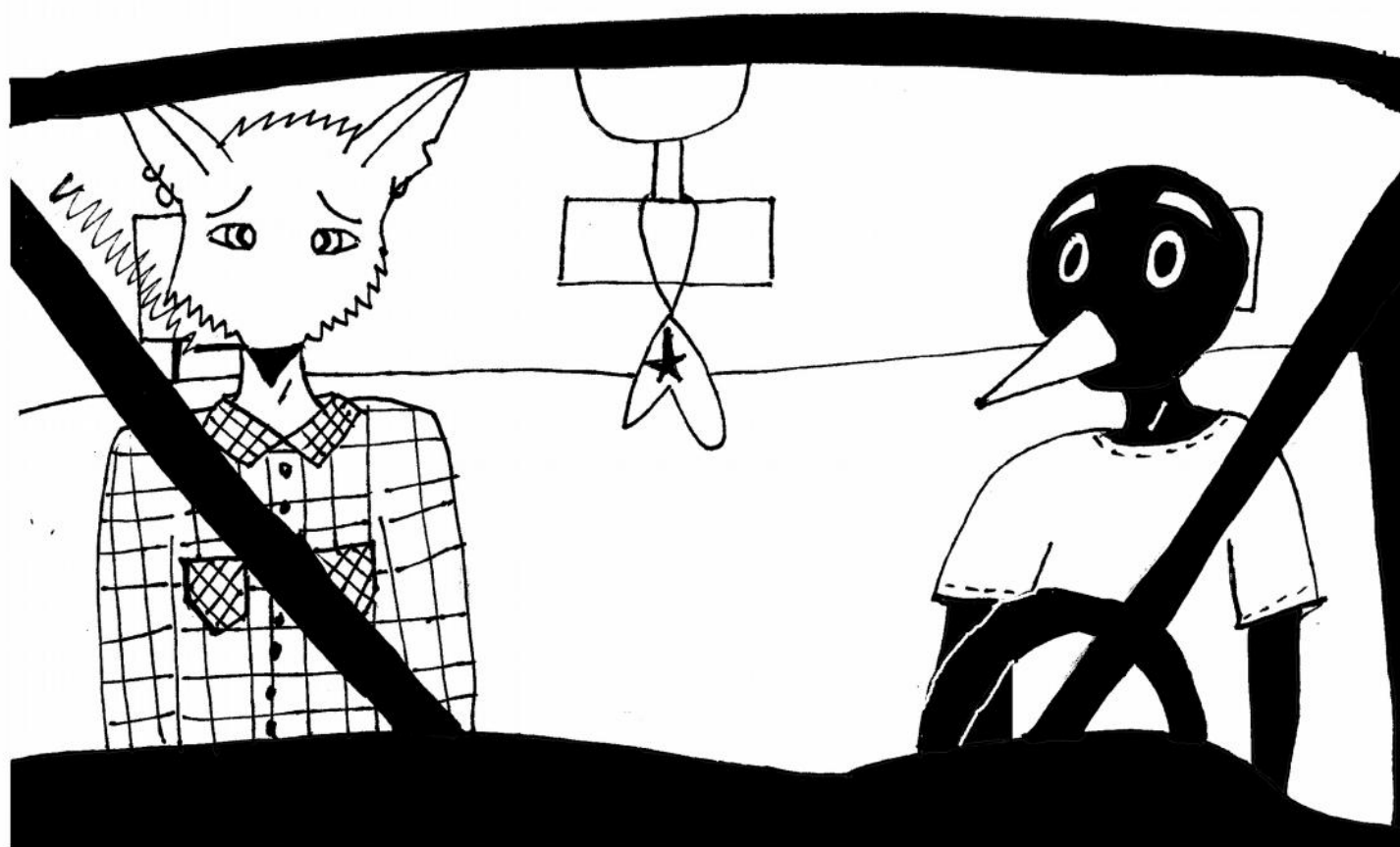


December 2019

vol 3

# HOW DID THIS HAPPEN???



where does that highway go to???

a zine by

Ray & Shay Daylami-Frost



HOW DID THIS HAPPEN???

vol 3: where does that highway  
go to???

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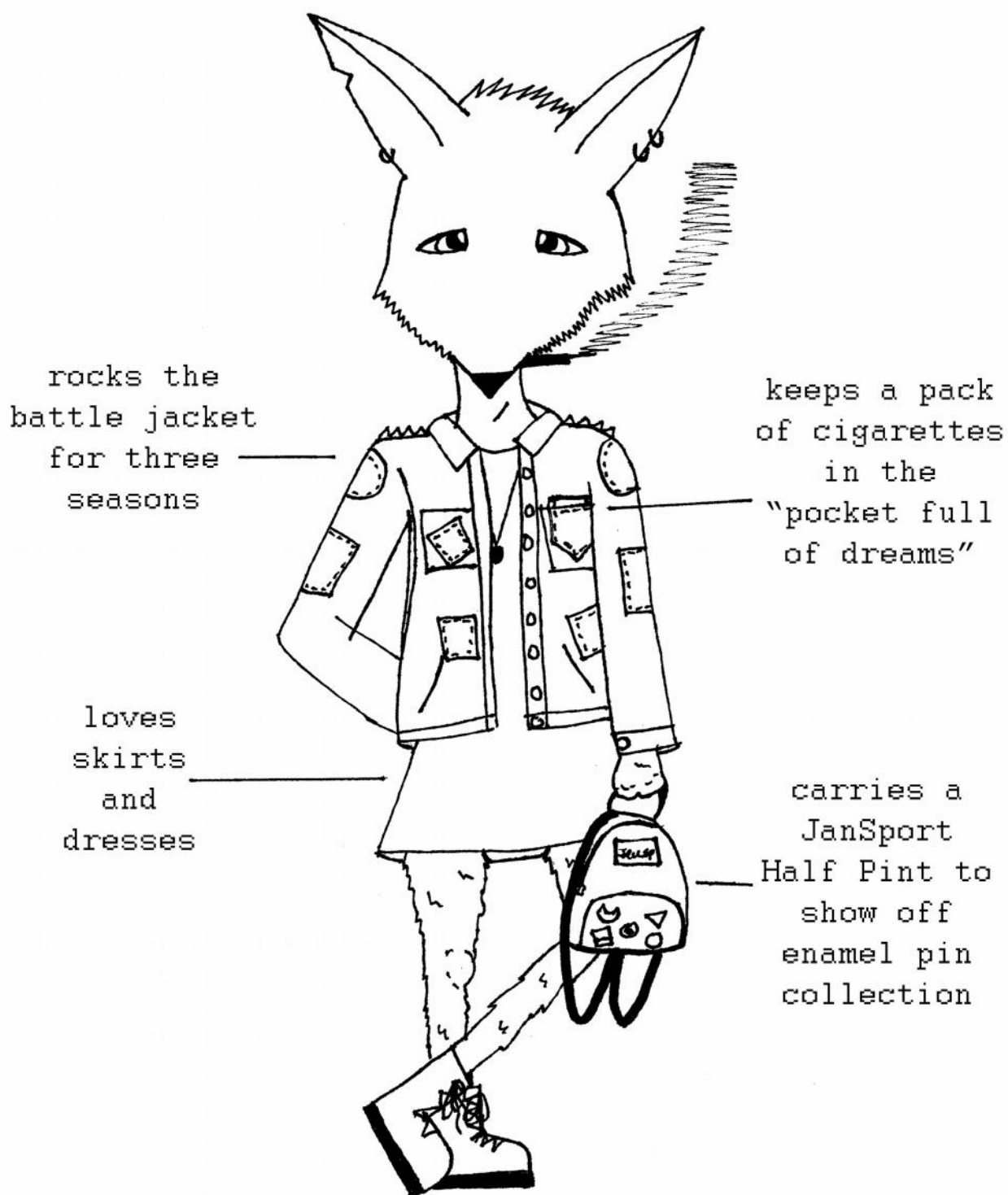
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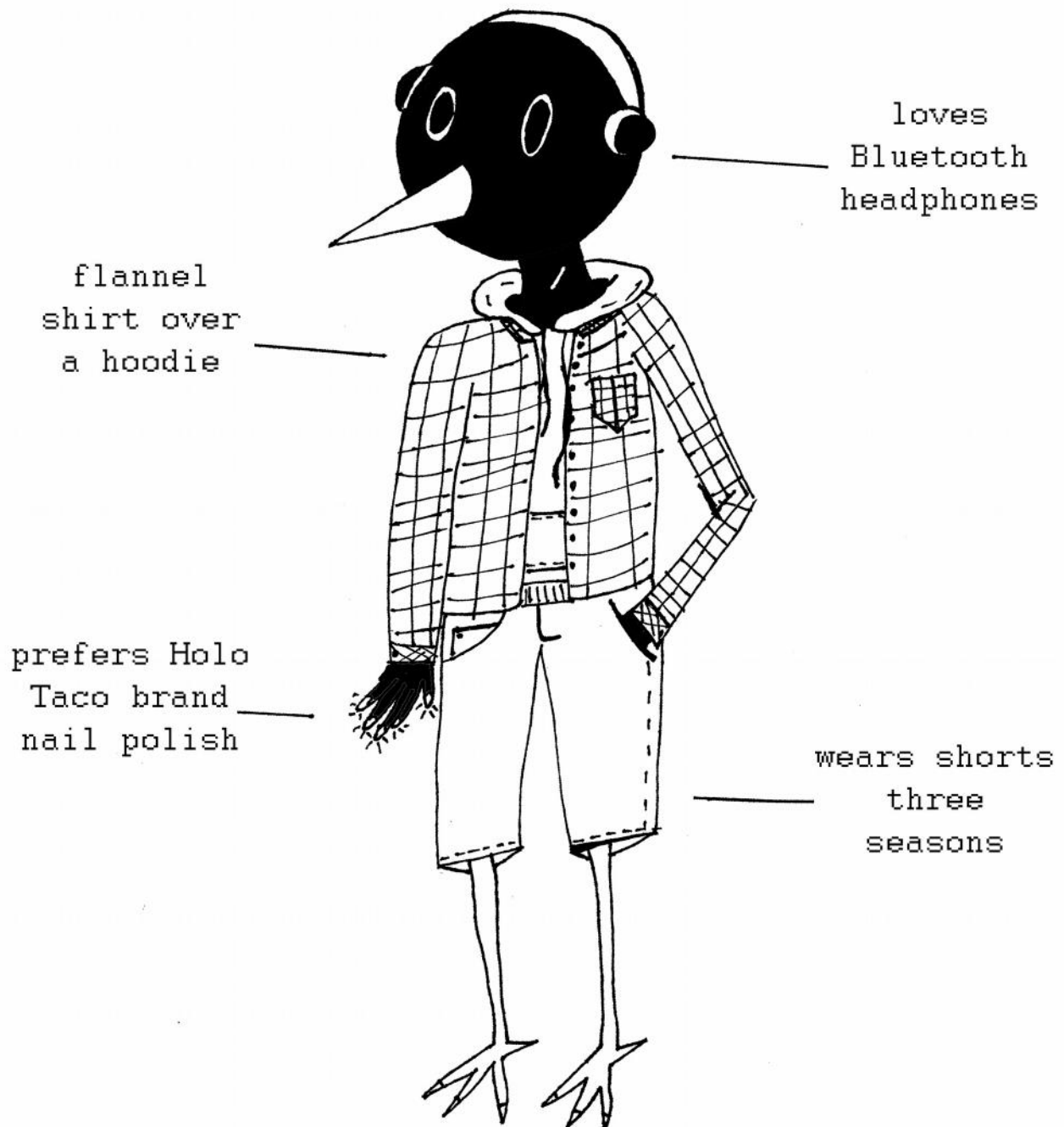
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# COYOTE UGLY

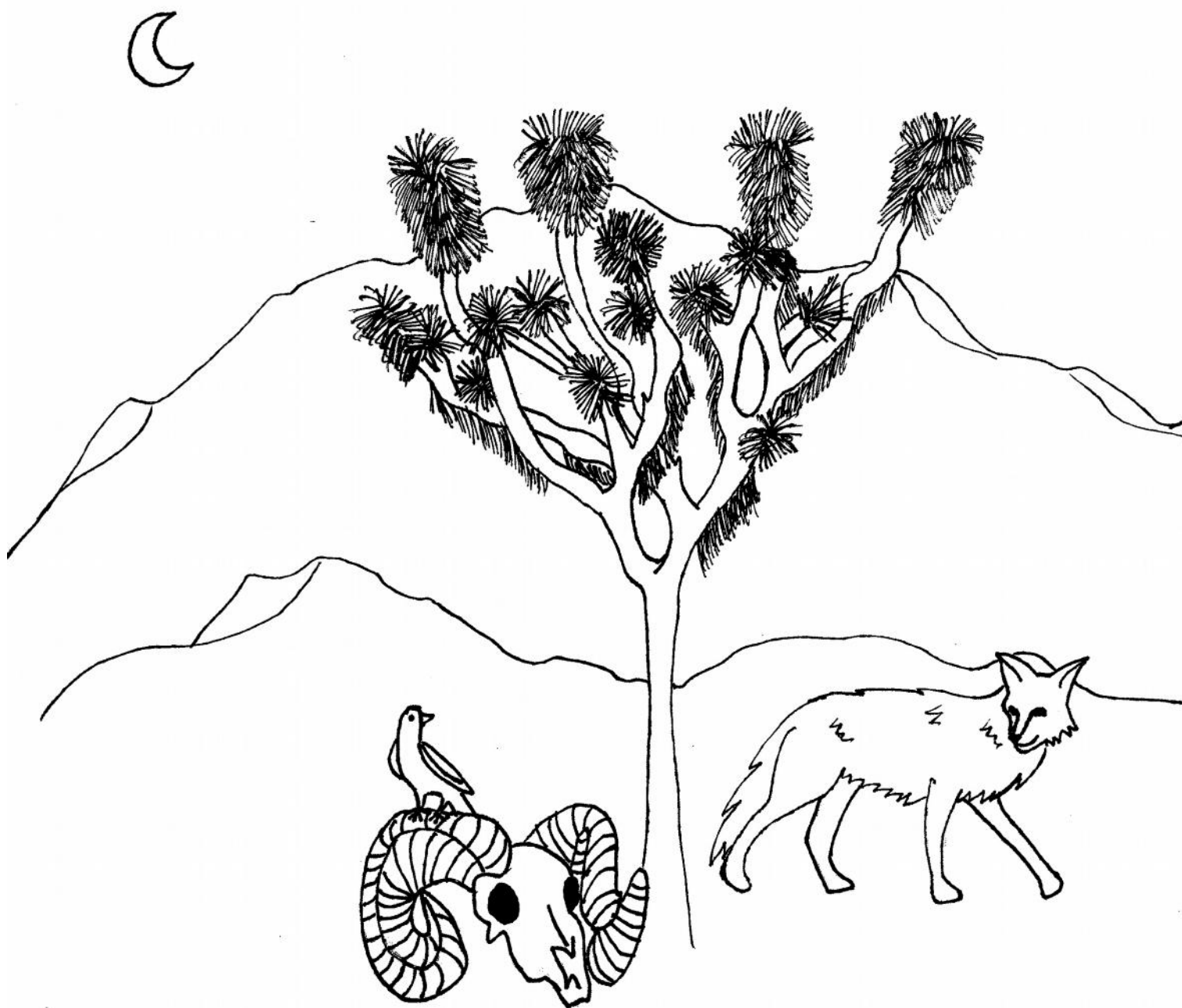
they/them pronouns



# DISCO NAILS

(THE CROW)

they/them pronouns



die to prove we ever lived this

## "I'll Take the Desert"

They were driving through the woods between Branson and St. Louis when Disco Nails saw it laying in the road.

A coyote.

And a sorry-looking skinny one at that.

Disco slammed on the brakes, stopping with the headlights illuminating the body. They hopped out of the truck and over to the corpse, talons clacking on the asphalt. Up close, they could already smell the vague, acrid stench of death. Disco prodded it with a toe. Already cold.

They put their hands on their hips and looked down at the 'yote. Scrawny and dirty in a red flannel shirt, tight gray jeans, and red Docs. Three silver hoops glinted on its ears and one of them was missing a good sized notch of flesh from the edge.

"Well shit, I can't just leave them here."

They bent down and hefted the coyote into their arms. It was awfully heavy for such a scrawny critter. Disco plopped it onto the bench seat through the open driver's door and slid the body over to the passenger seat. Its head lolled back, revealing flecks of blood in the creamy fur on its chin and neck.

"That won't do."

Disco buckled the body in and nudged the head forward. "There. Looks like they're just sleepin' drunk."

Disco started driving again, put a cigarette in their beak and lit it. The corpse was perfuming the cab with a faint reek of death, so they rolled the window down. Disco looked over at it in the passenger seat, barely visible in the darkness.

"What the fuck is wrong with me? What kind of

bird finds a dead body and just puts it in their truck and drives away? People are going to think *I* killed it." Disco flicked ash onto the highway. "What the fuck am I going to do with it when I get home?"

Disco turned the radio on.

*"Was he unforgiven or just tired of livin' a life that never felt like his? Though I was worn and wary, I thought I'd bury him and lay his soul to rest out in the desert night..."*

Chills ran down Disco's spine. They tried to change the station, but only static tuned in, so they switched it off. They didn't know why—coyotes could be native to Missouri, sure—but they had a feeling that this one was from the desert, just like them. It just felt wrong to leave them there in the road like that.

Disco drove on, chain smoking to mask the scent of the body and the night faded from deep midnight blue to predawn lavender. When they came to the fork in the road outside Springfield, Disco glanced over at the body. They tried the radio again.

*"...to roam forever, I'll take the desert..."*

Disco found themselves turning down the highway headed west. "Fuck St. Louis! I'm going home."

The rising sun filled the cab with peachy-pink light and warmth.

The heat caused the coyote's heart to beat. Suddenly, Disco saw a clawed hand reaching for the cigarette in their beak.

"Holy fuck!" They put the cigarette between two cold-ish, clawed fingers. "Take it!"

Disco pulled over, onto the shoulder, flipped their hazards on.

The coyote drew hard on the cigarette, exhaled



smoke from its nose. "What?"

"Jesus Christ! I thought you were fucking dead!"

"I was."

"Well, what happened?"

The coyote shrugged. "Evidently, I'm not anymore," they said, "Do you know me?"

"No." Disco couldn't take their eyes off the 'yote. Its eyes were bright green and crystal clear. It seemed warmer somehow, more present than it had been as a corpse.

The 'yote looked around. "So, how did I end up in your truck, then? Do you, like, just pick up dead bodies you find or something?"

"I mean, you were just laying there on the road in the woods... I don't know. It just didn't feel right to leave you there."

"Ah." The coyote snorted out smoke in amusement. "Okay, so you didn't hit me?"

"No."

"You have no idea how I died?"

"None."

"Excellent. I've been told you'll die again if you find out how it happened the first time." They smiled. "No temptation to tell me if you don't know."

Disco nodded solemnly. "...right...?"

After a moment of silence, the coyote reached for the door handle. "So, I mean, I understand that this must be unsettling to say the least. Do you want me to just get out?"

"No."

The 'yote was taken aback. "No?"

Disco nodded. They'd felt so alone all their life and suddenly, it felt like they were connected to another living being.

"The corpse of some critter you don't know, that you found on the side of the road in the woods, came back to life and stole your cigarette from your mouth and you don't want it to get out of your truck and fuck off?"

They nodded again.

The coyote stared at them, wide-eyed, mixed fear and surprise. "I could be a murderer or something."

"Are you a murderer?"

"Not as far as I remember."

"See, you're not a murderer. It's fine. I'm the one who was driving around with a corpse." Disco cackled.

"Well, okay..." The 'yote felt like it would be ungrateful to just leave the crow who'd found them and probably had something to do with bringing them back to life. "We don't have to sit here on the side of the road then. I don't want to keep you from wherever you're going."

Disco turned their hazards off and pulled back onto the road.

"So, where are we going?"

"Reno."

The coyote yipped in excitement. "Fuck yeah! What luck! That's where I'm from."

Disco's golden eyes glimmered. "Really? Me too. How did you end up in this Midwest hellscape?"

"Haven't the foggiest, but is it any surprise that this place literally fucking killed me?" The coyote threw the butt out the window and took another cigarette from the pack on the seat between them. "What about you?"

"School is the long story short. Shit didn't work out." Disco ruffled the feathers on their head.

"My name's Disco Nails, by the way. What's yours?"

The coyote lit the cigarette, thinking for a moment. "Coyote Ugly."

Disco scrunched up their face. "I doubt that's actually your name."

They shook their head. "It's all I can remember being called." Ugly shrugged. "It'll have to do. Besides, I doubt your mother actually named you 'Disco Nails.'"

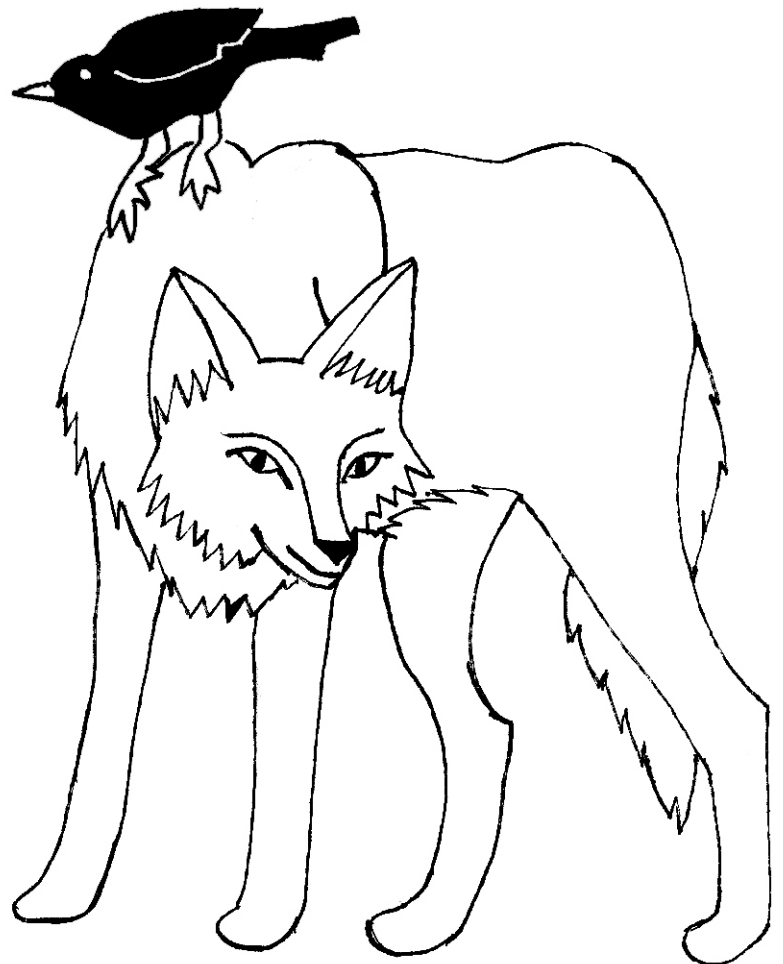
"Okay," Disco said, "My new friend Coyote Ugly."

Ugly laughed. "Friend?"

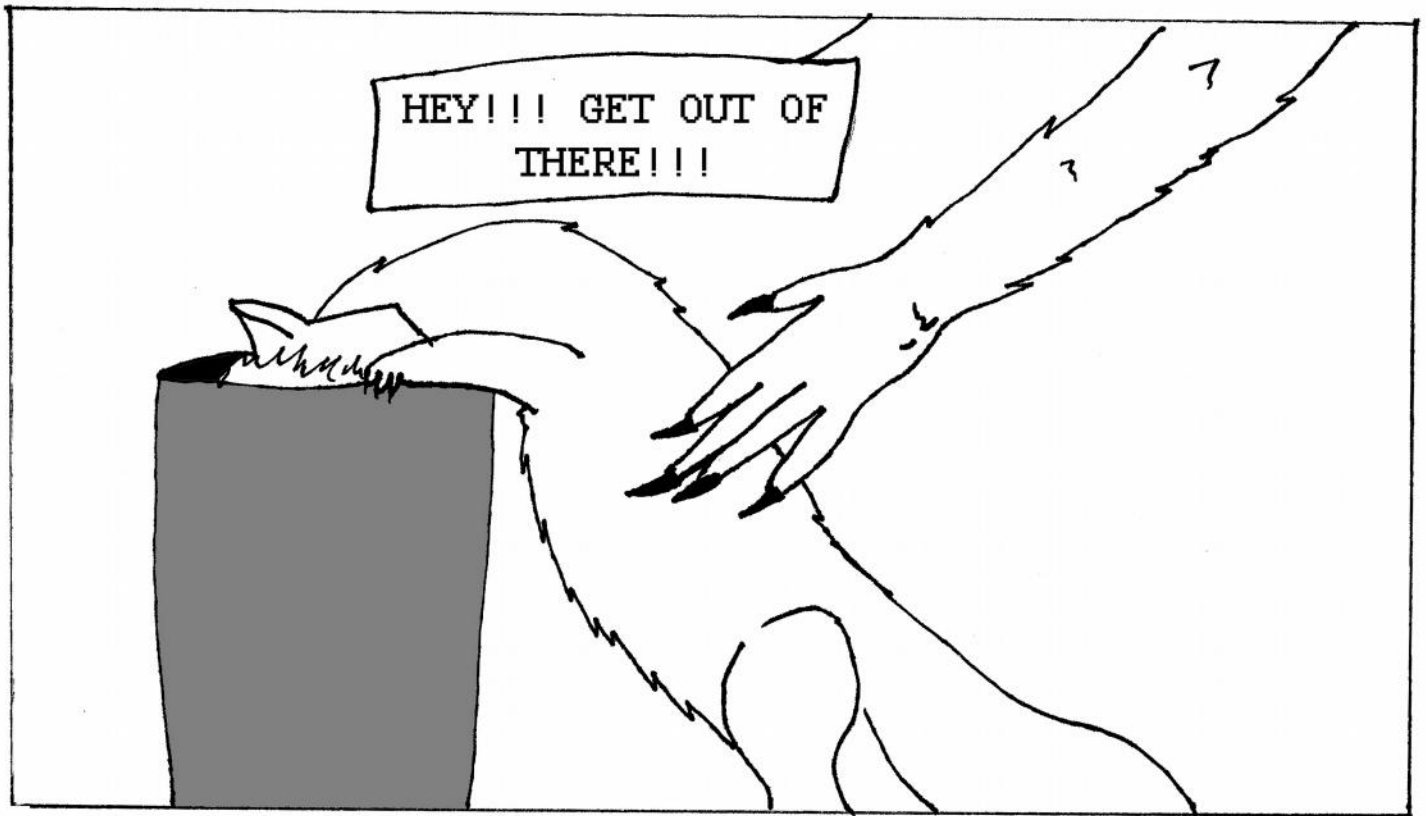
"I picked up your corpse and I'm driving you home. We're gonna have to be friends; it's a long drive."

"Alright," Ugly said. "Partners in grime."

Disco cackled. "I already like you."



# TRASH EATER



Hey, I know at one point in your life  
you only ate trash, but that's not  
your life any more. You don't eat  
garbage anymore. We feed you plenty,  
you fat lump.



what if what if what if

Anxiety is a bitch.

Having nothing within reason to worry about, my brain selects and fixates on the regular and the mundane. Like the commute to and from work, and which bag I want to use to carry my shit, and what to pack for lunch.

Nevermind that all of these things are 100% something I can handle.

Nevermind that making the "wrong" decision re: any of these things would not be a big deal.

Nevermind that they're the same things I do and the same routine I follow every day.

I'm paralyzed.

No clear option presents itself.

No easy answer comes to mind.

No calm

just spikey jaggedy scribbles in the back of my head and racing thoughts

whatif whatif

whatif

YOU'RE WRONG

but what but what whatif

what if whatif what if

what if...I'm right?

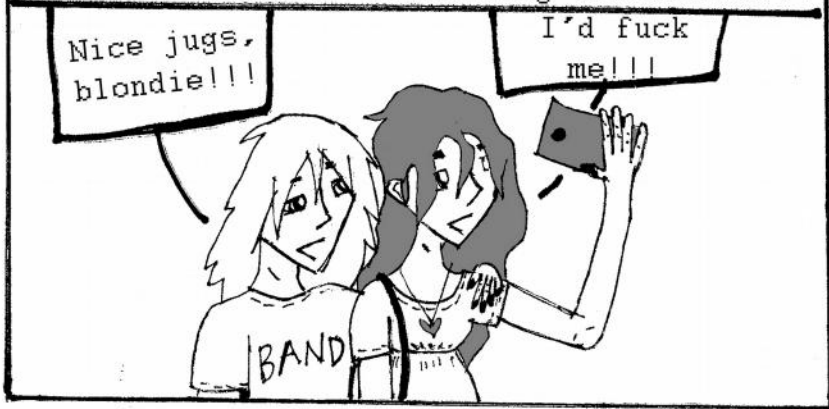
# CATCALLING



in an attempt to confuse and intimidate  
men, they began to catcall each  
other...

[illegible]

...before resorting to the ultimate  
confusion tactic: catcalling themselves!!!



getting dressed is hard/stream of consciousness  
clothes thoughts

The decision of what to wear each day is probably the most difficult I have to make. Torn between what will make me feel most physically comfortable and what will make me feel like I'm being seen the way I want to. Emotional comfort, call it. And except on my most sensory hellish days, emotional comfort wins. I've been uncomfy in jeans so many days in my life that that has become normal and the more comfortable option isn't something I know how to choose or know how to weigh against the old standby: jeans.

But there are different kinds of jeans even...so the automatic choice has sub-decisions that are almost impossible to make because they're all equally un-fucking-comfortable in their own special way.

\*

It is now officially, undeniably Xmas and I'm celebrating by wearing my 10+ year old green corduroy overalls. I'm amazed they still fit. And don't even make me look that dumpy..

The internet has been GREAT for my self-consciousness over clothes and what I look like. Now when I wear weird shit that makes me ~feel~ awesome but worry what other people would think I'm just like...FASHUN!!!

Like my overalls. I'm fuckin high fashion farmer over and anyone looking at me strange can suck a dick, dumbshits.

Leggings though...that shit is gendered and tied to my dysphoria and inability to accept my curves

and society's perception of them on my body. Overalls are boxy & masc...leggings are form-fitting & femme and reveal me to be "female"...when streetwear fashion instas make it okay for men to wear leggings then maybe I'll jump on that trend but until then I need to cover them up, either with overalls or gym shorts. And I know the argument that gym shorts are also revealing as fuck, but they're revealing in a masculine way. It's society's coding of that type of revealing outfit as more masculine and my internalization of that determination. And I'm okay with that. Because my emotional comfort with the clothes I wear is closely related to the level of dysphoria I feel in the clothes. And that's okay. And I'm allowed to call it dysphoria even if I don't want to claim the *trans* label and don't want to transition.

There have been tons of "dykes" like me before me and if that is the way I want to bumble through life there's nothing anybody anywhere can do about it.

\*

Overalls are nice because they don't have a waistband. But they have straps, and that's a different kind of uncomfortable...

High fashion farmer is nice, but I want to look dapper. A suit. A blazer. Nice dress shirts and suspenders. And slacks that make me look hot. A tie? Maybe a white tie and white suspenders over a black shirt and pants. Silver tie clip.

But for today, overalls.



# THINGS TO LIVE FOR PART 1:

## COYOTE UGLY

I love my little family



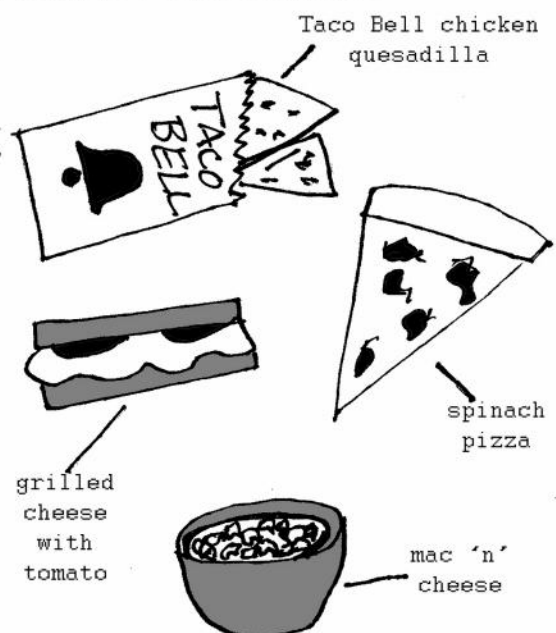
there will always be more  
books & zines to read & new  
songs to hear



the feeling of riding  
downhill standing on the  
pedals in a skirt



eating carbs with melted  
cheese



# THINGS TO LIVE FOR PART 2:

## DISCO NAILS

I love my little family



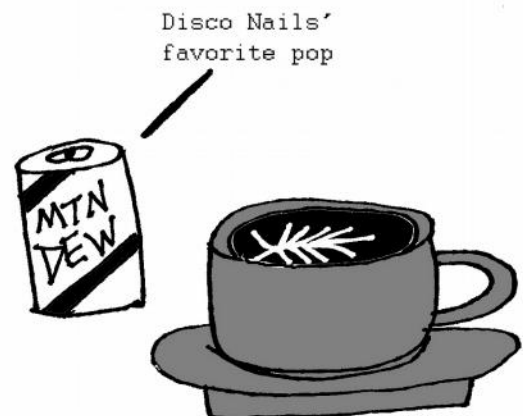
there are so many bike rides I haven't gone on



the feeling of just the right song at just the right volume at just the right moment



drinking sweet, caffienated beverages



fancy coffee shop latte



# Thanks for reading!!!



We hope you enjoyed our brain dribblings! If you liked this zine, share it with your friends. If you really liked it, consider telling them to buy a copy from our Etsy shop so we can keep making new issues. Follow your heart and maybe our socials!

Love,

Coyote Ugly & Disco Nails

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#howdidthishappenzine





## WONDER HOW A CROW MAKES FRIENDS WITH A COYOTE???

This volume of *HOW DID THIS HAPPEN???* opens with the story of how Disco Nails and Coyote Ugly met. From there, *where does that highway go to???* goes on to present musings on anxiety, catcalling, clothes as part of our identities and the little things that are worth living for. The themes of death and rebirth act as a uniting thread throughout both this volume and the series. All of this is presented in the dark humor you've come to know and love through short story, poetry, essays, drawings, and comics.



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Publication