

Brain
ODYSSEYS
Recovery through performance arts

**SOMETIMES I DREAM
I AM DANCING**



SOMETIMES I DREAM I AM DANCING

An Anthology of poetry sharing hope
after stroke and brain injury, written by
Ambassadors from Rosetta Life's
Brain Odysseys programme.


CURATED BY MARTYN COOPER

CONTENTS

| | |
|----------|---|
| FOREWORD | 4 |
|----------|---|

| | |
|--------|---|
| POETRY | 6 |
|--------|---|

| | |
|--|----|
| WE MADE AN EFFORT | 6 |
| THE TIME WENT ON... THE DAYS PASSED | 8 |
| MY STORY | 10 |
| BROKEN PATHWAYS | 12 |
| THE SPIRAL OF THE SCREW | 14 |
| OUT | 16 |
| MY HEADS BEEN BROKEN INTO | 18 |
| SNOW GLOBE | 20 |
| 35 DAYS IN A HOSPITAL PRISON IN SOLITARY CONFINEMENT | 22 |
| SPIRAL LIKE THE SEASONS | 24 |
| SPRING BIRDS | 26 |
| STROKE SURVIVOR – A DAY IN THE LIFE | 28 |
| THE STROKE | 30 |
| MY LIFEBOAT | 32 |
| ON MEMORY | 34 |
| UNDER THE | 36 |
| WARRIOR (APHASIA) | 38 |
| SOMETIMES I DREAM I AM DANCING | 40 |
| A SHORT POEM OF LOVE | 42 |
| FLOOD LOVE | 44 |
| THE ODD ONE IN | 46 |
| SING YOUR STORY | 49 |
| RIDDLE | 50 |
| MONKEY DO MONDAY | 52 |
| LOVE | 54 |



| | |
|-------------------------------------|-----|
| THE TREE (AUTUMN) | 56 |
| HOPE AFTER THE STROKE | 59 |
| MY TREE OF LIFE | 60 |
| SUPPORT | 63 |
| MY INJURY SPIRAL | 65 |
| I MET A MAN TODAY | 67 |
| MEMORY OF A WALK IN LOCKDOWN | 70 |
| SHOUTING HAT / APHASIA / STROKE | 72 |
| ALL I CAN DO IS HIDE FROM THE WORLD | 75 |
| WORDS | 77 |
| BRAINSPACE ODYSSEY'S | 79 |
| VISUAL / HOSPITAL | 80 |
| WHO | 83 |
| MY BODY | 85 |
| TAKE IT ONE STEP AT A TIME | 87 |
| I SEE THE VAST OCEAN | 89 |
| SEE YOU LATER | 91 |
| SMILE | 93 |
| SUNFLOWER | 95 |
| TO BED | 97 |
| FOUR YEARS A SURVIVOR | 98 |
| DIG | 99 |
| MOVING ON | 100 |
| GLOBAL EPIDEMIC – COVID 19 | 103 |
| AWKWARD BUGGER | 105 |

FOREWORD

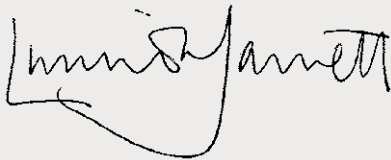
Poetry might seem an unusual art form for people struggling with aphasia after a stroke. However, the disruptive syntax and the nouns with mismatched meaning spark extraordinary creativity. In this anthology you will see the gaps where meaning cannot be made in normal speech and here is made anew. In the dialogue between meaning searching and expression new ways of writing poetry are born.

This anthology loosely follows the order of recovery after brain injury, from the trauma of a life changing moment through rehabilitation, to independent living. A remarkable discovery in the reading of the anthology is how strongly optimistic nearly all the poems are. Many address losing an older or earlier identity, but there is very little description of despair. There is a strong thread of resilience and overcoming difficulties.

All those who have contributed to the anthology have been through a performance arts programme run by Rosetta Life called Stroke Odysseys. Those who graduate from the programme become ambassadors for life after stroke and are members of regional performance arts companies located in Bristol, Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and London. The ambassadors advocate for life after stroke through the arts by delivering performance programmes that challenge perceptions of disability, supporting artistic delivery of performance sessions in hospitals, offering presentations at conferences and wide ranging media engagement. They also use newfound creative skills to find different ways to advocate for recovery.

This is the first anthology of poetry produced by the Ambassadors. It has been edited by Martyn Cooper, who has been living with the effects of brain

injury after brain cancer for five years. Many of the ambassadors have also found art making a powerful resource in their own journey of recovery. All the images in this anthology bear testament to the expressive potential of art for those who are struggling to communicate through language. We owe our thanks to all the ambassadors who offer their creativity in this collection to inspire not only people living with the effects of brain injury but also the wider public.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'Lucinda Jarrett'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name 'Lucinda' written in a more compact, rounded style and the last name 'Jarrett' in a more elongated, flowing script.

Lucinda Jarrett
Artistic Director, Rosetta Life

WE MADE AN EFFORT

For a poem to be favoured
The critic must see that it's been laboured
It's not proper poetry that should please
If written simply and with ease

Using words, their tales to paint
Brain injured poets relate their fate
by using vivid imagery
As castaways on life's sea

Coping post damage
Re-learning how to live
It's better than the alternative
So read our poems with some favour
and trust that there has been some labour

Martyn Cooper



THE TIME WENT ON... THE DAYS PASSED

I was writing a sweet dream
When suddenly... I had a stroke
Imagine... Imagine... It's true
I had a stroke... a bleeding brain
Imagine a bleeding brain
Not everyone has the same Brain as you
Not everyone has the same Heart as you
THE TIME WENT ON The time went on
from the moment... I wake up
Breath, breath, every breath,
I sing without a voice
I love singing voices
I love to sing with a high voice
but my voice has no frequency
How can I sing, how can I love life... or song
THE DAY PASSED
My friend tells me,
Soon... Soon...
Little... Little... by little
life is going to get better...
The time went on... The days passed
I laugh and feel loved
The dawn came out
After having no voice....
No voice... no voice
But it is becoming light-hearted

The dawn came out
The light of the morning woke up the joy
Maybe the light of peace shines for all
And said to love, let's rejoice... stay hopeful
Stay hopeful you never know what tomorrow
may bring
I couldn't be away from my lover
I was so happy that I couldn't sleep
or close my eyes
The time went on... The days passed
My life is beautiful
I have got a big heart....
I have made it through with life, love...
I like speaking, working and dancing
I love everyone being happy!!!
Now, I am writing sweet dreams
I am a Survivor...
I am stronger always, always, always...
I am a Survivor... I have overcome
We have overcome

Jawad Mohammed



MY STORY

I live with my stroke
Every minute of my life
I want you to help me
Start by understanding
My stroke isn't contagious!
It is not my fault!
I am not recovering from stroke
.. not ... recovering..
I'm Rebuilding after stroke
The stroke group are... Rebuilding... We are... Odyssey's stroke
Work needs to be shared
Telling people far and wide
I struggle
We all struggle...
We stay... strong
My struggle is every day
Struggle...
I am the story of Odyssey's stroke
It's my stoke

Jawad Mohammed



BROKEN PATHWAYS

Broken pathways in the brain
Neurons try to find new ways
WHIZZING, WHOOSHING round and round
Will I ever be the same?

Maybe one of these days...
I WILL find a way to regain
Though for the meantime, this is me, my bane
I CAN live through the pain, and retrain my brain

Georgina Binks



THE SPIRAL OF THE SCREW

Brain injury and stroke disrupts the brain messaging to different parts of the body.

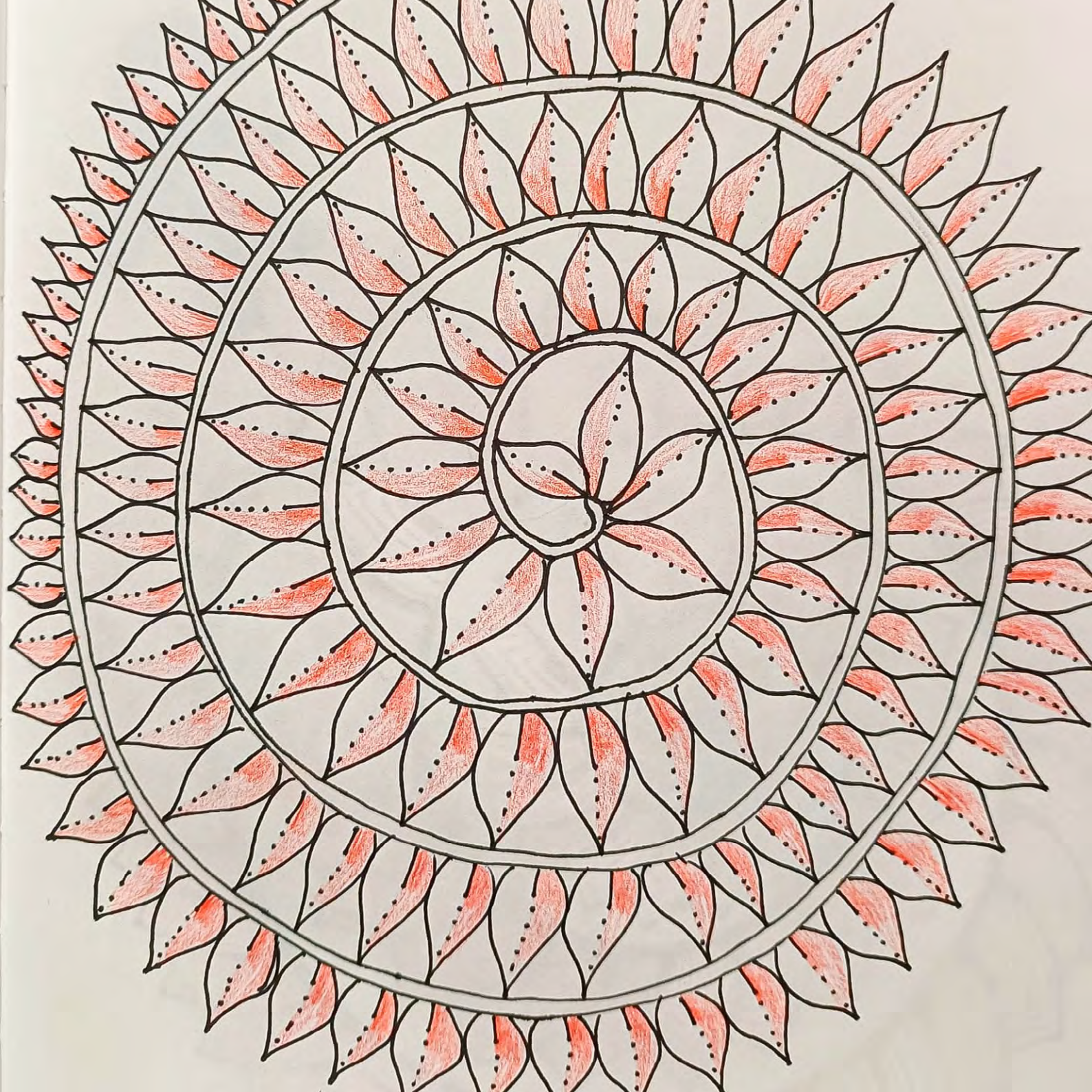
The spirals on the shank of a screw turn and tighten to bind things together, to hold things in place, to mend.

Tightening a screw can be an analogy for neuro plasticity, the spiral turning motion as the screw is tightened being like rehab; spiralling to fix and secure new messaging within the injured brain.

I imagine the screw shank turning in a spiral motion within the brain, re-attaching, joining and securing messaging damaged by brain injury - to create new movement and function within my body

The screw is an image for neuro plasticity, fixing and healing the brain. The supply of screws does not end, we just have to keep turning and letting the screws' spiral and tighten to mend the broken links.

Joe Dowd



OUT

Out out let's go out into the world

Mask on face

Take time - no race

Too much noise

Too many birds Too much traffic

Too many nerves

Onto the bus, don't sit too close

Please don't sneeze

Please don't cough

Please keep your distance

please don't ask me a question.

Into the shops, what will it be?

People smile with their eyes

Please help, a surprise

People just want to say hello.

I can do this again Later on, after my rest...

Fiona Watson



MY HEAD'S BEEN BROKEN INTO

My head's been broken into
The brain burglars have been
And stolen many treasures
And swiftly fled the scene

They left the bare essentials
Enough to stay alive
And a minimum of energy
from which to build and thrive

To tentatively trust
Returning to my head
Searching in the dark
for words once easily said

I fumble and I stumble
I trip and often fall
From being strong and mighty
Now feeling weak and small

Do I choose the path of victim;?
Or warrior superman?
The negative route of "I can't"
or the positive path "I CAN"

No longer dwelling on past theft
But regrowth as a man.
I can, I should, I will, I hope
I can, I can, I CAN

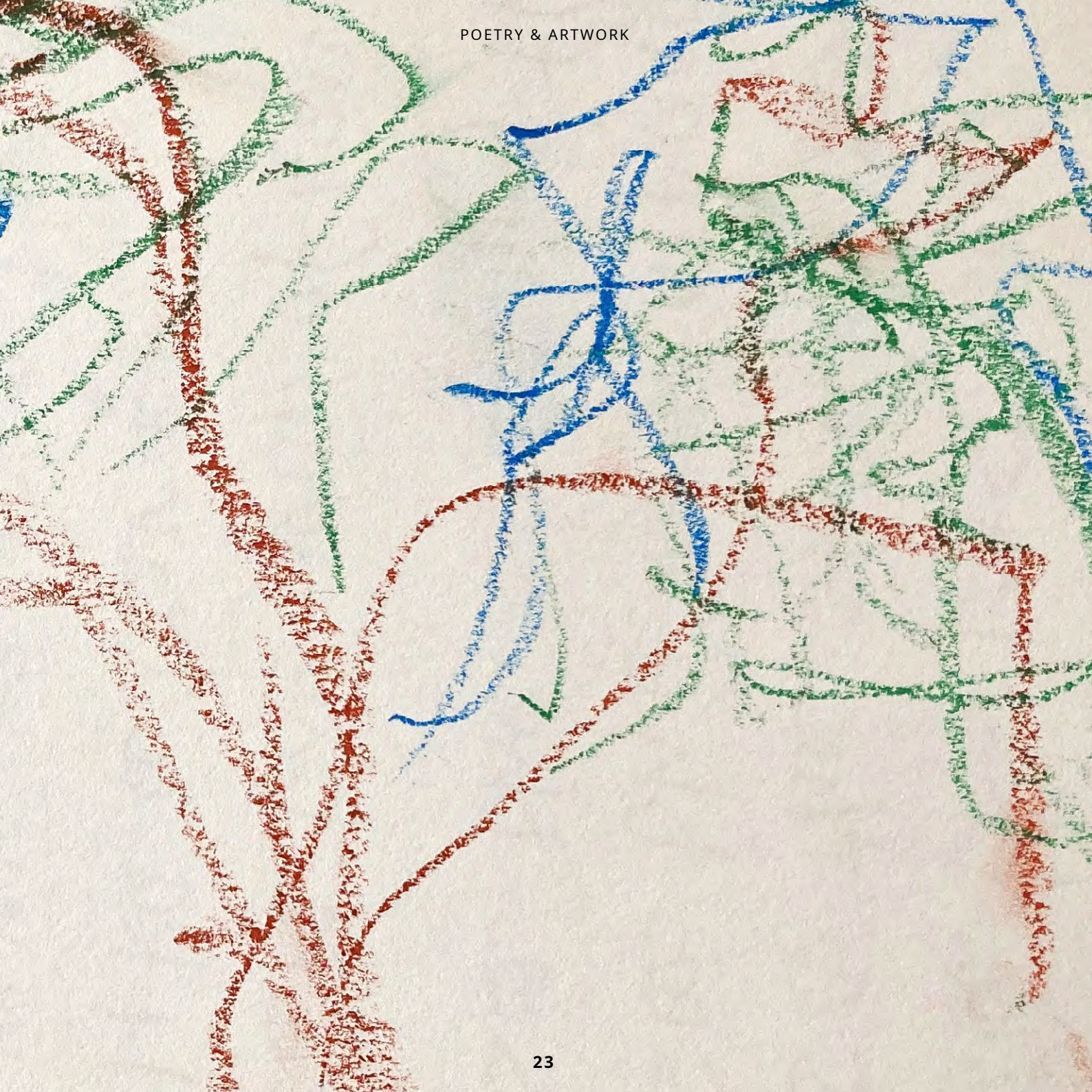
Martyn Cooper



SNOW GLOBE

I feel like I'm a snow globe
And someone shook me up
Now every piece of me
is falling back randomly
Nothing is ending up where it should be

Julie Parker



35 DAYS IN A HOSPITAL PRISON IN SOLITARY CONFINEMENT

It's something a bleeding brain
That had shown in the scanner!
My heart My brain
It's it's bleeding
How can love love life
Can change my heart My brain
I can't think ... I can't think.
When it's rising day
life is going to get better....
Little.....Little.... by little
Soon.... Soon
(Pauline: 'You'll notice amazing
Amazing...amazing..... changes.')

//////////

Because I have love
I will never leave love ... life
I will always walk
I must walk
I will always speak
I must speak
I will always dance
I must dance

Jawad Mohammed



SPIRAL LIKE SEASONS

My life is like a spiral
A spiral like the seasons
Down deep down in Winter
The garden all dreary, dank and dark
When there are no leaves on the trees
And snow has turned to slush made black by traffic
And down I lie
To slowly warm up at the onset of Spring
And I spiral upward when the green leaves come
I spiral further upward with the coming of the buds
Spiralling further upward with the onset of Summer
And the warmth of the sun upon the buds turns them into flowers
And up to the peak of the Spiral with the opened flowers
And the smell of Summer and new mown grass
I have spiralled to the height of Summer and I am smiling
But all too soon I begin to spiral downward with the onset of Autumn
Spiralling past the Autumn colours of brown, auburn, russet and gold
Spiralling quickly toward that dank and dark depth
Where my spiral quickly ends
In the deep
To sleep until the warmth of Spring
beckons for me to
Spiral
upward
again

Chloe Thomas



SOMETIMES I DREAM I AM DANCING



SPRING BIRDS

Starlings singing spring sounds,
Shining shimmering without bounds.
Happily darting around,
This is your open ground.
No concern, no worry,
There is no snow flurry.

Splendid sparrow,
You have no sorrow.
Wearing your gown,
Adored in brown.
Darting around on the fences,
Enlightening my senses.

Beautiful black bird with no bounds,
I hear your smiling sounds.
Wearing your clever calming coat,
Forever fondly floating my boat.
Pushing away nights of dark,
You make my garden your park.

Wonderful wilful wagtail,
I see you come across the dale.
Making memorising movement,
Giving my eyes enchantment.
As I look out you are my delight,
In the early morning spring light.

Afsana Elanko

STROKE SURVIVOR

A DAY IN THE LIFE

The start of another day in lockdown
Stretching and rubbing my eyes
The chorus of morning birds tweeting
Music accompanying every tortuous move

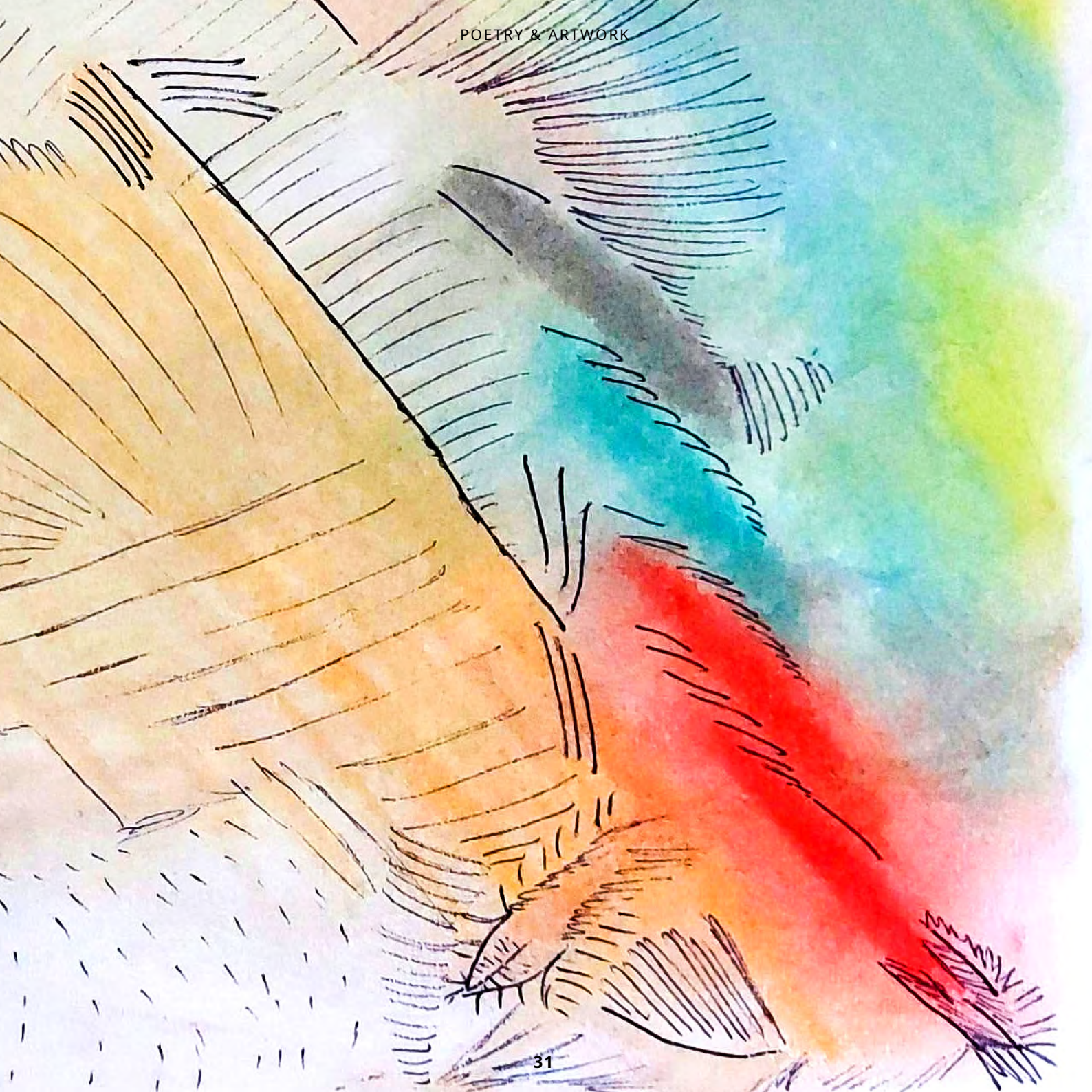
Medication for the day laid out in line
A pint of water to wash them down
A shower endured as part of the ritual
Partially dressed to negotiate the stairs
Relying on the bannister recently installed

Starting my exercises on the bottom step
Moving to the lounge to complete the regime
Breakfast awaits, my most popular meal
Granola, yoghurt and milk to sustain

Potentially fattening but who really cares
There's more to get on with like reading the news
Then on with the day
Whatever that brings

Colin Dalton





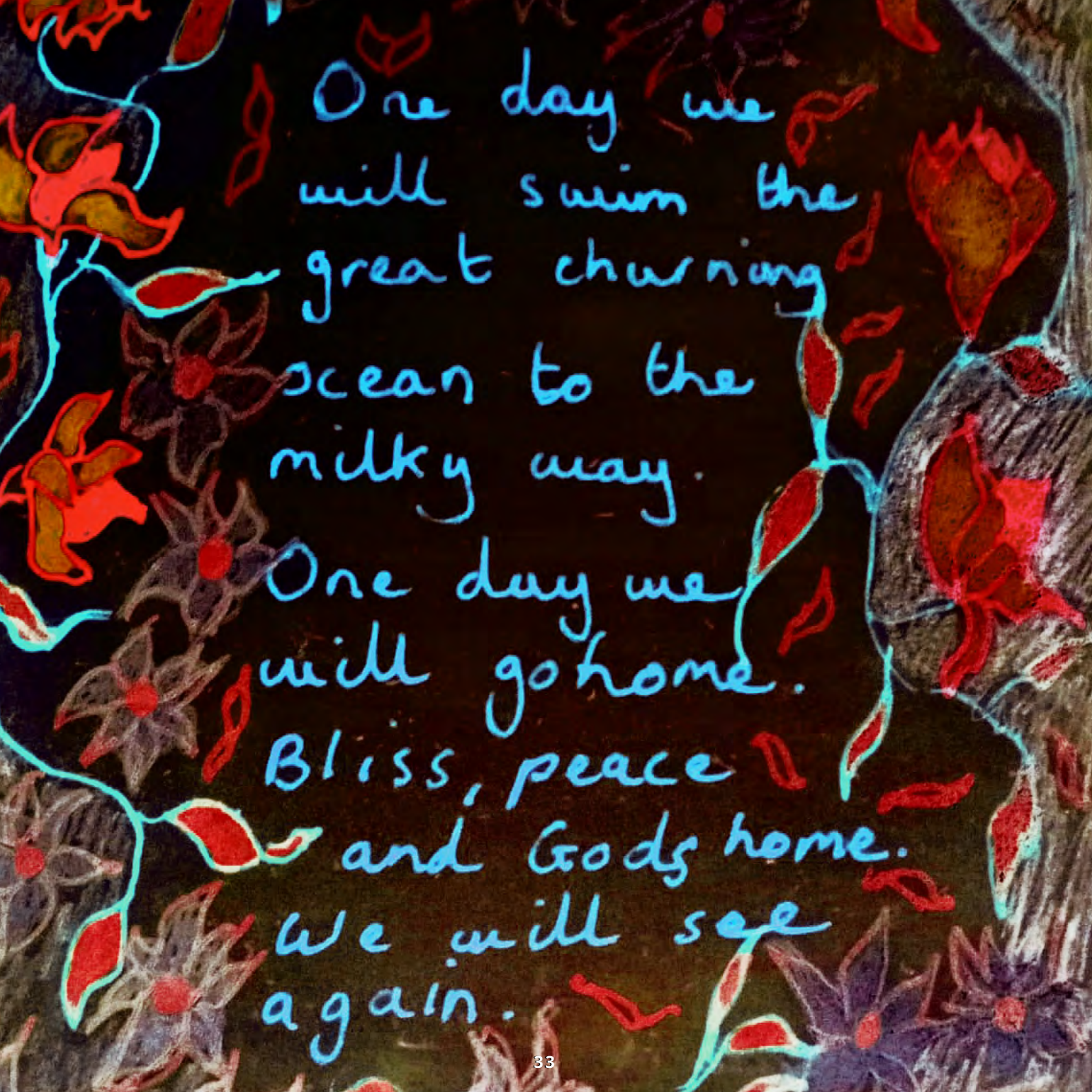
THE STROKE

Bbbback in pampers at seventy
Wheelchair reminds of pram days
And that erstwhile defeated stammer
Lllocking up the lips
All to knock bbbback my confidence.
Who would have thought mister fitness
Couldn't even crawl like a baby
That mister go to consultant
Couldn't even remember what day
That mister smart casual
Couldn't even button up the pyjama top
Self-assurance spiralling downward

But God rich in mercy there is family surrounding
And friends patiently decipher the mumbles
While compassionate carers brush my hair
Though therapists faintly whisper you can do it
Concealing half a doubt.
Half a hope looks forward.

When stroke support group colleague shouts out
Me too but I overcame
When ambassador quietly encourages
Then we overcome that nagging doubt
Forward spiralling confidence springs back the will
To get me back in the game.

Max Banda



One day we
will swim the
great churning
ocean to the
milky way.

One day we
will go home.

Bliss, peace
and Gods home.
We will see
again.

MY LIFEBOAT

My lifeboat it did float gently
On waters still and calm
The sun it did a blazen -
My life it felt no harm.
Til rainclouds appeared a yonder
And the waters they got rougher
Had I sung my final Psalm?

Steering my lifeboat, it gets tougher
What direction for this soul?
What will be for me, will be for me,
But to save myself I have no qualm.

John Brandham



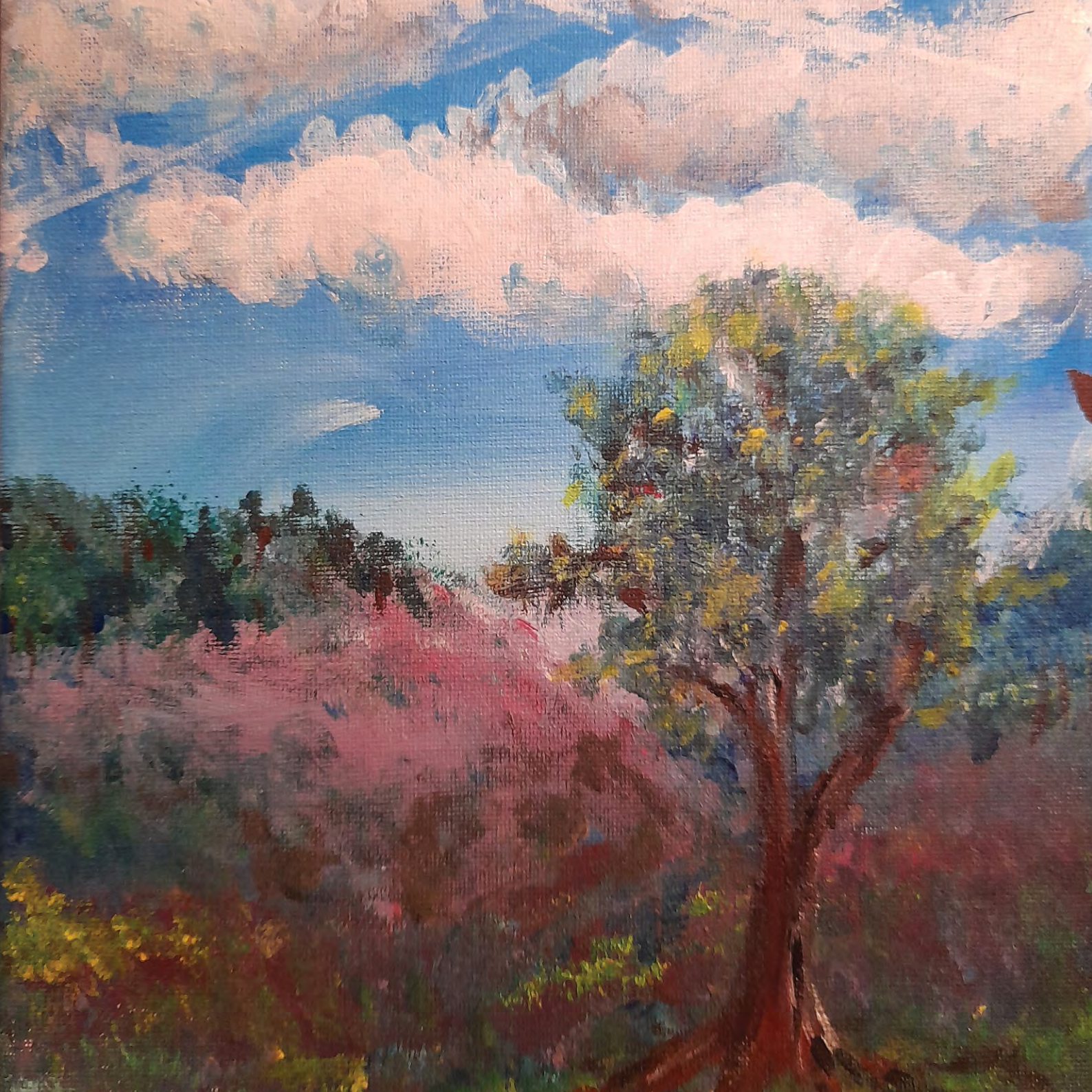


ON MEMORY

"I wandered Lonely as a Cloud" .. Keats, John Keats
Or was it Maya Angelou? I forget
Follows "Fade far away, dissolve, and quite forget"
Oh dear, it don't seem right
Could be Wordsworth I don't know,
Have forgotten for what it's worth.

But does the other follow?
More like Ode to a Nightingale.
Confused, am I confused?
Yet I must remember
Damn this stroke
"Just like hopes springing high,
Still I'll rise." With Maya.

Max Banda



UNDER THE SAND

Under this barren vista
There once lived a mister
A civilised man with dreams
A cultured man with plans

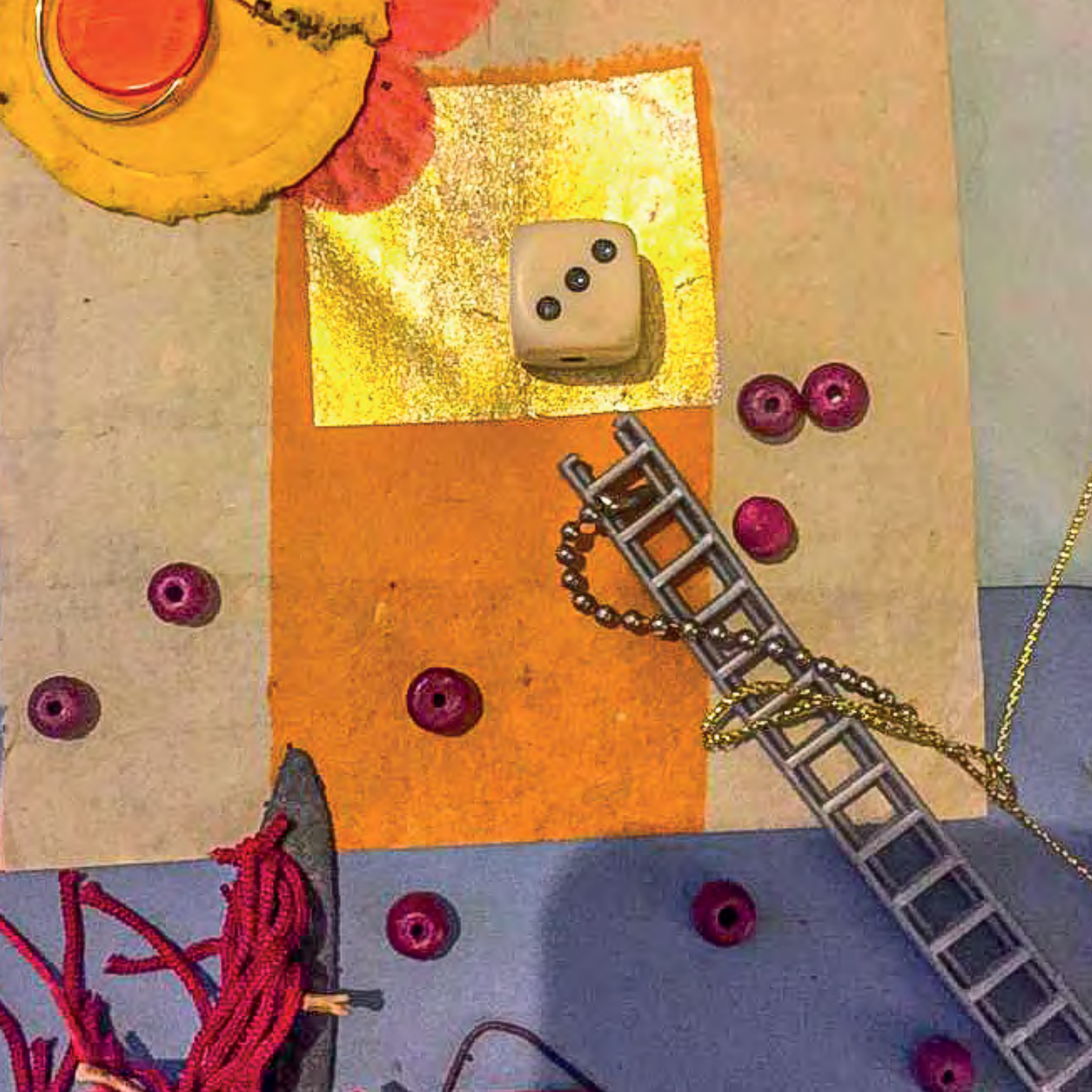
And desires and laughter and tears
With friends and with family
A fully formed human
Who you may have liked
and craved their company.

Now what you see is this war-torn body
Battles lost and defeated
Subdued, much retreated
Licking their wounds
Sorting out the debris

Wanting to rise once again
Knowing that past glories may never return
But a new sort of life,
A hope at the dawn
That a new man may rise
Though we're building on sand

Reach out lend a hand
Please, help me stand
Though we're building on sand

Martyn Cooper



WARRIOR (APHASIA)

I am fighting everyday
 Aphasia is my new world
 In this world, I fight for speaking, reading, writing and dancing
 I was not able to work.... It was a tough life
 I did not work ... I ... I ... I ... I can't speak
 Fighting Fighting.... Fighting
 Against aphasia, for life and love
 I am Fighting ... Fighting.... Fighting
 I want to speak
 I want to work
 I want to work, sing and dance
 I want to go somewhere... beautiful
 I need a rest, to travel and love....
 I need Love
 A life and love
 I am a warrior warrior warrior
 I can fight . . . I must fight
 I can talk..... I must talk
 I can work..... I must work
 I can dance.... I must dance
 I will be able to overcome
 I must be able to overcome
 I am a Survivor.

Jawad Mohammed

My Stroke
 has come of
 age,
 but it still
 has not
 left home

January 2020
 January 2021



SOMETIMES I DREAM I AM DANCING

Sometimes I dream I am dancing
moving around easily
Waving my arms and shaking my hips
dancing for no one but me

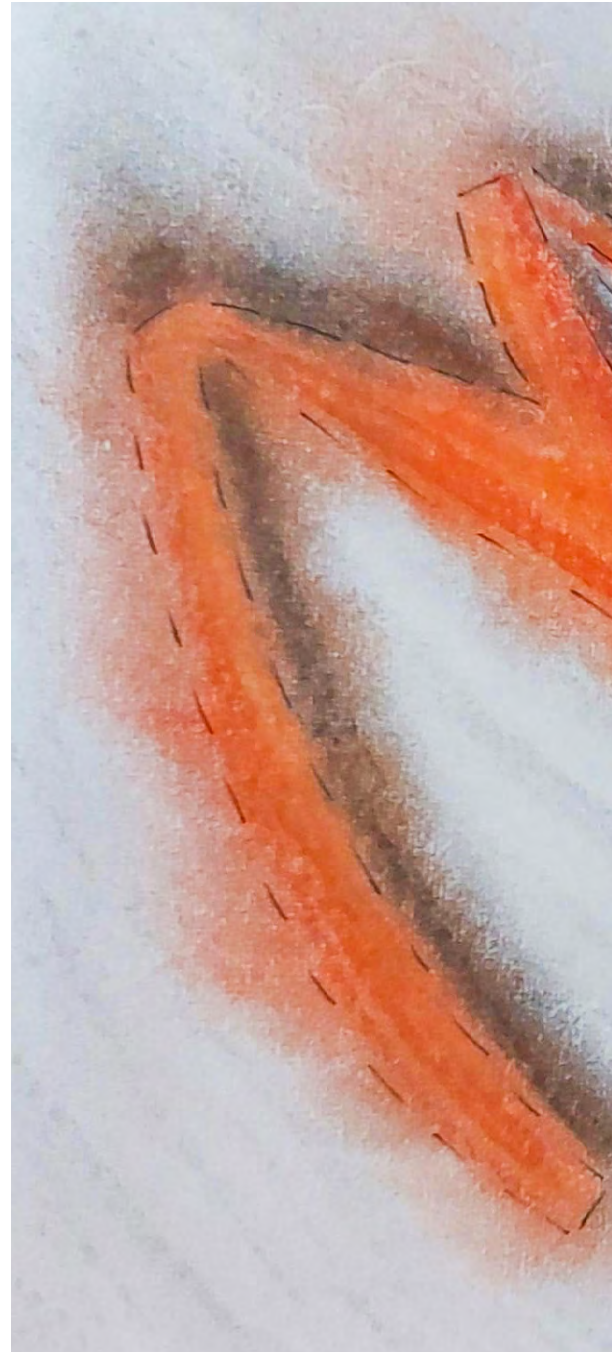
Then I wake and think about standing
an effort which no one will see
I shower and dress, not to impress
just cloth that hangs comfortably

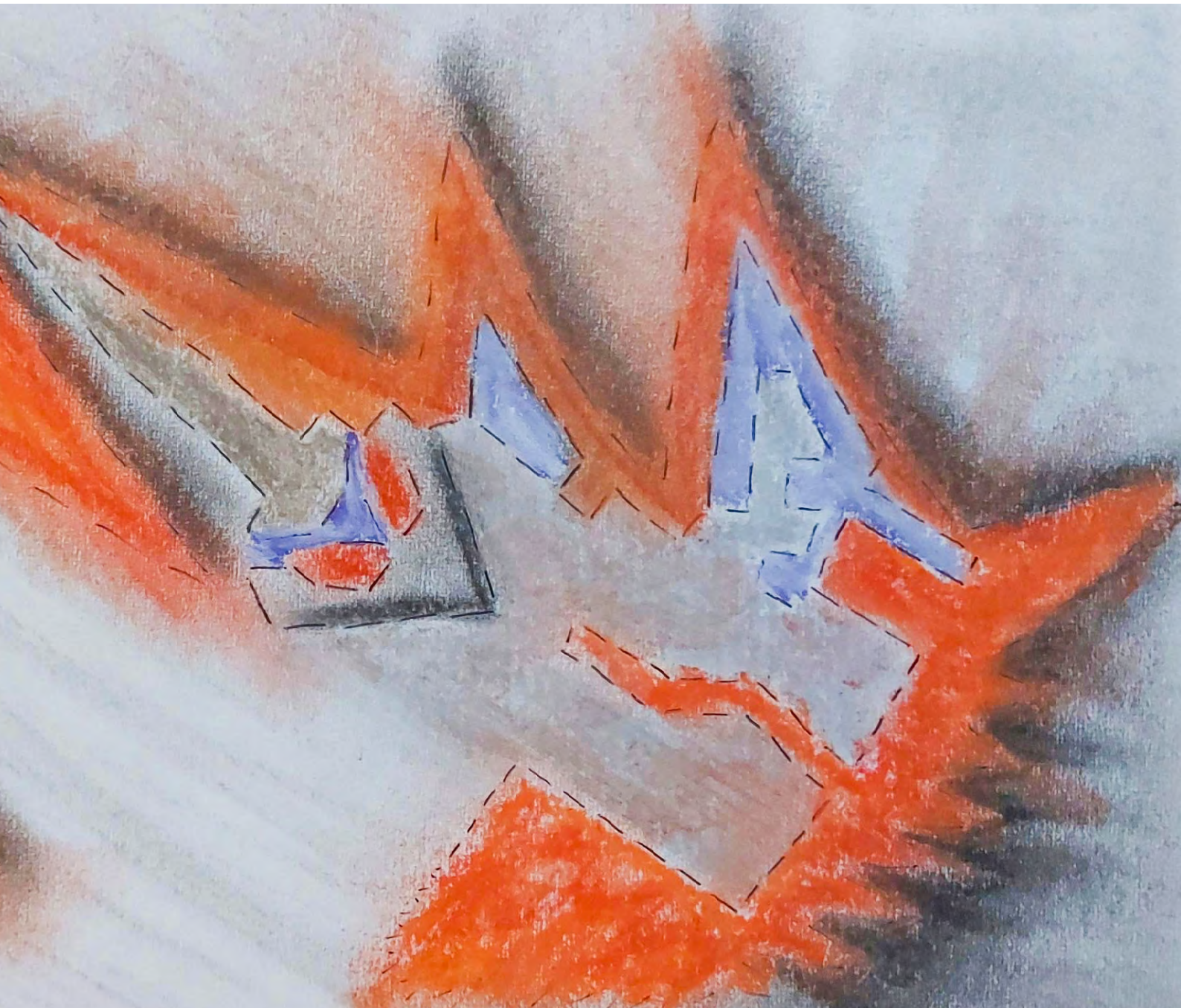
A coffee will do me for breakfast
I can manage that all on my own
then maybe a walk, a short bloody walk
Knowing that it's 'good for me'

Exhausted from all these exertions
onto the sofa I'll sink,
I'll try not to sleep, watch daytime TV
and enjoy not having to think

At dusk I'll tire and think of my bed
Hoping the error inside my head
won't keep me awake overthinking
for I want to sleep and start dancing

Martyn Cooper





A SHORT POEM OF LOVE:

Love is patient and kind.

Love is eternal.

Be kind to others while you still have breath.

Be kind to the people you meet on your way up the ladder because you
will meet them on your way down.

I expect to pass through this world but once.

Any good or kindness that I can show to others, let me show it now.

For I can never pass this way again.

Be happy to hope to the hopeless.

Never give up in doing good.

Never relent in showing kindness.

The reward is eternal.

God is Love.

Remmyglad Analee



FLOOD LOVE

My life it's beautiful
Flood love as flooding's river
I have got a big heart....
I have made it through with love...
Speaking, working and dancing
I make everyone happy!!!
I am stronger always, always, always ...
Positive

Jawad Mohammed



THE ODD ONE IN

Be the square peg
Be the stone in the shoe
Do not comply
Break the rules

Be the odd one in
Be fantastic
Be wonderful
Be you
Be amazing

Martyn Cooper





SOMETIMES I DREAM I AM DANCING



SING YOUR STORY

Come and sing your story
Come and be a friend...or
A stick to lean on
A twist or a bender,
Say your truth,
Move your way.
Perform with us, have your day.

Take your journey
Make a mark,
In theatre, hall or windy park
Sing opera, write poems, draw or paint
Show others your new self
However quaint.

Fiona Watson

RIDDLE

Who is this man that looks at me?
Who makes me stare,
But I dare not see:
The neglection
Of my reflection
Is my reaction,
To my imperfection.

John Brandham





MONKEY DO MONDAY

Tiny feet in boots too big
Hats and scarves and gloves
Plonk in a circle of squelchy mud
Hold a stick, sharp and damp

Spark, Crackle, Ooohhh ...
Glow, Leap, Dance,

Stinging weeping eyes
Nostril invasion

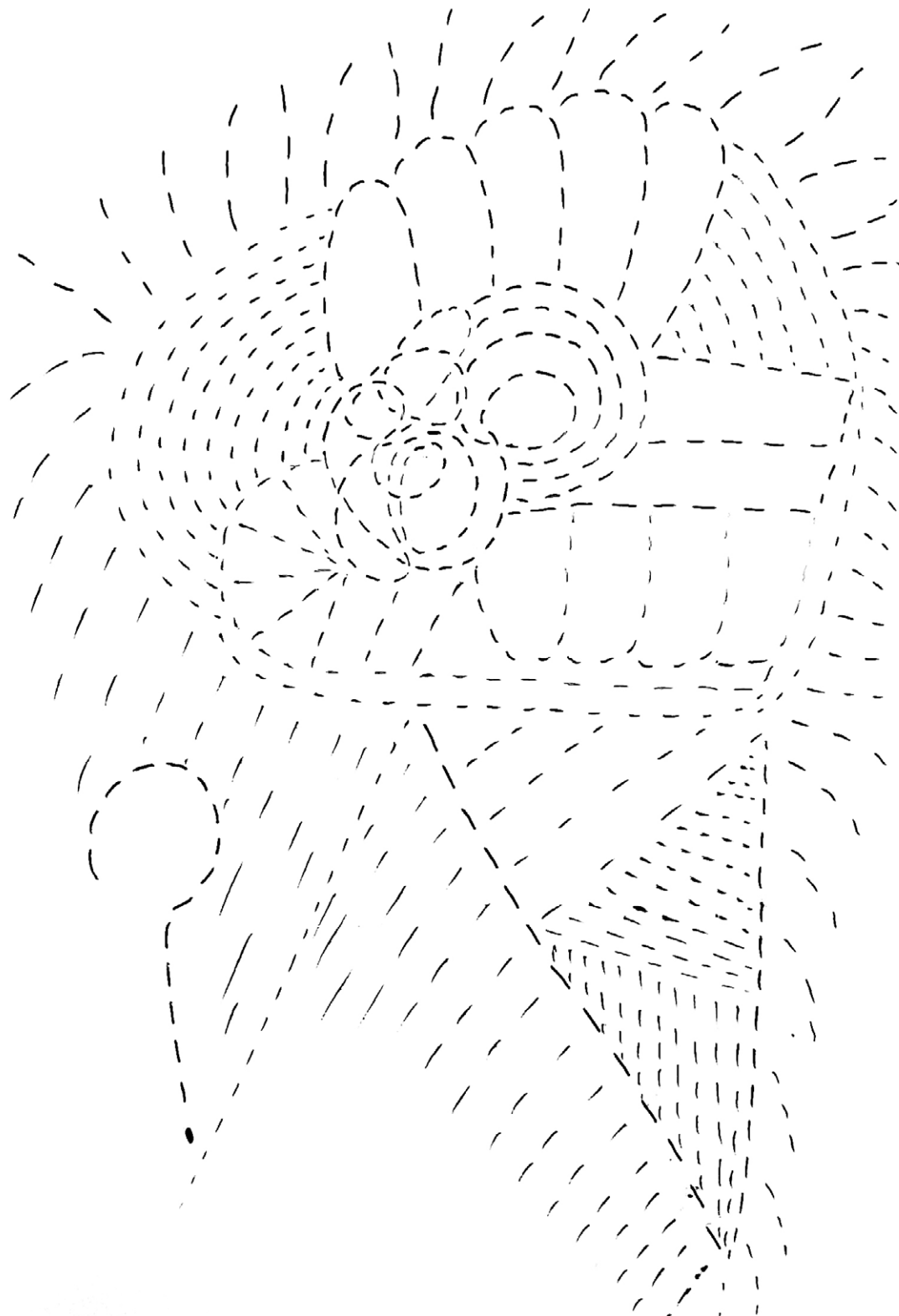
Twisting, twirling, grabbing hiss

Burning sugar, puff puff

Drinking, licking, pink in brown

Watching waiting, grey twirling
Whoosh, hiss, gone ...

Fiona Watson



LOVE

For thousands of years....

The people want ... need

Love and Lovers

Clear water – Roses – Pigeon...

Peace. Peaceful .. Health

Immigrant birds The spring.

The birds joyfully welcome the water.

Spring is the season of beauty and new life...

Clear sky ...Clear water.

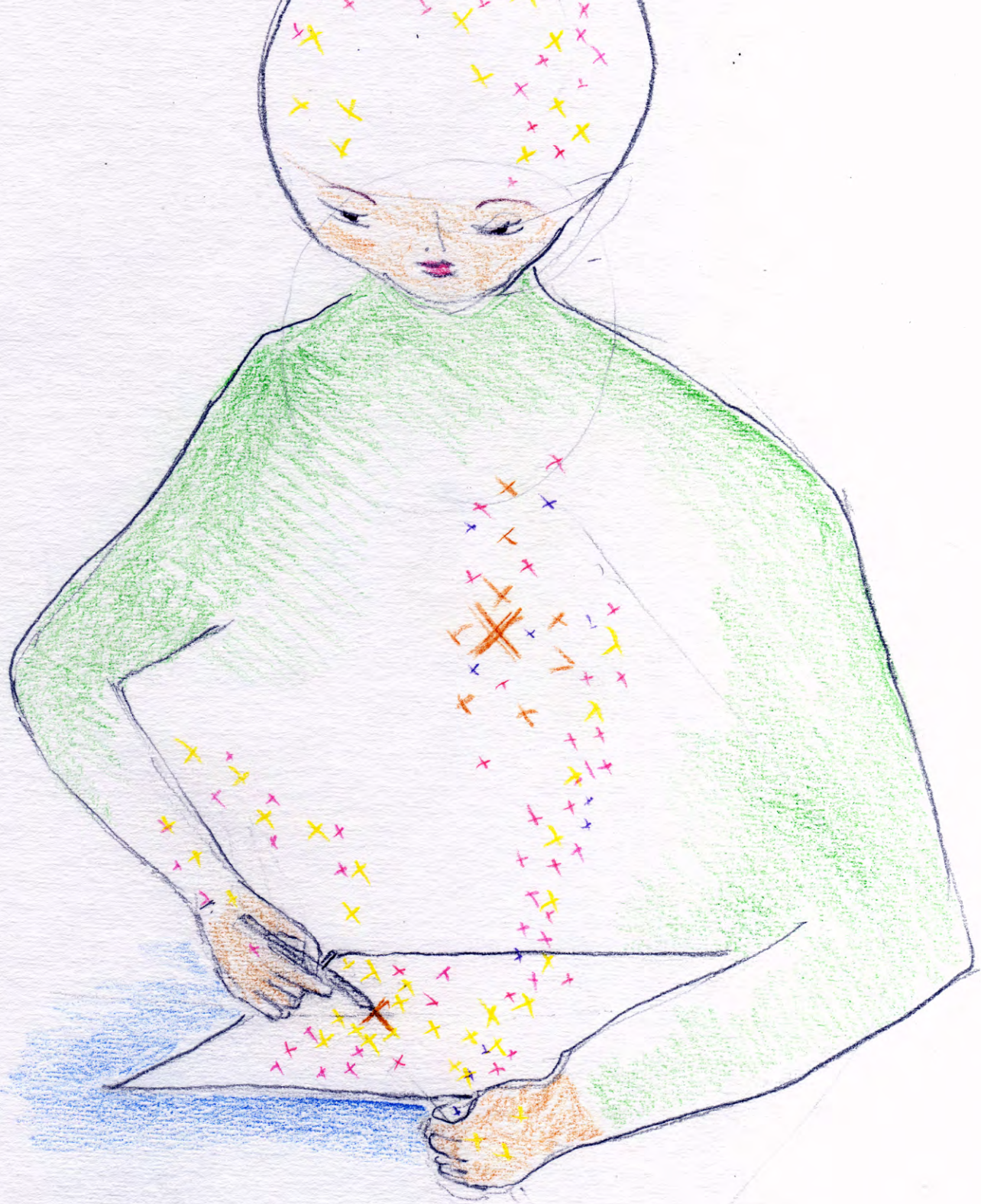
As clear as the water of a cloud

straying as an immigrant girl

Love Love

Between ... London to other parts of the world

Jawad Mohammed



THE TREE (AUTUMN)

In the Autumn breeze
The trees lose their brown and golden leaves
the bow quivers in the gentle breeze
As the leaves fall gently to the ground

Leslie Smith





SOMETIMES I DREAM I AM DANCING



HOPE AFTER THE STROKE

Shaken and battered like an oak tree
by the autumn winds

Like the oak holding onto the red, yellow
and browning with which I was arrayed
Unwilling, disbelieving it is time to let go.

But realising that I won't, becomes I can't
that this old must give way
I watch the colours fall gracefully
Without regret
And await the buds and new greenery
of the coming renewal

I watch the sunset peacefully
Without lament
In perspicacious anticipation
of the inevitable different dawn

Max Banda

MY TREE OF LIFE

My tree of life,
You are my wife.
You stand tall,
You never fall.
When I feel weak,
You are my peak.

As I walk through life's length,
I feel your unequivocal strength.
When I loose faith in myself,
You find a positive from my
bookshelf. When I am lost and
indulge in frivolity, You hold me high
showing my quality.

My tree of life,
You are my wife.
You stand tall,
You never fall.
When I feel weak,
You are my peak.

You have given my life direction,
Holding my ideas close without
rejection. As you breath at night I
feel your tender affection, Looking
into your eyes I see loves reflection.
Nurturing my dreams, You are my
house's beams.

My tree of life,
You are my wife.
You stand tall,
You never fall.
When I feel weak,
You are my peak.

Afsana Alanko



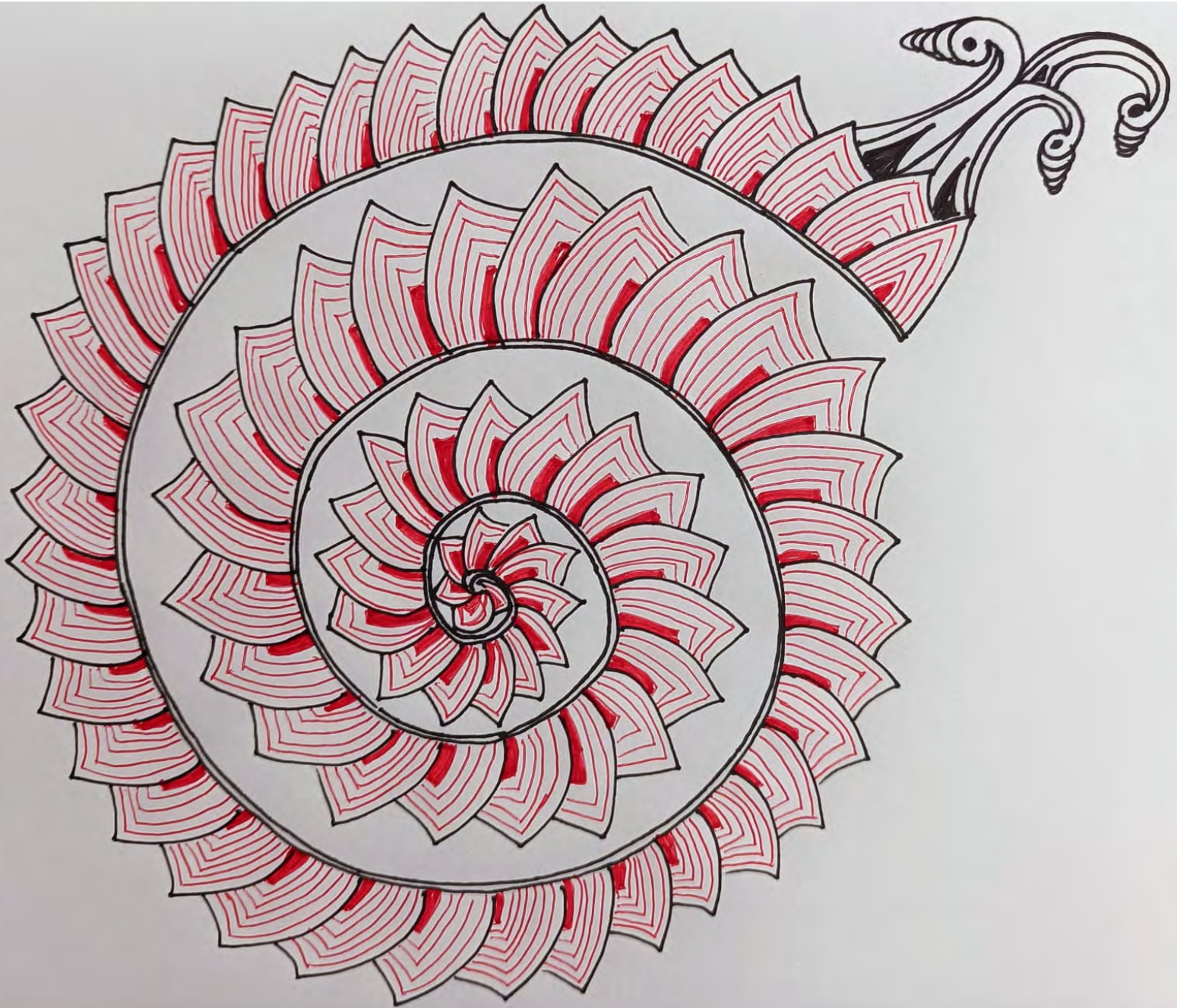




SUPPORT

My spirit is indomitable
strong and resolute
As strong as the ground beneath my feet
That Gives support, as solid as a rock
My body is weak, my Head spins
Arm and leg give pain
Only my spirit can overcome.
And give me a life I once knew

Leslie Smith



MY INJURY SPIRAL

A ferocious spiralling tornado
took my blood-flooded brain
to the calm eye of the storm.
I lay in a coma.

My body was fragile, so fragile.
Any more and I would have been game over.
Loved ones fell into an emotional spiral
around me.

I have no memory of it.
My brain was occupied with survival.
I found strength and woke up.
And then I faced a spiral of recovery.

I felt angry and confused,
And in denial.
But it was the only spiral available at first.

Eventually I took a tentative step
onto the recovery spiral.
A spiral so steep.
And I felt so alone.
I couldn't make sense of it.

I spiralled away.
And then back.
I didn't want to be in this spiral.
I wanted to be in the 'normal' circle of life.

Exhausted with spiralling through
difficult emotions,
I eventually made a decision to embrace.

My insight slowly, so slowly,
Works out I am on a different path.
My own journey to Ithaka.

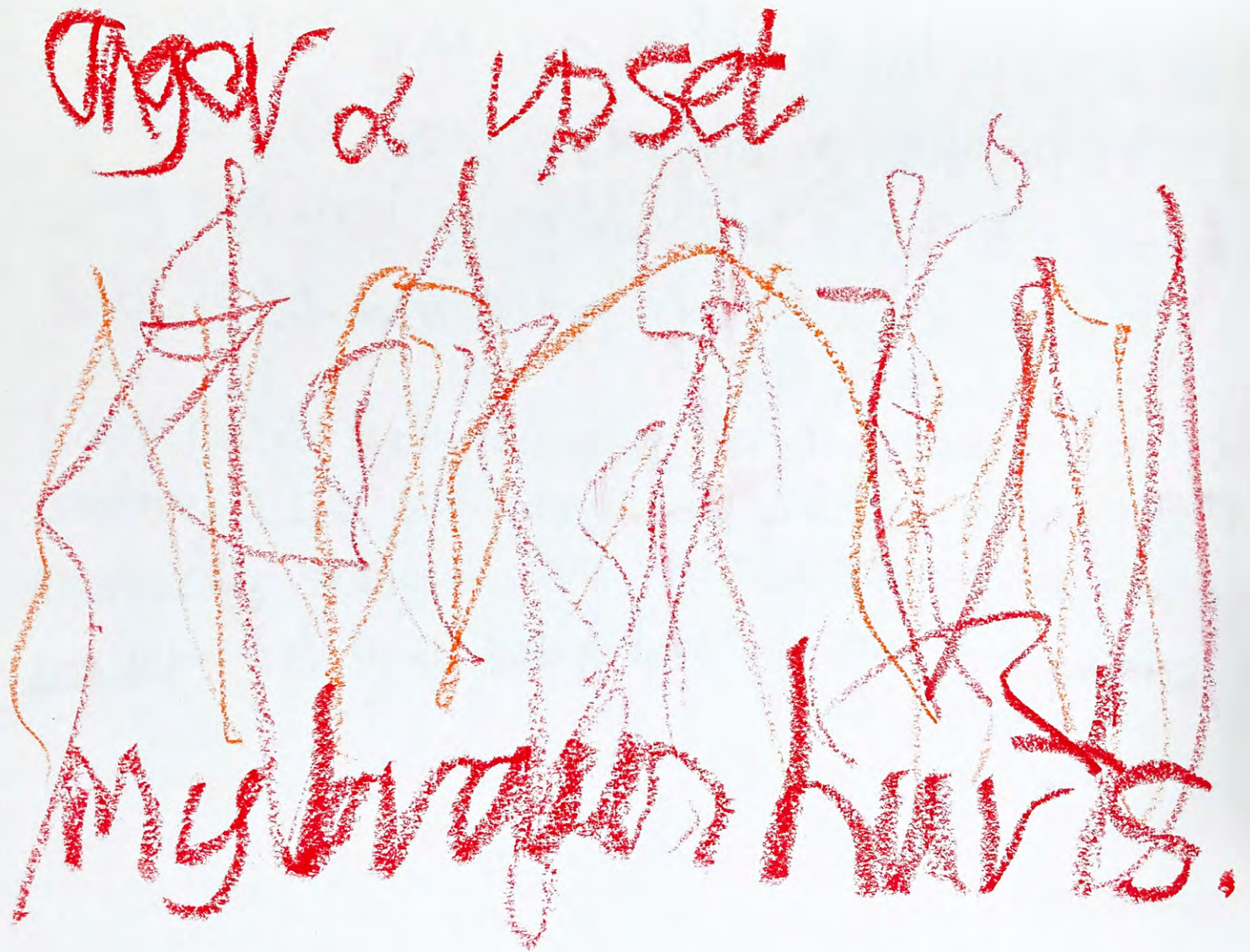
I embrace rehab goals.
And appreciate the path towards
purpose and meaning
of this life and my injury.

This spiral is a marathon
But with no clear finishing line.
This path is my Ithaka.

Maybe, just maybe,
My injury has redirected my life path
And closer aligned it to a meaningful purpose.

I place my trust in this spiral.
And try to believe

Jow Dowd



I MET A MAN TODAY

I met a man today
and he, like me, tried to say
he'd had a stroke some time ago
and like me words didn't flow

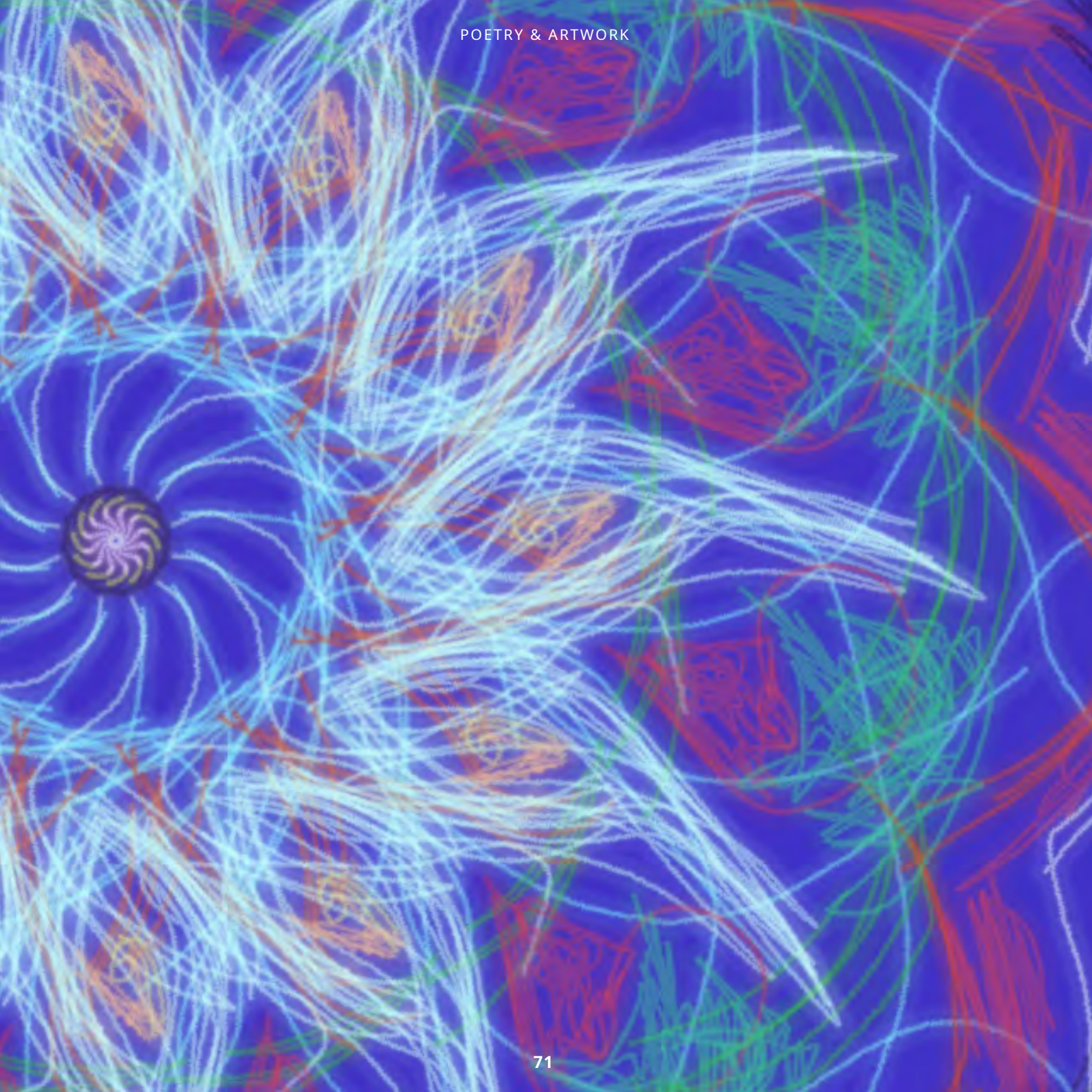
I remember like him, feeling bad
cross, depressed, swearing, angry, mad

and I said to him through rude outbursts
"It will get better. You are not cursed. It will be different,
just say out loud what you need to say
in your own way"

And we will understand.

Fiona Watson

SOMETIMES I DREAM I AM DANCING



MEMORY OF A WALK IN LOCKDOWN

A walk through the graveyard in perfect silence
Gravestones everywhere old and new
A muddy path and slippery bank to negotiate
Down the river, water lapping the banks

On to the locks with stick in hand
Ah! Thankfully a bench to sit on and rest
People with purpose and masked everyone
Dogs on leads with coats to keep warm

Turning to a café with a forlorn look
No coffee today it's all shut up
Retracing my steps passing shops with shutters
Floods and water almost everywhere

People evading people ...
Some 2 metres apart ...

Back to the car for a well earned rest

Colin Dalton



SHOUTING HAT

I can't shout loudly at any body
My voice is soft and goes away easily
This hat would be useful in a demonstration or in a row

Hazel Hammond

APHASIA

how the brain snips the phrases
and the longer words, hides the plans
you intend to say.

Hazel Hammond

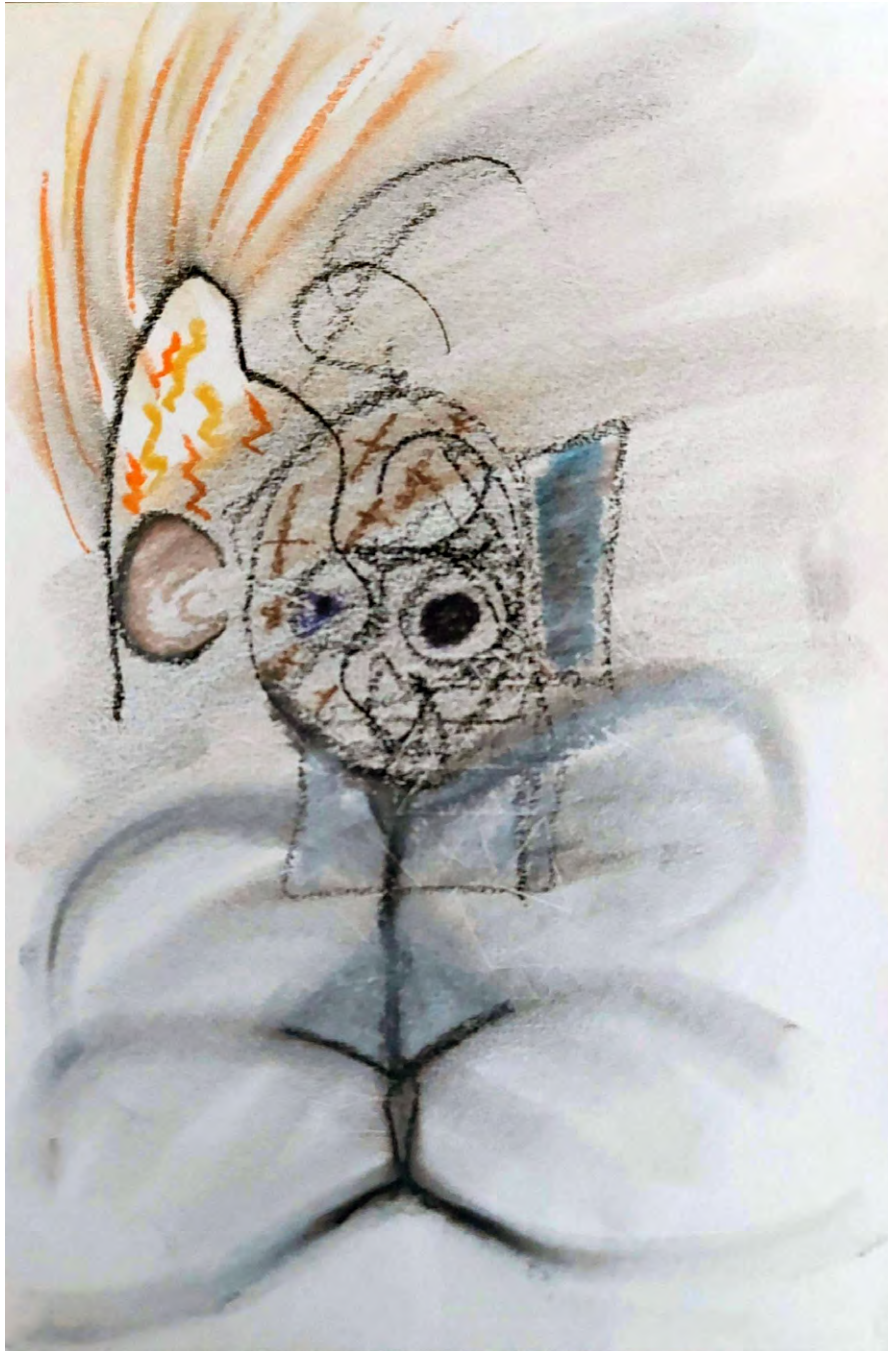
STROKE

This is the bloody accident
of the stroke, it goes deep into the brain
I don't know how it bled or where it was

Hazel Hammond



SOMETIMES I DREAM I AM DANCING

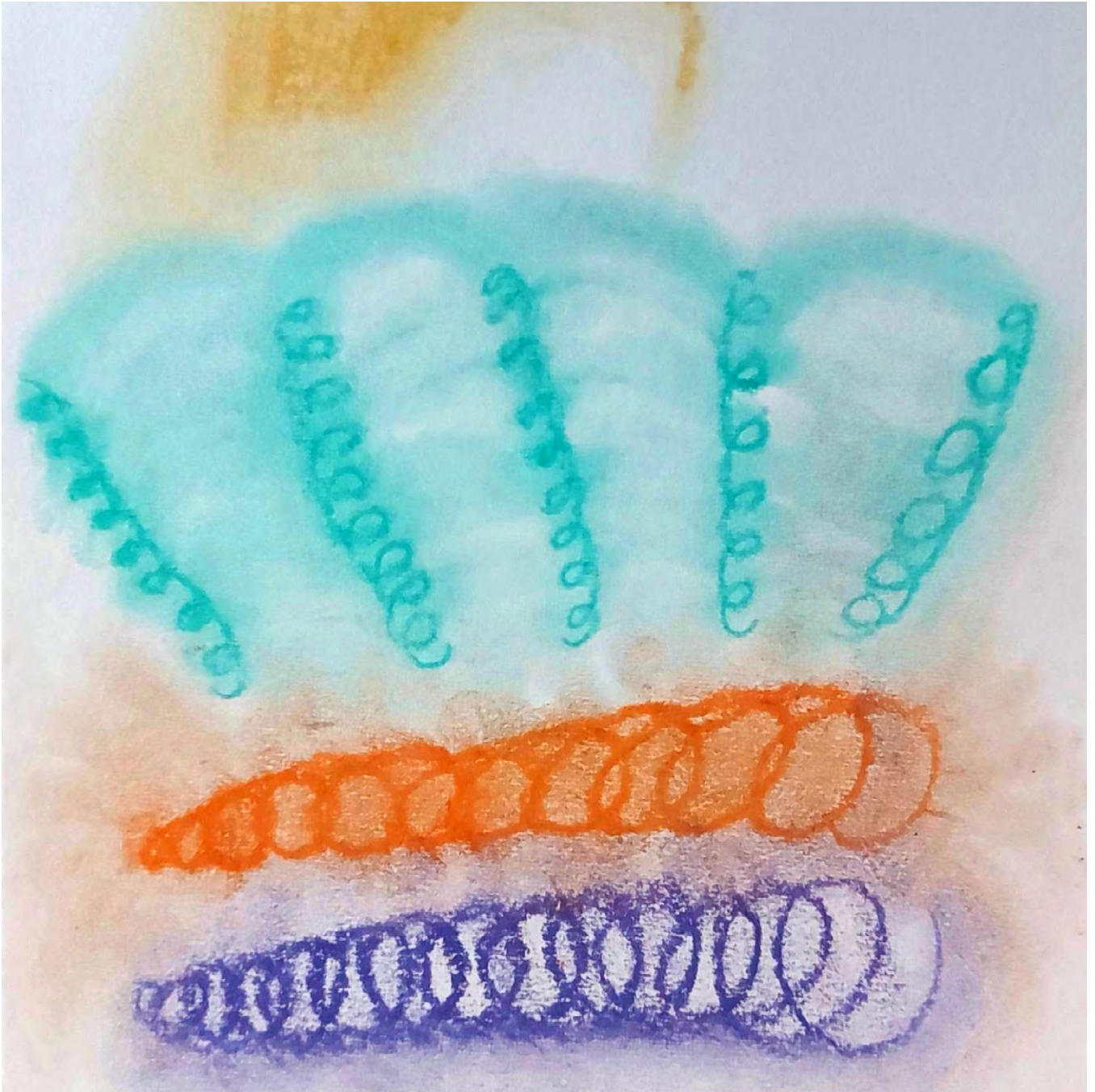


ALL I CAN DO IS HIDE FROM THE WORLD

All I can do is hide from the world,
It doesn't seem to hear my voice,
It doesn't seem to know how to help me.

Afsana Elanko

SOMETIMES I DREAM I AM DANCING

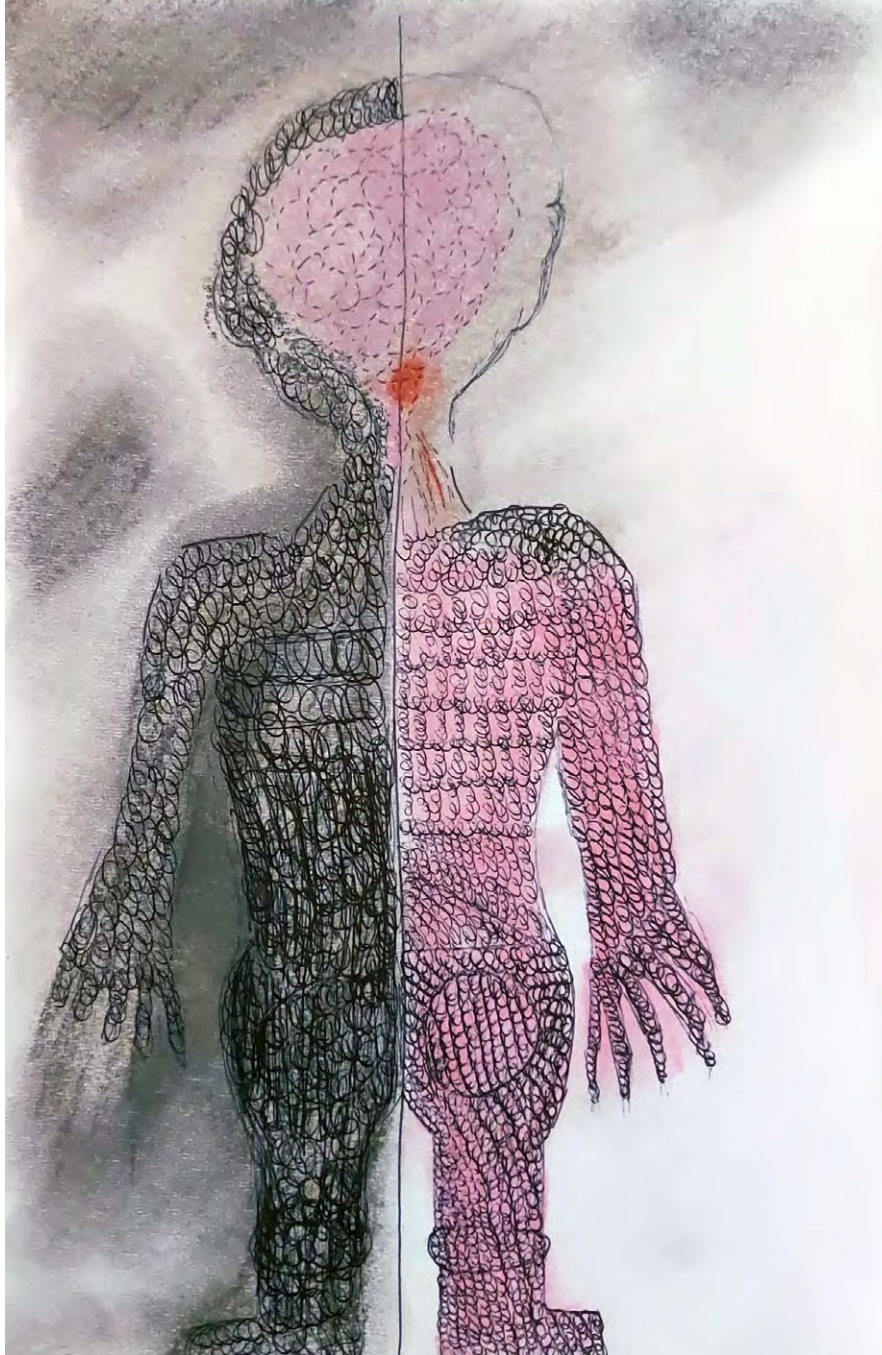


WORDS

The brain made words from it delicate and subtle plan
the conversation rolled down into my arms and hands
into their soft lumpy thumbs leaving my fingers saying nothing

Hazel Hammond

SOMETIMES I DREAM I AM DANCING



BRAINSPACE ODYSSEY'S

BrainSpace odyssey's
Brain to activate finger to touch my nose.
Brain to engage with memories laid.
Brain to remember who I
Am plans to be made.
I am my brain so why does it not respond to me,
why does it not respond, why does it not
Respond ?

Jennifer Chandler

VISUAL

Look how the floaters move
how the colours twinkle with the silver
Even the words the eyes try hard struggle
A time as hard as a limp to see

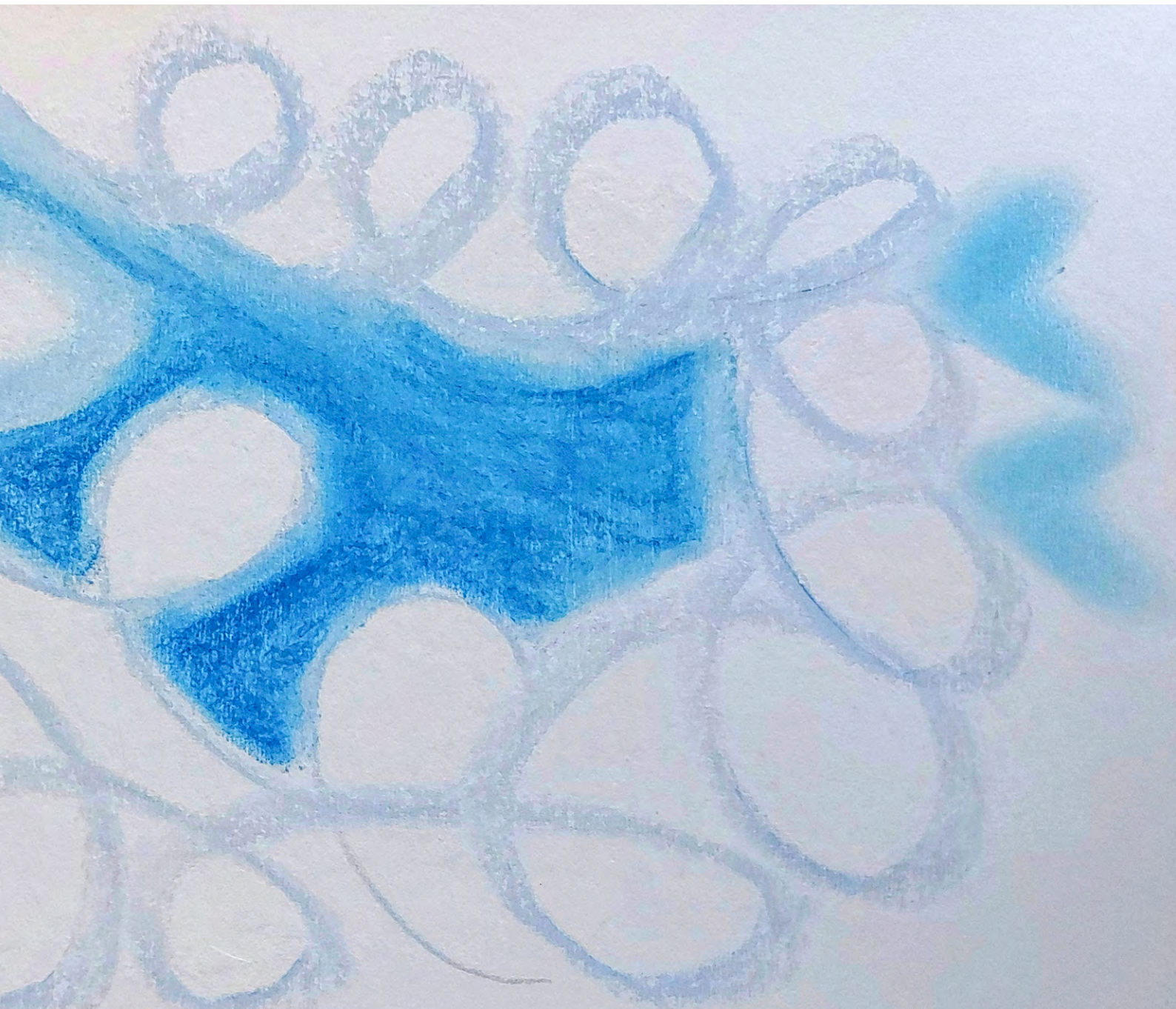
Hazel Hammond

HOSPITAL

It's not spoken like this
nor yet like this ,twisted before
and behind. Each syllable
might be the beginning

Hazel Hammond



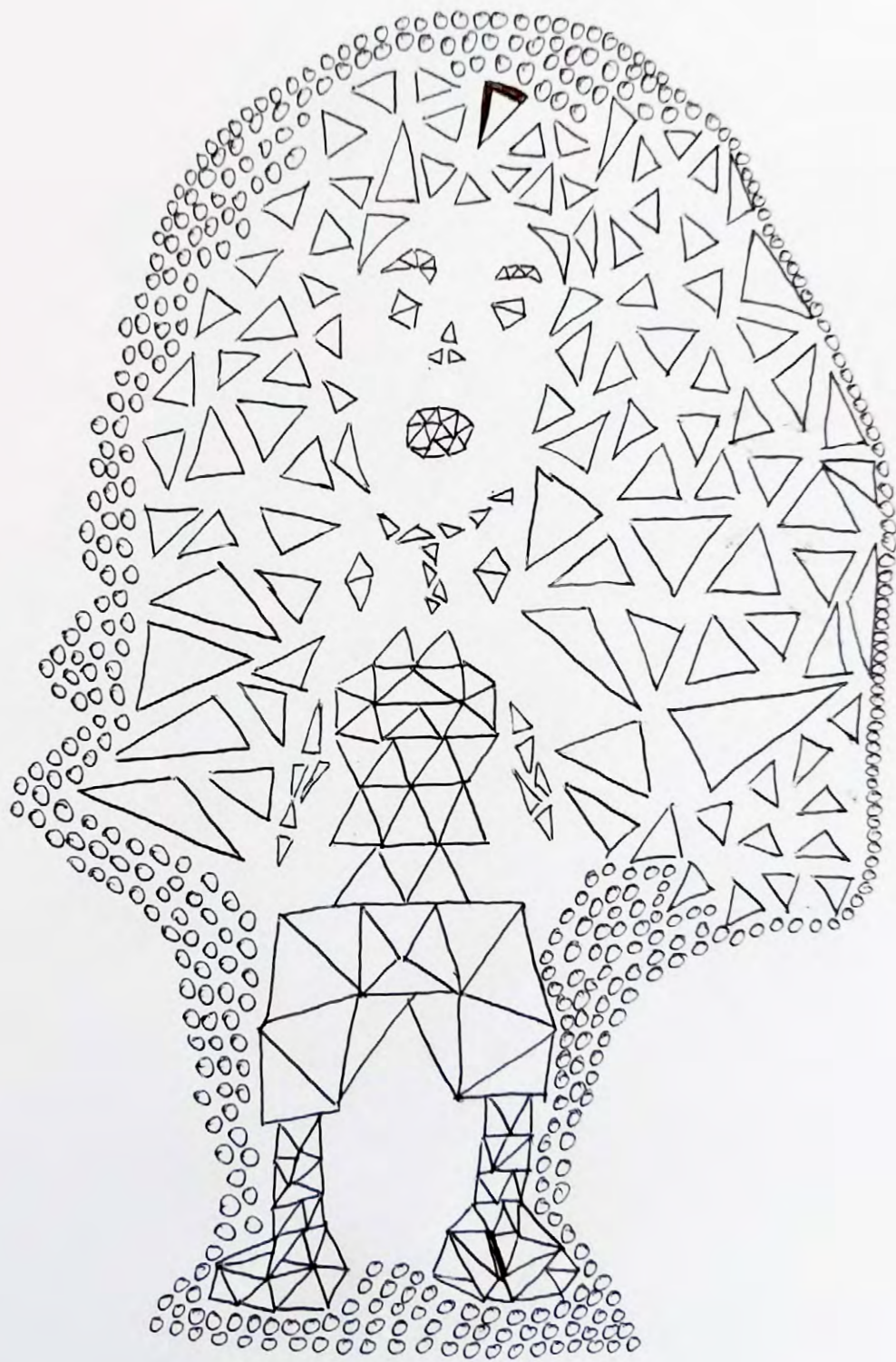




WHO?

Who was I?
Who am I?
Who will I be?
I don't know, to all three statements.
I just don't know.
I can't remember who I was
I'm not sure I like the me now
I'm not sure who I will be.
So where do I go to find out who I was?
Where do I go to sort out the who I am?
Where do I go to find out who I will be?
Does it matter who I was?
Does it matter who I am?
But it matters who I will be
And that is up to me
Right?

Chloe Thomas, London Group



MY BODY

I miss you, I miss you
I wish you, I wish you
Get stronger

I miss you, I miss you
I wish you, I wish you
Get strong

I miss you, I miss you
I wish you, I wish you
Stay strong

Ludmila Kipping

SOMETIMES I DREAM I AM DANCING



TAKE IT ONE STEP AT A TIME

I will take it one step at a time, at my pace.
I slowly reach out in all directions, quietly the world responds.

I want to run and dance, then I trip up;
The earth softens and holds me when I fall.

I can do this my way, so like a tree I set in my roots.
Branches sway in the winds and slowly I grow,
My horizons expand.

Afsana Elanko



I SEE THE VAST OCEAN

I see the vast ocean
I see the swelling sea
I see the river meander
I see the streaming flow

I see the drop of rain
Like a teardrop
Running down the window pane

I see a tiny droplet
Dropped from the sky

I see a tiny tear
Running down my cheek

I remember
I remember

Ludmila Kipping



SEE YOU LATER

Not goodbye
Just 'Au revoir!
It's quite a way
But not too far
We'll miss you here
But we will look
Up North
Our holidays to book
Have fun and eat cake
When your new home you do make

Fiona Watson



SMILE

'You are smile. Smile ... Smile ... Smile'
'You will get back up',
Everything...Everything...Everything
Speaking, reading, writing, loving and dancing
'You are so brave',
Everything...Everything...Everything
'You smile.... Why are you so grateful?'
Life is too short to waste....
On negativity
'You are a survivor, you have overcome.'

Jawad Mohammed



SUNFLOWER

We fall, we go quiet.
Will we be alright?
In the shock, we are lost,
As if we are caught with frost.
Not knowing what will happen,
Will sound come with one hand clappin?

We start the realisation,
This is our new station.
Cut down like a slash of the knife,
We need to start a new life.
Come dear brain,
How do we begin again?

Slowly, softly, surrendering to new
surroundings,
Learning the new groundings.
Growing, gaining the strength,
Keeping people at arm's length.
Finding hope in other stories
Gaining knowledge in new territories.

We grow from the seed of hope,
Uncoiling like a rope.
Reaching up towards the sun,
Knowing we can run.
Just like the sunflower,
We grow stronger by the hour.

Just like the sunflower,
I bask in the bright light.
Getting to the top of the tower,
Fighting every battle like a Knight.
I have blossomed like the sunflower,
Reached new heights like the sunflower.

Afsana Elanko



TO BED

A dusky haze settles as eyes go dim
the dark approaches and rest and respite beckon
But in the morning light will come
from our sun and our love
and I will wake with you at dawn

We spoon to sleep, our warmth and smells
and tics a strange comfort
"I love you" we both say,
to end the day
perfectly

Martyn Cooper

FOUR YEARS A SURVIVOR

Released in early Spring
Beautiful sunny days ahead
Plants and flowers beginning to blossom
Leafy trees and hedgerows turning green

What a joy to be in the open air
Thoughts abound about a new life ahead
Can I do this?
Can I do that!
Yes of course I can with a positive mind

OTs creating demanding exercise
The gymnasium visits twice a week
Where would the mind be without the challenge?
How would the physical strength recover?

Watching rugby rather than a participant
I've had my time!
Resuming golf with one arm
Severely testing my balance and skill

But Hey Ho the new norm quickly embraced
What next, regaining independence
I'm luckier than many, able to drive
So yes I can

I can survive

Colin Dalton

DIG

Dig, dig, dig
Dig deep to find strength
Dig, dig, dig
Wipe away the sweat

Ah my back oh my aches
Dig dig dig
What's that I see?

Hope

Dig dig dig

Now get hold of it and pull, going forward to brighter skies
My grip is slipping oh no I'm falling back

Dig dig dig

There's that hope again
Hold on tight
Going forwards to reach your goal, reached!

Jennifer Chandler

MOVING ON

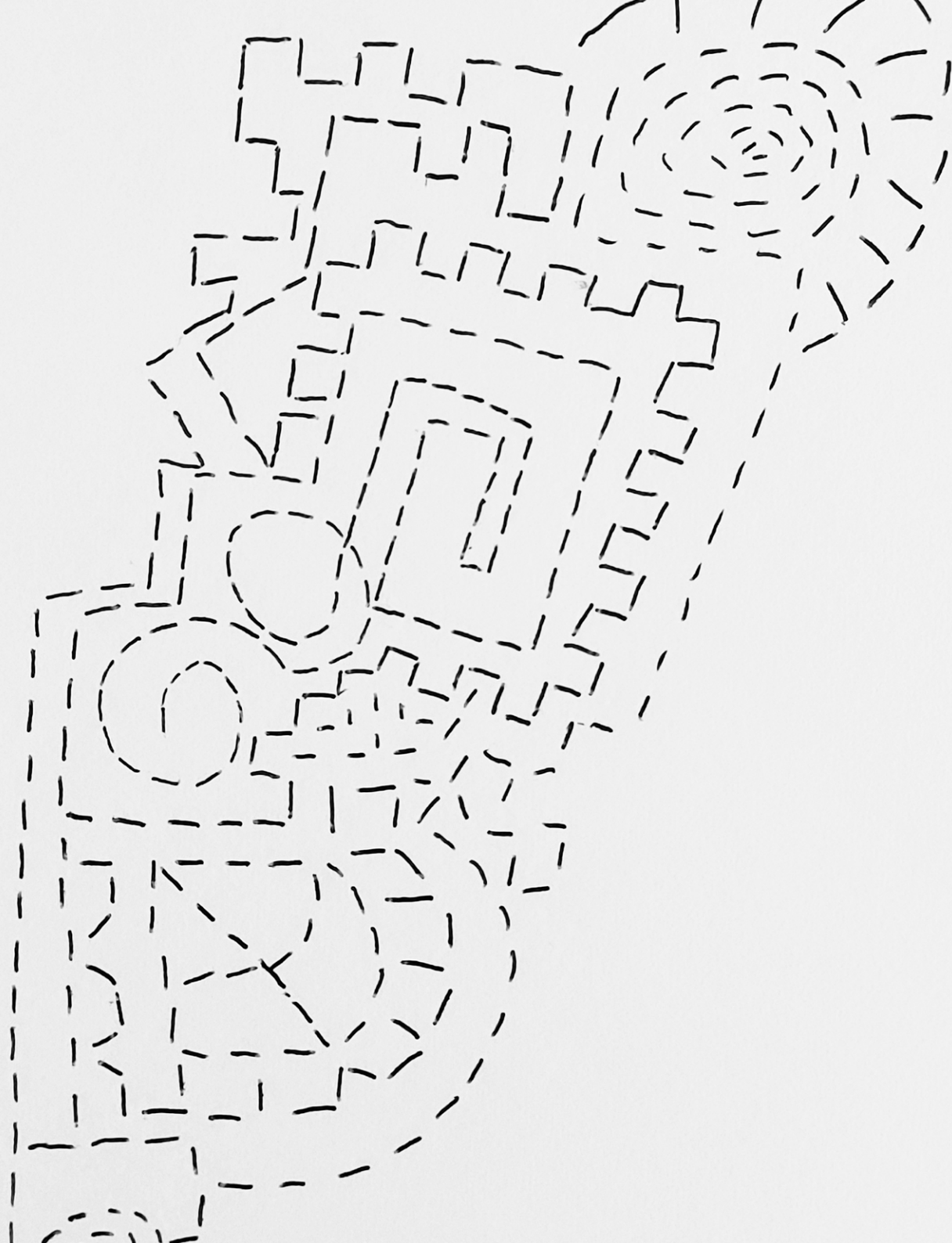
I survived
Bruised and battered, slightly out of kilter,
Different

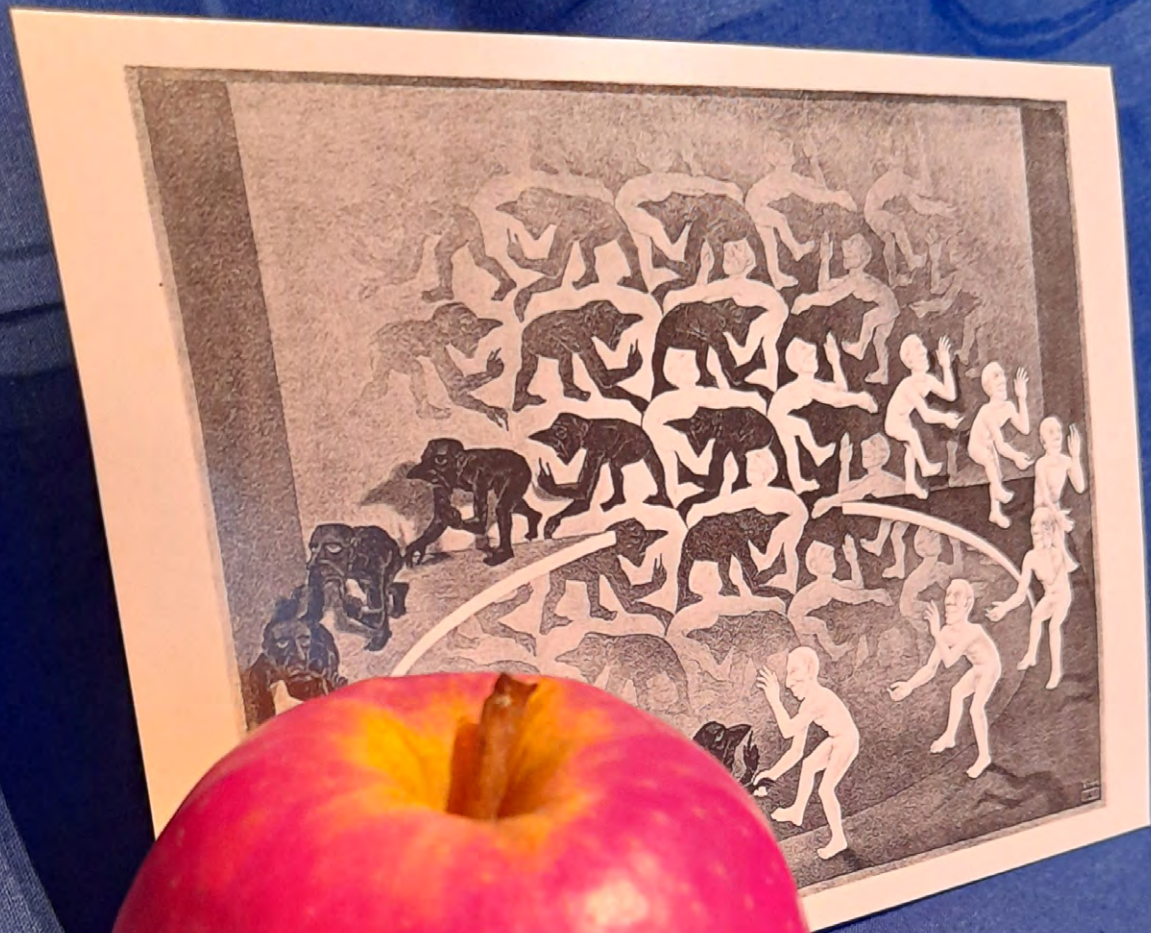
Different but the same
Wiser perhaps
Better in some ways

You can't see or quantify the improvements
But I know they are there
So I focus on the gains more than the losses

The same but different
Wiser perhaps
Better in many ways

Martyn Cooper





GLOBAL EPIDEMIC COVID-19

Tomorrow - Tomorrow
We will going to a New day
We will comeback again

we will going to a new song
we will going to new dancing
we will going to performance
we will going to travel
We will going to drinking and laughing
We will comeback again
Like a birthday
We will comeback again

Jawad Mohammed

SOMETIMES I DREAM I AM DANCING



AWKWARD BUGGER

I
thought
what could I do
to wind up the printers
and designer in creating this anthology, but
what better way than writing a poem shaped like
a tree, pretentiously, the sort of poem
that says
"Look at
Me"
But
nothing
else
So
I did,
--
This
Is
it

Martyn Cooper

| ARTIST | PAGE |
|-----------------|------|
| Sonya Dudhnath | 7 |
| Fiona watson | 9 |
| Georgina Binks | 11 |
| Georgina Binks | 13 |
| Afsana Elanko | 15 |
| Georgina Binks | 17 |
| Andy Brewer | 18 |
| Ludmila Kipping | 21 |
| Lil Sullivan | 23 |
| Afsana Elanko | 25 |
| Afsana Elanko | 26 |
| Georgina Binks | 28 |
| Sonya Dudhnath | 31 |
| Afsana Elanko | 33 |
| Fiona Watson | 35 |
| Lil Sullivan | 37 |
| Andy Brewer | 39 |
| Georgina Binks | 41 |
| Afsana Elanko | 43 |
| Afsana Elanko | 45 |
| Fiona Watson | 47 |
| Georgina Binks | 48 |
| Georgina Binks | 50 |
| Georgina Binks | 53 |
| Hazel Hammond | 55 |

| ARTIST | PAGE |
|-----------------|------|
| Afsana Elanko | 56 |
| Sonya Dudhnath | 58 |
| Afsana Elanko | 61 |
| Lil Sullivan | 62 |
| Afsana Elanko | 64 |
| Ludmila Kipping | 66 |
| Sonya Dudhnath | 68 |
| Hazel Hammond | 71 |
| Georgina Binks | 73 |
| Georgina Binks | 74 |
| Georgina Binks | 76 |
| Georgina Binks | 78 |
| Georgina Binks | 81 |
| Fiona Watson | 82 |
| Georgina Binks | 84 |
| Georgina Binks | 86 |
| Fiona Watson | 88 |
| Georgina Binks | 90 |
| Fiona Watson | 92 |
| Afsana Elanko | 94 |
| Afsana Elanko | 96 |
| Georgina Binks | 101 |
| Fiona Watson | 102 |
| Georgina Binks | 104 |

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