

## Image descriptions for

### ***Just a Pill?***

**by J Amaro and A Andrews**

#### **COVER**

Pale yellow background. Centered on the page is black text with a white shadow. The text reads *JUST A PILL?* with the “a” encapsulated in a grey pill. The creators’ names, A. Andrews and J. Amaro are written centrally in black at the top of the page. Beneath the title text is the upper third of a person’s face. The person is light complexioned, the left side of their face in shadow. They have black hair that appears dense with the suggestion of curls. They glance upwards with an inquisitive look at the floating pill above.

#### **PAGE ONE**

##### **PANEL 1**

Yellow background. The character from the cover appears. Their whole face is pictured and their eyes are glancing to the upper left. They are wearing a salmon colored tee-shirt.

Text box: *I’ll admit it: it didn’t really cross my mind to get tested...*

##### **PANEL 2**

Text box: *...I’d been feeling sick and my roommates convinced me that I should.*

The narrator is sitting with two friends in what seems to be a bar or a coffee shop. One friend is bald, is the narrator’s best friend and is facing

the reader. Another friend has their back facing the reader, is wearing a yellow shirt and has brown hair with an undercut. All three are olive to light complexioned.

Best friend: *Let me call Tim and see what he thinks.*

Narrator: *It's probably nothing.*

Text box: *Coincidentally, my best friend was dating an infectious disease doctor.*

### PANEL 3

Shrugging their shoulders, the narrator says: *Really! It could be anything! A cold! The flu? Allergy season?*

Text box: *I wasn't necessarily concerned or put off. My symptoms were vague and could have been anything.*

### PANEL 4

Close up of the narrator's mouth. Teeth showing and lips expressing discomfort. The narrator says: *Ehhh.*

### PANEL 5

The best friend is looking at the narrator with concern. The narrator, face flushed red, says: *Okay. Okay. I'll go.*

## PAGE TWO

### PANEL 1

A grey building with corner windows that stretch from the ground to near the roof stands next to a shorter pinky-brown building that reads *FALCON*. There are two green trees at each bottom corner of the panel. There are banisters indicating stairs or a ramp leading the building's front door.

Text box: *I went to the student health clinic on campus the very next day.*

## PANEL 2

Narrator is holding a cell phone to their ear and has a concerned look on their face.

Voice from cell phone: *We can't give results on the phone. You'll have to come in.*

Text box: *The test was simple enough, but it'd be a month before I'd get sick of waiting and call the clinic myself to get my results.*

## PANEL 3

A hunched over receptionist with a black ponytail and light skin is wearing a red shirt. The reception's desk is brown and has a black multi-line phone, a desktop computer and a white inbox/outbox divider. The receptionist hands a folder over the desk lip to the narrator. To the top left of the panel and in the background of the waiting room are the outlines of two people, sitting on chairs looking concerned.

Text box: *The receptionist handed me a printed result, and sent me home.*

Receptionist: *Here you go. Have a good day.*

Narrator, looking startled, says: *Oh! Uhh.*

## PANEL 4

View of narrator's hand holding test results printed on white paper: *To be honest, I thought they read negative at first. Lab work is hard to decipher.*

## PANEL 5

The narrator stares out of the page at the reader with a shocked expression. They have a red cross in place of a nose and black streaks emanating from their head.

Text box: *Then the doctor called. The reality of my diagnosis sunk in.*

## PAGE THREE

### PANEL 1

Narrator's head is tilted down, their expression is a halted grimace.

Text box: *Being diagnosed with HIV was for sure a bummer. But that day was really the only part that felt all that complicated...*

### PANEL 2

Text box: *...or out of the ordinary in the landscape of, "what living with HIV looks like today."*

Close up of a light complexioned doctor's smiling mouth. All teeth showing.

### PANEL 3

The narrator is sitting on a grey doctor's table covered in a disposable white sheet. The narrator is smiling and a doctor—long, wavy brown hair and wearing a white lab coat—places their right hand on the Narrator's shoulder.

Text box: *From there, I was able to find a doctor...*

### PANEL 4

Close up of the narrator's hands. Their left hand holds an open, orange pill bottle with a white label. Their right hand holds a blue pill in the palm and a white cap in its fingers.

Text box: *...find a treatment that worked...*

### PANEL 5

The Narrator's head rests on the keyboard of their grey laptop and a scattering of loose, lined papers cover a brown desk.

Text box: *...and get right back to the more mundane parts of my life.*

## PANEL 6

Close up of blue, weekly pill organiser sitting on a brown table. The compartments for Monday and Tuesday are both open. There is one blue pill in each compartment.

*Text box: And for me, living well with HIV has been relatively uncomplicated! Take a pill. Live your life.*

## PAGE FOUR

### PANEL 1

Half view of Earth from space. The stars of the cosmos twinkle in stark contrast to the greens and blues of Earth's lands and waters.

*Text box: But there are millions of people living with HIV globally...*

*...Each with their own nuanced experience that makes living well (by most standards) almost entirely circumstantial.*

### PANEL 2

Twelve people are clearly drawn in a trapezoidal shaped panel. The people are Black and brown and white, and of varying genders and ages. Behind the twelve people clearly drawn are the faint outlines of even more people in community together.

### PANEL 3

The full body of the narrator is depicted and they jump and skip. Arms and hands reaching up from the bottom of the panel, giving the suggestion that the narrator is crowd surfing.

*Text box: And acknowledging and making space for the various intersections we face (or don't face) in our HIV journey matters!*

*I had a number of privileges that supported me in each step toward emotion and physical wellness.*

## PAGE FIVE

### PANEL 1

Two new characters are depicted. The character to the left is white, has blonde hair, is wearing a red shirt and holding a pen and brown clipboard. The character to the right has a darker complexion and is presented in profile. They have a black beard and black, undercut hair. They are wearing a blue shirt.

Text box: *Where others may lack signs or symptoms...*

Red-shirted character: *It's not uncommon to not show any physical symptoms.*

Blue-shirted character: *Positive?! How could it be positive?! I...I didn't even know I was sick...*

### PANEL 2

Text box: *...community support...*

On the ground is a houseless person wearing a green hoodie and a thick brown winter jacket. They have a large blue bag and a cardboard sign that reads: *ANYTHING HELPS!*. The bottom half of two people are depicted walking past the houseless person, wearing business casual clothing.

The characters walking past: *...he'll just use it to buy drugs...*

### PANEL 3

Text box: *...education...*

Rear view of a black student with black kinky hair and a yellow shirt in a classroom. At the front of the classroom is a teacher next to a chalkboard that reads: *LET'S TALK ABOUT ABSTINENCE. NO SEX, NO PROBLEM.*

### PANEL 4

Text box: *...or competent health resources...*

A Black pregnant person with kinky black hair and a troubled expression, wearing a red gown, is sitting on a doctor's examination table. The pregnant person is facing the grey-haired white doctor.

Pregnant person: *But my baby, will the baby be o-*

Doctor: *HIV positive and pregnant? Do you really think that's responsible?*

#### PANEL 5

A close up of the narrator's face as they look out at the reader from a three-quarter view while speaking.

Narrator: *...I had the vital tools to not only be tested, but listened to, and supported.*

### PAGE SIX

#### PANEL 1

Overhead view of the narrator's hands as they write on a notecard placed on top of a large desk calendar. Depicted is their laptop, black coffee in a white mug, the blue pill case, a calculator and assorted papers.

Text box: *And while, I had the time and the footing to manage my health...*

Text box: *...others may be managing difficulties with substance use, housing instability, or racial or gender discrimination.*

#### PANEL 2

Front facing depiction of the houseless person from the previous page. They have light skin with brown hair and a brown beard. They stare forward vacantly.

### PANEL 3

The red-shirted character from the previous page who said it was not uncommon to be asymptomatic tells the blue-shirted character: *.../ support you, but I think you should move out.* The blue shirted character looks away, hurt.

### PANEL 4

The doctor from the previous page is facing the reader, rolling his eyes with an exasperated expression. He is holding a brown clipboard and a black pen.

Pregnant person from the previous page asks: *Umm...Doctor?*

### PANEL 5

The pregnant person from the previous panel is sitting next to their friend, an olive complexioned person with brown hair tied up, wearing a pink shirt. They are looking at each other.

Pregnant person: *And he just walked out! What am I going to do?!*

Friend: *We're gonna find you a new doctor. A good one. Honey, we're women. It's always harder. But we'll make it work.*

Text box: The paths we take from diagnosis, to receiving care and treatment is rooted in these intersections. These pieces of our identities shape our worldview, our relationship to risk, and our access to care.

## PAGE SEVEN

### PANEL 1

The student from the previous panel, wearing a backpack, is signing a sheet at a table. Behind the table is a light skinned person, smiling, in a blue shirt. On top of the table are literature and signs reading *U=U, What is Prep?* and *Living +!!*

Blue-shirted person: *Welcome to the Youth and AIDS teen clinic! We're glad you're here!*



Text box: *We can't overlook that...*

## PANEL 2

Under the starry night sky, the student kisses a medium brown skinned person, wearing a red shirt, with short black hair.

Text box: *Because living well is a reality for people living with HIV today.*

## PANEL 3

Side view of the houseless person looking at a sign for a syringe exchange attached to a graffitied metal locker.

Text box: *We can, and do live well. It's just not always neat, and it's not always simple.*

## PANEL 4

The blue shirted person, who was kicked out of their home, sits on an examination table at a doctor's office. Their head is bent forward despondently and their hands clasped together. A different doctor, sitting, with brown hair, a moustache and olive skin, expresses concern.

Blue shirted person: *I just feel like I've lost my community. I can't talk to anyone.*

Doctor: *Maybe taking part in some support programs within the HIV community could give you some support too...*

Text box: *It's not "just a pill a day."*

## **PAGE EIGHT**

## PANEL 1

A light skinned person, sitting behind a white folding table, smiles at the houseless person who is standing on the other side of the table. The houseless person is looking at a sign above the table which reads **RAPID HIV TESTING WALK-IN!!!** in red and black lettering.

Text box: *It's community support!*

## PANEL 2

The pregnant person smiles at a POC medical professional who smiles back at them. The medical professional is holding a clipboard and has their black hair pulled back in a hair tie.

The pregnant person: *It's nice to be listened to.*

Text box: *It's Health Equity and Access!*

## PANEL 3

The blue-shirted person is smiling while wearing an apron and a cover over their beard and serving food. They are standing next to a white person with a blonde ponytail and a blue baseball cap, who is also serving food from the counter. Behind them are the faint outlines of a queue of people waiting to be served food.

Text box: *It's housing and food support!*

## PANEL 4

A group of people are gathered together. They are protesting and shouting. They are Black and Brown and white. They are holding signs, with black text and pink highlights. One sign reads: *AIDS ISN'T OVER FOR ANY OF US, UNTIL IT'S OVER FOR ALL OF US! ACT UP.* Another sign reads: *SILENCE EQUALS DEATH! ACT UP FIGHT AIDS*

Text box: *It's political! It's radical!*

The narrator is smiling in the bottom right-hand corner of the panel holding out a blue pill in their hand.

Narrator: *AND THEN! y'know... it's a pill a day!*

**END**

**CREDITS:**

Image descriptions by Joselia Hughes.