



oxford women in business | insight magazine

THE NEW WORLD

michaelmas 2022 | issue no.13

This painting shows the death of the old, natural world to make way for one fuelled by human materialism.

Our addiction to things and wealth is symbolised by the cigarette; the harmfulness of a nicotine addiction has been drilled into us as children. Now, we have a subconscious desire for ease in everything we do, such as consuming single-use plastics/packaging and fast-fashion, investing in brands which test their products on animals, and burning through fossil fuels both inside and outside of the home, when there are other options available. Of course, we all do this. Most can't afford to find these 'other options'. Ridiculously, those who have the most money are the most guilty, using private jets, founding companies on completely unsustainable and unethical practices, and recklessly accumulating unnecessary possessions, when the majority of the UK is unable to heat their homes and afford food this winter. So, the crown on the head of the girl and the throne she sits on represent the richest within our society. Her sad expression demonstrates how money cannot buy joy, especially as the world around us heats up and dies, as conveyed through the dying roses.

—Brenna Angseesing

THE NEW WORLD

the prologue

Trashy Trinity was a term of manic creativity.

Insight Magazine: LEGACY, Eulalia's one-hundred-page lovechild, had been sent to the printer. By some miracle, she was still alive.

Naturally, The Mad Hatter was an appropriate venue for a launch event whose host was going half-mad. She had just bought a super groovy vintage green midi skirt and so even more naturally, she wanted the event to be green-themed.

"What do you think of 'Green-Eyed on the Future?'" she asked her friend. "It sounds senseless."

She settled for *Green with Envy* and said "Why not?" whenever someone asked.

One day late into term, a girl was restless.

"Where are you going?" she said to her friend.

"CSR and Chocolate Tasting. Do you want to come?"

She looked unsure.

"The chocolate's free."

And so Jasmine Sayer found herself at her first OxWIB event. During which, "Applications for Michelmas Committee are open!" was announced.

"Why not?" she thought.

On the other side of Oxford, all the way in St. Hugh's, another girl was in need of a photography gig to add to her portfolio. She happened upon an open-mic, with a dress code (??), for a magazine. She shrugged. Nonchalantly. *Why not?* Always the

casual opportunist, she enquired whether a camerawoman had been drafted. She received a prompt (desperate) response, "Not yet!"

And so Isabelle Rycroft found herself at *LEGACY: the launch event*.

To her dismay, her camera decided to not work, and only seven photos were worth delivering.

After a string of applications, Eulalia interviewed Isabelle Rycroft for the role of Insight Editor. Her face seemed familiar, but then, so does everyone's in a small town.

"Why do you want to join Insight?"

"I saw LEGACY and I really liked it."

"How did you come across LEGACY?"

Isabelle laughed, "I photographed the launch event."

"Oh!"

Bells were ringing for a reason, apparently.

A summer of zoom calls unravelled. Lali was predictably eccentric. Unpredictably, so were Jas and Izzy. So it didn't take long for Lali to stop overthinking, "How can I manage this team without looking like a beg?" Lali was used to working on her own, manically getting the job done herself. Jas was used to distracting everyone around her with unprompted anecdotes in between bursts of hyperfocus. Together they were unhinged perfectionists. Izzy was cool as a cucumber, often resembling sleeping beauty in a slumber, and her seemingly blasé vibe brought the two back to earth.



(a short story)

editor's letter

LEGACY saw the re-birth of Insight Magazine as a publication with a conscious curation and production. OxWIB wanted issue no.13 to continue LEGACY's vision. As such, I was given a team to evolve both the magazine and the presence of OxWIB in the creative community. Izzy and Jas are two incredible artists who, as I write this, I realise have not only developed my own artistry, but; over the hundreds of hours we've spent together; have become my good friends. (Taming the beast that is Adobe is something of an adventure when you're with good company.)

In LEGACY incredible global connections were made, but THE NEW WORLD realised a sense of local community. We celebrate The Oxford Period's crucial demonstration of activism amongst invaluable contributions of Ruskin Fine Art students. After befriending Oxford Brookes' creatives through LEGACY, I attended their exhibition in June, where I came upon more visionaries. OxWIB were honoured to feature some of this work in President's Drinks: The Runway, and in the name of immortalising the inspiration which birthed them, my team delve deeper in this issue. In October we collaborated with Women in Art Magazine hosting a relaxed collaging event to make something new out of something old, borrowed and blue.

THE NEW WORLD thus announces Insight Magazine as a publication determined to imagine, and determined to make this imagination accessible through the continued use of large sans-serif fonts for body text as well as clearer colour schemes. Perhaps at face value, this issue might not be the most conventional for a student society titled 'Women in Business', but we insist, how

can we ask questions about what it means to be a woman in business without asking what it means to be a woman or a young person, for example?

When creatives and business-minded people mix, a host of opportunities can blossom. Every day we watch in anticipation as the creative industry swells with vibrant possibility, promising to give life colourful animation. Imagination incites innovation. Building the utopia we envision requires new ways of engaging with both the world around us and the people within it, diverging from the road most travelled by.

From timeless epics to 15-second TikToks, creativity is consumed in every aspect of society, everywhere. We binge TV shows that were created over a decade in under a week. The process of creation—and the raw inspiration that births creation—is often underestimated, reduced, and erased. Our sunburnt attention spans demand more than suppliers can authentically give us, and paired with restless impatience, this leads to commodification and burnout. Students write plays, cast them, direct them, perform them for a week, and then forget about them in the footnotes of their CVs, barely resting and reflecting before embarking on their next project. Eventually, we want to see Oxford move away from fast-paced living; eventually, we want to see Oxford slow down.

Businesses are starting to realise that there's a difference between being impartial and being complacent. When asked how we would be incorporating the theme, 'The New World' into our work, we said, "As a Society, OxWIB's particular focus is on sustainability, but as a Magazine, our focus encompasses

and transcends the term in all meanings: social, environmental, accessibility, inclusivity, enlightenment. We want to work with a diverse group of people (both in background and submission) to continue amplifying stories, building the community, and learning from each other, eventually making these ideals ordinary and habitual.”

Western environmentalism holds a problematic paradox: unintentional or not, the residue of white supremacy and colonialism penetrates every circumstance. Take, for example, white veganism as a concept: it’s founded on the white, upper-class experience, ignoring the rich history of vegan diets in other cultures, diets which are actually much more accessible to underprivileged people. Dairy substitutes and meat alternatives are relatively new (and expensive) industries that permeate our perception of veganism, but Arab poet al-Ma’arri, born 973 CE, probably wasn’t thinking about Quorn in his poems about veganism.

Perhaps more fundamentally, Western environmentalism is more concerned with *our future* rather than everyone’s present. Climate change is not some abstract threat of dystopia; climate change is now. In 2022, the UK saw blistering summers and biting winters, but all around the world, we’re seeing man-made natural disasters. Landfills are polluting the earth, but it’s not usually Western soil that deals with the poisonous consequences.

Listening to the radio, we hear updates about the strikes, soundbites of government officials claiming that the demands for fair pay and sufficient resources are unreasonable when they’ll have to come out of the taxpayers’ pocket, and increasingly, advertisements for private healthcare. Can we truly disentangle

ourselves from unethical practices without confronting the fact that consumerism in a capitalist world might just be inherently immoral? It’s not just about liberation from exploitation and injustice, it’s about eventually deconstructing a world that ‘goes round’ on money.

With the sociopolitical reality of today, there is so much to talk about: the state of the NHS and our emergency services, the monarchy, the cost of living crisis, the refugee ‘crisis’, the perseverance of structural racism, radicalised misogyny and bigotry indoctrinating the youth, the rights of women worldwide... The headlines are relentless. But we had to accept that a termly publication can only do so much.

We hope that the 26 pieces we’ve curated reflect our stances, start conversations about these urgent realities regardless, and encourage an appreciation for our thoughtful curation process. We’re excited to say that the winner of the Editor’s Choice Award is Sofia Olendraru. ‘A society grows great when old women plant trees whose shade they know they shall never sit in.’ LEGACY sowed seeds of consciousness; THE NEW WORLD nurtures the bed of grass now growing underneath our feet. The editing process is one that is sacred to us; it demands vulnerability on both sides: from our artists who have trusted us with their work, and from us, who have the responsibility to bring their work to its full potential. As a poet, I love making up words and transforming others. As an editor, I love encouraging this chaos to unfurl in the name of expression, and getting a front-row ticket to the show.

—Eulalia Marie
Creative Director &
Insight Magazine Editor-in-Chief

Instagram @greetingsextraterrestrials

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president's welcome

The New World: a dystopian vision of our future, inspired by Aldous Huxley's 'Brave New World'. This book has held a special place in my heart from the moment I picked it up. I find my mind often returning to it as I witness the great changes (or lack thereof) unfolding in the world today. Huxley's removal of individualism in his novel is something that I sought to challenge in my presidency: it is through individuality that the greatest thoughts and ideas are formed. It is then these thoughts and ideas that make waves of change in our world.

As a society with an ability to influence, we wanted to help spark these thoughts, centring them around how we can act more sustainably as both individuals and wider communities, to work together to build 'The New World'. By definition, sustainability involves both maintaining and improving what we have in order to achieve long-term goals. I believe that this term has seen both a strengthening of what OxWIB already believes in, as well as an expansion into new concepts and actions that are only going to keep growing.

Organic. Fairtrade. Soil Association. Vegan. As consumers, we have grown used to seeing these labels on the products we buy and, if we don't see them, we often disregard the product as unsustainable or unethical. So, what would happen if we took this viewpoint and directed it towards businesses as a whole? That's where you would find the term B Corporation. **"B Corp is to business what fairtrade is to coffee."** says Richard Johnson.

I wanted to explore this certification and what it truly means to be a sustainable business in the modern era in more depth. I was lucky to be able to host a panel, Green-Eyed to the Future: The B Corp Conference, asking these questions to four representatives of B Corp businesses: Lauren Murrell, co-founder and CEO of By Sarah London; Richard Johnson, Head of Impact at DAME; Pip Durell, founder of With Nothing Underneath; and Doug Johnson, founder of Mesh Energy.

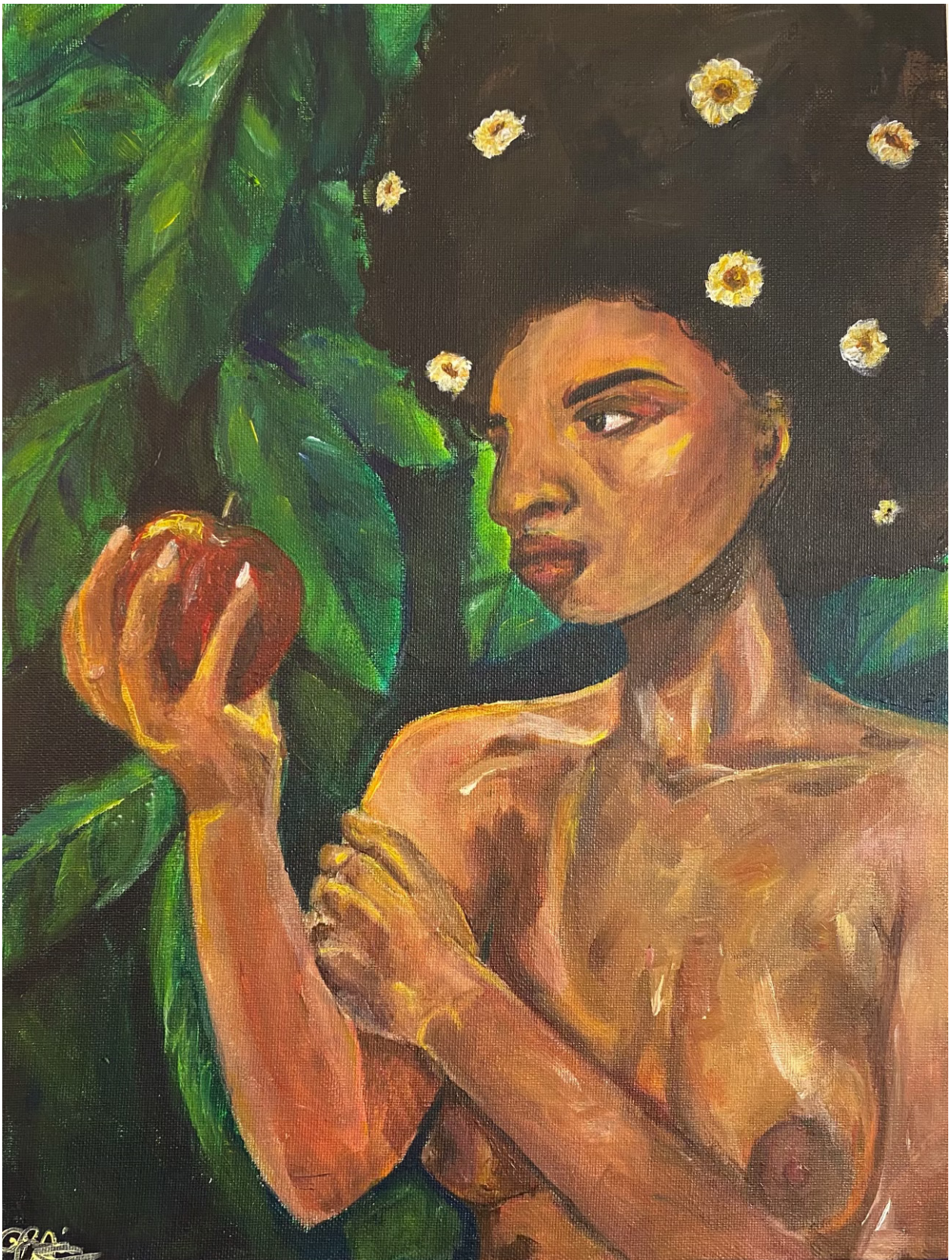
A key discussion during the panel was about the tension between greenwashing and actual efforts made by businesses to achieve sustainability. Recent news has exposed sportswear giant Adidas' exploitation of their garment workers, whilst spotlighting fast-fashion brand SHEIN's choice to launch a re-selling platform for their clothing.

The concept of whether the fashion industry inherently damages our planet and its people was brought to question: after all, can consumerism ever really be sustainable? When asked about how the B Corp status came to be at With Nothing Underneath, Pip explained, "[until] recently, no one talked about sustainability...on the whole, fashion companies are doing bad things".

In solidarity with garment workers, we supported the UK campaign group Labour Behind the Label by donating all ticket sales from our MT22 President's Drinks: The Runway. Their aim is to improve working conditions and change the fashion industry for the better, creating solidarity between those who make our clothes and those who wear them.

I am unbelievably proud of what this committee has achieved this term. There's still a long way to go, but I know OxWIB is more than capable of inspiring a brighter, greener future. I hope you enjoy this Michaelmas 2022 edition of Insight Magazine: THE NEW WORLD, and that the conversations within spark an idea in you too.

Caitlin MacClay, OxWIB President, Michaelmas 2022



the first woman
by Brenna Angseesing

Hamida Begum

A Story of Unbelonging, Partition, and Survival

By ADAM PERVEZ

Fifteen years have passed since my mother's mother passed away, but her memory and image are inescapable: framed photographs adorn the walls of our house, anecdotes of smart quips and mannerisms are shared through text messages or over dining tables, and perhaps most often, when remembering her, I find my mother lost in thought, eyes reddening and unable to speak.

I was only nine years old when she passed away. I loved my grandmother as a grandchild is supposed to love a grandparent, but I feel that I never really knew her the way that a human is supposed to know another human. What I knew were facts: grandma immigrated to the UK at some point in the 50s; she lived in a small council house in Nelson, Lancashire, she raised my mother and her six siblings practically all by herself; and born on November 16th 1928, she was a Scorpio. In an attempt to learn more about my grandmother and understand the grip she still has on my family, I decided to sit my mother down one day and ask.



grandma's passport photo, 1971

CW: mention of violence, war, death, rape, abduction, and suicide.

My grandmother was named Hamida, which in Arabic means 'to praise' or 'to love'. She was born in an agricultural, working-class and heavily patriarchal village community, in the mountainous and thickly forested Jammu, Kashmir. This was pre-partitioned British India, which is now a disputed province between North India and Pakistan. The youngest of four sisters, Hamida lost her mum at the tender age of six years old. Though I am told she had a loving relationship with her dad, his desire to have a son to inherit the family name and occupation determinedly led him to marry twice again. In his third marriage, he had two sons, and so his attention shifted promptly onto them.

As they married young and moved out of the family home, Hamida lost the presence of her eldest sisters, and having strained relationships with her stepmothers, she had no constant maternal parent. While her revolving door of influential women would stop turning one day, the instability of her formative years would shape her mentality for the rest of her life. Described as a 'free spirit', she had a special connection with animals and nature, and was often found amid an earthy adventure: climbing trees, playing in rivers, and raising animals on her dad's farm. Like a true Scorpio, she rebelled against the societal norms placed on her by her stepmothers, community, and culture, and she unapologetically said no to anyone who asked her to do any sort

of domestic task.

Hamida was eighteen years old when partition was enforced.

The British yielded to India's demands for self-autonomy in 1947 but didn't leave without self-servingly carving up the country into two independent nations. India and Pakistan. Religious and communal rivalries stoked by three hundred years of British colonial rule were furiously ignited and resulted in the largest forced human migration of the twentieth century. Nearly fifteen million people were displaced across those hastily drawn borders, and it is estimated that between half a million to two million people tragically died in nightmarish examples of violence and war, in communities which were so recently living in peace.

It has been argued that this war and partition were inevitable, and Britain shouldn't be held accountable for them. The situation is nuanced, but there is a difference between a historic outlook and a lived experience. Hamida lived in harmony with her Sikh and Hindu neighbours. When Partition was enacted, in one breath she was told stories of Hindus hiding their Muslim neighbours to protect them from other Hindus seeking them, but in another breath, she was told of lifelong friends turning on each other suddenly. Kashmir was her motherland and my grandma did not want to leave her, but she had no choice. If she had stayed, there is no saying what would have happened to her.

Often overlooked is the psychological

and physical trauma which vitriolically seized the women who survived this time. Because of the feudal-patriarchal expectation on South Asian women to uphold and carry the honour and reputation of their family (which prevails to this day), generations of family honour, tradition and respect can be tarnished solely through targeting the women of a family. As such women became the most vulnerable targets. Over seventy-five thousand women were raped. Over forty thousand women were abducted, never to be seen again. These reports spread like wildfire through South Asia, recalling women carrying poison in their necklaces or throwing themselves into local wells because they wanted to save their families from 'dishonour'. I cannot begin to comprehend their impact on eighteen-year-old Hamida. No matter how much she had resisted the societal expectations gripping her, she was still a woman, and now even more unimaginably vulnerable. Though she strongly opposed leaving Jammu, overnight Hamida became a refugee. With her family, she was forced to flee the only home she had ever known to go to Sialkot, a city close to the border of Pakistan. Unforgettably, as raiders quickly approached her village, Hamida went back to free her animals, who in turn followed her across the border.

Luckier than most, Hamida's escape to Pakistan consisted of a nightly nine-hour journey on foot with her relatives and ended with a place to stay upon arrival. One of her sisters,

now married, welcomed Hamida in, but the years apart from each other had changed their dynamic: Hamida was tasked to work for her, assisting in the running of the household, and being paid with food and secondhand clothes. While this is a rather fortunate new beginning for a partition refugee, it was understandably quite oppressive: having no financial independence, and being forced to get by doing the domestic tasks she had previously worked so hard to resist.

She did however meet my future grandad Ghulam here: I am told he won her affections by learning love sonnets and singing them to her whenever he saw her doing one of her domestic tasks on the street. They married quickly. Though safe and married, partition had taken away a chance of stability and security for the couple. As a newborn, Pakistan was only just being built, and so it was incredibly hard to find jobs or meaningful purposes. My grandma had already left her motherland, Kashmir, and was heartbroken. She did not want to leave Pakistan, which, though a forced move—or arguably, because it was a forced move—had become her new home. When the opportunity arose for Ghulam to move to the UK and stay with one of his brothers in Lancashire, Hamida pushed him to do it. Neither one of them wanted to be apart, especially for the sake of their two children, but Hamida had dreams for their family that she knew needed sacrifice to make true, and so the family persevered with almost no contact with Ghulam for

two years. Whilst in Pakistan, Hamida continued working for her sister and, having learnt how to sew, she slowly developed a small business: using the clothes her sister would pay her with, Hamida reworked them and sold them for a minuscule profit to other families in her neighbourhood. Ghulam and Hamida spent their years apart saving every penny they could, slowly moving their entire family to England, first the children, enrolling them into schools, and then finally Hamida herself was able to join her family, which meant reluctantly saying goodbye to her new home in Pakistan.

The 1950s and 60s saw a huge influx of South Asian immigration to the UK and the development of visible South Asian communities in areas like Bradford, Nelson and Birmingham. Britain's objective to expand their economy couldn't be achieved with their labour force: the shortages caused by the Second World War left gaps in textiles, traditional manufacturing and transport, sectors which continued with unfair working conditions like long hours and low pay, making the jobs unattractive to British workers; Britain's answer was to bring in workers from abroad. Poverty and communal violence caused by Partition encouraged many to emigrate, whilst the promise of a better living standard, more job opportunities and fairly lax immigration policies made Britain an attractive destination. Hamida came to the UK and reunited with Ghulam in 1961, one year before the



grandma and granddad with their children outside their house, Nelson, 1973

UK government decided to tighten immigration policies to prevent 'too many' South Asians from immigrating.

Hamida once again found herself living with relatives. She also soon discovered that over half of her husband's wages were being kept by her brother-in-law. When she confronted him, she found herself evicted with Ghulam and their children. Using the money she'd managed to save from her husband's salary, she was able to purchase a house in Nelson. This house soon became the home my mum and the rest of her siblings were born in; a sacred site of pilgrimage for her grandchildren years later.

Whilst Ghulam worked long days in

factories, Hamida worked hard to make a living off her sewing skills. I was taken aback by my mum's vivid account of her mum's determination as if the memories were so deeply imprinted on her. Hamida repurposed the pantry into a makeshift home office, piling up layers and layers of her hand-sewn tea towels from floor to ceiling with fabric fibres furiously flying around. My grandma worked day and night in her pantry home office, sometimes even fourteen hours a day. Every penny was saved for the future. Hamida and Ghulam never again wanted to be faced with an emergency or crisis where they would have to restart their lives; they wanted to build a future, and they

dreamed that one day they might return to Pakistan, own space in their homeland and grow old together there. Hamida's sewing became so successful she later signed a contract to make curtains, trousers, and even more tea towels, for a local Asian family wholesaler. As the money slowly started trickling in, Hamida started giving back to her community, teaching other immigrant mothers how to sew, so that they too could become self-sufficient and gain some control over their own lives.

In *Remnants of a Separation: A History of the Partition through Material Memory*, Aanchal Malhotra writes,

'apart from a physical displacement, there would have been a traumatic mental displacement, a sudden uprootedness, an unlearning and relearning of identity.'

Hamida experienced a sense of displacement and unbelonging far before Partition, and she worked diligently to ensure that this sense was not passed onto her descendants. Hamida and Ghulam's tireless toiling and money-saving proved fruitful; they were able to send their children to university, ensuring all their daughters were given an education and a promise of a stable future, something Hamida never had. As the years passed by, Hamida and Ghulam were eventually able to purchase land back in Pakistan. Not long after, they began developing plans for a spacious house. They wanted a place for all their children and grandchildren to come back to, to call home, no matter

what happened in their lives. They wanted ground to grow roots in.

Towards the end of her life, Hamida truly got to enjoy the fruits of her labour. She travelled the world, but this time, because she wanted to. She and Ghulam bought a farm where Hamida could raise animals, just as she did as a child in Kashmir. They chose to distribute part of their wealth amongst villagers, some of whom Hamida once knew as a child, some of whom were family members, paying for their surgeries or dowries.

Hamida's story was one of constant adversity and surviving it. She died knowing that her daughters and their daughters were able to study at university, were financially self-sufficient, and were able to follow their dreams. Her legacy lives on vividly. Years after her death, on the same land they dreamed of owning one day, Ghulam opened a series of orphanages and schools for young girls to learn Maths, English, Urdu, Arabic and life skills (like sewing). This organisation ensures these young girls, many without stable parental figures, are not denied a stable future. Pictures of Hamida hang on the walls of these schools, just like they do in my family home.

Hamida's determination to adapt and evolve to every situation thrust at her ensured not just her survival, but also her children's, and her children's children. I can write this story because my grandma made her dreams a reality that her descendants could inherit.



grandma holding mum as a baby, Lancashire, 1966



grandma and granddad with me and my sisters



grandma with all her daughters, granddaughters, and me

roots

by eulalia marie

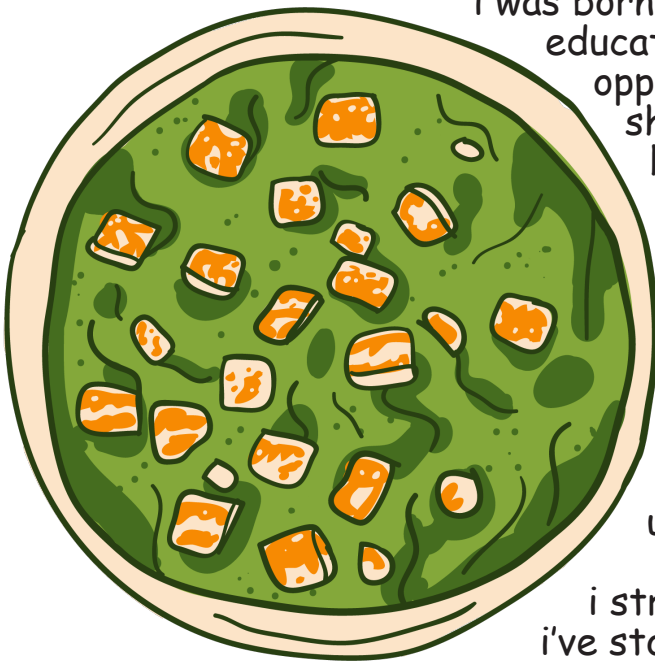
i long for a place to belong
i think i'm lost
i have no soils to return to

i am not homeless
i reside in a house with a family
the broken sort, but a family
all the same
born into privilege
we never had it easy
there were days
when we weren't sure
when we'd next see
a meal on the table
we weren't starving
we were broke



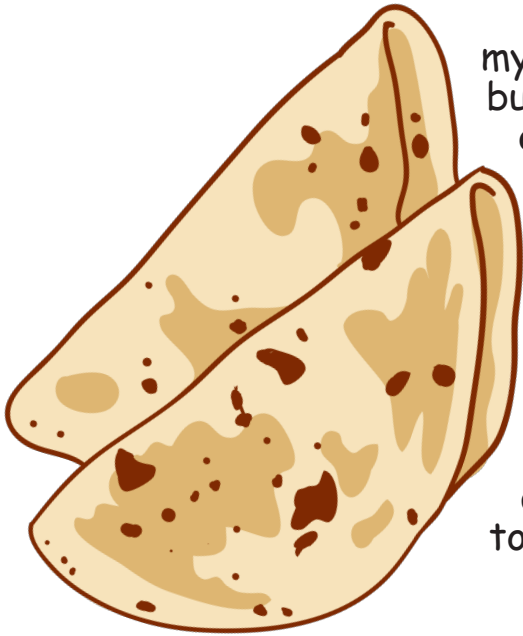
maybe that's what broke us apart.

anyway, what i mean to say is
i was born into blessings:
education,
opportunities,
shelter,
healthcare,
clean water,
etcetera
i can read and
i can write and



though i refuse to use capital letters
my grammar is generally good
i know the rules but i don't
understand them

i struggle most with tenses since
i've stopped learning spanish
but what the bark of my bones
really crave is something native:



my first language is english
but my mother tongue is konkani
or hindi.

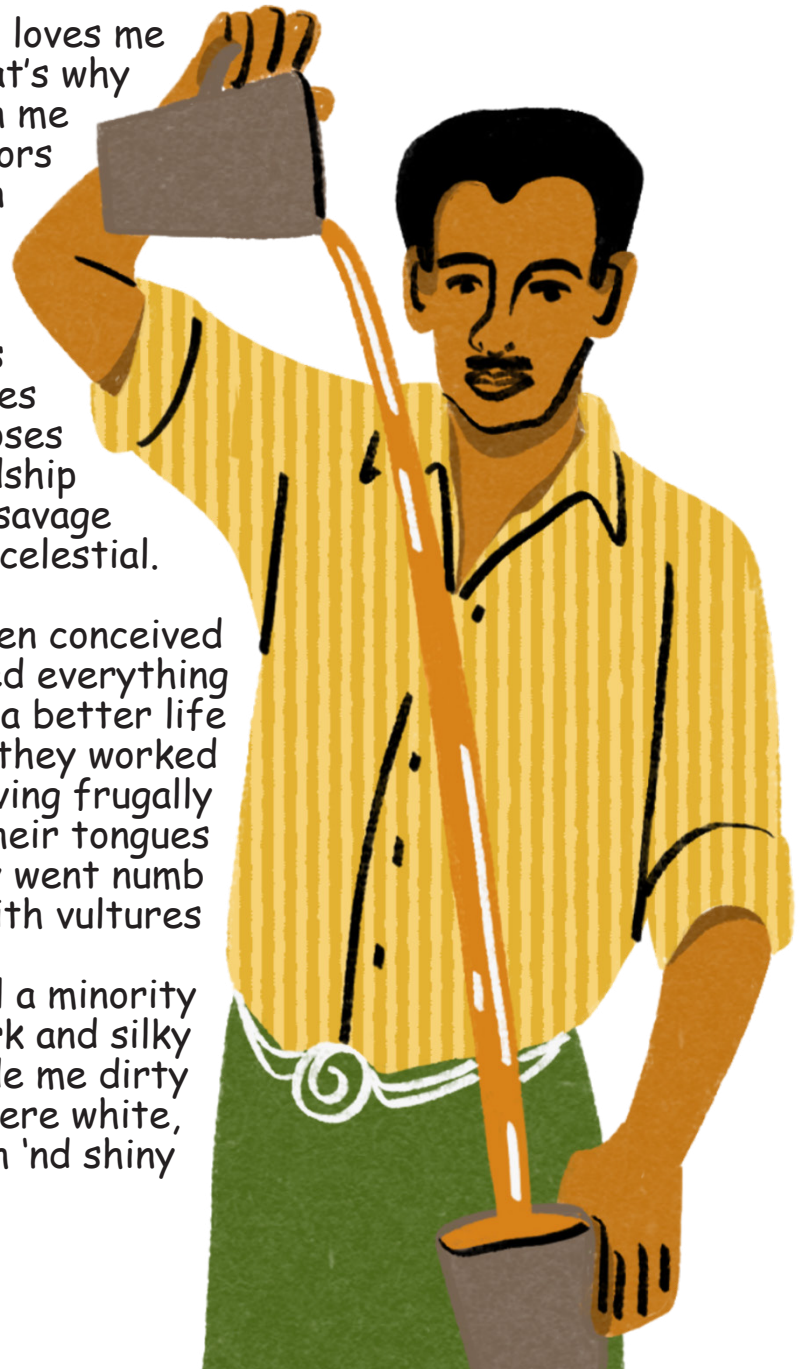
i'm not sure
if it is the local language of goa
or the 'national' language of india
see i don't know anything
but the colour of my skin
and that mum lived in chembur
until she married dad and moved to leicester
he'd been living in britain since he was five
and he'd done what he had to
to survive

a light skin with a light accent
he was still called 'paki' by the 'friends'
who sniffed his scent.

mum loves me
and maybe that's why
she did not teach me
the mother tongue of our ancestors
i think she felt unclean
when people treated her
differently
for her accent
and her curries
and her clothes
when they'd turn up their noses
at her offers of friendship
like she was something savage
and not celestial.

before i was even conceived
my parents sacrificed everything
so that i could have a better life
and i don't just mean that they worked
tirelessly, saving every penny, living frugally
i mean they cut out their tongues
and their culture, til they went numb
from cohabiting with vultures

despite their efforts i was still a minority
though my locks were dark and silky
the smell of my hairy skin made me dirty
cuz the dolls we played with were white,
smooth 'nd shiny



and the mirror didn't reflect who i wanted to be
the fantasies of the tv
anything indian about me
made me a factory manufacturing mistake
by default.

sometimes i wish i could set to factory default
learn the languages of the countries my grandparents lived in
where they lived in relative poverty but had values
where there was colour and beauty and love

one early morning on the way to the orthodontist
mum drove through an area of leicester
where the pedestrians and passersby were
predominantly indian
kids walked to school in packs like affable wolves
protecting the young and protecting their own
i wondered what it would have been like
to grow up in a pack
rather than feeling like prey,
becoming my own predator
i wondered what difference it would have made
to my reflection
i am grateful for growing up grotesque
it gave me perspective
charged me to embrace the strangest
but sometimes i wish i didn't
cuz i feel like i've lost out
gotten lost in the map of trying to fit in
and now
i don't know where my home is

i'm not sure where i stand on
the controversy of cultural appropriation
or how cultured you have to be to claim your identity
because i feel like i don't have one
my cultured friends call me a coconut
brown on the outside, white inside
because i'm so westernised:

for my year eleven prom
i was adamant i wanted to wear a sari
burgundy and gold
something to authenticate my identity
but it felt like a costume
tell me why i feel more comfortable
in clothes made in sweatshops
by people who look like me
than in what they wear as they make them?



mum loves me
and so she tells me stories
tales to remind me of my roots
like how grandad taught himself english
with a newspaper stood under a street lamp
he was determined to learn
so that he could earn his own light
he possessed one pair of trousers
and he washed them every night

i wish i knew my roots like i know my trunk.
this trunk of western culture
that sprouts rot in every other
high-waisted jeans and consumerism
back and forth breakthroughs with
freedom and tech and respect
roast dinners and shallow dreaming
and conjugating verbs
thesauruses of synonyms
what adjective to choose and
what punctuation is correct
how to dot the i's and cross the t's.

i can write
but not in sanskrit
not with devanagari script
the language that my dna is rooted in
they say it is divine
but i cannot understand it

a tourist in my motherland
a misfit in britain
i am

lost



it is not that i prefer
apple crumble and custard over jalebi
but that i cannot grab
multiples of eleven rupees
and tell a rickshaw driver where to take me.



Without Song or Dance

by Alice Williams

A storytelling piece about kindness during the COVID-19 pandemic and women helping to support each other during times of struggle. The home itself is a replica of my grandmother's house — the shopping bag on the doorstep is a symbol of generosity whilst telling a story about my mother buying her groceries every week.



Planting Trees

by *Melanie Sinclair*

She stands bare foot on fertile green soil,
Closed eyes to the sun as she bathes in its rays,
Worn bones tell stories of victories and toils,
Silver hair in the winds of time gently sways.

The ridges of her hands hold traces of earth,
From the planting of countless trees,
Though she knows she'll not witness much more than their birth,
That they'll benefit the world gives her ease.

And she planted these seeds with joy and with love,
Smoothing over the soil with enduring care,
Praying with her soft heart to the creator above,
That the trees will grow strong and sweet fruits they will bear.

She's lived multiple versions of parts of her self,
As she walked through the bookshop of life,
Picking up and imparting from many a shelf,
Volumes filled with both calm and with strife.

There are chapters she'd wish to return to and read,
And others' best left in the past,
But in her wisdom she knows they too helped make the seed,
For the trees she's now leaving to last.

Her face beams with light as she now turns away,
From the orchard she's lovingly laid,
And her soul fills with happiness knowing someday,
Those after her will sit in their shade.



brenna in a field of oxeye daisies, may 2021
by eulalia marie

KNITTED INTO NATURE

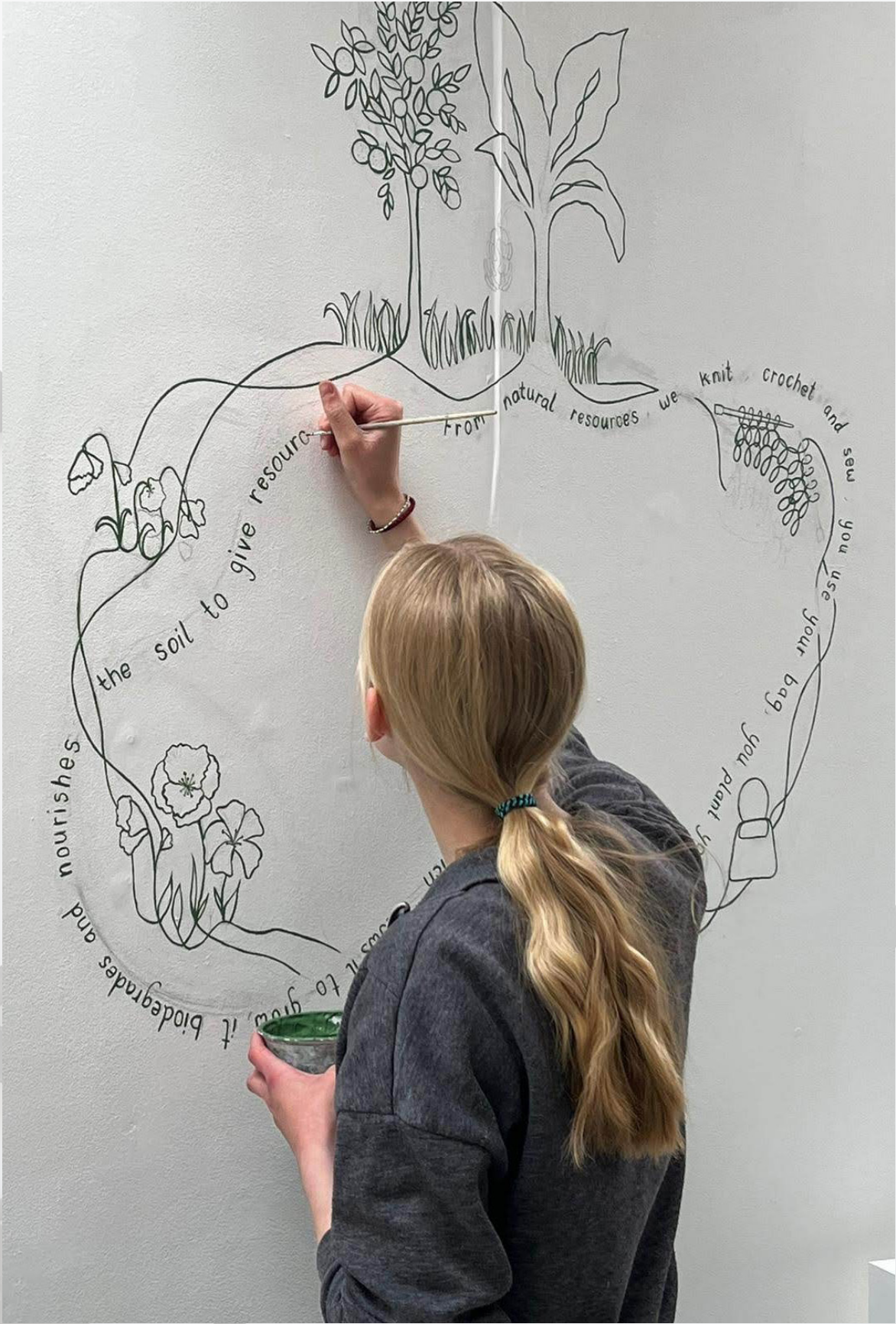
Amelia developed her passion for sustainable textiles whilst studying Art and Design Foundation at Oxford Brookes University. She is now studying for a Degree in Textile Design and is excited to continue experimenting with unconventional techniques and combining multiple disciplines within her work.

A PROJECT BY

AMELIA

WYLAM







Where did the idea come from initially?

My project stemmed from exploring the term 'interdependence'. From my investigations, I noticed a fundamental imbalance in the relationship between humans and the environment; humans are taking so much more from nature than they are giving back, therefore hindering natural interdependence. We're so quick to forget how dependent we are on the earth that we're destroying.

Frustrated by my discoveries, I developed this as the focus of my project. I was thinking about cycles, how people and the environment interact and how natural cycles within our earth's biosphere are being broken by human activity. My passion for sustainability and awareness of unsustainable activity in the fashion industry led me to attempt to answer the questions, 'How can fashion and textiles fit into the natural cycles of our earth's biosphere? How can we borrow resources rather than take them? How can we give resources back at the end of their useful life?'

I began with researching bio-materials and developing my own samples and processes. This led me to the idea that resources should be borrowed from the environment and given back in a way that provides nourishment and

support, instead of just being taken. It's important to work with the environment, not against it.

What problems do you think there are within the fashion industry at the moment and how have you avoided these issues?

The fashion industry is very wasteful, there are huge issues with overproduction and often the production process itself causes lots of waste, for example from offcuts during pattern cutting. Heaps of textiles end up in landfill. Furthermore, textile production often uses hidden plastics and toxic chemicals, like in dye production. The resources taken from the environment strip key elements from cycles of interdependence, and as a result ecosystems struggle to support themselves, causing a reduction in biodiversity. The natural resources I used were either grown responsibly or collected from waste, meaning my products are renewable, biodegradable and non-polluting so they can be returned to the environment after their period of use.

Consumer behaviour is another massive issue; overconsumption and fast fashion are two major problems. I believe companies have a responsibility to slow down, spread awareness, and guide their consumers into making choices that are less harmful to the environment. At the end of their life, the seed bombs in the handles of my bags can be planted in the ground to be watered and grown into wildflowers. I hope this interactive process of giving the bags back to the environment is exciting and engaging for the consumer, and enables them to value patience, slow fashion, and natural processes. I wanted to promote a symbiotic relationship between humans and nature, one which is carefully balanced and which humans need to



restore with this earth.

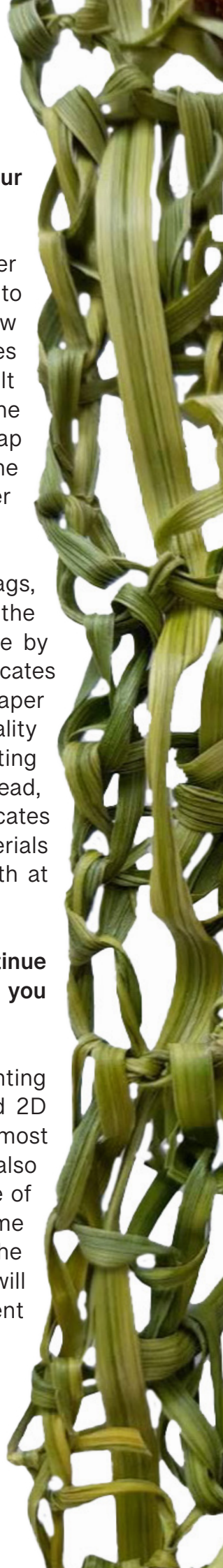
Where did you draw your aesthetic inspiration from?

I wanted to reference designer bags that were recognisable to a range of audiences. I drew inspiration from key features such as: the curved flap and quilt effect on the Classic Chanel, the handle indentations and flap shape on the Birkin, and the rounded shape and shoulder strap of the Baguette.

Through referencing these bags, my aim was to comment on the unsustainable duplicates made by the fast fashion industry. Duplicates are often made from cheaper materials and are lower quality so they do not last, contributing to pollution and landfill. Instead, I wanted to reimagine duplicates using biodegradable materials which would give back to earth at the end of their use.

Do you have any ideas to continue this project? If so, where do you want to take it?

My plan is to continue experimenting with root fabric, going beyond 2D growth; this is my favourite and most versatile bio-material. I have also begun to collect a wider range of natural resources to begin some more experiments. Following the same concept, the materials will be returned to the environment after their use.



GRASS ROOT BAG

The grass root bag was made from homegrown root fabric, knitted banana peel, macramé grass handles, hand-grown and hand-twisted grass thread and handmade seed bomb beads. It took two weeks to grow the grass from seed to the correct root density before I could harvest it and make it into root fabric.

To make the thread, which I used to combine all panels of the bags, I twisted the grass which was grown on top of the root fabric, utilising all components to avoid waste. The bag is fully constructed using saddle stitch which is traditionally used on designer handbags, a common sign of tradition and quality.

The grass for the handles was sourced from a plant within my garden, (harvested to a level where the plant remained healthy and was able to grow back); I incorporated the seed bomb beads into the handles using macramé square knots. For the knitted banana peel side panels, I collected waste banana peel which I soaked and dried in cycles to create my desired malleability before joining and knitting the strands.



ORANGE PEEL LEATHER BAG

The orange peel leather bag is made from hand-made orange peel leather, 3D woven diamonds made from dried grass (a technique inspired by corn dolly making), macramé grass handle, hand-twisted grass thread, wildflower seed bomb beads, and left over root fabric from my other bag.

To make the leather I used waste orange peel collected over time which I dried in the sun, ground in a pestle and mortar to a fine powder and combined with other kitchen ingredients to produce the desired colour and consistency.



The mixture was then spread out and dried on top of salvaged waterproof fabric; it took two weeks to dry out all the way through. I embedded wildflower seeds into the leather mixture during the drying process, and adjusted the ratio of ingredients in my orange peel leather to produce a stiffer mixture. I shaped this into seed bomb beads, these only took a few days to dry (I included these in the handles of all three bags).

KNIT AND CROCHET GRASS BAG

The grass for the knit and crochet grass bag was harvested from my garden and tied together to form 'yarn' while still very fresh. I knitted it into panels which were joined using overstitch, also using grass. The handle was crocheted and the front flap is constructed from four crochet circles made using my hand-twisted grass thread. All bag designs contain an element of knit or weave in the main body of the bag or in the handle which connotes to my recurring metaphor of human and environmental interdependence. Loops provide collective strength and are dependent on one another to provide support and bind the fabric together. If one stitch is cut, the whole structure is weakened. This is how I view interdependence within the environment, if one element is damaged it has a domino effect and adjusts many other connections.



Interviewed by Izzy Rycroft

MOSS BROS



Covered in moss, chia, grass, and ivy, this business suit is a statement on capitalist greed. Our planet is being stripped to line the pockets of wealthy businessmen but this piece tells an optimistic story of Mother Nature fighting back.

This durational piece is the first of Baboo's to combine textiles with nature in a fine art piece. Her work is a continuation of her previous studies of looking into the relationship between textiles and nature with our ever-growing consumption of fast fashion.

What does your project focus on?

My work often centres around humanity's relationship with nature, and this piece was no different. I focused on how capitalism affects our Earth and how it is predominantly businessmen to blame for the destruction of our planet.

Where did the idea come from initially?

What, if any, inspiration did you take from social media content or movements?

A lot of inspiration came from the Climate Action movement. I would see a lot of information about it on social media and learnt just how much climate change was to blame on these big industries, especially the fashion industry. Following the rise of more fast fashion brands, such as Shein, I grew more passionate about this subject and wanted to find a way to add to the conversation about it.



Expanding on this, what problems do you think there are currently within the fashion industry?

Over-consumption is a massive problem that we're facing right now. We're in a strange era where so many trends exist at once, and new trend cycles occur almost bi-monthly; big industries are pushing this attitude through media advertising, subsequently creating a massive issue of over-consumption. Their sole aim is to make money fast using any means to achieve this, inevitably exploiting people and the planet. People are catching on to this issue and spreading awareness of the chain of exploitation within the fashion industry, however more often than not we are met with green-washing by these companies. For example, fast fashion brands such as H&M and Shein are currently launching campaigns to change their image, attempting to prove they're more sustainable than they actually are.

How would you like to see this changed?

I believe a restriction on how these brands advertise, in the same way fast-food restaurants have restrictions on theirs, would definitely help this problem. Love Island, for example, is often sponsored by Missguided with an advert at the start of every break, followed by adverts for PrettyLittleThing, BooHoo, and NastyGal. These brands promote to predominantly young women viewers that the way to achieve the unattainable 'Love Island' look and lifestyle is to shop from them.



A PROJECT BY
**RIANNA
BABOO**

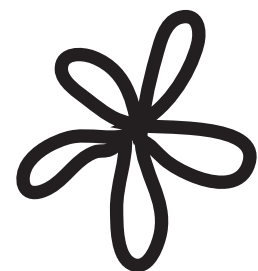
There should also be stricter laws surrounding how fashion brands produce their garments, from how they obtain their fabrics to how they dispose of waste. These brands find loopholes for producing their clothes by exploiting people in countries where worker laws aren't as tight — predominantly within Asia. These governments need to take action in creating better laws for their citizens, to avoid exploitation of their people and the destruction of their environment when harmful waste is subsequently dumped into local waters.



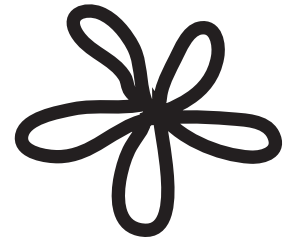
Could you describe the process of making the items in more detail? How long did it take to make, how and where did you source the materials, and what was the importance of collaboration?

I wanted to be as sustainable as possible, starting out by sourcing a suit and shirt from a local charity shop, using seeds I had at home, and collecting moss from around the studio. Through many (failed) attempts, trying to grow various seed types on different fabrics in multiple environments, I realised that the chia seeds most successfully adhered to every fabric and grew within a week when put in a warm and moist environment. The great thing about these seeds is that they become very glue-like when soaked in water which gave me an advantage when attaching them to the fabric. This also meant I could create variety on the garment by mixing in different seeds to the soaked chia as they would attach more easily. In my experiments, I found that grass seeds also grew super quickly in the same environment as the chia, hence the added inclusion of grass on the jacket. However, during the trials, I realised that the chia and grass had an estimated life cycle of just over two weeks which included its growing and wilting process.

Since I knew this piece would be durational and I had to get the timing right for the plants to survive for the exhibition, the piece came together mostly within the final two weeks—which meant a lot of late nights in the studio. The first week was to source the moss and attach it onto the jacket, while the second week was solely for growing the grass and chia. Being in the studio with everyone making their own pieces for the exhibition meant



that others were able to look after the jacket on days that I couldn't come in. I had my jacket on a mannequin in the middle of the studio to get the best light, loosely covered in a clear bin bag to preserve the moisture and easily accessible for daily watering. Since I was taking daily progress pictures of the jacket, it was great working in a studio with other people who I could readily ask for pictures and to water the jacket; oftentimes they'd do it without me even having to ask!



In this way, collaboration definitely played a huge part in the development of my project. My course had frequent group crits where I could talk through all of my ideas with both other students and my lecturer which was insanely helpful. The studio was another great space to bounce ideas off of each other and gain inspiration; Amelia and I, another artist featured in this issue, worked together quite closely since we were doing similar experiments, giving each other feedback on how different seeds grew. Funnily enough, we both ended up using grass seeds for our work! It's crazy how many little bits of knowledge I was able to receive from people, especially when I was struggling to grow things.

Could you expand on the inspiration you drew from designers such as Hussein Chalayan?

I was heavily inspired by artists with extensive knowledge of working with plants, such as Monsieur Plant, Marcin Rusak, Hussein Chalayan, and Azuma Makoto. Rusak's work embraces the decay of flowers as he sews or encases them in preservatives. His pieces show the life cycles of nature, an idea I see as fitting for my piece as it is inevitable that it will eventually wilt. 'Plant' uses nature in place of everyday essentials as a way of showcasing our reliance on the man-made, and how we have yet to spiritually connect to mother earth. Azuma Makoto uses and manipulates plants in extravagant feats of symbolism; he has created many pieces using moss as the main medium. Hussein Chalayan has particularly impacted my work through his experiment of oxidising clothing, something I aimed to recreate for the dirtied, white shirt in my piece.

How did you decide on the name of the project?

Funnily enough, I didn't think of it myself. I had posted the progress pictures on my art Instagram (@riannaart) and one of my friends had cleverly commented the title pun, so naturally, I stole his idea and gave my piece the name 'Moss Bros'.

Along with it being quite funny, a good play on words, it definitely encapsulates the idea behind my piece: a big fashion brand, horrible for the environment, making suits for businessmen.

INTERVIEWED BY
**JASMINE
SAYER**



MEGAN BAFFOE:

*GROWING A
SUSTAINABLE
WARDROBE*

PHOTOGRAPHED BY MARTHA HUGHES







Jumper – bought prior to quitting fast fashion

Skirt – Depop, £10

Legwarmers – Ebay, £7

Heels – London Charity Shop (Scope), £6

Earrings – Depop, £35



*Dress – Oxford Vintage Shop (Ballroom Emporium), £35
Blouse – Oxford Vintage Shop (Unicorn), £20
Corset – bought prior to quitting fast fashion
Choker – Sustainable Brand (Stonehart Jewelry), £33*







*Dress – Depop, £99
Shoes – Vinted, £15
Umbrella – Oxford Charity Shop (Oxfam), £5
Hair Bows – Online Vintage Shop (She's Parisian), £13*

Dress – Depop, £15

Coat – Oxford Vintage Shop (The Ballroom Emporium), £12

Choker – Online Vintage Shop (She’s Parisian), £24

Earrings – Online Vintage Shop (She’s Parisian), £15

Ribbon – Sustainable Brand (Mille Saisons), gifted





Blouse - Depop, £16

Skirt - Depop, £25

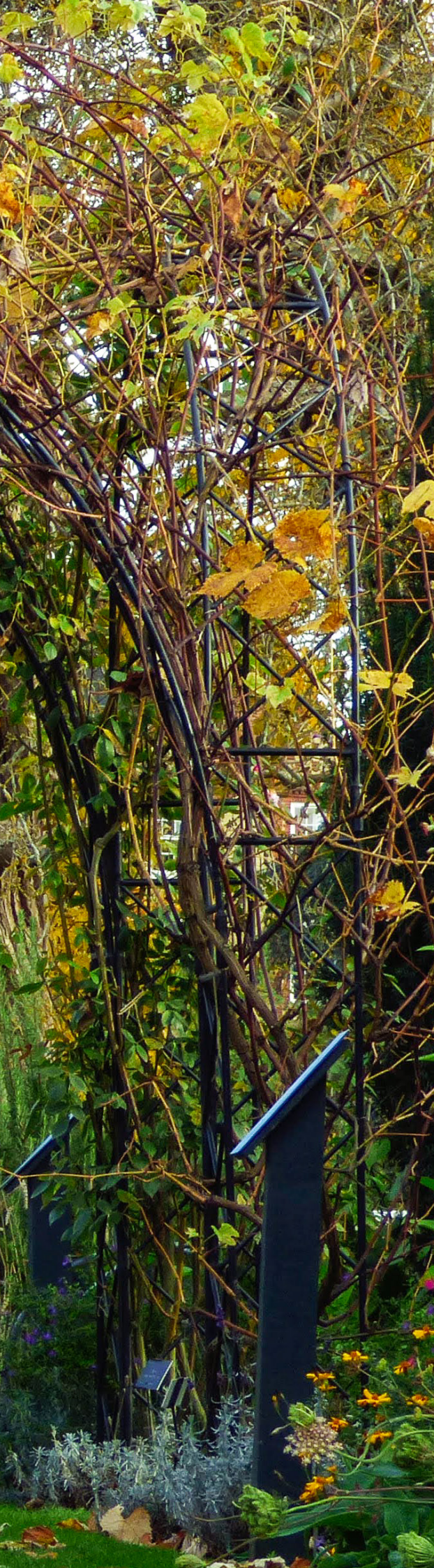
Shoes - Depop, £25

Socks - Etsy, £15

Hair Bow - Sustainable Brand (Millie Saisons), £20

Coat - Depop, £35









@rosyfingeredmegan @oxfashionsoc



What happens when the sun dies?

by Anais Coates

'What happens when the sun dies?' is a series exploring city landscapes after ecological collapse. Compiled of travel agent magazines, the series explores a morbid sense of finality in travel agent media. These images are so temporary in their nature; what will these landscapes look like in 10 years? Will Florida be swallowed underwater and spat back out into one conglomerate metropolis? I imagine a future in which iconic landmarks become one state created by moving landmasses and societies to form one apocalyptic state.



HOLLYWOOD

THANK YOU KNOW
FLORIDA?

the last of the ice

Written by Louie de Silva

Illustrated by Millie Davidson



When I was a child in the 2030s, I thought I knew the cold, with my hat squeezing my head and my scarf strangling my neck. But then 2050-52 saw the Last Age of the Icebergs, so I clearly didn't know the coldest of the cold.

They told us the bergs wouldn't melt, that they were working as fast as they could to prevent any damage, that our children would get to see all that we got to see. But I watched the last iceberg melt on TV with my child and I never did that with my parents, and my child will never do that with their child because the bergs are never coming back.

Greenland had become so flooded with the seas of tourists coming to see the icebergs one last time that they had to close their borders for four years. People had started jumping onto the icebergs to connect with the Arctic as it perished, but they would get lost at sea as the icebergs melted. These were terrible tragedies and a national embarrassment for Greenland; one headline read **BOY, AGED 9, DIED FULFILLING HIS LAST WISH OF TOUCHING SNOW**. Some were saddened by this, but most were jealous of him: he got to fulfil his wish. I don't remember the last time I touched snow.

My child has barely even seen rain. Only storms. Only floods. It's absolutely absurd to own a car now; the rain falls so heavily it crushes the metal completely. Only the wealthiest can afford a pellet-proof car. So we

stay here, in this village. My child barely knows beyond its borders. I used to holiday abroad. Sometimes we visit my parents, but they live in the Fens which is nearly impossible to get to since the floodings. We have to take a specially designed public boat that can withstand the weather and is submersible. Before I could just drive. I was a terrible driver.

No one was warned about the mass floodings of 2057, now unofficially referred to as 'the Death of the Farmers'. People had moved to the Fens for its remoteness, but 2057 spat in their faces. When it came, people only had time to try and save their bodies. Their souls are stored in the soil underneath the endless abandonment and destruction. One day they will become a seabed. So many farming families died on their farms, stranded by the complete lack of access to boats. Those who survived have now become fishing communities and live on stilts.

Most people are just homeless in London. Instead of spending money on high-risk flood zones or tackling climate change, the government funded the super-rich's space-exploration missions. It worked out for them—the government, that is—they now live in a gated community with the super-rich in space, far away from all the shit they've caused. All the while, I'm here, hiding tears from my child, reminiscing about the houses I used to play in but now struggle to navigate through.



death by water

Cast

Cassandra
The Friend
The Witch
The Monk
The Priest
JAY-Z
The Unhoused Woman
The Strange Samaritan

Eulalia Marie
Clara Marks
Tamilore Olusanya
Paul Majek
Kesena Berry
JAY-Z
Clara Marks
Paul Majek



Script

Inspired by 'The Waste Land' by T.S. Eliot
and No Church in the Wild by JAY-Z & Kanye West
Written by Eulalia Marie
Edited by Clara Marks
Photographed by M.Woods

Content Warnings

allusions to sexual violence
cursory descriptions of mutilation
mention of rape and suicide
vulgar language

DREAM ONE:

The Friend

don't count sheep,
cassandra, you mustn't fall asleep
only fever dreams in this hot heat
the coven gave you a concussion,
you're dead meat

Cassandra

the air is always thick
always both humid and dry with
drought
always empty and
i can never tell
if it is me or you who is not
breathing

The Witch

to live is to die until you are
dead

Transcendent Cassandra

i'm too old to cry when i'm scared

Cassandra

we were so close, i felt
like you were made of my blood
made from my rib

Transcendent Cassandra

i'm too old to be held

The Monk

i teach suffering and the cessation
of suffering.

Cassandra

when i see you
i will shake you
until your skull cracks

The Monk

focus on your breathing, cassie.

The Priest

hello, hello, so good to see you
here
what a night, the future is bright
let us swallow our fear

The Monk

in and out. see how it ebbs and
flows.

Cassandra

where father sees beauty, i see
pain:

JAY-Z

tears on the mausoleum floor
blood stains the colosseum doors

The Monk

everything passes.

The Priest

those who are fallen asleep are
lost!

Cassandra

he preaches,

The Priest

for as in adam all die, so in
christ all will be made alive.

JAY-Z

lies on the lips of a priest
thanksgiving disguised as a feast

The Priest

and every eye will see him, even
those who pierced him

The Witch

but he said, you cannot see my
face,
for any man who sees me i will
erase!

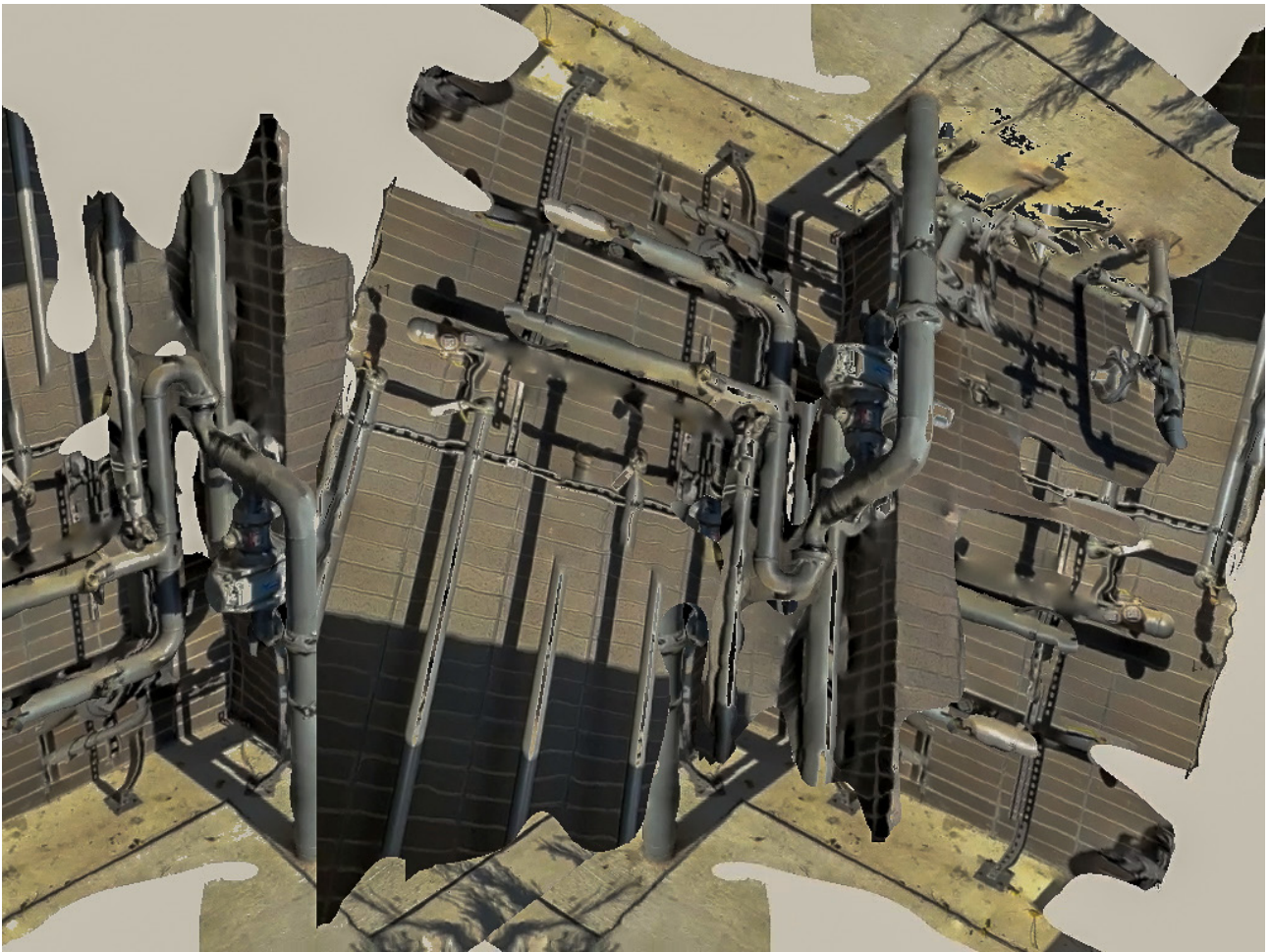
when the sun comes with the
clouds
we will suffocate, no doubt,
no grace

The Monk

swallow this impermanence before it
hollows you

Transcendent Cassandra

rinpoche, if only you knew how i am
trying



Cassandra

at the banquet we raise our glasses
and toast,

All

let us eat and drink,
for tomorrow we die.

Cassandra

empty stomachs and empty glasses
i breathe in and out and watch as
the pain passes...

at the violet hour
my dreams contorted into prophecies
we had watched a film before we
crawled into bed
i told you a fairytale
you fell asleep
i couldn't
thinking, i want to stay in this
bed forever
i wondered if we were too old for
this:

films and fairytales and falling
asleep next to each other
there are some savages in this
wicked world

i hadn't prayed in a long time but
i prayed then

we were taken at dawn by the
menacing man

and thrown into cages

made of barb

whispering promises of harm

we were trapped and

kneecapped

crawling

in his lair

together, at least, i could still
tell you

Transcendent Cassandra

i'm sorry/i love you/i'm sorry/i
love you

i'm just as scared

Cassandra

mercy meant death
but i've never been self less

time crept by until it withered
away
and we grew
and grew apart

one day the monstrous man
found me off putting and desperate
so he released me
i couldn't save you

Transcendent Cassandra

i didn't want to save you

Cassandra

you were forgotten, unseen
i no longer loved you
and i was no longer sorry
i left you to that fate worse than
death
i left you alone.

you can't wake
a wakeless
sleeper

but still i roused
convulsing and wet
soaked in tears and sweat and
too petrified to close my eyes
you were sleeping soundly next to
me, disconcertingly
tossing and turning in my
restlessness with me
gritting your teeth and rubbing
your eyes
in your sleep you couldn't hear my
cries
silence now, but the sound of
bones grinding and organs
squelching

Transcendent Cassandra

i cannot take you to school today
the miscreated man will be waiting
for us
i cannot repeat what happened to us
in that endlessness
if i must live in a haunted house
i will live there alone
i only wish
that the man was murderous instead.



DREAM TWO:

Cassandra

a wedding feast on dead land
dead, dry land
no water
for we drank it all
chugged it through our grey factory
canals
and guzzled it down our hosepipes
until we were strangling our selves
waiting on the bed of the jordan
awaiting arid rapture

The Priest:

i am the way, the truth, and the
life

The Monk

journey with me, from ignorance to
enlightenment

Cassandra

the drought scorched the earth
until it cracked
no oil to quench the dry land's
thirst
there were no olives in the grove
this year
the cloisters gaze out onto the
dead lawn

Transcendent Cassandra

they still spend more on that lawn
than they do on me

The Witch

a wedding in the chapel
and a feast in the hall
but the land is dead, i tell
you!
where can we have our ball?

Cassandra

but still we dance and we dine and
the choirs sing praises
as we drown on dehydration and the
sea level raises
let us make an empty toast, with
our empty glasses!
let us watch our selves idly and

pray this pain passes

The Priest

our chalice is empty, now, the
drought stole our juice
and there stands jesus with a
gallon of wine
what a sign of the times, let us
witness and glorify

The Witch

our chalice is empty, now, the
drought stole our juice
shrivelled the grape vines and
shrivelled the fruit
and there stands jesus,
looking undignified
my god, he has no water to
turn into wine

Cassandra

we are roasting in this stifling
swelter
somehow i am more scared of wasting
water
than wasting away myself, i-

Transcendent Cassandra

why would charlie lie?

Cassandra

the girl cries in the café
i look at her with my eyes:
for a moment i think that
maybe she is me
but then i look on.
i spent three hundred pounds at a
jewellery stall
last christmas

The Friend

why did you do that, cassie
you didn't pay your rent
you told me you couldn't pay your
rent

Cassandra

i didn't, i couldn't, but
better a small business than a
landlord, hmm?

The Friend

who was it for?

Cassandra

my self

The Friend

your self!

Cassandra

self-love

The Friend

but i've never seen you wear them

Cassandra

yes well i couldn't, see-

The Monk

you desire to be free from attachment-

Cassandra

they were gold
and my septum was pierced with silver

The Friend

oh, cassandra, aren't you a character
tell me how your time was with alexandra

Cassandra

there are dead mice rotting behind the wall of his study
his house is a hundred years old, no, it's older

The Friend

my home is old too
i hear the mice scurrying in the attic
they are my familiars now

Cassandra

how curious, this intimacy with beings you can only hear and not see

The Friend

well what about you and-

Cassandra

i am a prophet, not a porcupine
my problem is that i only see

Transcendent Cassandra

i cassandra have foresuffered all

The Monk

stop grasping on your self to escape samsara

The Witch

frolicking in the fire
fury frisking the fryer
flickering flame
it'll always be the same
don't you listen to that friar

Transcendent Cassandra

blistering-exhaustion-choking-the canapés-



The Friend

why'd you steal the canapés,
cassie!

Cassandra

they were going to waste

Transcendent Cassandra

they were already waste

Cassandra

they made me feel sick

The Witch

turtles trapped in the yokes and
netting
walking on cracked eggshells and
fretting

Cassandra

the canapés made for a pretty
corpse
they told me
the house fly laid eggs

Transcendent Cassandra

but i couldn't just
throw them away

The Witch

such is the semblance
of control
one hand on the wheel
the other is
being bitten off
by madness
you'll never know
what's real

Cassandra

and the wheel, it's made
of rot
my hands are rotting
i am going to waste

Transcendent Cassandra

you are already waste

Cassandra

landfills, think of the landfills
can't think of the landfills

The Friend

don't think of the landfills, cassie

Cassandra

always climbing these uphill while
this land fills
no man's land, this land is man's

The Witch

your race
only knows how to waste

Cassandra

gulping on pollution
pulsing sulphuric solution
maybe if we were made of plastic
we'd be prettier...

the oceans fill with the dead
carnage sleeps sweetly on the
sea bed

it isn't as brutal as it
usually is

you are with me this
time- or

i am with you

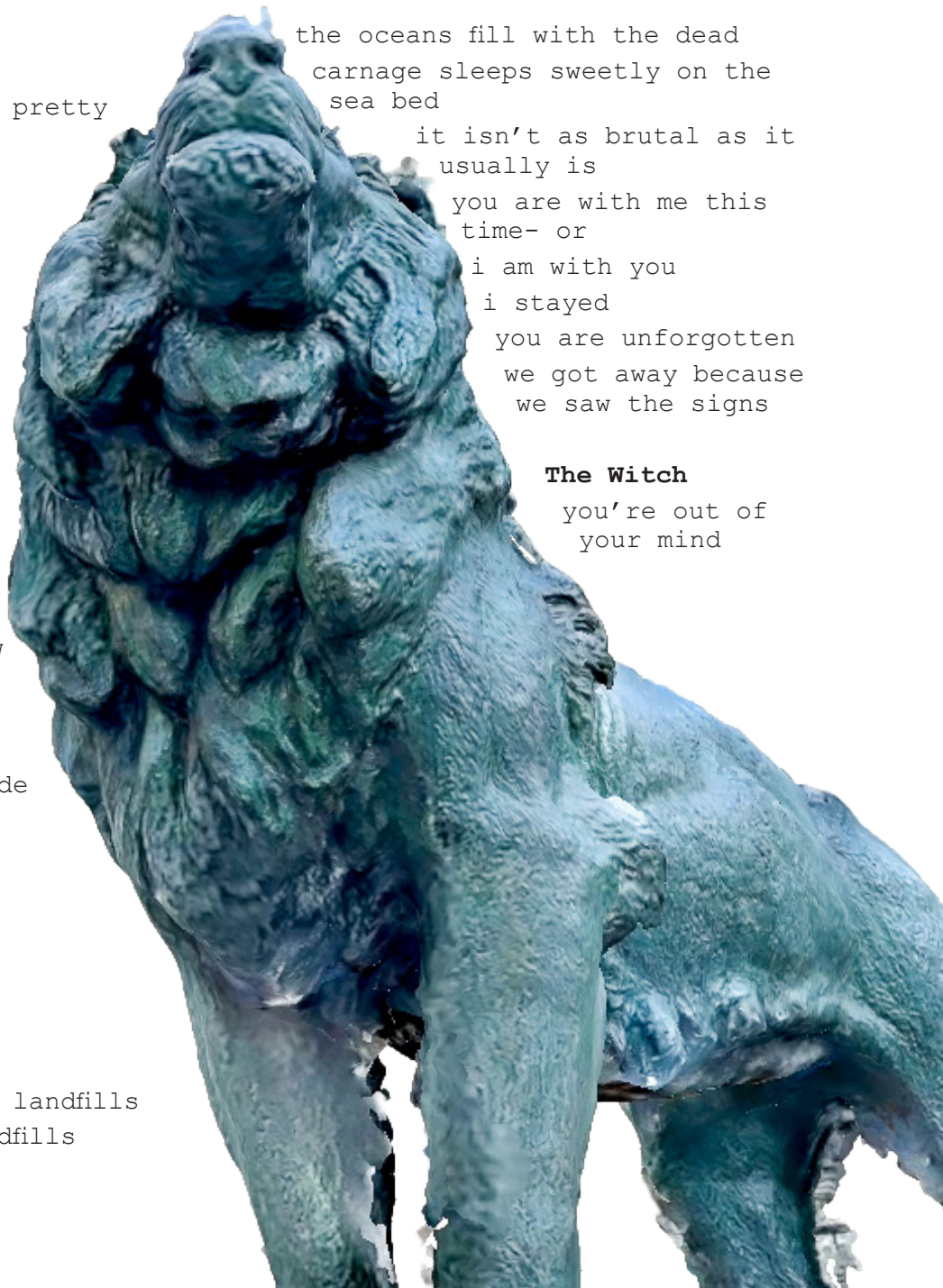
i stayed

you are unforgotten

we got away because
we saw the signs

The Witch

you're out of
your mind



Cassandra

then we swam the seven seas to
rescue your rabbits
and then on the floating boat we had
a pique-nique

The Witch

inflatable food on the inflatable
raft
try all you want, you can't hold on
to your past

Cassandra

no life jackets, just straight-
jackets
but at least we won't die alone

The Witch

we must pluck out our eyes
or watch the unfurl of our demise
we must escape this murderous sleep
yes, a little water will clear us
of this deed

Cassandra

sewage surges into the lakes we
used to swim in
and the showers-
how can i describe to you
the feelings that grow like fungus
standing in a cesspool trying to
get clean?
the pipes are all clogged
and the cubicle blocked
thirty bottles of radox
waiting with the rot
why bother going plastic free when
these bottles, they are waiting
here for me
my skin is crawling away from me
my feet will fall off

The Unhoused Woman

excuse me, i'm sorry to trouble
you, please

Cassandra

she picks up her foot and shows me,
it is burnt

The Unhoused Woman

i need to go the hospital

look at my arms, look, no track
marks, see, i'm clean
i've never hurt anybody
please, i'm bleeding myself dry
i just want some food and-

Transcendent Cassandra

i'm sorry, i don't have any cash-

The Unhoused Woman

there's an ATM 'round the corner
please,

Transcendent Cassandra

i'm sorry, i don't have my card-

The Unhoused Woman

there's a shop 'round the corner
if you buy me six packs of
cigarettes i'll have a place to
sleep tonight

Transcendent Cassandra

i- i'll buy you sanitary towels,
and food, please, i can't breathe,
please just step back a little

The Unhoused Woman

i've been raped seventy two times
i'm going to kill myself if you
don't help me

The Strange Samaritan

just walk away!

The Unhoused Woman

fuck you! don't tell her to walk
away, fuck off!

The Strange Samaritan

you're a fucking nitty, walk away,
don't look at her

The Unhoused Woman

say that to my fucking face

The Strange Samaritan

i'm saying it to your fucking face,
you're a nitty, you're a wasteman,
you're a piece of trash, you belong
on the goddamn streets

The Witch

street meat
you ready to eat?

The Priest

and he told them, you will always
have the needy, but you will not
always have me.

Transcendent Cassandra

i can't breathe

The Witch

when shall we three meet again?
In thunder, lighting, or in rain?

when the scorch of the sun
chokes the red earth

when the cries are collected
from the hearth

and all that's left is
pain



DREAM THREE:

Cassandra

the women waited
for me at the
violet hour
waited on the
endless red rock
for me
the crops were
ripe

The Witch

for the
taking,

Cassandra

they said.
curious,
i picked
a head of
grain
and as i ate
it, i saw
the sun's
last rays
time crept
by until it
withered away...

lidless eyes, we
lie in our cold
lockers, always
alive

listening to the
sound of forks
scratching fine
china

of axes sharpening
smelling our own rancid,
rotting flesh

at lunchtime we line up in
queues

and wait our turn

for the limb of the day

but to leave this place you must
lose your self

The Monk

the more difficult the journey,
the greater the depth of
purification

The Witch

this prison is a palace
oh, you must see how those
glittering blood rubies gleam
sullen faces of the captured
sneer and snarl as our crown
of thorns adorns the queen

Cassandra

when the queen asked for our heads
one girl chopped hers off her self
she did not hesitate
we were jealous, bitter
so angry we plotted an uprising
we needed fire
and i was scared so i threw out my
lighter
the one blessed to burn an eternal
flame
i hoped no one noticed

Transcendent Cassandra

i wanted to keep my head

Cassandra

together we made them choke on
those red rocks
and locked them, alive, in those
cold tombs
but our matches kept going out
the wind was too strong
and the flames kept flickering
and we kept failing, every time we
made it onto the fire escape
the women had escaped the fire
had burnt out

The Monk

you're selling your soul to the
corporate world

Cassandra

i laughed but i loved him so i
listened and declared,
i'm not scared

The Witch

we confess, we made the world a
mess, and yet
there always lingered, the scent of
death

we are stuck here in this hot
hell
burning burning burning
burning

Cassandra

i must burn alive defiantly
like the buddhist monk in Vietnam

The Priest

this is not the death i wanted for
you

The Witch

barren parched desolate land
high priestess, what do you demand?

All

do this in memory of me

Transcendent Cassandra

lilacs litter the landfills
the red sand and the black soot
the scorching sun

The Priest

the blood of christ

The Witch

grape juice laced with cyanide

Cassandra

we're all in a cult
and you love me when i'm drunk

The Friend

i love you so you don't have to

Transcendent Cassandra

if i must live in this haunted
house
i will die in this haunted house
alone. skull and bones.
chante-moi une berceuse
i say to the ghost
jericho
when you fall
i will catch you
and pray you don't wake up wicked

The Friend

what do you see, cassie, tell me,
tell me the prophecies, tell me
cassie,
i want to touch the tapestries,
why won't you tell me

Transcendent Cassandra

what is the point, dear heart, when
you will not believe?

Cassandra

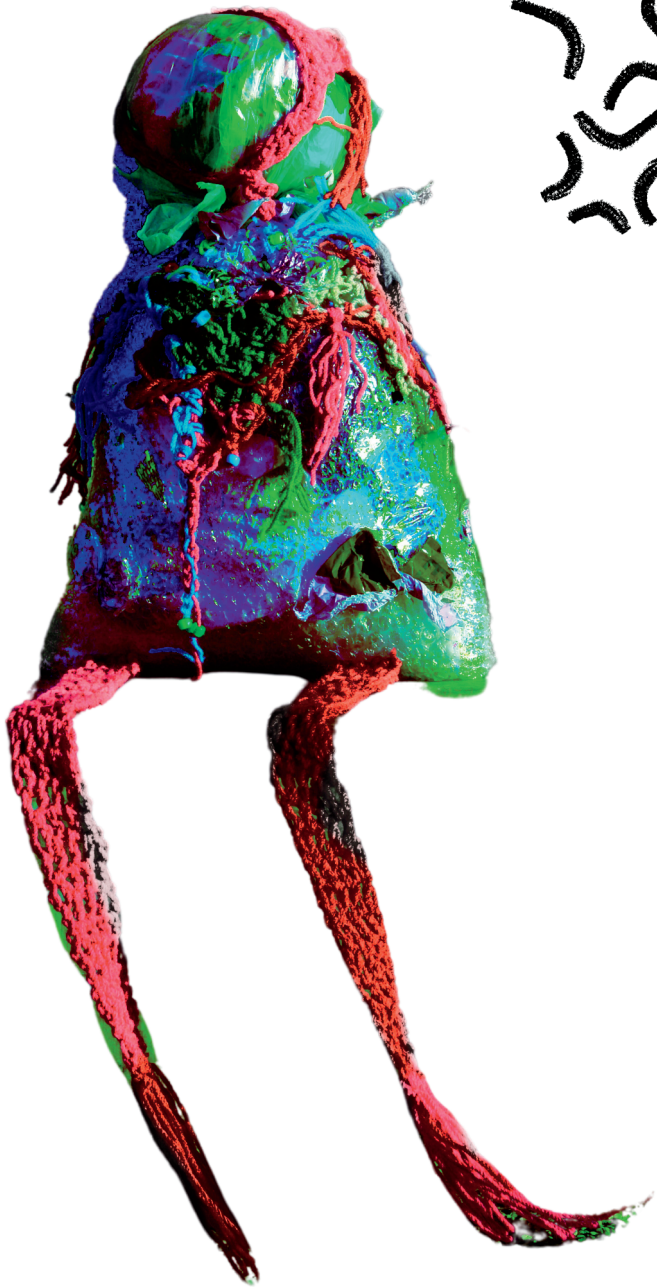
polypropylene shrapnel splinters
his guts
answer my riddles or i'll eat you
up

The Witch

you kinky little minx
you slinky little sphinx
jinx!

Cassandra

death by water, death by starvation
death by drought, death by auto-
erotic asphyxiation
choking on plastic, choking in
plastic
kill the turtles, this isn't a
rehearsal
skull cracks, catnaps, turtle
traps, oh, snap!



TRASH BABY BABEY!

by Anais Coates

A sculpture/photography series conceptualising infants of the future, using recycled plastics and textiles to envision a world of designer babies made from excess waste.



SEE ME, EAT ME

by Jasmine Sayer

This mixed-medium piece of oil on canvas and thread explores the desire to be seen, consumed. Following Freud's psychoanalytic theory, depicted is an imploding of the ego as the moralistic superego fails to suppress the socially unacceptable sexual desires of the id.

BREAKING THE CYCLE OF PERIOD POVERTY: IN CONVERSATION WITH THE CO-FOUNDER OF 'THE OXFORD PERIOD'

SO FIA OLENDRARU

My introduction to periods was when, aged about six years old, I walked into the bathroom to find a red bloodstain at the bottom of the toilet bowl. Panicked, I ran to my mum, who calmly explained that the blood was hers and told me what periods were. By the time I was nearing my own period, I felt prepared: my mum had bought me pads months in advance, my older sister had told me about her own experience, and I knew it was going to happen sooner or later. Yet I was still taken completely by surprise when my first period manifested itself through a brown stain on my underwear. I had never been told that period blood could be any colour other than red.

Many of my friends have similar stories; in the UK one in four young menstruators feel unprepared for the start of their period¹. There is a grievous lack of education around periods and the menstrual cycle, even in supposedly 'developed' countries like the UK. All I can recall from school is one GCSE Biology class that delved into the scientific aspects of the menstrual cycle and the hormones involved. The content was taught in a very detached way which failed to acknowledge that this was something regularly experienced by about half the people present. The class did not

¹ Plan International UK, 2018
<https://plan-uk.org/file/plan-uk-break-the-barriers-report-032018pdf/download?token=Fs-HYP3v>

cover any of the practical realities of having a period, such as learning about premenstrual symptoms, using period products, or the impact of periods on physical and emotional health. Not being taught these things about our own bodies means not knowing when something is wrong, and lacking the confidence to speak up when it is, such as a cycle being too long, a period being too heavy, or cramps being too painful.

Most people who menstruate might learn more from their friends and relatives, but a lot of people can't rely on that either, as the debilitating shame and stigma associated with periods makes it so much more difficult for people to discuss them openly. When I was twelve, my friends and I had established an elaborate system of codewords to discuss our periods in public and would try to come up with clever ways to hide pads and tampons up our sleeves or in our pockets on bathroom trips. With

over 5000 euphemisms internationally for the word 'period'², pads and tampons being sold in packaging with names such as 'whisper' and 'discreet', as well as adverts that famously replace red blood with non-descript blue liquid, it is no wonder we struggle to openly speak about periods.

The language we use around menstruation has a significant impact on our perception of it, for example, terms such as 'sanitary products' are loaded with the implication that periods are dirty and unsanitary. Misconceptions and superstitions also abound, amusing at best and incredibly harmful at worst, especially when entrenched cultural beliefs on the impurity of periods punish menstruators by restricting their day-to-day activities and isolating them from others. Conversely, the mentality that periods don't affect a person's day-to-day life can be just as harmful.

The narrative that we become women when we start our period is misogynistic; it reduces the concept of womanhood to one's reproductive system. The worst and most painful days of the menstrual cycle defines 'womanhood', and in an often ironically mocking way. How many times has a man said 'she must be on her period' in a response to a woman's supposed volatility? Furthermore, this narrative also inherently erases the experiences of transgender men and non-binary people who menstruate, who might not relate to the concept of womanhood at all.

With periods still considered taboo around the world, we are stuck in a frustrating static where the mere mention of menstruation feels groundbreaking. This holds us back from



© @theoxfordperiod ⓘ The Oxford Period

2 Clue, 2016

<https://helloclue.com/articles/culture/top-euphemisms-for-period-by-language>

furthering the conversation around menstruation and from addressing the much more pressing aspects of period poverty, such as inadequate access to period products, and the consequences of this.

In the UK, one in ten young people who menstruate are unable to afford period products.³ One in five have changed to less suitable products due to cost⁴, and more than a quarter have used period products for longer than their intended use because they could not afford to change them when needed⁵. This puts menstruators at an increased risk of infections, including the potentially fatal toxic shock syndrome. Restricted access to period products also means that young people who menstruate are more likely to miss school, thus falling behind their non-menstruating peers.

Schools in England can now provide free period products funded by the government, but a third of menstruating students report that free period products are still not available in their schools⁶. This provision does not extend to universities, unlike in Scotland. In Oxford, many colleges have some form of free period product provision, but there is wide variation in the range of products available, the way they are accessed, and the size of the budget allocated. Additionally, these schemes are mostly funded through JCR budgets and run by the JCR's Welfare or Gender Equality representatives, which is unreliable as these representatives turn over every year and JCR budgets can vary

easily be reallocated. A few colleges have schemes funded by the college themselves and run in collaboration with college staff, Worcester College being one of them, however these colleges remain a minority.

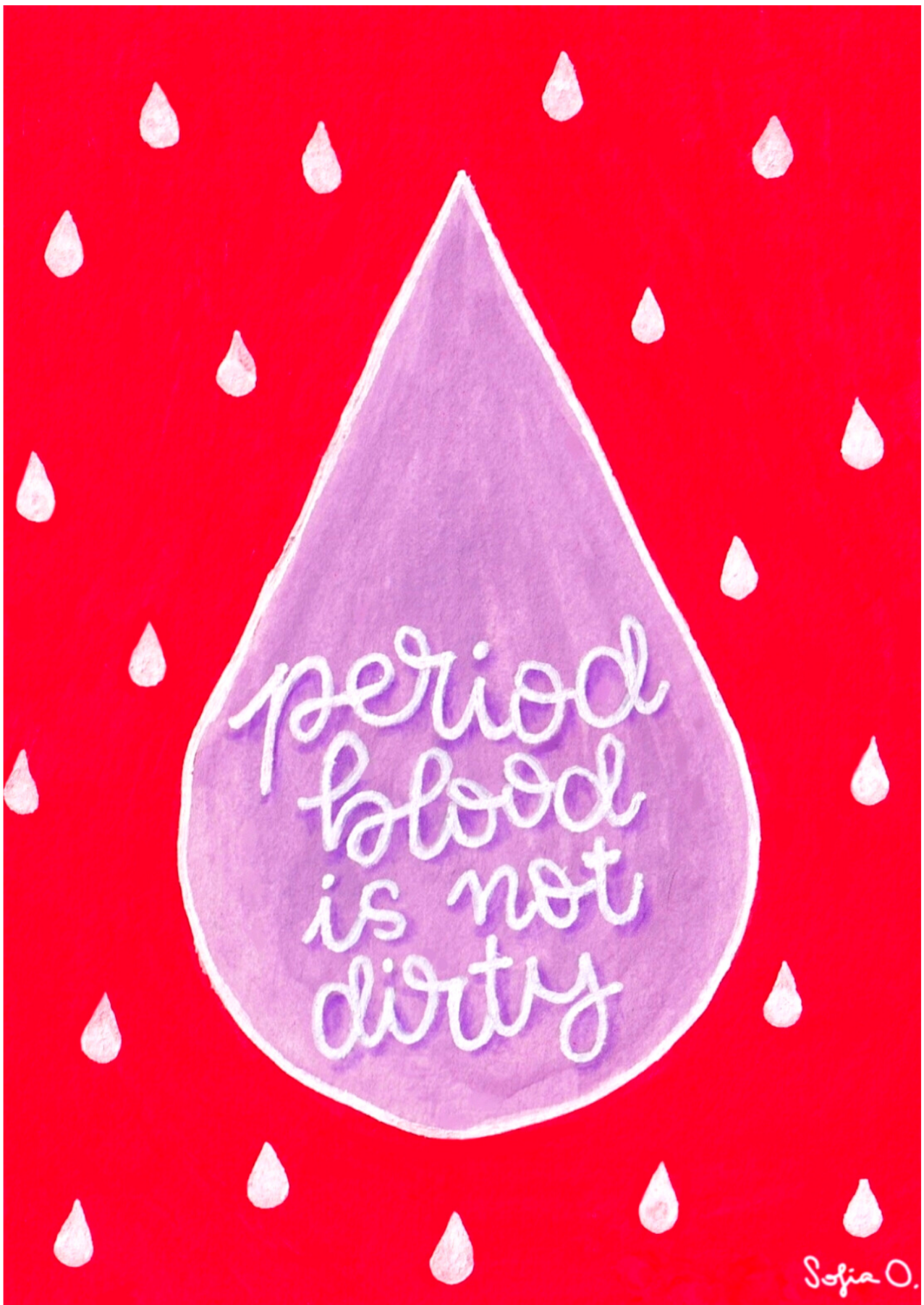
I became the JCR Gender Equality rep in Trinity 2021. Part of my manifesto was to lobby Worcester College for free period product provision after noticing the double-standard in their provision of free condoms but not free period products. This aspiration quickly became feasible when I was contacted by a period products company who were interested in providing Worcester with their products after having worked with other Oxford colleges. The company offered their sustainable biodegradable pads and tampons, which are made from organic cotton. Conventional single-use products generate an enormous amount of pollution due to the worrying proportion of plastic and chemicals they contain (such as bleach), which additionally pose a health hazard to their users. Unfortunately our JCR budget could not fund this, and so I had no choice but to go directly to the college's Joint Consultative Committee (JCC), a panel that includes most of the senior staff. After extensive research on the state of period poverty in the UK, I wrote a 4000-word proposal arguing for the free provision of sustainable period products to the Worcester student body. The proposal also included statistics of the demand in college, student feedback, logistics suggestions, and illustrations. It was discussed at the college's JCC meeting in Michaelmas 2021, where it received unanimous support from the committee who called it "the best proposal [they] had ever seen", and yet, this incredible success was followed anticlimactically by several months of inaction from college

3 Plan International, 2017

4 *ibid*

5 Plan International, 2018

6 https://www.girlguiding.org.uk/globalassets/docs-and-resources/research-and-campaigns/girlguiding-research-briefing_is-the-free-period-products-scheme-working.pdf



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staff. I watched in hurt and confusion as the project got passed around between various members of staff, and I sent out increasingly frustrated emails trying to understand why nothing was being done. At long last, the change was made, and the scheme is now up and running, with Worcester providing a wide range of free sustainable period products.

I am delighted that students at Worcester can now access free period products, but speaking to JCR reps at other colleges revealed how uneven the access to free period products still is across the University. To address this, I co-founded a university-wide campaign, The Oxford Period, which aims to lobby the entire University of Oxford to establish a standard of free period product provision across all colleges and departments. The idea is to have a top-down approach to put pressure on colleges externally, as well as supporting the bottom-up attempts by individual JCR reps who are fighting their colleges alone to improve period product provision. We intend to write an open letter to the University to stress the need for this free provision and to recommend logistics. We launched the campaign at the end of September 2022 and the response so far has been overwhelmingly positive.

We are greatly inspired by the work of The Cambridge Period Project, a similar campaign that has been running for the last couple of years, where they have now succeeded in securing free period product provision across the University of Cambridge. In addition to campaigning for better access, we plan on using our platform to start more conversations around periods and menstrual health, to raise awareness of period poverty and its consequences, and to raise funds for charities that

champion period dignity.

Improving access to period products is a crucial part of combatting period poverty, but the work goes much further than that. The reality is that we currently live in a world that is not prepared to accommodate periods and the people who have them. The “anything you can do, I can do bleeding” mentality sets the expectation that people who menstruate should just grin and bear it and keep getting on with their lives in spite of the excruciating physical and emotional pain that the menstrual cycle might bring. The first time I got my period at Oxford University during term time, I took the day off, and felt terrible for doing so. In the fast-paced environment of Oxford terms, taking one day off because of your period leaves you at a significant risk of falling behind, whether this is by missing a lecture, lab, or any time that could have been spent working on that week’s essay or problem sheet. It’s hard not to feel guilty for being ‘unproductive’ in these circumstances. Periods can be difficult to predict and may arrive unexpectedly, which adds more stress to the lives of anyone who experiences them, through constantly having to factor in our menstrual cycle when going about our lives. I always worry about the possibility of getting my period on the day of an exam and I know that if this happened, I would be in so much pain my performance would be surely affected. When I spoke to one of my tutors about this, she told me the only way around it would be to submit a mitigating circumstances request, but that it would be unlikely to be granted.

To me this highlighted all of the ways that the pain of menstruators is often ignored, reduced, or dismissed, including by medical professionals; an example of this is the average time of



@theoxfordperiod The Oxford Period

eight years⁷ that it takes to diagnose endometriosis, a serious condition that causes debilitating period pain and affects one in ten people who menstruate. There is currently no cure for it, further emphasising the general lack of research into reproductive health for those who menstruate. My tutor then advised me to look into the pill as a solution. Although it was revolutionary in its own right, the contraceptive pill also comes with a variety of negative side-effects such as headaches, acne, mood swings, and increased blood pressure; there are many reasons why someone might not want to take it. With something as commonplace and natural as periods, it is ultimately irresponsible to be asking people who menstruate to chemically change themselves or

just 'get on with it', when we should in fact make space for menstruators and their needs. Of course, this is part of a much bigger conversation about making space for anyone who doesn't fit the healthy, able-bodied, non-menstruating, neurotypical norm, but nevertheless it goes to show how flawed and exclusionary our systems are currently.

I strongly believe that period dignity is a virtuous cycle in the same ways that period poverty is vicious one. The social and practical aspects of period poverty and period dignity go hand-in-hand: starting conversations around periods empowers people with the knowledge and confidence to demand better period care, and having access to this further enables people to talk about menstruation. Campaigning for free period products means that I often hear stories about people's periods. This is something I love even when these stories are those of adversity; we will always be better off sharing our stories than letting ourselves be silenced. While periods are so diverse and no two people will have the same experience, there will always be comfort, connection, and strength to be found through solidarity. I hate having a period. It brings me a lot of pain and makes me feel miserable. But I am stuck with it, and I would much rather live in a world where periods are accepted and celebrated, than one where they are hidden and shunned.

Sophia co-founded The Oxford Period with Maia Hamilton.

For more details, find them @TheOxfordPeriod on Instagram.



BEYOND PLASTER



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Artist

artist with BPD & PTSD

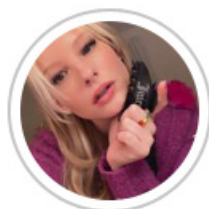
Content Warning: This piece discusses symptoms of Borderline Personality Disorder (BPD) such as suicidal ideation and self-harm, but with no graphic descriptions.

Over the course of many months, I had been abandoned, I lost friends, I was bullied at work; I felt incredibly alone and widely disliked and for someone with untreated BPD, this was detrimental. Once I began to indulge in my symptoms, it was impossible to stop. I had lost friends, but I had found a “friend” in the self-destructive nature of my illness. My BPD symptoms had progressively amplified, and I decided to voluntarily enter a 30-day DBT program. I knew the system was corrupt, but it is absolutely one thing to know that and another for it to be your trauma narrative. I feared discharging in the same mental state that I was admitted with, but it never occurred to me that I would leave with heavier baggage and PTSD. In my mind, that just wasn’t going to be a part of my story.

The program was ill-equipped, to say the least. Staff members were very poorly trained and generally uninvested. The program director was far removed from the program and its clients and even refused to have weekly 30-minute community meetings with us. There was a massive disconnect between the group of patients seeking care and the care itself. I work in the field myself, so I knew what this program was meant to be. I have worked at a psychiatric hospital for four years now and was also working at a residential program specializing in treating BPD for over a year. The treatment I was assured of was meant to have similar resources to that of where I had worked. I knew exactly what services I was promised, and I knew what the ethics of a program like this should have looked like. High-quality intensive and specialized mental health



process



hey



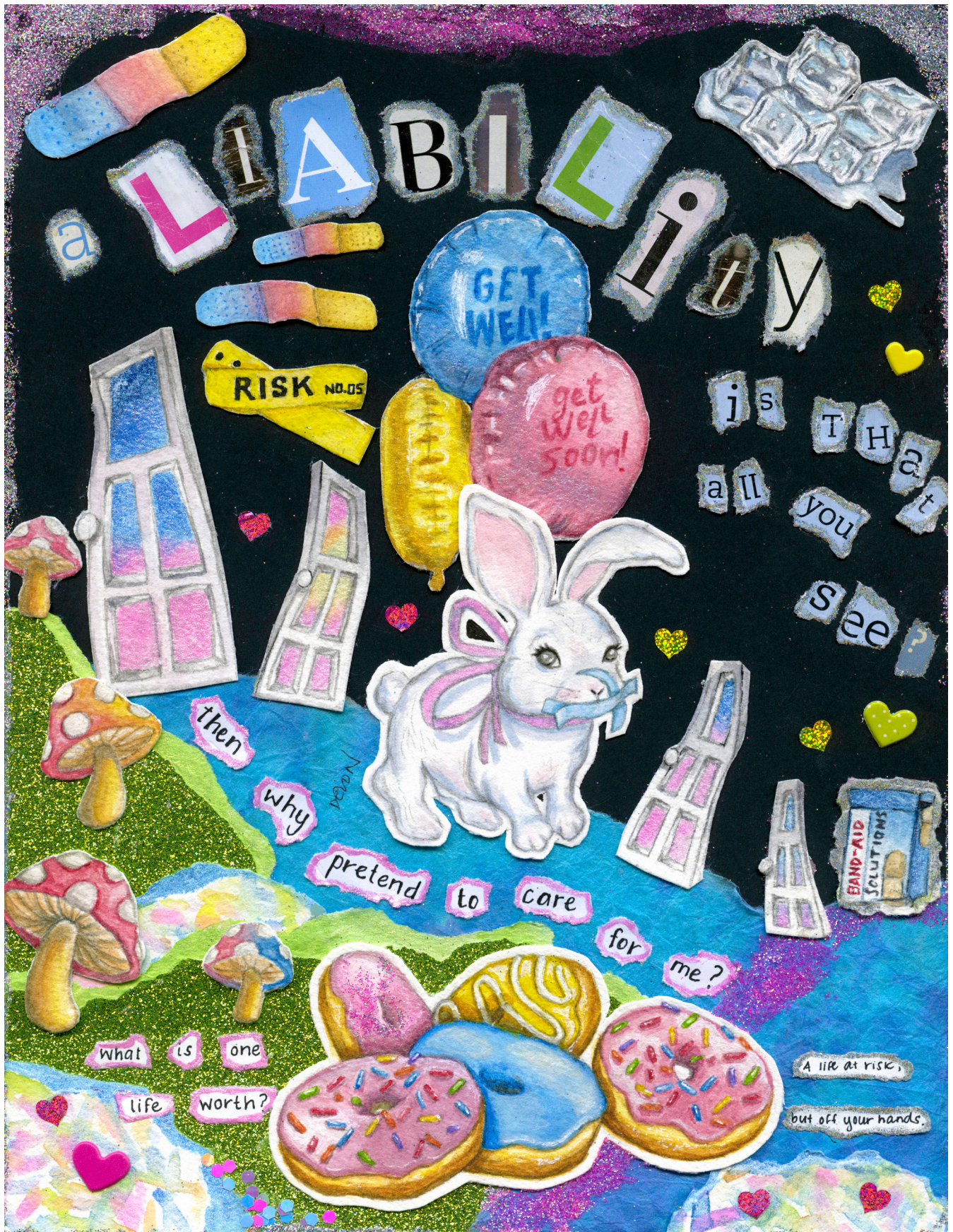
thank u



notebooks!!



merch



care should be this collaborative effort with transparent communication and clear expectations on both ends. Quality treatment should feel equivalent. There was this evident authoritative power struggle that was occurring amongst the higher-ups, and this took away from the care they were providing. We were not treated like equal (or adult) humans with basic rights; it felt so much closer to a children's summer camp than intensive treatment.

There were endless failures within this program but what was most detrimental for me was the negligence I was met with when I was in crises. I would be in a severe panic attack, hyperventilating and struggling to breathe—and I would see staff members walk right by me. On occasion, they would place a bag of ice next to me and walk away, their pathetic, half-hearted attempt at crisis intervention. From the start, I voiced my concerns. I advocated for myself and for others and it was evident that the program did not like this. I was questioning the ethics and judgment of care and rightfully so—but it was like, oh, how dare I. How dare I have an opinion about the treatment I am seeking for this illness I have. How dare I question authority when I am only this inferior patient at the very bottom of their totem pole. How dare I have emotional needs that are in desperation for healing and human compassion. I questioned my own reality and that was a strong indicator that I was indeed gaslighted and failed by the system. The entire experience was such a lesson learner for me in many aspects. I learned how vital it is that I trust what it is that I both witness and experience.

I was utilizing my voice, but I had responded with behaviors on many occasions because I was driven to that and was not given the tools to do otherwise. I know now, that if someone tries to silence me, it is not an opportunity to submit to silence or to communicate indirectly; I should use my voice without conditions. Every time I spoke up, I was immediately silenced. I truly felt like I was screaming underwater. My efforts were extensive, but it was like only I could hear my own voice. I was trying to unlearn that I had no voice and that it was of no value, but the program's response reinforced the very idea; don't speak, we won't listen. Ultimately, I learned what I needed to. Thank you for taking my voice, now I know how important it is. Any uncompliant patient like myself was very clearly treated differently and anything and everything could be used against us. It was a frequent occurrence that someone would get the threat of being "kicked out", via hospitalization or a different program. A treatment program should want to see their patients thrive and do what is in their power to keep them out of hospitals. I thought this was such a cowardly threat and a massive disservice to threaten what has been known to be counterproductive and damaging for individuals with BPD (hospitalizations). My acuity was what was used against me. I was worsening under their care. The conditions were a perfect storm for someone with significant BPD: Constant invalidation, emotional neglect, and their lack of resources like having too few therapy sessions. Instead of taking responsibility for their role in my regression and working with me to implement changes, they ignored my every concern and tried to push me out the door. Despite being chronically

suicidal, I was never a serious danger to myself in treatment—however, they wrote an alternative narrative and painted me out to be the biggest liability under the roof. To them, the problem was not that I had a symptom that needed treating; the problem was that I had a symptom that could damage their program or career(s).

There was one day that I had acted on self-harm urges after continued frustration of feeling invalidated and dismissed by my environment. They sent me to a side room and the response to my actions was to shame me for my behavior. I had to sit in this room with a therapist that sat there solely to supervise me. Nobody asked me the function or cause of my behavior; it didn't matter to

them because my recovery did not matter to them. I was merely a body in their program and a fresh victim

of system failures. I was often spoken to condescendingly. I remember the director picking up my items (bag, art supplies, etc.) to bring them into that room and stating, "Here are your cute little things". A couple of days later, I was abruptly given a hospital threat with no known reasoning. What I hadn't been aware of was that the program director's indirect way of threatening the hospital days prior was by telling me that I cannot continue to act on self-harm because they couldn't "provide me with that level of supervision". It felt ironic to me, that in a DBT program, the staff approached target behavior incidents with indirect communication. I also found it ironic that they shamed the very symptoms we were all there to get help

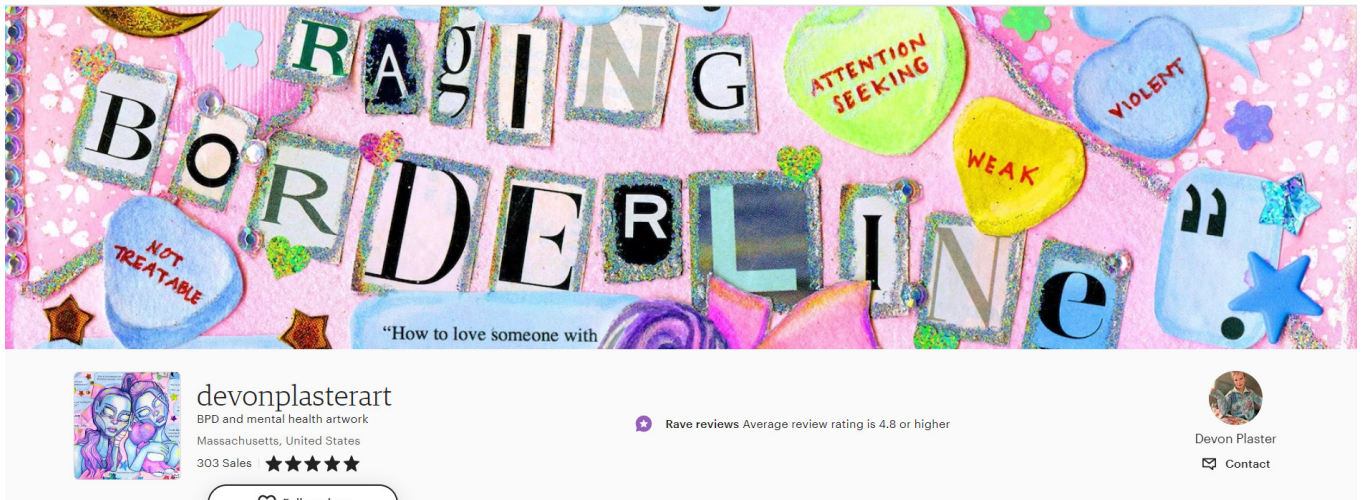
***"MY RECOVERY DID NOT
MATTER TO THEM. I WAS MERELY
A BODY IN THEIR PROGRAM"***

with.

I remember that day so well when they muttered the word "hospital". In the condition I was in, a hospitalization being the outcome of my recovery felt like a death sentence to me. I knew exactly what I was looking at and I had completely lost my filter at this point. "I know what this is. They don't want to be liable for me", I said mid-cry, on speakerphone with a higher-up that would not face me directly. The way the program director avoided face-to-face conversation with me made it evident that she was afraid of what I was capable of—not due to intent or actions but due to my thoughts and urges, and I knew how vastly unfair that was. I was being

punished for the ways I felt when my suffering deserved validation and empathy.

That day in the side room, I began this piece of artwork. I had no idea where this was going but I knew how I felt—like a meek bunny, their test subject; my mouth taped for their comfort. The finished piece of artwork was one of my very first fully unapologetic, bold pieces of artwork. I was absolutely done holding back for the comfort of others. So, I spent time one night in the art room alone, searching magazines for each letter— "LIABILITY. Is that all you see?" Its sister piece was one of the first pieces I made after I left treatment. I continued with this concept of being a body in a system of injustice and dysfunction: "A nightmare under their control; I was a static player under their simulation, kept underwater so that I was robbed of my voice. They probably



thought I'd stay where they left me, irreparably damaged and without a voice, but I'm here. I'm still here". And one year later, I'm still here and I'm still speaking—in all the ways I know how, in words and in color and my very voice in the literal sense, the same voice they tried to hijack. The system failed me but it did not silence me; it kickstarted the very courage I needed to start this conversation. Those six weeks were life-changing for the most unexpected and wrong reasons. I was certainly beyond wronged but what is important to me is that I make the very best of the things that have harmed me, and I think I have. After treatment, I fully emerged myself into my creative voice and that was the silver lining that I had every reason not to believe in.

I speak of my experience because my story is not unique. I wish my advice would not be this, but the reality is that many people go into different fields for the wrong reasons. In turn, we end up with many clinicians that lack the fundamentals needed to provide quality mental healthcare. A diagnosis as complex as BPD can be taught and learned on a logical, textbook level by any intelligent person. But to treat a condition that involves chronic emotional

hypersensitivity, empathy, compassion, and curiosity are vital. So very often, traits like empathy and compassion cannot be taught, they are simply acquired through life experiences. Typically, individuals with BPD feel or have felt immensely misunderstood. To feel misunderstood by a treater, a person who we expect to understand, can feel incredibly isolating and discouraging. Almost like, if a therapist that studied to treat my condition doesn't understand my pain, who will?

BPD is complex in that although it is a debilitating illness to co-exist with, to the surprise of many, there are aspects of BPD that don't need "treating" at all. We are often intuitive—I had a terrible feeling about treatment from the start—I should have followed it. Because we feel deeply, we can also feel deeply for others, and we understand pain in ways that can elicit remarkable empathy. We are entuned to the emotions of others, sometimes to a fault. I can tell when somebody genuinely cares and that was a necessity that was lacking when I was in treatment. I saw through their halfhearted attempts at consoling me and I knew of the very few staff members that did care. I saw it in the way my therapist in treatment advocated



a
nightmare
under
their
control

I was a static player in their simulation.
kept under water
so that

I was robbed
of my voice

they probably thought
I would stay
where they left me,

irreparably damaged
and without a voice

But I'm here

I'm
still
here

This place was everything I didn't need and more.

Still it's like my trauma isn't real.

HAND CARE
FRAGILE
WITH CARE
EVO

for me, in how there were many days that turned to nights where she was still working with me and fighting for me. I saw it in the staff member that challenged me when I jokingly said that I couldn't feel joy—to say that she had just witnessed it, as my face lit up when I saw an opossum outside that night.

It is those who have extended their time, who looked me in the eye when I spoke, and sat with me like I was a priority, not like they had another task to get to and I was a stop along the way. Placing a bag of ice next to me was nothing I couldn't have given myself. What we need outside of ourselves when we are suffering is compassion and kindness; it's humanity that we need. What I would say to anyone seeking treatment: Notice it. Trust how people make you feel in their presence. If something feels unethical, it likely is. I would say if you are in a treatment program that you continue to worsen in, don't stick around to see if things change. Don't fall into the trap that is this authoritative narrative; we are all equal. You are no less than your therapist or psychiatrist and they should treat you as such. Any clinician who treats you as inferior is abusing their power and likely shouldn't have it to begin with.

I've been on both ends; I have been the staff member that has taken work home with me because I worried about someone. I have also been the patient that needed someone to care enough to worry about me. Not receiving the care that I had given felt so brutally unfair that it haunted me. But I had to let go of fairness. I had said to myself that I work in the same system that failed me, that is

true, but I will work even harder to make certain that I am on the right side of that system. I will never walk by a person that is suffering, I will never make anyone feel like they are robbing me of my time or effort. I would do anything in my power to avoid what I had endured from occurring to someone else and I'd be grateful to know if I made someone feel safe, something I had taken for granted prior to losing access to it. If you feel cared for, don't write that off as of course they don't, nobody ever cares about me, they get paid to do this—that's your BPD talking, and nobody gets paid to care. If you feel cared for, it's probably because you found someone on the right side of the system—and they care.

Lastly, I would say your worth is not non-existent just because you have yet to find it. It's always been there and even if you can't see it now, simply trust that it is there. A dangerous place to be is surrounded by people who fail to see your value when you are lacking self-worth. If you can see someone else's worth, you can learn to see your own. Ask, am I receiving the treatment that I, like anyone with BPD, objectively deserves? Anytime, if even for just a moment, I think, God, I was a nightmare of a patient, no wonder they neglected me, I deserved it—I remove myself from my own shoes immediately. I would never think that way about someone else nor should anyone be judged based on their very worst of moments. The worst version of myself was in treatment 14 months ago and I will extend compassion to her—but she can stay there. She, just like you, is more than worthy of healing and has a right to heal in the safest of spaces.



ANITA RODDICK

CREATING A SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS

By Sophie Beaumont

Born in 1942, Anita Roddick lived in Littlehampton, Sussex, with her parents Gilda and Donny Perilli, of Italian-Jewish origin. Gilda would divorce and marry her ex-husband's cousin, Henry, and she waited until Anita's 18th birthday to explain that Henry was her real father. From a convent secondary school, Anita went on to a teacher training course at Bath Spa University before becoming an English teacher. After extensive travelling across Europe, Africa, and the Far East she met and married Gordon Roddick. Following the opening of a bed and breakfast in Littlehampton in 1970, Gordon decided to have a two-year break to travel from Buenos Aires to New York on horseback. It was during this time that Anita opened the first of her cosmetic shops.

With an initial 25 products, The Body Shop was radically unique from the big companies that dominated the beauty industry. Long before the Fair Trade Movement, Roddick promised that all of her ingredients were directly sourced from individuals rather

than commodity brokers, and also that they hadn't been tested on animals. Hers was the only company at the time which marketed its products with the purpose of making women feel more confident in themselves, rather than with the promise of making them look like the models on magazine covers. She believed that beauty was a person's "source of joy, comfort, and self-esteem", and also understood that beauty was individual to a person and that beauty standards were ever-changing. The products she sold were intended to be used in daily rituals of genuine self-love, unlike the slimming and anti-ageing products promoted by the rest of the beauty industry.

She began with no packaging for her products; customers had to return plain bottles for refilling. To this day The Body Shop has a 'Refill Plan'! These ideas were unique but posed challenges for the franchising of branches suggested by her husband when he returned from travelling. After making the business public in 1984, Anita realised a mistake with this move. The success of the

business became determined only by profits and growth; social change and activism could not easily infuse the business plans of a pioneering woman entrepreneur.

The Body Shop's environmental promise was way ahead of its time with ExxonMobil still trying to keep knowledge about global warming a secret from the public. The 1980s saw the spark of incredible international ethical, social and environmental movements for which Anita was an active spokesperson. In 1988, Anita wrote the foreword to 'The Green Consumer Guide', (by the sustainability pioneer Julia Hailes), encouraging readers to question the origins of the products they buy. "As consumers, we have real power to effect change. We can ask questions about supply and manufacture. We can request new or different products. And we can use our ultimate power... buying a product somewhere else or not buying it at all." Anita's

passion for the planet made The Body Shop more than just a cosmetics brand. It had a goal: to make "profit and principles" work together. She demonstrated that to make real and actionable change, a passion for the environment had to be built into the business and everything it does. In the 1990s she became the fourth richest woman in Britain, and regularly donated large sums of money to ecological and human rights causes: Amnesty International, Friends of the Earth, and The Big Issue to name a few. Anita and her husband were also responsible for setting up three orphanages in Romania, an organic farm in Nicaragua,

a Brazil-nut cooperative in Brazil, and a healthcare initiative in Nepal, among many others.

Anita's story highlights how a successful business, in the right hands, can be the most powerful tool to make social change. As an environmentalist who believed in business, she was unpopular with sceptical green activists at the time. However, Roddick's aim was wider than the traditional focus of profit in entrepreneurship. She aimed also to instigate a global transformation in attitudes towards climate change. Along with this, she founded the Fair Trade Movement; she sourced exotic products but insisted that all producers get a fair deal for them. Her method challenged other social entrepreneurs to raise their game" and "change the global economy".

“
Business shapes the
world. It is capable of
changing society in almost
any way you can imagine
”

— DAME ANITA RODDICK

Understanding the force that business has and how it can truly instigate social and environmental change is inspiring. Too often we hear political leaders make

promises and sign treaties, only to fail to meet targets and fail on delivering to voters. The time has come for businesses to lead the way in combating climate change and work globally to set realistic targets for reducing Greenhouse Gas emissions.

Anita's story is inspiring to any aspiring entrepreneurs who want to maintain a dedication to the planet and its people.

“If you think you're too small to have an impact, try going to bed with a mosquito.”
— Dame Anita Roddick

CHOCOLATE TASTING AND

CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

TRANSCRIBED BY SERRENA SRITHAVARAJAH

On the 30th of May 2022, Serrena Srithavarajah and Claire Tan hosted a 'Corporate Social Responsibility' panel, welcoming speakers Abiola Dabiri and Maja de Vibe to talk about their experiences working in sustainability and ask for their advice for young people looking to enter the field. The panel was accompanied by a chocolate tasting session, featuring ethically produced chocolate that was generously donated by socially responsible brands, whose company missions align with OxWIB's focus on sustainability.



ABOUT THE EVENT

We were inspired to put on this event because we wanted people to understand that there isn't a trade-off between succeeding financially as a business and contributing to a more sustainable world. Companies can do better by doing good. Organisations have a huge capacity to have a positive social and environmental impact on the world, and Abiola and Maja were the perfect people to inspire OxWIB members to get involved in careers within CSR and sustainability. The chocolate tasting was a delicious way to showcase companies (Ombar, Montezuma's, Divine Chocolate, Cox and Co, Coco, and Chocolate and Love) that are providing excellent products whilst ensuring their production and supply chains are ethical and positively benefitting society.

THE SPEAKERS

ABIOLA DABIRI

Abiola works for an African-focused infrastructure development bank with a mandate to enable economic and industrial development on the continent. She sees the mandate as Africans Developing Africa. She manages the governance and compliance aspect of the business, by ensuring that the organisation follows ethical and governance standards. She sits on the CSR committee, looking at the business's impact on society, and says, 'We don't just want to build Africa, we want to do the right thing'. She is passionate about helping people develop: 'Every day when you see your path in life, it's a reminder that there's someone else that needs your help. Kindness is a baton, pass it on to the next person so we can all stand together'.

MAJA DE VIBE

Maja de Vibe works for Statkraft, the largest generator of renewable energy in Europe, operating across twenty countries worldwide. Prior to joining Statkraft, Maja worked for the British government, working on anti-corruption, governance, and sustainable development in a range of countries. She also managed a research program working for the World Bank, UN and OECD. She is passionate about the role business can play in making the world a better place.



How would you define Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and how is it applicable to your jobs?

MAJA: The challenge with this topic is that it means a lot of things to different people. The terminology has changed over the years. Ages ago, at the very early stages of businesses looking at their responsibilities and impact on society, you find a much stronger focus on philanthropy. For a while, CSR was the main term used, whereas now sustainability and ESG are more common; ESG particularly in the finance sector as a framework for measuring impact in environmental, social and governance topics. Regardless, they deal with the same question: as a business, what are your impacts on people, society, and the environment around you, and how do you responsibly manage that impact? And that can be through what you deliver as a company, and how you go about delivering it. There has been a massive shift over the last three to forty years towards a

stronger rigour in terms of measurement and understanding of what that looks like, driven, to a large extent, by regulation. We had a debate with the other executive MBA students at Saïd Business School who were complaining about the lack of agreed and aligned standards around measuring corporate social responsibility or sustainability. I reminded them that we had just finished our accounting course which was all about the vast interpretations of accounting on the finance side and that nobody would think about dropping financial reporting because there is a disagreement on certain terms in that area. **Why would we walk away from measuring this subject just because it's a little bit harder to do?**

ABIOLA: CSR has a broader meaning in Africa where about half of the population live below the poverty line; Africa has fifty-four countries so, in each region, the delivery of CSR is different based on the communities. The measuring standards and what you aim to provide

will always change. If you are extracting oil and gas, you have to focus on the community that your mining or drilling activity is displacing. CSR is beyond just what a company does to meet regulatory standards, it's what we do to impact our community positively and ultimately make people remember your business and smile. In today's world, the focus is ESG and building sustainable impact-driven businesses. From a governance and compliance perspective, it is clear that good governance correlates with economic growth and industrial development.

To what extent do you think that companies should go further than just meeting those standards? Especially, Abiola, with your experience in Africa, how do you see that occurring and how, Maja, might it differ from doing that in Europe perhaps?

ABIOLA: In the past, it could have been perceived as a box-ticking exercise, but with the current climate indices and an increased push for ESG, each business has to think about its reputation in light of this reality. Do you want someone to go into a store and say no to your product because you aren't doing the right thing? It has gone beyond just ticking boxes; you have to think of the implication to your business. **By neglecting CSR, you're exposing yourself to reputational damage.** If you take your product to international markets and someone says: 'you're using child labour', that's your product immediately damaged and a loss of investment. From the perspective of governance and CSR, we also have to

think of what would happen; who the partners are, how ethical you are as a firm, and whether there is a risk of negative impact made by businesses that are associated with your business or product. At the back of my mind, I always remember that most companies don't survive reputational damage, especially in the early stages. Beyond this is also the change in the regulatory climate. Regulations based on various impact measurement standards are being developed and businesses are being required or will be required to redesign how they do business to ensure compliance.

MAJA: **I think that companies must ask themselves; how far does my responsibility stretch?** I think there are hundreds of thousands of examples of companies choosing to draw that line too close to where they are. But things are changing in the regulatory space very rapidly. I was just explaining to our board the contents of the new Norwegian human rights regulation which takes effect on the 1st of July 2022. This means that anyone, anywhere in the world, can ask our company any question about any human rights issues anywhere in our supply chain and they have to be given an answer within three weeks, or risk facing a penalty and reputational damage. There are similar components in the Modern Slavery Act in the UK. You are seeing a very definitive legal standard across the board which says, 'your line of responsibility stretches much further than what you might have voluntarily decided it did in the past.' The European Green Deal and EU

taxonomy will force financial investors across Europe to measure assumptions and standards of how green their portfolios are against a much stricter set of standards than before. You will have to provide evidence. It's not just green in what it does, but how it's run. Those companies that choose to draw the line of responsibility close to themselves are going to be challenged to a much larger extent.

Leading off your point about philanthropy and box-ticking, a lot of companies view CSR as just spending on philanthropic projects, rather than integrating it into their business model. Over the pandemic and during times of economic recession we've seen that when CSR is only philanthropic, spending is often one of the first things to be cut. What do you think the levels of CSR are, and how do you think firms can make that transition to integrate CSR into their business models?

MAJA: The best companies today don't have an artificial line between spending on 'doing good' and a set of sustainability targets that are more integrated into what they're doing as a company. They look at these things as interconnected to one another. A really critical starting point for any company is to ask the question, 'What are our material issues which can cause damage to the environment or to people, and how do we prioritise tackling those things? Where do we invest based on this?'. We are one of the largest buyers of wind turbines in Europe, so when we have conversations with suppliers about where they source

their minerals and if they're affected by conflict mineral risks, they will listen because we're a big buyer, and their responsibility to pursue those issues are all the greater. If we look at the actual investments we make, the logic that we follow is to look at where your actual footprint is: where are your operations, what are the impacts that you're having in that environment and how can you ensure that you invest in improving the conditions for the people and environment where you are? It's not always straightforward. It's easier for a company like ours that has fixed power structures, it's harder for a company with less tangible structures not based anywhere. In this case, come back to the logic: what are your overall targets, what are your material issues, and how do you want to see this all come together?

A huge pressure has built up over the pandemic as people have been at home and reflecting on their personal impact. Companies are facing increasing pressure to meet higher ethical standards. How can companies avoid greenwashing and how can we as consumers tell if a company is greenwashing?

MAJA: Having sat on the inside of companies, you get to see the sales pitch version of a company and what's behind it when you take it on. It is easier to tell a more positive version of a company than the truth that is behind it. **It's interesting to see how loudly companies like high-street fashion brands speak about sustainability when their fundamental business**



model surrounds fast fashion, when their aim is to move as much clothing as possible through the system. Most of us look at the story being presented to us. If you want to make good choices as a consumer, there is more proper benchmarking where organisations break through and look at what the real numbers say, 'What's really happening behind these doors?' However, the most important choice you make is the employer you choose when you finish your studies. If you choose the wrong company, you'll find yourself in some tough situations where your own set of standards and morals will be at odds with what you find in the company. When you're young it's very difficult to challenge that, and after a while, you'll start to feel that is the way business is supposed to be done. **Be confident enough to move on if it doesn't gel with who you are.**

ABIOLA: As we have maintained, the current climate coupled with the pandemic has shown us that

businesses must shift from paying lip service to consciously providing impactful and sustainable solutions to the environment and communities. **As consumers, we must realise that CSR starts with you.** Would you choose to pay extra for a sustainably produced product or not? As a student, your choice of an employer is one of the toughest decisions you may have to make. But if your employer is genuinely committed to their promises, you can rest assured that even if you have a tough day, you can pull yourself together to go to work the next day, because of the impact you are making as a business and an employee. Speak to people at organisations to get a better idea of what the company is like.

MAJA: **More senior employees are understanding that the younger generation is a relevant voice to listen to because they are more tapped into what the broader consumer market cares about.** Their level of enthusiasm and focus has changed the perception of



the senior ranks: CSR matters to people and it's important. Some environments are too set in their ways, but some you can be part of influencing. So don't think that just because you have a different view or voice to the majority, yours is an irrelevant voice.

ABIOLA: You have fire and energy when you're coming in. To affect change, it's not going to be given to you, you have to show the change. The change we desire in sustainability and ESG comes from new ideas at the table. **Oftentimes, the changes in big firms don't come from the top, they come from the bottom.**

from, and is that fundamental logic of value creation one you can align with? Would you work for a weapons manufacturer? Would you work for a fossil fuels company? We all have different views on these issues, but you have to individually answer that question. Then I'd read their annual reports and compare them to other companies in the sector. Is there something fundamentally missing? Have they had difficult cases, have they been open about those cases? Look at who is in key management roles: what's their background and do they have a proper area for sustainability, CSR, or compliance? I think you can, in an interview process, raise some of these questions. Do you have a sustainability officer? Where is that person based in that structure? How do you see sustainability issues reflected in your strategy for the next three years? What are the biggest changes that you want to make as a company in terms of your sustainability performance? See if the company can answer these questions readily or not. It will depend to a large extent on the leaders that you work for and whether you feel that it is a supportive environment for the standards that are important to you.

ABIOLA: To add to that, you can be the



How do you make sure companies that you may want to work for are genuinely sustainable?

MAJA: Look at what they produce. Where do they get their value creation

change the firm needs. You can be the voice of change from within. When I joined my organisation, we had a board dominated by men. When we needed to bring new members to the board, I just kept on singing to my seniors at the time for a woman member. Now we have two. Look at the annual report and decide if you are prepared to make the change within the firm. By deciding to effect change, you've not only improved the firm, but you have also improved yourself. Also, conduct a self-assessment and mark out what can you do to make a difference.

What do you think about entrepreneurship and start-ups? Looking at starting something new and building it up differently, rather than going into a company and tweaking it from the inside, which method can be more sustainable and generate more impact?

MAJA: There are stories to back either scenario really well. Lots of really interesting start-ups with great ideas don't go anywhere, or there are great ideas that don't have an impact because they don't succeed. Only two in ten start-ups succeed. On the other hand, you have some fabulous start-ups that have shaken up an industry and challenged locked-down practices. This depends on what you want to pursue and how. Changes in the regulatory space mean your generation will enter companies that feel very different to when we started working twenty years ago. Chances are, many of you will end up in companies that have a genuine commitment to sustainability

because there is evidence now that it contributes to better results, but only if you do it properly and senior levels take it seriously. **They may not have a 100% emotional commitment to CSR issues but they understand the financial impact of not doing CSR.** You'll find a lot of supportive environments in large companies too, but it's very much up to who you are, how you like to work, and what works for you.

ABIOLA: Listening to you reminds me of how you break a rock of gold. You break it from the inside and outside. Through fire and hitting it. Even though we talk from the perspective of big corporations, most of the change comes from start-ups. The biggest start-ups have started with someone. It is about understanding that start-ups don't tend to last, but that regardless, you've left the legacy of a business idea. Every project that fails is a learning opportunity for when a viable one shows up.



In conversation with

Jenny Natusch

founder of youth charity Escape2Make
Interviewed by Izzy Rycroft

Jenny Natusch founded Escape2Make (E2M) in 2018. Frustrated with the lack of opportunities for young people in Lancaster and Morecambe, especially for those not into sport, Jenny wanted to provide them with free creative courses, to better escape boredom, social media, and any pressure faced at school or home. The charity offers workshops and short courses to youth from all backgrounds; these often culminate in an end project such as the E2M Green Festival which happened in August 2022. This is only the beginning for Escape2Make; Jenny and the E2M team have visions of scaling up this model and replicating it all over the world.

I know that your journey hasn't been easy, from founding Escape2Make to getting to where you are now, you've faced a lot of obstacles, especially in terms of getting funding. Can you talk a bit about this process?

We're currently in the process of bidding for £60,000 over three years from a trust in the Lake District. They're one of the only sources you can apply for funding from where you can be flexible with the money you receive; most people want you to allocate it to a certain thing which can get complicated. If nobody gives you money for what you want, when you have an emergency (like needing to get people first aid trained, which happened to us recently) then you have to dip into your reserves. Then if your reserves are low it can make it difficult for you to get funding from anybody! That's why charities do a lot of fundraisers, to top up the money you can use on emergency stuff.

Escape2Make has got through to the next stage of this funding bid which means the funders will interview us. They've also asked to meet someone on the E2M youth board. I'm going to bring Jack with me. How amazing will he feel if he's helped us to get £60,000?

Are people enthusiastic and say they'll help, but sometimes these words are empty?

Yes, we have a lot of cheerleaders. The county council, the police, and the NHS all refer people to E2M. So we are obviously good enough for them to do this, but they've never given us any money. You could say we are propping up these government

services, and yet we are a bunch of volunteers with only two members of staff. However, we are waiting for £14k to land in our account from the NHS, which will be our first payment from any kind of government service. But yes, very few people actually give us money.

So now we are starting to talk to local businesses. More and more businesses that have corporate responsibility budgets want to make a social impact. As well as this, more businesses, even small businesses, are wanting to become B Corps. To become a b-corp you have to get your accreditation by proving that you're responsible (that you're good for the planet and people). These businesses are wondering how they are going to tick the social impact box, and E2M would be a very exciting organisation for a seed funder right now. **Escape2Make creates a huge positive social impact, and with the right funding and support, we could make even more.**

How has Escape2Make evolved from your starting idea to where it is now?

We are a charity for youth shaped and led by youth. We don't want to have a board of trustees aged 30-70 trying to work out how to engage 11-18s. That's why we set up a youth board made up of 12 young people with diverse backgrounds. I came up with the initial vision and the youth board has shaped and sharpened it. **This board must be diverse because we want to engage young minds from all backgrounds,** not just, say, grammar school kids. But, young people who have dropped out of education, who are neurodiverse, or maybe who are in care. You need all the different perspectives.

Some young people feel they don't have many opportunities in mainstream education to fuel creative passion and find a sense of purpose. So we don't just deliver creative workshops, we create end goals for them to work towards: the workshops will culminate in things like a cabaret, green festival or heritage market. **This way the youth feel motivated by purpose and end goals from the start, and can say to themselves, "Wow, I'm doing something that makes a difference to my community and the planet."**

Do you think that other youth charities don't listen to youth enough?

We've advised a couple of charities on how to set up a youth board. It's not easy to do, because you need to find a diverse cohort who already know and understand the charity, and who will show up and have ideas. A few more forward-thinking organisations are working hard to set them up. Others are setting them up, but not authentically; theirs can be quite decorative and tokenistic. They'll help the organisations with funding bids, but how much power do they have to steer and shape the charity? Often, it's not much at all.

If you're a youth charity or organisation, then surely the one thing you would want is input from young people!

Exactly. Time and again, the people at the top of an organisation don't listen to their clients and customers; they aren't in touch with them enough or doing enough research about them. **There's a sense of detachment from**

the problems they are trying to solve, and you see this right through society. E2M is apolitical, but it's no secret that politicians are not in touch with the people they are serving as much as they should be.

The University of Cumbria wrote a successful and popular youth work degree course. Because of funding cuts, it disappeared. But now they're rewriting the course, and with E2M's youth board. People are beginning to realise how important young people's voices are. The youth board has changed so many things about our original model. We were really surprised, for example, that some of the most popular workshops they wanted were about things like bicycle repair and wild cooking.

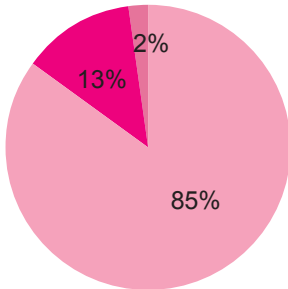
Do you think that the popularity of workshops like bicycle repair and wild cooking stems from them being so different to what young people are usually offered in school?

Yes definitely. It makes sense to me that this is filling the gaps not only in youth provision but also in education. I wonder if our outdoor workshops are so popular because 11-18s don't have anywhere to go. **They're too old for the playground, too young for the pub, and too broke for the café. They want an antidote to fast-paced digital life.** They want to slow down and connect with nature. Gen Zs want a more circular economy, zero waste, things my generation is less informed and concerned about. Lots of young people want direction and purpose, they want to know what to do with their climate anxiety. E2M gives them something tangible to do, projects that make a difference to the environment and the

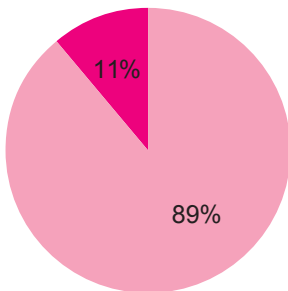
At the North Lancashire Business Expo (hosted on 30 September 2022), E2M conducted a survey. 121 students from 7 schools (some of which are located in the top 1% of deprived areas) participated.

- yes
- maybe
- no

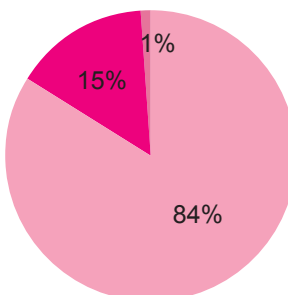
Do you have any friends who are struggling with their mental health?



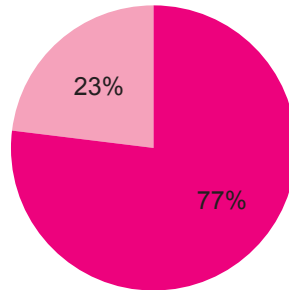
Would you like to meet more people your own age?



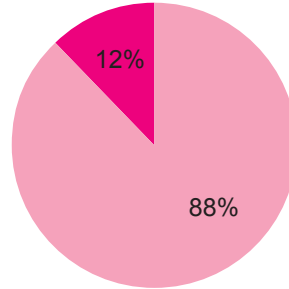
Would you like to spend more time socialising in real life, and less time online?



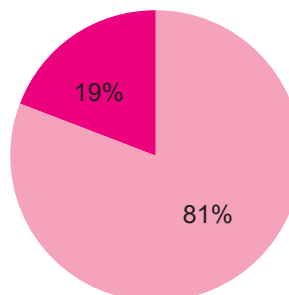
Do you feel like people your age have enough places in your local area, where you feel safe and welcome, to hang out in your free time?



Would you like to develop creative skills to help you get a job or even start your own business?



Would you like to learn green skills (e.g. indoor gardening, flying drones, repairing, inventing, etc.)?



community. Extinction Rebellion is a fantastic movement, but a lot of young people involved wish they could do something more targeted to make a change, and this is where E2M fits in.

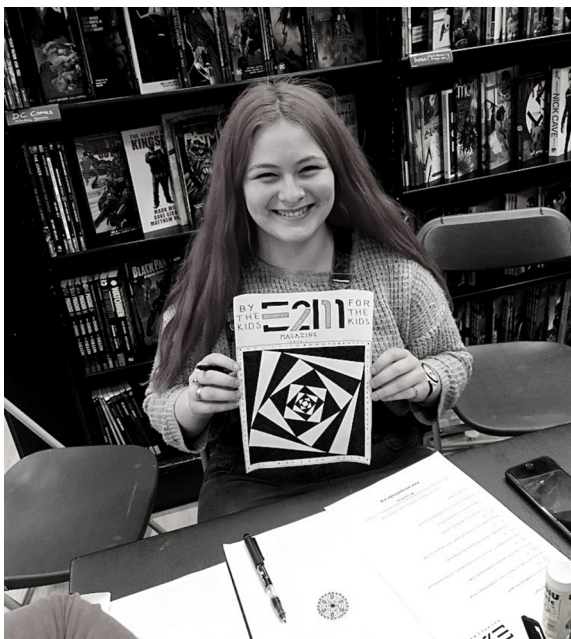
In your ideal world would Escape2Make exist alongside young people's education, or would it not need to because the curriculum would

provide everything they need for the future?

Well, if you could wave a magic wand and drastically evolve the education system to where it needs to be, then E2M wouldn't need to exist. The education system currently is largely just a hamster wheel of standardised testing. Kids who can, learn how to memorise things and regurgitate them in an exam. Computers and robots have those skills! Ken Robinson's Ted Talk, 'Do schools kill creativity?' explains this well. **The system needs to be creative, cater to all, and focus on emotional intelligence too. Young people need to learn how to think outside the box, innovate, and act with compassionate intuition.** They feel they aren't learning creative skills at school, and want to. Until schools evolve drastically and give students the skills they want and need, E2M is essential.

Earlier you mentioned the interest of the police and NHS services in Lancaster and Morecambe in Escape2Make, could you expand on why?

Escape2Make is all about active prevention. It's impossible to solve some of the problems that youth are facing at their source by yourself because you can't independently change the way social media works, or how the school curriculum is framed. But E2M tackles these problems at our first point of access, and preventively



works against mental health issues young people might have. It's easy to see why the police and NHS want to see Escape2Make succeed, E2M eases the challenges of their work.

It's frustrating that these problems aren't being solved by the powerful people who are responsible for solving them. In fact, these people are making things worse. According to the National Youth Agency, funding

has been cut by around 1 billion a year for youth work (*National Youth Agency, 2021*). In 2017/8, 95% of youth provision funding went to the National Citizenship Service (*Tracey Crouch, They Work for You, 2018*)¹, a three-week long course only for 15-17-year-olds, leaving little to spend on other areas of youth work. Between 2012 and 2019, 760 youth centres closed (*Unison, 2019*); young people, who are especially vulnerable because they're young, just haven't got anywhere to go.

There's probably a correlation between funding cuts and youth provision and young people's mental health. The police and NHS spend too much money on firefighting. A lot of their money goes to CAMHS, or to finding missing children. CAMHS's demand has gone up in the last 2/3 years by 700% in some parts of the UK². In Lancaster, there's a unit called the COVE, which is an NHS specialist 14-person in-patient unit for young people who are experiencing a variety of mental health problems. It costs them £5000 for 1 week to put a young person in a bed there³. It costs E2M £5000 a year to run a course for a whole year that many young people attend; about 45% of the people who come to us would be classed as hard to reach or vulnerable in some way. The police's budget for Lancashire is 320 million, but 10% of that budget is spent on looking for missing children⁴. Imagine if that wasn't needed if the money could be spent

1 <https://www.theyworkforyou.com/wrans/?id=2018-06-14.153871.h&s=speaker%3A24871#g153871.r0>
 2 Statistic from a Lancashire County Council meeting Jenny attended
 3 Statistics from a COVE employee who Jenny has been in conversation with
 4 Statistic from Deputy Crime Commissioner of Lancashire Constabulary Andy Pratt

on youth services that would prevent them from wanting to run away from school or home in the first place, that could give them somewhere to go in the community that would make them feel valued and full of purpose. This would not only save money but would result in young people having much happier, fulfilling lives.

At the moment young people are just on the periphery of society, and people will say, "Look at them, on their phones all the time, vaping, hanging out on the streets and at McDonald's." Well of course they are! They don't have anywhere else to go! It's up to us older people to stop sitting around and complaining, to use our power and make a change. We need to take this 'lost generation', as NESTA are describing them, and centre them in our communities, give them meaningful projects to work on so that they can make a difference and feel empowered doing so. And most importantly, we should listen attentively to them, to their feelings and ideas. As you grow up, creativity only dwindles, and so we must harness such a fantastic resource where and when we can.

What are your plans for E2M in the future?

One of our main goals is to solidify E2M in the form of having a building that our youth can use as a central hub. I want it to be an incubator of creativity and compassion, enterprising skills and green skills for 11-18s, supported by 19-25s. It's urgently needed, I think. I was in London for a week with UrbanOvation with our new chair, Bill Kistler, who was formerly the vice president of Euro-Disney. He wants to

globalise our model, and this building is a great way we can begin to do this. I was asked, "Is this a building, or is this a movement?" and I said, "I think the two are interconnected: the ultimate vision is to have these buildings all over the world. We can't change the education system overnight, we can't change policies and government overnight, and we can't change the way people parent overnight. But what we can do on a grassroots level is make change, and make impact, really quite rapidly. We are looking at Escape2Make as being a scalable, replicable, financially sustainable model that can be brought into other communities. Bill Kistler has been scouring the world for grassroots models which can be scaled and replicated, and so far he has only found two that he believes in. The first is Turquoise Mountain in Afghanistan, and the second is Escape2Make in Lancaster and Morecambe, which we honestly can't quite process because we're a relatively new charity. Right now, architects are working with young people to come up with designs for this flagship prototype building that we will build in Lancaster in the next 3-5 years. Then we should be in a position to share our brand, model and methodology with communities far and wide, as the problems that 11-18s face are universal, and the solutions that E2M give can be applied to just about any community ecosystem. I think the reason we demand so much attention is that people understand E2M's services are the most effective way to make change to a system that continues to neglect the well-being and education of our young people.

IN CONVERSATION WITH DOMINIQUE MIELLE

Interviewed by Georgia Flynn

*HEDGE FUND MANAGER AND AUTHOR OF
'DAMSEL IN DISTRESSED'*

Damsel in Distressed: My Life in the Golden Age of Hedge Funds, is the story of Dominique's rise to the top of Canyon Partners, as the only woman partner and senior portfolio manager. Canyon Partners became one of the largest hedge funds in the U.S., and Damsel in Distressed explores the inner workings of hedge funds while exploring what it takes to succeed as a woman investor.

When you decided to write Damsel in Distressed, what inspired you?

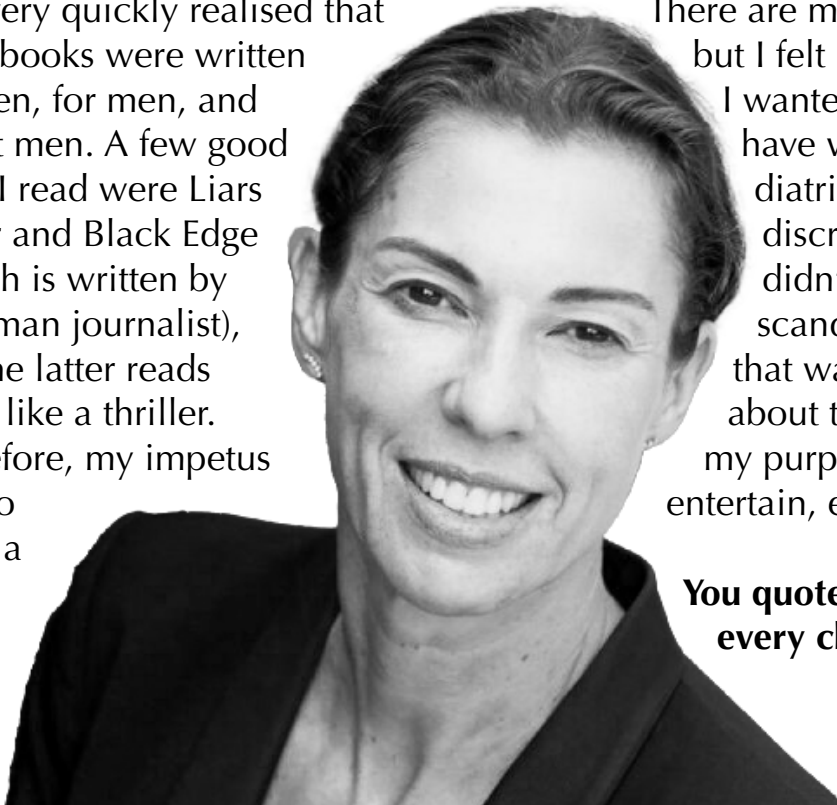
I got into writing when I wrote a well-reviewed article* for Business Insider. I felt I had touched a point that diversity wasn't talked about enough. I looked around for books about investing and very quickly realised that most books were written by men, for men, and about men. A few good ones I read were Liars Poker and Black Edge (which is written by a woman journalist), but the latter reads more like a thriller. Therefore, my impetus was to write a light-

hearted, strictly not self-help book about my experience working in a hedge fund.

When you finished the book, did you feel like you said everything you wanted to say?

There are more stories of course, but I felt I said everything I wanted to say. I could have written more of a diatribe about the gender discrimination, but I didn't want to write a scandalous book or one that was decidedly negative about the industry. Instead, my purpose was more to entertain, enlighten and inspire.

You quote U.A Fanthorpe in every chapter heading, why?



The poem I quote is called 'Not my Best Side' and references the painting 'St. George and the Dragon' by Uccello. It depicts a Damsel in Distress rescued by a knight in shining armour. The poem is a satirical take on the painting. I felt it suited the theme of the book and I encourage everybody to read it!

Did you feel your literary background came into your investing style or helped you along the way?

First, my strong conviction is that diversity and plurality is necessary. When one has a different background, they bring a new perspective, which is crucial for generating new ideas. Second, it brought solace when times were hard. For example, when I lost money, my knee-jerk reaction was to read a poem or novel to take my mind off work.

For young people starting their careers, what did your time in investment banking teach you?

The investment banking experience is still a vetting process for the second step in hedge fund or private equity. I don't think I could have gotten a hedge fund job straight out of college. Not only did it provide a crash-course in Excel, but it also gave me physical and emotional stamina and built my resilience to sustain losses. The great thing my career has taught me is that failure is business as usual; you must always move forwards.

Why distressed investing?

Distressed has a very strategic aspect to it; there is a construct. You must look at a company's capital structure, assets, imagine its potential, and how it needs to change to fit the business better. I think this work is a lot more creative and has a competitive advantage when compared to stock-picking. I think distressed is similar to the show *The Queen's Gambit*—that is what it is! You are moving your pieces to best position yourself. Ultimately, your goal is to get as big a piece of the pie as possible and the moves are infinite.

You mention that you made in-person visits to potential investments, was this approach useful for sourcing new information?

Sometimes it's quite difficult to have an objective point of view of a business from the outside, and a visit does bring some information to the table. Investing is like putting a puzzle together. The more pieces you connect, the better picture you have. The job requires one to really understand a business and how it's being financed. Ultimately after I quit and became a director, I realised how little I knew as an investor.

'DISTRESSED INVESTING' REFERS TO THE PROCESS OF INVESTING CAPITAL IN THE EXISTING DEBT OF A COMPANY, GOVERNMENT, OR PUBLIC ENTITY, WITH AN UNSTABLE CAPITAL STRUCTURE



'SAINT GEORGE AND THE DRAGON', BY UCCELLO (SOURCE: WIKIPEDIA)

Do you have any advice on how to sustain a big loss?

The great thing about this job is you have a decision to make every minute. You can buy more, sell, or do nothing. It is always in your hand to respond to market moves against your position. When you just don't know, it can be easy to freeze with anxious uncertainty, but what you can't do is undo your last move. Therefore, you have to move forward no matter how tough.

How did you overcome investment obstacles?

There is always a point when one must overcome a hurdle or gets stuck. The process requires imagination. I think it's a quality that people very rarely talk about when it comes to being a good investor. I believe imagination, ingenuity, creativity, alongside resilience are the qualities of a good investor.

What makes a successful pitch?

There are two qualities I believe lead to a successful pitch: (a) being a good listener, and (b) being well-prepared. Usually there is something people want to hear and if you can figure out what that is and give it to them, the

likelihood of success increases. Selling is not (or not only) educating; it's an entirely separate art.

When faced with gender discrimination, what should be the reaction of your man colleagues?

It's tough because if a man colleague comes to your rescue, do you really want to be perceived as a woman who needs help from a man, especially one less experienced? However, if they don't say anything then it is very isolating. Therefore, my advice to men who want to be supportive is to at least acknowledge a sexist act.

How can you deal with inappropriate behaviour from a colleague in a position of power without risking your career?

You must make a judgement on intention and intensity. You must ask yourself the following: What is the context of the situation? What is the intensity? Has this only happened once or are they a repeat offender? If the case is not serious, I often use humour (and slightly belittling humour to get my point across) as a coping mechanism. However, if the situation is more serious then no amount of humour will fend that off and honestly, I don't know what to do. There is no way to come out of it unscathed. In my mind, this kind of offence is particularly terrible because there is no way for you to win. Sadly, there is no satisfying answer.

Research suggests that women must outperform men to survive in this industry, do you see this changing?

I think it's a question of presence, scale, and numbers before we get to a place where investors consider a man and a woman portfolio manager as equal. A man (in the mind of an investor) today is still the safer option.

What is your opinion on the hedge fund industry as a whole?

It is an industry that has matured. An industry is like an S curve which grows exponentially but then hits a plateau. Thus, as performance has weakened, the fee structure is hard to justify. I think the hedge fund industry needs novelty and innovation. I am working with a young woman who has a firm called Legalist. Her work is the most exciting thing I have seen in a long time. It is your generation that will develop different structures in terms of fees, data analysis and products. The good thing about finance is that it is very fast moving. The people in that world are creative and highly motivated which inevitably brings about change.

*Dominique's Business Insider article: <https://www.businessinsider.com/canyons-dominique-mielle-on-the-lack-of-diversity-at-hedge-funds-2018-2?r=US&IR=T> ?



Inspirational Woman:

Sultana Tafadar KC

by Clara Marks

This piece is based on the transcript of an interview hosted at Mansfield College on May 31st. Sultana Tafadar KC is the first hijab-wearing criminal barrister to be appointed King's Counsel. Ranked in the Legal 500, Sultana is a highly experienced human rights, international law and criminal justice barrister.

Clara: Let's start at the beginning. Why don't you tell us about your journey to the bar?

Sultana: When I started the bar, I came in completely uninformed, I hadn't had any experience with barristers. I had started working with NGOs because human rights law was my thing, but also, one of the reasons I went to work for an NGO in the first place was because I'd thought 'I won't make it at the bar: there aren't very many women from a minority background, who wear a hijab.' Later I did find out that there were the odd one or two women like me, but I thought, 'I don't know the profession, I don't have any contacts and I have no idea how to go about it.' In the end, I decided I wanted to give it a bash; I didn't want to lie on my deathbed and wonder about this. I'm sadly one of those people who from birth always knew they wanted to be a lawyer and wanted to be in the courtroom (laughs).

The statistics are daunting to look at; they're never positive and can scare you off from the outset. I learned that you've got to make your own way and pave your own path. I was lucky I ended up doing pupillage at Toops Chambers which was the most human rights centred at the time. The process is intense. Out of about 700 applications, only 3 pupils are chosen. Then it's literally *The Apprentice* for a year (laughs) trying to get chosen. By some miracle, I was hired and could stay on as a tenant. Then the real struggle begins... you're self-employed which means you have to build your own practice. You give a percentage of your income to chambers that do administration and business development, but ultimately it's down to you and how you build your own practice. In the early days, this was a big struggle. People have ideas about what women and minority women can or can't do, and about women wearing hijab. I was overlooked for a lot of work. The clerk's

room is powerful because historically they've had relationships with solicitors and allocate the work they are sent. If the clerks don't love you then things can get really difficult and if they do, you can have a fantastic practice. There were both conscious and unconscious reasons behind their feelings towards you. Ironically, for a human rights chambers, I had a tricky relationship with the clerks.

Thankfully in this age of social media, solicitors can research barristers directly, so I decided to cut out the middle man. This is something I learnt from other lawyers from minority backgrounds: just carve your own practice through networking events and seizing opportunities. I got my very first case about the July bombings this way. The solicitor Imran Khan was defending some accused of being co-conspirators and I was loitering around out of interest in the case. I knew that someone from my chambers was involved in the trial and I found out one of the junior barristers had hurt his back and fallen ill so I said to Imran, 'You need a junior to sit in there.' He said 'Maybe I do,' and I said 'You need a junior like me,' and elaborated on why I was good for the job. I think he was bemused and wanted to give me a shot. We also thought the junior would be back sooner. I wished him a recovery, but not a speedy one (laughs). I was able to sit through the entirety of the trial and the clerks' room suddenly formed a different opinion about me. Initially, I did a mixture of criminal law and in the last six or seven years I've ended up specialising in terrorism and national security work.

Clara: You speak with a real passion about your cases. Is that what has decided your specialisms?

Sultana: Terrorism and national security were popular work around chambers for several reasons: you can appear

in the press, it can be career-defining and well-paid, and you get to flex your muscles by dealing with new laws. As a Muslim, I thought there were a lot of new laws which were very broad and which targeted the Muslim community as a whole, e.g. Prevent. This incursion and the way the law was being applied drove me. Some assume it's easy for me to work in this area as a Muslim, but that wasn't always the case. I had a Muslim client who asked my solicitor, 'Does she speak English?'. I said 'No, we're going to have this entire conference in Mandarin. I hope you can keep up.' (laughs). As a Muslim man, he already had an idea of what a Muslim woman was capable of. Recently I even had a solicitor who said, 'I'm not sure I should put you on this terrorism case. Having too many Muslims on the case might not be great optics.' You have to challenge it. I said, 'You're actually wrong.' When you have a Muslim client who is accused of terrorism, you can imagine all the stereotypes that the jury has at the forefront of their mind, but having someone like them speaking on their behalf, helps break down these stereotypes. Most people say that having a lawyer from a minority background can be detrimental to the client because

jurors don't necessarily like lawyers who aren't white, middle-class men. Actually, the reverse is true. If you had a Black client accused of murder and gang involvement, a Black lawyer representing them can articulate their story in a way they can't, and this bridges the gap between the defendant and the dock. It can be a really powerful thing to see in court and I think that's something juries do respond well to.

You'll often hear women barristers' frustration with the fact that women get put forward to represent rape cases more than men because solicitors think that a woman should be cross-examining a woman defendant. This means that women get pushed into working sexual offences and men benefit from being assigned to high-value fraud cases which do far better financially. You'll always hear about a disparity in how work is allocated in chambers due to gender, religion, race etc. The bar just needs to diversify. It is diversifying, but not fast enough. When you have diverse barristers it brings a wealth of different perspectives. Jurors don't necessarily warm to a white, middle-class man because jurors are also evolving and becoming more diverse.

The fact that they reported about my appointment actually shows that it is a bit of a sorry state of affairs. If there were lots of women in hijab, my appointment wouldn't be featured at all, and that's where we should be. The problem is that while access is improving; a lot is going on with the bar standard board and chambers; retention isn't improving. Women as a whole are not staying at the bar. If someone wants to start a family and take time off to do so, when they come back they have to start the clerk-solicitor relationship all over again. Progression is very tough—how do you move and do better,

“IF THERE WERE LOTS OF WOMEN IN HIJAB, MY APPOINTMENT WOULDN'T BE FEATURED AT ALL, AND THAT'S WHERE WE SHOULD BE.”



more complex work for example? I went on maternity leave and had about two years off, but I used that time. I used to go to my solicitors' office with my daughter and her very cute face, which was very good for business, the solicitors would come and coo over her (laughs). I ended up with more solicitors when I came back than I had before. We have to try and use whatever others might perceive as disadvantages.

I've forgotten the stats but men by far outstrip women at the bar, and it only gets worse with other protected characteristics, with Black women right at the bottom and Asian women doing a little bit better. I think there are only 6 Black women and maybe 17 Asian women currently in silk (all Asian women are grouped because of BAME statistics in the UK). There are maybe two crown court circuit judges who are Black women, but no Black women in the high court. A lot needs to happen to change the profession. I'm chair of the BSP Taskforce on religion and belief where we're looking at intersectional discrimination and

what things can be done. From a faith background, it is difficult because of worries about alcohol, networking, and 'schmoozing', which is also a concern for women and their safety. We're suggesting having dry events where people do not need to have alcohol or go to a pub to network. There are real issues with power dynamics, and I think it is sadly going to take a while to change them. I've been at the criminal bar for sixteen years and there's only one other person in a hijab.

Clara: It seems like there's a bigger problem within the structure of self-employment which is something surprising about the profession; what other misconceptions are there about being a barrister?

Sultana: People think all lawyers are 'fat cat' lawyers. It's only at the commercial bar let me tell you, not if you're doing criminal or human rights (laughs).

One of the things you always get asked is, 'How can you defend someone guilty?' The answer is that everybody has the



right to representation, a fair trial and the right to be heard. We are not allowed to mislead the court, so if the client tells you they are guilty then you advise them to plead guilty. A code of conduct binds us; a fair trial is critical. I sit on the advisory board for Fair Trials International and you'd be shocked to discover that something so fundamental to democracy just doesn't exist in other places. Without a fair trial, everything falls apart. I don't want to say the UK is a perfect system. I don't prosecute because I feel that the state is very powerful and if they want to crush people they can. Defence lawyers see our role as the buffer between the state and the individual; to ensure that the individual gets the right to be heard; human rights law is always about the state encroaching on civil liberties and rights.

The sad thing is that people think criminal barristers are milking the legal aid system, which if you look at the rates, you can see isn't happening. The legal aid system is in shambles. As a junior barrister, I'd make £46.50 a day, covering a short hearing in the crown court and that might be all I had scheduled that day. People are leaving the criminal bar, especially at the junior end, because it is unsustainable. We're going back to the old days when you were only able to go to the bar if you had independent wealth, which does nothing for social mobility and diversity. It also has a knock-on effect on the rule of law. In criminal law, if there aren't good-quality advocates on either side, people unjustly go to prison on life sentences and that is a real danger.

Clara: You hold several special advisor positions; Special Advisor on Human Rights to the Oxford Initiative for Global Ethics and Human Rights; a member of the Legal Expert Advisory Panel for Fair Trials International; Member of the International Legal Network of Avocat

Sans Frontières; Head of Strategic Litigation for the Muslim Lawyers Action Group (MLAG). How do these advisory roles compare to criminal law?

Sultana: That's a good question. Some criminal barristers become adrenaline junkies, I think I might have, along the way; I love doing closing speeches in front of a jury and I think there's nothing more fun than cross-examining a police officer. Crime is unlike any other area, you see some of the best advocacy and off-the-hoof legal arguments. Unlike other areas of law you don't have the luxury of time, it can be fast and furious. There's a theatrical element involved and we love to see characters coming into the witness box. Advisory work is slightly different, slower-paced but equally important. For example, a case being taken to the European Court of Human Rights is about a French lawyer who is not allowed to speak in the courts because she wears a hijab. As she was going through bar school they actually changed the laws with her in mind, to stop her from speaking. Ironically, one of the reasons they gave for this move of exclusion was 'equality of litigants', alongside saying it would be difficult for the client to get fair representation because a judge and jury would be biased, unable to process a hijabi woman as the client's lawyer. This is one of the most bizarre reasons and is of course discriminatory. It's a surreal form of victim blaming to say that a judge cannot be fair if a lawyer shows up as a brown woman wearing a hijab. The European Court of Justice has not ruled favourably for women in hijab, but we are building a new case with new arguments. The whole thing is quite astonishing and we are hoping there will be an oral hearing which I can attend. It would be quite a statement to go onto French soil in my hijab and present my case to the European Court of Human Rights.

Clara: It's amazing that you are so passionate about human rights and can work in something which you so clearly love, but was that always the case? How did you deal with the pressure to go into a more lucrative area of law?

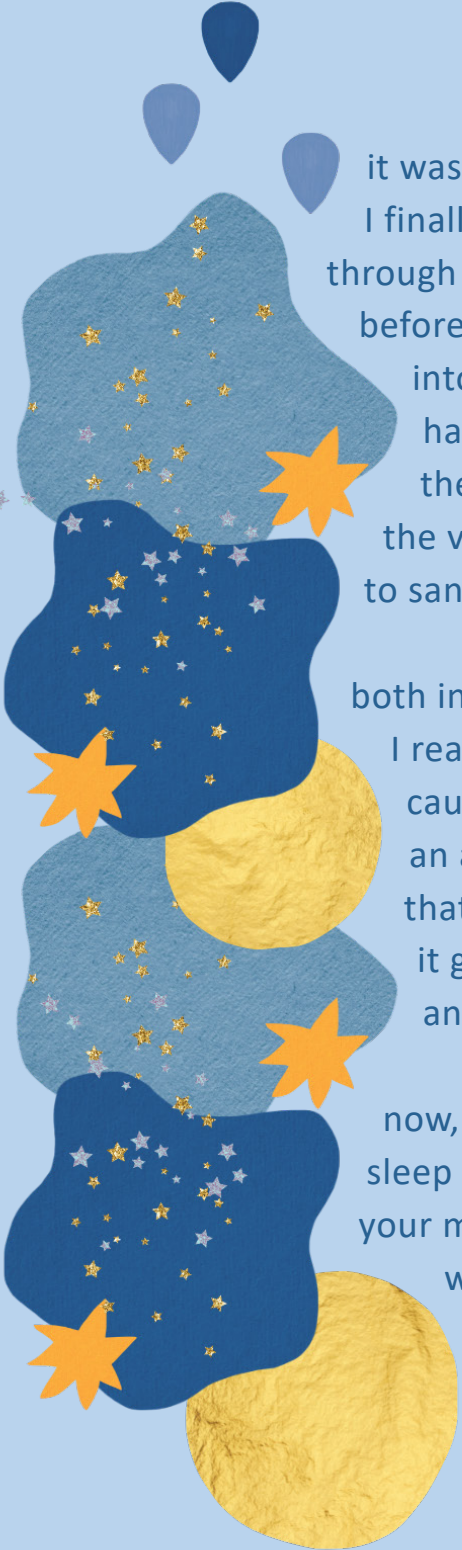
Sultana: At first I went into criminal law to learn the trade and to see the cut and thrust of daily advocacy, the mental gymnastics. My goal was always to do international criminal law, which was in the process of being set up when I joined the bar. There are great international criminal lawyers but they don't have a lot of advocacy experience and I did not want to do that, so I started with a baptism of fire in the magistrates' courts. I then stayed because it was so gripping. My first five years were consumed by just trying to make ends meet and so I couldn't think of what I wanted to do. It's like treading water to make sure you're not drowning. But there came a stage where I was able to do better paid, higher profile and longer cases. I don't know how I got through those incredibly difficult five years. I couldn't see what was out there and I didn't think I'd ever take silk. I had no hopes or dreams of that.

Getting silk is a complicated process: you need 36 referees and about 16 years of practice. Half of the applicants are rejected on paper, and half more are rejected at the interview. It's a 9-month process, almost like having a child, and almost more painful (laughs). When I got the news I was successful it was the most fantastic feeling, especially after years of gruelling work. I always said I would retire but it seems like it's the beginning of a new stage (laughs). My husband took silk in 2016, we have this constant debate where when my daughter wants something she'll start a debate about which parent is the better barrister. I would lose because he had taken QC. When I got the call I said

to her, 'Now who's the better barrister?' She said, 'Mum I'm really proud of you, and you know... when I grow up I want to be the best lawyer... just like Brenda Hale.' (laughs). I've got to sit in the Supreme Court to be the best lawyer now. It was an amazing feeling walking the corridors of the Old Bailey the day after my ceremony with my new robe and my white hijab. The first thing I did was go to the ladies' robing room and crack open one of the special KC lockers and claim it. There are cases that I am pleased and grateful to have worked on but this is the best moment of my career.

Tears to Water a Garden


Written by Sophie Lord



it was a tuesday, midnight just fled, and
I finally fell
through Eden's frontier.
before I dove
into that velour landscape
hazy where I met you, hazy where
the mouth of heaven touched earth,
the voice of god told me
to sanctify nostalgia.

both indigent and ardent,
I reached up and with my own hands
caught and cradled
an angel's tears, the blood of narcissus.
that water was moonlight's daughter,
it grew verdant gardens
and blessed roses in all their blooming.

now, under the eye of the moon,
sleep is an impossibility as you speak of
your mother, your hopes, that girl you loved
whilst I'm stuck in Eden
holding just your tears, and the whisper of god.



Illustrated by Jasmine Sayer



SOMEONE

written by **jessica tabraham**
illustrated by **leyla baxman**

I can't write about her without sounding like a man.

I learnt long ago that to deconstruct her is to dethrone her.

Sitting on the Circle line. Unruly curly mop faded into two tones. Legs akimbo. Displaying a triangular flag of underwear. Red military jacket. Eyes. Varicose cream boots. All wrapped up in a liquorice-streaked coating of black leather.

I'd made the journey twice a day for years but this was the first time I looked up from the floor. She appeared into my world of metropolitan liminality, interrupting my routine of passive nothingness with a coquettish newness I have never seen before or since. I know you're not supposed to look at people on the tube, but I couldn't help looking at her through the glass reflection: a modern-day Medusa radiating such impenetrable confidence that she became

gloriously monstrous.

Her confidence was the only way I recognised her all those years later. Basilisk eyes fighting a losing battle for pre-eminence in a face pledging its allegiance to corporate middle age.

It sounds like a cliché to say that everything froze but it wasn't because of her. It was just the first time I noticed everything freeze. It was the first time I'd ever looked up on my commute. When you're on the Circle line, you're the eye of the storm: even though every carriage is bending it feels like you're in the only one that isn't. Everything is bending around you. Now, I'm not saying that her entrance made the world stop turning, but in that moment it felt like she had the power to render our carriage the epicentre of her own personal hurricane.

To deconstruct her is to dethrone her; but I hadn't learnt that yet. Instead I was confronted with her all at once. A guileless rodent allured by her Pied-Piper-siren-call. I got off a stop early. It was only one stop but I would've gotten off ten stops early if it meant I was getting off at hers. She knew all this, of course, monstrous intelligence has its perks. So although to an outsider her turning around and asking if I would like to go for coffee

seemed audacious, it was really the safest bet she would ever place.

She had been likened to monsters before due to the morally righteous venom she spat at any opportunity. But she liked it, took pride in it, because it meant she was doing something right. If the powers that be were spitting back, that meant her speeches, marches, and general hellraising were hitting them where it hurt. The old her used her monstrousness for good. Who could say no to those harsh eyes? Especially when paired with the soft surrealism of her siren song. Succumbing is inevitable.

She made me feel ashamed of my job or 'my purpose', as she called it, slandering all its trappings, including my soulless commute. She spoke about changing something. Doing something.

Always something over someone.

She thought this meant she was choosing purpose over individual fame and success, choosing the cause over the ladder she knew she could conquer. But to me it meant that there would always be something more important. She would always choose something over someone, *she would always choose something over me.*

I haven't become something, but she has certainly become 'someone'; her name is on the wall of a building. She is known and for all the wrong reasons. She treads on the people she used to stand with. Every day constitutes an erasure of the person she used to be, squashing the fragments of herself that I see everywhere: sprawled across the back row of a night bus, standing at reception flirting with the security guard the day I quit my job, gnawed fingers gripping the top of a lamppost while her face basked in that liminal space halfway between a smile and a scowl.

Tattoos would have suited the old her, but they seem out of place with who she is now; they seem too fresh, too new. It's as if her back is a petri dish, so rigid is the boundary between the new blue growth and the rest of her skin. Her back is a deceptively two-dimensional garden, littered with so many forms that their outlines are indistinguishable, creating an inky blue haze so pervasive that for a second I question whether an octopus has taken up residence in my mind.

I look over at the sweater vest that she threw across the room before she threw herself onto the bed and suddenly the tentacles ease and I can see clearly once again. For the first time I take my

eyes off her and instead focus them on her room. I see more sweater vests, skirts intended to be worn with bare legs, and pale shirts that threaten to expose any navy artistry quivering beneath their translucency. The verdant petri dish of her back is her only available canvas—the only piece of herself that she can guarantee her work clothes will never show. This is a tribute to her old self: a perennial middle finger to the world that she hates to love.

What could I do but join? Starting at the roots of the painted trees, I trace up to the flowering branches of her shoulder blades, first with my fingers and then with my tongue, as I surrender to the blue haze and immerse myself fully in the garden someone has created for me.



daddy issues

written by jasmine sayer
photographed by faye song

i have clung to love like a relic
burnished gold, saw-toothed
unearthed on a sunless morn,
soiled.

a miracle
centered in touch

hallowed be thy name
seeping into clasped hands
chafed and bloody
clotted

i am
swaddled

in the sticky red string



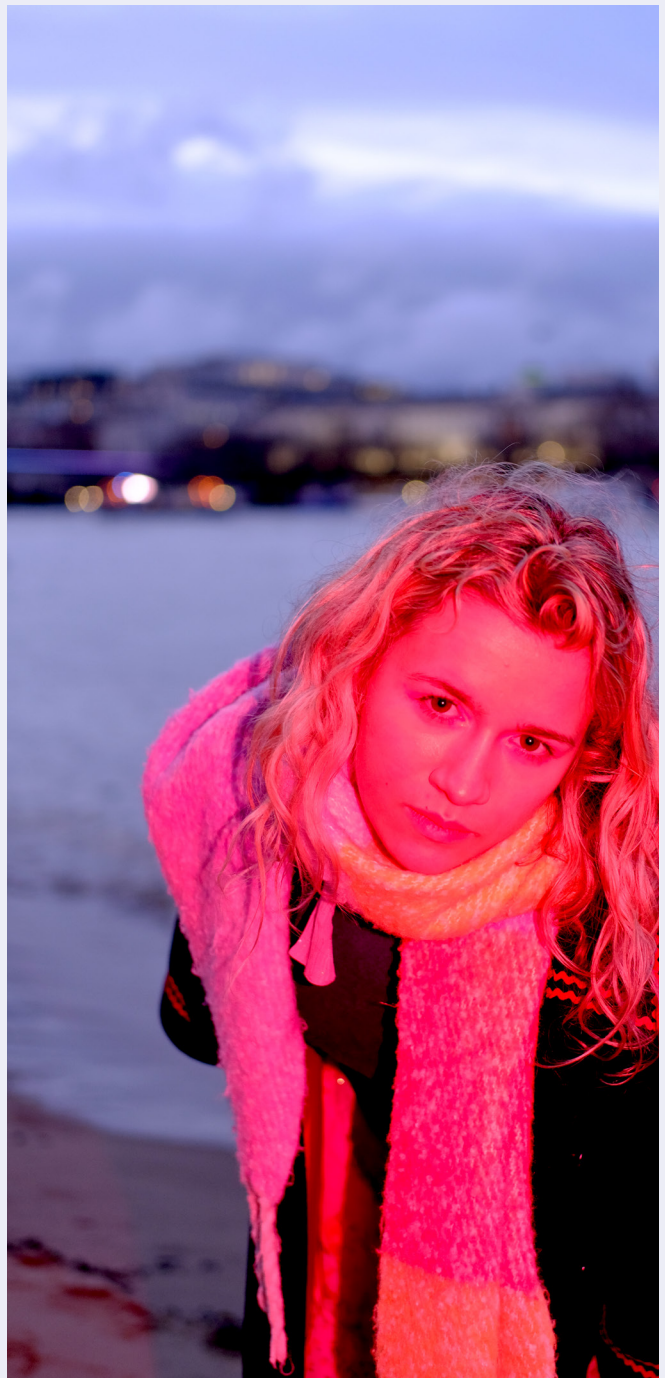
i do not love in white spaces
forgive us our trespasses



i will not hang upon a laundry line
of virgin linen
flayed, displayed
flesh turned inside out

no
i've made my bed in
tumbling marginalia
the ramblings of a non-believer

i am
knotted
between sheets and sheets
of paper, ink
durex red and clingfilm skin.



forgive those who trespass against us

back and forth and

back then you promise you were much better at this



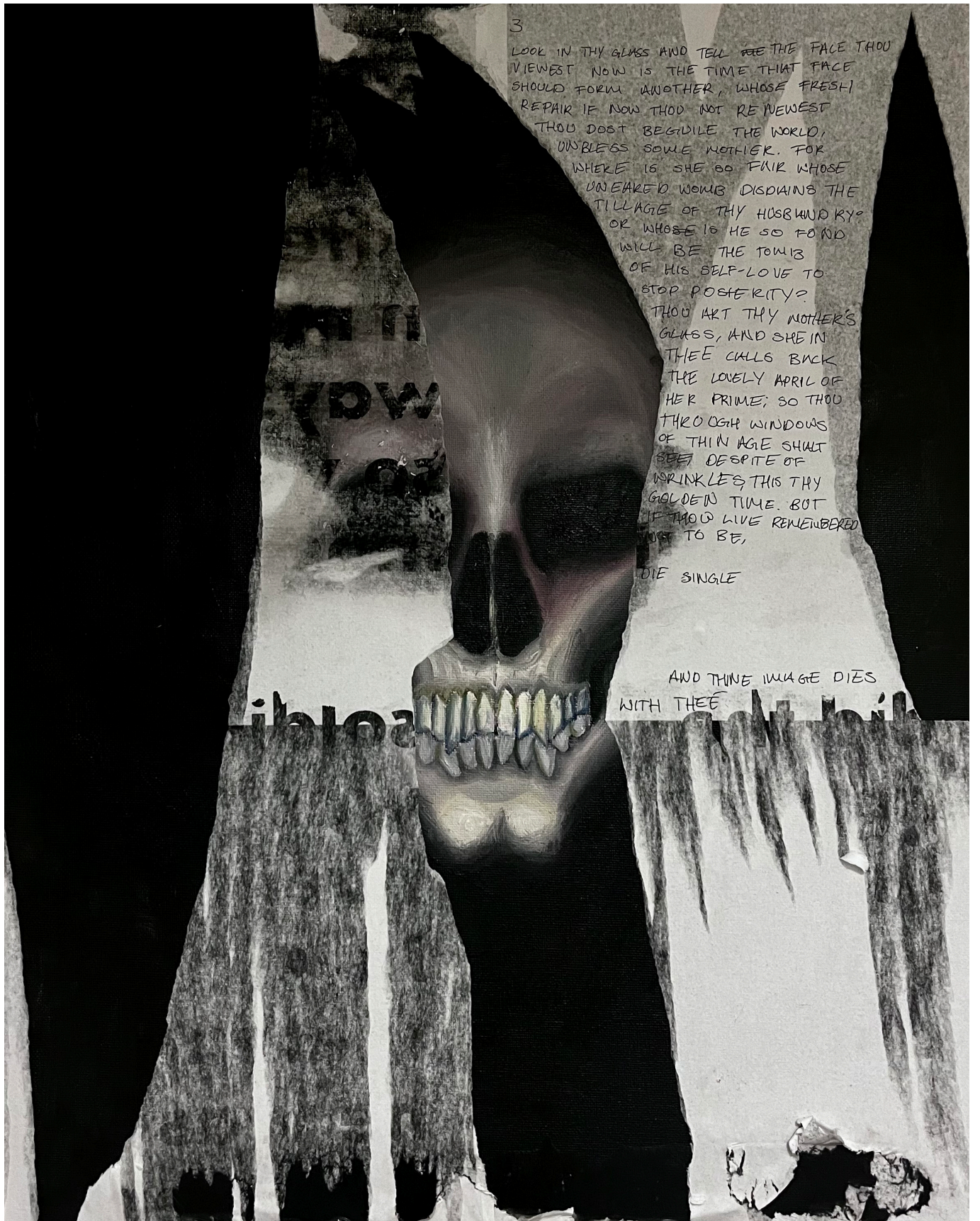
and forth into foil pockets
"you know what they do to you
right?"

unstitched unstuffed
my knees are in my lungs
uncross me
cut me up and carve me
intestines spilling on kitchen countertops
please

this is my body, *brok e* for you

eat me baby one more time

tell me i look **pretty in pink**
pulsing and raw.



3

LOOK IN THY GLASS AND TELL ~~THE~~ THE FACE THOU
VIEWEST NOW IS THE TIME THAT FACE
SHOULD FORM ANOTHER, WHOSE FRESH
REPAIR IF NOW THOU NOT RE NEWEST
THOU DOST BEGUILLE THE WORLD,
UNBLESS SOME MOTHER. FOR
WHERE IS SHE SO FAIR WHOSE
UNEARED WOMB DISDAINS THE
TILLAGE OF THY HUSBANDRY?
OR WHOSE IS HE SO FOND
WILL BE THE TOWNS
OF HIS SELF-LOVE TO
STOP POSTERITY?
THOU ART THY MOTHER'S
GLASS, AND SHE IN
THEE CALLS BACK
THE LOVELY APRIL OF
HER PRIME, SO THOU
THROUGH WINDOWS
OF THIN AGE SHALT
SEE DESPITE OF
WRINKLES, THIS THY
GOLDEN TIME. BUT
IF THOU LIVE REMEMBERED
JUST TO BE,
DIE SINGLE

AND THINE IMAGE DIES
WITH THEE

KESENA

BERRY

YOU DID NOT COME AND MARCHING TIME DREW ON, AND
WORE ME NUMB. - YET LESS FOR LOSS OF YOUR DEAR
PRESENCE THERE THAN THAT I THUS FOUND LACKING IN
YOUR MAKE THAT HIGH COMPASSION WHICH CAN OBE BEFAIR
RELUCTANCE FOR PURE LOVING KINDNESS' SAKE GRIEVED,
WHEN, AS THE HOPE HOUR STROKED ITS SUM.

YOU DID NOT COME

YOU LOVE ME NOT

AND LOVE AND WE
LOYALTY; - I KNOW AND

CAN SEND YOU
KNEW IT, BUT

"UNTIL THE STORE OF HUMAN
PEERS DIVINE IN ALL BUT
NAME, WAS ~~IT~~ IT NOT
WORTH A LITTLE HOUR
OR MORE TO KOD
YET THIS: ONCE

YOU A WOMAN, CAME TO SOOTHE ATIME-
TOKOS MAN; EVENTHOUGH IT BE

YOU LOVE NOT ME





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