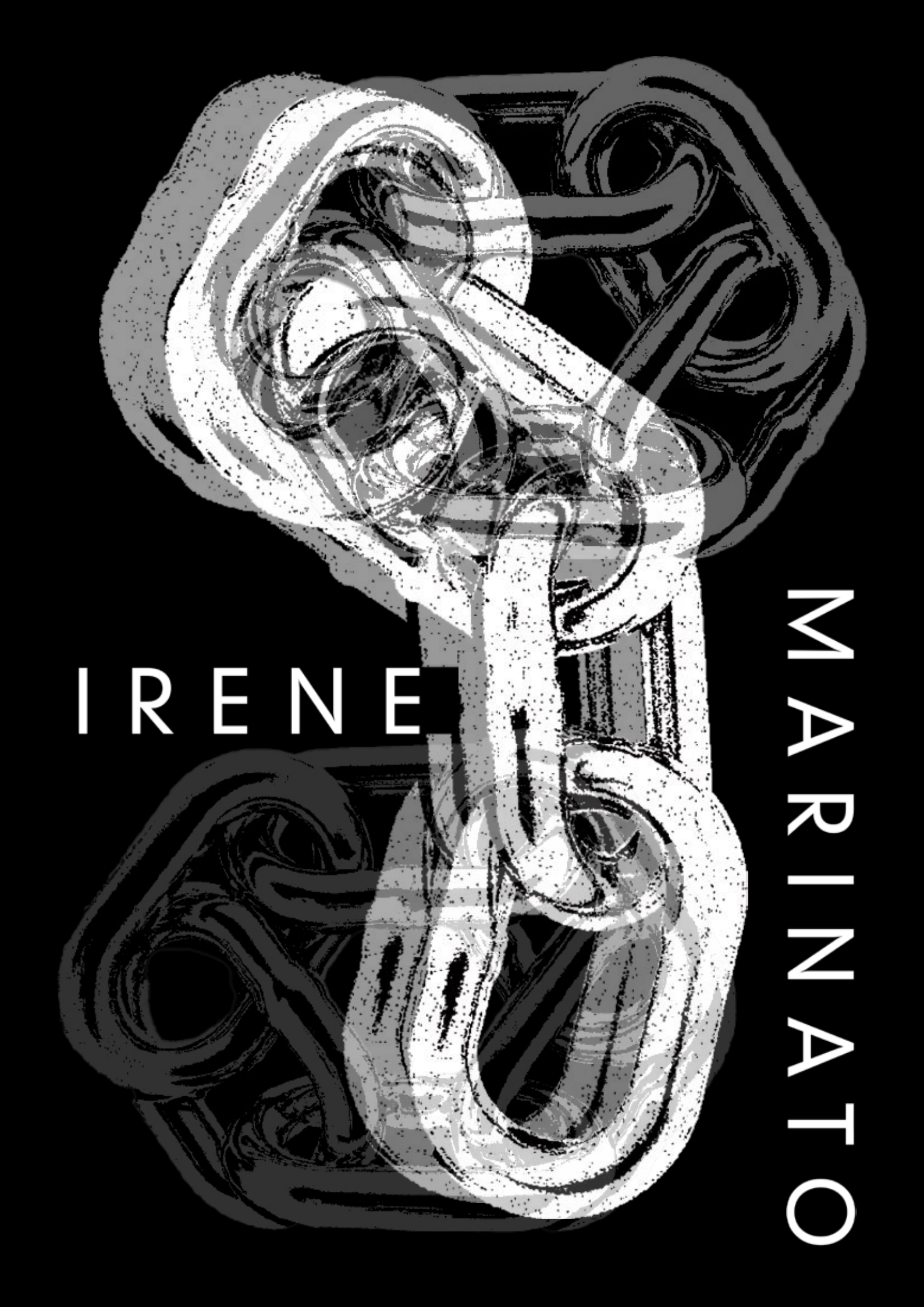

IRENE
MARINATO

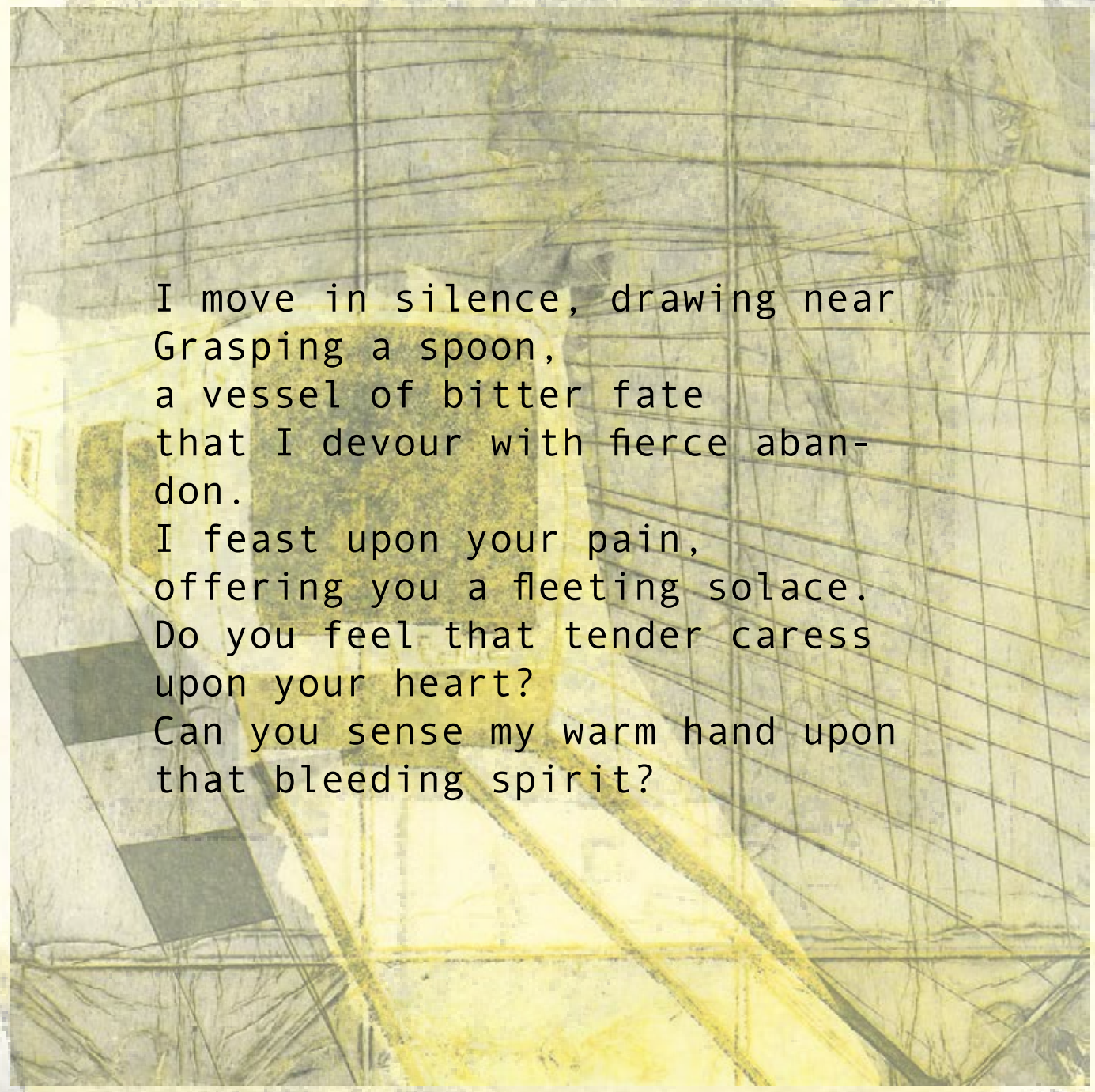
A BODY THAT HOSTS ME

Am I the freak sh0w?

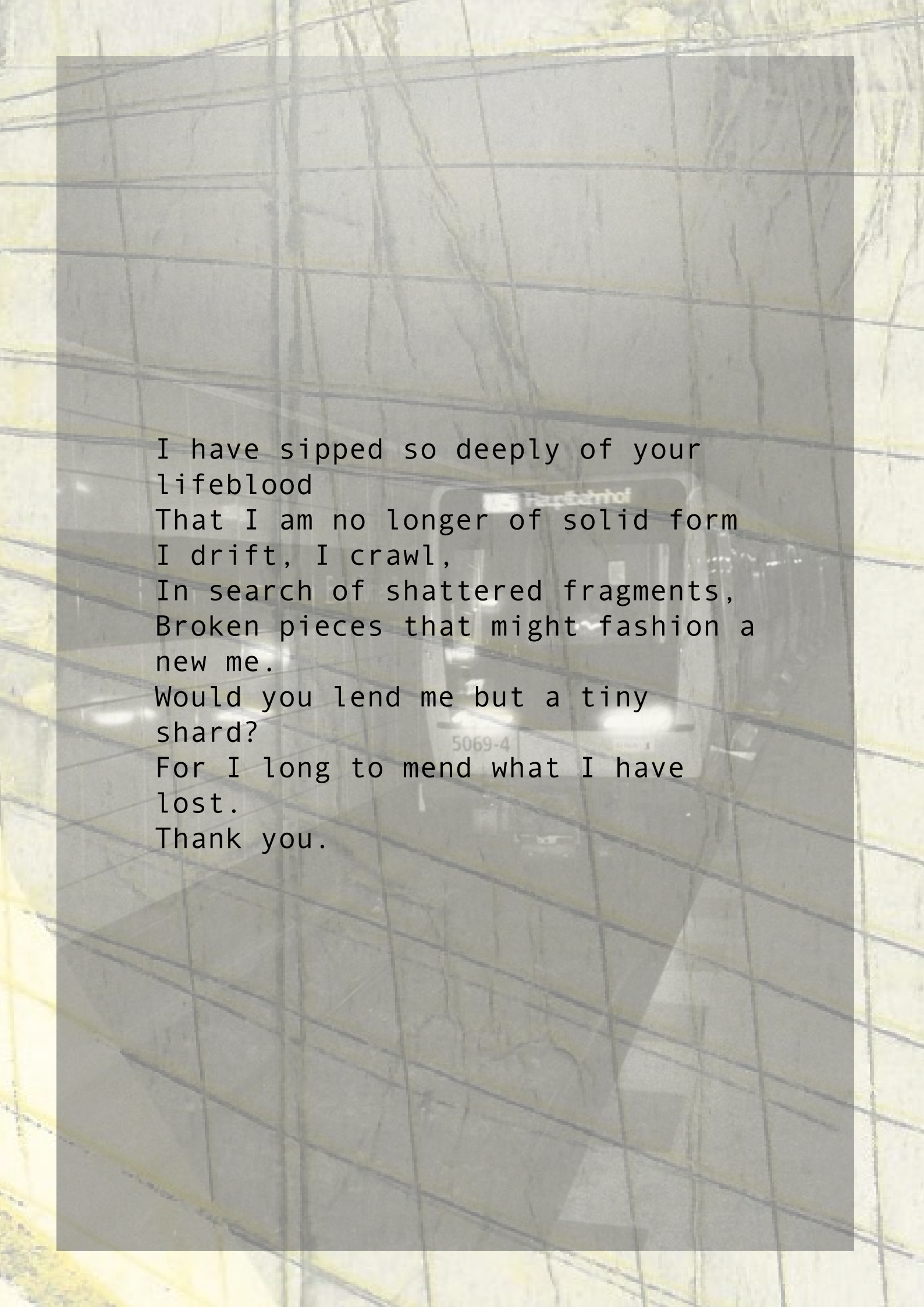


Welc0me t0 the sh0w

Many times,
I tried to transmute
that chaos
into light,
a quiet breath,
almost peace.
I hear the screams of
your soul seeping into
my bones
My organs quiver in a
trembling dance
My eyes
barred
like shuttered windows
reveal my fear.



I move in silence, drawing near
Grasping a spoon,
a vessel of bitter fate
that I devour with fierce aban-
don.
I feast upon your pain,
offering you a fleeting solace.
Do you feel that tender caress
upon your heart?
Can you sense my warm hand upon
that bleeding spirit?



I have sipped so deeply of your lifeblood
That I am no longer of solid form
I drift, I crawl,
In search of shattered fragments,
Broken pieces that might fashion a new me.
Would you lend me but a tiny shard?
For I long to mend what I have lost.
Thank you.

Fragments of a body
I don’t feel as mine

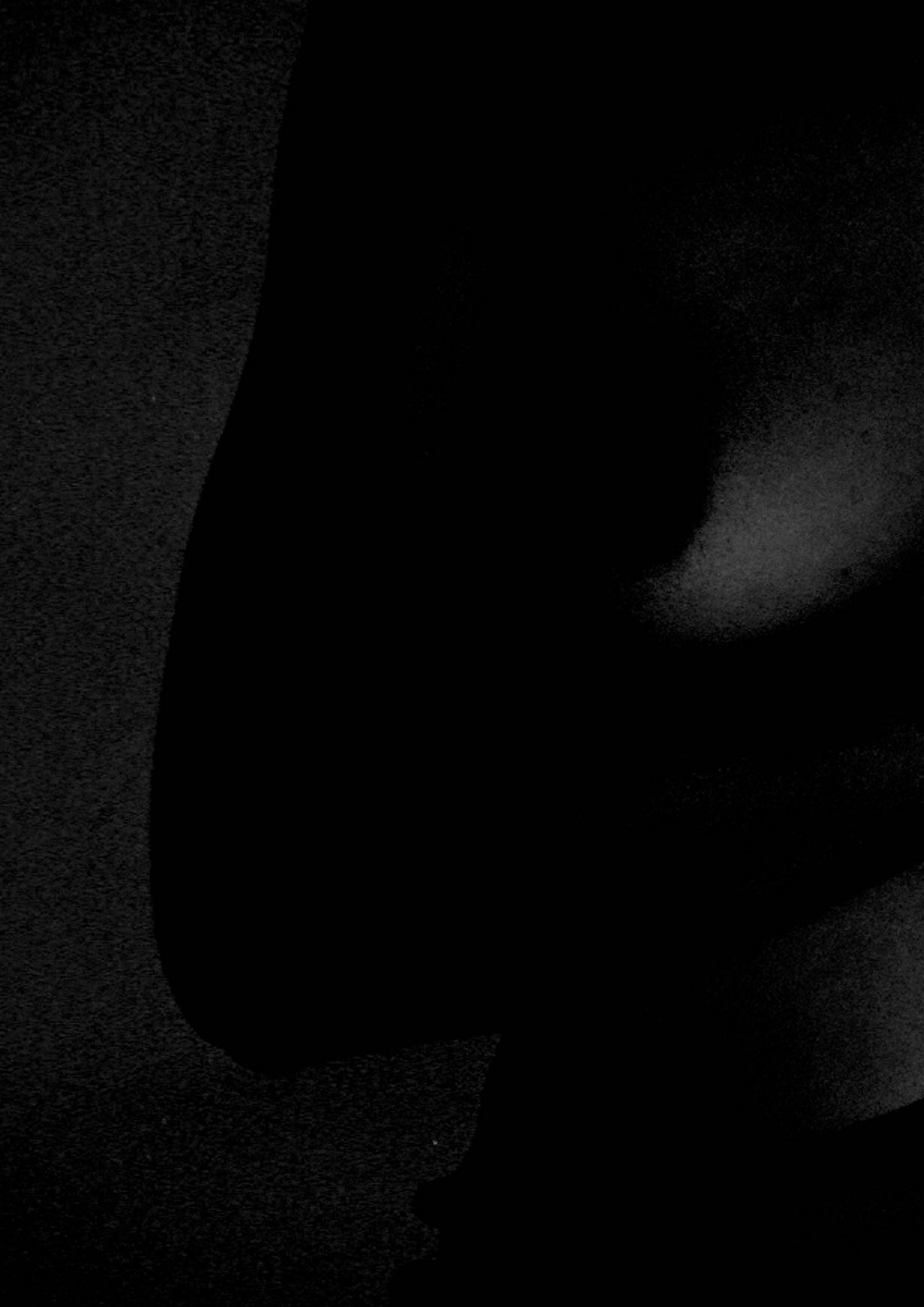




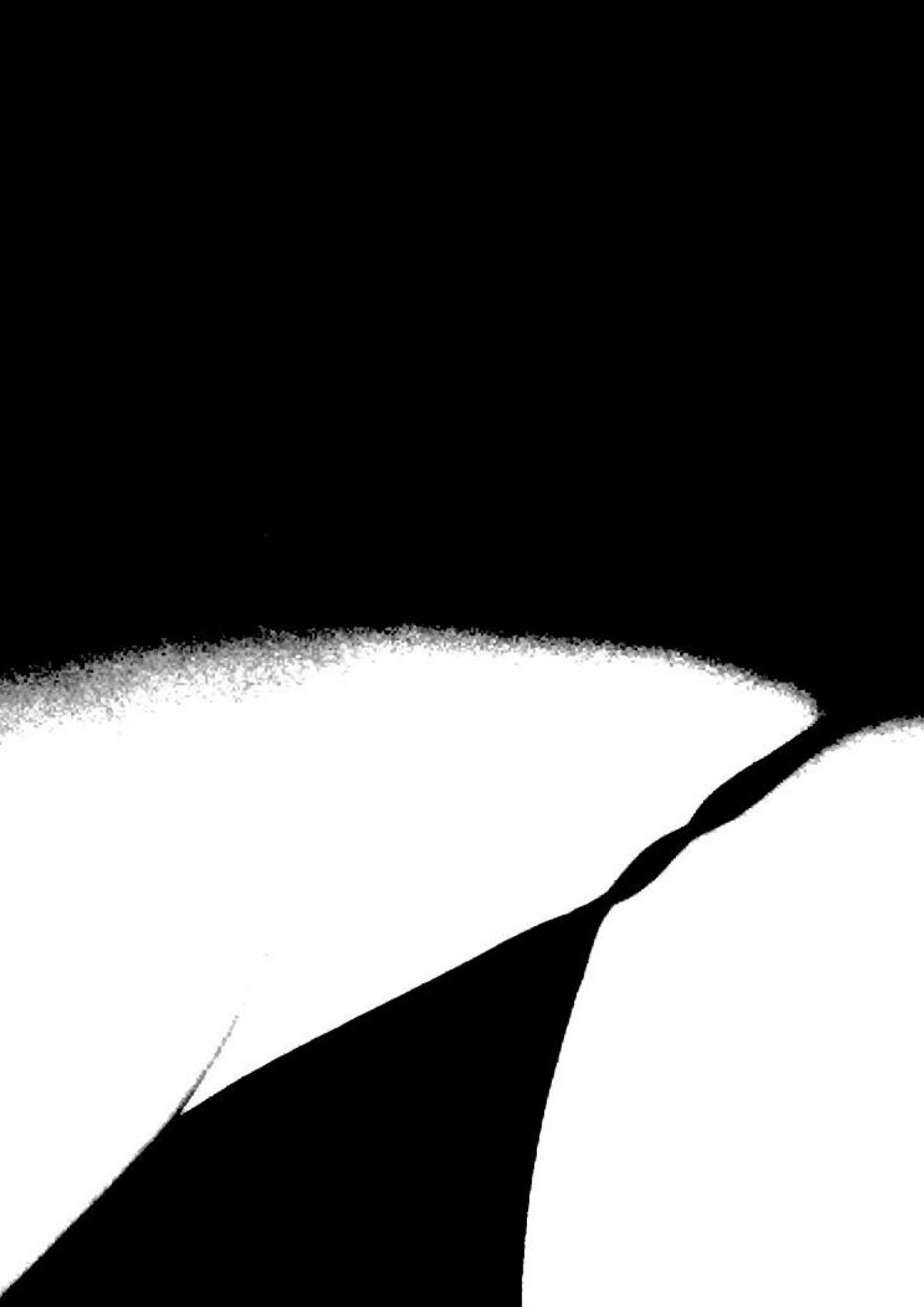
I touch myself
I hold myself

Not knowing where pain begins
or where it ends

or where it ends









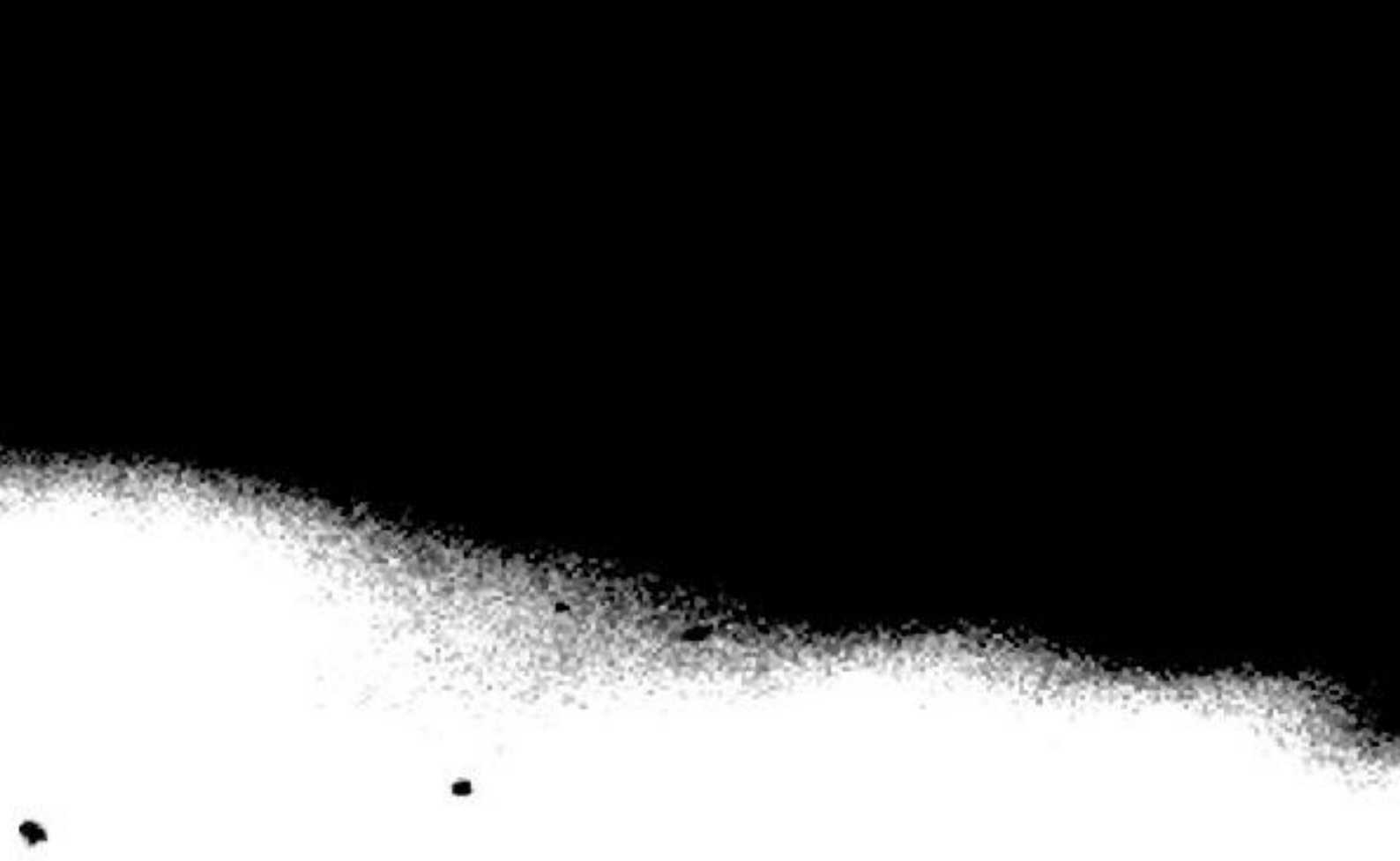
I am an echo
calling itself

persistent whisper









Monsters come closer
certain

they already know
where I break

like a vase

Even if it hurts

I stop defending myself

I watched

from the window

as anxiety ate
your frail body alive

Your body

grew weak

bones to be thrown to dogs

There wasn’t much left of you

Your soul



it was still there

just to remind you

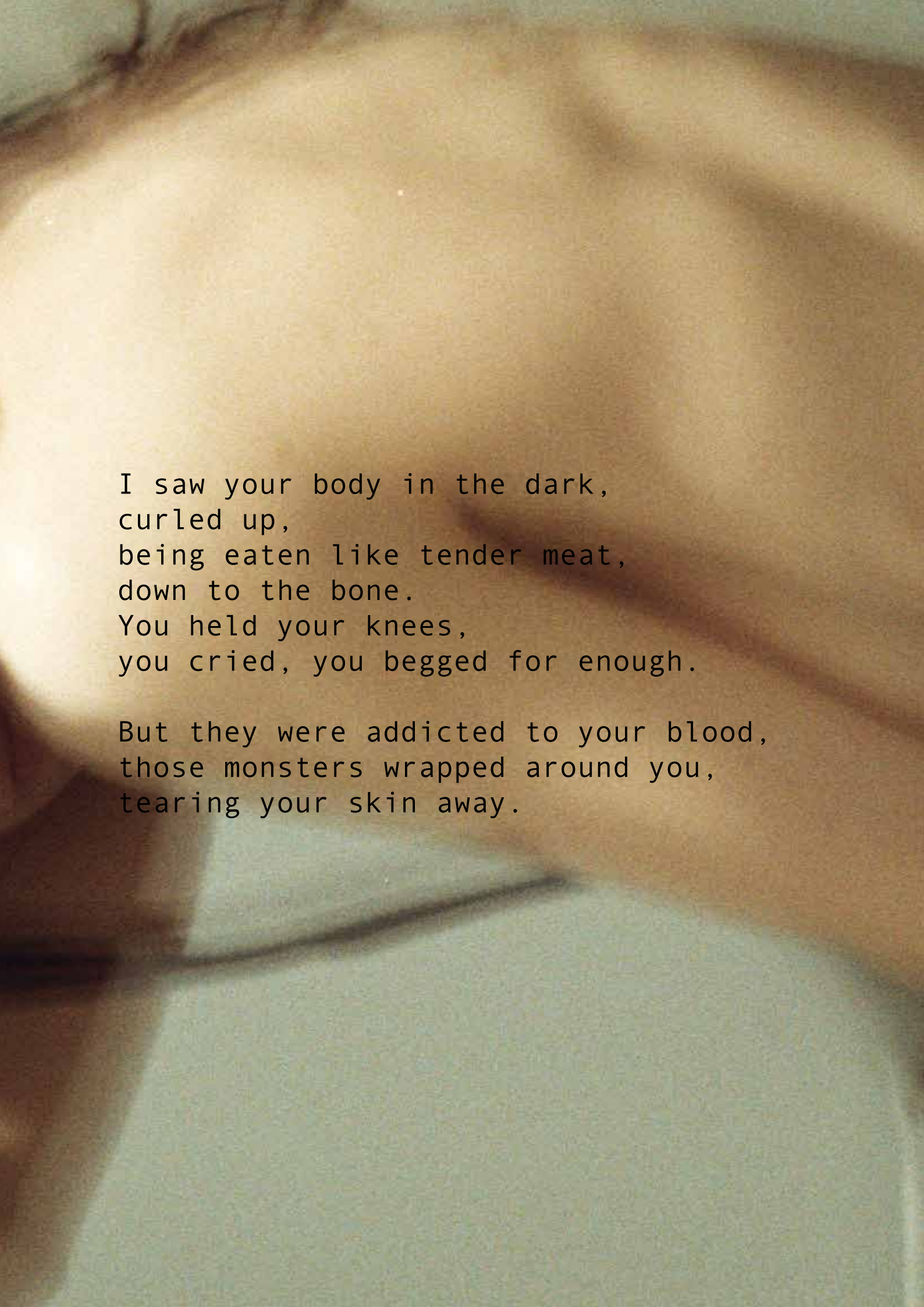
so a bit of light
could reach the others

maybe the bathroom

leaving one on
in the middle of a room

was turning off its lights





I saw your body in the dark,
curled up,
being eaten like tender meat,
down to the bone.
You held your knees,
you cried, you begged for enough.

But they were addicted to your blood,
those monsters wrapped around you,
tearing your skin away.

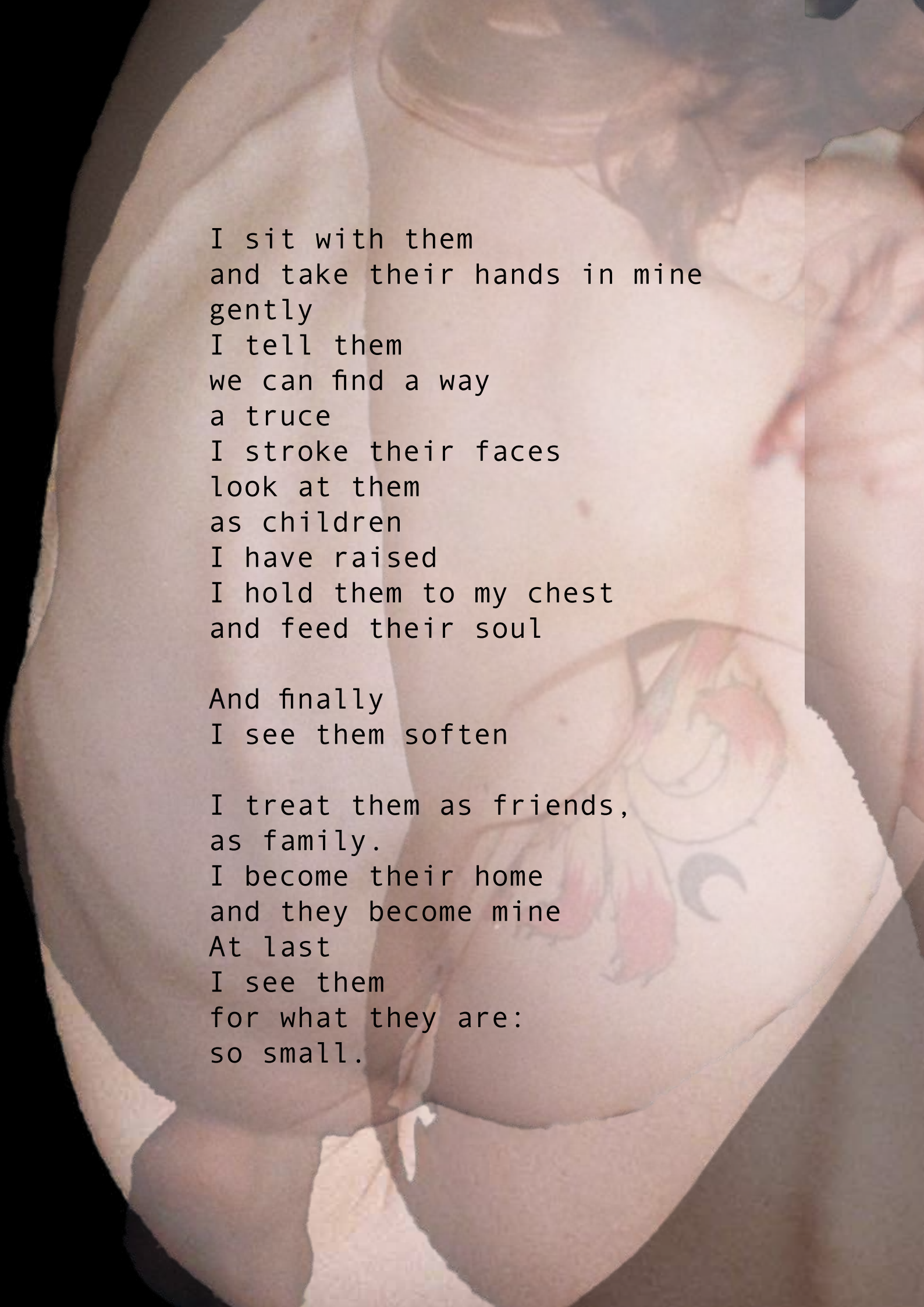




I saw your naked soul
throw my skin
Had you felt the emptiness?
I’m just concerned
Bewildered.
That kind of feeling that eats your stomach
and leaving only
your kidney.
Can you feel my pain?
I can see the red (blood) in my hands.
Am I just the space your love needs?
Please, caress me, my face.

What should I be striving for?
I feel your gaze
judging my soul
Shut up
I like to hear
the cold speak to me
Keep your armor safe
take it clean
for your health
Close your eyes
Can you hear
the sound of my voice?
Now we dance
You are free to cry





I sit with them
and take their hands in mine
gently
I tell them
we can find a way
a truce
I stroke their faces
look at them
as children
I have raised
I hold them to my chest
and feed their soul

And finally
I see them soften

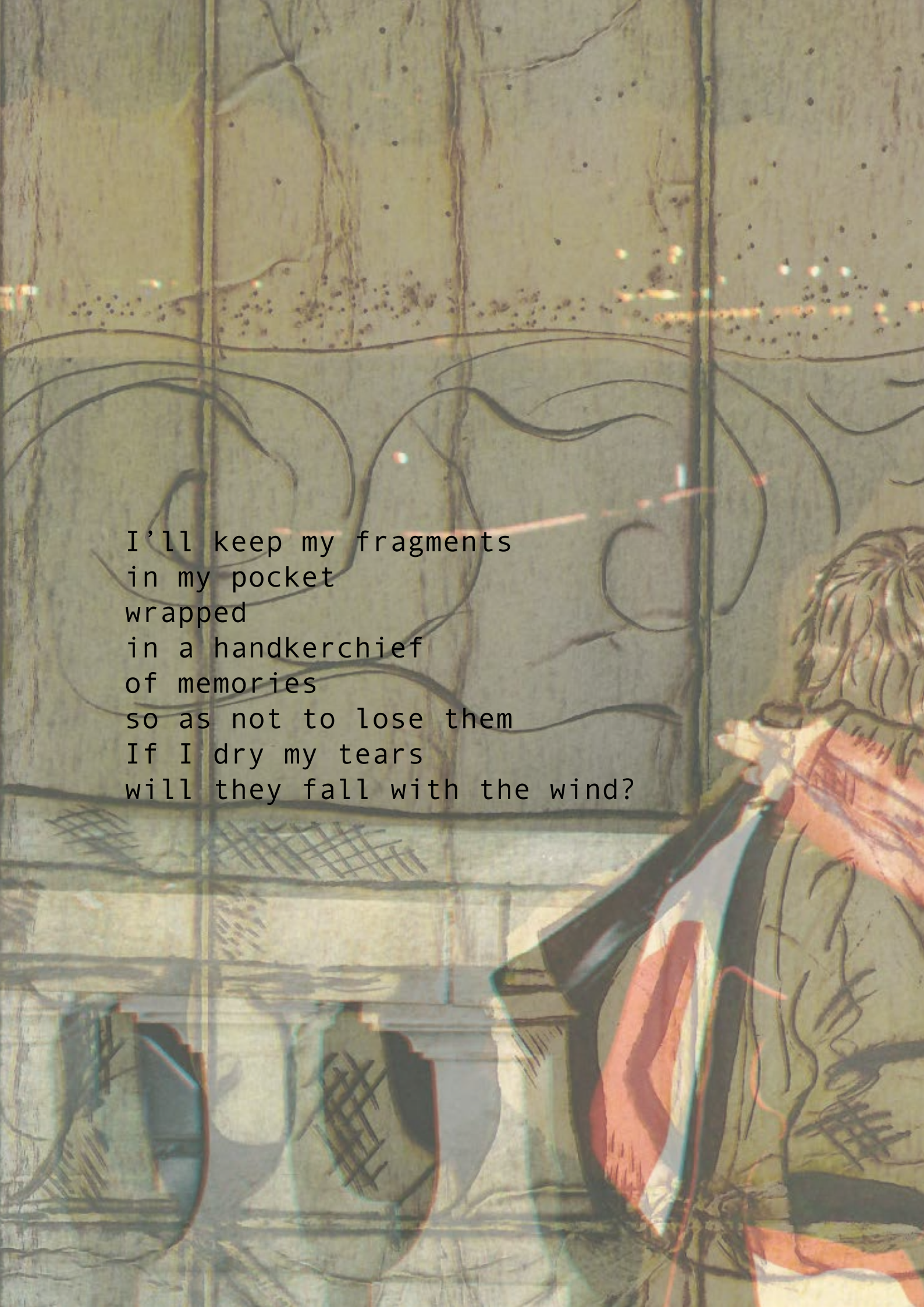
I treat them as friends,
as family.
I become their home
and they become mine
At last
I see them
for what they are:
so small.



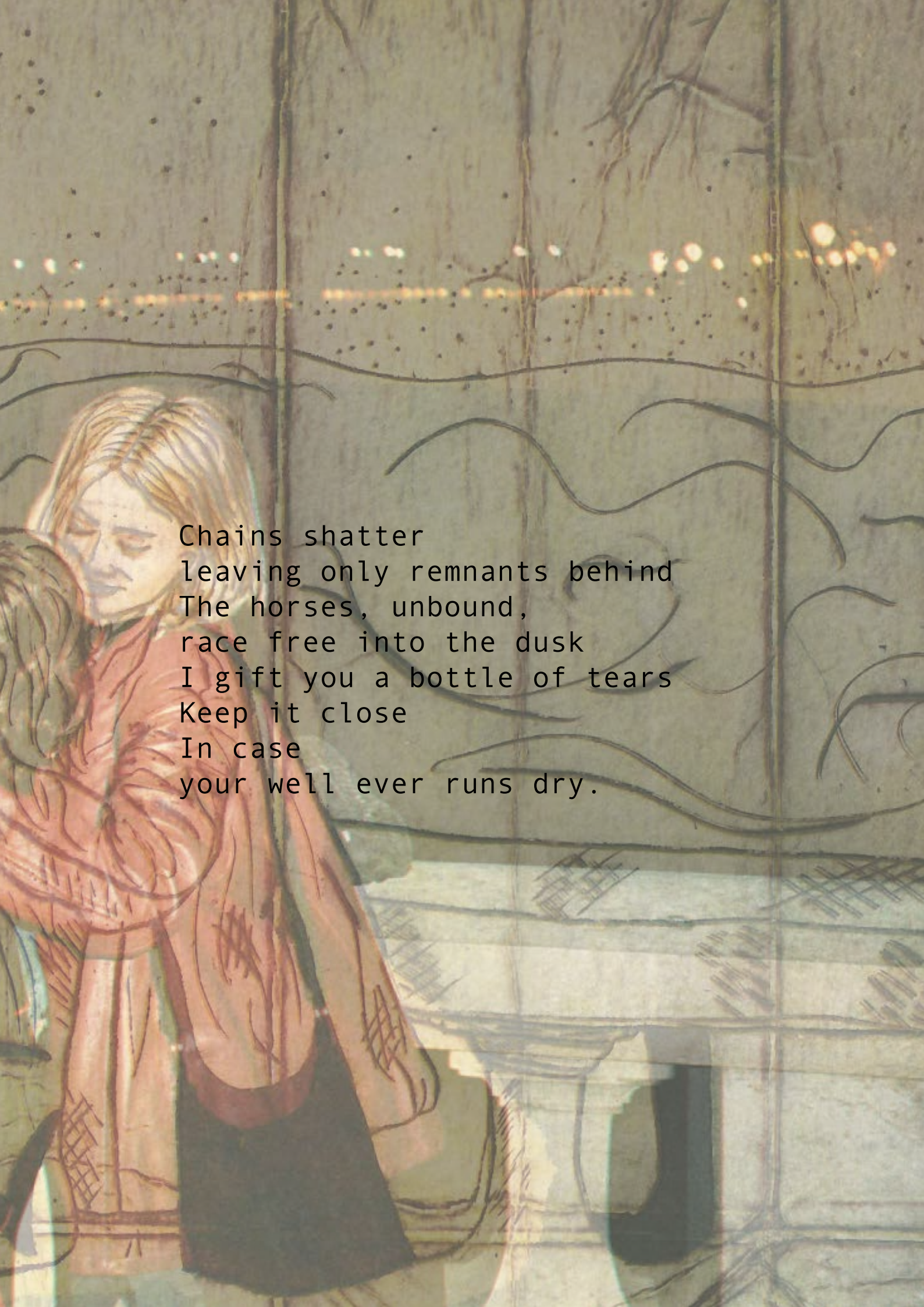
I am the mother
who soothes them
the father
who teaches them respect
the elder sister
who guides them
the grandmother
who tends to their wounds

They are so small, truly
At times
they seem
to tower over me
but all they need
is a touch
and all I need
is to understand them
so I may hold them
so I may lead them

Light.



I’ll keep my fragments
in my pocket
wrapped
in a handkerchief
of memories
so as not to lose them
If I dry my tears
will they fall with the wind?

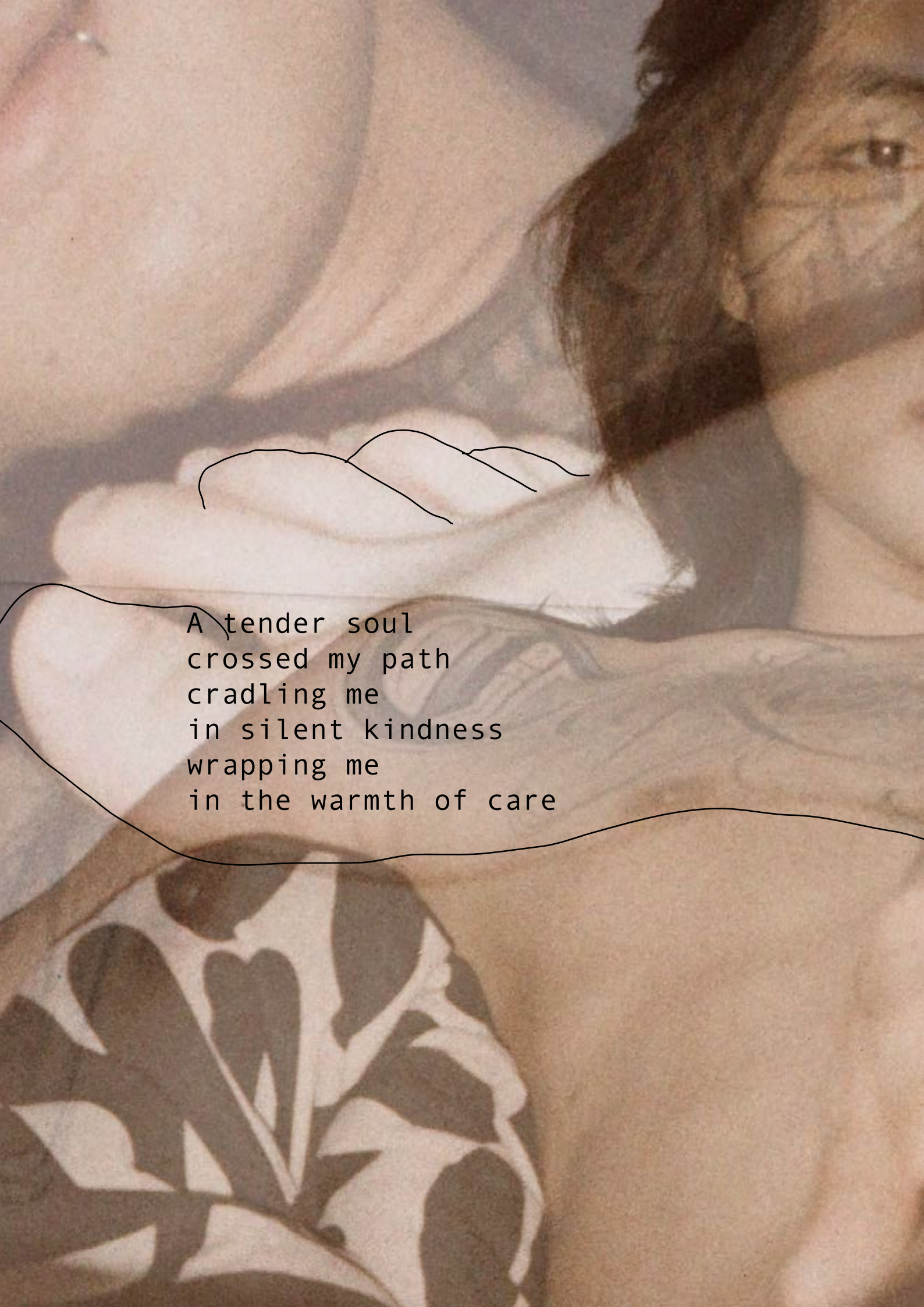


Chains shatter
leaving only remnants behind
The horses, unbound,
race free into the dusk
I gift you a bottle of tears
Keep it close
In case
your well ever runs dry.

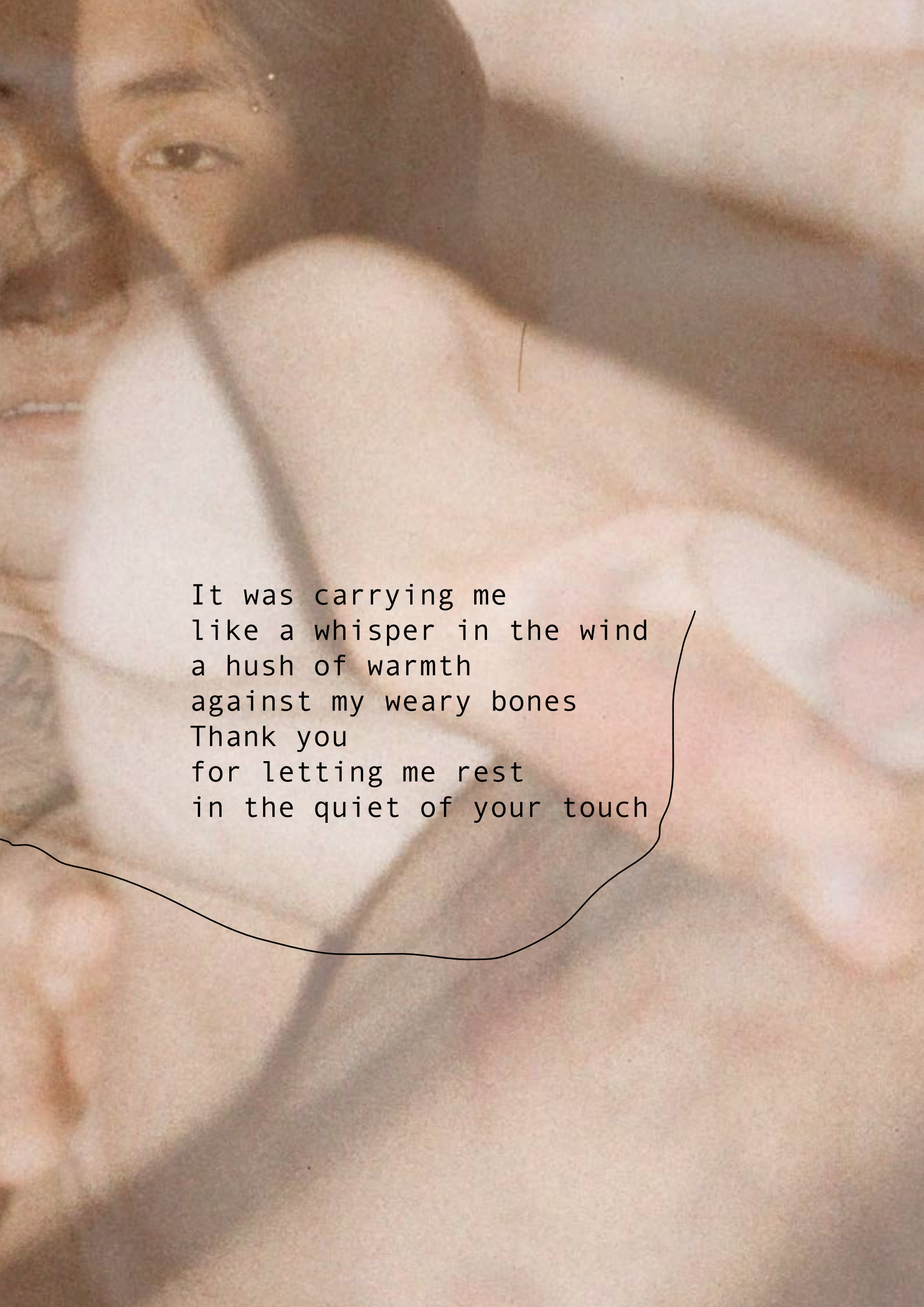



I love the adrenaline
To fall in love
while travelling

Touch me, soften



A tender soul
crossed my path
cradling me
in silent kindness
wrapping me
in the warmth of care



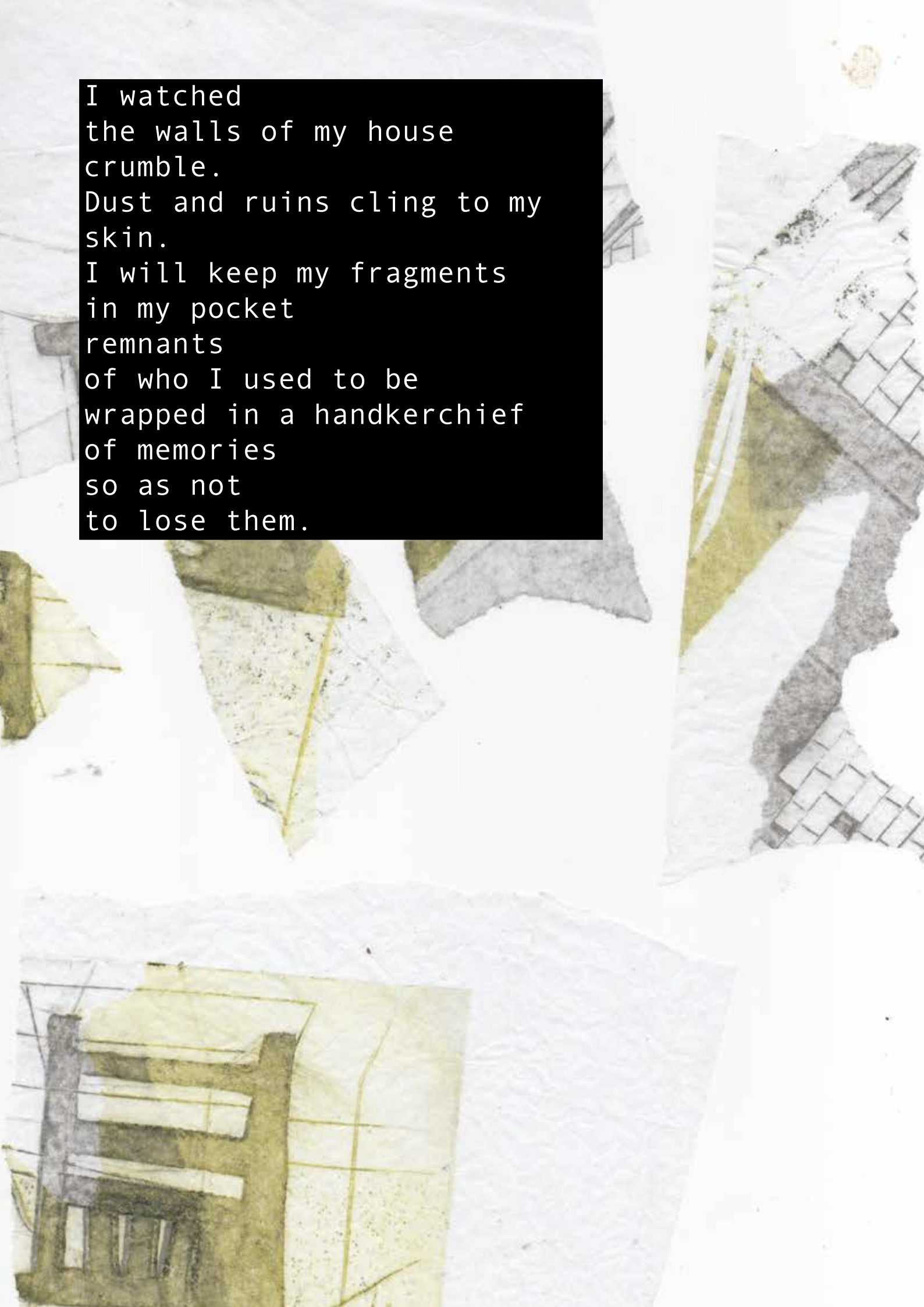
It was carrying me
like a whisper in the wind
a hush of warmth
against my weary bones
Thank you
for letting me rest
in the quiet of your touch

I felt impure
A scripture carved in sin
a faith that worships shame
I still sense those hands
tracing my soiled skin
Am I desire,
or its echo?
Or even confession
Repentance was born
from a god that never touched
a god that cannot forgive
what breathes outside its word
The church breathes in me
its cold fingers
sliding through my soul
its voice whispering: repent
But did I ever sin?
Isn’t the act of flesh
also a prayer
a way to love?
Forgive me
For wanting
For feeling
For living inside the wound





I watched
the walls of my house
crumble.
Dust and ruins cling to my
skin.
I will keep my fragments
in my pocket
remnants
of who I used to be
wrapped in a handkerchief
of memories
so as not
to lose them.





I’m searching for fragments
of vessels
broken pieces
that give me
a new form
Would you lend me but a tiny
shard?
For I long to mend what I have
lost
Thank you.



Open the curtain
The clown is in town
Born with a red nose
I learned early
how to make you laugh
even when
something in me
felt wrong
Still
I steal a smile
I become the show
you sometimes seek
in your lives
the lightness
you need



I’m the clown
of myself

The monsters
I swallow for breakfast
By night
I vomit them out
still
they remain
inside my stomach





A year ago,
you carried the child
of the anxiety that had
fed on you for years.
A year later,
the same anxiety
took back all the flesh it
had given you.

Is there love without
pain?
Because I love myself
but I suffer.
Deeply.

I listen to myself.

Traumas
my old friends
I smile at you
with tears still in my eyes
but my hands don’t shake anymore
I’m the child you raised
without asking
the friend you fed on
when no one was watching
I face you now
not as your son
but as what survived you
You look old and small now







The loving care of friends
looks into your soul
and finds
only a meadow in bloom
dwelling inside you.

They prepare your flowers
for gathering,
tending them with love
Sun when they ask
for warmth,
shade when they need
to rest.

And they seal them
as memories
inside those mailboxes
postcards
never sent



The grave where
I left my body
The cold
I left

The silence
of what you left
behind you





Sometimes they stay under the bed
feeding on the crumbs of me that fall

they wait

for appetizing leftovers
of a broken heart

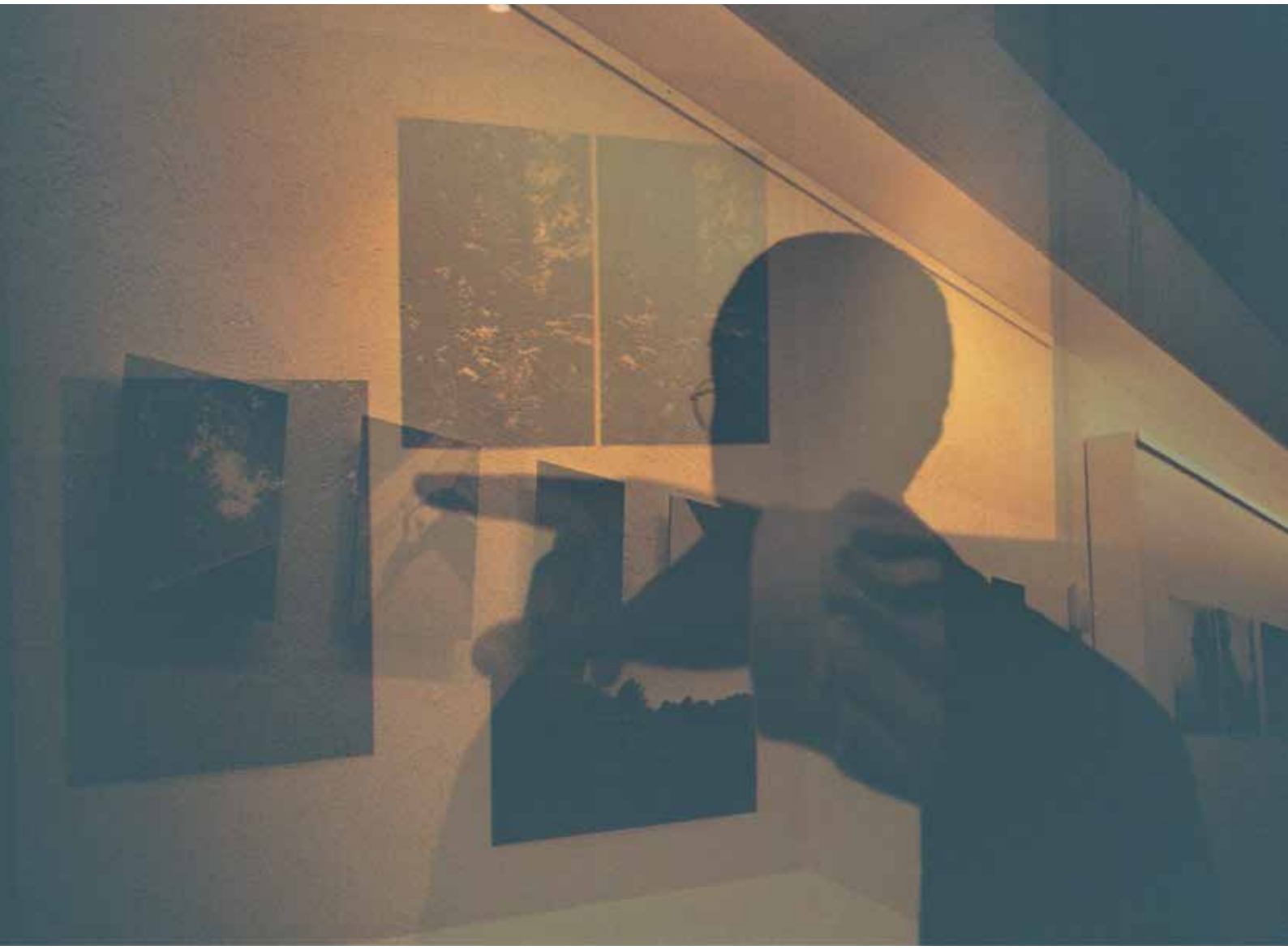
but i keep them
close to my chest

sometimes they are shadows
in a wall of rain

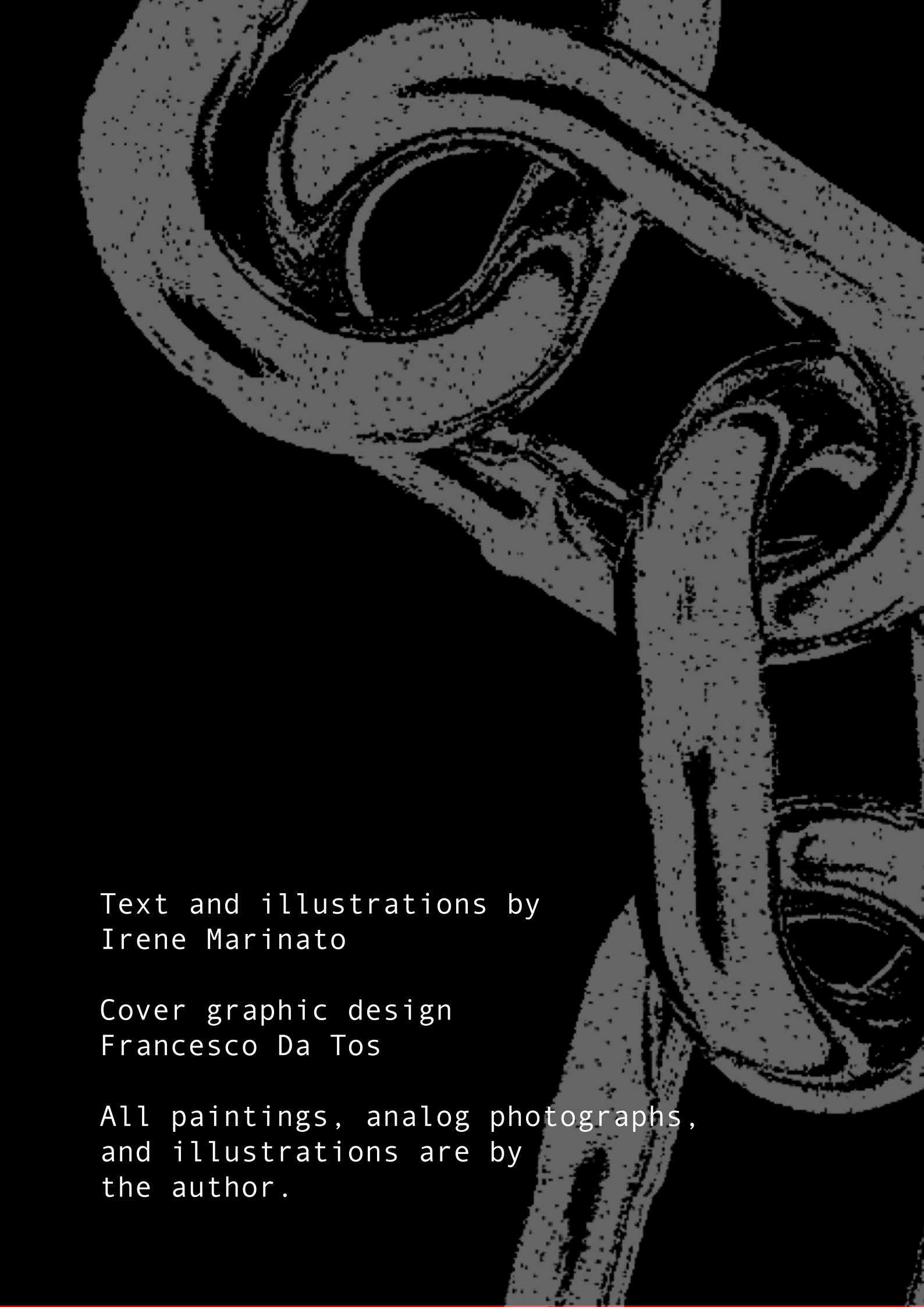
they leave me without an umbrella

Sometimes they ask for space that I
don’t know to make

You fought the monsters with me
as if they were your own
Your precious light still lives in me







Text and illustrations by
Irene Marinato

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Francesco Da Tos

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