

MAYA'S UNTITLED  
COMIC/ZINE THING  
FIRST DRAFT

CW: DEPRESSION,  
SUICIDAL IDEATION,  
GENDER DYSPHORIA

Hi! MY NAME IS MAYA!  
I'M A 26 YEAR OLD ARTIST

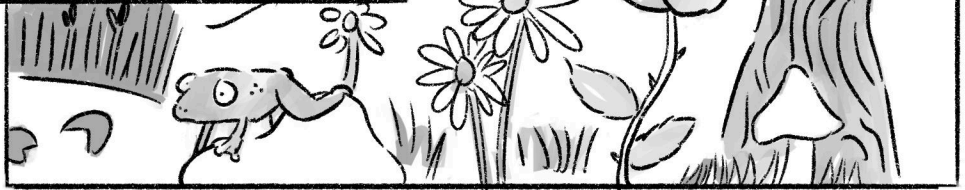


I'M WRITING THIS COMIC  
TO TELL PEOPLE A LITTLE  
ABOUT MYSELF!

TO START, I'VE BEEN  
INTO DRAWING SINCE  
A VERY YOUNG AGE



I ALWAYS USED IT AS  
A WAY TO EXPRESS  
MYSELF AND THE  
BEAUTY I SAW IN THE  
WORLD AROUND ME!



SELF-EXPRESSION IS A KEY  
PART OF MY IDENTITY. IT'S NOT  
JUST THROUGH DRAWING, I LOVE  
MUSIC TOO! I'VE BEEN SINGING  
AND WRITING SONGS FOR AS  
LONG AS I CAN REMEMBER!

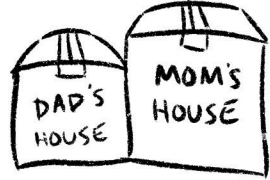


I'VE DEFINITELY OVERCOME MANY CHALLENGES IN MY LIFE.



STARTING IN MIDDLE SCHOOL I HAD SOME YEARS WHERE I DIDN'T FIT IN

I COULDN'T ALWAYS RELY ON MY FAMILY AFTER MY PARENTS DIVORCED.



IT WAS HARD TO SPLIT MY LIFE IN TWO.

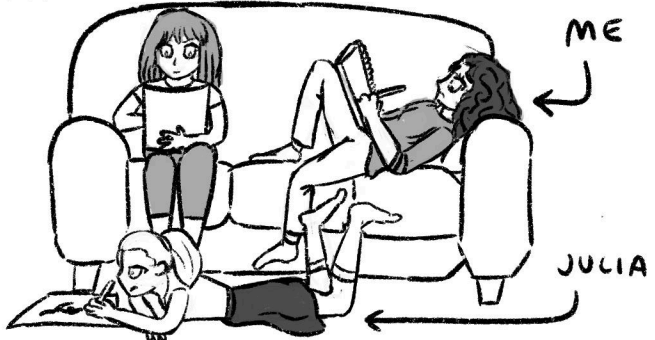
I Poured my feelings into creativity. Having that outlet helped me so much



WHEN THINGS WERE HARD I DREW AND SANG AND CRIED UNTIL MY EMOTIONS WERE OUT



I STARTED TO BECOME FRIENDS WITH OTHER GIRLS FROM MY ART CLASS. WE SPENT A LOT OF TIME OUTSIDE OF CLASS DRAWING TOGETHER AND HANGING OUT.



SOMETIMES WE HAD BIG SLEEPOVERS WITH A LOT OF GIRLS. SOMETIMES WE JUST WENT TO EACH OTHER'S HOUSES.

A LOT OF THE TIME IT WAS JUST ME AND MY BEST FRIEND JULIA.



ONE DAY I STARTED TO GET DISTRACTED BY THE WAY JULIA'S HAIR TUCKED BEHIND HER EAR SOMETIMES.



AND I NOTICED THE SOFTNESS OF THE DOWNY HAIRS ON THE BACK OF HER NECK.

I WANTED TO TUCK THE HAIR BACK MYSELF, PUT MY HAND ON HER NECK



AND KISS HER

I DIDN'T REALIZE I WAS A LESBIAN FOR A COUPLE MORE YEARS

BUT ONE DAY I DID KISS HER JUST LIKE THAT



I'M GLAD I'M ALIVE EVERY DAY. I THINK I'M A GOOD PERSON WITH A PLEASANT LIFE.

EXCEPT THIS IS ALL IMAGINARY



MAYA!

THIS LIFE NEVER EXISTED

MY CHILDHOOD HAPPENED  
IN A BOY

COME ON,  
THIS CAN'T  
BE MY  
BODY



I'M NOT SOME INTACT  
FEMININE SOUL,  
FORCED TO INHABIT A  
MALE BODY



GROWING UP IN THAT  
BODY RUINED ME  
BEYOND REPAIR

I WASN'T VERY MUCH  
USE TO A BOY.

I HAD TO BE TWISTED  
AND BROKEN TO FIT  
THE ROLES THAT I  
WAS EXPECTED TO  
FILL.

(I STILL  
COULDN'T)



I LEARNED THAT I HAD  
NO VALUE.

I WAS SOMETHING  
TO BE ASHAMED OF.

I WAS EMBARRASSING  
AND IF PEOPLE  
SAW ME IT WOULD  
MAKE THEM  
UNCOMFORTABLE

WITH THE HELP OF  
EVERYONE AROUND ME,  
I TRIED TO DISAPPEAR  
UNTIL I WAS 24.

DISAPPEARING WAS  
WHAT I WANTED

AT 24 I BROKE THROUGH MY SOCIAL CONDITIONING AND BEGAN TO TRANSITION.

AS MY BODY GOT MORE FEMININE I STARTED TRYING TO SHOW MYSELF AGAIN.



EXCEPT THE DAMAGE THAT WAS DONE TO ME DIDN'T GO AWAY

I WAS ALLOWED TO EXPRESS MY TRUE SELF IN THEORY —

IN REALITY, MY DAMAGE MADE THIS A LOT HARDER

MY SENSE OF WORTH NEVER RETURNED.

WHEN SOMEONE SEES ME, I COWER IN SHAME AND APOLOGIZE FOR THE CRIME OF BEING AN AWFUL SHAMEFUL SOUL

I'M BAD AND I DON'T TRULY BELONG IN ANY BODY.



THE WILL TO BE ALIVE IS A STRUGGLE TOO. I SPENT SO MUCH TIME FANTASIZING ABOUT DEATH THAT I'M STILL CAUGHT IN ITS GRAVITATIONAL PULL.



I WORRY THAT I'M PAST THE EVENT HORIZON. THAT NO MATTER THE CHANGES TO MY BODY, I WILL NOT STAY IN THIS WORLD MUCH LONGER.

MY VOICE DOESN'T  
WORK IF I TRY TO  
SING

.....



ALL CREATIVITY IS A  
BATTLE IN OVERCOMING  
SHAME

I'M SUCH A  
FAILURE



I HOPED THAT LOVE COULD SAVE ME, AND  
RESTORE ME TO WHO I'M SUPPOSED TO BE --  
THE PERSON I WOULD HAVE BEEN IF I  
WEREN'T BROKEN.



BUT WITH MY DAMAGE AND  
SHAME PREVENTING ME FROM  
LOVING MYSELF, THE LOVE THAT  
OTHERS GIVE ME IS HARDLY  
SOMETHING I CAN GET A GRIP  
ON.

I DON'T THINK IT MAKES ME  
SUCH A GOOD PARTNER EITHER.



I'M REALLY SORRY  
EVERYONE




WHO... ...ARE YOU?

... YOU COULD  
HEAR ME  
THIS WHOLE  
TIME?

I'M THE NARRATOR. AND  
THIS IS AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL—  
SO I'M YOU: MAYAS SOUL.

BUT THESE THINGS  
AREN'T TRUE...

I'M NOT  
IRREPERABLE



YES — I'M  
DAMAGED AND  
SCARED BUT DEEP  
DOWN, I LOVE MYSELF.

SO YOU DON'T SOUND  
LIKE ME, YOU SOUND  
MORE LIKE THE  
PEOPLE WHO TAUGHT  
ME IT WAS BETTER  
TO GIVE UP AND  
DISAPPEAR RATHER  
THAN BE MYSELF.

THOSE TWO THINGS AREN'T  
MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE. TO KEEP  
ME — TO KEEP US — SAFE, I HAD  
TO INTERNALIZE THE JUDGEMENT  
PUT ON US. OTHERWISE WE WOULD  
FACE NOTHING BUT PAIN AND  
REJECTION. REGARDLESS OF ANY SELF  
LOVE

BUT I AGREE — IT ISN'T WORTH IT  
TO LIVE THIS WAY. THE CONCL —  
-USION I WAS GETTING TO IS THAT  
IT'S TIME FOR US TO DISAPPEAR.

FOREVER, THIS TIME.



**NO!**



DISAPPEARING ON PURPOSE IS SOMETHING I WILL NEVER DO!



PLEASE...

IF I HAVE TO KEEP CARRYING ALL THAT JUDGEMENT TO BE SAFE, THEN SAFETY ISN'T SOMETHING I WANT!

DON'T BE STUPID

YOU STILL NEED ME

YOU AREN'T PROTECTING ME AND I DON'T NEED YOU ANY-MORE!

YOU'RE JUST MY DAMAGE!!

YOU ACT AS THOUGH MY BIRTH DOOMED ME, BUT I WAS STILL BORN LUCKIER THAN MOST, WITH AN ACCEPTING FAMILY AND RESOURCES.



THE CRUELEST THING IS THAT I WOULD HAVE BEEN SAFE WITHOUT HIDING MYSELF. BUT NO — I HAD YOU! ALWAYS LETTING ME BELIEVE OTHERS WOULD HURT ME IF I WERE EVER TRULY VULNERABLE



DONT EVEN THINK ABOUT IT. WEIRDO.



BUT IT ISN'T TOO LATE NOW!



SO I'M GOING TO SING!

AND I'M GOING TO LET PEOPLE KNOW MY REAL SELF WITHOUT APOLOGY!



YOU'RE JUST GOING TO MAKE A FOOL OF YOURSELF. YOU'LL MAKE EVERYONE UNCOMFORT-ABLE!

THEY'RE JUST GOING TO HAVE TO FORGIVE ME UNTIL I FIGURE IT OUT, THEN!



I GUESS THAT'S IT THEN.

IT'S TIME FOR YOU  
TO GET RID OF ME



...GOODBYE  
THEN

HEY, JUST BECAUSE I DON'T  
NEED YOU RULING ME  
DOESN'T MEAN YOU NEED TO  
BE GONE FOR GOOD

YOU ARE A PART  
OF ME, AFTER  
ALL.

SO THAT  
MEANS I  
CAN FOR-  
-GIVE YOU.



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THANK YOU FOR  
READING!

BY MAYA

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