

# Things to make

- Van
- road
- trees
- dirt clouds
- school
- soccer field
- not nice room/nice room
- characters

## Synopsis

I get on a van to go to a small village called Langkap, we arrive and the place is really run down and underdeveloped. I take a look into my assigned room and wonder how I'm going to be able to survive here.

The next day we arrive at the school/church and begin to clean. Kids begin to arrive and play with each other, but are still uncertain about us. The kids are barely clothed, and many do not even have shoes. Once enough arrive, we begin to introduce ourselves, then teach them English.

During the break time, all the kids eat then go outside to play around. They seem to be able to enjoy themselves and be happy regardless of their situation. I wonder to myself what it takes for me to be happy.

Once the trip is over, I stare at my room and wonder why I insist on having such expensive/nice things in order for me to feel happy when those kids can do so much with so little.

## Scene 1

Arriving in Langkap, Pahlawan, Perak

### Panel 1

Van chuggin down dirt road, no road signs

- music out the windows
- dirt spewing up behind

### Panel 2

Old town, dirt roads, rundown buildings, dense jungle

- hostel
- same van parked off to the left
- Yoo standing somewhat in the middle
  - Says something about stopping here... i guess

## Panel 3

In the lobby of the hostel, fairly dim, crooked paintings, broken light

- Yoo describing what we are going to be doing here

## Panel 4

Arrive at the motel we stay in

- front entrance, dingy

## Panel 5

Get into the room

- small, cramped, mainly just the bed and a tv
- express a little disgust

## Scene 2

Get to the school

## Panel 1

Dirty old place, basically just four walls, empty, light shining though the windows

## Panel 2

Start cleaning the place, dust everywhere

## Panel 5

One kid arrives while we are still cleaning

- Kid standing in the doorway, backlit
- Panel Description "They begin to trickle in" or something like that

## Panel 6

More kids arrive

- somewhat unhappy, gloomy

## **Scene 3 - Teaching**

meet the kids, teach them stuff on the whiteboard

### **Panel 1**

One of classmates give an intro on stage

### **Panel 2**

Check on the iPads again

### **Panel 3**

Kids come in in clusters

- rowdy asf

### **Panel 4**

Looking at the kids play around in the room

- See me holding an ipad in the bottom

### **Panel 5**

Telling kids to be quiet and sit down

- kids sit nicely and politely on the floor

### **Panel 6**

Explaining the app to them

### **Panel 7**

They begin doing the exercises on the app

- some finish early

### **Panel 8**

New group of kids x2

## **Scene 4**

Take a break, go play soccer with them, realize they're really happy all the time

## **Panel 4**

Throw trash away

## **Panel 5**

Kids lining up throwing away their trash

- Kids running out the door in the background

## **Panel 6**

Kid on my right pulling on my tshirt

- something like "Trevor come play tag with me"

## **Panel 7**

I lift the kid up

- Kid laughs and many more come

## **Panel 8-9**

Playing Tag / exhausted

## **Panel 10**

Go outside, watch kids play

## **Panel 11**

Join soccer

## **Scene 5**

On the way back, get to stay in a nice place and get phone back, realize that didn't need all this.

## **Panel 1**

Looking into a dimly lit, nicely furnished room

## Panel 2

Wonder to self if this is what i need to be happy

## Process

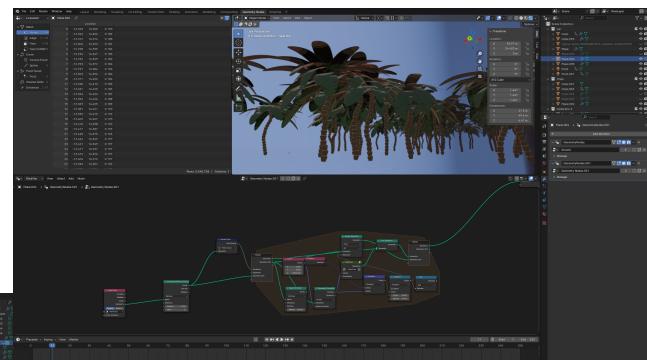
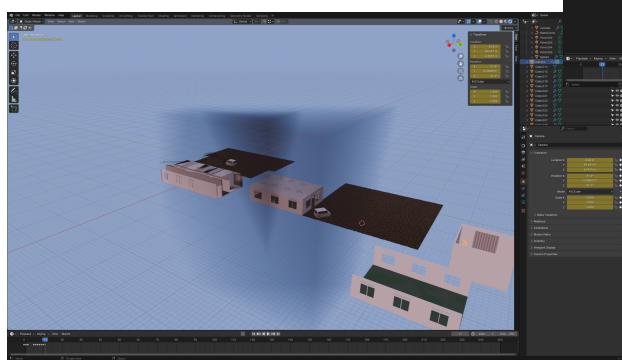
Went through multiple revisions of what style I liked for the comic to be in (image 1)

Worked a lot on creating textures, generators for trees, or reusable items within my scenes (image 2)

### Process



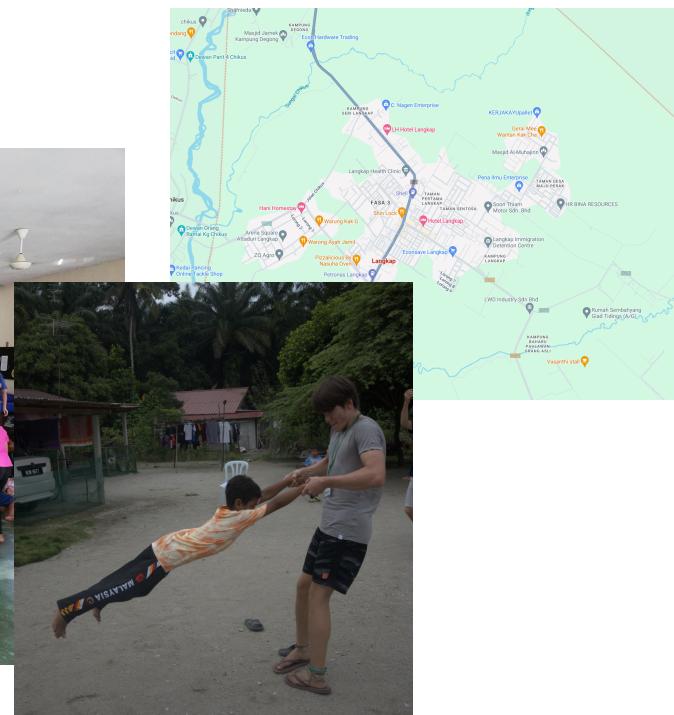
### Behind the Scenes



## Research

I did a significant amount of research looking around the village where we stayed, looking for anything that would be familiar to me. Even though I did not manage to find the places we were on google street view, I still got a general look and feel of the place based off of the images. I also dug into my photo storage and found some images of me there, as seen in the bottom image below.

## Research



## Influences

Nichijou: a daily life anime with simplistic shading, yet expressive characters

Lethal Company: A game with highly stylized toon shaders

## Influences

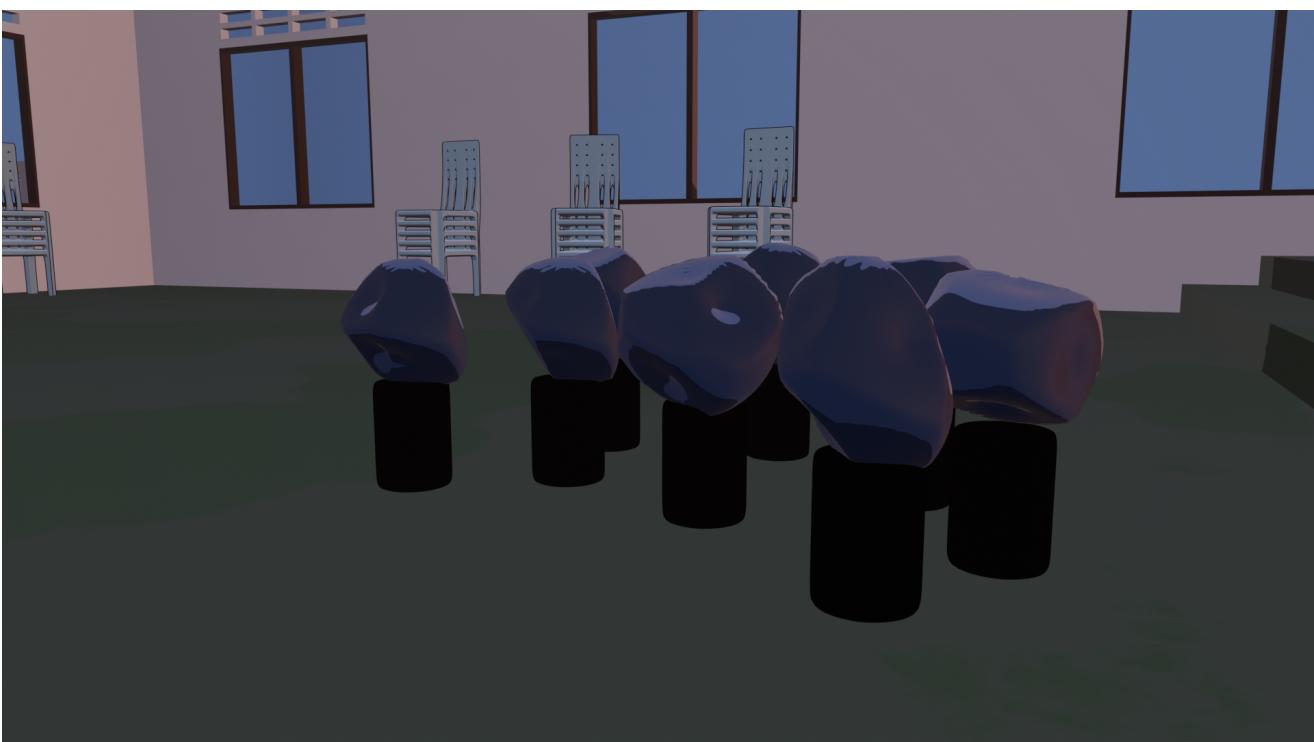
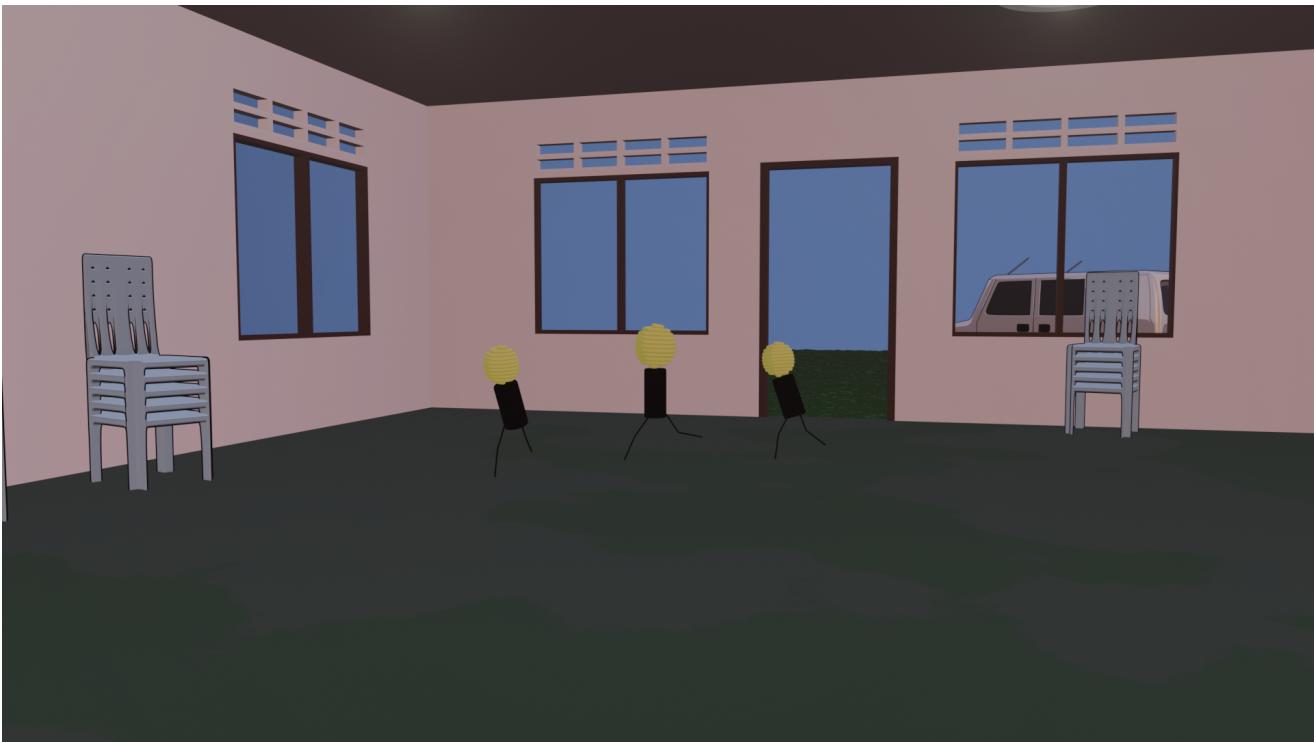


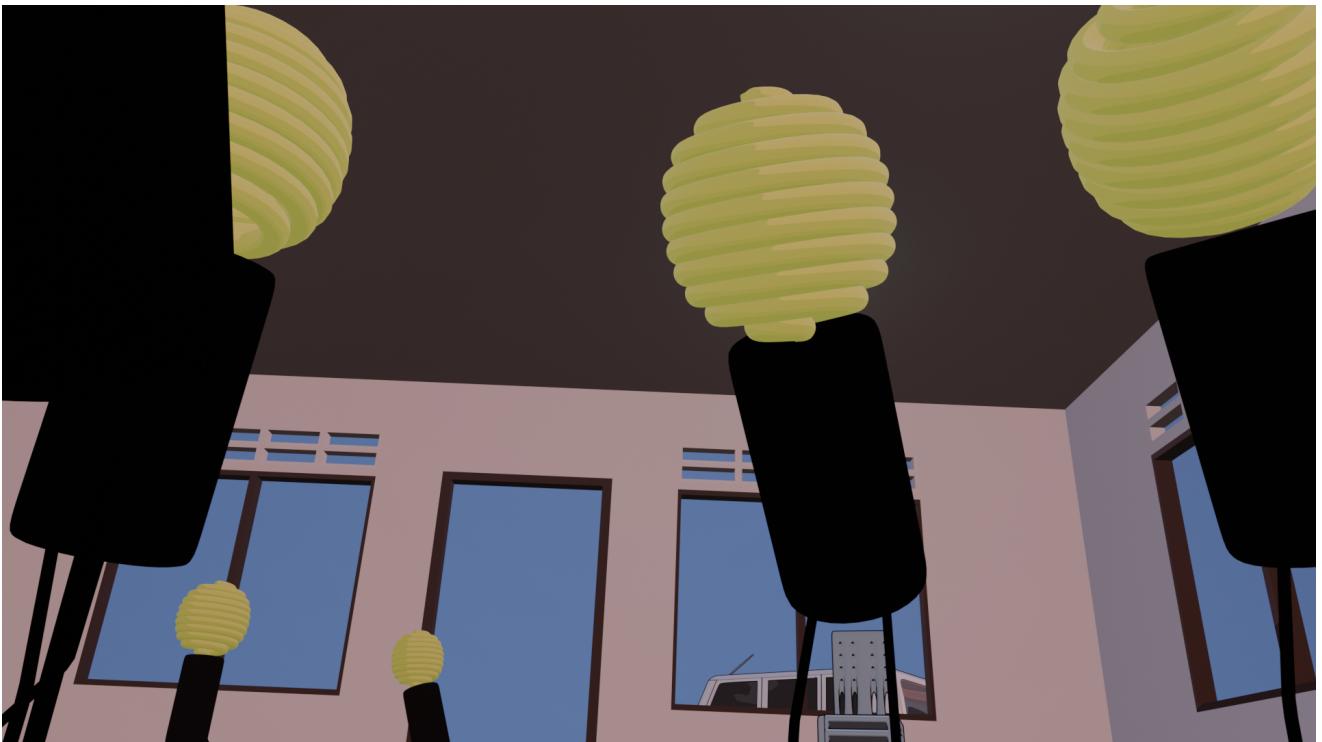
## Raw Images

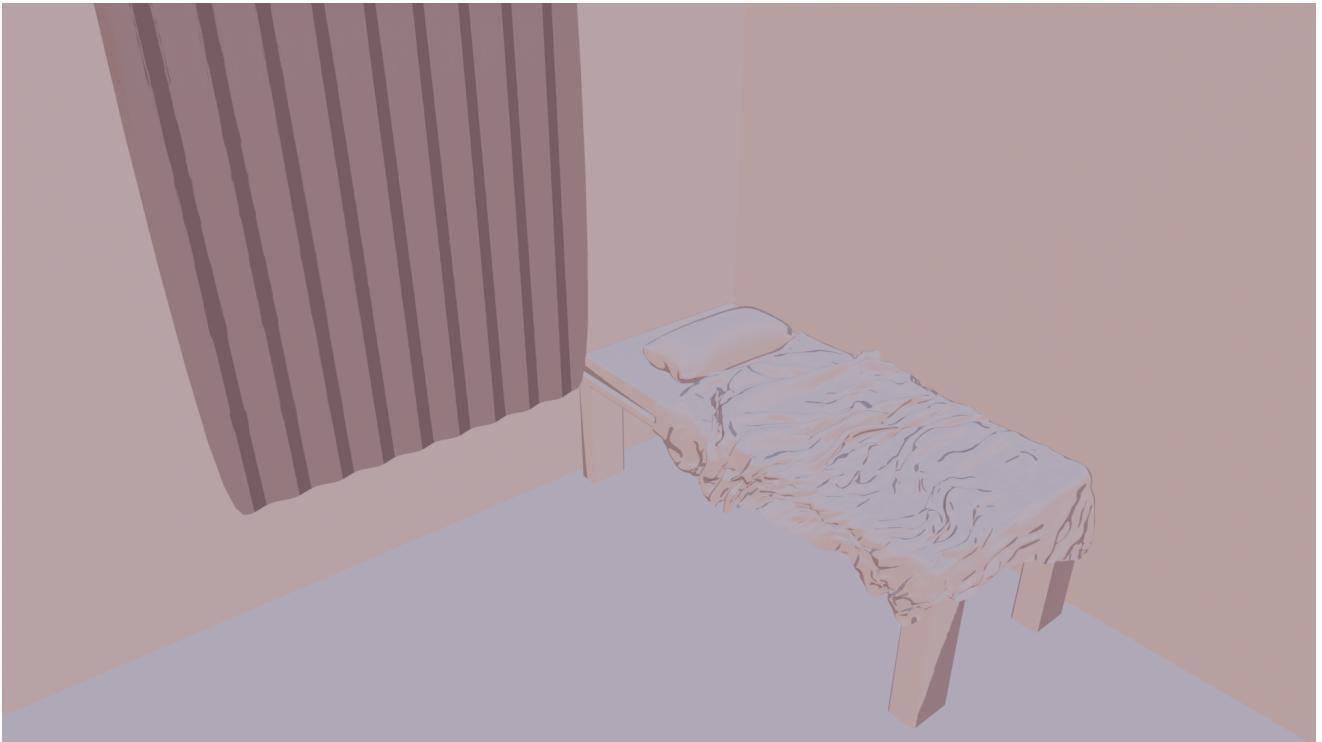












## Composed images



The Next Day

We only need  
to clean up  
and teach  
them English

That's all  
we're here  
for.

Then one  
showed up

And another

They seemed  
less than  
pleased with  
my teaching

Maybe it was  
because they  
knew something  
I didn't



Maybe in the  
end it was I  
who learned  
something



Maybe I don't  
need anything  
for me to be  
happy

## Artist Statement

This story is meant to be a simple retelling of my service trip to a small village in Langkap, Malaysia. Among all the fresh experiences from going somewhere I am unfamiliar with, my most important takeaway from the trip is that there are no requirements for you to be happy and satisfied. This journey was significant to me because it allows me to see a wider picture when processing myself and the world around it: it gives me more alternative perspectives to understand the world from. Mainly, it allowed me to understand that life is what you make of it and your mentality drives how you perceive the

world through a blunt example to my face. Broadly, I believe that people should be able to have or understand these experiences in order to have a more complete image of the world.

I conducted a significant amount of research in google maps, exploring the areas near to where I went to re-spark my imagination of what the area looked and felt like. I studied the architecture of the buildings, the structure of the roads, and even what vegetation and foliage there was. Although I was unable to find the actual places we were on Google street view, reviewing the general area was still highly valuable to me. I also dug up hundreds of old images I had saved from the time and went through them looking for anything interesting. These images allowed me to relive my time there and write a more faithful retelling of it. These images gave me more direct of a look back into where I was and what I was doing.

I chose the story to be told as first person as the story is a retelling of my experiences. I chose for it to be somewhat reflective, with my current thoughts mixed in with the thoughts I had at the time as I feel like my time there without my own reflection at the end was less impactful. Although my final product was relatively short, I feel like it still has the main ideas of what I was trying to convey: my development of thought throughout my journey to this village. I also chose to make the comic in full color, with cell shading, much like most other hand-drawn comics. I chose to have my comic look this way as it is more familiar to other comics, solidifying its position as a comic, but also as the details of every object in this story are not the focus, but mainly act as a guide to my own thoughts. I wanted to use colors very similar to what they physically were in real life, with the exception of people. For the people, I chose to use abstract shapes to represent their feelings as their heads, and simple solid black strokes to represent their body, similar to some comics. I chose to use this simplistic rendering of the people as once again the details did not matter for the goals of the comic, only their emotions and actions did.

Some fairly basic influences for this comic include Nichijou, a daily life-like anime with flat shading, yet expressive story lines and characters, and Lethal Company, for their strongly stylized cell-shading in the game. There was not much influence in the storytelling itself as it was a highly personal retelling, but the artistic style of which I chose to draw it as was highly influenced by these two pieces of media. Nichijou, much like my own comic attempted to copy, lacks details in things that are non-essential to the story at hand, with only relevant and important details being included in the story, both for saving on the cost of animating, but also as a balance between detail and story. Lethal Company also takes a similar route, with the game focusing on gameplay more than eyecandy. I attempted to do something similar with my own comic, with limited success, as I would have developed the style more if time allowed.

Writing the story out did not change much about what I thought of it as I already somewhat mentally journal my significant life events such as this. This comic was mainly just a rehashing of what I already thought and also acted as a way for me to convert my worded thoughts into other art-forms. The

main thing that has evolved across my time working on this project however, was how much I thought was essential to the story. I began this project with the goal of telling the story exactly as I had pictured it and organized it in my mind, but over time realized both my limited modes of expression and length of story were both factors that required me to rethink how I took on this project. Ultimately, I cut many details and pieces of the story that I thought were relevant in order to produce a comic that would satisfy the needs of this final project.