

SO FI ZINE

a sociological
fiction zine

edition 11
june 2022

Fig. 1. 2. *Hypophyllum fasciculare*
Les Têtes de feu olivaires. ▲. Ann. 2. pag. 229.
Biblioth. C. de la Fac. de Médecine



Pl. CVIII.



SO FI ZINE
EDITION #11

JUNE 2022

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#SOFIZINE

KEEN TO SUBMIT?

SUBMISSIONS FOR SO FI
ZINE #12 WILL OPEN IN
JULY FOR PUBLICATION IN
NOVEMBER 2022

SEE SOFIZINE.COM FOR
DETAILS



Mim Fox is a Senior Lecturer in Social Work at the University of Wollongong. Mim researches and publishes on digital technology, social work practice and education and hosts the Social Work Stories Podcast, a podcast that showcases and analyses the everyday experiences of social workers (www.socialworkstories.com).

Pede Hollist is a Professor of English at The University of Tampa and a 2017-2018 Fulbright scholar. His credits include *So the Path Does Not Die*, the 2014 African Literature Association Creative Book of the Year and "Foreign Aid," shortlisted for the 2013 Caine Prize.

Teri Anderson creates work that looks into the idea of craft in art, textiles, installation and sculpture to create a linear or surreal environment which the audience have to inhabit. The work links to her heritage and how textiles were key in their family history including sample machinists and pattern cutters. Building on this Teri proposes an art practise which incorporates a craft based techniques into the art based discipline of installation.

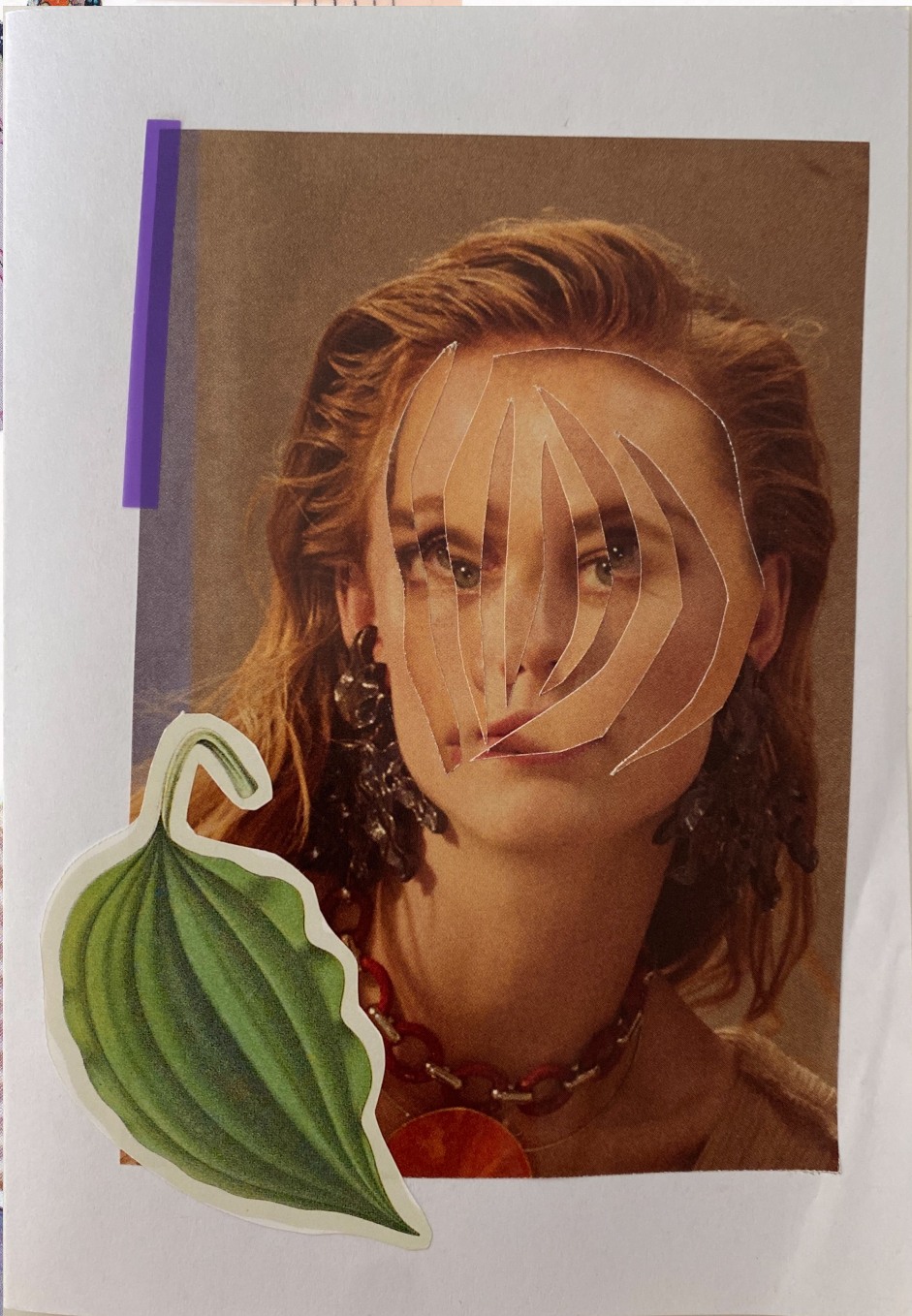
Editorial

Ash Watson

This edition marks 5 years of *So Fi Zine*. I've learnt so much in this time from everyone who's joined in and made each edition what it is, about fiction, form, representation, texture, feeling, voice – all things that can be worked like a muscle to augment and enhance sociological writing in its many genres, from traditional academic articles to creative pieces like the excellent ones enclosed in edition #11 here. I've spent these years writing and writing about writing and talking with so many people about the craft, and reading hundreds of stories, and I'm still so excited about this kind of work and the directions it makes possible.

What fiction and art can make possible feels a bit hard to articulate. I'm trying to find the words for what creative work – especially the *work* of creative work – can make visible, thinkable, feelable, sense-able, shareable and share-in-able. How do I break down the answer into more discrete pieces than 'life'?

The most valuable and important thing that this project has opened my eyes to is the fact that scholarly community and creative communities of practice can be found and made and sustained. There is care and space and commitment and courage and effort and support and time and joy, real joy, to be revelled in with so many others. If this is your first time coming across *So Fi Zine* then please read its pages as what they are – an invitation. Come and join in. It's beautiful here.



John-Paul Smiley is a writer and independent scholar. He has a PhD in Civil and Building Engineering (Loughborough, UK), an MSc Social Research (Leicester, UK), and a BA Politics and Sociology (York, UK). His interests include futurism and science fiction, as well as politics and sociology. He tweets at @JohnPaulSmiley.

Kyla Tully is a PhD candidate completing an Applied Research Collaborative Studentship with Edinburgh's Queen Margaret University and the University of Glasgow. She is currently experimenting with creative methods to explore cultures of professionalism and management within rural arts organisations.

Lena Dedyukina is a Geography MA student from the University of Ottawa (Canada) examining food security in Arctic regions. She has a BSocSc degree in Sociology and Indigenous Studies. She has three children and has lived in Ottawa (Canada) with her family since 2010. Photography, art, and poetry are her hobbies.

Matenia Altikatis is an NYC-based creator with a thirst for adventure and connection. Fascinated by humans, Earth, and everything in between.

organized and lived and how they might be interrupted. Twitter: @grcharania.

Born and raised in the UK, Hassan Akram has an active interest in sociology and has also had short stories published in anthologies like *Sherlock Holmes: Further Adventures in the Realms of H.G. Wells*, with more stories in the pipeline.

Ian C Smith writes in the Gippsland Lakes region of Victoria, and on Flinders Island. His work has appeared in *Antipodes*, *cordite*, *Eureka Street*, *Griffith Review*, *Journal of Working Class Studies*, *Meniscus*, *Shaping the Fractured Self* (UWAP), &, *So Fi Zine*. His seventh book is *wonder sadness madness joy*, Ginninderra Press.

Incarnadinea, also known as Carna, is a queer visual artist currently living and working in India. Their art mainly explores notions of self-identity and also draws upon their experiences as a person living with mental illnesses.

Jack Redden lives in Manchester. He is currently unemployed and spends most of his time writing poetry.



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Author bios

Alice Wilson is a PhD researcher at the University of York. She is looking at women who build their own tiny houses, and is also the co-director of social enterprise OpHouse. Her work has appeared in Ruminare Magazine and the Apple Valley Review.

Basundhara is an artist who is discovering herself and her art style via her work. She draws inspiration from both her internal and external life experiences and tries to portray them in ways that feel the most honest to her.

Charli Morachnick is a patriotic Earthling with a passion for visual storytelling and social justice. Self-proclaimed logophile, biophile, and persistent nomad, her curiosity is insatiable.

Gulzar R. Charania has been secretly and intermittently writing poetry since childhood. She returned to poetry during the pandemic, when words stopped doing what she wanted them to do. In her scholarship and creative work, she writes about how racism and domination are



sagittarius
pause

capricorn
invite

aquarius
persuade

pisces
revive

Underlying Conditions

Pede Hollist

On this hot spring 2020 Florida afternoon, after months of pandemic mandates that confined us indoors and limited social contacts, I could tell from the look in her eyes that she wanted us to do it.

Do you think we should? It would be a quick one, with minimal touching.

She edges closer to me, flicks aside the bangs overhanging her eyes, shakes her head, and extends her sleeveless arms. Their light-brown freckles darken. Her tank-top strap slides down her plump left arm. A sulfurous odor wafts between us, triggering my nerve endings.

It would not hurt you. You would be safe.

She had been a student in my introduction to Biology class, Fall 2019. However, we had not seen each other since the pandemic shut down face-to-face learning. Now, here we are on campus, standing six feet apart—the freckled-faced white female student and the older black professor—eager to affirm our classroom friendliness.

Are you worried you will get into trouble, that they will say you should have known better?

She inches toward me. Her warm breath rushes up my nostrils into my synaptic pathways creating a wave of desire for the warmth of human touch. In response, the hippocampus marshals embedded ethical codes, Bible teachings, Zen sayings, Qur'anic hadiths, and most



leo

abandon

recently, CDC pandemic guidelines to fight against the viral invasion.

We are out in the open. It will be only once.

"No! I cannot do this," I say and move back from the precipice.

She pulls up the strap that had slipped down to her elbow, her body a sagging white bag of disappointment and humiliation.

A satisfied grin sweeps over my face. Pickled happiness quickens my heart. Closed pores expand my skin. I had canceled her, refused to give consent, asserted that I, too, a black man with underlying conditions during a pandemic, could feel threatened, and I had a right to preempt the potential danger that a friendly hug posed.

Alas, long after the pandemic, my underlying blackness still leaves me vulnerable, while birdwatching in a park, jogging, or driving a car.

virgo

stay

libra

connect

scorpio

preserve

SOCIOLOGICAL HOROSCOPES

In the spirit of 'committing sociology,'
this edition brings each sign a verb they need

aries

honour

taurus

evaluate

gemini

specify

cancer

lead

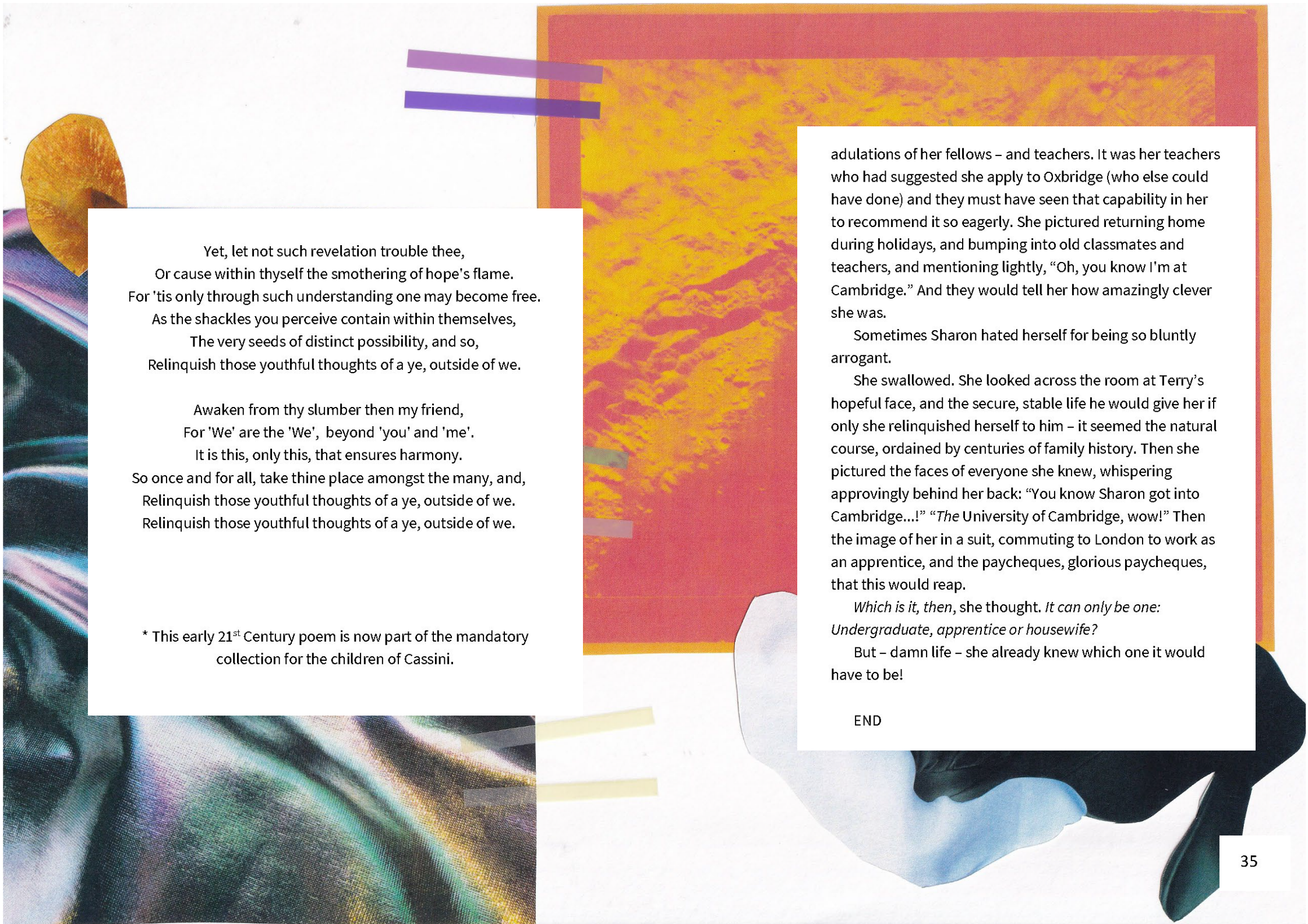
Relinquish Those Youthful Thoughts

John-Paul Smiley

What meaning did you hope for?
In those dreams of yours,
Which on occasion turned to terror.
For reasons unbeknownst to ye,
And of which memory fast faded.
Did you ever think from whence they came?

"Monkey see, Monkey do".
Was that not you?
Was that not me?
Was that not we?
What was particular to thee?
Did you silently desire that ye were exempt?

But could you be, as if untouched by all,
Another you, free and unsullied?
No! 'Tis merely an illusion.
For you are you, in no small part, because of we,
Just as others will, in turn, be shaped by thee.
Free then, but to degrees, constrained always, by the embeddedness of we.



Yet, let not such revelation trouble thee,
Or cause within thyself the smothering of hope's flame.
For 'tis only through such understanding one may become free.
As the shackles you perceive contain within themselves,
The very seeds of distinct possibility, and so,
Relinquish those youthful thoughts of a ye, outside of we.

Awaken from thy slumber then my friend,
For 'We' are the 'We', beyond 'you' and 'me'.
It is this, only this, that ensures harmony.
So once and for all, take thine place amongst the many, and,
Relinquish those youthful thoughts of a ye, outside of we.
Relinquish those youthful thoughts of a ye, outside of we.

* This early 21st Century poem is now part of the mandatory collection for the children of Cassini.

adulations of her fellows – and teachers. It was her teachers who had suggested she apply to Oxbridge (who else could have done) and they must have seen that capability in her to recommend it so eagerly. She pictured returning home during holidays, and bumping into old classmates and teachers, and mentioning lightly, “Oh, you know I’m at Cambridge.” And they would tell her how amazingly clever she was.


Sometimes Sharon hated herself for being so bluntly arrogant.

She swallowed. She looked across the room at Terry’s hopeful face, and the secure, stable life he would give her if only she relinquished herself to him – it seemed the natural course, ordained by centuries of family history. Then she pictured the faces of everyone she knew, whispering approvingly behind her back: “You know Sharon got into Cambridge...!” “*The University of Cambridge*, wow!” Then the image of her in a suit, commuting to London to work as an apprentice, and the paycheques, glorious paycheques, that this would reap.

Which is it, then, she thought. It can only be one: Undergraduate, apprentice or housewife?

But – damn life – she already knew which one it would have to be!

END



earning to start paying.” Sharon wondered if teachers met that minimum salary. Probably not.

“Can’t your parents help you out?” someone else had once asked her, but Sharon didn’t think it worth explaining the consequences of the fact that neither of her parents had progressed beyond GCSE level, narrowly at that.

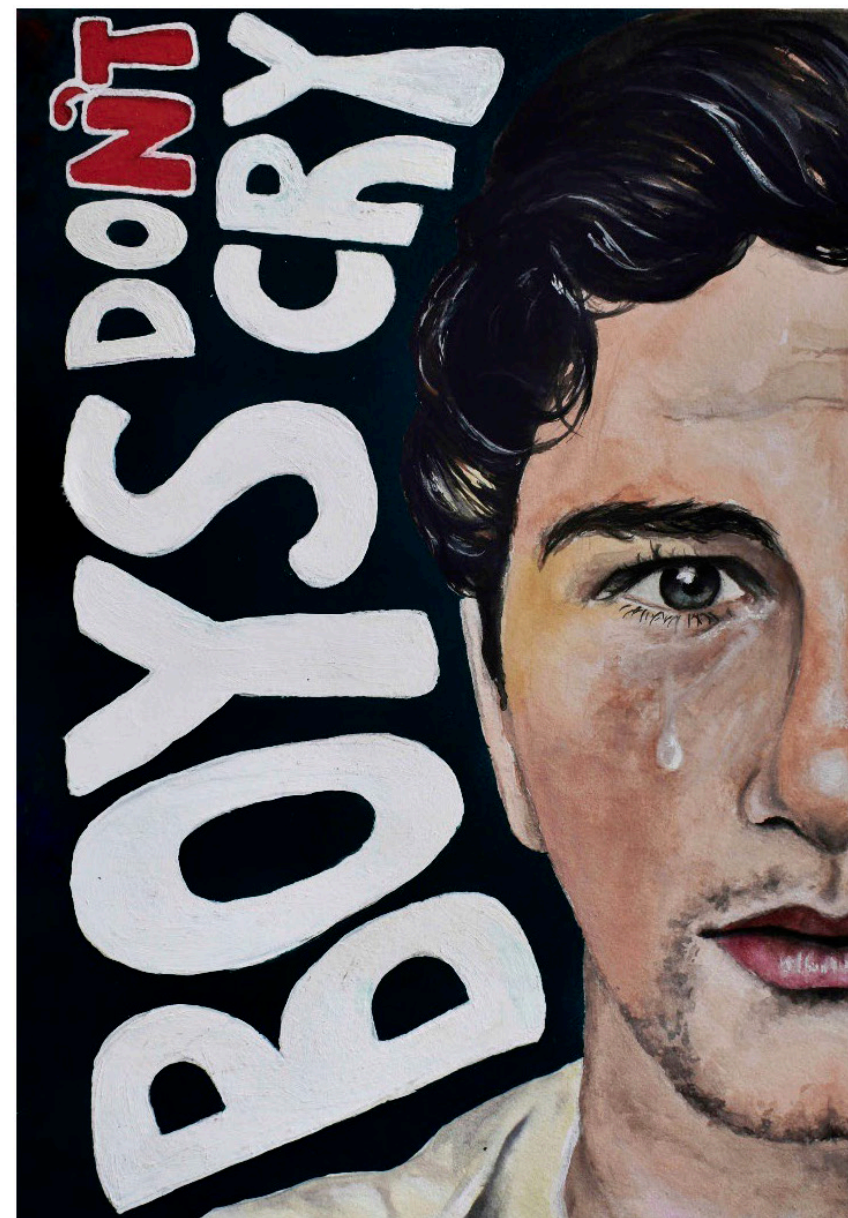
“£30,000!” her mother had jumped up at hearing the retail price of a bachelor’s degree. “Do you know how long it takes to... and for what? Okay, so you’ve got your—degree in *English*. Then what? Who cares what books you read, you read so many of them anyway. It won’t do you any good, you’d do better to remember your place.” If only Sharon had been born to someone else, someone *higher*.

And what if she took an apprenticeship? It was the commonest way out which, she thought, any fool could take. What was the point, then, of those years of hard work and being outstandingly intelligent? It was a waste of talent. But it was an income, at least, an occupation in Central London, training on the job. Income, not debt. Independence, not reliance.

Then Sharon thought of her dream. She wanted to enrich her mind and be a woman of higher education, but the fees and debt! Still... “I’m a Cambridge woman” – that would be her identity, a lifelong sense of belonging to that sacred institution – lifelong. People would look at her admiringly forever, and her children would one day be the children of a graduate! Already, her intelligence was so renowned as to actually be proverbial at college, and there was nothing she relished more than the frequent, admiring

Boys Do(n't) Cry

Basundhara





The Worst Part

Jack Redden

In a dream I had,
I was happy
and everyone I loved
forgave me.

disdain Terry's sort when that was what she herself might very well end up becoming? Or had already become. She supposed she was really a chav. Just like him.

Terry went to yell at some friends.

Sharon could now feel her own gaze on herself – the gaze of the future Sharon looking back at this moment. The gaze seemed fractured into three different hypothetical entities. None of them looked particularly appealing. One was a richly-cultivated graduate sprouting entire pages of Chaucer like mad, but scrambling vainly to find employment on this merit, and manacled to an oppressively weighty backpack which symbolised £45,000 of combined tuition fees and living costs. The next entity was a middle-grade careers woman, who after completing her apprenticeship, was certainly competent in the workplace, but unhappy with her job, and with no qualifications or cultural capital to do anything else. The third entity was a haggard housewife whose duties included Hoovering and cooking and smothering Terry with lascivious kisses when he returned home in the evenings, and cradling the violent mobs of baby Terries who were to appear in due course. Somehow, when she thought about it, they were always Terry's babies, not hers.

"I know it's tough, the fees," her teacher had told her once. "When I was at uni, it was only £1000. Some would actually say it's downright oppressive now, £9000 a year, but it's not that bad because you can pay it off over time and there's a minimum salary before you need to be



Undergraduate, Apprentice, Housewife

Hassan Akram

*GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS: A**

*ENGLISH LITERATURE: A**

*ECONOMICS: A**

So that was that. Sharon had passed her A Levels with flying colours. Happy Results Day. Yay.

Now, she pondered. The grades were all right. Cambridge would warmly matriculate her with these beauties under her belt. She ought to be elated, though her nerves were still panging with receding anticipation. And what about the other options?

Terry arrived at school some minutes later, uncharacteristically punctual. Upon seeing Sharon, he kissed her passionately. Neither of them mentioned what had happened last week. Neither of them mentioned his declarative promises or the question of the ring, which still hung in the balance, to be decided at her say-so. Yet Terry was still silently expectant.

Terry soon discovered he had failed his course. "Don't need any f— exams to lay bricks, anyway, yeah word," he murmured. Sharon hated him when he was like this: coarse and ruffianly. He represented everything she wanted to wrench herself free of, the ill-bred masses who languished in slum-water their entire lives with no thought to any higher aspiration or plane. But was she in any position to

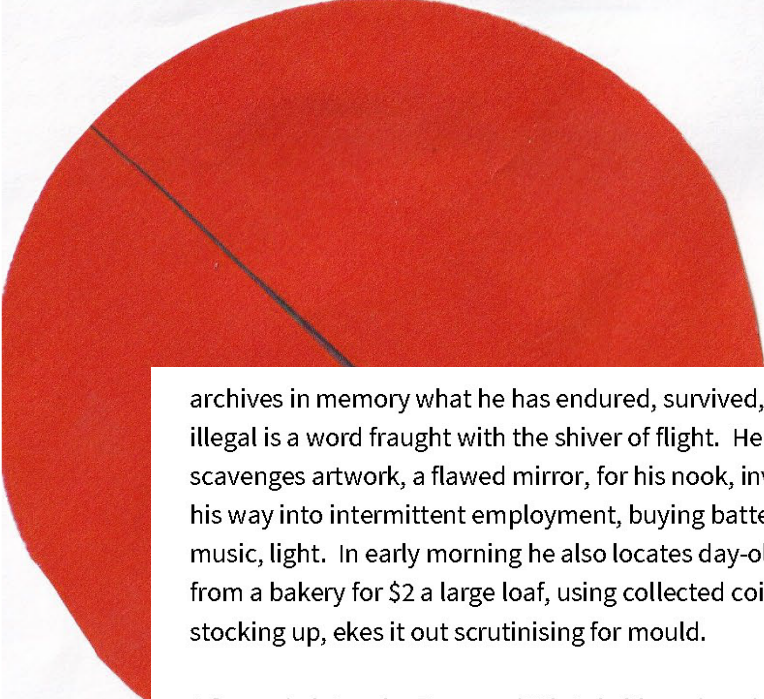
The Art of Squatting

Ian C Smith

Government policy means danger to him. He always stares at maps of havoc found in newspapers, crashes his way in by bunching a speculative shoulder against the side door opening from a narrow footpath next to thundering industrial traffic. He secures his privacy with wedged timber, pulls the door hard behind him setting out, scanning like a sniper, blood thudding, before slinking forth, relying on luck not to be door-crashed in turn. Losing a tiny photo carried for years, himself aged five, he is cut down by grief, but finding a builder's skip, visiting it each stealthy night, stirs his wounded joy.


He turns a tap full on. Nothing. Walking away, he is startled by its sudden gush. Rust, then clean flow. Even the toilets flush. To combat the cold he finds scrap timber inside, then forages, the hunted as hunter, until winter is over, this scrounging arousing only the barking alarms of dogs. His cubby, fire-pit, are unseen from the doorway. To magpie his nest he prowls further abroad on this new leg of his strange odyssey, preferably in fine rain, footpaths emptied. Shielded by traffic's hum he moves, ghostlike under orbiting satellites, security cameras.

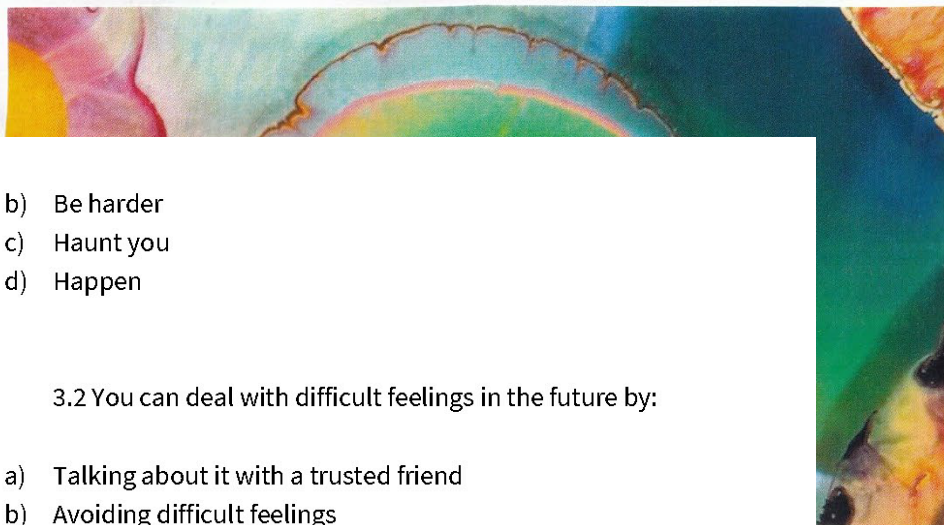
Accompanied by a pizzicato of pigeon wings, he reads. Dramatic ideas tango, warding off abstract grief. Absorbing knitted words, mind-rolling them, imagination partying, he



archives in memory what he has endured, survived, knows illegal is a word fraught with the shiver of flight. He scavenges artwork, a flawed mirror, for his nook, inveigles his way into intermittent employment, buying batteries for music, light. In early morning he also locates day-old bread from a bakery for \$2 a large loaf, using collected coins, stocking up, ekes it out scrutinising for mould.

A framed picture by Raymond Wintz in his godsend op shop window for \$4, glows, a scene both interior and exterior. From inside an airy dwelling he views the outside, beyond a foregrounded writing desk with chair, reached through an open blue door, a glimpse of harbour, sky, little white boats moored. He is wary of boats, the way they leak when too old, overloaded, but these boats auger peace, joy. The open door casts shade, a sun-loved day of promise. He buys the print for his makeshift mantelpiece, loves that desk and chair, the idea of destination.



- 
- b) Be harder
 - c) Haunt you
 - d) Happen

3.2 You can deal with difficult feelings in the future by:

- a) Talking about it with a trusted friend
- b) Avoiding difficult feelings
- c) Writing
- d) Eating a loaf of bread

3.3 Your capacity for change is:

- a) Small
- b) Fragile
- c) Comical
- d) All of the above

You have now reached the end of the test. Thank you for your participation.

This piece was first published in *Discretionary Love* at <https://www.discretionarylove.com/a-multiple-choice-test-alice-wilson/>

- d) You are sad that something which seems like it should be easy is so much hard work

2.2 You try to handle this experience by:

- a) Demonstrating empathy with how complicated this must feel for her
- b) Thanking her for being honest
- c) Ghosting her
- d) Eating a loaf of bread

2.3 Reflecting on this conversation allows you to realise that:

- a) You try to control conversations by asking questions and avoiding answering them
- b) You are unhappy
- c) Relating to someone with high emotional intelligence is challenging
- d) You don't like bread

Section 3: Future Actions

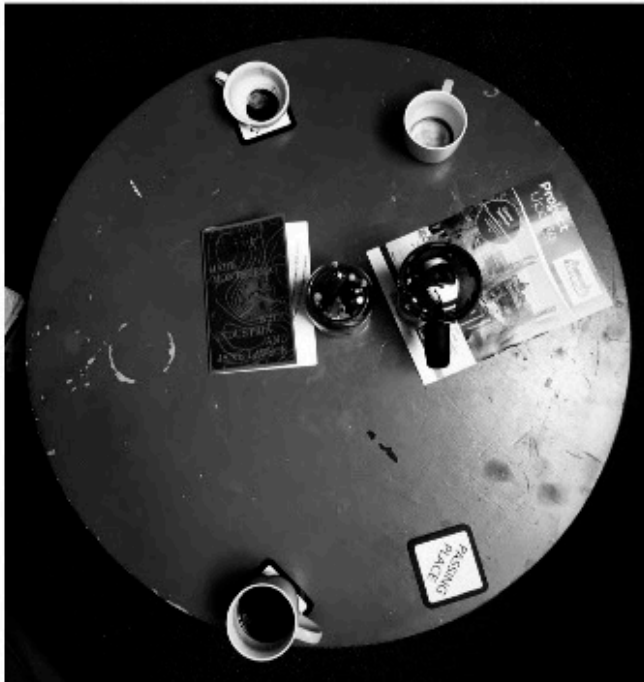
3.1 Speaking with your ex in the future is likely to:

- a) Be easier

Gathering Phases

Kyla Tully





- b) You need to feel in control of a relationship and that is more easily achieved with her.
- c) You are used to uncertainty in relationships and that is what she provides you with.
- d) You are gay and you need her to confirm it by being your girlfriend. Again.

1.3 Her aim in initiating this conversation is to remind you that:

- a) She doesn't think you are dealing with the situation well enough
- b) She would not tolerate the treatment you are enduring
- c) She is growing up and you are not
- d) She has done a psychology degree

Section 2: Self-awareness

2.1 The conversation you have had with your ex makes you feel terrible. This is because:

- a) She is right
- b) She is wrong
- c) You do not actually enjoy the honesty you claim to crave

A (Multiple Choice) Test

Alice Wilson

This is a multiple choice test. For the best results, please answer intuitively without thinking too much about each question. Circle the answer that you think is correct. You have the rest of your life to complete the test. Once you have completed the test, nobody will know that you have completed it. Thank you for your participation.

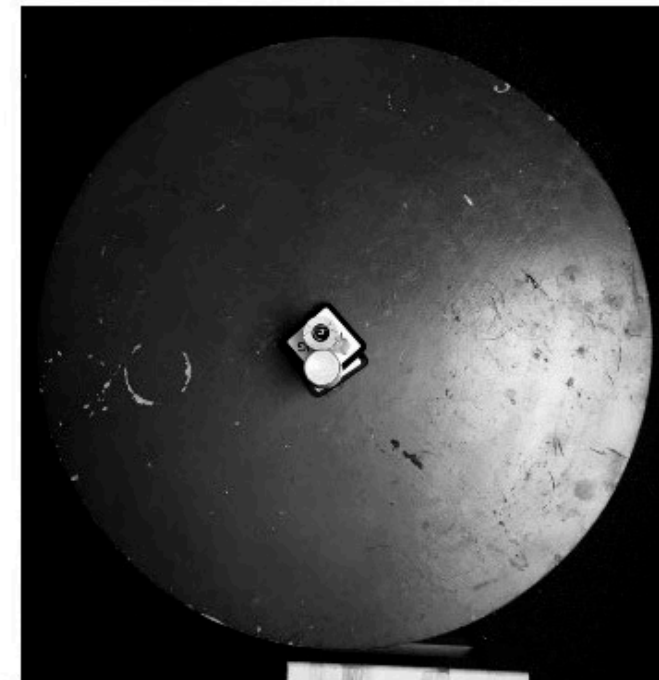
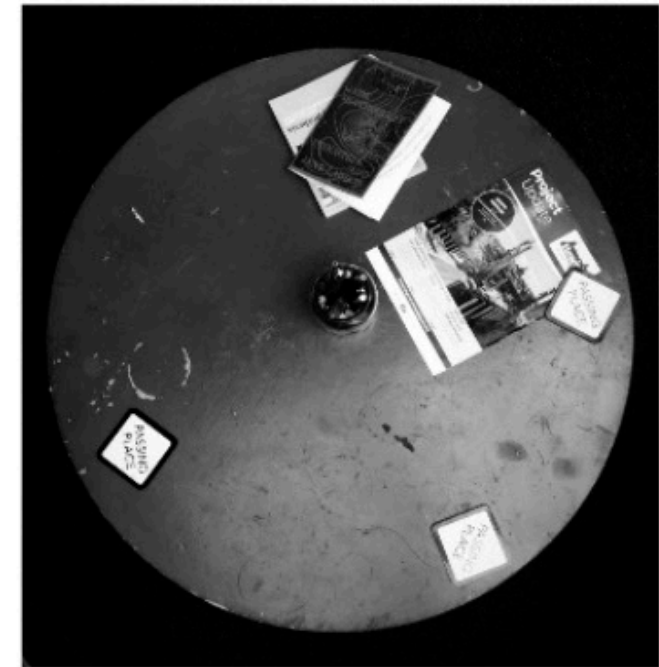
Section 1: Emotional Intelligence

1.1 You are speaking with your ex who you still have feelings for. She explains how she has noticed that your current partner's drinking has caused you to feel:

- a) Unpleasant
- b) Unwanted
- c) Unappreciated
- d) Unsafe

1.2 Your ex can see that you are still in this relationship but continue to seek closeness with her. She thinks this is because:

- a) You see closeness with her as a reducing pain in your other relationship so that you can ultimately keep pushing through that relationship.



Running

Lena Dedyukina

I'm running...
I'm running from regular days,
I'm running from hustle and rush.
I'm running from rational ways,
I'm running, afraid to be flushed.
I'm running from fear itself,
I'm running from darkness away.
I'm running to nurture myself,
When despair starts looking for prey.
I'm running from curious eyes,
Burning bridges behind, closing doors,
And the phrases that are born in disguise,
Scribbling down on pages as notes.

(Written in 1996, translated in 2020)

SOCIETY

Lena Dedyukina

Social rules, social norms,
Order of actions to keep us together.
Community formed with
Institutions and regulations as a tether.
Encouraged conformity,
Truth can be tricky.
You want something changed? Picky!





Poetry, words and photography by Charli Morachnick
Design and layout by Matenia Altikatis



Extraction

Gulzar R. Charania

Theory

Methods

Data

Findings

Conclusions

24 interviews¹

being a lawyer isn't a realistic goal for someone like you

have you considered a trade?

do you read to your daughter at night?

am I gonna get justice?

Theory

Methods

Data

Findings

Conclusions

crying

confusion

quiet

laughing

wondering

¹ Most of the phrases within this poem are taken from qualitative work on racism. Identifying information is removed.



Theory
Methods
Data
Findings
Conclusions

who wrote this story
why does she hate me?
loud
I always have to prove myself
put on your game face

Theory
Methods
Data
Findings
Conclusions

lost dreams
hard
ways to survive
calibrating risks
wordlessness

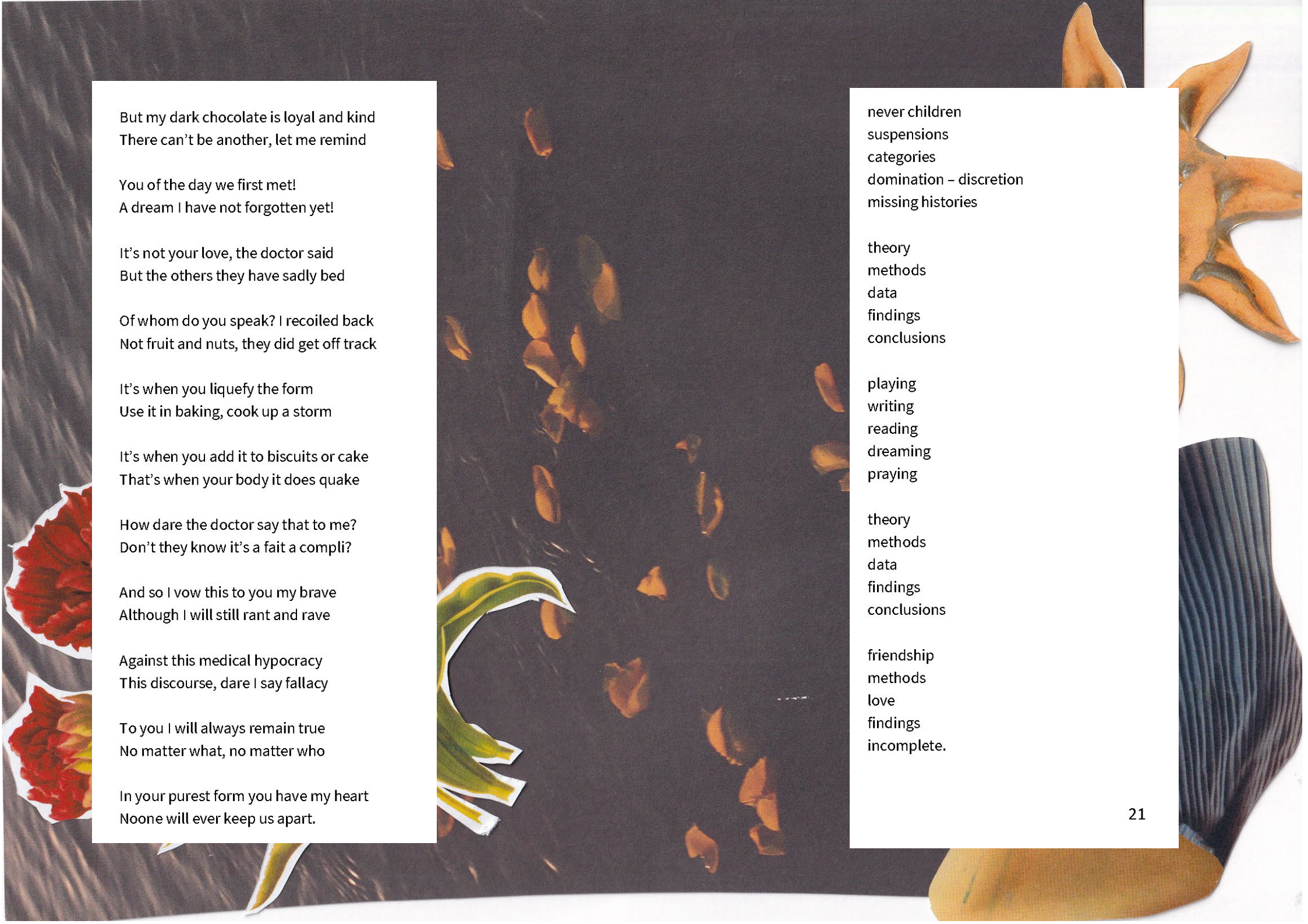
theory
methods
data
findings
conclusions

Lost my place

Teri Anderson

lost in place that seemed familiar
I wish I felt less insular
beyond a wilderness of normal faces
that loose connection of familiar places

dark the heart feels
when love doesn't conquer any ills



But my dark chocolate is loyal and kind
There can't be another, let me remind

You of the day we first met!
A dream I have not forgotten yet!

It's not your love, the doctor said
But the others they have sadly bed

Of whom do you speak? I recoiled back
Not fruit and nuts, they did get off track

It's when you liquefy the form
Use it in baking, cook up a storm

It's when you add it to biscuits or cake
That's when your body it does quake

How dare the doctor say that to me?
Don't they know it's a fait a compli?

And so I vow this to you my brave
Although I will still rant and rave

Against this medical hypocrisy
This discourse, dare I say fallacy

To you I will always remain true
No matter what, no matter who

In your purest form you have my heart
Noone will ever keep us apart.

never children
suspensions
categories
domination – discretion
missing histories

theory
methods
data
findings
conclusions

playing
writing
reading
dreaming
praying

theory
methods
data
findings
conclusions

friendship
methods
love
findings
incomplete.

Not all Women

Incarnadinea



An Ode to Chocolate

Mim Fox

When looking back on all my past loves
The choral music, the lonesome white doves

I can't help but think of one love true
One love that made me say "I do"

This love has stood the test of time
While the rest have fallen it does shine

When I look back over all the years
All the laughs and all the tears

You were there, no matter what!
Just a nibble, maybe a block

You were there, in all your glory
Dark reigned supreme, the same old story

We had our dark and difficult day
When the doctor threatened to take you away

They said I was suffering from too much of you!
No, I said, it's just the flu!

My love would never betray me like that
Ok maybe caramilk cheated behind my back