

SARAH CAMERON

JESS CURRIE

REU LEACOCK

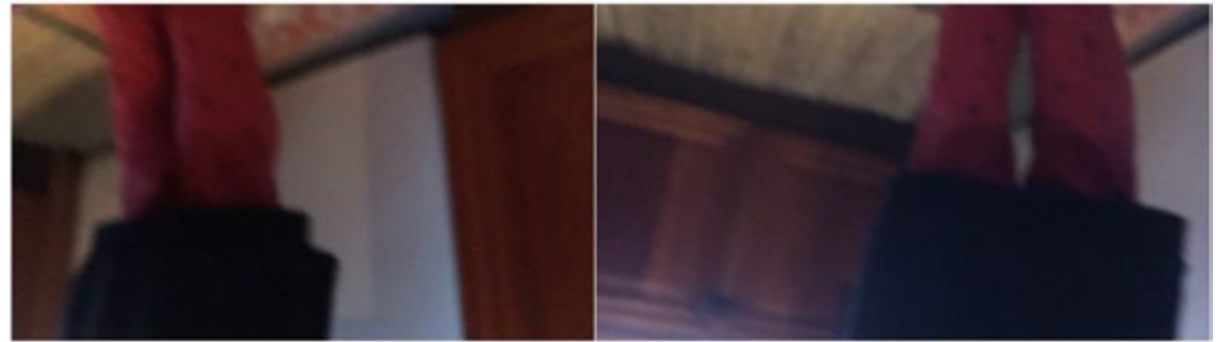
JILL MCKNIGHT

ROSIE VOHRA

*conversations on swansong 2024, being anoona parveen by sarah cameron, becoming a mother and the abominable self by jess currie, the alphabet of the feet by reu leacock, life can only be understood backwards but must be lived forwards by jill mcknight, mortar as metaphor by rosie vohra.*



Bina  
Noona Parveen



Anoo in her fiancée's trousers

## Becoming a Mother and the Abominable Self

I recently listened to the audiobook of Virginia Woolf's *A Room of One's Own*. A woman must have money and a room of her own if she is to write fiction. I guess now, I will have to stick to fact.

I stumble and hurdle to even make the words come out. It feels like I am going to vomit. My thoughts aren't coherent, they are scattered and endless. Writing used to be a feat that used to feel so natural, it now stands as still as a deer in headlights. I wonder if that too is a trauma response.

Other times I have imagined myself as a flower not yet ready to bloom. Someone else has the smart idea to force the petals open, but instead ends up plucking them out.

Once when I was in secondary school, sat in Geography class, our teacher made us watch a video of a Native American tribes ritual practice. The girl in the video had started her period and as a result of this the other tribes people plucked out the hairs on her head one by one until she was completely bald. They said she was coming of age.

That's how I felt when I was induced into labour, three times. That I was unprepared and not ready for the next step. That I was being plucked at, The midwives offered a stretch and sweep. Except they don't offer they force, and unable to say no as a result of a lifetime of people pleasing you fawn. They do this on multiple occasions over the course of a two day period. Squirting some magical gel like substance that is supposed to encourage birth. My friend who works in maternity told me that she has never seen one work. They placed hands deep inside the vaginal canal and say that your cervix is facing the wrong way and pull, stretch and tear on delicate flesh that houses what only feels like a bowling ball whilst simultaneously trying to

RIP.

It open. A part of you dies. I can't think of a more transformative time in my life than becoming a mother. It was unexpected, unplanned, not previously meditated upon. I hated pregnancy. The constant nausea in the first trimester, the not even having enough energy to lift up an arm and by the third trimester, pelvic girdle pain so severe, completely rendered unable to walk even a few steps. I screamed when turning over in bed. And labour was work.

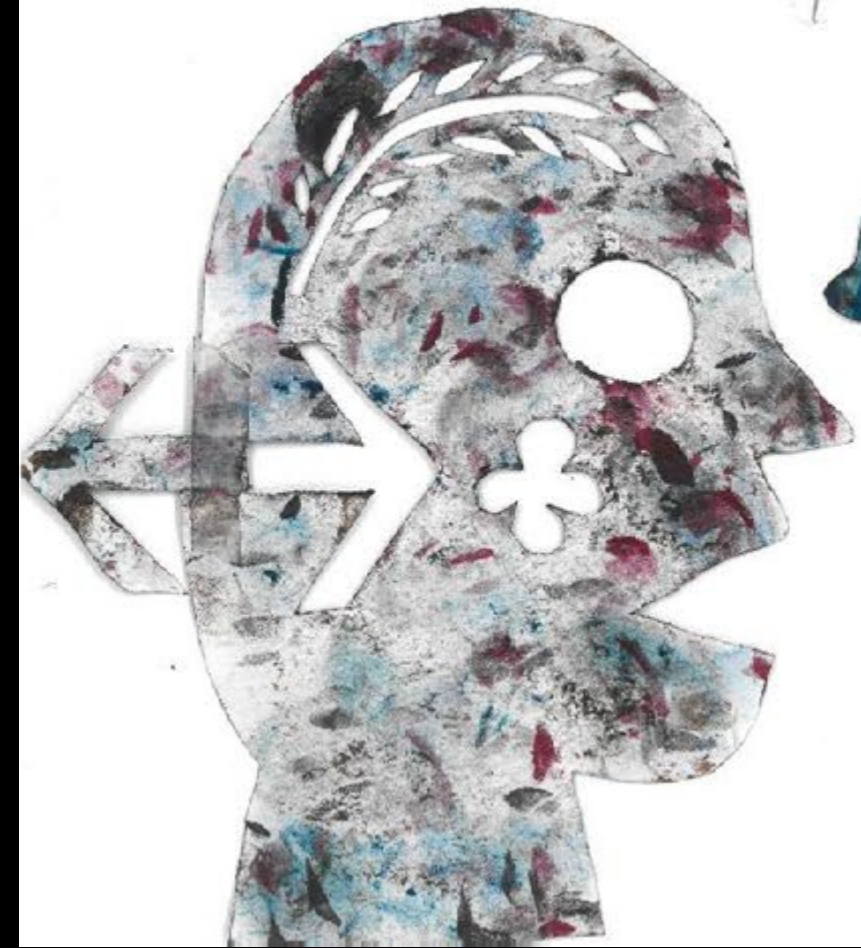
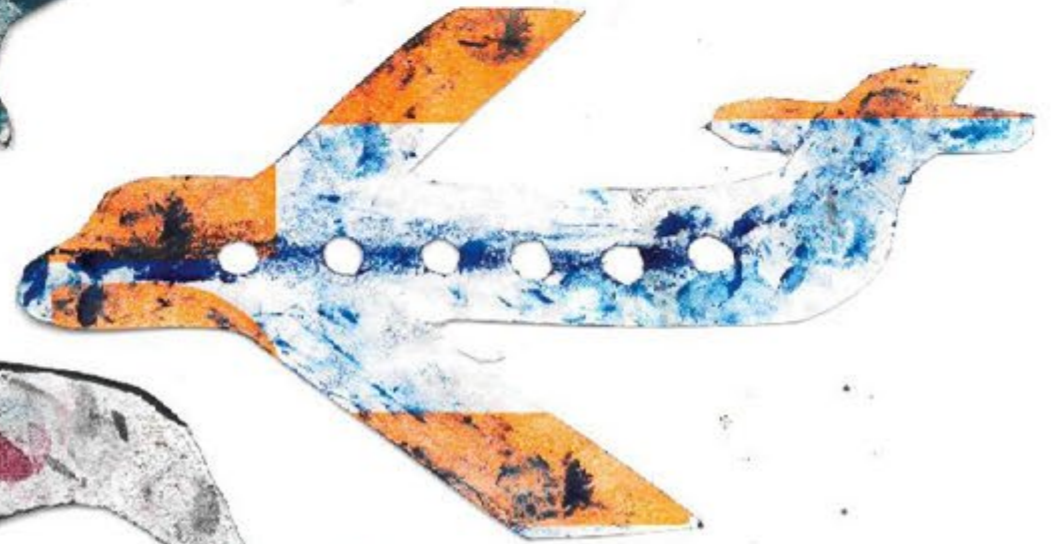
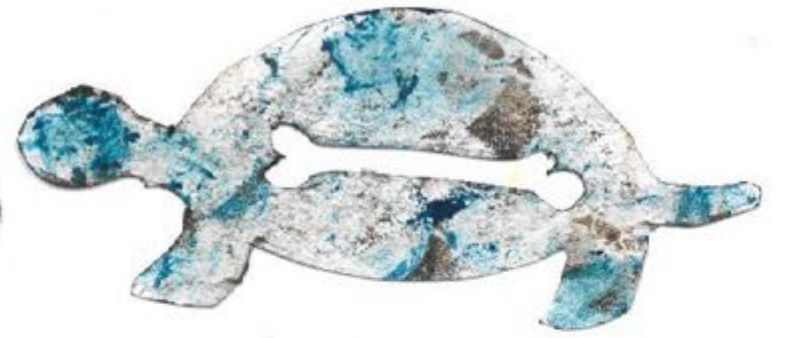
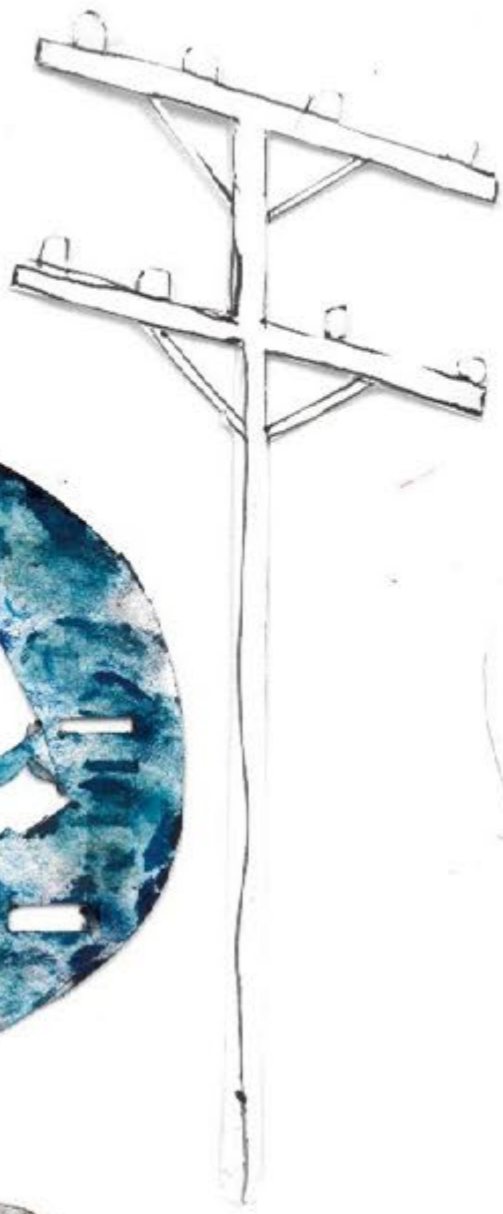
I had envisioned that I had entered the underworld to retrieve a soul. Because it was really hell. I lost 1.7 litres of blood and whilst I was bleeding out my only request was to drink some diet coke. I felt myself slip away and I think maybe I knew that a part of me would never return.

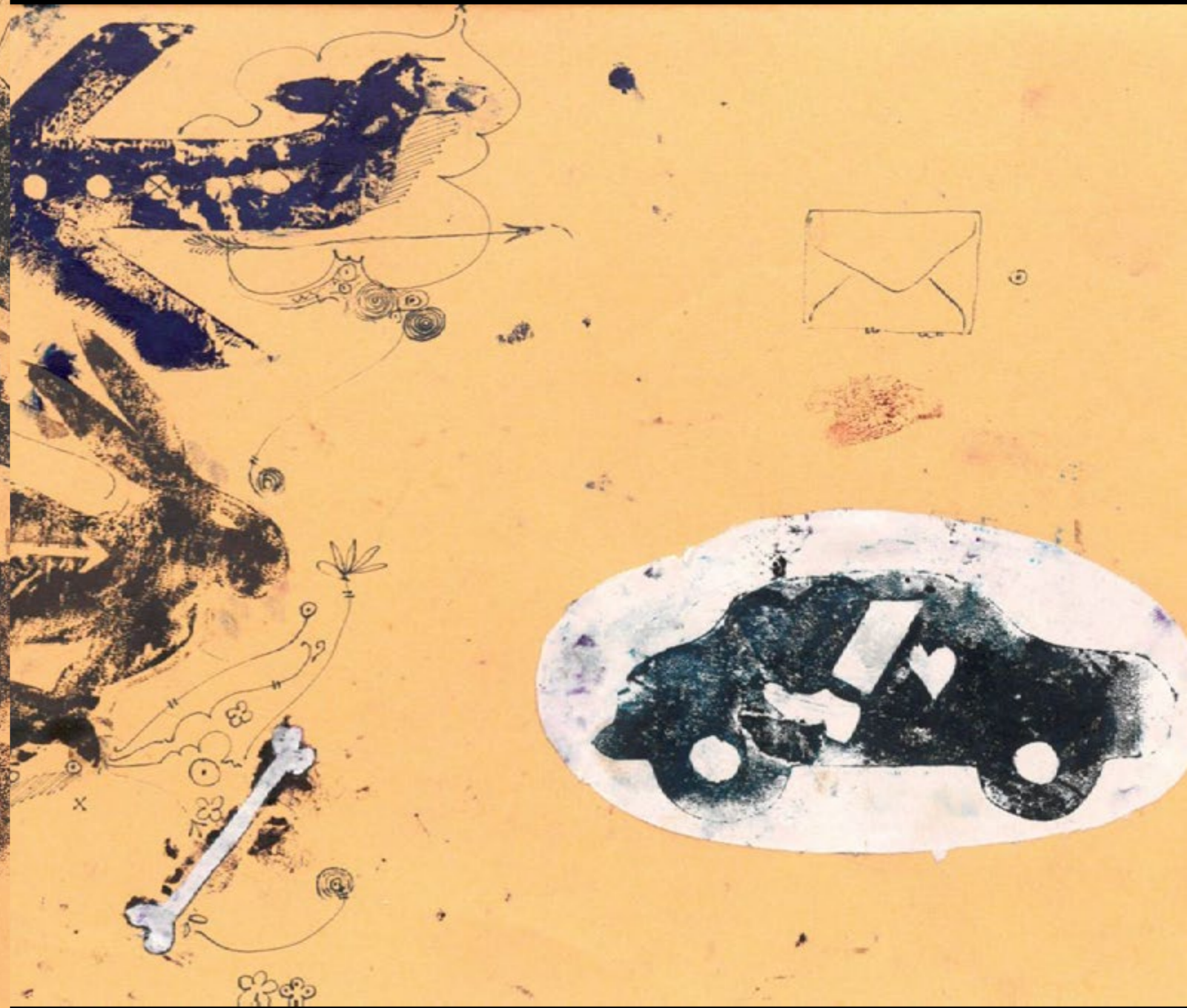
2 weeks later I was in a psychiatric facility, a specialist mother and baby unit in Derby. I joked to my friends that at least now I had been sectioned I could finally be a *real* writer, just like how Lana Del Rey is in *Violet Bent Over the Grass* - she doesn't fly a plane, *she* writes. *She* is a poet. *She* writes and I just jest. Another coming of age.

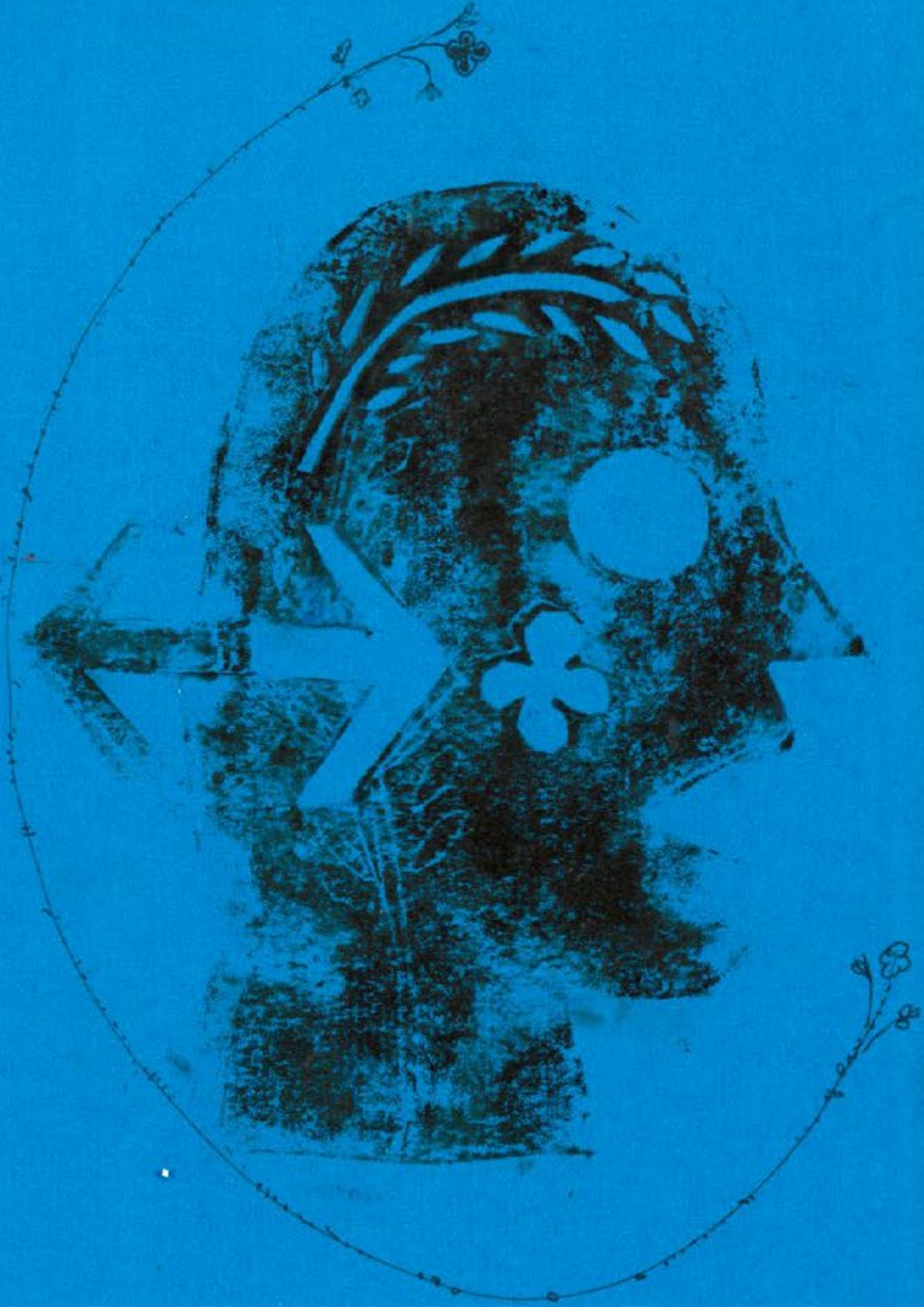
That was all almost a year ago, and again I have adapted well to the new reality, the new pace and rhythm of life. I stand at the kitchen sink, bracing myself to wash the dishes, again, and think - *If not you, who? if not now, when?* The contemporary existentialist's mantra I see on every new-age yogi business influencers instagram account. I wonder if they use it to wash the dishes too, or if it is only invoked for spontaneous vacations to India.

We love ourselves, we love ourselves, we love ourselves, but we sure couldn't be here without you.

Maybe we do really need each other, after all.



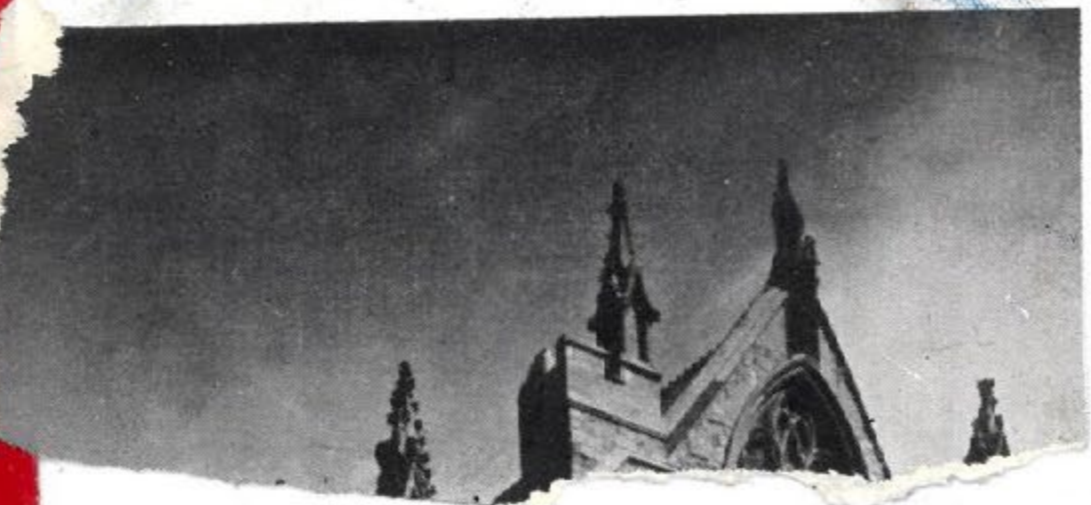


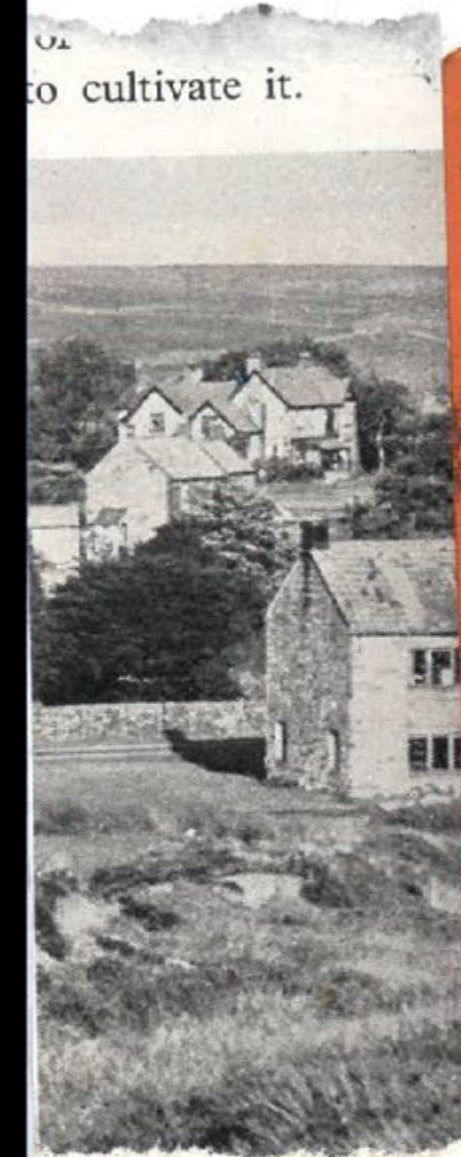




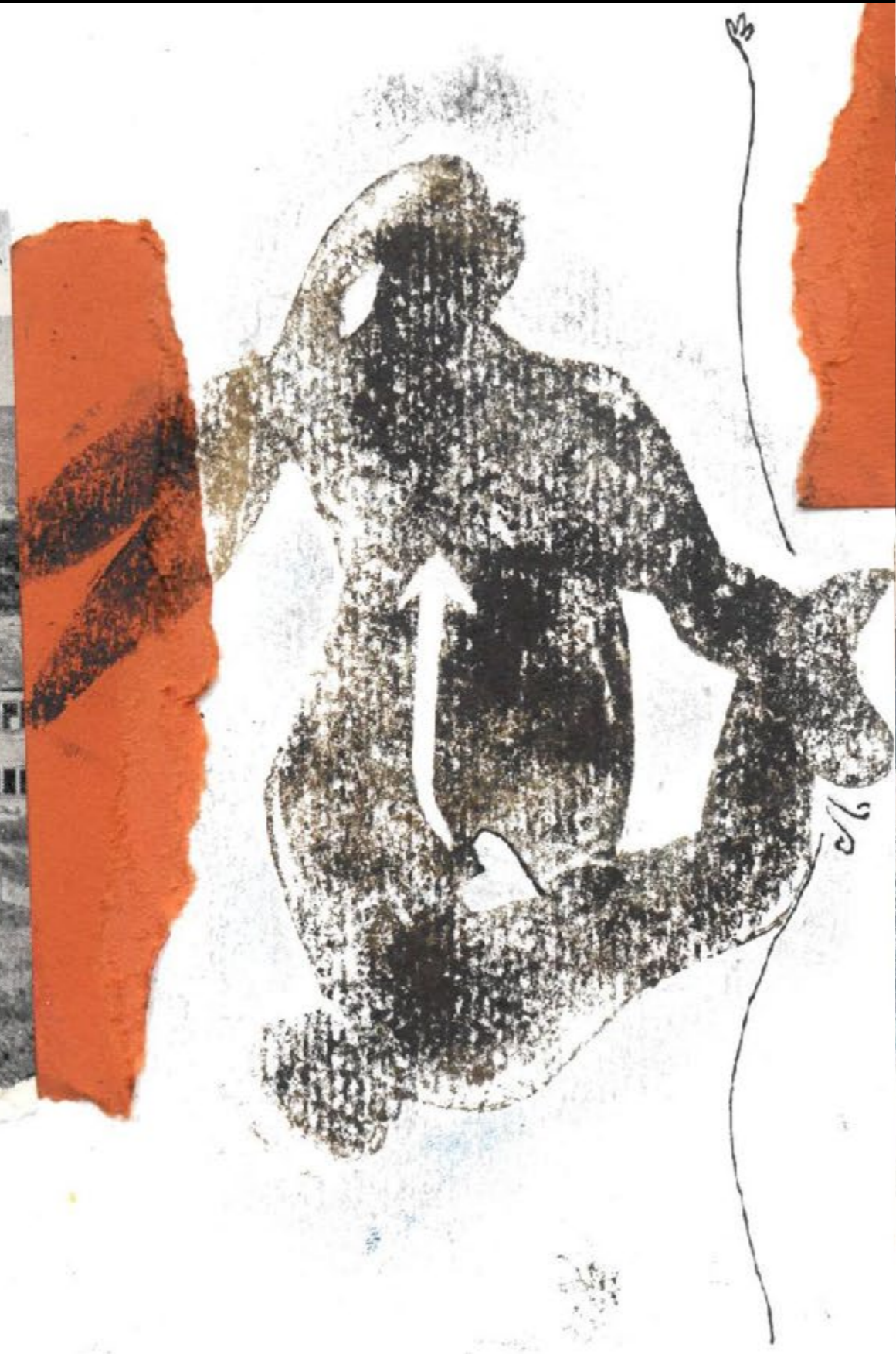


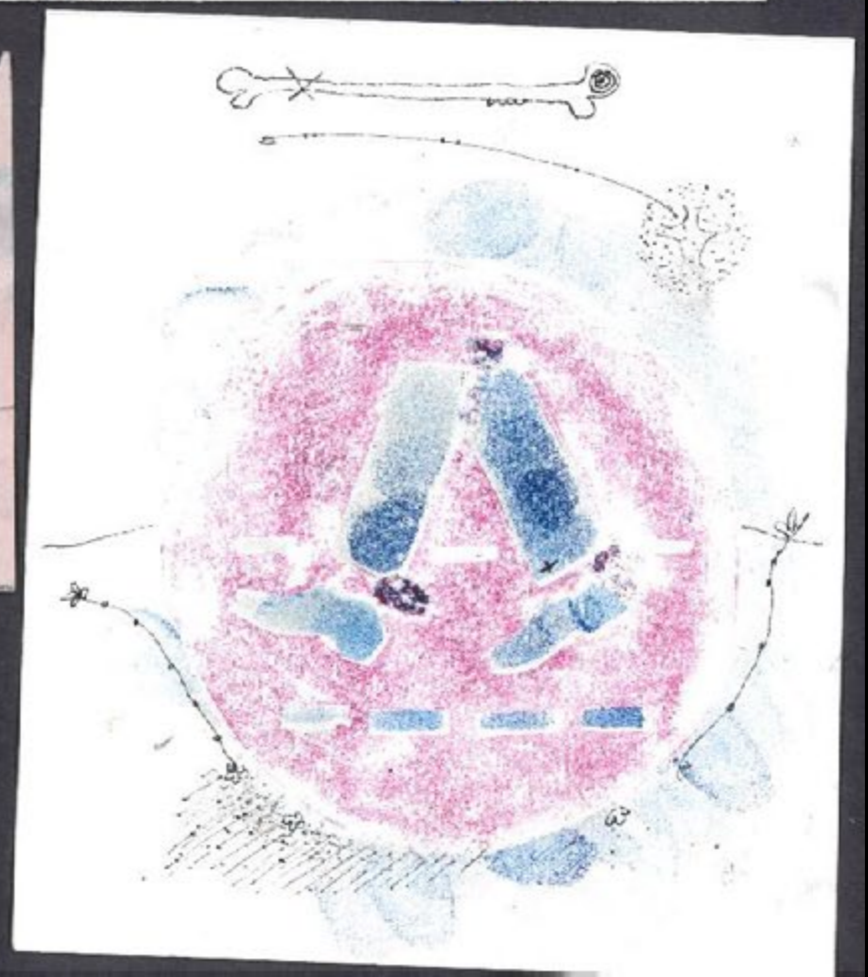
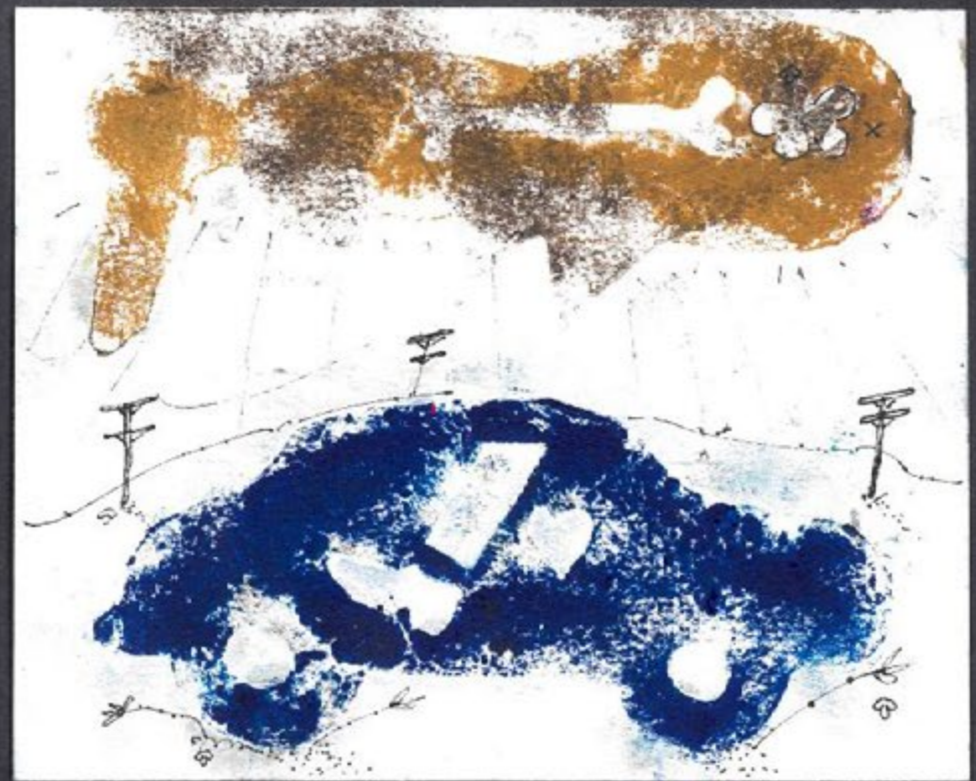






to cultivate it.







The Alpha of  
of



Of the Feet



The Foot Against the Wheel  
Against the pavement  
The road isn't  
Open enough

The Image of Introspection  
And what can be  
Carefully  
Considered On  
the Wall

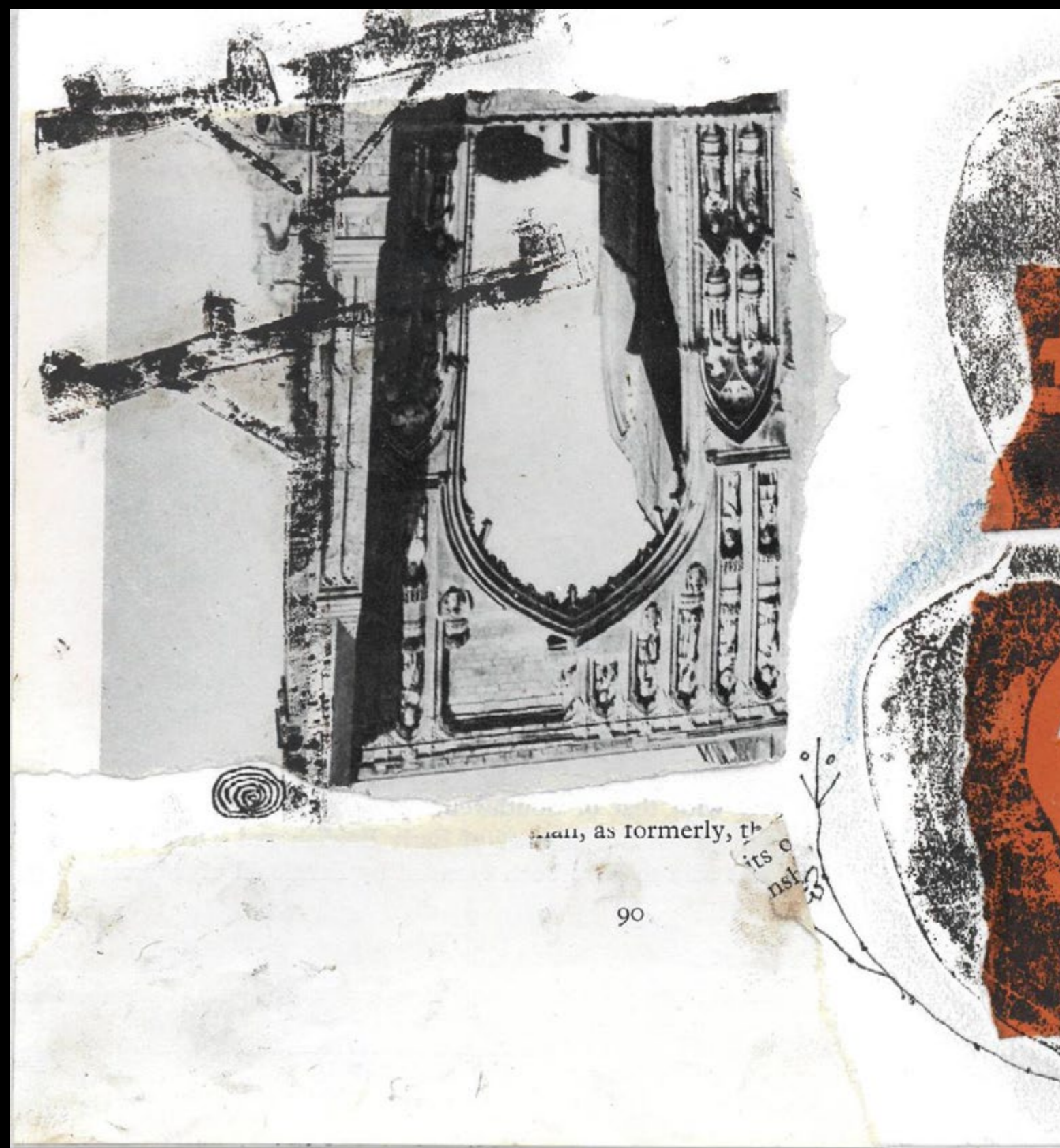
Guided  
as the Vessel  
the Natural World  
as an Engine



THE PRACTIC Retreat  
Action to its  
Home On its  
feet  
in suspension

The Head driven by the Gentle  
Environment - but pulled by  
the Contemporary Responsibility

The Distinctive Symbol of  
the Well  
In Emotional Conflict  
The Scream







oela caps

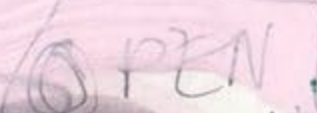






- Robert Maguire.

y-trees.  
- catwombs.

- PORTAL  PEN  
- Rewinding, space sand

deep listening  
TOOBT FACE HASL 56.



2024