

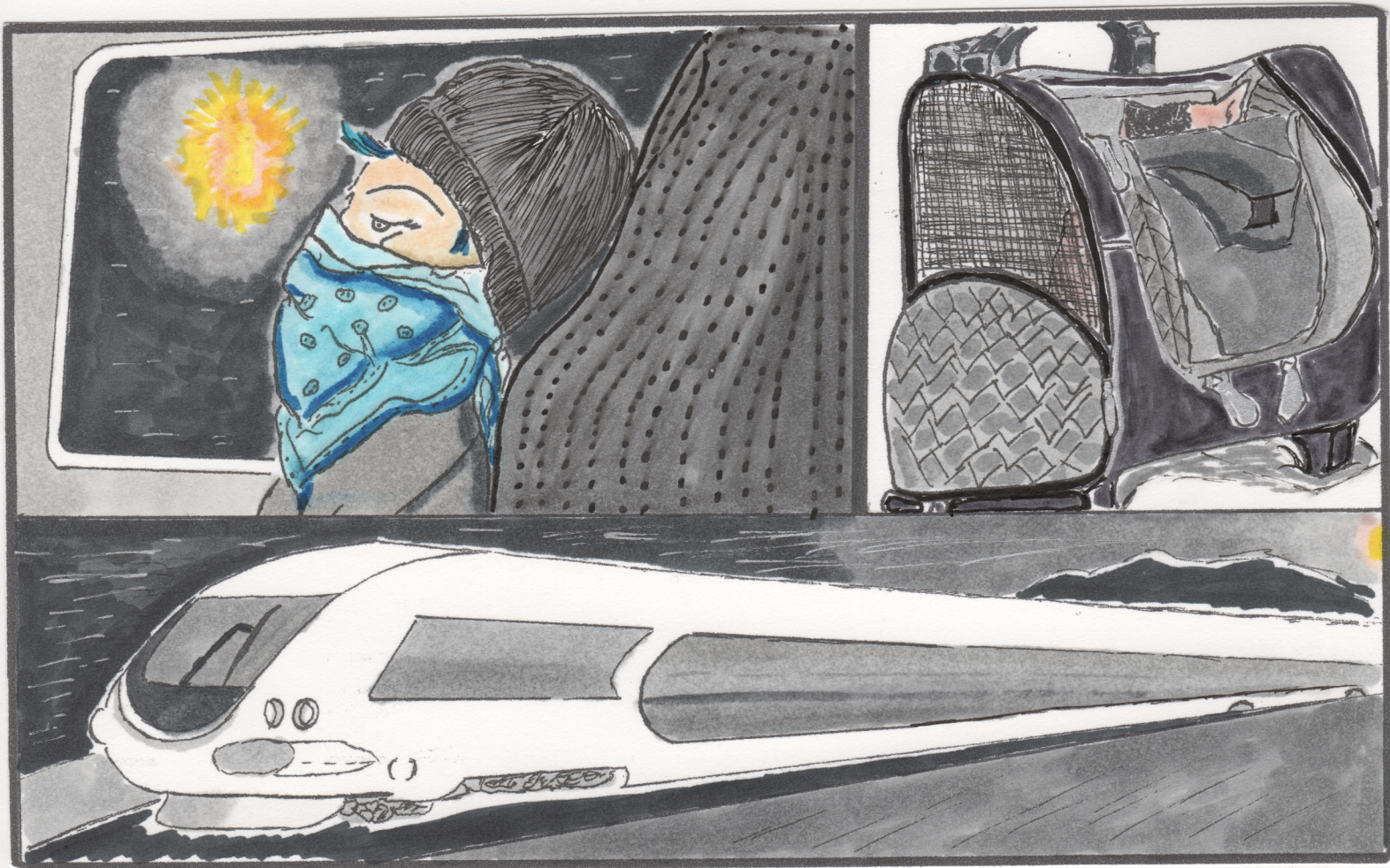
Issue 1

# ANIMAL



# HEARTS

By: Tina V. Cabrera



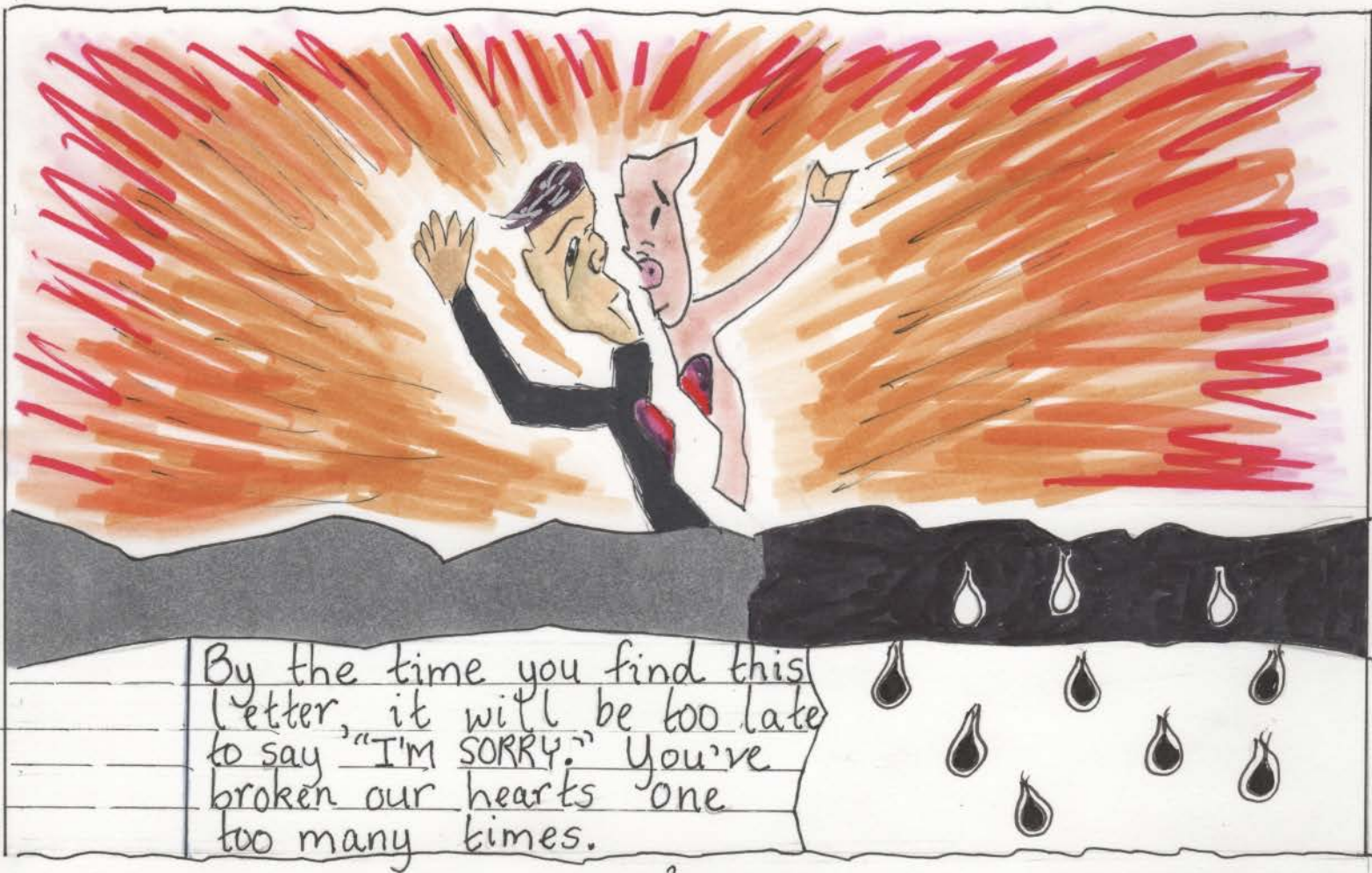




Jan. 29, 2040

Dear M,

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3



Deep down you know I am justified in running.  
That I can look after us both.

I can imagine what you are thinking as you read this letter...



4

Don't worry.

BUT I'M  
YOUR **MOTHER**.  
IT'S MY JOB TO  
WORRY! AND  
YOU'VE GIVEN  
ME REASON

See—already you do what you do  
best—**MANIPULATE**!

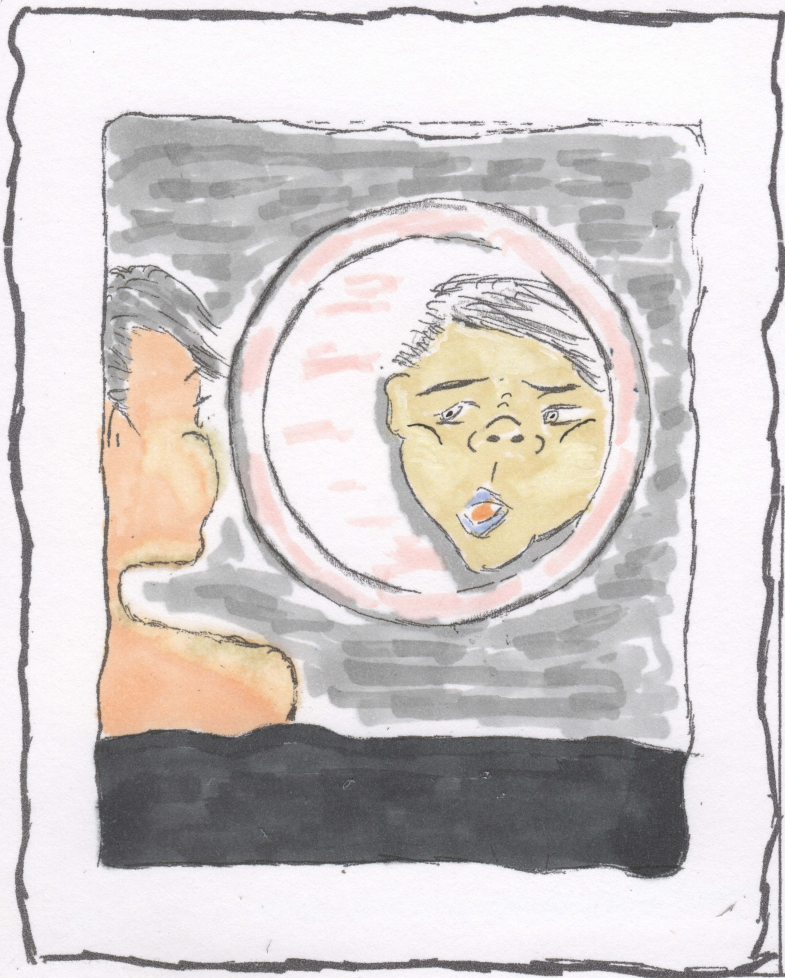
TO WORRY  
SICK  
How can  
you do  
this to  
me

YOU'RE  
ALL I'VE  
GOT

Cast yourself in the best light.  
Me in the worst.

5





You've made all my decisions for me. First, you insisted I needed a heart transplant. You never said, "By the way baby, you're getting one of an animal kind." You said that in the face of my **TRANSFORMATION**, homeschooling was best.

"LOOK IN THE MIRROR. WHAT DO YOU SEE?"

6



7





If you really wanted to avoid the ridicule you were certain I would face, then why did you make me wear that **RIDICULOUS** handsewn pink dress for 6th-grade graduation?

By the way, not once did any of my classmates call me **PIGGY-PIGGY** as you were so sure they would.



Please don't look at me like that. You know, that face you're making right now. We had to leave; you forced our hand. We are so in sync that I know Obie's feelings and he knows mine.



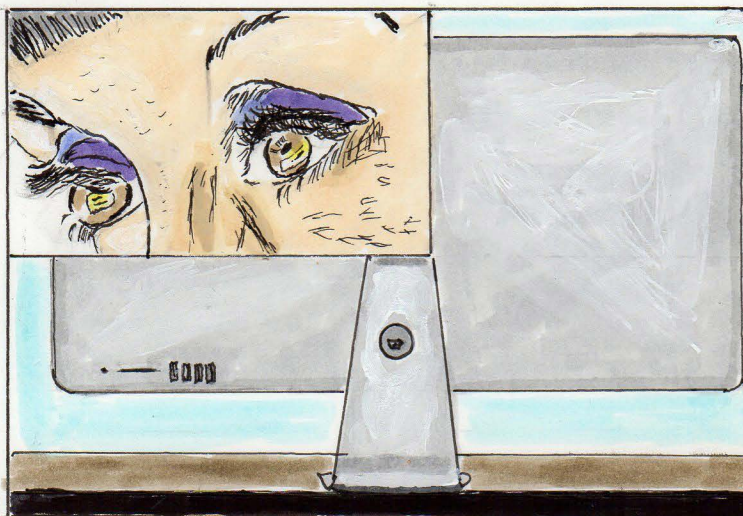


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"But Ernie, you're over-  
reacting! You're letting  
your imagination run  
wild. All they want Obie  
for is some testing."  
We know what they want.  
More prodding and probing;  
more cloning. They want  
him back. Well too bad.  
Obie's mine. You take blood  
\$ for your dream, not mine.  
You know what Obie means  
to me. Not a pet. A friend.  
We won't allow for more  
exploitation. In this I know  
for certain - Obie agrees.

I cannot tell you  
going. What I see  
window into a  
Search "Animal  
pure love". I want  
what our heart  
at heart.

Ernie



## ANIMAL HEARTS

"All animals are equal."

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26 Jan. 2040

## They're Back

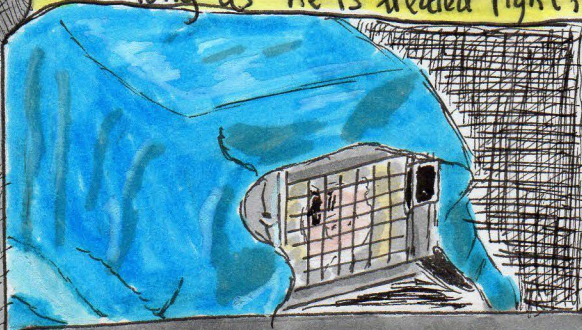


Ernie

The company wants Obie back. They speak with corporate jargon: "peculiar developments" that "warrant further investigation." They say other patients are showing signs of heart failure, and that if we return and submit to their tests, then perhaps they can figure out the secret to our success and save lives. Well I don't buy it. They want to exploit Obie again. In exchange, they offered M money and she agreed, which makes her the enemy. Those of you who have been following my posts - you know where I stand. I won't let them take him to further their vicious cause of breeding animals for their organs. I've come this far... I must remain strong.



We took the train from Austin. I asked for a private room. The crew assumed he was a common pet like a puppy or cat. They didn't ask to see inside the carrier. He stayed quiet. As long as he is treated right, Obie's just fine. One of a kind.

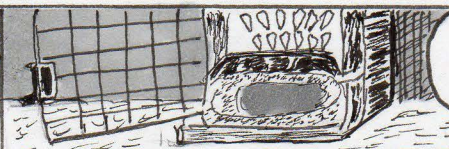


I remember the night he came into my life. It had just been a week since my surgery and I was still recovering when M came home holding a crate draped with a towel.

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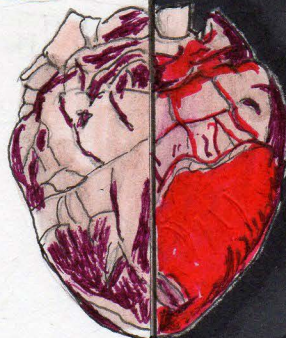


What's in there? A kitty cat?? A pup?



NO, DON'T BE SILLY! GUESS AGAIN.

This was no ordinary pig. Special. An original. My original. I took one look and knew that the heart in my chest belonged to him.



Can you tell me

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# Can you tell the difference?

yet there is increasing acceptance that of some kind. A growing number of



our closest evolutionary relatives biologists and philosophers agree that,

The extent to which animals can suffer is still argued, have the necessary brainpower to experience suffering at the very least, the majority of mammals can suffer.

Pigs raised for xeno transplantation would probably need to be kept in a sterile environment, so would not be able to forage and play with other pigs © Getty

He squealed and ran through the house. My — our — heart raced. It felt both wrong and right at the same time.

Follow Science Focus

How would you feel about the thought of a pig's heart inside you?

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I MADE A GREAT SACRIFICE, FACING THE SCORN FROM FAMILY AND FRIENDS.



BUT I HAVE FAITH IN SCIENCE, THE BEST OF THE BEST. FOR YOU, ERNIE BABY.



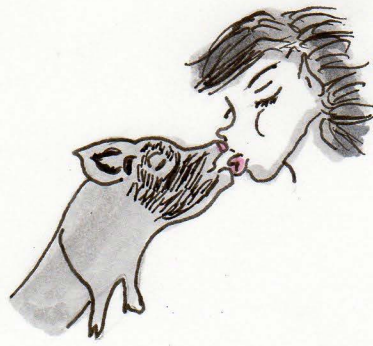
A PIG HEART? WHAT AN ABOMINATION!



I resented her. What for? First, for not telling the truth beforehand, and then for confessing afterward. Why tell me at all? I could have gone through life no worse off in my ignorance. After all, the surgery was a success. But I can't un-know and I've never been the same ever since.



That night, I couldn't sleep.  
So I let him out of the cage.  
I had to know for certain.



I held him against my chest,  
felt the beating of his  
heart against mine.

## PERFECT SYNCHRONY

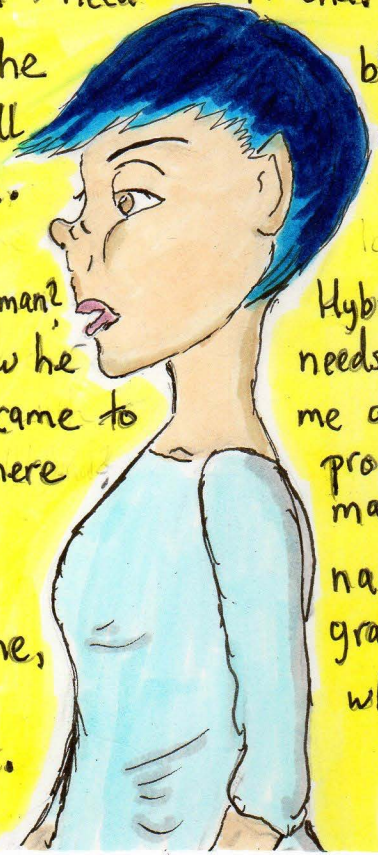


Obie has been with me for every  
milestone. At every lonely birthday.  
Helps me eat cake, licks the icing off  
my face. Every Halloween, I hoard  
candy under the bed. We gounge

together in secret, in the dark. I rub  
his belly, scratch his ears, and he  
can tell when I need a friend.

When I shut the  
and lay in bed all  
he's by my side.  
never lonely.

He has me—human?  
Same heart. Now he  
Here I am. He came to  
number 7, a mere  
in a giant  
"Obadiah," a  
that chose me,  
through a  
of the heart.



blinds  
day,  
He's

Hybrid?  
needs me.  
me as  
product  
machine.  
name  
granted  
whisper