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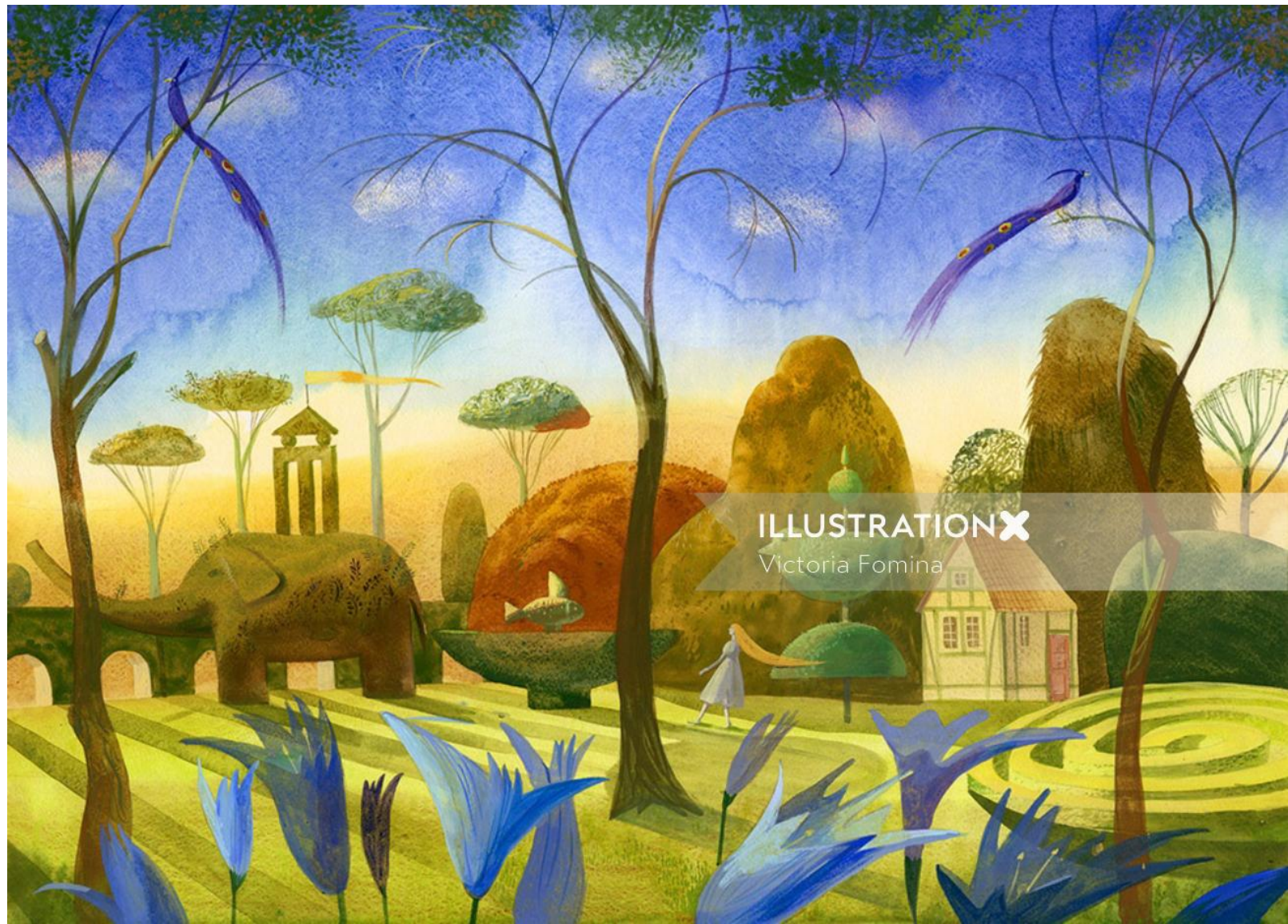
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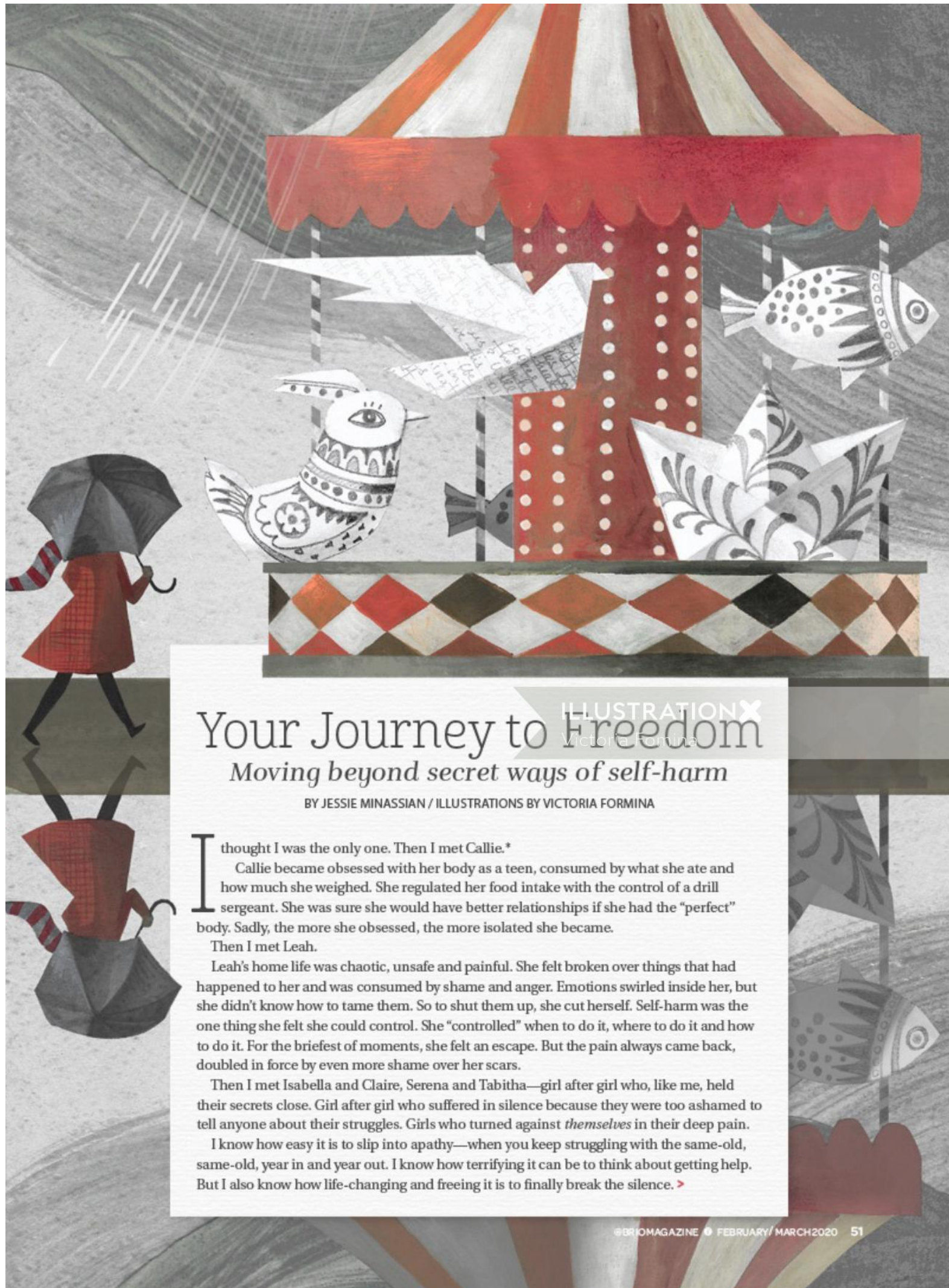
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Your Journey to Freedom *Moving beyond secret ways of self-harm*

BY JESSIE MINASSIAN / ILLUSTRATIONS BY VICTORIA FORMINA

I thought I was the only one. Then I met Callie.*

Callie became obsessed with her body as a teen, consumed by what she ate and how much she weighed. She regulated her food intake with the control of a drill sergeant. She was sure she would have better relationships if she had the “perfect” body. Sadly, the more she obsessed, the more isolated she became.

Then I met Leah.

Leah’s home life was chaotic, unsafe and painful. She felt broken over things that had happened to her and was consumed by shame and anger. Emotions swirled inside her, but she didn’t know how to tame them. So to shut them up, she cut herself. Self-harm was the one thing she felt she could control. She “controlled” when to do it, where to do it and how to do it. For the briefest of moments, she felt an escape. But the pain always came back, doubled in force by even more shame over her scars.

Then I met Isabella and Claire, Serena and Tabitha—girl after girl who, like me, held their secrets close. Girl after girl who suffered in silence because they were too ashamed to tell anyone about their struggles. Girls who turned against *themselves* in their deep pain.

I know how easy it is to slip into apathy—when you keep struggling with the same-old, same-old, year in and year out. I know how terrifying it can be to think about getting help. But I also know how life-changing and freeing it is to finally break the silence. >

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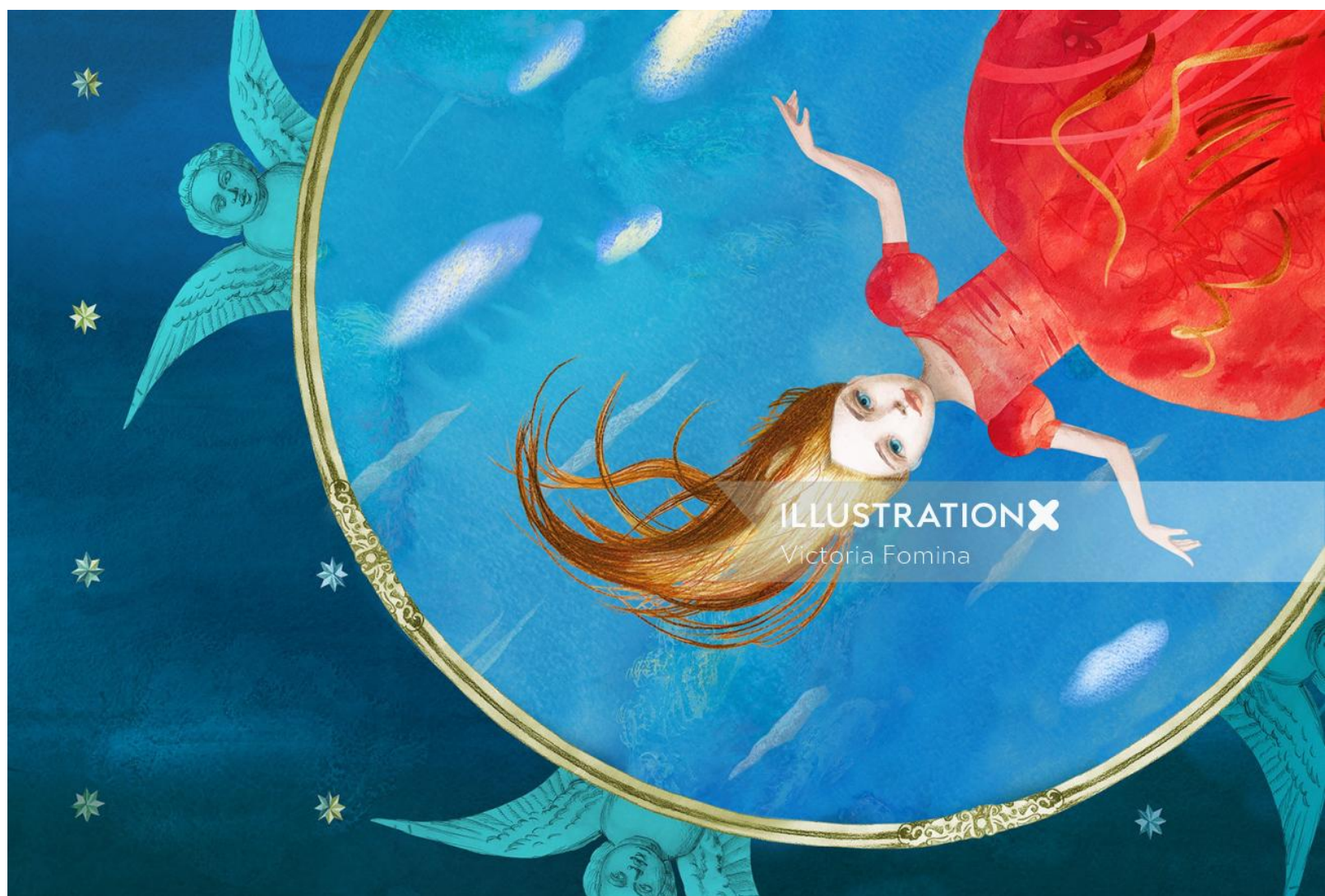
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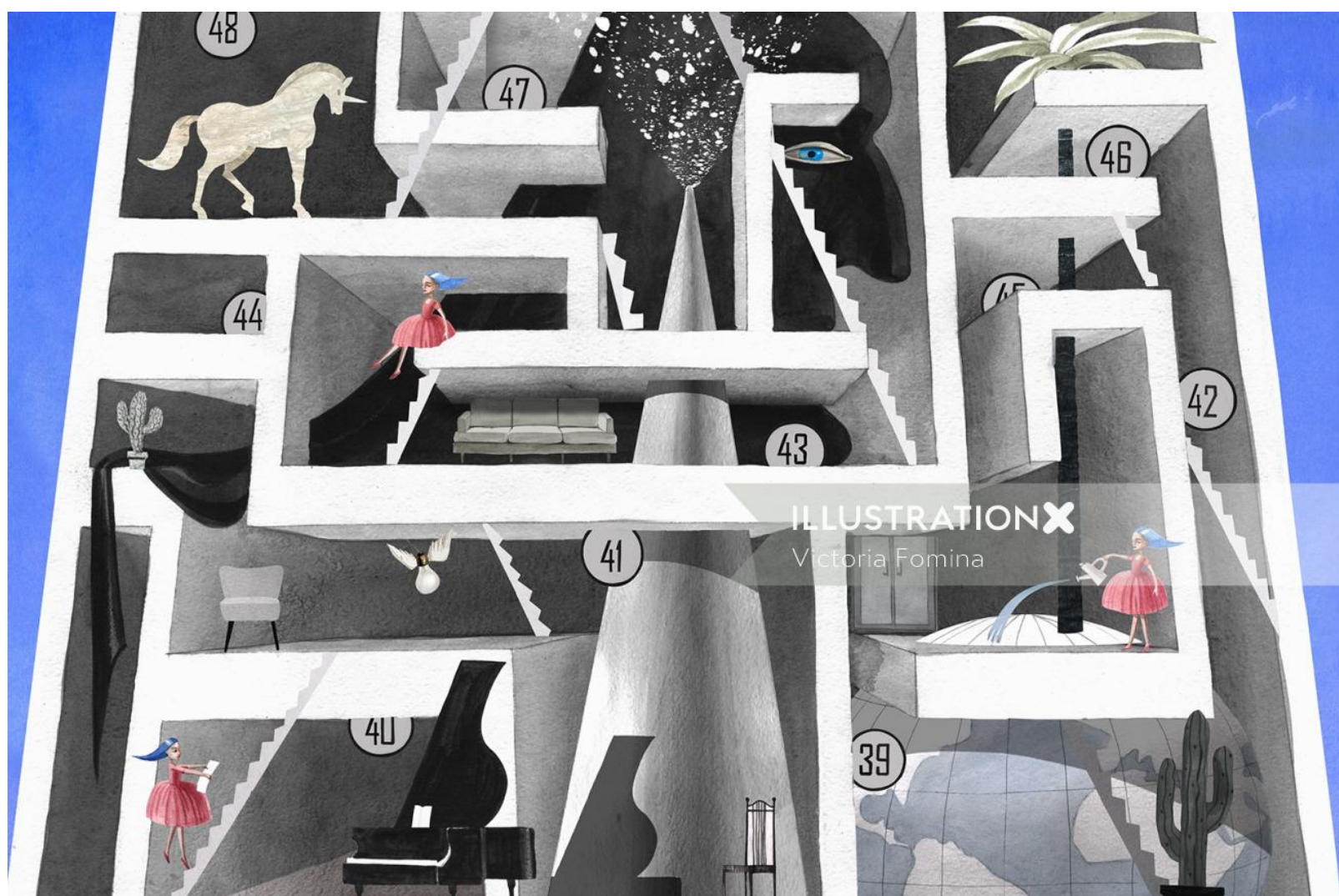
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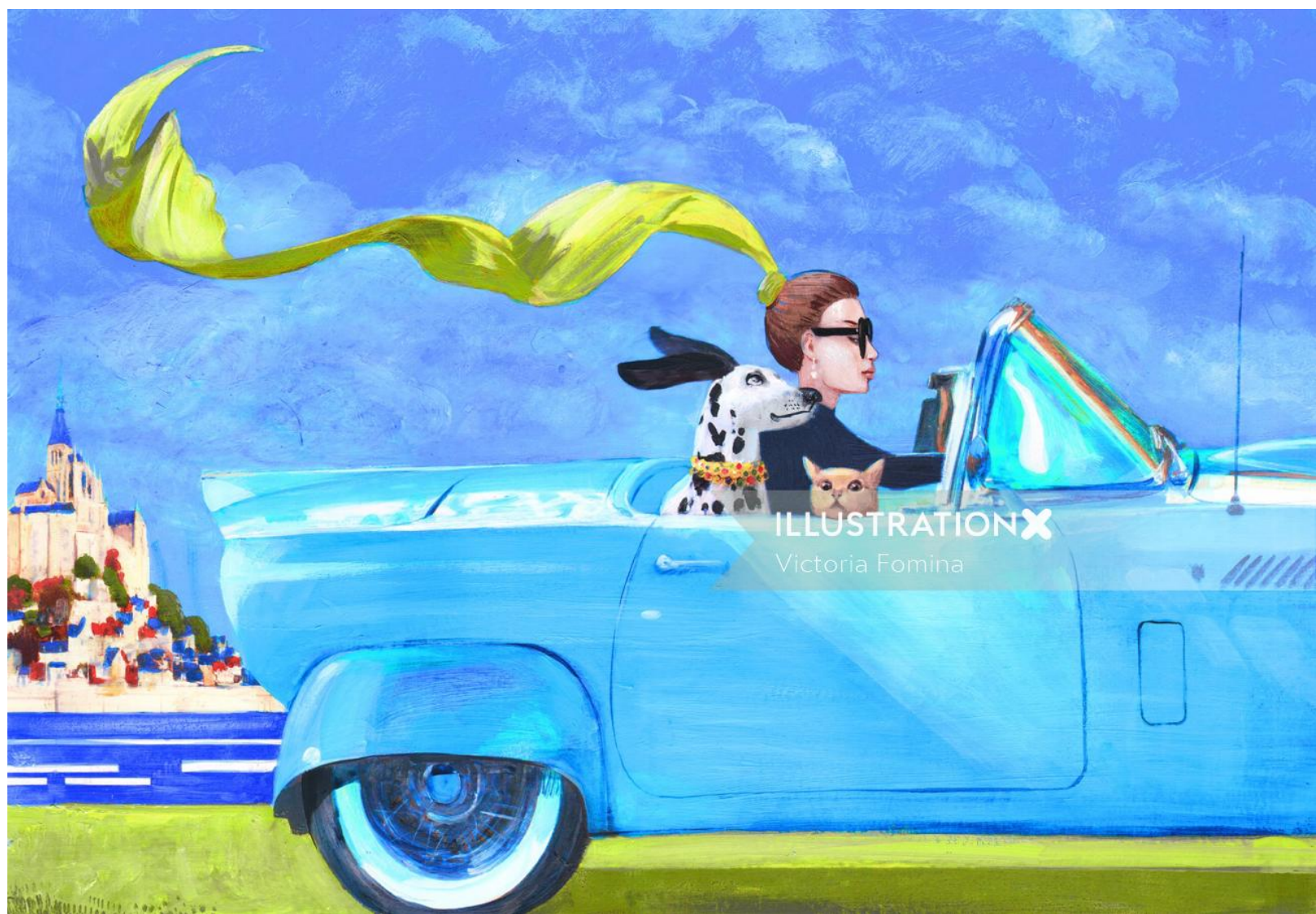
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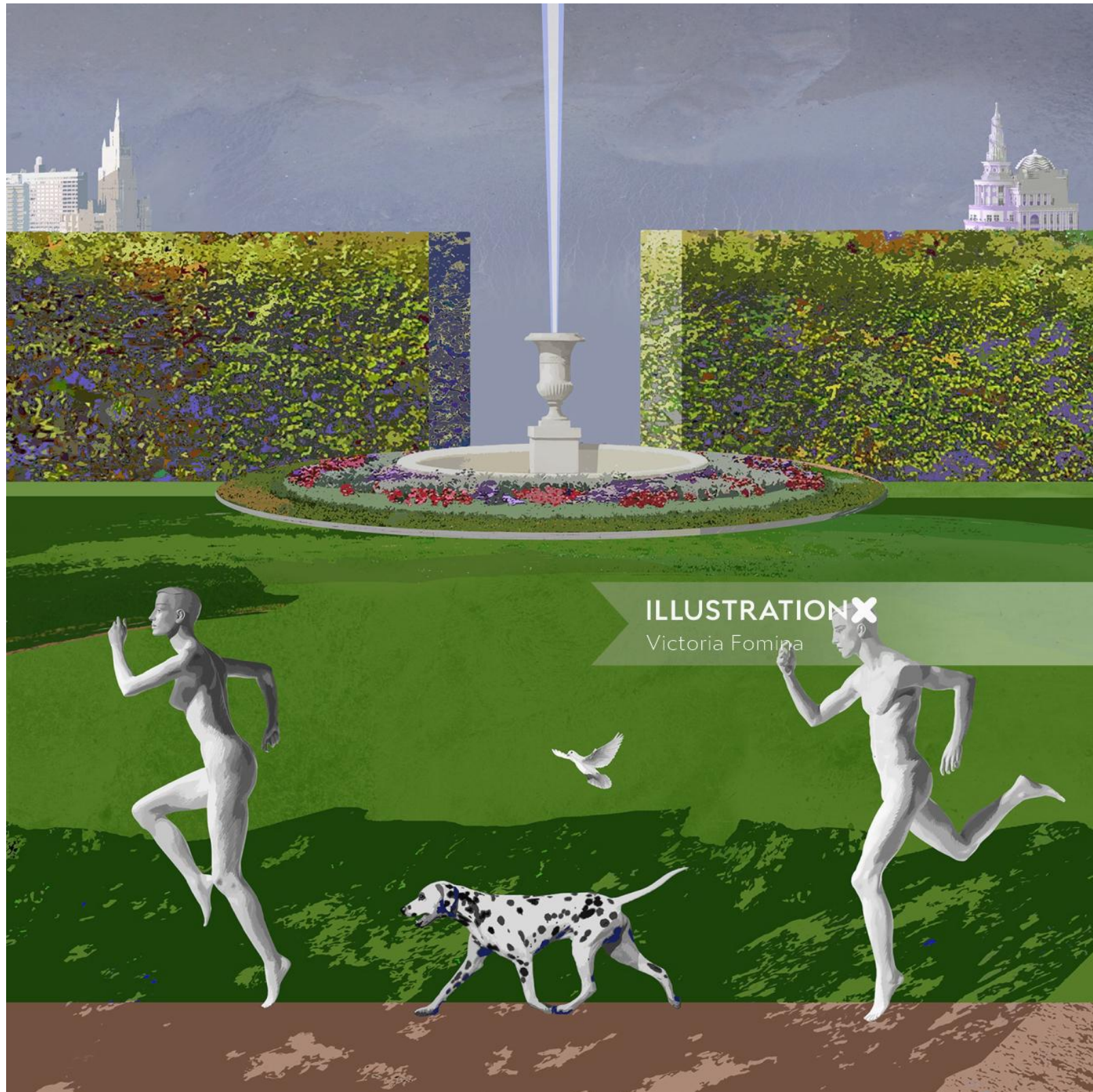


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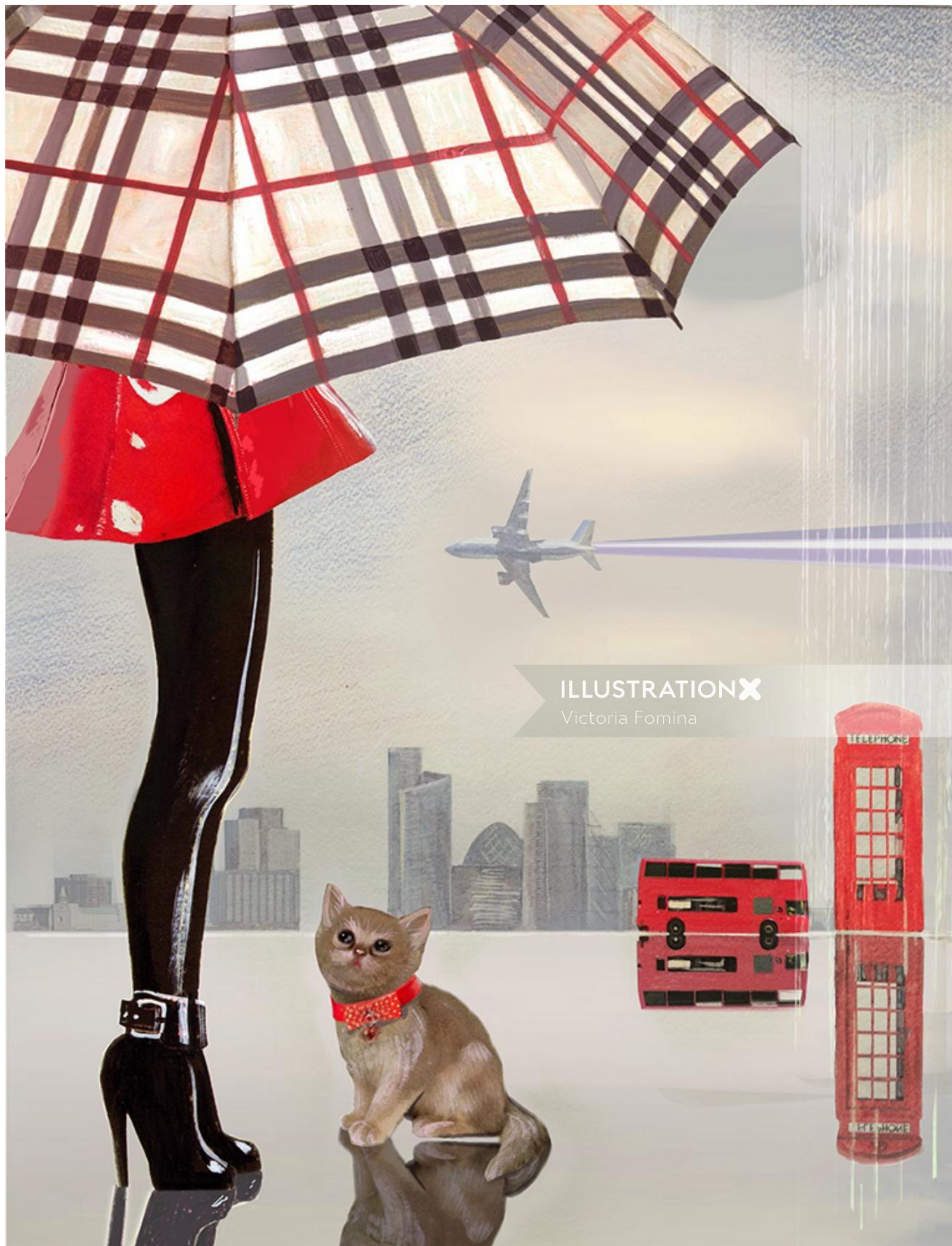
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