





solidarityTEa

OUR QUEER SCHOOL












WELCOME TO OUR QUEER SCHOOL.
HERE YOU'LL BE EDUCATED TO BECOME KINGS,
QUEENS AND ALL THE IN-BETWEENS.
YOU ARE TAUGHT TO BE PROUD.
YOU ARE TAUGHT TO BE LOUD.
YOU ARE TAUGHT TO LISTEN, TO SUPPORT.
TO CARE FOR YOURSELF, BE AN ALLY, TO
REPORT.





LET US SHOW YOU AROUND.



IN OUR CAFETERIA YOU FIND THE STUDIOUS
TYPES, WHO UNDERSTAND SPECTRUMS AND THE
GRAVITY OF WORDS. THE ARTISTS, WHO
CREATIVELY MAKE EACH COLOUR OF THE
RAINBOW SHINE. THE SPORTY TYPES, WHO
KNOW HOW IMPORTANT OUR BODIES ARE AND TO
LOOK AFTER THEM. AND THE PERFORMERS WHO
CAN TEACH YOU ALL ABOUT DRAG. IN OUR
CAFETERIA WE SIT WITH OUR FRIENDS AND WE
STAND IN SOLIDARITY WITH EVERYONE. WE EAT
TOGETHER, WE BREAK BREAD TOGETHER.



OUR SCHOOL WELCOMES ANY LOVING LEARNER
WITH OPEN ARMS.



WE WELCOME YOU WITH OPEN ARMS.


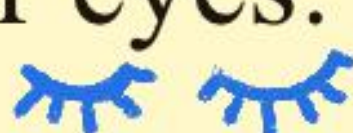


Welcome to our
Queer School




Art by Jasmine

1, 2, 3... Plant a Seed by Hansika

1,2,3... Plant A 
Close your eyes. 

Imagine you are a pomegranate.

The pulsing **RED** 
is your beating heart

every seed inside it
is a different part of you.

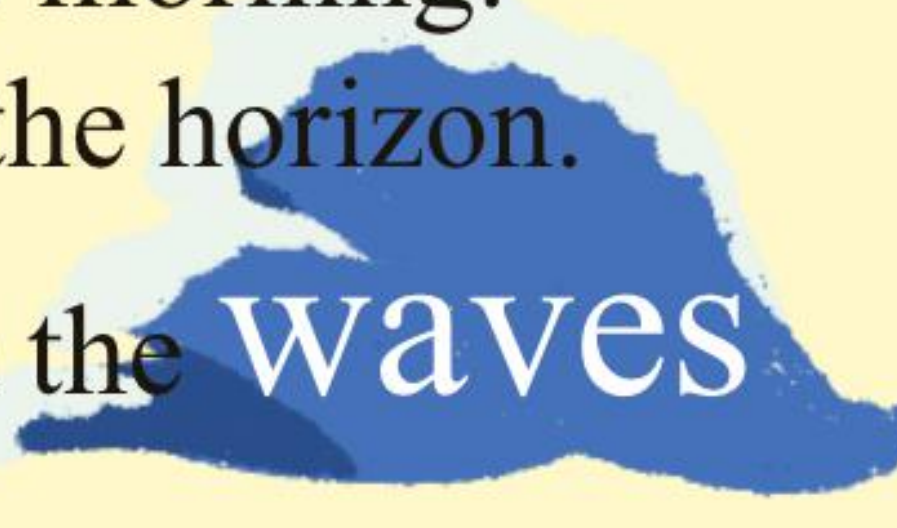
Explore every seed you find.

There are so many pieces of you, waiting to be seen.


You are a child of Mother Earth.

You are the **SUN**  on a glorious morning.

You are a cloud floating above the horizon.

You are a bird skipping through the **waves** 
as the sun sets.

You are the last book you wept to,
You are your favourite film.

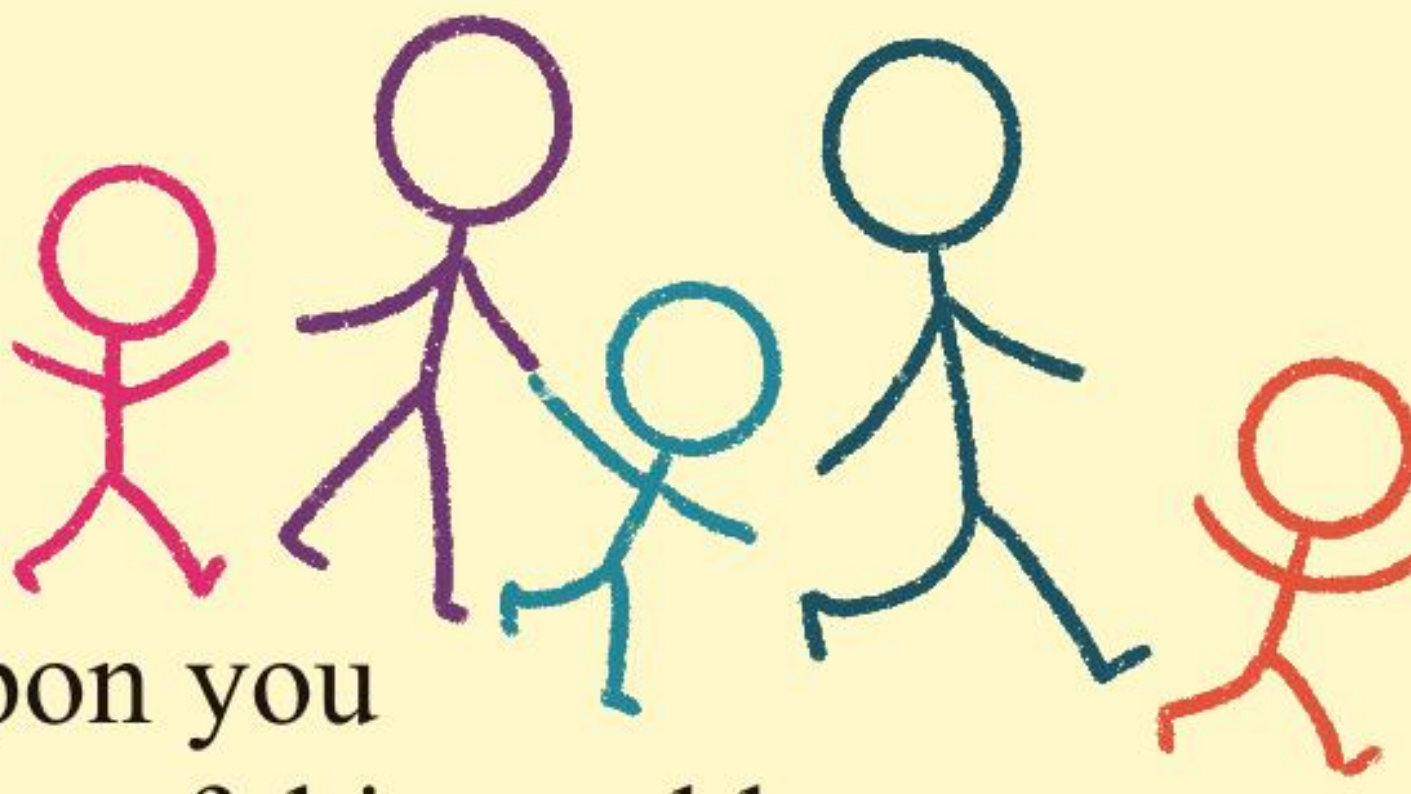
Bask in all of your seeds. 

Take a l o n g
d
e
e
p


breath.

Remember,
Some seeds you find might have been placed there.
An intended plant, handed down to you inherited
traditions,
rituals,
and expectations

p
l
a
c
e
d upon you
by systems of this world.
by people complicit in the SYSTEMS.



If it is unsettling, as you stumble upon those seeds,
Be kind to yourself.

Remember, it is not you.


It is what you've been taught and told,
and those are things you can **let go** of and
unlearn.

Because what we inherit isn't always right.

There are a multitude of ways to be,
to live
and to love to grow,
and flourish.

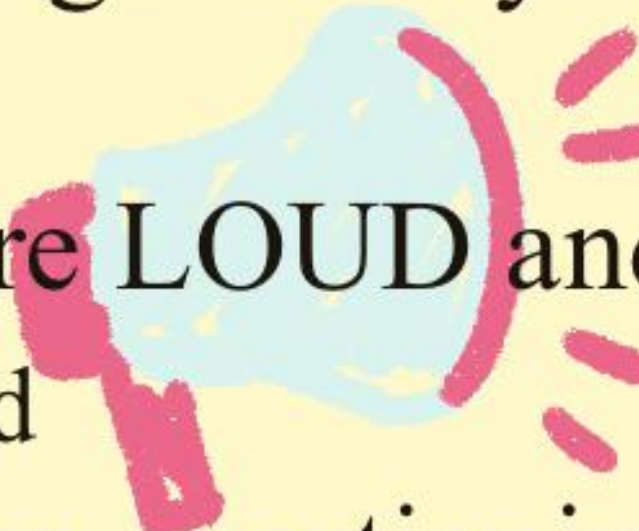

You are the only one who knows,
what living, loving and growing
looks like for you.

You are the only one who knows what seeds you
need.

There is no Rulebook. 
Every way is valid.

Do not believe what fairytales tell you.
boys can be **QUEENS**,
girls can be **KINGS**,
QUEENS can marry **QUEENS**,
and you don't have to feel like a boy or girl
to be noticed.

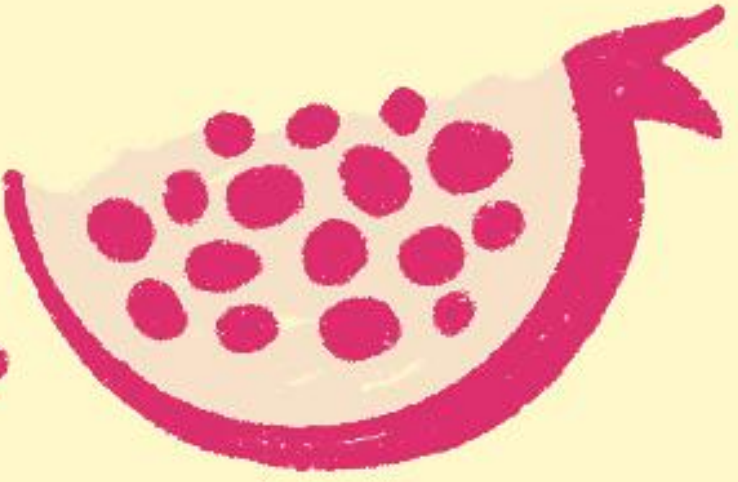
You can be neither, you can be in-between. We
can live in a kingdom beyond the gender binary.

Whether you are **LOUD** and Proud, 
or quiet and proud
Whether you are questioning the seeds
inside you,
or still trying to decipher them,
Every part of you is valid.
Your journey is valid. 

Do not let anyone put you into a **BOX**.

S A H
M S THE SYSTEM'S BOX! 

Create your own pomegranate filled garden,
paint the clouds with rainbows and butterflies
plant seeds that only you want to see grow...
Run,
Dance,
Breathe,
Be free



THERE IS A RIOT WITHIN YOU: UNRAVELLING THE AESTHETIC OF QUEER RESISTANCE

Queer peoples throughout the world engage and negotiate themselves and their surroundings in multifarious ways. There is no singular way queerness is performed, and hence, the condition of these individual subjectivities is manifested differently everywhere. Although these subjectivities develop independently, a golden thread, a pertinent narrative, runs throughout - which is of resistance - such that emerges unequivocally even amidst multiplicity.

Resistance, rebellion, rioting are the first words in a queer person's lexicon. Apart from the unintended alliteration, resistance and its cousins imply the existence of a problematic 'other' that negates queer existence as kitsch, unnatural and perverse. Regardless of where and how queer peoples are located geographically, historically and in society - the spirit of resistance runs deep. There is strength in collective action, in fraternity, in communion - and our resistance rests on that.

Egypt's Sara Hegazi resisted when she raised a rainbow flag at a concert. Ghana's Alex Kofi Donkor resisted when he founded the country's first LGBTQ+ community centre which was later forcibly shuttered by police forces. India's Dr. Aqsa Shaikh resisted when she became the first trans woman to serve as a nodal officer at vaccination centres. Likewise, trans persons resist when they earn independently as sex workers, queer persons resist when they choose to share their pronouns, when they choose to love who they love, live how they want to - closeted or not. Our resistance is not in our action, our resistance is in breathing, living, working, sleeping - for every healthy minute in our lives is a protest against those in our community who are being lynched, murdered, hunted, criminalized, shamed, bullied and denied legality.

The existence of queer folk is fundamentally provocative, anti-establishment, revolutionary and through arts, advocacy, protests and representation, our forces morph into an armed rebellion against pre-existing normative structures in society. Queer resistance is unique in itself because it does not propose to negotiate heteronormative forces, but strives to abolish, obliterate conformities. It so rarely happens that the locus of conflict is within us, instead of being located outside. We are the perverse, unnatural, erotic, filthy sinners. We are resolute, proud - a summation of the world's vices and virtues. We are kind, open-hearted, accepting, loving, together in this fight. Every one of us is a trained guérilla fighter: we are in a war, and we are ready to confront. The birth of a queer person is a protest, their life is a call to action. Our hearts thump for a free world, total uncompromised liberation and it is not romantic in the least. There is, indeed, a riot within us.

Written by Sara



Seeing Rainbows

**I've been seeing rainbows
More and more
Everywhere I go.
Brilliant reds and yellows,
Bathed in radiant light,
Touching everything in sight.**

**I've been seeing
Beauty,
Perfection,
Grace,
Reflections of myself,
In swirls of orange and blue.**

**Where once I was a dull brown
In a black-and-white tableau;
Floating in space and time
Trying to be more than my shadow;
I have finally become the full picture,
I am finally awake, alive, fully here.**

**I've been seeing rainbows,
Dancing in both rain and sunshine,
I, myself, have kissed the sunrise.
There is a glorious peace in being seen,
Looking at the world and seeing
yourself.**

**When you're life, your existence is valid;
When you realise you are the pot of gold.**

— Phindu



THEIR ~~HIS~~
TO
RY

I
EVER SHALL YOUR FAME LIVE IN THE EARTH
DEAREST HARMODIOUS AND ARISTOGEITON,
FOR THAT YOU SLEW THE TYRANT WHO SCOFFED
AT LOVE,
AND MADE ATHENS A CITY OF EQUAL RIGHTS.

HARMODIUS AND ARISTOGEITON, C. 476 BC



II
ON EARTH ONE SEEKS SHELTER,
EVERYDAY,
AND FLOATS TO THE SEA AT NIGHT,
THEIR BODY FLUID AS THE
CRASHING WAVES,
ONE IS BAFFLED BY THE BINARIES OF
LIFE.

SLEEPING HERMAPHRODITUS, 1620



III
THERE, ONCE WAS A BOY,
AS BRIGHT AS THE SUN,
WHO FOUGHT WITH THE GODS,
TO SAVE THE ONLY BOY HE LOVED.

APOLLO BELVEDERE, C. 350 BC



LE
SS
ON

Work by Bidisha



Aravani Art Project is a Women and Trans-Women art collective which involves a collaborative public art/wall art project to raise voices and awareness of the friendship between trans-women and women in public spaces.

We create safe spaces for alternate voices through art. We examine their spaces of innovation, the places of their history and create room to learn by transforming this knowledge into public art. The streets are a particularly important place to do our work, as it is in these public spaces that the bodies of transgender identifying people attract violence, harassment, social negligence and pressure.

Our creative collective seeks to respond to these experiences by creating spaces that instead encourage exchange, discussion, openness and debate surrounding gender identities.

**Better
Together**

**RECLAIMING QUEER
SPACES-**

Aravani Art Project

QUEER IS A VERB

written by Ettie

Queer is a verb,
to quiver, tremble, shake,
the tremor before the quake.

The books on the shelves
are shaking,
the shelves are breaking,
labels flaking,

Portraits of dead cishet white men,
they're falling off the walls,
appalled jaws, an open maw,
wide mouths and shocked howls.

Shelves come tumbling down,
walls crumbling,
stones rumbling round,
books hit the ground.

Raise the call,
these walls will fall,
there's space for us all.
They're fumbling now.
Run and shout,
we're climbing out.

Afterwards, they'll say,
like it's something you can name,
"What is an earthquake?"

It's a break,
an escape,
it's whatever we make.

And we'll say,
dust is whatever the wind whips,
change is whatever they resist.

We gaze through the smoky haze,
the dust is settling.
Let me rephrase:
this isn't a phase.



BEYOND THE RAINBOW BOXES

In a rainbow box beneath my bed
Lies a box full of things
I go back to understand myself

In the box there are movies and books
And my hopes in the nooks
Of living courageously someday

It's another night of sitting in front
Of a movie critically acclaimed
The actors with their blemish free skin
Skin which isn't like yours
Skin which isn't like mine
I look for myself some more,
I'm trying to find the inches on their bodies
That I've wanted to slice off myself
The curves I wonder people see and feel
repulsed about
The person in the movie has blue eyes
Mine are blackish brown

And once again, I feel down
Unable to fit into the rainbow box
Of things I wish to be about

On nights like these I let my imagination run
Into the gates of the place I want to be
A place with open gates and level playing
field
In my version of the schools I see on the
screen
Binary is only in computing
And friendship is solidarity

Boxes are just a shape in math class
And closets where our literature rests
In language classes, hate is a four letter
word
But so is love
And so is hope
And is spoken in tongues you and I understand

I let my mind run away
Across the fields of this place
A place for learning and unlearning

Where rainbows means our lives
And lives actualize beyond our yearning
And I hope to make this space someday
Where acceptance flourishes in every room
A space of decolonized appreciation
Beyond the rainbow boxes
Which starts with me, today

Poem by Nipunika

QUEER LIBRARY



Art by Alex



OUR READING LIST

Mark once you complete the book

CRITICAL THEORY

GENDER TROUBLE BY JUDITH BUTLER

HISTORY OF SEXUALITY BY MICHEL FOUCAULT

THINKING SEX BY GAYLE RUBIN

EPISTEMOLOGY OF THE CLOSET BY EVA K. SEDWICK

QUEER THEORY AND NATIVE STUDIES: THE HETERONORMATIVITY

OF SETTLER COLONIALISM BY ANDREA SMITH

QUEER THEORY: AN INTRODUCTION BY ANNAMARIE JAGOSE

THE GLOBAL TRAJECTORIES OF QUEERNESS EDITED BY ASHLEY

TELLIS AND SRUTI BALA

FICTION/ NON-FICTION

THE COLOR PURPLE BY ALICE WALKER

ZAMI BY AUDRE LORDE

GIRL, WOMAN, OTHER BY BERNARDINE EVARISTO

ARISTOTLE AND DANTE DISCOVER THE SECRETS OF THE UNIVERSE BY

BENJAMIN ALIRE SÁENZ

NONE OF THE ABOVE BY I.W. GREGORIO

LAST NIGHT AT THE TELEGRAPH CLUB BY MALINDA LO

MAY THE BEST MAN WIN BY ZR ELLOR

ALL BOYS AREN'T BLUE BY GEORGE M. JOHNSON

MIDDLESEX, BY JEFFREY EUGENIDES

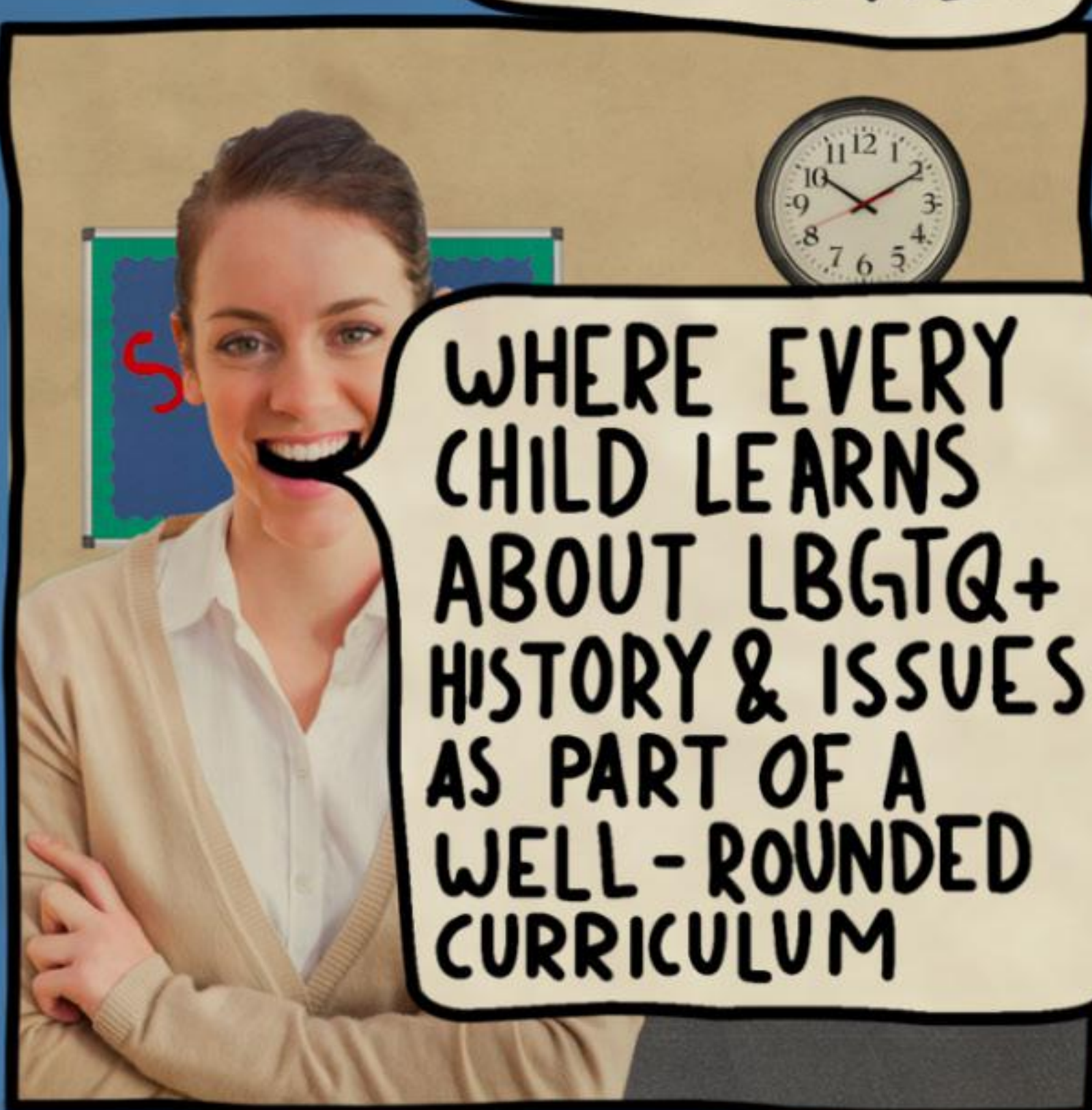
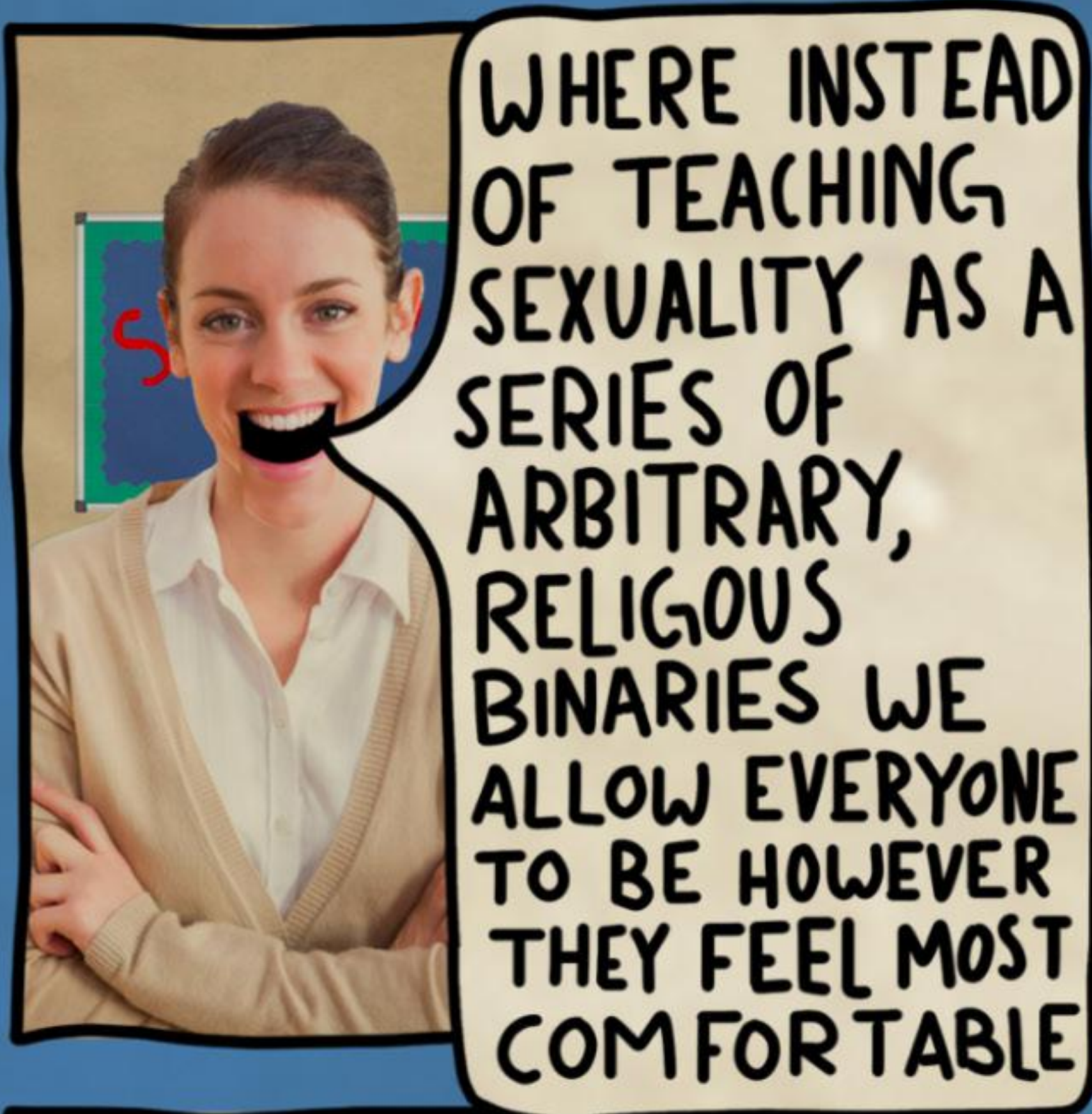
OF FIRE AND STARS BY AUDREY COULTHURST

RED, WHITE AND ROYAL BLUE BY CASEY MCQUISTON

Add more to the list... happy reading!

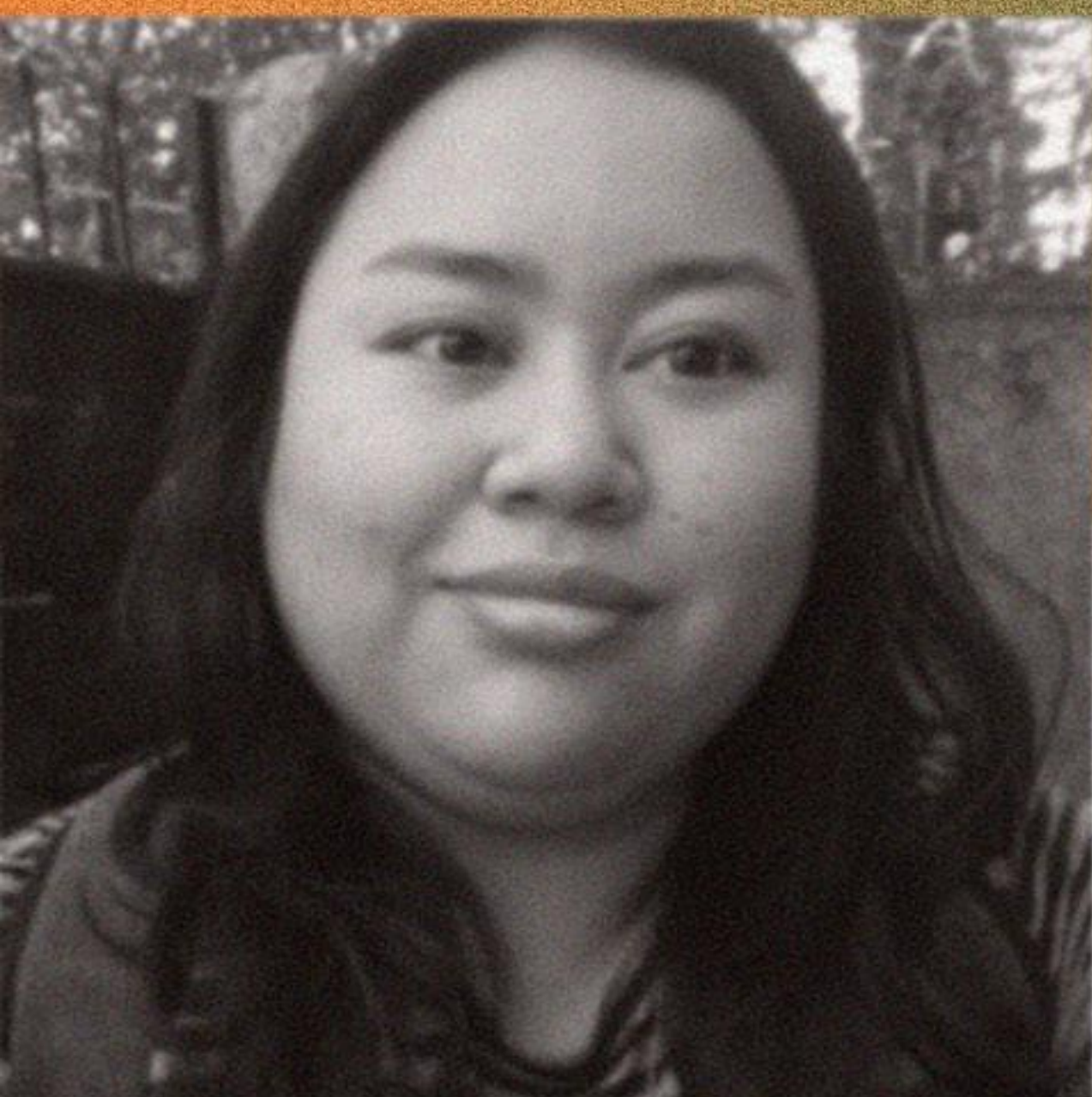
SATIRE ATTIRE

THE SCHOOL OF THE FUTURE...

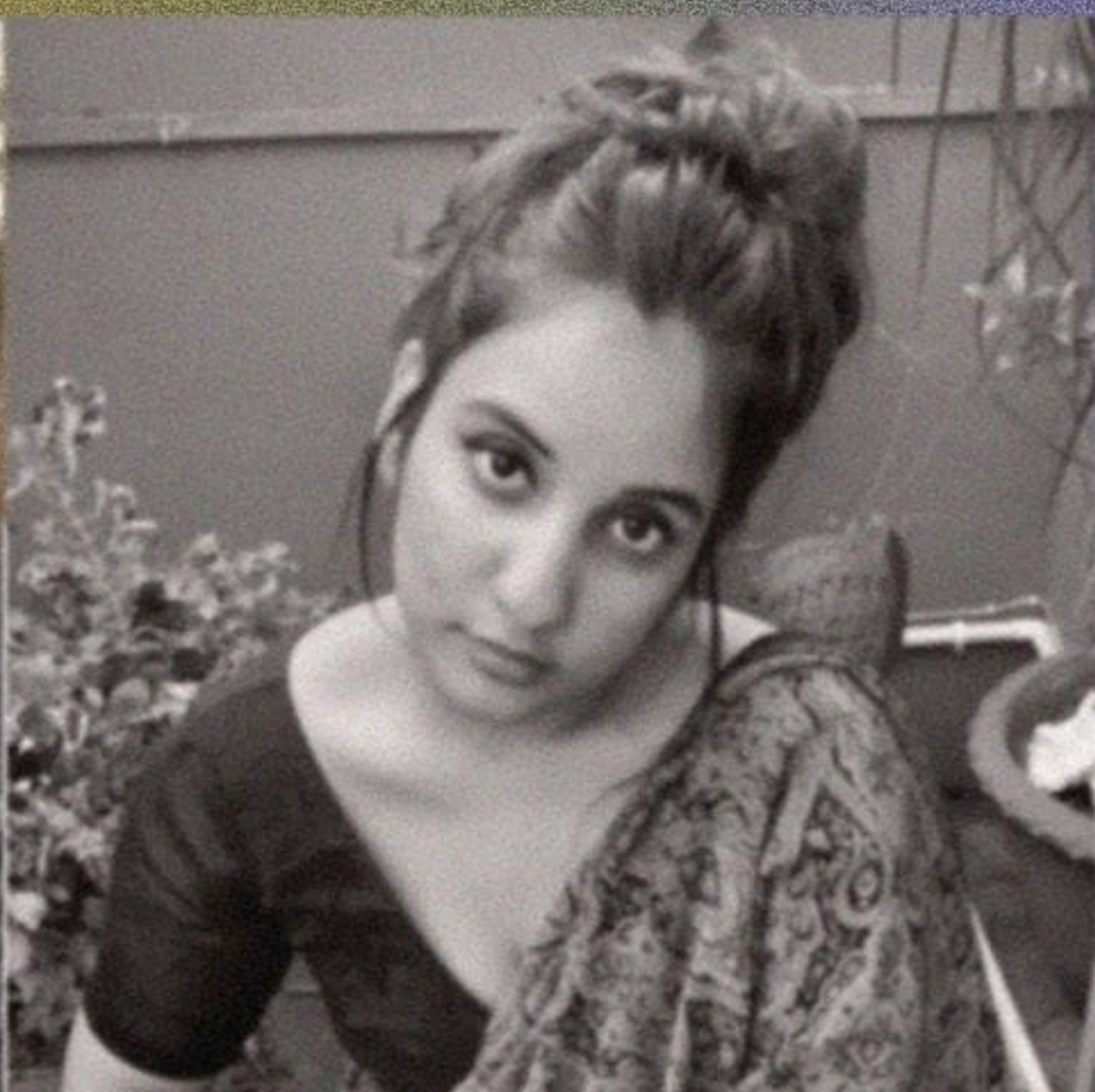


Queer School:

Batch of 2021



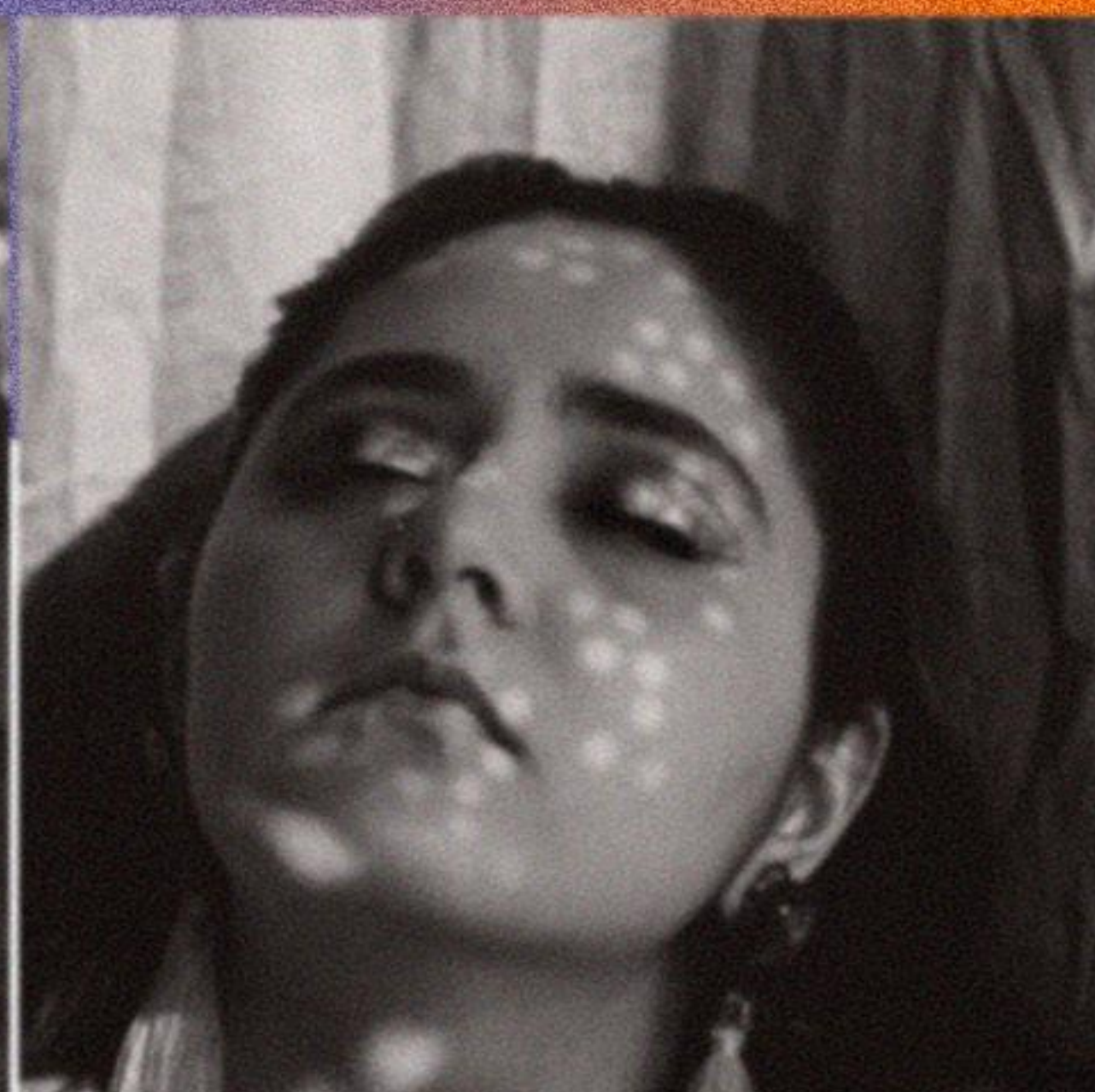
When I was a kid,
I sneezed and
nobody said bless
you so now I'm
gay!
- Alex,
Artist



And of course
there is hope.
Look, here it
comes in
meandering,
tickling the ends
of your ear. Can
you feel it?
- Bidisha,
Visual Creator



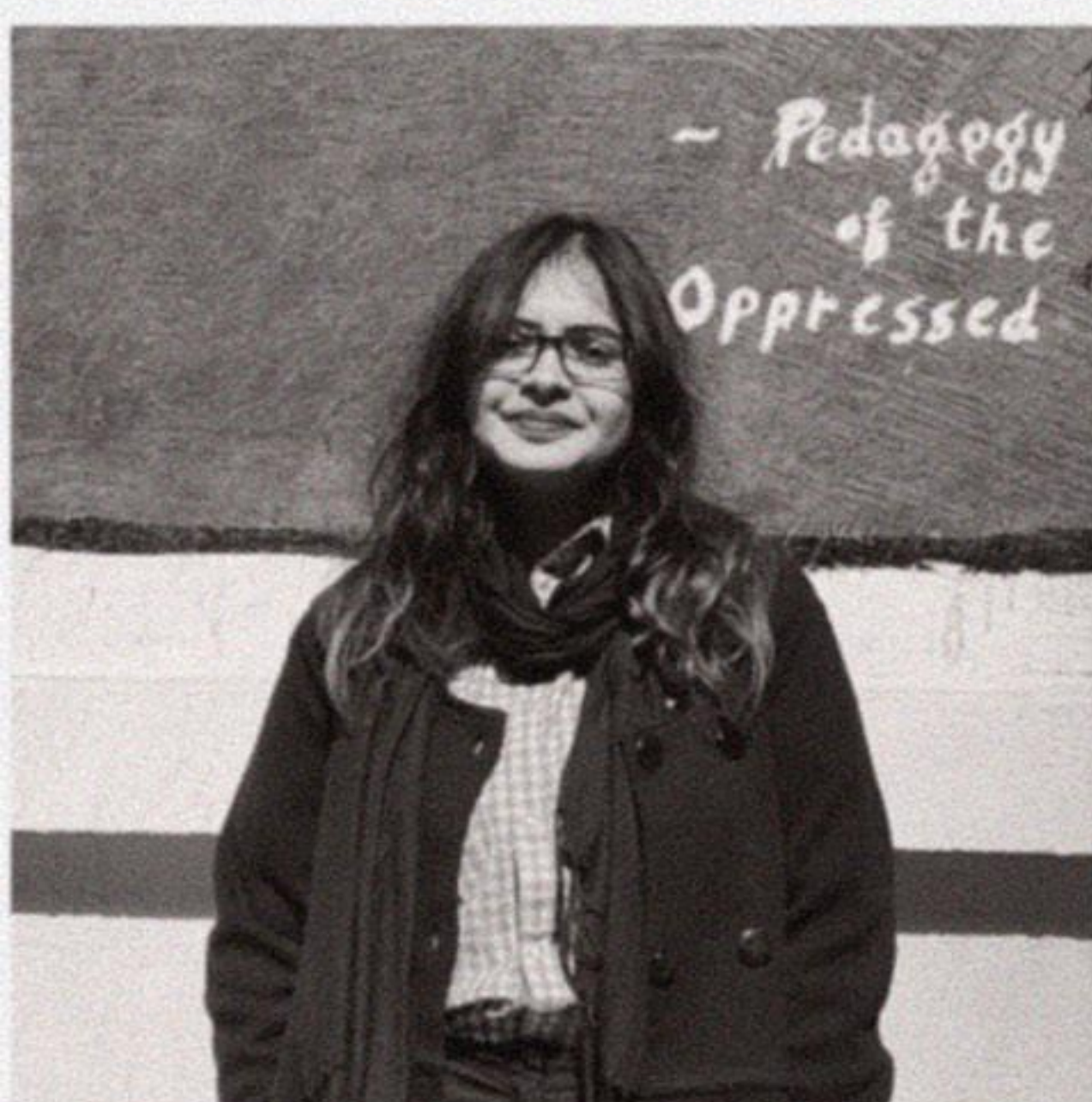
Finally, a year
book we can all
feel at home in.
Thank you, Queer
School!
- Ettie,
Writer & Educator



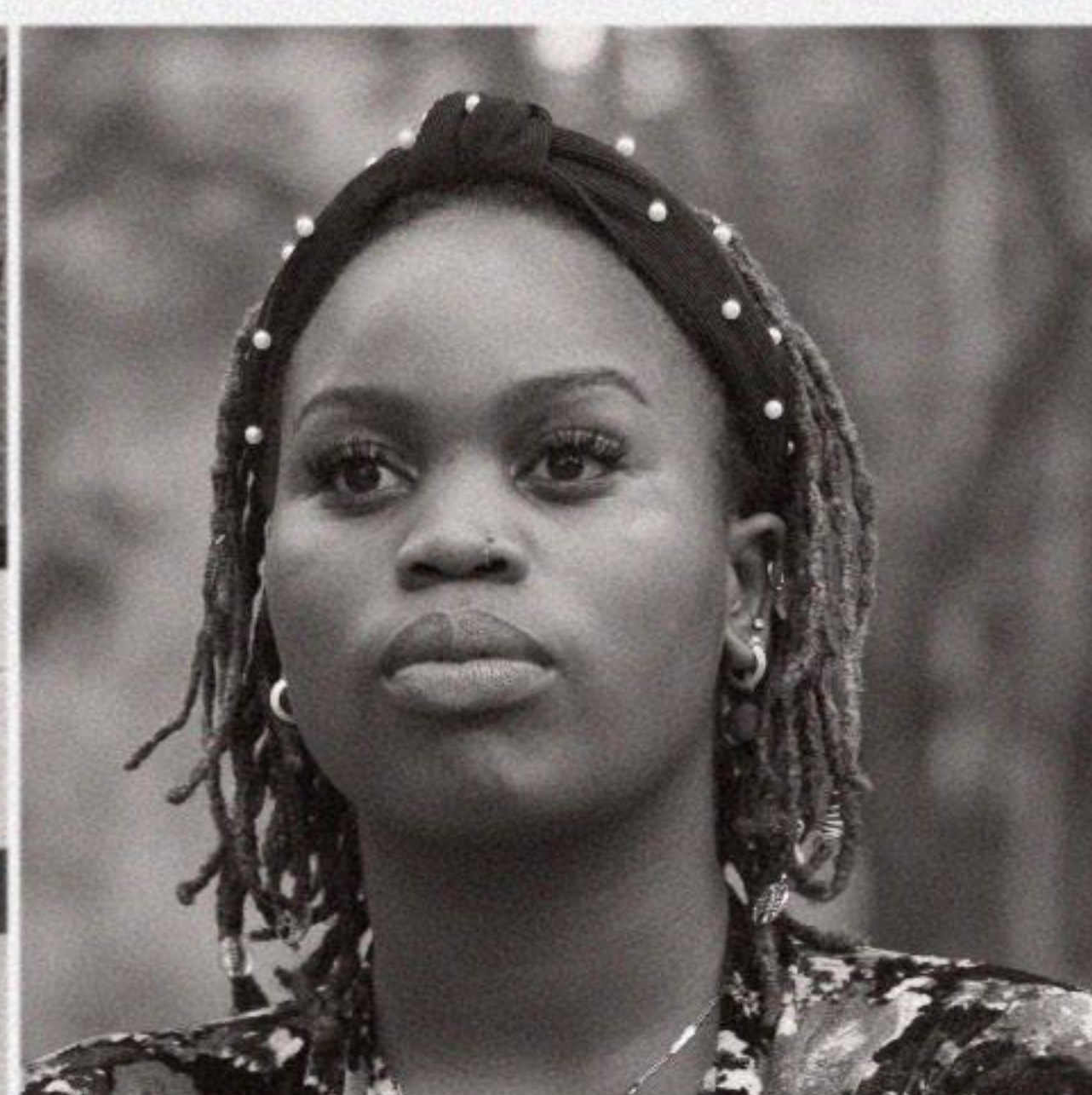
Here's to turning
the visions in
this zine into
reality, queer
schools are
revolutionary!
- Hansika,
Poet & Visual
Artist



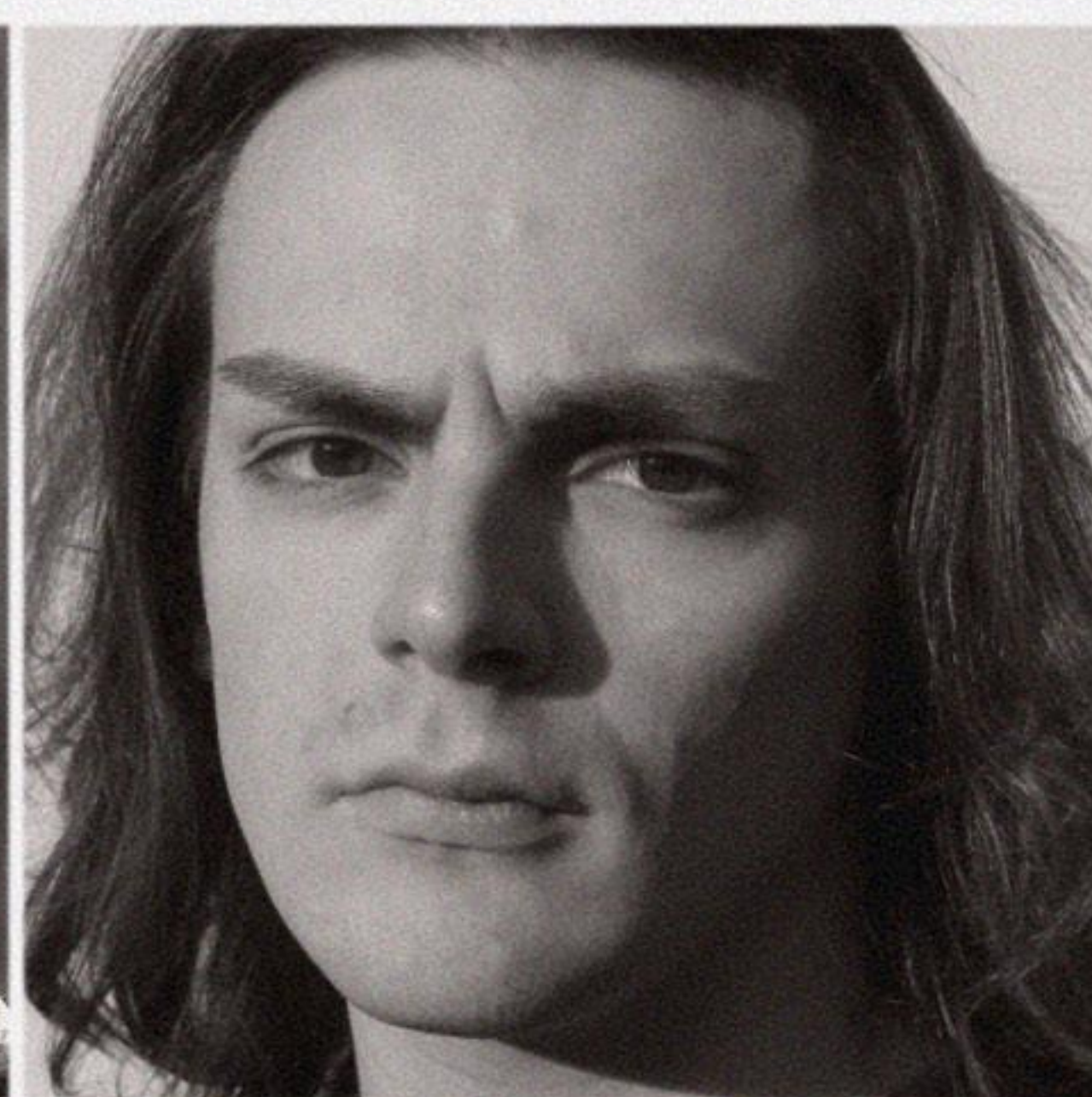
"Little girls
with dreams
become women
with vision."
- unknown
- Jasmine,
Graphic
Illustrator



Main hak likhungi,
tum narivaad
samajh lena
(Translation: I
will write rights
and you may
understand it as
feminism.)
- Nipunika,
Spoken Word Poet



"Caterpillars
are really more
than just
worms."
- Phindu,
Visual Creator



Most Likely to Be
Prime Minister
(2015). Fell
asleep on the
kitchen floor
whilst reheating a
lasagne (2021).
- Sam,
Writer &
Performer

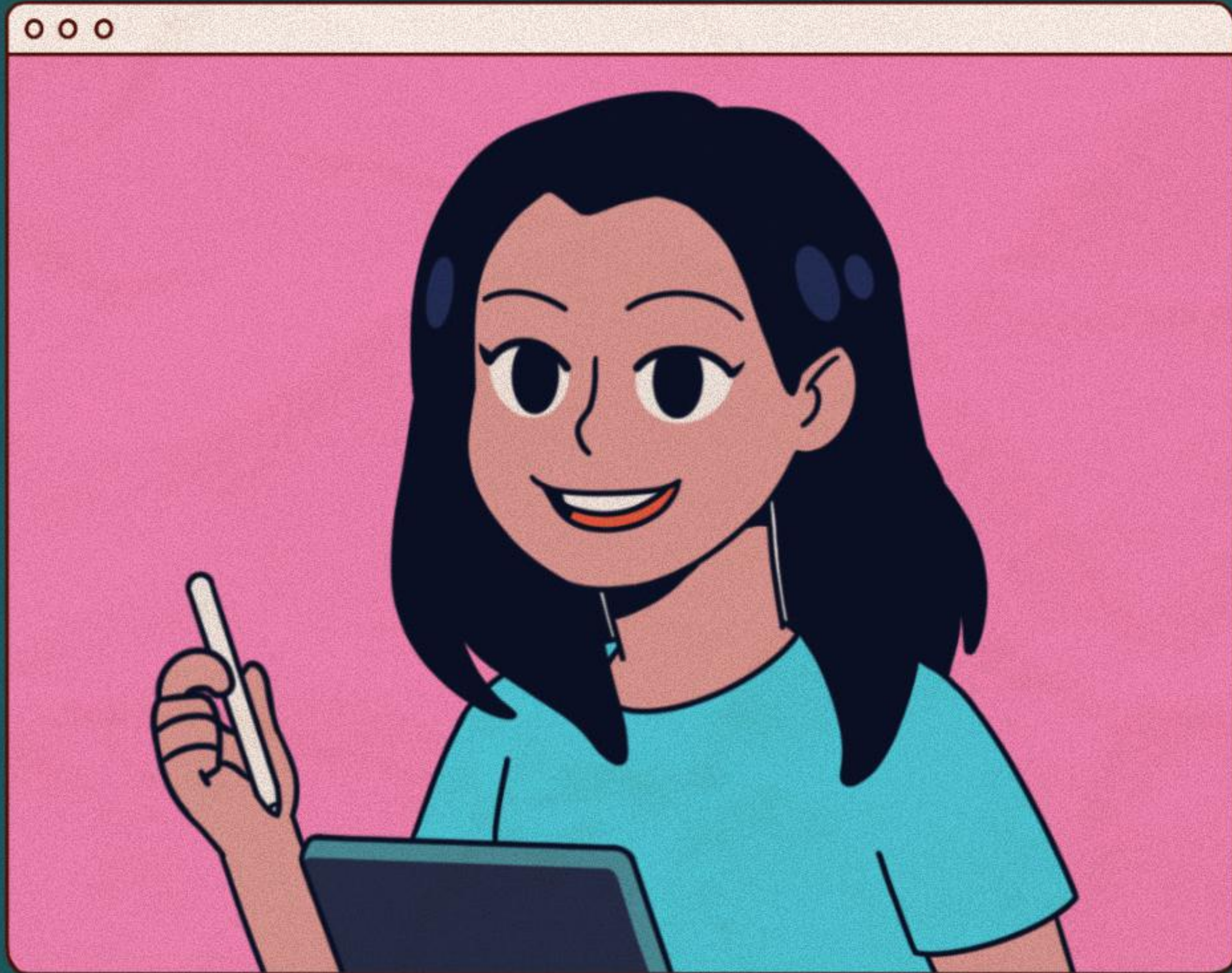


"Every time
someone steps up
and says who they
are, the world
becomes a better,
more interesting
place." Captain
Holt, Brooklyn
Nine-Nine.
- Sara,
Citizen Journalist

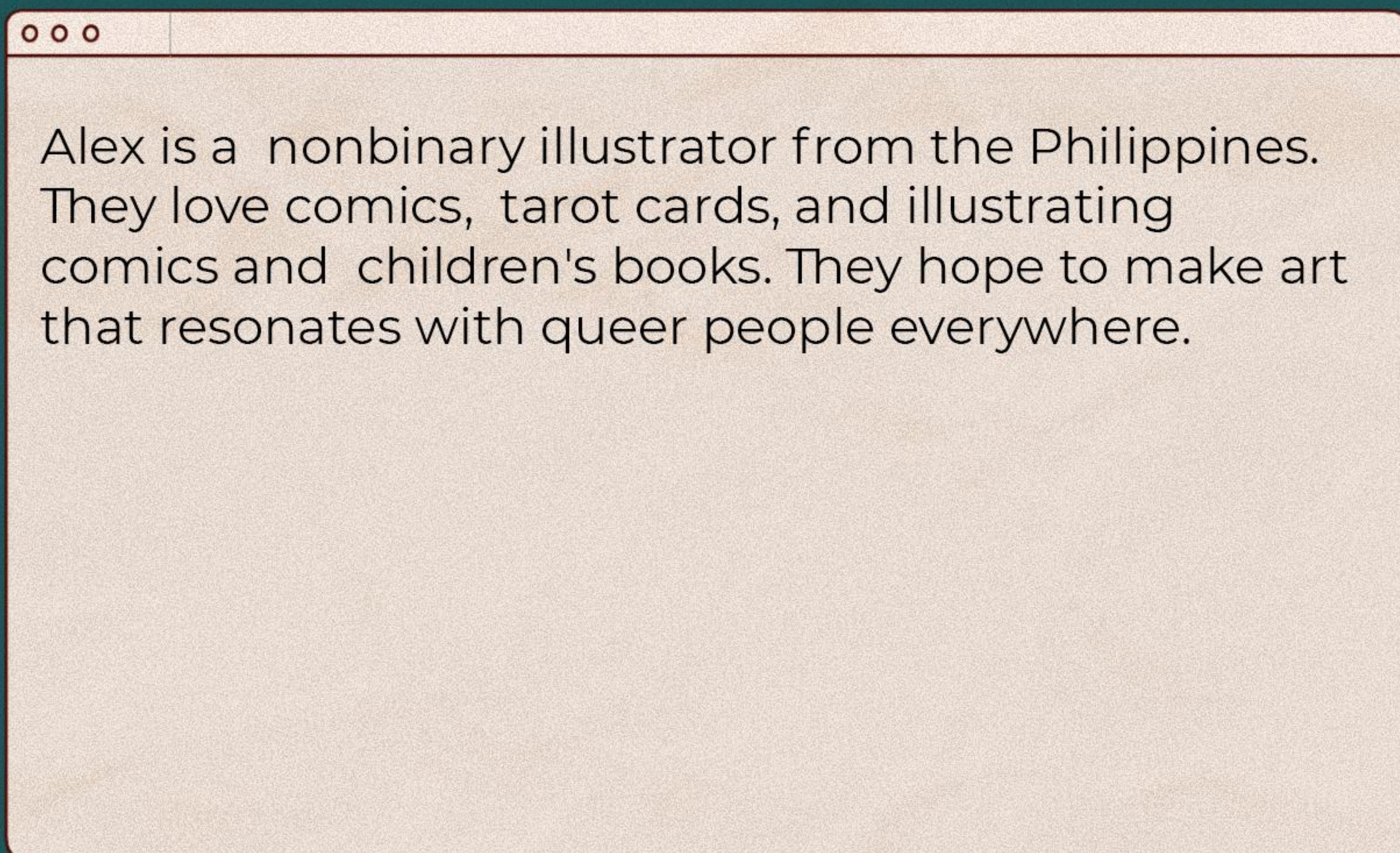


The Transgender
community all
over the world
are in need of
support,
acceptance, good
exposure and
most importantly
art. We hope to
gently change
the world.
- Aravani Art
Project

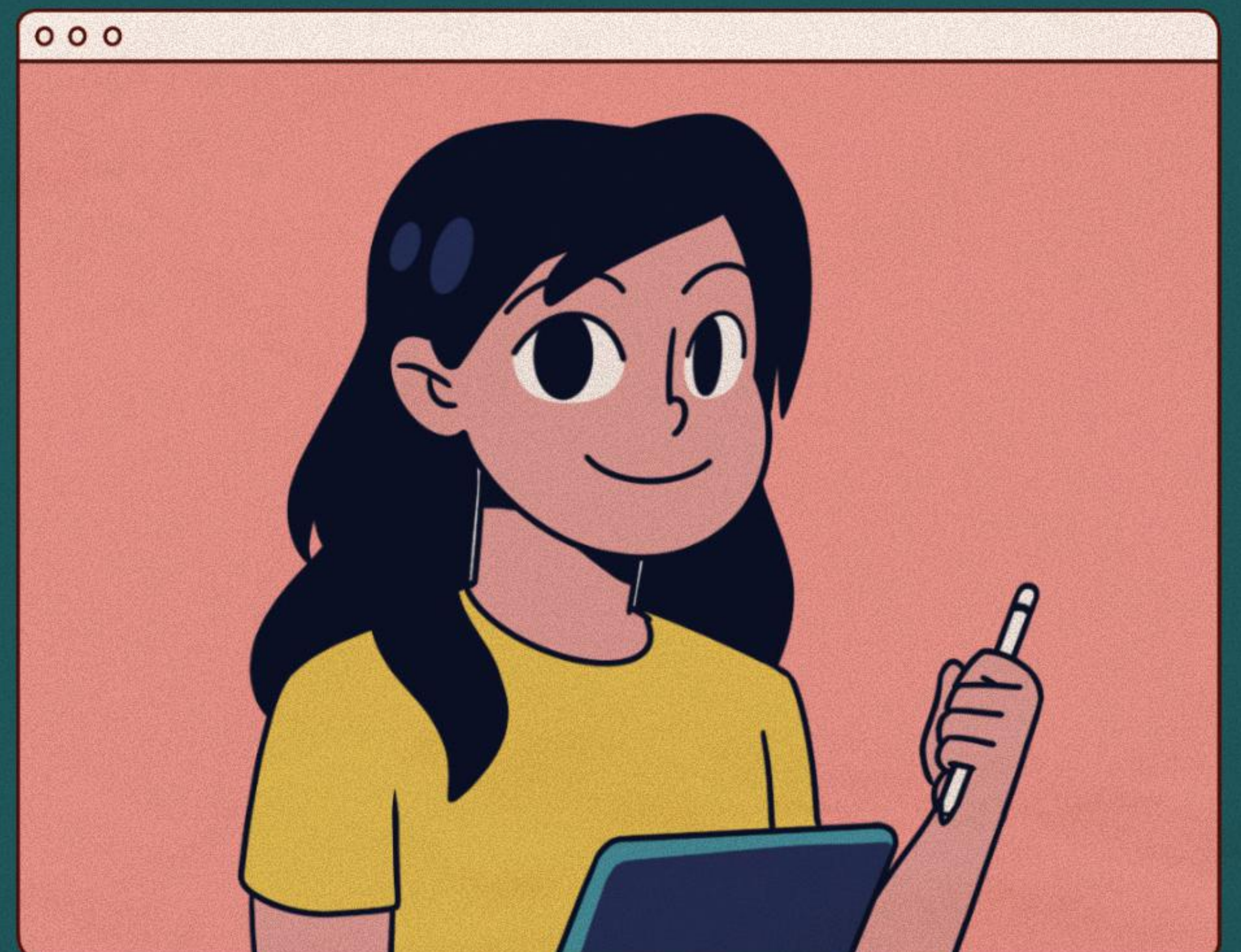
Meet the TEam



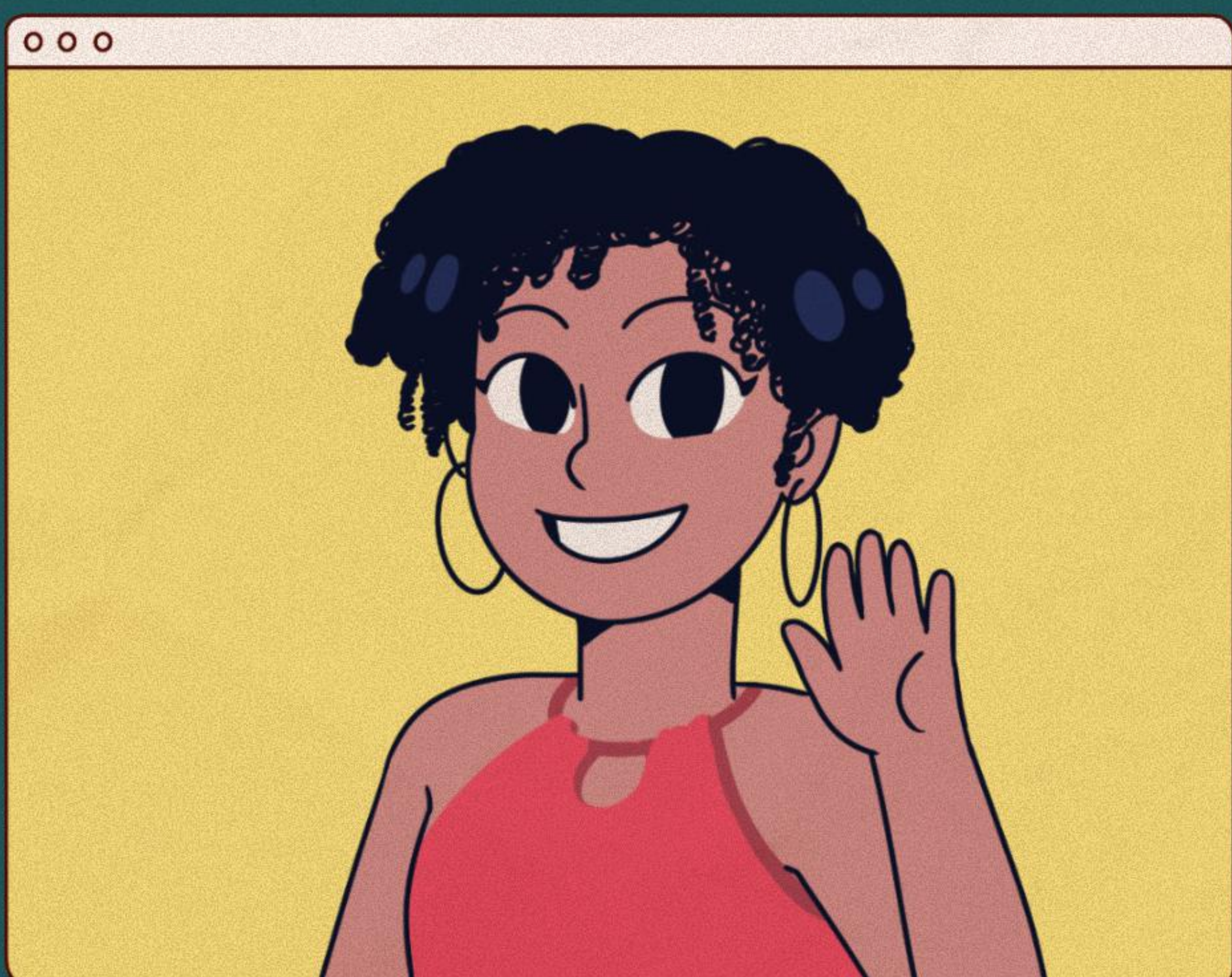
Ipsita is a feminist illustrator currently based in New Delhi. An advocate of gender studies and intersectional feminism, through her work she aims to explore the subjects sexuality, politics and power. Her art captures the multifarious human emotions and sentiments. Most of her work centers on realist portraits and colorful illustrations. As a self-taught artist works in various mediums and is well versed with fine art techniques as well as digital.



Alex is a nonbinary illustrator from the Philippines. They love comics, tarot cards, and illustrating comics and children's books. They hope to make art that resonates with queer people everywhere.



Nnenna is based between Amsterdam and London, where she does a Master's in Human Rights. She is passionate about the philosophy and politics behind educational equality and the social impact of conflict; in particular with regards to gender and education. Outside academia, she explores different ways through which information around social issues can be made accessible. She believes art and feminist principles are key to make the distribution of such knowledge inclusive.



Shamah is a young feminist activist from the Dumaguete in the Philippines. She studies Foreign Affairs and has been working on issues like gender-based violence and queer rights since she was 14. In her free time, she experiments with vegan and vegetarian recipes and takes care of her dog, Peanut and her rescue puppies, Azula and the Powerpuff Girls (Blossom, Bubbles, and Buttercup).

SolidariTEa by **Transform Education**

SolidariTEa is a zine by Transform Education (TE), a young feminist coalition hosted by the United Nations Girls' Education Initiative (UNGEI).

TE supports and amplifies the work of young feminists and feminist networks around the globe by focusing on comprehensive sexuality education, SRHR & menstrual hygiene education, girls' education in emergencies, school-related gender-based violence, feminist leadership in education, the STEM gap and the gender digital divide, education for gender equality and climate justice, and challenging gender norms in education.

SolidariTEa explores these themes through art, poetry, stories and music. Arising from the youth-led space that is TE, this zine is created by and for young feminist activists, and distributed in communities actively working in gender equality and education.



[@Transform.Education](https://www.instagram.com/Transform.Education)

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