

AND REMEMBER THAT WHATEVER DISCIPLINE YOU ARE IN,  
WHETHER YOU ARE A  
MUSICIAN OR A PHOTOGRAPHER, A FINE ARTIST OR A  
CARTOONIST, A WRITER, A DANCER, A DESIGNER,  
WHATEVER YOU DO,  
YOU HAVE ONE THING THAT'S UNIQUE  
YOU HAVE THE ABILITY TO  
MAKE ART.

AND FOR ME, AND FOR SO MANY OF THE PEOPLE I HAVE  
KNOWN, THAT'S BEEN A LIFESAVER.

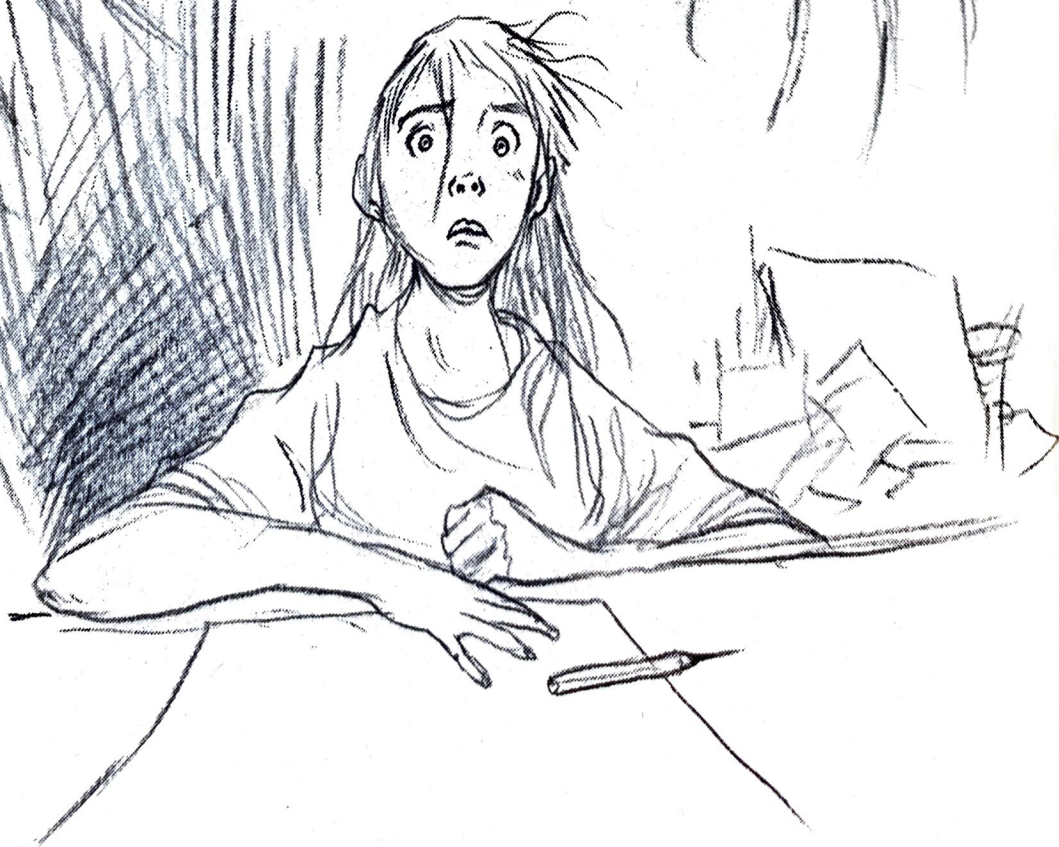
THE ULTIMATE LIFESAVER.

IT GETS YOU THROUGH GOOD TIMES AND IT GETS YOU  
THROUGH THE OTHER ONES.



LIFE IS SOMETIMES HARD.  
THINGS GO WRONG, IN LIFE AND IN LOVE  
AND IN BUSINESS AND IN FRIENDSHIP  
AND IN HEALTH AND IN  
ALL THE OTHER WAYS THAT  
LIFE CAN GO WRONG.

AND WHEN THINGS GET TOUGH,  
THIS IS WHAT YOU SHOULD DO...



MAKE

GOOD

ART.

I'M SERIOUS.

HUSBAND RUNS OFF WITH A POLITICIAN?

MAKE GOOD ART.



LEG CRUSHED AND THEN EATEN BY  
MUTATED BOA CONSTRICTOR?

MAKE GOOD ART.



I RS ON YOUR TRAIL?

MAKE GOOD ART.



CAT EXPLODED?

MAKE GOOD ART.



SOMEBODY ON THE INTERNET THINKS  
WHAT YOU DO IS STUPID OR EVIL OR  
IT'S ALL BEEN DONE BEFORE?

MAKE GOOD ART.





PROBABLY THINGS WILL WORK OUT SOMEHOW,  
AND EVENTUALLY TIME WILL TAKE THE  
STING AWAY, BUT THAT DOESN'T MATTER.  
DO WHAT ONLY YOU DO BEST.

MAKE GOOD ART.



MAKE IT ON THE GOOD  
DAYS TOO.



AND FIFTHLY,  
WHILE YOU'RE AT IT,  
MAKE YOUR ART.

DO THE STUFF THAT ONLY YOU CAN DO.

THE URGE, STARTING OUT, IS TO COPY. AND THAT'S NOT A  
BAD THING. MOST OF US ONLY FIND OUR OWN VOICES AFTER  
WE'VE SOUNDED LIKE A LOT OF OTHER PEOPLE.

BUT THE ONE THING THAT YOU HAVE  
THAT NOBODY ELSE HAS IS

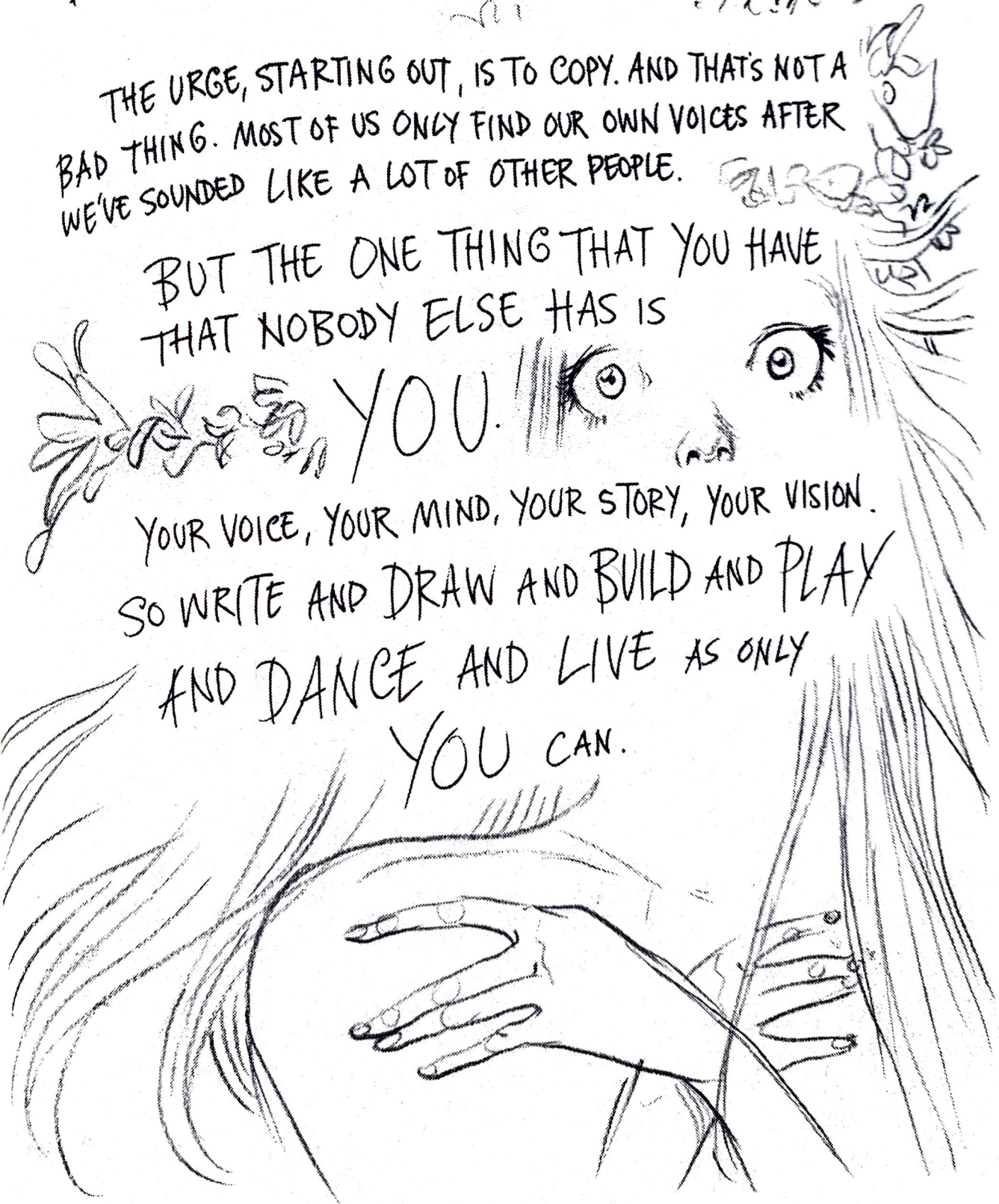
YOU.

YOUR VOICE, YOUR MIND, YOUR STORY, YOUR VISION.

SO WRITE AND DRAW AND BUILD AND PLAY

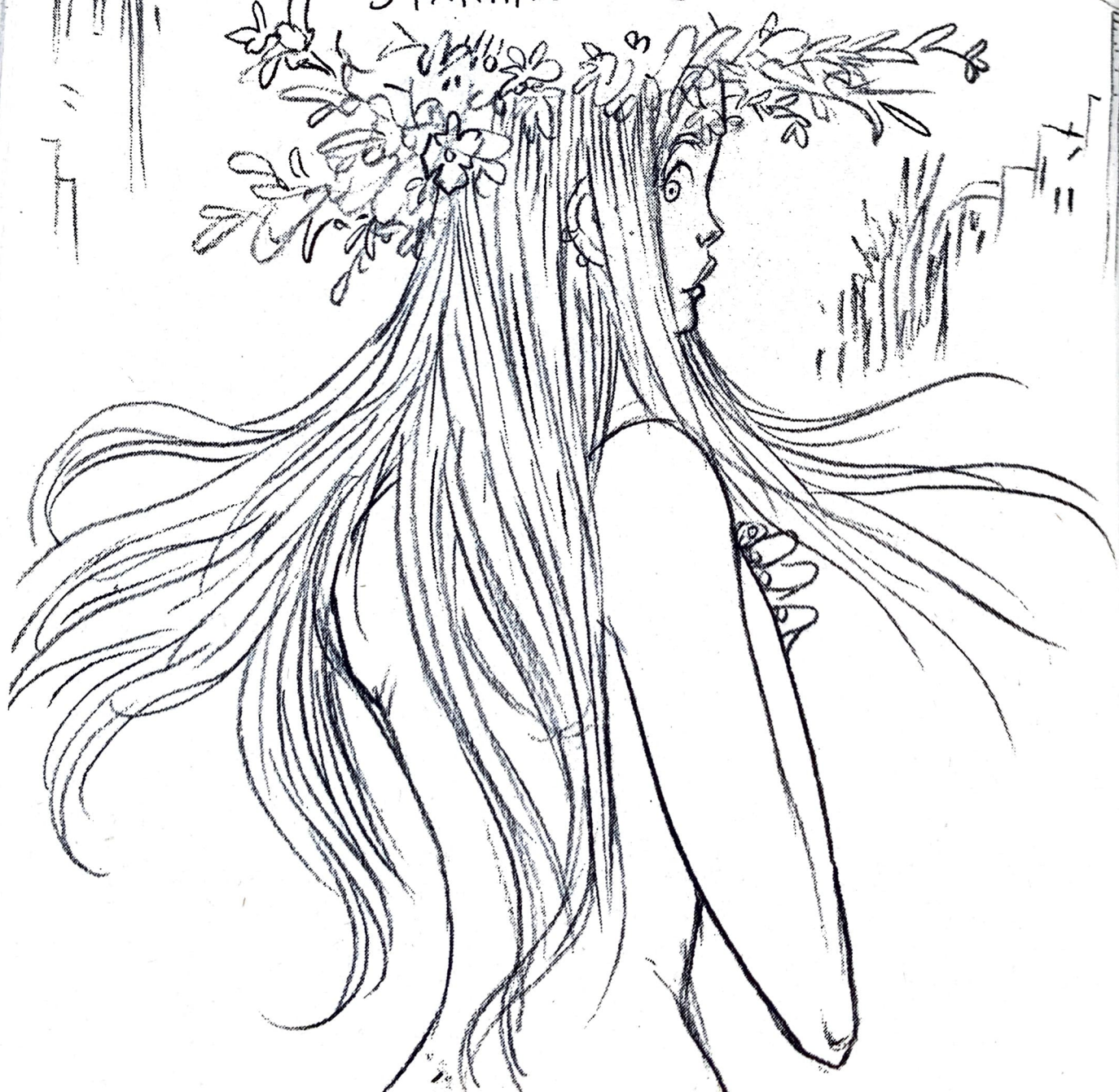
AND DANCE AND LIVE AS ONLY

YOU CAN.



THE MOMENT THAT YOU FEEL THAT, JUST POSSIBLY,  
YOU'RE WALKING DOWN THE STREET NAKED,  
EXPOSING TOO MUCH OF YOUR HEART AND YOUR MIND  
AND WHAT EXISTS ON THE INSIDE, SHOWING  
TOO MUCH OF YOURSELF.

THAT'S THE MOMENT YOU MAY BE  
STARTING TO GET IT RIGHT.

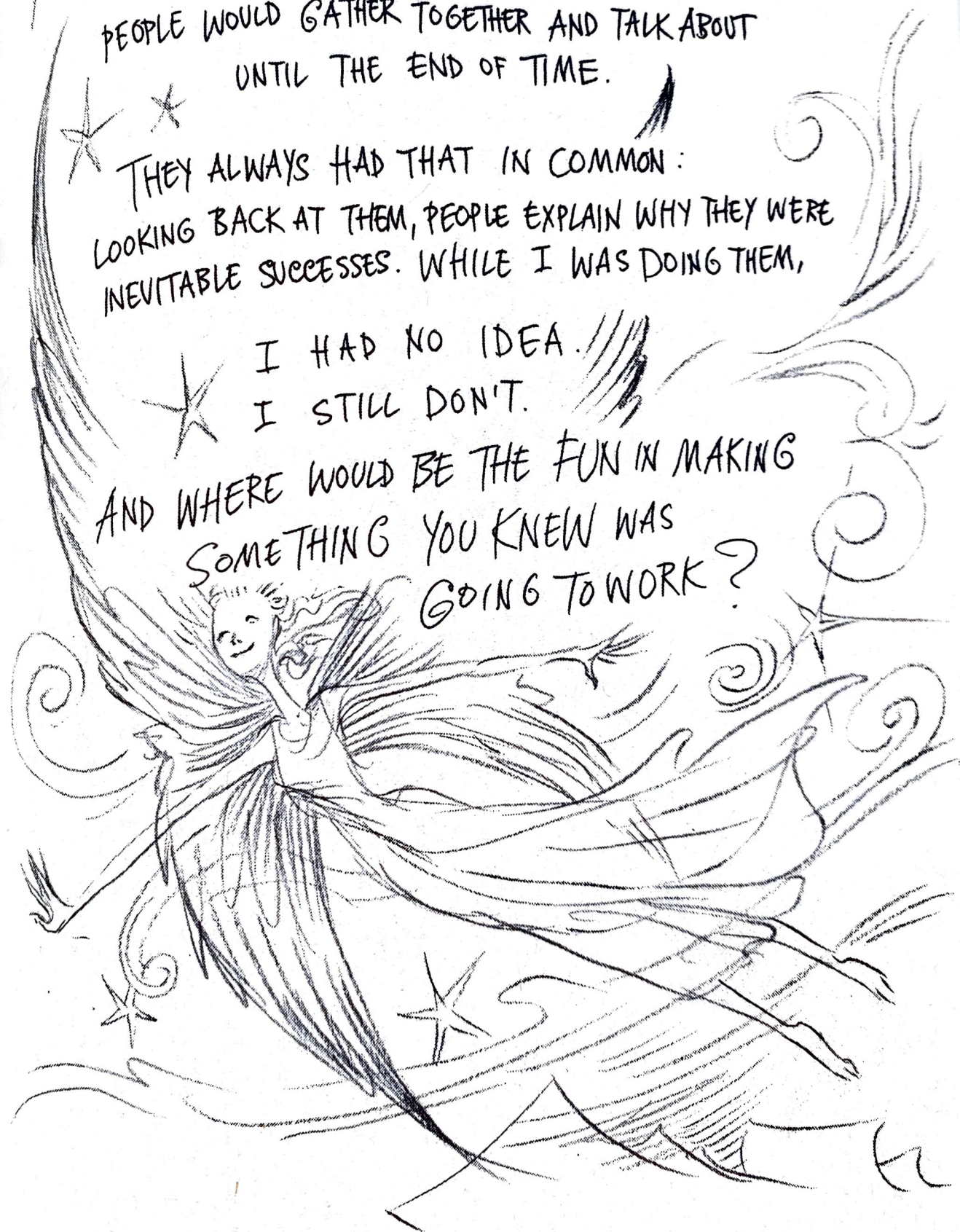


★ THE THINGS I'VE DONE THAT WORKED THE BEST WERE THE THINGS I WAS THE LEAST CERTAIN ABOUT, THE STORIES WHERE I WAS SURE THEY WOULD EITHER WORK, OR MORE LIKELY BE THE KINDS OF EMBARRASSING FAILURES PEOPLE WOULD GATHER TOGETHER AND TALK ABOUT UNTIL THE END OF TIME.

★ THEY ALWAYS HAD THAT IN COMMON: LOOKING BACK AT THEM, PEOPLE EXPLAIN WHY THEY WERE INEVITABLE SUCCESSSES. WHILE I WAS DOING THEM,

★ I HAD NO IDEA.  
★ I STILL DON'T.

★ AND WHERE WOULD BE THE FUN IN MAKING SOMETHING YOU KNEW WAS GOING TO WORK?



AND SOMETIMES THE THINGS I DID  
REALLY DIDN'T WORK.

THERE ARE STORIES OF MINE THAT HAVE NEVER  
BEEN REPRINTED. SOME OF THEM NEVER EVEN  
LEFT THE HOUSE.

BUT I LEARNED AS MUCH FROM THEM  
AS I DID FROM THE THINGS THAT  
WORKED.



SIXTHLY:

I WILL PASS ON SOME SECRET FREELANCER KNOWLEDGE.

SECRET KNOWLEDGE IS ALWAYS GOOD.

AND IT IS USEFUL FOR ANYONE WHO EVER PLANS TO CREATE ART FOR OTHER PEOPLE, TO ENTER A FREELANCE WORLD OF ANY KIND. I LEARNED IT IN COMICS, BUT IT APPLIES TO OTHER FIELDS, AND IT'S THIS:



PEOPLE GET HIRED BECAUSE, SOMEHOW, THEY GET HIRED. IN MY CASE I DID SOMETHING WHICH THESE DAYS WOULD BE EASY TO CHECK, AND WOULD GET ME INTO TROUBLE, AND WHEN I STARTED OUT, IN THOSE PRE-INTERNET DAYS, SEEMED LIKE A SENSIBLE CAREER STRATEGY: WHEN I WAS ASKED BY EDITORS WHO I'D WORKED FOR, I LIED. I LISTED A HANDFUL OF MAGAZINES THAT SOUNDED LIKELY, AND I SOUNDED CONFIDENT, AND I GOT JOBS. I THEN MADE IT A POINT OF HONOUR TO HAVE WRITTEN FOR EACH OF THE MAGAZINES I'D LISTED TO GET THAT FIRST JOB, SO THAT I HADN'T ACTUALLY LIED, I'D JUST BEEN CHRONOLOGICALLY CHALLENGED...



PEOPLE KEEP WORKING, IN A FREELANCE WORLD,  
AND MORE AND MORE OF TODAY'S WORLD IS FREELANCE,  
BECAUSE

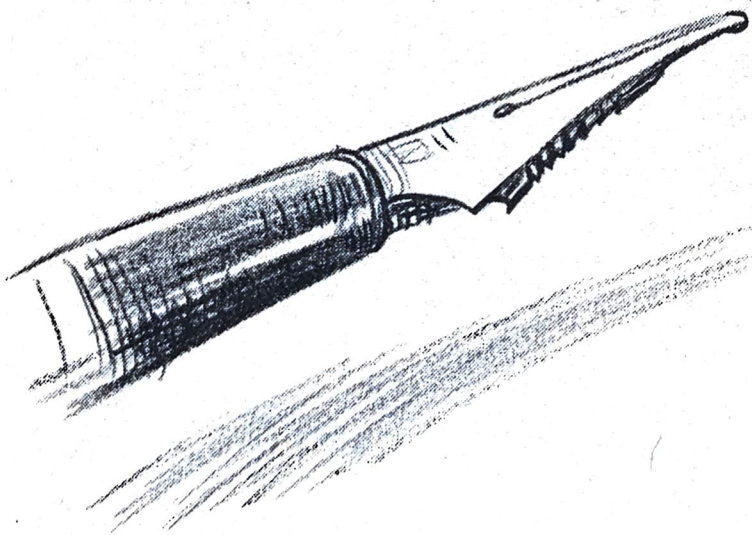
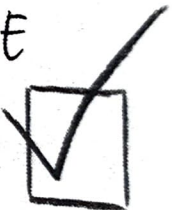
1. THEIR WORK IS GOOD.



AND 2. BECAUSE THEY ARE EASY TO  
GET ALONG WITH,



AND 3. BECAUSE THEY DELIVER THE  
WORK ON TIME.



AND YOU DON'T EVEN NEED ALL THREE. TWO OUT OF  
THREE IS FINE.



PEOPLE WILL TOLERATE HOW UNPLEASANT YOU ARE   
IF YOUR WORK IS GOOD   
AND  
YOU DELIVER IT ON TIME.



THEY'LL FORGIVE THE LATENESS OF THE WORK   
IF IT'S GOOD.   
AND  
IF THEY LIKE YOU.



AND YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE AS GOOD AS THE OTHERS   
IF YOU'RE ON TIME   
AND  
IT'S ALWAYS A PLEASURE TO HEAR FROM YOU.



I STARTED TRYING TO THINK WHAT THE BEST ADVICE  
I'D BEEN GIVEN OVER THE YEARS WAS.

AND IT CAME FROM  
STEPHEN KING

TWENTY YEARS AGO, AT THE HEIGHT OF THE SUCCESS OF  
SANDMAN.

I WAS WRITING A COMIC THAT PEOPLE LOVED AND WERE TAKING  
SERIOUSLY. KING LIKED SANDMAN AND MY NOVEL WITH TERRY  
PRATCHETT, GOOD OMENS, AND HE SAW THE MADNESS, THE  
LONG SIGNING LINES, ALL THAT, AND HIS ADVICE WAS THIS:

'THIS IS REALLY GREAT. YOU SHOULD ENJOY IT.'



BEST ADVICE I GOT THAT I IGNORED. INSTEAD I WORRIED ABOUT IT. I WORRIED ABOUT THE NEXT DEADLINE, THE NEXT IDEA, THE NEXT STORY. THERE WASN'T A MOMENT FOR THE NEXT FOURTEEN OR FIFTEEN YEARS THAT I WASN'T WRITING SOMETHING IN MY HEAD, OR WONDERING ABOUT IT. AND I DIDN'T STOP AND LOOK AROUND AND GO,  
THIS IS REALLY FUN.

I WISH I'D ENJOYED IT MORE. IT'S BEEN AN AMAZING RIDE. BUT THERE WERE PARTS OF THE RIDE I MISSED, BECAUSE I WAS TOO WORRIED ABOUT THINGS GOING WRONG, ABOUT WHAT CAME NEXT, TO ENJOY THE BIT I WAS ON.

THAT WAS THE HARDEST LESSON FOR ME, I THINK:

TO LET GO AND ENJOY THE RIDE, BECAUSE THE RIDE TAKES YOU TO SOME REMARKABLE AND UNEXPECTED PLACES.



I WISH YOU LUCK.  
LUCK IS USEFUL.

OFTEN YOU WILL DISCOVER THAT THE HARDER YOU WORK,  
AND THE MORE WISELY YOU WORK,  
THE LUCKIER YOU GET.

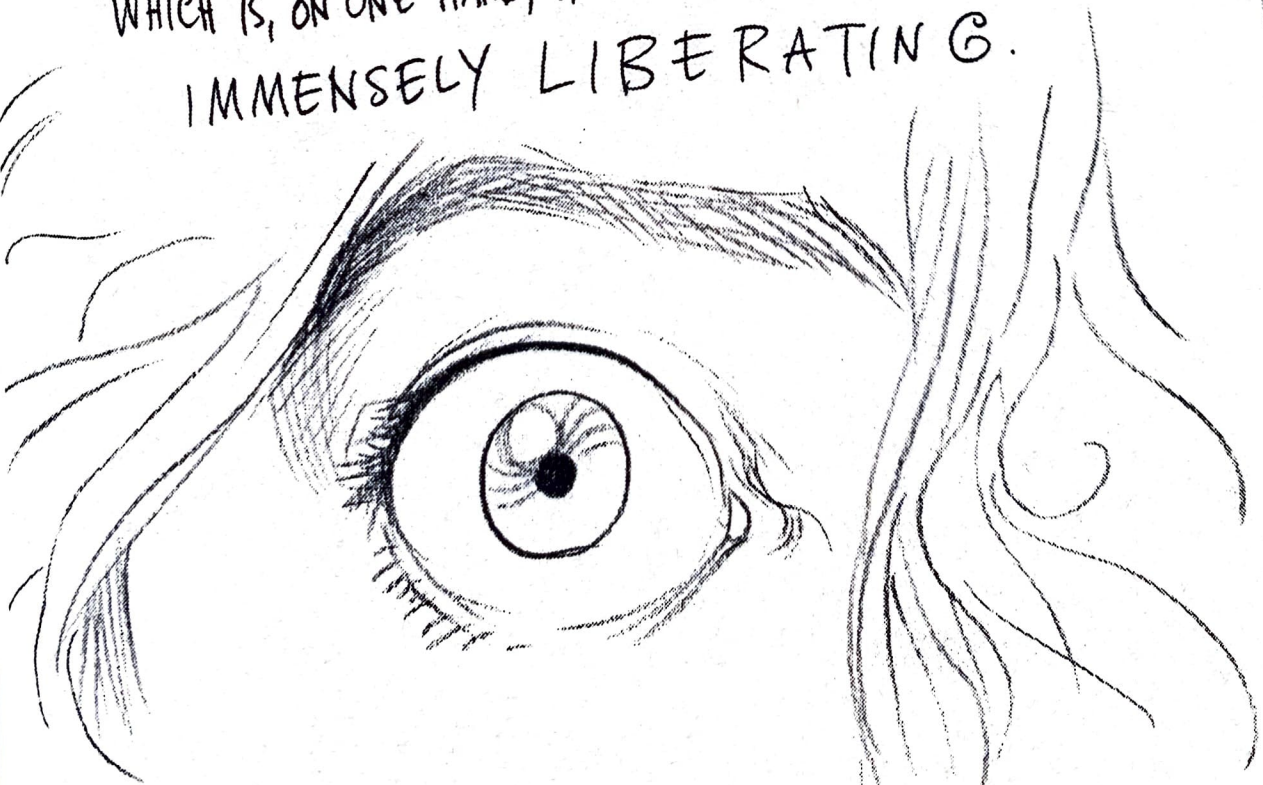
BUT THERE IS LUCK, AND IT HELPS.



WE'RE IN A TRANSITIONAL WORLD RIGHT NOW, IF YOU'RE IN ANY KIND OF ARTISTIC FIELD, BECAUSE THE NATURE OF DISTRIBUTION IS CHANGING, THE MODELS BY WHICH CREATORS GOT THEIR WORK OUT INTO THE WORLD, AND GOT TO KEEP A ROOF OVER THEIR HEADS AND BUY SANDWICHES WHILE THEY DID THAT, ARE ALL CHANGING.

I'VE TALKED TO PEOPLE AT THE TOP OF THE FOOD CHAIN IN PUBLISHING, IN BOOKSELLING, IN ALL THOSE AREAS, AND NOBODY KNOWS WHAT THE LANDSCAPE WILL LOOK LIKE TWO YEARS FROM NOW, LET ALONE A DECADE AWAY.

THE DISTRIBUTION CHANNELS THAT PEOPLE HAD BUILT OVER THE LAST CENTURY OR SO ARE IN FLUX FOR PRINT, FOR VISUAL ARTISTS, FOR MUSICIANS, FOR CREATIVE PEOPLE OF ALL KINDS. WHICH IS, ON ONE HAND, INTIMIDATING, AND ON THE OTHER, IMMENSELY LIBERATING.



THE RULES,  
THE ASSUMPTIONS,  
THE NOW WE'RE SUPPOSED TO'S  
OF HOW YOU GET YOUR WORK SEEN, AND WHAT YOU DO THEN,  
ARE BREAKING DOWN.

THE GATEKEEPERS ARE LEAVING THEIR GATES.  
YOU CAN BE AS CREATIVE AS YOU NEED TO BE TO GET YOUR  
WORK SEEN. YOUTUBE AND THE WEB (AND WHATEVER  
COMES AFTER YOUTUBE AND THE WEB) CAN GIVE YOU  
MORE PEOPLE WATCHING THAN TELEVISION EVER  
DID.

THE OLD RULES ARE CRUMBLING.  
AND NOBODY KNOWS WHAT THE NEW RULES ARE.  
SO MAKE UP YOUR OWN RULES.



SOMEONE ASKED ME RECENTLY HOW TO DO SOMETHING SHE  
THOUGHT WAS GOING TO BE DIFFICULT. IN THIS CASE RECORDING  
AN AUDIOBOOK, AND I SUGGESTED SHE PRETEND THAT SHE WAS  
SOMEONE WHO COULD DO IT. NOT PRETEND TO DO IT, BUT  
PRETEND SHE WAS SOMEONE WHO COULD. SHE PUT UP A NOTICE  
TO THIS EFFECT ON THE STUDIO WALL, AND SHE SAID IT HELPED.

I  
ROCK  
AUDIO BOOKS

SO BE WISE.

BECAUSE THE WORLD NEEDS MORE WISDOM.  
AND IF YOU CANNOT BE WISE, PRETEND TO BE SOMEONE WHO  
IS WISE, AND THEN JUST BEHAVE LIKE THEY WOULD.



MAKE  
INTERESTING, AMAZING, GLORIOUS, FANTASTIC  
MISTAKES.

BREAK RULES.

LEAVE THE WORLD MORE INTERESTING  
FOR YOUR BEING HERE.

MAKE GOOD  
ART.



NEIL GAIMAN

CHRIS  
RIDDELL