

Sabine S.

West Palm Beach, Florida

Tenderfoot

Procreate, my brain

The transition period between being a teenager and an “adult” is a loud and devastating but blank experience simultaneously. This year I turned 18 years old and although everyone is always asking me what it feels like to be an adult I have no genuine answer. For my final project I did a small sequential comic about my conversations with my parents about leaving on an uneven pathway towards whatever adulthood is supposed to feel like. I had an inexpressible hope that I would never have to sacrifice my immature freedoms in order to become a stifled adult.

The premise of the comic is that I have traveled to Oxbow School of Magic Arts to escape my seemingly mediocre life in Florida, when I arrive there I meet my roommates and work tirelessly to figure out my dynamic among them.

Tenderfoot; an Annotated Script



Sabine S.
The Oxbow School OS45

This is an annotated script for my introduction of being away from home for the first time and how it felt to say a temporary goodbye to my entire life in Florida. Growing up is extremely hard, I don't think I am ever going to be able to do it correctly mostly because I don't really want to. When I was younger I struggled a lot with going to school and living up to the expectations that school had set for me, I wasn't really interested in doing math or science because I was basically told from the start that what I was not welcome in communities that were considered complex and intelligent topics. I was consumed by internet culture of meme art and comedic background blogs that other people just didn't. I felt like the way I was "growing up" was completely separate from kids the same age as me and I don't think that feeling will ever leave, it used to be extremely uncomfortable and shameful to me because I didn't know how to express myself in a way where I wasn't going to get trampled on for not following the crowd pattern that most were. Coming to Oxbow was constantly referred to as my "taste of adult life" but honestly it just reassured me that I still do not want to be an adult ever because I dislike the idea of becoming stale so much. I live for the "childish" moments in my life so much because those are things that really truly make me feel whole and excited to make other people happy or even sometimes confused by my actions or words. I love being weird and making absolutely no sense to anyone because what is the point of micromanaging your life to make sense to someone else's ideals. I feel like this attitude also goes hand in hand with my artwork, even when I was going to my sending school Alexander Dreyfoos School of the Arts I have constantly been pushed to have mastery over the technical and straightforward perception of what artwork is, this stale dead 2d capture of cold true life void of anything that could make something absurd out of something serious or heartbreaking. Comedy will always be a source of creative energy and motivation for me. acting like artwork always has to have deeper meaning ignoring the fact that comedy has the ability to be deep by itself is the

tragedy that society spins forcing people to forfeit their childish subconscious in order to become more "adult"; being an adult is bullshit, it doesn't mean anything, so what you can do taxes and sit still for 10 hours straight, do you want a trophy for betraying yourself? The only way I could pin down some form of label for what I am trying to explain is absurdism. Movements like DADA gave an example of how artwork is not meant to be stable or always Avant-garde, it is volatile and supposed to be forever changing, if art does not change then we have failed completely at our one job to challenge what everything is all the time. If we are going to complain about how everything does not make sense, let's not make sense of what not making sense is supposed to be.

Lynda Berry is a 65 year old comic book artist from Seattle, when she was a young girl she thought comic books saved her life. When I was in my sophomore year of high school Lynda Barry came to give us a lecture about how children, despite not having what is seen as technical skill for artwork, understood very clearly how characters and personalities can be concisely communicated to other people. During the lecture I really did not pay that much attention because it was 8 in the morning and I was 15 years old, but something about the way she was holding an audience with her passion and not her words was so appealing to me. At the time I was making artwork the only way I thought was interesting to other people, angsty, upsetting depictions of whatever negative feeling I was experiencing, which was fine but I didn't really have any hard passions in it. When I left that lecture I started looking into Lynda Barry. I started listening to her interviews online just during my drawing sessions and the more I became interested in her ideas of comic books and transforming real life into something childlike or imaginative. In a way I feel like everything does happen for a reason, I feel like I was meant to go to Dreyfoos and then go to Oxbow just like how I am supposed to be ridiculous and not make any sense (a lot like this essay).

Going to Dreyfoos was a really big transition for me because I was coming from a place of healing from an environment where I was constantly put down to having a place where I was given the time of day from other people and misunderstood. my whole life, I didn't know if I even really existed but I did, and people were starting to notice, and in a positive way as well. The idea of Absurdism is that nothing in the universe makes sense, and I do think that is true but for me I think making no sense means you can do whatever you want and no one should care so much about what other people are doing as long as it doesn't intrude on them.

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(True setting is currently Florida West Palm Beach, driving in a car with my mother along the beachside to get one more look of home before leaving the next day. At this point, it was boiling in Florida and my summer had been extended for an entire month waiting to attend Oxbow. It was an uncomfortable feeling of overprepping but still never feeling ready enough to leave despite never admitting it. I have always hated living in Florida; I constantly feel like I do not belong there but there is always a weird feeling of home that the discord of Florida has imprinted on me. I wanted to dedicate my project to the feeling of saying goodbye to that specific feeling florida gives me.)

Mom: Bean, you know it's okay to be nervous about it. it's a big deal moving away for the first time but everyone does it, you're going to be fine babes...

Sabine: I'm not nervous, I know everything is going to be fine., I can't wait to kind of just get out of here and study some real magic.

Mom: Well, y'know home, in a way, is magical too. I never thought I was going to end up here when I was younger at all, but shit happens and Florida has more to offer than you think.

Sabine: ...

Mom: Well, do you think you have enough to go off of for your home sigil?

Sabine: *stares intently at all the restaurants with fancy little old witches eating and drinking*

Mmmm, yea, i think i do actually

(I had a lot of conversations with my mom about leaving home. It Was really painful because I didn't want my mom to feel abandoned and I didn't want to feel abandoned either. Especially since the pandemic started, I have been leaning on my mom a lot emotionally and physically. During the pandemic my panic disorder got a lot worse and my attacks were becoming more frequent, my mother became basically my nurse in a way and would stay with me through 10+ hours of panic episodes. It is shocking how much time and effort she puts into making sure I can stand on my own, but also notice when I clearly need help. In a way, my mother and I are complete opposites, our outfits contrast in a laughable manner when we walk down the street talking about college or pinterest ideas we found that day, there have been instances where people have asked me if my mother was sending me to reform school as if its a funny idea that they would expect her to be

disappointed in the way I have “turned out” but they are dead wrong; as ironic as it is that my mother and I are not the same I think because of how different we are we have truly learned to love each other unconditionally, I am not going to lie and say my mom and I have never had any problems with our relationship but we have learned over the years to work better together instead of destroying each other with an overpowering contrast. It took a long time for us to have a mutual understanding for each other, and nothing is perfect between anyone but I am glad that I know my Mom cares a lot about me.)

SEPTEMBER 7TH

(walking back into my room, walking as slowly as possible at 6:00 am)

Sabine thinking: This is the last time I'm going to be in my room for a while. I wonder what it'll be like when I come back...

Sabine: I wonder if I'll still have friends.

Sabine: Dude I'm so lame for saying goodbye to my bedroom lol.

Sabine: *walks out and down stairs* goodbye stairs

Sabine: *grabs Cheese the squishmallow dog*

scene of me and my dad getting loaded up to go to the airport

Dad: Hey

Sabine: Hey

Dad: You know, I'm gonna miss you so much sugar bee.

Sabine: I know you will, I'll miss you too but it'll be fine, this should be good for me I think...

Dad: *slow hug and holds for a while*

Dad: ...do you want some tea?

Sabine: Sure, thanks dad

(My Dad and I have a friendship where we are both very introverted and similar. There is a weird understanding between us about our emotions that we don't really have to say, it's more of just a mutual understanding about each other and how we feel about certain situations. My dad has always been very dedicated to making sure I am mentally stable and gives me room to feel my emotions without immediately trying to solve them. I think I'm a really lucky person to have a dad that can be open to listening to me being emotionally vulnerable, unlike a lot of unfortunately common father child dynamics where Dads are not open to being emotionally available to their

children. I was worried about leaving my dad alone because I didn't want him to feel upset or alone without me because I feel like sometimes I am my Dad's best friend and people are not as abstract thinkers as we are together, there are simply people who don't get my dad or me and that is okay. There have been days where my Dad will drop everything to come help me and I was afraid to not have someone that dedicated in my life after I become an "adult" even though I know Oxbow has changed me I don't feel like I am ready to be a completely independent adult, most of the time I feel like I am still an awkward 11 year old girl who is too physically giant for her spirit, but my Dad is okay with that and then I feel okay with 11 year old me too.)

(Driving the car to the airport. The car fades into an airplane and an image of a cool magic plane design!)

(I was extremely nervous about my Zoom Introduction with Oxbow and was trying hard to connect the entire flight. Now that I look back on it I feel extremely embarrassed because I made a fool out of myself in front of the entire school and I was just walking off of the airplane. I was so convinced that if I didn't show up to the call that everyone there would think I was a lazy kid and didn't put effort into being present and putting effort in my intentions at Oxbow. Reflecting on that now, I know that it was another situation where I was over prepping my inevitable time I would spend at Oxbow.)

Sabine: (*looking impatiently at wizard-y laptop trying to connect on the airplane, looks very uncomfortable and worried*)

laptop connects really poorly

Sabine: HI SORRY! HI, I'M HERE!

Wayan's laptop perspective: *sweating and doesn't know what to do*

Sabine out of Wayan's Laptop: *looks stupid and terrible* SA- HELLO I- AAAAA— MY- ON
A PLA-

(little dotted map of West Palm Beach, Florida to Napa, California)

(Exiting the airport, getting to the car rental place, scene of my mother investigating the car and making sure that it's suitable, going through a checklist and giving a small "Okay!" allowing my dad and i to load up the car)

Sabine: OH MY GOD!

Sabine: IT'S SO BRIGHT! *eyes explode*

(When we were driving in the car to Napa I was so excited about everything around me. I had never seen so many hills or mountains in my life.)