

This is Me

This is Me is a traditionally hand drawn slightly fictionalized biographical comic.

Caption Reads: Small Steps.

Page 1, Panel 1: A teenager, wearing a hoodie and a top hat, stands with their back to us. They hold a large sheet of paper in front of them and say, "My great plan to change the world."

Page 1, Panel 2: The teenager, still wearing the top hat, now faces us. They read the large sheet of paper, saying, "Step one."

Page 1, Panel 3: We see the teenager from the side, walking confidently. They carry a rolled-up sheet of paper.

Page 1, Panel 4: The teenager, seated on a stool, holds a globe of Earth on their lap. They paint a silly face on the globe, saying, "Paint more silly faces of America."

Caption Reads: Unfortunately, I was not feeling brave enough to actually hug him when I saw him. Thank goodness for comics.

Page 1, Panel 5: The teenager, still wearing the top hat, walks while enjoying an ice cream cone.

Page 1, Panel 6: The teenager, now holding the ice cream cone, looks off-panel with a surprised and excited expression.

Page 1, Panel 7: The teenager, mid-leap, throws the ice cream cone into the air. They run towards an adult man with short black hair who is holding a sign that reads "Free Hugs." The man looks concerned.

Caption Reads: A true quandary...

Page 1, Panel 8: The teenager, sitting at a drafting table, looking down at their work while holding a pen says, "I'm often told I look and act like a cartoon. I always say I'm not and it's just how I move. But now that I'm drawing myself..."

Page 1, Panel 9: The teenager, still at the drafting table, looks directly at the viewer and asks, "...can I still say that?"

Caption Reads: I have no idea what character they are talking about.

Page 2, Panel 1: The teenager, wearing a top hat, puts on a long, black coat, saying, "I put on my coat..."

Page 2, Panel 2: The teenager, now wearing the coat, walks out of a door, saying, "Go outside..."

Page 2, Panel 3: The teenager, standing outside, says, "And usually..." A text bubble from an unseen person reads, "Hey! You look like my favorite movie guy!"

Page 2, Panel 4: The teenager, still outside, responds to the unseen person, "I'm just cold!"

Caption reads: I do like to jig at bus stops.

Page 2, Panel 5: The teenager, wearing a top hat, strikes a pose, snapping their fingers to music playing from a phone on the sidewalk.

Page 2, Panel 6: The teenager, wearing a top hat, continues to dance, their body language expressive and fluid.

Page 2, Panel 7: The teenager, wearing a top hat, strikes another pose, their arms raised and one leg bent.

Page 2, Panel 8: An adult, holding grocery bags, stands at a bus stop and watches the dancing teenager. The teenager says, "You're only frowning because you can't hide that you're watching."

Caption reads: 'Nuff said

Page 2, Panel 9: The teenager, wearing a top hat, walks down the street as a car drives by. Someone in the car yells, "Hey you! Why are you wearing a top hat?"

Page 2, Panel 10: The teenager, still wearing the top hat, yells back at the car, "Why are you wearing pants?"

Page 2, Panel 11: The teenager continues to yell, "'Cause it would be weird if you didn't is why!"

Caption reads: Ever experience that one? You blink and BANG! Sunshine.

Page 3, Panel 1: The teenager, covered by a blanket, sleeps soundly in a dark room. A top hat hangs from a lamp above the bed.

Page 3, Panel 2: The teenager, still asleep, has a thought bubble above their head that reads, "Blink."

Page 3, Panel 3: The teenager, startled awake, lies in bed with wide open eyes. A sun with a face, yelling "Boo!", appears in a thought bubble.

Page 3, Panel 4: The teenager, now tightly closing their eyes, lies in bed, looking disheveled. A laughing sun appears in a thought bubble.

Caption reads: Note to self: keep practicing

Page 3, Panel 5: The teenager, wearing a top hat, sits at a desk, drawing with a pen. They say, "I pride myself on being a mindful person."

Page 3, Panel 6: The teenager, still at the desk with pen no longer in hand, looks thoughtful.

Page 3, Panel 7: The teenager picks up the pen again and looks at it curiously.

Page 3, Panel 8: The teenager stands up and reaches for a pen holder. They exclaim, "How long was I using a red pen?"

Caption reads: It's funny how differently those songs can be interpreted.

Page 3, Panel 9: The teenager, wearing a top hat, hunches over a drafting table, drawing with a pen. A song plays in the background: "We got the power! Power! Come on..."

Page 3, Panel 10: The teenager sits up straight, still drawing. The song continues: "Yeah, we're taking over! We're the ones in control. Yeah, we're taking over!"

Page 3, Panel 11: The teenager, with hands raised in a questioning gesture, turns to the viewer and asks, "Self-empowerment? Or threat to world peace?"

Caption reads: True Story. It fits right on top of my hat.

Page 4, Panel 1: The teenager, wearing a top hat, smiles as they walk towards a sign that reads "Garage Sale."

Page 4, Panel 2: The teenager, with a mischievous grin, looks at a table with a "\$1.00" sign.

Page 4, Panel 3: The teenager, happily skipping away, wears a small umbrella perched on top of their top hat. An adult watches in confusion.

Caption reads: Truth can be funnier than fiction.

Page 4, Panel 4: The teenager, wearing a top hat, stands with their head down, hands in pockets. A blurry, shadowy figure, also wearing a top hat, says, "You don't actually have friends. You just know nice people. They're just waiting for an opportunity to leave! They don't want to be pals!"

Page 4, Panel 5: The teenager, now standing tall, looks at their phone. A text message reads, "Ding! Joshua, you're a wonderful friend. I can see our friendship lasting decades." The shadowy figure watches.

Page 4, Panel 6: The teenager turns and sticks their tongue out at the shadowy figure, who yells, "Ech! Too much truth! TRUTH!!" and begins to fade away.

Caption reads: It's important for them to see hair every once in a while.

Page 4, Panel 7: Two teenagers stand facing each other. Teenager 2 asks, "You made it! Where's your top hat at?" Teenager 1 replies, "I left it at home while I'm at camp."

Page 4, Panel 8: Teenager 1 talks to another teenager, Teenager 3. Teenager 3 asks, "Where's your top hat?" Teenager 1 replies, "I left it at home."

Page 4, Panel 9: Teenager 1 talks to yet another teenager, Teenager 4. Teenager 4 asks, "Where's the top hat?" Teenager 1, looking slightly concerned, replies, "At home."

Page 4, Panel 10: Teenager 1, slightly exasperated, points at themselves while speaking to yet another teenager, Teenager 5. Teenager 5 asks, "Did you not bring your top hat?" Teenager 1 replies, "Seriously, I'm right here."

Caption reads: It took four years to finish this.

Page 5, Panel 1: A young child, wearing a top hat, lies on their stomach, engrossed in a comic book. A caption reads, "I had an idea! A plan to change the world."

Page 5, Panel 2: The child, still wearing the top hat, stands with a wide grin, holding up the comic book. A caption reads, "I drew it up and showed it off on brown paper, slightly curled."

Page 5, Panel 3: The child, hugging the comic book, looks towards the wiggling fingers extending from an arm of someone off-panel. A thought bubble reads, "He already thought of that, they said. An old man did."

Page 5, Panel 4: The child, still hugging the comic book, smiles brightly. A thought bubble reads, "I smiled and replied, 'Then how great am I to have thought of it as a kid?'"

Caption reads: When the world stares at you. Stare right back. And smile.

Page 5, Panel 5: A teenager, wearing a top hat, walks past a group of three adults standing near a brick wall. The teenager looks slightly concerned as the adults stare at them intently.

Page 5, Panel 6: The teenager, still wearing the top hat, turns around and stares at the adults with wide eyes. The adults appear uncomfortable and look away.

Page 5, Panel 7: The teenager, laughing hysterically, runs away, clutching their stomach.

Caption reads: Sometimes, yes.

Page 5, Panel 8: A teenager, wearing a top hat, brushes their teeth in front of a mirror. They say, "Some people have imaginary friends. I do too."

Page 5, Panel 9: The teenager, still wearing the top hat, points to their temple and says, "I also have an imaginary enemy."

Page 5, Panel 10: The teenager, still brushing their teeth, points their toothbrush at the mirror and says, "Sometimes he gets in my head too much and I have to remind myself he's just that: imaginary."

Page 5, Panel 11: The teenager looks in the mirror. A shadowy figure, also wearing a top hat, appears in the reflection. The figure says, "Ouch," and the teenager replies, "I mean, sometimes you're helpful."