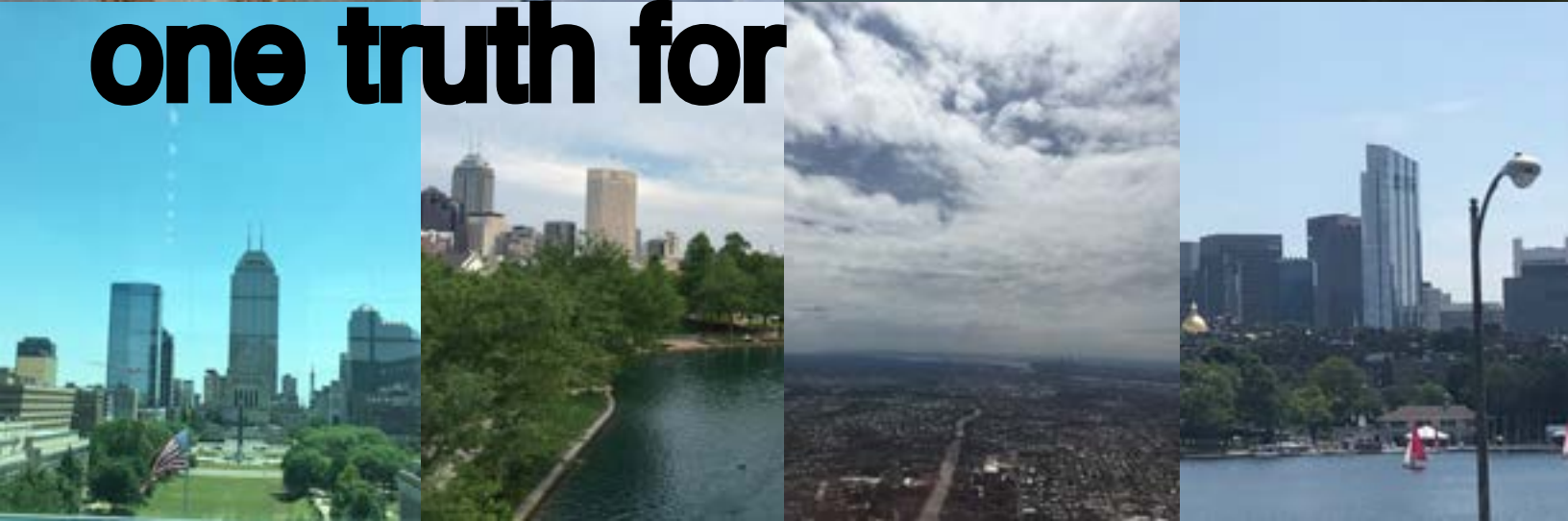




one truth for



every lie



rachel kisen

feb. 2024

Womanly

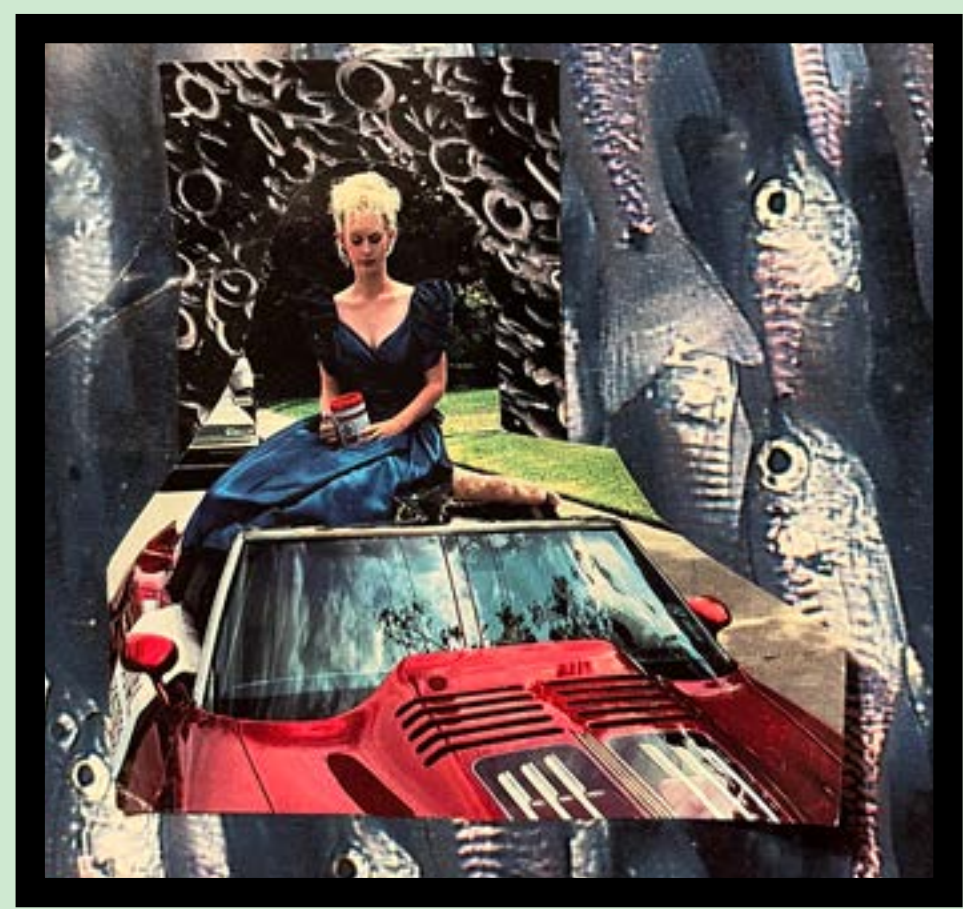
There are so many steps to being a woman.

My mom called me up
to tell me
a story she heard:

security video footage
a woman,

first she topped off her tank with too much gas,
second went into the store to buy a lighter,
after came back out to her car,
then she flicked her lighter, bam, burst,
finally she set her car on fire!

She skipped to her lou
around the flaming
vehicle after ignition.



no one is here for the time
I am in my bedroom, stretching, trying to write,
trying to understand how to
live my life, how to make my choices.



remember our shared humanity
look people in the eye
remember
there's humans
all interconnected
we are all populating a whole ecosystem and we are
we're all doing the same thing
at the same time do you not understand. this past Christmas everyone in my
life bought me blankets. We were remembering how important it is that we all
remain comfortable. MY mom did the best out of everyone, really out did
herself. She got me the heaviest weighted blanket in the world, like at first I
could not even lift it. I can barely fold it, its immense weight

Aarmor.



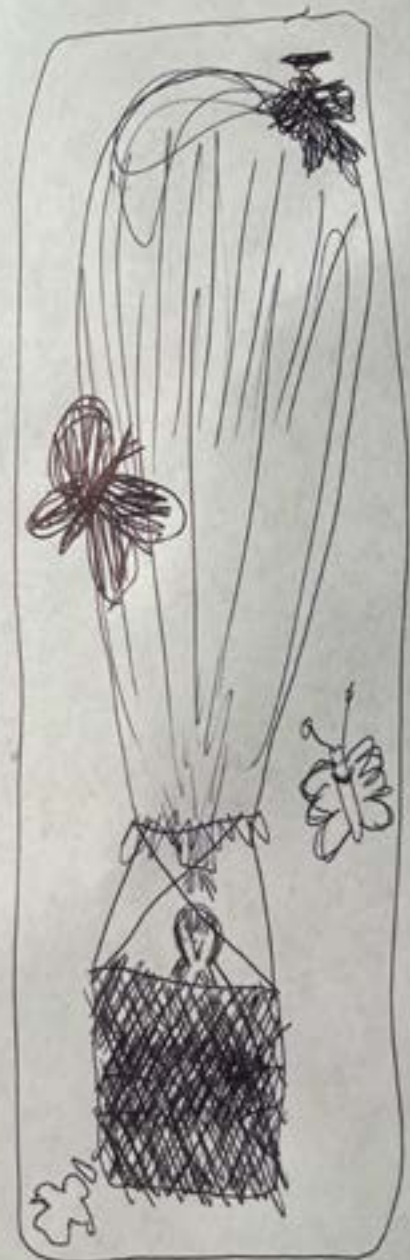
Poolside

-5-



I never understand what he wanted to do. Either by the pool or next to the TV: eyes peeling out, drying, never blinking, the flashing of commercial, 8-minute sitcom segment, then 30 seconds of women who want perfect hair and rub creams, 20 seconds of a family eating a meal, a short segment where the flash mob

told me about toothpaste, then the sitcom again until a cliffhanger. Every other moment breaking the water of the pool. Always a transition and delineation. I never understand why he was doing it. There was a whole world outside the two-car garage, sunroom, hard wood floors, kitchen, bathroom, porch, walls, barrier to the sky/horizon/trees.



Calling it



She was my -----.
I was in love with her.

I refused to admit it. Which was the most embarrassing part
teenage
lesbian
love: so obvious,

the stench of loving her foul on
me, strong you could see
coming for miles
I was not even aware I walked

at its epicenter, I radiated love for her.

It's a shame
I did not realize.

She made me ----- . What fucking shit is that?

by that point I'd forgotten how to teenage rebellion anyway. But I was really good
at it ----- at first.

----- adolescent uprising. I was 14
and every weekend
smoking weed and ----- For a few weeks

in the spring ----- I was so
depressed. one night eating vegan mint chocolate
chip ice cream and watching twin peaks and
thinking to myself 'oh well I guess these are my days
without -----.' I don't remember how but she
picked

me
back
up
soon after and later that year

we road bicycles
and smoked and
ate seafood, the freshest I've ever eaten, a boil of the sound.

I stopped eating seafood soon after that.

Anyway,

we road bikes around town
(all freedom no consequences
so much discovery). I would rip bong

and ----- . Or maybe I was just telling her
and she agreed. I know we are saying
words back and forth, exchanging: that I never ----- with anyone else,

we were inventing
a way to know someone, to care for someone,

I'd go on to know
that meant
-----.

But I did not,
my first love.

Later on she became more -----.
She seemed to -----
for no reason. Like invite people over
and party when it's
not the time.



I cried so hard
when she ----- this guy
outside. I cried another time
we were all ----- and she took -----.

I was jealous.

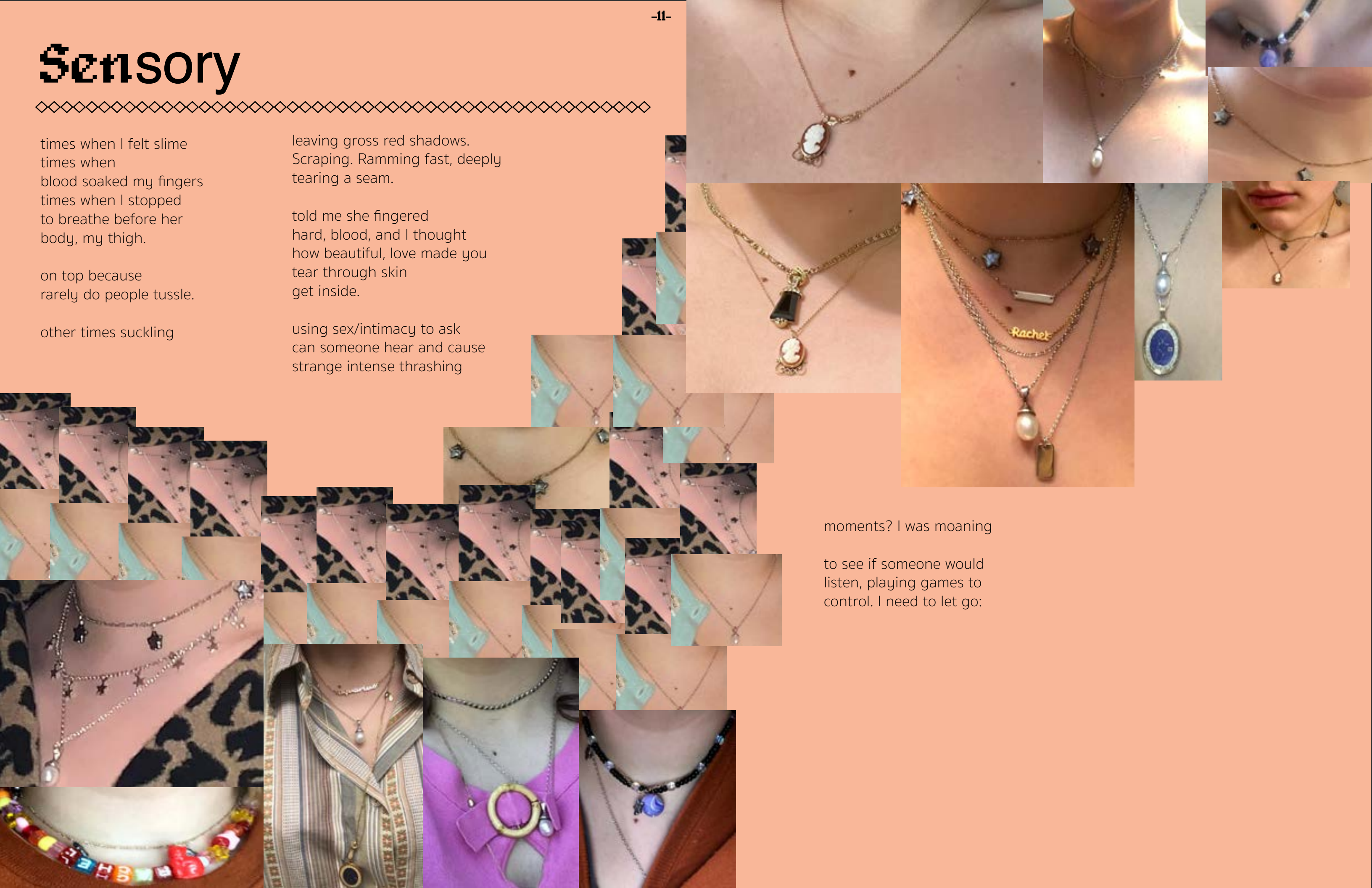
Later she'd give me his shirt and I'd wear it all the time,
still do,
always get told it's a great shirt.



other times suckling

using sex/intimacy to ask
can someone hear and cause
strange intense thrashing

to see if someone would listen, playing games to control. I need to let go:



Mildred's Predicament

Starring

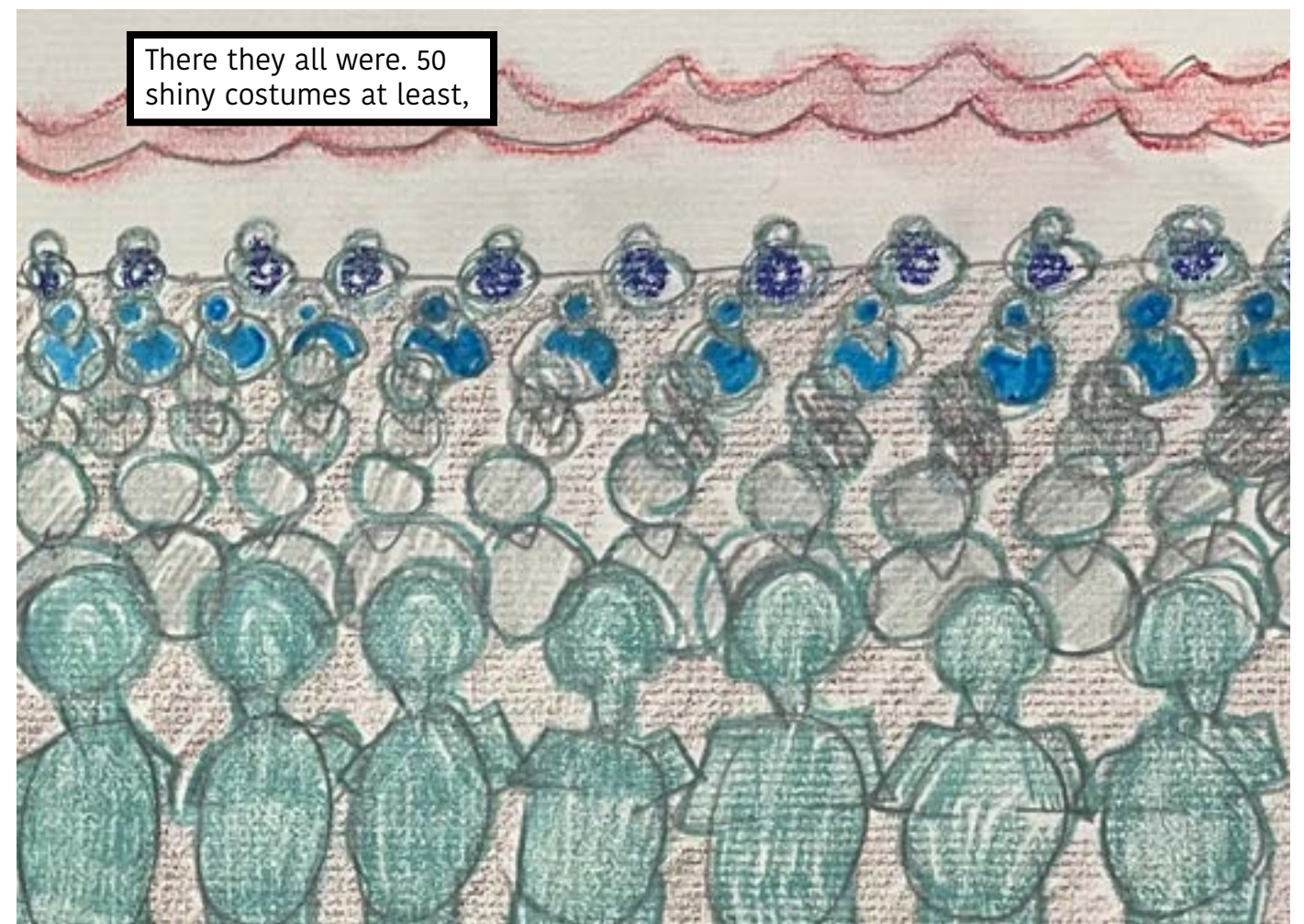
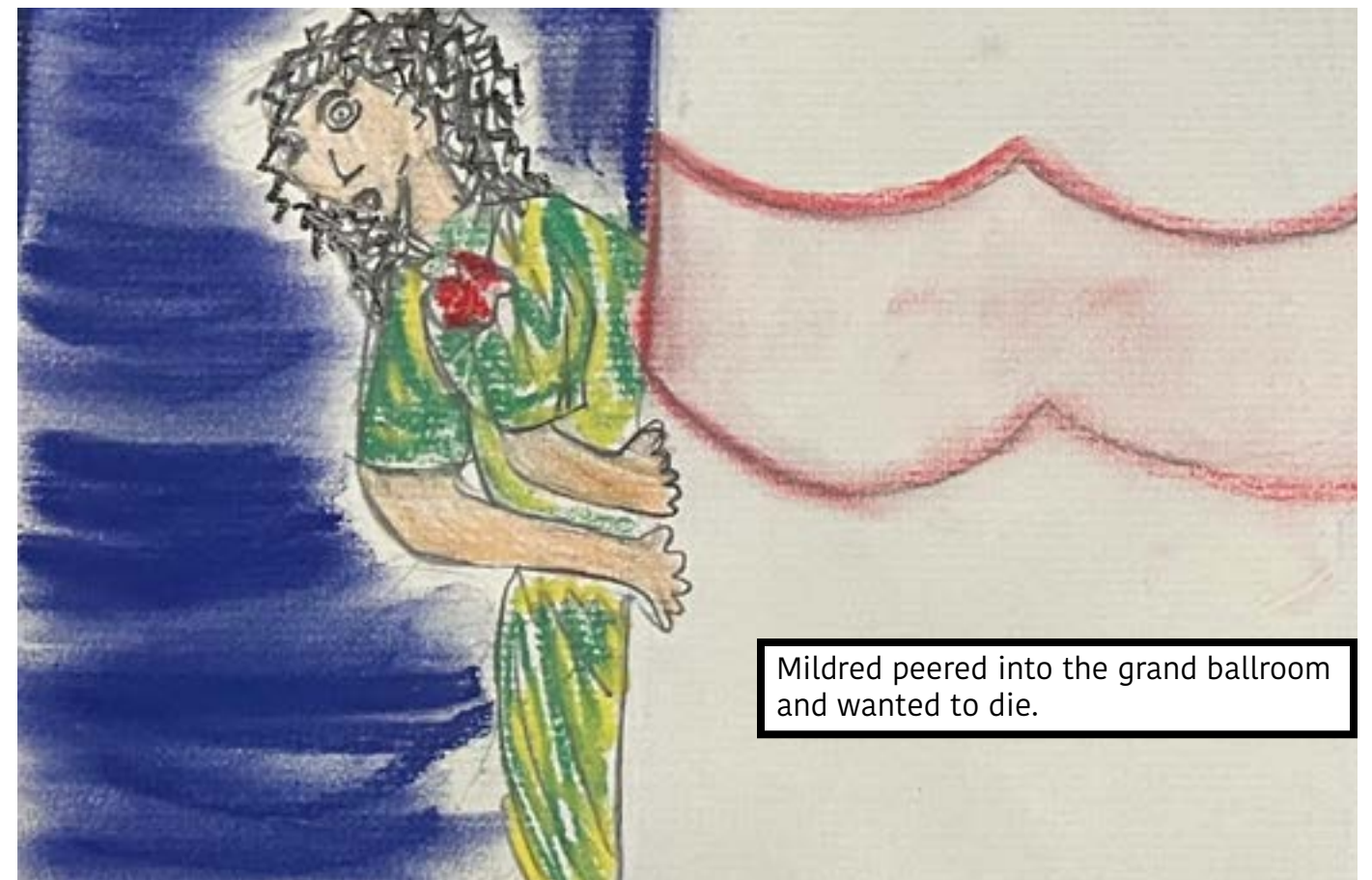
Mildred Daring as Mildred

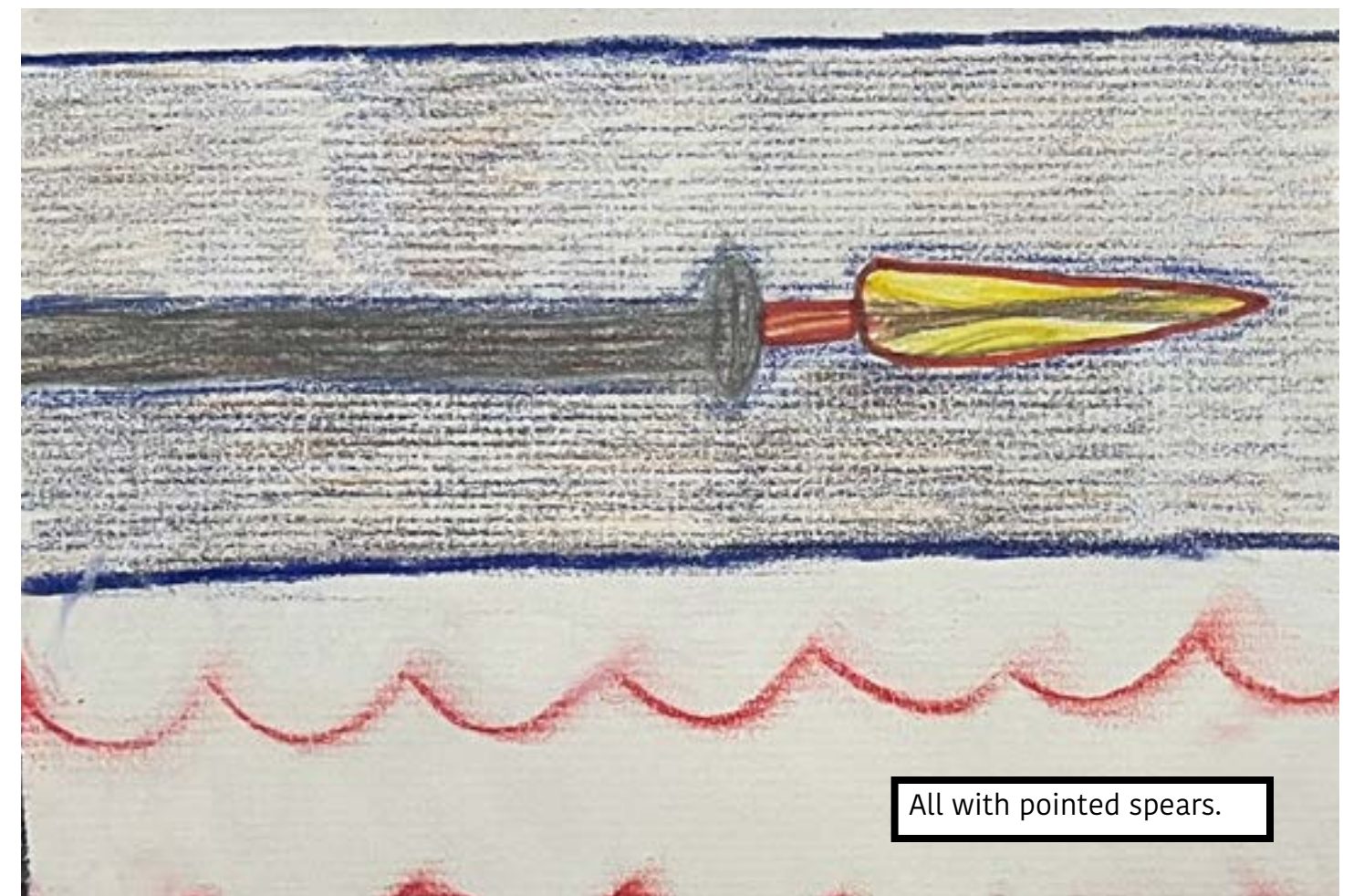
Everyone You Have Drama With as Armored Men

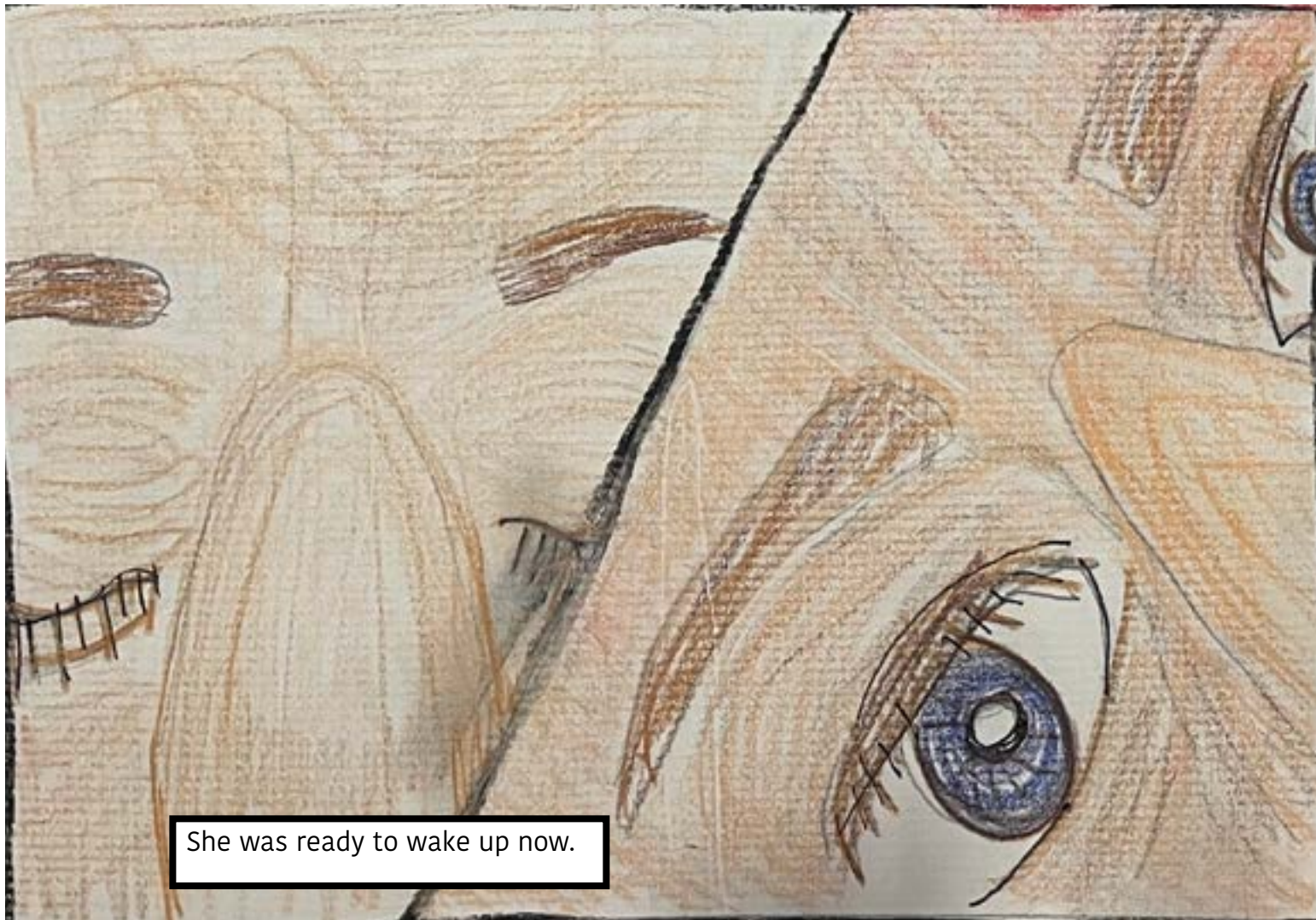
Hope Willski as Lover

George as Pig 1

Unfinished Business as Long Lost Friend



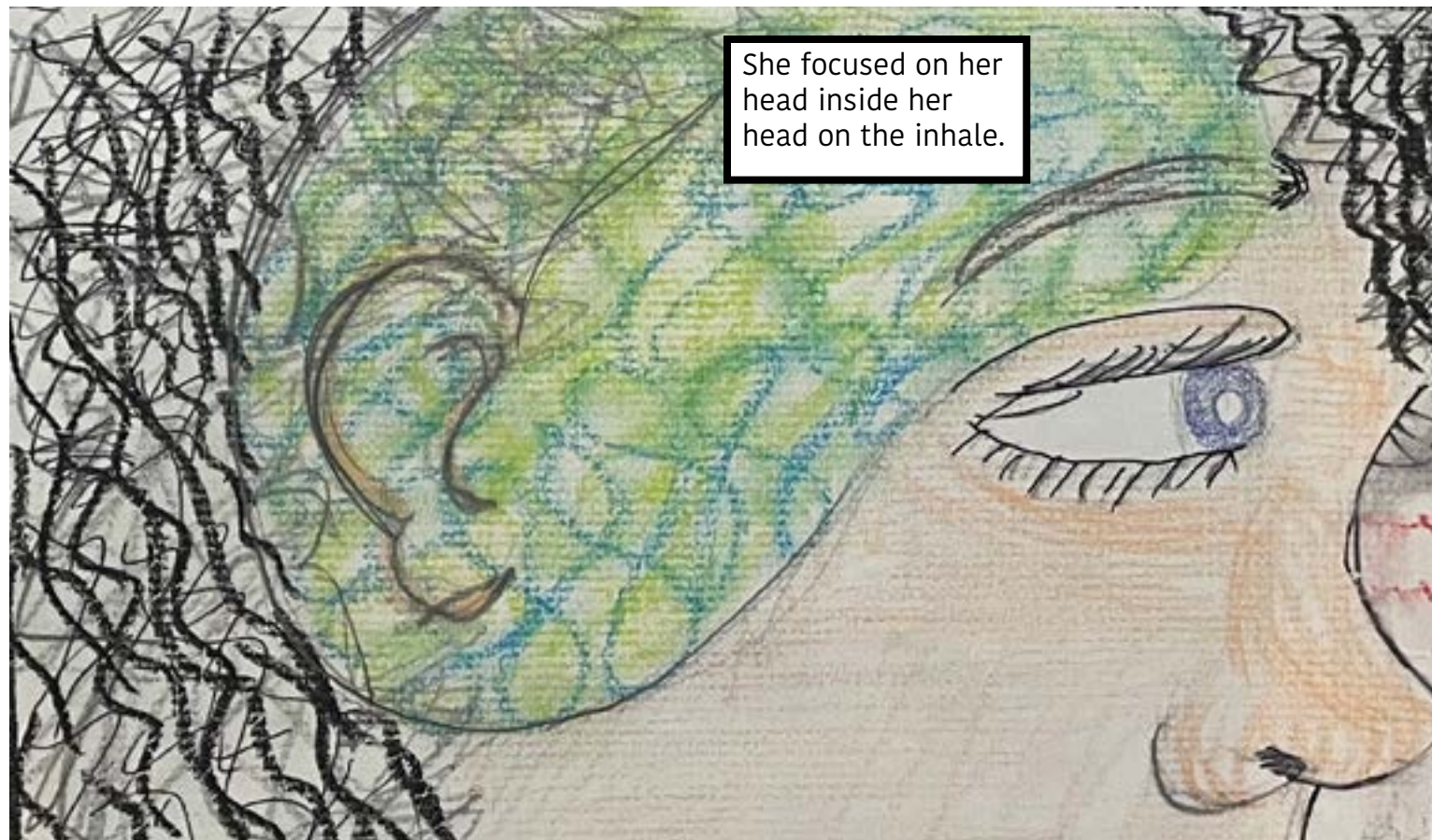




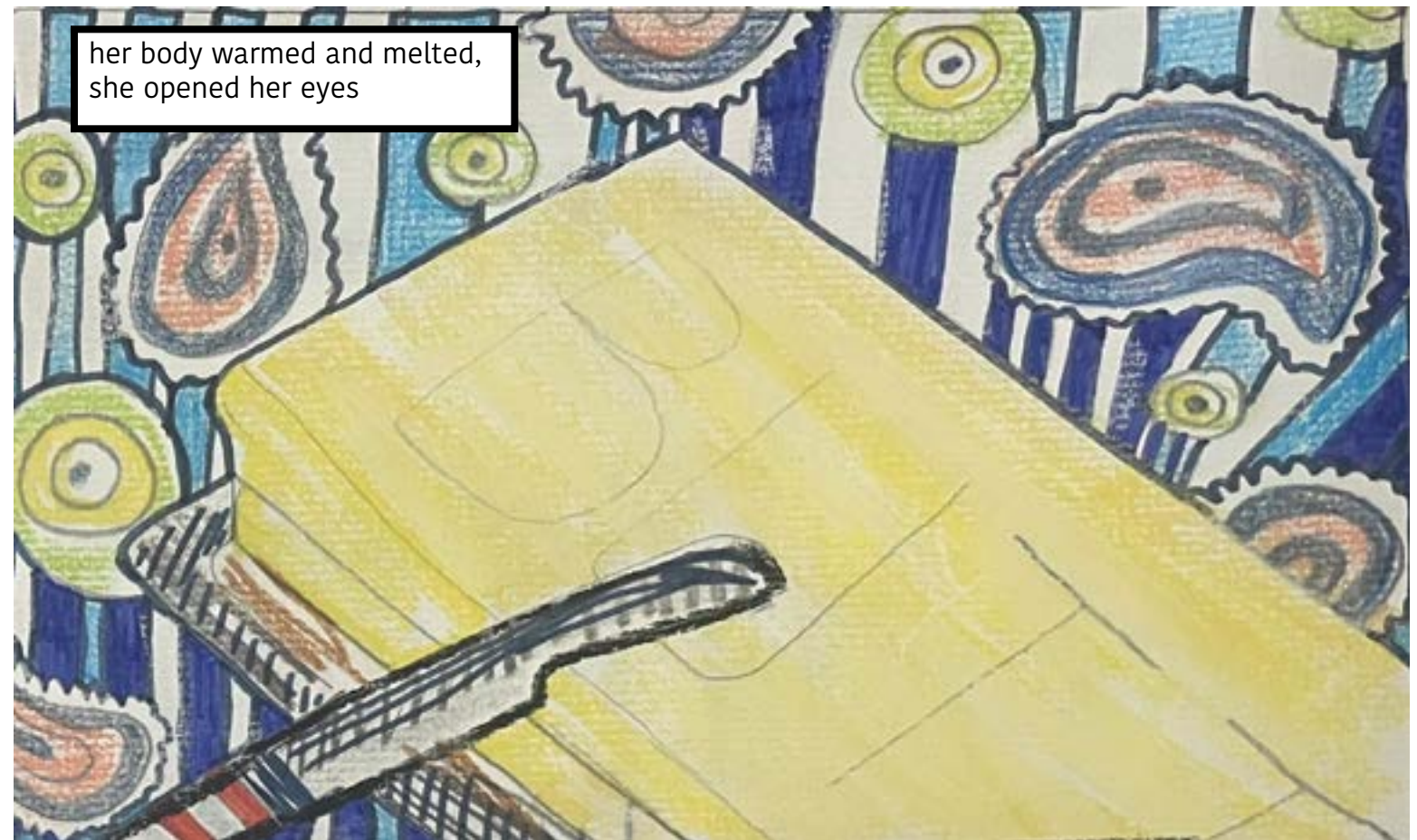
She was ready to wake up now.



On the exhale the
room hazed,



She focused on her
head inside her
head on the inhale.



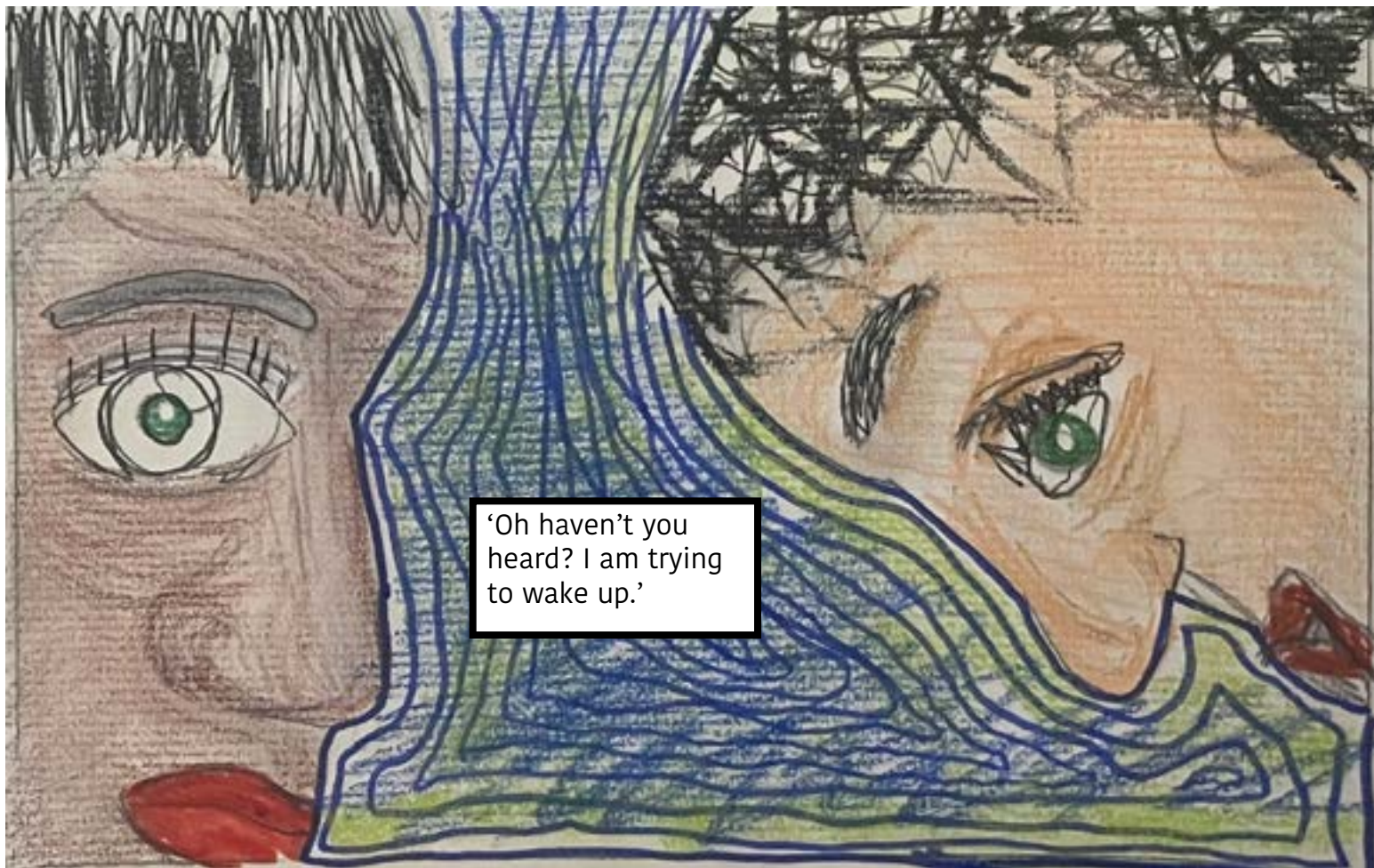
her body warmed and melted,
she opened her eyes



next to someone else.



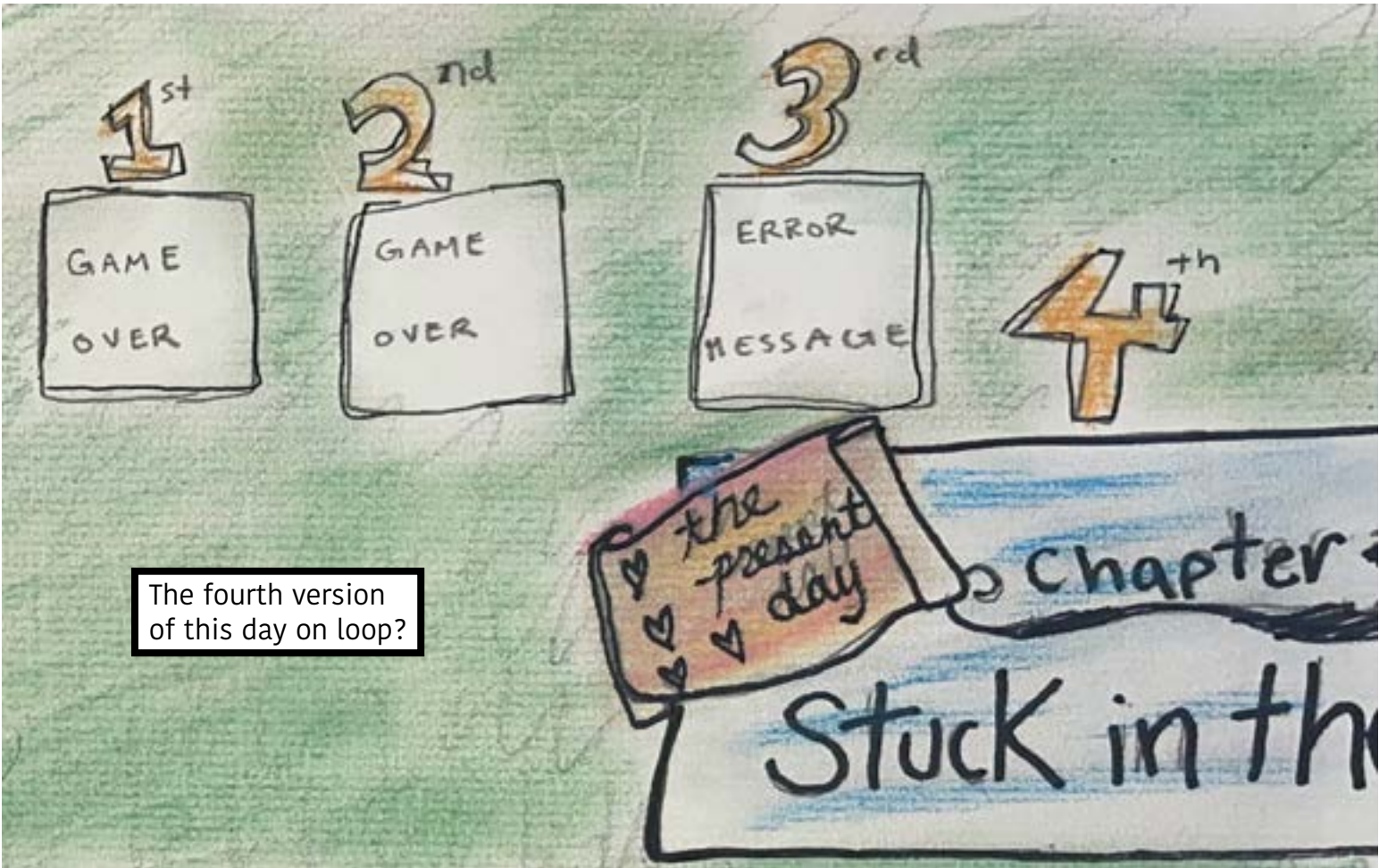
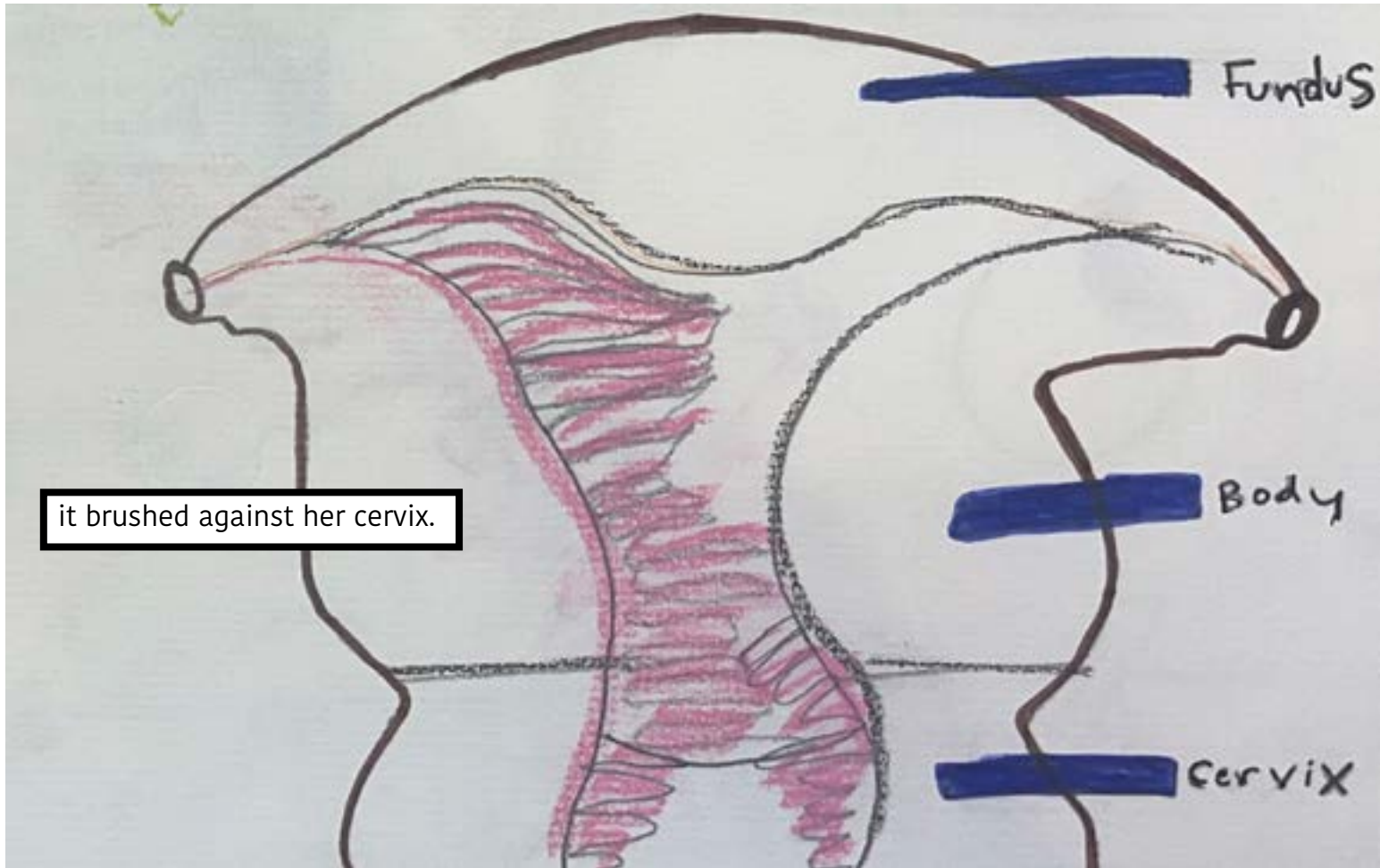
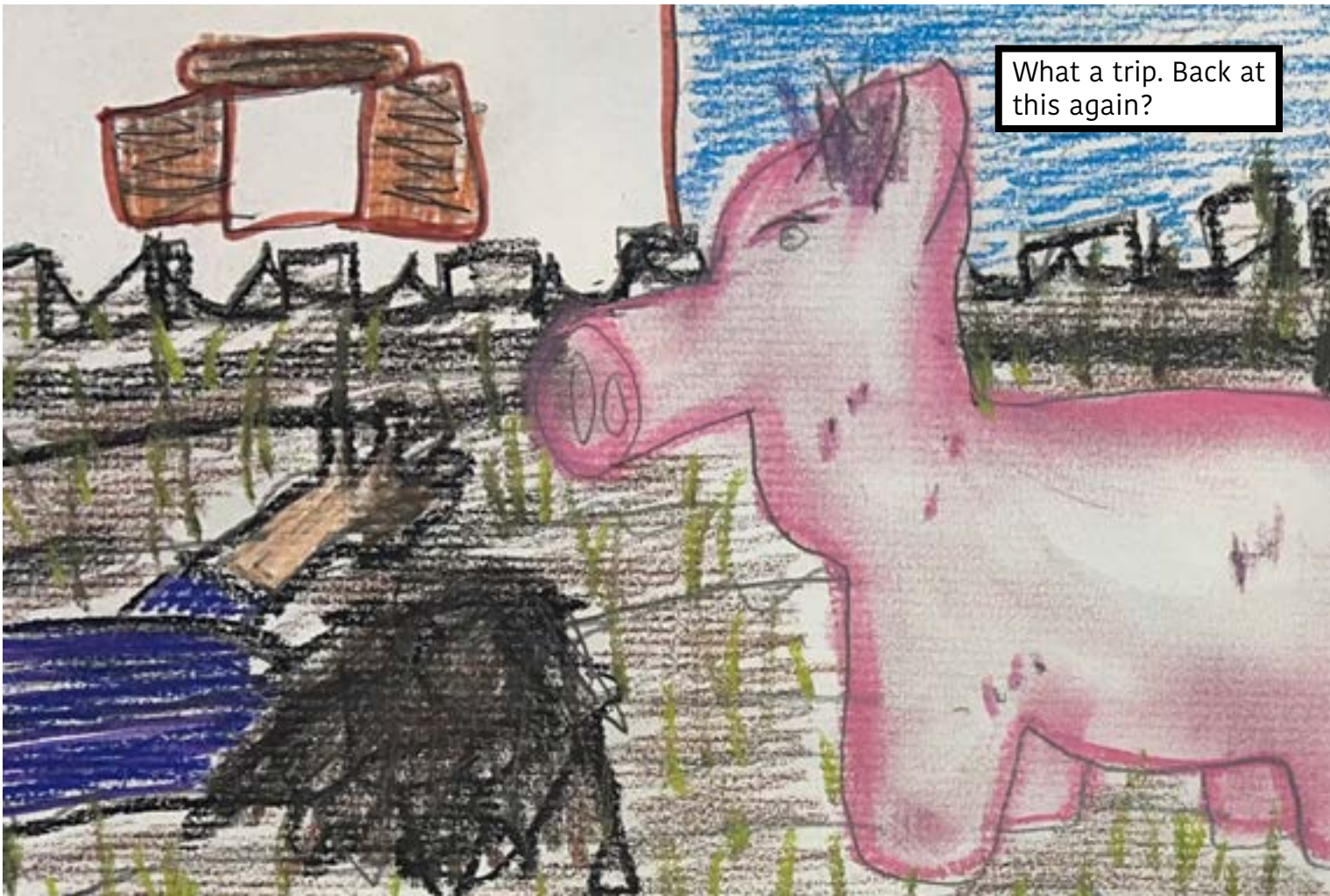
And she was back in the mud.

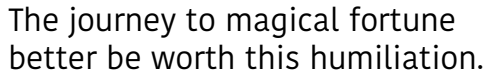
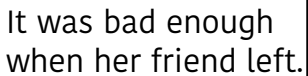


'Oh haven't you heard? I am trying to wake up.'



Grass tickled her heart shaped nostrils.



[illegible]

