

DRAWN & QUARTERLY

SPRING 2022

ACTING CLASS

NICK DRNASO

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EMMA GROVE

TALK TO MY BACK

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HUMMINGBIRD HEART

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ACTING CLASS

NICK DRNASO

A brilliant and suspenseful follow-up to the Booker-nominated graphic novel *Sabrina*

“Every single person has something unique to them which is impossible to recreate, without exception.”
—John Smith, acting coach

From the acclaimed author of *Sabrina*, Nick Drnaso’s *Acting Class* creates a tapestry of disconnect, distrust, and manipulation. Ten strangers are brought together under the tutelage of John Smith, a mysterious and morally-questionable leader. The group of social misfits and restless searchers have one thing in common: they are out of step with their surroundings and desperate for change.

A husband and wife, four years into their marriage and simmering in boredom. A single mother, her young son showing disturbing signs of mental instability.

A peculiar woman with few-if-any friends and only her menial job keeping her grounded. A figure model, comfortable in his body and ready for a creative challenge. A worried grandmother and her adult granddaughter; a hulking

laborer and gym nut; a physical therapist; an ex-con.

With thrumming unease, the class sinks deeper into their lessons as the process demands increasing devotion. When the line between real life and imagination begins to blur, the group’s deepest fears and desires are laid bare. Exploring the tension between who we are and how we present, Drnaso cracks open his characters’ masks and takes us through an unsettling American journey.

PRAISE FOR *SABRINA*

“*Sabrina* is the intimate story of one man’s suffering, but it also captures the political nihilism of the social-media era.”
—*The New Yorker*

“A Midwestern gothic tale for our times.”
—*The New York Times* Book Review,
100 Notable Books of the Year

“A clever and chilling analysis of the nature of trust and truth.”—*The Guardian*

AUG 2022 • \$29.95 USD/\$34.95 CAD • 4-COLOR • 8.5 X 9.875 • 248 PAGES
COMICS & GRAPHIC NOVELS/LITERARY • ISBN 978-1-77046-492-6 • HARDCOVER



CAN WE STILL USE THE GYM?

I LEFT IT OPEN FOR YOU!

I ASSUME YOU'VE ALL COME HERE BECAUSE YOU FEEL LIKE SOCIAL MISFITS, RIGHT?



WHAT DO YOU MEAN?

WHAT, DO NONE OF YOU EVEN REALIZE THAT ABOUT YOURSELVES? I MEAN IT AS A COMPLIMENT.

THE PEOPLE THAT PICK UP FLYERS AND SHOW UP TO FREE CLASSES TEND TO BE RESTLESS SEARCHERS.

YOU'RE HERE BECAUSE SOMETHING IS WRONG IN YOUR LIFE, RIGHT? IF NOT, YOU WOULD BE CONTENT TO SIT IN FRONT OF THE TELEVISION EVERY NIGHT.

I WOULD LIKE TO OBJECT.

WHY IS THAT, GLORIA?

WE'RE NOT HERE BECAUSE THERE'S SOMETHING WRONG WITH US. SINCE WHEN IS IT WRONG TO WANT TO LEARN A SKILL AND TAKE A CLASS?



OH NO. IT WOULD BE THE WORST THING IF YOU MISUNDERSTOOD ME.



WHY DO YOU THINK I'VE BEEN DOING THIS FOR THIRTY-FIVE YEARS, TO INSULT A GROUP OF STRANGERS? I CAN DO THAT ON THE BUS.



NO, YOU'RE HERE, AS WITH EVERY CLASS I'VE TAUGHT, BECAUSE YOU FEEL OUT OF STEP WITH YOUR NORMAL ROUTINE. YOU WOULD LIKE TO SEE A NEW DIMENSION.



WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY NORMAL?



I DON'T EVEN KNOW. I HAVE NO CONCEPT OF IT ANYMORE. SITTING ON A BARSTOOL TALKING PAST YOUR SPOUSE? HARDENING YOUR OPINIONS, OR WORSE, HAVING NO OPINIONS AT ALL?



SO NOW I HOPE YOU SEE THAT WE'RE NOT HERE FOR PLATITUDES, AND REMEMBER - THE DOOR IS OPEN IF THIS ISN'T FOR YOU. I WON'T BE OFFENDED IF I'M HERE BY MYSELF NEXT WEEK.



WELL, THAT'S NOT ENTIRELY TRUE, BUT ANYWAY, I'M RAMBLING. I PROMISE THE REST OF THE CLASS WILL BE FOCUSED ON YOU ALL.



LET'S START BY ESTABLISHING SOME ROLES FOR THE NIGHT.



INSTEAD OF PERFORMER AND AUDIENCE, TONIGHT YOU WILL ALL BE PERFORMING, AT ALL TIMES.



SO LET'S LINE UP AGAINST THE WALL.



DOES ANYONE HAVE A PREFERENCE?



MAYBE MY WIFE AND I COULD BE PAIRED UP?



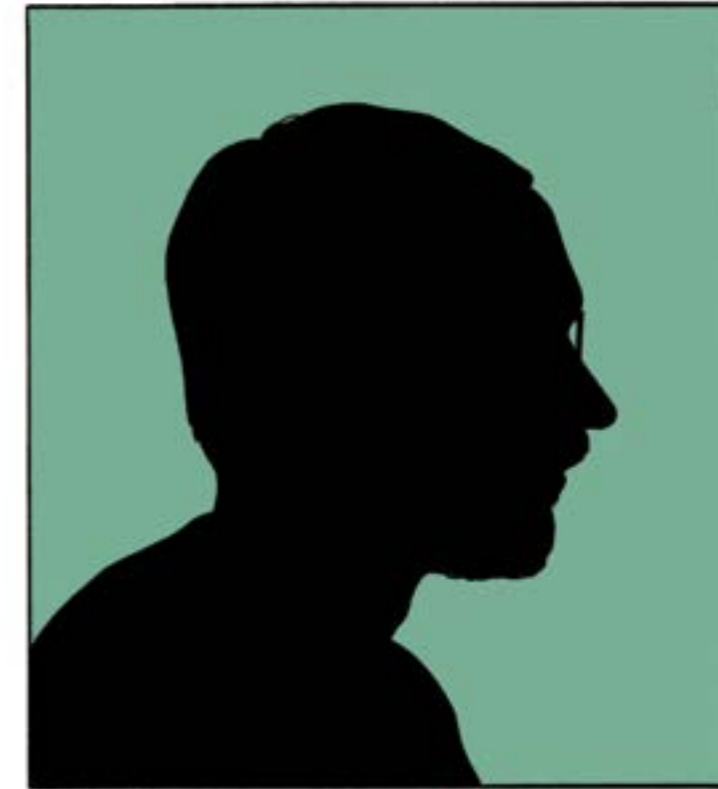
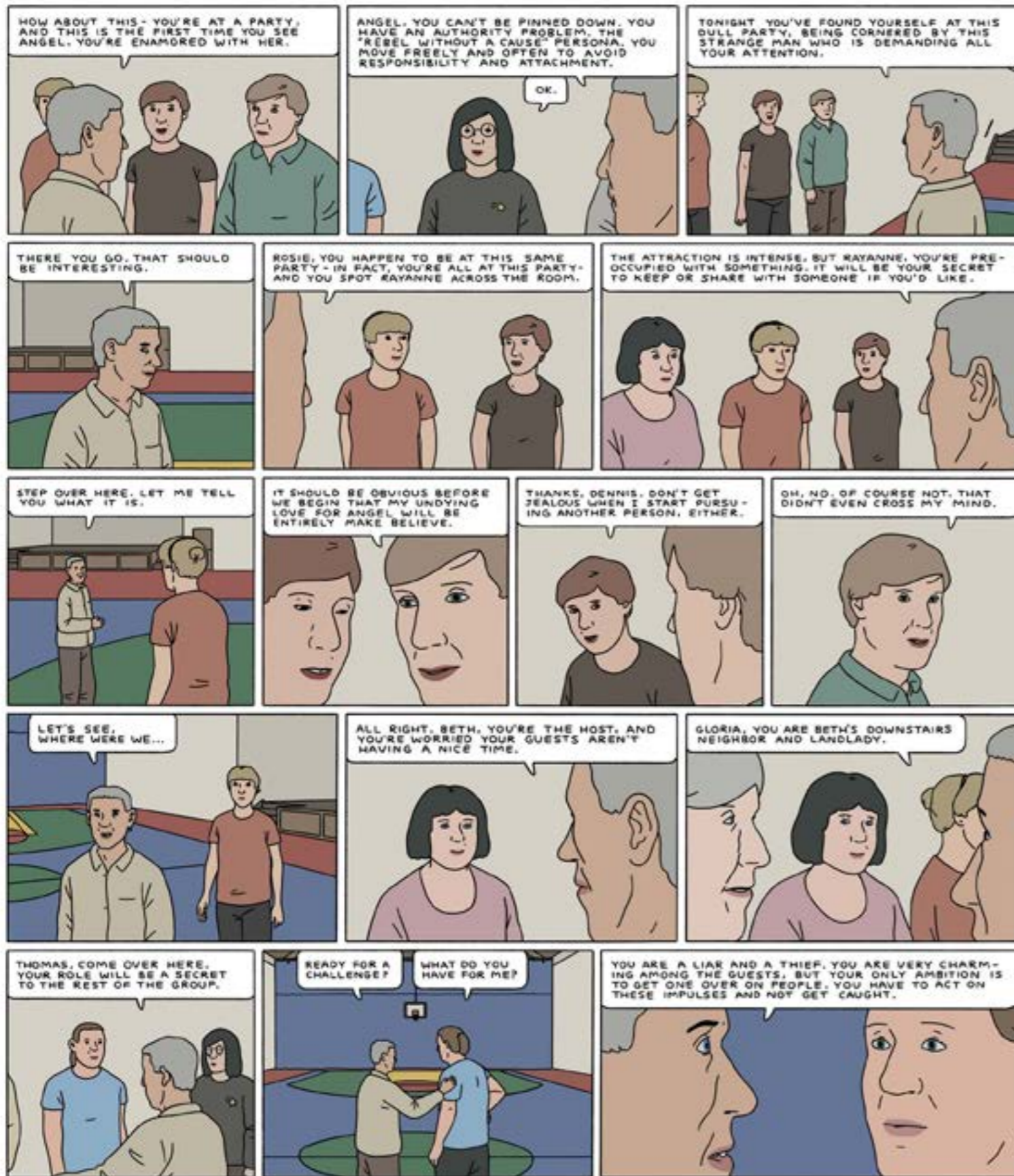
WHY?



MAYBE THIS COULD BE LIKE, THE FIRST TIME A YOUNG COUPLE MEETS.



DIDN'T THAT ALREADY HAPPEN IN REAL LIFE?



Nick Drnaso was born in 1989 in Palos Hills, Illinois. His debut, *Beverly*, received the LA Times Book Prize for Best Graphic Novel. His followup, the graphic novel *Sabrina*, was a *New York Times* Notable Book of 2018 and received nominations for the Booker Prize, the Eisner Award, the LD and LaVerne Harrell Clark Fiction Prize, the Orwell Prize for Political Fiction, and the New York Public Library's Young Lions Award. *Sabrina* has been published in fifteen countries. Drnaso lives in Chicago with his wife and their two cats.

"Emma Grove has written a beautiful, vulnerable, exquisite book that offers an uncommonly clear look at a mind coming to know itself."

—TORREY PETERS
DETRANSITION, BABY

THE THIRD PERSON

EMMA GROVE



THE THIRD PERSON

EMMA GROVE

A boldly drawn, unforgettable memoir about trauma and the barriers to gender affirming health care

In the winter of 2004, a shy woman named Emma sits in Toby's office. She wants to share this wonderful new book she's reading, but Toby, her therapist, is concerned with other things. Emma is transgender, and has sought out Toby for approval for hormone replacement therapy. Emma has shown up at the therapy sessions as an outgoing, confident young woman named Katina, and a depressed, submissive workaholic named Ed. She has little or no memory of her actions when presenting as these other two people. And then Toby asks about her childhood...

As the story unfolds, we discover clues to Emma's troubled past and how and why these other two people may have come into existence. As Toby juggles

treating three separate people, each with their own unique personalities and memories, he begins to wonder if Emma is merely acting out to get attention, or if she actually has Dissociative Identity Disorder. Is she just a troubled woman in need of help? And is "the third person" in her brain protecting her, or derailing her chances of ever finding peace?

The Third Person is a riveting memoir from newcomer Emma Grove. Drawn in thick, emotive lines, with the refined style of a comics vet, Grove has created a singular, gripping depiction of the intersection of identities and trauma. *The Third Person* is a testament to the importance of having the space to heal and live authentically.

MAY 2022 • \$39.95 USD/\$49.95 CAD • B&W • 6 X 9 • 916 PAGES
COMICS & GRAPHIC NOVELS/MEMOIR • ISBN 978-1-77046-615-9 • PAPERBACK





[Emma Grove](#) could draw before she could write. A classically-trained animator, she lives in New England with her cat, Little Mischief.



YAMADA MURASAKI

TALK TO MY BACK

YAMADA MURASAKI

A celebrated masterwork shimmering with vulnerability from one of alt-manga's most important female artists

“Now that we’ve woken from the dream, what are we going to do?” Chiharu thinks to herself, rubbing her husband’s head affectionately.

Set in an apartment complex on the outskirts of Tokyo, Yamada Murasaki’s *Talk To My Back* (1981–84) explores the fraying of Japan’s suburban middle-class dreams through a woman’s relationship with her two daughters as they mature and assert their independence, and with her husband, who works late and sees his wife as little more than a domestic servant.

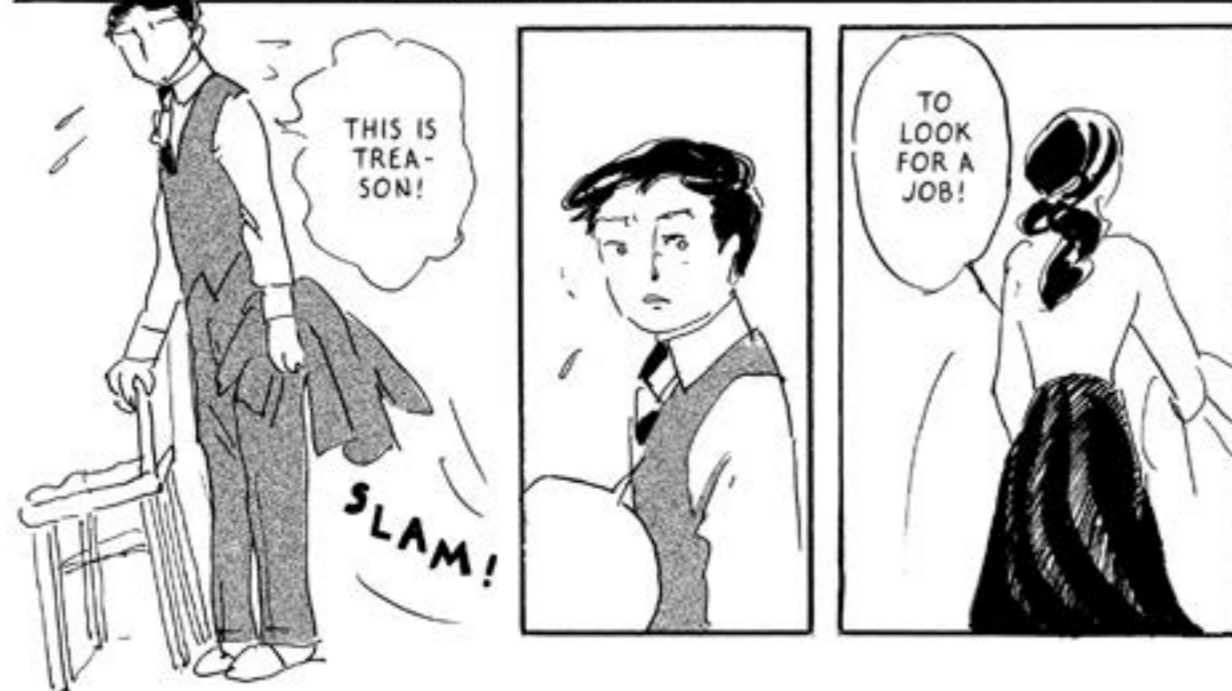
While engaging frankly with the compromises of marriage and motherhood, Yamada remains generous with the characters who fetter her protagonist. When her husband has an affair, Chiharu

feels that she, too, has broken the marital contract by straying from the template of the happy housewife. Yamada saves her harshest criticisms for society at large, particularly its false promises of eternal satisfaction within the nuclear family—as fears of having been “thrown away inside that empty vessel called the household” gnaw at Chiharu’s soul.

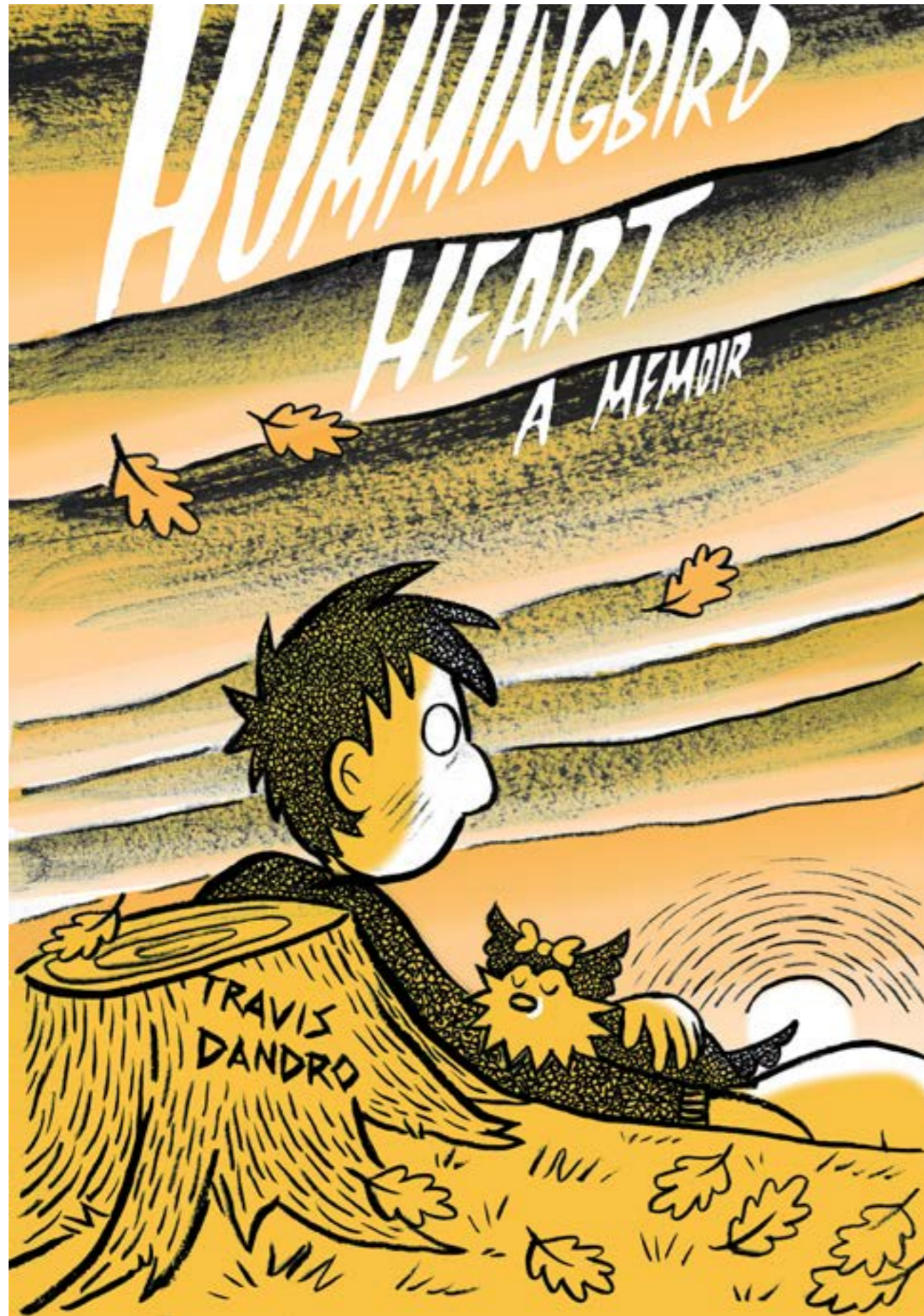
Yamada was the first cartoonist in Japan to use the expressive freedoms of alt-manga to address domesticity and womanhood in a realistic, critical, and sustained way. A watershed work of literary manga, *Talk To My Back* was serialized in the influential magazine *Garo* in the early 1980s, and is translated by Eisner nominated Ryan Holmberg.

JULY 2022 • \$29.95 USD/\$34.95 CAD • B & W • 6.125 X 8.375 • 368 PAGES
COMICS & GRAPHIC NOVELS/MANGA • ISBN 978-1-77046-563-3 • PAPERBACK





Yamada Murasaki (1948–2009) debuted as a cartoonist in 1969. Informed by her upbringing—she was raised by her mother and grandmother—and her background in fashion design and poetry, Yamada's early work was unique in form and content, with realistic portraits of young women negotiating their mothers. Later, after having a family of her own, her work shifted to young mothers negotiating children, husbands, and the balance between social responsibilities as a housewife and self-respect as a woman. Considered one of the Three Daughters of *Garo*, Yamada published manga in practically every issue of *Garo* from 1978–1986, and is considered the first cartoonist to use the modes of alternative manga to explore womanhood and domesticity with an unromantic eye.



HUMMINGBIRD HEART

TRAVIS DANDRO

A deeply emotional visual representation
of a teenager's confusion

Still reeling from the death by suicide of his drug addicted father, Travis moves in with his grandmother to become her caretaker as she battles cancer. Meanwhile he tries to live a typical teen life of pulling pranks, occasional shoplifting, dating, and endless drives through the twisting backroads of Central Massachusetts with Nirvana's *Nevermind* as the soundtrack. When the police intervene after a prank backfires, the boys realize that their time as children is rapidly disappearing and they may never fully understand each other as they move apart.

After his Lynd Ward Prize-winning graphic novel, *King of King Court*, explored the power that parents hold over their children's emotional lives, Travis Dandro employs his signature dream imagery and crass humour to tell the story of teenage independence and resilience as he prepares to head off to art school.

Hummingbird Heart is a detailed and stylish account of a time of great uncertainty. Dandro's densely crafted pages create a deeply emotional experience as his story swings from character confrontation to finely-wrought domestic detail—a slapstick cafeteria destroying brawl gives way to the beautifully rendered flight of the impossible hummingbird.

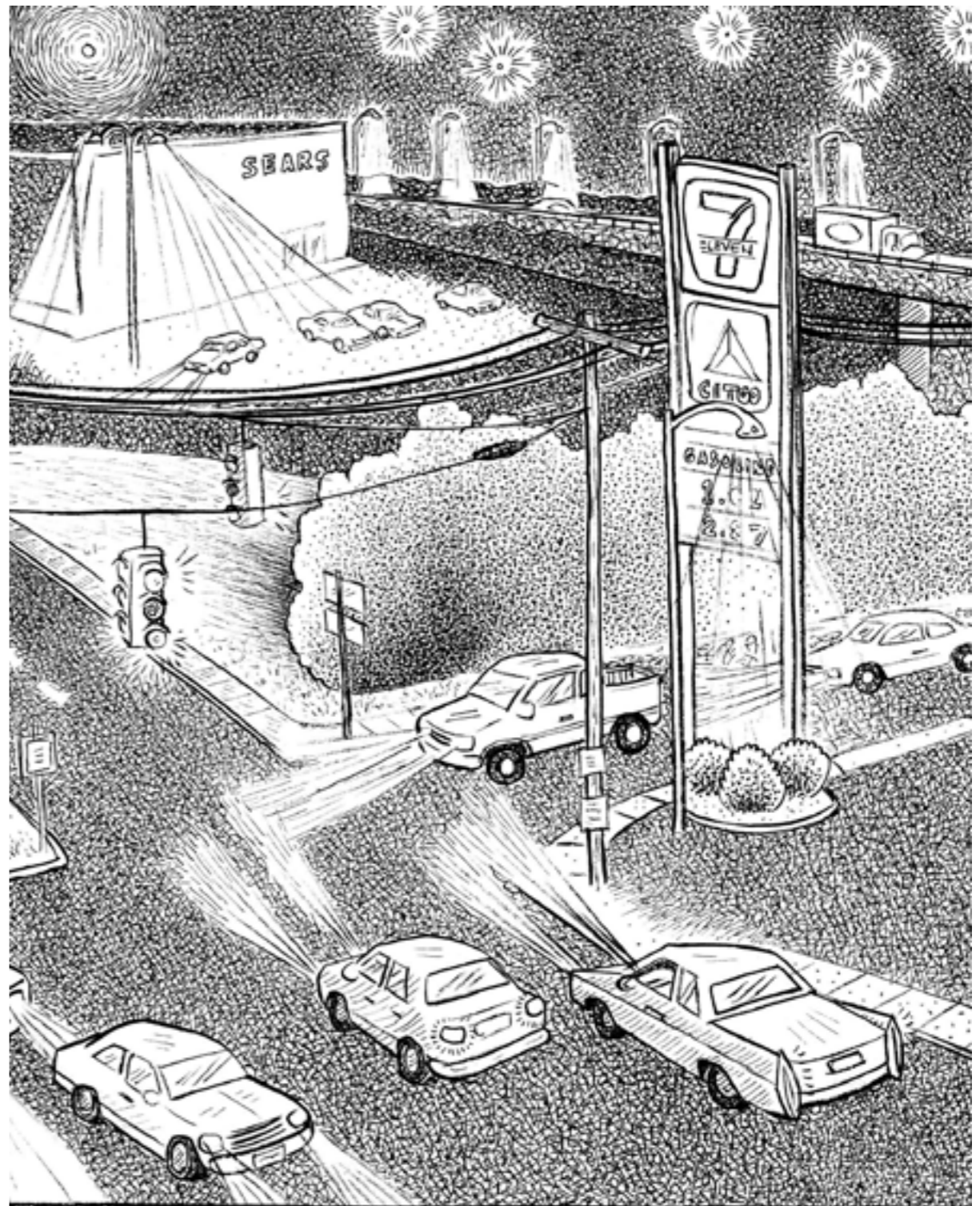
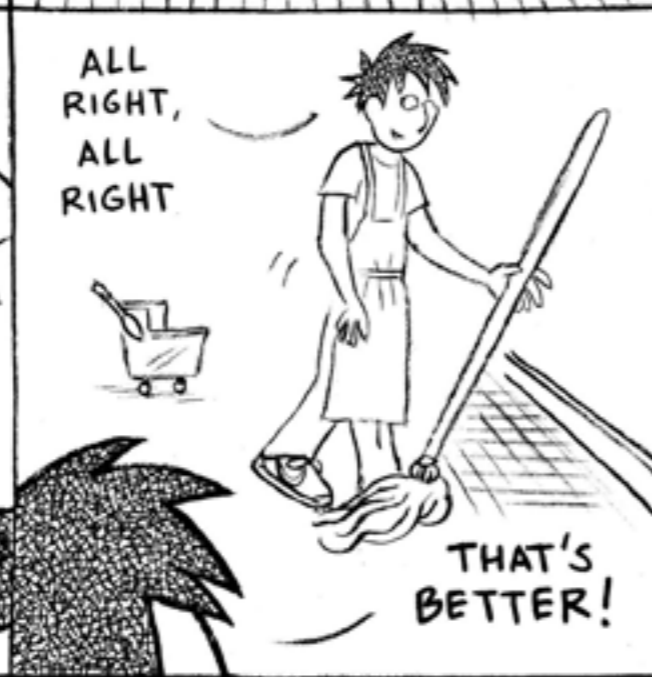
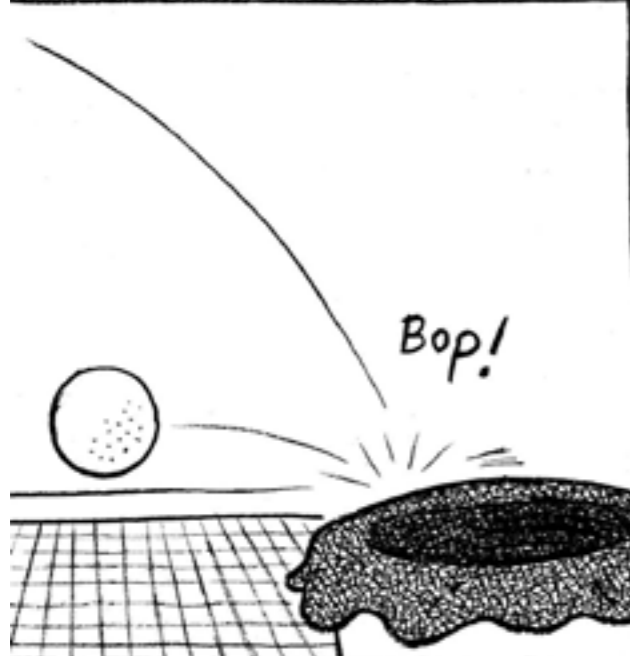
PRAISE FOR TRAVIS DANDRO

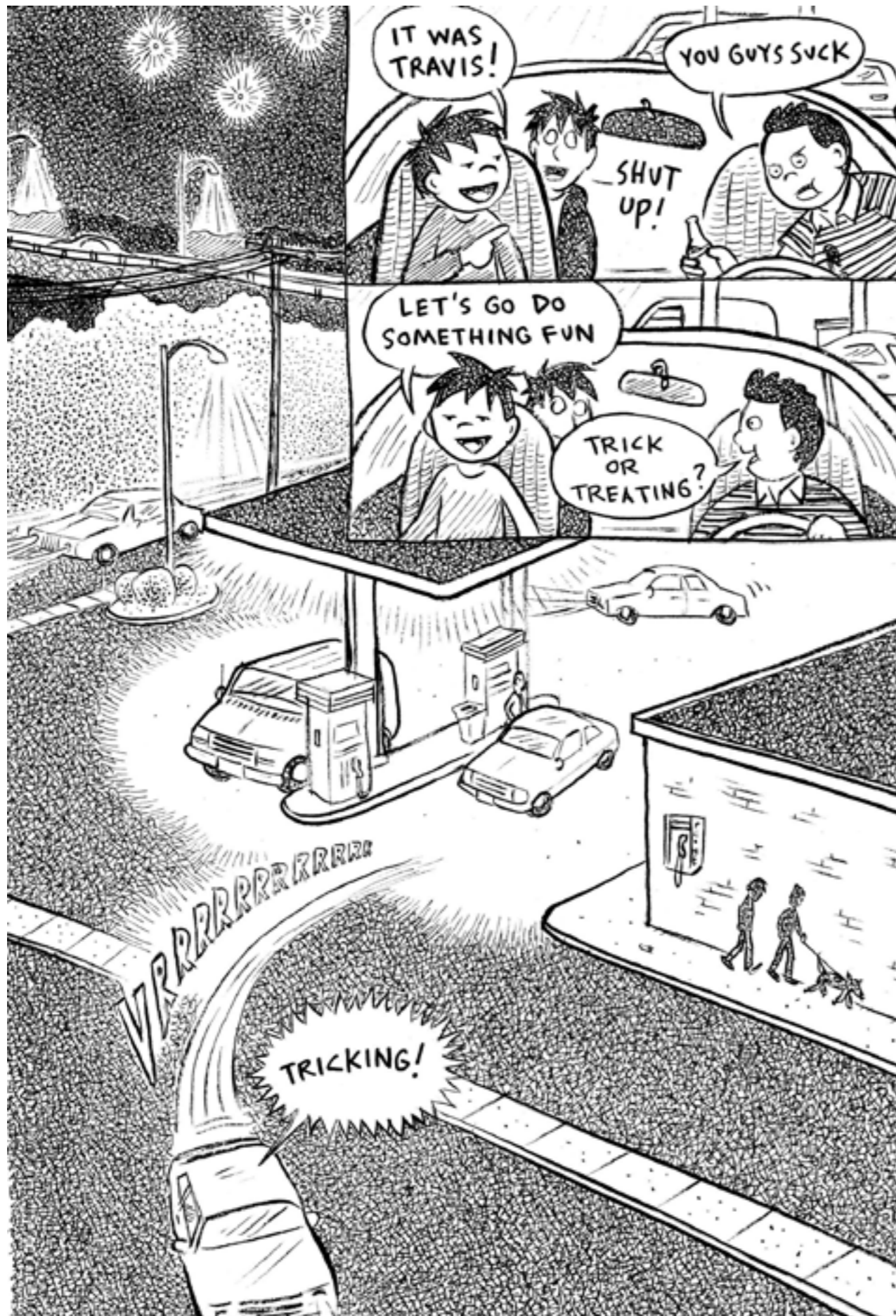
"Dandro has a gift for the cinematic."
—*Times Literary Supplement*

"This is a powerful debut, skilfully drawn, cleverly told and as raw as a wasp sting."—*The Guardian*

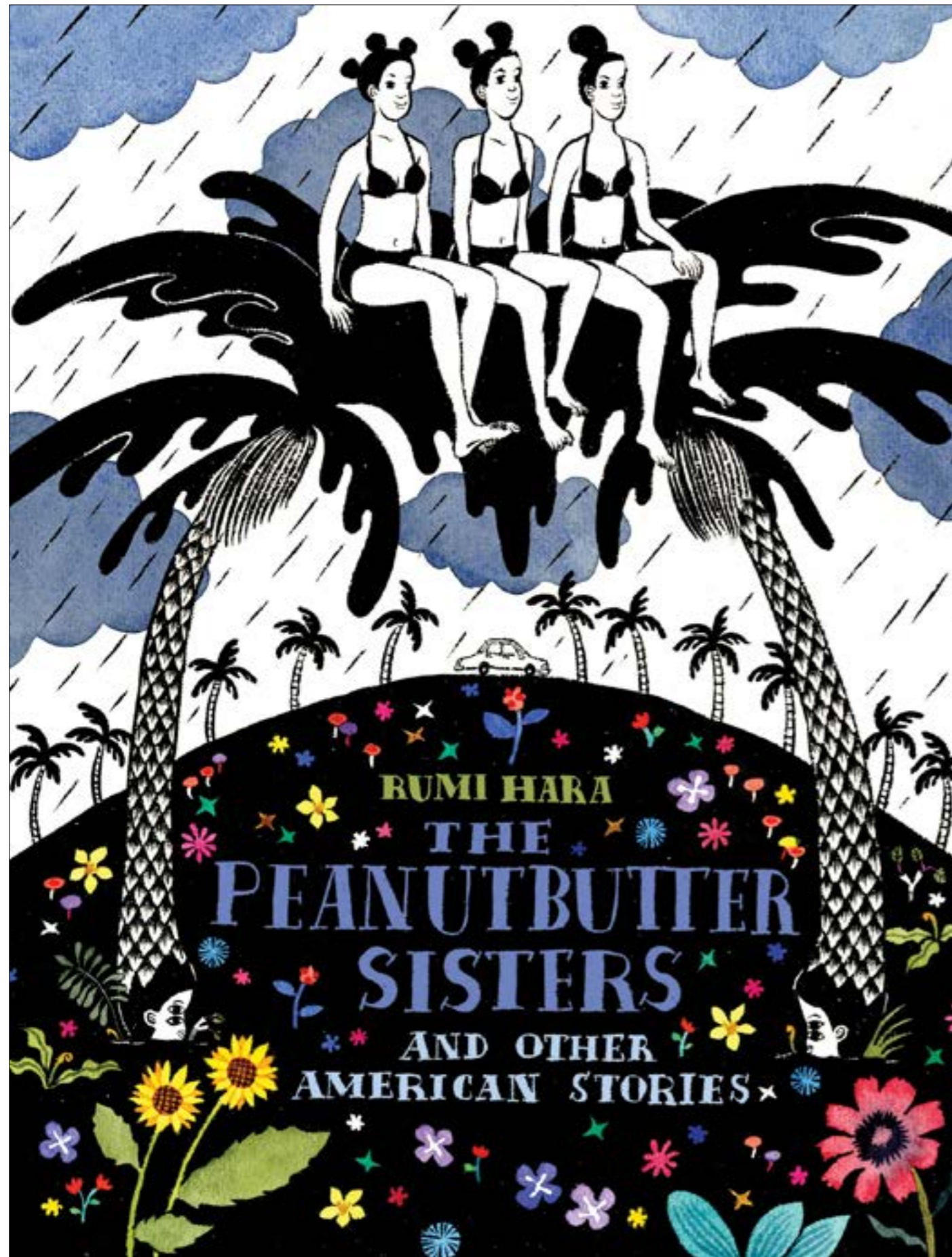
"Inventive...A visually engaging and human story of early trauma and how art and the imagination persist through the toughest of times."—*Library Journal*

MAY 2022 • \$29.95 USD/\$34.95 CAD • B&W • 6.125 X 9 • 368 PAGES
COMICS & GRAPHIC NOVELS/MEMOIR • ISBN 978-1-77046-562-6 • PAPERBACK





Travis Dandro was born August 2, 1974 in Leicester, Massachusetts. He started publishing his first comic strip, *Twerp*, in the local newspaper when he was thirteen years old, earning \$15 a week! After graduating from Montserrat College of Art in 1996, Travis continued drawing comics, his work appearing in dozens of college newspapers across the USA and Canada. He also self-published *Journal* which was a notable comic in the 2010 and 2012 editions of *The Best American Comics*. *King of King Court* is his first graphic novel. Travis lives in Maine with his wife and three sons.



THE PEANUTBUTTER SISTERS AND OTHER AMERICAN STORIES RUMI HARA

An immigrant weaves a new, surreal Americana,
complete with bubblegum fights and bomb queens

Rarely does a new talent arrive in the medium as unmistakably distinct as Rumi Hara. With immersive art and a clear-eyed storytelling rhythm, her uncategorizable debut, *Nori*, put her playful cartooning on display. Her new collection, *The Peanutbutter Sisters and Other American Stories*, delights with equal mischievousness.

The Peanutbutter Sisters is a glorious balance of contradictions, at once escapism and realism; science fiction and slice of life. Two students explore the urban landscape while following Newton Creek, the polluted Queens-Brooklyn border. As they do, they plan a traditional Japanese play with contemporary pop culture. Another story features an intergalactic race of all living things set in the year 2099 and is a dazzling treatise on the environment and journalism. Yet, sometimes the fantastical collides with the quotidian in the same story. A man

struggling with vertigo during quarantine encounters a world of sexual revelry whenever he has a dizzy spell. The Peanutbutter sisters ride a hurricane into NYC and yet aren't able to hitch a ride back with a whale due to a heavily polluted ocean.

Hara's magical realist tendencies and diverse cast of characters all contort the tropes of the American comics canon. Yet above all else, her innate control of the comics language—her ability to weave the absurd with the real on such a charming and commanding level—is refreshingly unrivaled.

PRAISE FOR NORI

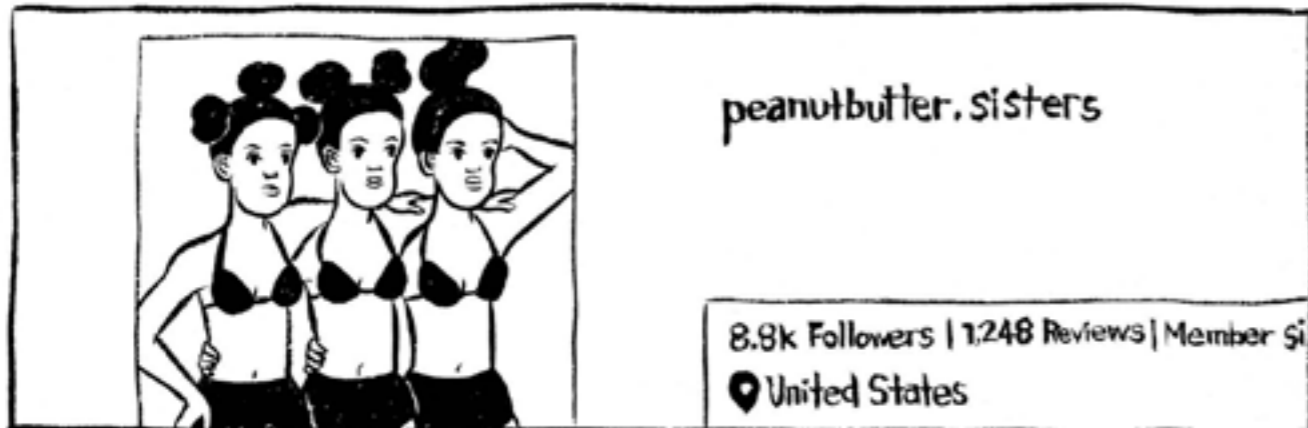
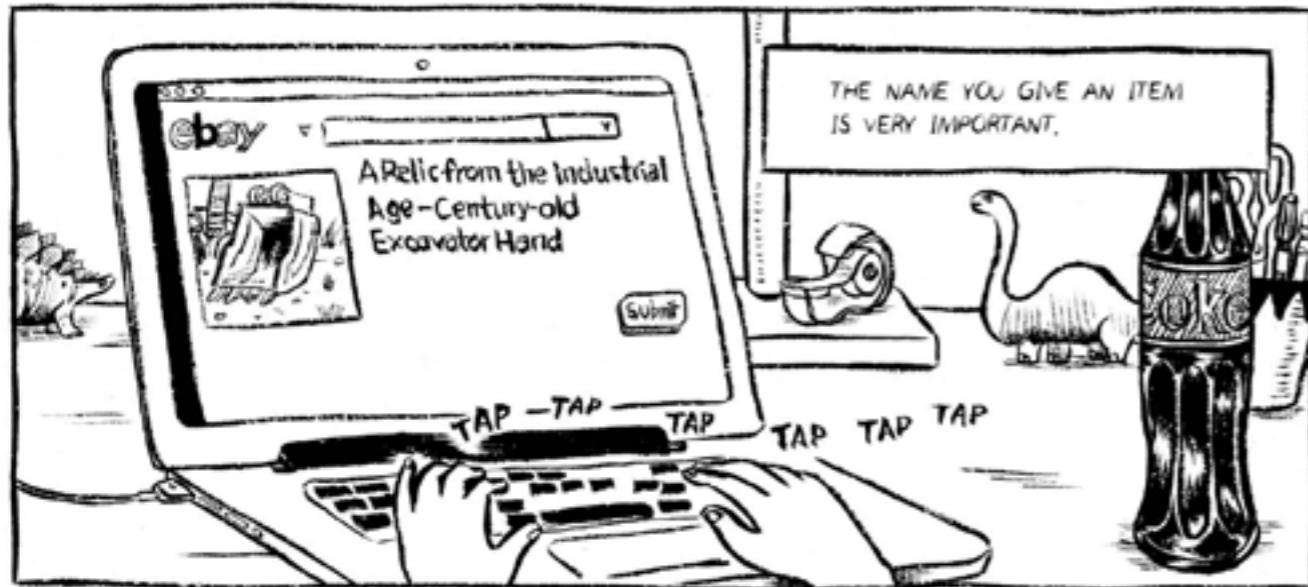
"Dreamy and intoxicating."

—*Buzzfeed Books*

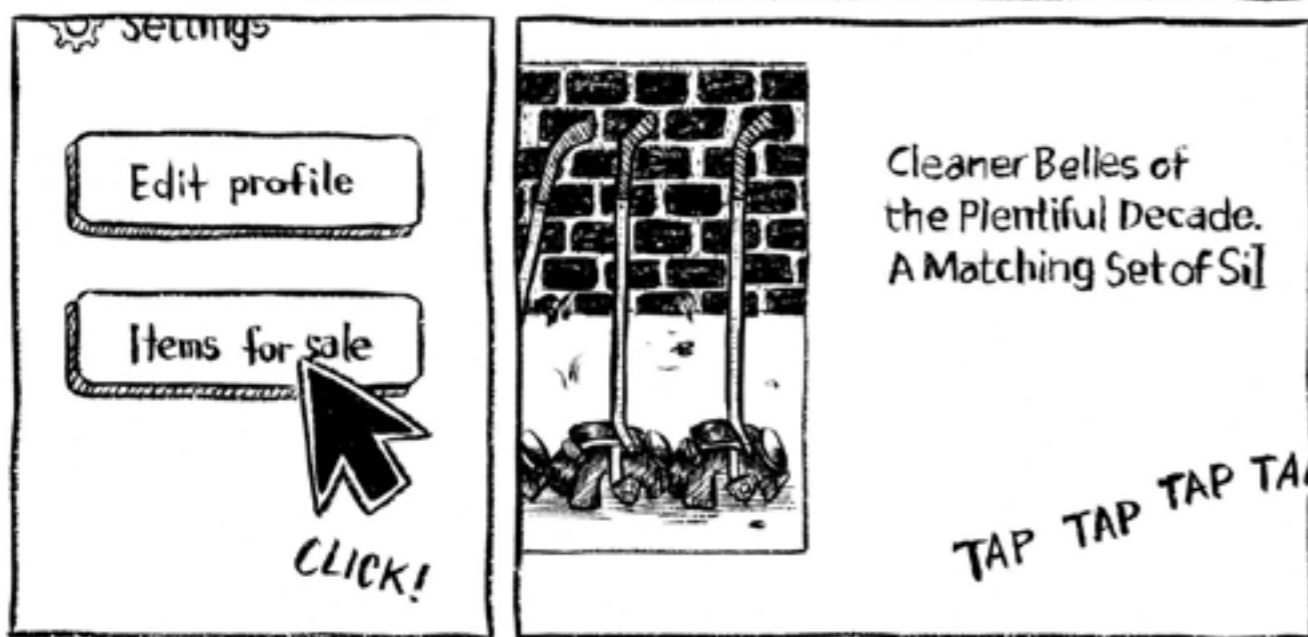
"Magically illustrated, the collection combines Japanese traditions with modern life through the eyes of the curious and adorable Nori."—*Ms. Magazine*

MAY 2022 • \$24.95 USD/\$29.95 CAD • 4 - COLOR • 6.5 X 8.75 • 176 PAGES
COMICS & GRAPHIC NOVELS/LITERARY • ISBN 978-1-77046-495-7 • PAPERBACK





IT'S ABOUT THE STORY YOU TELL, DADDY WOULD SAY. HE WANTED US TO HAVE A TRUE AMERICAN NAME, A NAME THAT EVOKES HERITAGE AND LOVE IN THIS COUNTRY, SO HE DITCHED HIS FOREIGN NAME AND MADE US THE PEANUTBUTTERS.



[Rumi Hara](#) was born in Kyoto, Japan, and started printing her comics on a tiny home printer while working as a translator in Tokyo in 2010. After receiving an MFA in illustration from Savannah College of Art and Design, Rumi moved to New York in 2014, where she now lives and works as an illustrator and comics artist. Her comics series *Nori* was first self-published as minicomics and was nominated for an Ignatz Award in 2018.



BIRDS OF MAINE

MICHAEL DEFORGE

Take flight to this post-apocalyptic utopia
filled with birds

Long after the demise of humankind, birds roam freely around a new Earth complete with fruitful trees, sophisticated fungal networks, and an enviable socialist order. The universal worm feeds all, there are no weekends, and economics is as fantastical a study as unicorn psychology. No concept of money or wealth plagues the thoughts of these free-minded birds. Instead, there are angsty teens who form bands to show off their best bird song and other youngsters who yearn to become clothing designers even though clothes are only necessary during war. (The truly honourable professions for most birds are historian and/or librarian.) These birds are free to crush on hot pelicans and live their best lives until a crash-landed human from the moon threatens to change everything.

Michael DeForge's post-apocalyptic reality brings together the author's

quintessential deadpan humour, surrealist imagination, and undeniable socio-political insight. Appearing originally as a webcomic, *Birds of Maine* follows DeForge's prolific trajectory of astounding graphic novels that reimagine and question the world as we know it. His latest comic captures the optimistic glow of utopian imagination with a late-capitalism sting of irony.

PRAISE FOR MICHAEL DEFORGE

"Frequently funny, sometimes harrowing, and always deeply strange."—*Slate*

"DeForge examines both how we build our own sense of self and how others take on the roles we create for them."
—*The Guardian*

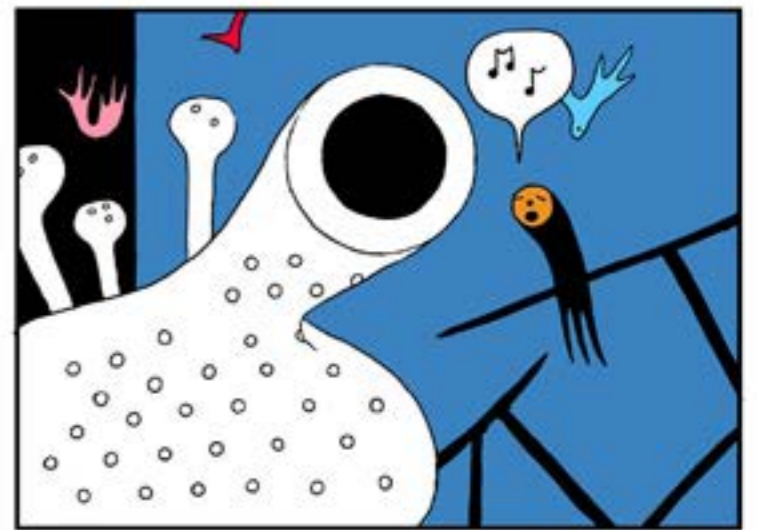
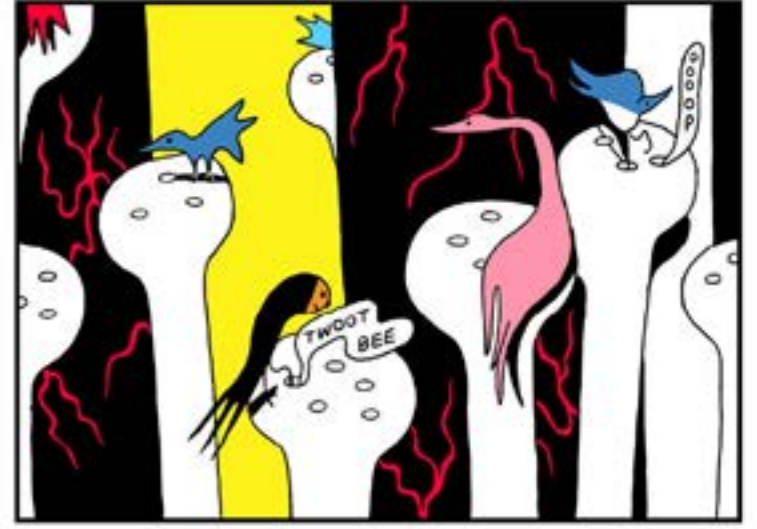
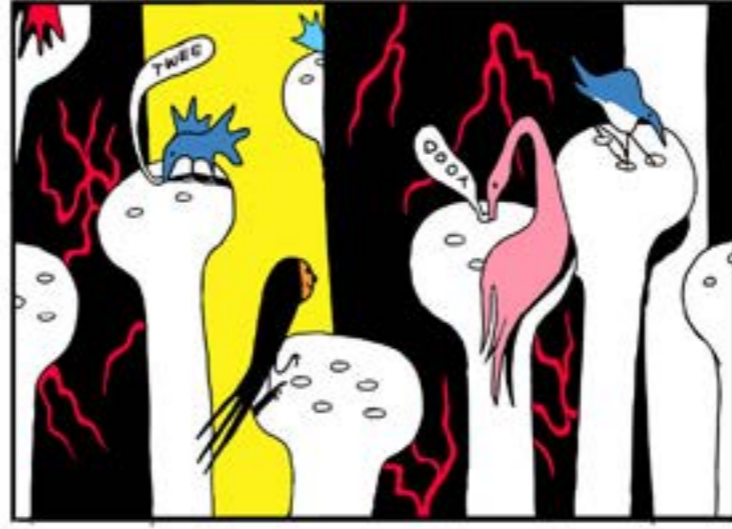
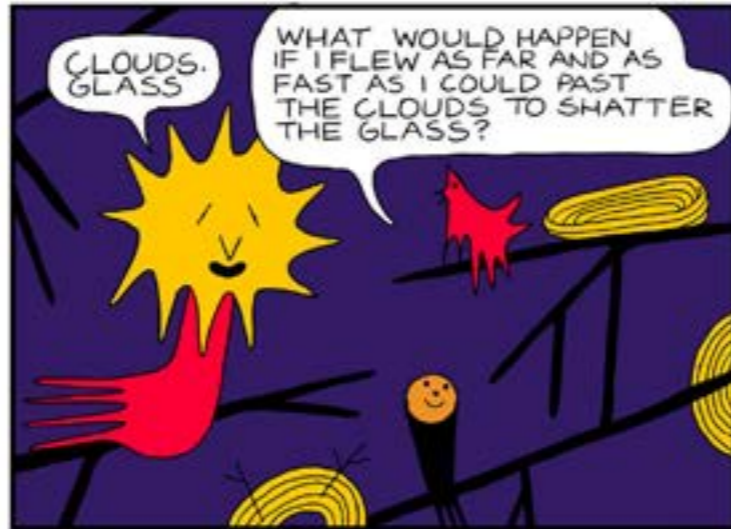
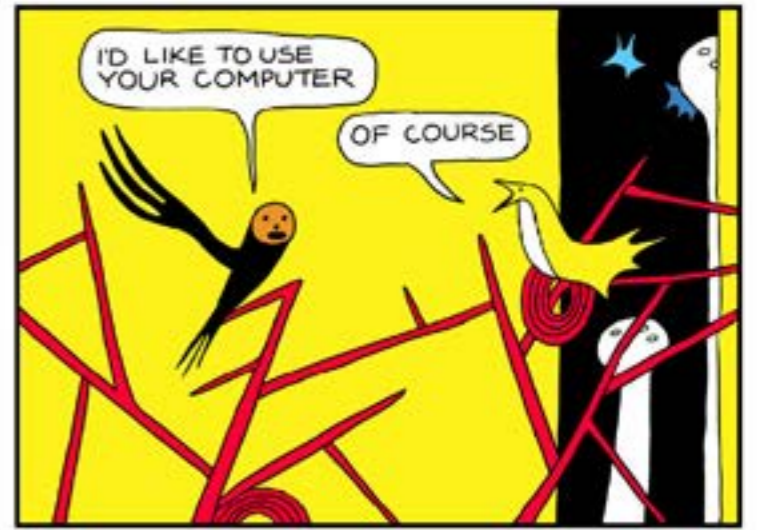
"Another DeForge classic—tender, depressing, and overflowing with his mind-melting, uber-satisfying surrealist style."
—*Interview Magazine*

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COMICS & GRAPHIC NOVELS/LITERARY • ISBN 978-1-77046-566-4 • HARDCOVER

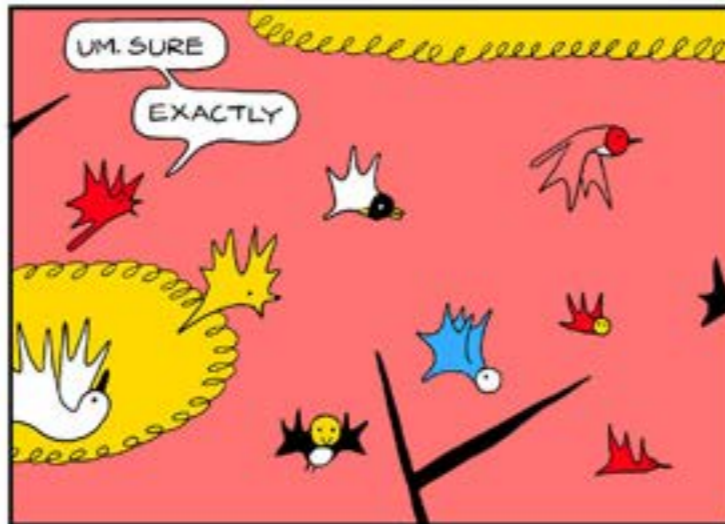
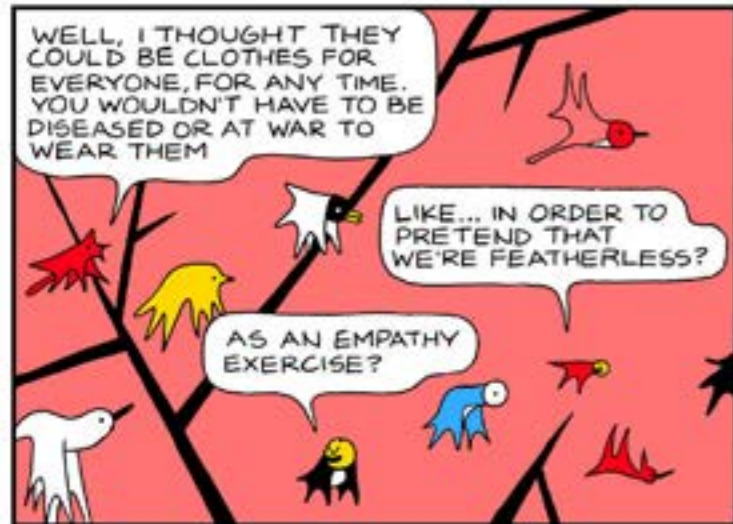
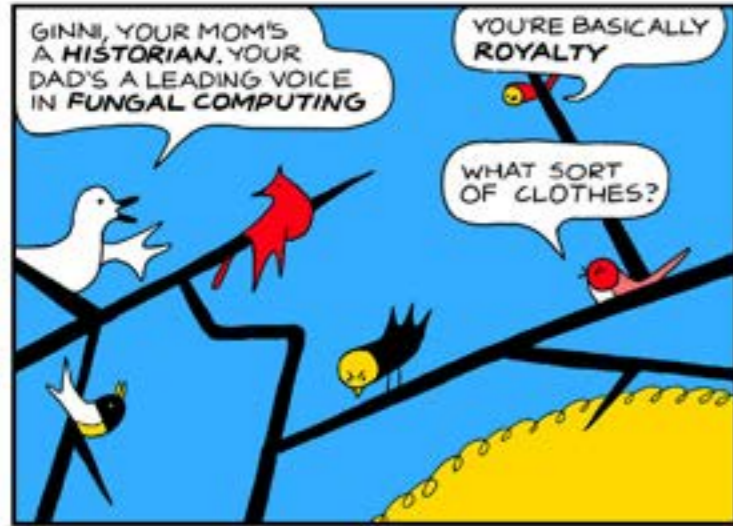
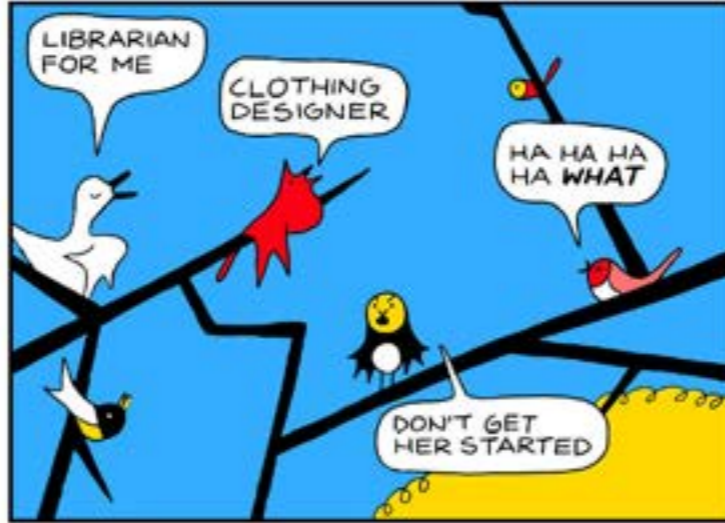
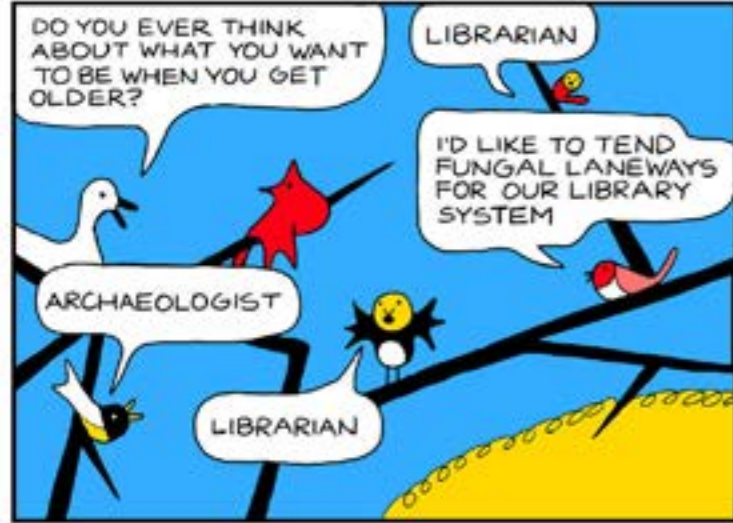
BIRDS OF MARINE



BIRDS OF MARINE



BIRDS OF MARINE



Michael DeForge is a cartoonist, illustrator, and community organizer in Toronto, Ontario.

The Con Artists



Luke Healy



THE CON ARTISTS LUKE HEALY

A quintessentially millennial tale about friendship
and the quest for self-actualization

This is going to be Frank's year. He's going to do it all: find love, become a famous comedian, and responsibly parent his plants. But then, Giorgio gets hit by a bus.

Self-assured and utterly entitled, Giorgio has always seemed like "Frank, but better." Moving in with and caring for his estranged childhood friend quickly starts to chip away at Frank's sense of self, as well as Giorgio's carefully curated online persona. Is Giorgio's penchant for overindulgence truly aspirational? Or is it ultimately a red flag? The further Frank is pulled into Giorgio's orbit, the quicker his existential dread blooms. Expectation and reality soon collide in a singular tale about trust and confidence.

Luke Healy's playful, hilarious third graphic novel uses crisp lines and physical

comedy to portray an uneasy friendship between two young men on the cusp of adulthood. Snippets from Frank's middling stand-up routines are punctuated by the subtle farce of Healy's *mise-en-scène* and the lively, at times scathingly pointed, banter of old friends. *The Con Artists* is a stylish character study that asks the question of who fools who once everyone is off-camera.

PRAISE FOR LUKE HEALY

"Smart, funny, restrained and beautifully drawn."—*The Irish Times*

"Healy's pilgrimage through America is also a journey into his own mind, soundtracked by blistered footsteps and breathless huffs, and told with winning honesty."—*The Guardian*, Best Comics and Graphic Novels of 2019

JUNE 2022 • \$24.95 USD/\$29.95CAD • B&W • 6 X 9 • 128 PAGES
COMICS & GRAPHIC NOVELS/LITERARY • ISBN 978-1-77046-623-4 • PAPERBACK

FULL TITLE LIST





Luke Healy was born and raised in Dublin, Ireland, where he also received a BA in Journalism. He has an MFA in Cartooning from the Centre for Cartoon Studies in Vermont, USA. His work has been exhibited in the Museum of Comics and Cartoon Art in Manhattan, and his clients include Seven Days VT and Narratively.

FULL TITLE LIST

WORLD RECORD HOLDERS

(NOT FINAL COVER)

GUY DELISLE



WORLD RECORD HOLDERS

GUY DELISLE

A funny and insightful retrospective collection
from a celebrated cartoonist

Universally beloved cartoonist Guy Delisle showcases a career-spanning collection of his work with a sly sense of humour and warm characterization. Before Delisle became an international superstar with his globe-hopping travelogues, he was an animator experimenting with the comics form. Always aware of the elasticity of the human form and honing his keen observer's eye, young Delisle created hilarious set pieces.

World Record Holders ranges from wistful childhood nostalgia to chagrined post-fame encounters, touching on formally ambitious visual puns and gut-busting what-ifs. Delisle again and again shows how life is both exhilarating and embarrassing. Delisle visits an exhibition of his work in

another country and is confronted by an angry spouse who blames him for destroying her marriage. A coded message from space creates different reactions from different people—debates, dance festivals, gallery shows. Translated by Helge Dascher.

PRAISE FOR GUY DELISLE

“One of the greatest modern cartoonists.”
—*The Guardian*

“Guy Delisle is the real thing: a skilled and wryly funny cartoonist [with an] acute sense of timing.”—*NPR*

“Delisle, a former animator, has a knack for visual shorthand...and for drawing environments.”—*The New York Times*

JUNE 2022 • \$21.95 USD/\$24.95 CAD • B&W • 6.125 X 8.5 • 152 PAGES
COMICS & GRAPHIC NOVELS/LITERARY • ISBN 978-1-77046-567-1 • PAPERBACK

In the line-up at the hardware store, a customer wanted his purchase—a hammer—wrapped in bubble wrap...



Why the hell would a guy need his hammer wrapped, I wondered. Was he afraid he might damage the thing?



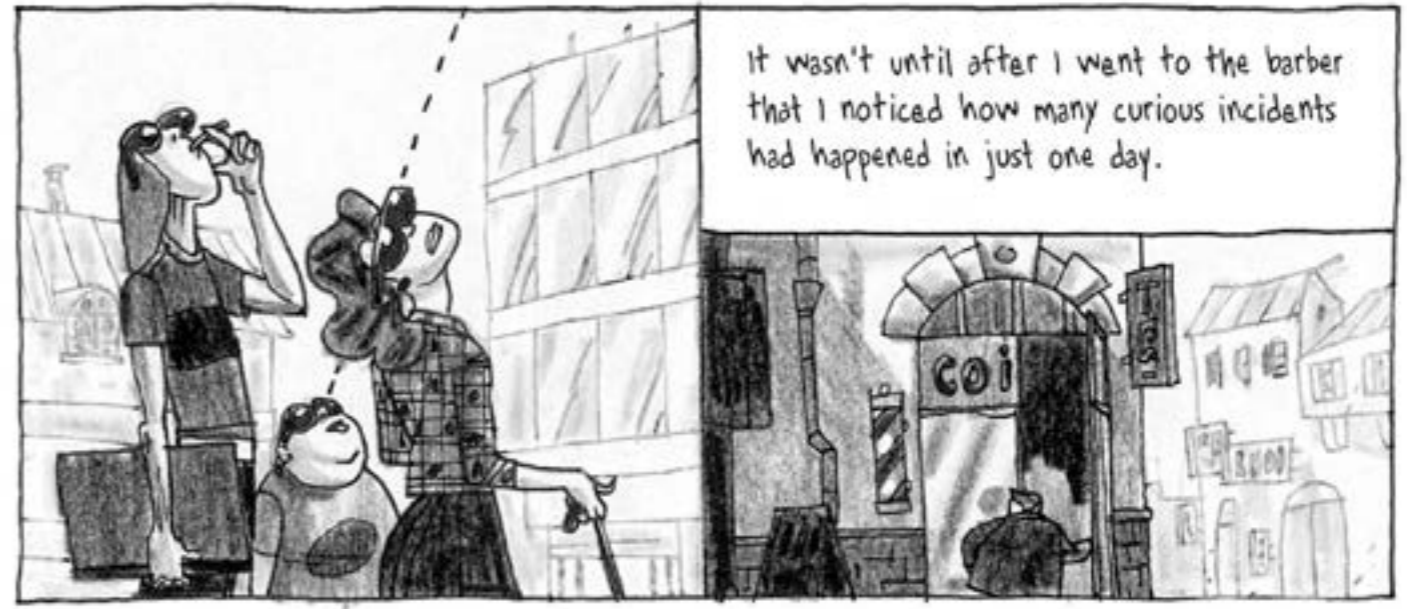
Or maybe it was meant as a gift...a hammer, really? Ha ha ha!

I looked around for amused smiles...Nothing. No amazement...



As if wrapping hammers was a normal thing! Well, I'd never seen anything like it...

It wasn't until after I went to the barber that I noticed how many curious incidents had happened in just one day.



After a few mundane remarks about eclipses and astronomical phenomena, he proceeded to tell me about the peculiarities of his profession.



He's a heavy-set man, and he told me that his belly often rubs against the chair...(why do people always confide in me, I wondered).



The rubbing causes little hair cuttings to pass through the fibres of his clothes. Not often, but it happens...





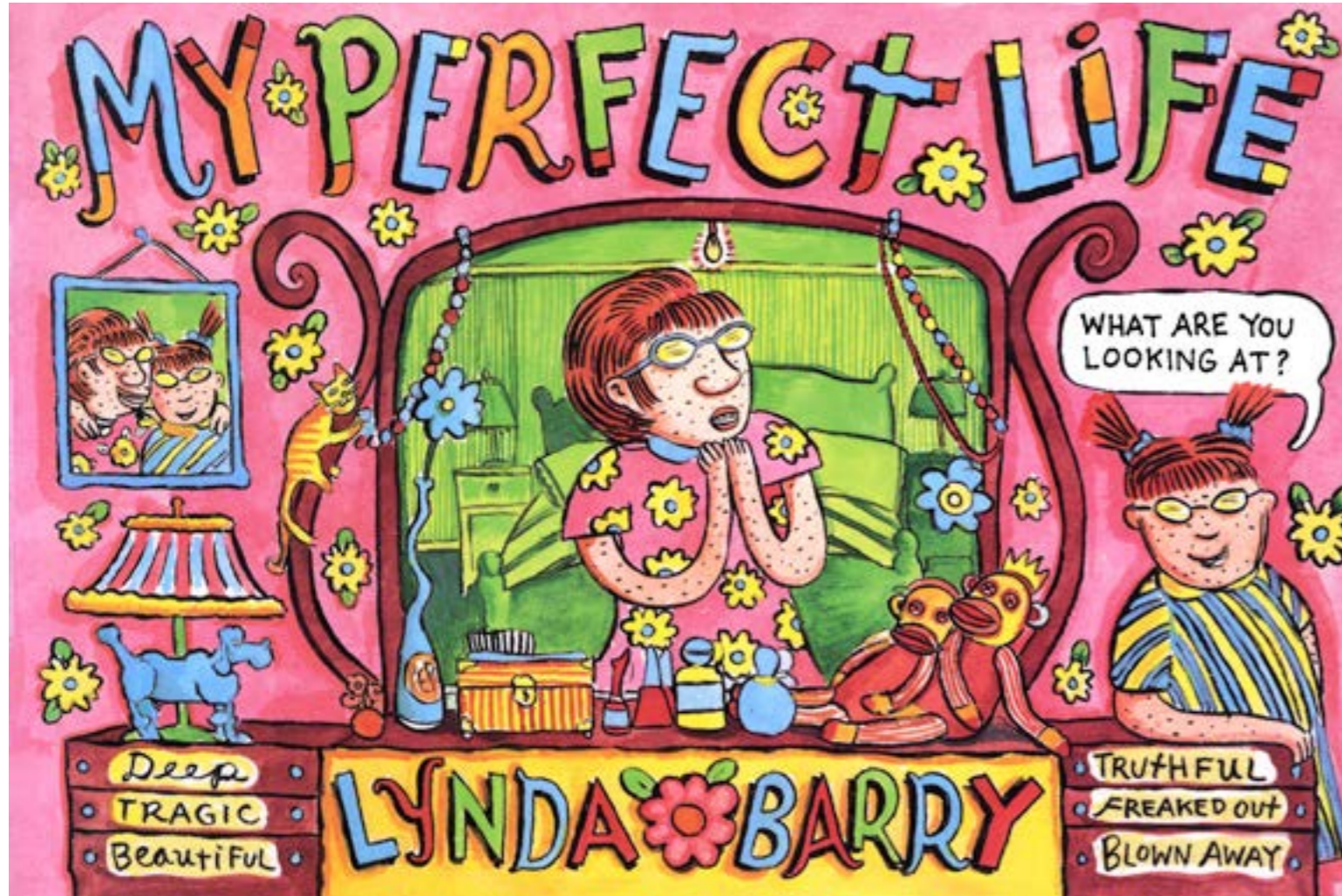
Born in Québec City, Canada, in 1966, **Guy Delisle** now lives in the south of France with his wife and two children. Delisle spent ten years working in animation, which allowed him to learn about movement and drawing. He is best known for his travelogues about life in faraway countries, *Burma Chronicles*, *Jerusalem: Chronicles from the Holy City*, *Pyongyang*, and *Shenzhen*. He has since expanded his oeuvre by telling a Doctors without Borders acquaintance's story as nail-biting thriller (*Hostage*) and revisiting his teen years and first summer job (*Factory Summers*).

In 2012, Guy Delisle was awarded the Prize for Best Album for the French edition of *Jerusalem* at the Angoulême International Comics Festival.

MY PERFECT LIFE

LYNDA BARRY

Maybonne and Marlys Mullen endure the mortifying highs and lows of middle school in this Lynda Barry classic



Collected from the strip *Ernie Pook's Comeek*, which was serialized in alternative weeklies across the continent, *My Perfect Life* captures the moment of Lynda Barry finding the perfect balance in longer form storytelling between the belly aching laughs and the brutal reality checks. Along with the 2022 release *Come Over Come Over*, this collection continues to spotlight the life of teenager Maybonne Mullen. She suffers through the utterly relatable insults of junior high and the excruciating embarrassment caused by her little sister Marlys. Hovering in the background, however, is a broken home, parents struggling with addiction, a grandmother who takes her granddaughters from the diverse big city to a bewilderingly bland small town.

Yet fitting into the new school and surroundings is, of course, paramount to a

young teenager. Maybonne begins September full of life and excitement. As the school year progresses, she experiences bullying, her first boyfriend, family drama, drinking, and more. The book ends with Maybonne withdrawn and jaded as the reality of her world outweighs the magic.

PRAISE FOR MY PERFECT LIFE

"*My Perfect Life* is [Barry's] finest, funniest, most affecting graphic novel to date, partly because she's perfected her draughtsmanship, but also because it observes the Aristotelian dramatic unities, sort of."

—*Entertainment Weekly*

"Barry's carefully chosen words and scribbly drawings capture the melodramatic fantasies and insecurities of adolescence more accurately than most conventional novels do."—*Los Angeles Times*

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THE CHANGES

BY LYNDA BARRY ©1990

PEOPLE SAY YOU CAN CHANGE YOURSELF. FOR EXAMPLE IF YOU HAVE A DEFECTIVE PERSONALITY YOU CAN KEEP ON STRIVING AND SOON YOU WILL WALK IN THE RAYS OF A BEAUTIFUL SUN.



BUT IF A GUY YOU LIKE IS DEFECTIVE AND DOES THINGS COLD BLOODED TO YOU, PEOPLE SAY CLOSE THE DOOR BECAUSE NO WAY IS HE EVER GOING TO CHANGE. PERSONALLY I DON'T GET THE DIFFERENCE.



DOUG SAYS NOW HE WANTS TO BE MY BOYFRIEND BUT DON'T TELL ANYONE BECAUSE IT'S TOO COMPLICATED. I TOLD ONE PERSON, NANCY NEWBY AND SHE SAID SEE HOW HE'S USING YOU BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE BUT DOUG, I BELIEVE IN YOU AND TRUST IS OUR MOST BEAUTIFUL THING. NOTHING CAN DESTROY IT.



SO WHAT IF YOU DIDN'T CALL ME TONIGHT AND SO WHAT IF YOU WENT TO THE GAME WITH CINDY LUDERMYER? I KNOW IT'S LIKE YOU SAID. YOU HAVE TO EXPRESS YOURSELF AND YOU DON'T WANT NO ONE TO BE A CHAIN ON YOU. AND I KNOW WHAT WE HAVE IS SECRETLY BEAUTIFUL BECAUSE BEAUTIFUL GOD LET YOU COME BACK TO ME. I PRAYED AND HE LET YOU COME BACK. THANK YOU SO MUCH.



MARLYS SPRING

BY LYNDA BARRY FOR GARY COVINO ©1990

I SHARE THE BED WITH MY LITTLE SISTER MARLYS WHO SOMETIMES JUST KILLS ME. LIKE THIS MORNING SHE WAS SINGING JERIMIAH WAS A BULLFROG OUT THE OPEN WINDOW OF OUR BEDROOM.



IT WAS THE FIRST WARM DAY OF THE YEAR. IN THE FRONT YARD THERE WERE FLOWERS. SHE SAID DID I DARE HER TO GO OUT ON THE ROOF AND DO THE BUTT DANCE IN HER PAJAMAS. THIS IS THE DANCE WHERE YOU STICK YOUR BUTT OUT AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE. SHE INVENTED IT.



SHE CLIMBS OUT THE WINDOW AND STARTS SINGING LA CUCARACHA THEN SHE BENDS OVER AND SINGS 'SOMEONE LEFT THE CAKE OUT IN THE RAIN.' A CAR HONKS AT HER AND SHE STICKS HER ARM IN THE AIR AND SHOUTS 'BLACK POWER!' THEN THE DOOR FLYS OPEN AND IT'S MY GRANDMA YELLING IS MARLYS TRYING TO KILL HER?



AT BREAKFAST MY GRANDMA WON'T SHUT UP ABOUT HOW I HAVE NO RESPONSIBILITY. HOW COULD I LET MY SISTER BEHAVE THAT WAY, SHE COULD HAVE FALLEN OFF THE ROOF AND WHAT ABOUT THE NEIGHBORS. THEN SHE TURNS HER HEAD TO GET THE TOAST, AND MARLYS LOOKS AT ME AND SMILES. MAN. I NEVER KNEW I LOVED HER SO MUCH.



THE PLASTIC WALL

By LYNDA EVER LOVIN' BARRY © 1990!

EVER SINCE I FOUND OUT I HAVE A INFERIORITY COMPLEX I HAVE BEEN FEELING SO TERRIBLE. ALSO, MORE SELF-CONSCIOUS THAN MY LIFE HAS EVER KNOWN.



IT'S A THING WHERE I WISH I COULDN'T TALK BECAUSE EVERYTHING I SAY IS SO STUPID BUT I CAN'T CONTROL MY MOUTH. IT KEEPS OPENING AND BORING THINGS COME OUT. ALSO I HAVE NOTICED I AM UGLY COMPARED TO ALL MY FRIENDS OUT OF EVERYONE IT TURNS OUT I AM THE DOG. I'M NOT SAYING THIS ONLY TO GET ATTENTION. I'M REALIZING FACTS.



THERE'S ALSO GOOD QUALITIES. READING COMPREHENSION, ARTISTIC AND NOT TO SOUND CONCEITED BUT GOOD AT POETRY. BUT HOW MUCH DOES THAT COUNT WHEN YOUR FACE + BODY + WHOLE PERSONALITY SUCKS? SUE AKER AND THEM ARE GOING TO GIVE ME A TRUTH SESSION ON THE REALITY OF THEIR OPINIONS ON ME WHICH SHE SAYS WORKED GOOD ON HER COUSIN CAROL FROM IDAHO. I HOPE IT WORKS FOR ME.



MOST OF ALL I JUST WISH FOR EVERYTHING ABOUT ME TO CHANGE. AND THEN I SWEAR TO GOD I WOULD QUIT ACTING INSECURE, AND BE MYSELF, LIKE IN ALL THE SONGS WHERE PEOPLE ARE BEING THEMSELVES. I WOULD STOP FAKING AND BE FOR REAL AND ACT FREE LIKE SUE AKER AND THEM, BECAUSE FOR RIGHT NOW I AM ONLY A PLASTIC WALL OF ILLUSION, WHICH I HATE. IF I HAVE A POSSIBILITY TO CHANGE, PLEASE GOD LET IT HAPPEN.



Lynda Barry has worked as a painter, cartoonist, writer, illustrator, play-wright, editor, commentator, and teacher and found that they are very much alike. She is the inimitable creator behind the pivotal comic strip *Ernie Pook's Comeek* as well as numerous comic books and graphic novels, including most recently *Making Comics*. In 2019 Barry received a MacArthur Genius Grant. She lives in Wisconsin, where she is an associate professor of art and a Discovery Fellow at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

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