

# When The World Ends I'll Miss You



A Variety of Works Originally by  
**Patrick "Rowan" Roughan**

To You,

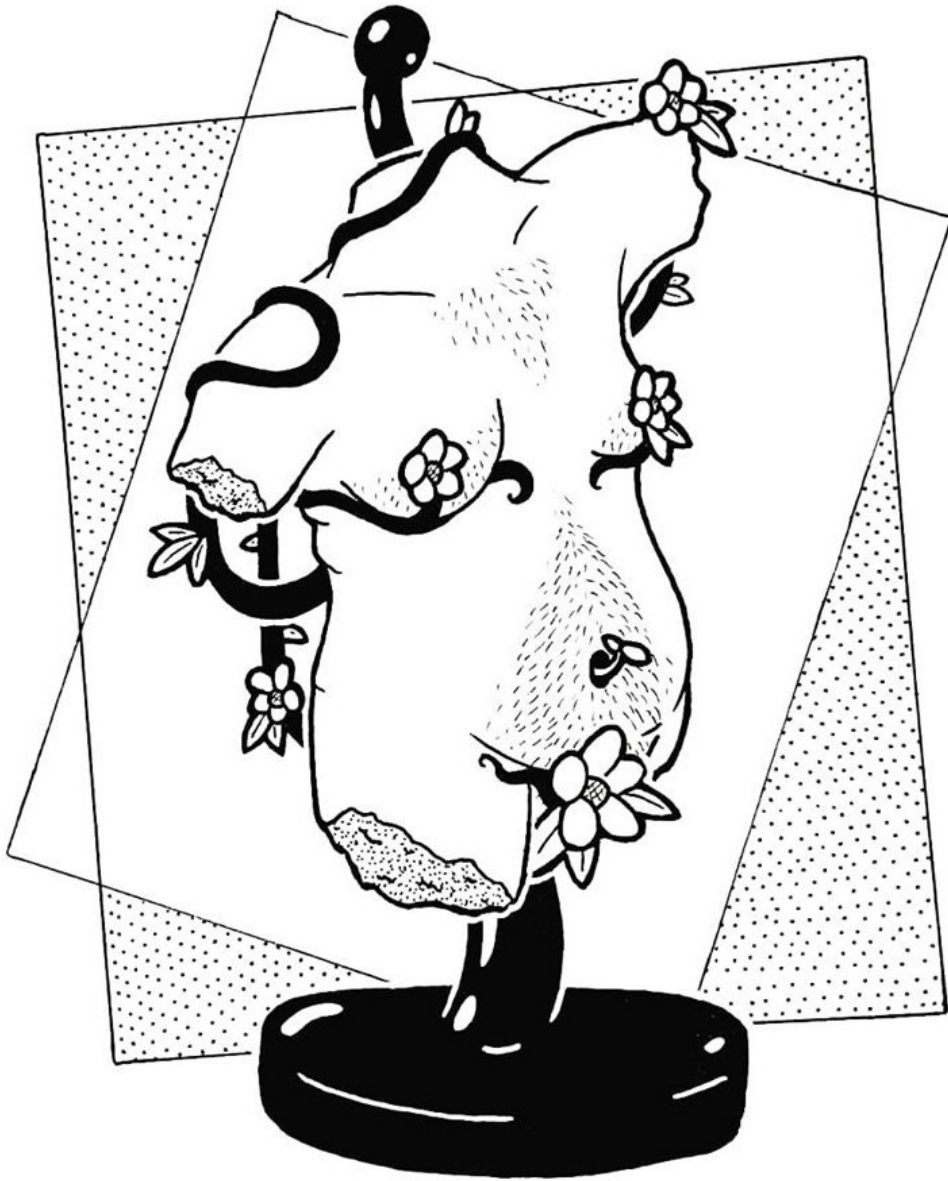
Thank you for owning my zine! Whether you bought it from me, or it was a gift, or you just found it on the side of the road, I greatly appreciate you taking the time to open this zine up and check out what's inside.

You may be wondering why the cover says "originally by." That's because this work isn't necessarily finished; I've completed my part, but you, zine-owner, are free to do with it what you wish. You bought it, after all, so make it yours! Color the inkwork, make blackout poetry from the words, rip the pages apart if that's where your inspiration leads you. There's no need to keep this zine exactly how you got it; I can print more of these, but I can't replicate your personal creativity and experience.

I've already put myself in this work.  
Add yourself to it, too.

ROWAN





The message was always there,  
But I didn't yet know how to read it.  
When I realized it could have meaning,  
I stared at the shapes with calm focus  
Until they became letters,

Until they became words,

Until they became sentences,

But still, I didn't know how to read it.  
Frustration clouded my vision.

The sentences dissolved,

The shapes meaningless,

Their purpose unknown.

I lived some time without the message,  
But one day, I was reminded once again.  
I resumed my focus on the shapes,  
Until they became letters,

Until they became words,

Until they became sentences,

And this time, I could see it clearly.

And this time, I understood.

The sentences dissolved,

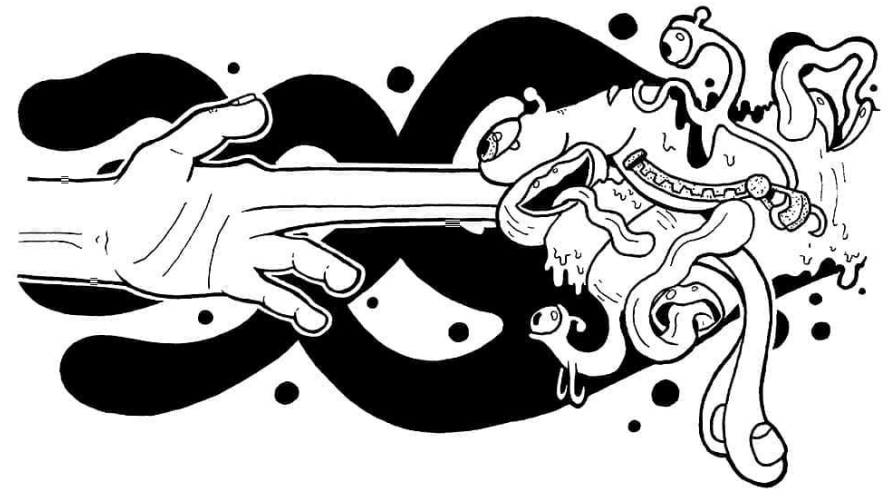
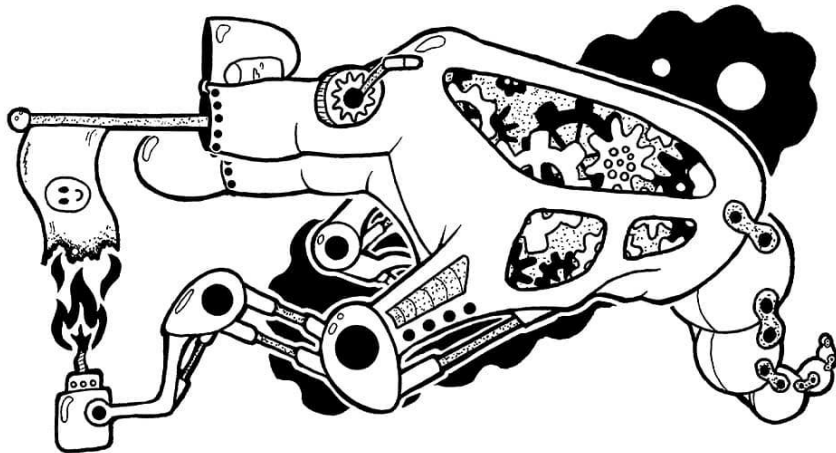
The shapes meaningless,

Their purpose known.

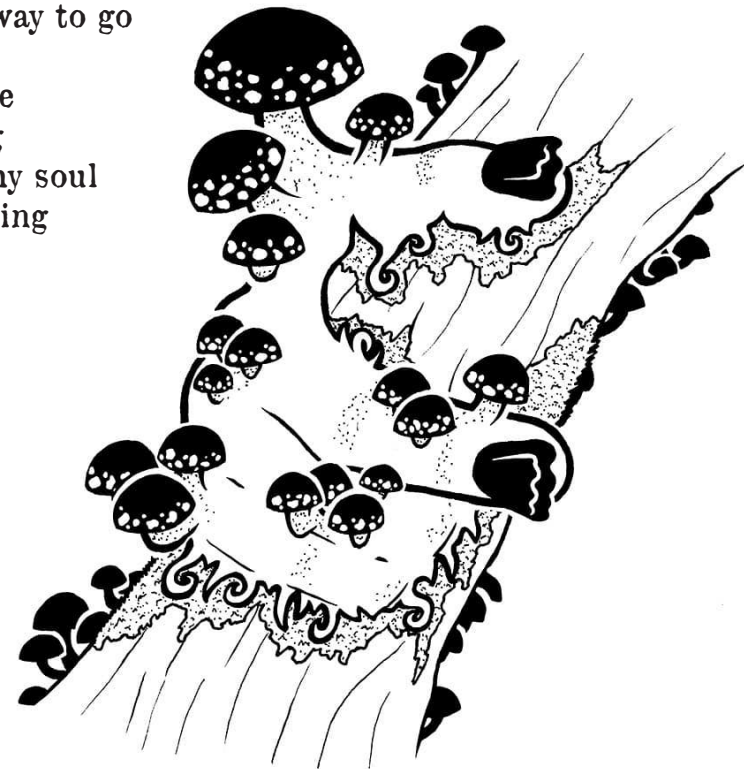
The message was always there,  
And now that I knew how to read it,  
I found there was nothing to read.



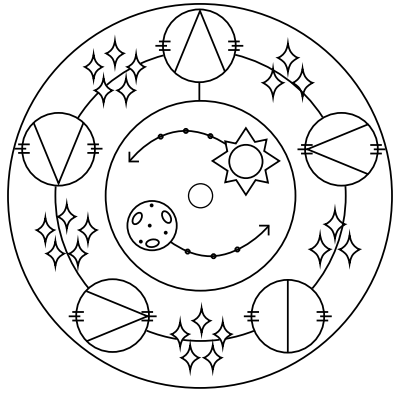
How can I describe what it's like?  
 It's like the rotten remains of a fallen fruit,  
 Once healthy and ripe and now a victim of time.  
 Or maybe it's more like a withering vine  
 Sprawled along a brick wall, stretching out  
 Until it's grown far beyond the scope of its roots.  
 Or maybe it's more like a fallen tree  
 That could have stood a hundred years more,  
 If not for a strike that broke its sturdy bark  
 And let in the mold that rotted its core.



Or maybe it's not like any of that at all,  
 And all of this symbolic prose, these smilies,  
 These rambling lists  
 And line breaks,  
 Are just a way to go  
 on and on  
 And feel like  
 I'm showing  
 a piece of my soul  
 Without saying  
 anything  
 at  
 all.







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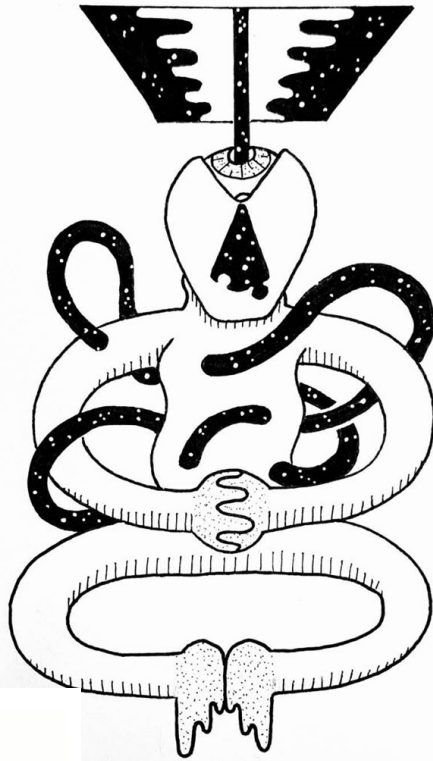
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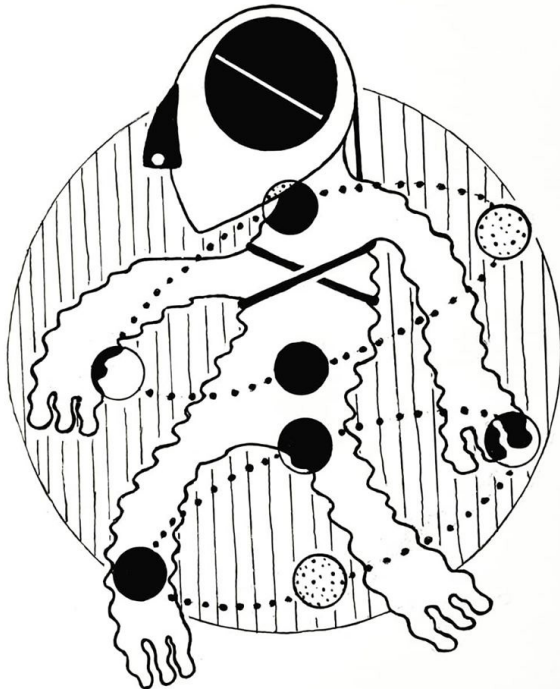
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A fish moves along the  
path of the river,  
Twisting and turning  
along the bends  
And always moving  
forward with the current.



It's surrounded by  
its swimming kin,  
All navigating the  
path of water before  
them.

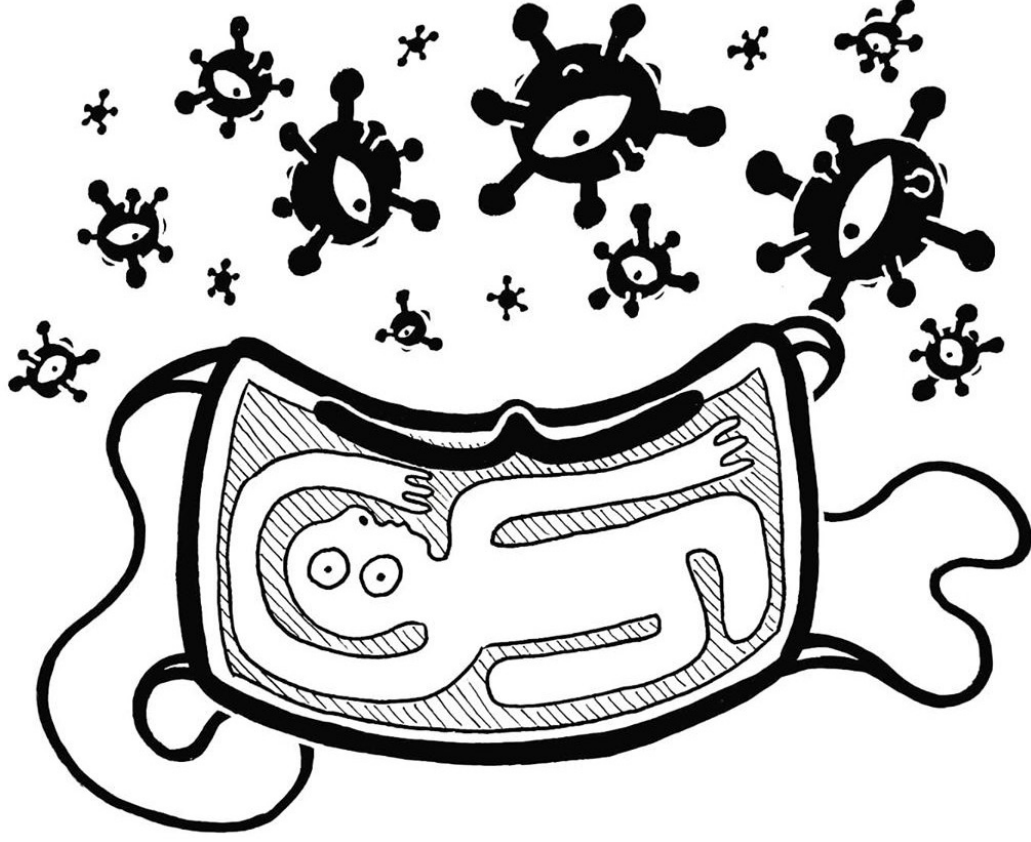


The raging river opens to a calm lake.

The other fish pause, then slowly swim off,  
Cautiously venturing in every direction.

The fish is alone now in the still waters,  
Sinking as it learns it has no fins.

Returning to work, I hop on a call, and see my coworkers appear on my phone screen. During the meeting there are no jokes, and nobody laughs. As the workday nears an end I lose motivation and scroll on my phone's screen. The headlines quickly make me look away. I switch to scrolling on my computer screen. My friends appear on my phone's screen, and we all try not to let our conversations linger too long on the headlines we all saw. I keep gaming as the call empties and the lights slowly turn off, leaving me on a call, and see my coworkers appear on my phone screen. During the meeting there are no day in quarantine. A spoonful of peanut butter gets my body going as I sit down at my desk to view my layout there. It all blends together as hours pass. I pause for lunch from last night's leftovers. It's alright, but it could be better. Returning to work, I hop on a call, and see my coworkers appear on my phone screen. My friends appear on my phone's screen, and we all try not to let our conversations linger to drift off to sleep. After another restless night, I wake up to begin a designed layout there. It all blends together as hours pass. I pause for lunch from last night's leftovers. It's alright, but it could be better. Returning to work, I hop on a call, and see my coworkers appear on my phone screen. My friends appear on my phone's screen, and we all try not to let our conversations linger to drift off to sleep. After another restless night, I wake up to begin a designed layout there. It all blends together as hours pass. I pause for lunch from last night's leftovers. It's alright, but it could be better. Returning to work, I hop on a call, and see my coworkers appear on my phone screen. My friends appear on my phone's screen, and we all try not to let our conversations linger to drift off to sleep. After another restless night, I wake up to begin a designed layout there. It all blends together as hours pass. I pause for lunch from last night's leftovers. It's alright, but it could be better.

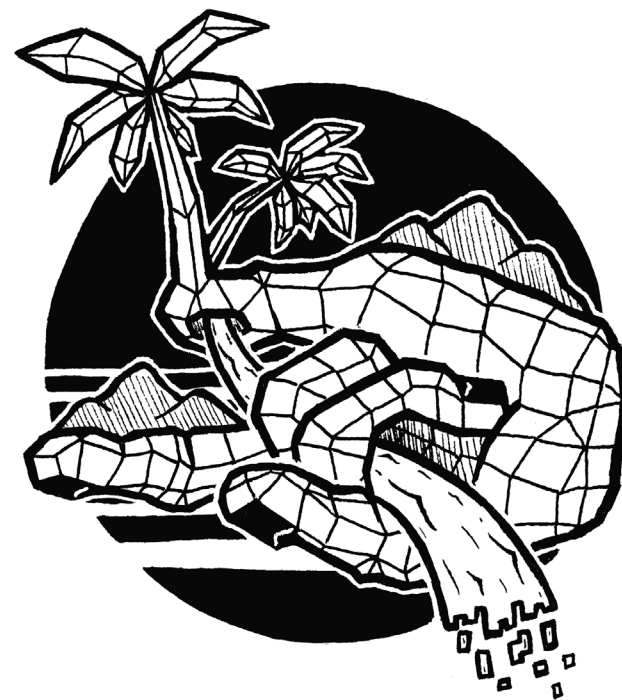




Floating  
Finding  
Merging  
Connecting

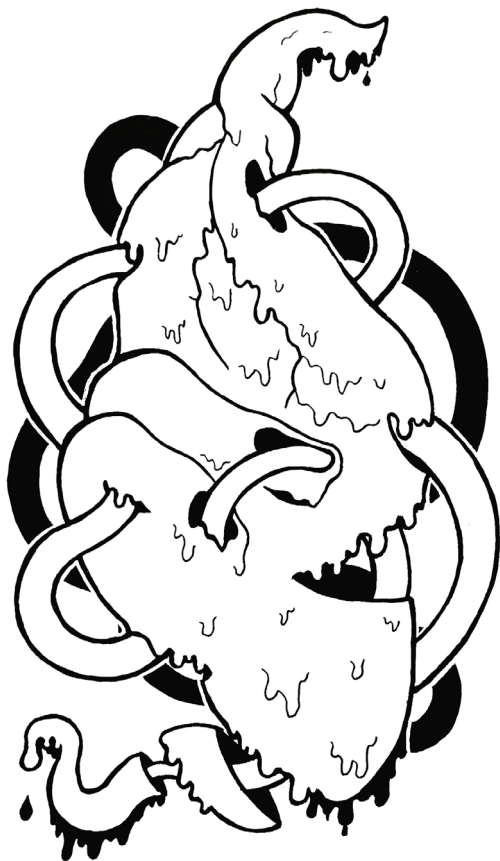


Splitting  
Speaking  
Reassigned  
Redefined



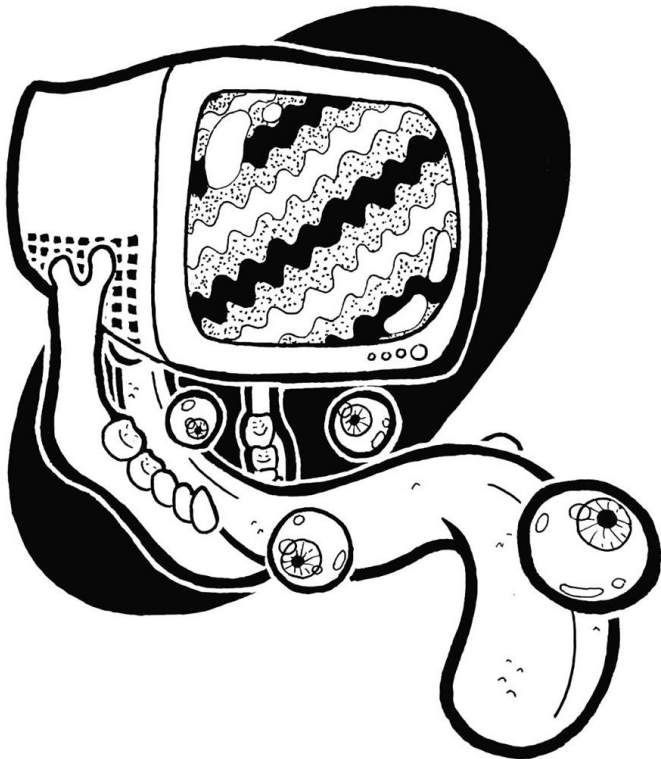
Knowing  
Finding  
Growing  
Free

Intertwined  
Unrefined  
Nonaligned  
Undefined

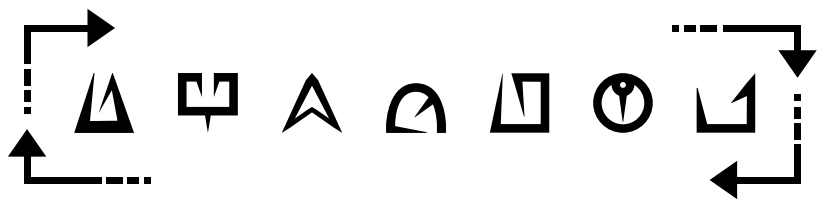




The blinds are closed and the doors are locked  
As a new day begins inside the same four walls.  
The light of the sun is replaced by incandescent squares  
On every table, every desk, in every hand and every mind,  
And from their light forms the images of the familiar,  
A world just outside the door and so far out of reach.  
The sun sets, or maybe it rises, time loses meaning  
As the squares fill the room with an unending light,  
Taunting the senses with crumbs of what was once a feast.  
And as they starve, the crumbs become a feast,  
Eyes darting from square to square, ravenous for more  
Of a vibrant reality reduced to planes of glowing glass.  
Dust settles on the doorknobs, the doors now nothing more  
Than another decoration, a form without function.  
The windows, too, lose purpose, looking out to nothing  
As the memory of what once was shrivels and shrinks  
Under the tremendous heat and pressure of the light.



With every look the squares grow, consuming the space,  
Merging to become four new walls contained within the old.  
If there is day or night, or rain or sun, it's all lost now  
As every eye is glued to the walls of light surrounding them.  
The eyes notice nothing, the feast of the outside now forgotten,  
And the hope of returning to a vibrant and wonderful reality  
Forgotten, too, under the power of the all-consuming walls.  
The light flickers.  
In that moment of darkness the memories come rushing back,  
And with them the outside world blinks back into reality  
As the senses recall the flavors of a feast once experienced.  
They cry out, starved and dying, screaming for escape.  
The light returns.  
The glowing glass walls resume feeding crumbs to the senses.  
Filled with light, the eyes water, but don't remember why.

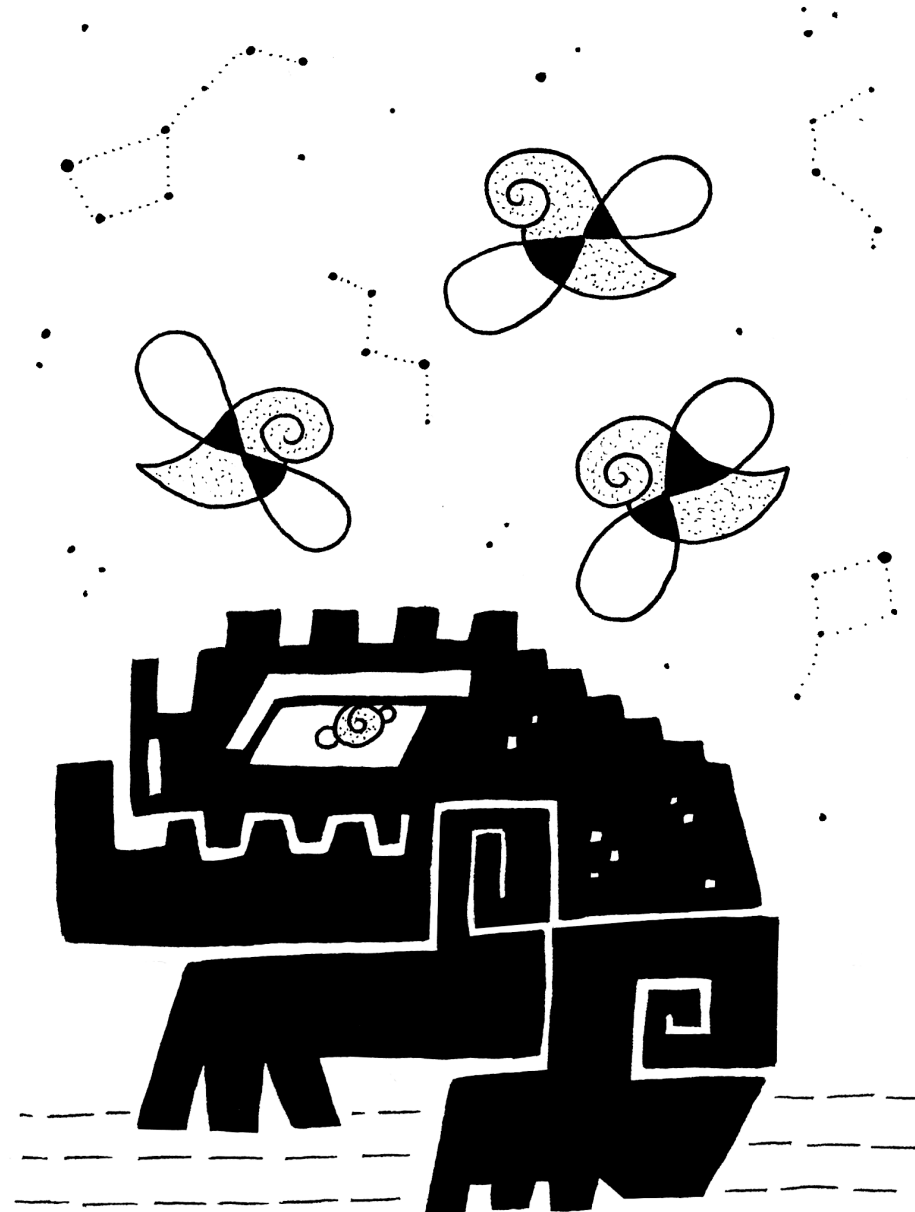


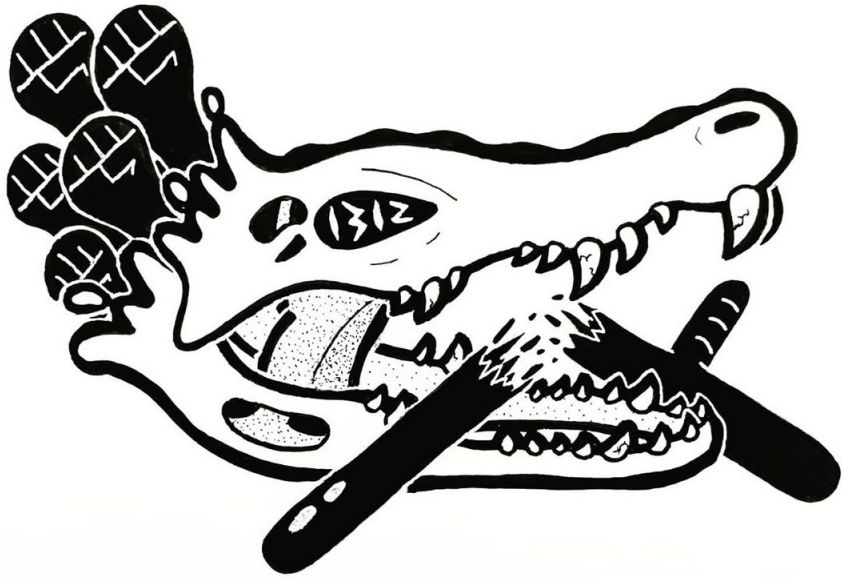
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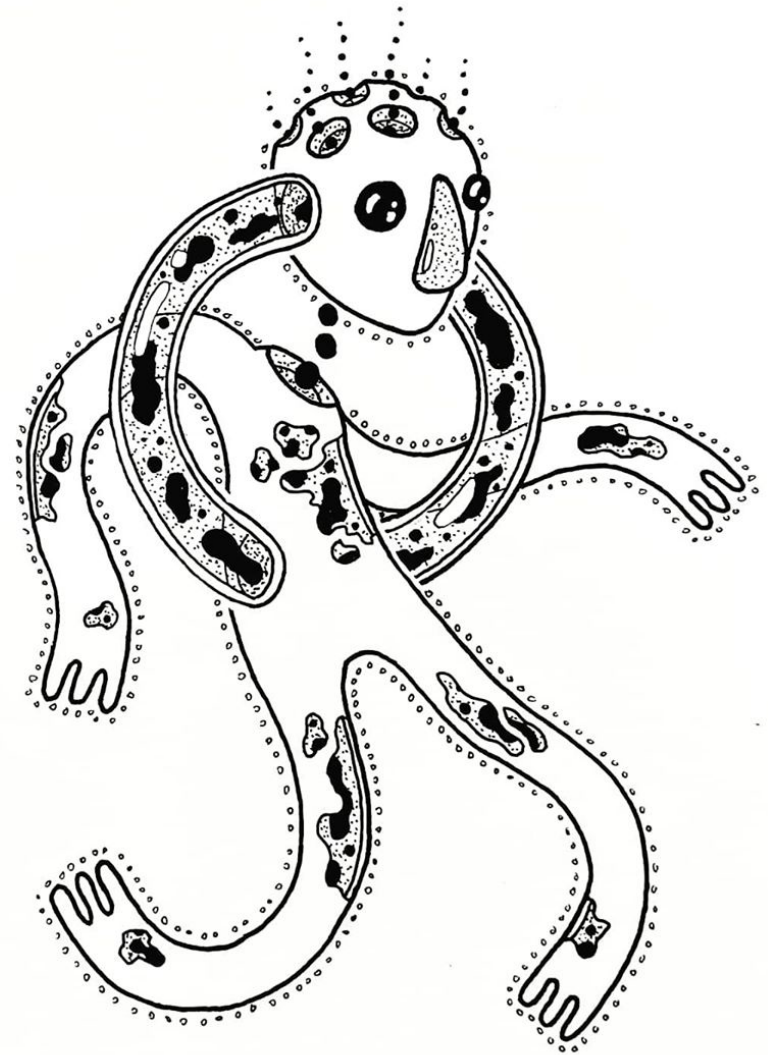


The neighborhood is burning down.  
It's been burning as long as I can remember.  
I remember seeing a trail of smoke as a kid,  
and when I asked the adults what it was,  
they said it was a cloud like all the others.  
Now the smoke has blocked out the clouds,  
and the flames have taken the houses  
on the edges of the neighborhood.  
I can feel the heat from my front porch,  
and I see the light of the fire on the horizon.  
I ask about putting out the flames.  
"Oh, it's a shame about those homes,  
but the warmth of the fire is quite nice,  
and doesn't the light look so beautiful?"  
I ask another, and another, and another,  
but the flames have no enemies here.  
I pull out my hose and fight with the little I have.  
"Oh what a waste, using good garden water  
on something so futile as stopping a flame."  
I stay out through the night, through the week.  
The neighbors notice and take pity.  
To show their support, they come outside  
to stand beside me and make some s'mores.





Everything's falling apart at the seams  
And it's different than we ever knew  
There's so many ways that it's breaking apart  
And I don't think we're making it through



I wonder if I'll miss the trees and the sky  
And the oceans and sunrises too  
But the one thing that I know that I know  
Is that when the world ends, I'll miss you



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