



wrong brain

VOLUME 3

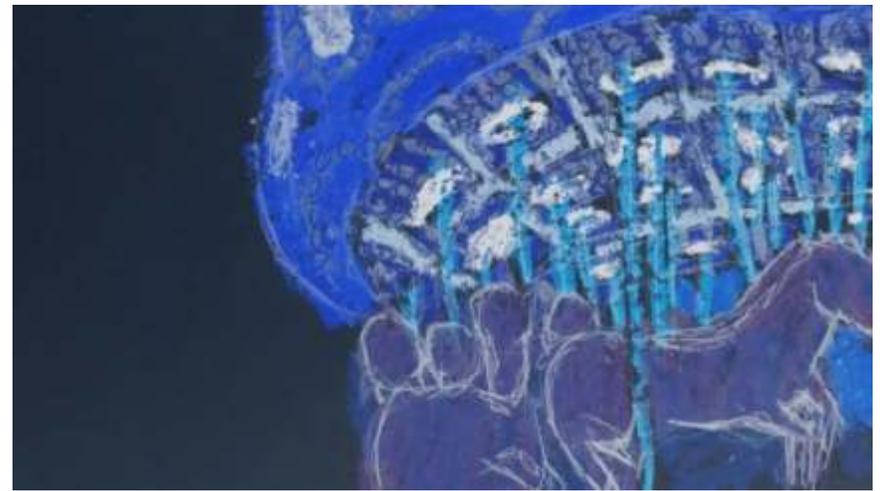


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Dissent

I never feel clever in coffee shops. The man at the next table is trying to intimidate me with his corduroy blazer, his beret, his politics.

The too-willing victim of his conversation, a younger man with Eager, combed hair, seems to agree with him. A lot.

Corduroy blazer is gesturing to eager-hair to make sure that he understands, that he is clever enough to keep up——

political dissent; foreign
policy; the raised price of
cappuccino. I never feel

clever. I should be spending more time in coffee shops.



At Once

Right now,

I am getting drunk for the third
Time,
The fourth. I'm writing another poem in another
Café & also learning (the hard way) that hockey
is a difficult sport to play when you don't know
how to skate. Right now,

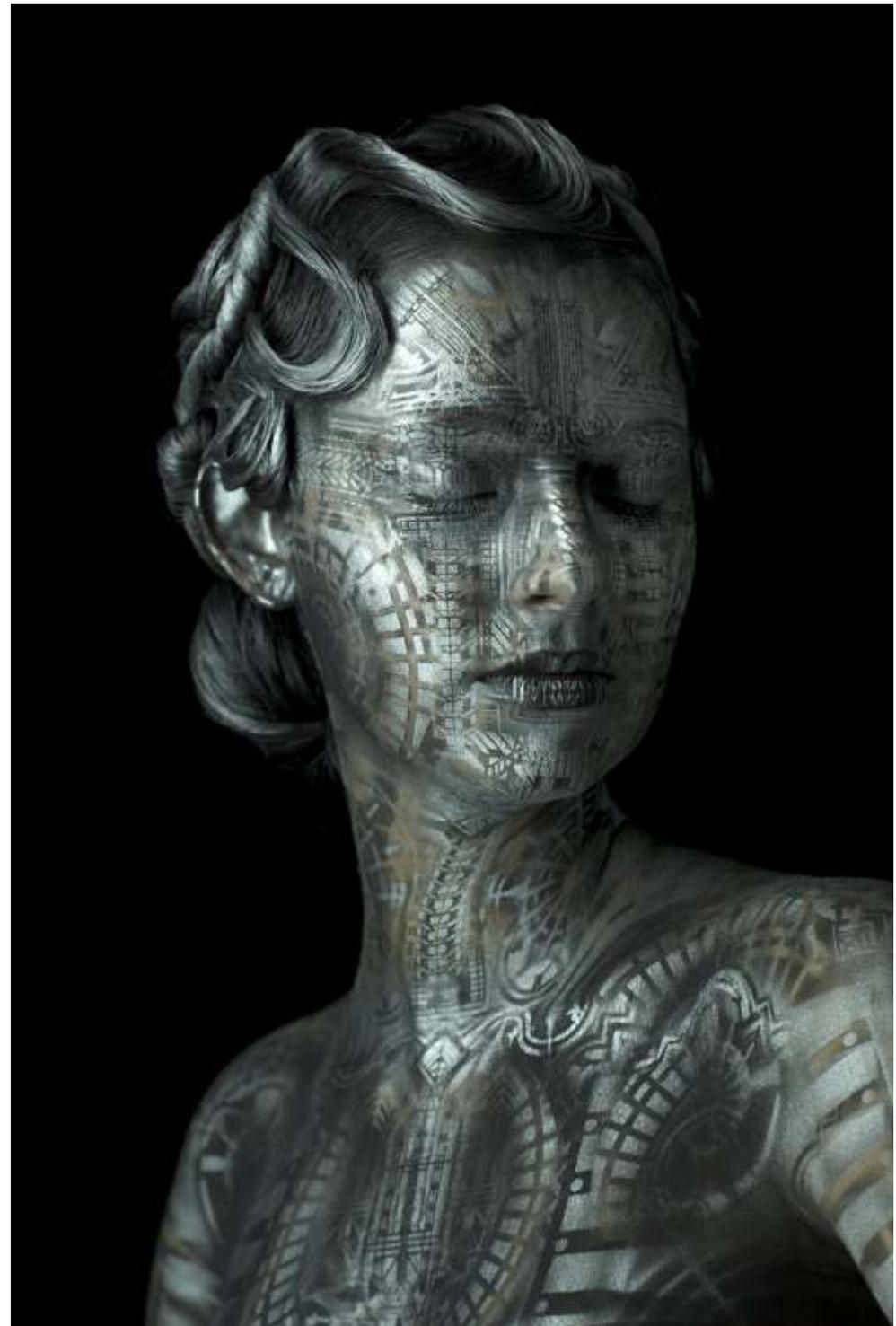
I'm picking up my guitar for the last
Time.
I'm also helping her with this goddamn cross word
puzzle & I'm leaving the womb a screaming,

beaten cone head. I'm kissing her the fifth
Time,
The sixth. Right now,
my fifth grade teacher is crying because distant
buildings are crumbling like poorly constructed
science projects.

Right now,

I'm taking my last breath,

my first.



Happy Corporation

As I wandered aimlessly through the Valley I walked into a large open field filled with men and women dressed in suits and ties, sweating as they dug holes in the ground. Next to each digger was a pile of rocks and each digger had a backpack on; some appeared to strain under the weight of their packs. I approached one of the diggers and said,

"Excuse me sir, what are you digging for?" He paused and rested on his shovel.

"We're digging up Rocks. What else would we dig for?" he asked as if somewhat confused by my question.

"Why do you dig for Rocks?" I asked.

Thinking hard for a moment, he wiped his forehead with his dark red tie and said, "It's just what we do."

The man bent down and reached into his hole. He pulled out a fist sized dirty rock. Eyeing it for a minute, he brushed off some of the dirt and said, "Have a look at this one... Now that's a nice Rock."

"Yep. It's pretty nice." I said, just to be polite. He placed it carefully onto the pile of Rocks he had been collecting, and began digging again.

"So what do you do with the all the Rocks?" I asked.

He paused again. "We give them to the Corporation. What else would we do with them?" He said with a confused look on his face. Still not quite understanding, I asked another question:

"So then what exactly does the Corporation give you for digging up all these Rocks?"

Shaking his head, he smiled, laughed and said,

"Seriously? Are you messing with me? Are you like from another planet?"

"No. I don't think so. I really don't know. What does the Corporation give you for all the Rocks that you dig up?"

He spoke slowly as if I was hard of hearing or didn't speak his language: "The Corporation gives us Stones."

As he said this he slowly lowered his backpack and unzipped the top of it to reveal it's contents: Shiny, clean rocks. He went back to digging and began to sing a little song:

*The Stones make us happy, everybody knows.
The Stones make us happy, the Corporation told us so.
The Stones make us happy, everybody knows.
The Stones make us happy, the Corporation owns my soul.*

I wandered on...





Starting tomorrow, I will be voluntarily locked in a 300 square foot room for the rest of my life.

My father, CEO of Cagna Inc., a Fortune 500 company that develops, manufactures, and maintains cell phone towers, died 10 months ago in a car accident. He had a head-on collision with a gas truck that exploded on impact, killing him and 4 other people in the immediate area, one of which was his mistress who was in the passenger's seat of his new car and who intentionally took the wheel out of his hands during a heated argument, possibly in some sort of suicidal rage. When the police came to my parent's door to break the news to my mother, she was just throwing on a bathrobe after sleeping with a guy I had gone to high school with (who incidentally had escaped out the back window thinking the doorbell was my father).

Hours before my father's funeral, in an effort to raise her spirits, the same classmate of mine suggested that she try opiates to deal with the stress. Not knowing that my mother had never even drank an entire bottle of beer let alone used hard drugs before, he gave her some of the purest heroin to enter the United States within the last 10 years. It was only during the service that word got out that she had died of an overdose before she even got dressed that morning. A few days later I arranged a double funeral for both of my parents.

My late father's lawyers informed me that I had inherited the company, which I sold for about 25.6 billion U.S. dollars within days to an even larger company in Denmark. While my father's team of experts had numerous meetings with me to discuss what to do with this money or what to invest it in to make my new fortune grow, I didn't need any kind of advice as to what to do with it. I was essentially set for life, and this realization can make or break a person's sanity. I already had all the big ones: manic depression, chronic anxiety, agoraphobia, and severe obsessive compulsive disorder to the point where 5 different therapists diagnosed me as 'untreatable', and I knew exactly what I was going to do with my 25.6 billion U.S. dollars.

In the age that we live in, information is as easily attainable as typing in someone's name into Google. Everyone in the world might as well have a public webpage with their mugshot, social security number, employment history, medical information, and list of people they've slept with. People spend every waking moment stalking and tracking their friend's/enemy's every move, interaction, and thought on Facebook and Twitter. You are judged not by your appearance as you once were, but by your internet presence. Googling someone before a first date is so commonplace now that I found myself doing it. If someone doesn't like what you have to say on one of 10,000 different websites, they can easily forward what you said to every single person they've ever met with the subject line 'Look at what this good for nothing piece of shit said-- do not talk to him, do not befriend him, do not trust him' before you can even think of a way to explain what you originally said. We are being watched at all times not only by the powers that govern us, but people higher up on social hierarchies.

One evening a year before my parent's death, I drunkenly sent an internet message to a girl I had seen occasionally around town complimenting her on a new haircut and asking if she wanted to come over and smoke weed. Apparently this qualifies as 'stalking' and as soon word got around town, I was allegedly an 'internet sex offender'. The girl even made a video blog about how she was sexually harassed over the internet, telling her (97% false) tale with tears in her eyes before publicly displaying my personal email address and full name.

Dozens of people started monitoring my actions online, I couldn't walk into any public place without people gathering and whispering to each other, or even sometimes beating me up and stealing the contents of my wallet. It felt like I had become a real life comic book villain. I would meet girls around town, hit it off with them, and arrange to take them out to dinner or a movie, only to have them cancel once their friends told them about how I was 'Norman Bates in real life'. It got to the point where I moved to another state for a higher paying job, only to find that even when I politely kept to myself, people still found reasons to deem me disturbing and creepy, and even worse than that, some people had informed some residents of the new area about my little drunken incident, making it literally impossible to escape it while no one stood up for me. All of this exacerbated my neurosis to a level I had never thought possible. I barely left the house. One morning I began talking to myself while I stared into the mirror, only to realize that 9 hours had passed and I had missed an entire day of work. I would think about embarrassing things I did years ago that no longer mattered and hit myself in the head as hard as I could, or bang my head against the kitchen counter over and over until I almost went unconscious. I thought about committing horrible crimes just to go to jail to escape modern American society.

My parents are both dead because of their own stupidity, a hair-triggered, idiotic, information-addicted society has rejected me, and I am severely mentally ill. My existence is a disaster and I know just what the fuck I'm going to do with my 25.6 billion dollars.

I've hired a team of architects to build me a complex in Salt Lake City, Utah that I will indefinitely live in. The first room is a security checkpoint where there will be at least two armed guards at all times regardless of the time of day and one receptionist. The second room is a fully operational, extra large kitchen with 4 walk-in freezers and a team of highly trained chefs. The third room is an office equipped with top of the line computers, internet, and research equipment. The fourth room is a medical center with an operating table and necessary medical supplies. The fifth room is a professionally furnished and decorated 300 square foot living area with a memory foam bed, 120 inch flatscreen HD TV, top of the line vintage analog stereo equipment, DVD player, exercise equipment, refrigerator, enclosed bathroom and shower, sitting areas, and a fireplace. It also has a custom forward-and-backwards compatible console developed by an associate of my late father that digitally contains every video game made within the past 20 years while remaining the size of an average VCR. I will live in this room until I die.

When I wake up every morning at 9am sharp, my breakfast will have been prepared for and delivered to me through a heated receiving dock near the door by the head chef. At 11am after I have completed my morning workout routine, I will select what I would like for lunch and dinner using a touch screen monitor near my refrigerator. The fridge itself will be stocked with fruit, vegetables, and other snacks while I'm asleep by one of the employees of the complex in case I get hungry in between meals. New movies, books, TV shows, and music will be sent to me based on my interests, but not before being approved by a panel of personal critics I've hired. If I experience any health issues, I will consult one of two doctors that will be able to use the medical room if they need to. As technology advances, it will be the office's duty to determine what new gadgets and luxuries should be purchased for me to keep me entertained and happy. Taxes, bills, and investments will be handled entirely by accountants I've hired to work in the office room, who will work around the clock to make sure I'm not spending too much money or run out of it before I'm dead.

Old friends, family, exes, acquaintances, and anyone else from the outside world will never see me again, and anyone else who tries to contact me in the complex will be redirected to a team of call center operators in the office who will read off one of 10 statements I've prepared depending on the person's relationship to me. Christmas, birthday, and other significant holiday cards will be automatically sent. I will have no contact with any of the employees. In the event that any of the employees of the complex don't meet the standards I set, the complex supervisor will fire them and hire a replacement. All of my employees will have medical benefits, paid vacation, and yearly bonuses.

A few doctors have gotten word of this venture and have tried to stop me, claiming that it's the most unhealthy thing they've ever heard anyone attempt to go through. I don't care. Tomorrow I will enter that room and I will never have to worry about anything ever again. I will be safe, and there will be a team of 25 people taking care of me 24 hours a day. This complex is my heaven, it's what I deserve, and I've never felt so relieved, happy, or free in my entire life.





ALL FALL DOWN

6 billion now and rising
Like on McDonald's signs
Breeding like bunny rabbits
'cuz it feels so divine
Soon there will be a thinning
Of the organic kind
Through random variation
Some virus will refine
Who would have ever guessed
The smartest would lack the brains
To put in place the plans
To ensure we held the reins
But it appears we have to
See what we can attain
In our pop-art world
Ignoring potential banes

Ring out for what's to be in good time
Ring around anything to buy time

All fall down - Cascading shadows plummet downward
All fall down - The changes it implies
All fall down - Gravity is so persuasive
All fall down - We're all pre-qualified

Here's to Commercial Culture

And the way it constrains

Our attempts to grow up

In hedonistic chains

Here's to the selfish short-term

War chants and comfort claims

Here's to the profit margin

For all it explains

I'd like to sing a future

Where we combine

All our accumulated

Knowledge and truly shine,

But greed and ignorance

Are certain to undermine

Any determined effort

To prevent our decline

All fall down - Our perfumes will stand in for poesy

All fall down - While ashes pile high

All fall down - Intelligent design on trial

All fall down - Society awry

All fall down - The dominoes of cruel succession

All fall down - The motions of the tide

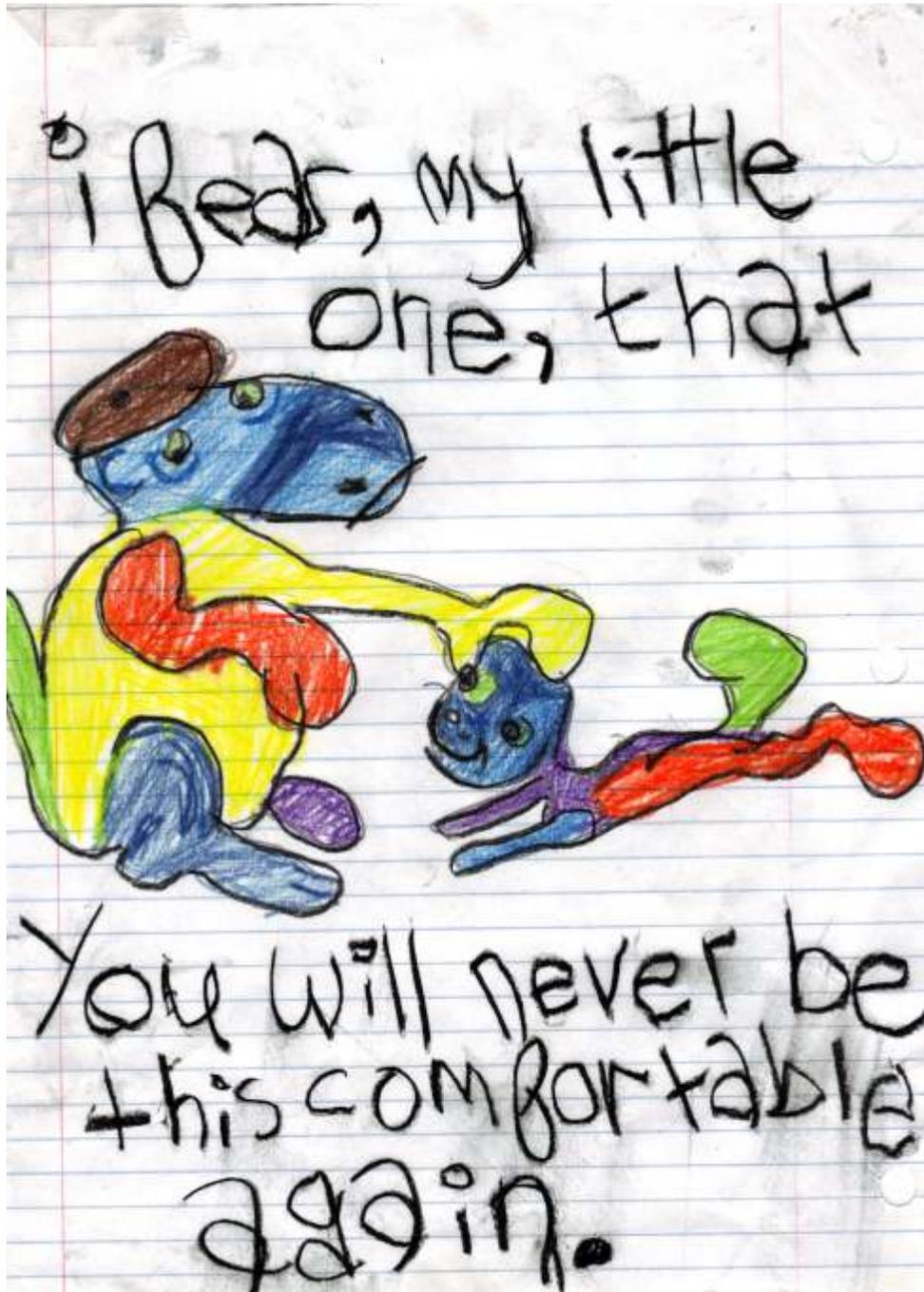
All fall down - Mimicking the Towers

All fall down - The smoke may purify









Wasted species tres moderne.
Il faut etre absolument wasted.
modern jesus wouldn't like it they say.
il faut etre absolument moderne jesus.
There's no modern room for pederasty.
Chastity and Charity don't believe in it.

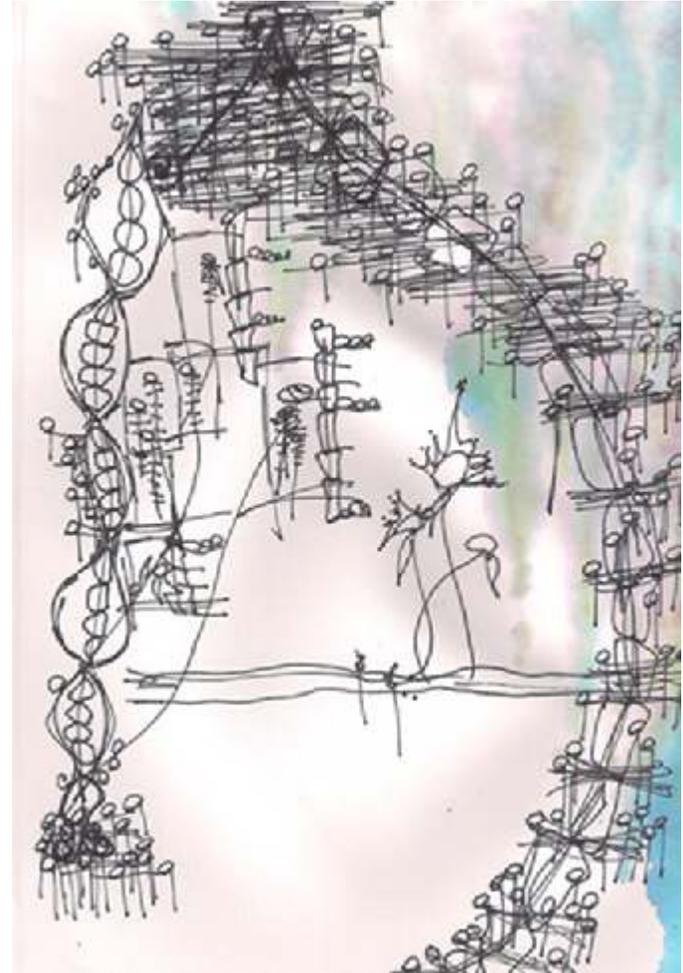


Dobby

My little red and white dog
Who gives himself away
With a howl of delight
When he's tricked you
Into feeding him
A second dinner.

There's something
about a freshly sharpened pencil
just a regular old yellow number two
with a pink eraser
and it has to do
with the scraping, grinding, shaving sound
that's made
when you twist
and press
the dull pencil end
into the sharpener
and then,
like a pearl from an oyster,
you pull out a brand new tip
and it's never written
a single word
until you put
it to paper.





Oh Mom

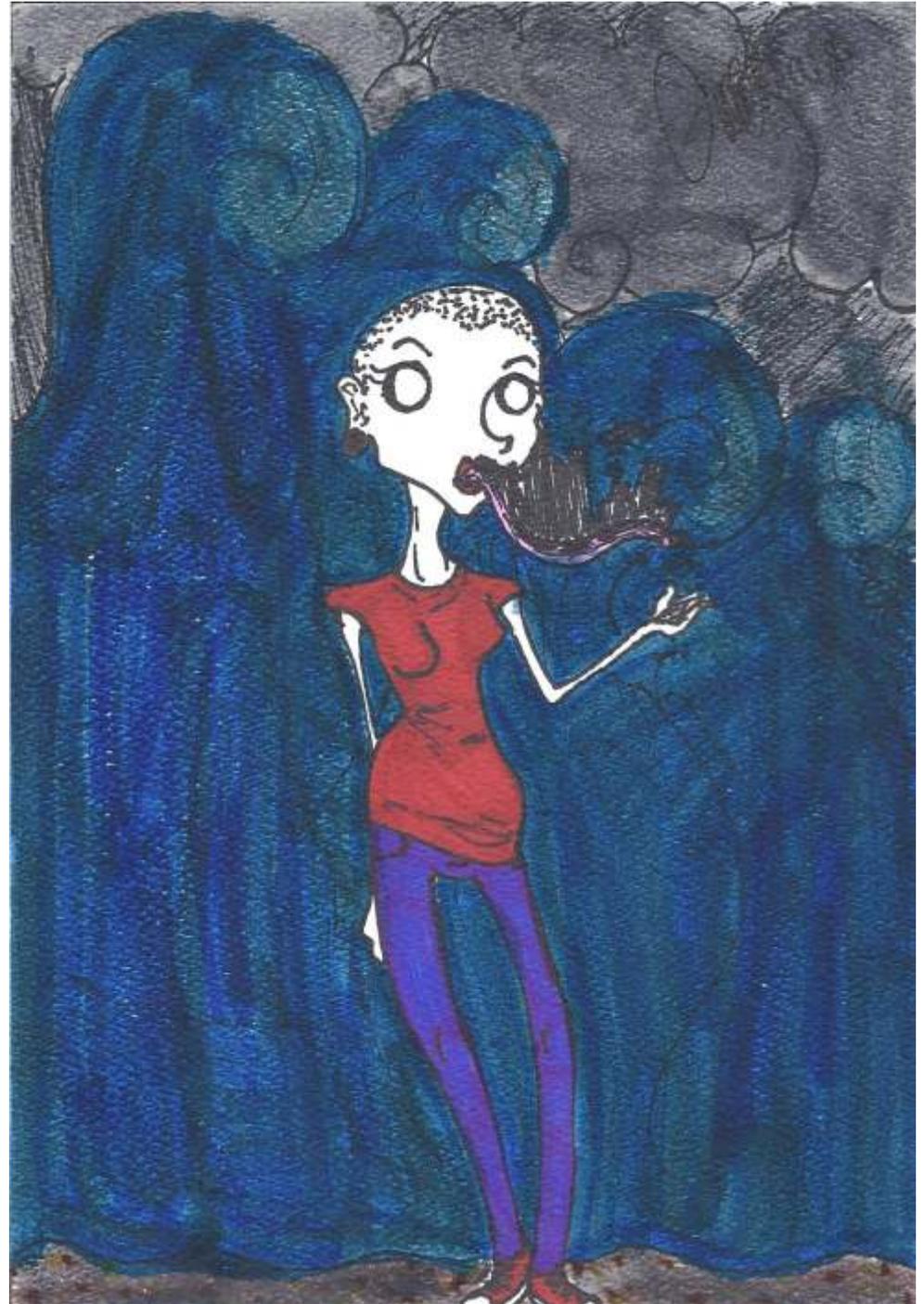
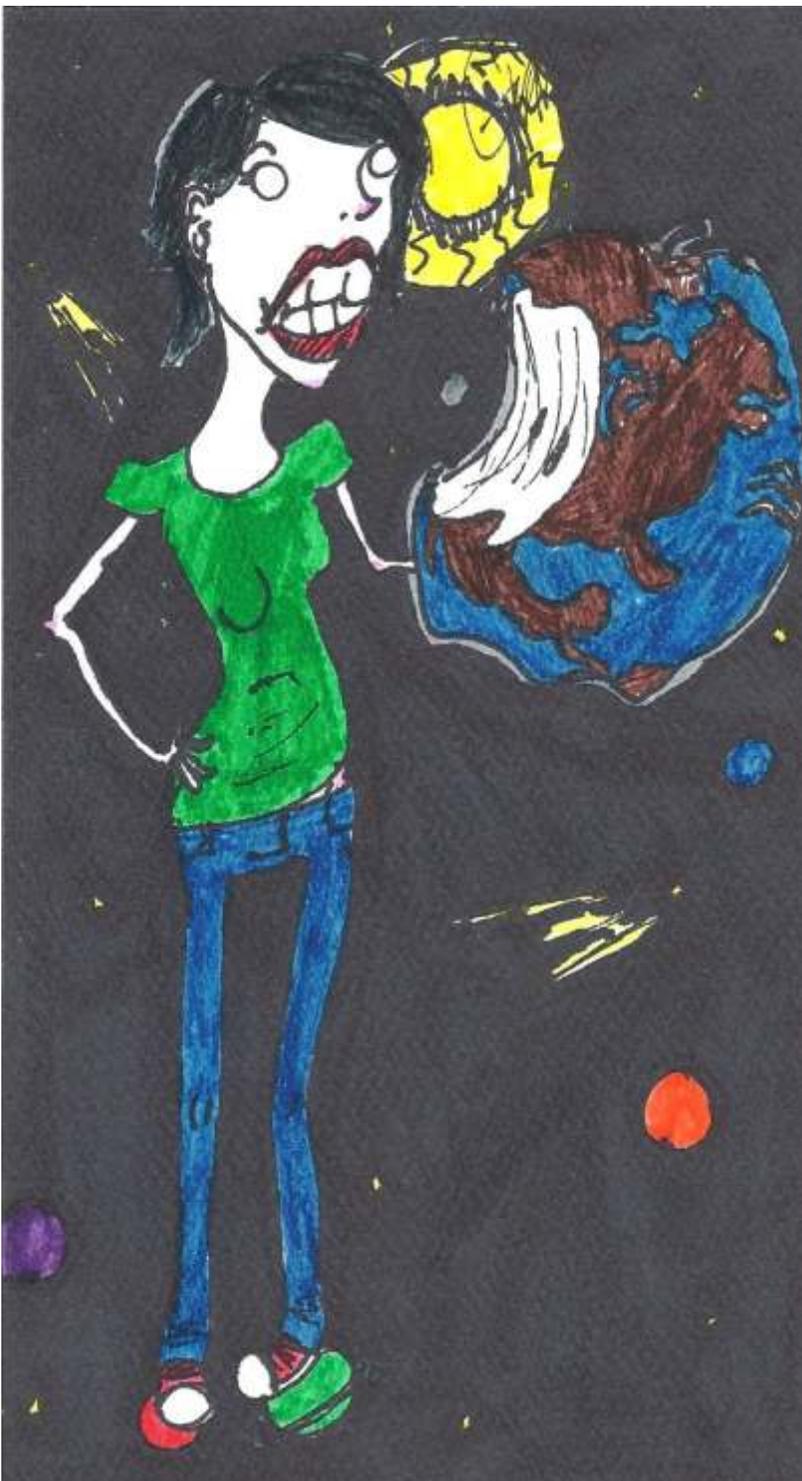
She is riveted by the slithering mass she sees
She watches as glistening bodies glide effortlessly over one another
Dozens of newly hatched black snakes - each as long as a ruler
-move, twist, ripple
Go under, come up...
Such a protected site to lay the eggs
Tucked in the warmth of a basement window well
Shielded by a brick wall above
The child contemplates their existence
She wonders
She wants to reach out, to feel that velvet, to stroke
To hold
She hesitates
Shares this marvelous find with the parent
Oh, what joy!
So much life in so restricted a space
Smashed with the blade of a shovel in a few quick strokes

Haiku

Alone

But not lonely

Blessed solitude



Daze

Time to break faith with these false beliefs people have for me. Time to move past the unbearable actions that keep me actively changing my plot to escape this mess. How can I think to survive when these lies pile high, I cannot move with all this weight upon my shoulders, I can not think of all the disappointment I constantly cause you. Now back to the start where things first fell apart. All of this darkness mixed with bitterness only makes me more miserable. Breathing gets harder and I can't count out how many days I tend to waste away just thinking of the ways that you still throw all of the wrong that I have done right back in my face. My hands are slowly slipping away from the tight grip I have with reality. Replace these pages with the changes that I need to make, maybe then I could continue on without this fake smile plastered on.

Or perhaps I've got it all wrong and nothing really matters: this is all a confusing dream. Nothing is actually real. Have you ever thought that we could all just be someone else's thoughts? Whirling notions I can't fathom start unraveling. I think I'm slowly going insane. Could this be a time for change? Just let me shut my eyes. I need to gain some security in the darkness of my own mind. I need get some clarity.

Well, what a beautiful thing it would be if I could have things go my way-- just for once I'd feel no pain and the darkness I walk around with would simply float away. No more suffering in my heart. No more contemplating the agony that you provide me with. Erase the sins caused by your wickedness that still burden my life today.

They say the impossible is possible but that doesn't seem probable maybe I'll just walk away and waste my days tracing where my hate originates. Nothing in this world feels real. Please let me open my eyes to a day where I see an open colorful world that I could call my own.

Losing Touch

I'm going nuts. I'm losing touch with reality.

It's sound asleep. It doesn't know what it wants to do with me.

This is such an anomaly, clear to see, born to lead.

But did you really think that you could take control of me?

I'm growing so hopeless just waiting for you to notice.

All my fears suddenly reappear.

Leave this pain.

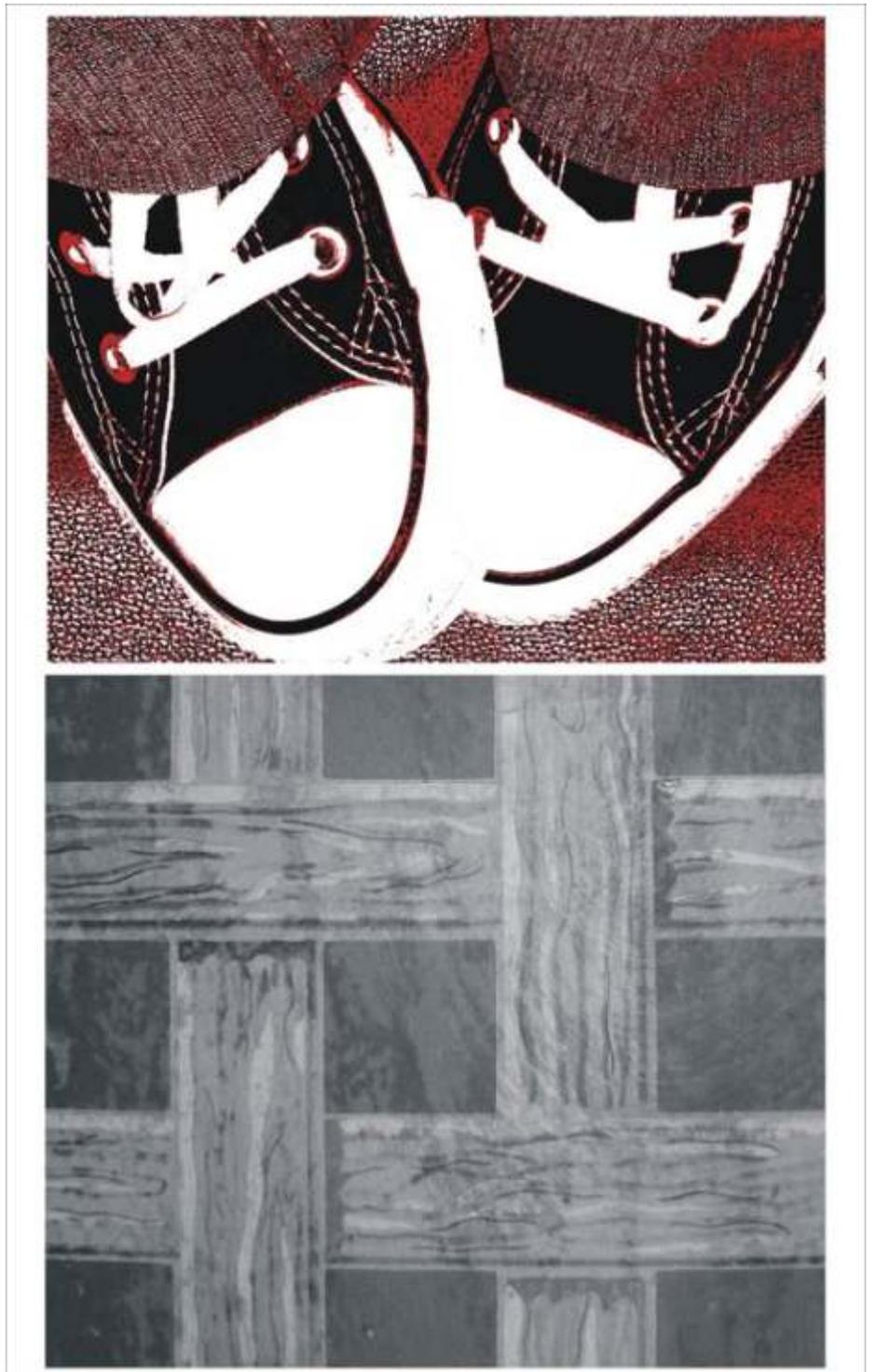
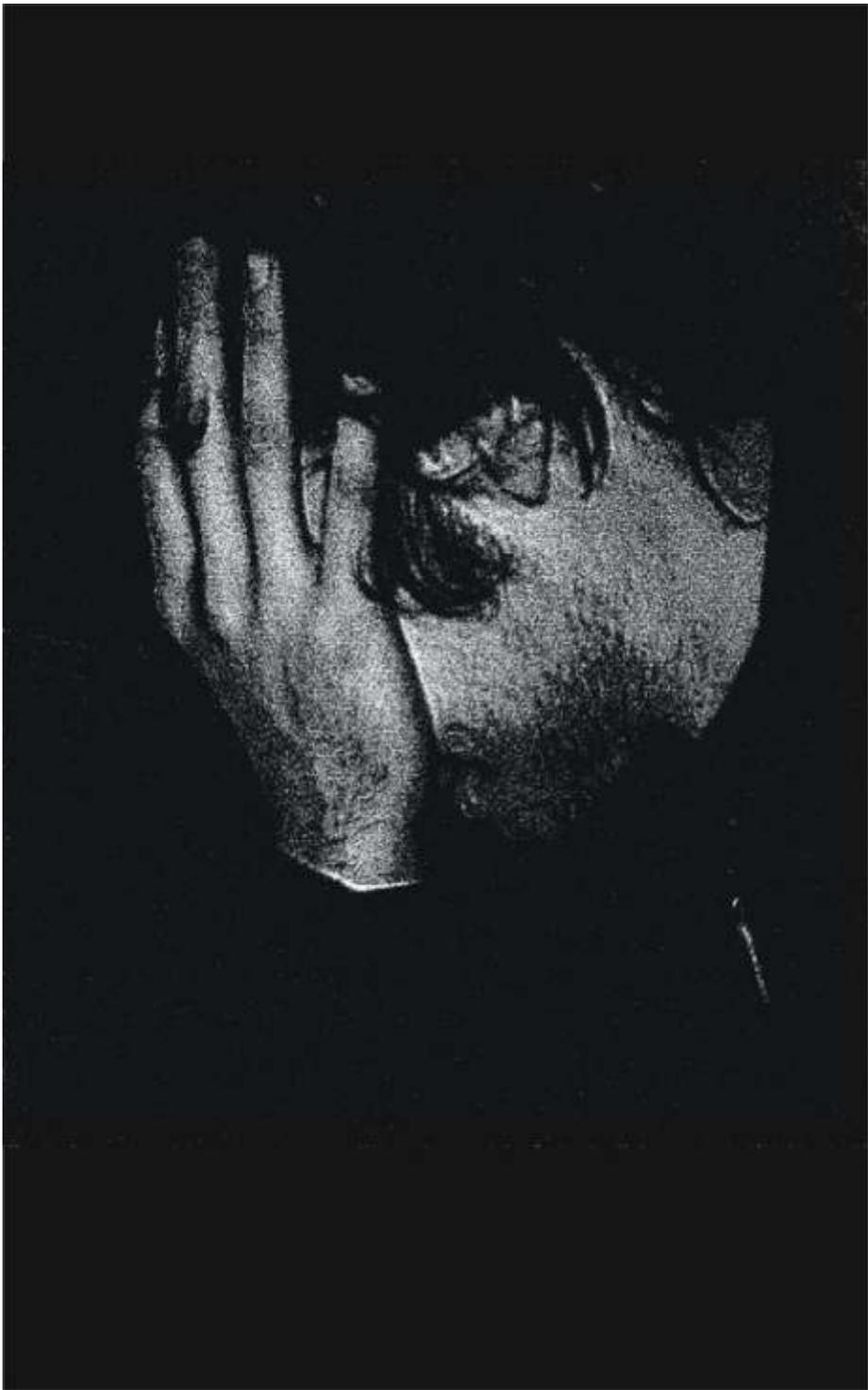
Leave a mark, like you did on my heart.

How could you let this all fall apart?

I should have known from the start that your heart was dark.

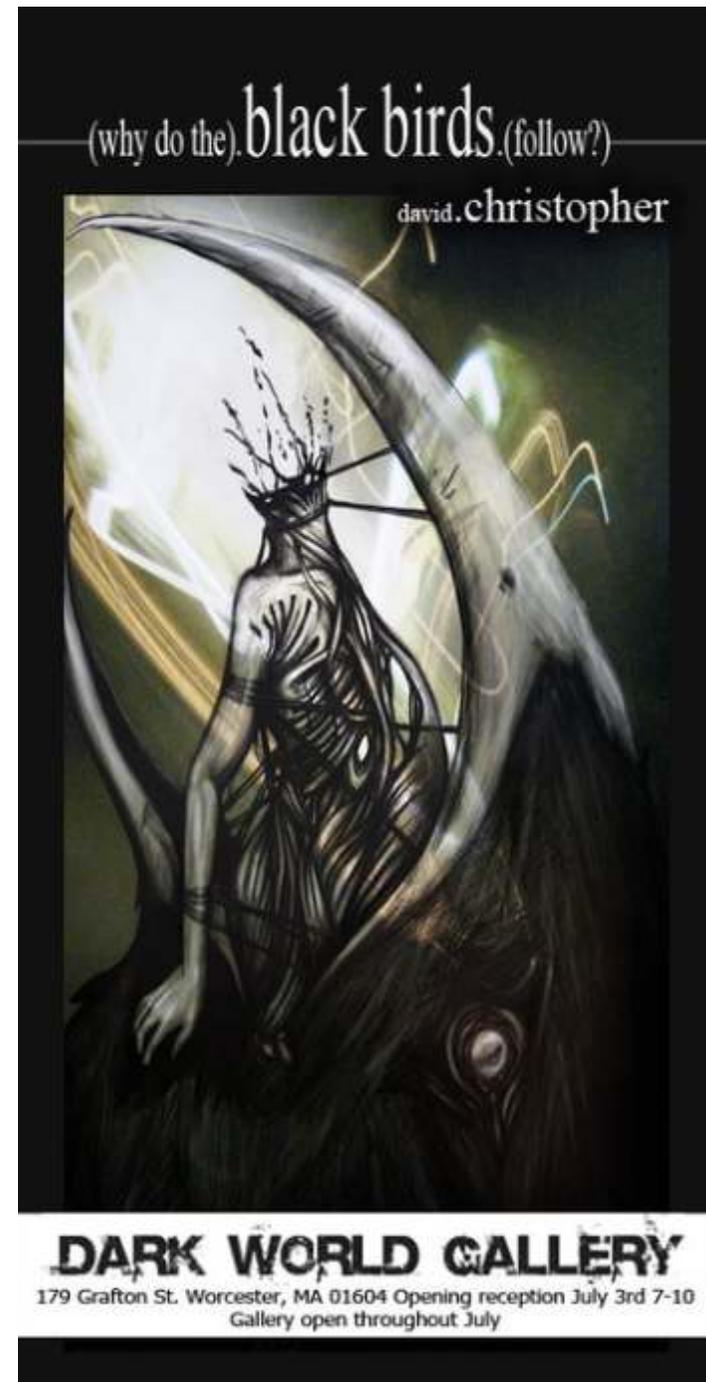
I don't dare say your name to refuse this pain.

And in all your shame, I feel your pain.



Refrigerator Magnet Thoughts

sour sex
ripe irritation
the only passion
Anger
a beautiful wrath of words
these embers
roll spill spark and burst
turn burn boil and rust
madly bleeding red hot tongue
cut my flesh
ink blood
glass white skin
sweet apple cheeks
she he
you me
be open
Rollover
correcting our
black letters
roasting my ruby red heart
satin sheet war
Fighting in
the television glare



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Want to submit? Please include your name, titles and link to your website or blog (if you have one).
Submissions for WB4 are due August 31, 2010.

Welcome **Cody John Laplante** as our new Writing Editor!

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Love,
Sam Paolini