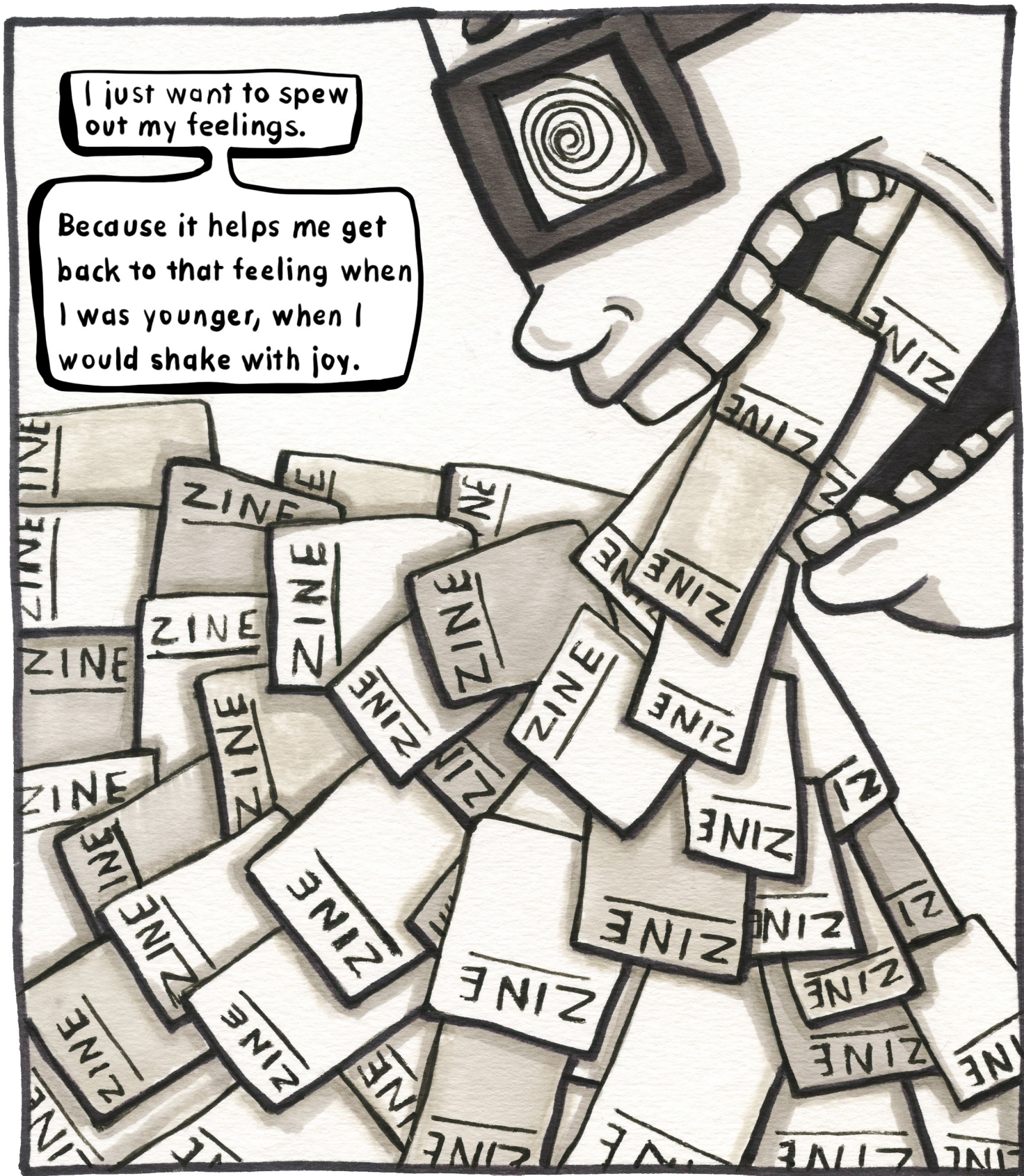


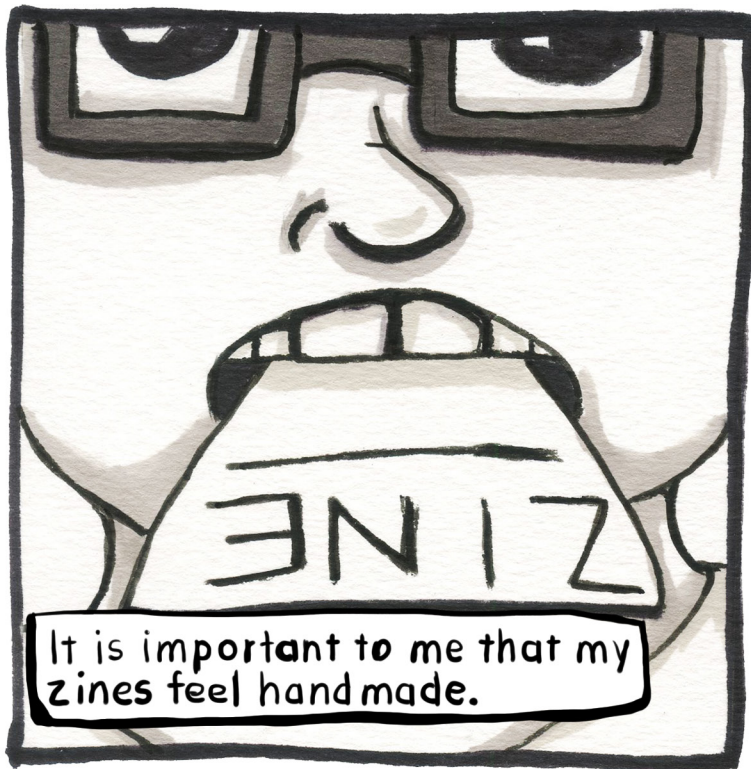
And I love you for reading it.



I just want to spew
out my feelings.

Because it helps me get
back to that feeling when
I was younger, when I
would shake with joy.





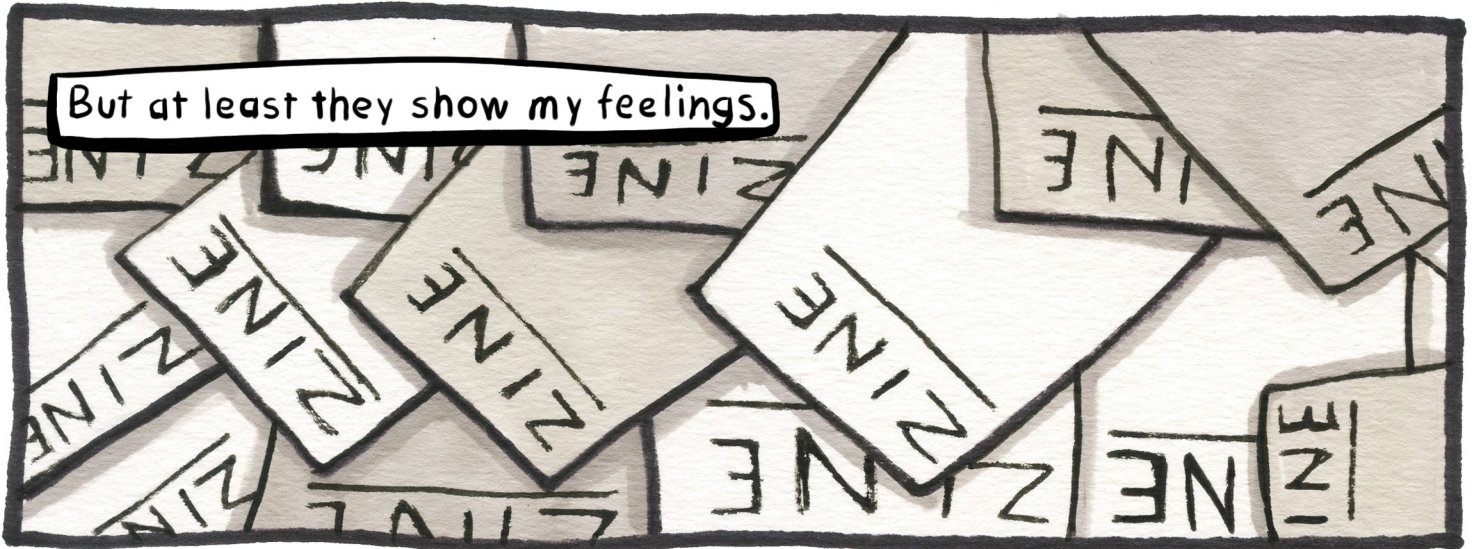
It is important to me that my zines feel handmade.



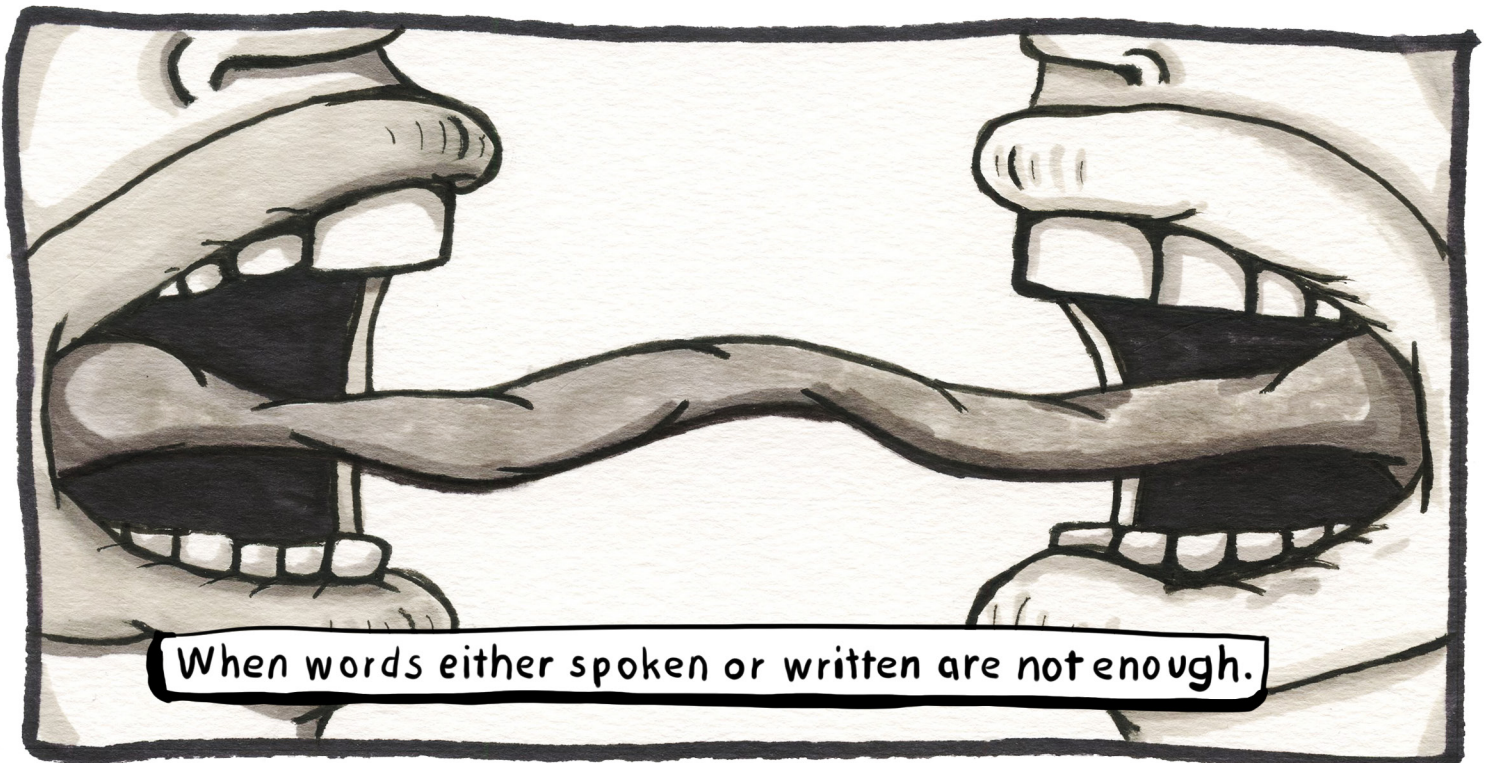
That they have my fingerprints on them.



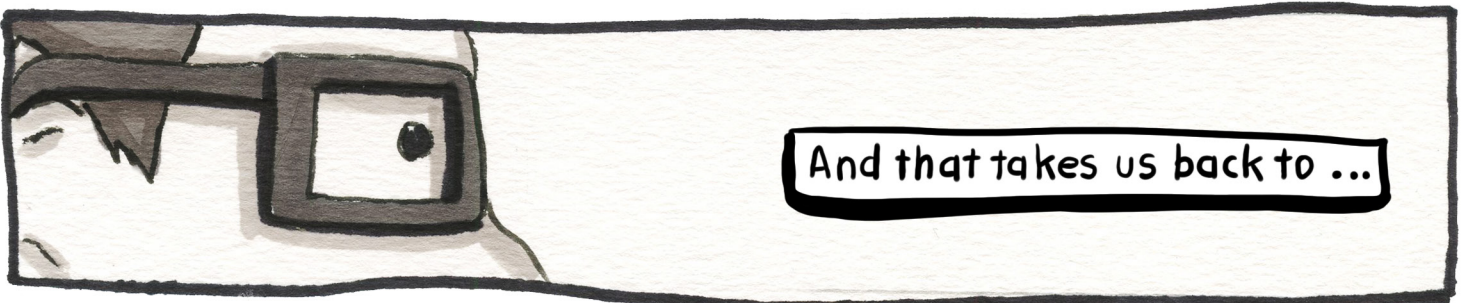
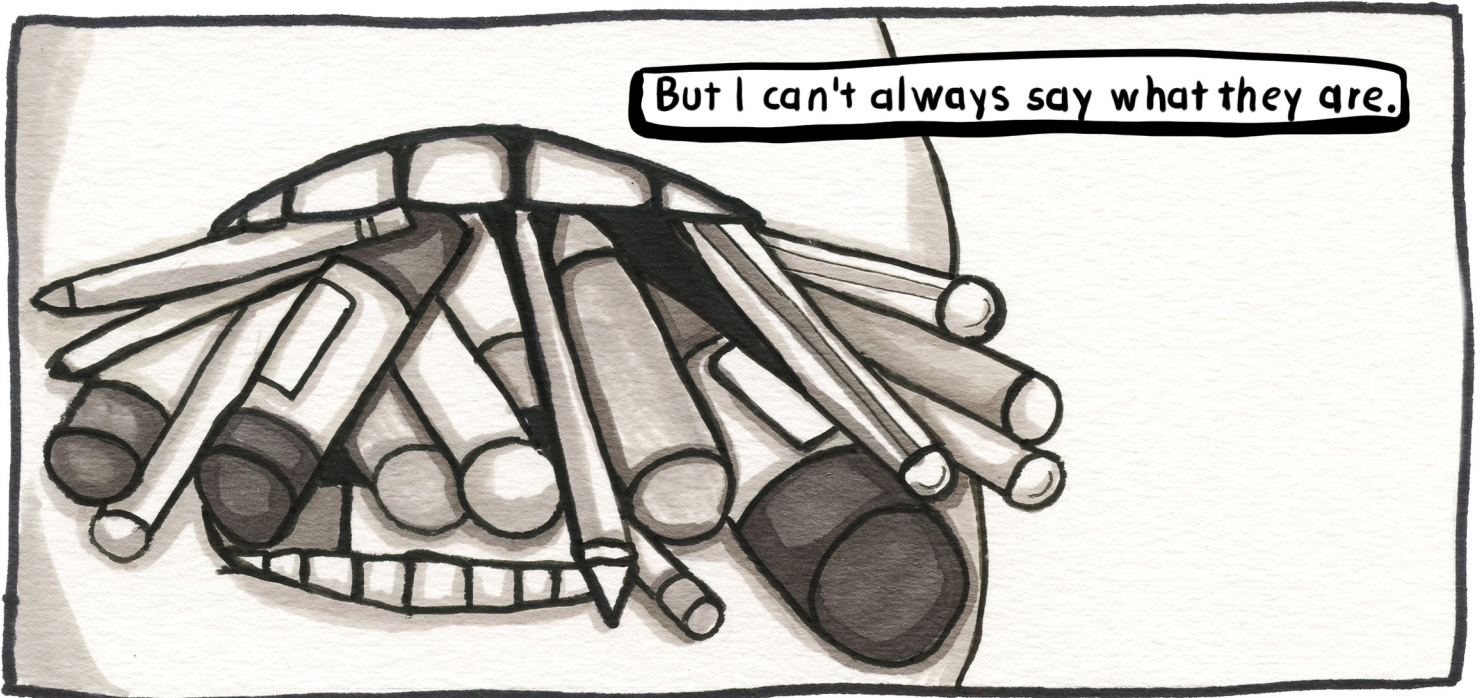
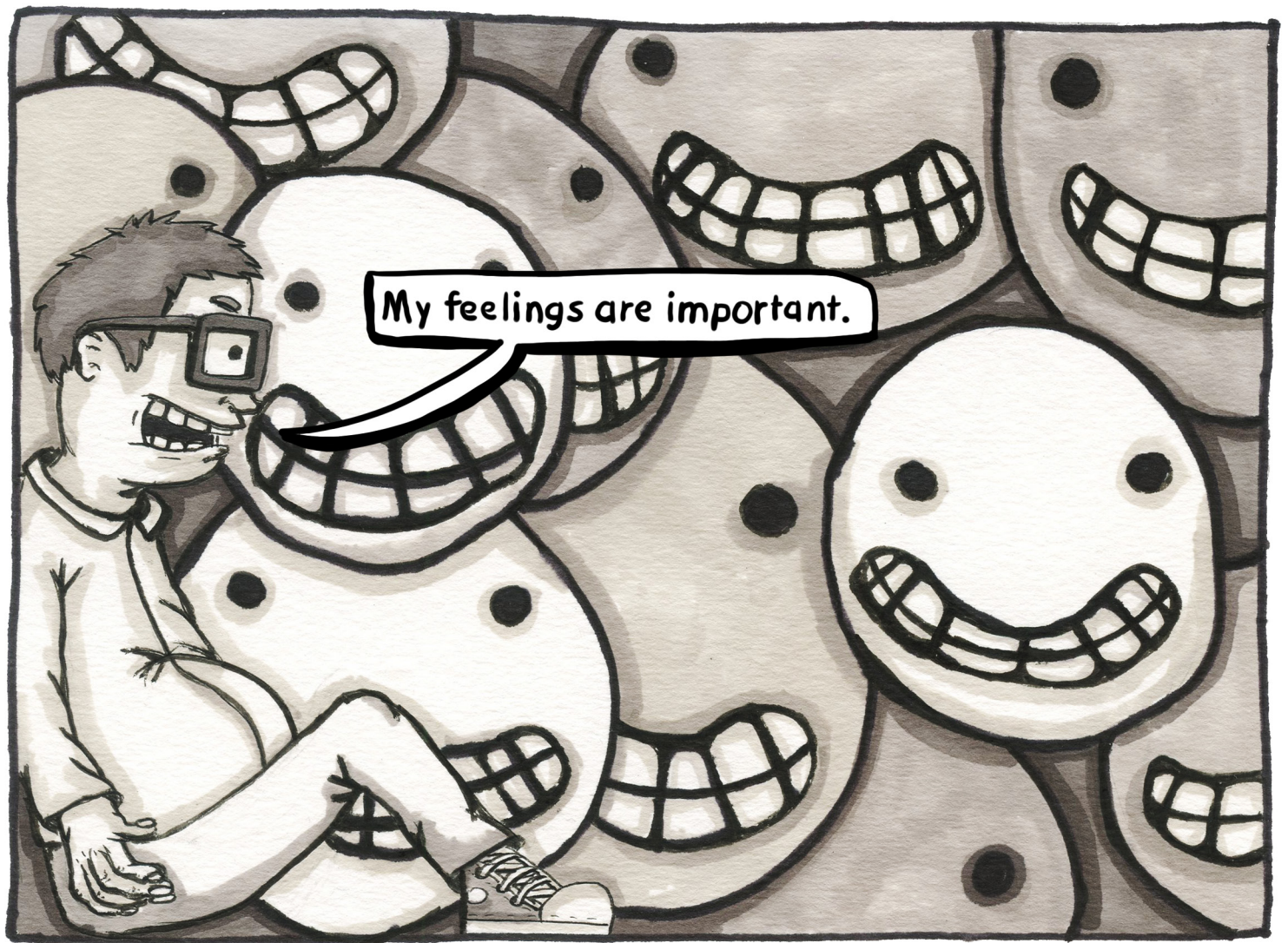
They are not ~~perfect~~ perfect.

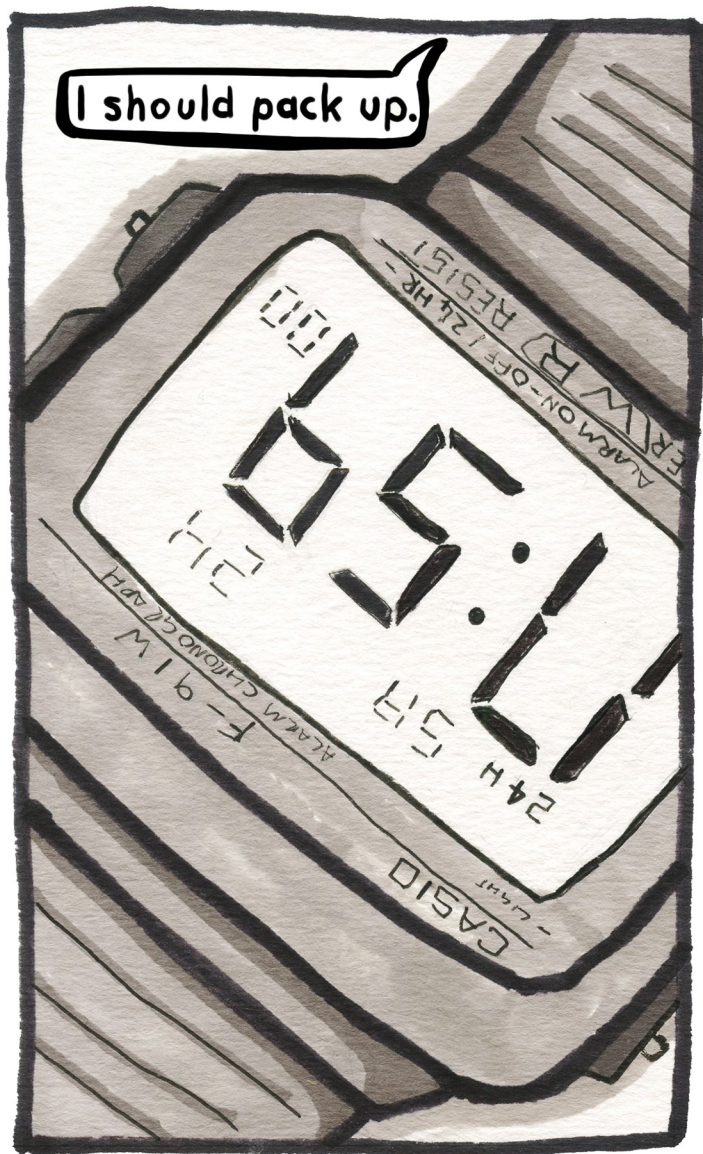


But at least they show my feelings.



When words either spoken or written are not enough.







ABOUT THE CREATOR

Steven Fraser is a writer, artist and animator who creates short animated films, installations, zines and comic books. His work looks at mental health, autism and queer identities. Some of his films have won awards and screened at international film and arts festivals.

Under the name Do It Theatre, he also creates experimental performances for adults who live with neurodiverse behaviours. These performances have been staged at various arts festivals throughout the UK and Australia.

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www.doittheatre.com

ZINES SAVED MY LIFE

A comic about zines
Created by Steven Fraser

If you have ever been to a place where the only way you could express yourself is through a zine or a comic then this is for you.

Making and reading zines have saved my life and given space to present my thoughts and feelings. This comic presents some of my ideas around this. It is short, experimental and looks at themes of creativity, difference, sadness and love.

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