

**Somehow,
Somehow**



Somehow, Somehow

**Written and illustrated by
Nyanda Foday**



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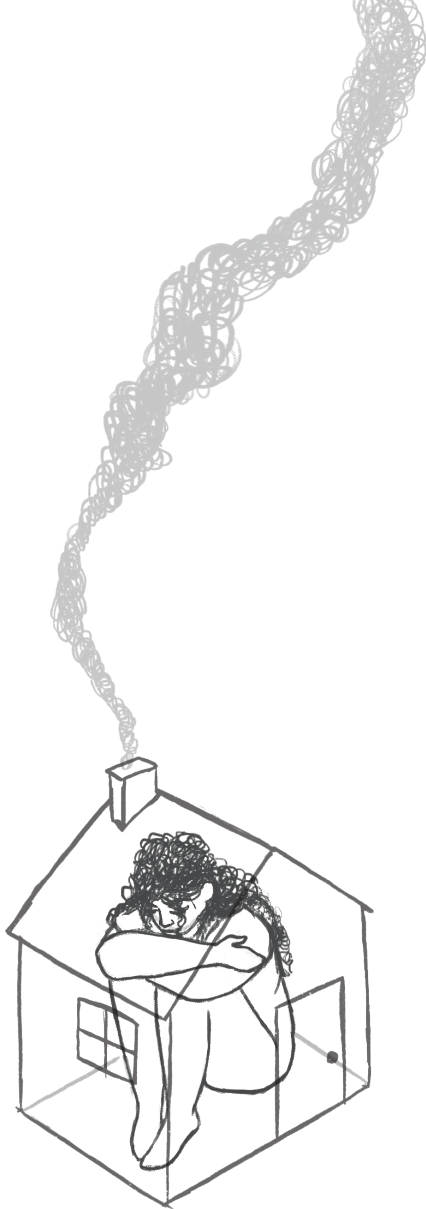
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Conversation Topic

I am in a park with strangers

When it becomes something to talk about.

We laugh,

Stand a little apart.

The Prime Minister is suggesting herd immunity.

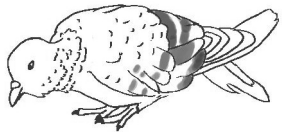
We make our plans for our project-

We don't know yet-

We say:

It should be fine,

So long as we remember to wash our hands



Contamination OCD

I am in a Nando's with my parents
When I realise that I cannot do this the way they can.
When I track my father back from the sink
And see everything he's touched
And want to rush back and wash again and again.
I don't have contamination OCD.

Yet.

My flavour is hoarding and intrusive thoughts
But I can feel the way my brain shifts,
Alert.

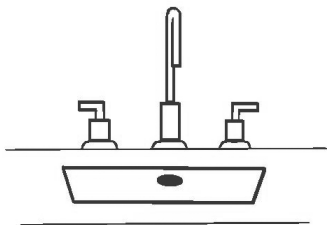
It says: Here is a new thing to be afraid of
It s almost not even about the germs
It says: If you're going to do it, do it right.
That's when I decide to stop going outside,
That's when I decide that it is better to have nothing,
Than play around with 'careful'.
I spent most of the pandemic more afraid of passing it
Than catching it-
I said: If I see nobody,
If I am locked away for all but two hours a week,

Please, please don't let me hurt anybody.

I gave it up

I gave it all up

I would do it again.



Alone (Part 1)

When my housemate tells me he's thinking about going home,
I tell him that I support whatever decision he needs to make.

And when he tells me he's going home, I hug him.

And my family is in Birmingham

And I am in Manchester, 75 miles away.

And I decide to stay.

The flat becomes my domain

I stretch the days out into vague spaces

Of shuffling back and forth

I create art

When I can.

I only leave the house once a week to get food

I stay inside

I am completely inside

I do not see anyone

I leave videos on

I fill the empty flat with the sounds of strangers talking

I shuffle back and forth

I learn the way the living room glows orange

In the too-early morning

I stop sleeping right
I learn that I love to be awake for a sunrise
I make every room my room
I take a nap in a sunbeam
I learn how to get by
I tell myself it will be okay
I dress for the mirror
I order in dinner
I let myself drift through the day
-The days-
I put my thoughts that are too loud
 for my head on Instagram
My friends and I do weekly videocalls
I create more art
I fill the flat with paintings
I make it through every day
Somehow, somehow
I do my exams
Somehow, somehow
I stay alone.