

COMMUTER DAYDREAM

Written by Zoya Salam

Notes for illustrator:

- Page size: 215mm x 555mm
- Visual Style: semi-realistic but generic characters as the main character is a self-insert for the reader.

ONE

Panel 1: This panel takes up the entire width of the page. The focal point to the left of the frame is the ringing alarm clock marking the time: 6:00am. Zoya's hand is on the clock, turning it off. Her foreshortened arm leads to her body in bed, groggy, just waking up.

SFX: BRIIINNGGGG!!

Panel 2: The beginning of a brief montage of Zoya's morning routine, beginning with her tired face, brushing her teeth in the bathroom mirror.

Panel 3: The second frame of the montage, framed close together to show little passage of time, Zoya is making her morning coffee in the kitchen.

SFX: WHIRRRR

Panel 4: The last closely spaced montage panel to complete the row of three, Zoya is seen hurriedly getting dressed while checking her watch. The background -her apartment - is disheveled with strewn clothing and dishes.

Panel 5: A narrow panel spanning the width of the page showing cars stuck in gridlock, engines rumbling and the faces of the drivers angry and tired inside the vehicles. The cars are depicted from a side view.

SFX: HONK! HONK!

Panel 6: A larger panel that is the end of the montage, Zoya is finally at work. She sits in her cubicle, at her computer, feverishly typing away with a tired expression. The desk is littered with papers and pens. A co-worker in the background greets her, she tiredly responds.

1. CAPTION: Every day is the same, I'm grateful for my life but sometimes it feels mundane. Especially the commute.
2. CO-WORKER: G'Morning everybody!
3. ZOYA: morningggggg

Panel 7: A large frame with a thick border to emphasize the congestion, Zoya is on her way home from work in a jam-packed subway. She is shoulder-to-shoulder with a variety of people. Her expression is tired, as though she could doze off at any second.

1. CAPTION: The subway is always the worst part of my day.

Panel 8: As Zoya nods off in the subway, she imagines an image of sardines tightly packed in a tin. Her face is in the corner of the page as the image of sardines takes up most of the frame. The text is in the same thought-bubble.

1. CAPTION: I feel like a sardine, cooked and pressure packed tightly in a tin.

TWO

Panel 1: Zoya is now daydreaming and colour is introduced to the illustrations. Establishing shot of an off-shore oil rig. The rig looks small and insignificant compared to the darkness of the ocean surrounding it.

1. CAPTION: I want to be away from the crowds, I think I would like to work as a marine biologist on an offshore oil rig.

Panel 2: Establishing shot of a biology lab complete with beakers, a microscope and animal dissection tools laid out on lab tables.

Panel 3: A densely filled fish tank populated with a diverse range of fish including crabs, snails, fish and squid. The tank is lively and colourful. The boundary of this frame itself is the fish tank.

1. CAPTION: I know being a biologist on an oil rig is mildly ironic.

Panel 4: a small frame that begins a montage of fish on dissection trays. A brightly colored fish is cut open on a dissection tray, surrounded by various surgical tools.

Panel 5: The second small frame in the montage of fish on dissection trays. A crab is cut open on a dissection tray. Less colourful and more gruesome than the fish of the last frame.

Panel 6: The third frame in the montage, this frame is larger of the three side-by-side frames, depicting a particularly gruesome image of a bird, covered in oil, spilling out of the frame and boundaries of the panel. Zoya's hands are seen trembling from fear on the table.

1. ZOYA: Shit.

Panel 7: An image of Zoya, leaning over a railing in the darkness, her face lit by the end of a burning cigarette. She looks pensive and disheartened.

1. CAPTION: Maybe I wouldn't always be happy. At least it is quiet here... peaceful.

Panel 8: In the same location, Zoya's face is visible in the periphery of the frame as she looks out onto the ocean, with the moon partially visible over the horizon, casting a dim glow on the rippling waves. Stars in the sky are dim but plentiful.

1. CAPTION: The stars are brighter out of the city, I can actually see them now.

Panel 9: A still, close-up shot of preserved aquatic animals in a variety of jars on a shelf. 2-3 jars are visible in this close up.

1. CAPTION: The work I do here, at least it could help some people right?

Panel 10: A wide-shot of the same jars shows them in a museum, amongst dozens of other preserved specimens. A mother and son look onto the exhibit, excited.

2. SON: Mom look!
3. MOTHER: Yes dear.

Panel 11: A tall, narrow frame depicting a sliver of the oil rig. The Shell oil company's logo is prominently painted on the body of the metal rig. The backdrop is of a dark night sky, against which the bright, steel rig is prominent - looking imposing.

1. CAPTION: Maybe I'm still not free

Panel 12: An image of a fish farm with hundreds of fish crammed into small pools. The atmosphere is cold and industrial, workers walk by the pools wearing masks, making them look inhuman and distant.

1. CAPTION: Maybe I'm still a fish but in a bigger tin.

THREE

Panel 1: With the same setting and composition from panel 7 of page 2, Zoya is leaning over the railing in the same manner, but her head is morphing into that of a sardine. She maintains the same disheartened expression.

Panel 2: Still in the same setting as the last panel, Zoya's head has now completely transformed into that of a fish. Both of her hands and holding on the railing tightly, she looks alert and determined in her posture.

1. CAPTION: Maybe I could truly get away from it all if I turned into a fish and lived at the bottom of the ocean.

Panel 3: An extremely wide shot takes up the entire width of the page. The oil rig the small and half visible at the side of the panel. The moon shines dimly in the background of the night sky. The ocean below is dark and expansive, teeming with the silhouettes of aquatic animals. Zoya is now a speck in the distance, standing on the railing and ready to jump.

Panel 4: The same size panel, closely placed under the last, Zoya punctures the surface of the water. A splash lifts around her. The ocean gets progressively darker in colour and the aquatic figures larger and more mysterious the deeper she goes.

SFX: Splash!

Panel 5: In the third panel showing the expansive ocean, Zoya is now close to the seafloor. The animals around her are eerie in their scale and form. Zoya, in her fish form looks unbothered and determined to reach the bottom.

1. CAPTION: Maybe everything would be peaceful if there finally weren't any people.

Panel 6: A close up frame of two fish, one is Zoya as a sardine and the other is a generic fish. Although they have no human expression, a heart in the frame shows that they are in love. The blank display of affection is comedic.

Panel 7: In a wider shot, Zoya and the other generic fish are seen with dozens of small fish: their offspring. The small fish all carry a mix of both their parents' features. The family is swimming peacefully.

Panel 8: Zoya and her fish family are seen crowded together in their small home, which is made up of various articles of garbage on the sand seafloor. Kelp sways in the ocean around them. Their home looks cozy.

1. CAPTION: I could have a fish family and live in a fish house at the bottom of the ocean

Panel 9: In a wide shot, a small submarine flashes its headlights onto Zoya's home. The bright headlights contrast the dark backdrop of the ocean. Zoya looks alarmed in the spotlight.

1. CAPTION: and never the self-imposed stresses of human nature ever again.

Panel 10: The daydream has ended, returning to black-and-white illustrations. Zoya is standing in the same crowded subway from panel 7 of page 1. The shot is a closer-up shot of her face, she looks startled. The people around her are unbothered.

1. CAPTION: DAMN! Missed my stop!

Comic Draft:

ONE



TWO



LINKED

