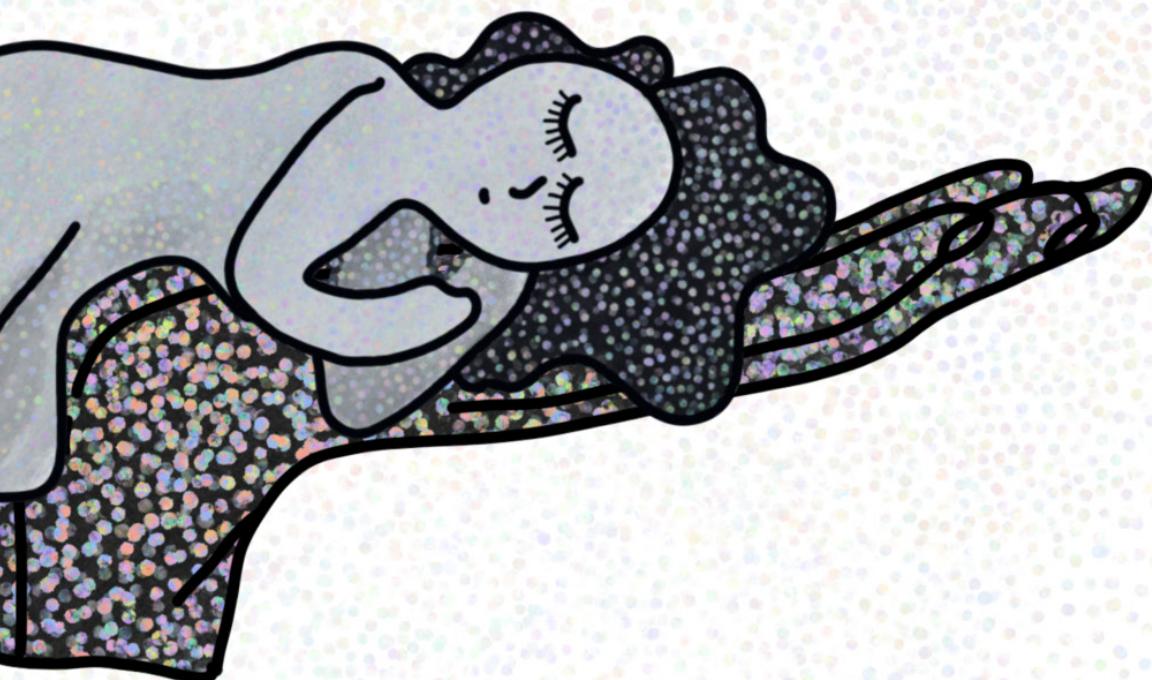


hands



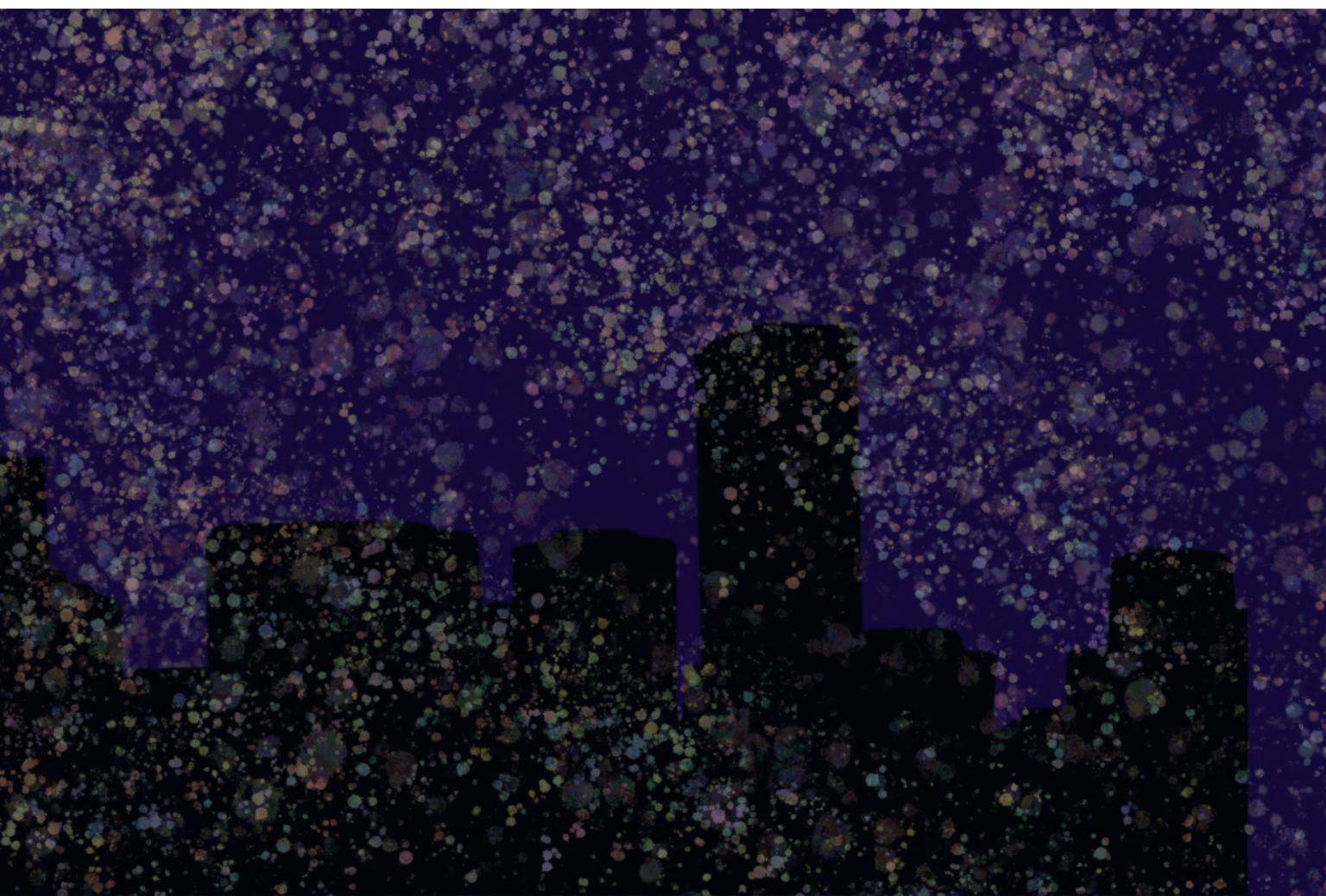
a poem
and illustrations
by robin basalaev-binder

I look out the window and see a yellow
purple glow consuming the sky.

I was
expecting darkness.
somehow I've forgotten
I'm in a city.



I've become completely
disembodied from my surroundings, turning
the days over like burnt pancakes,
waiting to wake up from some half slumber
suspending me in that darkness I
can't seem to find now.



nine years later and this still happens.

won't reality ever catch up to me, or is it
the other way around- have I dragged my
feet so far behind that the light I see now is
some distant cornucopia of sunrise I
haven't quite reached?

like a lost bear peering through dark trees
to find its nest.



come to think of it,
when's the last time it's occurred to me
to even look out the window,
to notice the level of opacity
I'm wading through?

last night?

was it the first night I arrived?

No, I was too drunk that night.
even if I did look,
all I would have found was a blaze of
hands and faces struggling to make
their way home
over
dented glass
and
cracked heels.

hands.

up, down, behind, in front.

hands.

everywhere I could see and feel and taste,
It was only hands.

I pulled them away as they pulled me
down, into waves of nausea.
how could there be so many hands?

they
crushed me
into sand,
but only for a moment.





now
there are still hands

but they reach to me to
Help me up
Help me move
Help me slow down
to hear my pulse
Make sure I'm okay

there are so many reasons to be okay,
least of all the night sky

gazing down at me.

maybe it's more of an
orange turquoise
than
yellow purple.

city skies make no sense, like the stars
stop reflecting the standard colors in the
north.

this is north, right? this cold
rotting under my fingernails, cracking
my skin.

isn't it all worth it, just for these colors?

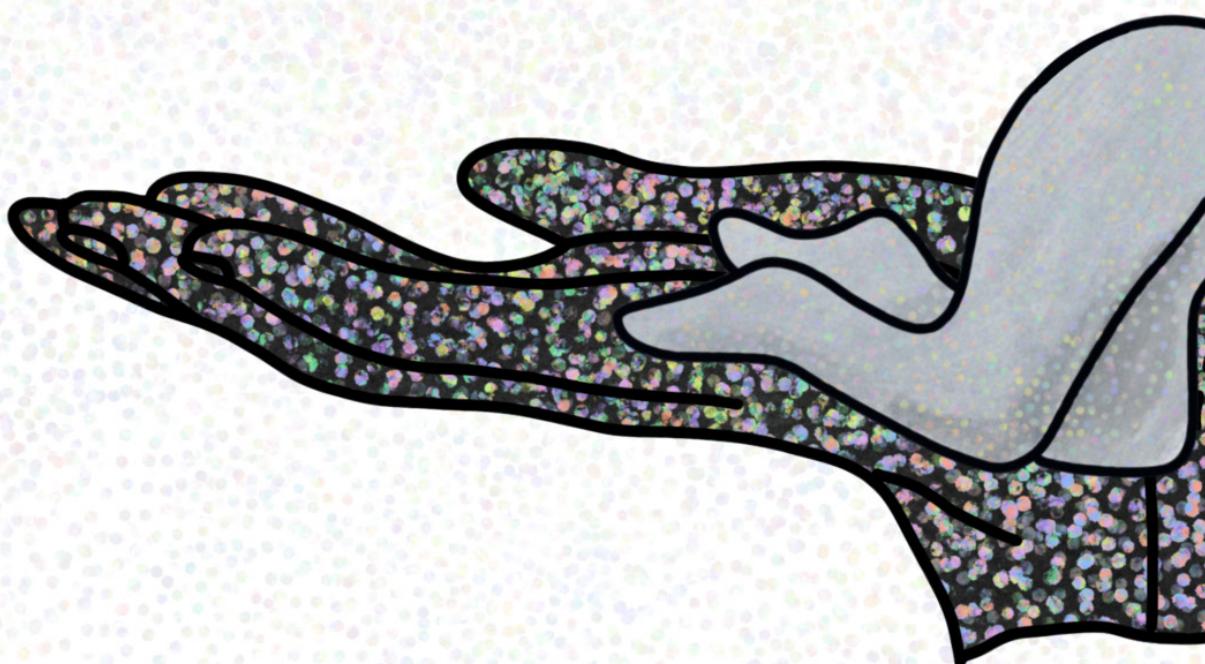




restless muscles finally ease
making way
for dazes of dreams



where the sky never ends
and the colors never fade.



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