Somehow,
Somehow



Somehow, Somehow

Written and illustrated by

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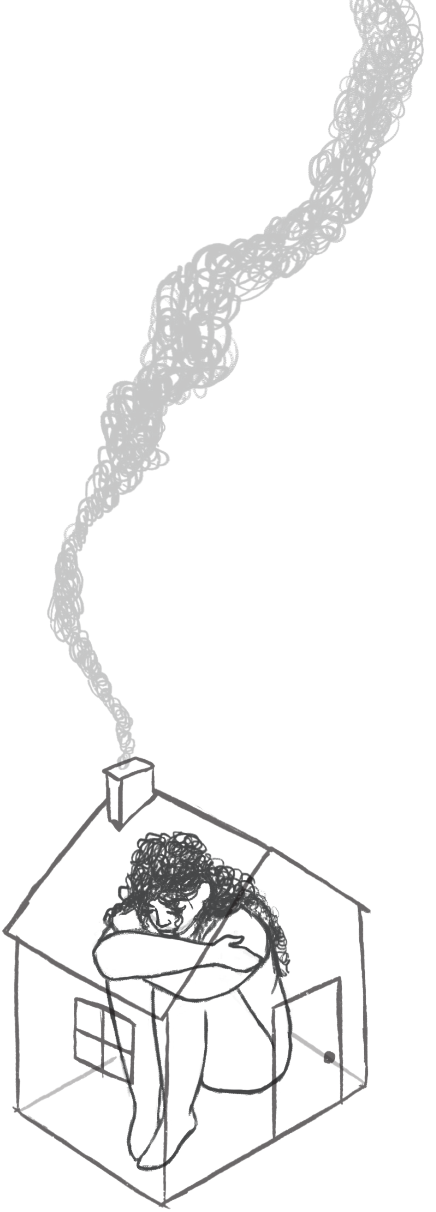
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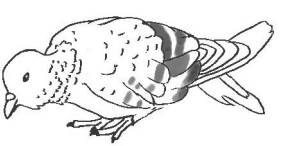


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Conversation Topic

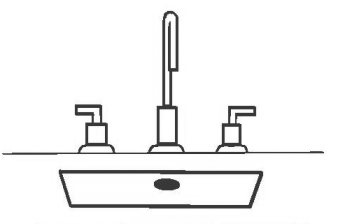
I am in a park with strangers
When it becomes something to talk about.
We laugh,
Stand a little apart.
The Prime Minister is suggesting herd immunity.
We make our plans for our project-
We don't know yet-
We say:
It should be fine,
So long as we remember to wash our hands



Contamination OCD

I am in a Nando's with my parents
When I realise that I cannot do this the way they can.
When I track my father back from the sink
And see everything he's touched
And want to rush back and wash again and again.
I don't have contamination OCD.
Yet.
My flavour is hoarding and intrusive thoughts
But I can feel the way my brain shifts,
Alert.
It says: Here is a new thing to be afraid of
It s almost not even about the germs
It says: If you're going to do it, do it right.
That's when I decide to stop going outside,
That's when I decide that it is better to have nothing,
Than play around with 'careful'.
I spent most of the pandemic more afraid of passing it
Than catching it-
I said: If I see nobody,
If I am locked away for all but two hours a week,

Please, please don't let me hurt anybody.
I gave it up
I gave it all up
I would do it again.



Alone (Part 1)

When my housemate tells me he's thinking about going home,
I tell him that I support whatever decision he needs to make.
And when he tells me he's going home, I hug him.
And my family is in Birmingham
And I am in Manchester, 75 miles away.
And I decide to stay.
The flat becomes my domain
I stretch the days out into vague spaces
Of shuffling back and forth
I create art
When I can.
I only leave the house once a week to get food
I stay inside
I am completely inside
I do not see anyone
I leave videos on
I fill the empty flat with the sounds of strangers talking
I shuffle back and forth
I learn the way the living room glows orange
In the too-early morning

I stop sleeping right
I learn that I love to be awake for a sunrise
I make every room my room
I take a nap in a sunbeam
I learn how to get by
I tell myself it will be okay
I dress for the mirror
I order in dinner
I let myself drift through the day
-The days-
I put my thoughts that are too loud
for my head on Instagram
My friends and I do weekly videocalls
I create more art
I fill the flat with paintings
I make it through every day
Somehow, somehow
I do my exams
Somehow, somehow
I stay alone.