

Image Imagination

Lynsey Ficker

A Love Letter

Anyways, sorry for being so hard to read at first, honestly that feels like a whole different world. A whole different world but not THAT long ago to be honest. As soon as quarantine started it ended an era and that era has been frozen in time and will forever feel like not that long ago. But watching Tiger King and Stranger Things? Bro that feels like YEARS ago. I remember playing Ori with you in Rachel's room because we were so bored out of our minds. We were like, do you think we'll go back to school by the end of the semester?

As much as I know you have a mountain to complain about, I really can't say I'm unhappy with how anything went. I guess I found out this year that I thrive with just the small amount of people that I love and feel safe around, so I'm picturing myself battling quarantine out with anyone else aside you. . .and I can't. I love with my whole heart how much quarantine has proved that we can complement each other, doing what so many other couples and families can't. It's amazing how much everything has pointed to our strengthened connection and understanding of each other, and subsequently ourselves. . . and somehow severed our connection with the outside world so much so that we start to create our own unique tongue—of which nobody wants to begin to understand (or wants to be around).

And now we're on winter break and all I can do is shrug as I come to realize that I don't just miss you. . . I feel a little inseparable from you. Enjoying time with my family has been a whole lot of missing you and wondering when I'm going to find an excuse to come down to Cincinnati again. You know things are weird when you don't just miss a person, you feel a little homesick when you're cozy and they're not there.

Writing that down on paper makes me feel like a cat raised in quarantine who's developed separation anxiety.

Our late night calls have been nice but it makes me really want to push you off the bed with my butt so it makes me more sad that I can't, I love you so much. Whenever we hang up I look at my limited stock of Lynsey photos to reminisce and slowly cozy further into this couch, but then I get barraged by all the awkward Aaron selfies I've sent to you for whatever reason I could muster.

Thanks for being goofy with me and accepting me for me and for returning my awkward selfies because awkward selfies are my love language.

In addition to that, napping in parks is also my love language, and drinking beer on the porch, and making fajitas together, and listening to new albums together for the first time, or napping in the park and listening to an album together for the first time at the same time. And even though we slowed up a little bit, I've loved learning more about you while answering the 36 questions that lead to love. Maybe more than all of those, I love having a spiritual and physical companion to learn more about my own thoughts, preferences, needs, and loves of both my mind and body with.

I don't know if I'll ever be able to articulate how much you mean to me without the cheese that comes with saying it all. I love you a million times over, and I'll probably say it that many times.

As I was listening to new music to put on a playlist I'm making for you, I came across a song from a collaborator of Bon Iver's with the line, "safe's the kinda word that makes love grow old".

And I guess there's no way that couldn't have resonated with me because there's no one I've ever felt more safe around than you, I know we have the most pure and safe love between us. I guess it's also to say that forever is a long time and it's not easy to value the minutes that turn into years and the years that turn into decades. People can be together in principle, but are they saying I love you 36 times a day?

It's different to consider being together with someone for 20 years and slowly becoming complacent with the cards life dealt you. But it's another to thrive with them every minute of the way as you both grow together and nurture healthy habits rather than police bad ones. I don't take for granted our focus on spiritual self work for a second- it gives me hope that I won't be stuck becoming my parents, trapped by the suburbs and my genetic fate. I don't know if it's because I feel more autonomy, if I'm just closer to that age, or if you've just inspired me and shown me it's possible, but I've never felt more hope for myself and my future's happiness. I'm not sure why we gravitate towards it, but it seems like what we've gone through in our lives before meeting each other has led us to have had a focus on it for our entire lives, more like a hobby than it is a way to become a more righteous person.

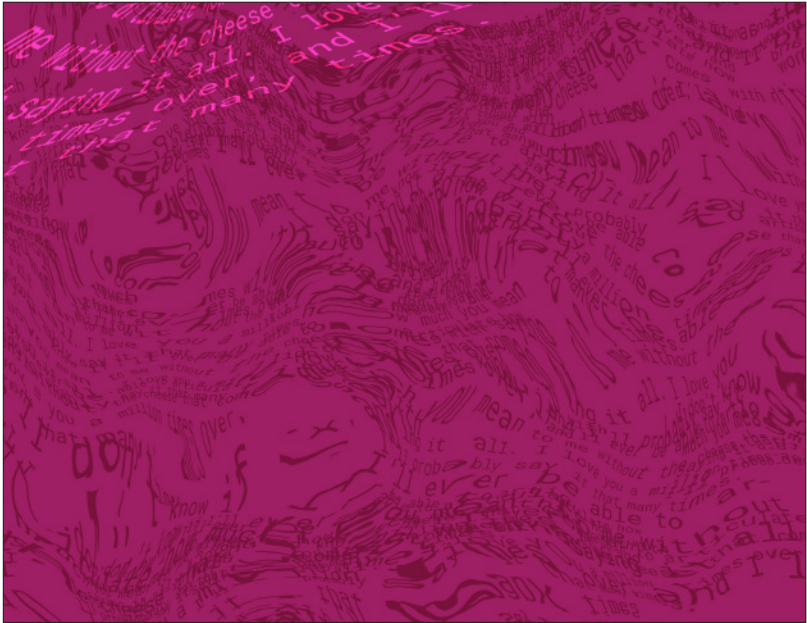
The last song on the playlist is from Bon Iver. It's about the load and the burden of moving on from someone in the context of the album, but without the bigger picture it seems like a reflection on being paralyzed by the weight of life before someone who loves you comes into the frame and offers to share in the struggle.

It's about an excavation of the self, examining and breaking down the parts and determining if we like them or if they carry a weight and burden, so that we can unlock and release them. When you find that there are things you don't love or that weigh you down, another person can share that weight and help you unload. I don't hold any keys, but I want and I hope that I can be there to help you realize it's been there all along.

There's never going to be a sudden moment where we realize something or become new people, rather the whole time we are growing, changing, and accepting together, sharing in not just the heaviest, but all the weight of life, helping each other along the way feel safe and secure. We're safe together. . . your love is safe with me.



I feel like a cat



Entranced



Safe makes love grow



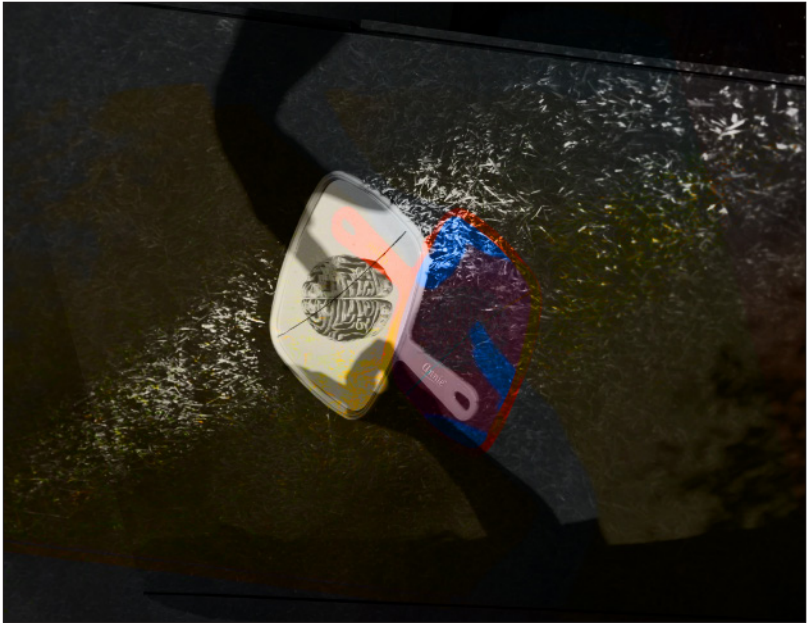
Time passes strangely



Old texts



Memories and future hope



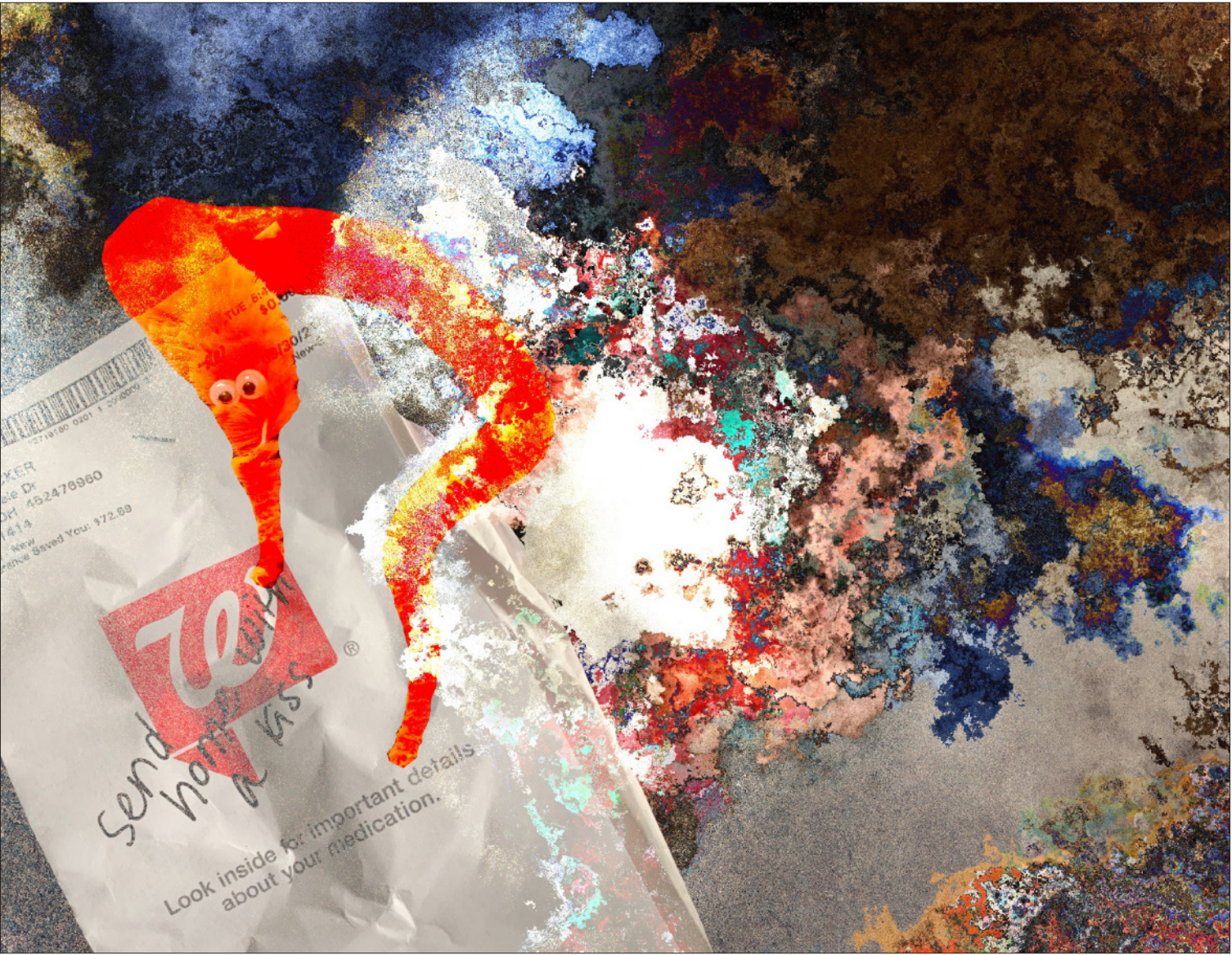
Mirror image



Keep you with me



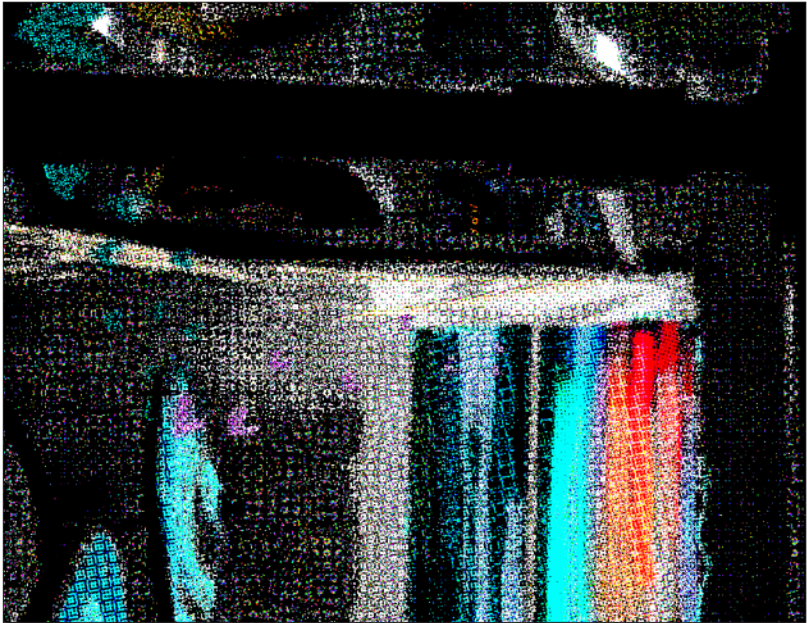
Our time together



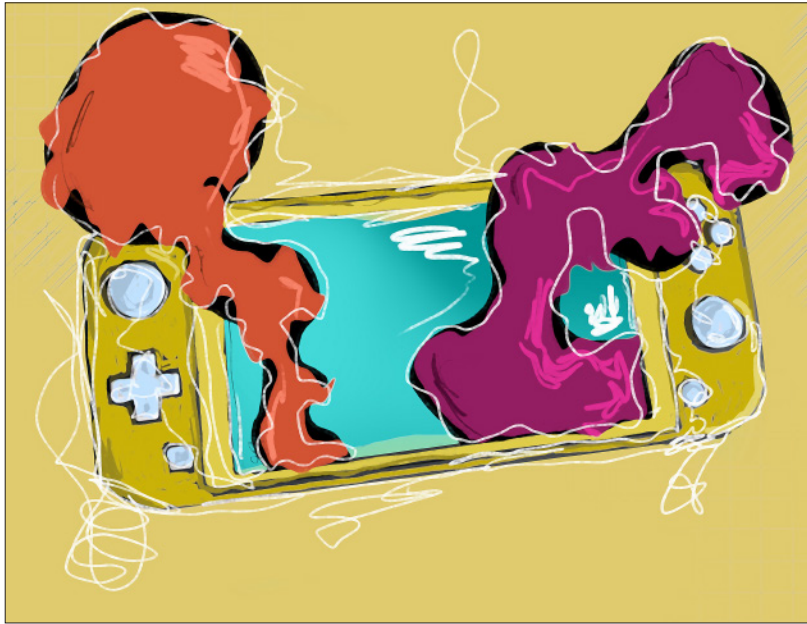
Away for the winter



Softly, with each other



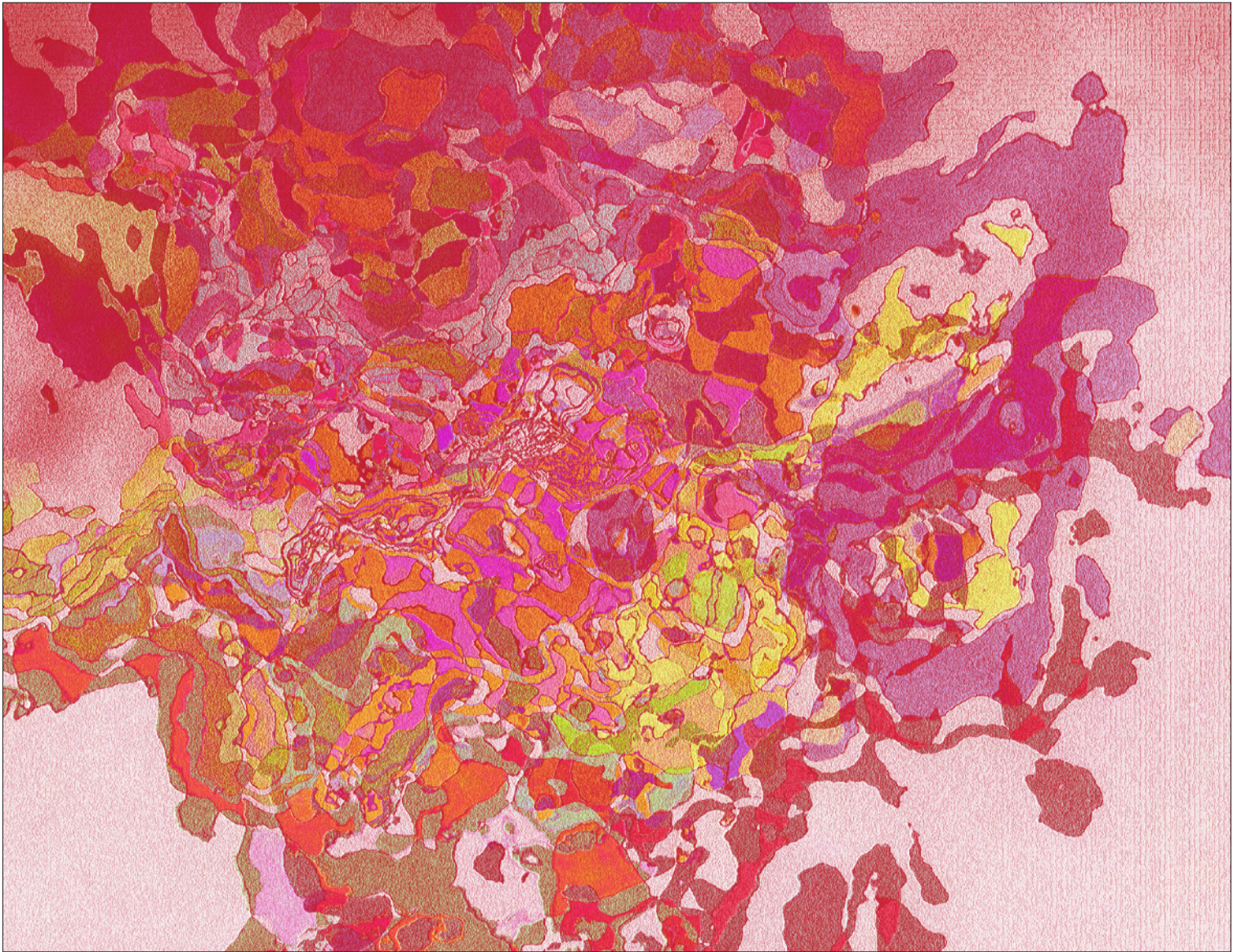
In my (your) room



Wanna play mario kart?



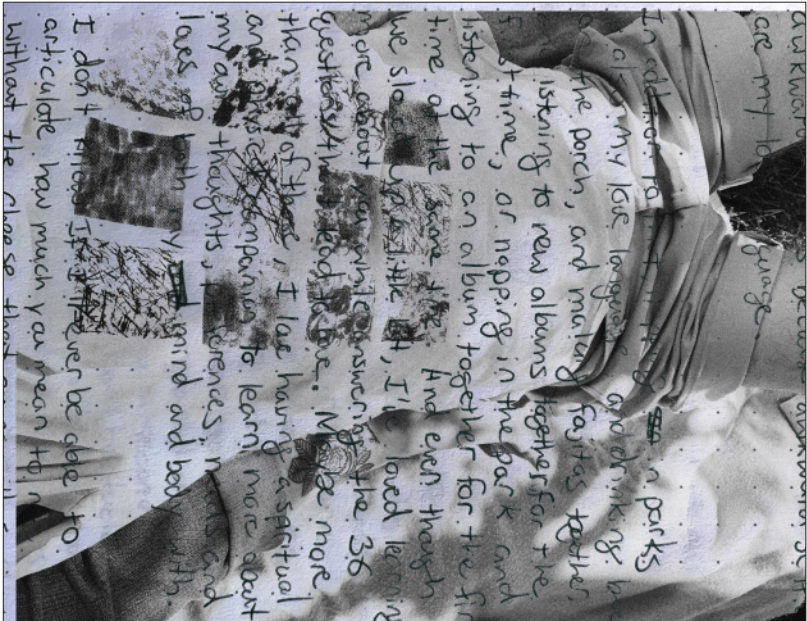
I hold no keys



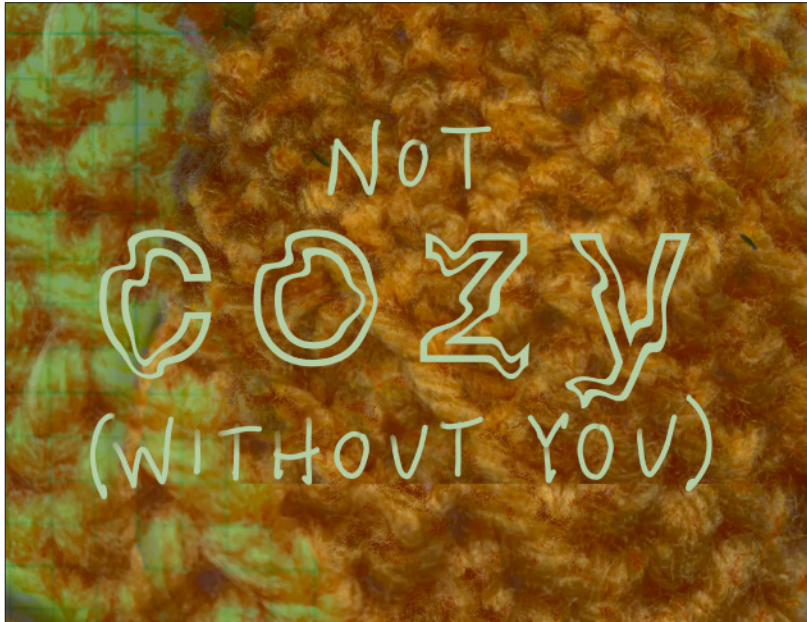
Butterflies



Interconnected



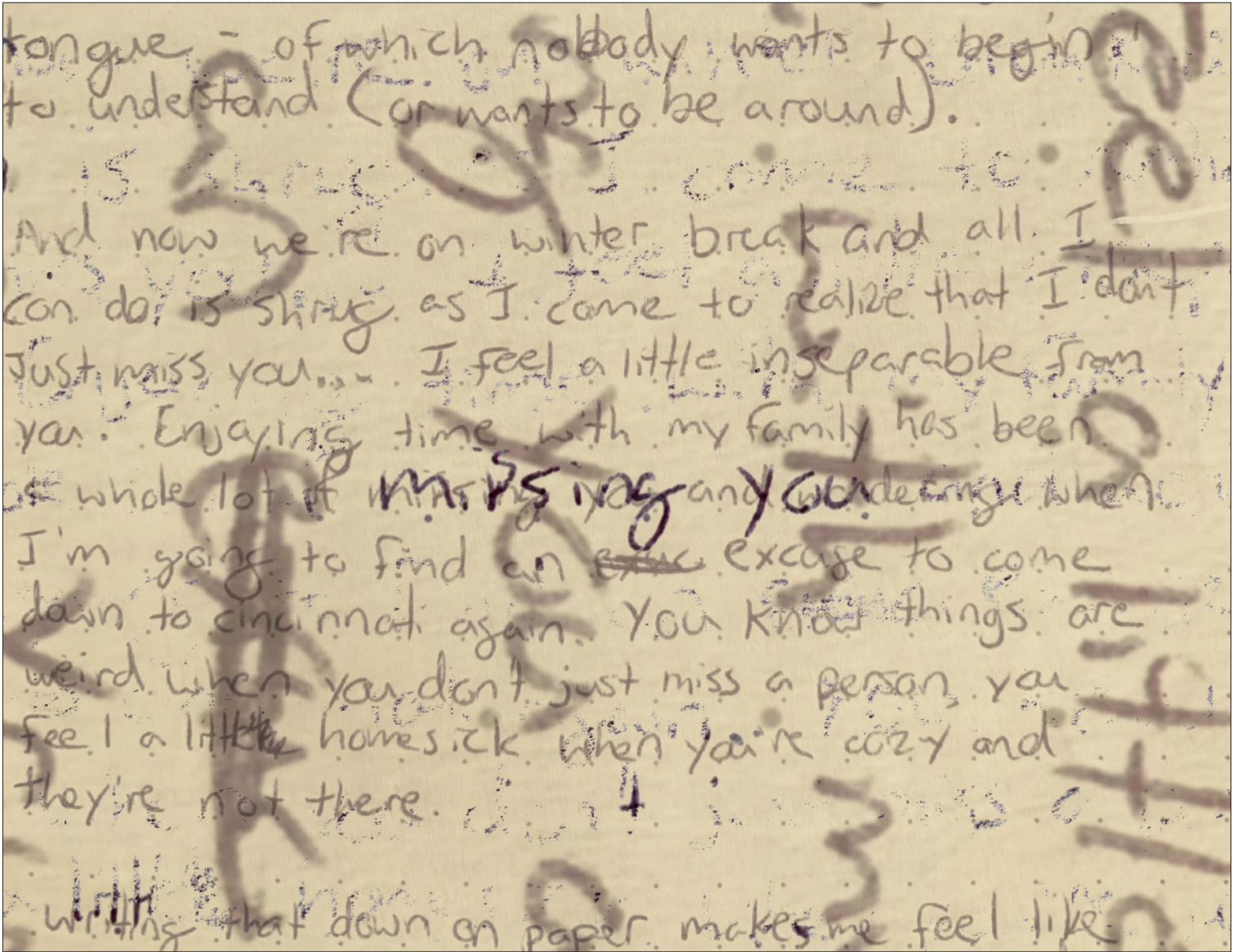
Skyline park date pt. 302



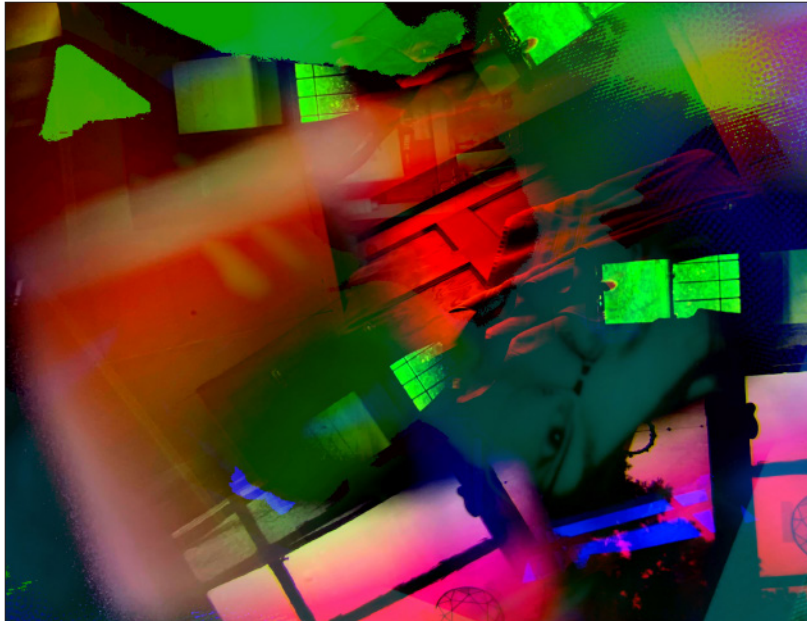
Coziness: lacking



36 times a day



tldr; miss u



Bending of reality



Evenings in wintertime



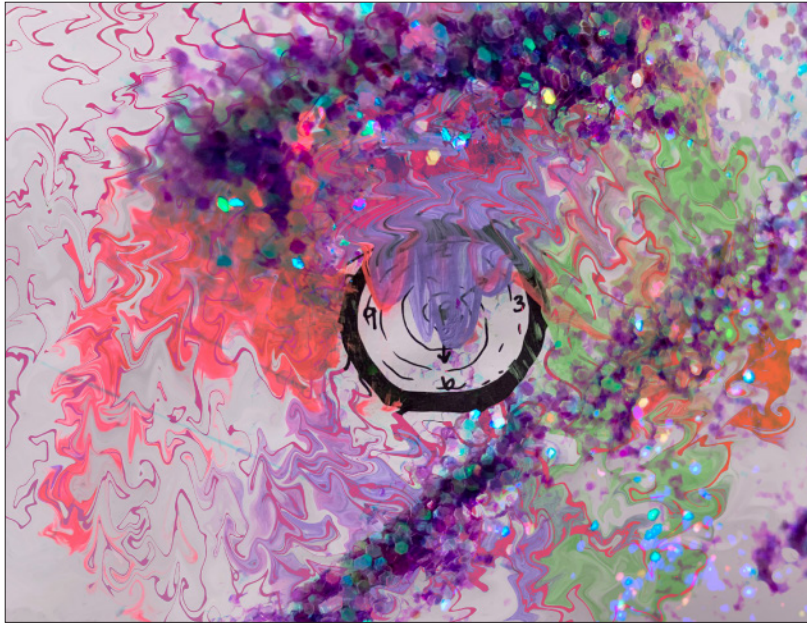
When you're away



Hazy



Dreaming of a roadtrip



Time is an illusion



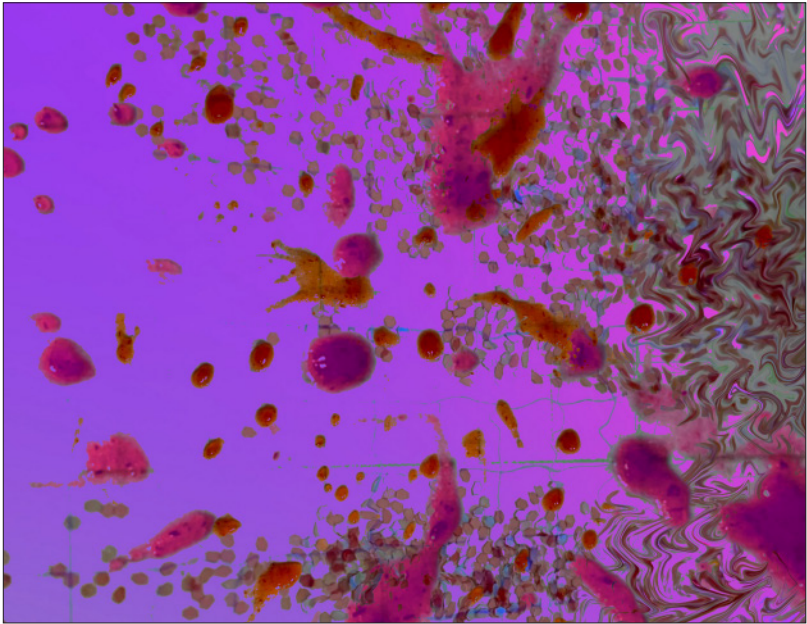
3 hour phone calls



Cozied up in bed



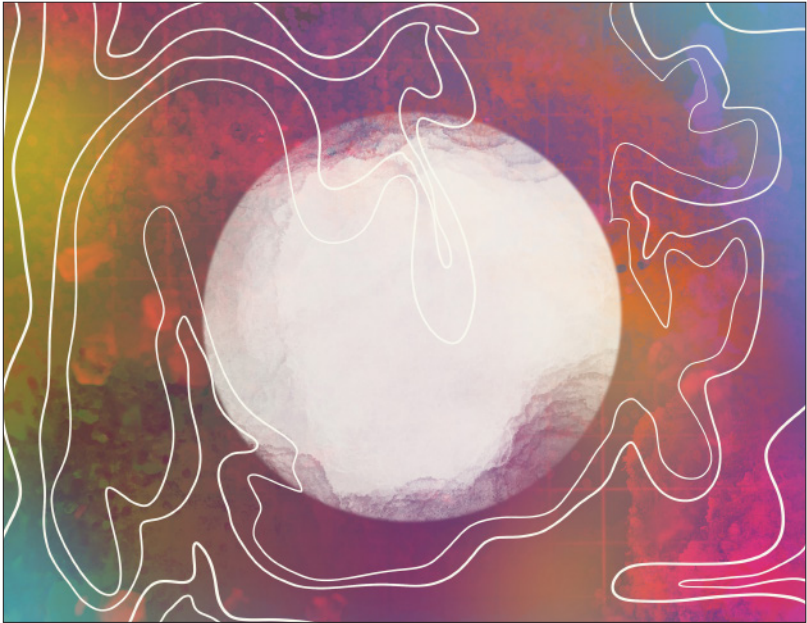
Goocy



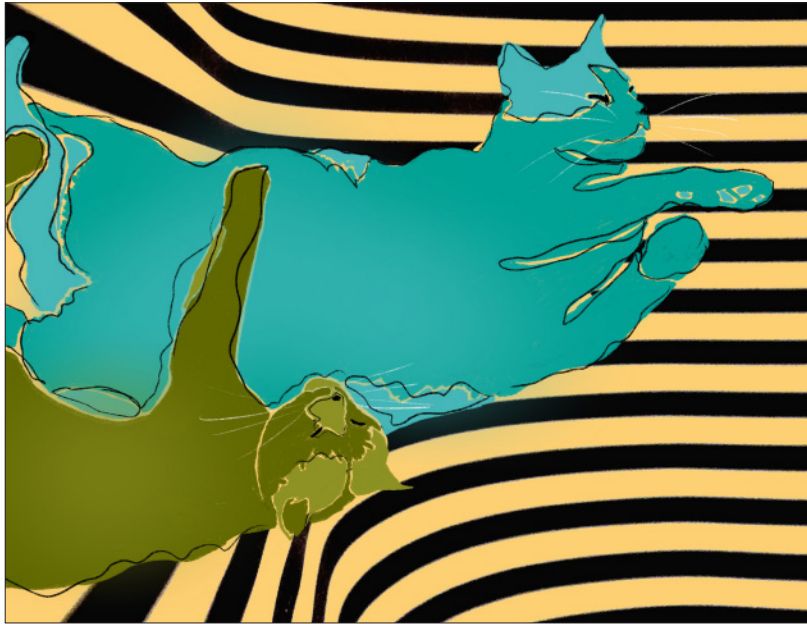
Tango with 2



Safety and Uncertainty



Absence



Raised in quarantine



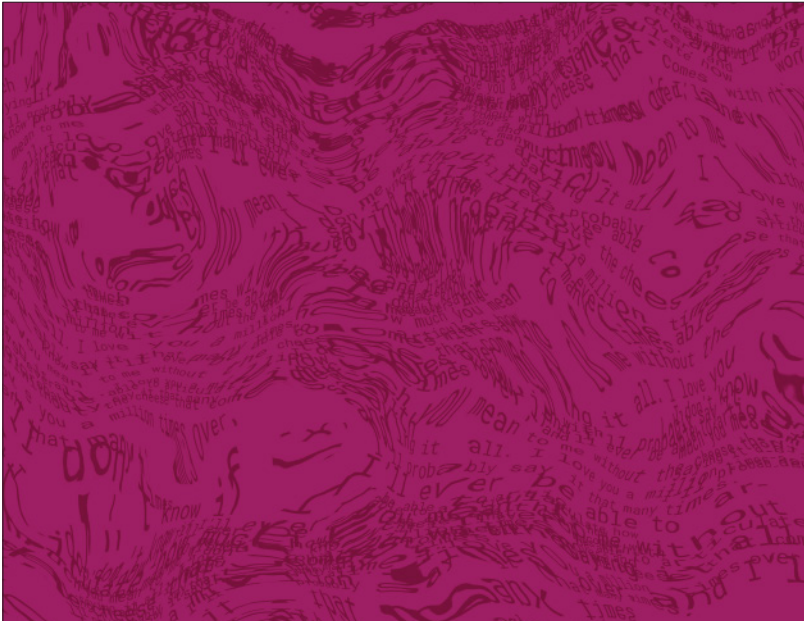
Isolated bliss



Odd complement



Hazy



Entranced



36 times a day



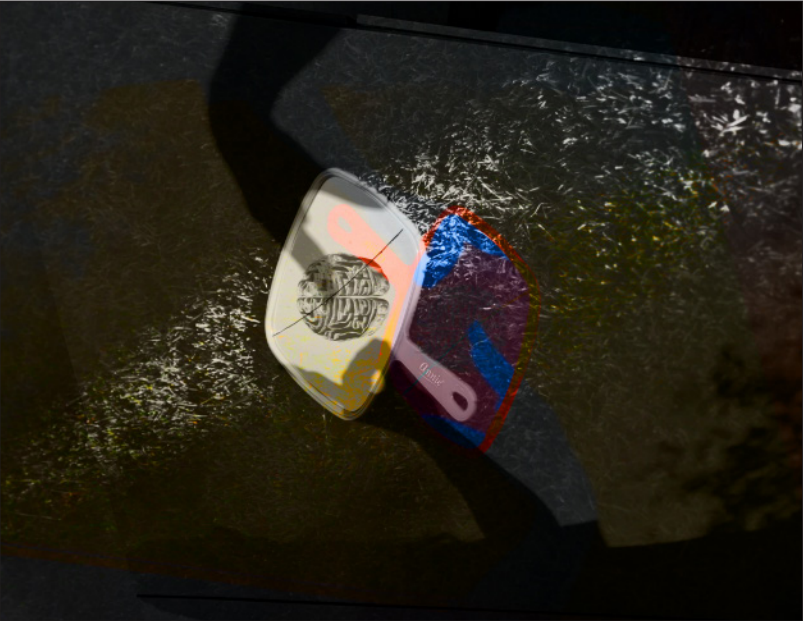
Goopy



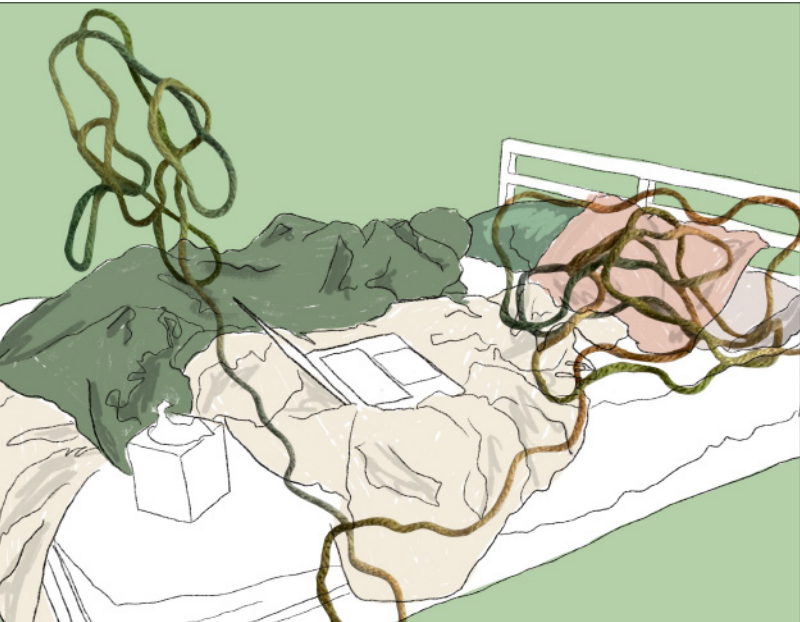
Love in little things



Old texts



Mirror image



Cozied up in bed



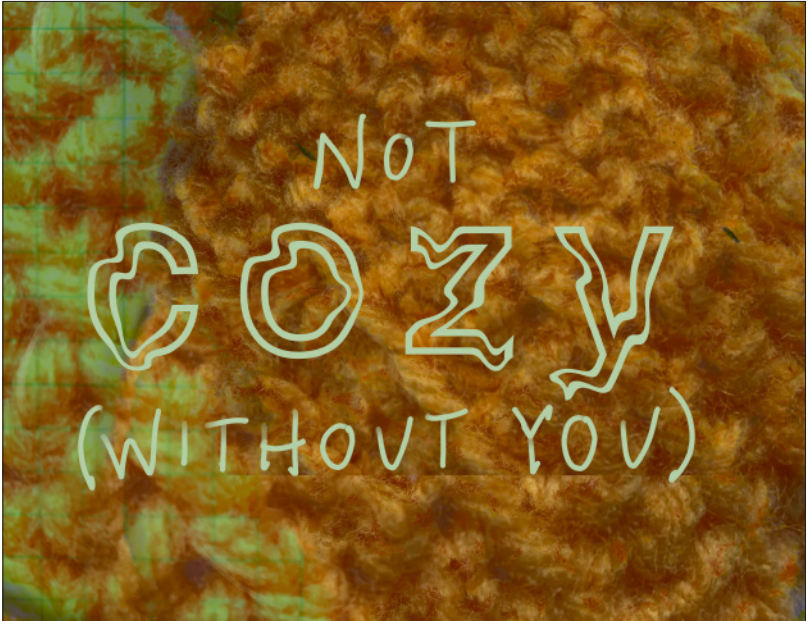
Odd complement



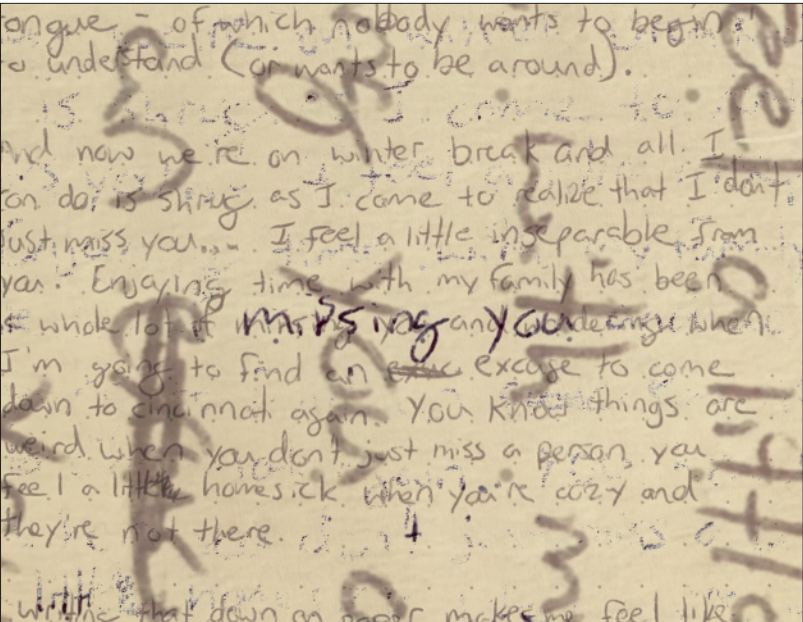
Seeing new



Away for the winter



Coziness: lacking



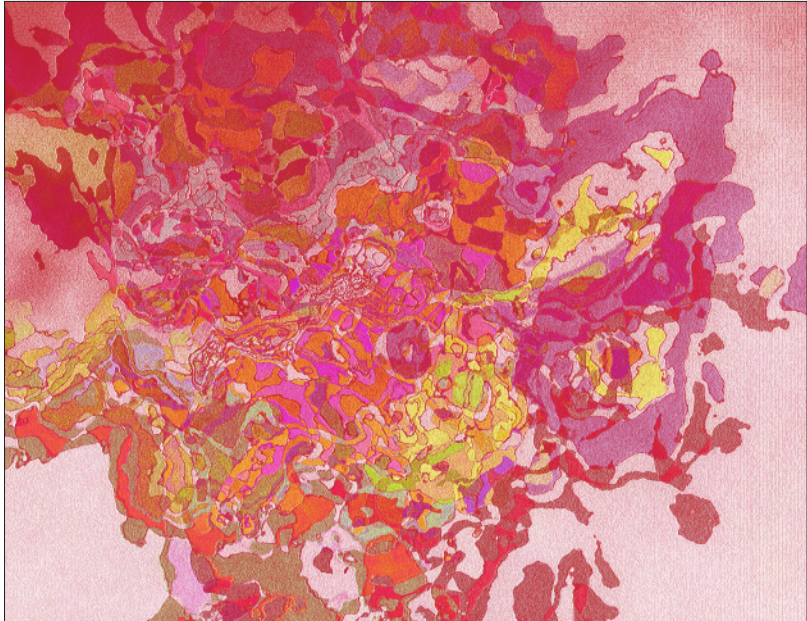
tldr; miss u



3 hour phone calls



Strange solitude



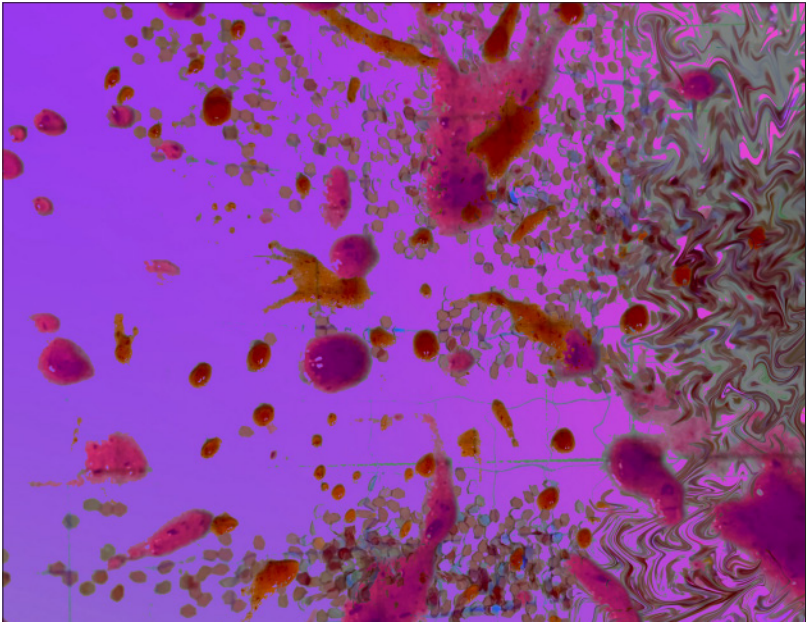
Butterflies



Keep you with me



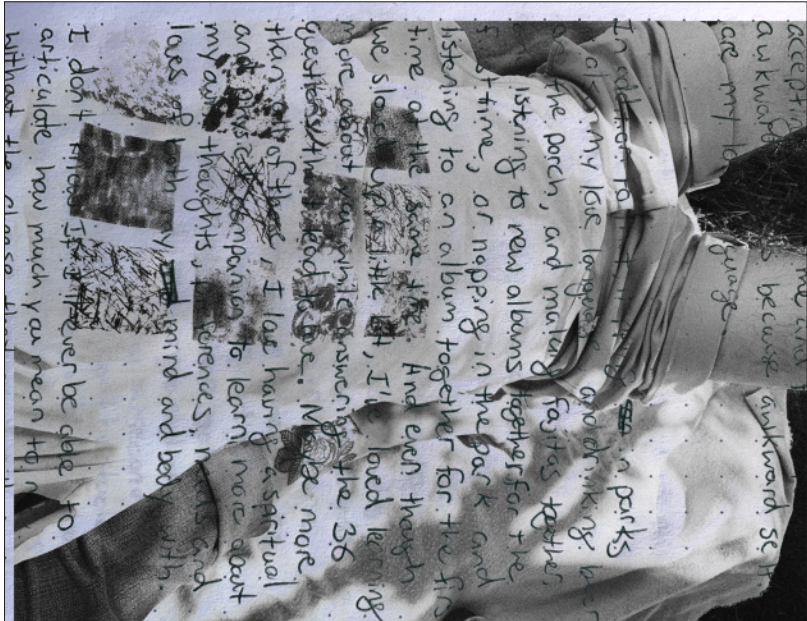
Memories and future hope



Tango with 2



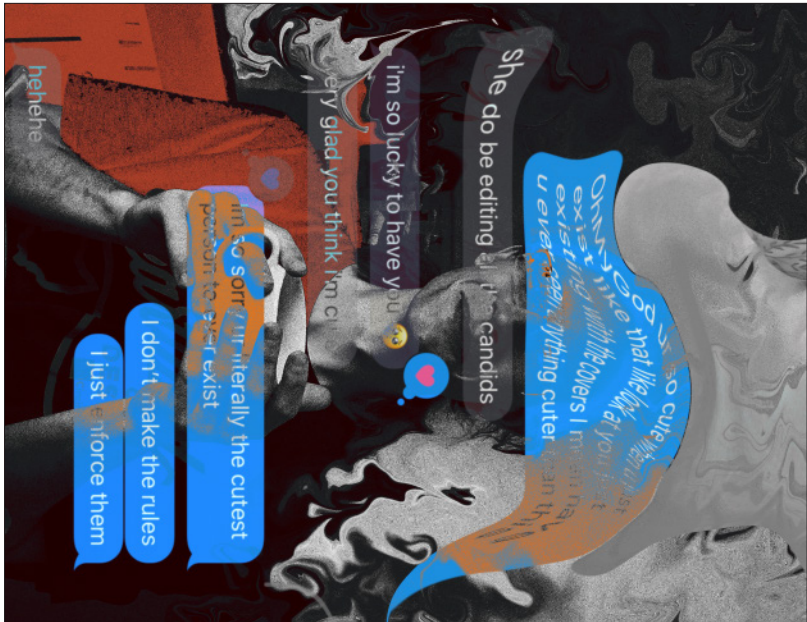
I love you a foot too much



Skyline park date pt. 302



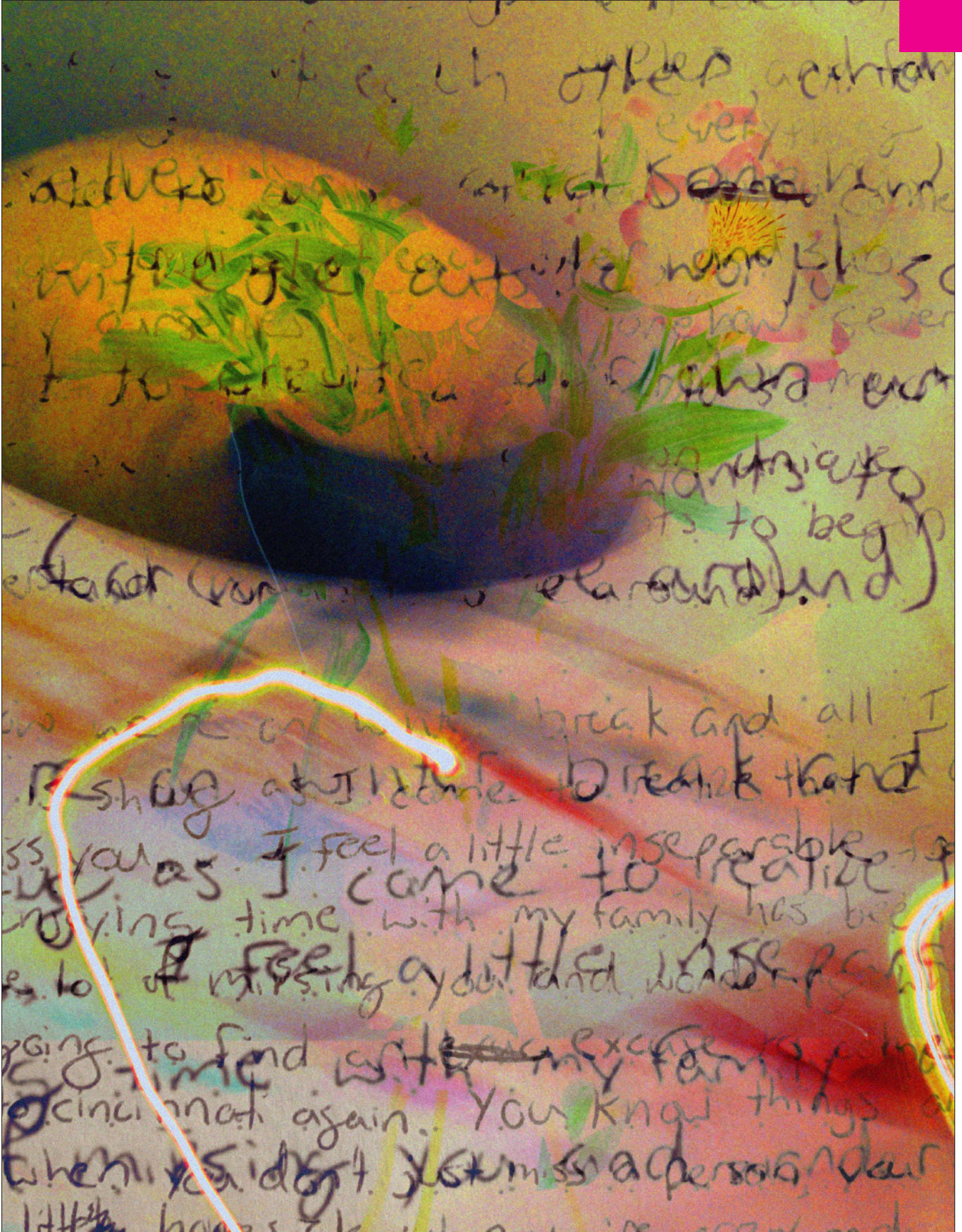
When you're away



Old texts



Isolated bliss



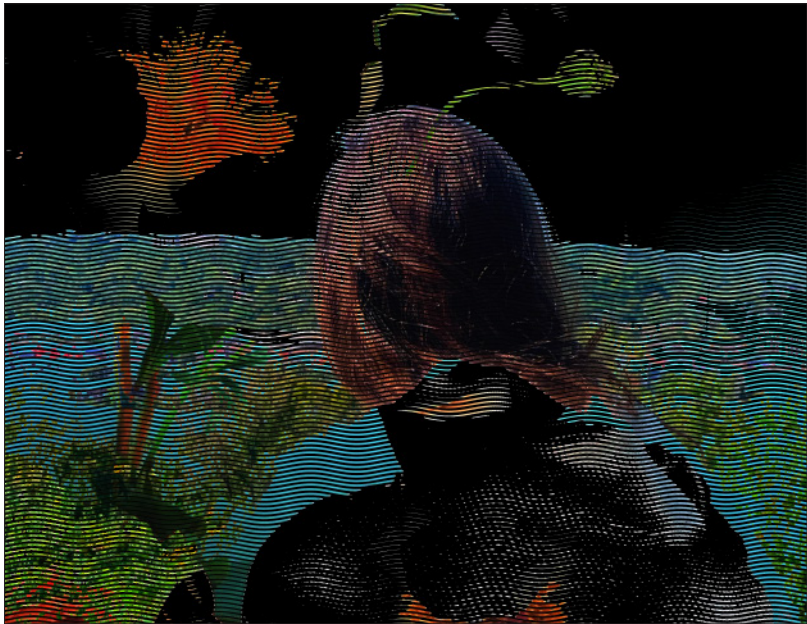
Comfort in chaos



Time passes strangely



I hold no keys



Dreaming of a roadtrip



Safety and uncertainty



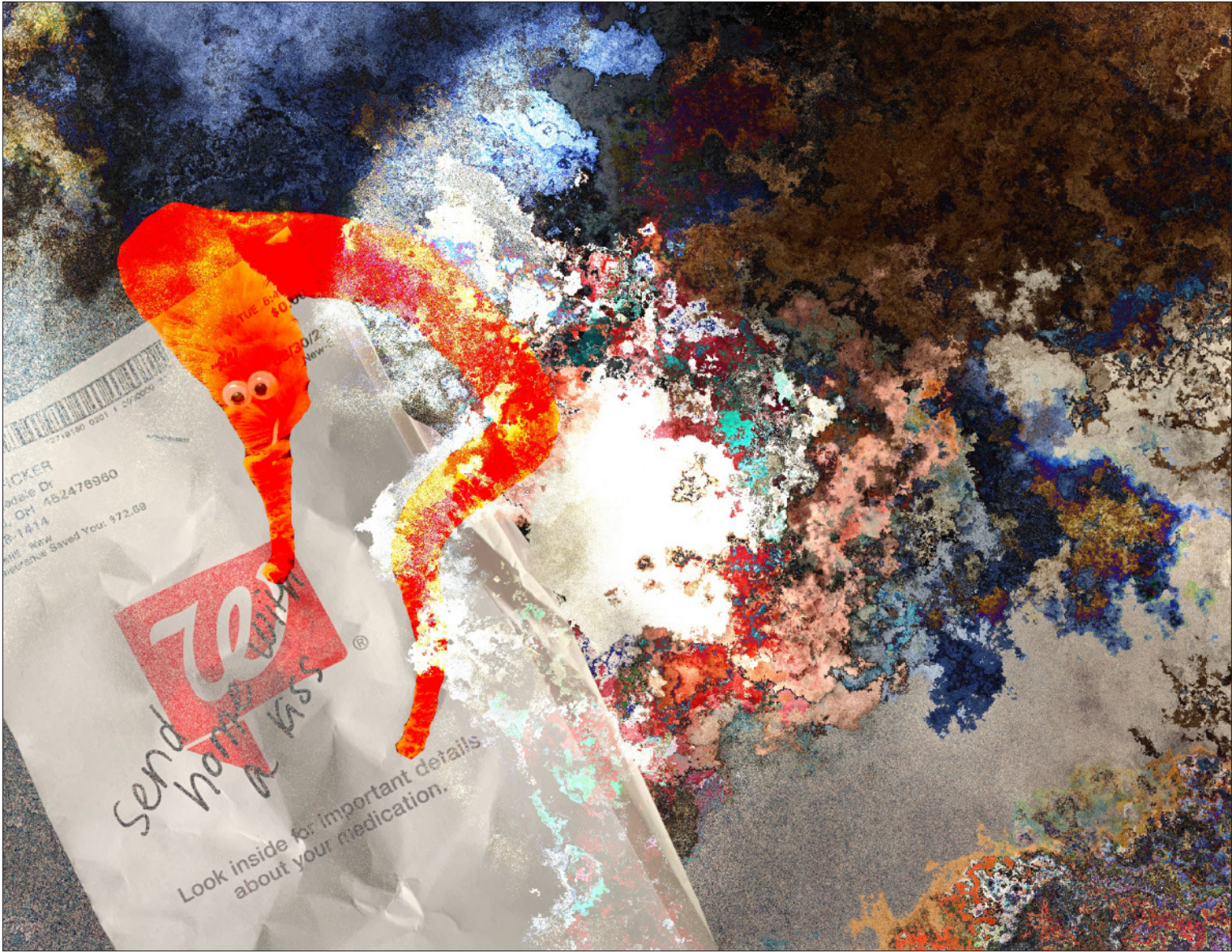
In rainbows



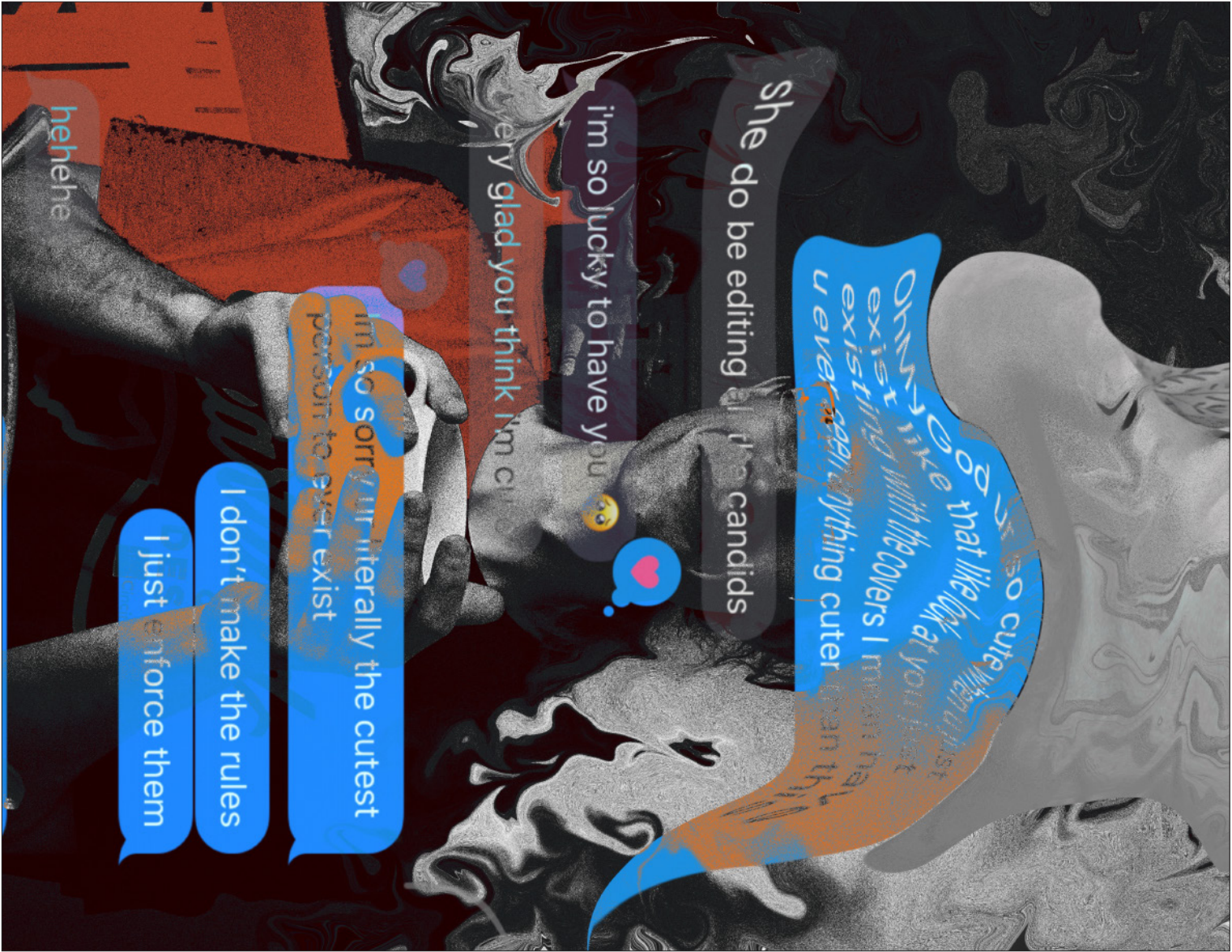
In Rainbows



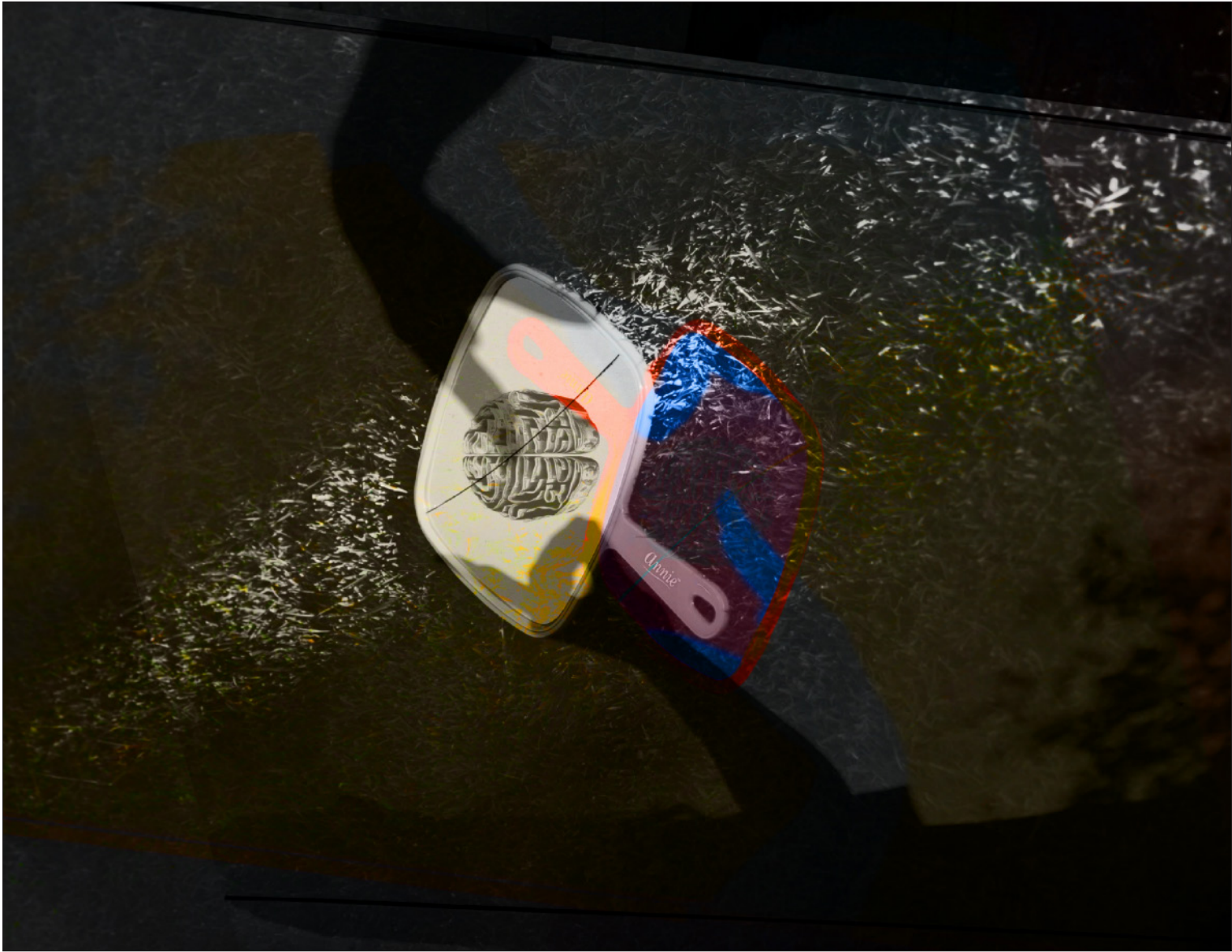
Strange solitude



Away for winter



Old texts



Mirror image



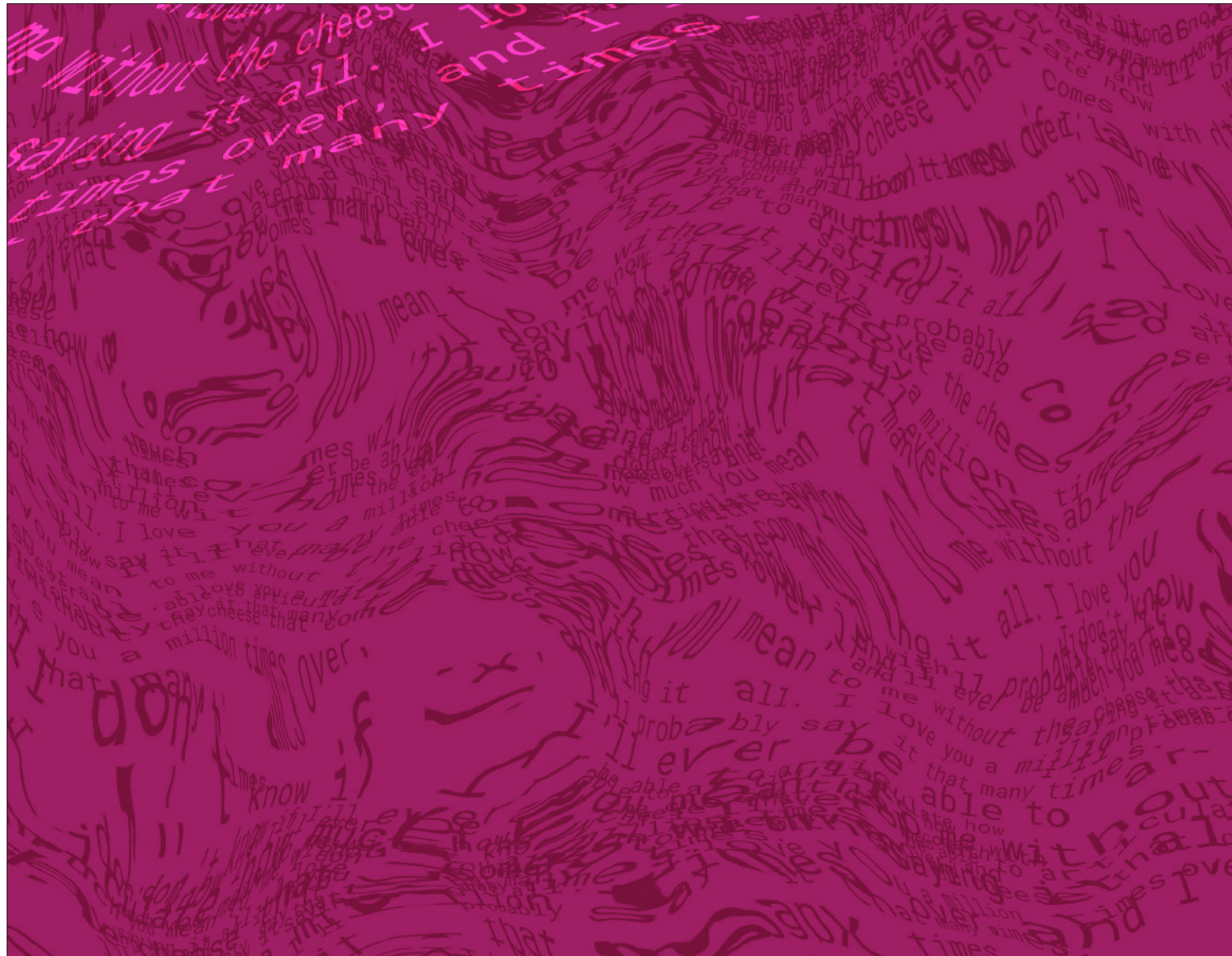
Memories and future hope



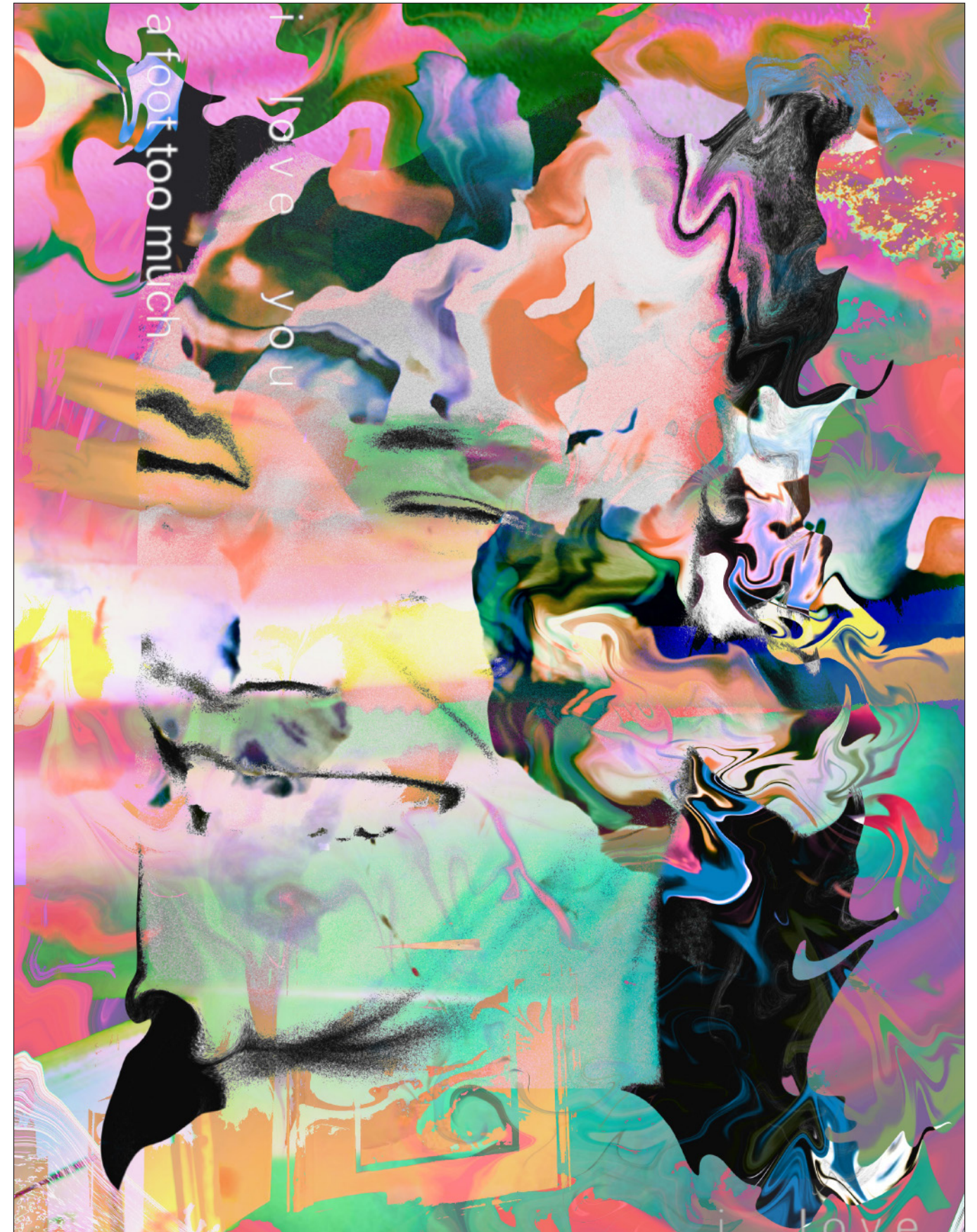
Hazy



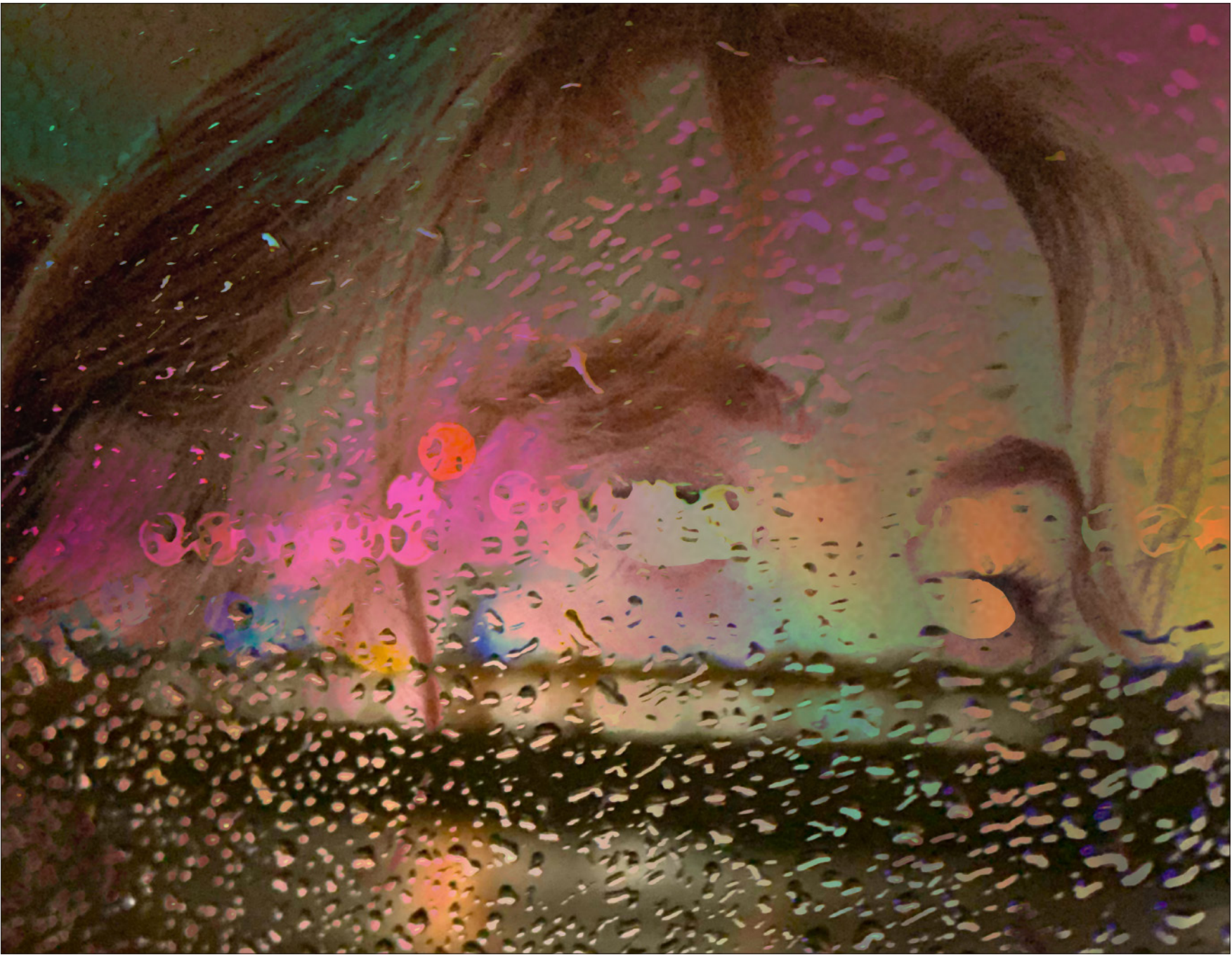
Safety and uncertainty



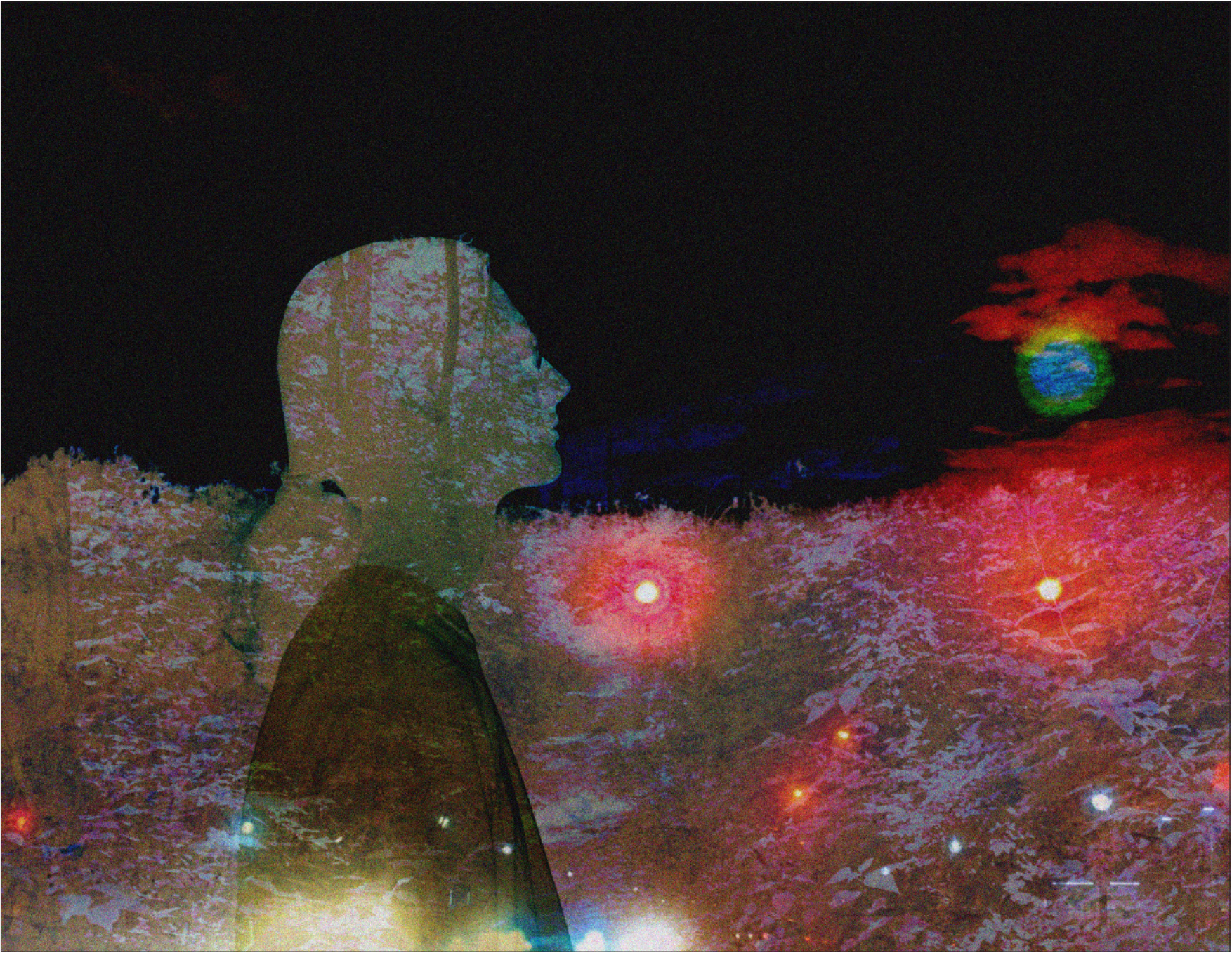
Entranced



I love you a foot too much



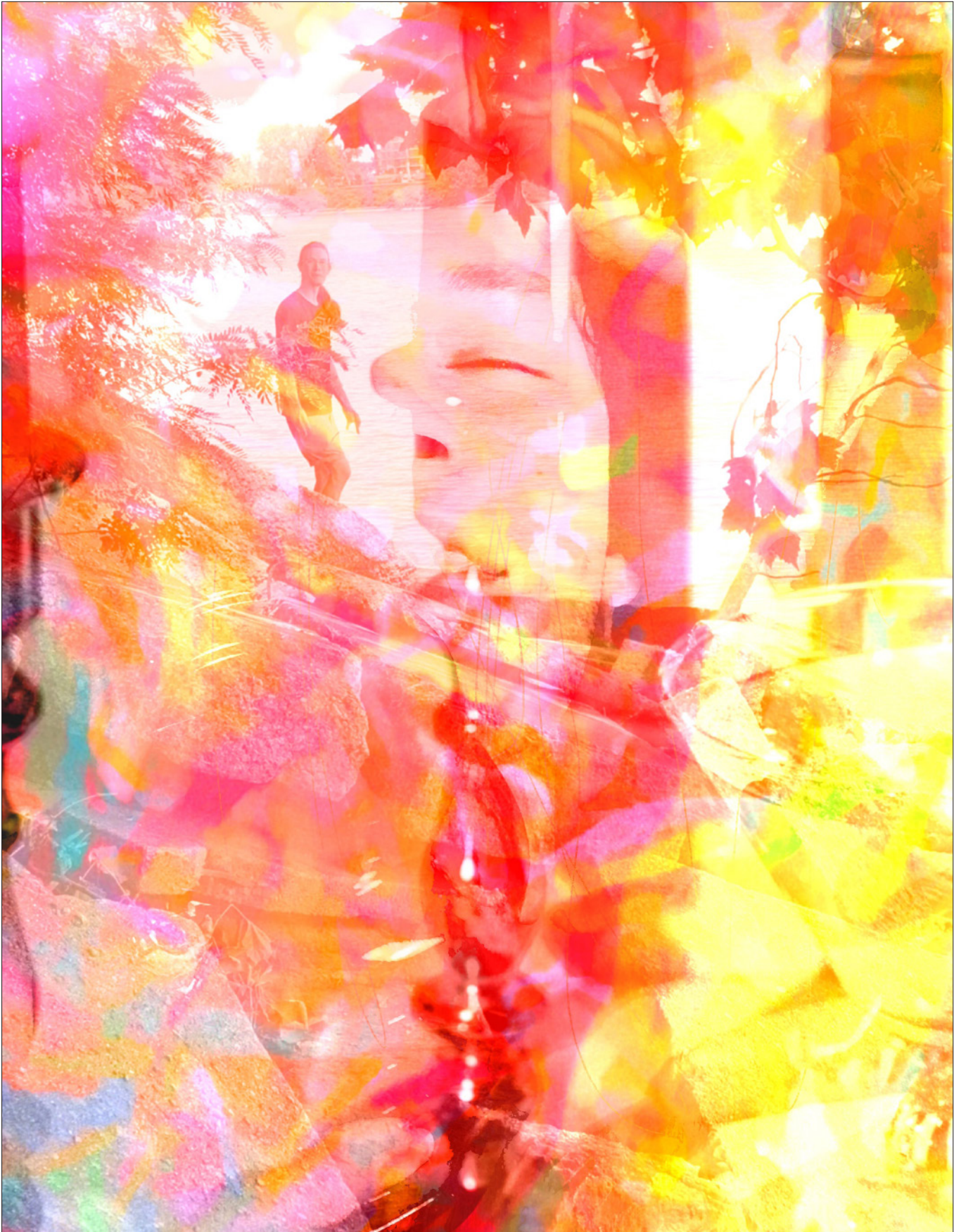
Absence + Rainbow Color



Absence + Grain



Connection + Distortion



Love + Rainbow Color



Love + Distortion