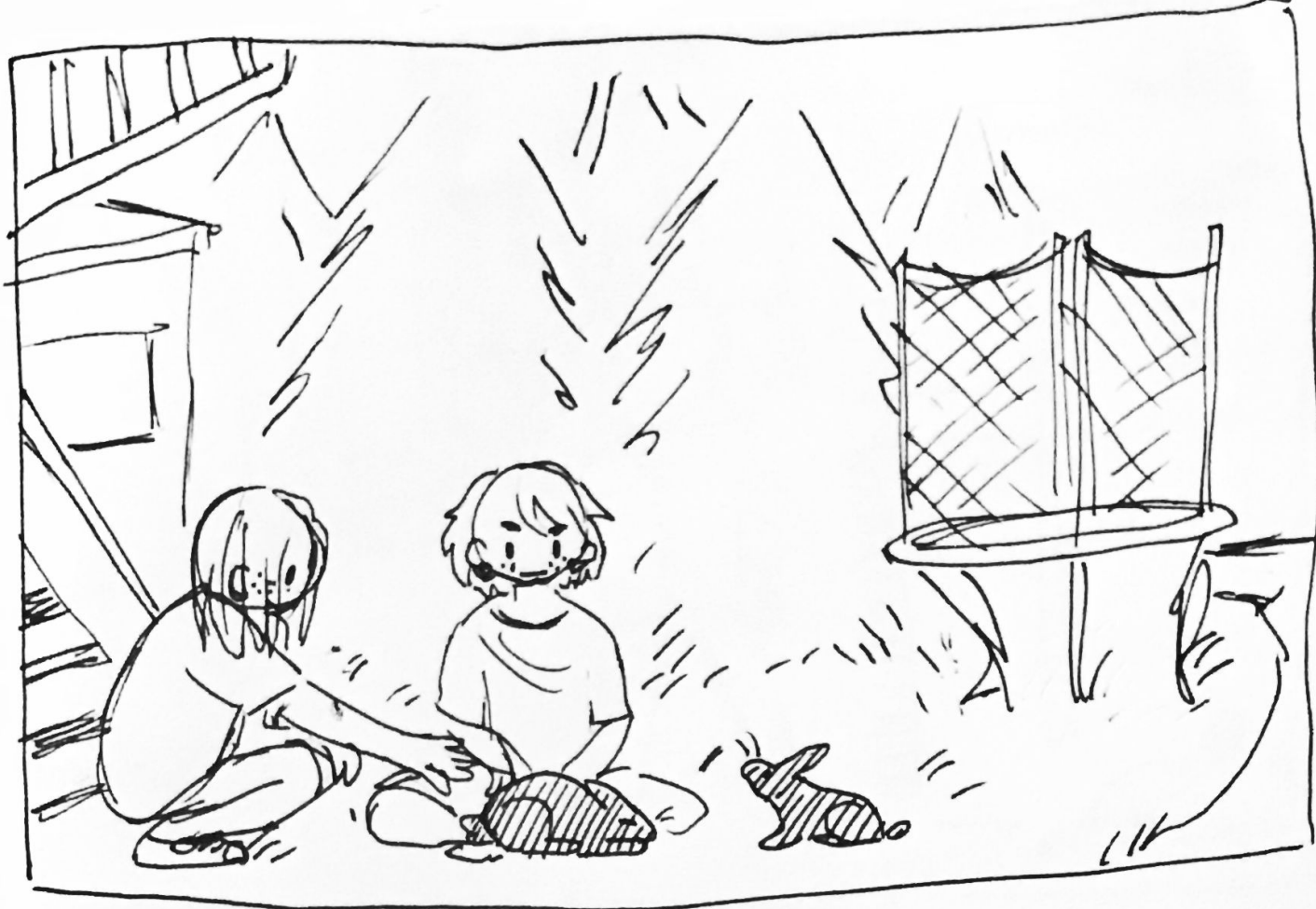


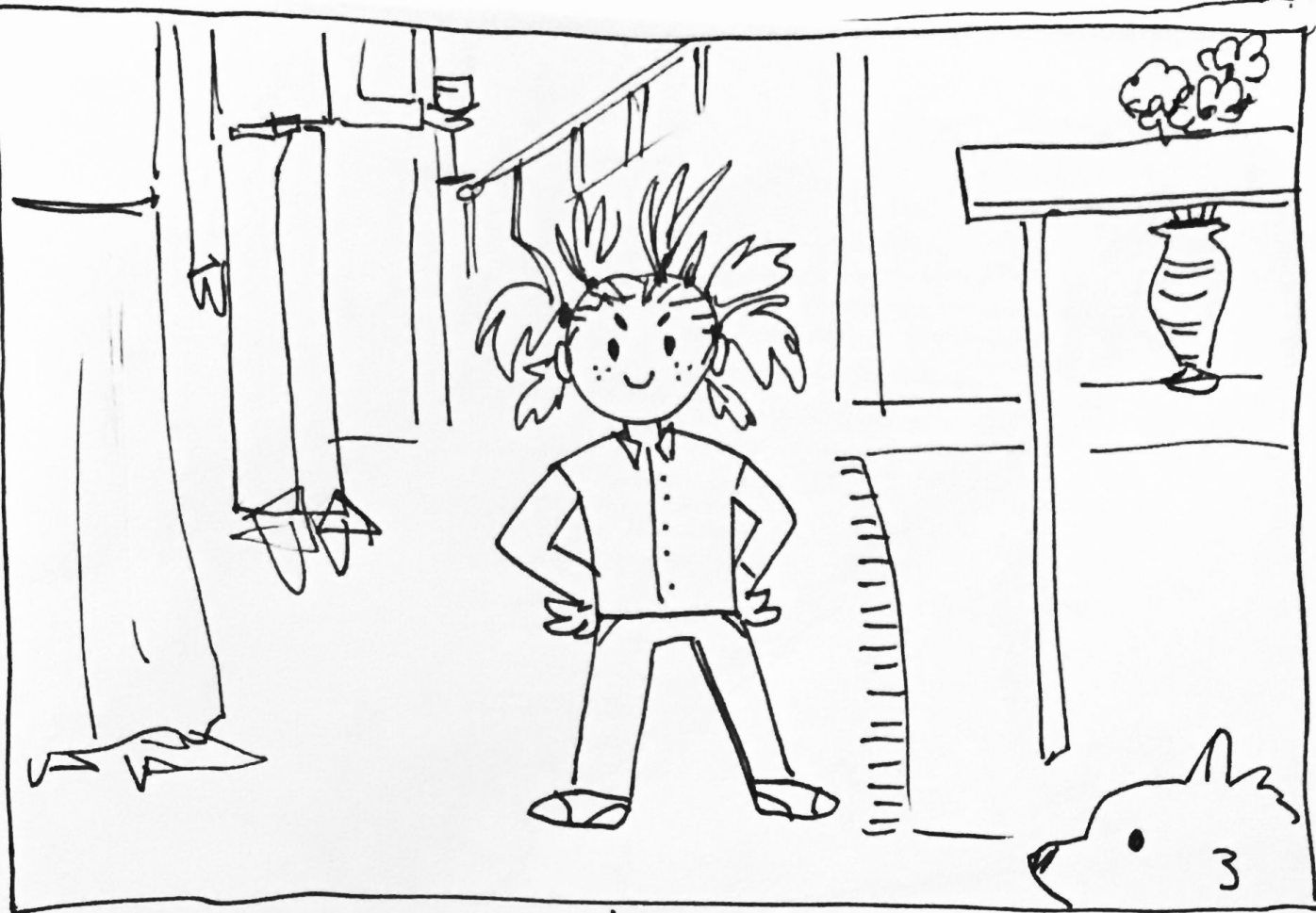
OLIVER





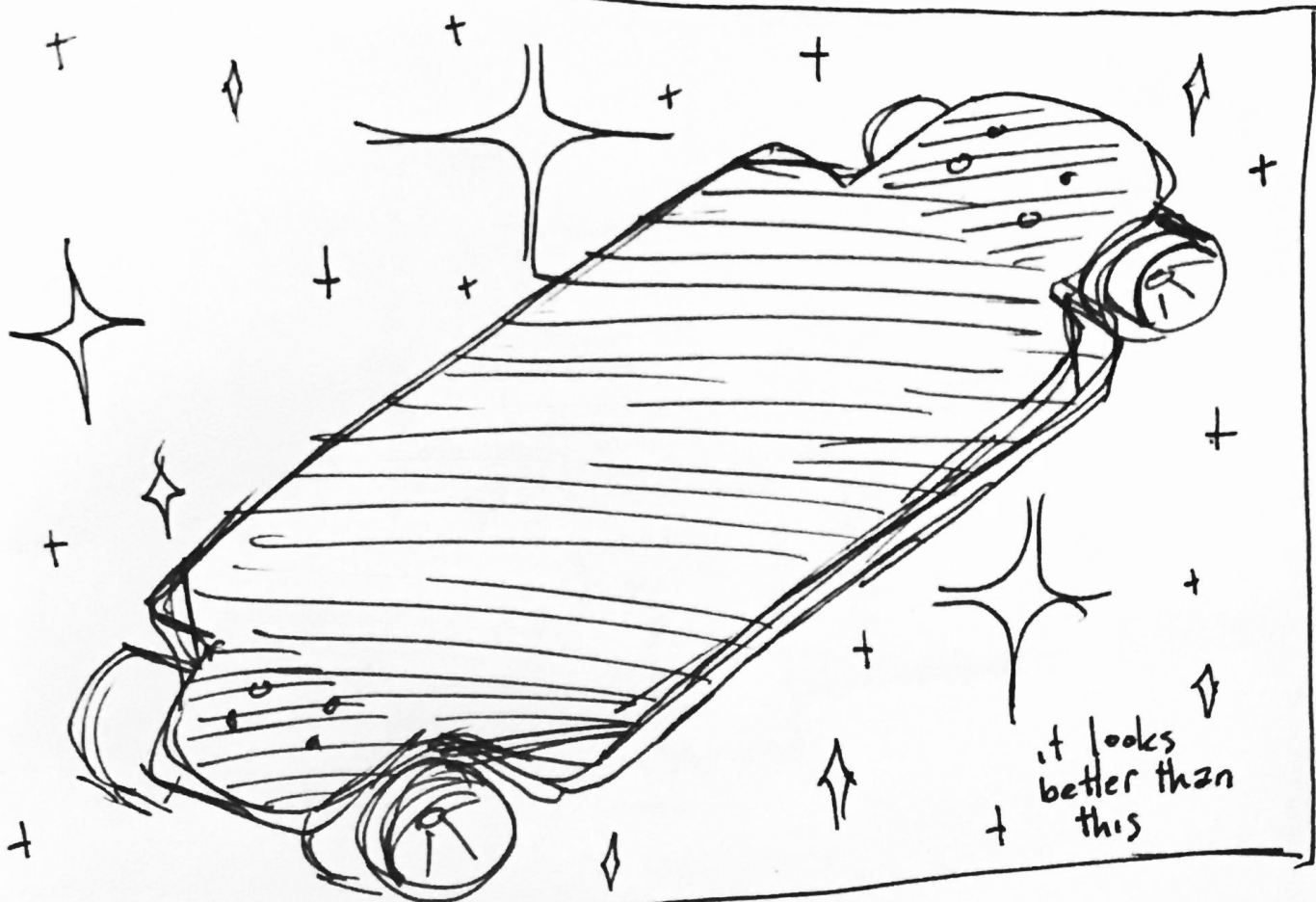
Chapter one

I'm with my best friend Oliver. We're sitting on the muddy grass of his dad's yard, trying to pet his two black rabbits. They don't want to be touched. We had just been jumping on the trampoline, getting philosophical in the way that 12 year olds get on trampolines. There is sun shining through the clouds, but it's too cold still. My legs are skinny & shaking he's wearing board shorts. We're giddy & young & forgetting to act older than we are.



Chapter Two

When Oliver was small, even then he had an excellent sense of self. Back when his parents were together, they were throwing a dinner party. His mother brushed his hair, and then left to greet the guests. Looking in the mirror, Oliver realized he wanted to look even better. He took a fistful of hair ties and made himself a new hairstyle that everyone will be jealous of.



Chapter Three

The longboard was so important, a smooth fast ride, a sport, an art! He went to every skate shop in Victoria to find the best trucks & wheels. Downhill longboarding was his favourite, Beach dr. was the best road for it. Right beside the ocean, a long decline with rich-district paving and barely any cars.



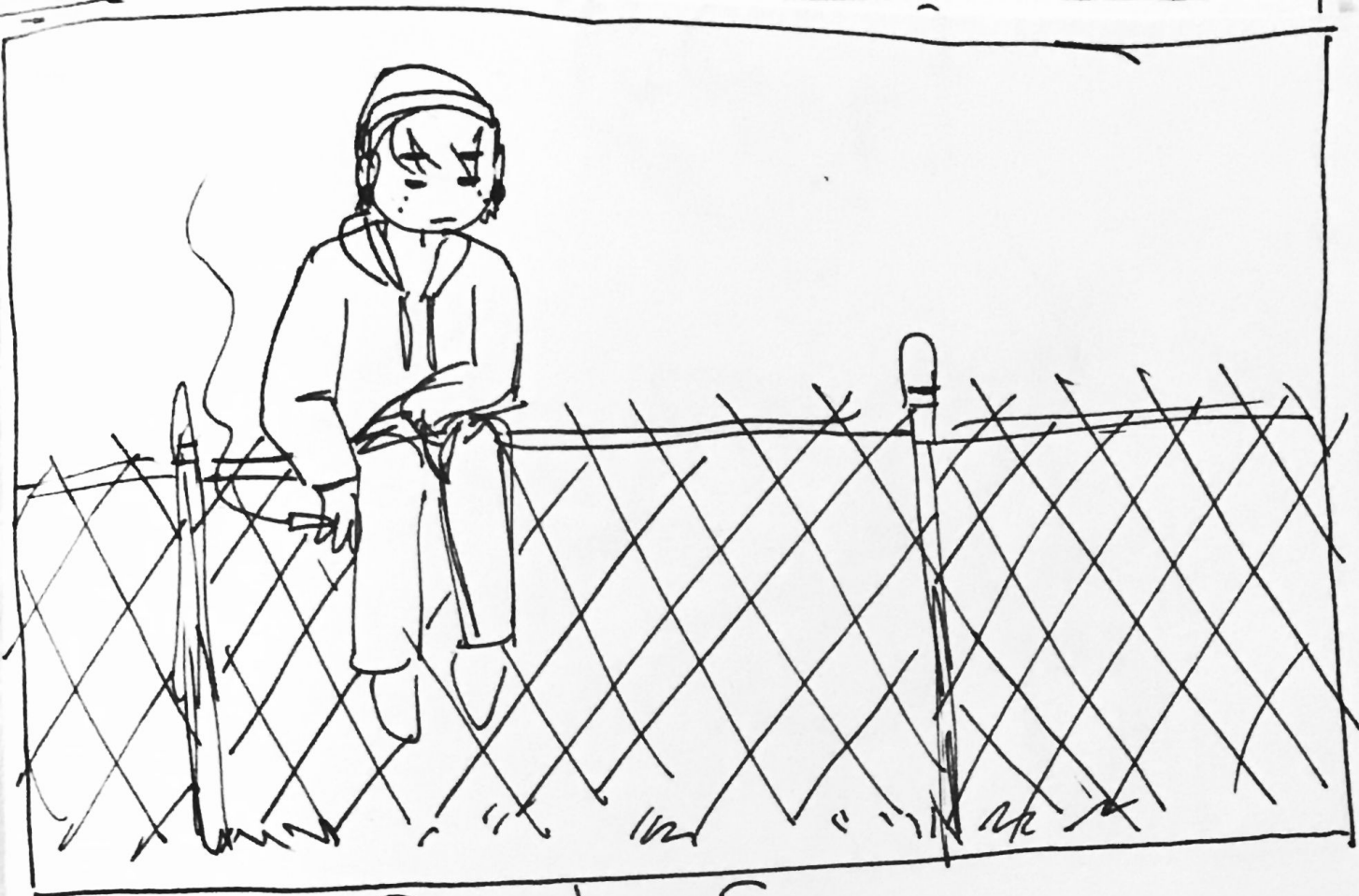
mac
'n
cheese

Chapter Four

"That Oliver is sure something. You two seem to have so much fun together. He's a very nice young man."

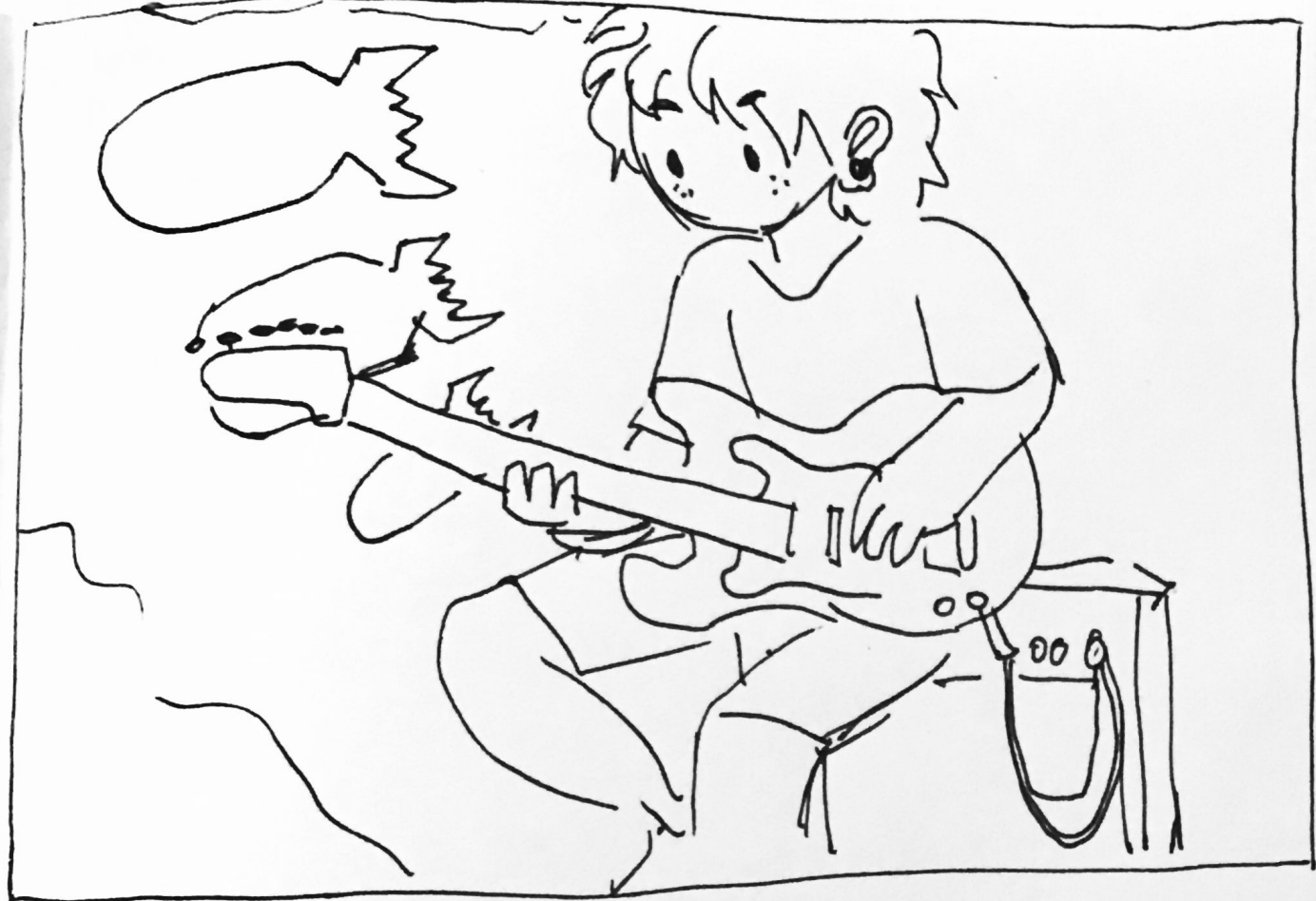
- Hazel Beach, my grandmother

"It's too bad he doesn't come by much anymore, is he doing alright?"



Chapter Five

Oliver is sitting on a fence and smoking. It's fall and he's not sure where life is taking him right now. He is on the property of a beach park, near the parking lot, and he can hear seagulls. He doesn't want to be alone right now.



Chapter Six

I thought of Oliver the other day while I was playing guitar. I remember they had a left handed guitar, we had a hard time coming up with a band name. He came up with the name ZOOMTOTHMOON, all the 'o's are zeroes. I thought this was very cool. Sometimes I also think of him while listening to Lizardmania by Phoenix. You tried to teach me how to rollerblade while we listened to the album.



Chapter Seven

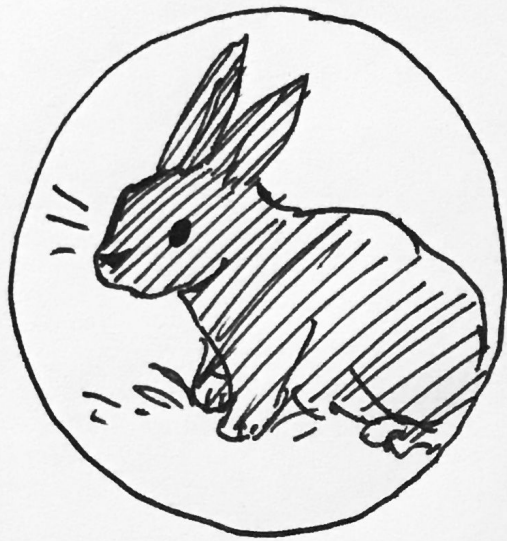
Oliver is driving to Tofino with his partner & two friends. It's five AM, he's been driving for so long. He pulls over when he sees a break in the trees and opens the door. His footsteps make crunching noises in the gravel. The sun rises over the ocean.

"This is sick." says Oliver.



Chapter Eight

It has been years since we've seen each other. After we stopped being friends, we barely looked at each other though we shared the same class. Then we moved to different high schools. I thought about you a lot, my mom always brought you up, it was complicated. Years later, after a gap year and a semester of college, I made friends with someone I had known well in grade 4. One day they mentioned your name, asked if I remembered you, because they're dating you. After paint class, in Camosen's badly lit artist hallway, you were walking towards me. You were wearing black, your hair is still blond, you opened your arms and I found I had opened mine. We crashed into each other and hugged for a long time. I can't remember what we said.



BY
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