

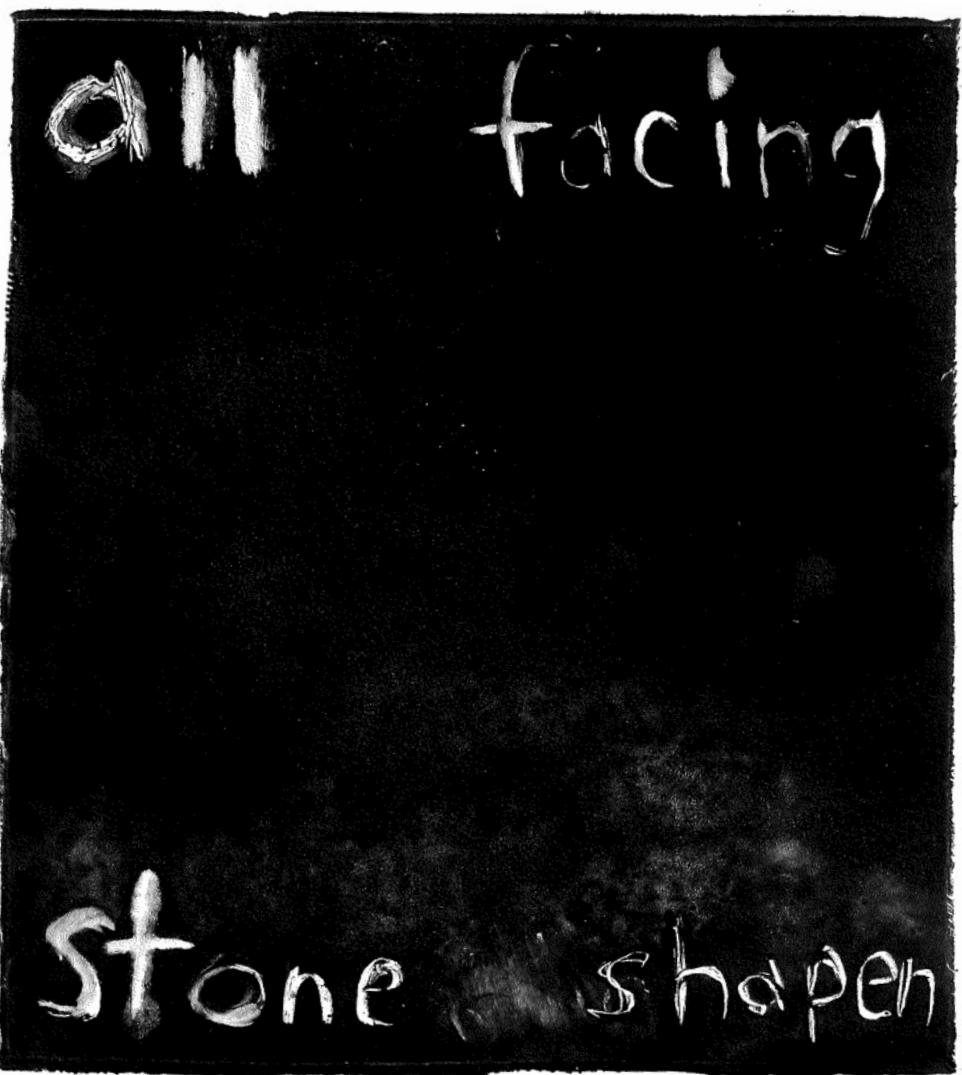


*For
June*

When I was a child I did not trust the world when it
sat between the sun and me.
Laying in bed my ears caught the most subtle shifts in
air.
I always thought there was someone in my closet.

The only way I learned to cope was by accepting that
someone was in there, and that I might be slaughtered.
I could only fall asleep after persuading myself that
if my most gruesome fear came true, it would be fine,
if not perfect.

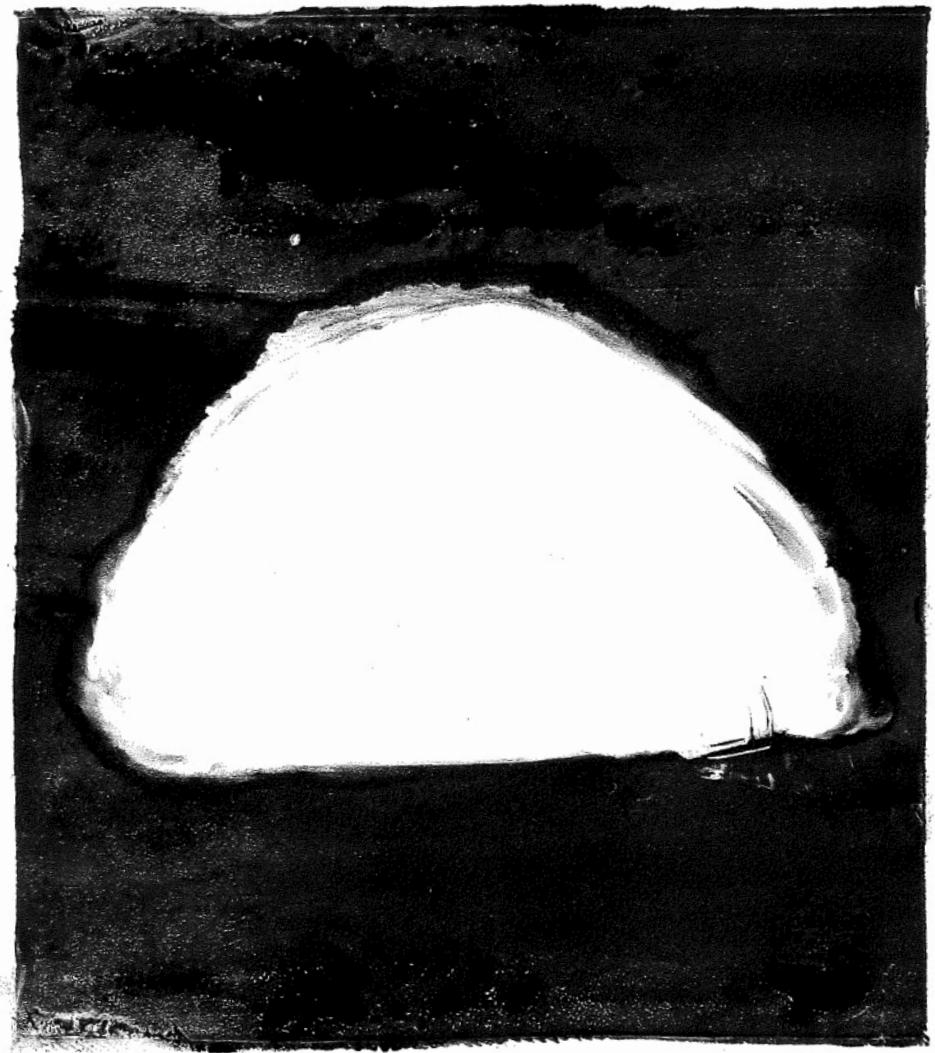
After years, I had fantasized about my funeral.
I thought, "They will regret all the times they
treated me as a concrete sack. They will want me back
so badly but I will never come back for them."
That's the most evil I ever was.



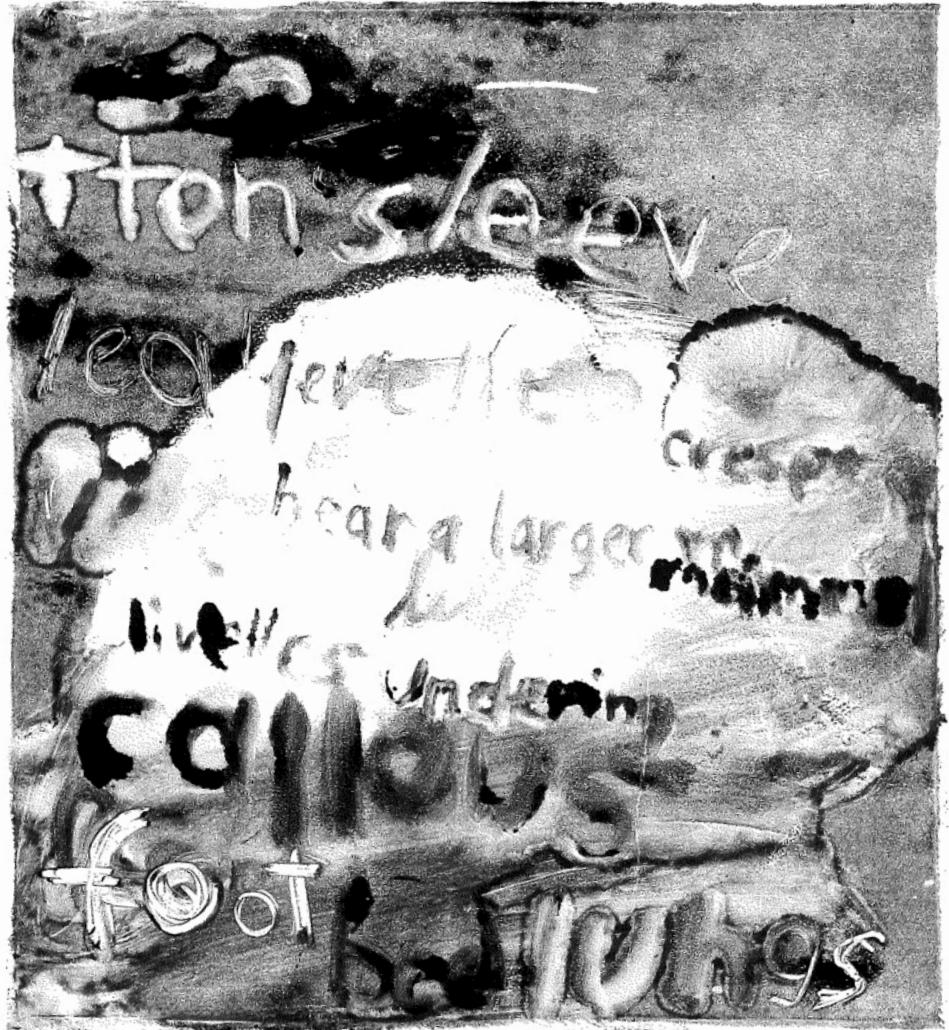
I can't exactly place the last time I felt that way,
but there came a moment when I found my eyes open
right as the sky was beginning to turn from dark blue
to misty grey. I rolled over in the bed sheet, and
realized that I didn't want to die. I was filled with a
sense of warm entirety that I had never felt before.
I thought, "It will be okay if I die, but
I don't want to die."



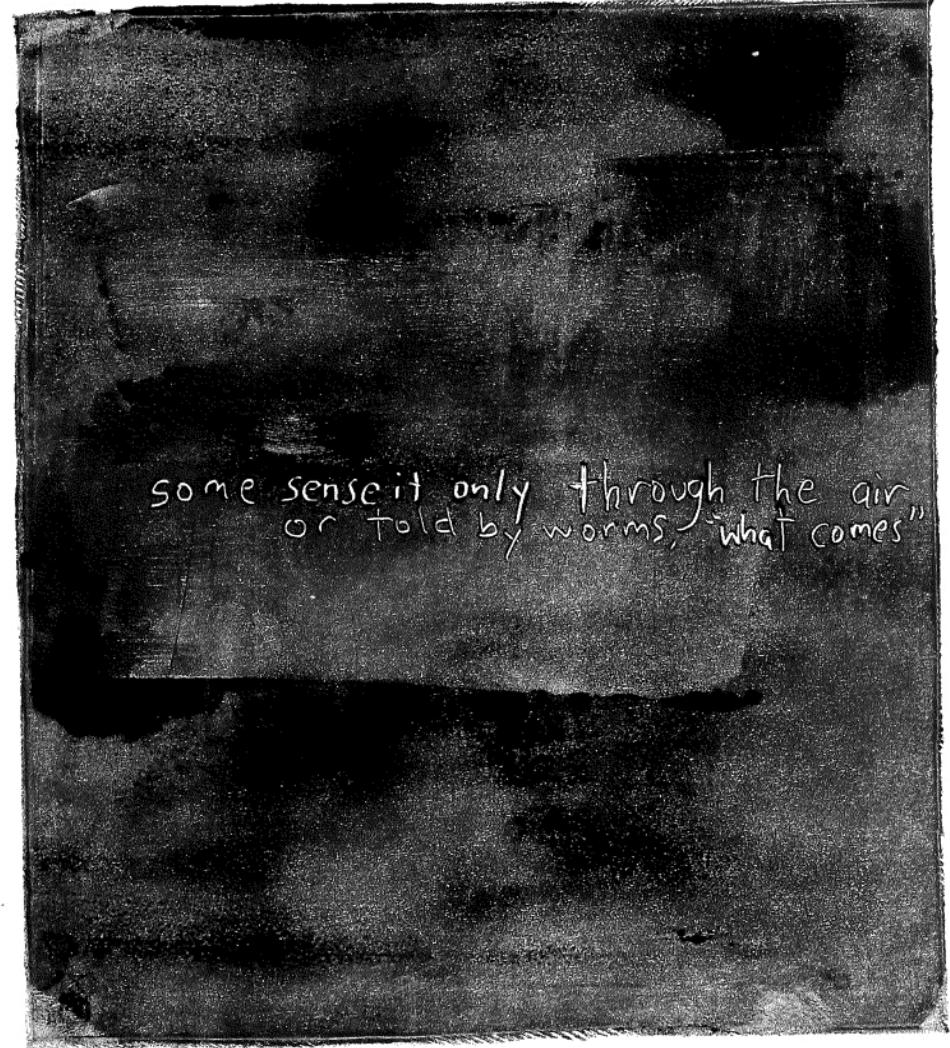
Laying in bed that morning, my body was a complete
loaf of very dense bread.



I was bored and got more curious about my fear of death and darkness. While my friend was slitting their arm, I was walking through the pitch dark forest alone, trying to go as long as possible without switching on the flashlight in my clammy hand.



I thought, "It will be more beautiful if a bear kills
me than if a human kills me."



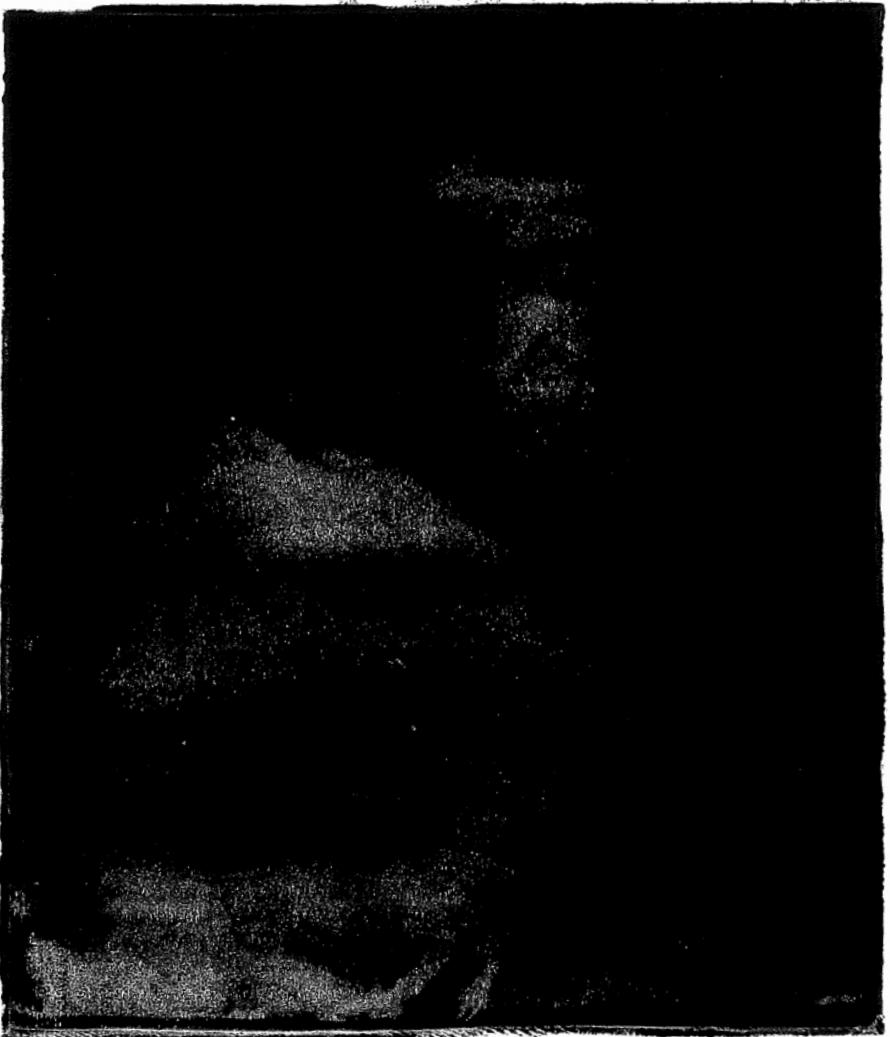
I found a moment walking through the darkness when my stomach was no longer screaming. I felt like all the organisms in the forest were holding me in their body parts. I let go. I had to walk really slow because I couldn't see the ground.

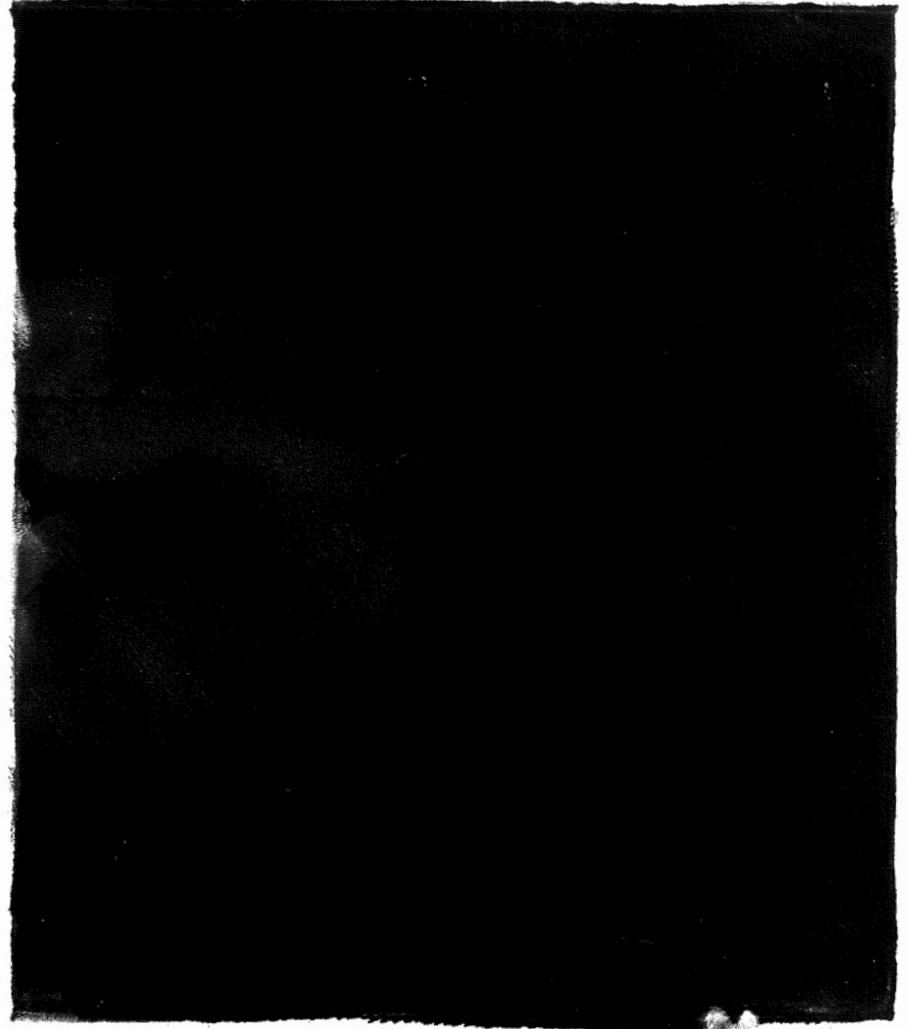


Poison oak
knew not
poison

Then arachnids felt / ~~in~~
their arm

I didn't know what was solid and what was air.





In college my haunter was the light. Night brought
deep relief to my eyes, which were sore from all the
piercing information of the world.

Sore from looking at images and at pages of letters
and at people's faces.

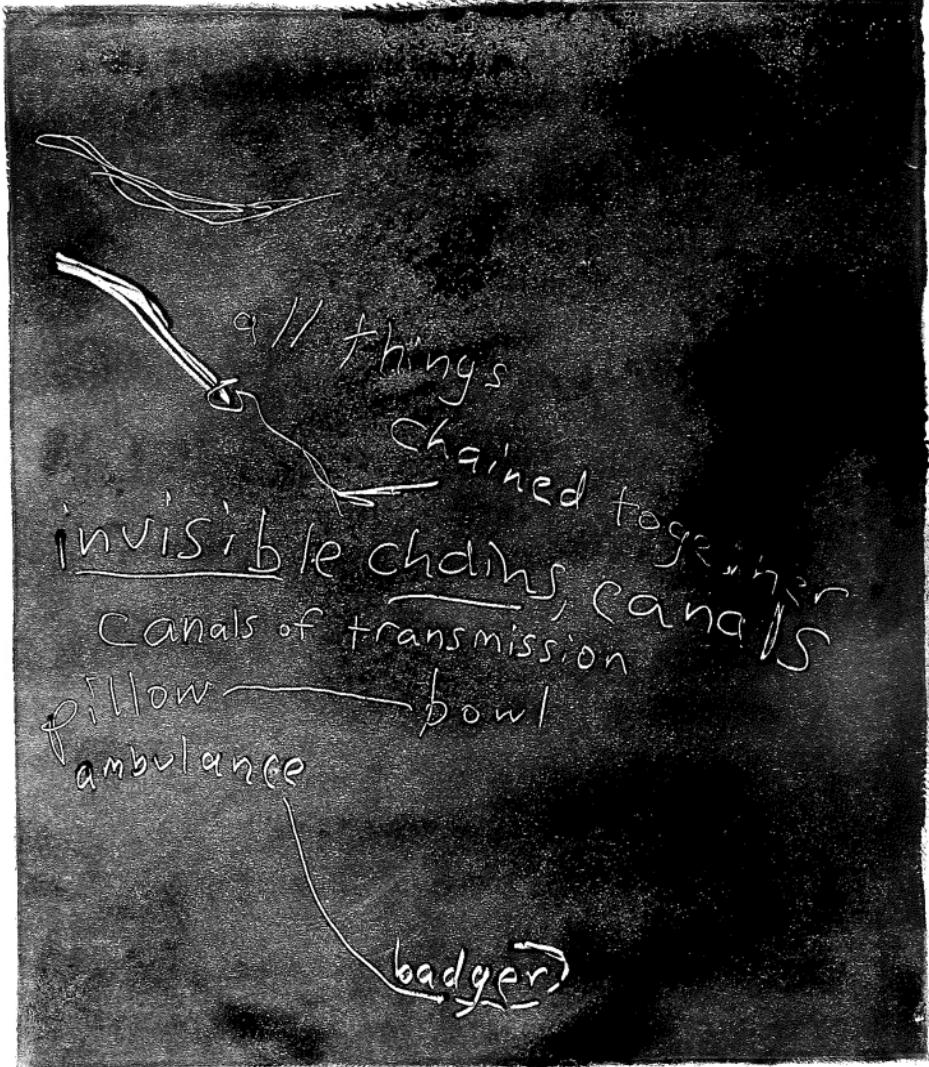
I saw an advertisement on the metro.
It had a big close up of a smiling face with very
white teeth.

You couldn't see beneath the person's neck.

I walked downstairs and a girl laying on the couch was wearing thick neon pink eyeliner only on her lower eyelids. The texture of her sweater looked chemical.

I was instinctively grossed out that I was instinctively grossed out.

I couldn't trust my eyes. Everywhere chairs or rocks or receipts on the sidewalk were twisted or angled to point at other things that were pointing at other things that were pointing at other things.
There was no end.

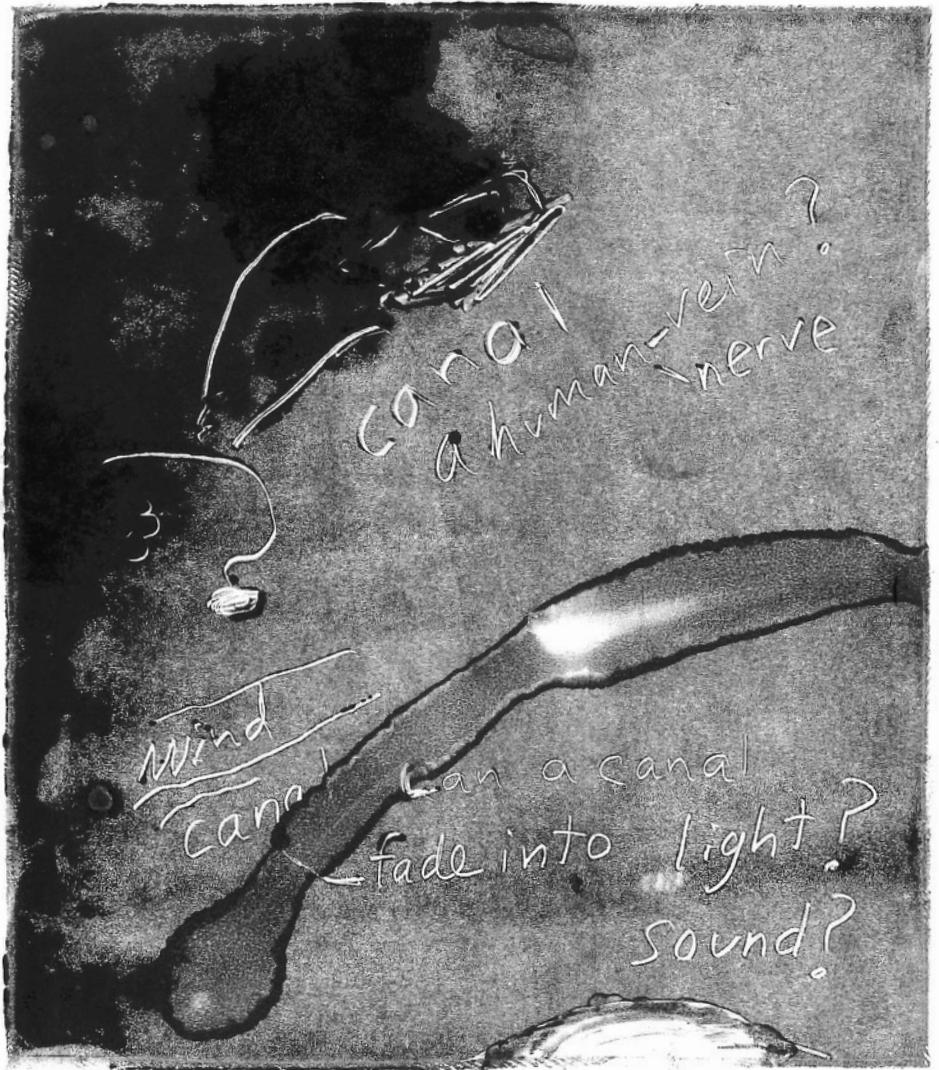


I couldn't get over the texture of the frozen dirt
beneath a fresh orange peel.

I saw a purple rubber band on the kitchen counter.

I couldn't stop looking at it.

I was stuck in a trance, holding the situation with my stare. I thought, "This moment is everything." I thought, "This shit means nothing."



I detested my obsessive fascination with colors, shapes, and lines. I found it incredibly distracting from something which I suspected was more vital.

Every moment in the world was screeching and scraping my corneas. The intensity of color, shapes, and lines was so exhausting that I wanted to go to sleep after being awake for three hours.

I started wearing sunglasses on cloudy days.

Everyday I forced myself to press through the aching
and everyday I got more numb from all the information.
Everyone around me seemed to be saying, "Keep your
eyes open."

"Keep your eyes open."

One day my friend was talking to me and her face
started jumping all over the room.

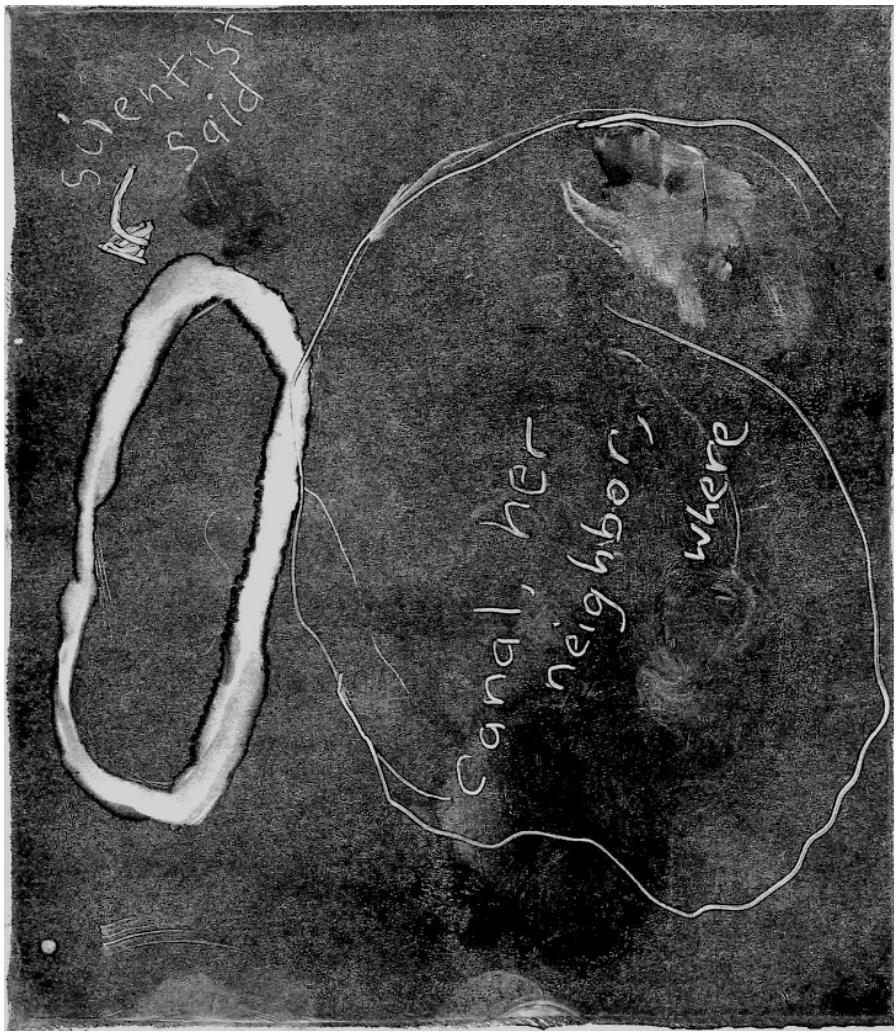
Stuff like this started happening more frequently, the more days I went on opening my eyes.

I was in college. I tried to read a book but after
twenty minutes my head hurt so bad that I had to close
my eyes.

I thought, "This will give me time to do more important things."

“Like walking, or sleeping, or fucking, or
drinking tea”

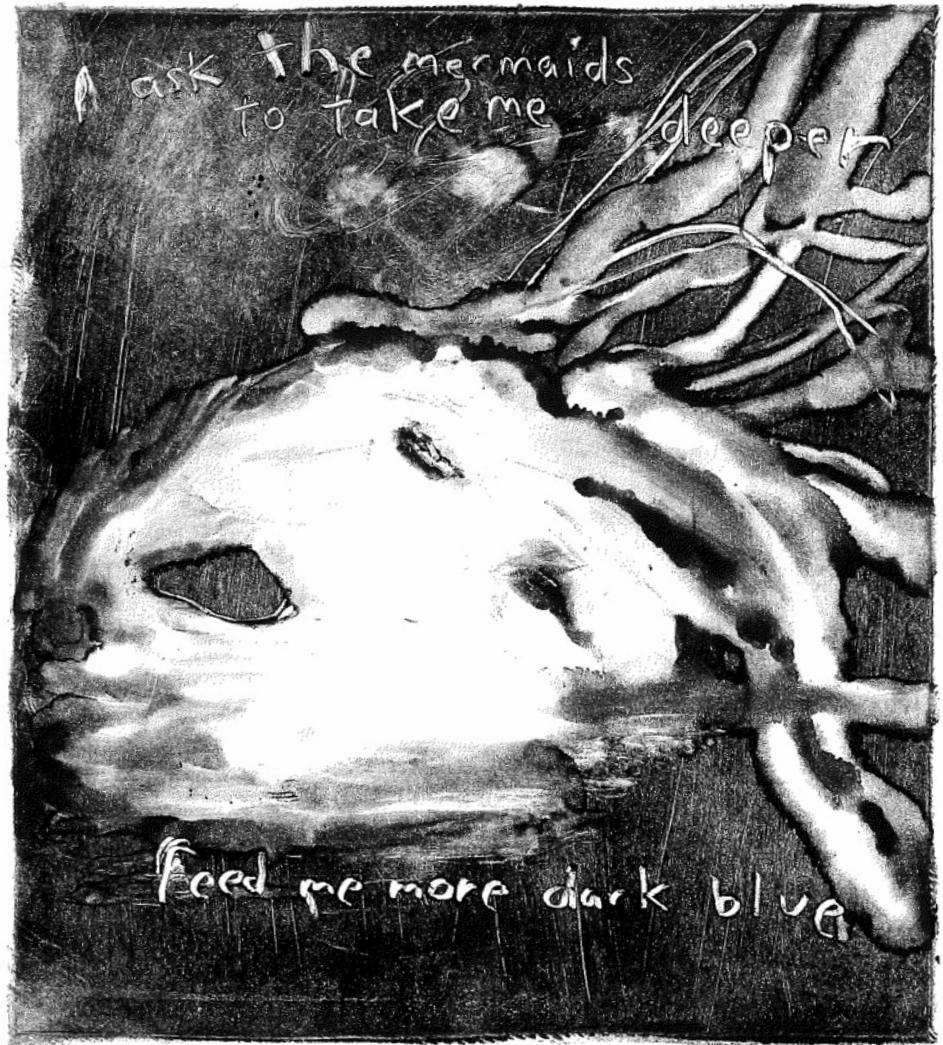
Paddle goes the puddle
through the marsh



I lost movement in my left eye.

I thought, "Dear lord, I know I should have listened closer to the aching." I felt special that the lord was communicating with me so directly.

I thought there was something more I could have done
to respond to all the pain I was feeling.
The lord was asking me to relocate to a cave far away
from any cars. I was disobeying the lord. I was afraid
things would get worse. I was afraid I would lose my
eyesight completely. My eyes hurt but so did my head
and my neck and my back. In my dreams, I could do
things without any pain. Every morning when I woke up,
I didn't want to open my eyes.
I thought, "The lord might give me blindness."
I fantasized about blindness.

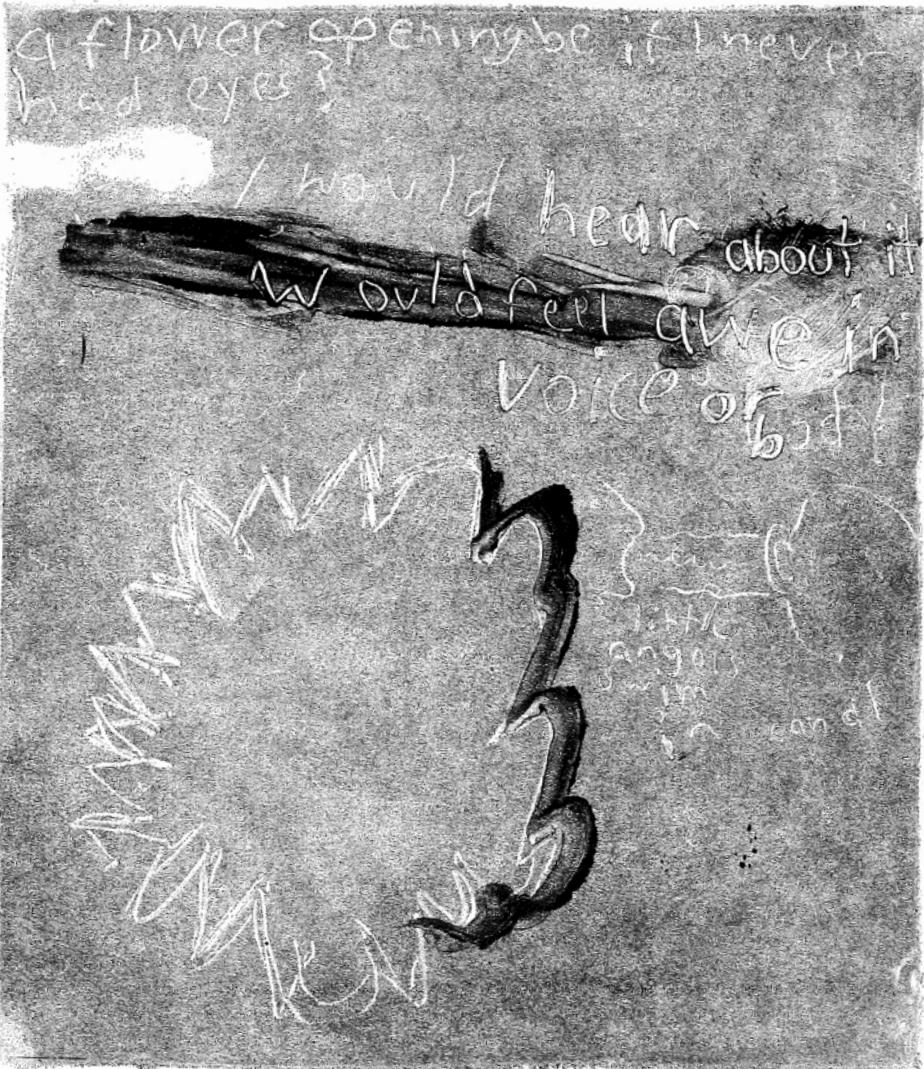


I wanted to be able to touch someone's body without ever knowing what it looked like.

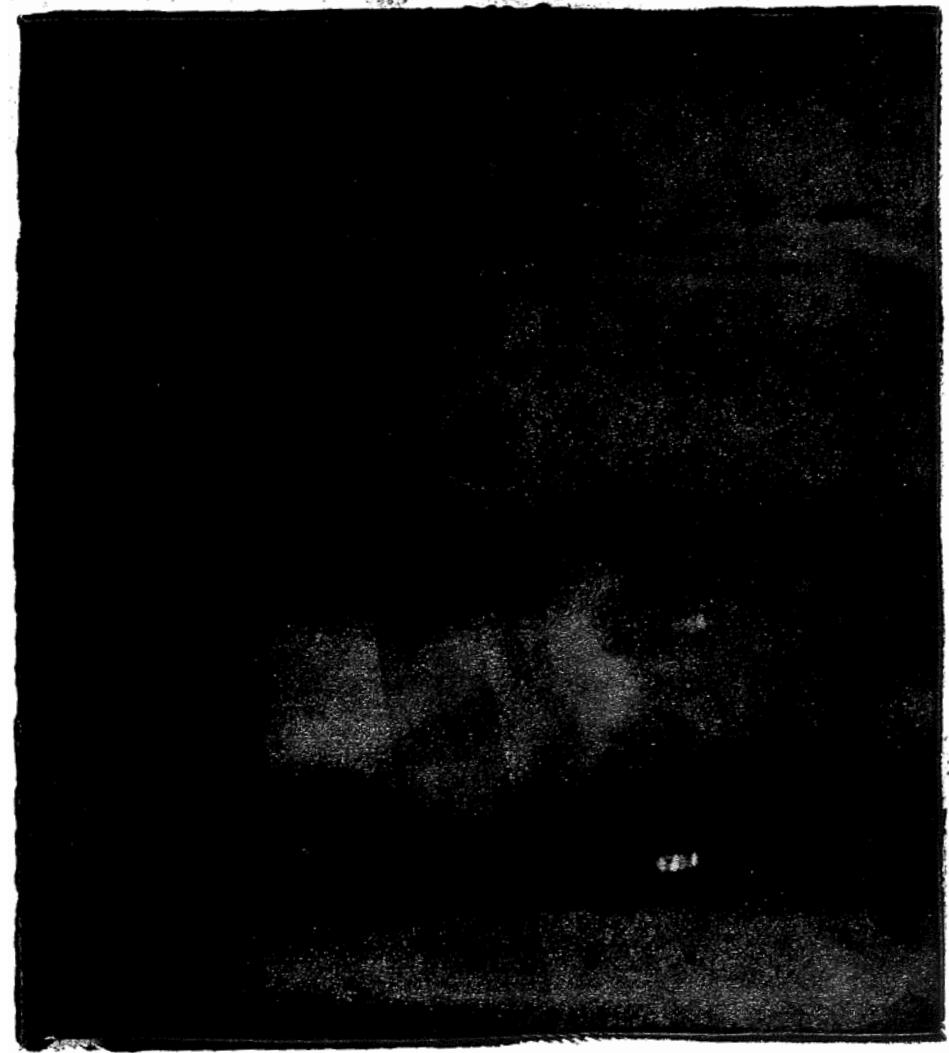
I started to think about blindness a lot. I knew that if I went blind I would be intensely dependent on other people to help me do a lot of things.

I thought, "The independence that I feel right now is only an illusion." I thought, "It will force me to perform the reality that I am completely reliant on other humans for survival."

"When I am blind, my life will be less of a lie."



When I closed my eyes, my body came to life.



I saw a house in a row of houses. It stuck out to me because when I was a child I had decided that that color was my favorite color.

but another friend would tell me about the opening of flower and this friend would be indifferent

"the petals sort of open"
"and then it looks different"



I felt indifferent towards the color.

My preferences were corrupt.

When I looked at art that I thought I should like, I felt sick. When I looked at art that I didn't like, I persuaded myself that it was really good.

The interpretations were limitless.



Either my eyes or the painting was getting in the way of my ability to connect with the artist or enjoy their expression. The image was a dead end. I hated myself for not being able to enjoy art.



Now, I realize it was neither one of these *things*.



Finally, the operation was scheduled.

The doctors hoped the operation would heal my vision,
but more importantly, they wanted to prevent the
disease from spreading.

Because the operation was so long, I expected that something would jostle their hand for a split second, puncturing the carotid artery or another part of my brain.



I thought there was a possibility I would wake up from
the operation.

Dorella can't
the words get shared by
strange relatives

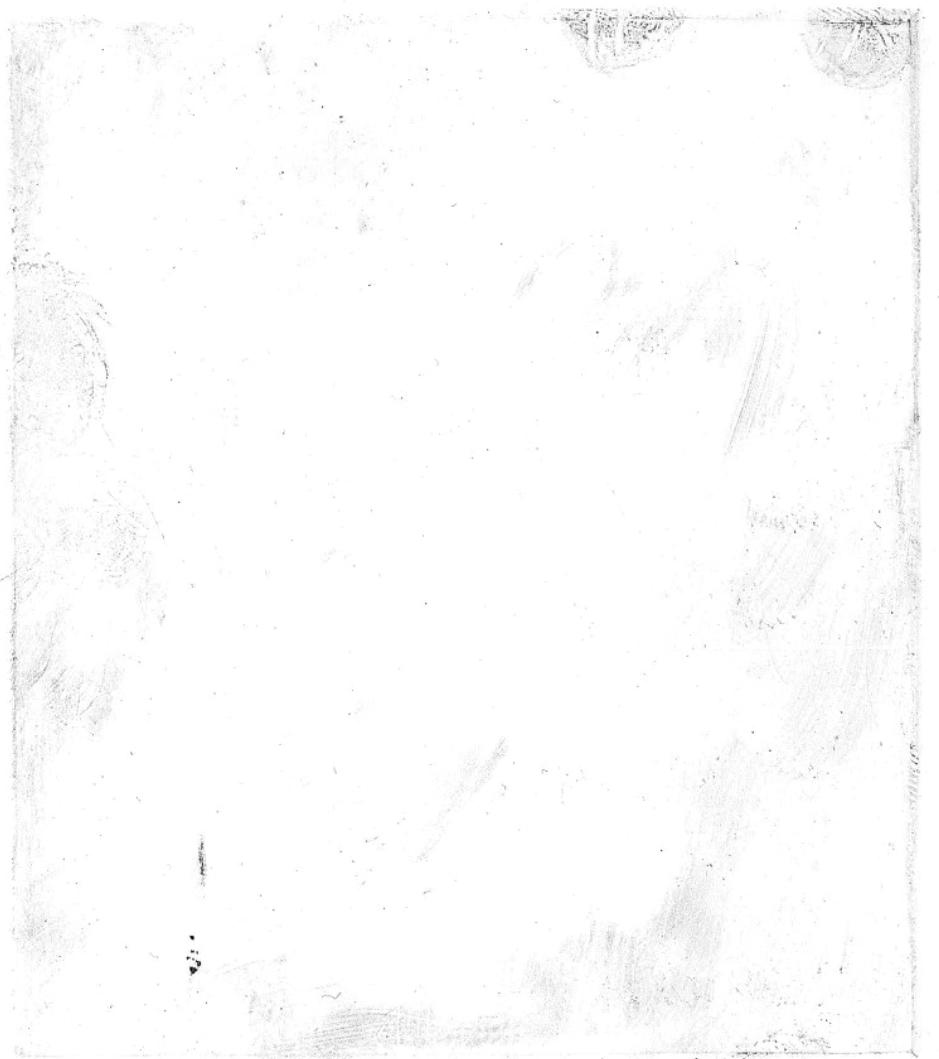
the fate of my body gets
carefully chained to
boxy arrows

I told my mom that I was trying to feel *okay* with
death and she was angry at me.
She thought that if I had that attitude, it would be
more likely that I would die.

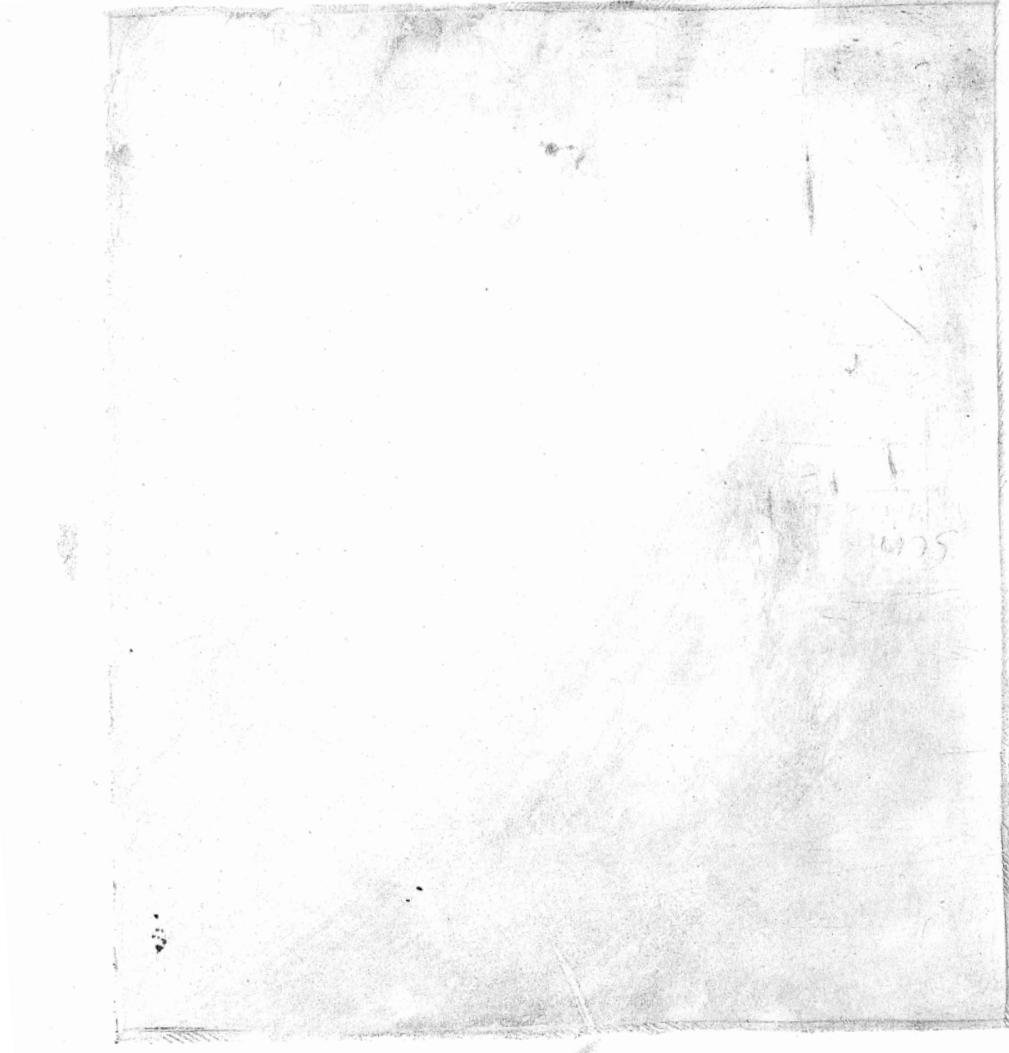
Every time I saw someone I knew, I thought,
“This might be the last time I see this person.”

They didn't know I was thinking that.

"The last time I wake up to a misty blue morning and open a door to smell the wet air."



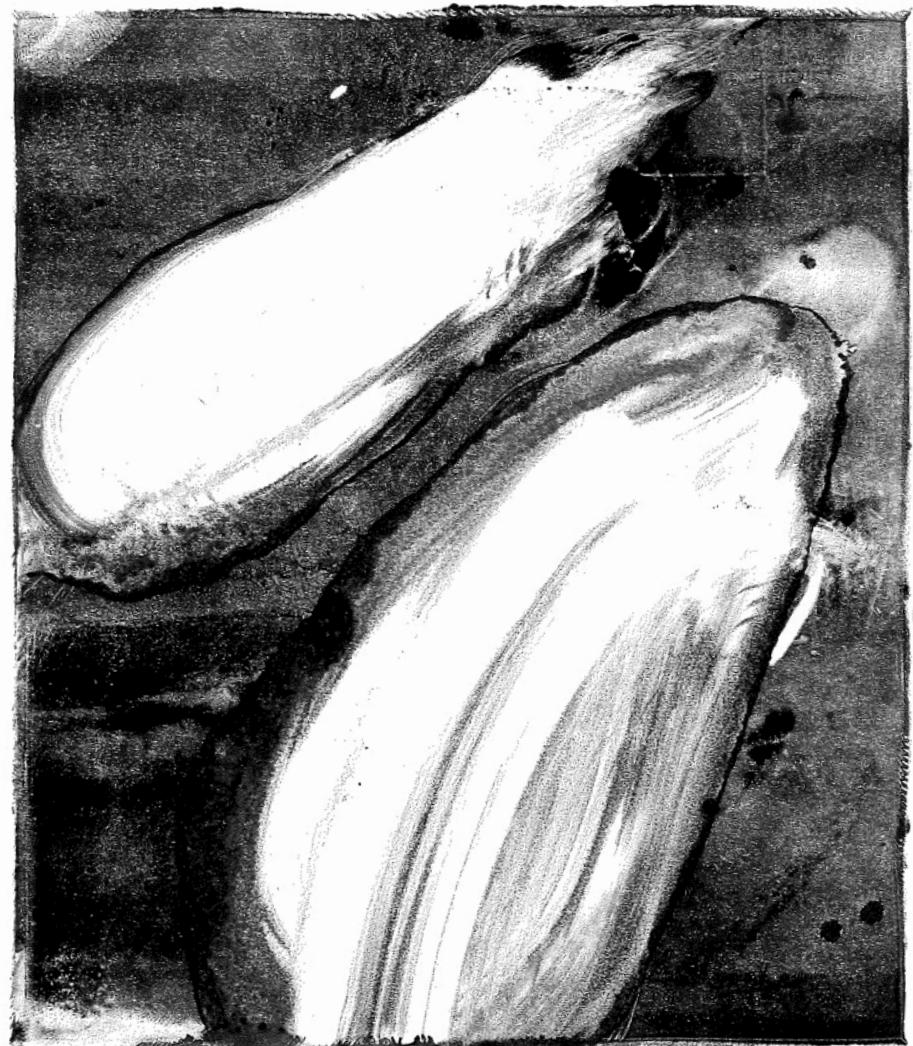
"The last time I hold a door handle in my hand."



"The last time I eat a tomato."

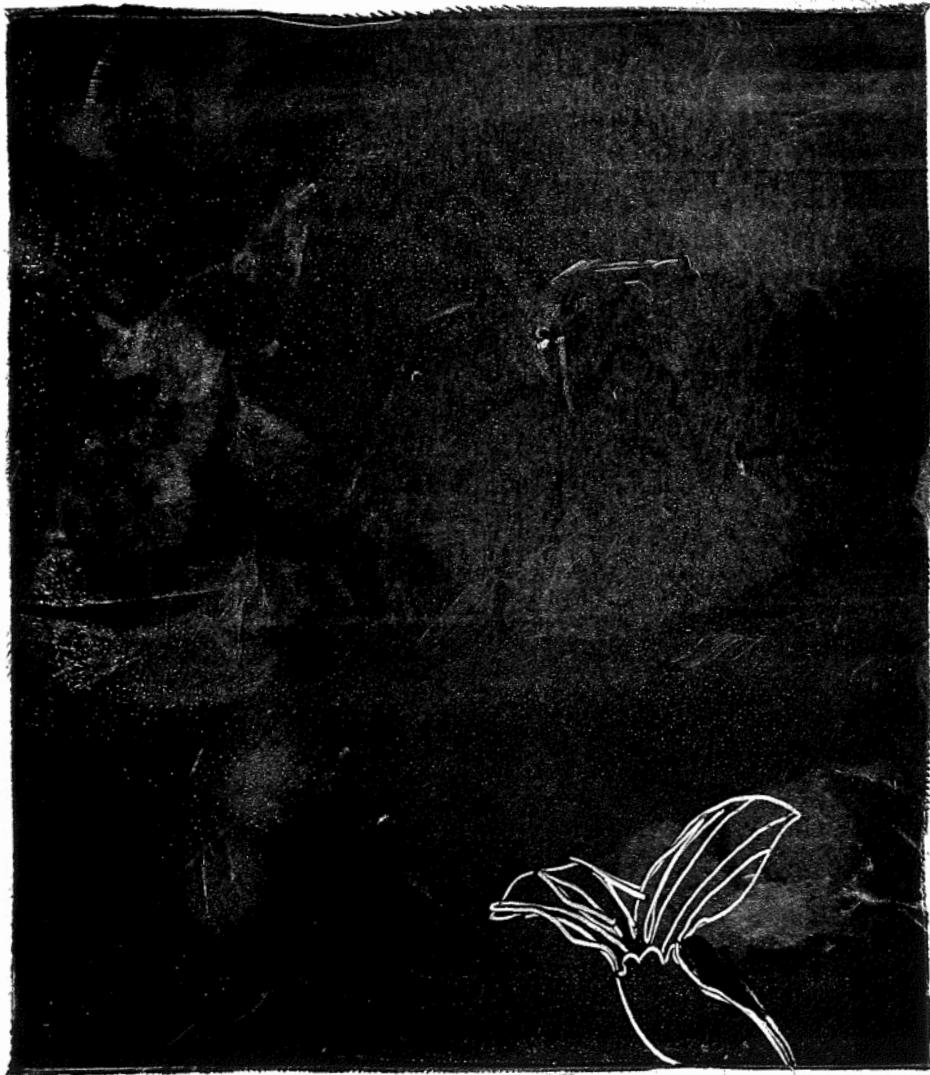


I touched my mother's arm.



I wept alone in a strange bed.



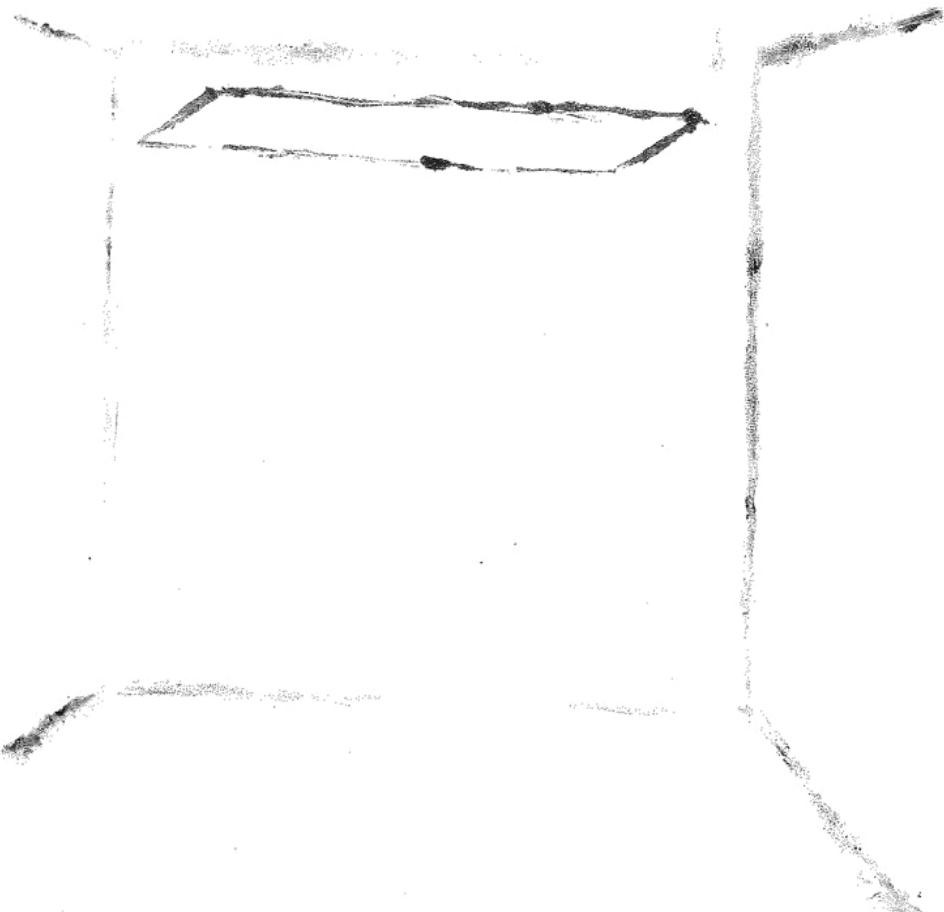


I didn't want my life to be over.

When I was laying on the gurney, before they put the anesthesia mask over my face, I tried to steady my breathing. It was like doing a hundred meter sprint, "Just keep breathing steadily for the next twenty minutes, and then you won't have to think anymore."



I closed my eyes and imagined that every inhale was
pulling in air from outside the walls of the hospital.



I tried to summon people that I loved into my body. I got my friend Molly into my head and let her fall into my chest. She was curled up in a ball. I was trying to bring my friend Delia into my body, but she was too tall to fit, while still holding Molly.



The way I conceptualized their presence in my body was through memories of what they looked like.

Their energy was inside of me.

Their “energy” was more powerful than their “image”, but I could not let go of their “image”.

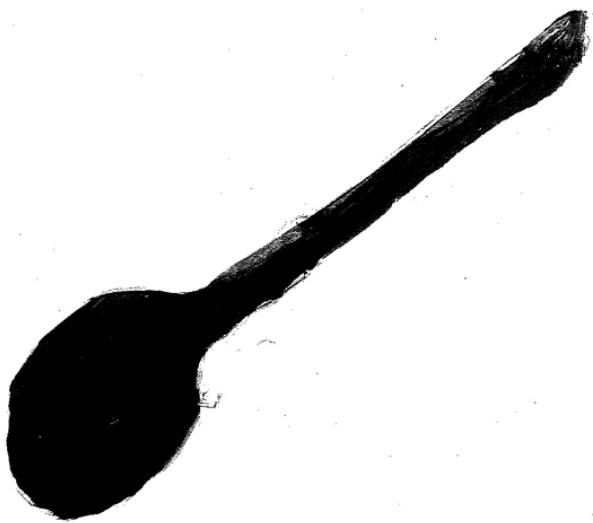


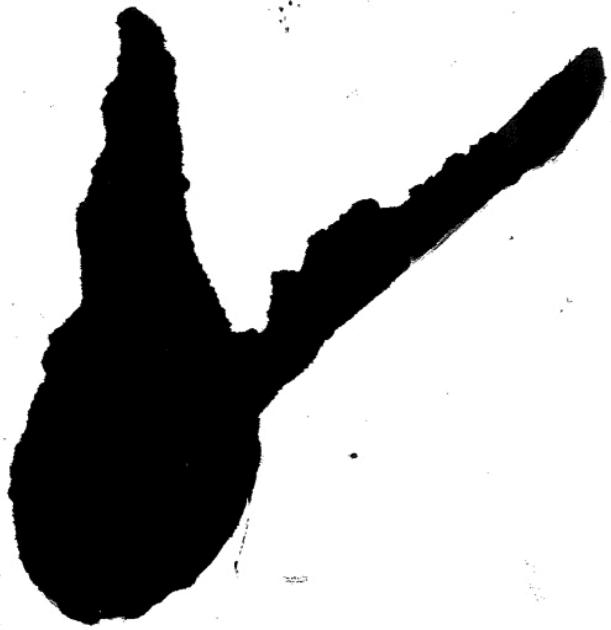












1. Monocotyledonous

2. dicotyledonous

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