

Daniela Schreiter

The World Beyond My Shadow



An autobiographic
comic-book about
a childhood and youth with
Asperger's/Autism.





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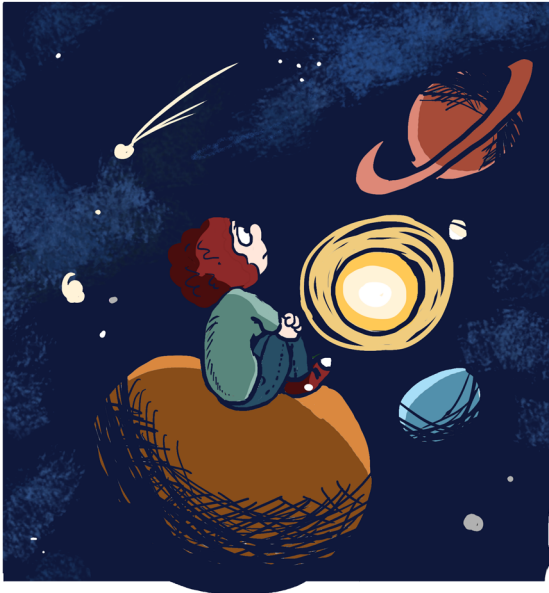
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Daniela Schreiter

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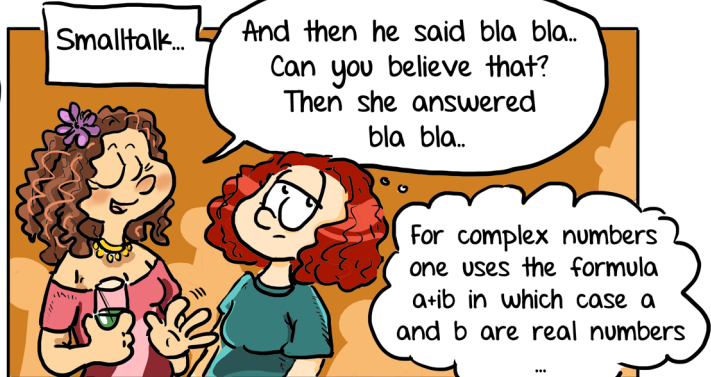
People with Asperger's often have the feeling that they landed on the wrong planet. That's why this form of autism also has the nickname "Wrong-Planet-Syndrome". That's basically right on the money. I often feel like an alien that is trying to react to human behavior through trial and error.



Greetings...

Hello,
Miss Schreiter!

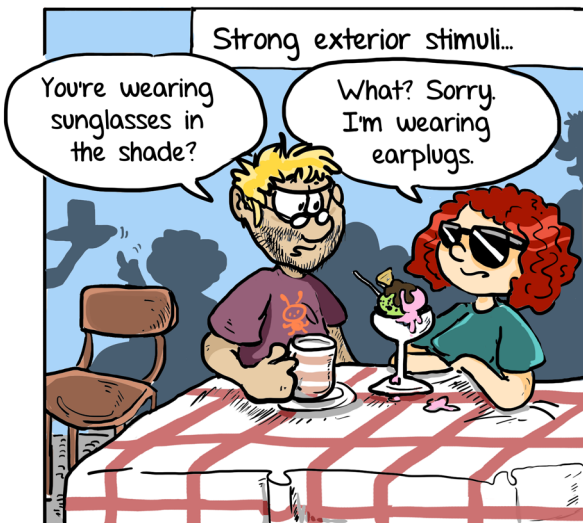
Uh...



Smalltalk...

And then he said bla bla..
Can you believe that?
Then she answered
bla bla..

For complex numbers
one uses the formula
 $a+ib$ in which case a
and b are real numbers
...



Strong exterior stimuli...

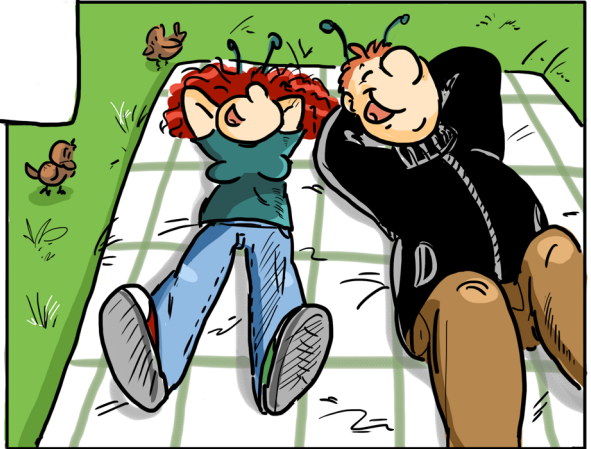
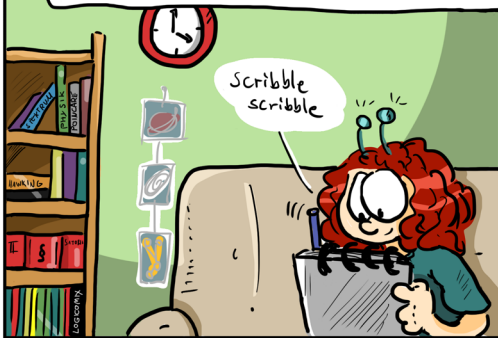
You're wearing
sunglasses in
the shade?

What? Sorry.
I'm wearing
earplugs.



One can rarely escape
the feeling of being
different...

For example, when I'm home alone,
pursuing my favorite pastimes, or
conversing with beings from my
own planet...

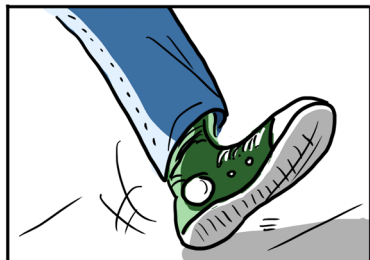
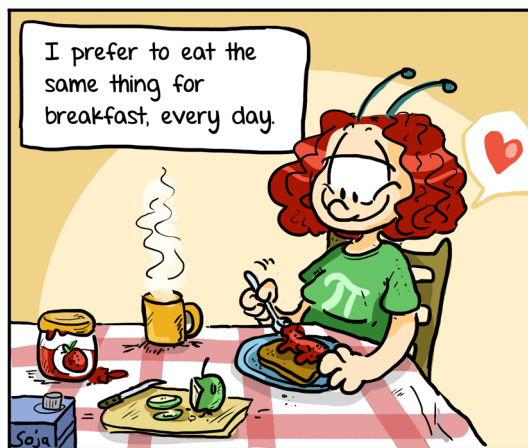
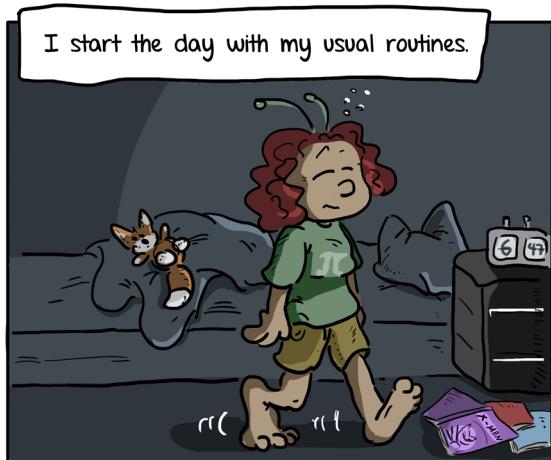


But those
moments truly
are rare.



BEEEEEP
BEEEEEP
BEEEEEP





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Chapter 1

Landed

ALKOHOL UND KOKAIN
BRAUCHT DER MENSCH
IN WEST-BERLIN!

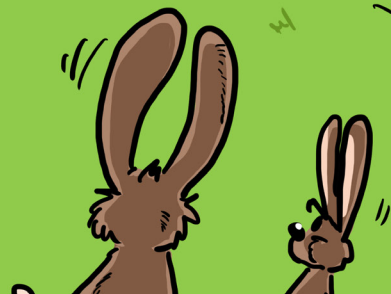


BIRNE
WIRD KAISER

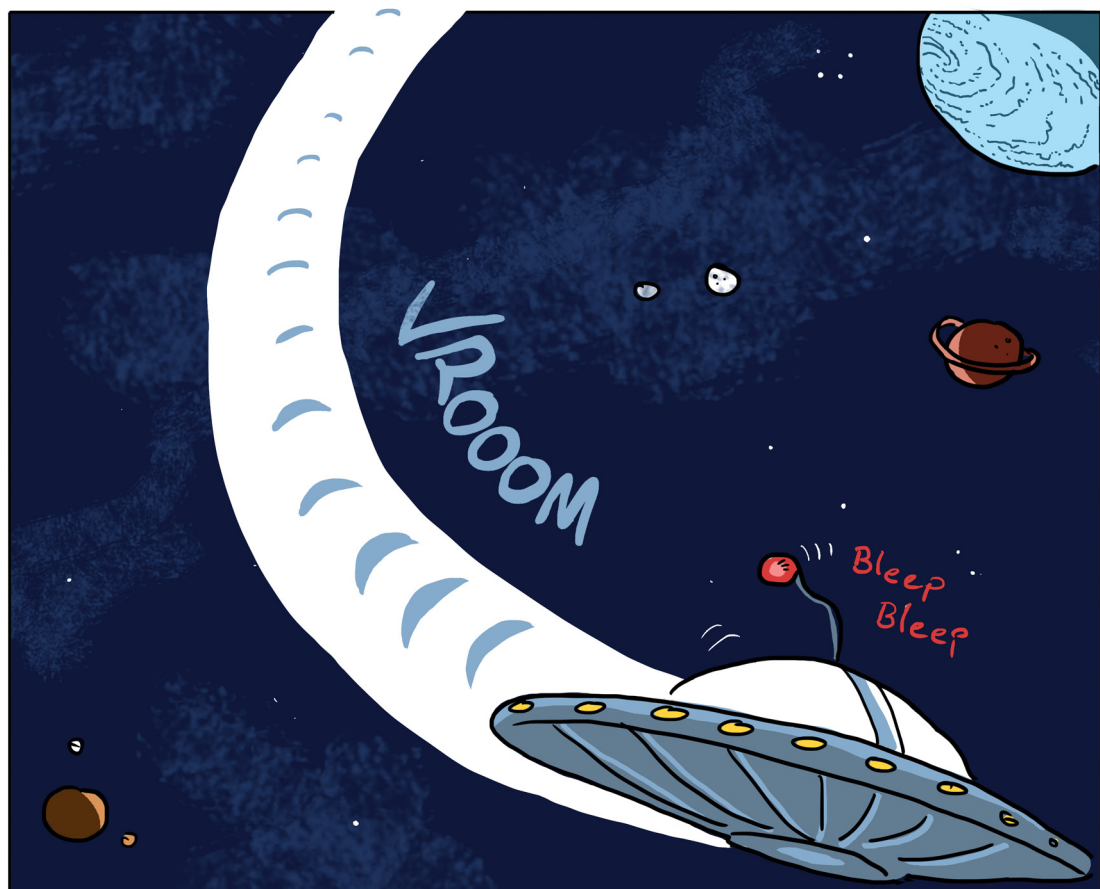
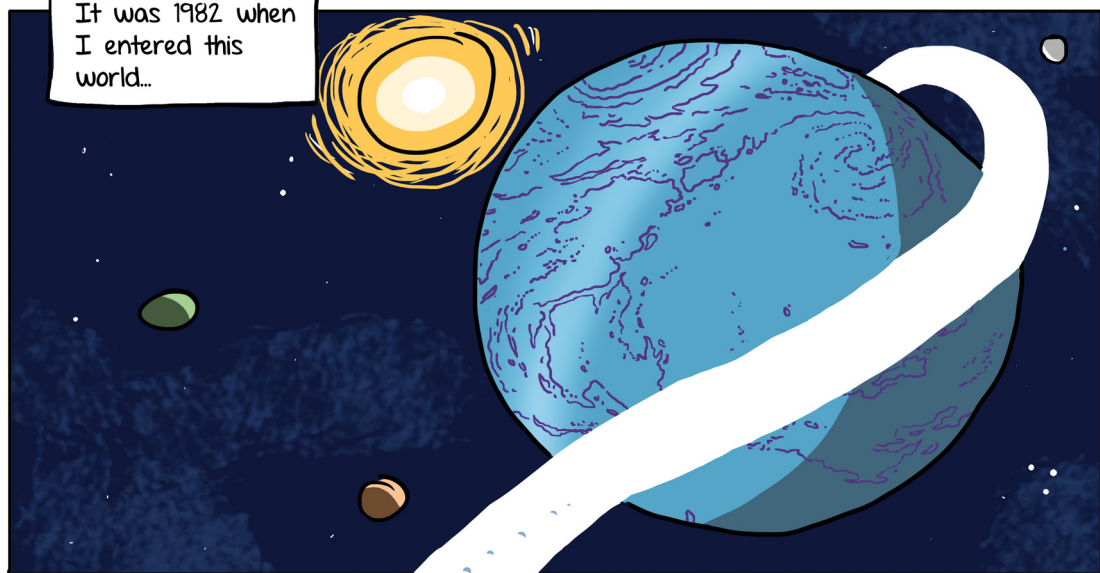
BWAAAAA!

GINE

Bleep
Bleep



It was 1982 when
I entered this
world...



...And landed right on the edge of West Berlin.

Grrrrr.



Grrr yourself.



WEST

EAST

I was the heaviest baby in the maternity ward.



When I was born I already had a lot of curls on my head.

I was a seemingly normal baby. But it wasn't long before I started to exhibit certain, "special traits".

Dada.



Learning to walk was really something else. When I finally managed to walk, I looked so odd that it either entertained everyone, or caused those watching to be genuinely concerned. When I walked it was a mixture of shaking and waddling, I found it difficult to find the right rhythm. This led to it looking unnatural. I still have difficulties at times, even if it doesn't look nearly as silly as it did when I was a child.

Is that considered normal?

Oh, she'll grow out of it.

Maybe a doctor should take a look at her?

Hah, it looks like she's imitating Chaplin!

Meow

My motor functions were a problem in general; my hand-eye coordination was far from satisfactory.



Ooops!

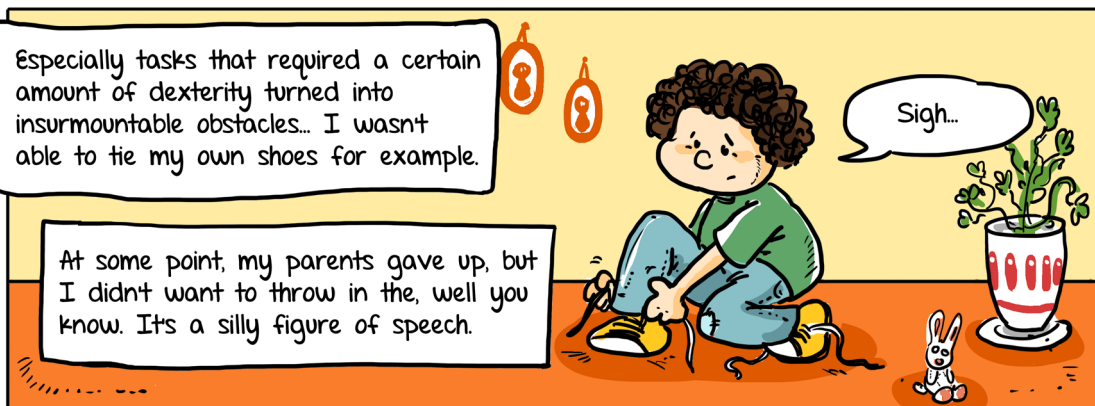
Spill

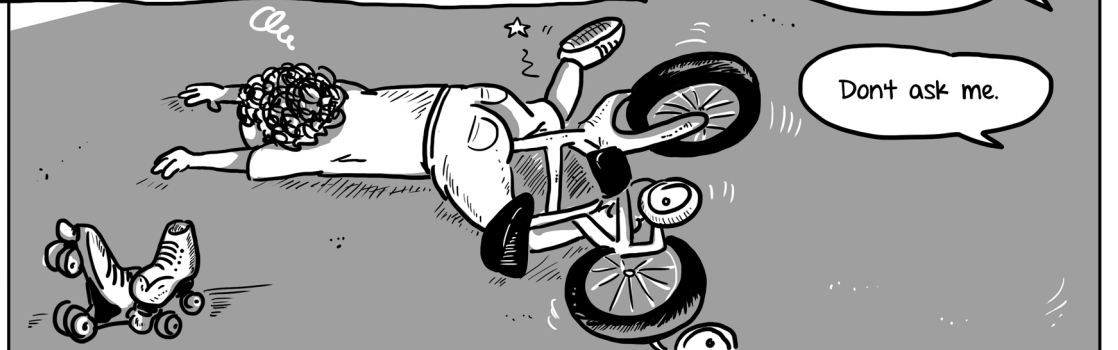
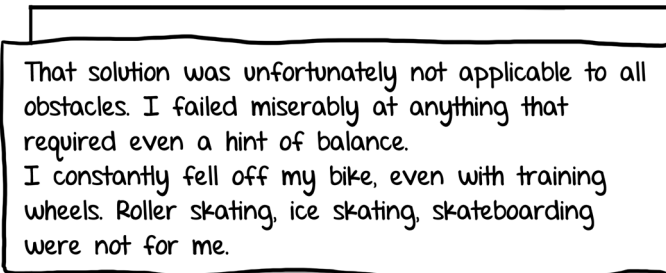
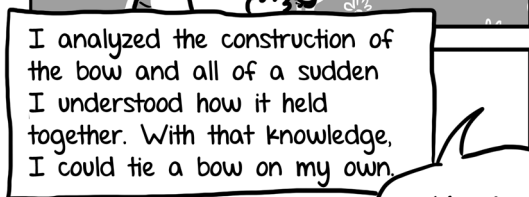
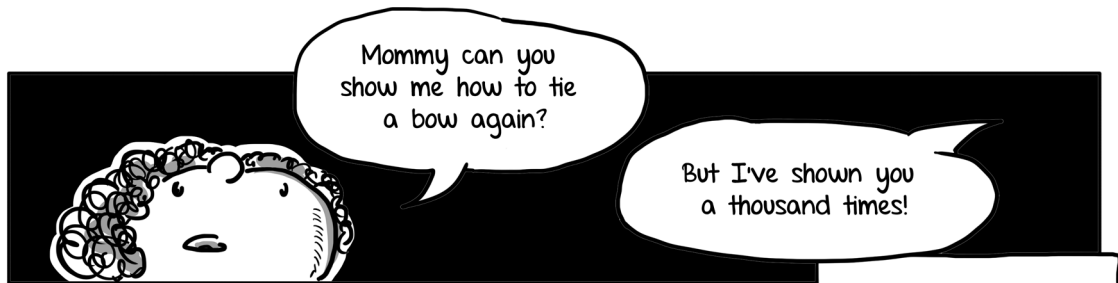


Especially tasks that required a certain amount of dexterity turned into insurmountable obstacles... I wasn't able to tie my own shoes for example.

At some point, my parents gave up, but I didn't want to throw in the towel, well you know. It's a silly figure of speech.

Sigh...





The bothersome clumsiness wasn't so bad in the end. I had a different problem that was much worse, that still persists today. It's something that most people who aren't autistic won't be able to understand. Oversensitivity.

Tactile



Mommy, mommy, the grass is like needles, I don't want to walk on it! Waaah!



Waaah! It's too tight! It's itchy and pokes and feels bad, I don't want to wear it.



A lot of people with Asperger's are so sensitive that even the most mundane sensations are unbearable. They set off proverbial fireworks in the person's brain. Some sensations are worse than others regardless of type (tactile, acoustic, visual, etc.).

Problem: Clothing

Brain is overwhelmed quickly

The baggier the clothing, the better. Tight clothing means more irritation for the skin.

It's as if there are a lot of little ants in between the clothes and your skin, and they get stirred up every time you move.

The main criteria I have for clothing these days is whether or not I can stand the feel of it on my skin.

Yay, this feels great, and it's in such a wonderful color, too. I'll take five!

SALE%

If I do end up having to wear uncomfortable clothing, I can barely wait for that sweet moment of salvation.

Off with this stuff!
Stupid dress, and these shoes... Argh!

Home at last!

AAAAH!

Now I feel human again...

