



World Organisation
for Animal Health

SKETCHING CHANGE

TALES FROM VETERINARIANS ACROSS ASIA-PACIFIC



HOPELESS ANIMALS ARE WAITING FOR US



Scan the QR code to access the comic stories in this publication in digital format, and to read several others.

© WOA, 2026

Some rights reserved. This work is made available under a CC BY-SA 3.0 IGO licence.



This publication was possible thanks to the support of the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT).

Note: Designations, statements and opinions in the material do not imply any official position of WOA or partner organisations, and responsibility for interpretation lies solely with the reader.

ABOUT THIS VOLUME

The World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH) is committed to strengthening gender equality, disability and social inclusion (GEDSI) within the veterinary sector. Our recent work in Asia and the Pacific has shown that, while there is a growing number of qualified women and diverse professionals in the sector, many still face barriers shaped by longstanding norms, insufficient adjustments and unequal opportunities.

As noted in regional studies conducted by WOAH in Asia-Pacific, gender stereotypes influence perceptions within the veterinary sector, and the absence of reasonable accommodations reinforces the exclusion of persons with disabilities. These findings highlight the need for continued awareness and action across institutions, training systems, and professional communities.

To foster this change, WOAH has expanded its GEDSI initiatives, including awareness raising events and partnerships with veterinary associations and networks in Asia and the Pacific region, in particular the Federation of Asian Veterinary Associations (FAVA), the Asian Association of Veterinary Schools (AAVS) and the International Veterinary Students' Association (IVSA). The Comics Competition Promoting GEDSI in the Veterinary Sector, organised between December 2025 and January 2026, invited veterinary students and professionals to reflect creatively on what an inclusive profession looks like.

The competition aimed to celebrate storytelling, artistic talent, veterinary commitment and GEDSI values, and to inspire dialogue through accessible and engaging narratives. Among the winning submissions, the comic presented here captures the imagination, concerns, and aspirations of veterinarians in different parts of the Asia and the Pacific region. The story reminds us that inclusion is not only a policy goal—it is a shared cultural commitment that strengthens the profession and the communities it serves. While we could not award all participants with prizes, we appreciated all entries and will be sharing additional comic stories of note on our website (see QR code on the cover inner page).

We extend our heartfelt congratulations to the winners of this competition, and thank all participants for adding their voices to this important conversation. This comic enriches WOAH's ongoing efforts to promote a veterinary sector where everyone can thrive, advancing our mission to improve animal health and welfare globally and ensure a better future for all.



Dr Tomoko Ishibashi
WOAH Regional
Representative for Asia and
the Pacific



Dr Naree Ketusing
WOAH Sub-Regional
Representative for South-East Asia



KAMPONG CHHNANG PROVINCE, CAMBODIA



Will they judge me for only have four fingers on my right hand?

Hmmm.... I'm gonna be homesick.

but I really want to be a Veterinarian.



Don't forget to call me when you arrive in Phnom Penh

Go for your dream Son!!

Got it Dad.

Nervous...



YOU DON'T EVEN TELL ME YOU GOING TO VET SCHOOL!!!

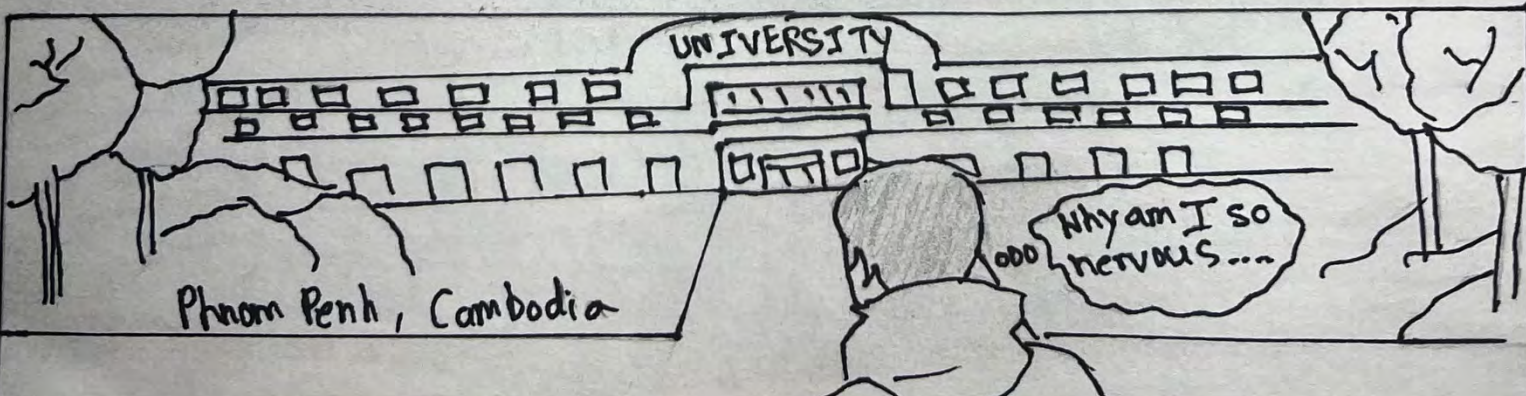
Uhm.... Sorry



Alright just tell me if anyone in college bully you about your fingers OKAY?

okay, I will

BEEP!
Phone call end.



Phnom Penh, Cambodia

Whyam I so nervous....



Did you notice that guy? He look like someone who would go on a date with a gyy.

No, why?

There's only four fingers on his right hand HAHA...

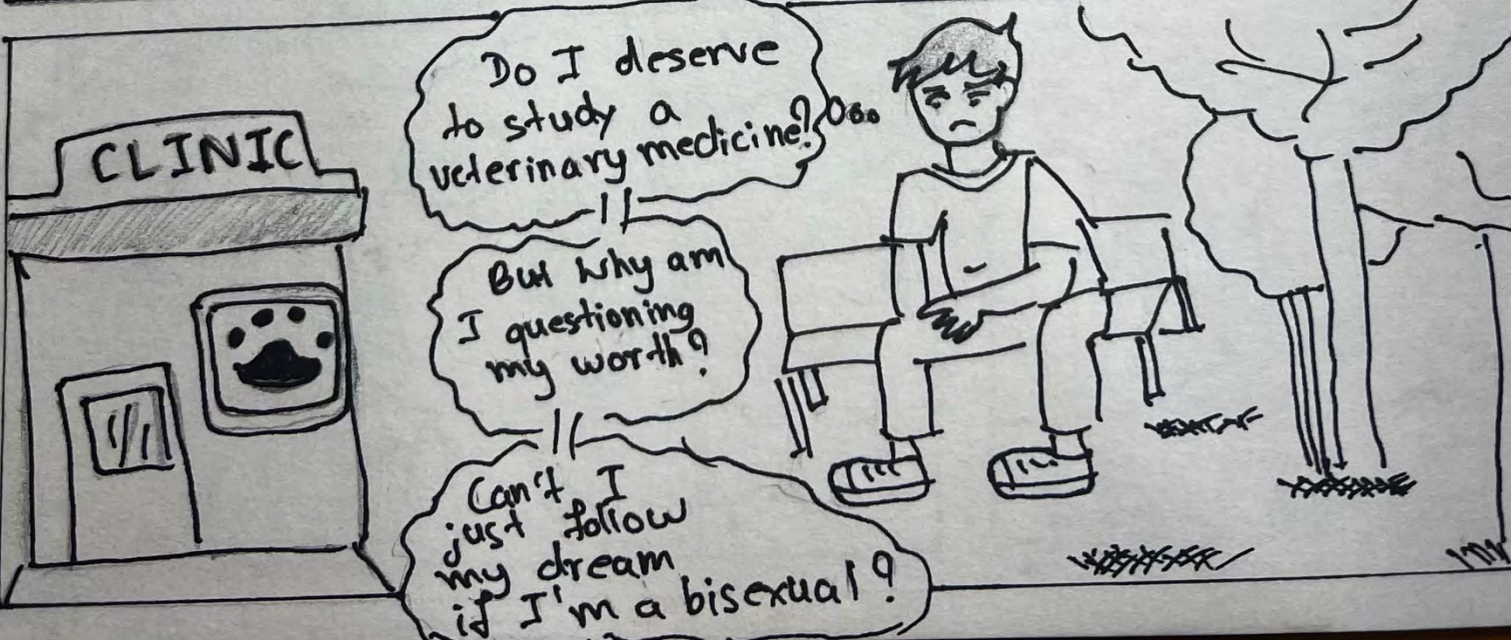
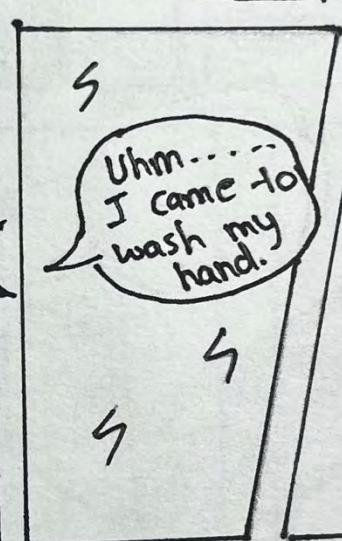
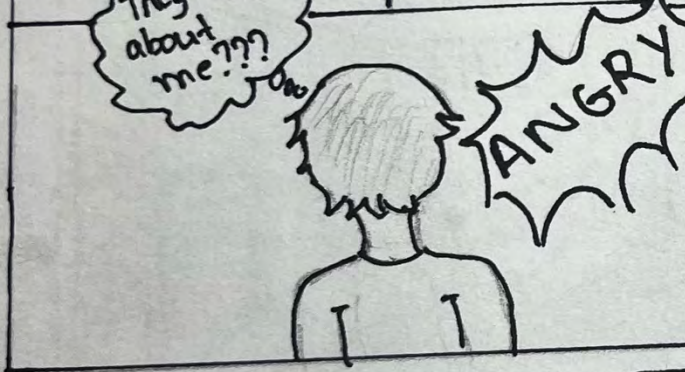
WAIT! REALLY??

Yea hhh ONLY FOUR FINGERS

I thinks bro's can't even use needle and syringe

LAUGHING....

That ridiculous for real HAHA..





So what's wrong with having feminine
vibe it's doesn't define who you are
What's wrong if you're bisexual?
Study veterinary medicine is not
about what's gender are you having
or how many fingers you've got.



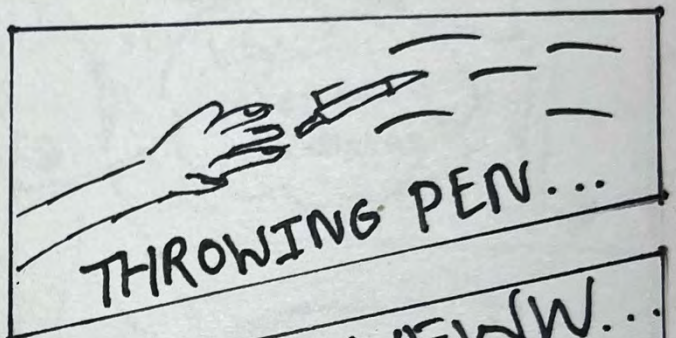
it's all about
commitment,
love and care
that you have
for animals.

? SILENT...
? ? ? ? ?

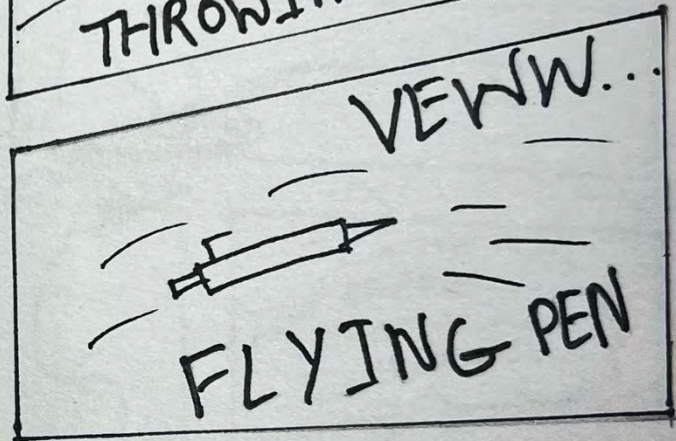


Think a bout why
you're here
in the first
place.

Whisper
...

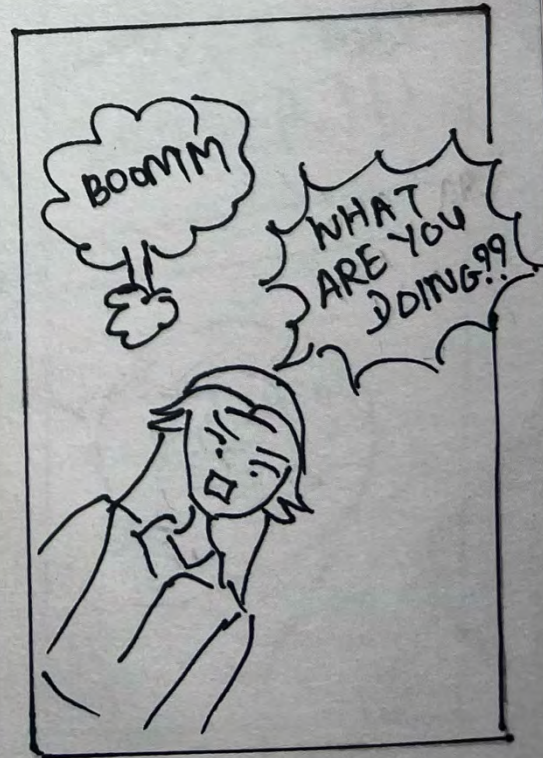


THROWING PEN...



VEVW...

FLYING PEN



AWKWARD



That's OKAY
I'm used to
it. See you
tomorrow

Used to it
is even worse.

Bye....
See you
tomorrow.



u_c
u_c
u_c

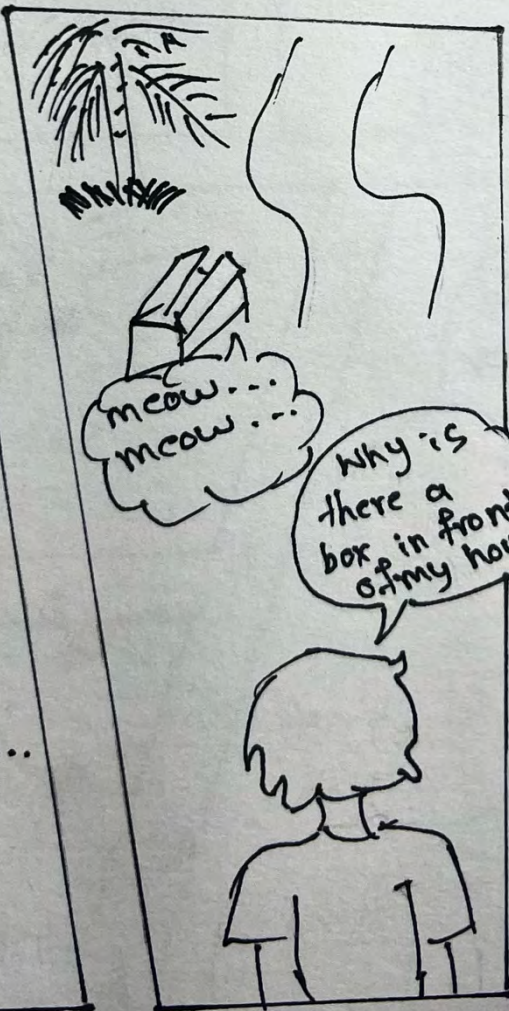


Think
about why
you're herein
the first
place.

Why
veterinary
medicine?

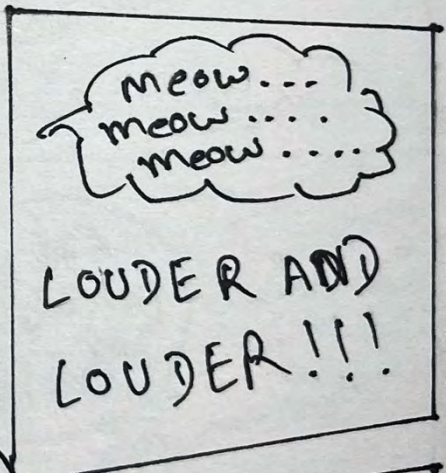


Throw Back



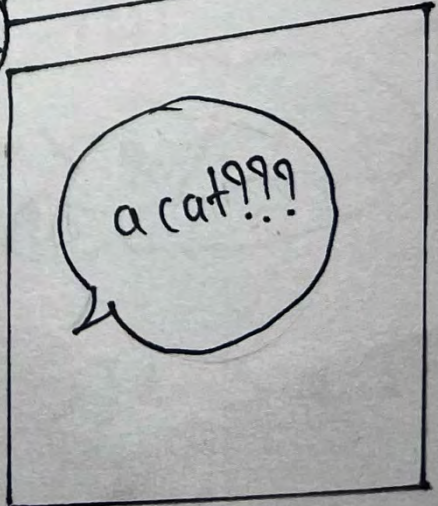
meow...
meow...

Why is
there a
box in front
of my house?

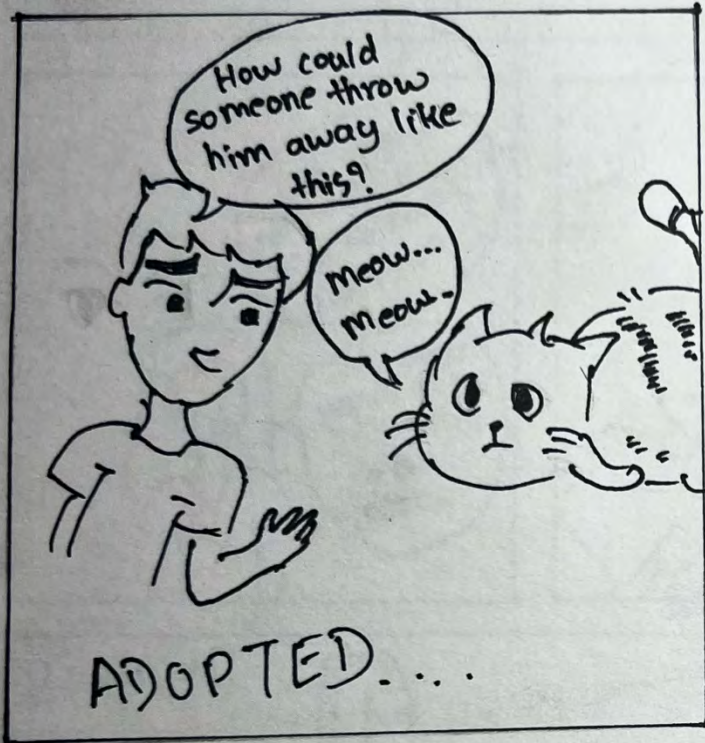
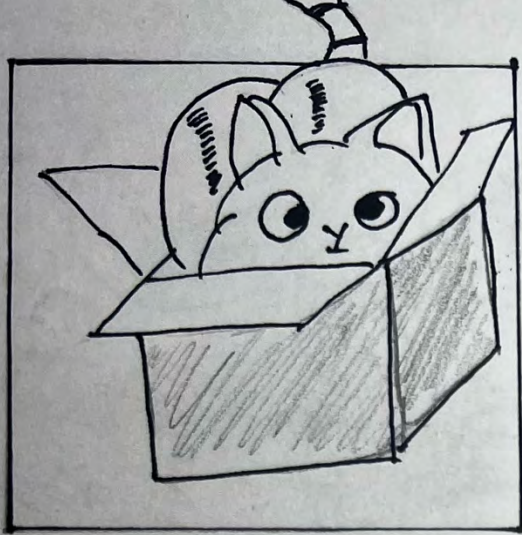


meow...
meow...
meow...

LOUDER AND
LOUDER!!!



a cat???

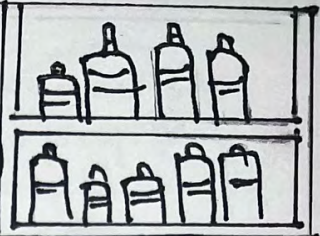


VET CLINIC

I think he's sick... he's not eating.

Doctor he's been sleeping all day long...

Alright let me check



You might not notice this, he has diarrhea

It's called parvo virus It's hard to be cure..



What should I do doctor?

Please help him...

HOPELESS....

I'll give him IV fluid and medication



HARDLY BREATH



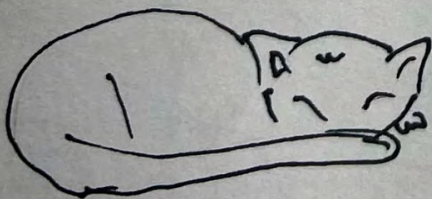
Rest well little boy!...

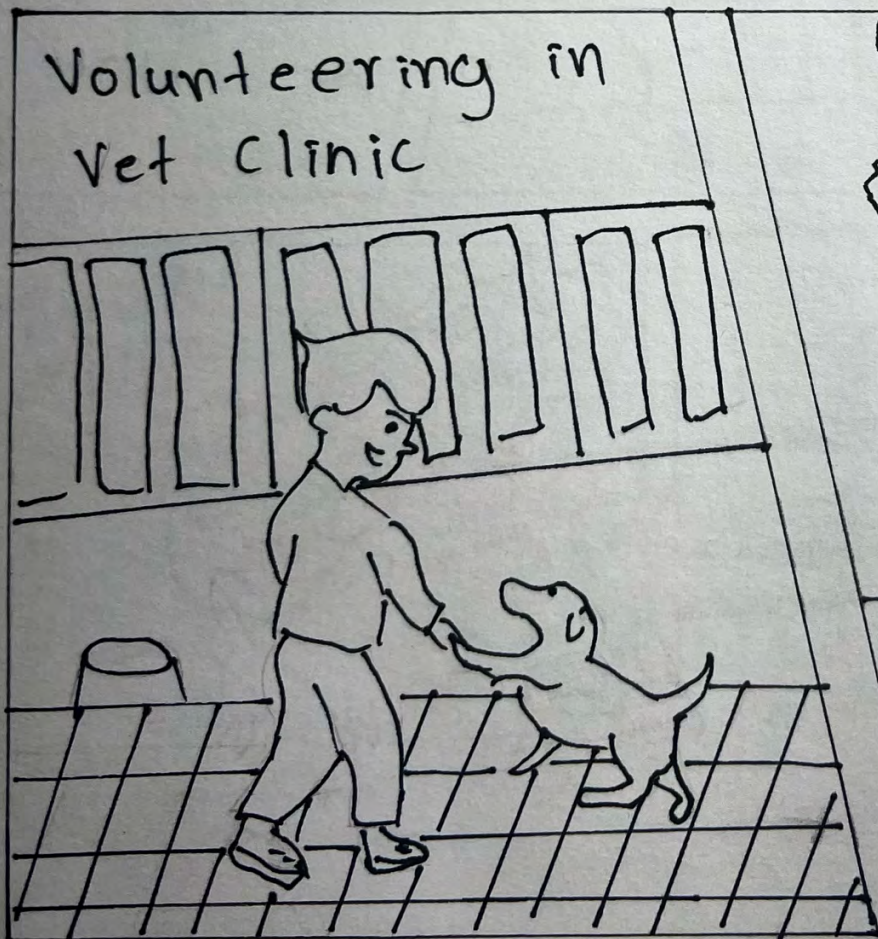
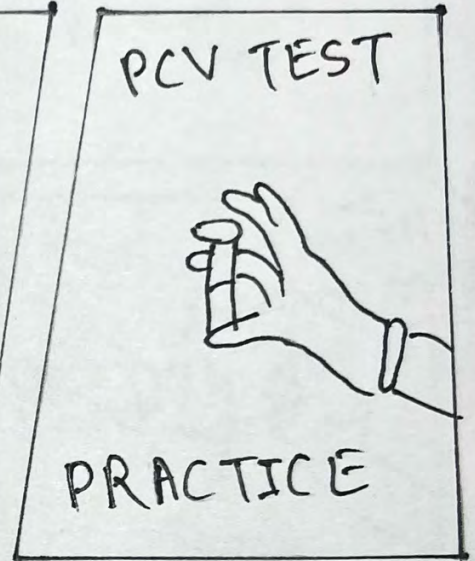
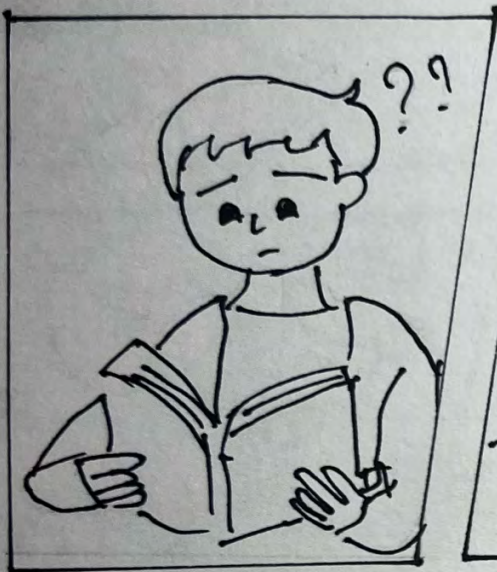
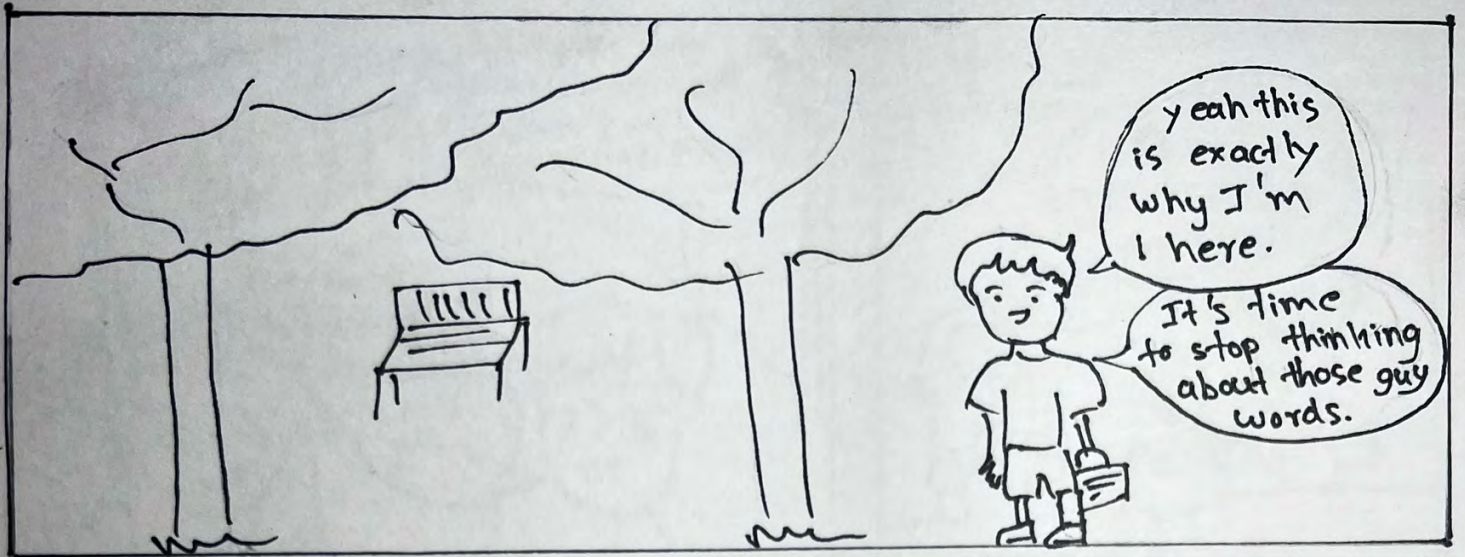
I should've notice that you were not okay earlier... I'm Sorry

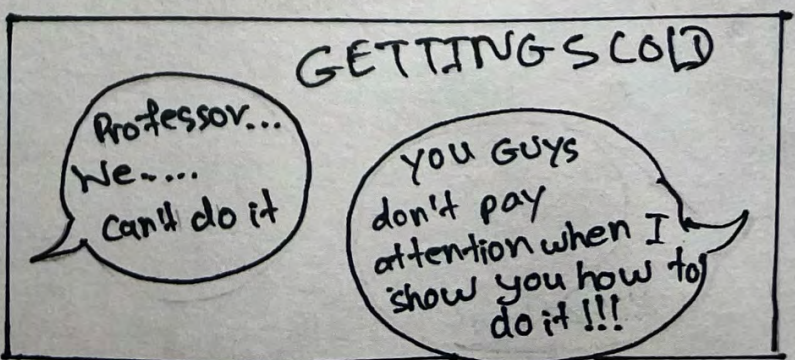
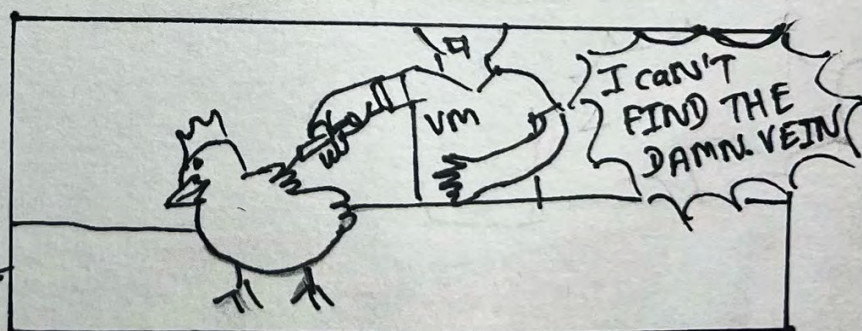
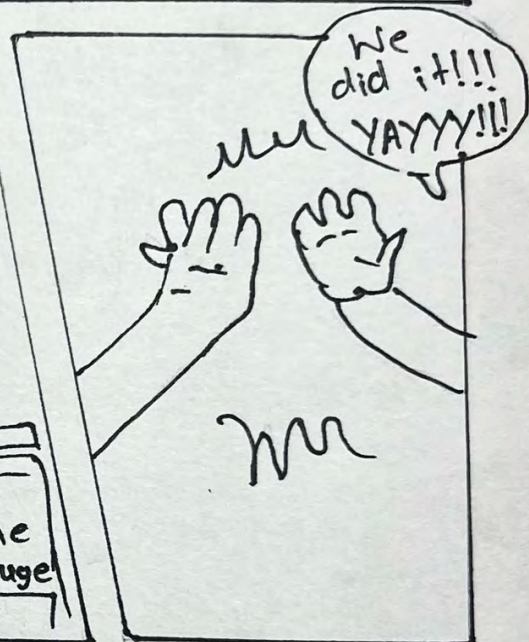
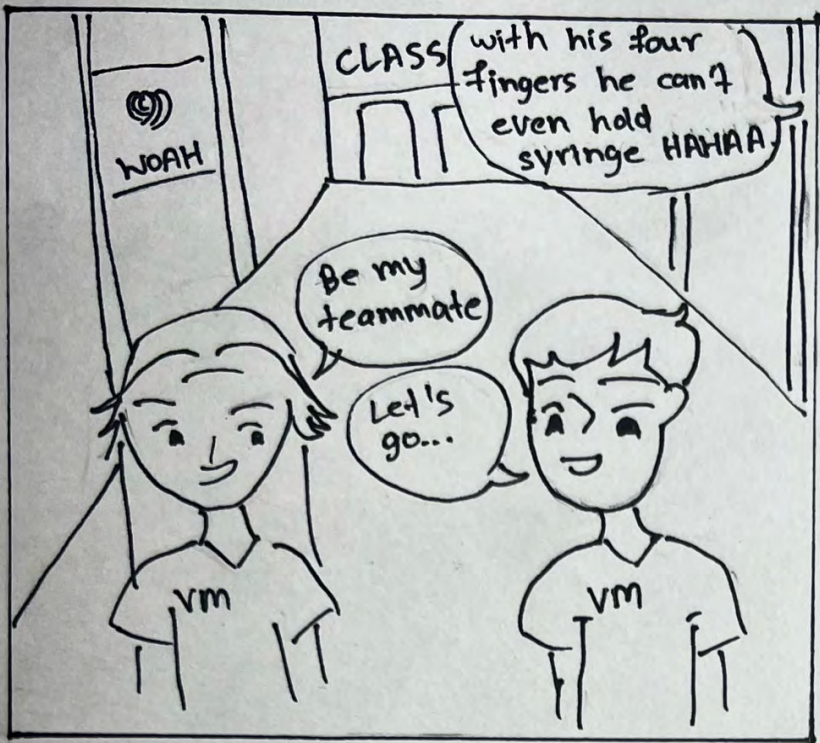


STOP BREATHING.....

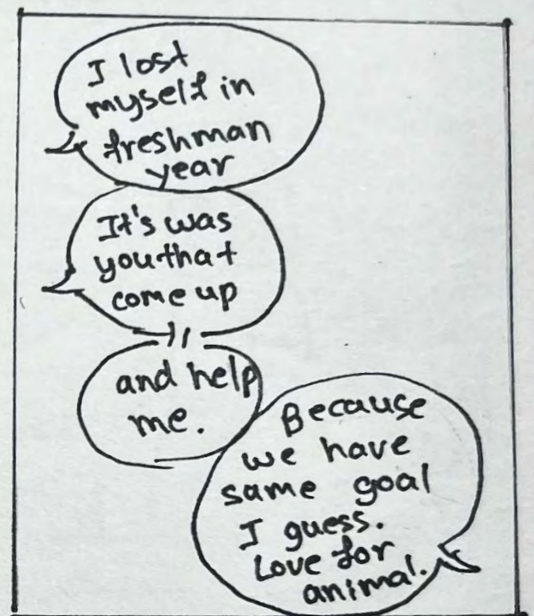
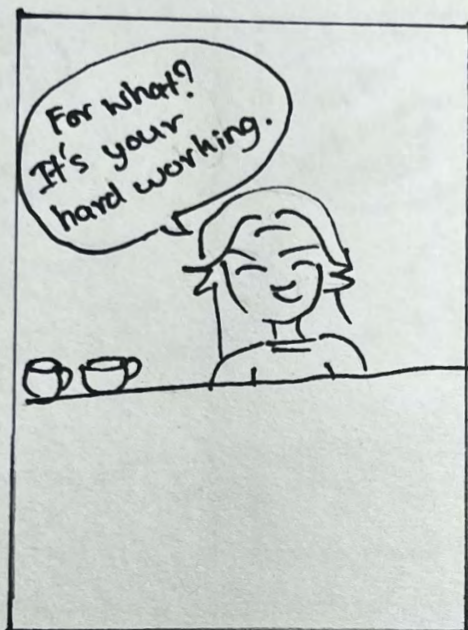
CRYING.....



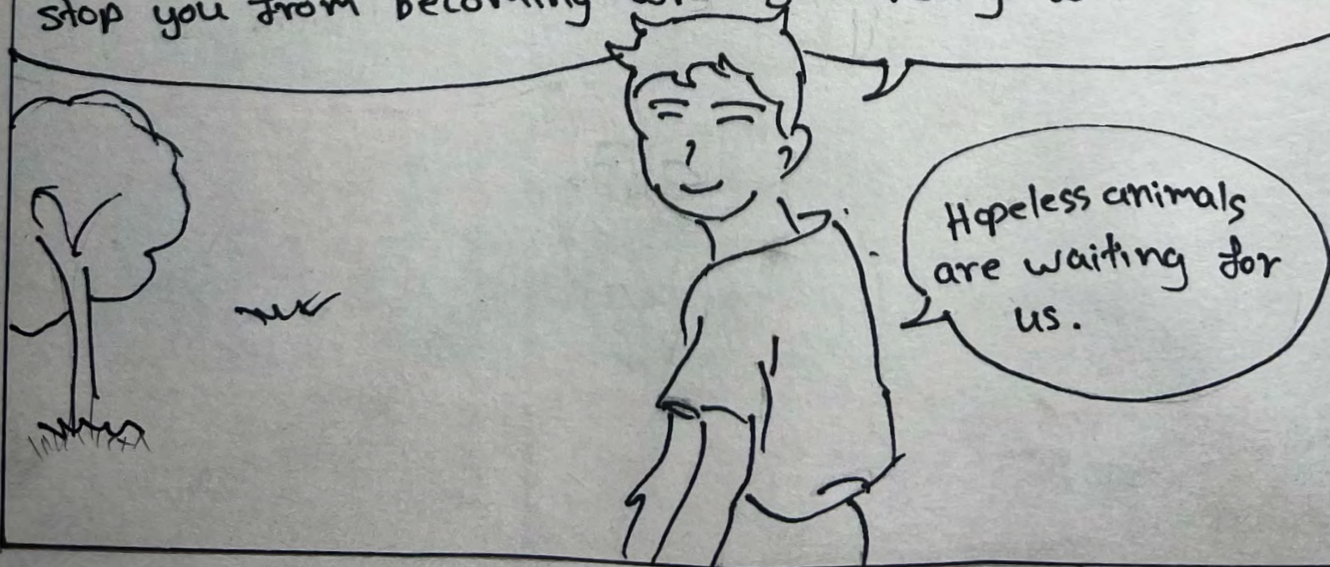








She was right. Veterinary medicine is all about commitment, love and care that we have for animals. Cured them feel like treating our inner child. The pet that we losted during our childhood day. Gender, disability should never be a reason that stop you from becoming who you really wanted to be.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Theara Soun

My name is Theara Soun. I am a sophomore student majoring in veterinary medicine at the Royal University of Agriculture in Cambodia. I have a strong interest in animals, inspired by growing up around many stray cats and dogs. This passion motivated me to pursue veterinary medicine and visual storytelling related to animal health.

Story description


This comic follows a gentle young man from rural Cambodia who was born with four fingers on his right hand and faces discrimination while growing up. Despite bullying and social challenges, he remains determined to pursue his dream of becoming a veterinarian. The story explores resilience, friendship, and the challenges he encounters as he begins his college life.


World Organisation for Animal Health


Regional Representation for Asia and the Pacific
Food Science Building 5F
The University of Tokyo
1-1-1 Yayoi, Bunkyo-ku
Tokyo 113-0032
Japan

World Organisation for Animal Health

Sub-Regional Representation for South-East Asia
c/o Department of Livestock Development
69/1 Phaya Thai Road
Ratchathewi 10400 Bangkok
Thailand

 WOAHAAsiaPacific

 @WOAH_Asia

 WorldAnimalHealth

Visit us: woah.org | rr-asia.woah.org

