

Hotels are complex ecosystems, giant creatures that never sleep and hum and whirr day and night with activity. Behind the efficient and polished façade, gurgling pipes and flickering switchboards provide the comforts promised as people check in and check out unaware of the sleepless ever-pulsating heart of this quiet beast. When I was first employed by a hotel, I realized that I was being pulled into an energetic vortex that knew nothing about working hours and personal boundaries. The hotel beckoned me into its grinding rhythms. I was sucked into its underground vortex of invisible, ongoing tasks and I let myself fade into its mechanisms. It was peaceful there in the dark, being a cog was easy.

Then I felt something rebel within me – so I began my slow ascent towards the light.

American psychologist Abraham Maslow posited the existence of a cognitive condition inherent in human beings which sabotages their dreams of greatness and relegates them to live in mediocrity and conformity. He called this condition the Jonah Complex after the Biblical character Jonah who attempted to flee the fate God had decreed upon him.

Just like Jonah, I needed to crawl out of the whale/hotel and embrace an unknown path, find my voice and free myself.































#### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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### Michelle Davis

Born in California in 1987, Michelle Davis now lives in Florence, Italy. She received her first camera at the age of 14 and has been taking pictures ever since. She studied painting at the Academy of Fine Arts in Florence

and The Academie Royale des Beaux-Arts In Brussels. Her images have been exhibited in collective shows alongside the likes of Koci Hernandez and Harper Reed (DigiArte Festival, 2013) as well as in solo shows in Florence's Galleria Isolotto ("Polaroid Isolotto" 2020, "Q4 Family" 2020). In 2019, in an attempt to overcome her workaholism and reclaim her creative identity, she enrolled in Fondazione Studio Marangoni's three year program in Photography and New Media. She still works for a hotel but has finally found her balance.