

Spring 2026 | Issue 0

MUSHROOM RAIN



FOREWORD

“Mushroom rain” (or *gribnoy dozh* in Russian) is a term used in some cultures for a rare kind of weather: rain falling while the sun is shining. The name stems from the traditional belief that these conditions are ideal for mushroom growth. It is a fertile phenomenon, much like the birth of poetry.

I take it also as a symbol of convergence — the coming of all life-giving things together. Visually, this convergence is sunlight reflecting through rain: illumination within what might otherwise seem grey. It suggests that something hidden can be revealed, that there is a quiet, glistening reality beneath the surface of things. An animating grace, giving shape and light and life.

This is what reading the ineffable in poetry feels like to me, and I hope this becomes a place to hold that feeling, and to share it.

Sometimes, I think, this vision of reality hits us rather suddenly, when overcome by an impression or when trying to explain a feeling. My guess is that many of us have taken to notebooks or notes apps to get it out.

We invite submissions of pieces like this that were never really meant to be found: notes app fragments, abandoned drafts, and poems written without an audience in mind. Work that carries the texture of immediacy, intimacy, or hesitation is especially welcome.

Please write to submissions@mushroomrain.org or complete our online form.

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- 4 FIELD NOTES
observations, perceptions and impressions
- 14 FAULT LINES
moments of tension and shift
- 24 ADDRESSES
to *you* in love, mostly

FIELD NOTES





LETTER FROM THE BATH

my friend gave me a bar of soap for my birthday. when wet it turned a translucent yellow, like a half-light. i sat in the bath and watched my fingers distort through it. my freshly-dyed hair bled quietly into the bathwater. when i looked down, the white porcelain was halfway clouded with pink. i stayed very still, to keep the symmetry.

AUTUMN

The liturgy of eternity is silent and it is also
The perfectly apprehended crunch of autumn leaf underfoot,



LIT-

URGY

SOMEWHERE IN BOSNIA

there are the instant coffee grounds in the bottom of a small white cup, poured over by hot water from I can't remember where. there is a kindness from without and all these knowing looks and all this funny, home-cooked breakfast on a sticky, wipe-down tablecloth. there is a silence and a stillness and a climb before the dawn. and a small room with a bed and a window and a looking. and there is this inner me, the one that has crawled out from under you to be here. her hands and knees are bloody but the coffee in the white cup tastes quite good, and she likes the silence.





ORANGE PEEL STORY

I started to peel an orange without waiting for the varnish on my nails to set. The skin was loose around its edges and fell away with an almost crunch that cut momentarily through the hum of the boiler. It made no sense to me where so much noise could be coming from. I watched the white threads tear apart and they made no attempt to hold onto one another. They parted apathetically, as if having let go a long time before the skin was even pierced. Like ex-lovers lingering in their own dying embers to a point near indifference, waiting for some door to be opened so that they can slip out without saying a word. So I couldn't understand what all the racket was about. I kept going — to try to. With each movement, the varnish on my nails threatened to leave, to cling to that apathetic skin, or worse, be disfigured by it. But I kept going. The peel crunched, and fell away, and fell away.

NOTES ON BECOMING REAL

30.11.24

do the thing that is like seeing
for the first time
all the pieces of light in the dust
fitting together like mushroom rain
or an entire world
folded up into droplets
do it until fire forms in your belly and rises
to your throat
becoming a smile, waiting
to burst free from your mouth
get to know the thing so intimately
that even a blank wall and its edges
call out to you in love
and your heart beats freely,
like the ringing of a church bell
through crisp air

12.02.25

I would walk and walk
take steps in dizziness through tar
spend so long staring at all the specks of
life in the sky, trying to get my eyes to
land on them, pleading with them: *let me
land somewhere*— and they would,
sometimes, and then so would I

there was something about the fuzz in the
sky then and on the ceiling now, it is like
landing—no, it is like when you grab me
still after I do a spin —so firm and clear
and safe like the fuzzy sky,

14.11.22

Suppose reality has parted around me,
asking that I exist in the space it has left.
And so, I obey, I bear uncertain witness;
perception becoming of sharpness bereft.

NOTES ON BECOMING REAL (CONTINUED)

How now will I dine, will I dance
with light's offering?
What true thing can call me to love
or to suffering?

I shall stay as a babe 'til the space in between
is a blanket that swaddles and calms.
And, once I am safe, may my corners of mind
be restored to life in its arms.

01.01.25, 00:30

the water is so still in the glass
I feel as though I could follow my eyes right through it
and I think, perhaps,
this wind that rushes past me now
could be the harshest thing so close this year
because these soft sheets are my thoughts
like blades of grass, unswaying
and because I think it's real,
more real, I think, than that one big reality
I sought so hard to death,
and it's a lily pad marooned,
so undisturbed, my heart
because some hand, without lifting,
has taken away the weight of my head
and there is no certainty except all this
and there is no certainty in all this except right now:
this momentary spring that shatters
everything before,
this new, soft, happy little spring
and the water is so still in the glass
I feel as though I could follow my eyes right through it

24.11.23

I step outside to meet You and a window is a window
And it is the best thing I have ever seen

TROUT QUINTET

The road we drove down
That late evening
No longer exists
Cut off by a fence
And a motorway.
My father at the
Wheel, I was the sole
Passenger as we
Made our way back from
Taking Grandma home
After a visit.

The road slipped between
Dark hedgerows. Nothing
Was said. The engine
Sobbed as the night came
On and a tape or
The radio played
Schubert's Trout Quintet.



I LIKE THE SMELL OF HER FACE



"I like the smell of her face,"
she said.

I shifted slightly within the confines of my quarter of the bed we were sharing with her boyfriend. It was to his snores that we had both been unable to find sleep and their sound that we had then likened to the dozing rattle of our childhood cat, the smell of whose furry little face we were now both fondly remembering. In this thinking of that little cat's little face and little smell and little snore, I fell asleep, because my little sister's mind playing back a memory so akin to mine had made our sweaty, squished up insomnia suddenly feel a whole lot like home.

WALK [IDEA]

Though they walked side by side, it was like he barely moved, while she seemed to flow all around him. His hand maintained a half-closed fist full of autumn air, while her fingers almost danced — pointing now, then tucking hair, then down, knocking the air out of his fist, interlacing with his hand. Only at this did his hand undergo some conformational change; a slight tightening, fist more fully closed, so as to say: *stay here now, stop dancing*.



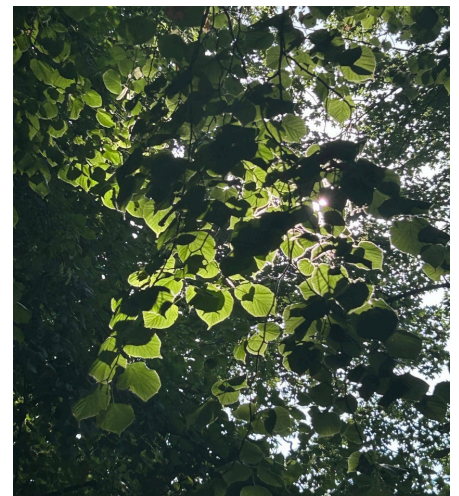
MEMORIES



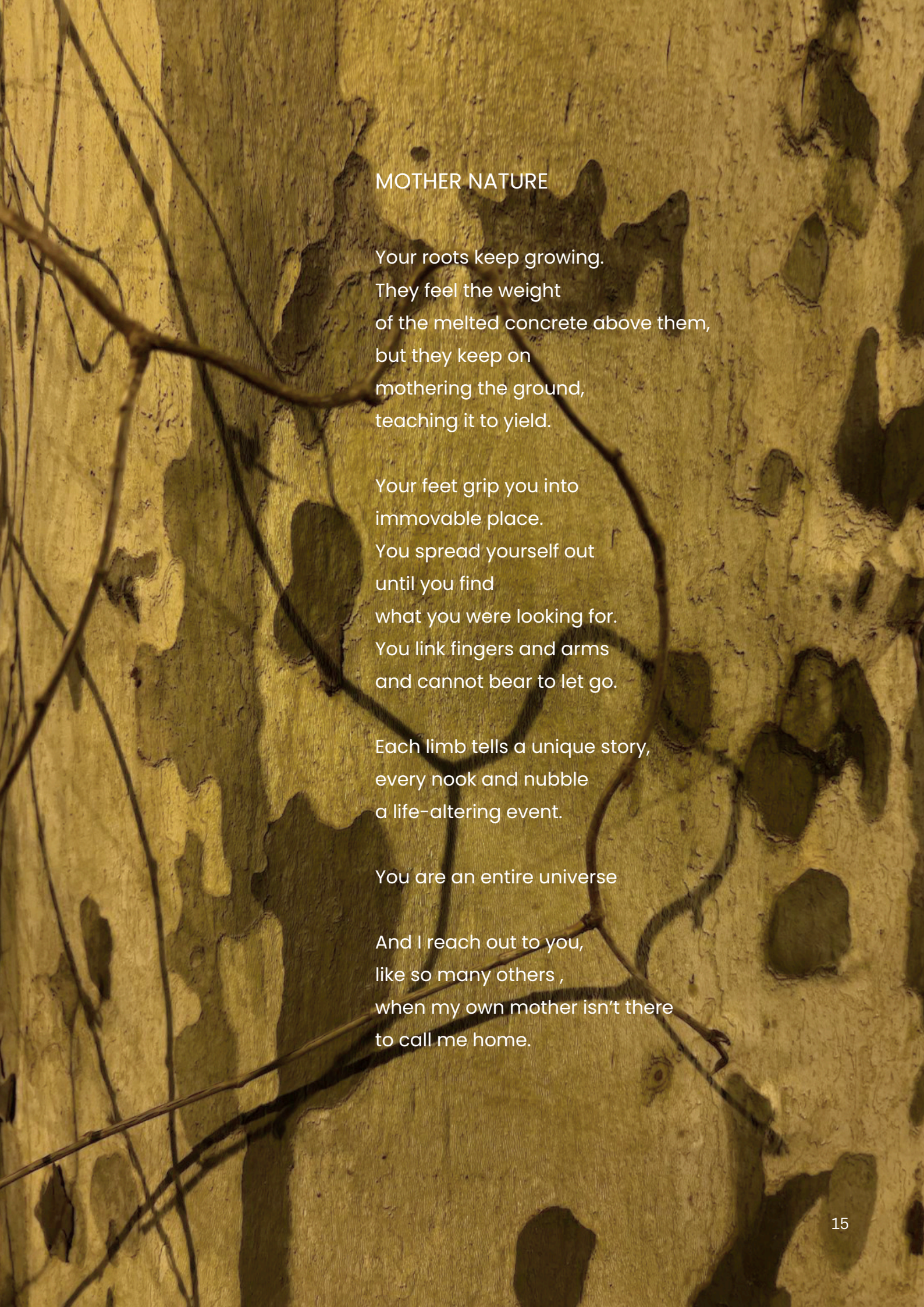
sickly sweet like skin
yellowed on the playground



no, like tar melting



like vomit—
or like sunshine?



MOTHER NATURE

Your roots keep growing.
They feel the weight
of the melted concrete above them,
but they keep on
mothering the ground,
teaching it to yield.

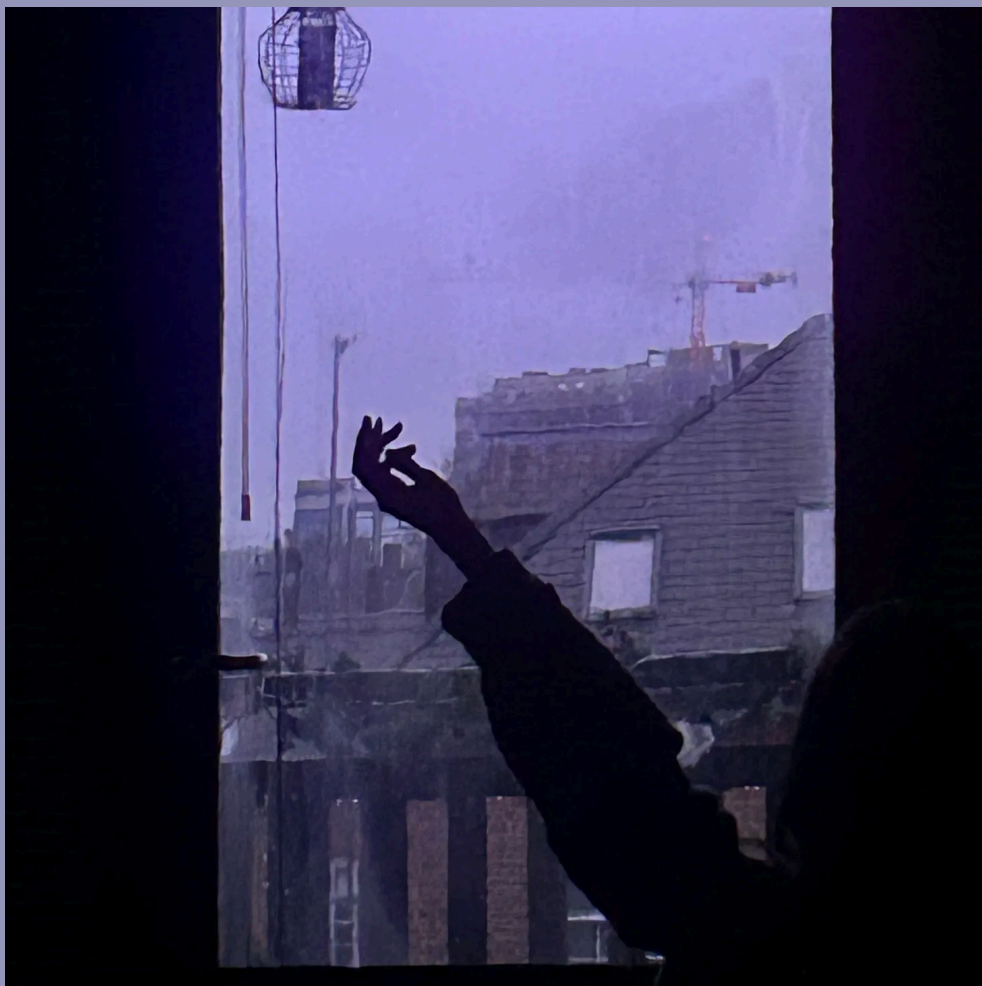
Your feet grip you into
immovable place.
You spread yourself out
until you find
what you were looking for.
You link fingers and arms
and cannot bear to let go.

Each limb tells a unique story,
every nook and nubble
a life-altering event.

You are an entire universe

And I reach out to you,
like so many others ,
when my own mother isn't there
to call me home.

FAULT LINES



TELL ME,

How do I get to where birds sing —

Where grass grows and is cut?

How do I belong

No more to myself,

But to wet earth and all but?

How do I shed flesh,

Crack open my skull,

Let knotted fear drain out?

How can for a second

Heaven be grasped

When even in earth I have doubt?



07 01 25

I could hear your screams through the rising and falling waves of song, and they did neither. they fell straight and cold and I could feel your hands

finding their familiar grooves around my throat, tightening, redirecting me, letting me go. letting me go as long as my eyes were fixed to wherever your gaze would lead them. only in blinking was it still me that blinked.

only the intermittent need to moisten and oxygenate my eyeball could you not control. and it was the feeling of it happening. the pressure of the lid going over my eye, hitting my lower lash line, as if the only thing I could sense coming from myself.

UNTITLED

Sensing your fear, I lose my own
My sight returns to rightful place
Inside my head, on the ground floor
You're sitting on the middle stair
And yet I see you from above
You're smaller now — a feather lost
Unseen, mid-flight, whereas
Before, according to your wish, we let your anger give you height
Suddenly, you stand not tall, nor proud nor rigid, firm,
You squirm and scatter on the stairs,
Flail, clasp at empty space and scratch
When space turns air to flesh
You talk in circles, rocking now
From side to side, then still, and only muttering
In some deep part that I can't see.
I can see, though,
That there is more for you to hate
In your world but for me alone
Perhaps you don't know how to hate that thing,
Or, maybe, hating it does not
To you its submission bring

MORNING AFTER

awake to heavy, whitened sky
asleep to every part of mind that
yesterday was set alight
now wispy, dull, intangible
thoughts smoke then vanish, as if shy

there is desire to just remain
in half-light, hidden under sheets
move motionless from room to room,
down stairs and onto icy streets
but in the car a stranger's voice
will speak to me as if she knows
and I will finally wake up
and hear myself say: *let it go*



Is it the birch tree or the Wood of the Cross?

Because it's in my flesh and blood, this Love
and this shame. It flows
to the tips of my fingers as I write.
What can I say,
in prayer,
when Light has once already
graced my veins?
So close is He that I can't speak,
so sickeningly close
that anything I want to say is known
even before I know to say it
and there is only room for guilt
and shame
for having made myself so close —
my flesh a home to Love —
when love Him I cannot.

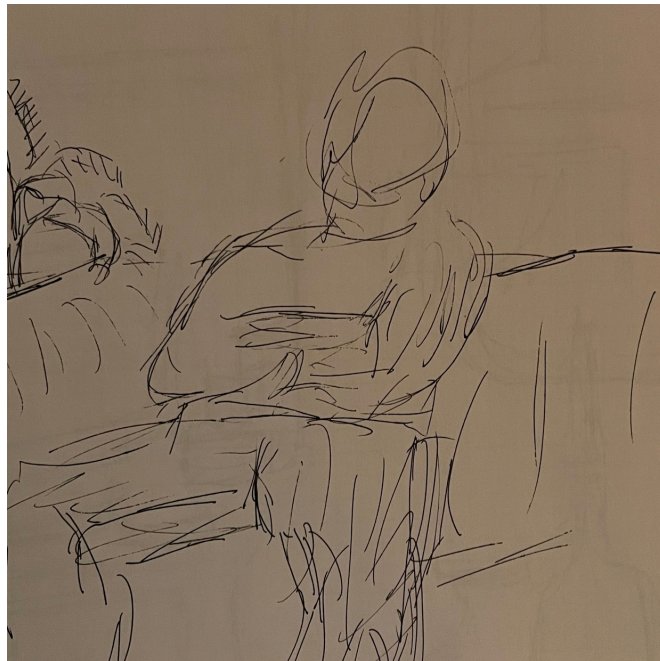


A little after ten to midnight

The air is empty for the rain—
it sighs with almost an impatience,
almost pleading, come inside,
but I am glued down to the pavement.
Your candle dances through the glass,
parting ways with its black smoke:
A bitter end to fleeting life,
or dying breath, the dance to stoke?
If not for knowing, I would crave
to know it's warmth—
the gospel that it tells in light,
to smell my hair seeped full and know
it died so we could have the night.
But I stay outside on the pavement,
my hair full now of rain instead,
and I am glad,
because it smells like blossom, moonlight
and not your shitty little bed.

WHY DIDN'T YOU EVER STAY A WHILE?

maybe if you had— stayed, I mean,
a little longer in bed in the mornings,
lingering just to see the part of my soul
known only in the time between waking and rising.
or if you'd counted all the freckles on my face
and traced them, maybe 'til I slept
and climbed into my every corner—
content and certain in love, sure,
but never in not knowing:
always seeking me out from under
sheets and in crowds.
maybe then
I could've arranged
for you a blossoming,
my petals unfurling
in bed in the mornings.



UNREQUITED SUBJECTIVITY

I must be wrong about the things hearts do to fill the space
to bide the time
from when you start
to when you finish
tucking hair behind my ear

now that it's tucked
my ear is cold
you're looking past me

RELAPSE

The fans whirl below in their unison
Birds fall, catching themselves mid-air
Music pounds my ears where you once did
And I wonder,
While hating that I do

ASYMMETRY

search for me like I search for you
and you will find me there
pause,
look longer,
study the moment
because I want to tell you: *I am yours*
but your lowered eyes hang back
like question marks as I pull away
and so you haven't got me
you haven't found the me I sit with and console
when you leave

ADDRESSES



DO YOU SEE?

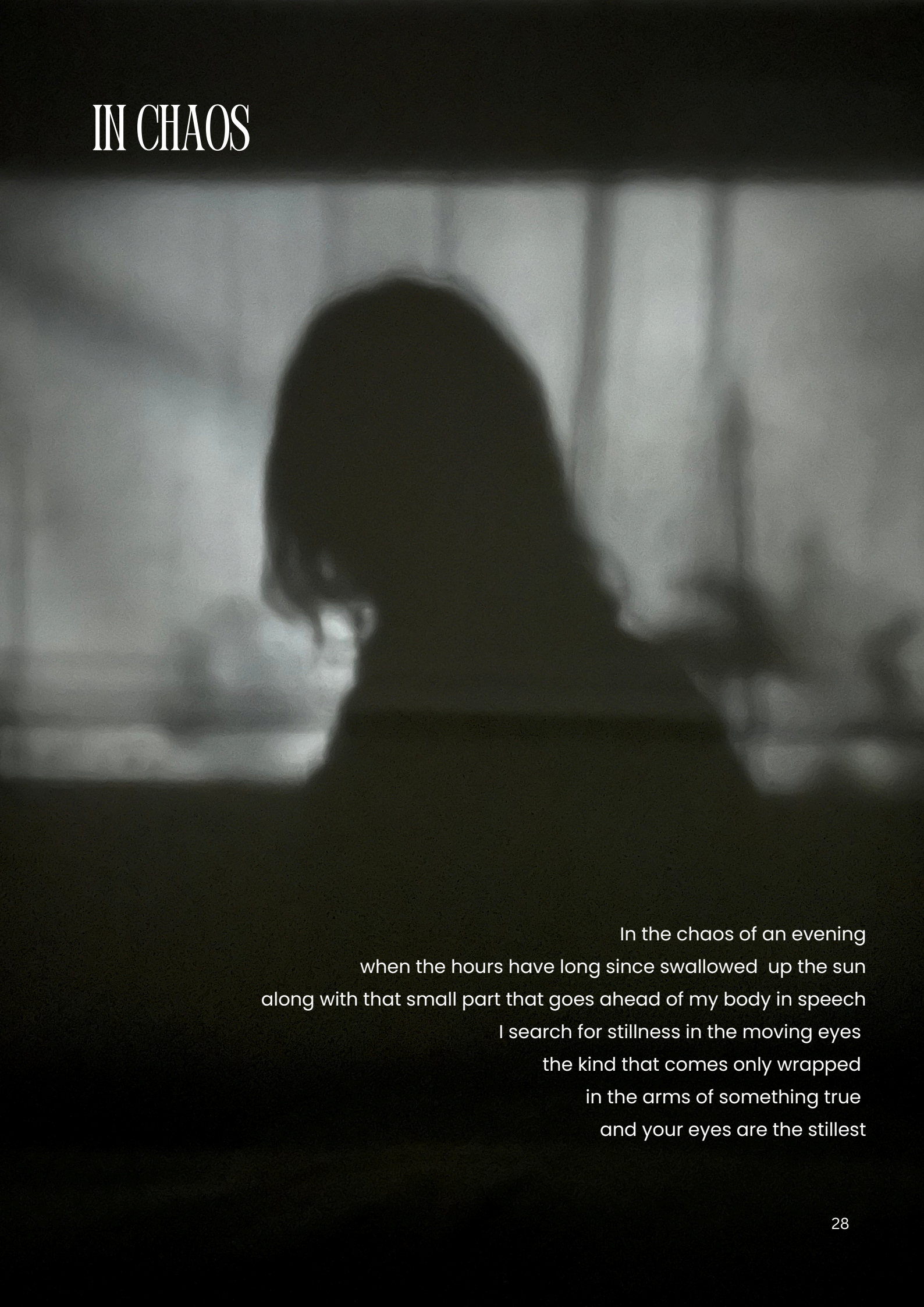
do you see it is a melting
of you and I when occupying some like space?
does that old knot in you grow loose
as mine is totally untied
and is the presence of the ground felt suddenly
letting you know you'd just been treading air before
and is it warm
my knee against your knee?
and do you think about it still
and do you see it is a melting?



PINK LIGHT ON THE WINDOW

I moved my salt lamp onto the windowsill in my bedroom a while ago.
her soft pink light
now breathes some warmth onto the glass,
brings me close, and I look out
onto the street, onto myself.
I can choose one or the other,
or both, imperfectly.
but I keep on choosing skin and curls
these days, just to imagine yours beside.

IN CHAOS



In the chaos of an evening
when the hours have long since swallowed up the sun
along with that small part that goes ahead of my body in speech
I search for stillness in the moving eyes
the kind that comes only wrapped
in the arms of something true
and your eyes are the stillest

A CUP OF TEA

what would make it better? you say

and you smile — long enough,

but only just, to let me in

to that warm world behind your cheeks

where I would like to go in deeper

climb inside

kiss those cheeks

so I stare — so long

I've gone beyond your eyes

I am inside your cheeks

a cup of tea, I say

smiling back at you

JUST FOR ME

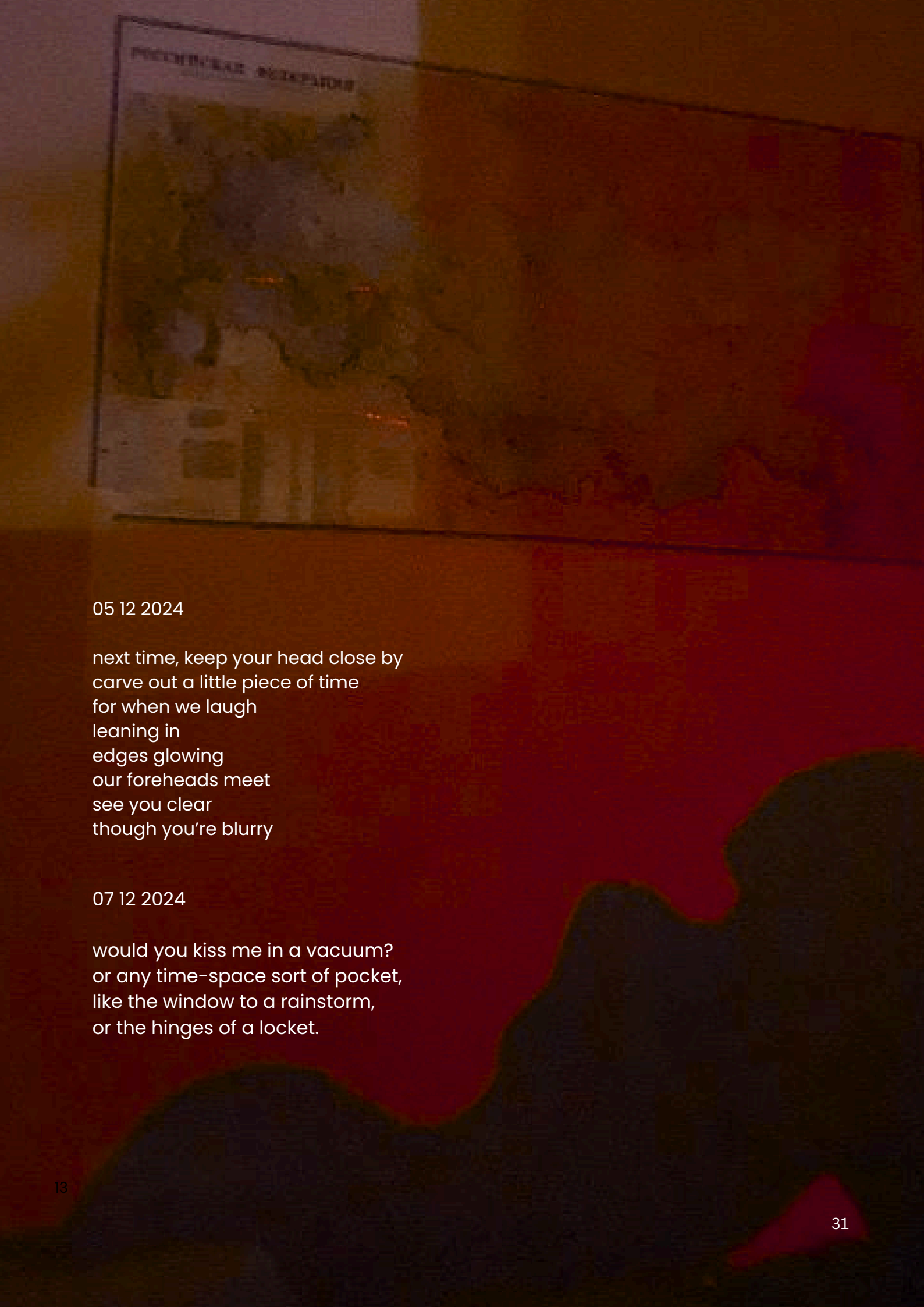
The minutes chip away at an eternity no longer set in stone

and I am glowing in the dark,
warm for you in so much secret,
loving you, just for me. until

The minutes move my tongue
to make it real,
to tell you what I am in secret,
where palm to cheek was not just palm

and then you know, and there we are:
we with our own, brand new eternity





05 12 2024

next time, keep your head close by
carve out a little piece of time
for when we laugh
leaning in
edges glowing
our foreheads meet
see you clear
though you're blurry

07 12 2024

would you kiss me in a vacuum?
or any time-space sort of pocket,
like the window to a rainstorm,
or the hinges of a locket.

zoomed in

everything looks better when you zoom in

like the all the colours in your eyes

reflecting the departing day

differently, each one

and like this scaffolding sheet

become a glittery desert as the day returns

but depart already, day!

I want to watch you leave his eyes again





VISIT ONLINE

www.mushroomrain.org

SUBMIT VIA EMAIL

submissions@mushroomrain.org

Thank you 😊

