

THESE ARE  
OUR STREETS  
TOO



Artwork by Dave Frisina

2013

SAAM

Iowa City queer  
and trans\* communities  
on Sexual Assault  
Awareness Month

APRIL 6<sup>th</sup>. 2013

FOR MORE INFO ON:

RAPE VICTIM ADVOCACY  
PROGRAM (RVAP)

WEBSITE: [www.rvap.org](http://www.rvap.org)

LOCAL RAPE CRISIS LINE:  
(319) 335-6000

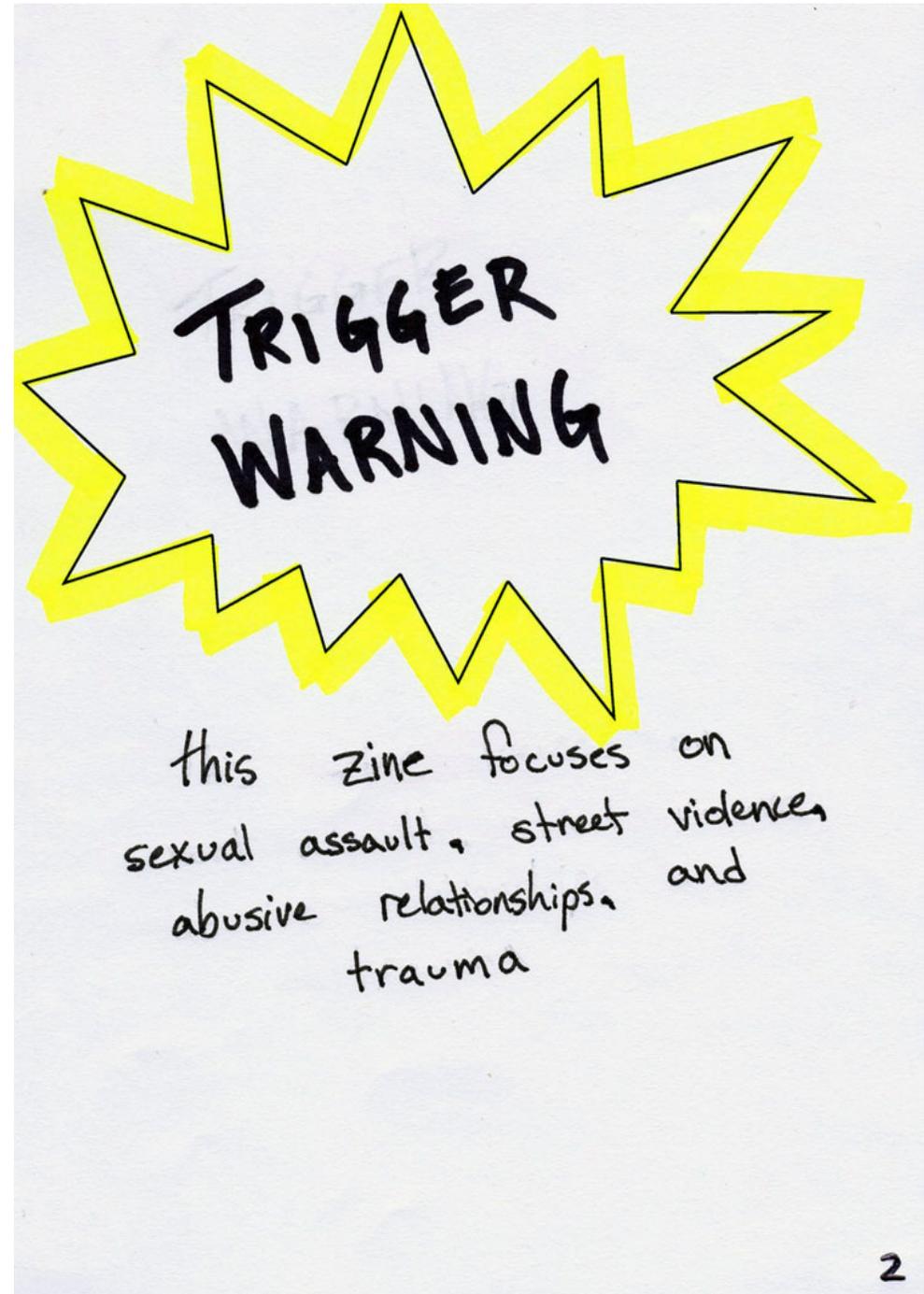
IOWA SEXUAL ABUSE HOTLINE:  
1-800-284-7821

TRANSCOLLABORATIONS  
WEBSITE: [www.transcollaborations.wordpress.com](http://www.transcollaborations.wordpress.com)

FOR QUESTIONS OR TO JOIN  
OUR EMAIL LIST, PLEASE  
CONTACT US AT:  
[transcollaborations@gmail.com](mailto:transcollaborations@gmail.com)

On April 6th, 2013 at the Iowa City Public  
Library in Iowa City, Iowa

To honor Sexual Assault Awareness Month,  
TransCollaborations and the Rape Victim Advocacy  
Program (RVAP) came together to host a zine  
making party focusing on queer and trans\*  
communities and sexual assault.



I REMEMBER A TIME WHEN I THOUGHT I DIDN'T KNOW ANYONE WHO HAD BEEN SEXUALLY ASSAULTED.

ANYONE — INCLUDING MYSELF.



I REMEMBER A TIME WHEN I THOUGHT ONLY {CIS} MEN COULD RAPE, AND THAT ONLY {CIS} WOMEN COULD BE RAPED. OR RATHER, THAT ANAL/ORAL RAPE WASN'T AS BAD BECAUSE IT COULDN'T GET YOU PREGNANT.

I GREW UP AS A YOUNG GIRL HAUNTED BY THE SPECTRE OF RAPE & RAPE CULTURE, KNOWING THAT PEOPLE LIKE ME WERE ATTACKED ALL THE TIME.

BUT NO ONE TALKED ABOUT IT.



I DIDN'T CALL IT WHAT IT WAS FOR TWO YEARS. I STILL STRUGGLE WITH WHAT TO CALL IT.



THE SHADOW OF "DID IT REALLY HAPPEN LIKE THAT?" AND "DOES WHAT HAPPENED REALLY COUNT?" STILL HAUNTS ME EVERY TIME I TALK ABOUT IT.



BUT SOON I LEARNED EVERYTHING WAS A



WAS WHAT IT SEEMED.

I GREW UP TO BE A NON-BINARY TRANS\* PERSON, NOT A WOMAN.



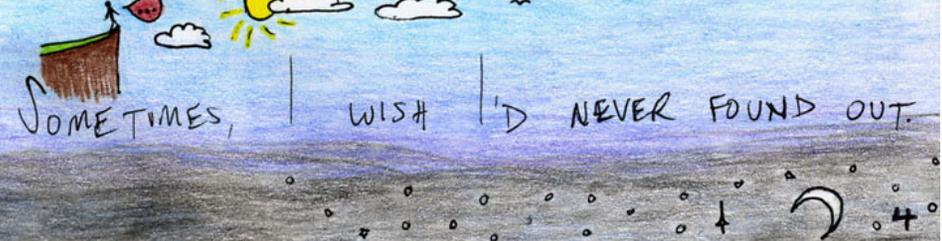
I FOUND OUT MY FRIENDS HAD KEPT THEIR SECRETS, TOO.



I FOUND OUT THAT MY CIS MALE, TRANS\*, AND NON-BINARY FRIENDS HURT JUST AS MUCH AS CIS WOMAN SURVIVORS OF CIS MALE RAPISTS.

I FINALLY CALLED IT SEXUAL ASSAULT.

SOMETIMES, I WISH I'D NEVER FOUND OUT.



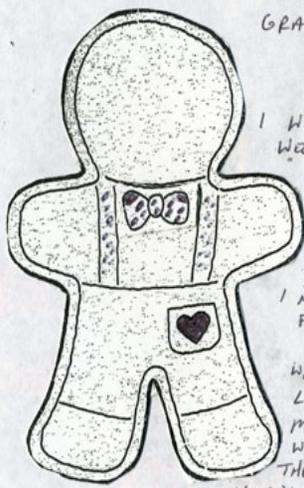
The Beauty in the Beast



PINK IS  
 QUITE *the*  
 EYESORE



TWO YEARS AGO I MOVED  
 TEMPORARILY TO A NEW CITY  
 TO DO RESEARCH FOR MY  
 GRADUATE  
 DEGREE.



I WAS A FEW  
 WEEKS IN AND  
 REALIZED I  
 NEEDED  
 A SENSE  
 OF COMMUNITY.  
 I NEEDED TO  
 FIND MY  
 PEOPLE!  
 WHILE I WAS  
 LIVING THERE,  
 MOST DAYS I  
 WAS OUT IN  
 THE FIELD  
 HELPING PEOPLE'S STORIES  
 OF EXTREME VIOLENCE  
 AGAINST TRANS\* PPL.

ONE NITE, A BEAUTIFUL HONORFUL  
 HUMAN WHO I HAD RECENTLY  
 CONNECTED WITH, INVITED ME  
 TO GO OUT TO A BODY POSITIVE  
 QUEERED-OUT DANCE PARTY.

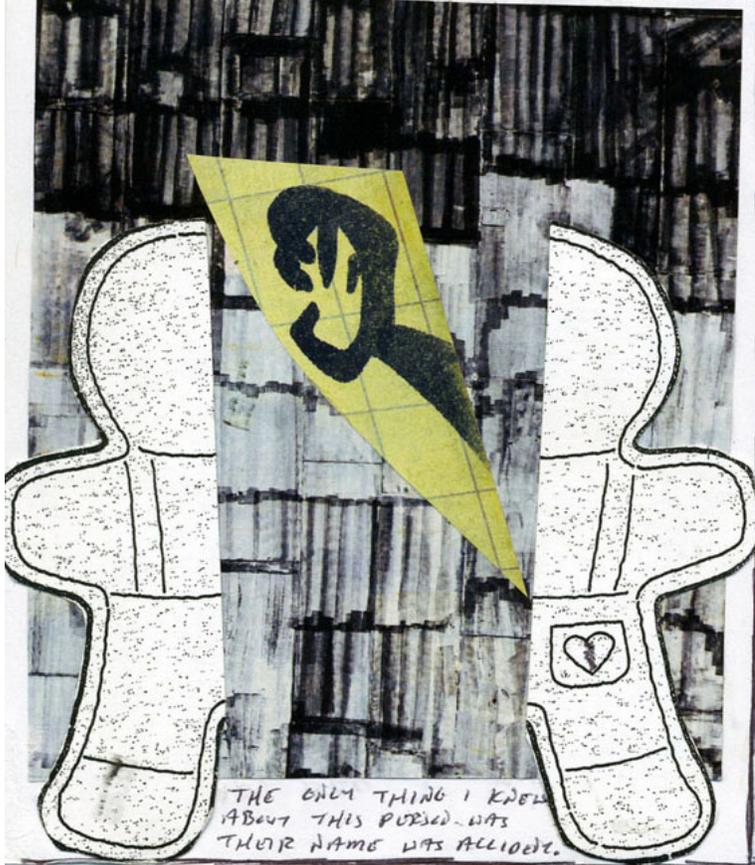
I DON'T DANCE

BUT  
 CELEBRATE  
 PEOPLE  
 WHO  
 DO.



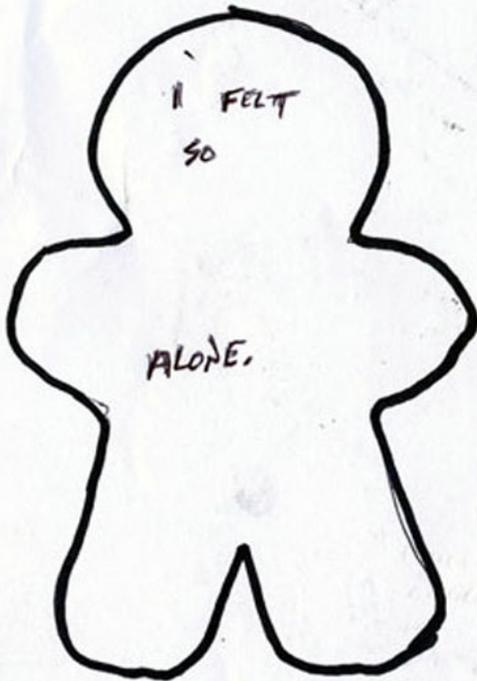
SO I  
 SAID  
 YES!

IT WAS ALREADY LATE, BUT I SNAGGED A SPOT AT THE EMPTY BAR (EVERYONE WAS DANCING). AT THE BAR, I WAS ASSAULTED.



THE ONLY THING I KNEW ABOUT THIS PERSON WAS THEIR NAME WAS ALLIANT.

I HAD NO IDEA WHERE I WAS. OR HOW TO GET HOME. OR WHAT 'HOME' EVEN MEANT.



I FEEL SO MUCH GRATITUDE FOR THE PEOPLE I WAS WITH. THEY NOTICED MY DISTRESS, AND TOOK ME BACK TO MY APARTMENT; MAKING SURE I GOT HOME SAFELY THAT NITE.

IT WAS THEM, MY FIERCE AMAZING TEMPORARY

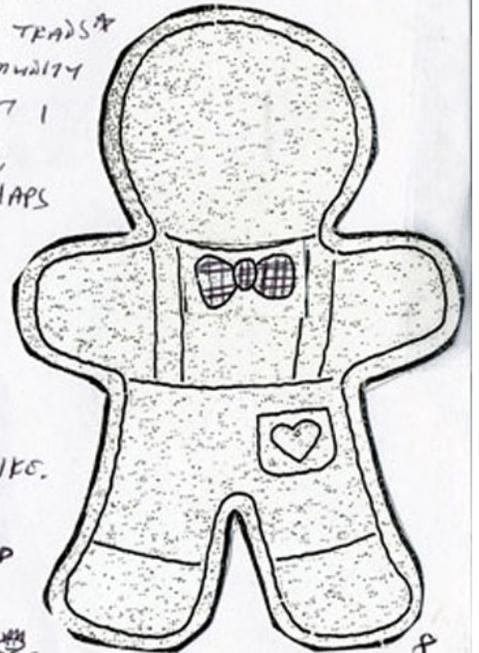


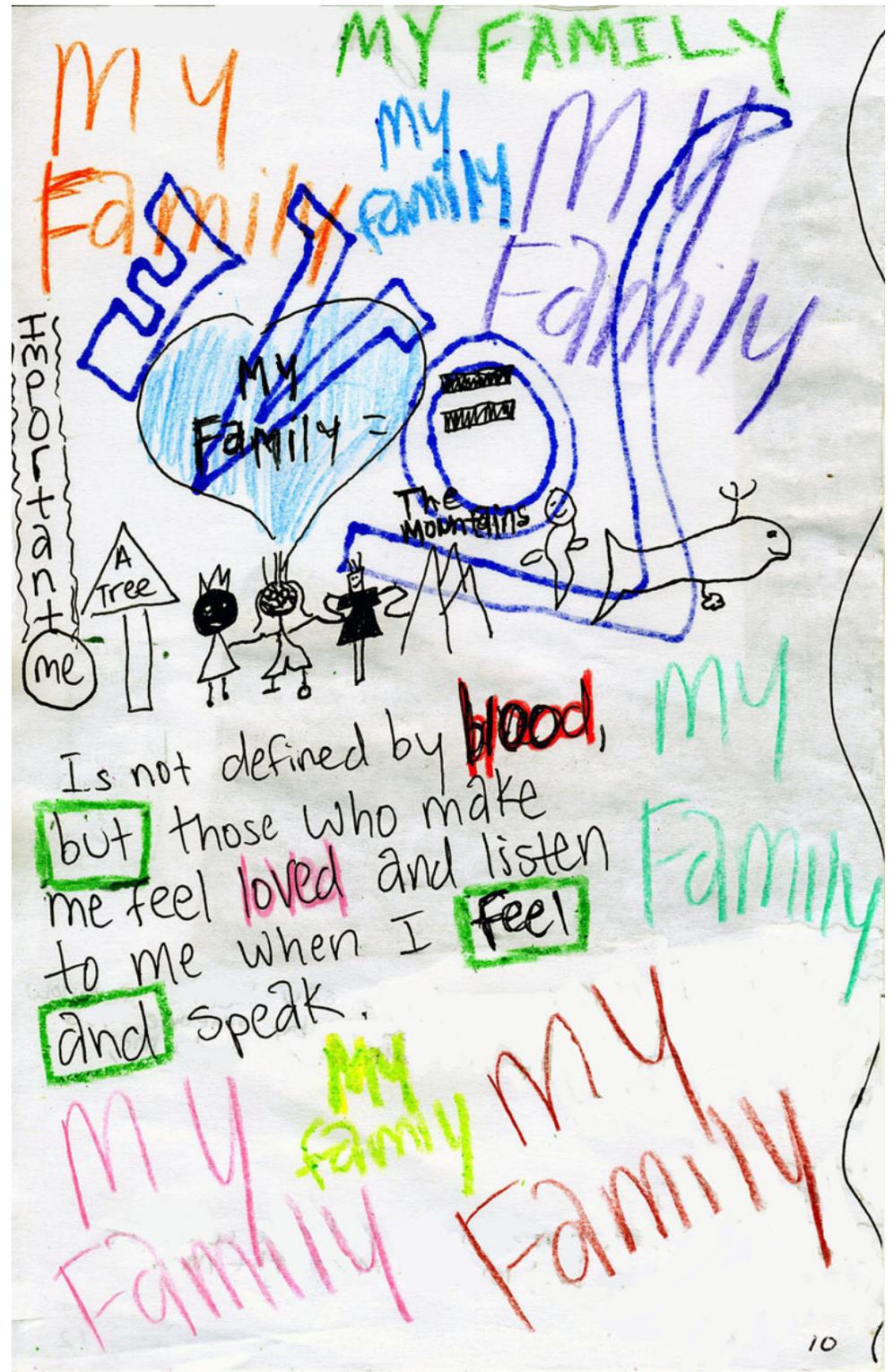
QUEER TRADITIONAL COMMUNITY THAT I FELT, PERHAPS

FOR THE FIRST TIME IN MY BODY, WHAT "COMMUNITY"

CAN FEEL LIKE.

AND IT FELT LIKE SOME KIND OF WONDERFUL RADICAL LOVE.





Jenny WATKINS



I know that loving myself will be hard, and exhausting but I am committed to loving me because I believe that I can do it.



- I will love myself when I am feeling scared
- I will love myself when I make a mistake
- I will love myself when I learn to love others
- I will love myself when I move at my own pace
- I will love myself when I do not conform
- I will love myself when I think about giving up
- I will be my hero
- I will let others be my hero.

# SELF



# LOVE



Dear child self,  
This is your adult self stopping in to say hello. I know that you have been hurt very badly by someone you thought was your friend. You can talk about it to me, any time and anywhere.

Dear adult self,  
I trust you. Thank you for your patience with me. I need your support and love the most right now.  
♡ child self.



ATTACK

MYTHS

What was she wearing?

Only ♀ get raped

Its about sex

The victim shows the blame

What about false reports?

It doesnt happen that much  
Reporting = Justice

DON'T

How you ask DOES matter!

GUESS

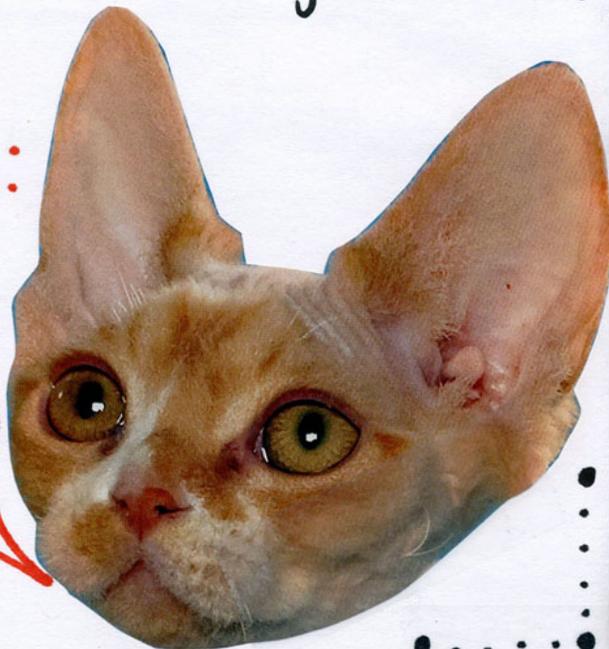
GET CONSENT

# how to ask for Consent.....

- ☆ Can I touch you here?
- ☆ What are you into?
- ☆ Do you like it when I....?
- ☆ Can I kiss you?
- ☆ do you want to cuddle  
right meow?

Consent  
Cat sez:

RESPECT  
CONSENT!  
(meow)



## Preliminary Acknowledgements:

I wasn't aware what kind of event this was.

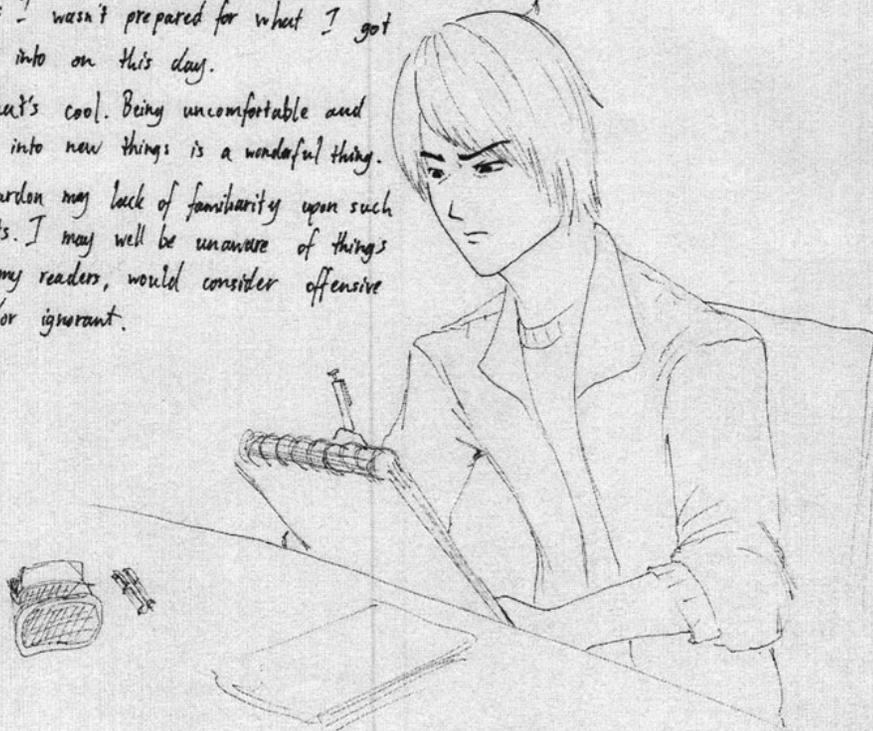
I consider myself straight. Male.

As an international student, discussions of such gender/sexual identities are new to me. But that's also a political aspect. Where I'm from, such discussions are usually and shallowly viewed as "Western concerns." "Nothing to do with us."

Well, I do believe such issues, gender/identities do exist. I believe in the freedom to express oneself regardless of race, origin, or cultural upbringing. I just have to admit: I wasn't prepared for what I got myself into on this day.

But that's cool. Being uncomfortable and pushed into new things is a wonderful thing.

So, pardon my lack of familiarity upon such subjects. I may well be unaware of things you, my readers, would consider offensive and/or ignorant.



Here's a story I remember. This is about my first few friends coming here to the U.S. International student like me, only from Guangzhou, China. Let's call her "Allison" for ease of storytelling and maintaining privacy.



She's graduated, at this point. But I really can't blame her for thinking poorly about America. Or at least, the Midwest, in Iowa City, anyway.



"Allison" got herself into an abusive relationship. I don't think anyone would have thought of it in such a way. But I would. She used to pride herself for being daring. Daring, to experience Midwest American culture. Daring not to stick to her groups of Chinese friends. But that was all before.

Without a decent grasp of English, she could only take things at face value. She's had relationships before, but none as "serious" as her jock of a boyfriend claimed this one would be. I don't remember his name, but he was an asshole for leaving her after getting "serious" for a week.



That was just the beginning, however. Not being able to say no, to protest, to express yourself emotionally due to language differences made it hard for her to separate from him. And how could she? Allison didn't know that the moment she had a relationship with a white guy, her family and friends would alienate her. Alone and without agency, I really don't blame her for letting that guy come in and out of her life as he pleases. Time and time again she told me she broke up with him. And not soon after, she'd be back with him again.



The University counselors didn't help too much. They did what they could, but as Americans...

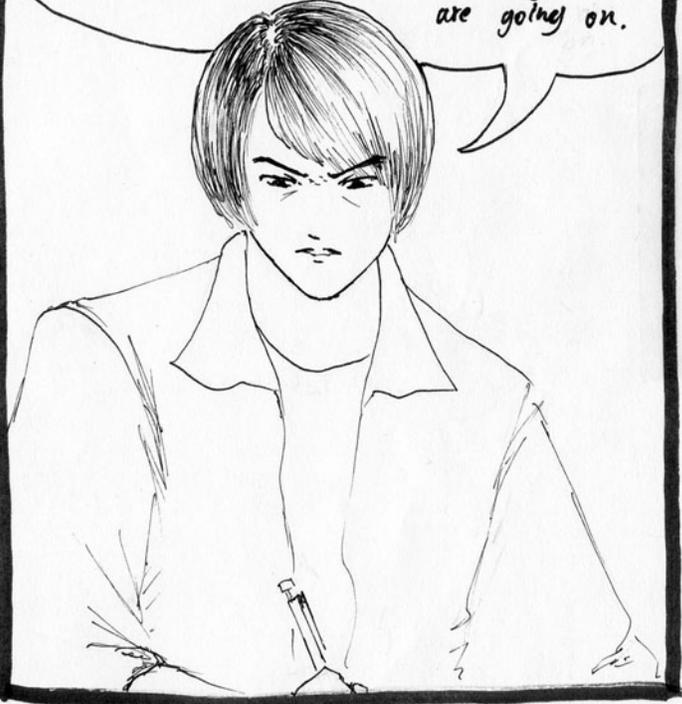


.. they failed to decide whether Allison's case was culture shock, abusive relationships, or sexual harassment. I'd say it's a mixture of all three.



The relationship went on for a year and a half. Those last years of studying abroad cloyed at her being. I watched her enthusiasm for life fade. Allison's parents and friends no longer welcome her, while that guy continues to "see other people" while using her as home base. Which begs the question: would things be different if she were white?

So that's my story. It's a complicated issue, as there's so many things in there all at once. I do know, though, that Allison's is not the first, and one of many that are going on.



I don't remember how old I was when my father walked in on me looking at myself naked in the bathroom mirror. What I do remember is that my body didn't feel right the way it was. Later he came in to my bedroom for the first of many times that he would sexually abuse me. He said that he wanted me to understand why my body was the way it was and what it meant to be a girl. By the time I hit puberty he had stopped coming in to my room at night and my body felt even more wrong. I never felt like a girl, but more importantly at the time, I knew it wasn't safe to be a girl.

When I first learned about trans<sup>t</sup> people I was relieved. There was a way for me to not be a girl or woman. I was so excited for people to see me as a guy. Being a boy felt safe, not entirely right, but safe. I didn't know then there were people who weren't men or women, boys or girls. And I didn't know that people hurt men + boys too. • Unfortunately I learned the latter all too quickly. And now, years later, I understand myself as a trans genderqueer person and I have a fabulous community.

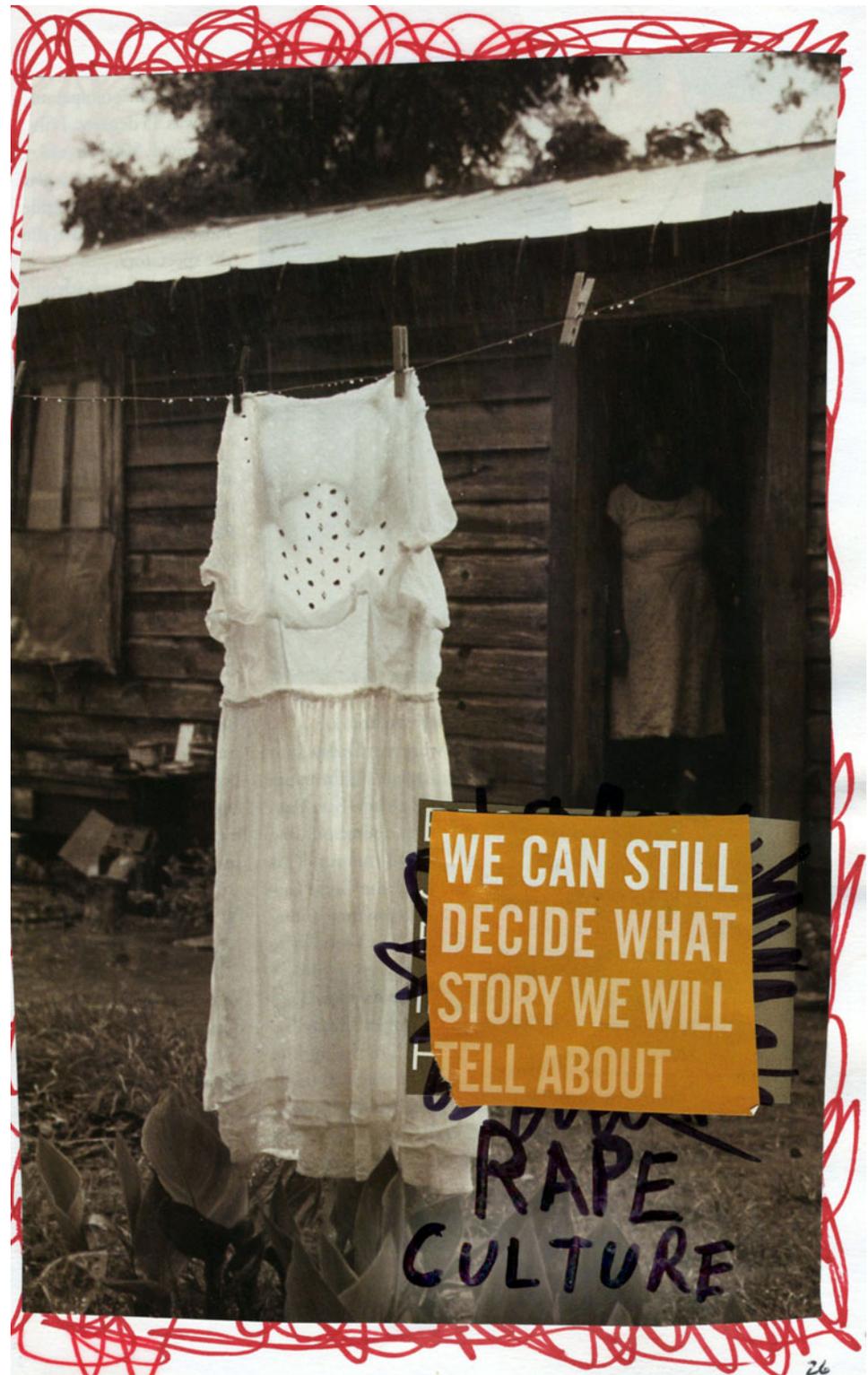
But I still don't feel safe in this world.

instead of telling potential

victims to protect themselves

why don't we tell potential

perpetrators not to assault?



WE CAN STILL  
DECIDE WHAT  
STORY WE WILL  
TELL ABOUT

RAPE  
CULTURE