

a l i e g o

r i c a l

a t h e n a

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I'M THE WHITEST, PASTIEST GUY YOU'LL EVER MEET - I'LL NEVER BE BANNED FROM ANYTHING - BUT THIS MATTERS TO ME. I... US WHITE PEOPLE NEED TO ACKNOWLEDGE WHO WE ARE AND HOW WE CAN HELP

I DON'T THINK BRAVERY IS THE LACK OF FEAR - BRAVERY IS THE ABILITY TO HAVE AND SHOW COURAGE

THE ONLY TIME I WANT TO BE SEEN AS AN ALIEN IS IN A SNAPCHAT FILTER

MY BEST FRIEND COULDN'T STAY IN PAKISTAN - FOR THE FEAR OF BEING KILLED FOR HAVING SEX WITH A MAN.

WE NEED AN AMERICA THAT VALUES

0 ATTACKS HAVE BEEN COMMITTED BY COUNTRIES LISTED ON THE BAN

NO HUMAN BEING IS ILLEGAL. NO HUMAN BEING IS ILLEGAL.

IT AFFECTS FRIENDS, BUT IT DOESN'T EVEN MATTER IF I DIDN'T HAVE MUSLIM FRIENDS, IT STILL AFFECTS ME BECAUSE IT AFFECTS HUMANS

I DON'T KNOW WHY PEOPLE AREN'T FACING EMOTIONAL RIGHT NOW

WHEN PEOPLE'S LIVES ARE AT STAKE

Migrational is natural borders are not.

EXECUTIVE ORDER PROTECTING THE NATION FROM FOREIGN TERRORIST ENTRY INTO THE US

Muslim attacks are 16/249,000 WANT TO STOP VIOLENCE! STOP POLICING BROWN AND BLACK BODIES!

I AM OPPOSED TO MASS MIGRATION

YOU KNOW, IN SWEDEN, THERE ARE NO-GO ZONES. POLICE DON'T FEEL SAFE

I don't know I don't have the... experiences to answer this question

IF YOU DIDN'T HAVE A HOME, IF EVERYWHERE YOU WENT CLOSED THEIR DOORS... where'd you go?

My family were not Muslim. But it still takes year to get papers. They've been waiting to get a better education. They've been waiting since 2011. It's 2017.

SHOULD WE ALLOW TENSION INTO A SAFE SPACE

8:30 - 10 PM Chapel Basement

BEFORE THE TRAVEL BAN, HOW MANY PEOPLE FROM SAUDI ARABIA COMMITTED TERRORIST ATTACK?

WHEN I GOT MY VISA TO COME HERE, I HAD TO GO THROUGH SCREENING AFTER SCREENING, THE AMOUNT OF DOCUMENTATION, SCREENING, VETTING TO GET INTO AMERICA - IT'S INSANE THE PEOPLE WHO COME HERE, COME HERE SO THEY DON'T HAVE TO WORRY - I CAME SO I COULD FINALLY BE MYSELF

03/09/17



Anna Ríos-Rojas | cardioid equations

Becky | Mylah Chandler

On April 23, 2016
at 9 pm
Beyonce released her sixth album
Lemonade
At the end of the fourth song
she sang the controversial
and already infamous words
“you better call Becky with the good hair”
And at that moment,
this
nation
erupted

“Becky” was deemed a “racial slur” by white
people nationwide
And I’m here to tell you
Becky is not a racial slur
It is a stereotypical name for a white female
But no,
it is *not* a racial slur
But oh how I wish it was

I’ll show you what it’s like to *be* a stereotype
What it’s like to walk down the street
and have people rake their eyes up and down
your body,
eating without asking,
asking without words
“Who are you?”
“How did you get here?”
“Where do you think you’re going?”
“Why are you here?”
“What does it feel like to be a problem?”

In this new world,
with this new bad word,
our values will change

There will be hair products dedicated to
“fixing” that Becky hair

There will memes as far as the eye can see
about Becky’s and Chad’s
and stereotypical white things
like Uggs and school shootings
Your children
will cry
and scream
and paint their skin
until they can look like their favorite princess-
oh pardon me-
their favorite *queen*
in their favorite movie
who they happen to notice never looks like them
You will wear butt pads
because your backside is a clear giveaway of
your Beckyness
no matter how much wet ‘n’ wavy you sow into
your scalp
Don’t worry
You’ll learn about weaves too
Beach waves and messy buns
will be deemed unprofessional
legally
and you will have to modify them for job
interviews
and maybe even the whole time you work at that
job
Your children
will get kicked out of school
for having hair too light
and too thin
and too straight,
for having voices too nasal,
their words too clear,
their -ings too annunciated,
their clothes too put together,
their everything’s too white
The other children can’t see *that!*
It will be a distraction,
a hindrance of learning

We're not even gonna be able to say it out loud
it'll be whispered in the privacy of melanin,
typed out as "B-asterisk-C-K-Y" on Twitter -
except for those radical liberal pages that just write it
out
or call them them *gasp*
whispering Rebecca
It sounds so much harsher with the "a" at the end
You will contour your skin
make your nose fatter,
your skin darker,
your cheeks less rosey,
your face less like your face
In like forty years
you guys will be saying "Becca" because you've re-
claimed the word
and it's okay to say now
as long you've got blonde hair
But what about your colored friends who dye their hair?
Or drink Starbucks?
Or do yoga on Tuesdays?
Do they have their "Becky cards"?
You'll have to discuss this as a whole Becky's,
not gonna lie
it's pretty confusing
You will wear contacts
because who wants to look at those boring blue eyes?
They're so blah ya know?
You will be asked
"You're a Becky? Like *only* Becky? You sure you not
mixed with a little Laquanda? I mean you're just soooo
pretty I never would've guessed!"
You will watch your people's blood
paint the sidewalks

And then just when you are about to pull that trigger
There will be protests and rallies
BECKYS LIVES MATTER
they will shout through the streets
There will be instagram pages dedicated to your struggle

Your college will *finally* assign an empty classroom
to your meetings with people like you
And right when you begin to make progress
you will be interrupted
by non Becky's
You will see organizations spring up
out of thin air in opposition to you
as if what little you are asking for is far too much
What? Only Becky's matter? *All* names matter!
what about Maria's?
what about Ling's?
what about Kentasia's?
Not everything is about race ya know
Not everything is about skin color ya know
Not everything is about hair ya know
It's just hair
It's just hair
IT'S JUST YOUR HAIR
Can I touch it? It's so stringy
like spaghetti or something
I just wanna lay in it

This is just the beginning sweetheart
You try to turn any bit of uncomfortability
into oppression
just to make yourself feel better
Be careful what you wish for, Becky

Lainie LaRonde | swan, caged

everything i touched became a rose. though
my hands were soft & small & i knew
that, it was like a curse. only
softness can come from softness
 or so they say, thinking my hands
 are all that i have.

& what of the punishment?
thistle barbs, rubbed up and down my thumbs
etching pain into this world—hands feet mind
 or so they say, thinking my life
 could be contained in my two white
 palms. a lake.
but had you read closely, you would know
i felt no pain, shed tears only
for the worry, the neverending silence
 (& wasn't that the real punishment
 anyway?)

the mouth is a zero-sum game—not a single
petal fell from it
even once. & though i
loved those swans as my own
 (arched necks pearl sheen
 a skin worth saving)
they could not fit a life on any single wing
between them. after all i am the only one
left to deal in such things
 as lives
 (though i possess none of my own)

now, sitting on this chair (throne? no.)
 rubies, emeralds, an unknown
face sighing into the dirt
rose petals bleed from my toes
& never have i wished to run
 farther faster
in my life



Alessandra Devia | the matriarch 2



Alessandra Devia | the matriarch 1



S. N. | The Making

Pamine. Sesame. Ogiri. Granat. Scotch Bonnet. Cayenne. Chicken. Yabas. Maggi. Old Bay. New World. Smoked. Fish and Turkey. Butter beans. Cassava Leaves. add Rice. more water, no salt. Hypertension. Lit Fuses. Dropped attitudes. Timers Ticking. Roast Beef. Soaked Sticks. Too wet to burn. Ginger Beer. Pepper Soup. Jollof. Fire. Holy Ghost. Crossing Over. New Years. Late Nights. Mid Mornings. Church at 10. Door at 11:30. Cold water is a warning. Gospel and Gossip. Holy. Sanctified. Inside. Counting Outside. Twenty Dollars Owed. Ten percent. Three parts to one. Father, Spirit, Son. This work is never done. Next week's orders. Hallelujah. Lingers. Dry Fish. Onions and Stews. Open Windows. Closed Classrooms. Child's Ridicule. Mondays. Migration. Degrees. No accreditation. Associates. Assistant. Long hours. No Boss. Alone time. Keys at 7. Babysitters. Expenses. Outstanding Child. Expecting Parent. Deliver. Honor Roll. A+. Doctors Dreams. Flying and Falling. Almost Drowning. Crossing Seas. Wizards. Dr. Oz. Omega 3s. Ori. Massages. Aching and Bruised. Long Hours. No Down Time. and a Half. Siblings. Their Dad. My Father. Needy. Unfulfilled. Bipolar. Stigma. Burden. Chores. Saturday Mornings. Seven Eleven. Slurpee. Macadamia Nut Cookie. FYE. New CD. 50 cent's The Massacre. Listen. Nine Times. Dead in the Car. Explicit. Abuse. Court House and Bond. Warning. Repeat Again. Advisory. Recovery. First Period. Sixth Grade. Best friend. Hate Then. Emo. Oreos. All Black. Hot Topic. Worn like a costume. Silence on the issues. J14, Disney Adventures, Ebony. Subscribed. Doctrine. Addicted. Uncertain. Awaiting the cure. Rock and Soul. Message in a Bottle. Ship. Stolen. Appropriated. Trapped. Prison. The Police. Brutality. Black History. February. Today. Still Standing. Long Walk to Freedom. Biography. Africa. Going Back Home. Salone. Garvey. Corruption. Politics. Visas. Boyfriends. See Him Again. Akwaaba. Facetime. Faceless. Nameless too. Hoes and Housewives Sidechicks and Mamas do. Cook for you. Culture and Customs. Borders and Bans. Crazy ass president. Tryna defeat the man. White Feminism and Pink Pussies. Revolution and Respectability. Overturn the Status Quo. We've got a long way to go. You still can't see me. Undercovers. Doing it in the dark. Not tired just resting. Ashamed we let it get this far. Rejuvenate my soul. Restore my image. What if my mama knew. Leave some room for the spirit between you two. Purity Rings. Quarter past. Time to overflow. Cry. Today for all the years we had to hold it in. Cry. to God to forgive us of our sins. Cry Freedom. That one day we'll find its light. Cry for help to restore the will to fight. Cry.

ASIAN

ME,
AGE 6



IN AMERICA

short stories on being Asian in America

ANGEL TRAZO

Angel Trazo | Cover

Shyenne Parris | Finally

Today I am feeling creative
Finally
I am feeling
Today I feel anything but the empty thing that sucks in desperately
Like the intake before a cry for help

Today my mother went to an interview
Her hands wringing out the moisture in themselves they hold each other like they're in danger of being washed
away at sea
Like sea otters
Enhydra lutis
I learned Latin while hiding the fact that I was Latina
I am Latinx,
X rated
Extreme
I am exultant
I am an exclamation:
I will not be silenced.
Tell them that.

To be or not to be is too easy
Being is not an option when your being is beholden to others
I am for my brother who only smiles when I am home
He is quiet and calm like a tide
I am frenzied like a storm
He soothes me
I move him
We push and pull
My mother tethers us to each other like tightrope made of titanium
My mother is never broken
I've watched her start over more times than I can count
Be devastated right after lunch and compose herself by dinner time
My mother does not know defeat
The day she acknowledges its existence is the day she teaches it to us
I am more like her than I admit
I can see my excitement in her smile
And her eyes glow like mine when she forgets to be guarded
And bursts into a happy sob
Like a flash flood.

She realizes that this is the age she gives me my independence
So I can give it to someone else
In exchange for intimacy
She watches as I put it back together every time

Someone drops it with careless hands
It hurts her too much so she pretends she doesn't care at all
I am more like her than I care to admit.

Today has been eleven months since the person I last gave myself took me up on my offer
With hands scarred by putting herself back together
And cutting herself on the edges
I am all edges
She knows how to handle them now.
Her hands move in between my spikes
She smooths out cracks with gentle motion
I feel less like pottery, more like Terracotta Army.
She reminds me that storms can be beautiful too
That I am full of strength that I am learning how to harness
That I was born of titanium
I can be no less than steel
So I have the power to support entire cities with my beams
She tells me she loves me like a prayer
Sunday School teacher, she teaches me about mercy and forgiveness
When she talks to me, her eyes glow like city Windows in a summer sunset and I can't tell if she is the sun or the window
All I know is that we both glow.

One day when we fought til I felt like I had swallowed cement and it hardened in the pit of my stomach,
My grandma told me "you can't love with everything you have. You leave yourself too vulnerable."
My grandma is like the Giving Tree and she was telling herself even though she said it to me
And nine times

Ninety nine times
Almost every time out of every time this is true but you are not the normal
Not the average
You are the things that people get put in asylums for saying they saw
The secrets of the universe

42
If you get that then you know too
You are the feeling of playing frogger across a 4 lane highway during rush hour
What I mean to say is that you are not stumbling home
Eyes glazed over from ibuprofen and everclear
What I mean to say is that you are not pathetic pleas
What I mean to say is that you are not "too much like the lightning which doth cease to be ere one can say it lightens."

What I mean to say is yes I know you love me
I feel it in my scalp and my laugh lines and the way my shoulders relax when I come home to you
I feel it in the tip of my pen
I forest fire for you too.

**NOT A BOY
NOT A GIRL
NOT YOUR BUSINESS**



BUCKET LIST



There's a difference between us and our parents. They had struggles.

But we have the pressure of making sure that struggle was worth something"

THE BURDEN OF PROOF

the

01/02/17

k.g. | Collateral Beauty

Mom you're grieving me
but I'm still here.
You can grieve for your daughter,
but please celebrate your son.

We just saw the movie,
and we're talking about it
in the car on the drive home.
You say the words,
but I don't think you really
know what they mean,
at least not together.

You can grieve for your daughter.
Cry when I cut my hair,
Complain about my clothes.
I know you see the ghost
of the femininity
I never quite fit in to.
So I understand why you weep

But please,
celebrate for your son.
Smile when I try on my first suit,
don't turn away when I feel elation
at the sight of my name
on a brand new christmas stocking.

Please don't throw away
the beauty of my becoming.



Virginia Moore | tree

hannah | روح



Lorelai Avram | Roots

I'm staring at my reflection in the mirror while the hair on my head is gradually disappearing. It's like a veil is being lifted off my face, exposing it in its entire, round ugliness. My cheeks are so fat, my lips so thick, my nose so big. God, I look monstrous, like a blob fish. I glance to the right. Sol is sitting there. I can't believe she's seeing me like that, how awful. I start crying. The barber notices, pauses the machine and turns to Sol to say something to her in the language they share, that's incomprehensible to me. Sol translates: "He can stop, if you want him to." There's only a tuft of hair left on my scalp, next to my right ear. "Stop now? Lol. I'm okay. He can carry on." I hear the sound of the secret language again, then the buzz of the clippers. After a couple of minutes, silence. I get off the chair. I'm surrounded by mirrors, and I can't bear to see all of these ugly reflections of my new, bald self. I step outside and put on a hat, while Sol pays. We start walking back, and I'm suddenly overwhelmed by a powerful desire to see myself. Ugly. As I am. Like when you have a mouth sore and insist poking it with your tongue even though it hurts. I take off the hat, and examine myself in every car wing mirror, and every shop window we pass by. I tell myself I look fine. I ask Sol what she thinks. Her answer isn't encouraging enough. I get upset again. We run into one of her friends when we get close to his house. The friend asks, "Why'd you do that? Your hair was so nice."

My hair used to be long and blonde, even though the short roots sticking up on my scalp now are dark brown. It was "honey" or "vanilla" blonde at first: 8.0 in hair-dye speak. Then, platinum blonde. 10.0. I first lightened it in 11th grade. I had it bleached, then dyed blue. I said it was for an English assignment - write an essay on a "personal experiment" similar to the one Thoreau described in Walden: living alone in the woods. Here's a diary entry from the first day I woke up with blue hair:

This morning, my pillowcase was blue. I freaked out for a second, but then I remembered. My hair was blue. And I had paid \$200 for it, which my mom wasn't too happy about. I'd tried passing it off as an experiment for school, but she said that there had to be plenty of experiments I could write about that were also free. I honestly didn't know it would cost that much, and now I'm not even sure I love it. It's not exactly a strong blue. It's more like a blue-gray, like Boris's fur. Boris is my cat. She lives at home, and she's a Russian Blue cat, but in spite of her name, she's not that blue.

I was super embarrassed when I left Blake, my dorm, this morning, but it was fine. Tori came up to me while I was in line in the cafeteria. She said my hair was cool, and asked me to join her table for lunch. I sat with her and five of her friends, after I got my steamed broccoli and mac'n'cheese. I'm still nervous about my English, so I didn't talk much, but it was nice to eat with people. I usually eat alone, in the back of the dining hall, where they have those small, individual tables, where you normally sit if you wanna cram in some last-minute studying. Most of the time I'm there, I don't even need to study.

I only had history and calculus today. Bannerbach, the history teacher, does not even attempt to pronounce my name the right way. He's too scared of sounding foolish, I guess, so he sticks with what he knows: the American way of saying it. I hate hearing people use that ugly name to call me, so I'm starting to hate his class. Mrs. Pressman was nice, she said she used to have pink hair in college, and that she loved my hair. However, she also gave us another quizz, which I probably failed. I hate to let her down, but it's my mother who signed me up for AP Calculus BC. I'm gonna have to transfer to another section.

I went to debate in the afternoon. I got very flustered once I started delivering my speech, and forgot all about CAIC: crux, argument, illustration, and conclusion. After I was done, everything the coach said was: "I counted how many times you said "like" in your speech: 47 times." She's clearly never tried to deliver a speech in my language.

I said, "Oh fuck", out loud, after I heard this, and Nicole, this annoying girl, gasped. There are always gasps when I curse. I said holy shit the other day, and my sailing coach freaked out. He always says "holly molly", or "holly guacamole", which I find very silly. English curse words don't sound that blasphemous to me, it's not like any-

one has ever told me they were bad before. I learned them from the movies, where everyone curses. They're just words, why give them so much power?

Anyway, Julian and Vicky felt bad for me, I think, so they sat down with me for dinner, after debate practice. At some point, Mr. Mackenzie, the headmaster!!, who was also eating dinner in the cafeteria for some reason, came to our table to talk to me. He asked why I'd dyed my hair blue, and I replied, "Out of school pride", 'cause the school colors are blue and white. Mr. Mackenzie laughed, and so did Julian. My cheeks got hot and red, but I was happy inside that I'd told a good joke. I'm very funny in my language, but when I try joking in English, I usually end up having to explain myself. When I told my mom about Mr. Mackenzie, she got annoyed, and said that she'd prefer it if the headmaster talked to me to congratulate me on my grades, but it's good I dyed my hair blue, since that's apparently the only chance I have at recognition. (And she doesn't even know about my plan to transfer out of my calculus course.) I cried after our conversation, of course.

A month later, the blue dye was completely washed off. My hair was blonde. My host mother offered to color it dark brown for me, but I refused. It was really pretty as it was.

I hadn't been a very attractive teenager. I was chubby, had ugly glasses, ugly clothes and weird bangs. I had been bullied throughout middle school and had spent the first two years of high school in love with a boy (my desk-mate) who didn't really want to date me. (He didn't budge even after I'd scratched "Hippy-Dippy loves you" on the desk we shared.)

Leaving for the US at age sixteen had already revealed itself to me as an opportunity for reinvention. On my first American shopping trips, I bought my first dresses (from Urban Outfitters and Forever 21), my first high-heels (one pair black, the other, red), my first wallet (from Guess) and first handbag (also red). I still remember these purchases very well; it's only recently that I found the courage to throw these items away, though I'd stopped wearing them a long time ago.

The blonde hair, a remnant of my experiment, acted as a catapult; it propelled me far away from the girl I'd been and was trying to leave behind. It also promised more masculine attention, which had been slim up to that point. While my friends had all heard many tales about my romantic trysts with cute boys, most of them were either imaginary, or involved not-cute boys.

In the beginning, I didn't even know how to color my ever re-emerging dark roots myself; I had to visit a professional every time. My mother refused to pay for constant visits to a hair salon, so my dark roots were often showing. My hair didn't look too good in the photos that were taken on my 18th birthday party.

But then I learned and sometimes even got my friends to do it. My dark roots seldom showed anymore. But some people - those who knew what to look for - could still see them.

I spent the summer after my first year of college in South America. I'd gotten a grant from university to intern at a newspaper in Santiago de Chile. I was there for two months, and then traveled through Brazil and Argentina. I was excited about the internship, but even more excited about meeting men.

The promise the blonde hair had made about masculine attention proved to be false even though the brown boy who'd broken off what had been a very short affair between the two of us, October of freshman year, also believed it. He'd sugarcoated his rejection by saying that my blonde hair would help me get many more guys (even frat guys!), so why was I sad!? It turned out I had reasons to be sad. I didn't "get" any more guys from October to May. I'd left the university campus feeling lonely and unattractive.

Once in South America, I traveled around: I couchsurf (slept on strangers' couches) and hitchhiked (hitched rides on the highway). These two concepts are meant to make traveling available to those who wouldn't otherwise afford it; travelers rely not on money, but on the generosity of strangers. There is a catch. The generous strangers are often men who choose to solely help women. They usually want something in return: sexual gratification. They will sexually harass their guest or their hitchhiker to varying degrees to make their desire clear. At age nineteen, I was young, insecure and starved for male attention enough to mistake sexual harassment for

genuine interest. So I kissed many gross men. And these men always wanted to know: was my hair really blonde? They always looked at my dark roots suspiciously. I enjoyed the validation they gave me. I wasn't about to risk it, especially since a Chilean man had told me that "Chileans usually liked their women thinner" while measuring me with his eyes. "Good thing my hair was blonde," he seemed to imply. (I knew men everywhere liked their women thin. I really knew it: by that point I had been trying to lose weight for years. I had tried the 12-day diet, the three-month diet and the starving myself diet. I'd tried each of them many, many times, with little success.) So I made up stories about why my roots were darker. I said my hair lightened a lot in the sun. I resolved to dye it more frequently.

At the end of that summer, I went back to the university campus and felt as invisible as I had before. There were many other blonde women there, whose hair color was natural, and who also had skinny bodies and expensive, fashionable clothes on top of that. But my roommate and best friend had many dates. I used to say in jest that she was the attractive heroine and I her chubby sidekick. Sometimes my jesting was bitter. When we had a big fight before leaving for Seoul to spend our junior fall semester there, I decided to pull out and take a year off. I didn't want to feel alone in a country famous for how men liked their women: really skinny.

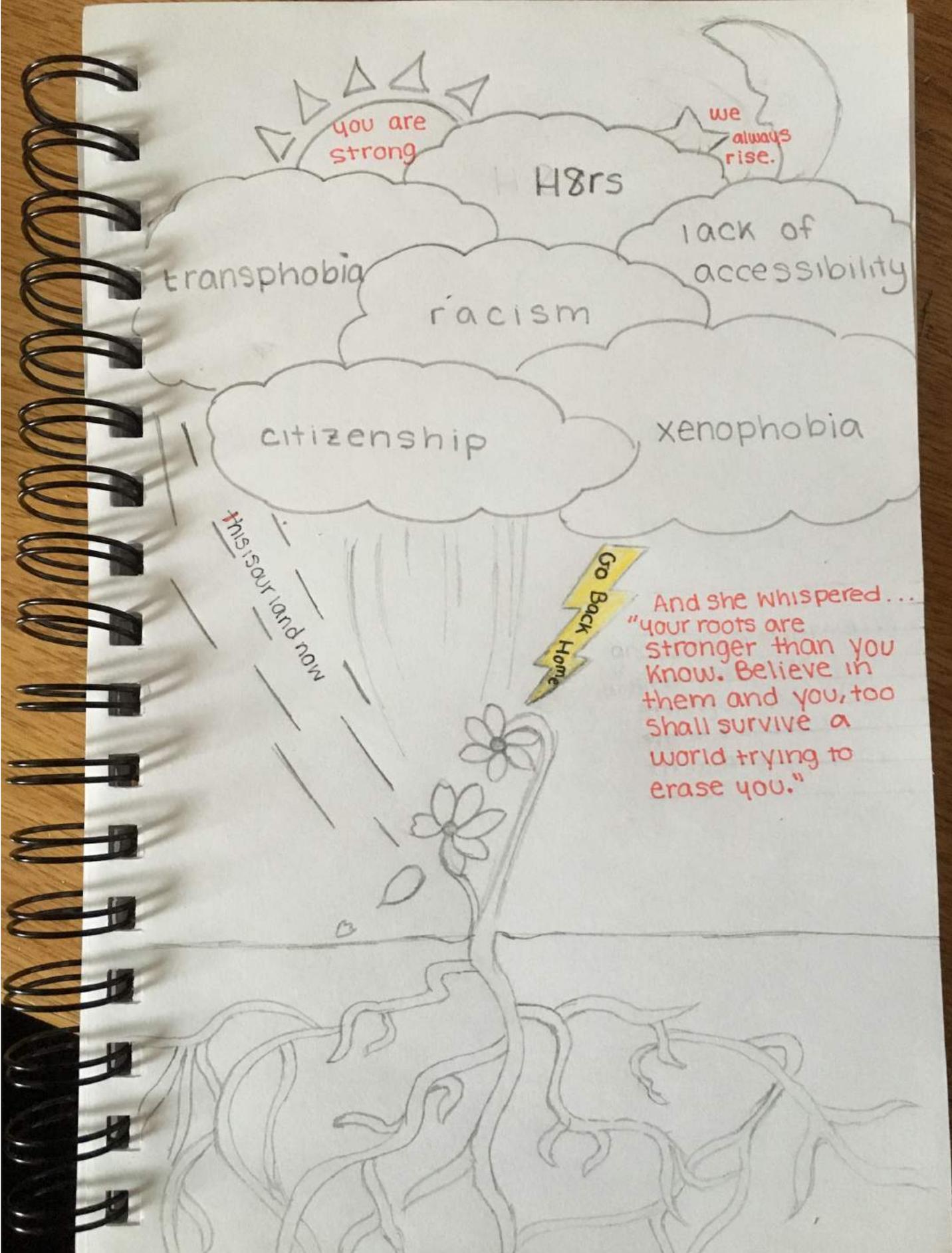
Instead, I went back to Latin America, where men have internalized racism and as such have grown to like white (and, even better, blonde!) women regardless of their measurements. I started a relationship with a Mexican man while in Mexico City, moved in with him and lived with him for the next 6 months. I never told him what my natural hair color was. Though he asked, and so did his friends. My most recent ex is the first sexual/romantic partner to know my natural hair color. Though only recently did I tell her it wasn't blonde.

Dying one's hair blonde is part of faking whiteness. Though I'm told by Internet sites that women color dye their hair a lighter shade because "blonde women are supposed to be more fun", I think they do it because blonde women approach the white, patriarchal colonizer's ideal of female beauty: the skinny woman with white skin, blonde hair and blue eyes. As such, they attract more masculine attention.

I needed to rid myself of the hair dyed blonde to be truthful to my origins and chip away at my own self-hate (telling me that I needed to act and look like someone I'm not in order to feel beautiful and appreciated.) I also wanted to shave my head in order to claim ownership of my body. Growing up, it often seemed like my body solely belonged to my parents. As a child, I always had to wear this purple hat because my mother thought it pretty, though I hated it so much I'd tried getting rid of it by throwing it out of the window or putting it in the trashcan on several occasions. As a teenager, I was beaten when I wanted to wear clothes or a hairstyle that my parents didn't approve of.

Since then, I've gotten piercings and tattoos and colorful highlights in my hair and wore whatever the heck I pleased. And now, I also shaved my head. To go back to the roots. Show the roots. The roots I hated so much and wanted to make disappear so much that I'd burn my scalp with peroxyde every month. To make sure everyone knows my body is mine because I chose an "unfeminine" haircut that most men don't like, that my parents hate, though I couldn't care less.

It was hard, because when I looked at myself in the mirror, my head shaved, I only saw my face. The face I'd found ugly, too round (like a full moon, as my parents would "joke"), its features non-descript apart from the big nose. The face I'd always tried to cover with my hair. I never wanted my long hair in a ponytail or braided; I always wanted it down, using it like a curtain I could hide behind. But it's okay, there's nothing I want to hide anymore.



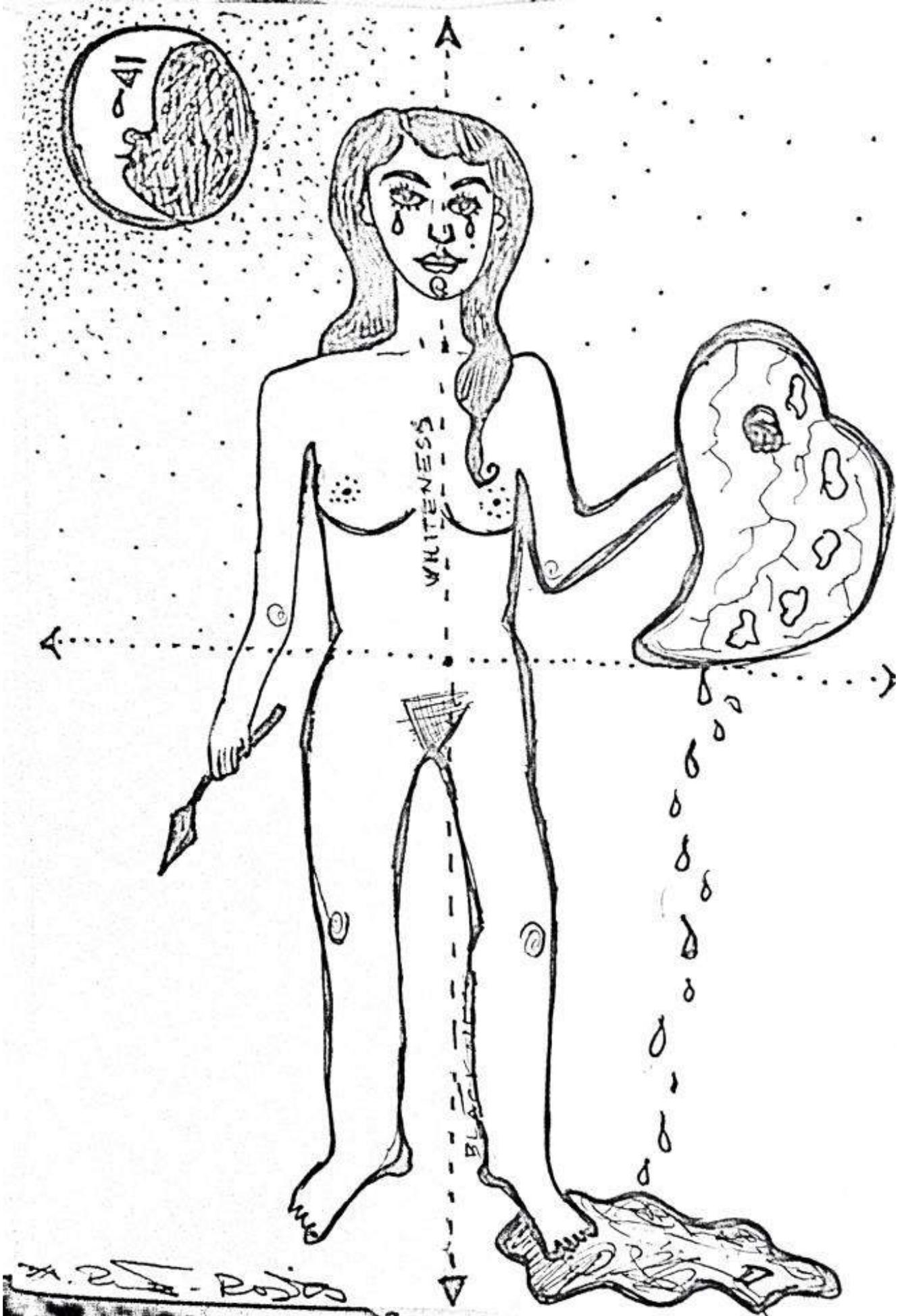
Chinyere Okogeri | untitled



Virginia Moore | anxious



Jake Mahr | untitled



Anna Ríos-Rojas | The AssimiLatina

Shyenne Parris | Tale Telling

*Tale telling-to tell a lie,
or to tell a story.*

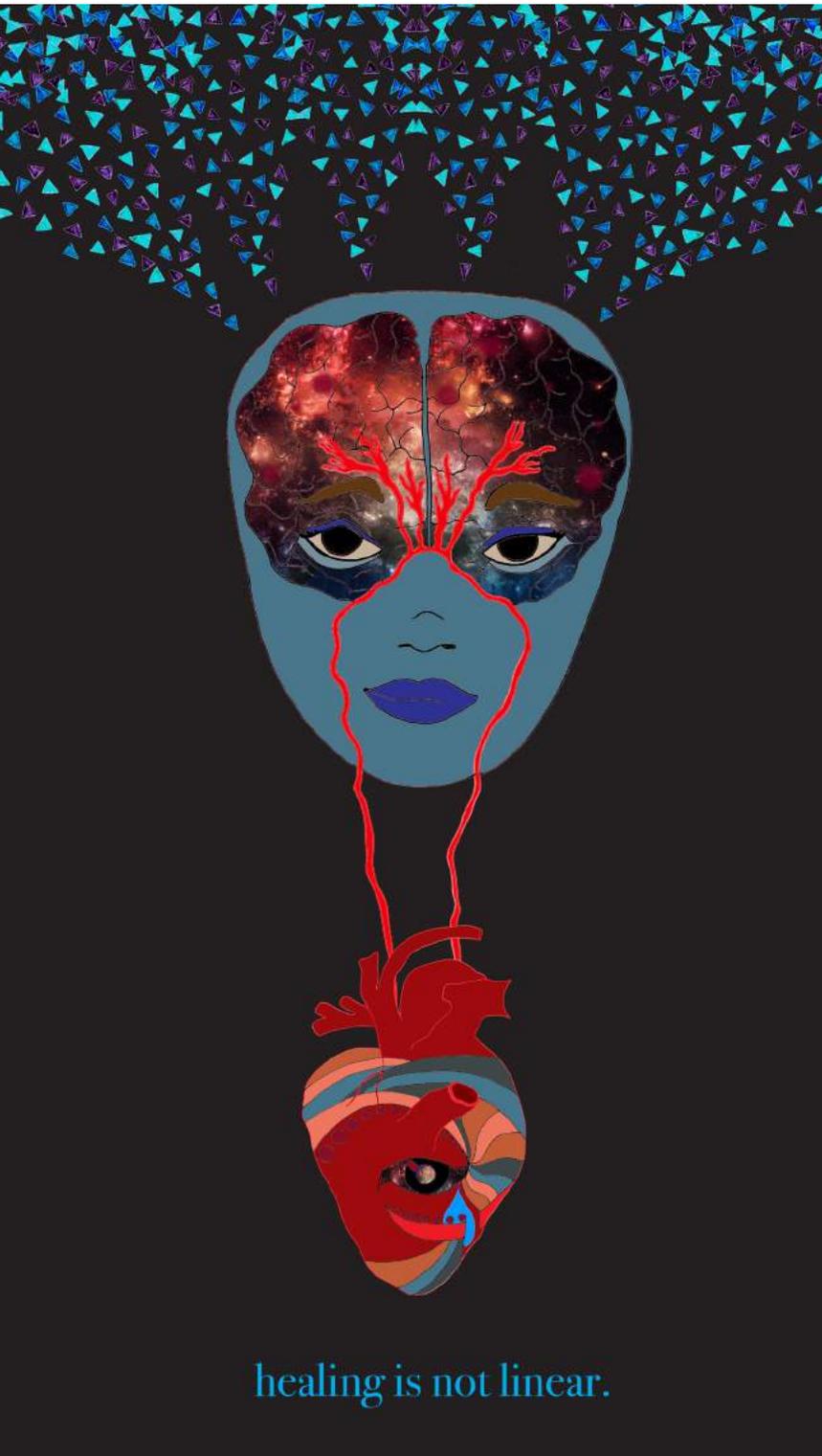
My mother's anxiety pulls tight at the laces of my chest.
It goes over, under my grandmother's caution at every hand offering handouts without a catch.
My head is bent low in my stepfather's predatory style of observation
as my blood bubbles furiously with my mother's rage at having been caged in places with signs saying
"home"
even though they were more regret than refuge.
Fingers shake with the cooped up tiger that is my ADHD,
the only thing I own.
The writing that leaves my pen is my mother bringing her backpack
and her daughter to college classes
mixed with my grandmother's knack for locking her accent away behind sharp smiles
that sink teeth into her cheeks like barbed wire
and my stepfather's frustration that
leaks into his hairline like a silver ripple.
My father's gift of storytelling runs through my veins
diluted only by my tendency to lie when given a chance to tell the truth.



Virginia Moore | outside

Gracie Morgan | Ineffable

I'm sorry if I spelled your name wrong
You see
I've only learned how to spell words like
Separate and temperature
And
Diagram and character
I taught myself
How to spell
Beautiful words like
Bauble and serendipity
So you see
It's on me to learn
You have a beautiful name
I'll teach myself how to spell it



hannah | healing is not linear

Lainie LaRonde | Way Station

A found poem based in Vievee Francis' Forest Primeval

I want to stand still.
How I want to say it—
and yet,
 words fail me
here.
Something has been lost
that won't return in this life,
which I'd take for
dead
if I didn't believe in spring's coming.

Tell me you haven't felt this way.
(This secret won't free you.)

I say,
 give me something else.
An insistent mouth
a mouth where I might go to pray
 Hungry mouth—
 so many kinds of hunger—
but where else was all this rage to go?

Have you ever seen such a thing?
& the lie of it?

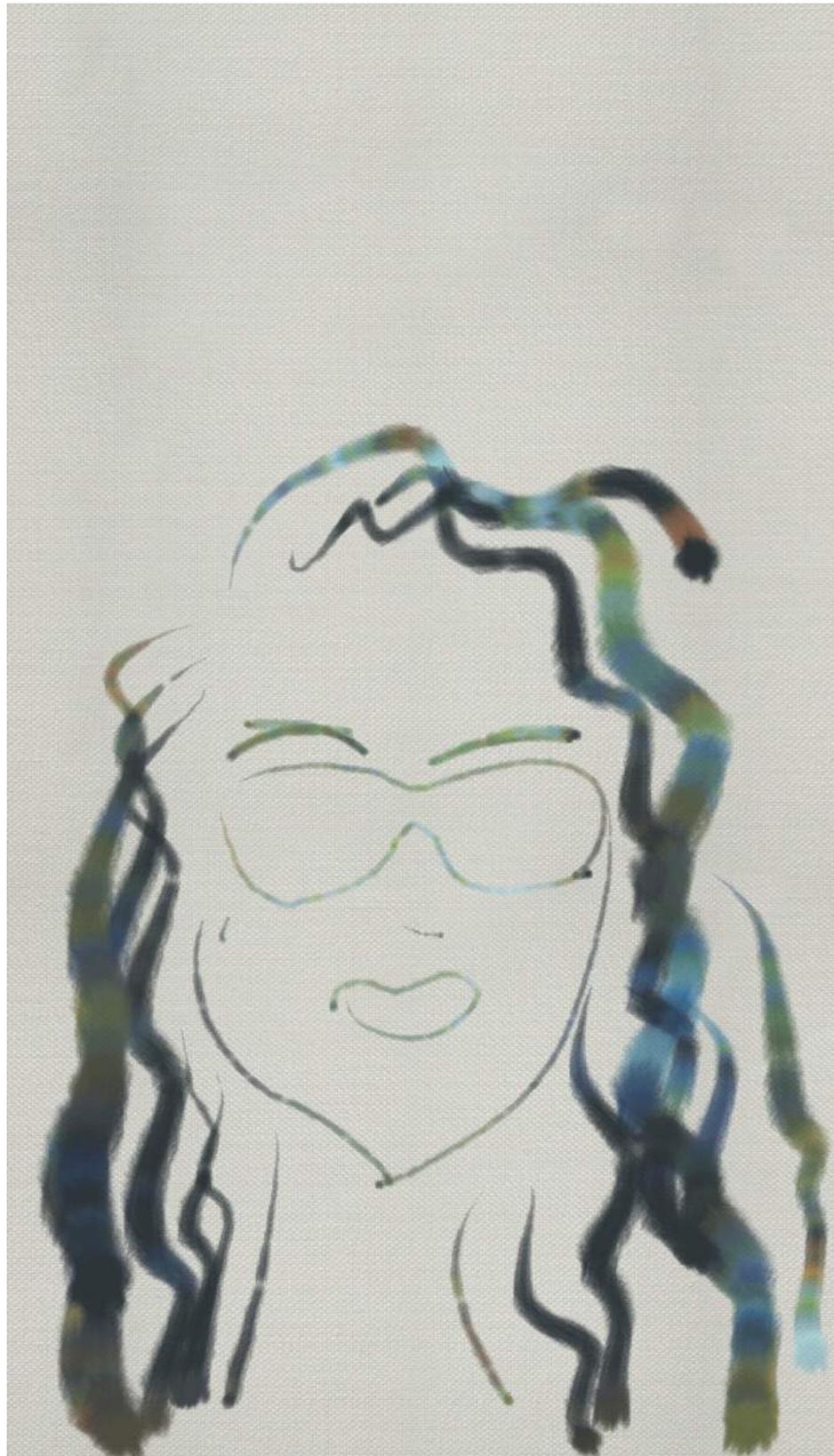
Lainie LaRonde | Heart Rot

In my dream last night, I was in a wood.
Or rather, a forest. (We love to say
synonym, but no idea can simply
be replaced by another. I would say
that's god's job, or whatever higher power.
See? Inequivalent.)

I was walking, a blur of dark green
black—obsidian, an ancient bruise—
and did I mention there were only five trees?
Five, which has no other significance
than this dream, which, of course
makes it wholly significant. Anyway,
I was walking, a blur of dark green
and black and the five trees
which weren't moving, but were
always there, which is to say that
I was not walking.

The branches were jewel-encrusted,
twinkling in the not-light of this
forest (and why was it dark anyway,
what with only five trees?)
and then I saw that the jewels
were really eyes, and not only this,
I could see through them—
self on self, a tunnel of mirrors—
and I could feel the teeth coming
closer on each side of me
(five each, of course,
insignificantly) and I ran,
but of course I was not running
because I was not moving because
I was dreaming—

And when I woke up, there was
moss in my hair and jewels in my
palms and the blackness was seeping
from between my toes and I knew that
I was missing four of my sisters.
Which is to say, what is a dream and
how do you know when you have left it.



Taylor Huffer | Me

나 

서울 
Seoul

Skyscrapers
Rivers
Mountains
Palaces

TAKING
BEST
PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION
ON EARTH 

동네 골목 walking dig up antholes plant sweet potatoes

hike 양봉산 in 물푸레골
창덕궁

Sit in 서울국제고 운동장 soccer field of my high school, watches the beautiful night view of Seoul, and takes it all in ... 야경

Food 남남! 김치 

반은 미는 매식 나물 반찬 재개 그릇 정가락

LIFE CHANGING CONVERSATION

Grew with the clicks of silver chopsticks & spoons

Shares concerns about LIFE with friends over

빙수  at cafes "오른 할랑했다"

시위  세월호
Protest Sewol Ferry

일본군 '위안부' (성노예제) 
Military Sexual Slavery by Japan

NEVER FORGET

청의 Justice
Inequality

Youth Activists
edstudies

타이완  추억 

ASIAN WOMAN

KOREAN WOMAN

International F-1

marginalization
identities
being human
transformations

ACCEPTING
MYSELF

한국인 
crossing borders

roots "non-resident alien"

Learning

나의 조각들  

Unlearning

김우희

Woohee Kim

Remembering
Unerasing

나다음 

WRIT 280 with Professor Morton
Inspired by EDUC 312 with Spring Professor Morton



fuck shame

Allie Fry & Natasha Torres | fuck shame

I am sitting in my living room, when something catches my eye. I look out the window and see Superman and Superwoman laughing, drinking from red solo cups. It's Halloween weekend. I look at them and wonder: Who are they going to save? Do they realize that they need to save themselves first?

I thought of you. I think of you, often. You, the ones who tell me that you are here to "fight the good fight". You, the ones who get an A on our midterm, so I know you have an arsenal of knowledge, at your disposal. You have been bestowed with the gift of language; so you know Exactly what to say at Precisely the right time. You the ones who say, you are truly here, to help dismantle these systems of racism, capitalism, classism, sexism, ableism, and many other -isms. You adorn your schedule with classes like badges of honor that claim to deconstruct such "isms". When you walk into class, your jacket sounds with the clinking of badges. So you come in, and you theorize. You utilize words and language, better than I can. And for that Academia has honored you. Then you leave and You are done. You switch off. And I am left here, hurting. I cannot switch off. You get so caught up in theory that you don't realize that we are talking about matters of Life and Death. This is Real Life. Real Lives. How do you disassociate, numb yourself, from what you claim to be learning? Are you afraid that if you switched back on, awoke from your numbness, and continued to remain switched on, you would not be able to handle what you see? I realized that there is learning and there is LEARNING. If you were actually Learning, then your world would shatter. You wouldn't be able to check in during class, Hello, and check out after class, Goodbye! You would have awoken to your humanity and this would overtake your experience. You would be so disillusioned with the system that you wouldn't be able to survive the everyday on auto-pilot anymore.

I know, it seems easy to go through life on auto-pilot. But living like this alienates you from your experiences, it dehumanizes you. I know language is a powerful tool, but it has its limits. I don't care if you use the Right Words. I am no longer moved by your ability to deconstruct and manipulate language. Stop trying to compete for the badges; they aren't a prize. This Is Not A Game To Win. In reality, none of us win. In reality, all of us lose. These systems of oppression are breaking us all, one by one, and the worst part is that some of us have no clue. I am thinking of you. I am thinking of me. I am thinking of us. I am calling for a deeper understanding of self. Only by better understanding yourself, can you understand the connections to systems, in order to dismantle and transform them. So, Stop performing. Stop pretending. Visibility is not allyship. I hold us all to the same standards that I hold myself. We need to embrace our humanness because we are human beings and we all deserve to lead fully human lives. I know it's hard, to take that step. But have courage. Stop being so fixated on academia and realize that here is life and death. Our lives, mine and yours, are at stake here. Academia and Language can only take you so far. We can use fancy words, but if that's it, then what's the point? What is real? This game is not real. What is real is that we are dying. When you switch off, your soul shrivels up. When your performance comes to a close and you take your bow, nobody will be left to applaud you. My soul is struggling to survive.

What kind of world will we inhabit once we start to decolonize our minds and souls? Where will we be welcomed? How can we exist in a world that is so deeply entrenched in maintaining this current system of whiteness? Where will we go? Will we only be truly free in a far-off galaxy? Should we kill ourselves?

This is a real question and this is a question, if we stop turning away, we are bound to ask. Do we think that Superman and Superwoman will come save us? We are here. You are here; I am here; We are here. We are Living and Breathing and we are Real. And this is Revolutionary. This is Magical. This is Beautiful. We have a right to be here and we need to save ourselves. In order to start, we need to hold ourselves accountable, but we also need to forgive ourselves, because we see the connection and difference between self and system. I am thinking of you, I am thinking of me, I am thinking of us. Let's begin.



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The machine will grind you
down, but the machine is not

bigger than the imagination.

Rome fell in a day. We know this.

SUHEIR HAMMAD