

MY NANI HAS GONE AWAY AND I  
WAS NOT THERE TO SAY GOODBYE  
TO HER. I CANNOT EVEN SPEAK  
FOR THE WEIGHT OF THE SADNESS  
AND GUILT.

I STARTED SOBBLING IMMEDIATELY  
WHEN I GOT THE NEWS BUT THAT  
DIDN'T STOP ANA ~~BOY~~ FROM  
FUCKING CURSING ME OUT  
FOR NOT BEING HOME SOONER.

FUCK THAT MOTHERFUCKIN

TRAIN TRAFFIC WAS SO  
BAD I COULD BARELY MAKE

IT THROUGH ON FOOT, THE  
POLICE WERE ALREADY THERE  
STIRRING UP FIGHTS AS USUAL  
AND IT TOOK A SOLID  
20 FUCKING MIN TO  
GET PAST THEIR  
STUPID CHECKPOINT.

I BURST INTO THE HOUSE  
LITERALLY MINUTES TOO LATE.  
SHE PASSED IN THE EARLY  
EVENING. SHE HAD STOPPED  
ASKING FOR MEDICINES. THE  
WHOLE FAMILY WAS CRAMMED  
INTO THE HEALING ROOM, ALL

BROWN TEAR-STAINED FACES AND  
SWOLLEN EYES. THE BED WAS  
COVERED HEAD TO FOOT IN TINY  
GIFTS, HANDWRITTEN PRAYERS,  
BITS OF SAGE. MY LITTLEST  
COLSIN ANITA CRYING LOUDLY  
IN HER MOTHER'S ARMS,  
LOOKING AT THIS GODDESS-LIKE  
WOMAN WITH HER GREY-BLACK  
TRESSES WHO HAD SOMEHOW  
BIRTHED US ALL =

IT WAS THE SADDEST AND MOST  
BEAUTIFUL THING I HAVE SEEN.  
I WANTED SO FOCKIN BADLY TO  
SAY GOODBYE, AND NOW SHE IS  
= GONE =

SOMEHOW I MUST HAVE  
CONVINCED MYSELF THAT SHE  
WAS OKAY, THAT SHE WASN'T  
GOING ANYWHERE, THAT SHE  
WAS GOING TO MAGICALLY JUST  
HEAL AND BE RIGHT BACK  
IN THE KITCHEN MAKING  
ME COCOA WHEN I GOT HOME  
LATE FROM CLASS.

YOUTH MAKES US  
STUPID.

LIFE IS SHORT.

ANA WHISPERED SOMETHING

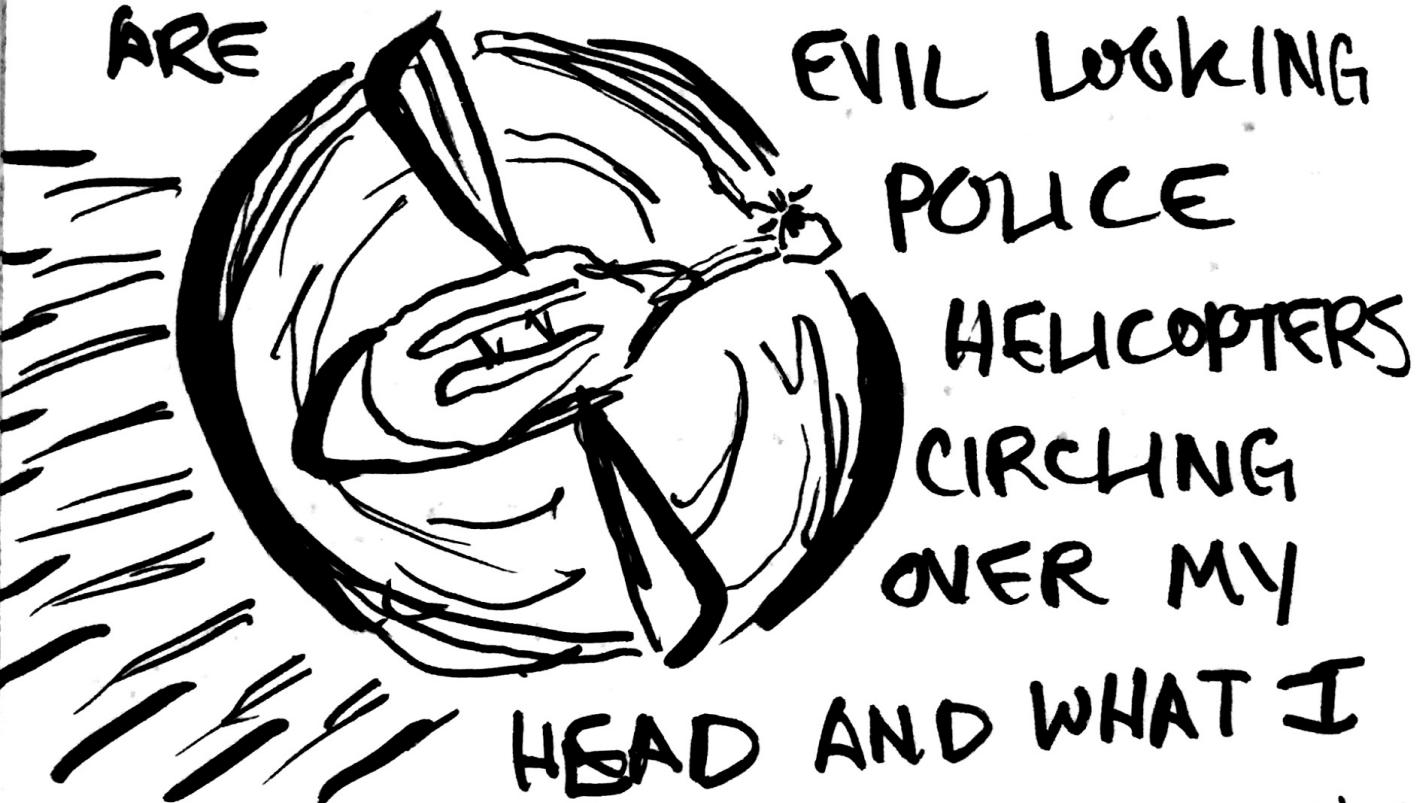
SHE  
THE  
IST  
OME

SHARP AT ME ABOUT BEING  
"UNDESERVING" OF MY GIFT,  
WHICH I WAS COMPLETELY  
CONFUSED BY UNTIL I GOT BACK  
TO MY ROOM. ON THE BED I  
FOUND AN ENORMOUS BLACK  
FEATHER TIED WITH A  
FLASHING STONE. THE NOTE  
WAS IN NANI'S  
HANDWRITING.

"PARA  
MI HIJA DE  
CORAZON  
PURO"



I IMMEDIATELY DROPPED TO MY KNEES AND SOBBED MY FACE OFF. I COULDN'T EVEN BRING MYSELF TO TOUCH THE GIFT. NOW I'M SITTING ON THE BACK PORCH. THERE ARE



EVIL LOOKING POLICE HELICOPTERS CIRCLING OVER MY HEAD AND WHAT I WOULDNT GIVE FOR A LITTLE FUCKING SILENCE...

THIS IS NOT THE WORLD THAT NANI TRIED TO MAKE IT WITH ALL HER HERBS AND HEALINGS, IT IS A

WORLD OF BLATANT INJUSTICE. NOW  
SHE IS GONE FROM IT. THIS  
WOMAN WORKED TIRELESSLY EVERY  
DAY OF HER LIFE TO HEAL OTHERS  
AND TAKE CARE OF HER FAMILY.  
SHE DID NOT DESERVE TO PASS  
WITHOUT PROPER MEDICAL CARE  
EVEN IF SHE PRETENDED NOT TO  
WANT IT. SHE NEEDED TO SEE  
A DOCTOR THAT WE COULDN'T  
AFFORD AND NOW SHE IS GONE.

XXXXXX

I CANNOT PRETEND TO BELIEVE  
THAT WAS RIGHT. IT WASNT.  
COME BACK TO ME, COME BACK  
TO ME A THOUSAND WAYS...