

Solo

OWL STRETCHING TIMES no. 2

NOT A STAR WARS
FANZINE. BOY I WISH
IT WAS.



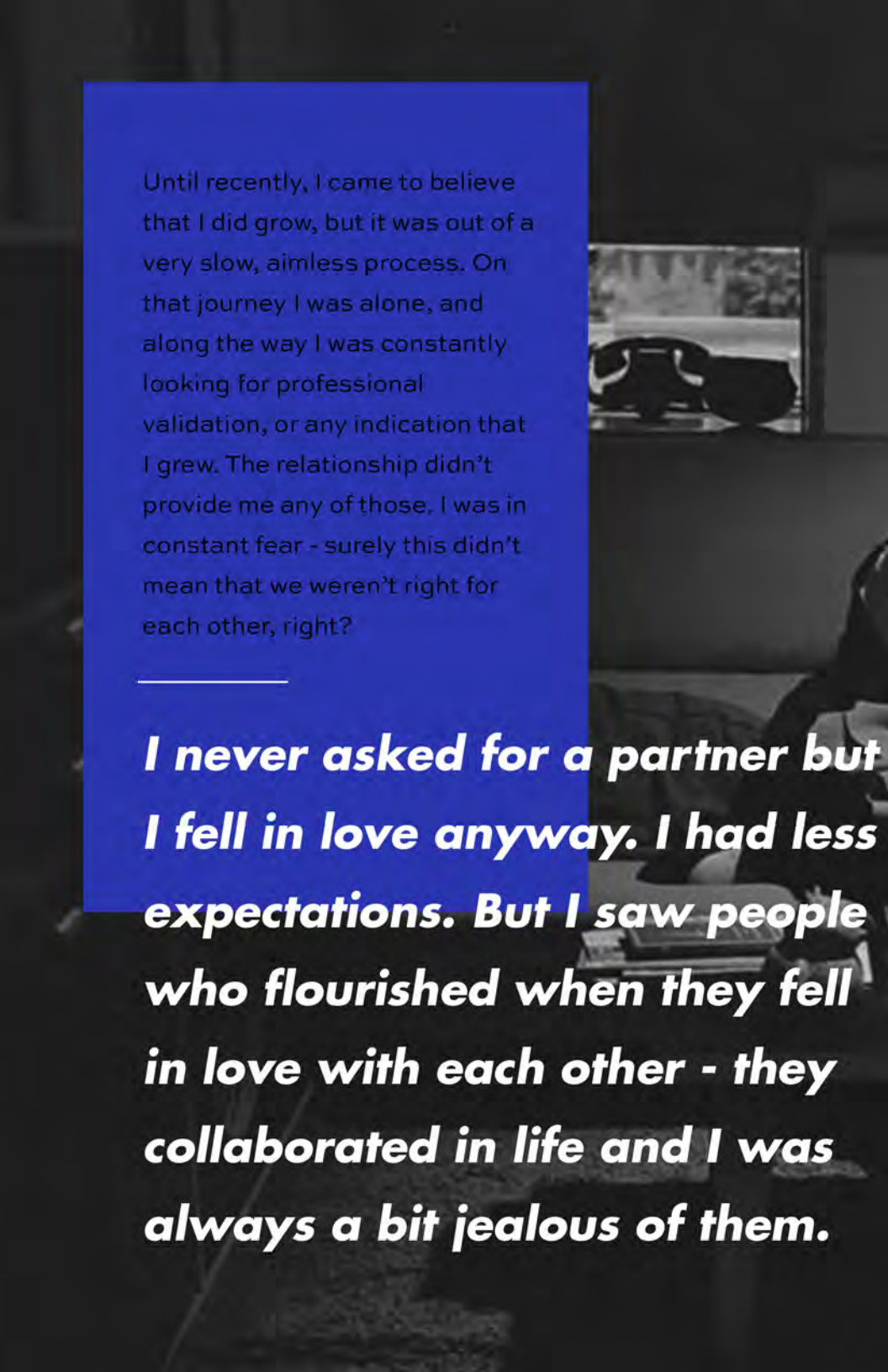


(not about him tho,
lol sorry)

This is how I usually answer friends and family for the past few years, when they ask how am I doing. How else can you articulate these feelings as efficiently and sincerely? My breakup isn't as different as anyone else's - **breaking up after 10 years is still a breakup** - but people are still shocked anyway. A lot of people would try to console me with their frank confessions: they feel we weren't suited to each other and it wasn't a huge loss anyway. Does it feel less because it can be described in 5 words or less?

Full disclosure: I made this zine before the Star Wars *Solo* movie came out, so I was embarrassed to stick with this title before I was finished. But that movie was very forgettable so I'm sticking with it. (Also, bring back Rian Johnson, you cowards!)

Guess what, guys? I'm single.

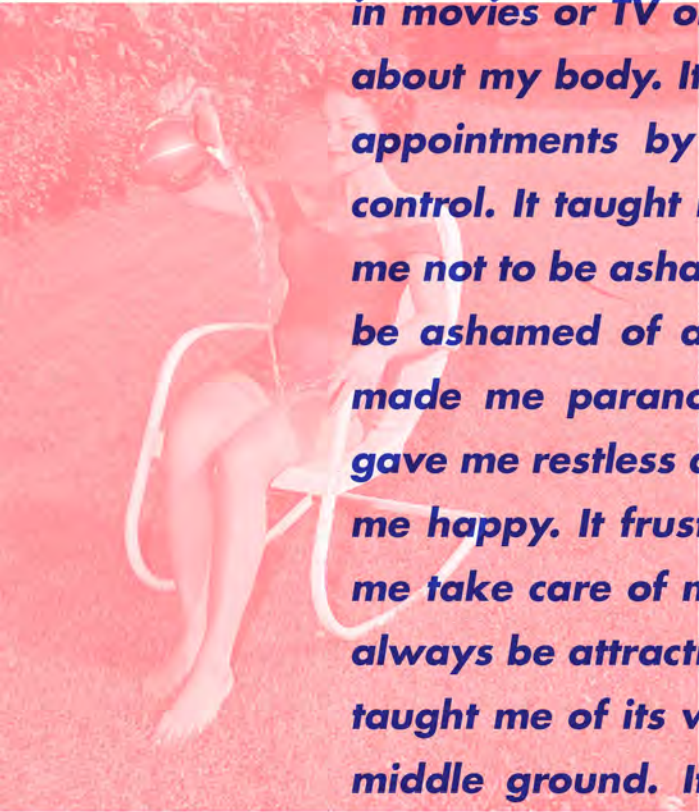
A person is sitting on a couch in a living room. On the wall behind them is a framed picture of a car. The person is wearing a dark jacket and light-colored pants. The room is dimly lit, and the overall atmosphere is quiet and contemplative.

Until recently, I came to believe that I did grow, but it was out of a very slow, aimless process. On that journey I was alone, and along the way I was constantly looking for professional validation, or any indication that I grew. The relationship didn't provide me any of those, I was in constant fear - surely this didn't mean that we weren't right for each other, right?

I never asked for a partner but I fell in love anyway. I had less expectations. But I saw people who flourished when they fell in love with each other - they collaborated in life and I was always a bit jealous of them.

*Charles and
Ray Eames, 1950

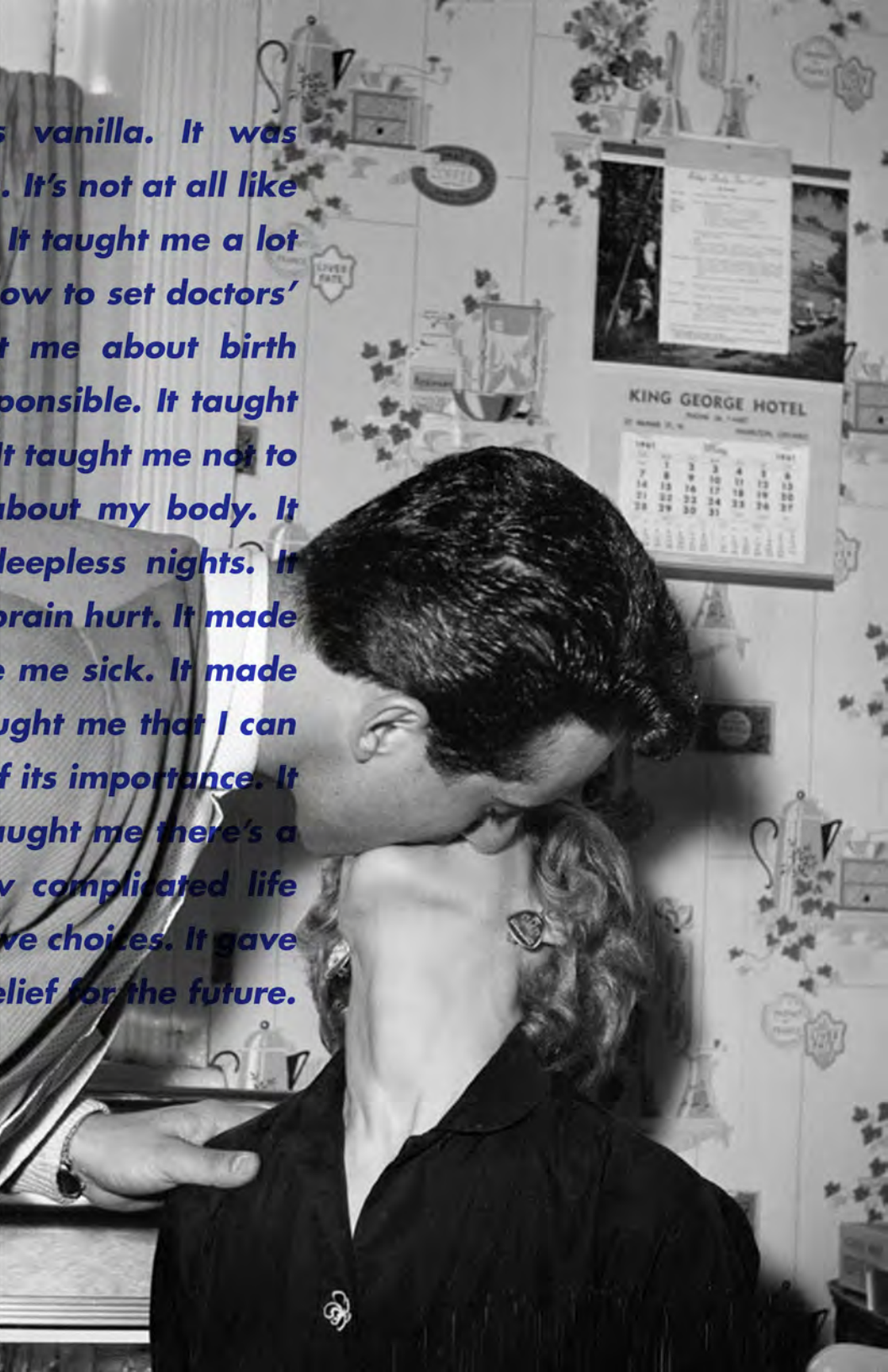


A woman in a red bikini is sitting on a white chair. She is holding a large, glowing red heart in her hands. The background is a textured, reddish-pink color. The text is overlaid on the right side of the image.

It was good. It was ok. It was satisfactory. It was scary. It was fun in movies or TV or porn. It's messy. It made me learn about my body. It made me learn how to have appointments by myself. It taught me how to have control. It taught me how to be responsible. It taught me not to be ashamed of my body. It taught me not to be ashamed of asking questions and answers. It made me paranoid. It gave me sleepless nights. It gave me restless days. It made my body feel like it was mine. It made me happy. It frustrates me. It made me realize that I can take care of myself better. It taught me that I can always be attractive. It taught me that I can be confident. It taught me of its worthlessness. It taught me that I can be in the middle ground. It showed me how to be confident. It showed me that I can have control. It showed me that I can have fear for the future. It gave me relief. It is what it is.

Talking about sex still makes me uncomfortable. I guess I was never that kind of person. But here are some thoughts.

s vanilla. It was
. It's not at all like
It taught me a lot
ow to set doctors'
t me about birth
ossible. It taught
t taught me not to
about my body. It
leepless nights. It
rain hurt. It made
e me sick. It made
ught me that I can
f its importance. It
ught me there's a
v complicated life
ve choices. It gave
elief for the future.



LOVE PART

KING GEORGE HOTEL

1941		1941	
1	2	3	4
7	8	9	10
14	15	16	17
21	22	23	24
28	29	30	31

I could've lost
myself but
stepped away
just in time

It
was
my
me

I used to wake up alone. I made myself do little morning rituals, say little mantras, write in a journal - so I can have some control over my life. Made myself breakfast. Enjoyed the first few hours of my day until I give everything else to someone who doesn't love me, yells at me, and gives zero shit about me or my work or my health.

They asked me, "you stayed there for 10 years **for that?**" Well, no. I thought we were in love, and would be forever. I forgot about the diminishing returns. He seemed not to, though, because he got a replacement for me. I waited for a year for him to get over it and he didn't. So one morning I just thought that I'd rather wake up alone and enjoy my mornings.

Have you

forgiven him?

Yes.

*Forgiveness means letting all the shit go, but forgiveness also means that I will NOT forget everything. Forgiveness is not forcing myself to be friends with someone who hurt me a lot. Forgiveness does not entail to: condoning very harmful misogyny, being obligated to answer messages, stop being friends with or being civil to his friends and relatives. Forgiveness and friendships have limits; I believe that some values have should not be compromised for the sake of civility. Forgiveness means I can tell myself to finally live my life without him to bring me down.

*In the end, there's
nothing left to
do but to catch
up on the years
and opportunities
I have missed.
And seem to
be taking it
better than I've
expected.*

*Was it worth it?
I did learn a lot
about relationships
and about myself.
I grew up and I'm
thankful for that.*

*I'm in love with
myself for the
first time and I
think that it's
lovely, gal.*



*we're doing
amazing,
sweetie.*