

RAINBOW APARTMENT

彩虹公寓

Set in 2024, five years after the legalization of same-sex marriage in Taiwan, this LGBTQ comic compilation gathers six humanizing stories that showcase the strength and dignity required to live in a society that has only just begun to acknowledge your basic rights.

Taipei, 2024, five years after the legalization of same-sex marriage in Taiwan. In a building called the Rainbow Apartments, we find six stories addressing the issues of friendship, love, family, and work that the LGBTQ community must navigate within a society that is still adjusting to the formal acknowledgement of their basic rights.

Moving up through the floors of the building reveals a diverse range of lives in the process of unfolding. Living under the shadow of HIV, an art teacher falls for the nude model who poses for his classes. A young woman who has never been in love begins to have stirrings of affection for a same-sex online friend, but struggles to bridge the gap to real-world romance. Two lesbians who met through a dating app linger in the tentative yet exhilarating exchanges of the first blush of love. Having already cohabited for one year, another lesbian couple struggles with the necessity of living in the closet to avoid upsetting a conservative parent. A transgender woman who has not completely transitioned faces disappointments in life and love. And, a bisexual man falls for his gay roommate, but is forced to come to terms with what it means to live truly as oneself.

Rainbow Apartment compiles the work of six different comic book artists, each with their own unique style of art and storytelling. Showcasing the diversity of the LGBTQ community, this collection carries us through the full range of human emotions, while also normalizing difference by situating these characters in the most familiar of circumstances: the slightly cramped but wonderfully convenient apartments we all inhabited in our youth.



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Moriku 墨里可

Moriku is a comic book artist, illustrator, graphic designer, and lecturer on comic book art. Her most representative work is the boys love manga *My Honey, My Hero*, which has been licensed for re-release on the WEBTOON platform as a full color serial comic strip.

Chen Pei-Hsiu 陳沛琄

Originally an archaeological illustrator at Academia Sinica, Chen Pei-Hsiu eventually went freelance, publishing work in magazines, newspapers, and books. She has been short-listed twice for the Angoulême Prize for Young Talent, and twice for the 3×3 International Illustration Award. Her comic book *For the Time Being* has been published in French.

Elainee

An illustrator and artist/writer of graphic novels, Elainee studied occupational therapy at university and worked in hospitals and clinics for three years before realizing her true passion was art. After quitting her day job, she began selling her art from a street stall. In 2017 she obtained an MA from London's Royal College of Art and was awarded a residency in Angoulême, France.

Nin

Comic book artist Nin graduated from National Taiwan University of Arts with a degree in visual communication. She excels at watercolor, pencil, and expressive ink line work. She was a 2020 artist in residence in Angoulême, France. Her previous works include the graphic novel *Weight-less*.

Lee Weien 李瑋恩

A graduate of the University for the Creative Arts in the UK, Lee's works tend towards realism, using beautiful interlinked images to explore contemporary social issues. She participated in the 2019 Creative Expo Taiwan, and won a gold medal at the 2018 Taipei Illustration Fair. She was also a finalist for the 2nd Comico Original Comic Book Award.

Lucas Paixão 盧卡斯

Born in 1990 in Salvador, Brazil, Lucas Paixão graduated with a degree in graphic design from Universidade Salvador. After working as a freelance designer in Brazil, he came to Taiwan in 2014 to study at the Institute of Fine Arts at Taipei National University of the Arts. His previous works include *Binlang Beauty*, *Orange Boy*, *Picasso Compulsive Disorder*, *CURTA! Short Comics by Lucas Paixão*, and *Seven Day Life*.

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Prologue

Apartment of the Future

Taiwan, 2024. Five years since the legalization of same sex marriage.

The sun still rises, and the oceans haven't risen up to flood the earth. The human race has not only avoided extinction, but continues to survive much as before.

From today's vantage point, the fierce debates and anguished conflicts of five years ago seem worlds away.

But the dust has not completely settled. The story goes on...

The "for rent" sign has just been taken down from an apartment in Taipei.

It is located in a seven-story building, just three minutes from the nearest MRT station. There's a park across the street that's perfect for an after-dinner stroll. Just around the corner are a 24-hour supermarket and a chain fast-food restaurant. On the first floor of the building there's a small bar that stays open until daybreak, perfect for night owls.

The residents of the building each have their own stories, their own colors.

Red, orange, yellow, green, blue, and purple. Sweetness, bitterness, tears, and triumph. All find their way into the portrait of this building. All come together in its melting pot.

This is the story of the Rainbow Apartments.

When the end of the world finally comes, it won't be because of love, but its absence.





Does time change us?



I don't think so. I think it's our environment that changes us.



But if we decide to change ourselves, the environment, and time,
and the whole world will change with us.





HEY, YI-HAO!

YOU'RE BACK!



WHERE'D YOU RUN
OFF TO TODAY?

I WAS PLANNING TO WORK
OUT BUT IN THE END I
JUST SLEPT ALL DAY

YOU LAZY SLUG! I WENT
TO JOIN THE PARADE!



PARADE?

THE PRIDE PARADE!
EVERYONE THERE SAW
THE STORY

I POSTED YESTERDAY
THEY ASSUMED WE WERE
A COUPLE.



WHEN I TOLD THEM
YOU'RE STRAIGHT,

THEY WERE
HEARTBROKEN!

HEH...











HUH?

YOU'RE REALLY
HARD?
WHAT THE HELL?



I... I...



KO, I...

I THINK I MIGHT
LIKE YOU A LITTLE BIT.



HUH? WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
I WAS JUST JOKING!

BUT... I'M NOT JOKING...







YI-HAO...

... THE TRUTH IS,
I LIKE YOU, TOO.



BUT I'VE ALWAYS THOUGHT WE
BELONGED TO TWO DIFFERENT
WORLDS.

AND WHEN I MOVED IN, YOU
WERE STILL GETTING OVER
YOUR LAST RELATIONSHIP

SO I DIDN'T WANT
TO GET TOO CLOSE.



THIS IS ALL SO
SUDDEN.

IT'S KIND OF HARD
TO BELIEVE.



BUT SINCE YOU'VE BEEN
SO BRAVE IN CONFESSING
HOW YOU FEEL...

... I WOULD LOVE
TO BE YOUR
BOYFRIEND.

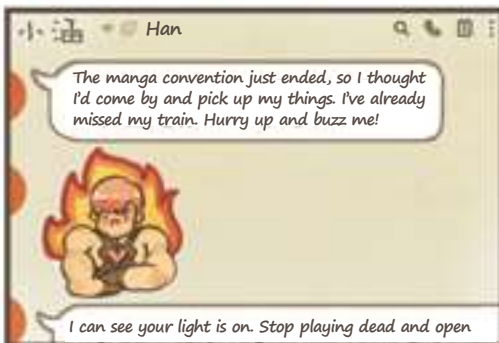


STILL, I'M AFRAID YOU STILL
MIGHT NOT BE CLEAR ABOUT
YOURSELF. YOU HAD A GIRLFRIEND.

I...



小池 Han
I'm downstairs. Buzz me in.









WELL...

YI-HAO HAS ALWAYS
LOVED SIR DARLING,
AND HE USED TO
STEAL MY "BOYS LOVE"
MANGA TO READ

I'VE SUSPECTED
HE'S GAY FOR A
LONG TIME!



BUT SINCE YOU LOOK
EXACTLY LIKE SIR
DARLING,

YOU HAVE MY
BLESSING!



HAN, DON'T GET ME MIXED
UP WITH THE GUYS IN YOUR
COMIC BOOKS.

IF YOU LOOK AT IT
THAT WAY, IT'S AS IF...



...I NEVER LOVED YOU AT ALL

AS IF YOU SOMEHOW FORCED
ME TO MOVE IN WITH YOU...
TO MAKE LOVE TO YOU

YOU MAKE IT SOUND LIKE OUR RELATIONSHIP
WAS A FRAUD

I'M MAKING A DIFFERENT
CHOICE NOW,

BUT THAT DOESN'T
MEAN THE PAST
WAS FAKE.



JUST A CRAZY
PERVERT?

YOU USED TO LOVE
A GIRL. NOW YOU
LOVE A GUY.

IF THAT'S NOT
GAY, WHAT IS?











I'M SORRY IT SHOULDN'T
HAVE BEEN
LIKE THIS.

IT'S OK.

IT'S RARE TO HAVE ANYONE
BEING SO HONEST.



BUT I'VE BEEN
THINKING...
YOU SAID YOU'RE CLEAR
ABOUT WHO YOU ARE,



AND YOUR
MOTHER'S HERE,

SO MAYBE TOMORROW
WOULD BE A GOOD TIME
TO COME OUT TO HER?









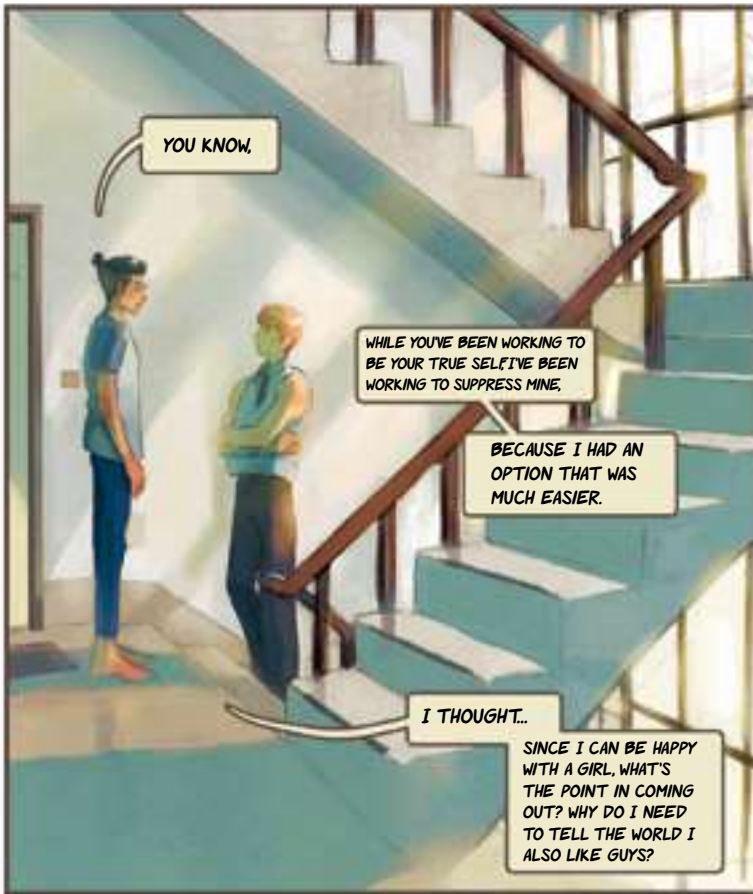


CAN'T YOU SEE HOW SELFISH THAT IS?



ISN'T FORCING ME TO COME OUT OF THE CLOSET EQUALLY SELFISH?





YOU KNOW,

WHILE YOU'VE BEEN WORKING TO
BE YOUR TRUE SELF, I'VE BEEN
WORKING TO SUPPRESS MINE,

BECAUSE I HAD AN
OPTION THAT WAS
MUCH EASIER.

I THOUGHT...

SINCE I CAN BE HAPPY
WITH A GIRL, WHAT'S
THE POINT IN COMING
OUT? WHY DO I NEED
TO TELL THE WORLD I
ALSO LIKE GUYS?



THERE ARE
PROBABLY A LOT OF
PEOPLE LIKE ME,

EVEN SOME OF THE
CHARACTERS IN HAN'S
"BOYS LOVE" COMICS.

WE'RE ALL AFRAID
OF BEING JUDGED
BY SOCIETY.



BUT AFTER GET-
TING TO KNOW YOU,

I REALIZE THERE ARE
SO MANY PEOPLE LIKE
YOU WHO'VE WORKED HARD

TO CHANGE THINGS.
YOU'VE MADE THE WORLD
START TO ACCEPT US.



SO, I WANT TO
CHANGE, TOO.
PLEASE, GIVE ME...

OK.

I'LL WAIT
FOR YOU.

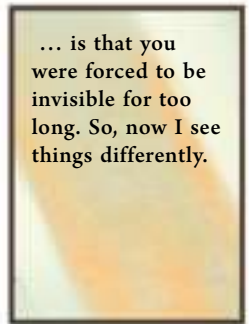








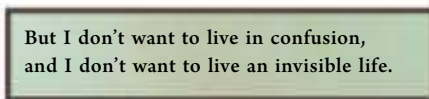
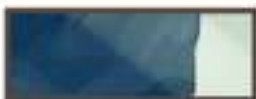
But after meeting
you I realized the
reason you insist
on being seen...



... is that you
were forced to be
invisible for too
long. So, now I see
things differently.



Life is short,
and we have to make choices



But I don't want to live in confusion,
and I don't want to live an invisible life.





Because I choose you.