

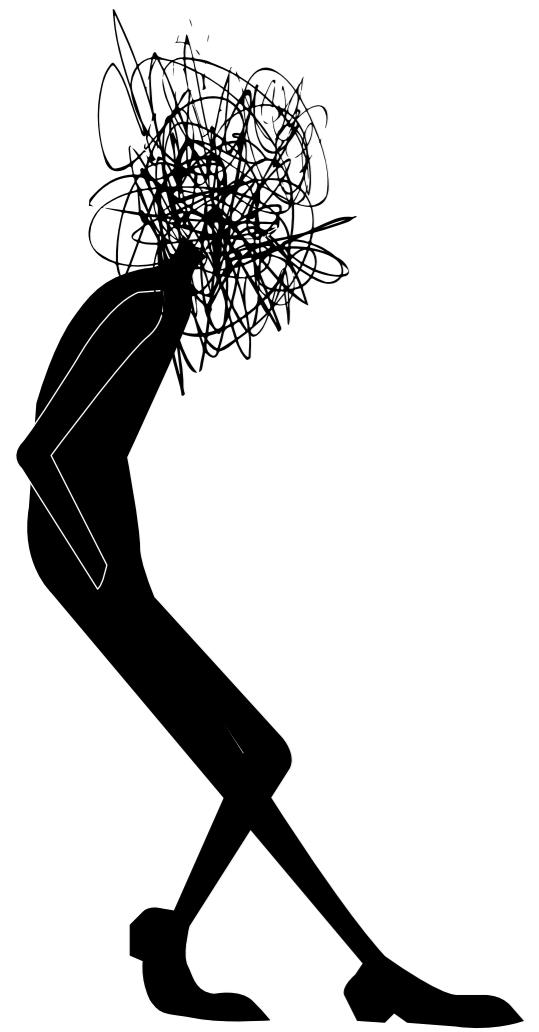
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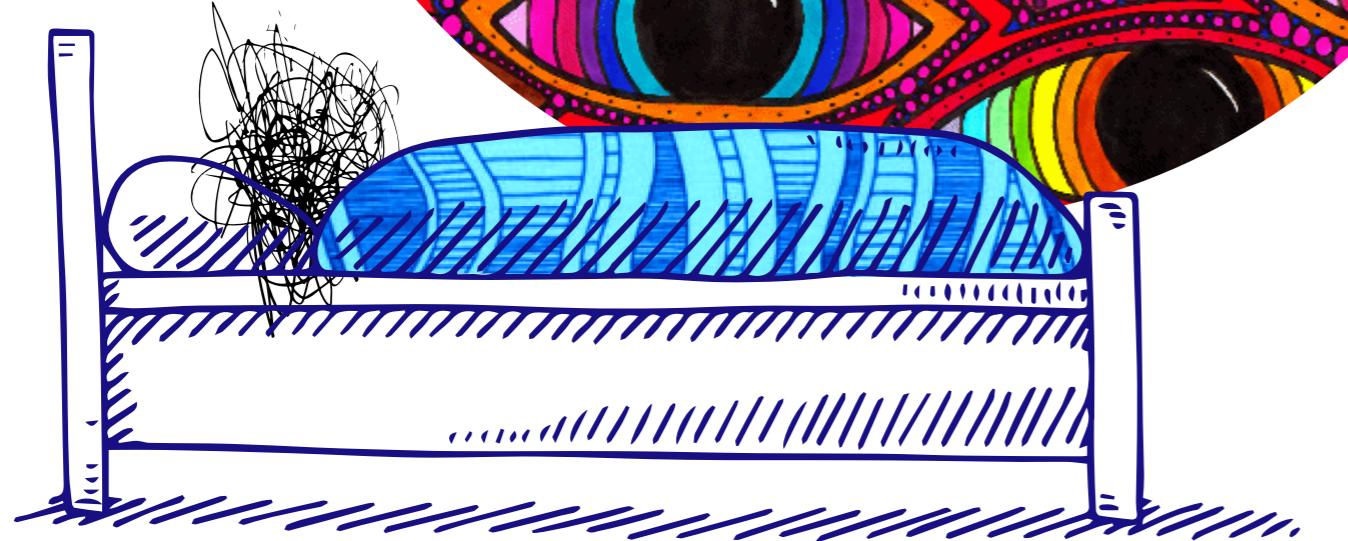
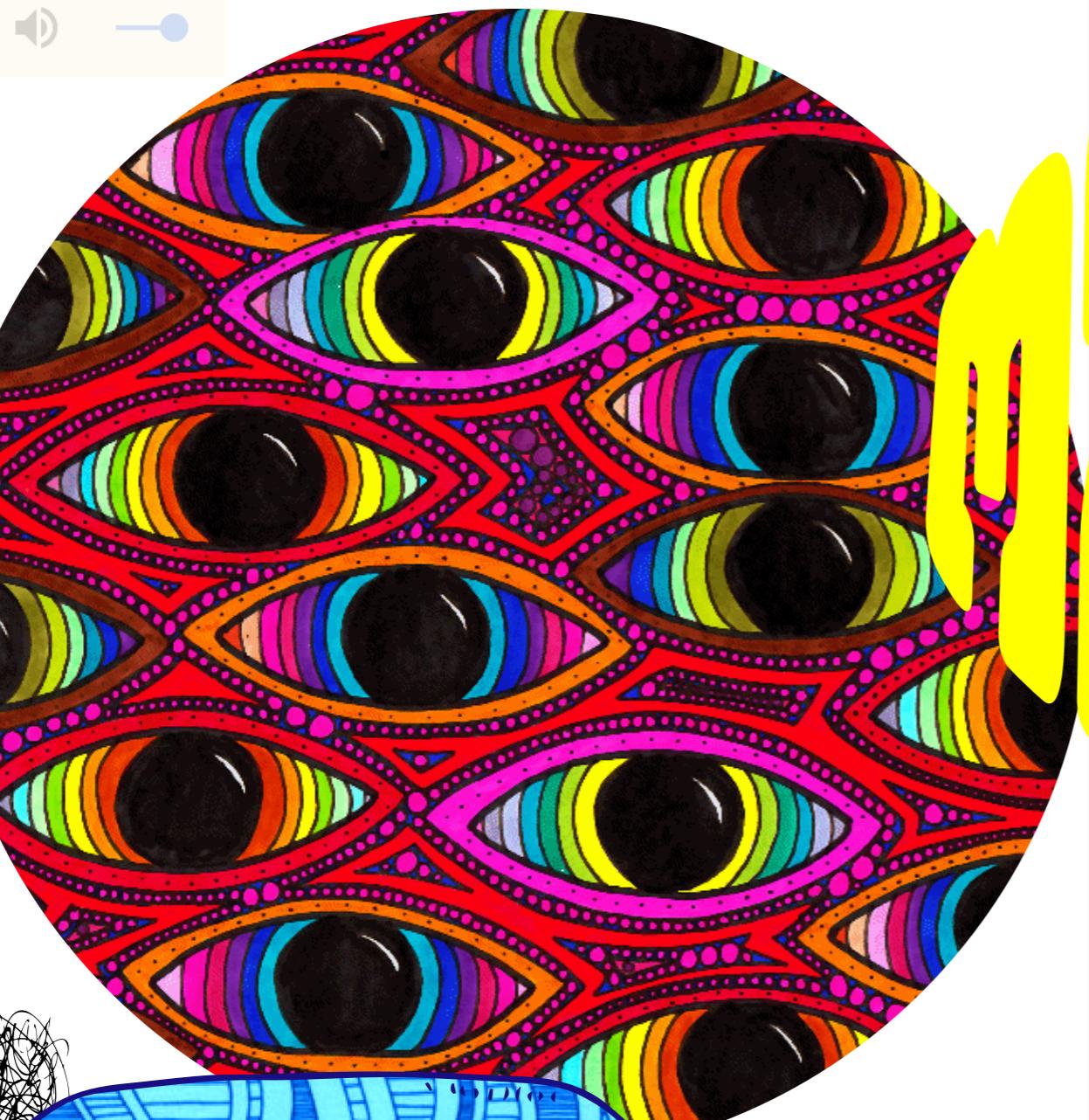
↶ Adjust your audio now. Hear the music?

The Gift

written by Lou Reed
read by John Cale
1967

And so Waldo waited.





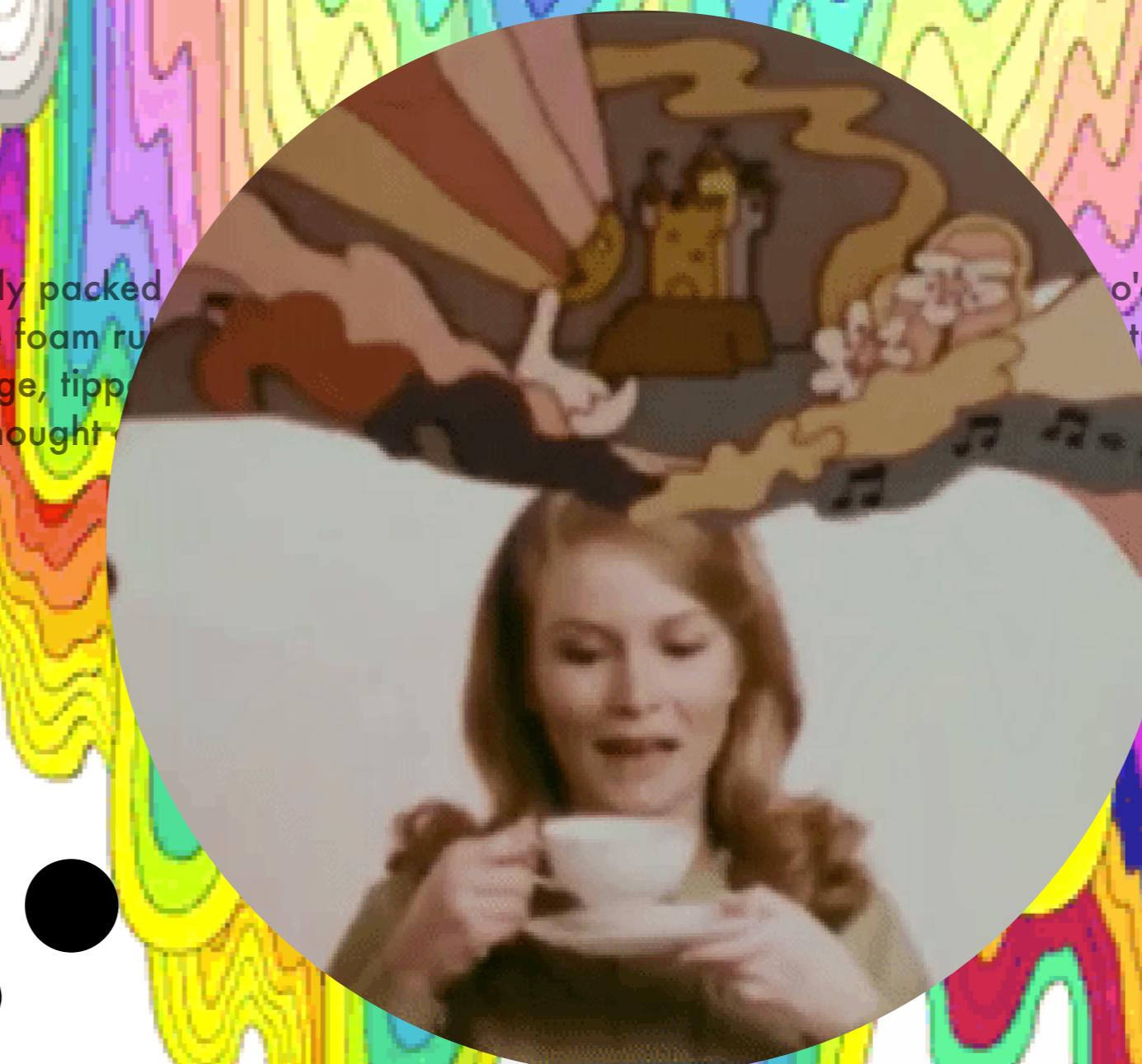
Do something, Waldo!



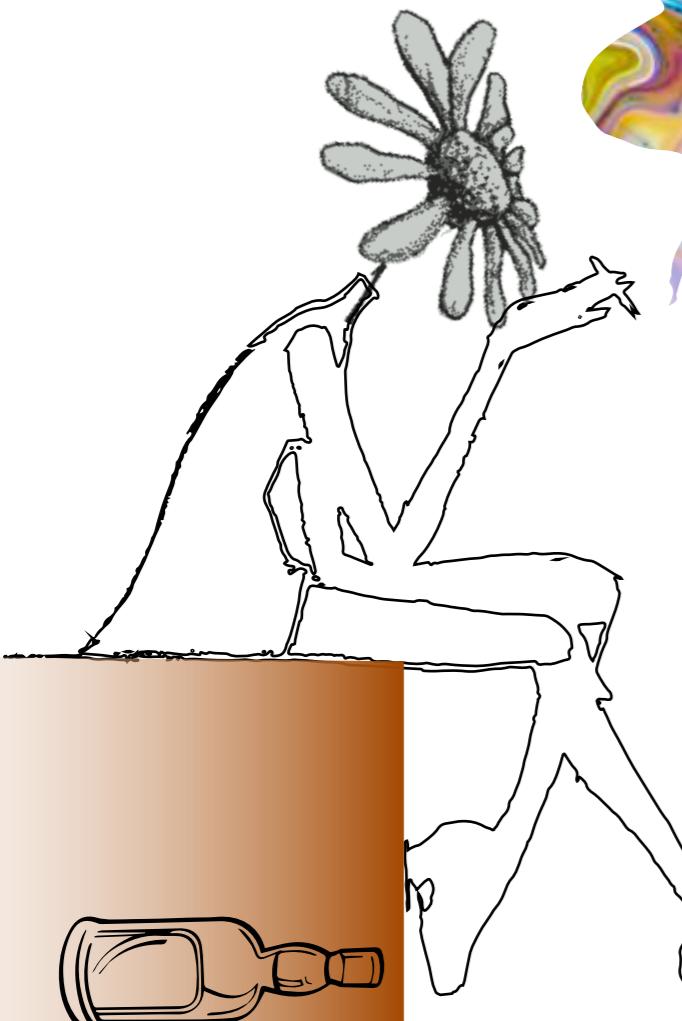


It was absurdly simple. He would ship himself parcel post, special delivery.

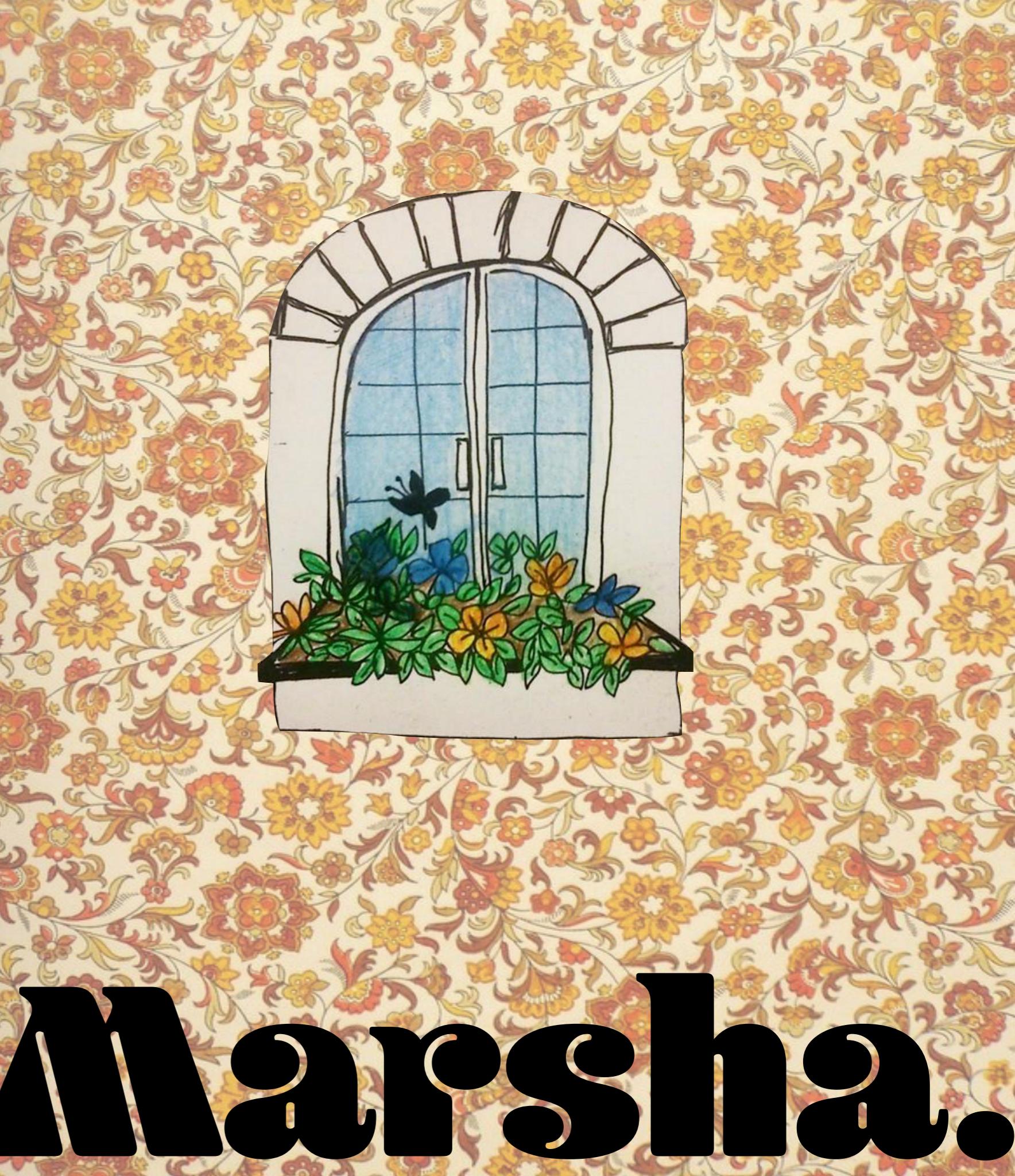
By Friday afternoon, Waldo was set. He was thoroughly packed "Fragile", and as he sat curled up inside, resting on the foam ruler, Marsha's face as she opened her door, saw the package, tipped it, and then maybe they could see a movie. If he'd only thought...



...he'd have known better. At 5 o'clock. He'd marked the package "Fragile". He'd never seen Marsha's face before. He'd never seen the look of awe and happiness on Marsha's face. He'd never seen Marsha there in person. She would kiss him, and then maybe they could see a movie. If he'd only thought...



Oh,



Marsha.

AGGIE

Sheila Klein, her very, very best friend, walked in through the porch screen door and into the kitchen. "Oh gawd, it's absolutely maudlin outside."

"Ach, I know what you mean. Feels all icky! Marsha tightened the top on her Morton robet, it the silk outer cover."

Sheila ran her finger over some salt grains on the kitchen table, licked her finger and made a face. "I'm supposed to be taking these salt pills, but," she wrinkled her nose, "they make me feel like throwing up."

Marsha started to pat herself under the chin, an exercise she'd seen on television. "God, don't even talk about that."

She got up from the table and went to the sink where she picked up a bottle of pink and blue vitamins. "Want one? Supposed to be better than steak," and then attempted to touch her knees. "I don't think I'll ever touch a daiquiri again."

Where's wal do?



0:04 / 0:30

It was at this point that Mr. New Price's face reappeared. It was a stucco-colored face, open at the door. He had his hands in his pockets and Marsha had gotten out of her pocket to meet him.

"You think Sheila does

Marsha stood with her arms folded behind her back. She saw the brown cardboard carton that sat in the middle of the living room. It

Marsha walked around the box and read the ink-scratched label. "Ah, good old Waldo!"

"That schmuck!" said Sheila.

Waldo trembled with expectation.

"Well, you might as well open it," said Sheila.

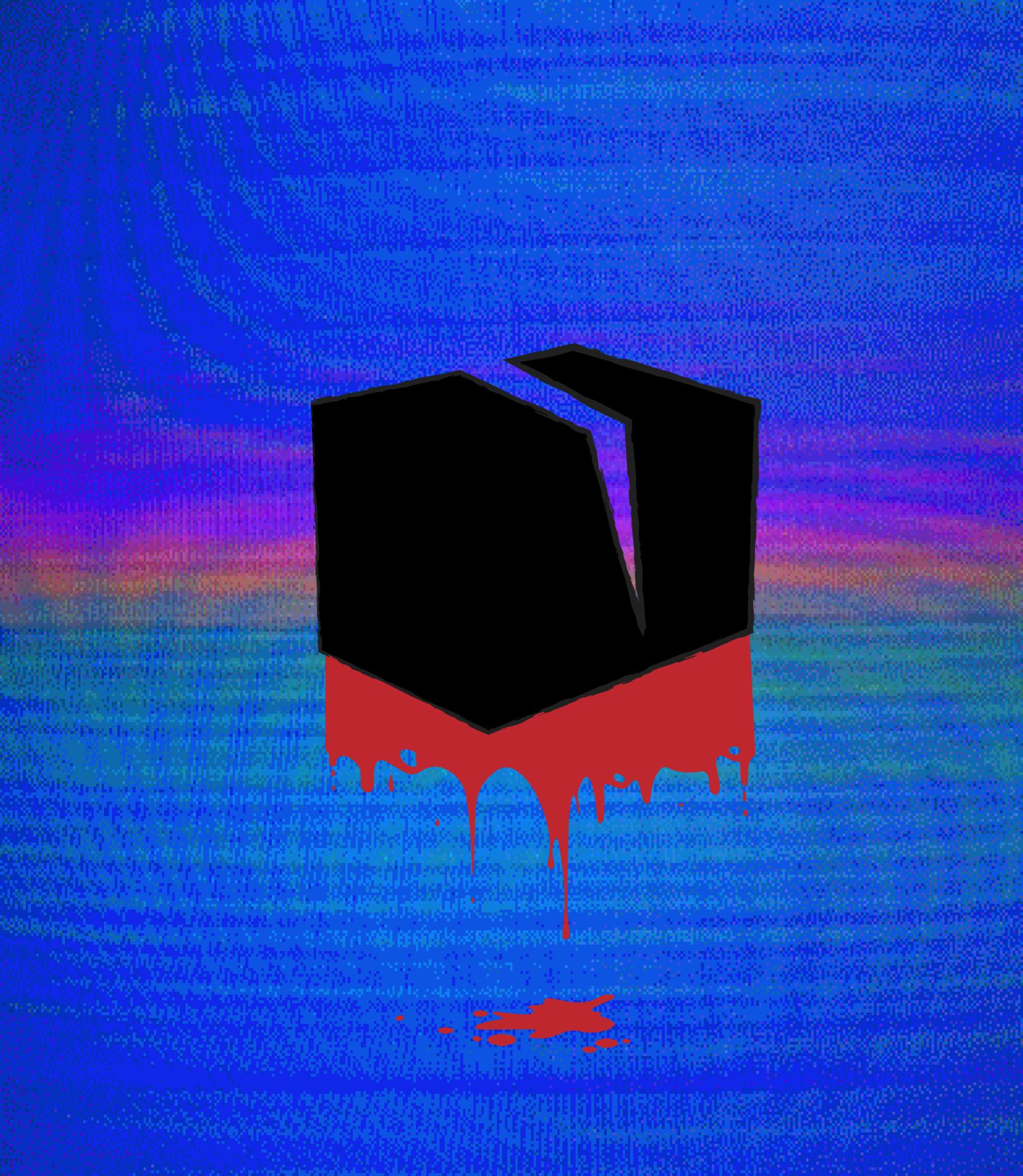
Waldo tried to lift the staple flap. "Ahhh sst," said Marsha, holding him back. "He's going, "he must have noticed it shut."

They tugged on the flap again. "It's stuck," said Sheila. "You need a power drill to get this thing open! They pulled again. "I can't get a grip." They both stood still,

scissor, " said Sheila.

She reached in, but all she could find was a pair of pliers. Then she remembered that her dad had a box of tools in the basement. She ran down the stairs. When she came back up, she had a box cutter in her hand.

Careful...



Then she sank down to her knees, grasped the cutter by both handles, took a deep breath, and plunged the long blade through the middle of the package,
**through the masking tape,
through the cardboard,
through the cushioning and
right through the center of
Waldo Jeffers' head,**
which split slightly and caused little rhythmic arcs of red to pulsate gently in the morning sun.

The End.