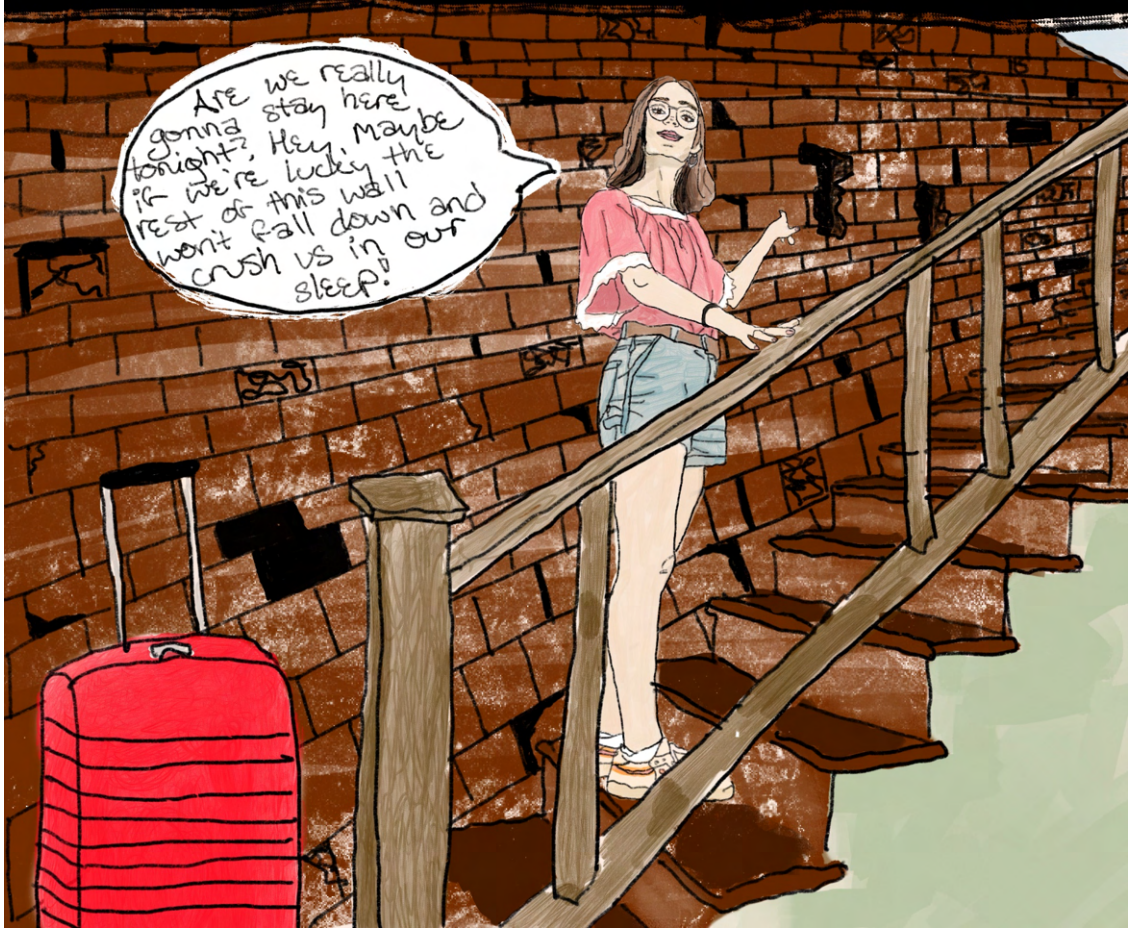
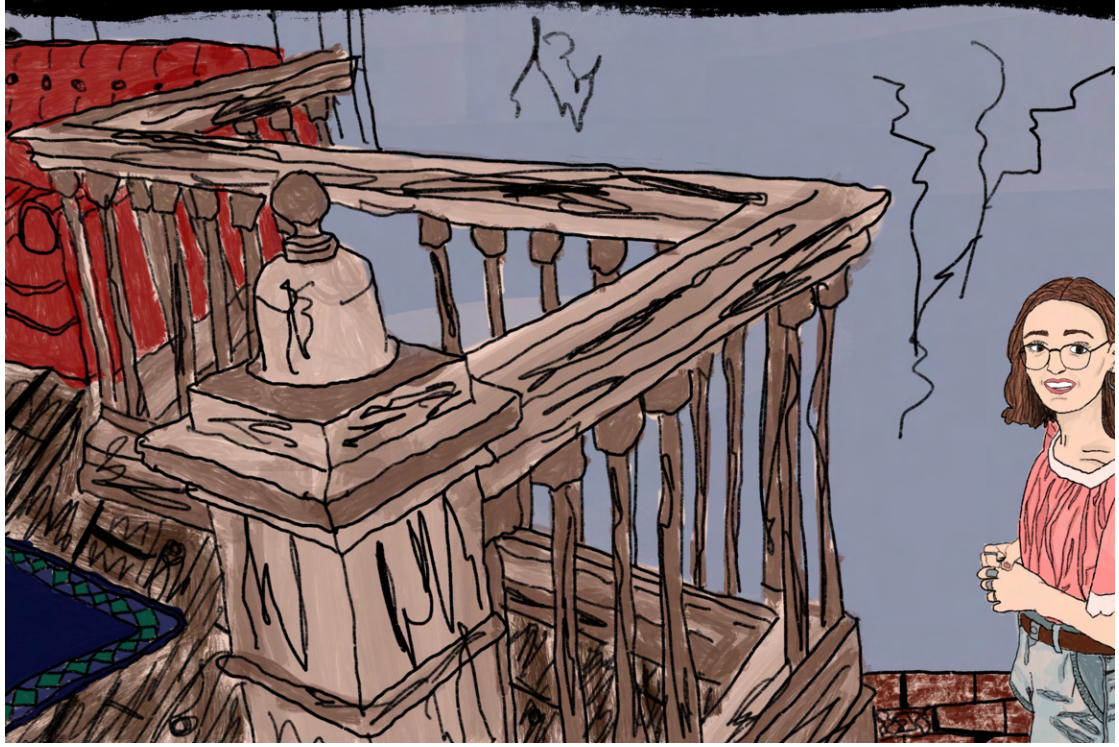
Thus far the trip was going well. Tennessee had been nothing but fun. As we peeked around the new Air BnB though, things were looking grim.

The stale smell of mold wafting through the air, a fly buzzing around the room, cracked walls and crooked floorboards surrounding us— We'd been catfished by strategically cropped photos and 5-star reviews. Besides the shabby appearance, something just feels... very wrong.



As we creep around the house, an uneasy feeling washes over me. My family's true experience with ghosts linger in the back of my head, and I can sense that mom is in a similar headspace.



I step into the bathroom and hesitantly close the door behind me. I want mom to come with me, but I don't want to seem like I'm overreacting or ungrateful for the trip. As I pee, I continually glance around the room with a looming feeling as if someone is watching me.

We go to dinner and then walk around the town after dusk, procrastinating going back to the house for the night. Eventually, we have to face our fears, although neither of us will admit it.

Mom snaps some photos to send to Dad, but her phone screen whisks them away, going black and leaving no trace that they were ever taken.

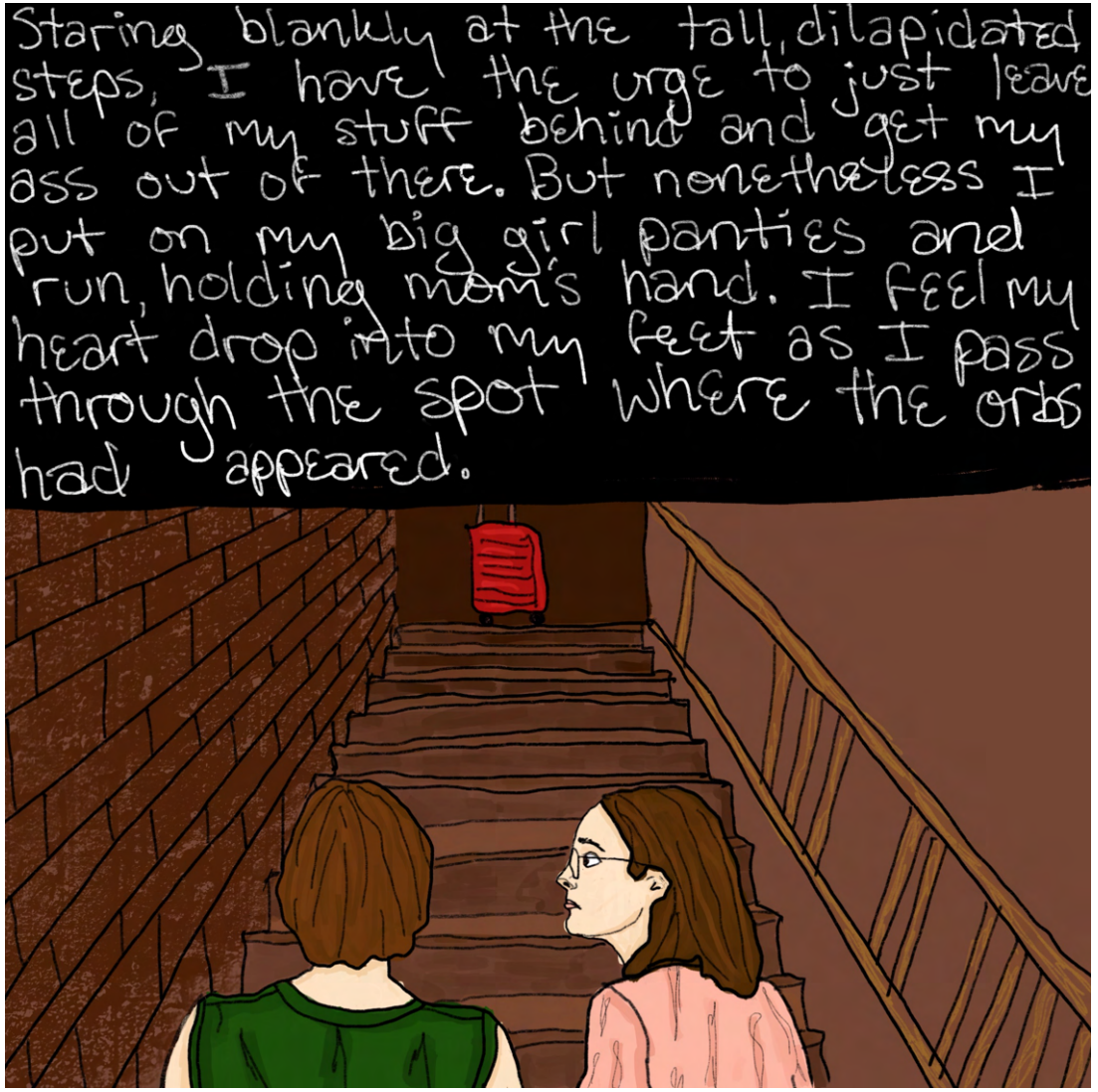
We try to turn on some lights and settle in for the night, but as we flick the light switches up and down, plug and unplug cords, no electricals will work in this corner of the room.

Despite there being no energy in here... There's some weird energy in here...

I sit down in the kitchen and snap a photo to send to my friend. After I take it glowing blue orbs appear all over the screen. Right. On. My. Mom.

Mom, I think you should come look at this...

And so we fled... but there was one problem: my suitcase was upstairs.
We're getting the $@&%# out of here!

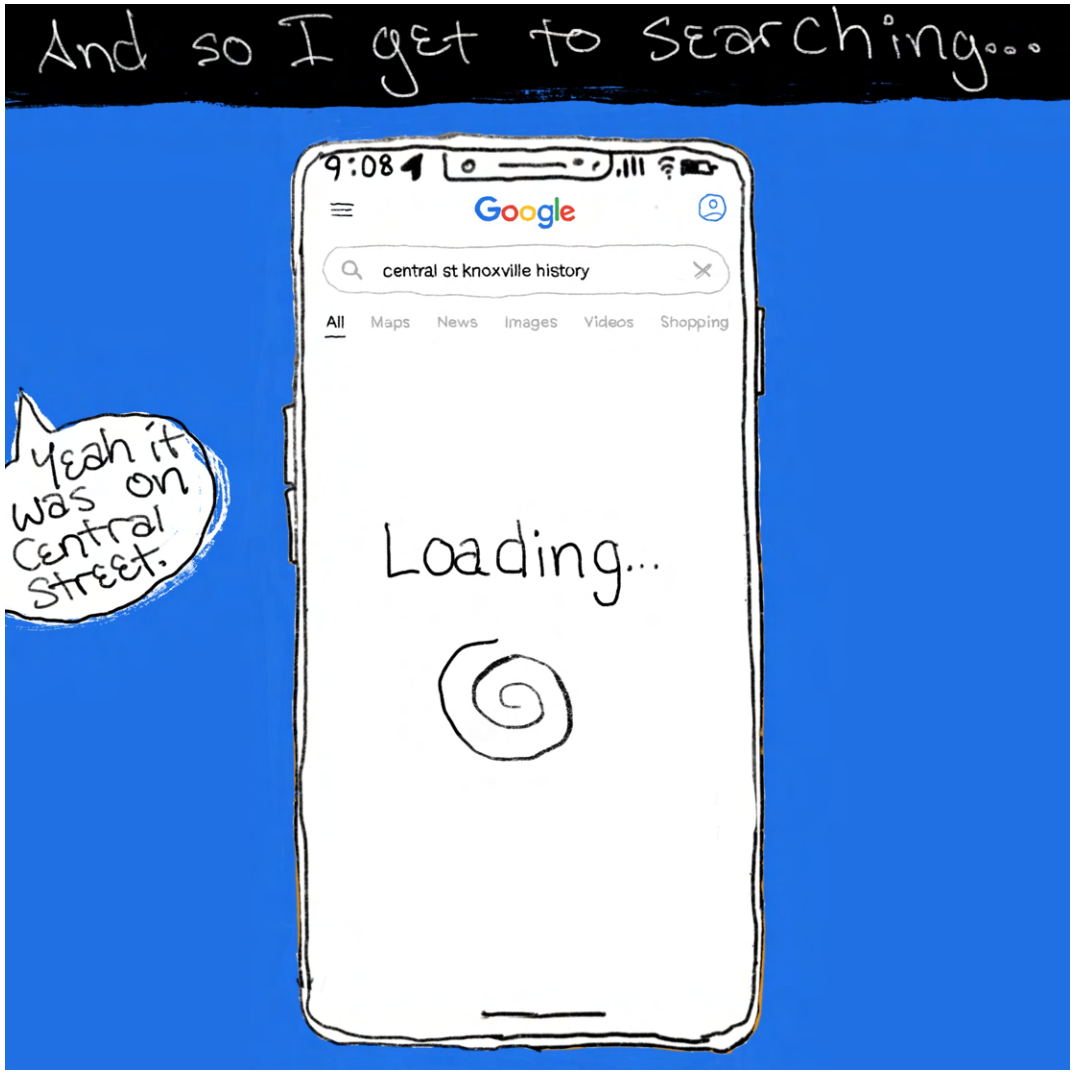

Staring blankly at the tall, dilapidated steps, I have the urge to just leave all of my stuff behind and get my ass out of there. But nonetheless I put on my big girl panties and run, holding mom's hand. I feel my heart drop into my feet as I pass through the spot where the orbs had appeared.

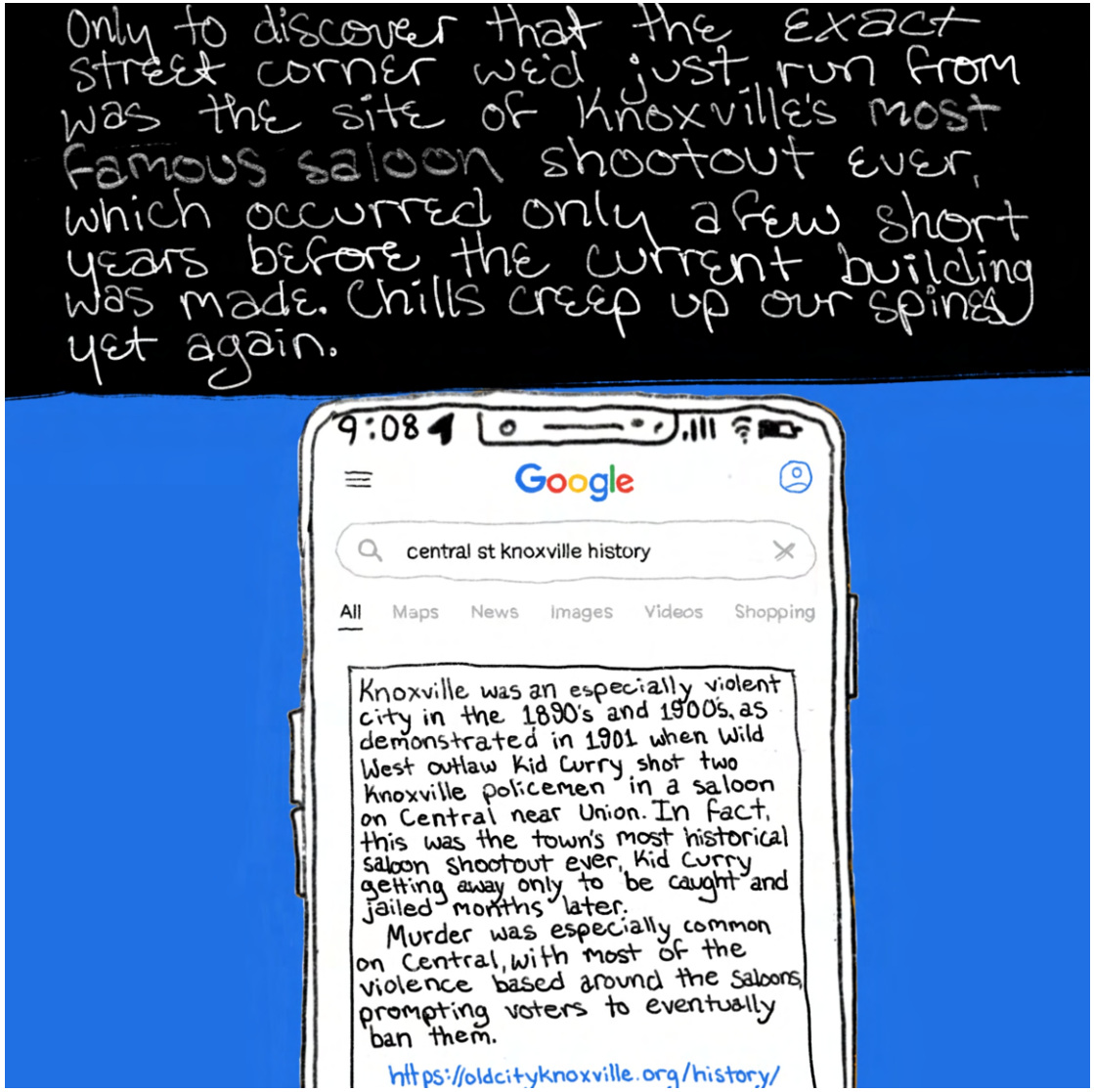
After sprinting down the block...

Twenty Minutes Later...

in a modern hotel room with working lights, no holes in the floor, clean air, and, thus far, no GHOSTS...

Finally, we take a deep breath as we relax in the comfort of the modern hotel room—no cracks in the floor, lights that are working, and, thus far, no ghosts. We recount the eventful ghost story, and mom tells me she feels like there had been a saloon shootout or something there, and she always reminds herself: "ghosts were once people, too."


And so I get to searching...
9:08
Google
central st knoxville history
All
Maps
News
Images
Videos
Shopping
Yeah it was on Central Street.
Loading...


Only to discover that the exact street corner we'd just run from was the site of Knoxville's most famous saloon shootout ever, which occurred only a few short years before the current building was made. Chills creep up our spines yet again.
9:08
Google
central st knoxville history
All
Maps
News
Images
Videos
Shopping
Knoxville was an especially violent city in the 1890's and 1900's, as demonstrated in 1901 when Wild West outlaw Kid Curry shot two Knoxville policemen in a saloon on Central near Union. In fact, this was the town's most historical saloon shootout ever, Kid Curry getting away only to be caught and jailed months later.
Murder was especially common on Central, with most of the violence based around the saloons, prompting voters to eventually ban them.
https://oldcityknoxville.org/history/

Why did the spirit world choose to tell me that?! I swear I'm psychic or something!?!

We head to bed, but as we're lying down the events of the evening loom over me. I insist on sleeping in the same bed even though there are two, and I pull the covers over my head for protection. My mom does the same.

The next day, we go out shopping, only to discover a slightly less terrifying sequel to yesterday's ghost tales: a haunted history of the town. The perfect entertainer for our drive back home.