

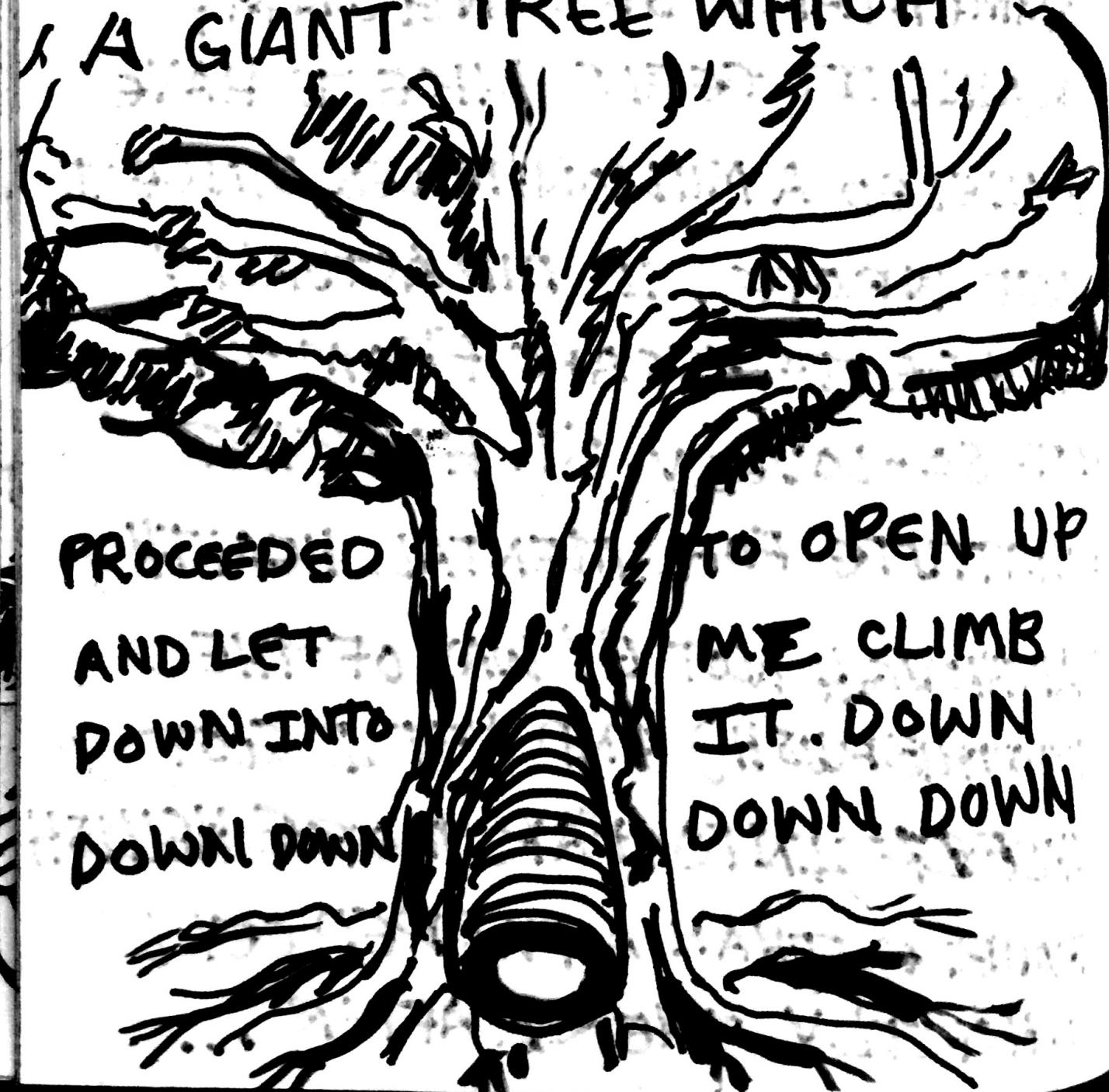
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"WOW. IT'S INCREDIBLE TO HAVE MY
"MINDSPACE TO MYSELF AGAIN. NO
OFFENSE TO ~~THE~~ NANI BUT I CAN'T
WRITE SHIT FOR POETRY OR LYRICS
WITH HER CONSTANT RUNNING
COMMENTARY BUZZING IN MY
BRAIN. IT FEELS LIKE I HAVE
TRAVELED A MILLION MILES SINCE I
LAST WROTE. I DID ACTUALLY
MANAGE TO ESCAPE FROM THE
NOT-SO-LOVELY ST. HOPKINZ
INSTITUTE FOR MENTAL HEALTH
(ALTHOUGH NOT BY WAY OF THE
TOOTHBRUSH) AND YET I GOT
MYSELF INTO FAR MORE HELLISH
TROUBLE THAN A PADDED CELL
SHORTLY THEREAFTER...

THE VOICE, WHICH AT THIS
POINT I WAS DETERMINED TO
FOLLOW TO THE ENDS OF THE EARTH
IF IT WOULD FINALLY SHUT UP,

LED ME TO A GIANT TREE.

A GIANT TREE WHICH



PROCEEDED
AND LET
DOWN INTO
DOWN DOWN

TO OPEN UP
ME CLIMB
IT. DOWN
DOWN DOWN

DOWN THE TREE INTO A SMALL
FOUL SMELLING STONE ROOM.

A HALL LINED WITH SKELETONS.

A PLACE I WISH I COULD UNSEE
BUT WHICH WILL BE FOREVER
BURNED INTO MY MIND.



ONCE
UPON A TIME, I HEARD A
RUMOR THAT USC HAD RECEIVED
A RATHER CONTROVERSIAL GIFT
FROM THE NAZIS, A TREE THAT
SYMBOLIZED SOME KIND OF SICK
SENSE OF SOLIDARITY. I WAS
ALSO ORIGINALLY TOLD THAT THIS

TREE HAD BEEN RELOCATED
MULTIPLE TIMES TO "PRESERVE"
IT (SERIOUSLY, WHY?) AND THAT
IT HAD ENDED UP RESIDING
SOMEWHERE IN THE PARK
BETWEEN BOVARD AND THE PHYS
ED BUILDING, WITH THE CREEPY
CRYING TROJAN HEAD ON IT.



(YOU KNOW, ITS A LITTLE STRANGE TO)
(PICK A MASCOT FAMOUS FOR LOSING WARS)

AS IT TURNS OUT, THAT WAS A LIE.
IT WAS IN FACT THE GIANT TREE
NEAR MORETON FIG THAT WAS
GIVEN TO USC BY THE NAZI'S
AND NOW HAS GROWN SO LARGE
THAT IT CANNOT BE REMOVED
WITHOUT DAMAGING THE SURROUNDING
BUILDINGS.

BENEATH ITS LONG FRONDS AT
TABLES CLOTHED IN WHITE
LINEN SIT THE SCHEMING, KNOWING
AND BLISSFULLY IGNORANT HEIRS
AND BENEFACTORS OF THIS IDEOLOGY
DRESSED IN GARMENTS MADE IN
SWEATSHOP FACTORIES AND DINING
ON THE FLESH OF SMALL ANIMALS.
LOVELY.

BENEATH THIS TREE LIE HORRORS
SO DEEP THAT I AM SCARED TO
WRITE THEM DOWN HERE.

I DON'T KNOW IF THERE
ARE RULES ABOUT WHAT
NORMAL PEOPLE ARE SUPPOSED
TO BE ALLOWED TO KNOW ABOUT
BUT I FEEL PRETTY SURE I
AM BREAKING THEM...

AS I WAS WALKING OVER THERE I
REALIZED THAT I HAVE NEVER
ACTUALLY EATEN AT MORETON FIG.
I CAN HONESTLY SAY THAT I
NEVER EVEN THOUGHT OF IT AS
AN OPTION. ONCE I WAS
STANDING CLOSER TO THE

TREE I COULD FEEL A COLDNESS,
AN UNEASE IN MY LUNGS. NANI
TOLD ME TO WHISPER SOME SECRET
WORDS (WHICH SHE ALSO TOLD ME

NEVER TO WRITE DOWN) SO I DID.

SUDDENLY THE TRUNK OF THE TREE
BEGAN TO STRETCH AND MORPH.

I FELT LIKE I WAS GOING OUT OF
MY MIND JUST WATCHING IT. I

MUST HAVE SLAPPED MYSELF TWICE
TO MAKE SURE I WASN'T ~~HALLUCINATING~~

HALLUCINATING. THE TREE
GRADUALLY TWISTED ITSELF
OPEN AND I SUDDENLY STOOD
ABOVE A DARK CIRCULAR
ENTRYWAY WITH A STRAIGHT

SHOT DOWN INTO DARKNESS.
I HESITATED A LONG MOMENT
BEFORE CLIMBING DOWN, ASKING
MYSELF IF THIS WAS HOW STUPID
PEOPLE DIED? WONDERING IF
I WAS GOING TO BE SCARRED
FOR LIFE FROM THIS EXPERIENCE
OR IF THIS WAS SOME SORT OF
BIO ENGINEERED SUPERTREE!

I SUCKED IT UP AND JUMPED.
I FELL A LONG WAY BEFORE
LANDING ON COLD HARD TILE,
NEARLY SPRAINING MY WRIST.
I HELD UP MY PHONE AND
LOOKED AROUND TO SEE ALL
SORTS OF WEIRD SYMBOLS