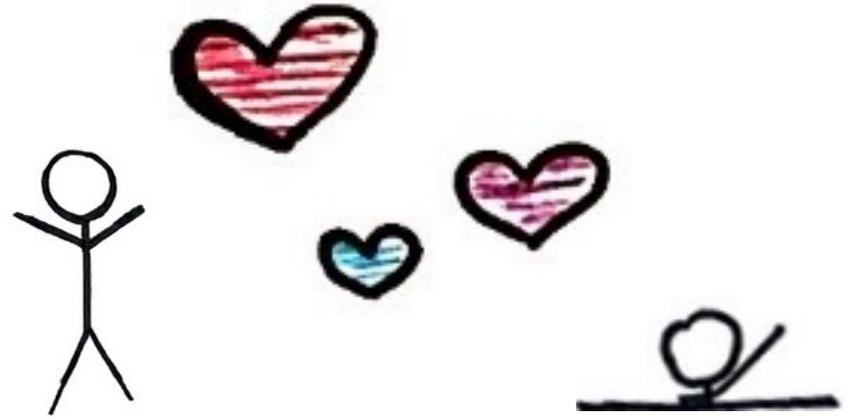


# I Can Love Me Too!

By Loulia Daker



# August



**Friday**

Dear diary,

Well since you are going to be reading my diary for a while, you are going to be one of my close friends.

And since this is the first page of my first diary, let me introduce myself.

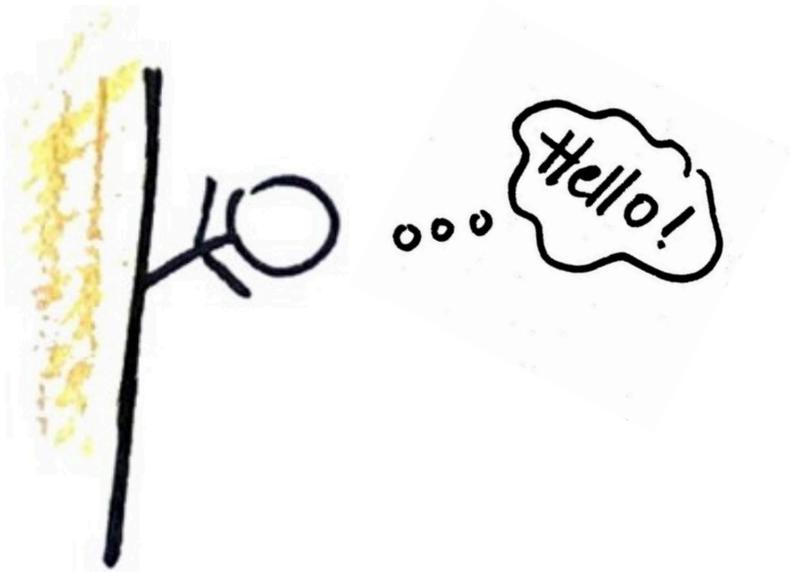
Well, I am pretty sure you know who I am, and you've probably seen me so many times ;)

I'm actually very famous especially in books, not just any typical book, it's your copybook.

Hmmm... you still didn't guess?

Okay, so you know this tiny human figure you draw on your page when you are extremely bored, and the teacher is talking in class as if he/she is a mosquito buzzing in your ears?

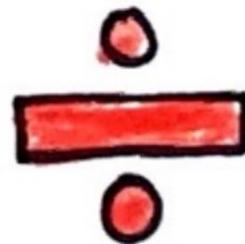
I am that stick figure!

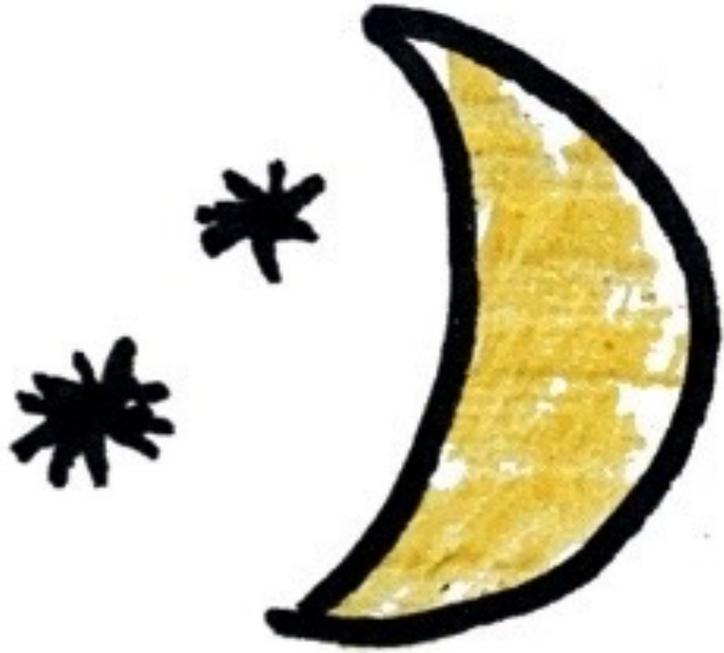




Literally every child drew me at least once and I keep running from copybook to another, I've travelled the world and entered so many schools and classes. I wish you guys could stop drawing me in your math copybooks though. My head hurts looking at all these numbers. I wish I can enter art class, but teachers seem to be a bit bothered with my presence and appearance.

You think these teachers are jealous because you students don't draw them? I can't find another reason for their hatred towards me. Hahaha!





I'm going to stop talking about myself for today, I was supposed to sleep an hour ago! Oh my God, I think my mom is coming to my room. Anyways, I have to sleep and wake up super early tomorrow. I am going to meet with my friends and don't worry I will make sure I will tell you later all about them.

Good Night!!

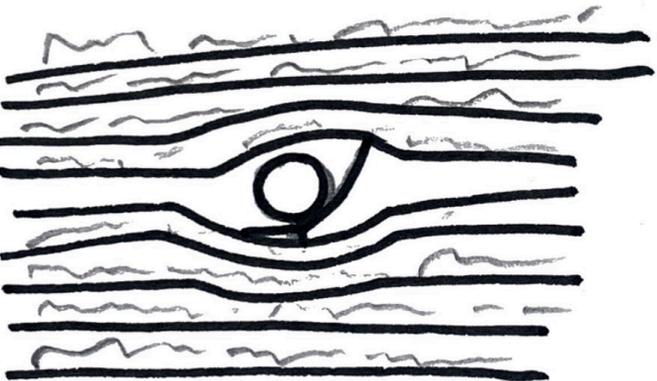
## Saturday

I promised myself that I would write something interesting in my diary, but nothing interesting happened today.

Oh wait! I actually have an interesting thing to tell you.

Have you ever heard your teacher say, “read between the lines”? I am not sure what exactly they are talking about but between the lines is actually where I live. It’s a world, just like yours but of course it looks kind of different. You will be able to tell how from my drawings.

Everything is basically made up of lines, even the people.



The only problem is that no one looks like me.

So, you know all these geometric shapes you learned about in school; square, circle, triangle and rectangle. A combination of these geometric shapes with my stick figure look, and this is how everyone looks like.

I actually don't know how to feel about this, it's something that I have always struggled with. Not even my family looks like me.

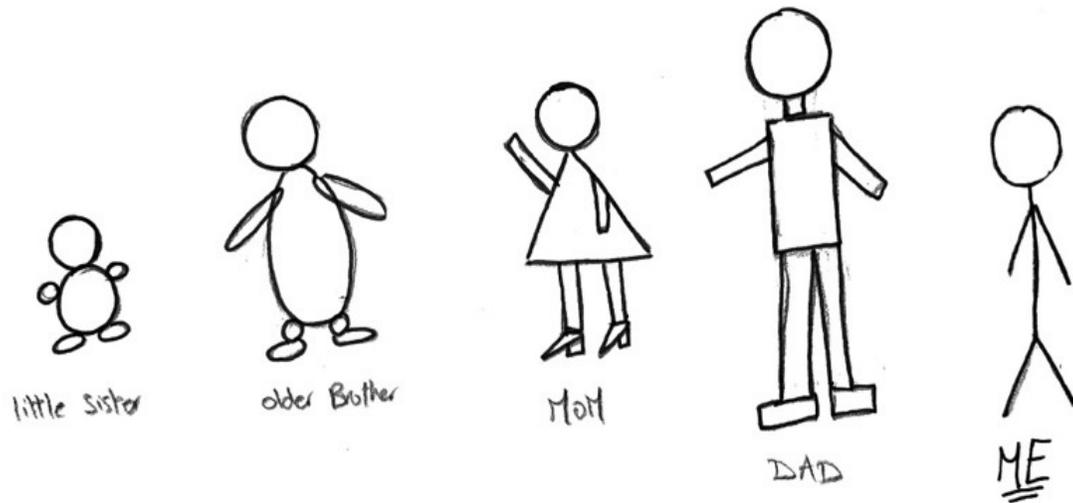
Let me draw and show you my family.

And yes, they actually look like this, it's not that I'm bad at drawing.

I have a little sister; my parents named her Cici because she looks like a circle.

I also have an older brother Ovi, he was named as such because he also looks like an oval but looking at your science books he kind of looks like a real life penguin. Hehe!

And then look at me, just a weird 11-year-old boy. They should have named me Ohno instead of Stiff.

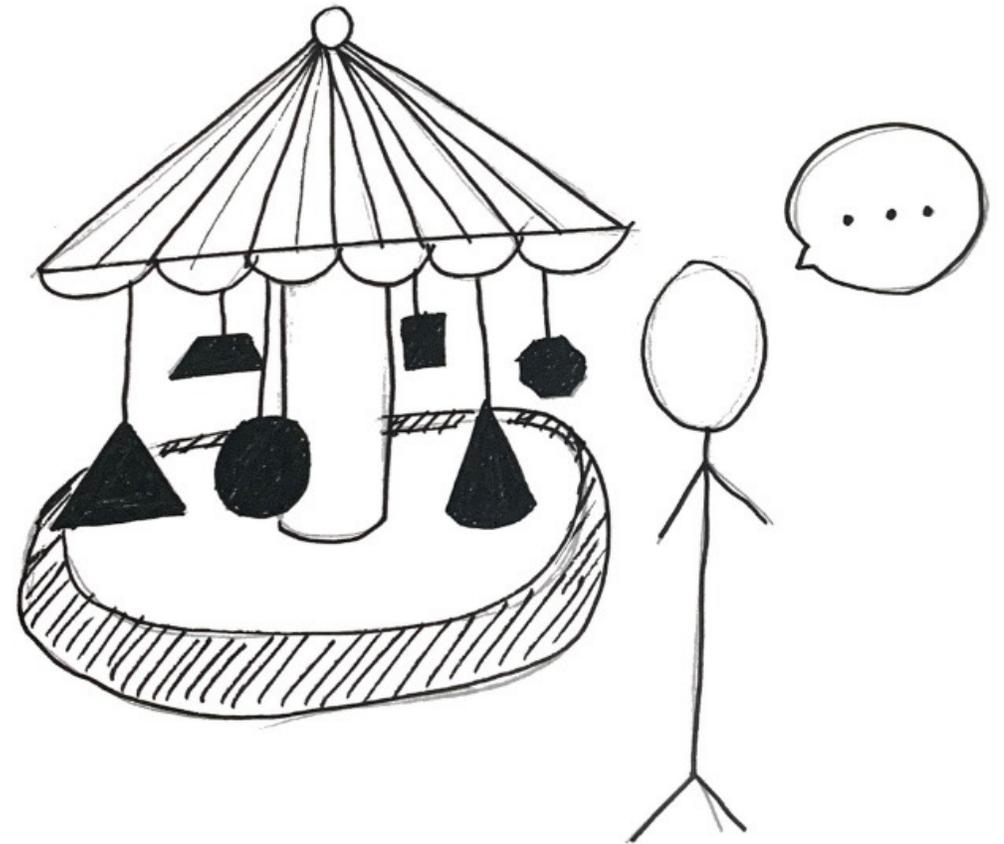


My parents never actually told me the reason behind my name, but I figured it out on my own: The "Sti" is for the stick and the "f" for the figure.

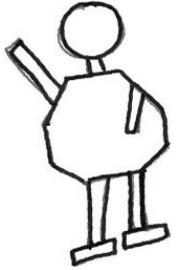
I appreciate that they don't point out to the fact that I'm different and even when it comes to my friends no one ever bullied me. Not gonna lie, I do get these annoying looks from time-to-time from people, but this is not what annoys me. What annoys me the most is that I don't feel like I belong here and looking at everyone around me, they all seem to be very happy with who they are.



Even today, we all went to this amusement park and nothing seemed to fit me. Our amusement parks are also different from yours, since everyone here looks like a specific geometric shape, they built all the games in the park in a way where every shape can fit each person. But guess what, I had to look at them all day because I didn't look like any of the shapes. I don't even know why I bothered to go, and my friends wonder why I don't love myself. I even removed all the mirrors from my room.

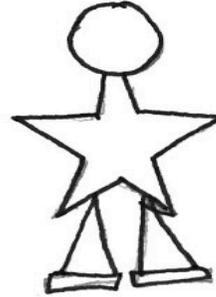


- Let me introduce you my friends:



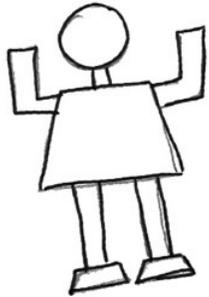
Octa

this is octa  
he's the mood maker in the group,  
always making us laugh.



Stas

This is stas, she's  
the dreamy one.



Trape

This is Trape (you pronounce  
his name as "trappy"), he  
shows off type in the group.



Coco

This is coco. Everyone  
agrees that she's the  
prettiest girl in school.



ME

And again, this is me. I'm  
actually not sure why they are  
my friends.  
Maybe they just feel bad for me.  
Do they find me ugly?  
Or do I look weird to them?  
Do they want me to stop  
hanging out with them?  
Am I embarrassing them?  
The list of questions I have in my  
mind right now can cover this  
entire page, but I think I wrote a  
lot today.  
I wonder if things will ever get  
better.



## Thursday

Hello again!

Nothing very interesting happened on Monday, Tuesday, or Wednesday but today was different.

Today was my birthday!

I think I misjudged my friends when I said they don't like me.

I woke up this morning with my favorite breakfast, my mom did pancakes while my dad was cooking fried eggs with cheese and vegetables. Cici and Ovi gave me a stick figure doll with a letter on the side saying how special and unique I am. I didn't cry but it got me emotional reading such words even though I don't believe it.

Few hours later and my friends were knocking on my room door.

They surprised me with the costume they were wearing. They all wore a stick figure costume!

Then we decided to go buy a cake and celebrate in the flower park.

The flower park was so beautiful today, it's actually the only place where we get to see colors in the "between the lines" world.

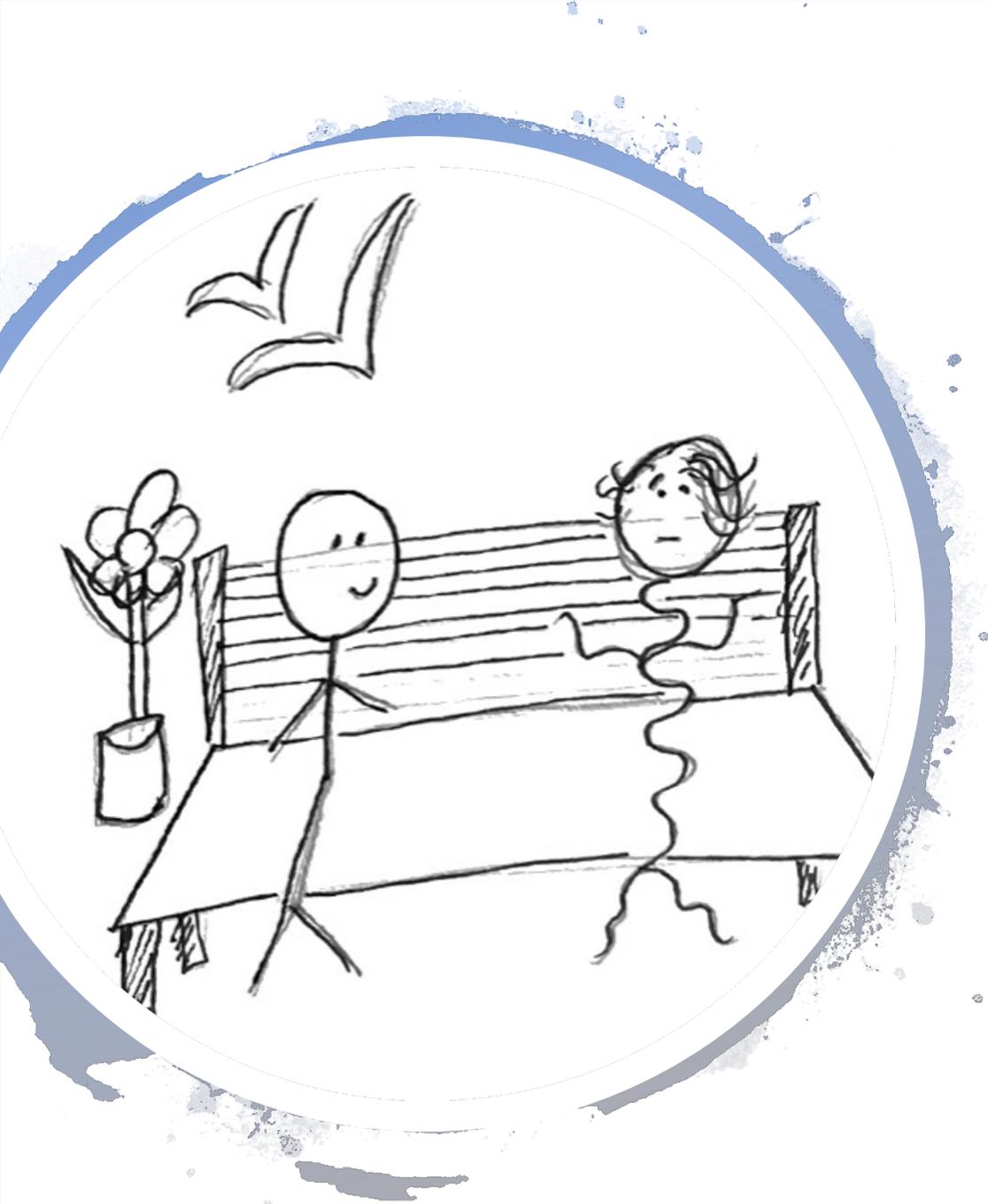
After we celebrated and ate the cake, we went to play hide and seek and you won't guess what happened.

Well since I'm a bit lighter in weight than rest of my friends I ran a bit faster and without noticing I ended up losing them.

I thought I'd walk around for few minutes alone and think about life and who I am, but I heard a sound of a small girl and she sounded like she was crying. I approached the sound until I found her sitting on the bench all alone.

I was hesitant if I should talk to her, but I remembered myself when I used to cry alone and how hard it was to talk to someone. So, I went over to check on her and made sure that I introduced myself.

I was actually worried she would freak out just by looking at me. Surprisingly, she didn't.



She introduced herself, her name was Minmi and she was only 7 years old. After talking for a while, it turned out that she also doesn't like the way she looks.

I was very hurt and bothered from the harsh words she was saying about herself and then I tried to show her how beautiful she is.

After I made sure she knew that she's unique in her own way, I told her that it's not always about how we look and more about who we are and how we act. once we accept ourselves, we will then realize how beautiful we are.

Before she left, I asked her for a favor:

I asked her to do a small thing every day every morning and it was to look at the mirror and say one beautiful thing she sees about herself. And when she can't find any, she'll have to say "I am smart, beautiful and unique." couple of times.

After Minmi left, I was shocked to see Coco my friend standing few inches behind me. We started walking towards the rest of our group and had a small yet meaningful conversation and this is how it went:

“See all these words you said to that little girl”, Coco said, “why don’t you treat yourself the way you treat others? Why can’t you say the exact words to yourself?”.

At that point I was speechless.

“Everyone envies your popularity in the human world. The only problem is that you don’t look at the bigger picture, you’re only focusing on a small part of your daily life.”

She then stopped walking then looked at me and said:

“WE also wish we looked like you, you are lucky to be different and unique. So love yourself and treat yourself the way you treat all of us.”.

We spent the rest of the day all of us together and when I finally went back home, I kept on hearing her words on repeat. I realized that I've only been harsh on myself this whole time. I realized that I worry too much about how people might see us instead of focusing on how we see ourselves.

Today was the first day I learn about selflove, and I feel so happy and confident in who I am. I am looking forward to how will I feel and how my personality will change once I learn more about myself. I regret all the harsh words I used to say to myself, I was the one who was letting me down all this time. But I can also be the one who's going to make ME feel powerful, happy and loved.



*UNTIL NEXT  
TIME DIARY!*

