A Letter To My Hearing
by Trix Willems

This is the transcript and image description for a short graphic novel.

Trix: It's like how you'll never know if others see color like you do. It's all comparison.

Trix: Which is exactly why the description “Central Processing Disorder: Sounds seem louder” was so useless. It’s just how I hear.

Trix: I've always fixated on sounds. Isolating them, meditating to . . .

The gurgling rush of the heater

The wetness of feet unsticking from the floor

The mingling of exhales

All filling my head into blank noise

The busy rattling of windows

Image: Small red shapes by black bricks and windows.
The open creak of the floor
[Image: Bent blue lines, revealing maroon underneath.]

Trix: It’s a lot easier now that I know why. Before, I would just be at lunch and then . . .
[Image: Birdseye view of Trix at a table. From all around, lots of colors and patterns. Long pink triangles of music, Small maroon curves of forks, Blue twists of ice, and a variety of blue circles with different inside patterns for people talking.]
. . . and then I had to leave.
[Image: The text is where Trix’s face should be. He is looking up and banging on the previous panel like the table.]

Trix: Over time I learned—I can’t go to concerts. Or a club. Or a dance. Or watch a movie without earplugs. Or keep up with conversations at crowded restaurants.
[Image: Each example has a black and white drawing of the scene.]

Trix: I knew it was real.
[Image: A doctor looking in Trix’s ear with an implement.]
Trix: So I don’t know why I was surprised when—
Doctor: It sounds like you have an auditory processing disorder. It’s rare and we don’t know why it happens. Or how to fix it.
Trix: He made it real.

Trix: And even with everything I’ve learned, I feel broken.
[Image: In the center, Trix. Around him is an empty circle. The rest is a bunch of colors and symbolic patterns.]
Trix: The city encroaches.
[Image: Three black dots. From top to bottom, the colorful pattern leaves less and less space.]
What will happen when it reaches me?
Trix: I can already feel the sounds becoming familiar, grounding me. If these are my sounds...  
[Image: Trix is upside down. Only his head is visible. The rest is surrounded by the colorful sounds.]

Trix: ... then this is my city.
[Page blank except for the words, “then this is my city.”]

[Image: A two page spread of New York City. Blue squiggles weave between buildings. There are giant red dots and little pink ovals.]