



ALEX

Alex is a disabled precariously employed academic, contracted to teach one part-time course but doing much unpaid research in their own time. Precarity has made their disability worse, and they struggle to find a place as a disabled academic in the contemporary university.

When Alex's previous teaching contract ended due to covid cuts in 2020, they lost access to possibilities to do research. After working (in their own time) on postdoc applications, and applying for jobs, for about three years, they gave up the idea of paid research as a possible trajectory for them. Alex does unpaid training for their teaching role, and they also do research in their own time, even though not on a paid research contract. While Alex struggles with time and deadlines due to their condition, they also note the exclusionary eligibility criteria for funding, not only concerning time and age limits (e.g. the term 'early career') but also where grants can be held (e.g. not at their own teaching-focused institution): 'I can't work out where I fit. And I'm older... From my perspective, it's very difficult to find out where I fit in these eligibility criteria.'

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I can't work out where I fit in these eligibility criteria, and it's not something I am willing to do in my own time. I just say no.



One article at a time
"immersion within reach space"

early walk w/ dash
then research
then 1-2pm walk w/ dash
then rest of day.

interaction is what makes me tired
research time is not tiring



positive side
as I get to do
these things from
here (teaching me, r)

sec
n

The Blackmail of Precarious Employment

ALEX IS A DISABLED ACADEMIC WHO HAS BEEN TEACHING SINCE 2014.



TEACHING AND RESEARCH TOGETHER WAS MY PRECIOUS DREAM FOR FIFTEEN YEARS.

I'VE GIVEN UP ON IT NOW.



THEY HAVE BEEN ON UNIVERSAL CREDIT THROUGHOUT THEIR CAREER TO HELP THEM MAKE ENDS MEET.



PRECARIOUS WORK WORSENERED MY DISABILITY.

ALEX TYPICALLY WORKS FROM A SOFA BED,



AND TAKES THEIR DOG OUT FOR A WALK OVER LUNCH.



I ORGANISE ONE MODULE, WHICH I CAN AT LEAST DO FROM HERE.

THEIR LAST RESEARCH CONTRACT WAS ONLY THREE MONTHS LONG, YEARS AGO. THEIR CURRENT CONTRACT IS TEACHING ONLY, BUT ALEX STILL DOES UNPAID RESEARCH.




MY OWN TIME IS RESEARCH.

THE TIME IS NEVER ENOUGH.



I ALSO DO UNPAID TRAINING FOR MY TEACHING JOB IN MY OWN TIME.

BUT NOW, I FEEL ACADEMIA IS BEYOND ME.



I KEPT APPLYING FOR JOBS BUT AT SOME POINT STOPPED GETTING INVITED TO INTERVIEWS.



THERE IS THIS EXPECTATION OF FULL TIME TEMPORARY CONTRACTS.



I CAN'T DO IT.



BEING IN NATURE IS GOOD FOR MY FATIGUE.



THERE IS SO MUCH I WANT TO RESEARCH AND WRITE. BOOKS, ARTICLES.



IT'S DIFFICULT TO HAVE PUBLICATIONS ACCEPTED.



DENOUNCING BAD STRUCTURES USED TO BE KEY IN MY WORK, BUT I'M SO OUT OF THOSE STRUCTURES NOW.



I CAN'T CHANGE THE WORLD. IT'S MAYBE NOT MY ROLE ANYMORE.



I'M FOCUSING ON WHAT I CAN DO NOW.



THEY HAVE ALMOST GIVEN UP THE THOUGHT OF AN ACADEMIC CAREER, BUT KEEP APPLYING FOR ACADEMIC JOBS.

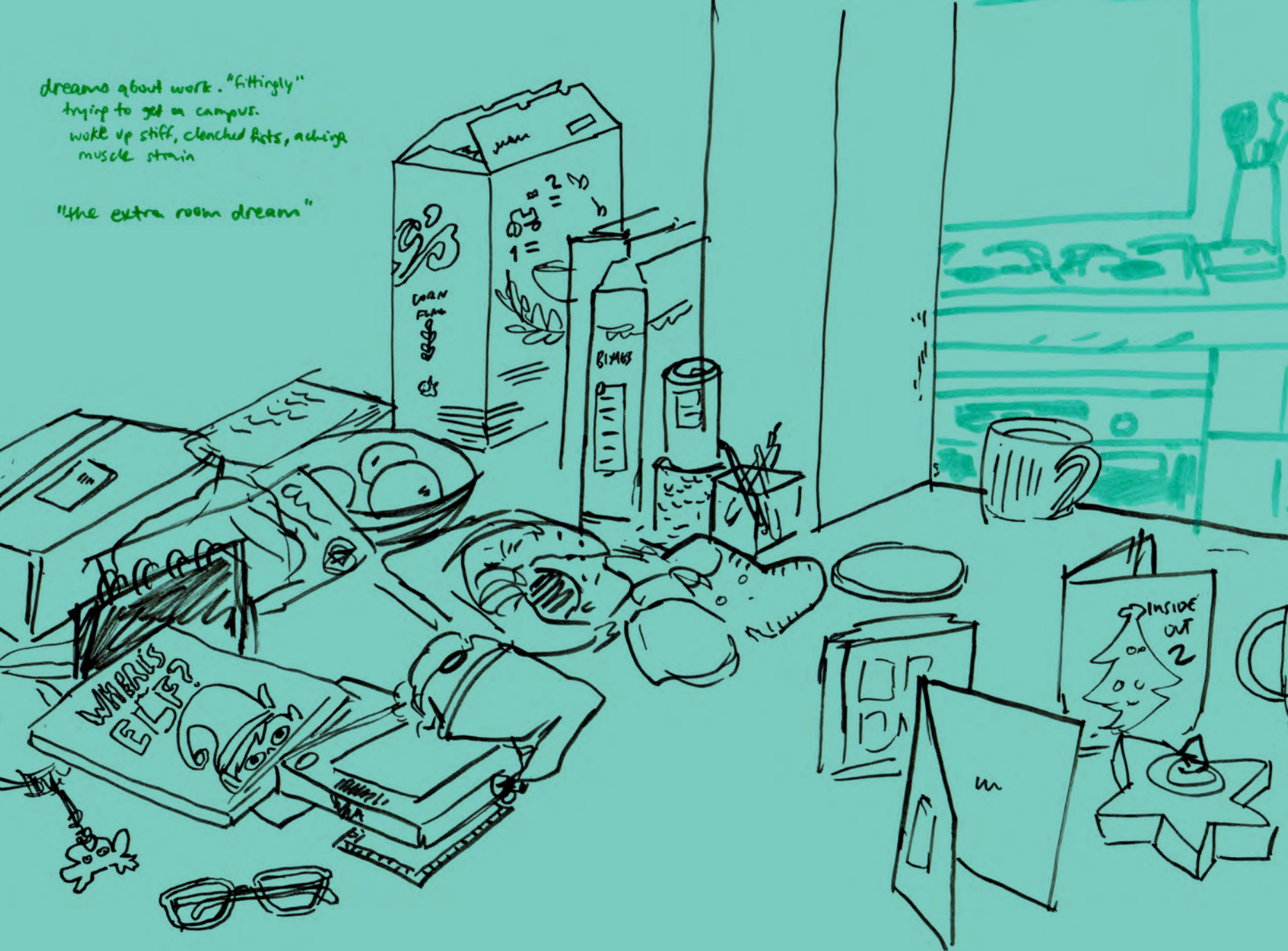
I CAN'T STOP MYSELF FROM APPLYING, BUT I HOPE I FAIL...



IF I FAIL, I WILL NEED TO FIND THE COURAGE TO STOP APPLYING FOR PRECARIOUS ACADEMIC JOBS, ONCE AND FOR ALL.

dreams about work. "fittingly"
trying to get on campus.
woke up stiff, clenched fists, aching
muscle strain

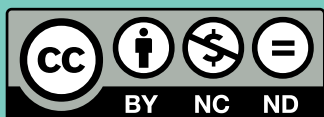
"the extra room dream"



IN THEIR OWN TIME

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Every year I panic – will
I have a job next year?