



**THIS** **OR** **THAT**



THIS OR THAT THIS OR THAT THIS OR THAT

THIS OR THAT THIS OR THAT THIS OR THAT

THIS OR THAT THIS OR THAT THIS OR THAT

“Mobilize vigor to attain what is unattained, to master what is unmastered, to realize what is unrealized. In this way your taking to the spiritual life will not be barren but fruitful and even growing.” — The Dhammapada

THIS OR THAT THIS OR THAT THIS OR THAT

THIS OR THAT THIS OR THAT THIS OR THAT

THIS OR THAT THIS OR THAT THIS OR THAT

## TWIN VERSES

by Karen Alyce Blessen

---

THIS or THAT  
&  
IF THIS THEN THAT

*May 6, 2022 – October 25, 2023*

THIS MOMENT IN TIME

MAY 6, 2022

THIS MOMENT IN TIME

- Russian invasion of Ukraine continues. War, cruelty, destruction.
- Climate change + urgency around that continues to be back-burned.
- The Supreme Court/vast right-wing conspiracy against women has begun to tick off/check off its nefarious goals.
- My precious cat P. Nat died on March 30.
- Betsy is moving into The Tradition
- One person. One life. My life.

AGING

# PROGRAMMING

## 101

We care for others

Losing loved ones

Subtraction after subtraction of ability of joy.

FEAR of GETTING old

Loss of independence

Physical incapacitation

Old people as a burden.

Few if any positives



**THIS** OR

— REVISION —

Re

# PROGRAMMING

## 101<sup>(B)</sup>

ACCUMULATED KNOWLEDGE

GAIN WISDOM AS GROW OLDER

MEMORY KEEPER

FULL CONNECTION + ENJOYMENT OF NATURE

ORAL SONGLINES

PEAK of ABILITIES

SPIRITUAL DEPTH



**THAT**

BAD



THIS

OR THAT



NEIGHBORS



OR THAT

7.31.22

So. The new neighbor — of the house + garage labeled "an abomination" "fucking awful" "a fucking abomination" "but ugly" by all who see it — wants to tear down our fence — and the trees growing through it so that we both can feel 'secure.'

Big  
White  
Boxes

Text to wife/  
Lezlie.

I don't feel secure by the knowledge that this neighbor — and pretty much all new homeowners — live under the illusion that an ugly, wasteful stockade fence gives safety or security to them or their family?

It's a hollow perception — born of fear + the mistaken belief that a wood fence protects against — what? Theft of my stuff? Someone watching my children?

Stockade fences leave me feeling  
saddened, separated from  
community and even  
contemptuous of the waste,  
and ~~express~~ the underlying fear  
they express.

So.

It's your home + you have  
a right to a stockade.

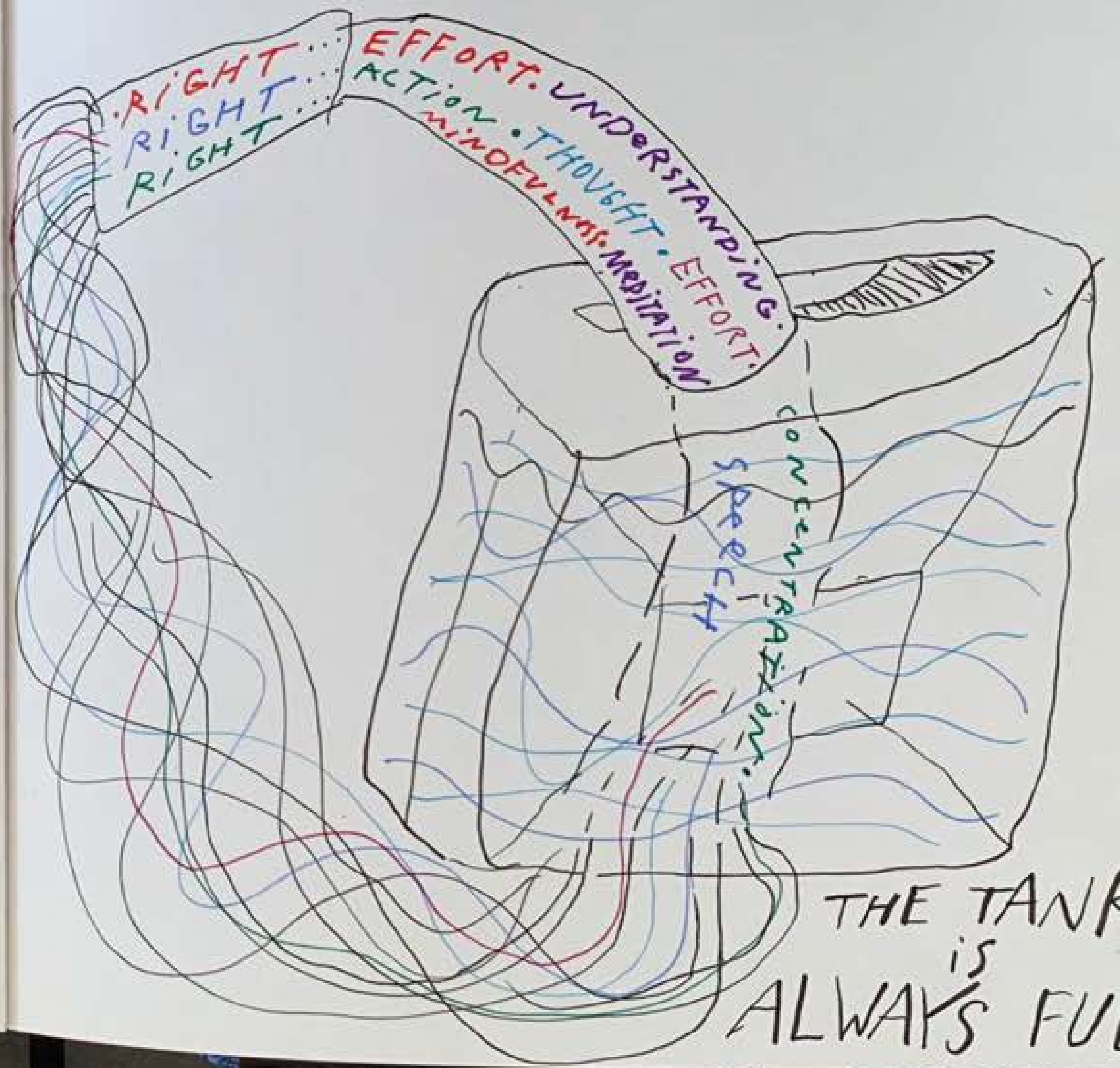
We've been in this home  
for 36 years — and we like  
our overgrown fence that  
gives support to growth which

in turn gives support to  
living creatures.



- TANK  
is  
LIMITED +  
WILL  
BE EMPTY  
ONE DAY

THAT ...



CLUNKY - BUT YOU GET THE PICTURE.

8.5.22



HEAT: FIRES:

FREEZES: FLOODING

BRANDON WOODARD

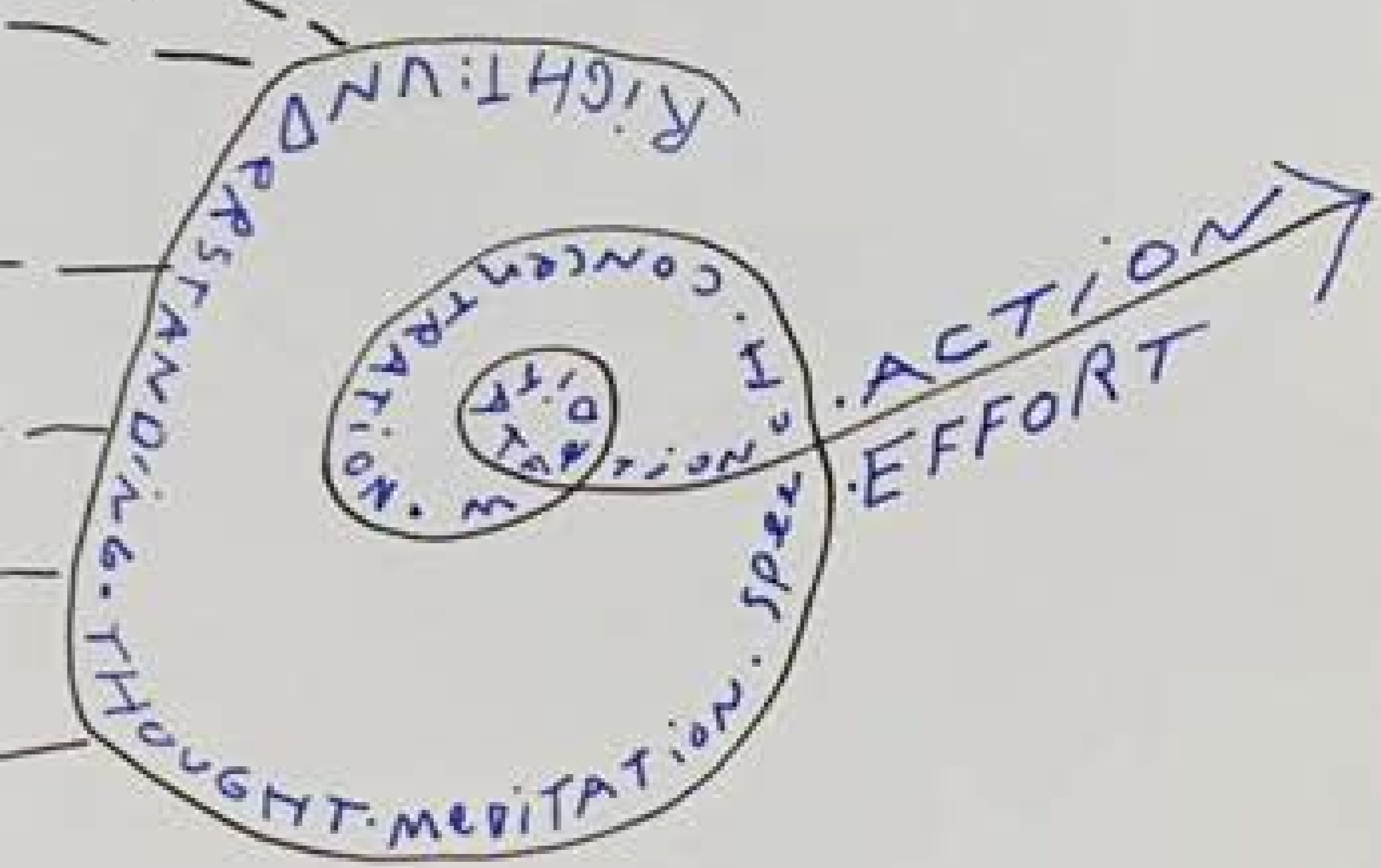
RESTORATION OF HOUSES IN LINCOLN

29 Pieces Projects

LEGAL MATTERS. WILL. BENEFICIARIES

THE COLLISION OF VALUES IN

THE NEIGHBORHOOD  
THE WORLD



THE OVERLOAD → TRANSFORMATION → ACTION EFFORT



8.5.22.  
Debbi Knotts visited on April 28.  
That weekend was the LAST  
weekend that it was comfortable  
to be outside.  
Relentlessly hot + dry.

RIGHT ACTION · QUIET · SILENCE · CALM.  
RIGHT EFFORT · RIGHT NOW →

HEAD TO THE WORK · WITHDRAW WHERE  
BRANDON · 29 PIECES · NECESSARY →

AVGUST 13, 2022

MELTDOWNS. (A RECORD OF) (not chronological)

1979-1980 - LAMPING IN DALLAS. SEPT./OCT./NOV.

WHAT PRECEDED?

Decision to leave New York

WHAT CONTRIBUTED?

Feelings of loss, emotional blackmail

WHAT CAME NEXT?

Settling in to life in Dallas.

Work. Friends. DMN.

Connections. BARBARA

WHAT WAS LOST?

Knowing what might've happened in NY.

WHAT WERE ANCHORS? DMN, Barbara, Boster, MOM, DAD

|||||

KELLY

(Symptoms: crying, shortness of breath, anxiety)  
2017 (JUNE-JULY)

WHAT PRECEDED?

Closing Jefferson Blvd. offices, Trump election, Doherty pull-out

WHAT CONTRIBUTED?

Board inactivity, Funding questions, Dana hire → CA.U

WHAT CAME NEXT?

Reinvention of how 29 P. operates.

We became digital-virtual offices.

Projects happened, Less stress.

ANCHORS: MEDITATION, THE WORK, CATS, THE STUDIO, Home Life.

|||||

2022 (AUGUST 11)

WHAT PRECEDED?

CAT'S DYING, noise next door, Janelle's death, conflict w. Kelly, trip to NE & then returning here.

WHAT COMES NEXT?

? THAT REMAINS TO BE SEEN

ANCHORS: STELLY, ALEX, STUDIO, MUSIC

# AGGRIEVED

overwhelm  
grip + selfishness

NOT PRAISED  
FOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS

RESENTMENT

PERCEIVED AS

DISRESPECTED

NOT ENCOURAGED

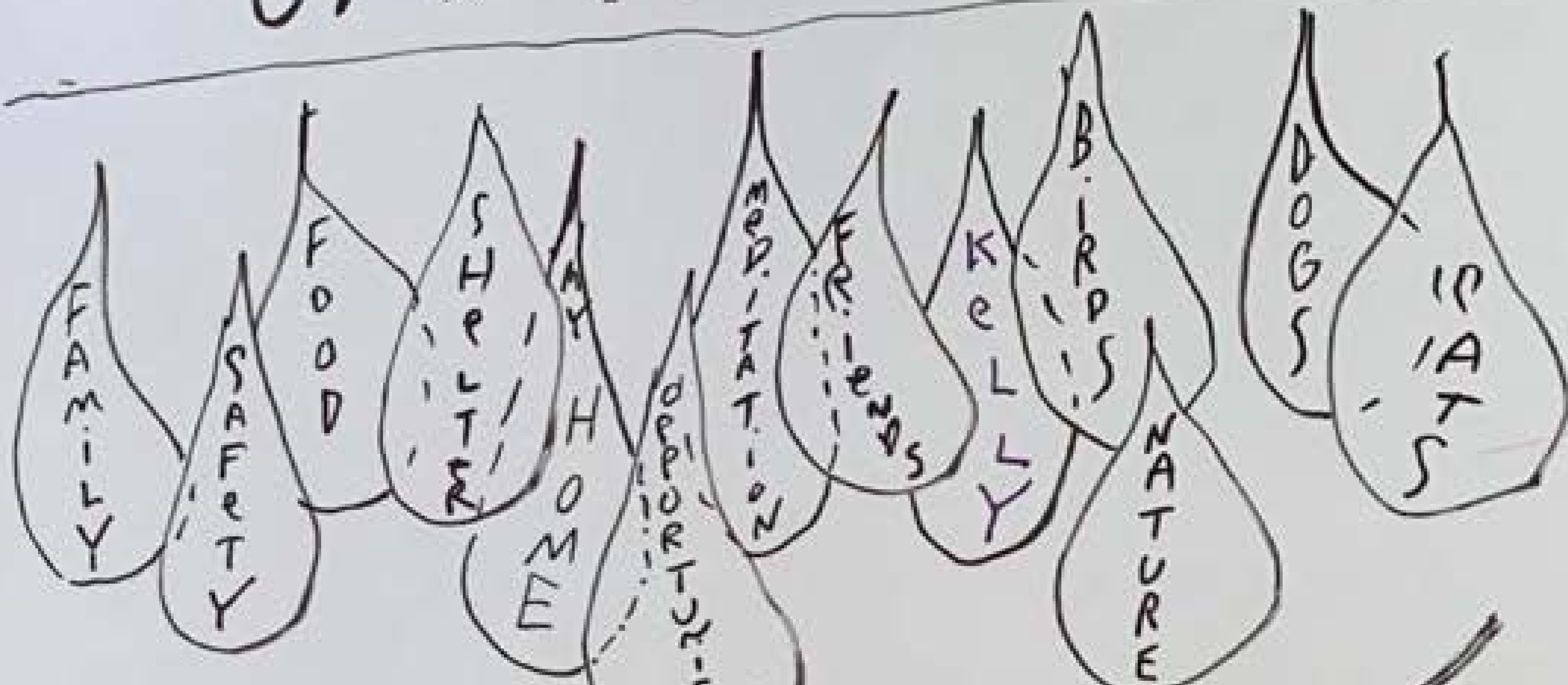
W9B



THIS OR THAT

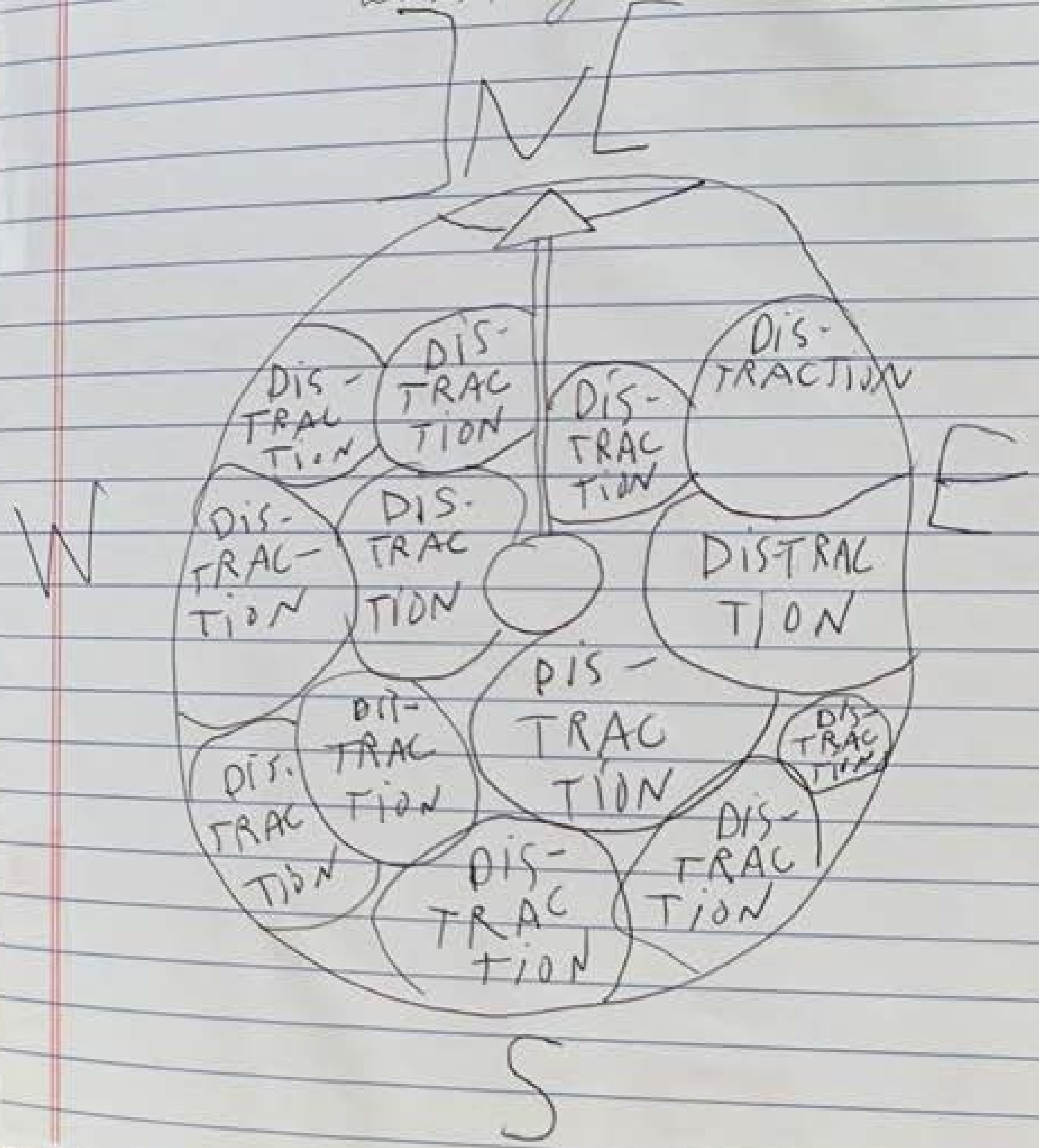
OR

# GRATEFUL



What is True North?

What is my TRUE NORTH?  
what grows love?



August 16, 2022

In Fort Worth, retreating from the noise pollution of wood chippers, steel saws cutting rebar, trees coming down and God knows what else.

I had to run away. I'm here in a Hilton near the Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth. The temp on the car said 111. The room is 69 degrees. Frigid.

I'm escaping noise that's built up like torture, Kelly and I contradicting each other on EVERYTHING. And the grief of losing P. Nut and Sparky.

What else? A general malaise induced by an extraordinary endurance test of a summer. Blazing hot. The drive over here was dramatic in the tan-ness of it all. The sky today was the color of sand. It may have been sand.

On Thursday, I thought I was having a nervous breakdown. UNrelenting noise, a day that started with some insignificant bark from Kelly, uncontrolled tears whenever I imagined P. Nut. Grief about living in a neighborhood that feels diametrically opposed to what I value.

My fingers feel herky jerky and that bugs me. I love the feeling of writing. But not any more. It's not that my hands hurt. They just feel kind of less nimble. I don't like that.

2022  
THE YEAR  
of  
LIVING  
AGGRIEVEDLY  
BEGINNING  
DECEMBER 19, 2021

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I'm here hoping to arrive at some clarity about what's next after this transition. From The American LOVE Project, death of Sparky and P. Nut, talks of sunseting 29 Pieces, dissatisfaction with Texas the heat the neighborhood.

What do I want? What do I want for US? Is there an us? A Kelly and I us?

So I sit here and I think - I want what I have. A home, a garden, a studio, time to do this and that. Time to be slow. If I want. Time to just sit in silence. I don't want a lot of pressure anymore. Financial or otherwise.

I want time for ideas to develop.

I sit here in this quiet hotel and I realize that the sound pollution in our neighborhood is a great deal of my anxiety and emotion.

November 16, 2022

I'm awake at almost midnight, though I've been up since 5 am.

What's happened since last writing?

In the world. The war between Ukraine and Russia is still going on. The Democrats held the Senate in the midterms but it looks as though the House will go to the Republicans. There are now 8 billion plus humans on the planet. Every day there are shootings. This week it was The university of Virginia at Charlottesville and the university of Idaho.

Beyoncé and Adele will duke it out for top Grammy awards. Endless other stuff

Here in Dallas, the world looks lush and green after the extremity of the heat and drought this summer. Well, after a string of good rains, I should say. Flowers are still blooming in the garden and a big raccoon was on our back porch this evening - with his little paws pressed against the glass looking in at KELLY AND I.

P. Nut and Sparky are gone. P. Nut died on March 30 and Sparky died on June 2. After P. Nut died, Sparky was desolate - dead and blind and crying inconsolably. They were 22 so they'd had a wonderful and beloved life. Nevertheless, it was raw and hard. Straight on grief.

with ~~no~~ <sup>with</sup> ~~losing~~ <sup>faith + gratitude</sup>  
~~trusting~~ <sup>spiritual</sup> ~~imagination~~ <sup>trust</sup>

### Concurrences

- ① a Fall in downtown Dallas
- ② Skin cancer on my scalp.
- ③ Vertigo + an ambulance ride
- ④ Inadequate approval for the Love Project.
- ⑤ Constant noise from next door
- ⑥ Clashes with Kelly
- ⑦ P. Nut + very ill + she died.

- ⑧ Sparky very ill + he died.
- ⑨ Janelle's death on July 4.
- ⑩ Blistering heat wave. Texas is a desert.
- ⑪ Flood + studio takes on water
- ⑫ Differences of opinion about Lincoln prop.
- ⑬ 27pieces.org site crashes

UNTIL OCTOBER 2022

then there was  
time to discern,  
live in quiet.

Oscar came  
into the house.

Sept. 18, 2022

2022 - my first full year of being  
70.  
Feels like

1972 - my first full year of being  
20. The year when  
Lorraine said to me -  
"You have more inertia  
than anyone I know."

This year feels familiar to that  
year.

Stasis. A period of inactivity  
or equilibrium. Rest.

Deep rest. The peacefulness of just sitting.  
The absence of urgency to  
do this, do that.

The emptiness of mind rather  
than sharp insight.

... the heat of the neighborhood.

What do I want? What do I want for US? Is there an us? A Kelly and I us?

So I sit here and I think - I want what I have. A home, a garden, a studio,  
time to do this and that. Time to be slow. If I want. Time to just sit in  
silence. I don't want a lot of pressure anymore. Financial or otherwise.

For most of my adult life, I've  
had the intuition that the  
years leading up to 75 would  
be the most productive artistically.  
Well so far not so.

TODAY.  
I need to think of/write some  
messaging for North Texas  
Giving Day 2022. Aka.  
The Hunger Games for  
non-profits.

What a bizarre concept.  
Here's where the challenge  
is to put aside my own  
cynicism about the wealth →  
charitable giving → tax benefit →  
reduction of guilt → higher bottom  
line

life cycle. And recognize  
the more <sup>generous</sup> positive cycle.  
Charitable giving → supports  
earnest effort → life + beauty →  
recognition of effort → charitable  
giving. Life cycle.

---

29 pieces. Thank you for believing  
in us. Your greatest gift is  
believing in us.

Your generous gifts are an  
essential part of the life cycle.  
Your gifts support our earnest  
effort to awaken, uplift +  
give voice to the creative  
human spirit to create  
positive social change.

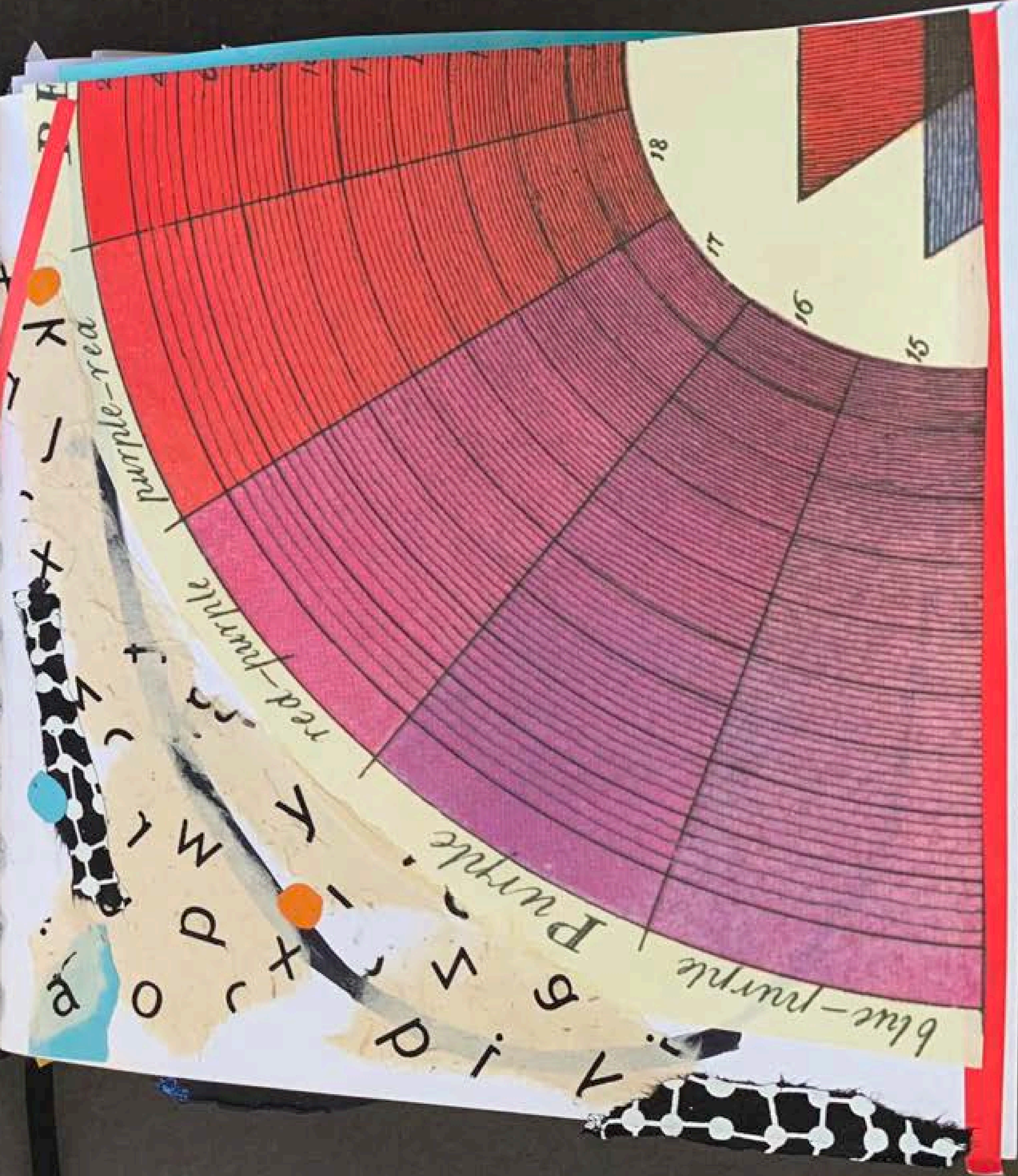
Nut, talks of sunsetting 29 Pieces, dissatisfaction with Texas the heat  
the neighborhood.

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time to do this and that. Time to be slow. If I want. Time to just sit in  
silence. I don't want a lot of pressure anymore. Financial or otherwise.

Left hand. Keep it simple  
OK Team 29. You believe in  
our work. You support it.  
You are an essential element  
of our life cycle as a  
living breathing entity that  
lives to birth kindness,  
compassion + love for all.

Monday,  
October 24, 2022.



October - November 2022.

A month of quiet.

No deadlines. A new cat  
suspicious of people  
Kelly in Lincoln. The  
construction next door  
was mostly done.

I felt.

Content

Emptying out.

Fundamentally  
changing.

Quietly

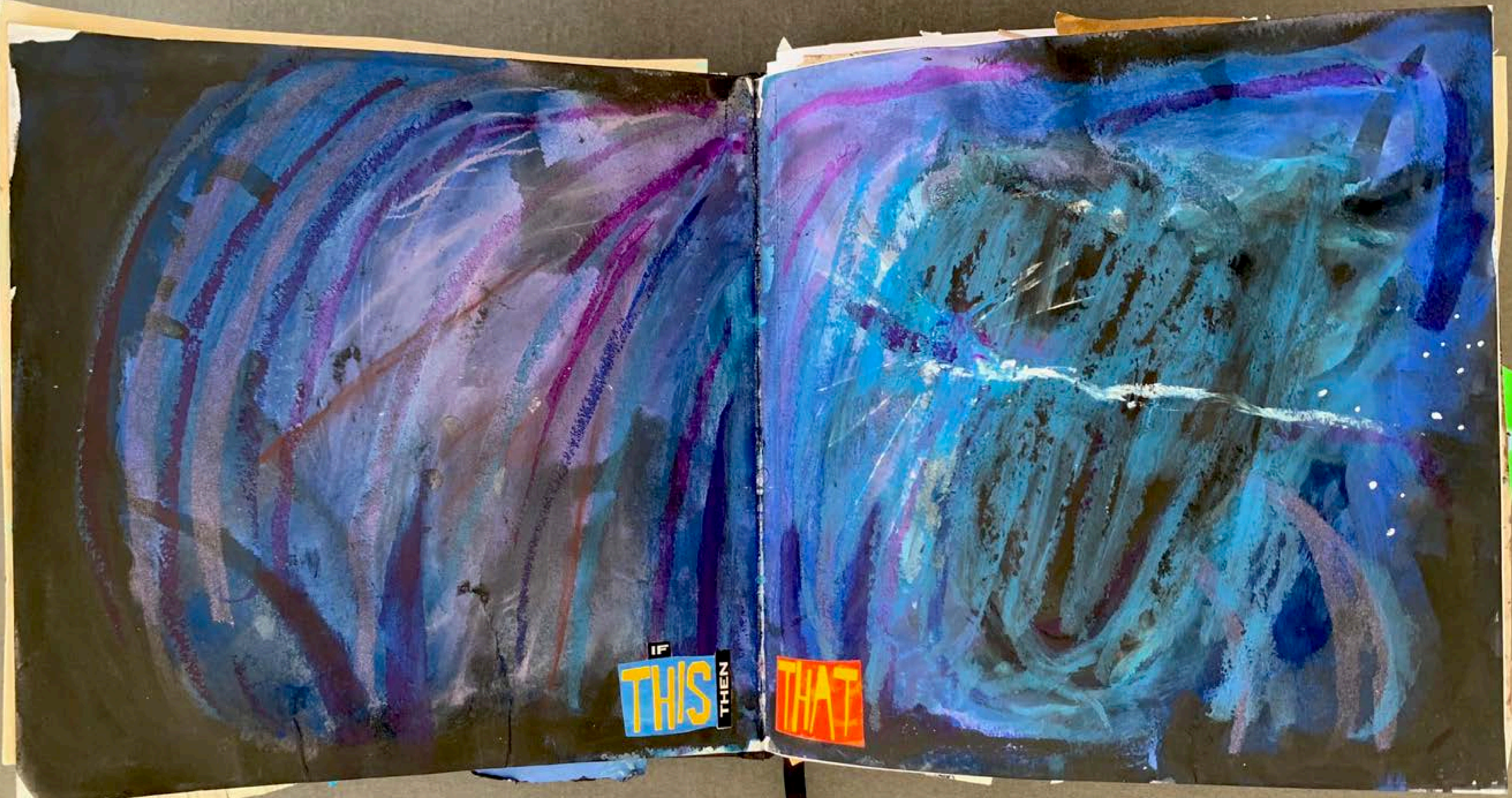
Peaceful.

Holding the fraying at bay.

October 2022  
One month  
to make empty  
the Region  
of space that is



Conscious  
Emptying.



IF  
**THIS**  
THEN

**THAT**

A narrow escape?

A window of opportunity?

Nov. 21. 2022

This relatively un documented year.  
Recorded:

① TALP Journal

The project: Exhibits, social media,  
wrapping it up.  
Reporting it.

Closing it

② Medical stuff.

moms Surgery

Vertigo

Pains of mysterious origins.

③ P. Nut's death

④ Sparky's death.

Unrecorded:

① Books | Attempts to cope w. aging

Breaking the Age Codes

Aging Backwards

No fight — fight

(N)  
Need

## Unrecorded (cont.)

- ② Betsy's condition and move to  
The Tradition. May 2022.  
~~Home~~ institution.  
Hold on ——— let go.
- ③ War in Ukraine
- ④ Rise of omicron variant.
- ⑤ Robb Elementary mass murder  
in Uvalde, TX.
- ⑥ The billionaires.
- ⑦ Roe v. Wade overturned.
- ⑧ Criticism of Biden
- ⑨ Jan. 6 hearings, led by  
Liz Cheney.

- ⑩ Affairs art at the Kimball  
Museum.
- ⑪ Women Painting Women exhibit
- ⑫ Janelle's 96th Birthday
- ⑬ June 22. Sarah Salazar & I  
do teacher trainings @ Region 10.
- ⑭ Canned cocktails
- ⑮ July 4, 2022 - Janelle dies
- ⑯ Kelly & I arrive in Lincoln on  
July 7.
- ⑰ Journals → Love Library  
July 8, 2022.
- ⑱ The heat & drought  
are underway.

Unrecorded (continued)

- (19) In Lincoln, Omaha.  
Wilderness Park.  
Lorraine's home.  
Richard Russell's home.  
Red & White quilt exhibit,  
(20) Janell's clothing,  
(21) David McNulty's store  
damaged.  
(22) The tent is a attempt to save  
the Great Green Thruway.  
(23) Pile of wood, cardboard  
against our fence

- (25) My meltdown about fire  
threat.  
(26) Canned Bombay Sapphire.  
(27) DROWNT  
(28) John Katz is the "fucking  
abomination" next door.  
(29) August is the garden lives.  
(30) Tidy & Julips  
(31) Work begins on properties in  
Lincoln.  
Here or there?  
(32) Feelay on the verge of  
a nervous breakdown.  
Aug 17 - head to  
museums in Ft. Worth.

(33) Rain. Studio Floods.

(N) (34) To Michael Unit to see Brandon Woodard w. Kendall Castello.

(N) (35) The new 29 p. lessons.

(36) Kelly in NE.

(37) Lush Dallas after the rains

(P) (38) Drive to NE. Sept. 26, Arkansas, K. C., Brooke, Dana → Lincoln.

[O. I have P. Nat. & Sparky pages?] OSCAR

(N) (39) Tanzele's memorial.

(40) Oscar is rescued.

(41) Conversations on Sandra's porch. Oct. 8

(42) The sky over Fiesta

(43) Arboretum w. Bats & J.

(44) Evening in Lakewood H.

(45) Dia de los Muertos.

(46) Oct. 31. Front of house.

(N) (47) Nov. 8. Sunset

(48) Grandparents Pay.

DESIRE for EXTINCTION

*Mala noche.*

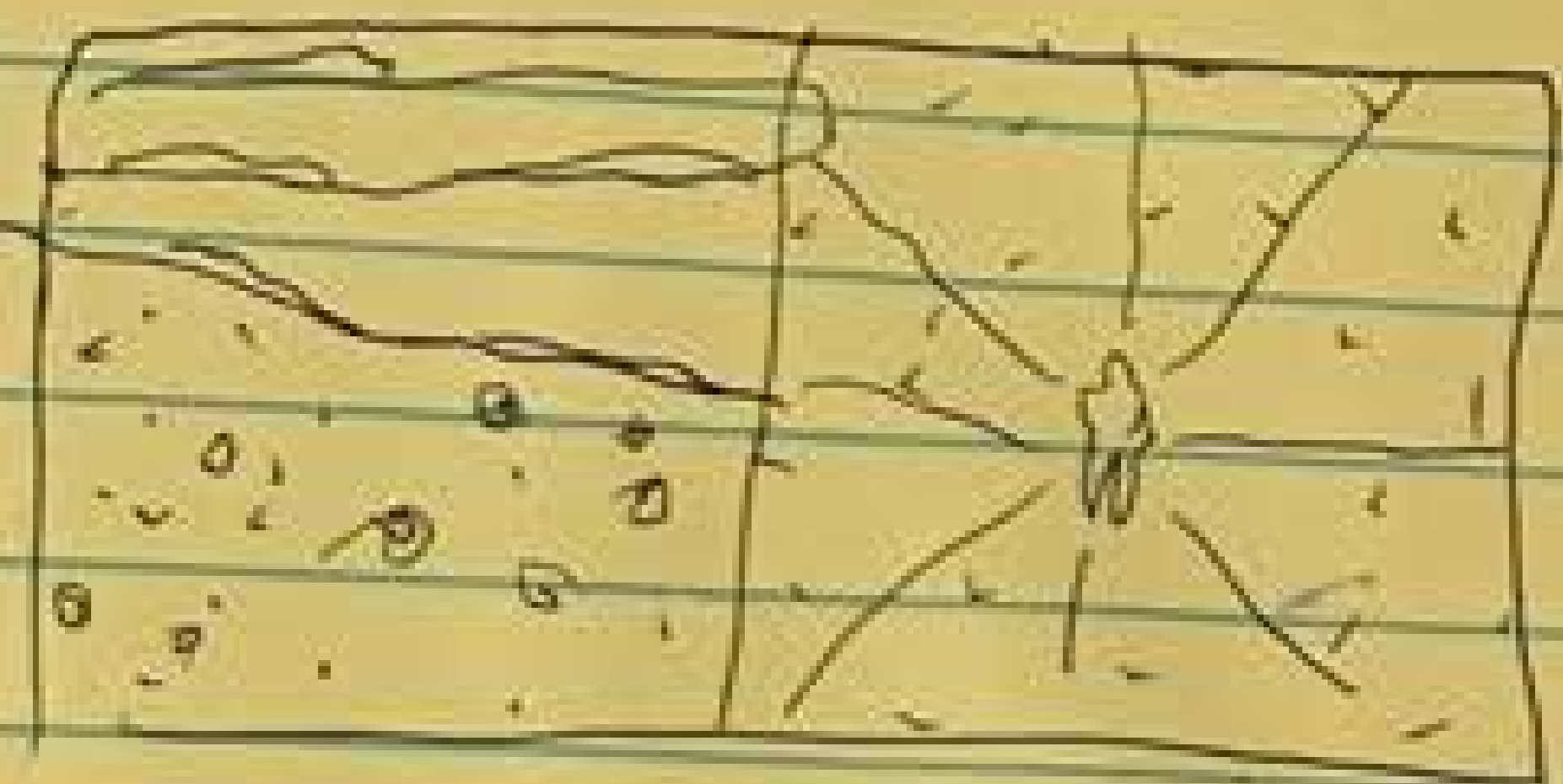


**THIS**  
OR

*Desire for Becoming*

**THAT**





*Desire for Extinction*

*The forces.*

A FEW MORE

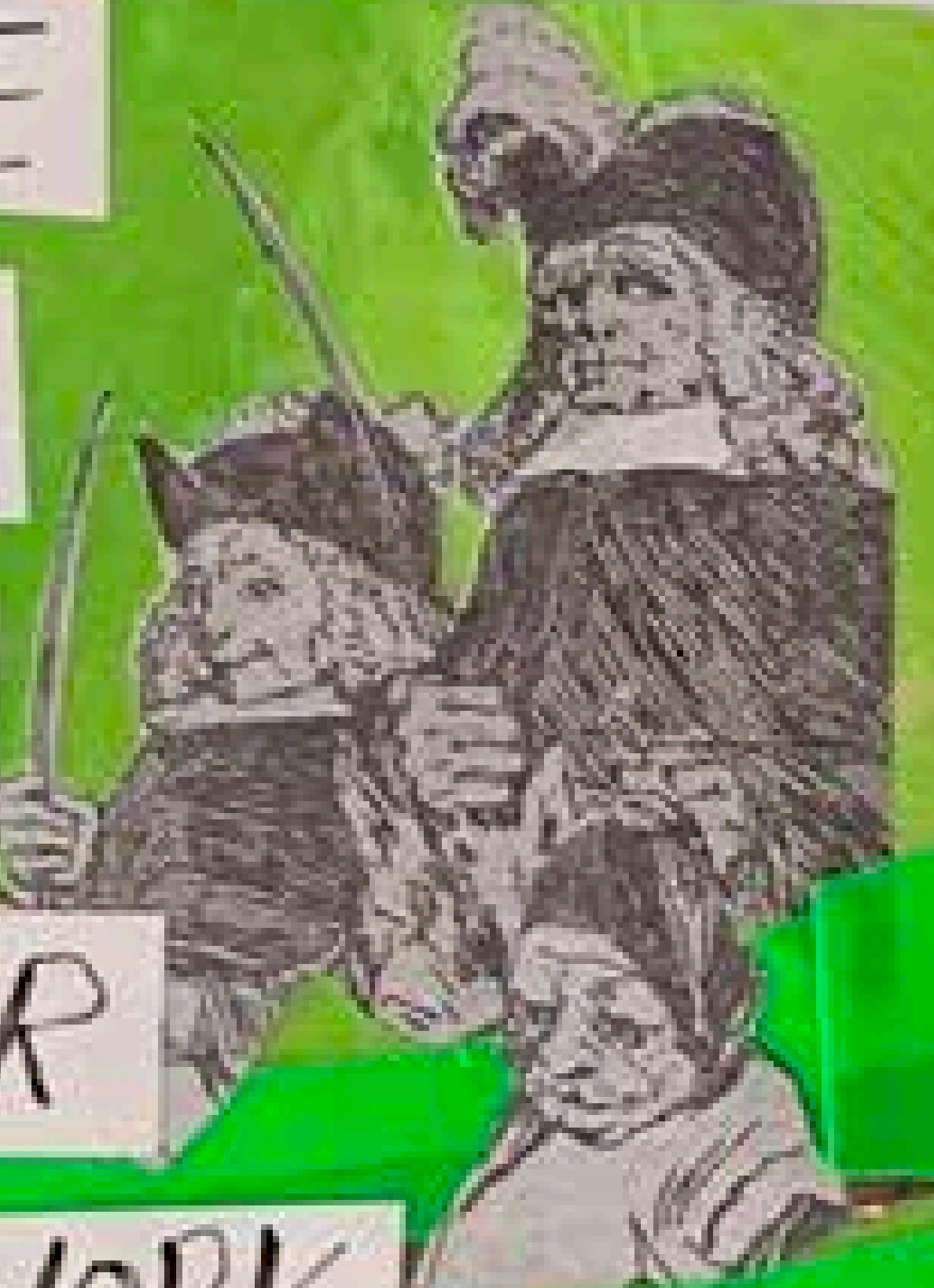
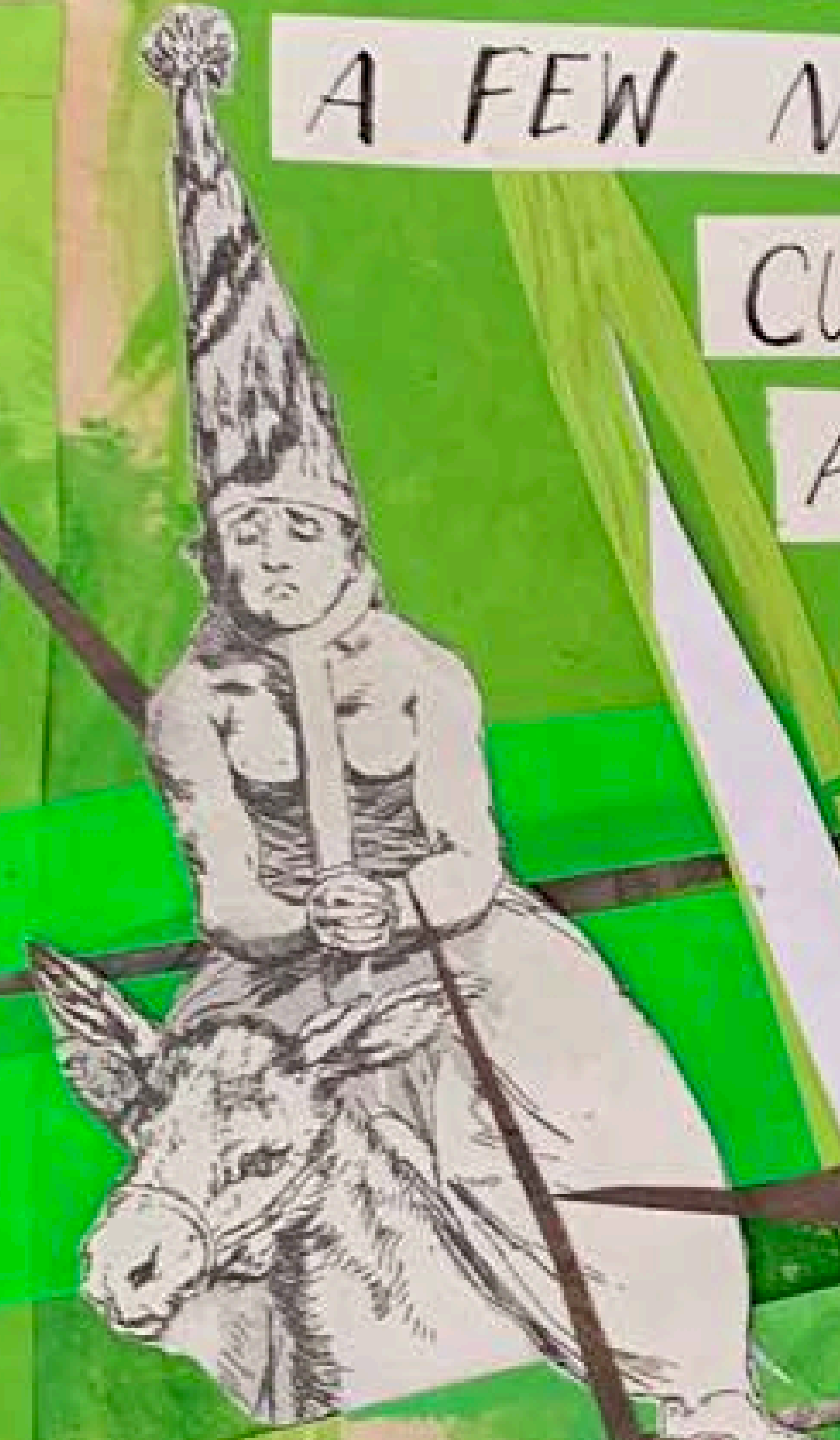
CUTS

AND

OUR

WORK

IS DONE.



*Nobuko remedia.*

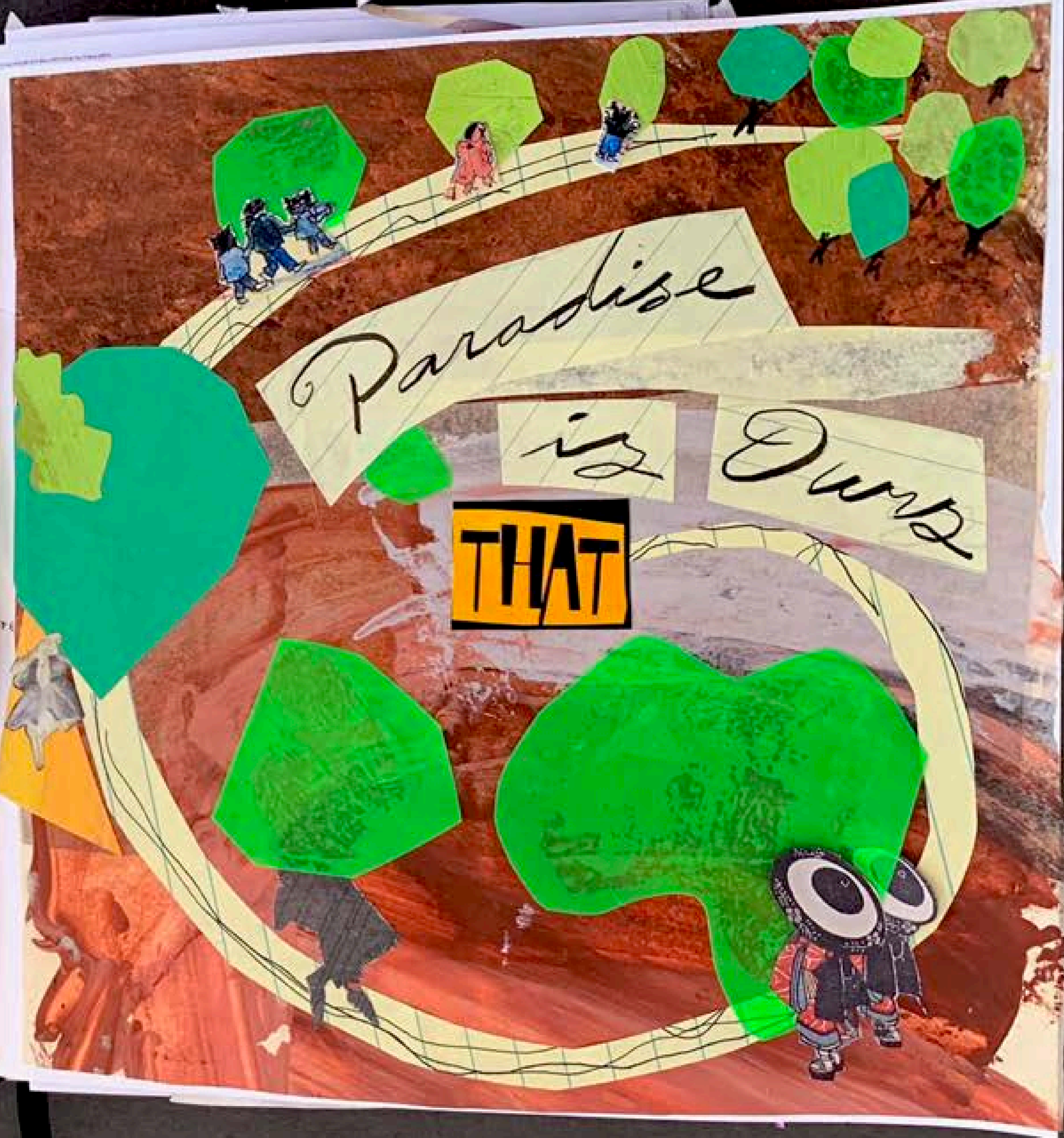


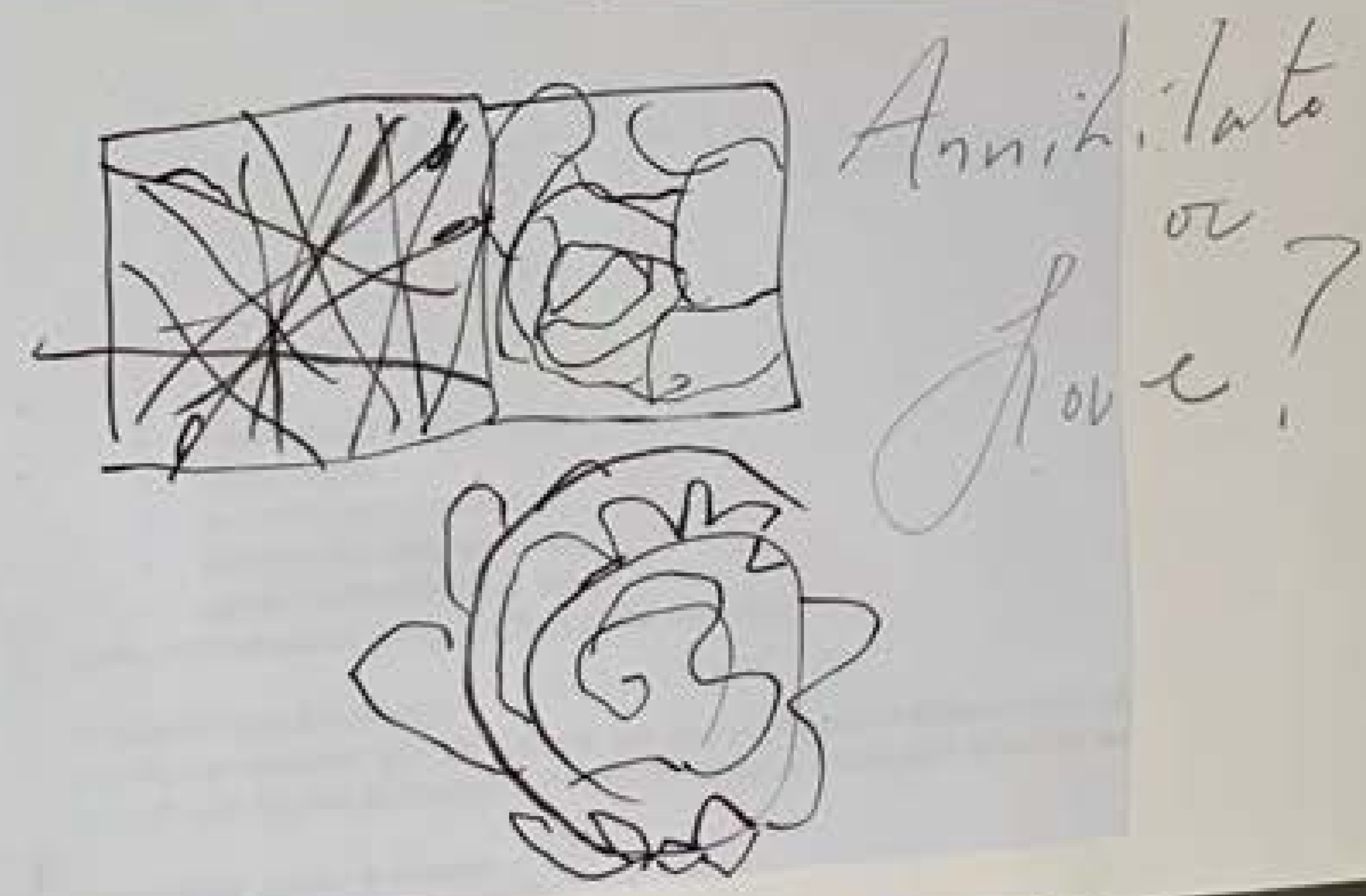
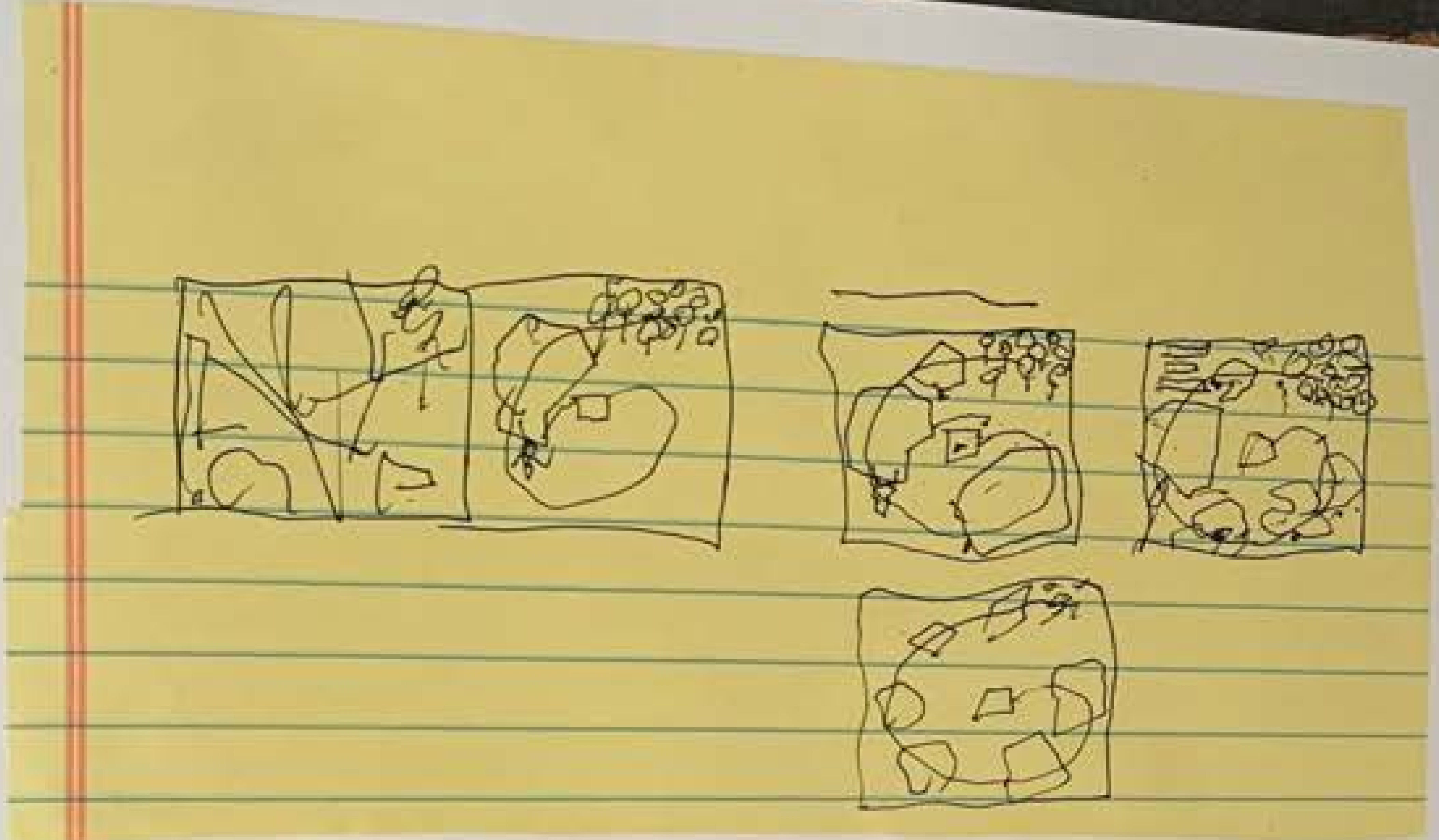
**THIS**  
OR

24

Paradise  
is Dumb

**THAT**



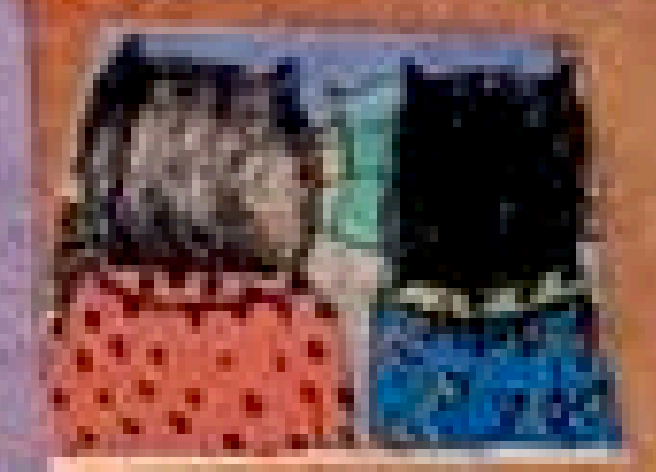


Annihilate  
or  
Love?

**THIS** OR



The waves are so black



The waves are so high



**THE**

**OTHER**

**SHORE**



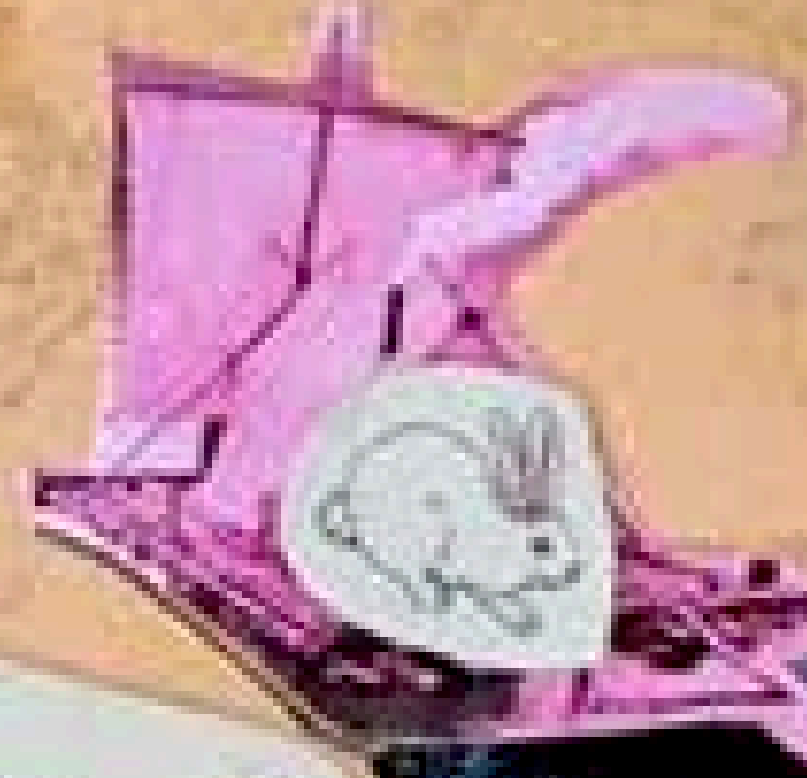
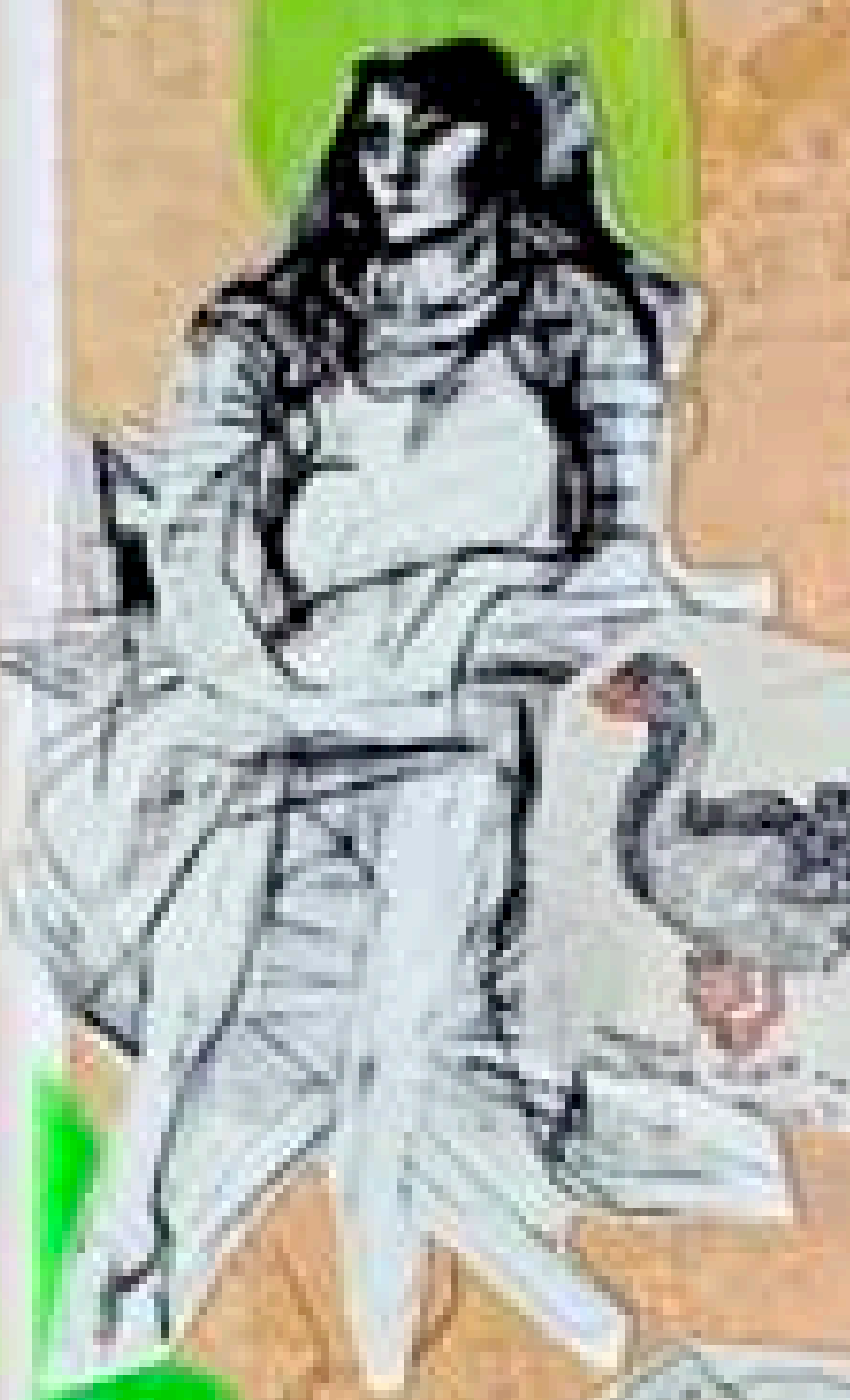
The water is so deep



It's so comfortable here.



**THAT**



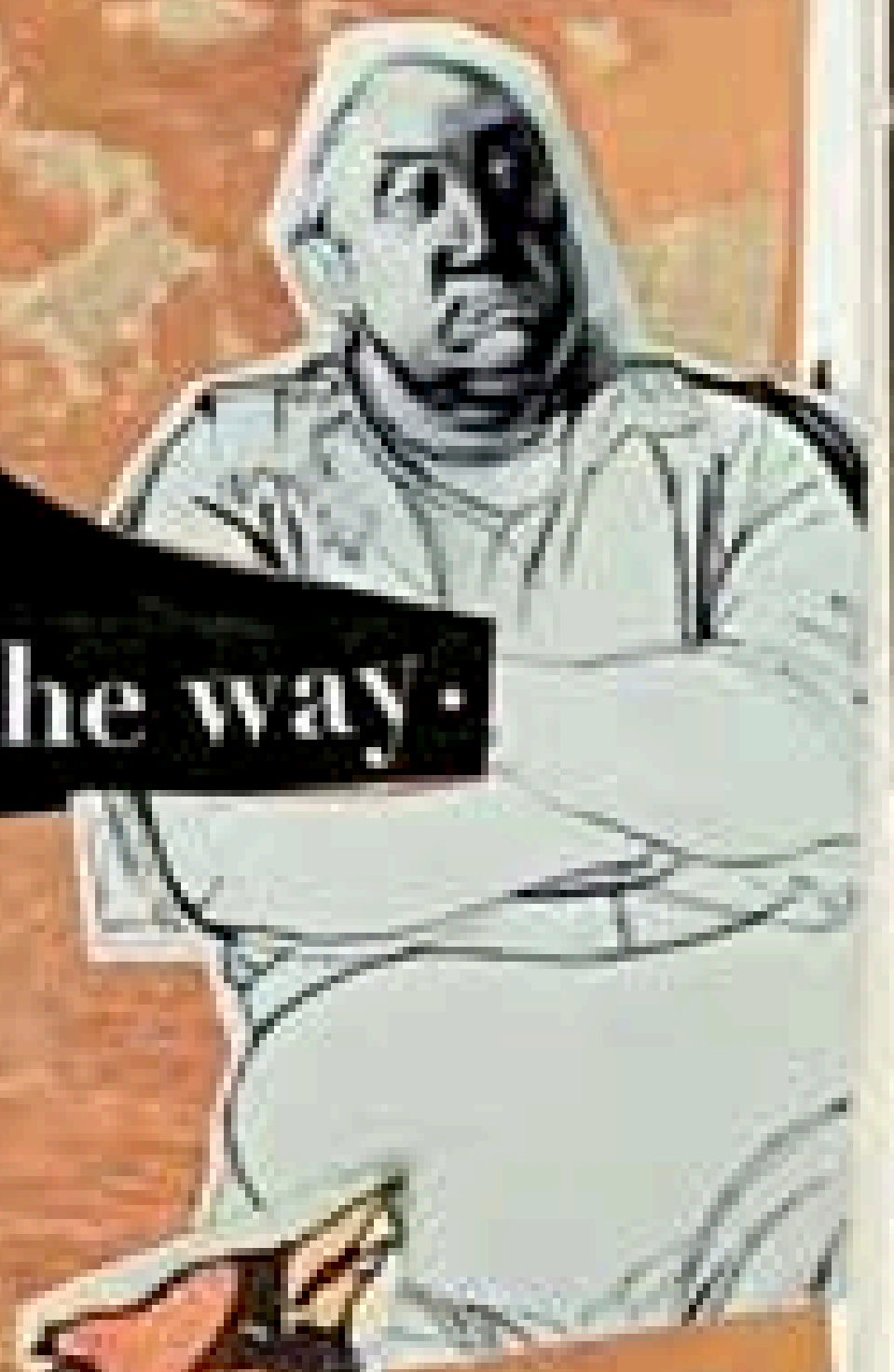
Cross the river bravely.

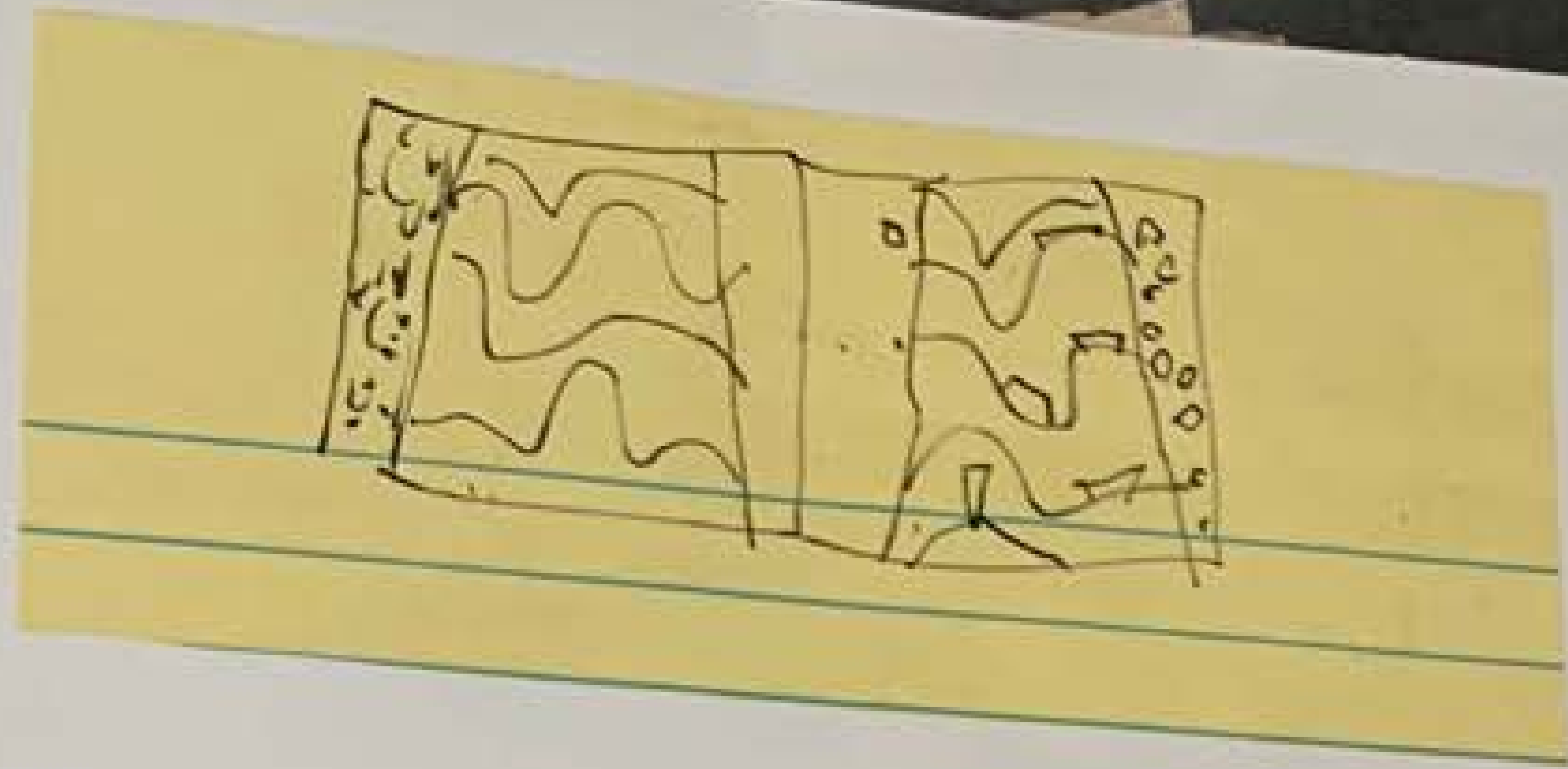


Explore the depths.



The waves provide the way.





When to hesitate?

When fearless?

May 29, 2023

MEMORIAL DAY  
Dad died 29 years ago on  
Memorial Day.

I woke up thinking about  
Dad. About Mom.  
And in this order — I don't  
know why:

Claudia Opicensky

Bob Bersano

Karen Bernburg - died April 2023

Barbara Boston - 2013. July 4

Lorraine Hiemann - Aug. 19 2021

One day there  
will be  
more loved  
ones on the  
other side  
than there  
are here.

And remembering:

Grandma; Grandpa Aule; Bessen  
All the aunts & uncles, Tanelle  
Ceraldine Simpkins; her grand-dad  
P. Nut, Sparky, Flame, Luella, O'Malley,  
Betsy, Andi, Alice, Rosie, Charlie,  
Emma, Brynn, Dodie, Braddy, Ben,  
Don Jundoen. Sylvester

29 PIECES DONATE



# INNOCENSE INNOCENTS KILLED.

SHOCK. FURY. RAGE. HEARTBREAK. GAPING WOUNDS. CHILDREN KILLED. CALLOUS POLITICIANS. LOVED ONES DESTROYED. LOVE EXTENDED. The headlines have the naïve audacity to say it's our time to heal.



On Saturday May 6, EIGHT PEOPLE were shot and killed - innocents - out shopping in Allen, Texas. The shooter was 'neutralized' by another man with a gun. It's one more convulsion of violence in America. Two days later, the headlines say we are on the way to healing. We're not. On May 8, in yet another murder, the 20-year-old brother of a 29 Pieces team member was shot and killed in Oak Cliff in Dallas. His 22-year-old brother was shot five times in the same event. Miraculously, he survived. We don't heal from murder and traumatic grief. It won't happen. We change. Hardened politicians who love guns and status more than children won't stand up to the colossal monster we've created. We're seduced by cynical gun marketing that makes us feel powerful. We may be unaware that our money is streaming into mutual funds that support guns, ammunition and violent 'entertainment.' We are wounded, and we are all party to this madness. There is no healing from the cruelty and violence when fresh volleys of deadly shots are fired every day. How do we unite our broken hearts and angry minds to end this cancer of cruelty?

We pray. We vote. We practice radical love and kindness.

There must be more. 29 Pieces was born as a response to a murder that occurred 23 years ago in front of my home. 23 years, and those most impacted by that one killing still deal with the harm done. With 29 Pieces' work, we hope to educate hearts, so that children understand the beauty and benefits of compassion. Enough is enough. So much more must be done. How do we extract ourselves and our resources from contributing to the flow of blood? How do we live with the knowledge that, at any moment, the next bullet may hit us - or worse yet - someone we hold precious? How do we STARVE THE MONSTER we've created?

Karen Blessen - Karen Blessen, Founder and Executive Artistic Director, 29 Pieces. 29 Pieces uses art to awaken uplift and give voice to the creative human spirit to make genuine, positive social change.

29 PIECES DONATE

# Innocence INNOCENTS



# Killed

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# Innocence Innocents

# Killed

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We pray. We vote. We practice radical love and kindness.

There must be more. 29 Pieces was born as a response to a murder that occurred 23 years ago in front of my home. 23 years, and those most impacted by that one killing still deal with the harm done. With 29 Pieces' work, we hope to educate hearts, so that children understand the beauty and benefits of compassion. Enough is enough. So much more must be done. How do we extract ourselves and our resources from contributing to the flow of blood? How do we live with the knowledge that, at any moment, the next bullet may hit us - or worse yet - someone we hold precious? How do we STARVE THE MONSTER we've created?

Karen Blessen - Karen Blessen, Founder and Executive Artistic Director, 29 Pieces. 29 Pieces uses art to awaken uplift and give voice to the creative human spirit to make genuine, positive social change.



29 PIECES DONATE

# Innocence Innocents

# Killed

SHOCK. FURY. RAGE. HEARTBREAK. GAPING WOUNDS. CHILDREN KILLED. CALLOUS POLITICIANS. LOVED ONES DESTROYED. LOVE EXTENDED.

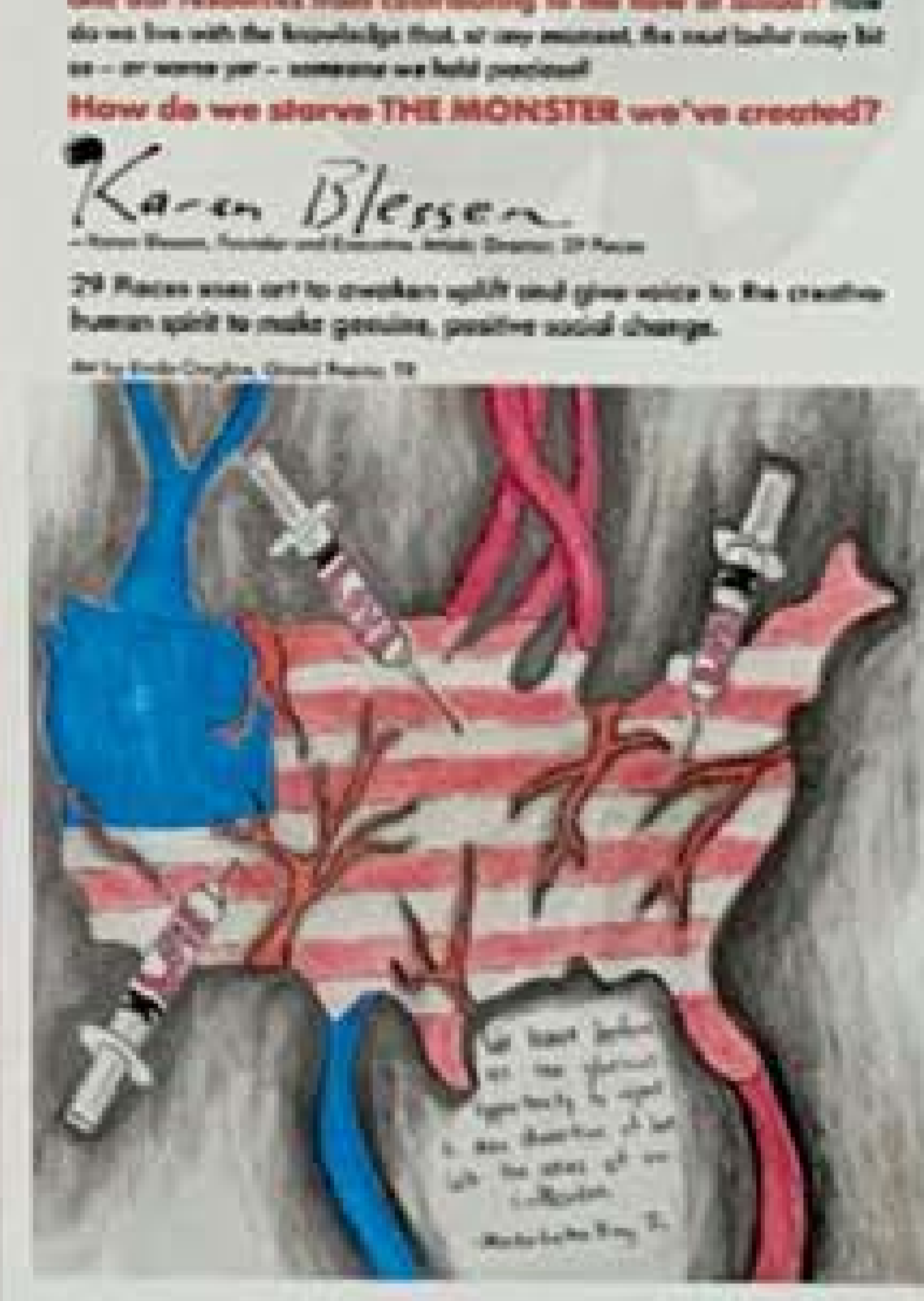
On Saturday May 6, EIGHT PEOPLE were shot and killed - innocents - out shopping in Allen, Texas. The shooter was 'neutralized' by another man with a gun. It's one more convulsion of violence in America. Two days later, the headlines say we are on the way to healing. We're not.

On Monday May 8, in yet another murder, the 20-year-old brother of a 29 Pieces team member was shot and killed in Oak Cliff in Dallas. His 22-year-old brother was shot five times in the same event. Miraculously, he survived. We don't heal from murder and traumatic grief. It won't happen. We change. Hardened politicians who love guns and status more than children won't stand up to the colossal monster we've created. We're seduced by cynical gun marketing that makes us feel powerful.

We pray. We vote. We practice radical love and kindness.

There must be more. 29 Pieces was born as a response to a murder that occurred 23 years ago in front of my home. 23 years, and those most impacted by that one killing still deal with the harm done. With 29 Pieces' work, we hope to educate hearts, so that children understand the beauty and benefits of compassion. Enough is enough. So much more must be done. How do we extract ourselves and our resources from contributing to the flow of blood? How do we live with the knowledge that, at any moment, the next bullet may hit us - or worse yet - someone we hold precious? How do we STARVE THE MONSTER we've created?

Karen Blessen - Karen Blessen, Founder and Executive Artistic Director, 29 Pieces. 29 Pieces uses art to awaken uplift and give voice to the creative human spirit to make genuine, positive social change.



June 30  
2023

we face both - words  
challenges - good - words  
the small is good - words  
over with them  
weight + force.

These are those  
like all AS.  
previews things that  
are permanently  
available to  
us when  
the big  
hit.

Andy.

2 4 8 9 13

56 36

35  
words.

29  
PIECES DONATE

IN THE DESIRE FOR A BETTER WORLD,  
what is stronger than your loving heart - that beats on with a fear-  
less outlook. That pushes anguish and grief aside. That embraces  
the 10 life rafts below - to help stay afloat in today's stormy world.

WHEN THE WAVES FEEL TOO BIG  
WHAT DO WE

HOLD ON TO?

TRY OUR 12 LIFE RAFTS



WHEN GREAT TROUBLES DRAW NEAR,  
hold on to what is good. Hold onto life and its beauty, its dreams  
and opportunities. Now - rise up with faith and love, holding  
onto hope and its selfless nourishment for our collective future.  
As we say in #10 above: "Help The World".

29Pieces.Org was set to awaken faith and give voice to the creative  
human spirit to make genuine, positive social change.

WHEN BIG  
WAVES HIT. W

Too impressed  
How do we  
HOLD ON?

Peter  
750 or  
11930 Coniam  
Lane  
Middleham VA  
23113

**BRAINSTORMING. June 2023 poster**

(INTRO SENTENCE - SMALL. Something about all that lives - after the anguish, after the grieving.)

HOPE

JOY

LOVE

COMPASSION

COMMITMENT

ACCEPTANCE

WILL

~~DESIRE FOR A BETTER WORLD~~

TENDERNESS

GENTLENESS

FORGIVENESS

← IMAGINATION

← CURIOSITY

RESPECT

HELP

HEROES

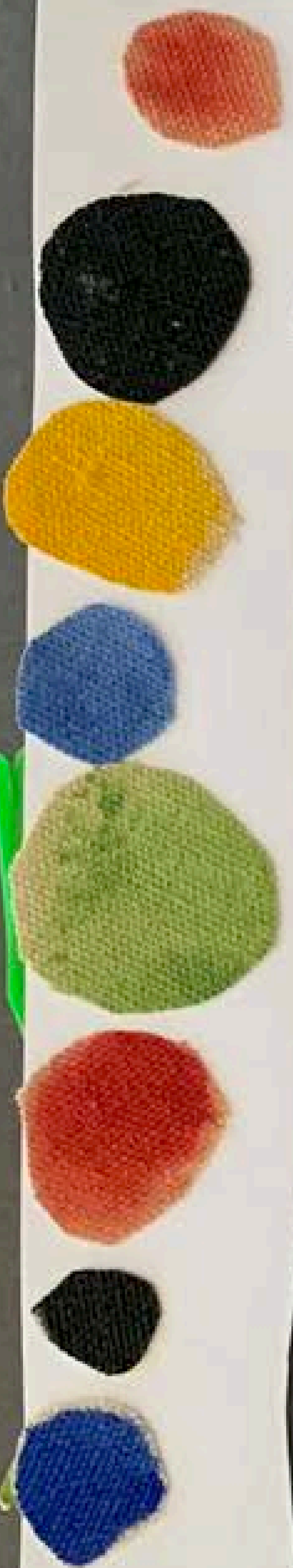
# LIVES

A lifeboat or liferaft is a small, rigid or inflatable boat carried for emergency evacuation in the event of a disaster aboard a ship. Lifeboat drills are required by law on larger commercial ships. Rafts (liferafts) are also used. In the military, a lifeboat may double as a whaleboat, dinghy, or gig.

Peter - I've pulled more images than we need. I like your idea of 'Ten Commandments' 'Twelve Lifeboats' 'Twelve infinite anchors'

# HEROES ARE ALIVE

(CLOSING STATEMENT - BRIEF. Something about holding on for our lives when times threaten to discombobulate us.)



JUDGE

SPEAK UNKIND WORDS

CRITICIZE



THIS OR

CRITICIZE

JUDGE

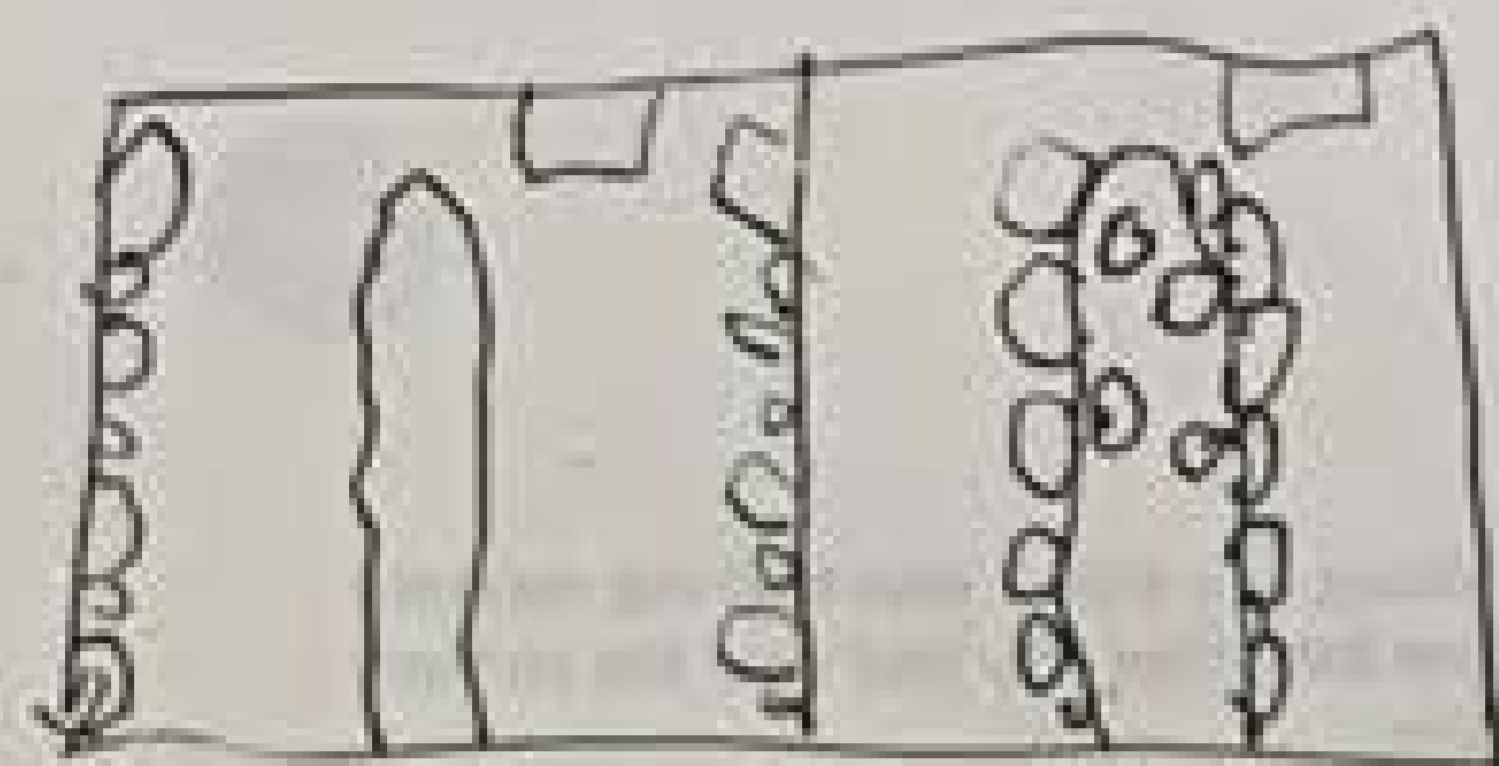


THAT



DO THE OPPOSITE.

American



D. the opposite



The force  
of  
Disfaſte  
and or

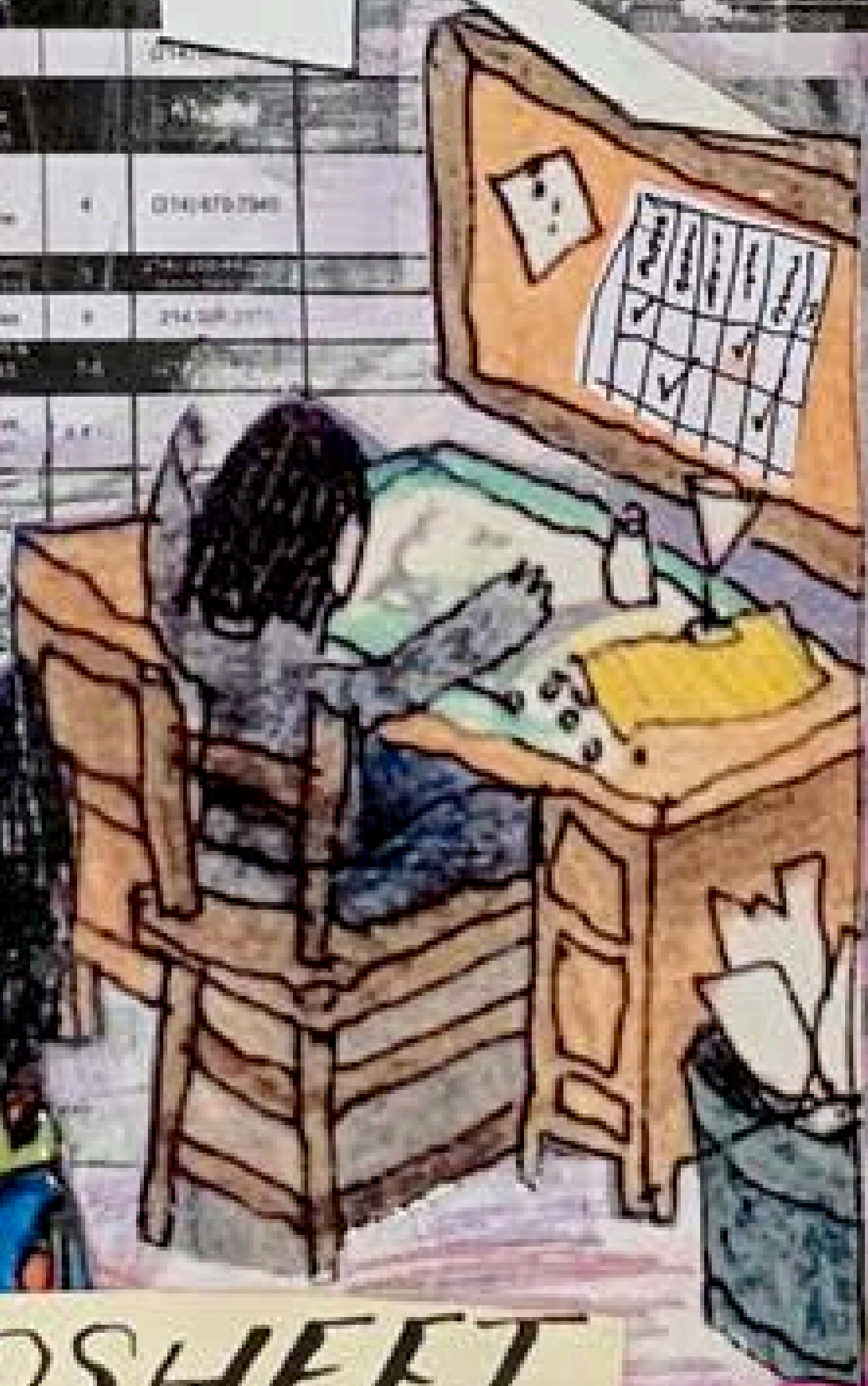
A force of Magnetism



THIS



Handley David J.	3000 West Mockingbird Lane Dallas, TX 75225	972-353-1111	www.mercedes.com
Jeremy Miller, General Manager	3000 West Mockingbird Lane Dallas, TX 75225	(214) 876-4880	www.dallas.mercedes.com
Scott C. Chambers, Manager	3000 West Mockingbird Lane Dallas, TX 75225		
Anthony LaFolgia, Leadsman Dan Superior, Public Info Officer Jason Evans	3000 West Mockingbird Lane Dallas, TX 75225	(214) 876-7940	
Thomas Cleveland, Bus Manager	3000 West Mockingbird Lane Dallas, TX 75225	(214) 876-7940	
John L...	3000 West Mockingbird Lane Dallas, TX 75225	(214) 876-7940	
John L...	3000 West Mockingbird Lane Dallas, TX 75225	(214) 876-7940	



LIFE AS A SPREADSHEET

THAT

THE Simple Joy and Low Cost of Contentment



This don't more  
require words.

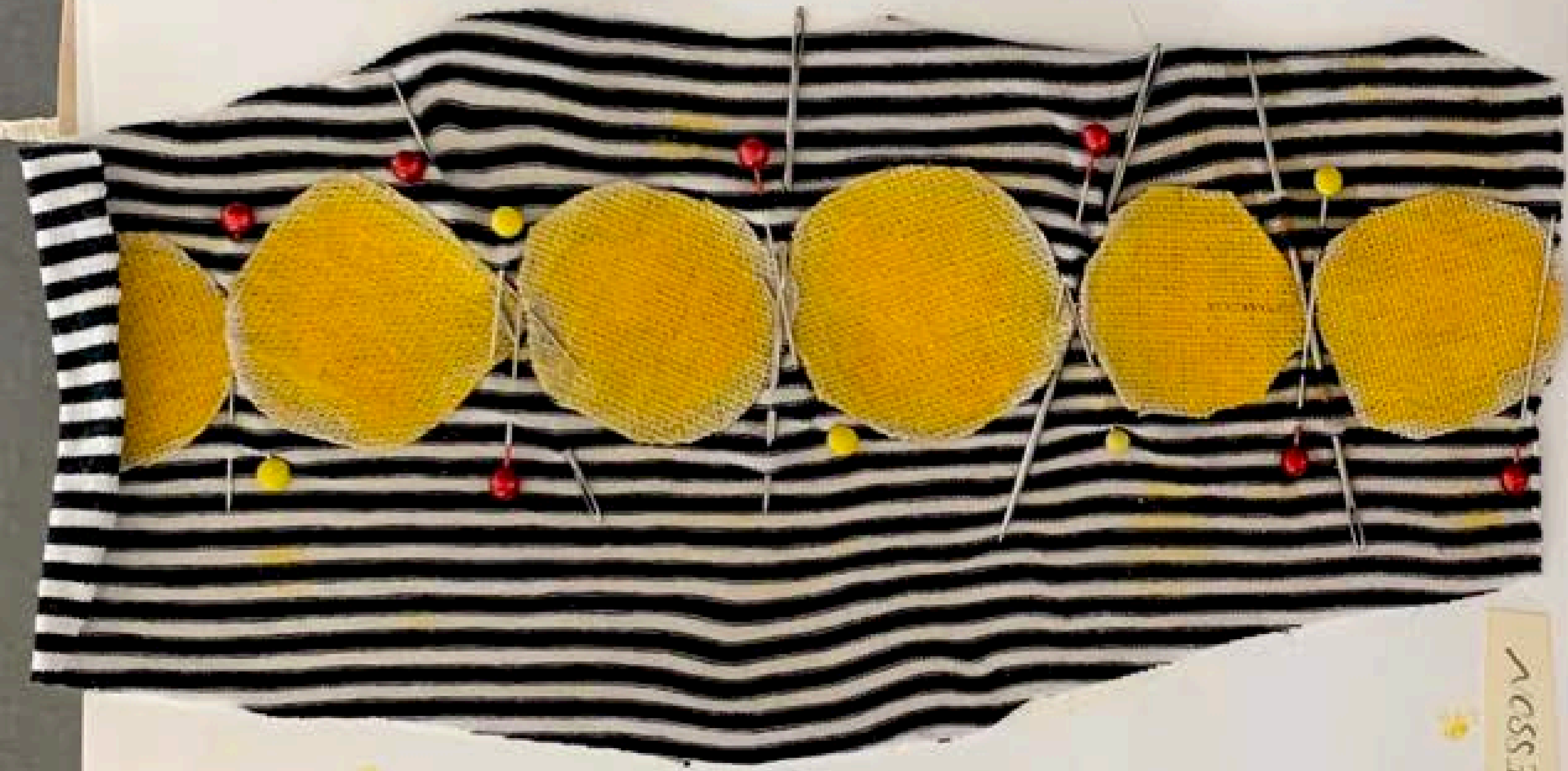


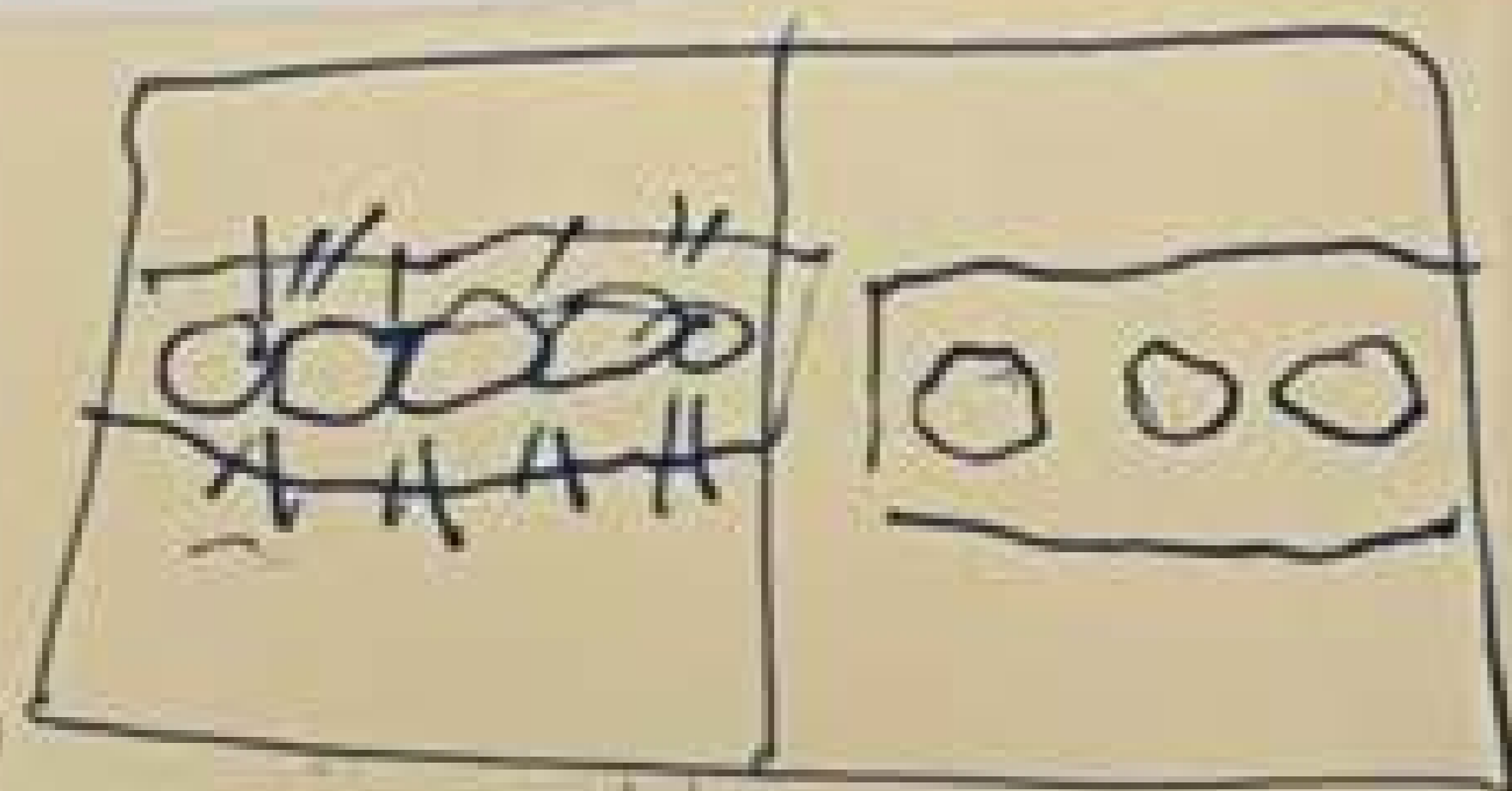
**THIS**

LIFE LONG LESSON

FIGURE IT OUT

**OR THAT**





Pins & needles | SPACE

The sharpness of  
Collisions,

The peace that  
follows time: space.

THERE'S

THIS

JOY.

CREATIVITY.

UNITY.

LOVE.

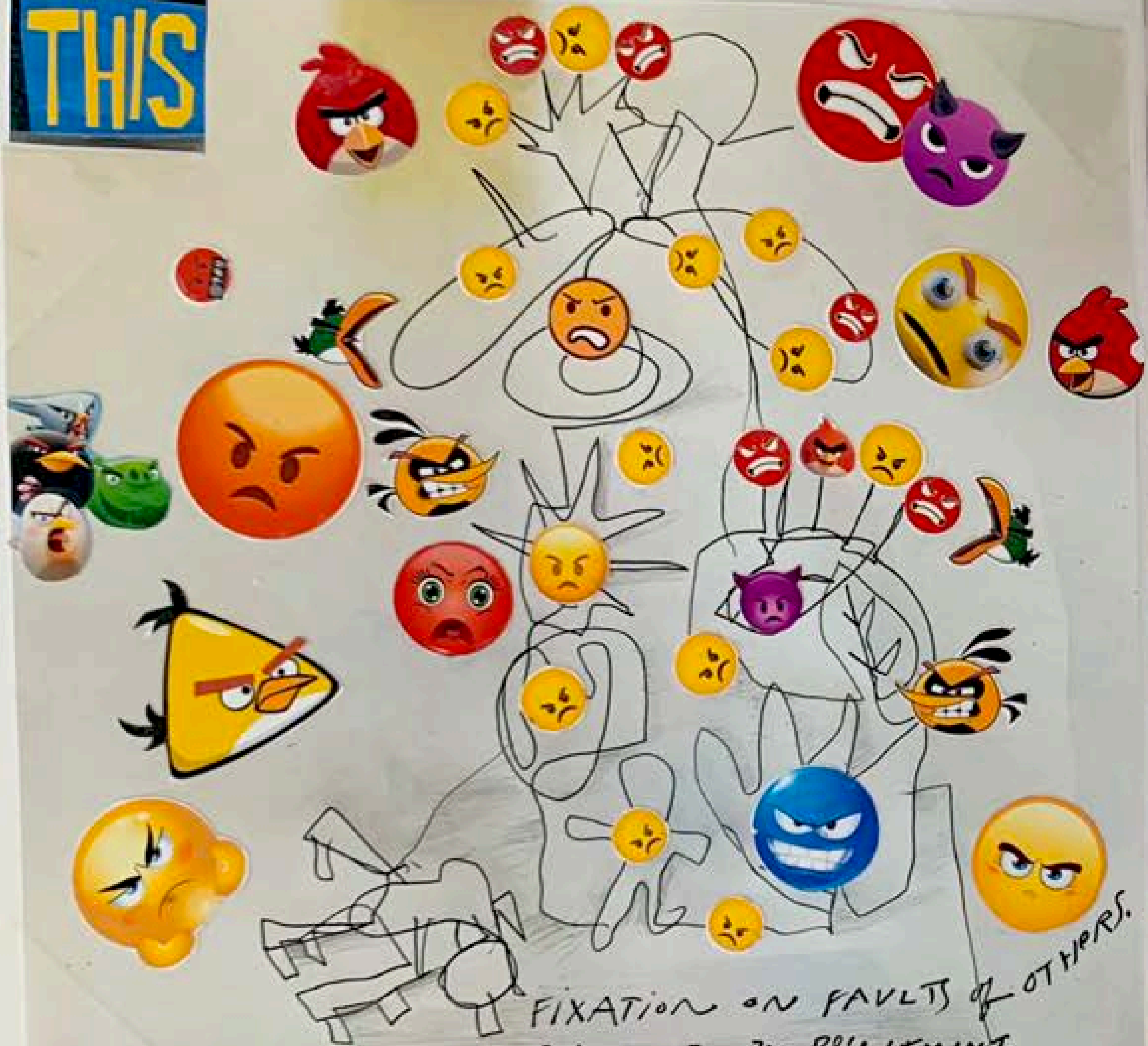


The World  
that

ART

Creates.

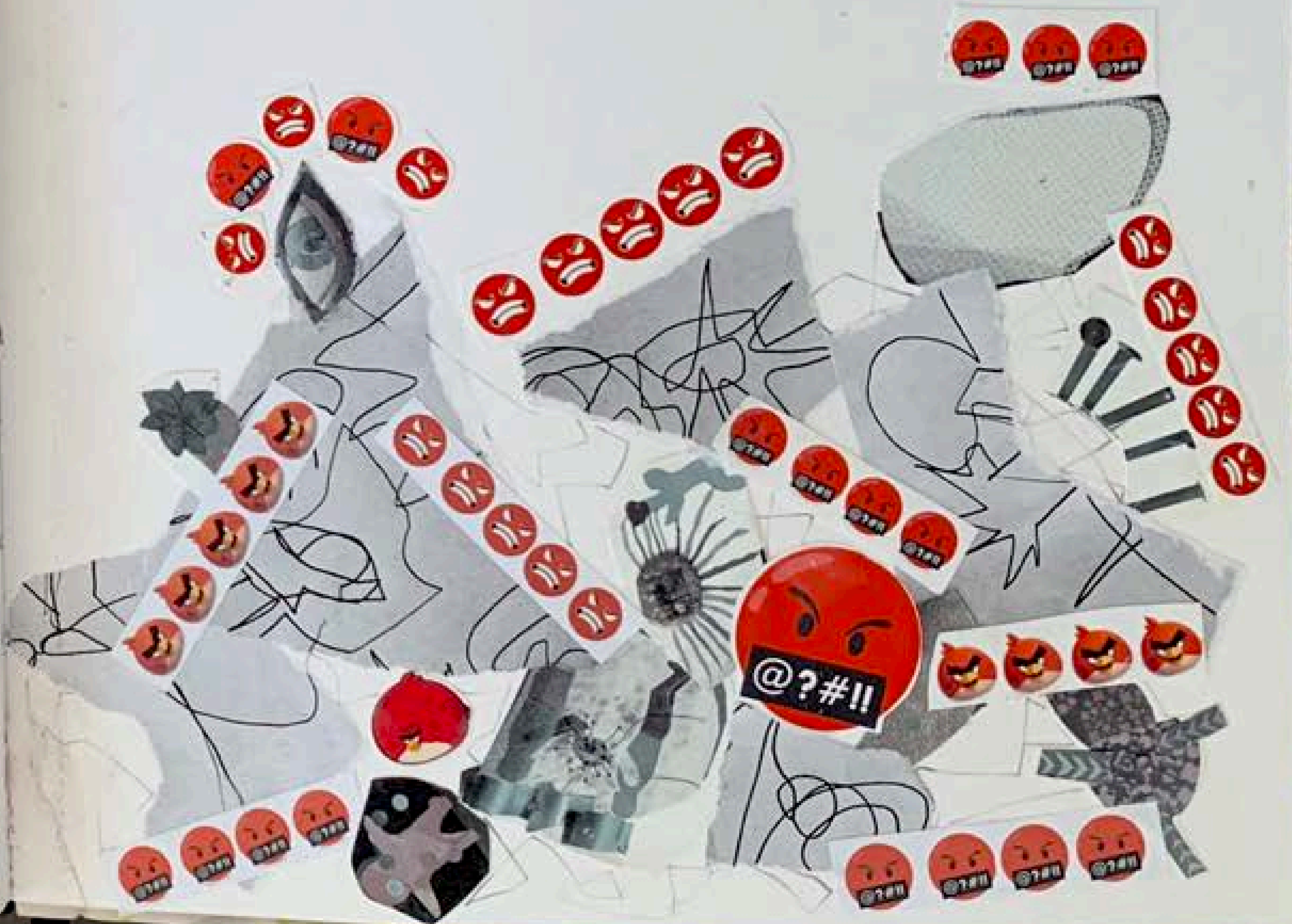
BUT IF  
**THIS**



FIXATION ON FAULTS OF OTHERS.  
ALLOW ANGER. POISONED BY RESENTMENT.

THEN  
**THAT**

EATS AWAY AT A PERSONALITY.  
LIKE RUST CORRODES IRON.



Guard  
against  
erosion  
of  
personality.



Margot Robbie and Ryan Gosling on Barbie and Kenergy

A Crisis in America's Theaters Leaves Prestigious Stages Dark

As Rhodes Burns, Fires Strike More Greek Islands

These Cheap Sunglasses Make Me Feel Like a Million Bucks

Our Favorite Workouts So Far This Year

**THIS**

**THE FRAY**

Elite College Admissions Data Suggests Being Very Rich Is Its Own Qualification

GRR!

THE LATEST  
Russia Strikes Danube River Port, in New Attack on Ukrainian Agriculture

Elon Musk Changes Twitter Logo to an X

The Best Vibrator

MY GARDEN

OR THAT

OF PEACE

The Fray:  
Constant conflict  
Noise  
Foolish engagement  
Energetic waste

The Garden:  
Quiet  
Nature  
Listening  
Observation

Keeping the Fray at Bay

July 1, 2023

Mom - Alice Asche Blessen -  
would've celebrated her 116th  
Birthday. There she is at  
right towering over her  
best friend & Luella Anndt's  
holding two pairs of new  
high heeled spectators.

They were on a shopping  
trip in Omaha.

This was before marriage.  
So she and Lu were in their  
late 30s or early 40s.

A "man on the street"  
photographer took the photo,  
and Mom loved it.

[Her friends called her 'AL']



I loved spoiling her on her  
birthdays — and at holidays.  
pink flowers, package with  
pretty wrapping, big bows,  
glittery cards.

I must've been such a  
puzzle to her. She never  
liked my straight hair,  
my resistance to church,  
the way I dressed, that  
Kelly and I lived together  
before marriage. She must've  
felt ashamed of me on  
one's hand. But then on  
the other — these startling  
accomplishments — the  
Pulitzer, Absolut, book projects,  
newspaper stories.

None of it was easy for her —  
from times way before me.  
I know there was a  
big part of her whose  
highest hope for me would've  
been to marry a Columbus  
boy, stay near, raise a family  
and give her grandchildren.

We all have our life lessons  
cut out for us when we  
step into this world.

This. And I think I hold  
to be true, I'm pretty sure  
that she loved me deeply,  
completely. I know that's how  
I felt ~~about~~ her. I think I knew  
her fairly well. I wonder if she'd  
say the same of me.

# 4 JULY 2023

4th of July 2023. We remembered and raised a glass to two dear ones who left this life on the 4th. Janelle - Kelly's Mom - died last year on July 4th. My dear friend and soul sister, Barbara Boster-Phillips, died in 2013 on July 4th. Both women picked their day of departure thoughtfully and perfectly in line with their colorful and red hot personalities. Fireworks and celebration sent them on their way. Barbara often signed notes with 'Babs at the Beach.' So I imagine Barbara and Janelle waiting for us patiently at the beach on the other side, complete with deck chairs, a cool drink and umbrellas. The fabulous cake was created by the gifted artist and baker Iris Candelaria of Candelaria Bakery.



THE BEGINNING



Love  
Iris  
Candelaria



2008



Left: John Katz with Barbara Boster.  
Right: John and Kelly on July 4, 2008

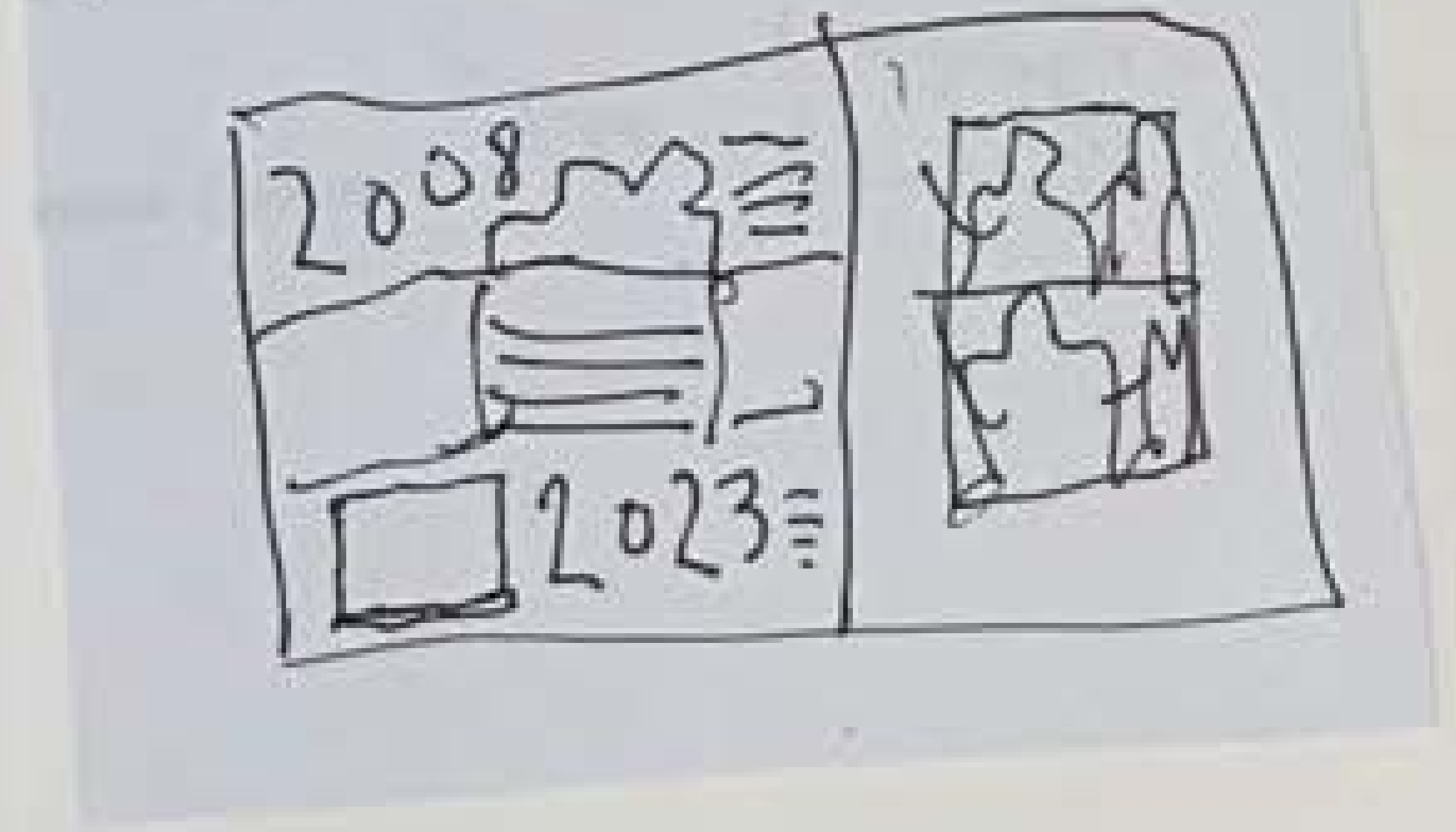
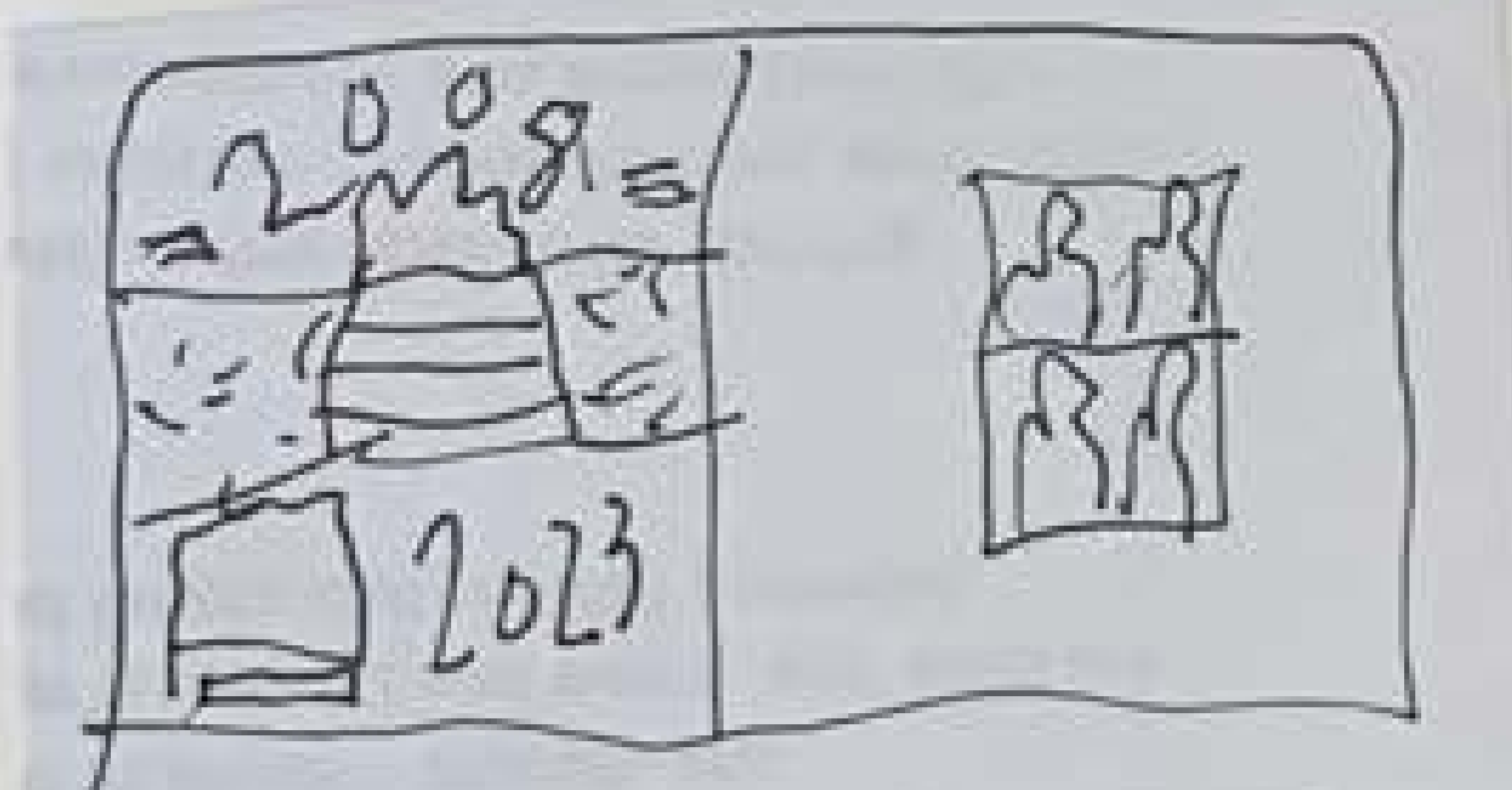
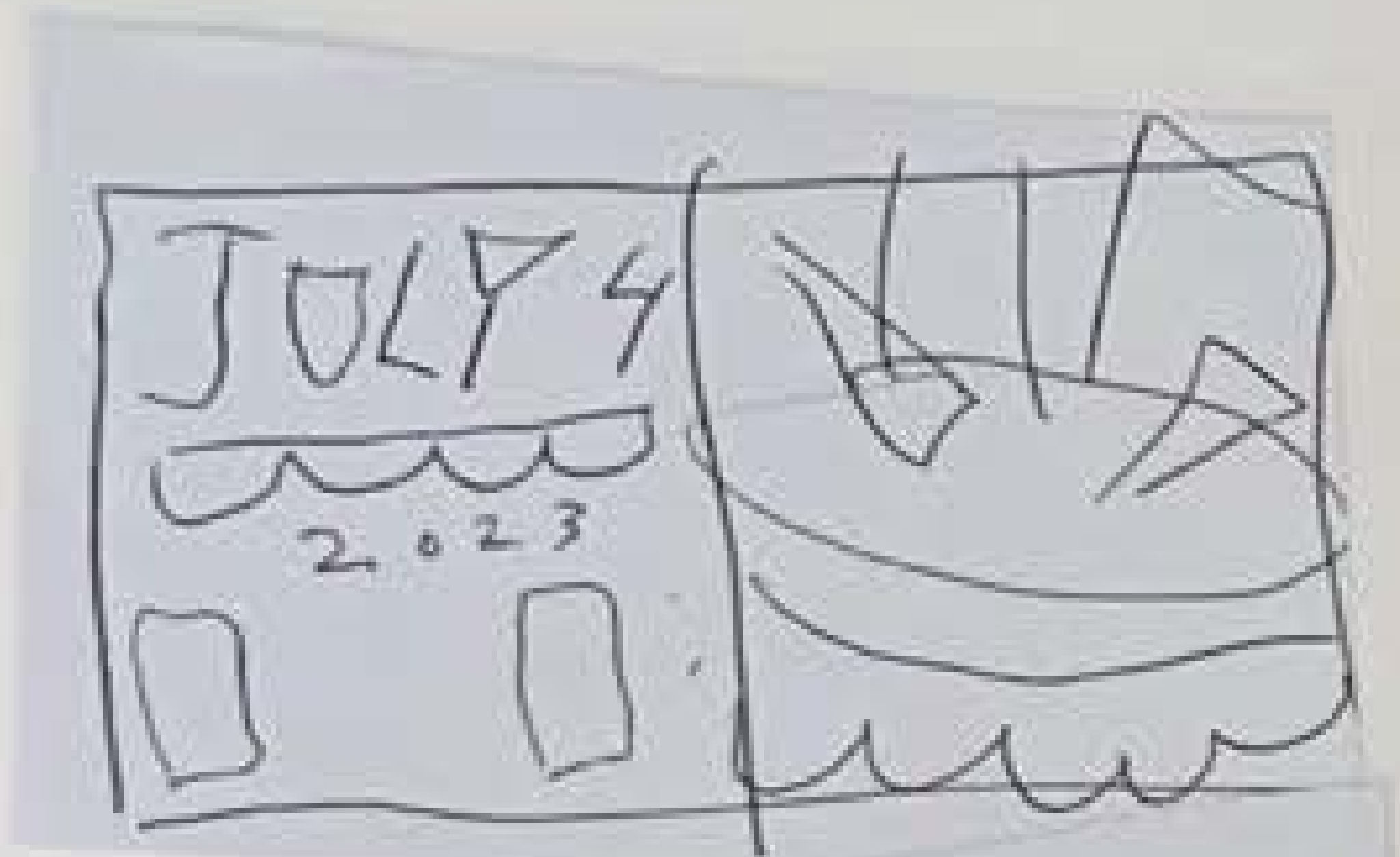


2023

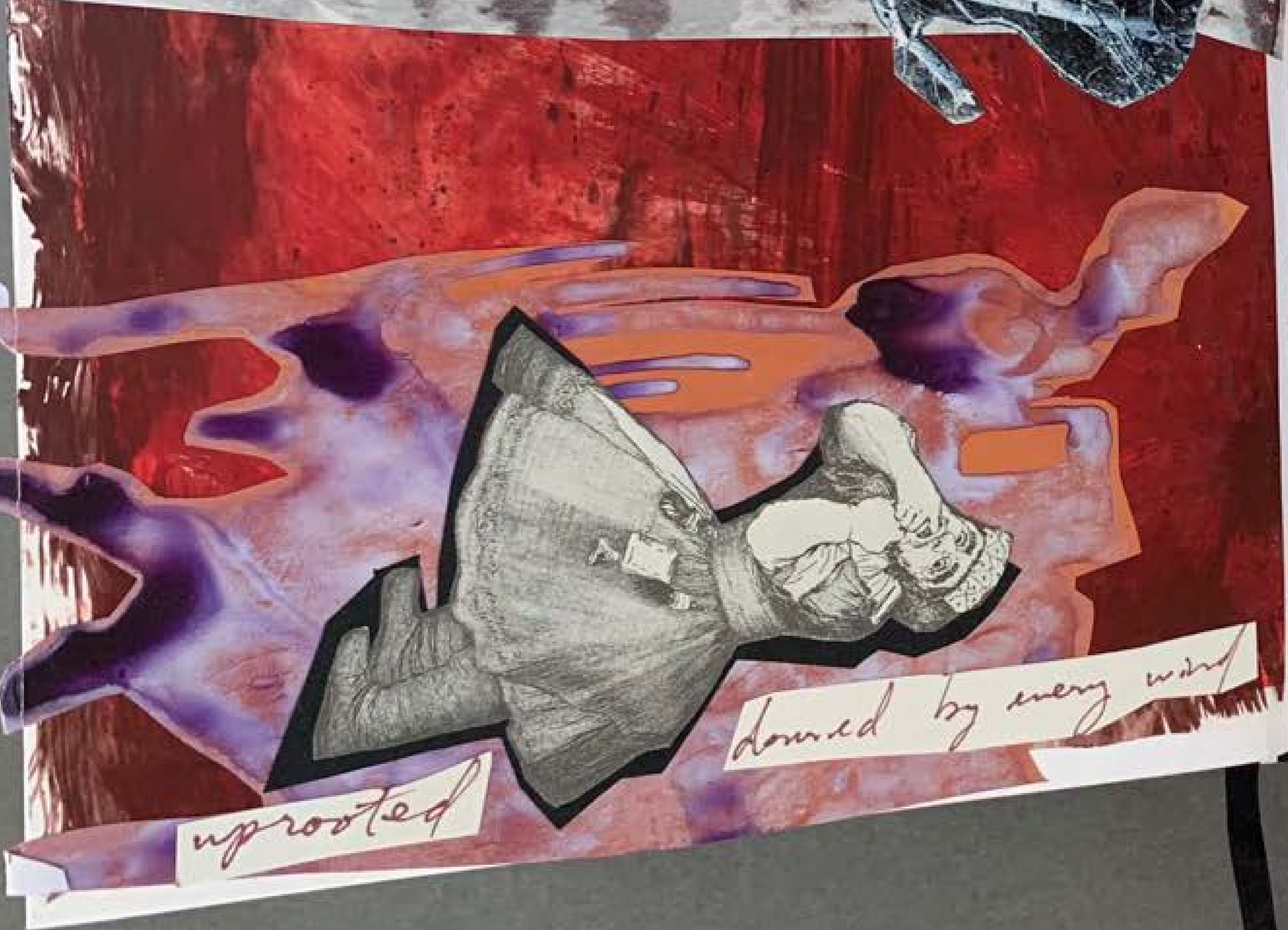


Left: Kelly and Janelle at church dedication.  
Right: John and Kelly on July 4, 2023





THIS

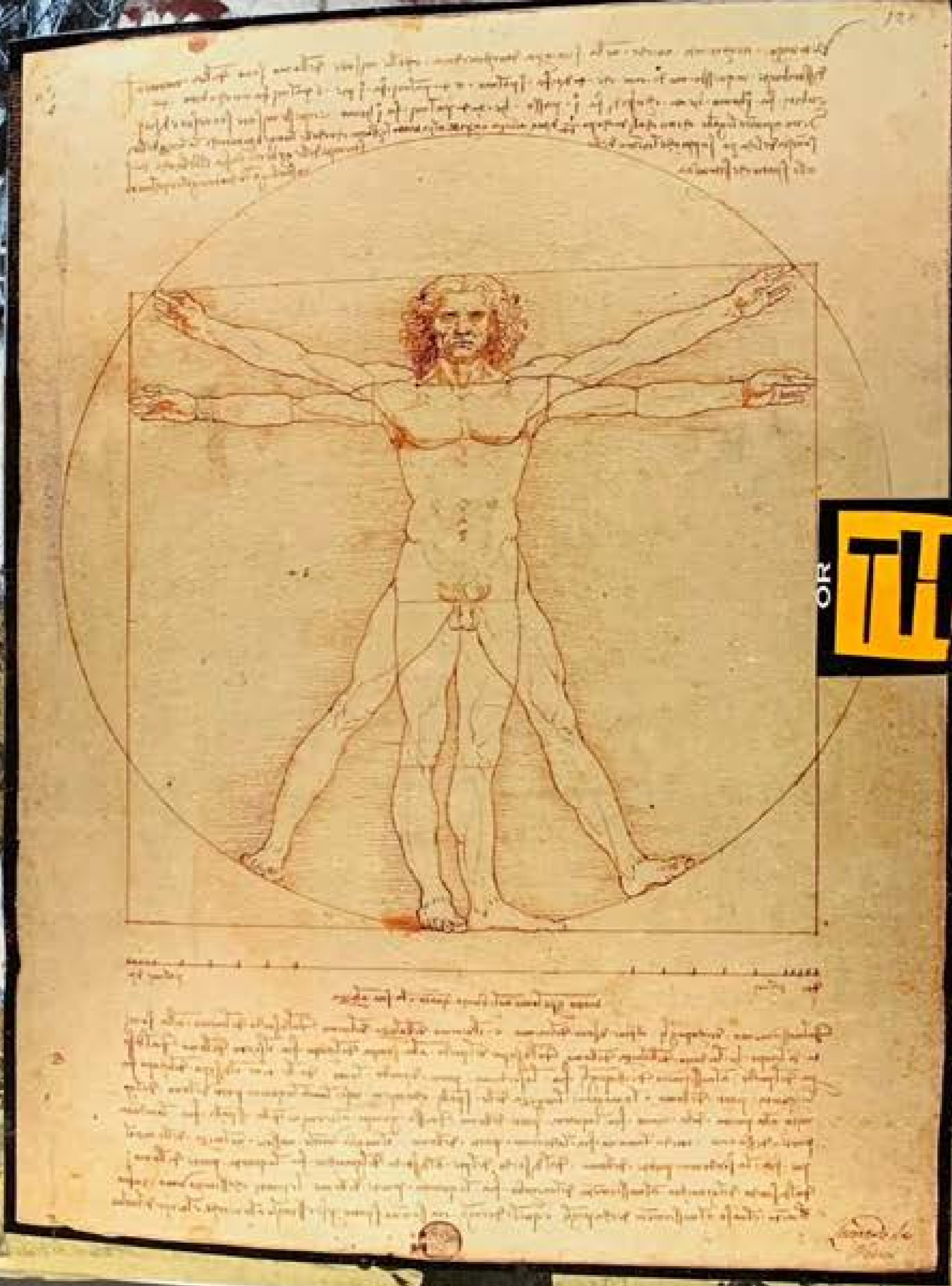


downed by every wind

uprooted



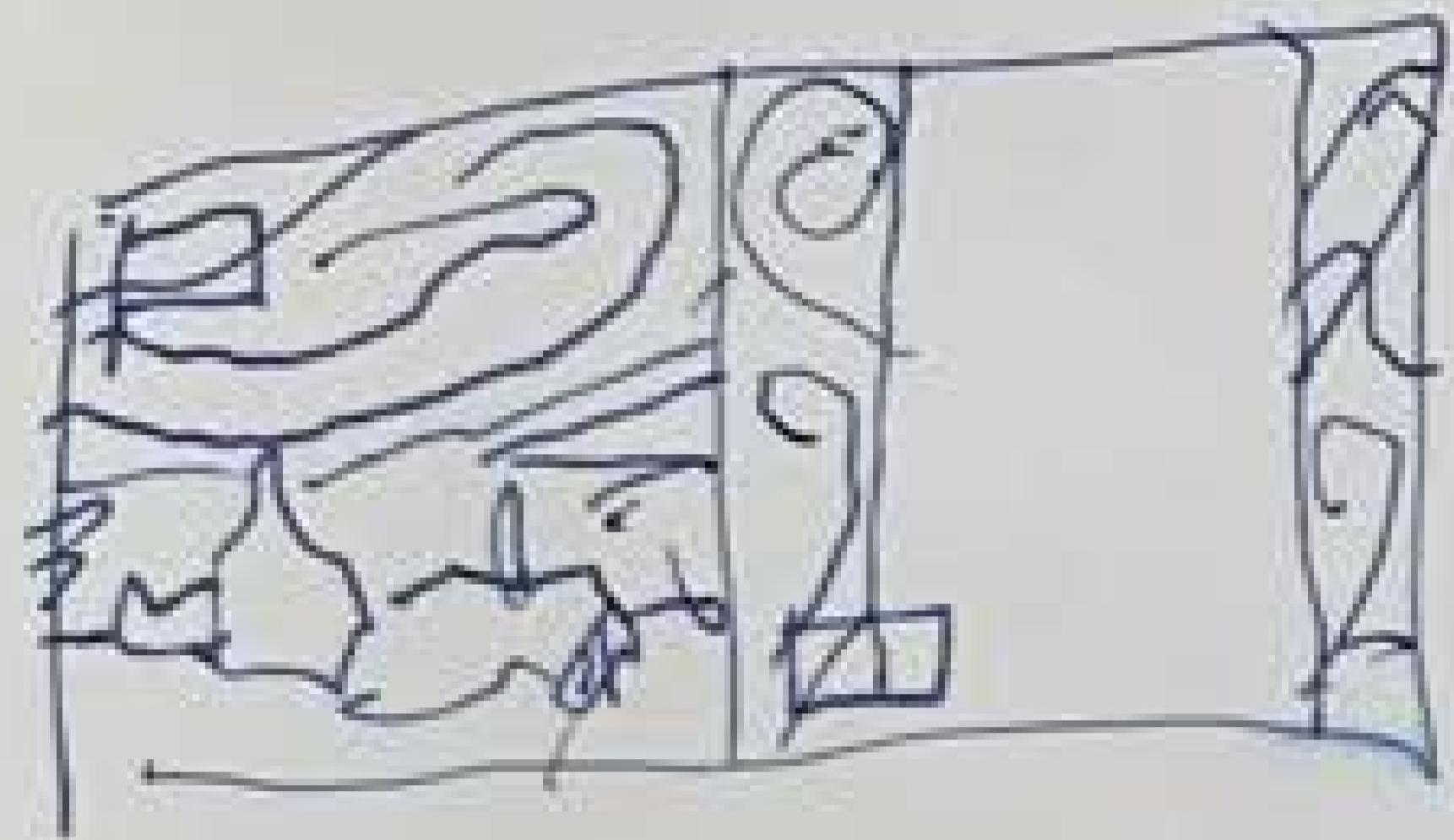
Stand



OR THAT

firm





Uprooted. Downed & Damaged  
by every storm?  
Every wind?



oR:

Stand firm.



the gift shop, bought water cooling  
and came back to this cool  
and clean and quiet hotel.  
To rest. Watch a movie +  
to pull out this journal.

THAT

Overload of  
too much  
art - too  
much stimulation.

OR,

A shower.  
Clean, quiet +  
cool. Reflection.  
Deep. Rest.  
Before the long  
drive tomorrow.

It is VERY hot & humid here!  
and may be a 2 shower day.

Consuelo Jimenez Underwood  
1949

### Home of the Brave

2013  
Wire, silk, fabric, safety pins, and synthetic  
and natural threads  
Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art,  
Purchased with the Fund for Craft

Artificial flowers, safety pins, and small caution  
signs pierce interwoven graphic elements from  
the flags of Mexico and the US, evoking imagery  
from the border. In the title, Consuelo Jimenez  
Underwood plays on the lyrics of the US anthem,  
"The Star-Spangled Banner." For Underwood,  
"Living in the borderlands, flags become similar,  
blurred, often both nations seem the same."

### Hogar de valientes

Alambre, seda, tela, pasadores de seguridad e hilos  
sintéticos y naturales

Flores artificiales, pasadores de seguridad y  
pequeños letreros de precaución atraviesan  
elementos gráficos entrelazados de las banderas  
de México y Estados Unidos, evocando  
imágenes de la frontera. En el título, Consuelo  
Jimenez Underwood juega con la letra del himno  
estadounidense, "La bandera de las barras y  
las estrellas" (The Star-Spangled Banner). Para  
Underwood, "al vivir en las tierras fronterizas, las  
banderas empiezan a parearse, se difuminan, a  
menudo ambas naciones parecen la misma".



Howard Finster  
1916-2001

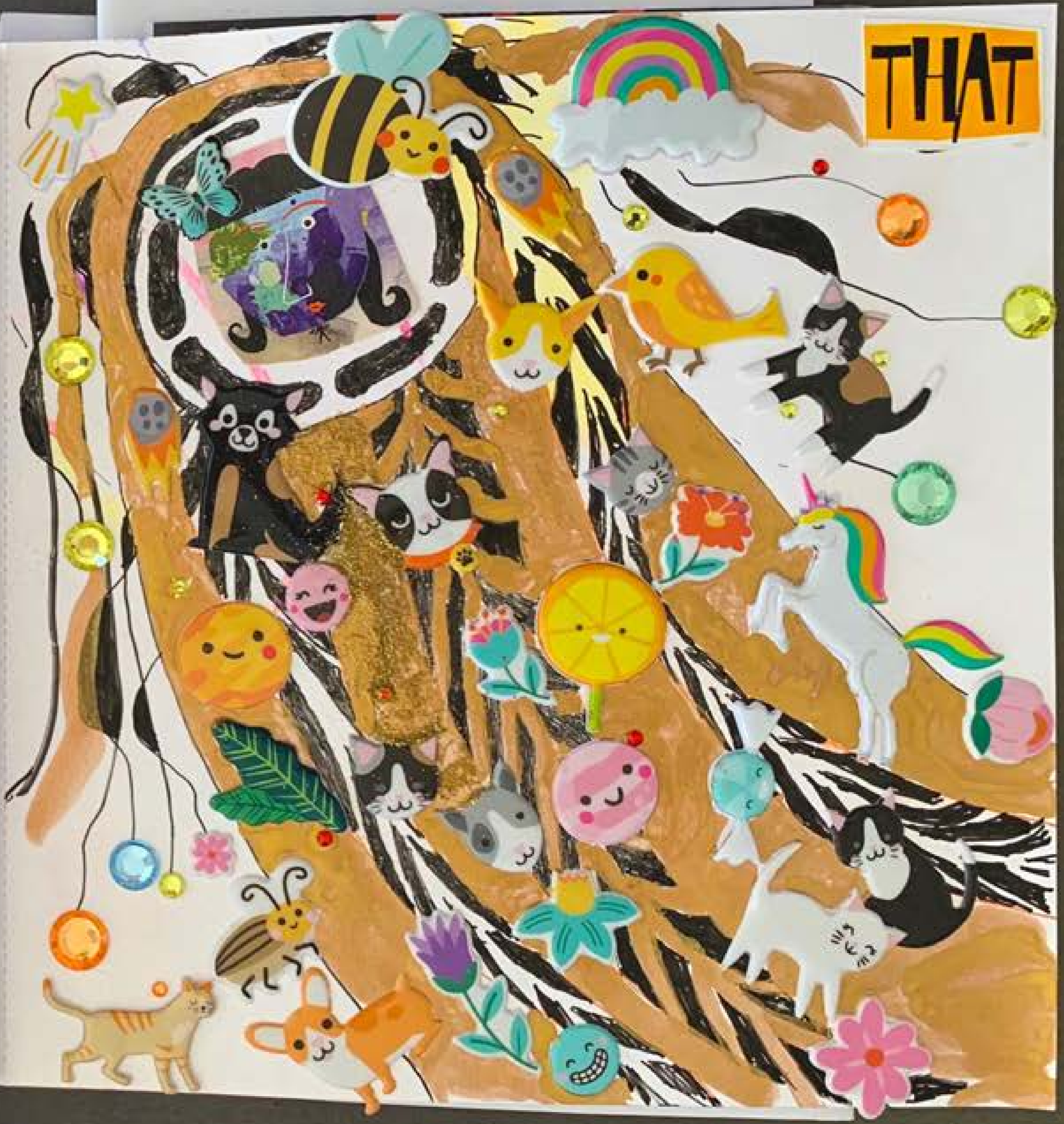
### George Washington Looked into Another World

1987  
Paint on board  
Collection of Carl and Marian Mullis

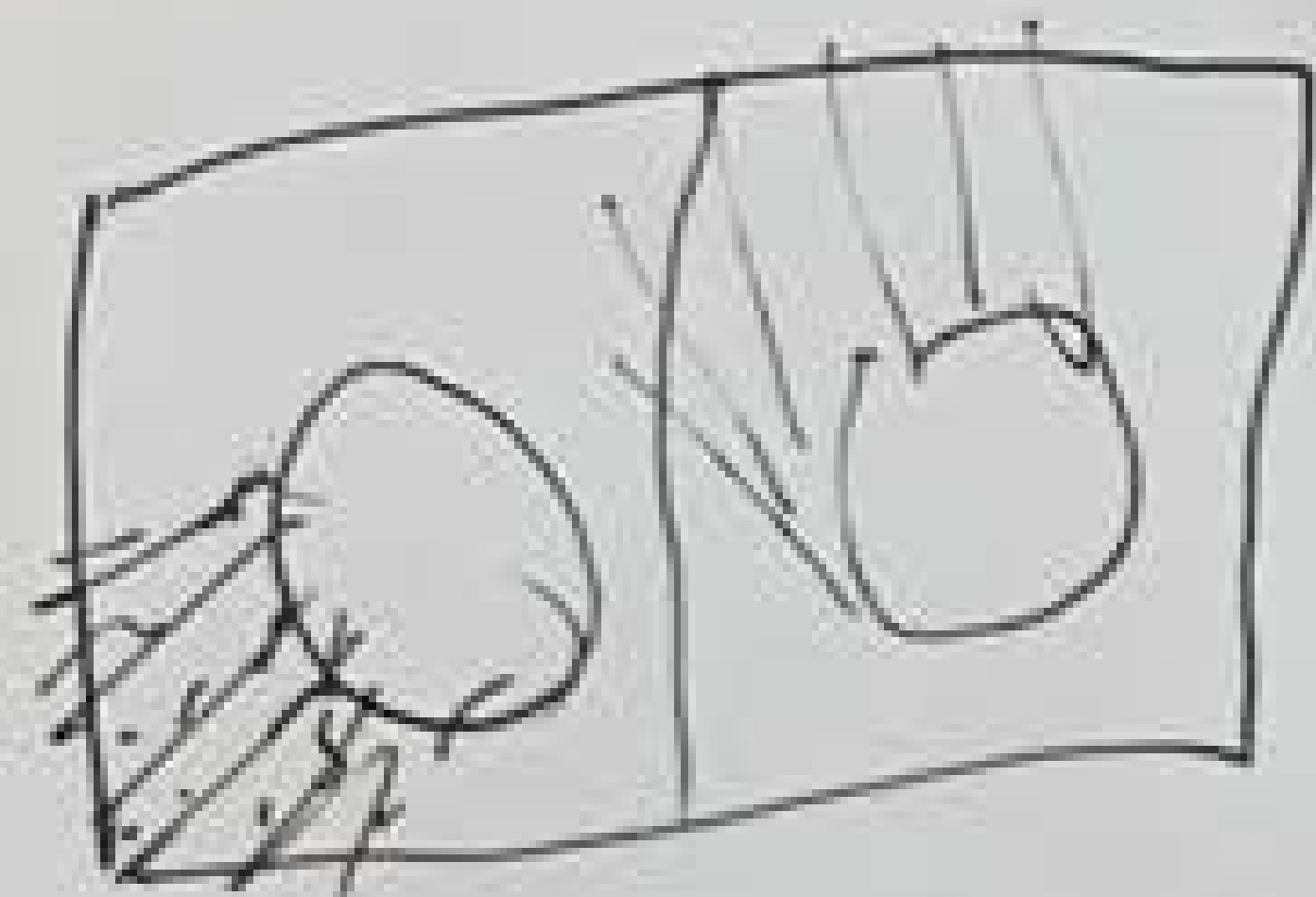
A preacher, bicycle repairman, inventor, and devoted  
family man, Howard Finster had a vision from God  
in 1976 commanding him to begin preaching  
through paint. George Washington was the subject  
of Finster's first painting and the artist subsequently  
portrayed his hero in a wide array of poses and  
scenes. In this painting Finster placed Washington in  
another world, populated by dozens of people and  
described in the painted text.



THIS OR

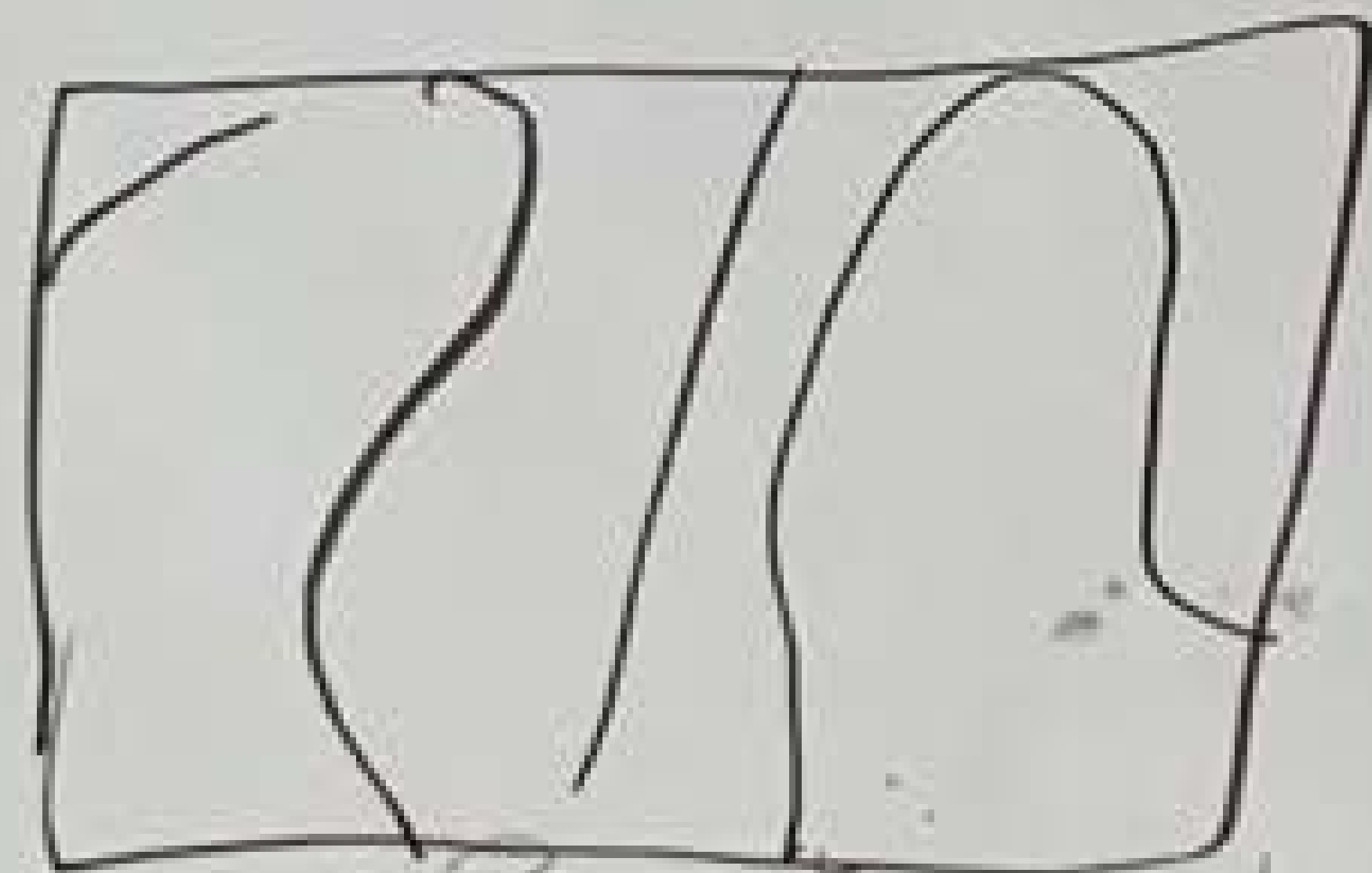


THAT



What do we leave in our wake?

Kind of a mess — make better



Fires to put out?  
Stop signs?  
Frowns

A legacy of kindness?

August 23, 2023

Kelby had his left hip joint replaced on Monday, August 21. He's doing really well - walking with a walker, eating & so far in good spirits.

I, however, am struggling. And whiny. And a jerk at times. A muscle in my back got strained somewhere / sometime in the early (4 am.) rising, the stress, the schlepping of groceries, stuff, the dragging of hoses in yet another endurance

fest of a summer. Resulting in sometimes short patience when the caregiver/cook/gardener/29 Picus leader becomes "just too much."

I experience that old familiar 'panicky-push-push' feeling and am determined to evict that unwelcome visitor and return to the state of 'calm, clear, quiet, cool.'

Have mercy on me. Help me to do that.

I pray for strength & health.

September 1, 2023

We've had several welcome days of -100. Relatively, that feels like a cool front. What hasn't been welcome is a highly contagious stomach virus that Kelly contracted from (I think at least) his Physical Therapist who came to the house last Saturday after visiting a client right before Kelly -

and this patient had the stomach virus. She's our only suspect for that contagion.

And Covid is back - almost everyone I talk to either has it - or knows someone who does.

Kelly was doing so well in recovery - then Boom. He was miserable for 3 days, now just slightly nauseous, but eating a little. He tested  $\ominus$  for Covid. So far - possibly thanks to Lysol wipes & compulsive hand washing, I haven't gotten it.

The Puerto Rico trip to the  
ICFAD\* conference is three  
weeks away. Booklet printed ✓  
Loving mitts printed ✓ Simple  
card to hand out ✓ Business  
cards ✓

29 p. Promo:

○ Several more posters mounted

○ Concentina? ○ One mitty per  
person please

Home work

○ Attendees + their programs.

○ Puerto Rico

○ ? to Alison

○ Will at Thurs day dinner.  
" " Friday breakfast

\* International Conference of Fine  
Arts Deans.

○ Will @ 29 & table

Breakfast presentation.

○ Do it.

○ Write people ahead of time.

Type all this up.

Grooming

○ Clothes

○ Hair cut

○ Facial

○ Make up

○ Shoes

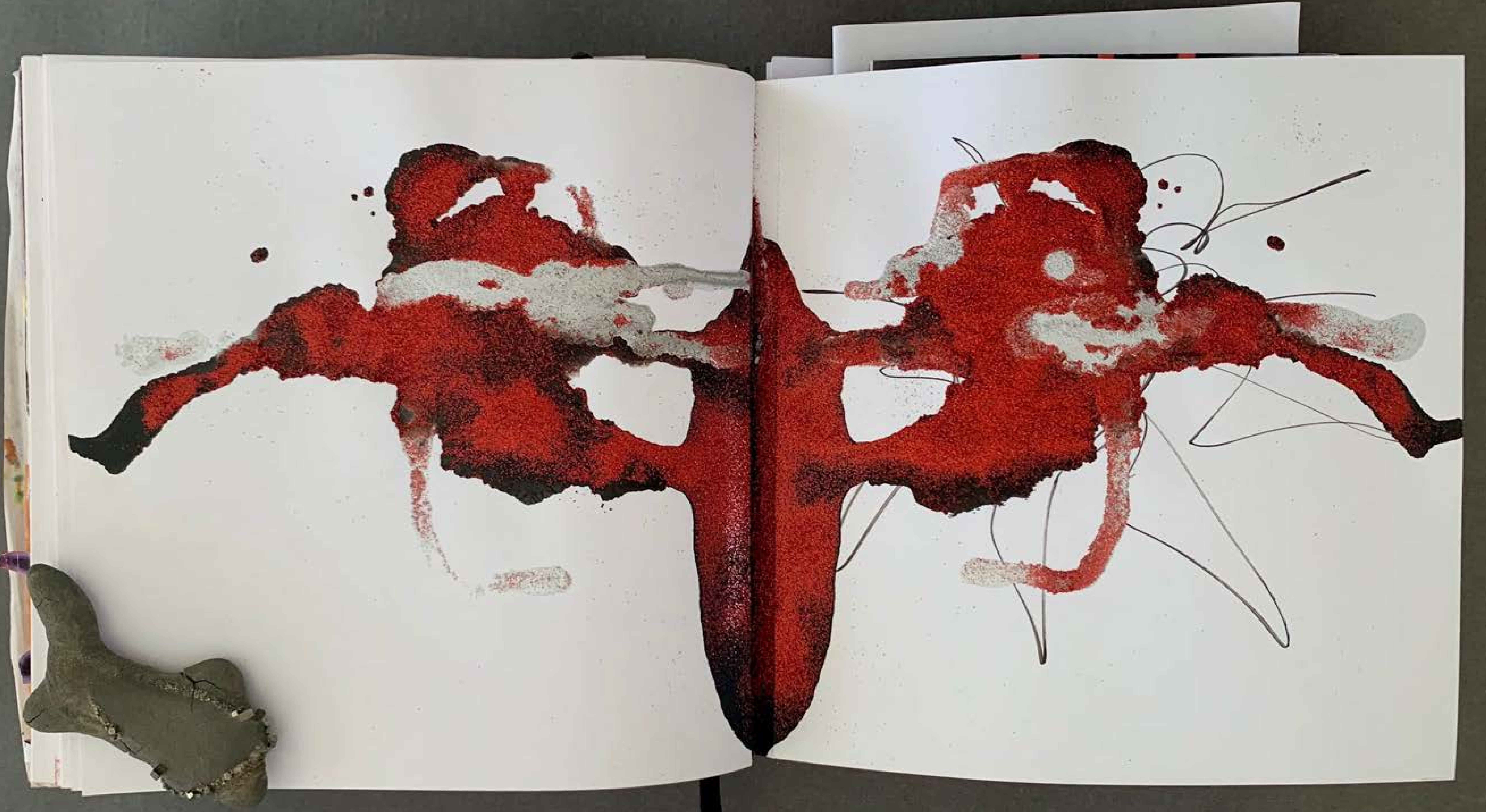
September 3, 2023

Kelly is eating again - small portions. He's a bit dispirited by the setback of the flu. One day at a time. My attentions + focus are frayed - I have to bring it back + spend time writing + concentrating on preparing for the ICFAID Conference in San Juan - and the 'why' am I going. What does this offer to 29 Pieces?

How do I <sup>wisely</sup> manage opportunity? Manage expectations? Put my full effort in - with the hope of positive outcomes. What homework do I do? Who can help me get 'schooled'?

September 4, 2023

Kelly calls this his worst day since surgery. He's irritable, scary, depressed, reckless. ~~He~~ This surgery has been hard on him - no smooth recovery this time around.





what looks like a fairly accurate depiction of my guts during this time.

September 2, 2023  
Monday was Kelly's worst day. He was crying out in pain - the past 2 weeks have been a perfect storm of

- (1) major surgery, (2) jacked up on steroids, (3) a nasty + highly contagious stomach flu, (4) violent throwing up, gagging (5) constipation (6) overuse of laxative (7) violent diarrhea.

Now yesterday + today, he seems to be stabilizing.

On Monday, I feared that we were at a point where I couldn't take care of him, and that he needed to be hospitalized.

But then, the next day, the tide seemed to turn for the better.

Will came over yesterday, brought flowers & food. We talked about Rizo.

This summer has been yet another endurance test of heat, Kelly's stress (last summer it was Janette's death) and pain, my additional to-do list, and end of year bookkeeping.

Somewhere this combination needs to change — and the only parts under my control are to:

get bookkeeping done month by month + focus on more work —

- Garden

- Laundry

- Cooking

- Kitchen clean-up

- Bookkeeping — month by month.

EVERY LOVING HEART  
deserves to be educated.



250,000 Student Participants  
In 24 States and Washington DC.  
More than 1,500 educators trained.

EVERY LOVING HEART  
deserves to be educated.



Sept. 2023

New 29 Pieces  
Booklet



Photo: Nate's invitation



From Dana

September 17, 2023

Kelly is doing well.  
Thank God. He's back to  
himself - eating, moving, money  
confidently, engaged + ready  
to ditch the successors  
of hip replacement surgery -  
walker, leg pumps, bedrest.

These health events'  
bring dramatic + un-ignorable,  
sharp reminders of 'this  
could be our time. This  
could be it.' Don Sunder  
died suddenly. Chris Candell  
died suddenly. Cole Porsick.  
Here one day + gone the

next. We are not immune.  
I felt ill-prepared  
holding on to Kelly, so home,  
to this life, to things  
that I feel still need  
doing. Unfinished business.  
And that showed me  
how much work I still  
have to do.

September 18, 2023

One day left in the BMLM  
Setu Retreat - for the 65+  
crowd. It's very rich, reassuring,  
full of insights from Eusebio,  
as well as the other participants.



Once the retreat is completed,  
I will gather my main takeaways  
and insights, put here.

#### Setu takeaways

2023

#### Explore Affiliate program

Lynn Johnson - the 88 year old woman at a Quaker community in Santa Rosa. She'd sold her car and talked about how she tried to be creative and imagine creative ways for that to transpire

Our career is our spiritual life. Our family extends to The world.

Focus on forgiving ourselves - and the light bulb moment when watching Easwaran's video.

We face stuff. "We use every challenge of old age as an opportunity to turn to God."

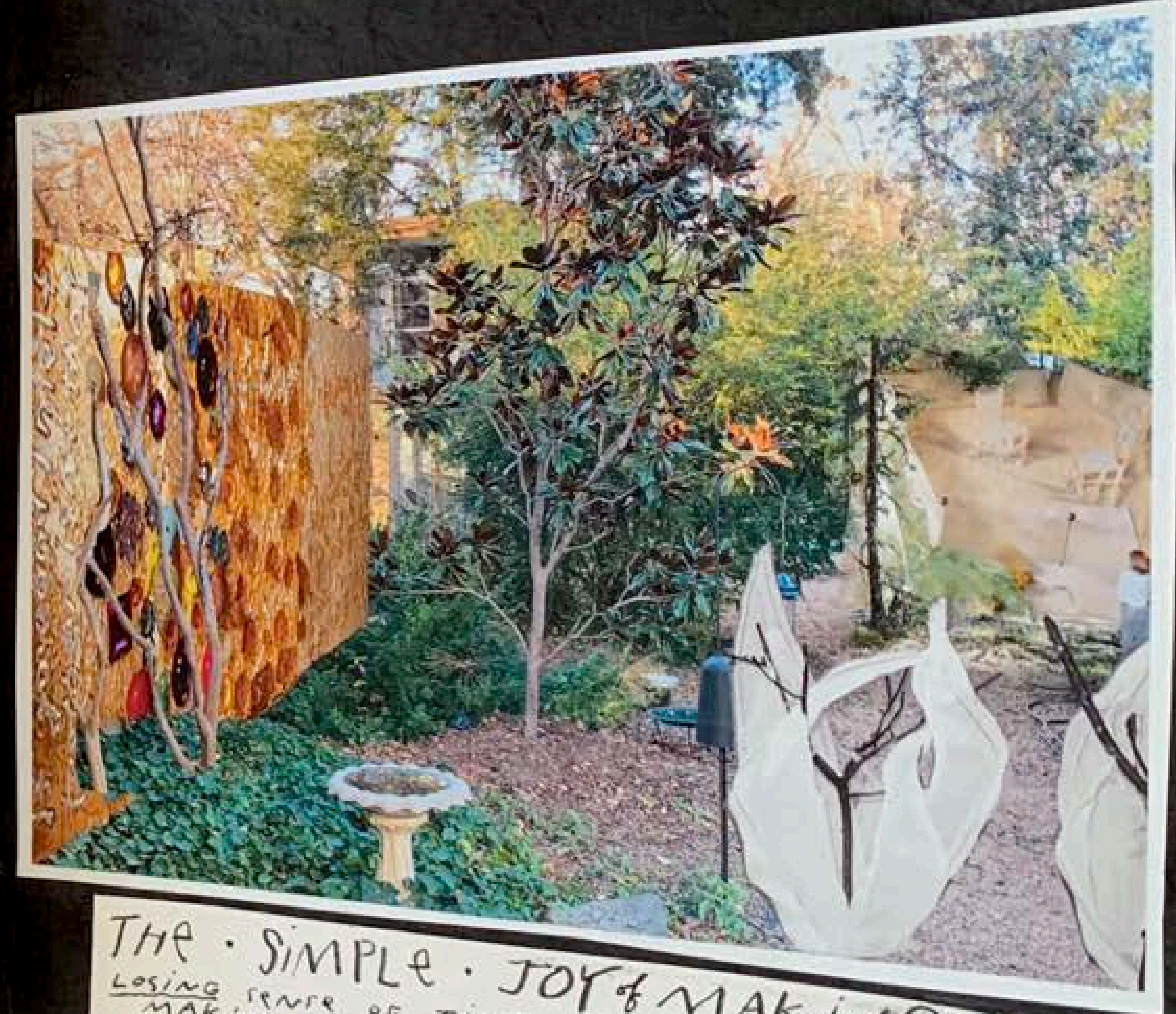
"We are ordinary, humble people. But when we practice the Setu program sincerely, as the body fails and mental capacities fade, our spirit soars and we become shining beacons to others. We call this 'bringing heaven to earth.'"

Have a talk with God.



DREAMS IN A DRAWER

THAT



THE · SIMPLE · JOY of MAKING  
LOSING SENSE OF TIME... SOPHOMORE YEAR...  
MAKING THE 29 PIECES MODELS... THE  
JOY OF DISCOVERY... OF FINDING FORM

Reflecting on what's going on  
with friends, loved ones,  
the neighborhood — the world

♡ Sandra (Johnson) had her  
2nd surgery for bladder  
cancer + will undergo a  
2nd round of chemo.  
Sandra is my dear friend  
from college — a soul sister,  
my favorite conversationalist.  
I pray for her health + peace.

♡ Karen (Sball) — my friend  
+ 29 Pieces cohort. Her  
husband of 29 years has  
asked for a divorce —  
no discussion.

Karen is "devastated"  
"broken." The layers of  
complication involve  
intertwined finances,  
unequal contribution to the  
running of the household,  
a daughter they both love,  
lines in the sand about facial  
perceptions of Karen's loyalties.  
A wrenching, sad situation.

♡ A former intern confides  
about an abusive father and  
pressure put on her — to  
be the breadwinner of the  
family.

What Grows Love?



Give Up Anger

Give up anger, give up pride, and free yourself from worldly bondage. No sorrow can befall those who never try to possess people and things as their own.

5.4.22 Those who hold back rising anger like a rolling chariot are real charioteers. Others merely hold the reins.

5.4.22 Conquer anger through gentleness, unkindness through kindness, greed through generosity, and falsehood by truth. Be truthful; do not yield to anger. Give freely, even if you have but little. The gods will bless you.

MISERLY  
or  
GENEROUS

What?

- Forgiveness
- Patience
- Acceptance
- Recognition
- Attention
- Generosity
- Honesty
- Loyalty

The rest  
spread in  
this book are  
in spirals  
by T.H.S.

The Brahmin

Cross the river bravely,  
Conquer all your passions,  
Go beyond the world of fragments,  
And know the deathless ground of life.

Cross the river bravely,  
Conquer all your passions,  
Go beyond your likes and dislikes  
And all fetters will fall away.

Who is a true brahmin?  
Him I call a brahmin  
Who has neither likes nor dislikes,  
And is free from the chains of fear.

Who is a true brahmin?  
Him I call a brahmin  
Who has trained his mind to be still  
And reached the supreme goal of life.

The sun shines in the day;  
In the night, the moon;  
The warrior shines in battle;  
In meditation, the brahmin. 4  
But day and night the Buddha shines  
In radiance of love for all.

Him I call a brahmin  
Who has shed all evil.  
He is called samana, "the serene,"  
And pabbajita, "a pure one."

Him I call a brahmin  
Who is never angry,  
Never causes harm to others  
Even when he is harmed by them.

Him I call a brahmin  
Who clings not to pleasure.  
Do not cause sorrow to others:  
No more sorrow will come to you.

Him I call a brahmin  
Who does not hurt others  
With unkind acts, words, or thoughts.  
His body and mind obey him.

Him I call a brahmin  
Who walks in the footsteps  
Of the Buddha. Light your torch too  
From the fire of his sacrifice.

Not matted hair nor birth  
Makes a man a brahmin,  
But the truth and love for all life  
With which his heart is full.

Of what use is matted hair?  
Of what use a skin of deer  
On which to sit in meditation,  
If your mind is seething with lust?

THE DHAMMAPADA

The Blessing of a Well-Trained Mind

wise OR  
UNWISE

As an archer aims his arrow, the wise aim their restless thoughts, hard to aim, hard to restrain. 5.4.22.

As a fish hooked and left on the sand thrashes about in agony, the mind being trained in meditation trembles all over, desperate to escape the hand of Mara the Tempter.

Hard it is to train the mind, which goes where it likes and does what it wants. But a trained mind brings health and happiness. The wise can direct their thoughts, subtle and elusive, wherever they choose: a trained mind brings health and happiness. Those who can direct thoughts, which are unsubstantial and wander so aimlessly, are freed from the bonds of Mara.

THE DHAMMAPADA  
TWIN VERSES

As rain seeps through a poorly thatched roof, passion seeps into the untrained mind.

OR  
As rain cannot seep through a well-thatched roof, passion cannot seep into a well-trained mind.

Those who are selfish suffer here and suffer there; they suffer wherever they go. They suffer and fret over the damage they have done.

OR  
But those who are selfless rejoice here and rejoice there; they rejoice wherever they go. They rejoice and delight in the good they have done. 12.23.20

THE DHAMMAPADA

see pgs. 86-87 in DKTRF THIS or THAT

TWIN VERSES:

"All that we are is the result of what we have thought. We are formed and molded by our thoughts. Those whose minds are shaped by selfish thoughts cause misery when they speak or act. Sorrows roll over them as the wheels of a cart roll over the tracks of the bullock that draws it."

"She has completed her voyage"

THE DHAMMAPADA  
Twin Verses

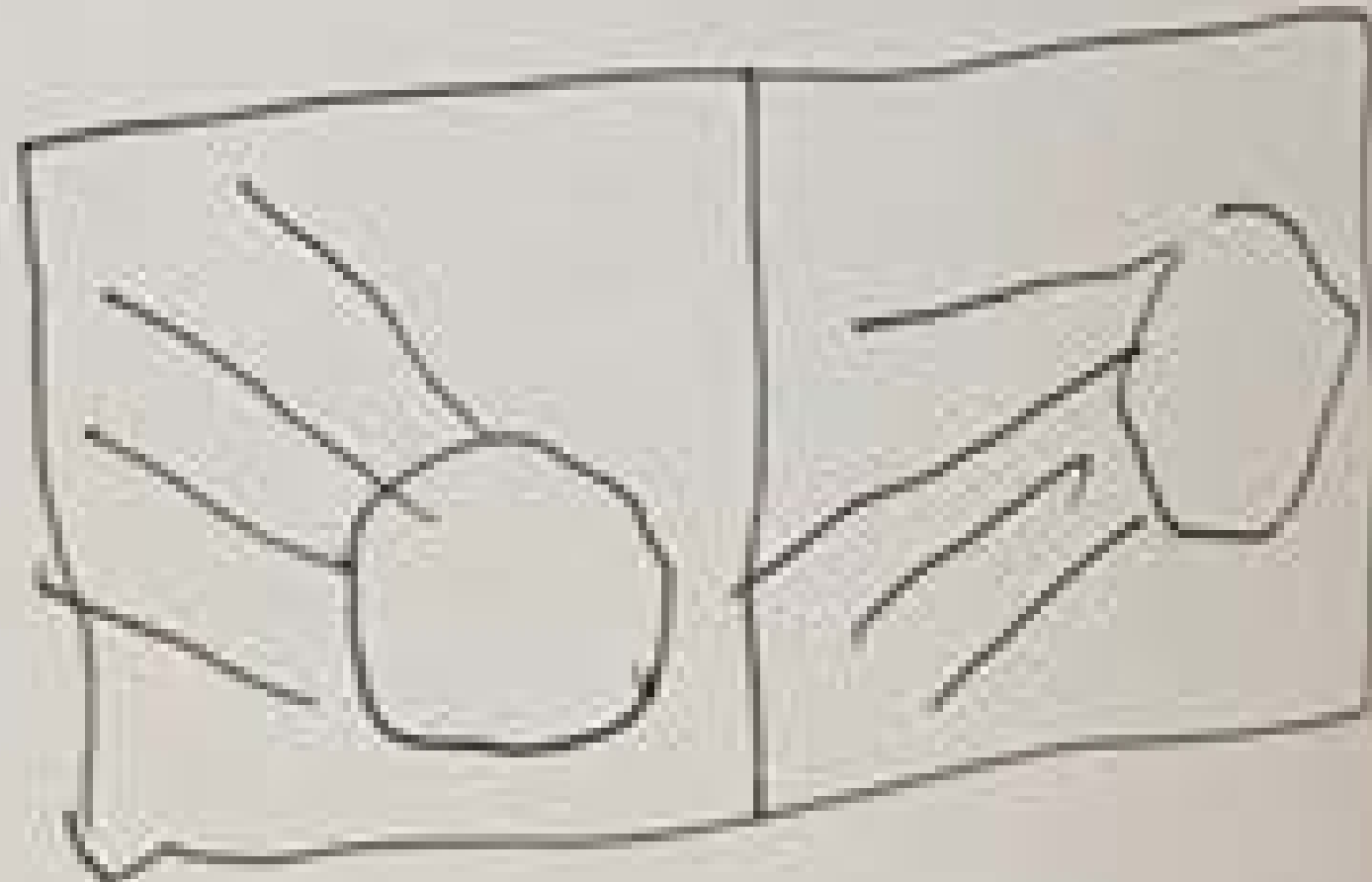
MISERY MIND      JOY MIND

12.22.20

All that we are is the result of what we have thought: we are formed and molded by our thoughts. Those whose minds are shaped by selfish thoughts cause misery when they speak or act. Sorrows roll over them as the wheels of a cart roll over the tracks of the bullock that draws it.

12.22.20

All that we are is the result of what we have thought: we are formed and molded by our thoughts. Those whose minds are shaped by selfless thoughts give joy whenever they speak or act. Joy follows them like a shadow that never leaves them.



THIS or THAT

DHAMMAPADA

The SAINT:  
"He has gone beyond sorrow. The fetters of life have fallen from her, and she lives in full freedom."

That Freedom fall away  
Fetters

"They make holy wherever they dwell in village or forest, on land or at sea. With their senses at peace and minds full of joy, they make the forests holy."

This Inevitable Images that portray Holy. Joy; Sacred.  
That Holy Mind.

Those who live only for pleasure, who eat intemperately, who are lazy and weak and lack control over their senses, are like a tree with shallow roots. As a strong wind uproots such a tree, Mara the Tempter will throw such a person down.

THIS

Twin Verse



OR THAT

But those who live without looking for pleasure, who eat temperately and control their senses, who are persevering and firm in faith, are like a mountain. As a strong wind cannot uproot a mountain, Mara cannot throw such a person down.

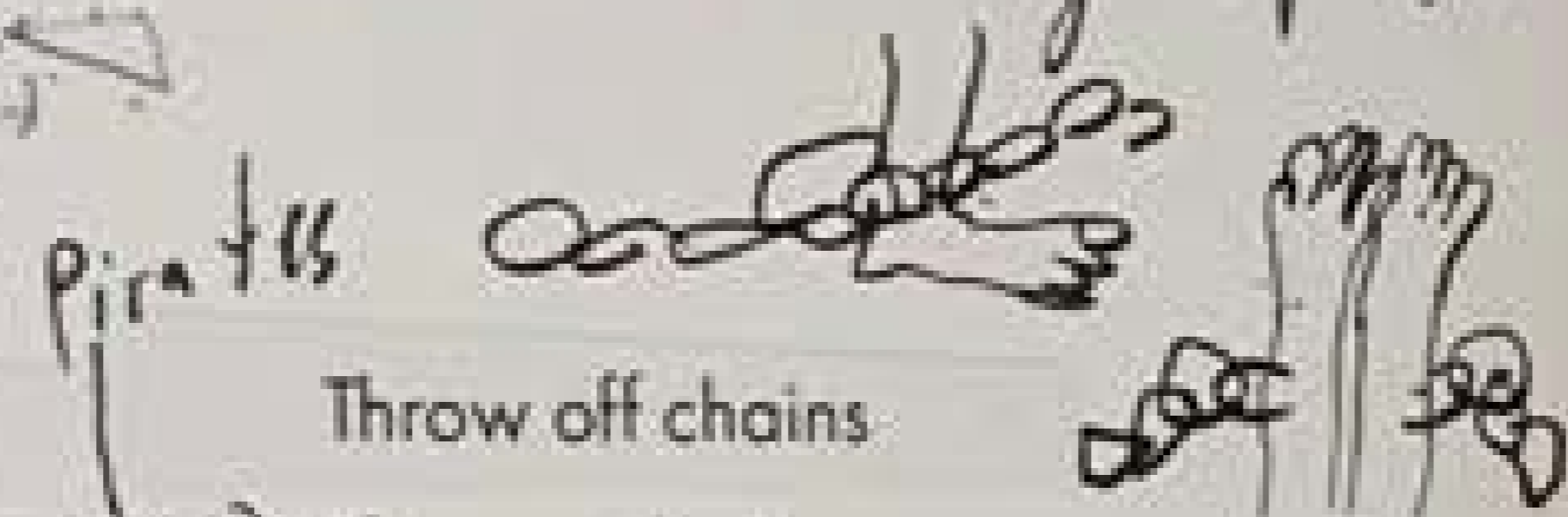
# THIS OR THAT JOURNAL

## VISUAL ELEMENTS

Fragments - a world of fragments



Broken THINGS  
CHAINS  
LITTLE BOAT  
could be a styled photo.



Throw off chains

The River

Difficulties in between



Lighthouse  
The little boat

All fetters fall away (chain or manacles used to restrain a person - usually at the ankles)

Free from bondage



Chains of fear

Radiance of love



SCREEN  
MOSAIC  
BURNT  
THING  
DIRTY  
THING  
FLOWER

Day  
night



The sun

Shine like the sun



The moon

Shed evil



Rising above the duality of the world



Give or get? Presents, stuff



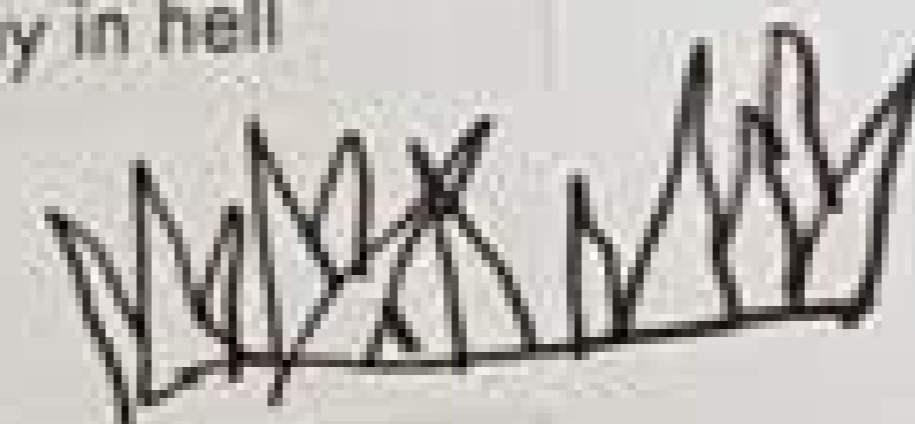
Stay in hell

IMAGE:  
BEAUTY, HORROR

Beauty

Pain

Shine like the moon with no clouds



Find heaven



An impure mind



Bitter fruit

A mind from which sorrow and self will are banished



Light our torch from the fire of an illumined one's sacrifice.

PHOTOS:  
GANDHI  
OTHERS



Walk in the footsteps of the light



Mustard seed on a needle

CREATE CHARACTERS



No more sorrow

A force for good

Water on a lotus leaf

BLOSSOMS  
NEEDLES  
LITTLE STUFF  
KEYS



Cause sorrow

Training of the mind and senses




THIS OR THAT

• Performance or Mastery.  
Ignore those things that are tasked to me? OR Engage with them. Attain what is unattained, master what is unmastered, realize what is unrealized?

• Contentment or Responsibility  
+I've done all that I have to do in life? OR I have things to finish?

Self taught or Teacher  
+Live unintentionally in inertial drift? OR Shape my life?

• Desire for extinction or  Desire for Becoming

Self destructive or Self expanding  
+Desire for oblivion and self destruction? OR The desire for BECOMING?

• If the fruits of selfishness turn bitter  
Then self-oblivion

• If personal aggrandizement is fed.  
+Live to get? OR Live to give?  
+Benefit one - or no one? OR Benefit all?  
Then: the higher it flames.

• Base cravings or for personal satisfaction.  
Mobilize energy to attain what is unattainable, master what is unmastered.

• Cravings for personal satisfaction or <sup>vigor for</sup> spiritual growth.  
+Desire for personal aggrandizement? OR Desire for spiritual growth and selfless service for all?

• An act performed carelessly, a vow or not kept.  
Do it with all your heart.

+Sloth? OR Earnest spiritual seeker?

Focus broad - or Focus macro: the forest or the details of the tree

• Doorway to infinity or union thereof.  
Doorway to 1.0 or 0.00001. Or the infinitesimal.  
Doorway to a closed door. To stasis. To inertia?

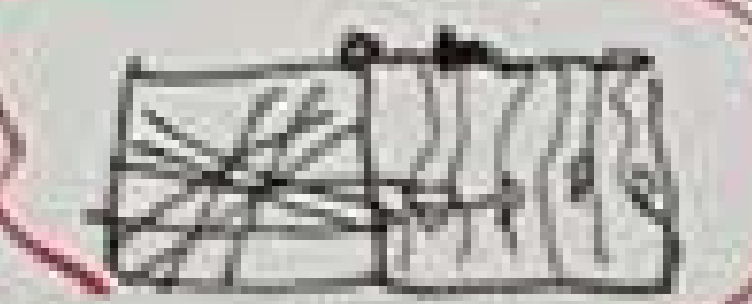
+Run up and down the shore of life? OR Plunge into the stream?

+Immature? Or Wise?

+A chick living inside the egg shell? OR A breaking forth?

• Being a magnetic force. (Selflessness, goodness, humor, kindness) or A force of repulsion. Like poles repel.  
Contagious grace and LOVE? +Unkind acts, words and THOUGHTS that hurt others?  
opposite poles attract

• Destroy life (unity)



Grow life (unity)



+Live in hell? OR Find my heaven?  
+Ask what life can give me OR Ask "What can I give life?"

• Fulfill the vision or Shrug + say "oh, well."  
Soft focus or Hard Focus.

Desire profit, prestige, power? OR Desire the greater good?

• Lesser happiness (pleasure, comfort) or Greater happiness (unity/fulfillment)  
+Yield to selfish desire? OR Defy it?

• Action for outcomes or Action for the process  
Unintentional floating.

• The path or Uphold the unity of life  
or Disrupt/destroy the order + unity of life.  
+The Pleasant? OR Immature impostor

• True elder, Truthful, virtuous, gentle, Kind or elder impostor ignorant.

+A brain polluted by impure thought? OR A brain impervious to pollution, that filters out the negative or doesn't allow it in, or immediately transforms or neutralizes it to something positive.

contentment, peace, joy, and mastery  
• Finish what you started or Abandon what's been entrusted.  
Live for oneself

• Live for the whole or One with all life?  
+ Separate and suffering? OR One with all life?  
Allow this: A mind poisoned by resentment + fixation on faults of others  
strive to remove these impurities

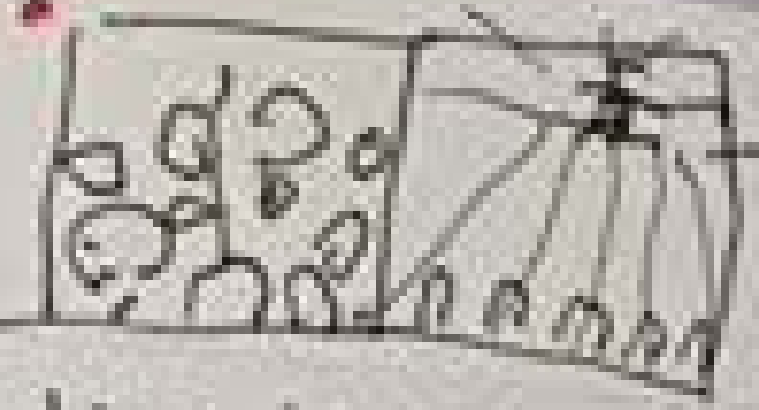
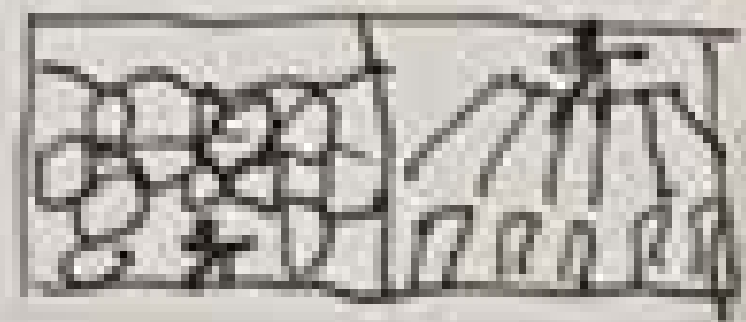
An impurity is any habit, mistake or foible that corrodes or coarsens something good.

It can eat away at a personality like rust corrodes iron.

A person who jumps off a bridge to end his or her life simply gets reborn to face the same desperate situation all over again. P. 232 Dhammapada

Which pain do we choose? Risk or Regret  
+A closed up, stingy heart? OR An open, big, radiating heart?

Quality: contrasts existing  
at once.



- + Anguish over the duality of the world OR Rise above it. Shed the anguish and just shine?
- + Another River to cross. Run up and down the shore? OR With difficulty, cross the River and reach the other shore?

FIGURES

GOYA/CAPRICIOS  
Japanese woodblock  
Beatrice Potter  
Larry Rivers  
Piero Le Brun  
Caravaggio  
Moses  
Magical paintings  
African figures

BACKGROUND

OZITSKI  
FRANKEN  
outer space  
Rothko  
Poons  
man Ray

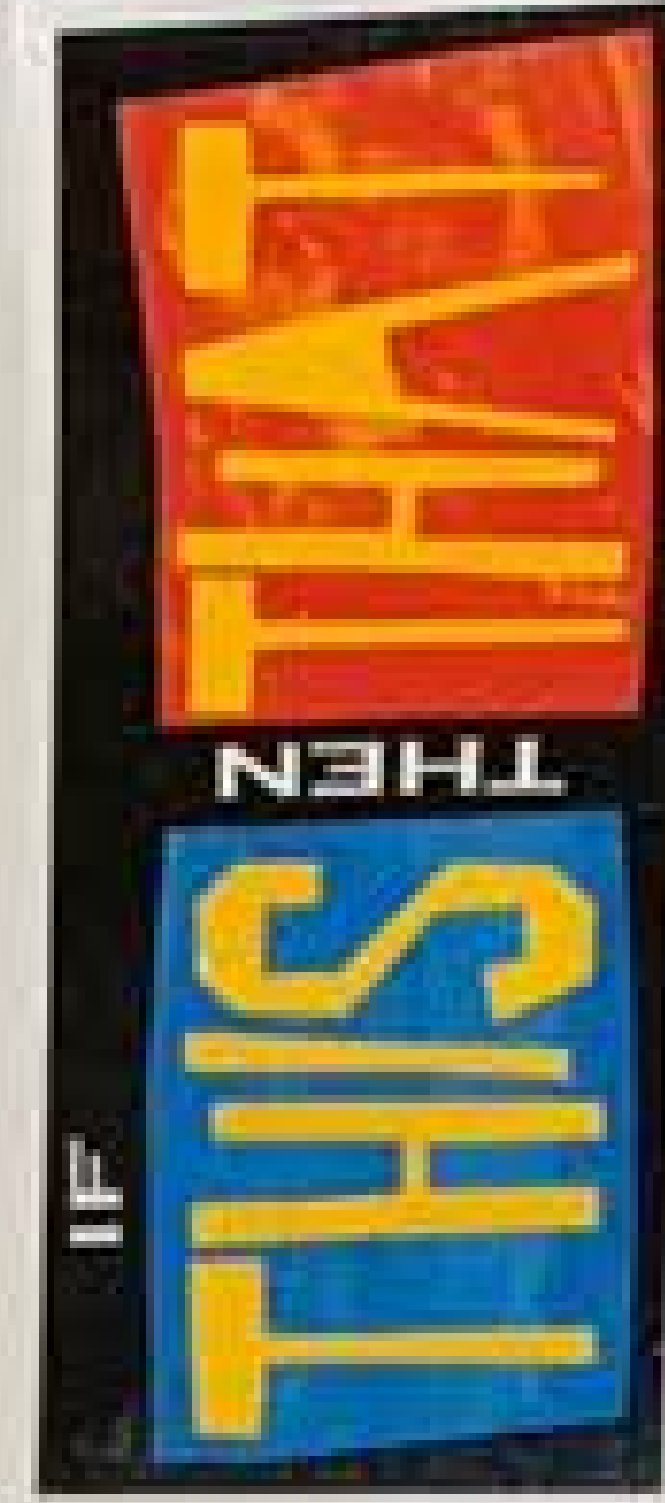
Elements

Fragments  
Broken glass  
Shards  
River  
Outer space  
Chairs  
Sun  
Moon  
Radiane  
Screen  
Dirty thing  
Flowers  
Lighthouse  
Little Boat  
Needles  
Keys  
Angus  
Materialistic



Lemons

Materialistic



She has reached the end of the way;  
She has crossed the River of Life,  
All that she had to do is done;  
She has become one with all life.





IF

THIS

THEN

THAT

