

# A TRIP TO THE ASYLUM

## 瘋人院之旅：整個世界就是你的精神病院

\* 2021 Golden Comic Award

\* 2021 Taipei Book Fair Award

*What is life like inside a modern residential psychiatric facility? Pam Pam Liu's graphic novel A Trip to the Asylum peels away the stereotypes to reveal the inner world of psychiatric patients and the painful realities each grapples with while undergoing in-patient treatment.*

What is life like inside a modern residential psychiatric facility? Is it oversaturated patients slumped over board games as depicted in *12 Monkeys*? Or is it a place of simmering conflict and coercive control, à la *One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest*? Pam Pam Liu's graphic novel *A Trip to the Asylum* peels away the stereotypes to reveal the inner world of psychiatric patients and the painful realities each grapples with while undergoing in-patient treatment.

The story follows a new patient who enters residential care at the suggestion of his sister. With his hand bandaged, and clinging to the idea that "I'll be out of here before you know it," he begins to adapt to his surroundings and get to know his fellow patients. He meets a middle-aged man so terrified of life he hopes to never leave the facility, a former entertainment reporter never stops mumbling celebrity gossip, and a teen who struggles with gender identity and social ostracization. Though they appear "crazy" at first glance, each harbors a secret trauma that drives their behaviors, including our reticent protagonist.

Ten years in the making, *A Trip to the Asylum* incorporates author Pam Pam Liu's personal experiences as well as extensive research into the literature of mental illness, including works such as Erving Goffman's *Asylums: Essays on the Social Situation of Mental Patients*



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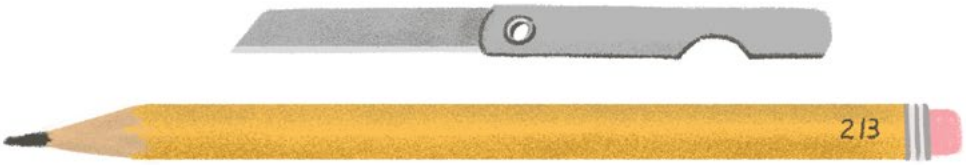
**Pages:** 336

**Volume:** 1 (END)

*and Other Inmates* and Bessel van der Kolk's *The Body Keeps the Score: Mind, Brain, and Body in the Healing of Trauma*. With its indie comic aesthetic, absurd humor, and fast pacing, *A Trip to the Asylum* delivers deep issues in an entertaining package, bringing mental illness out of the shadows and into the realm of relatable, everyday interactions.

## Pam Pam Liu

Active as an illustrator, an independent graphic novelist, and a musician, Pam Pam is also a talented animator. She often turns the dark side of life, its anger and failures, into fantastical graphic novels, but also creates true-to-life works such as *Good Friend, Cancer*. Her other works include *When My Brother was a Kid*. She was a resident of La Maison des Auteurs in Angoulême, France (2018-2019).



1

A relatively small group of prepatients come into the mental hospital willingly, because of their own idea of what will be good for them, or because of wholehearted agreement with the relevant members of their family. Presumably, these recruits have found themselves acting in a way which is evidence to them that they are losing their minds or losing control of themselves.

-Erving Goffman, Asylums







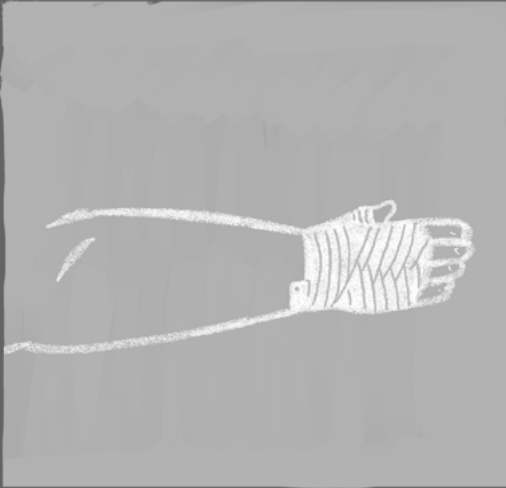












I know of a mental health facility that would suit you.

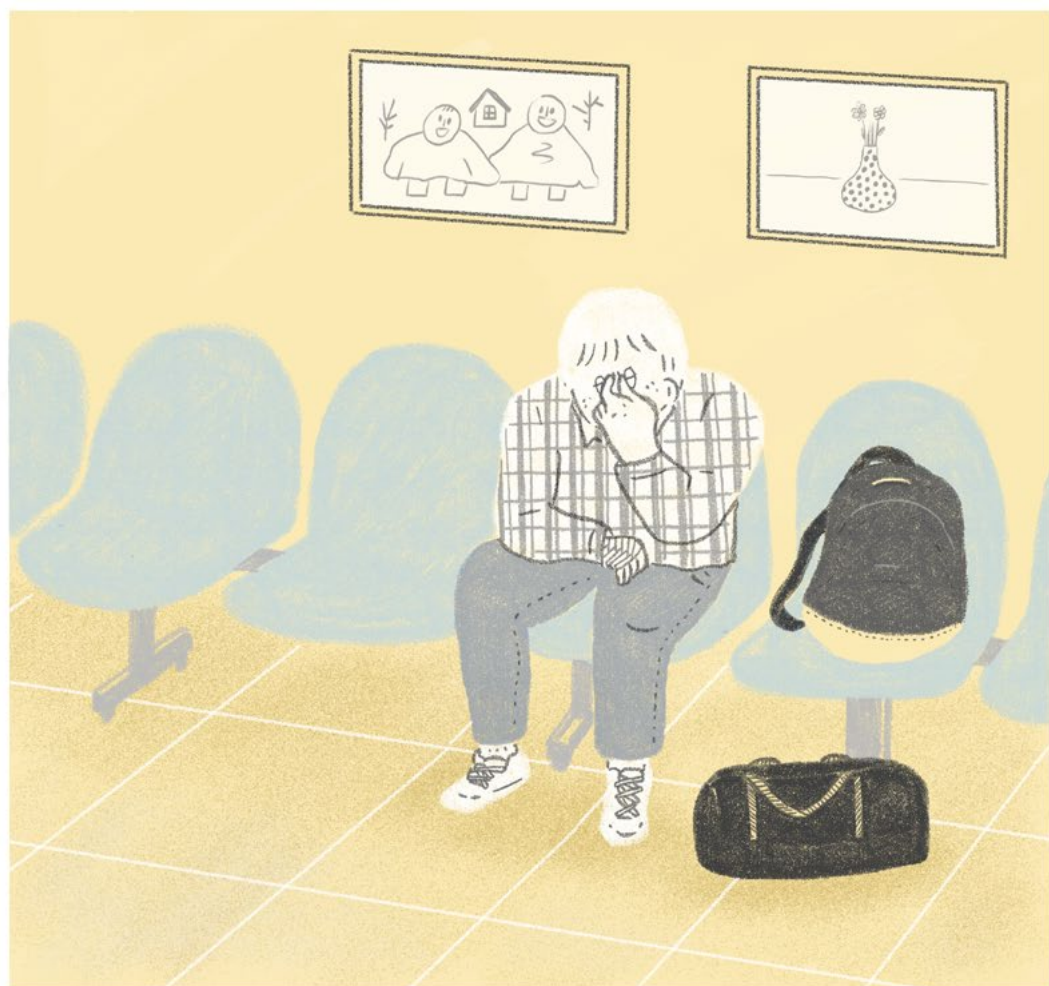
Don't worry.

It's not so horrible as you might imagine.

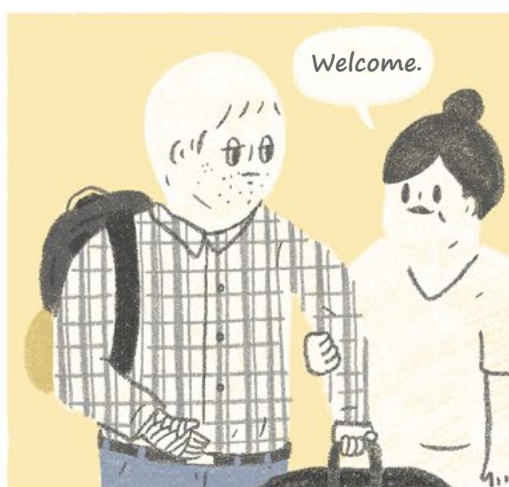
Given your present condition, you could spend some time there, see if you like it.

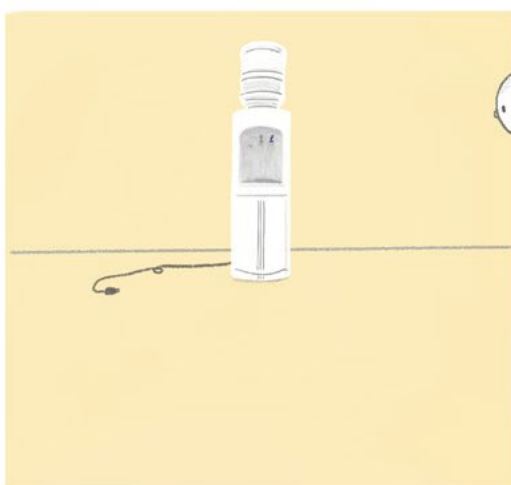


I'll take a moment to explain to your family...



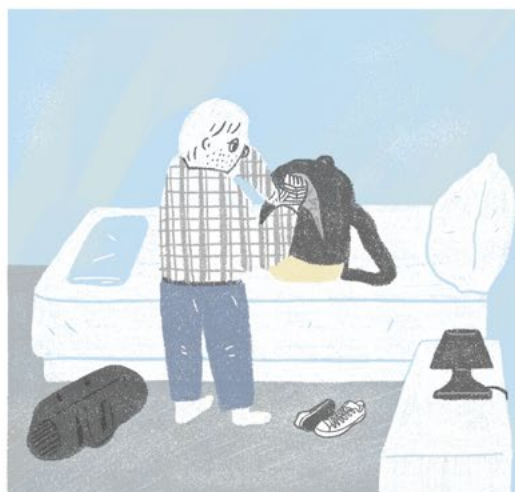



















\*Fei Yu-Ching is a Taiwanese singer and entertainer who was popular throughout the 80's and 90's.









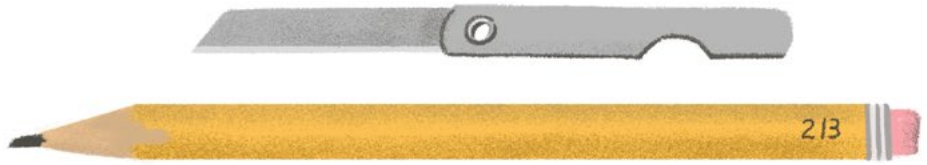


Fuck, that  
guy's a mess.

May you walk in my sweet dreams ♪

I'm totally fine. I'll  
be leaving this stupid  
place in no time.





2

A recruit's readiness to be  
appropriately deferential in his  
initial face-to-face encounters...  
is a sign that he will take on  
the role of the routinely pliant  
inmate.

-Erving Goffman, Asylums

A black and white illustration of a young boy with short hair, wearing a light-colored button-down shirt and dark shorts. He is walking in a field with tall grass in the background. He has a surprised expression, with wide eyes and an open mouth, and his right hand is raised to his face. A speech bubble above him contains the text "Little Chick!". In the lower-left corner, the words "peep peep" are written between two diagonal lines, indicating the sound of a chick.

Little Chick!

peep peep



