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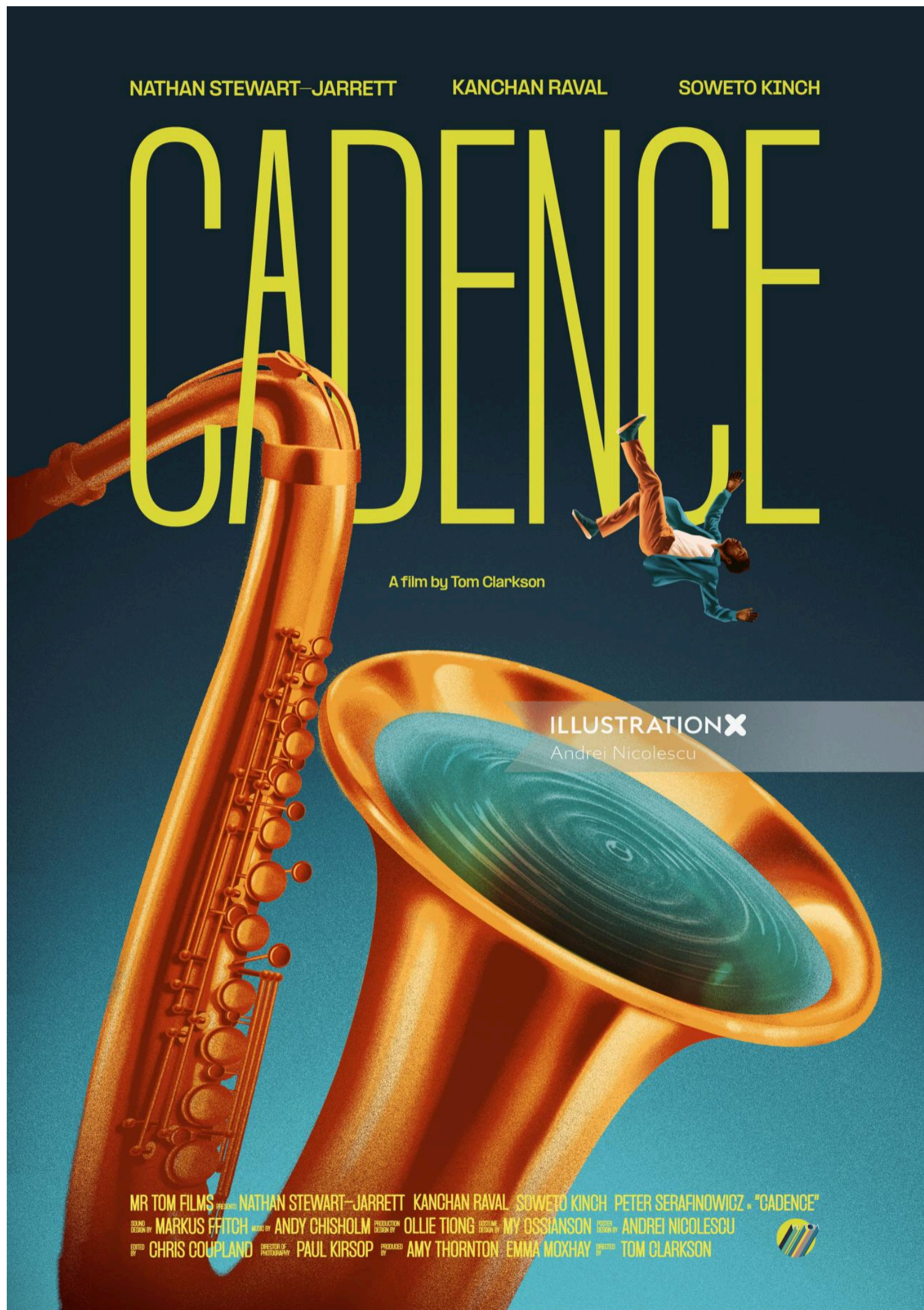
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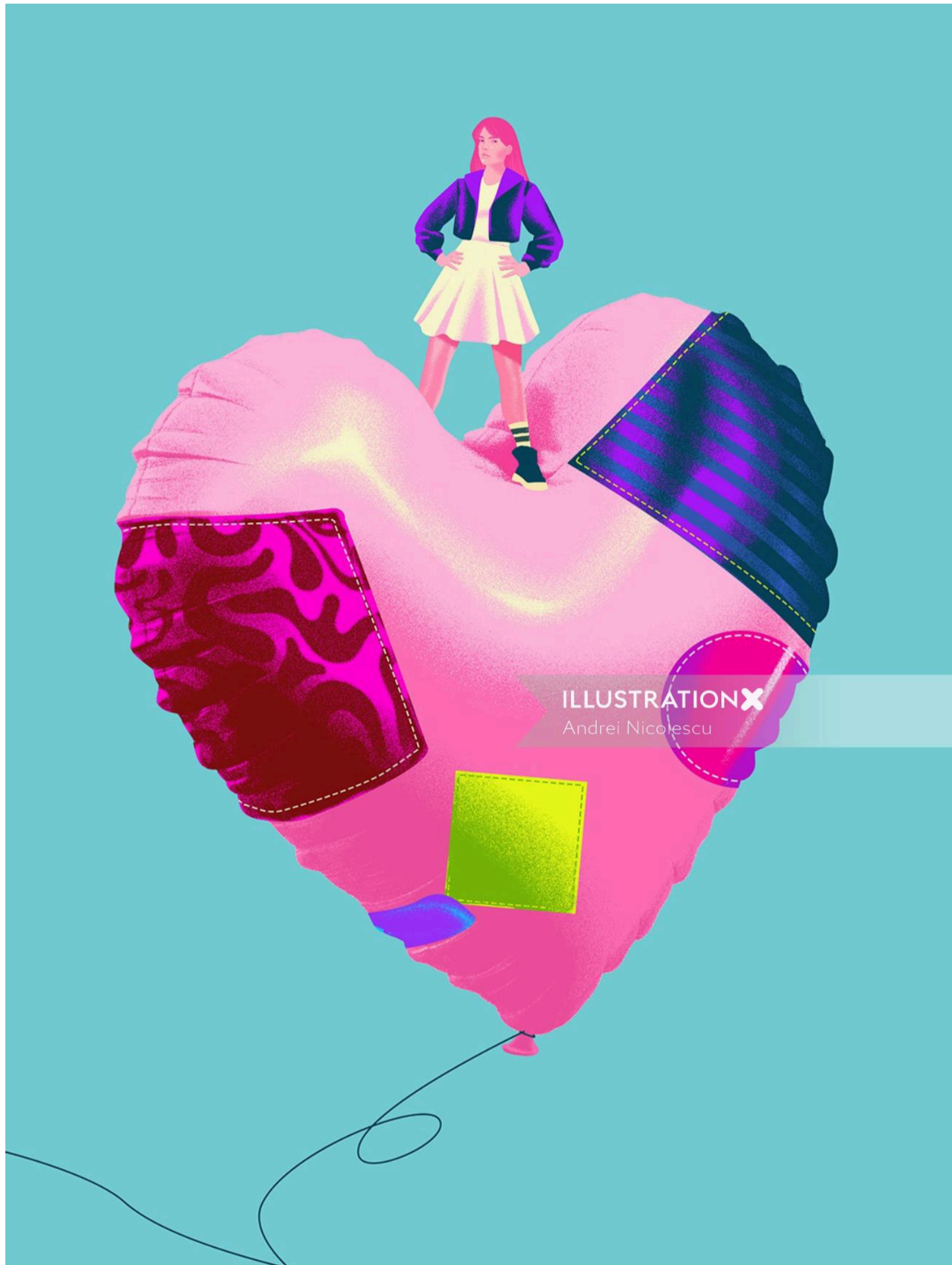
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INTERVIEWS/IN CONVERSATION



WORDS & INTERVIEW BY DAVID JENKINS
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ILLUSTRATIONS BY ANDREI NICOLESCU

Luca Guadagnino: 'I don't watch tennis matches. It's quite boring to me'

We catch up with the Italian provocateur behind *Challengers*: the sports drama starring Zendaya, Josh O'Connor and Mike Faist, that's getting pulses raising around the world this spring.

It's 6.55am Pacific Standard Time, and Luca Guadagnino is sat in the passenger seat of a packed car, shades balanced on dome, and looking down into his smartphone to begin our chat. The last time I spoke to the director was on the occasion of *Call Me by Your Name*'s swift ascent to the deserving status of global sensation, and in the spirit of the film we conversed while Guadagnino did his morning walk around his one-time hometown of Crema, pausing occasionally to greet passers by.

The subject now is *Challengers*, a skillfully-wrought romantic melodrama of the old school that's set in the world of professional tennis, where the tense ebb and flow of a men's singles match between Josh O'Connor's Patrick and Mike Faist's Art is compounded further by the slow release of details about both of their relationships with Zendaya's injured almost-star, Tabi. It's a film of visual razzmatazz and cheeky humour that's

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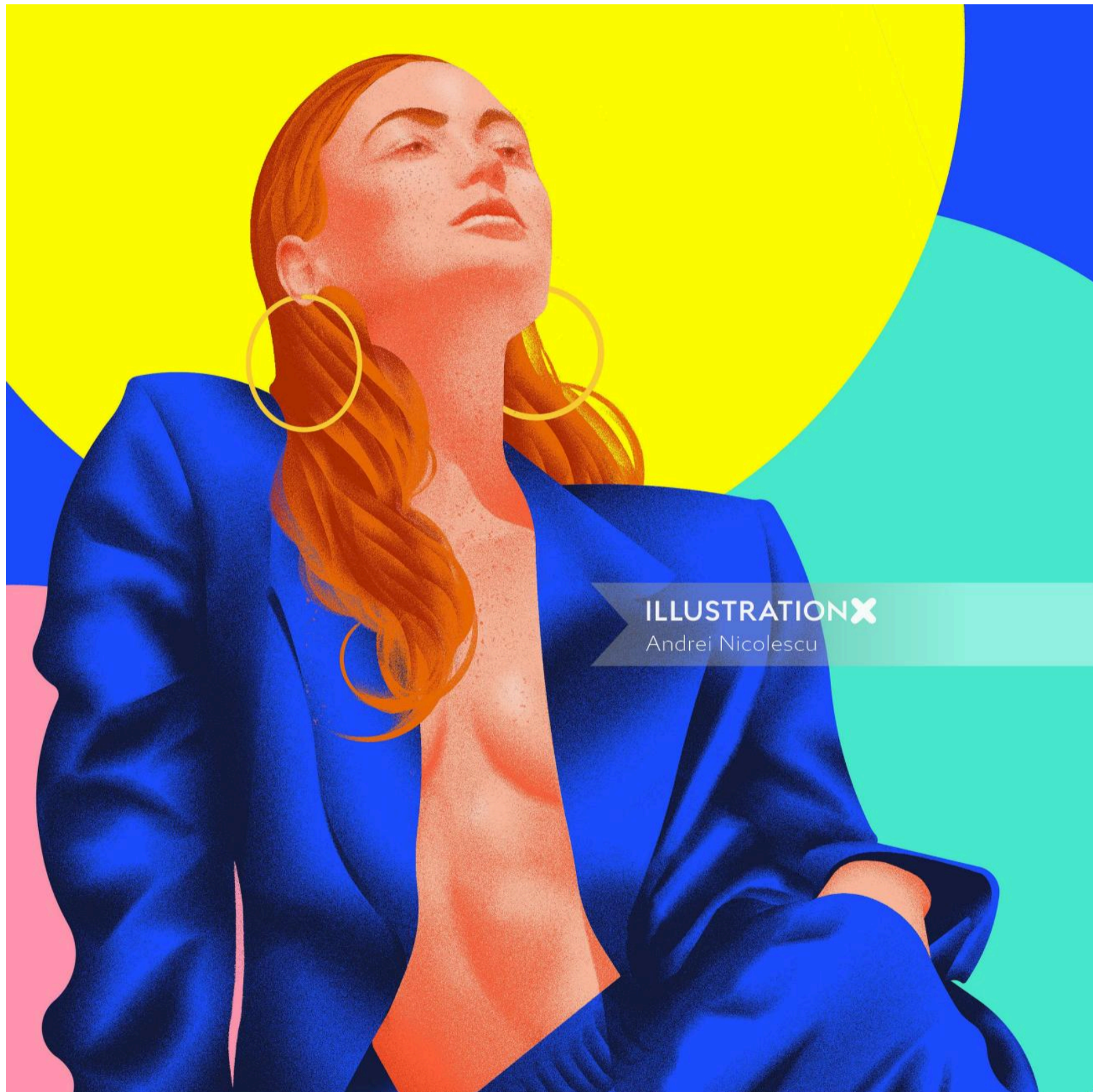
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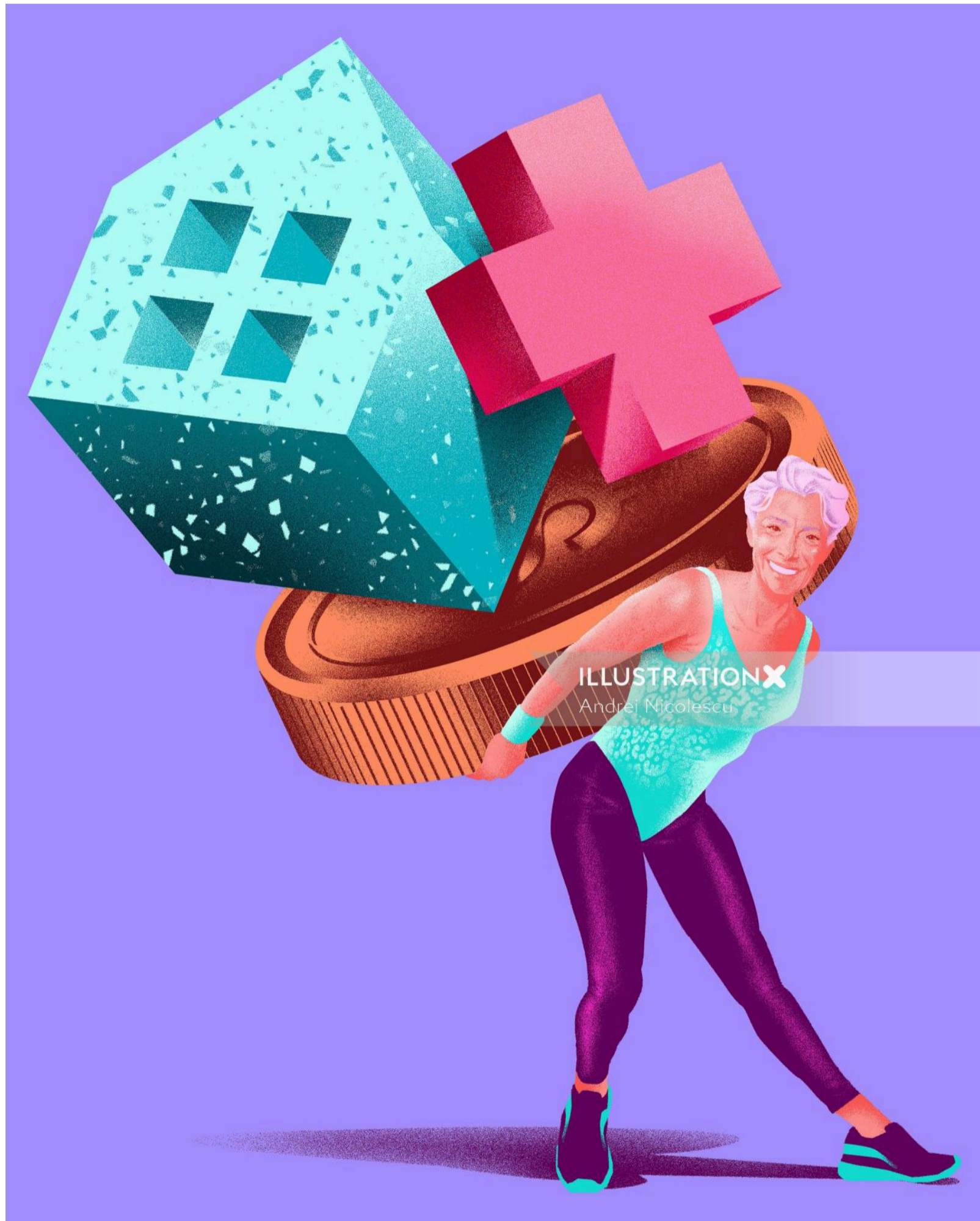
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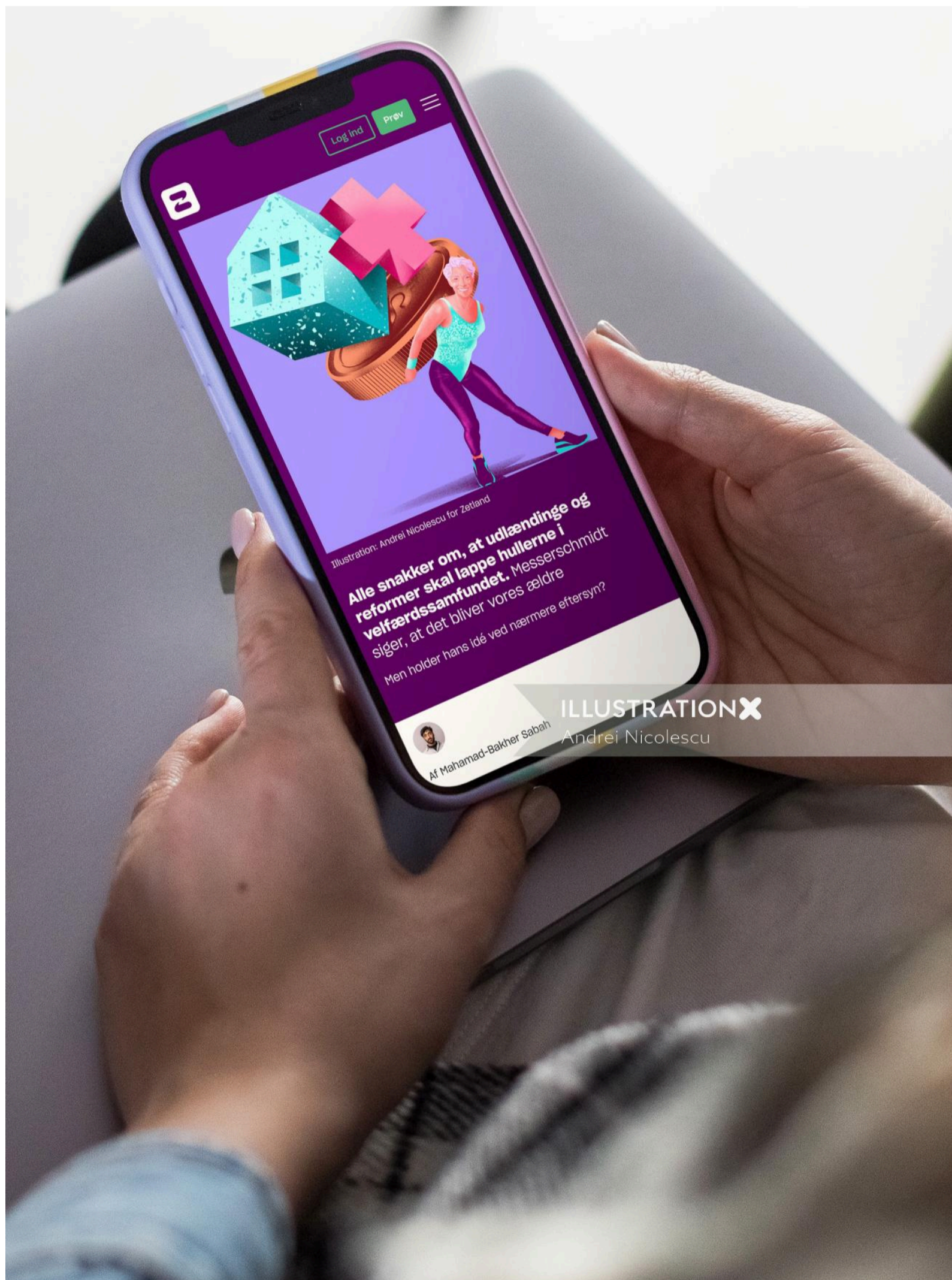
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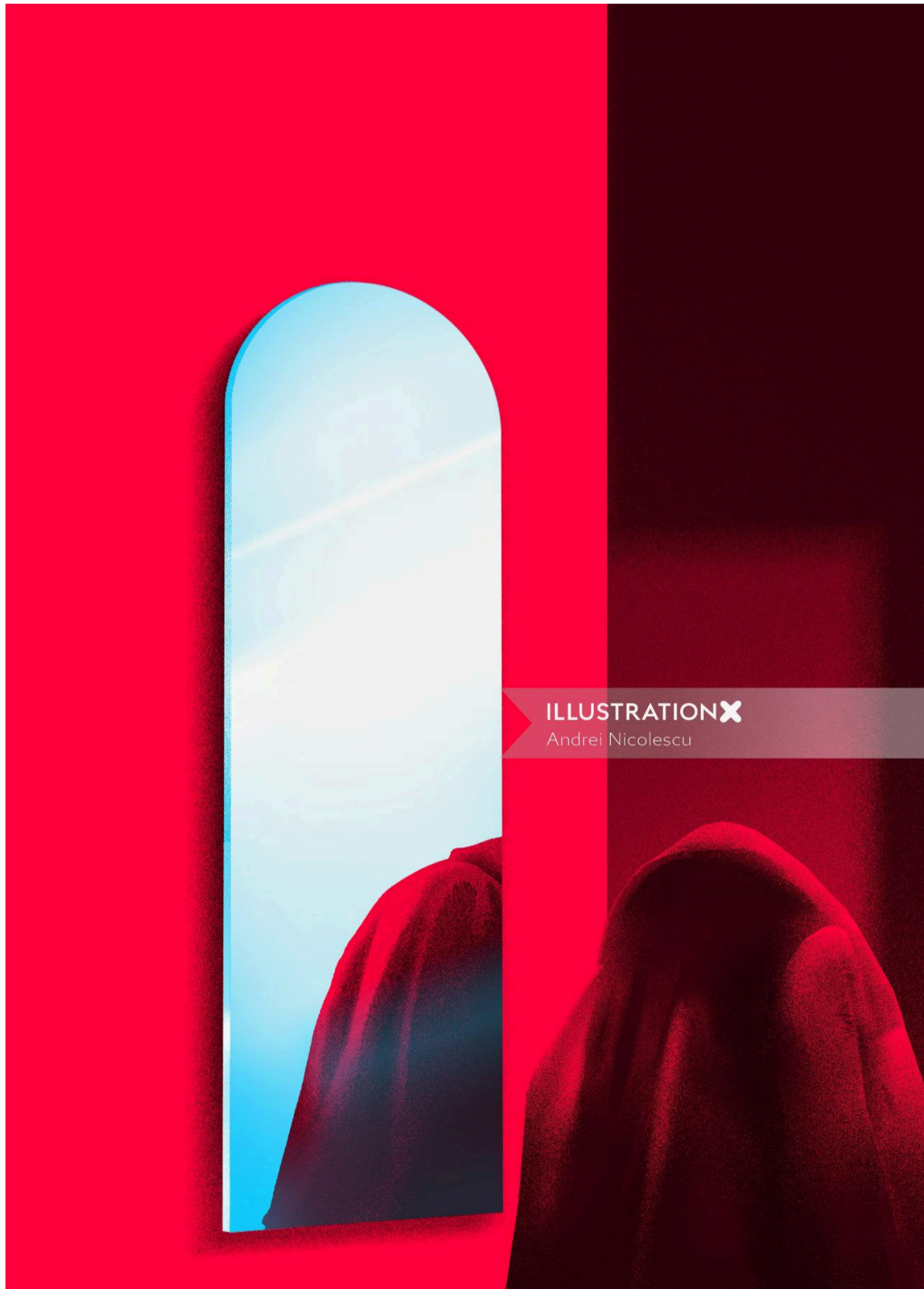


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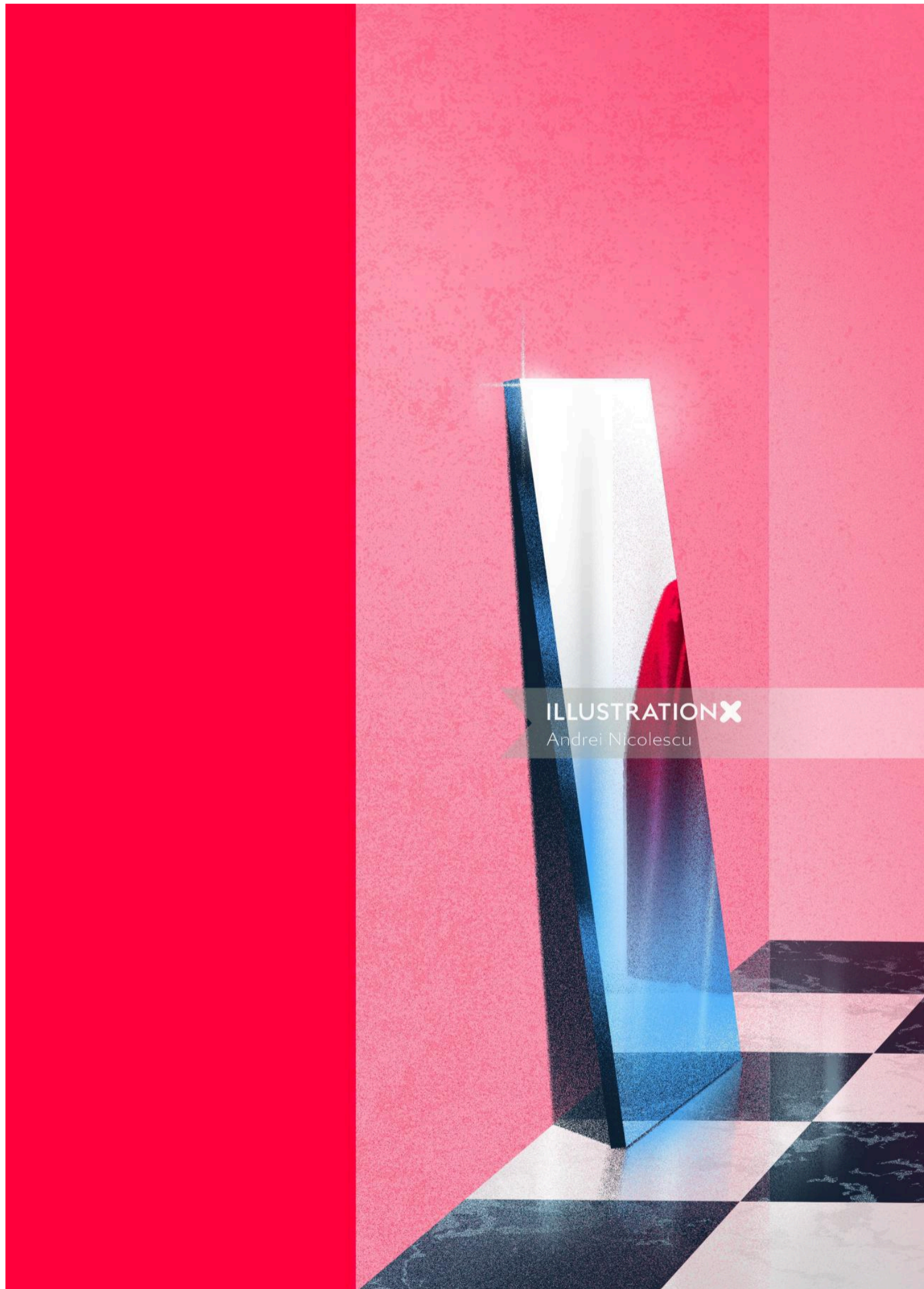
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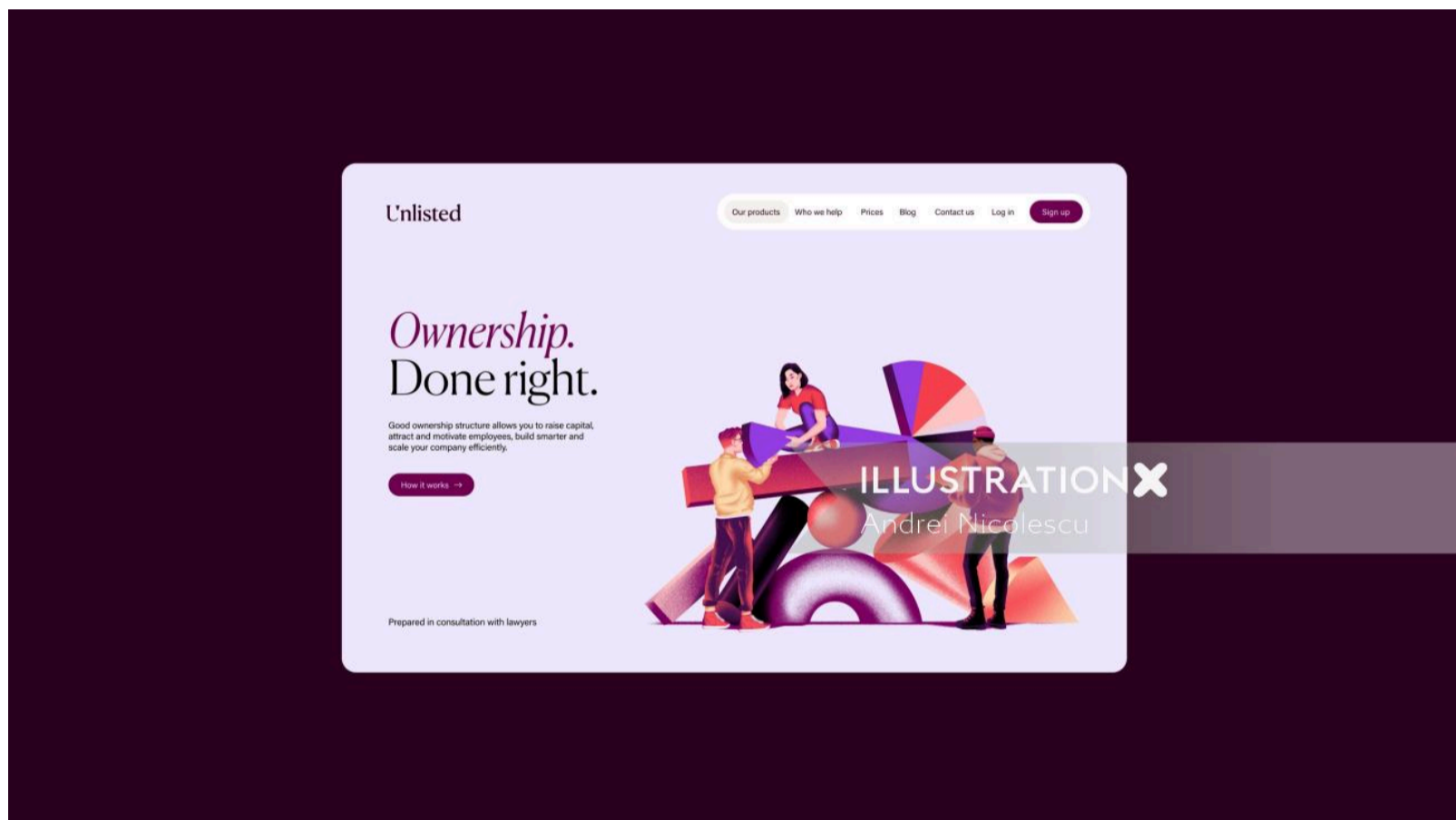
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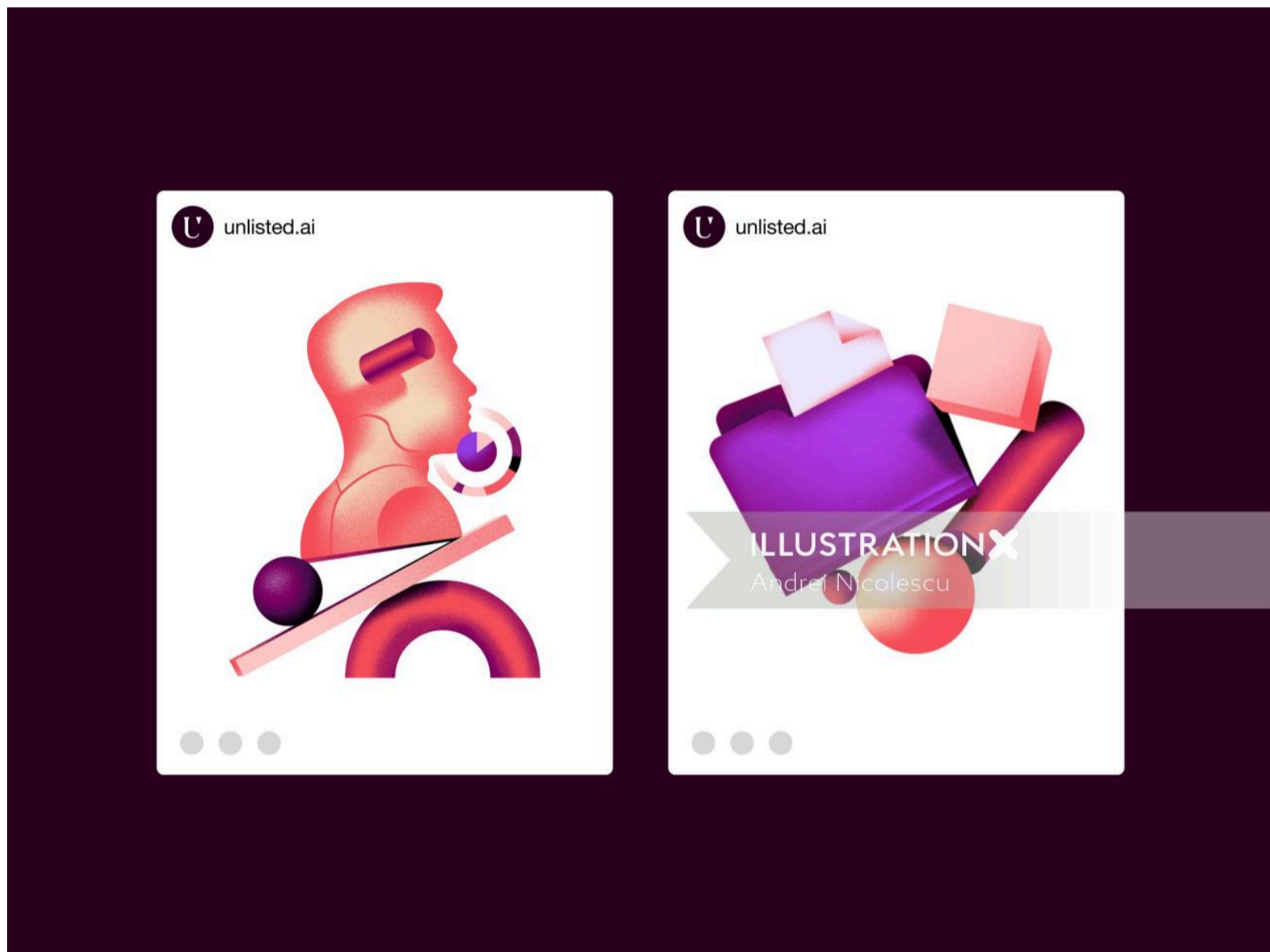
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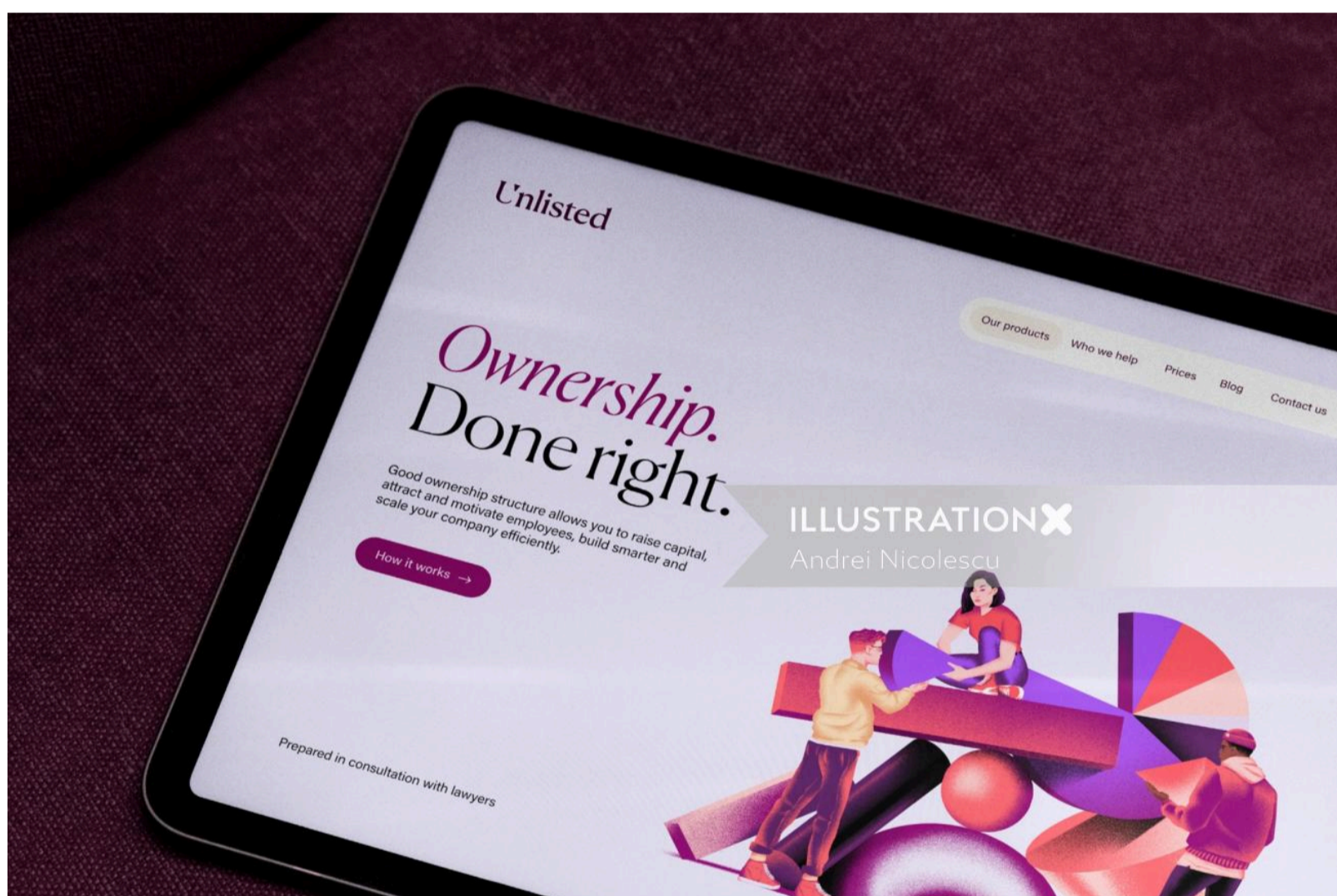
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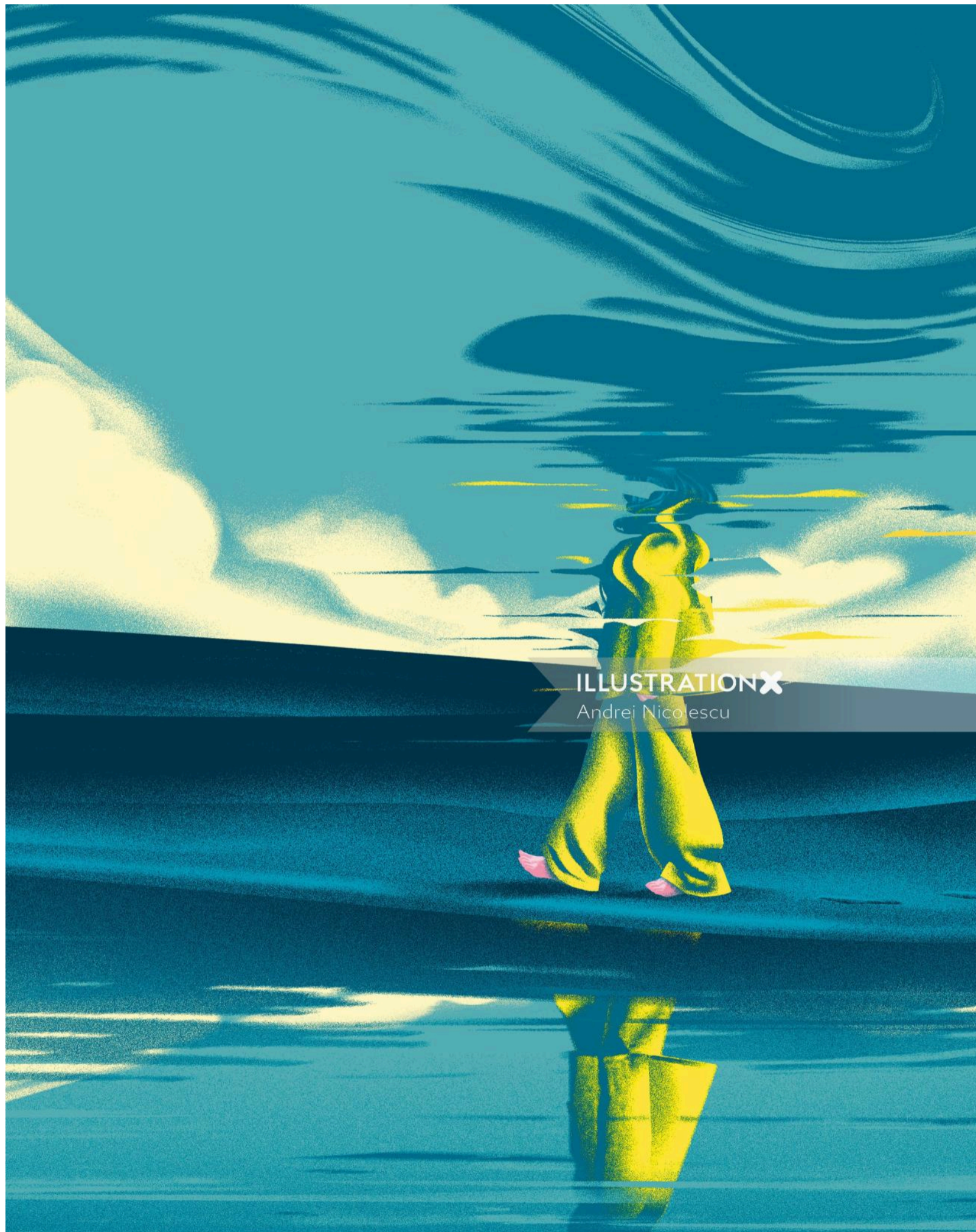
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