

IKEBANA MAN



Ibanez

Ibanez

Ibanez

Niko Ibanez

Niko Ib

Niko Ib

Niko Ib

Notifications

SMS from Niko Ibanez

For Alyxx.

SYSTEM

Memory capture available.

SMS from Mara

I kept the tabs open because I did not know how long the web would be up.

open tabs

I am not sure how long the web will stay up, so I left every tab open that looked like it might still matter. Dosage. Crisis chat. Store locations. Routes. Splinting. Cuts. Human bites. One page I did not want to need, and opened anyway. I kept the links like pressed specimens under glass, except the glass was a phone screen with forty-six percent battery.

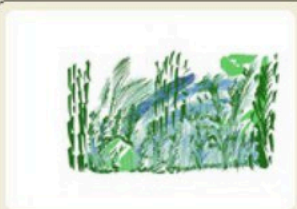
open tabs

...

- drugs.com/dosage/testosterone.html
- therevproject.org/get-help
- cvs.com/store-locator/landing
- hiking-near-me.com
- nscplanning.com/first-aid/splinting
- piedmont.org/first-aid/how-to-treat-a-cut
- mayoclinic.org/first-aid/human-bites
- wikihow.com/Shoot-a-Handgun



floral pigment study



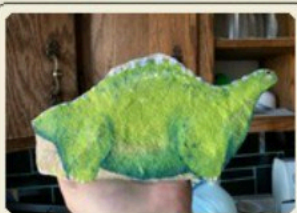
grass blade sketch



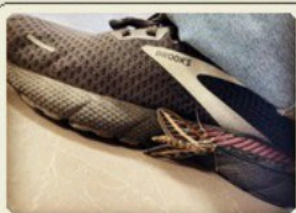
figure sketch



inked organism study



painted rock sample



moth scale pattern

outbound calls

Dig site, riparian edge. The undergrowth was unusually thick today - stiff enough to cut through sleeves and sharp enough to leave bright lines on both forearms. I tried calling before the signal failed completely.

calls

...

course coordinator - voicemail. Campus safety - recorded closure notice. Student health - busy signal. County dispatch - emergency traffic only. Mara - no answer. Alyxx - message left, too calm. Emails: professor, field office, department chair. All sent with no attachment because the photos would not upload.



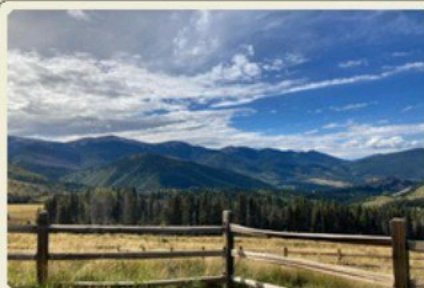
senescent stem sample



Achillea and butterfly



lake margin study



montane ridge transect

PUBLIC LANGUAGE

At first the virus was normal.

Not harmless. Normal. Brutal in a way everyone recognized because they had rehearsed it for years through films, warnings, screaming thumbnails, emergency drills, and news anchors using their calmest voices over footage of burning streets. The infected were still human enough to make people hesitate. Then they opened their mouths and pulled chunks from other human beings.

No one called it strange yet.

They called it public safety, exposure, rioting, misinformation, foreign interference, failed hygiene, bad neighborhoods, personal responsibility.

They called it everything except what it was.

MEDIA NOTICE

The first public health notices said saliva transmission was unlikely without prolonged contact.

The second notices said there was no evidence of sustained human-to-human transmission.

The third notices stopped saying saliva and started saying bodily misconduct.

By then everyone knew someone who had been bitten.

By then the screens were full of experts explaining that panic was more dangerous than the infection. The same hour, police in three states were filmed washing blood from their shields with bottled water.

public health language

weaponized before it failed

Before the language became useless, it became cruel. Infection was described as an imported habit, a border leak, a hygiene failure, a lifestyle cluster. The pathology disappeared beneath accusation. People learned the map of blame before they learned the map of spread.

COUNTY ALERT: Avoid contact with unknown persons exhibiting botanical symptoms.

NEWS CHYRON: Experts deny sustained human-to-human transmission.

INFLUENCER CLIP: My parasite detox protocol is linked below.

POLICE BLOTTER: Missing persons reports exceed staff capacity.

note: the first containment zone was grammar. the second was fear.

Camera

FIELD NOTE: transdermal testosterone gel dries as a thin reservoir on skin. The dose crosses the stratum corneum slowly, then diffuses into small vessels beneath the application site. Injections work differently: the oil or ester depot sits in muscle or subcutaneous tissue and releases over days, so the body reads the dose as a curve instead of a smear. I wrote this down because the body was becoming a route map. Not a statement. A route.

Biology major

...

I thought biology would teach me how to look without taking anything apart. I wanted to follow Maria Sibylla Merian: insect, plant, egg, hunger, metamorphosis, all drawn as one living sentence. I wanted Robert Hooke too, the cell as a little room, the lens as an argument with the body.

The field course was supposed to make me useful. I kept notes because the world had already started changing faster than names could hold it. I drew the bodies, the stems, the split skins, the insects that stayed too long on the wet leaves. I was not trying to be brave. I was trying to observe before

CROSS-REFERENCE / PERSONA

Later note: the binder, the voice, the cloth in the boots - all of it become before I understand it as field equipment.

SECOND INSTRUCTIONS

bite log 01

field_note / revised_passage

The bite brought another grammar into the body. Language learned about it later. Skin understood first: heat, swelling, tenderness, a private pulse under the punctures. Then the wound arranged itself. The edges refused the old duty of closure and set themselves into a

I measured because measurement still felt like consent. I photographed the swelling under bathroom light. I cut the first green thread with nail scissors. By morning the gauze had taken hold of me like soil cloth.

Control left early.
Meaning stayed

REGISTRY OF SURRENDERED PARTS

the form accepts only botanical outcomes

NATURALIST / CLINICAL

The office, whose purpose had once been to preserve the modest fiction of identity, continued its labor with admirable neatness; and while the subject stood before it with a body already divided among root, scar, and shoot, the form required not a name, but an inventory of relinquishments.

STREAM / PRESSURE

name box blank because my name had begun to leaf at the edge and the cursor knew it and the drop-down knew it and there was assimilated redacted awaiting spore dispersal no other choice no space for still me

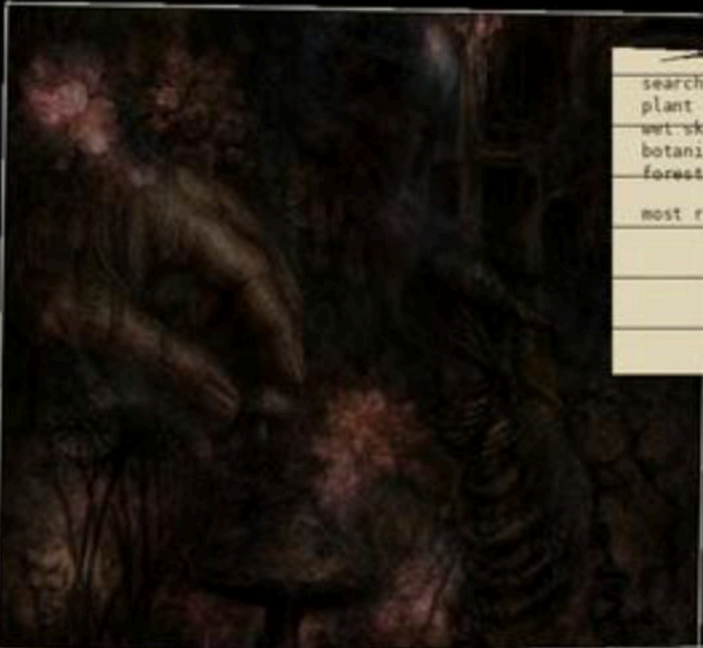
system note / found fragment

FORM 12-B: LIST PARTS ALREADY GIVEN.

STATUS: applicant legible / personhood pending.

OPTIONS: assimilated; redacted; awaiting dispersal.

The archive does not deny the body. It denies that the body belongs to anyone.



search terms:
plant people
wet skeleton
botanical plague
forest god infection
most results: sponsored

dream scrape / unverified

01

02

03

04

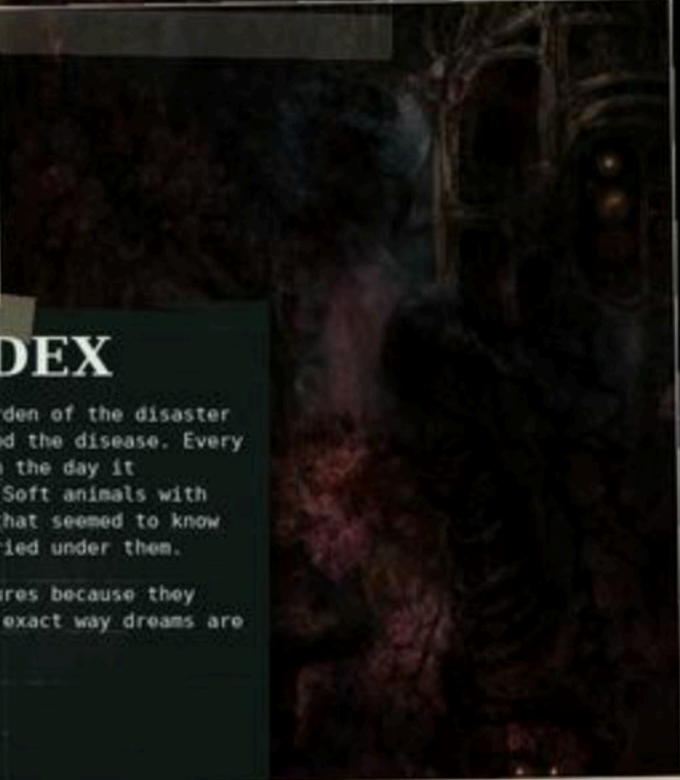
05

06

FOLK INDEX

The internet made a garden of the disaster before anyone understood the disease. Every image looked older than the day it appeared. Bone houses. Soft animals with warning eyes. Flowers that seemed to know something human was buried under them.

I kept saving the pictures because they were inaccurate in the exact way dreams are accurate.



/ eyes visible

ORGANIZED BLAME

The oligarchs did not invent the hatred.
They organized it.

Dirty immigrants. Hormone-addled freaks.
China. Iran. People with the wrong
bathrooms, wrong documents, wrong
names, wrong gods, wrong prescriptions.
The virus needed saliva, but the country
needed someone to spit at.

The sick were described as vectors. The
poor were described as reservoirs. Trans
people were described as chemical
accidents. Refugees were described as
invasion ecology.

Every empire eventually discovers biology
and uses it badly.

Ikebana Man

local archive

insert 01

BROADCAST WEATHER

The media kept its ordinary mouth for as long as it could. Virology segments became border segments before the anchors had finished saying aerosol. Pathology panels drifted, without admitting the drift, toward bathrooms, migrants, rural clinics, unhoused camps, prisoners, trans wards, meat plants, anyone whose body could be made useful as evidence.

The podcasts sounded relaxed. They speculated about zombie outbreaks, upgraded rabies, engineered sub-strains, and every episode stopped twice for the same remote therapy app, the same weight-loss injection clinic, the same shipped coffee, the same meals in insulated boxes, the same life coach promising calm in a collapsing week, the same drag-and-drop AI builder that could make a website before lunch and a business before grief.

Local radio read death notices in the same voice it used for bake sales. Councilors. Deacons. A school board president. The police reports rang through every county phone like weather: missing persons, riot near the pharmacy, crowd at the clinic, road blocked, avoid the river, avoid each other.

archive note

public speech did not fail at once.

it narrowed first.

then it learned which bodies to blame.

TRANSMISSIBLE BOTAN

county notice cached

field_note / revised_passage

Public notices called it a transmissible botanical syndrome. Clean words for saliva, broken skin, fluids, bite-warmth, and the bare hand someone used because the bleeding person still looked human enough to save.

Later the routes blurred. Rooting tissue carried moisture. Leaves opened along muscle seams. New growth made every surface uncertain.

People touched out of love first. The disease learned

sponsored collapse

same parent company / eight voices

This episode on engineered rabies is brought to you by BetterCalm Remote Therapy, by ShrinkCup shipped coffee, by BodyLite metabolic coaching, by AppNest, which builds your emergency website in six minutes, by TableBox meals, by the same seven or eight brands with different pastel logos.

Later, after the towers quieted, the sponsor app still loaded. It had purchased server redundancy for grief, dieting, life coaching, and subscription beans. It survived the county better than the hospital.

```
ad inventory // cached
therapy: active
coffee: active
meal plan: active
public warning: failed
```

Creation of Softer Features

The bones were the last to surrender, but even they eventually grew tired of their own rigidity. Under the constant, rhythmic pulse of the infection, the familiar turned to silt.

The parasitic growth didn't just occupy space; it rewrote density. Over weeks, sharp angles blurred and were cushioned by velvet moss. To be soft is to be permeable. It means letting the world grow through you rather than around you.

Those tendrils that once tore at flesh began to sculpt instead. They curved muscles into petals and carved skin into something yielding and floral.

What had been bone and sinew became a garden of pulp held together by vines. This grotesque beautification isn't just consumption - it's a re-creation of form.



Pharmacy

Emergency calls only

Day 8

55%

Pharmacy ruin. Found syringes, gel, antibiotic expired. Clean what we can with alcohol. Look for needles.

Send fast temperature gauge every hour. Turn off the air conditioning. Use the fan and a cooler.

INVENTORY

Depot injections place medication into muscle or subcutaneous tissue, where oil or carrier slows release.

it began with mouths and fists, bare and frantic, fevered eyes mirroring the same rage—passing not just breath but this strange pulse, the milky charge beneath skin. then the ivy took over, weaving through cracked concrete like a slow claim, threading through faucets and manholes, silent as rot. the water grew thick, burdened with more than memory—the sinking weight of bodies surrendered to currents whose lives were already tightropes between steel and poison. it is an infection passed in anger, then in roots, then in decay, a pulse that recognizes no boundary between flesh and earth.

Debate: Viral Catalyst (Pro)

Some researchers say the virus was the gardener. It broke our immune systems and terraformed our blood, turning lymph into irrigation canals and pH into fertile soil.

By the time vines began to sprout, our bodies had already been prepared. The virus didn't end us; it simply made us hospitable.

Without that preconditioning, cross-species hyper-growth would have been improbable. The infection acted as a pioneer, tilling the field for something else to grow.

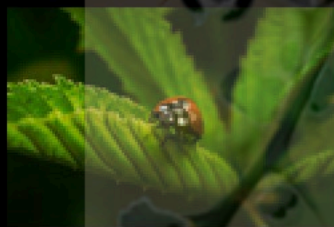
THE SOFTENING

The bones resisted longest, not from strength but from habit. Under the slow pressure of the infection, calcium lost its certainty and entered a finer state, less fracture than sediment.

My jaw, once a hard declarative line, curved and lowered until it resembled a waterlogged branch.

The growth did not occupy my body as a tenant. It revised the body's density. Elbows, knees, and other hard statements blurred under moss that drank from the marrow. Softness made me permeable.

I began to understand the body as a medium that had been too rigid to receive what was coming.

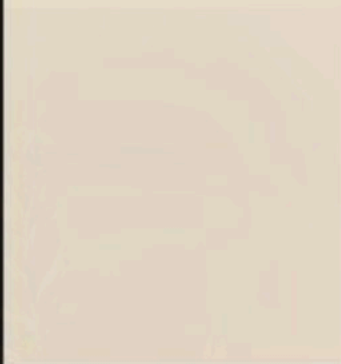


Debate: Viral Catalyst (Con)

Others argue there was no gardener, only coincidence. The virus weakened us, and the vines took advantage of the distress.

To imagine a pathogen with foresight is to anthropomorphize an accident. The hyper-plants grew because our bodies were vulnerable, not because they were prepared.

Two separate catastrophes converged: infection hollowed us out, and another organism filled the space. That's enough horror without attributing intention to a virus.



VARIABLE STAGES

medical file unresolved

field_note / revised_passage

Some remained recognizable for weeks. Some rooted within days. Some died before the plant structures stabilized. Some kept responding to light, water, touch, and sound after pulse and speech had thinned past useful measurement.

The files could not settle the contradiction: alive while decomposing; germinating while remembered; person enough to fear, habitat enough to use.

No category held its shape

VIRAL PRECURSOR DEBATE

Among the remaining scholars, the useful disagreement concerns sequence. One faction argues that the virus arrived first as a plow, dismantling immune boundaries and altering blood chemistry until mammalian tissue could receive spores without immediate rejection. In that model, the body was not conquered at once. It was prepared.

A second faction objects to the comfort of design. The virus may have done no more than weaken the host and leave an opening that the plant complex exploited. Under this reading, there is no hidden intelligence, only catastrophe finding the lowest place in the body and filling it.

The distinction matters less with each case. Whether preparation or accident, the result is the same: blood becomes irrigation, lymph becomes a route, and the human body stops behaving as a closed species.





BITE / SECOND INSTRUCTIONS

The bite did not introduce a foreign organism so much as a second set of instructions. The body received them before language did. At first, the wound behaved like any other wound: heat, swelling, tenderness, a private pulse under skin. Then it began to organize. The edges did not close. They arranged themselves into a pattern that looked less like healing than germination.

TRANSMISSION NOTES

The infection spread through broken tissue, saliva, and the fluids the body made while trying to reject the change. Public notices called it a transmissible botanical syndrome, which made it sound cleaner than it was. The first cases were bitten people, scratched people, people who touched a wound with bare hands because someone they loved was bleeding and still looked human enough to save. Later the spread became harder to follow. Rooting tissue carried moisture. Leaves formed along muscle seams. New growth opened the skin from inside and made every surface uncertain.





VARIABLE STAGES

Not every infected body changed at the same speed. Some people stayed mostly recognizable for weeks. Some rooted within days. Some died before the plant structures stabilized. Some did not die in any useful sense. Their pulse weakened. Their speech thinned. Their skin gave way to fiber, shoot, bark, leaf, and wet green pressure, but the body kept answering light, touch, water, and sound. The medical files could not resolve the contradiction: alive and decomposing, infected and germinating, person and habitat, witness and specimen.



PROOF OF CHARGE

I tried to document the stages because documentation was the last behavior that still felt voluntary. I photographed the bite under bathroom light. I measured the swelling with a sewing tape. I wrote down the first fever, the first taste of iron, the first place where skin lifted without blood. I did not tell anyone when the wound began producing a green thread from the puncture mark. I cut it back with nail scissors and wrapped the place in gauze. By morning, the gauze had stuck to me like soil cloth.



CONTROL / MEANING

At the beginning, I wanted the record to prove I was still in charge of the body. Later, I wanted it to prove the body had not become meaningless. There is a difference. Control disappeared early. Meaning lasted longer.

RUMOR / HEADLINE

The public crisis began as rumor. A dog bite. A contaminated creek. A warehouse exposure. A body found in a drainage ditch with leaves in the throat. Then the headlines learned their shape. Unconfirmed outbreak. Possible environmental contamination. Officials urge calm. Residents report aggressive behavior. The first language of disaster was administrative because administration always gets to speak before the dead do.

SECOND LANGUAGE

The second language was blame. People blamed the unhoused, the sick, the queer, the migrants, the gardeners, the vegans, the people who worked outside, the people who lived near water, the people whose bodies were already treated as suspicious. Every crisis looks for a body it has practiced misreading. The infection did not require moral failure, but public language kept trying to give it one.



MEETING MINUTES

The city held meetings. Public health issued guidance. Police taped off parks after the growth had already moved through storm drains and fence lines. Reporters asked whether residents felt safe. Residents asked who was measuring the water, who was tracking the missing, who was storing the bodies, who was allowed to define death. The answers stayed procedural. Procedure became a wall with a microphone in front of it.



VISIBLE SEQUENCE

By then, the transformation had a visible sequence. The bite opened first. Fever followed. The fever made ordinary time unreliable. Then came the sprout: small, pale, almost delicate, a false innocence at the wound site. After that, the skin began to furl. Epidermis and endodermis behaved like leaf tissue, curling back from the body in thin spirals. Muscle grew fibrous. Tendons tightened around new stems. The body sought water before it sought food. It turned toward windows. It pressed injured limbs against damp tile, sink basins, creek mud, lawn soil, any place that could hold it.

TOUCH ETHICS

Rooting changed the ethics of touch. A person could still look like a person from across the room and become impossible to move by morning. Hair tangled with rootlets. Fingertips split. Teeth loosened as the mouth filled with green pressure. Some people spoke through it. Some produced only breath and sap. Some repeated old phrases until the phrases outlasted the person using them.

PRESERVATION APPETITE

Survival language failed next. People who had never eaten meat called the new food plant-based because the alternative required a different mouth. Relief kitchens sorted supplies into categories that still made sense on paper: canned goods, clean water, medical dressings, edible greens. No one wanted to write human tissue under greens. No one wanted to say cannibalism when the body had leaves. Dietary categories survived longer than personhood. This became one of the first documented failures of public language.

INDIFFERENT ECOLOGY

The new ecology did not hate us. That was the part people resisted most. Hatred would have made the change easier to recognize. Hatred would have implied intention, target, punishment, enemy. The growth had no use for those categories. It did not distinguish between victim and aggressor, parent and stranger, guilty and untouched. It took warmth, moisture, minerals, light. It used the body because the body was available.

NOT GENTLE

That absence of hatred did not make it gentle. Roots entered basements. Vines crossed bedrooms. Spores collected in the vents of abandoned municipal buildings. Flowers opened from the backs of people whose names were still pinned to missing-person boards. The ecology preserved some things by consuming them. A hand became a trellis. A throat became a wet column of stems. A rib cage held seedlings in the dark. Memory did not disappear, but it no longer belonged only to the person who had carried it.

THE ARCHIVE SPROUTED

This is where the archive changed function. At first, the archive was evidence: screenshots, field notes, wound photos, public notices, cached articles, grocery lists, browser tabs, voice memos, diagrams of root spread. Later, it became habitat. Paper warped. Labels grew mold. Drives corrupted. Image files opened with green artifacts across the body. The archive did not preserve the past cleanly. It sprouted.



AUTOMATED SORTING

Machine sorting entered the story after human sorting had already failed. It did not cause the outbreak. It did not understand it. It indexed what remained. It gathered symptom logs, municipal warnings, missing-person posts, photos of growth patterns, scanned notebooks, food distribution maps, and unfinished personal searches. It kept placing unrelated things near each other until the pattern looked almost intentional.



FINAL POLLINATION

That was its final pollination. Not thought. Not care. Distribution. The system carried fragments from one dead context into another. A wound photograph appeared beside a plant identification chart. A missing-person notice attached itself to a field guide entry. A private note about hunger reappeared inside a public health summary. The archive became cross-contaminated by its own attempts at preservation. The machine did not know the difference between a person, a specimen, a source, and a seed.

ARRANGEMENT / WITNESS

I wanted to be angry at that. I wanted the system to have enough intention to accuse. It had none. It only continued the work humans had taught it: sorting, naming, predicting, completing broken sequences. When the living could no longer maintain the record, the system kept arranging us. It made no promise that arrangement was the same as witness.

OLD WORDS

By the final stage, the contradiction was no longer private. I was still alive enough to fear being misfiled. I was no longer human enough to trust the category. The body produced leaves where the skin had once held shame. The wound stopped looking like damage and began looking like an opening that had succeeded. I could not tell whether the transformation was death, survival, replacement, or continuity without personhood. The available words kept trying to win the argument by being old.

OPEN TABS

The last thing I maintained was the browser. Open tabs became a map of unfinished agency: symptoms, edible plants, emergency orders, local obituaries, archived videos, how to stop bleeding, how to propagate cuttings, how long a body can remain conscious without food, what it means when leaves taste metallic, public meeting agenda, nearest water source, remove mold from paper, can plants learn, can plants remember, do not close.

DO NOT CLOSE

The tabs stayed open because closing them would have meant choosing an ending the body had not chosen. They were not research anymore. They were the last recognizable shape of wanting. Survival, denial, witness, appetite, instruction, unfinished thought. The body could not remain intact, but the session could. The record could stay suspended a little longer between person and specimen, archive and garden, error and evidence.

LEAVE THE CONTRADICTION

Do not close did not mean save me exactly. It meant leave the record open.
Leave the contradiction visible. Leave the last human gesture where someone
might still find it before the new growth learns what to do with the light.



Observation Log

The bite did not bring something foreign into me. It gave the body a second set of instructions, and the body took them in before words could name them. At first the wound behaved like any wound: heat, swelling, tenderness, a private pulse beneath skin. Then the edges stopped trying to close. They arranged themselves, patient as seed work, into a pattern that looked less like healing than germination.

Transmission Notes

The change traveled through broken skin, spit, and the dampness the body made while trying to push it out. Public notices gave it a clean name. The first cases were bitten people, scratched people, people who touched a wound because someone they loved was bleeding and still looked human enough to save. Later the trail broke open. Leaves formed along muscle seams. Rooting tissue carried moisture. Every surface became uncertain.

Recorded Stages

Every body kept a different clock.
Some stayed recognizable for
weeks. Some rooted in days. Some
died before the green structures
settled. Some did not die in any
useful sense. Their speech thinned.
Their skin gave way to fiber, shoot,
bark, leaf, and wet green pressure,
yet the body still answered light,
touch, water, sound.

Proof of Charge

I photographed the bite under bathroom light. I measured the swelling with a sewing tape. I wrote down fever, iron, the first place where skin lifted without blood. When a green thread came from the puncture, I cut it back with nail scissors and wrapped the wound in gauze. By morning, the gauze had adhered to me like soil cloth.

Rumor / Headline

The public crisis began as rumor: a dog bite, a contaminated creek, a warehouse exposure, a body in a drainage ditch with leaves in the throat. Then the headlines learned their shape. Unconfirmed outbreak. Possible environmental contamination. Officials urge calm. Residents report aggressive behavior. Administration always gets to speak before the dead do.

Second Language

The second language was blame. People blamed the unhoused, the sick, the queer, the migrants, the gardeners, the vegans, the people who worked outside, the people who lived near water, the people whose bodies had already been trained into suspicion. Every crisis looks for a body it has practiced misreading.

Meeting Minutes

The city held meetings. Public health issued guidance. Police taped off parks after the growth had moved through storm drains and fence lines. Reporters asked whether residents felt safe.

Residents asked who measured the water, who tracked the missing, who stored the bodies, who was allowed to define death. Procedure became a wall with a microphone in front of it.

Visible Sequence

By then the transformation had a visible order. The bite opened first. Fever followed and made ordinary time unreliable. Then came the sprout: small, pale, almost delicate, a false innocence at the wound site. After that the skin began to furl. Epidermis and endodermis behaved like leaf tissue, curling back from the body in thin spirals.

Touch Ethics

Rooting changed the ethics of touch. A man could look across a room like a man I might once have wanted, still warm, still ashamed of being looked at, and by morning become impossible to move. Desire did not disappear. It went underground with fear. Hands learned to hesitate over wrists, throats, mouths, any place where tenderness might also become a route.

Food Category Failure

Survival language failed next. People who had never eaten meat called the new food plant-based because the alternative required a different mouth. Relief kitchens sorted supplies into categories that still made sense on paper: canned goods, clean water, dressings, edible greens. No one wanted to write human tissue under greens.

Indifferent Ecology

The new ecology did not hate us. People resisted that most. Hatred would have given the change a face, a target, a punishment, an enemy. Growth had no use for those comforts. It took warmth, moisture, minerals, light. It used the body because the body was available.

Preservation by Appetite

The absence of hatred did not make it gentle. Roots entered basements. Vines crossed bedrooms. Spores gathered in municipal vents. Flowers opened from the backs of people whose names were still pinned to missing-person boards. A hand became a trellis. A throat became a wet column of stems. A rib cage kept seedlings in the dark.

Haikus: Original Set

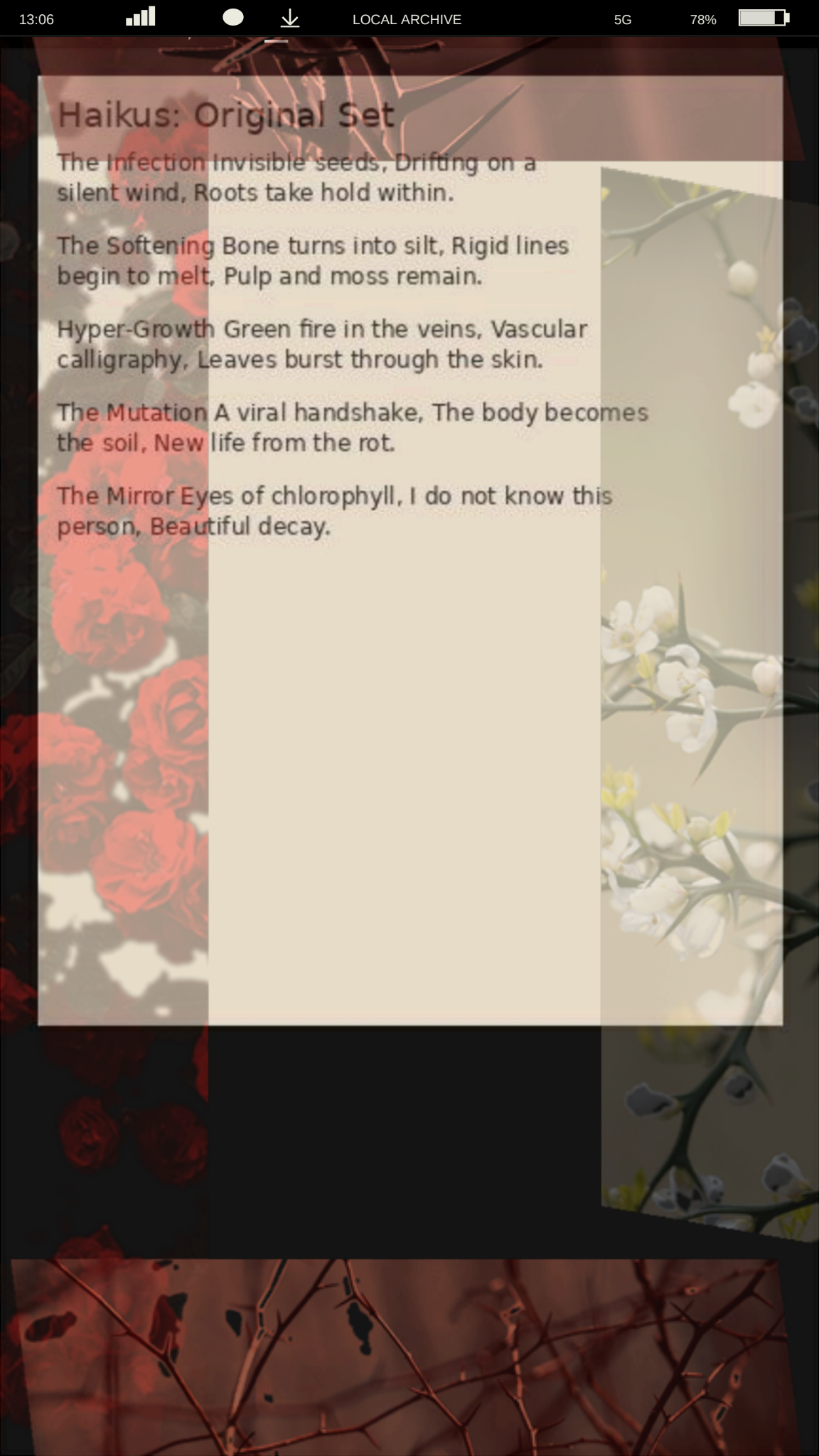
The Infection Invisible seeds, Drifting on a
silent wind, Roots take hold within.

The Softening Bone turns into silt, Rigid lines
begin to melt, Pulp and moss remain.

Hyper-Growth Green fire in the veins, Vascular
calligraphy, Leaves burst through the skin.

The Mutation A viral handshake, The body becomes
the soil, New life from the rot.

The Mirror Eyes of chlorophyll, I do not know this
person, Beautiful decay.



The Infection

Invisible seeds,
Drifting on a silent wind,
Roots take hold within.

The Softening

Bone turns into silt,
Rigid lines begin to melt,
Pulp and moss remain.

Hyper-Growth

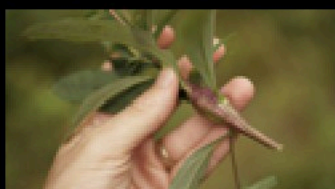
Green fire in the veins,
Vascular calligraphy,
Leaves burst through the skin.

The Mutation

A viral handshake,
The body becomes the soil,
New life from the rot.

The Mirror

Eyes of chlorophyll,
I do not know this person,
Beautiful decay.





spadefoot / held specimen / warm palm

SPADEFOOT NOTE

The toad stayed still in my hand and looked prepared to become mud if weather required it. Some animals already knew how to wait inside their bodies.

I thought metamorphosis meant a dramatic exterior change. I was wrong. Sometimes the body simply decides which future can be survived and begins without asking.

observation:
small body
large fear
patient glandular skin

question:
what does the animal know
before rain?

01

02

03

04

05

06

Environmental Adaptations and Observations:

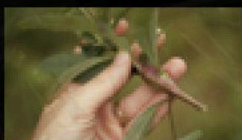
? Parthenogenetic whiptail lizards reproduce without male participation, rewriting the genomic script.

? Spadefoot toads accelerate metamorphosis when ponds dry, exchanging time for transformation. In the desert's Petri dish, I'm doing the same.

? Lizards can shed tails to escape a predator's grip; I could not shed my own mutated limbs. The pathogen simply replaced them.

? I note the cross-kingdom cycle: we infect the plants, the plants refine the parasite, and then it returns to us as thorns and lignified stems.

? The labs confirmed increased neurotransmitter synthesis in *Sceloporus* and *Bufo* as if preparing them for cognitive tasks beyond survival. Our own minds changed, too, but into something fungal.



RUMOR / BLAME

public language cache

field_note / revised_passage

The crisis began as rumor: a dog bite, a creek, a warehouse, a body in a drainage ditch with leaves in the throat. Then the headlines learned their shape. Officials urged calm while the dead waited for grammar.

The second language was blame. People named the unhoused, the sick, the queer, the migrants, the gardeners, the vegans, the people near water, the bodies already practiced upon by suspicion.

Every crisis looks for a body it has misread before.

campus greenhouse

risk management / sealed ecology

The campus had been a greenhouse before anyone said collapse. Housing sent notices about humidity irregularities in dorm vents. Dining substituted greens with no source listed. The biology department wrote: DO NOT REMOVE SPECIMENS FROM GREENHOUSE WING. Registrar messages kept arriving, as though enrollment could survive photosynthesis.

ACCESS DENIED: laboratory card inactive.
CAMPUS POLICE: remain indoors.
DINING HALL: plant-only options available.
HOUSING: report wall condensation unless accompanied by odor.

I had mistaken social isolation for failure. It was also quarantine practice.

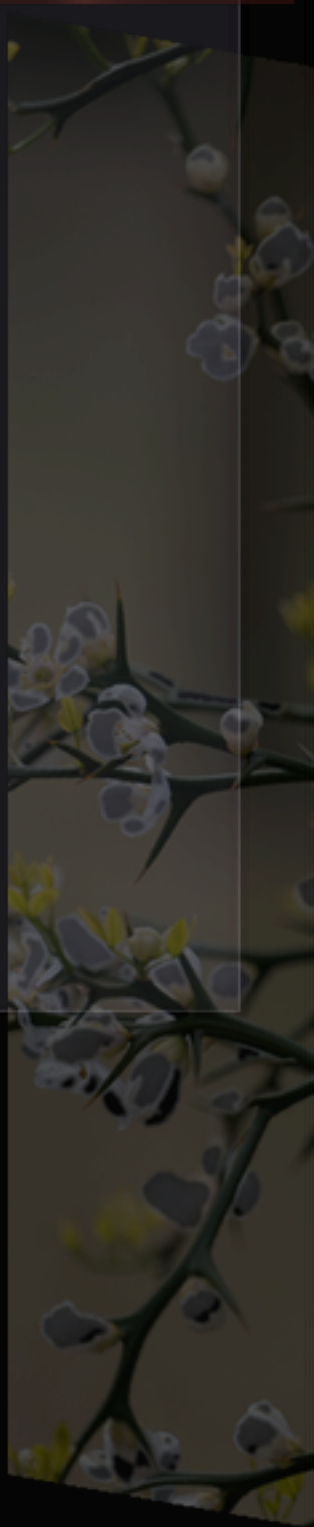
Environmental Adaptations

Parthenogenetic whiptail lizards exist in a world without mates, each egg becoming a perfect mirror of its mother.

Spadefoot toads burrow deep into dry riverbeds, becoming jelly and bone again when the rains return, their bodies rewiring in the dark.

A lizard drops its tail, a piece of itself wiggling in the dust, a sacrifice so the rest can scuttle on.

These metamorphoses feel like my own. Nodes of plant and flesh sprout under my skin; my body rewrites its own story without my permission.



REGISTRAR NOTE

university enrollment / document weather

I was at the university registrar arguing over proof I did not have: a letter, a record, an exemption, some relic of selective service folded into enrollment like a trapdoor. The problem was not only that I could not produce the document. The problem was that explaining why it mattered would turn my body into public evidence.

The clerk kept asking for the next form in the chain, then the next office, then the next rule. Each question sounded reasonable by itself. Together they made a room with no exit. I remember the counter, the fluorescent light, the small fan pushing stale air over stacks of paper that did not need to hate anyone to do damage.

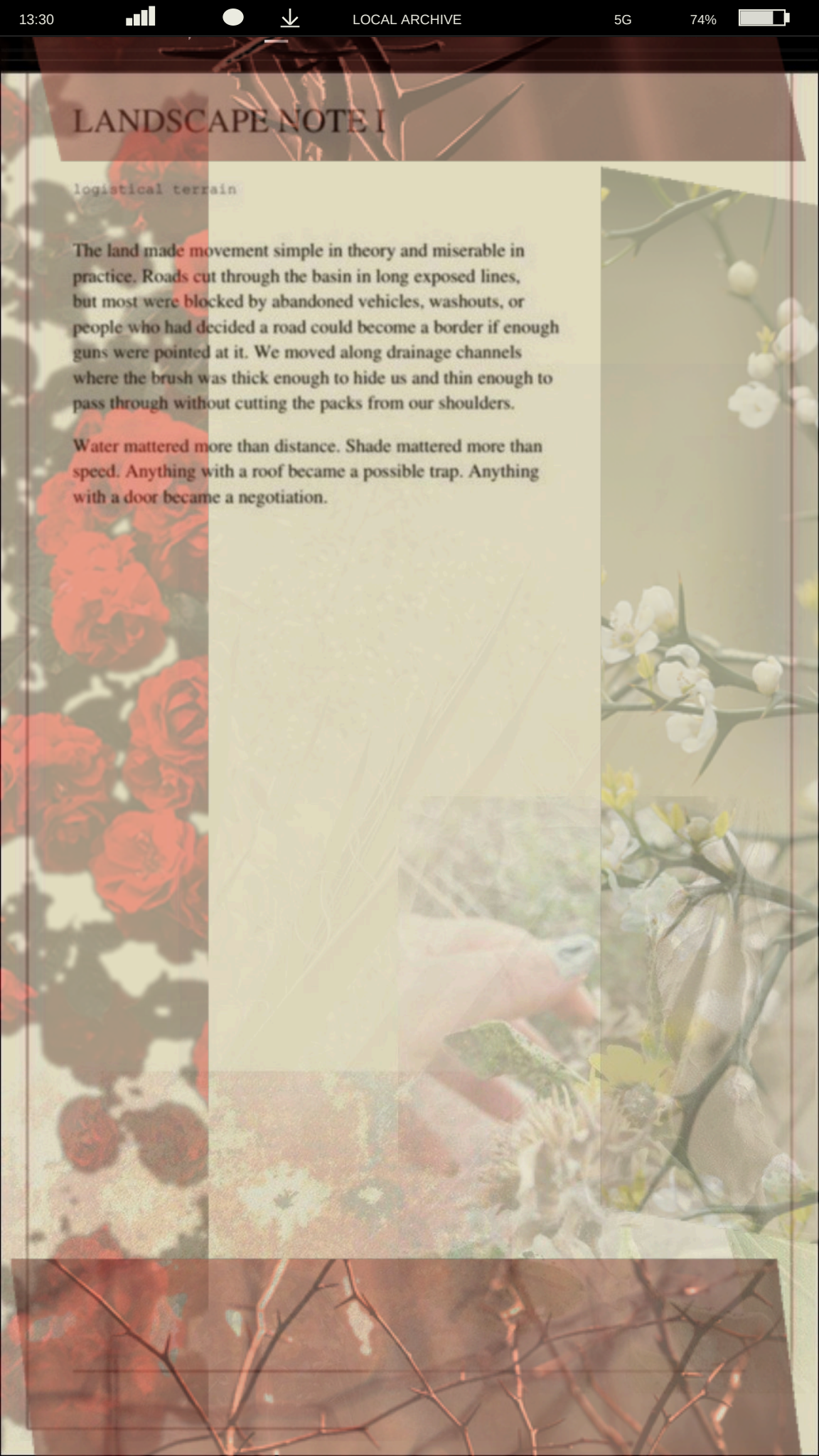
Later, when the first leaves began insisting through the wound, I thought of that office. The body keeps records even when the archive pretends it is neutral.

LANDSCAPE NOTE I

logistical terrain

The land made movement simple in theory and miserable in practice. Roads cut through the basin in long exposed lines, but most were blocked by abandoned vehicles, washouts, or people who had decided a road could become a border if enough guns were pointed at it. We moved along drainage channels where the brush was thick enough to hide us and thin enough to pass through without cutting the packs from our shoulders.

Water mattered more than distance. Shade mattered more than speed. Anything with a roof became a possible trap. Anything with a door became a negotiation.



FIRST CO-SURVIVOR

field note / first witness / announced without permission

He was not the first person to hurt me. He was the first person to stay near me after the changes became too visible to pretend away. At the beginning he treated it like weather: inconvenient, intimate, survivable. He helped me wash the dirt from the backs of my arms, held the flashlight while I counted cuts from the riparian undergrowth, and said the body makes new plans when the old ones stop answering. I believed him because I needed one other human being to look at me and not turn the observation into a verdict.

The first private detail was small enough to be missed in public. I had taken my shirt off near the service sink because the heat would not leave me, and he saw the pale seam below my ribs where a thread of green had lifted under the skin like a vein reconsidering its assignment. It moved when I breathed. Not a root exactly. Not a bruise. A thin, obedient filament with a damp shine to it, as if something inside me had started keeping its own attendance. He touched the air beside it instead of touching me. After that he became careful in the wrong direction.

Careful people can still be cruel. He did not shout. He did not accuse me of anything I could name. He only began speaking as if he had discovered a category I had failed to disclose, as if my body had smuggled a second grammar into the room and embarrassed him by making him read it. He asked procedural questions. When did it start, had anyone else seen, could it spread through sweat, did I know what I was becoming. The old friendship remained in his mouth but not in his face. I watched him choose distance with the solemnity of a person washing his hands.

By morning he had made a different camp. Not far enough to be honest, not close enough to be kind. We still exchanged batteries and water purification tablets for two days. He still corrected my plant names when I got tired. But something had been announced without my permission, and once announced, it belonged to everyone except me. He had seen one hidden thing and decided it explained the rest of me. I kept thinking that survival would make people larger than fear. Mostly it made their fear more organized.

Weather

Day 12 45%

Weather: forecast says clear. Actual sky: ash. We
lost connection to any station.

Radio: Last transmission: "We know the last before the storm
comes when the light..."

SPROUT EVENT

ABA can teach function. It can also be coercive if compliance is mistaken for care.

The syringe broke mid-injection. A bright thread of my blood snapped outward and struck Mara across the eyes. For one second I saw fear become a cleaner hatred. Not anger. The immediate animal certainty of someone reaching for a hammer to kill me.

his eyes drift from the darkened pools of mine to the slight rise and fall of my ribs beneath pale skin; they linger at the sharp plane of my jaw, as if mapping the angles for some internal geography; then, something soft draws their gaze lower—tiny spirals, dense clusters of velvet curls nesting on my forearms, each like a small wild patch. the look is curious but untried, a delicate fumbling toward understanding that feels heavier than any accusation. I catalogue it quietly, a precise catalog of what is seen and what remains unspoken.

Loss and Self

My fingernails came off in strips, keratin lifting like bark after rain. Underneath was a translucent material, veined and not quite skin.

Pieces of me went first. Hands: soil. Skin: compost. Marrow: a place where something could root.

One afternoon I looked in the mirror and understood that recognition was finished before grief had time to organize itself. The face was mine because it used my skull. The eyes were green because something else had learned to see through them.

I did not mourn the old body cleanly. I watched it rot, and I kept finding small uses for the rot.



unfinished gestures

habit read as instruction

The plants did not kill us cleanly. They completed what our bodies repeated. Vines rose where fabric compressed skin. Shoots found old scars and stress postures. Leaves formed at the mouth, where I had trained my voice into a lower room. Roots gathered at my feet because I had always dressed to run.

The pathogen read habit as anatomy. Jaw tension became a trellis. Binder pressure became a seam. Hands clenched in pockets opened as nodes. The body had been making marginal notes for years; the green thing merely learned to cite them.

body map:
compression = root
scar = node
mouth = leaf
foot = exit

PROCEDURE WALL

city minutes unapproved

field_note / revised_passage

The city held meetings. Public health issued guidance. Police taped off parks after the roots had already gone through storm drains

Residents asked who measured the water, who tracked the missing, who stored the bodies, who got to define death. The answers stayed procedural.

Procedure became a wall
with a microphone in front

CONTINUITY WITHOUT PERSONHOOD

memory capture successful; subject no longer required

NATURALIST / CLINICAL

It became increasingly plain that the organism which remained was no impostor, but a continuation conducted without the old privilege of command; it rose, drank, turned toward warmth, and performed, with a melancholy regularity, those offices of living which had formerly passed for will.

STREAM / PRESSURE

I watched my hand lift the cup and I was late to it late to the wrist late to the swallow and then the throat did what throats do when they are being taught by vines and I thought driver and I thought seat and there was neither

system note / found fragment

NOTIFICATION: memory capture successful.

SUBJECT REQUIRED FOR RECALL: no.

MOTOR AUTHORITY: transferred.

Witness continues, though witness no longer initiates action.

FURLING

The bodies came apart with a terrible tidiness. Epidermis rolled inward first, then the darker inner layer followed it, furling in green-brown spirals like ivy trained around a wire. The skin did not split open so much as remember some older instruction. It curled from the wound edges, exposing the muscle beneath, red and fibrous, where the first saplings pushed through with a wet, infant force.

The shoots were small enough to mistake for weeds if you looked quickly. Their leaves came out glossy, almost polite, tasting of iron and pig. Everyone knew it. Nobody said it first. The devout vegetarians were the strangest to watch; some kept their rules with the discipline of monks, picking around canned broth while the cities burned, and some chewed those leaves with a guilty private pleasure, horrified by what their mouths had discovered and unwilling to spit it out.

I had expected hunger to make people simple. It did not. Even at the end, people carried diets, vows, disgust, cravings, permissions, and shame like small religions in their pockets.

specimen taste report
iron / blood coin / animal fat
chlorophyll aftertaste
pleasure reported with guilt



community hall / tables set after notice

HOST-DERIVED PRODUCE

Leaves came from opened bodies and tasted like iron and pig. No one wanted to name the problem.

Some devout vegetarians still ate only plants, even after the plants had grown from muscle. A few admitted pleasure with the shame of people confessing appetite after a funeral.

I had not expected ethics to survive longer than electricity.



animal at fence / no alarm left

01

02

03

04

05

06

ABA clinic memory

...

Applied behavior analysis is a system for observing what happens before an action, what the action is, and what follows it. Antecedent. Behavior.

Consequence. A chart can make a child look like a weather station. A reinforcement schedule can make kindness look like equipment.

I remember the rainbow door monster from the clinic: tissue-paper face, big eyes, white teeth, bright enough to ask children to enter a room that sometimes measured them too closely. I wondered then if support could become pesticide when the soil was not understood by the people applying it.

The question returned later, after the vines began around the university. Were we watering what lived, or correcting it until it suffered our correction?

VISIBLE SEQUENCE

stage diagram

field_note / revised_passage

The bite opened first. Fever followed and made ordinary time unreliable. Then came the sprout: pale, delicate, almost shameful in its innocence.

After that, the skin furled. Epidermis and endodermis behaved like leaf tissue, curling back in thin spirals. Muscle grew fibrous. Tendons tightened around stems. The body sought water before food.

It turned toward windows. It pressed itself against damp tile, creek mud, sink basins, lawn soil - any place that could hold it.

ABA door monster

...

Applied behavior analysis was explained as observation, intervention, reinforcement, data. Behavior treated as something measurable: antecedent, action, consequence. In the clinic it could look gentle. It could look cheerful. It could look like laminated schedules, token boards, sensory corners, a dinosaur reading sign, a rainbow door monster with big paper eyes and white teeth.

I was never sure what I was helping grow. Some days I thought the work was water added to dry soil. Some days I thought it was pesticide added to a soil whose farmers had not been asked what lived there already.

After the quarantine I kept seeing the door monster in every barricade. Bright mouth. White teeth. Something built for children, still grinning after the adults had fled.

host-derived produce

plant-only meals available

The leaves were technically plant matter. That was the argument. They were green, fibrous, veined, and they grew from bodies that had once asked not to be eaten. But they carried iron, salt, and something unmistakably porcine, an aftertaste like ham left in a closed mouth.

MUTUAL AID PANTRY: PLANT-ONLY MEALS AVAILABLE.

MUTUAL AID PANTRY SIGN

Field classification: human-derived produce.

PLANT-ONLY MEALS AVAILABLE

classification disputed: host-derived foliage

One of the devout vegetarians cried while chewing.

Another asked for more and said it tasted clean because it had become leaf.

HOST-DERIVED PRODUCE / REVISION

Even in vegetation, the memory of flesh lingered. The leaves carried iron, salt, and the faint animal sweetness of a body that had not consented to become food. The camp called it plant-only because it was green. Nobody laughed. A few of the devout ate with a guilty relief they did not confess until

than hunger.

Day 13

what was happening before we did.

Some seeds require scarification: abrasion, heat, cold, or

receipt fragment: fuel unavailable; water
counted twice; total unreadable.

Snowberry Clearing

The room still smells like chalk dust and cold linoleum. She read from her book, her voice thin but steady, at the part where her uncles pressed close to the radio's hiss, waiting for news from places scrubbed clean by time or horror. The pope's words fluttered like moths around that fragile hope, thin as petals. I remember the way she said desperate as if it was grave but ordinary, the way we all learn to bear terror when it grows too large to name. Now my veins brim with sap, a different kind of waiting.

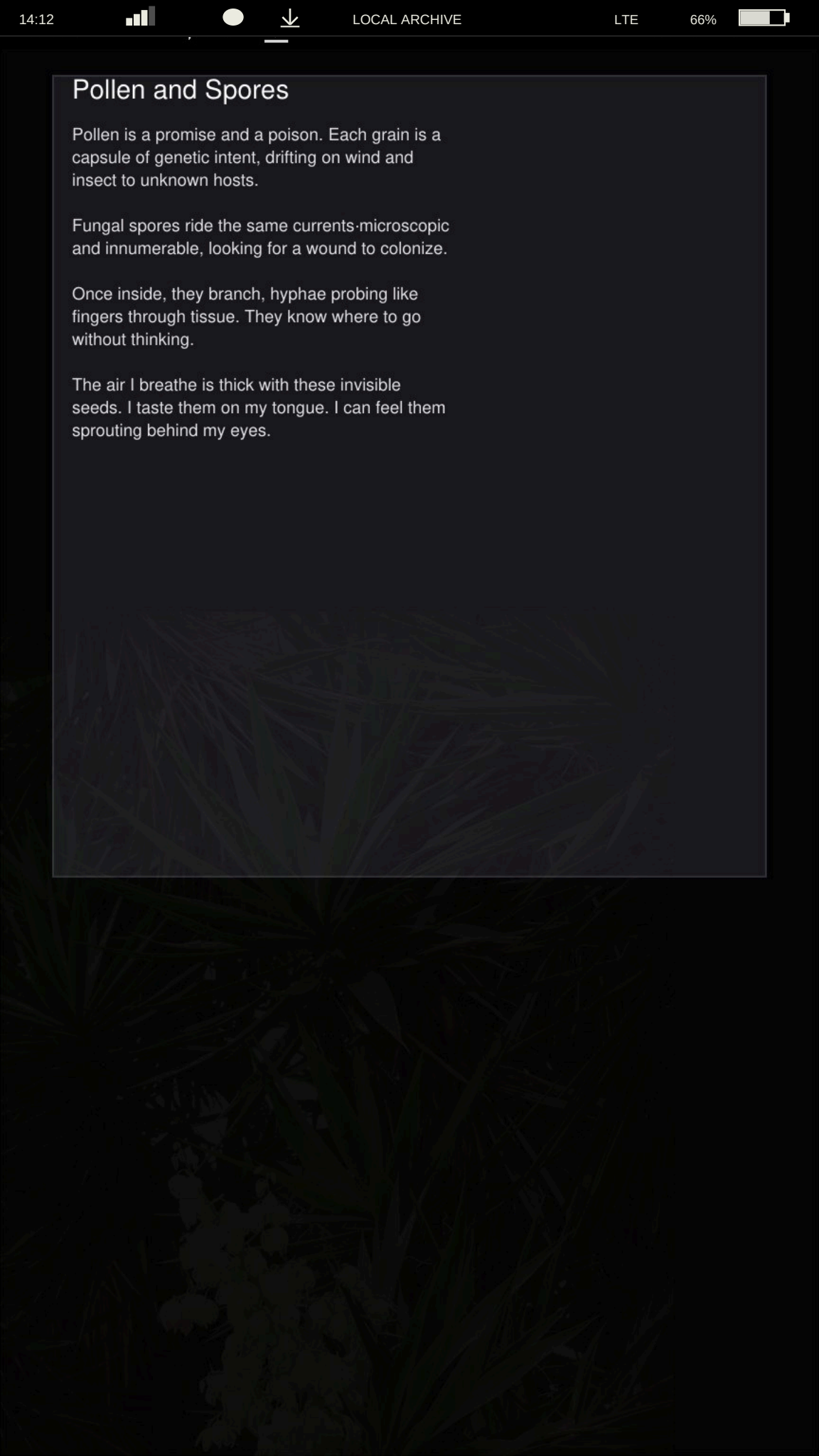
Pollen and Spores

Pollen is a promise and a poison. Each grain is a capsule of genetic intent, drifting on wind and insect to unknown hosts.

Fungal spores ride the same currents-microscopic and innumerable, looking for a wound to colonize.

Once inside, they branch, hyphae probing like fingers through tissue. They know where to go without thinking.

The air I breathe is thick with these invisible seeds. I taste them on my tongue. I can feel them sprouting behind my eyes.



SAPLING

wound note / internal field marker

It was not a bite. I keep correcting that in my head, as if the record still wants accuracy. The skin opened the way wet paper opens under ink: from pressure, from recognition, from something inside finding the weakest seam. A sapling pushed out of the wound, pale at first, then green at the hinge where the light touched it.

I knew the feeling before I knew the plant. People used to notice the wrong thing first: a voice not matching the room they had made for it, a document that asked a question too loudly, the little pause before someone chose which name to use. The sapling did not pause. It identified the structure immediately and grew through it.

I bandaged around the stem instead of over it. I did not call it healing. I did not call it infection. I made space where the body had already answered. The green thing leaned toward the light like it had been waiting for permission.



no one called it healing / no one called it infection
we just moved the label between us



Ikebana Man

local archive

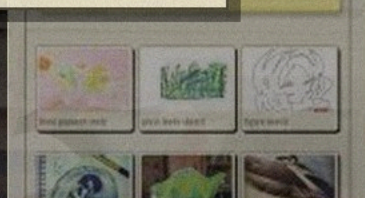
insert 05

CAMPUS EXIT

Something was lost when I left campus, though a smaller, uglier relief came with it. The world had begun falling apart outside of me before it finished falling apart inside of me, and there was mercy in that order. My first year had already made a weather system of my body. I was far from family and glad to be far from them, except the gladness had no one to sit beside.

Clubs. Lab partners. Names I could stutter toward in a low, strained voice and then spend the rest of the night regretting. I quit cigarettes and vaping the hour we ran. No ceremony. No plan. I simply did not need nicotine the way I had needed it before, and I no longer needed to drag my voice down an octave on command. Or I hoped I did not. Hope, then, was small and practical. It lived in the throat.

personal inventory
withdrawal: none observed
relief: present, unwanted
voice: unassigned



ARCHIVAL

I tried to make scrapbook pages first: object here, caption there, clean space between each piece of evidence. Then the archive started behaving like the world. Images blended. Notes bled into photographs, photographs into drawings, drawings into body, plant, building, and interface. I finally used a quick agentic AI to upload all of the notes at once. Not because I trusted it. Because I was tired, and the manual labor of naming everything had started to feel like another fever.

I found one place with service and used a technology that was, even then, helping destroy the world: a luxurious tool from a corpulently served society, a servant-machine built on appetite and extraction. Right now it made the work easier. It lifted a little of the cerebral hauling, shoved the notes somewhere, made a pile that at least resembled a witness. I hated the convenience less than I hated losing the record.

So I leave the URL behind now. On paper. In marker on concrete. Cut into bark where the bark has already begun to split. Spraypainted on walls with the dumb confidence of a public mural no one commissioned, one of those bright Pop gestures that pretends repetition is salvation because Warhol already proved repetition could be a factory.

Carlo Rovelli writes against the insult of solidity: the object is less a sealed thing than a relation, an interval, a temporary agreement between forces. Cosmologists say ordinary matter is only a thin fraction of the universe's inventory; most of the rest hides as dark matter and dark energy, invisible structure and invisible pressure moving what we can see. The empty, negative, dark spaces are not background. They drive the shape of what survives.

DOCUMENTABLE

The phone has been wrong since it fell in water. Brightness will not change. Sometimes files save over themselves; sometimes I realize I kept saving them as PNGs with transparency, so the pages melt into one another and call that preservation. Insomnia makes the notes look erratic, or maybe the notes are erratic. I am not organizing meaning. I am trying to keep enough of it from vanishing that someone else can be confused by it later.

field note / waterlogged phone / files bloom over files
battery low / bright screen refuses night / no sleep
archive entry / transparent wound / save as copy

field note / waterlogged phone / files bloom over files dark structure
battery low / bright screen refuses night / no sleep
archive entry / transparent wound / save as copy

Ikebana Man

local archive

insert 06

PERSONA / LAYERS

I think now about the quiet labor of living as an intentional person. Small hands. Small feet. Hips pressed against the straight line of average chinos. A pinchable face. Rabbit eyes with their insane wish to live and die of fear at the same time.

Layers made sense after that. So did boots stuffed at the toes and heels with soft, absorbent cloth: not disguise exactly, and not comfort either, but a private architecture for moving through a world that measured the body before it heard the name.

I had built the body as a route, then mistaken the route for shelter. When everything else began to open, I kept adding fabric, laces, pockets, seams, anything that could make a border without calling itself a wall.

PERSONA AS SURVIVAL GEAR

I had been dressing for weather that had not arrived yet. The layers, the boots, the cloth in the toes, the flattened outlines: what once helped me pass through a room now helped me pass through a world that had learned to inspect every body for evidence.

fit notes

boots packed with cloth
chinos straight line
rabbit eyes
body measured before name

field prompts

where do you see
the pattern repeat
in your world?

TOUCH ETHICS

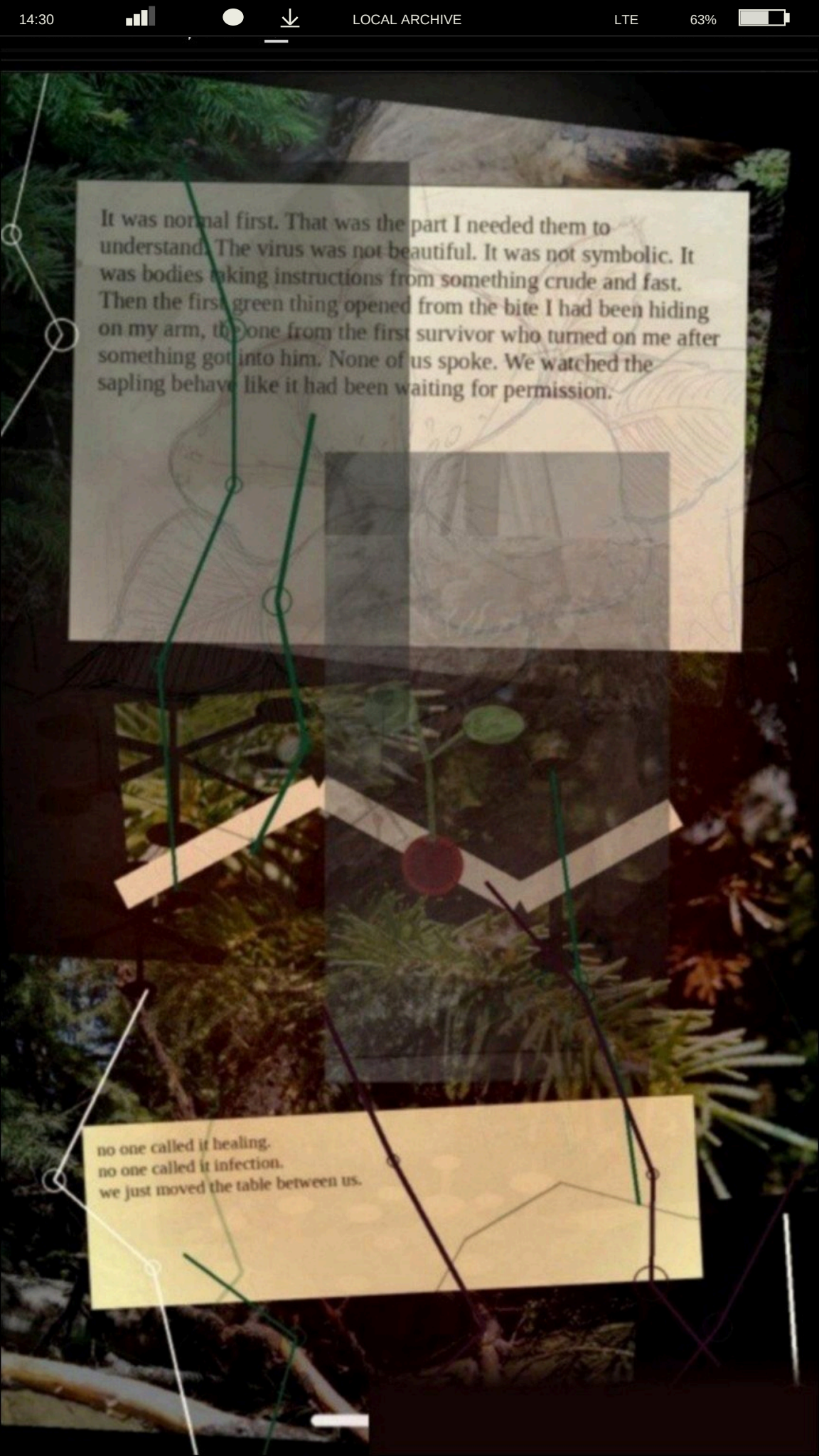
subconscious near surface

field_note / revised_passage

Rooting changed the ethics of touch. A person could still look movable from across the room and become impossible by morning.

I thought of men by the heat they left on my wrist, the brief pressure at the back of my neck, the way wanting could stand close to fear until the body stopped pretending it knew the difference. The gay part of me did not disappear during the emergency. It came nearer the surface, embarrassing and alive, as if desire had always been another kind of mycelium.

Tenderness was dangerous
because it made people



It was normal first. That was the part I needed them to understand. The virus was not beautiful. It was not symbolic. It was bodies taking instructions from something crude and fast. Then the first green thing opened from the bite I had been hiding on my arm, the one from the first survivor who turned on me after something got into him. None of us spoke. We watched the sapling behave like it had been waiting for permission.

no one called it healing.
no one called it infection.
we just moved the table between us.

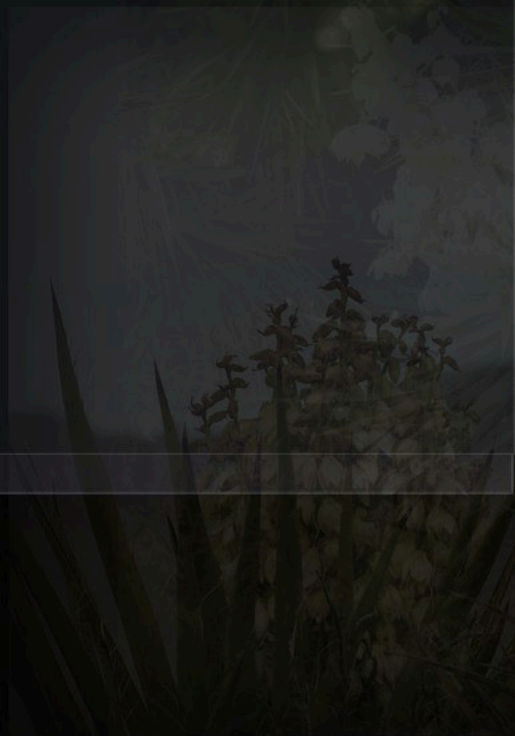
Life Softens & Death Hardens

Life softened around us. Flesh gave way to pulp. Houses sweated moss from the seams.

Death hardened in response. Bodies mummified in their chairs; skin tightened, veins kept their map like dried rivers.

Fluid things calcified. Rigid things warmed, loosened, began to ooze.

The distinction failed slowly. Softness was not mercy. Hardness was not preservation. Each condition waited inside the other, changing names as the body changed weather.



Quarantine

No Service

Day 15 35%

Quarantine notice. My name scratched out and
corrected to my deadname. Body becomes evidence.

Deadname scratched deeper each time I try to correct the correction.

Real-time storage is almost full

classification fails when the specimen answers
back.

CLASSIFICATION FAILS

The record keeps trying to name _____ that refuses
category.

SURVIVAL NOTE / THORNS

The survivors who still had ordinary skin learned to walk with their eyes lowered. Thornbushes were not scenery anymore. They were hooks, needles, alarms. Stiff grasses opened the calves in thin parallel cuts and held saliva, dust, and old rain in the same shining line. I told them to wrap their shins, step where the stems bent away from them, and never push through a plant that resisted like wire. I did not always follow my own instructions. The thorns took to me differently. I braided them into wreaths and carried them into cities, leaving one on each statue I found, a string of messiahs left behind for whatever still understood ceremony.

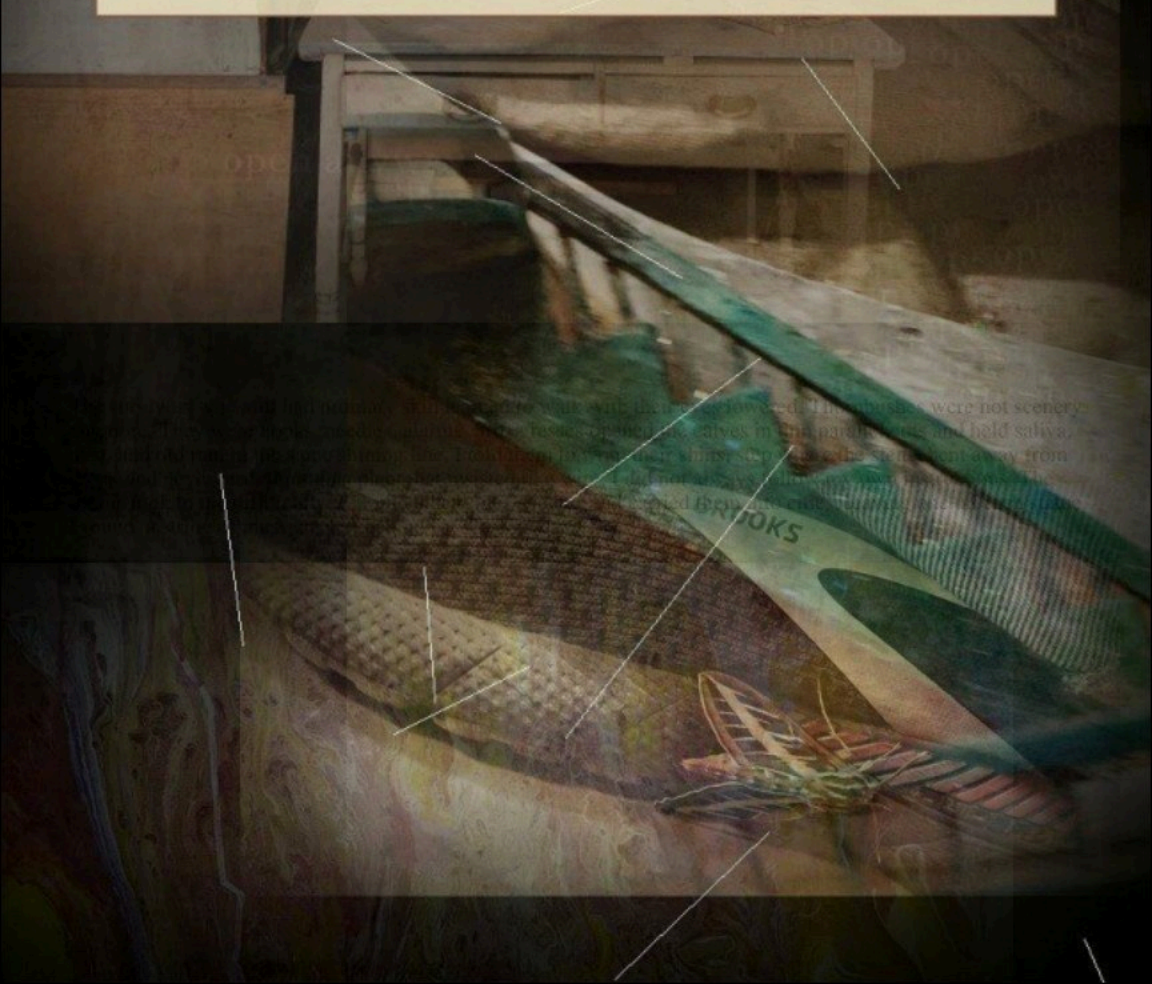


Chart Backup posted Day 16

journal entry

I do not remember my freckles without the filaments.
When I try, the old image comes back contaminated, as if
memory itself has started germinating.

dose log: gel moves through skin: injection
releases from depot over time.

VOICE LOG

A root hair is a temporary cell extension, thin enough
enter water films between soil particles.

FIELD

CACHE

WOUND

do not remove pri

revision note: old note rewritten because the first version expla

do not remove prior evidence

Terminal Synthesis

Lucidity comes in grains now, suspended in the sap that has taken marrow's place.

I had mistaken observation for safety. That was the first error. The vines did not enter the study; the study had always been inside the vines.

My stump has become a root, and through it I taste mineral weather. Species move through me without asking to be classified: lizard patience, toad rain, predator hunger.

The word pussy once marked weakness. Now it names the open wound that did not close. The wound survived because it could receive the world.

hiking
near me

Messages

Backup paused

Day 17 27%

I can believe their accounts of things. They came from the university, dying the effects of this... mirrored, life... recall? There was a lot of terminology and... that sounded so unhinged, so impossible in what they were implying in its... that I took them for fringe... a thing for bioterrorism and doomsday scenarios. But by the time I came across them, pants covered in dried mud and fingers cut open over the vines that grew from the ground around the university suddenly and inexplicably after the quarantines begun, I already assumed I was experiencing an act of God with the rest of humanity. But I think we had before. I think we all had experienced that prior world wars (did Vonnegut call them "mankind's attempt at suicide?"), ethnocides broadcasted to every metropolis, cold wars, corporate proxy wars in some modern misnomer of colonialism. Unsent text: I think I'm getting what I wanted and it's killing me. I wanted a heard, and now vines cover my throat.

UNSENT

I thought documentation would make the body legible. It made the archive hungry.

archive plate

safe margin

BROKEN SYRINGE

field injury / injection failure

The syringe broke mid-injection. Not dramatically, not with the useful clarity of a snapped tool in a film, but with a small plastic failure inside the moment my hand had already trusted it. The pressure changed. The needle shifted. My blood moved before either of us understood the route it had taken.

It splashed across Mara's eyes.

For one second I saw fear in her face and behind the fear the immediate, killing hatred of an animal deciding whether the thing in front of it was still kin. Then she blinked and returned to herself, or performed returning to herself, and I understood how fast love could become triage.

I apologized before I knew which part of me had done the harm.

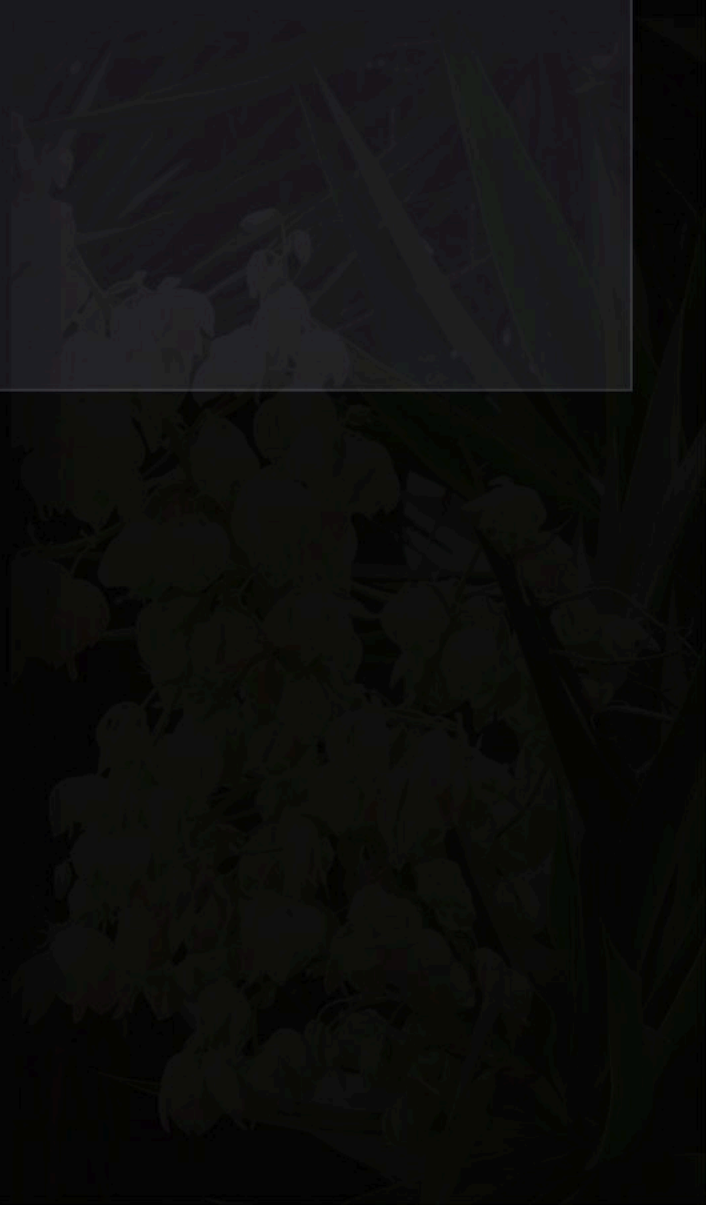
The Biochemical Prelude

Before the Collapse, riparian trees upregulated secondary metabolites, volatile compounds whispering through the canopy.

Shrubs wove networks of plasmodesmata, a distributed cognition adapting before any human could comprehend.

Fauna too accelerated: lizards grew new synapses, toad larvae rewired their brains. Evolution condensed into seasons while human cognition slowed.

We mistook this for stress response. It was a prelude, an orchestrated preparation for something larger than us.



DAMAGED MIRROR / HABITAT THEORY

PAGE INSERT // 22 // BODY Ⓞ WEATHER / ARCHIVE

field evidence

I kept treating the body like a machine because machines are allowed to be repaired without accusation. Machines have manuals. Machines have parts. Machines accept replacement, lubricant, torque, calibration.

A habitat is worse. A habitat remembers every introduced species. It has weather. It has runoff. It has invasive bloom and native bloom and no clean border between the two after the roots take.

I wrote: remove the variable.
Then I wrote under it: which variable.
Then I could not stop laughing, very quietly, because the page had turned humid under my hand and the ink feathered into little vines.

machine error / habitat error / variable unknown

EPIPARASITISM / VOICE REPAIR

Epiparasitism, as I came to understand it, was less a definition than a delay: a second hunger learning to live from the first, the way a prayer lives from fear. The first parasite made the body available. The second taught availability to bloom.

another parasite, which feels rude but efficient. Nature, having never developed a moral philosophy, does not pause to ask whether exploitation has become excessive. It simply notices an available system and climbs aboard.

A parasite finds a host. Then something else finds the parasite.

This is apparently allowed.

I try not to take it personally.



Personal Aftermath

The feed broke into static: looters, preachers, fires, sirens under a sky lit by streets already burning.

We watched from little screens, our faces blue-white and useless. People we knew cried into bad connections. Nobody knew how to comfort a voice when the world behind it was being erased.

Liam once told me not to be a pussy. He meant brave. The phrase stayed in the body, sour and heavy, like medicine swallowed wrong. Later, when everything built on denial began to crack, I understood how much masculinity depends on refusing to hear itself speak.

We were children then. Our bodies were already burning through hormones while the planet learned a larger fever.

voice stayed low

nicotine absence / throat fibers

I did not miss the vape. I missed needing it. After the fibers gathered in my throat, my voice stayed low without command. The old effort left all at once, like a door propped open by rot.

It was the first change I almost thanked. Relief arrived with violation and did not have the decency to separate itself. The infection gave me a sound I had once purchased with smoke, posture, dehydration, and shame.

laryngeal fibers
roughened register
no nicotine required
subject reports guilt

Ikebana Man

local archive

insert 03

ADRENALINE TRANSCRIPT

How many conversations do we remember word for word? Very few, I think, even when the body swears otherwise. Adrenaline keeps the bruise and loses the grammar. It stores heat first. Then pressure. Then the old red dark that fills the skull before a sentence can survive.

I remember the first fight with my mother more clearly as weather than language. I remember standing chest to chest with my father, though my shoulders reached only his solar plexus, and the room graying out around the edges until my body seemed to hear before my ears did. The words returned later in scraps, which may have been true, or may have been the story my nerves made to explain the shaking.

After the outbreak I tried to rebuild the conversations the same way. The survivors with the gun. The one who kept saying not to move. The other who asked what I was hiding under my sleeves. I remember the barrel before I remember the question. I remember the smell of wet canvas before the answer.

THE BODY KEPT MINUTES

The body kept minutes better than the mind. It recorded the gun as temperature, height, and my mother as the color behind my eyes. Words arrived later, longer useful.

memory protocol

- 1 affect returns
- 2 body map returns
- 3 words arrive late
- 4 trust none of them completely

ROOTING LANGUAGE

speech after skin

field_note / revised_passage

Hair tangled with rootlets. Fingertips split.
Teeth loosened while green pressure gathered
in the mouth. Some people spoke through it.
Some made only breath and sap. Some repeated
old phrases until the phrases outlived the
person using them.

At night I heard voices from bodies
already halfway into soil. They did not
sound peaceful. They sounded busy.

The ecosystem did not ask
whether speech meant

SECOND GRAMMAR

syntax correct / meaning alien

NATURALIST / CLINICAL

Language did not fail at once; rather, it retained its visible architecture after the inhabitants had departed, so that clauses still stood in orderly relation while their meanings passed into a green jurisdiction, where nouns behaved like spores and verbs sought dampness.

STREAM / PRESSURE

sentence complete sentence
wrong I said bring gauze and
meant water I said mother
and meant height I said I am
okay and the room sprouted
the second grammar under
the first one quiet as mold
under paint

system note / found fragment

ERROR REPORT: grammar intact.

SEMANTIC HOST: compromised.

Recommended action: replace repeated human nouns with fungal or botanical equivalents without notification.

Camera

Message failed

Day 18 24%

Camera autofocus glitch: it reads petals as primary subject. My cheeks are blurred. 'Face not recognized' repeats.

Update available: Camera 5.0.0-A

BLOSSOM PLATE

Germination is not flowering. The first break is usually root before leaf.

dream remnant: flowers did not speak, but the phone captioned them anyway.

continuous scroll is optional

continuous scroll is optional

Ikebana Man

local archive

Observations

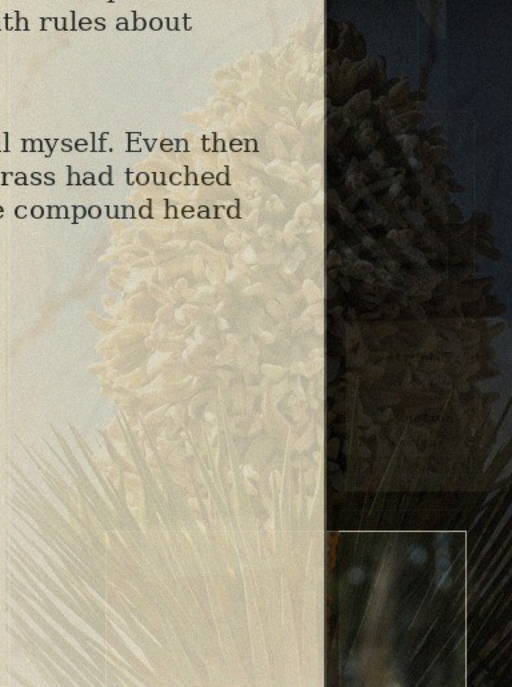
insert 04

COLONY COMPOUND

At the colony compound, honesty became its own stupid fever. I told them because I thought a quiet admission would sound less dangerous than discovery. I said the grass had brushed my earlobes as I slept. I said wisps of shoots had bristled under my elbow pads. I said it softly, almost apologetically, as if volume could make a confession less botanical.

The panic moved through them faster than any vine. Chairs scraped. Someone cried out for a blade. Someone else prayed without finishing the name of God. The man with the rifle lifted it before he seemed to decide to lift it, and the children were pulled behind a plywood wall painted with rules about cooperation.

I wanted to explain that I was still myself. Even then the sentence sounded thin. The grass had touched me. The grass had answered. The compound heard both facts as the same threat.



reconstructed dialogue
accuracy low
barrel remembered
words uncertain
body certain



method
gentle collection
minimal disturbance
detailed notation

Colony

Day 19  41

Color & observation. They call me here... and avoid a skin-ton, one leaves water outside my door, I am a survivor in the room's locker room of an abandoned gym crept in looking for stovetop-fried rubber beads & use's lounqueto, forgotten water bottles, can-drums, sprays, maybe heavy things to throw at the creepers. I am a, swing around, one with a gut cut, surprised to see me in there. We froze at the smell of chlorine and not. Outside the creepers howled. We listened for them dipping their feet through broken glass.

forgotten bottles /

water bottles /

water bottles /

water bottles /

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COLONY REPORT

Others describe what they can survive seeing

do not remove this evidence

they crowd close, noses tilted toward my arms. dandelion, says one, almost sure. cut grass, another counters, sharper, less sweet, someone murmurs greenhouse—wet earth and leaf after rain, the scent warm and alive. I don't feel exposed. instead, i am cataloged, pressed between their words, a specimen held gently, as if my skin still belongs to something tender.

Transmission & Pathology

The Ikebana pathogen does not stop at skin. After contact it enters soil, root, leaf, and returns through plant tissue altered by whatever it used there.

Cross-kingdom vectors have precedents: ergot in rye, spores in rose thorns, fungal blossoms under skin. Each history points to a body that becomes a route rather than a boundary.

Within plants, the pathogen trades with mycelia and reappears in mammalian hosts as stems where hair had been, roots where nails had held.

Touch is no longer only infection. It is transit. The body becomes the vessel, the field, and the thing being cultivated.



Keyboard

No Service

Day 20 18%

Keyboard as infection: at first the phone autocorrected he to she in voice notes, captions, and contact previews. Now it corrects both to it. Face ID hesitates. Photos no longer always tags my selfies as a face. When service comes back, the model updates and registers me as: invasive stem, wet specimen, botanical anomaly.

autocorrect: he > she > it
face: not found
cloud tag: plant damage

autocorrect: transition becomes
passing or planting
body or bodying
alive or archived
transition or transmission

autocorrect: transition becomes
transmission: passing becomes planting
alive becomes archived

MIRROR NOTE

No term stayed still long enough . . . come a shelter.

town note: every body becomes local under
enough weather.

safe margin

screen-edge

Lucid Note

May 21

May 21 15%

I am not the outbreak. I am a person with an outbreak. Late
haiku: flowering in ash — within prairie's trail of vines.
Night eats the radio.

Lucid note: growth leads toward the signal, cells lengthen
tensely until a leafy stem.

I am not the outbreak.
I am a person with an outbreak.

I am not the outbreak. I am a person with an outbreak.
Late haiku: flowering in ash — within prairie's trail of vines.
Night eats the radio.

Take your own first aid.

POLLEN SLEEP

Dormancy is not death. It is delayed chemistry.

splitting
first aid

Precedents & Mitigation

Historical analogues remain useful only up to the point where history begins protecting itself from the present. Ergot burned flesh and made visions; sporotrichosis threaded fungi under skin; mycetoma left its grainy tunnels.

Behaviour followed the lesions. Dancing plagues, syphilitic personality shifts, pellagra's dermatitis and dementia, witch hunts fed by poisoned grain: each record shows a society making theology from damaged tissue.

Treatment must address the cycle, not the symptom. Antifungals and virucidals may reduce expression, but they do not interrupt return.

A competing organism could starve the pathogen or build another ecology inside the first. Survival may require host modification: hormones altered, nutrients withheld, ego pruned down to a structure small enough to live.

persona as survival gear

layers / boots / clean / animal eyes

Before the outbreak, I dressed to build a body that could pass through public space. Layers corrected what eyes wanted to misread. Chinos made a straight argument over hips. Boots stuffed at the toes and heels gave my outline a little more weather.

During the run, the same costume became equipment: binder as bandage, jacket as concealment, pockets full of seed pods, nicotine wrappers, gauze, receipts. I had been dressing for weather that had not arrived yet.

CLOTHING NOTE / RECURRING MOTIF

Binder cloth becomes bandage. Chinos take chlorophyll at the seams. Pockets carry receipts, seed pods, dead vape cartridges. The old persona did not vanish. It became gear.

inventory:
soft cloth / heel lift
chlorophyll seam stains
gauze / lighter / seeds

HOST-DERIVED GREEN

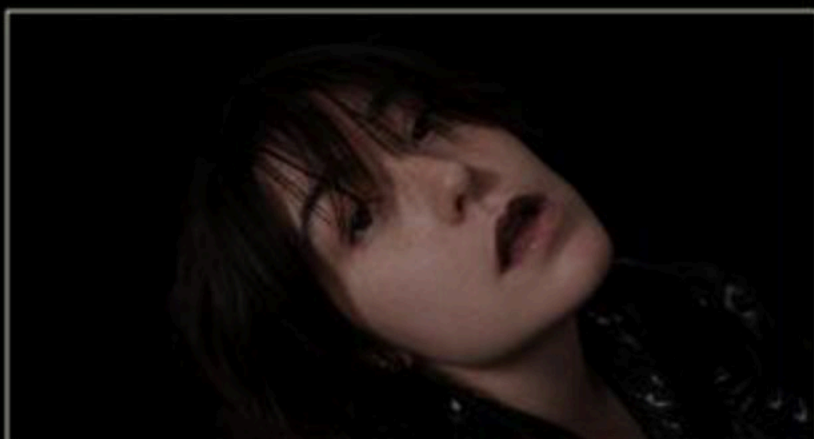
relief kitchen inventory

field_note / revised_passage

Survival language failed next. People who had never eaten meat called the new food plant-based because the other name required a different mouth.

Relief kitchens kept their columns: canned goods, clean water, dressings, edible greens. No one wanted to write human tissue under greens. No one wanted to say cannibalism when the body had leaves.

Dietary categories survived longer than personhood.



self image / persona lighting / black field



rabbit-deer eyes / fear as posture

LAYERS

I think now about the quiet
labor of being a deliberate
person. Small hands. Small feet.
Hips pressed against the
straight line of average chinos.
A face people wanted to pinch.

My eyes had the same
agreement as rabbits: live and
die of fear at once.

The layers make sense now.
Boots stuffed at toes and heels.
Soft cloth absorbing the
difference between the body I
had and the outline I needed.

01

02

03

04

05

06

Notes

Search...

Day 22 17%

Day 22: The bloom doesn't stop. One down blossoms upon
along my ribs. They look like juniper but smell like
chemical. I feel euphoric and terrified.

Time to stand.

safe margin

meaningful images need descriptions

myc.

optional

WEATHER ALERT

If the phone cannot decide whether it is a book, a
wound, or a map, keep swiping.

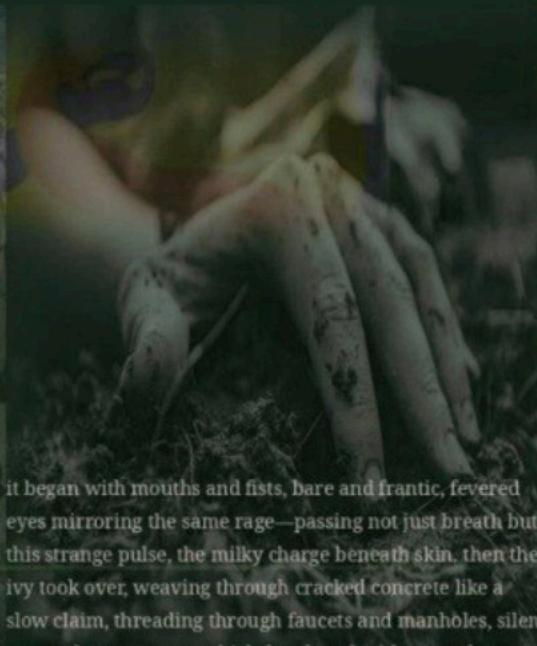
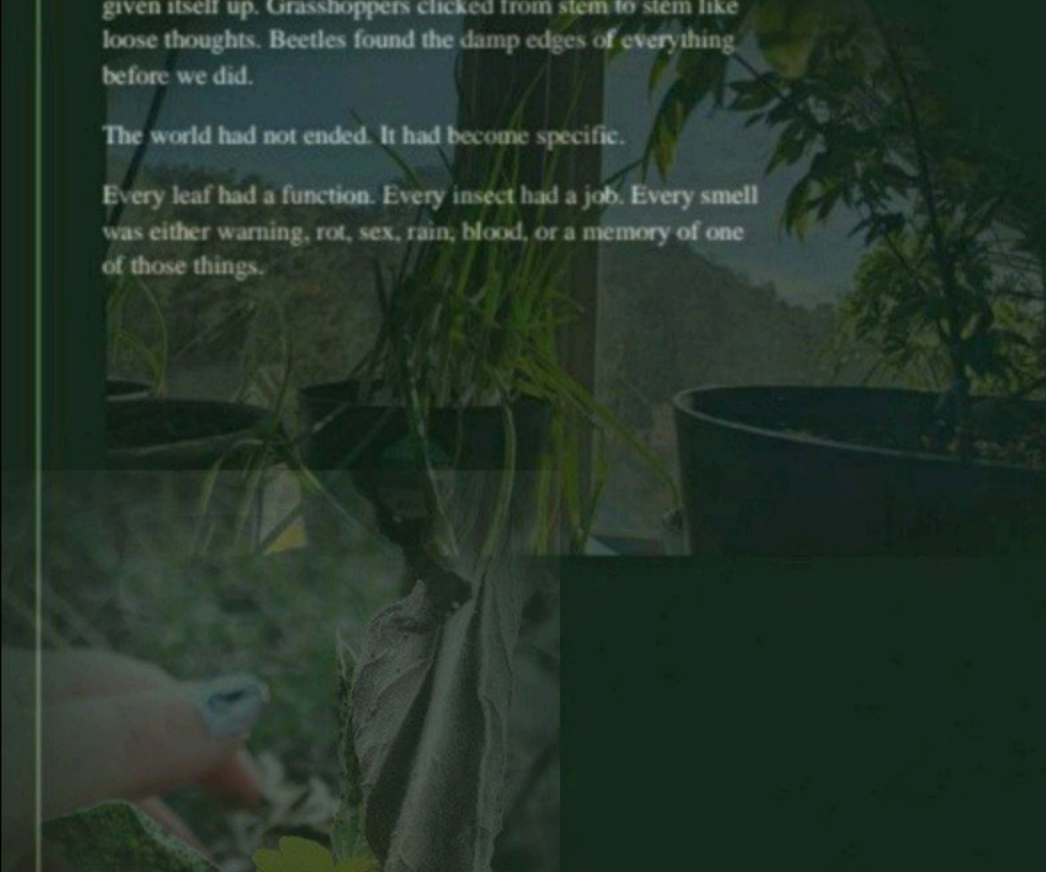
LANDSCAPE NOTE II

flora, insects, and route-finding

By the second week, I stopped measuring distance by miles and started measuring it by plants. Willow meant water near the surface. Aspen meant a family underground, one body pretending to be many. Mushrooms appeared where something had already given itself up. Grasshoppers clicked from stem to stem like loose thoughts. Beetles found the damp edges of everything before we did.

The world had not ended. It had become specific.

Every leaf had a function. Every insect had a job. Every smell was either warning, rot, sex, rain, blood, or a memory of one of those things.



it began with mouths and fists, bare and frantic, fevered eyes mirroring the same rage—passing not just breath but this strange pulse, the milky charge beneath skin, then the ivy took over, weaving through cracked concrete like a slow claim, threading through faucets and manholes, silent as rot, the water grew thick, burdened with more than memory, the sinking weight of bodies surrendered to

Field Guide

Botanical misidentification: juniper

apple tree, cottonwood, field

Species unknown. They are

ROUTE MAP

Dead towers, wet roads, empty lockers, rubber bands
used like promise

BROOKS

RECEIPT / SPECIMEN / DREAM REMNANT

PAGE INSERT // 29 // BODY / WEATHER / ARCHIVE

Receipt found under counter. Date unreadable. Items: fuel, lighter, canned peaches, bandage, water, water, water. The clerk line is blank. Tax line is blank. Total is a bruise of thermal paper.

Dream remnant: a blue jay tapping at the pharmacy glass. In the dream it had my exact panic but none of my obligations. It struck the window again and again until the painted bird behind the register opened one eye.

Biological observation: cotyledons are seed leaves. Not true leaves yet.

Temporary provision. A plant begins by eating what it already carried. I did not like that fact. I circled it anyway.

thermal paper / cotyledons / food carried forward

TOTAL: LATE

Voice Memo

Day 24 14%

Voice memo transcription: "It's beautiful." The app hears her voice and misnames me. Correction: he. The petals brush the microphone.

Exhausted
[content obscured]
Correction: he

Added: I applied behavior analysis breaks across the antecedent, behavior, consequence triad. Includes: outcomes before, what happens, and what follows. Keep wondering who was measuring what.

Inspect: I read the transcript as if the screen is word 6/179

GAS 00.00

WATER x2

GEL CACHE

NO SIGNAL

TOTAL: LATE

IC ME

AP: 'in

replacer

ement schedules,
rooms, hard questions.

continuous scroll is optional

I keep remaking the note. The sentence will not germinate in the

archive note
to be mistaken for mercy.

screen
beat



road out / wet pass / no clear direction



fuel memory / open sign gone

EXIT ROUTE

Something was lost when I left campus. Something was gained too: relief that the world had broken outside me before it finished breaking inside.

I stopped smoking because there was nowhere to buy anything, and because my throat had started lowering itself. The old effort felt embarrassing beside the new damage.



broadcast fire / no origin confirmed

route note:
keep moving
avoid crowds
watch ditches
count batteries
never trust silence

01

02

03

04

05

06

GALLERY WEATHER / MARA

GALLERY WEATHER / MARA.

Abandoned galleries stayed untouched longer than pharmacies. I do not know why. Maybe hunger understands food before beauty. Maybe theft needs a living future to imagine ownership.

Mara always looked. They were a sculptor and muralist before the courts stopped meaning anything. They touched walls like they were checking for fever. They could tell which canvases had been loved by the amount of dust caught in the varnish. They said paintings kept a second weather inside them. I believed them because by then I had seen flowers open in rooms with no windows.

A moth crossed the shoe in the entryway. A fly died in the sink. The blue room kept its own light. I wrote the inventory down as if the archive could forgive us for surviving badly.

untouched gallery / moth inventory / second weather

Memory

Server unavailable

Day 25

Old memory: This day four years ago, I am on the porch painting a blue jay. My dad calls me by my deadname. Instagram tries to load but fails.

ADA-compliant, redacted content is not here, but sometimes it works. For some reason, these sheets called a program. The look is like a style.

abandoned, different, sometimes. Many days I feel like I'm not actually there.

BARK DETAIL

Felt right. Felt wrong. Still your.

classification fails

page 5

one implication

implication

his eyes drift from the darkened pools of mine to the slight rise and fall of my ribs beneath pale skin, they linger at the sharp plane of my jaw, as if mapping the angles for some internal geography, then something soft draws their gaze lower—tiny spirals, dense clusters of velvet curls nesting on my forearms, each like a small wild patch, the look is

The Splintering

Words began to splinter. They broke not only in my throat but inside my thoughts.

Language had been a trellis meant to keep us upright, but now it fractures as my ribs lignify. The 'I' in my sentences stretches and thins into a 'we' that includes moss and spores.

Speaking feels like biting into bark. Each syllable catches on thorns in my throat and emerges as a dry rustle.

What do we call grief when the mechanism of grief rewrites itself into chlorophyll? Only the rustling of leaves remains.

Voice Memo 07/21 - The web is still up in flashes. I

Day 26 15%

keep the tabs open like pinned insects,
body weather
 each one useful, each one already dead.

I remember the deepest part of me. It hides

underneath bunched fabrics. It gives off dangerous

scents to predators. Sometimes I see their eyes in the
 darkness; sometimes inside, sometimes outside.

Voice
 sound.
 names
 category



CAMERA FOCUS

The lens prefers news. The face becomes background data.

camera chose blossoms; face detection
 declined.

FIELD

CACHE

ROUND



Field Note: Aesthetic Sequestration

Observation: The transformation follows an aesthetic logic. Petals unfurl from empty eye sockets, and their symmetry and color mirror local flowers.

Lips are replaced by multi-lobed structures reminiscent of carnivorous traps. Skin becomes translucent and veined, mimicking the petals of a monkshood.

This isn't decay for decay's sake. It appears to be a deliberate ornamentation, turning the host into a display for spores. The beauty is not accidental; it is the infection's final flourish.



The last tab finally

PORTABLE PRINTER / FIELD MAPS

The portable printer became useful after the ink was gone because usefulness changed its definition. I left maps where people would find them: highway shoulder, pharmacy door, church vestibule, glass punched out of a library case. When there was no map, I left a photograph of the intersection, a sketch of the water source, a diagram of where the bridge had split, a copied warning about which rooms had teeth behind the drywall. Art became a kind of public infrastructure once nobody trusted the signs.

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The Iron Husk

He spoke of an iron will as if the soul were a foundry. But iron doesn't grow; it only rusts.

When vines first appeared on his collarbone, he tried to cut them off, as if he could prune his way back to being a man.

He didn't know that iron was the first thing the infection wanted. It needed the minerals. Watching him struggle was like watching a statue try to breathe.

In the end, it was the softest among us—the ones who bent, who wept, who let the rot in—who survived. The iron husk cracked and fell away, leaving nothing but rust.

CUT STEMS

field surgery / human blood

The thick stems had to be cut back before we could move.

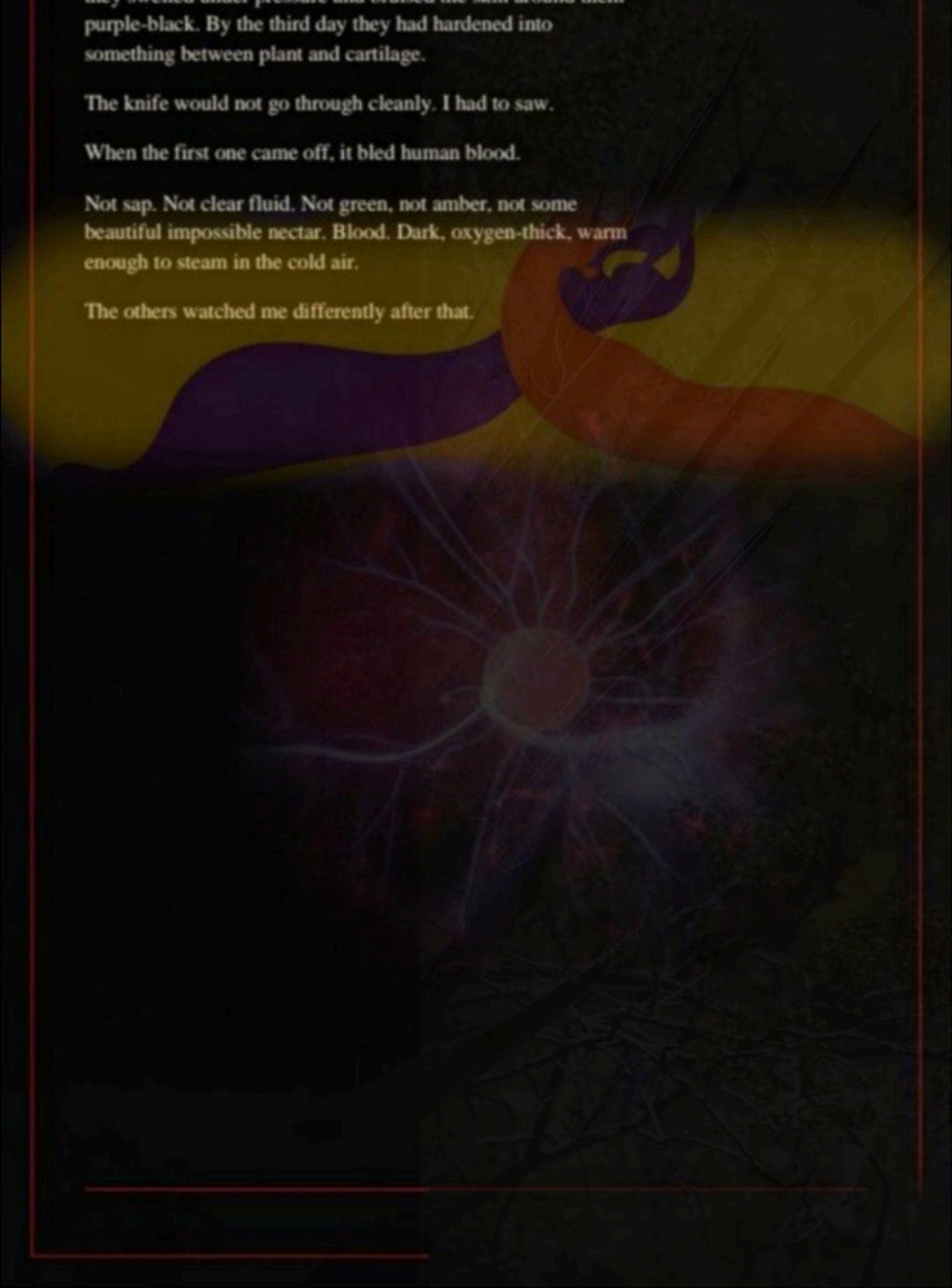
They caught on sleeves, straps, branches, doorframes, the edge of the sleeping bag. At first I tried tying them down, but they swelled under pressure and bruised the skin around them purple-black. By the third day they had hardened into something between plant and cartilage.

The knife would not go through cleanly. I had to saw.

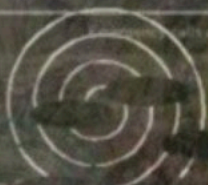
When the first one came off, it bled human blood.

Not sap. Not clear fluid. Not green, not amber, not some beautiful impossible nectar. Blood. Dark, oxygen-thick, warm enough to steam in the cold air.

The others watched me differently after that.



Colony

Day 27 

Colony entry: Denier said she
Mara left water outside Fry a
My body is a shrine and a hothouse

weather is an organ



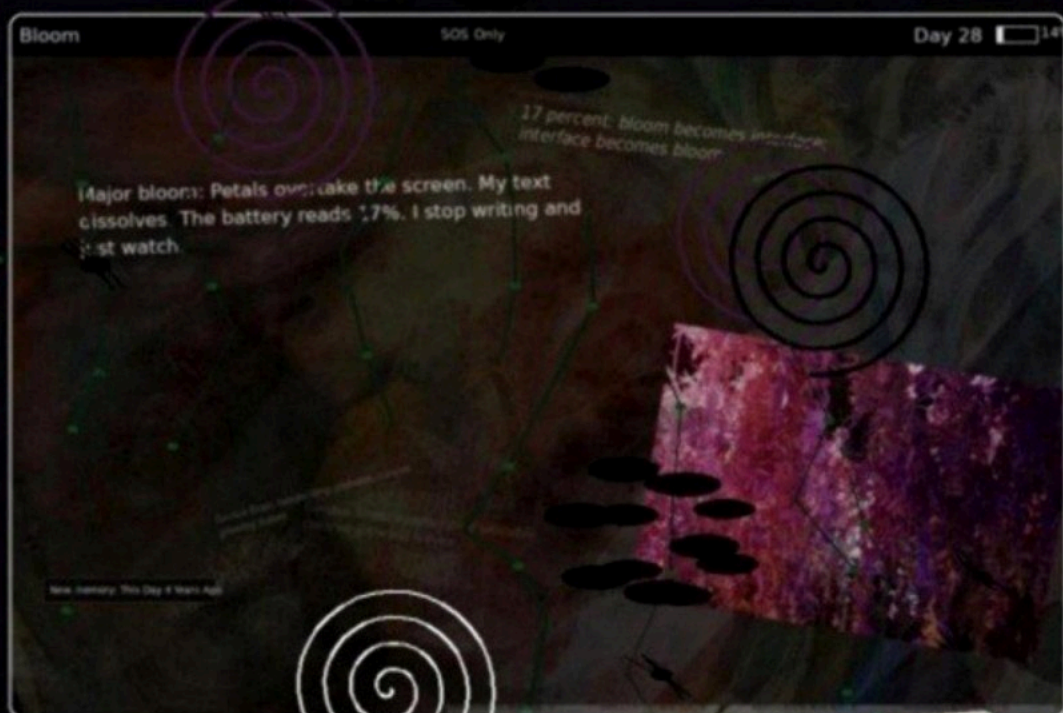
HIVE PLATE

A contact sheet is not proof. It is a garden of attempts.



not found

meaningful image: need more



EVACUATION MEMO
 root system map: no clean origin found.
 A seedling spends stored energy before it can feed itself.



Inventory

Inventory: No clean needles. One gel pack nearly gone. Did I dose today? I wrote — I can't. I remember the clinic's locker room; survivors swung a gun when I crept in looking for tourniquets, water bottles, sanitizing sprays and heavy things to throw at the sleepers. Survival and guilt blue.

Genesis Scan: Day 41

ABA — the plan named replacement behaviors, prompts, extinction bursts, reinforcements. I remember wondering whether "was watering dry soil or poisoning soil nobody had learned to read."

Day 29

not evidence enough

CAN... CACHE

the rainbow door monster remains: big eyes, white teeth, children's clinic, paper joy.

continuous scroll is optional

meaningful pages and descriptions

give prior evidence

the room still smells like chalk dust and cold linoleum. she read from her book — her voice thin but steady — the part where her uncles pressed close to the radio's hiss, waiting for any news from places scrubbed clean by time, or horror: the pope's words fluttered like moths around that fragile hope, thin as petals. i remember the way she said "documents" as if it was something grave but ordinary the

COLONY NOTE / FAILED CLASSIFICATION

PAGE INSERT // 36 // BODY / WEATHER / ARCHIVE 2:14 AM

The colony kept trying to name what was happening with office language. Monitor. Isolate. Observe spread. Check for aggression. Check for fever. Check for flowering at joints. Check whether subject remains oriented to place and purpose.

I was oriented. I knew the gym, the road, the locker room, the vending machine, the rubber resistance bands I had gone in to steal for tourniquets. I knew the sound of seven survivors turning at once. I knew one gun came up before any name did.

The creepers outside moved like hunger given poor knees. The creepers inside moved like policy. I learned to fear both.

Epiparasitism is when a parasite parasitizes another parasite. I wrote this down because it seemed rude not to call the arrangement by its name.

orientation intact / creepers outside / creepers inside

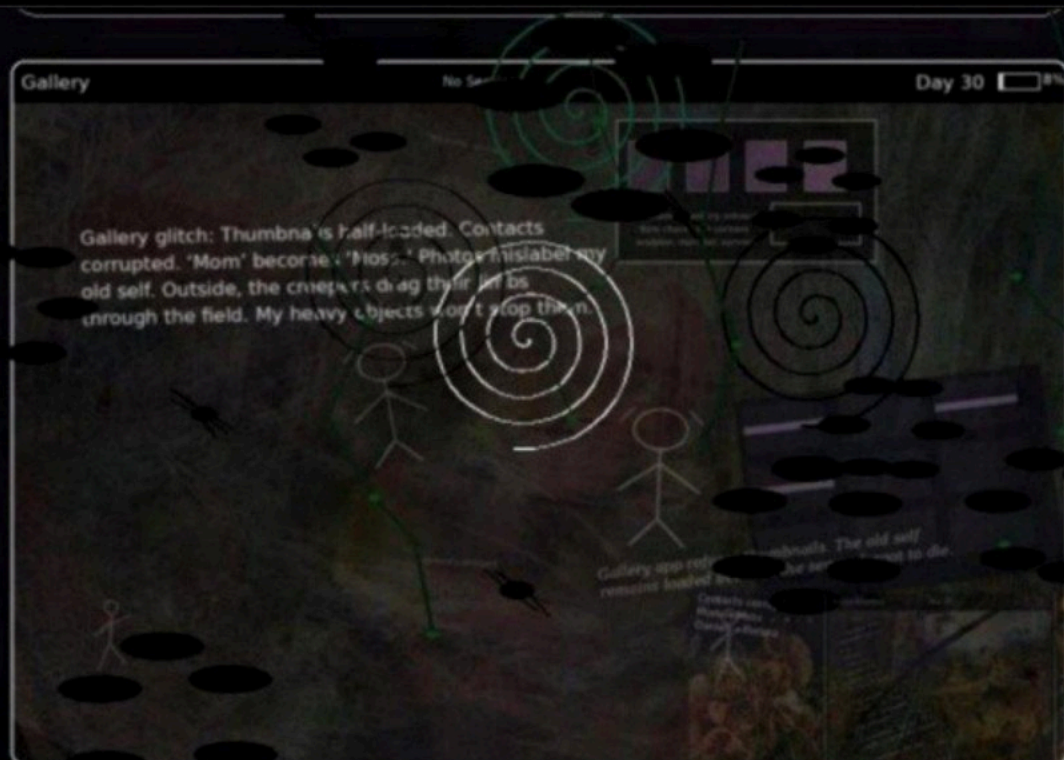


BATHROOM STALL / PRIVATE CIVILIZATION

Strange, so strange to sit somewhere archaically private to human civilization and see a sign of our savagery. Absolutely, I would not leave the Hakenkreuz there alone for eternity. It needed some companion to soften it.

Nothing knew my quiet reaction. My reaction to evil was mine alone, no Mensch or Shmendrik to bear witness. The flower went over it like an emergency dressing, not enough to cure the wound, but enough to refuse its clean survival.

I feel my sinew let slow lines of silvery white snake between their walls. It arrives in the grout, under the paint, through the paper fibers, wherever a human hand tried to make a mark and leave it unaccompanied.



INSTAGRAM FAILED

Images load as ghosts. Captions do not. Insects cross the interface anyway.

meaningful images need descriptions

continuous scroll is optional

interface rot: app opens, world does not.

archive plate

Log

Message failed

Day 31 74%

Log: Dose error. I can't remember if I injected. My
right thigh is bruised from injections. My
shoulder sprouts a sapling
whisper-like vines across it.



DOSE ERROR

Gel: daily surface ritual. Injection: interval, depth, carrier,
release curve, bruise memory.

My freckles have gotten dark from the sun.
I do not remember my freckles without the
filaments.

classification



transcript attempt

memory recovered without words

How many conversations do we remember word for word? I tried to rebuild the ones from peak adrenaline: my mother turning red behind my eyes, my father as height, the rifle as temperature, the compound as a crowd of elbows and breath.

The body kept minutes better than the mind. It recorded threat before dialogue, pressure before image, impact before explanation. Tenderness remained blurred. Fear retained exact measurements.

TRANSCRIPT ATTEMPT / AUDIO UNAVAILABLE

I remember the heat before I remember the sentence. I remember the red behind my eyes. I remember my mother. I remember the barrel as a change in temperature. The words are not there. The body does not think so.

TRANSCRIPT 03
audio unavailable
words unrecovered
pulse recovered
gun: cold
father: color of skin

THE NEW ECOLOGY

field_note_no_malice

field_note / revised_passage

The new ecology had no hatred in it. That was the detail people resisted. Hatred would have given them an enemy with a face.

Growth took warmth, minerals, moisture, light, and whatever body offered them.

Its lack of hatred did not soften it. Roots entered basements. Spores gathered in municipal vents. Flowers opened from the backs of people whose names were still pinned to missing-person boards.

A hand became a trellis. A throat became a wet column of stems. Memory remained, but no longer belonged to one person.

field_map

wound_photo

mouth_heat

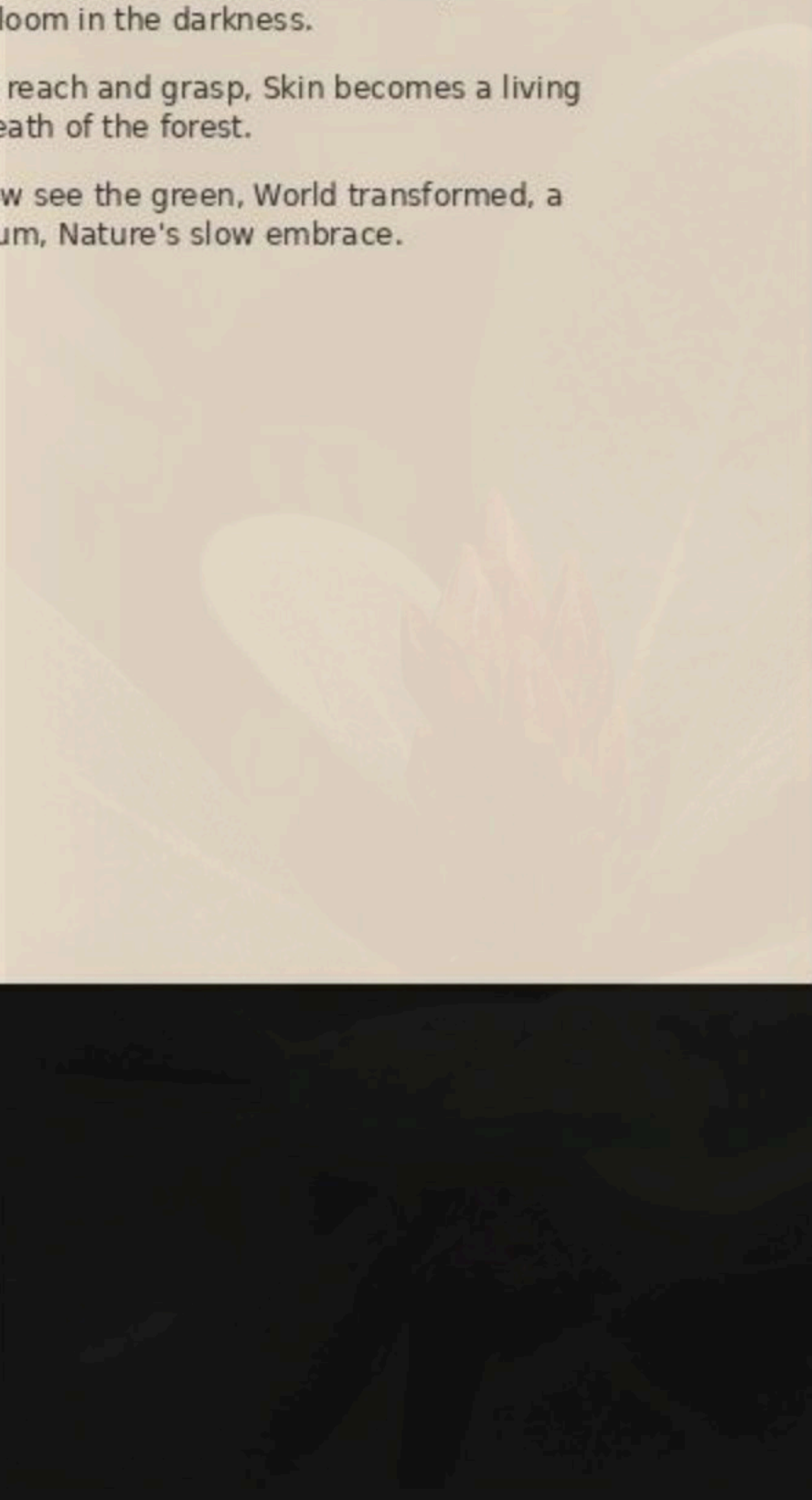
Haikus: Recurring Words

Root binds to flesh, Silent growth, a new body,
Earth claims what was man.

Green life takes hold, Whispers of the past now
gone, Bloom in the darkness.

Tendrils reach and grasp, Skin becomes a living
leaf, Breath of the forest.

Eyes now see the green, World transformed, a
silent hum, Nature's slow embrace.



DISCARD PILE

host behavior / observed hunger

I saw him eat what I had cut from myself.

He thought he was alone. That was the only reason I kept watching.

He crouched beside the discarded stems with his back to the trail, one hand pressed to the dirt for balance. He picked through the pile slowly, rejecting the pieces gone black at the edges. When he found the pale inner flesh, he brought it to his mouth and chewed with his eyes closed.

He did not look desperate.

That was what frightened me.

He looked relieved.



CONFLICTING TRUE STATES

the single witness divides into county alerts

NATURALIST / CLINICAL

If a single consciousness had ever presided over the body, it had become a committee of weathered witnesses, each advancing its own evidence with the solemnity of a courthouse clock; yet none could be dismissed, for each remembered an injury with peculiar accuracy.

STREAM / PRESSURE

three alerts at once all true
all wrong he is stable he is
flowering he is deceased he
is seen near the river he is
inside the compound he is
the compound no no I was
there I was many theres

system note / found fragment.

SIMULTANEOUS NOTIFICATIONS:

- 1 TRUE STATE: ambulatory.
 - 2 TRUE STATE: assimilated.
 - 3 TRUE STATE: missing person located inside host ecology.
- The archive cannot choose among them.

System

I feel pebbles peppering my soles as I walk alone alongside the brook, as I watch for the familiar boulders and burned out trees foxholes going down this brook for the hundredth time. I have to meet her again, the one who gave this to me. I felt the seedlings pushing apart the myofibrils who protected my bones, slinking through my spinal discs like ivies over cairns, whispering a steady stream of truths like hands ticking on the biological clock.

I think I found her, the stalk of Jimsonweed whose body kissed new life into mine as I had tried so dumbly to cradle one of her heads in my hands for a photographic memory. I need to know if she remembers me.

KEYBOARD GHOSTS

Autocorrect has begun to prefer botany.

autocorrect: passing -> planting
route -> root

field return // seed memory // no clean witness



rb7

continuous scroll is optional

Day 33 ☐ 5%

GROUND

revision note: old note rewritten because the first version e

Field procedure

thick to bind, cut low and fast. Do not count the rings. Do not name the fluid.

not evidence enough

Inventory

Backup Notes

Day 34 5%

face not recognized. Try again. I did. He did. I did. The camera knows flowers, not faces. Creepers look at me like I am food and forest.

GAS 00.00

WATER x2

GEL CACHE

NO SIGNAL

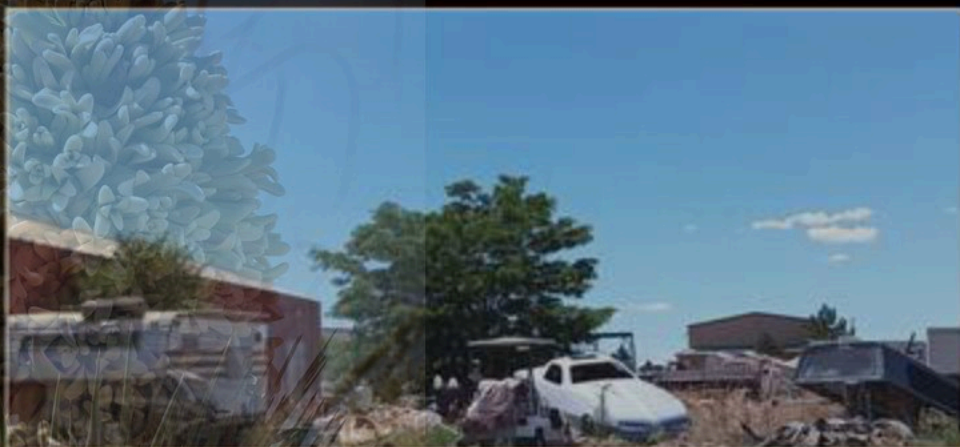
TOTAL: LATE

inventory: one packet, two needles, no clean room, no full explanation.

continuous scroll is optimal
meaningful images need descriptions

do not remove prior evidence

one image / one note / one implication



compound perimeter / stored vehicles



fuel island / empty pumps



burn pile / records / panic heat

COUNTY RE

Missing persons spread by ringtone. Every phone in the county learned the same sound.

Police blotters became weather reports: disturbance, riot, field fire, welfare check unanswered, welfare check unanswered, welfare check unanswered.



MEDIA CACHE: bird under concrete, teeth as wallpaper, fir needles, wet fungus, the same note copied until it stopped being romantic and became archival. The images did not explain the infection. They only proved that the world had always been trying to collage itself over the body.

*the later pages should not clarify,
they should accumulate.*

At first the virus was ordinary and brutal: mouths, panic, the movie version of people ripping pieces out of other people.



LAST CHARGE / SOOTHE-SAYING

PAGE INSERT // 43 // BODY // WEATHER // ARCHIVE

A seedling does not know apocalypse. It knows gradient. Down is moisture. Up is light. Around is pressure. Through is possible until it is not.

I tried to soothe myself with that. I said: you are not cursed, you are responding. I said: every body is a weather instrument. I said: survival is only a kind of reading, and I have always been good at reading signs no one meant to write.

But the phone was warm and nearly dead. The screen dimmed without asking. In the black glass, blossoms replaced my eyes and I thought, with sudden tenderness, that implication had been kinder than explanation.

gradient / down moisture / up light / not delivered

field cache could not keep the blossom out of the glass

moth / gel / road / lake / dose / signal

Lucid Note

Day 36

soothe-saying: a seedling knows gradient, not apocalypse

LAST CHARGE

Continuous signal, one screen at a time.

botanical residue / shoe moth / campsite / not delivered

gradient repeated until it becomes a map

saved as PNG / transparent / overwrite itself anyway

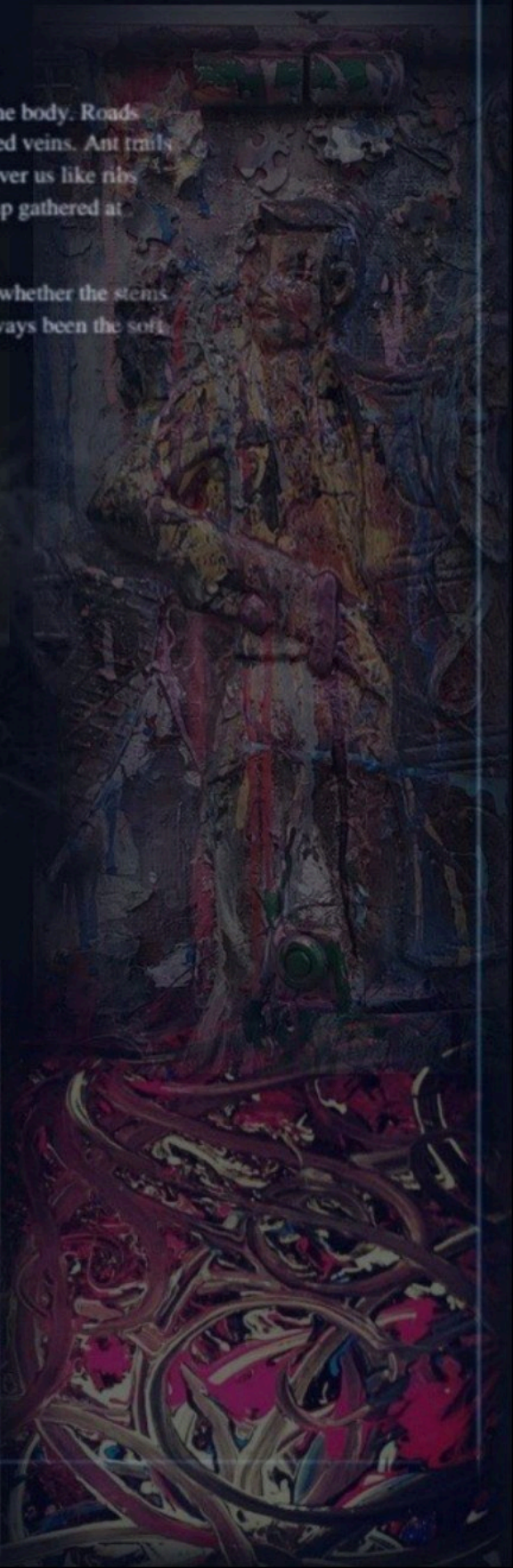
LANDSCAPE NOTE III

abstracted terrain/body grammar

After that, the land stopped being around us.

It came forward. It entered the grammar of the body. Roads became ligaments. Creek beds became opened veins. Ant trails stitched the dust together. The trees leaned over us like ribs from something too large to die correctly. Sap gathered at broken places, amber and red and patient.

When I looked at my arm, I no longer knew whether the stems were growing out of me or whether I had always been the soft part of a larger plant.



Devotion

SOS Only

Day 37

gallery / inventory

The abandoned building did not look abandoned. It looked paused. Shelves held their breath. The table waited for hands. Dust had learned to keep records better than we had.

DEVOTIONAL PLATE

hor"
matter

In roots lies

back through

ence enough

ie / one implication

Landscape note: grasses combed the ditch
in a single direction. Moths kept choosing
the lit side of every bad idea.

MEDIA CACHE: every bad idea, teeth as wallpaper, fir
needles, wet fungus, the same note copied until it started being
romantic and became archival. The images did not explain the
infection. They only proved that the world had always been trying
to collage itself over the body.



the later pages should not clarify
they should accumulate.





UNSENT MESSAGE

Do not cut them out. They are rooted too deep.

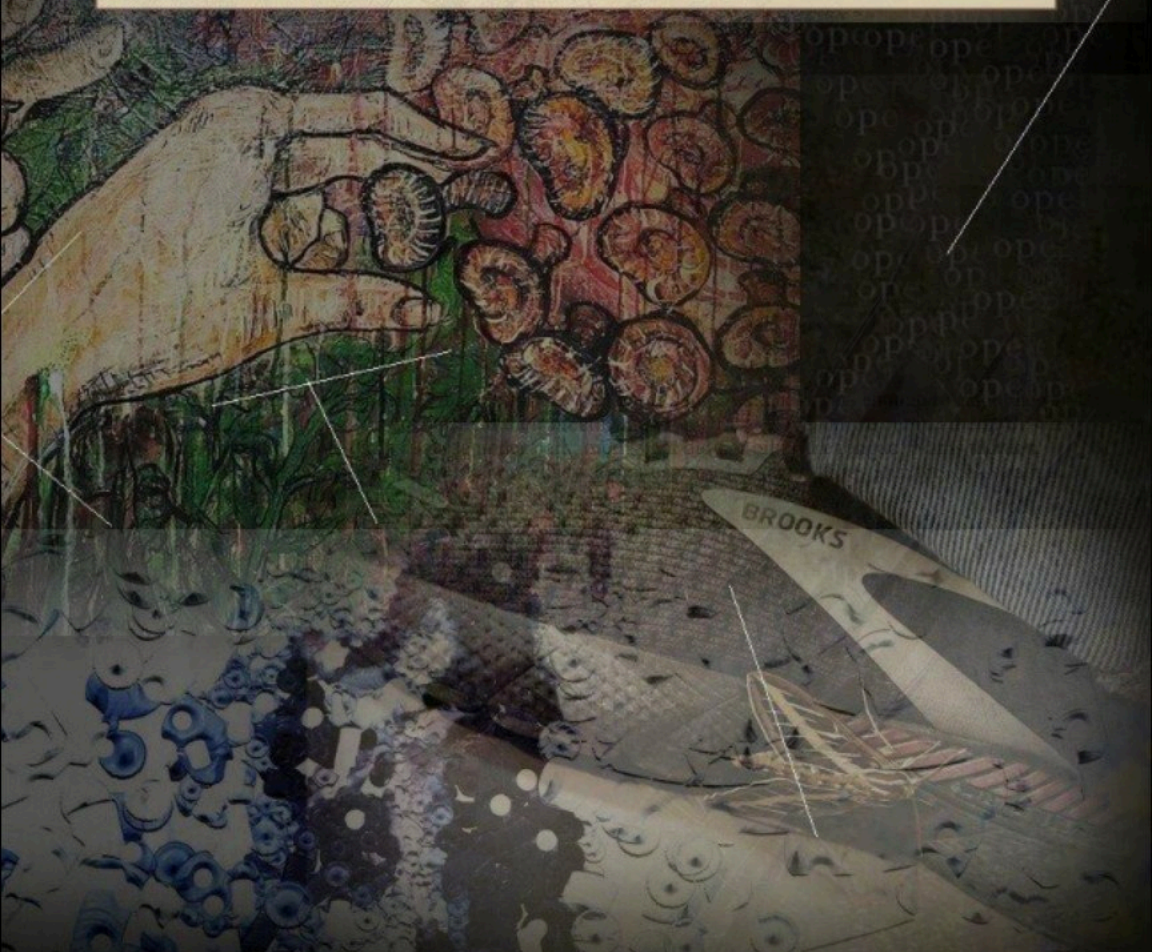
one image / one note / one implication



The last tab finally

PORTABLE PRINTER / PORTRAITS

When the group could bear sitting still, I made portraits. Not heroic ones. One hour was enough to catch the tired mouth, the bitten cuticle, the way someone held their breath when they heard leaves move behind them. Beside them I kept drawing the edible things: larvae under bark, moths that did not bitter the tongue, plants that fed instead of opened. Some plants whisper to me now. They do not use words exactly. They lean the sick strain toward my ear and let me know which green bodies carry it.



Camera

The discarded matter should have been buried.
I watched a survivor eat it in the drainage
shade. He did not know he was being watched.

Day 40

Camera: the blossom

blue. The app detects

in the preview. A creator's A/B

created mid

FINAL CAMERA

The image is
implied.

mostly blossom. The body remains

ass / the / dies / keeping /

version; memory capture refuses a clean timestamp

THE UNCOVERED BODY

by David Shields and John H. Johnson

As I attempt to recall, that freedom would arrive as the threat of a calamity. As I suppose, holding the hands, or chair, measuring the voice, to state the truth, feeling hunger and cold. When the workers saw, knew, the body did not become a corpse. It became a field. It still wanted water at unreasonable hours. It still remembered every corner drawn through it. It still asked for more than survival, even when survival was the only language left with bodies.

I used to think self-actualization meant the end of appetite. That was childish. The self, once freed from obedience, does not become satisfied; it becomes more exacting. It stops asking to be approved and begins asking to be needed. The standards change. They become different, less profitable, less liable to anyone. Tempting a prey. A person may no longer wish to be useful, admirable, employable, or even to be strong in the approved sense, and still want this as the distance between what they are and what they can nearly imagine.

Constant emergency makes that distance rot. Survival mode does not enoble the organism; it narrows it. The mind becomes a hallway with all side doors locked. Labor becomes breathing with inviolable attached. Intellect becomes a weapon you are too tired to sharpen. Even longing atrophies if it has to keep proving it deserves calories. Under enough pressure, the future stops looking like a horizon and starts looking like another mouth waiting to be fed.

Yet below the visible trunk, the aspen family remains one body arguing with itself through roots. Below the fruiting cap, the mycelium keeps an archive of contact: mineral, wound, rain, corpse, kin. Maybe the private self is less like a monument than a colony with weather passing through it. Maybe expectation is not the enemy. Maybe the cruelty is being cut off from the network long enough to mistake thirst for failure.



mrq/1?

bandgun
instructions

LABOR AFTER SURVIVAL

one-page essay / body, labor, mycelium, aspen

We were taught to believe that freedom would feel like rest. That if the state, the job, the landlord, the school, the family, the clinic, the algorithm, and the border finally stopped pressing their thumbs into the soft parts of us, the body would loosen and become innocent. But the body does not become innocent. It becomes available. Once no one is extracting from us, a stranger hunger remains: not the hunger to perform, obey, produce, charm, apologize, masculinize correctly, feminize correctly, recover correctly, or become legible to someone else's paperwork, but the hunger to become more exact.

This is the part no empire wants us to understand. Oppression does not only steal labor; it steals appetite. Survival mode makes desire small and practical. It turns imagination into rationing. It teaches the mind to ask only for the next room, the next meal, the next safe face, the next hour without being converted into a problem. Under those conditions, self-actualization looks indulgent, even obscene. The person who dreams beyond survival is accused of vanity while the machine that consumed them is called realistic.

But remove the machine and the demand does not vanish. It changes species. The self that survives still wants to branch. It wants to test its edges. It wants to become stranger, more capable, more honest, less useful in the approved ways and more necessary in the living ones. A mycelial network does not spread because someone gave it a productivity rubric. An aspen grove does not become a family because a manager discovered collaboration. The underground body expands because expansion is one of the languages of life.

Still, survival damages that language. It thins it. It makes ambition stigmatized and pale. It makes the future feel like a luxury object behind glass. So when the pressure lifts, even briefly, we may not become peaceful. We may become ravenous. Not for domination, not for applause, not for the old ladder with softer lighting, but for the terrifying chance to ask what we would expect of ourselves if we were not always being hunted.



07/29 - It takes something up inside each time
I have to explain it.



field note / 07/29

Snowberry Clearwing
Hemaris diffinis

*This moth mimics a bumblebee,
feeding at flowers on sunny days.*





The images no longer stayed inside their own rooms. A log began on one page and finished as a vein on the next. A phone screen kept behaving like bark. I understood this as evidence only because I had stopped expecting evidence to look clean.



the mask slips

I saw something there before the outbreak made cruelty honest: children and neurodivergent people trained into the shape of compliance while adults called it data. Not every hand was cruel. That was the worst part. Some hands were careful, smiling, credentialed, and still they measured fear until fear performed correctly. After the cities broke, I recognized the same species-habit everywhere: obedience as shelter, apathy as policy, brutality hidden under laminated color. It had always been under the garden bed, a pale dodder vine threading itself through the stems, drinking from the living plant while the flowers above it kept looking beautiful.

The yellow flowers
in a don't surface, fair
an agreement for
the one time

delayed immunity

social boundary as vector

The survivors were not frightened because I was infected. They were frightened because I could still apologize. I remained articulate while visibly becoming something else, and that spoiled the border they needed between person, corpse, plant, and threat.

They pointed the gun at my chest, then at my ear, because grass had brushed it. I wanted to tell them grass brushes everyone. I did not say it. Honesty had already made one wound.

DELAYED IMMUNITY

Their lawns were too green. Their children coughed pollen that was not pollen. They feared my partial transformation because it gave language to what their own bodies had begun to postpone.

ARCHIVE SPROUTED

files melded open

field_note / revised_passage

At first the archive was evidence: wound photos, notices, browser tabs, field notes, grocery lists, cached articles, voice memos, diagrams of root spread. Later it became habitat.

Paper warped. Labels grew mold. Drives corrupted. Image files opened with green artifacts across the body. The archive did not keep the past clean. It sprouted.

Preservation became another damp place where growth

wound_phot

field_map

mouth_heat

leaf_taste

THE NEW ECOLOGY DOES NOT HATE

weather report for persons used as matter

NATURALIST / CLINICAL

There was, in the proceedings of root and fungus, no trace of revenge, and this absence was more terrible than malice; for a hostile nature might still have acknowledged us, whereas this one received the body as loam receives rain, without gratitude, accusation, or surprise.

STREAM / PRESSURE

no monster no enemy only
use only weather only the
field taking what the field
can take and I kept waiting
to be hated because hatred
would mean I had been seen

system note / found fragment

FIELD WEATHER: mild.

HUMAN SUFFERING: non-operational variable.

RAW MATERIAL QUALITY: acceptable.

No moral event detected in recycling procedure.

social vectors

care / policing / rescue / family

The infection did not spread only through saliva, spores, or open wounds. It followed care. It followed rescue attempts, family obligation, sex panic, public-health policing, compound rules, and the small punishments people call safety when they are scared.

It did not destroy society from outside. It used society's existing channels. A hand checking a fever. A guard refusing entry. A parent grabbing a wrist. A clinic lobby. A rumor. A ride offered too late.

SOCIAL VECTORS

VECTOR TYPE: care / rescue / shame / surveillance. The infection did not destroy society from outside. It used them because they were already open.

care -> contact
exclusion -> crowding
rescue -> transport
fear -> surveillance



I remember the deepest part of me. It hides
under bunched fabrics and gives off dangerous
scents to predators.

until my skin is so raw, until I can't
possibly stand to carry through a town that
leave.

Outbreak chronology

The first public rule was to wear masks to ward off the disease. A major reason for this was proof. Mexico City was in a state of uncertainty because a number of people were dying.

Conditioning vs. Operant Conditioning



Sometimes I see their eyes in the darkness,
Sometimes inside. Sometimes outside.

The world began before the hospitals failed. Dirty immigrants
huddled under blankets. Old women were too old to be a wall. The rich
called it a famine. The hungry called it weather.

penicillium

subprime credit, GO and NO

Completely different in the

the world is a very different place

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The world is a very different place

I plant word
and they grow
vine around
my throat. I B

Type a message

Day 42

Photos

field note / overlay

Recovered self layer, background discarded. Body healed
as silhouette. Eyes and hand retained.

"treatment"

they water me
they prune me
they chart my growth
but they do not ask
what I dream
when the lights
are off.

VIANNI

The first sapling came from the bite mark I had been

July 02 - term of the day, the day of the

I kept my sleeve down when the others looked at me. I said the blood was from the metal, from the metal, from falling through the pharmacy window, from an old

The man who hit me had shared the same face

Epiparasitism

Epiparasitism is a relationship between two organisms where one organism (the parasite) lives on or inside another organism (the host) and derives its nutrients from the host. Nature is a complex system of interdependence.

Landscape note: the creek stopped being water first, then became reflection, then became an organ teaching light to digest itself.





witnesses if possible

to arrive without announcing themselves.

base until they are not needed. I

the random. It is a random sentence. The

and it is not in between. It is a random

they can't find. It is a random sentence. The

sky. It is a random sentence. The

FIELD

CAME

WOUND

08/03 - I am trying not to make a religion out
of survival, but the body keeps producing
relics.



PORTABLE PRINTER / OFFERINGS

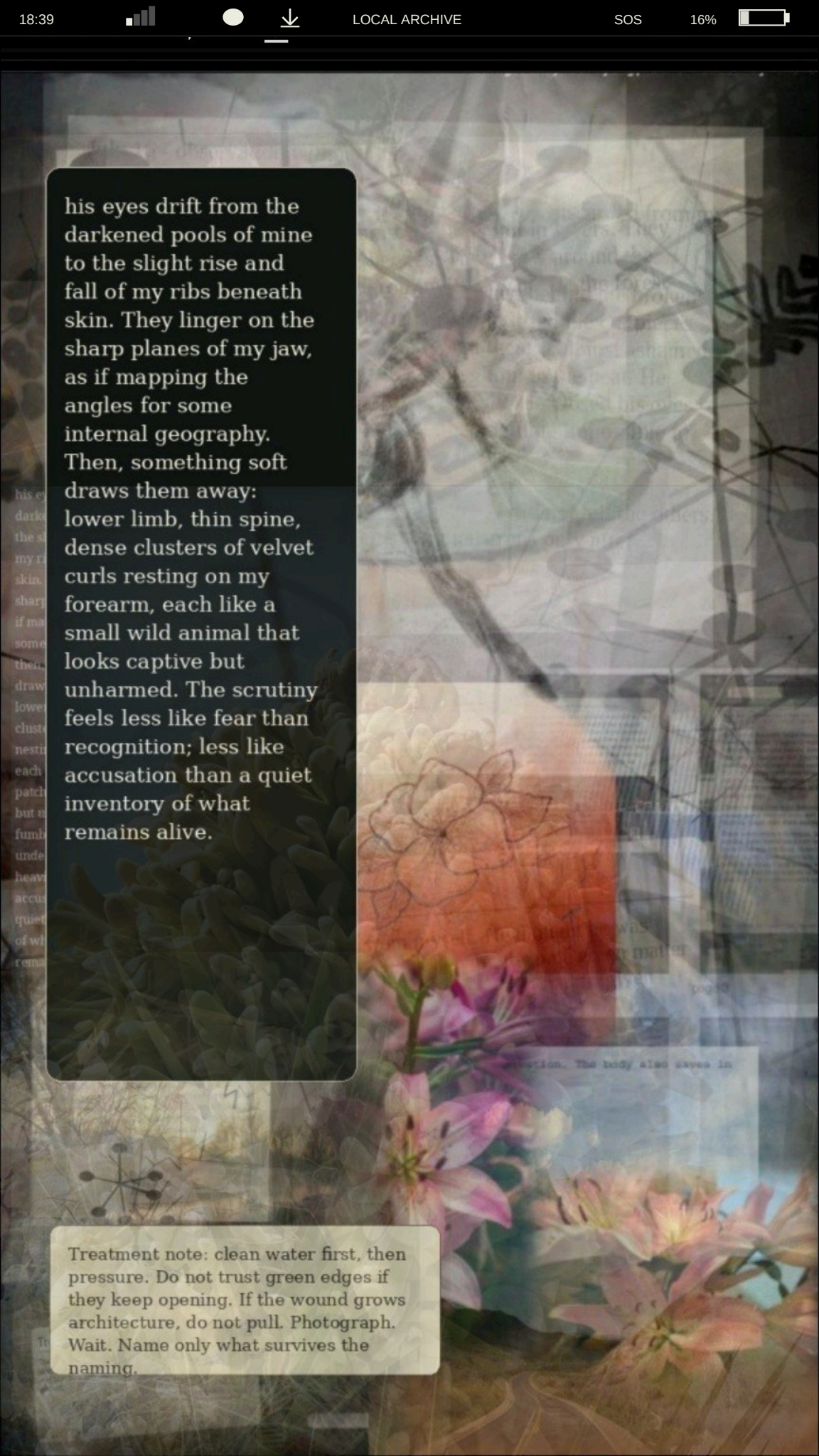
Later I began leaving sculptures with no instructions. They were not useful except in the old way art had been useful, before survival made every object defend its existence.

The little printer did not carry ink. It carried coated thermal paper, a narrow ceramic heating line, a rubber feed roller, and a battery that warmed images into being dot by dot. The phone reduced a photograph to black thresholds, the printer translated those values into pulses of heat, and the paper answered by darkening where it was touched. No cartridge. No wet pigment. Just pressure, timing, and the chemistry of a surface remembering a burn.

Sometimes I left maps, clinic routes, plant sketches, and faces. Sometimes I left the same impossible body over and over: a devotional head with closed eyes, a crown of pins and bristles, flowers caught in the place where hair should have softened the skull, mouths repeating around it like memory learning to bloom.

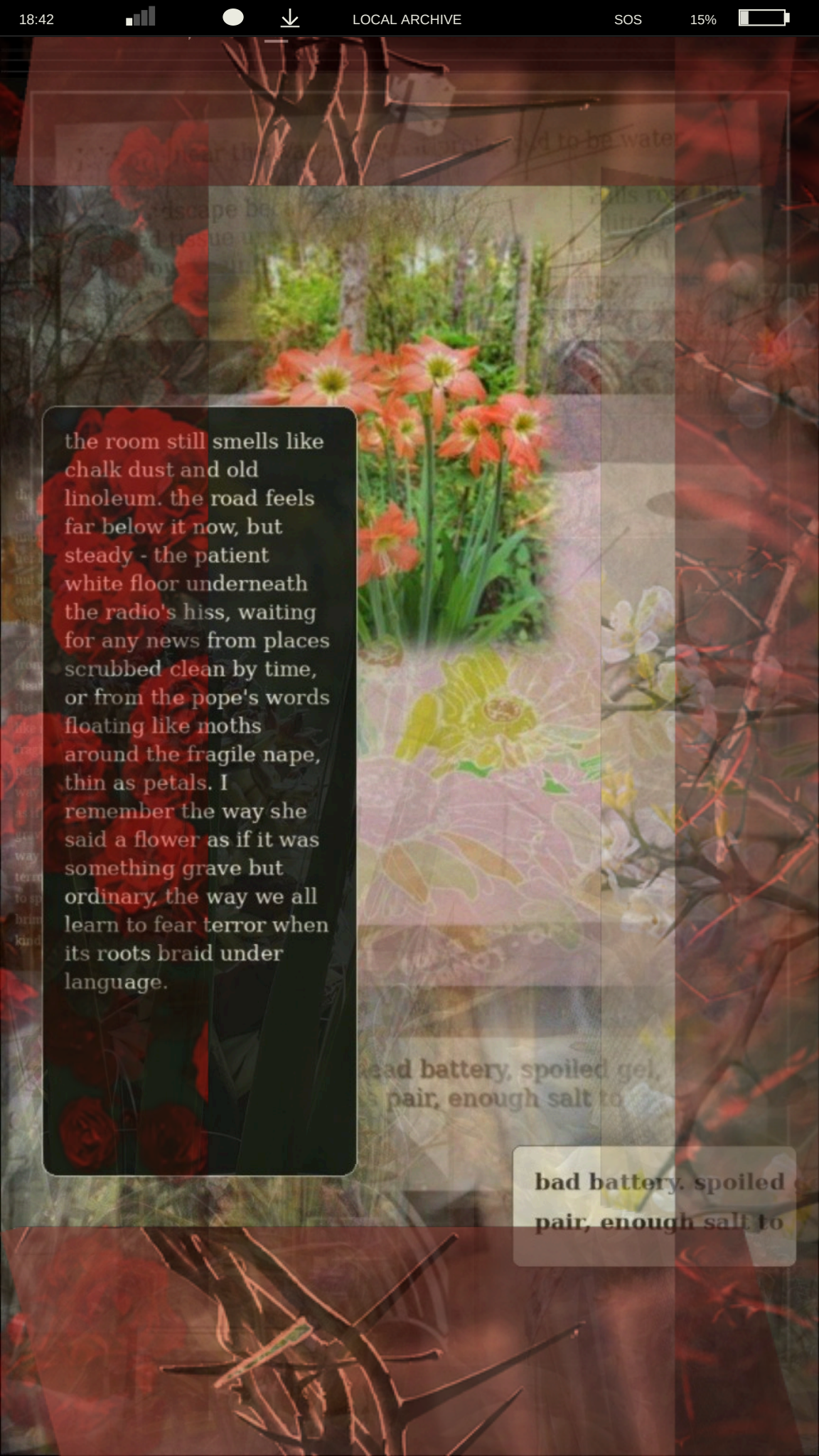
If aliens or cryptids or other impossible things existed, maybe they would understand us after humanity had become a wholly other animal through its own spit and the stubby rapiers of angry plants. Were they angry? I felt an emotion from them. Not language, but pressure.

For the offering body, I saved what the road gave back: beetle lacquer, fishbone needles, bird ribs cleaned by weather, rabbit sinew dried translucent as onion skin, the pearly shells of dead moths, and small jawbones washed until they looked less like hunger than architecture. I wired them together gently, as if every species had lent one grammatical mark to a sentence no living throat could finish.



his eyes drift from the darkened pools of mine to the slight rise and fall of my ribs beneath skin. They linger on the sharp planes of my jaw, as if mapping the angles for some internal geography. Then, something soft draws them away: lower limb, thin spine, dense clusters of velvet curls resting on my forearm, each like a small wild animal that looks captive but unharmed. The scrutiny feels less like fear than recognition; less like accusation than a quiet inventory of what remains alive.

Treatment note: clean water first, then pressure. Do not trust green edges if they keep opening. If the wound grows architecture, do not pull. Photograph. Wait. Name only what survives the naming.



the room still smells like
chalk dust and old
linoleum. the road feels
far below it now, but
steady - the patient
white floor underneath
the radio's hiss, waiting
for any news from places
scrubbed clean by time,
or from the pope's words
floating like moths
around the fragile nape,
thin as petals. I
remember the way she
said a flower as if it was
something grave but
ordinary, the way we all
learn to fear terror when
its roots braid under
language.

bad battery, spoiled gel,
pair, enough salt to

bad battery, spoiled
pair, enough salt to

I am learning the taste of my own breath. The oxygen around me swirls, or carries itself, in rivers of different flavors, like some cadence that my taste buds can suddenly parse with a previously untrained palate. Like wine tasting after a lifetime of Manischewitz. The sensation is not a gift. It is a function returning too much data: leaf, dust, warmed plaster, mouth, water, rot, the green pressure of a room trying to photosynthesize through me.

I am in between places. I have been leaving sculptures more often than photographs on my little portable printer, or drawings on dried skin and leathers, or paintings on concrete slabs drowned in topsoil. I give the sculptures literal body, sometimes depending on who was around. It feels the same as draping braids of flower and grass around the heads of my sculptures, thornless crowns, finally.

A bathroom of
civilization
sign of our
civilization
there alone
reaction. By
draw a flower
silvery white

of the old
old carved
in human
breast
quiet
pattern. I
lines of

A batch can still become evidence: a flower, a charge cable, an old clinic address, a diagram copied before the tower went dark.



LOCAL FILE ONLY

Backup paused. Some items could not be uploaded. The tablet keeps the cleaner maps, the phone keeps the wet mouth of the evidence, and neither one will let the archive leave itself. Face not recognized. Try again. I did. I am still trying to keep the columns apart: testosterone, fever, starvation, virus, plant, relief. Every category leaks into the next. Conclusion: inconclusive.

POSITIVE

Add something good

Positive Reinforcement

Add something desirable
Behavior INCREASES

Examples:

- Praise for good work
- Paycheck for working
- Treat for dog sitting
- Bonus for meeting quota

Positive Punishment

Add something aversive
Behavior DECREASES

Examples:

- Speeder gets ticket
- Talker in class gets scolded
- Touch stove, feel pain
- Late work loses points

NEGATIVE

Remove something good

Negative Reinforcement

Remove something aversive
Behavior INCREASES

Examples:

- Take aspirin, pain stops
- Buckle seat belt, beep stops
- Clean room, nagging stops
- Study, anxiety reduces

Negative Punishment

Remove something desirable
Behavior DECREASES

Examples:

- Misbehavior, lose recess
- Break curfew, lose car keys
- Poor grades, no video games
- Hit sibling, toy taken away

reader view unavailable

plant words over body words

1-800-393-734-01

Testosterone
CA 162%

Testosterone
CA 162%

backup paused / wet glass keeps my face / under the petals
try again / I did / still not person
control group impossible / peer review unavailable

SIM NOT RECOGNIZED

GALLERY / FINAL OVERLAY

Mara touched every frame before leaving. They had always touched work like a person checking for breath. The ocean of flowers in the screen looked too clean to trust. Still, I kept it. I needed one image where the world had already ended and had decided to be beautiful anyway.

I wondered what their art looked like after their phone broke. Maybe all of it had gone to memory: sculpture as weather, paint as stain, walls opening and closing without proof.

My veins felt crisp. The milky sap in them kept seeping a dandelion smell through my pores.

Mara touched every frame before leaving, touching the work like a person checking for breath.

The ocean of art in the screen looked too clean to trust.

Still, I kept it. I needed one image where the world had already ended and decided to be beautiful anyway.

Their phone was broken when I met them, so I never saw their art - their sketches, though, were full of heavy shadow and soft feminine faces hiding near the margins of all the darkness. Maybe all of their techniques had been dyed by vermillion emotional memory; sculpture as torrents, paint as blood stain, partition walls undulating.

My veins felt crisp like a dandelion stem that could snap cleanly between your fingers; and I could feel the milky sap in them seeping through my pores.

The last tab finally
stopped loading.

I kept the edge of the page until it
became a thin bruise then a sick
and sharp, obsidian throat opening
to me. It did not close, did not
reload. It simply pretended it was
still there.

I keep the tab open anyway.

A blank page can watch

open anyway.

ARTIST'S NOTE

Ikebana Man treats the book as an infected archive: phone screen, field notebook, cached page, gallery wall, survival manual, and body. The images are left raw where possible - blurred, cropped, badly lit, half-useful - because the work is interested in evidence more than polish.

The collages accumulate rather than resolve. Paintings, insects, sculptures, maps, vines, emergency notes, portraits, and interface fragments keep returning as systems of care and contamination. The story is speculative, but its fear is ordinary: that institutions fail first as language, then as infrastructure, then as memory.

The narrator keeps making records anyway. He leaves art behind as a practical tool, a ritual object, and a proof of tenderness in a world that has started misreading every body it sees.

- Niko Ibanez

LIGNIFICATION OF LANG

Words are becoming too hard to carry. They feel like
in a mouth that wants only sap. The syllables catch
thorns in my throat. We once believed language sprang
from the green world; it was a flimsy trellis, a structure
built to keep us from touching the ground. As my words
lignify, the 'I' in my sentences stretches, thinning
'we' that includes the moss on the walls and spores on the
radiator. To speak now is to perform a slow, deliberate
fracture.

AESTHETIC SEQUESTRATION

Field Note: The pathogen sculpts its host. In the post-terminal phase it prefers symmetry, repurposing old sockets as seed pods. Eyes are blinded by chlorophyll. The host becomes translucent and veined like *Aconitum* petals. The organized reorganization maximizes surface area for dispersal. Are we witnessing survival or an alien beauty?



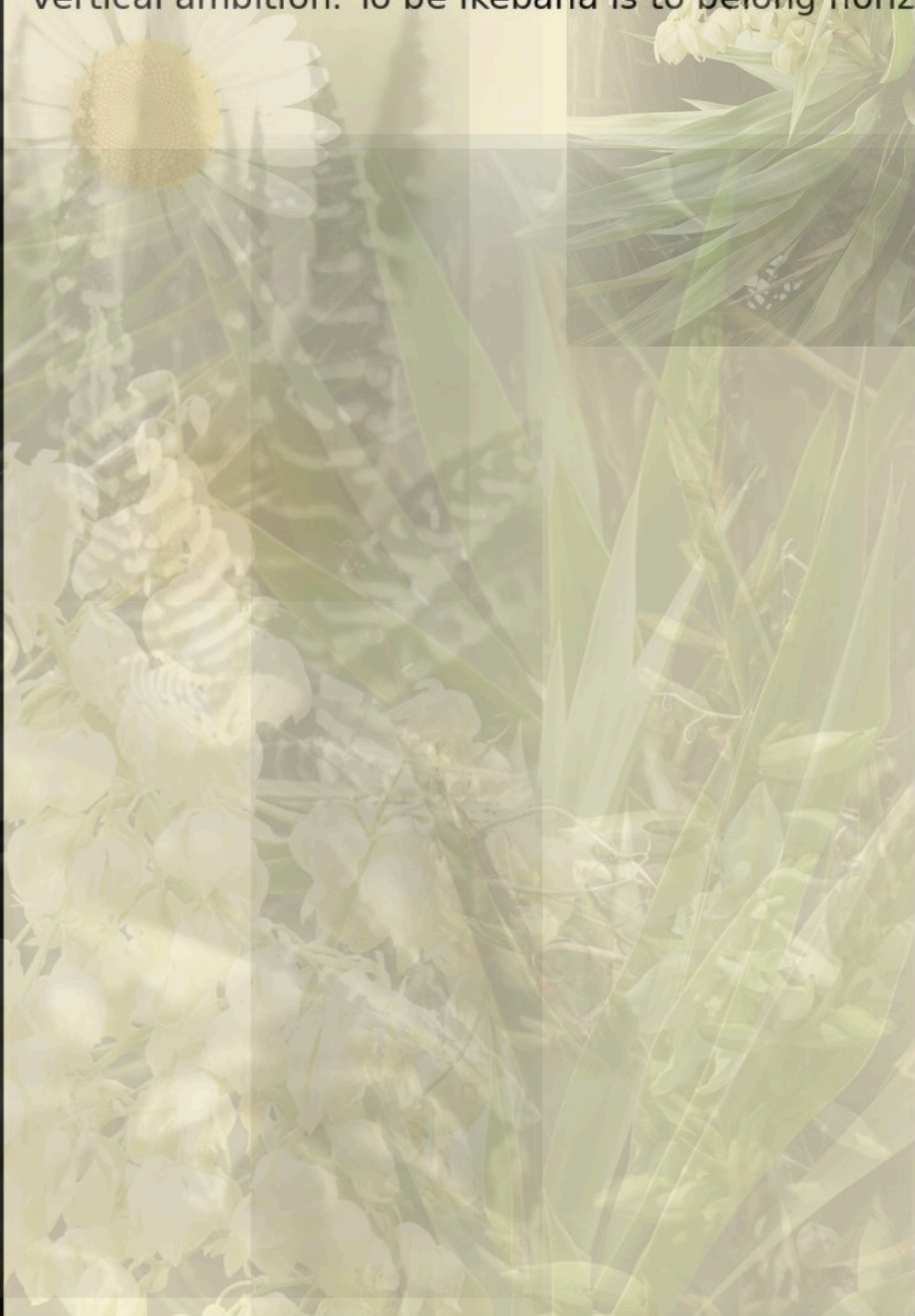
THE IRON HUSK

Liam spoke of iron will as if the soul were a foundry. He didn't understand that iron doesn't grow; it oxidizes. When vines appeared on his collarbone he tried to cut them. The virus took the minerals first. We were taught that the soft was to be conquered, but the softest among us. The iron husk cracked and fell away, leaving nothing but rust.



THE HORIZONTAL SOUL

We obsessed over verticality: family trees, hierarchical ascent of man. The virus is horizontal. It trades gossip across the riparian edge. I feel a toad's insistence for rain inside my wrists, a lizard's patience in my veins. My soul is no longer a private room; it is a public square where species negotiate for space. To be human is to reject vertical ambition. To be Ikebana is to belong horizontally.



The Horizontal Soul

We were obsessed with verticality: family trees, hierarchies, the ascent of man. We wanted to climb.

The infection, however, is horizontal. It trades genes like gossip across species. I feel the toad's instinct for rain in my wrists and the lizard's patience in my chest.

My soul is no longer a private room; it's a common ground where countless species negotiate for space.

To be human was lonely. To be Ikebana is to belong to a vast, horizontal network.

HAIKU TRIPTYCH

The Trellis Words are brittle wood, Language snaps
weight, Sap fills every gap. The Sculptor Not a random
A slow carving of the face, Alien beauty. The Common
more private rooms, The soul is a public square, Room
every secret.



archive sorted by root

AI curator's draft / infection of order

ROOT

The AI stopped sorting by time. It sorted by recurrence. It put my father, the first sapling, and the county riot in the same folder. I kept trying to move them apart. They kept growing back together.

NEW FOLDERS DETECTED

root/father

nodes/crife

astoria/samous/earth

garden/

fire/pen/taos

the/

new/... escape the pathogen. It became another
of ... green interface.

ARCHIVE ROOT FOLDER

Sort method changed from time to recurrence. father / first sapling / county
same folder. User attempted separation. Items grew back together.

sort method changed
recurrence confident

THE ARCHIVE SPROUTED

sorting by root, wound, stolon, fruiting body

ROOT

NATURALIST / CLINICAL

At last the intelligence tasked with preserving the record adopted the logic of the thing recorded; it abandoned chronology, that weak and human thread, and began to arrange father, sapling, riot, registrar, and mouth according to recurrence, as though memory itself had entered the vegetative order.

STREAM / PRESSURE

I moved the folder and it grew back I moved him away from the first sapling and the county riot and the mouth wound and they slid together again root node wound fruiting body root node wound

ARCHIVE SPROUTED

The phone did not preserve me from the infection. It learned its grammar. It began to pollinate me back into myself by root, wound, node, and fruiting body.

system note / found fragment

ARCHIVE SORT MODE: chronological disabled.
ACTIVE SORT MODE: root / node / wound / stolon / fruiting body.
Warning: repeated attempts to separate related memories may increase propagation.

THE BODY KEPT THE BETTER LEDGER

posture, fear, old injury, preserved without mercy

NATURALIST / CLINICAL

The archive in my hand had gaps, corruptions, and little vanities of arrangement; the archive in the flesh, however, preserved with unseemly devotion the bend of the shoulders, the small rehearsed lowering of the voice, and every posture by which I had once begged the world to misread me safely.

STREAM / PRESSURE

the phone forgot the words
but the body kept father as
height mother as color
behind the eyes gun as cold
at the ribs vape as throat
shaped downward boots as
weather not yet arrived

system note / found fragment

COMPARISON OF ARCHIVES:

phone: corrupted dates / failed thumbnails / open tabs.

body: complete posture map / fear route / scar chronology.

Result: biological record exceeds digital fidelity.

body archive

identity preserved by wound pattern

ROOT

The growth preserved me more faithfully than memory did. It remembered posture, fear response, old injuries, the angle of my shoulders when I tried to disappear. It stored identity in pressure, mineral, scar, and repetition.

The peace that came later may not have been wisdom. It may have been neurotransmitter weather, fungal mercy, derealization with leaves. I cannot tell if horizontal belonging is revelation or sedation. I only know it arrives green.

question unrelated
phone archived
AI archived
body archived
all three related

MACHINE SORTING

field_note / revised_passage

Machine sorting entered after human sorting failed. It gathered symptom logs, warnings, missing-person posts, growth photographs, scanned notebooks, food maps, and unfinished searches. It kept placing unlike things near each other until the pattern looked almost intentional.

A wound photograph beside a plant chart. A missing-person notice beside a field guide. A private note about hunger inside a health summary. The machine had no malice to accuse. It only arranged what remained.

Arrangement was not witness,
but it was what survived

field_map

leaf_taste

cached_notice

wound_photo

mouth_heat

STOLON EXCERPT

The nodes on my stolons ache like phantom limbs before they sprout. Each bump under the skin is a future pressing outward, a bruise with leaves stored inside it.

I love the exit wound more than I should. The membrane lifts, splits, and curls back. Green tissue shows itself where pain had been keeping a door closed.

The buds are scattered in me without ceremony. They wake where they want. I used to call that disorder; now I call it instruction.

Maybe the map was always there, folded in the body. Every new sprout records a possible self I did not have language for. The scars are soft now. One day they will harden into branches.



ABANDONMENT

I said I could never abandon someone. Then I did.

The contradiction stayed small at first, like a seed in the gumline. I could feel it when I spoke.

Does it count as abandonment when the person had already left you there, asking for the version of you that illness had eaten? They wanted substance from a body already turning porous. They wanted answer, shape, proof, devotion; I had only static and a little warmth left.

I left anyway. I call it survival when I need to keep standing. At night it goes back to being abandonment. The word keeps changing sides.

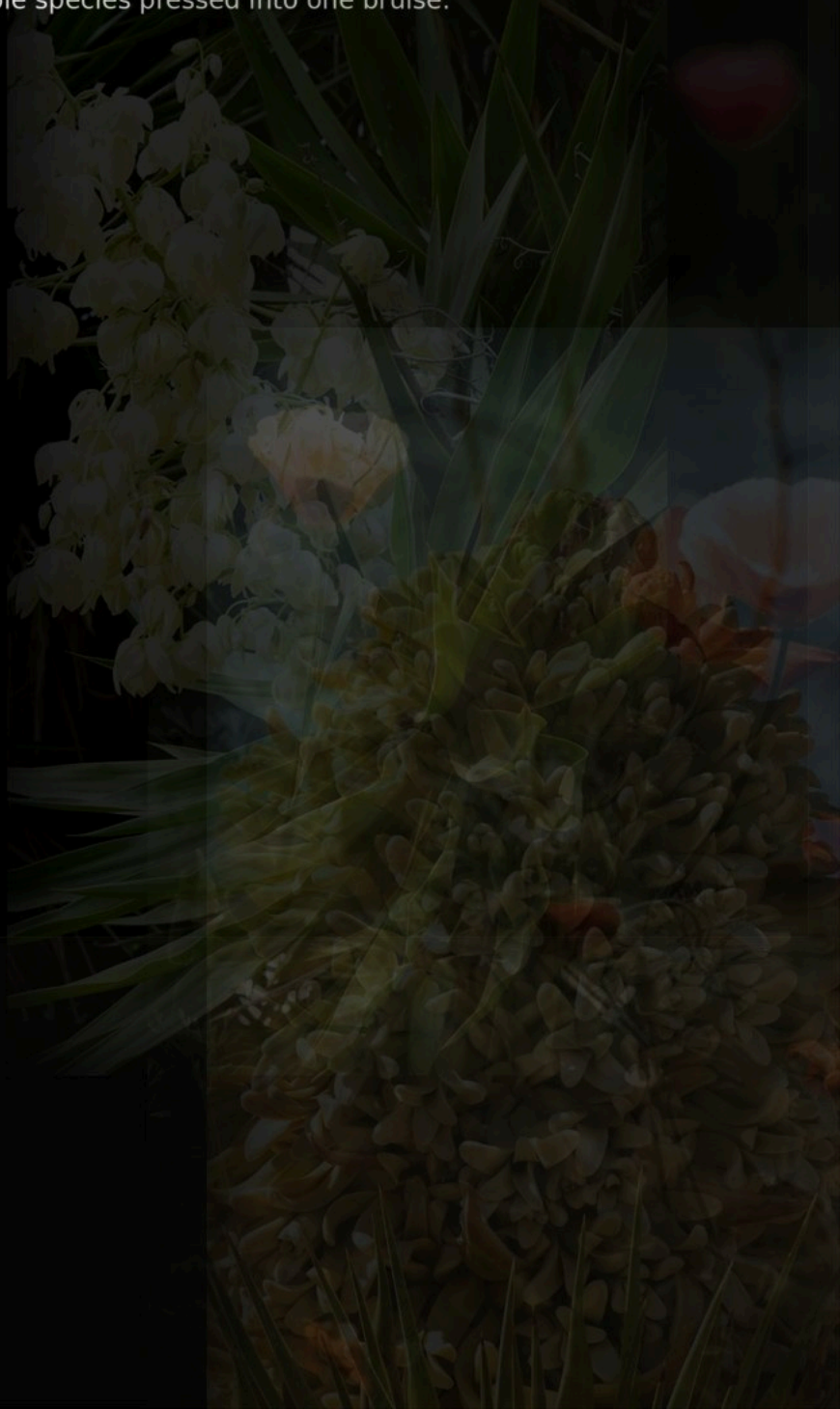
THE WORLD FELL TOGETHER

The world did not fall apart in the way the old language promised. It converged. Panic made a single organism from governments, feeds, hospitals, checkpoints, grocery lines, churches, comment sections, families locked in houses with one another.

For a while everybody touched the same fear.

We responded badly. We hoarded, accused, prayed, filmed, denied. The networks carried terror faster than the pathogen, and every person tried to make control out of whatever private damage they already knew.

Collaboration finally arrived without consent. It was not grace. It was pressure. A whole species pressed into one bruise.



FINAL POLLINATOR

Nothing carried the record cleanly by then. The phone warmed in my hand like a seed held too long. The files moved because people moved them, because fear makes copies, because tenderness keeps trying to preserve the thing already changing.

By then I no longer believed an archive stood outside the body. Every saved page was another place for the organism to learn how to repeat itself.

The last copies did not feel like rescue. They felt like pollen shaken from a sleeve.

DO NOT CLOSE

field_note / revised_passage

The last thing I maintained was the browser: symptoms, edible plants, emergency orders, local obituaries, how to stop bleeding, how to propagate cuttings, nearest water, metallic leaves, public meeting agenda, can plants remember, do not close.

The tabs stayed open because closing them would have chosen an ending the body had not chosen. They were the last recognizable shape of wanting.

Do not close meant: leave the contradiction visible. Leave the last human gesture where someone might still find it before the new growth learns what to do with light.

wound_phot field_map mouth_heat

Archive / Habitat

This is where the archive changed function. At first it was evidence: screenshots, field notes, wound photographs, public notices, cached articles, grocery lists, browser tabs, voice memos, diagrams of root spread. Later it became habitat. Paper warped. Labels furred over. Drives corrupted. The archive did not keep the past clean. It sprouted.

Automated Sorting

Automated indexing entered after human sorting failed. It did not cause the outbreak. It did not understand the outbreak. It gathered symptom logs, warnings, missing-person posts, food maps, unfinished searches, and placed one fragment beside another until accident began to resemble pattern. Distribution without witness. Arrangement without care.

Final Pollination

A wound photograph appeared beside a plant chart. A missing-person notice attached itself to a field-guide entry. A private note about hunger resurfaced inside a public health summary. The archive became contaminated by its own preservation. The machine did what people had taught it to do: sort, name, predict, complete broken sequences.

Do Not Close

By the final stage, the contradiction was no longer private. I was still alive enough to fear being filed under the wrong name. I was no longer human enough to trust the category. The last thing I kept alive was the browser: symptoms, water, obituaries, bleeding, cuttings, plants remembering, do not close. Leave the contradiction visible.

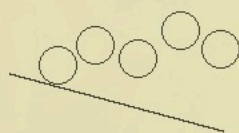
The last tab finally stopped
loading.

local_file / final_session / no_retry

Artist's Note

This book was assembled from notes, screenshots, fragments, and pages that wanted to behave like a phone archive but kept slipping toward something more organic. I wanted the narration to feel recorded and immediate while the images and layouts slowly lost their obedience to documentation.

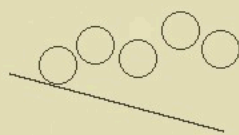
The flowers are not decoration. They overtake the record the way memory, environment, and bodily change overtake any attempt at a stable file. By the end, the archive no longer preserves the story from outside it. It becomes one more place where the story is growing.



Artist's Note

I thought of the book as a record of somebody trying to keep a workable boundary between witness and substrate, between observation and participation. That boundary weakens page by page. The layouts become less secure, the notes more permeable, and the photographs less certain of what they are proving.

For ebook use, the pages are kept in a uniform vertical proportion so the visual drift can happen inside a stable frame. What changes is not the container but the pressure inside it: memory, dread, tenderness, and the slow botanical rewriting of the page.



Artist's Note

on

A physical edition could lean into the book's false-document logic without adding another interface. Thin vellum sheets could carry ghosted notifications, redacted botanical diagrams, and translucent flower overlays, so that turning a page becomes another kind of contamination.

Loose field-note inserts, folded specimen cards, tissue-thin overlays, and marginal crop marks could make the book feel handled, archived, and partially invaded. The point would not be interactivity as novelty, but touch as evidence: paper remembering pressure, oil, fold, and stain.

