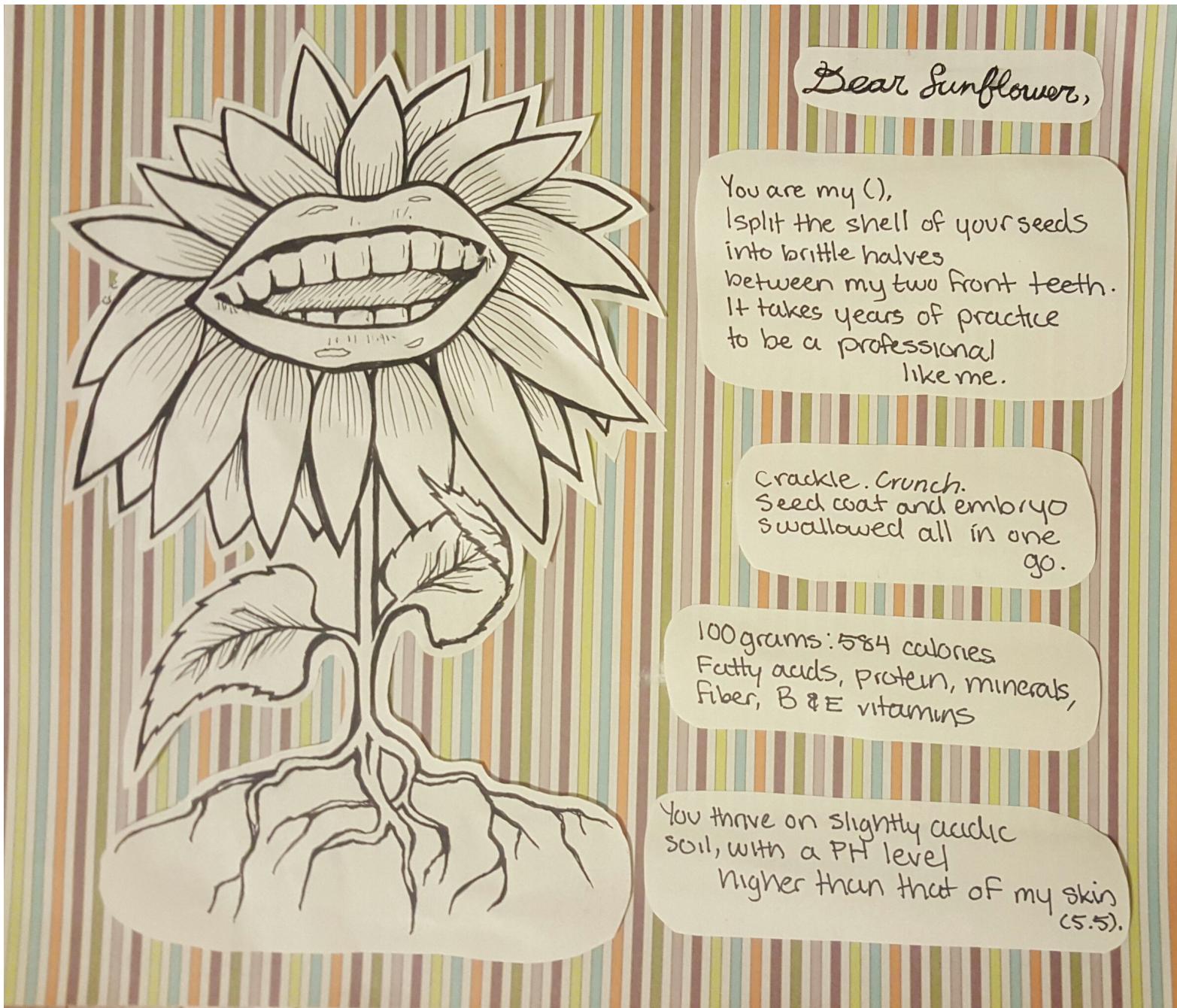


Dear Weather Balloon,

Up, up, and many ways away
20 miles into the atmosphere
(by god, you're past the troposphere
and ozone layer)

With your yellow yellow flock
released into the wild
where you soar with
stray spider silk and dandelion seeds
(though far less graceful)

All that nitrogen must
starve your latex lungs
But I imagine your helium
voice
as you giggle away into the sunset
or whatever.



Dear Sunflower,

You are my (),
I split the shell of your seeds
into brittle halves
between my two front teeth.
It takes years of practice
to be a professional
like me.

Crackle. Crunch.
Seed coat and embryo
swallowed all in one
go.

100 grams: 584 calories
Fatty acids, protein, minerals,
fiber, B & E vitamins

You thrive on slightly acidic
soil, with a pH level
higher than that of my skin
(5.5).