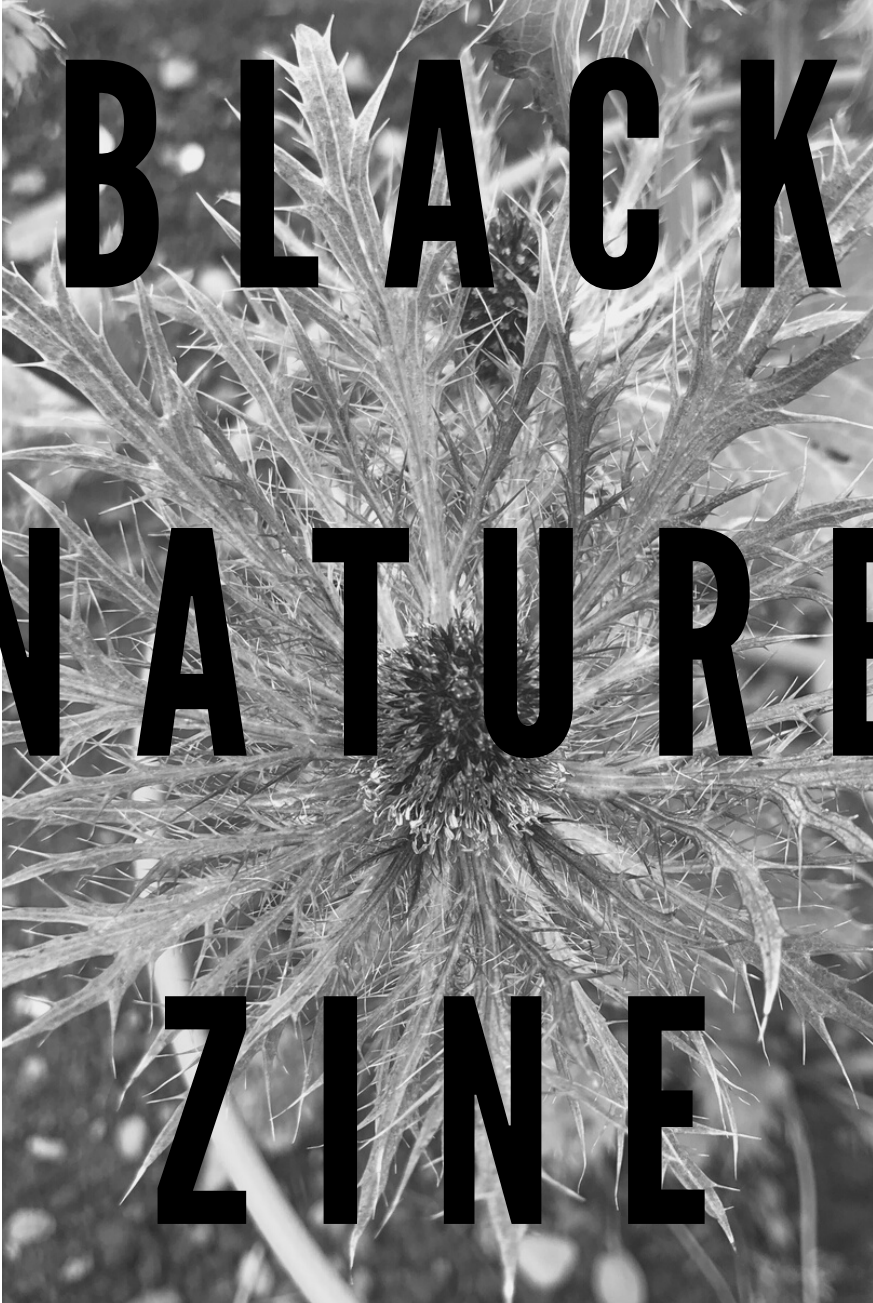


NOVEMBER 2021



**BLACK
NATURE
ZINE**

VOLUME ONE : ISSUE ONE

BLACK NATURE IN RESIDENCE

Special release in conjunction with
the Black Nature in Residence project.
All content by Wajid Hussain, Niveen Kassem,
Sheree Mack and Jola Olafimihan,
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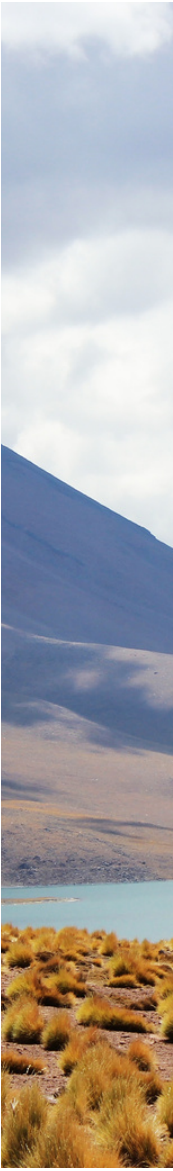
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ENGLAND**

BLACK NATURE
IN RESIDENCE
ZINE

VOLUME ONE: ISSUE ONE

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Niveen Kassem



Wajid Hussain



Jola Olafimihan



Sheree Mack

BLACK NATURE IN RESIDENCE ZINE

VOLUME ONE: ISSUE ONE

The Black Nature In Residence Project, 2020/21, was an Arts Council England funded Black writers in residence program in North East England. Initiated and managed by Identity on Tyne, the aim of this project was for four writers of colour to be immersed in nature over a period of time, to develop a deeper connection with the landscape and themselves. Over the period of the year, the four writers had the opportunity to explore whatever and wherever their creativity took them.



There were no hard and fast rules for the writers' residencies or for what outcomes may be produced.

The aim of the project was to focus on the process, providing each writer with the time and space to 'BE'. A rare opportunity indeed.

The Black Nature in Residence Zine is the collaborative creative result.

A Zine is the ideal format for the writers to experiment, to share their art, writing and to centre otherwise underrepresented and marginalized voices.

This is just the beginning.

LOVE CAN GROW AS MUCH
AS YOUR HEART CAN GROW



THE HUMAN PARADOX

Inspired by Gibran Khalil Gibran's *a Tear and a Smile*.

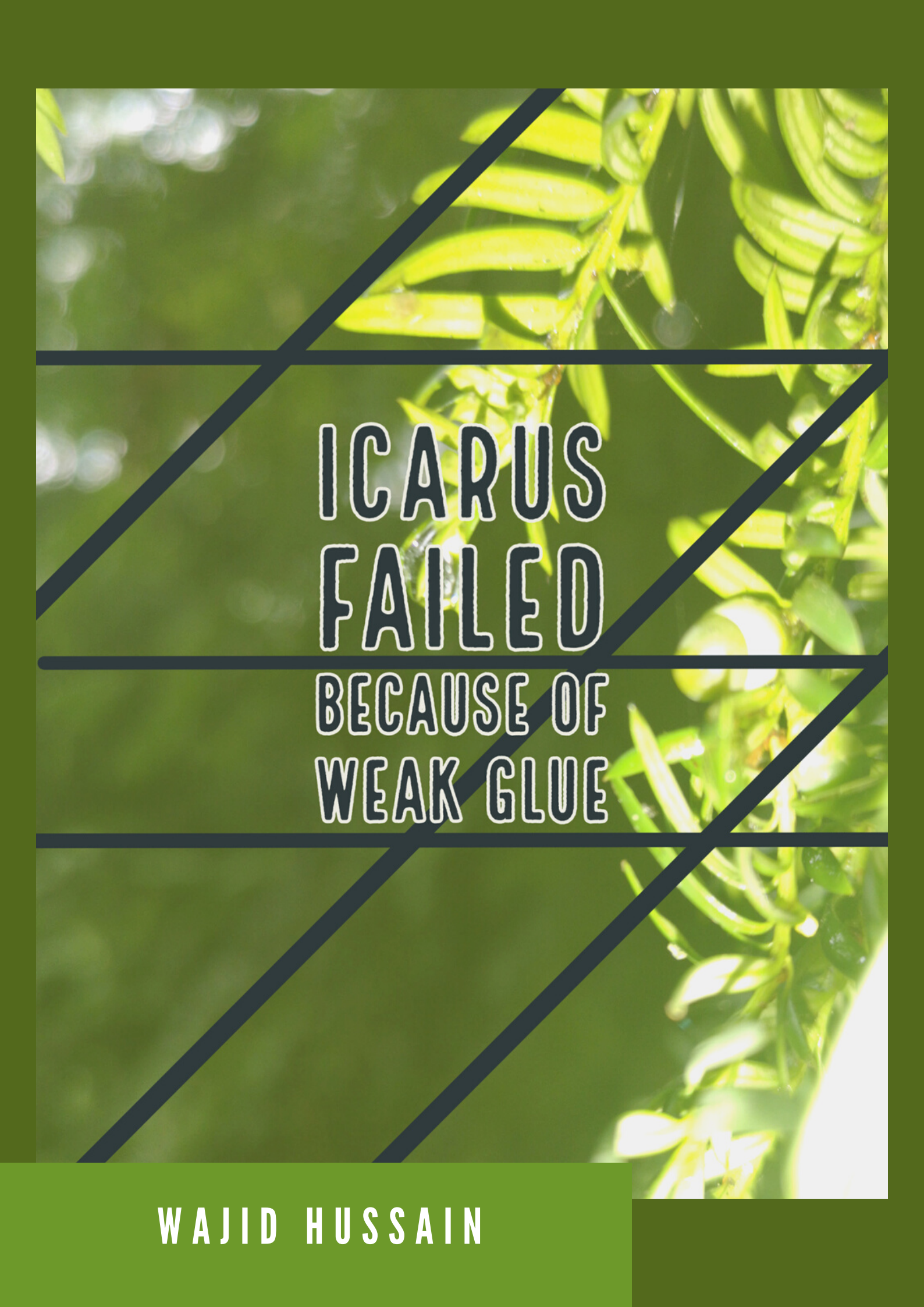
There in the middle of the fields, on a sunny day in July, I sit on the edges of the Lady's lake; weary and possessed by the worries of the day. I stare at the golden rays of sunshine as they leave her body.

I contemplate her...wondering did she sit there for thousands of years?
Did she witness the birth and death of new civilizations, kingdoms and nations? How did she find humanity and human beings, we who possess the human heart and soul?

Then in the blink of an eye, I stood possessed by how she appeared to me- a Lady with two wings with a tear in her eyes and a smile on her lips.

Niveen Kasseem



The book cover features a vibrant green background with a close-up photograph of a plant's leaves and stems. The image is overlaid with a series of dark blue geometric lines: two diagonal lines forming an 'X' and two horizontal lines. The title is centered within the intersection of these lines.

ICARUS
FAILED
BECAUSE OF
WEAK GLUE

WAJID HUSSAIN

My Green, My Gold

You saw me basking in gold.
My hair adorned in silver,
my history worn around my neck,
from days of old.
My warmth given freely
O gun mi – You stabbed me deep.
Straight at my liver
being so bold.
But my spirits, Ori mi duro
(but my spirits, my head stood still)
Mo pada, mo duro, (I returned, I stood)
Bi pillar (like a pillar)

Ole ji wura mi, you can't steal my gold.
This gift over ten thousand years old.
Mo pada, mo duro
I tend stood smiling with my gold.



WE MUST TELL OUR OWN STORIES



A SKIN
AS KIN
ASK IN



LIFE SPEAKS LOUDER
THAN DEATH..

WE LIVED TOGETHER...
DEATH WILL NOT DO US
APART.



THE HUMAN PARADOX

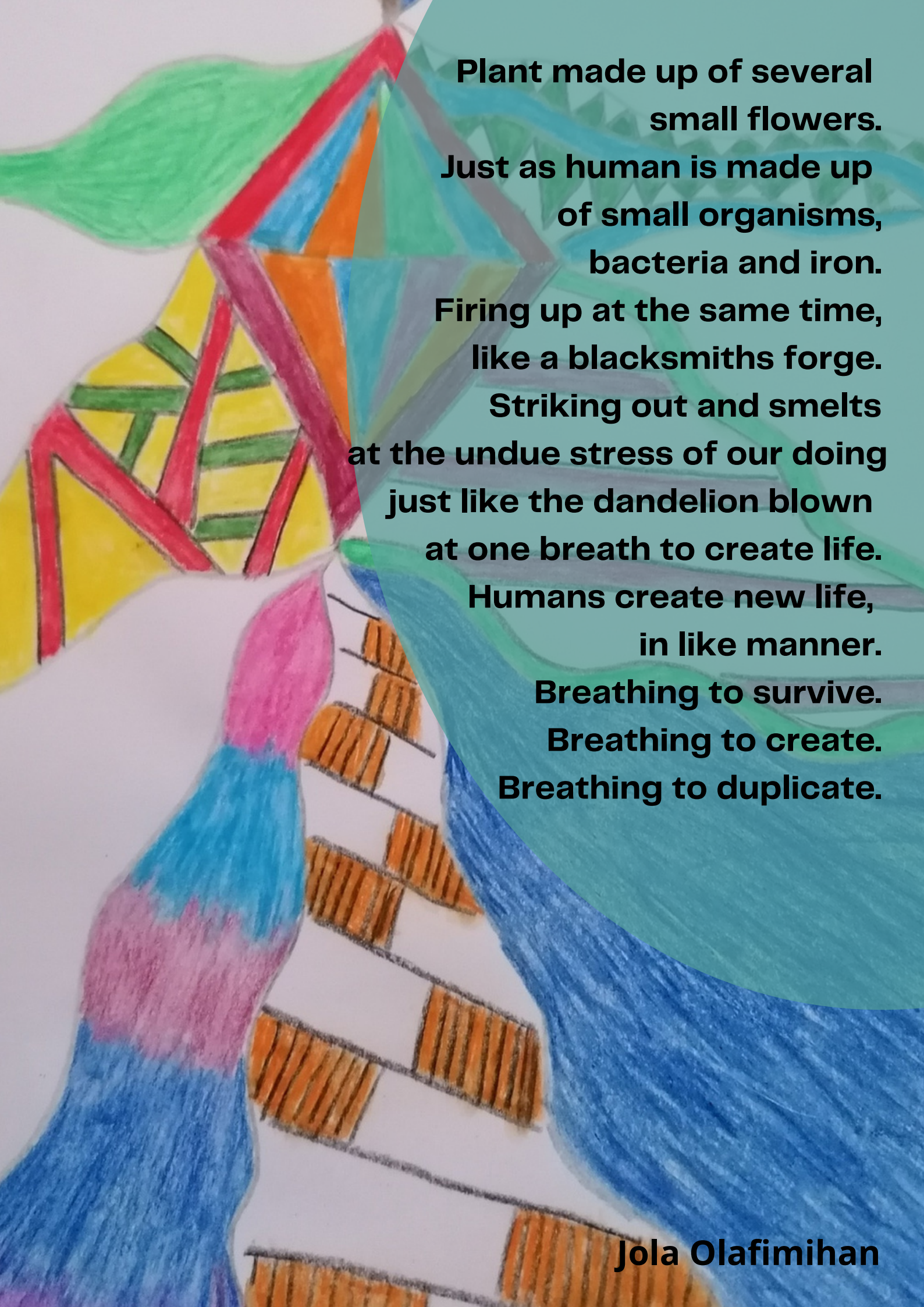
I didn't understand the paradox in the Lady's appearance.

She holds me gently and puts me on her wings. We fly high and travel in time and space- the tapestry from above is a mix of contradictions as if I'm experiencing de ja vu.

Wolves in the shape of angles, with multiple masks to camouflage their true faces, telling tales of one thousand and one lies. Their victims are the wretched of the earth whose Godot has forgotten about them. But there I see love, generosity and compassion in multiple forms and shapes.

Niveen Kasseem





**Plant made up of several
small flowers.
Just as human is made up
of small organisms,
bacteria and iron.
Firing up at the same time,
like a blacksmiths forge.
Striking out and smelts
at the undue stress of our doing
just like the dandelion blown
at one breath to create life.
Humans create new life,
in like manner.
Breathing to survive.
Breathing to create.
Breathing to duplicate.**

Jola Olafimihan

**THINKING
OVER**



**OVER
THINKING**

THE BEAUTY OF THE
TREE IS MAGNIFIED IN
HER DEATH.

SHE DIES STANDING
TALL.



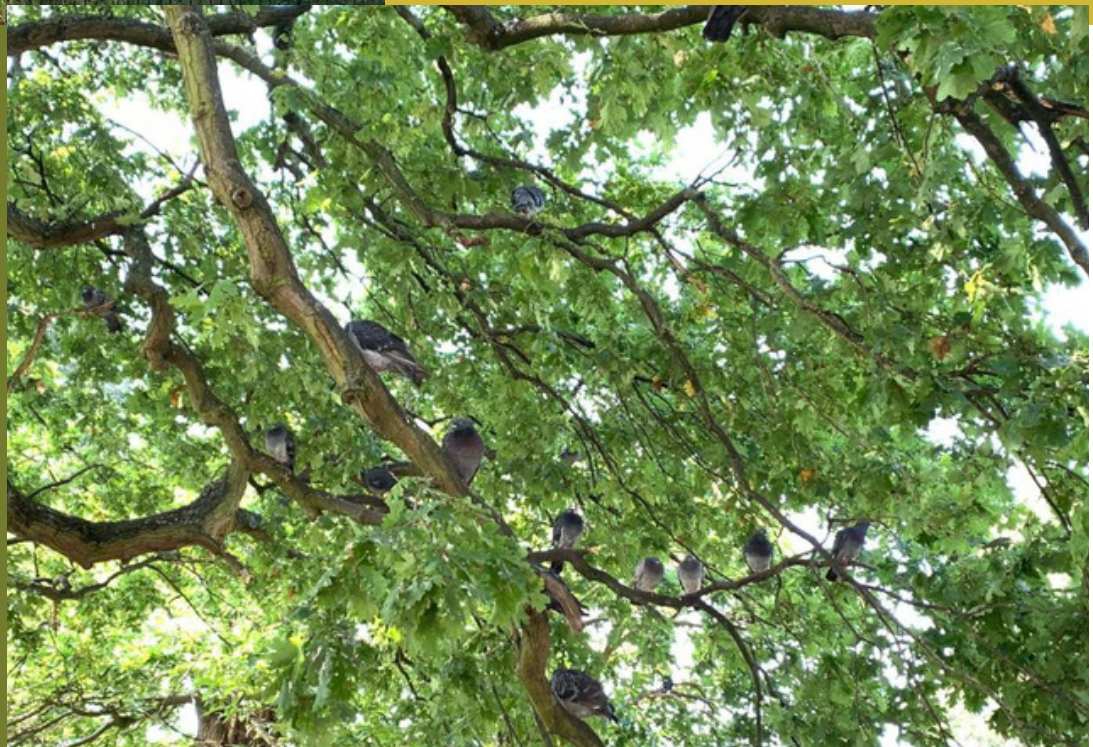
THE HUMAN PARADOX

I saw people sowing love so that the human heart can grow and fill the land with life.

There on the right side of the blue planet, I saw icebergs crying. I heard a voice emerging from tears saying: ' You Man, you killed me with your own deeds'.

And on the left side of the blue planet there were fields of roses and greens smiling and whispering, ' How marvellous are the deeds of humans.'

Niveen Kasseem



—

T H E R E -

I S -

N O -

D E C A Y -





how do people see me in nature?

as a shadow as a mark as a scar

as a gaping wound as a darkling

as a phantom as a ghoul

as an absent presence

Sheree Mack

In Northumberland, on a day I have already
spiralled in memory, I will disappear.

You do not believe me?

After taking a walk in the rolling peaks
through the rain, I will vanish forever.

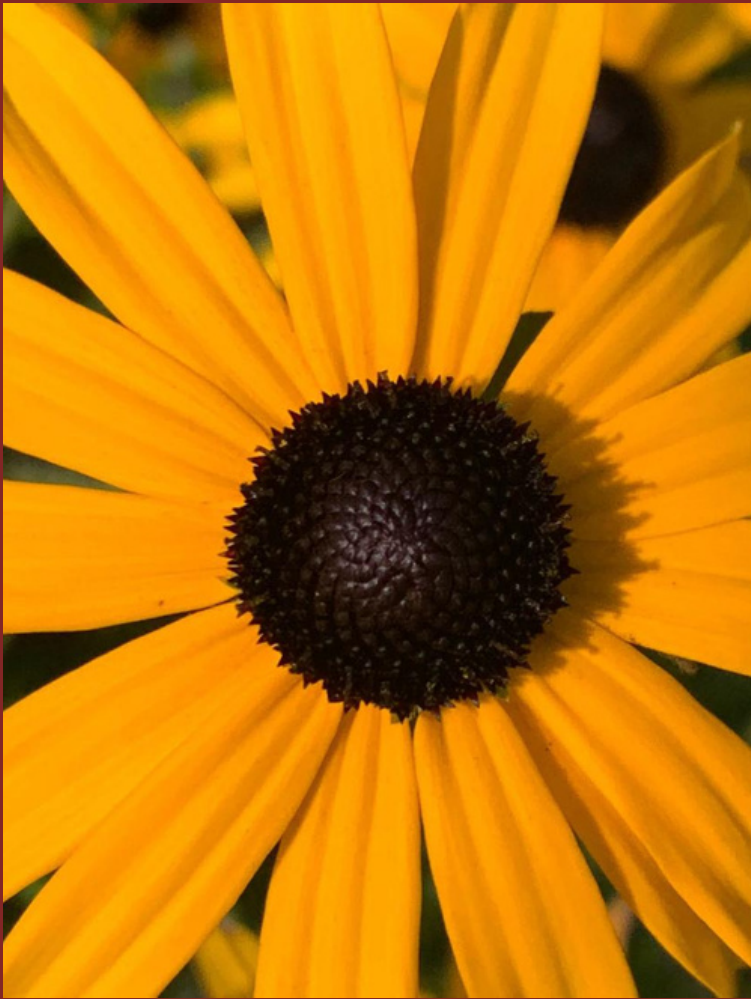
THE HUMAN PARADOX

On our way back, I saw clusters of clouds in the image of a Man with thousands of other creatures and their anti-ones all weaved into one tapestry.

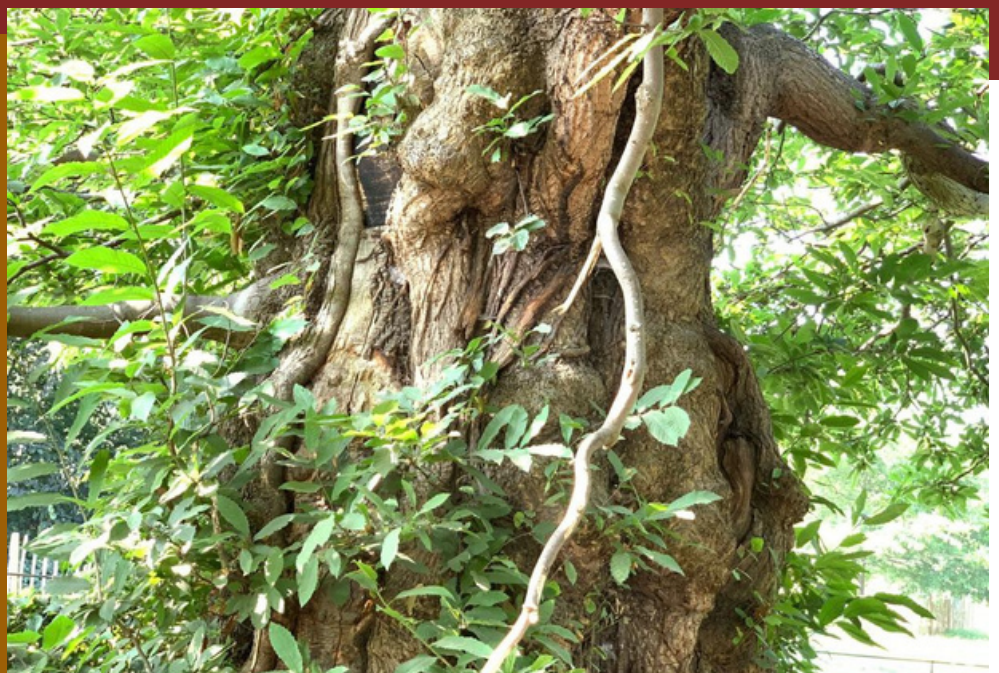
This is the blue planet's way of telling the story of human kind over the years.

Then suddenly I realised why the Lady had a tear in her eye and a smile on her lips and why she sits facing the sky.

I return to my reality with a tear in my eye, smiling at the human paradox.



*Love can
grow as much
as your heart
can grow*



Niveen Kassem

THERE IS A FERMENTING
OF HOPE AND FURY,
OF WALKING THAT FEET
DO NOT DO,
AND NOT EVERYONE
CAN MAKE THAT FIST,
TO PUSH
INTO THE AIR AND SAY:

I AM DOING UNTIL,
DONE!

TREES LISTEN

Can you hear the wind?
It whispers a secret.
Did you know trees can't keep secrets?
But they are always listening.

"My mother told me to not scream, yell and speak
loudly at night. Why?
Because trees listened,
They carried the noise.
They would let others know what was said.
Trees kept no secrets, especially at night."



The Lady

She sits still, tall, and whole;
unfazed by the natural elements
or the violation of the land around
her.

Armed with graceful presence and
self-trust,

Knowing she can weather all storms.

Just listen, watch and be still, when
with the Lady;

lean into her wisdom,

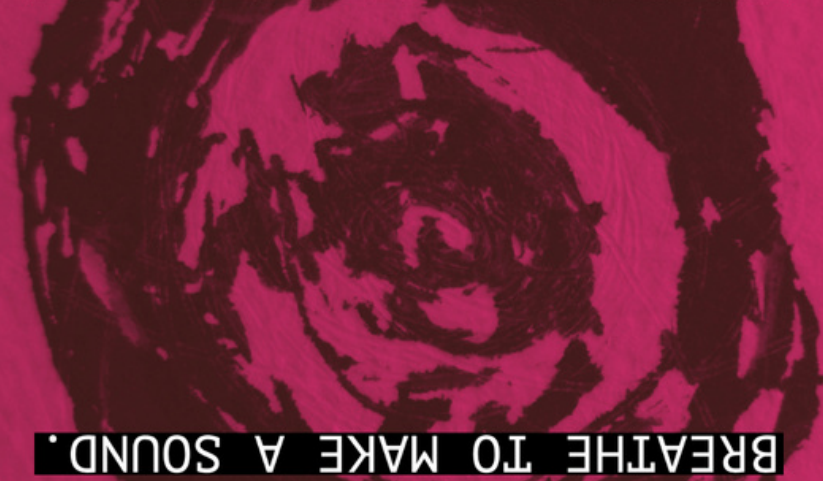
to awaken the goddess within you;

mother nature has it all.

We know the systems are not made for us to survive.



WHEN YOUR NOTIONS
HAVE SLIPPED
INTO A CHASM
AND THE CHASM ECHOS
NOTHING BACK.



WHEN THE
CREAK OF THE VACUUM
CAN BE HEARD
BUT YOU CAN'T EVEN
BREATHE TO MAKE A SOUND.



Returning to
the Site

It's scary sometimes
I still worry and wonder

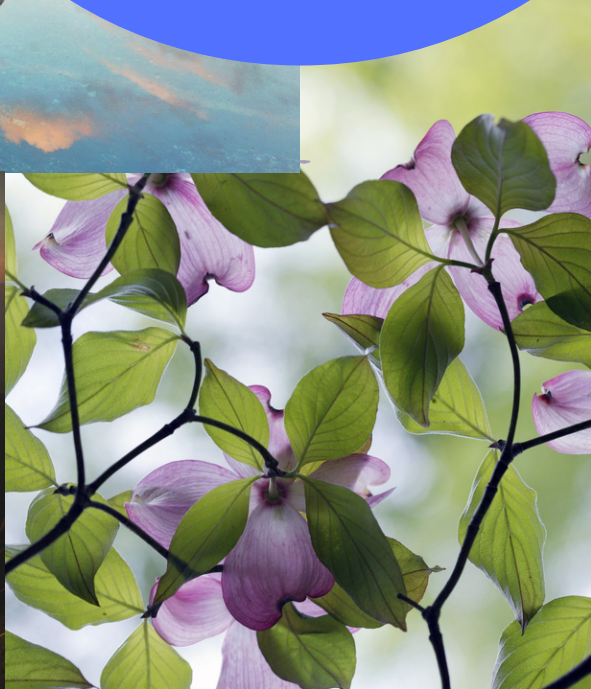
Are they still there waiting
for me?

Perhaps it was written long ago,
Before I arrived.
Yet I must return
I must return.

" I fell in love with the site,
especially with the trees and the
warming sunset. I won't have them
take it away".



Taken from all your belongings, to an alien place, for what? For someone's else's pleasure and desire.



FOR JOLA

SHE CLINGS TO THE ROPE
IT TRASHES IN THE WIND
CONNECTED TO A VOID

SHE CLINGS ON TO HOPE
SHE IS DETERMINED NOT TO
LOSE
CONNECTED TO THE
UNIVERSAL CORD

SHE CLINGS TO THE ROPE
PULLING ONTO OTHERS
HER SISTERS, IN ONE
ACCORD.

SHE CLINGS TO HOPE
THEIR VOICES TRIUMPHANT
CREATING MAGNIFICENCE
FROM THE VOID.






**HEALING, JUST LIKE GRIEF,
IS SOMETHING WE LIVE
WITH, WITH PRACTICE.**



WHEN THE HEART REACHES
ENLIGHTENMENT, YOU WILL
FIND LOVE EVEN IN A
SINGLE GRAIN OF SAND IN
THE DESERT.

BUT IF THE HEART IS NOT
READY, YOU WILL NOT FIND
LOVE IN A MILLION GRAINS
OF SAND.
THAT'S THE LOVE EFFECT.





SOMEHOW
FROM HERE
YOU GET
THERE

Sunset Walk To Holy Island

After Megan Fernandes

Late May. The damp North-East.
Honeyed sun coming to rest

along the sea bed. Sapphire skies
impasto dried, supported by

clustered clouds. Light curling
around my heart, along with

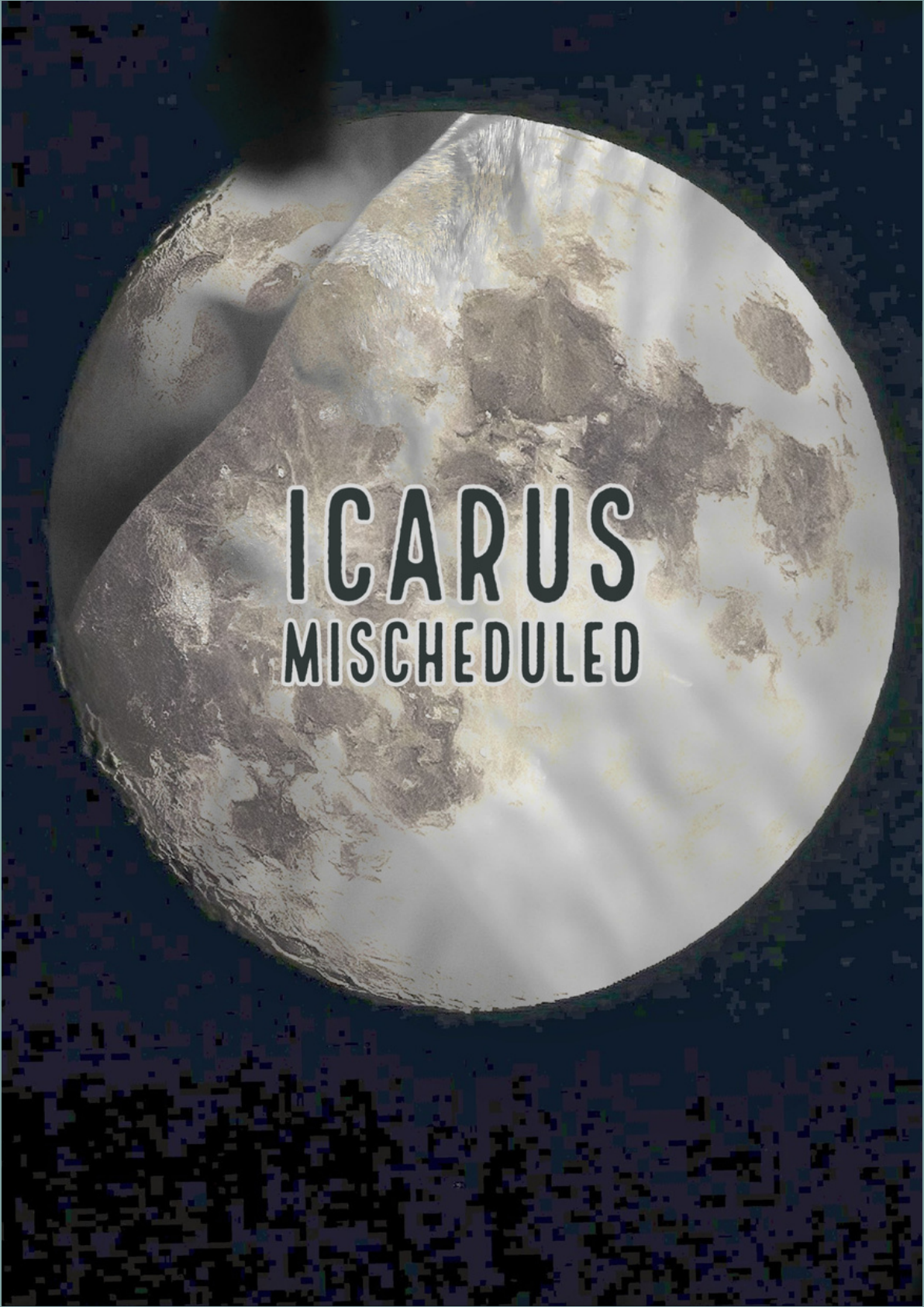
the galumping cries
of grey seals gathering

- gathering
with light in my heart.

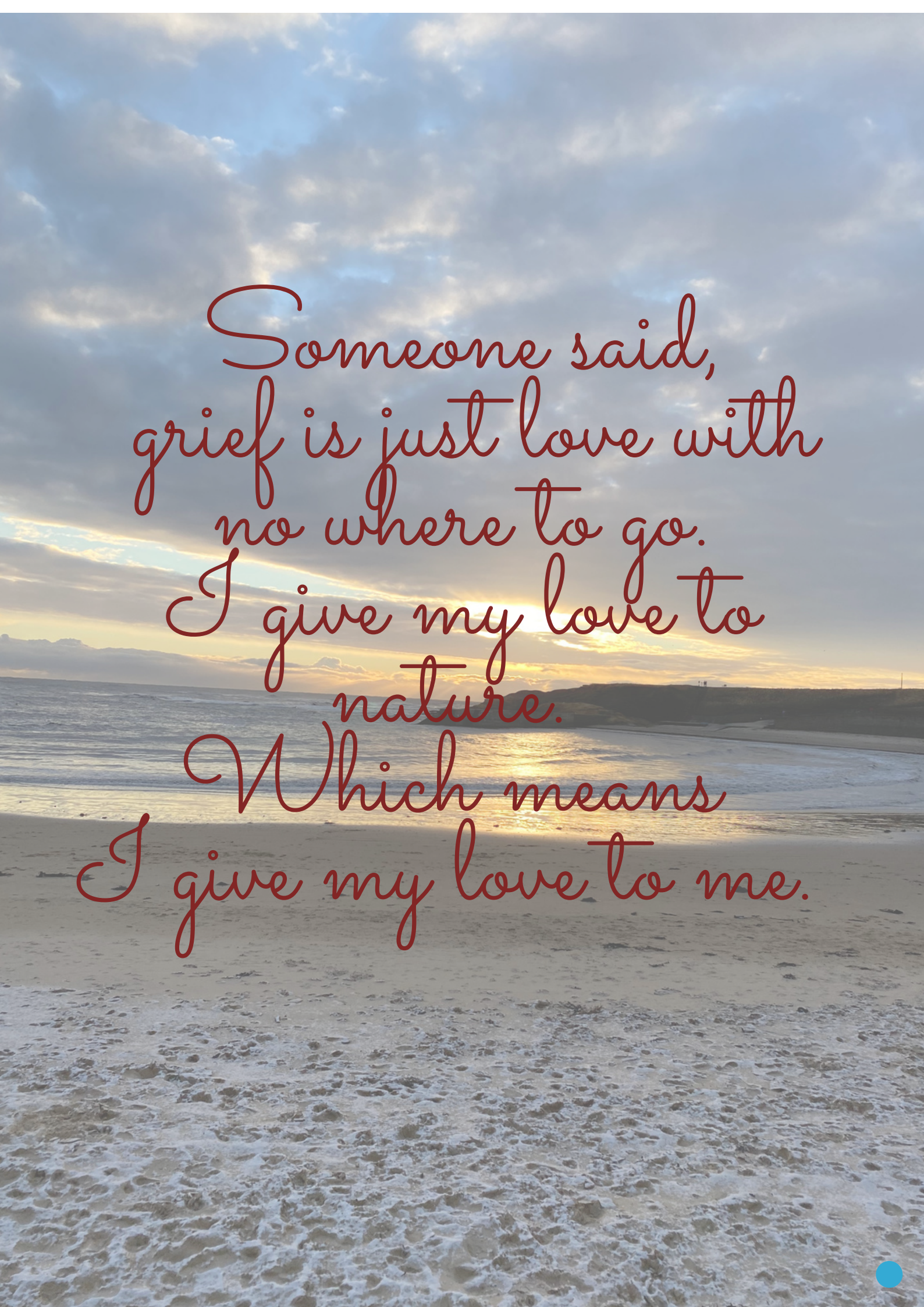




When you see me,
be patient, I'm healing
for I am a spirit.



Wajid Hussain



Someone said,
grief is just love with
no where to go.

I give my love to
nature.

Which means
I give my love to me.





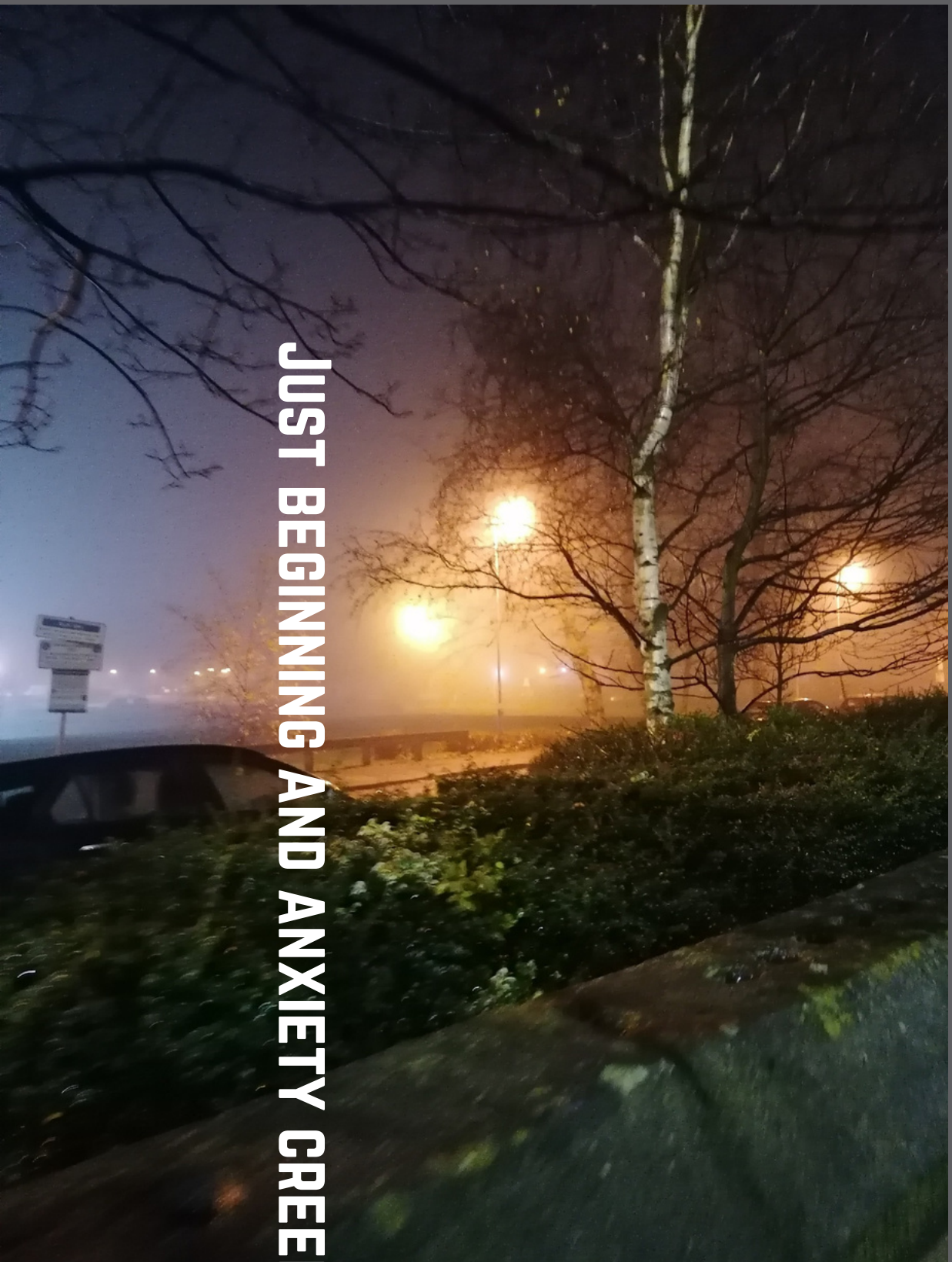
H O W
L O N G
W I L L
Y O U
W A I T
U N T I L ?





The healing properties of the seas

JUST BEGINNING AND ANXIETY CREEPS IN.



**what was
autumn
like on a
slave ship
crossing
the
ocean?**

shedding bodies like leaves
ripe berries for the sharks to pluck
wisdom & history & culture
floating about in a lullaby sea
sleep my darlings & come home to me



Sheree Mack




THERE
IS NO
DECAY

WAJID HUSSAIN

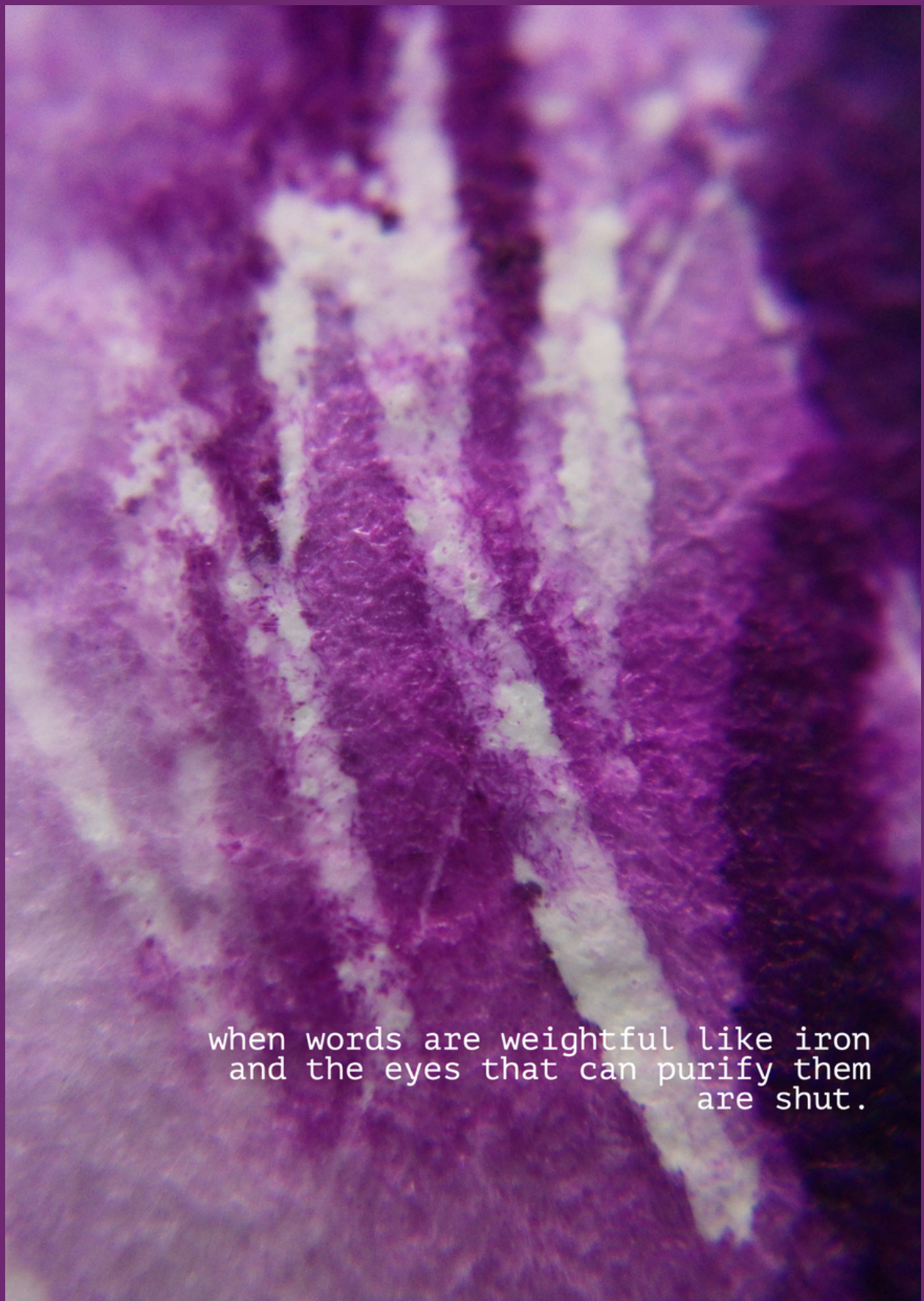
I Sprouted ROOTS

I am in the
landscape
Not sure where
But its thick
and shaded
The sun comes
through
There is water
surrounding me
Maybe monkeys
in trees
I move swiftly
as the wind
propels me
ONWARDS!!





THE BEAUTY OF
THE TREE IS
MAGNIFIED IN HER
DEATH. SHE DIES
STANDING TALL.



when words are weightful like iron
and the eyes that can purify them
are shut.

Wajid Hussain



invisible diver

Absent Presence

abandon

Stalking Senses

release
my body
health

my heart dropped

my tooth ached

like crashing waves

i chewed on cloves

it really hurt

the way they watched

it smashed and rolled, a beautiful calabash

now compared to thrash

my lesson dumped, drained for cash

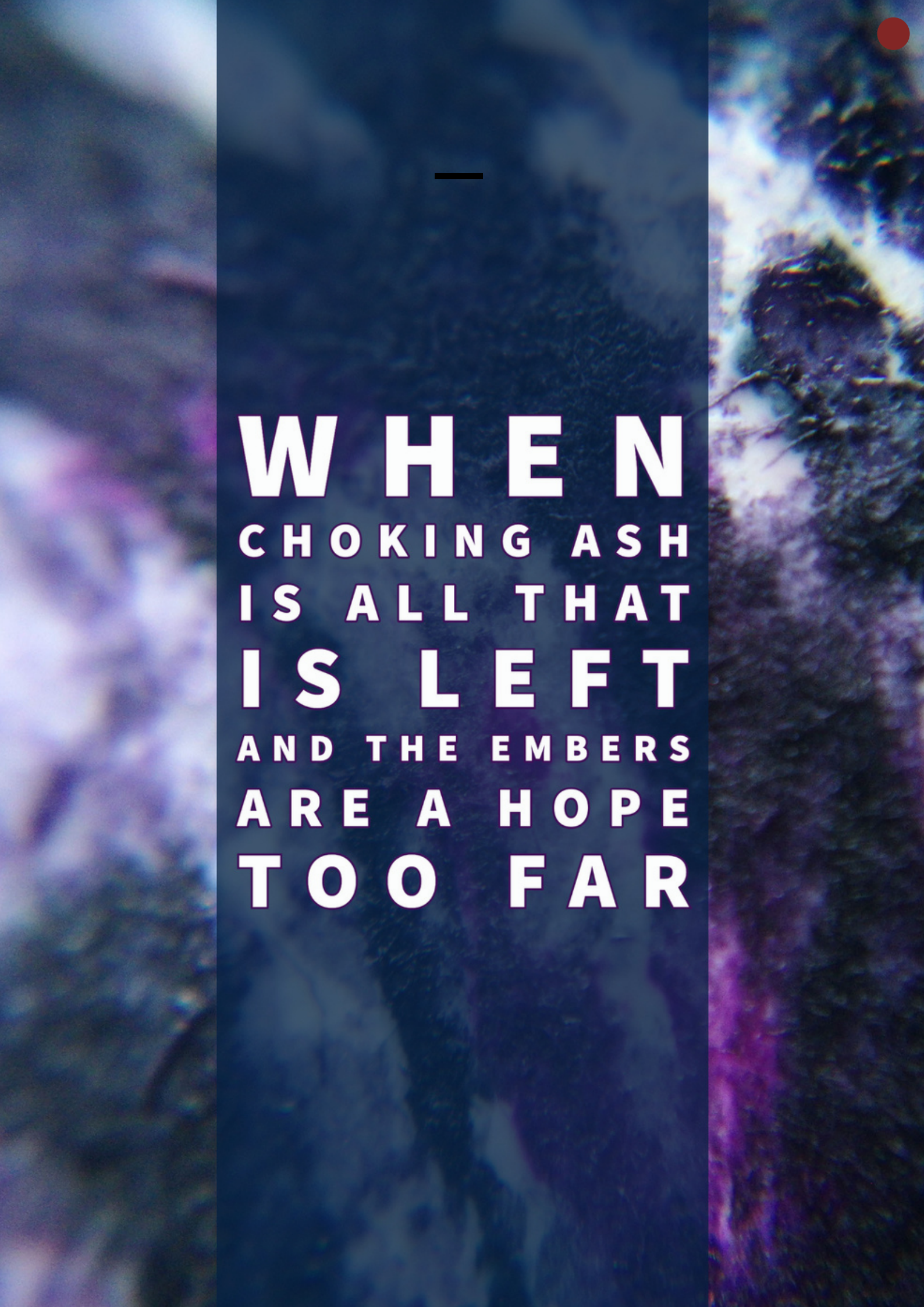
and my tooth aches

like crashing waves on
solid rock

i chewed on cloves, as
they continue to watch

now I too return, with wind and fire

lightning as my attire



W H E N
C H O K I N G A S H
I S A L L T H A T
I S L E F T
A N D T H E E M B E R S
A R E A H O P E
T O O F A R

The Black Nature In Residence Zine