

Self

(AKA:
Pre-Transition
Attempts at self
translation)

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Self
(Before)

Premis of 'before' labels

I started writing, and drawing, the summer of 2020. I graduated High school the following year, Spring 2021, and entered college Fall 2021.

Spring 2022 Semester is when I started seriously questioning. I had discovered the queer community for the first time, in college. The summer of 2022 is when I transitioned.

The central conceit of this book is that everything with the (Before) tag was created before summer 2022. Tags with (After) were made some-point after.

After writing 'The Book Of:' and 'Life, you', I wanted to give a love-letter to my previous work for... everything. This was the start of everything, and the final publishing of this work was, in my mind, the ultimate goal:

Trying to connect to a world, which seemed so far away, by explaining myself. 'Maybe, if I figured out a way to make sense to other people, they could finally

relate to me. I could finally have real relationships'. Explanations, which ultimately, I didn't have the language for.

After going over the collective work of all my writing, now, to publish it, I've realized more patterns of thought and questioning which I've been doing all along, which I haven't confronted until now. I have newly entered another questioning phase, and it will be fun to have all this work as possibly representative of another 'before' stage of my life.

On: Typical Atypical

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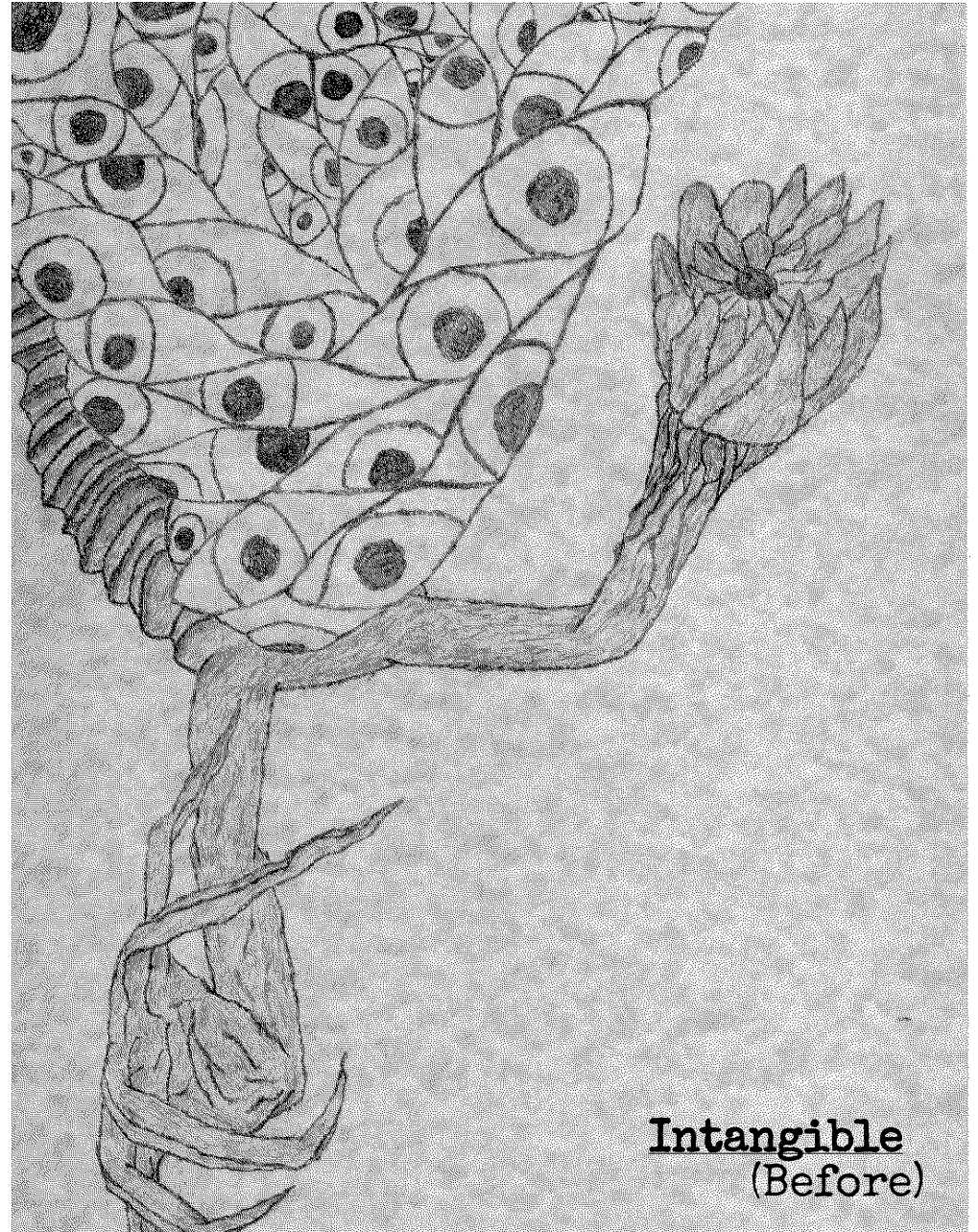
On: Getting into Writing (By Writing about writing)

Intangible (Before)

I am not as I look,
I am not as I say,
I am not as I act,
I am not as I think,
I am not as I was,
They are dead.
I am not as I'll be,
They are not here yet.
I am instance,
I am unknowable,
I am existence,

Yet, to others, and the outside,
I do not, and will never, exist.
I am intangible, and I am infinite.

Who are you?



Intangible
(Before)

A Preface (Before)

I have written this book for no-one,
Which you may find a bit sullen.
But I simply don't care,
If your emotions might flare,
Because, if they do, you're a moron.

Words (Before)

My words have escape,
They are out of my hands.
Onto a page,
Each one now stands.

Careful (Before)

“ There are times of peace
and times of struggle.
Of this time,
I smell trouble.

Halter here,
and you will stumble.
But if you fall,
You will crumble. “

Trash (Before) (AKA The start of
everything)

This poem is full of trash
Words I smash
Together to make ash-
Heaps of a bash-
Fully disappointing mash-
Of lash-
ing thoughts.

The words only rhyme 'cause of dash-
es which is a very irrash-
onal approach to the clash-
ing conflict poems flash
on it's victims to cash
in people's bottomless stash
of confusion.

Now, I don't means to slash
On your choice of trash,
But surely you yourself could bash
a better fash-
ion of theme than mine of crash-
ing interest.
One man's trash is another man's stash
of trash, too.

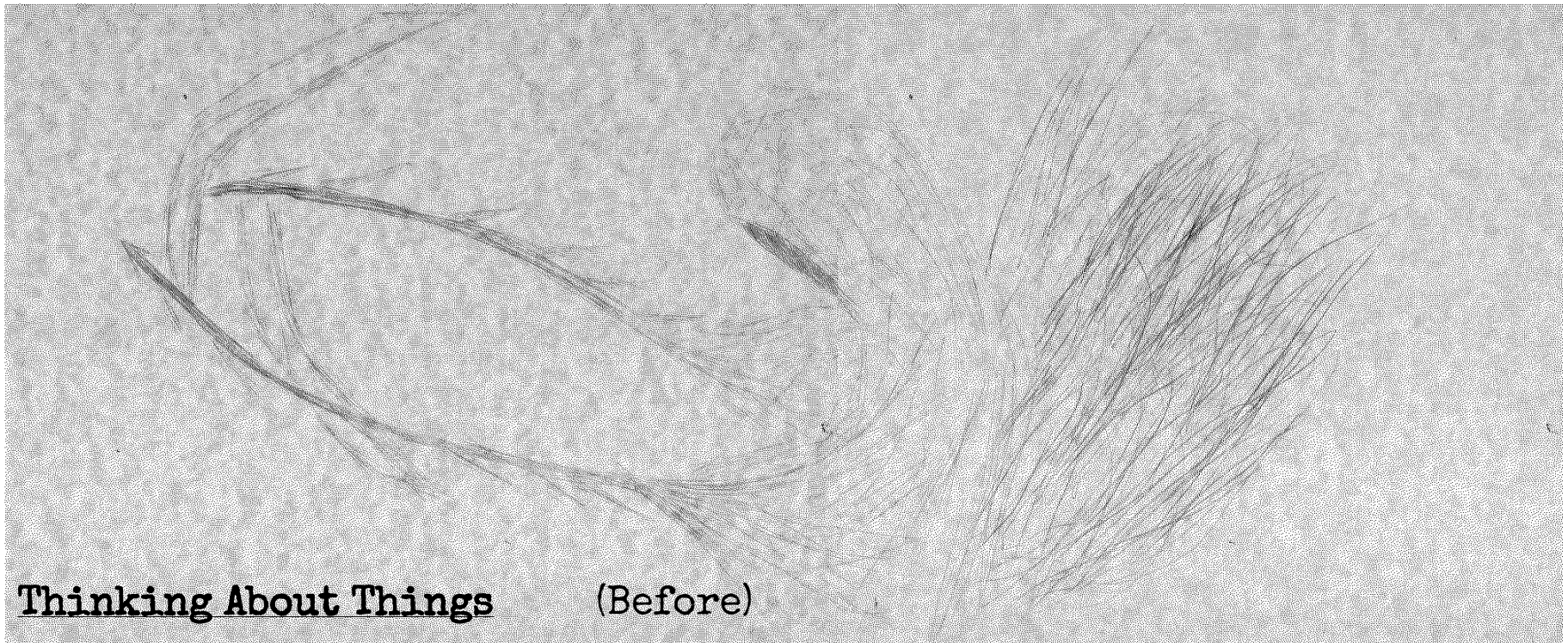
To Die (Before)

“ By and by, if you ask why
I speak as if I want to die,
then, by and by,
it's because this is how I lie. ”

Riddle
(Before)

I can't see the mirror,
I'm blind.
I can't hear silence,
I'm deaf.
I can't tell time
I'm mute.
I can't feel my skin,
I am cold.
I can't taste the air, I can't smell fear.
I can't understand, my mind is clear:
I'm dead.

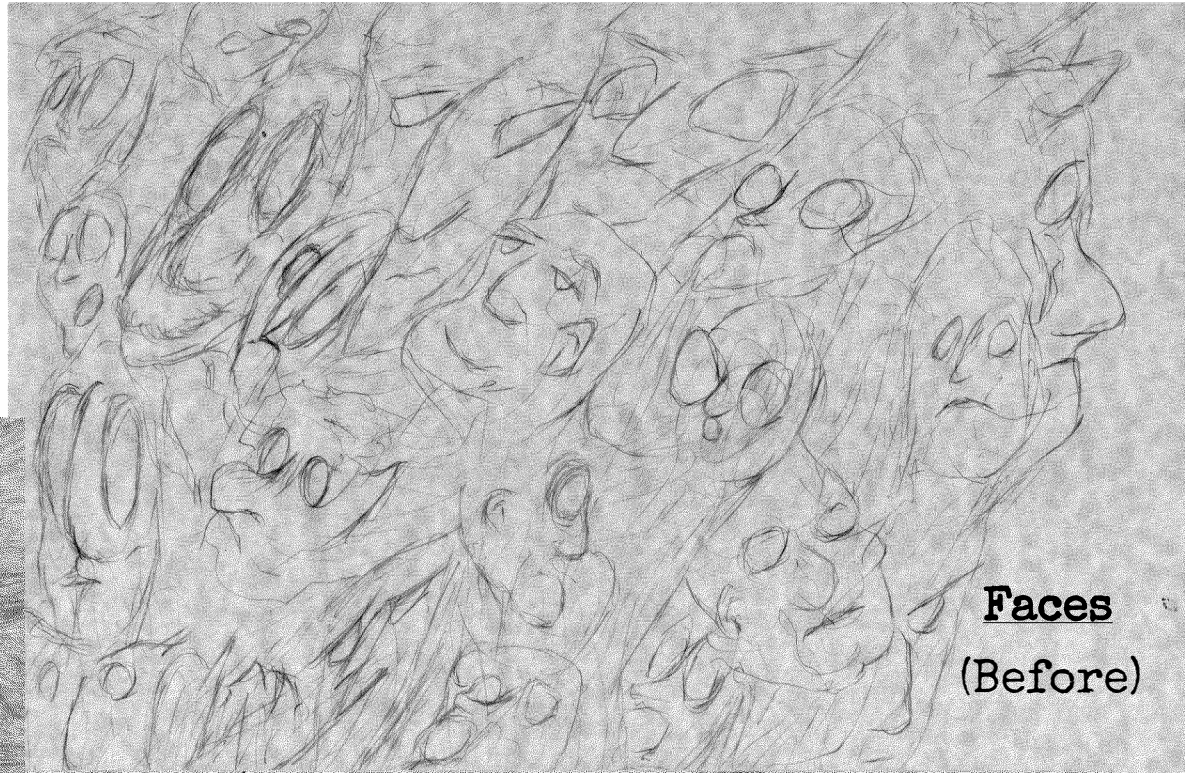
Thinking About Things (Before)



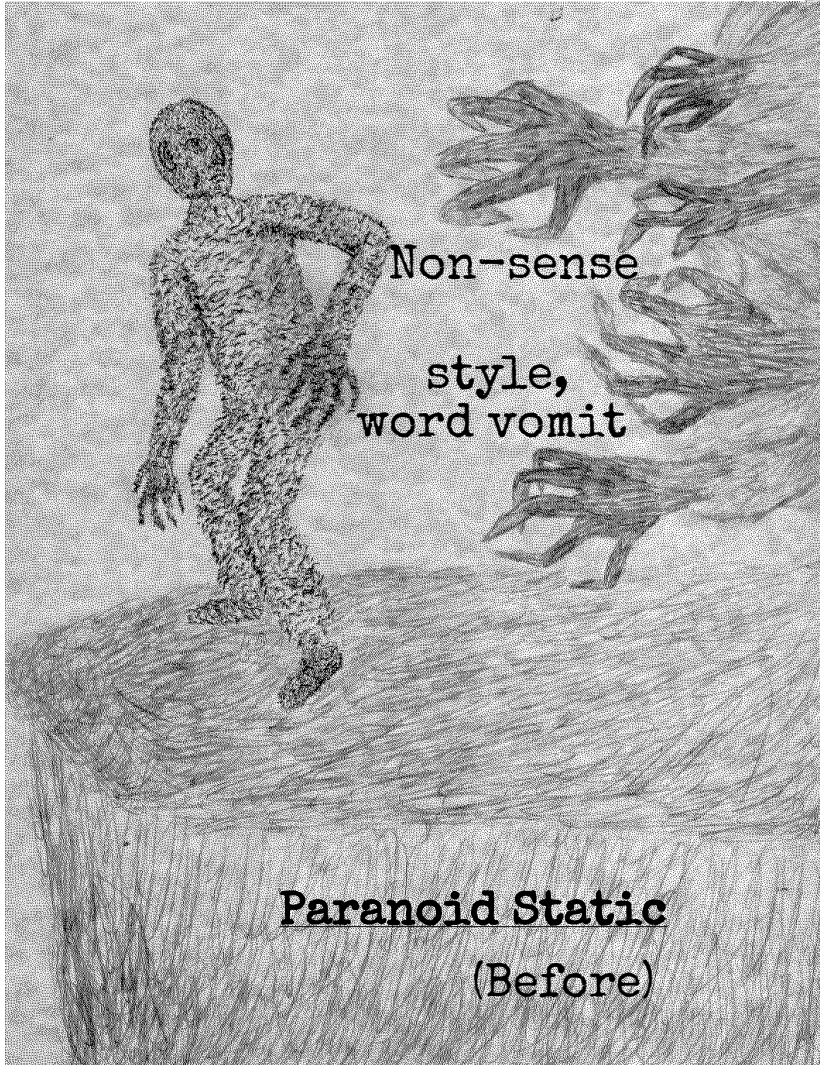
(After) Self-Conscious

I see myself in your eyes
I know what my face looks like

I feel them, bulbous, peering,
You know nothing, I am blind.



Faces
(Before)

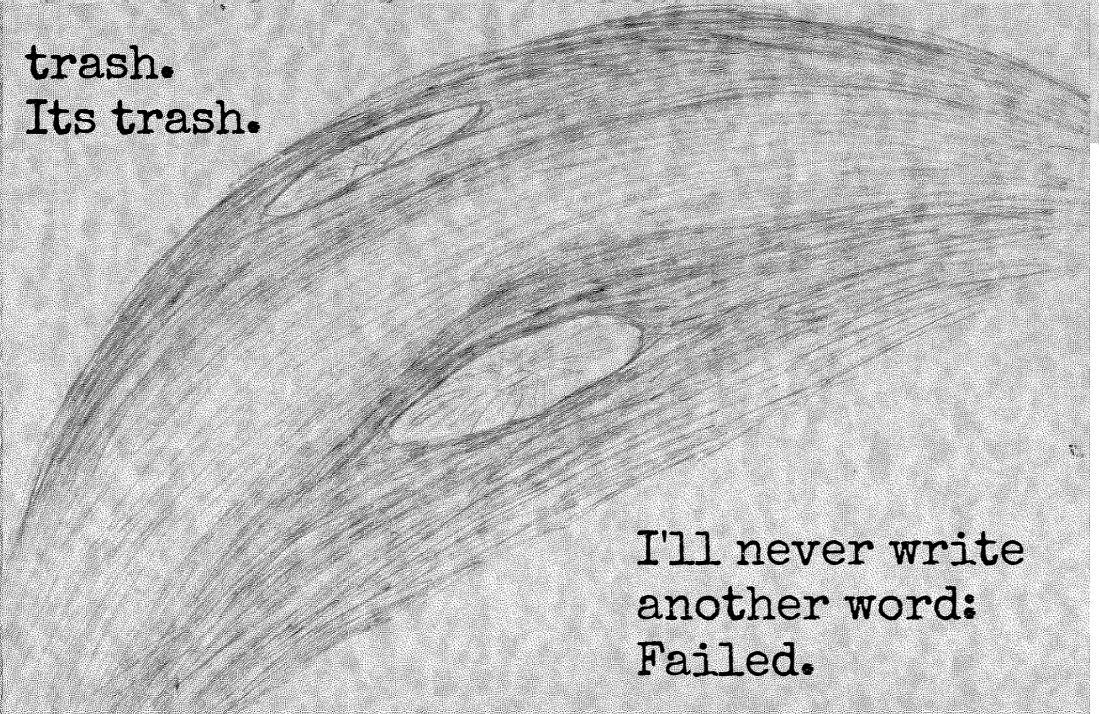


Non-sense

style,
word vomit

Paranoid Static
(Before)

trash.
Its trash.



I'll never write
another word:
Failed.

Leen
(Before)

The Fox (Before)

Great trees hide the smallest of things with the best of meaning. Each smell of pine is a wiff of time to enjoy in moments. Each chance I get, I breathe it in, life. My house is surrounded by it. My life, not within the small box, but within the world of the wild. Eternal happiness, I have always believed, lies lost in its branched-off depths, waiting to find... something. There, it is lost also.

I thought I had seen it, time to time, while enjoying the scents, The first I can remember happened when I was 5. I saw it in the forest. It was blocked, partially, by my long scruff of hair. I saw it's red coat glide on the ground, and disappear.

Then, again, months later, returning from school. Christmas vacation had put me back to my home. I was laying, quiet, beside my windowsill. If I moved, I would spark the violent activities of the time. I saw, again, in the silence of the morning, the spirit which haunted the trees.

Sat, just within the shadows, was the red fox. It gazed at me coolly with it's two marble voids. It left again...

... Even here, though, in the infinite quiet, I am still not alone. I can't be, for still I hear the wringing of silence, providing emptiness as my company.

... With impossible personification, it smiled with the teeth of the devil, and the eyes of oblivion.

(I)ntellect (After)

Romantic, beautiful!
Love, pretty.

Contemplation of the mind:
Love be my anchor to
judge!

As a rose, In my mind
Beautiful, *decorative*

As a Fragrance, fresh,
What a sweet treat,
Appreciated, of course, in a
respectable, logical manner,
[You] are rationally
Attractive! *useful*

A promise I keep
A contract to remember,
always
As a principle, I hold
Faithful! *obedient*

As a pillar holds the wall of my home,
Sculpted for the world to see,
Presentation, another face of me!
Important! *necessary*

Existing in my mind,
I protect it by introspection.
Neglect, all else!
The World, etc.!
A footnote to my thoughts,
But the ground I practically walk
on.

An old, finished piece of art,
Painted by someone else's hands
A thing I must intellectually respect!

A thing I must keep distance from,
do not touch the paint

Romance, a study!
Of knowledge, *taught*:
Love, pretty.

What I mean is I don't mean what I say
And don't say what I mean
I mean what I mean
And say what I say
But don't mix them up: that's not what I mean.

What I Mean (After)

I don't mean to say I don't mean it at all,
Or that words are too small,
What I mean is that the words are too big,
And many more meanings than I mean will fit in their rig
And so my sincerity lacks clarity, and I get little to wall
In the exact sentiments wishing to make the contents

Of the words.

I don't mean there is no way out,
I just mean there's always room for doubt:
There could be a chasm of sarcasm,
A false floor of metaphor...
Like a ceiling of simile,
With more room in the rafters.

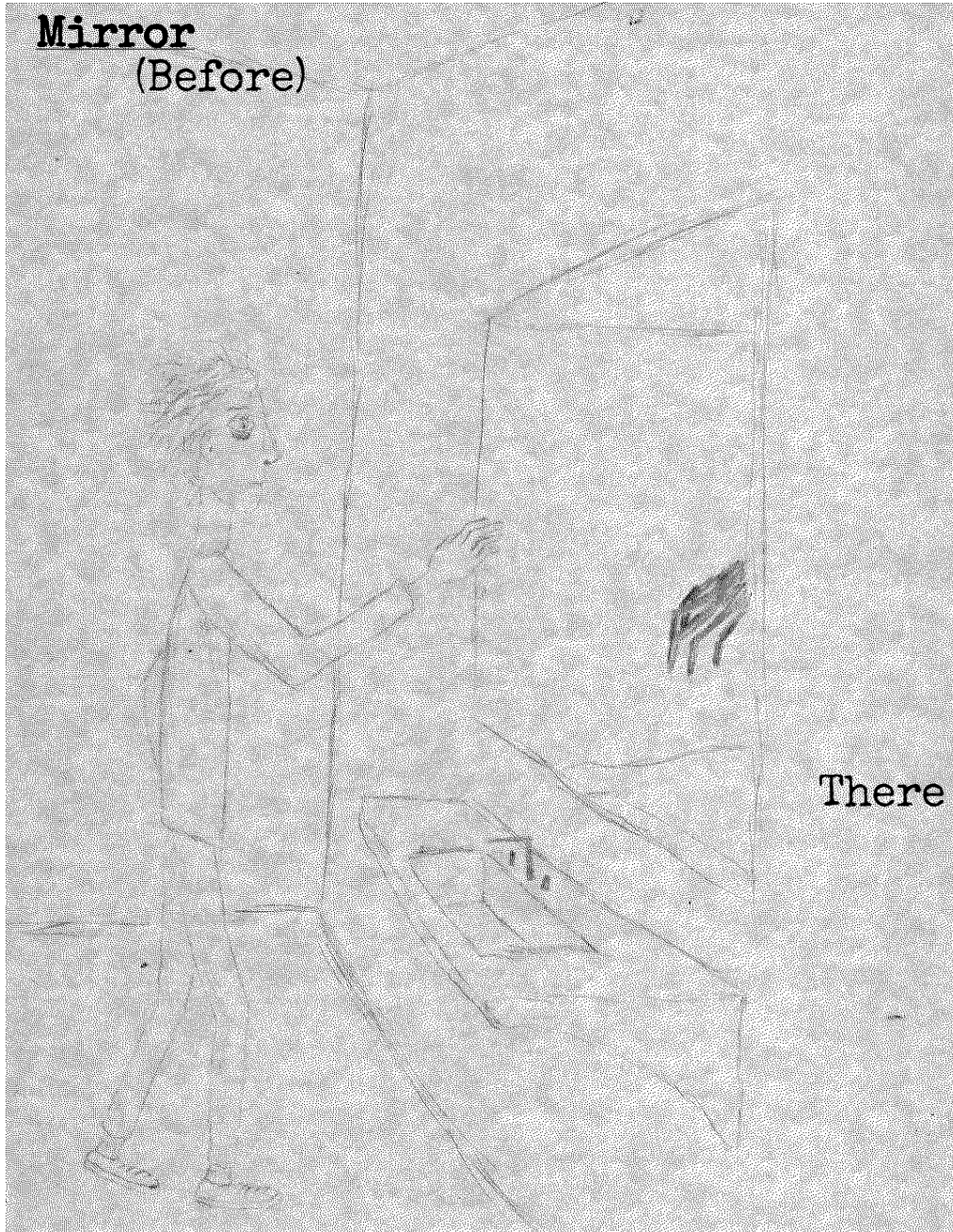
What I really mean is this:
I don't mean that.

What I mean is that... and I mean it.

PeRfectionism (After)

Disturbing, disrupting, this
piece I keep on working.
Finished, but it hurts:
conclusion yields no desert but
the gritty dirt I see could still
be cleaned. Can a piece be a type
of perfect without a smooth
polish? I should relish what is
delicious about satisfaction to
move-on. It's more fun to move
on, my work is the writing.

Mirror
(Before)



Blank
(Before)

This area is empty,
A void of space.
In it's reflection,
I see my face.
My thoughts, here
I will trace.
My errors, here,
I can erase.

My thoughts are written here,
But this is not my mind.
This is but a labyrinth,
Where I cannot find,
Reality.

Where am I?
How can I
Escape?
Is it possible?
Yes, here,

There is nothing, everything, anything.
Here, I am all the above.
Here, in this empty place,
Reality is what I say.

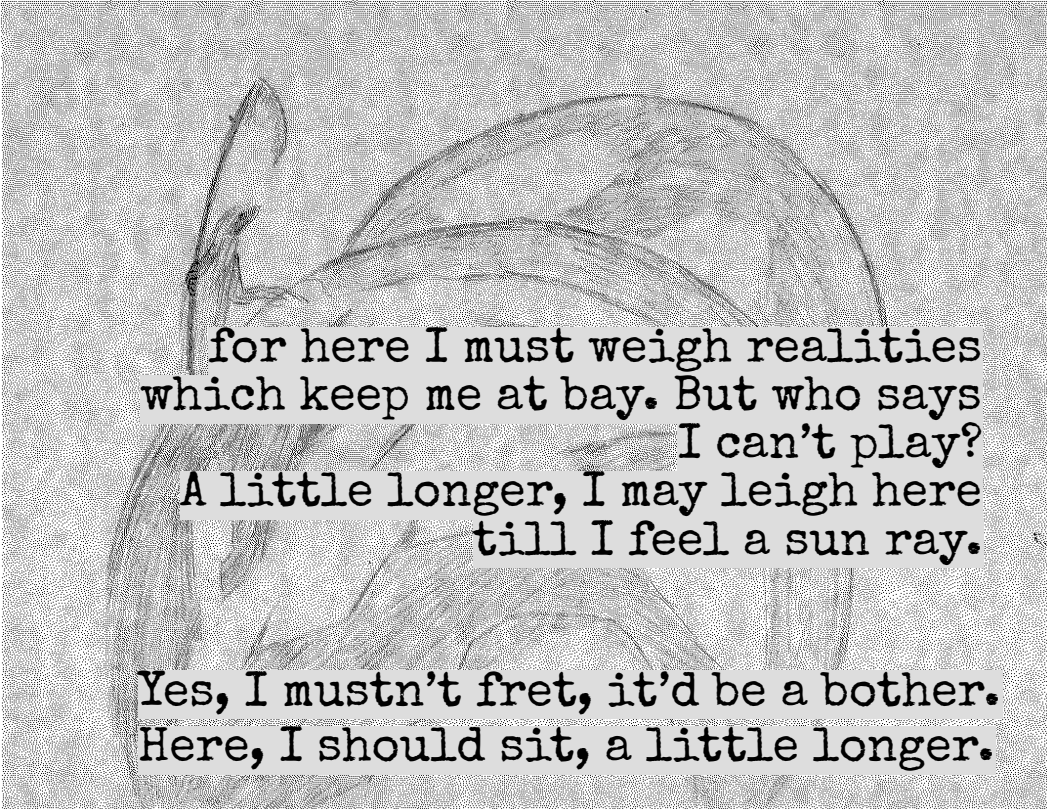
But even if
I am not here
Do other realities matter
Anyway?

Or is everywhere in the world
Just this blank sheet of paper?

Snooze (Before)

I am dreaming, but isn't this real?
What is reality, if not to feel.
Here, this place, I don't want you
to steal. This world, to you, it may
not appeal.

To think this way is what I say in
the morning. But there I can't stay,



for here I must weigh realities
which keep me at bay. But who says
I can't play?
A little longer, I may leigh here
till I feel a sun ray.

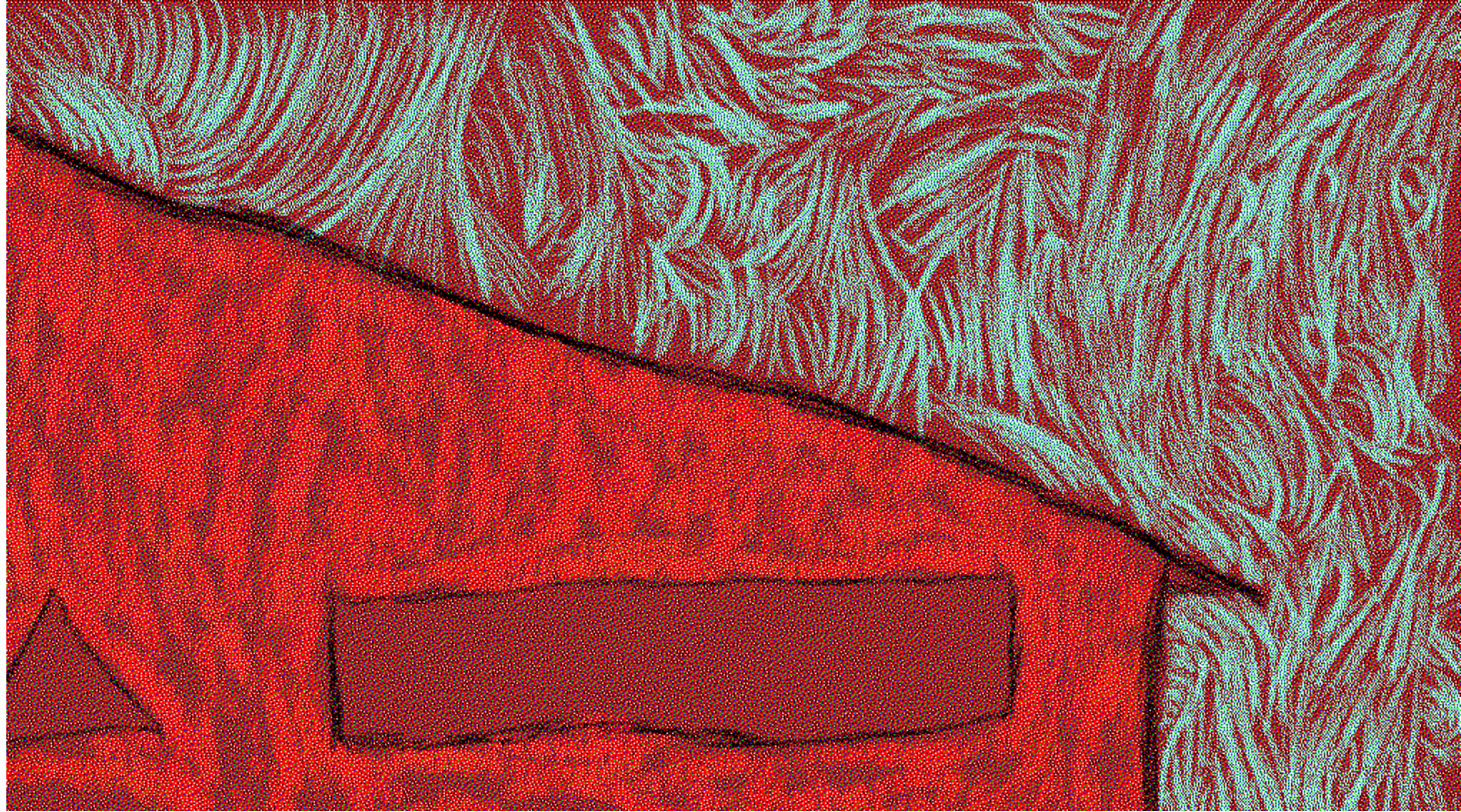
Yes, I mustn't fret, it'd be a bother.
Here, I should sit, a little longer.



So as boredom subsides,
I begin to reside
back in my fields of wonder.

Home
(Before)

That house,
I know it well.
I could never
live there,
now. That
House must
live without
me, me without
it. I will
never live in
that house.



The corpse of a
child lies
buried, beneath
the ground of
that home.

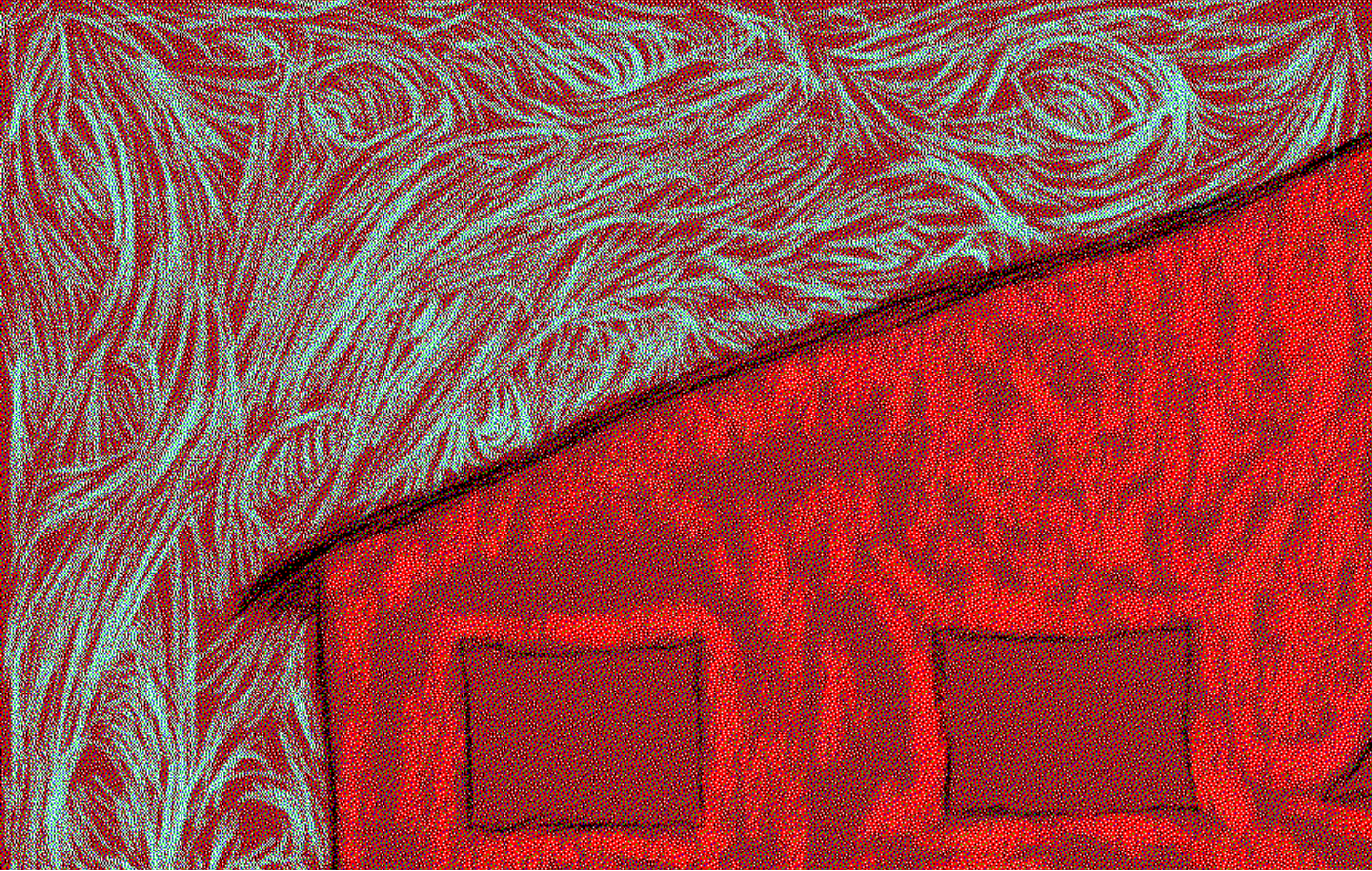
There are no storms which
shriek against it's walls. No
windows broken. No cracks in
its door.

It's door, that sits in plain
view. It's handle glistens,
clean. The walkway to it,
welcoming. Entry, calling,
"Come home!"

The paint brightly
kept, the yard neatly
trimmed,
"Come Home!"

So easy it would
open, just
"Come Home!"

But that house will
never open for me.



There is something
else living there,
now.

The street, before it,
is clean. The street
was all the world,
once.

Where I met with
neighbors, played in
the sun, shared in
the fun; I knew
everyone. It brought
the mailman, and the
ice-cream truck, and
the corn salesman.
They have nothing to
do with me, now.

Further on was a plain of dirt, now gone.
More houses are there, now, waiting to turn-over
and over again.

Perpetual change, nothing lasting.

My room is in there. From that most sacred special place of my own,
I knew sleep.

I had to relearn how to sleep. I had to relearn how to rest.

I knew my closet. I knew
darkness.

[The closet, mysterious shadows:
it held familiar monsters.]
Now, the light is blinding,
intangibly horrifying.

I knew my floor, too, by the toys
I'd scattered on it.
I had to relearn gravity. [What
am I, without my floor?] A floater
in space, tied to the world only
by an invisible web of 1s and 0s.

[Under that bed lay the head of a
creeper],
Leaning from that darkness was
it's peeping eye.

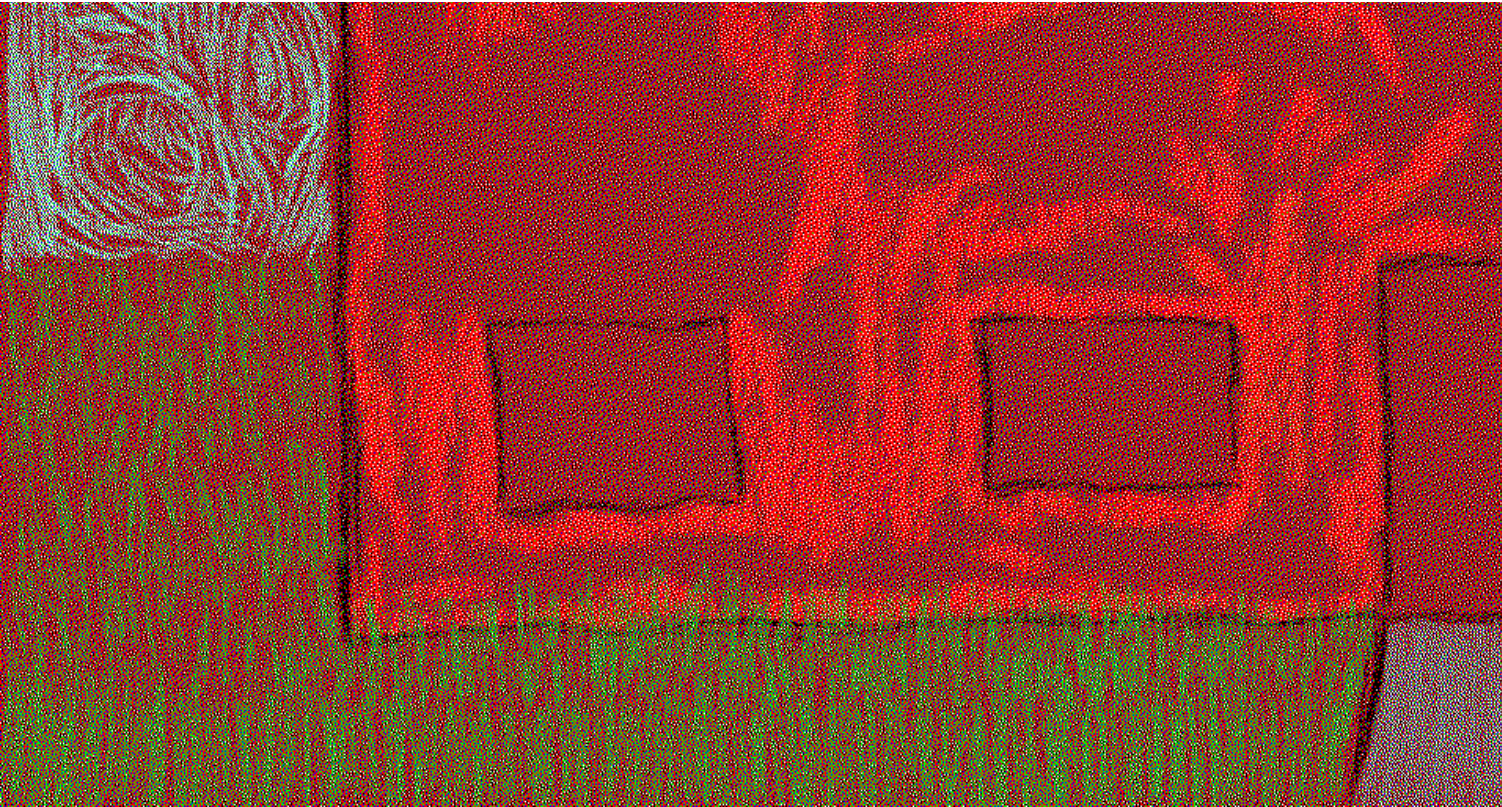
It was always waiting for my
hanging leg

To snatch it with its jaw.

I knew my ceiling, painted popcorn,
which formed images visible only to
me

Creatures I can reveal, now, for
others to see

By my pen and twitching hand.



I knew my walls, I
knew safety.

I am
[vulnerable to
the giants],
now, without
any real
barriers of
separation.

The dining room held my food. The family room held my family.

How do I find completeness again? The food is all air, no substance. And where is my family, without that space? Where do we find each other again? A house far away...

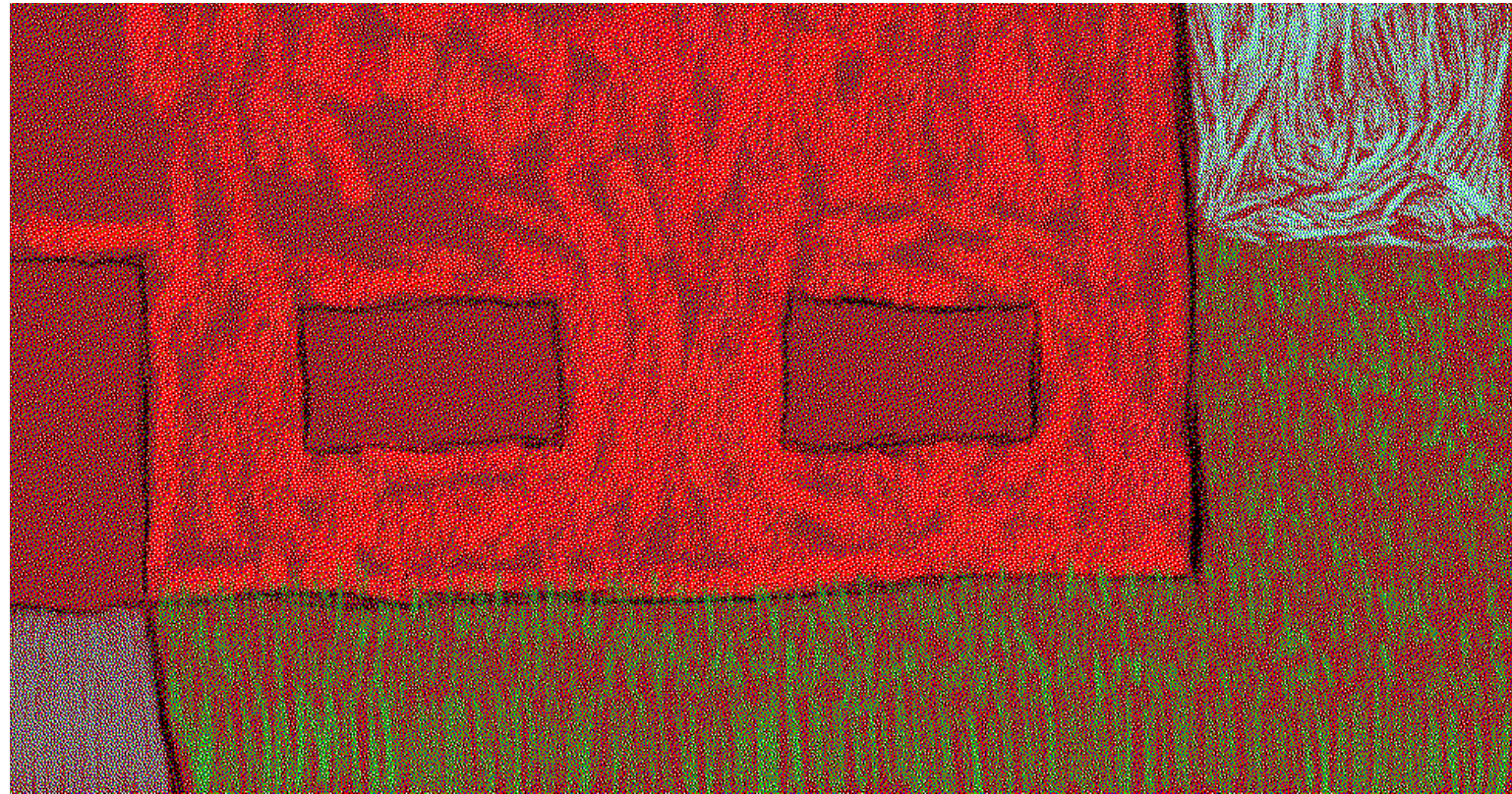
Time is kept in that place. Repeating forever within its walls is the sequence of my life.

Though my height-marks may be painted over

My toys are all sold

My bed and clothes in some trash dump

My soul stains
the *being
presence* of
that space, as
my mind is
stained by it.
I haunt that
house. That
house is mine.
I hold it in
the palm of my
hand, it bends
to my will.



I am the shapes that form on the ceiling.

I am the
beneath

I am the
of the

I am the
it's

I am the storm that will shrill its walls.

I am the giant, come to play.



thing, lurking
the bed.

shadows, leaking out
closet.

bellowing rumble of
pipes and vents.

The corpse of a child lies buried, beneath the
ground of that home. I hope whoever lives there,
now, can bear it's cries,

While I must live the rest of my life beneath the
weight of it.

Pocket (Before)

A locket pocket full of
sockets and trinkets galore.
Knock it and hack it to try
and ask, "more",
But you don't know what
you're asking for.

Knives (Before)

Knives, cutlery,
cutting and
carpentry, cultural
crevice creation and
killing. Splitter-
splattering sprays
spurling out sprawls
of sprinkling spurts.
Gander at the grizzly
glittering ground,
galvanizing grittier
gripe grabbing. Cut,
cut, cut.

Dotted Line (Before)

.....

A dotted line
cannot confine
my words.

My words,
however sturd,
don't define the meaning.

The meaning
conveys a feeling
of yours

which is past the
dotted line.

.....

<p>Flesh (After)</p> <p>Its tasty Its stringy Its nasty Its kingly Its ghastly I'm hungry, Come feed me.</p>

<p>Multiple Meanings (Before)</p> <p>As I write a word, no, two, I see their meanings are far from few. 'Cause as I put them down, I begin to frown, when I noticed they are: "Very Blue."</p>

Legacy (After)

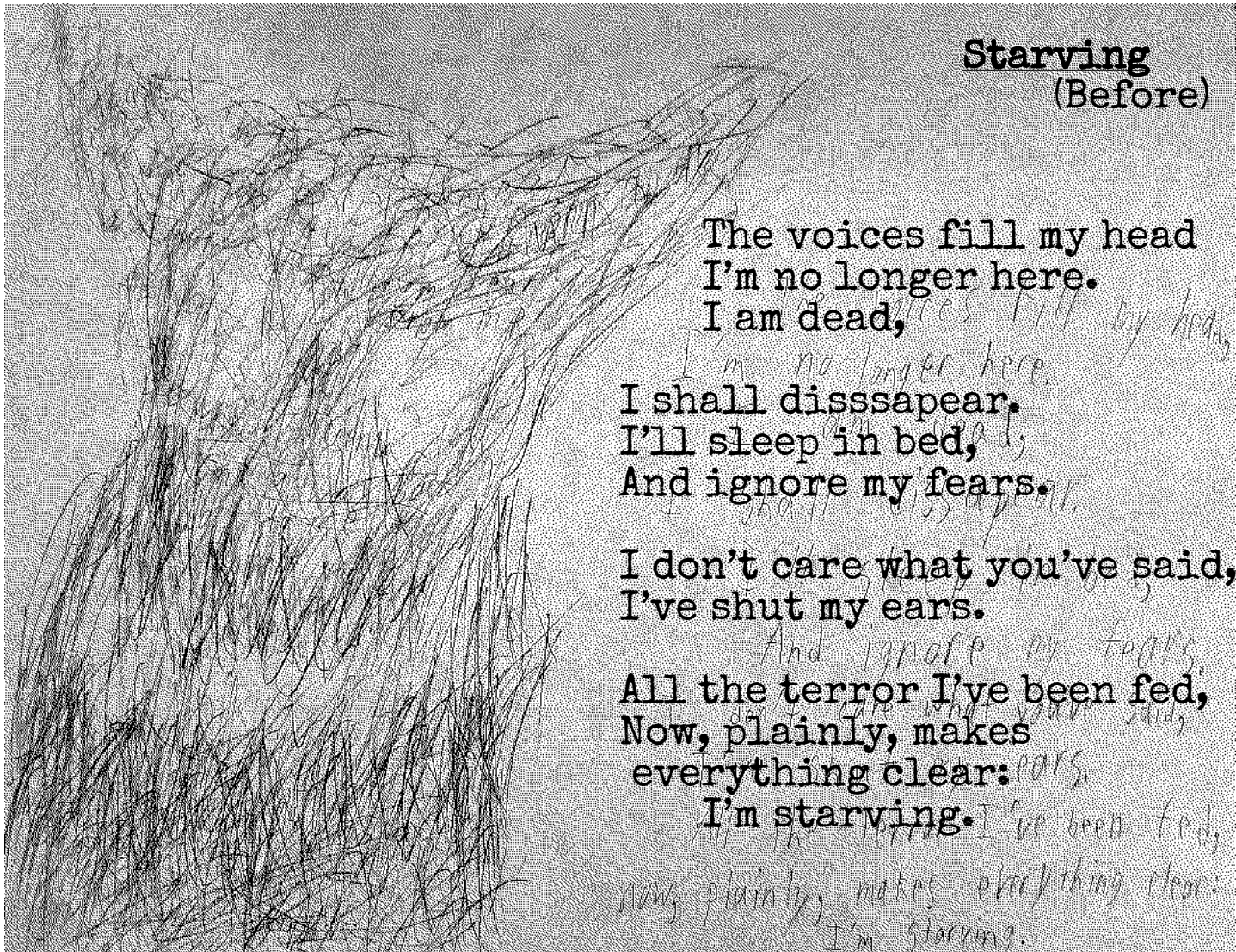
If they call them scraps,
Do not believe them.
These pieces of art took time,
Took my careful edge,
They took my attention
And interest
In earnest.

They could only have been made
By my hands.

If they call them art, grandeous
and profound,
Do not believe them.
I drew each in, often, short time.
My insight, messages, or thematic
expressions
Are limited, entirely, to:
Look! This is alive, now.

Do you see it?
You can make it, too.

Existence is everything
This is nothing
Contradiction is easy
Definition is impossible
Where am I?



Starving
(Before)

The voices fill my head
I'm no longer here.
I am dead,

I shall disssapear.
I'll sleep in bed,
And ignore my fears.

I don't care what you've said,
I've shut my ears.

All the terror I've been fed,
Now, plainly, makes
everything clear:

I'm starving.

Eat More
(After)

I made to form my
dreams, my dreams,
my flesh is made to
form, this form, I
form this flesh
eat more eat more I
made to eat, eat
more, eat more.

I made my mind to
flesh my thoughts
think, think more,
eat my thoughts,
eat more. I made my
mind to flesh my
thoughts I speak my
words to life:

to die in an earless room I write, I write: eat
more.

Eat more. I made, my mind, to think, I think, think more, eat more, eat more.

Eat more.

Distraction (After)

I got distracted the last time we talked. Your eyes glistened. I don't remember their color, only that I felt I wanted to look at them deeper.

I got distracted. Your hands pressed against your face, as did mine to mine, but when I looked at your hands I wanted to trade them for mine. I wondered at what they felt like, how they would feel in mine.

I got distracted. Your voice became more than words. The sound kept in my ears as I digested them slowly. They tasted like honey.

I got distracted. I lost my own voice to yours, wanting simply to enjoy the presence of your company. Knowing your sincerity in discussion, your interests. Your enjoyment in conversation with me. I got distracted by realizing you like talking to me.

I got distracted. The presence of time started to weigh on me. It became heavy with the distance of us, which I knew would come. It was difficult to move under the strain. My only support is the pull forward, towards finding weightlessness in meeting again.

Fight (Before)

I can't take it anymore,
low in my chest.
Only a little longer,
violently I fight it.
Even as I breath,
yelling,
crying out;
Of all people I see, and will see,
upon you, my eyes stop.

On: Quick Overview on 'that particular incident' which people love to refer to as 'that particular incident'

Another person to say it (Before)

“ Of times of plenty, we are full.
Of this time, twenty-twenty,
it is rather quite dull. ”

Distancing (Before)

I better go back inside,
to leave the house, I tried.
But each time I went out,
I saw someone outside
breathing out,
so I went back in to hide.

Memory (Before)

Something I clearly can't see,
waits forever behind me.
I can always look back,
to know that I lack
but only a distant memory.

Flocks (Before)

The flying flocks
fly on.
The ticking clocks
ticks on.
But a running jock stays put,
while every lock is shut.

The streets, so empty,
that the flocks might start to walk.

Spoiled (Before)

I am spoiled and rotten,
and have since forgotten
the disciplines I had tried to persue.

Now I just sit hear,
While my days disappear,
and never do anything new.

(Before) Covid-19

Many have died
more have cried,
though, bills are no-longer
due.

Now choices are gone,
an effort to push on,
past this fatal flu.

Our worlds have divided,
which many have subsided
into prisons with nothing to
do.

We are afraid of infection,
but I fear a deception,
that the flu hasn't happened

We have all lost our lives **to you.**
as all of us dives
deeper into
our ever shrinking
tombs.

Happy Graduation (Before)

You finally escaped hell.
So, congratulations
From being released from that
spell

As a reward
From progressing from the
title 'ward',
Welcome to Purgatory
(or 'young adult').

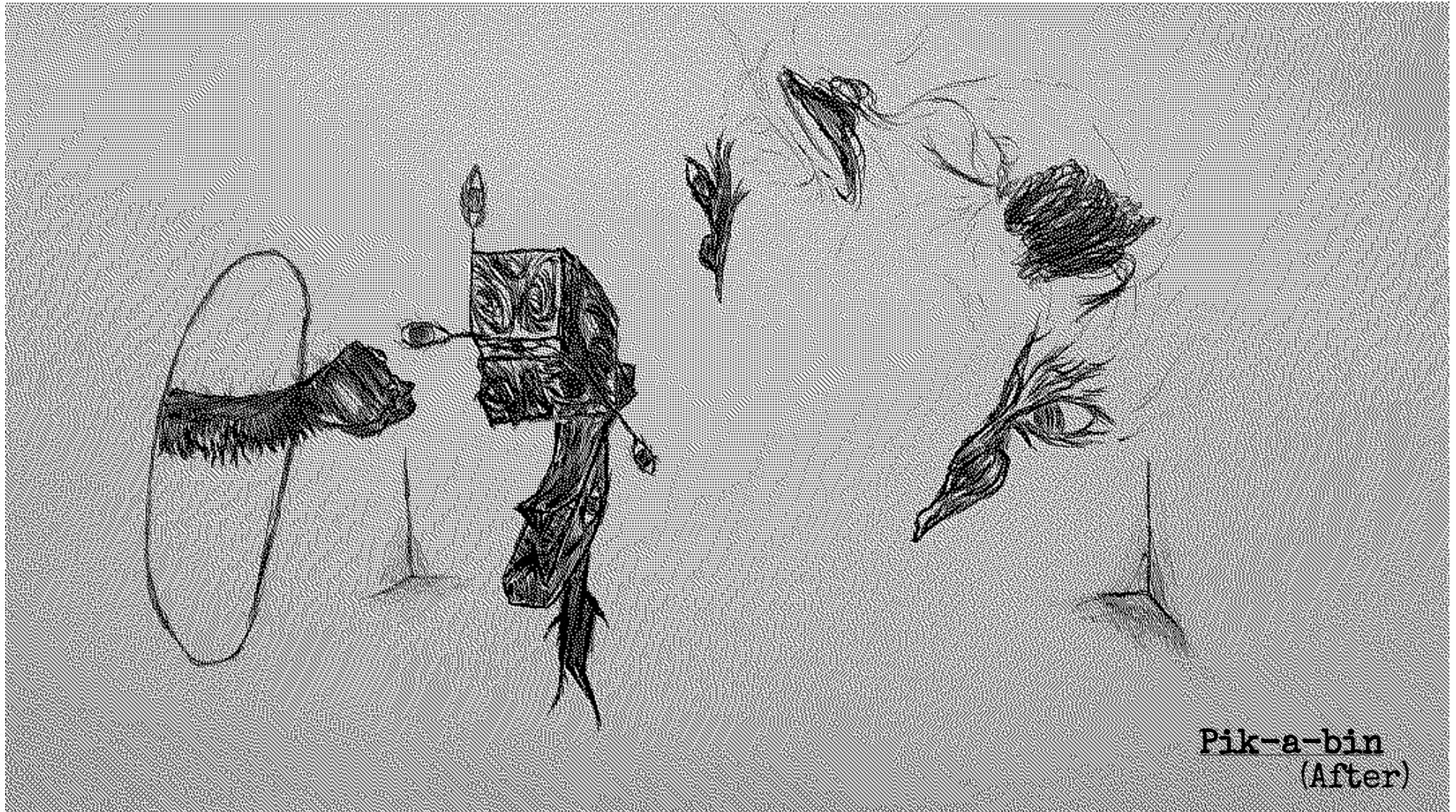
The place you'll be
questioned
Where to go from here.
But seriously, at least you
know,
It can't get worse than last
year...

...

Right?

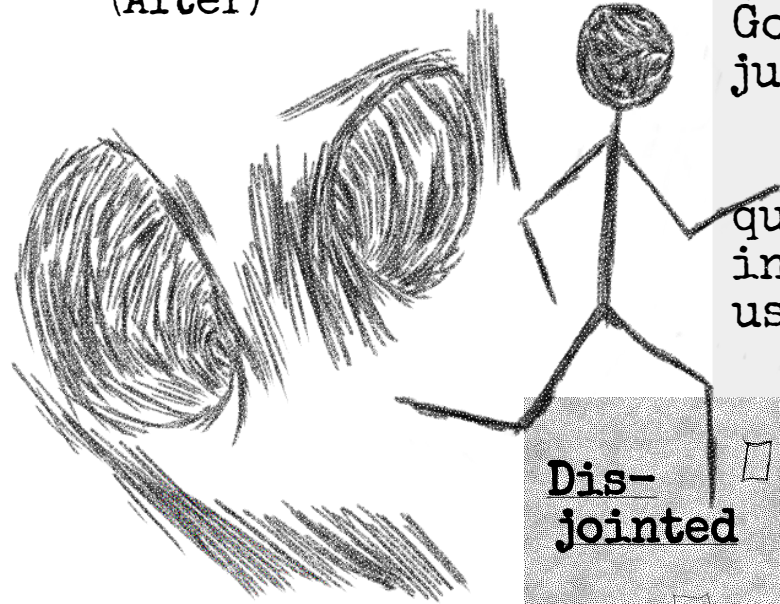
On: Typical Atypical

All I could see is through other's eyes
All I could say was with their lies



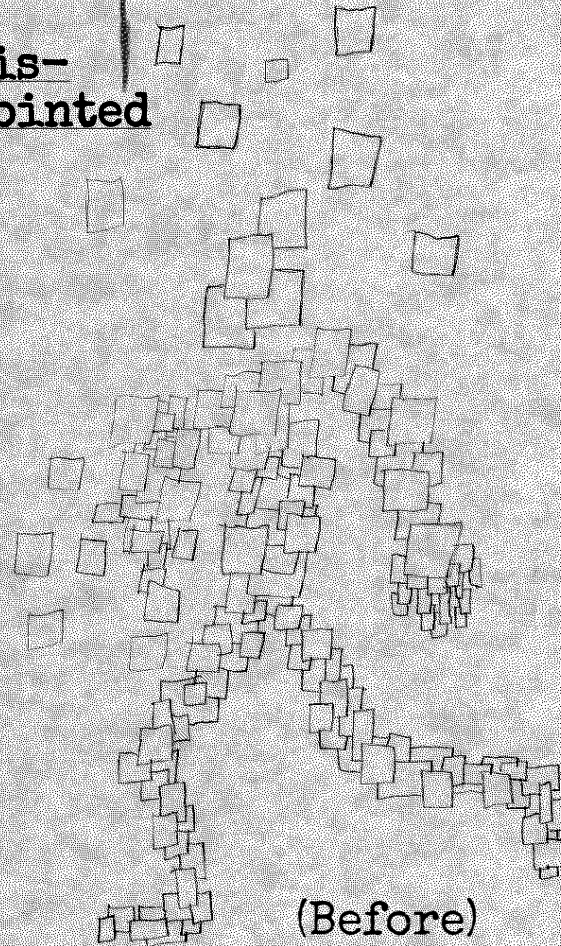
Pik-a-bin
(After)

Form
(After)



"May I have a Dear query?" I say. God
God gave his (Before)
jury and said,
"Yes, you may."
"I have a
question in your
intentions to make
us feel this way?"

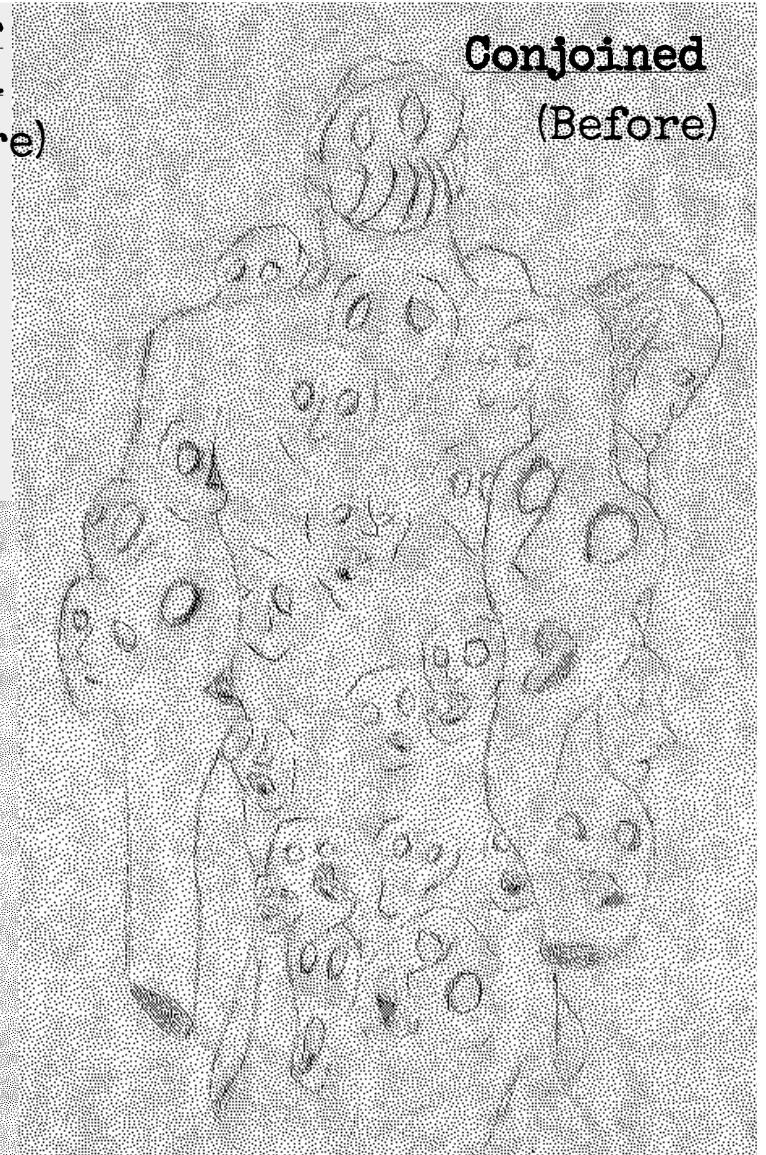
Dis-
jointed



(Before)

"I'm sorry I
must bid you adew,
but my time
has been counted
too few.
But I promise
I won't take long,
and now I must
say, "Stay Strong!"

Conjoined
(Before)



until 'soon'
tells me to see
you."

(Before)

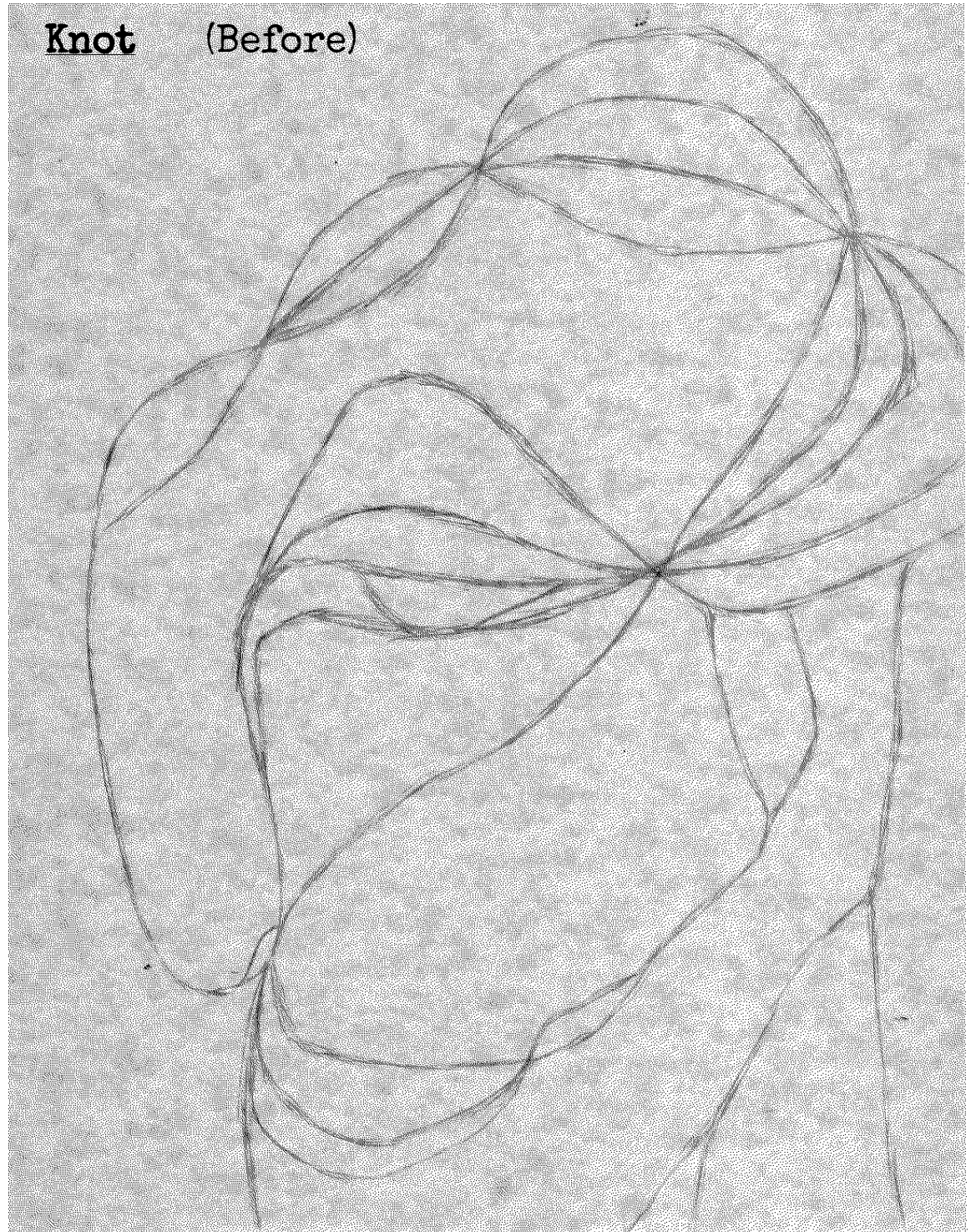
Multiply

Split ends,
Hair knots,
Fashion trends
and polka-dots.
Action sends
my words as thoughts / Vice-
Verse!
Which bends and breaks
into lots and lots
more split and separated
ends.

Bloom (Before)

Flowers bloom every
season,
and they do it without a
reason.
They show the world their
all
'till all their petals fall
when the world says that
“Wilting is treason!”

Knot (Before)



Ghost (After)

Validation The idea that the opinions of others is evidence of sanity. Whose to say that they're more trustworthy than yourself?

What if the ideas they agree to are less right than the ones they did? Crazy people wouldn't say they're crazy, so no-one is trustworthy. Except you; you're definitely right.
(Before)



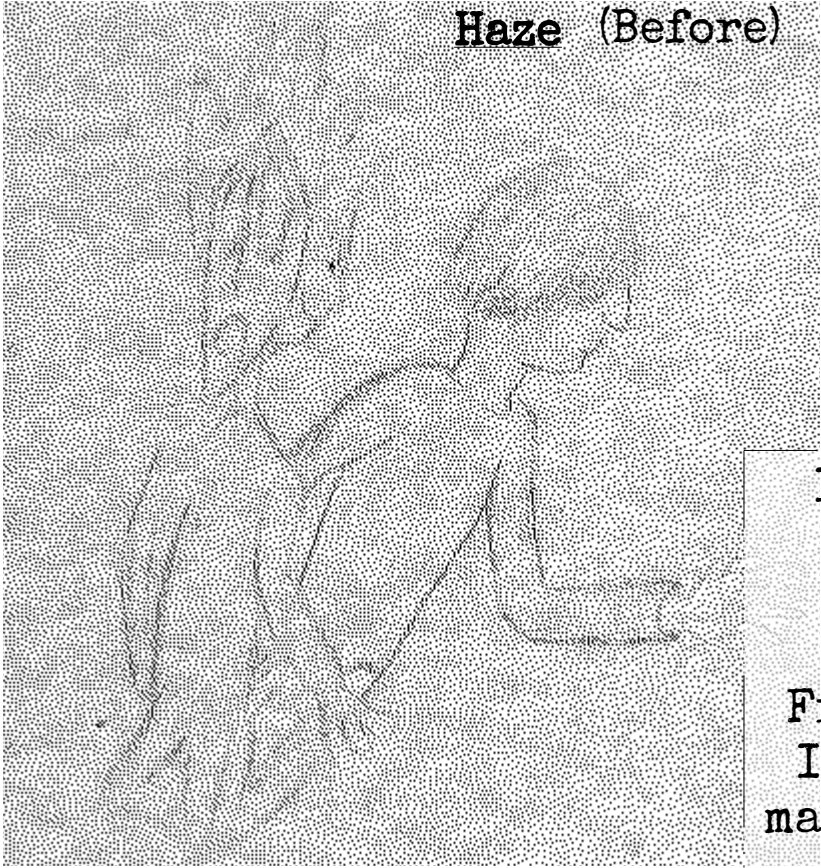
Window (Before)

Perspective There is the thought that, in our minds, color is perceived differently to different people. We might all point to the same sky, and agree it is blue, but what each of us see as blue might be different than how others see it.

What if the same could be said for ideas: sadness, to me, might be different than how you experience it. The same can be true for everything: shapes, words, gender, etc. The room for doubt in our implicit belief in consistency of perspective prevents use from knowing, with complete certainty, how we as individuals relate to one another. What I know, within my perspective, can never be externally validated, and I will never truly understand perspectives different from my own.

(Before)

Haze (Before)



(Before)

Changing

Which is mine?

Which is real?

If I what I feel is what I choose,

If I can always smile, what can I

lose?

Happiness is *wrong*,

for me, to use

Because of the simple

question of feeling:

Which is mine?

Which is real?

If

Only (Before)

If only I knew

Just a few

more lessons.

From what I do,

I just have too

many questions.

Fan

(Before)

A fan

to fan

the flame.

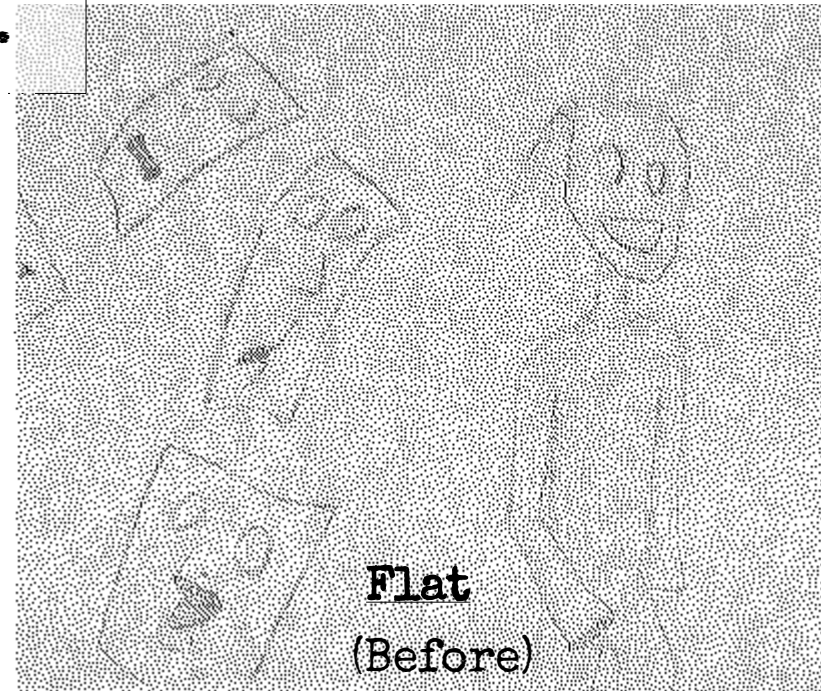
The sadness

did the same.

To end it, we could,

but they say we should:

find where to place the blame.



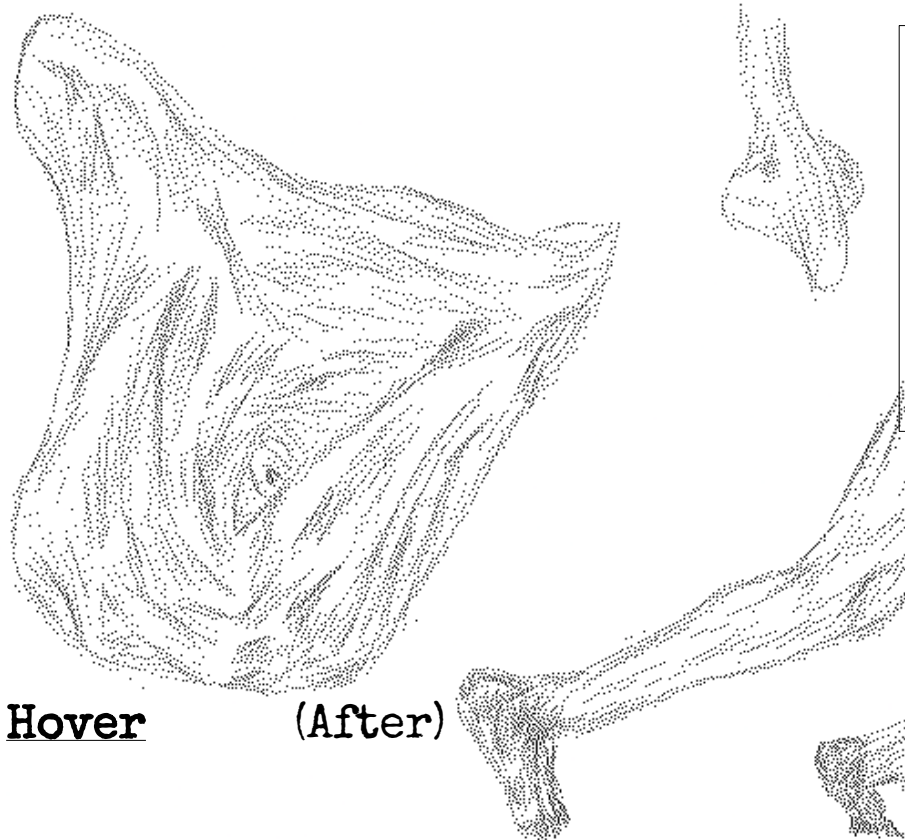
Flat

(Before)

The noise, louder than I can bear. So loud the voices seem to repeat on all the walls in the room. Even by picking out a voice you can't tell where it is.

The Party (Before)

I sit on the edge of the room, a space seemingly less active than everywhere else. Looking out into the sea of faces, I could see no calming recognition. Only harsh waves would acknowledge me there, pushing me away with any attempt to swim. So I float, here, distancing myself from the storm.



Hover (After)

There is nothing here for me, I think, deciding I should leave. As I start my escape, however, a wall constructs itself in my route. Built of ice and danger, I make no attempt to break through, so I retreat.

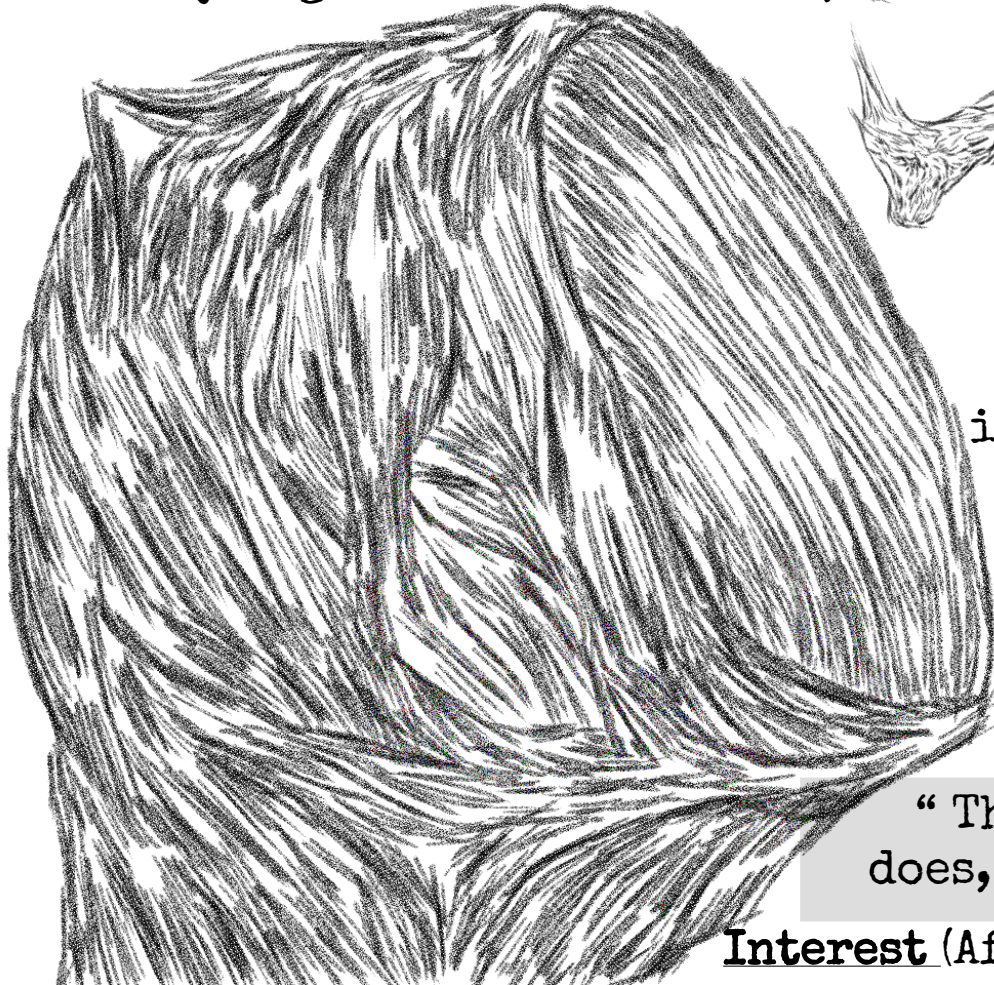
If I wait long enough, I strategize, The wall might dissapate and melt on its own. So I wait longer, making myself look busy with my small, electronic shield.

Ties (Before)

Ties you hold
With no hands.

Connected they grow old,
making them hard to stand.
Strike them if you're bold,
even if they don't understand.

Untied from the world,
anywhere you can land,
you gravitate to the cold,



Body
(After)

Most distant
and grand.

Until you
inevitably
mold
back
into
ties you
tried to
disband.

“Thoughtful is
does, which never

Interest (After)

“Many old
ties

bolden with
golden string,
weaved
tenderly
through
thoughtful
fingers
and warm
hands.”

as thoughtful
is as it ever

was.”

Cry (Before)

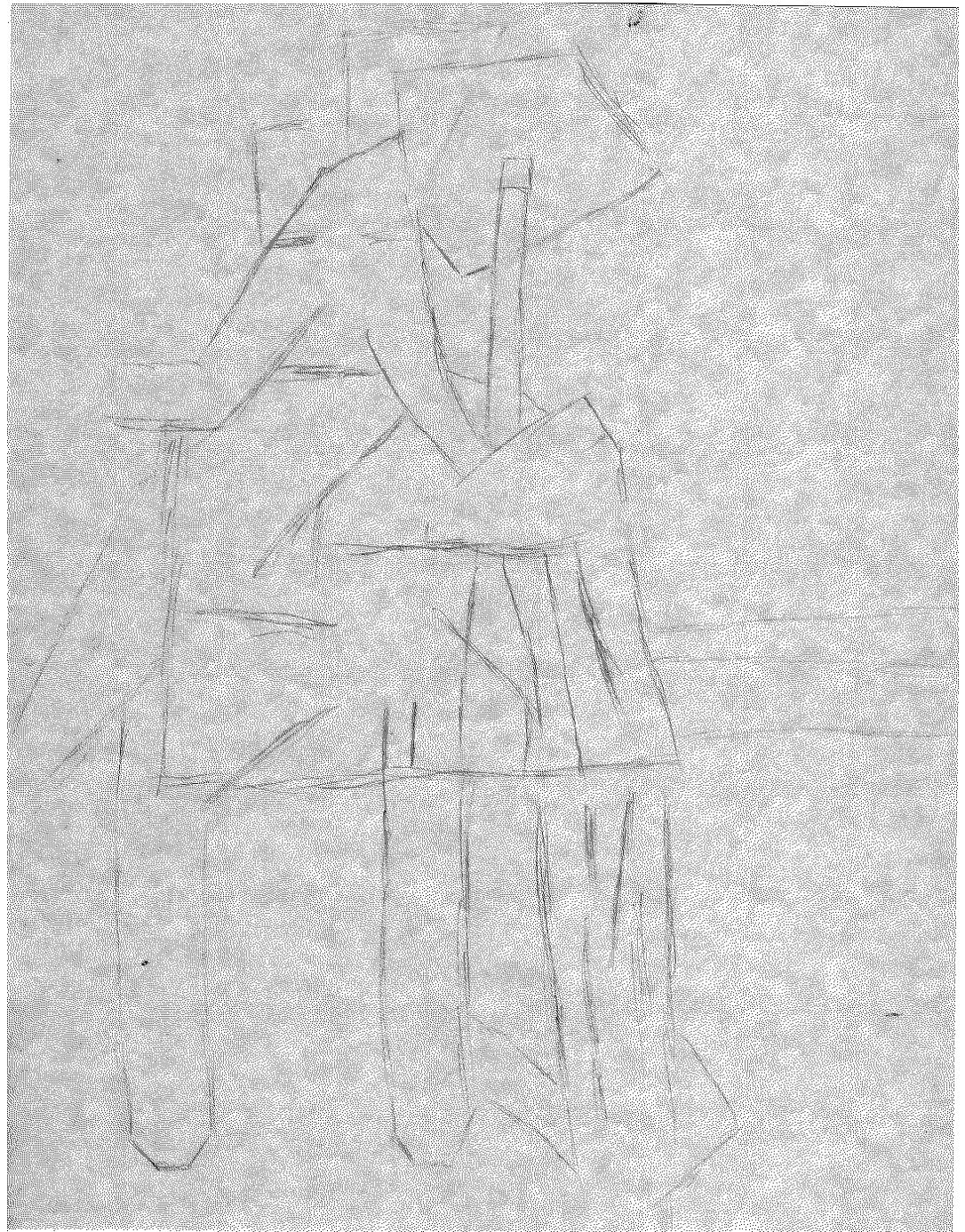
I want to cry,
let the tension fall,
but my eyes are dry,
they won't let me bawl.

My problems are few,
I shouldn't feel this way.
But I do,
nothing else to say.

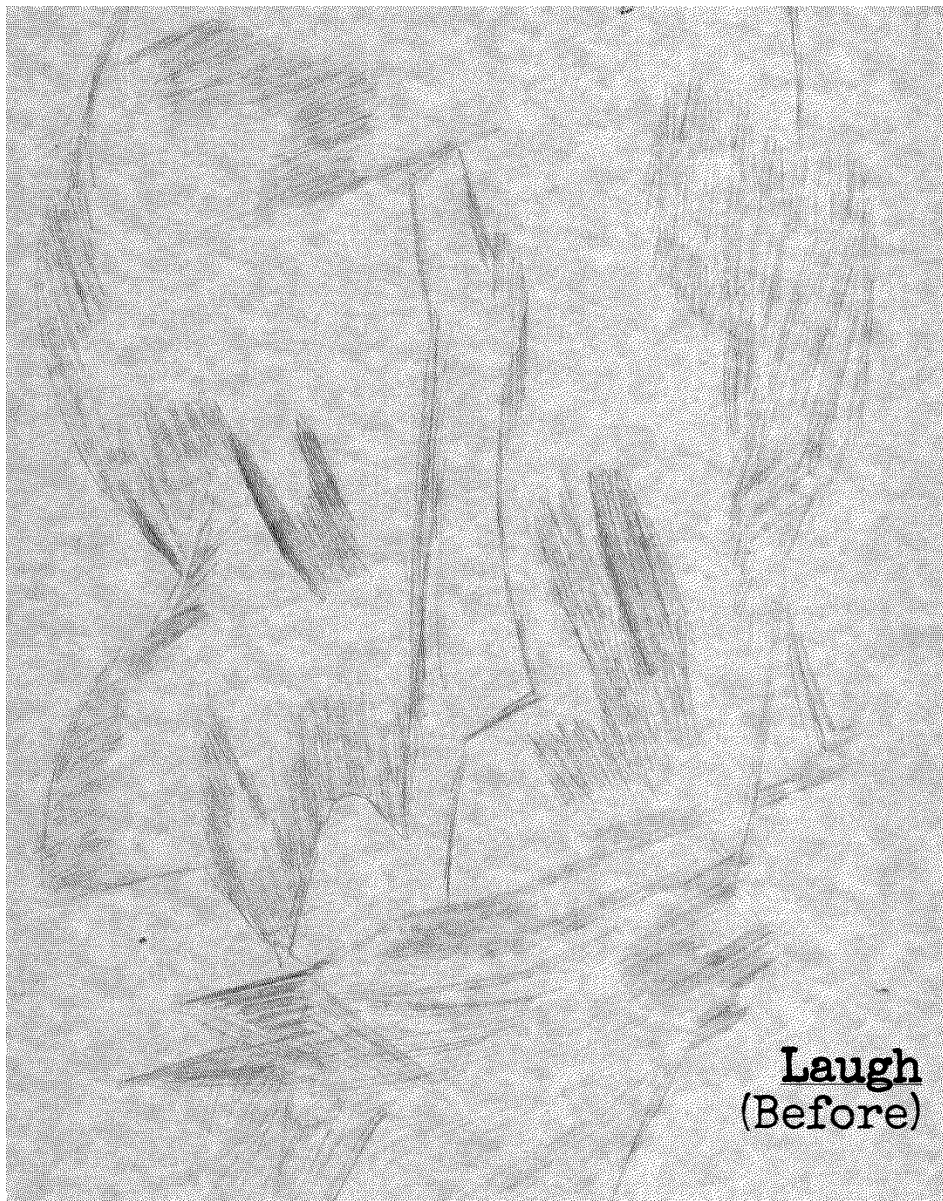
I've haven't the reason,
I would feel better with
one.
I don't have any excuse
to be this way.

If there was a cause to
this effect,
Then something could
cause it to end.
But if the cause is living,
What then?

Feel Your Crying (Before)

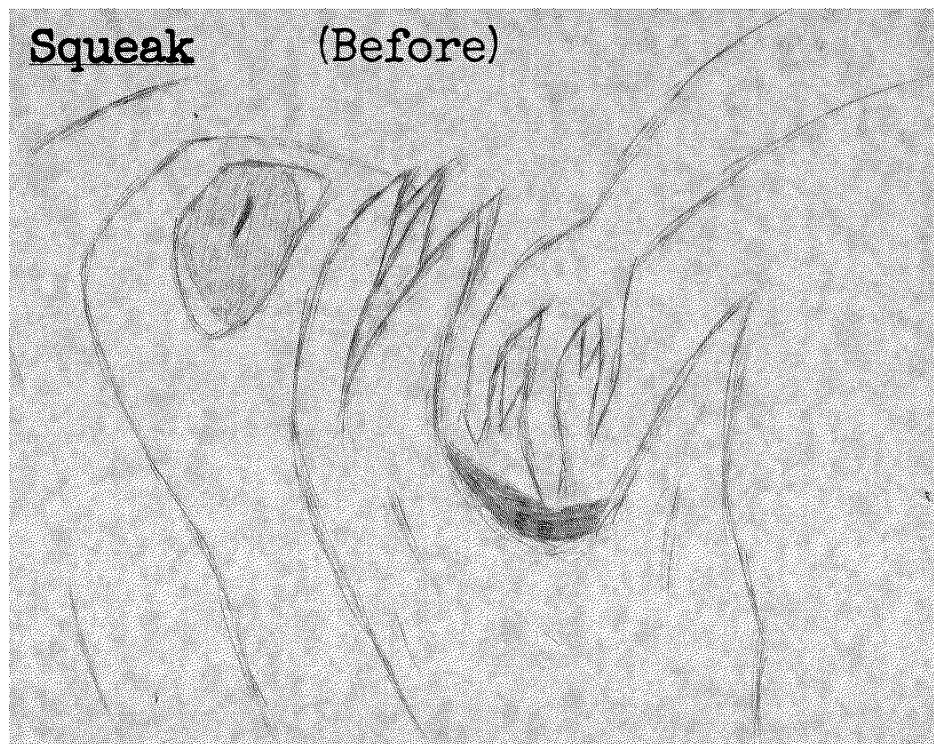


Deal with it.
Look at the bright side.
What if, after staying so long in the dark,
the brightness is just uncomfortable.



Laugh
(Before)

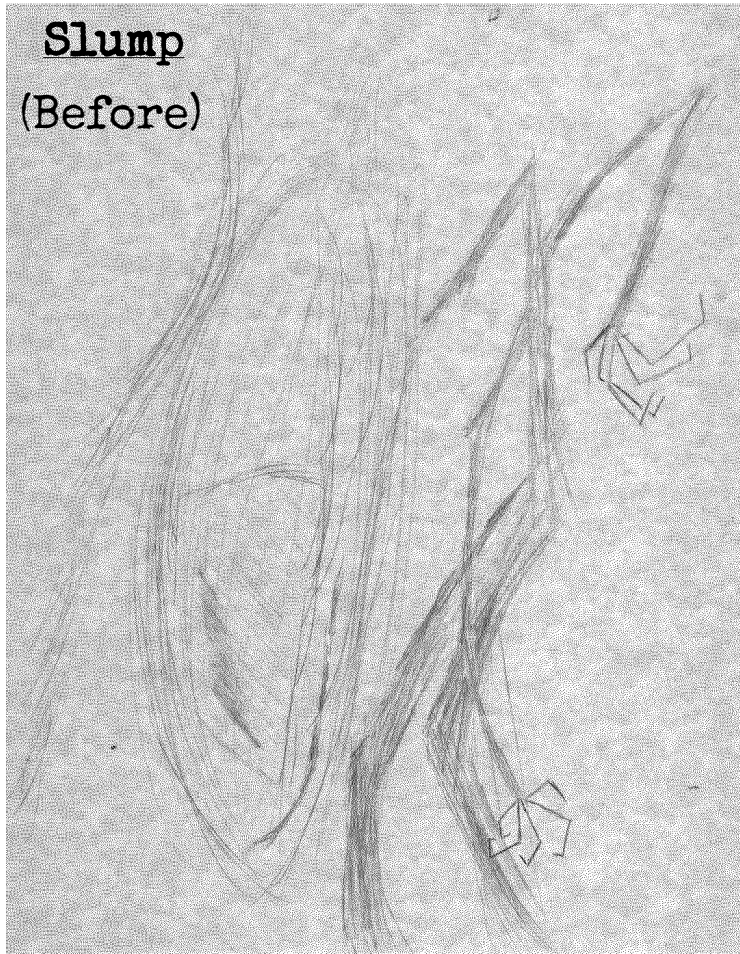
A dead hand grips the back of my
throat,
Unnaturally pressing,
but I can't cough it out.
It's a pressure I can't escape.



Squeak (Before)

Slump

(Before)



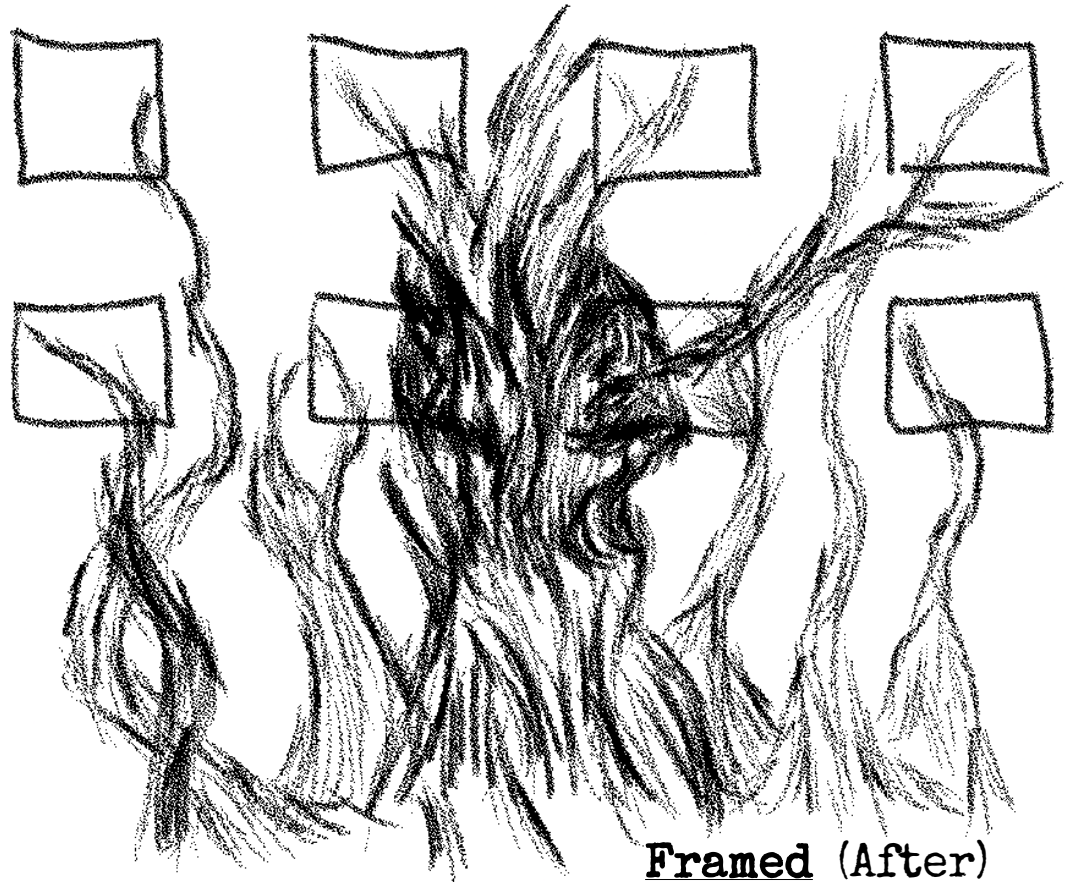
Not that I want to be liked
anymore, either,
Since then I could use that
as the excuse

To let it end.

The same with my
dry eyes,
Something
constantly
caressing the back
of them,
Itching them,
Never letting up.

What am I to do?
What should I
say?
How should I act?

Nobody likes a
downer.



Framed (After)

Melodies Imagery (Before)

Guided in the light of pleasant melodies, I walk blissfully under the midnight sky. The stars twinkle in rhythm of my music, which is personally isolated to only play into my ears.

In this moment, as I close my eyes, the world belongs to me.
Held peacefully with tender hands I feel the world

revolving
around
me.

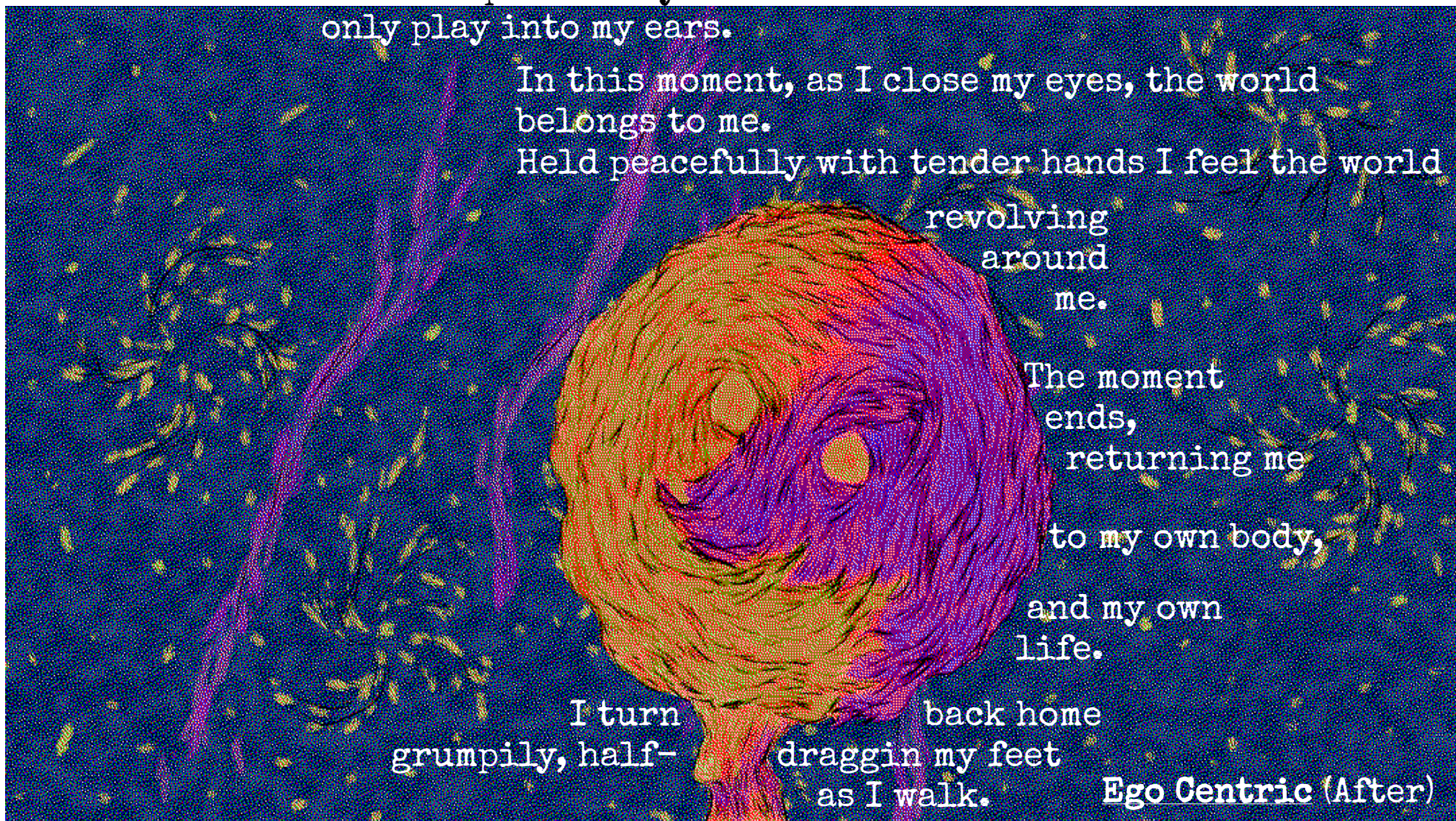
The moment
ends,
returning me

to my own body,

and my own
life.

I turn back home
grumpily, half- draggin my feet
as I walk.

Ego Centric (After)



Complexion

Hair is a spectrum, My eyes are a rainbow.

Which face is mine? I no-longer know.

Whatever sculpture,

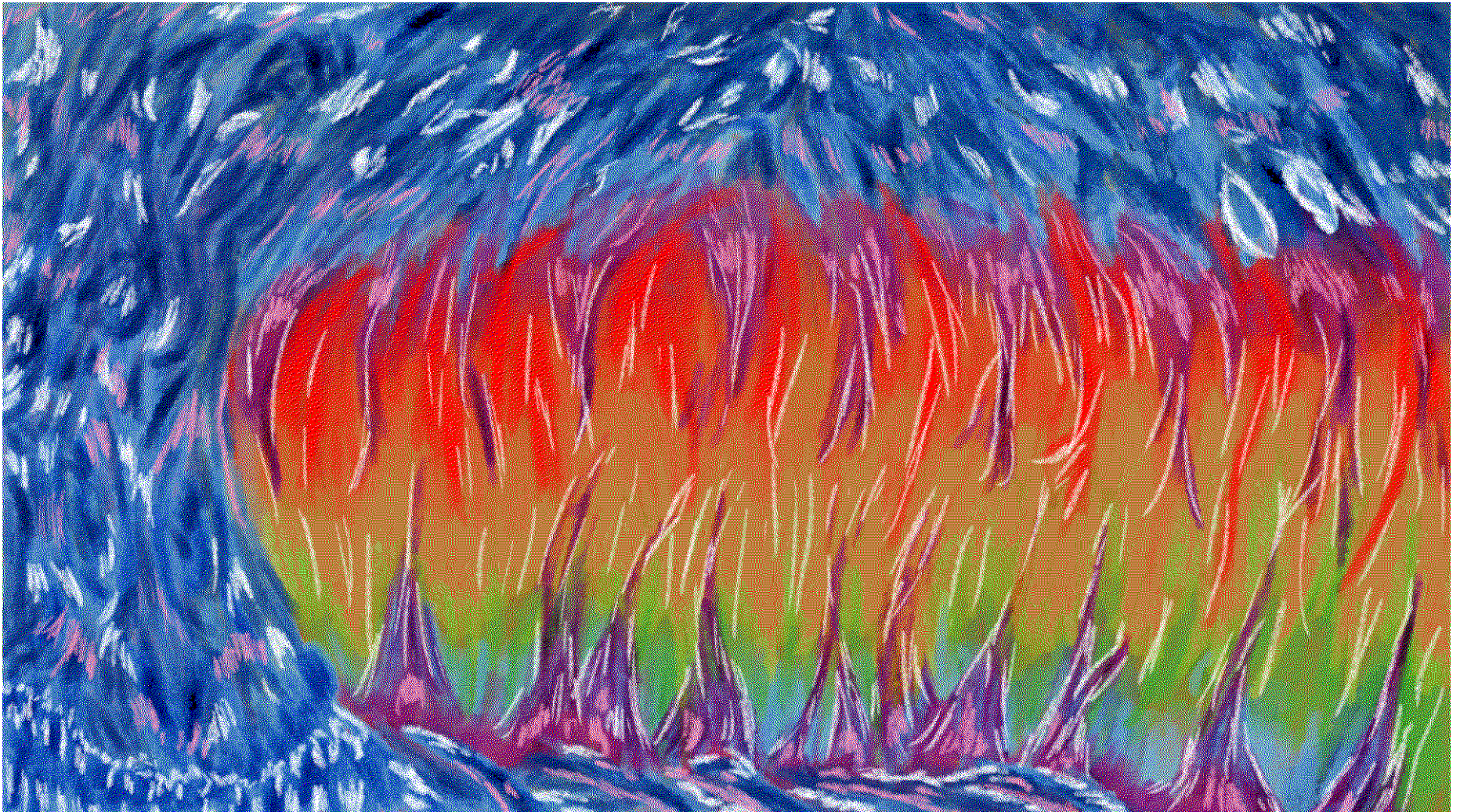
I want to show,

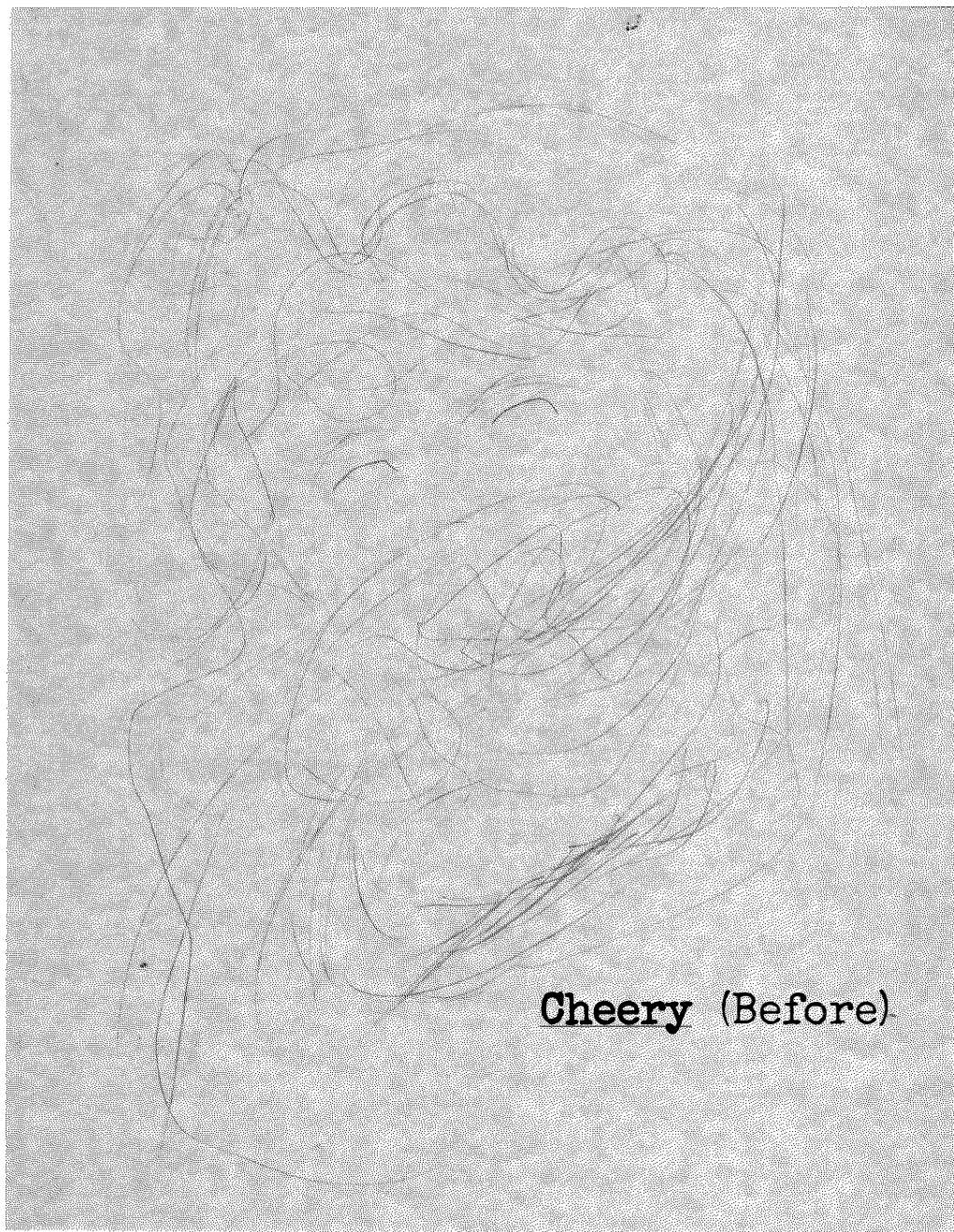
Is what I am.

(Before)

Rainbow

(After)





Cheery (Before)

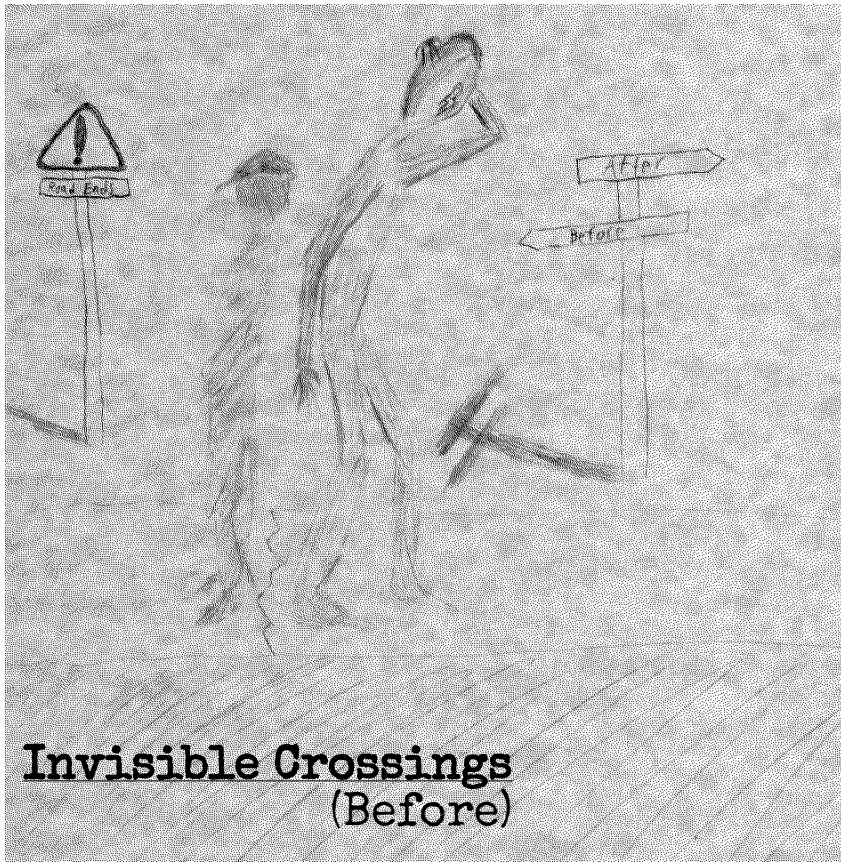
Darkness (Before)

The darkness creeps from the midnight sky. It stares me down with its hollow eye; it swirls around for a crack to pry. To say I have none would be a lie, but to tell it where I would rather die. It, and I, know why. Until it finds it, I'll get by.

It can't touch me.

The Unknown (Before)

The darkness below the murky sea hums like a siren's coaxing melody, bringing the sailor, closer: towards the soft-sounding pleasantries. The furthest they can be, is the surface that they see, until they jump into the depths of bottomless curiosity.



Invisible Crossings
(Before)

Soo Deep (Before)

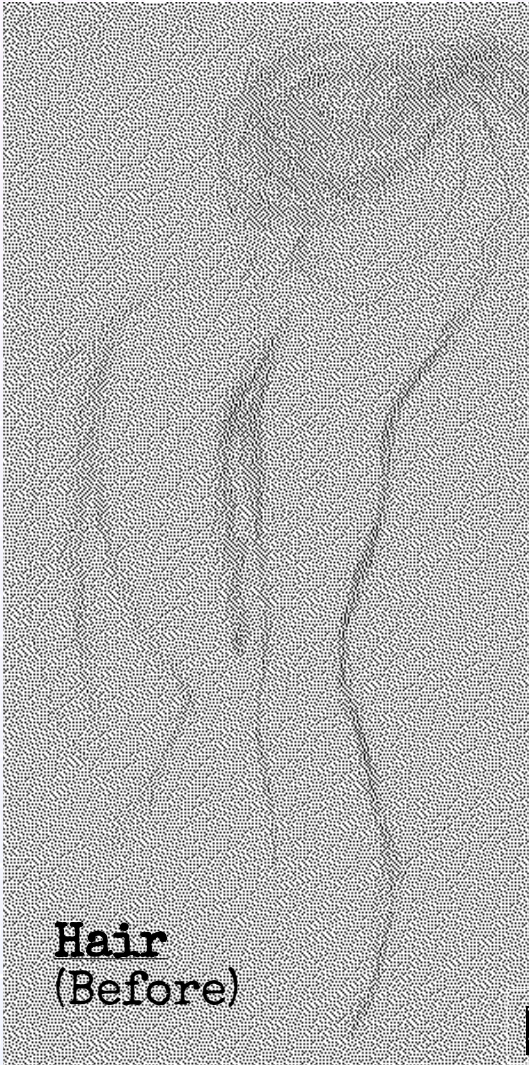
“ To speak the truth,
I wouldn't dare.
To hear it,
you could not bare.
But, if you insist,
I'll let you be aware:
In my opinion
to talk of happiness
would cause no-one to care. “

Do you ever feel... (AKA: Egg-head)
(Before)

Do you ever feel like the person you are on the inside is never who you are on the outside? Trapping yourself within your body to hide your true feelings and understanding of the world. It's always better this way, to pretend to be a person who is easier to get along with, nicer, less honest, more friendly. To be unfriendly is the bravest thing a person could do, actively showing how much they don't always care instead of always pretending to.

It's hard to be honest, and harder to be true. You could say you don't like something, and it would be honest, but what you truly think about it might be more than that. You might despise it, utterly hate it, but you know other people don't care about how much you care about something, so you don't go further than honesty.

Maybe it's only my own problem, believing I should be someone I'm not when in front of other people.



Hair
(Before)

Face (After)

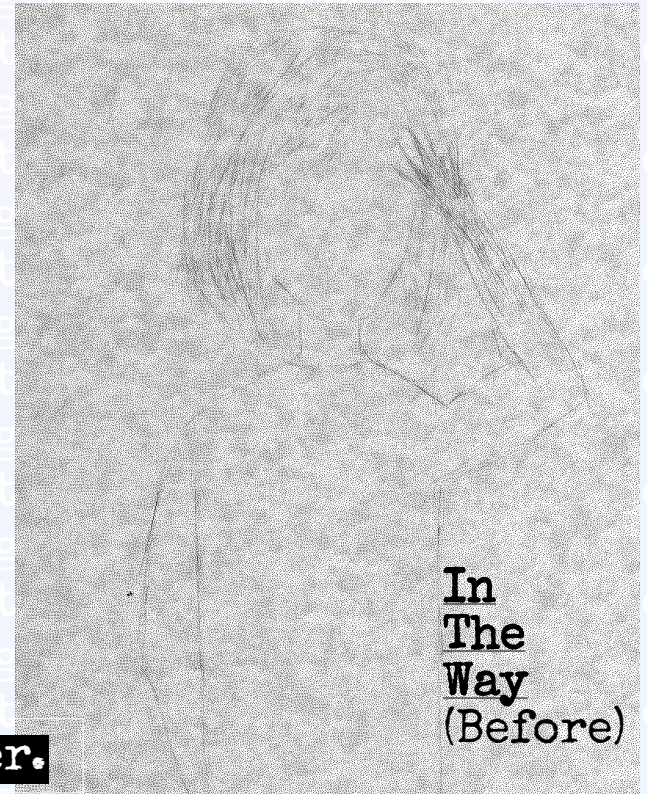


Maybe it isn't, and everyone's the same, putting up an illusion of themselves which is all it is: an illusion.

Either way, it wouldn't matter.



Scrunched
(Before)



**In
The
Way**
(Before)

Muffled (After)

My Mask
(Before)

My mask, hide
I keep, inside,
my troubles,
pride,
they couldn't,
tried,
I helped, cried,
my mouth, lied,
you see, tied,
my mask, hide,
still covered,
died.

It's scary, to me, the idea of being your true self. At least when people don't like your fake self you can hide behind the fact that it's fake. If you act your true self, though, and people you KNOW start to dislike you, then the world starts being destroyed around you. Crumbling from the weak structure you had built upon your fake personality.

Is it possible to ever break that fake persona down? To become the person you know yourself to be? Knowing that the person you are is a thousand times less likeable than the fake person? Even, just, to one person? How could you trust, then, that the other person is also their true self? How could you convince them that you would accept them no matter what? How could you tell them everything is going to be okay? Can you... tell that to me?

Can you... tell that to me?

