



So

Fi

a sociological fiction zine

EDITION 1

June 2017

This is a vertical strip of a historical map, likely from a 17th-century atlas, depicting the Arctic region. The map is oriented vertically, with North at the top. It features various geographical labels in Latin and German, including 'Novaja Zemlja', 'Sala-y-Gomez (Ch)', and 'Kena vändkretsa'. The map is divided into colored regions: orange for land and light blue for water. A grid of latitude and longitude lines is visible.

Editorial

I have no idea what to say in an editorial or if this zine even needs one. I've started writing now to figure that out so maybe you'll read this or maybe I'll keep it saved in the limitless rabbit hole that is my cloud drive. I'll probably put it in.

I write fiction because I like to write. I use 'I' a lot. Maybe I'll never escape that hang-up, being a full selfie-stick and iPhone addicted 90's baby. But when I write sociological fiction I do it to figure out what I think about something, in the same way as writing my thesis or a journal article. But unlike other kinds of academic writing I don't try to make a sociological argument with the piece – I just try to share the same questions I'm asking. Float questions about this world.

While doing a PhD about the place of fiction in sociology I've had many conversations about *why* fiction is important – it's an arts-based research method, with it we can communicate our ideas in different ways, it can help us teach our students to think sociologically, it can help us understand theory and knowledge and the social world in ways that are hard to get at otherwise.

I hope this collection goes some way to answering some of those 'what is it' and 'why' questions. Thanks SO much to everyone who shared the call on Twitter and especially to those who submitted.

I think:

Fiction can help us show the value of sociology.

Fiction can help us see sociologically.

Fiction is also an end in itself. It doesn't have to be 'employed' as an academic method or a pedagogical tool to be good or be meaningful to us. I do think writing with sociological imagination can bring something new or different and exciting to stories. I hope reading this you think so too.

Ashleigh Watson

A few words on the inaugural edition of So Fi

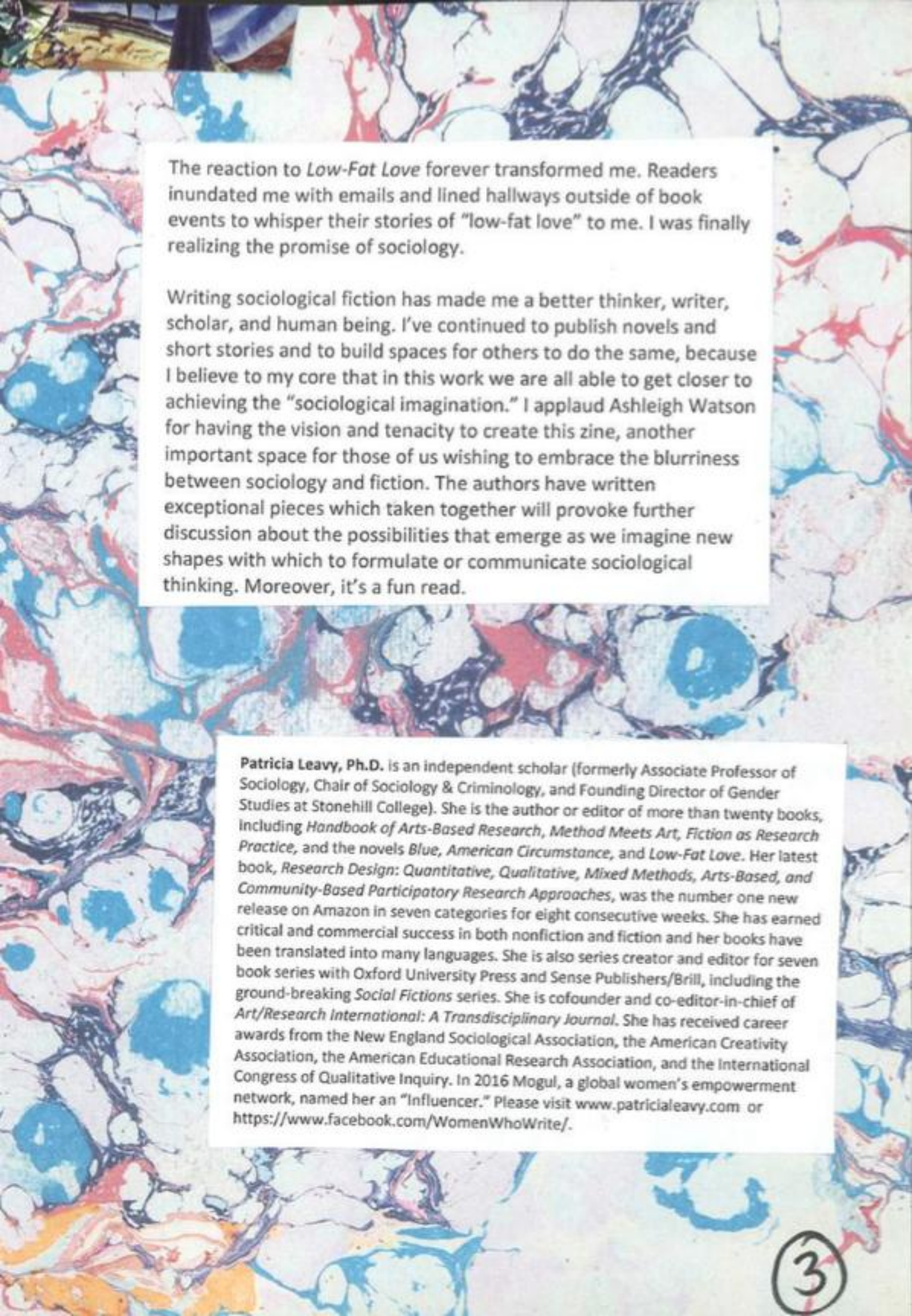
Patricia Leavy, Ph.D.

I've loved creative writing since I was a little girl. I've loved it more than anything. There's something magical that happens as we string words together to make sense of the world of which we are a part, chronicling or reimagining. We can crawl into a story-world where new possibilities emerge.

When I became a sociologist I had the aspirations many of us have—to jar people into thinking and seeing differently, to crystalize micro-macro connections so that people might reflect on their own lives and the society of which they are a part, to unsettle stereotypes and the ideologies that support them, and above all, to somehow, in some small way, make the world better. These goals didn't seem out of reach. After all, I was endlessly conducting interview research or what we call "gathering data." The more data I collected and analyzed, the more insights I developed. This stuff was interesting—to the people it was about, to me, and I knew to others who would be able to relate. Then reality came crashing in. Like most academic research, no one would ever read it. That's when I returned to my childhood passion, but with grownup tools.

I wrote my first novel, *Low-Fat Love*, based on nearly a decade of interview research, as well as my own autoethnographic observations. I was determined to publish this subversive chick-lit as research that could be read by just about anyone – public scholarship in the form of a beach read. I coined the term "social fictions" so to explain it to the academic publishing world, and eventually to academia, and created the *Social Fictions* book series (partnering with Sense Publishers). It's been amazing to see in the years following that students and scholars around the world have adopted the term. That shows me that what we're all doing, what everyone who contributed to this edition is doing, is tapping into something that resonates deeply.





The reaction to *Low-Fat Love* forever transformed me. Readers inundated me with emails and lined hallways outside of book events to whisper their stories of “low-fat love” to me. I was finally realizing the promise of sociology.

Writing sociological fiction has made me a better thinker, writer, scholar, and human being. I’ve continued to publish novels and short stories and to build spaces for others to do the same, because I believe to my core that in this work we are all able to get closer to achieving the “sociological imagination.” I applaud Ashleigh Watson for having the vision and tenacity to create this zine, another important space for those of us wishing to embrace the blurriness between sociology and fiction. The authors have written exceptional pieces which taken together will provoke further discussion about the possibilities that emerge as we imagine new shapes with which to formulate or communicate sociological thinking. Moreover, it’s a fun read.

Patricia Leavy, Ph.D. is an independent scholar (formerly Associate Professor of Sociology, Chair of Sociology & Criminology, and Founding Director of Gender Studies at Stonehill College). She is the author or editor of more than twenty books, including *Handbook of Arts-Based Research*, *Method Meets Art*, *Fiction as Research Practice*, and the novels *Blue*, *American Circumstance*, and *Low-Fat Love*. Her latest book, *Research Design: Quantitative, Qualitative, Mixed Methods, Arts-Based, and Community-Based Participatory Research Approaches*, was the number one new release on Amazon in seven categories for eight consecutive weeks. She has earned critical and commercial success in both nonfiction and fiction and her books have been translated into many languages. She is also series creator and editor for seven book series with Oxford University Press and Sense Publishers/Brill, including the ground-breaking *Social Fictions* series. She is cofounder and co-editor-in-chief of *Art/Research International: A Transdisciplinary Journal*. She has received career awards from the New England Sociological Association, the American Creativity Association, the American Educational Research Association, and the International Congress of Qualitative Inquiry. In 2016 Mogul, a global women’s empowerment network, named her an “Influencer.” Please visit www.patricialeavy.com or <https://www.facebook.com/WomenWhoWrite/>.

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Waiting

Geraldine Donoghue

Do you think I am just waiting here,
as though my time is incomplete?

Do you think I am just waiting here,
with no place to arrive?

Do you even know what waiting is -
person with young eyes?

I am looking -
seeing whole stories about
where I have been,
and where perhaps
I will or won't go.

Like the ping pong match at the community centre -
no, I won't go.

Like the kitchen where my grandmother used to hang puddings
from the roof -
yes I have been.

The upcoming bus trip to see the lake
in summer,
the way my legs used to run
from morning till night.

You need to know
my sitting here is not about stasis.

I am not without motion -
and this is not quietude.

Oh, person with young eyes,
this waiting is not stillness -
stuff is happening here.

In Her Direction

Philippa Thomas



Hello he says [she smiles hello]

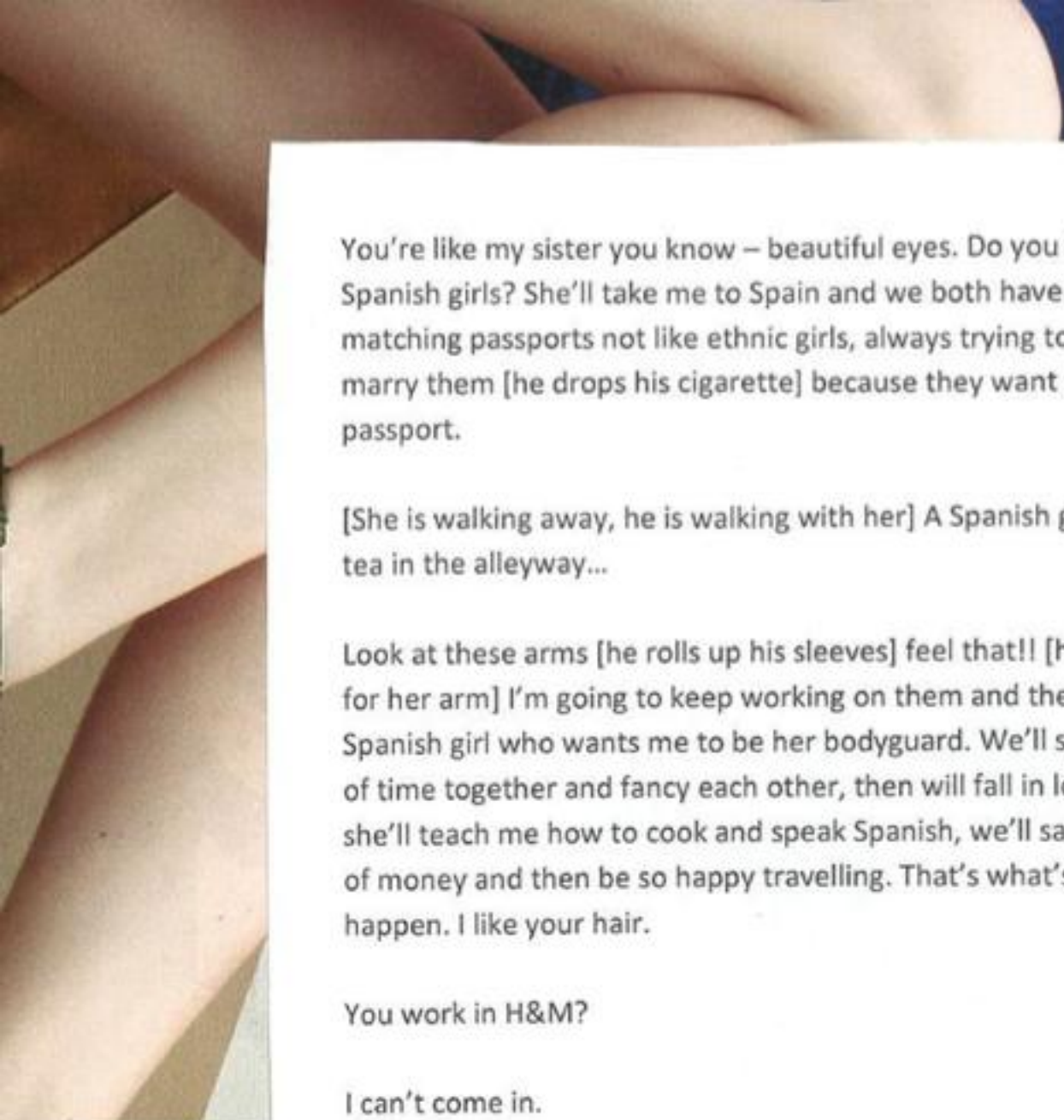
You're the person I needed to talk to today. I thought it was the Spanish girl with the wonky smile that I saw in the alleyway, but it's you. Do you know, I can tell you're not like those people, dangerous people, sometimes you have to watch out. I have these neighbours right, not nice. I mean

I think you have a right to say anything you want and I call them the slobs – like Harry Enfield, Wayne and Waynetta, do you remember? Well I don't think they like me calling them that but I'm entitled to my opinion.

They're common. They're dangerous, and they blame ME for everything.

They say I'm stopping their son [he touches her arm] getting a girlfriend, me! A man of 40 something in him a boy 19! Anyway the bird I'm shagging is almost over the hill, how am I a threat to him? They're noisy, I don't like it.

Do you know a Spanish girl with a wonky smile? If you meet one send her my way! I like these girls, European girls not ethnics. This American girl is begging me to take her back but I won't have her in my house. She's sick. She took me to Brazil and made me live in a favela. It was dangerous I got into some bad situations there.



You're like my sister you know – beautiful eyes. Do you know any Spanish girls? She'll take me to Spain and we both have our matching passports not like ethnic girls, always trying to get you to marry them [he drops his cigarette] because they want your passport.

[She is walking away, he is walking with her] A Spanish girl drinking tea in the alleyway...

Look at these arms [he rolls up his sleeves] feel that!! [he swipes for her arm] I'm going to keep working on them and then find a Spanish girl who wants me to be her bodyguard. We'll spend loads of time together and fancy each other, then will fall in love and she'll teach me how to cook and speak Spanish, we'll save up loads of money and then be so happy travelling. That's what's going to happen. I like your hair.

You work in H&M?

I can't come in.

[He stands at the door for a while staring not at her but in her general direction. She marches through the shop reassured by the communications of fabrics, ducks out of his view and into a corner. She brings out her notepad – turning him into text].



Toward the Ivory Tower

Fabian Cannizzo

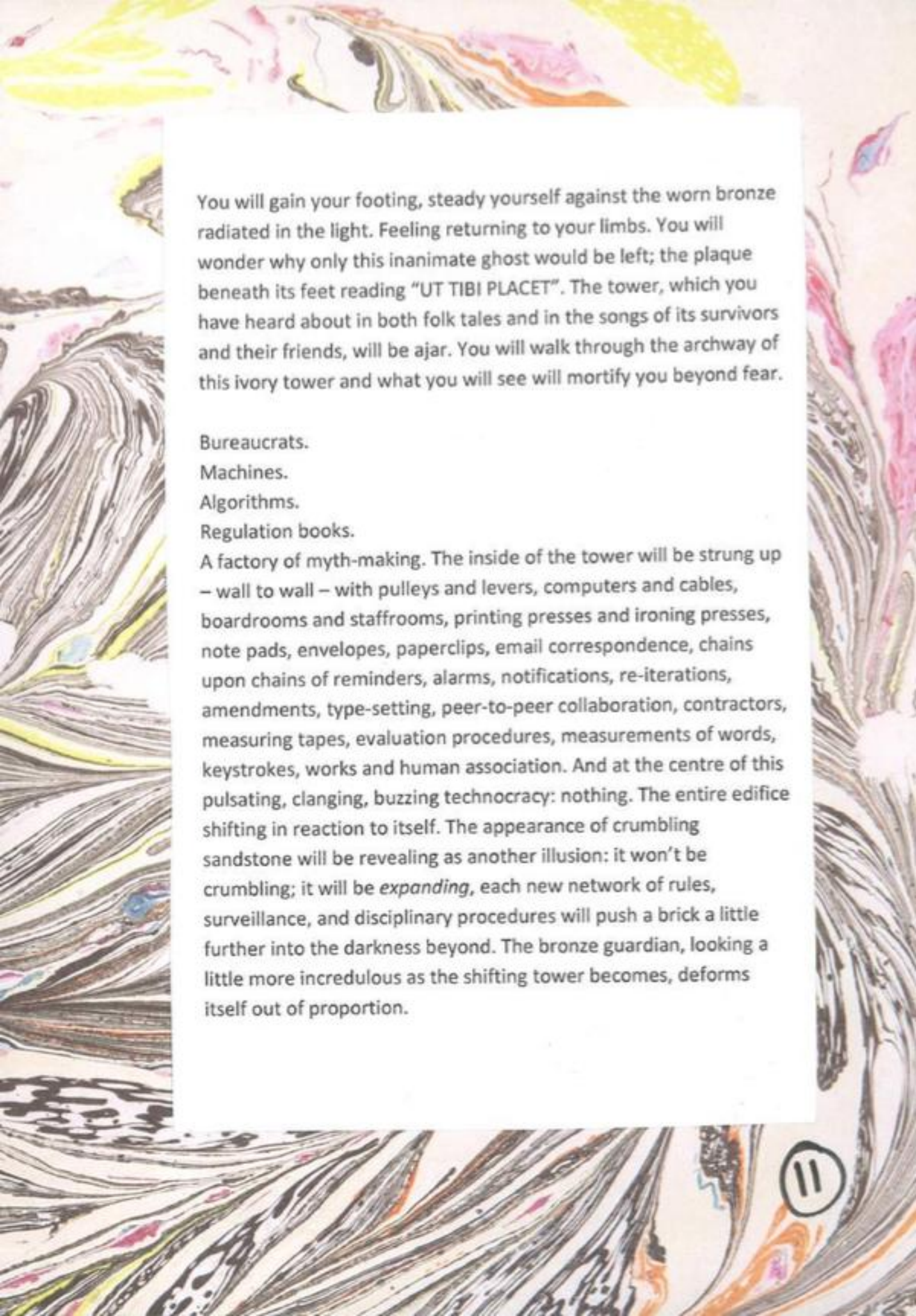
You will know your time is coming. As sure as every breath must cease, as every moment vanishes as it comes to be. And as before every threshold you will ever cross, you will close your eyes, inhale, exhale, and open them again.

Through the grizzly forest, beneath the precipice of a dark, moaning cliff is where you'll go. In the eerie blue light of a covenant moon, reflecting phantasms that slice between the tree branches, you will find your way to a set of iron gates, rusted, ravaged by the sea-borne winds. With every thunder crack you will jump, dance a few steps deeper into your quagmire and the belly of this spinning landscape. Your stomach will turn with the twisting path; your eyes will dart away from the flashes of the thunder god, forging his perilous bolts. The silt will turn to mud, to slag, to sloshing splatters, to subtle fingers, to clawing tentacles from a deep under-dwelling.

If you finally reach the edge of that forest, beyond its fantastic horrors and terrorising illusions, to see the sight of those ancient gates that stand higher than the courage of fabled princes... If you can still feel your arms enough to motion them forward; command them with a fine electro-chemical trail, not millimetres thick embedded in the rigid meat of your frail, human, body... If both your weather-hardened meat and trembling mind should find one another... Those gates might creak their timeless, hell-bound affirmation and permit a single, broken soul entrance to the trials ahead.

- You will whisper yourself onwards, and mistake your own voice for a trusted mentor. It will be your most valuable deception.
- You will walk a bare, narrow path across a deep, barren field with only the darkness as your peer and only a flickering light in the distance as your guide. The moonlight of the forest will subside, daring to show its face no longer. With each step further into the darkness, your mentor's voice will grow distant, echoed, beckoning from the timid flame. The sounds of footsteps will grow deeper, reverberate, rebound onto themselves as if caught in a chasm. Your mentor's voice, less humanoid, more a long groan than words. You will think of the legends who have walked this path before you and those thousands more who have failed and you will hear the groaning of successors and the motionless as a long howl of history.
- You will clasp your hands over your ears, close your eyes and picture your once peaceful life in your mind's eye. And you will run, leaps and bounds on uncertain ground, feeling the tremor of the earth push back against you, knowing what you are trying to do. And in your cocoon of senselessness and spirited flight, you will come face to face with a bronze statue of a revered ghost.
- Picking yourself up, caressing your numb, bruised, bloodied forehead, you will wince towards the flickering flame, held in the hands of that bronzed guardian. At the foot now of the moaning cliff, beyond the terrorising forest and the road without foreseeable end, you will reach a crumbling sandstone tower with its guardian standing affront, greened by the passage of time.





You will gain your footing, steady yourself against the worn bronze radiated in the light. Feeling returning to your limbs. You will wonder why only this inanimate ghost would be left; the plaque beneath its feet reading "UT TIBI PLACET". The tower, which you have heard about in both folk tales and in the songs of its survivors and their friends, will be ajar. You will walk through the archway of this ivory tower and what you will see will mortify you beyond fear.

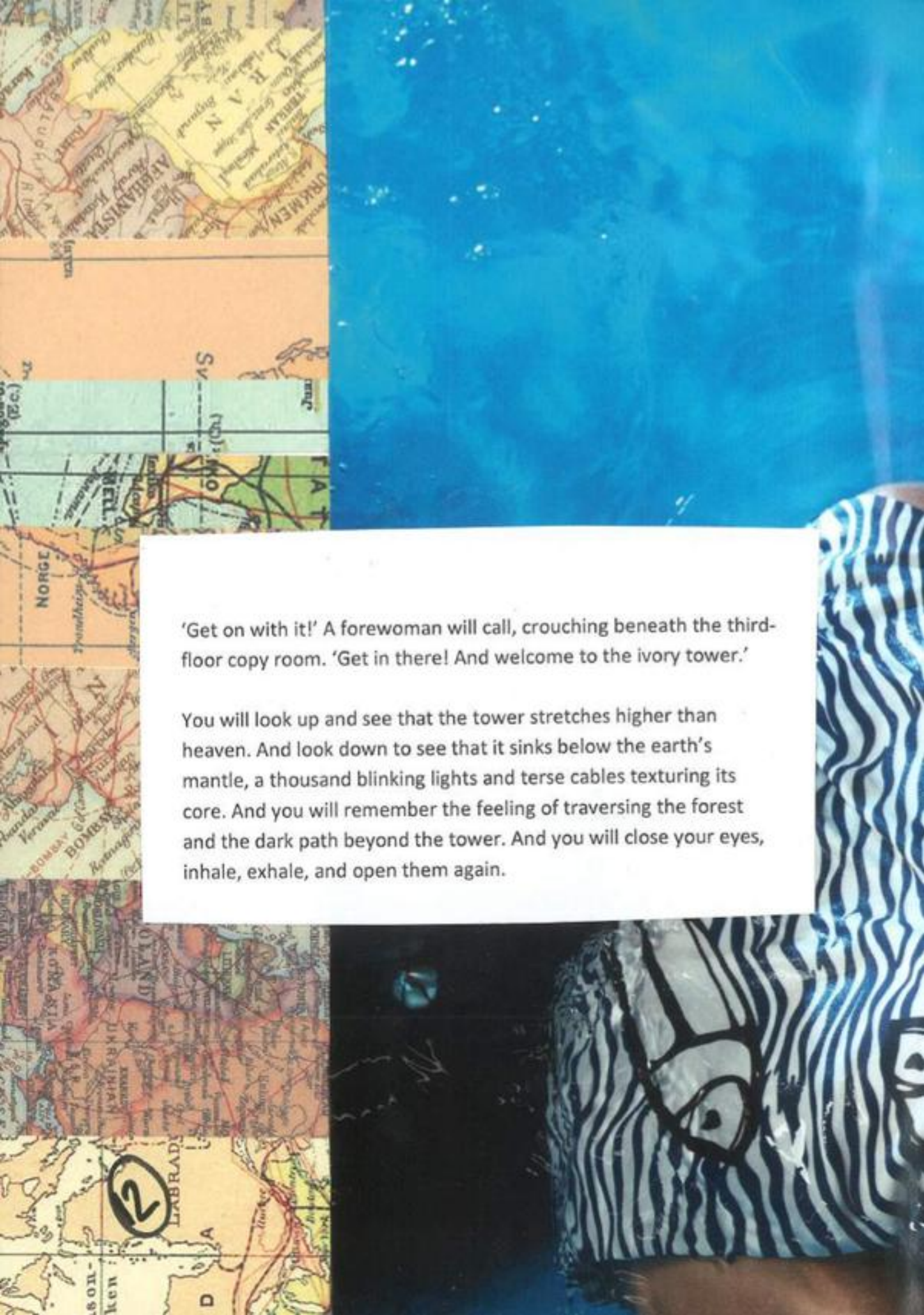
Bureaucrats.

Machines.

Algorithms.

Regulation books.

A factory of myth-making. The inside of the tower will be strung up – wall to wall – with pulleys and levers, computers and cables, boardrooms and staffrooms, printing presses and ironing presses, note pads, envelopes, paperclips, email correspondence, chains upon chains of reminders, alarms, notifications, re-iterations, amendments, type-setting, peer-to-peer collaboration, contractors, measuring tapes, evaluation procedures, measurements of words, keystrokes, works and human association. And at the centre of this pulsating, clanging, buzzing technocracy: nothing. The entire edifice shifting in reaction to itself. The appearance of crumbling sandstone will be revealing as another illusion: it won't be crumbling; it will be *expanding*, each new network of rules, surveillance, and disciplinary procedures will push a brick a little further into the darkness beyond. The bronze guardian, looking a little more incredulous as the shifting tower becomes, deforms itself out of proportion.



'Get on with it!' A forewoman will call, crouching beneath the third-floor copy room. 'Get in there! And welcome to the ivory tower.'

You will look up and see that the tower stretches higher than heaven. And look down to see that it sinks below the earth's mantle, a thousand blinking lights and terse cables texturing its core. And you will remember the feeling of traversing the forest and the dark path beyond the tower. And you will close your eyes, inhale, exhale, and open them again.

The First Explorer

Jon Gray

Most of the strong liquor patterned the bottles directly in front of Eric. The tiny beads left glistening trails shining in the light. That's how it started.

'Damn it Eric, you can bloody well clean that up. What the hell are you thinking?'

Eric stared forward, his hands pressed on the bar, half raised off the barstool. He looked like he was preparing to leap over to Will's side. His eyes bulged and he made a small mewling sound, trying to take a breath.

Will placed a glass of water in front of Eric and deliberately placed a cloth on the bar near Eric's splayed hand.

'I'm serious, stop playing stupid games and clean this up.'

They were alone in the bar. It was still early, morning light flared across the floor dividing the room into spaces at once too bright and too dark. This time of day Will usually had the bar to himself. Lucy, the owner, never showed up before lunch and the regulars don't really appear until mid afternoon.

But having the doors opened early at this time of the year allowed the light and air to both clean and expose the room, blurring the boundary of outside and in. There were no al fresco tables at The Smiling Mask; no one wished to share the street with deeds and entertainments better performed behind closed doors.

So Will generally enjoyed this quiet time. The taste of the outside world mixing and pushing against the dark wood and brick of the inner satisfied some piece of him that still rebelled against his years behind the bar. Eric wanted what Will had moved beyond

- adventure and fame. Eric wanted to be an explorer, to live in the new, the unknown and for all to know that as the truth. Will was not jaded enough to be above feeling some sympathy for the lad.

Eric whooped air in, arms lifting up and out, his colour returning to its usual shade.

'I just about choked up! Dropped my breakfast on my lap. How can anyone drink this?'

'I warned you. Told you to stick with beer,' Will leaned onto the bar. 'What's going on?'

After drinking most of the water to clear his throat, Eric shared the story of his first exploratory mission.

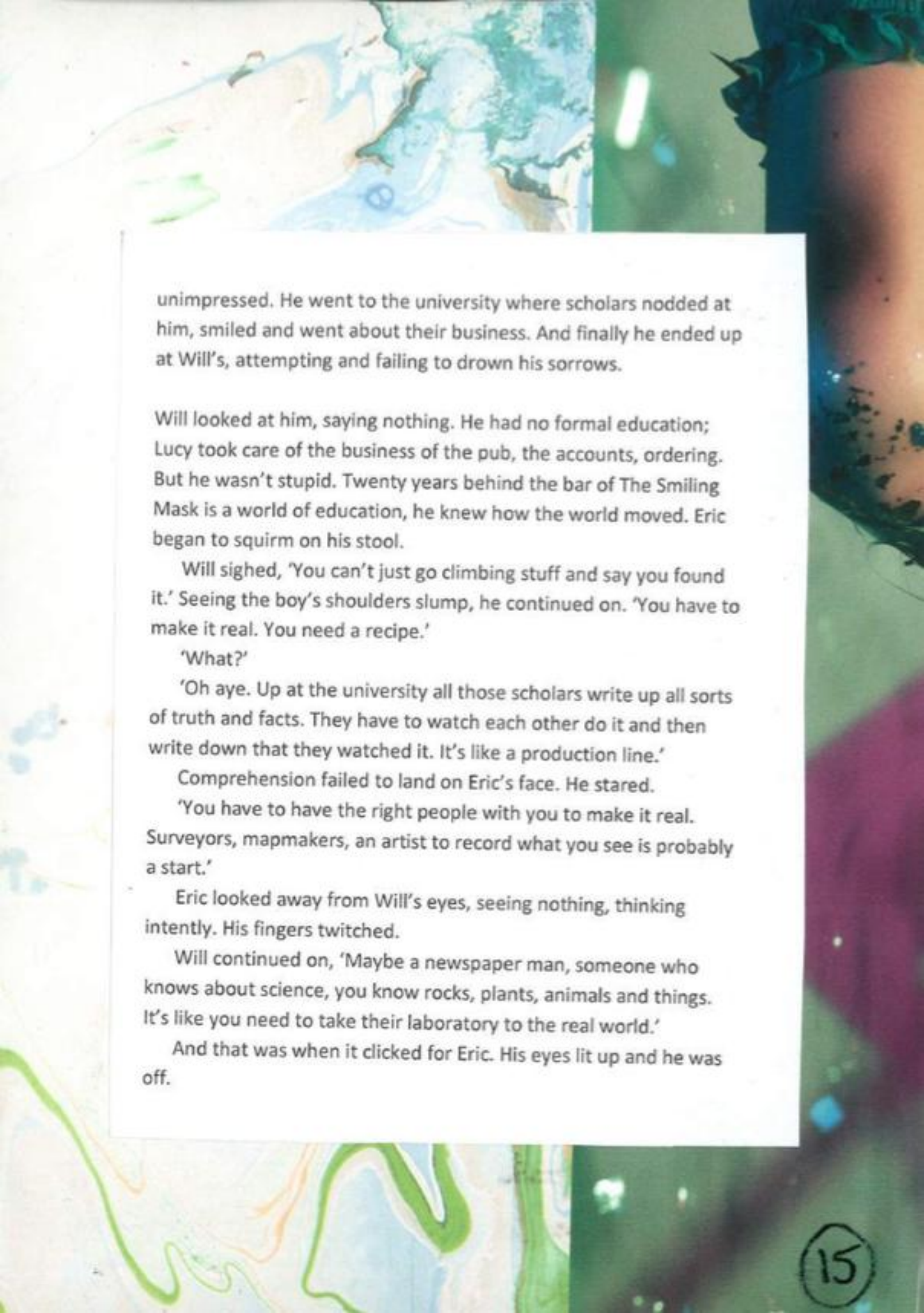
Explorers explore. Eric, with his trusty canoe, travelled out to Fleetfire Island, about fifteen kilometres east of the bay. It was only visible from the coast due to the mountain in its centre. It was the first of the range that travelled in from the coast separating the town of Teacraft from the highlands. It's not a large island but it carries a colourful history, probably untrue and wildly exaggerated over the years. Legends abound about the sands that surround it, stories that Will has contributed to, over the years. Talk of shipwrecks and lost bullion routinely see eager teenagers exploring the shore and waters of the island. These narratives tend to ignore the mountain, a peak that admittedly looks quite treacherous.

But Eric, as one who sits outside regular frameworks, focused on the mountain. On his coming of age, over the course of a few days, he scaled the mountain, attained the top, planted a flag and claimed the mountain in the name of king and country. He named it Eric's Peak. He thought it had a good ring to it.

Happy in the certainty of his newfound fame he returned to the town proudly claiming his discovery and this is where things did not go as planned. No one cared. The newspaper, the patent office, even the king, who happened to be his uncle, remained

Upper Holloway





unimpressed. He went to the university where scholars nodded at him, smiled and went about their business. And finally he ended up at Will's, attempting and failing to drown his sorrows.

Will looked at him, saying nothing. He had no formal education; Lucy took care of the business of the pub, the accounts, ordering. But he wasn't stupid. Twenty years behind the bar of The Smiling Mask is a world of education, he knew how the world moved. Eric began to squirm on his stool.

Will sighed, 'You can't just go climbing stuff and say you found it.' Seeing the boy's shoulders slump, he continued on. 'You have to make it real. You need a recipe.'

'What?'

'Oh aye. Up at the university all those scholars write up all sorts of truth and facts. They have to watch each other do it and then write down that they watched it. It's like a production line.'

Comprehension failed to land on Eric's face. He stared.

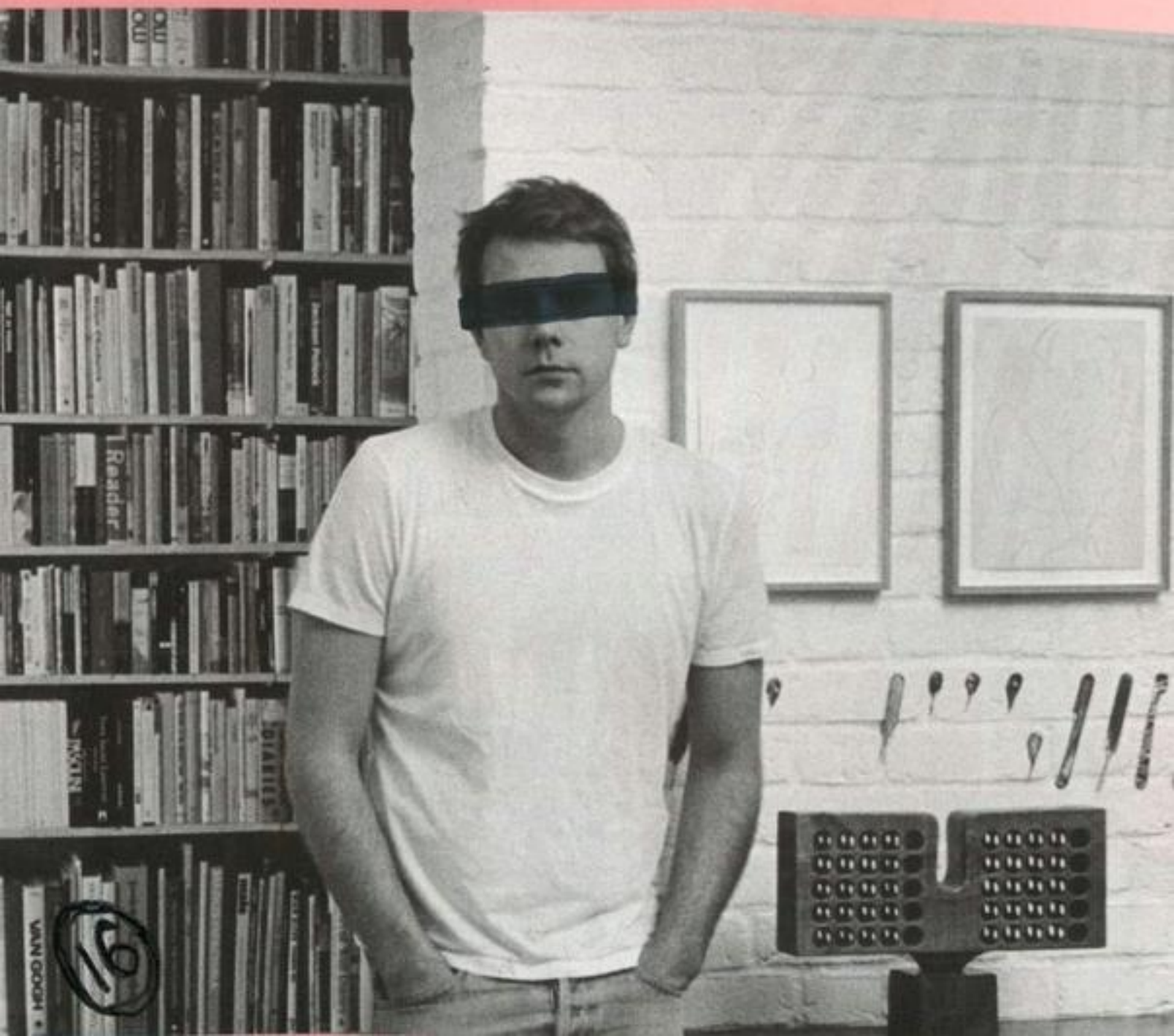
'You have to have the right people with you to make it real. Surveyors, mapmakers, an artist to record what you see is probably a start.'

Eric looked away from Will's eyes, seeing nothing, thinking intently. His fingers twitched.

Will continued on, 'Maybe a newspaper man, someone who knows about science, you know rocks, plants, animals and things. It's like you need to take their laboratory to the real world.'

And that was when it clicked for Eric. His eyes lit up and he was off.

The rest is history, and although some people claim his fame bears a closer relation to his relationship to the king, it hasn't stopped numerous young would be explorers running around the place putting expeditions together to discover the unfound. Eric will always be the first. Although, when he finally penned his memoirs he made sure not to mention the existence of old camp sites on Eric's Peak when he and his exploration team officially returned to make their discovery.



DANCE DANCE DANCE

The Dancer

Sarah Raine

I'd popped in for a quick rush around; mid-week and back to bare rations again. A scribbled list on a battered receipt clutched in my hand as I negotiated the aisles heaving with similarly flushed individuals: a mid-week ritual of the busy and urbane. Basket rammed onto my arm and crushing the fabric of a quickly chosen shirt, thrown on in the midst of morning coffee - the calling card of midnight emails, early meetings, and evenings spent frantically trying to fit in 'life'. I scanned the list again, ever more crumpled and distorted, and shuffled, laden down, to the "World Food" aisle, glorious in its iconic and colourful packaging. Absorbed in a realm of Rubicon and halva, were it not for the unstable stacking of tins of coconut milk, I would have traipsed on for rice oblivious. Yet as it was, the tins tumbled, sprawling in an angular fashion across the Formica floor, and on my return to the world of the shoppers I noticed him down the aisle.


At first it was merely the shock one feels when pulled from your own, padded world of contemplation and back into company, as if disturbed in the library. Then the prickle of familiarity commanded



my attention, to look more carefully at my silent companion. Pushed into a shapeless uniform that only unisex cost-cutting can provide, it was not his physical shape that piqued my interest and my memory, but rather the movements he made. The turn of the wrist; the way he held his head; his stance, slightly to the left, confident yet unassuming. While formless fabric of the trousers and polo shirt jarred with my unconscious expectations, his shoes hinted at the repulsive, the perverse, with thick rubber soles, safety requirement steel toecaps, cheap faux leather. They seemed monstrously at odds with a strange expectation.


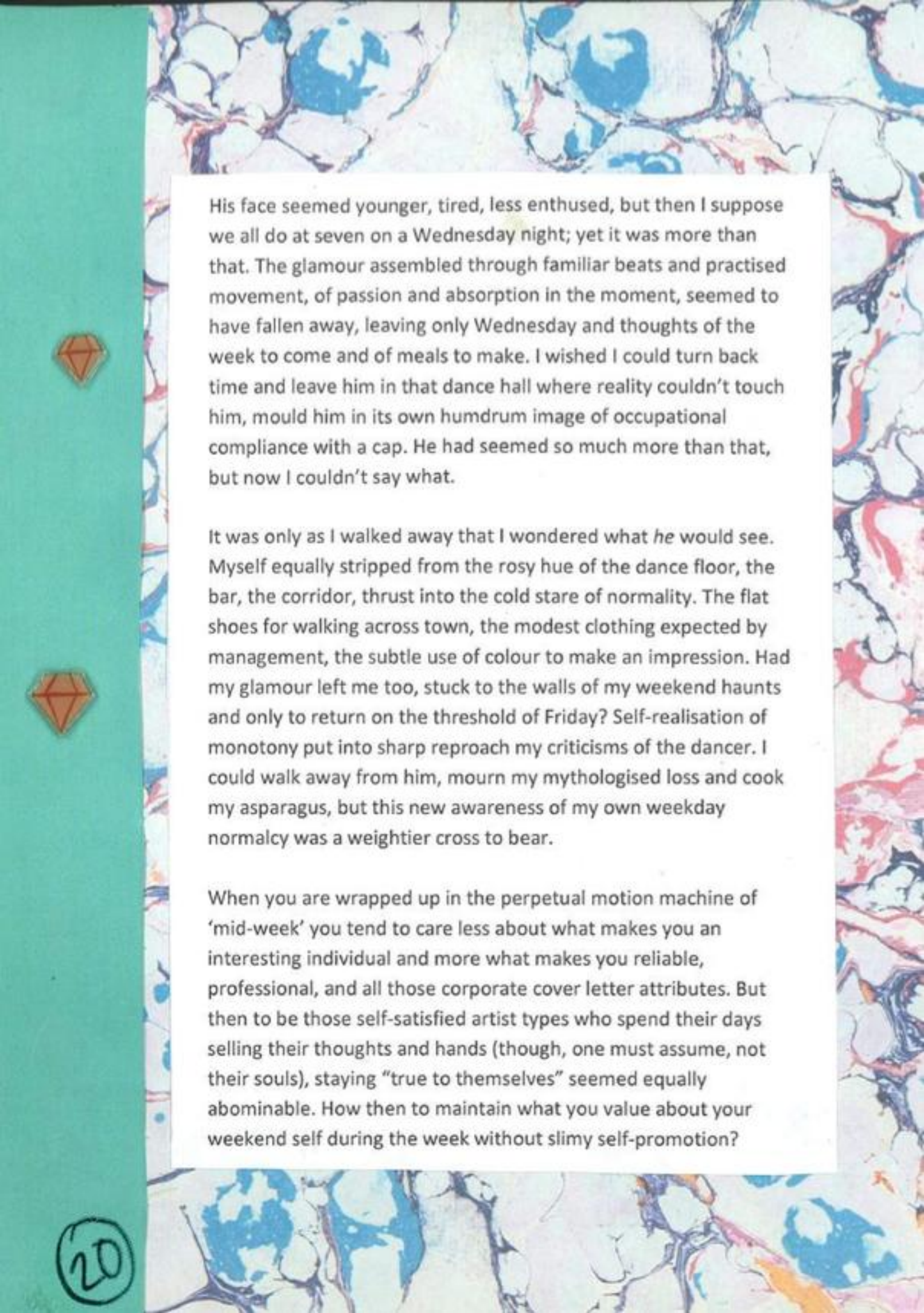
The moment of recognition. Funny how time and place can change the watched, and the watcher. Of course I knew him - slightly sandy hair normally coiffured a bit too carefully, arms raised and usually right at the front where you can feel the base in your throat, the hair upstanding and vibrating on your arms. Funny how normal he seemed here, stripped of the carefully chosen get up, the shiny Italian leather soled shoes, and left open, bare in the unforgiving strip lights of a shopping aisle. No mystery here.

And yet I felt part of a secret that my nightlife forays into talcum powder floors and spinning skirts provided me with information that no other shopper would know about their helpful, young shelf stacker. The free-hand tattoos on his upper arm and back, burrowing a hard-won identity into his skin, the ankles aching from a long night well danced: a form that captivated the viewer and around which others danced. It seemed a well-hidden secret, successfully buried beneath polyester and Lynx, for this alter ego that I knew better seemed but a ghostly shade of weekends and snatched evenings, the reality of life anchoring those dancing feet within a rubber sole.




At once it seemed both laughable and obvious that he should be indeed so mundane when away from the dance floor. What did I imagine he did for a living? Yet why would I ever waste the time to ponder such trivial frivolities in the heat of the night. I had never imagined that anyone had ever wondered such things about me: the dance floor seemed a clean slate upon which new identities could be forged through sweat and talc. Deadlines forgotten and titles relinquished for a fleeting moment, to be clutched at like a strange dream later when reality bit. Yet I think I had always assumed that when everyone went home, he was still there, as much a part of the hall as the balcony. He seemed so much smaller here, amid the beans, cowed by life.

I felt at once angry. Angry with him for his dreary reality, with his rubber soles, and with myself for feeling loss. You conceited arse - what does it matter? But I found it did. Perhaps this is why people keep their distance during the week, police their social media posts, keep weddings and birthdays separate, secret, to maintain a sense of self removed from all the detritus of life, to save a part of themselves for Soul. I chanced a glance again, aware that I would start to look odd (or odder) very soon, stood there clutching my eclectic wares.



His face seemed younger, tired, less enthused, but then I suppose we all do at seven on a Wednesday night; yet it was more than that. The glamour assembled through familiar beats and practised movement, of passion and absorption in the moment, seemed to have fallen away, leaving only Wednesday and thoughts of the week to come and of meals to make. I wished I could turn back time and leave him in that dance hall where reality couldn't touch him, mould him in its own humdrum image of occupational compliance with a cap. He had seemed so much more than that, but now I couldn't say what.



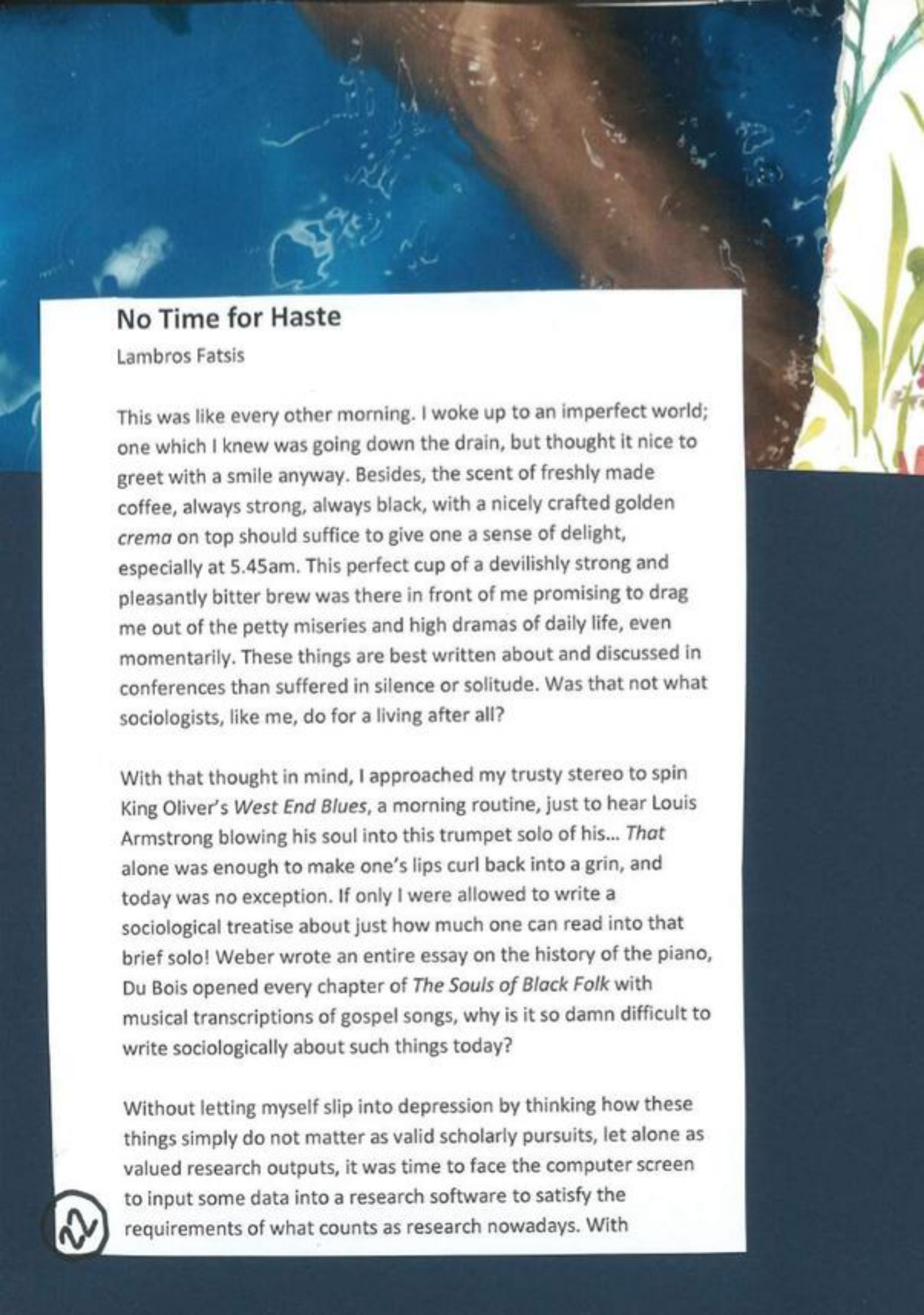
It was only as I walked away that I wondered what *he* would see. Myself equally stripped from the rosy hue of the dance floor, the bar, the corridor, thrust into the cold stare of normality. The flat shoes for walking across town, the modest clothing expected by management, the subtle use of colour to make an impression. Had my glamour left me too, stuck to the walls of my weekend haunts and only to return on the threshold of Friday? Self-realisation of monotony put into sharp reproach my criticisms of the dancer. I could walk away from him, mourn my mythologised loss and cook my asparagus, but this new awareness of my own weekday normalcy was a weightier cross to bear.

When you are wrapped up in the perpetual motion machine of 'mid-week' you tend to care less about what makes you an interesting individual and more what makes you reliable, professional, and all those corporate cover letter attributes. But then to be those self-satisfied artist types who spend their days selling their thoughts and hands (though, one must assume, not their souls), staying "true to themselves" seemed equally abominable. How then to maintain what you value about your weekend self during the week without slimy self-promotion?

Should each element of oneself be neatly placed within its own box and filed away, or is it time for a cabinet of curiosities, each element placed next to each other in haphazard contradiction? My mind whirled with ridiculous, emancipatory thoughts, all stirred by a dancer in the wrong shoes.

Then my phone vibrated to announce an incoming email, emblazoned with red urgency. I opened my calendar and scheduled a meeting with myself - "*Friday 23rd June, 5pm- Consider identity*" and made a similar comment in my Notes. With that contemplation tidied away into the schedule of the week, I carried on down the condiments aisle with dinner on my mind.



The background of the page features a close-up photograph of a person's arm, likely of African descent, resting on a surface. To the right, a portion of a green plant with long, slender leaves is visible. The overall lighting is soft, and the colors are muted, creating a contemplative atmosphere.

No Time for Haste

Lambros Fatsis

This was like every other morning. I woke up to an imperfect world; one which I knew was going down the drain, but thought it nice to greet with a smile anyway. Besides, the scent of freshly made coffee, always strong, always black, with a nicely crafted golden *crema* on top should suffice to give one a sense of delight, especially at 5.45am. This perfect cup of a devilishly strong and pleasantly bitter brew was there in front of me promising to drag me out of the petty miseries and high dramas of daily life, even momentarily. These things are best written about and discussed in conferences than suffered in silence or solitude. Was that not what sociologists, like me, do for a living after all?

With that thought in mind, I approached my trusty stereo to spin King Oliver's *West End Blues*, a morning routine, just to hear Louis Armstrong blowing his soul into this trumpet solo of his... *That* alone was enough to make one's lips curl back into a grin, and today was no exception. If only I were allowed to write a sociological treatise about just how much one can read into that brief solo! Weber wrote an entire essay on the history of the piano, Du Bois opened every chapter of *The Souls of Black Folk* with musical transcriptions of gospel songs, why is it so damn difficult to write sociologically about such things today?

Without letting myself slip into depression by thinking how these things simply do not matter as valid scholarly pursuits, let alone as valued research outputs, it was time to face the computer screen to input some data into a research software to satisfy the requirements of what counts as research nowadays. With

Satchmo's solo still buzzing inside my head, I could only see this as a thankless task. The day's first distraction couldn't have come at a better moment! 'You have now completed all required submissions into RESsys' read the first e-mail notification in my Inbox followed by reminders to register for another round of compulsory Health and Safety training, for all those risks involved in thinking dangerous ideas...

Curious to know what that RESsys e-mail was all about, I was informed that I 'have now reached' the 'maximum number of submissions' for the coming research evaluation exercise that could make or break my career as a young scholar. This was surely odd, as I certainly did not and *would not* write or submit anything entitled: 'Class Differences among Hungarian Climbers in North Wales', nor was I particularly interested in 'Measuring the Cultural Capital for Tennis Club Membership in Winchester', both supported by national research funds. My name is John Smith however and, according to RESsys there is nothing more I need to do to justify how research active I am for the next few years. Besides who am I to defy the omniscience of RESsys? And since this is approved and signed off by my Department, why would I make a fuss by challenging it? Now I could go really slow and write about the meaning of that Louis Armstrong solo without punching the clock or forcing my interests to fit into the narrowest of agendas to justify scope, rigour, or impact. Or I could take my thoughts to the streets, like a New Orleans second line parade, to see "what works" in real social life where it all happens.

Flinging my laptop aside, I begin to pace the room trying to think what I could be doing now that I have time I can use meaningfully.

What drew me into doing sociologically what I value as a person? How can I truly labour in my vocation instead of simply working as a professional sociologist? As I walked, my thoughts gained traction, and I started listing them out loud: an almost childish inquisitiveness to learn “the social”, a desire to attend to neglected details of everyday social life, an appetite for imagining things as different from what they currently are or seem to be, and a keenness to find out what others think by talking to them; swapping my own blind spots with insights from others. How do I do *that*?

I leave the house to get some fresh air only to bump into my neighbour, Olivia who runs a community kitchen in my area. After covering such niceties as the weather, I tell her what I’m up to, sharing the terrific news before she asks with a smirk: “And what will you be doing now, will you finally dine with us?”.

Acknowledging my guilt for not having joined any of her events, Olivia’s question dawned upon me: dining *in* my community, *with* my fellow-citizens, now that’s a symposium! A *real* symposium where people eat, think, talk, and share ideas for communal pleasure, not competitive gain. Smiling broadly at the very thought, I turn to Olivia announcing that not only do I want to join but I want to ask all everybody else to join me in an open sociological discussion! “Can I cook something, come along, and involve everyone in a discussion about a topic?” I hesitantly ask. As Olivia nods in agreement, pure joy flows into my eyes as my mind fixates on the idea of sharing what I do convivially, *in public*, reminding myself why sociology matters as a true exchange, rather than a deposit of citations, or funds to be listed, counted, and judged under the tyranny of the clock by spreadsheet flunkies.

On my way home, the gravelly voice of Louis Armstrong sang a Duke Ellington refrain inside my head which I can't help but paraphrase as a warning for sociology: "What good is theory, what good is method, if it doesn't make us and our public tick? No it ain't the theory, and it ain't the method that makes the wide world think. Yeeesss... It don't mean a thing if it ain't got that critical sting... It doesn't matter if it's "hot" or not, just give your writing everything you got..."



TO
THE
Radio



Excuse All the Blood

Keith Kahn-Harris

I met him in a place of death. I saw the gun. I felt his blood.

I would not disappoint him.

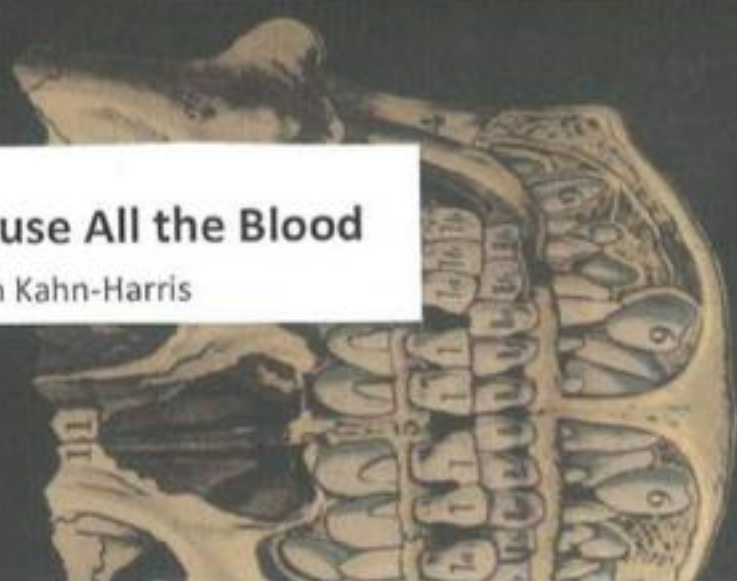
Despite my floppy fringe, my neutral clothing, my adenoidal whine,
I would not disappoint him.

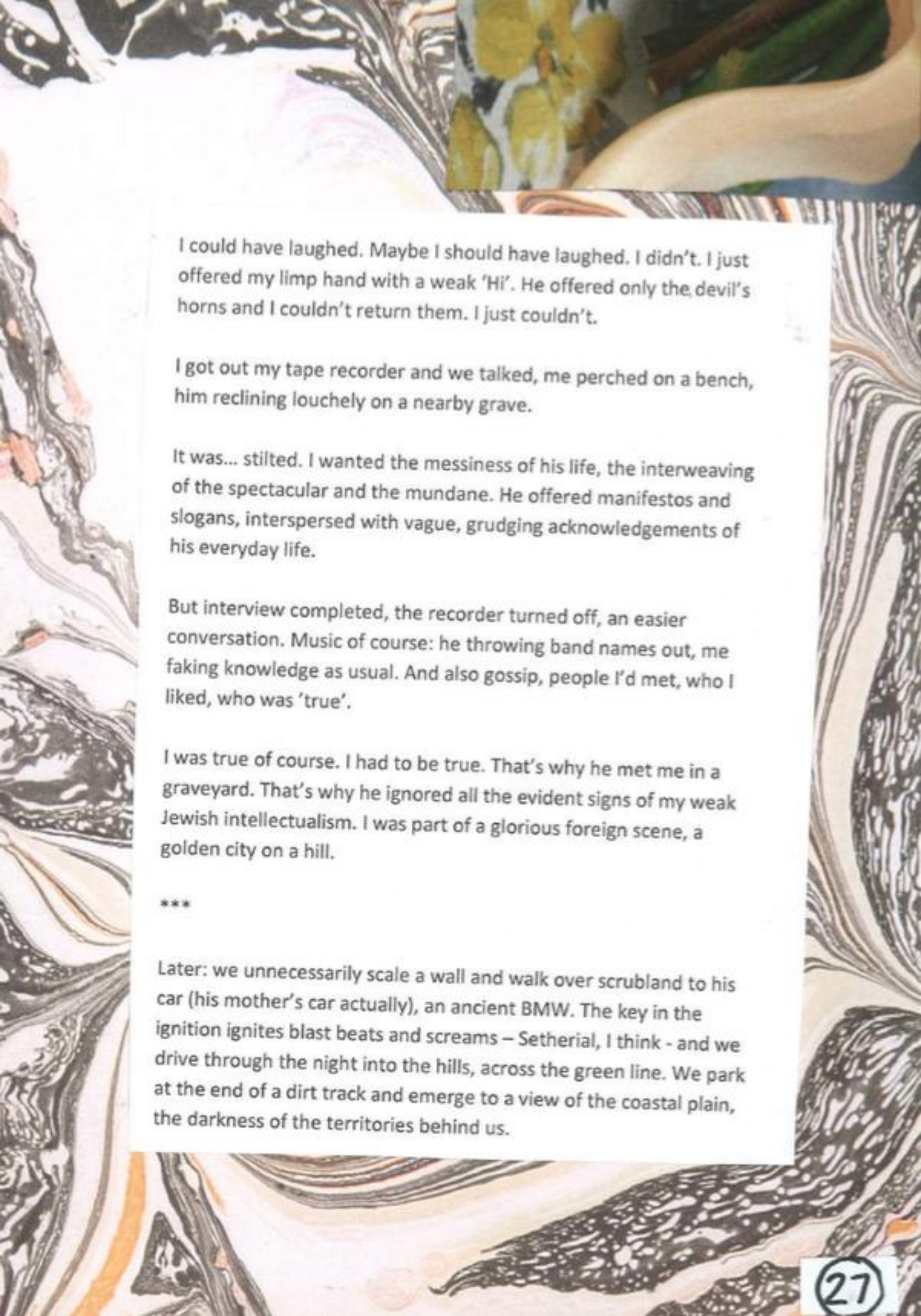
I don't remember the location of the graveyard. Night fell and I was driven through the Tel Aviv sprawl to a place of white stone. My informant dropped me off with a vague 'call me' (he didn't have a mobile and neither did I). I had been told that the wall petered out after 100 metres or so and it did; I was amidst solid gravestones with simple Hebrew inscriptions that I could just about decipher.

As promised, he was under a lonely cypress that served as the focal point for the winding paths between the stone, a silhouette highlighted against the dull light from whatever dormitory town it was that abutted the cemetery.

I approached, he turned, revealing a face painted in the stark black and white of the stones around him.

'I am Baal!' he cried.





I could have laughed. Maybe I should have laughed. I didn't. I just offered my limp hand with a weak 'Hi'. He offered only the devil's horns and I couldn't return them. I just couldn't.

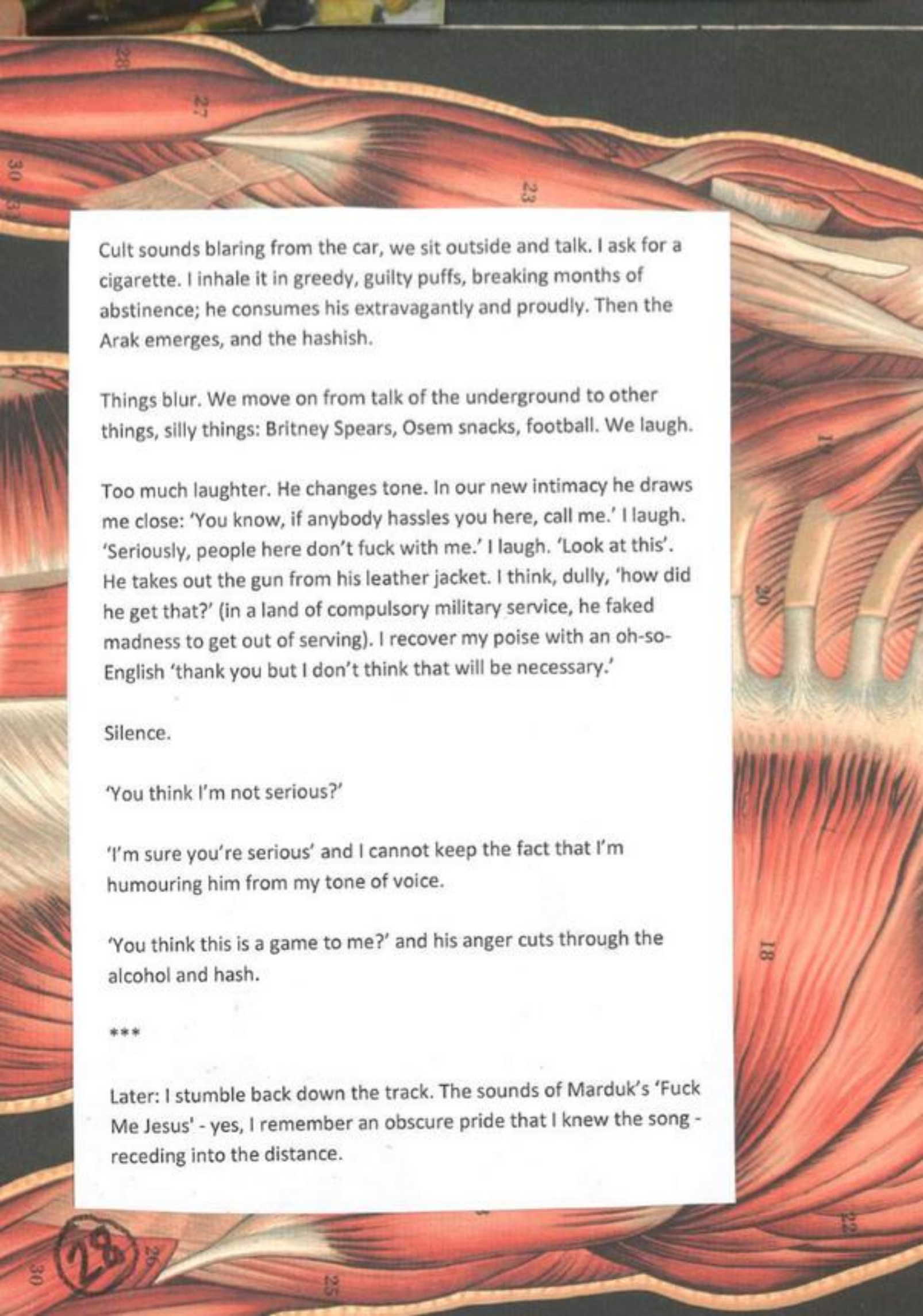
I got out my tape recorder and we talked, me perched on a bench, him reclining louchely on a nearby grave.

It was... stilted. I wanted the messiness of his life, the interweaving of the spectacular and the mundane. He offered manifestos and slogans, interspersed with vague, grudging acknowledgements of his everyday life.

But interview completed, the recorder turned off, an easier conversation. Music of course: he throwing band names out, me faking knowledge as usual. And also gossip, people I'd met, who I liked, who was 'true'.

I was true of course. I had to be true. That's why he met me in a graveyard. That's why he ignored all the evident signs of my weak Jewish intellectualism. I was part of a glorious foreign scene, a golden city on a hill.

Later: we unnecessarily scale a wall and walk over scrubland to his car (his mother's car actually), an ancient BMW. The key in the ignition ignites blast beats and screams – Setherial, I think - and we drive through the night into the hills, across the green line. We park at the end of a dirt track and emerge to a view of the coastal plain, the darkness of the territories behind us.



Cult sounds blaring from the car, we sit outside and talk. I ask for a cigarette. I inhale it in greedy, guilty puffs, breaking months of abstinence; he consumes his extravagantly and proudly. Then the Arak emerges, and the hashish.

Things blur. We move on from talk of the underground to other things, silly things: Britney Spears, Osem snacks, football. We laugh.

Too much laughter. He changes tone. In our new intimacy he draws me close: 'You know, if anybody hassles you here, call me.' I laugh. 'Seriously, people here don't fuck with me.' I laugh. 'Look at this'. He takes out the gun from his leather jacket. I think, dully, 'how did he get that?' (in a land of compulsory military service, he faked madness to get out of serving). I recover my poise with an oh-so-English 'thank you but I don't think that will be necessary.'

Silence.

'You think I'm not serious?'

'I'm sure you're serious' and I cannot keep the fact that I'm humouring him from my tone of voice.

'You think this is a game to me?' and his anger cuts through the alcohol and hash.

Later: I stumble back down the track. The sounds of Marduk's 'Fuck Me Jesus' - yes, I remember an obscure pride that I knew the song - receding into the distance.

There is no sign I was there. I collected the cigarette butts and the Arak bottle, eventually to be disposed of in a wadi a mile away. There is no need to fake anything else: the position of the body, the gun, the hand, the remains of the face, are eloquent enough.

An endless walk to Latrun. I wait in the trees, watching the bus stop until it begins to fill as dawn breaks. I join a line of soldiers and board the bus to Tel Aviv.

Then: a day of restless sleep, the breaking of the news, an awkward talk with an incredulous cop, endless ethnography as the scene lingers over the gorgeous tragedy.

Back home: juggling therapy and guilt with wading through my material, attempting to create some sort of sanitized narrative.

I read about one who came before: Per 'Dead' Ohlin, Norway, 1991. A suicide note, quoted on a hill in occupied territory by one for whom this was definitely not a game:

'Excuse all the blood'.

"I have brought
of different
into both I
so if one e
come:
doesn't all fal
Jonathan And
"I put the sam
into a bla
I do into a ba
art exhib



Sheep without Shepherds

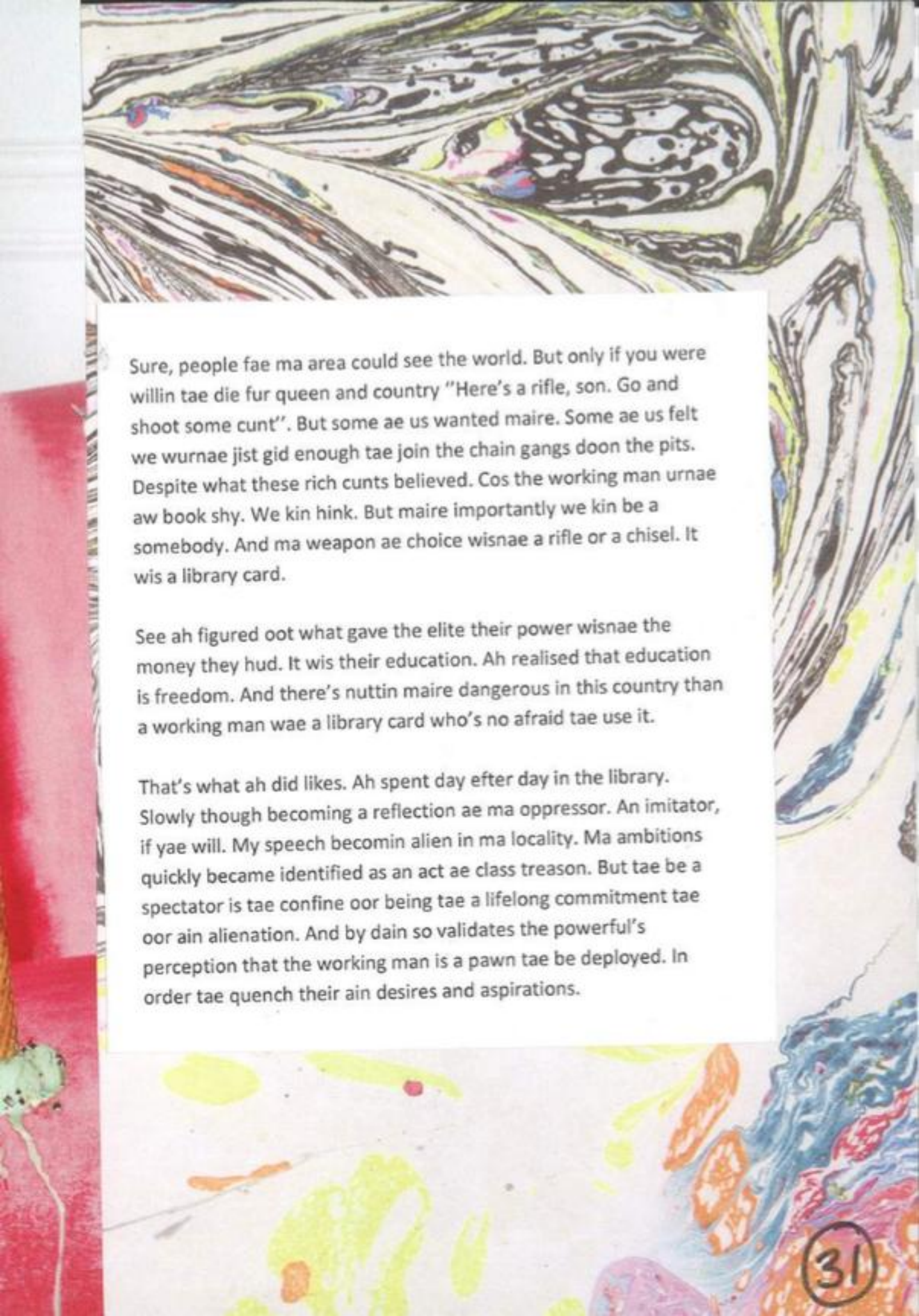
Colin Burnett

Ah wis born tae be a naeboady.

Fae the moment ah entered this world ah wis labelled only gid enough tae be doon the pit or brek ma back oan some hopeless buildin site. Yur telt "Work hard and yull git there. Yu'll be a 'Someboady' Aye, well, it's a beautiful idea. But that's aw it is.

It's a fuckin illusion. A make believe theory that stoaps us fae realisin that wur only as gid as what these rich cunts kin bleed oot ae us. Ma parents believed in the system likes. But in the end, in the end, what defined their years oan this planet wis a piece ae paper tae say when they arrived in this life and departed it. Watchin thum work thumselfs intae the graveyard. Seeing Thatcher raping five million folk. And ma mum gontae the social efter ma da passed away. Only tae be presented wae twity quid like it wis the golden ticket fae Willy Wonka himsel.

Ah mean seein this changed me. It made me realise the truth. That in this life nuttin is given tae cunts like me, it's taken. And growin up where ah'm fae maist ae the guys chose a life ae substances rather than substance. And who could blame thum, eh? Cos efteraw being high wis the only wey tae numb the pain ae reality. Ah mean wae aw the wonders oan this planet. Aw we git tae look at is the violated Lego sets the government pit up tae keep us contained. So when they shoot up it's wae the purpose ae making thum furget aw about the dole que that's waiting.



Sure, people fae ma area could see the world. But only if you were willin tae die fur queen and country "Here's a rifle, son. Go and shoot some cunt". But some ae us wanted maire. Some ae us felt we wurnae jist gid enough tae join the chain gangs doon the pits. Despite what these rich cunts believed. Cos the working man urnae aw book shy. We kin hink. But maire importantly we kin be a somebody. And ma weapon ae choice wisnae a rifle or a chisel. It wis a library card.

See ah figured oot what gave the elite their power wisnae the money they hud. It wis their education. Ah realised that education is freedom. And there's nuttin maire dangerous in this country than a working man wae a library card who's no afraid tae use it.

That's what ah did likes. Ah spent day efter day in the library. Slowly though becoming a reflection ae ma oppressor. An imitator, if yae will. My speech becomin alien in ma locality. Ma ambitions quickly became identified as an act ae class treason. But tae be a spectator is tae confine oor being tae a lifelong commitment tae oor ain alienation. And by dain so validates the powerful's perception that the working man is a pawn tae be deployed. In order tae quench their ain desires and aspirations.

Noo here ah um wae ma piece ae paper. Not yin that states ma time oan this planet or that ah died an honourable death fightin fur queen and country. But yin that announced that ah'm gontae be a 'Somebody' *"Mr Fraser we are delighted to inform you, you have an unconditional offer to study BSc (Hons) Public Sociology at Queen Margaret University in Edinburgh"*.

Imagine some cunt called Rupert. Fresh ootae Hogwarts, and who finds Lenny Fraser fae Granton waitin tae show him that yae dinnae need tae descend fae some ersehole ae the establishment tae huv an intellect. Aw yae need is a library card. Ah mean who kens, eh? Ah might be an advisor tae Nichola Sturgeon. In fact ah might run the show masel, fuck knows. But yin hing ah ken fur sure, is that the world is ma oyster. No where ah'm fae, no ma locality.





Wheatopocene

Alexandre Saunier

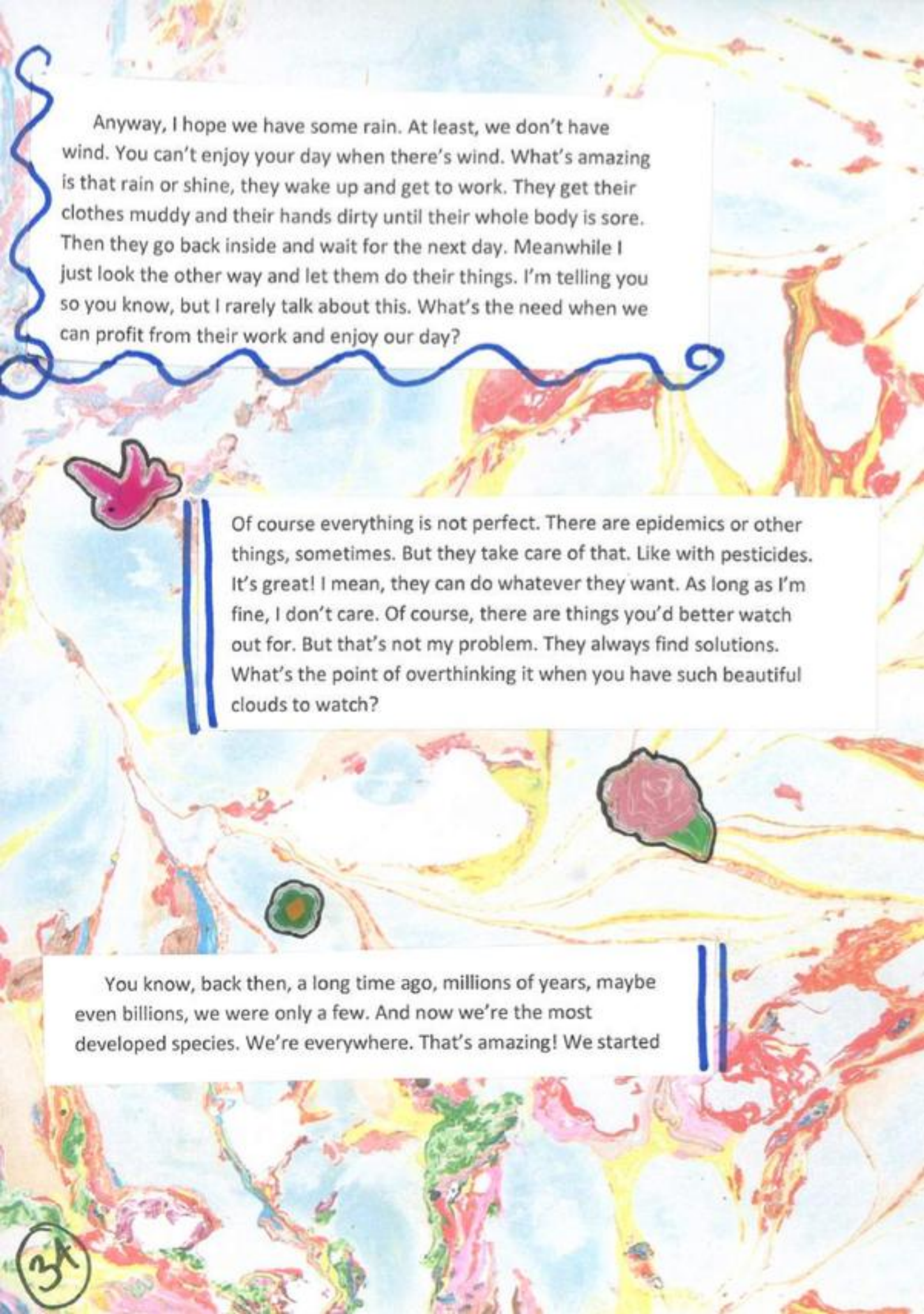
Look. The first light of dawn appears above the hill and they light up their house. Right on time. They know how to stick to a schedule. Sometimes they light up before dawn, sometimes after. Days might get longer or shorter, they don't care. They wake up, light up, and get to work. That's better than what I've heard of the past, when they woke up and went to sleep with the sun. I mean, I get the point, that's what I usually do. But ain't it better now? Now we can count on them.

It's a great sunny day. A few clouds here and there. I hope we'll get some rain. I love rain. Their machines will soon be here. They must be down south now. I love machines. They're a great invention. Robust, tireless, productive. Thanks to them, the fields stretch over the horizon, millions of them all over the world. Maybe even billions or trillions. That's beautiful! Can you imagine they used to do it by hand? No, machines are way better. Fields wouldn't have developed this way without them.

And the beauty is that machines are everywhere! Harvest, transportation, transformation, storage... Even cooking! They used to mill and cook by hand, now they feed straight from factories. With the stock they need there will soon be new fields to add to the count!

Of course there are also smaller fields with more rigorous practices. 'Organic,' they say. And they provide for organic restaurants. You have to provide for everyone. I mean, it takes all kinds to make a world. But if you want my opinion, those of us who enjoy that organic lifestyle are just conservative snobs obsessed with purity and refusing progress.

F



Anyway, I hope we have some rain. At least, we don't have wind. You can't enjoy your day when there's wind. What's amazing is that rain or shine, they wake up and get to work. They get their clothes muddy and their hands dirty until their whole body is sore. Then they go back inside and wait for the next day. Meanwhile I just look the other way and let them do their things. I'm telling you so you know, but I rarely talk about this. What's the need when we can profit from their work and enjoy our day?



Of course everything is not perfect. There are epidemics or other things, sometimes. But they take care of that. Like with pesticides. It's great! I mean, they can do whatever they want. As long as I'm fine, I don't care. Of course, there are things you'd better watch out for. But that's not my problem. They always find solutions. What's the point of overthinking it when you have such beautiful clouds to watch?



You know, back then, a long time ago, millions of years, maybe even billions, we were only a few. And now we're the most developed species. We're everywhere. That's amazing! We started



somewhere East and spread all over the world. It took time and dedication for sure. But we got it worked out. We even domesticated other species. I've been told we were just a few stems of wheat here and there, and we relied on the wind to spread. Can you imagine that? I wouldn't want to go back to that time. Having humans wake up every day to serve us is way better. They take care of rodents, of the earth, of epidemics... They do it so well that I can stand in my field and enjoy life. By the way, that wind means there should be rain tonight!

If you want my opinion, what's amazing about humans is their dedication. They are wheat's best friend, for sure. I've heard it's the same all over the world. They build all kinds of infrastructures to make sure we have water. But we don't need that here. There's quite a lot of rain. That's why I love the place. If you want my opinion, they're a fantastic species. I mean, they care for us, they tend to us, and everything. They must be kind of smart to do all that. But still it's funny to see them sweat to make sure we develop. Honestly, they must not have consciousness to be so docile and not enjoy nature. I even heard other species like rice and coffee found ways to tame humans too. But I only talk about this because you brought it up. If you ask me, I'd rather talk about the weather.



Peeling Up

Anoushka Benbow-Buitenhuis

Her hand is unsteady as she dabs at the hollows under her eyes with cream make-up. She is aware that she hasn't showered in four days and she smells like it. She pats her under-eye area with the facial powder she shoplifted and thinks how easy it was this time to slip into her knapsack. She didn't always evade security because she no longer looked like a middle-class woman with a nice northern suburbs flat, central heating and savings account. She reapplies lip gloss, pauses, then pops a mint to mask the taste of the man who just paid her one hundred dollars for oral sex and thinks she should have asked for more money. She breathes in and readjusts her crooked ponytail. It would have to do.

She is early but doesn't want to look like she is loitering – campus security were wise to her and had caught her sleeping in numerous areas. She had used the floor of her office space until another PhD student ratted her out and then management took her key. She recalls how they assumed she had a home and she was pulling all-nighters. She thinks how they'd looked at her in disgust; assuming her abuse of resources. She was a perfect fake; a brilliant actress – her life was a secret. No self-respecting academic would hire a homeless PhD student to teach their classes or work on their projects. She would probably be kicked off the PhD program, so she kept quiet. Every PhD sucker was doing it tough at the university; they squabbled over the limited precarious work and no-one had a



scholarship anymore, but, she thinks; at least they still have their flats and friends and family. *Or do they?* Who knows...but then again, in this culture, who cares.

She leaves the bathroom and walks down the hall, seeing academic staff and exchanging greetings, asking about their research, commiserating about lost funding and asking if anyone was looking for Research Assistants or markers. She occasionally picks up the odd month of RA work; doing a literature review or ghost-writing a journal article, and she works as a tutor for three units, which gives her some spotty income but nothing ongoing enough to secure another rented flat. She thinks her luck will improve, she just needs a break, and as she walks through the hallowed halls, with their bookshelves full of work written by the staff at her university, she is just another ambitious PhD student with a bulging backpack. She knocks on her PhD supervisor's door. He's an older professor close to retirement; kind, worldly and from a time before excellence frameworks and metrics and precariat academic workers. His door opens and he doesn't hide his surprise as he looks her over. She enters his large office and takes a seat. She starts tapping her foot, unaware she's doing it. She's hungry and trying to ignore how itchy she feels. He sits across from her, staring openly.

She breaks the silence. "Did you have a chance to read the chapter I emailed you? I like the addition of Mead, thanks for insisting that I look at some classical stuff."

"Elizabeth, has your situation improved? You look terrible."

She looks at him, meeting his concerned gaze. "Improvement is a subjective term, Michael."

He sighs. "This is a tremendous strain on you. The PTSD is what made you lose your flat in the first place. Have you tried the university counselling? They're really good, you know -"

"Yes, I did try it out. I saw Kate, I think that was her name? For about a year..."

"Well, see her again. They are there to help, you know."

She says, "I'm sick of telling my story. I'm so sick of me. Can't we talk about the chapter? I want to work it into a journal article. I need to submit at least another one this year. At least."

He says, "Well, you need to try harder to get help. It's not going to find you, you know."

Michael sounds annoyed now; she is familiar with this tone – the social workers and people running shelters and many others fashion a version of it. She thinks of it as empathy exhaustion. She looks at her Converse. The white rubber on the tops are peeling up. They don't look fun or hipster or early-career academic; they are beginning to look like the drug dealer's near the subway entrance. She is aware she is slipping. She doesn't want to slip. She just needs a break or two, get a few things going her way again, like the old days.

"Are you using again, Elizabeth?"

"Michael, I can't believe you'd ask me that. I have my six month sober chip in my bag."

"You didn't answer me."

"I'm fucking offended. I truly am."

"You're jittery. Your clothing is loose and you're scratching your arm so hard you're going to rip your skin off. And your eyes...my God, Elizabeth. I think we need to talk again about a leave of absence. Get yourself together."

She stands and says shrilly, "I came here to talk about *my chapter* and *my academic career* and I'm being vilified for my past mistakes! *I won't hear it!*"

As she storms from the room, she hears him call her and feels a twinge at the sadness and defeat in his voice. Tears prickle in her eyes as she finds the stairs and makes her way to the sessional hot-

desk area. She has over two hundred first-year essays to grade and the unit coordinator wants them back quickly to students so they can use the feedback for their next assessment. The Enterprise Bargaining Agreement says these essays don't need intellectual judgment and she should take ten minutes to mark one thousand words. There must be something wrong with her because she takes over half an hour. She stops by the bathroom to snort some speed. It is going to be another long night.

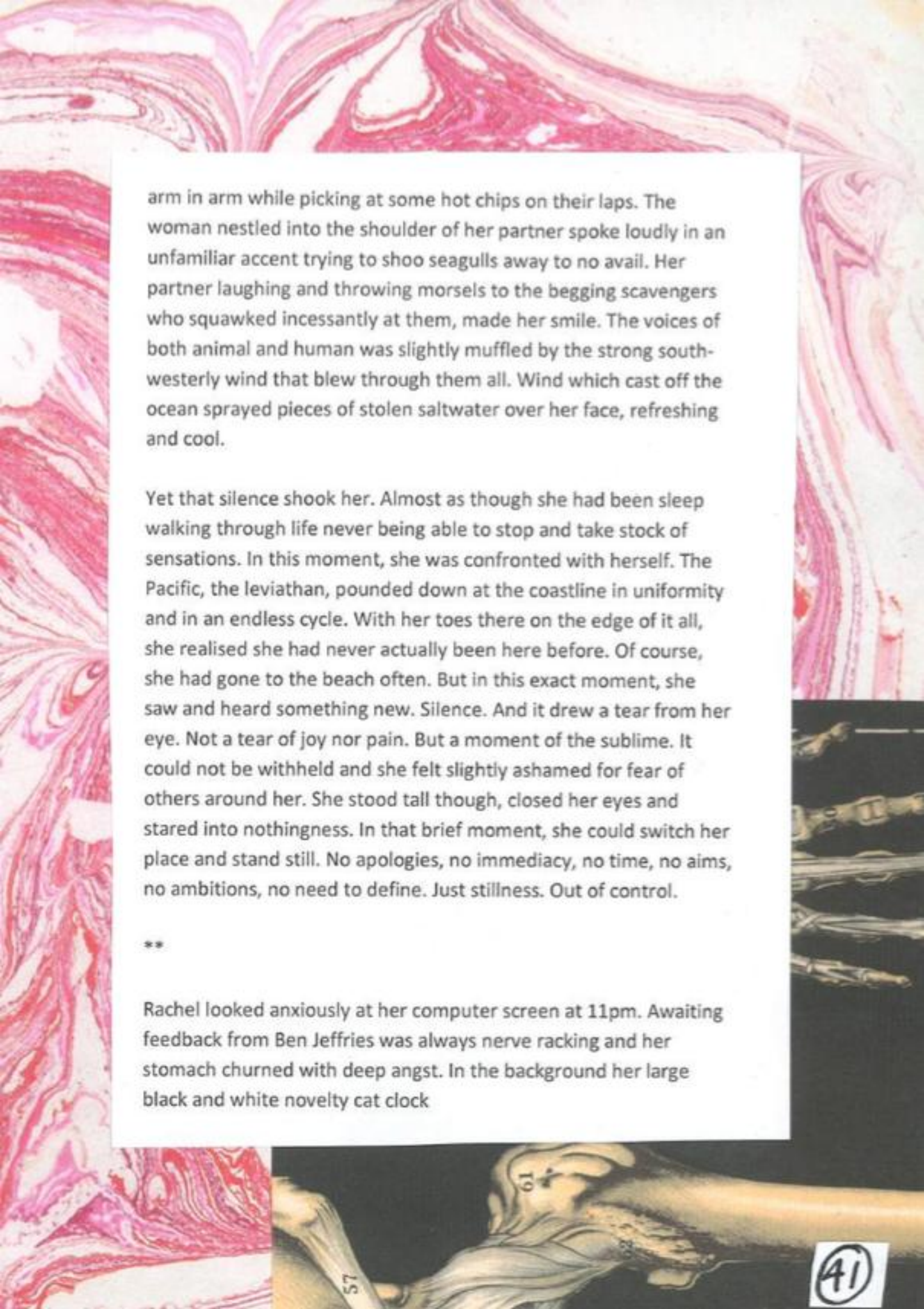


In the Still

Nick Osbaldiston

She stood still in front of the fading horizon of the Pacific at dusk. The breadcrumbs showing her the way back home seemed insignificant in this moment and she thought it would be nice if someone else devoured them up for her. Butterflies within her stomach were let loose in the hopes that they would not return anytime soon. Her feet slightly submerged beneath the golden sands felt warm and safe. The houses behind her that stood on sand might waver in the storms, but in her place, where she was, her body was firm and secure. Water flowed over her ankles tingling the skin and sending a smooth signal through to her that she was ok. In this space, and in this moment, the things that she thought that she couldn't, were now gone.

The first thing that she noticed was the silence. Nothingness. It surrounded her body and pricked her brain delicately without the brute force of those things that promised to be good in her other place. There was sound though. To her left children dug into the sand seeking to trap oncoming water for their moats much to their delight. Their laughter though aligned beautifully with this place, to this moment. To her right two elderly lovers sat together talking





arm in arm while picking at some hot chips on their laps. The woman nestled into the shoulder of her partner spoke loudly in an unfamiliar accent trying to shoo seagulls away to no avail. Her partner laughing and throwing morsels to the begging scavengers who squawked incessantly at them, made her smile. The voices of both animal and human was slightly muffled by the strong south-westerly wind that blew through them all. Wind which cast off the ocean sprayed pieces of stolen saltwater over her face, refreshing and cool.

Yet that silence shook her. Almost as though she had been sleep walking through life never being able to stop and take stock of sensations. In this moment, she was confronted with herself. The Pacific, the leviathan, pounded down at the coastline in uniformity and in an endless cycle. With her toes there on the edge of it all, she realised she had never actually been here before. Of course, she had gone to the beach often. But in this exact moment, she saw and heard something new. Silence. And it drew a tear from her eye. Not a tear of joy nor pain. But a moment of the sublime. It could not be withheld and she felt slightly ashamed for fear of others around her. She stood tall though, closed her eyes and stared into nothingness. In that brief moment, she could switch her place and stand still. No apologies, no immediacy, no time, no aims, no ambitions, no need to define. Just stillness. Out of control.

**

Rachel looked anxiously at her computer screen at 11pm. Awaiting feedback from Ben Jeffries was always nerve racking and her stomach churned with deep angst. In the background her large black and white novelty cat clock




ticked seconds into her mind that pounded on her nervous system. Time was not her friend tonight. The urgency of the deadline and the confusion amongst her team online left her vulnerable to late night snacking and the occasional swig of Canadian whiskey. Often she would need to rub the redness that surrounded her blue eyes to alleviate the itching of her pupils. Such was the nature of late night after late night working on the 'submission'. Her space in this building stood far above the frivolity below her in the bars and clubs showing football games on their LED televisions. Now and again she could hear the screams of fans cheering, the crash of glasses being dropped on the cold concrete ground and the occasional screeching of tires on asphalt as sirens blared signalling emergencies.

She sat tapping her laptop case with her carefully manicured fingers, hunched over it like a hoarder stashing decaying treasures. Darkness surrounded her, but that is how she preferred to work in the evening. Something about being away from the light reminded her that it was indeed night. Maybe she liked to think she was still normal. The room was dimly illuminated by the glow of the screen highlighting certain objects of her harried existence. The half-eaten tub of Chinese food she had for dinner, the wine glass stained with the scarlet memories of an unsuccessful date on Saturday night, the unfolded but clean clothes that lay in a pile on her floor after a morning of figuring out how to define her look that day, and the shiny framed certificate that proudly hung over her wall with the title of 'Bachelor of'. Little pieces of evidence of her ambition, goals and failures.


No email. Quarter past eleven now. Rachel turned away from her little crimes of food and alcohol to other things to interrupt her





anxiety. Incessant pings on her mobile phone called to her all night long while she sat in alone in her room. Friends on social media wanted to know when she was coming out tonight, left unanswered but 'seen'. Rachel felt slight pangs of guilt for not responding immediately. Quickly, her fingers ran over the words on her handheld keyboard spelling out 'soz, gotta work!' followed by the picture of a cat frowning that she had saved to her phone for such occasions. Messages chimed back signalling empathy. One friend though, her best friend, responded with a 'living the life huh?' What did that mean? Rachel ruminated for a moment, too much if she was honest with herself.

Amongst the electronic noises and whirring of the air conditioner, Rachel finally heard the sound she had been both impatiently awaiting and deeply dreading. 'Message' spoke her computer in the cute kid voice she applied to make it appealing. Tracing her now slightly shaking fingers over the mouse pad, she double tapped on the email with the header 'RE: Submission'. A short sentence. 'Hey Rach, looks good. Just a few suggestions in track changes. See attached. Ben'.



Rachel bit her lip gently and then ran her fingers through her strung out hair. She sighed loudly; a noise that symbolised the following in her head, 'bloody track changes...' Reluctantly, she opened the document. The red lines and speech bubbles of comments took aim at her like a gun and shot down her confidence that she would be getting much sleep tonight. Her head dropped back onto the pillow supporting her weight and immediately her eyes were drawn to the inspirational quote she wrote herself on the ceiling. 'This is going to be good. This is going to be worth it'.



Drawing courage from this, she opened up her group chat to her small group of employees all waiting in their own worlds across town and wrote, 'sorry folks, we have some work to do'. Tapping at her keyboard for the rest of the night, her friends kept messaging, her phone kept calling, but she was under the water where she could not hear them.



Kat & Jane

Shaun Huston



Kat is late.

She isn't late often, and even today she'll probably only be ten minutes past, but she's uneasy about how her boss, Matt, will react.

Kat thinks about Jeff and Scott, who pretty much get away with whatever. Playing games at their desks. Long lunches. Chatting, sometimes loudly, over their cubicle walls. She's seen Matt leave work with Jeff and Scott, all laughs and fist bumps.

On the other hand, Jane, her best friend since starting this job, came back late from lunch last week. Matt called her into his office. Kat could see, and sort of hear, Matt yelling at Jane. Kat took Jane out for drinks that night. They didn't talk about the yelling so much, but they did talk about how Jeff and Scott never get yelled at even though they're the biggest screw-offs in the office.

Then there was Eduardo. Eduardo got fired after coming in late, quite a lot, a couple of months ago. His kid was in the hospital. Kat covered for him a few times. So did Jane. They were both fine with that. Matt knew all this and fired Eduardo anyway.

Kat picks up her pace and finally arrives at the office. She takes a deep breath and opens the door.

#

Kat is late.

This was becoming a habit, and it was starting to fill her with dread.

Kat works at the Emma Goldman Brewery Co-operative. The brewery is owned and operated by a group of twenty women and

five men. Everyone is a worker and an owner. Everyone rotates jobs. There's no boss to be mad at you for being late.

What Kat fears is letting everyone down.

She knew that someone, probably Jane, her best friend since college and sister in the co-op, would start to notice her repeated lateness. This wouldn't be Jane's first time seeing Kat fall into a pattern like this.

Kat thinks about Audrey, who had a knee injury a couple of months ago. Everyone else picked up the slack and made sure she had company while she recovered. What did Jane call it? Oh yeah. "Serial reciprocity." Basically, you're there for everyone and everyone is there for you. Kat thinks that she might need to be on the other side of that for awhile.

That thought made her anxious.

Anxious because, unlike with Audrey's knee, you can't see what's keeping Kat from getting out of bed on time. Anxious because she doesn't want to think, let alone talk, about the depression welling up inside of her.

And there it was, Kat sighed to herself.

Kat arrives at the brewery and sees Jane through the glass door. Jane smiles and waves. Kat returns the gestures. She's sure Jane sees how forced they are. She takes a deep breath and opens the door.

#

Kat is late.

Even though she has a permit to be out in public, alone, she needs to be at her station in less than twenty minutes and she's cutting it short. In truth, her permit is more privilege than right. If an Enforcer wants to detain her and find her in violation, he can.

Her friend Jane was out past her permit a few months ago. Kat hasn't seen her since. At her lowest moments, Kat thinks that Jane is dead. At other times, she thinks maybe Jane has just been moved to another House, or, placed into a marriage auction.

Death aside, that's the fate Kat most wants to avoid.

Not that being auctioned off is the only way to end up married. A man could propose, too. If that happened, she could decline, but the Judicial Authority would have the final say. The man could be found unfit, but that was rare, and, in any case, no one would care about her preference.

No, Kat has a plan.

The most content, maybe even happy, person Kat knows is Miss Graham, the head of her House. Kat wants to be Miss Graham. But to do that, she needs to stay unmarried. This means she can't attract male attention and needs to stay out of trouble. Being late would be getting into trouble.

In two and a half years, at twenty-five, she can apply to be emancipated. If that's granted, she will be free to decline proposals (the odds of getting one will start to decline, too). That's the track to stay on.

Kat is shaken out of her thoughts by another woman (girl?), in pants (!) and a shirt (!), running (!) up the sidewalk.

Kat is stunned.

The girl brushes past Kat and says, "You don't have to do this."

Two Enforcers appear from around the corner. A couple of the men on the sidewalk try to grab the girl, but she feints and dodges past them before disappearing into an alley.

Kat unfreezes and starts walking again (why didn't she take the tram?). What did that girl mean, "You don't have to do this"? She pictures Jane. Kat can feel herself tearing up with anger and sadness.

Damn that girl.

Kat finally arrives at the manor. She walks around to the servant's entrance, takes a deep breath, and opens the door.

Thanks to Anne-Marie Deitering for her editorial suggestions and revisions.



Navy Rum

Karl Johnson


The Navy Rum has appeared on the table, shifting the course of the evening. My Step-Mum must've gone to bed. It's just me and Dad at the kitchen table now. With the weather, outside in the dark.

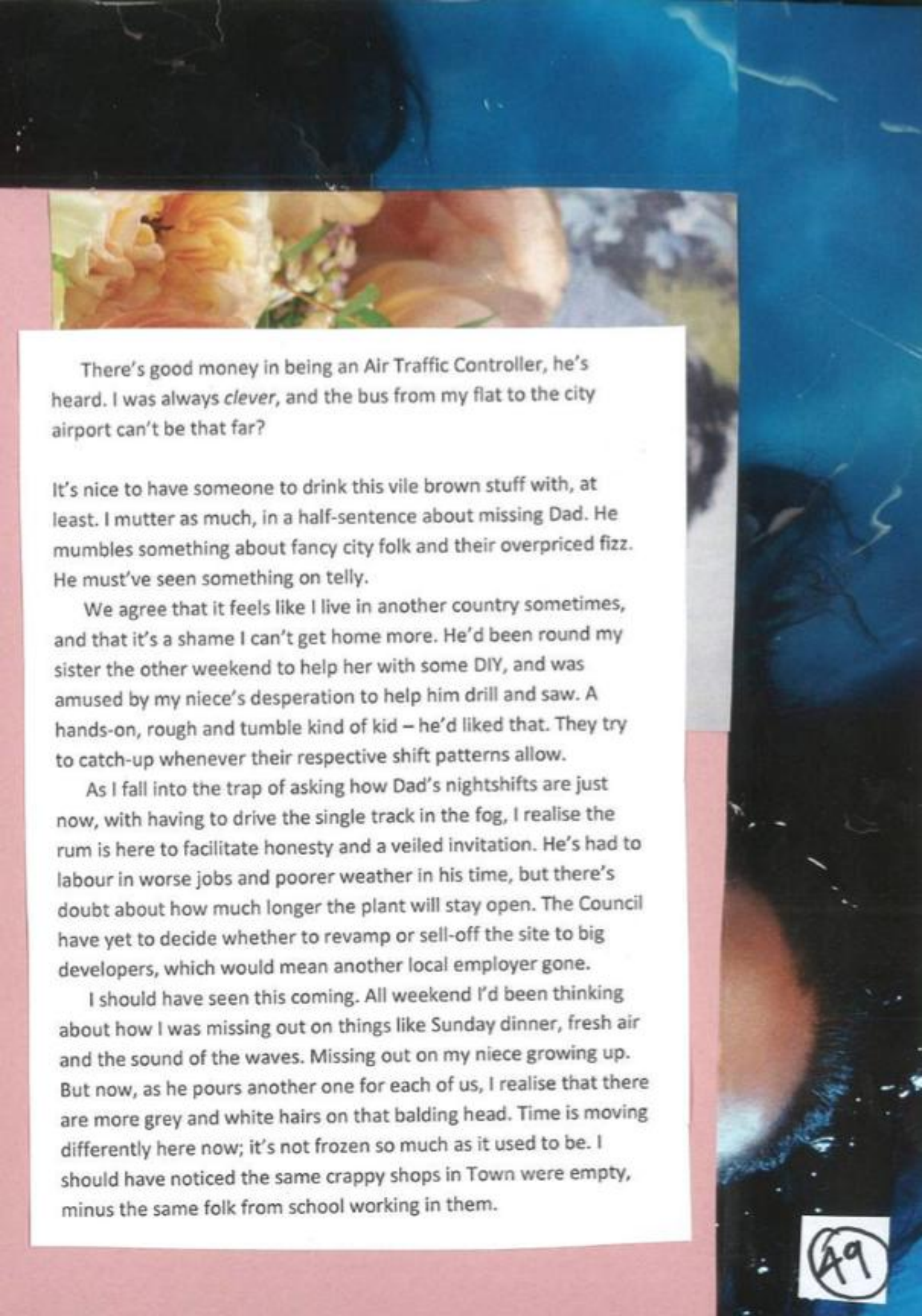
How's my work going? Have they made me a permanent job yet? Can he call me *Professor* now?

I perform my edited explanation – he must've forgotten; I'm sure this is the fifth time we've had this conversation in the last year – about how it's like this for a lot of people starting out these days, and about how I haven't been able to get funding for a PhD. I'm happy where I am and I really enjoy the bits of lecturing and project work I'm trusted enough to do. The money's not as much as the 'proper' staff get, but I'm lucky to be in my position and my Head of Department wants to keep me around. Anyway, I don't know if anywhere else would think I was any good.

Ah, do I need any money? Would I be better off somewhere else if it was full-time?

He's missed my imposter sub-text, and stuck to the basics of what my job tangibly gives me. At Mum's yesterday, she'd asked how she should explain my job to her friends, now that I think about it.






There's good money in being an Air Traffic Controller, he's heard. I was always *clever*, and the bus from my flat to the city airport can't be that far?

It's nice to have someone to drink this vile brown stuff with, at least. I mutter as much, in a half-sentence about missing Dad. He mumbles something about fancy city folk and their overpriced fizz. He must've seen something on telly.

We agree that it feels like I live in another country sometimes, and that it's a shame I can't get home more. He'd been round my sister the other weekend to help her with some DIY, and was amused by my niece's desperation to help him drill and saw. A hands-on, rough and tumble kind of kid – he'd liked that. They try to catch-up whenever their respective shift patterns allow.

As I fall into the trap of asking how Dad's nightshifts are just now, with having to drive the single track in the fog, I realise the rum is here to facilitate honesty and a veiled invitation. He's had to labour in worse jobs and poorer weather in his time, but there's doubt about how much longer the plant will stay open. The Council have yet to decide whether to revamp or sell-off the site to big developers, which would mean another local employer gone.

I should have seen this coming. All weekend I'd been thinking about how I was missing out on things like Sunday dinner, fresh air and the sound of the waves. Missing out on my niece growing up. But now, as he pours another one for each of us, I realise that there are more grey and white hairs on that balding head. Time is moving differently here now; it's not frozen so much as it used to be. I should have noticed the same crappy shops in Town were empty, minus the same folk from school working in them.

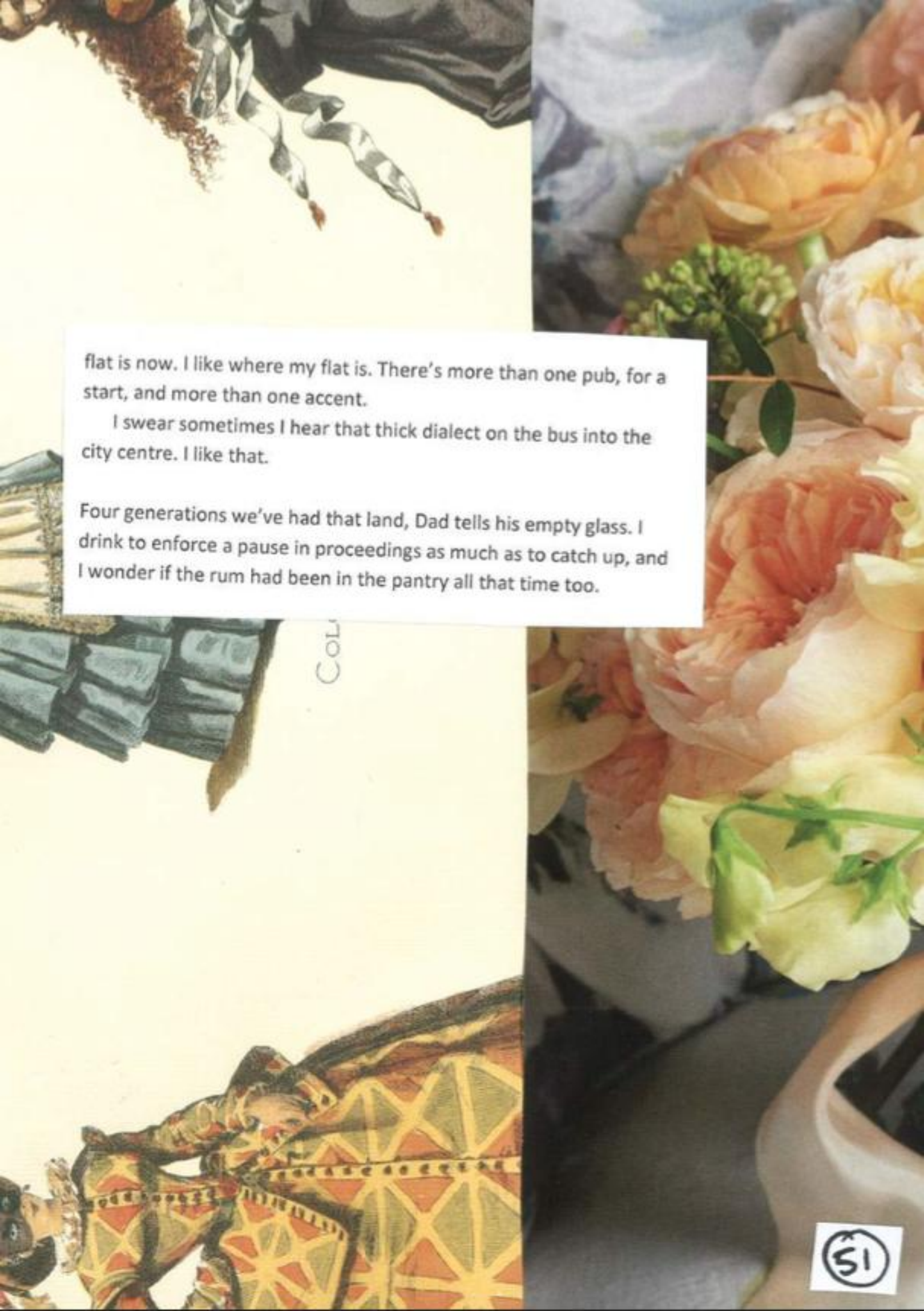


Two-thirds down the bottle, while I'm pretending to remember a farmer from the South-end, Dad admits that he and my uncles are going to have to get serious about the land. Grant money is harder to secure and the Commission is too afraid of what Brexit might mean to pay attention to supporting their people. They need ideas, but Dad can't agree with his brothers and none of the three of them feel confident in taking full responsibility. A 'monitor farm' project is running with the guy at the South-end (Did I know his kids or something? Racking my brain...), but that kind of innovation and expansion is "a big commitment".

"Commitment" (to Dad) means time, energy, and *being clever*. It means that unless some combination of me, my sister and our cousins take on the land – and tackle the ever-dwindling prospects it faces, then it'll have to be sold. Dad and my uncles don't have the kind of years, or lower back strength, to see it through enough to make the effort worthwhile.

Are my efforts in "all that learning" worthwhile? Is that *his* subtext? I'm not sure if Dad knows the word subtext – I mistakenly said "brioche" at lunchtime and we went round in circles about bread for almost fifteen minutes. He can read the guilt on my face as my brow tries to do some 'life-plan' calculations. I was trying to appear concerned, but my acting range is limited.

Neither Mum nor Dad begrudge me my degrees. I truly believe that they're proud of me, and I got my picture in the paper twice for something that wasn't drink-driving or Best in Show. But it was the massive student loan that took me away from them – which doesn't exist anymore – and after the best part of a decade the only outcome they can see is my debt and hundreds of miles between us. My calculations aren't coming up nicely. If I'd taken that damned apprenticeship, I'd have a house by now – but a house up The Hill, rather than anywhere remotely near where my



flat is now. I like where my flat is. There's more than one pub, for a start, and more than one accent.

I swear sometimes I hear that thick dialect on the bus into the city centre. I like that.

Four generations we've had that land, Dad tells his empty glass. I drink to enforce a pause in proceedings as much as to catch up, and I wonder if the rum had been in the pantry all that time too.

Col


2343 - A Day in the Life of a Citizen of Cassini

John-Paul Smiley

Sarah awoke promptly at 6:30am. As always. Eyes open and alert, she stepped out of the sleep-cubicle which just sufficiently covered her frame. Humans had long been genetically adjusted to cope psychologically with extremely cramped living conditions, a pod like existence becoming the norm. It was all she had ever known. There was no need for that archaic ritual called 'breakfast' as food had been intravenously injected into her at night, with an implant time-releasing nutrients throughout the day to ensure maximum energy and health. She was always energized upon waking. The only time she remembered experiencing hunger was exactly six years, four months, eight hours, thirty-one minutes and sixteen seconds ago, when her nutrition implant had malfunctioned. That event caused quite the stir at the time.

As usual, the day was spent on her assigned career, searching the universe for emerging life to be categorized and classified; monitored and covertly cultivated. This was deemed necessary in order to prevent any potential threat to the harmonious society finally achieved by humanity. It was a responsibility that Sarah took seriously. The biological parts of her body had long been optimised to withstand extremes of temperature and pressure; a prudent requirement for a species whose existence now routinely required inter-stellar travel. This had become standard for humanity after the 2195 accord mandating germ-line genetic amendments to the species. Three planets and one moon were to be assessed today, with a record required to be uploaded to the central government database. This would, as always, be double and triple checked by others in the coming days. There was always a certain trepidation





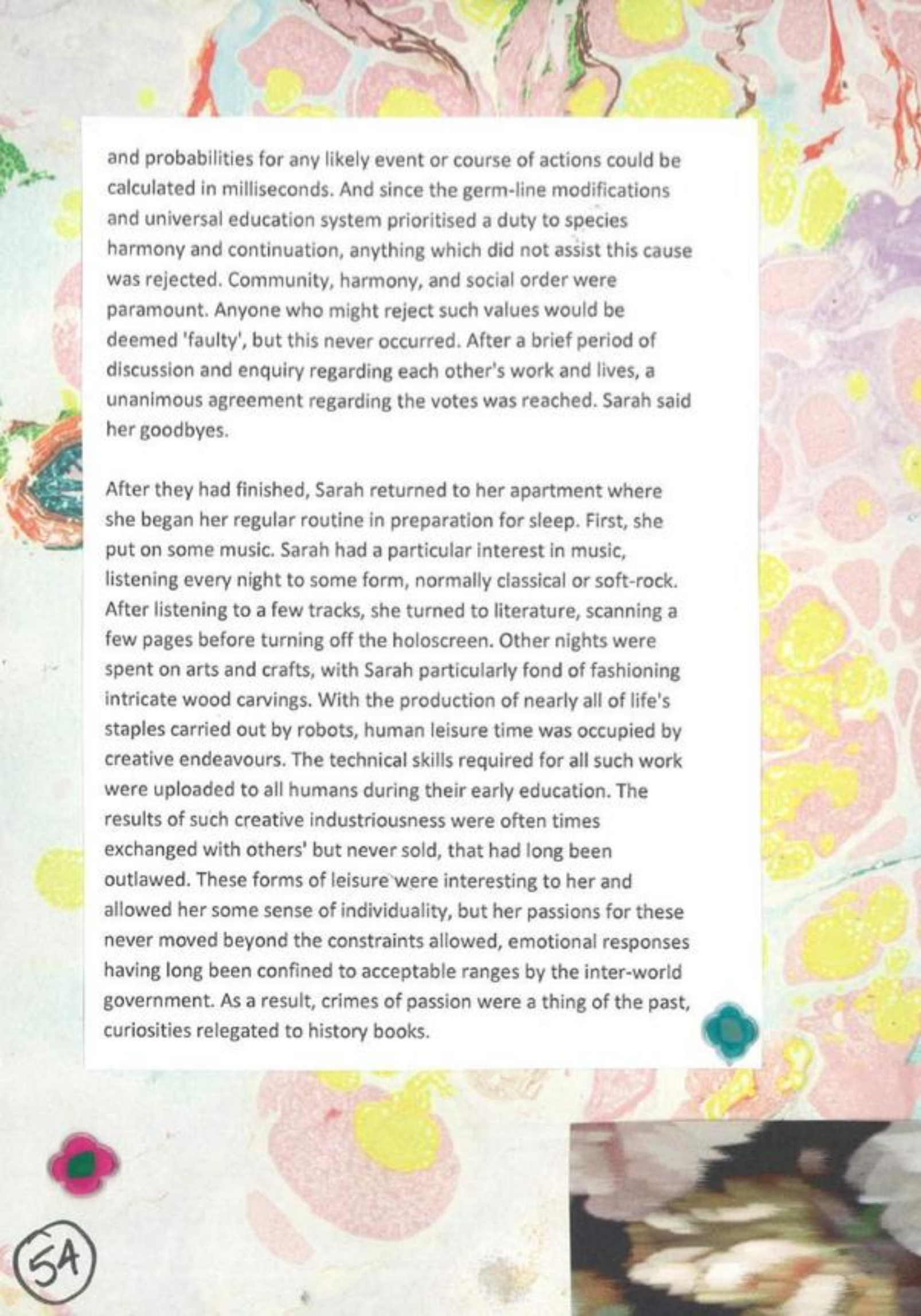
with engaging new species, Sarah remembering the history lessons of her childhood where she was informed of humanity's own past immaturity, as a species dominated by the whims of individual selfishness and biological urges. It seemed so remote to her. After completing her task, Sarah brought up the holoscreen and booked a vehicle to take her to meet her friends. Travel to anywhere was conducted exclusively by Hyperloop and/or automated vehicles, powered by a combination of solar and kinetic energy. No human had physically driven a vehicle in over a hundred years. Deaths by any form of transportation accident had been zero since around the same time.

THE FUTURE

in and Moscow might have been
look at what could have been.
ties van der Rohe & James Stirling

She arrived at one of the designated, sanctioned meeting rooms where free-assembly was permitted and greeted her friends. They would all vote on a variety of policy decisions tomorrow. And though there were no longer political parties, just devolved chapters of the central, inter-world government, there were still democratic traditions and ideals. Voting on particular policy options was mandatory, the duty of every citizen. This was not a simple majority system though. Ultimately the final decision was for the Council of the Enlightened. Given the uniformity of the education system, however, differences of opinion regarding policy directions were rare, differing usually by only minuscule degrees.

Disagreements did still occur, but they were now resolved in moments. With telepathy now standard and human brains part machine, the calculations necessary to judge the relative merits



and probabilities for any likely event or course of actions could be calculated in milliseconds. And since the germ-line modifications and universal education system prioritised a duty to species harmony and continuation, anything which did not assist this cause was rejected. Community, harmony, and social order were paramount. Anyone who might reject such values would be deemed 'faulty', but this never occurred. After a brief period of discussion and enquiry regarding each other's work and lives, a unanimous agreement regarding the votes was reached. Sarah said her goodbyes.

After they had finished, Sarah returned to her apartment where she began her regular routine in preparation for sleep. First, she put on some music. Sarah had a particular interest in music, listening every night to some form, normally classical or soft-rock. After listening to a few tracks, she turned to literature, scanning a few pages before turning off the holoscreen. Other nights were spent on arts and crafts, with Sarah particularly fond of fashioning intricate wood carvings. With the production of nearly all of life's staples carried out by robots, human leisure time was occupied by creative endeavours. The technical skills required for all such work were uploaded to all humans during their early education. The results of such creative industriousness were often times exchanged with others' but never sold, that had long been outlawed. These forms of leisure were interesting to her and allowed her some sense of individuality, but her passions for these never moved beyond the constraints allowed, emotional responses having long been confined to acceptable ranges by the inter-world government. As a result, crimes of passion were a thing of the past, curiosities relegated to history books.

retro-fantasy aesthetic

enthraling

Sarah re-entered her sleep-cubicle where the presence of her body triggered the release of a mild sedative, followed by the activation of the automated nutrition delivery system which connected to the base of her neck. She smiled with contentment as she began to drift away, the same way she had every night of her life, the same way every citizen of Cassini smiled with contentment every night.



SMILE

Maddie Breeze



Walking to work along the high street, across town to the university, a balding white guy in a suit tells me I've got a beautiful smile. Don't stop smiling he says, don't ever stop smiling. I'm too pre-occupied with the day ahead to tell him to worry about how his own face is arranged and/or go fuck himself, and besides I didn't think I *was* smiling. I do not have resting bitch face. I have something else, resting nice face? Resting talk-to-me face? Resting amenable-pliant-happy-to-help face? Resting heteronormative-white-femininity face? Resting sure-I'll-do-the-emotional-labour face? My face looks smiling when I'm not intending it too, I smile without realizing, and I smile a lot. I'm going to work on developing more of a resting bitch face.

People comment on my face in the workplace. A (senior) colleague told me I shouldn't smile so much when I speak in meetings; it makes me look untrustworthy, sneaky, and deceptive, as if I am secretly laughing, making a mockery. Either that or it makes me look stupid, naïve, unaware of the gravity of proceedings. I think the problem is reading character and morality and ability from a face, not with my actual face. I tell the (senior) colleague I will make an effort to smile less. Arranging my face in a particular way doesn't appear in my job description as far as I can see. But it is there.





& PLEASE SAINT

I tried to track the times my smile was 'complemented' at work and lost count. Course evaluation forms, completed by students giving feedback on my teaching reliably give feedback on my face and the feelings that are imagined to generate it. The lecturer is always smiling and happy to help. The lecturer is friendly and approachable, very supportive. The lecturer is very smiley and enthusiastic. The lecturer is clearly passionate about the subject, and happy to teach it. Colleagues tell me that I have brightened up the place; the mood of the department has lifted since I arrived. I smile a lot and it makes others smile more too. I don't think this feedback is about my face, as much as it is about what is expected of me.

It is not part of my job to be happy. But it is there. My contract is temporary, and very short. I am scared that if I'm not likeable, then I'm not employable. It is part of my job to support students, and be collegial. I care about the work that I do. I care about students, I care about colleagues, and I care about trying to do good teaching, and good research. Sometimes I do feel happy at work. Sometimes I present as happier than I feel – smile when I don't feel like smiling – because I imagine it is expected of me. Because it is expected of me. I'm going to work on my resting bitch face.

lala!

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Ahmed, S (2017) *Living a Feminist Life* Durham, Duke University Press
Hochschild, A R (1983) *The Managed Heart: The Commercialization of Human Feeling* University of California Press

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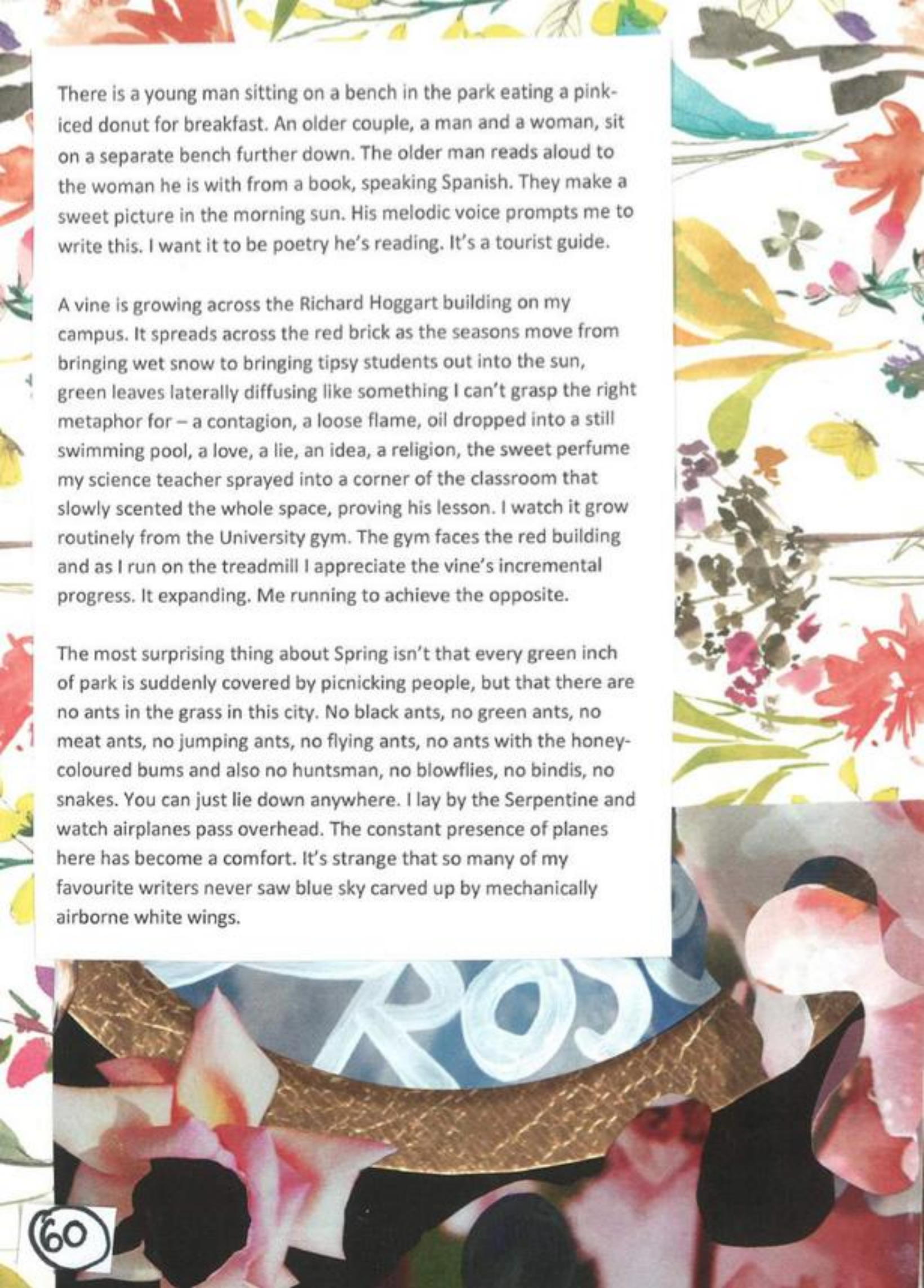
⇒ Euston

10 Scenes in London, 2017

Ashleigh Watson

There is a busker in the courtyard playing Misirlou on electric guitar. The instrument lights up around the edge, flashing red and green LEDs on a rope string like it's Christmas. It's June. Most people eat their lunch or smoke with one hand and take advantage of the free Wi-Fi with the other, sometimes managing all three, necks craned down towards sandwiches and palm-sized screens and then up to blow smoke at the sky. A man approaches the burrito store. One hand protrudes from the middle of his chest between the fastened buttons of his cardigan. The deformity is obviously caused by an injury and a sling under his layered clothing but he still compels double takes as he passes. My napkin has illustrated instructions for correctly eating my burrito.

I spot a genuine punk in Euston on the escalator – he is carried down as I move toward its ascending pair. I watch him. Pale sharp-angled face, thin body caked in black cotton, iced with badges and hanging silver chains. Heavy boots. Blond hair shaved on each side and the middle gelled into a Mohawk of quite miraculous length. He jumps off the last stair like a child. I delight.



There is a young man sitting on a bench in the park eating a pink-iced donut for breakfast. An older couple, a man and a woman, sit on a separate bench further down. The older man reads aloud to the woman he is with from a book, speaking Spanish. They make a sweet picture in the morning sun. His melodic voice prompts me to write this. I want it to be poetry he's reading. It's a tourist guide.


A vine is growing across the Richard Hoggart building on my campus. It spreads across the red brick as the seasons move from bringing wet snow to bringing tipsy students out into the sun, green leaves laterally diffusing like something I can't grasp the right metaphor for – a contagion, a loose flame, oil dropped into a still swimming pool, a love, a lie, an idea, a religion, the sweet perfume my science teacher sprayed into a corner of the classroom that slowly scented the whole space, proving his lesson. I watch it grow routinely from the University gym. The gym faces the red building and as I run on the treadmill I appreciate the vine's incremental progress. It expanding. Me running to achieve the opposite.

The most surprising thing about Spring isn't that every green inch of park is suddenly covered by picnicking people, but that there are no ants in the grass in this city. No black ants, no green ants, no meat ants, no jumping ants, no flying ants, no ants with the honey-coloured bums and also no huntsman, no blowflies, no bindis, no snakes. You can just lie down anywhere. I lay by the Serpentine and watch airplanes pass overhead. The constant presence of planes here has become a comfort. It's strange that so many of my favourite writers never saw blue sky carved up by mechanically airborne white wings.


A girl on the dance floor, tall with brown hair curled (or maybe naturally curly), dances near me and around me and I around her — not close to each other but moving to the beat like orbiting moons, marked both by gravity and by distance. I barely catch her face when we turn in sync toward one another because even drunk I don't have the courage. I mostly see the back of her — her bare back in the UV light, soft shoulder blades killing me whenever I catch them between other people. After a while the friend I'm there with points the stranger out, whispers (yells over the music) that this girl clearly likes me. I think, I know. I say nothing in return but hold onto this feeling's tangibility. Cradle it inside. My Uber driver home talks politics, the military-industrial complex, the insanity of building the weapons here that people elsewhere learn how to want to kill us with. He pulls over twice for me to be sick.



Under the yellow light of the British Library Social Science Reading Room desk 5137, I slip my shoes off and hope no-one notices my bare feet. Even after months of making a home in this country I'm not used to wearing shoes all the time. My soles swell and sweat and hurt, turning red and purple if I have to be in them all day. It's a strange and entirely unprofound embodiment of being Australian.



Inside my upper left arm is a matchstick-sized tube that slow-releases hormones which my doctor inserted inside my arm the same week I started my PhD, because I was so terrified of an 'accident' interfering with my three year submission. Years after becoming a technologically-regulated woman, male friends at a party debated about emerging technology that would soon let you pay for things with a microchip in your hand. *How insane would that be*, they laughed. *You would feel it*. Yes, you can. All it takes is a slight cut.



If these separate scenes were to link and make a point that's creatively sociological, now would be the time for me to do it. I don't have a point yet though. I have a deadline and some unended sentences, so I look up to the spines on my bookshelf for inspiration. Left hand resting on my MacBook keys, right hand propping up my chin, neck craned to read the names – Oakley, Sontag, Davies, Berger, Becker, Bauman, Bourdieu, Back, Beck, Cohen, Foucault, Hall, Ahmed, Lord, Mills. I catch myself in this pose – hand to laptop, fingers to chin, face to bookcase. The academic pose. My iPhone, next to me, pushes through news of Grenfell Tower. I shake off the position.

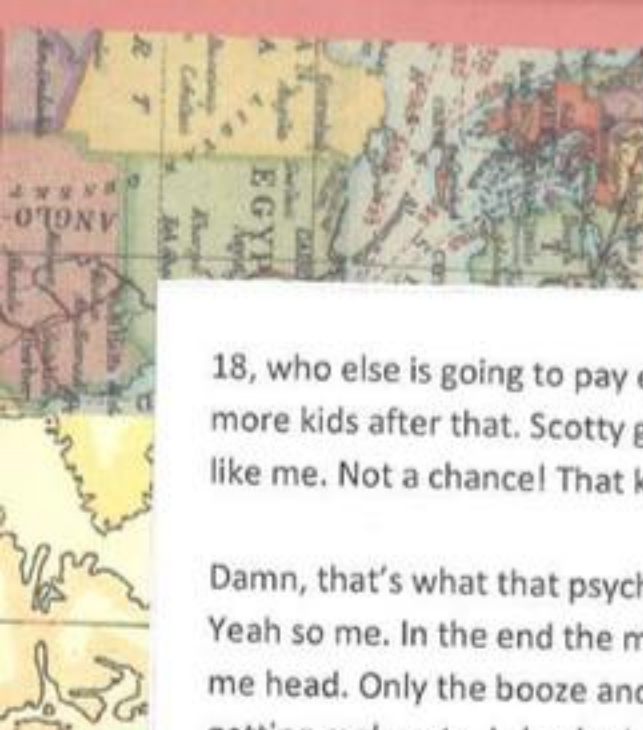
Jack and the DJ

Merrilyn Crichton



I always thought maybe something was different about me. I got on alright at school, I did ok. Jess and me went out for a bit, lost our Virginity in the back of Dad's old Ford. Great night, a beer or six, a bit a weed, then Jess and those tits. Yeah, sorry, easily distracted me. Yeah. The voices came before that night in Dad's Ford. But they were alright. Like you've got someone next door talking sometimes. You know? Like the old bloke talking to his misses about what it was like when they were going out. Planting Roses all over the front garden just for her. She near lost her marbles when he died. She was still talkin to him when they took her off to the home. Poor darlin. Anyway, I've lost the track again. Sorry, I do that a bit.

So, yeah. At first it was like someone talking to someone else next door. Just at night ya know when it was quiet. So, I'd play loud music at night. Easy fixed. Then it got during the day. So I'd have a smoke and a beer. I worked shift work when I left school – 15 I was. Didn't like school in the end, except for Jess of course. But after a while, it got like radio DJ. I thought I was nuts, so I didn't tell anyone (only Mum), not even Jess. I got an apprenticeship as a fitter and turner. Good job too, they kept me on and the machinery drowned out the DJ. Jess didn't stay around too long after I left school. Reckoned she was going to Uni and I was goin to rehab. So she hooked up with Scotty Johnson. Smart bloke. Poor bloke, knocked Jess up by the end of year 11. She just finished her High School Certificate, kids are just about in High School themselves now. I like those kids. Good kids. Scotty bolted, long gone. I guess he didn't like taking on Jess's Dad's chip shop. I told him it was a great idea. With a wife and a kid, it was security. And when you're




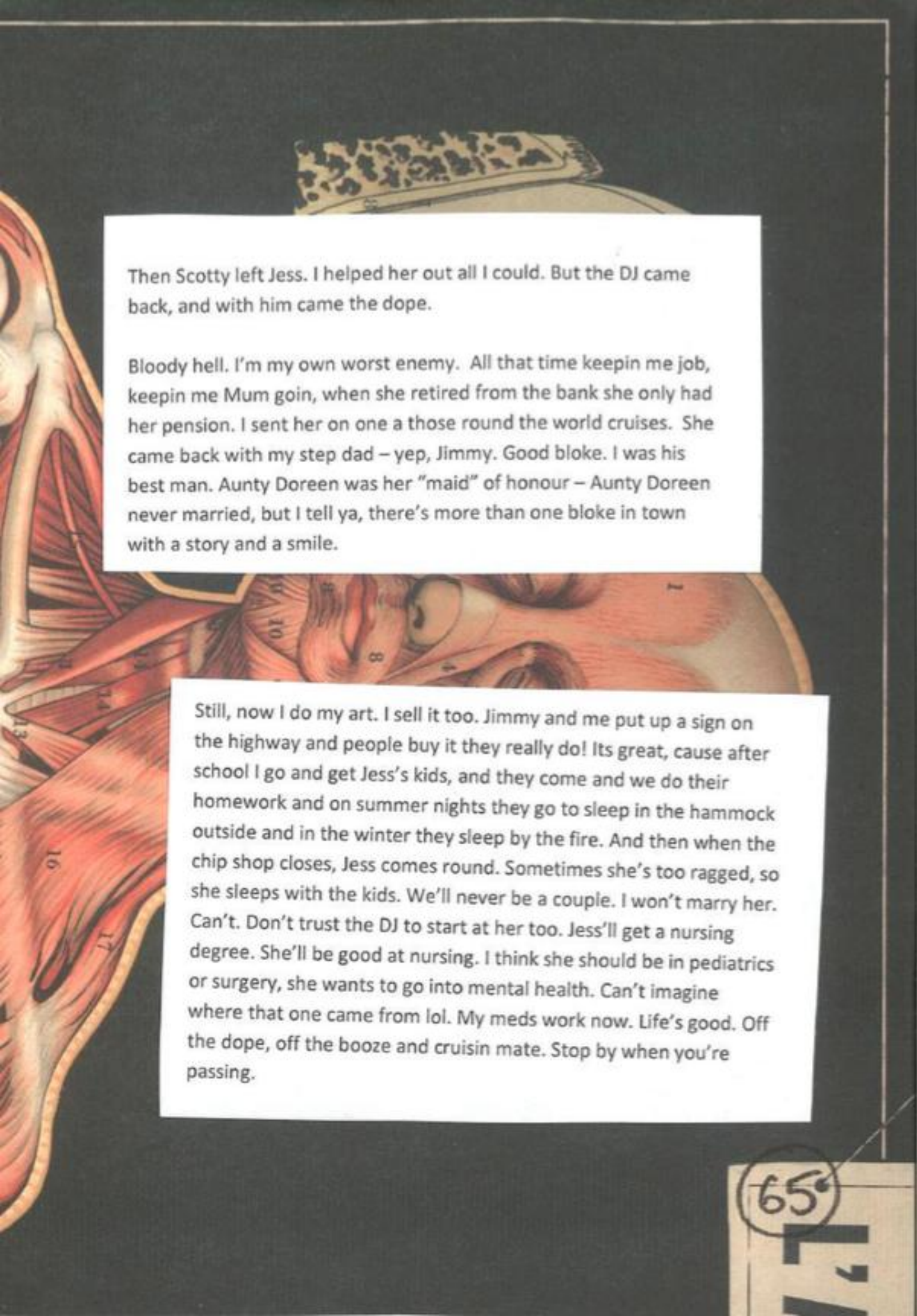
18, who else is going to pay enough to keep em. There were two more kids after that. Scotty got mad, reckoned that last one looks like me. Not a chance! That kids the spit of Jess's Dad.

Damn, that's what that psych calls a 'digression', good at those. Yeah so me. In the end the machinery couldn't keep the noise out a me head. Only the booze and the dope did anything. That DJ was getting real nasty. I checked myself into the hospital twice cause the bastard was telling me my Mum was a whore and I had to kill her. Nearly had me convinced too. Blimey. My Mum! That woman's all that was there for me in the end, and Jess. Me Dad packed up and left soon after Scotty and Jess got married, said Mum could stay with a loony son, but he was off. Mum stayed. The boss sent me packing when he caught me 'medicating' in smoko. Said he couldn't have my hands coming off, blood was OH&S you know. He laughed, I got it, not his fault. My work was good, but I couldn't be workin a job like that with that DJ and the noise in me head.

Work 'ed get dodgy after a while, and one a the other boys might lose an eye if the DJ lost it and they had to stop suddenly to calm me down. Too hard. If the boss hadn't sacked me, I'd have left myself. But the boss said I'd get more in my welfare cheque if he sacked me, so I let him. Gave half of it to his misses, he never did know.

One a the other boys, was my apprentice once, we made things for people. We put some of our stuff in an art show, won too. Sent it up to Sydney, won there too. But, I was losin it. That DJ on at me all the time. Had me convinced the boss was Hitler once, boss called the ambo's. Let me come back to work when they let me out. The meds worked, real good. The noise was like a really distant train, the DJ buggered off altogether. Went really well for a while there.





Then Scotty left Jess. I helped her out all I could. But the DJ came back, and with him came the dope.

Bloody hell. I'm my own worst enemy. All that time keepin me job, keepin me Mum goin, when she retired from the bank she only had her pension. I sent her on one a those round the world cruises. She came back with my step dad – yep, Jimmy. Good bloke. I was his best man. Aunty Doreen was her "maid" of honour – Aunty Doreen never married, but I tell ya, there's more than one bloke in town with a story and a smile.

Still, now I do my art. I sell it too. Jimmy and me put up a sign on the highway and people buy it they really do! Its great, cause after school I go and get Jess's kids, and they come and we do their homework and on summer nights they go to sleep in the hammock outside and in the winter they sleep by the fire. And then when the chip shop closes, Jess comes round. Sometimes she's too ragged, so she sleeps with the kids. We'll never be a couple. I won't marry her. Can't. Don't trust the DJ to start at her too. Jess'll get a nursing degree. She'll be good at nursing. I think she should be in pediatrics or surgery, she wants to go into mental health. Can't imagine where that one came from lol. My meds work now. Life's good. Off the dope, off the booze and cruisin mate. Stop by when you're passing.

Hanging Sheets

Miranda Iossifidis

I am drawn to images of sheets hanging. Rectangles of white, pinned against the landscape, creating empty spaces, which are actually not empty. Pauses. Wish-images. No one wants you to see their sheets hanging. I don't think I've been allowed to let anyone to see my sheets hanging. But there they are, and I am drawn to them.

In alleyways, connecting tenement blocks. Jacob August Riis, a Danish photographer in New York (1849-1914), took photographs of hanging sheets. They aren't the subject of the photograph, entitled *Bandit's roost*.



Work Type: Cityscapes.

Date: 1888.

Site: 59 1/2 Mulberry Street,
New York, New York.

Technique: Documentary
photography.

Description: Negative.

Repository: Museum of the City
of New York.

Accession Number: #101

Subject: New York (N.Y.)

Photography—United States.

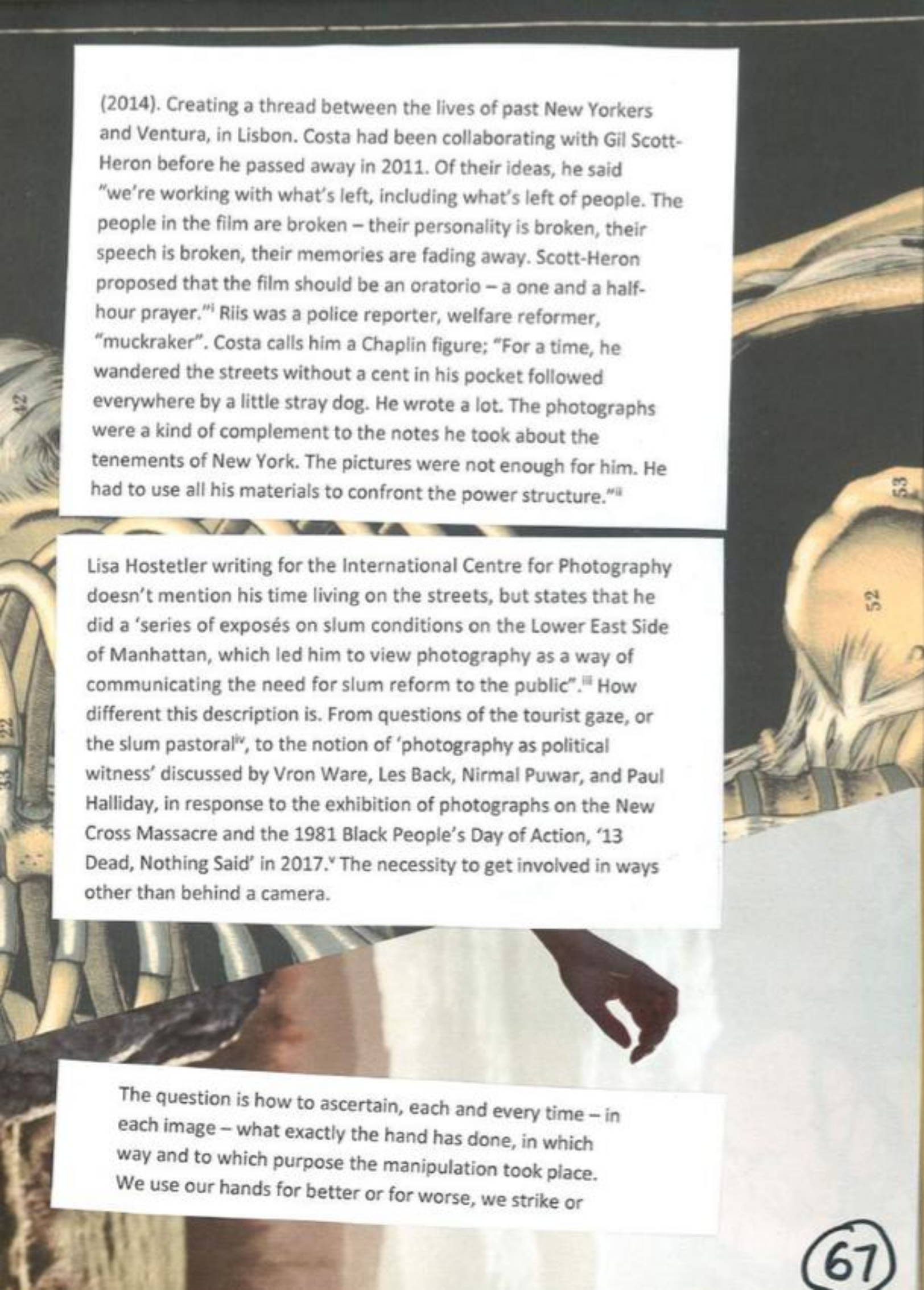
Brigands and robbers.

Collection: The Carnegie Arts of
the United States Collection.

Source Data from: University of
Georgia Libraries

Download Size: 1024,1024

Are these the traces of women, of women's hands, women's work?
I discovered Riis's photography because they are shown, a
repetition of stills, at the beginning of Pedro Costa's *Horse Money*



(2014). Creating a thread between the lives of past New Yorkers and Ventura, in Lisbon. Costa had been collaborating with Gil Scott-Heron before he passed away in 2011. Of their ideas, he said "we're working with what's left, including what's left of people. The people in the film are broken – their personality is broken, their speech is broken, their memories are fading away. Scott-Heron proposed that the film should be an oratorio – a one and a half-hour prayer."ⁱ Riis was a police reporter, welfare reformer, "muckraker". Costa calls him a Chaplin figure; "For a time, he wandered the streets without a cent in his pocket followed everywhere by a little stray dog. He wrote a lot. The photographs were a kind of complement to the notes he took about the tenements of New York. The pictures were not enough for him. He had to use all his materials to confront the power structure."ⁱⁱ

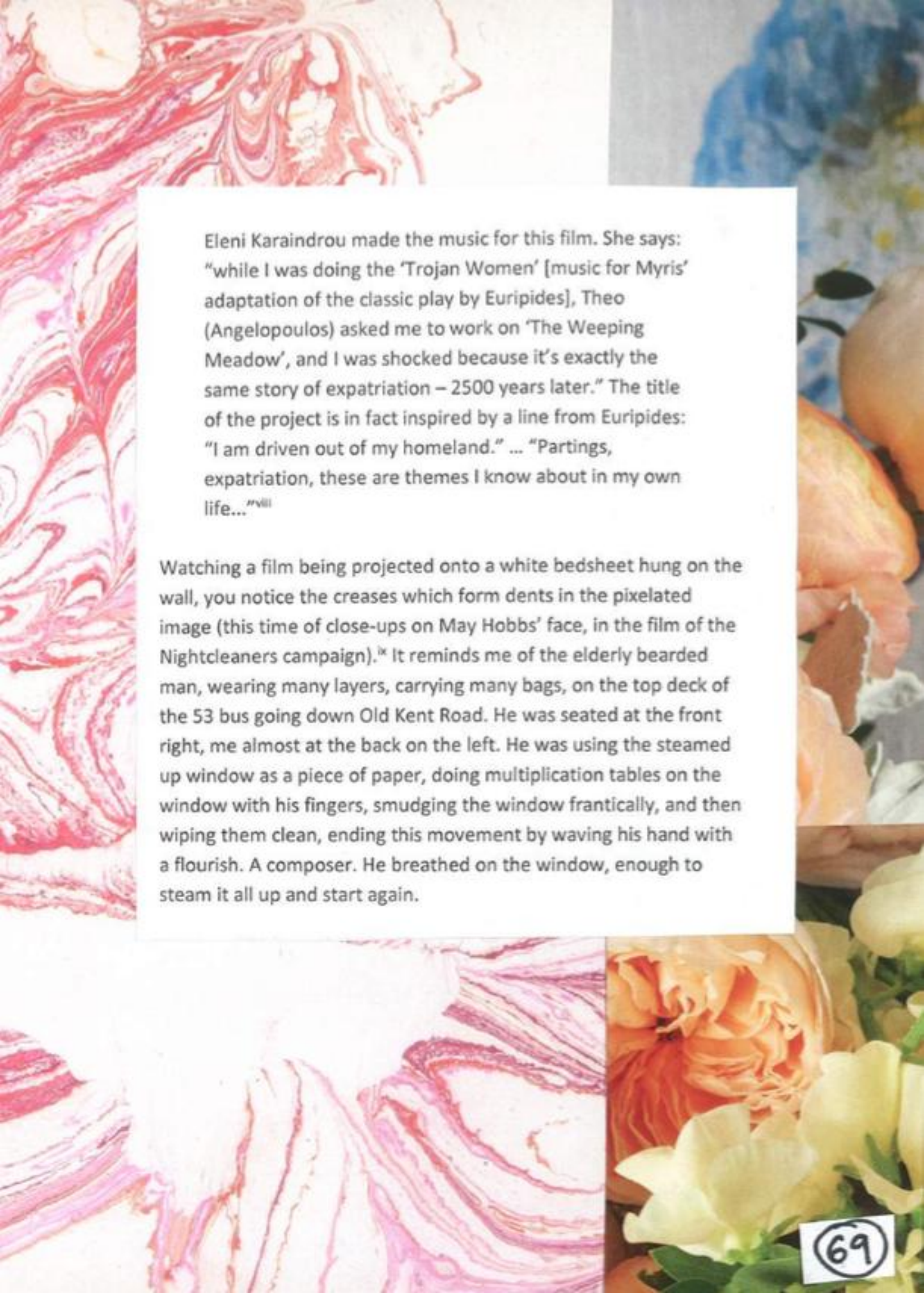
Lisa Hostetler writing for the International Centre for Photography doesn't mention his time living on the streets, but states that he did a 'series of exposés on slum conditions on the Lower East Side of Manhattan, which led him to view photography as a way of communicating the need for slum reform to the public'.ⁱⁱⁱ How different this description is. From questions of the tourist gaze, or the slum pastoral^{iv}, to the notion of 'photography as political witness' discussed by Vron Ware, Les Back, Nirmal Puwar, and Paul Halliday, in response to the exhibition of photographs on the New Cross Massacre and the 1981 Black People's Day of Action, '13 Dead, Nothing Said' in 2017.^v The necessity to get involved in ways other than behind a camera.

The question is how to ascertain, each and every time – in each image – what exactly the hand has done, in which way and to which purpose the manipulation took place. We use our hands for better or for worse, we strike or

stroke, build or break, give or take. We should, in front of each image, ask ourselves the question of how it gazes (at us), how it thinks (us) and how it touches (us) at the same time.^{vi}

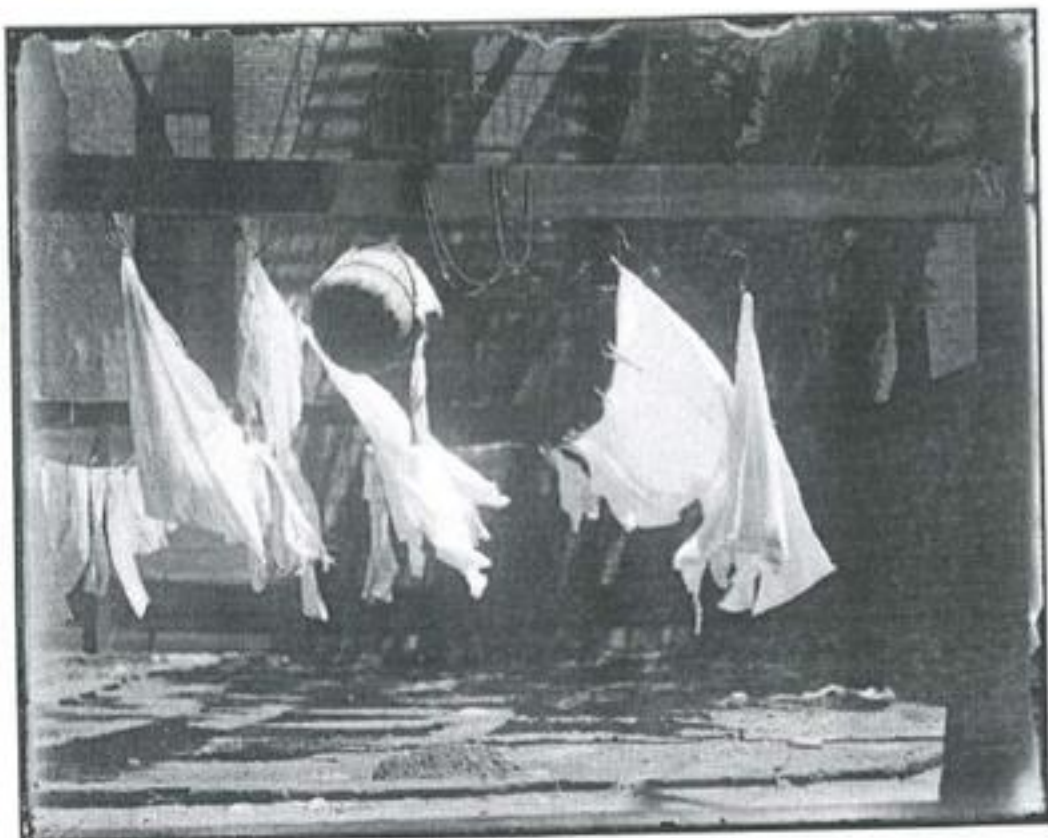
I remember watching *Trilogy: Weeping Meadow*, (2004) the first of an unfinished trilogy by Theo Angelopoulos (1935-2012). Looking for traces of my ancestors, imagining their journey from the Black Sea to Patras to Piraeus. I have no photographs or stories, so I seize onto ones that have been made. All I know is that they walked. I took a screenshot of the sheets twelve years ago and put it on Flickr. Anne Rutherford has written that the way Angelopoulos uses location is as 'catalysts of sensory awakening'^{vii} ... Activating and mediating silenced histories. There are sheets repeatedly being hung by the nomadic groups that populate his films, constellations of people, perpetually on the move. Endless stories of walking long distances.





Eleni Karaindrou made the music for this film. She says: "while I was doing the 'Trojan Women' [music for Myris' adaptation of the classic play by Euripides], Theo (Angelopoulos) asked me to work on 'The Weeping Meadow', and I was shocked because it's exactly the same story of expatriation – 2500 years later." The title of the project is in fact inspired by a line from Euripides: "I am driven out of my homeland." ... "Partings, expatriation, these are themes I know about in my own life..."^{viii}

Watching a film being projected onto a white bedsheet hung on the wall, you notice the creases which form dents in the pixelated image (this time of close-ups on May Hobbs' face, in the film of the Nightcleaners campaign).^{ix} It reminds me of the elderly bearded man, wearing many layers, carrying many bags, on the top deck of the 53 bus going down Old Kent Road. He was seated at the front right, me almost at the back on the left. He was using the steamed up window as a piece of paper, doing multiplication tables on the window with his fingers, smudging the window frantically, and then wiping them clean, ending this movement by waving his hand with a flourish. A composer. He breathed on the window, enough to steam it all up and start again.



Man Ray, *Sculpture Mouvante ou La France*, 1920.
Musée Nationale d'Art Moderne, Centre Pompidou, Paris.

ⁱ theguardian.com/film/2015/sep/17/pedro-costa-director-horse-money-cavallo-dinheiro-gil-scott-heron-interview

ⁱⁱ cineaste.com/summer2015/horse-money-pedro-costa-aaron-cutler

ⁱⁱⁱ icp.org

^{iv} Hecker, T. (2010) The slum pastoral: Helicopter visuality and Koolhaas's Lagos. *Space and Culture*.

^v autograph-abp.co.uk/exhibitions/13-dead-nothing-said

^{vi} Didi-Huberman, G. (2009). How to open your eyes. *Against What? Against Whom*, p.39

^{vii} Rutherford, A. (2002). Precarious Boundaries: Affect, Mise-en-Scène and the Senses, in *Art and the Performance of Memory: Sounds and Gestures of Recollection*.

^{viii} Karaindrou, E., Farantouri, M., & Myrat, A. (2006). *Elegy of the uprooting*. ECM Records.

^{ix} *Nightcleaners*, London Film-makers Collective, 1975



Appointed

Paul Aitken



Mr. Potter enters a small bar near the shore, in the town. He shakes himself as the door closes behind him, it wasn't raining, but it was windy. He looks up to the bar to see Nolan, who nods his head whilst pulling a beer. The accordion player is just taking his microphone down. It is later in the evening but not so late. Mr. Potter would have time for a drink and to speak with Nolan before getting home and getting on with his business. He had been allowing it to pile up, but he felt as though he would be more productive facing it after a drink and a talk with Nolan. Mr. Potter heads straight for the bathroom, it is up some stairs near the bar, away from the tables. There are some people in the pub, some by the tables and others by the bar. Mr. Potter recognises most but has spoken to few. Mr. Potter sees the Doctor as he opens the door and enters the lavatories. The Doctor is finishing urinating. Mr. Potter stands still for a moment with his hand still on the door.

The Doctor notices him and says "ah!" putting his penis back in his trousers. "Mr. Potter", he turns anti-clockwise, towards the sink and away from Mr. Potter, who lets the door close.


"Hi," says Mr. Potter, as the Doctor is washing his hands. "How are you?" Mr. Potter says as he begins to use the urinal.

"Very well," says the Doctor. "More importantly, how are you?"

"I'm fine, thanks for asking, great actually!"

"Great," the Doctor scrubs his nails. "That's great, you haven't been doing anything you shouldn't be doing?"

"No," says Mr Potter. "You mean like drinking too much or smoking too much?" He smiles, turning his head briefly, towards the Doctor, as one might.



The Doctor is washing his wrists. "No, no, no, no. I didn't ask if you've been doing too much of something you should be doing. You work a long week," The doctor turns off the tap. "Having a beer or a cigarette wont kill you." The Doctor turns around clockwise.

"That's good to know," Mr Potter says, over his shoulder, again. "I plan on having a good few of those tonight!"

As Mr Potter finishes urinating, the Doctor sniggers a friendly snigger. "I asked you if you've been doing anything you shouldn't be doing".

Mr. Potter puts his penis back in his trousers, and zips up his fly. Mr. Potter turns anti-clockwise to face the Doctor.

Mr. Potter and the Doctor are separated in height only by a small step up to the urinal, Mr. Potter is standing on it and the Doctor is not.

"No, like what?" Mr. Potter enquires.

"I don't know!" the Doctor says. He fails to turn away as one might expect him to. "Perhaps it just my concerned imagination, but I fear for you, Mr Potter. Doctor Alexander says you haven't been to practice in two weeks!"

"I've just been busy,"

"We're all busy Mr. Potter but we all must practice, your health depends on it."

"But I feel great!"

"Like I say, that's great, come on down to practice this week though will you?"

"I can't this week it's already Thursday, I'm..."

"Tomorrow then?"

"I'm drinking tonight and spending tomorrow with my family."

"All the more reason to make an appointment!"

"Then I'm spending the weekend with my friend."

"Friend?" the Doctor says. "What friend?"

"What do you mean what friend?" Mr. Potter asks, now feeling slightly put out.

"I mean, what friend?" the Doctor says calmly, authoritatively. Mr. Potter should remember his place.

"Aleph," says Mr. Potter.

"I don't know an Aleph," the Doctor states.

"From another town." Mr. Potter explains.

"Is Aleph a boyfriend or girlfriend?" The Doctor looks to be concerned.

"No", says Mr Potter, "Just a friend", he adds.

"Because you know you have to register that sort of thing?"

"I know,"

"I draw the line at you endangering other members of the community,"

"I understand."

"I won't have it."

"I understand,"

"You have us all worried sick about you Mr Potter, to not be in practice for over two weeks well, it's not right."

"I know."

"It's selfish."

"I know,"

"So make an appointment."

"I will."

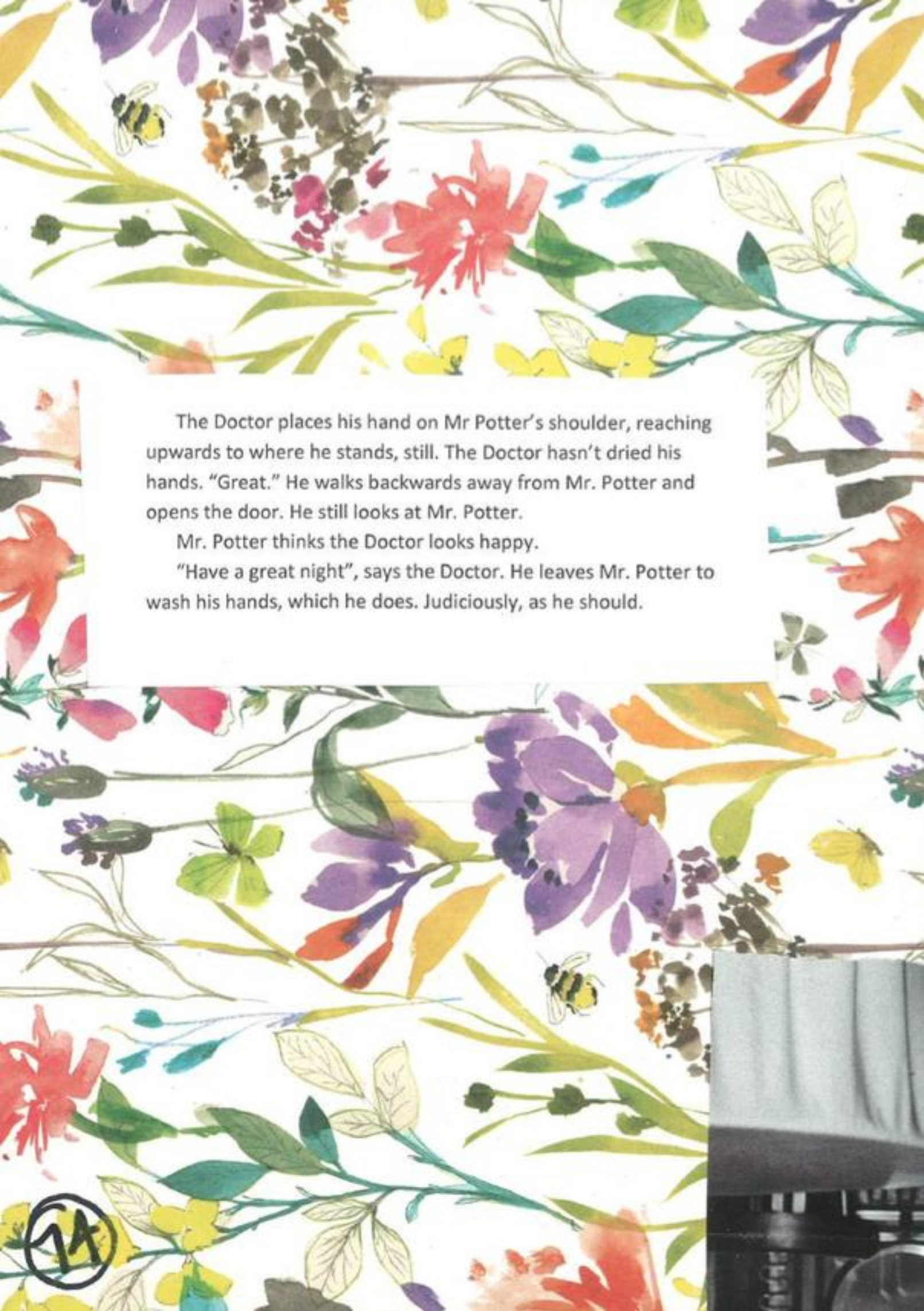
"Good, otherwise I will be making a home visit. I'm writing you a prescription for one Slow, two Sleeps and four Calms. I will leave it with Mr. Nolan for you to pick up. I expect to see you before Tuesday and I expect to find that all these Modulators have been taken."

"Yes."

"Am I understood?"

"Yes."





The Doctor places his hand on Mr Potter's shoulder, reaching upwards to where he stands, still. The Doctor hasn't dried his hands. "Great." He walks backwards away from Mr. Potter and opens the door. He still looks at Mr. Potter.

Mr. Potter thinks the Doctor looks happy.

"Have a great night", says the Doctor. He leaves Mr. Potter to wash his hands, which he does. Judiciously, as he should.

Dreamscape

Frederic Suffet



Late spring. Two young men were having a beer at the West End, on Broadway, just off the campus. One, in his late twenties, had returned to school to work on an MA. The other, two or three years older, was a new assistant professor and taught a course the first one was in. He spoke: 'I tell you, functionalism is over. Dead. We're gonna push those guys aside.'

'If you say so.'

After a while they left. It was late afternoon, May 31, 1967. There was a war overseas, and in the country, and on campus. The younger man went home, did some reading, and scanned the headlines in the Times.

Soviet Is Sending 10 More Warships to Middle East
and
9 Hurt, 38 Arrested as Hippies Clash with Police
and
Witnesses Accuse 5 in Mississippi Trial

He turned the radio on. It played: 'Mmm, I get high with a little help from my friends.' Sometimes, he thought, but not tonight. He had a couple of hits, then crawled into bed and fell into a dream.



I heard Charlie Mills used to ride shotgun, taking Negroes to the polls. In Texas, in the thirties. Did you know that? No, not really.

After our last class, a couple of students contacted me to say that they were afraid to speak out – that a few other students in the class had intimidated them since we were last here. What? That will not be tolerated.

We are told that no matter what perspective a sociologist takes, his work must be written from the standpoint of subordinates or superiors. Oh?

A controversial painting depicting police officers and protest in Ferguson, Missouri, will not return to the U.S. Capitol anytime soon.... Friday's judgment is a victory for Republican representatives... Jesus.

White free speech and white creative freedom are not natural rights, and have been founded on the constraint of others. The painting must go. What?

Who are these kids who seem to show up in every class around the third session, sit quietly for twenty or thirty minutes, then leave, never to return? Don't you know? The word is that there are groups on campus that monitor what is said in class. You're kidding.

In this article, I argue that considerations that support transgenderism extend to transracialism. Hmm, okay.



[We] write to request the retraction of a certain article, entitled, "In Defense of Transracialism." Its continued availability causes further harm... *Good god, it's a theory article.*

Sociologists of one camp develop highly selective perceptions of what is going on in the other... *For sure.*

But whatever the status of your chromosomes, hormones, sex organs, and individuality, their directional push was no match for societal pressures differentiating your gender identity. *But it's not the whole thing, right?*

Is $E = Mc^2$ a sexed equation? Perhaps it is. Let us make the hypothesis that it is insofar as it privileges the speed of light over other speeds that are vitally necessary to us. *No, no, no.*

Facts discipline reason, but reason is the advance guard in any field of learning. *Yes, yes.*

The sleep of reason produces monsters.

He awoke in a sweat. He turned on the radio. It played: 'I read the news today, oh boy.' He scanned the headlines in the Times.

Campuses Grapple with Balancing Free Speech and Security After
Protests

and

In Chicago's Crisis of Violence, Some Signs of Hope

and

Kabul Bombing Kills at Least 80, Shaking City Centre

There was a war overseas, and in the country, and on the campus.
He walked to the bathroom, stood in front of the sink, and stared
at the mirror. An old man stared back.

He looked at the date on his watch. Today is May 31, 2017.



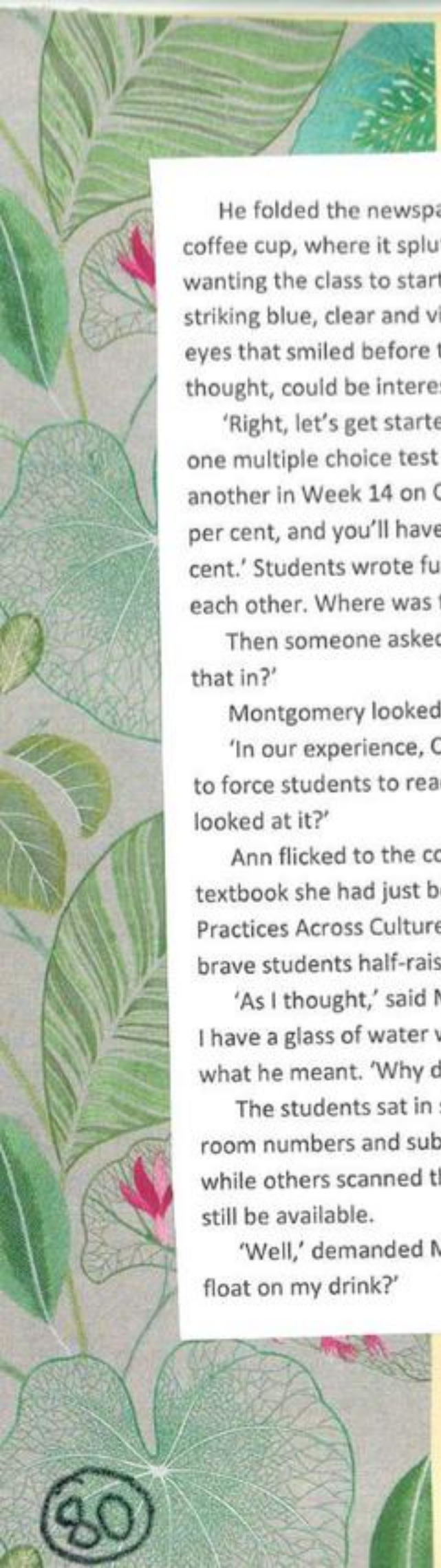
Sociology 101

Eileen Clark

A bead of sweat rolled down her face and dripped onto the writing pad on the desk. Thank goodness I'm not wearing mascara, Ann thought. It was 5.55 pm and still hot outside. The air-con did little to cool the crowded tutorial room, managing only to disperse the fumes of burgers and chips (sorry, French fries) from the golden arches next door around the building. It was a subtle form of torture for students who had rushed to class without pausing for dinner, but for many of them this place was the nearest they would get to a proper university.

The Study Centre (not even called a campus) was set up in the early 1970s by a government determined to spread tertiary education to the bush and spend as little money as possible in doing so. Ten years later, Ann was part-way through a pick-and-mix arts degree, her progress impeded by the limited number of units offered and the fact that Wednesdays were the only nights she could count on making it to class because of her husband's shifts.

Jim Montgomery burst into the room, *Daily Telegraph* in one hand and a plastic cup of coffee in the other. He squeezed himself behind the front desk facing the students, lit a cigarette and opened the newspaper at the racing pages. Ann looked at him critically, trying to guess what kind of learning experience he would provide. He was a large man, tall and corpulent. Sparse grey hair hung straight to his collar but his clothes! Vinnies would have been glad to get rid of them. A crumpled bright green shirt open at the neck, shapeless brown corduroy trousers and, despite the heat, a battered tweed jacket with a pink rosebud in the buttonhole. Correspondent shoes in black and white patent leather completed the outfit.



He folded the newspaper and dropped the fag end into the coffee cup, where it spluttered and hissed. Ann sighed impatiently, wanting the class to start, then she noticed his eyes. They were a striking blue, clear and vital, not cold Gestapo eyes but jolly St Nick eyes that smiled before the rest of his face. He's different, she thought, could be interesting.

'Right, let's get started,' he barked. 'Write this down. There'll be one multiple choice test in Week 7 on Chapters One to Six, and another in Week 14 on Chapters Eight to Thirteen, each worth 40 per cent, and you'll have to submit a critique in Week 10 for 20 per cent.' Students wrote furiously, trying to keep up and whispering to each other. Where was the Subject Outline, the handouts?

Then someone asked 'What about Chapter Seven? Which test is that in?'

Montgomery looked pained. He'd heard it all before.

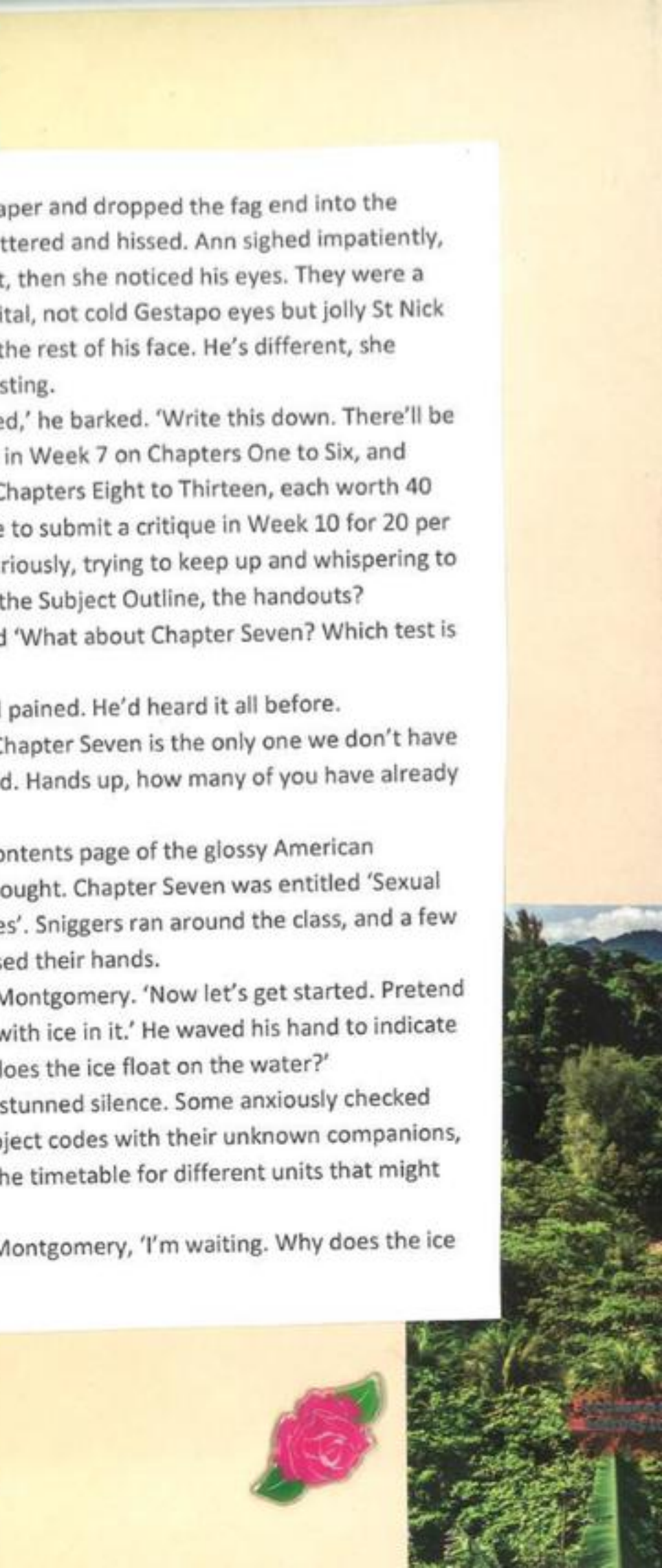
'In our experience, Chapter Seven is the only one we don't have to force students to read. Hands up, how many of you have already looked at it?'

Ann flicked to the contents page of the glossy American textbook she had just bought. Chapter Seven was entitled 'Sexual Practices Across Cultures'. Sniggers ran around the class, and a few brave students half-raised their hands.

'As I thought,' said Montgomery. 'Now let's get started. Pretend I have a glass of water with ice in it.' He waved his hand to indicate what he meant. 'Why does the ice float on the water?'

The students sat in stunned silence. Some anxiously checked room numbers and subject codes with their unknown companions, while others scanned the timetable for different units that might still be available.

'Well,' demanded Montgomery, 'I'm waiting. Why does the ice float on my drink?'





Ann accepted the challenge. She had loved science at school and still remembered odd facts. She raised her hand.

'Yes?'

'Because ice is lighter than water.'

'Why?'

His eyes were locked on her face. This was a game for two now, the rest of the class forgotten.

'Ice is less dense, that's why it floats.'

'Why?' he asked again, more gently this time. Ann loved the attention. She wanted to show him what she knew.

'Water expands when it freezes. It's at its most dense around 4°, you can do this experiment...'

Her voice tailed off as Montgomery interrupted.

'What would you think if the ice sank in my drink?'

She held his gaze.

'I'd say you put too much whisky in it!'

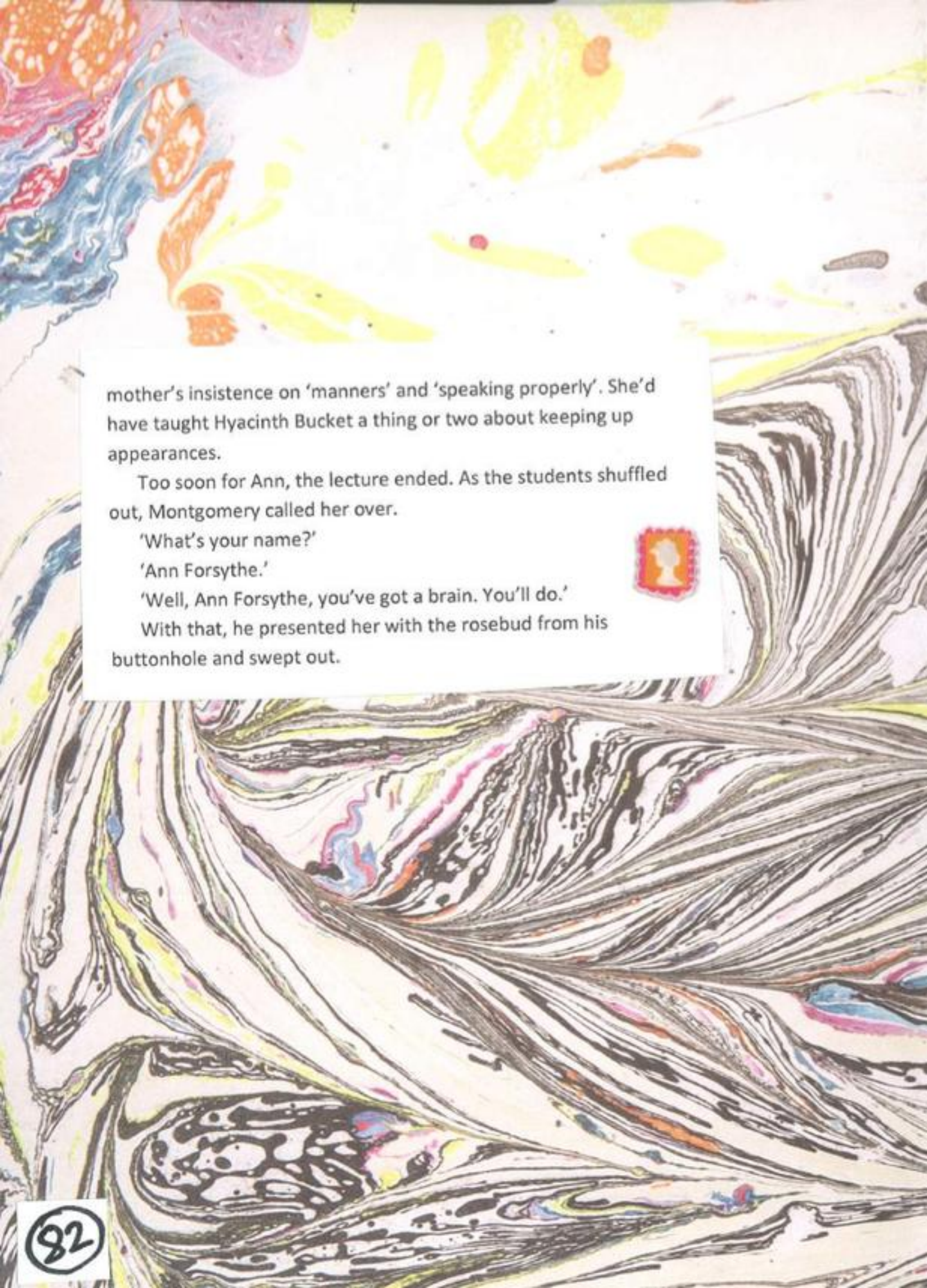
She grinned in triumph and those blue eyes flashed in response. This one's worth watching, he thought, before continuing.

'Right, ladies and gentlemen, this is not a science class but what you have just seen is a search for logical explanations, and that's what sociology is all about. It's not airy fairy theorising or communist claptrap, it's a scientific search for patterns in society.'

He spoke for the next hour, barely pausing long enough to draw breath. He had no notes, nothing to show on the overhead projector, only writing a name or word on the blackboard occasionally. He talked about class and status and power, how they were defined, how they interacted and shaped lives.

Ann wrote notes furiously, trying to keep up, but after five minutes she stopped. She didn't want to miss a word and, anyway, assessment was based on the text and she could read that at home. She listened, engrossed, her eyes never leaving him. This was her life he was talking about. Her father's failed business, her





mother's insistence on 'manners' and 'speaking properly'. She'd have taught Hyacinth Bucket a thing or two about keeping up appearances.

Too soon for Ann, the lecture ended. As the students shuffled out, Montgomery called her over.

'What's your name?'

'Ann Forsythe.'

'Well, Ann Forsythe, you've got a brain. You'll do.'

With that, he presented her with the rosebud from his buttonhole and swept out.



Authors



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Maddie Breeze is interested in gender, feminist research, queer theory, emotional labour in academic work, and the institutionalisation of 'diversity' in educational contexts. Her PhD (2014, Sociology, University of Edinburgh) ethnography on roller derby is published with Palgrave and was awarded the 2016 BSA Phillip Abrams Memorial Prize.
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Alexandre Saunier is an interdisciplinary artist and researcher. His work associates fictions, digital machines, and physical systems to question our perception of the world and explore our relation to the non-human. He is currently a PhD candidate at Concordia University, Montreal.

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Frederic Suffet. Born Brooklyn, NY, 1938. Columbia, BA, sociology, 1960; Columbia, MA, sociology, 1970. Evaluation research, non-profit legal and medical programs serving the poor. Co-author, one book; two dozen journal articles. Equal number of private reports to funding and regulatory agencies. Taught college and graduate levels. Retired.

Philippa Thomas is an artist and academic completing a PhD in Visual Sociology at Goldsmiths College, London. Her research includes making films and short fiction. She wrote a satirical play called *The Girls Get Younger Every Year* (2015) about sexual harassment in higher education. See <http://crowdedmouth.wordpress.com>.

Ashleigh Watson is the editor and producer of *So Fi*. She is a current PhD candidate at Griffith University, Australia, and a 2017 Endeavour Research Fellow based at Goldsmiths, University of London. Ashleigh tweets at @awtsn. See ashleighwatson.com.





Handwriting practice lines consisting of 20 horizontal lines.



cotton T-shirt, £490:

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generation
in mind

white cotton
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PROT



I felt protected,
as though angels
were holding me.
I've always
believed in invisible
forces, and I know
they've helped me'

POWER

HOROSCOPES

The future revealed: your essential guide

ASHLEIGH

By R. WATSON

ARIES

21 March - 20 April

Relationships [redacted] need use up too much [redacted]

[redacted] business or financial developments [redacted]

[redacted] are [redacted] the answer.

MOTTO OF THE MONTH *You're not dressed [redacted] wearing a smile.*

TAURUS

21 April - 21 May

[redacted] bankroll a set-up that others cannot afford [redacted] no matter how charitably disposed you feel [redacted] you mustn't give the impression that you've unlimited resources. [redacted] you're too generous [redacted]

MOTTO OF THE MONTH [redacted] hear [redacted] and understand [redacted]

GEMINI

22 May - 21 June

[redacted] difficulties [redacted] the situation to improve. [redacted] may be tempted to become [redacted] direct, [redacted] Saturn is beginning to move backwards [redacted] your chart. Even if you are trying to convey complex [redacted] messages, [redacted] with a light touch.

MOTTO OF THE MONTH *Write kindnesses [redacted] in the sand.*

CANCER

22 June - 23 July

[redacted] everyone will see with you want to pursue a particular goal [redacted] but you instinctively know it's time to go all out for something you've wanted for a while. Don't argue [redacted] motives [redacted] suggest that they leave you to do things in your own way and in your own time.

MOTTO OF THE MONTH [redacted] love dies [redacted]

LEO

24 July - 23 August

expect to be given short shrift. Pluto's clash with the Sun brings out that streak in you that means you're dismissive. What's going on but that's no excuse to behave badly.

MOTTO OF THE MONTH *We are the tracks*

VIRGO

24 August - 23 September

consider new work challenges and how much might be expected of you. sacrifice all other interests for the sake of some serious business, but not about to be in several different places at the same time.

MOTTO OF THE MONTH *win from loss.*

LIBRA

24 September - 23 October

Someone close suggesting that certain aspects of you have become dull might have a point. Tap into that fun-loving, childish side of you that fails at the end of the day by proving that the two of you can still find love. It will make all the difference.

MOTTO OF THE MONTH *we all rain.*

SCORPIO

24 October - 22 November

overreact to minor upsets. Outside influences both of you feeling tired and techy, which may cause arguments you need. All of this between the pair of you every day will ease the situation until you're back on an even keel.

MOTTO OF THE MONTH *Courtesy is the oil that greases the wheels.*

SAGITTARIUS

23 November - 21 December

everyday tasks are you. You'll be meeting. Stay on your feet. You'll remain calm, careful and methodical. Sudden departures from the established routine are to be avoided.

MOTTO OF THE MONTH *Love is fire.*

CAPRICORN

22 December - 20 January

[redacted] to promote a cause or project with which you're involved. This year might also have to manage mundane chores that [redacted] crave your attention. Just remember that you are blessed [redacted]

MOTTO OF THE MONTH *Education costs* [redacted]

AQUARIUS

21 January - 19 February

Revisit plans to enhance [redacted] of your [redacted] family [redacted] abandoned [redacted] while [redacted]. And on this occasion be absolutely sure that you [redacted] time [redacted] and [redacted] make a good job of it. Look forward to putting in place [redacted] changes [redacted] everything [redacted]


MOTTO OF THE MONTH *Replace what was* [redacted]

PISCES


20 February - 20 March

Although you'll agree that necessary at work matters need some [redacted] [redacted] you mustn't think in terms of gloom and doom [redacted] [redacted] challenging the Sun, you may face petty problems [redacted] threatening [redacted] that actually are [redacted] current issues [redacted] [redacted] efficiently provided they're [redacted] blown out of proportion.

MOTTO OF THE MONTH *The rich earn* [redacted]



I swear to
tell the post-truth,
the alternative truth
and nothing like
the truth



Keen to
contribute?

So Fi Edition 2
launching
December 2017

see
sofizine.wordpress.com
for submission
dates and details

can sociology ?

can fiction?

