LLEVA UNA ESCUELITA EN TU CORAZÓN

GARAGE school

of MEDICINE

UNREGISTRED TRADEMARK

FOR THE YEAR

2024

This book is published on the occasion of the Garage School of Medicine, part of the fellowship for situated practices @ BAK (Basis vor Actuelle Kunst) Utrech 2023-2024

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ALIGNMENT NON-ALIGNMENT

Fellowship for situated practices

CAPI-
TALISM
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FLAMES

A GARAGE SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

The *escuela de garaje* (garage school) was born in Bogotá in 2013, it is an informal study program that has no consistent or permanent infrastructure and exists on very little. Our schools emerge like fruiting bodies in relation to a particular place, subject or host(s). We are interested in knowledge and tools that are considered irrelevant, of low quality or without official validity. This iteration of the escuela (The Garage School of Medicine) is convened by artists and educators Kari Robertson and Santiago Pinyol.

'The Garage School of Medicine' has so far been a 9 month body of research that emerged from a proposition of nonalignment with hierarchical and imperialist medicine and medical discourse. We strive to research, remember and imagine other conceptions of health and healing that are holistic, metaphorical, metaphysical, preventative, collective and hopeful.

We face a world of increasing climate, ecological and social breakdown, forced migration and unpredictability in which many hegemonic, epistemic principles will no longer apply, or moreover have set the foundations for their own demise. In this vacuum of uncertainty and grief we ask: how can we make space to study for an unknown future? How can we collectively develop tools, methods and strategies for survival despite and beyond the necropolitics of now?

While the body in western medicine is an individual one, we ask what sorts of 'medicines' can we conceive for social bodies? While the western doctor diagnoses and treats symptoms of the 'sick' body, we begin with the acknowledgement that under the toxic injustices of late capitalism we are all, to varying degrees, already sick.

Ultimately toxic systems; white supremacy, injustice, inequality, extractivism, capitalism etc. cause deadly inflammation in our bodies, environments and societies ***(Marya, R. Patel, R 'Inflamed; Deep Medicine and The Anatomy of Injustice' 2022)***. It is not within the discourse or remit of western medicine to diagnose diseased systems, and therefore diagnosis in this framework will always be insufficient. We do not deny the many incredible pharmacological and surgical innovations of western medicine, rather we advocate for a more just society in which these powerful tools, alongside others, are free and equally accessible to those who need them.

Where medical diagnosis is often atomised and alienated from place and context, we align ourselves with situated study and focus on relation. The impetus of the 'garage school of medicine' is to prioritise what is usually peripheral and non-universal knowledge (by this we refer to immigrant intelligence, indigenous wisdom and repressed histories). This is with a view not only to pluralise and multiply forms of knowledge and experience, but also acknowledges that the speed at which the ecosocial crises around us are developing urgently necessitate radical resilience and resistance: We must share learnings across varied experiences of struggles, temperatures, climates, altitudes and ways of life.

We acknowledge and are indebted to the many ways *'garage medicine'* is already being enacted, through informal practices of healing or nourishing the collective body: Community kitchens, such as ***B.asic A.ctivist K.itchen*** at BAK literally feed and organize communities in resistance against fascism and oppression. Informal redistribution networks for pharmaceuticals abound, particularly among bodies that are demonised, criminalised or abandoned by the state: ***Abortion Without Borders*** allows access to abortion medication, where it is otherwise unavailable or illegal. Many trans communities have, in lieu of being able to access consistent and affordable gender affirming healthcare, relied for a long time on informal networks to access hormones. Anti-depressants, ADHD medication, and painkillers are among other commonly shared prescription medications.

We strive for affirmative and active healing of and by collective bodies, to conceive and create together medicines and salves which build collective resilience. The ills and symptoms we identify, along with the corresponding treatments and preventions can be social, psychological, ecological or in most cases some entanglement of these. Borrowing from the philosophy of agroecology, which bridges new and ancient knowledge, we learn and glean recipes from past, present and desired futures.

COMMUNITY APOTHECARY AS METHOD

We came across various inspiring radical herbalist practices during our research for the *Garage School of Medicine*, including the work of Claudia Manchanda, ***Herbalists Without Borders***, Nicole Rose's ***'Solidarity Apothecary'*** and ***Herbalista's homeless foot care clinic***. What each of these practices have in common is a desire to democratise access to herbal knowledge and medicine. Each acts from a position of solidarity and deep connection with those who are denied access to adequate care through state marginalisation, violence or neglect. These practices recognise that the continued existence of some bodies is a political act and herbs can offer tools to strengthen and reinforce our commitment to systemic change.

One of the groups we are most inspired by is ***Movement in Thyme***, who run regular 'community apothecaries' in the south side of Glasgow (Scotland) on a 'pay what you can' sliding scale. Attending some of these we witnessed how a group of people can be brought together around a herbal recipe. What is produced during a community apothecary is both a simple remedy (infused honey, tea blends, fire cider) which can be taken home and used by the participants, but also the recipe and means of production; knowledge is disseminated from 'expert' herbalist to the attendees. In an environment filled with an increasingly commercialised, individualistic culture of 'self care' this approach is particularly refreshing.

For our interpretation of the Community Apothecary we simply made a small adaptation; that each person can bring to the recipe an ingredient from their own context, this was in an effort to further decentralise the flow of information and allow 'garage knowledge' to flow in all directions. We found that speaking through medicines and remedies we use or value in our lives can be a proxy to speak about how and what our bodies experience and our, often shared, vulnerabilties.

The community apothecary becomes an *'attunement ritual'*; a moment to recognise the symbolic potential of cooking and alchemy, and opens up these practices to become spaces for meeting and conversation, where resistances can be woven together and a common body can form.

Any basic recipe can be enriched by doing an attunement ritual such as foraging with friends. Rituals anchor community in the body, make sense of time. It is the art of repetition, but it is not or should not be just routine. Always leaving space for adaptation.

FIRE CIDER

Fire Cider likely derives from a much older recipe called 'four thieves vinegar' which dates back at least to the medieval period and was used as a tonic to both cure and protect against disease. The story behind *'Four Thieves vinegar'* goes that during the great plague in Marseilles four thieves extensively robbed the houses of the dead and dying. When they were finally caught, in exchange for their lives being spared, they revealed the secret of how they managed to avoid contracting the plague. They claimed that they drank and rubbed on their bodies a special vinegar infused with a blend of spices and herbs; *garlic, wormwood, meadowsweet, wild marjoram, sage, campanula roots, angelica, rosemary, horehound and camphor*. It is now believed that the remedy was likely effective both because of its antibacterial, antiviral and antimicrobial properties and also because the herbs act as a repellent to the fleas which transmit the plague.

Fire Cider was popularised in North America in the 1970s by American Herbalist ***Rosemary Gladstar***. It can accommodate many possible recipes and variations but is usually made with warming, stimulating herbs and spices, such as chillies, ginger and garlic. It can be taken daily to warm the body, boost the metabolism and immune system (1 tbsp.) or can we consumed to help rid the body of a cold or flu (3 tbsp.) Like many herbal recipes it is both food and medicine; it can be taken directly off the spoon, mixed into a cup of hot water with a spoon of honey, or used as a glaze or salad dressing.

>

BASIC INGREDIENTS

Apple cider vinegar
Lemons
Oranges
Chillies
Garlic
Ginger
Red onion
Turmeric
Black pepper
Honey

INGREDIENTS BROUGHT BY PARCITIPANTS

Escitalopram 10 Mg
Sambucus
Coca
Mambe
Sumak
Minced flax seed
Valeriana

Willow
Plantago major
Szechuan pepper
Zhouhorat (Syrian tea)
Whiskey
Thyme
Za'atar

1. One week before the session all participants prepare by thinking about a home remedy (a salve, a method, a soup, a vegetable, a drink) from your/their own context (place/family/culture). Each should bring one ingredient, for example, a herb, a spice, a fruit or vegetable, a pill etc. If you do not have a home remedy in mind it could also be a significant/symbolic herb to you for another reason.
2. Gather and sit together around a large table with one or more (clean) empty mason jars in the centre. Have plenty of knives and cutting boards.
3. Slice, grate, crush, squeeze the lemons, garlic, ginger, turmeric, onion and chillies. Then place in jar(s)
4. As you work, each person can talk about the ingredient they brought and why. Decide together if, and how, to incorporate each ingredient into the remedy. Edible herbs, teas, seeds or bark can be placed in the jar, other ingredients can be added to, or taken with the fire cider after it has finished infusing. *Do not add honey or sugar prior to infusion.*
5. Pour the apple cider into the jars until all ingredients are fully submerged and close the lid. Label the jar with the date and ingredients.
6. Keep the jar(s) in a dark place and rotate them every 1/2 days, ensure nothing is sticking up above the vinegar. If you want you can carefully bury it in a hole in the garden. Leave to infuse for 4-6 weeks.
7. Use a sieve to drain the fire cider into another jar or bottle. Label and date it, it expires after around 1 year.
8. Take a spoon or more of fire cider every day in a hot cup of water with a spoon of honey, and a shot of whiskey alongside your anti-depressant.

THYME

Thyme is an effective herb for treating respiratory and digestion problems, parasites and skin disorders. It is a plant native to the mediterranean region where it is used for medicinal and culinary purposes.

Make a thyme tea and drink it when you have a cold, flu, cough or chest infection.

ESCITALOPRAM 10 MG

Escitalopram is an antidepressant of the selective serotonin reuptake inhibitor (SSRI) class. Escitalopram is mainly used to treat major depressive disorder and generalized anxiety disorder. It is taken by mouth and is designed to alter human brain chemistry by increasing levels of the neurotransmitter serotonin, which helps regulate mood, happiness, and anxiety.

If your family and friends also take the same antidepressant, you will be sure that you will never run out and support each other in case of shortage.

SAMBUCUS

Sambucus Nigra, (or elderberry) both boosts the immune system and has anti-viral properties, making it effective at fighting the cold and flu. To harvest, cut the elderberry clusters off the bush during August and September and gently place them in a container so that the juicy berries do not burst.

This is a tea for the immune system, also works for eye infections (apply with cotton).

SUMAK

Sumak is an astringent, which means it contracts and tones tissues. It's been used for diarrhea, hemorrhoids, excess urination, and bleeding. Sumac also can alleviate muscle pain and has antibacterial and antifungal properties which make it useful for skin health, infections, and wounds.

Sumak has many uses! It can be used for dying, as a garnish, as an ingredient (has a lemony taste), for marinating chicken, for making pink lemonade (popular in Palestine, Turkey, Kurdistan, Iran), or as medicine for regulating blood pressure.

MAMBE

Mambe is a green powder obtained from roasting, grinding and sifting Amazonian coca leaves, generally mixing them with Yarumo ashes. It is combined with a tobacco paste called Ambil and with this combination in the mouth, the indigenous people gather around the fire in a circle of words to talk and make decisions about the community. The closest to describe the feeling of taking mambe is how indiginous people describe it: "it sweetens the word".

Having mambe is quite a sensory experience. You have to skilfully pack a spoon full of mambe powder into your inner cheek, next to the molars. It produces a slight numbness in that area of the mouth and has a sweet/bitter taste. You can tell someone has been "mambeando" by the shade of green mambe leaves on someones lip, or the slight bump in someone's cheek.

COCA

Many indigenous groups and communities in South America, such as the Inca, Quechua, and Aymara, have a long history for thousands of years of relating with the coca plant for medicinal, spiritual and social purposes. The leaves of the coca plant were chewed or made into tea to combat fatigue, hunger, and thirst. The use of coca was/ is deeply ingrained in these cultures, it is considered a sacred plant and a gift from the gods.

The indigenous peoples of the Andes also believe that the coca plant has mystical powers and provides insight, strength, and protection. The leaves are often offered as a form of pagamento or tribute.

When the Spanish colonized South America, after observing its widespread use they eventually began to incorporate it into their own culture, leading to its spread throughout Europe and the rest of the world. Despite its ancestral history of use among indigenous peoples, the weaponisation of coca in the form of cocaine have led to its global criminalization. The synthesis of cocaine was first reported by german chemist Richard Willstätter (Nobel Prize Winner) in 1898.

More and more people are starting to consume coca and mambe in latinamerican cities, mostly as an infusion, for example to counteract "soroche" or height sickness. It has also become costumary taking it with them when they travel as a very special treat and symbolic act of defiance on the demonization of coca. A great way to smuggle coca leaves when you travel by plane is to place them inside the pages of a book!. Extra points if the book is about extractivism.

GROUND FLAX SEED

Flax historically has many medicinal uses. The sticky sap or gum that flax produces was applied to boils and wounds and also used for toothache. Flax leaves were used in binding broken bones and matted leaves were used as dressings. Flax root juice was routinely applied to wounds as a disinfectant.

You can take it with hot water every morning or evening for the stomach. As is the example of the emoliente a traditional drink consumed principally in Peru which contains flax seed among other ingredients such as Barley, Andean horsetail alfalfa, ribwort plantain, boldo, sugar and lemon juice. It is also very good as oil for the hair.

VALERIAN

Valerian is used for treatment of insomnia, anxiety, depression, premenstrual syndrome (PMS), menopause symptoms, and headaches. To harvest valerian, dig deep to get a whole root, wash them well and allow to fully dry. To make Valerian tea pour 1 cup of boiling water over 1 teaspoonful (2 to 3 g) of dried root and steep for 5 to 10 minutes.

ADHD used to be diagnosed exclusively in men, as it often presents differently in women. Valerian is helpful in managing ADHD symptoms, you take an extract of the root.

WILLOW

Bark of white willow has powerful anti-inflammatory and pain-relieving properties (similar to aspirin). It can be drunk as a tea, or directly chewed to release compounds from the bark. It was used extensively in China and Europe and its medicinal use has been recorded as far as back as 400 BCE.

The best time to harvest willow twigs is the period from March to July, and the bark is obtained from two-to three-year-old twigs cut in the spring, before the leaves and flowers, forming catkins, develop.

Willow is a very fast growing tree that can grow from planting a branch. It is also the symbol plant of Poland, medicine for non-human animals, and source of material for ducks who make nests from it. Medicinally it can be used to deal with pain as a natural form of paracetamol, it can be ingested by making an infusion of the bark in hot water.

PLANTAGO MAJOR

Effective as a wound healer when applied directly. Consumed orally (as tea) is an antiulcerative, antidiabetic, antidiarrhoeal, anti-inflammatory, antinociceptive, antibacterial, and antiviral agent). It can also be used to calm and support the nervous system in times of stress or burnout. It is used extensively in traditional Persian medicine.

This is for wounds, it grows next to plants that sting.

SZECHUAN PEPPER

Szechuan pepper is officially listed in Chinese pharmacopoeia as 'Huajiao', and is involved in more than 30 traditional prescriptions for the treatment of toothache, abdominal pain, vomiting, diarrhea, ascariasis and trauma. It also helps stimulate circulation, reduces pain, increases immunity, strengthens bones and eliminates inflammation.

Mostly used as a spice (in cooking) but made into a poltice with ginger and garlic it can be used to heal broken limbs. You can also make a foot bath with it for blood circulation (in traditional Chinese medicine) to get rid of the coldness and wetness in the body.

ZHOURAT

Zhourat is a Syrian tea made up of 77 ingredients, 52 of its ingredients aid in healing diseases of the digestive system (stomach aches), 30-45 aid in treating diseases of the respiratory system (common cold), and 18 aid in healing diseases of the nervous system (migraines).

A mix of herbs and flowers drunk mainly for digestion. It is becoming popular now in Egypt, maybe due to Syrian immigration.

WHISKEY

Whiskey can temporarily widen the blood vessels, this can help clear mucus congestion in your sinuses and chest, which lets the body better deal with sickness and infection. This effect may also relieve other symptoms of a cold or flu, like coughing or wheezing.

In Scotland It is a key ingredient in a 'hot toddy', a traditional remedy for the cold, flu and insomnia (You don't need to be ill to have one btw.) In the past a fussy baby's dummy would be dipped in whiskey to 'soothe' them, or it would be rubbed on teething babies gums to numb them.

ZA'ATAR

Za'atar is a levantine culinary herb and one of the most popular plant-based foods in the Eastern Mediterranean region. It is also the name of a spice mixture that includes the herb along with toasted sesame seeds, dried sumac, often salt, and other spices. It contains hundreds of antioxidant compounds, especially polyphenols, and fiber, with pre-clinical and clinical evidence suggesting health-promoting effects in cardiovascular and metabolic disease.

Altitude defines the bitterness of the za'atar.

MOBILE APOTHECARY

Each iteration of the garage school (which has been running since 2013) is different, 'the production of public' school was hosted only outdoors in public space; never in a place with a door, our fermentation school transformed a gallery space into a community kitchen that lasted one lunar cycle, another iteration built a greenhouse in a cultural centre that was warmed using only the body heat of participants.

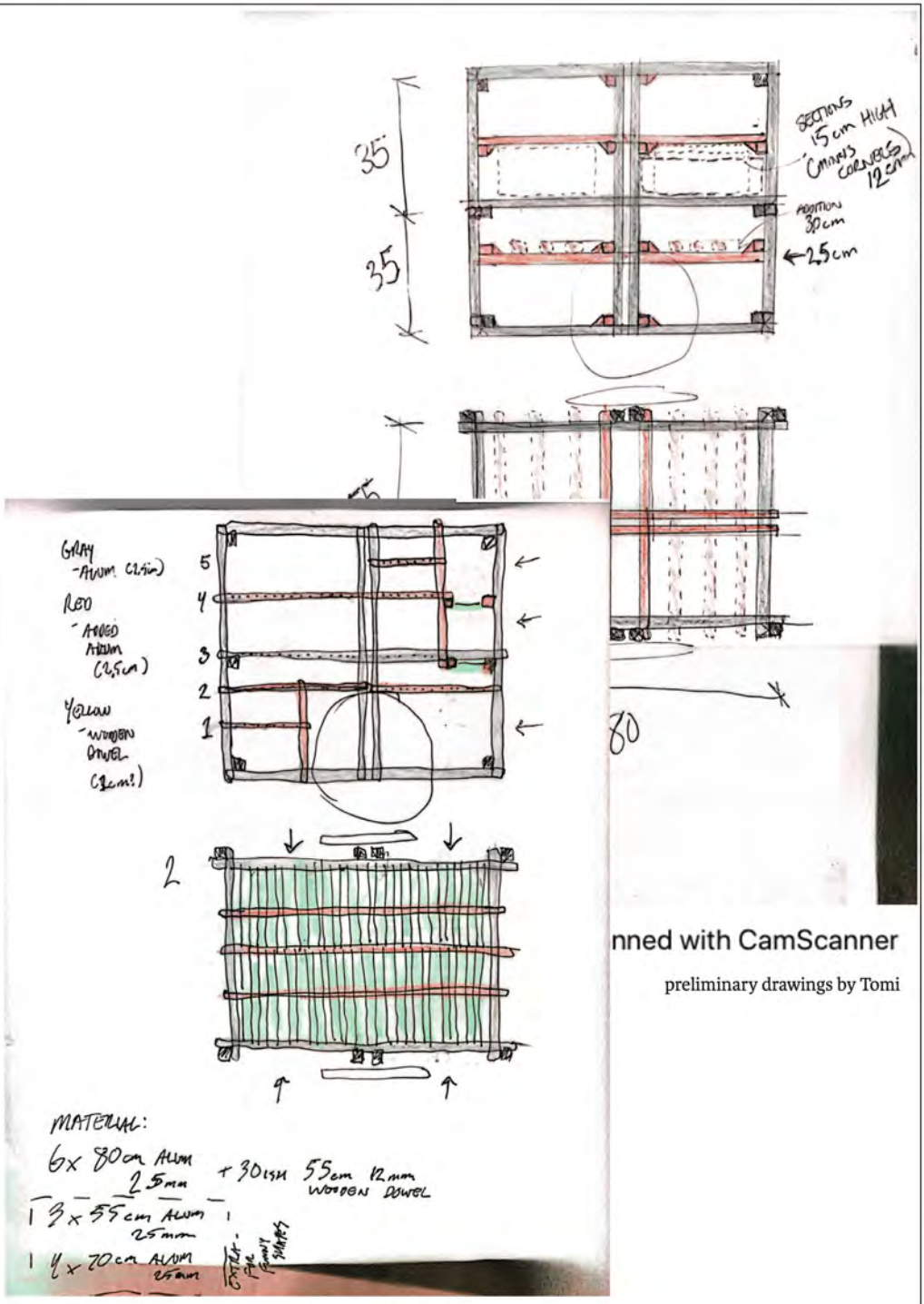
This iteration of the 'school' will take the form of a mobile apothecary inspired by that of 'herbalists without borders', who travel to various EU entry points (such as Calais) to provide care to migrants who would otherwise have no access to healthcare services. We conceive of, and launch this project inspired by the student mobilisation in solidarity with Palestine and in response to violent police and institutional repression of these peaceful protests. The mobile apothecary is conceived as a micro political project of intimacy with community and context.

The mobile apothecary infrastructure is a modified XYZ cargo bike specifically designed to offer practical support for other practices that imagine and prefigure inclusive, caring and anti-fascist futures. To support and host workshops, events and conversations around food/medicine, health and medicine-making at relevant moments/ locations.

We are collaborating with Tomi Hilsee (architect and member of doe-het-zelf werkplaats) to develop the mobile apothecary and make it fit for purpose.

As with this zine that you hold in your hands, we plan to during/after each event with the mobile apothecary, produce a small 'publication' of the event/learning. This is both a practice of documentation and of expanded publishing as the publication could take the form of a small printed zine, or could be a limited edition scent/ ferment 'published' in small bottles for participants to take home.

To keep posted on events and collaborations, or reach out to us with invitations/suggestions follow us on instagram
@escuela_de_garaje



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preliminary drawings by Tomi

Scanned with CamScanner

COLOPHON

This research and publication would not have been possible without active contributions of our BAK fellowship for Situated practice Utrecht cell: Teresa Borasino, Iliada Charalambous, Yuliia Elyas, Astrid Feringa, Marta Keil, Andrea Knezovic, Siwar Krai(y)tem, Paula Montecinos Oliva, Maoyi Qiu, Radical Data (Jo and Rayen), and Firat Yücel. As well the Istanbul cell fellows; Betül Aksu, Varduhi Balyan, Alev Ersan, Hanieh Fatouraee, Enis Köstepen and Irmak Karasu, Esra Oskay, SB Arch Lab, Seher Uysal and Ayça Yüksel. Thank you for 9 months of generous and enriching conversation.

Special gratitude and indebtedness to Adaptor Project Sıla Bozdeveci and Gülşah Özgen who contributed to this publication an extract of their fascinating research "hapsedilmiş araçların feminist eleştirisi" (A Feminist Critique of Imprisoned Tools) in the form of a DIY 3D-printed speculum.

Deep thanks to the entire BAK team who have challenged, supported and fed us in this work; particularly Zeyno Pekünlü and Dina Mohamed, Geo Barcan, Ollie Paterson, Grace Lostia and Maria Hlavajova.

Thank you also to Cannach MacBride for last-minute editing help!

Thanks to CBK Rotterdam and BAK for their generous support of this project and presentation.

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https://hackteria.org/wiki/GynePUNK

Herbalista:
https://herbalista.org/

Herbalists Without Borders:
https://hwbglobal.org/

Movement in Thyme:
https://www.movementinthyme.com/

Solidarity Apothecary:
https://solidarityapothecary.org/

Typeset
with the fonts:
Priori Acute Dead History,
Karmina.
Printed in 80gr Clairefontaine Bond
paper.

Print run 50ish copies.

Printed at the 00k_huijs, Rotterdam.
22th July 2024

Cover by escuela de garaje :)

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