



for the love of flowers

peiyi.c

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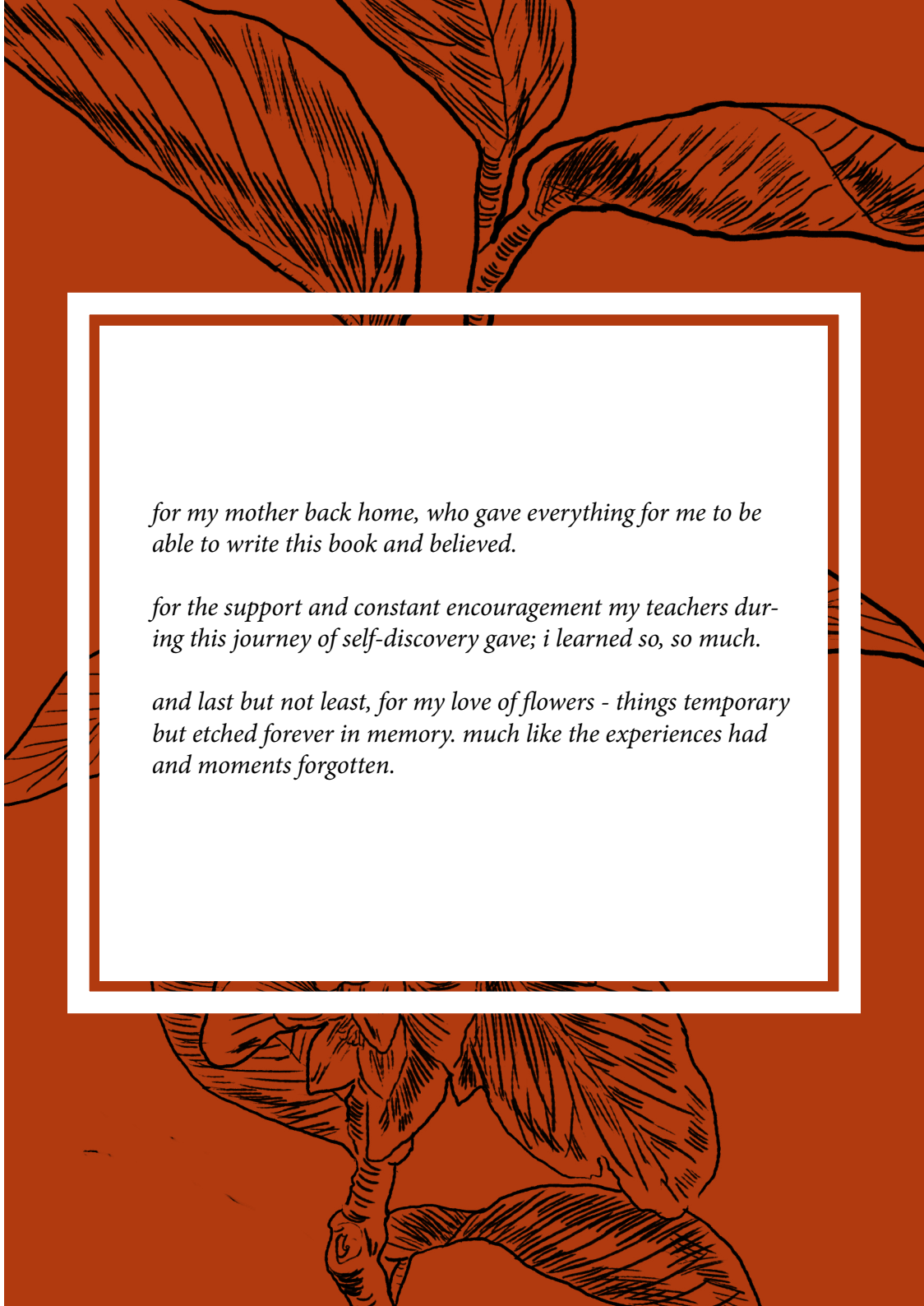
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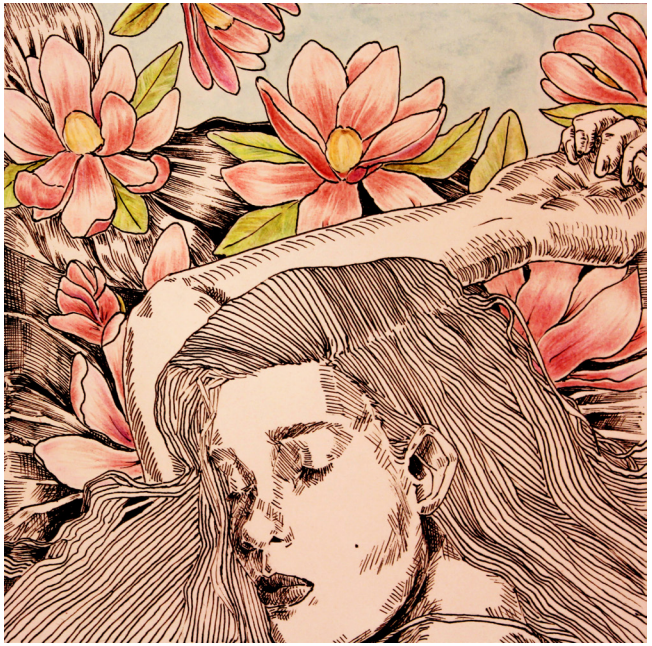
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for my mother back home, who gave everything for me to be able to write this book and believed.

for the support and constant encouragement my teachers during this journey of self-discovery gave; i learned so, so much.

and last but not least, for my love of flowers - things temporary but etched forever in memory. much like the experiences had and moments forgotten.



dear reader,

I think I have this love
for people,
The idea of them
anyway -
Which is more than a
little unfair
I'm aware,
But I cannot help

This one-sided love of mine.

chapter 1

The Maxims of Being Human

"For where is the man that has incontestable evidence of the truth of all that he holds, or of the falsehood of all he condemns; or can say that he has examined to the bottom all his own, or other men's opinions?



The necessity of believing without knowledge, nay often upon very slight grounds, in this fleeting state of action and blindness we are in, should make us more busy and careful to inform ourselves than constrain others."

- Locke, 1826

I.

Truth is
Things unsaid And whispered under breaths,
Going unheard
And unseen,
By senses blinded with shuttered hearts,
But never goes away.

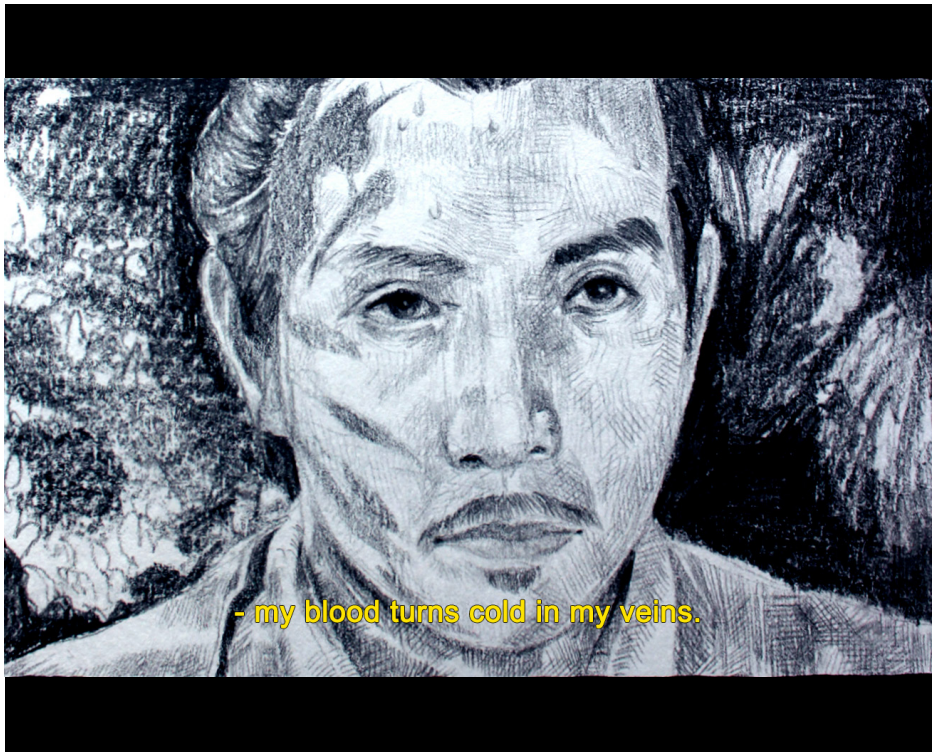
Solanum Dulcamara



Bittersweet Nightshade

"TRUTH"





“For what I saw in them,

was neither anger or sorrow,

but a cold light of loathing.”



a quiet settles
the whispers of the bamboo,
but they listen still.

II.

Sometimes I wonder,
Is it the sheer force
Of wilful ignorance
Or the selfish pursuit
of pleasure,
And petty satisfac-
tion,
That they use
To mask the scent of
rot that clings
To their skin,

Or is it because
They are so self-ab-
sorbed,
So fearful of their
sense of self
Being lost to them
That they so willingly
Do the unspeakable,

Leaving gore and
viscera
In their wake;
Of husks that once
housed a soul;
Of wounds festering
and left to rot;
And of still beating
hearts bleeding
Into nothing;

All for the sake of
survival,
They reasoned.

And perhaps,
There *is* some truth to
their words,

That this
Is what it means
To live
And be

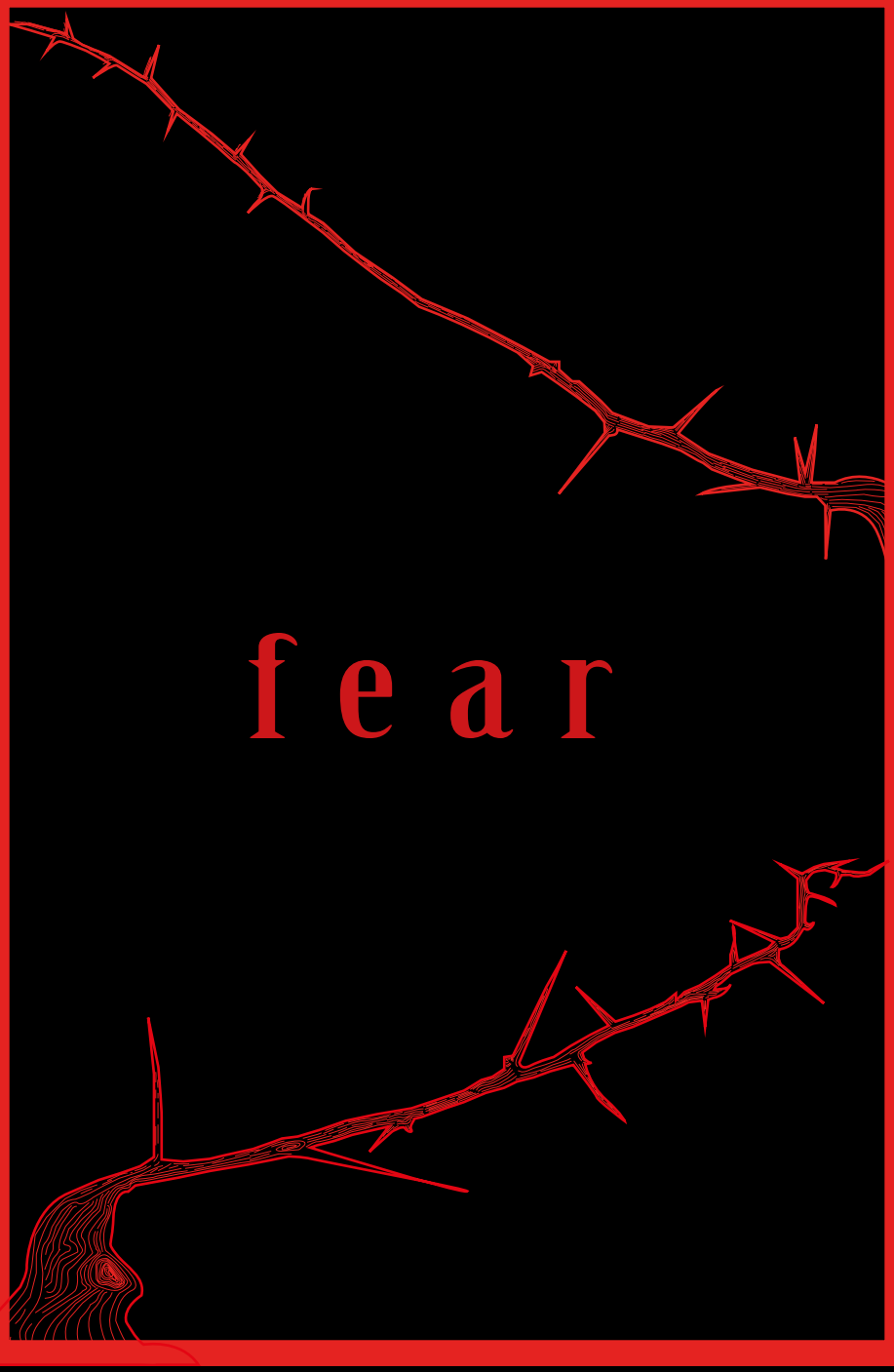
Human.

"… but yet, if a Christian, who has a view of happiness and misery in another life, be asked by why a man must keep his word, he will give this as a reason: because God, who has the power of eternal life and death, requires it of us. But if an Hobbist be asked why; he will answer, because the public requires it, and the Leviathan will punish you, if you do not. And if one of the heathen philosophers had been asked, he would have answered: because it was dishonest, below the dignity of a man, and opposite to virtue, the highest perfection of human nature, to do otherwise."

- Locke, 1997, pp. 77

"…That the innate principles of morality, may, by education, and custom, and the general opinion of those, amongst whom we converse, be darkened and at last quite worn out of the minds of men."

(Locke, 1997, pp. 87)



"The oldest and strongest emotion of humankind is fear, and the oldest and strongest kind of fear, is fear of the unknown." – Lovecraft, 1927










w h y ?

“OUT DAMN SPOT, OUT I SAY!”

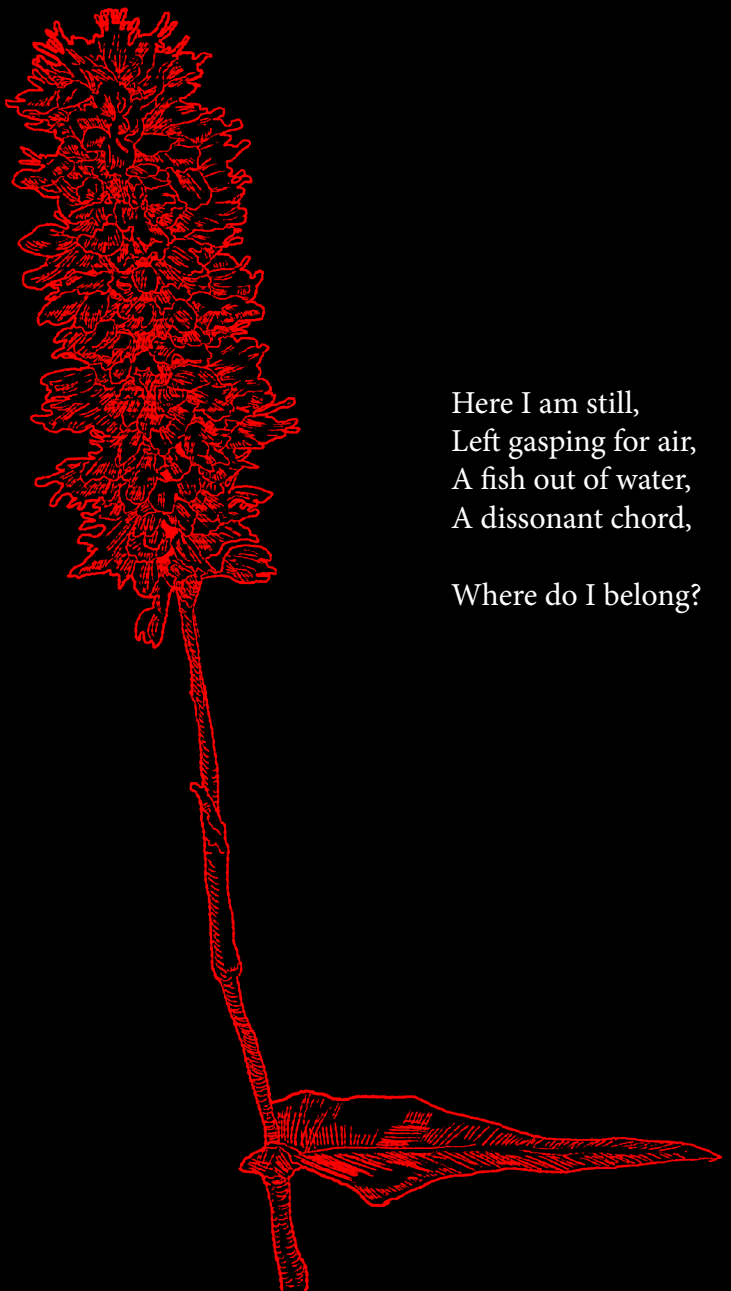


Artemesia Dracunculus

Tarragon

"HORROR"





Here I am still,
Left gasping for air,
A fish out of water,
A dissonant chord,

Where do I belong?

OF
GROWING
PAINS,



AND
MOMENTS
GONE.

"CHANGE"

Anagalis arvensis

Pimpernel

"THE GRADUATE"

Screenplay
by
Buck Henry

Ben has not moved. now the bed on which he is lying moves as though someone has sat down upon it next to him.

MR. BRADDOCK'S VOICE
What is it, Ben?

The CAMERA BEGINS TO PULL BACK SLOWLY.

BEN
I'm just -

MR. BRADDOCK
- worried?

BEN
Well -

MR. BRADDOCK
About what?

BEN
I guess - about my future.

MR. BRADDOCK
What about it?

BEN
Don't know. I want it to be -

MR. BRADDOCK
To be what?

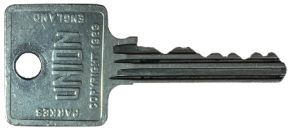
BEN
(quietly)


- ...Different.

Play make-believe where truths are stories told

And lies spun gold

Play pretend where roles are



And do not just simply *be;*

Play dress up where no one else can see

Save for  attendee;

Play both the emperor and the fool

With ignorance as the rule;

Play as grown-ups do
And you'll be one too.



II. You'll Know

They tell you
With knowing eyes
And solemn finality
That epiphany comes
When you fill shoes once too large
And your fingers graze ceilings
That were once out of reach.

They tell you
With white lies
And halting sincerity
That answers will wait
For you to collect them
Like bleached shells
By the seashore.

They tell you
That it was only
A matter of time
Before you learn.

They don't tell you,
Of callouses earned,
And scraped up knees;
Of bowed backs,
And bruised eyes,
From ill-fitting shoes
And ceilings now too low.

innocence

I.

It is
A joyous laugh,
A gasp of wonderment,
A sigh of wonderment
At the most
Simple.



to all the little boys and girls that grew up.

Heart pounding,
Lungs burning
With the fear of
The world behind me,

I *ran* and *ran* and *ran* –
~~(But got lost along the way)~~;

Muddled truths and
Buried my head in sand
Just to hide away
From the world,

I lied and lied and lied –
(And left my heart six feet under);

Voice silenced
And tongue cut out,
Replaced it with others
For you and her and him and them,

I bled and bled and bled –
(Wrung dry with good intentions);

Now,
With eyes dry
And heart still,
I wonder:

What is left of me now?

THE IDEAL BEAUTY



Nerium and Camellia Japonica

Oleander and Japanese Camella, White

“BEWARE OF PERFECTED LOVELINESS"

It is the most

Mercurial thing,

Finicky,

Impossible,

Never-ending,

And

Exhausting;

This hypersensitivity,

Of being so *aware*

Of every blemish,

Of every possible

Flaw or lack,

That it keeps me
Awake at night,
Makes me dream
Of skin cracked or ridden with marks,
Of reflections in mirrors distorted,
BLOATED,
ENLARGED,
So frighteningly clear
That I remember it as I wake,
Fatigue clinging to my skin.
Yet I still,
Desperately,
clumsily,
Reach for the light,
And force myself to look upon
The face that stares back at me,
With an expression so desolate,
And eyes so wide and wild,
Darting across my face,
So keen in their gaze,
That I can't help but turn off the light,

panicandshamerakingtheirnailsonmyskin -

please stop.

(Then)

...I breathe,

And feel my lungs expand,

My thoughts leaving me in a rush of a sigh.

Nothing has changed and

Orpheus plays his lyre still;

There is no Eurydice in this story to bring back,

Renewed,
Eyes closed,

Again I know the stairs grow

longer;

L
o
o
k
i
n
g

but not .sbrawkcaB gnikooL

u
p
w
a
r
d
s

~~(I'm fine.)~~



II. DISSONANCE

When will you be pleased
With the **stretch** marks on my thighs,

The faint ripple of
My soft skin and supple flesh
As I d[a]n[c]e away
To the music of your words,

Are you *happy* now

That the **hollows** of my bones

t
h
g
i
l
Take f and sing,
Birdsongs of a brighter sky,
My skin stretched and etched
With the notes of your music,

Will you be *content*

Now that I have danced till morn,
My feet bleeding red
Shaking hands shivering with
Cold fear and loathing,
Your sound **deep** in my body,

But the music stops.

And a new sound plays softly,

T e r r i f y i n g l y ,

I realise I must fill my
Empty bones
and

Put back my torn off flesh and fat.

And as morning comes,
I ask her,
Him,
Them -

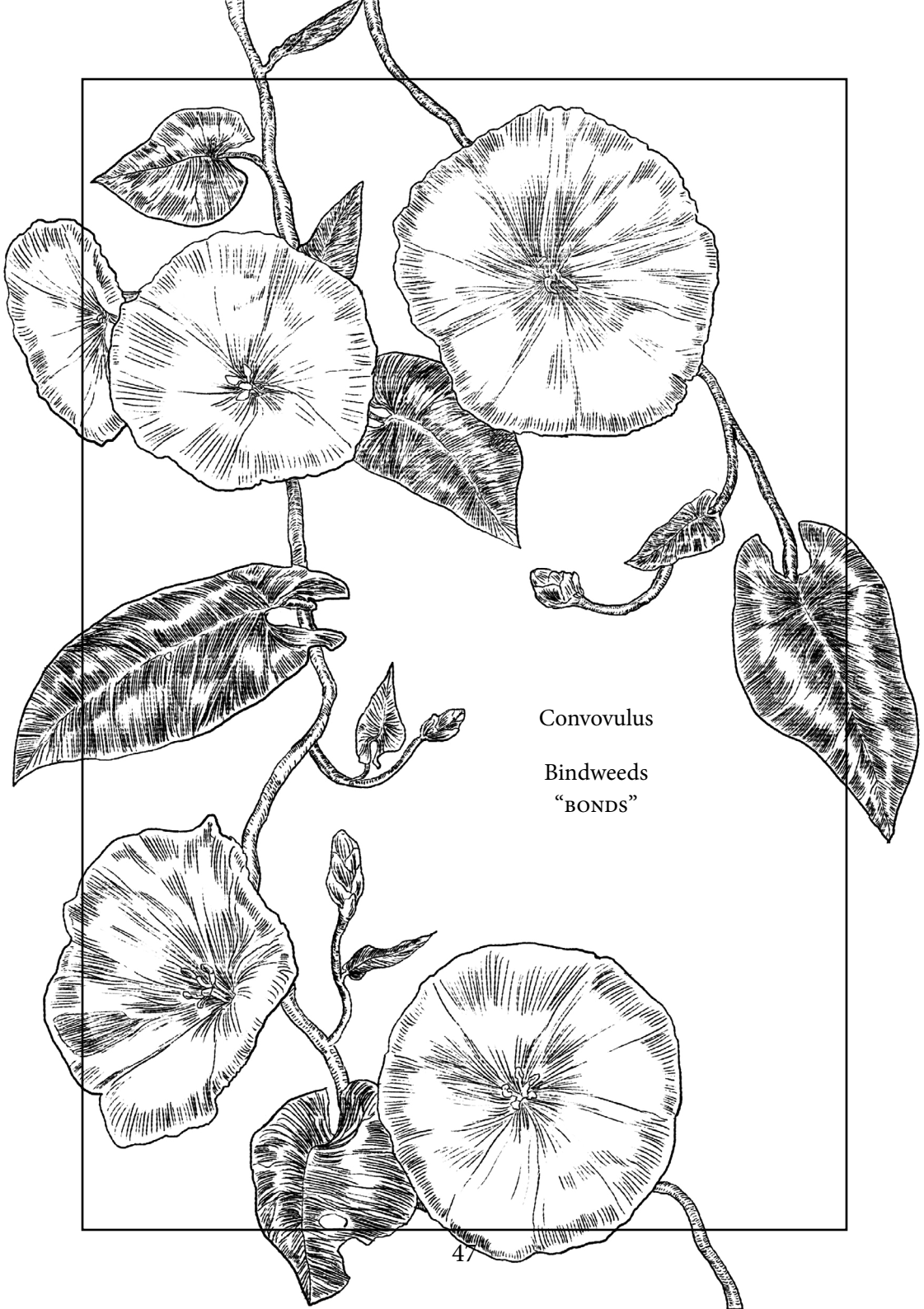
Are *you* pleased,

happy,

And content?

chapter 2

You, Me, Us

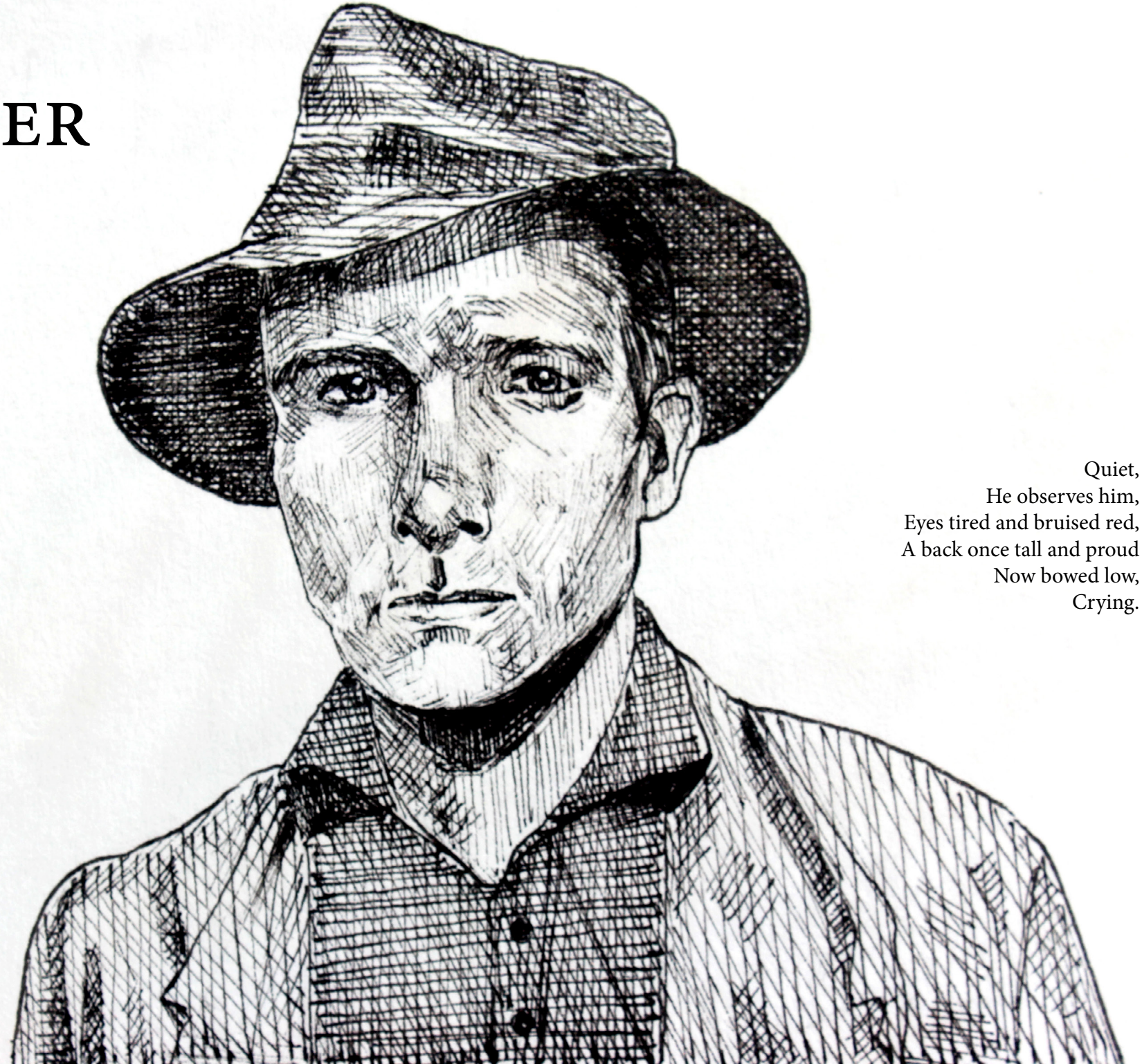


Convovulus

Bindweeds

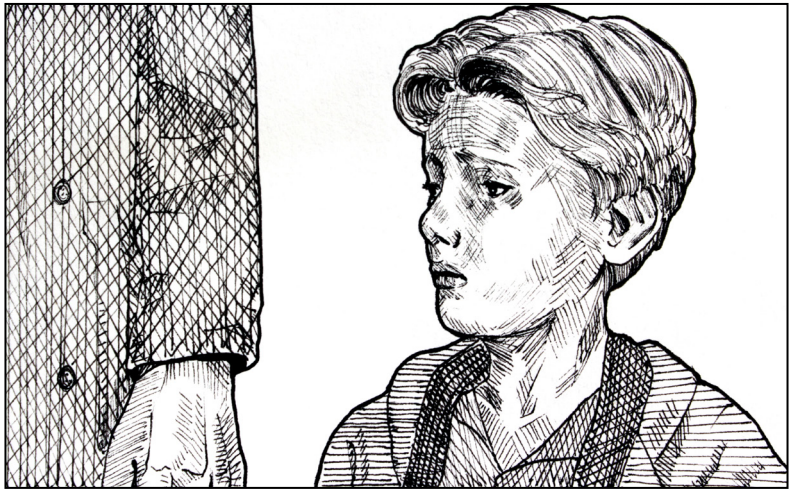
"BONDS"

Father



Quiet,
He observes him,
Eyes tired and bruised red,
A back once tall and proud
Now bowed low,
Crying.







I.

Father,

Teacher,

Husband,

Brother,

Friend,

And –

~~Liar, Tyrant,~~ **~~Coward~~**

Yet, I am my father's daughter.

And there within,

Is the punch-line.

II.

it wasn't as if i didn't fucking know,
what with YOUR voice rattling in my ears,
~~cutting off my own~~
when i tried to *speak*
and when i tried to *think*
of an answer to your question,
of a plea to your demand.

but what YOU know
with such surety and authority,
invades my thoughts
and my tongue,
which grows back
is tied,
because –

what was my answer
for you
again?

i forgot.

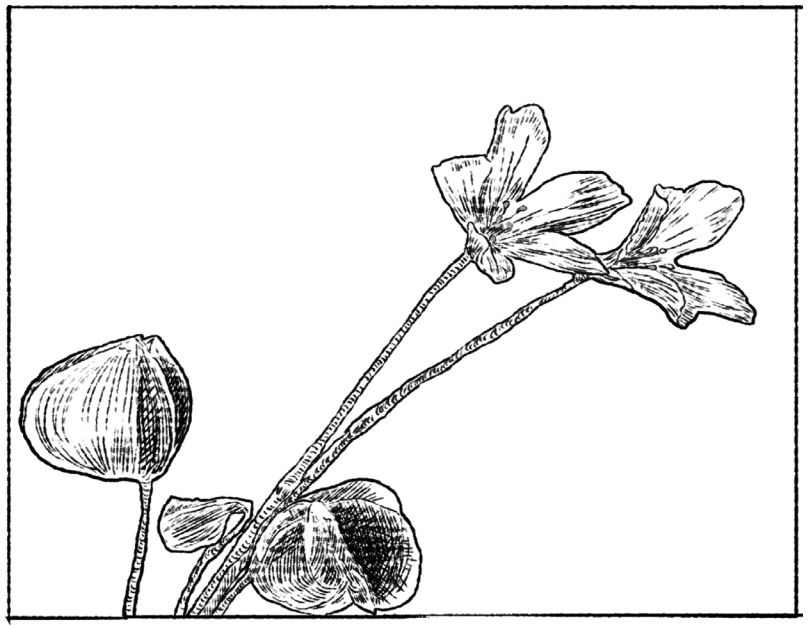


FRED BALLINGER
Believe me, Lena, I can understand you, really, I can.

Silence. Lena doesn’t respond. But when she does, she is lucid, furious, and ruthless.

LENA
You can understand me, Daddy? Like hell you can! Mummy would have been able to understand me. Mummy found herself with you in the same situation I’m in now, not once but dozens of times. And she always pretended not to know. You had a stream of women, but she just kept going. Not just for us children, but also, above all, for you. She loved you and so she forgave you. No matter what happened, she still wanted to be with you. But who were you? Who? That’s what I always asked myself. You never gave anything, not to her, n ot to me, nothing. You gave everything to your music. Music, music, music! There was nothing else in your life. Only music. And aridness. Never a caress, never a hug, a kiss, nothing. You never knew anything about your children. You never knew if we were suffering, if we were happy. Nothing. Everything was on mummy’s shoulders.

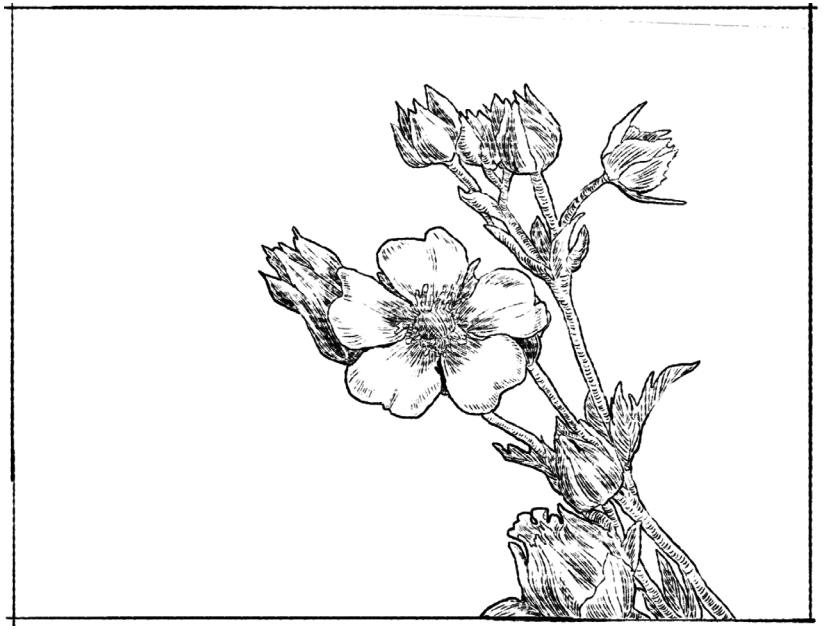
Mother



Oxtalis

Wood Sorrel

"JOY, MATERNAL TENDERNESS"

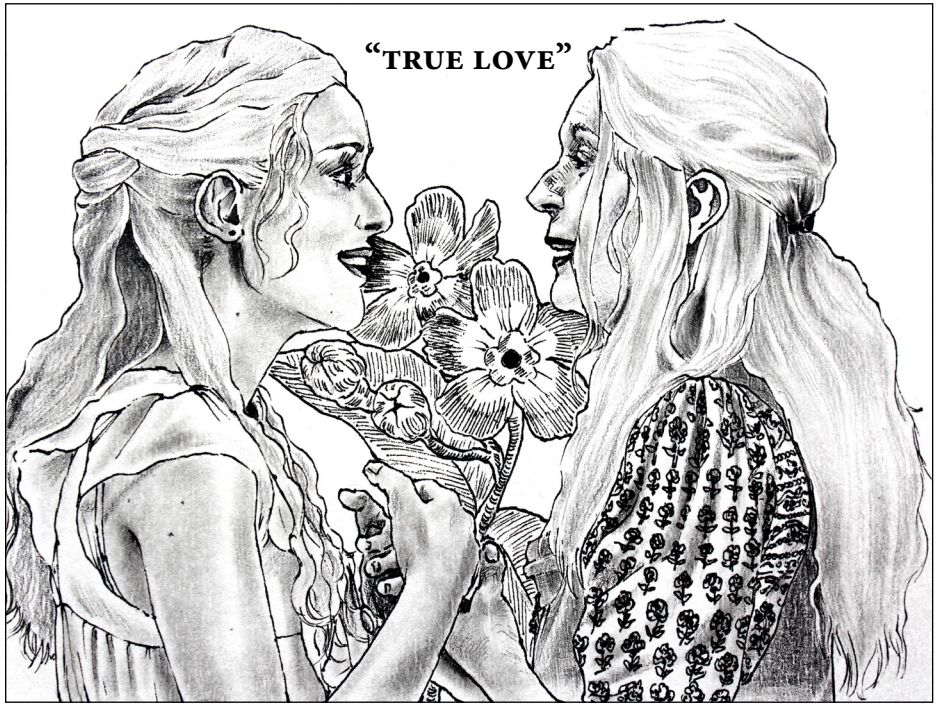


Potentilla

Cinquefoil

"MATERNAL AFFECTION"

Myosotis



Forget-Me-Nots

does it ever hurt?

I ask the earth,
When the skies roar
and lash at you
With hailstorms and
lightning
Battering at your
form?

No child,

She rumbles.
And softens the sound
of rain and thunder,
With the shelter she
builds for me,
Ofs carred flesh and
bone.

is it not tiring?

I ask the earth,
When they placed
mountains of
Jagged rock and heavy
stone,
Against the slopes of
your shoulders
And your back?

No child,

She murmurs.
And carries me along-
side the stones
Both her own and not,
In arms that have
never
faltered or swayed.

are you lonely?

I ask the earth,
When the birds leave
you for the sky,
And the fish stay for
the sea,
While those that tread
your heart and soul,
Eventually sleep for
an eternity?

No child,

She whispers.
And bids me good
night,
Fingers twined in
mine.

For I have you.



Asclepias tuberosa

Butterfly Weed

"LET ME GO"

Dearest one,

I'm just a singular heartbeat in
your lifetime of forever.
It is equally as precious,
as it is easily passed on.

(..And vice versa.)

Yours always,
The me in your memory



Do not

Think that
The ghosts
Who haunt your
memory
And the skeletons
That hang in your
closet
Are mine to bear for
you
Without my knowing;

Do not

Pile unto me
The shackles
That bound you to
yourself
And the bruises
Your heavy heart
carries
For I am no keeper
Or handler of yours;

Do not

Take my love
As salvation
Or my body
As panacea,
For I am not your
God
And I am no lamb,
I will not lead
And *will not* be kept.

So

You ***do not***
get to hurt me,
For not being able
to heal your ego,
Or soothe
Your past hurts,
As I am not
The one
Who made you
This way.

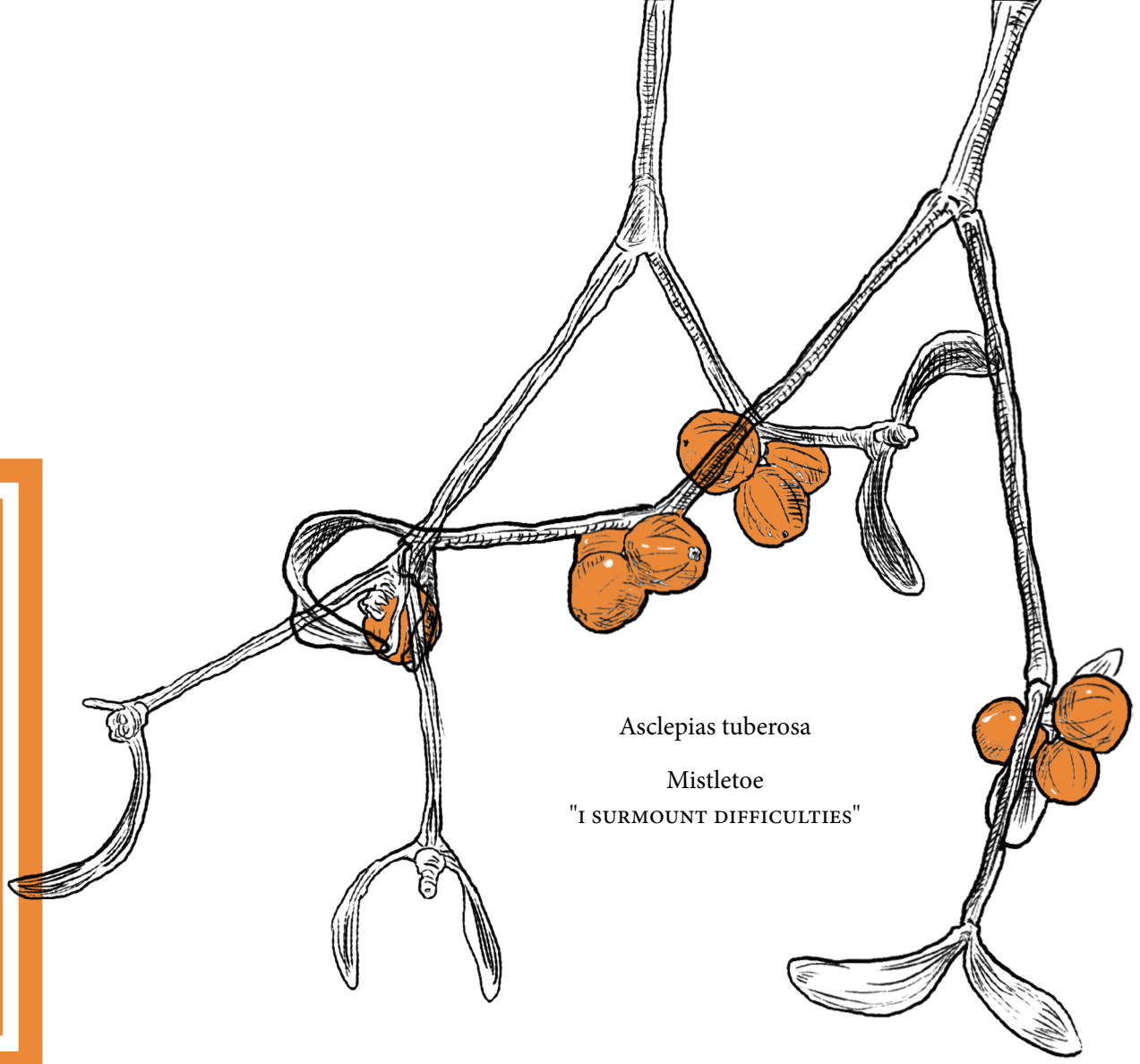
(When will you gaze upon me,
Instead of them?)

The Aftermath of You

I will not ask for you anymore,
things like how are you, what happened and who hurt you –
because you're burning so bright it's eating you up,
eating everything and,
everyone around you,

It scares me,
becoming a nameless face,
in the aftermath of you.

I was. I have. I am.



Asclepias tuberosa

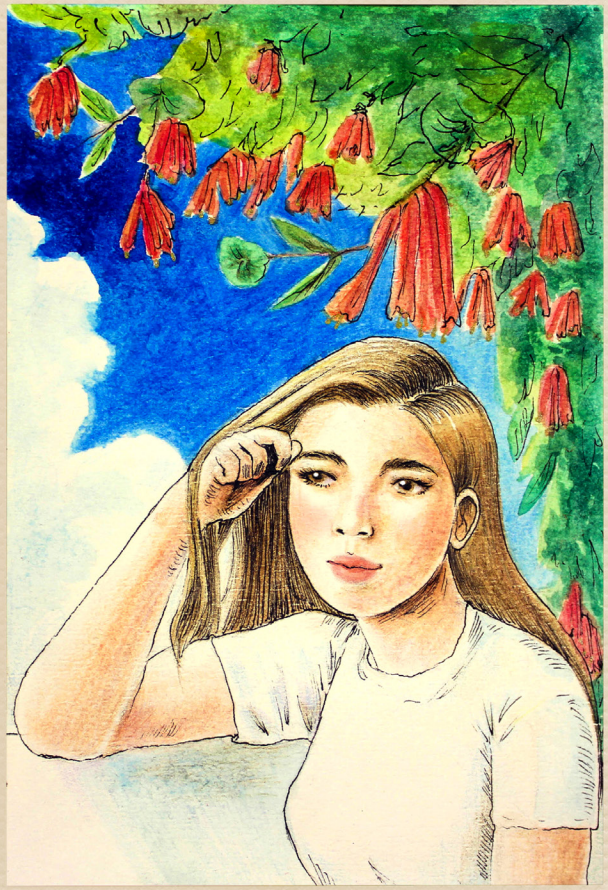
Mistletoe

"I SURMOUNT DIFFICULTIES"

chapter 3

hello, goodbye.

the colour of tomorrow



looks a lot like *hope.*

I find a lot of things beautiful.

Places,
Little moments,
And the most insignificant of things,
Like taking a hot shower after a long
day,
Or a simple compliment that gets a
surprised look
And a shy smile.

I find people beautiful -

Eyes rimmed red and glassy,
Fingers trembling against pale,
Waxy skin,
Stretching themselves so thin,
You'd be half afraid that they'd break,
And maybe they have,
But still they're picking up the pieces
Of what's left of themselves,
Putting themselves back together
Even when it hurts;

I find them beautiful,

Haunting and

transcendent,

Because they're still trying.

It makes me want to try too.

I.

“You’re enough,”

I want to say to her
But hold my tongue
For fear of startling
What little light
That was in her eyes
Away, away,
As I watch her figure sway
In the gentle wind,
Her smile brittle and lips pale,
Cheeks hollow and sockets caverns.

“You’re more."

I want to shout at him,
But bite my cheek,
Afraid of my words
Becoming the wind
That topples his hunched form
Bowing, bowing,
So close to flying
Off the ledge,
His face an angry snarl with eyes so lost
A mirror of mine.

"You're loved."

I want to whisper to her,
But hide it away,
Knowing it won't be heard
Nor wanted,
So I sit with her over ketchup and
fries,
Talking, talking,
The night away,
Hoping one day
She'll find me and say,
"I love and am loved."

II.

And because I am many things;

A coward,
A liar,
A fraud,
A sinner

and

Ultimately,

Damningly,

Human,

I write these letters
In the form stanzas,
In hopes that it would reach you,

And one day

reach me.

III.
You *are* enough.
You *are* more.
You *are* loved.

Alyssum Maritimum



"WORTH BEYOND BEAUTY"
Sweet Alyssum

For the Love of Flowers is a labour of love comprised of intimate, introspective pieces that revolve around an attempt to convey the inner workings of being human, and the consequential emotional growth that we stumble upon along the way towards adulthood.

Using instances of life as the source of inspiration, the entirety of this book's design is to engage its readers with familiar scenes taken from films, books, as well as the author's own coming-of-age experience.

For those who are about to transition their way into the unknown waters of adulthood, and for those who are already wading through the sea of life itself, For the Love of Flowers intends to serve as a reminder that despite the trials and tribulations of adulthood, the various experiences that we come across are what ultimately shapes us as who we are today – our identities, ideologies, our actions, and so much more.