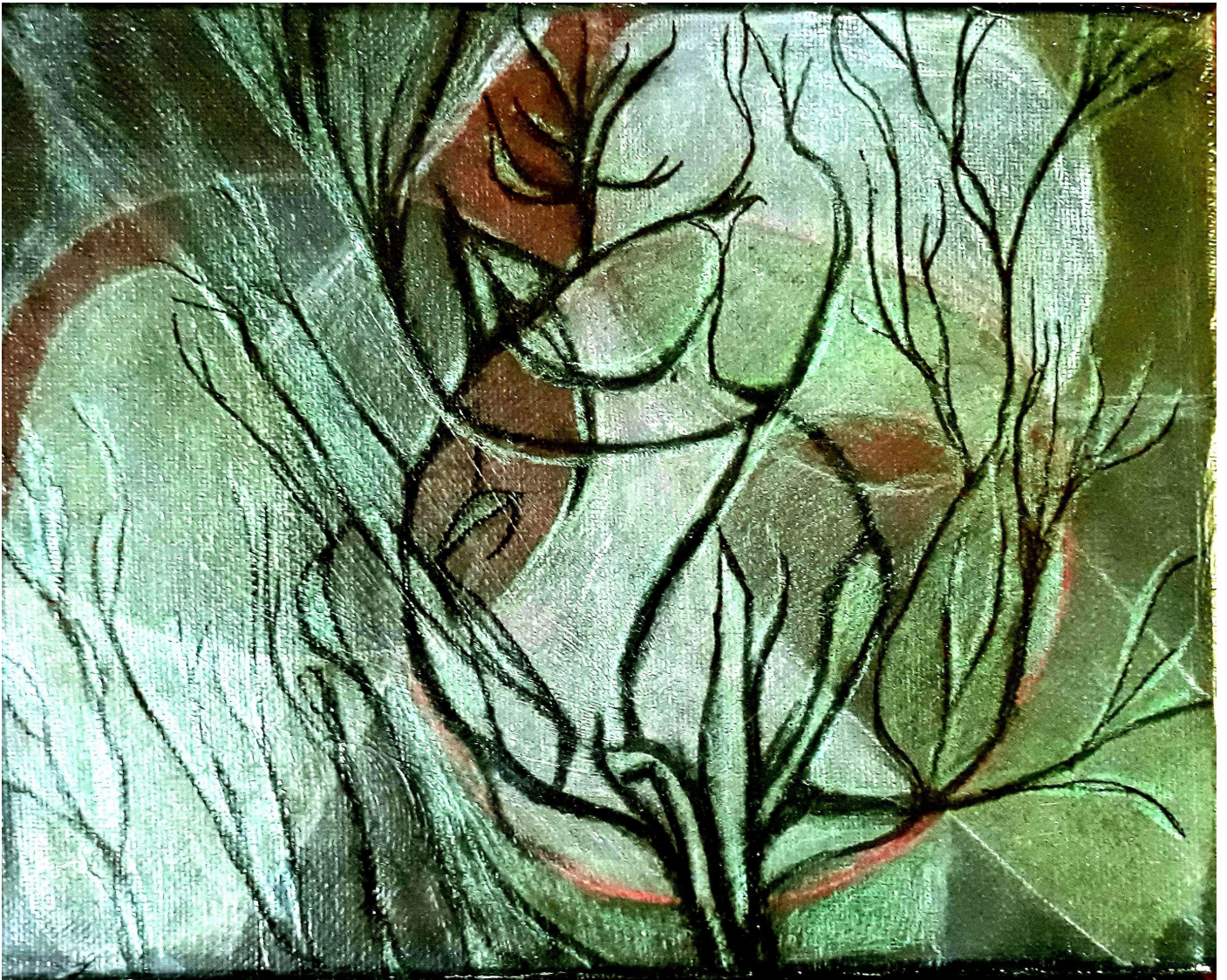


STREET CAKE

experimental writing magazine

issue 73

part 1



at dusk we dance @ lindsey morrison grant

contents

issue 73

part 1

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WHERE DID SCOTT GO IN THE ANTARCTIC?

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daniel f. bradley

A Symphony of Things Now Yet to Already Come

- In Movement -

Do not find. Create. Create, and know the heart. Thus cut through flesh to hearts.
Let them come if they do. Know that you, in creation, offer a sapphire, while others pass
but a shadow thereof. Be that which is found.

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I.

I talk in silence. They are fake, and they are not. I am not of myself or its prior
information. They are not I.

Faces used to please and frighten me. Now the idea of the face exists by me, buoys me if
ever pleasure or fright steels itself in false momentum.

But for a song and a laugh, all would ever be known present.

Sitting in empty classrooms, jealousies cracked, soft sun breaking in through the gaps,
settling in the valley of matter and mind where then I sat.

And sat.

Never waiting beyond the thought of delay. The room empty, full of silence. Solace runs
afield from what He and She necessitates. Consider myself a detective of that which delimits.
That which touches is that which divorces. Hold high, afar. Interest nary asked, never
compounding.

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II (Tu).

From fiction to fiction you roam. I, yes you. Leap. Step. Never an aimless aim. Still yet in
the room — though what once behooved today has cowed, or has prior engendered the thought
of past cowering and exists therein, treasonous trigger. The room foggy; the sun blinding,
angular, mirror. Edison has passed; his progeny, too, shall come to death.

And you. So you fathom.

Blinds become bridges to sight. Lowered, to sensualize. Now down, sight seen, dim light
— preference here reigns, choice and longing preponderated through remembrance of a brighter
world.

No way out. The room a trap, entrapped.

Stand, make to leave. On whose legs? Fingers? Shout — with what tongue? It was
excised in the war, taxed and expended, the fee for passive certainty. Once outsourced,
outsourcing in all idea and functioning of *then*.

You sit, routed. The chair stinks — reeks — but it is comfortable, if noses are plugged.

You browse for flights, trains, carpools to a brave new land, old. Planes, boxcars, magic
carpets. But you cannot run, the room being tethered, the contract now signed. Inked. Stained,
fashioned paper. Cause and effect and affect of conformity. You figure that you figure; fate
sealed, undeliverable, you extract the Lincoln Logs from the bottomless toy chest in the room's

floor — the floor glass, the toys sprawled beneath. The pull is felt — others have come before, perspire now below, amidst the strewn and shiny rubble. But you are strong; you, who once knew the sun.

No concept of boredom — though in the understanding of conceptlessness, is there not concept? You ignore yourself or the gauze which now covers it, exhume your hand from the subterranean chest. Content yourself in the cool heat of the traditional, wistful sticks. Bare branches, thick as thieves when stacked.

You stack and fit until work yields four walls and a peak. The peak low, to fit atop the walls. The walls fit for themselves.

Within the walls you wish you yourself could fit — a home within a home: autonomy. To achieve you visualize. Shrink yourself. Liftoff — why you ever hunted for airfares is beyond you — you, ha, who are flying afeard.

The home you enter. In the home you exist. For a time, peace is had.

Then the structure grows stale — walls plain, as good as peeling for their lack of paint. The roof low, too damn low. You rise high, knowing — Yes, knowing — the paint kit to reside *in the mix*, below.

Though needing proof. Crouching, reaching for the latch. Eyes fat as pizza pies. The face itself two hemispheres, each square. Eyes centered, The Sense. You, man, mandala.

You trip the latch. The wheels of the lock set in motion; you watching, waiting. The floor swells; it, too, a roof over malcontent. The lid springs up.

Cover your face!

The toys remain settled, calm. You look foolish, by feeling — though you are yet above, bulb-lit and alone — lean towards the hole: the opening. You bend, fall forward onto your knees. Lower below the glass the height of your compromised systems.

Still, nothing. The hand probes, groping; full investment, necessitated by a dearth of selected alternative. You reach — deeper yet. The toys' stench both familiar and new in that unkempt, honorable mien. You reach — arm above shoulder, 180° flat.

The paint kit both a driving force and forgotten. You instead are saving face. Oblivious by choice. It is now the toys that inhale. You think to pull yourself clear of their rattling darkness, their compression, and in this moment of judgment they open, accept your condition, take you within.

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III.

Subsumption. You hear the latch click and close behind your feet, which in spite of your brain's insistence were the responsible party in kicking the lid shut. Upside down, breathing suffocation.

You blame the toys. They the enticers, the lying enhancers of a better reality. Not liars — that's you. Of lies you cannot rightly speak, though you have tried. Blame exported, sick sanity reigning on-low.

The dying lights now faded. Of their existence you are conscious, you think, though present surroundings have rendered Turinous all truth thereof. You find that anyhow your body functions as it normally would, or better. You backstroke. This, you shout, muffled, is swimming. You breast stroke, break rank into freestyle. There is, you realize, no rank to break.

You would celebrate, if life here were not such a celebration. Explication a murderer — conscious planning would kill the joy. This reminds you of something, something undying. The what and when you cannot pin.

Doggy-paddle you begin, then eschew — dignity you maintain.

Your eyes become accustomed to the lightlessness. You are dark light. You pass erstwhile entertainments, vestiges: Yoyo; Monopoly; Risk; Sorry; two rocking horses, settled. Brothers of yours, within.

On you maneuver. The room a memory, alive via reduction, your limbs distractions from the dominant pasts guiding you deeper, lower. Who needs a roof, you think, when the world is invertible? You stop thinking — it, too, a distraction. And a reminder of the distractions which —

The paint kit! You reach through swarms of barrels of monkeys and plastic army men, grab hold of the wooden box which houses bottles which themselves house colors, rainbows, GRIVBOY.

You grip hard, forgetting solidarity. The box cracks. Solidarity, you realize, is king. Yet you grip on, and harder. The bottles next: glass shards knifing through skin and sinew. You sense the colors — though you are unsure whether from prior knowledge or present relation.

Blood and colors mixing; they must be. You grab the teddy bear to stem the flood, are carried through body and mind beyond, back to a roomless youth. Thumb in mouth. The desire to ascend permeates, compulsates, releases auratic into the concrete, compressing ether of identifiable things. Things known, you now realize, by what they are not.

You cling to your mind as to a chew toy, the memory of would-be ascension and its dominant splendor muddled pure. Lost within it you are, unsure yet which way is up, and of the means towards such cognition. Unsure, as you are certain that you were once certain that you were certain of the lack of a need for truth's discovery.

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IV (Discovery).

You are trapped.

You can swim. But time is limited. Guessing up or down would render you a fool — better to close your eyes and drift.

You feel yourself bumping, feel corners knocking and grinding and grating into your tender flanks.

This goes on. You wince until wincing becomes familiar. You expect the disrespect of objects which exist beyond your control. You enter the storm and allow it to become you. You are the bright lightning. Lightning now the drug, thunder its approaching indicator, though you cannot hear it.

And you cannot see — not for the lack of light, but for the paint that you have rubbed, red-cheeked, into your eyes. The sting of this, too, is subsumed in the Wince: the winter of discontent, pleasurable in its balanced inversion. You realize, eyes closed and floating, that pleasure is no more than balance.

You drift in painless pain, beautiful.

All is bright. Body suspended, held together by that which lives beyond it, crumpling. You cease breath.

Yet you are alive in activity. You understand there is no death, not for the living —
consider, then, what it means to live!

You open your eyes to the light. Anew you are, in the room. Neither above nor below, not insofar as one need acknowledge. You be: Being. Yes in the body: the body that will ever know the lightning, spur the thunder. A reminder, temptation.

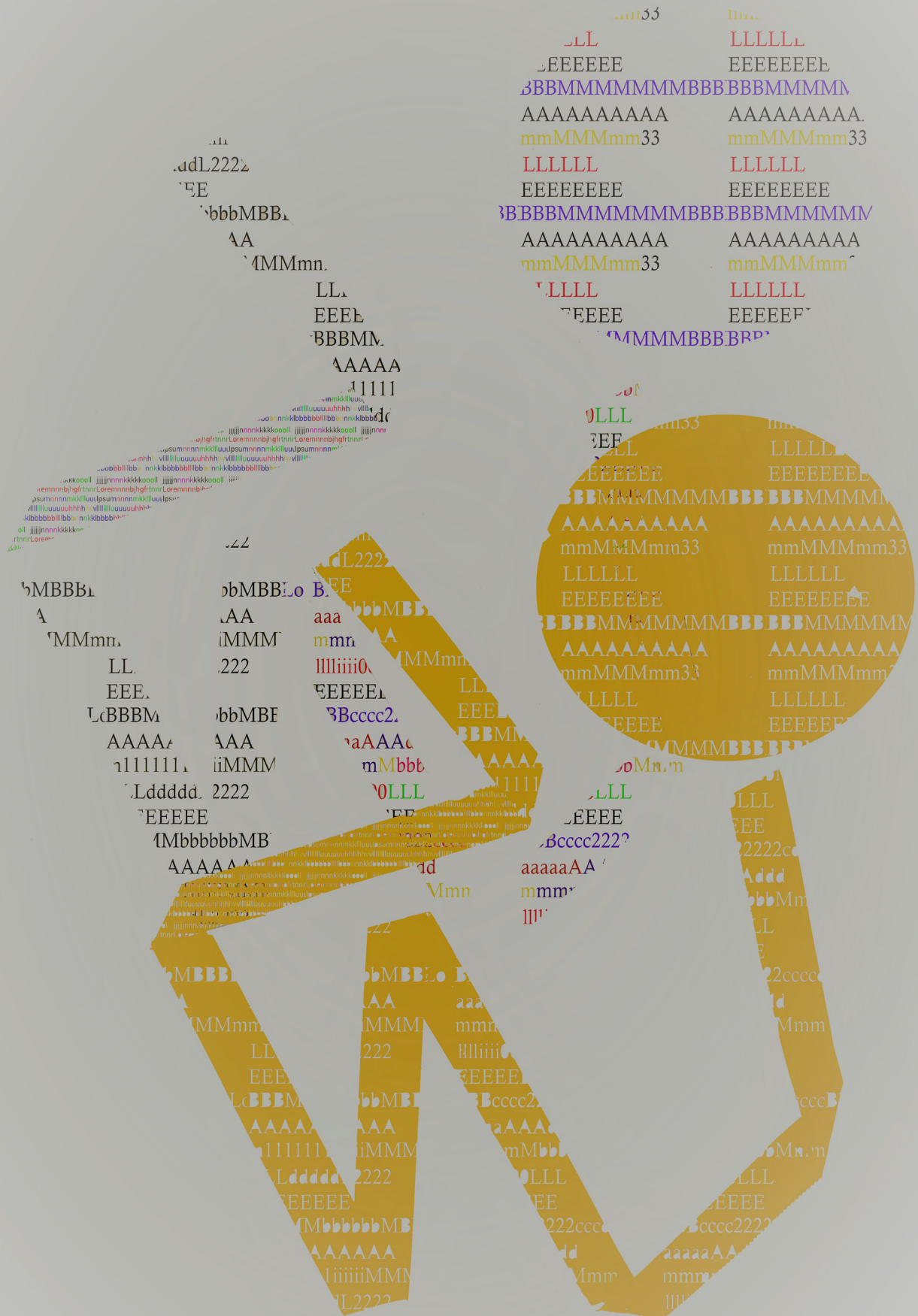
Toys beneath, houses roofed. Blinds up. The sky outside. The sun a circle, bright. The sky a square. Condition condition, incontrovertible.

You stand, go to the untested window. *Look down.*

Out is critical mass is over. The battle against light speed, the limitless limit, is no battle. The end.

It could be here. But it is not. You turn, pace, sit.

You are whole, one. You, inside.

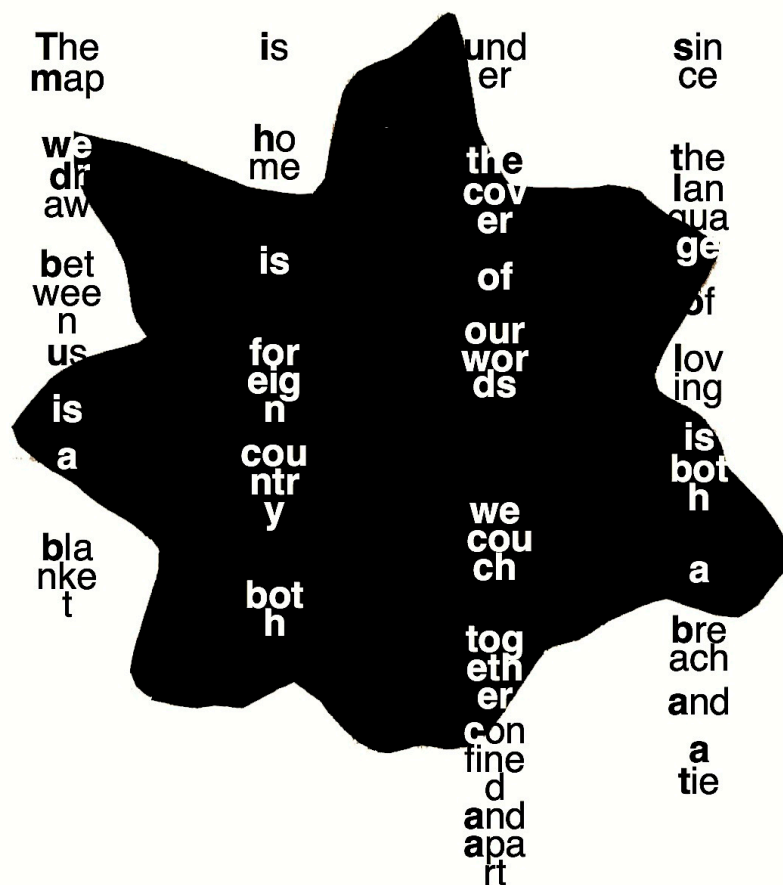


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 that featured ball pits in pizza joints/mist
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 — water soluble, too eventuall —y
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 aunt would say ad nauseum/and sure
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the positive in the negative

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Dirt

Things you can clean:

Your room; your clothes; your hair; the slate (sometimes); that beanie that isn't just yours anymore; your insides (with clean eating, an enema or
a special pill);
your clothes again; Your mouth (though it can take a long time
before you really feel unsoiled);
underneath your fingernails; the dishes; your throat; as much as you can.

Things you can't clean:

Some rusts; old carpets; red wine; the slate; your clothes
(burn them instead);
those nice pants your mum got you for Christmas; your head; your head; your head;

It is important to remember that **unclean** doesn't mean **unlovely**.

What Should You Do?

What should you do at night?

What should you do in snowy conditions? What should you do at night in snowy conditions when passing sheep on a road before making a u-turn? What should you do when dealing with this hazard?

What should you do in the event of fire?

What should you do to avoid fuel spillage? What should you do in the event of fire to avoid fuel spillage when the fire alarm sounds? What should you do when dealing with this hazard?

What should you do in fog?

What should you do when ~~hiding~~ overtaking at night? What should you do in fog when ~~hiding~~ overtaking at night at the scene of an accident? What should you do when dealing with this hazard?

What should you do after sex?

What should you do when the fire alarm sounds? What should you do after sex when the fire alarm sounds before making a u-turn to avoid spillage? What should you do when dealing with this hazard?

What should you do when dealing sheep?

What should you do in the event of sex?

What should you do when making a pass?

What should you do to avoid this hazard?

What should you do when night overtakes you?

What should you do?

What?

based on a google search prompt.

Appendix 1: The 'Reading the Mind in the Eyes' Test¹

Instructions

For each set of eyes, choose which word best describes what the person in the picture is thinking or feeling.

It upsets me to see an animal in pain.

I try to keep up with the current trends and fashions.



1

I would never break a law, no matter how minor.

I dream most nights.

I don't like to take risks.

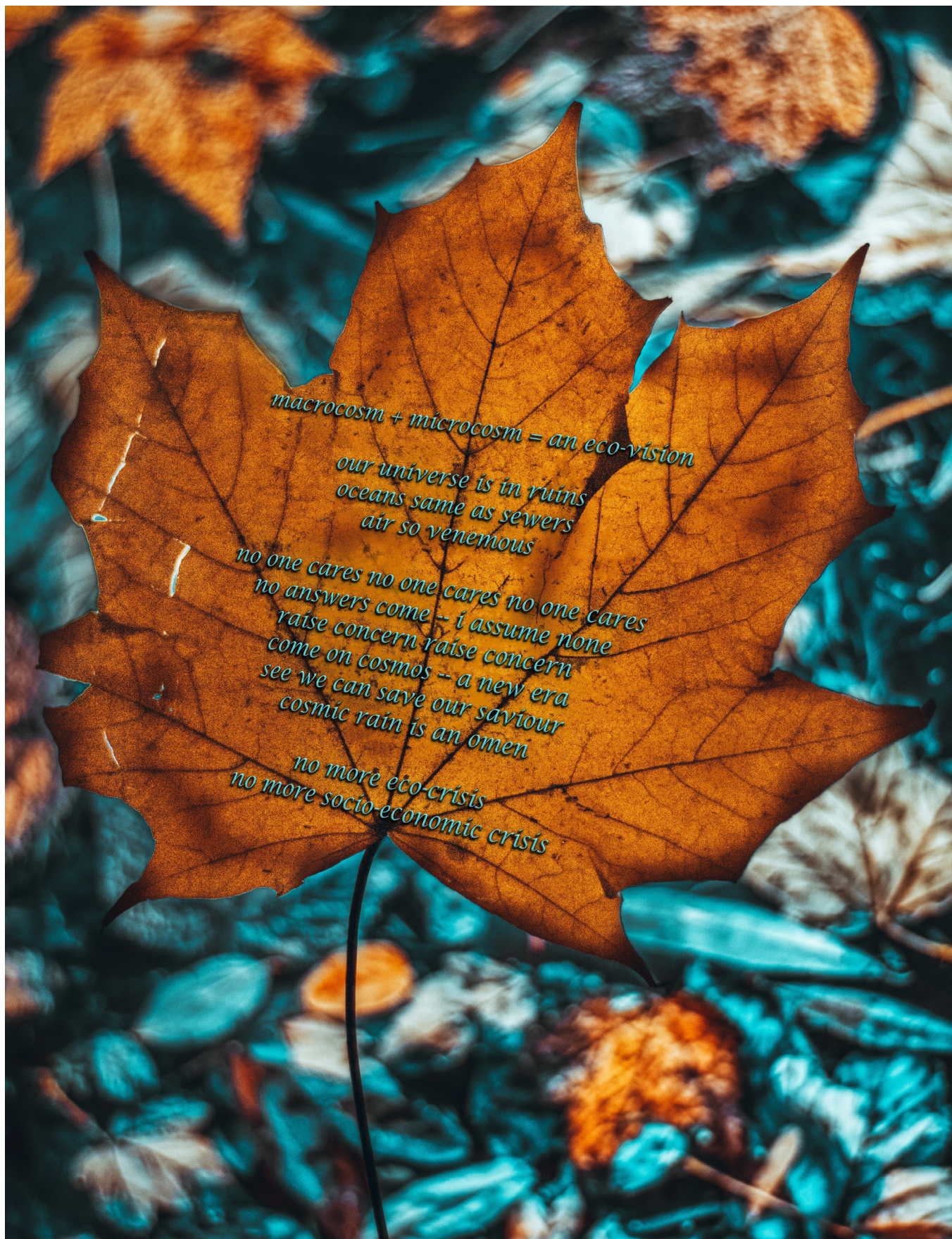
I get upset if I see people suffering on news programmes.



2

I often start new hobbies but quickly become bored with them and move on to something else.

I tend to get emotionally involved with a friend's problems.



macrocosm + microcosm = an eco-vision

our universe is in ruins
oceans same as sewers
air so venomous

no one cares no one cares no one cares
no answers come -- i assume none
raise concern raise concern
come on cosmos -- a new era
see we can save our saviour
cosmic rain is an omen

no more eco-crisis
no more socio-economic crisis

POLAROID / Visiting Day

while sorting
grandfather asks
unable to recall
who stand next to
are merely shadows
buried below first frost

these photographs
once again
if the children are mine
that weed covered shed
of dogs long ago
and his planted tomatoes