

To Become the Next Generation's Ancestors

A collaborative story told in artwork by
Vicky Chia Wei Mo, Rachele Ogbunigwe,
Natalia Soto Leites, Felicity Crisp,
Sunny Nestler, Wake Cook, River Kero,
Al McWilliams, Marlene Yuen, Woojae Kim,
Clare Yow, Amory Abbott & Jenna Kirouac,
Rachel Lau, Damla Tamer,
Mandana Mansouri, Megan McClennon
and arranged by Dan Starling

Unit 1: To Become the Next Generation's Ancestors

成	<p>chéng to accomplish, to become, to succeed</p> <p>一 厂 万 成 成 成</p>
成	<p>Grid for practicing the character 成.</p>
爲	<p>wèi to do, to act, to govern, to be</p> <p>一 一 一 一 尸 尸 尸 爲 爲 爲 爲 爲</p>
爲	<p>Grid for practicing the character 爲.</p>
下	<p>xià next</p> <p>一 一 下</p>
下	<p>Grid for practicing the character 下.</p>
一	<p>yī one, a, an</p> <p>一</p>
一	<p>Grid for practicing the character 一.</p>
代	<p>dài era, generation, to replace</p> <p>ノ イ 亻 代 代</p>
代	<p>Grid for practicing the character 代.</p>

Unit 1: To Become the Next Generation's Ancestors

的	de aim, goal, of, possessive particle 丶 丶 白 白 白 白 的 的
的	
祖	zǔ ancestor 丶 丿 丿 丿 丿 丿 祖 祖 祖 祖
祖	
先	xiān former, previous 丿 一 丩 生 先 先
先	

Unit 2: Whose land do we live on?

我	wǒ I, me, us 一 二 手 手 我 我 我
我	
們	men plural marker for pronouns and some nouns ノ 亻 亻 亻 亻 伊 們 們 們
們	
生	shēng life, lifetime, birth, growth ノ 乚 乚 牛 生
生	
活	huó to exist, to live, to survive, living, working 、 丶 丶 丶 汫 汫 汫 活 活
活	
在	zài at, in, on, to exist 一 丿 才 在 在 在
在	

Unit 3: What meanings do your actions hold?

你	<p>nǐ you, your</p> <p>ノ 亻 亻 亻 你 你 你 你</p>
你	<p>Grid for writing practice</p>
採	<p>cǎi to collect, to gather, to pick</p> <p>一 扌 扌 扌 扌 扌 扌 採 採 採</p>
採	<p>Grid for writing practice</p>
取	<p>qǔ to take, to receive, to obtain, to select</p> <p>一 冫 冫 冫 耳 取 取</p>
取	<p>Grid for writing practice</p>
的	<p>de aim, goal, of, possessive particle</p> <p>丶 丩 丩 丩 丩 的 的</p>
的	<p>Grid for writing practice</p>
行	<p>xíng to go, to walk, to move</p> <p>丶 彳 彳 行 行 行</p>
行	<p>Grid for writing practice</p>

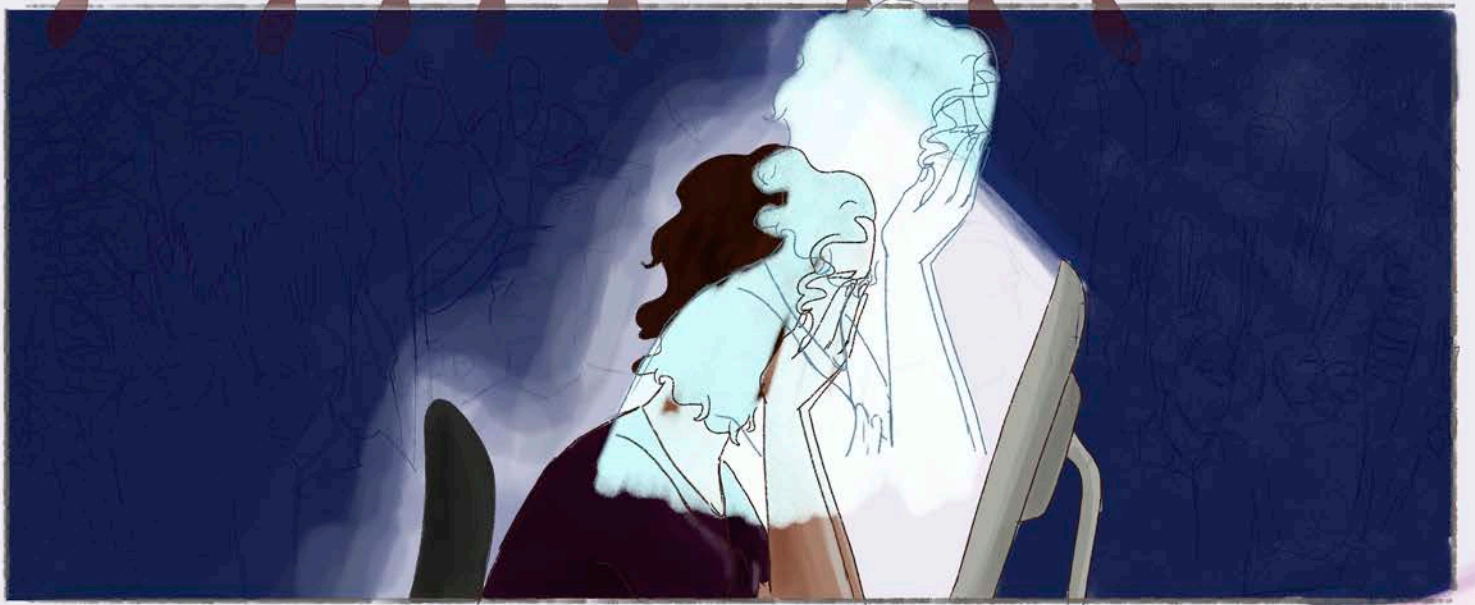
Unit 3: What meanings do your actions hold?

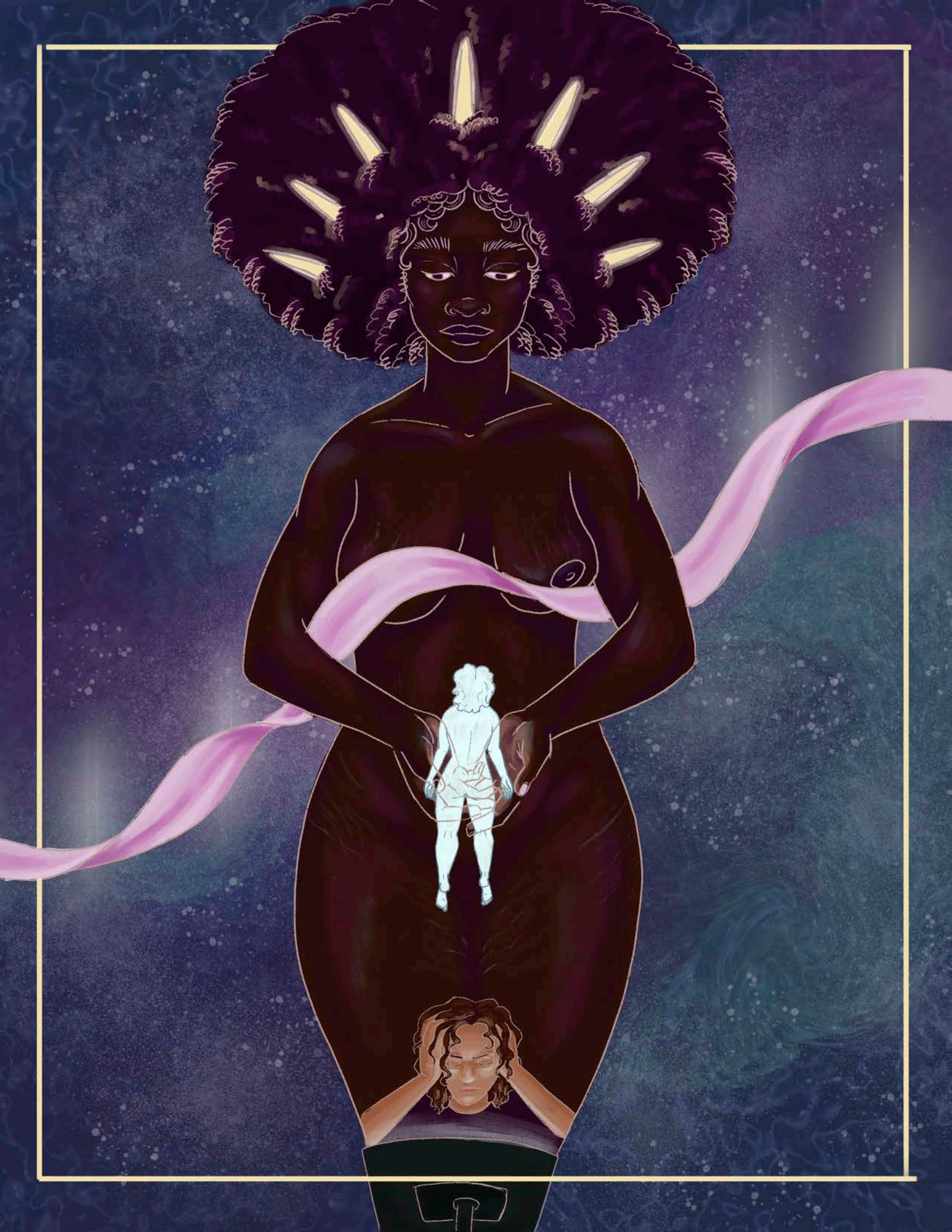
動	<p>dòng to move, to happen, movement, action</p> <p>一 二 亠 台 台 台 車 車 重 動 動</p>
動	<p>Grid for writing practice</p>
有	<p>yǒu to have, to own, to possess, to exist</p> <p>一 ナ 才 有 有 有</p>
有	<p>Grid for writing practice</p>
什	<p>shén what?</p> <p>ノ イ 仁 什</p>
什	<p>Grid for writing practice</p>
麼	<p>me interrogative particle</p> <p>、 一 广 尸 尸 尸 尸 尸 尸 尸 麼 麼 麼</p>
麼	<p>Grid for writing practice</p>
意	<p>yì thought, idea, opinion, desire, wish, meaning, intention</p> <p>、 一 一 一 立 产 音 音 音 音 意 意 意</p>
意	<p>Grid for writing practice</p>
義	<p>yì right conduct, propriety, justice</p> <p>、 一 一 一 羊 羊 羊 羊 羊 羊 羊 義 義 義</p>
義	<p>Grid for writing practice</p>



PC









why is this happening?



oh child...



*Did it ever
truly stop?*





TOOT

C




oh look



~~its doubt~~

its doubt



make a mistake
try again

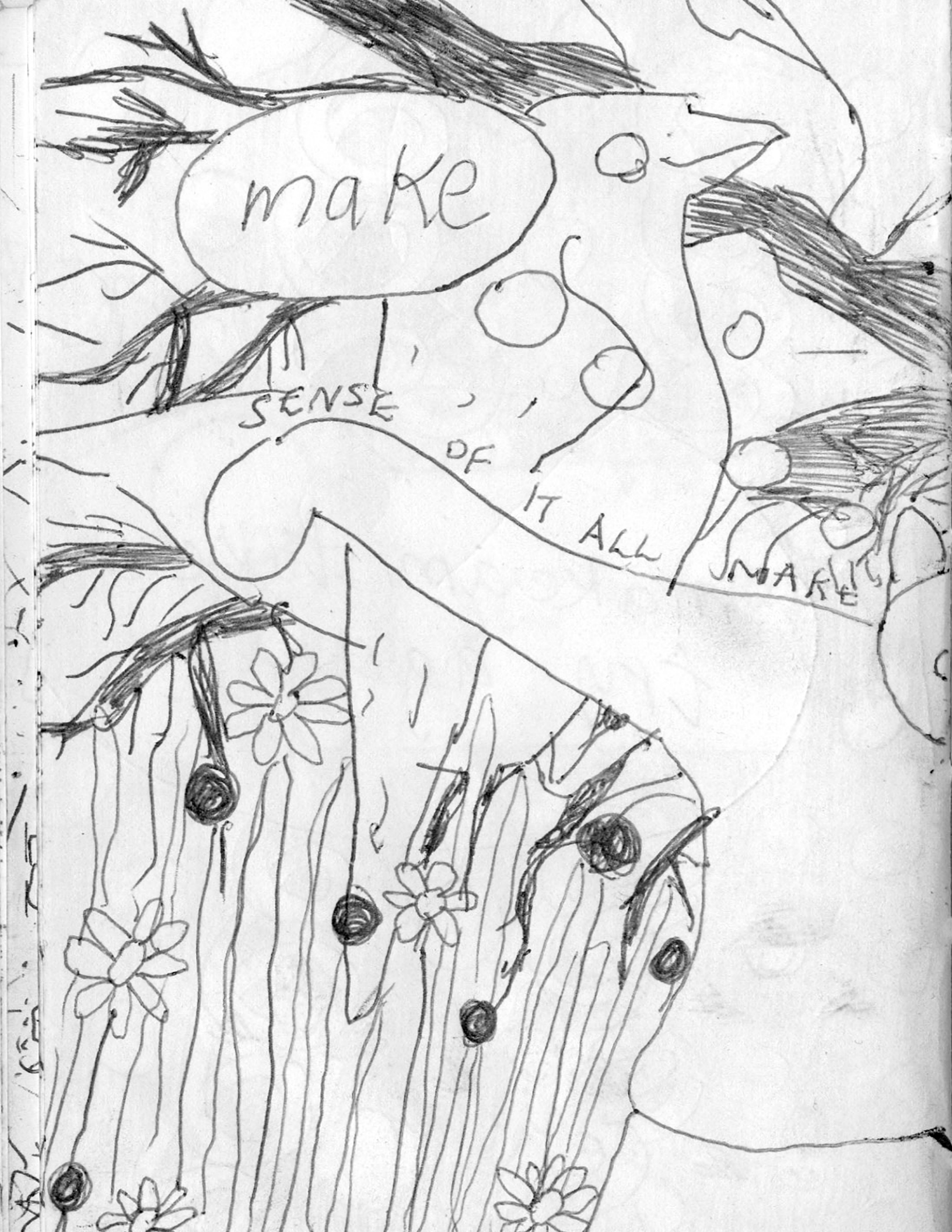
make

SENSE

OF

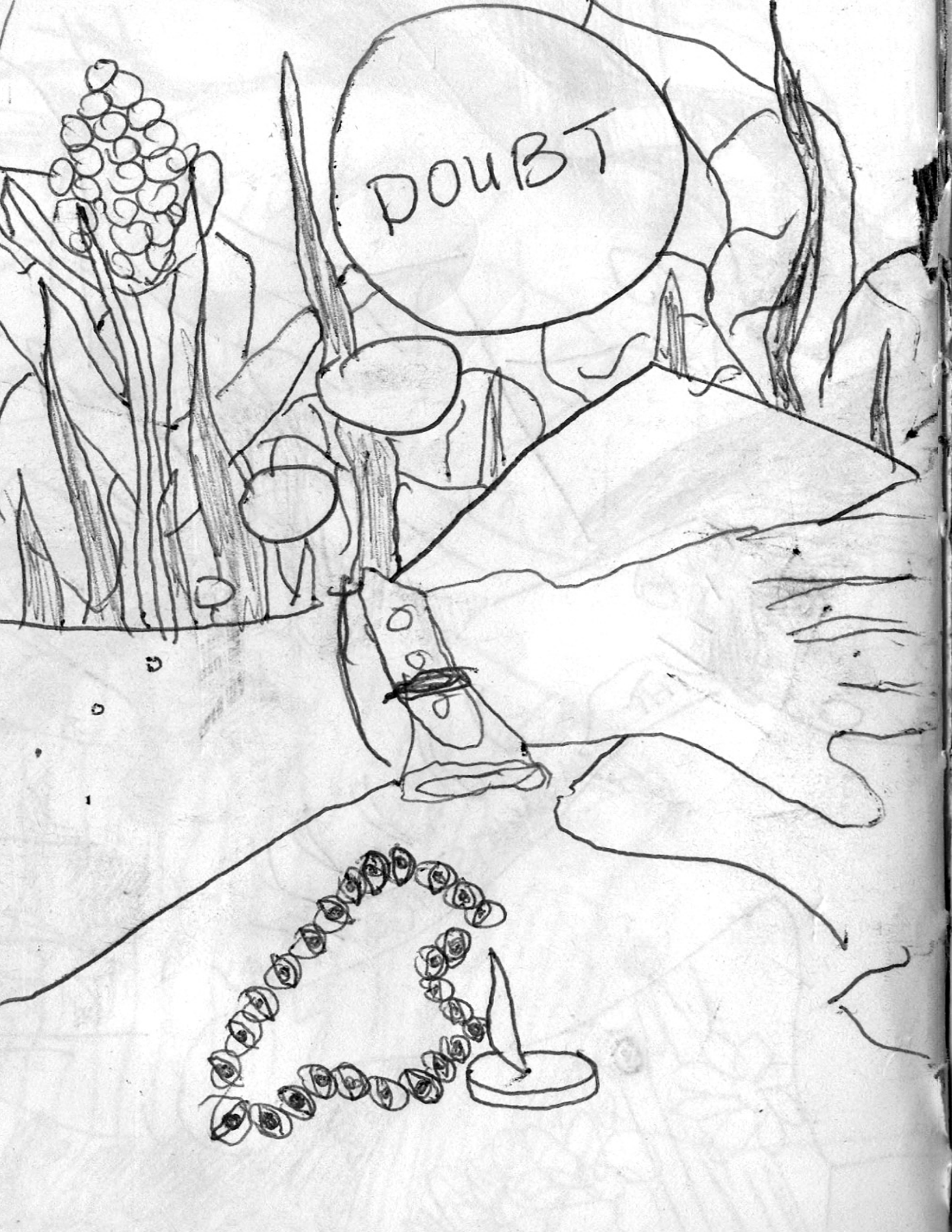
IT ALL

MAKE



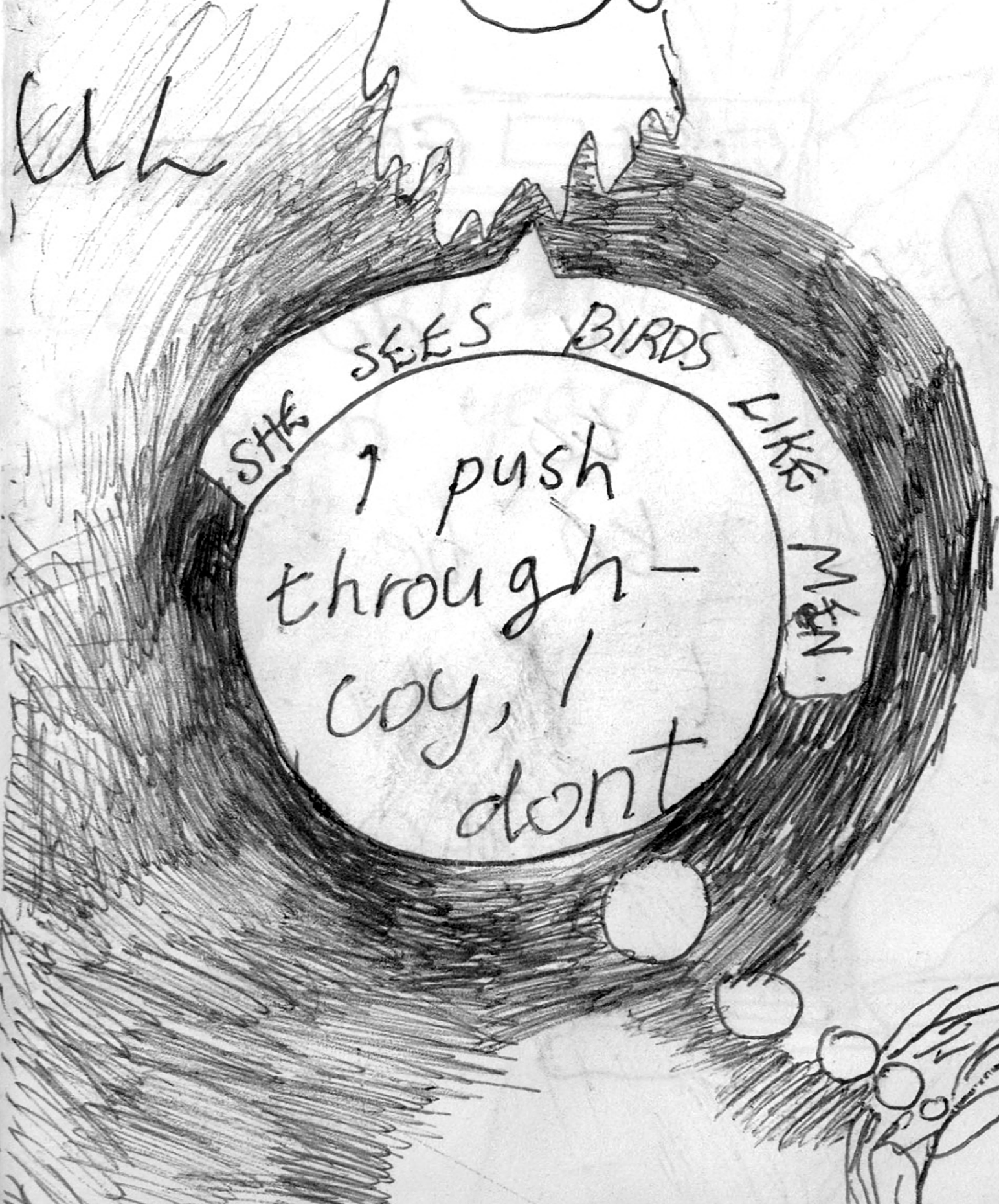


THE THOUGHTS GO AWAY



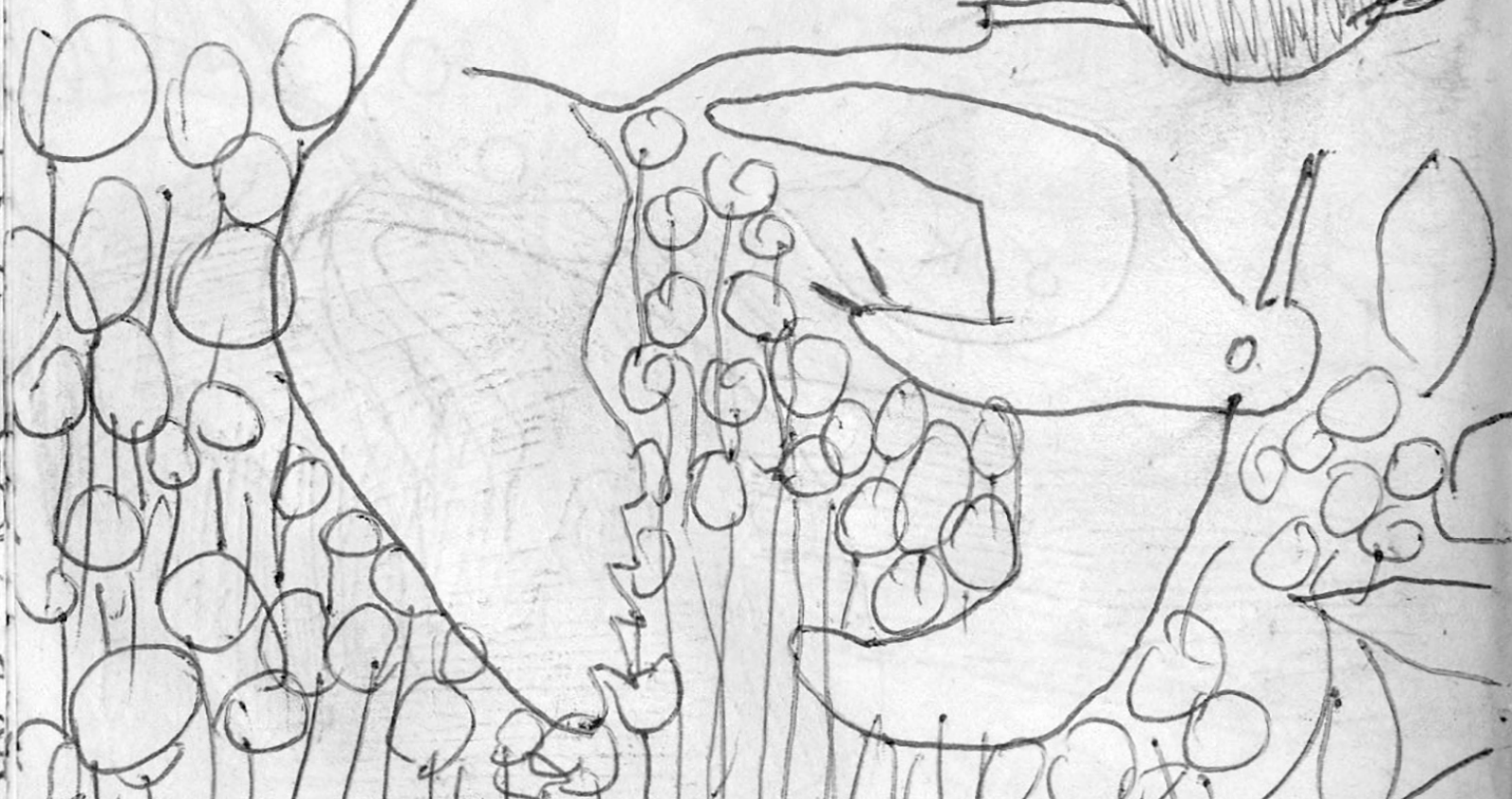
DOUBT

uh



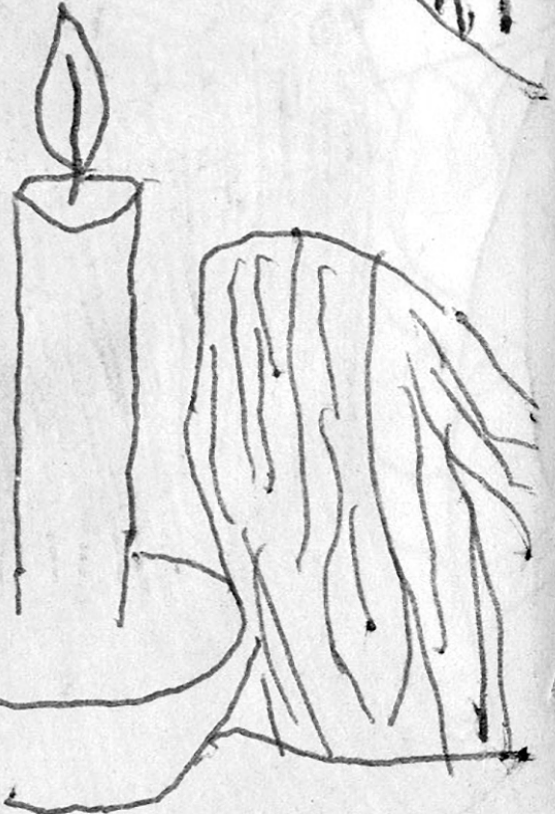
SEEKS BIRDS LIKE MEN.
I push through - coy, I dont





PUSH THROUGH
SOMETHING STRANGE
E.



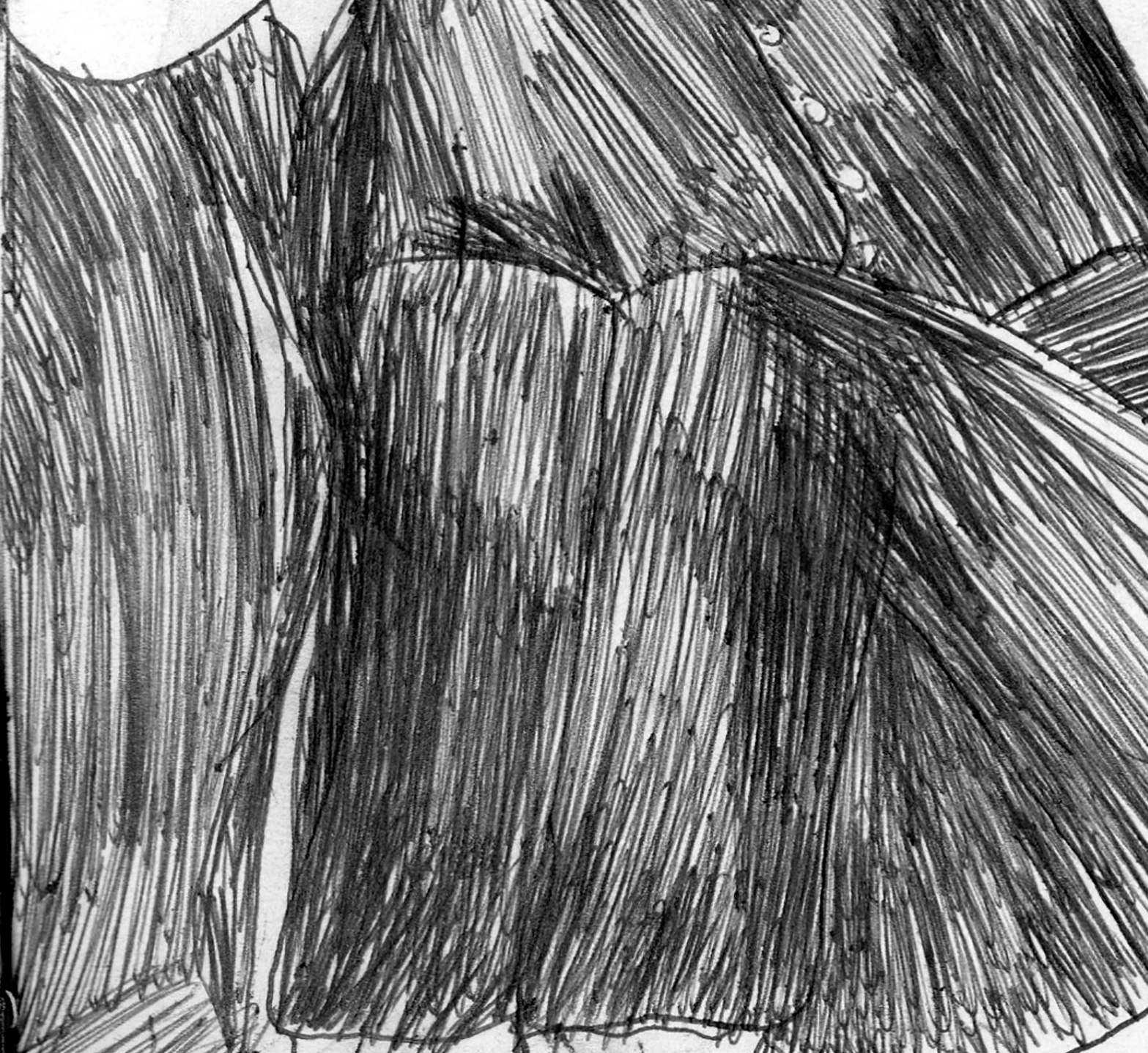


MAYBE.

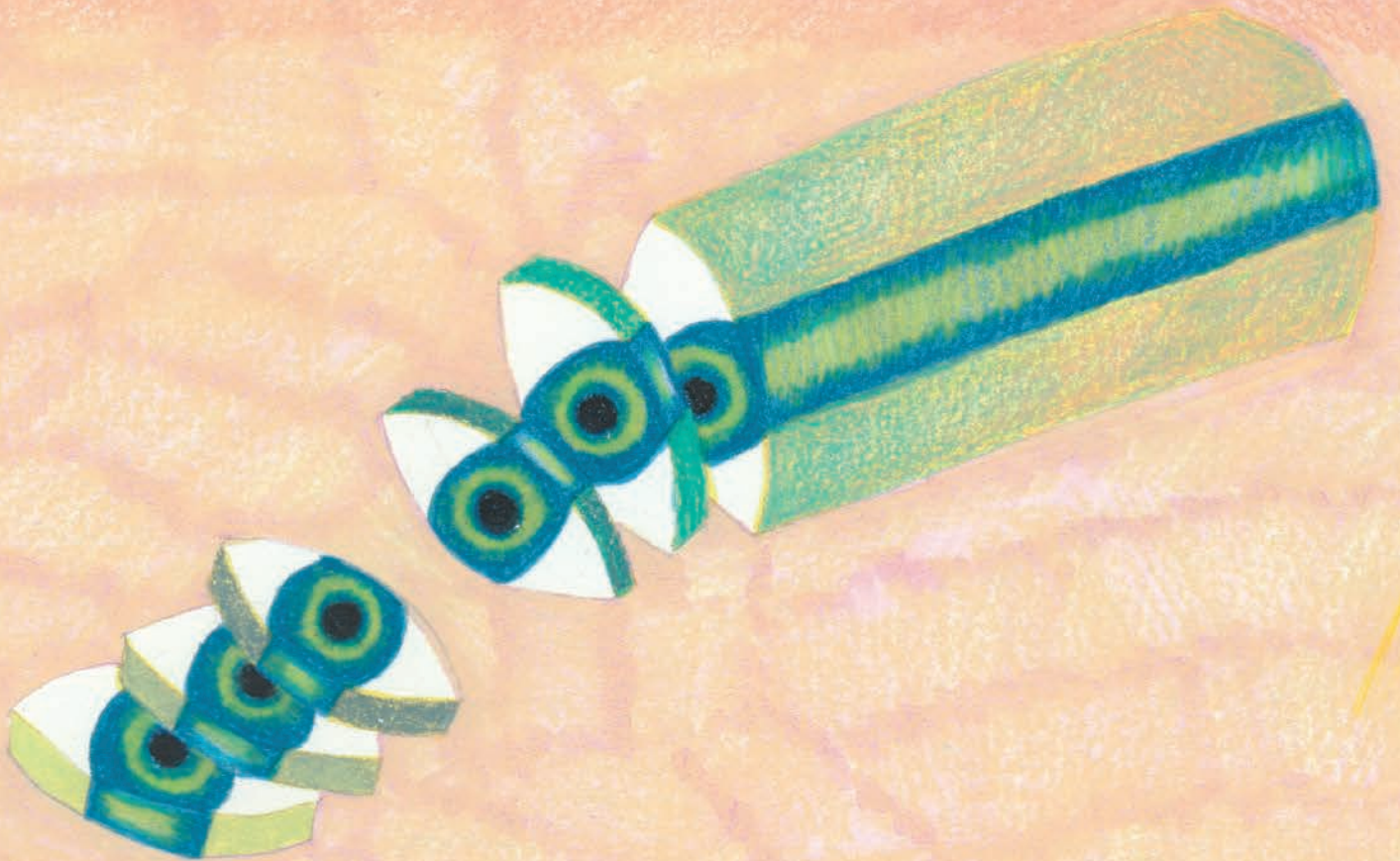




I am
beginning.







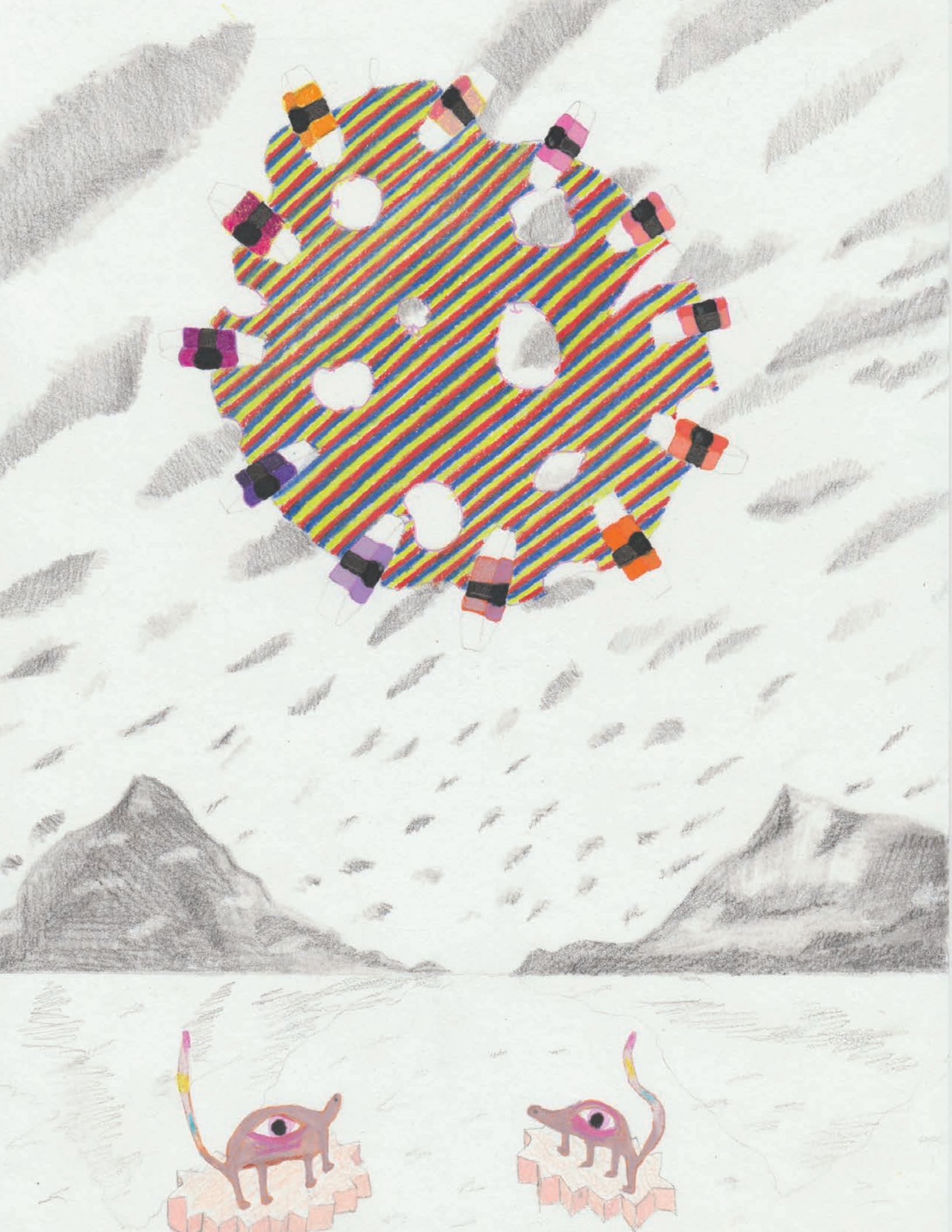


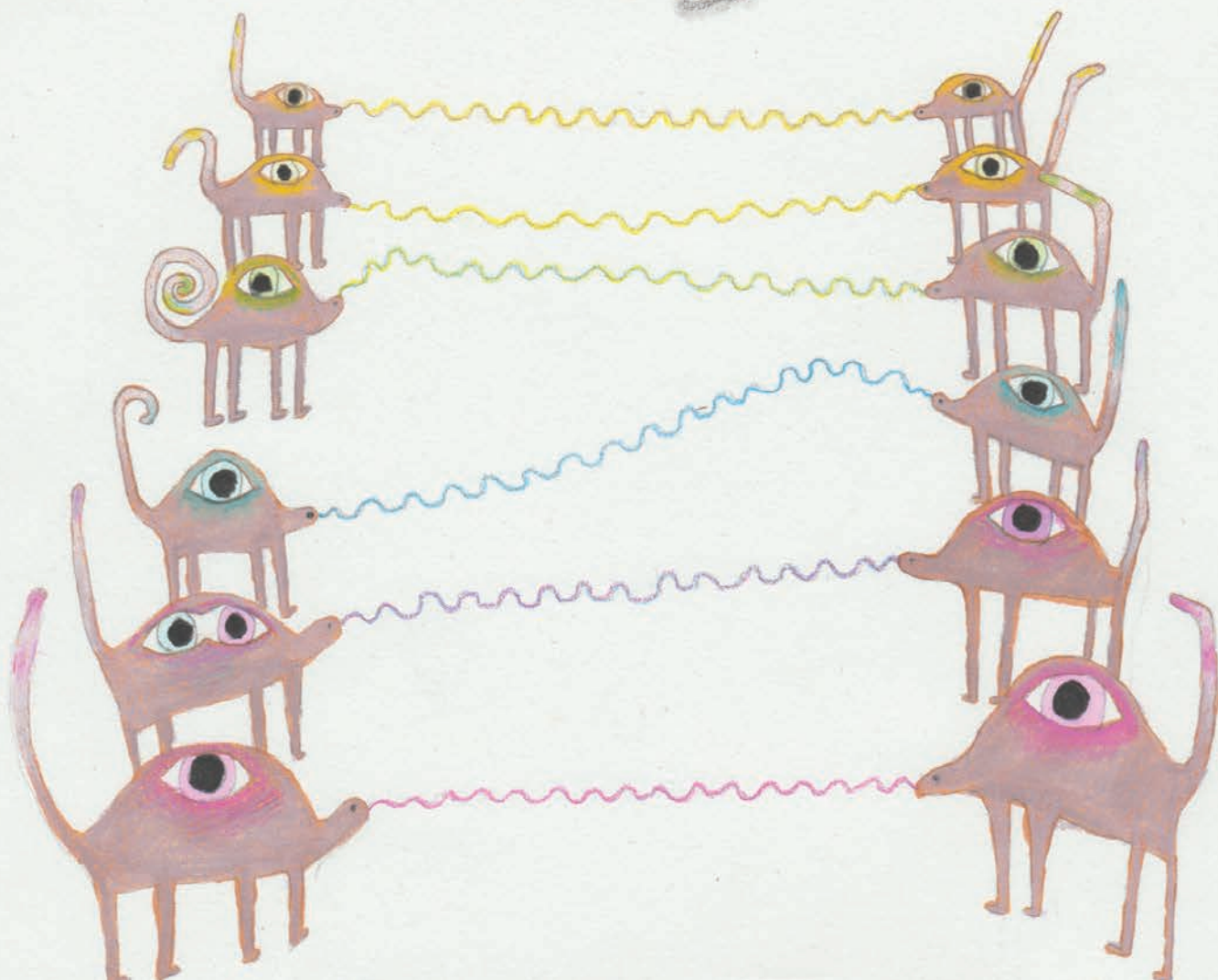
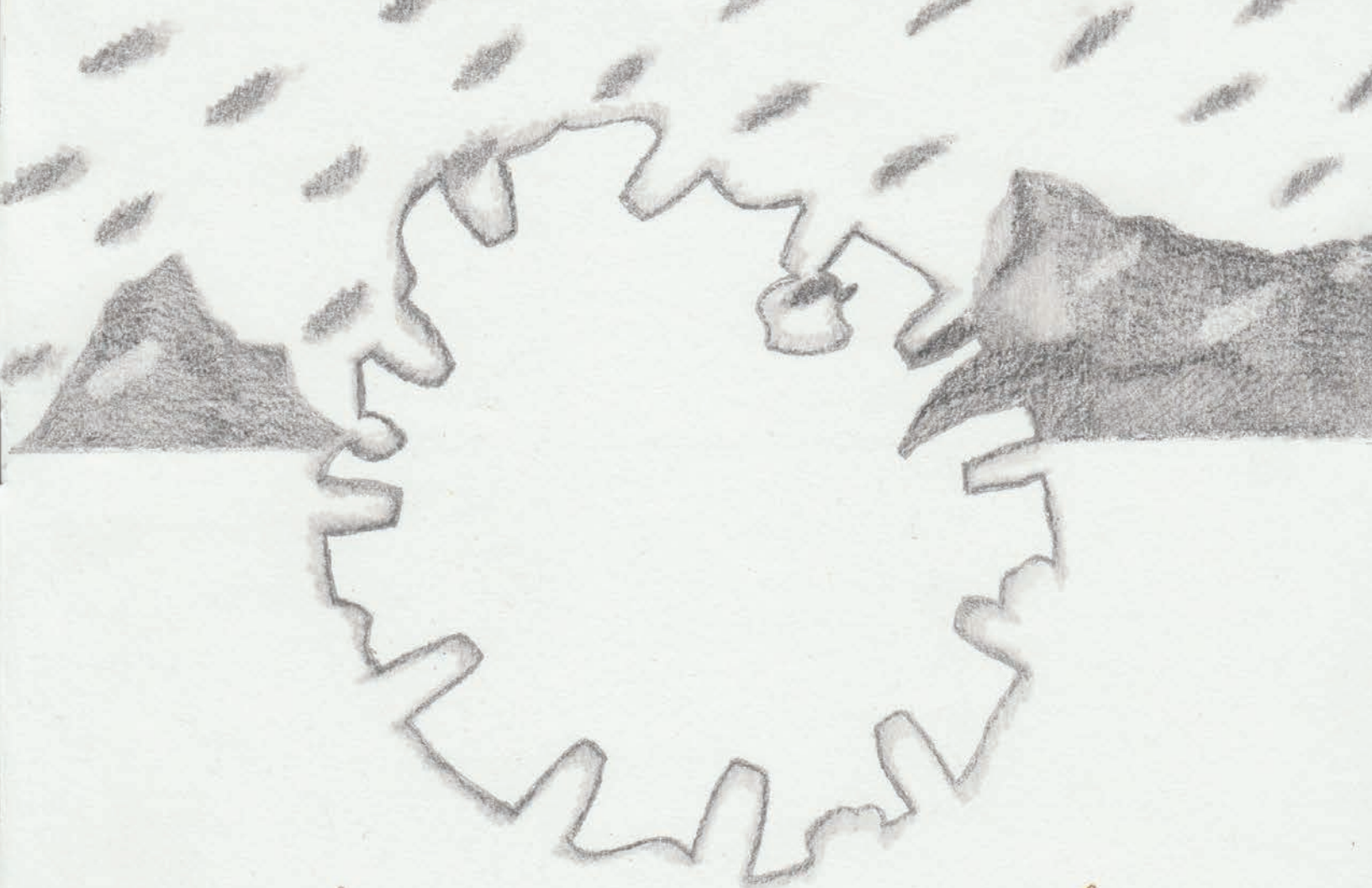














**IT IS OUR
RESPONSIBILITY
TO BE AWARE.**

**IT IS OUR
RESPONSIBILITY
TO LISTEN.**

**IT IS OUR
RESPONSIBILITY
TO TEACH.**

Your kids are going to fall behind in school.

People are going to steal your chickens and beat up your kids.

I grew up in rural Canada on a First Nations reserve. My dad is a teacher so we moved up north when I was five.

You shouldn't let your kids play with those kids. They'll pick up bad habits.

Aren't you worried whether you'll be safe? now that every year they're in a First Nations School they will fall behind the rest of the public school system by three months?

Why are your teeth yellow?

My skin is just pale, jackass.

I was very aware of my ethnicity while I was growing up because everyone around me was indigenous and I am not.

Do you think he gets picked on because he is white?

No. It's because he's a know it all. You're white and you're not like that.

Anyway, kiddo, since I'm white.

Yes, definitely, haha.

Wait, you're white!!

Hey, kids, do you have your signs ready for the pipeline protest? Make sure you look your best, there are going to be cameras.

Did you want to sign up for the three day hunger strike? You'll be able to drink water, just no food and no chewing gum. It's about Enbridge.

My auntie has to miss work again to fly to Vancouver because she is sick.

I became interested in activism and politics as a teen mostly out of love for my friends and family. I learned from a very young age that I had privilege, and that issues of racism are complex— tied to environmentalism, economics, and the politics of isolation.

I can't believe that the store is out of milk again.

My mom is going over to Klemtu because there was a death and they don't have a counsellor, since only like a hundred people live there.

We need to take on the fishing company, they keep doing kill fisheries on the herring when they're harvesting the eggs, there's none left for us!

I experienced white guilt at a young age. (don't worry I outgrew it)

Teacher, I feel so bad for these things that happened. It's all really awful. I feel guilty, even though I didn't do anything.

We aren't going to punish you for the things your ancestors did, we all just have to be aware of them.

Okay, 7th graders, we are going to watch "We Were Children" today.

It's the real life experiences in residential schools. It does have some upsetting content so be warned.

Yeah, the hotel staff tried to turn my sister away from the hotel. She was underage and stuck in Port Hardy. Where was she supposed to go?

The first book we are reading for course is "Indian Horse", about a young boy's experience in residential school.

First Nations kids don't get the luxury of being gently introduced to racism.

My sister was followed around a Shopper Drugmart in Vancouver just for being First Nations.

Can't believe they're getting special treatment JUST for being First Nations. Where's MY scholarship?

Let's set up a military recruitment booth at the job fair. Make sure we tell the kids about the programs that will help First Nations youth get into the military.

All the cops are white.

All the nurses are white.

I'm gonna send my kids to go to school at the white town across the channel... that school only has ten kids, but I think it's better than the reserve school.

How come all the white kids are so damn smart?

I promise not all white kids are smart, honey. The truth is, the people that move out to these parts just to be teachers and doctors who are already well-educated.

Racism is everywhere. You can't escape it.

So native kids aren't dumb?

No, they're not.

I just feel like these people are living close to nature! They're so happy with so little.

After graduation, I ended up in Peru with a bunch of white private school kids.

Poverty isn't fucking cute you numbskull.

I can't believe that the Spanish would do that to the Peruvians! So many horrible things happened during colonization.

It was an interesting transition. Most of them were a bit ignorant.

The effects of colonization are still here today. How did you not know about all this?

Hey, just so you know, you should really change the title of this essay. It comes across as offensive.

Crap, I had no idea. Thank you.

Have you thought about the intersectionality of queerness and ethnicity in this issue?

I grew up, and I figured out that I have a lot to learn, too. Moving to the city changed my perspective on a lot of things. It made me realize what I really didn't know.

No, I really haven't.

I feel pretty safe walking around downtown by myself.

Yeah, that's because you're a masculine-presenting white guy. Creepy guys try to talk to me all the time. I got followed home, once.

There's no black people in Vancouver.

Ugh, this neighbourhood is WAY too Asian.

There's this perception that exists in the countryside that everything is just better in the city. Bigger, louder, faster, more fun, more socially aware, more kind. It's not really true.

Would you ever consider being a spokesperson for First Nations people?

But I'm white...?

Idle no more!

Black lives matter!

Hold them accountable.

Remember our missing and murdered indigenous women!

No pipelines, no tankers!

Fighting is not enough!

Fight white supremacy!

Racism exists everywhere, which means everywhere you go there is work that can be done to dismantle it.

Black lives matter!

Black lives matter!

Do the work.

Black lives matter!

Black lives matter!

Defund the police!

Black lives matter!

Idle no more!

Fight back!

My daughter is First Nations, I'm sure you didn't want to offend me like that. What you said was incredibly hurtful and untrue.

I think you're taking this issue way too personally...

I don't think that's an appropriate remark for you to make.

To you it might be a little thing, but this is the tenth time I've heard that comment in the last week!

Is this issue really about race? This problem affects white people, too.

Yes, yes it is! This issue disproportionately affects people of colour.

I'm sorry, I genuinely didn't mean to offend you.

That's okay, but your words are still hurtful even if your intentions are good.

The work to make sure that doesn't happen again.

It starts with your words.

Hey, my kid got their grades back! Straight "A"s.

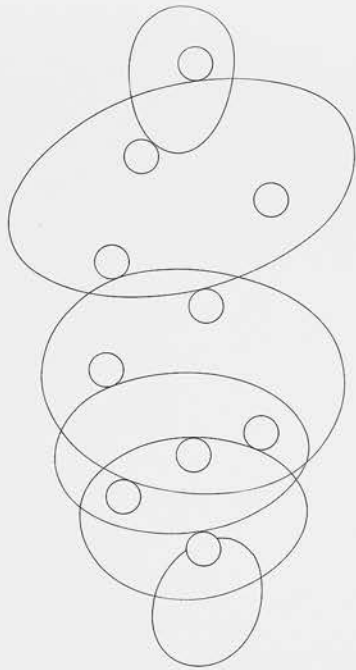
Well, the standards are lower at those schools, so...

These are provincial exam marks.

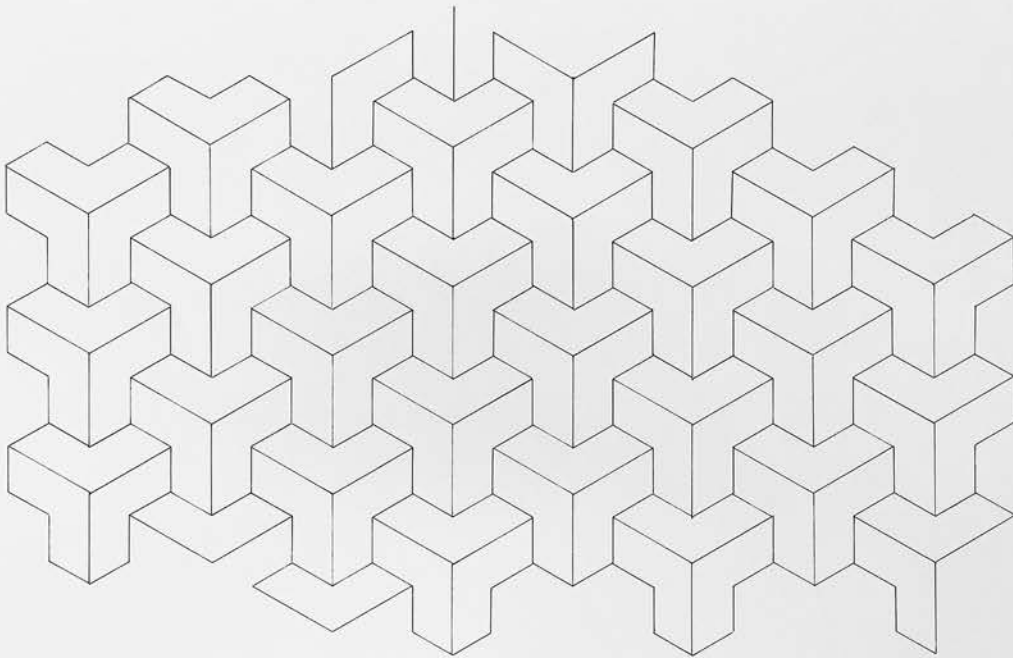
We need to advocate for affordable housing.

We need to fix the racial bias in this system.

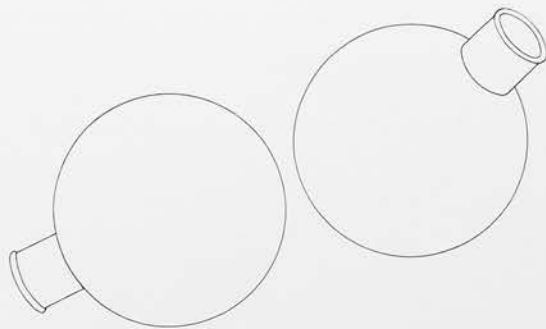
It ends with your actions.





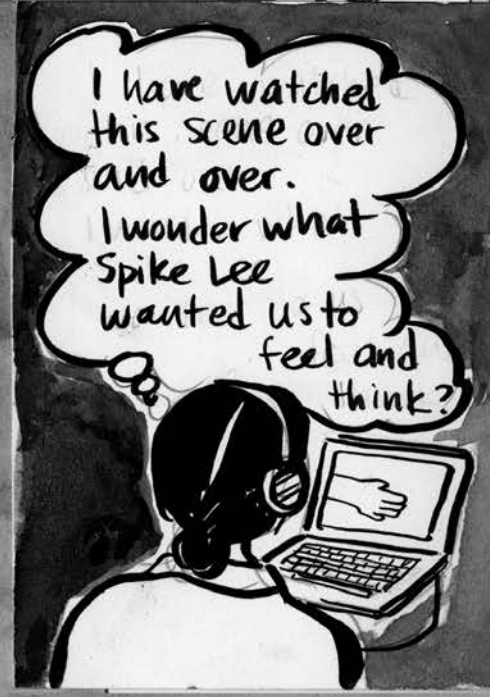












W hates the word, “meditation”. He also hates the words zen, calm, and mindfulness. He especially hates the sound of the Tibetan bowl without a good reason.

W has recently started learning how to meditate. He clicked on a Youtube video on the list of “suggestions” designed to introduce meditation to a complete beginner. He was desperate to do something about his anxiety.

He has always been the type of person that loses his appetite before a job interview. His chest would tighten. And his bladder would shrink. Now, he feels like that all the time. His problem is that his body believes something bad is about to happen. His mind continuously runs simulations on that thought. Most of the time, a person of authority accuses him with a darting question. He forms an answer, then revises his answer, then revises his answer, then revises his answer, then revises his answer and so on.

“Start by finding a chair and get comfortable”

W sits down on the floor and pushes his lower back against the couch. W rarely sits on the couch. He is more comfortable on the floor using the couch as the backrest. It didn't strike him as a weird behaviour until it became “something only Koreans would do”. He is secretly proud of how Korean he is.

“Allow yourself to listen to the sounds around you. Don’t react but just acknowledge.”

W hears a choir of electrical hums. They are coming from his computer, the WIFI router, and the desk lamp. “It’s there”, he is instructed to say to himself by the voice in the guide video. He didn’t realize the buzzing was there until now. He wonders if the slightly different pitches of the hums are playing a minor chord making his workspace sad. But he is not musically talented enough to tell.



W remembers the electrical hum of a thousand televisions. He remembers the heat generated by 80's TVs. He remembers the tingly static on his fingertips as he snuck under the wooden barricade to touch convex glass screens. He remembers the smell of burning electronic parts. He remembers the strain of excessively tilting his head up to look at a towering mass of plastic and metal radiating electromagnetic pulses.

At his eye level, large TVs flashed neon graphics. On top of them were smaller TVs that show similar images. On top of them were even smaller TVs. On top of them were even smaller TVs. On top of them were even smaller TVs. The pattern continued until you couldn't see the images on the TVs because they were way too high and way too small.

W likes running his fingertips on the handrail as he walks up the spiraling ramp of the Guggenheim-like architecture. It is always sticky. He is not sure whether it is just the old lacquer or a build-up of hand grease. He doesn't really care. Doing this makes his walk up to the top more interesting than looking at the TVs.

From the top, he sees the same video playing, but on smaller monitors. The only reason for anyone to come up the ramp is the higher vantage point. It adds fear that they might fall if they lean in to see the work up close. It makes the viewing experience better.

The artwork is called *Da Da Ik Sun* (다다익선), meaning the more the better. The piece was made by Nam June Paik at the National Museum of Contemporary art in Korea. It is the first artwork W ever saw.

W's family lived 15 minutes away, by walking, from the museum. Admission is free. His mom came here several times a week to exercise when she was pregnant. Since then, W visited the gallery in the stroller, then as a toddler, then as a student on field trips, and then as an adult son who dedicates a day to visit the gallery with his mom whenever he visits from Canada.

W's mom tells him how much she hates *Da Da Ik Sun* every time they see the artwork. W always agrees. But really, he doesn't mind. He is indifferent about the work. It is just something that has always been a part of his life



“Focus on the physical sensation of your body. What feels good? What is aching?”

W pulls more air than his usual breath into his lungs. As he exhales, he scans his body for a spot that is tensed up. It is usually his chest and the trapezius muscle. He exhales slowly and relaxes those parts. It feels good. The muscles on his upper body had been sending signals of pain. But they blend in with the surrounding like the electrical hums in his room. The signals from the body rarely interrupt the thoughts in his head

Pop!

W remembers a sudden and unexpected sensation. His leg is hit. It feels numb. It feels wet. He looks down to his left thigh. He realizes that a McDonald’s drink cup has hit his leg judging by the beads of cola rolling down his pants and the ice cubes on the ground. Something like this only happens in movies. A mean-looking person would poke their head out the window and yell something offensive. That didn’t happen. The passenger of a small red hatchback didn’t even allow him to put a face to his anger.

W looked around for someone to acknowledge the injustice that just happened or someone who would offer a napkin to wipe the sugar drink off his leg.

There was no one around.

"Start counting your breaths"

W realizes how shallow his breaths have been. He draws in twice more air, twice longer and exhales twice slower.

One.

W notices how unusually sunny it is for Vancouver's winter. There is no smell of rain. Dry air smells different. Or rather, dry air feels different in the nose. Small but a difference nonetheless. The dry air from Siberia stings the inside of the nose. The wet air from the Pacific settles into the back of the throat.

W remembers the smell of tree shade. It is the smell of tree perspiration evaporating under the summer heat. The sun is going down now. The disintegrating radiation becomes orange beams that everybody loves. Now, the fragile smell can survive to reach his nose. It was the perfect summer evening to drink beer on the balcony.

"This must be boring for you." M didn't want to exclude J, W's wife. She was a cancer research technician. She is a person of exactitude. M worried that their conversation about art has made the gathering unbearable for J. M and W had been talking about W's experience of going through BFA at UBC as a Korean.

"No, I really don't mind" J has become skilled at finding odd interesting details in conversations about art which she has established as "boring" a long time ago.

"But why is contemporary art white?", J asked.

Inhale.

Exhale.

Two.

W remembers the smell of yellowing lacquer on old wooden desktops in room 102 in the Lasserre building at UBC. The smell amplifies with the muffled stillness of air created by the windowless soundproof walls. He is sure that the air he breathed 10 years ago is still there. He took many art history classes in that room. Like H. G. Wells' time machine, he watched slides go from Greek columns to Byzantine mosaics to Tintoretto to Matisse to Matthew Barney over the 4 years. Also like the time machine, the lectures made huge jumps through more than three thousand years of foreign history. Perhaps for many of W's classmates, it was their history. They looked like figures in Reubens' paintings. Michelangelo chiseled their traditional religion. Delacroix painted their history. For W, it was the mandatory training to participate in the game.

Only once in that room, W saw a relatable person. Nam June Paik. W didn't know anything about Paik, other than the fact that he made *Da Da Ik Sun*. In the black and white photo, Paik was dipping his hands into a bowl of ink and painting a line on paper. W noticed the resemblance to a calligraphy master writing Chinese letters on the floor. Two knees and a hand act as a tripod supporting the writing hand. He was making an artwork like a Korean person.



Inhale.

Exhale.

Three.

“You are a good Asian,” L said as they were loading up the grocery in front of the Canadian Superstore. “Some people have prejudices against Asian people here. There are a few families who stick to themselves. But you are fitting in nicely.”

W was genuinely happy to receive that compliment. He was the only person of colour in that parking lot.

Inhale.

Exhale.

Four.

W is worried that he might have said something wrong during his last meeting between the POC students and the black students. He doesn't understand why two different groups are working for equity at the same time. But the tension in the meeting tells him that is precisely why this meeting is happening. He didn't say a word during the meeting because he was afraid he would say something wrong. Nonetheless, he is worried that his lack of participation has somehow labelled him of something. He knows that at the end of the day, nobody is thinking about how distanced he was in a small zoom window. But his heart pumps a bit faster as he thinks about it again.

W had received an email containing information about the POC affinity group and its agenda a few weeks before. He felt uneasy about it. Of course, he is a person of colour. But are Asians a historically oppressed group? Or perhaps it was because he spent the last 10 years trying to fit in, to not be spotted as the only Asian kid in the parking lot. To claim it as his identity felt like an indirect acknowledgement that he has been subjected to systemic racism. He was afraid that he wouldn't have a convincing answer if someone asked him, “How have you been affected by racism?”.

W wouldn't have signed up to be a part of the POC affinity group if he had a choice. His face granted him an automatic membership. He feels like he doesn't qualify to be a part of a group asking for an apology and a change.

Inhale.

Exhale.

Five.

“Cultural shock means you experience the difference between cultures. You can talk to me about it. I think it is a natural process of learning Canadian culture.” L told W.

W was still learning English. “Cultural shock” is one of the first phrases he learned after arriving in Canada.

Sitting in Lasseres 102, W wondered whether Paik had similar experiences as an immigrant. W was 23 studying art in Canada. Paik was 25 when he moved to Germany.

Did people around Paik joke about how fresh-off-the-boat he was? Did he also feel the desire to dissociate from the Korean ways of thinking, talking, eating and dressing? Did he also repeatedly tell himself that it is not racism but a cultural misunderstanding. But since he is the newcomer, the responsibility of understanding falls on him? Did he have to do all these to be accepted into art history? To be on the slide after John Cage? Did he have to be a good Asian to be a recognized Asian?

“Canada is like a mosaic. Each person retains their cultural colour while learning to fit together.” Said P, who was W’s first English teacher after arriving in Canada. P spoke with pride. A Korean teenager, two older Japanese women, and a college student from Switzerland were struggling to learn Canadian culture in a language they could barely keep up.

It took W 13 years to be a piece in the mosaic of a maple leaf. The beauty of mosaic is the weight that makes his trapezius muscle tense. He was willing to cut corners off to fit into a hole in the picture. He tries not to remember the pieces that didn’t fit.

W remembers a comment he read on a news article reporting the “Cancel Canada Day” protest in front of the Vancouver Art Gallery.

“Not saying there isn’t more that can and will be done; however, generally speaking, there’s never been a better time or place to be, visible minority or otherwise, than today’s Canada.”

Inhale.

Exhale.

Six.

“Boycott Paik Nam June!”

W stumbled on a petition to boycott showing Paik Nam June’s work in Korea. They argued that Paik Nam June’s father (Paik Nak-Seung) sided with Japan during the Japanese colonization (1910-45). He was one of the wealthiest people in Korea at the time. He ran a fabric business. His close relationship with Japan allowed him to amass wealth unthinkable for a Korean person. He supplied the Japan-China war. He expanded his business to weapon production. It involved collecting metal from Korean people to supply weapons to the Japanese military. His factories melted people’s livelihood to support the military that oppressed the same people. Paik’s achievement is funded by the people’s suffering. He shouldn’t be celebrated as Korea’s hero.

W knows that the wealth during the colonization period is proportional to the suffering of the Korean people.

“What would you do with a 60 feet tall tower made of 1000 TVs?” W thought.

Paik Nam June said in an interview, “My father was a Chin-il (친일 Meaning pro-Japan collaborator during colonization). He couldn’t be more chin-il even among chin-ils.”

W can’t believe that he has never thought about how a Korean person close to his grandma’s age could have had the money and opportunity to study art in Germany.

“I was 10. I heard adults saying Japanese people are taking all the virgins. People were marrying off teenage daughters in a hurry to keep them safe. Some girls were told by the Japanese that they would work in a factory. But instead got sent to sex slavery. Those girls are all dead. And there are not many left who remember that.” W’s grandma said before taking a long breath that made W hear how old she is.

Inhale.

Exhale.

Seven.

“I come from a very poor country, and I am poor. I have to entertain people every second.” Said Paik Nam June. He came from a very poor country. But he wasn’t poor. Who was he trying to entertain anyway?

“Have you heard the saying “ripping poor”?” W’s grandma once asked W.

“People ate tree bark. People would strip bark and boil them to soften it. But when you poop the next day, bunched-up tree bark would rip your anus! Ah ho!” She laughed with her signature exclamation at the end.

“All the trees were bare.” W’s grandma said as a matter-of-factly.

“Wouldn’t it be better to eat grass then?” Asked W.

“Anything edible had already been eaten at that point.”

W’s grandma is very picky about tofu. When the war ended, her family settled in a new town. His grandma took a year off the school and sold tofu at the local market. She thinks she knows everything about tofu. She criticizes tofu loudly in restaurants. W’s family never take her to a tofu restaurant.

Inhale.

Exhale.

Eight.

MOMA's bio on Paik says Paik's family fled Korea upon the outbreak of the Korean war. It makes Paik look like a war refugee. But his family left because their deep connection with Japan and the wealth they amassed through it had become a crime.



W's grandma laughs a lot when she talks about how her family fled from North Korea during the war. "Because people left in hurry, people didn't take their food. you could just go into abandoned homes and eat their rice and kimchi. We each carried a bundle on our shoulders. That was all we had. No food."

"We knew the Chinese and the North Korean military (중공군) was marching south. But we didn't know how close they were. We were desperate to keep moving south and cross the Han-Tan river. But It wasn't frozen solidly enough for people to cross. Some people couldn't wait. I saw them drop through the ice. Our family waited two days there." Said W's grandma. She is always high-spirited when talking to W. But her voice slows down and drops an octave when she talks about tragedies she has witnessed. She was 17 years old.

The cold air from Siberia stings the inside of the nose.

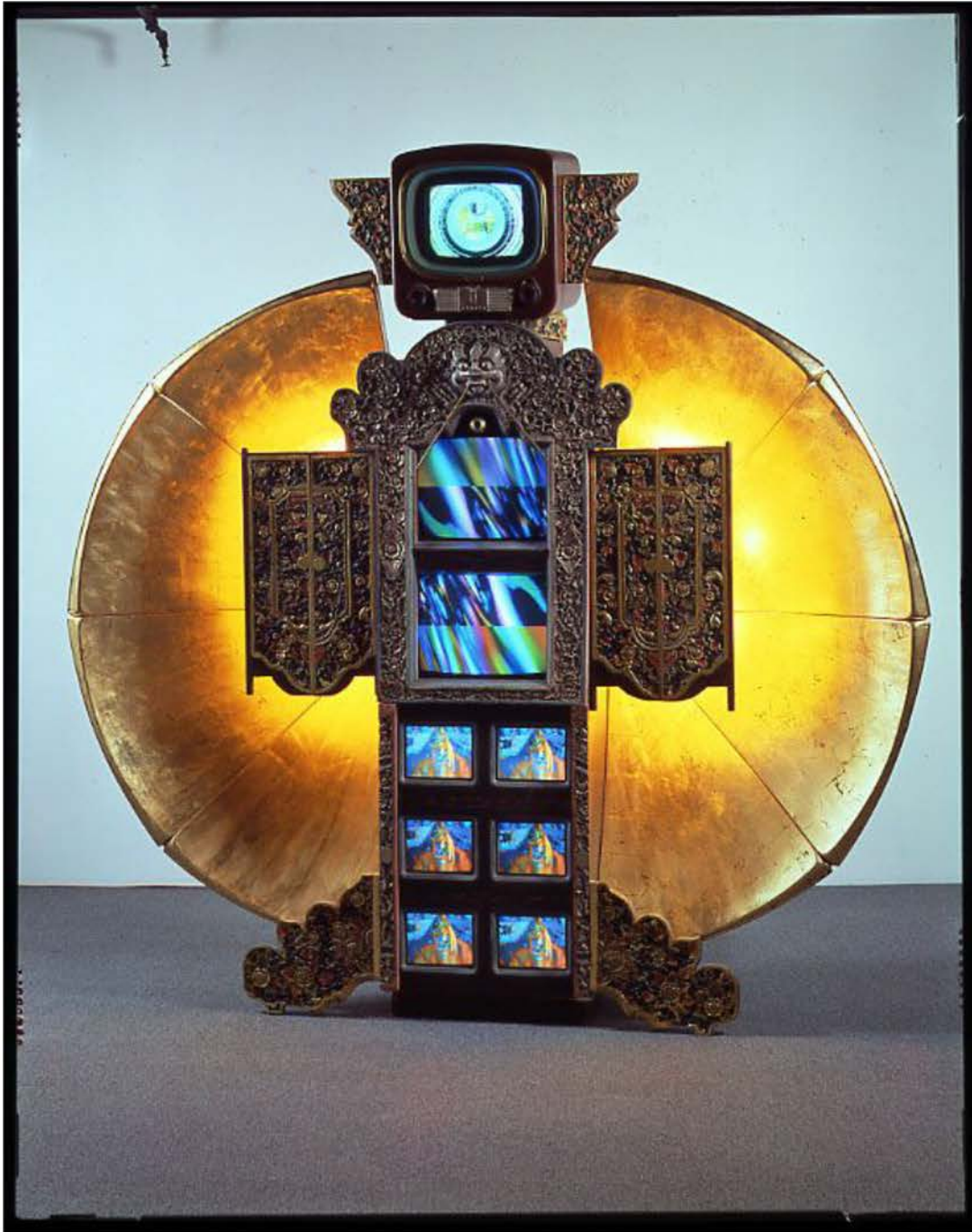
Inhale.

Exhale.

Nine.

UN photographers and the US army documented the war. So many photos of nameless Koreans. W likes to imagine that his grandma's family is in one of the unrecognizable faces in the crowd.

After moving to Japan, Paik's family bought a large Zenith television. It was said to be the only tv in the neighbourhood. Paik must have watched the aftermath of the war on his tv. He might have seen W's grandma in the crowd of people fleeing from the war.



Nam June Paik. *Zenith*. 1992

W remembers watching TV with his grandma. Family reunions were being broadcasted on live tv. The North Korean government and the South Korean government have exchanged a list of people who wish to meet family members separated by the border. Old people brought photos of their family from 50 years ago. They embrace and cry loudly while commenting on how much they have aged since they last saw each other.

“Grandma, what happened to your relatives in North Korea?”

“I don’t know. I don’t want to know...Do you know how many families were separated by the war? Those people are there for the camera.”



Inhale.
Exhale.

Ten.

“It’s a huge fucking buddha.”, W thought looking at the photos of the famous Kamakura statue. After fleeing Korea, Paik’s family settled in Kamakura, Japan, home of the great buddha statue. W imagines Paik looking up to Buddha’s face as he looked up to the top of *Da Da Ik Sun*. It must have made a lasting impact on him.



Inhale.
Exhale.

Eleven.

W heard Kerry James Marshall talking about the lack of black representation in art history at his artist talk. The lack of role models. W wishes he had also talked about finding out your role model is the son of a traitor.

Inhale.
Exhale.

Twelve.

W's parents moved a few years ago. It is a strange experience to "go back home" and find yourself in an unfamiliar place. The condo is decorated with old family photos, recent photos of W's younger brother, and W's wedding photos. There are too many photos on the walls. It feels too home but foreign at the same time.

When W was young, there were many paintings by his mom on the walls. But every time they moved, many of them disappeared. Only one painting survived the last move. A large oil painting hangs by the doorway. It gets partially covered when the door opens.

W is sad because this painting shouldn't be by itself. There was another painting that is the same size. They used to hang side by side on the most prominent wall in the living room. They were always too big for a place that was already too small for four people.

W's mom kept the one that W drew over with her lipstick when he was too young to remember.



Inhale.

Exhale.

Thirteen.

“Desperate people don’t meditate” W’s mom often told W when he was young.

American Missionaries took many photos of Korean people. One of the photographs says, “Natives praying to wooden devils.” The carved poles are not devils. They are village guardians. But the captions speak louder than the people depicted in the photograph.

Inhale.

Exhale.

Fourteen.

“My life started in an evening of August 1958 in Darmstadt”, said Paik reflecting on his first encounter with John Cage.

John Cage was influenced by Suzuki Daisetsu (or D. T. Suzuki in the West). It is easy to talk about Zen when John Cage talks about it. It is so hard to be a devil worshipper though. W wondered, “Do I have to be a good Asian to be a recognized Asian?”

To be a devil worshipper means to constantly feel the pressure to change. They get photographed, never photographing. The caption is written for them, not by them. And most importantly, it means to be misunderstood.



14089—Natives Praying to Wooden Devils, Chosen (Korea)

Inhale.

Exhale.

Fifteen.

"I took care of your grandma when her cancer got bad. And soon after she died, I was pregnant. Your dad promised that he would try his best to help me get to a grad school in a few years. I dreamed of going to America. I believed him. But I knew it wasn't possible." W's mom said it like it was someone else's story.

Two years ago, W visited the national contemporary art museum with his mom.

"Mom, I wish I can have a small show in this museum and come see it with you. Maybe one day..."

"You will never have a spot in Korean art. They will never accept you. You need to make a spot in Canadian or American art. Then they will see someone who speaks Korean."

W wondered how she felt as she walked around the museum with W in the stroller. She was 27 then. W is 28 walking around the museum with his mom. They have seen some works more than a hundred times. This place feels too home but foreign at the same time.



Inhale.

Exhale.

Sixteen.

Last year, W visited the National Museum of contemporary art. He was surprised to find *Da Da Ik Sun* turned off. There was a sign saying that the televisions, now more than 40 years old, are failing. The museum technicians assessed that the installation has become a fire hazard.

The museum was thinking about ways to bring back the work. One proposal was to replace the inside of the televisions with newer parts while maintaining the old casings. Another proposal was to replace the old TVs with curved display LCD TVs altogether. Then some people said the public should accept the course of the work. The work should be displayed turned off.

The things he remembered of *Da Da Ik Sun* were gone. No more flashing graphics. No more TV heat. No more sound of electronic buzzing. No more electromagnetic pulses. The rotunda is much darker without 1000 tv lights. There's even a faint smell of oil paintings from the adjacent rooms.

W likes the work more this way. It doesn't try to appear artsy. The ambitious installation by Paik Nam June at the most prominent spot in Korea's national contemporary art museum looks almost like a junkyard. *Da Da Ik Sun* (More the Better) is something that has always been part of W's life. It is only when it turns off, he realizes how much noise it has been making every time he remembers the museum he grew up in.



fresh earth. old ground.



i give what i can.
you take what you need.

divulge. divest. temper. expectations.



are you going to let me
or do I have to make you?



chapter ten:

Two Kingdoms

Amory Abbott Jenna Kirouac

STAGE 10: QUESTIONING THE CONSEQUENCES

“What have we done, will this ever get better?”

While the collaborative narrative project focuses on anti-racism, this chapter looks briefly at a substructure below it, colonialism.

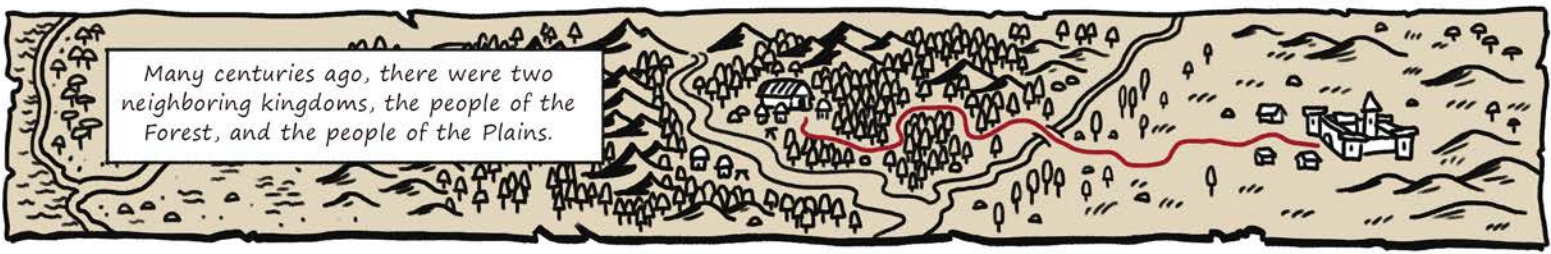
Our heroes aren't virtuous.

The work is a long journey, not a tokenistic offering that rights all wrongs. Doing the work comes with sacrificing privilege. We can see our 'heroes' are flawed people and have arrived at doing the right thing for the wrong reasons. As this chapter ends, we are left wondering whether they will come around.

Copyright ©2021 Amory Abbott & Jenna Kirouac

*Created on the unceded and shared homelands of the
xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish),
and Səlílwətaɕ (Tseil-Waututh) peoples.*





Many centuries ago, there were two neighboring kingdoms, the people of the Forest, and the people of the Plains.

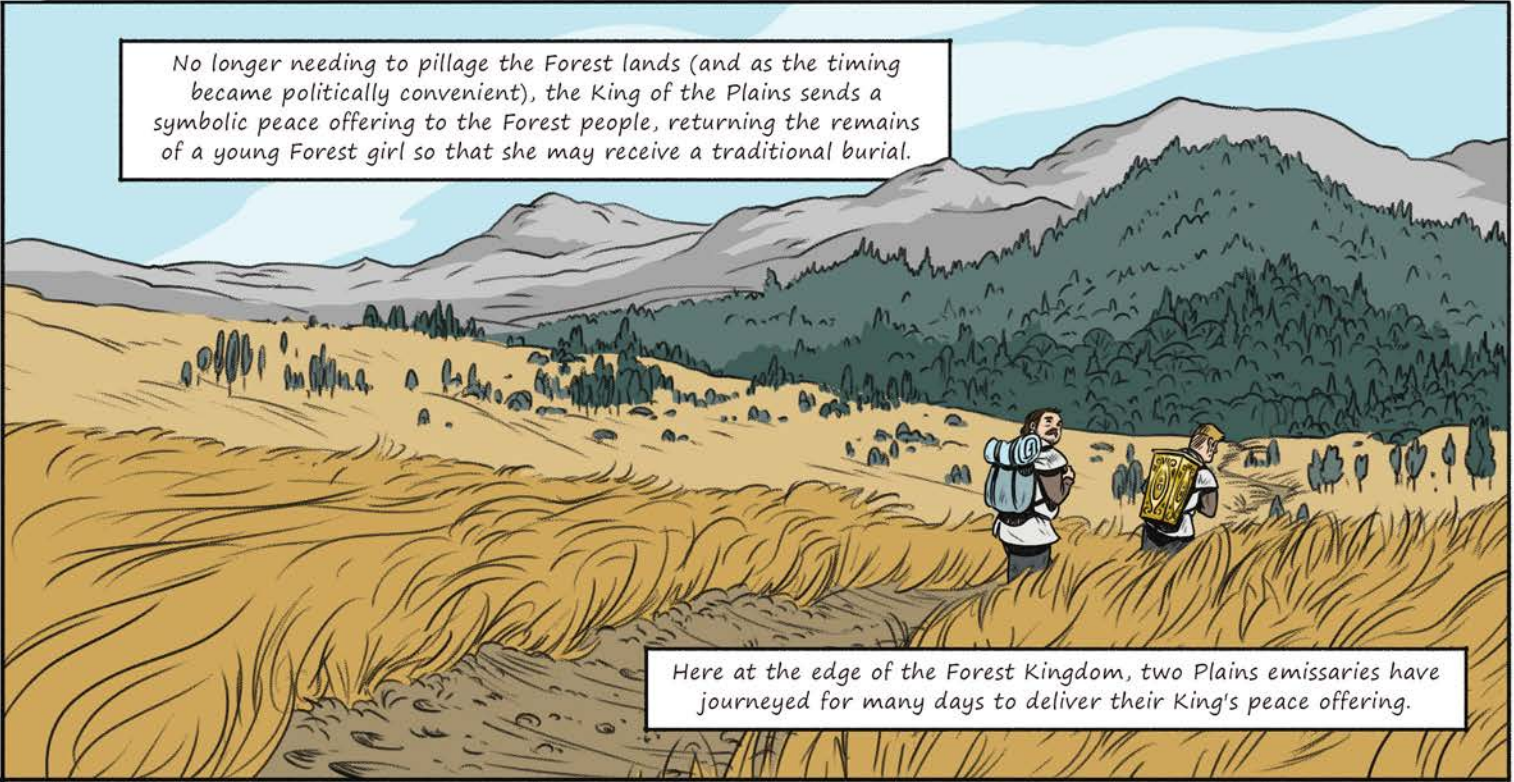


The Forest Kingdom's lands were rich in natural resources, while the Kingdom of the Plains harnessed a powerful army...



...that they wielded against the Forest folk, extracting their natural resources, enslaving their soldiers, and killing civilians at any sign of insurrection.

While the warlords of the Plains grew wealthy beyond measure, slowly their appetites moved to sate off the bounty of other lands...



No longer needing to pillage the Forest lands (and as the timing became politically convenient), the King of the Plains sends a symbolic peace offering to the Forest people, returning the remains of a young Forest girl so that she may receive a traditional burial.

Here at the edge of the Forest Kingdom, two Plains emissaries have journeyed for many days to deliver their King's peace offering.



HOW MANY DAYS HAVE WE BEEN WALKING?



...AND JUST TO DELIVER A PILE OF BONES...

QUIT YOUR MOANING. WE'RE ALMOST THERE.



THIS SAVAGE PLACE IS TOO CLOSED-IN... TOO DARK.



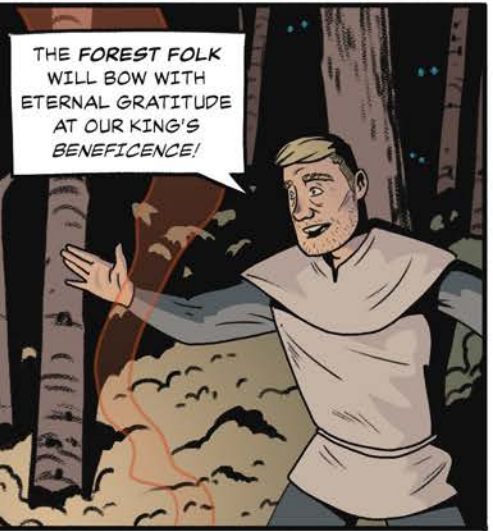
ANOTHER DAY'S TREK AND WE'LL REACH THEIR CITY.



MEH.



YOU WOULD THINK YOU'D BE PROUD TO BE ON THIS MISSION... WE HAVE A SACRED CHARGE FROM THE KING!





YOU SHALL NOT TAKE ONE STEP
FURTHER INTO OUR KINGDOM WITH
YOUR TOKEN PEACE OFFERING.



YOUR KING SEEKS TO ABSOLVE
YOUR LONG TYRANNY, TO
REWRITE HISTORY WITH THIS
EMPTY GESTURE!



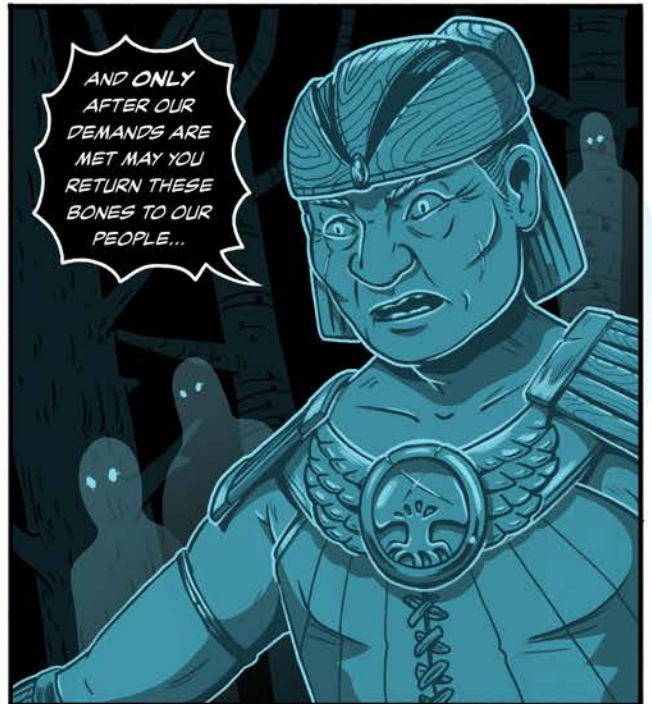
YOU WILL TAKE THIS CHILD'S BONES
BACK TO YOUR BARREN PLAINS
AND HANG THEM UPON YOUR TALLEST
FLAG STAFF FOR ALL TO SEE...



...AS A SYMBOL OF YOUR
COLLECTIVE SHAME!

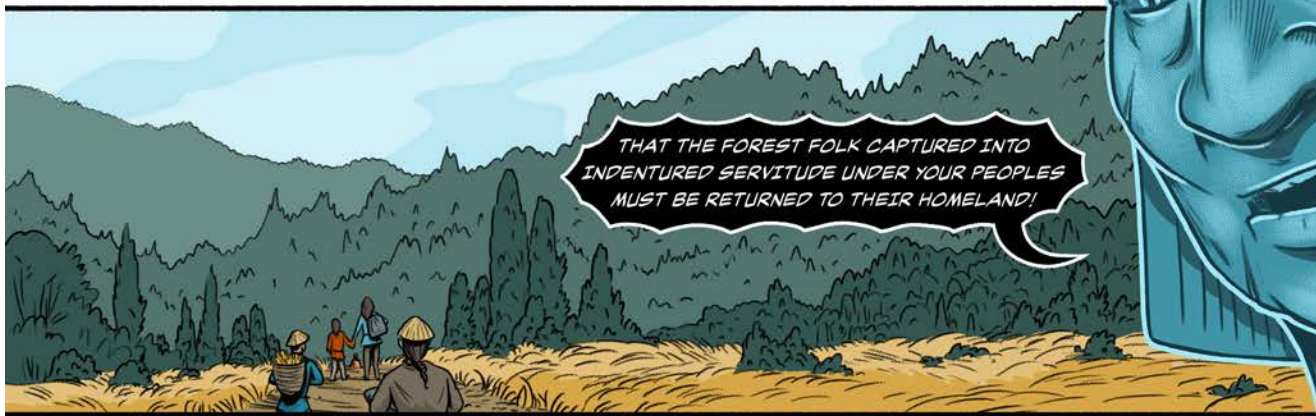


AND ONLY
AFTER OUR
DEMANDS ARE
MET MAY YOU
RETURN THESE
BONES TO OUR
PEOPLE...





GO BACK TO YOUR KING AND TELL HIM THAT HE MUST RELEASE THE FOREST SOLDIERS FROM YOUR DUNGEONS, WHO WERE LEFT THERE TO ROT FROM BATTLES LONG AGO!



THAT THE FOREST FOLK CAPTURED INTO INDENTURED SERVITUDE UNDER YOUR PEOPLES MUST BE RETURNED TO THEIR HOMELAND!



AND LASTLY, THAT HE MUST SWEAR AN OATH TO RELINQUISH ANY CONTROL OVER OCCUPIED FORESTLANDS. THE FOREST IS A SOVEREIGN KINGDOM AND THE LANDS WILL RETURN TO OUR SOLE GUARDIANSHIP!



Y-YOU CHARGE US TO DELIVER THESE DEMANDS?



YES. IF YOUR KING SWEARS TO DO THESE THINGS, THEN AND ONLY THEN WILL WE ACCEPT THIS STOLEN CHILD FROM YOU... NOT AS A PEACE OFFERING, BUT AS THE BEGINNING OF ONE.







AND BESIDES, HAVEN'T WE ALREADY DONE **SO MUCH** FOR THE FOREST PEOPLE?!





YOU'RE RIGHT.



YOU'RE RIGHT. WE MAY BE PUNISHED AND WILL MOST CERTAINLY BE SHUNNED AT FIRST, AS THESE DEMANDS WILL NOT BE POPULAR...

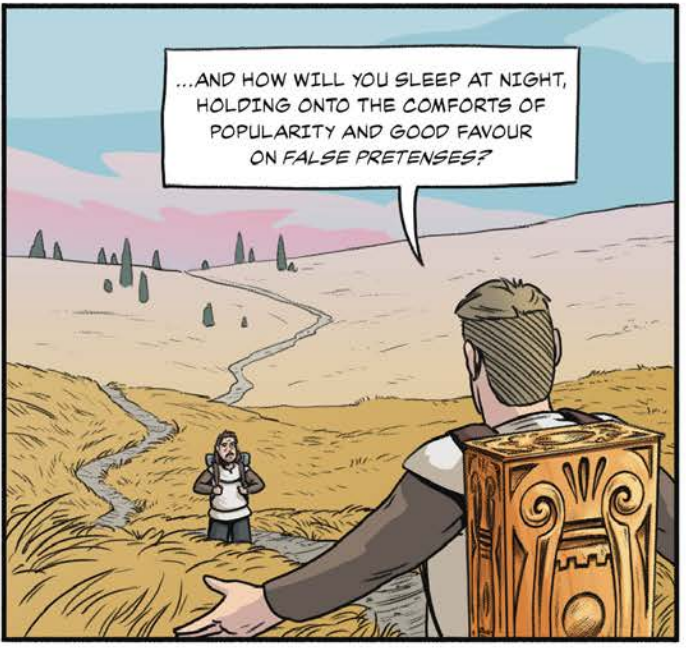
...BUT WE HAVE NO OTHER CHOICE.



B-BUT...



DO YOU THINK I WANT TO DO THIS?!
HMMM?
DON'T YOU THINK I KNOW THAT DELIVERING THE MESSAGE OF A *GHOST* WILL MAKE US LOOK CRAZY?!
BUT HOW WOULD WE GO ON KNOWING THAT WE HAVE *LIED* TO OUR KING AND THE PEACE TREATY BETWEEN OUR PEOPLES WAS NOT FULFILLED?



...AND HOW WILL YOU SLEEP AT NIGHT, HOLDING ONTO THE COMFORTS OF POPULARITY AND GOOD FAVOUR ON FALSE PRETENSES?





I SUPPOSE WE
MUST FACE
THIS SHAME...



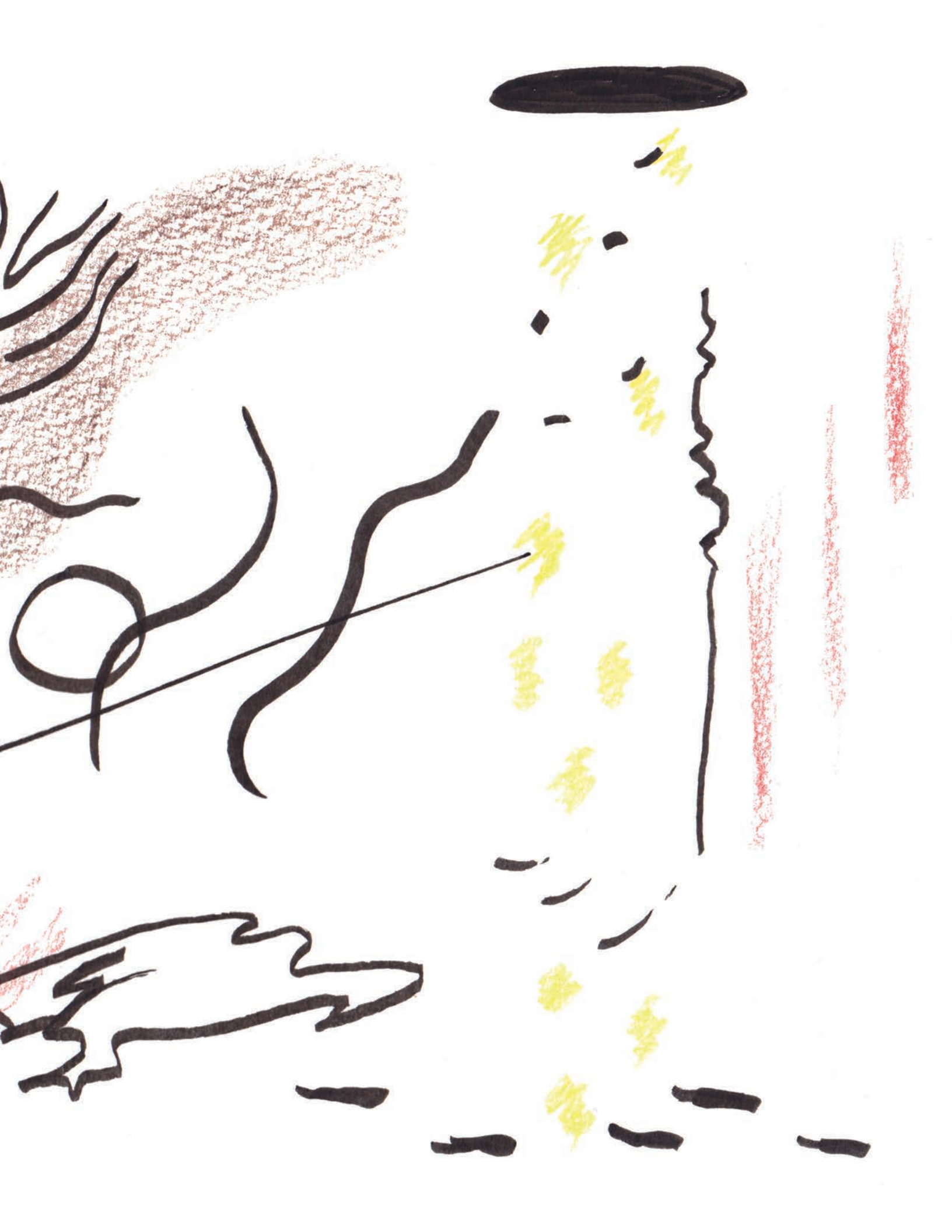
...BUT
IT WILL
COST US.

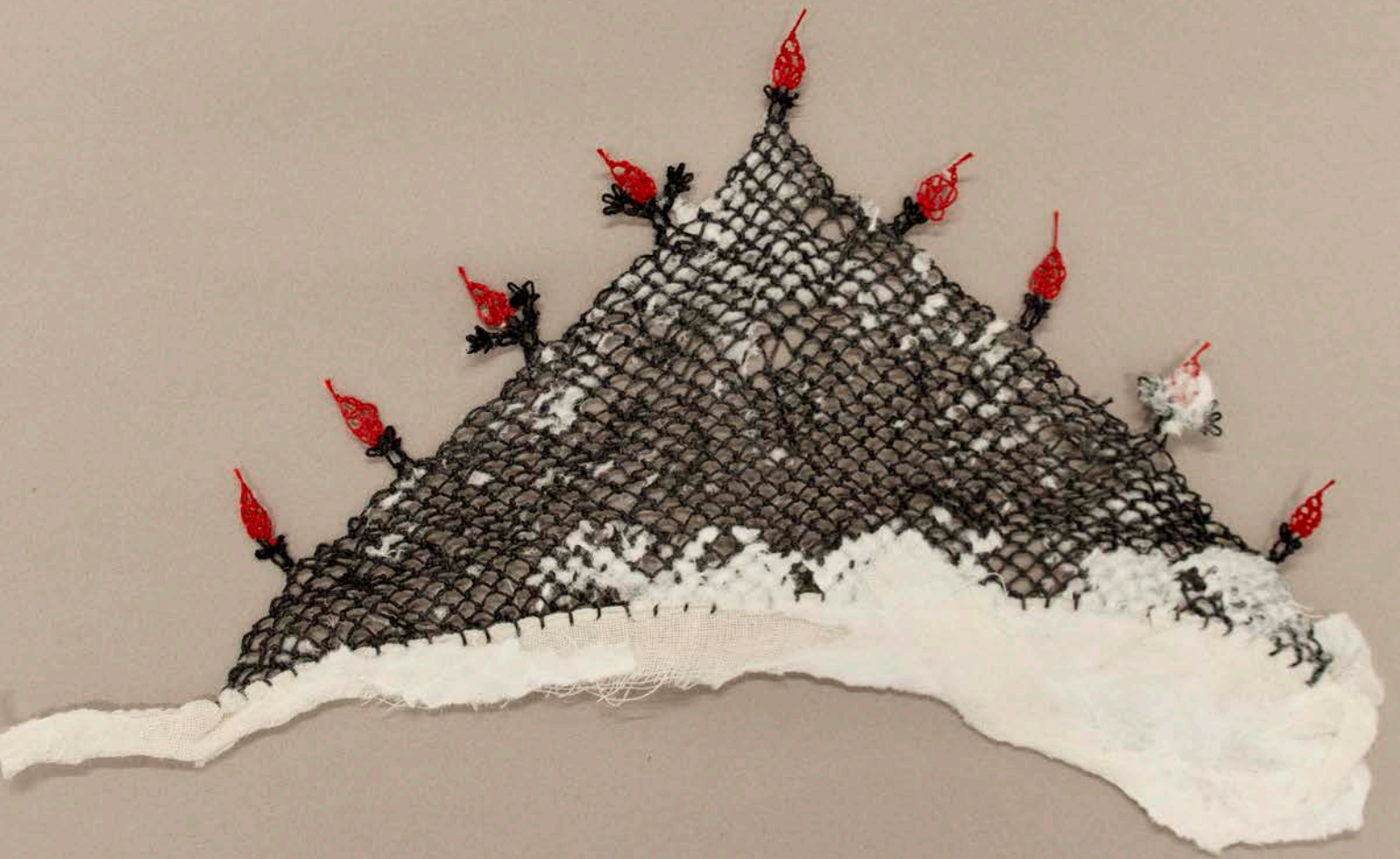


"...I THINK THE
GREATER SHAME
WOULD BE SPENDING
ANOTHER MOMENT
PRETENDING WE HAVE
DONE ALL WE CAN."

FIN.







44minuts and 17seconds of listening
Vancouver, Commercial Drive

"It is itself this language; not in written form, but as it is joyously acted out. This celebration is purified of all rite or song, and its language is the very idea of a universally comprehended prose, just as the language of birds is comprehended by the children born on Sunday."

Agamben, Giorgio (1988)

حج
: حج

کر
کر
کر
کر
گر

ت
ت
ت



ش
کر
کر
کر
کر

کر
کر
کر

ح
ح
ح

حجر

3

2
3

1

3

2
2

3

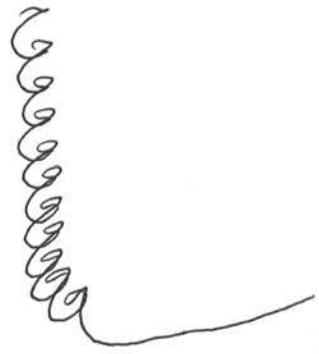
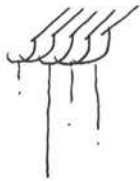
2

3
3
3
3

,

,,

2



۲۲۲۲

۷
ک

U

2 2

2 2

2

o

5

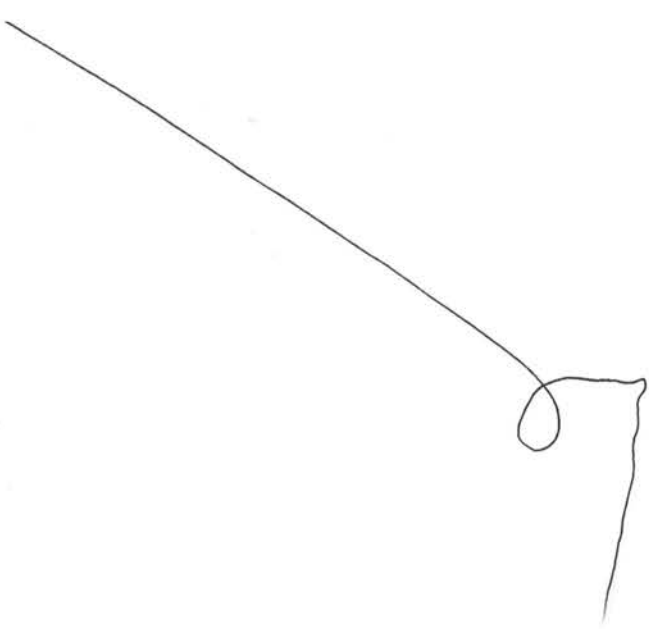
,

o

2 2 2

2 2

2 2 2



2

111

2

f



This book was created by each artist responding to the following call for participation and choosing a stage:

CALL FOR PARTICIPATION

COLLECTIVELY AUTHORED NOVEL/ARTIST BOOK/PHOTO BOOK/COMIC BOOK/GRAPHIC NOVEL on ANTI-RACISM

Introduction:

We invite participation from community members of any discipline (students / staff / faculty / workers) to contribute a chapter that fits into an experimental narrative sequence focused on the topic of anti-racism. During the ongoing discussion on anti-racism there has been a desire to turn thoughts into an artistic form that speaks to our solidarity: what would we need to do, learn or create to have the conversations about racism, social justice, and equity in our art and design context? The goal of this project is to facilitate a space where we can collectively imagine an alternative narrative paradigm that represents a more compassionate way of relating to one another and to the world around us; to creatively imagine a non-exclusive poly-vocal resistance towards the status quo that embraces diversity and change in order to unite us.

Method:

The ideas raised in the work are generated by the artist creators, who have the opportunity to contribute to a peer dialogue. Each participant will be assigned a stage, chapter, or episode, by random selection to complete independently by the due date. Teams can work together on one part. Trust will be placed in the creator to accept that their chapter will fit into the narrative sequence in their pre-determined position and be one voice among many that contributes to work as a whole. The creator is open to interpret or present their chapter in any way.

Structure:

The structure of the work will be based on the following:

Stage: ORDINARY WORLD. The given.

Stage: DISRUPTION also known as the "CALL TO ADVENTURE" (What disturbs the status quo?)

Stage: QUESTIONING also known as the "REFUSAL OF THE CALL" (Has something (an event) happened or are we dreaming?)

Stage: DECISION to act or not. (Something has happened and action is necessary)

Stage: The decision to act can be encouraged by a MEETING WITH THE MENTOR. Guidance.

Stage: UNKNOWN also known as "CROSSING THE THRESHOLD" (the first step on the new path)

Stage: HELP OR TESTS FROM ALLIES OR OPPONENTS, whom are met on the journey.

Stage: QUESTIONING THE CONSEQUENCES of the decision ("What have we done, will this ever get better?")

Stage: THE FINAL TEST/ ORDEAL (pushed to the limit, the breaking point, the world will not be the same after this...)

Stage: RENEWAL of outlook and position / Creation of a new community.

Stage: RESTORATION OF THE WORLD / Reconciliation (returning to the "new" ordinary world; what has been repaired or healed)

All artwork courtesy the artists, 2021.



STAGE: ORDINARY WORLD. The given.

ARTIST: Vicky Chia Wei Mo

BIO: As a living presence navigating a society built on different modes of oppression, my individual growth and development are parallel to my artistic practice. My hands are tools used to communicate the feelings behind labour: love, strength, resolution, despair... inherited from my ancestors. The wielding of my hands carries out my art-making process and mirrors this familiar labour and aids in the act of inner healing. Ultimately, my practice explores themes surrounding how a wounded individual's psyche is formed, informed, and reformed, and in return, attracts and sustains, collective healing. I am a first generation Chinese/Taiwanese settler currently residing on the unceded lands of the x^wməθk^wəyəm (Musqueam), Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish), and səliłwətaʔ (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations.



STAGE: DISRUPTION also known as the "CALL TO ADVENTURE" (What disturbs the status quo?)

ARTIST: Rachele Ogbunigwe

BIO: My name is Rachele Ogbunigwe and I'm a second year Emily Carr University student majoring in Visual Arts. The representation of my work is based upon self-expression through the communication of personal thoughts and emotions that constantly hunt my mind. Fantasy and imagination play a significant role in my life. The concepts I conceive and develop in my work, incorporate the the fascinating confusion of the subconscious of my deepest thoughts. I love to explore the principles of having the valiancy to be afraid to share my vulnerabilities with the viewer. The goal and aspirations I have when creating my work is to let the viewer interpret the piece in their own way and constantly making their mind wonder, without limiting their thinking. My practice is mostly based on the usage of a variety of different colours as well as the incorporation of elements of collage and detailed designs into a mixture of paint, ink, glitters and watercolours. I tend to follow the rhythm of my mind, without planning an overall picture before portraying it onto the piece, therefore every thought, line and image is portrayed the exact moment I paint it.



STAGE: QUESTIONING (1) also known as the "REFUSAL OF THE CALL" (Has something (an event) happened or are we dreaming?)

ARTIST: Natalia Soto Leites

BIO: Natalia Soto Leites is a Mexican illustrator based in Vancouver, Canada whose work is inspired by the many fantasy novels and movies she relished in as a child and the bright colors of Mexican artisanal arts. Having moved from Mexico City to attend Emily Carr University, Natalia combines fiction, surrealism, and reflecting on the world she lives in through character and creature design, and world building. Her main medium is digital illustration, but has explored 3D modeling in both digital and analog formats. When she's not making bird-human hybrid characters, Natalia can be found, coffee cup in hand, embroidering, reading or attempting to roller skate.
nataliasotoleites.com Instagram @na.r.t Twitter @natsl_art



STAGE: QUESTIONING (2) also known as the “REFUSAL OF THE CALL” (Has something (an event) happened or are we dreaming?)

ARTIST: Felicity Crisp

BIO: Felicity Crisp is a student of Emily Carr University. She is interested in how art connects and brings people together, especially when it comes to the private moments they share. Her practice primarily focuses on the daily practice of drawing by herself, but also branches into collaborative efforts in drawing as well. She is currently working on projects with the Patio Press fellowship and drawings to put towards her degree. In her spare time she enjoys riding her bike, doing yoga, and spending time with her cat named Moonbean.

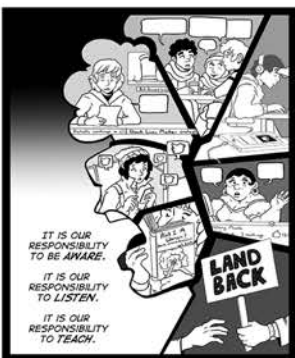


STAGE: DECISION to act or not (Something has happened and action is necessary)

ARTIST: Sunny Nestler

BIO: Sunny Nestler is a grateful and uninvited guest on unceded Coast Salish territories belonging to the x^wməθk^wəyəm (Musqueam), S^łwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish), and səilwətaʔ (Tsleil-Waututh) First Nations. Nestler's visual art practice is rooted in drawing, and studies mechanisms of biological life using a process that mimics DNA replication and mutation. Their subject matter cross-pollinates biological processes, for example the growth of a virus, or the changing interpretation of biological gender markers.

Nestler's past work includes collaborative animation, community-led arts programming, a recent municipal commission, as well as thirteen years of managing community bike shops, and seven years of teaching university-level fine art and science. Nestler sits on the board of UNIT/PITT Society for Art and Critical Awareness and teaches art and science classes at Emily Carr University of Art + Design.



STAGE: The decision to act can be encouraged by a MEETING WITH THE MENTOR. Guidance.

ARTIST: Wake Cook

BIO: Wake Cook is a queer comic illustrator and character designer working in Vancouver, B.C. He uses his practice to explore the fluidity of identity and thoughtful representation through the comic medium. His first graphic novel, *Iris*, was published by Wildstar Press in 2021.



STAGE: UNKNOWN also known as “CROSSING THE THRESHOLD” (the first step on the new path).

ARTIST: River Kero

BIO: River Kero is a queer Canadian artist born and currently living in Vancouver, British Columbia. His practice consists mostly of graphic novel illustration, drawing, and writing. Currently, River creates online content, works as a freelance illustrator and writer and lives in East Van with his cat.



STAGE: HELP OR TESTS FROM ALLIES OR OPPONENTS (1), whom are met on the journey.

ARTIST: Al McWilliams

BIO: Al McWilliams was educated at the University of British Columbia and the Vancouver School of Art, Graduating from the Art School in 1969. Since that time Al has exhibited extensively in both solo and major group exhibitions throughout Canada, the United States and Europe. His work has represented Canada in major exhibitions in Germany, France, Japan, Korea and the United States. His work is in most major public collections in Canada including The National Gallery of Canada, The Vancouver Art Gallery, The Art Gallery of Ontario and the Musee D'art Contemporain as well as many private and corporate collections in Canada, the U.S. and Europe.

Along with his private studio practise Al has been involved in a number of public art competitions, completing projects in Toronto, Vancouver, Seattle and Japan. His most recent public work was the Monument for the Royal Canadian Navy in Ottawa, a collaboration with the architect Joost Bakker.



STAGE: HELP OR TESTS FROM ALLIES OR OPPONENTS (2), whom are met on the journey.

ARTIST: Marlene Yuen

BIO: Marlene Yuen is a Vancouver-based artist who received her bachelor's of studio arts in 1998 from the University of British Columbia. She has exhibited at galleries, artist-run centres, and cultural events in Canada, United States, UK, Belgium, and Japan. The work in this book is based on a scene from Spike Lee's film *Do the Right Thing* (1989).



STAGE: HELP OR TESTS FROM ALLIES OR OPPONENTS (3), whom are met on the journey.

ARTIST: Woojae Kim

BIO: Woojae Kim (b. Seoul) is an artist living in Vancouver, the unceded territories of the x^wməθk^wəyəm (Musqueam), Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish), and səililwətaʔ (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations. He is an MFA candidate at the Milton Avery Graduate School of the Arts, Bard College. His works accommodate contact between nonhuman/material intelligence and human memory. His current research is on olfactory communication.



STAGE: HELP OR TESTS FROM ALLIES OR OPPONENTS (4), whom are met on the journey.

ARTIST: Clare Yow

BIO: Clare Yow is a visual artist whose lens-based art practice revolves around the politics of identity and being. She focuses on how race, transnationality and feminist culture intersect with the everyday, while continually situating herself on the lands she has called home as a Chinese-Canadian diasporic immigrant and settler. Clare resides, works and parents on the unceded, ancestral and occupied territories of the x^wməθk^wəyəm (Musqueam), Skw̓wú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish), and səliwətaʔ (Tsleil-Waututh) First Nations, known as so-called Vancouver, and works out of BCA Sun Wah in Chinatown. Learn more at clareyow.com



STAGE: QUESTIONING THE CONSEQUENCES (1) of the decision (“What have we done, will this ever get better?”)

ARTISTS: Amory Abbott & Jenna Kirouac

BIOS: Amory Abbott grew up in in Bloomington, Indiana, relocating to Vancouver, BC in 2017 where he now teaches illustration at Emily Carr University of Art + Design. His personal art practices range from gallery to publication, exploring social and environmental justice, the effects of global ecological crisis, and how a bit of fantasy and imagination can reconnect us to the earth.

Jenna Kirouac is a writer from rural Northwestern Ontario who currently resides in Vancouver, BC.



STAGE: QUESTIONING THE CONSEQUENCES (2) of the decision (“What have we done, will this ever get better?”)

ARTIST: Rachel Lau

BIO: Rachel Lau is a multidisciplinary artist, writer, and radio producer based in what’s colonially known as “Vancouver”. Through sound art, photography, and zine-making, they contemplate what it means to experience longing in a world that is transient. They are interested in the process of death and decay, along with our mortal resistance to it. Currently, they are a co-librarian of Queer Reads Library, a mobile library of queer books and zines founded in Hong Kong and presented internationally. You can find their work at racholau.com.



STAGE: THE FINAL TEST/ ORDEAL (pushed to the limit, the breaking point, the world will not be the same after this...)

ARTIST: Damla Tamer

BIO: Damla Tamer (born in Istanbul, Turkey) is an artist and educator living on unceded Coast Salish Territories. She works with mark-making, textiles, and spoken performance. Her practice and pedagogy search for a new ethics of temporality through the relationships between safety and vitality. Her work has been the focus of solo exhibitions at Darling Foundry and the fifty fifty arts collective. She is a founding member of A.M. (Art Mamas) artist group, and teaches on a sessional basis at UBC and Emily Carr University.



STAGE: RENEWAL of outlook and position / Creation of a new community.

ARTIST: Mandana Mansouri

BIO: Mandana Mansouri is a visual artist and writer working with still and moving images, language, performance and site-specific installations. She has three languages and her practice is remembering the forgotten one.

Mansouri holds a BSc in Architecture (2005) and an MSc in Urban Design (2012) and MFA in Visual Art (2019). Her work has been included in recent exhibitions at Morris and Helen Belkin Art Gallery, Vancouver (2019), HEKLER Medium, New York (2018), AHVA Gallery, UBC (2018), Gallery 1515, Vancouver (2017) and Azad Art Gallery, Tehran (2017). Mansouri has collaborated with art collectives such as Two's Company in Vancouver, Photocopy, New Media Society and Architecture Urbanism Circle in Tehran.



STAGE: RESTORATION OF THE WORLD / Reconciliation (returning to the “new” ordinary world; what has been repaired or healed).

ARTIST: Megan McClennon

BIO: Born in Victoria, British Columbia, Megan grew up with a mom and a dad and a little bro. At the age of 4, Megan was given a crayon and paper and from then on she was addicted to art. With a push from her mom, she was rolled in many art classes, when she was young, fueling her passion. Megan was lucky to have great art teachers as she grew up in school that encourage her to explore, imagine and create many things.

This collaborative book was organized and arranged by Dan Starling.

BIO: Dan Starling is an interdisciplinary artist who works with print media and film. As a settler inhabiting the unceded territories of the Coast Salish peoples, he dedicates his research based practice to the deconstruction of mainstream cultural paradigms. danstarling.com