

Do we have a mutual understanding?

In this interview series, titled 'Do we have a mutual understanding?' we meet four early-career creatives who shared work about the climate that stuck with us, and we learn more about their inspiration and process. The interview series was made in collaboration with Round Lemon. The paid creative opportunity was solely funded by public donations. Thank you to all who supported the project.



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Sarogini Pease

@sarogini_reddiar_pease_art

'Birth of the First Tree' (2023)

Oil painting on canvas.

Sarogini's work explores folklore, and identity in outdoor play. Drawing from research in early years pedagogy and intergenerational trauma, it incorporates a love of archetypes and the symbols of childhood.



Did we stop playing in nature,
should we be scared?

‘We’ve devalued play in nature (without a learning or competitive goal). I’m interested in how we’ve replaced a healthy respect with disgust or fear; I think the impact this has on our capability to handle trauma is the most scary. We’ve started a controlled reintroduction of nature, from messy play and forest bathing to popularising folkloric and indigenous ritual. I see this understanding in my child - mud, hay, and wet leaves are familiar, and homely, and I realise how imaginary and real places in nature have held me during trauma in ways that have impacted on my identity.’



Where is the tree?

‘It’s not often that I feel that my paintings are done, my work is iterative and continually processed, particularly as I’m surrounded by my paintings day to day; I work on them on the walls of living and play spaces. Something suddenly dawns on me and I know there’s more life to a piece. The tree started in the first form as a ghost tree, barely visible as a texture. I paint mostly at night and one evening I knew I had to add two golden trees, a mother and child. Sometimes that gradual growth reaches a natural end.’



Karolina Dworska

@karolinkadworska

'The Sacred Rot' is printed word on paper (2023).

Karolina is a contemporary artist working predominantly in textiles. Exploring the dream as a lens of the surreal. Deeply nourished by horror, mythology, science fiction and confusions of corporeal reality.

RESTART THE CLOCKS ON THE SACRED ROT
FOR THE PINE FOREST IS STUCK IN TIME.
THE LEAVES AND BOUGHS SCATTERED,
WITHHOLDING ONE MORE CATAclysm,
AN INFERNO—

HOW LONG CAN WE HOLD OUT WITHOUT NEW GROWTH?
HARBOURING DEAD WEIGHT WHICH REJECTS DECAY?

DRIBBLES OF ENERGY IN THE ABYSSAL OCEAN
WILL DISSIPATE THE LONG DARK NIGHT,
AND CHEMOSYNTHESISE THE HARD PLASTIC POISONS.
DEVOUR AND DIGEST THE PRESENT;
GROW, WITHER, AND DECOMPOSE.

24,000 YEARS IS TOO LONG TO WAIT FOR A CLEAR CONSCIENCE.

TOMORROW CANNOT BEGIN UNTIL THE PRESENT DAY ENDS.

Why is text your chosen medium to visualise the sacred rot?

‘I usually work in textile, but as a static medium, I didn’t think that would be effective in the exploration of the subject of time, and its stagnation, as a result of environmental decline and nuclear fallout. Using text felt a more apt and neutral medium to examine time as a focal point, and allowed me to collage many disparate images and ideas, which would be more difficult to capture in any other way. Retrospectively, I realise there is also a possible visual link to drafted “long-term nuclear waste warning messages”, which are similarly quite abstract and ominous in tone.’

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Why do we have to wait for this day to end, in order to act tomorrow? Won't we be too late?

‘I wanted to evoke a feeling of dread about the current state of environmental decline, and being unable to imagine an alternative world through those last two lines. Rather than waiting for a tangible watershed moment – which won't come, as we already live in a state of endless expansion, producing un-rotting things that will last forever, and poisonous waste, distorting natural processes and their temporality – we need to draw a line in the sand, and end this day, so that tomorrow can begin. It's already too late; we need to end this chapter of history, in hope of new growth.

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Grime

@grime_buster

'Faery with Lamp' is a digital photograph of a performance (date).

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Grime works between the poetic and the pathetic. Their work explores the transformative beauty and the horror of the queer body through drawing, performance and sculpture.



What part of the story are we missing?

‘You are missing the whole story, this image is supposed to invoke a narrative that lies out of reach. I was personally inspired by a local legend of the ‘Tiddy Mun’, a spirit of the Lincolnshire salt marshes who controlled floods and could be wrathful if not respected. I was also inspired by the Will-O-Wisp, a fairy who used lights to lure travellers into dangerous bogs. I guess i’m interested in the relationship between humans and nature and the dangers of folly.’



How does it feel to be naked in the dark?

‘Primeval, it is completely exhilarating, especially with the sound of the sea and the freezing wind blowing through the dunes, it made me feel like magic. This photo is more like a documentation of a performance where I really embodied some old sea spirit or wild fae. In the dark our boundaries are taken away and you must rise above fear or you can feel swallowed up.’



Holly Pittaway

@hollystrations

‘The Planet is Fucked’ (2023).
Digital Cartoon strip.

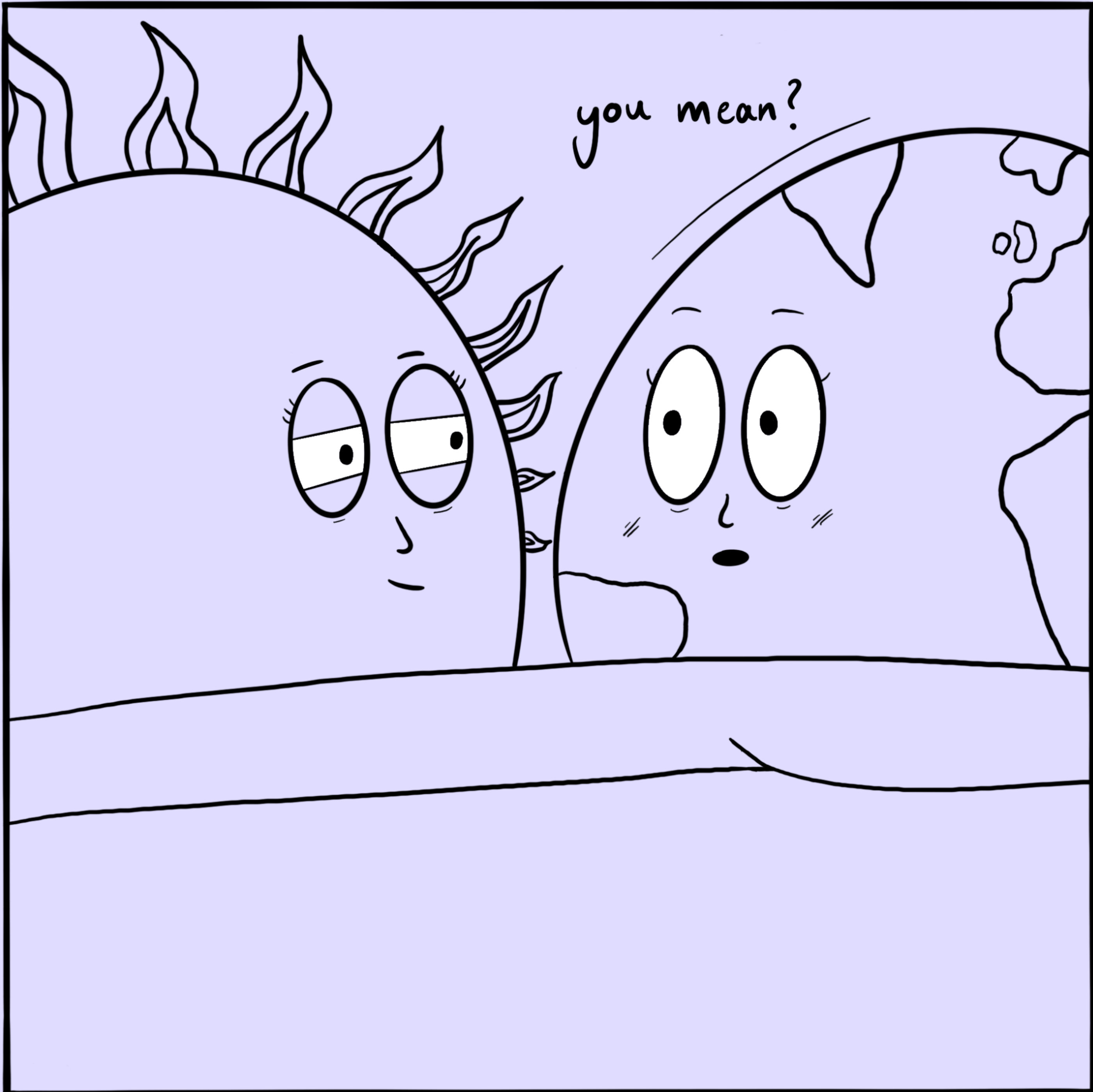
Holly is a self-taught digital illustrator and live portrait artist with a penchant for drawing big eyes and silly scenarios. Holly works mainly in black and white using minimalist colouring in a style that is always evolving!

shall we heat things up a bit?



How do you feel about this relationship?
this act consensual?

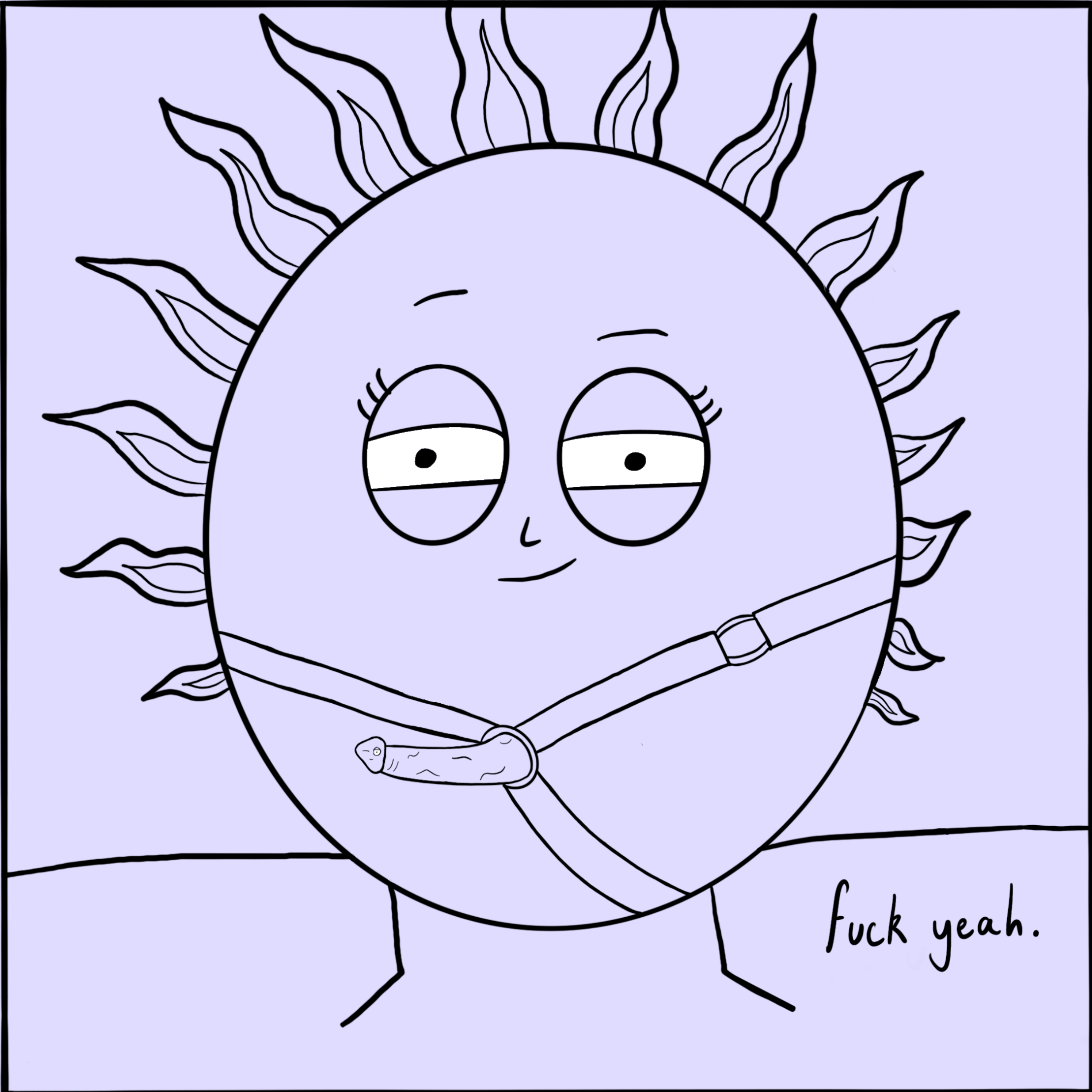
‘It’s hard to say. I think the Earth (referring to my piece here, not the actual planet) is clearly in two minds about the act - part of them wants to go through with it, being excited by the pleasure and opportunity it could bring. But, the other part is trepidatious, scared of whether it will hurt or they might not enjoy it. And to me, this seems like a perfect analogy for climate change, because it’s ultimately down to the Earth to decide whether they let themselves be fucked or not. So is the act consensual? It depends on who you decide the Earth represents in this piece.’



you mean?

Is it suitable to use a cartoon to lighten the mood around climate change?

‘Climate change is happening and there’s nothing I can personally do to stop it. For years I’ve cut out meat, stopped buying new clothes and now I don’t even drive - and yet we’re in a more dire situation now than when I started making these changes. So if drawing a silly cartoon about the planet getting pegged makes you feel better, I say do it.’



fuck yeah.

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