



MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING

# FPT UNIVERSITY

## Capstone Project Document

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### [DROWN – TRẦM]

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Capstone Project code		

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## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

First, and foremost, we would like to send our sincerest gratitude and appreciation to people who has helped and guided us throughout the making of this project. Without your advice and support, this project would not have been possible.

We would like to express our deepest gratitude to our supervisor Mr. Nguyen Ngoc Tuan for his great support and patience in guiding and helping us to carry out our project.

We would also like to thank our colleagues, our friends, our family for their immense support, encouragement as well as financial funding. It is with your help, that we managed to finish this wonderful project.

Making “Drown” has been one of the most challenging experience we have faced. It marks the start to a new chapter in our life. Although our journey is not very long, it has been arduous and we would not have reached this final destination without all the great support from everyone. We would like to thank everyone for this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity.

## Table of Contents

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS .....	1
INTRODUCTION .....	4
About the team.....	4
Topic selection.....	4
Targeted audience and message.....	5
Challenges and Result.....	5
Content.....	6
1. REPORT NO.1: CP PROPOSAL .....	7
1.1. Problem Definition.....	7
1.1.1. Name of this Capstone Project.....	7
1.1.2. Problem abstraction .....	7
1.2. Project Overview.....	7
1.2.1. Original ideas.....	7
1.2.2. Plot summary .....	10
1.2.3. Development tools .....	10
2. REPORT NO.2: DESIGN PROPOSAL .....	10
2.1. Script .....	10
2.1.1. Story.....	10
2.1.2. Script.....	11
2.2. Storyboard .....	13
3. REPORT NO.3: PRE DESIGN .....	23
3.1. Characters Design .....	23
3.1.1. Size Comparison Chart .....	23

3.1.2.	Design characters from different views .....	25
3.1.3.	Design facial expressions.....	30
3.2.	Background (environment) Design .....	35
3.2.1.	Normal scene .....	35
3.2.2.	Dolly scene.....	50
4.	REPORT NO.4: DESIGN FINALIZATION.....	52
4.1.	Character Animation .....	52
4.2.	Poster.....	58
SUMMARY	.....	59
Conclusion	.....	59
Workload distribution	.....	60



## INTRODUCTION

### About the team

The team consists of 2 students from the Graphic Design department, GD0901.

Thieu Pham Thanh Dung - SE61630 - Graphic Design major

Nguyen Thanh Phuong - SE03861 - Computer Graphic major

With the knowledge that we managed to acquire from the internship (OJT), we decided to choose 2D animation for our final project. It combines both our strength while still providing opportunities for teamwork as well as individual reflection.

### Topic selection

We have considered many social issues but the one that we resonate with the most is about the way people live their lives today. In this modern society, people must sometimes survive the onslaught of everyday life. And in order to do that, they need to hide their true selves.

We created a girl based on our personal experience with this issue. She is put in situations where the audiences can easily identify the underlying problem as well as the overarching message of the story. Even though this topic has been dealt with several times in the past, we would like to have our own take on it with a different perspective and ideas. Overall, we believe that it is a problem many people including us have to face in the modern world.

### Targeted audience and message

2D animation means there is no age limit, everyone can watch the short. However, in order to understand and be able to relate to the character, the audience still need to have experiences with the world out there. That's why we think it is our best interest to aim for teenagers and more mature audience as it might be what they connect with on a spiritual level.

The main message we want to get across is sympathy. The fact that nobody is really alone in this world for the thoughts in our head and the feelings in our vein can be that of someone else. These thoughts and feelings maybe not be completely identical, but they are what many people are dealing with. We want to try and help as many as we can by sharing our experience and opening a door. We believe that everyone should have a chance to be themselves. However, in the end, no one can truly save you, the final choice is still yours, whether you walk through that door or not.

### Challenges and Result

The process of completing this project has not been as straightforward as we expected. We started with brainstorming the ideas and the script since it is the most time-consuming. After that we moved on to the most important process, art design. We utilized design tools such as Adobe Photoshop and Adobe Animate to visualize every parts onto the computer, making it easier for the latter stage of film production. In addition, Adobe Illustrator and Adobe Indesign were used to support the printing.

This is the first time we have taken upon ourselves to complete a film from start to finish. We have pushed ourselves to the limit, in order to experience the feeling of making a film. This has been an incredible challenge and we have learned a lot from it.

The biggest takeaway from this project is how to manage time and health. It is probably the largest and most time-consuming project we have worked on. Thus, it has been difficult to set aside a certain time to meet up and discuss about the project's progression. At the end, we also feel like we have learned a lot about working in team, respecting individual difference, accepting others opinion and reconciling our ideas to get the best outcome.

## Content

There are two aspects that we considered: art design and film production. We worked solo simultaneously and as a team throughout each stages of the project. After each stages, we had a quality check where we make adjustment to ensure the project will meet the standard and the deadline.

- Art design

Character design: There are 2 versions of the main character and 4 supporting casts, 3 people and a dog.

- Background design

The story is set in both outdoor and indoor spaces. There are a total of 20 backgrounds that were used in the film. All of them were put in a loop starting with: the bedroom, the bathroom, the dressing table, the city, the alley from 3 angles, the company, the coffee shop, the bathroom, the forest, the coffee shop, the bedroom... The story takes place in a modern city with the mix between Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh city. The inspiration for this setting is from our personal hometown.

- Storyboard

This is the part where we started visualizing specific actions and details in the film. Beside the main storyboard, we also added a couple of transition in order to make the film smoother and more comprehensible.

- Poster

Poster is one of the most important part as it introduces the films to the audience. We decided to choose the bathroom, the interception of the film, to be the background for the poster. We believe that it is the gateway for the main character to wash away the old and change.

- Film production

The film is computerized based on all the previously mentioned art design. After the initial production, we also reconsidered the length of the film as well as the theme, music and end credit. In the end, “Drown” finished with a 4-minute runtime.

## 1. REPORT NO.1: CP PROPOSAL

### 1.1. Problem Definition

#### 1.1.1. Name of this Capstone Project

English name: Drown

Vietnamese name: Trầm

The named is based on a repeated moment which focuses on the vicious cycle of personal indulgence. The main character 'drown' herself in a digital reality to escape from the world she is living in. However, she still yearns for a glimpse of her true self in this unreal world. There still might be hope for her, to live a true life.

#### 1.1.2. Problem abstraction

As society progresses, people become more artificial toward one another. People do not dare to show their true selves, to share their true thoughts and feelings. They do not want to risk losing the balance between order and chaos. However, not everyone can adapt to such a lifestyle. These people dream of the things they could have done to live a true life. A life where they could feel and share how they feel. A life where they need not be afraid. A life where they could be themselves. In the end, everyone has their own reasons for living the way they do and sometimes dreams are just dreams.

### 1.2. Project Overview

#### 1.2.1. Original ideas

In the real world, people have to hide who they are just to fit in, to please others, etc... This is not a new concept, many people have expressed this subject in their art. This film takes inspiration from other films of the same topic and from Lưu Quang Vũ's "Những chiếc lá rơi":

"- Anh có nhớ Macxen Macsô  
cái ông hề tóc bạc

*có gương mặt rất buồn rất cô đơn?  
anh có nhớ một người đùa bỡn  
với cái mặt nạ cười  
rồi không sao cởi được  
đau đớn mệt mỏi kiệt sức  
tuyệt vọng ôm vai, cái mặt vẫn cười?”*

In addition, my personal experience also play a crucial part in the making of this film. Here is a list of others animations and shorts that inspire this story in term of presentation and script:

Ode – Camille Chao’s graduation project

<https://vimeo.com/215871599>



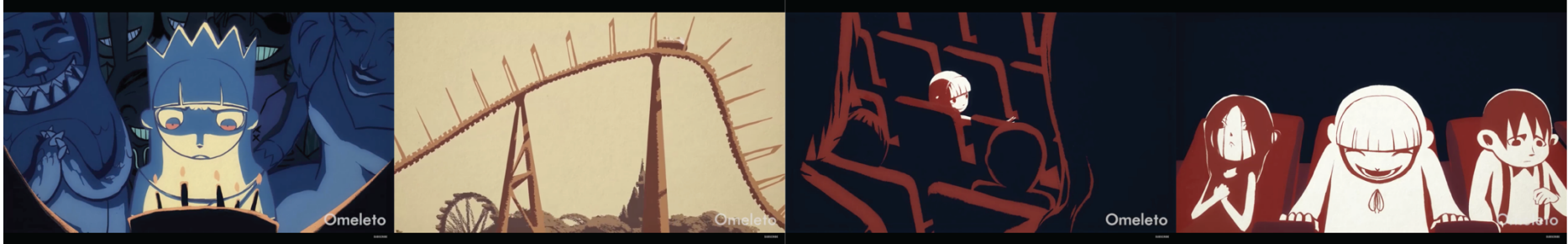
Coda – An animated short by “and maps and plans”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MkA3sLyEWdU>



Eggplant – An animated short by Yangzi She

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BfliUOXtrA8>



Symphony no.42 – An animated short by MOME Anim

<https://vimeo.com/153887315>



Inception with its incredible visual effect.

Last but not least, suggestions and guidance from Mr. Nguyễn Ngọc Tuấn.

### 1.2.2. Plot summary

The story takes place in a modern world in which the main character loses herself while fitting in and pleasing others. However, there is something in her that craves the feeling of being herself in her own little world.

### 1.2.3. Development tools

Within the 15-week period, we have considered between 3D, 2D and stop motion but due to the time and skill limitation, we settled with 2D as the mean for our project. Our knowledge and passion for 2D are the main reasons behind this decision. With the addition of multiple tools that support 2D animation, it is one of the best choices for storytelling and character personalization. Furthermore, we believe that 2D is also the best option in terms of maximising time, minimising cost and maintaining aesthetic.

## 2. REPORT NO.2: DESIGN PROPOSAL

### 2.1. Script

#### 2.1.1. Story

This story is all about a main character who is an adult girl.

The story begins at one morning when the girl wakes up in her bedroom. She starts to do make up, dress up to begin a new day. However, she only sees a white face on the mirror; There are no facial parts on that face.

When she walks outside to go to work, she meets her neighborhood who is yelling at his dog at that time. After the dog ran and looked at her, her face starts changing to her neighborhood face shape with also an angry face. After that, the neighborhood's facial changes to normal after he looked at her. The same thing happens again with her face.

At her office, she and her colleagues both sit down with bunch of paperwork on their desk, her face start changing to a tired facial like her colleagues. Their faces suddenly change to flatter facial right after their boss walks in.

After her work, she hangs out with one of her friend at a coffee shop. They both sit down face to face with each other and again, they have a same facial.

The similarity happens with other cases, her face just changing to anyone she met in a whole day.

After she got back home at night, she walks into a bathroom, take a bath with a face distortion. When she drown herself into a bathtub, her face get cleaned and revealed her real face. She starts drowning deeper after that.

She drowns to another dimension. She wakes up in the middle of the forest, wearing a T-shirt with short. Suddenly the dog last morning run through her. She run along with him, her face is happy, not the angry face that she changed before from the morning guy. After she run into another place in the forest, where it has office desk, the incident last morning recur, she throw out all the paperwork on her desk.

Then she walks into coffee shop again. She walks into the shop, her friend still sitting there with her phone. She suddenly pull her friend's hand to walk away from that shop

After walking a few miles in the forest, she looks back and her friend already disappeared, everything around her turning darker. She begins to fall. As deeper she fall into, as slower the speed is. Finally, after her body touched the black ground, her bed appears. Another morning has just begun. She starting do make up...

### 2.1.2 Script

#### DROWN – ACTION

1. She woke up in the morning
2. She finished her morning routine
3. She sat down by the dressing table. The mirror reflected her pale lifeless face.
4. The city at dawn



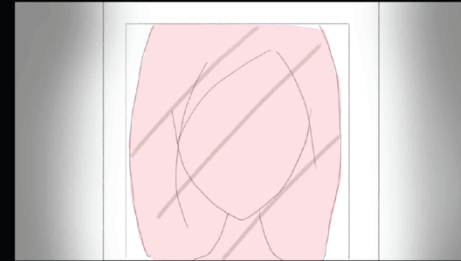
5. She could see in the distance that her neighbor was angry at his dog
6. As she got closer, she turned their frown upside down
7. The man looked at his dog and let out a slight relief
8. She blended in with the stream of almost identical female at work.
9. She sat down by her lifeless colleague who was occupied by a pile of paper.
10. They both started sweet-talking just as their boss stepped in
11. They put their grumpy face back on right when he left
12. The clock struck 6
13. She stirred her cup of coffee gently
14. They sat down and began to stare at their phones
15. In the small coffee shop, she changed her face to fit the people that she met
16. Her hand turned on the switch
17. She bathed herself in the tub
18. She sinks in with the water
19. Her face changed
20. She started drowning slowly
21. She found herself in a forest (wood)
22. A dog ran past and she chased happily after it
23. They stopped at her office desk and from the shadow of the wood
24. Her boss appeared and everything was the same.
25. She tossed all the paper on her desk and ran into the wood
26. She arrived at the coffee shop
27. She walked in and dragged her friend out
28. Despite being surprise, her friend followed and they both stepped through a door.
29. She was happy but as she turned around, there was nothing...
30. She was holding onto an empty space.

- 31. She started falling into the neverending darkness below
- 32. She sank and touch the bottom
- 33. Her bedroom again
- 34. She woke up in her room
- 35. She sat down by the dressing table

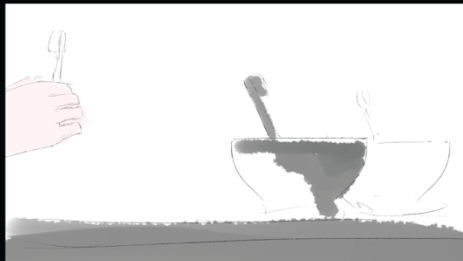
## 2.2. Storyboard



Act 1: She woke up in the morning  
Camera Range: full shot



Act 3b: She sat down by the dressing table. The mirror reflected her pale lifeless face.  
Camera Range: close-up  
Camera Movement: panning shot



Act 2: She finished her morning routine  
Camera Range: close-up



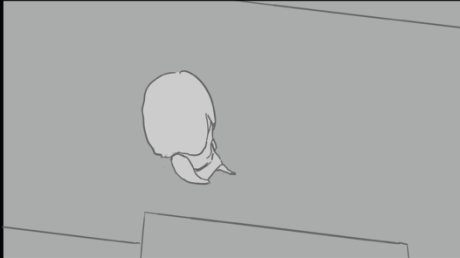
Act 3c: She sat down by the dressing table. The mirror reflected her pale lifeless face.  
Camera Range: close-up  
Camera Movement: panning shot



Act 3a: She sat down by the dressing table. The mirror reflected her pale lifeless face.  
Camera Range: close-up  
Camera Movement: panning shot



Act 4: City in the morning  
Camera Range: full shot



Act 5a: She could see  
in the distance that  
her neighbor was  
angry at his dog  
Camera Range: full  
shot  
Camera Movement:  
panning shot



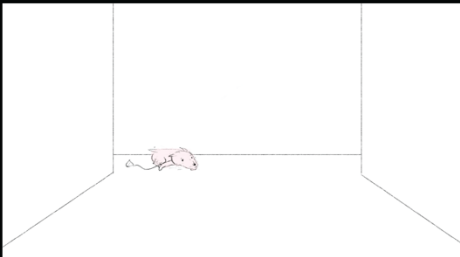
Act 6: As she got  
closer, she turned  
their frown upside  
down  
Camera Range:  
mid-shot



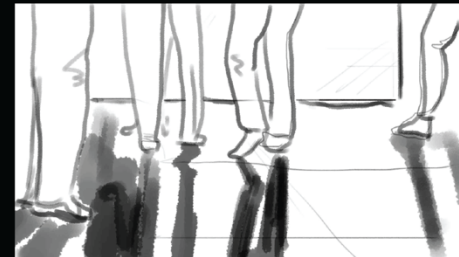
Act 5b: She could see  
in the distance that  
her neighbor was  
angry at his dog  
Camera Range: full  
shot



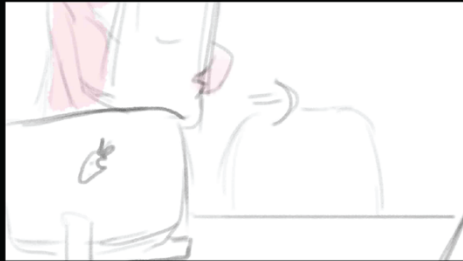
Act 7: The man  
looked at his dog and  
let out a slight relief  
Camera Range:  
mid-shot



Act 5c: She could see  
in the distance that  
her neighbor was  
angry at his dog  
Camera Range: full  
shot



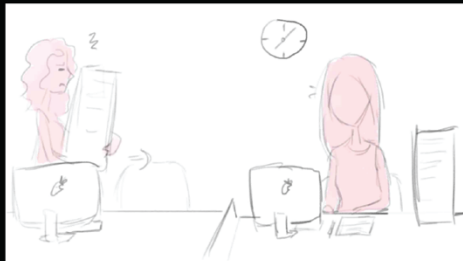
Act 8: She blended in  
with the stream of  
almost identical  
female at work.  
Camera Range:  
mid-shot



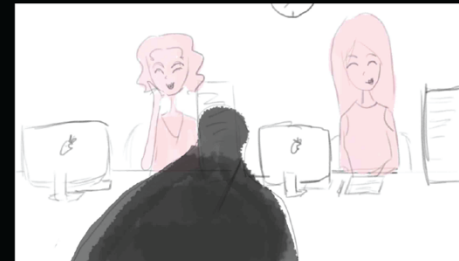
Act 9: She sat down by her lifeless colleague who was occupied by a pile of paper.  
Camera Range: mid-shot  
Camera Movement: panning shot



Act 9: She sat down by her lifeless colleague who was occupied by a pile of paper.  
Camera Range: mid-shot



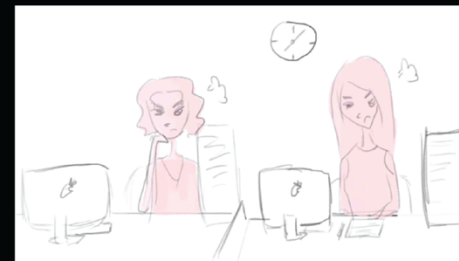
Act 9: She sat down by her lifeless colleague who was occupied by a pile of paper.  
Camera Range: mid-shot  
Camera Movement: panning shot



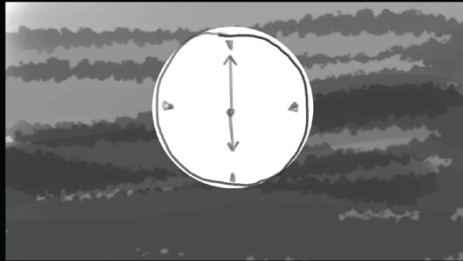
Act 10: They both started sweet-talking just as their boss stepped in  
Camera Range: mid-shot



Act 9: She sat down by her lifeless colleague who was occupied by a pile of paper.  
Camera Range: mid-shot  
Camera Movement: panning shot:



Act 11: They put their grumpy face back on right when he left  
Camera Range: mid-shot



Act 12: The clock  
striked 6  
Camera Range:  
close-up  
Camera Movement:  
fade



Act 14: They sat down  
and began to stare at  
their phones  
Camera Range:  
close-up



Act 13: She stirred her  
cup of coffee gently  
Camera Range:  
close-up  
Camera Movement:up  
fade



Act 14: They sat down  
and began to stare at  
their phones  
Camera Range: full  
shot



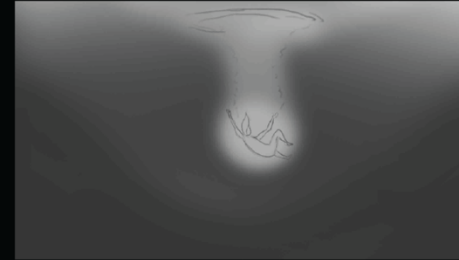
Act 13: She stirred her  
cup of coffee gently  
Camera Range:  
mid-shot  
Camera Movement:  
zoom out



Act 15: In the small  
coffee shop, she  
changed her face to  
fit the people that she  
met  
Camera Range:  
mid-shot  
Split scene



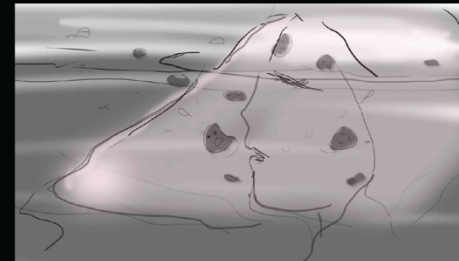
Act 16: Her hand  
turned on the switch  
the morning  
Camera Range:-  
close-up



Act 18: She sink in  
with the water  
Camera Range:  
full shot  
Camera Movement  
zoom out:



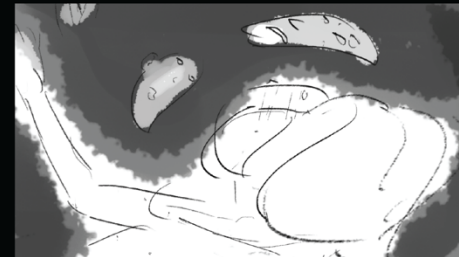
Act 17: She bathe  
herself in the tub  
Camera Range:  
full shot  
Camera Movement:  
zoom in



Act 19: Her face  
changed  
Camera Range:  
close-up



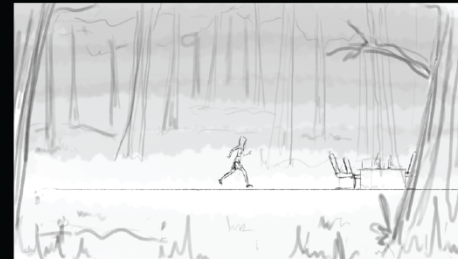
Act 17: She bathe  
herself in the tub  
Camera Range:  
mid-shot



Act 20: She started  
drow ning slowly  
Camera Range:  
mid-shot  
Camera Movement:  
panning shot



Act 21: She found herself in a forest (wood)  
Camera Range: close-up  
Camera Movement: zoom out



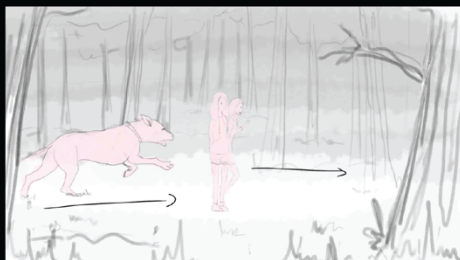
Act 23: They stopped at her office desk and from the shadow of the wood  
Camera Range: full shot



Act 21: She found herself in a forest (wood)  
Camera Range: full shot  
Camera Movement: zoom out



Act 23: They stopped at her office desk and from the shadow of the wood  
Camera Range: mid shot



Act 22: A dog ran past and she chased happily after it  
Camera Range: full shot



Act 24: Her boss appeared and everything was the same.  
Camera Range: mid shot

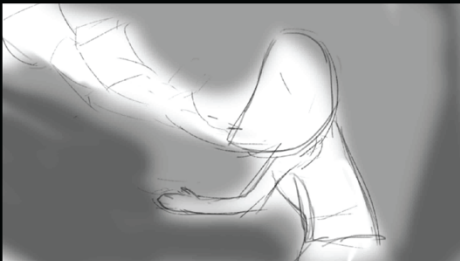




Act 24: Her boss appeared and everything was the same.  
Camera Range: mid shot



Act 25: She tossed all the paper on her desk and ran into the wood  
Camera Range:



Act 25: She tossed all the paper on her desk and ran into the wood  
Camera Range: mid shot



Act 26: She arrived at the coffee shop  
Camera Range: full shot  
Camera Movement: zoom in



Act 25: She tossed all the paper on her desk and ran into the wood  
Camera Range: close-up



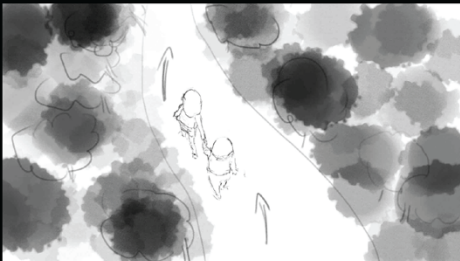
Act 27: She walked in and dragged her friend out  
Camera Range: mid shot



Act 27: She walked in and dragged her friend out  
Camera Range: close-up



Act 30: She was holding onto an empty space.  
Camera Range: close-up



Act 28: Despite being surprise, her friend followed and they both stepped through a door.  
Camera Range: full shot  
Camera Movement: panning shot



Act 31: She started falling into the never-ending darkness below  
Camera Range: full shot  
Camera Movement: zoom out



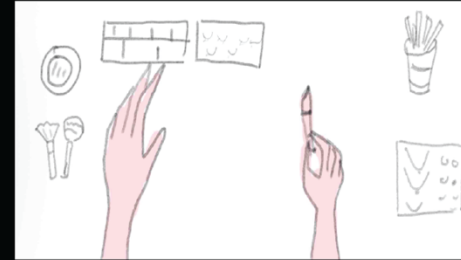
Act 29: She was happy but as she turned around, there was nothing  
Camera Range: mid shot  
Camera Movement: panning shot



Act 32: She sank and touch the bottom  
Camera Range: full shot



Act 33: Her bedroom  
again  
Camera Range: full  
shot



Act 35: She sat down  
by the dressing table  
Camera Range:  
close-up  
Camera Movement  
panning shot:



Act 34: She woke up  
in the morning  
Camera Range full  
shot



Act 35: She sat down  
by the dressing table  
Camera Range:  
mid-shot  
Camera Movement:  
panning shot

### 3. REPORT NO.3: PRE DESIGN

#### 3.1. Characters Design

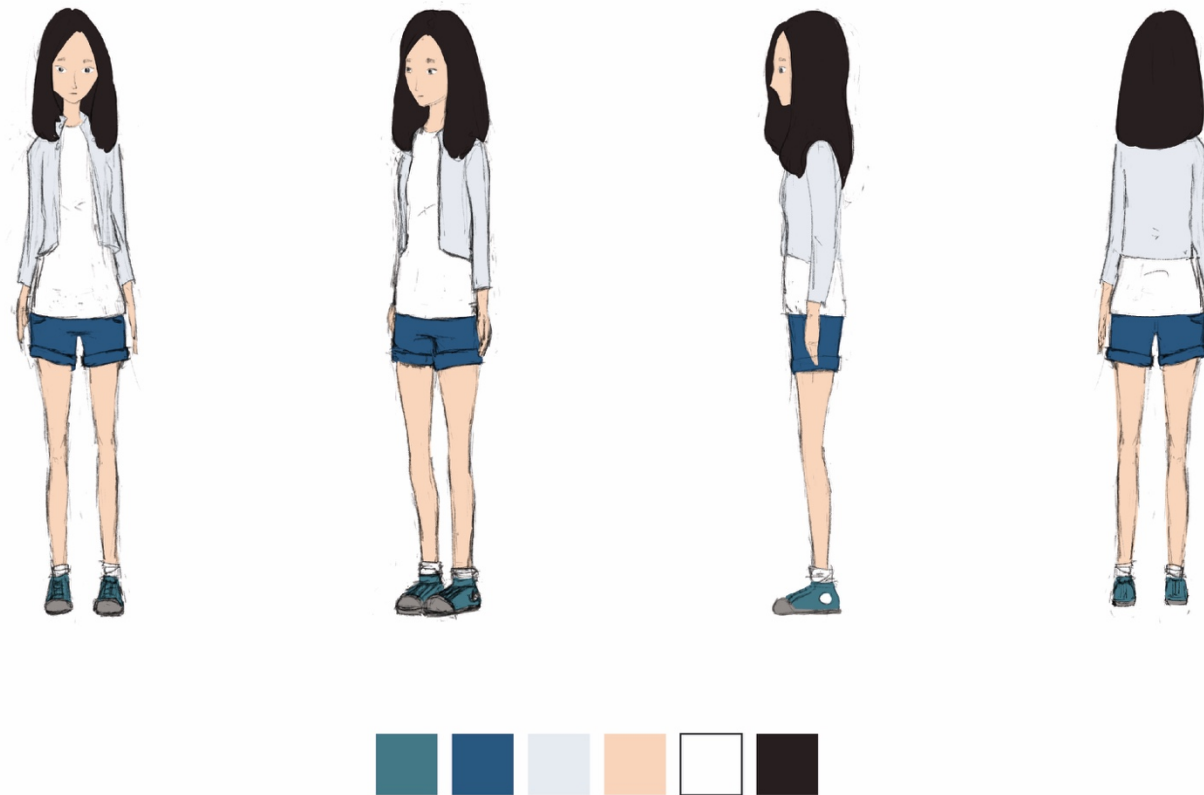
##### 3.1.1. Size Comparison Chart

These characters do not have any official name. They are the representation of anyone in the society. Each character is constructed with different lines, curves and colour to depict clearly the discrepancies between them. Because of which, the viewer can easily grasp and remember the content of the film. Moreover, the change (or imitation) of the main characters is varied due to those construction.



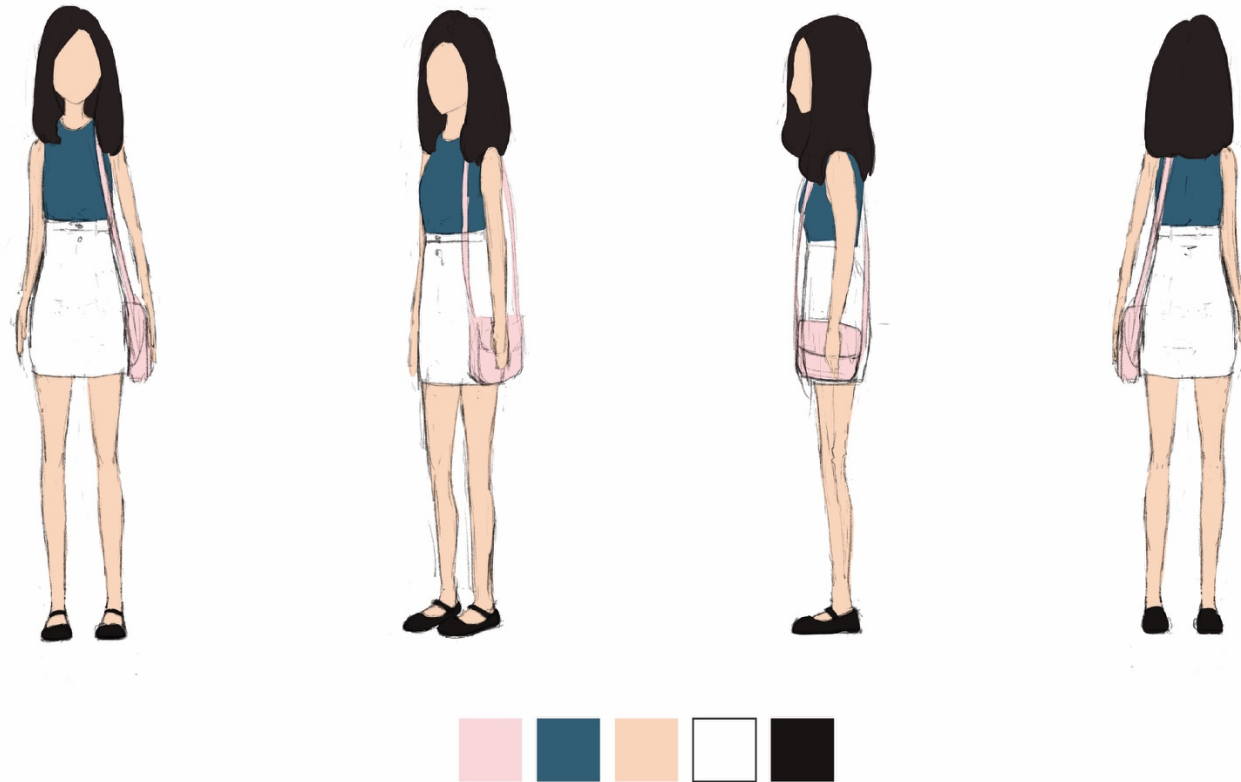
From left to right: Lady in a dream- Lady in reality - Female coworker - The neighbour and his dog - The close friend

### 3.1.2. Design characters from different views

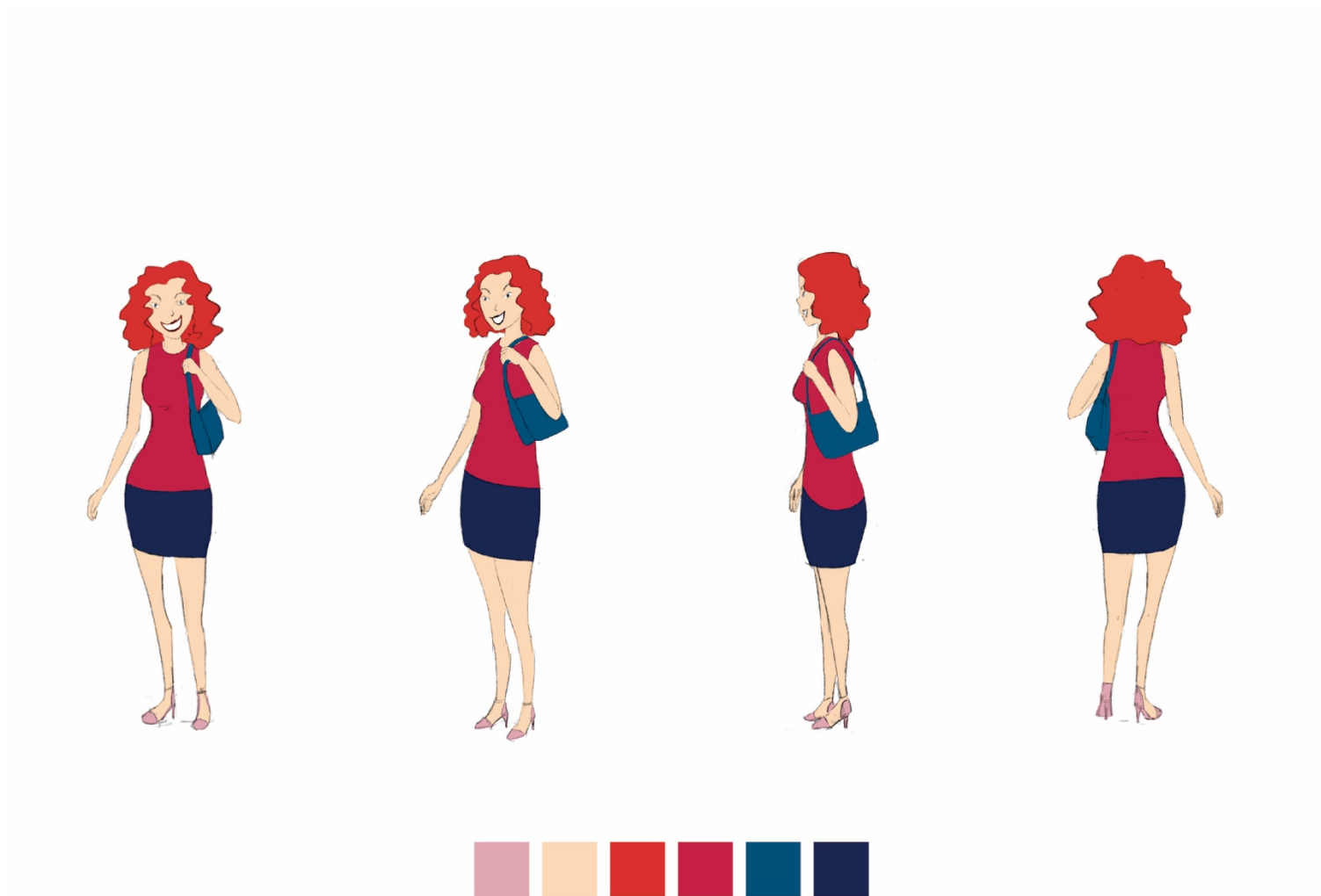


The Girl in a dream

Personality: animal-loving, nature-loving, chatty, decisive



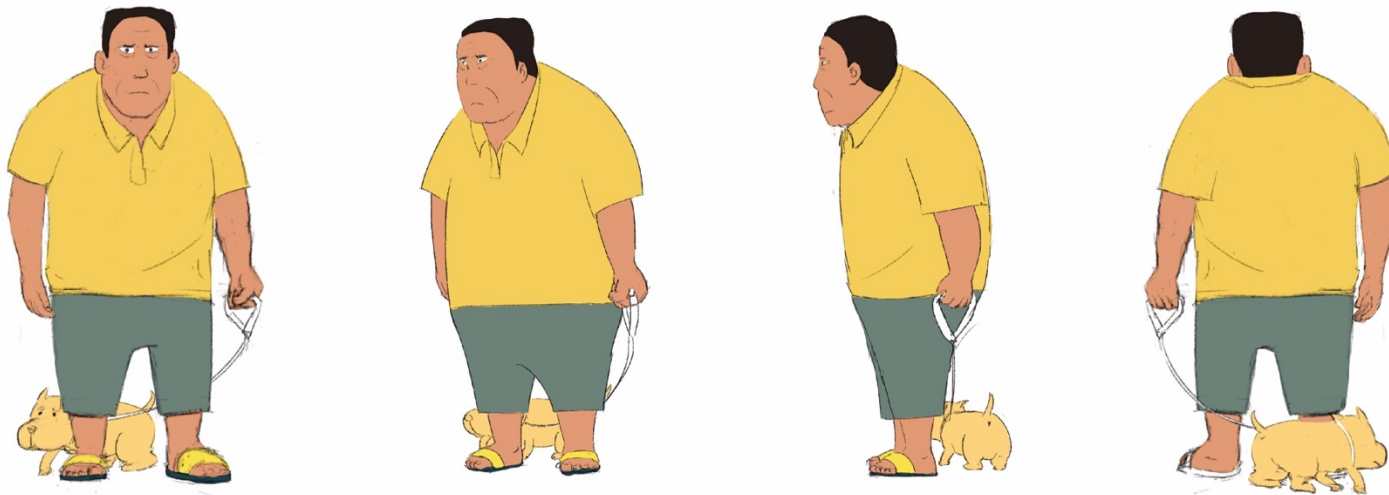
The Girl in reality  
Personlity: non-identifiable



Female co-worker

Personality: archetype of co-worker, sweet-talking, hate work, focus on the appearance





The neighbour and his dog  
Personality: Easily furious, rude



The close friend

Personality: Addicted to smart phone, fashion-loving, love going to coffee shops

### 3.1.3. Design facial expressions

The emotional expression of the characters are manifested based on their personalities.

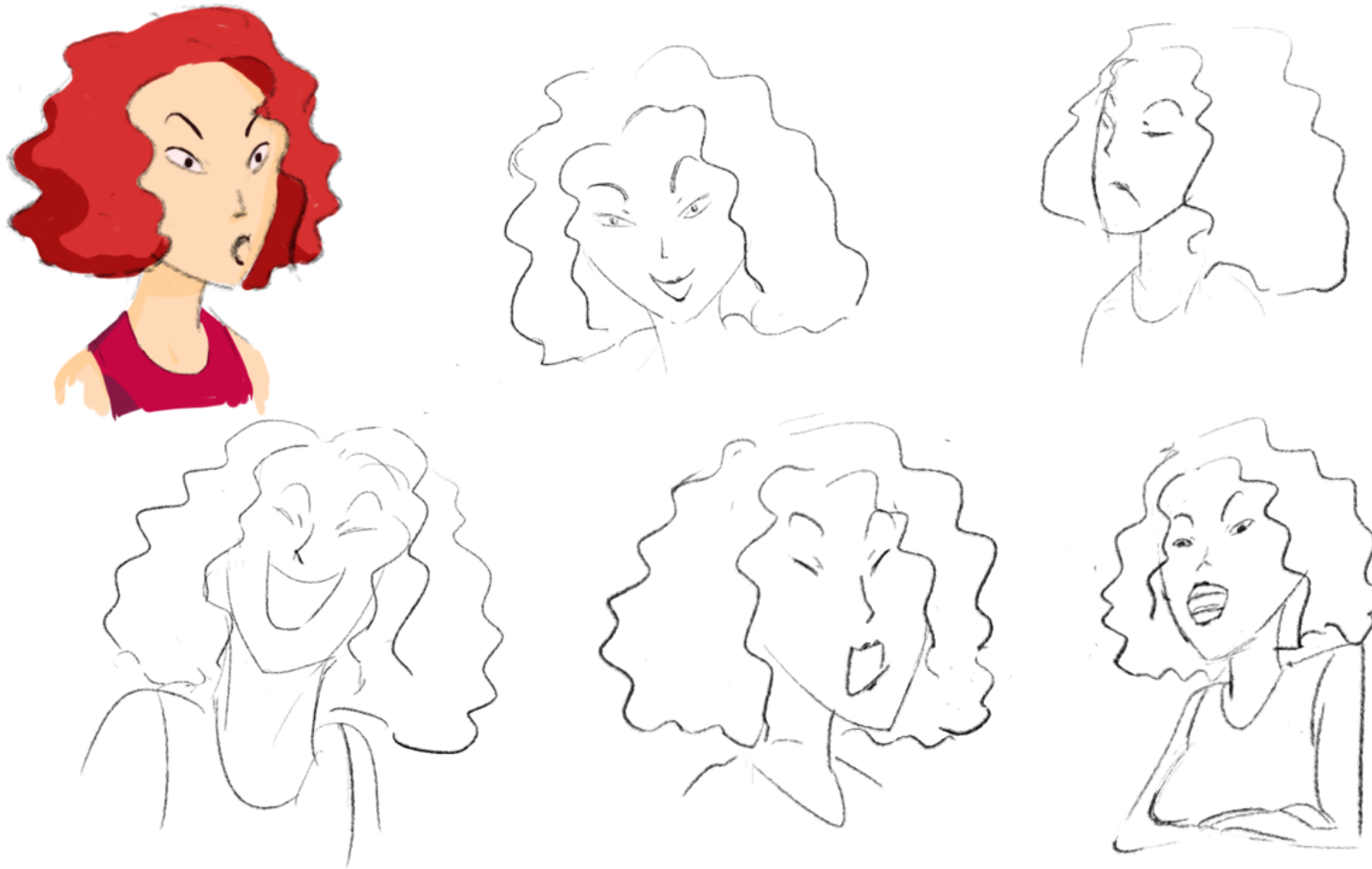
Most of the side characters in the film will have their own distinct expressions and feelings. On the other hand, the main character may lack these since she is faceless. Instead, her expressions and feelings are that of the side characters. The following excerpts show the expression and feelings in the film.



Character: The neighbour



Character: The dog



Character: Female co-worker



Character: The close friend

### 3.2. Background (environment) Design

The main background of the film is expressed by two major tones of colours: blue and pink. The order of motion of colour moves from blue to pink and go back to blue in order to create a loop.

Blue is used in the first scene. The background starts with a monochromatic style, creating a feeling of coldness and isolation at first. After that, The supporting colours appear in order to change the background and then finally end in the interference scene which is the bathroom. The bathroom also utilises monochromatic colours as an emphasis to the interference moment and the change of the film. Additionally, the dream is expressed in a joyfully pink hue but nevertheless it creates a mischevously psychedelic feeling, which is to express the discrepancies between dream and reality.

The bedroom is built as a privacy chamber for each of the character. The decorating objects of both the bedroom and the bathroom are soft-expressing objects: the flower vases, the paintings of the woods. These objects describe a person who is imaginative, beauty-loving, and seek the calmness and inner-peace. The wall painting is also the premise for the dream of the lady.

The bathroom is the place of interference and change. It is because water is the object of purification. The bathroom is the gateway which navigates to the the interference point of the storyline

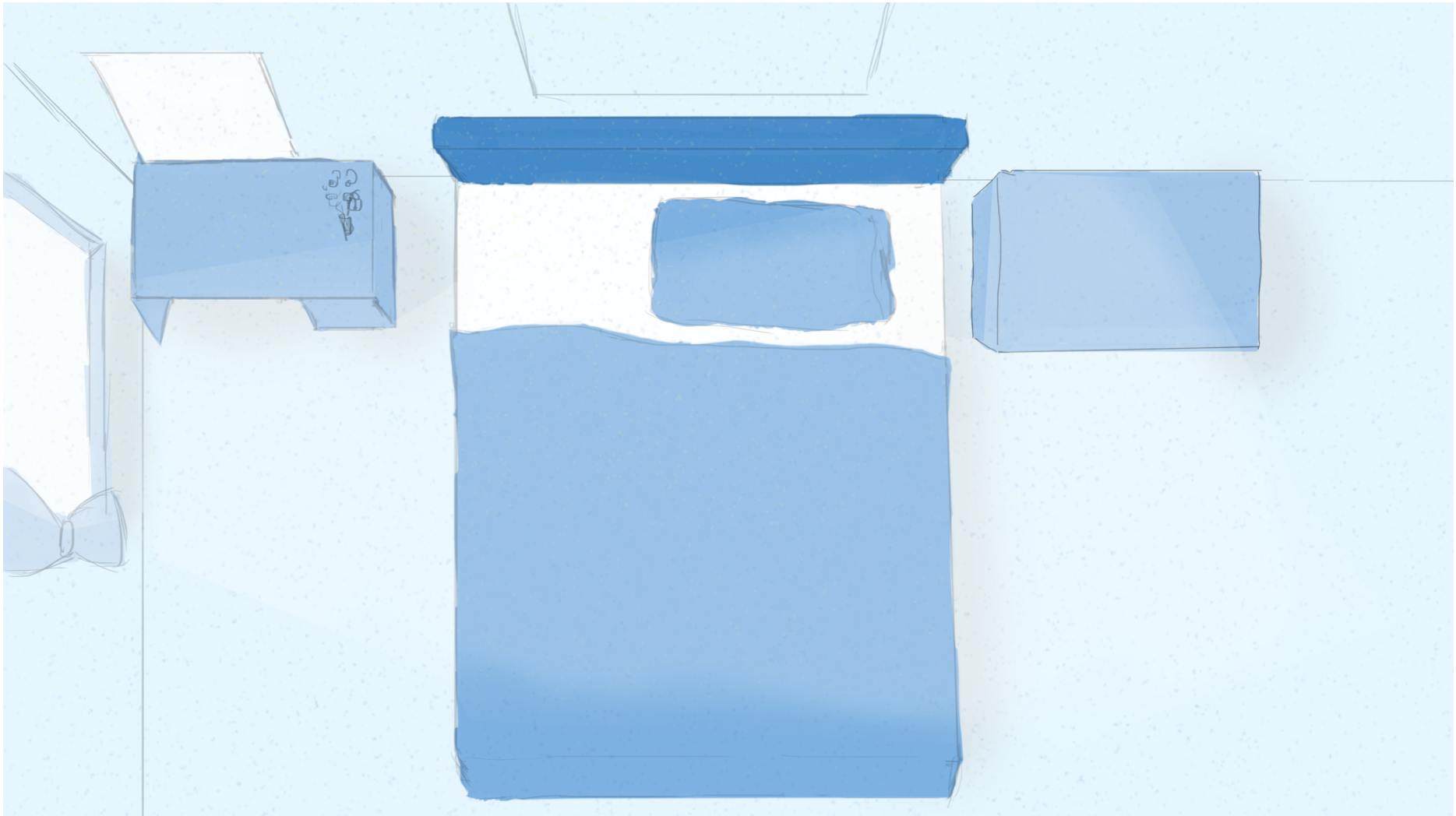
The woods is chosen to the background of the dream. It is because the woods is a place to hide one's identity, one's soul, to self-explore and to self-manifest. Only the woods can depict those desires.

#### 3.2.1. Normal scene

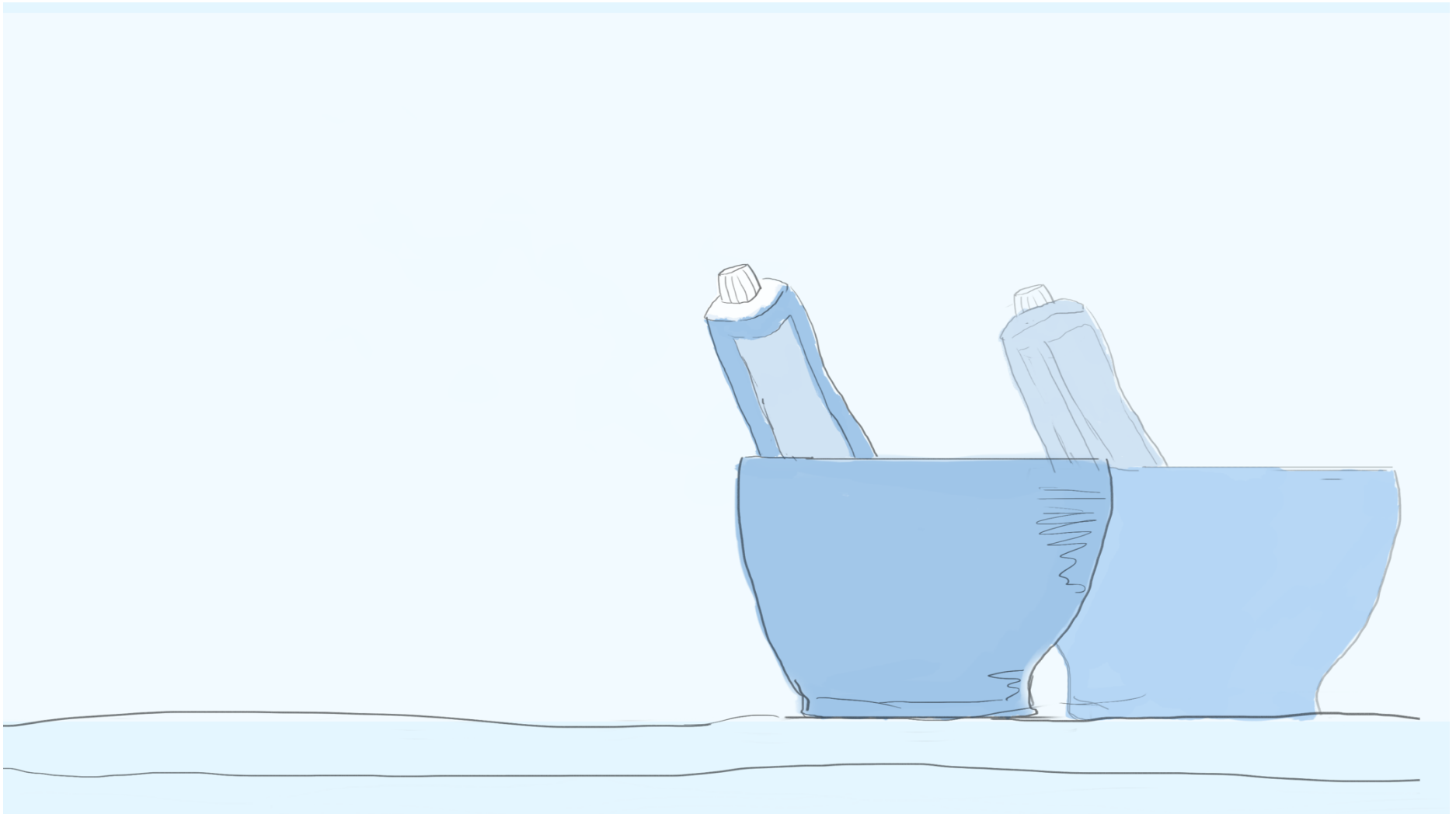




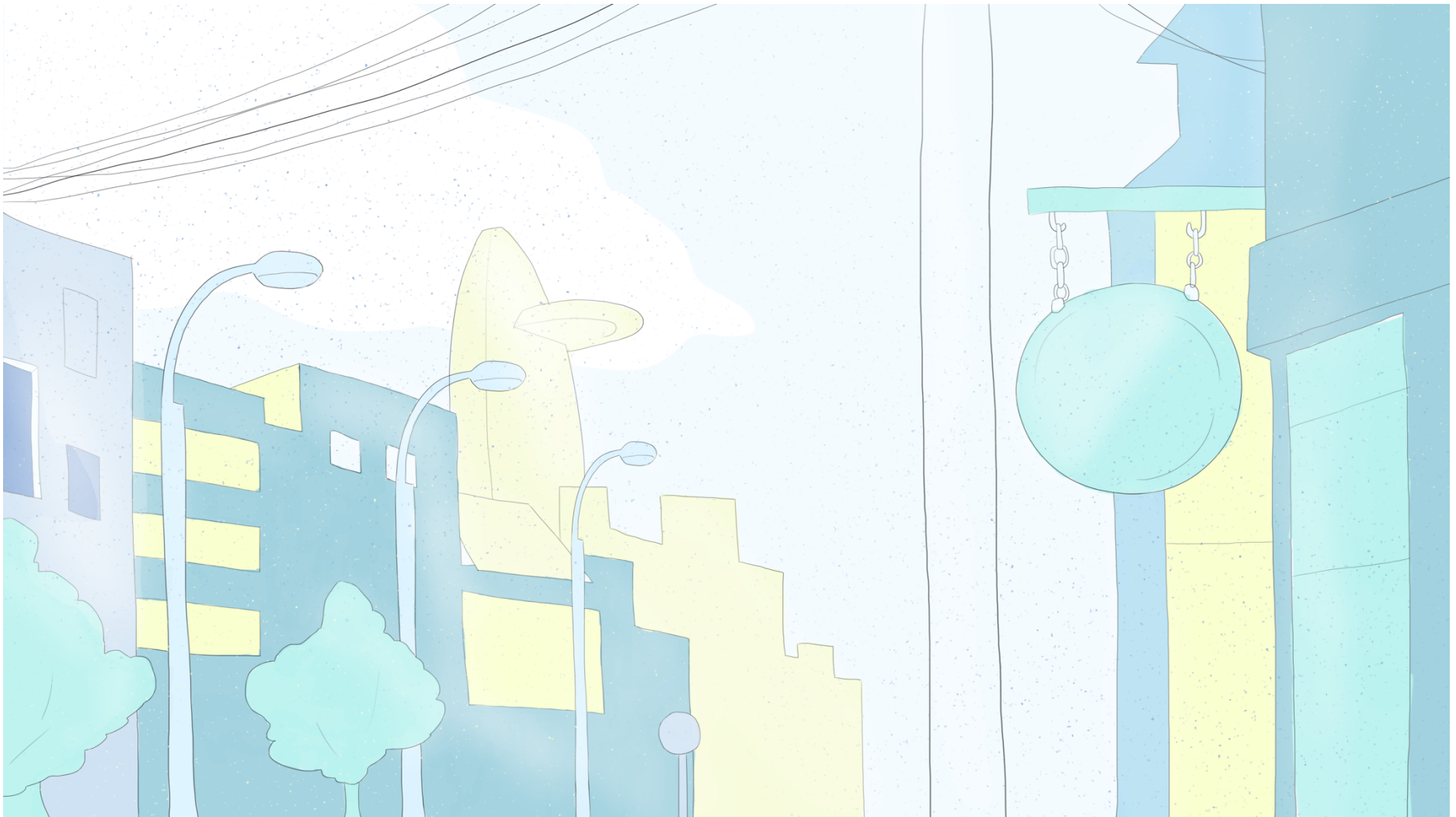
Bed room (view no.1)



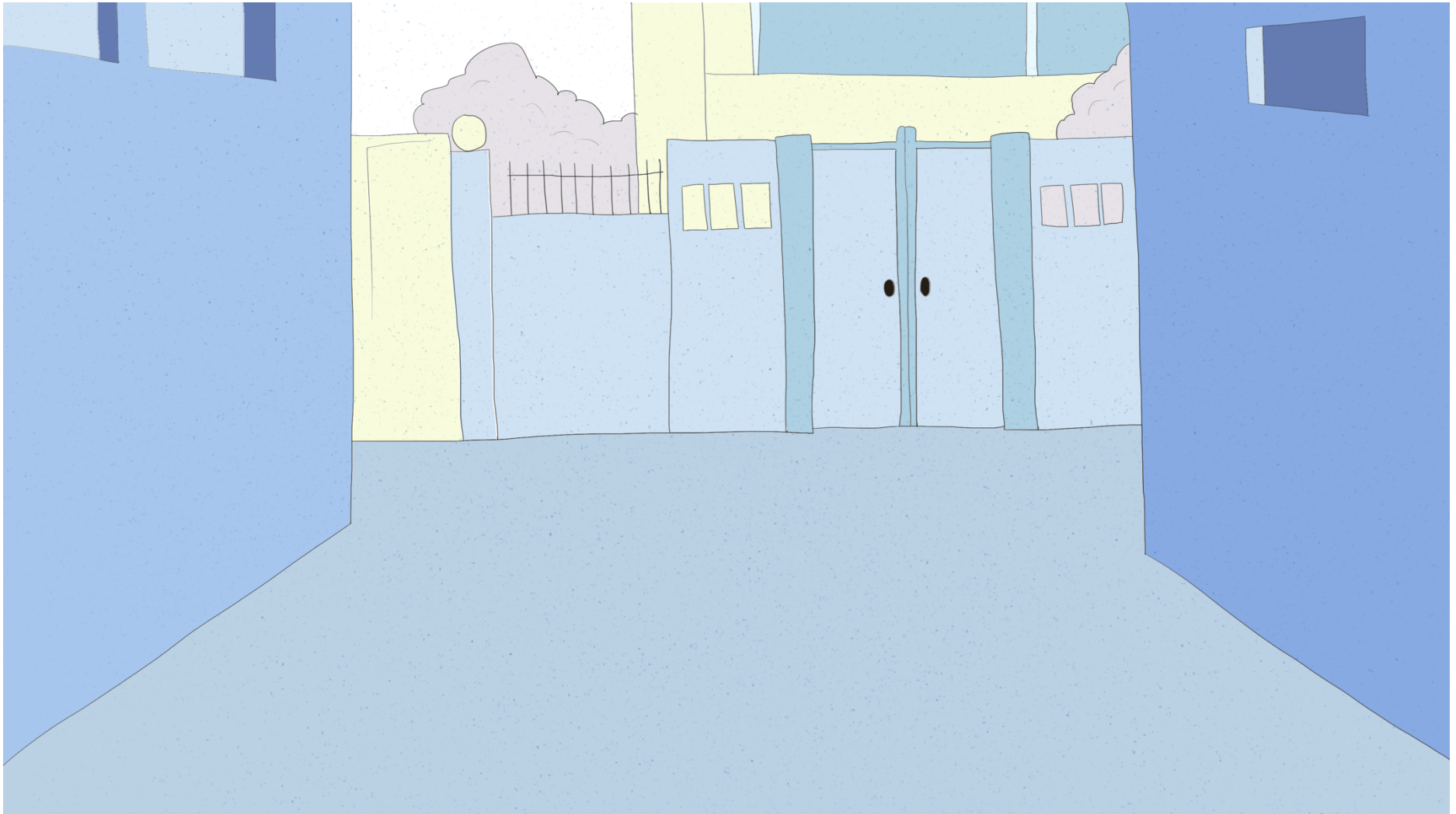
Bed room (view no.2)



Sink

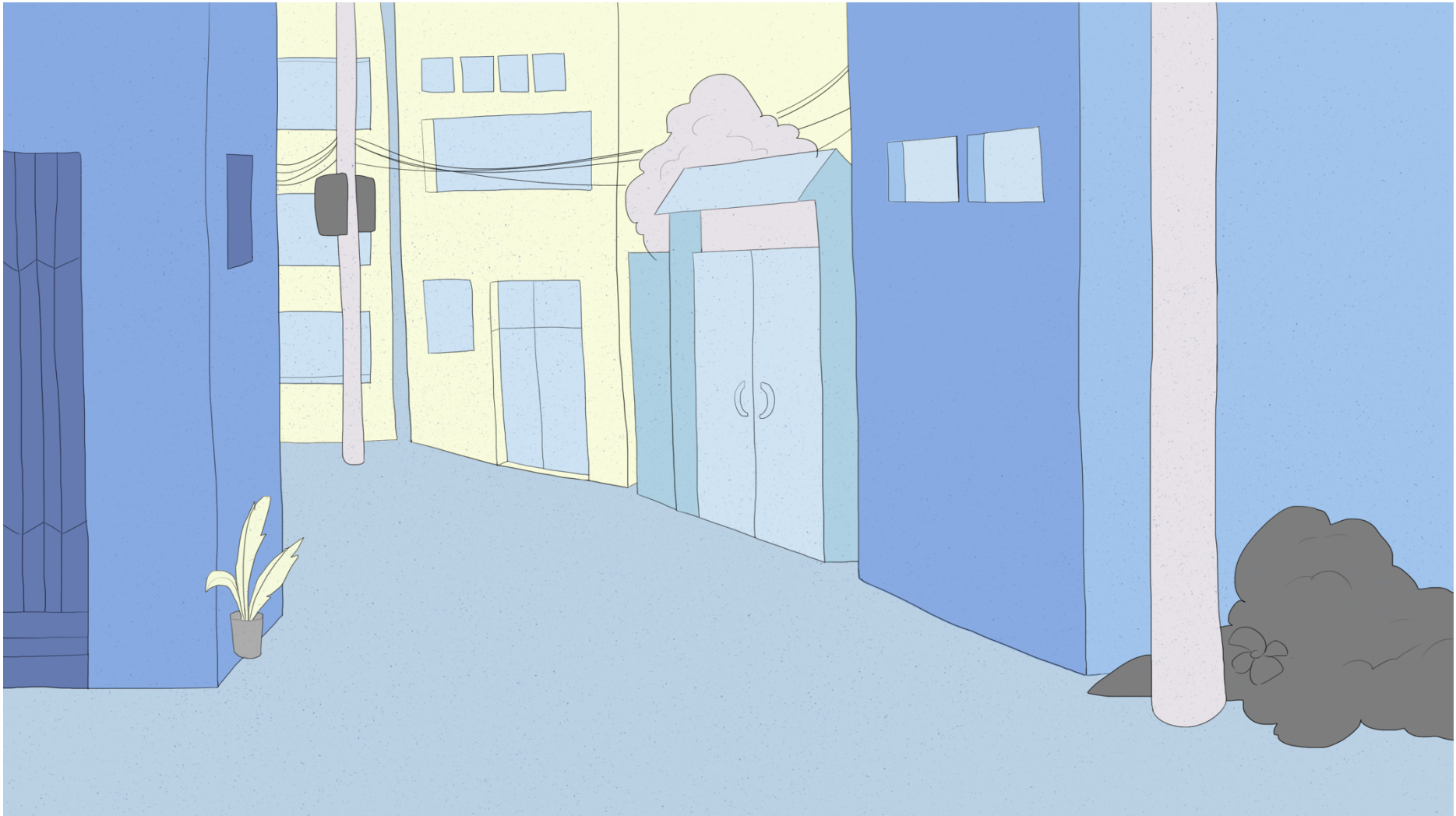


City

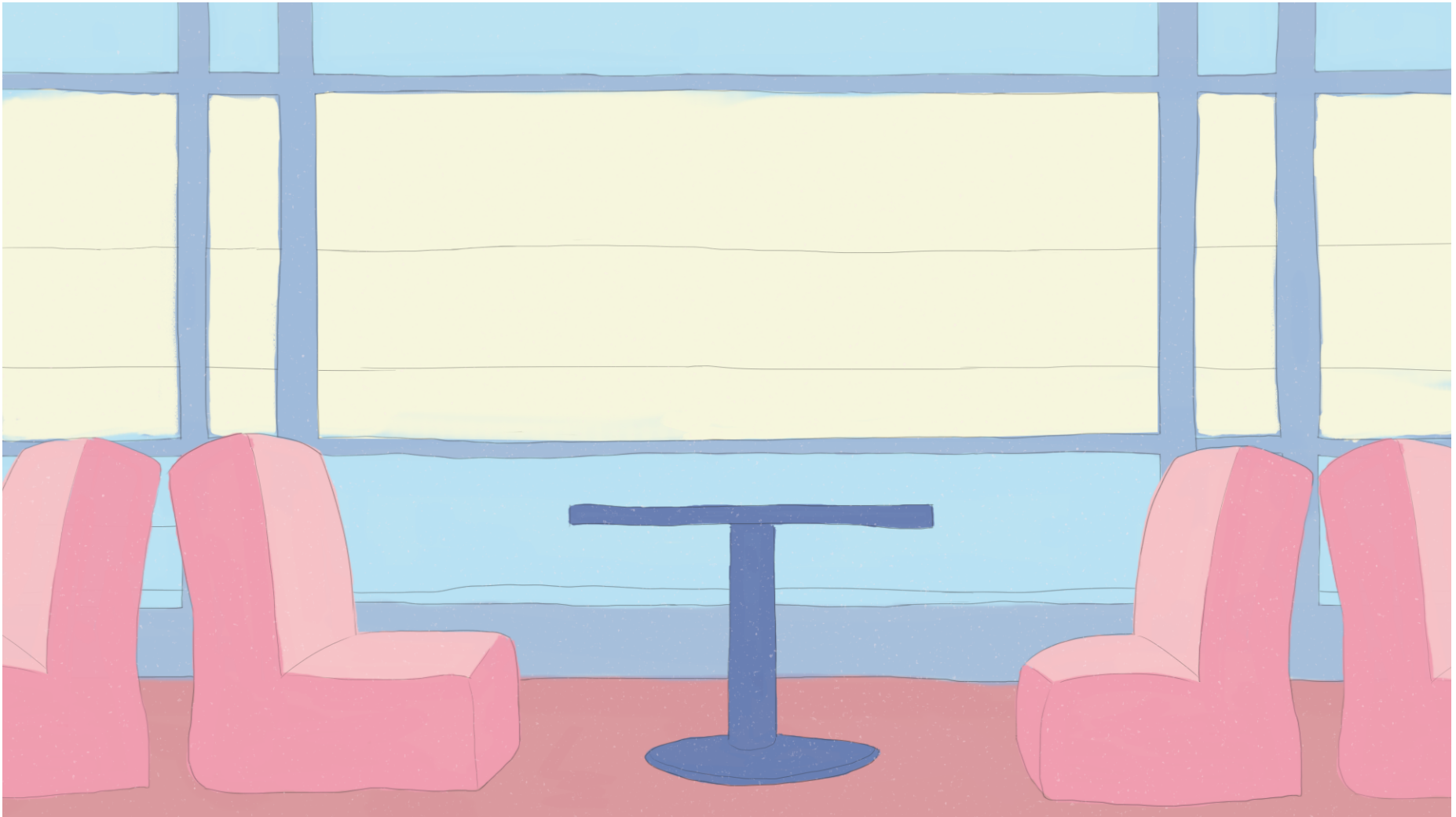


The street (view no.1)





The street (view no.2)



Coffee shop



Bathroom

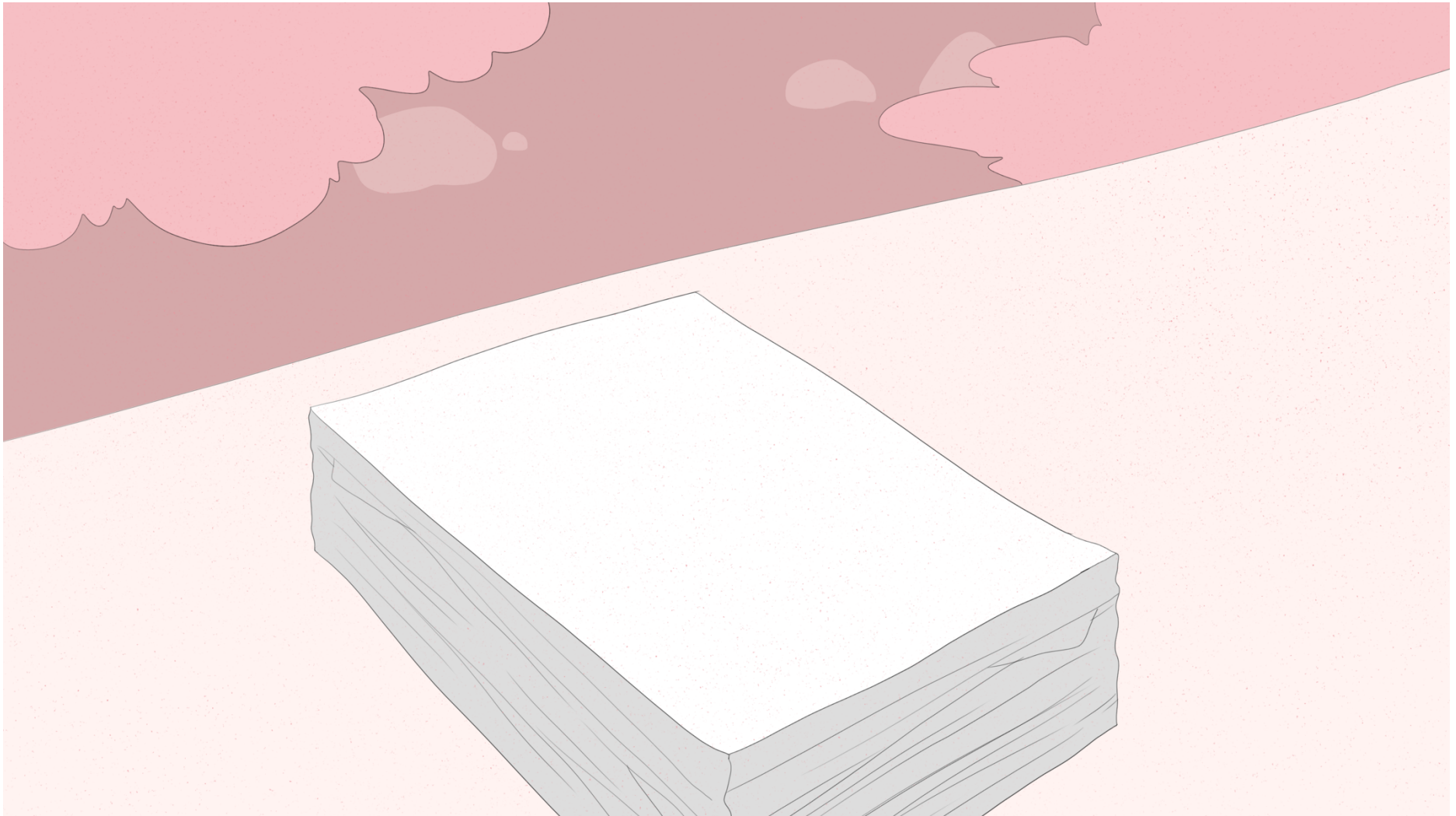




Forest (view no.1)



Forest (view no.2)

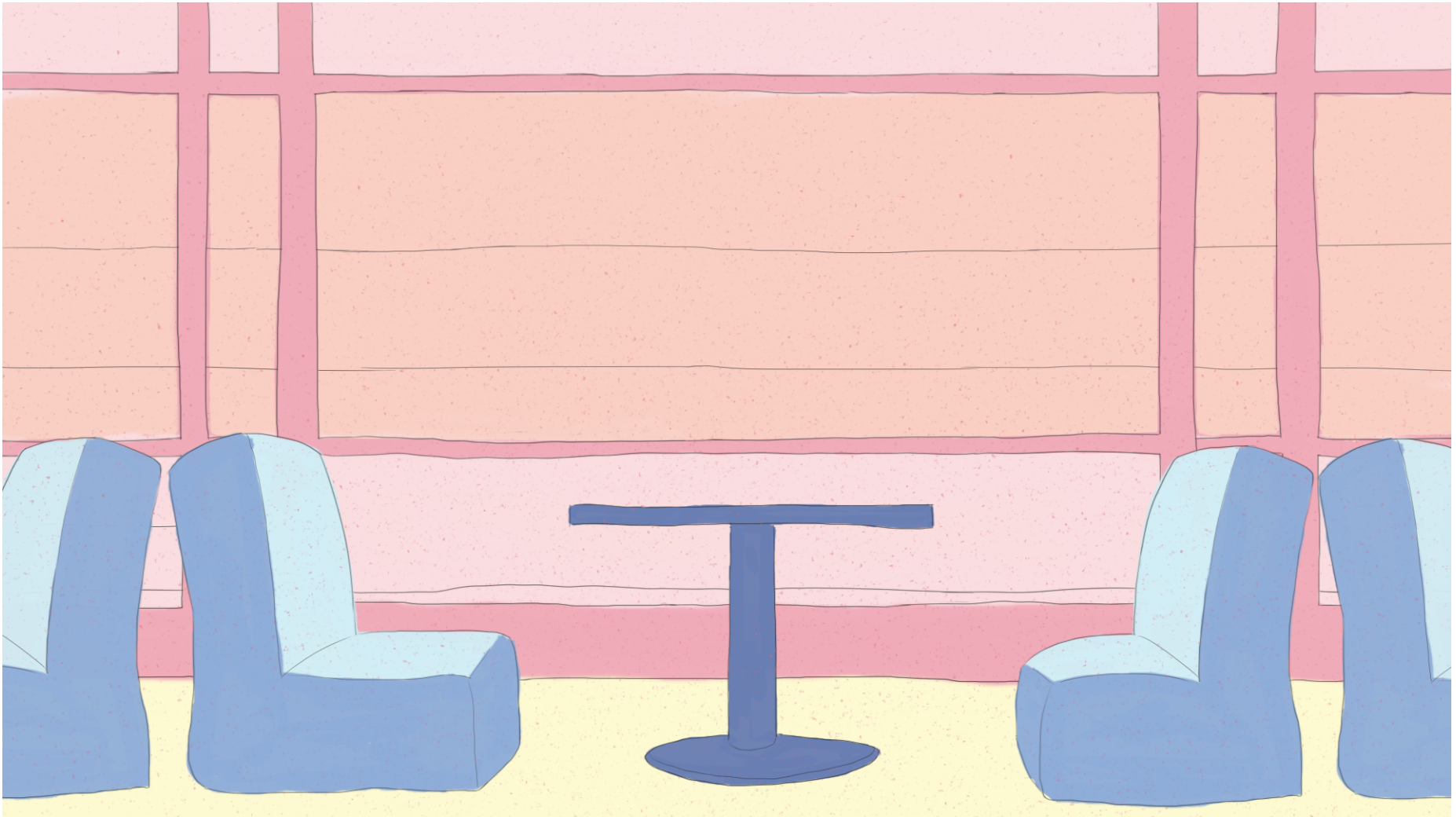


Office in forest

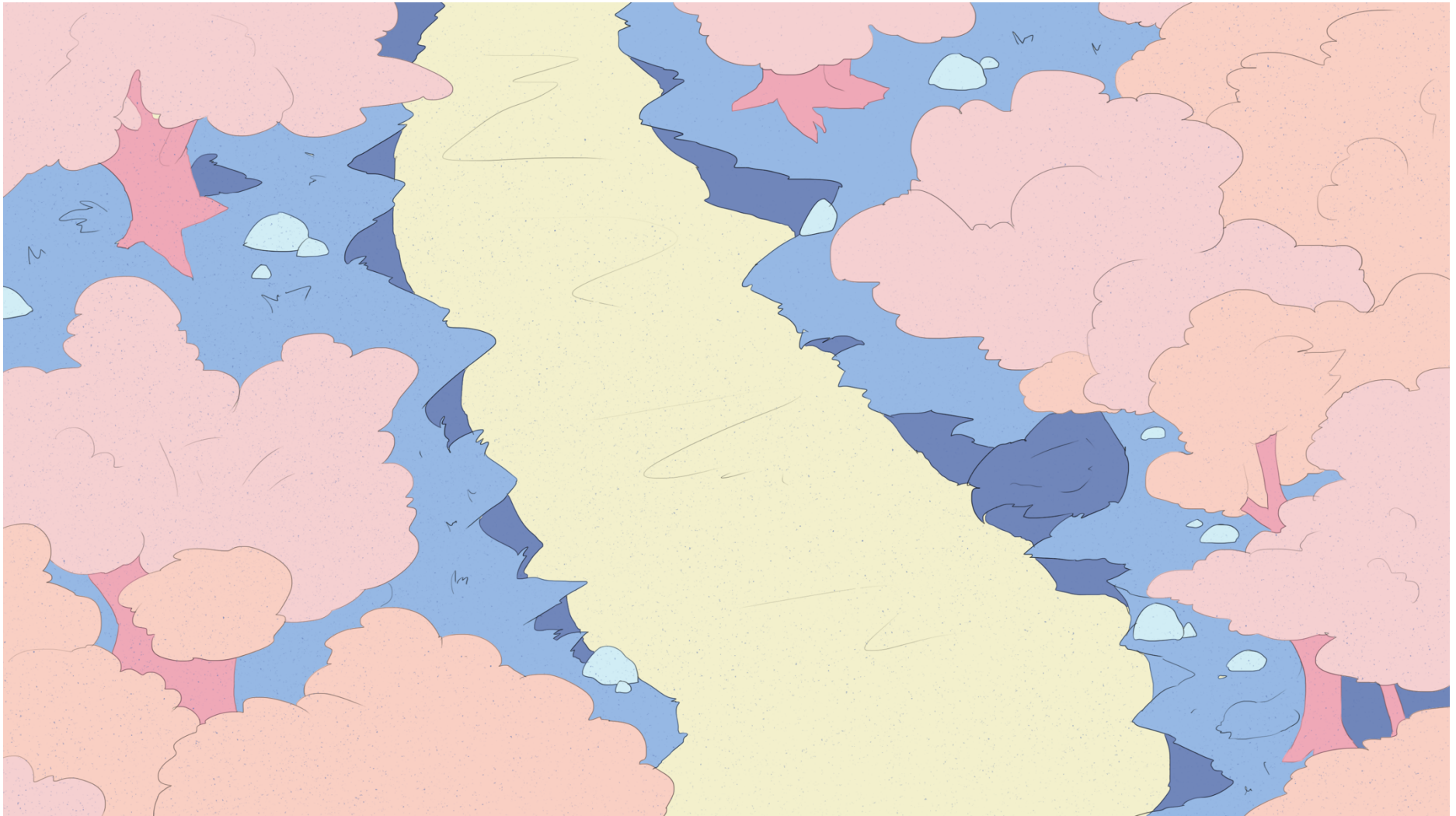




Coffee shop in the forest (outside)

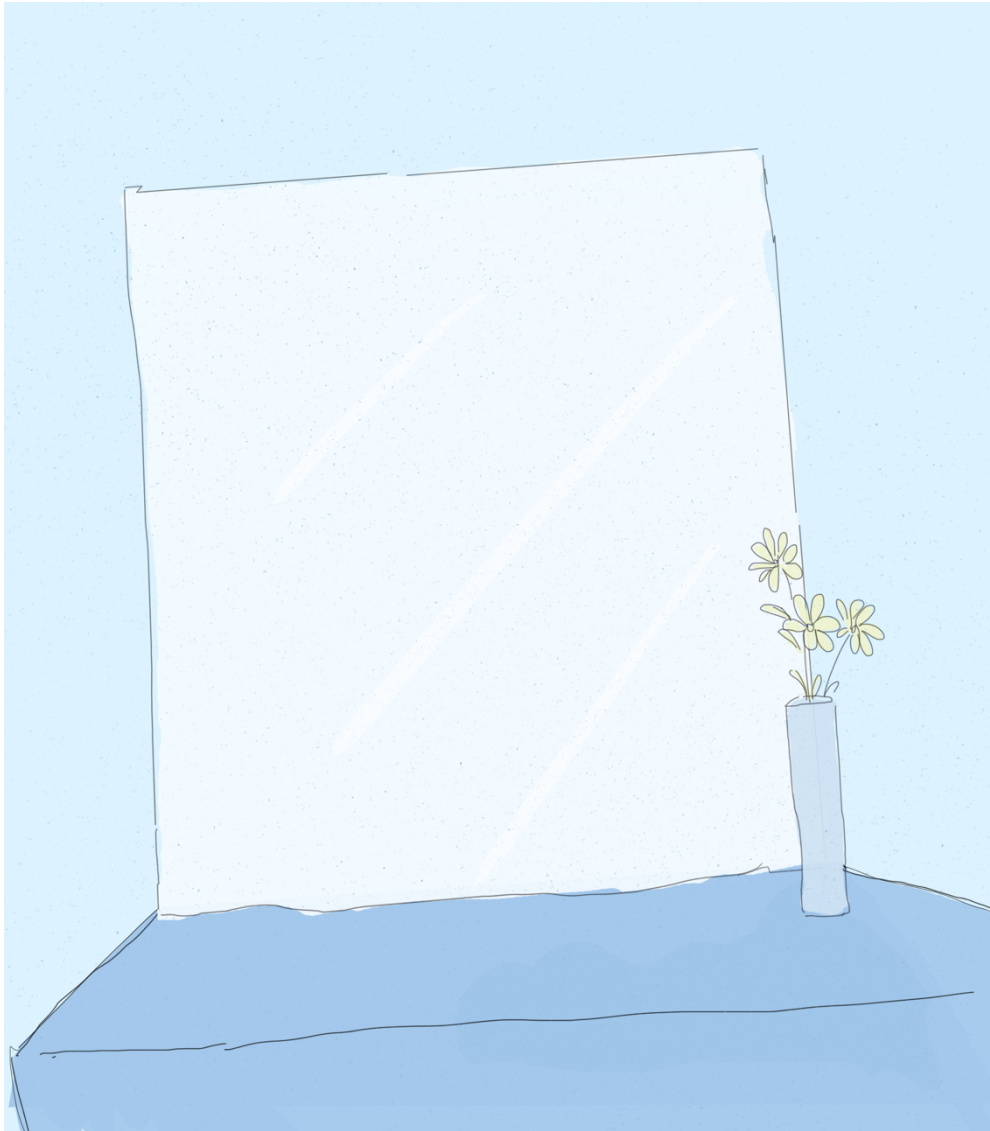


Coffee shop in the forest (indoor)

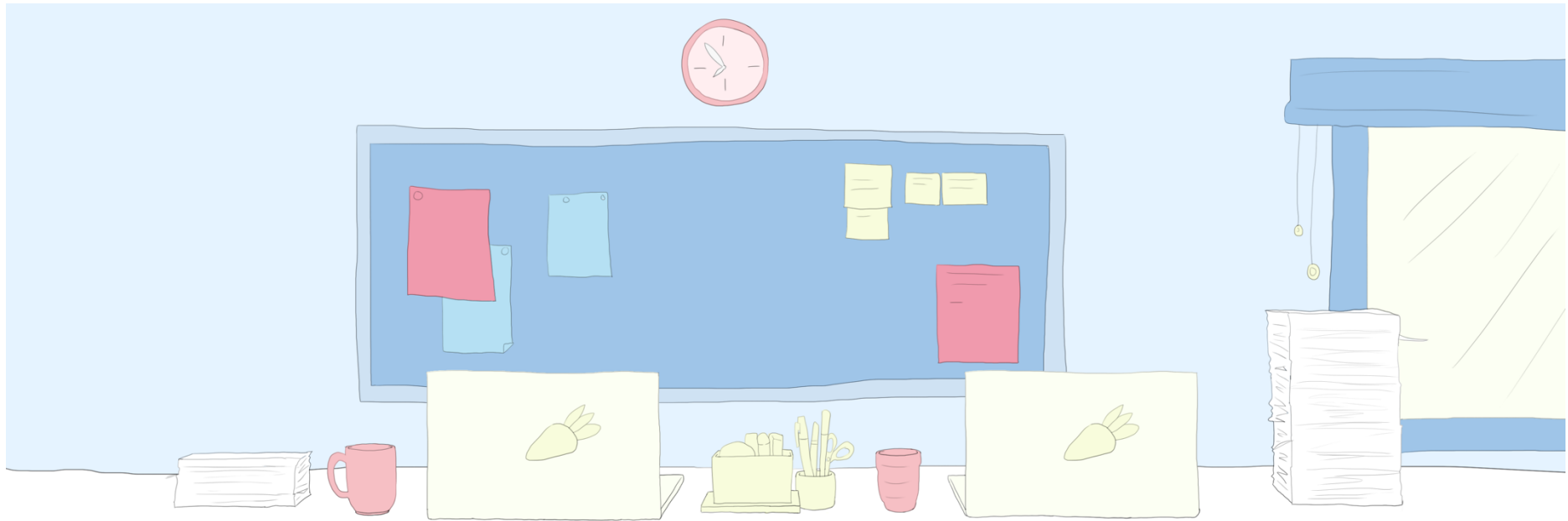


Forest last view

### 3.2.2. Dolly scene



The mirror of dressing table



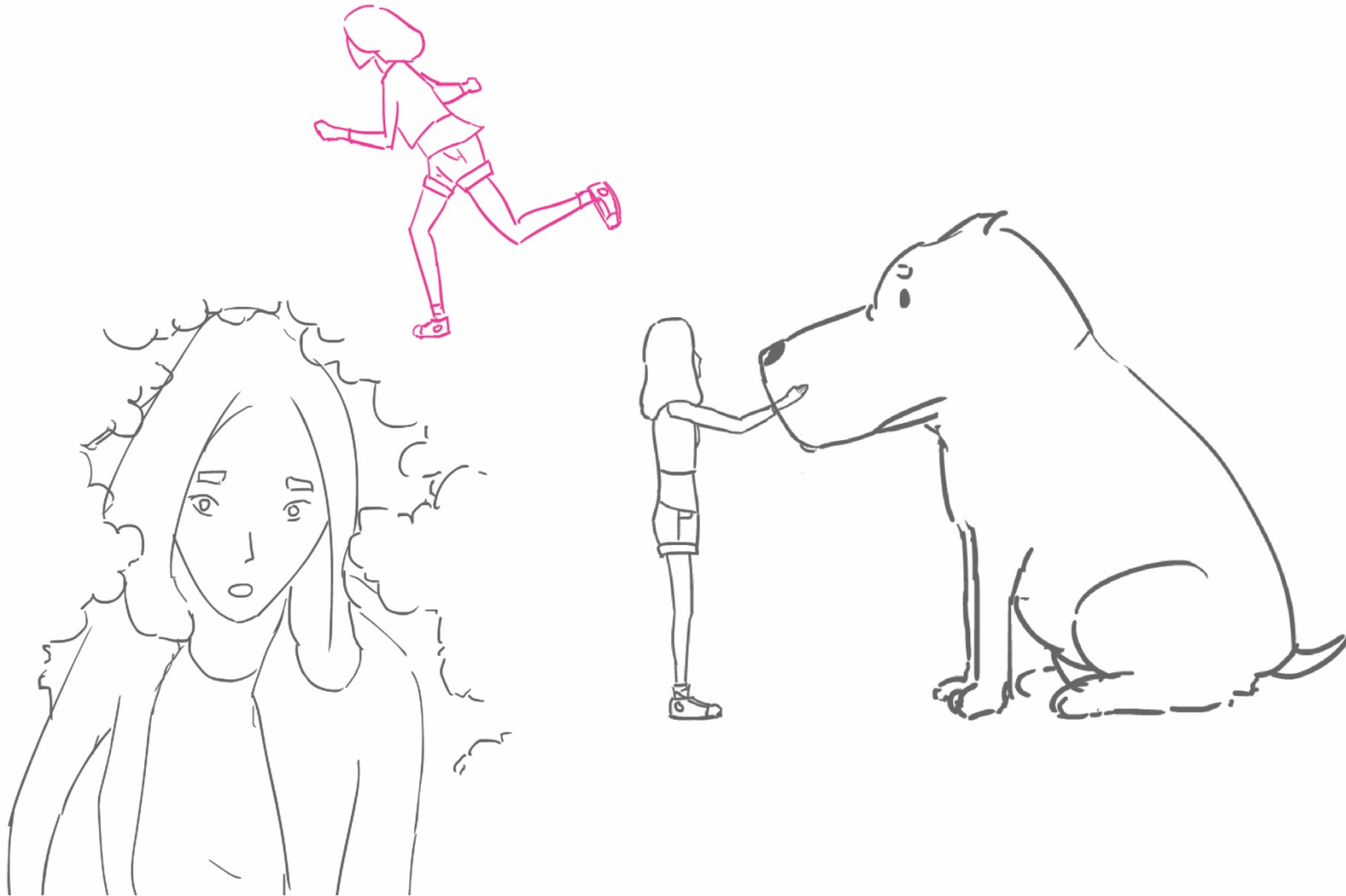
Office in real life

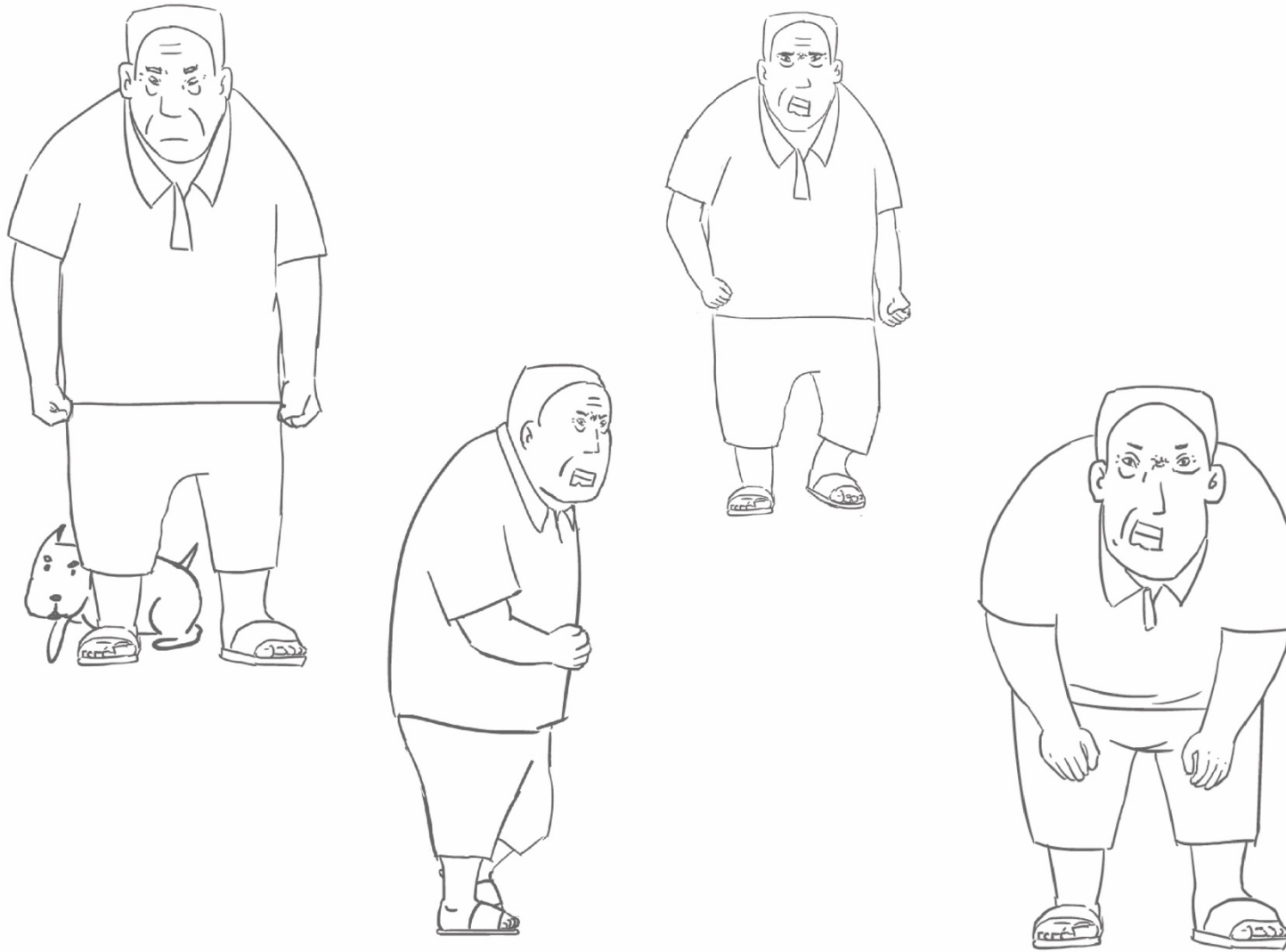


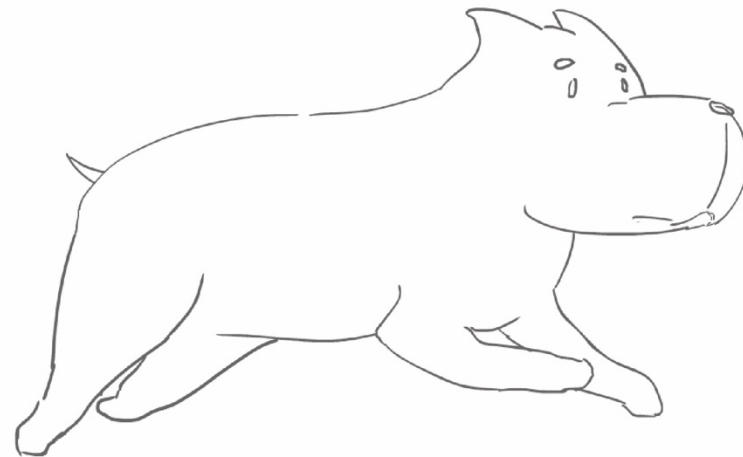
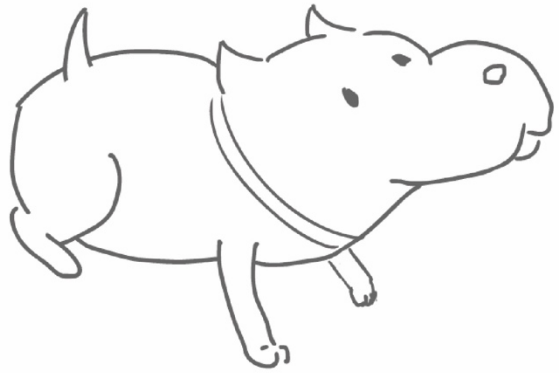
## 4. REPORT NO.4: DESIGN FINALIZATION

### 4.1. Character Animation

Another important aspect to the film is the character personalization. Since they are all different in age and appearance, we need to make sure their movements and actions match to their personality. In addition, these movements and actions have to be simple enough to fit in the short runtime of the film. We also opted for the frame to frame method. As a result, we only select a handful of movements and actions to focus and polish. The following excerpts show the movements and actions the characters have in the film.



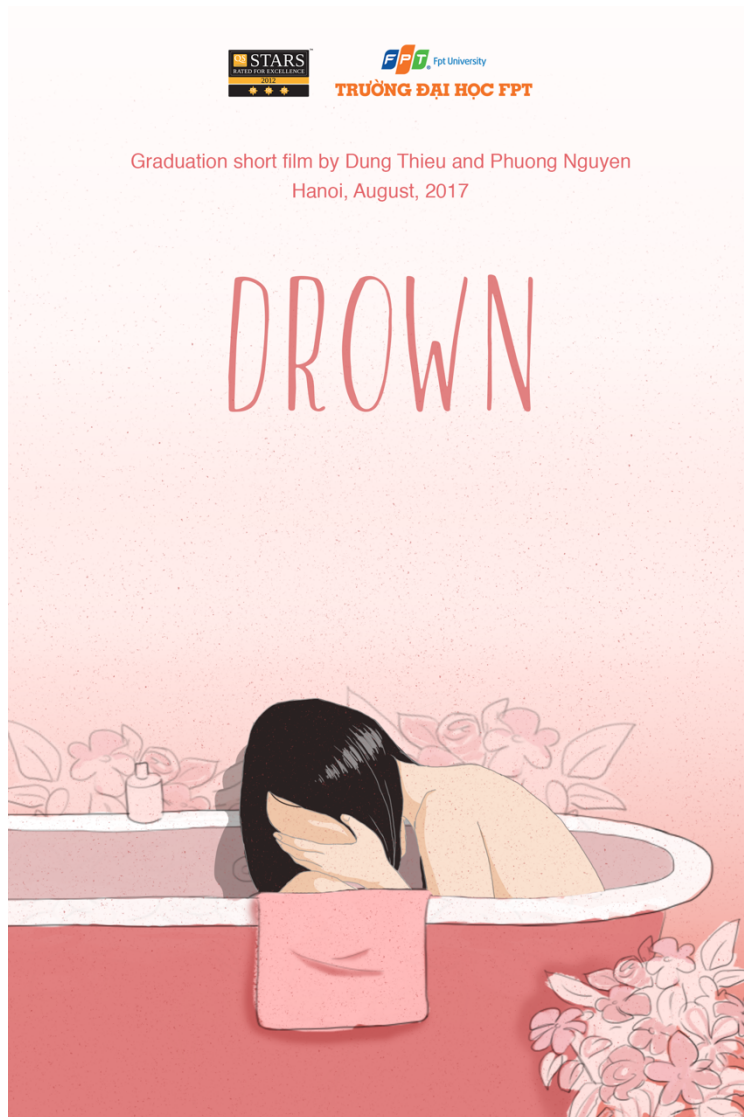








## 4.2. Poster



Poster is a major part in introducing the film to the audience.

The poster for “Drown” focus on a single color, which was used to mark the transformation in the story. The girl’s pose also added to the feeling of loneliness as she tries to hide herself. The poster is open to interpretation and different people will have different take on its meaning.

Other details in the poster are mainly for aesthetics.

## SUMMARY

DROWN - a name that brings a looming sense of sadness. However, the girl in our film has already drowned in the real world, in her own world, and still drowning deeper into it all. A vicious cycle. We cannot help her. To go or to stay is her decision to make and there is nothing we can do. The only thing we can do is open a door for her.

### Conclusion

After all the passion and hardwork we have put into making the film, we hope that it will meet the expectation and receive positive feedbacks from everyone. However, it is still our first project so errors are to be expected. We have much to learn and this project will bring us one step closer to our latter goal.

It is our genuine hope that the audience will have something to think about. We believe that everyone should start thinking about our true selves, and whether is it worth it to leave it and run after everyone's else. "Drown" is our personal quest to find the answer. It is a letter to the lost and the wanderer. We hope that you will find a glimpse of yourself in this film and perhaps an answer to your own question.

"Drown" is our first attempt at understanding the major concepts of making a film, ignite a new passion for it and share a piece of ourselves to the world. We have pushed ourselves to the limit to create this project and we would love to see it be a part of the animation community in Vietnam. We would like to express our eternal gratitude for the enthusiasm and the guidance everyone has offered during this time. We have also put our very best in making this project. "Drown" is the result of this combined efforts.



### Workload distribution

To get the best result, it is crucial that we value each other opinions since we excel at different aspects. Thus even though we work together all the time, the one who is better at that part will be the leader. After each stages, we always have a controlled check to make sure we are on the right track and to make any necessary adjustment. We also try to work on multiple parts simultaneously to reduce the load as well as complete the film on schedule.

This is the first time we have taken upon ourselves to complete a film from start to finish. We have pushed ourselves to the limit, in order to experience the feeling of making a film. This has been an incredible challenge and we have learned a lot from it.