

I HAVE YOUR WHOLE LIFE AHEAD OF ME

by Amelia Darling



Bobby, 21
Indiana University of Pennsylvania
15 miles away

Ricky, 22
Rowan University
7 miles away

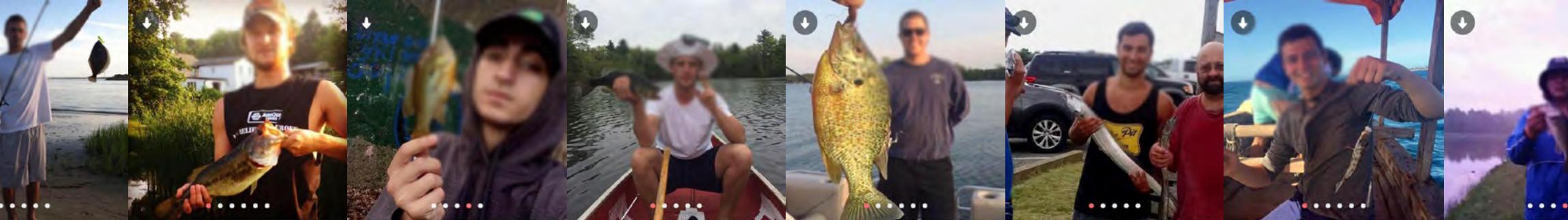
Max, 21
Hofstra University
15 miles away

Hunter, 22
Drexel University Kline School of Law
10 miles away

Brian, 20
University Of Swag
Villanova University

Josh, 20
Widener University
10 miles away

Tyler, 20
Wilkes University
1 mile away



Alex, 20
2 miles away

Eduardo, 21
Lookaway Golf Course
16 miles away

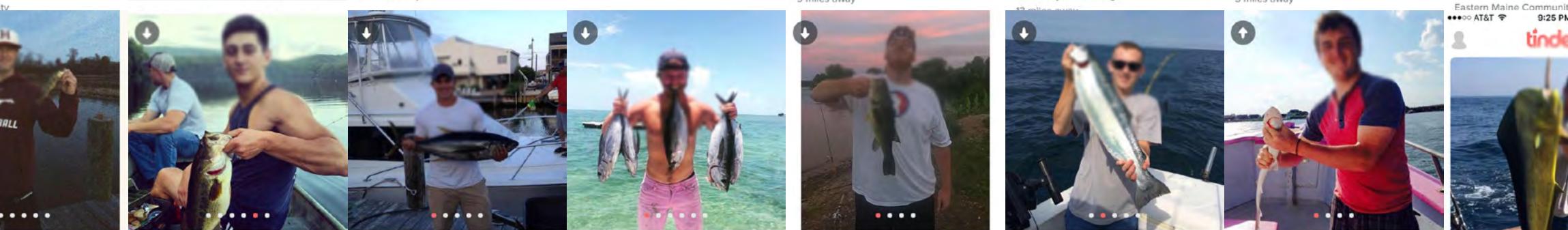
Sean, 21
Villanova University

Connor, 20
Cornell University
9 miles away

Dylan, 20
Lifeguard at Conestoga Swim Club
University of Pittsburgh

Zach, 19
The University of Alabama
5 miles away

Gregory, 19
Laborer at New York State Environmental Conservat...
Eastern Maine Community College
9:25 PM



Eric, 22
University of Pittsburgh
17 miles away

Zach, 22
Temple University
10 miles away

John, 21
20 miles away

Zac, 20
15 miles away

Daniel, 20
Air Flow Tech
17 miles away

Luke, 21
1 mile away

Stephen, 18
11:38 PM

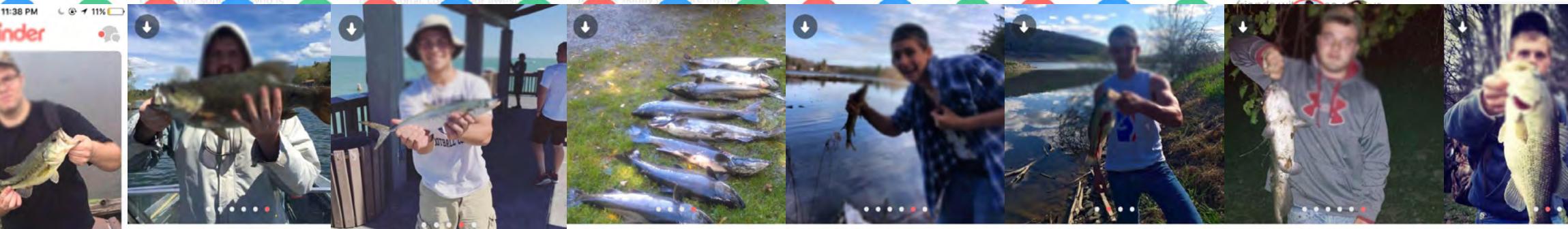


6'1" 195lb

Foodie, workout fiend, outdoorsman, beer fanatic, hard working professional. Lookin for awesomeness

If nerds with dad bodies are in why aren't I on the cover of a magazine already?
Musically skinny is where my heart is

Swipe right to hang out with us
We compare your Facebook



Justin, 22
Software Engineer at Twin Tiers Eye Care
Corning Community College
Sunny fredonia

Kevin, 21
14 miles away

Josh, 20
Southport, New York
19 miles away

Andrew, 21
Highway Department at Town of Orange
4 miles away

Eli, 22
Alfred State
1 mile away

Kenny, 21
14 miles away

Joe, 19
18 miles away

I HAVE YOUR WHOLE LIFE AHEAD OF ME

a collection of art and poetry

by Amelia Darling

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grinnellcollegepress.com

I. prelude

II. entree

III. learning

IV. forgiving

prelude

I think we should break up. I'm sorry.



YOU PSYCHO
FUCKING
BITCH

who,
me?

BOYS

I LET TOUCH ME
IN HIGH SCHOOL ❤
(the Prelude....)

I'M SO FUCKING CRAZY
I'M SORRY...
WE JUST CLICKED...

GOOD
LUCK WITH
EVERYTHING
AMELIA

BET YOU CAN'T
FINISH A 4 LOKO...

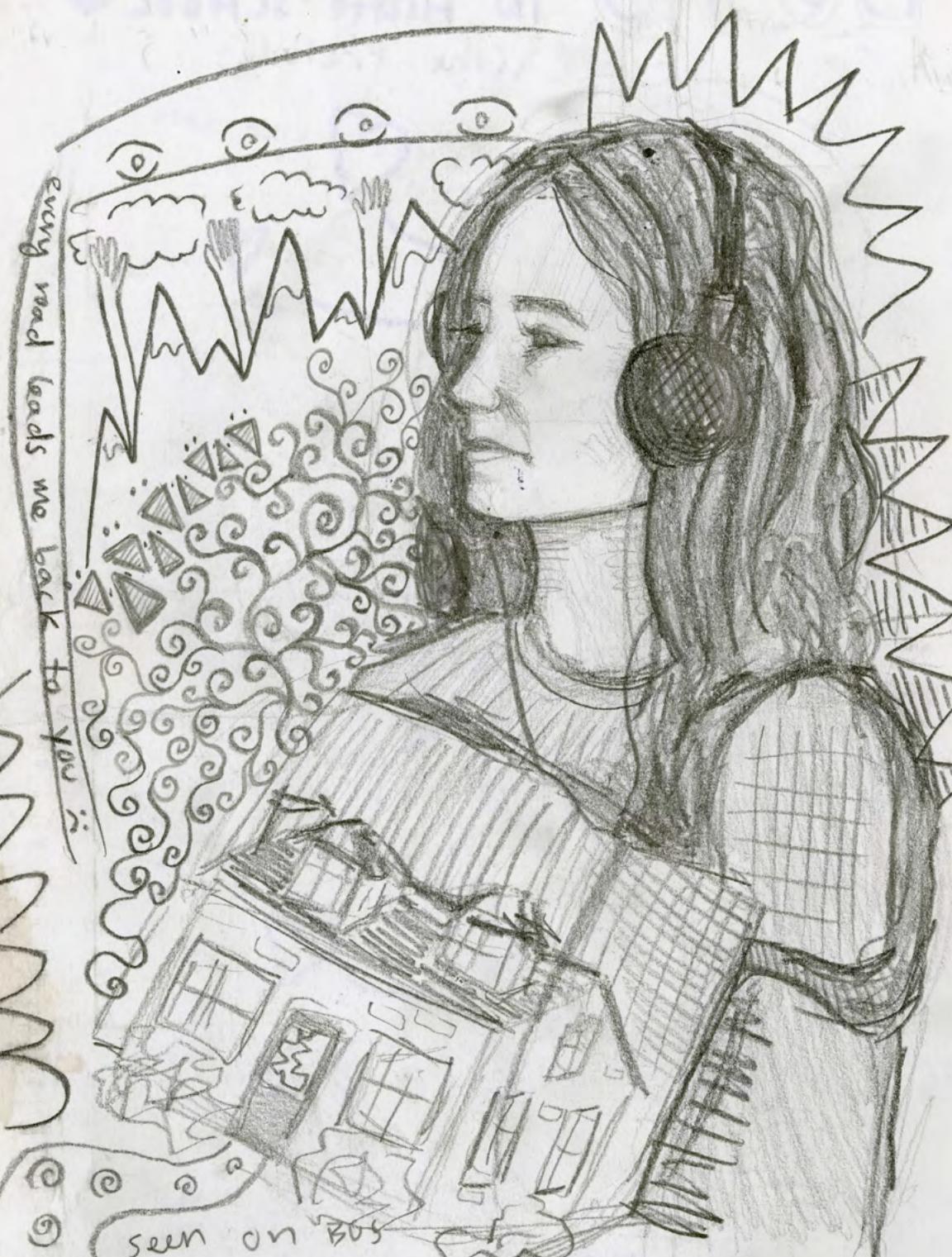
SHH... LET'S JUST
LISTEN TO WHITNEY

(Drew him as a
child. cuz he
so childish.)

every road leads me back to you

seen on bus

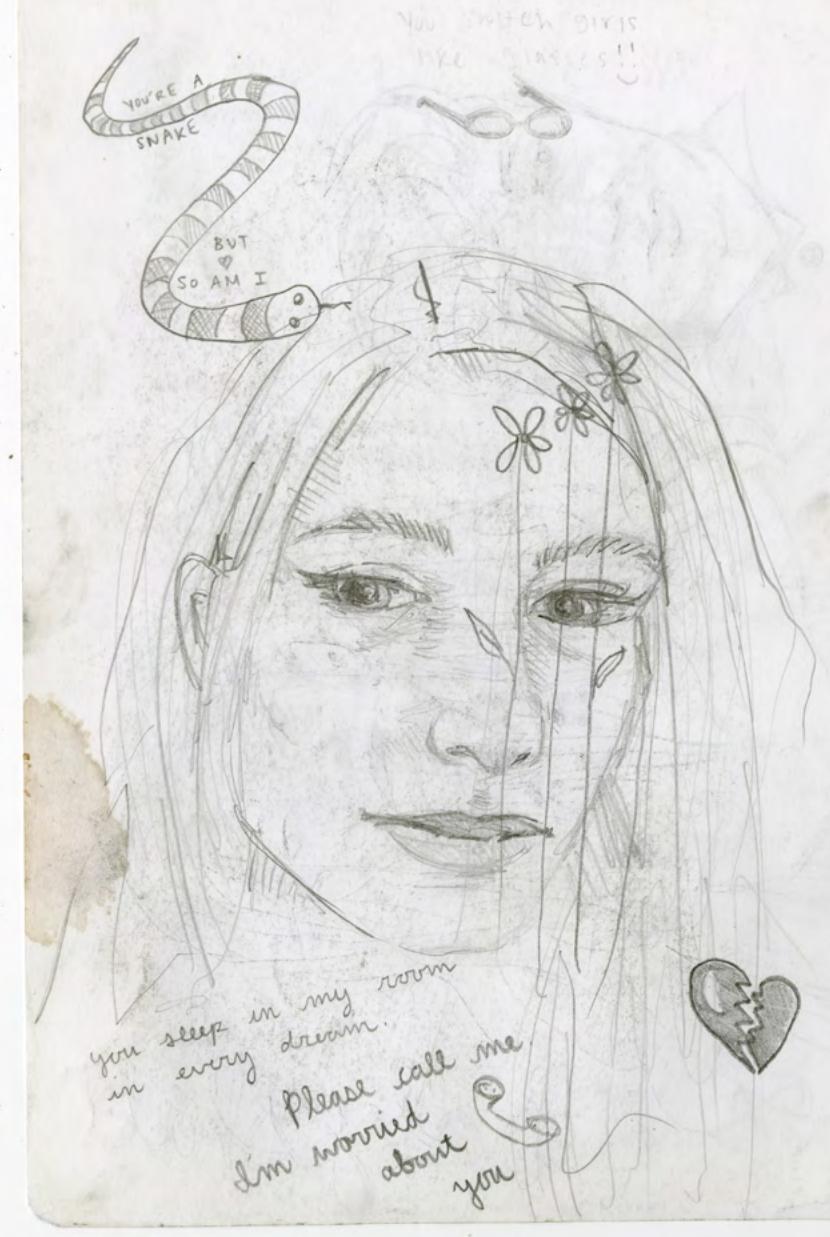
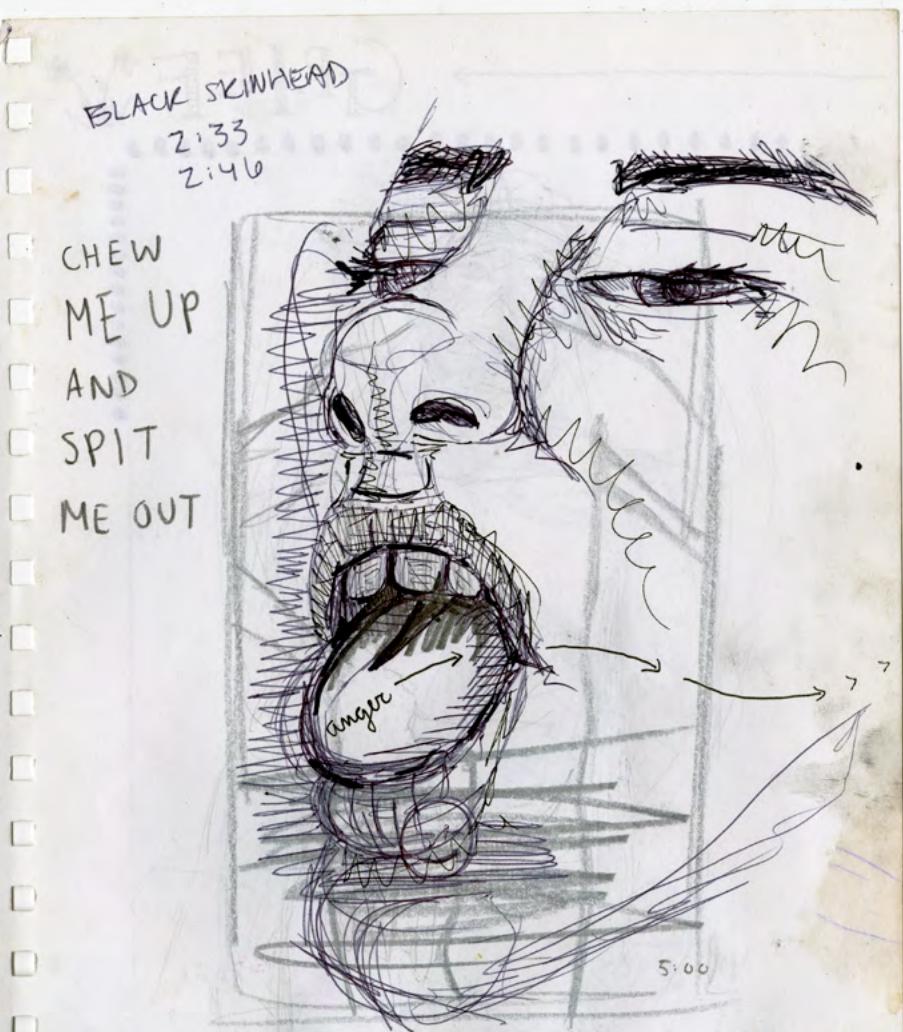
RT 44: ARDMORE & NARBERTH



Father figure

We huddled in dive chapel corners,
lights echoing halos of golden dust.
He sucked down Turkish Royals in curls of silk,
breathing indecencies down my spine
on the women in our family, the teenage body
that was from him, kind of, but never his.

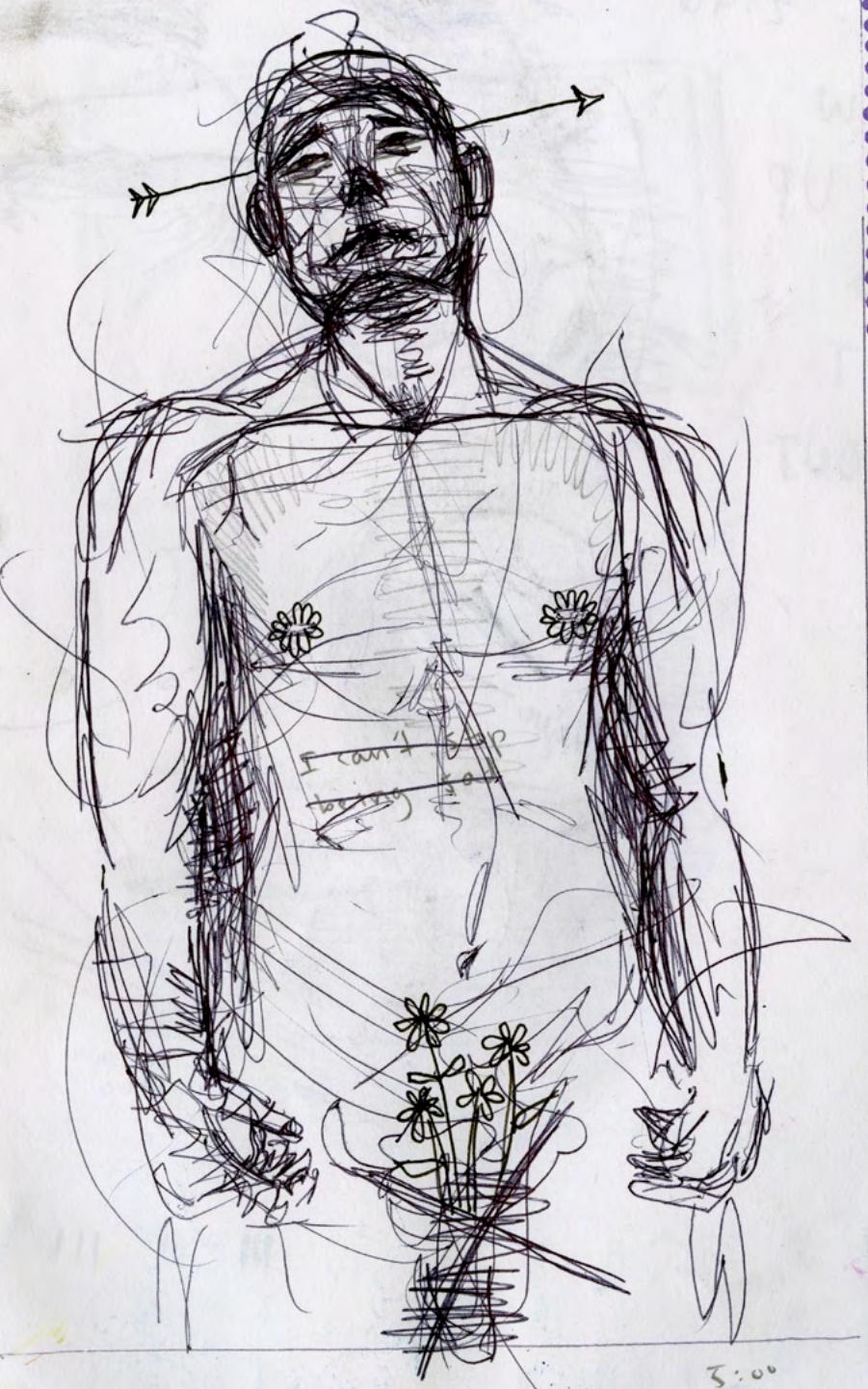
I drifted through oceans on a raft of his secrets
because this crabshell man can only justify
his failures when he's poking holes in the
wet tissue paper family he surrendered.



And so his way in was a storm but his way out was a sparrow.

Before the whole house sighed with his exit
he would leave little gifts on my pillow—
Clementine chunks and golden dollars,
ornaments of his affection that vibrated with apologies
of a life he couldn't give me; a life he ached for me to have.

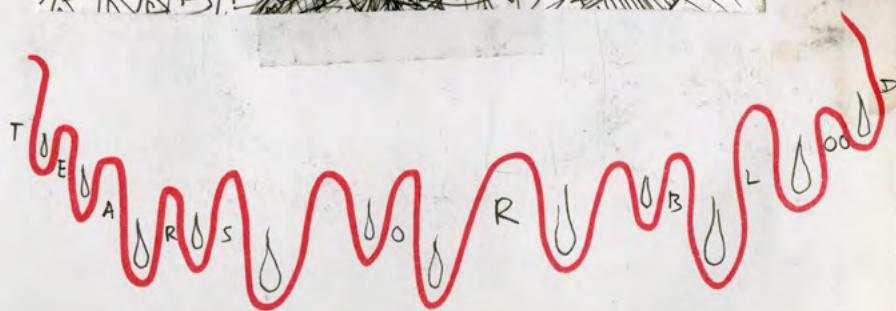
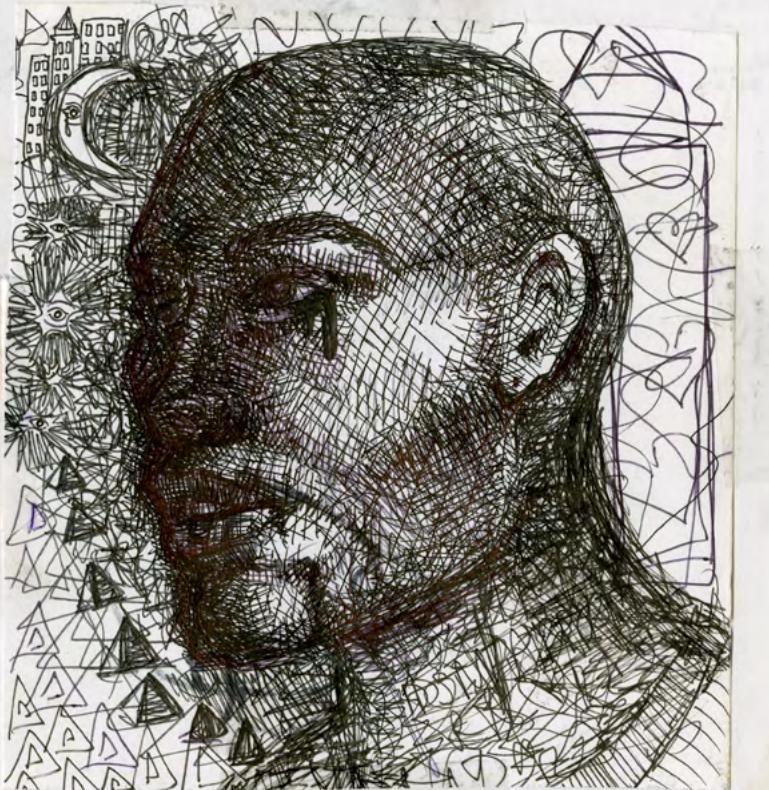
GRIEF



5:00

entree

winter clothes



we're still gonna circumcise our kids, right?
I tried to master the universe today. And I
fell asleep looking at a picture of you
Smiling

states i've been

CA
NM
AR
TX
MS
MS
DE
PA
NY
VA



COPING MECHANISMS B LIKE...

ummm eee

LINDSAY LOHAN
Told To Stop
Partying

Hot Rumors!
Hotter Sex!!
Hottest Bands!!!

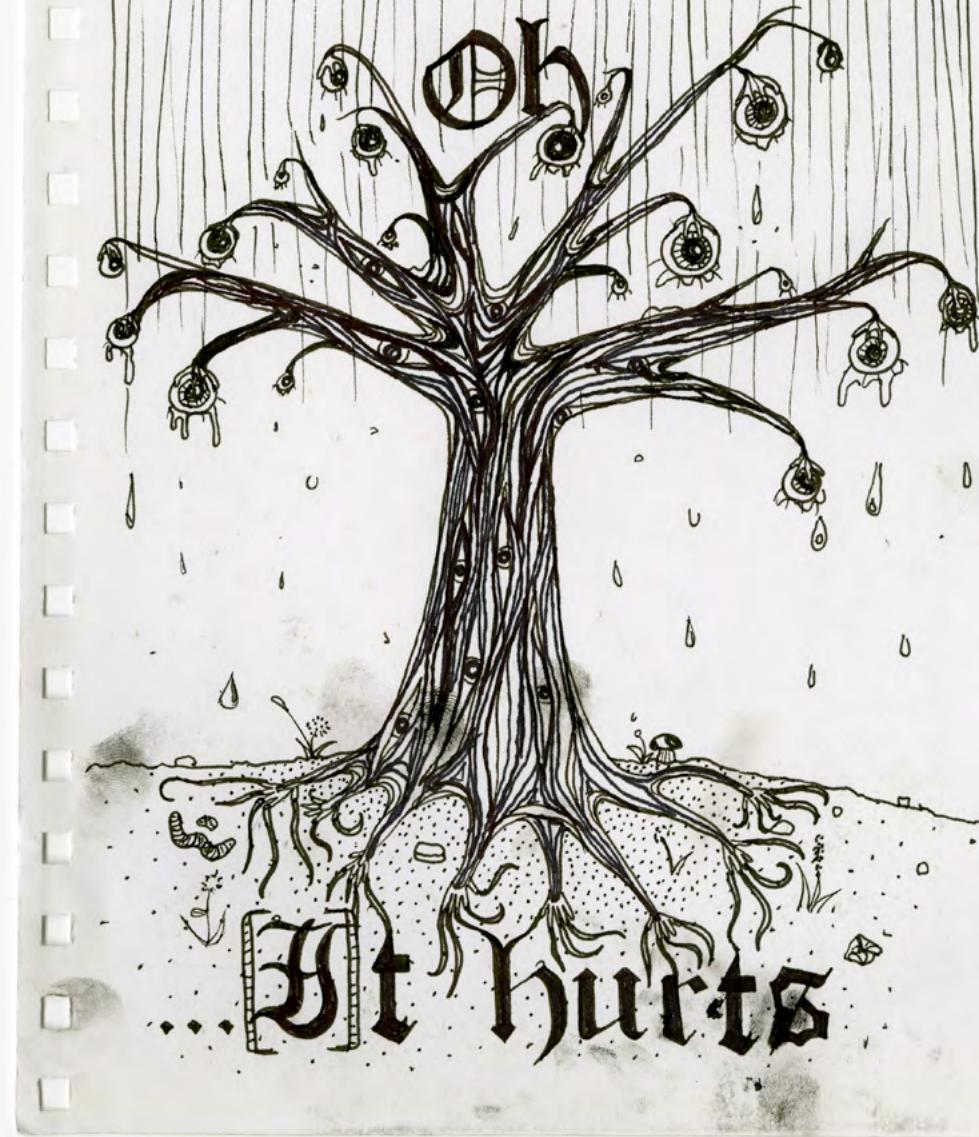
Casual encounter

frogs bleating where we're meeting,
moonlight dripping down the pines,
and stillness but my heart is beating.

spiders provide proper seating
spun from silky silver lines
you arrive and bring my feeding

quiet, kneeling, hush my pleading,
spark me up and down my spine
and give me everything i'm needing.

hot breath on wool so sweat is beading
"I'm hot so hurry, make it mine"
We become one and I start feeling



pushing prodding pressing heaving,
I see the weight and price align.

if you're a daydream then i'm sleeping
spooning with the daisies, breathing
smokey breaths of the divine
i found you so i'm never leaving
i just write poems because you're mine

Stanford

I.

I was twenty years old
when I saw her dance like a flickering candle.
I was a lanky pock-marked chlorine bleached bad haircut.
And she was a beauty,
in a sloshy sort of party way.
It wasn't holy. She was too drunk—
I was drunk too.

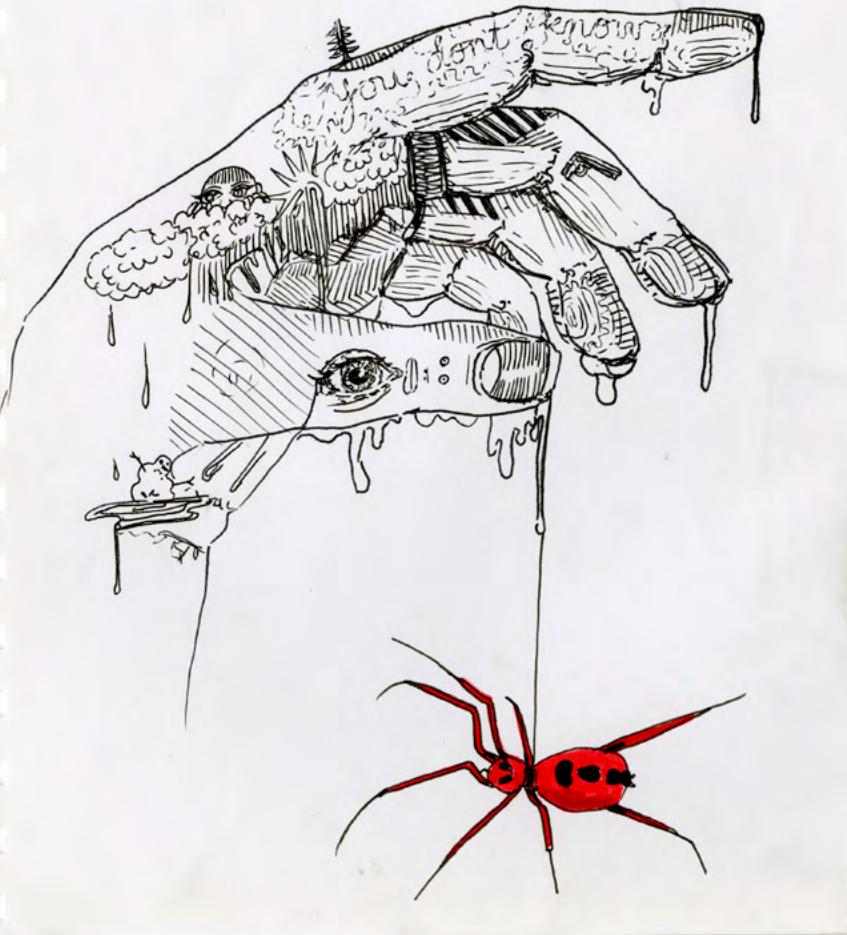


I was drunk and horny.
I watched her stumble outside,
Found her lying in the dirt,
Curled in fetal position,
Felt her velvet thighs.
She was unconscious—
She smelled like beer and
watermelon shampoo



And I did the unthinkable
Shredded her dignity with my teeth
Tore her pride and her sense of intimacy
Her joy, her peace of mind,
Her cautious trust in men,
Her sleeping with the bedroom door unlocked,
For an orgasm behind a dumpster.
And the sky drizzled angel tears.





II.

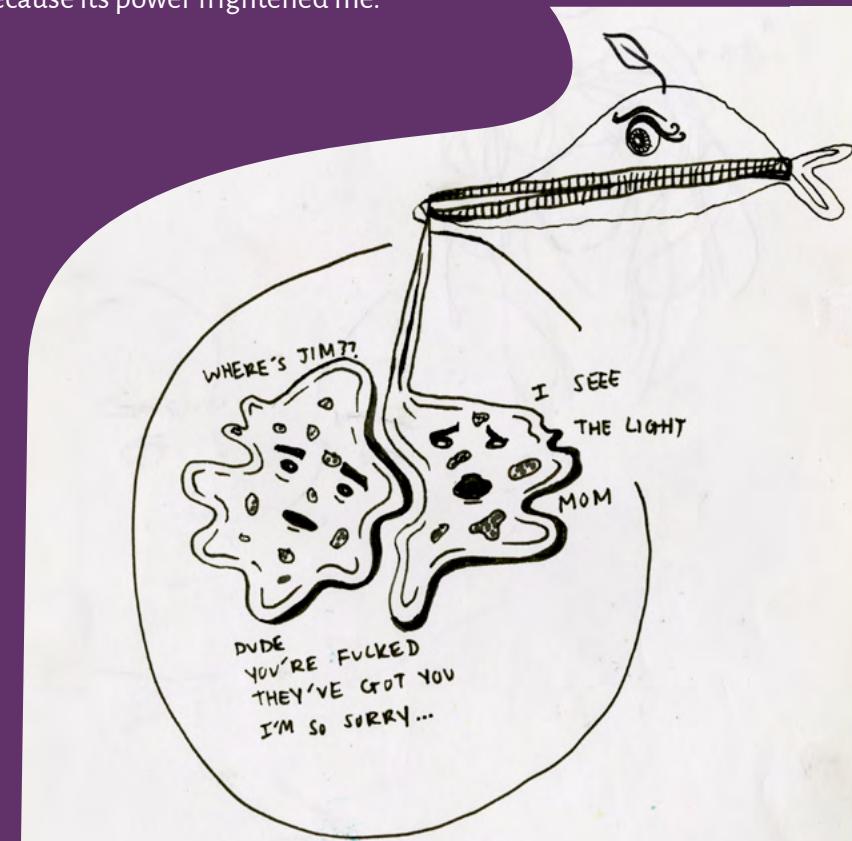
I was eighteen when I guzzled warm foam
And crept up behind pulsing teenage bodies,
Forcing my throbbing self against them
Skin contact before any introductions
Over whining music.

I was sixteen when I roared slurs from my car.
Felt my ego bloom in my chest when I had the voice
To make her flinch on the sidewalk,
Howled with laughter 'cause my words hit like stones
And made her fold into herself.

I was fourteen when my brother called me a faggot
Because he knew I hadn't kissed a girl yet and
My face burned with shame,
My prudence echoed off a thousand walls,
And my friends kept their eyes locked down
As if the rumors pelted their manhood.

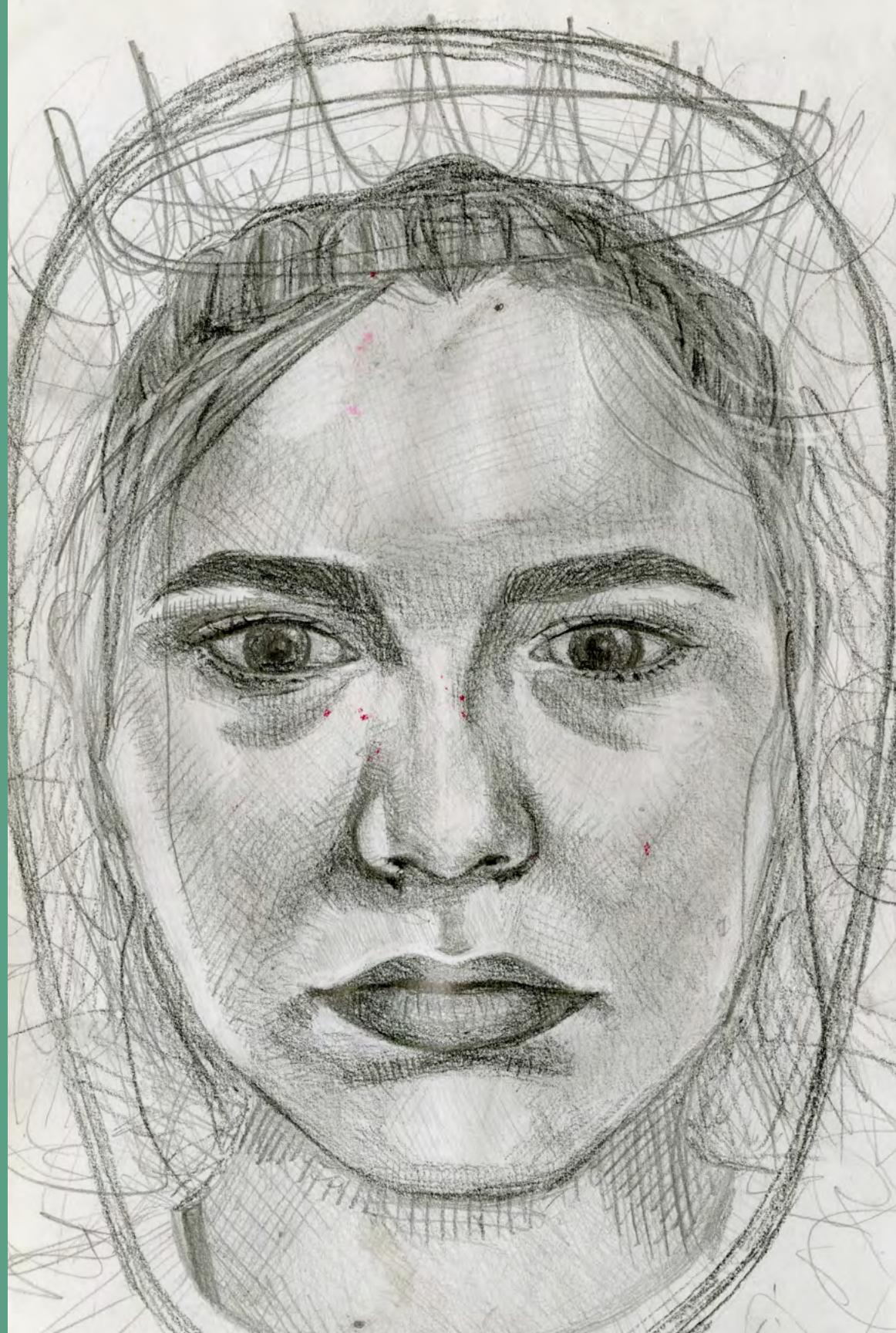
I was twelve when I ripped the prettiest girls from magazines,
Crumpled glossy celebrity curves
into a folder I pushed under my bed—
A secret sanctuary of sorts.
I only leafed through my archives
in the distilled silence of night.

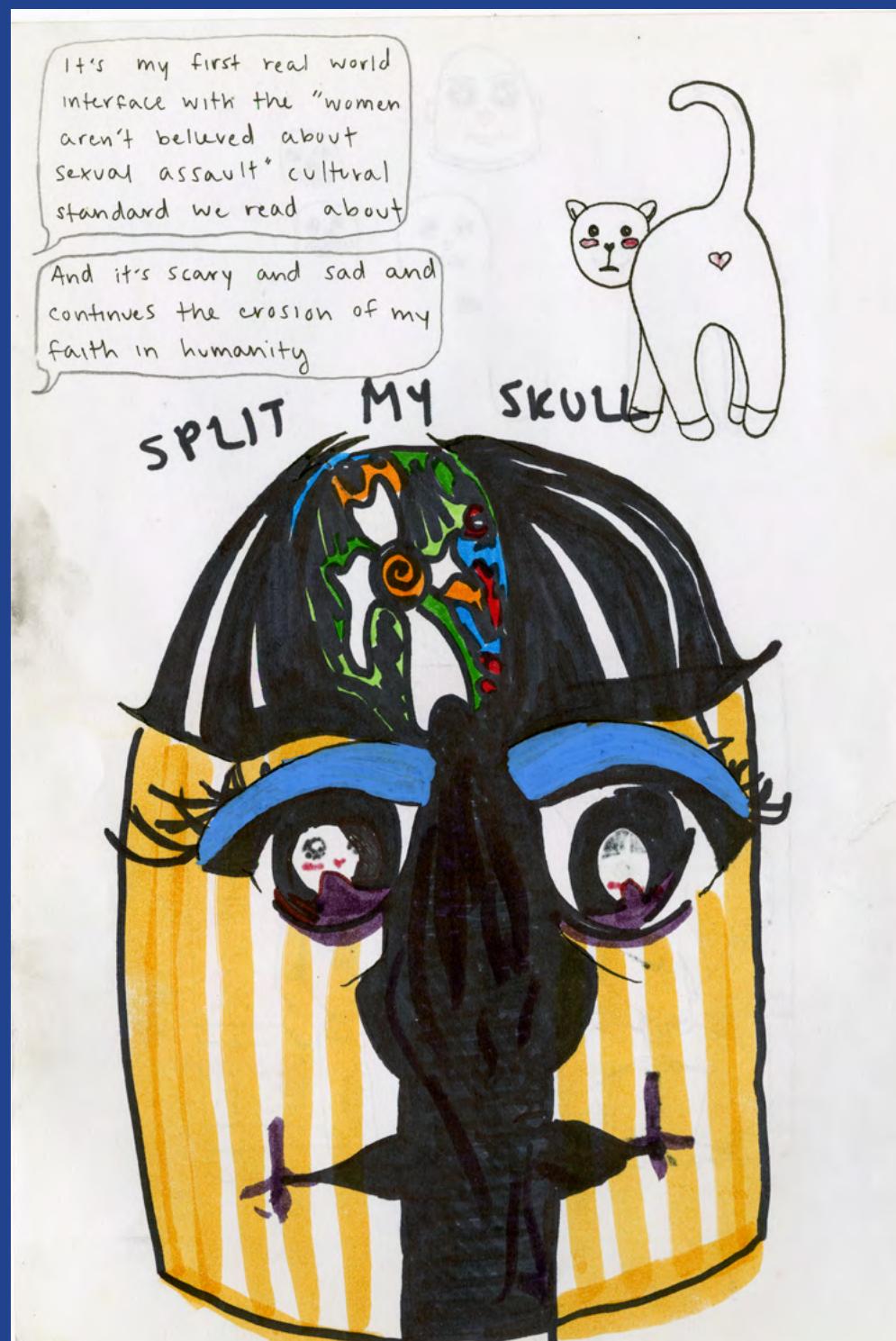
I was eight when I found a spiderweb glistening with dew—
I pulled it from the rafters.
The creator watched from a lofty corner
as I parted her sticky gossamer strands,
Rolled its filthy life between my fingers.
I'm not sure if I destroyed because I wanted its beauty
Or because its power frightened me.





learning







You will grow flowers from this pain one day



because that's what you always do.



Assisted Duck Slaughter

We follow the winding gravel strip for a bird's eye view of the crashing waves. Onion grass and milkweed shoots push through the sand and there's a tangerine stripe of light where ocean swallows the gray sky whole. The duck emerges through drowsy fog. I don't notice the blood at first. Closer look and I see sticky emerald wing twisted into a boomerang. Rattling with thin breaths.

He's probably going to get eaten.

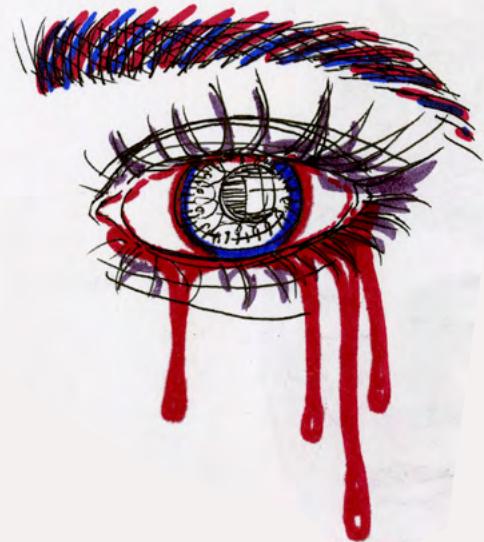
Or just slowly lose blood. He's too injured to live.

His last hours will be agonizing cold and alone and afraid. I can't leave him here. So my boyfriend drops a boulder on his head.

I hear a sharp crack, a tortured gurgle.
His soft snow belly deflates with a hiss.
I can't hold my gaze on the pulpy mash
under the rock.



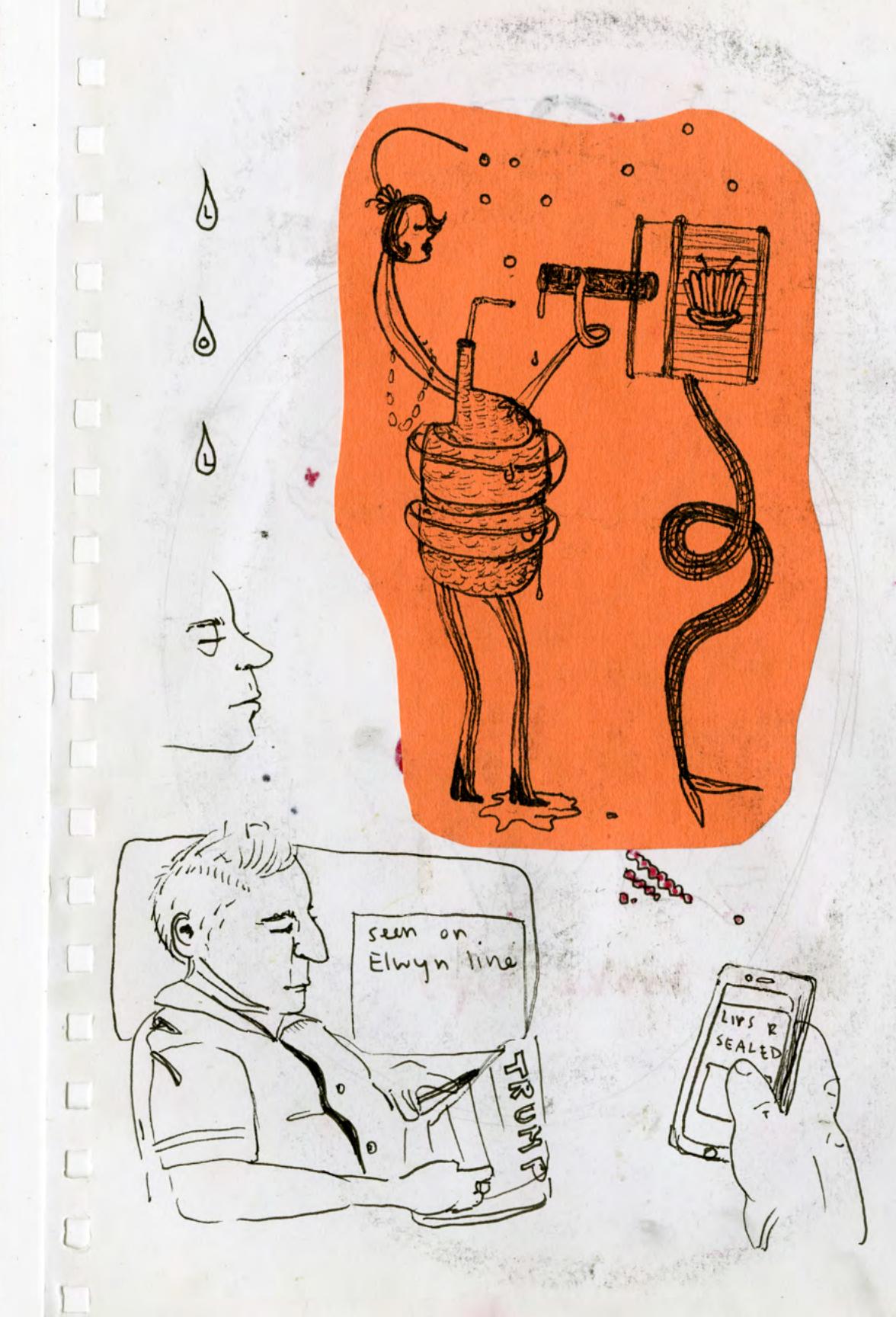
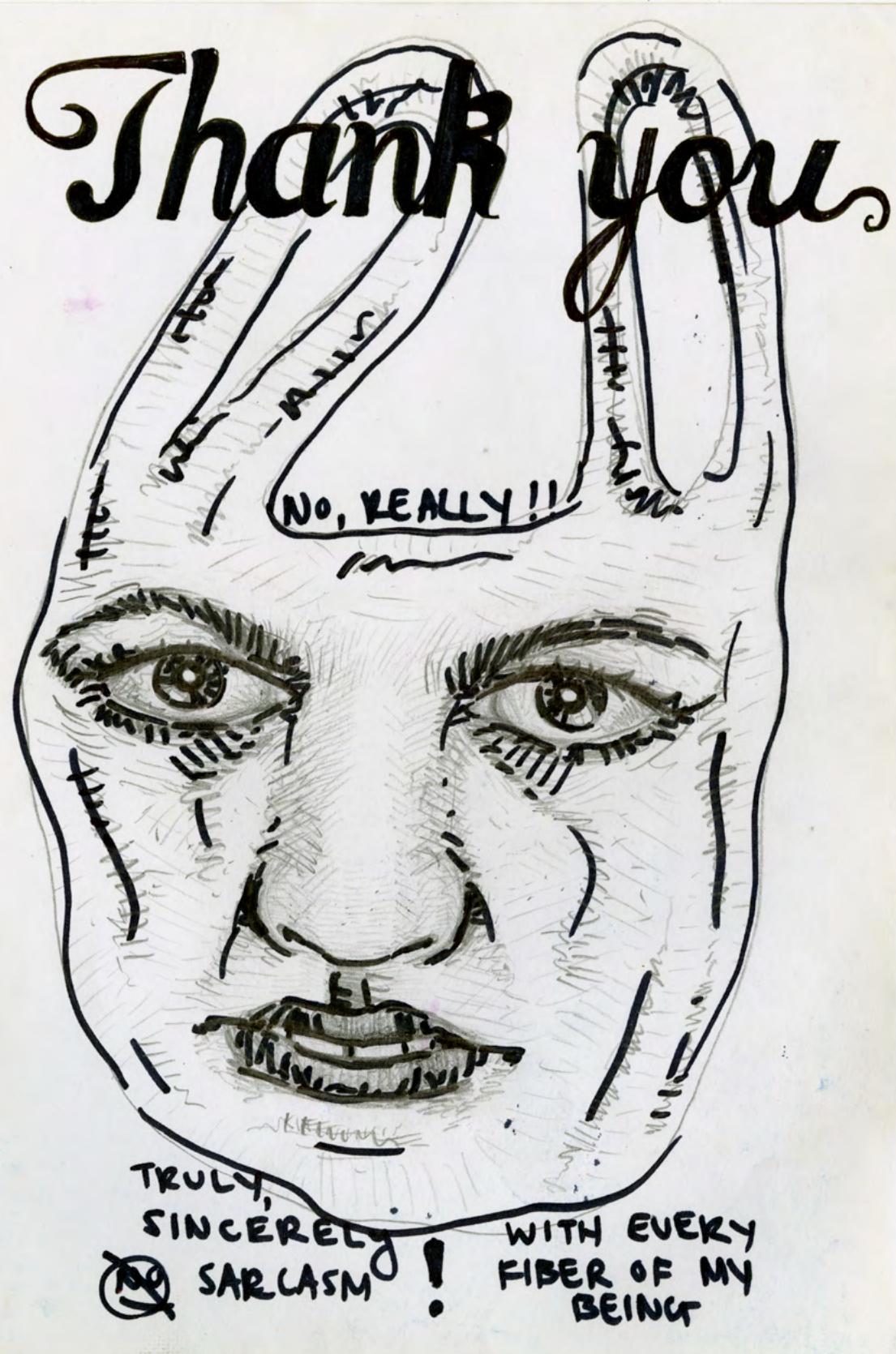
what could've been



So he was in pain. Do ducks feel love or loss?
Was it a violent jolt or like sinking into sleep?
His eyes said I know suffering-- dark dull twin rabbit holes.
A broken wing definitely doesn't hurt like a crushed skull.
But if I let the wing bleed out death would have dragged on long and cruel or
Something's teeth would rip out his pearly pink throat.

I don't think I could've killed that duck without knowing its pain.
When being awake coincides with a dull exhausting ache, eternal sleep
glimmers like a mirage. In dreams I try to pin his life
to my walls until it melts like a snowflake against my warm breath.
Some nights I can almost reach that spectral projection, where whole
images of what could've been dance until
the spindled networks return to ash.





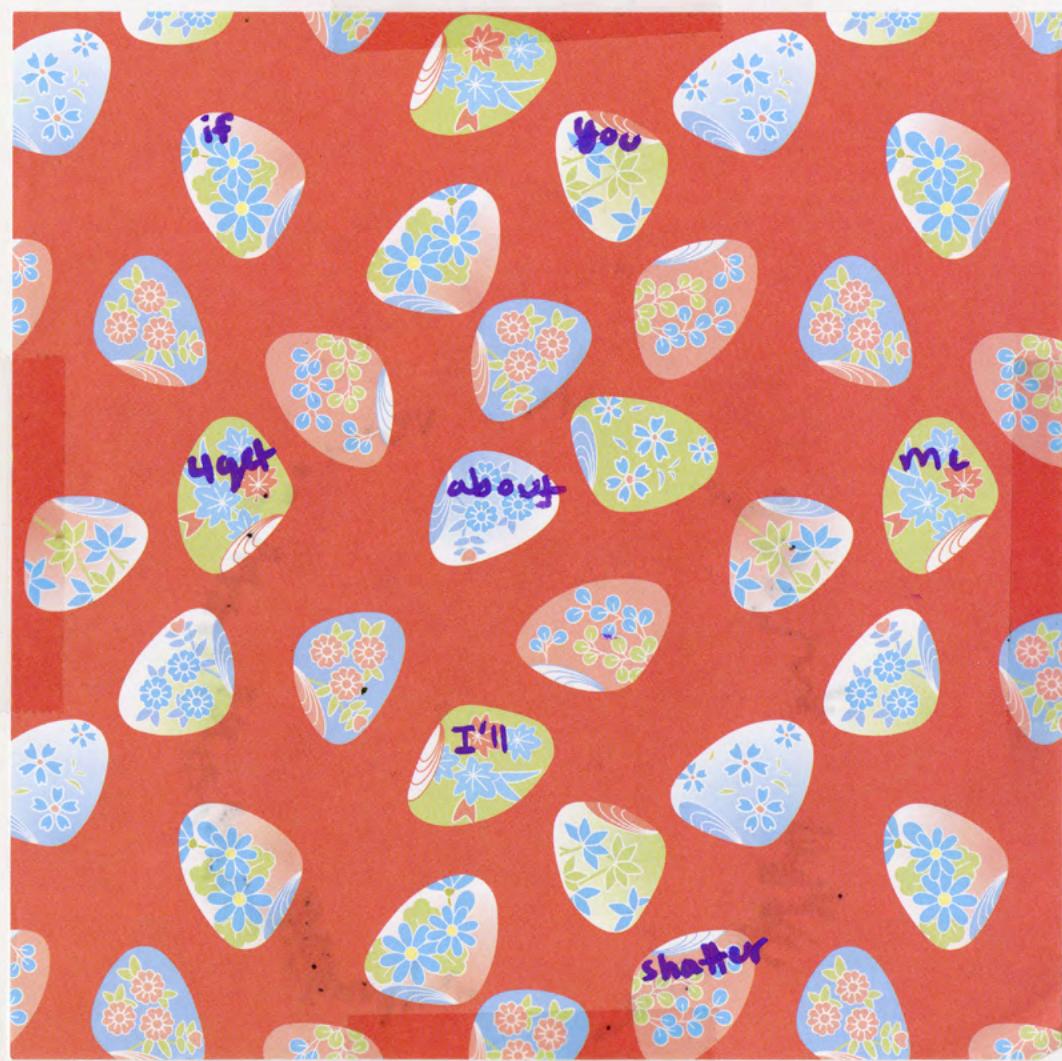
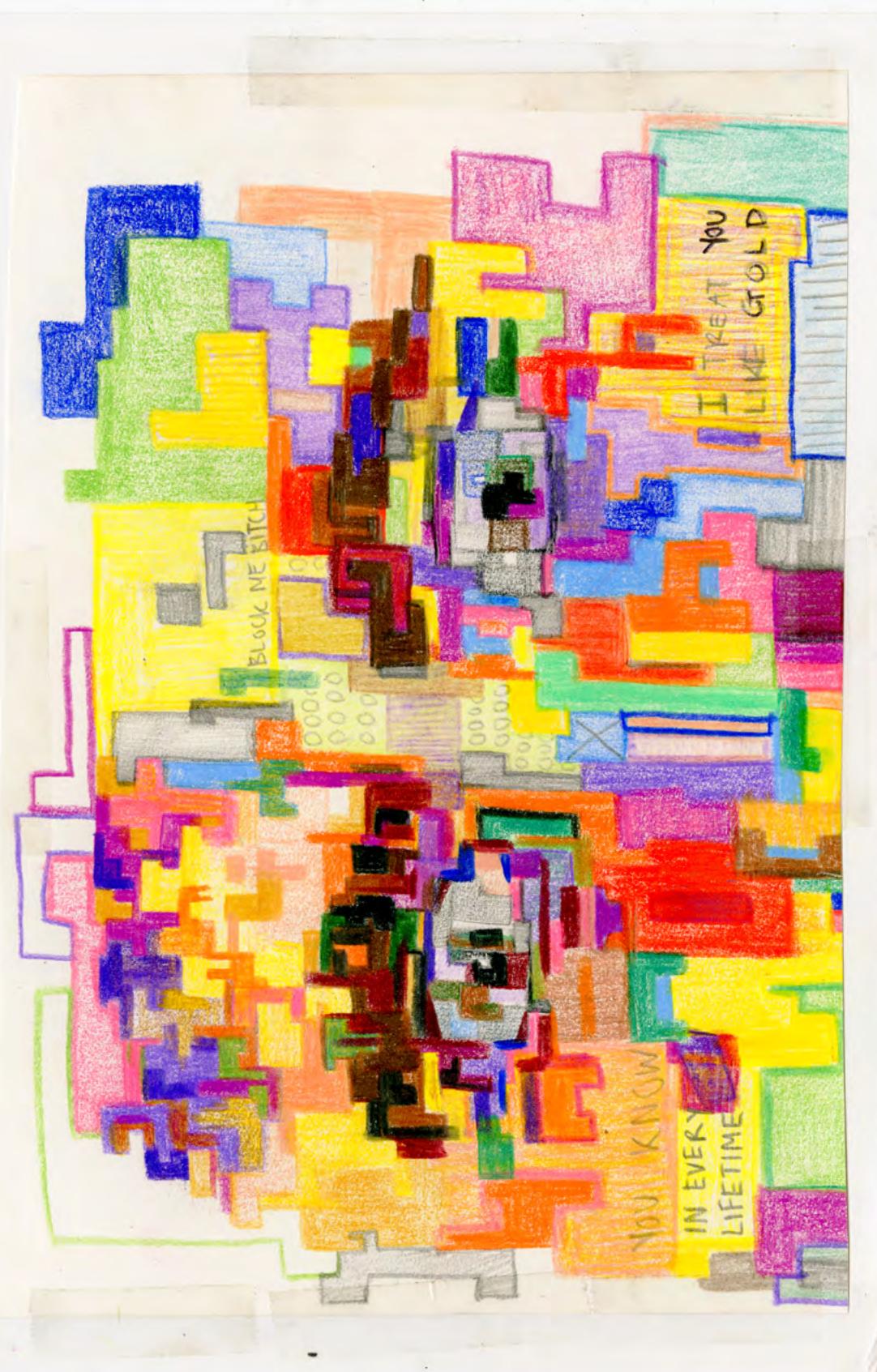
Sycamore

Gnarled tree, pocked with centuries of wind and rain—
How do you rationalize a childhood kissed by its shadow?
You memorized its curves from every window,
watched its fingers filter through dusk from the claw-foot bathtub
where your mother rinsed peppermint soap from your hair
You were both blonder. And she wore gold earrings then.

But Every tree that does not bear good fruit
is cut down and thrown into the fire.
So when you return to the sunlit rooms
you can walk through with your eyes closed,
you'll discover how her crooked branches were
ravaged first by insects and then by a zoning committee—
Reduced from the impenetrable always to softdustpile in a hush.



First step of grief: leave your mom a sticky voicemail since
The tree years belonged to the two of you alone.
Step two is hold a fistful of her life to the wind
So permanence melts through the creases of your palm.
Step three is put distance between you while you still can
Because her death will weigh down every bedroom you assume.





forgiveness





Untitled

Your mood is sludgy on Taco Tuesday
so I pull the moon out of the sky and
She's much heavier than she looks.
Golden edges gurgle in my skillet,
Freckled with cayenne, wanes gracefully.
Goopy wax lump shrinks like kail
in hot oil.

Here's the moon, I say, here's a taco shell,
I think there's sour cream in the fridge.

Takes you two mouthfuls to
swallow her whole, wipe the turned down
corners of your lips the corners of your lips
tell me it tasted how a hummingbird's
heart knocks around in its chest,
and you ask about seconds
with a shit eating grin.

continued

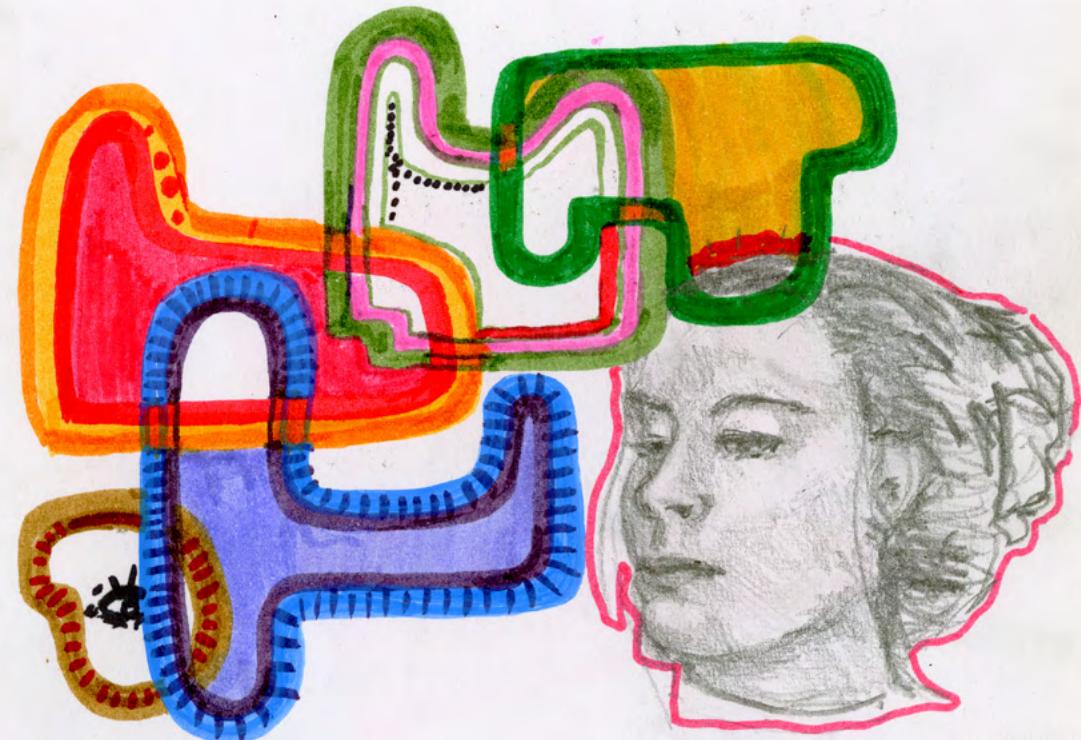


So I pluck down stars like rotten apples. Each is
a gaping handful so do the math. They're searing
bright like an electric shock sneeze.
I drop them in the toaster oven
Plunk, Plunk, sizzle,
Char skinlayer smudges out the shine and
you say they're like peaches and dynamite and
I say I'm not your personal chef.



The neighbor presses her forehead against
the kitchen glow through screen door
and she wants to know why it's so dark and in the same
breath that her daughter saw me messing with Moon
and you say God Lois Get out of here That's libel.
It's chimney smoke and global warming darkness.

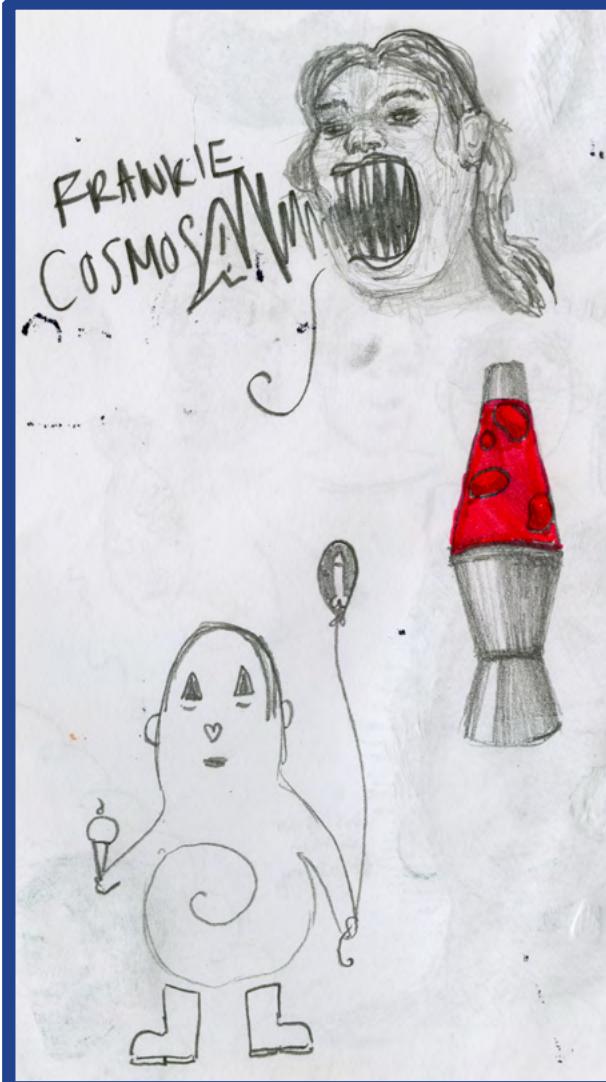
When she huffs off you say You should Not
have done that it was Not yours to give me and
I want to be kinder to you but it's hard when
this whole Moon thing will be a bitch to explain
and I just sit there doing pretty and dumb,
pressing my thumbs into my eyeballs.



I didn't promise you Easy I promised you Interesting.

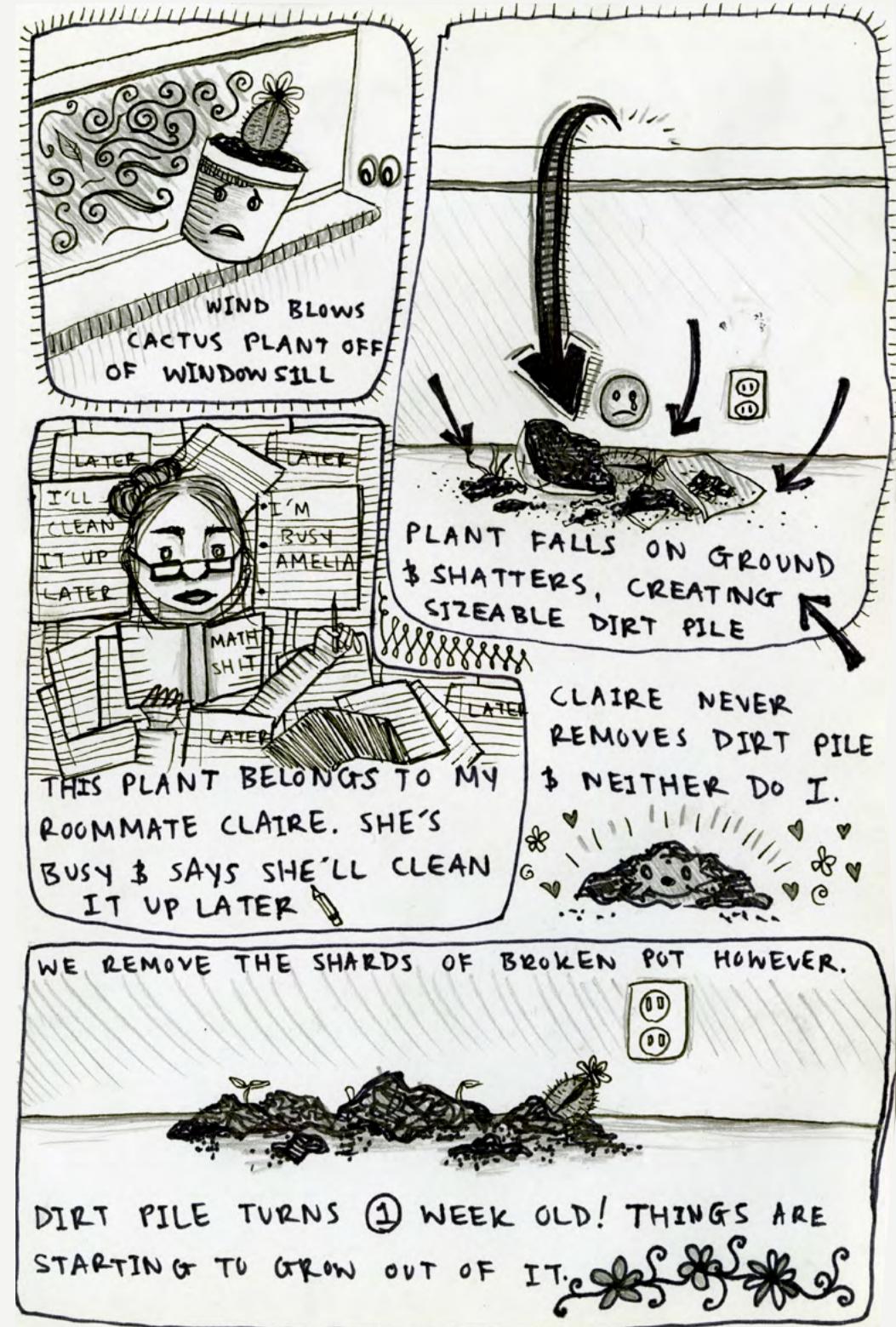
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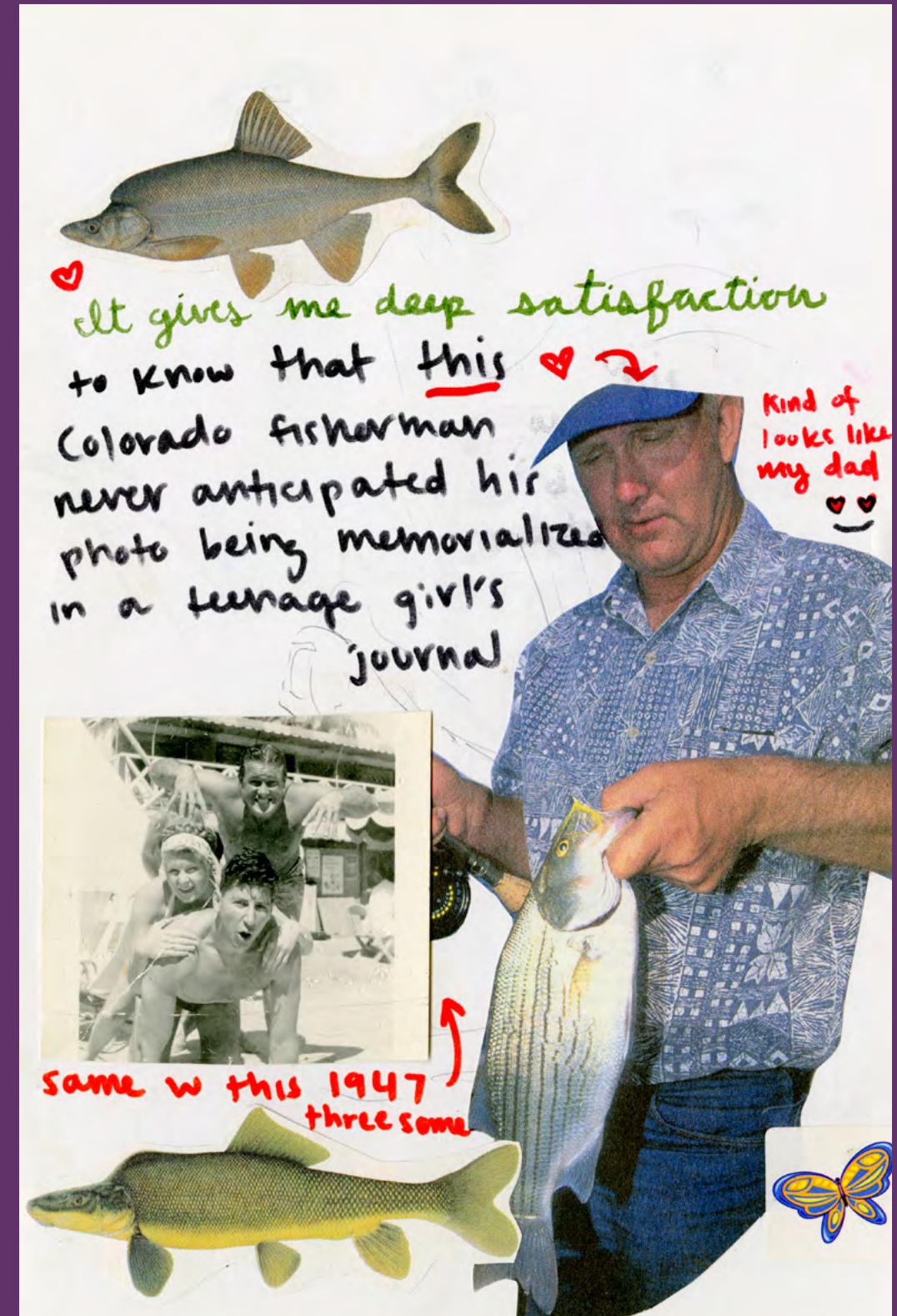
I stack plates in sink suds while you slam doors and
I don't tell but I only fed you smallgrayboring
Mars Moon and Real Moon is a
shiny silver crescent secret
In the dark corners of mossy back porch beams,
nestled in milkweeds and peeling rattlesnake skin.
I'm gonna to sell it on Etsy and buy a timeshare
in the Maldives unless guilt eats me alive.

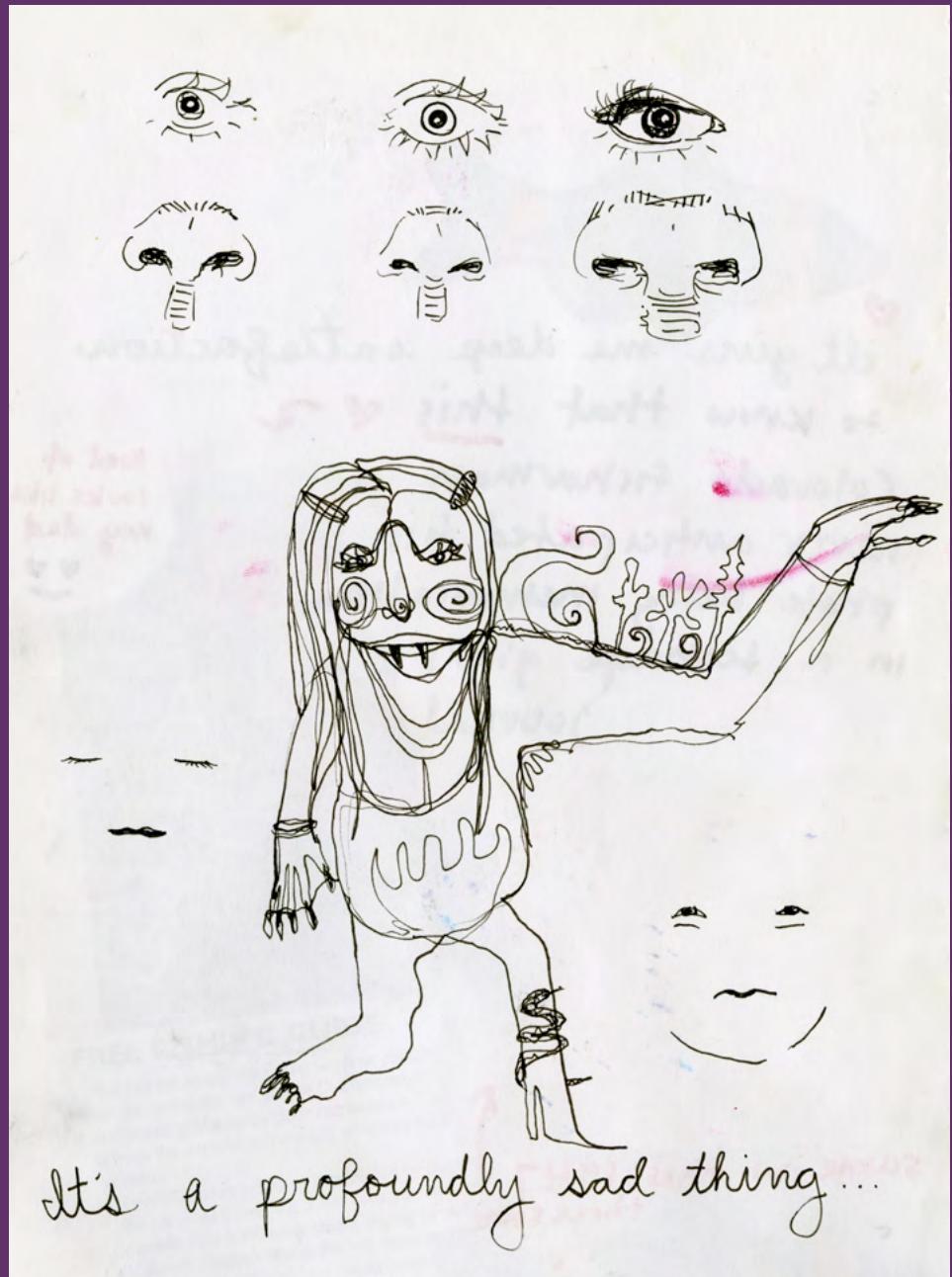


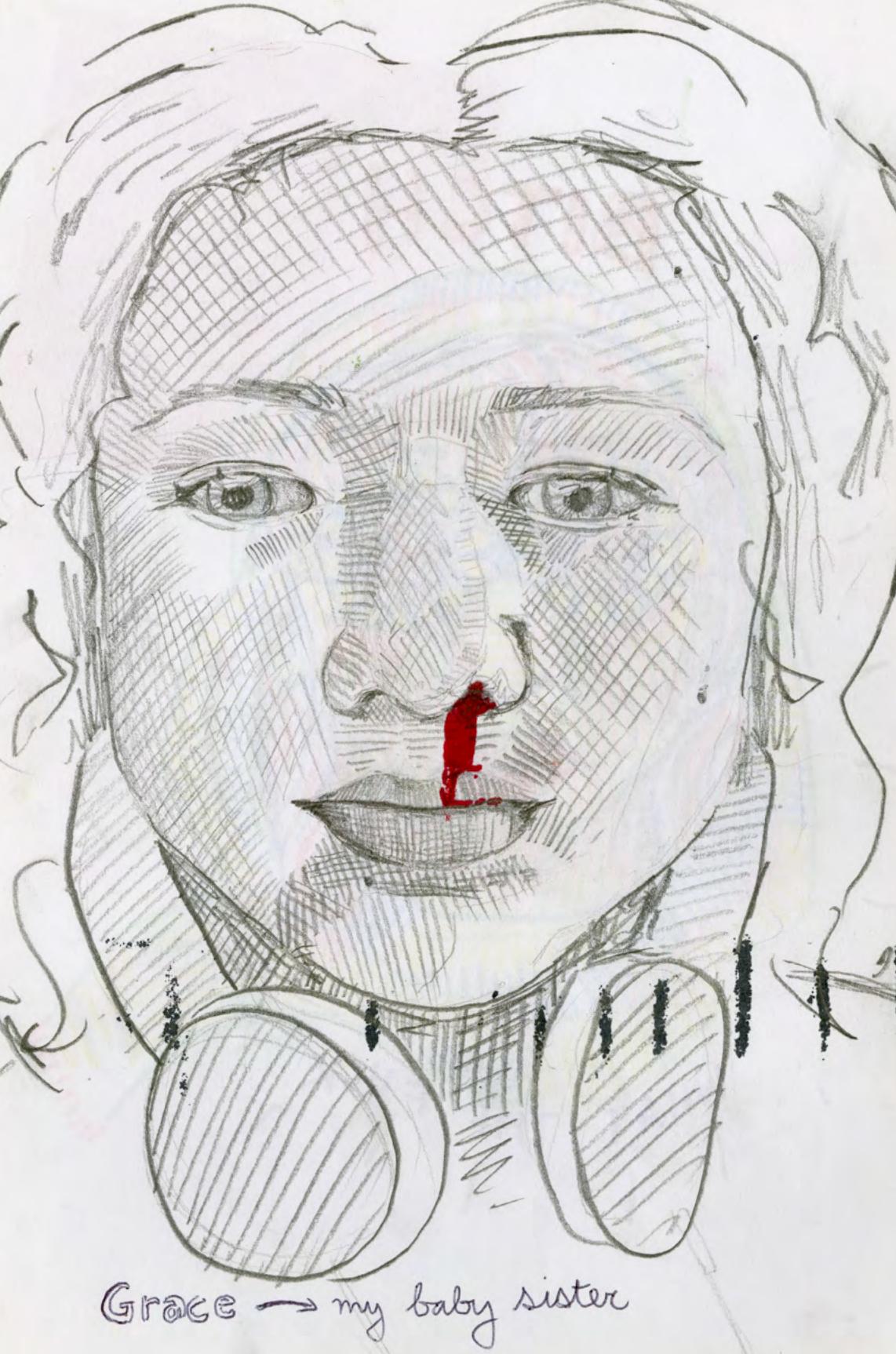
The stars were real though—
In this lifetime I fed you many stars.

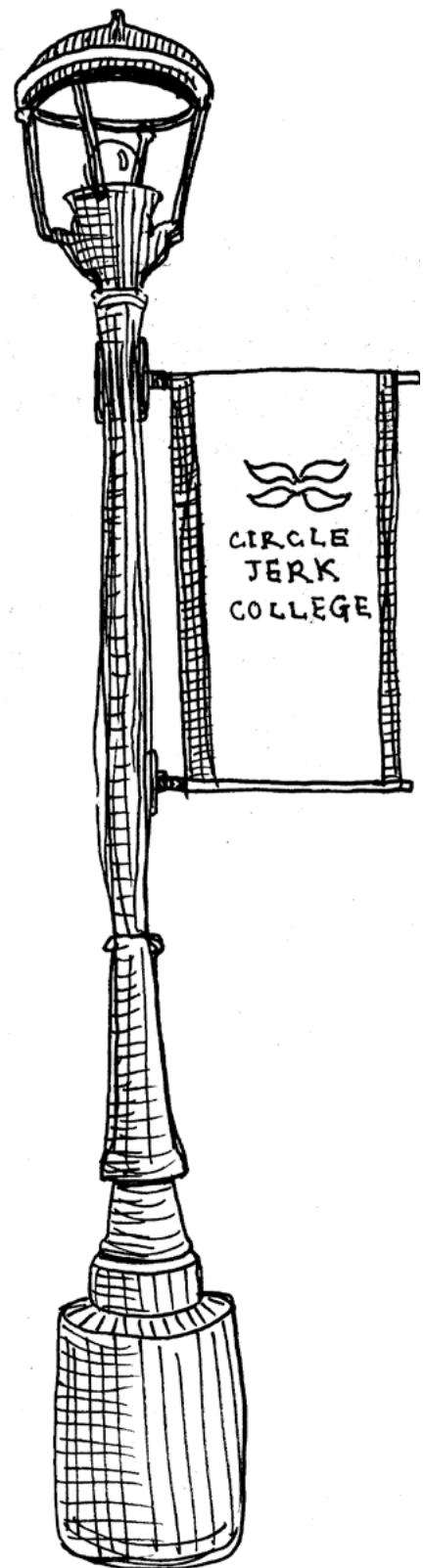


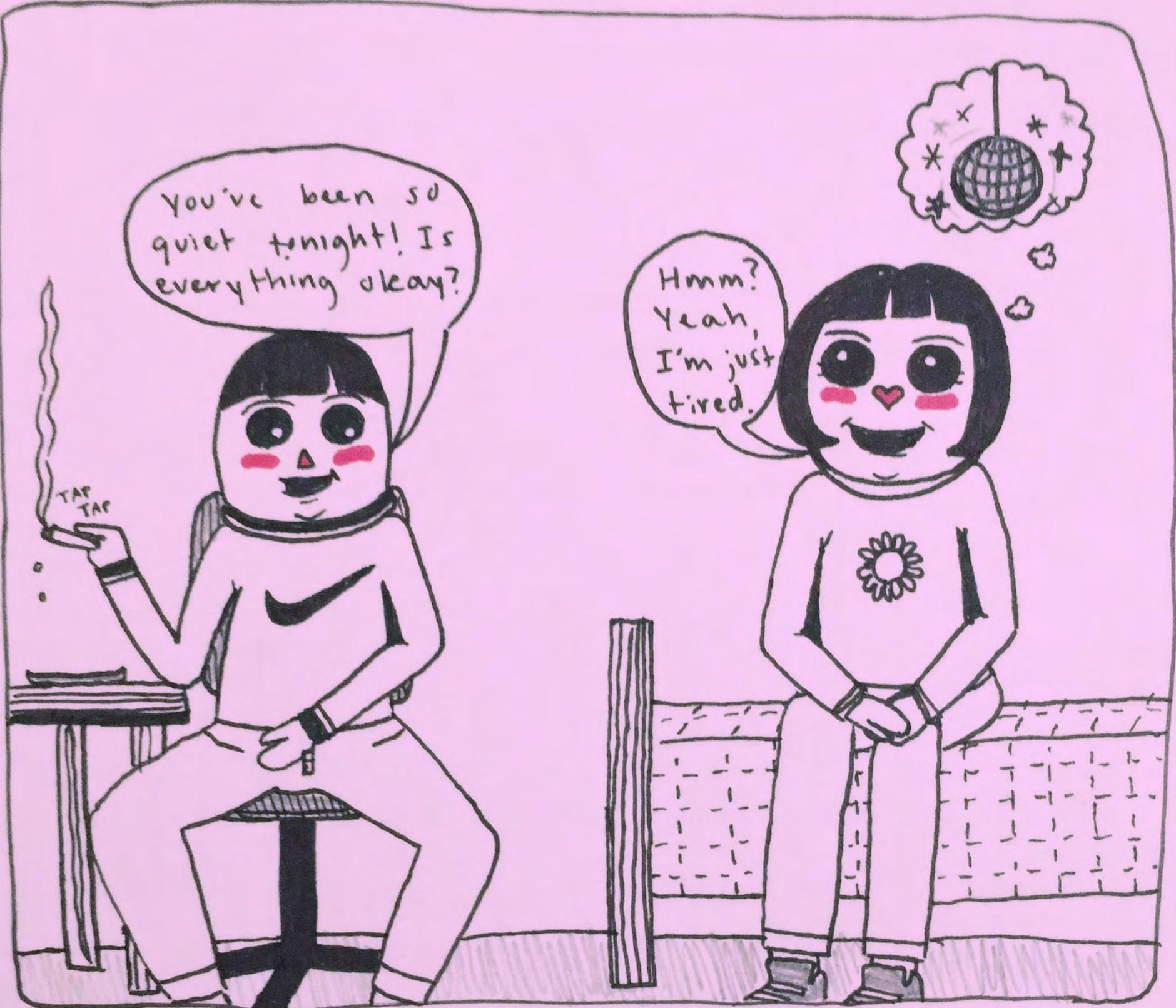


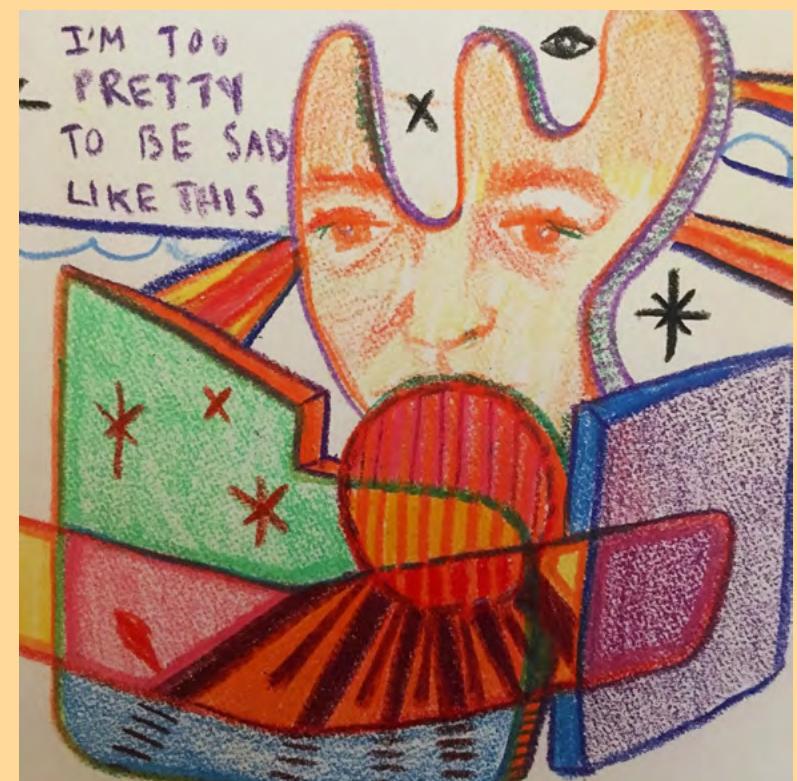




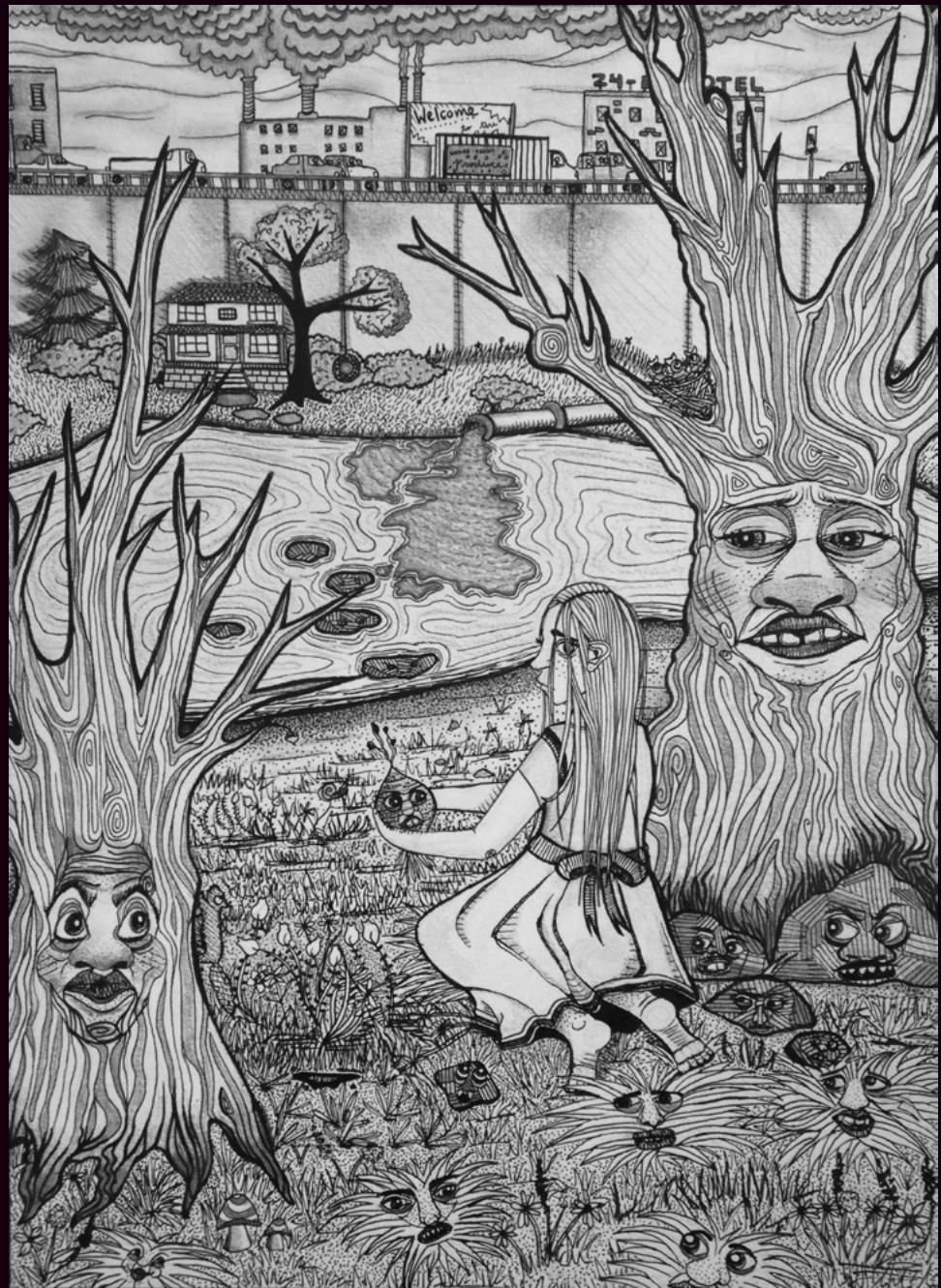












(=,,

Amelia

Amelia

Amelia Darling

AD

AS

A Good Girl
Gone Wild

I FOUND MY BLISS



IN
YOUR LAP

HELP
YOU
GIRLS

I THINK I'M LOST

GIRLS?

I CAN'T FEEL YOU



what are you doing
who are your
are you still
WHERE IS
DID
You

SWEAT
CIGARS

I THOUGHT YOU WERE DIFFERENT
THINGS I WISH YOU KNEW
YOU WERE DIFFERENT TOO
BUT YOU NEEDED SOMEONE TO TELL U

(almost)

Amelia

Amelia Darling



