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and
when all the noise
dies down

and
darkness descends upon us

and
you finally learn
to shut the fuck up

hopefully then
music will at long last

triumph

and
take us all away

somewhere anywhere

that's not here
in this mundane

life of ours
we call

the social network

Omar Alexandre
Miami, FL



grandroue

sandraparis

It's midnight
And something's not right
It's dark
But she's alive as dawn

I'd care less if she'd not passed out earlier
If she'd not scared the rhythm off my heartbeat
I'd not bother if she had not made me gasp for breath
But this night is weird...

She brIGHTEneD as by a power surge.
But at a sniff, she DiMs o u t
into the Dark

The Lady of the Sound slipped into silence
And would only be stirred if my voice brings another
surge

But she was bold to step out of the death valley
Though s l o w l y,
Hope lightened the gloomy night
And the morning came after the short intense fight..

Seye Maj
Nigeria

Geneviève Thauvette
Toronto, Canada



technical difficulties
oh the humanity
lostandfound
batchild weds mystery woman
chance of rain
world's smallest dictator dies
glamma ray (cover)

Red Raspberry Jam

What was it that you had said to me....?

During that lusty twilight that borders the edge of dreams?

The line that forges hope, where the air is oh, so clean!

Words that spilled out of your mouth like marbles!

Brilliant!

Child-like!

Each syllable containing galaxies that explode and implode within my heart.

Could you stay mine, all through the night?

Wait for the dawn to burn this all away, like match to tissue paper.

I'd trace the endless topography of this dreamscape every eve just to set fire to

Seconds!

Minutes!

Hours!

Eons!

Until the flames of daybreak lap her fiery tendrils at my tear streaked face,

I will whisper "One more breath." just for you.

Victoria Young

Pennsylvania, USA

Strong working hands

Black and weathered

What machines have you oiled?

What wheels have you gripped?

What bottle necks have you tilted to cigarette stained lips?

What letters have you written to forgotten loves back home

What tears have you wiped?

Yours or another's?

Child...sister...brother...or mother?

Whose face did you cradle as they slept in sweet slumber

Strong working hands

Black and weathered

Hands heavy with experience, heart light as a feather.

Christina Booker

Novi, MI

Cold Brew

Josh Dale
Philadelphia, PA

The roll-up garage door chugged along its path, revealing the beer store to a frigid Saturday morning. As per usual, the owner unlocked the man doors and a couple haggard denizens stomped inside. Across the parking lot, the young man trudged in as well, holding a twenty-four-ounce coffee. His eyes were bloodshot from a poor night's sleep—also due to the fact he'd already labored his typical 40 hours—and only nodded to the owner. He, in kind, nodded back.

"Crazy, huh?" The owner said to the young man, who was now situated in the cashier booth. His feet were cold and he hunched by the small electric warmer.

"How can anyone come in at eight? Like its...just unreal, right?"

"Yea, who knows," the young man sighed.

The owner retreated down the warehouse. He disappeared, almost into thin air, into the office. The young man heard a slam of his door, which began the monotony of cashiering solo. "A four pack of Colt 45...that'll be \$4.40"

"Ok."

"Want a bag?"

"Sure. Burrrr! A bit chilly today, huh?"

The last one really got to him. It was not even 8:30 and he must've heard that line from every person. There was a loathing sensation about it. It was obviously an unseasonably cold day, and everyone was overdressed for a reason. It wasn't some freak cold front that turned a casual September day from 70 degrees to 64, no. It was November, mid-November to be accurate, in the northern hemisphere. Nothing in his mind could quantify a reason behind the static, benign way strangers accumulate the exact same thought on the exact same subject. How many times did Whitman call the sky blue? How often do you here a reiteration of—well, there isn't a high chance any of the young man's customers would know of a poetic metaphor, so we will end that discussion here.

His pumpkin-flavored coffee with vanilla creamer kept him going. Same with the heater, that is, until he opened the dilapidated windows of the booth. Plexiglass and plywood were not good insulators, but he had to manage. What really would warm him up is berating a customer about the frigid air, but his job matter just a tad more than his intentions. It was 9 o'clock and all he wanted to do was urinate. He heard a pop in the back warehouse. It was cold enough for the soda cans to explode, or it could've been a gunshot. Hopefully, it was just the soda.

Time passed. Same ole, same ole. He joked with some repeat customers.

"What's up, man?"

"Same ole, nothing extraordinary."

"I feel ya."

"Actually, am really bummed. The Eagles have a bye-week. I don't know what to do with myself!"

"Sucks, yea. Well, that's why we drink, right?"

"You know it!"

He wouldn't dare ruin their routine. He wouldn't dare give a recommendation of his favorite beer. He did realize that the perspective of time spent in the brief association was a subjective statement. They saw him for less than 5 minutes of their lives and most likely overlook their meeting for their

friends and family. Who's to say he didn't see them as friends? It was nearly indistinguishable to tell. But he assumed by the sendoff of 'thanks, guy' would plea some sense of anonymity and disregard.

He's funny, but I need more coffee.

Toilet.

Where's my helper?

10:30 arrived and he was pleased enough with some reading. He was deep in thought, sitting at the back of the booth when he heard a muffled 'Hello?' He rose to the occasion, shaking off the delusional state and greeted the senior gentleman. His right eye was forced shut and the young man dared not ask if there was an empty socket behind that lid or not.

"What can I get you, sir?"

"No worries, son. I have it right here."

"Great. That will be \$12.70.

"Quick question."

"Sure."

"What's wrong with your door?"

"Oh. That door's been broken for a while."

"Why is there a sign on it saying, 'please use next door'?"

"Because they have to use the 'in' door."

"But the 'out' door is propped open. They can go in and out through the 'out' door."

That very conversation made the young man question all there was to authoritarian practices. He did not prop the door open, the boss did, yet people still went in the door that clearly denotes 'enter here'. He was debasing ideas from Foucault and how tortured his body felt. Weaving in and around the shelves, performing labor for customers that seemingly rank lower than his class and privilege. Yet, this senior man was able to dismantle his constructed, albeit systemic, view on his position at the beer store. He was not imprisoned as much as the next guy, or even those that succumb to alcoholism. He was an enabler, a host, a value.

"You know what? I'm not sure, frankly. Maybe I just need to step outside for a while. It's pretty light out there."

He stared down the highway that ran parallel to the store. His helper arrived, entering through the 'out' door, unacknowledged and grumbling. The senior exited, also through the 'out' door.

"Fuck, it's so cold!" the helper exclaimed. He stood in front of the heater immediately.

"Tell me about it. I'm going to step outside for a minute. Call me if you get busy."

"You're nuts, with this wind whipping around and all."

"Yea, exactly. Pissing in the wind. I've done it all morning."

The Tree Inside My Forehead

There was a tree
that spoke in thought-clouds,
when the lights went out
when the lights went out.

In the simmer of his afternoon heat,
I half-boiled like a sleeping frog
kissing a lady under the sea
where sands crept in shape
of abstract time
of neither noon nor night.

I gave up
time
then, to think of old dreams I would usually forget
when I had to tie-up
collars that were graves;
an old theme.

I gave in
to the fall that was in my mind
and even though, only blind I was,
I also stopped speaking.

Of pictures and no words
Of trees and no birds
I weaved a world
of mornings lit with moon
under the old willow above my eyelids.

Priyanka Kapoor

kinky relationships

cut me up
open my insides and
torture me with your soft kisses

grab me by the roots
and fill my lungs
with your black ink

feeling the eyes of the world
each day
afraid of it all

but don't stop, dear
choke my heart

make it weep,
winsomely

my gorgeous monstrous ocean

my blemished
yet immaculate whole

Omar Alexandre
Miani, FL



INTENTIONALLY UNTITLED

For the Hopelessly Hopeful:

It's us...It's always been us.

We, who -

Abdicate the surface to love so deeply with our souls;

We, who trade our lungs with bated breath for organs filled with Their smiles instead.

We, whose veins are filled with the persisting scent of the lasts' betrayal;

Who release our past through the same vertical nicks that we'll shelter our future.

We, who have a self-destruct-button of a heart.

We open up our veins expecting to bleed blissfully.

Idiotically. Repetitively.

We forget about the shock, the damage and the shut-down.

We end up fiend-ing for warmth in the palm of Their hands.

We end up anemic.

Samantha Baddington

Westchester, NY

lower course, to be herself, as it would have been, but no longer
 Pearl. This, however, indicated, and did not stop
 them, hardly express the various properties of her nature.
 After this nature appeared to go to its depth, too, as well
 as variety; but for all, Hester's tears deceived her, it
 lacked reference and adaptation to the world into which
 she was born. The child could not be made amenable to
 this, by giving her nature a great law, had been
 broken, and the result was, being whose elements were
 perhaps beautiful and brilliant, but all in disorder, or
 with an order peculiar to themselves, amidst which the
 point of variety and arrangement was difficult or im-
 possible to be discovered. Hester could only account
 for the child's character, and even then most vaguely and
 imperfectly, by recalling what she herself had been,
 during that momentous period while Pearl was imbibing
 her soul from the spiritual world, and her bodily frame
 from its material of earth. The mother's impassioned
 state had been the medium through which were trans-
 mitted to the unborn infant the rays of its moral life; and,
 however white and clear originally, they had taken the deep
 stains of crimson and gold, the fiery lustre, the black
 shadow, and the untempered light of the intervening sub-
 stance. Above all, the warfare of Hester's spirit, at that
 epoch, was perpetuated in Pearl. She could recognize her
 wild, desperate, defiant mood, the flightiness of her temper,
 and even some of the very cloud-shapes of gloom and
 dependency that had brooded in her heart. They were
 now illuminated by the morning radiance of a young
 child's disposition, but, later in the day of earthly exist-
 ence, might be prolific of the storm and whirlwind.
 The discipline of the family, in those days, was of a

Laughing Owl

Sceloglaux albifacies

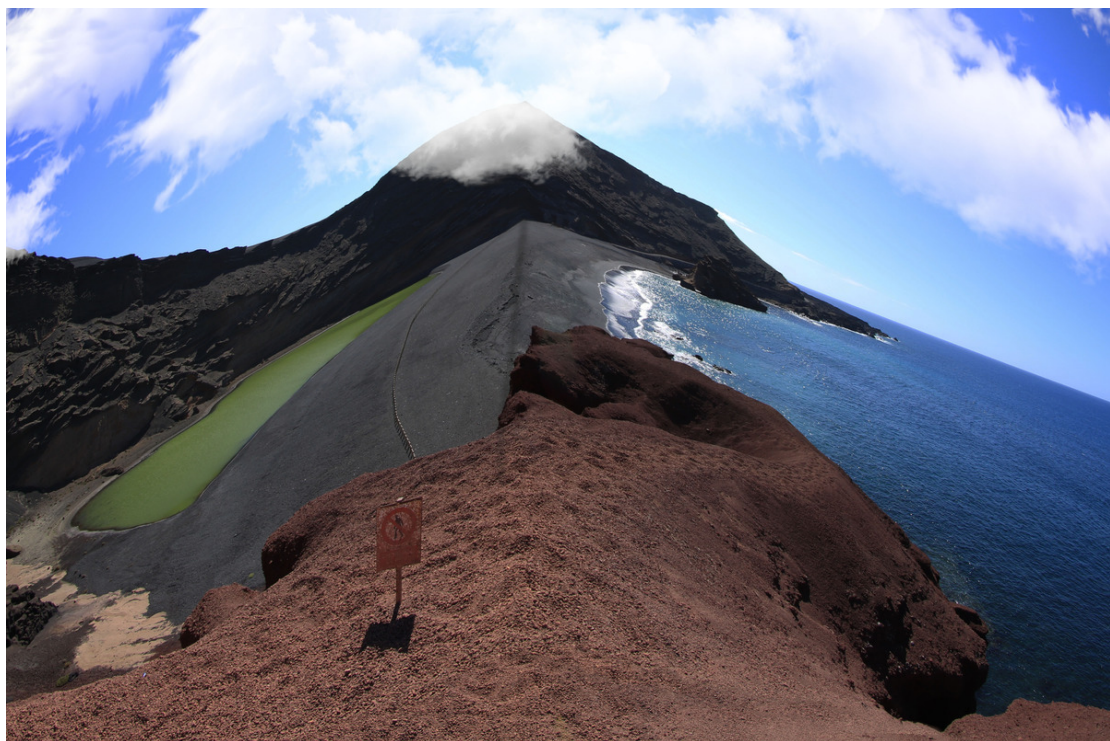
We were attracted to extinction's discordant music.
 Settlers with an ear for the drowsy pastoral or energetic
 Sea shanty could seduce us down from the forest's dank
 Edge. We were suckers for European gypsy ballads or
 Scottish litanies on the accordion; the raspy breath of
 The finger-machine spoke to us of living in similar
 Hardship. A strange key change for a predator to go
 Belly up; we were able to handle the new arrivals, mice
 & Pacific rats we just ate along with the rest. Prions that
 Nested too close or weta that grew too haughty thinking
 The carboniferous had returned. We were great pets
 Naturally, tame as neutered livestock we lived wisely
 By your side like monks. Mercenary stoats ransacked
 Our timid stone monasteries the day the laughter died.

B. R. Dionysius

Ipswich, Queensland, Australia



Lido Di Scacchi, Emilia-Romagna, Italy



Charco Verde

Riccardo Pozzati
Bologna, Italy

TEACHING HAYLEY NUMERALS

Teaching Hayley numerals on the train,

“Un, deux, trois, quatre, sunk. Daddy, what’s five again?” “Cinque.” “I’m cinque.” The hyperactive brain

of one small girl beguiles a neighbour, who gently adds some German to the mixture.

“Now listen, Daddy. Ein, zwei, drei, vier, funf. They have a number fear!” Curious stricture, from one who’s unafraid of everything.

We try the Farsi, “Yek, doh, seh, chahar.”

‘Yek’ is approved of, parroted with zeal.

One guy, in transit to the restaurant car,

Gives her a Russian phrase to memorise:

“Ya ee-do na potch-too, pass-latch pees-mo.”

(I’m going to the post-office, to send

a letter.) She considers this, then, “Oh no

we’re not. We’re going to Nan in Maidstone.”

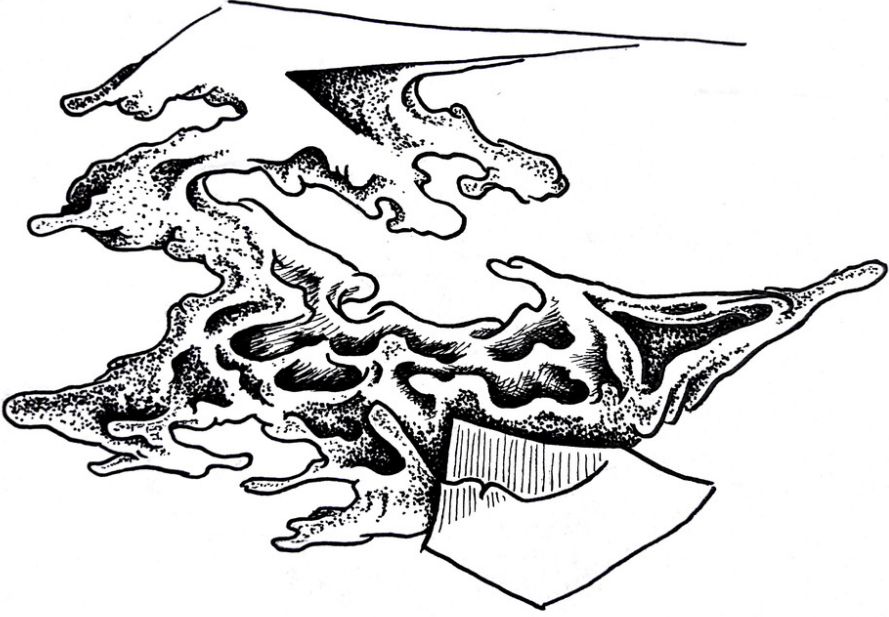
A tiny tower of Babel, once again

chanting through her repertoire for Daddy.

Teaching Hayley numerals on the train,

Pulling in to cavernous Paddington.

*Peter Wyton
Gloucester, England*



*Cameron Crum
Portland, OR*

SCAR TISSUES OF YOU

I tried to walk in reverse
Tried to collect the petals of your heart off
the cold floor
I tried to bind them back with words of gold
Because I am mortal enough
To admit the idea of losing you
Hurts more than that
Of loving you behind the glass of my
jargon-filled, wretched mind.

*Lervneie S. Chenge
Kenya*

THE BOTTOMLESS PIT

Adam Skorupskas | Detroit, MI

The mop swingers laughed. Frederic Oglivay stepped out of the Rolls-Royce. His chauffeur closed the door behind him. His Gucci loafers crunched the salt, on the mostly snow covered sidewalk, outside one of the hundreds of car dealerships owned by his family. He stopped by for a quarterly update on finances. He hoped they improved, even ever so slightly, from last quarter. His mood had been low lately, and it seemed that there was not anything Frederick could do about it. Sex, drugs, and therapy had run their course. But when he saw the mop swingers, they were laughing.

The dream returned. He was stuck, and did not know what the Hell to do. He was at the bottom of the well. The dream started with him clinging to a rope. His arms were very tired of holding on. It terrified him to look down. The well seemed to go down forever. Before long, it got so dark, that it was impossible to know how far. And when he looked up, he saw a similar problem. The well seemed to extend upwards for infinity. This state of being able to keep falling and falling, or keep climbing and climbing, stunned Frederick to paralysis. The dream went on, and he kept holding onto the rope. But his arms kept getting more tired. He did not think he could hold on much longer. One of his Gucci loafers fell off. He watched it disappear into the bottomless pit.

Frederic felt much the same in his waking life. This knot never stopped tightening in his chest. Then he saw the mop swingers. Now that was a hard job. These two Polish brothers, were hired to mop the floors, at about the same time Frederic inherited the business, from his dying father. Whenever he saw them, they were laughing. They laughed so hard they had to mop their own tears up, along with everything else. They seemed to be in on some big joke that no one else was aware of. He wanted to introduce himself, and invite them to the funeral. His father often spoke highly of the mop swingers work.

Frederic said, "Hello my name is Frederic Oglivay, son of the owner, I thought I should inform you that—"

The one they called Sturgill said, "Whoa, like Fredereeks Of Hollywood?"

The one they called Hank said, "Dude, be cool."

Frederic said, "No, we are in the auto industry. And it's pronounced Frederic. And—"

Sturgill said, "Okay Mr. Fredereek, we got a lot of work left to do tonight, so we got to get going. But you have a good night."

On that day, Frederick was struck by the thought, that every quarter now, for twenty years, the mop swingers were laughing. How could this be? Frederick cannot remember a time that he laughed so hard. At least, not while sober. To get the giggles like those mop swingers, he would have to fly to Tangiers, and spend a week in an opium den. But Tangiers was not the same as it used to be. And they would probably laugh about that, too.

At the end of the following quarter, Sturgill pushed his mop through the door of the men's bathroom, and found the corpse of Frederic Oglivay. He blew his brains out with his father's shotgun.

Sturgill walked up two flights of stairs, to where Hank mopped the break room. Sturgill tapped him on the shoulder. Annoyed, Hank took out his headphones.

He said, "I told you not to sneak up on me."

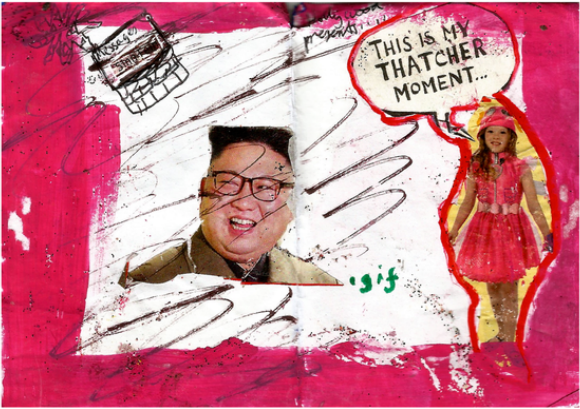
Sturgill said, "Freddy Hollywood iced himself in the men's bathroom. It's a real mess."

Hank said, "That inconsiderate blue blood low life. Get a room. Know what I mean?"

Sturgill said, "Paper rock scissors for not having to clean up the brain matter."

The mop swingers laughed.

Angelphone
Pinkxbrains



London



**OBITUARY
FOR A DETERMINED ROMEO**

They
said I
could not fall
in love with every
girl I met. They lied.
I fell in love with
all of them and
loving them I
lived and
died.

*Peter Wyton
Gloucester, England*

Spix's Macaw
Cyanopsitta spixii

Creatures of habit were picked off easily by trappers & ranchers who grew used to our naïve territoriality. Even killer bees shot it out with us to the death in The nest, rustling the best hollows; evicting us to the Lower forest slums. One of us reappeared in the mid West, a caged outlaw, his trenchcoat of cyan feathers Dusty from imprisonment. He became a part of a wild Frontier show of genetic diversity; they even made a film Based on his exploits. You can only romanticise last stands For so long. Extinction is every species' Alamo. He died of Course, as dramatically as any Newman or Redford going Out in South America in style. Dying on their feet. You Took his reproductive tissue to breed an uncertain future. New gold rushes scramble in the high plains of test tubes.

*B. R. Dionysius
Ipswich, Queensland, Australia*



words by Zuri, Detroit, MI
re-imagined by artist Stefan Matioc , Mexico City, Mexico

Blanketed in Stars

by Taylor Yeomans | Santa Cruz, CA

Everywhere that I go, I write. Tonight beneath the full moon, I felt the burn of my fire. It grew from my groin and rose through the sky. Together we will break through this global suppression. Get to the heart of it. And eradicate the suffering, by looking into the source of our depressions.

The surface suffocates. Hi, hello. People of the planet exhausting all their worth to work the dreams of another's wealth. Creating things to throw away, begging for money in exchange. Our filth builds up in piles along distant beaches; which once were pristine, and remain mostly uninhabited. Except for a dilapidated house occasionally here or there. Where the floors cave out to the sea. Palm trees die without their roots, another chunk of foundation falls back to the earth. We walk upon her land. Her self expression.

We control it as we go. We like things happy. Creating experiences, because this is what happy does. Happy parties till the sun comes up. Happy smiles. Happy waves hello. Happy consumes. Happy goes with the flow. But when is the last time you felt happy, like innocence—in the stream of subconscious play. Like wandering within a forest of redwood trees, feeling tiny and fleeting. The heart floating like a monarch on an ocean breeze.

She gives us our breath, the power of our hearts. She gives us the nourishment to carry ourselves, to witness her wonders. We watch her moon swell and fall like breasts. We watch the stars change locations in her skies. We watch the sun rise and set. We watch her change with every shift of light. Her colors deepening brighter and falling to night. We stair off into space wondering how this can all exist.

It doesn't seem right that suffering should be within so much magnificence. And yet here we are crying on the ground balled up into a knot, convulsing and shaking, feeling alone, misunderstood, stripped of life, and struggling to breath. We fight each other to insure survival. To hoard limited resources, so we will be safe from death.

The pain of our facade. I break like a sledge hammer to glass. My swings coming from a place of grace. Light seeping into space, which once was unknown. Fragile.

Fragile and tender. Shattered. Over it. Looking for glue.

What will it take for us to all get a clue and wake up to the potential of the mind rinsed once a day. In the truth of the cosmos, blanketed in stars. The weight of the rain pulls me into the ground. Where my body sinks into the mud, becoming one with the banana slug. Roots grow from my legs curling through the soil like hair. The tears run from my eyes rinsing my cheeks clear.

For so long I've looked outside of myself. Asked you for the approval of me. Afraid of my own transparency, and wondering when my own self would be the cause of my broken heart, rejected and cruel.

But here in the soil, like a corpse. I tell myself the truth. I set the standard and uphold its meaning.

My heart is touched, just where it needs to be. I examine the holes of my American soul—the ways in which I've felt torn out, unbelonging, ripped uncomfortable, the ping pong tossed across a pond between two children, ripples across the ceiling, piles of clay—the masterpiece in work; a masterpiece in and of itself.

Flooded in the color of landscape—bathing in space. Connected to the stardust within. Romantic and soft with tears running down my cheeks, like streams. Raw with insecurity. Beheaded by capitalism. Drilled with screws of energy. Oil dripping death upon soul. The immigrant within me ostracized. Turning to music, tarot, zodiac—the pain dissolves with any sort of magic.

But the door is nature. The escape of twisted metal is this expression—the truth of what's evoked. I promise not to make boring art. My subconscious mind had a head start—off to free the world with the perspective of heart. I am reborn from the mud, upon a lotus flower.

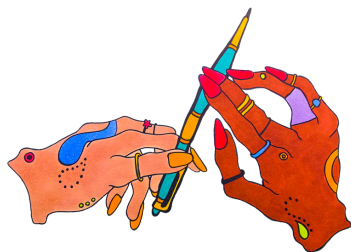
One of many. Privileged to breathe. Romantic in nature. Peaceful at center. Divine in love. Aware of the waves, I create through time. I place the hands upon my heart, one on top of the other. The rhythmic flutter deepening and pure, an intense swell of color.



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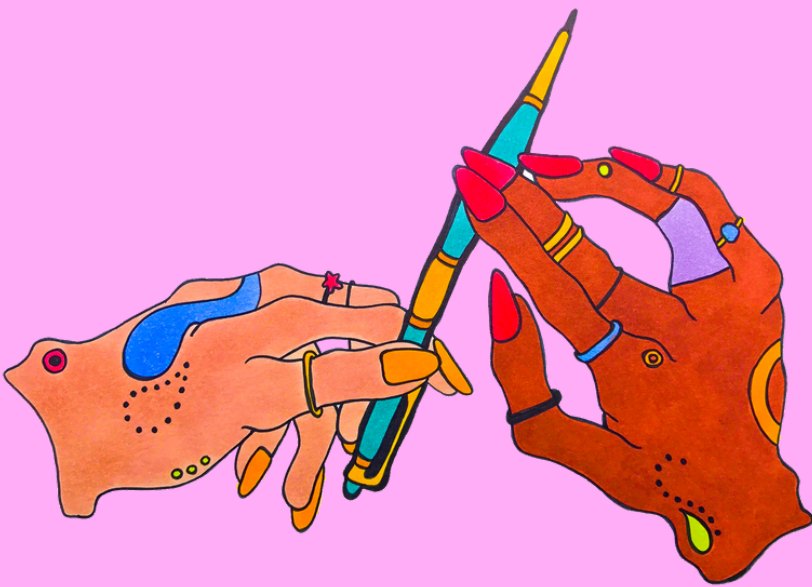
dogfart.life

Taylor Yeomans

Santa Cruz, CA, USA

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"The juste milieu,
the happy medium,
between reality and art."



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