

Golden



ashtray

By pirooz Kalayeh

Palm trees circled with  
Christmas lights.

~~cushioned with~~ perfectly-  
edged bushes at their  
base.

"Nine stories" in my backpack.

Jewel playing ~~through~~ in  
~~speakers lining~~ the courtyard.

A woman with a crossword,  
~~sits~~ next to me, says hello.

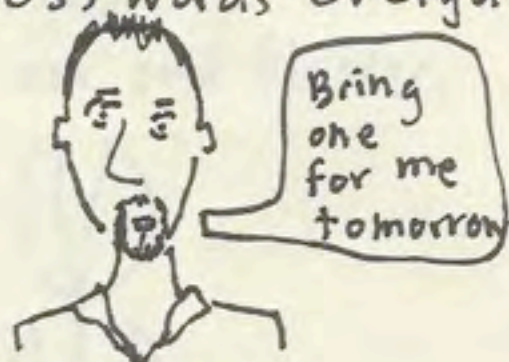
We have met ~~before~~.

here several times.

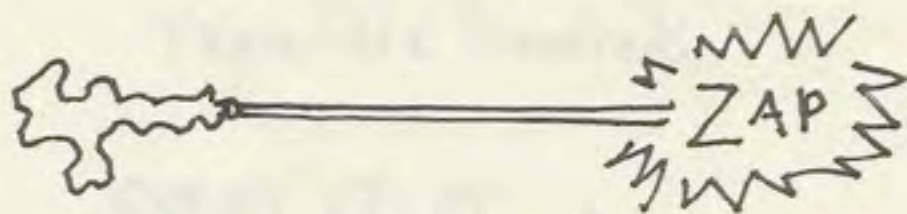


WG,  
I say.

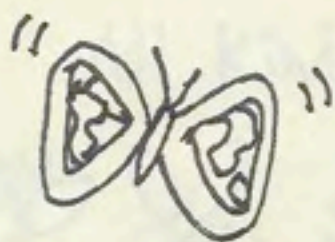
She is beautiful.  
I love her discipline.  
Cross words everyday.



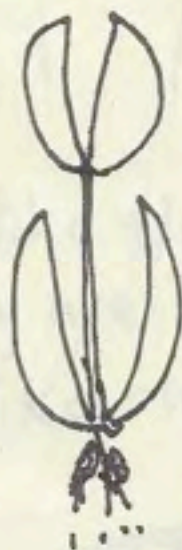
A giggle.  
She looks back at her puzzle.  
She is disciplined.  
She is a laser.



She makes hearts  
wilt in desert heart.  
She is a bumblebee.  
She is a butterfly.



I am one flower.

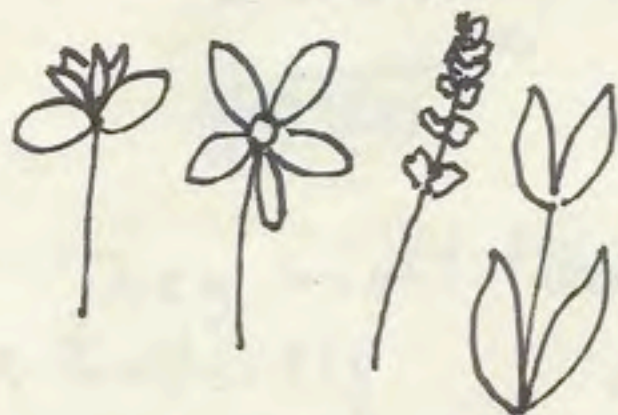


There are hundreds.





All Kinds.



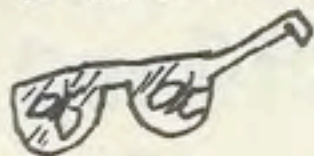
I like flowers.  
They are beautiful.  
I like sunglasses too.



I'd like to get a pair.  
I would wear them all the  
time.

People could see their  
reflection in them.

Butterflies too.

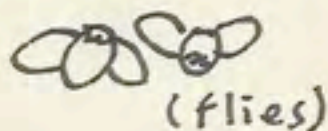
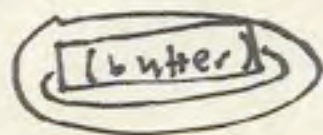


They might think I was  
a butterfly.

♪ ...Just the <sup>2</sup> of us  
we can make it  
if we try... ♪

Yeah, Hollywood has  
lots of sunglasses.

Everyone dreams  
of butterfly flies.



(flies)

Everyone dreams of  
Destiny.

Our One and only's.

I like to dream about  
Destiny's Child.

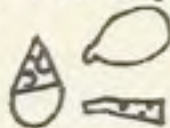
I watch anything with  
Jennifer Connelly in it.

She dreams about Justin Timberlake.  
She watches anything  
with Jared Leto in it.

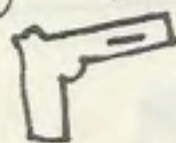
Carver's Side:



My Side:



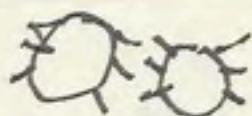
Hemingway's Side:



My side:

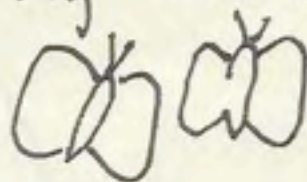


Basquiat's Side:

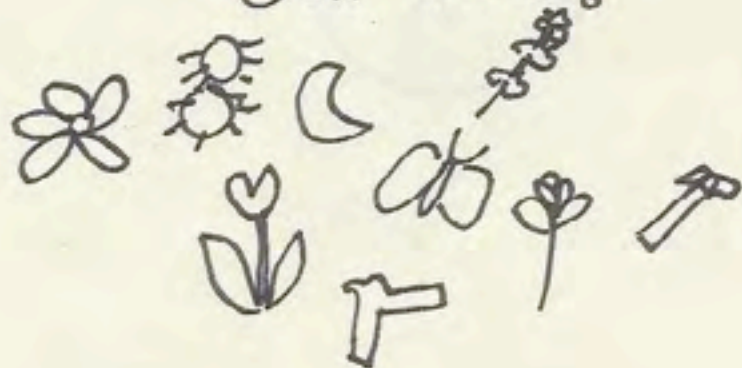


fleas

My side:



Our side:

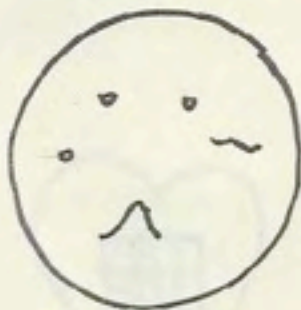




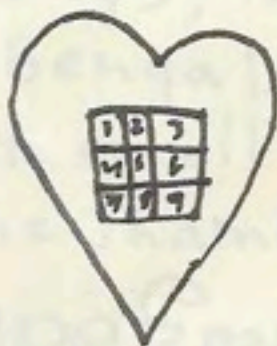
Our slide:



No sides:



All sides :



Thousand of street peddlers  
in Hollywood.

They ask me for spare  
change in every language.

I am darker here too.

I just noticed my arm.

I am getting tan.

I like my tattoo.



It says, I LOVE YOU,  
in Bengali.

I can smell citrus  
from the Thamba juice.

Grapefruit.



There is a woman  
who looks like Marcy Gray  
staring at me.



She is beautiful.  
I think I have a quarter.  
I found one under  
the CoinStar at Ralph's.

Marcy smiles at me.  
She leaves.  
I don't think she wanted  
a quarter.  
I can keep the one I  
found





That's a good thing.  
Money is nice.  
I'd like to hold onto more.  
There are so many  
Street Urchins though.  
So many languages.

জাতি ভাষাকে ভালোবাসি

faire tout son possible Yo no tengo dinero.  
Double Roatee, please!  
You got some spare change?

ㄷㅌ

appena sufficiente

توروں کے لئے کچھ  
!جیڑ سٹو

please some change

ボキヤララー - خیل

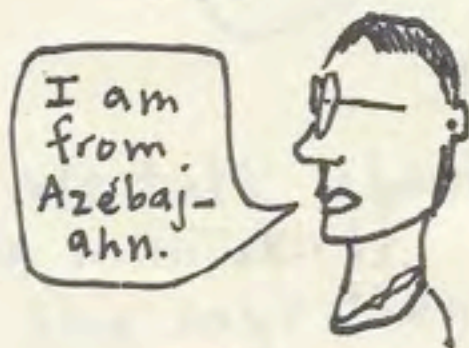
I'm a sucker for accents.  
There's my Mom.



The woman from Missouri.



The woman sitting  
next to my right.

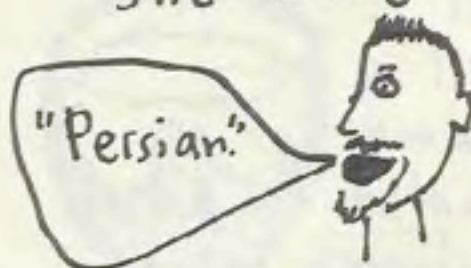




I say



She asks



I say.

We talk about old women  
in mini skirts.

She says they should have  
more self-respect.

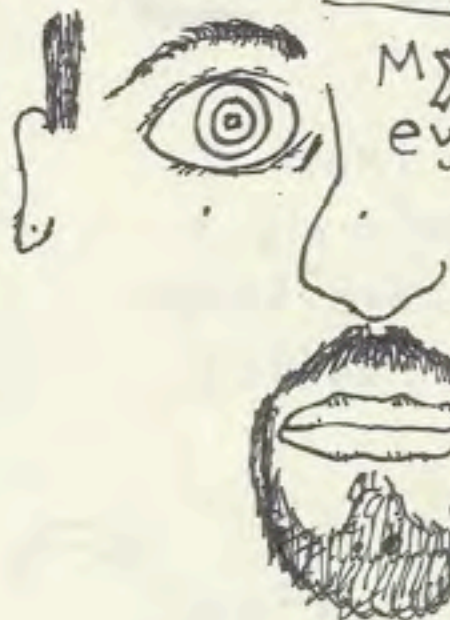
I laugh.

I like her accent.

It's like chewing oatmeal.



← oats, Quaker.



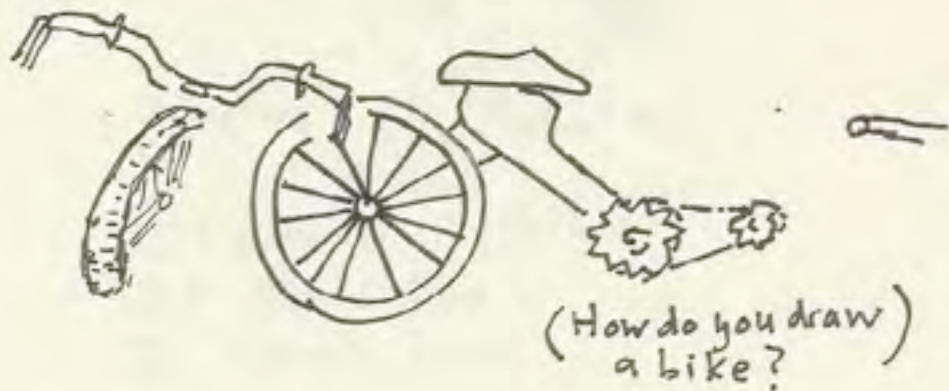
My  
eyes are wide  
open here.

In a matter  
of 5 minutes,  
I see a robbery,  
a little girl run  
away from her  
father, and a  
family of 7 offered  
free bikes by a  
local Christian.



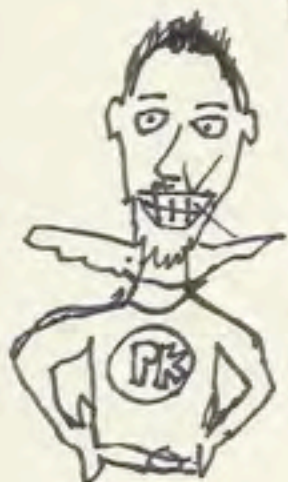


I want a free bike too.  
A big wheel would be  
good too.  
Either one.



I figure once you  
draw one.

You don't ever forget.  
Here's one from Hollywood  
to you.



It's a transformer.  
It flies too.

I name her

Optimus 713.

She's lucky.  
Don't worry.



I am sitting in North Hollywood.  
It is a tired Monday.  
I feel lonely and alone.



Last night I read some J. D. Salinger.  
I read e-mails.  
I tried to stay awake.

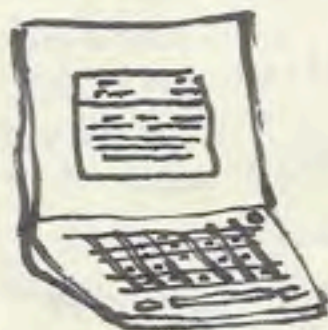


I fell asleep though.  
That's how it goes.  
Now I am on lunch.

I am sitting at a table.  
I got some green tea.  
I have no sunglasses.



I think about Nicole.  
I miss her so much.  
I think about Annie's e-mail.



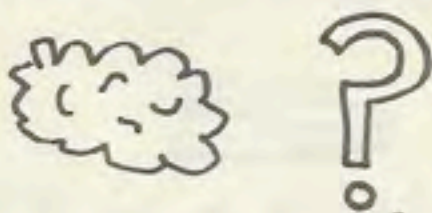
She says I have a warped  
sense of women.

She says I have a wounded  
heart.

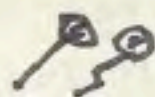
She says a lot of things.



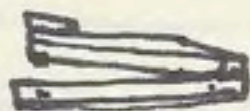
I told her she might be  
right. I didn't really know.  
I am pretty clueless.



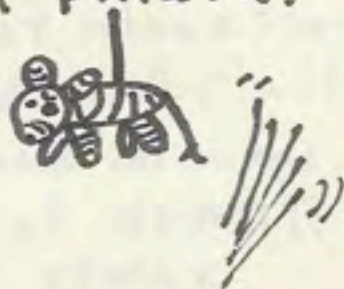
My heart is an icicle.  
It is sharp and edgy.  
It can be made  
into ice cream.  
It can be churned like  
butter.  
It can wilt in desert  
heart.  
It can cough gumdrops.  
It can swallow itself  
whole in unholy measure.  
It can be tender.  
It can be tough as nails.



It draws itself back to life.  
It uses needle and thread.  
It is a stapler.



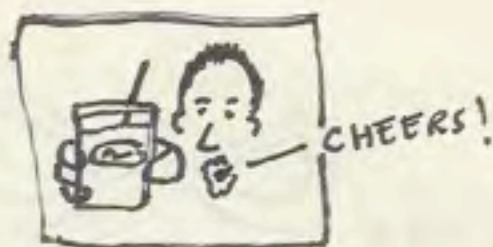
It is a piñata.



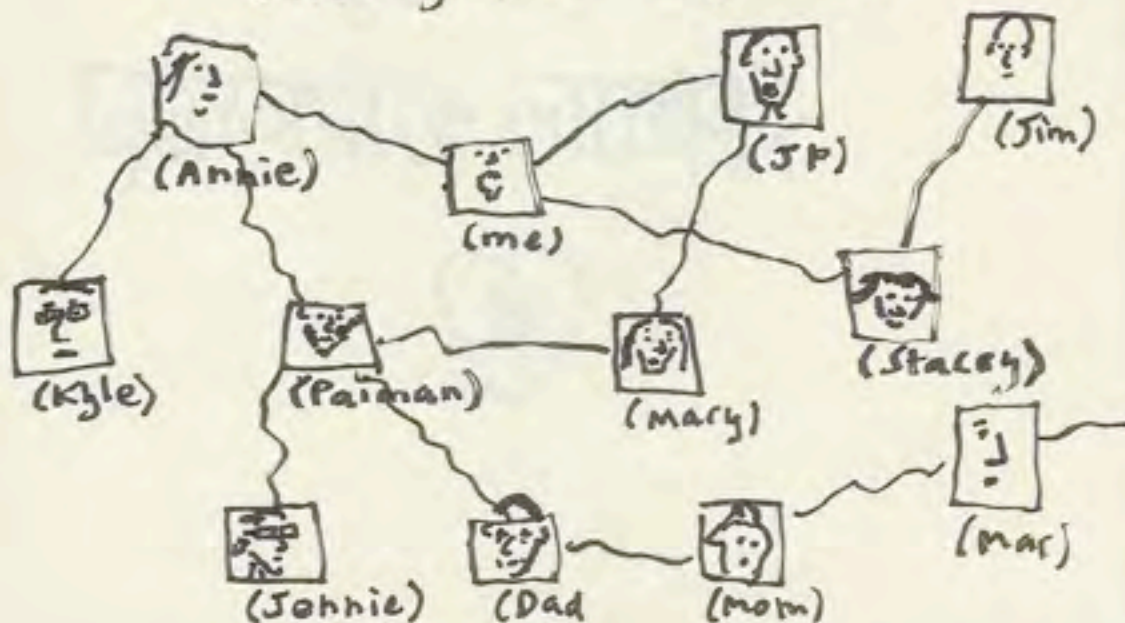
It is a milkshake.

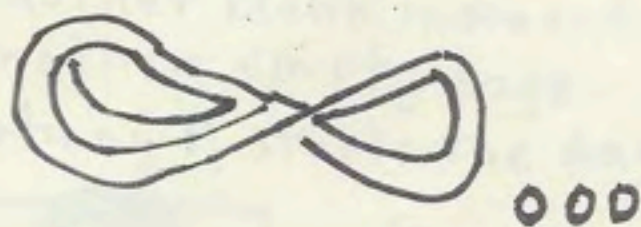


It is green tea.  
It is Monday morning.  
I drink horchatas to it.  
I cheers the world.



"Yeah, today is a tough one."  
I am not alone though.  
Hollywood walks with me.  
A thousand dreams.  
Buckets of HEART.  
Pails of SPEAK.  
Thimbles full of fingers  
sticking us all together.





3.14...

30 ...

50 h m ...

আমি তোমাকে ডাঙোবদি





Another blank moment.  
Another empty page.  
Johnny P. starts the day.



(I can't get his hair right. It's more buoyant).

I comment on L.A.  
in the winter...



"The same  
as this. More  
overcast.  
Not as sunny."

I notice J.P. is getting younger.

Pretty soon, he is 14 years old.

He is articulate for his age.



I am getting younger too.

I am 23.

I am here to destroy all cover bands.



I am 52.

I am in Aculpoco.

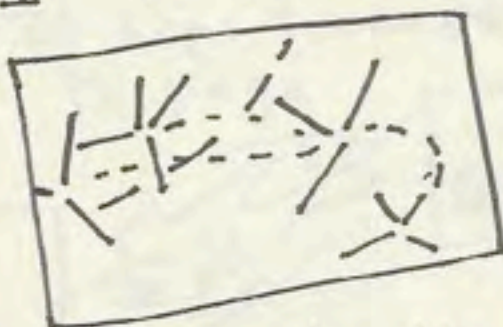
I trace my big toe in  
the sand



I am a voice.

I am everywhere.

I ricochet off stars.



I am majestic.

I am nothing.

I am numbers.

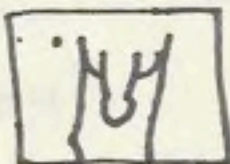
1 0 1 1 0 1 1 1 . . .

I have a universal  
language.

It thumps like a bunny.



It humps from rage  
to sorrow.



It hops from page  
to page.





It turns in circles.  
It lands on the page  
~~where~~ where I left it.  
It drives me to work.



I love you Louis.  
I've got you on speedial  
in my heart.



Today I had a scare.  
I got a call from my dad.  
I didn't talk to him.  
I just saw that he called  
on my cell.



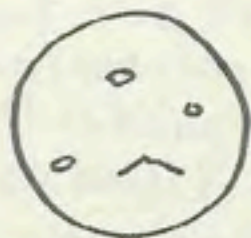
I thought something happened  
to my brother. I went through  
all the scenarios: death, sickness,  
then I thought about my dad;  
"was he okay?"



Then I jumped in the ocean.  
I jumped from a bridge.  
My body went plop in the  
sand.



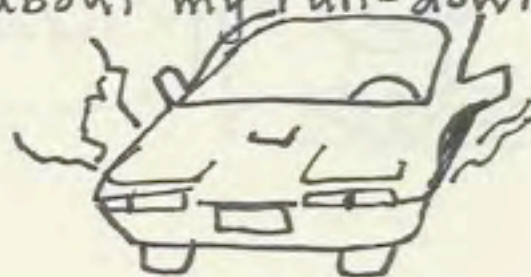
Through the dirt I  
could see the center  
of the Earth. It was  
on fire. It looked like  
Mars.



Mars calls to me in my sleep. She has a soothing voice. It's like a lullaby.



Most of the time she gets the answering machine. I am busy thinking about death and sickness. I worried about my run-down car.



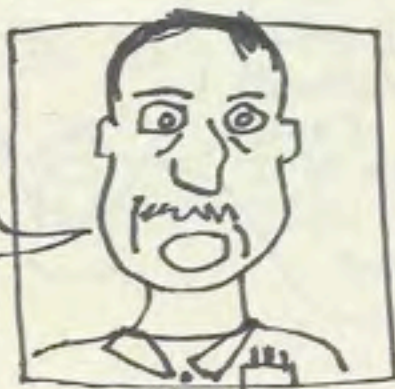


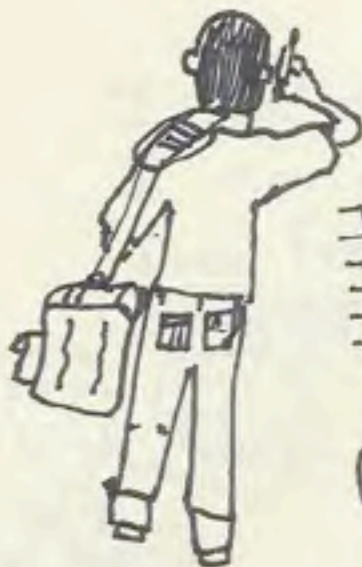
She has seen her last day.  
She is coughing a lot.  
She is dying.  
She is sick.



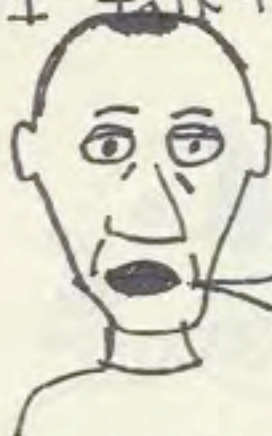
I take her to the local  
Chevron.  
They tell me not worry  
about her.  
They will take care  
of it.

"We take  
care of it.  
No problem.  
We have your  
number."



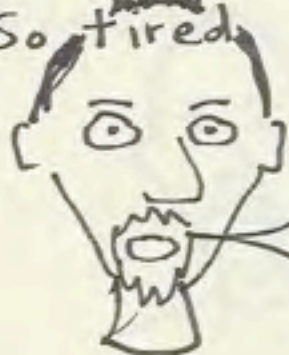


I walk home.  
I call Nicole.  
I talk to my Dad.



"This is nothing. This is the time to be strong. Everything will be okay."

I know it will be.  
I am just tired.  
So tired.



"I know, Dad. I'm just tired. Nothing's wrong. Don't worry. I'll deal with it. I'm a Zeh master."

I am not a Zen master.  
I am a man in Hollywood.  
Two French women are  
sizing up men as they pass.



I smile at them.  
They ask if I speak  
French.



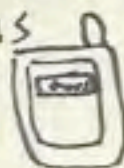
The words come slow.

I could be speaking Martian  
for all I know.

I could be transmitting  
on 900ghz.

This satellite that calls me.  
The searchlight over me.  
"C'est l'une derrier," they say.  
The search for "uh person."  
The helicopter whirs above.  
Here at the Sabe.  
Here in front of the Sabe  
They find me.

The same as  
before...



PiPooZ



Sabe  
RESTA

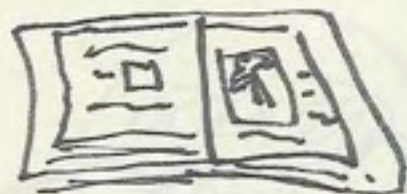


Listening...

There is no cookie  
cutter...



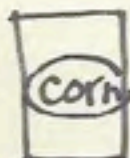
No open book.



It must be heard.  
Then written.

These messages  
for us all.

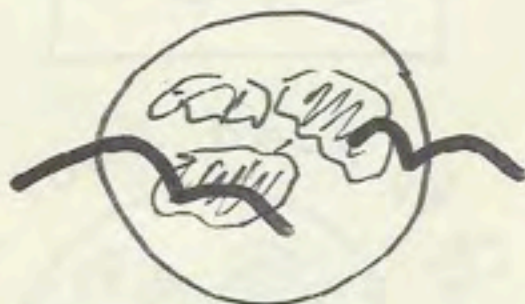
These cans of corn.



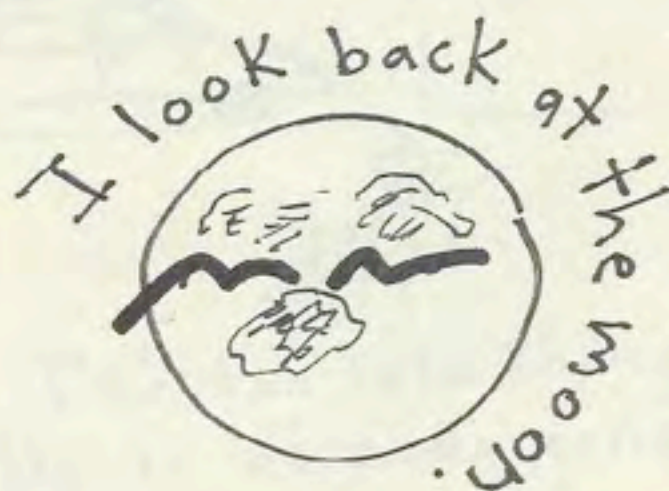
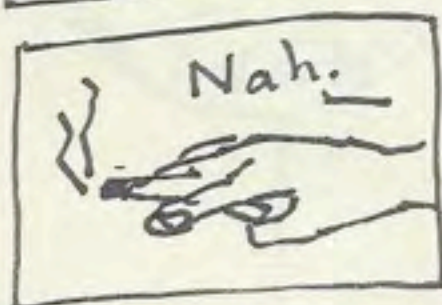
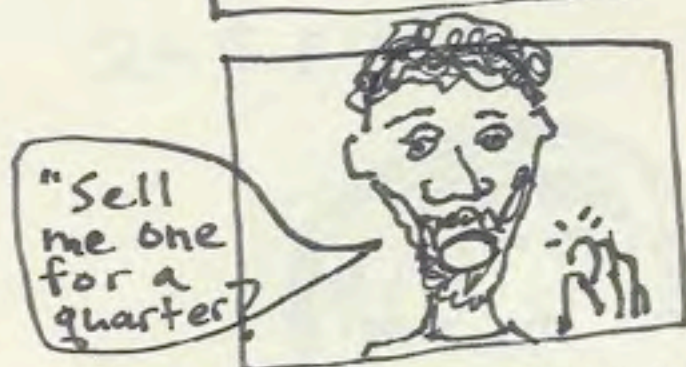
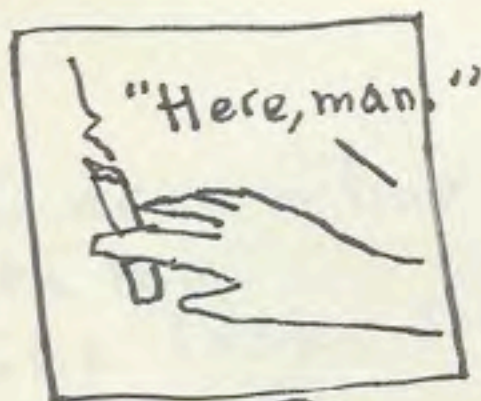
These love apples.



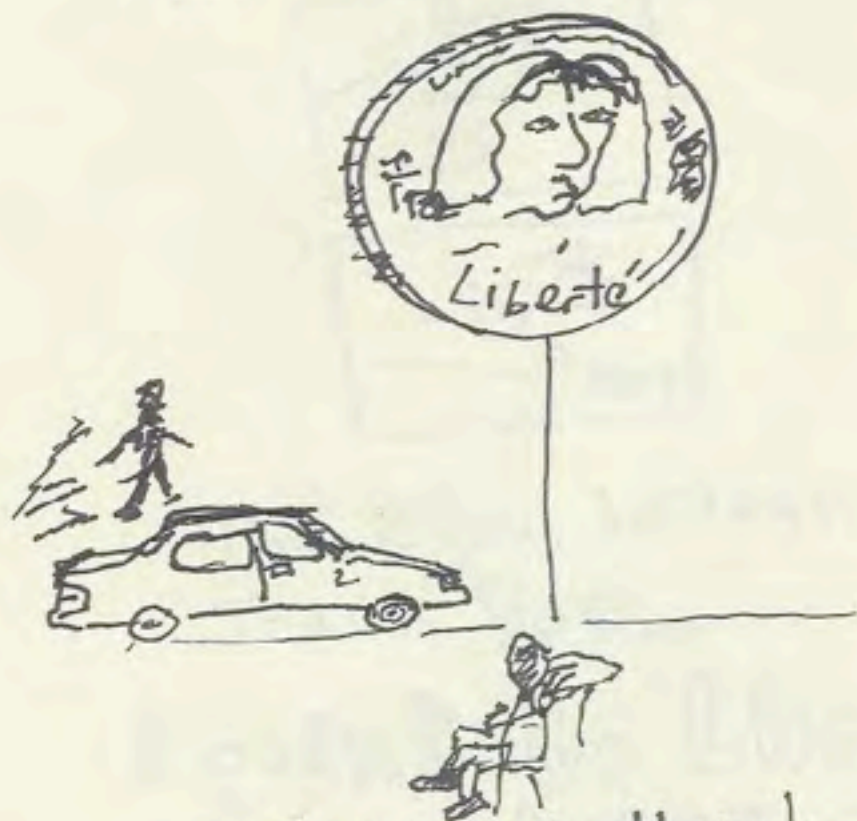
These W's in the  
night.



Hoopoes Through the  
full moon.



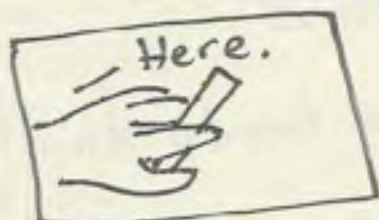
I draw a line from  
her to me.  
She looks like a  
25¢ piece.



It's too late though.  
He is already gone.  
Only the birds now.  
Only Mars and the Moon.



... And my Christian friend.  
He is picking up debris.  
He is sitting alone.



Thank you, he says.  
Thank You.

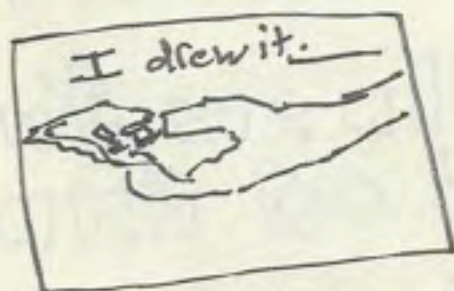
I point to the  
moon. Mars above  
me.

Thank you, I say.  
Thank You.

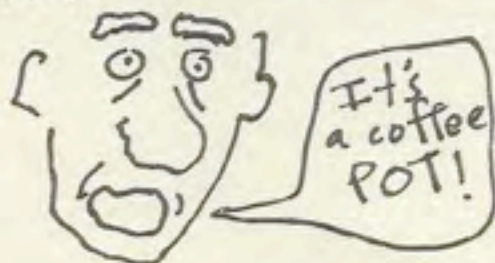
I walk home from the  
Sabe y Cultura  
cafe.

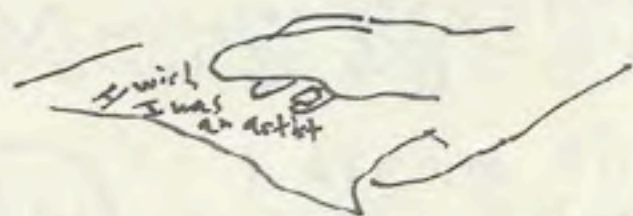
I think about my Christian  
friend.

Yesterday he showed me  
his artwork.



There is a tea pot.  
Some plates.  
A left over cake.





Scrawled next to  
his painting are the words  
that set me free.

They sing me to bed  
at night.

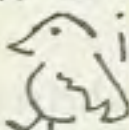
They tell me the Truth.

Don't we all  
want to be \_\_\_\_\_.

Don't we all  
wish \_\_\_\_\_.

# MARS SPEKS...

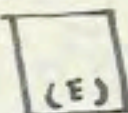


I dream all your  
dreams. I dream your  
children's dreams. I  
dream the Christian's  
dreams. I dream Laticia's  
dreams. I dream the  
quarter's dream. I dream  
W's dreams. I dream  
's dreams. I dream  
I dream Burt's dream. I  
dream  pigeons. I dream  
love pples. I dream  
Simurgh. I dream Simurgh.  
I dream Simurgh.



Hot like molten lead.  
Ice-cold star dust.  
Tepid comet trails.  
Full moon birds.

~~~~~  
No STOP Signs.

No  mpty boxes.

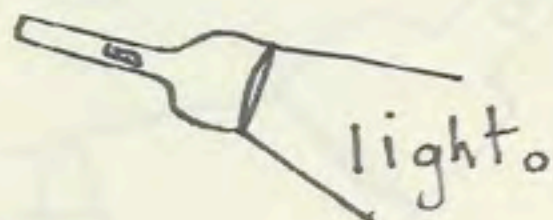
No sour  ilk.

No dirty  rayons.

Only Moons.

Only space.

Only



Bon Svir

Until tomorrow  
Until you hear  
me again

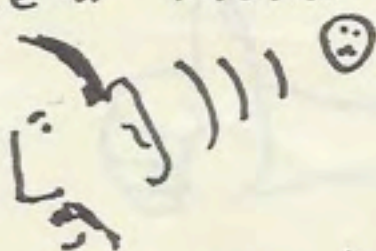
Until you hear  
me again  
until you hear  
me again



I am playing bass for  
the Persian Rugs.



I am good at coming  
up with bass lines.  
I hear them.

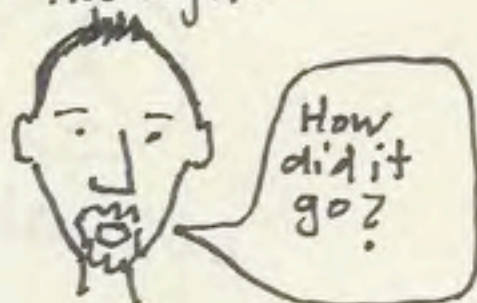


Then I play them.

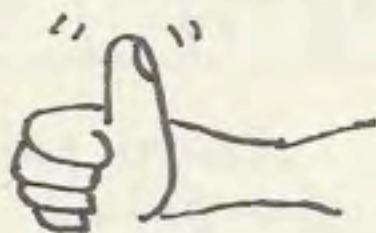




It's hard to remember  
them though.



And I can only play  
with my thumb.

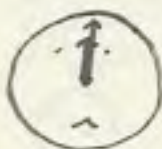


But I'm getting better

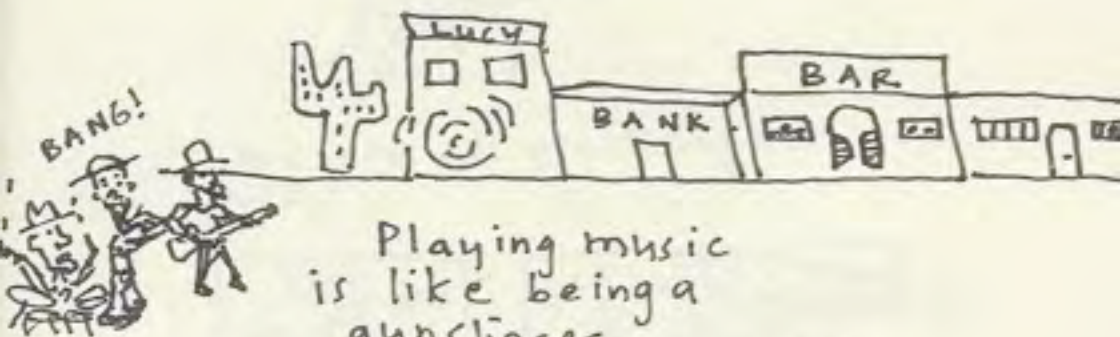




We are supposed to  
practice tomorrow.



12 Noon.



Playing music  
is like being a  
gunslinger.

You have to practice  
with your piece.

You got to be a quick  
draw.

You got to have  
some tricks.

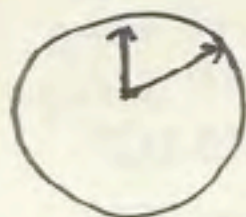


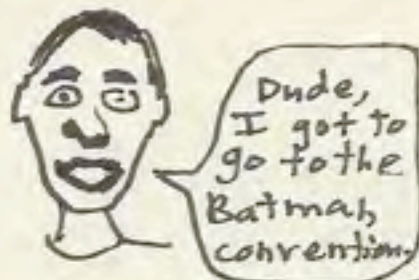
We are all practicing our tricks.



My Branch  
LALA...Ä!

Our only problem  
is

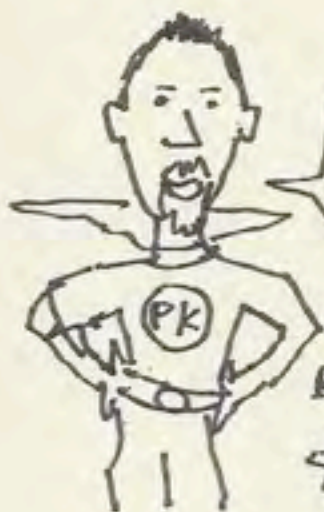




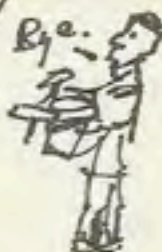
Dude,  
I got to  
go to the  
Batmah  
convention.



Yeah,  
I got  
to make  
the next  
Batmah

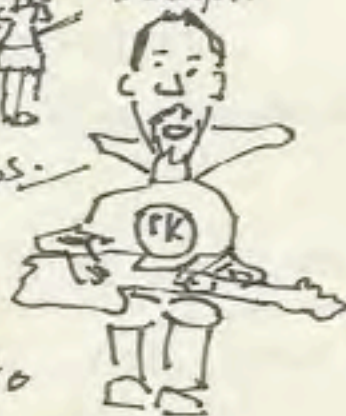


"Well, I have  
to meet Batman.  
There are people  
who need us."



see ya.

Adios.



It's good to  
be alone.

It's good to be  
It's good to play

MUSIC.

me.







I am at the *Sabe*.

I have a turkey and cheese  
on ciabatta.

A coffee.

It is calm.

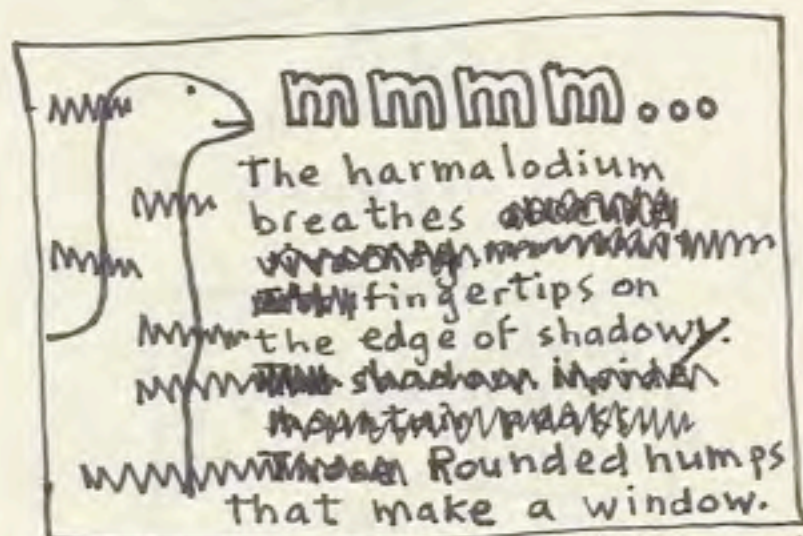


There is no crescent ☾.  
No mountain peaks.

Only valleys upon valleys.

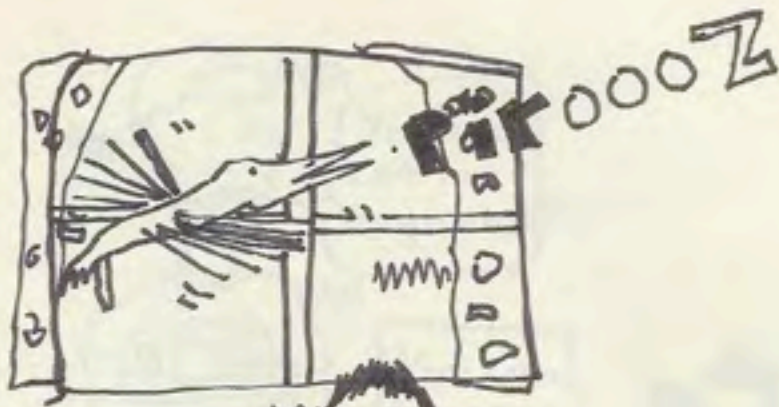
**A** gentle thump.

h **B** My heart is a well-oiled machine.  
It purrs in desert heat.  
It makes minced meat  
of mantras when mantras  
come.

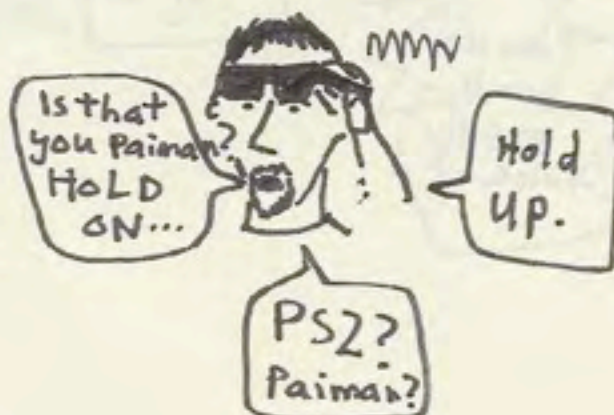
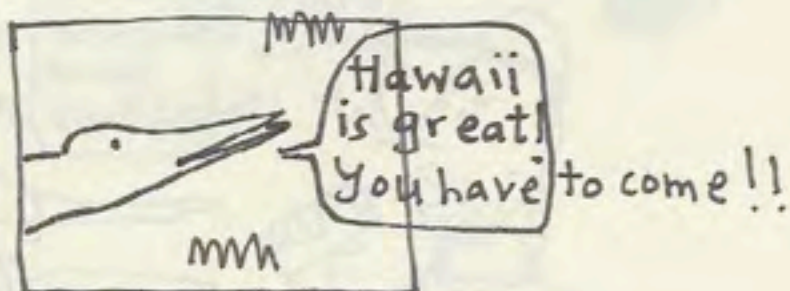


A frame to distinguish speed bumps from asphalt.

love asphalt turned meadow  
loop de loop   
and unveil my thoughts  
to you.



I say.





Goin'   
back  
to  
Cali  
Cali...



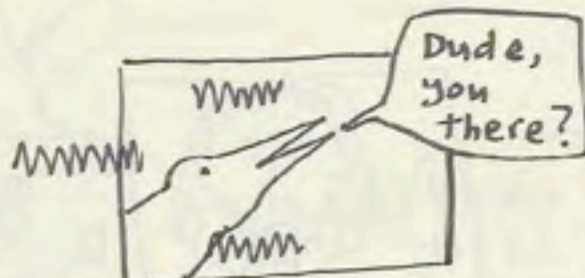




You can't do  
this to my children...  
putting my children—  
I'll drink where  
I want— Look at  
these fine Armenian  
women— uh-oh here  
come the cops..oo



to  
Cali  
Cali ♪

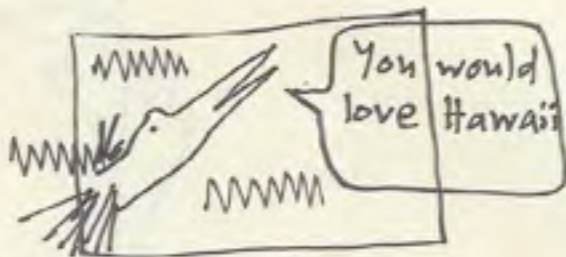
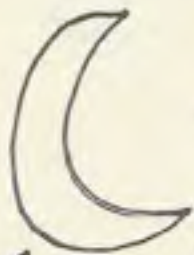


Dude,  
you  
there?



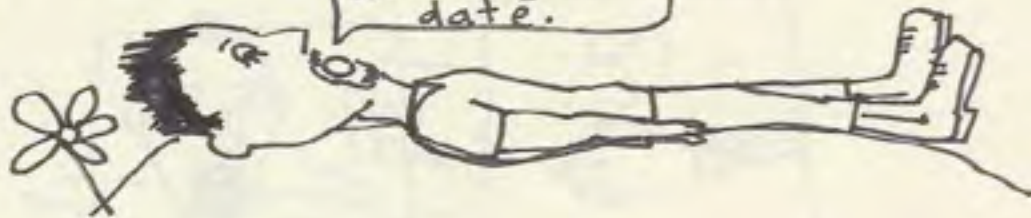
Hey.

yeah.



Way down  
in Kokomo

I can't talk  
now. I got a  
date.





All it takes is the  
wave of a hand o o o









"Do you ever get scared of love?" he asks.

"No, celebrity," she says.

perfect reflections,  
a voice calls.

crack the heart  
of any atom: from its  
midst you will see a  
sun shining...

- S. Hatif



Wave upon wave ooo

In Boulder, Bobbie and I would talk about love. She said no one could talk about love if they were in it.



Is that true?



"Yes, sweetie. It is."

I was taught to  
question everything.



Pirooz, is a necessity  
to try and try again.  
This universe... this  
beautiful molecule  
in your body. How many  
year it take to grow.  
There is El Guapo everywhere.  
They say this <chertalpert>  
nonesense. You have to  
find for yourself.

Discover this light  
inside you. Then  
it will shine throughout  
the universe.

Go meditate.

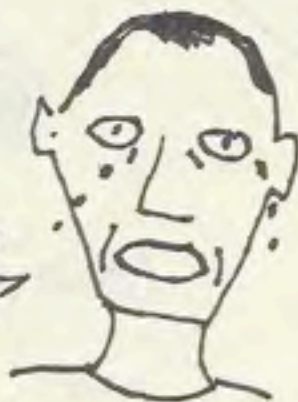
I was 4 years old.





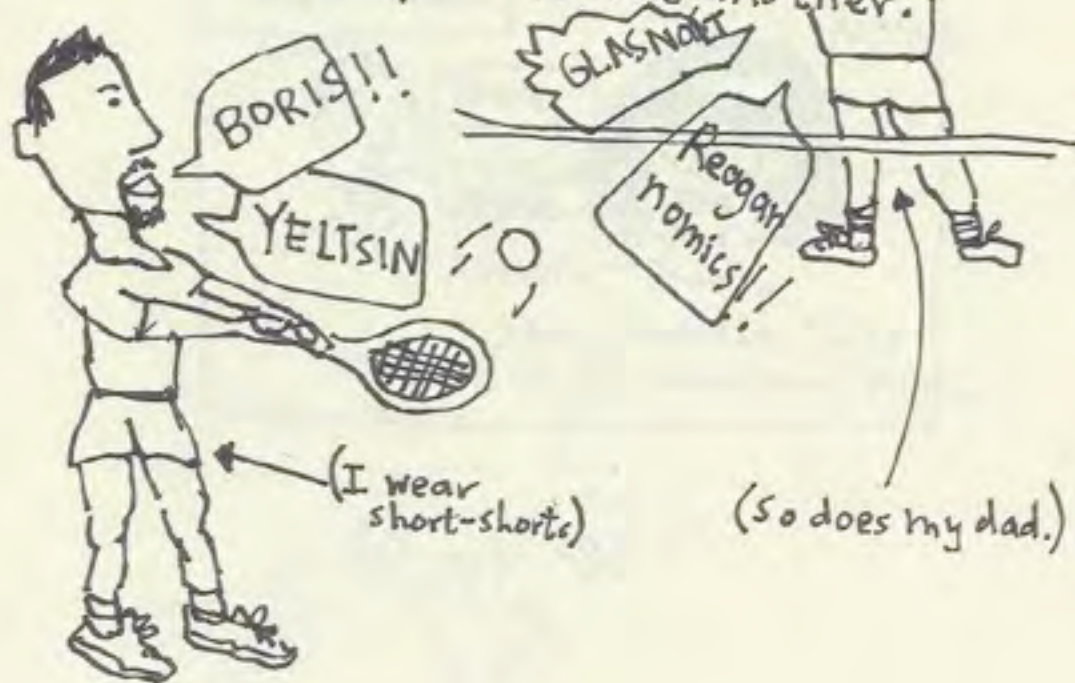
On my 29<sup>th</sup> birthday, my father cried when I told him of my hurt. That Nicole and I were getting divorced. That now I would move to Los Angeles.

Oh, my son, it is my fault. I try to make you like a Buddha, like a Jesus Christ. I didn't want any of these El Guapos to effect you.





I hold my father.  
I tell him it is not his fault.  
We play tennis.  
We yell to one another.



I tell Bobbie ~~this is not true~~  
I am constantly in love.  
So is she. It's the little  
things. Ants that march in  
columns. Flies in winter  
cupboards.

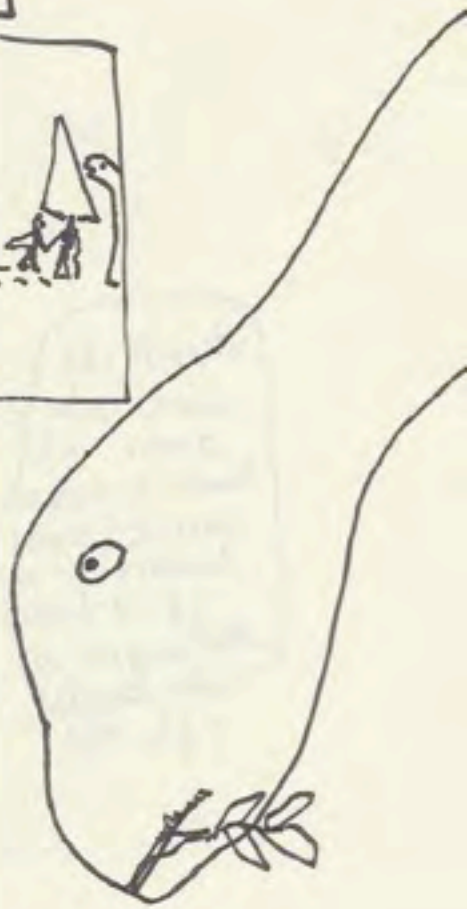
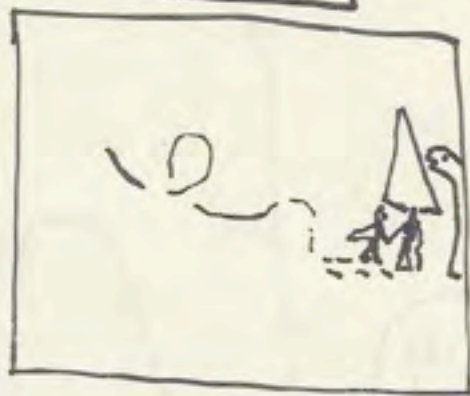
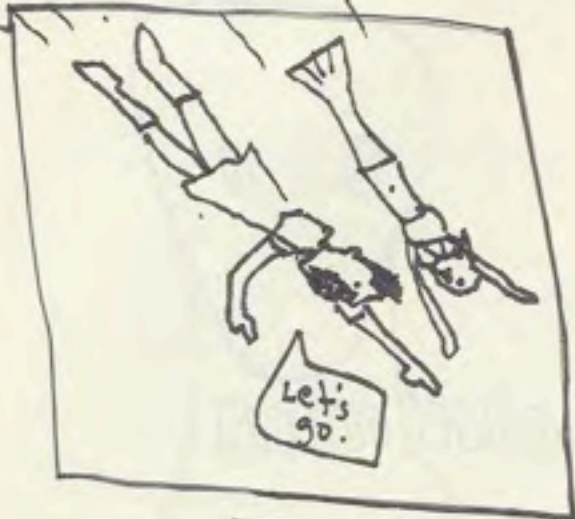


"Okay, sweetie. Lets  
talk about something else..."



Valleys upon valleys...





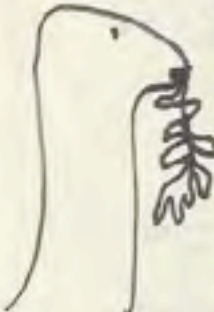




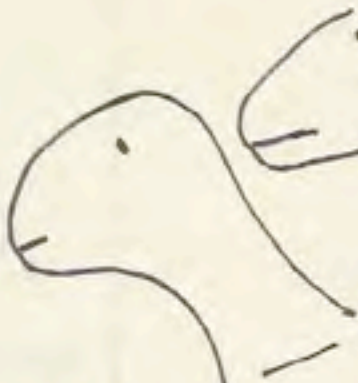
Yes.  
Me.  
The—  
this is  
Yellow,  
the mermaid.  
She's my  
girl.



Hi Tahto.  
We come  
for some  
advice about  
love. I am  
a mermaid  
and P. is  
a superhero.  
What do  
we do?



m m m m m  
m m m m m  
eat grass  
leaves  
m m m m m  
happy.



Shhh



Shhh.

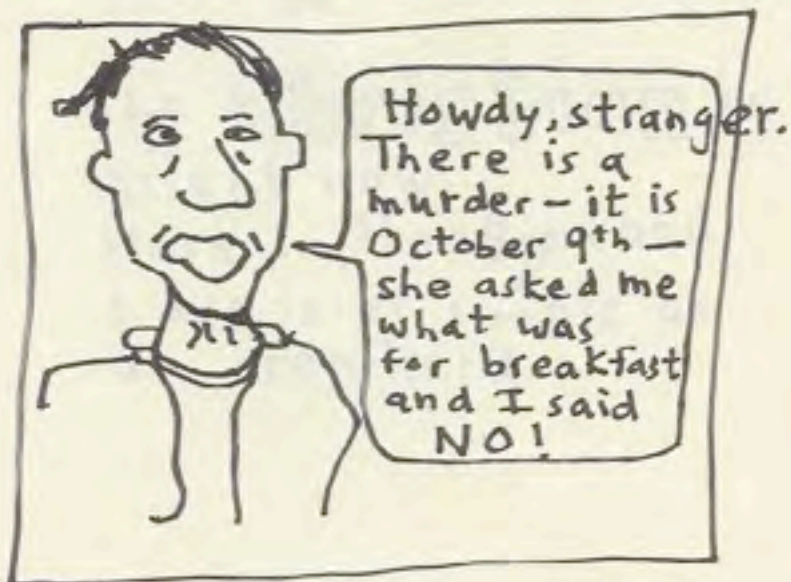
~~The pack.~~

~~Who~~ is going to  
Sing.

"Tanto's Song"  
by Tanto

I tatattoo.  
I tanto...

The Christian  
has returned.  
He has no socks.  
He talks a lot today...

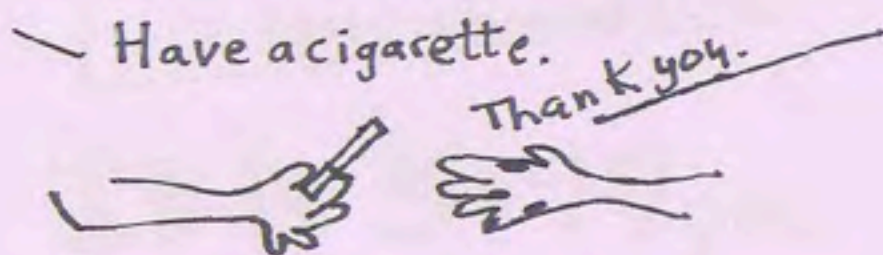






Don't  
worry  
about  
it.

Yes...  
She told  
me she liked  
me, but I  
like Mikie  
and there's  
nothing she  
can do about it.



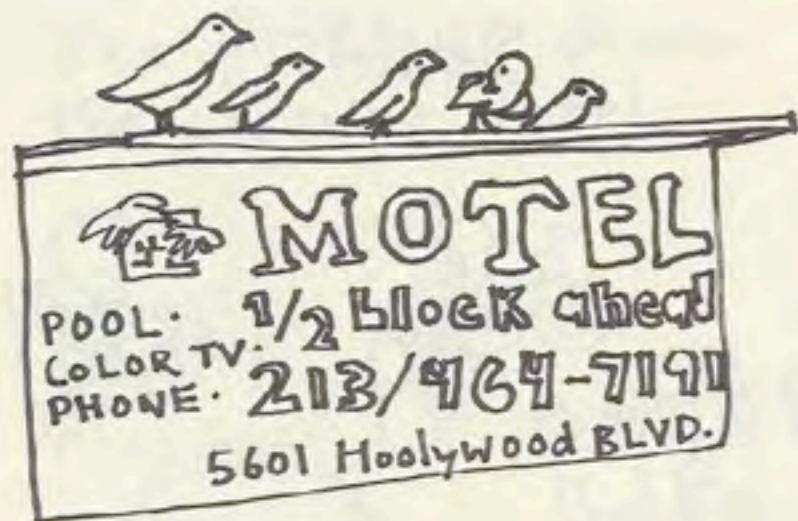
The Christian is  
silent now.  
Here in Hollywood.  
Love is as simple as  
an open hand.



I stare at the pigeons.  
They sit in a line  
above the

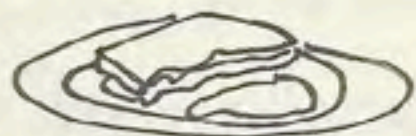
รอดัด

RODDED RESTAURANT

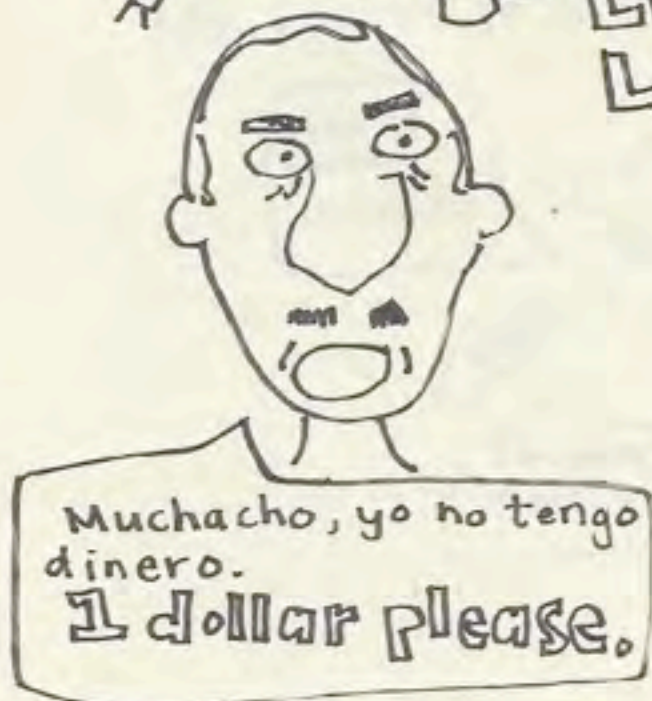


It is 5:14 pm.

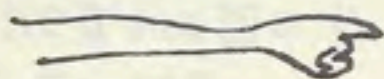
The Christian has  
left the sandwich I got  
for him.



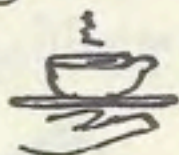
A Father and Son  
sit in a station wagon.  
The boy is 4 years old.  
He bounces his legs on the  
car seat.  
The Father drums  
the steering wheel.



I point to the sandwich.



I give him my coffee.



"Mexican mocha," I say.

He sits.

He eats.

He speaks to me in Español.





It is 5:38 pm.

My hermano is standing  
next to me.

He asks again,

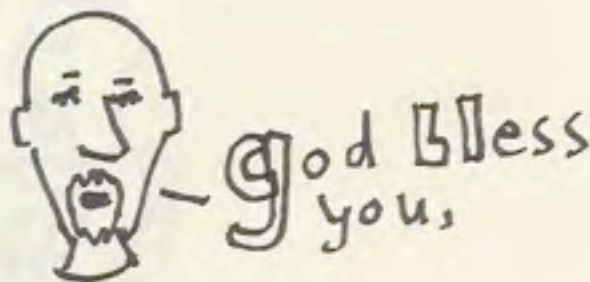
"1 dollar please."



I say.  
He does not move



"No money,"  
I say, and bow to  
him.



I say.

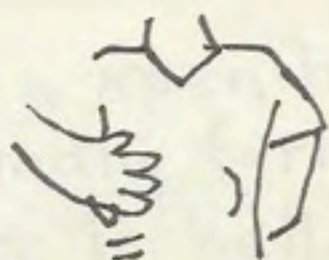




He says.



I rub the old man's head,



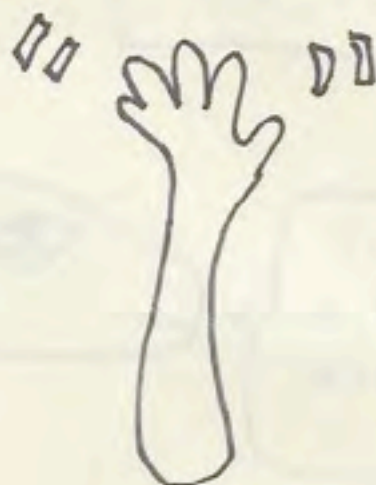
He  
rubs my stomach.



— Adios amigo,  
I say.



- Adios, he says.



An open hand comes  
in many forms.

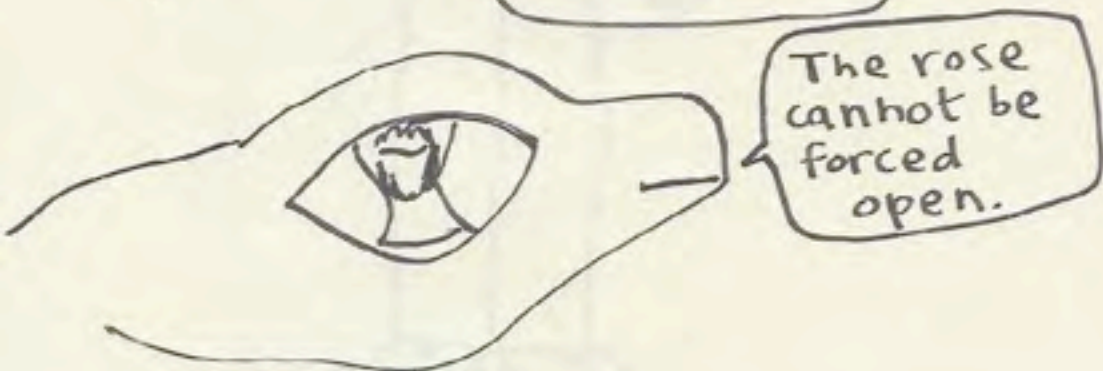
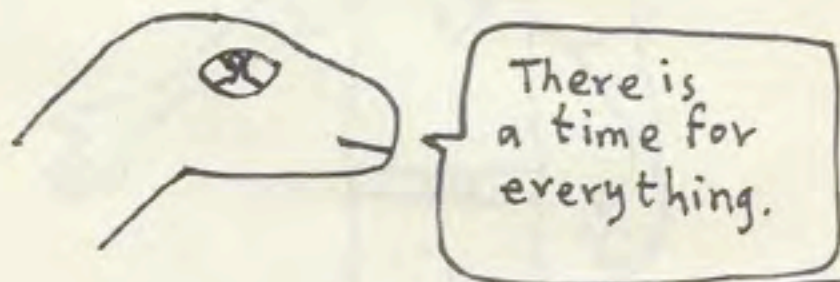
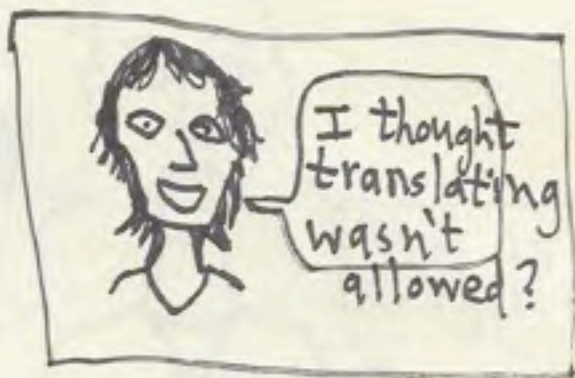
It is hello or  
goodbye.

It is a sandwich or  
mocha.

It is leaves or grass.

It is being held or  
not.

It is you or me.



I tattoo.

I tanto.

U yellow.

U blue.

I green.

I U.

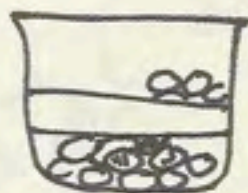




It all  
depends  
on you.



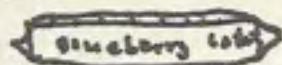
Another journal.  
Another dollar spent.  
These days I feel so poor.  
I count change.  
I count everything.



I buy salt.  
59¢.



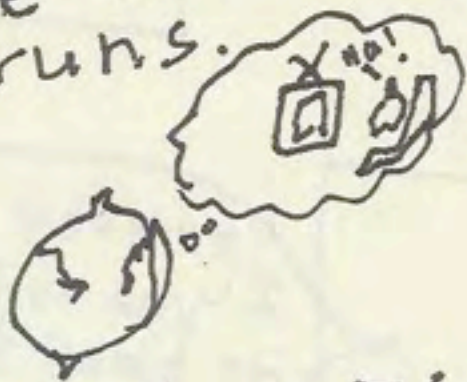
Blueberry bars.  
99¢.



3 heads of leek  
1 lb. of chicken  
and a lonely  
red onion.

I name the onion  
Montelo

He likes television.  
He dreams of  
reruns.



I don't have TV  
though.

Furniture either.  
We just git on  
the carpet.  
We tell each  
other stories.



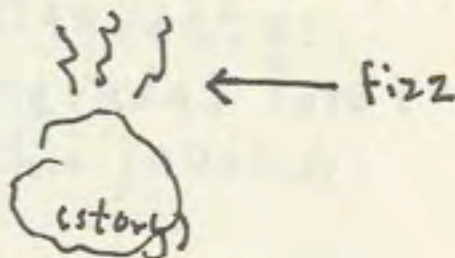
The other day I was  
so hungry I spilled  
my hoodles on the floor  
then I just ate

That's nothing.  
The other day I  
was at home on  
the carpet when  
this big radish



We don't really finish  
our stories.

They just kind of fizzle.





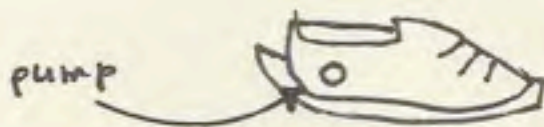
"To the sick man,  
sweet water tastes  
bitter in the mouth."  
- El Ghazali

Ah, yes.

I would like to see a dentist.

I would like some shoes.

Reeboks. With the pump.



I don't do that though.

I buy cigarettes.

I get Neruda's love poems.

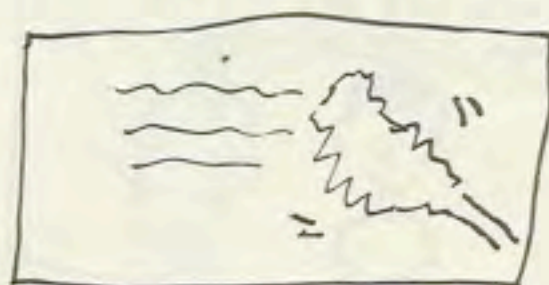
I buy this journal.

It is 4:55 am...  
It is sometime  
after 1 pm.

I am at work.  
Groceries are in the fridge.  
I see palm trees again.



An unusual breeze  
from the desert.



I listen and choke on  
the sorrows of childhood.





Why this comes up I do not know? I welcome it like a friend.



Sorrow obliges.  
We talk about heartache.  
The great THUMP  
around us.







I've got a cold.  
I can't hear a thing.

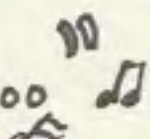


That's too bad.  
Would you like  
to dance?



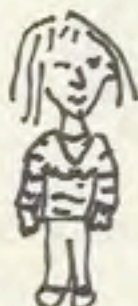
I turn on my record  
player.

It's the Rolling Stones.

do I can't get no...<sup>no</sup> 

I pick up my foot.  
It comes down on the  
subway floor.

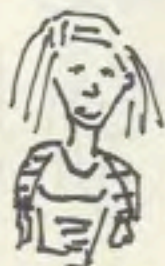
There are a bunch of  
random strangers, waiting  
for the N updown.



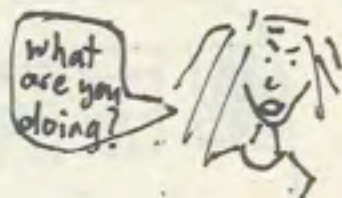
(Kate Mitchell)

I am 15.

I am in New York City.  
It's a school field trip.

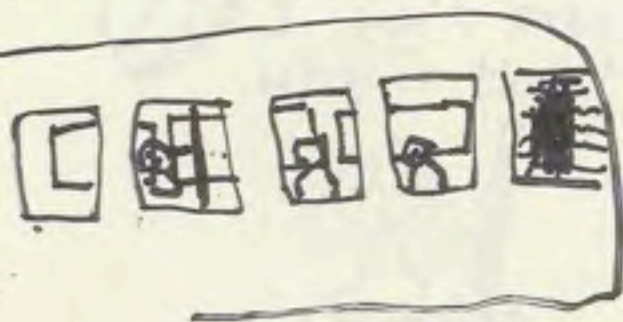


Kate Mitchell is with me.  
I have a crush on her.  
I start singing.  
I have nothing else to say.



Pretty soon, every one  
joins in.  
We are all strangers.  
We are singing together.  
Even Kate.

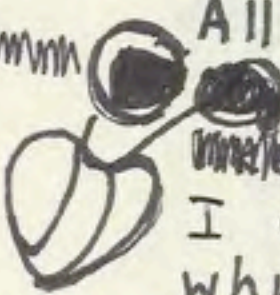
I CAN'T get no



Then the subway comes.  
We all get on.  
Kate sits next to me.





~~~~~  
 All I see is a propellor.  
heart moving  
~~~~~ breeze.  
I can't even draw.  
why is that?



I was 16.  
Kate invited me over.  
She showed up in her  
bra and panties.  
That made me a little scared.

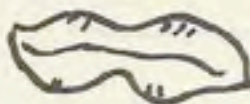
Cause her mom was right there.



Kate was a bad girl.  
Naughty would be a better word.  
Lolita would be a sting  
song.



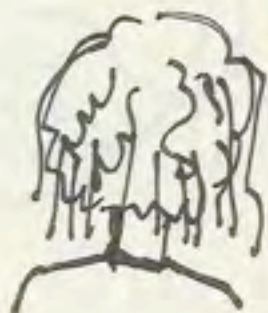
I was not sting.  
I was cute.  
I was in high school.  
I was a virgin.  
I don't know why  
she picked me.



We first met in Algebra class.

She sat in front of me.

Right next to Tracy Tutors.



(Tracy)



(Kate)

I had a mad crush on Tracy.  
(We're talking 3 years here.)

I finally got the nerve to  
ask her out.



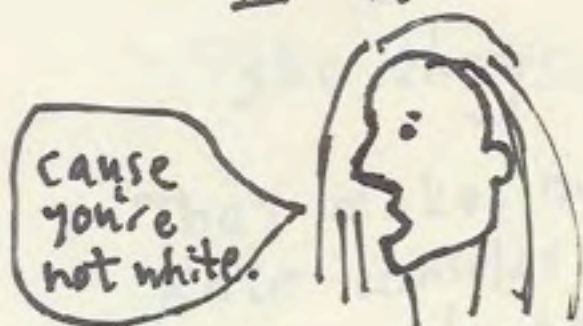
she says  
she won't  
go out with  
you.

Kate brought back the  
news.





I ask.

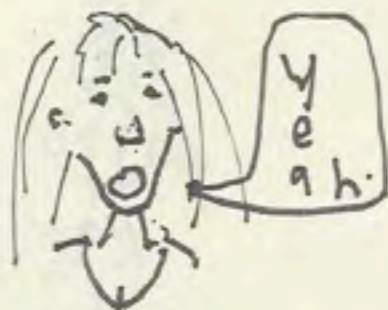


she says.



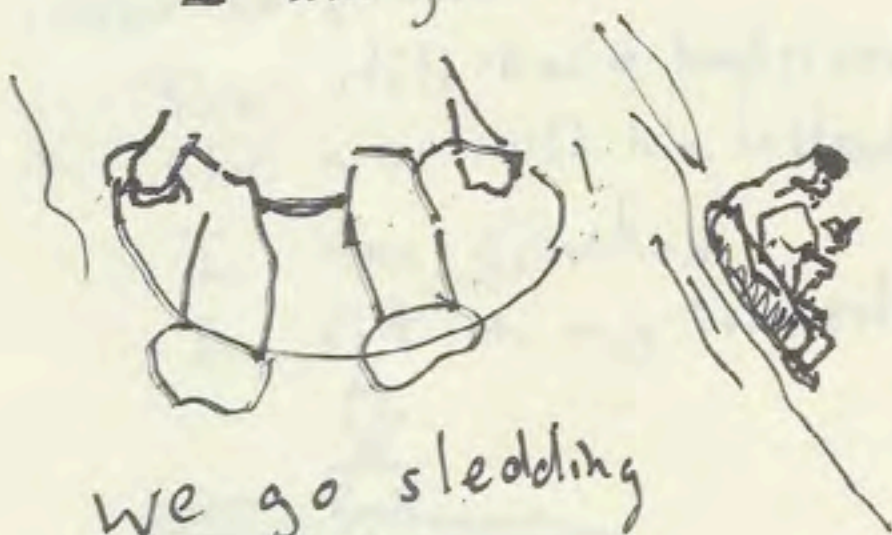
I ask.





she shays.

That makes me sad.  
Kate consoles me though.  
She says she would go out with me.  
I am game.



We go sledding  
together.



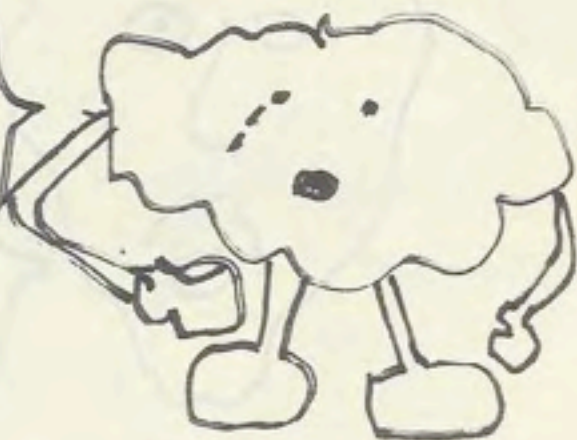
We jump on the trampoline.  
She asks me to go with  
her to prom.

She still has a boyfriend.  
She goes with him instead.

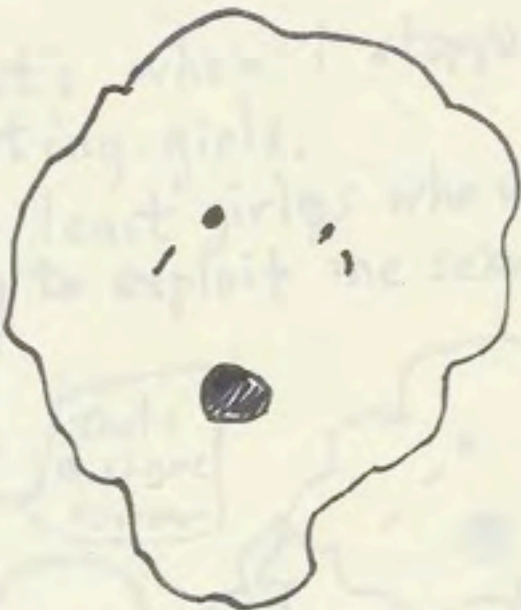
I am crushed.  
I sit on my trampoline,



That  
was a  
good day  
for me.



I got  
to let  
it out.



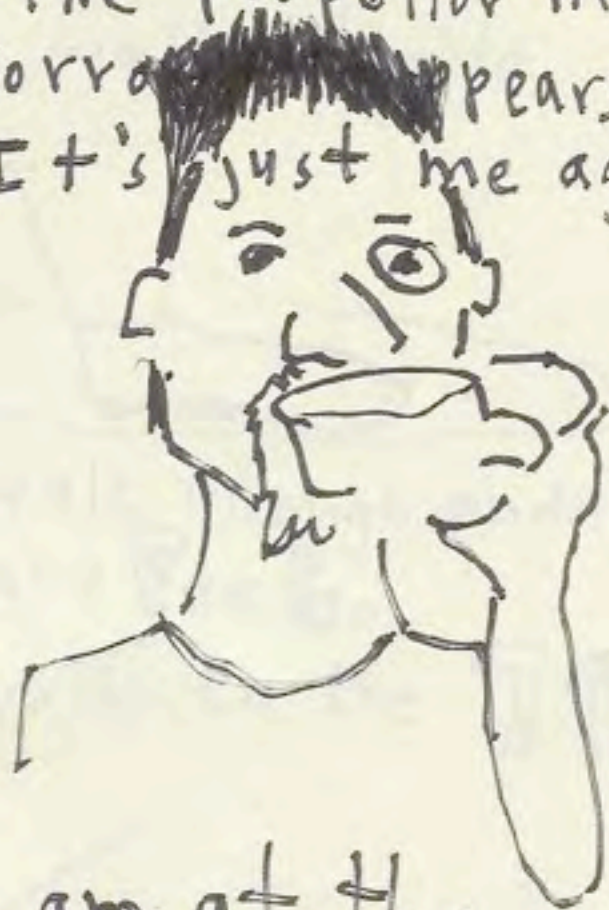


That's when I stopped  
trusting girls.  
At least girls who were  
trying to exploit me sexually.





I turn on the fan.  
The propellor moves.  
Someone appears.  
It's just me again.



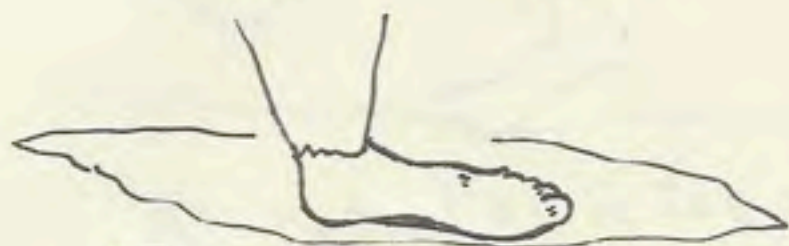
I am at the  
Sabe.

I am in my new apartment.  
I fall asleep.

It is 2:22 am.

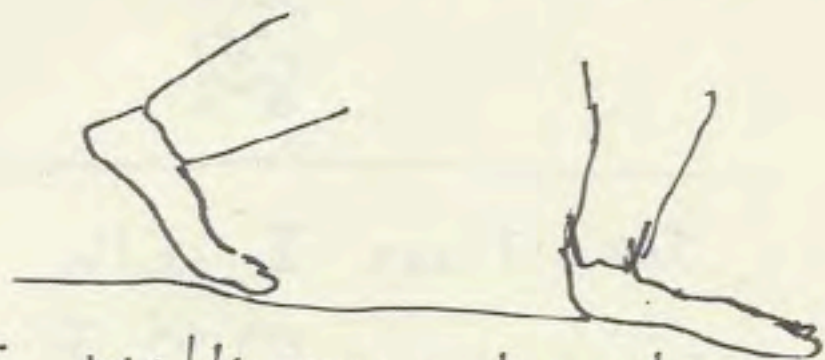
It is raining.

I walk outside.

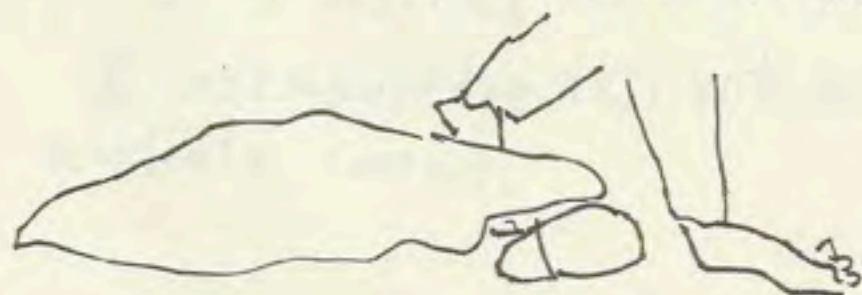


I walk through puddles in  
my bare feet.

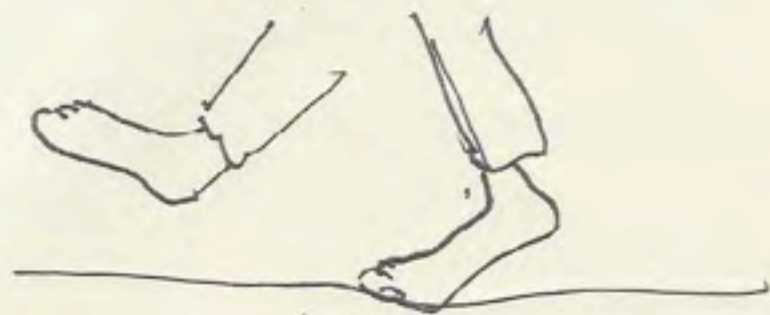
I walk to the 711.



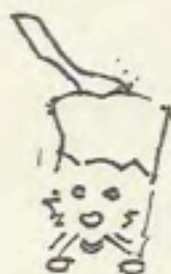
I walk over a homeless man.



I walk back home.

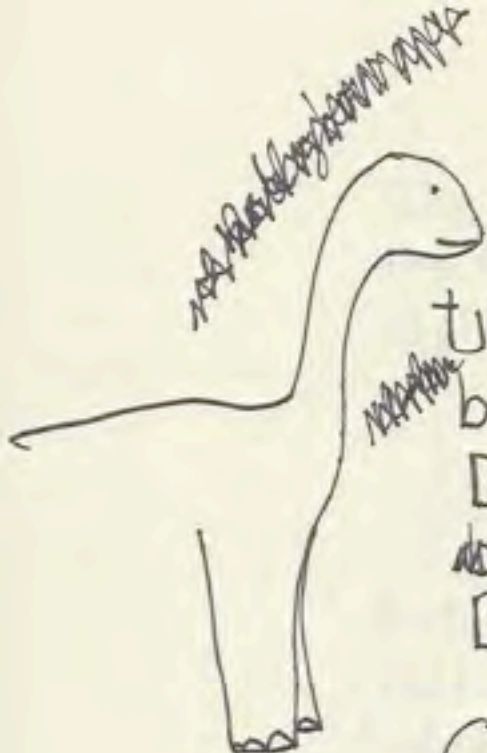


A cat lies in the  
middle of the road.



---

When I see the cat,  
I know.  
It is warmer at the center.  
I acknowledge this with an  
audible sound.



mmmm

the harmalodium  
breathes.

Dark forest rain.

~~dark forest rain~~

Phonic distortion

Orange blossoms.

Like distant electrons.

~~orange blossoms~~

~~orange blossoms~~

majesty. on desert sand.

Like ~~ant~~ ~~elms~~ elope

~~and in the rain~~ aware they

that the ~~in the rain~~ are

alone.



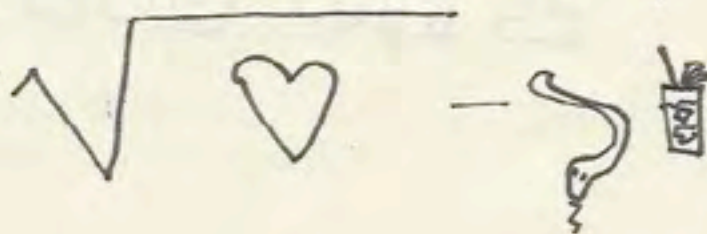
These puddles beneath  
my feet.  
Spider webs across my face.

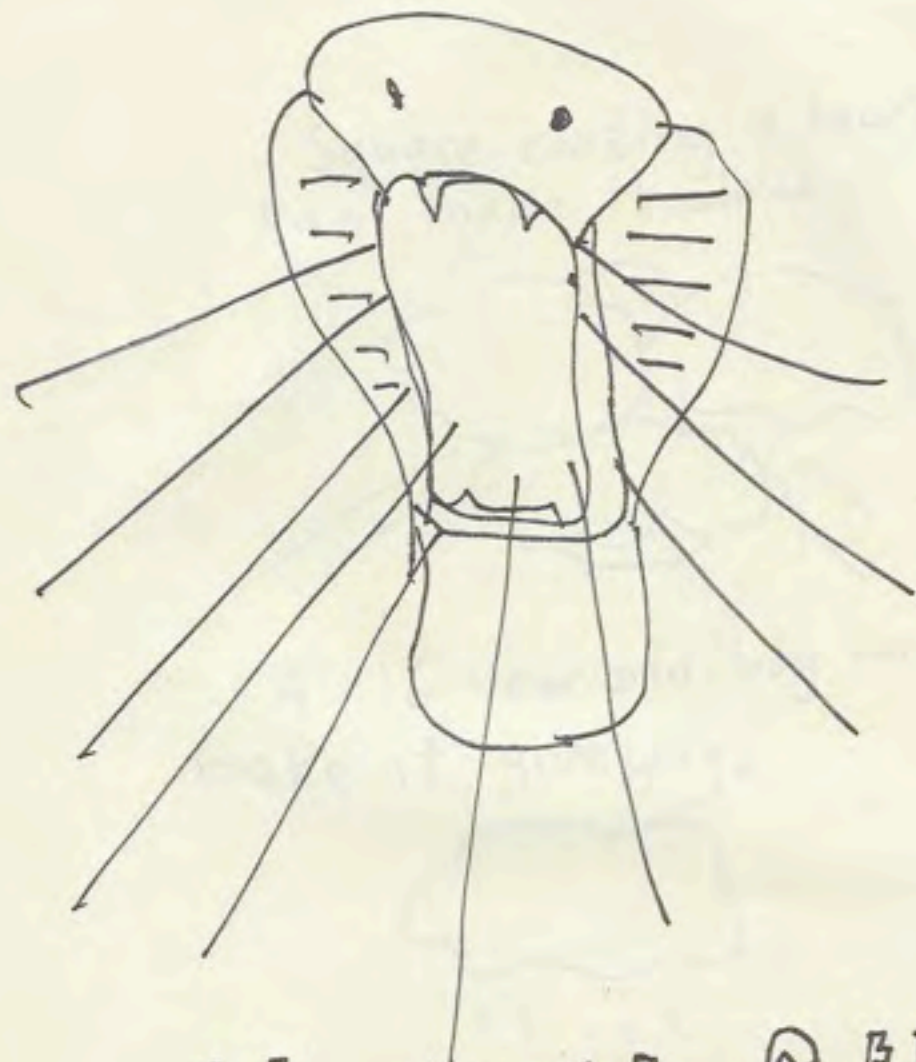


Butter on the frying pan.  
Half-eaten yogurt in the  
fridge.



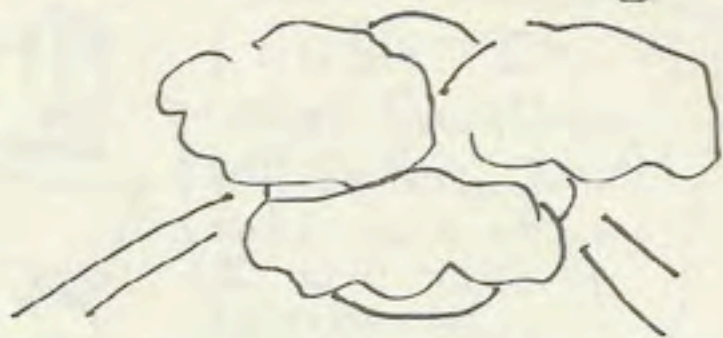
The squar root of my heart  
minus a snake and a mint julip.



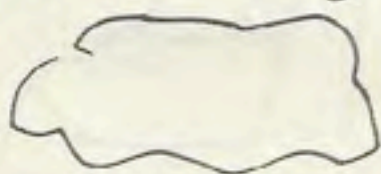


the light of the  
sun is not all I  
do.

Square rooting a heart  
can make it cloudy.



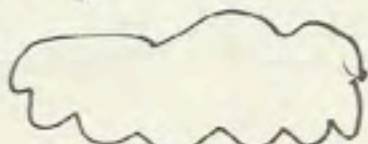
A 16 year old boy can  
make it giveaway.



1 1 1 1

1 1 1 1

Sorrow can make it  
hail.



Bless me Father  
For I have sinned  
It has been 3 min  
Bless me Oh Lord

I can make it loop de loop.

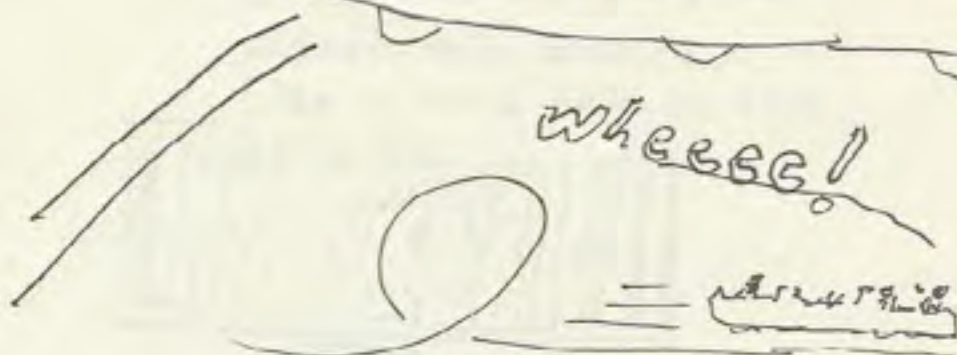


Listen! It's  
okay. Everything  
will be fine. I will  
take care of you.  
I will take it  
from here.

You just enjoy  
the ride. Hooold  
Ooon.



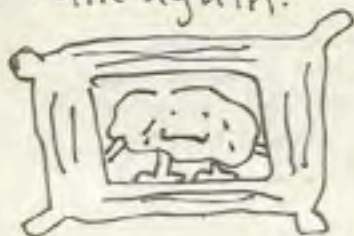
Wheeee!



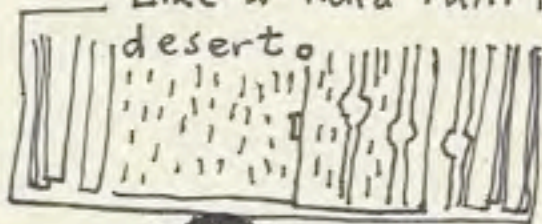


I helped 16 year old Pirooz  
pack up sorrow.

We put his picture on  
the wall so we can remember  
what he looks like if we  
see him again.



This roller coaster of love.  
This great thump.  
It serves its purpose.  
Kisses me awake.  
Like a hard rain in the  
desert.



I am at the WG.  
We are all tired today.



Even Jaggerhant  
looks tired.



Mad  
tired.

(Buddha)

Fitz isn't here.  
If he was,  
he would say,



She looks  
like Bob  
Hope.



Vince puts this  
creation on my notebook.  
He is like Blade Runner.  
I tell him so.

Yeah,  
now you're  
going to  
die.



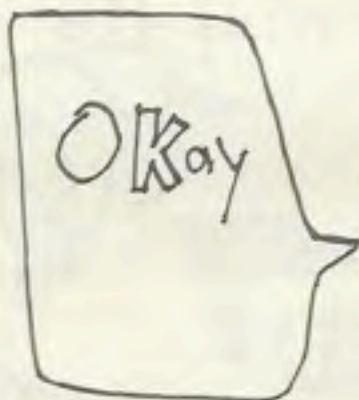




Why do I  
look angry?  
Draw  
another  
picture of me.

Vince says.

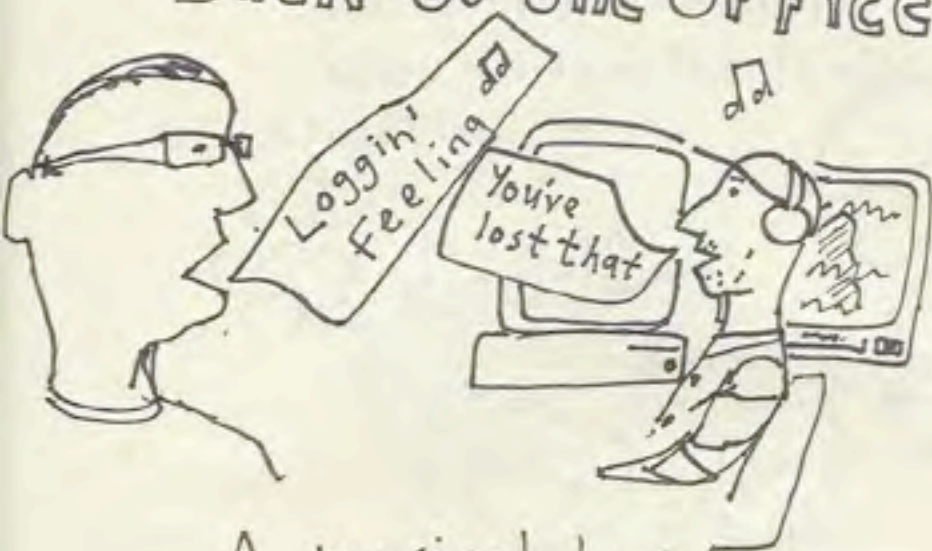
(no underwear)



I shay.  
I go Commando too.  
Another thing that  
unifies us.



Back to the Office...

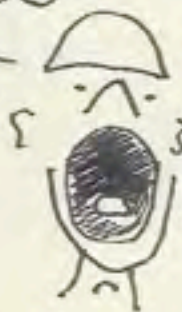


A musical begins.  
We all join in.



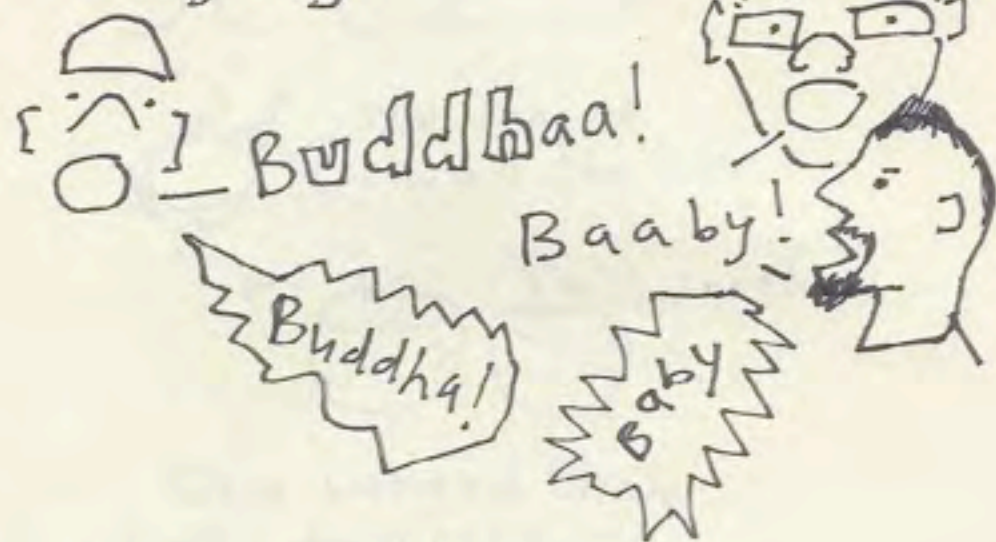
Whoa, that  
Loggin' feeling...

Fitz lets  
go!



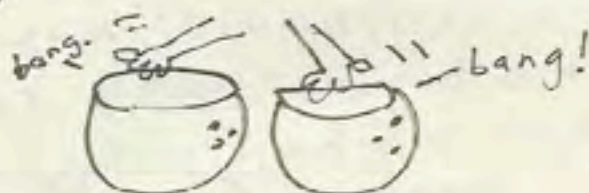
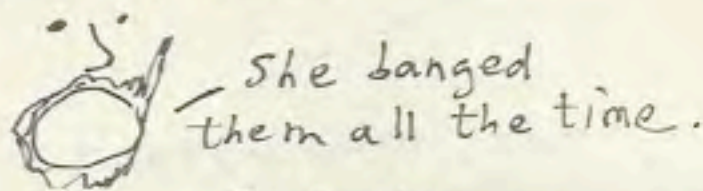
Baby, Ba

We join on the Chorus.  
We amend the lyrics  
slightly.

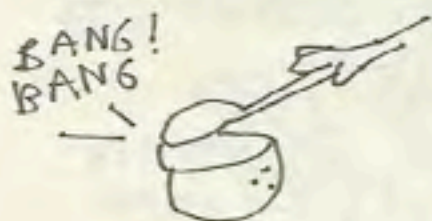


It's good to be at  
the WG.

It makes me smile.  
So does Shel Silverstein  
as me.



She banged them  
in the morning,  
and the afternoon.  
She banged them wooden  
with her head and a spoon.

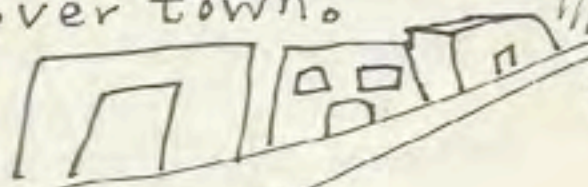


She banged them on  
Sundays when no one was  
around.





She banged coconuts  
all over town.



BANG  
BANG  
BANG

Pretty soon, she  
banged coconuts so loud,  
that people stood around her  
and she had a crowd.



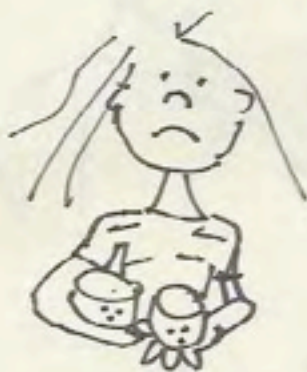
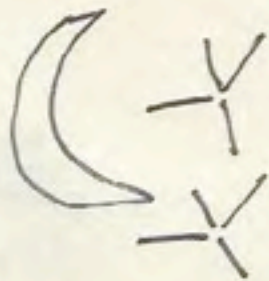
BIPPETY  
BANG

BANG  
BANG



The it got dark.  
And everyone went  
home.

And the girl who banged  
on coconuts was  
left all alone.



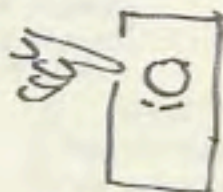
I am at the WG.  
There are no coconuts.  
It's just me and Derek.



We push in the  
chairs.



We turn off the  
computers.



We say goodbye.



Bye, beautiful!

See ya!

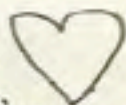


We don't say anything.  
We don't have to.  
We can both hear  
it in our hearts.

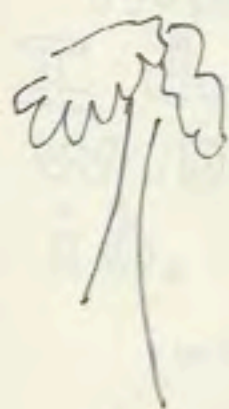


I want  
to write  
books...  
I love  
Dylan Hack.  
I like the  
color green.  
I love the  
moon.  
I love this  
planet.  
I love these  
people.  
I wish I had  
more money.  
I love honey  
mustard.

I want  
to make  
movies...  
I love Delfina.  
I like the  
color blue.  
I love the sun.  
I love my  
family.  
I can rhyme  
with steeple.  
I wish I had  
more money.  
I like blue cheese.



I love these loggers.  
I'm down on my knees.  
I'm praying for a miracle.  
I'm singing with the  
Trees.



I love the sound  
of this thumping.

It's louder than a  
coconut.

It is as soft as  
silence.

It helps <sup>us</sup> believe  
in miracles.

I know this is  
true..

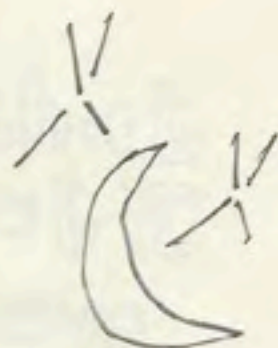
Because I am  
not the only one  
thumping.

There is the  
little girl,

Derek,

and

You ♡





How do I know that  
I don't need what I  
want? I don't have  
it.

(my hair is getting  
long)

- Byron Katie

↓ 1. Is this true?



Yes. My hair is getting  
long.

(I have 2 freckles on my  
right ear)

2. Can I absolutely  
know this is true?

✗ No. I had to go to  
the bathroom. Now I know  
it's true. I have 2 freckles  
on my Left ear.

3. Who would I be  
without that  
thought?



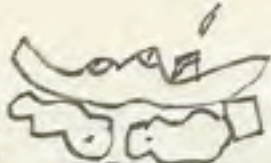
My hair would keep growing. I wouldn't think about it. I would forget what barbershops were.

Pretty soon, I skip out on hygiene altogether. I get to meet filthy. We go ~~to~~ the park together.



Filthy likes the park. He shits and bars everywhere...

Barfing.



(front side)

Pooping



(backside)

I don't let go of  
concepts—I question  
them. Then they  
let go of me. —Katie



What was  
I talking  
about?

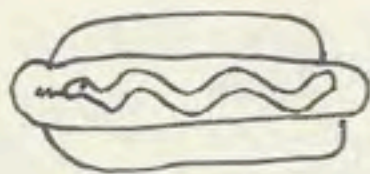
I like my butt...

~~I like kissing  
myself...~~

I work for

Mr. Phipps... He found  
me on a quiet day. I didn't  
expect it. I was walking.  
No, not walking. More like  
standing in this line. It was  
for a movie theater. Everyone  
was staring at me. I  
squirted Ketchup on my  
hot dog.oo





I am at the WG.  
I am in the courtyard.  
Nelson, the security guard  
walks past me.  
He is singing to me.

"Nobody loves  
nobody like I  
love you." ♪  
Good song.



I smile at him.  
I draw a palm tree.







It-it is sometime  
Saturday night.  
I am so lonely I  
could die.  
I am done being  
Vincent.

Now I am Saadi.\*  
This is not any  
letter.

He is filled with  
bliss.



Now I am nothing.  
There are no  
flowers.

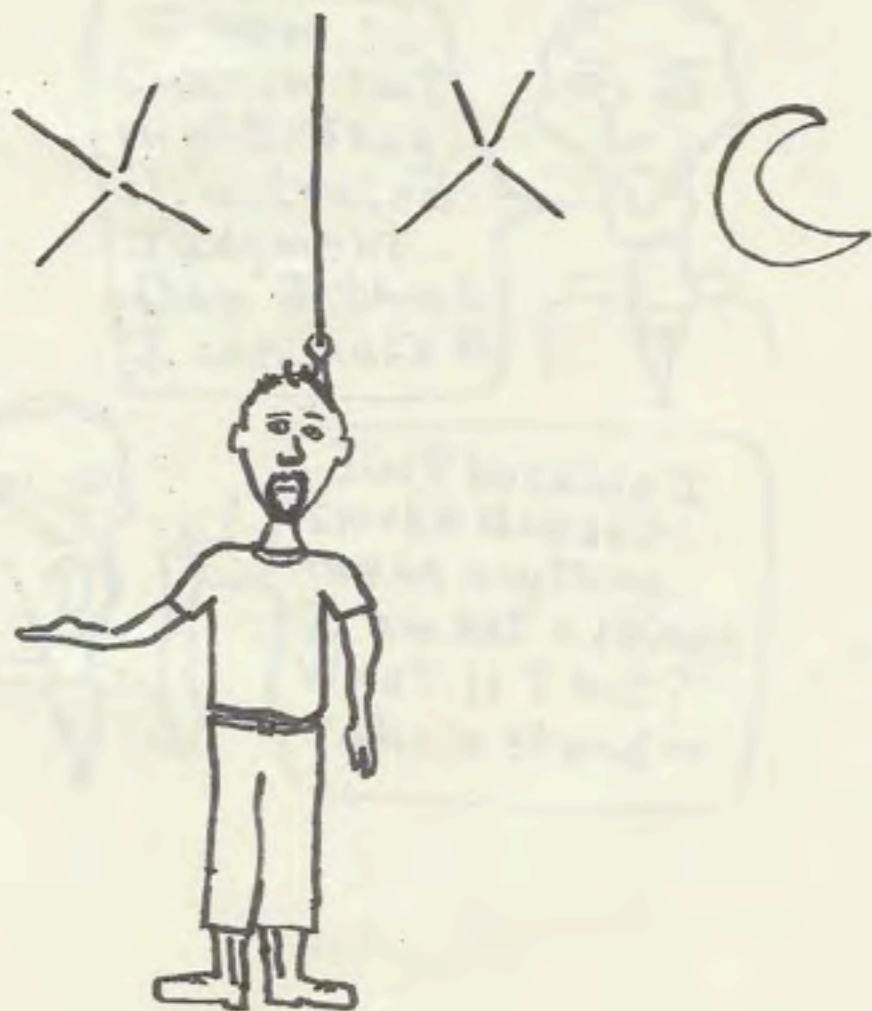
\* Saadi of Shiraz wrote THE ORCHARD and THE ROSEGARDEN.

He says, "If a dervish remained in a state of  
ecstasy, he would be fragmented in both worlds."

I am the invisible  
man.

I am Wonder Woman.

I lasso myself into  
oblivion.





It is 12:52 pm.  
I am at the Sabe.

The Christian tells  
me about Church.

I went to  
Church last  
night. They  
illustrated  
Judgment  
Day. I think  
I can make it.



Just because I  
smoke doesn't  
mean anything.  
I am not a sinner.  
What is that?  
Take a stand—





There is a booth set-up  
in front of us.

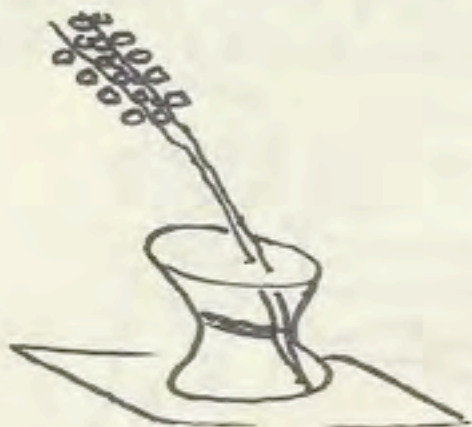
The Christian  
reads out their sign.

Take a stand  
for justice. Coalition  
of Concerned Legal  
Professionals. Justice!  
I need justice.  
Someone stole  
my chemistry book.



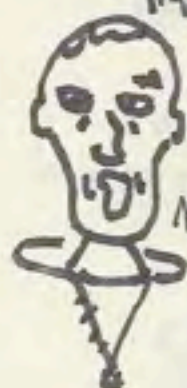
The Christian  
has nothing.

Today he brought  
flowers for the Sabe.





~~He tells them.~~



Do you like them?

I do



~~He tells them.~~

Now he takes 3 quarters and a nickel, and puts them in the C.C.L.P.'s donation box.



I am for Justice.

he tells them.

This makes me cry.  
Tears of Justice.  
They fall into my tea.



I cannot drink it anymore.  
I go home.  
I lie down.  
I stand up.  
I look in a mirror.

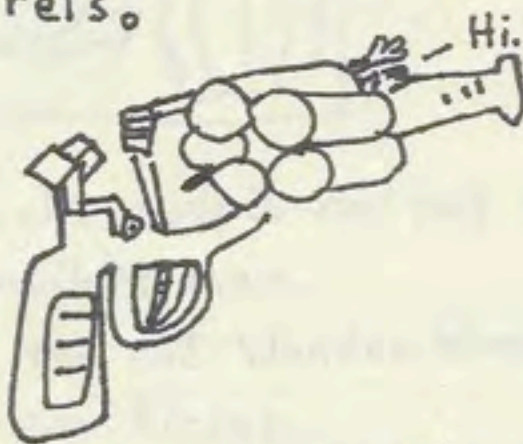
It is 7:58 pm.



I move towards myself  
like a rodeo clown.



Sometimes I hide in  
barrels.



Sometimes I run for my  
life.





Sometimes I am too sick  
to do either.



Right now I am not the  
Invisible Man.

I am not Wonder Woman.

I am Piroot.

I am frail and beautiful.

I am for Outside and Inside.

I am for Left and Right.

I am for Oblivion and Reality.

If you want to  
see the love of your  
life, look in the  
mirror.

- Byron Katie.

If I want  
to see love,  
I don't have  
to look.

How do I know  
I don't need  
what I want?  
**I don't.**  
That simple.

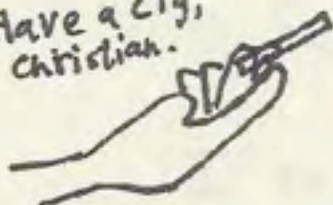
I don't let go  
of concepts. I don't  
question them. I don't  
think about this at  
all.



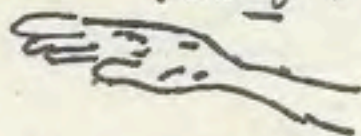
I have  
more important  
things to do  
with my time.

I want Justice.

Have a cig,  
christian.



Thank you.

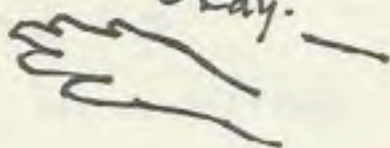


I want my Health.

Take this, Pirooz

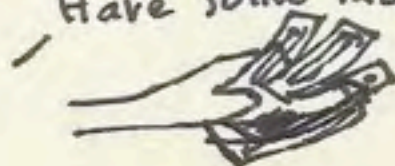


okay.

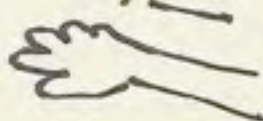


I want Money.

Have some money.



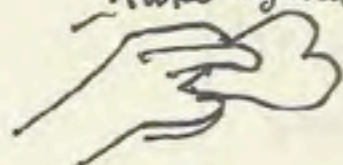
okay.



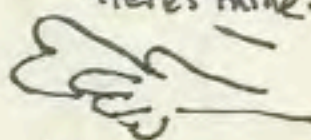


I want Love.

Take my heart



Here's mine.



I want to Write and  
Sell my Art.



I want a lot  
of things...  
Technically, I don't  
need any of it. I  
could float into Oblivion.  
I could walk with Filthy and  
the Christian. I don't want  
to live like I'm homeless anymore.

I want to create  
my art, and make  
money to support  
myself in a healthy,  
happy way. I want  
to help other artists.  
I want to help the  
Christian. I want  
world peace. I want  
Justice for the poor.  
I want Justice for  
people everywhere.  
Have I used up my cards?  
Is there someone there?



I am  
here, my  
son.



How do  
I get what  
I want?



It is very  
simple. Write  
your book for  
me.

Mars  
or  
Bust  
by PM Kalayeh



What about  
all the  
other books?



Do not worry,  
my love. This  
book will answer  
all questions.  
It will take you  
home. The pyramids.  
The desert. The  
forest floor...



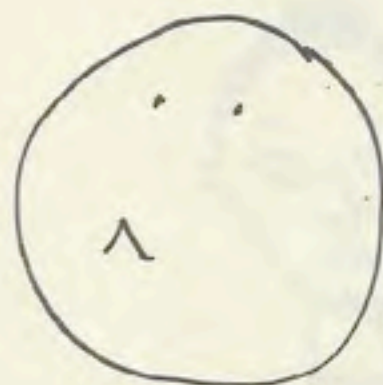
Is this  
the  
book?

Mars?

Hello?!

Why am I  
writing  
comics?

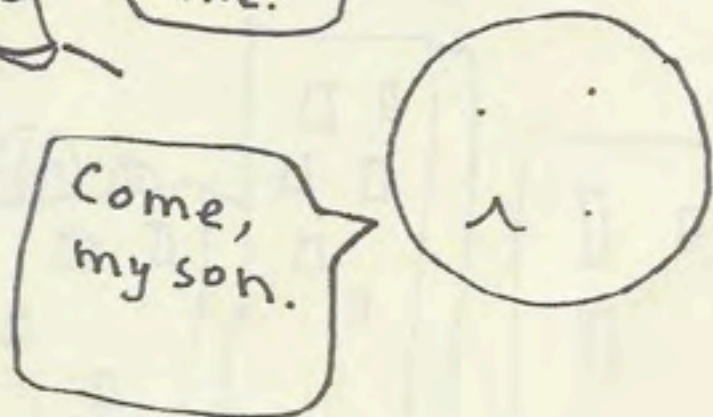
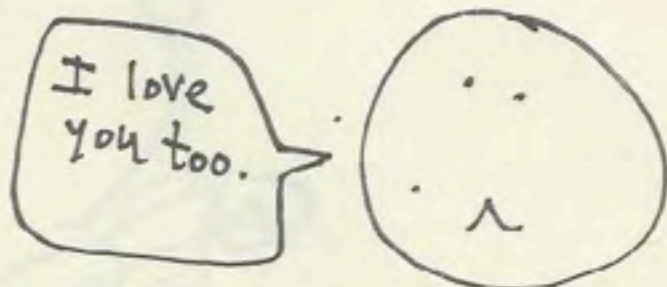
Is this  
the  
BOOK?



Tonight you  
will wake from  
a dream. Spirit  
and I will be  
with you. Then  
all answers will  
be revealed.

Pay attention  
to the spider.  
Look at the  
heart of you.  
Make love to  
yourself. Dance  
alone in the  
darkness. Do not  
be afraid. The  
Shadow will co-mingle  
with Light. This  
is you. The king  
of munificence. You  
are magnificent.





It is hard to  
say goodbye to the  
past. I have to  
though. I have to  
take care of me.  
Mars is waiting...



I was willing to do everything.

I was OPEN.

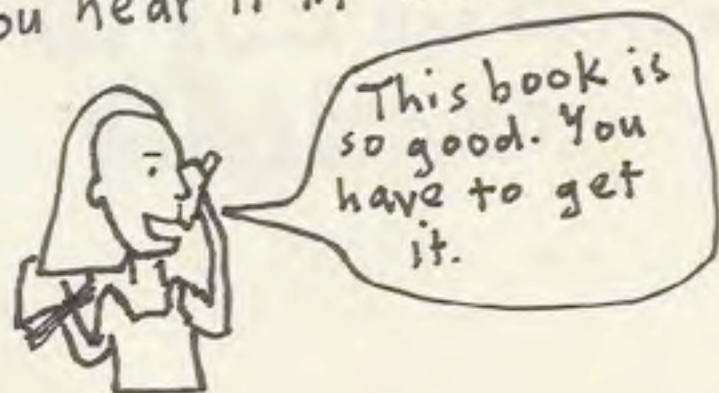
Sometimes people need  
independence though.



Then you let go.

You watch them bloom without  
you.

You hear it in their voice.

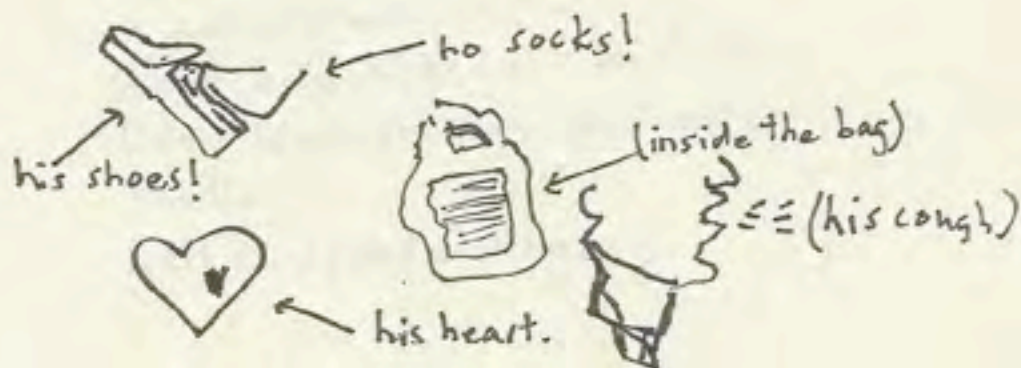




Tanto [redacted]  
[redacted] raised me underneath  
desert skies.  
[redacted] unbearable heat.  
[redacted] Sapphic mantras.

we happy.  
eat grass.  
leaves.  
conifers.

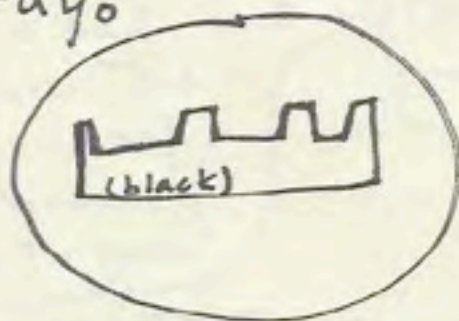
The Christian has  
returned.  
He carries a composition  
notebook in a plastic bag.  
He is officially an artist.





Cam everywhere.

ZI to MS — Christian  
coughing PL to MCH —  
ashtray.



This crown.

Palmtrees.

OPEN.

Neon sign flickers.

Cam Tracks around crown.

A paintbrush.

Gold and stardust on its tip.

Draw brush strokes over outer  
shell.

Cell is speeddialing...

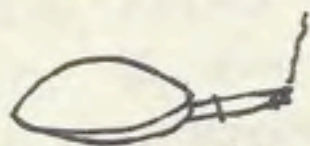
Hello? Pivooz!  
Dr. Jone?  
This cigarette  
is bad for you.  
This is a bad  
situation. This  
is — this is not  
good. Panauh is  
looking to you!



Yes, I know. Right  
now I am hurting. I miss  
Nicole. I am poor. I am hungry.  
I smoke. This is the way it is  
right now. Things change. I am  
open. Please don't pull away your  
love. Please don't disown me.  
Please try and understand.



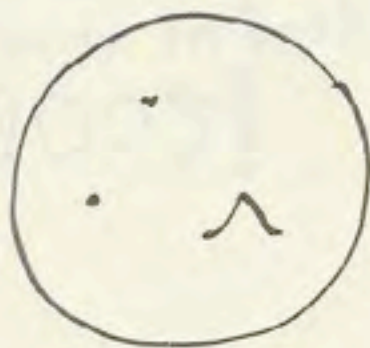
I am an oyster.  
My love is inside me.  
I cultivate it.



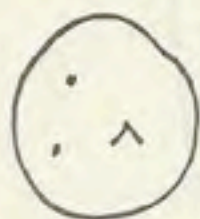
I lay a golden egg.  
I hunt chickens at night.  
I am a magician.



Ladies  
a gentlemen!  
for your  
reading  
please  
I will  
transform  
this bunny  
into an  
artifact  
from the  
Red Planet...



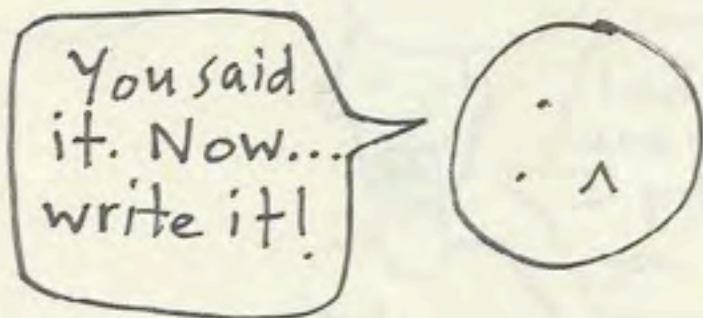
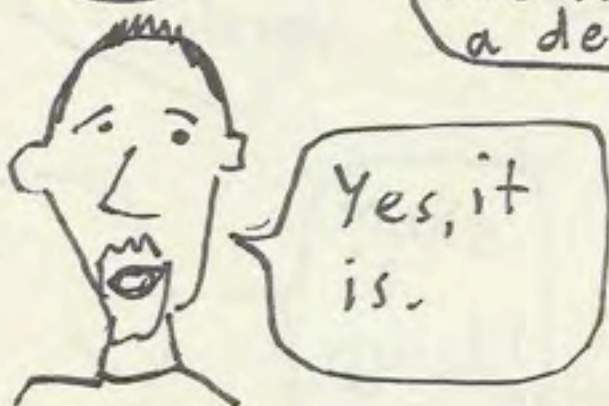
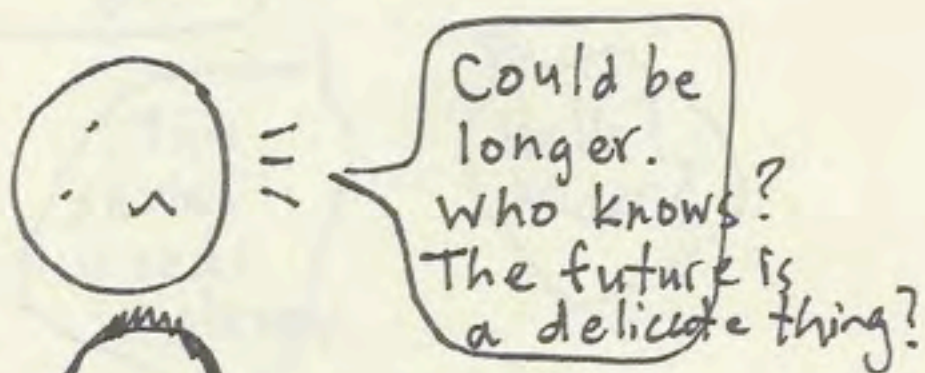
# Mars speaks



= Is this thing on?

Well, folks it's me  
Mars. I am here to  
let you know P. has  
been commissioned by me.  
He owes me a book. Don't  
worry I have a nice  
exchange for him. It's been  
long enough though. Now  
he has to work. So  
everyone make room,  
send your prayers,  
**MARS OR BUST**  
is in production. Look  
for it in bookstores  
**2007!**





Before I  
go, can't  
I show them  
the magic trick?



This  
series  
needs  
a closer.

Hello?  
Mars?



Make  
it  
quick!

Ladies  
and gentlemen  
I present  
you the poo



the author →

me →



I like to draw. I like to paint.  
I like to make love. I like pinball.  
I love good food. I like having  
fun.

I like other things too. They  
are in The Whopper Strategies. It  
will be out in the serial magazine  
Ellipsis. You can order it now  
at [www.waywardcouch.com](http://www.waywardcouch.com).

If you want to take me clubbing,  
tell me I am swell, or ask about  
my other books visit [www.shikow.blogspot.com](http://www.shikow.blogspot.com).

~~from~~  
I like me. I like you too. I like  
the color orange. I like getting  
e-mails. I am just like Meg Ryan.  
What's up?

e-mail: [piroozkalayeh@gmail.com](mailto:piroozkalayeh@gmail.com)