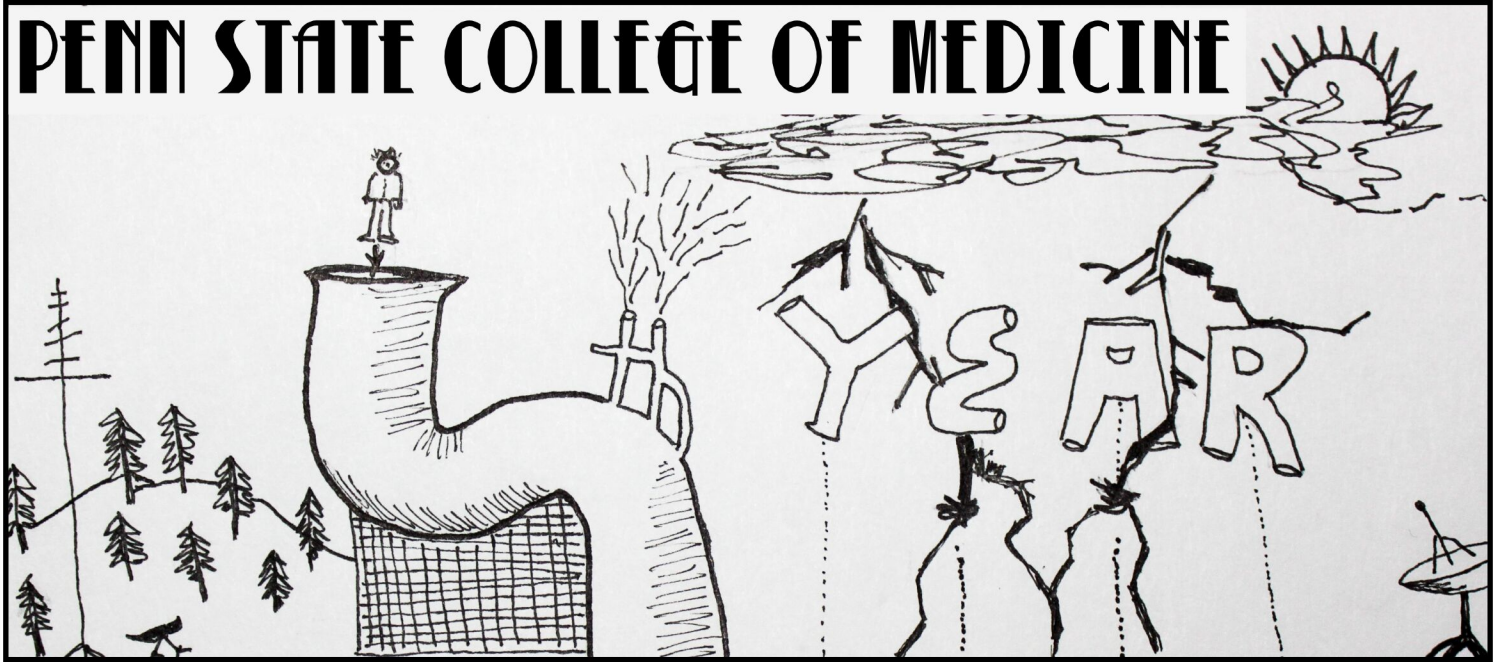


PENN STATE COLLEGE OF MEDICINE

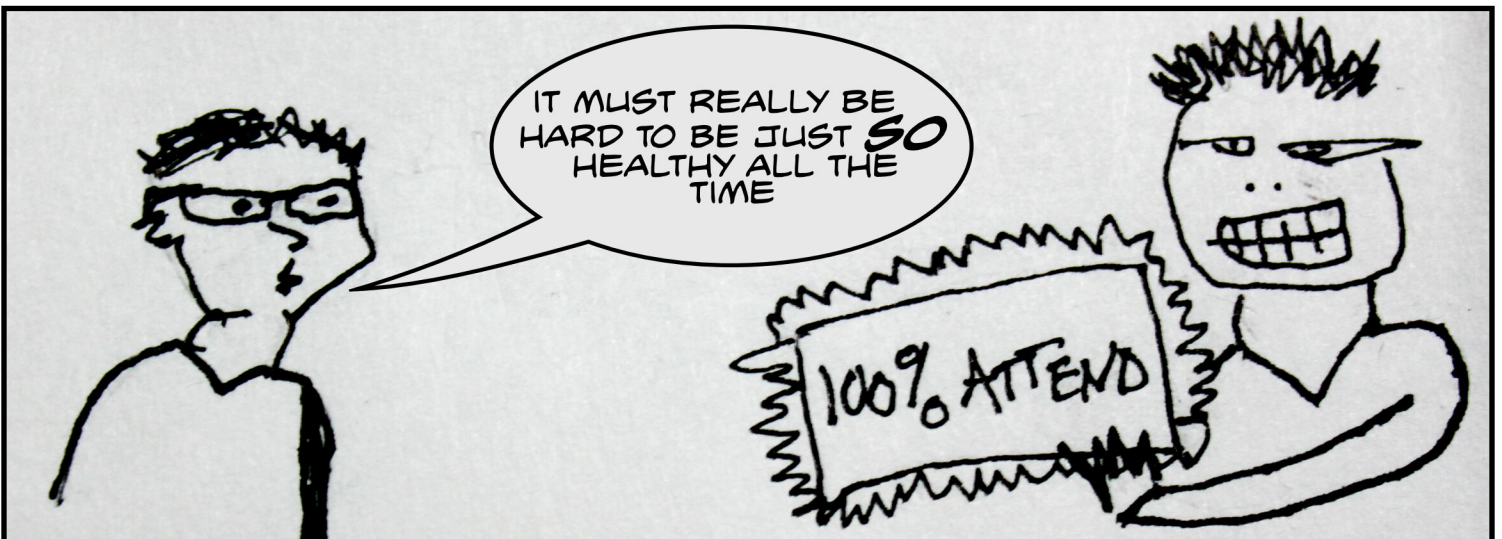


I DIDN'T TRY BECOMING A DOCTOR FOR THE WHITE COAT OR SALARY, BUT BECAUSE DOCTORS HELPED ME A LOT, I WAS A PRETTY SICK KID.

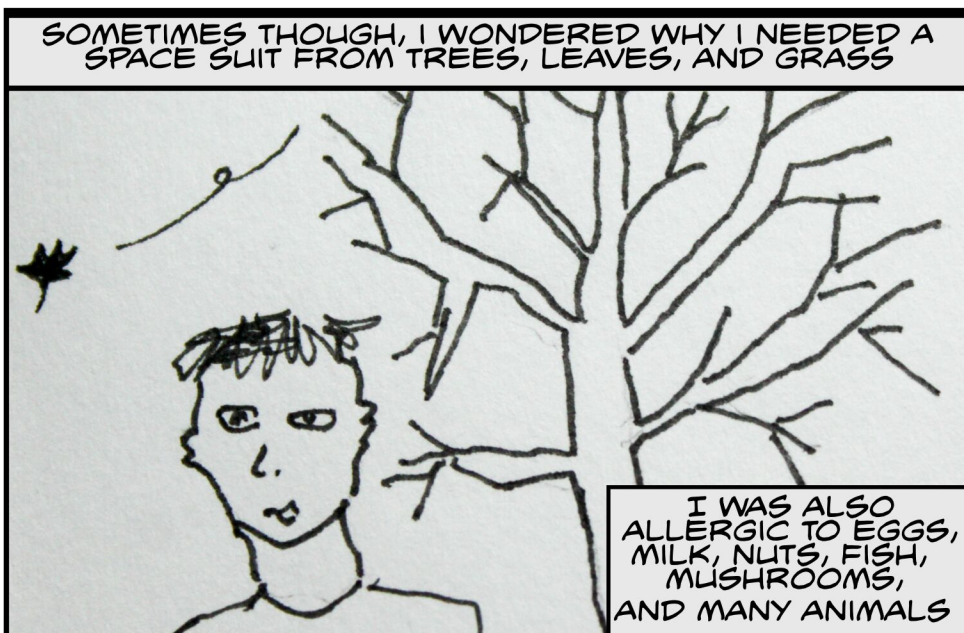
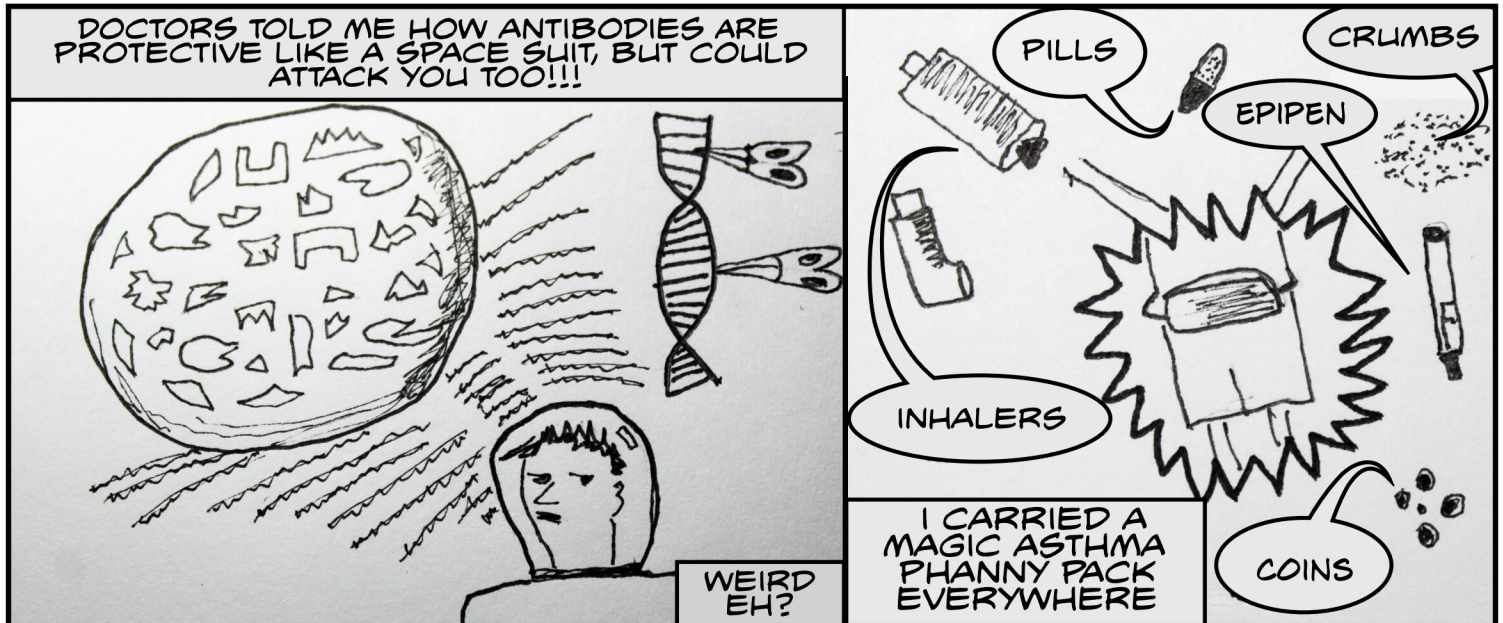
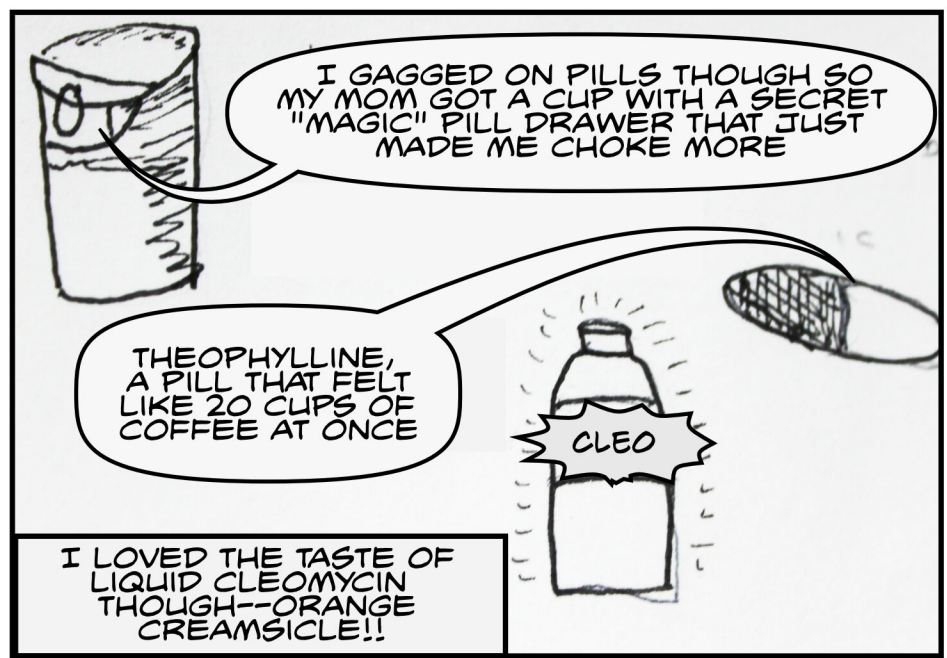
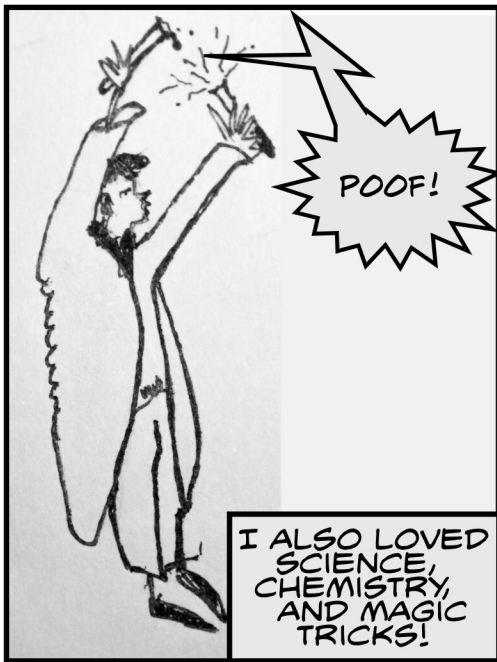
I WOULD THROW UP A LOT AT NIGHT, SO I HAD A "JUST-IN-CASE" BY THE BED



I COUNTED PREDNISONE FAST AS A BANK TELLER



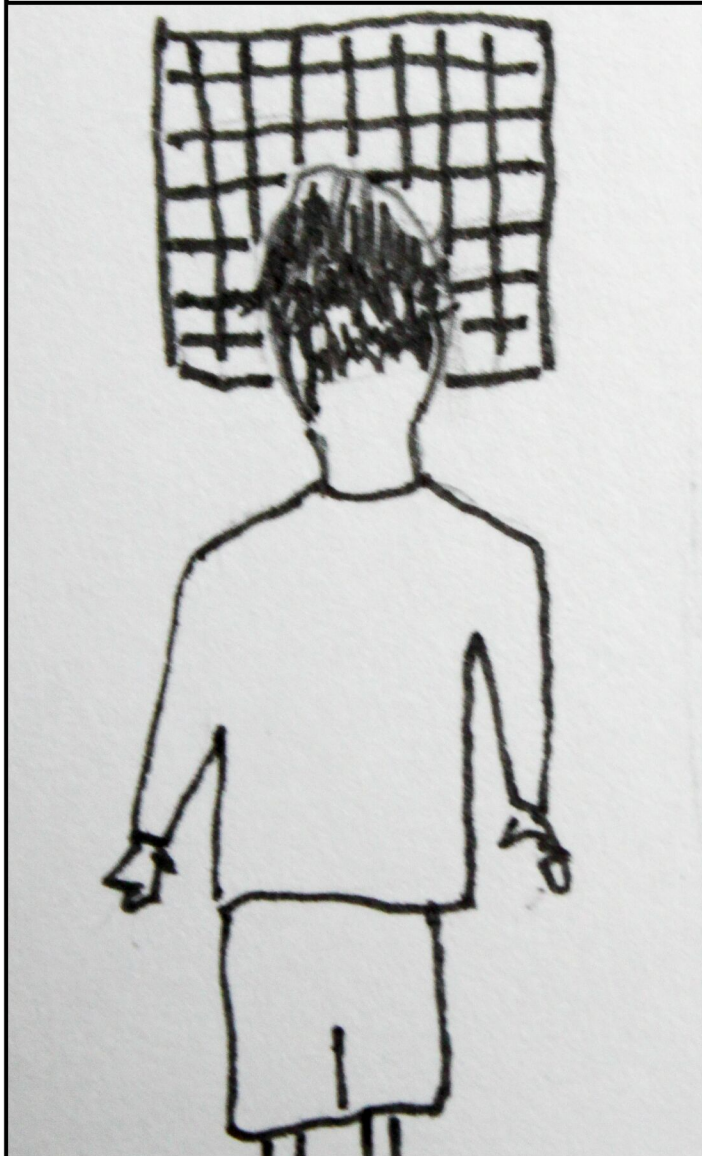
AS I MISSED MONTHS OF SCHOOL A YEAR, I THOUGHT PERFECT ATTENDANCE WAS A RATHER GALICHE AWARD



I GOT ALLERGY SHOTS FOR 10 YEARS



I WATCHED PEANUT BUTTER BIRD FEEDERS BE MADE THROUGH THE CLASS WINDOW



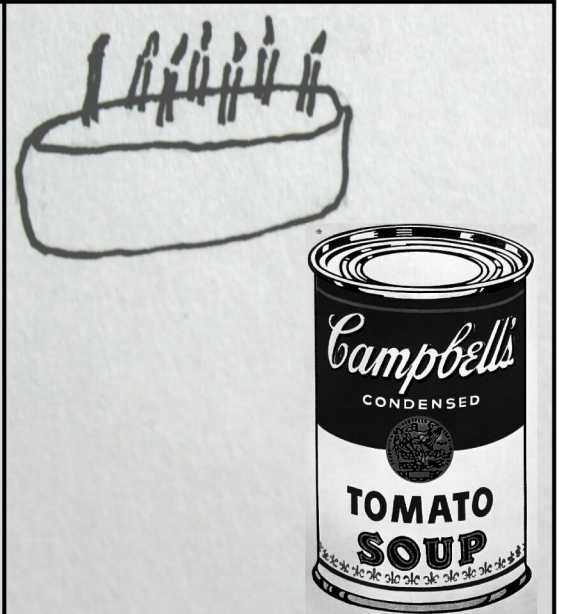
WHEN EVERYONE GOT BIRTHDAY CAKE I GOT A POP TART...IF THE PARENT REMEMBERED.



FOR MY BIRTHDAY MY MOM MADE WAR CAKE...

WITH TOMATO SOUP INSTEAD OF EGGS OR MILK...

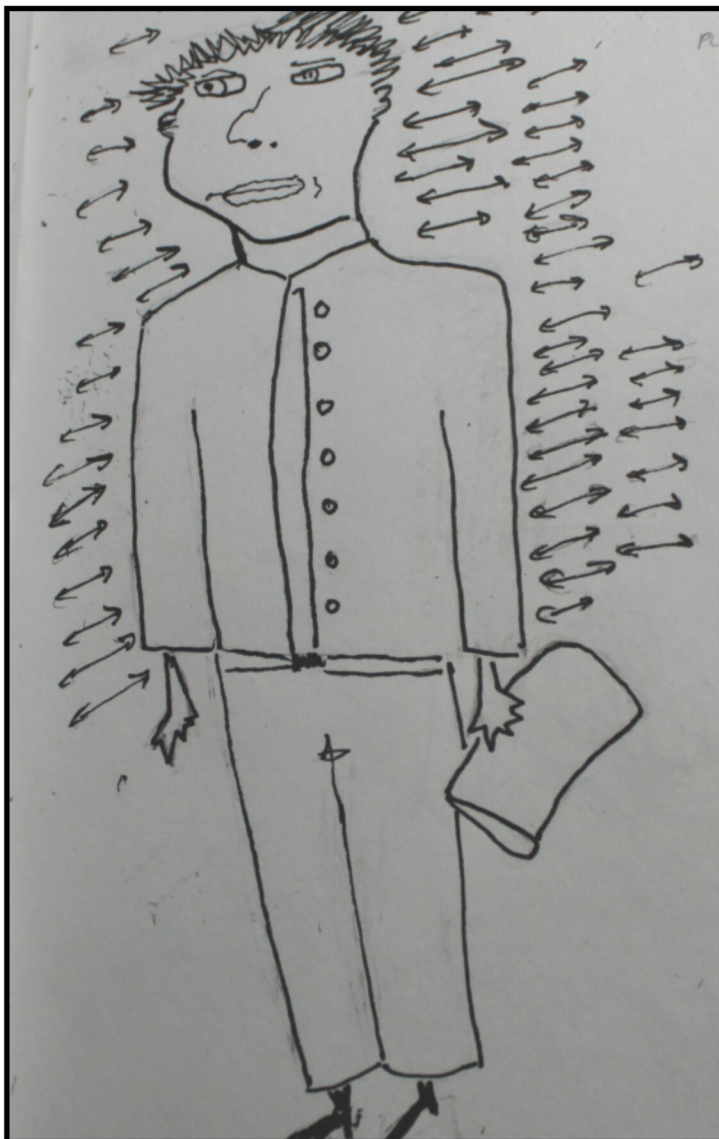
IT TASTED MUCH BETTER THAN IT SOUNDED.



Now and in the Future

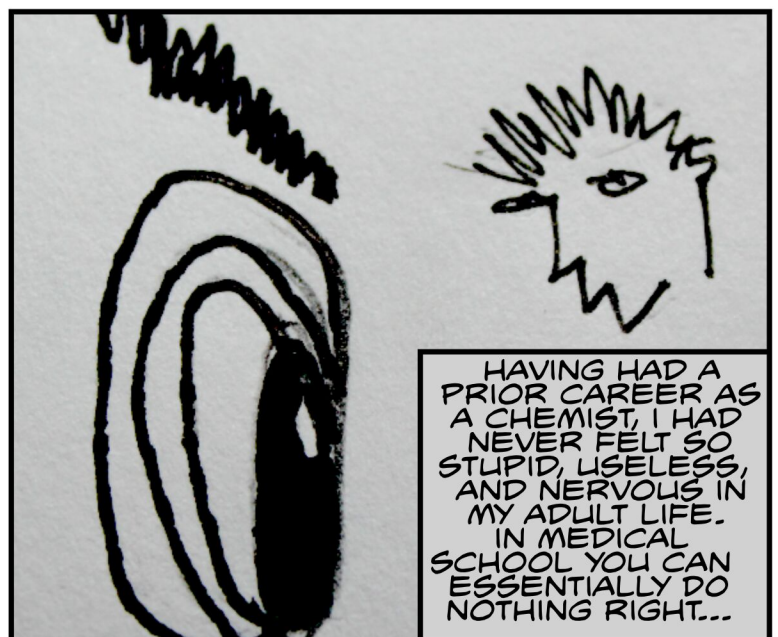
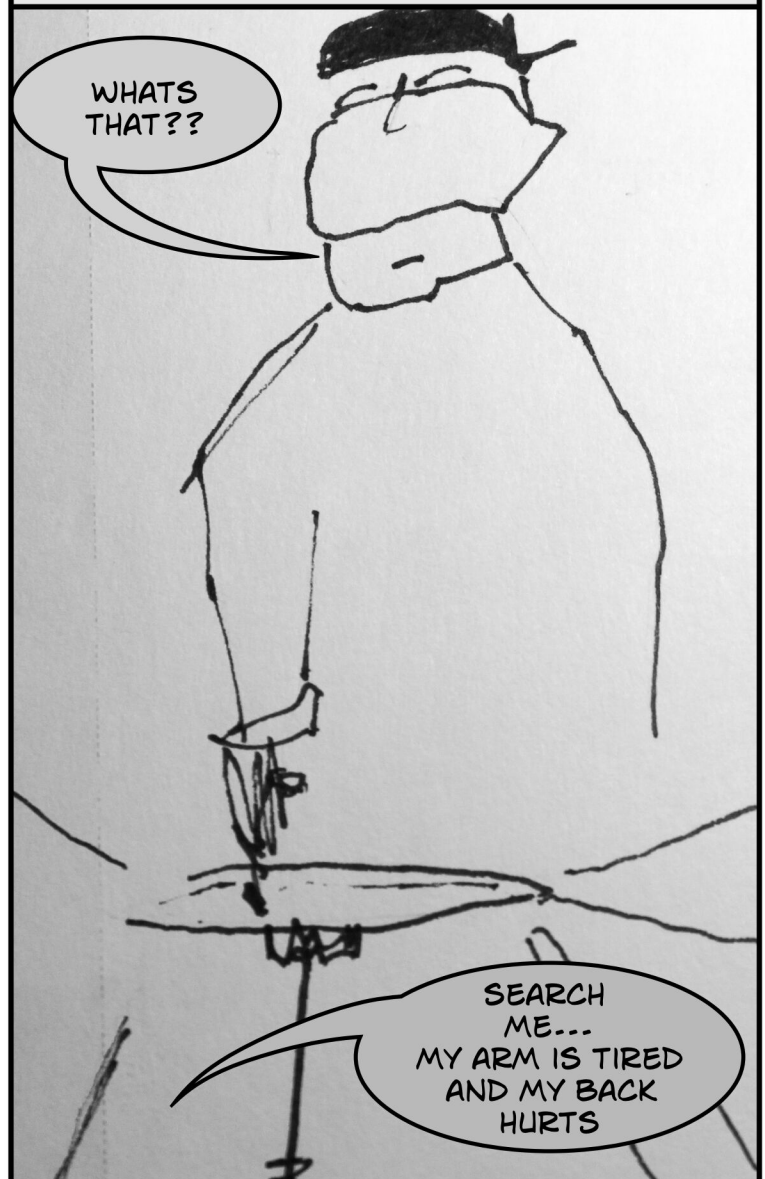
I want to be a doctor because
I have asthma and I suffer
alot I know other people who

I LOVE HOW AS A KID I COULD
PREDICT MY WANTS IN THE
FUTURE, BUT INDEED I DID
END UP IN MEDICAL SCHOOL
AT THE RIPE AGE OF 31

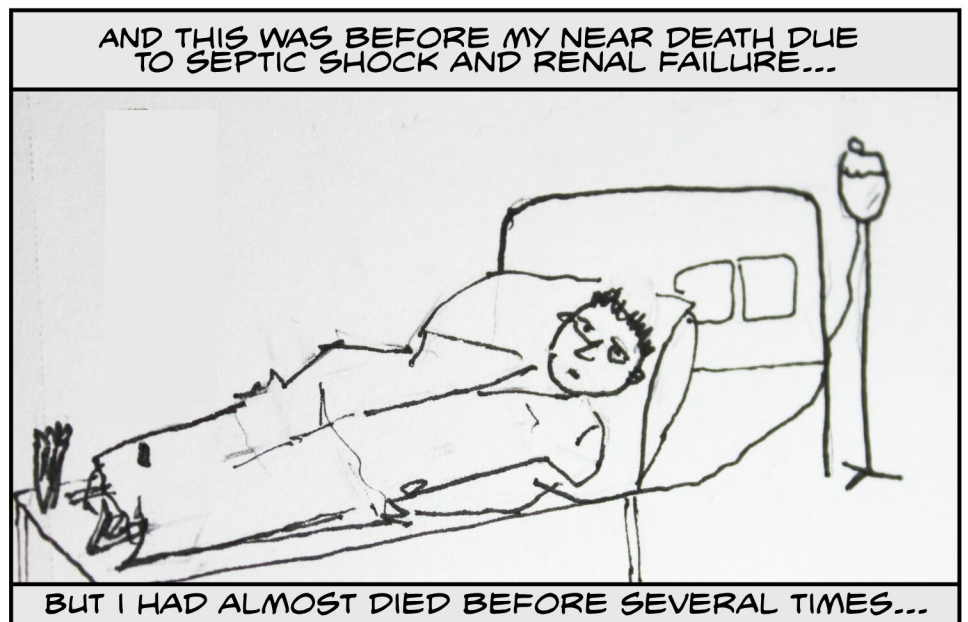
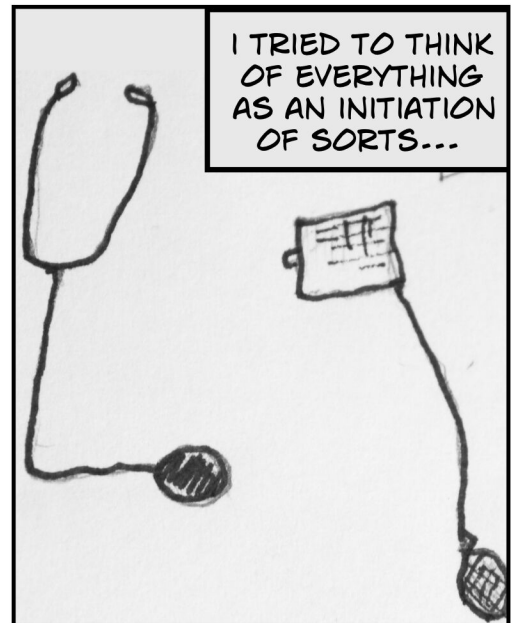
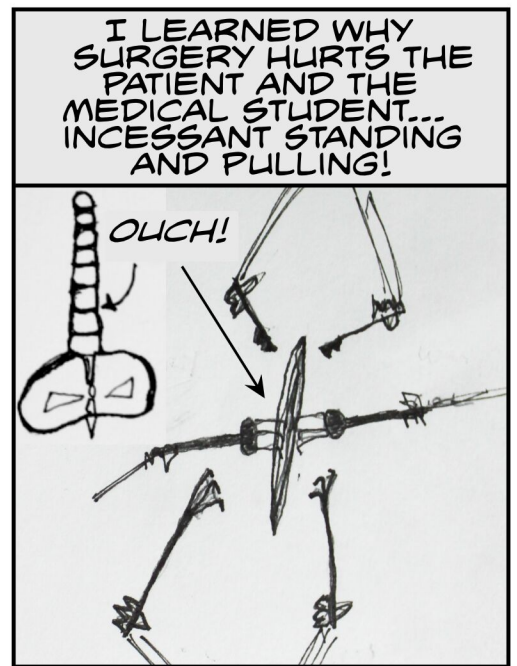
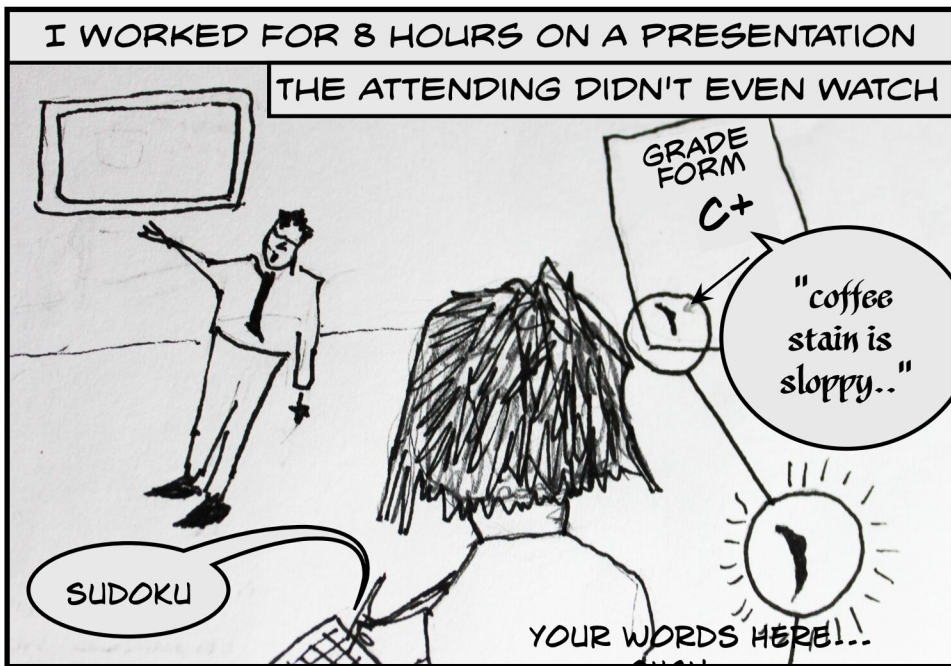


THEY WOULD INTERRUPT YOUR
PRESENTATIONS AND YELL AT YOU AND
THEN COMMENT THAT YOU SEEMED
"NERVOUS" ON YOUR EVALUATIONS....

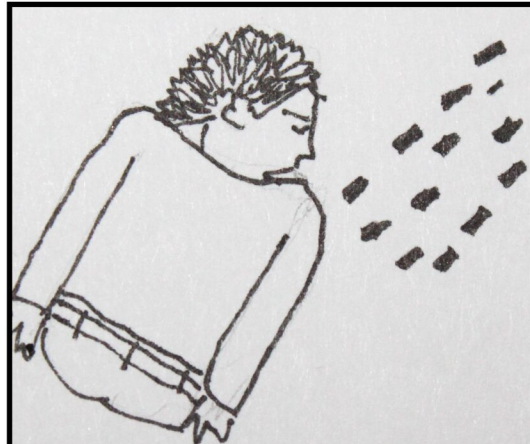
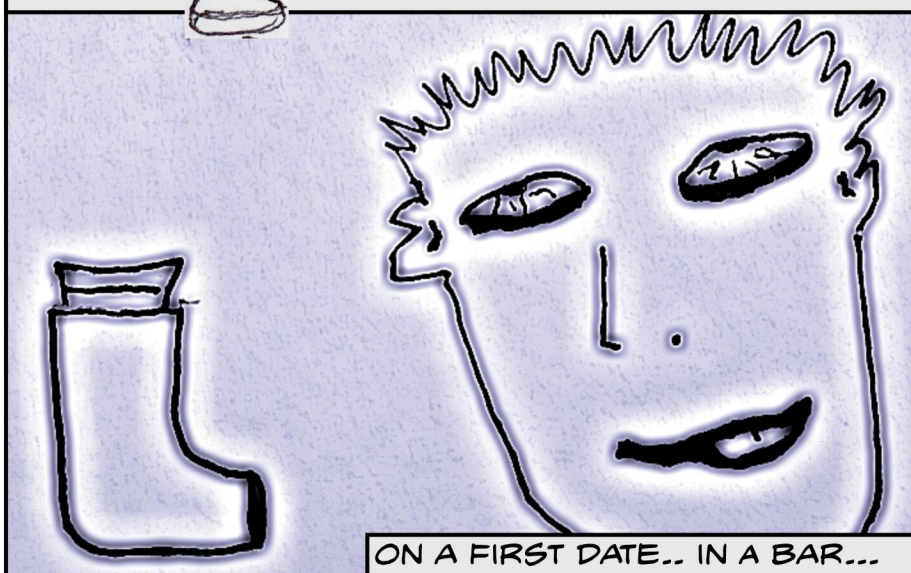
SURGEONS SEEMED TO LOVE POKING
AT THE MOST RANDOM THINGS...



HAVING HAD A
PRIOR CAREER AS
A CHEMIST, I HAD
NEVER FELT SO
STUPID, USELESS,
AND NERVOUS IN
MY ADULT LIFE.
IN MEDICAL
SCHOOL YOU CAN
ESSENTIALLY DO
NOTHING RIGHT...



I PASSED OUT ONCE FOR 40 MINUTES IN ANAPHYLACTIC SHOCK FROM AN UNLISTED PEANUT IN A GRANOLA BAR

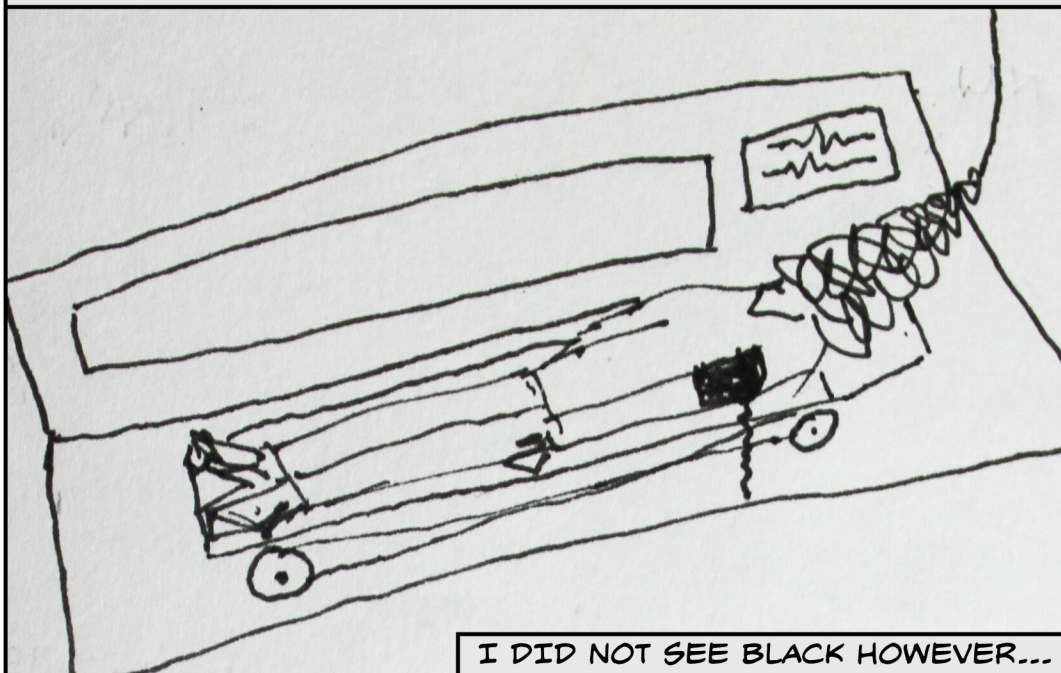


IN THE BAR RESTROOM I STOPPED BREATHING COMPLETELY, MY VISION WENT PIXELATED AND THEN I MERCIFULLY PASSED OUT, MY FACE A BLUE/GREY CORPULENT COLOR BY MY DATE'S REPORT.

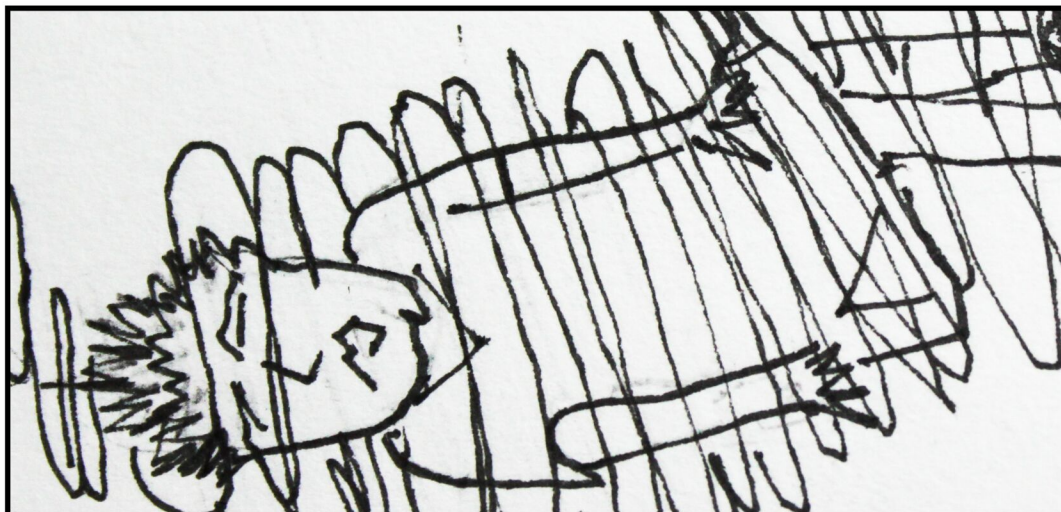
THEN IT ALL JUST WENT BLACK..I WOKE UP WHEN I HEARD THE WORD "INTUBATE!!!" IN THE HOSPITAL.

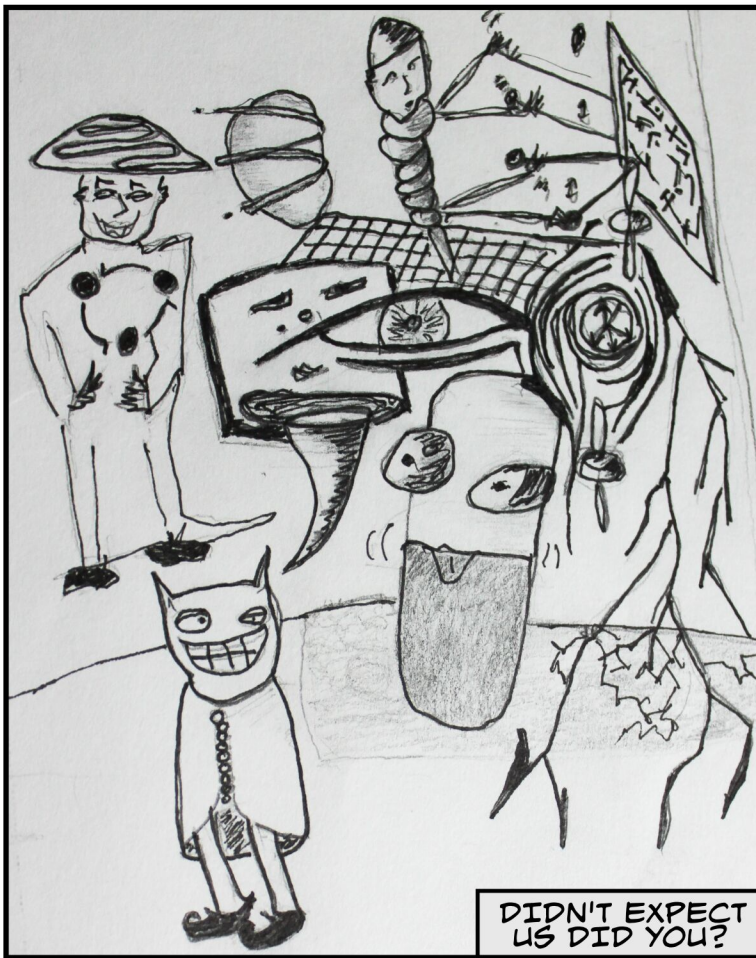


THIS TIME THOUGH I WAS FOUND UNCONSCIOUS IN MY CAR AND MY BLOOD PRESSURE WAS 40/20.



I DID NOT SEE BLACK HOWEVER...





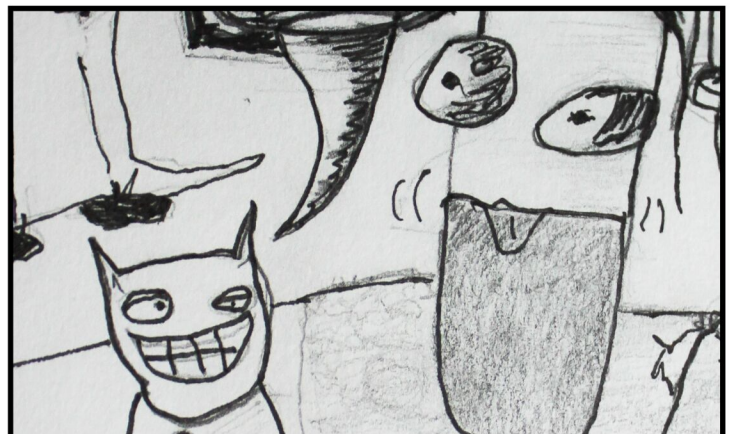
DIDN'T EXPECT
US DID YOU?

INSTEAD I WAS GREETED BY AN ELF AND
A CIRCUS OF ALIEN TECHNOLOGY AND
HIEROGLYPHICS. I FELT TERROR, SHOCK,
AND DISBELIEF.



THESE BEINGS TELL ME ITS ALL ABOUT
LOVE

AS A RATIONALIST AND AGNOSTIC, I
FEARED A FUTURE AS SOME NEAR DEATH
SURVIVOR OR CULTIST WEIRDO...BUT IT
WAS JUST **TOO** STRANGE TO DISMISS AS
MY OWN MENTAL CREATION.

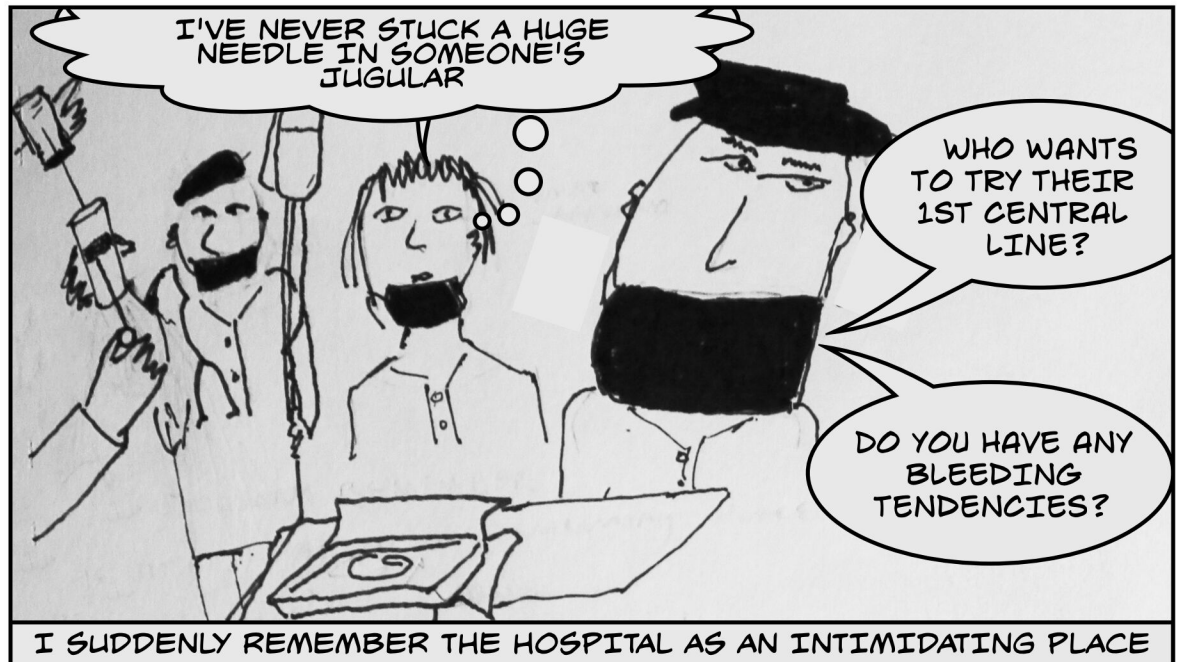


DID I MENTION THEY COMMUNICATE
TELEPATHICALLY THAT DEATH DOESN'T
EXIST? DEATH--COSMIC JOKE! HAHA

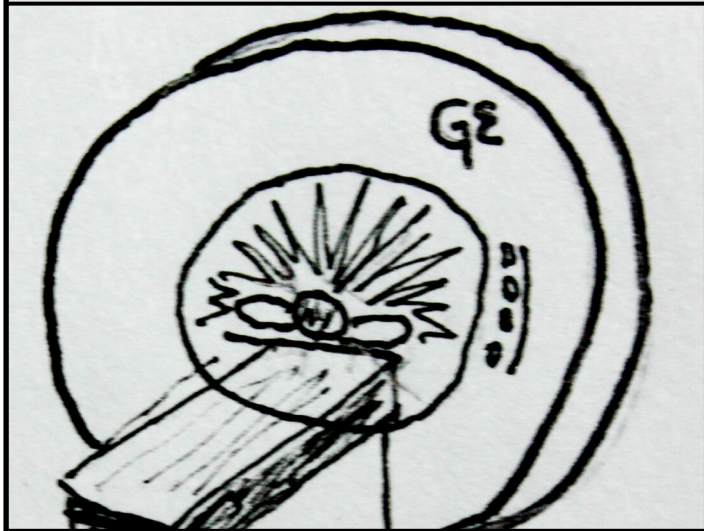


I WAKE UP IN THE
HOSPITAL IN
SPEECHLESS
EXISTENTIAL SHOCK

...BUT ALSO
STILL SEPTIC
SHOCK.
MY BLOOD
PRESSURE WAS
STILL 60/30
AFTER 8L OF
FLUID AND I
CAN SEE THE
PANIC ON THE
DOCTORS
FACES. I KNOW
THAT MOMENT
WELL--
EVERYONE
GETS QUIET
AND STOPS
TALKING ABOUT
THEIR PETS
AND KIDS



I GO TO CT AND CONTEMPLATE
TRILLIONS OF ELECTRONS AT 57,000
VOLTS RIPPING THROUGH ME



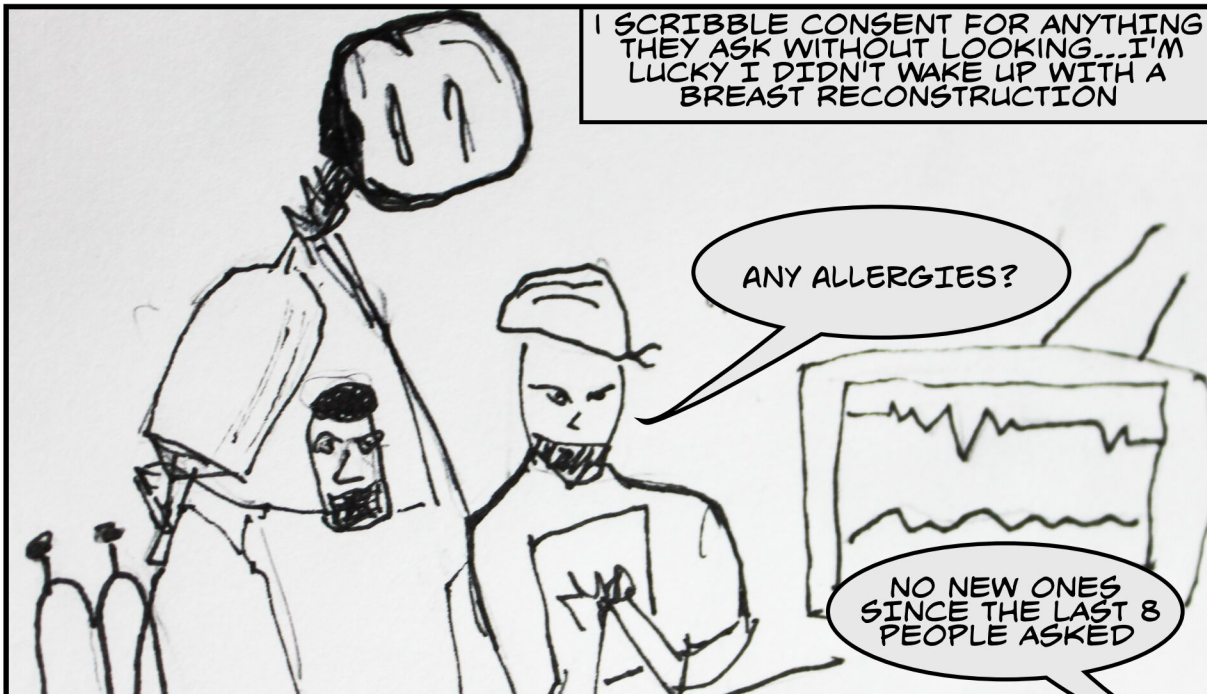
ED CALLS SURGERY
IMMEDIATELY



YOU HAVE A
LARGE GLUTEAL
INFECTION...WE ARE
GOING TO HAVE TO
OPERATE ONCE WE GET
YOUR BLOOD PRESSURE
UP OR YOU WILL DIE

OK...I...
GUESS

I SCRIBBLE CONSENT FOR ANYTHING
THEY ASK WITHOUT LOOKING...I'M
LUCKY I DIDN'T WAKE UP WITH A
BREAST RECONSTRUCTION



I WAS SO
SEMI-
CONSCIOUS I
DON'T
REMEMBER
COUNTING OR
FEELING
ANYTHING
DURING
INDUCTION

EXCEPT THEN WAKING UP
CONFUSED AND IN
EXCRUCIATING PAIN



I FELT TORN APART PHYSICALLY AND MENTALLY



I WAS IN THE ICU SEDATED FOR THREE DAYS,
MOSTLY UNCONSCIOUS OR BABBLING
INCOHERENTLY...

I THOUGHT I
HAD FELT
THE WORST
OF THE PAIN
BUT WAS
DISABUSED
OR RATHER
ABUSED OF
THIS NOTION
THE FIRST
DRESSING
CHANGE,
DONE BY
THE METRO-
SEXUAL
SURGERY
RESIDENT I
WORKED
WITH JUST
WEEKS
BEFORE

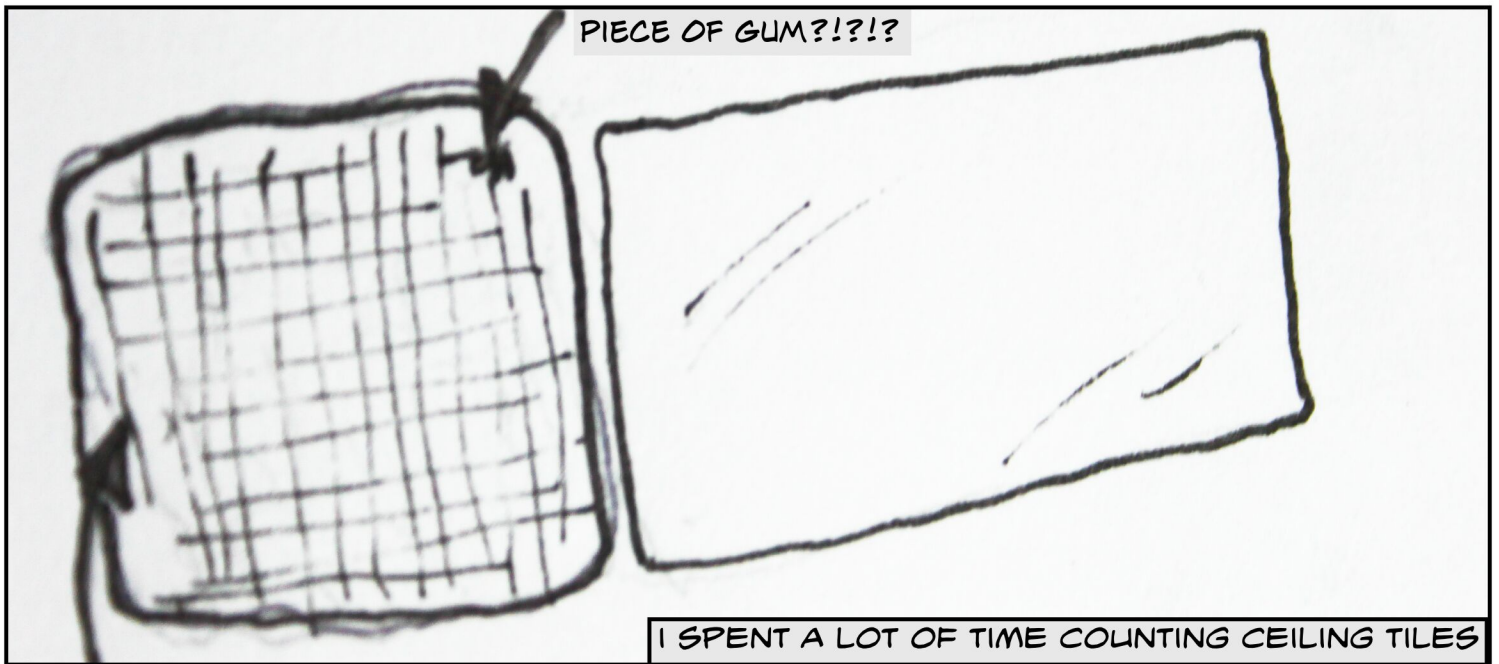


HE REFUSED TO
IRRIGATE OR USE
LIDOCAINE AS IT
"TOOK TOO LONG"

I PREFERRED THE ROLE
OF A BYSTANDER



I NEVER THOUGHT ABOUT A TOWEL TO BITE ON SO THE PATIENT WOULDN'T SCREAM,
BUT I USED ONE.



PIECE OF GUM?!?!?

I SPENT A LOT OF TIME COUNTING CEILING TILES



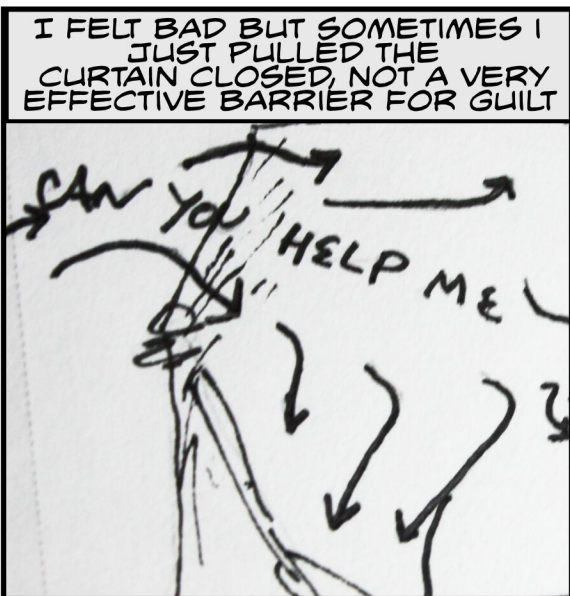
AND SAVORING EVERY TIME I GOT TO WET MY MOUTH WITH A SPONGE STICK



AND WATCHING HOURS OF TV STUCK ON A SHOE MAKING DOCUMENTARY



MY ROOMATE WAS ALL ALONE ALL THE TIME AND WANTED HELP



I FELT BAD BUT SOMETIMES I JUST PULLED THE CURTAIN CLOSED, NOT A VERY EFFECTIVE BARRIER FOR GUILT

THERE WERE SOME MOMENTS OF QUASI-SUSPENSE LIKE THREATS TO GET YOU TO URINATE... I HAD NEVER TRIED SO HARD TO VOID IN MY LIFE

YOU HAVE THREE HOURS TO PEE OR THE CATHETER GOES BACK IN. ALRIGHTY?





THE OTHER MEDICAL STUDENTS ON THE SURGERY WARDS STARTING GETTING ON MY NERVES A LITTLE BIT

THERE IS AN INEVITABLE VOYUERISTIC ASPECT OF MEDICAL EDUCATION--EVEN IF WELL INTENTIONED AND NESCESSARY.



I FINALLY GET OUT OF THE HOSPITAL LIFE OF INJECTIONS, INFUSIONS, DISGUSTING PROTEIN JELLO, BLOOD DRAWS, PILLS, AND BOREDOM. I GO HOME WITH A WOUND-VAC AND JOIN THE RANKS OF THE VISIBLY ILL. IF THE MACHINE GOES TOO LONG UNPLUGGED IT STARTS BEEPING VERY LOUDLY. THATS ABOVE THE BASELINE NOISE. IN 7 DAYS THEY MANAGE TO ADD 30 POUNDS OF FLUID TO ME SO I FEEL NOT MYSELF IN MY OWN BODY.



IT TAKES 2 MONTHS TO FEEL SEMI-NORMAL AGAIN

IN FEBRUARY I GO TO VISIT MY GRANDMOTHER. ALTHOUGH INDEPENDENT AND SPRITELY BEFORE, SHE SUFFERED A STROKE AT 85 LEAVING HER UNABLE TO TALK OR COMMUNICATE AT ALL. WHAT SHE FEARED MOST-LOSS OF INDEPENDENCE-BECAME REAL IN A STARKER WAY THAN ONE COULD HAVE IMAGINED. SHE LATER FELL AND BROKE HER FEMUR TWICE. BEFORE THE SECOND OPERATION I WENT TO VISIT HER. THEY TOOK OUT HER FEMORAL HEAD AS THE BONE WAS IRREPARABLE. NOW SHE COULD NO LONGER EVEN STAND. IT IS HARD TO EVEN WITNESS HER UNIMAGINABLE SUFFERING

I THINK...WAS IT ONE OF THE CIGARETTES I SMOKED WITH HER THAT LED TO THE STROKE?

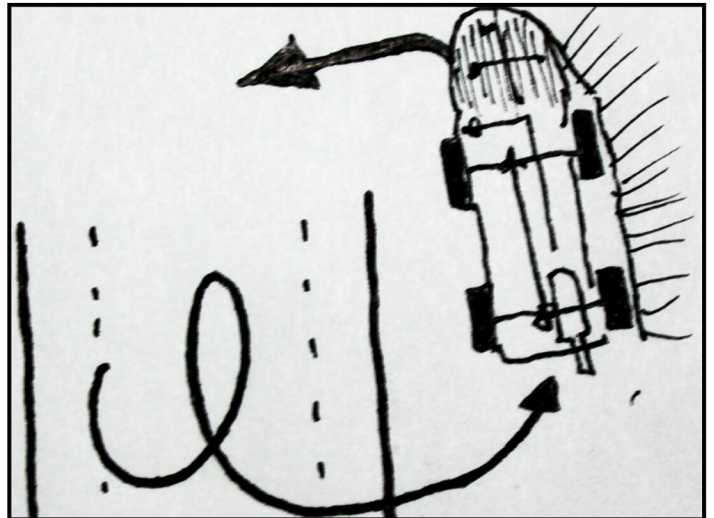
IN MY TWENTIES WE BECAME CLOSE FRIENDS AND LAUGHED TOGETHER



I WAS THE LAST ONE TO TALK TO HER PRE-STROKE, I GOT AN INEXPLICABLE MENTAL ORDER TO CALL HER JUST AN HOUR PRIOR.

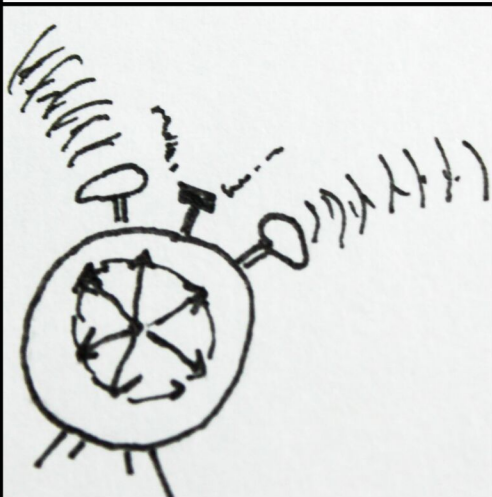


I THOUGHT OF THIS CONVERSATION AS I DROVE HOME IN A BLIZZARD ALL NIGHT.



I SPUN OUT AND HIT THE SNOW BANK, ALMOST CAPSIZING THE CAR. BUT I FELT O.K. AND CONTINUED HOME.

I GOT HOME AT 5:30AM AND SET 3 ALARMS FOR 7 AM FOR MY MEDICINE ACTING INTERNSHIP.



I FOUND OUT LATER I NEARLY BROKE MY REAR AXLE AND FOUND BLOOD IN THE CAR AND A WOUND ON MY HEAD.



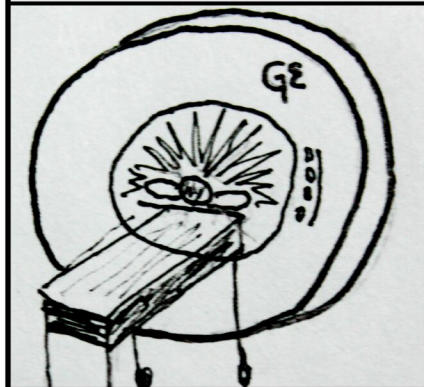
WHICH IS WHY I DID NOT WAKE UP FOR A DAY AND A HALF...I WAS CONCUSED.

A WEEK LATER I "LOSE" 6 HOURS AND WAKE UP FINDING A BROKEN BOWL ON THE FLOOR



THE DOOR OPEN AND MY PHONE MISSING...

ANOTHER DOSE OF RADIATION LATER, BUT LUCKILY ITS "JUST" POST-CONCUSSIVE SYNDROME



I DO WAY TO MUCH READING UNRELATED TO MEDICINE



MY MIND CHURNS OVER AND OVER RELENTLESSLY



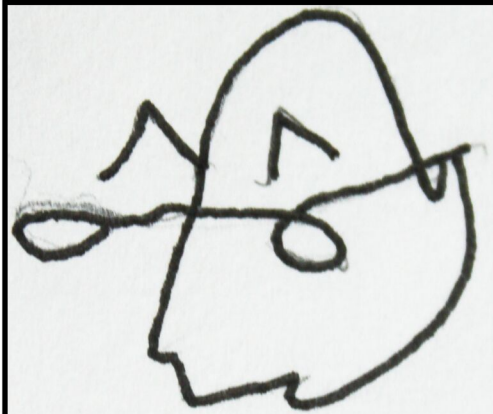
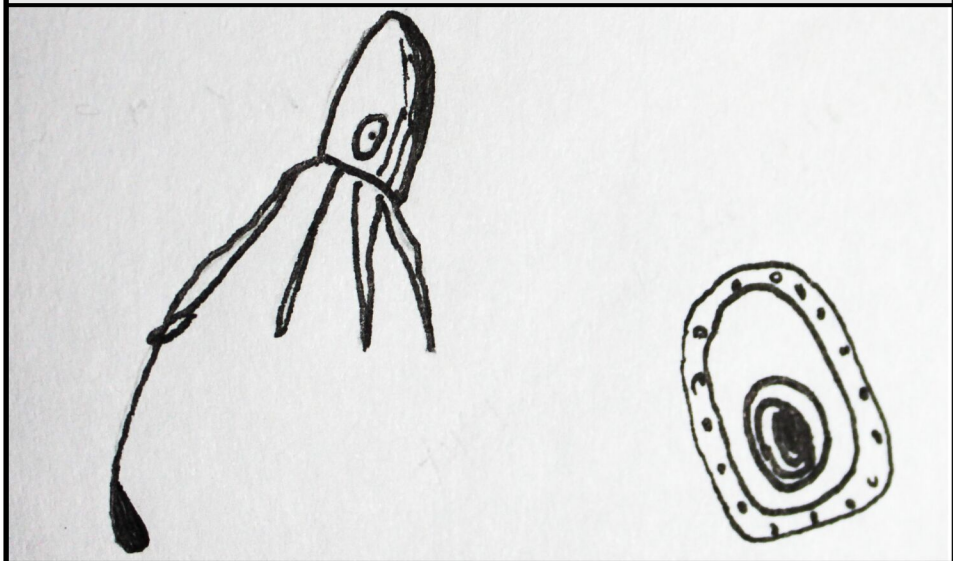
I TRY, BUT I CANNOT STOP THINKING OF WHAT I SAW



I FEEL LIKE AN UNWITTING ESCAPEE OF PLATO'S CAVE AND P.S. THERE'S NO REALLY GOING BACK DEARS...



I THINK OF THE GIANT SQUID, MAYBE WE SHOULDN'T HAVE LOOKED SO HARD FOR IT, ITS POOR PLATE SIZED EYE STARING SADLY IN THE SUB WINDOW



OF COURSE NONE OF THIS IS EXPLICABLE TO DEANS OR SCHOOL OFFICIALS, OR FRIENDS REALLY EVEN...IT IS AN ISOLATING FEELING. ALL I THINK IS AM I GOING CRAZY?

I FEEL PERFORATED, MIND AND BODY



MY PCP IS GREAT THOUGH, SO EMPATHETIC



BUT RECONCILING MEDICINE AND SCIENCE WITH WHAT HAPPENED IS MADDENING

WITH THE CONCUSSION I HAVE TERRIBLE HEADACHES AND INSOMNIA...JUST MORE TIME TO THINK...

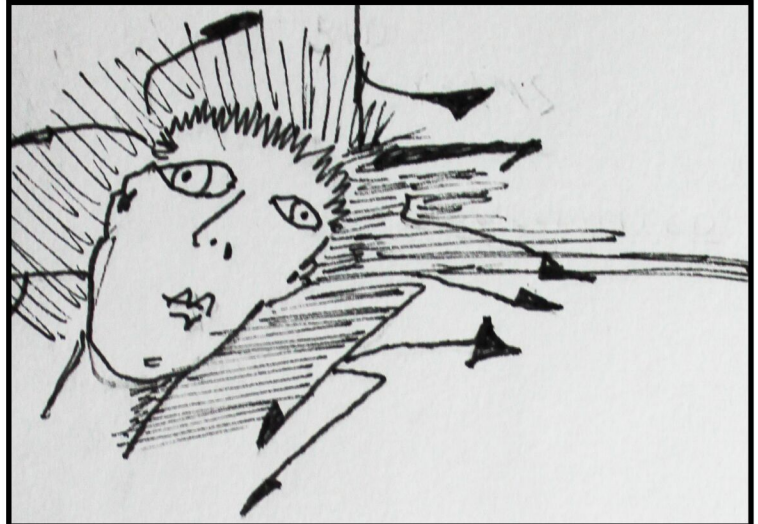
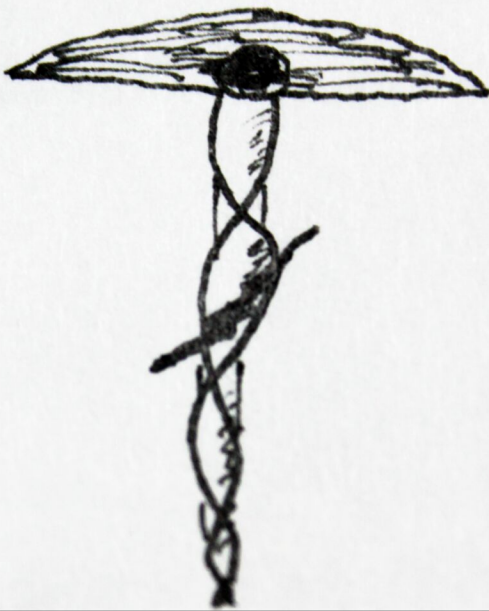


I MISS NOT QUESTIONING REALITY...



I READ
ABOUT THE
ARCHETYPE
OF THE
WOUNDED
HEALER...

AND CAN
RELATE ALL
TOO WELL



I DECIDE THE ONLY WAY TO HEAL IS THINK
OF THE TIME PATIENTS REALLY TOUCHED
ME OR THANKED ME FOR HELPING THEM

I REMEMBER MY FIRST NON-TRAUMA DEATH, IT
FELT SO INTIMATE TO INHABIT THIS USUALLY HIDDEN
SOCIAL SPACE, THE PATIENTS WIFE WAILING. I
ALMOST HELD MY BREATH FOR MINUTES.



SHE LATER THANKED ME
PROFUSELY FOR LISTENING AS
SHE MADE THE DECISION TO
WITHDRAW SUPPORT. I DIDN'T
FEEL I HAD HAD "DONE"
ANYTHING. IT FELT GOOD,
THOUGH I FELT UNWORTHY OF
ANY PRAISE FOR JUST TALKING
TO HER.

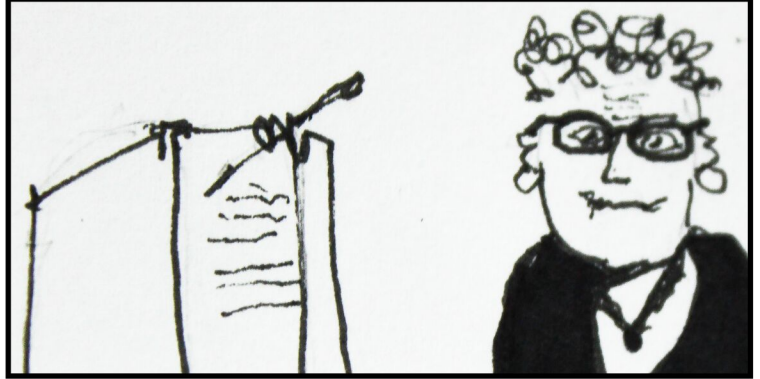
WE CAN ONLY REALLY ADJUST
THE TIME OF HIS ARRIVAL A
LITTLE BIT OUT OF MERCY...





I REMEMBER THE BIPOLAR LADY I COMFORTED FROM TEARS TO TALKING ABOUT HER JEWELRY AND HAIR...

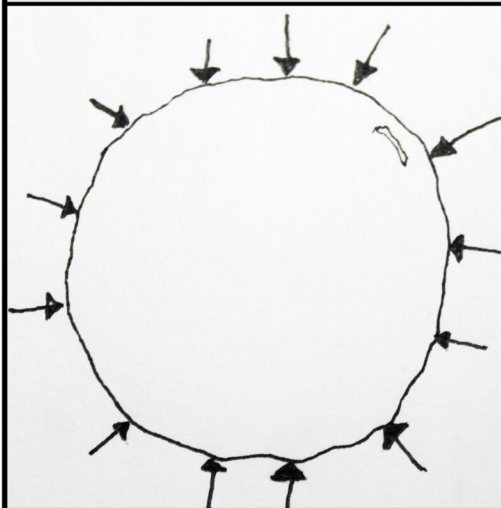
AND THE LITTLE OLD LADY WHO REMINDED ME OF MY GRANDMOTHER



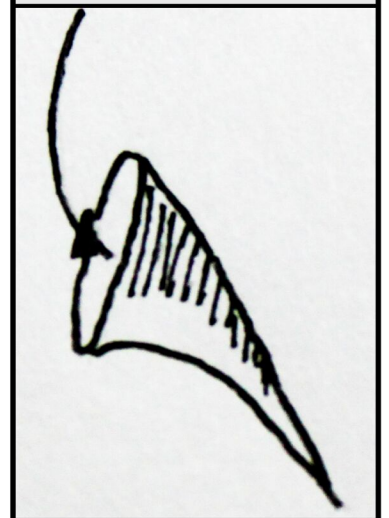
I REMEMBER FEELING BAD AS THE DOCTORS LAUGHED ABOUT FIBROMYALGIA PATIENTS, BUT NEVER SAID ANYTHING.



I CAN BEGIN TO SEE THE SHATTERING OF MY LITTLE GLASS HOUSE AS A POSITIVE THING...EVEN THOUGH I STILL FELT PROTECTED, JUST IN A DIFFERENT WAY.



AS GODEL PROVED, ANY FORMAL SYSTEM OF LOGIC HAS UNPROVABLE TRUTHS AND VICE-VERSA

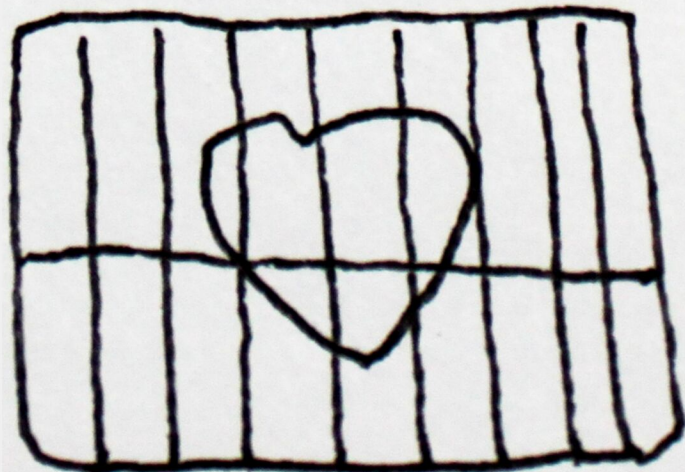
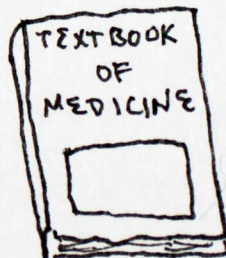
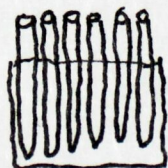


SO WE SHOULD TAKE ALL THE BENEFITS OF LOGIC AND SCIENTIFIC THINKING AND APPLY THEM TO HELP OTHERS AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE, BUT NOT LET THEM LIMIT US.

NOR LET LOGIC IMPRISON OUR HEARTS...

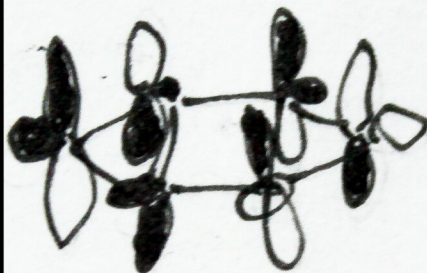
$$a^2 + b^2 = c^2$$

$$3 + 2 = 4$$



IN THE UNIVERSE THERE ARE ILLOGICAL, INCOMPREHENSIBLE THINGS.

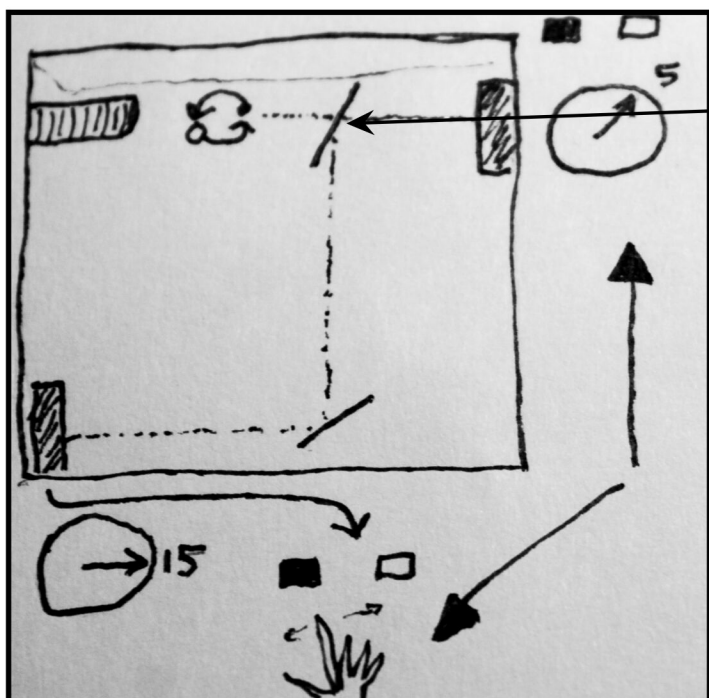
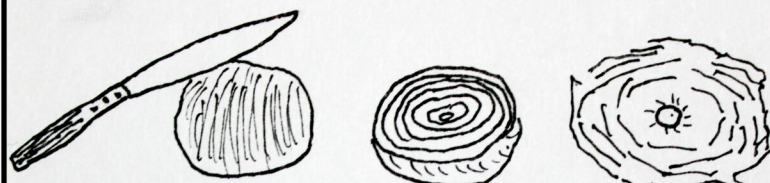
PHYSICISTS HAVE KNOWN THIS FOR A TIME. FOR EXAMPLE MATTER AND ANTI-MATTER SPRING FROM THE VACUUM, I.E. NOTHING, AND THEN ANNIHILATE INTO PHOTONS

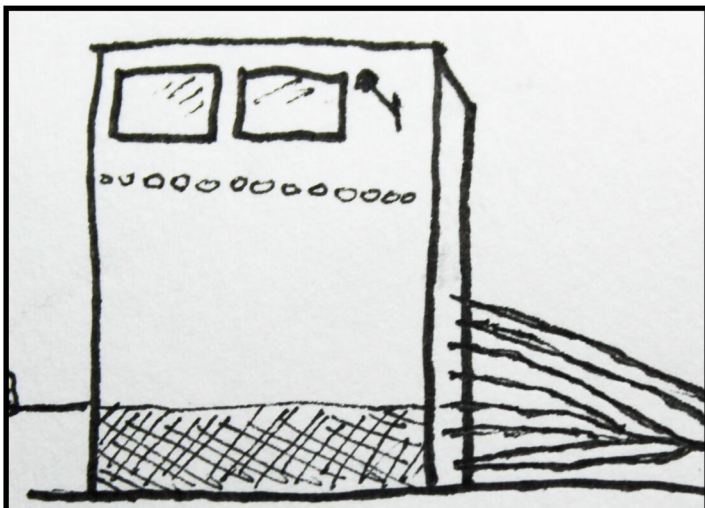


$$\begin{bmatrix} 1 & 0 & 1 & 1 & 1 \\ 1 & -3 & 5 & 9 & 2 \\ 4 & 1 & 0 & 1 & 2 \end{bmatrix}$$

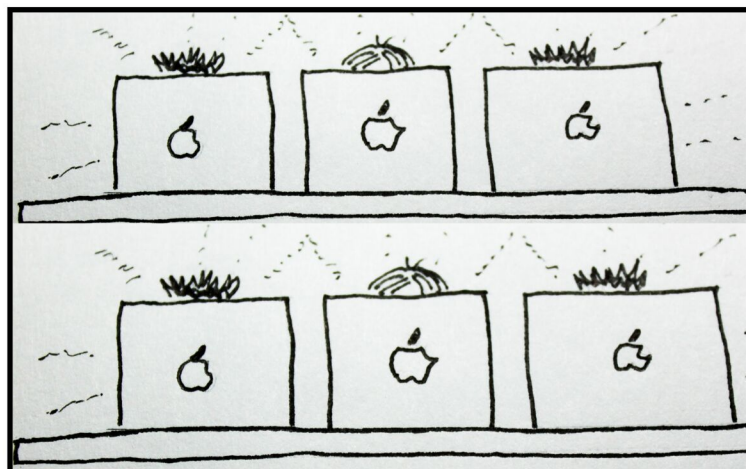
HEISENBERG WANTED TO CALL QUANTUM MECHANICS MATRIX MECHANICS.

OR TAKE FOR EXAMPLE THE QUANTUM TIME ERASER EXPERIMENT. TWO PHOTONS ARE ENTANGLED AND THEN SENT TO A HALF MIRROR WHERE THEY ARE SPLIT. ONE GOES TO A DETECTOR AT SAY TIME 5S AND IS REGISTERED AS WAVE OR PARTICLE. 10 S LATER THE EXPERIMENTER PRESSED A BUTTON WHICH DECIDES HOW THE SECOND PHOTON WILL BE MEASURED, FORCING IT TO BEHAVE AS A WAVE OR PARTICLE. NOTE THIS DECISION IS AFTER THE FIRST RECORDING. ONCE THEY GO BACK TO DOUBLE CHECK THE COMPUTER MEMORY, THE RESULTS ALWAYS AGREE BETWEEN BOTH PARTICLES. IT'S WHAT EINSTEIN CALLED "SPOOKY ACTION AT A DISTANCE," EXCEPT IT SEEMS TO OPERATE IN TIME AS WELL. ILLOGICAL! I CAN BEGIN TO SEE THE PEARL INSIDE THE STINGING ONION PEOPLE CALL RELIGION.



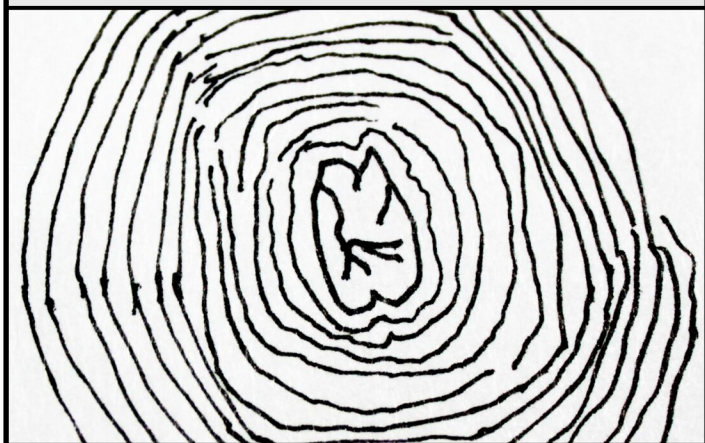


AND YET WE WAIT FOR
COMPUTERS...LOGIC MACHINES...TO FIX
EVERYTHING

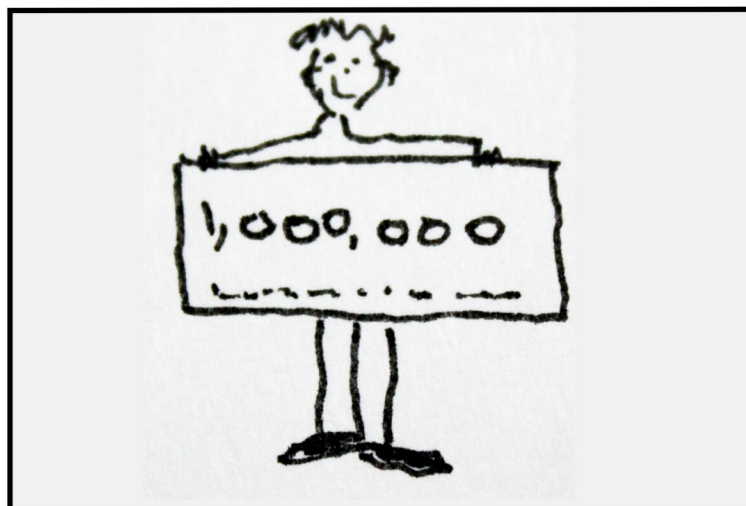


PERHAPS WE HAVE EATEN THE
PROVERBIAL APPLE. I THINK OF THE
POOR PROFESSORS LECTURING TO A
CAVALCADE OF CLICKING COMPUTERS
INSTEAD OF HUMAN FACES.

ITS MY CONCLUSION IT'S NOT THAT BAD
TO BE BIASED TOWARDS THE HEART
AND AGAINST STRICT LOGIC SOMETIMES



I MEAN THIS IS ALREADY
DEMONSTRABLY PROVABLE IN ALMOST
EVERYONE'S PERSONAL LIFE

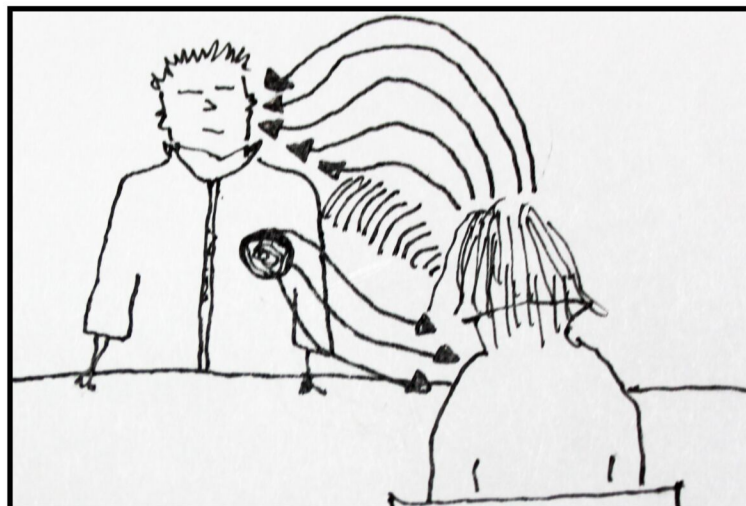


WE SHOULD REMEMBER MEDICINE AND
INTELLECTUAL ACHIEVEMENT ARE MORE
LIKE LOTTERY PRIZES THAN SOMEHOW
INHERENTLY DESERVED ACCOLADES.

REMEMBER ALSO THAT WE ARE NOT
EXEMPT FROM ENTROPY...

BOLTZMAN'S GRAVE
WITH THE INSCRIPTION OF THE
EQUATION FOR ENTROPY HE
DISCOVERED

$$S = k \log W$$



AS DOCTORS, AS HUMAN BEINGS, WE
SHOULD LISTEN AND BE EMPATHIC. WE
SHOULD NOT FEEL ENTITLED, SELF-
ASSURED, OR SUPERIOR SOMEHOW.