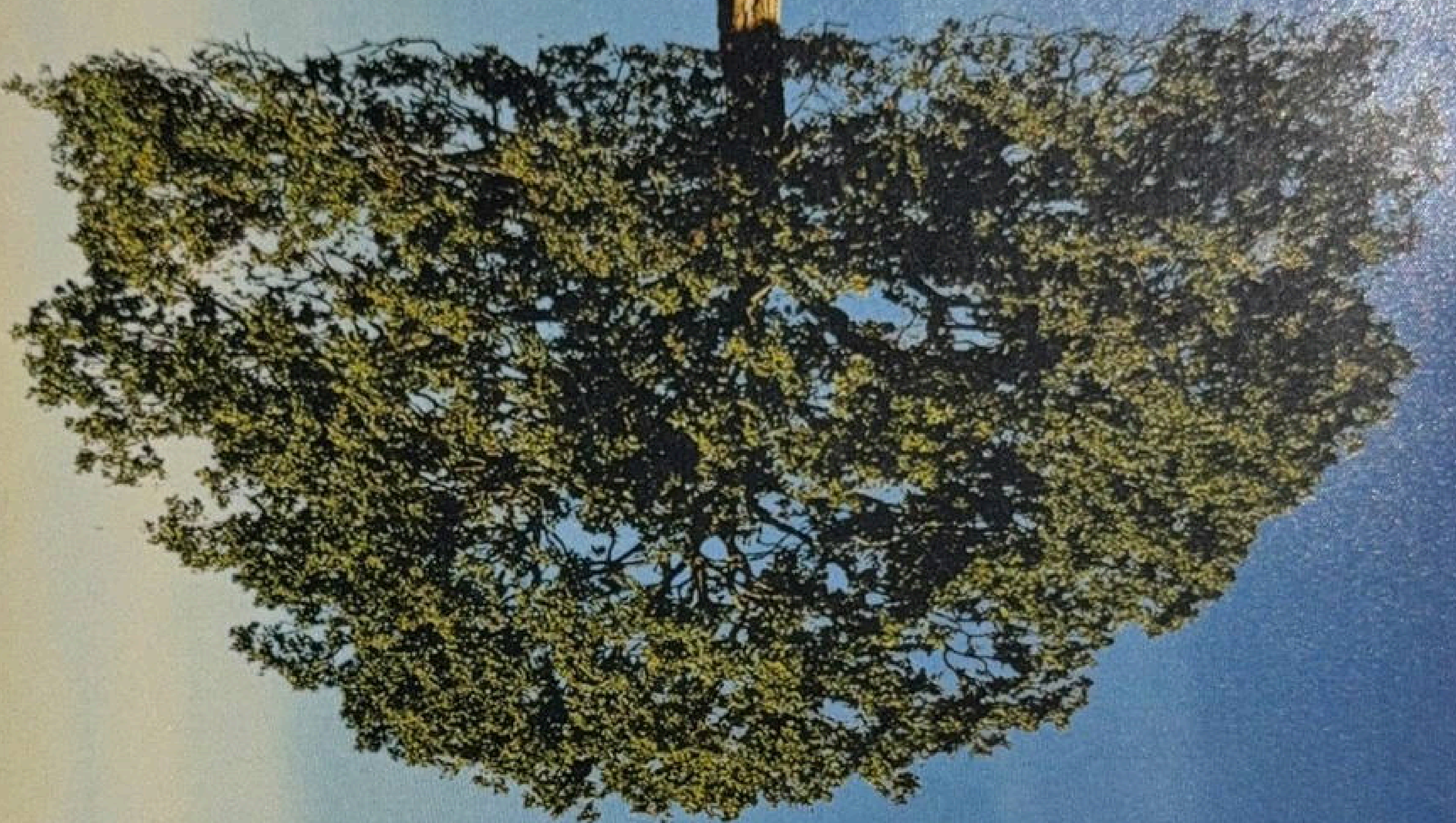




URBANA



I love waking up and thinking about my friends and family and about how awesome this day will be it with a positive attitude.

I love spiritualism and eastern religions. I'm in love with Siddhartha Gautama.

I love reading and writing. literature is a way to share our beautiful and creative potential. Stories open doors to universes unknown to us.

I love eating fruits and chocolate. I love kiwis and strawberries. I love red Lindor chocolate.

I like to think. It makes me.

I like not to think. It destroys me.

Sometimes I like to just feel...

I like to die while living, sometimes...

I love art. One time a very smart guy I met told me that art was about destroying yourself, if you know I mean...

I love freedom as long as it is rooted in love.

I love my cause, which is me, and everything.

I love feeling whole.

I love good poetry.

I love to see people do selfless acts of love.

I love real, organic food (fruits, some vegetables, eggs, cheese, fish)

I love making useful connections between things.

I love a good game of soccer.

I love being in nature, but cities are alright too. :]

I love the amazing sport of basketball.

I love improving myself, and everyone else's conditions that I can reach too.

I love my 92 Camry.

I love to have my inner core filled with passion and fire.

I love the way women make me feel like a man.

I love connecting with others.

I love trying to turn life into words so the line disappears. Always fails, always fun.

I love journies, and the journey.

I love trying to listen to trees talk, like really talk, not just metaphorically. (They do!).

I love being driven places cuz I don't like driving. Walking there is great too.

I love hamlet. I love the movie version by Kenneth Branagh. I love the scene where the white petals fall down on hamlet giving a depressing soliloquy. I love discomfort that opens things up.

I love what happens when you love the hater, even when it hurts. Smile!

I love those who teach the human religion of kindness. I don't care what their names be.

I love Ebonics and Spanglish.

I love it when my niece Josephine grabs on to my neck cuz she thinks the monsters are gonna get her. And my mom/dad/family/friends/assorted cosmic beings I could swear I've me in another lifetime.

I love the way love seems to make more love more loving.
I love how earlobes feel, and long hair, and chins, and warm ocean water, and cold rain, and the dimples
I love how earlobes feel, and long hair, and chins, and warm ocean water, and cold rain, and the dimples
I love how earlobes feel, and long hair, and chins, and warm ocean water, and cold rain, and the dimples
on basketballs rolling off your hand, and a soft bouncy keyboard, and yawning in the morning that makes a
tear come out

I love my children, I love the way they turn my tears into laughter and my frowns into smiles.

I love that I can still remember the way my grandmother smelled like baby powder, and how that scent
makes me smile and cry at the same time.

I love that my daughter considers me her best friend.

I love how my touch and my words can soothe my children.

I love to laugh.

I love to dance.

I love the power of a simple smile.

I love massages.

I love to feel, I love to understand.

I love being alive.

I love being a human and pushing a little further each time to become complete.

I love welcoming and embracing my fears because without them I would always be the same and it would
be too boring.

I love overcoming my fears.

I love how trees and flowers look like they open up to the soon gracefully.

I loved my last birthday, the only one that I ever enjoyed due to some ego fixing.

I love chiropractors, they believe that unlocking the bones in your spine is all you need to be healthy physi-
cally, and if you believe, spiritually too because then you have a more fluent and direct connection to the
universe, and I agree.

I love the big orgasm that life is.

I love taking naps.

I love flan.

I love swimming naked.

I love listening to Ismael Serrano.

I love reading, but I barely do it.

I love being in contact with nature.

I love YOGA

I love learning and listening to wise people.

I love when my house smells like saumerios.

URBANA

Editor-in-Chief:

Camila Álvarez

Editors:

Félix Acuña

María Murriel

Frank Villaboy

Nirka Zapata

Layout Designers:

Laura Prada

Jhonatan Larrocha

Video Editor:

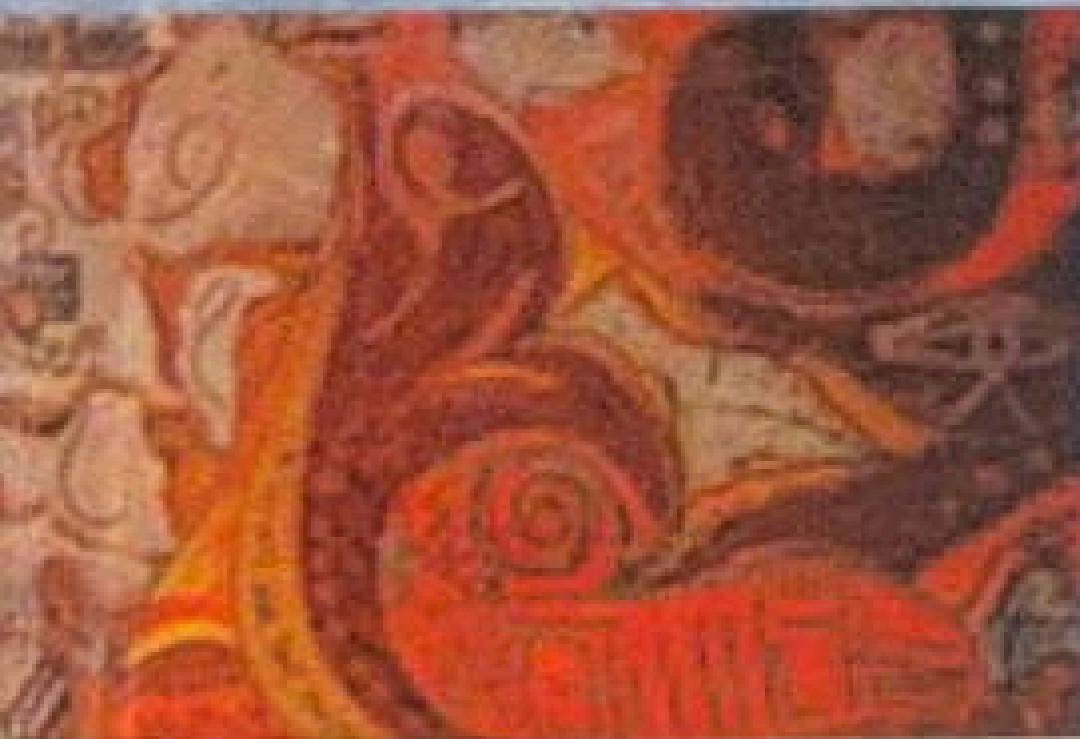
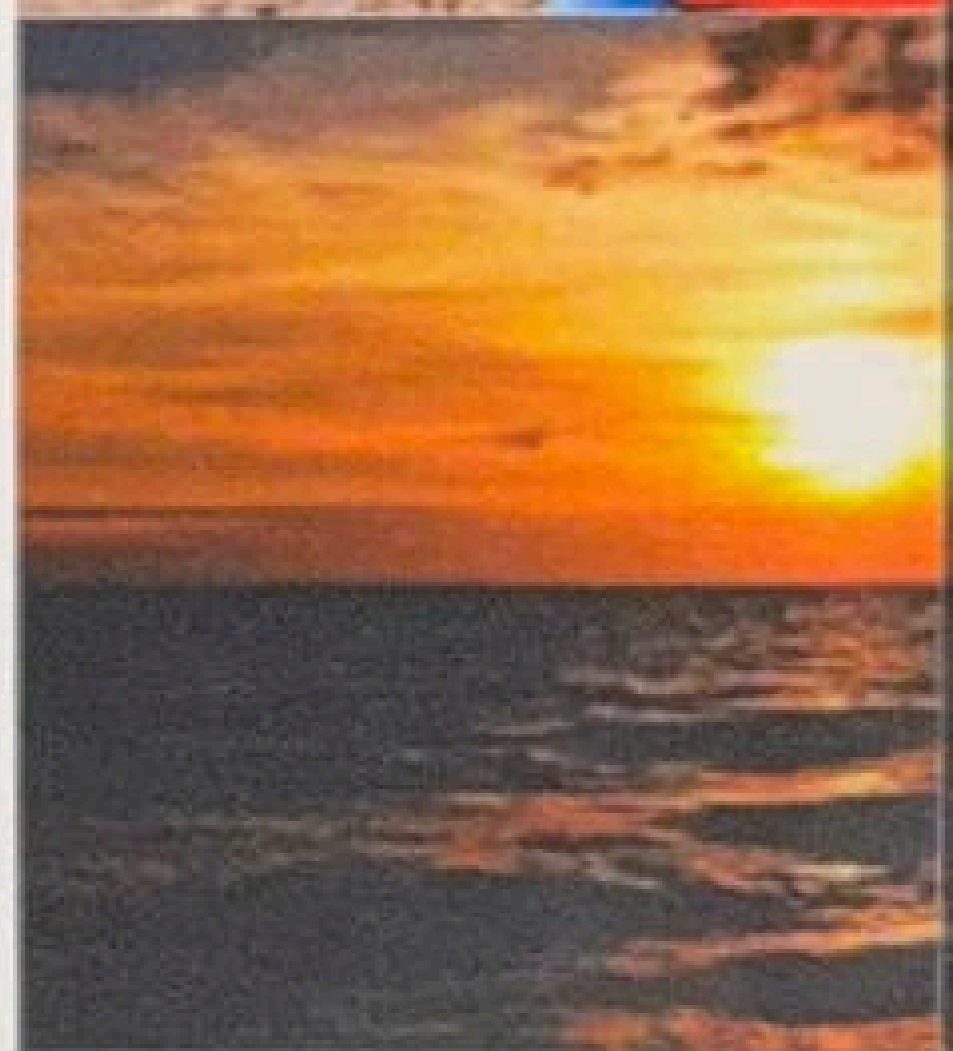
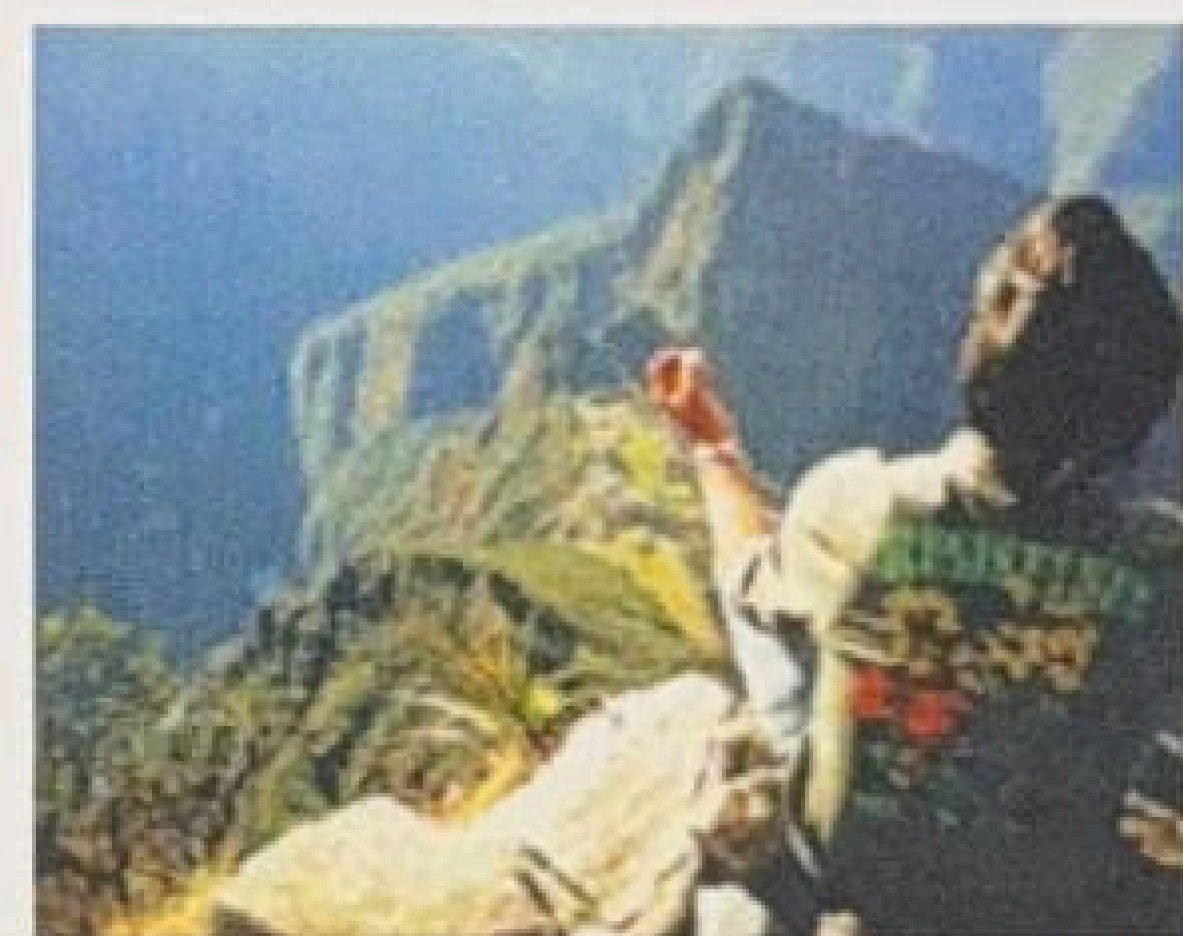
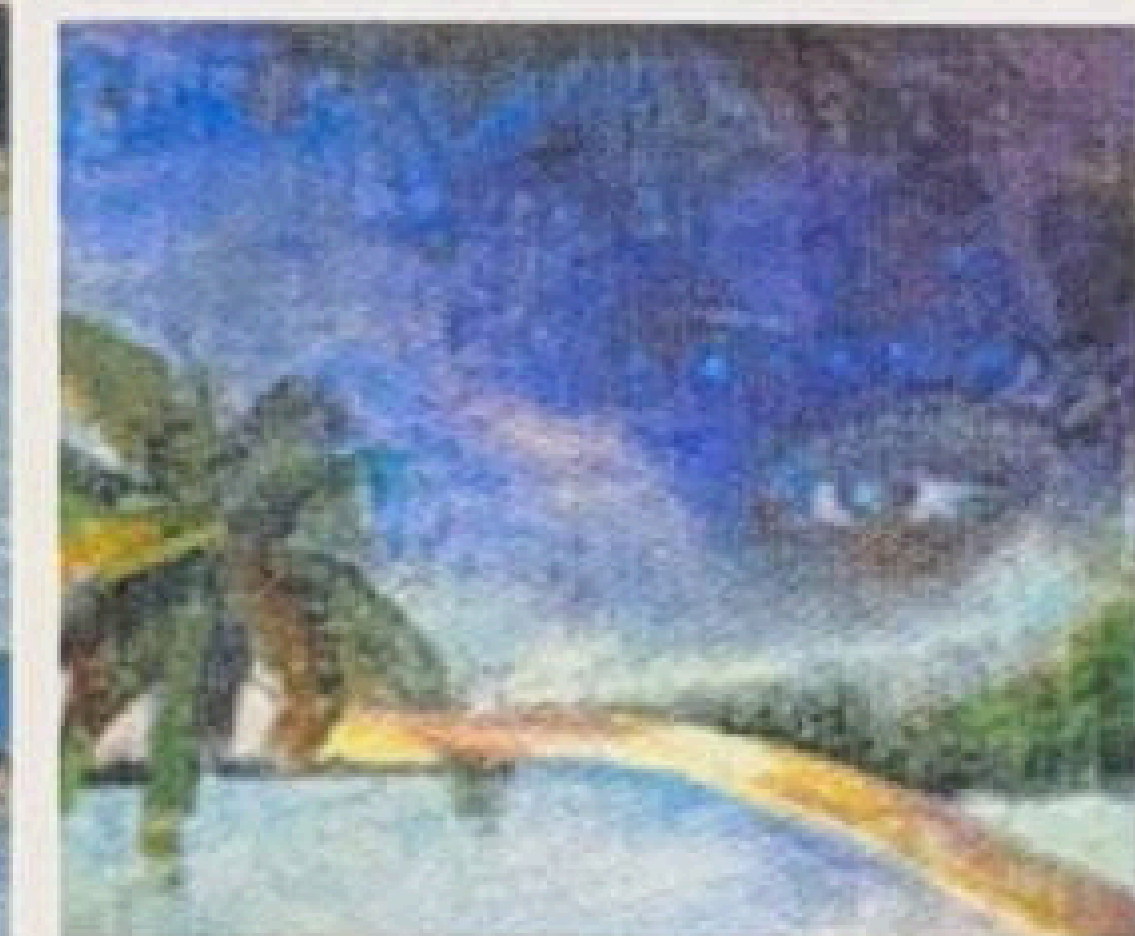
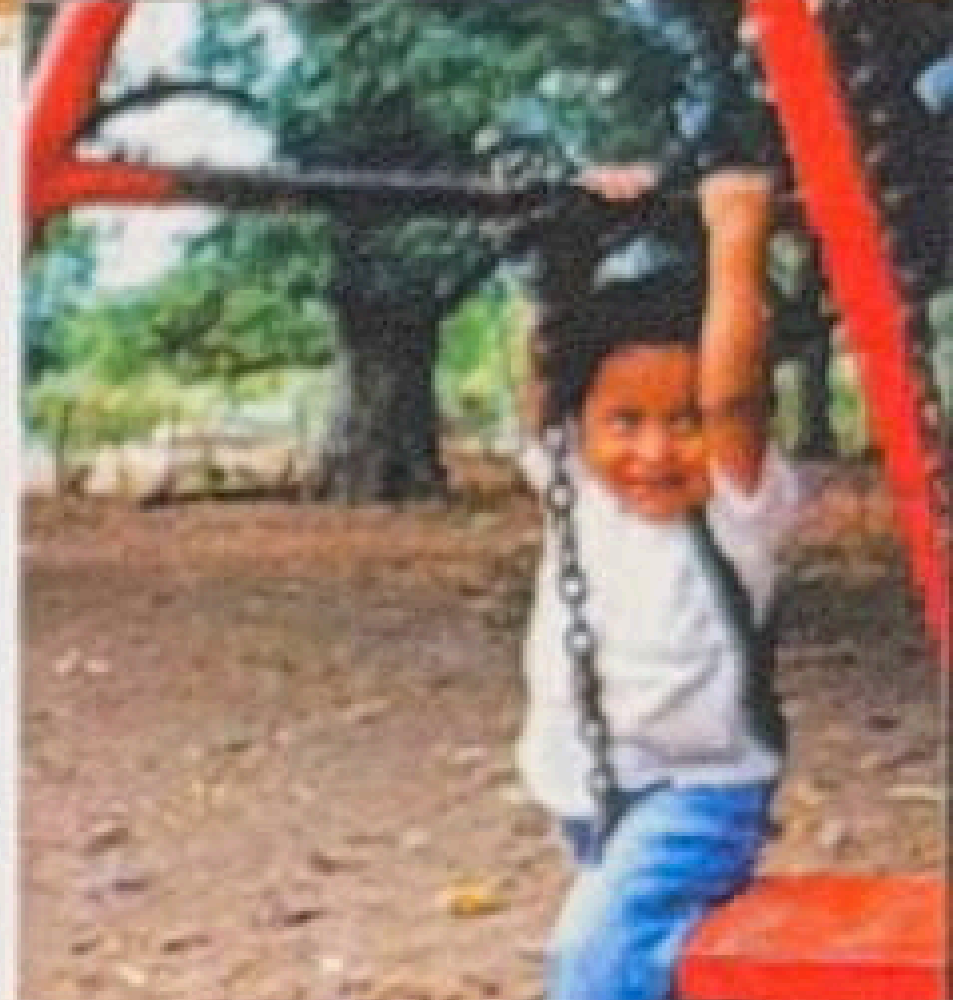
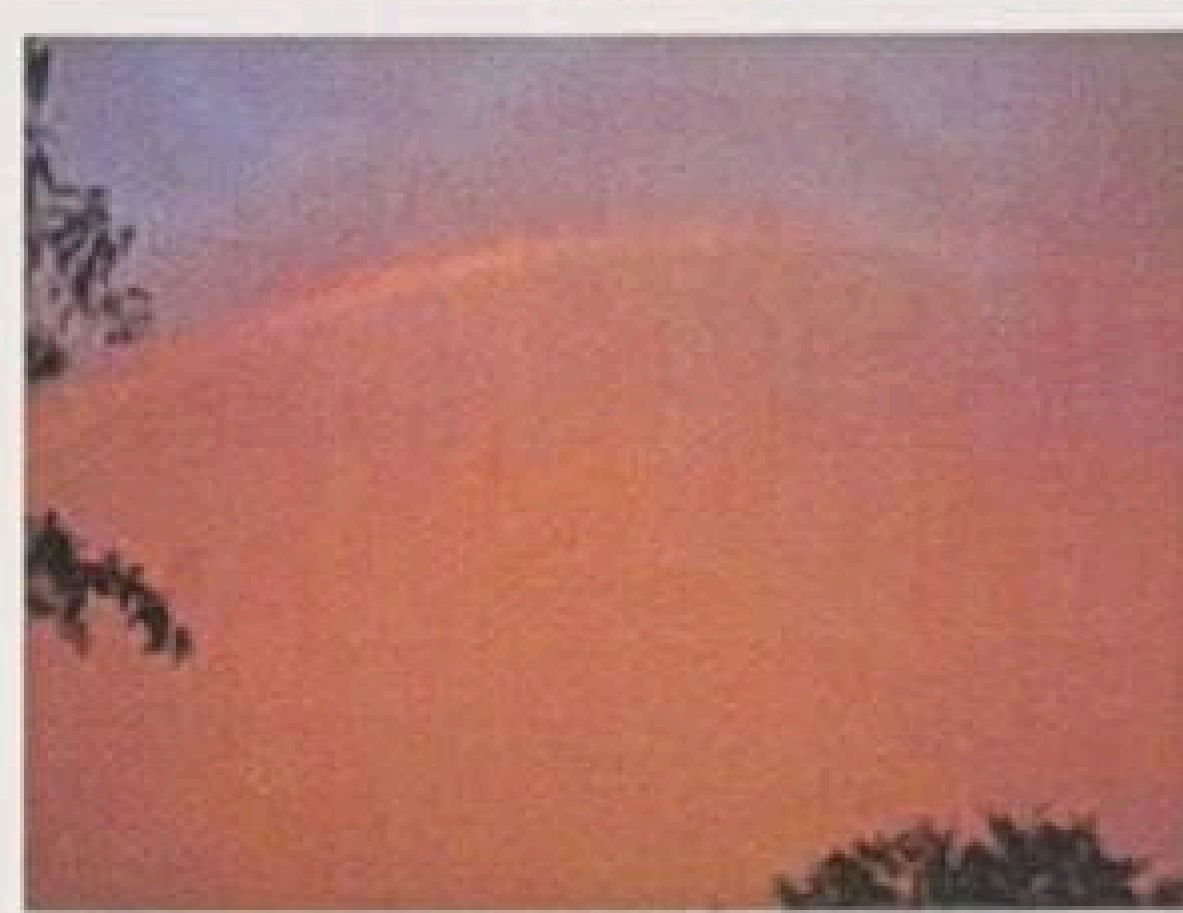
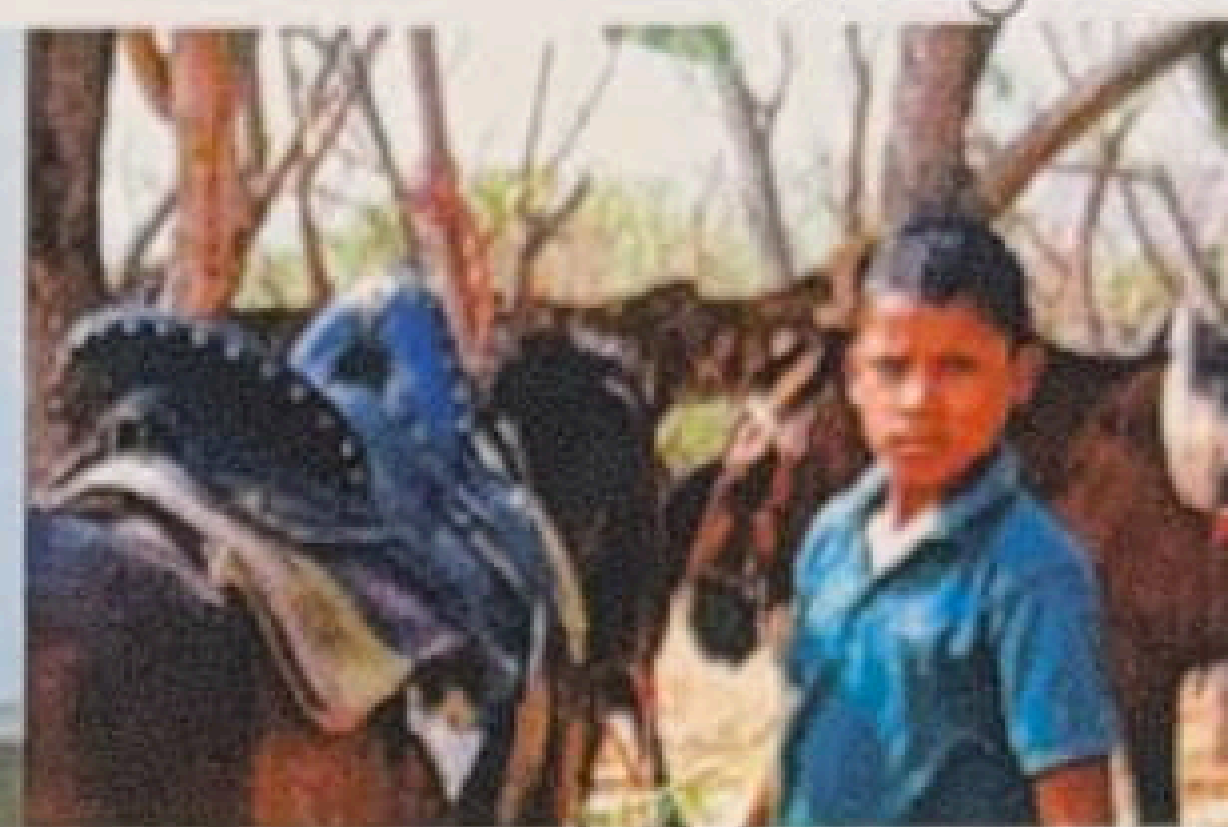
Stephanie Bechara

Faculty Advisor:

Emily Sendin

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WRITING

STEPHANIE BECHARA 34, 106, 184

JUÁN ELÍAS 182

ELIZABETH GÓMEZ 70, 101

MARÍA MURRIEL 63, 96

CLAUDIA OCAMPO 129

ROGER REYES 102, 111

JUAN RODRIGUEZ 24, 93, 152

FRANK VILLABOY 14, 156

NIRKA ZAPATA 34, 150

KERBY CHOUTE 34

34, 59, 139 FÉLIX

10, 34, 55, 56, 65, 72, 119, 149 CAMIL

20, 34, 88 JHONA

13, 32, 34, 84 LAURA

48 EDUAR

116 ANDRE

IRVIN LIRA 34

ORLANDO CORÉ 175, 179

DRANIN

BRANA

COVER DESIGN:
PEDRO ÁLVAREZ

ACUÑA 15, 32, 33, 58

ÁLVAREZ 8, 10, 30, 31, 40, 54, 65, 71, 72, 85, 86, 92, 146, 150, 178, 180, 190

ARROCHA 156

PRADA 12, 64, 100, 119, 148

VELARDE 26, 27, 48-51, 91, 109, 155

PEÑALVER 117, 174, 177

JONATHAN ARAUJO 108, 160, 161

ANA ALVARADO 94, 95

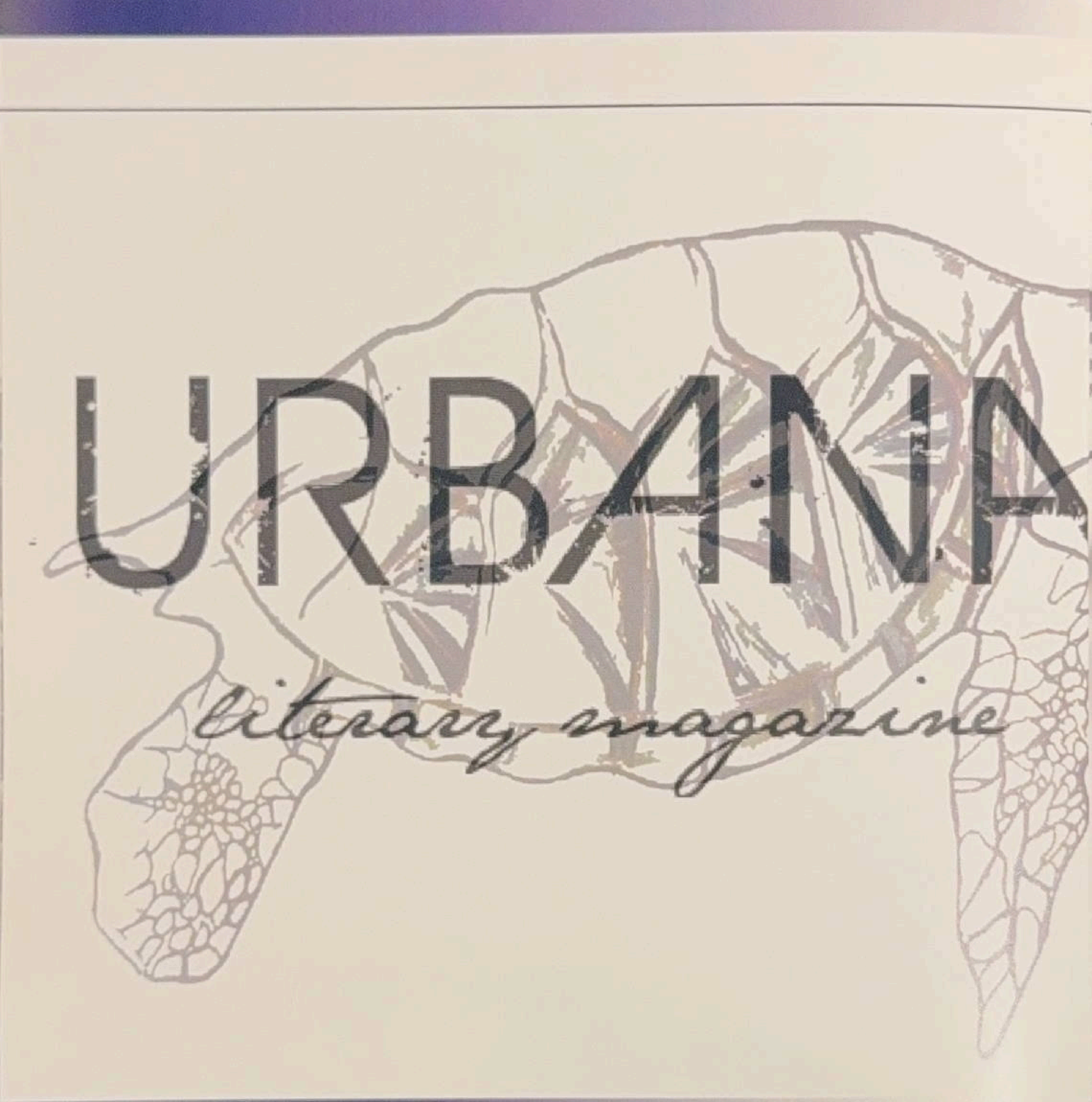
MARIANA ALTAMIRANO 19, 62, 68, 69, 78, 79, 89,
97, 100, 104, 105, 110, 115, 128

NATALIE EDGAR 21, 22, 103, 118, 120, 134-138,
140-145, 152, 156, 176, 183

CHRISTIAN GONZALEZ 52, 53

CRISTINA URDANETA 168

ART



URBANA

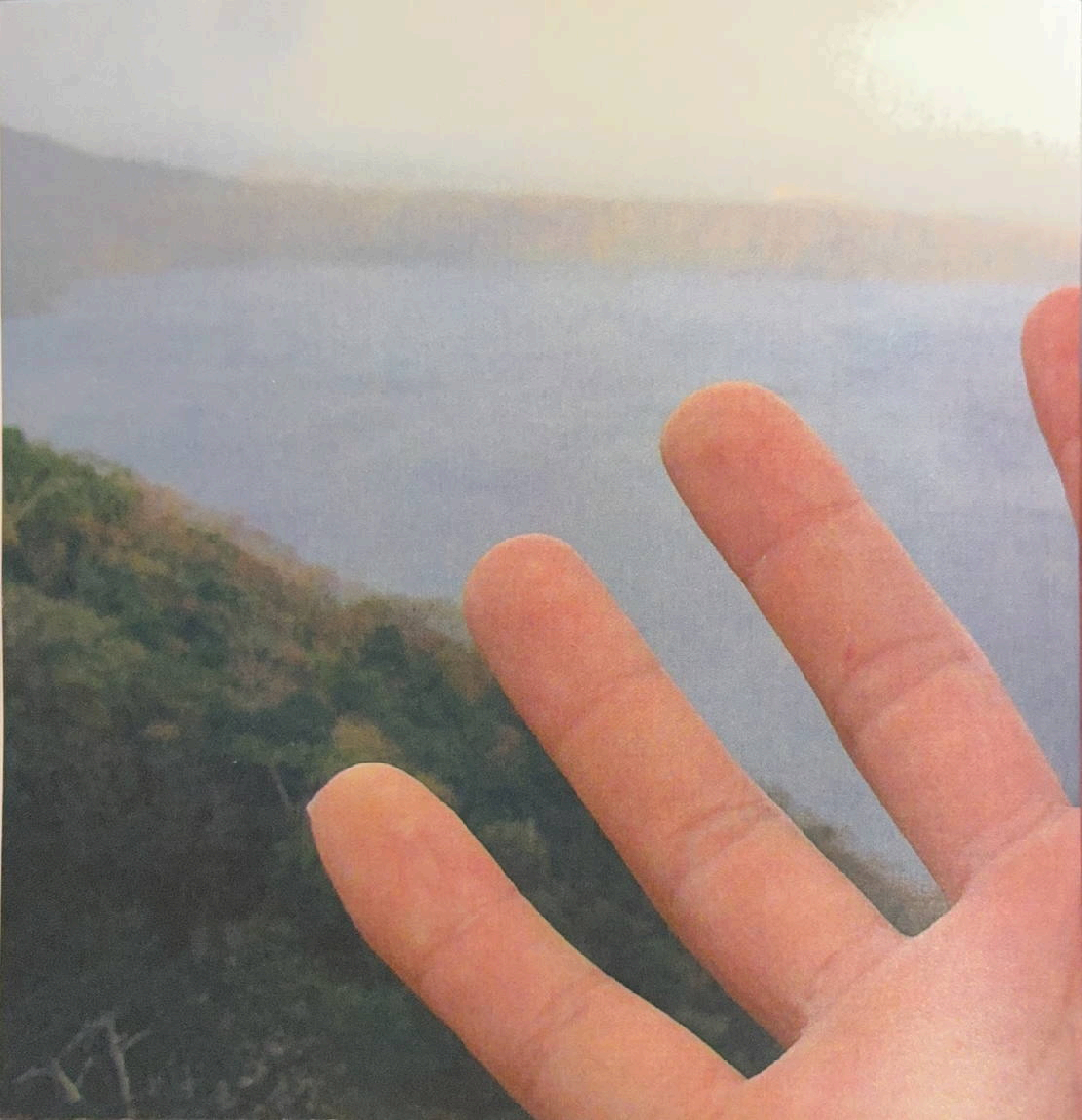
literary magazine



Editor-in-Chief's Note:

Each second that passes opens a door to a new beginning, starts a new cycle. As you read this, billions of carbon atoms are sharing their electrons, bonding our existence. As you read this, millions of flowers are blooming, babies are moving their eyelids for the first time, hope is touching mothers again. As you read this, little birds are discovering their wings and opening them to the sky, young people's minds are recognizing their autonomy again, old people are happy, because kids are smiling at them. Each second that passes opens a door to a new beginning. As you read this, there are soldiers dropping their guns, lovers their egos. If for some reason you're sad, open the window. If the sun is setting for you right now, it is surely rising for someone else, somewhere else. Wait for it to rise for you again, meanwhile, try to relax, and enjoy the beauty of the night.

Paul A. Hoyer



Le Abro el Alma al Mundo

Le abro el alma al mundo para que sienta como yo siento
Le abro el alma al mundo para que vea lo que yo veo.
Le abro el alma al mundo porque lo siento
Siento a la gente que sufre el rechazo
Siento al mendigo que se esconde del hambre en las nubes
Siento al poeta que ahoga su frustración en el vino
Siento a la mujer que vende su cuerpo para mantener a sus hijos
Siento a sus hijos.

Le abro el alma al mundo porque lo sufro
Sufro el miedo de quienes todo perdieron
Sufro el dolor de a quienes todo robaron
Sufro el dolor del campesino desterrado de su vida
Sufro el dolor de los esclavos de los esclavos del dinero.
Le abro el alma al mundo porque lo quiero
Quiero al obrero que levanta los monumentos a la codicia de otros
Quiero al minero que escarba en su pena para alimentarse
Quiero al estudiante que protesta pidiendo un mundo mejor
Quiero al que cree en un mundo mejor
Quiero al que quiere.

Le abro el corazón al hombre para que sienta, para que sueñe
Le abro el corazón al joven para que crea, para que luche, para que sueñe
Le abro los brazos al niño para que duerma, para que sueñe
Le abro los brazos a la mujer para agradecerle, para admirarla, para que sueñe
Le abro los brazos a todos para que por fin nos unamos, para que por fin nos amemos
Para que por fin creamos, para que por fin soñemos!

Le abro el alma al mundo.



PACIFICACIÓN



No me gaste las palabras
No cambie el significado
Mire que lo que yo quiero
lo tengo bien claro

Escaping the **Black Hole**

My elongated	There's no beginning and
Feeling of solitude	No end.
Escapes the black hole	There's this now
Wins another victory	That could be time and space.
Because this is where I am	There is this silent
And that is where you are	Crash between spirit
And the air between us doesn't know that	And matter.
I am down here	So black hole get close
Or does it?	To me so that I can see
Acting like minute ants	You, so we can travel
We run, we jump and think	Forward and eat time
That it's all about work	Or space.
All about us	Doesn't really <<matter>>.
All about getting up	Embraced by these bones
And acting robotic	My soul
When the truth is that	Travels
We'll soon be nothing	Around
No----thing	And walks on clouds not really knowing
Or a thing, not sure which one.	The start
Supernova and ketchup	Or path
Relate, see?	Or end.

Is it Worth it?

Detective Rockwood walked into his office at 8:00 am like any other day. Leaving his coat and his gun at the desk he sat down to think about what he was going to do, a method his first partner had taught him. "Doesn't matter how many unexpected things happen. If you got a plan to go back to the day is going to go well" the sergeant had told Rockwood and he had followed that principle and it had never failed him so not even today was he going to change it. Because you see, even though he had woken up at the same time as any other day, read the newspaper like any other day and had his breakfast and coffee in the same place he had any other day, today wasn't like any other day.

In the 20 years he had been in the force he remembered only having two days in which he felt like this before; the day the sergeant had been killed in action and the day he found out his wife had been murdered. What made these days different wasn't the sadness, he had sad days before, or having so many people telling him how sorry they were, he didn't care about sobbing hypocrites. What made these days different was the fact that

those were the only days he had ever had doubts about what he did for living and that's exactly what was happening today. He was wondering if all he did had a purpose, if the ends justified the means.

He sat there staring at the ceiling. He didn't want to move because moving would lead to him working and him working would mean he would be encouraging the same lifestyle he was doubting in the moment.

The door of the office opened with a loud noise waking him from his trance. A young man walked in, probably between 25 and 30 years old even though the tiredness of his eyes made him look a lot older. He was carrying a stack of files

"What do we got Jones?" Asked Rockwood

"Two robberies gone wrong, a domestic violence case, and a kid killed at the projects. You know, just the usual." To any other person the comment may have seen disrespectful and even rude but after working on thousands of murder cases detective Rockwood just did not care. For him death had become ordinary, death had become the usual.

"So do we have any suspects?" Rockwood asked, giving in to his fate. The job needed to be done.

"Actually we do, we have suspects in all of them. But, don't you want to see the crime scenes first?" Jones said while putting the files in the desk.

-Nah, I'll get all the info I need from these- Rockwood pointed towards the files- And then we will visit the crime scenes- He could have done it any other way but he wanted to get the hardest thing out of the way first . Crimes scenes were just rooms with dead people inside, dead people don't feel, suspects feel and he wanted to get the feeling out of they way.

"Ok, so where do we start?"

"With this one" He picked one at random. Any other day he would have picked the kid's case, but today all he wanted was for the day to be over. They walked to the interrogation cell while Rockwood read the file and got in touch with the case.

"Here we are" Said Jones "How are we going to do this, good cop, bad cop routine?"

"No, I think I'm going to go with just bad cop, you make sure we are in the dark."

"Ok, suit yourself. I'll turn off the cameras in the room. I will be in the other side of the mirror if you need anything."

Rockwood walked into the dark room with the suspect's file in his hand. He stopped to observe the suspect. He looks at the suspect's hands , face ,eyes like he was looking for a sign of guilt, a hint of remorse something that would give a purpose to what he is about to do. Something that would assure him that he was not going to convict another innocent man. However, he did not see anything; the suspect was just an average guy. Nervous like anyone in his position would be but nothing in his body revealed the essence of a killer. It didn't make any difference Rockwood's job was to get a confes-

sion and he would get it whatever the cost and that means using his more effective but at the same time his more despicable weapon: Fear.

After all that was what the bad cop routine was all about, first he would approach the suspect with a nearly friendly "I have a proposition for you", then he would explain what he needs and if the suspect didn't comply then he would get down to business.

The detective pulled a chair in front of the suspect still wondering what to do.

"What's wrong officer?" The suspect asked.

Rockwood did not answer. He seemed shocked by the neutrality of the suspect's question. The detective was hoping he would be a detestable person, someone that by throwing him in jail, he would be doing society a favor, whether he was guilty or not, but he just wasn't like that.

Rockwood wondered how the suspect was feeling right now. His shoulders were pulled back, his eyes were wider and his skin was pale. He was definitely scared, stressed and just waiting to see what his punishment was. Rockwood had seen that before many times, he had been in situations like that. Somehow his mind went to his childhood church, he was no longer an old cop, he was an 8 years old boy sitting in the first row listening to the pastor giving his speech. "Sinner, you will either turn from your sins or you will burn for your sins. If you reject the lord you will be tormented in the flames forever without a single solitary hope. Repent or perish" A modern day example of the greatest hoax in world history. When promises of eternal paradise proved ineffective in keeping believers coming to the services

the church had to change its tactics. If you can't charm them into believing, scare them into doing so. And, what better way to scare them than an eternity of suffering. With that to look for, even the vilest criminal will seek salvation and there's when the sweet talking institution will make their move selling salvation for a price: Servitude. As a child he never understood why someone would want to scare people like that, not until he became a cop did he clearly saw why: it worked.

Even tough he wasn't a man without sin he had never stopped going to church on Sundays. The pastor got exactly what it wanted.

That's exactly what Rockwood was trying to do .He was going to show the suspect how much of a hell prison will be. He was going to make him feel the pain of the bruises and cuts he will surely suffer and how hard the life behind bars is. Then when he is scared like a little child, then our detective will make his move proposing a faster and less painful solution for a price.

Rockwood looked at the file again. "Perfect! He has an accomplice" he thought. Like Jones always said, for cracking a suspect there's nothing better than scapegoat, someone that will divert the suspect's attention from the lack of proofs and put the fear back in his heart.

Jones' words still sounded in his head "You see Rockwood, there's nothing in the world that resembles more a Government than its own police force. We follow the same freaking formula" And he was right the formula is always the same, first define an objective, whether it is raging war for oil or keeping

the people from seeing the problems that actually affect them directly or in his case getting a time-saving confession. Then find a victim to blame, a scapegoat, someone or something that the suspects already hate or distrust like a terrorist group with a history of violence, a powerful enemy or an untrustworthy friend. And finally turn on the flame and feed the fire. All that's needed is a spark a hint of mistrust and it can be blown out of proportion making the suspect vulnerable and easy to control because if you can trust you neighbors and friends then you can't trust anyone.

However, before the suspect confesses Rockwood would need to deliver another blow, the blow that would finally break him. It is the most harmful of his techniques, it's a direct but subtle one and probably an illegal one but he no longer cares, the cameras are turned off. He will start off with a couple of beat-downs just to make him experience the pain. Rockwood knows is not the pain itself what hurts but the waiting. Just the idea of another beat-down would keep the suspect at bay, he will not protest, he will not fight because the blow can strike at any minute. At the end both his freedom and his souls are destroyed. Fear will be so perfectly blended into his normal live that he will not recognize it because fear will become his life.

Rockwood is feeling nervous himself. The ten minutes he spent quietly thinking actually helped his purpose .The suspect looked confused and probably vulnerable, this was the right time to strike, but the detective still was having doubts.

"Come on Rockwood pull it together, you have done this millions of times, one more wont make a difference" he tried to convince himself "Thanks

to your work there are thousands of criminals in jail now" but somehow it still didn't feel right. "Is it worth tearing this man apart?"

He stood up, lifted the chair with both his hand and threw it against the wall with all his might. The gesture scared the suspect, but the detective didn't care. He walked around the room angrily until he reached the door and then he stood there. He was looking at his way out, glancing at his freedom. If walked out then there would be no more innocent men's sentences hanging on his conscience, no more beatings. But what would happen to the man in the room, he would still be convicted? What about the homicide victims? Who would bring justice to them?

He turned his back on the door and slowly walked towards the thrown chair. Then he lifted it and put it back where it belongs. He took another look at the suspect, he was shaking.

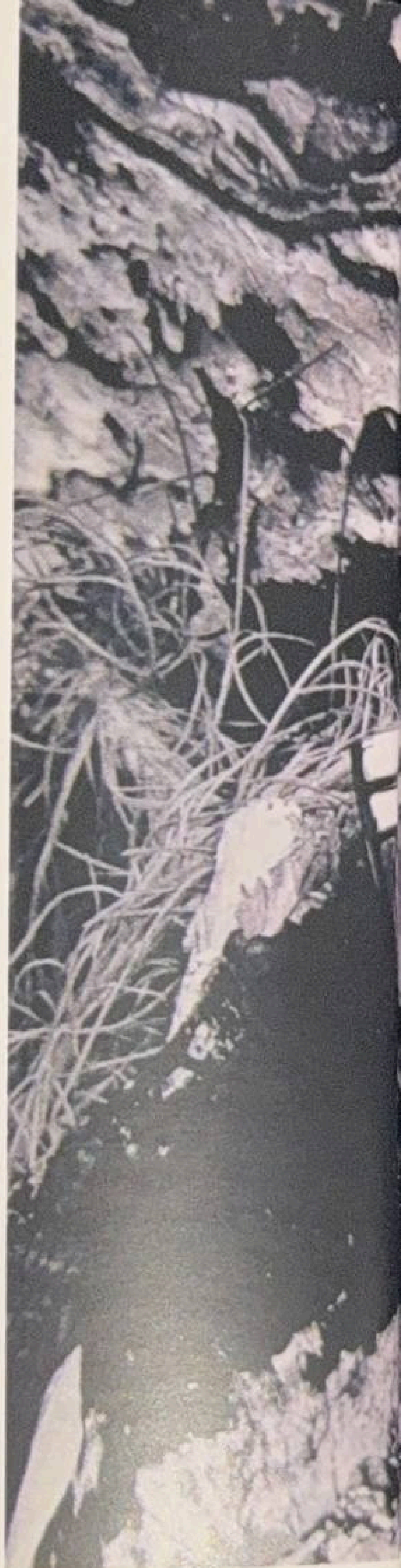
He pulled out the chair and sat down.

"Is it cold in here?" He asked

"No, officer" The suspect responded with a little stutter.

Rockwood observed the suspect from head to toe probably making him a lot more nervous. He glanced into his eyes again looking for an answer. "Can I do this again? Should I do it? Is it worth it?" He may never find an answer to that particular question. He opened the suspects file, pulled out a piece of paper and with a rigid yet nearly friendly tone he said

"I have a proposition for you".



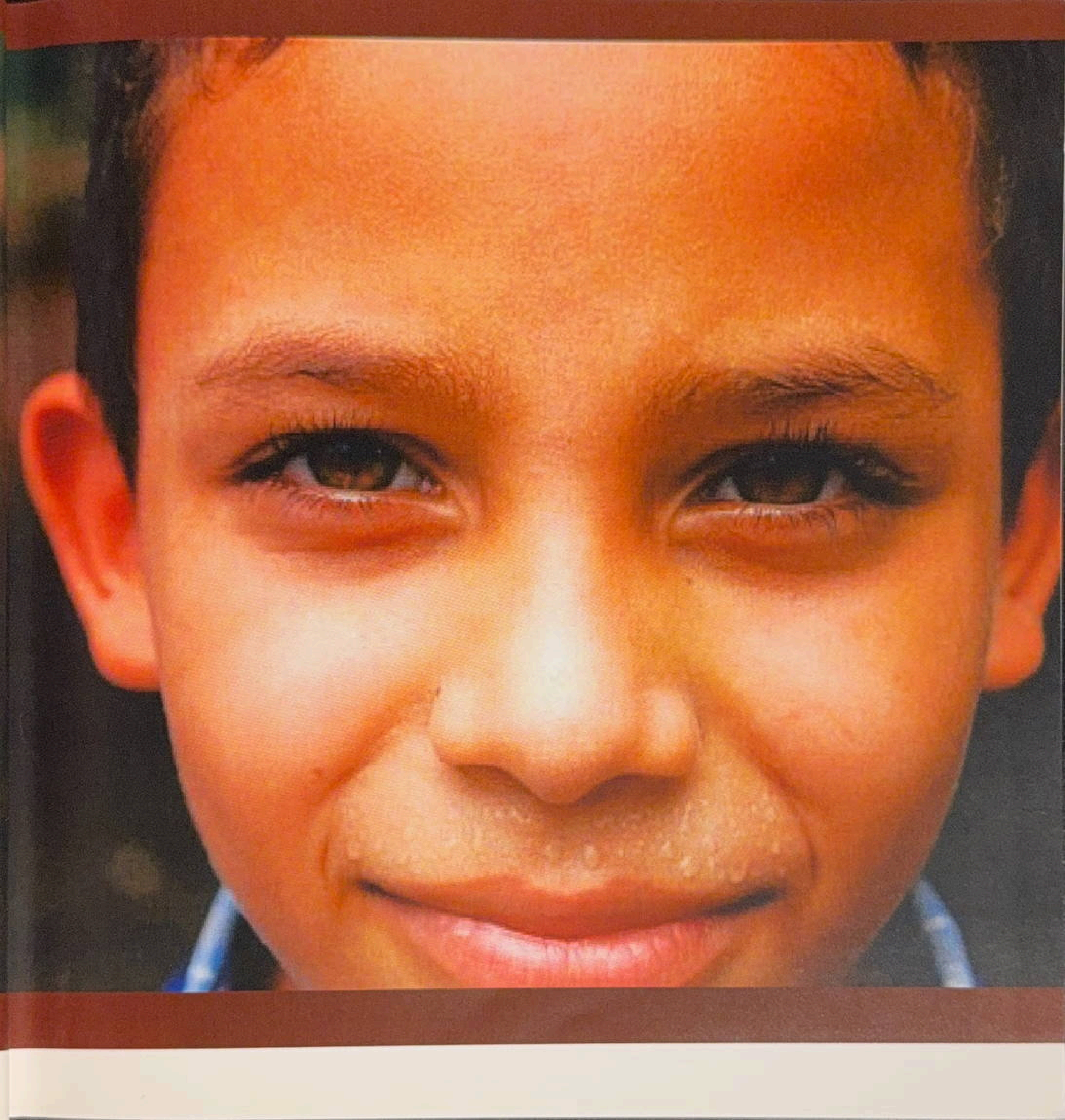


Peace, Love, and Death

Today is a day of rejoice,
When we gather together and make peace our
choice
We hold hands, sing songs,
Promising to never forget what we stand for

But... Where were you yesterday?

Where were you yesterday
When I needed you the most?
When I cried myself to sleep,
Wishing it all was a bad dream?



Where were you yesterday
When I needed someone to talk,
To listen to my bad jokes,
To hear my high-pitched laughs?

Where were you yesterday
When I needed someone to hold,
Someone to love,
Someone to love me back?

Where were you yesterday?

Peace is love
And love is free
Peace without love
Is anarchy
Peace without love
Is death





*Don't wait for the sound
of a thousand people to march*

Just live life loving

Peace is love
And love sets you free
So love one another
And make peace your dream.

Dare to **DREAM ACT**

I can relate to you the story of my immigrant struggle and transformation in three questions:

What does it mean to DREAM and to be a DREAMer?

What IS the DREAM?

How does one take a life stance on the DREAM ACT?

First of all to DREAM, according to the way that DREAMs have influenced and impacted my life, means to ASPIRE, to GROW, to have HOPE -all essential characteristics for the survival of a human being. DREAMs shape-shift, adapt, and evolve... and ultimately... our DREAMs guide us endlessly to our completion.

Growing up with divorced parents that constantly married, divorced, and remarried -accumulating 7 siblings over the years including my closest sister, Juliana, born with a mental disability- my DREAM at first was simply to carve out a place in the world where I could be free to love my parents openly, to learn from their decisions, and to secure an environment for Juliana that was free from discrimination and oppression.

Once brought to live in the United States and introduced to the concept of the American Dream, I understood that to DREAM was not to have a stable job that would provide a respectable pension, nor acquiring a two-story house to share with "a wife", 2 kids, a dog, and white picket fence. Instead, I understood that to DREAM meant to want to push myself farther, set ambitious goals, and challenge myself to the greatest extent of my potential to accomplish all the things that filled my life with love, security, and happiness.

Being a DREAMer for ME, meant that I would not give up on the possibility of EARNING my place in a country that afforded virtuous, committed workers with astounding opportunities, it meant that I would squeeze out every last drop of knowledge and use every available resource to further my education, and it meant that against all imaginable obstacles and opposition, I would believe in my capacity to produce all forms of greatness as a human being, with the commitment to make the product of all my labor not only fulfill the desires of my personal life, but aid and support the struggles of ALL OTHERS holding on to that same DREAM with me.

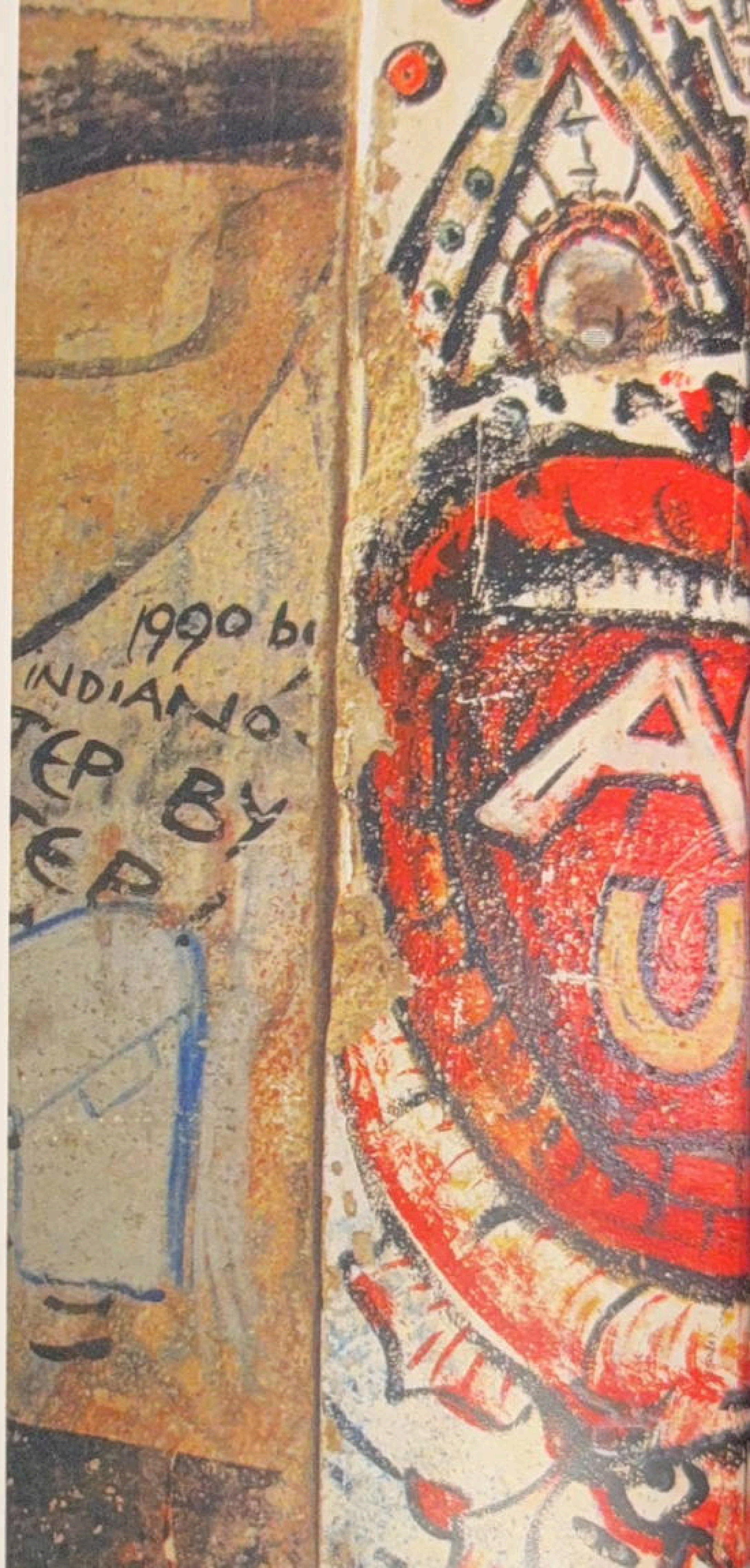
The DREAM... is to affirm that EDUCATION IS A HUMAN RIGHT. More specifically, that the freedom to ACCESS and benefit from knowledge should be a UNIVERSAL privilege, not something limited exclusively to white property owning families, as we saw once in our history, nor to those

of a privileged social status as we see even today not only between the rich in ivy league universities and the poor barely making it to high school, but also between those marked by the government with a 9-digit "social security" number and those who are more than a decade away from even getting a first hearing from an immigration judge to decide if they should even be allowed to live here.

The DREAM... is to live in communities safe from terrorism, oppression, and exploitation, as evidenced by the middle-of-the-night neighborhood raids, tearing hundreds of thousands of families apart and leaving millions of others wounded by the social gaps left in the aftermath. This includes also the exploitation of working-class families forced to succumb to employment at less than minimum wage because of their immigration status, and funneled into a modern-day infrastructure of slavery, physical, and mental abuse

as parents, brothers, and sisters are told each day that if they do not accept such conditions, their alternative is a DEPORTATION ORDER.

The DREAM... is to exist in a world where your quality of life is NOT DICTATED BY A PLASTIC CARD, A NINE DIGIT NUMBER, OR A STAMPED SHEET OF PAPER -where we can see each human being for what they really are, welcoming the unique and diverse identities and realizing that our personal liberation is intrinsically bound to every one of theirs. So as you can see, being a DREAMer only has maybe a 1% relation to what we recognize as the DREAM Act. The DREAM Act is only a single legislation (and currently the ONLY LEGISLATION) that would provide the opening of a path for youth to fulfill their academic and career dreams, and to begin to believe that the FULL DREAM I have mentioned here is truly a tangible possibility. The DREAM Act, as we know it, would provide a 6-year temporary status for students, brought to the United States before the age of 16, that have lived in the U.S. for a minimal period of 5 years and that graduated from a U.S. High School or received an equivalent G.E.D. certificate. The condition is that in those 6-years, an applicant qualifying for the DREAM Act would either complete a minimum of 2 years of college or 2 years of military service, after which the applicant would be granted a secure pathway to citizenship.





At this point in my life, I NO LONGER QUALIFY for the DREAM Act -having received my Permanent Residency within the past year- but understanding, after 12 years of struggling to attain IT or something like it, what it means to be innocently "UNDOCUMENTED" in this country and still having to pay the price for the uncontrollable circumstances I was born into. Essentially, the situation that we face is an immigration system that declares to more than 65,000 youth EVERY YEAR that they must INHERIT THE SOCIAL STATUS OF THEIR PARENTS, suffering the pains and burdens that their parents must face, and left with NO OPTION FOR RELIEF.

I took a life stance on the DREAM Act because whether the legislation exists or not, I know that I have a responsibility to ACT, speak, and fight for the rights of all those who went through the same situation I had to go through, and those who will be forced to confront those situations in the future.

We're talking about social justice here. The struggle never ends... and there will never be peace in the hearts of any of us so long as we know that individuals are being denied the right to an education; the right to further their capacities for greater achievements; the right to EXIST.

Let's Pass the

20

Help make the DREAM

DREAM ACT in

09

*a possibility for
everyone!*





I'm still dying and this just feels so good.
Should I laugh?
Should I cry?
Should I want to die?
My eyes only yellow see, the same
Fuzzy yellow painted paranoia I had once seen,
I am indeed weak,
And I am indeed not free,
Only until
I find this instant where I can go inside,
For just this same instant and look for things
That will eventually make sense,
And come whole,
From above,
To the inside,
To the outside,
And up again,
And in me,
And out of me,
Being that all that I can give,
All that I can really live,
When I'm inside of me.
And when the storm comes to be,
Pushing the clouds to the point where they cannot
hold anymore,
Forcing the air to run fast,
Lifting dust to the sky,
Everything cries.
And rain comes down my cheeks,
And my heart is filled with pain,
Like the sea is
When the storm so vigorously finds its way here.
And yet in the midst of chaos,
The sea doesn't cease to flow free,
And the sand dances rhythmically with the wind,

Spi



And the waves design the coil
Of the shell
Where I hide
Opened to the lesson
In solitude and peace.
And from here
I watch how the sky radiates
When lightning decides to strike
So intensively alive in the sky,
Like my mind giving birth
To the thoughts that
I purposefully choose to believe,
And become.
And the sequence repeats,
And my life is just that thing
That spins,
And swallows saliva,
And spits words inside sentences in different tones,
And inhales the molecules in the air,
That come from somewhere,
And get somewhere,
And run somewhere else,
Spiraling,
So that they can give you some life,
And then come back
To where I am,
To be inhaled one more time,
Before going somewhere else.
I am saved by these words
That come in sentences or alone,
I am saved by these tones
That carry the words that sometimes become songs,
And poems never told.

HMM...

"A One-Act Play"

Cast of Characters

VINCENT: The protagonist is an awkward man, who doesn't know much about the world, women, and himself.

NARRATOR: Also known as Paco, Paquita, or whatever her name is... A witty and clever female voice.

WEATHERMAN: Part of Vincent's head, a man who's duty is to report any meteorological conditions.

CLOUD: Part of Vincent's head, a friendly mass of water particle in the air.

PEBBLES: A playful and juvenile woman, part of Vincent's head.

VIOLET: An erotic and sexual woman, part of Vincent's head.

GRACE: A free spirited and gentle woman, part of Vincent's head.

CELESTE: An ingenious, youthful, and caring woman... Part of Vincent's life.

Setting:

VINCENT's apartment room.

Time:

The present.

ACT I

Scene 1

SETTING: The room is empty, except for a small bed, a chair, a small table, and a television.

AT RISE: VINCENT comes in through the front door. He looks exhausted and throws his coat and briefcase on the floor and lies in bed. All throughout, the NARRATOR speaks.

NARRATOR:

Hello there. This is Vincent. Vincent? Vincent! Hey! Wake up!

(Item is thrown at VINCENT from the sky and hits him.)

VINCENT :

Hey! I am trying to sleep!

NARRATOR:

Well, anyways... You may not know this, but Vincent has just come home from work on a Saturday night... For the 2,012th time. Now this may seem odd, as people don't usually work 'til night on a Saturday afternoon. Normal people go out with friends or family and enjoy themselves. But not Vincent. Vincent is... Different. For you see, Vincent has a very fatal disease. He suffers from awkwardness. Everywhere he goes, people don't. He's an anti-social magnet. If there ever was a guy who could never get a girl, it was Vincent. Like the time he went rock climbing with co-workers at the nearest mountain. One of the female employees slipped, and Vincent, seeing this as an opportunity to be the hero for once, reached out his hand to save her. However, he was so awkward and nervous that his hand was filled with sweat, and the woman ended up slipping and falling to her death. Not only that, but if he hadn't stuck out his hands she would've been able to hold on to the nearest rock and therefore surviving. So in the end, the poor chap caused her untimely death— by accident. Now, if that's not a damper, I don't know what is.

VINCENT :

Will you shut it already! I'm trying to sleep!

NARRATOR:

Sorry, I just thought that the audience should know what they're getting themselves into before it's too late. So please, if you regret watching this play, now's the time to ask for a refund.

VINCENT:

You know, you're not funny if that's what you think.

NARRATOR:

Well at least I don't hear voices in my head like some people...

(Cough cough.)

... Like you

(Cough cough.)

(VINCENT sits up from his bed.)

VINCENT:

Well, I can't fall asleep with your big mouth open. I might as well finish that novel I'm writing.

NARRATOR:

The one about you fantasizing with all your lovers?

VINCENT:

That's the one.

NARRATOR:

Of course, a fiction book!

VINCENT:

Oh shut it.

(VINCENT gets up from his bed, walks to the briefcase, takes out his laptop and sets it on the table. He sits down and starts typing.)

(Some time passes by.)

VINCENT:

Ugghh... I can't concentrate thanks to you. I might as well listen to the news. Maybe I'll get inspired.
(VINCENT turns on the television.)

WEATHERMAN:

Good morning Vincent.

VINCENT:

(In disbelief.)
What?

WEATHERMAN:

Today's weather will be partly cloudy, but don't worry; these are some really friendly clouds, so make sure to keep an eye out for them, especially on your windows.

VINCENT:

Excuse me?
(Vincent looks to window as a cloud passes by.)

(A friendly CLOUD passes by the window, smiling and waving hello to VINCENT.)

VINCENT:

(VINCENT shocked sees window, turns head
away from window.)
What the hell...?
(VINCENT looks over towards window, but
the cloud is gone.)

VINCENT:

Ok, ok... Everything's fine... I'm just imagining clouds saying hi to me... And that's perfectly normal...

(Knock on door.)

(VINCENT screams in surprise.)

VINCENT:

Who could that be?

NARRATOR:

That's probably the Pope, coming to give you an award for chastity. 32 years old and still a virgin!

VINCENT:

You know, if you have nothing good to say, then just go away!

NARRATOR:

Then I guess I'll go away.

(VINCENT walks to the door and opens it. PEBBLES comes in, giving him a hug very comfortably.)

PEBBLES:

How are ya pumpkin?

VINCENT:

(Suspicious look.)
Who are you?

PEBBLES:

What do you mean who am I? Hello don't you remember me?

VINCENT:

... Huh?

(PEBBLES invites herself in and makes herself at home.)

NARRATOR:

Hmm.... She's kind of your girlfriend.

VINCENT:

(Shocked face.)

What? Really? I have a girlfriend? ... Nice.

NARRATOR:

Yeah, I know. I couldn't believe it myself. Then again, maybe someone paid her to be it. Or she lost a bet or something. That makes more sense.

VINCENT:

Haha... Whatever. I have a girlfriend.

(Sticks out his tongue.)

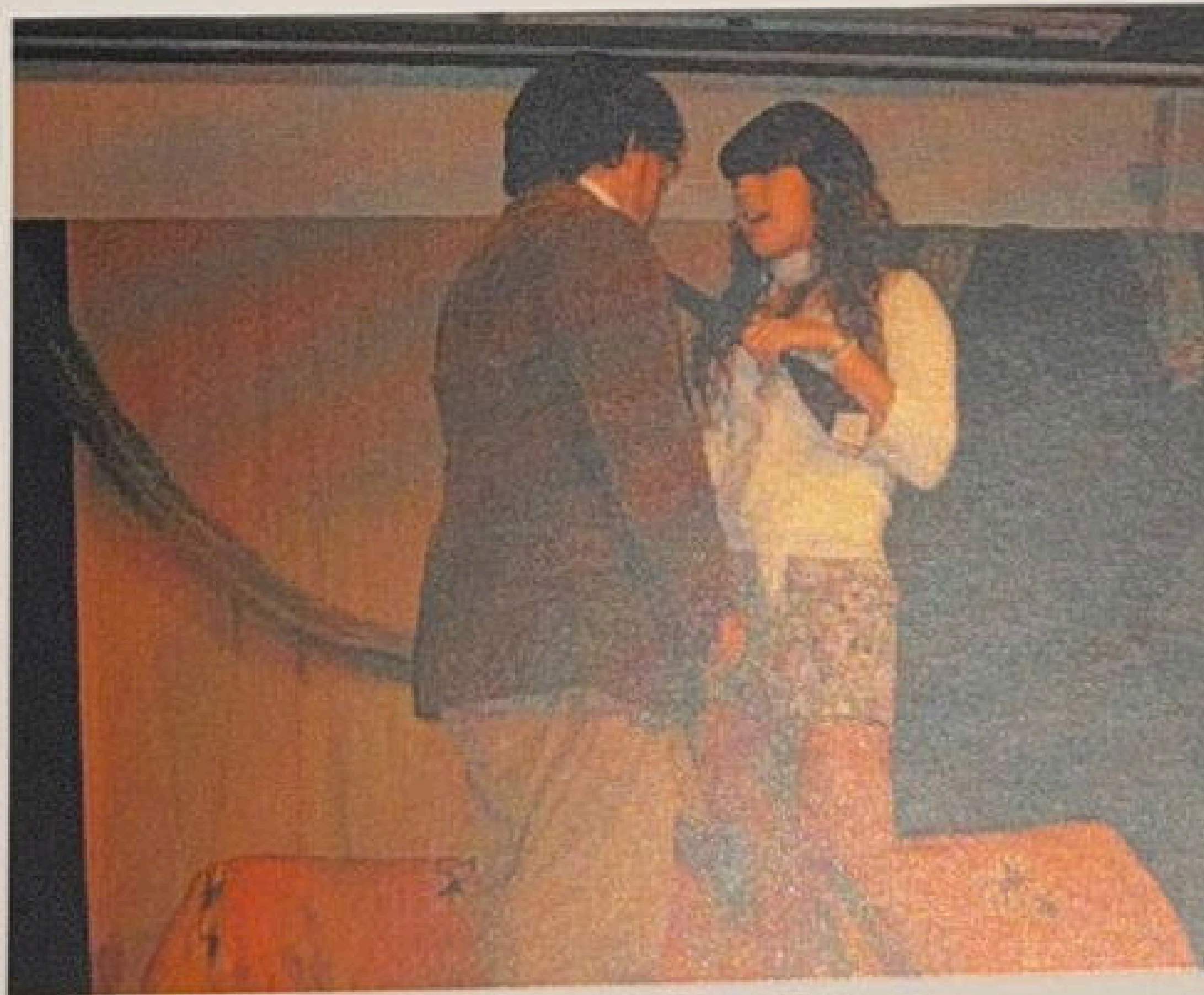
PEBBLES:

Hmm... Honey? Who you talking to?

VINCENT:

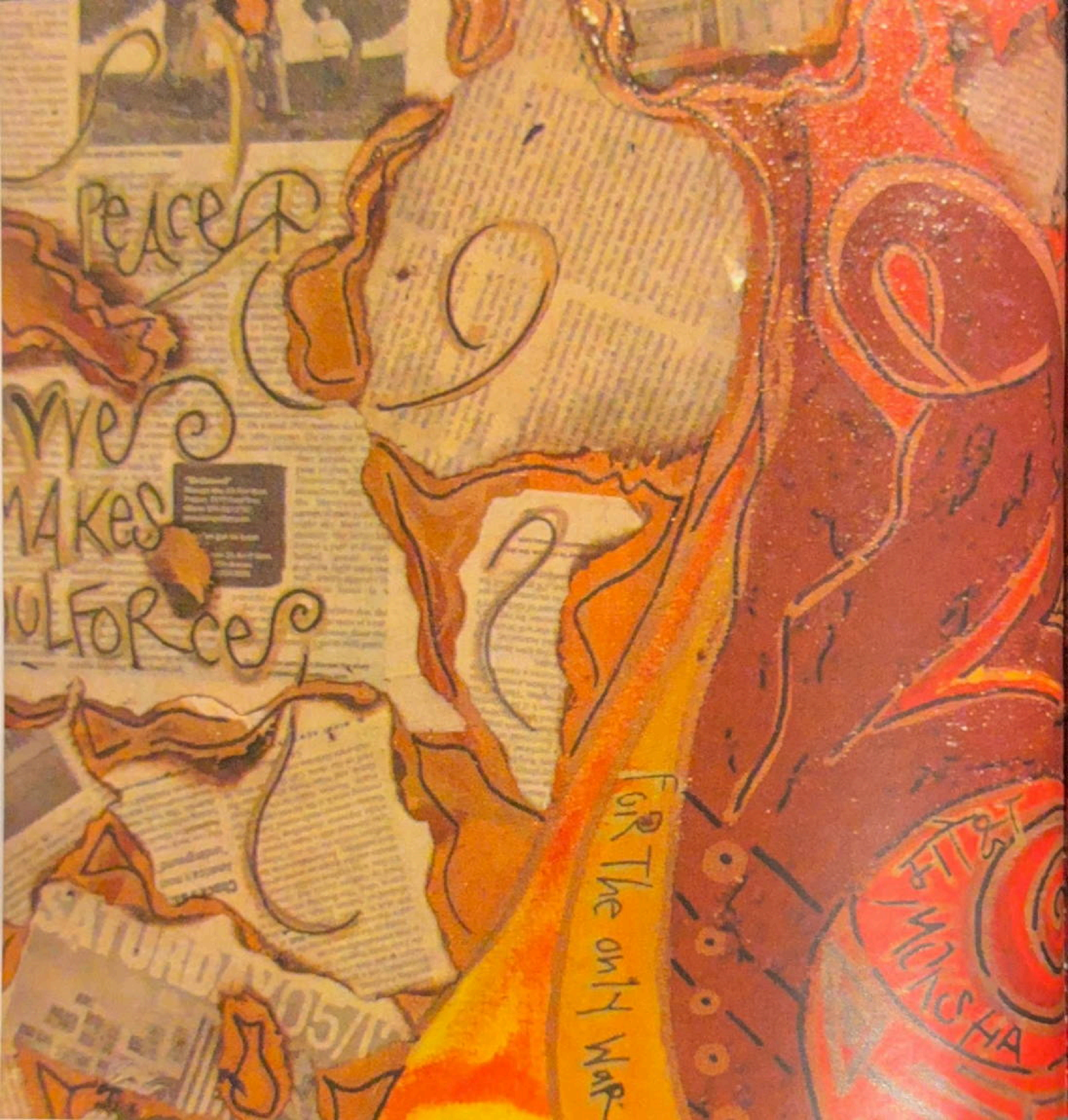
Ah! You're here... Mandy?

(Smiles awkwardly.)



PEBBLES:

What? Who's Mandy?



Peace

we
MAKES
ULFORces

FOR The only War

1st
MARCH



VINCENT:

Oh... no. I said "Candy." Do you want some candy?
(VINCENT hands candy from pocket, to PEBBLES.)

PEBBLES:

Sure, why not. Hey, I'm gonna go to the restroom. I'll be right back.

VINCENT:

No problem. It's down the hall to the left.

PEBBLES:

Oh, silly, I know where it is. It's not like it's the first time I'm here.
(Giggles.)

VINCENT:

It's not?

PEBBLES:

What?

VINCENT:

I said "It's snot." Must have a cold or something. I'll wait for you here.

PEBBLES:

Kk.

(PEBBLES exits stage left. Right after she leaves, VINCENT paces around the room nervously talking to the NARRATOR.)

VINCENT:

Ok, ok. I have a girlfriend. But not for much longer if I don't find out her name. Come on, you gotta help me crazy voice person! This is my only opportunity! If she breaks up with me, that's it. Not even the nuns will take me!

(NARRATOR begins to whistle.)

VINCENT:

C'mon, you're killing me here! Haven't I been through enough to deserve your pity?!

NARRATOR:

I don't know, maybe?... Whatever, you told me to go away, so...

VINCENT:

(Interrupts.)

Who, me? No, that's crazy. I would never wish you away. I love you!

NARRATOR:

Now I'm crazy? You sure know how to persuade people.

VINCENT:

That's not what I meant! Please, you gotta help me out here? Look, I'm on my knees!

(Gets down on his knees.)

I'll do anything for you, please! Just help me out this once!

NARRATOR:

Keep in mind, I'm only doing this because I don't want to be talking to a virgin for the rest of my existence, so listen up. I'll only say it once. Your girlfriend's name is...

(PEBBLES comes in screaming.)

PEBBLES:

Pookie!

VINCENT:

(Confused.)

Pookie?

PEBBLES:

Yes, you, Pookie. What are you doing on the floor?

VINCENT:

Oh, I was just cleaning the floor.

(Gets down on the floor and starts
cleaning it with his sleeve.)
You know how big of a neat freak I am.

PEBBLES:

That's true.

(PEBBLES Jumps on the bed with her
stomach against it and plays with her
legs. VINCENT goes to the table and
starts typing in his laptop.)

PEBBLES:

What are you doing over there?

VINCENT:

I'm working on my novel.

PEBBLES:

Why? I'm here! Aren't I more fun to be around than a bunch of fictional characters?
(Gets off from bed and walks towards
VINCENT.)

VINCENT:

Of course!

(Pretending to agree.)

Just let me finish this. I'm almost done...

PEBBLES:

(Sneaks up behind his back.)

No!

(VINCENT falls from the chair from the
shocking scream.)

VINCENT :

What do you mean no?

PEBBLES:

(Angrily.)

I mean no! You are so boring!

VINCENT:

Well, haven't I always been boring?

PEBBLES:

Of course not! You used to be super fun to be around! Don't you remember when you pulled that water balloon prank on J. J.? Everyone laughed so hard they pooped their pants off!

(Starts laughing.)

VINCENT:

(Confused.)

That... That happened when I was in fifth grade... How do you know?

PEBBLES:

How could I forget? That was the day I fell in love with you. But now, you're so caught up in how to survive that you have forgotten how to live.

VINCENT:

(Depressed.)

Maybe you're right...

PEBBLES:

Of course I am. But I know that deep inside you're still that fun kid I fell in love with so many years ago, and I can prove it.

(Goes to bed and picks up a pillow.)

VINCENT:

How are you gonna...

(PEBBLES throws a pillow at VINCENT)

and it hits him square in the face.)

VINCENT:

Hey! That hurt!

(VINCENT picks pillow up and throws it back at her. VINCENT then jumps on his bed and he has a pillow fight with PEBBLES. They're having fun. After it ends, they both sit in bed hugging each other.)

PEBBLES:

You see, I told you. You're still the same fun-loving rascal I knew long ago.

VINCENT:

(Laughs.)

You know, I'm really glad you're here. I wish you would stay with me here forever.

PEBBLES:

I'll always be here. I'm just a call away. But now I have to go pick up some dry cleaning. Us fun people still have chores.

VINCENT:

I wish you didn't. Why can't life be just us people having fun, enjoying life to the fullest.

PEBBLES:

Just because we have jobs, it doesn't mean we have to get sucked in by them. Just gotta learn how to balance it all out, kay Pookie?

VINCENT:

(Laughs.)

Ok honey. Will you call me later?

PEBBLES:

Of course silly, if not my name is not Pebbles!

(PEBBLES kisses VINCENT goodbye and

exits through the front door.)

NARRATOR:

We have witnessed history here. Your first kiss, your first girl, and your first pillow fight. I'm so proud of my little girl.

VINCENT:

Whatever. You can't say anything now that will take me down from this cloud. Pebbles... Her name is Pebbles... You know, when I was a kid, I always used to watch the Flintstones just to see what Pebbles would do next. I would pretend I was Bam-Bam and play pranks on all the kids in my school.

NARRATOR:

Yeah... That's not weird at all...
(Coughs.)

VINCENT:

Ha! I'm a man now! Anyways, I should get some sleep or I'm gonna be dead tired at work tomorrow.

NARRATOR:

You work Sundays? Finally, the nerd I've known all my life is back!

VINCENT:

Ok, laugh all you want. Maybe I won't go to work. We'll see.

NARRATOR:

Do you need someone to tuck you in little Miss. Princess?

VINCENT:

... Goodnight.

NARRATOR:

Nighty night.

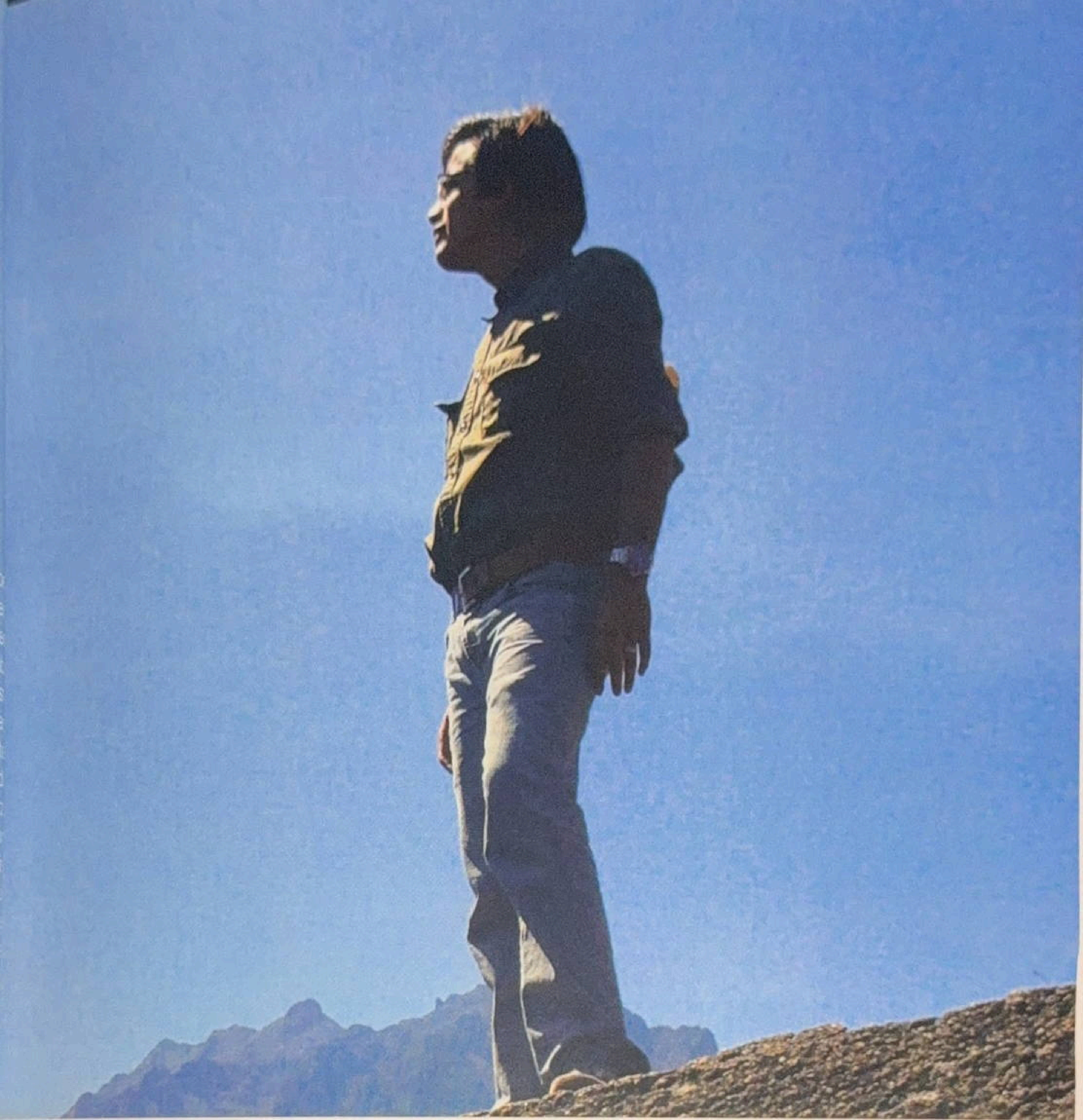
(VINCENT tucks himself in, closes his eyes and goes to sleep.)

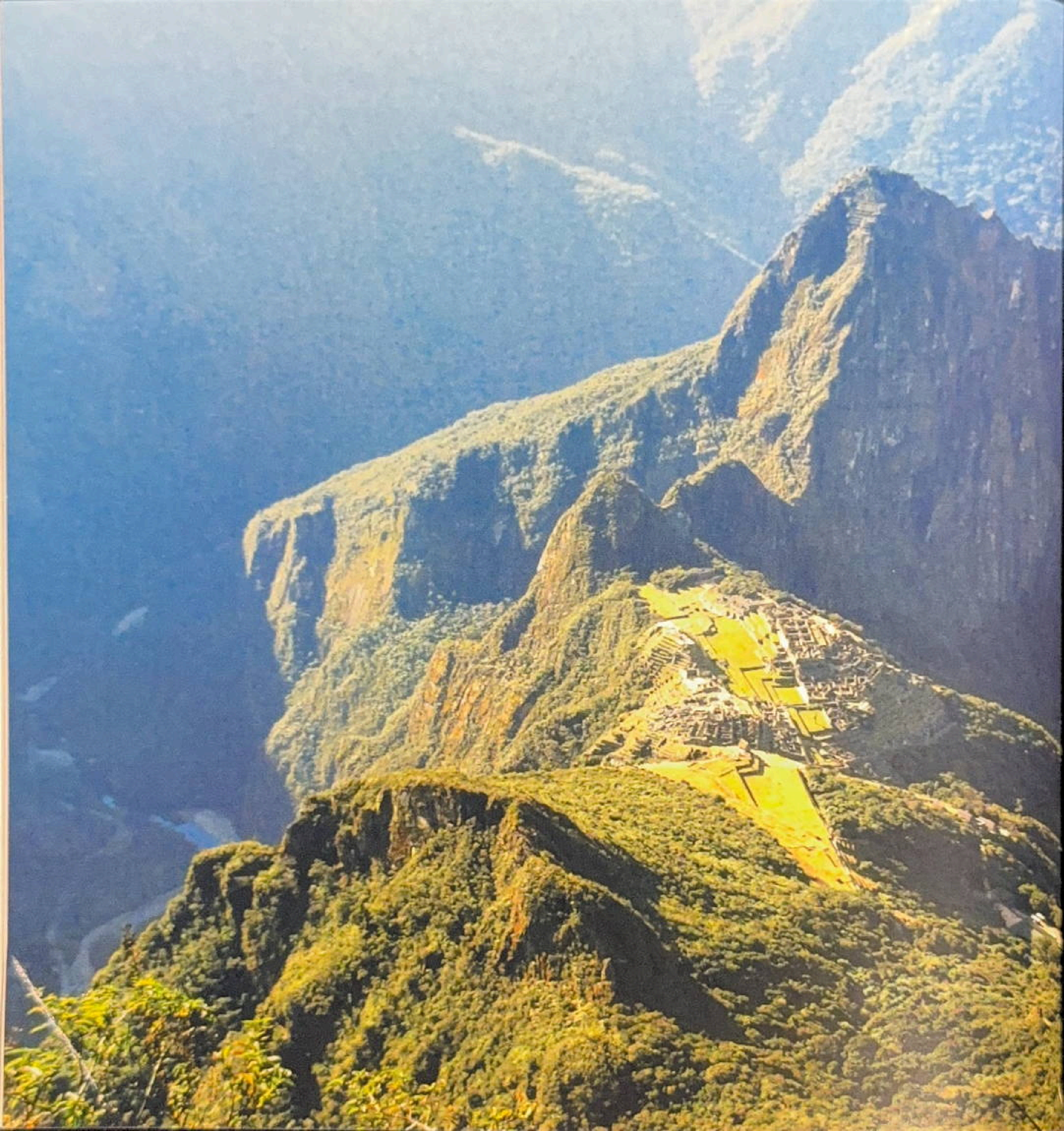
(END OF SCENE 1)

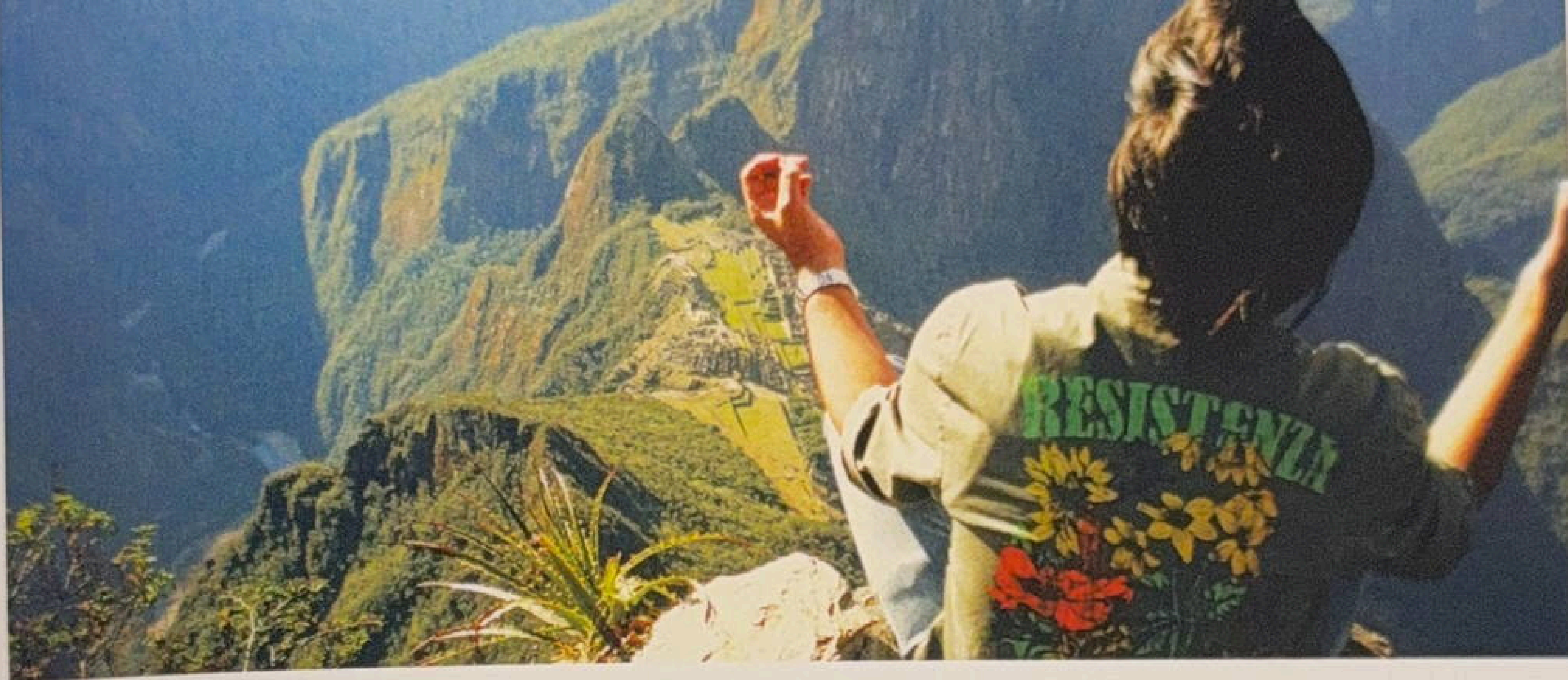
Una magnífica **sorpresa** Indescriptible

El ser humano, en la actualidad, es muy difícil de ser sorprendido. La tecnología y sus avances han sido de mucha ayuda pero definitivamente han exterminado con la capacidad de asombro de la gente. Usualmente uno, como persona, no admira la naturaleza ni el vestigio de los esfuerzos de antiguas civilizaciones. Esto que acabo de mencionar fue lo que pensé en el momento en que decidí conocer la ciudadela de Macchu Picchu. Luego de llegar a Lima y pasar unas semanas ahí, comencé mi viaje con rumbo fijo y marcado. Pasando por una escala obligatoria, pero a la vez maravillosa en la ciudad de Cuzco, proseguí a tomar un tren al pueblo de Aguas Calientes. Al llegar a este pueblo pequeño de una sola calle, lleno de hospedajes y con una gran mistura de personajes de un sin fin de nacionalidades, se distinguía la buena vibra

de los que ya habían visitado y de los que esperaban ver la nueva maravilla del mundo que descansa en lo alto de los Andes. Aguas Calientes, a pesar de ser diminuto y pintoresco presagiaba de lo que me esperaba sería algo magnífico. Este preludio vino a mí, al sentirme minúsculo por estar rodeado entre unas montañas imponentes a las orillas del caudaloso río Urubamba. Al día siguiente en la madrugada, me arme de fuerza y emprendí la marcha que me llevo medio hora hasta llegar a la entrada de la ciudadela más visitada en Sur América. Luego de incontables curvas en medio de la frondosa vegetación de la ceja de selva logre arribar a la cima que a la vez es la entrada dorada a la ciudad inca. Después de una breve pausa para oxigenar mi mente, caminé unos cuantos metros y descubrí lo más impresionante que he visto en mi vida, Macchu Picchu.







Impresionado de la magnificencia de lo que estaba presenciando, abrí mi mente a la idea de que todo es posible aunque parezca inalcanzable, y concebí este pensamiento al reflexionar que lo que veían mis ojos no era una alucinación exagerada. Tomó un par de minutos para que mi alma alcanzara mi cuerpo, ya que la misma se perdió entre la paz y la energía mística acumulada entre las ruinas de lo que algún día fue la cede de uno de los imperios pre-colombinos más poderoso del nuevo mundo. Entusiasmado por lo que estaba viviendo, me incorpore a un grupo guiado por un nativo de la zona que explicaba con gran detalle, emoción y orgullo la importancia del ombligo del mundo.

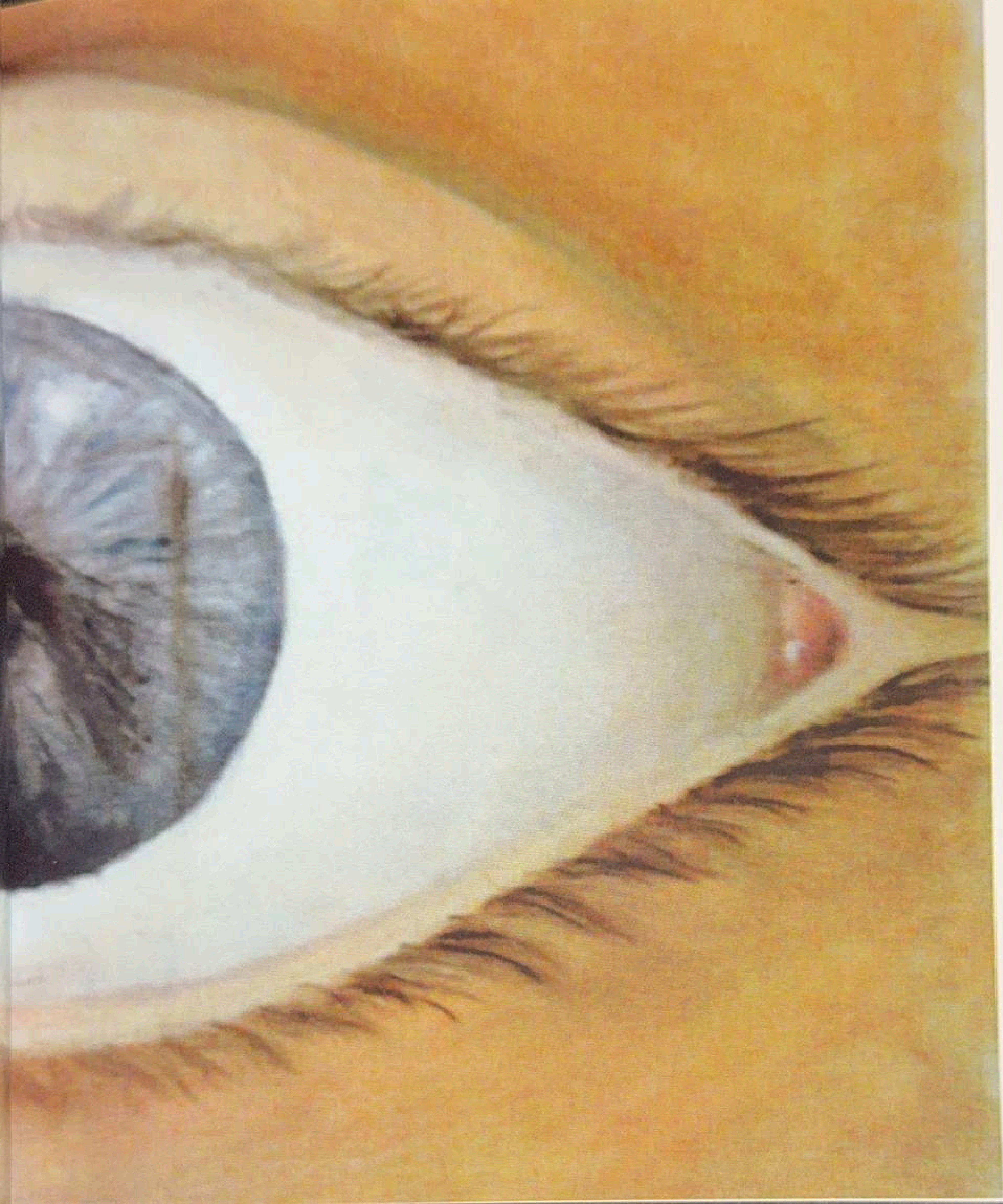
Transcurrido el día, descendí al pueblo a pernoctar y coleccionar fuerzas para escalar la montaña de Huaynapicchu y la de Macchu Picchu.

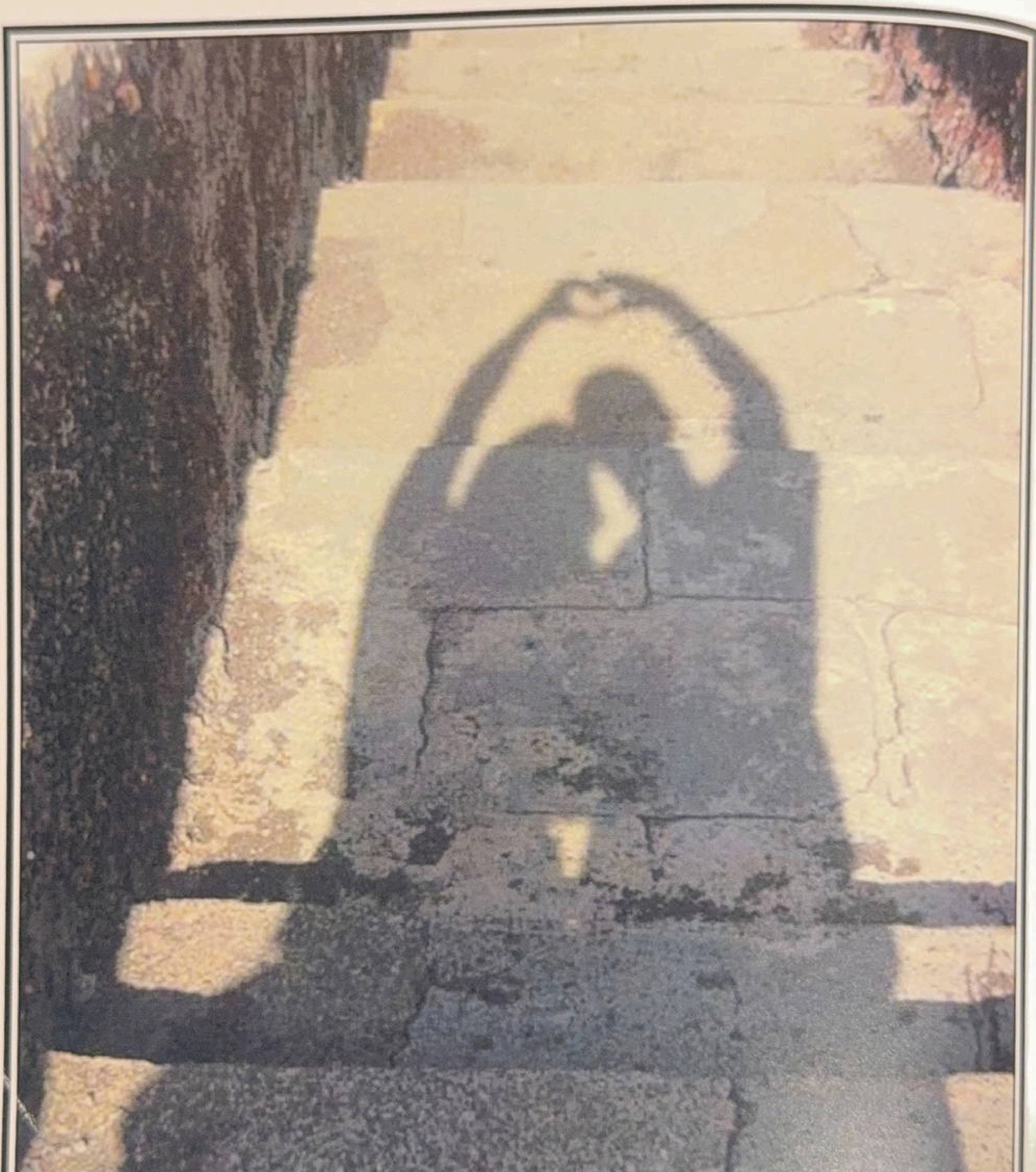
Al salir el sol también florecieron mis ganas de subir a lo más alto de ambas montañas.

En plena cuesta arriba y sosteniéndome de lo

inimaginable pude alcanzar la cumbre del indomitable Huaynapicchu, famosa por ser la montaña de fondo en todas las fotos de Macchu Picchu. Al haber conquistado esta montaña, me dirigí sin descanso a lo más alto y peligroso de la montaña que tiene a sus faldas y da nombre a Macchu Picchu. Al pasar de tres agotadoras e inspiradoras horas de caminata, en un ángulo de más de 45 grados, logre mi objetivo final. Al verme en la cumbre de las cumbres me sentí como un cóndor viendo los Andes al mí alrededor. Al observar abajo, en la falda de la montaña, se apreciaba las ruinas y a la vez se sentía una paz insuperable. Permanecí en lo más alto un largo tiempo. Un tiempo en el que estuve sentado en una piedra con mis piernas colgando hacia el precipicio, llenándome los pulmones del aire más puro del mundo y cargándome de esa paz ya mencionada que brinda el silencio y la tranquilidad absoluta del lugar; dos sentimientos que se funden en uno y que aun traigo conmigo.





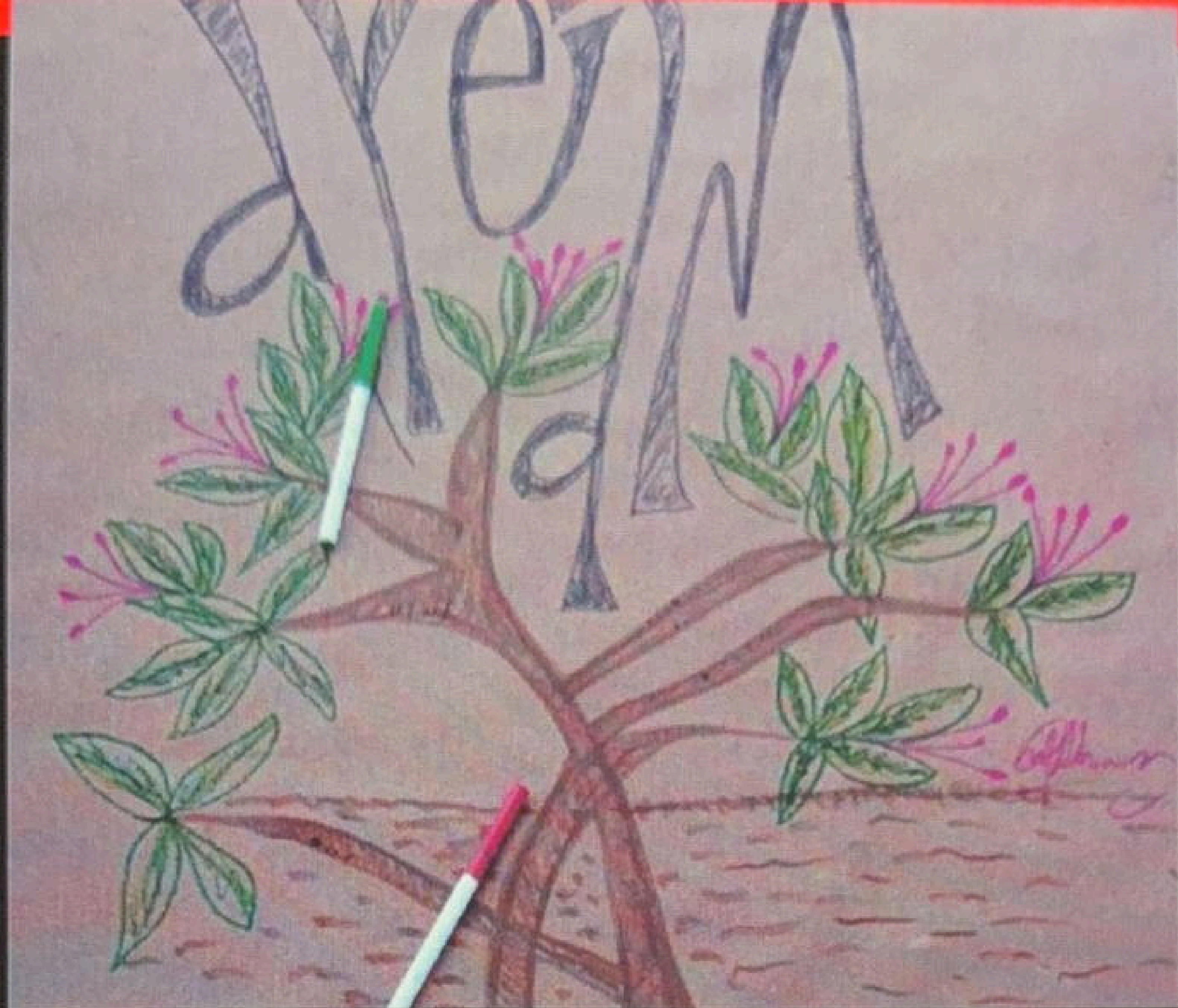


Ten

I woke up this morning with the sun saying hi to my right shoulder. My bed was warm and I was thinking about you. Dreaming about the day when I'll breath, to then feel your head on my lap, and the breeze, and the same day caressing us softly, while we worry about nothing and talk about something. Then I took a shower and thought about how much I enjoyed the feeling of the water running down my body slowly. In each drop mixed with soap, a multicolor world reminded me of how we can beautifully blend with each other, and I felt happy. Then I closed my eyes to listen to your dark brown eyes talk about infinity and wonder. You wrapped your arms around me and looked for mine to do the same, without noticing you were late, cause mine were already there, even before you called them. And it took me only about seventy four hours and a complete revolution of the Earth around the same sun that woke me up to realize that if I wanted you, I had to somehow touch you. And so I did, I put my letters on your paper and I touched you. You heard the honesty in my melody and you got me. Then I turned around and saw my reflection on the mirror and it was blurry. The water was pleasantly hot, but I sadly felt my blissful state fade away when I heard a voice inside my head, saying I was going to be late. Against my own will to follow my routine, I stepped out of my dream and got dressed, went to school, and pretended to be there, while I listened to my teachers and hung out with my friends. The truth is that your eyes in my brain had stolen my attention all day. Then I finally came home, watched the news, even though they felt old, went outside, rolled a joint, gave it two hits and then a final third, came inside, and folded my clothes. Then I realized it was late. It's the end of today: Monday, January Twenty-Sixth of Two-Thousand and something, and I'm still doing the same. Yes, it's almost tomorrow, and your eyes still make me wonder. I'm in my bed again, with the moonlight saying good-bye to my left shoulder. My light, white sheets are cold, just like the air, you're still in my head, and for some reason or ten I enjoy the intensity of your stare. For some reason or ten I still want you to stay.

ALL FOR ONE FOR ALL

A wise man was once brave enough to tell the world what he dreamed about, even though it went against the social standards of the time..."I have a dream that my four little children will not be judged by the color of their skin, but by the content of their character". Dr. King's dream has not ceased to inspire millions of people across the planet to continue erasing the boundaries that have separated humanity for so long: Ethnicity, nationality, gender, social class, and language among others. It was this same dream what inspired two professors from Miami Dade College: Alex Salinas and Carlos gonzalez, to take their educational curriculum a step further by creating a service learning program in which text-books are replaced by real life contact between two neighborhoods that otherwise would not have any kind of interaction: Little Havana and Overtown. The "I Have a Dream" program at Phillis Wheatley Elementary School has made it possible for MDC students to realize that the best way to learn is by serving and becoming involved with the community. It has also made it possible for a group of 5th graders (African American and hispanic mostly) to learn more about how they can work to make their dreams come true and to remove the stereotypes that might have made this process harder. All for One for All is a documentary about our experience throughout an entire year with the kids at Phillis Wheatley and about what it taught us about the importance of intention, love, care, and interaction.





Lapsos de papel

Que haces!?" "Suéltame loca!

Juan Carlos Monsalva acababa de despertar, la mujer frente a él lucía familiar pero no pudo descifrar quien era, tenía la vista borrosa después del fuerte golpe que recibió al abrir la puerta, y solo pudo identificarla por su voz quebrada.

La mujer escupía palabras, cada oración que salía de su boca era una victoria ante un posible ladrido. Aparte del espanto que Juan sentía al escucharla hablar, se le hacía difícil contener las ganas de reírse ante semejantes sonidos que solo podían traerles buenos de su extravagante infancia.

La situación, por mas nostálgica y poco clara que le pareciera, mostraba grandes posibilidades de un final catastrófico, mucho peor que el de las novelas Mexicanas que ocasionalmente veía solo para deslumbrarse con sus tramas inmensamente creativos y actuaciones geniales. Su sentido del

humor traspasaba la barrera de lo normal y muchos de sus amigos lo veían como una señal de un leve grado de esquizofrenia o un rechazo a verle las caras mas feas a la realidad.

La mujer lo tenía amarrado, extrañamente con unos tipos de cuerdas que le recordaban papel celofán, material que mas de una vez uso en sus días de artista. Sus manos y pies permanecían inseparables atados con estos brillantes y coloridos trozos de cuerda, pero lo mas raro era el hecho que de alguna manera u otra todas sus prendas se las había sacado, y yacía desnudo ahí en el piso, con el trasero ya casi morado del frío de las baldosas.

- Que quieres?, le dijo él después de haberse calmado un poco.

- Que quiero!?, "Mi dedo, que mas voy a querer!?"

Juan no podía mas, estuvo a punto de llegar a la conclusión de que se encontraba actuando en una película de un director de cine surrealista drogado, probablemente un viejo amigo de la escuela de

arte que se había encontrado en la fiesta de la noche anterior. Seguramente el hombre lo recluto a través de un sedante u otra sustancia mágica tan comunes en las manos de aquellos personajes.

Pero no faltó mucho en darse cuenta de lo que estaba pasando. La mujer era una vieja compañera de trabajo, que aunque nunca fue su amiga, en ciertas noches de ebriedad alcanzo a ser el amor de su vida.

Habían pasado muchos años, cinco, estimaba él. Victoria, ese era su nombre, se encontraba con mas años que nunca, aunque aparentemente la locura la había echo envejecer mas rápido de lo normal, todavía lucia su gran belleza con una magia que solo ella tenia. La mirada, por mas vacía que pareciera, tenia algo inconfundible, el peso de un memoria que no pudo dejar atrás. Sorprendido con el melodrama con el que su mente leía la mirada de Victoria, Juan decidió tratar de calmarla en vez de mirarla tanto a los ojos.

"No puedo devolverte tu dedo, ha pasado mucho tiempo, no te sigas lamentando"- dijo Juan con una honesta intención de aliviar su dolor, y obviamente también para prevenir la posibilidad del suyo.

"Eso es todo?", "Destrozas mi futuro como artista y tu haces el tuyo como si nada hubiese pasado"- dijo ella.

"Bueno tu sabes que tuve que hacerlo, si me quedaba sin hacer nada todos hubiésemos quedado heridos, tal vez alguien muerto"- afirmo Juan.

El recuerdo le llego con mas nitidez que nunca. Los gritos, las risas, la euforia de un grupo de jóvenes viviendo intensamente, algunos mas de lo recomendado por los doctores. Aquella noche de locura proporciono mas historias que cualquier esposo infiel podría darle a su esposa o vise versa.

Cada participante tenia que llevar un proyecto. Juan, especializado en la escultura llevo un trozo de hielo de impresionantes proporciones, y propuso montar un show de escultura en vivo en el que crearía una obra maestra en unos pocos minutos.

Victoria, tenia su puesto al lado de su compañero. Ella, también especializada en la escultura, vio su obra amenazada por la habilidad y espontaneidad de Juan. Impulsada por su miedo, y temperamento inestable decidió ir a buscar los fuegos artificiales reservados para el final de la noche, 10 kilos de coloridas explosiones para terminar una noche de semejantes sentimientos.

Obviamente si cualquiera de los participantes hubiese tenido el mas mínimo grado de sobriedad la tragedia no habría pasado, pero el acto de reunir todos los fuegos artificiales, que en realidad eran demasiados considerando las circunstancias, parecía mas divertido que peligroso ante tanta pasión artística y estados poéticos incontrolables. Solo Juan estaba consciente del daño que causaría Victoria si llegaba a prender las lucecitas, porque aunque le atraía la idea del despliegue pirotécnico al igual que todos los otros, prefirió proteger su obra y advierto a Victoria que no se atreviera a prender la mecha.

Después paso lo que tenia que pasar, bueno por lo menos lo que paso. Victoria saco de su bolsillo un encendedor, y lo llevo hasta la mecha con tanta rapidez que Juan no tubo otra opción mas que lanzarle su herramienta de escultura. El objeto toco el montón de fuegos artificiales por encima, reboto en ellos y rebano el dedo pulgar de Victoria desde donde empieza, y no precisamente con la misma exactitud que dejaría un cirujano. El daño fue grave, si el impulso hubiese sido un poco mas

fuerte, también hubiera perdido el dedo índice. Que desastre sería perder la capacidad de apuntar con la mano más útil de uno.

Después de haber recordado todo el acontecimiento, Juan se dirigió nuevamente hacia Victoria que parecía buscar algo en una caja que traía.

"Oye que quieres hacer? Que buscas?"

Sin respuesta, Juan comenzó a preocuparse poco a poco, y trato de convencerla de que lo dejara libre, contándole lo que decidió hacer con su vida después de aquella noche.

"Sabes? Después de que me vine a vivir aquí decidí dejar atrás todo lo que me acordara de ti, o sea, de lo que paso". Tomo un largo respiro y siguió.

"Me desasí de todas las cosas que herramientas con las que podía causar daño. Hasta los cuchillos bote"

Era verdad, siempre acostumbrado a tomar decisiones drásticas, e impulsado por un daño que nunca se había imaginado capaz de hacer, Juan decidió deshacerse de todas sus herramientas de filo o punta. Sus esculturas de todas formas habían sido casi todas echas de greda o arcilla de todas formas, después del incidente decidió hacer esos su único medios de arte.

Victoria tras oír su declaración decidió comprobar si lo que dijo era cierto. Se dirigió a la cocina, busco por todas partes, y si, si había un cuchillo. Pero era un cuchillo para pelar frutas así que volvió hacia Juan, pero ahora con incertidumbre sobre que es lo que debía hacer con el. Ya no sentía que su plan era necesario, pero el dolor y rabia que le inundaba el pecho cada vez que veía su mano la llevaron a seguir su plan.

Con diligencia Victoria acudió a encontrar los explosivos de su maleta. Los coloco frente a Juan,

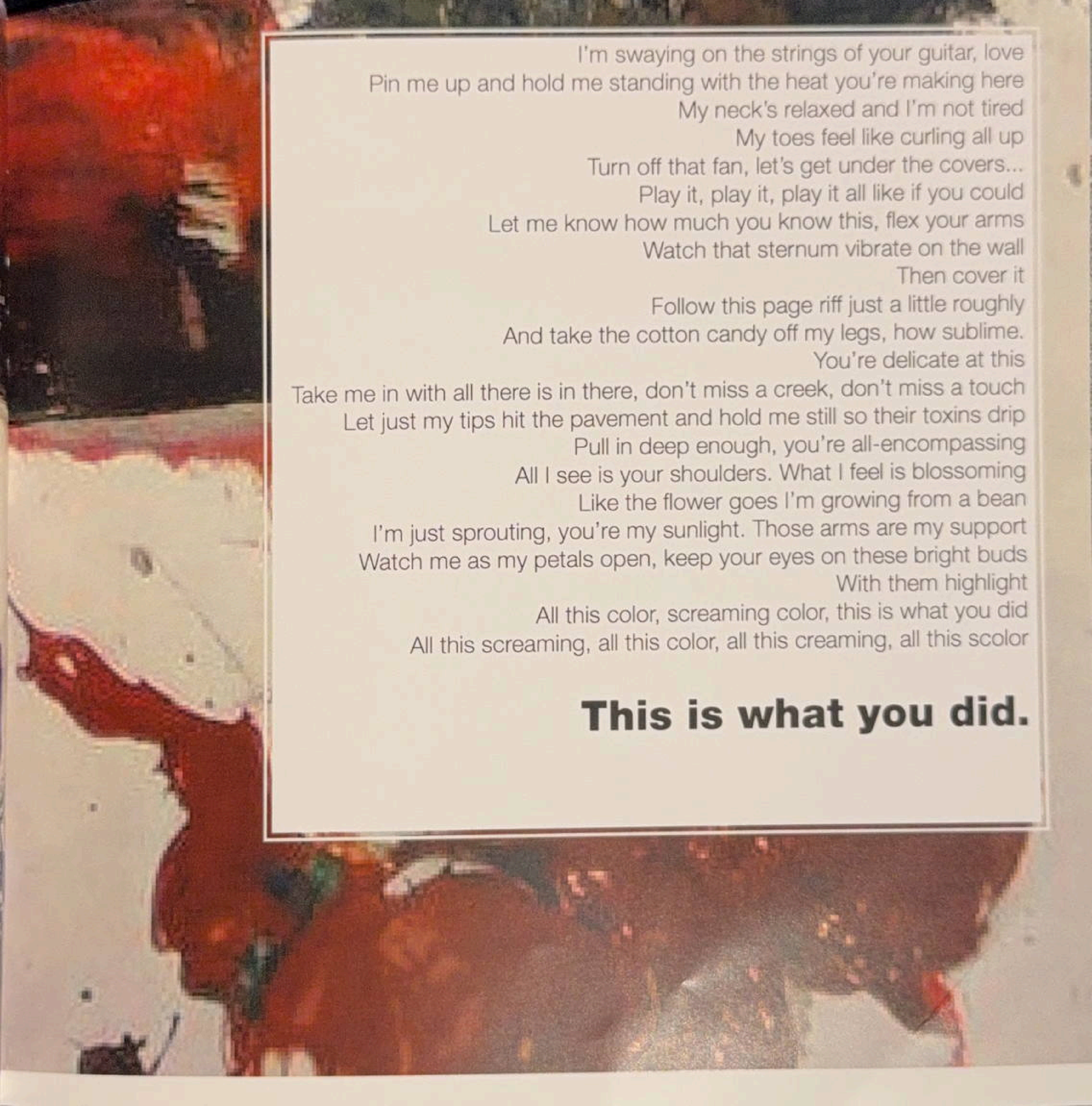
y sin decir ni una palabra mas lo miro y activo la bomba. Ya era tarde, si quería seguir con el plan no podía continuar hablando con el.

Estaba a punto de arrepentirse. Caminaba hacia la puerta y cada paso que daba la llevaba a darse cuenta que lo que estaba pasando era real; su sueño, o pesadilla de venganza se cumplía, y al final de la historia no terminaría con un despertar, pero con la muerte de un hombre que una vez fue parte de su vida.

Ya estaba en la puerta, preparada para tomar un respiro y correr hacia a el. Pero el deseo de vivir y el pánico del momento llevaron a Juan al desespero. Con toda su fuerza pateo el maletín hacia Victoria pero antes de moverse tan solo un centímetro. Todo acabo.

Un grito se escucho fuerte en toda la casa. Juan agitado despertaba de un largo y horrible sueño. La mujer a su lado, preocupada, lo abrazo con firmeza y cariño, y le dijo, "Fue una pesadilla, amor". Juan miro la mano derecha de la mujer, y con lagrimas en los ojos la besó y seco sus lagrimas en ella. "Te amo" le dijo, y olvido todo.



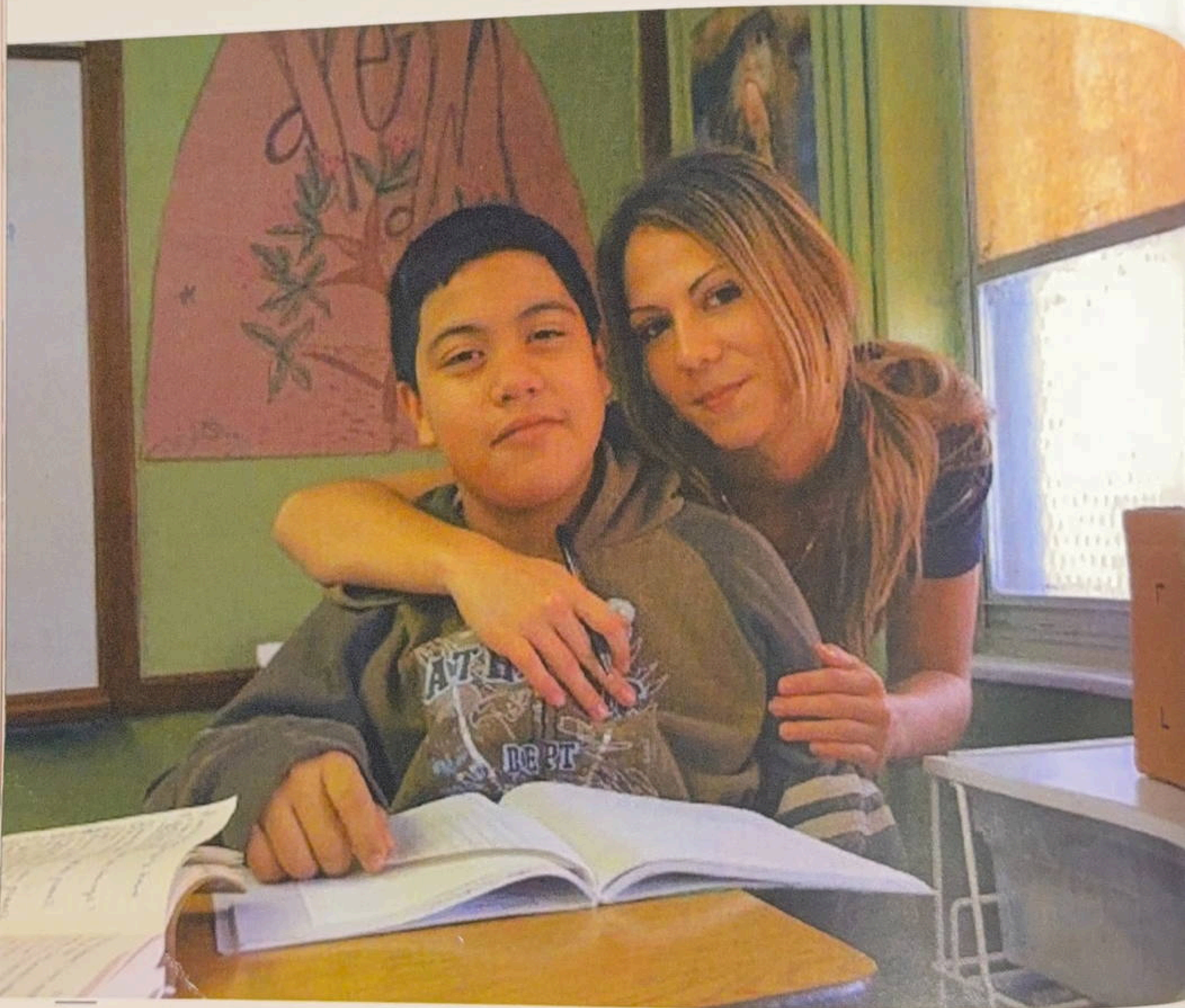


I'm swaying on the strings of your guitar, love
Pin me up and hold me standing with the heat you're making here
My neck's relaxed and I'm not tired
My toes feel like curling all up
Turn off that fan, let's get under the covers...
Play it, play it, play it all like if you could
Let me know how much you know this, flex your arms
Watch that sternum vibrate on the wall
Then cover it
Follow this page riff just a little roughly
And take the cotton candy off my legs, how sublime.

You're delicate at this
Take me in with all there is in there, don't miss a creek, don't miss a touch
Let just my tips hit the pavement and hold me still so their toxins drip
Pull in deep enough, you're all-encompassing
All I see is your shoulders. What I feel is blossoming
Like the flower goes I'm growing from a bean
I'm just sprouting, you're my sunlight. Those arms are my support
Watch me as my petals open, keep your eyes on these bright buds
With them highlight
All this color, screaming color, this is what you did
All this screaming, all this color, all this creaming, all this scolor

This is what you did.

Echoes Echoes Echoes

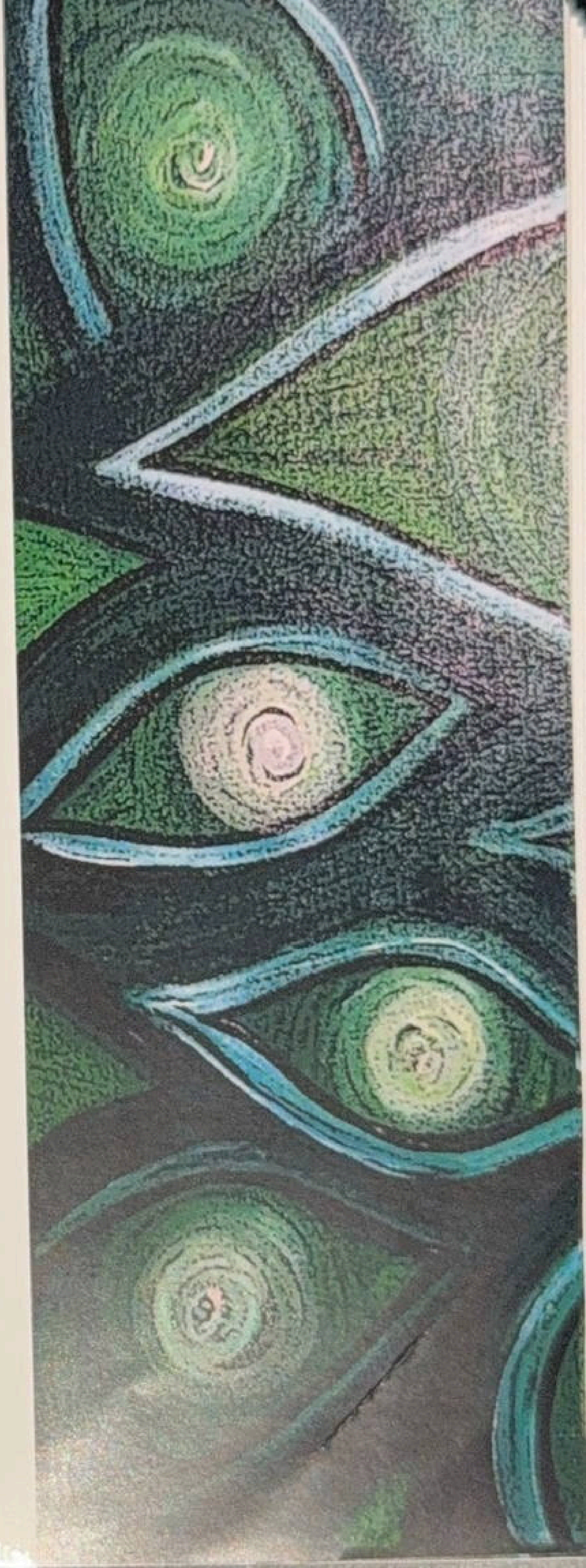


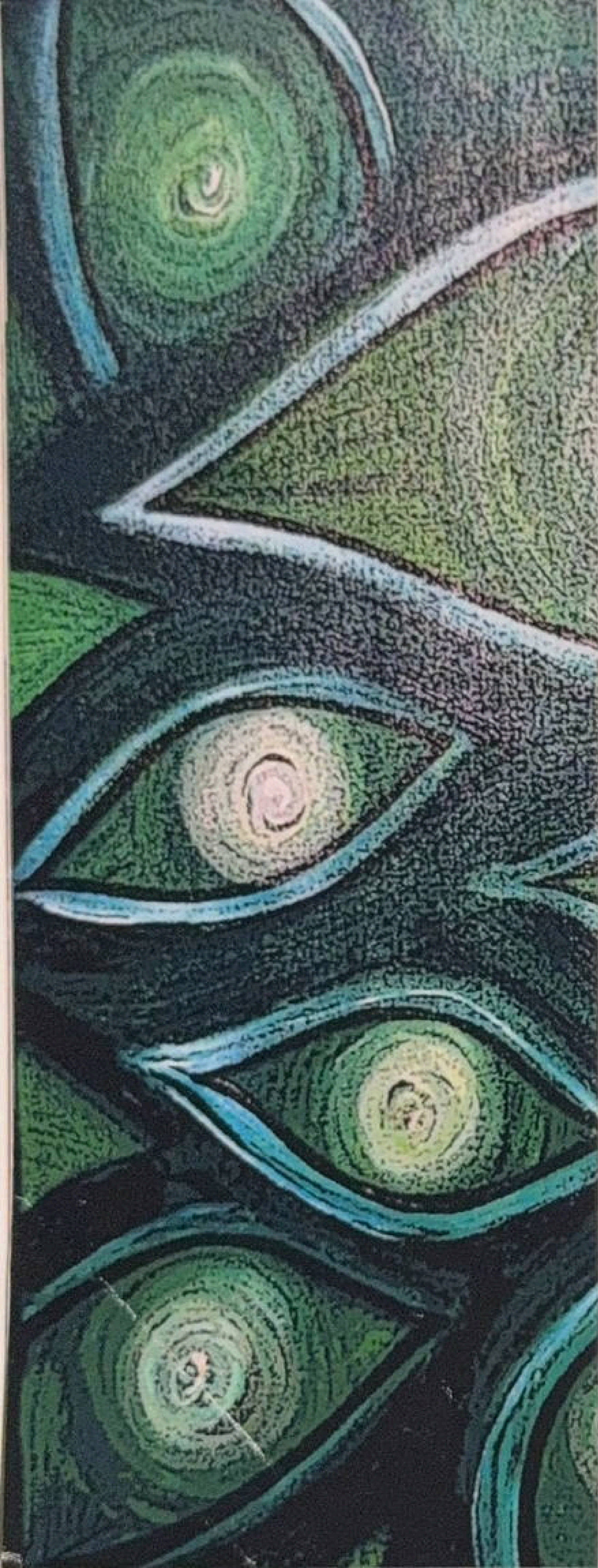
When I'm in bed and I'm about to die, I want to be able to look back, feel peace, and smile. This is the idea that has come to inspire and guide me throughout my day, and to give me comfort every night when I go to sleep. This is also what an 11-year-old kid named Alejandro taught me and what has magically connected all my life goals and aspirations. What do you want to be when you grow up, Alejandro? I asked. He said: "I don't know, but I wanna travel around the world." Oh yeah! And why?

"I want to travel around the world
And I want to go to all the places,
So I can see all the cultures and I can see
all the faces.

I want to travel around the world
By air, by sea, and by land,
So when I'm in my bed, and I go to sleep,
I can feel I am a successful man!"

Alejandro is the Nicaraguan-Honduran-American kid I mentored throughout an entire year in the "I Have a Dream" program at Phillis Wheatley Elementary School. And this was what he

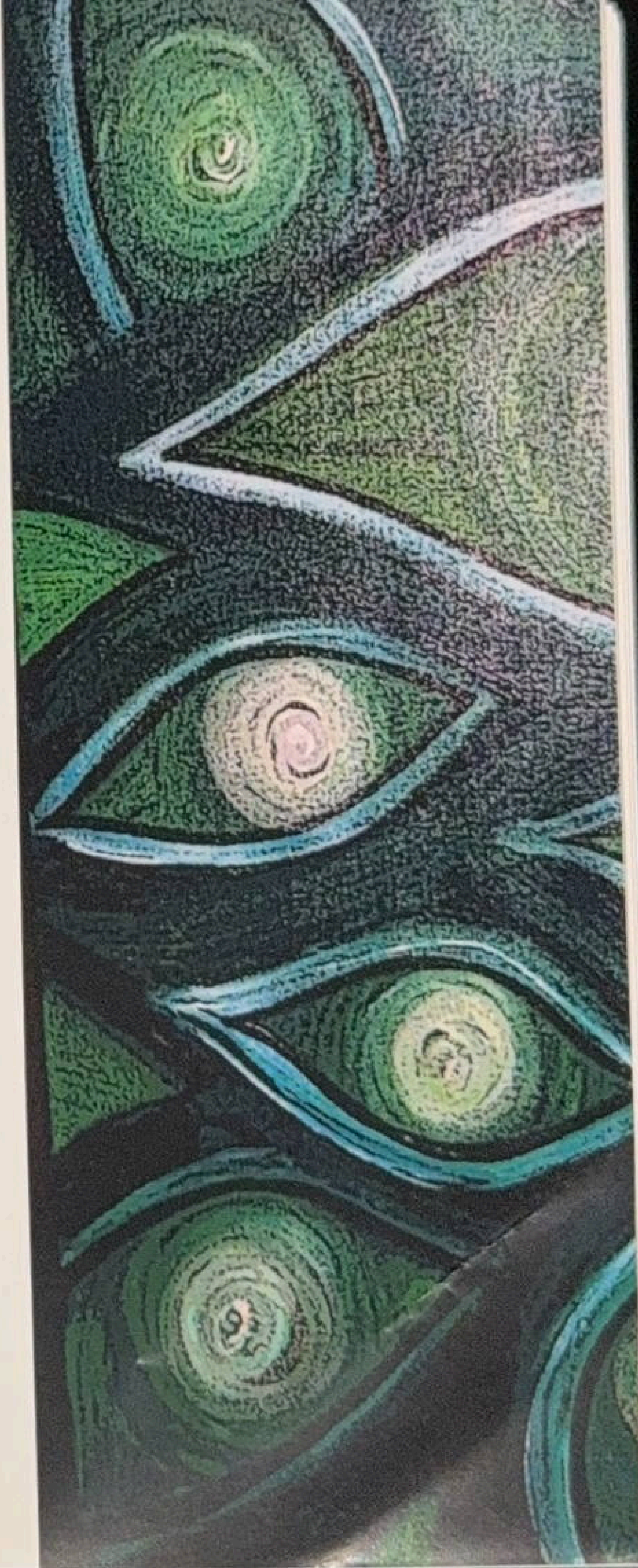


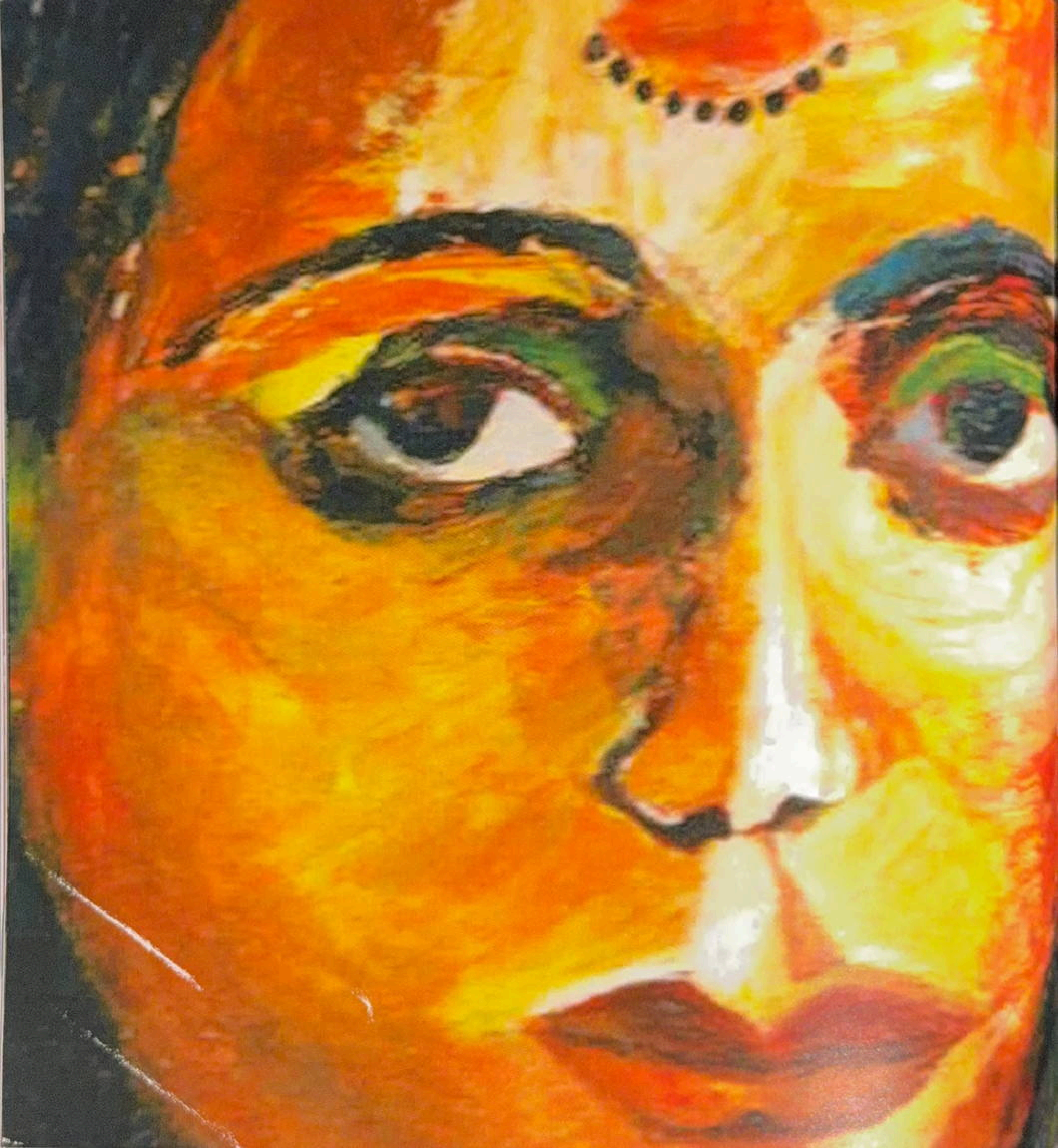


wrote. It made me think about what would make me feel successful. It made me dig so deep, that it ended up destroying the foundations of the illusion I had built in my mind. This illusion was a life that had locked away my passion and replaced it with a dull mechanical routine I followed every day.

What was it I was living for? It was certainly not what I wanted to live for. I was surrendering to my fears. I had chosen a relatively safe major: Business Administration, and I was depriving myself of the pleasure of letting my instincts guide me. I used to spend my time designing t-shirts in my notebook and writing poems with numbers and math concepts, attempting to blend the knowledge I was acquiring with my creativity. I felt a very strong pull towards the arts, but I wasn't giving it the attention it demanded. When this year started, I changed my major to graphic design. But this isn't really what changed my life. What did change my life, though, was the sense of security that took over my doubts once I realized that when your life and whatever it is you do blend together, it means you've found your passion; and that fortunately, you are able to engage in constant change, a recurrent life revision that allows you to ask yourself what you can improve and how you can do it.

In my case, it wasn't necessary to ask myself how I could make this passion part of my everyday life. My experience with the kids, especially Alejandro, had revealed the answer. The world doesn't need big things as we all think. What the world is missing is nothing more than committed people. I chose to be one of those. But committed to what? Committed to life, committed to peace, committed to love. My afternoons with my new Nicaraguan-Honduran-American friend consisted of exactly this. And they were magic. Besides the fact that we read books, painted t-shirts, filmed a documentary, planted seeds of hope in a community garden, cooked collard greens at Mrs. Kromer's (the school's security guard,) we did something behind it all. We shared our lives and were there for each other. I listened to him. I listened to his fantasies of traveling from America to Australia, and then to China, and then to Europe. I listened while he realized someday it could cease to be a fantasy and could become something real. I listened while he convinced himself it was going to be real. I listened as his walls came down to the ground, opening a way for his dreams to expand and for his will to grow. I listened. This was my service: one of listening. Sometimes all we need is someone who listens. Sometimes all we need is someone who listens.







Verde, amarillo, rojo
Congélate, quédate rojo
Para poder contemplar así
La reflexión de tus ojos.

Mirando disimuladamente
Encuentro mis ojos acechando
Cada uno de tus suspiros.
Aspiro cada respiro
Que provenía de más adentro de tu alma
Vertiéndome en una atmósfera de
Sonidos, murmullos, roces, y miradas
Me acerco, me arrepiento, me alejo.

Desenfrenado mi corazón se encuentra
Es tarde ya...
La fusión de tus labios con los míos es inevitable
Cada murmullo, cada roce, cada mirada
Me hace vestirme entre tus pestañas
Acaricio gentilmente ese beso
Y hoy escribo bajo un disfraz de manta.

El frío de mi cuerpo se ha esfumado
Te has llevado mis miedo, mis enojos, mis tor-
mentos
Todo en una sola lagrima se ha consumado
Bajo el fuego me siento
Mi corazón ardiendo.

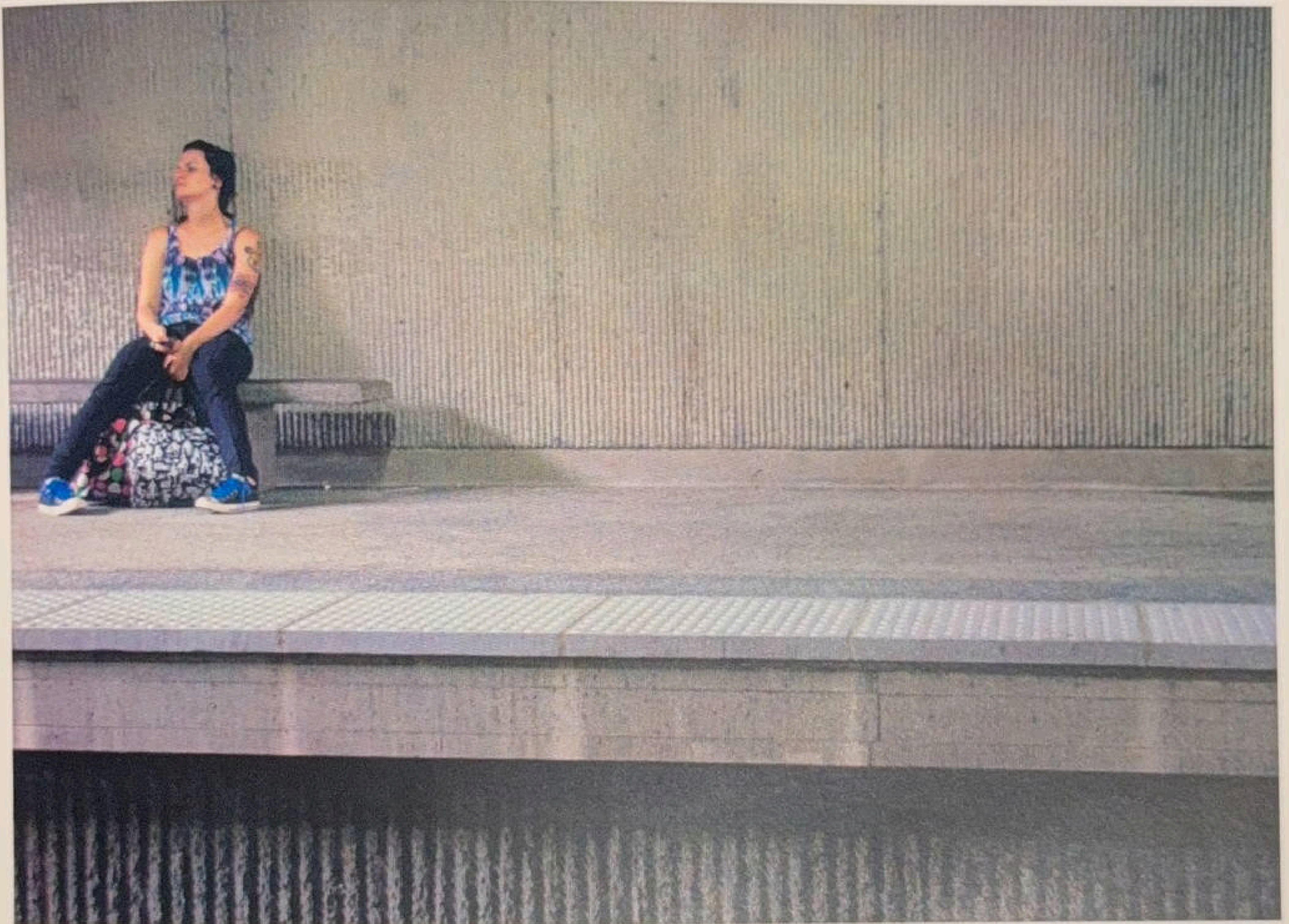
Una pregunta te tengo:
Olvidarás la noche

Mientras la luna vigilaba
Las ansias de fundirme bajo las mismas sabanas
Donde cada noche le deseas buenas noches
Al mes de abril?
Olvidarás la noche
En la cual tus manos no querían dejar ir
Talpreciado suspiro
Para poder recurrir a esa última esperanza
Oh! Divina pasión...
Olvidarás la noche donde tu alma se liberó
Para informarte de tus deseos en la vida
Olvidarás?... pensarás??..
Arrepentimiento, diversión, locura, perdición...
O solamente será amor?

La confianza de beber de mi
Estribillo la frialdad que calmara tu sed
Tu pasión, tu indecisión
Preguntas... respuestas... preguntas
Pasión desenfrenada
Que con llevan a una aclaración
A un final de cuento de hadas.

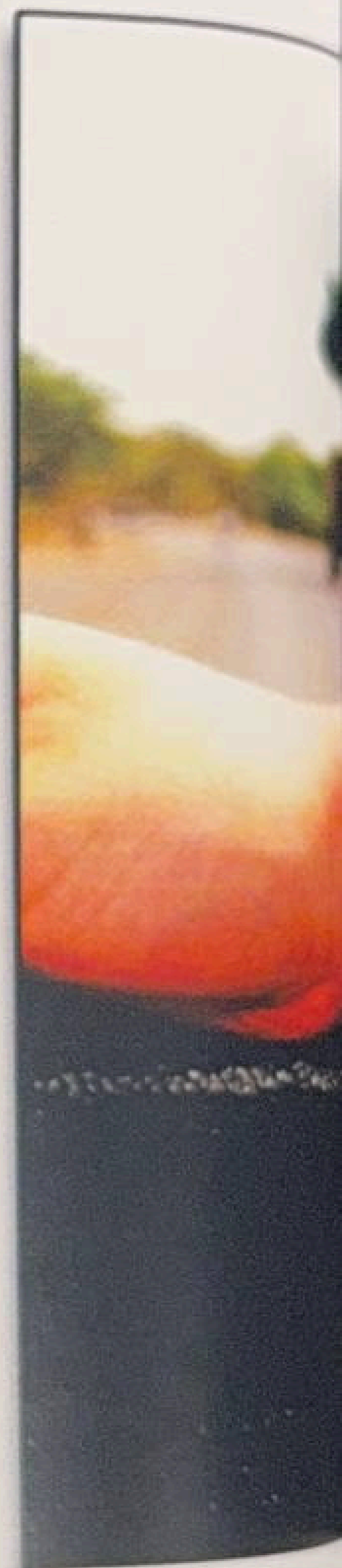
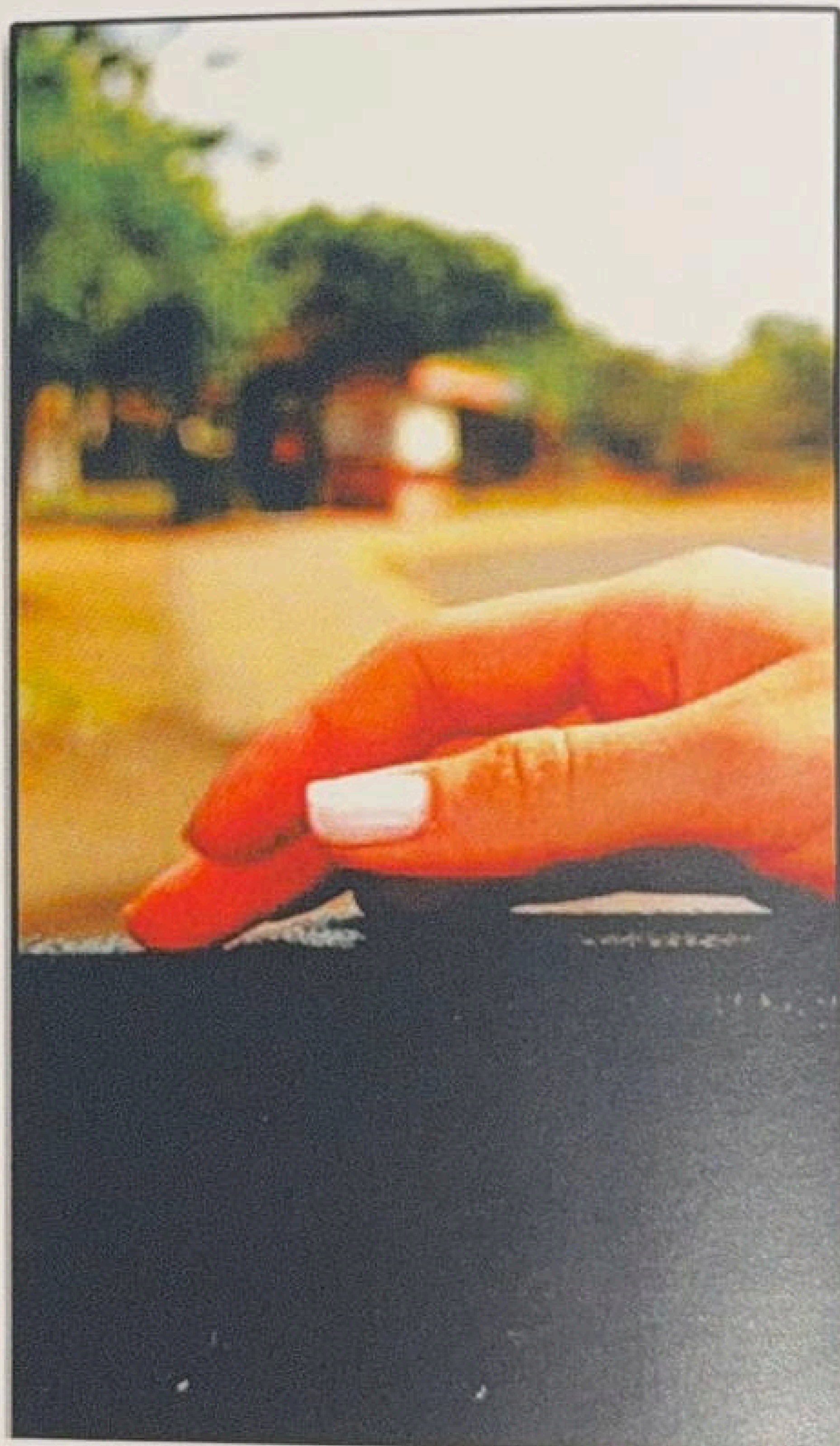
Te miro, te recuerdo, te veo, y no lo creo
Te miro, te observo, te siento, y no lo creo
Te miro, te veo, te rozo, te siento, te beso...
Y esto es solo un sueño.

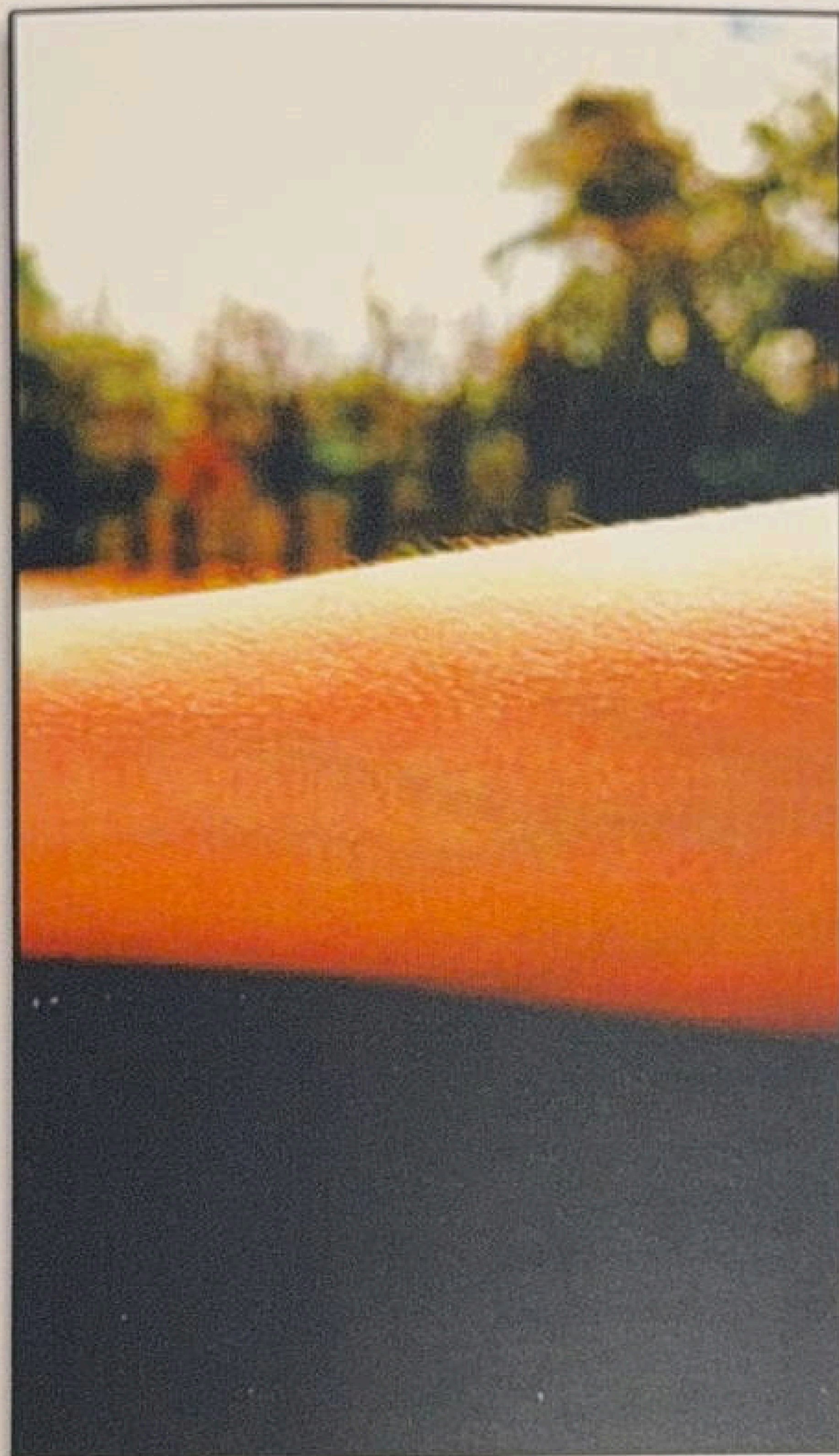
Puntuación



Y lo que Tu Quieras...

Un sentimiento que entra
Un corazón que palpita
Miedos que salen
Heridas que sanan
Armas se desarmen
Cinismo se entierra
Sonrisa en la cara
palmas extendidas
ansiedad reducida
Ojos abiertos
Cerrados si te pienso
Alma plena
Luna llena
Dos manos apasionadas
Un lapicero de tinta mojada
Tatuajes con significado
Papel reciclado
Mente clara
Cuerpo vivo
Caricias tiernas
Sexo poseído
Por amor verdadero
Labios libres
Para jugar cuando quieran





Besos cortos
Besos largos
Abrazos fuertes
Unas pocas cervezas
Frías si se puede
Marihuana si quieres
Si no quieres no importa
Que la remplazamos
Con muchos poemas
Y con música buena
Sol de día
Luna de noche
Nubes naranjas y estrellas
Millones de estrellas
Buenos amigos
Un par de libros
Bon bon bunes rojos
Y lo que tu quieras
No hay efectos secundarios
Ni grandes bodas
Ni aniversarios
Si, yo estoy loca
Por vivir la experiencia
Me movés hasta el fondo
De mi honda existencia.

Scene 2

(VINCENT is in his bed tossing and turning trying to go to sleep.)

NARRATOR:

Once upon a time, there was a young, handsome prince... And, as you've probably realized already, this is not that story. This is the story of our little Princess- Vincenta. As I said before, Little Miss. Sourshine is as clueless and hopeless to love as a hippie is to deodorant. Awww! Look at the little pookie tossing and turning... I like your new name... Hahaha it suits you.

VINCENT:

Shut up!! I'm trying to sleep!! ... (Pause.) Hmm, nevermind. I'll just watch some TV.
(VINCENT turns on the Television.)

WEATHERMAN:

Good morning Vincent.

VINCENT:

What?

WEATHERMAN:

Today's weather will be partly cloudy, but don't worry, these are some really friendly clouds, so make sure to keep an eye out for them, especially in your windows.

VINCENT:

Not this again!

(Vincent looks at window, as a cloud passes by.)

(A friendly CLOUD passes by the window, smiling and waving hello to VINCENT.)

VINCENT:

(Shocked, turns head away from window.)

What the...?
(VINCENT rubs his eyes and looks over
towards window, but the cloud is gone.)

VINCENT:

Ok, something weird is going on...

(VINCENT closes his eyes. There is a
knock on the door.)

VINCENT:

(Talking to the NARRATOR, surprised.)
She's back?

(VINCENT gets up from his bed and
walks towards the door. He opens it.
He sees a woman he's never seen before
wearing a coat.)

VIOLET:

(In a soft, delicate tone.)
Hey sweetie...

VINCENT:

(Puzzled.)
Who are you?

(The mysterious woman drops her coat
down to her elbows. When VINCENT sees
the woman's lingerie top, his mouth drops
to the floor and his eyes open as large as softballs.)

VIOLET:

Ooooooh! I love role-playing.

(She walks towards him, brushes her
finger on his chest and picks up his

mouth off from the floor with her index finger. VIOLET walks past VINCENT. She later stops and looks back by this time, VINCENT is close to fainting.)

VIOLET:

You know where to meet me.

(She winks, drops the rest of her coat to the floor and goes to the bathroom. VINCENT paces nervously around the room talking to the NARRATOR.)

VINCENT:

Who is she!?

NARRATOR:

You should know. After all, you're the one that invited her here.

VINCENT:

(Playfully.)

Oh! Did I?

NARRATOR:

(Sarcastically.)

No. I am making the whole thing up... Of course you did!

VINCENT:

Someone sounds jealous.

NARRATOR:

Yeah, right. Because I care.

VINCENT:

Well, if you don't care about it, tell me how I met her? How do I know her?

NARRATOR:

Hmm... No.

VINCENT:

Can you at least give me her name?

NARRATOR:

I don't kno--

VINCENT:

(Interrupts by begging.)

Pleaaaaaseeeee?

NARRATOR:

Oh god, I hate it when you beg. Makes you sound all the more pitiful. Are you ready for her name?

VINCENT:

Yeah I am ready!

NARRATOR:

(Teasingly.)

Ya sure?

VINCENT:

Yeah! I'm sure!! I am ready!!!

(Screaming at the top of his lungs.)

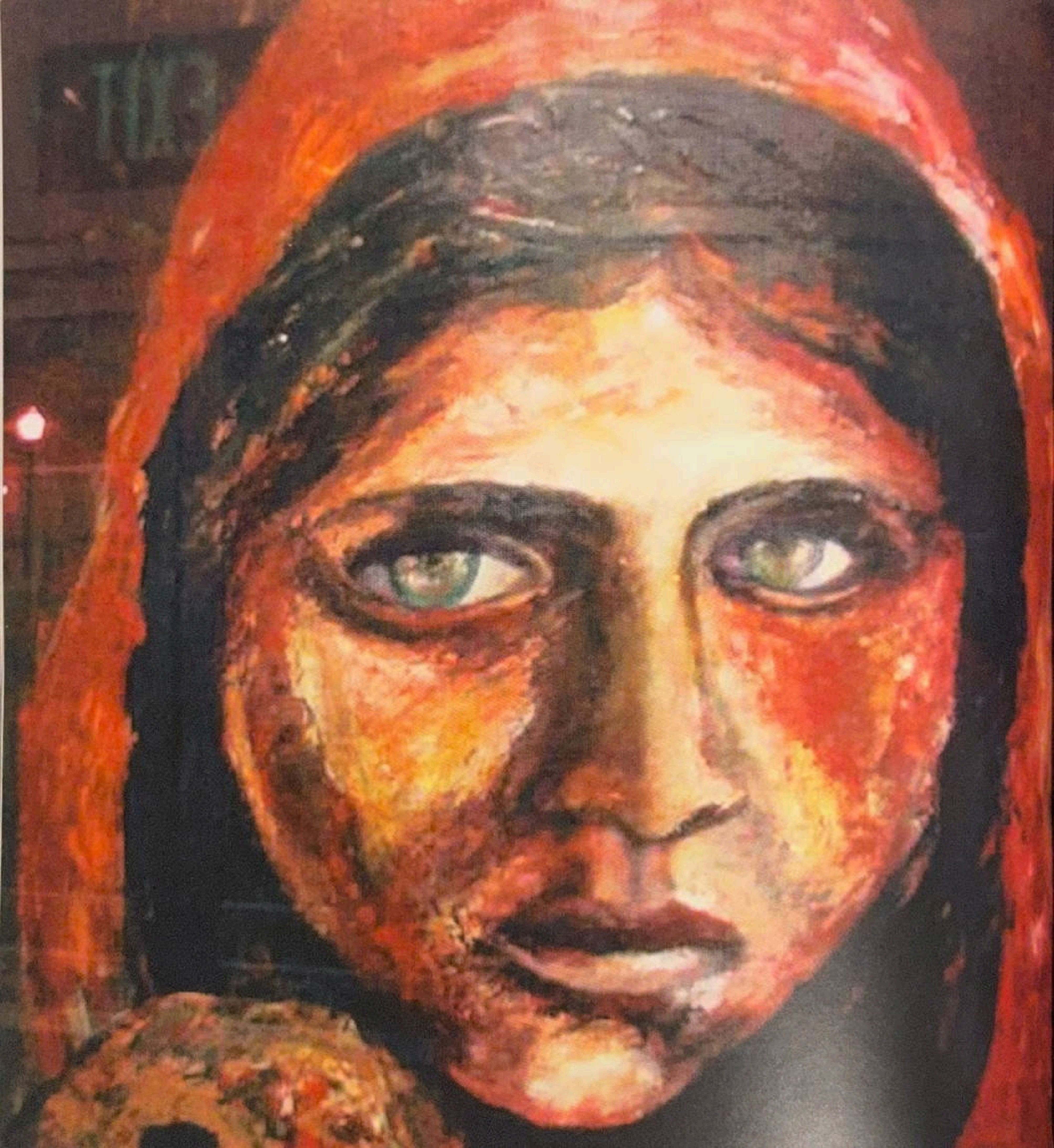
VIOLET:

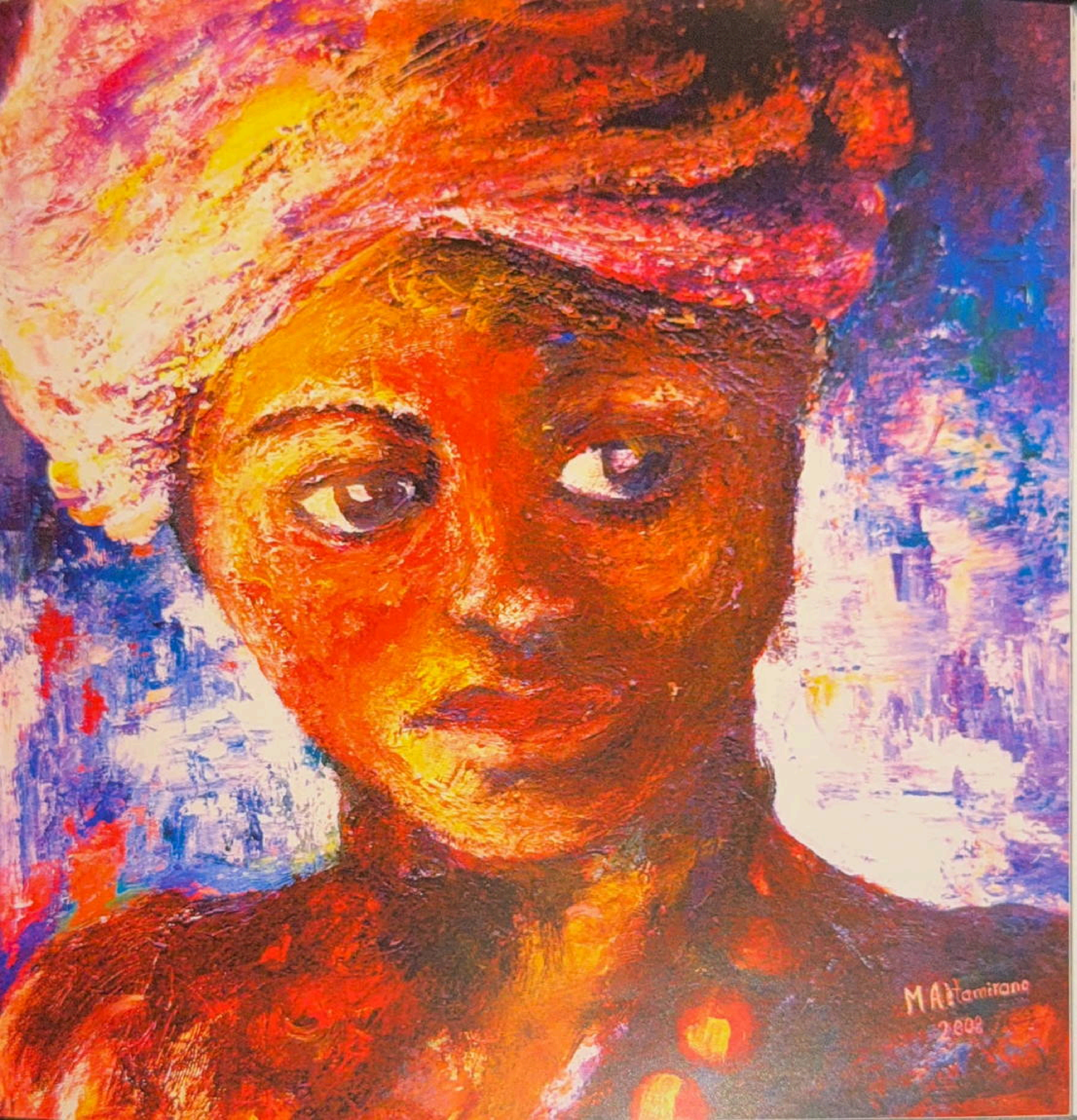
(Screaming.)

I've been ready since 10 minutes ago! Hurry up and get over here!!! The bubble bath is ready!

NARRATOR:

Alright, her name is...





M. Antamirano
2008



VIOLET:
(Screaming.)
Hurry up!

VINCENT:
Great. Not this again.

VINCENT:
Hey, hmm.... I took a shower a while ago. Maybe we can do something else?

(VIOLET walks out of the bathroom with a bathrobe on, holding the bubble bath soap, and grabs VINCENT by his shirt. All of this while VINCENT nervously moves away, but VIOLET continues to push him towards the bed anyway.)

VIOLET:
(In a sensual voice.)
No problem. Forget the bubble bath.
(Throws bubble making soap and gets closer.)
What role do you wanna play today?

VINCENT:
How about I play Vincent and you play yourself?

VIOLET:
(Pushes VINCENT back.)
How about no? I'm tired of being Violet. I play Violet every day of my life. I want to play something different tonight.

VINCENT:
And that would be?

VIOLET:

I'll be your experiment and you'll be the mad scientist. You can be Doctor Vincent and...

VINCENT:

(Sarcastically.)

And you can be Violetstein.

(VINCENT starts to laugh.)

VIOLET:

Oooh! I love the direction this is going. Come over here....

(VIOLET grabs him by his hair and tries to kiss him. VINCENT trips. He falls in bed and VIOLET intentionally lands on top of him. But VINCENT moves away from her and falls out of bed.)

VINCENT:

No. I can't.

VIOLET:

(Gets up from bed.)

Why not?!?!?

(Upset.)

I did not come here in my lingerie just to be turned down. If I knew this was going to happen, I could have stayed home role playing with myself. You need suck the pleasure out of life. You only live once and you only get a woman like me once in a lifetime.

(VIOLET picks up her coat, puts it on and walks toward the door. VINCENT crawling, follows her.)

VINCENT:

Where are you going?

(Stands up.)

VIOLET:

When you're ready to take it to the next level, call me.

(VIOLET kisses him passionately and leaves. VINCENT's mouth drops open in shock, leaving him in a trance.)

NARRATOR:

You virgin! You had a chance to lose your virginity and you blew it. This is one for the ages! At this rate, you'll end up dying a virgin. I have never met someone as useless as you.

VINCENT:

Hey shh! I wasn't ready!

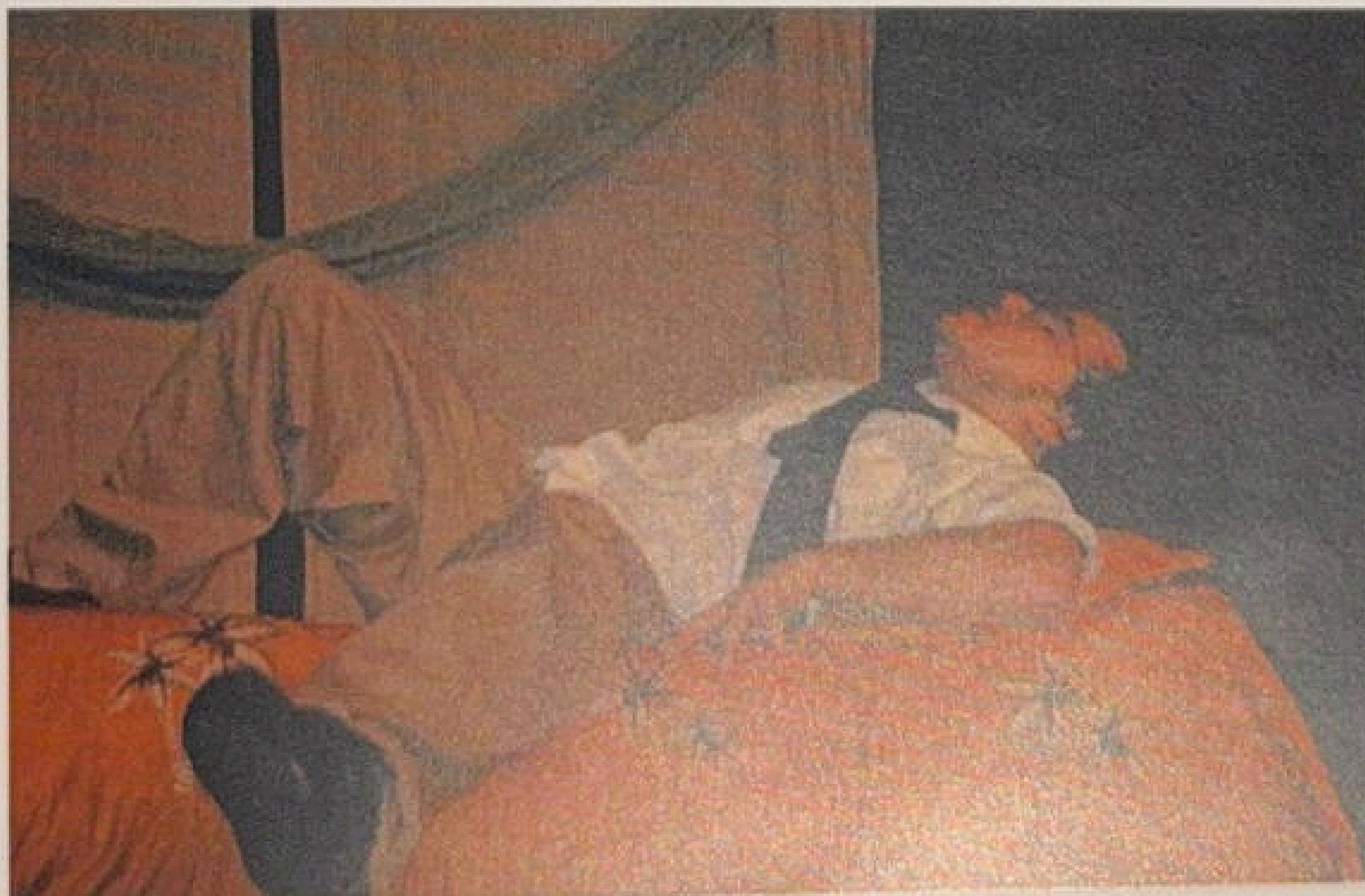
NARRATOR:

When will you ever be?

(VINCENT locks the door and goes back to bed.)

(BLACKOUT)

(END OF SCENE 2)



In

I want to let you know that this is me.
I want to let you know that I can't stop loving.
I can't stop sensing.
And breathing,
And feeling more,
And loving more,
And the intensity of my actions strengthens,
And with them my memories,
And my force,
And I feel completely IN,
IN this circle of awakened people,
Still waking IN the process of intentions,
Waking souls,
Waking while living,
While dying,
While involving even those,
Who are hurt by the system?
Damaged souls.

Bip- Bip- Bip- Bip- Bip
Time to wake up!
And feel what I do,
And want more.
And insist on revealing the true essence
Of what I've become.
A leading puppet of my own wants,
A subject of stepping firmly and passionately
Intensively
Unconditionally being me,
Loving the results of love,
Seeing the fruits grow,
Seeing how connected a dream and an action
are,
A dream,
An action,
An action upon a dream,
My third eye,





My moving hands,
My different mind full of innovation,
So this is what you teach,
You teach dreaming,
And I teach learning,
And we teach becoming one,
Without limits,
Without superficial colors,
Without a drawn line,
No line.
Only a hug and a collard green
IN our hearts,
Only our hands united covered by roots IN the
city mud.
Only our bodies dancing to the songs of free-
dom and reggaeton.
Freedom.
Reggaeton.
One song.
Moving mode.
Running electricity from bone to bone.
Running thoughts
Of desired extended minutes
Inside the new face of room 8.
The room of emerging discoveries,
The room of unison, chaotic circle
Where we loudly recite our mantra:
"One for all and all for one"
And again,
"One for all and all for one"
And this is where I scream,
And raise my hands up high,
Believing,
In one for all,
And IN all for one,
Believing IN holy moments like such,

Believing IN the circle that we are part of,
A circle of dreamers,
A circle of gray love.
And I want to let you know that this is me.
I am IN.
IN the circle
Of many scenes,
That we've put together
Not really knowing how to connect cables,
But knowing what to show.
Maybe the reality of what we do,
Or perhaps the breaking down of our moves,
We know what to show.
Because it has already been shown.
See it?
It's here.
This is the documentary of what we do.
And what is it that we do?
This is what we do.
We share the poem of love,
We sit on the dreamer's chair and discover that
dreaming is real,
We write,
We sing,
We improvise our lives,
We shake our booties to the rhythm of our unor-
ganized plan,
Our real plan,
Of doing what we love,
Of jumping when we want to,
Of following the camera's lens
And not being afraid of showing our faces.
And we stir it up!
And liberate ourselves from the outside world,
Remembering that we keep dreaming,
Dreaming IN love.

Give Me Liberty, or Give Me Death!

Liberty is an illusion; at least, that is what some people say. Some people believe that, even though we live in a democracy, we are not free. Maybe they are right. Maybe they are wrong. However, what comes to my mind when people say such things is not the question of whether we are free or not; I already know we are. When people complain about the lack of liberty we have in this or any other country, I often think to myself: "What have you done to deserve your liberty? What have you done to ensure your freedom?" Do not misunderstand me – I believe that everybody should be free. Yet, even though I hold this principle to my heart, I know that nothing – especially freedom – is free. Freedom is something that we, as a people, must fight for every day of our lives. I am reminded of many men who have fought and died for liberty; not the least is Rogelio Gonzalez Corzo. One day, when he was about twenty-eight years old, Rogelio carried a gleaming cherry wood cradle into the house of friends Lino and Emy Fernandez; it was for their newborn daughter Lucia. Emy blessed him for taking care of them in such a chaotic time; the blessing did not work. Rogelio was executed three weeks later by the Castro regime for heading a revolution against the current government; a revolution for freedom and democracy.

Rogelio died for democracy. He died for the preservation of his and everyone else's freedom. He did not look out for himself, but instead, for the well being of others. This principle is essential to the idea of democracy. As Clarence Darrow, a leading member of the American Civil Liberties Union, said, "You can only protect your liberties in this world by protecting the other man's freedom. You can only be free if I am free." Such is the nature of democracy. In a dictatorship, you look out for the well being of the dictator. In a democracy, you look out for the well being of the people. The common goal of every democratic society is to decide on acts that will be for the betterment of the society as a whole. Whether it is a decision regarding the education system, the health care system, or the transit system - if it affects the people of said society, the decision has to be made in the best interests of everybody. It cannot be based just on who is rich or who is poor, who is Caucasian or who is Hispanic, who is tall or who is short. If such a time came when a democratic country favored a certain interest group, it would no longer benefit the people as a whole and would cease to be a democratic nation. Slowly, this group would seep into the branches of the



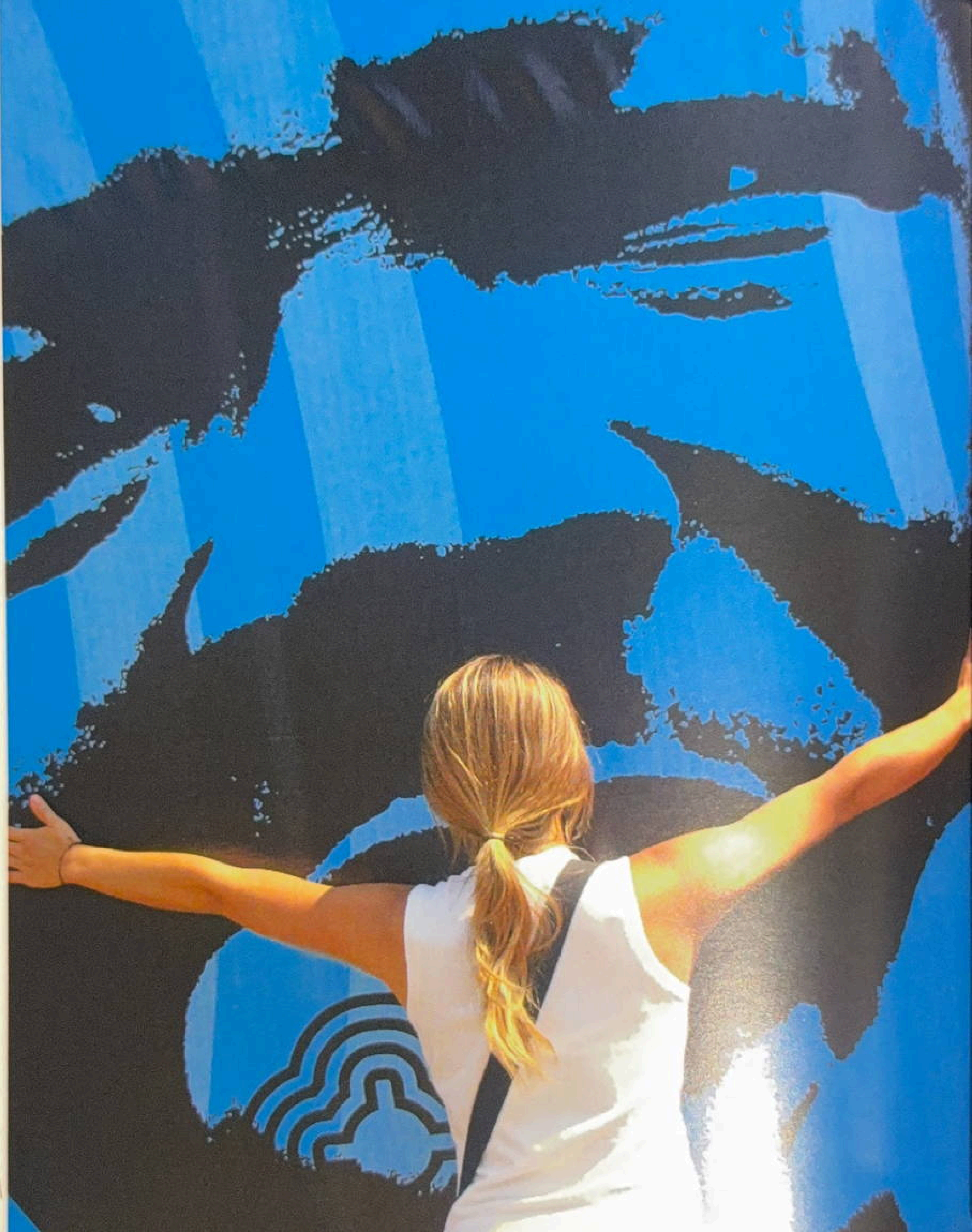
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government and have absolute control. That is, unless the people have something to say about it. Every day of my life I enjoy democracy: I am free to say what I want, to do what I want, and to believe what I want. I even have the freedom to choose not to say what I think, to avoid doing what I do not want to do, or not believe in anything at all. Living in a democratic nation is truly a blessing. Sometimes, however, it seems to be taken lightly. People do not realize how privileged they are. A lot of people complain about how our freedom is being taken away; sadly, this is all that they do. Of course, living in a free country, people have a right to complain and just complain. Although, if they really wanted to keep their freedoms from being stripped away from them, they would do something besides complaining. Rogelio died for democracy, and yet, in this democratic nation there are people who complain about the lack of democracy in another country while they do not even bother to go to a voting booth for a national election. For democracy, we must fight. For liberty, we must die. We must be ready to sacrifice our very lives for the freedom of everyone in this society. If you are not ready to die to protect my freedom, why should I die to protect yours?

If I was ever faced with such a dilemma, that of dying for freedom, the answer would be easy: freedom. Nobody wants to live their lives as slaves to the government. Nobody wants to be a robot. Unfortunately, some peo-

ple are afraid to speak up. They are afraid of being free. They fear the repercussions to their actions, and will painstakingly accept a temporary security over an essential liberty, when in fact, it should be the other way around. We must give up a temporary security in order to keep an essential liberty – that is the only way to be happy and be free, even if it means death. Death is inevitable. Sometimes we can delay it, but it will always knock on our doors and claim our lives. We cannot choose how we die; but we can choose what we die for. We can choose to live our lives fighting for what is right and fighting for what is free. When I think about Rogelio's death, I cannot help but think about his life. I cannot help but notice how one of his last acts on this earth was to bring comfort to a newborn baby. Death and birth, birth and death – hand in hand. I realize now that in order for something to be born, something else must die. In order for our ideals of democracy and equality to be born, the old ideals of dictatorship and sovereignty must die. Sometimes, in this war of liberty and captivity, those who seek freedom perish along the way. However, their sacrifices are never forgotten. Instead, they give strength to those who are weak. They give reason and spirit to fight for what is right. In the end, we will always die; but just as the great abolitionist Frederick Douglass said, "better even to die free than to live slaves."





Because...

I shouldn't have to explain to you
Why I did it
The rights of a human being were being
Violated
And I made myself present to raise my
Voice
And have it counted.

I did it because I saw in that oppressed
Community
Flashes of my family's history
And my best friend's struggles.

I saw the mothers clinging to their sons
And felt myself held
One final time
—Begging the gods to not be taken.

I felt, in their tears,
The moisture that had long dried upon my
Cheeks
Resurface
And thus saw myself weep...
Through them.

And I understood.

I understood that when a child is forced
To say good-bye to his mother
By an oppressive institution
They are ripping me away
From my mother.

That when they place an aspiring student
In a detention cell
They are placing bars around my dreams
Around my soul.

That when they put the bracelets on their legs,
I myself am being shackled
Monitored
Persecuted.

And I stayed because
I would not have dared to look away
As yet another child is put under these
"Circumstances"
—Much too young to know what is happening
Or how to deal with it
—Shredding yet another gleam of
Innocence.

I did it because
I would not let them
Take my HUMANITY!
Would not let them blind me
Fool me
Keep me in silence.





Magiccck

I would not be so enigmatic
If the situation weren't so mischievously pragmatic.

Some might like a little mystery
But I prefer to know these things
put'em in this history
we're making

Magiccck

Sounds of pleasure mixed with discontent.
Pleasure placidly permeating pillars protruding
From the discontent.

Pillars made of sugar
That was incrawled
Housing thousand ants plus more

Deteriorated
Infested, creating
coulds of clashing epinephrine compositions
Different levels of amounts of happy dispositions

Critiquing unshared, misunderstood insecurities
Stepping on stepping stones made from liver

liquids
Feeding them
Making them grow
Raising and maintaining villi in the most upright
position.

Building highways out of them in 265 seconds
Maybe less.

Covering up the watering hole
Freezing the tenants under ice.
Look up, it's gray & white inferno.

Magiccck

Look up, it's what you let get to you.
Look up, look up, look up, hold your breath.

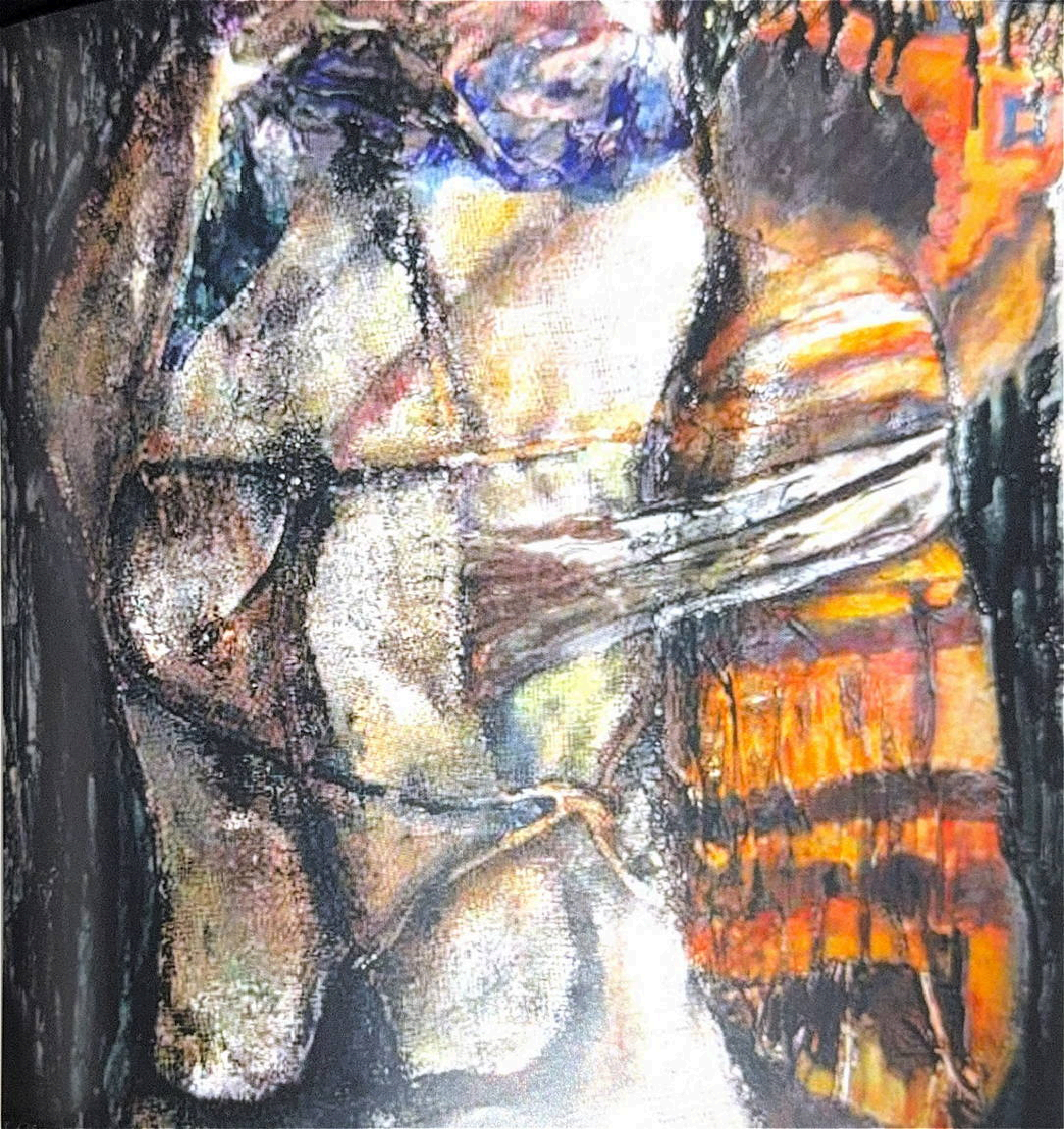
Look up, look up...
How can you climb out
If you build over your exits?

Look up, look up...
"Open" is the most powerful word.

Look up
Look up

Drain the watering hole
We can all just drink the rain.

It's no good anyway
If you're covering it
With
Pain.



I love smiling, and when people smile at me for no reason.
I love when my mom gives me massages when I have a headache.
I love to remind myself everyday that life is one and only one.
I love prayers.
I love the ocean, I love how the blue of the sea and the blue from the sky become one in the distance.
I love listening to my abuela's old stories.
I love the violin playing troubadour on the train I always wanna give my sandwich to, but forget.
I love crying and letting it all out because my life is rose colored but sometimes blood colored and that's
that I am ALIVE and I LOVE that.
I love when people work hard and go far as a result and have what they deserve and are HAPPY. It makes
smile.
I love sitting alone and watch people do people things.
I love walking against the wind. It makes me feel birdlike.
I love ramen soup with Parmesan cheese.
I love not washing my fruit before I eat it because I love being dirty.
I love growing, product of the good and the bad, but never the ugly, because everything is pretty.
I love turning off my phone and not checking my e-mail for days.
I love painting on things that I'm not supposed to paint, like the park bench...
I love swimming, it's the closest thing to making love to the earth in a respectful manner.
I love thinking outrageous things.
I love it when I see that some people realize what things are important in their life, and not just important
cause they are "mandatory."
I love sharing brains in groups.
I love being a woman.
I love flowers.
I love cheeseburgers with mushrooms.
I love everyone that smiles involuntarily.
I love my wife's eyes as she looks into mine.
I love the feeling of freedom when looking into the ocean or being in the mountains.
I love Rumi.
I love Cocorosies who make my heart light and remind me about what I love.
I love patchouli and sandalwood.
I love my human body.
I love to hear the phrase "oh my God!".
I love running long distances.
I love finding myself lost in thought and dreams..

love rituals and magic.
love mangos.
love my house.
love my father in law's heart.
love my mother in law's integrity.
love my dog Luke.
love my notebook.
love teaching/learning.
love pizza and beer.
love miso soup.
love arroz con frijoles like my aunt mamita makes them.
love to struggle and wrestle with life.
love to feel the air run through my hair as I drive with the windows down----not, but I do like putting down
my windows and feeling the air on my bald head.
love kayaking.
love camping and feeling the cool air of the mountains early in the morning.
love the quiet of the morning.
love each of my children's idiosyncrasies.
love Earth.
love fire.
love air.
love water.
love when people hug me so tight I can barely breathe.
love the smell of cilantro, especially on my fingertips.
love the way my sister ALWAYS greeted me each day growing up as if she hadn't seen me in years, and still
does when I visit her.
love when my skin is really cold but I can still feel the warmth of sunlight on the surface of my flesh.
love the Bob Marley lyrics: "emancipate yourself from mental slavery. None but ourselves can free our
minds".
love every moment I can help an undocumented student find a way to college, because I know what its like
to feel trapped that way.
love when I can cry so much I can barely stand.
love seeing my family love one another so strongly and so daringly.
love when I can feel CONNECTED to something beyond my own life.
love breathing deeply.
love feeling this e x a c t moment, and every other moment that comes along at that e x a c t time



Un Sentimiento que Habla pero No lo Entiendo

Mis pensamientos..
Son mis desahogos..
Mis ganas de hundirme en ellos
De querer ahogarme
Para poder sentirme libre...

Tus pensamientos son mis ordenes
Tu tristeza mi desdicha
Y tu libertad...mi vida

Para así poder nadar entre un millón de posibilidades
Y así tal vez estando ahogada de tanto pensamiento
Me pueda enredar en cinta blanca
Para poder llegar a ser yo misma

Un millon de ideas tenia para nosotros en la vida
Pero al final del camino solo son ideas
Quiero que seas tu misma
Que seas la mujer que mi mente idealizo entre nubes y estrellas

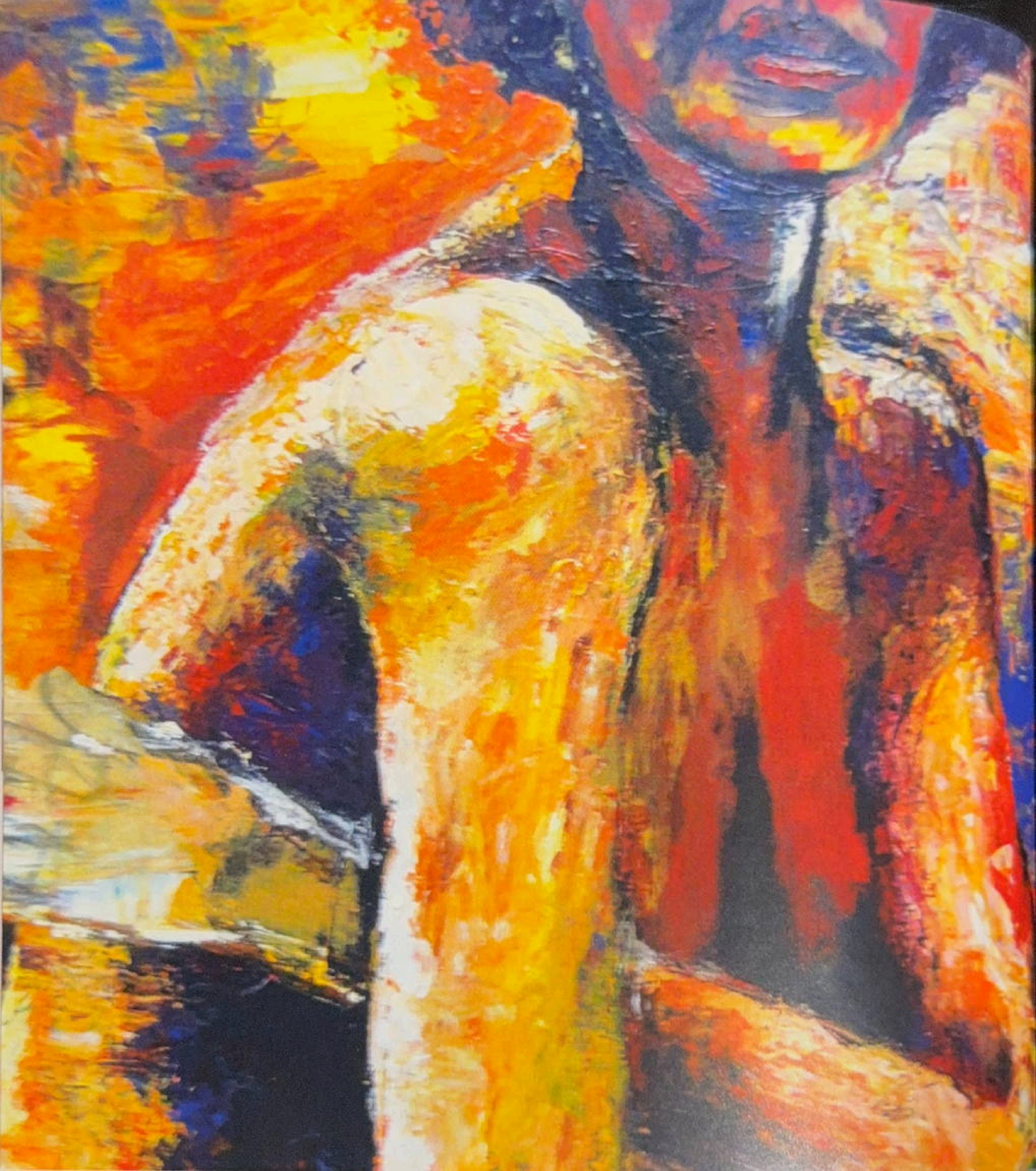
Sin embargo.. No puedo decirte lo que quieres oír
No puedo ser quien tú quieras que sea
Mi único sueño es tratar de ser feliz
Alcanzar una felicidad que parece inalcanzable

Prefiero tu felicidad a costa de la mía.
Te volviste mi felicidad cuando entraste en mi vida
Pero ahora no entiendo que paso
Simplemente una noche todo cambio y encuentro el remedio

Me encuentro en un mundo sin girar
Soy una voz que no es escuchada
Una persona reflejada en el espejo
Un espejo que prefiere romperse en mil pedazos.

¿Una Vida sin Familia?







Interview with Lena Burke

"Be happy and dare to dream," are the words that singer/songwriter Lena lives by. Lena is the grand-daughter of the well-known Cuban legend Elena Burke ("La Señora Sentimiento.") Malena Burke her mother, another Cuban icon gave birth to her on February 18th in Havana, Cuba. By age 3, Lena had already written her first songs. Lena's father, Rey Nerio, taught her how to play the guitar at 5 years old and by 7 she had learned how to play the classical piano. Lena was exposed to the industry at a very early age, being born into a musically inclined family.

Lena started her profession by participating in the chorus of numerous famous artists, such as Gloria Estefan, Plácido Domingo, Julio Iglesias, Cheyenne, Jennifer López, Alejandro Sanz, etc. Warner Music launched her career through Alejandro Sanz, he was a definite stepping stone. He discovered her talented abilities and wished to see more. She now refers to Alejandro Sanz as

"My god-father in music," Lena adds.

She has sold 1,429,000 copies of her first album all over the world. "Tú Corazón" was #1 in the 2005 Latin Billboard. Her CD titled "Lena," has 12 songs. She also has three distinguishing music videos from the songs: "Tu Corazón," "Puedo Jurarlo," and "Que Seria de Mi."

While singing or playing the piano Lena feels



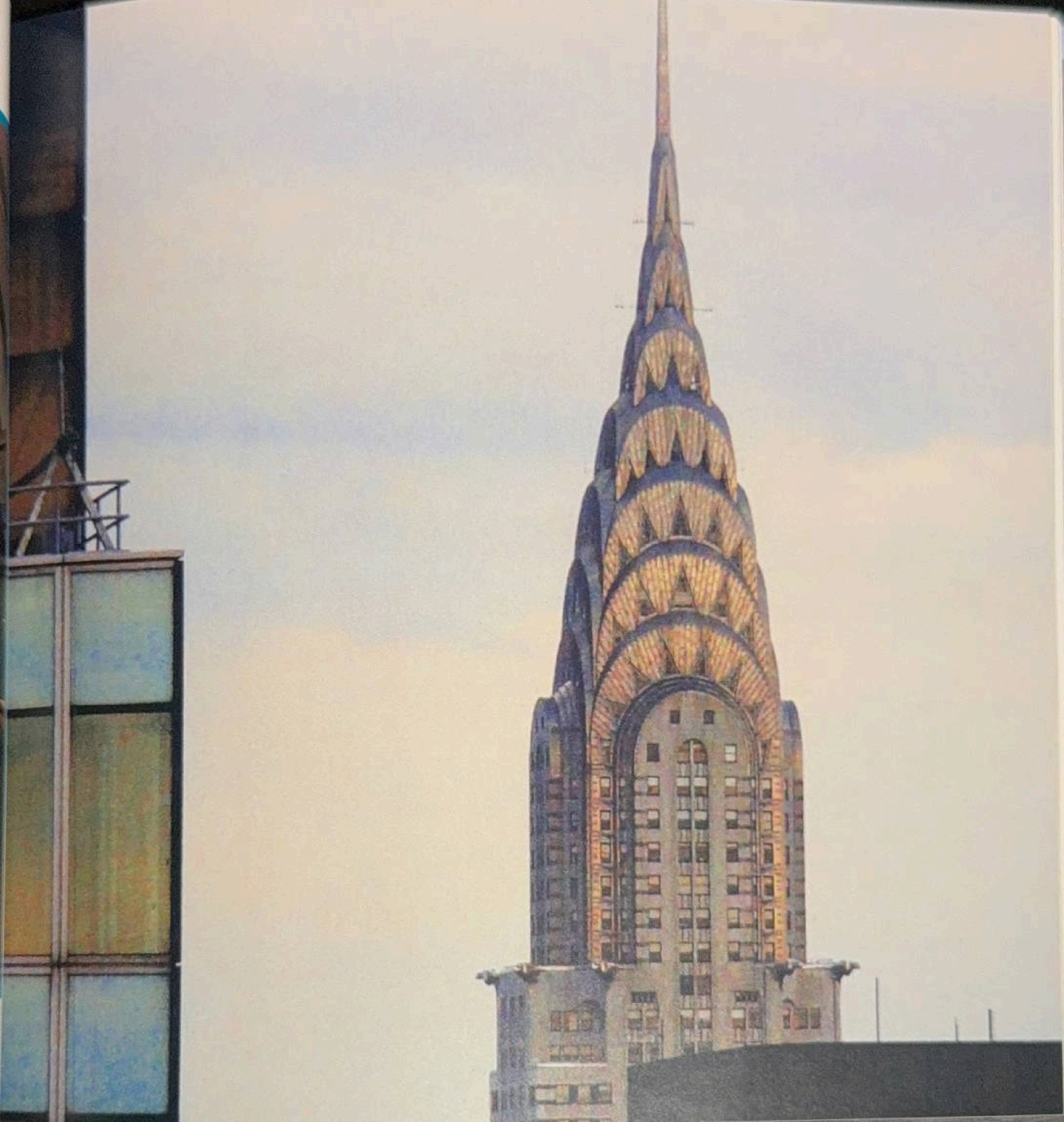


a torrent of emotions. Performing is her way to release a revolution of feelings. When asked which of her own songs was her favorite, she answered "Tu Corazon" with Alejandro Sanz. Mostly, because it got her discovered. But the song "Puedo Jurarlo" is the romantic intro to all of her acts and one of her most beloved songs.

Lena just finished her first movie: "La Mala," and is ready for the premiere. The movie was filmed in Spain and Puerto Rico. Not only is Lena the protagonist of the film but she also made the music soundtrack. Lena is always caught up in work, she is now proudly preparing her third album.

In 1995 Lena was a student at Miami Dade College, "It's a wonderful school, I learned a lot there." She urges the young generation of today not to give up on their goals. She encourages them to study very hard, "Nothing comes easy but it comes. If you dream something and work hard for it, it happens," Lena says. She thinks everyone has an objective in life. "I know, I couldn't have been a doctor," Lena states. Lena feels in the right place, she wouldn't want things any other way. She feels that if she was able to accomplish what she longed for so much in life, then so can you. That's why "Be happy and dare to dream," are the words that Lena lives by.







¿Te imaginás el pelo negro?
¿Un pelo negro y lacio que te cuenta una historia?
¡Un pelo criticado!
¡Un pelo destrozado!
¿Un pelo aislado?

¿Qué pensás vos pelo?
¿Qué pensás pelo indígena?
Pelo árabe.
Pelo largo, negro, y lacio.

Mucho se puede decir.

Ese pelo ha vivido mucho tiempo.
Ese pelo ha sido despreciado.
Ese pelo ha sido codiciado.
Ese pelo ha sido odiado.

¿Pelo?
¿No tenés rizos como el de mi primo?
¿No sos duro como el de mi tío?
No te tengo que alisar.

¡No soy musuco!
¡Soy indio como vos!
Fuerte como piedras;
Sedoso como musgo forestal.
Brillante como la luz al final de un túnel

¿Árabe como mi madre?
¿Indígena como mi abuela?
¿Sincero como una flor en la primavera?
¿Humilde como el río pasando suave por las montañas?

Me hablás de las montañas que coronan al valle de Sula.
Decís mucho con voseo adquirido.

Pelo Negro

Hablas de las calles españolas coloniales.
Hablás de ser industrial y trabajador.
Pero, faltan partes.
¿No se te olvida algo?

¿Qué se me olvido?
¿De qué me hablas?

No reflejás mi cultura costeña.
No decís nada de los bailes en la playa.
No hablás del mar que besa la costa norteña.
Sos silencioso de los carnavales y los ritmos movidos.
¿Vos sabrías decirme porqué sos tímido de esa historia?
¿Sabés porqué no la sabés?

No la sé porqué no quiero.
Crecí indiferente a mis primos musucos.
Desarrolle costeño con apariencia sampedrana.
Aprendí a hablar sin mi « vos ».
Nunca conocí fuera de mis confines maternos.
Nunca crecí con el sol si no la luna.

La luna, no el sol, me dio mi brillo.
El marfil, no el azabache, me dio mi suavidad.
El río, no el mar, me dio mi olor a verano.
La ausencia, y no lo vivo, me dio mi color negro.

El pelo musuco nunca me quiso.
El pelo musuco siempre me odió.
Jamás se dio por enterado de su primo lacio y negro.
Nunca pensó.
Ni en mí, ni en mi herencia.
Siempre me dejó sampedrano, parte costeño.

Pobre pelo...
Triste pelo...

¿Por qué no abrazás a tu hermano musuco?
¿Por qué no lo quieres?
Deja tu dolor y aprende a querer, pelo lindo.
Son tus hermanos, rizados solamente.

Vos creciste en parte...
Conociendo una historia que jamás olvidás...
Con una que querés olvidar...

Perdona al pelo musuco.
Perdónalo.
El pelo musuco nunca supo lo que ibas a llegar a hacer.
Nunca conoció tus logros.
Nunca conoció tus capacidades.
Pero no importa.

Tu creciste pelo Sampedrano con herencia costeña.
Aprendí a amarte ambas partes, pelo lindo.
Creciste mucho,
Creciste largo y hermoso.
Ahora crece unido.
Crece y ama a tu hermano musuco que ya muere.
Tu hermano musuco muy pronto se ira al Cielo.
Perdónalo.

Ya cuándo muera será el último...
La historia musuca se acabó.
Perdónalo pelito árabe;
Perdónalo pelito indígena.
Un día Diosito te hará ver el pelo más lindo del mundo.
Por eso, perdónalo:
Olvida el odio y aprende a amar pelo lindo.
Un día llegarás a ser feliz sin recordar un pasado.
Quiérelos queriéndote.

Sí, perdonaré. Pero nunca olvidaré.

El odio pasó;
La envidia existió.
La vergüenza amargó;
La indiferencia mató.

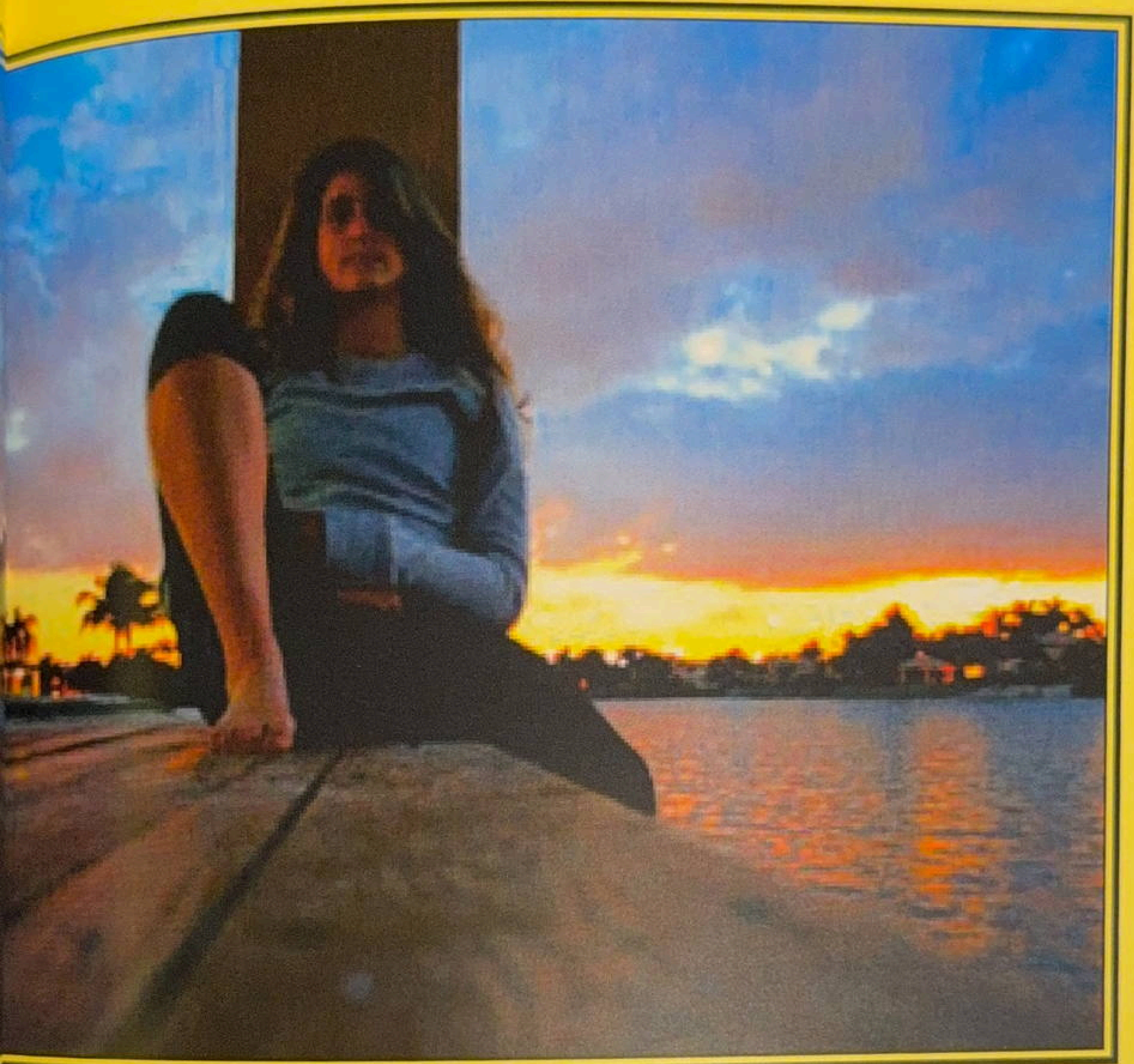
Pero siempre fui costeño.
A mi manera siempre costeño.
Yo siempre quise.
Ahora trataré de amar.
Pero jamás olvidaré.
La historia está ahí.
Recuerdo de un pasado triste;
Anuncio de un futuro próspero.

Te perdono hermano musuco:
Te he aprendido a querer, tarde pero hecho.
Ahora podrás morir feliz:
Ya tu historia de odio termino.
Te perdoné.



Mission

I am on a mission
To discover myself
To let myself grow
So I could cause some smiles
So I could love out-and-out
So I could rearrange this world
So I could trigger and inspire
To follow a dream
To just be a dream
I am flawed
But I am on a mission
Because I love deeply
I am trying to be a better person
Everyone deserves to be happy
I am on a mission
To spread unfailing happiness.



Genesis



I've felt the incessant beat of life
Resuscitating our dead hands
Our choice of impossibility
Our mediocre living.
I've seen the light in the faces
Of a million kids who are left helpless
Shine upon our negligent gazes
In forgiveness.
I've heard the echo of hope
Resonate in our mother earth-planet- home
Even after our senseless game of war
Has destroyed everything but our love.
My skin now breathes this need for change
As my lungs are filled with air
And my heart is filled with joy.
I now speak what I'm being fed
By my humble common sense
We need to weave a universal flag
We need to unite
There's simply no other way.

I 've seen the killing thoughts
Of competition and lies
Keep you attached
To a system where yours doesn't work
Where things don't make sense
Where love is dead.
I've then seen you become human
Caring
Breathing
Honoring truth
I 've seen your mask come off
Your heart become compassionate
Your voice soften.
I've seen you looking at me
I've seen you looking with me
We've seen us
We've felt us
We've been
One.





Scene 3

(Although VINCENT sank in deep sleep on his chair, he couldn't refuse to wake up to the obnoxiously, although now familiar voice.)

WEATHERMAN

Good morning Vincent.

VINCENT

(Sleepy.)
What?

WEATHERMAN

Today's weather will be partly cloudy, but don't worry, these are some really friendly clouds, so make sure to keep an eye out for them, especially in your windows.

VINCENT

SHUT UP!

(Turns television off and throws remote control at it. Vincent looks to window as a cloud passes by.)

(A friendly CLOUD passes by the window, smiling and waving hello to VINCENT)

VINCENT

(Shocked, leans back and looks away from window.)
I am losing it...

(VINCENT looks over towards window, but the cloud is gone. He jumps in bed and hides under the covers.)

GRACE:





(Singing.)

I saw the light, shining in my eyes, now I can't look away!

NARRATOR:

I saw the light, shining in my eyes, now I can't look away...
Lalalala.

VINCENT:

Holy smokes! I thought I had heard a feminine voice...

NARRATOR:

Don't you hear me, a feminine voice all the time?

VINCENT:

No. No, you're not a — - I mean it was a different voice.

NARRATOR:

Are you assuming I am not a girl?

VINCENT:

(Interrupts.)

Shut it! Now! Can you please quit it! I am trying to focus here on my dream.

NARRATOR:

Hmm, so let me continue with the story. Like I was telling you, this is Vincent. The king of the Beverly Awkward Hills. He's so pathetic, he has to focus on his dreams. God knows what's happening in his dream... Probably he's just trying to explain to the lady at "CosmoVision," (his ultimate favorite department store) for the thirty-fifth billion time, why he doesn't want to apply for a store credit card. Even though it'll save him 15% on his actual purchase and 30% on the next one. He doesn't want it because he only shops there or everywhere else once a year, when he buys his Superman undies. The rest of his wardrobe is a mixture of second-hand thrift store garments and his grandpa Ruben's inheritance. Mind you, he died in the 80's.

GRACE:

(Walks in from stage right.)

Om Mani Padme Hum! Beautiful morning we have here. Stop talking to yourself and join me. I

brought bagels and cream cheese from Jittery Joe's. Old Arnold says hi, by the way. He wants us to join him in his next pilgrimage. Oh, and there's grapefruit juice in the fridge, if you want. And yes, I know you don't like it that much, but remember it's good for the development of your 4th chakra, and we're trying to focus on that.

VINCENT:

(Looking up.)

Oh boy here we go again, who is it this time...? I won't let you go. Come on, you owe it to me, now, seriously, tell me who this is!

NARRATOR:

Jesus Christ! Have you lost your mind or are you just pretending to sound completely insane? That's your wife for the same Christ's sake!

GRACE:

Vince? Why are you talking to yourself about going insane? See, I told you watching fight club was not a good idea for you. Remember when I wanted to rent "The Enlightened Path of the Boddhisatva," and you flatly refused to and instead chose to see this schizophrenic hollywood kitty?

NARRATOR:

WHAT?! Did she just hear me or am I the one going insane????

GRACE:

Yeah, I believe I can listen to Paco here, or how is it that you call her?

NARRATOR:

(Freaking out.)

Who?! That's not me, I'm not here. I don't exist... Bye Bye! Ciao!

VINCENT:

So now you leave me alone?! When I need you the most! You Judas Iscariot... I knew you weren't my best friend after all.

NARRATOR:

Obvio microbio, I ain't your best friend,
(Cough cough.)

Best is a superlative that is only used when you talk about more than two objects or people, and I believe I am, or was, your only friend. Ahora si me voy! Au revoir!

GRACE:

Vincent, honey, can you please start with the morning chant? Why do I always have to remind you? Our friends at the temple are waiting for us.

VINCENT:

What do you mean they're waiting for us? How do you know?

GRACE:

Can't you feel their spirits' presence in the room?

VINCENT:

Are you like the mother of the earth or something? First you can hear my thoughts-- dur... Wait, shit what's wrong with me, why am I telling you this? Shit, anyways what spirits are you talking about? Please don't tell me you've haunted my house now...

GRACE:

Honey, are you here? You seem so awkward today. Please come back. Remember today is our tantric ceremony. I feel you're ready now. You'll love it.

(GRACE stands up, walks towards VINCENT's bed, sits down, puts her right palm on VINCENT's forehead, closes her eyes.)

GRACE:

(Chanting.)

Ommmm beloved spirit of the Ayahuasca, ooom, omnipotence of the powerless, mystery of the sacredness...

VINCENT:

What are you insinuating? Que alla adonde Alaska? My Spanish is not very fluent, you know... But did you say you wanna get down and dirty? Did you ask if I was ready? Oh, yeah! I am ready!

GRACE:

Oh sweetie, you seem to be very odd today, like in another world... What are you trying to say by
"You wanna get down and dirty?" I am lost on this one...

VINCENT:

(Looking up.)

Looost???? What does she mean? Help me out here! Why doesn't she want me? Paco?

GRACE:

(Walks towards kitchen stage right.)

Did you say you want some ginger tea?

(VINCENT raises his voice a little
bit and talks across the room so that
GRACE, who is now in the kitchen,
can hear him.)

VINCENT:

Ok, I could have some.

(Nervously begins to unbutton his
shirt.)

Hmm, I don't know but I think I am ready for some action, you know what I am saying? Like the real
one...

(Plots himself on bed, laying down
full body; acting sexy.)

NARRATOR:

Oh-kay, so this proves my point that you are indeed a total idiot.

VINCENT:

Oh, so you decide to come back...

(Gets up from bed.)

Finally! Would you stop narrating the story of my life and get me some answers! I need answers! I
need you to give them to me and then go away forever!

NARRATOR:

You know, if I was her, I would've never married such a loser who can't even talk to a woman be-

cause, oh, right! Because he's too busy listening to me!

(VINCENT gets up from bed and stands right in front of the window and begins to button up his shirt.)

(GRACE walks out of the kitchen and places two cups of ginger tea on the table. She walks towards VINCENT and stands behind him with her arm around his neck.)

GRACE:

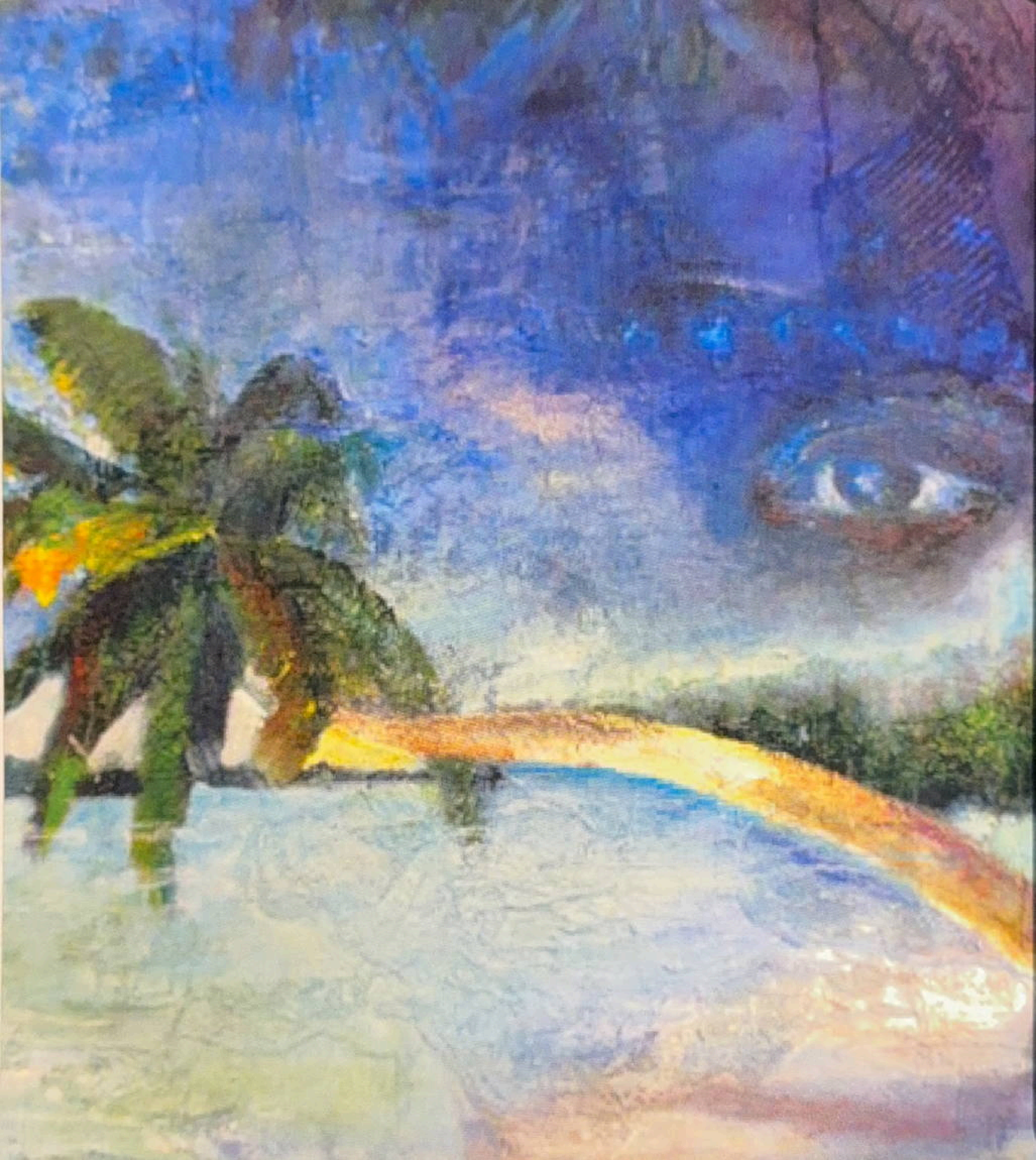
Isn't it just too beautiful how the sky is always opened to you? Whenever you look up, from wherever, it's always gonna be that way, just for you. And the birds... Oh how I love those birds! Always singing and flying and doing nothing else but what they decide... And being so free and embracing the entire sky! See how they're all over it? They love it!

You know, you can always rely on them because they are here just so that you can stand in this very same place and look at them, and feel what you feel, and feel that when there's no escape, you can always find them here.

(VINCENT, feeling a little bit more relaxed inside, decides to close his eyes completely and lets GRACE's voice penetrate his ears.)

(BLACKOUT)

(END OF SCENE 3)



¡Viva Cuba!

Ya era la hora del almuerzo. Ese era el momento en que se sentía más alboroto en la escuela. Uno a uno los profesores bajaban con dos o tres estudiantes a recoger la merienda escolar. En realidad no sé ni siquiera por qué le llamaban merienda escolar si era a la hora del almuerzo; supongo que era porque no daban ni arroz, ni frijoles ni chícharos. Unos días daban pan con queso y otros días daban pan con una especie de hamburguesa que todos llamaban medallón. Lo que si nunca faltaba como parte de la merienda escolar era el yogurt. Habían varios sabores, pero uno no los podía identificar con solo probarlos, excepto el de fresa, claro, que era rosado.

Salí del aula a buscar a mami. Supuse que ella estaría en su aula todavía porque sus alumnos eran de séptimo grado, así que todavía no les tocaba ir a buscar la merienda. En el momento en que entré al aula me di cuenta que había supuesto mal, allí solo estaban sus escandalosos chiquillos. No se por qué enseguida pensé que estaba en el "pantri" de

la escuela, creo que fue intuición de hija. El "pantri" era el lugar donde repartían la merienda escolar. Allí los profesores esperaban su turno para coger la merienda de sus alumnos y llevarla a las aulas.

Cuando llegué al "pantri" la vi enseguida. Ni siquiera estaba haciendo la fila, sino que ya estaba dentro echando una bolsa de yogurt en un pomo grande de refresco.

"¿Mami que haces?", le pregunté.

"¿Qué crees que estoy haciendo?", hoy es lunes y ya no hay nada que desayunar en la casa", ella me miraba como si mi pregunta estuviese fuera de lugar. Yo sabía que era costumbre llenar los pomos de yogurt los lunes, pero aún así me parecía inapropiado ver a una profesora de matemáticas llenando un pomo de yogurt para llevárselo para su casa. "Mira, ve para tu aula a comer que si no te van a coger la merienda. Te espero aquí abajo cuando terminen las clases".

Cuando llegué al aula ya todos estaban comiendo, por suerte la profesora Regla me había

guardado mi pan y mi yogurt. Aquello estaba de madre, pero no había más nada. No tuve más remedio que resignarme y comer con las demás chicas.

A las cuatro y media bajé para el aula de mami. Ella todavía no había soltado a sus alumnos. Siempre me consideré afortunada de no tener que haber dado clases con ella, porque era muy estricta. Al cabo de un rato los dejó salir fila por fila.

"Dame la mochila" me dijo.

"Un día de estos se va a romper con el peso que le pones dentro".

Me desesperaba cada vez que tenía que meter los pomos de yogurt en mi mochila para sacarlos de la escuela. Según ella, la directora le había llamado la atención por llevarse el yogurt de la escuela, porque no estaba permitido.

"No exageres, con el peso de los libros se va a romper de todas formas. Además el curso se está acabando", acabó diciendo.

"¿Y eso?", le pregunté exasperada, mientras ella incluía una jabita con medallones en la mochila.

"¡No me digas que ahora también vas a llevar medallones a la casa!"

"No pongas esa cara porque están muy buenos, ya verás cómo los sazonan bien y quedan riquísimos", me dijo medio riéndose.

"Ya verás tú cuando papi vea lo que vas a cocinar"

"Si tú no se lo dices, él no tiene por qué enterarse", su cara seria lo decía todo. Jamás me atrevería a contarle.

Siempre me ponía nerviosa cuando salía de la escuela delante de Mayra, la directora. Mami, en cambio, salía con cara de triunfadora. No sé cómo se atrevía a pararse a conversar con ella cuando estaba sacando comida de la escuela sin

autorización, delante de su nariz.

Cuando por fin salimos le dije con cara de inocente, "Mami, hay que hacer un intercambio de regalos en el aula". Yo sabía que el tema este la iba a poner de mal humor, así que le hablé bajito y despacio.

"¿Cómo?", me dijo frunciendo el ceño. "Ustedes no se cansan de inventar. Primero que si cincuenta pesos para alquilar el local de la fiesta de graduación, después porque hay que llevar un plato con comida, y ahora porque hay que hacer un intercambio de regalos. Me tienes arruinada"

"Mami, esa no fue mi idea", le dije rápidamente.

"Quien propuso el intercambio de regalo fue Isabel. Yo no quería hacerlo, pero no iba a ser la única en protestar".

"Yo lo sé Yuri, no te preocupes, ya encontraremos algo que regalar; creo que tengo guardado en la casa un pomo de champú que me regalaron el año pasado por el día del educador. ¿Quién te tocó, una hembra o un varón?"

"Un varón"

"No importa, un champú siempre hace falta; que se lo dé a la madre si él no lo usa. Vamos a ver quien te regala a ti, tú nunca tienes suerte para que te toque algo bueno. Hace falta que te toque la Isabel esa, que la madre vive en Miami y le manda dinero"

Para llegar a la casa había que coger la guagua. A esa hora la parada se ponía en candela. Cuando llegó la guagua estaba tan llena como siempre, con un montón de gente sudada dentro. No íbamos a caminar hasta la casa, así que no había más remedio que montarse. Cuando por fin llegamos a la casa, Carmen, quien estaba asomada a su balcón como de costumbre, nos dijo que había

llegado una masa de croquetas a la casilla, así que dejamos las cosas en la casa y nos fuimos. Más bien fui yo la que tuve que subir las cosas a la casa, porque mami siempre usaba el pretexto de su edad para no subir. Vivíamos en el tercer piso de un edificio de cuatro pisos, en el apartamento trece. Mami siempre decía que ese número nos traía mala suerte. A mí me gustaba mucho mi casa, mami siempre tuvo buen gusto para la decoración, y como ella era "vieja", me tenía a mí para mantenerla limpia.

Había una buena cola en la casilla, y un sol que rajaba las piedras. De todas formas, como cubanos al fin, el tiempo pasaba rápido conversando. Allí me encontré a Gabi y enseguida nos pusimos a hablar de la gente. De la casilla fuimos a la bodega a comprar el pan. Siempre detesté al despachador. Él era muy gentil conmigo, pero el pobre siempre tenía un catarro horrible. Él y su pañuelo tenían el poder de quitarme el deseo de comer.

Mami, enseguida que llegó a la casa, se puso a preparar croquetas con la masa que habíamos comprado. Papi había acabado de llegar en su bicicleta. Estaba todo sudado, pero contento porque le habían dado un bono para un "cake" por destacado.

"Vaya mierda que te tocó", le reprochó mami. "A mí me dieron una bolsa de viandas, y a Mayra, la jefa, le dieron una caja de paleticas".

"No seas injusta Marlen, el sorteo se hizo delante de todo el mundo. Todo fue justo. Cada compañero cogió lo que le tocó"

"Qué ingenuo tú eres Pedro, tal parece que naciste ayer"

Yo adoraba este tipo de peleas entre ellos. Me daba risa como el pobre de papá trataba de

justificar las cosas del comunismo, mientras mami siempre se quejaba de la situación del país.

"¿Y quién salió de vanguardia?, apuesto a que fue el hijito del director", con este comentario papá parecía derrotado y mami satisfecha.

"Bueno, sí, pero él también es un buen dentista. Además, tú sabes como son las cosas, hay gente que se aprovechan de su cargo y no merecen la confianza que el gobierno les da. A él le dieron un viaje a Varadero, pero bueno nosotros vivimos aquí en Matanzas, así que podemos ir de vez en cuando".

En ese momento tocaron a la puerta. Era Olga, la vecina de abajo para pedirle aceite a mami.

"Ven acá mi amiga, entra a la cocina y mira lo que yo estoy haciendo", mami parecía triste, pero al mismo tiempo se reía. En el momento en que miré para la cocina me tuve que reír al igual que Olga. Mami había puesto la botella de aceite medio vacía boca abajo encima del sartén, con la esperanza de que por lo menos un chorrito se escurriera para freír las croquetas.

"No es fácil Marlen. Yo estoy cocinando unos chícharos y se me están botando porque no les he podido echar grasa. Imagínate, el aceite no viene hasta el miércoles, y ya tu sabes la cola que va a haber".

A papi no le gustaba para nada oír estas conversaciones. Para él era insólito que la gente se quejara por la falta de comida cuando el país había avanzado tanto. Yo creo que si por él fuera, le hubiera quitado la libreta de consumo a todos los que se quejaban. Su mejor remedio era sumergirse en el Granma para leer las mismas noticias una y otra vez.

¡Mami había conseguido hacer muchas croqu-

etas con tan poca masa! Siempre me parecieron increíbles las cosas que ella hacía para cocinar! También sabía que esta cantidad de croquetas iban a ser mi desayuno, almuerzo y comida para lo que faltaba del mes. Dar dos por personas en cada comida, era su definición de racionalización. También admiraba todo lo que ella podía hacer con una posta de pollo. Primero lo sumergía en la olla para hacer sopa, y después hacía un arroz con "pollo". Los pollos los conseguía con el marido de mi prima Luisa, quien trabajaba como centinela en el hotel Meliá Varadero.

"¿Por fin qué te ganaste en el intercambio de regalos?", me preguntó un día.

"Un osito de peluche", le dije sabiendo que no iba a estar satisfecha.

"Vaya porquería, nunca tienes suerte", me dijo. "¿Y al chiquito le gustó el champú?"

"Bueno mami, él no dijo nada, supongo que sí". La verdad es que no estaba muy convencida de que le había gustado, pero bueno...

"Díos mío, ya tenemos que empezar a comprarte las cosas para la beca. Por lo menos ya te conseguí un maletín que me prestó Olga. Lo único que hay que hacer es llevarlo a que le cosan un rotico que tiene. Yo te digo a ti que un PRE en el campo es lo último. En mis tiempos había más comida, pero había una escasez de ropa tremenda."

A mí me encantaba oír sus cuentos. Papi se basaba en estos cuentos para recalcar los avances que el país había hecho. Los momentos

de apagones eran los mejores para oír estas historias. Me divertían tanto...

"Oye Marlen" dijo papi un sábado "No me pudieron dar el "cake" porque no aparezco en la lista de destacados. No es fácil, ahora se van a dar tremenda lija para verificar que me tocó el cake". "Pero señores, ¿será posible que hasta para ganarse un puñetero "cake" en este país hay problema?", ya la temperatura de la casa estaba subiendo.

"No te pongas así que todo se va a solucionar", le decía papi.

"Marlen, ¿y el periódico que traje ayer?", ya él había dado el asunto por terminado y se disponía como siempre a leer el periódico antes de que mami sirviera el almuerzo.

"¿Qué periódico?" le preguntó mami sin darle mucha importancia.

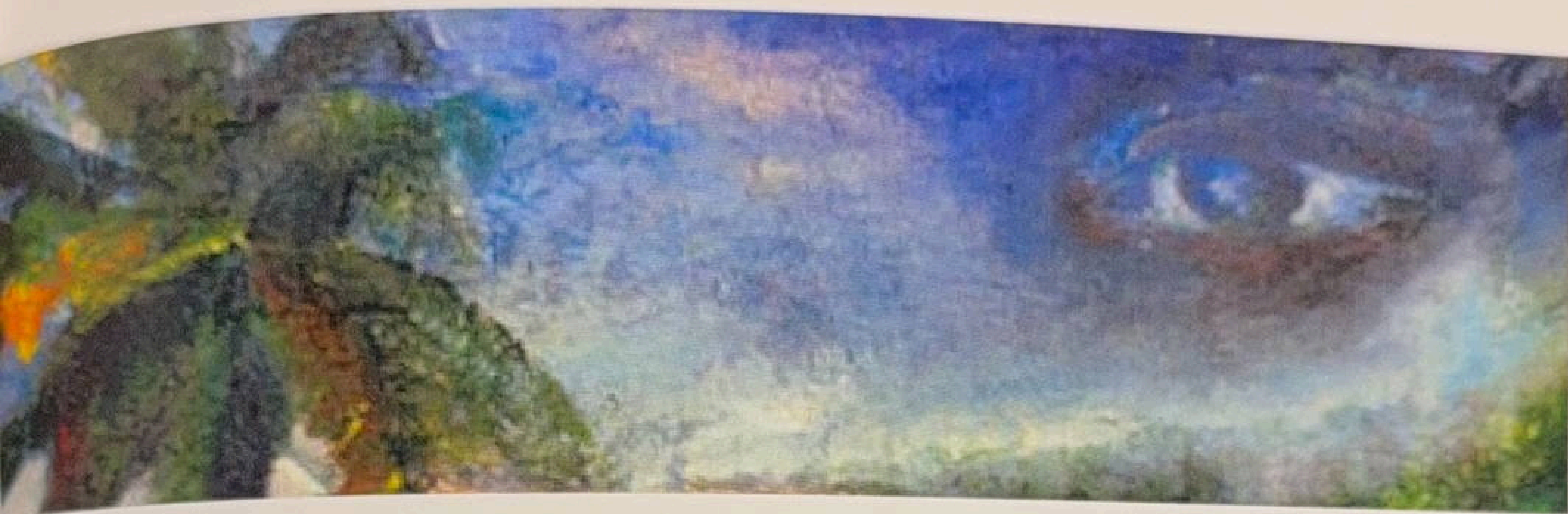
"El Granma", papi ya se preparaba para lo peor. "Ah el Granma, lo cogí para el baño", mami parecía aburrida. Yo en cambio me divertía.

"¡Cómo, pero si ni siquiera lo había leído!"

"Papi a las ocho ponen el noticiero, ya te enterarás de las noticias cuando lo pongan", le dije.

"Yurisleidys, tú sabes que me gusta leer el periódico. Además, ¿por qué tienen que coger el Granma para el baño?, usen otro."

No sé realmente cómo mami y papi llegaron a casarse. Eran diferentes completamente, supongo que es verdad eso de que los polos opuestos se atraen. Mami era bajita y gordita, papi alto y flaco.



Por suerte yo saqué los genes de papi, era alta y flaca; todos siempre me decían: "¡Eres cagaita' a tu padre!". El único parecido que tenía a mami eran los ojos color almendra. Para completar sus diferencias, mami criticaba todo el tiempo el comunismo, mientras papi lo defendía.

Por fin llegó el día de ir al PRE. Mami estaba más nerviosa que yo. Papi iba delante con el maletín en la bicicleta. Mami y yo nos plantamos en los amarillos a esperar a que alguien se compadeciera y nos diera botella hasta el parque donde las guaguas nos iban a esperar. Allí estaban todas mis amigas, tan ansiosas como yo. En la guagua hablamos de todo, y nos divertimos, pero ya cuando íbamos llegando se hizo silencio. Yo pensaba solamente en que no valía la pena matarse tanto estudiando. Papi era un dentista y andaba en bicicleta, y mami era profesora y se llevaba la merienda escolar de la escuela para el desayuno. Lo único que podía hacer era verme en el espejo de mami si quería ser profesora como ella. Yo la admiraba por su determinación, y me reía de sus cosas, pero sufría al verla abriendo el tubo de pasta para aprovecharlo

al máximo. No tuve más remedio que resignarme y esperar a que algún día las cosas cambiaran. "¡Mami, por lo que más tu quieras!, no me traigas picadillo a la escuela", le dije un día en que me fue a visitar al PRE. En sus visitas a la escuela mami no hacía más que traerme picadillo y croquetas a la escuela. De vez en cuando traía uno de sus arroces con "pollo". Yo veía a Isabel con un bistec y yo con croquetas, y bajaba la cabeza. "Mijita no hay más nada, además está rico", me decía mami.

"Y por favor trata por lo menos de hacer el refresco del mismo sabor que dice la etiqueta del pomo, para por lo menos disimular".

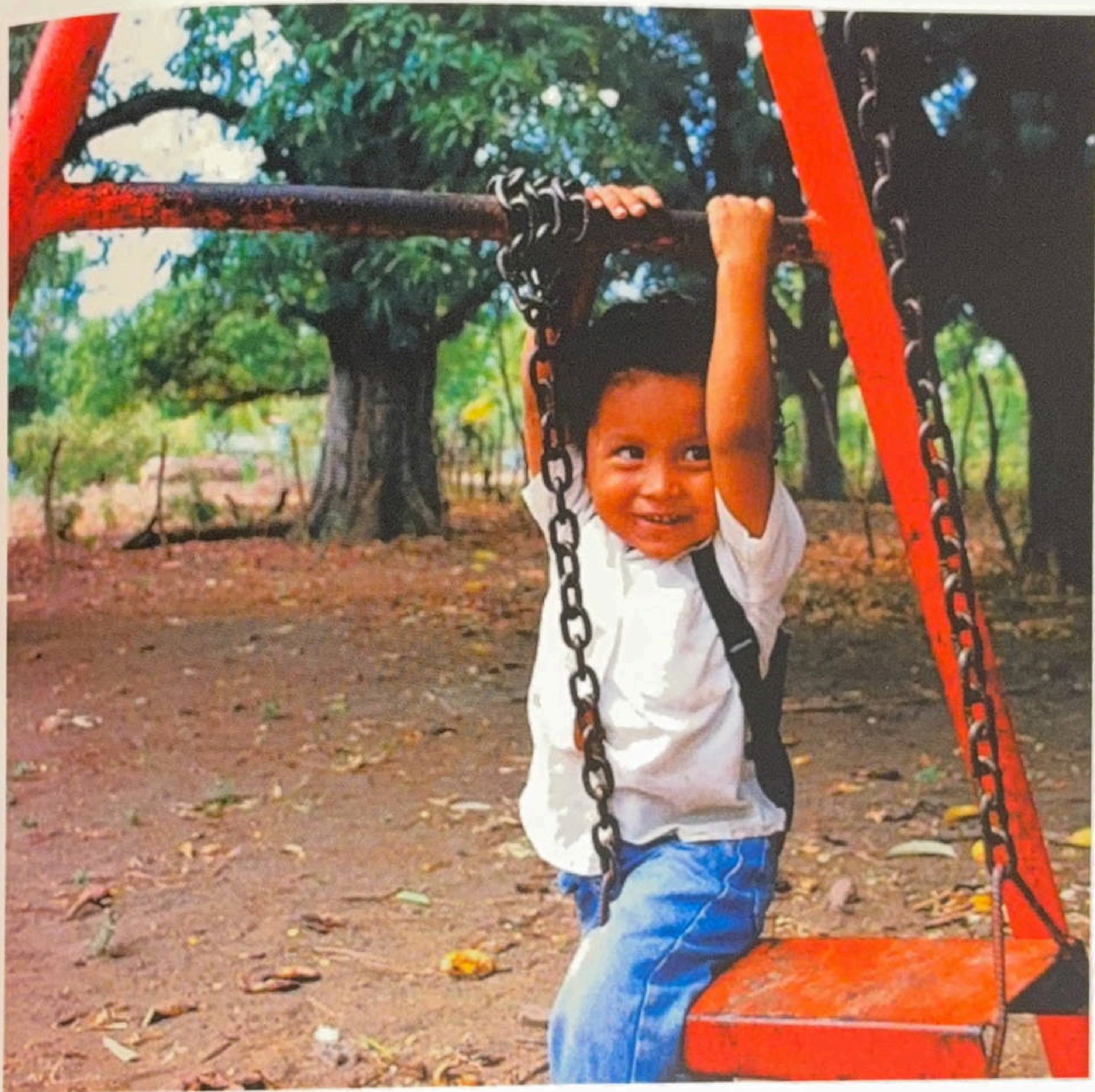
"Yo no sé por qué tú coges tanta lucha con eso si acabo de ver a una niña comiendo tortilla. La pobre tapó el pozuelo cuando pasé por su lado".

Y mami tenía razón. Casi todos estábamos en la misma situación. Para tener dinero había que ser negociante, o tener las "manos largas", o tener familia en el exterior. Esta es Cuba, mi Cuba. Pero caballero la cosa estaba de madre, y aún así había que gritar: ¡Viva Cuba!

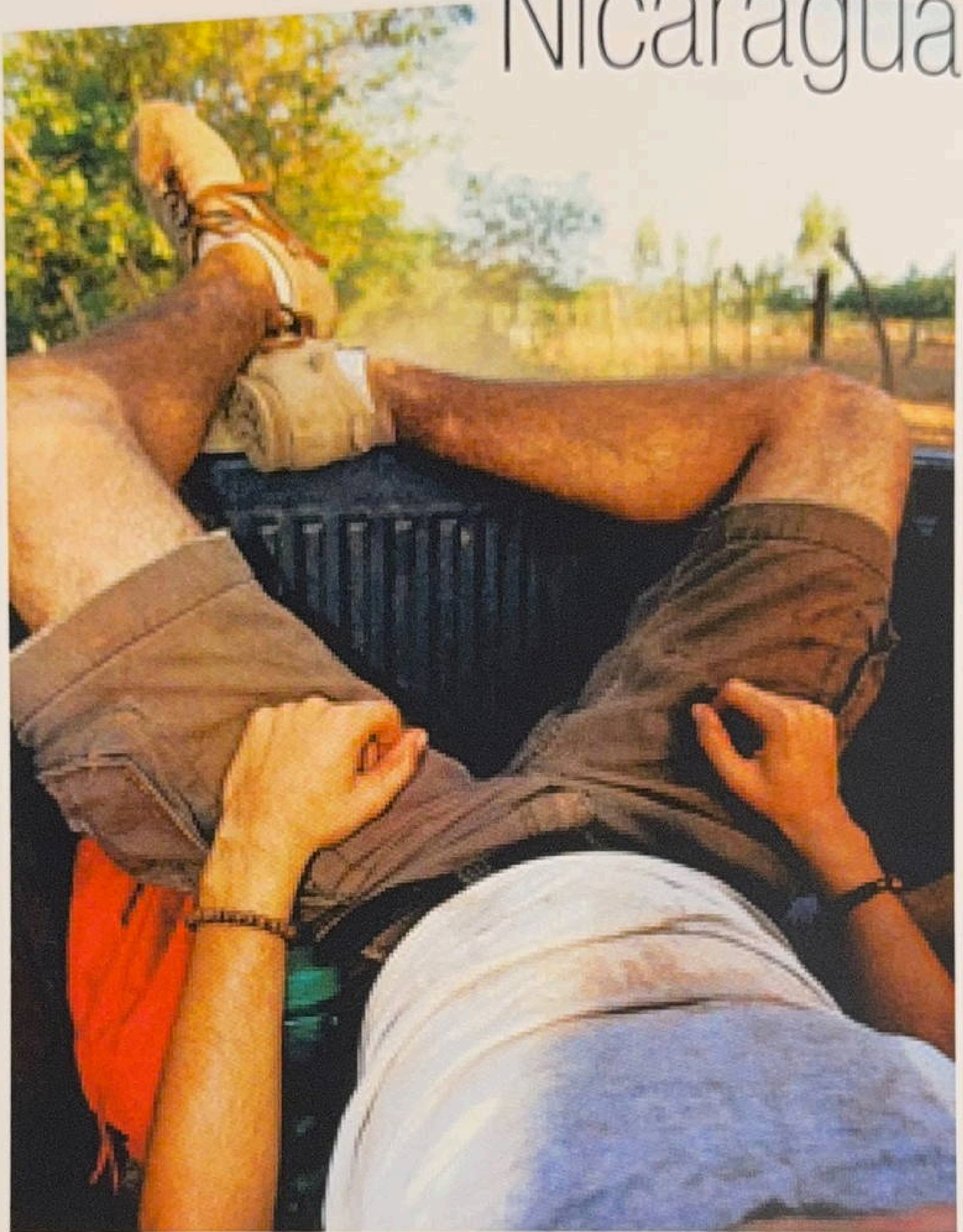








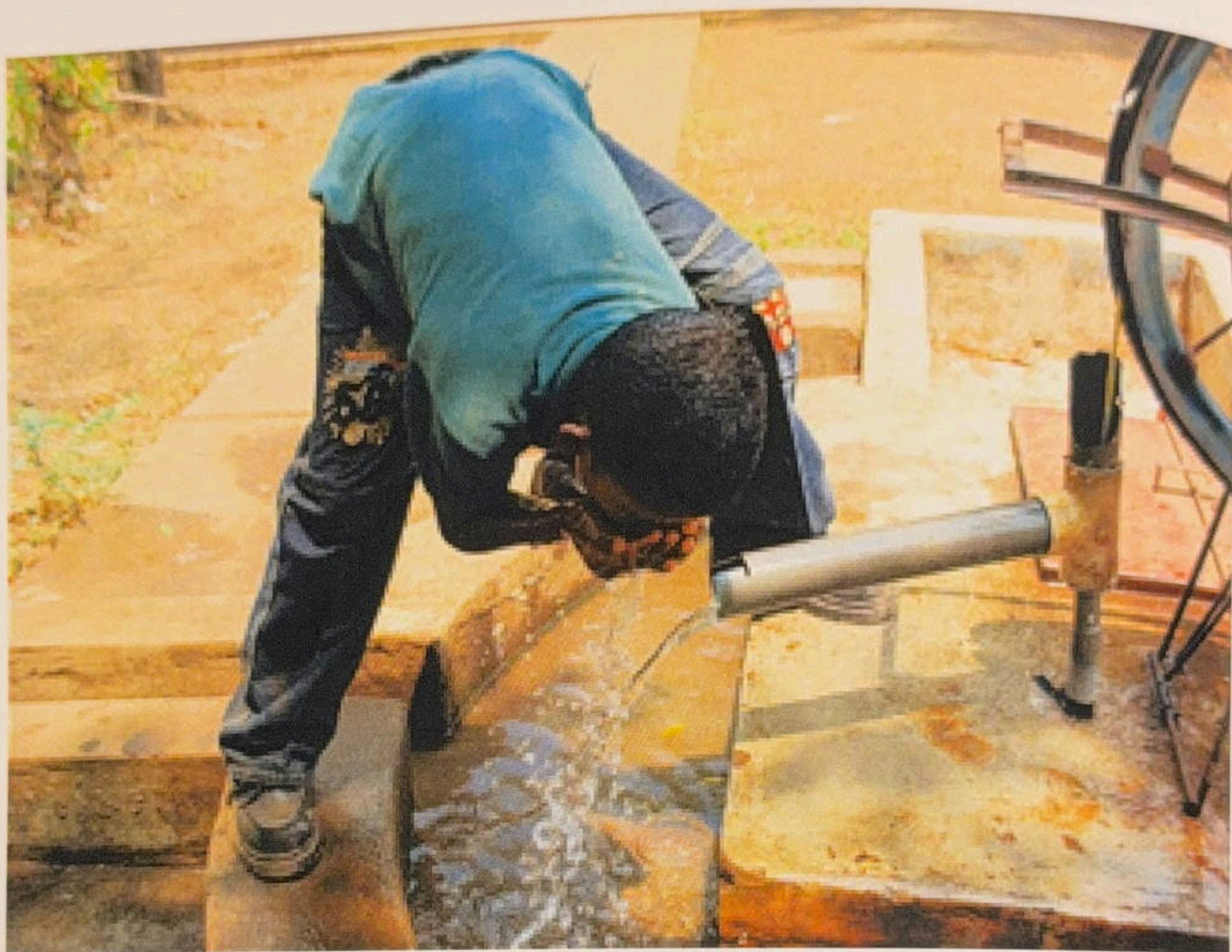
Nicaragua



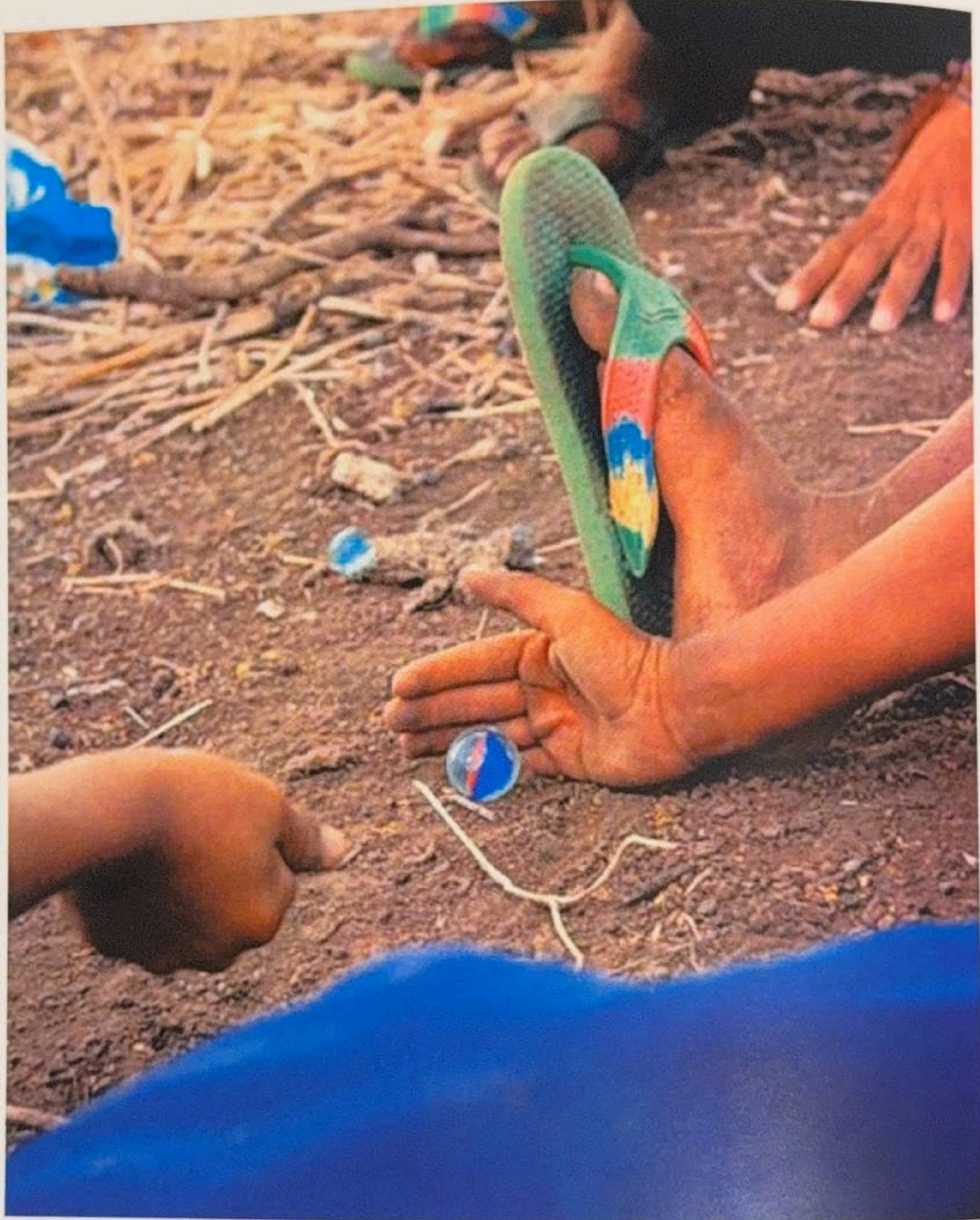
El sonido tormentoso de las piedras estrellándose contra el chasis de la camioneta en la que vamos todos apretujados se mezcla con la repetición de nuestro mantra tropical "arremangala arrempujala". La alegría de la canción que escuchamos casi cada día durante el viaje lleva en sí nuestra propia alegría, que envuelta en el silencio que trae estar con los ojos abiertos y tomando atención, nos muestra que acercarse a la verdadera realidad en la que vive la mayoría del mundo y al mismo tiempo tratar de mejorarla y darle más sentido a nuestras vidas es lo que complace a un ser humano más profundamente.

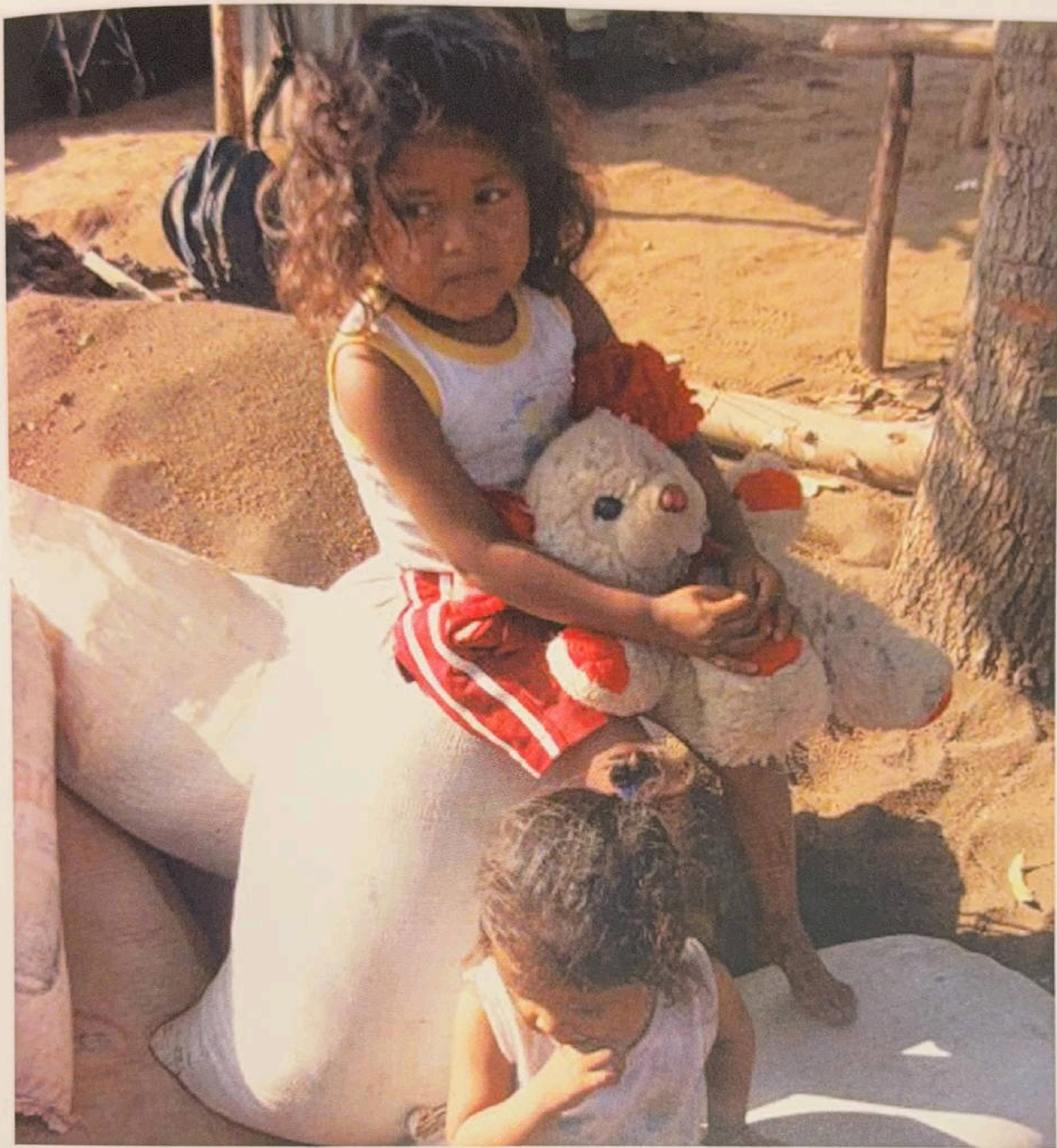
Y la descripción más resumida que se le podría dar al viaje es la del nacimiento de una relación, un intercambio entre dos grupos en los que la materia y el espíritu equilibraron cada lado. Nosotros, los visitantes, recibimos un sentimiento que no se puede explicar en una palabra: el de sentirse unidos, sentir que se pierde un poco el egoísmo para darle espacio al sentimiento que nos lleva a ayudar a los demás sin presión ni ideas heroicas sobre nuestro aporte. Todo era natural, estábamos en casa. Chacraseca en cambio, recibió tres casas, ropa, y bueno, también nuestra presencia. Como grupo aportamos nuestra amistad, pero la verdadera necesidad que ayudamos a calmar fue el de tres techos para tres familias que los necesitaban. Desde un punto de vista alejado a la realidad de lo que es vivir casi al aire libre, la entrega de cuatro paredes puede parecer insignificante, pero en realidad significa mucho, tanto que para poder entenderlo completamente hay que vivirlo.

Estar ahí en el polvo, sudando con la pala en las manos, haciendo las zanjas para el cemento que afirmará los ladrillos de una casa es una experiencia real, es saber que de verdad se puede hacer algo, saber que aunque sea una construcción humilde, significa una mansión para alguien, una mansión porque esa persona vivía entre cuatro troncos cubiertos con bolsas de basura. Y eso fué Nicaragua, fué el trabajo de nuestras manos dando fruto en nuestros corazones, y la apertura de una invitación a todos nosotros, a tí, lector, a hacer concreto un sueño, a darle músculo a la esperanza frágil de traer igualdad al mundo.

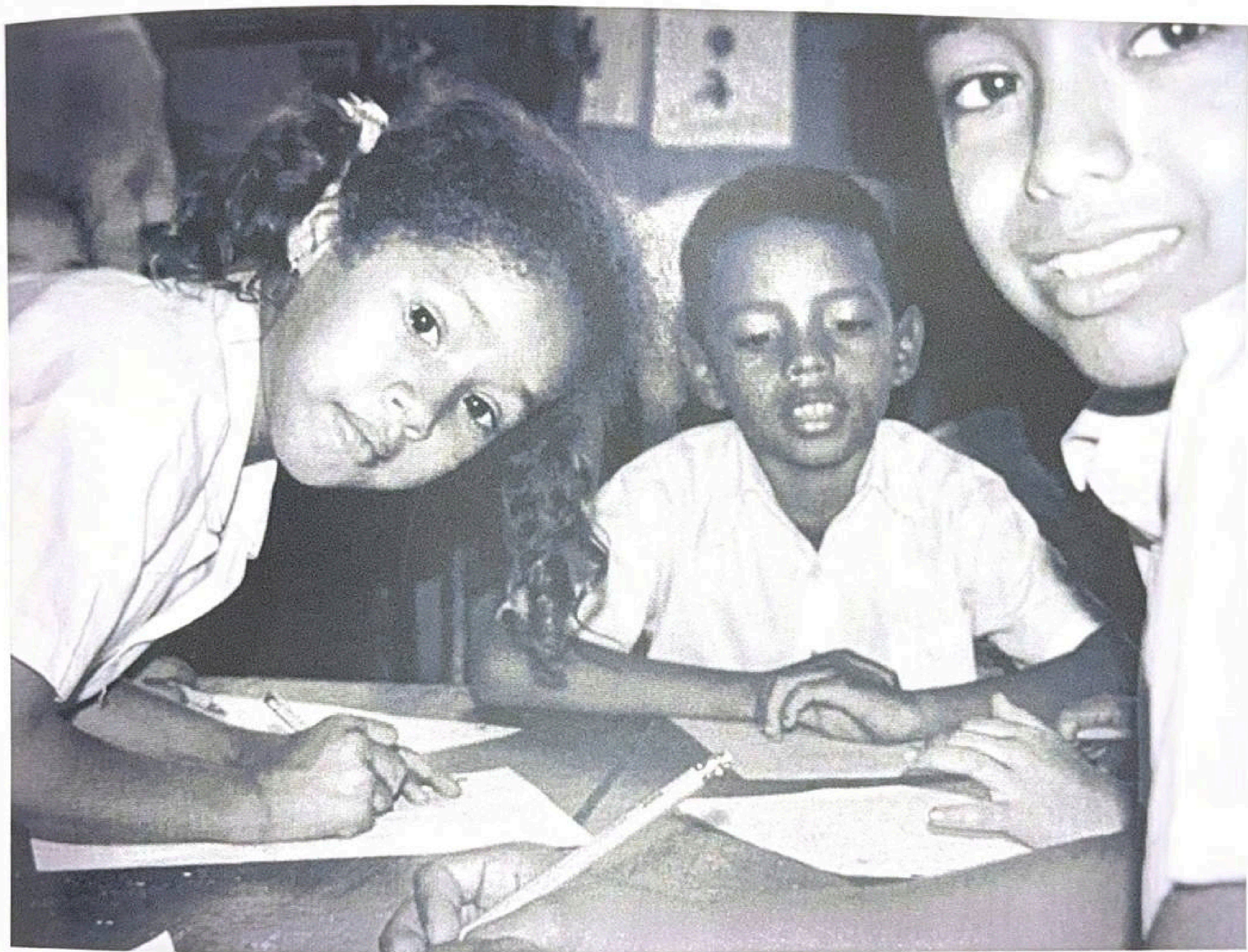




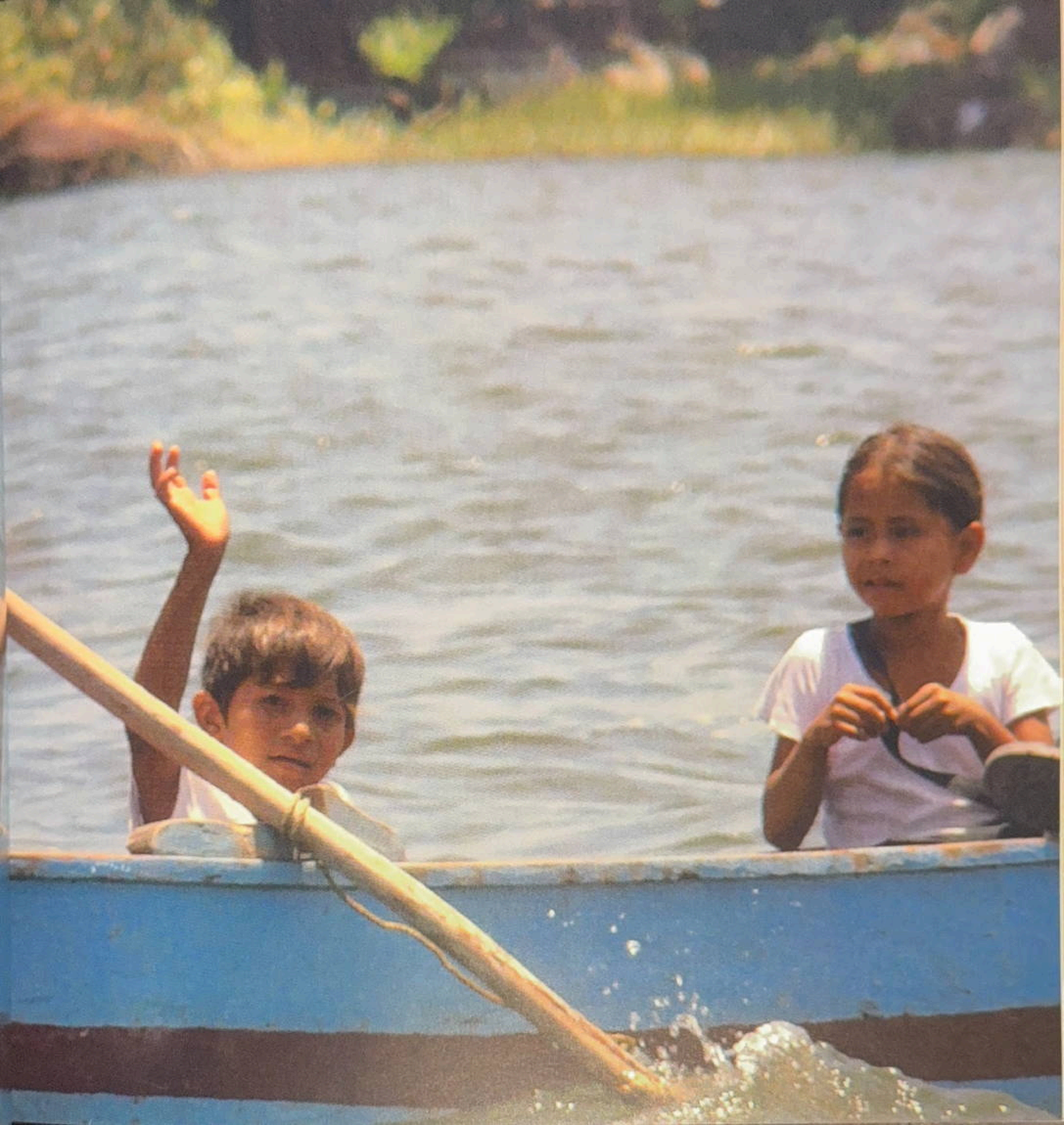














know you like the moon

And like the moon

You shine beautifully

And like the moon

You wait desperately

For the Sun to make your beauty

visible

Flapping the wings is different

For the **G O O S E** and for the **Falcon**

The most beautiful thing ***in you***

Is what you are taking for granted.

What is?

What is "make love"?
I swear I don't know
What that type of love is
If you mean the sexual part of it
Oh! That I know very well
For you see I had sex, a lot of it
Like honey to bees

Prohibited to some, privileged those
Who tasted the sweetness of my flesh
But my soul, my soul has never been touched
My soul has never been seen naked
But I did give my body

Under white sheets whose true color was the one of sin
So here I am, wanting to revive something I already experienced
Fearing that this would not fill me again
Knowing that action without love would once again kill my dreams
Drown me into the apathy of this world
And encourage me to play this senseless game of "love"

Stop me now
Stop my hands for if you let them free
They would probably go
To your sex and no to your heart

Stop my breath
Because when I breathe I say YES! DO IT
But listen to the cry of my heart saying NO! NO! PLEASE!

Don't have sex with me
Make me love with poetry
Make me love with songs
Make me love with your soul
Naked spirits touching, puffing, longing,
Wishing more and more and more of it

What is "make love"?
I swear I don't know
Because I did give my body

But no one has ever seen my soul
For every time I slept with a person
I gave my hands, my feet, my lips
But I reserved myself the right to keep my soul just for me
I gifted the movement of my hips
But I never showed the rhythm of my inner being
And maybe my mouth opened to his name screams
But I reserved myself the right to not open my heart
And it's not like I didn't want anybody to see the real me
I mean, I actually advertised it
I yelled: Love me! Love me!
But only the eco of the silence responded back
I even let the door slightly open
But no one ever stopped to get in
I guess sex was enough
And my soul was meant to be ignore
What is "make love"?
The more I think I know
The more I ignore it
The more I open my legs
The more my heart closes to it
Is "make love" external, internal
What is it? The random joining of two words
To describe the ups and downs, outs and ins
Of what? Two beasts?
I once heard: Love is the mere commitment,
The feeling, the intimacy
Well, I wish this could true
Because I do wanna meet "love"
I wanna welcome it to my heart
I tell how much I waited for him
How much I seek him
Maybe in wrong places, maybe with wrong persons
But my only intention was to know what "make love" is.

What is the worth of a single gesture?
A single word?
A single act?
Endlessly pondering rhetorical questions
To finally account for the wisdom we lack.

"It should be simpler..."
We tell ourselves,
We keep telling ourselves...
That it shouldn't be so difficult to talk,
To connect,
To trust,
To reach out,
To impact humanity...
With our words,
With our minds
-Our muted actions in the dark,
In the stillness of our thoughts;
To the rhythm of our steps upon wet
concrete.

Perhaps it was only a moment,
A whisper,
A decent gesture
-Any gesture.
Perhaps in that instant we recalled
What it meant to be alive,
To have a friend,
To be accepted,
To be heard
-Perhaps even understood...
Like an answered prayer
Years after we stopped believing,



Gesture



Stopped begging,
Stopped crying for answers,
For companions,
For salvation,
For a second of respite or solace
...From the tempest of our minds.

"It shouldn't be this difficult..."
So difficult...
To be felt,
To be heard,
To be seen without the need
For contact,
Or collision
-Obliteration.
Killing one another simply for that
instant
Of complete and sincere atten-
tion...

But what does it mean to attain
such attention?
When the most we can mention is
that which is already known,
Has always been known
-Rendered insignificant by its con-
tinuity?

To whom shall we turn to with this
desperate need
-The unplanted seed of an ideal we
could neither cultivate nor hold?

Who...
Is left?
Since we formed that cleft between us
and God?
Or since that bitter evening of '92
...When he abandoned us.

"But its alright,"
We mumble amongst ourselves,
Because we have accepted that life
will go on
With or without us:
Growing in entropy, heat, and raucous
-Against our will;
In desperate shrills from panic-stricken
innocents,
When we've become aware that there
really are NO INNOCENTS
Because no one is safe;
No one is cured from this habit
To destroy as we create;
To love out of hate and resignation...
In this bloated nation that turns
Our minds into activist mimes
Who struggle to make the world a bet-
ter place
By hopelessly tugging at empty space.

So this is
For the solitary soul that still has faith.
For that single face that initially com-
pelled us into action.
For the child.

For the elder.
For the stranger who cared;
Who looked;
Who dared;
Who blessed our lives
With a single breath of greater meaning.

And it is for him that I write this rant,
Until I pant,
To shove it in the face of those
Who say I can't...
Those that never will;
That like to kill
...And to hurt,
As we all hurt,
Without reason,
Without source
And without measure,
Because our animalistic pursuit of plea-
sure
Has never,
Could never,
And shall never be enough!
Yes... it is tough,
But despite it all
It is our duty to continue to believe,
To perceive
-To always...

ALWAYS
Keep fighting.



Am I There Yet?

A line here, you draw another one there. You pause to look online just to see if she is there. Draw another line. Pick up the phone (don't appear too content), "Thank you for calling...(say hell's name)my name is...(say it with the passion of a DMV employee) how can I help you?"(say it like you care). Take the clients info, process the order, send out the invoice and back to drawing the building plan. Another line there (is that supposed to be a wall), put a door there, measure, calculate, numbers...numbers. The big guy, passes by, looks at you, "Hey I need that floor plan ASAP, so let the girls take the calls, they have nothing else to do anyway" he says. You look up and nod (with confidence, he doesn't need to know). The clock hits 5:30; you get up, say goodbye to the girls. Show a little smile (even old ladies need appreciations sometimes). You get in the car, drive .You open the door, drop the suitcase, and lose the suit. You get a bath and sit in front of the TV, hours. Go to bed, fall asleep.... DAAAMN IT!! I'm late! What the hell happened to the damn clock? I know I set it up for six thirty it's





already 7:45. What the hell is wrong with it?! I am so god damn late! Damn it, Damn it DAMN IT!! I have got to take a bath. Screw the bath, where is my suit? Hell, it is so damn hard to put on these damn pants, I need to lose weight, everyday they fit even less. Was that a crack I heard? Please tell me it wasn't, please, please. I waaaasssss!! Damn it! Now I need to find another suit. Let's go to the closet, where is my black suit? I sent it to the dry cleaner, but that was weeks ago. Yes but the damn Asian girl said, "We ha a problem wit le machine, tomorrow we fix it" I hate that Asian girl. What else do I have? I have the pants grandma gave me last year but they have stains on them from last year's Christmas party. Who the hell cares? My legs are always under the desk anyway. Let me put on some perfume. It's already 7:55, hurry; I got to hurry to get the elevator. OH my god! I forgot today is the day the morons from 10C are moving. Damn they got the elevators packed. The stairs... Uff...uff.... Iseriouslyneed to get ...in

shape...uff. 8 o'clock. Impressive though, 10 flight of stairs in 5 minutes. I was almost flying...uff. Let's get to the car. A black Honda civic, a black Honda civic. Where the hell did I park? Oh right there behind that monstrous Mercedes. Hell, that thing is not gonna let me get out. Good, the driver is right there, I just need to go talk to him. Calm down man, you won't resolve anything being hasty. Breath in...Auppff, breath out pffiuu. "Sir, would you be so kind and move your car?" "In a minute" "Could you just move your car a little bit father so I could get out" "Wait just minute, Matilda is almost here and I don't want her to miss me" "Sir you don't understand I am lat..." "Hey man, everybody got problems." Did he just interrupt me?! Have people lost all sense of decency? Screw him and screw Matilda! I'm gonna get in the car and I'm gonna drive out whether he is on the way or not. Turn the wheel to the right, Turn the wheel to the left, right, left, right, left aaand craaaaaaack. Oh Crap! Did he hear that? No he wouldn't, not with that screeching loud music coming from his speakers....Good. But he will see the scratch on his bumper when he gets out. I am pretty sure he



won't be happy. Well let's not wait and find out. Damn its 8:10 the Palmetto will be packed. What other route can I take? Maybe 87th? No that's packed too. How about 107th? That's too far. Think, think... I got it: the Ghetto. The ghetto in these parts is not like you see in the movies it is not a ghetto at all it is just a poorer area that happens to be close to my neighborhood that my happy neighbors enjoy calling "the ghetto". I just happen to not like going through there but its freaking daylight, I won't get kidnapped or anything. Through the ghetto it is. Damn I am doing 90 mph on a 30, I never drive over 40. But who the hell cares? I am late and that all that matters. It's weird there are no policemen here today, this area its always filled with them, yet there is almost none where I live. Are people automatically more dangerous in poorer places, or they just happen to need more "protection". Hey who the hell cares? I am late! Better for me, no police, no ticket. Turn here, Turn here, I am almost there. Finally, the parking lot, but look at the line in front of it. Wait, why are they turning away from the entrance? Is the parking lot full? Oh



crap, please no. Don't matter, I am going in. The security guard is looking at me with his "Get the hell out of here" face. I don't care "Would you mind letting me in?" "It's full" "Doesn't seem full, I just saw two cars get out" I was not lying I did see them "Sir, it's full please move along" "How can you tell it's full when I just saw two cars getting out? See there goes another one" I am fooling myself? Those cars probably went in trying to find parking and did not find any so they got out. Because , who the hell gets out of work this early, maybe some lucky bastard. "Sir, it does not matter move your car out the entrance now" " Look here "Sir" I have been working in this company for more than ten years you probably started a week ago. I have been parking in this parking lot for most of those ten years. The window from my office, if you can call a cubicle attached to a wall an office, opens straight to the inside of this parking lot. You can be certain that I know by what time this parking lot is full.

And it is too damn early for this parking lot to be full. And now I am late so I am gonna ask you again: Would you mind letting me in?" He flinched, so I guess my crazy eyes worked. "Ok, man suit yourself, you are just gonna end up coming out empty handed." "Let me worry about that 8:25... No parking, no parking , no damn parking. Keep looking, don't give up. No parking, no parking. There is one ALLELUIA! Go , go , what there is another car coming to get it. Accelerate you damn car! NOOO!!! Damn you old lady in the pink suit! That was my parking spot! No worries keep looking. There! Another one! Yes I'm in ! I parked ! I parked! Run to the elevator. 8:30 I made it! You walk past the girls say hello to them (don't look tired or worn down). The big guy comes your way again "I still need that floor plan" You nod again(he still doesn't need to know, he does not know , he doesn't really care) Sit down in your cubicle. Check the web again(maybe she is too busy) Draw a line, another line, measure, calculate, numbers...numbers. Look out the window to the parking lot...(Smile. Maybe tomorrow you'll wake up late again)





Scene 4

(Vincent is on his bed sleeping.)

VINCENT:

(Muffled sound during his sleep.)

Together we'll make hippie babies. We'll call 'em Strawberry, Rainbow...

(Yawning.)

And Harmony.

(Pause.)

VINCENT:

(Calling from his sleep.)

My ray of sunshine? My true nature's child? (Tossing and turning.) Grace? Grace! GRACE!?

(Falls from bed and hits his head.)

VINCENT:

Ohh my head.

(Ends up in fetal position lamenting his injury, caressing his own head to make it feel better. He sits up on the floor with his chin on his knees and his arms hugging his legs, he turns his head and looks around.)

VINCENT:

(Begins to sob.)

Why did you take her away???

(Looking up at ceiling.)

I am talking to you Paco, or whatever your name is! You've taken three women away from me in one night!

Don't hide from me! Come out! Where are you? If you're real show yourself!

(Gets up and starts searching angrily around the room everywhere for this "Voice." He throws things everywhere

while looking under the bed, by the closet, etc.)

(VINCENT, disappointed, walks over to the television and turns it on, then sits on his chair and watches.)

WEATHERMAN:

And today we'll have clear skies and lots of sunshine. Have a wonderful day.

(VINCENT looks at the window, but no cloud. VINCENT sighs in relief.)

CELESTE:

(Sound is distant but becomes closer as the 1st verse finishes, singing.)
I want to live where soul meets body.

(VINCENT stops all movement and looks up.)

CELESTE:

(Singing.)

And let the sun wrap its arms around me.

VINCENT:

(Low pitched sound.)
Pacosito??

(There's a knock, Vincent runs to the door and puts his ear close to it. He listens attentively.)

CELESTE:

(Singing.)

And bathe my skin in water cool and cleansing. And feel, feel what it's like to be new.

(Vincent now has his back to the door,
takes a deep breath, turns around and
opens it.)

VINCENT:

(Stops in astonishment, mesmerized by
the presence in front of him, he
stutters and points)
Y-you're real...

CELESTE:

(Puzzled and slowly.)
Hmm, aren't we all?

VINCENT:

But how did you--?

CELESTE:

(Interrupts in serious tone.)
Well... It happened about...
(Thinks.)

28 years ago. When my father and mother decided to give the stork a phone call. They had asked
for a baby boy but it was around Christmas time and the incoming orders were insane so--

VINCENT:

(Interrupts.)
No! No. How can you be here right now?

CELESTE:

I walked. It's not too far. I am actually downstairs--

(VINCENT stares at CELESTE noticeably.)

VINCENT:

(Interrupts.)

Wow. You're beautiful. All this time your voice hadn't made you any justice. Please come in.
(Pauses.)

CELESTE:

(Enters.)

I think you're quite humorous. I find your weird compliments flattering. You talk like you've known me. Even though we've never met.

VINCENT:

(Pauses, then he get nervous.)

Very funny guys!

(Starts looking around for cameras,
begins to wave)

Where are the cameras? Where's Ashton?

CELESTE:

Kutcher? I love his work!

VINCENT:

Oh-kay... If I am not being punk'd, why'd you leave last night? Why'd you just disappear, without a trace?

CELESTE:

(Ignores last comment.)

But, we've never actually met... I think you're confused. You must remember me from your past life as a-- snail?

VINCENT:

A snail!?

CELESTE:

Yea. You act like a snail, you even look like one too.
(Smiles.)

(Vincent makes a face.)

CELESTE:

(Extends hand.)

But in this lifetime, I am--

VINCENT:

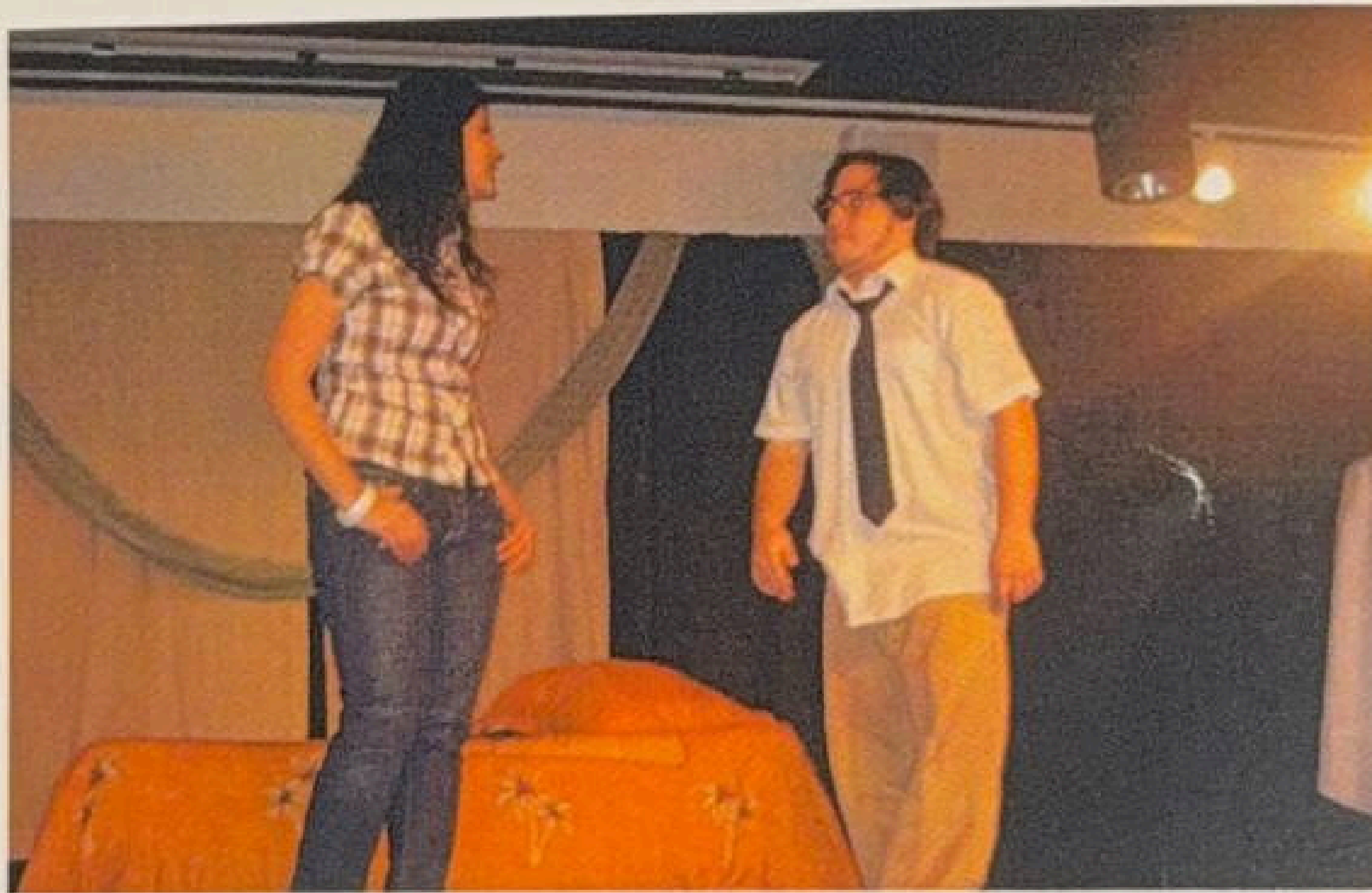
(Shakes hand and interrupts.)

Paquita!?

CELESTE:

(Lets go of hand in disgust.)

Euw NO! My parents aren't that cruel!



VINCENT:

(Snickers.)

It's just that, you never did say your name...

CELESTE:

Because I just moved in, I hadn't had the chance to introduce myself.

VINCENT:

So if you're really not Paquita, then who are you?

(Under breath.)

Oh god, not another girl...

CELESTE:

(With emphasis.)

Another girl?

VINCENT:

(With emphasis, questionably.)

THE girl?

(Looks at CELESTE, rubs eyes to
make sure she is real, blinks.)

VINCENT:

(In shock.)

Oh my dear Jesus! You must've been hired by Pebbles. That or it was Violet who hired you, because Grace wouldn't live peacefully with my death on her conscience. You're a serial killer, aren't you?

CELESTE:

(Smiles knowingly and interrupts.)

Hmm, no. My name is Celeste, let's leave it at that.

VINCENT:

(Repeats In trance.)

Celeste?...

(Snaps out of it.)

I am, I am Vincent.

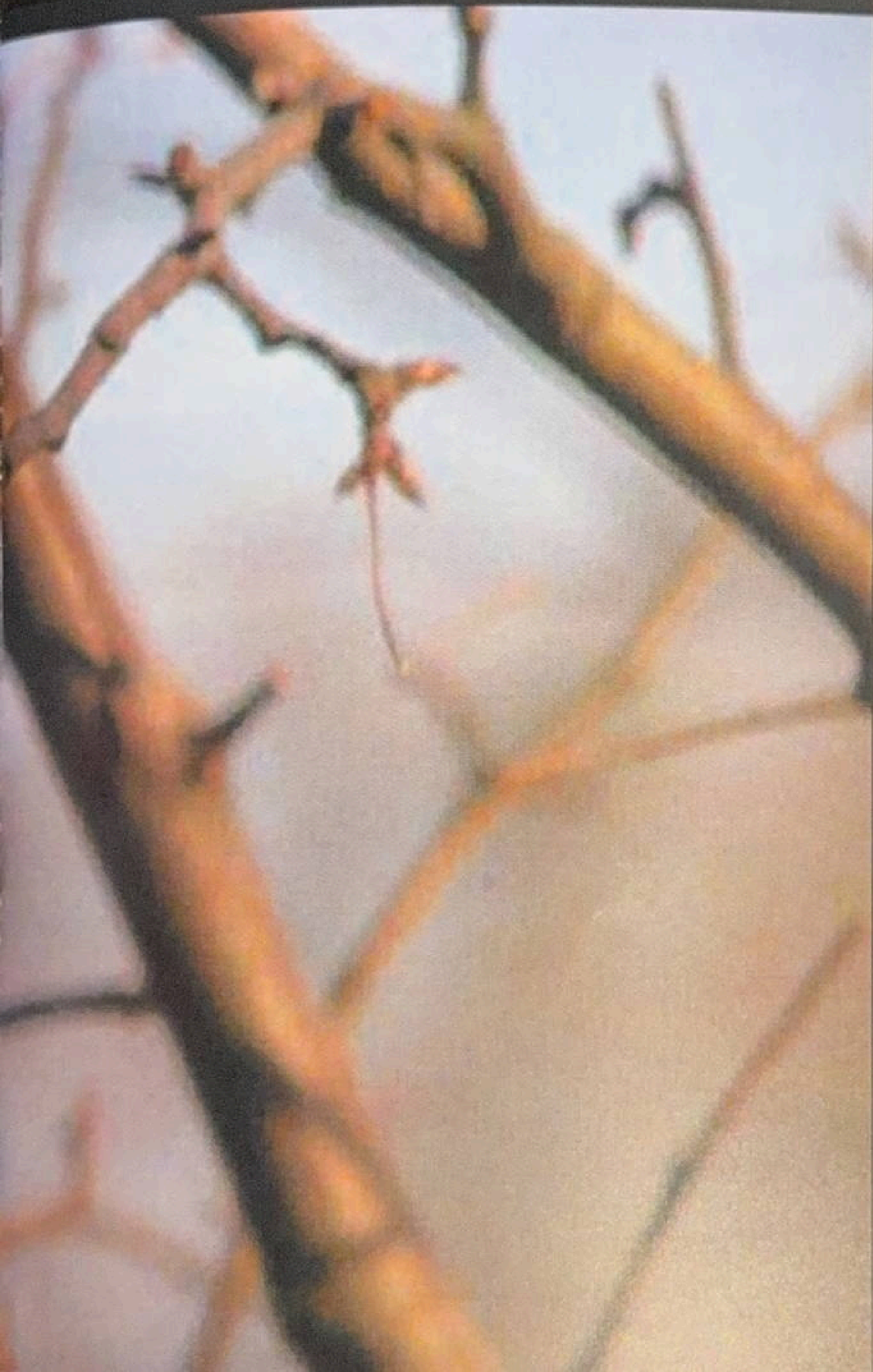
CELESTE:

Oh-kay.

(Laughs.)

Look, I actually dropped in because I had heard a loud thump from downstairs, that lead to your apartment. And I was wondering if you were okay.





VINCENT:

I am fine. The injury is the least of my worries. I am preoccupied about something else.

CELESTE:

What's that?

VINCENT:

(Whispers, looking crazy.)

Someone else lives within me. ..

(Pause.)

I spend a lot of time talking to her. I am sorry I confused you for her earlier. Your voices are almost identical.

(CELESTE just looks at VINCENT.)

VINCENT:

No, no I am not crazy...

(CELESTE looks at VINCENT in an
interrogative manner)

It's not schizophrenia either.

CELESTE:

Have you gone to the doctor recently?

VINCENT:

Are you mocking me? What if I am seriously ill? I think it's hallucinations...

CELESTE:

I think you might be one demented and disturbed soul.

VINCENT:

What if I really do need psychiatric help?

CELESTE:

With all those spirits talking to you... I think you might need an exorcist.

(Vincent's jaw drops open.)

CELESTE:

Relaaax, I was kidding. You're most probably talking about that on-going internal monologue inside of your head. In other words, your inner voice...

VINCENT:

(Repeats after her.)

Voice.

CELESTE:

It happens to the best of us.

(Pause.)

Except I don't know why yours was a girl...

(Confused.)

I guess we all have a feminine side?

VINCENT:

Now you think I am gay or something!? Not that there's anything wrong with being gay or anything.

CELESTE:

Well, you don't have much to show for yourself except for "Paquita," your invisible creation... Now do you?

VINCENT:

Well, when I am not writing, which is like always, I work in a lab, doing crazy experiments, that type of thing. It takes so much time away from me though...

CELESTE:

Hmm... Maybe you should just be a full time writer! If that's what you really like.

VINCENT:v

Haha, I don't know, nobody's ever seen any of my work, but I gotta tell you something, it can take you to another world... Well, at least me.

CELESTE:

Oh, I wanna go to another world!

VINCENT:

Hmm...

CELESTE:

Let me see some of your work!

VINCENT:

No, I don't think that's a good idea...

CELESTE:

Where do you keep it? In your lap top?

(CELESTE makes a move towards VINCENT's table where the lap top is, VINCENT gets nervous and tries to stop her reaching her hand. They look at each other in the eyes, VINCENT lets her go and smiles.)

CELESTE:

Hmm... Let's see.

(Clears throat. Then CELESTE begins to read her voice starts fading.)

How are you pumpkin?
(BLACKOUT)

(PEBBLES, VINCENT and the NARRATOR's

voiceover is heard reading lines.)

PEBBLES:

How are ya pumpkin?

VINCENT:

(Suspicious.)
Who are you?

PEBBLES:

What do you mean who am I? Hello don't you remember me?

VINCENT:

... Huh?

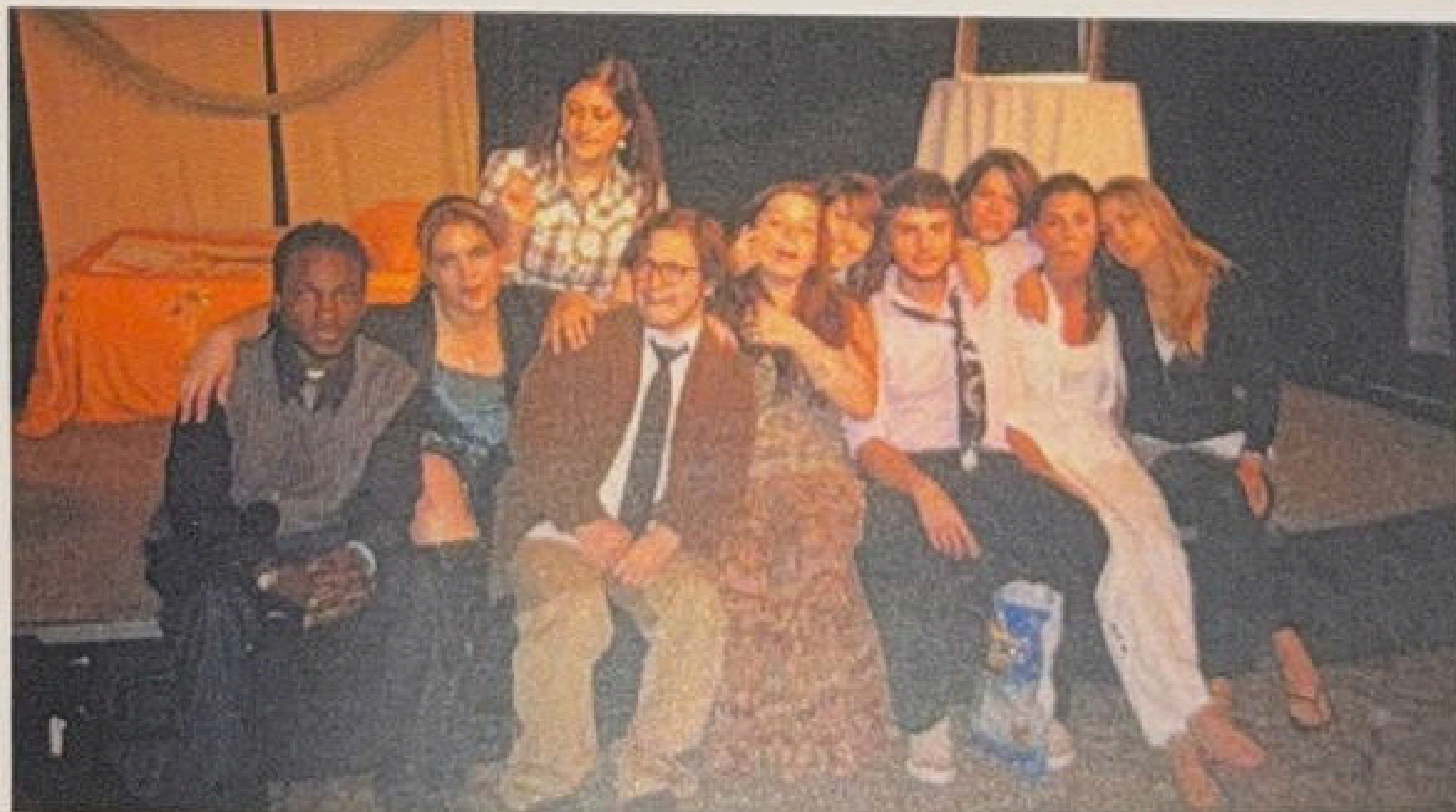
NARRATOR:

Hmm.... She's kind of your girlfriend.

(END OF SCENE 4)

(END OF ACT 1)

(CURTAIN)





A i r e

El aire se abre
y respiro

Los colores de la isla en el aire esplenden
en el aire disipan vestigios de una música
eco de una espuma gloriosa

aire crepuscular
Aire de la noche

los ojos se abren al cenit luminoso
un niño desnudo abraza el aire cálido del mundo
alegre sobresalto

hoguera de los cuerpos
en el aire el cocuyo concierta un universo
Palabras de aire

transparentes y breves Dios me ha dicho
Aire roto
música difícil

no es la mía respiración de santo
Un árbol contra el cielo de la isla crece
devorando el aire

un aire duro expele el árbol poderoso
que dolorosamente respiro

mientras un muro de aire lívido cerca
la isla como un espejo impenetrable que refracta
un paisaje ruinoso

un ejército
de sombras que afanosamente respiran
el aire que el árbol maldito deja

Papá escuchaba los partes de la radio
escudriñaba el techo
salía al patio a guardar los animales
respirando el aire presagioso
miraba cómo el cielo se iba cerrando
La noche del ciclón los hijos pequeños
dormíamos fuera a buen recaudo
papá y mamá en nuestra casa humilde
velando a oscuras en la casa de tejas
sentían acercarse el aire violento
que arrasaba el olor purísimo de las mariposas
del patio

Niños abrazados
la noche del ciclón tras la ventana vimos
la isla
una llamita
agitándose en medio del aire prodigioso
la luna desprendida por un aire sin tiempo

Un aire de estupor me llena
afuera un aire calcinante
derrota hastiado cada ademán de vida
después un aire mentido
empuja a las sombras afanosas
y dispone
un sol
un mar
un campo
muertos
alrededor del árbol asesino
El aire de estupor dentro de mí se asquea
entre cuáguilos de aire corrompido comienzo a
respirar
Aire roto
música difícil
Asediado por el aire vigilante
comienzo a hilvanar fragmentos de aire
musito una música ardua
la noche primera
la noche del ciclón
cuerpos niños abrazados en un susto gozoso
los ojos de papá conjurando el vendaval
mamá cantándome
mis ojos a la intemperie
ávidos

furiosamente iniciados en la premonición y el
miedo
que el árbol sangriento propaga
aire de miedo
música angustiosa
En el aire los colores salvados de la isla
magnifican el resto de una música
que a la eternidad señala
Palabras de aire
en el aire crepuscular
transparentes
y breves
Dios
me ha hablado
Contra el árbol respiro
Canto hacia la música promisorio del aire





La Revolución

Voces y vidrios que se rompen y gritan. Pasan cantando por la calle. Yo veo la luz por entre las piernas. Al pie de las piernas. Detrás de las piernas plantadas en el vano de la puerta -como a través de un bosque- yo veo la luz astillada y ronca que entra cantando a la casa.

Todas las casas tienen las bocas y los ojos abiertos, menos la de Pérez Mortal- dice mi hermana Lourdes, que tiene casi tres años más que yo que no tengo tres. Y anda desnuda porque dice que le pican los vestidos y con moños porque dice que el pelo le pica, como dice que la quería picar el gallo que en el patio de atrás la tiró boca arriba en la tierra y se subió encima de su barriga como si fuera ella una gallina, haciéndole cosquillas en la cara con la cresta colorada mientras la miraba con un ojo y después con el otro.

La luz de la mañana y las voces de los que can-

tan en la calle rompiendo botellas de alegría y, por encima de mi cabeza, más arriba de las palmas reales, digo, de las piernas que guardan la puerta abierta del ancho del gancho y por fin de par en par, las voces de mi madre y mis hermanas. Yo recuerdo o recuerdo que recuerdan que comen-
tan y saludan hacia fuera, más allá de las piernas, digo, de las columnas como palmas del portal y más allá del patio de alante donde creo que ya está sembrada la mata de jazminez y más allá de la acera, hacia la calle.

-Pérez Mortal debe de tener los calzoncillos embolsados. Ahora saldrán la hipócrita de su mujer y la hija. Dicen que ha robado tanto administrando el Hospital Civil, que hasta una tisis se ha traído a la casa; así está: acartonado. Y cuando le entran los ataques de tos, la vieja le pide a Ana Rosa que toque el piano bien fuerte, para que al padre no le

oigan toser los vecinos-

Mientras oigo a mamá, crezco hasta la altura de sus caderas, más anchas que las curvas aún vírgenes de mis hermanas mayores. Y empinándome todavía un poco puedo besar los brazos siempre frescos y esquivos de mi madre.

Afuera todos andan ocupados en adornar la calle. Los niños que nacen para ser felices entran y salen de lo que ya no es la casa de Clota y Edelia Faneque sino el Comité de Defensa de la Revolución de nuestra calle. La casa de todos. Atragantándonos el arroz blanco y el huevo frito de la cuota, los niños salimos disparados de las que fueron nuestras casas para ir a recibir y cumplimentar las órdenes de la presidenta y la vice-presidenta del C.D.R. Ensartar con cordeles recortes de latón para adornar de acera a acera nuestra calle mientras los mayores disponen un gran cuadro de la perra cosmonauta con Gagarin que va colgado en el centro y los más hábiles construyen una réplica del Sputnik en la azotea de la casa de dos pisos, la más alta de la calle, donde se pegó un tiro, con la pistola de su padre militar, aquel joven cuyo nombre no recuerdo.

Todos son milicianos, aunque no tengan pistolas. Todos están vestidos con el uniforme azul y verde; como los chipojos que, atados, achujan en parejas los muchachos.

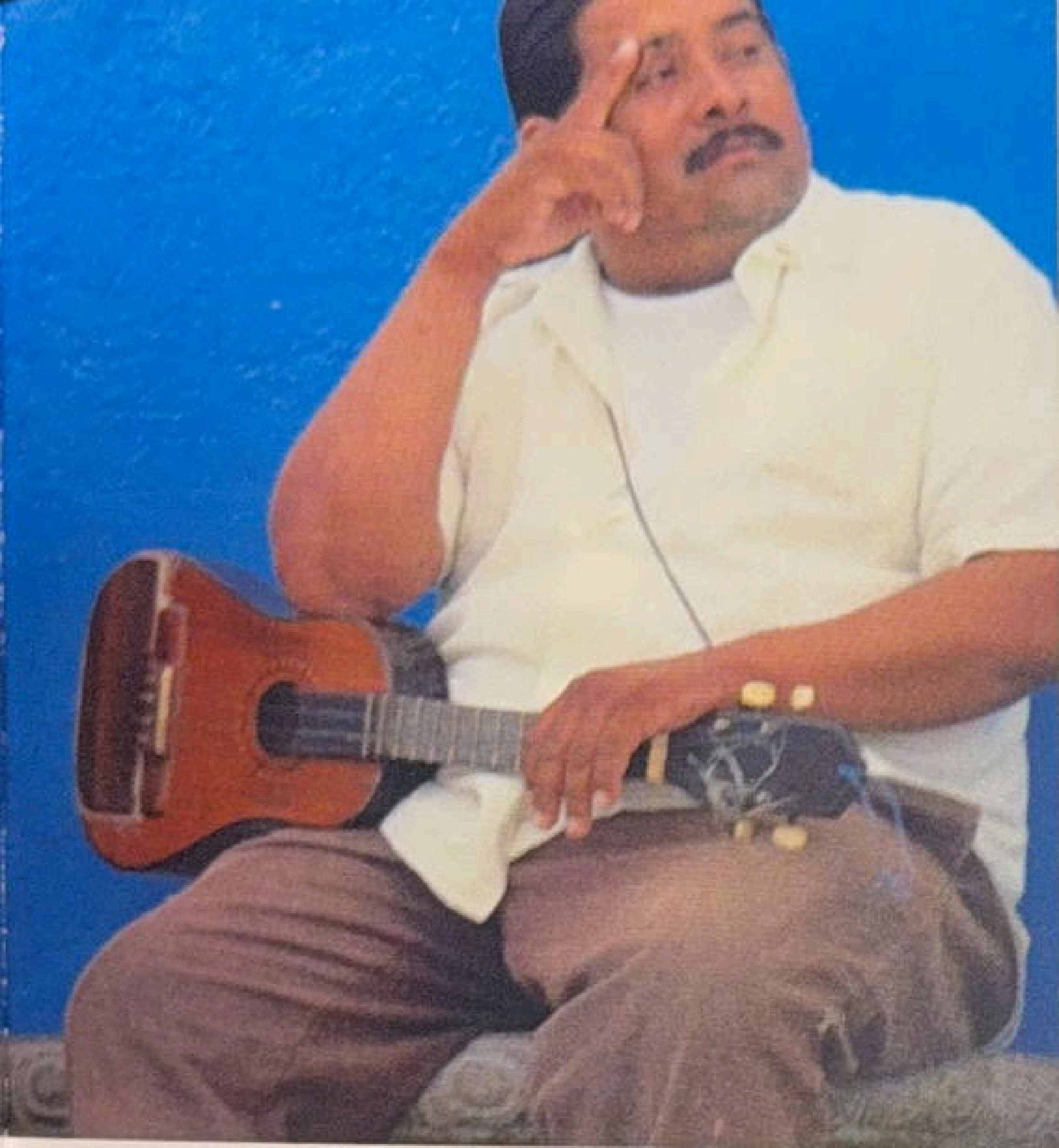
-Como los chipojos tenemos que ser los revolu-



cionarios- dijo el Comandante en Jefe -Como los chipojos que negros de odio muerden el cuello al enemigo hasta vencer o morir. Patria o Muerte. Venceremos-

Una vez, por la calle, pasó un loco borracho con un chipajo prendido como un arete en cada oreja. Con la cara colorada por el ron, el hombre se reía moviendo la cabeza pero los chipojos, negros, no le soltaban las guatacas ensangrentadas. Los que todavía seguían azul y verde eran el par de chipojos que, entre dos trozos de hielo, el loco se iba comiendo como un sandwich.

En los ladrillos de la tapia del patio, junto al cantero sembrado de mariposas, los chipojos se ponen a sacarles la lengua roja a las hembras hasta que las agarran y las cubren mordiéndoles la cabeza.



Cuando algún chipoyo entra al comedor o a la cocina, mi madre y mi hermana Teté salen dando gritos a la calle donde los muchachos achujan los chipoyos atados. Y entonces vuelven a entrar gritando a la casa y no dejan de gritar hasta que alguien los espanta otra vez hacia el patio. Porque dicen que si uno mata un chipoyo a las doce del día se vuelve loco.

Yo les tengo miedo a los caguayos y a los chipoyos terror, pero no puedo decirlo porque como soy varón van a decir que soy pájaro y contrarrevolucionario. Y a los pájaros y contrarrevolucionarios los mandan a la UMAP. A Pérez Mortal, no, porque es muy viejo y está tuberculoso; pero a los amigos de Ana Rosa, que fuman cigarillos y bailan rock

and roll, cualquier día se los llevan por bitongos a la UMAP.

Yo supe primero que Lourdes que ya ella era señorita. En el cantero de mariposas yo estaba agachado y ella doblada con las piernas abiertas. Miré para arriba y descubrí la primera mancha en los bloomers: -¡La sangrona!- grité.

-¡Mataron el berraco! - el coro respondió.

Yo tengo miedo. Más que a los chipoyos y a quedarme chiquito al lado de Lourdes que ya es señorita, a las Faneque. Con no sé qué pretexto una de ellas vino a leer lo que yo acababa de pegar en la puerta de la casa, con letras de colores y en la i de vi, como punto, el casquete de un bombillito roto de las luces del arbolito: -¡Feliz Navidad!- Yo no sé por qué hice eso cuando oí al Comandante en Jefe decir por la radio que más nunca habrá Navidad ni Día de Reyes.

Tengo miedo. Porque ya le llego a mamá por los hombros y las Faneque seguro que lo van a informar a alguno de los hombres con carpeta que visitan el Comité. Allí han clavado un ojo sin párpado y un machete afilado en la puerta: -¡Con la guardia en alto!- Tengo miedo. Ya no sé cuál es mi casa.

-¡Cállate ya, so faino, no seas vaina! Y estate quieto allá abajo. Oye los gritos y las botellas rotas. Ha triunfado la Revolución.

Tainted Grass

I used to be until yesterday a believer of peace through violence. Historically, that's how the world has always acted. If there's turmoil and tensions between two places, you fight them, and then peace is achieved.

Now, the question is that true peace? Does that really make us feel safe at night, does it makes us feel like nothing is going to happen to us?

I doubt it, because just in one day I summoned my thoughts and knowledge and came to the conclusion that no... No... I doubt it...

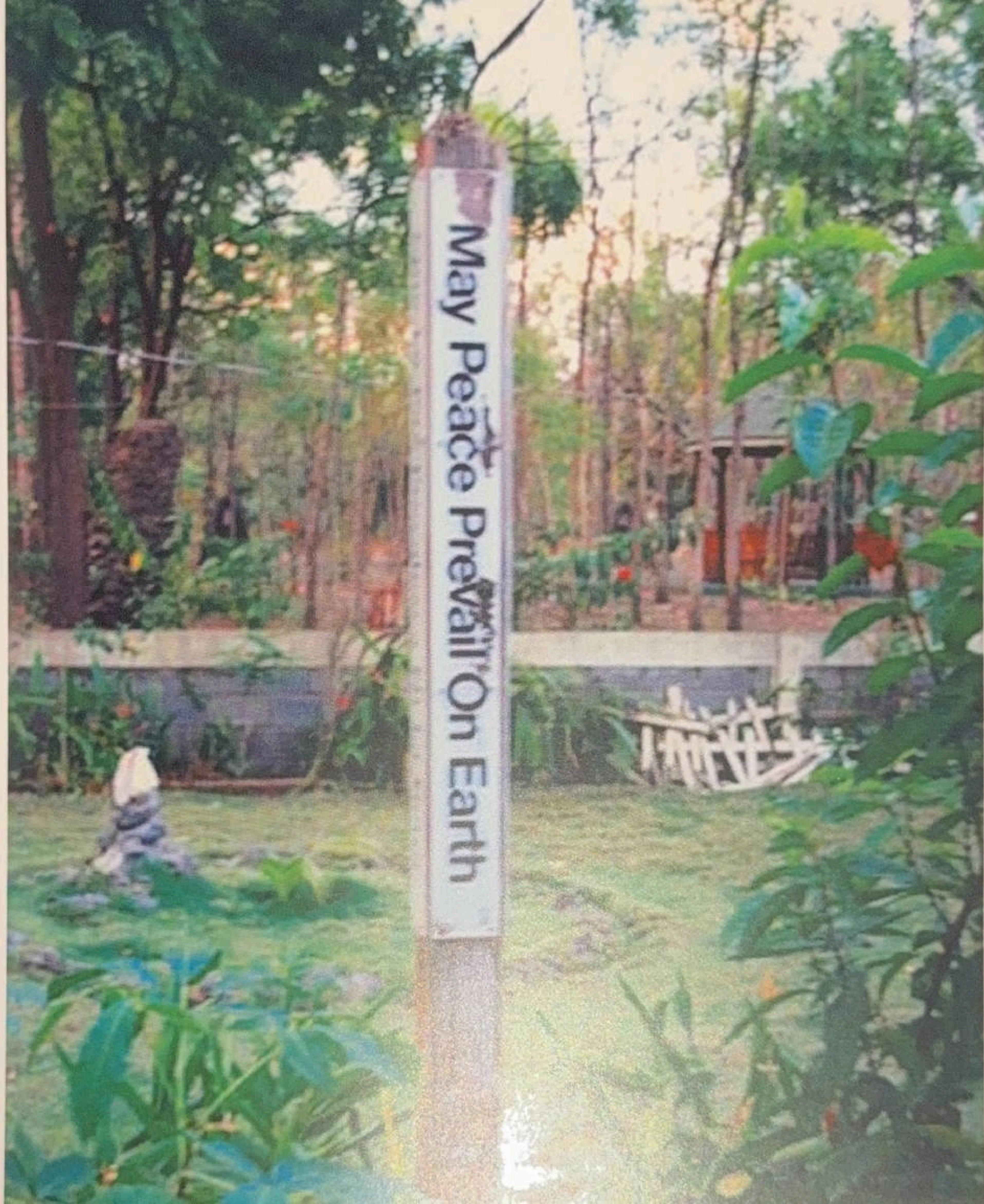
Short term peace foreshadows hatred and anger, peace for some years but then our kids have to live the same we lived and fight the kids of the man we fought time before. And their blood and our blood shall taint the grass, again.

Grass grown with blood like it was water. My blood and his blood, my kid's blood and his kid's blood, again.

In the end, we just accomplished violence.

We accomplished hatred and anger because we wanted peace. In the end through violence only violence is achieved.

May Peace Prevail On Earth



vHappineS

An English class of 12 students along with professors: Carlos Gonzalez and Alex Salinas, took it upon themselves to research one broad topic-- HAPPINESS. Together they accomplished a film about our own state of fulfillment, in the light of our own daily lives. Happiness is not something we can feel all the time, it is a momentary feeling that comes and goes. But ultimately, happiness can be achievable, by all of us. We would like to share with you today our findings in the theme we researched.



Interview #1 — "Is Happiness found in health?"

We interviewed a young high school student by the name of Pierina, she is unfortunately sick. She had a stroke which caused her brain to stop working, currently making her 8-9 years old mentally despite the fact she is really 17. The interview was at her house where she was very cooperative and polite. She is fully aware of her illness. She enforced the fact that if you happen to be unhealthy like her, you shouldn't put much mind into it, just try to live life to the best of your ability.

Interview #2 — "Can wealth make one happy?"

It took us forever and a day to arrive to John Beltran's house. A successful businessperson and significantly prosperous man, which finds himself lucky and well deserving for everything he's earned. John who has raised a family with three kids is still on the go, despite the fact he is well over the retirement age. John thinks money can help anyone be fortunate, but it is not the ultimate source of happiness. He remembers how happy he was when he had just arrived to this country from his homeland. He was pursuing the American dream and felt content, despite the fact he had nothing in his pockets

Interview #3 — "Is happiness found through education?"

Victor Morales aspired to be an artist, his father along with his family did not agree; in fact they criticized the idea. Forced by cruel judgment, he took it upon himself to study law. Once he received his degree, he handed the diploma to his father and said, "This belongs to you." In the time span it took to graduate he realized that what his family thought would be ultimate glory... A well paid and stable job-- Was not happiness. He left the country to pursue his career in theater, and catch his dreams where he is currently pleased and content.

Interview #4 — "Happiness through the arts."

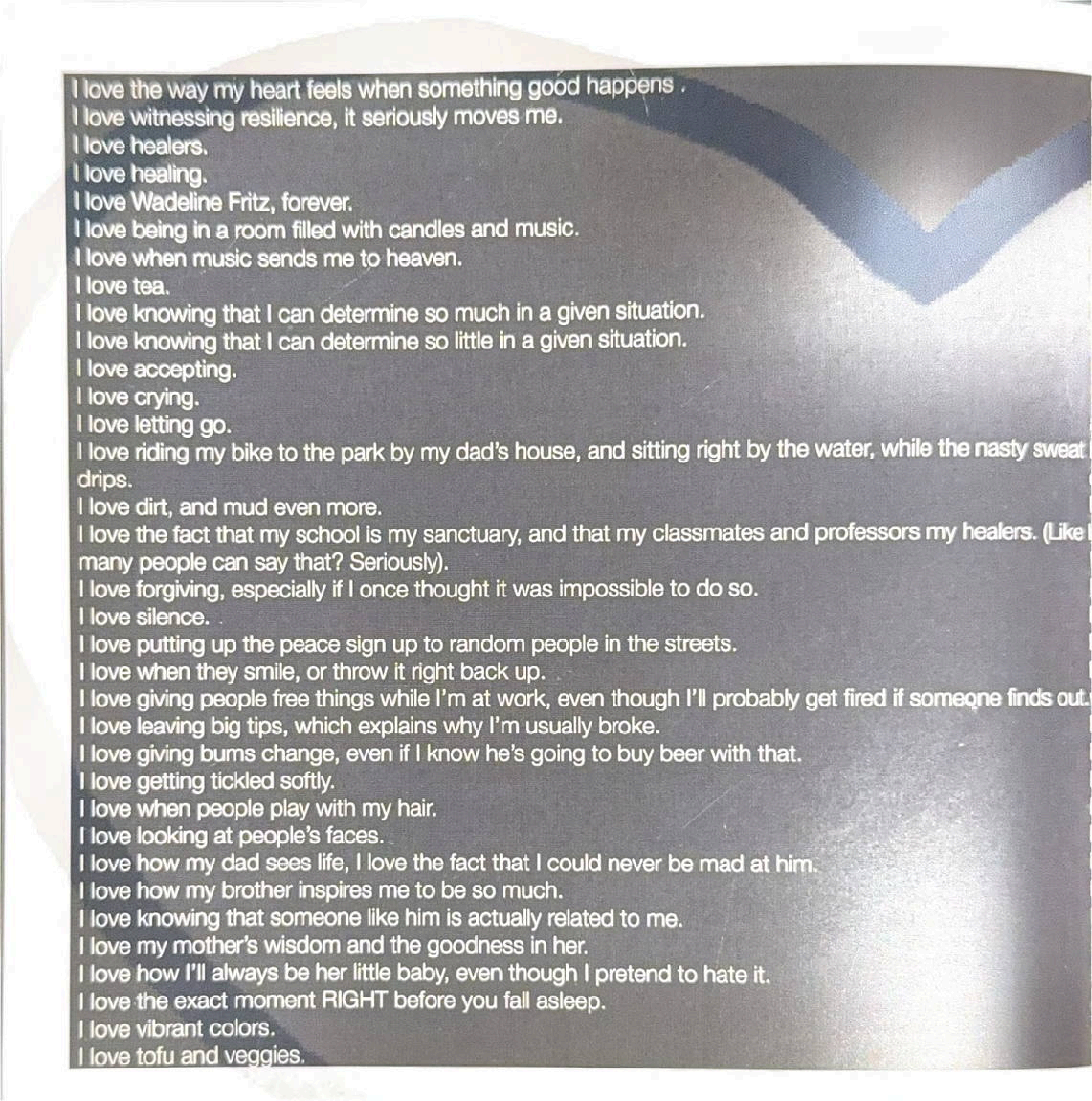
It took us a while to get to Lena's place, since we got a little lost. But when we did, Lena the artist welcomed us into her mother's home with open arms. The house was cozy and full of family tradition. Daughter of Malena Burke and granddaughter of Elena Burke, both legendary singers in Cuba, Lena is a shining star. She discussed her passion for music to be the true definition of her happiness. To conclude her interview, she later sang and played the song, "Tu Corazon," her hit single with Alejandro Sanz. The melody and harmony were full of meaning and emotion. Lena lives for what she does.

Interview #5 — "Happiness in tough times?/Do family and friends make you happy?"

Our target for this interview was someone who is not going through the best of times. We decided to interview someone without a home and without a family. Even though many people find themselves in that situation currently, finding someone willing to talk about it was not the easiest of things. I called shelters that help the community, such as Camillus House and Lotus House, many times. But these establishments never contacted me back. We decided a personal visit would be more effective; as we arrived to Lotus House, one of the directors explained to us how interviewing one of their guests would take a long process and plenty of paperwork for the sole purpose of their confidentiality. This is something we respected, but time was not something we could afford. So we decided to hit down town, where we found Silvio Gutierrez. He has been homeless for five months now and was eager to share his story. We started filming close to the Public Library where we found him, there I was asked to stop recording because we didn't have legal permission to tape near the building. We moved and finally proceeded with the discussion, where we found out why he was a hobo. This is not something he was proud of or chose to be, but more like forced to become. It is impossible for him to find a job without legal documentation in this country. He claims not to have any addictions, and despite the fact that he is a bum he looked clean and healthy. He made it clear that even if he did find himself all alone in this world he was trying to make the best out of it; with his music, a little coffee, and the usual visits to the library just to e-mail his family in Cuba.

Alexis Zayas is a current student at Miami Dade Inter-American campus. Alexis' interview took place in the set of the movie he is an extra for, "Immigration Tango." He told us about his incarceration for 3 months in prison where he believes to have made a transformation. He found himself and realized exactly what he wanted in life. He wishes to pursue a career in acting, even if it means he has to drop out of college and dedicate all of his time to this dream. Something Alexis described that I won't forget, is how he knew when the sun would come up or go down through his cell bars, just by seeing a tiny dot of light. This was something that pushed him to keep going and not give up. Knowing that after he got out of jail he had a future waiting for him, helped him not to quit.





I love the way my heart feels when something good happens .
I love witnessing resilience, it seriously moves me.
I love healers.
I love healing.
I love Wadeline Fritz, forever.
I love being in a room filled with candles and music.
I love when music sends me to heaven.
I love tea.
I love knowing that I can determine so much in a given situation.
I love knowing that I can determine so little in a given situation.
I love accepting.
I love crying.
I love letting go.
I love riding my bike to the park by my dad's house, and sitting right by the water, while the nasty sweat drips.
I love dirt, and mud even more.
I love the fact that my school is my sanctuary, and that my classmates and professors my healers. (Like many people can say that? Seriously).
I love forgiving, especially if I once thought it was impossible to do so.
I love silence.
I love putting up the peace sign up to random people in the streets.
I love when they smile, or throw it right back up.
I love giving people free things while I'm at work, even though I'll probably get fired if someone finds out.
I love leaving big tips, which explains why I'm usually broke.
I love giving bums change, even if I know he's going to buy beer with that.
I love getting tickled softly.
I love when people play with my hair.
I love looking at people's faces.
I love how my dad sees life, I love the fact that I could never be mad at him.
I love how my brother inspires me to be so much.
I love knowing that someone like him is actually related to me.
I love my mother's wisdom and the goodness in her.
I love how I'll always be her little baby, even though I pretend to hate it.
I love the exact moment RIGHT before you fall asleep.
I love vibrant colors.
I love tofu and veggies.

I love analyzing.
I love meeting a person, and instantly knowing that we're going to be great friends.
I love reading old letters or writings.
I love memories.
I love being human.
I love entanglement.
I love challenges.
I love justice.
I love laughter...the type that makes you cry and your belly ache...
I love thunder...rainy days...especially if I don't have to work and someone makes me banana pancakes.
I love words...I love that they have power...and the way they make me feel...
I love meows and barks...especially those coming from Purri, Lula, Rayita, Lucky, Leticia, Mushi, Bacio, Bisou and scooter.
I love art...getting lost in Michelangelo's David for hours and hours....really, there's nothing better to do in Florence (except dancing with real Italian boys at night).
I love the way my friends call and text me when it is most inconvenient and yet they make me laugh and smile and sometimes cry....
I love forgiveness.
I love community.
I love Cuba and Venezuela.... they are a part of who I am.
I love supernovas.
I love music.....from going to sleep and waking up to my father playing the piano to sharing videos and music with friends...it brings me joy!
I love watching the stars at night in Sunny Isles Beach.
I love being with my friends...
I love knowing that I can trust my capacities...
I love the way I mess up when I speak French.
I love meeting new people.
I love not being the center of attention.
I love wearing winter coats.
I love the beach and the sky!
I love being with the men and women that make up my life.
I love white chocolate and eating it like a glutton.
I love the world and the different people that make it up.
I love learning from my mistakes.
I love loving...





InterAmerican Campus

Miami Dade College
Interamerican Campus
627 S.W. 27th Ave.
Miami, FL 33135-2966

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