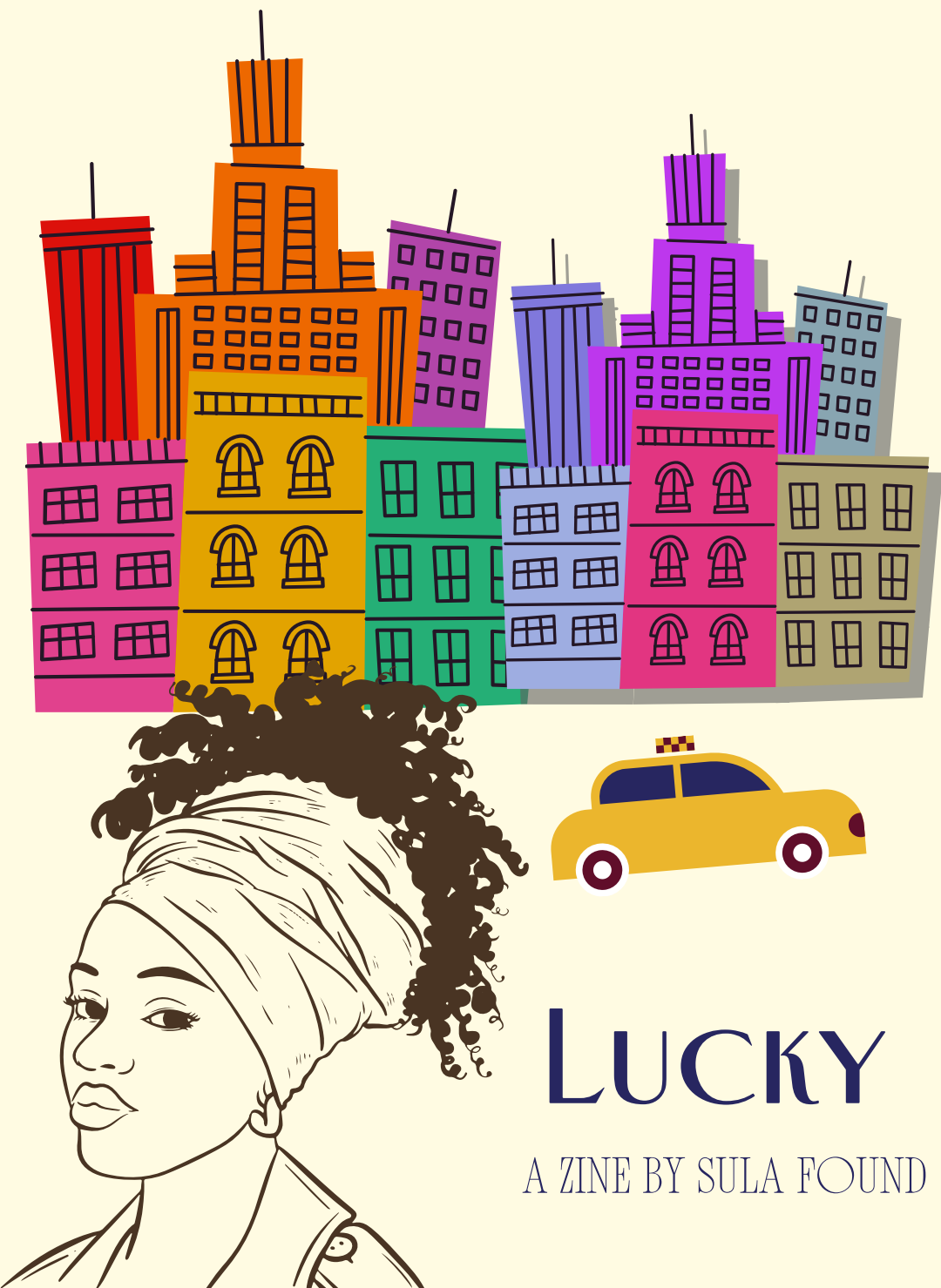




ABOUT THIS ZINE

Oh, to be exploring love at 20 years old again. Zero out of ten, would not recommend. That being said, this digital zine includes excerpts from LUCKY, a situationship that carried on far too long.

LUCKY was first written and performed for the stage in 2014. After telling the story of being with Lucky live, I started to believe that I didn't lack emotional depth and that loving me wasn't a challenging task. The performance returned a sense of self that remained bruised for years, but thankfully, it was mine again.

Ten years later, I am re-writing LUCKY from a newfound maturity and living a life that no longer centers men. This has meant challenging the idea of sacrificing a sense of self for a dream and what it means to love someone who wants to break you.

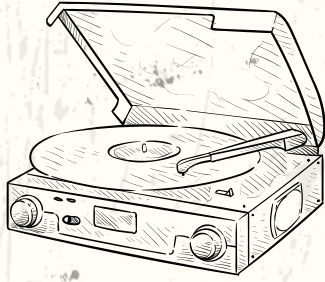
The final version will be featured in *Negotiation*, an essay collection examining mental health and sexuality from a queer Black feminist perspective.

S U M M E R 2 0 1 2

I ran away to New York after telling a close friend that my only options were to kill myself or to go on a vacation. She sent \$200 for a Greyhound bus ticket.

Towards the end of my trip, I fell for Lucky, a self-described Black Marxist who believed the revolution started between my thighs. I believed him despite the large number of Black feminist essays I read about not building a home out of someone else.





PLAYLIST

Talkin' Bout a Revolution - Tracy Chapman

HEAVN - Jamila Woods

Never Forget You - Noisettes

Just a Little Bit of Your Heart - Ariana Grande

Always Let U Down - Blood Orange

Lost (feat. Noname) - Chance the Rapper

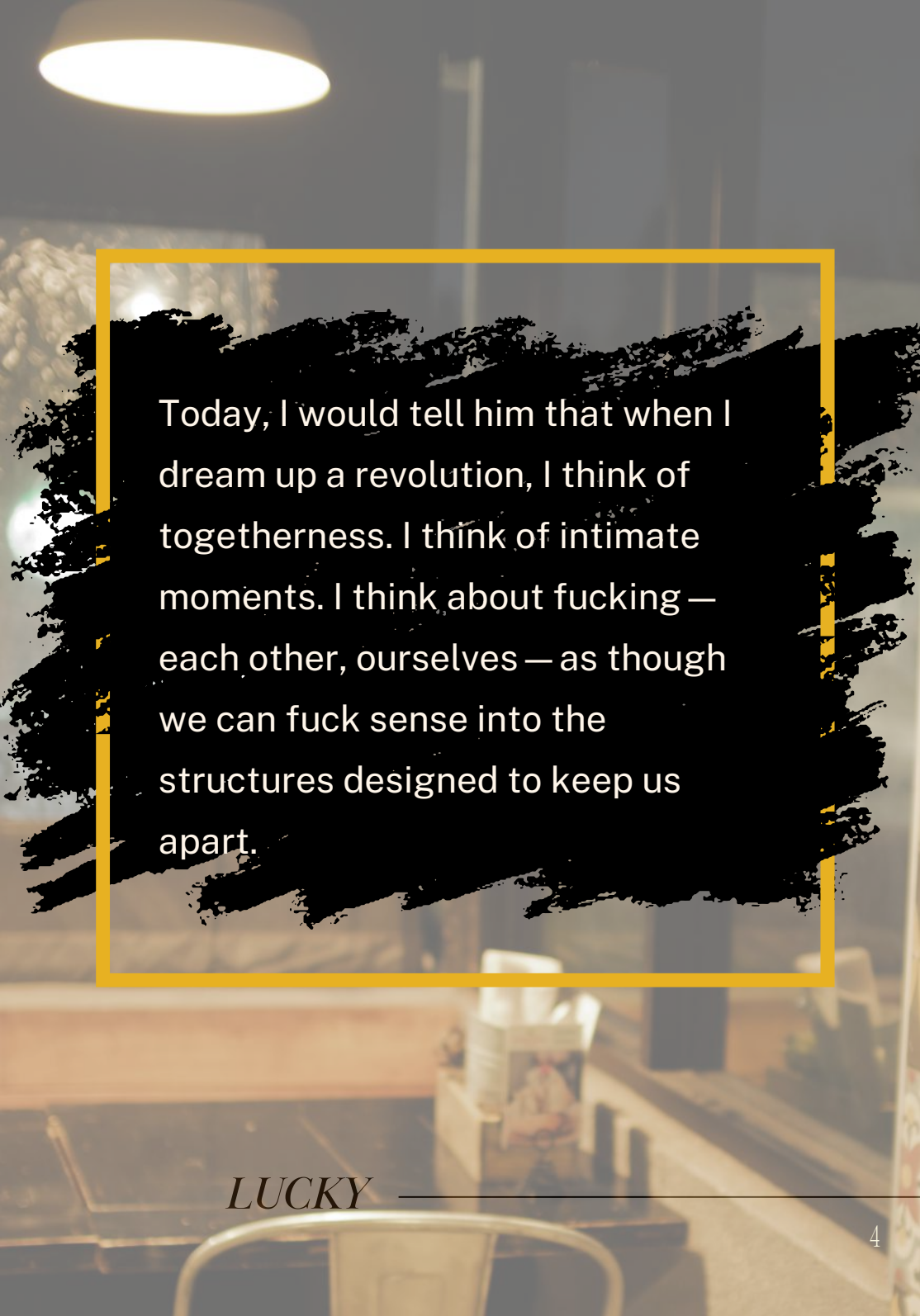
Fool of Me - Meshell Ndegeocello

You & I - Local Natives

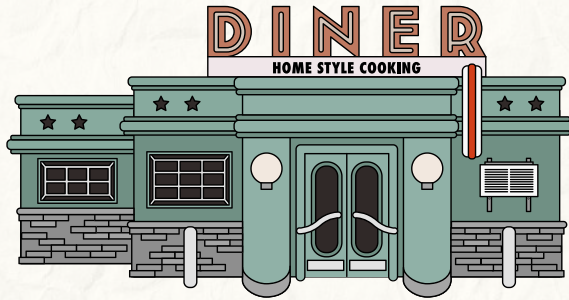
Don't You Remember - Adele

Temporary - RILEY

B2L - LeToya Lockett



Today, I would tell him that when I dream up a revolution, I think of togetherness. I think of intimate moments. I think about fucking — each other, ourselves — as though we can fuck sense into the structures designed to keep us apart.



We sat across from each other at a 24-hour diner in Prospect Heights. It was a Sunday evening. Rain drizzled the streets enough that people held onto the hoods of their jacket as they walked by. We sat near the window, and I paid close attention to couples holding hands and wondered if I should reach for his.

Inside of the diner, my eyes darted at our table. I sipped on my cold coffee as I listened to Lucky.

He asked me what kind of revolution I imagined would happen, if I thought it was possible. I wanted him badly, in a country that hates us, in a city that takes and takes from Black people and displaces us without regard. I told him that I didn't know and hadn't thought deeply about it until he asked. All I could think about was leaning over the table to kiss him. He stared at me with intrigue and told me that I'll figure out my vision over time.

After eating, we walked to the subway station to make our way back to Manhattan. We sat on the train and my mind was starting to spiral: I should've had an answer. I shouldn't focus so much on connecting. I stared at him as he chatted away.

I interrupted, "Why do you like me?"

The subway made a screeching stop, and our bodies were tossed closer together. I repeated my question since he didn't hear over the noise. I couldn't lose my courage now.

"Oh, I have a habit of gravitating towards people who think too much but don't say much," he told me. I felt a comfort with Lucky that I hadn't felt with anyone else. At the same time, that was the biggest indicator that he wasn't interested in holding whatever was buried in my shell. It was the first time that I asked the question that would never escape me: What am I doing here?

We hugged goodbye and I kissed him on the cheek. He said aww and pulled me back towards him for another hug. I didn't want to let go.



Lucky aspired to be a rapper and worked as a web developer. He was a former punk who used to stand far behind the crowds at shows because he didn't want to feel further isolation in the sea of white bodies. He was named after a man he thought was his father. To distance himself, he went by Lucky.

We sat on a stairwell inside the building where I was staying. We had spent that last hour walking around underneath dimmed streetlights. We finally saw each other in proper lighting and took a moment to study each other's faces. I thought, "Shit, he's cute."

He lowered his head and pulled off his baseball cap and smiled as if he heard me. I noticed how deep his dimple went, you could eat a scoop of ice cream out of it.

He led me to the Safari-themed studio apartment that he rented from a middle-aged white woman who told him she "absolutely loved ethnic art."



You're beautiful," he told me as he kissed all over my body. It was our last night together.

With his arms wrapped around me, Lucky said, "I thought you didn't like to cuddle." I responded with a kiss on one of his bicyclist biceps. He was the first man that I was able to kiss without having to stand on my tippy toes. He joked about having a complex about his height, but I found it endearing. We fit perfectly. We looked good, too. Two Black weirdos who used to hide pop punk and hardcore CDs in shoeboxes underneath their beds had found each other.

And I didn't freak out. I almost wished I did.

This was not a time in my life when I was capable of acknowledging or processing my emotions. I felt immature for not having the words to describe the thrill and discomfort I was experiencing. It was a new territory, and only God knows for whatever reason, I hoped that Lucky would be the one to guide me.

A low-angle photograph showing a tall brick building on the left and the Manhattan Bridge on the right. The bridge's steel structure, including its towers and suspension cables, is visible against a clear sky. A speech bubble is overlaid on the image, containing text.

Don't worry, you won't miss out on me.
I'm not emotionally available much either.
That's why we get along. We both
understand why we are distant and have
our guards up.



REMEMBER WHEN
YOU WANTED



ME ANGRY?

WHO

HURT

YOU?

LUCK HAS NEVER WORKED OUT FOR ME



Sula Found aka BB K aka Nobody's Darling is a writer and storyteller based in Northern California and Chicago.

You can follow their writing at withoutanartform.com.