



Us

Curtis Wiklund

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Curtis Wiklund captures the simple, intimate moments that make up a loving relationship in his moving collection of illustrations, *Us*.

The book is the result of Wiklund's project dedicated to documenting his life by drawing a picture every day for an entire year. The drawings in *Us* are mostly images of Wiklund and his wife together, many of which drew attention thanks to Wiklund's website and social media shares.

Wiklund, a professional photographer by trade, is a talented illustrator. He showcases a variety of drawing styles in *Us*, depicting himself and his wife in color and black-and-white, as realistic and cartoonish, fully painted and quickly sketched, and also as modified stick figures. The collection even includes a photograph of a self-portrait made out of Q-tips. What's universal to all of these images, however, is their ability to tell a story with one picture.

Wiklund is unguarded in these illustrations (one, featuring Wiklund and his wife cuddling in bed, is titled simply "I love her so much," while another is captioned "Sleepover with my best friend"). His sincerity is the engine of the book, though what one reader finds romantic and emotional, another might find mawkish or cloying.

While *Us* has no plot per se, the drawings function as a diary of events throughout a year, with one major life development coming toward the end of the book. *Us* is an impressive artistic accomplishment—an autobiographical testament to the power of love.

PETER DABBENE (January/February 2018)

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