

WHILE THE WORLD SLEEPS

A Collection of Stories and Insights

Eddie Pinero

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OPPORTUNITY

Opportunity is a never ending resource. As infinite as the stars in the sky, it awaits with open arms anyone willing to appreciate its immeasurable breadth.

“When you see life as a limitless opportunity, that is exactly what it becomes.”

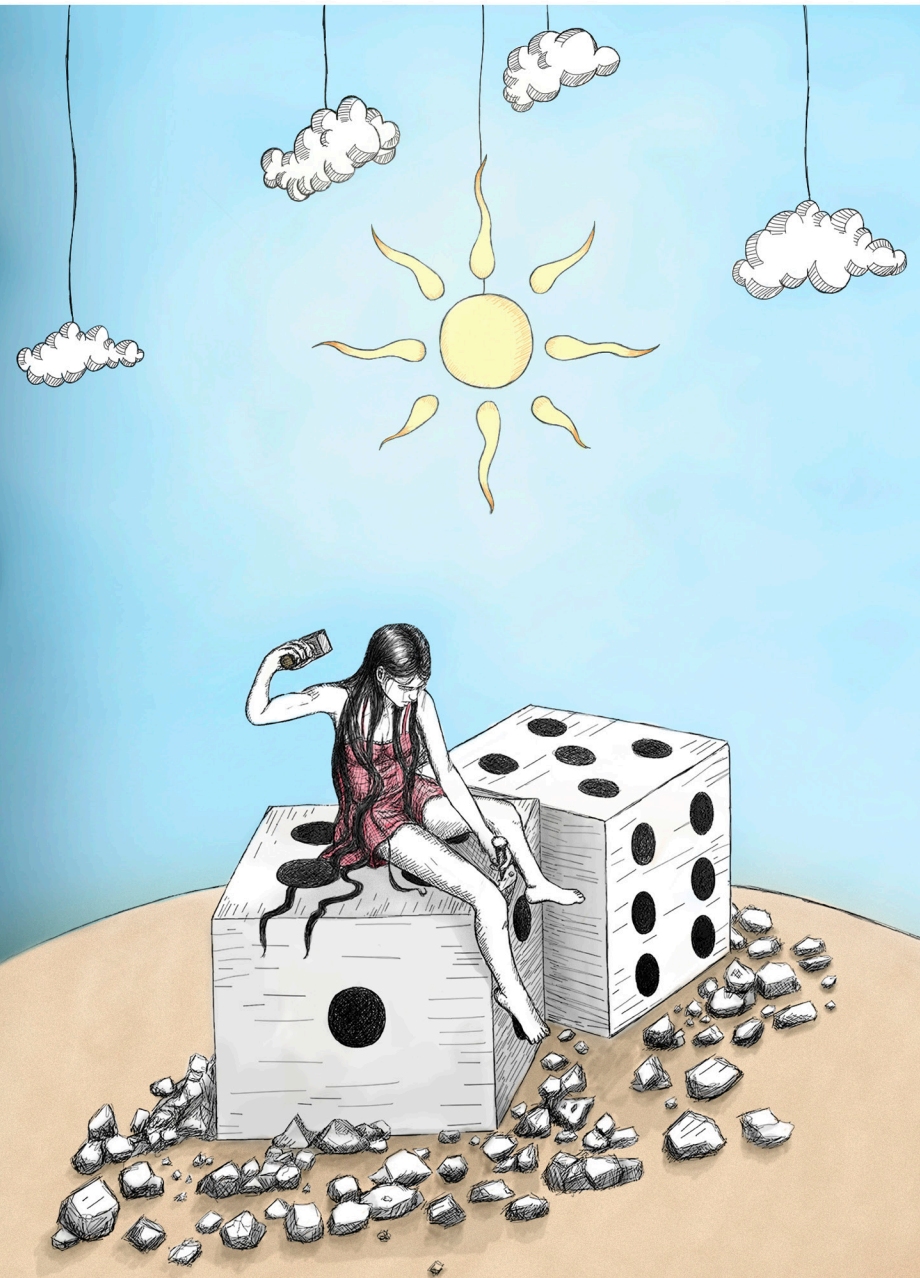


THE LUCK MANUFACTURER

Commitment her hammer
Resiliency her nail

She manufactured luck every single day
Before most awoke and long after they were asleep
She tirelessly sketched, built and created until, at last, she was done
Taking a step back, she stared in awe of the luck she constructed
and knew it would change her life.

"Luck is made, not given."



PERSPECTIVE

When the world collapses around you, life provides an opportunity.
Not to mourn the old, but to build again, this time better than before.

“Every setback is an open door.”



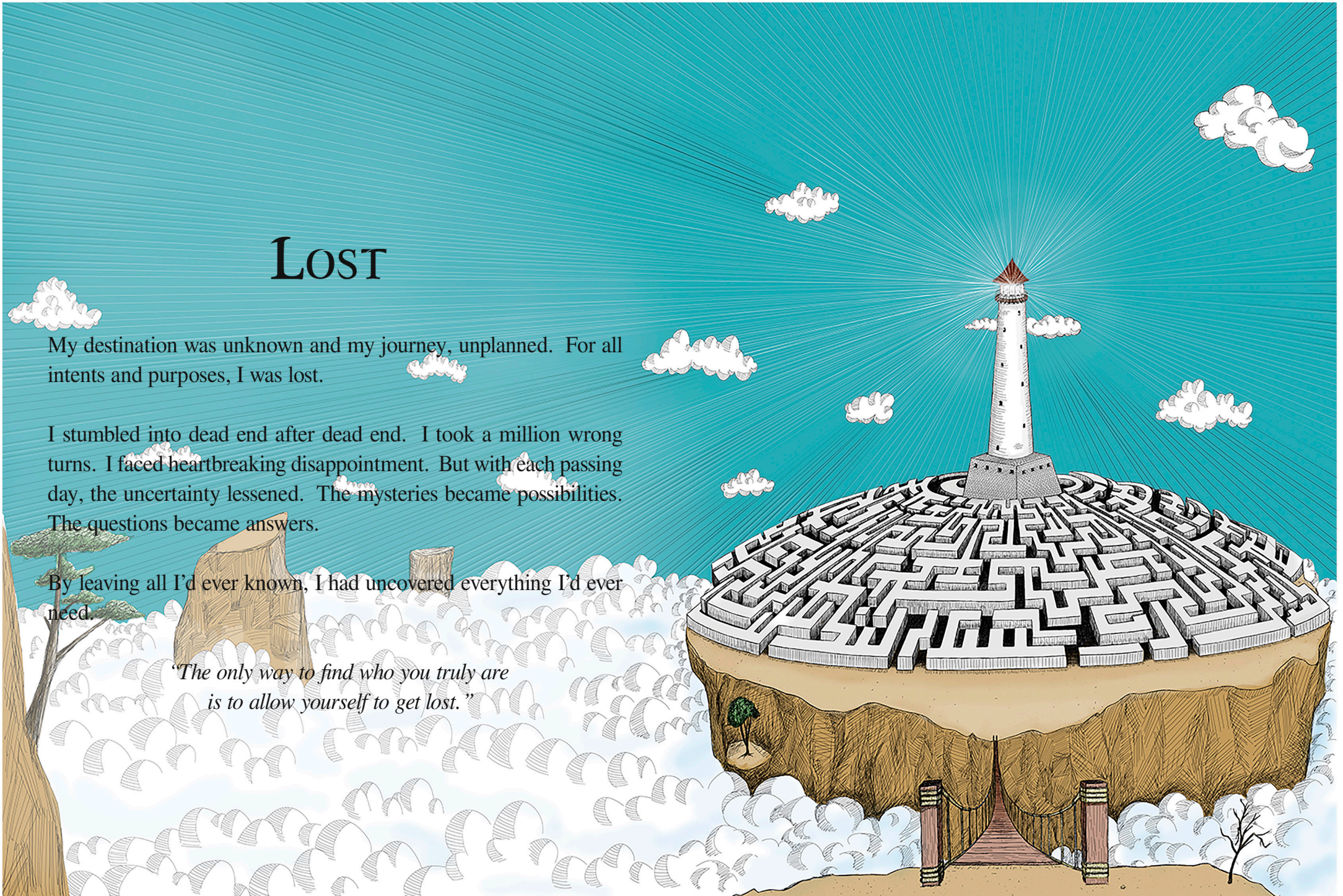
LOST

My destination was unknown and my journey, unplanned. For all intents and purposes, I was lost.

I stumbled into dead end after dead end. I took a million wrong turns. I faced heartbreaking disappointment. But with each passing day, the uncertainty lessened. The mysteries became possibilities. The questions became answers.

By leaving all I'd ever known, I had uncovered everything I'd ever need.

"The only way to find who you truly are is to allow yourself to get lost."



DOING MORE VS GETTING MORE DONE

The only thing worse than staying in bed and accomplishing nothing is to work feverishly and do the same.

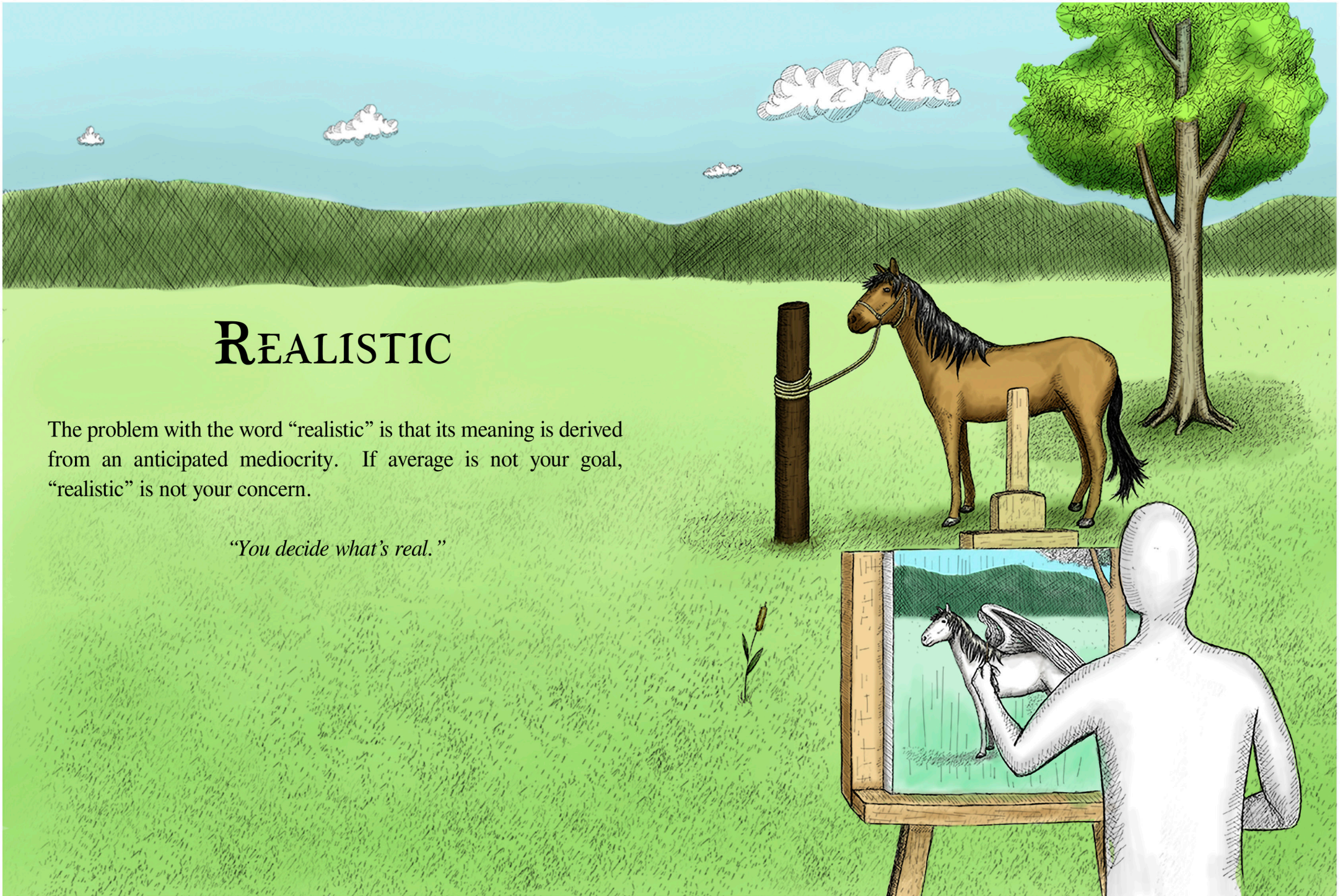
*“Being busy results in exhausted time.
Being efficient results in accomplished goals.”*



REALISTIC

The problem with the word “realistic” is that its meaning is derived from an anticipated mediocrity. If average is not your goal, “realistic” is not your concern.

“You decide what’s real.”



HE WHO GIVES TOO MUCH

He who gives too much is met harshly by the world around him. He experiences setbacks, derailments and obstacles. He tiptoes the line between innovation and foolishness. His weaknesses are exposed. He becomes vulnerable to criticism. He perpetually flirts with failure. But when all is said and done, he who gives too much often ends up with more than he ever imagined.

He who doesn't give enough is left to simply wonder what could have been, if only he'd had the courage.

"There is no pain worse than that of regret."



DREAMERS

Every night as you close your eyes and dream, life's unwritten laws are replaced with infinite possibility. Your detachment from the physical world creates an undying relationship with the spectacular. When you dream you see with eyes closed all that was invisible moments before. You explore the depths of your soul and capture an existence once beyond your wildest imagination.

When the time comes, your eyes open and the sun lights up the room, hold on. Hold on to the treasures you found, the passion you felt and the journey you experienced. This daily venture should not be a departure, but a continuation of the extraordinary, for dreamers never truly wake.

"Your life is a reflection of your imagination."



An illustration of a man in a white suit walking a tightrope. He is holding a magnifying glass up to his eye, looking at a large, fluffy white cloud in the sky. The tightrope is stretched between two trees on a cliffside. The tree on the left is bare, while the tree on the right has green foliage. The background is a light blue sky with a large white cloud. The foreground shows a grassy cliffside with a large white cloud.

THE DOUBLE STANDARD

Believing you are spectacular brings no guarantees. Believing you are unspectacular ensures you will be treated as such.

“Confidence is an asset. Insecurity is a sealed fate.”

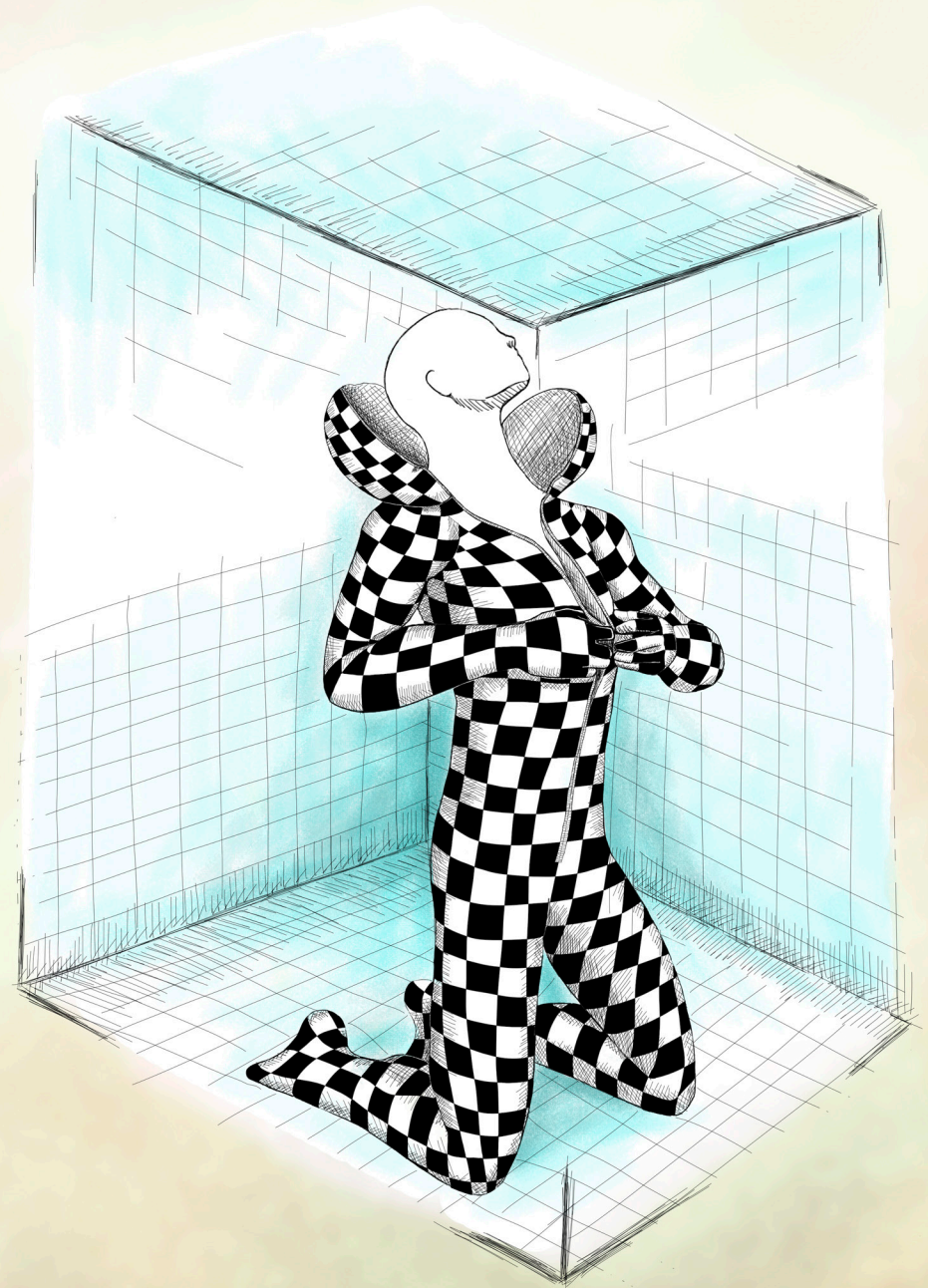


ACTORS

When I make myself the victim, I become resentful. When I make myself the hero, I become empowered.

With such an array of outcomes, I am forever grateful for the ability to shape my own legacy.

“If you aren’t happy with the role you’re playing, change it.”



THE IRRATIONAL FEW

She wasn't handed excellence. She wasn't born into the record books. She was an ordinary person with ordinary struggles. The difference is that she believed herself capable of extraordinary things.

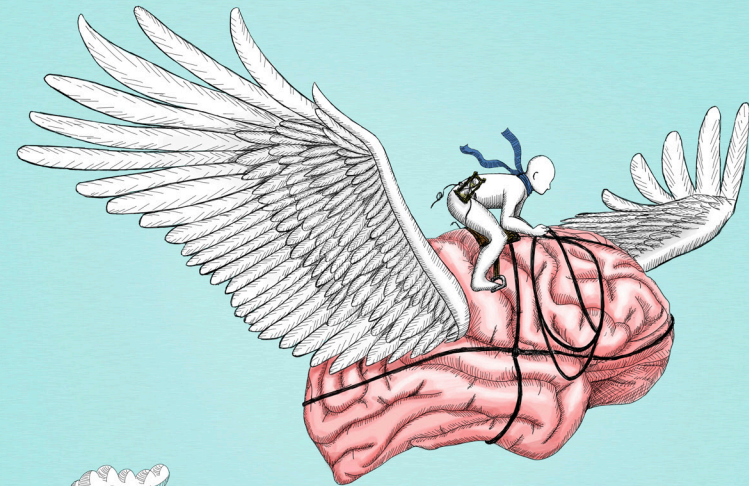
"Be crazy enough to believe it's possible."



TIME TRAVEL

My mind arrived at the destination years before my body did.

"Believe your dreams into existence."



THE RAREST OF DIAMONDS

Part of growing up is understanding the difference between people who celebrate the good times and friends who help you create them.

*“Enjoy the ones who stick around when times are good.
Cherish the ones who stick around when they aren’t.”*



JUST HANG ON

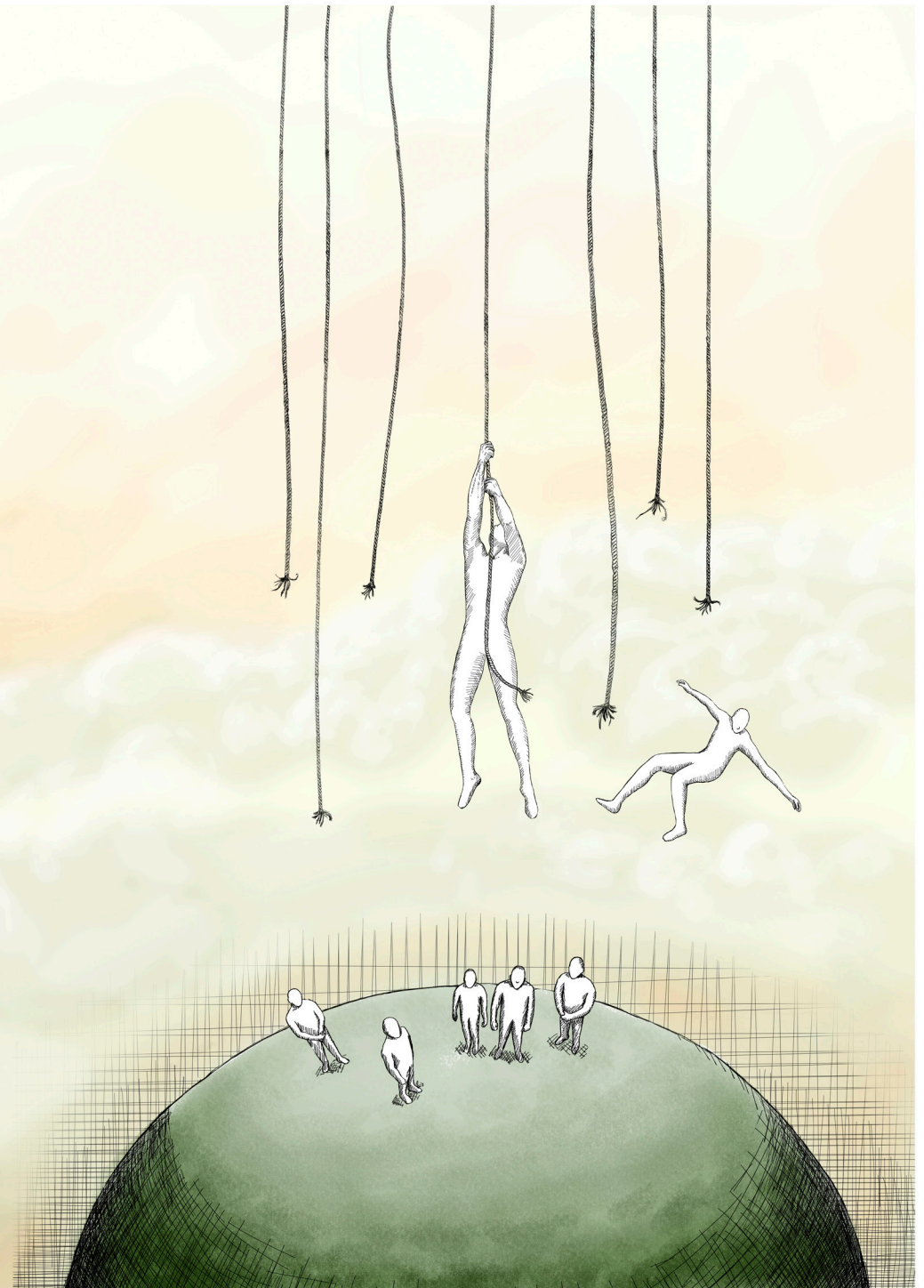
The rope was stretched taut, like a clothesline positioned 10 feet off the ground. As he dangled through the air, tightly grasping the line with two hands, he noticed his arms starting to feel heavy. His instinct was to let go, but for one reason or another, he didn't. He hung on.

Looking to his left, then to his right, he saw those around him begin to drop off, putting an end to their voluntary discomfort. He, however, hung on.

The pain seemed to be intensified by the mere thought of letting go. Like the devil on his shoulder, it reminded him that it could all go away with the snap of a finger. The pressure mounted to quit and join his comrades on the ground below, but he didn't. He hung on.

After a while he realized that he was the only one left. He had done nothing spectacular or memorable. When others let go, he simply hung on. "Maybe," he thought, "This is what makes all the difference."

"Sometimes it's not what you do, but what you're simply willing to endure that sets you apart."



WILDFIRE

Never underestimate the impact of a small step in the right direction.

All it takes is a spark to light a fire.

*“Too often we aim for the moon instead
of the staircase that will take us there.”*



TOMORROW

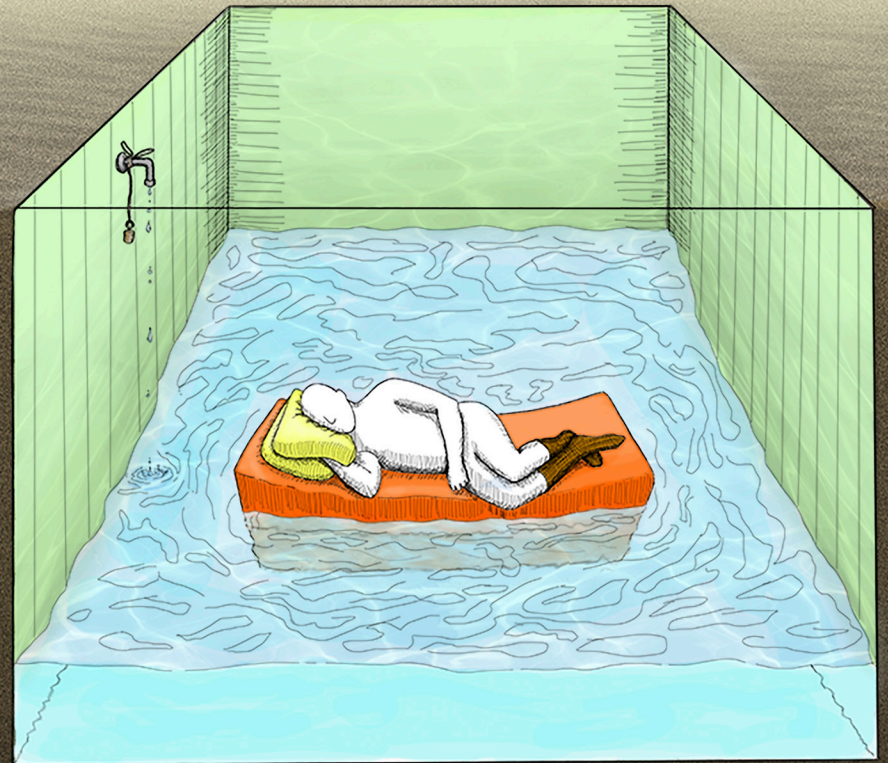
Tomorrow is the most dangerous word in your vocabulary. While it's a symbol for hope, it can just as easily be the reason that your dreams remain little images in your head.

Tomorrow tells you that you'll begin your journey "someday," and advocates that you make yourself comfortable in the meantime.

For some, tomorrow lasts forever. It evolves into regret, immobility and an excuse to never do what you were meant to do.

Tomorrow can be worse than failing, because it often implies that there was never a beginning. There was only a vision; just an idea being put off for a better time that never came.

"Procrastination kills more dreams than failure ever will."



KINGS AND QUEENS

When you rule over your life with an iron fist, you bow to no man.

“The first step toward creating the life you want is taking responsibility for the life you have.”



CONCESSIONS

Her daily concessions to life's demands were the subtle erosion of what made her beautiful.

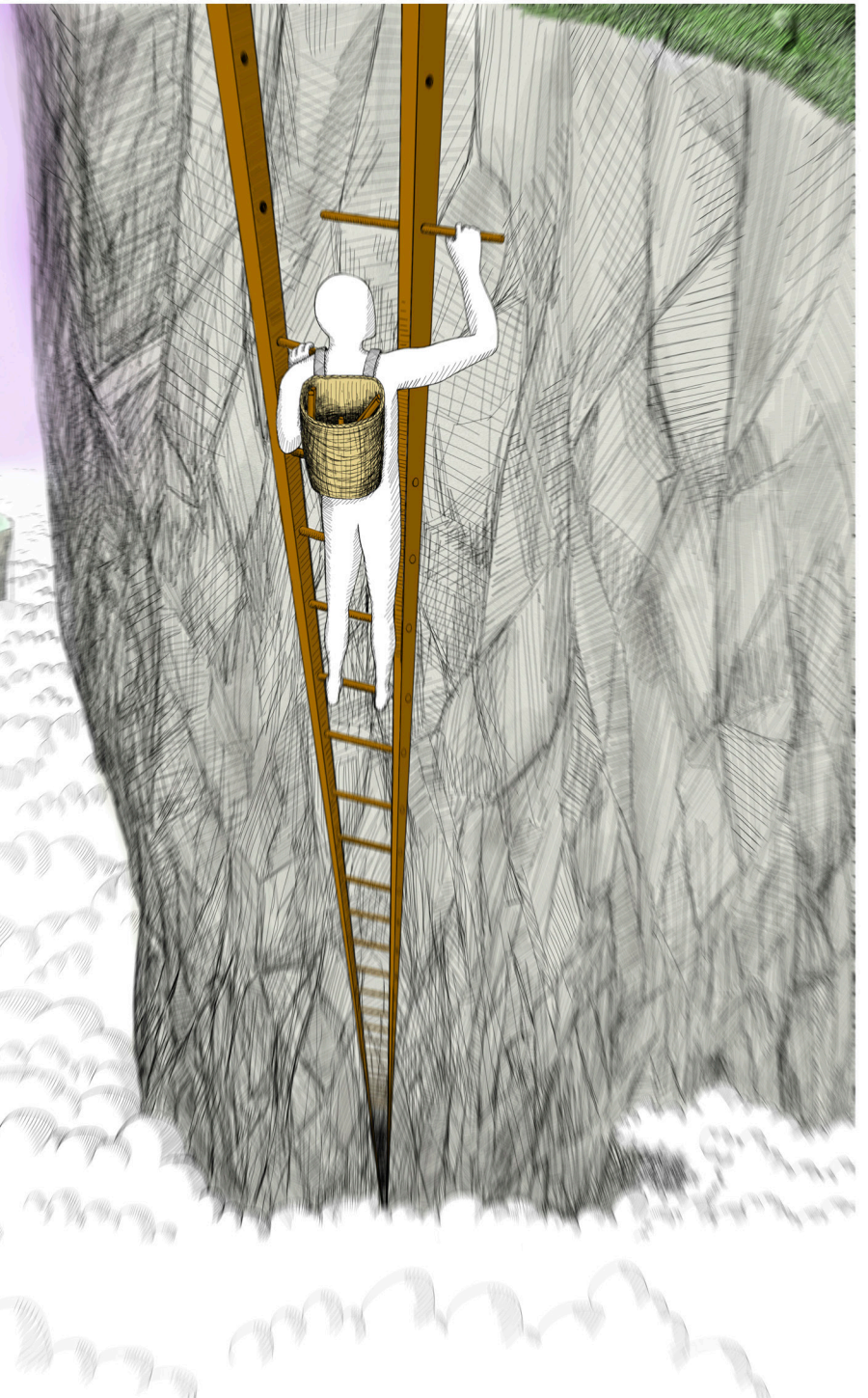
“Never lose yourself amidst the expectations of others. Your authentic self is the greatest gift you have been given. Cherish it. Protect it. Live it.”



THE COST OF ADMISSION

I was willing to fall down. I didn't hide from mistakes or the possibility of embarrassment. I sucked up my pride and remained focused on the bigger picture, knowing that struggle is quite simply the cost of admission.

"Success is a free market. Top shelf experiences come with the hefty price of humility, sacrifice and hard work."



LIFE: THE GREATEST OF TEACHERS

On that long drive in the middle of the night, with endless road in front of me and everything I knew diminishing in the rearview mirror, I learned the value of making a difficult decision.

During my times of disappointment and being let down by the ones I counted on and believed in, I learned the importance of loyalty.

Through my failures, uncertainty and stress, I learned that life goes on; that when you allow yourself to fall you get back up stronger.

Through heartbreak, loss and pain, I learned to appreciate every moment, to never take anything for granted and to recognize the fragility of the present, because with the snap of a finger life can change.

In the wake of past anger and conflict, I realized that our vantage points merely reflect our backgrounds. I saw that even the slightest effort to understand the person staring back at you is often the difference between building up and tearing down.



From being overlooked, disregarded and the smallest person in the room, I learned the value of true leadership. I felt the benefit of empowering and showing appreciation to those around us.

Life is a teacher, and only by enduring its greatest challenges do we see that the lows prepare us for the highs, the losses set up the gains and the mistakes build a foundation for the greatest things we will ever do.

"Life is the greatest of teachers."