

A Spiritual Haunting of Colonial Wastelands



TAKE FUN

Sheida Soleimani

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Culture Remix, led by Shirine Saad, in the Spring of 2023.
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LAND

CARE

SHELTER

A Community Zine *Remixing our City*

WHAT DOES IT MEAN to *exist* in our world, desperate for humanity and connection? Moving within geopolitical infrastructures of White Supremacist imperialist capitalist heteropatriarchy, circulating in our streets? Within our colonial and industrial architecture, our minds and bodies are conditioned to function towards robotic productivity—torn from nature and each other. This system has devastated the land originally inhabited by the Narragansett, Wampanoag and Nipmuc people; annihilated their communities and traditions; exploited the forced labor of Africans through the Transatlantic Slave Trade; erected violent institutions to monitor, police, control, punish, incarcerate us, flooding streets with guns and drugs, alienating, sickening and killing living beings for the benefit of corporations.

Dismantling and remixing historical narratives, traditions, memories and needs, learning about our land and its people, empowers us to reinvent our world. Rethinking our land is a dedicated creative, spiritual and embodied practice. Through solidarity, we can craft an ethos of resistance against hatred, greed, bigotry and intolerance. The land teaches us that we can't just *take*—as animal bodies we can only cultivate, harvest, and feed when we give back: seed and re-seed. Rituals of care and abundance that move with the seasons are intrinsically resistant to Western values of dominance and rich with sacred knowledge. Cosmically and creatively, we are connected.

Making this zine together, we learned about the hidden histories and truths around us. Samantha Cullen-Fry of the Tomaquag Museum, the only

museum in Rhode Island that's operated by Indigenous leadership, spoke of the ways in which we routinely violate sacred Indigenous grounds, such as the burial site the Providence Place Mall is built on. The Iranian artist Sheida Soleimani showed us that urban infrastructures are traumatizing and fatal to the native birds of the region. At her home rehabilitation space and artist studio, she saves these creatures as a practice of self-care and liberation. The painter and performer Lilly Manycolors 'skooled' us in the Decolonial ideas she investigates through her art, teaching, and curating. To her, haunting colonial wastelands means creating a viral system to counter the "assault and violation of cosmic planetary law." Beyond human-animal-earth hierarchies and their logic of control, her art centers intuition, transformation and intimacy. The activist Julio Berroa, a Dominican

immigrant who launched Haus of Codec as Providence's first youth transitional housing organization in 2021, perceives shelter as a political civic battle—a fundamental right for all to have a *home*, regardless of their identity, status or income.

What emerges from our moments of deep play, vulnerability, thought, exploration, learning and questioning is a collaborative zine that celebrates the innate vision we each hold instinctually. We have futurist collages and dystopian stories, earth poems and visceral digital art, messy diary entries and sketches. We invite you to witness and tap into our shared worldmaking.

SYMPOIETIC MAPPING
Lilly Manycolors, 2022
Mixed Media on canvas
108" x 84"



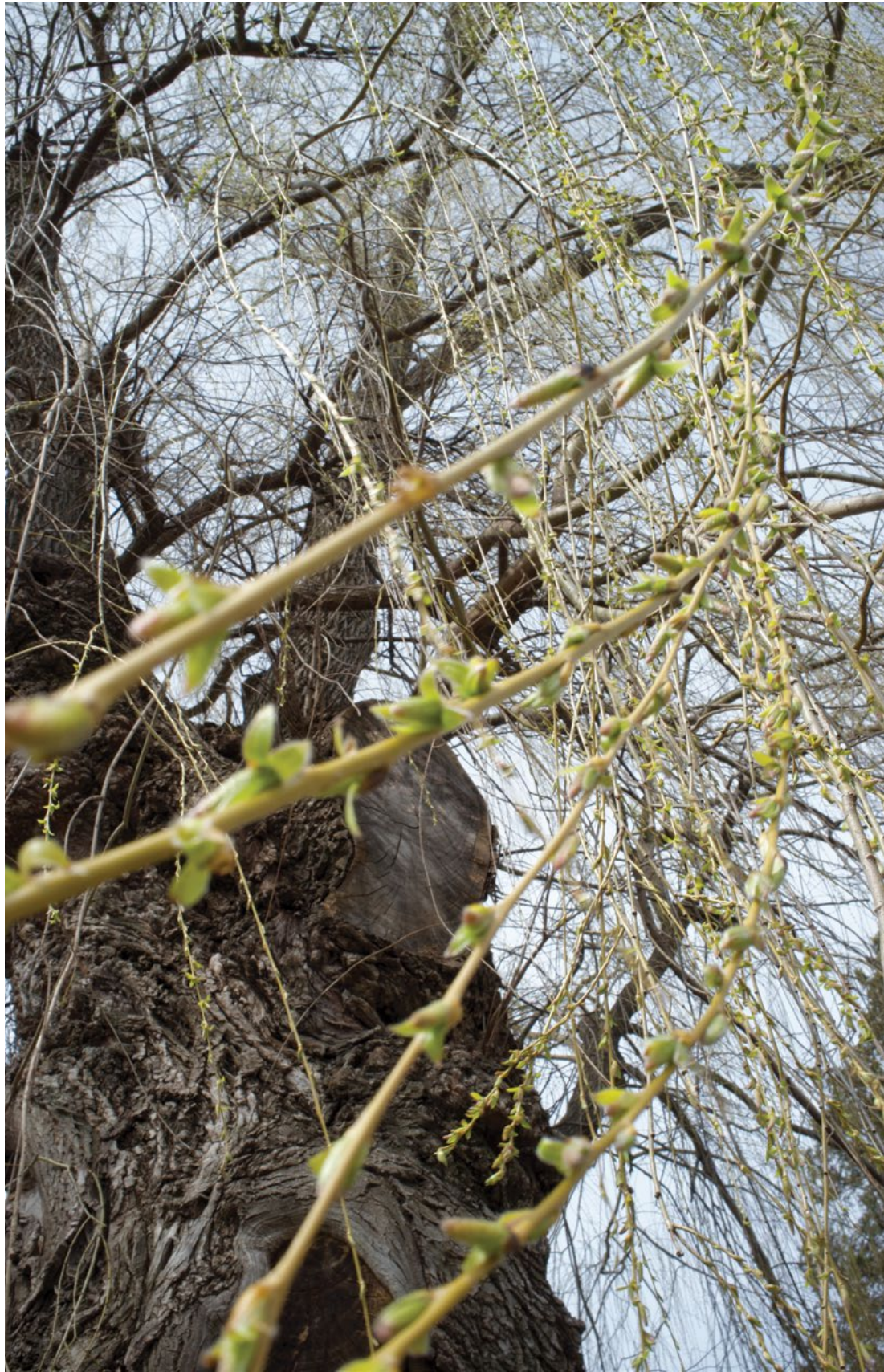
REMINDER

Jane Congleton

THE WILLOW’S ARMS reach down to me. Her branches are many layers of curtains, a soft doorway, a shield even. Her curtains whisper in a protective circle around a portal inward: a massive trunk of swirling bark that resembles a grandmother’s eyes, wrinkled from smiling and crying.

For a long time, I couldn’t let the feathery leaves brush my face, but it was what I wanted. I was afraid of being seen, not used to living so close to so many houses, being passed by so many cars full of strangers. Growing up in forests, I didn’t begin to reckon with how much space I had there, until I got here.

I was afraid of being touched so gently, also, and sharing that intimacy within sight of so many eyes. These were my first companions in Providence: the willows. For some time after moving here, I would visit them almost daily. In doing so, I’ve been introduced to other plants. They all teach me about relationship.

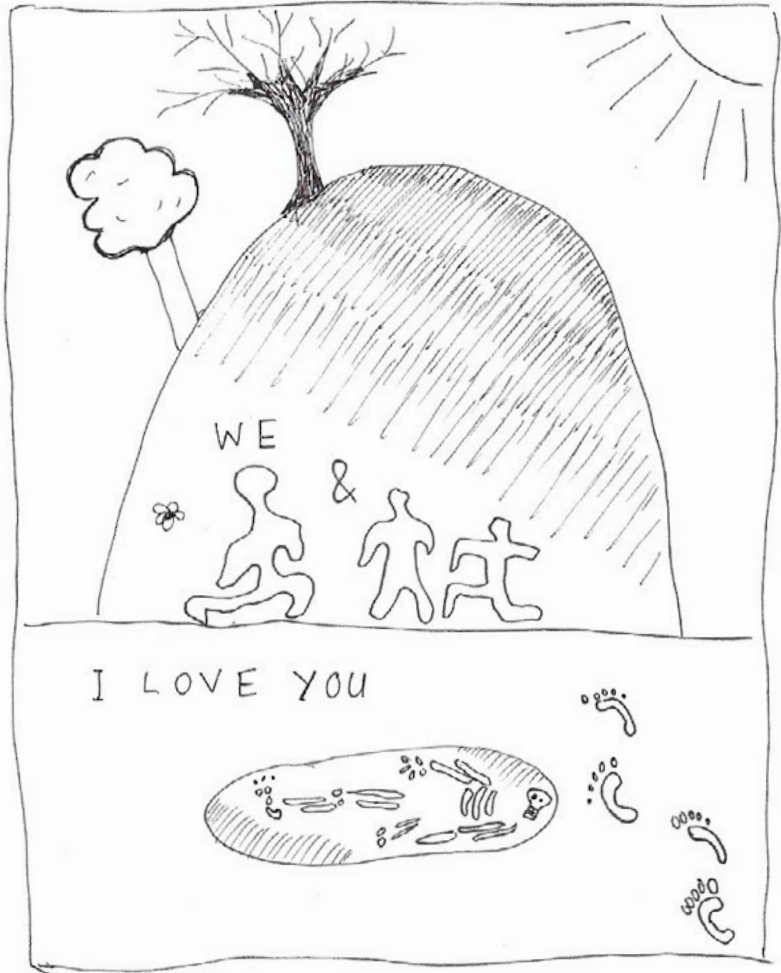


UNTITLED
Collage
*Between stillness and chaos,
a portal. Weeds overgrown are calling*

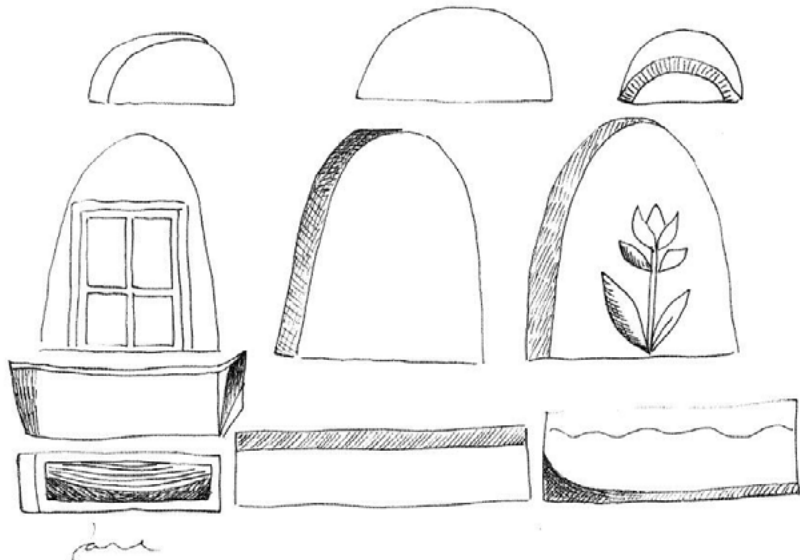


An Invitation: Color What You See

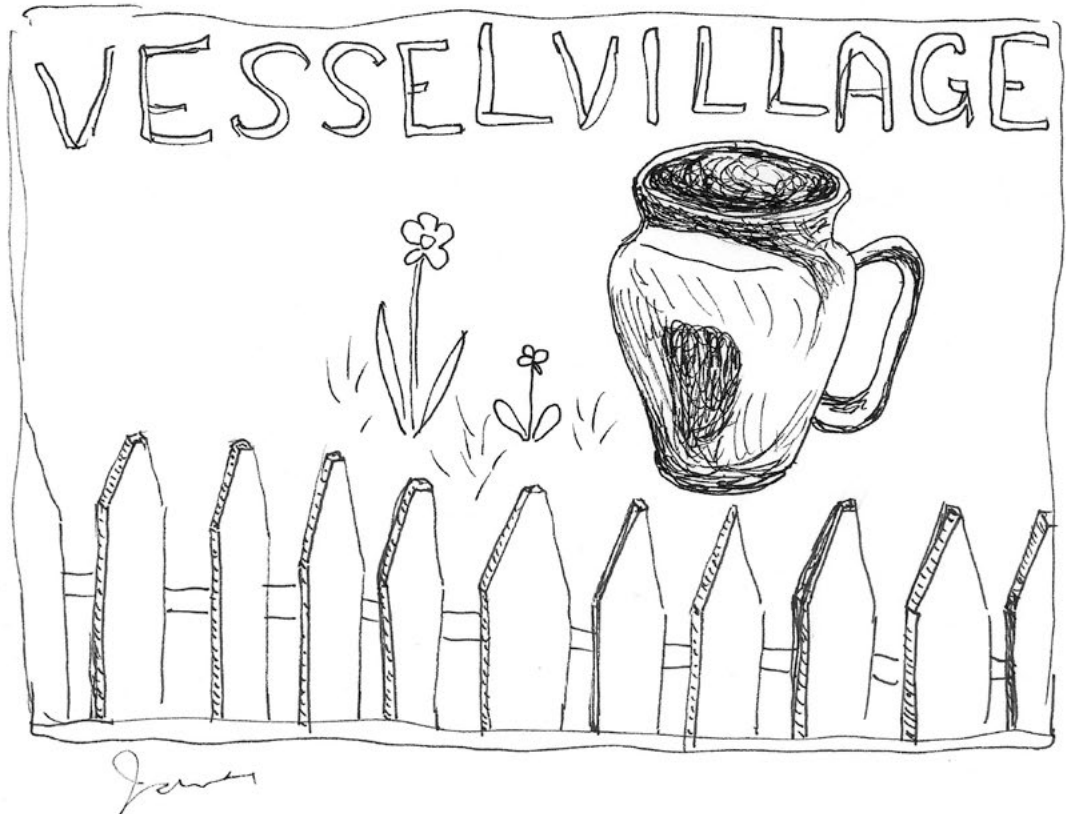
Jane Congleton



BURIAL
Ink
Movements of bodies across a landscape. Gathering, and grieving for who and what came before.

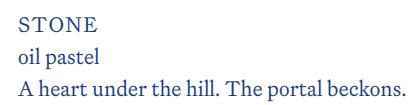


WINDOWS
Ink
...Shaped like a sun peaking over the horizon.



VESSEL VILLAGE
Ink
Ceramics is an engagement with spiral, water and mud. Pots, like humans, fill and empty, overflow, dry up. Are more fragile than they would like to be, sometimes.

These containers are trying out a day in the life of the “ideal” human neighborhood. They’re wondering, “Why do we live in boxes, and have to talk over a fence?”



TREE
Collage



BOTTOM FEEDERS

Kiana T. Murphy

All light is shared with those at the bottom of the ocean

—Alexis Pauline Gumbs, M Archive

And he went back to fixin up that landin. I come to see what he was doin pretty soon. And I had a notion to go down and pitch in. But I knowed Headeye. Sometimes he gets a notion in his big head and he act crazy behind it. Like the time in church when he told Rev. Jenkins that he heard people moanin out on the river. I remember that. Cause papa went with the men. Headeye, his old man was with them out in that boat. They thought it was somebody took sick and couldn’t row ashore. But Headeye, he kept tellin them it was a lot of people, like a multitude.

—Henry Dumas, Ark of Bones

Yetu closed her eyes and boned in on the vibrations of the deep, purposefully resensitizing her scaled skin to the onslaught of the circus that is the sea. It was a matter of reconnecting her brain to her body and lowering the shields she’d put in place in her mind to protect herself. As she focused, the world came in.

—Rivers Solomon, The Deep

WHEN I REACHED LUMUN, it was too late. The air had chilled significantly so I knew where I could find them. India Point Park. The sky was bending towards a golden sunset, the residue of the day’s blue trailing behind. And there they were, kneeling in the grass next to the river, crouched over as if in prayer.

“L, you don’t have to do this! Can’t we just talk.”

Silence.

The wind starts to pick up, and stuff my hands into my jacket pockets. Lumun is still gazing downward, their locs quietly floating. I try to walking forward but an invisible force keeps me in place. If only I could touch them. The grass begins to darken in color under Lumun, and a soft murmuring gets

my attention. I can’t tell if it’s Lumun or someone else. Or maybe more than one person? The sound of rustling leaves joined the chorus. I could have been imagining it, but the trees started to bend ever so slightly over the edge towards the river.

It was astonishing that no one else was there to witness. It could have been the same force that held me back. How did I manage to get so close? Did Lumun make room for me?

“L, please say something.”

“You know this is what I have to do,” Lumun began in a raspy whisper, “and there is no stopping it now. The wasting away of the world ends now. The bottom feeders have returned.”

At that instant, the murmuring began to get louder, and the surface of the water started to ripple in evenly spaced circles. One by one, small islands of red algae pierced the surface of the waters. One. Two. Five. Ten. Twenty. Forty. Lined up in sequence all the way back towards the horizon, as the sun sank more and more into the water. One by one, the algae began to rise—and then I could see eyes, maybe a mouth, and not quite a body. Instead, glistening mid-night blue figures draped in what looked from afar like kelp or seaweed. The figures all began to float toward land in unison, one row after another like an army getting prepared for battle.

Lumun was standing now with their hands raised, and I could see too now that their skin had faded into the same shade of blue as the figures. I could see them a little clearer now as the first row of figures stood up on land. The glistening came from shards of glass that punctured their skin, reflecting the light out and then in—a subtle surface glow. Some were tall and wide, others short and thin. Some were missing limbs, while others had extra ones. It was hard to tell what they were beyond what stood out as a face, as the figures were draped in the flora of the waters—shades of greens and yellows, oranges and purples, the whites of fungi. Their feet were covered in what looked like remnants of rubber. I guess what we humans discarded into the waters still had its purpose. Who could possibly make a landfill into something beautiful?

I follow behind L, who was now trailing behind slowly, not paying me any mind for the most part—but occasionally peered back at me to, I’m sure, see if I would trust them this one time.

They knew there was life there. They just didn’t know that anything would survive underwater, or that they would repurpose what we understood as waste for living.

The Greenfield Waterways Company had been in Providence for as long as Cypress could remember. Their family had lived in Providence for generations, and The Green stood taller it seemed with every decade, the buildings growing wider and

taller, looming more and more over India Point Park, casting the grounds into the shadows. No one really knew what happened in that building, but over the years shapeshifted to being many different kinds of things for the “community”—which we all knew meant another way to terrorize the people who could not afford to move elsewhere. Cypress’ great grandmother”; her grandmother remembered it as a as a clinic, where some women went to get things “handled; and her mother remembered it as place to get meals for us when the kitchen supplies were running low or when the “money was getting funny.” Her father’s side, up to her great grandfather, remembered the smell of factory smoke—a lingering that still courses through the geography of the city today.

What everyone did know is that the people who decided to go inside, either came back different or didn’t come back at all.

Cypress found herself drawn to the mystery of company, having lived blocks away from the now small business metropolis all her life. They never saw any of the workers come in or out of the building, which made the streets ominous and people tried to avoid it—which wasn’t impossible since it was gated off on all sides. That’s where they met Lumun.

Walking home from school, Cypress noticed someone at the gates everyday—just looking. Lumun was short with long thick locs and oversized golden-rimmed glasses. Their baggy black overalls were baggy covered their white sneakers and the yellow undershirt was cut at the sleeves, exposing the two sleeves of tattoos. They turned and stared, not breaking eye contact for what seemed like hours. The air had cooled down, and I couldn’t help but walk towards them.

“Why you so close to the gate?” I asked, “Won’t they come out and say something to you.”

“I haven’t seen anybody come in or out this place. All I do is see lights turn on and off in there.” They had turned their gaze towards the Company again, and I couldn’t help but notice how brown their locs were up close, almost golden.

“What’s your name?”

“Lumun. Or you can call me L.”
“I’m Cypress.”

“Like the tree.”

“Yeah, I guess.”

“Cool.”

Cypress thought they heard deep uninterest in Lumun’s voice, their eyes still transfixed on the Company. “And your name is what?”

“Like something other than here.”

Cypress didn’t know what to say or what that meant. Why was this starting to get weird?

“But that doesn’t matter. I’m trying to get inside here, and I need your help. I’ve seen you walking around here, and I know you feel it, too. I’ve found an underground way we can take, too.”

“Me? Go in there? You really have to be out of your mind.” Cypress could feel the fear rising up inside.

“I just might be. You in or no?” Lumun broke their gaze to stare over at Cypress, their eyebrows furrowed in what seemed like contemplation, or, to Cypress, annoyance.

“Um, yeah I guess? I don’t know what we’re expecting to find here exactly. It just seems like some spooky old buildings now.”

“Okay, great. Be here. Midnight.”

Are you alright?

Yeah, you?

I think so, I’m not sure I can feel my face. Or is that my hand?

It’s my leg.

Oh, sorry.

It’s fine. We had no other way but through the gutters, and it smells like shit. It’s so dark and cold, we could literally be anywhere by now.

Inside or still outside, you think?

Both.

Well, you’re not making this any easier.

I’m trying my best.

Okay, well what do you feel? It’s so slimy in here. I’m starting to lose feeling in my legs from the water.

Just keep moving, and if you feel an opening anywhere, anything soft, let me know.

I can’t feel anything.

Be serious.

No, really. I can’t.

Let’s move around a bit. Let me get in front.

Okay, so what now.

Keep moving!

Lumun? I think I feel something. Did you say that it would be soft?

Yeah, why?

Well, I think I’ve woken it up.

It would be weeks before Cypress saw Lumun again. Their “adventure” underground felt like a fever dream, and Cypress could barely remember anything. The walls of the tunnel Cypress remembered felt like a stomach, pulsing in and out. The soft part that Cypress touched was thicker, feeling their body sinking into it, swallowing them whole. Afterwards, a dimly lit dark basement with layers and layers of mildew for company, and boxes and boxes of what felt like books, or maybe something else. They could barely hear or see Lumun moving in and out of the shadows.

What Cypress would later discover is that Lumun had been there before. Had gotten up to this point but failed to get past the dank basement, and that they would need another body—some flesh—to enter the halls of the Company. A kind of sacrifice of sorts. Another kind of offering compared to the ones that had been done before.

So when Cypress felt drawn to the company, it wasn’t by chance. It was a calling. And when they could not help to be drawn towards the park weeks later, the chill overcoming their senses, they knew it was Lumun. That there was a beautiful chaos to be had. Shared.



ALL OUR WASTE WE DUMPED ON HER SHE ABSORBED #1, 2023

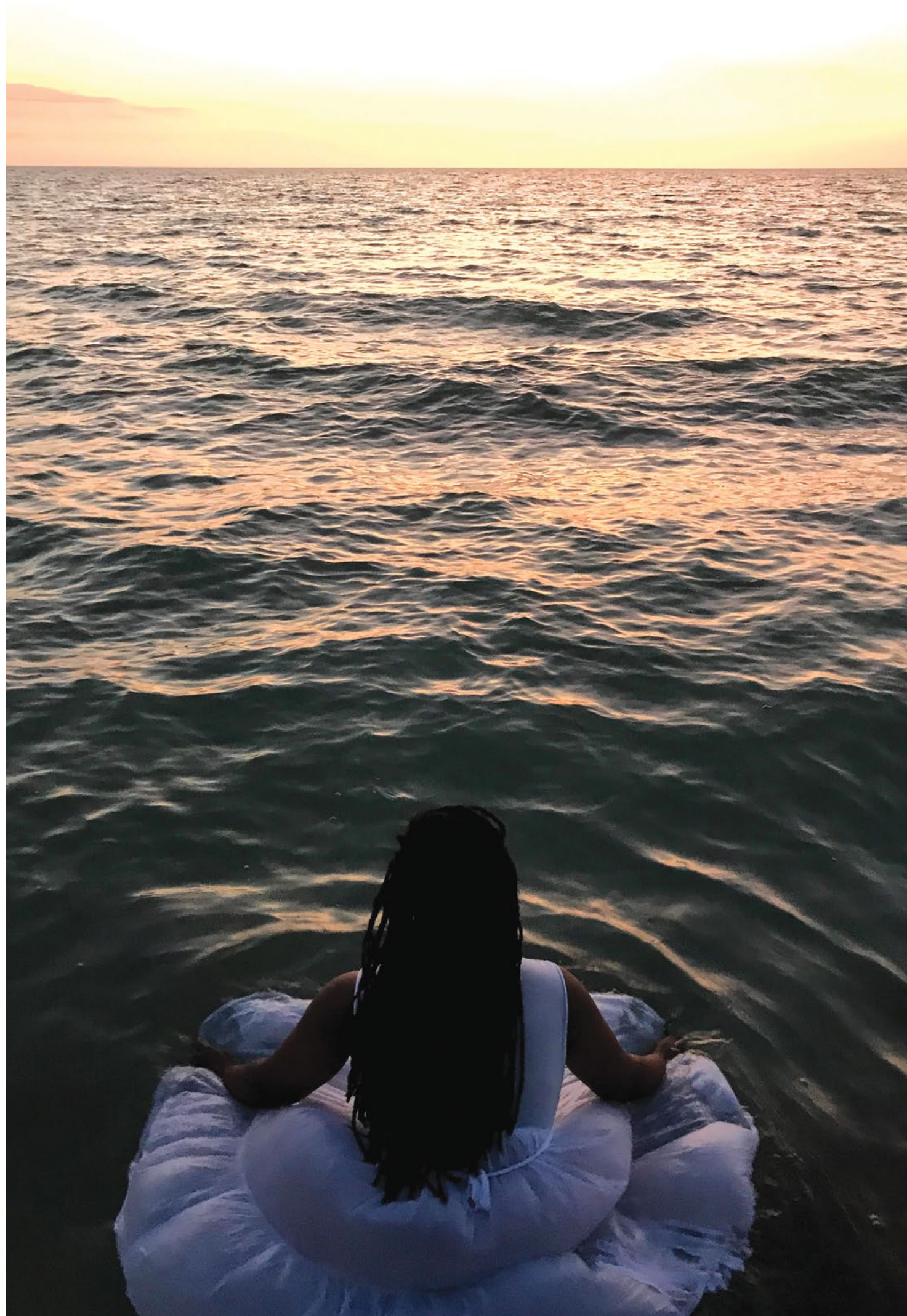


And now Cypress stood one amongst many. The murmuring now at the beat of a steady rhythm, sending chills through Cypress' spine. The multitudes start circling the buildings, one by one, stacking next to each other in concentric circles until Cypress could barely see Lumun. And then all went silent. The night had crawled over the skies, and the figures began to glisten more than ever—their glow mirroring those of the stars.

Cypress looked up, astonished. Lumun was floating above all the others, glowing a deep rich golden color now, a voice seeming unlike their own began to speak: "We return the debt. We have come back for what we are owed. We are the bottom feeders. Discarded but not lost. We have come for the souls you have buried, but lives."

The grounds began to shudder, and Cypress began to feel their feet sinking into the grounds, now softened by the rippling. The grounds mirrored the waters, the ebb and flow now shaking the buildings, slowly disintegrating into dust. Again, the crowns of heads began to show in the field front of the buildings, one by one these figures rose up covered in mud and the soot of the buildings. The trudged slowly on, toppling the gate over, the multitude of them, and joined the concentric circle—literally merging their bodies with those already in line. Soon, it was hard to determine who was who, but that didn't matter.

In an instant, they all turned around, row by row, Lumun among them, and me not far behind, to return to the waters below.



ALL OUR WASTE WE DUMPED ON HER SHE ABSORBED #2, 2023



THE CITY

Kobe Jackson

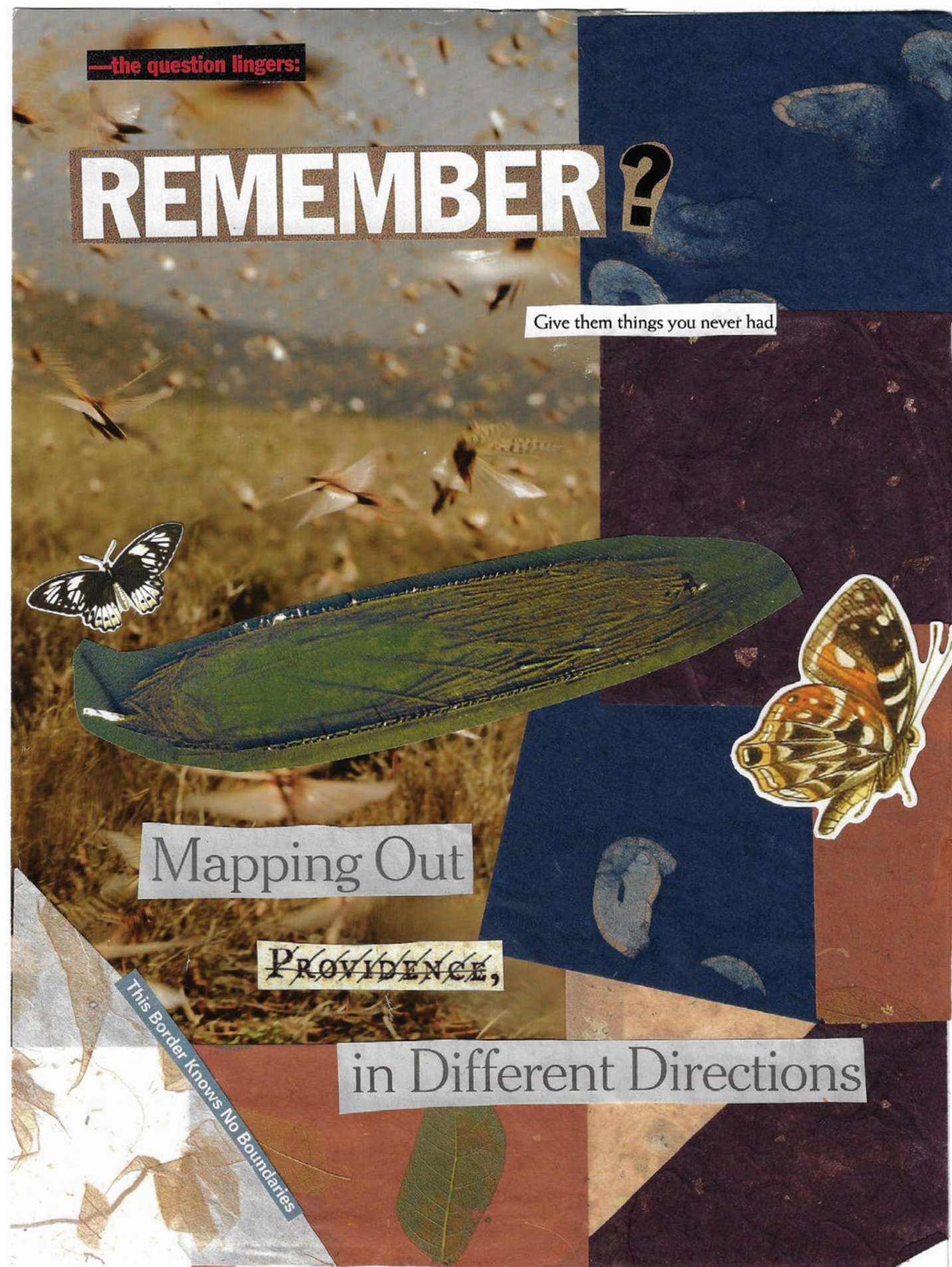


DEALING WITH THE THINGS THAT FEEL FIXED



BOUND FLOW





REMEMBER?

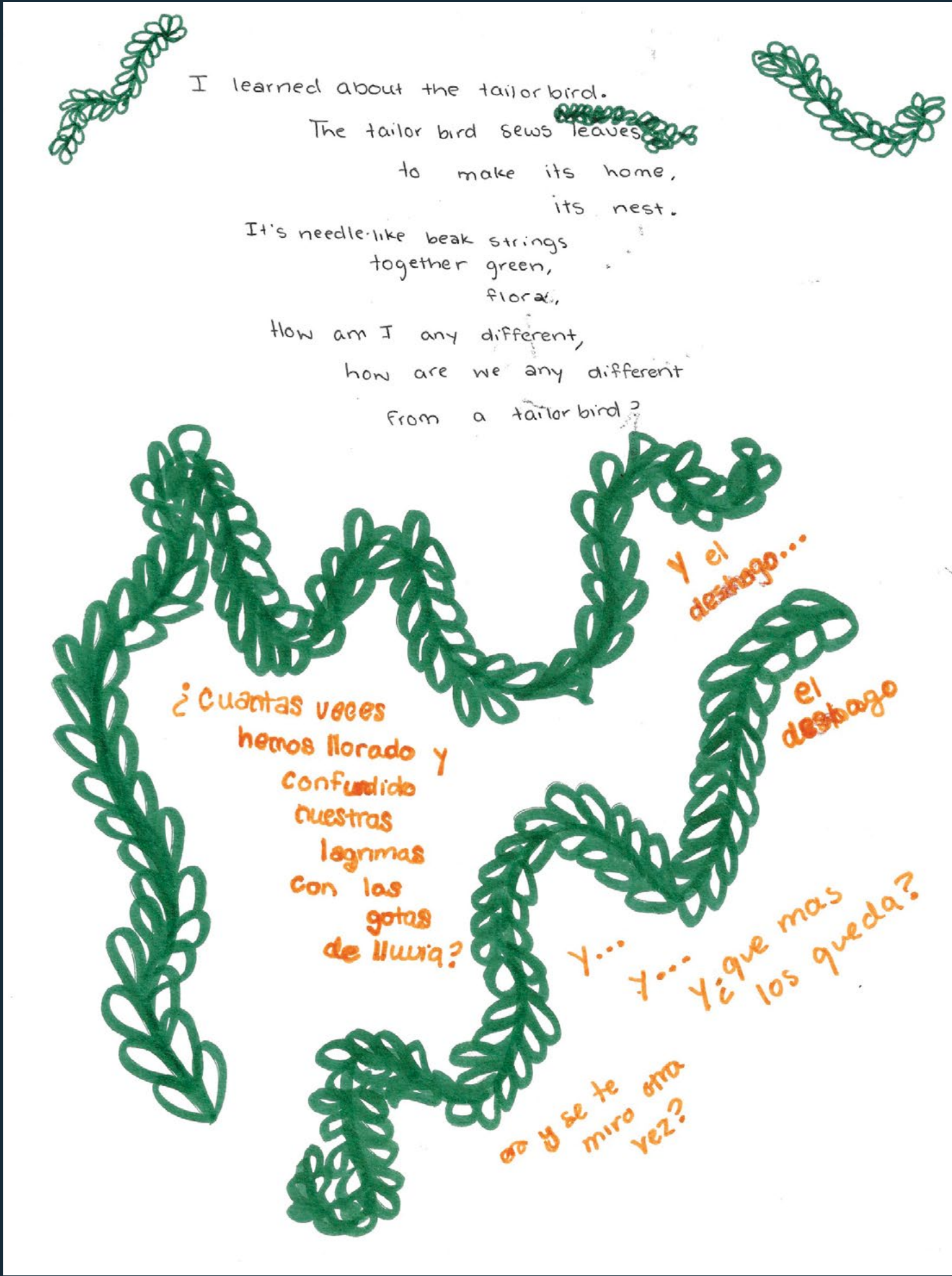
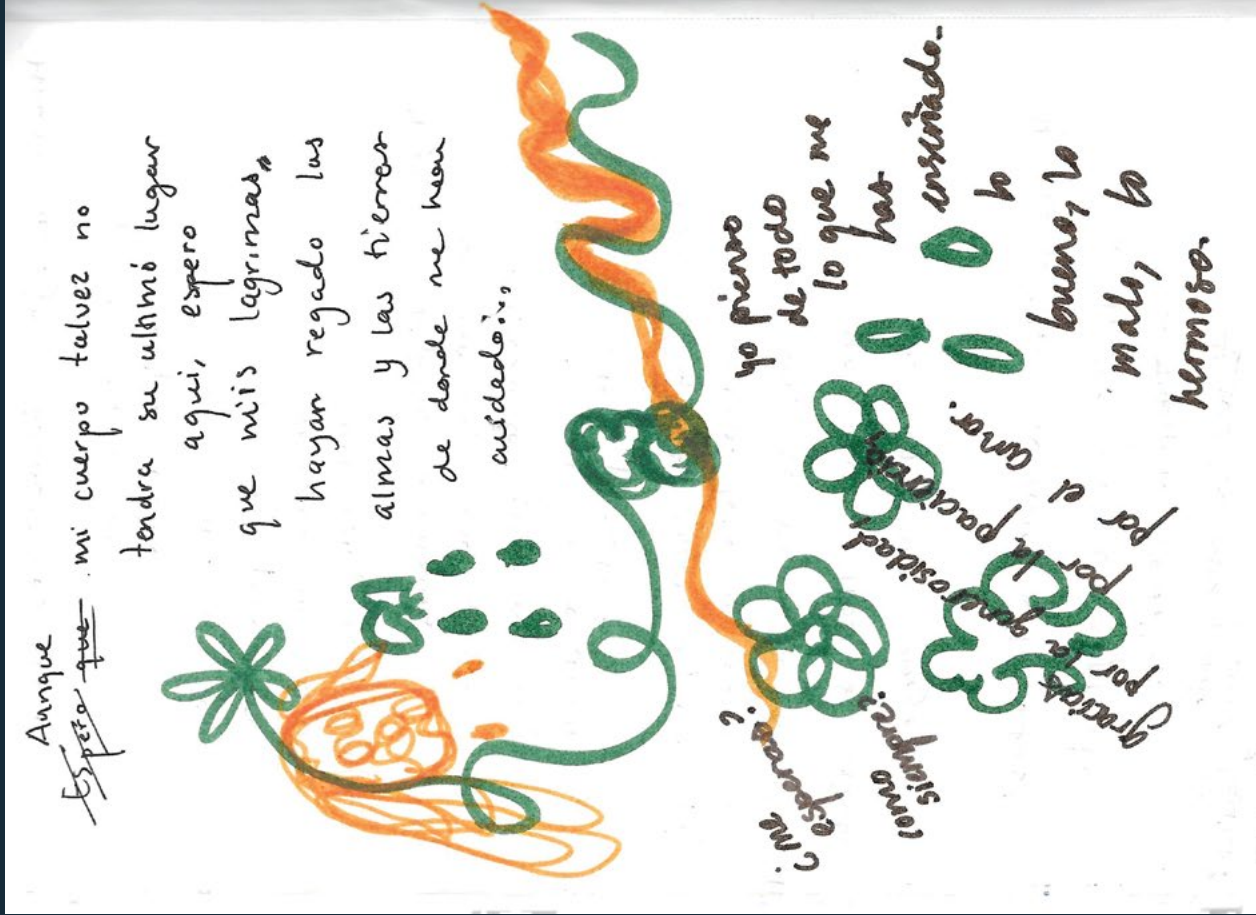
Georgara Castañeda-Garza

Te doy las gracias. Las gracias por dejarme estar aquí. Los invitados no deben de negar sin traer algo... Aún ~~pienso~~ no se que te traigo. Aún estoy imaginad que ~~to~~ te puedo ofrezar. Aún pienso que le puedo dar a todos. Tu y tu gente me a dejado estar, me a cuidado en los momentos cuando la misma escuela que me trajo no me dio el amor que pense.

Yo ~~busco~~ ~~bus~~ busque el amor en una instituciones que nunca penso de mi.

No quiero hablar a tí en inglés. tu mereces algo más que el inglés por que to eres más que esta escuela en una loma.

los dedos donde la lluvia nunca termina.



cuántas veces he llorado
y confundido mis lágrimas
con la lluvia lenta,
y constante.

cuántas veces ha llovido
y he confundido
las gotas con mis lágrimas

y cuántas veces he visto
tus ríos y tus aguas
y pensado que estoy
en mi casa...

y el sol, y el sol
que a veces no
se siente,

el sol que no pica,
—pero todavía
me recuerda
que estoy aquí

que estoy viva

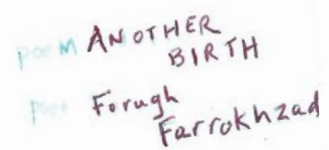
y ¿qué me digo a mi misma
cuando quedo
regresando?
¿qué me digo cuando
—ya no sé dónde
estoy parada?

los pájaros, sean de aquí o de allá,
me guían. los meses cuando se van,
yo sé que se van a dónde yo vivo. ellos regresan conmigo.

y ¿qué le digo al cielo?
¿a las nubes?
¿a la tierra?
¿a qué más le puedo dar gracias?

Jo-Anne Hart

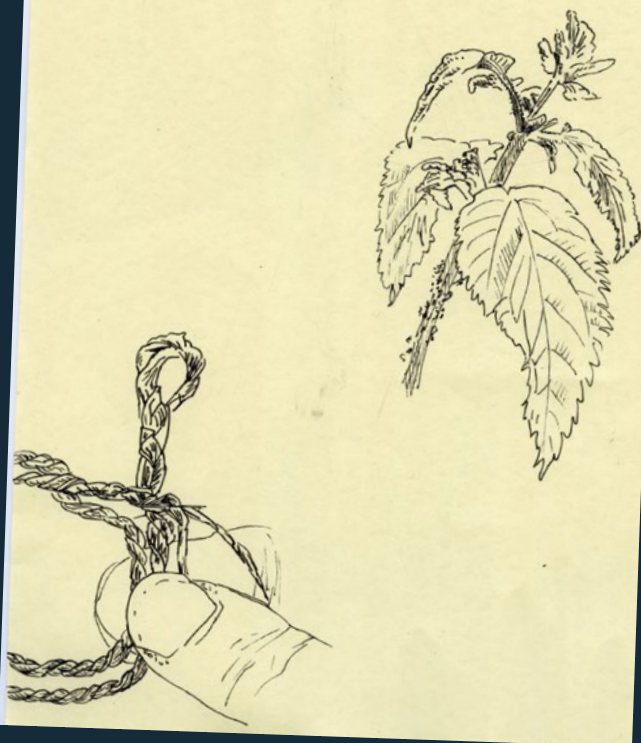
Jo-Anne Hart



The name *Moshassuck* means
River where the moose watered.

How to make nettle chips:
1. Find your local nettle.
If you don't know where to
go, you have to explore.
It's half the fun.
2. Get some nettles (we want
the leaves). Don't take too much.
3. Fry the leaves and spruce
to your liking. Eat them, they
don't bite.

I don't know the names of the
plants I live with.
but I know which ones sting me
and which ones twist well enough to make
a basket (to hold pears)
and which ones I can take a few
stems from
not too close to the bottom
to braid my little strings out of
and make scratchy friendship bracelets
that stay in my drawer.



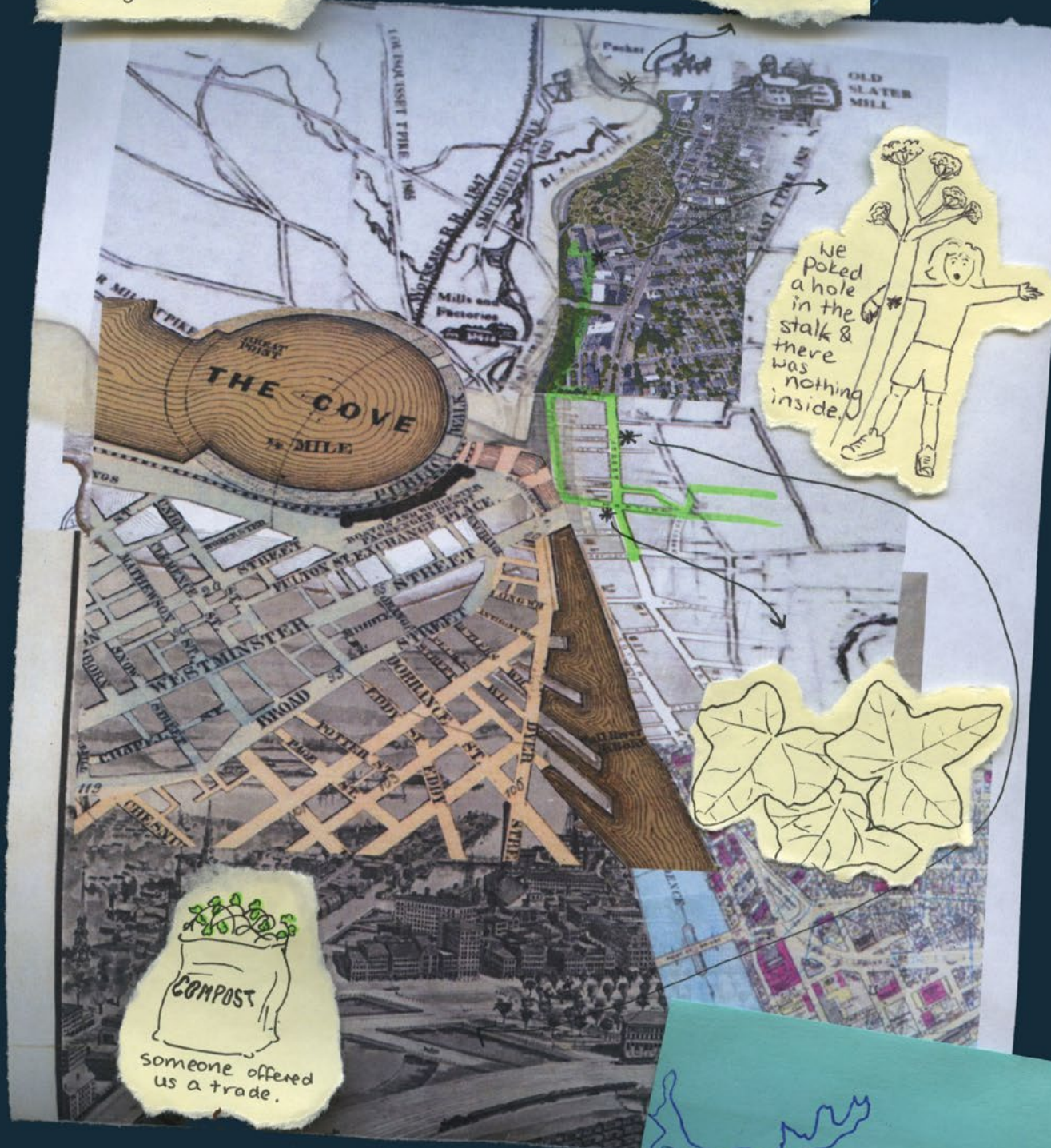
Der Fluss ist hungrig
aber wir sind hungriger.
Alles in den Schlund runter damit jetzt sofort
schneller alles schneller alles alles
und nichts bleibt übrig
für den kleinen
Elch

Der Kleine Elch
by Fanny-Marie Vavrovsky

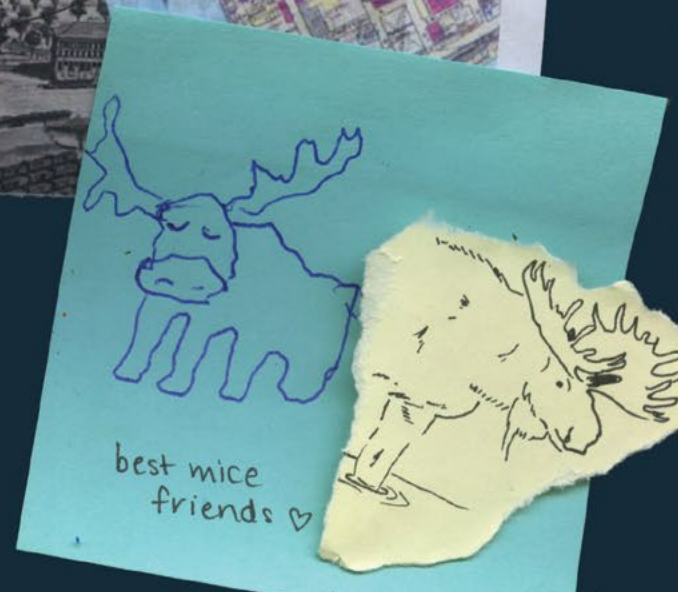


We went on a walk
to see if we could
find the start of
Moshassuck River. (we
didn't get very far.)

you can't see the
river from the sky
cos it's often underground.
follow the tree-trail.



Composite Map of Providence
by Cash and Fanny-Marie Vavrovsky



DER FLUß

Fanny-Marie Vavrovsky

der fluss er fließt er fließt so schnell so schnell so leise so leise
so laut so laut
er biss meine kalten zehen und flüsterte kühle küsse auf
meine heiße stirn

parfois le fleuve rattrape mes larmes et les berce doucement
dans ses bras jusqu'à ce qu'elles se désintègrent lentement, se
laissant couler calmement dans le courant

si j'étais un poisson je me laisserais couler tout au fond de la
mer dans la recherche d'un fond

tu crois dans les esprits des fleuves? j'en ai caressé un hier au
bord de l'eau

i fear i have forgotten how the world feels under my touch
my fingertips do not know the new city they are asked to
describe

oh little palm, do you remember holding the broken bones of
branches?
oh little finger, do you remember running and jumping along
brick walls?
oh little knuckle, do you remember caressing the petals of a
new plant?

dust and mud feel too foreign on hands they should be so
familiar with

time has erased the feel of life in my hands
responsibility has bound my feet and makes me trip on wild
paths
the weight of daily life has stolen the breath of trees and
flower and rivers and rain from my lungs

what a scary thought that my bond with the earth can be
strained
can escape
like waves running away from the shore
maybe i'll catch a tether with my fingertips
on Providence river's shore

DER FLUSS
Oil pastel, poem, & audio



RESET—BRANCH—SLIDE

Enongo Lumumba-Kasongo

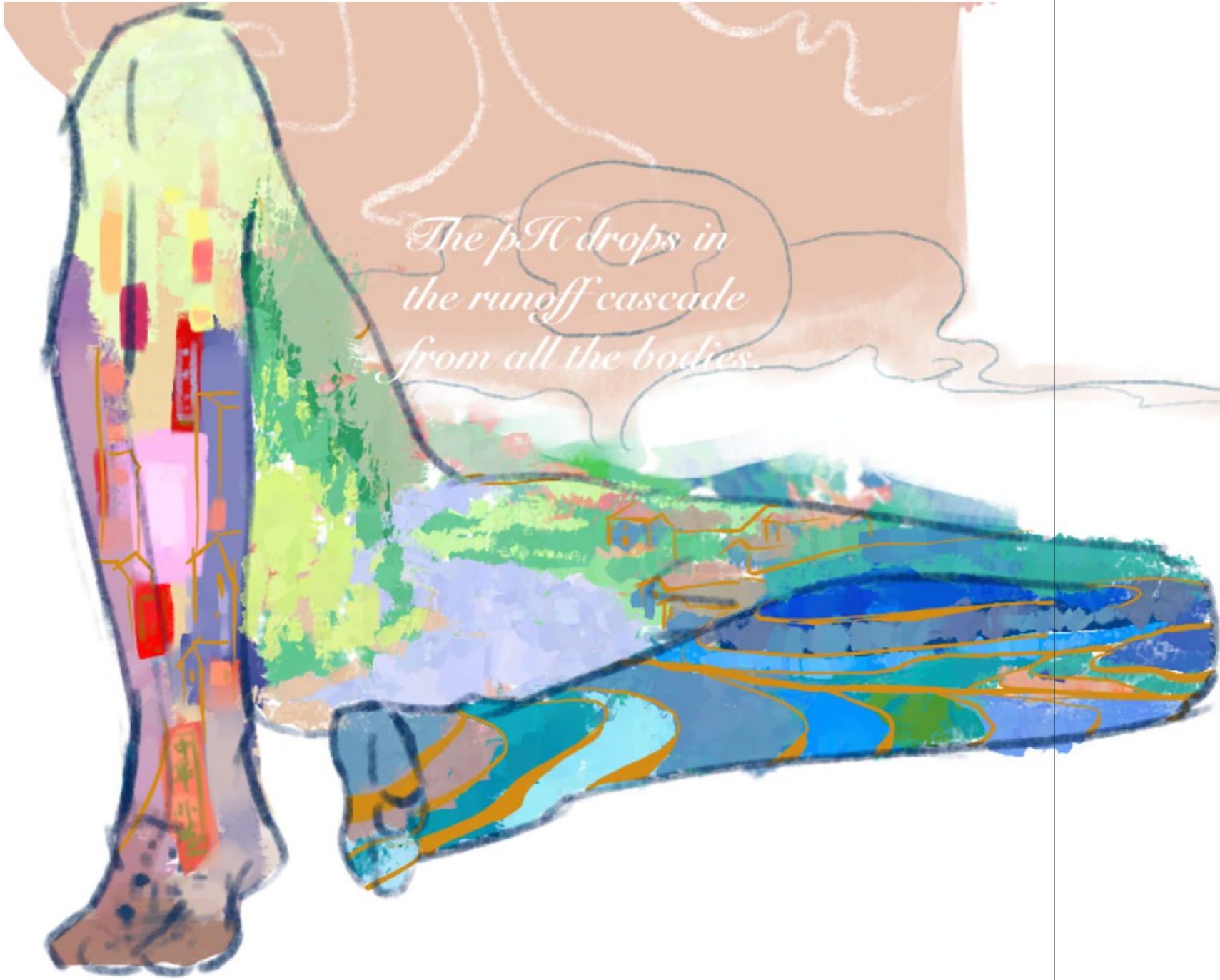


RESET—BRANCH—SLIDE
When you need to RESET
it means that you GROW
cuz living is a THING
that your WINGS
can't control.
You deal with the BLOWS.
The hills & the LOWS.
So when you get a lemon
plant a seed
and let it
GO.

e Mack
g is back
nd we have
n it: Our on-
ladison Suil
and
adis has
user

LAND, RAT, TRASH & US

Yuki Sun





ORANGE SAFETY

Cash

Is there something to peeling oranges
That feels like a deep tissue massage?

Segment sits cool in your palm
Like a worry stone
(don't press too hard or your fingers'll get sticky)
Piece pried free, every knot in its back kneaded out.

I never liked massages that hurt:
The knots in my back seem to want to stay,
and it hurts less that way than
Some chiropractor's.

I do think, though,
That the juice is always a bit sweeter when you cut right down the middle
—slice a cross-section botanical freeze-frame
Of each sac and sinew.

I still don't get why massages are meant to hurt,
But maybe that's how the orange feels too.



BITE by Cash, Pastel and Gold Leaf, 2022-23

BITE

Cash

I THINK I'D BITE INTO A POISON BERRY
IF IT LOOKED JUICY ENOUGH.
MY BRAIN WAS BUILT FOR THE SKULL OF
A CROW
OR MAYBE SOME SORT OF SMALL LIZARD.
IF THAT BERRY WAS JUST JUICY ENOUGH
OR IT CAUGHT THE LIGHT WITH SOME SHADE OF GOLD
I'D TAKE IT BACK TO MY NEST (OR MY SUN ROCK)
AND SPLIT IT WITH YOU

A vibrant city

Val Tendo-Kuharic



A vibrant city sings; it sings a tune that reverberates through every neighborhood.

We know its tune well...We hear it when we rise to greet the day, we hear it when we turn in for the evening.

The tune never ceases, it pulsates through the pavement, the trees and the buildings. It resonates in harmony, with the bird songs and flowers.

Its melody escapes us when we venture away but its siren never leaves us and so we return.