



BYWAYS

***JOURNAL OF
ART & LETTERS***

SPRING 2007

Byways

Central Texas College
Journal of Art and Letters
Spring 2007

COVER ART

Rhea Brown – Acrylic on Canvas

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A Promise

by Casey J. Murphy

The background is an abstract composition of swirling colors, primarily red, blue, and yellow. Several stars are scattered throughout: a large white star on the left, a large yellow star in the upper center, a smaller yellow star on the right, and a small white star at the bottom right. A green L-shaped structure is visible on the left side.

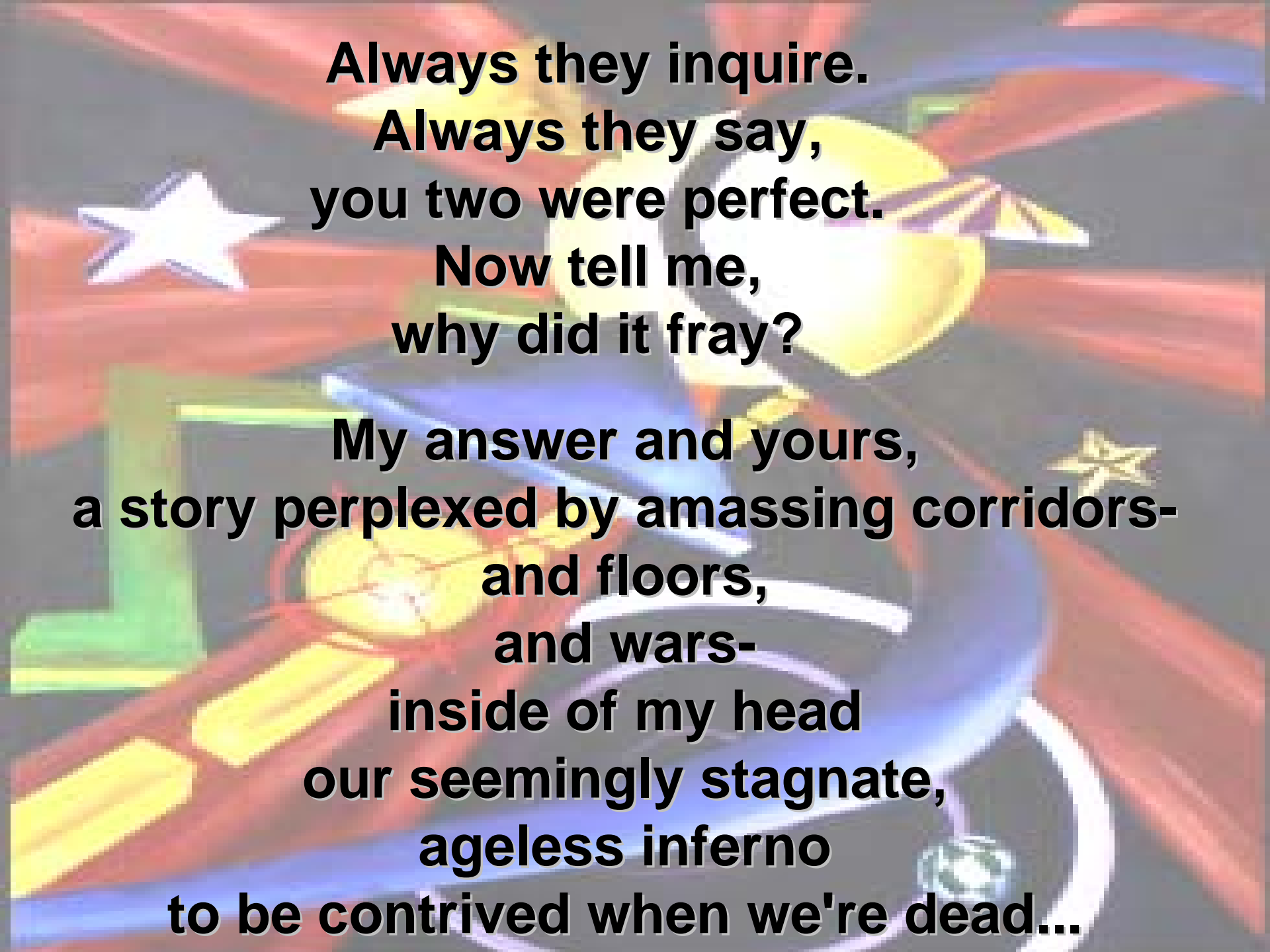
**I stand upon a threshold
a string wrapped in my hands;
life's twists and turns
become the burn
to create the Lover's dance.**

**Naked, in bed
I wish-
your kiss upon my cheek.
Instead,
I dream-**



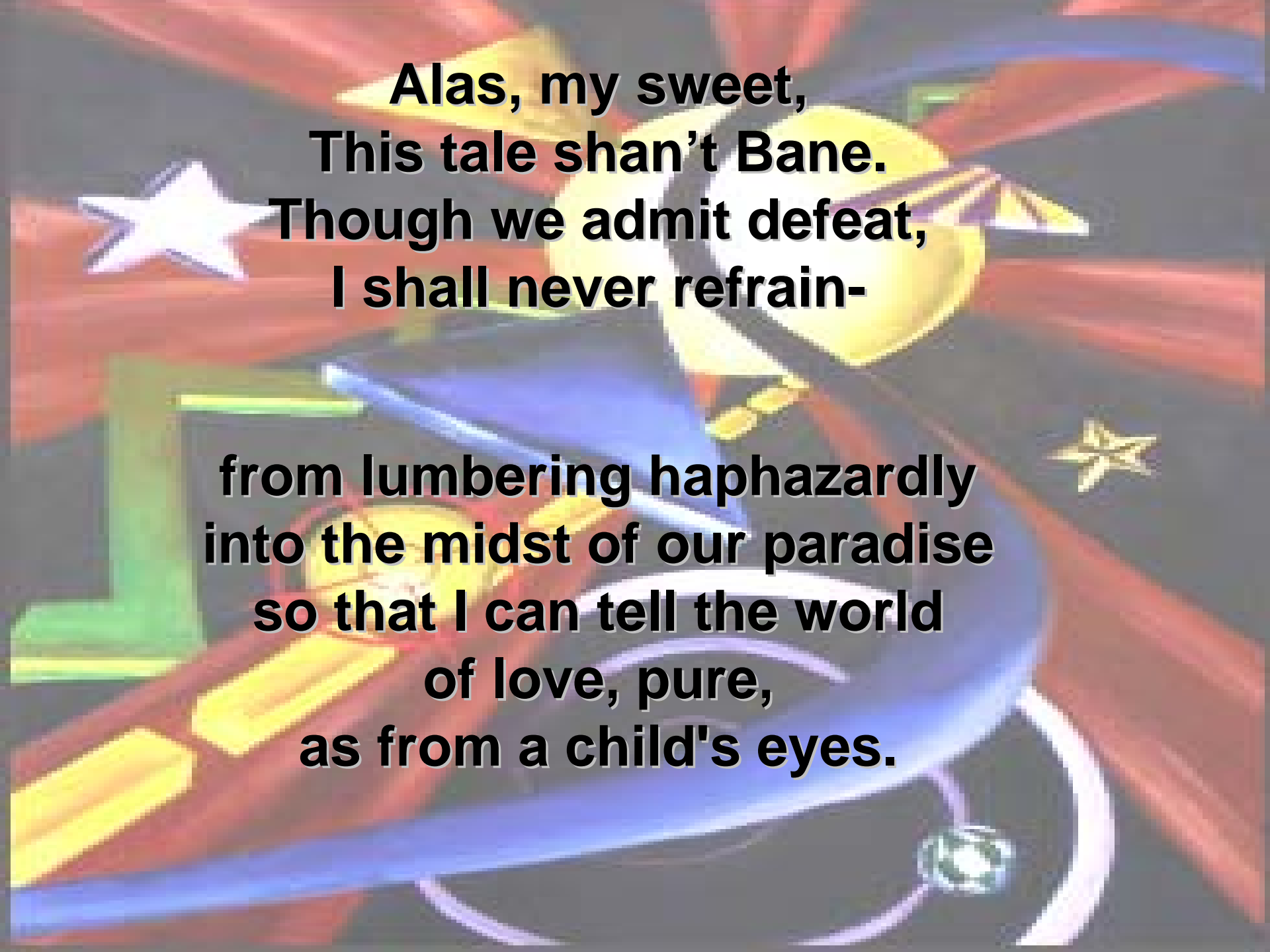
**but it's not you, per se...
Mi Amor,
the one who craved my every way.**

**Until I fell-
Until I drowned.
Until I lost myself
somewhere between you and the ground.**




**Always they inquire.
Always they say,
you two were perfect.
Now tell me,
why did it fray?**

**My answer and yours,
a story perplexed by amassing corridors-
and floors,
and wars-
inside of my head
our seemingly stagnate,
ageless inferno
to be contrived when we're dead...**



**Alas, my sweet,
This tale shan't Bane.
Though we admit defeat,
I shall never refrain-**

**from lumbering haphazardly
into the midst of our paradise
so that I can tell the world
of love, pure,
as from a child's eyes.**



**What happened?
May I ask?
Well, you and I both know
that it was never only happenstance.**



“Waiting”

Artist: Barbara Mazon

Medium: Charcoal

A Short Farewell and Long Goodbye

by Frederick Henry

**I sit in the Alps waiting for action
However my duties require no such attraction
Enjoying the pleasures of Italy's best
I aid a war in my American quest**

**Rinaldi, my friend, my comrade indeed
Introduced me to friends after my winter time
leave
She was beautiful, with remarkable simplicity
My love lived within Katherine Barkley**



**Consequence of war has taken me swiftly
Back to her arms is how I'm healing**

**★ The stronger I become the more love I can
give**

Through her, in her, my child lives

I seem to come and go, go and come ★

I fight again for a land I'm not from

**Pressure has overcome me, escaping is my
relief**

If I'm a traitor so be it, and now I'm the enemy



**Stripped of my rank but not of my love
Here I come Katherine we must fly like a
dove**

**To Switzerland free at last, now we may live
My child, my love you've left me with no
more to give**

Byways Artist Prize Winner
1st Place

Valerie Jackson
“One Last Kiss”



“One Last Kiss”

Artist: Valerie Jackson

Medium: Photograph



“Birds Flying”

***Artist: Andrea Rackley
Medium: Photograph***

Byways Literary Prize Winner
1st Place

Erin E. Fowler
“Remembering”

Remembering

By Erin E. Fowler

...for my sister

It was an old tree. The hard, wrinkled bark was starting to fall off in some places, but age had made it beautiful. Each leaf was crafted with care and the points spread out like fingers on a child's hand.



The leaves, like snowflakes, were all very different —some were small with leaves that curved into oval shapes; some were long, but pointy; and others were shaped delicately, like cat's paws.



The tree roots extended through the ground and stretched and scratched at the surface until they appeared through the grass halfway across the back yard.

There was an old, metal jungle gym set up near the base of the tree for us children to play on. The green paint had flaked off the handles and the rusted metal showed through in patches, making the jungle gym look like a Christmas wreath decorated with a faded red ribbon.

We would climb up onto the old jungle gym, grab hold of a large, protruding tree branch, and climb up into the ancient tree. One of the huge limbs had curved over time to form a small seat—the perfect spot to curl up in with a colorful picture book.

We would spend hours up there, my sister and I, talking, laughing, making up wild adventures, and enjoying each other's company.

Sometimes, if we felt daring enough, we would climb the other branches and scoot out on a limb until we were halfway from the safety of the trunk. We would swing and dangle above the ground, asking for trouble. Those were our best days.

The seasons changed, but our love for the tree only seemed to blossom. Staring out at the world through the spaces between the green, or even red, orange, and yellow leaves, our problems disappeared, or seemed to.

**However
we felt towards life and
each other, once we
were up among the
bird's nests and foliage,
nothing else mattered. It
was like the rest of the
world was on hold,
waiting for us to rejoin
humanity.**



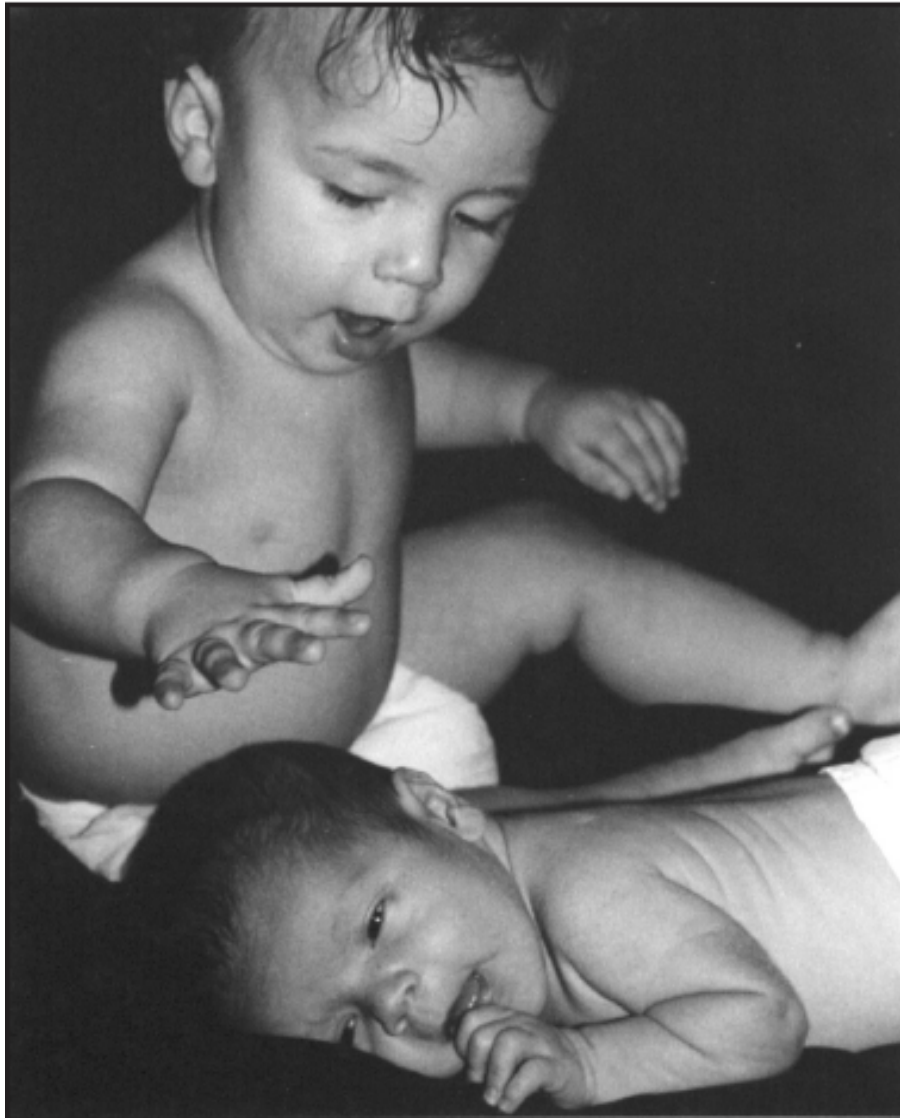
Like all children, the world finally caught up to us. Eventually, we moved away from that back yard; from our tree. We fought and made up, as sisters do. Our lives branched out, like the limbs of our tree, and our choices and discoveries sent us down the paths we travel today.



Still, sometimes, I look up from my desk at work and the papers that litter its surface, and stare at the stonewall of our office and think on those childhood days. How I wish I could step outside at break time and escape from the pressures of adulthood. I remember the serenity of those branches, our laughter, our silly adventures, and I have to smile.



The years will roll by and we will grow older and wiser, but that tree, beautiful in spite of its imperfections, will remain the same. And, if I close my eyes, I will still see two little girls: talking and giggling to each other and looking at the world through the leaves.



Booner's New Sissy

Artist: *Dinah Novey*

Medium: *Photograph*



Happy Bacon

Artist: *Audrey Carson*

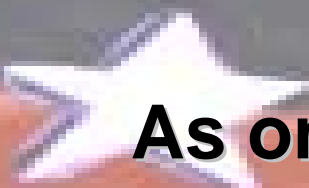
Medium: *Black and White Photograph*

Byways Literary Prize Winner
2nd Place


Floyd Spiller
“For Father”

For Father

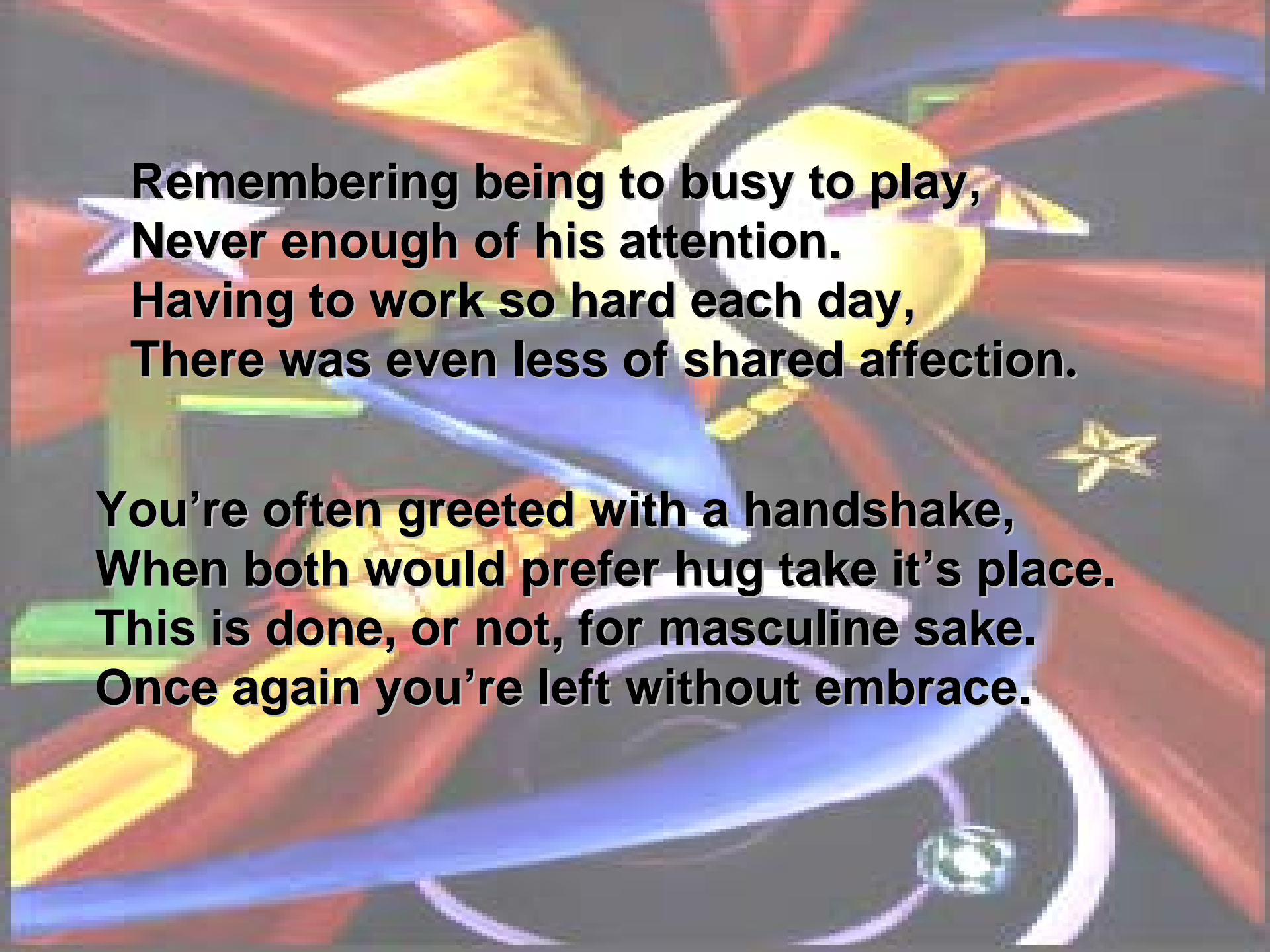
Floyd Spiller



**As one grows older reaching maturity,
Begins to reflect upon their lives.
At the same time ponders mortality,
Trying to take life in even strides.**



**A son watches a father set examples
Character traits, ethics and strengths.
Goals, high standards and morals,
Usually developed at great lengths.**



**Remembering being too busy to play,
Never enough of his attention.
Having to work so hard each day,
There was even less of shared affection.**

**You're often greeted with a handshake,
When both would prefer hug take its place.
This is done, or not, for masculine sake.
Once again you're left without embrace.**



**Taking the giant steps of fatherhood
Doing your best for this cause,
You're responsible for all in me good.
Blame equally shared for the flaws.**

**A father becomes a son's hero
So, in a way only you can,
Take the time to let him know
Having known him, you're a better man.**



“Harbinger”

Artist: Matt English

Medium: Photograph



“Hoop Dreams”

Artist: Donna Strickland

Medium: Photograph

Daddy's Girl

by Cassandra Phillips

It was the summer before third grade. I stood with another boy in a small wood-paneled bedroom with our pants and underwear around our ankles at Sean's order. Sean had locked the door and sat before us on a single sized-bed. I tried to accept what was happening for fear of enraging him. Sean's temper was unpredictable and he often reacted violently to other children.

The daycare was being run by Sean's mother from their split-level home. She stayed on the main level with the babies and infants. The rest of us were not allowed out of the basement. Sean seemed to be in charge because he was the oldest and his mother never checked on us. If we didn't do what Sean said, he would lie to his mother and get us in trouble. There was a laundry room, a large play room, and a spare bedroom in the basement. We were also not allowed in the laundry room. The playroom had a couple couches and a large screen television that did not work.

There were times when Sean wasn't around the entire day. One afternoon I heard the screech of the bus brakes in front of the house bringing Sean home. I knew he'd come to find me, so I strategically positioned myself between five other children who were laying in front of the twelve inch television set in the spare bedroom. Sesame Street had just begun but I could not concentrate on the show. I stared at the television but all my senses were tuned to the stairs in suspense.

During my second day at daycare the kids told me Sean had pushed someone into the television and broke it. Whoever it was, they didn't come to daycare anymore.

My heart pounded and seemed to beat loudly, peaking the moment I felt his presence in the room. He stood in silence behind us for awhile. No one acknowledged his presence. I prayed he would be discouraged and go away.

“Move Over,” he said to the three kids on my left. They didn’t hesitate. Sean laid down on his side next to me. He stared at me as I continued to stare at the black and white screen. His right hand began to wiggle its way between the floor and my pelvis. My mind ran, yet I remained perfectly still with my eyes fixated on the screen.

He finally pulled his hand out and leaned in close to my head. He spoke softly in my ear, “Why don’t you ever try to touch me?” I didn’t know what to say. What wouldn’t make him mad? I quickly shrugged my shoulders in response. After a few more intense minutes he got up and left the room. I put my head down on the thin carpet, closed my eyes, and rested. “Maybe my dad will take me out of here,” I thought to myself.



When my dad and I were in the car going home I said, “Dad, I don’t want to go there anymore.”

“Why not?” he asked. I starred out the passenger window at the rows of Ohio corn whipping by and made no reply. He ignorantly continued, “Is someone being mean? Did you have a bad day?”

“No, No,” I answered. I didn’t know how to say what I experienced. I lacked the vocabulary and confidence to tell my father what was going on. I needed him to ask the right questions, the ones that he never did. I pondered what would happen as a result of my telling my dad. I knew he would take me out of the daycare but what would happen to the other kids? I felt terrible. I didn’t want my friends to go through the same thing. What if my dad didn’t believe me and sent me back, saying something to Sean’s mother about it?

“You’re going to have to deal with a bully sometime in your life,” he said. . I sensed he was getting frustrated with me so I didn’t mention it again. I continued to get through each day as if I wasn’t changing.

On another occasion I found myself again standing in the bedroom facing the grungy bed next to the same little boy as before. We were both waiting to get it over with but strangely, Sean had left the room and the door open. The little boy and I heard Sean's voice in the main playroom.

His tone was sugary sweet and pleading. A young girl's voice replied hesitantly and reluctantly. We heard them move closer and turned our heads to look as Jenny rounded the corner. Our eyes met, and she understood immediately. Just outside the door Jenny took a step back in retreat but Sean was right behind her and pushed her into the bedroom.

With a bit of difficulty due to Jenny's physical protests to leave, Sean was able to close the door and lock it, keeping himself between her and the door.

“Let me out!” Jenny demanded, trying for the door.

“You're not leaving, turn around” he said, holding her back.

It was no use. Unable to get past him, Jenny sidestepped along the wall keeping her front side pressed against it. She began to cry with her hands around her head like deflectors on a horse.

Sean grabbed Jenny by her shoulders forcing her to turn around but her thick, long blonde hair which covered her back and shoulders weakened his grip on her. His hands slipped off but were immediately searching for a new hold.

Stop!” Jenny yelled. Sean was getting angry. As he tried harder to turn her around she became frantic and more resistant. Sean muttered and Jenny continued to sob and stammer, “I don’t want to!...NO!...Let me out!” Her untied hair became a swirl in the struggle. Sometimes I could see parts of it matted against her wet, red, blotched face.

She kept her eyes pressed shut. I just stood there not sure what I could do. There was no help to find. Jenny said everything I knew I should have said but was receiving the violence I was afraid of. The situation was out of control and my eyes began to fill with tears as I watched them. I had never been more afraid in my life. Hoping to neutralize the situation I said weakly, “Look Jenny, I don’t mind.” I immediately regretted what I said. Now I could never tell my dad because Sean would say I was okay with it. How ashamed my dad would be of me, and the rest of my family too.

What if he didn't want to see me during the summers anymore? I hoped no one had heard what I said. I really did mind. I left the daycare at the end of summer in preparation to return to my mother's house. The guilt I felt for leaving the other kids behind ate away at me until I finally told my dad some of what happened.

According to my dad, Sean's mother lost her license to operate a daycare facility for sometime and Sean was sent for psychological help. That's all he ever told me. The next summer I went to a Family YMCA nearby. I could've gone there to begin with but my dad and step-mother didn't want to pack lunches for me.



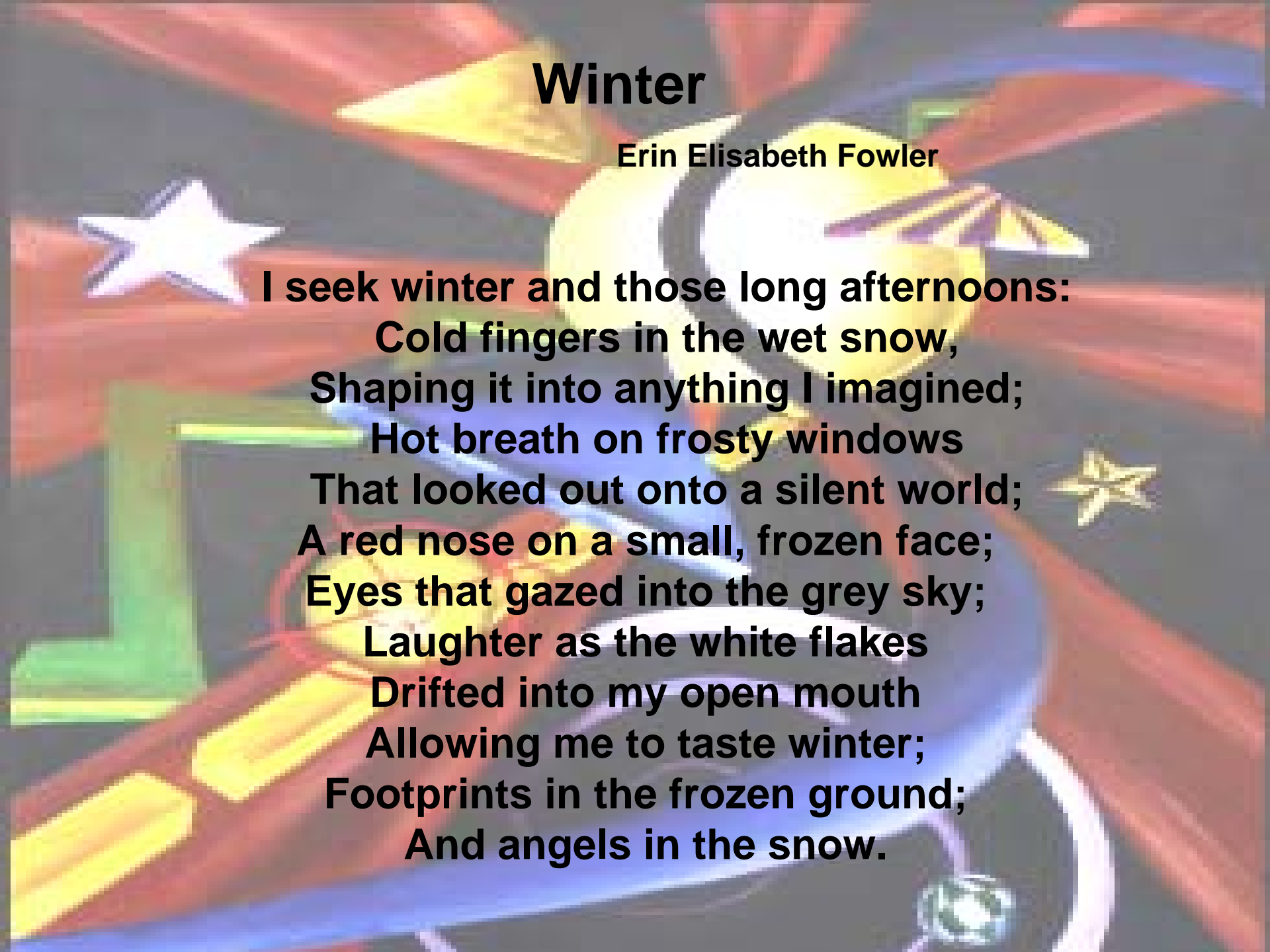
“Intense”

Artist: *Andrea Cohen*

Medium: *Charcoal*

Winter

Erin Elisabeth Fowler



**I seek winter and those long afternoons:
Cold fingers in the wet snow,
Shaping it into anything I imagined;
Hot breath on frosty windows
That looked out onto a silent world;
A red nose on a small, frozen face;
Eyes that gazed into the grey sky;
Laughter as the white flakes
Drifted into my open mouth
Allowing me to taste winter;
Footprints in the frozen ground;
And angels in the snow.**



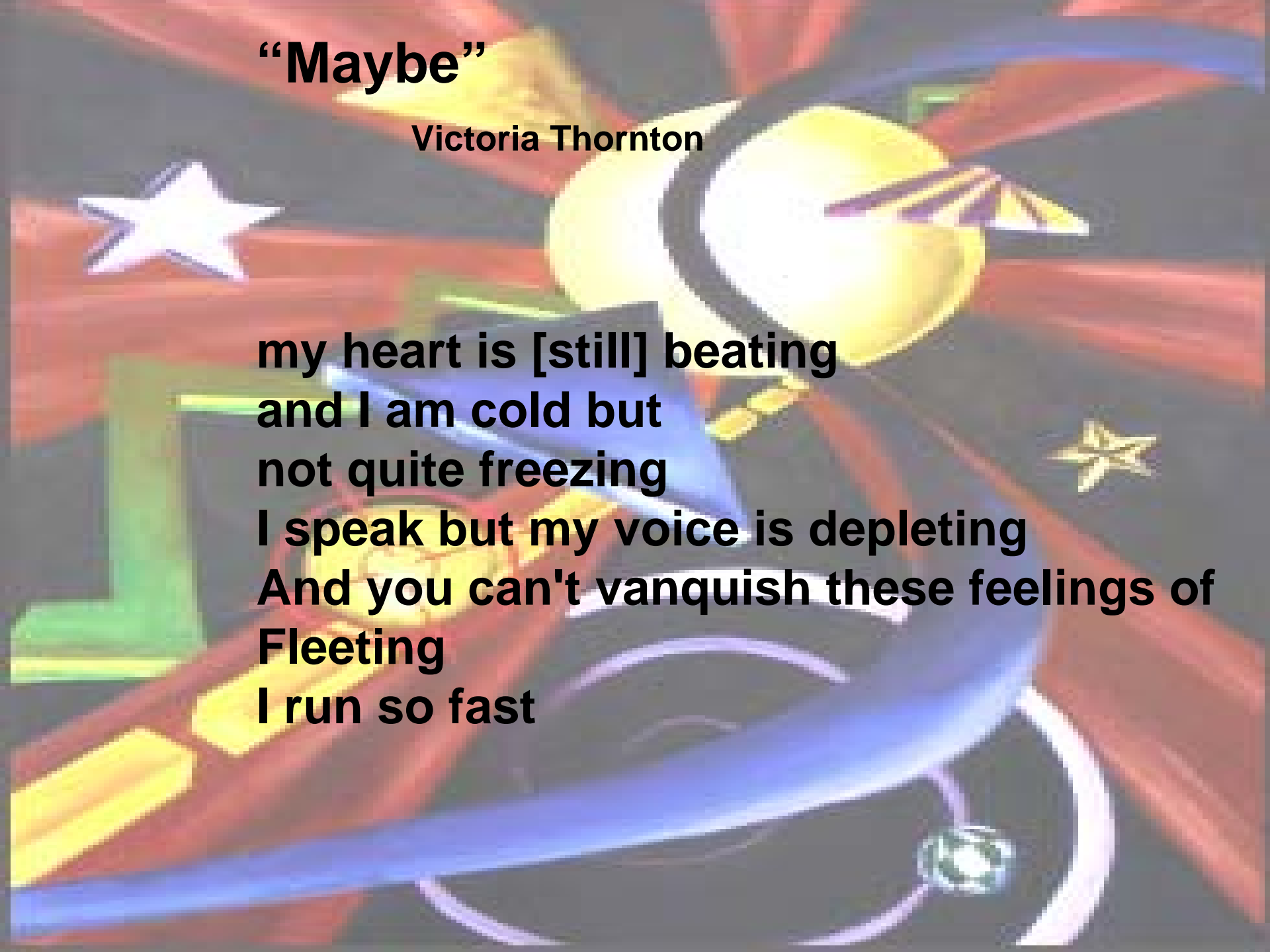
“Nike”

Artist: Catherine Common


Medium: Sterling - Copper

“Maybe”


Victoria Thornton



**my heart is [still] beating
and I am cold but
not quite freezing
I speak but my voice is depleting
And you can't vanquish these feelings of
Fleeting
I run so fast**



**But my legs won't last
I take flight
But I might
Just crash
Falling
and fleeting
Not freezing
But dreaming
Or flying
I'm crying
And I CAN'T
Take flight**



**Still falling
I'm crashing
It's smashing
My heart
Into the pavement**

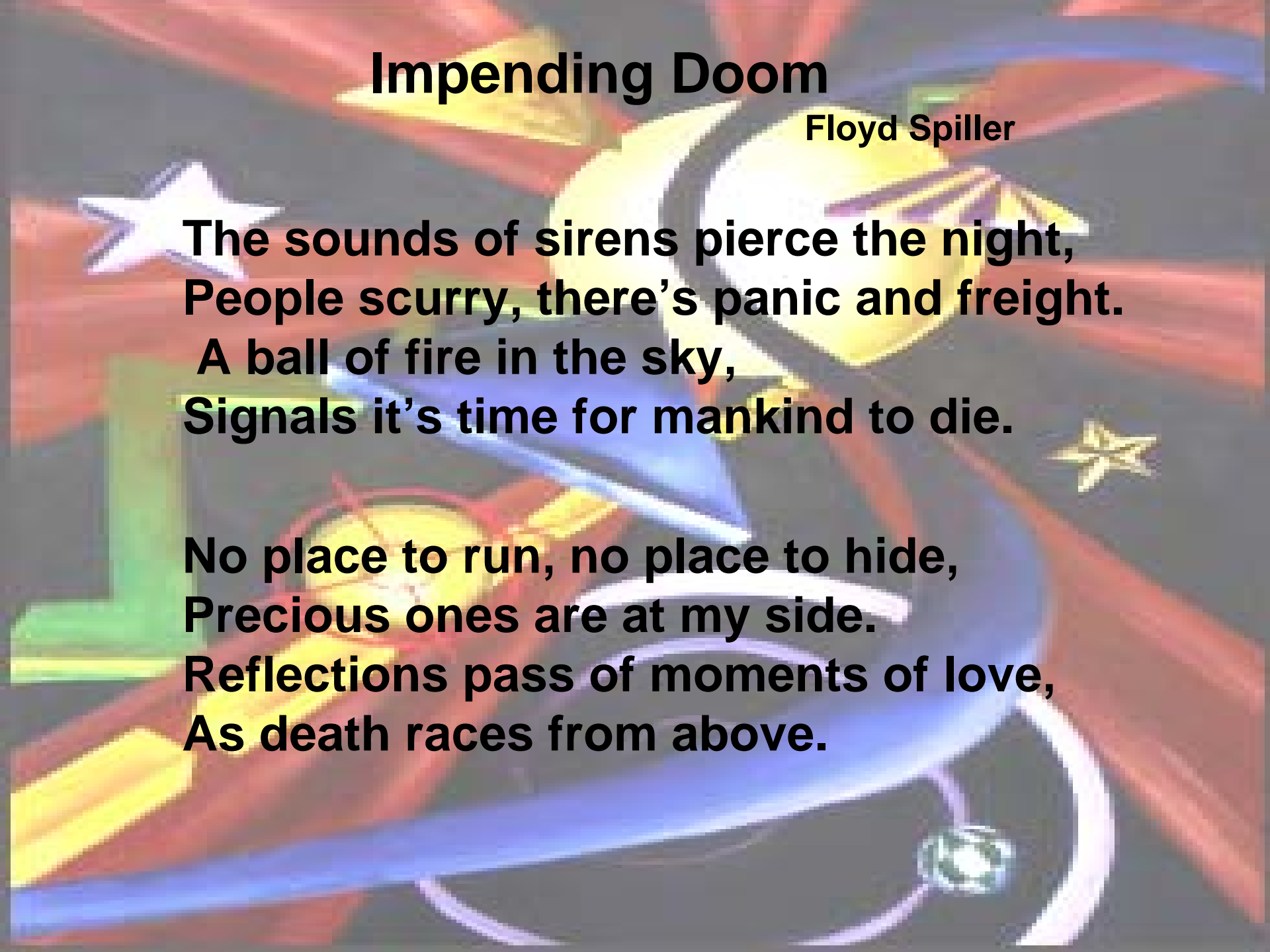


“Dragon Mask”

Artist: Joy Simon
Medium: Clay

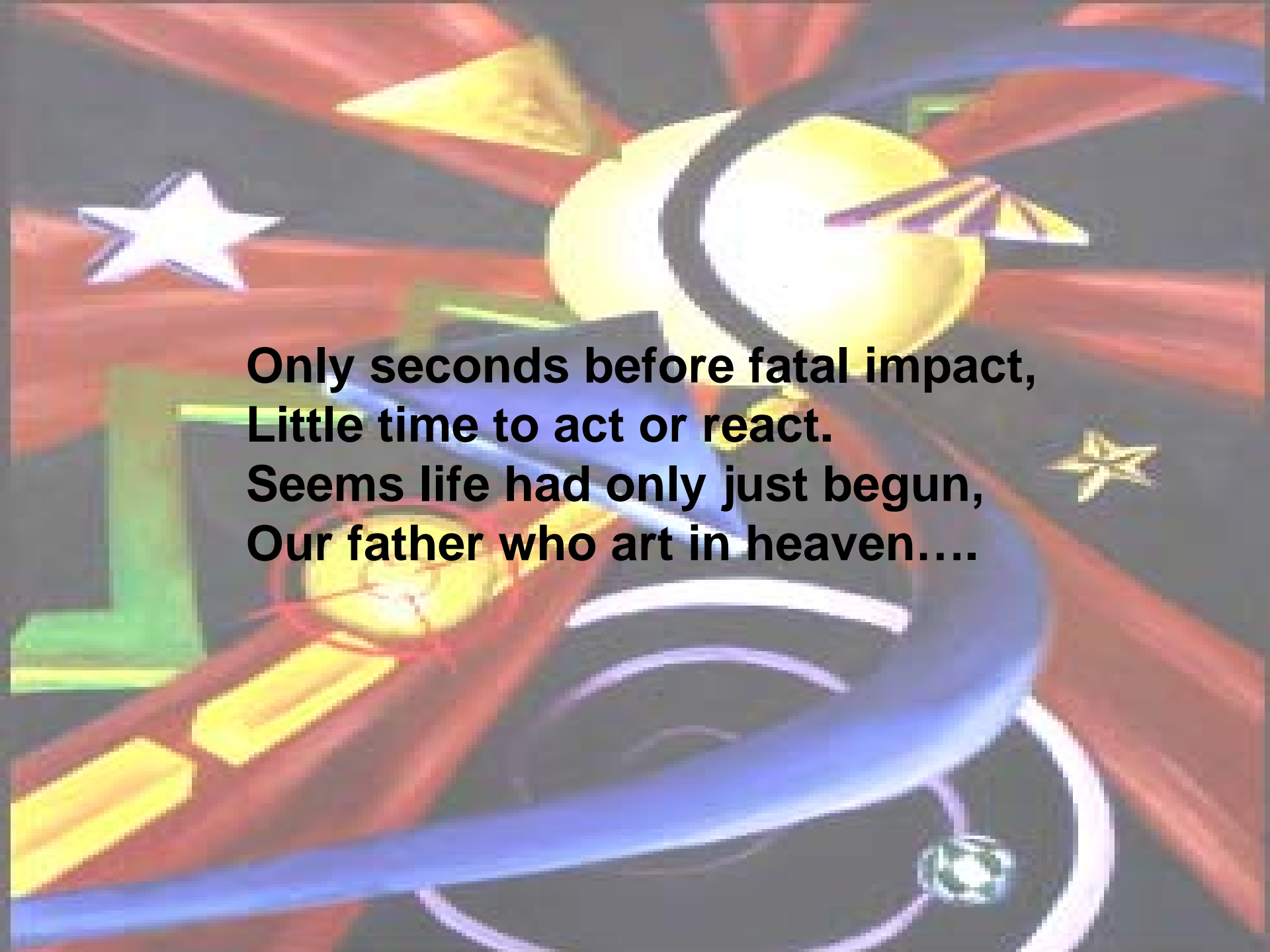
Impending Doom

Floyd Spiller

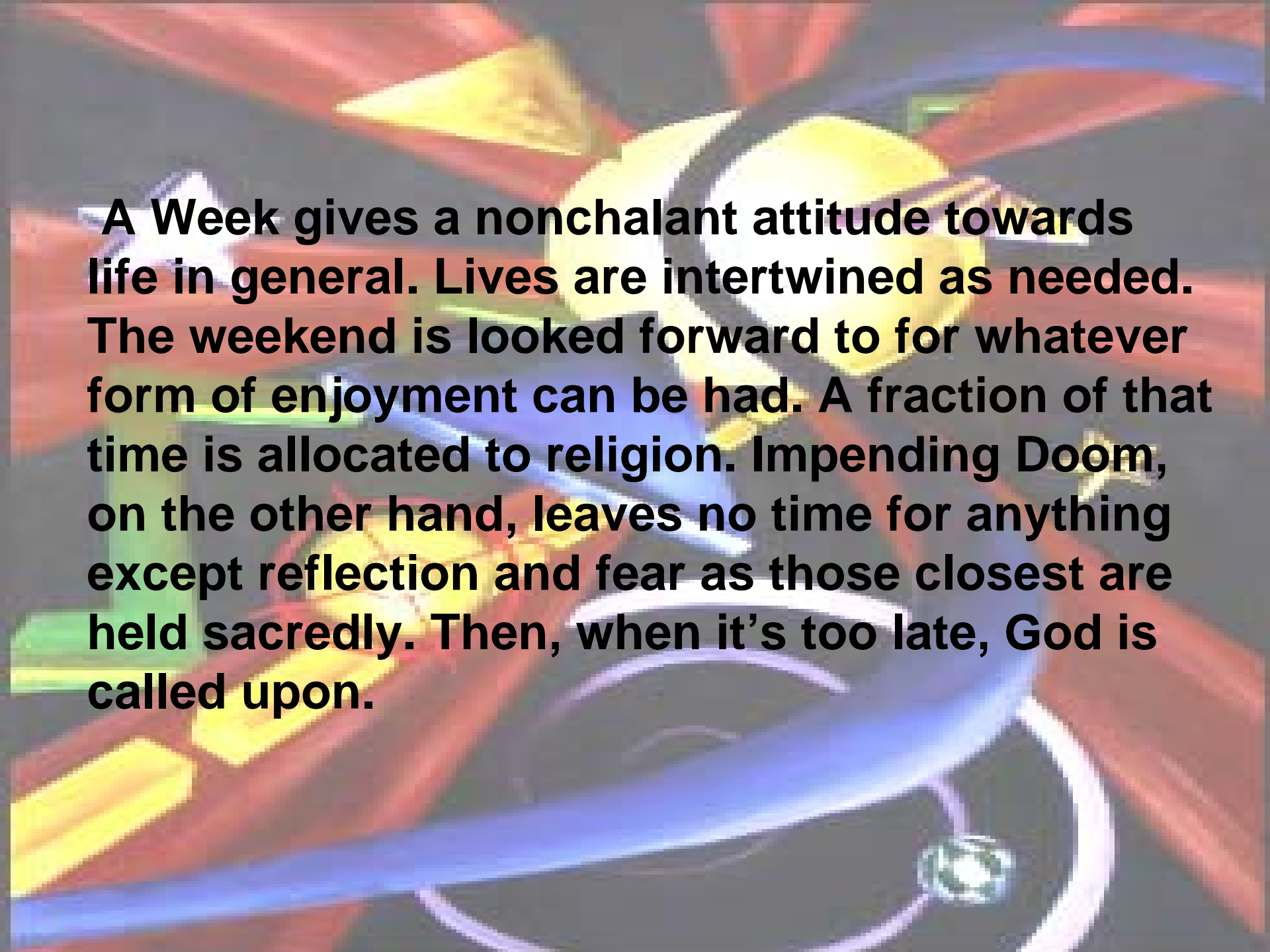
The background is a dark, abstract composition featuring several bright, multi-colored stars (yellow, orange, red, blue, green) and long, sweeping streaks of light in similar colors, creating a sense of cosmic movement and energy.

**The sounds of sirens pierce the night,
People scurry, there's panic and freight.
A ball of fire in the sky,
Signals it's time for mankind to die.**

**No place to run, no place to hide,
Precious ones are at my side.
Reflections pass of moments of love,
As death races from above.**



**Only seconds before fatal impact,
Little time to act or react.
Seems life had only just begun,
Our father who art in heaven....**

The background is an abstract composition of various geometric shapes. There are several red, yellow, and blue triangles and polygons scattered across the frame. A prominent blue sphere with a white ring around its equator is located in the lower right quadrant. The overall color palette is dominated by these three colors, creating a vibrant and dynamic visual effect.

A Week gives a nonchalant attitude towards life in general. Lives are intertwined as needed. The weekend is looked forward to for whatever form of enjoyment can be had. A fraction of that time is allocated to religion. Impending Doom, on the other hand, leaves no time for anything except reflection and fear as those closest are held sacredly. Then, when it's too late, God is called upon.



“Depression”

***Artist: Joel Amory
Medium: Charcoal***

Untitled Short Story

Jeremy Heenan

This morning after she dropped Timmy off at daycare, she had gone to the sentencing, 7-10 was the verdict. Sharon put the key in the lock turned it, and opened the door. She laid her purse and coat on a nearby chair, and shut the door. It was 12:30 now and she had just enough time to take a nice, warm, soothing bath before she had to pick up Timmy.

She put her hand on the banister and began to ascend the stairs. Slowly she climbed the stairs, letting her hand caress the railing on the way up, tracing the length of it with her fingertips. She paused when her hand passed over a cleft in the wood. Feeling the indentation, she looked down at the railing to Christmas three years ago.

There had been a fresh blanket of snow on the ground when they awoke. The morning had gone well, everyone seemed happy with the gifts. She kept Bill's finest gift for last. A beautiful set of custom golf clubs.

Excusing herself from the gift exchange for a moment she went and placed the clubs at the bottom of the stairs.

Returning, she suggested they all get dressed and go enjoy the fresh snow. Bill was ecstatic when he saw them, but it quickly faded when he pulled the first club from the bag. The four-iron had barely missed her head when it crashed into the banister. She forgot to get graphite shafts.

He did not miss the second time when he brought the blunt end of the club across her face. It broke a tooth and pierced her cheek. She quickly grabbed her face and ran for the car, leaving a bloody trail through the freshly fallen snow. She pulled herself from the memory and continued up the stairs to draw her bath.

After starting her water she went to the bedroom to get undressed. Pulling her stockings off, she looked down at the mark on her thigh. Bill had asked her countless times to get a tattoo of his name, but she had always managed to get out of the conversation.

The year the patriots lost to the packers in the super bowl, she had cooked and waited on him and his friends for half of the game. By the end of the third quarter his friends had all left. By the end of the super bowl he had drank nearly an entire bottle of whisky.

His anger climaxed at the end of the game when the announcer's commentary bashed the Patriot's preparation for the game. In his drunken state he tied her down and tried to carve his name into her leg.

She looked down at it, running her fingers over the marred flesh; it had never looked much like his name and had required thirty stitches. She finished undressing and walked to the closet.

Pulling out a flannel robe she put it around her body and buried her thoughts in it. She was eleven and at J.C penny's picking out a Father's Day present. She walked around for what seemed like hours until she saw the perfect gift. A large mannequin, resembling her father, wore a deep burgundy flannel robe.

The clerk had taken it down for her at her mom's request. She did not want the ones in the packages. She picked out the wrapping paper and had a difficult time waiting until Father's Day to give it to him.

On that Sunday morning she sat nervously as he opened it. She almost burst when he had said he loved it and put it on, scooping her up in the same motion. She looked up at him as he smiled down at her.

His hair was beginning to gray at the temples, but to her he was still the most handsome man in the world. She hugged him and sighed deeply. She could smell the old spice he always wore. His facial hair tickled her face as she hugged him. Standing in her room her arms wrapped around herself, she could still smell her Father on the robe.

She turned off the water and added some bath beads. It had been years since she had felt this at ease and she planned on taking full advantage of it. She decided to treat herself to a glass of wine.

She walked out of the bathroom and glided down the stairs, she couldn't remember the last time she had felt this safe; as safe as she had felt as a little girl with her father, not fearing anything, as she held his hand.

As she made her way into the kitchen she noticed the bag she had put together for the goodwill was open.

Timmy must have been playing around with it this morning; he was still too young to understand what was going on. The nine months she had carried him had been the best months of her recent life.

Bill was as nice as could be. He waited on her hand and foot while she was pregnant. She had hoped the pregnancy would change things, and it did, for about nine months. He had slapped her in the face in the hospital room over a fight about the name. That was the first time she realized he would never change.

She searched the cupboards for a glass for the wine. Most of their dishes had been lost to Bill's fits of anger. After a few minutes she managed to pull out one of the wineglasses from a set they had received on their honeymoon, compliments of the hotel. She filled the glass and took a sip, she brought the glass down and stared into the dark liquid. Deep into the liquid at the hotel sink, as she spit the blood from her mouth. .



Bill welcomed her early into his style of husbandry. She looked down at the tooth, as it lay in a puddle of blood in the sink.

She took another drink rolling her tongue around in her mouth and feeling the artificial tooth it had been replaced with. Sharon leaned her head back and rolled it around as the wine started to relax her muscles. Breathing deep to help them relax, a familiar smell caressed her nose, the kind of smell that stands in the woods at the edge of your memory taunting you to come and find it.

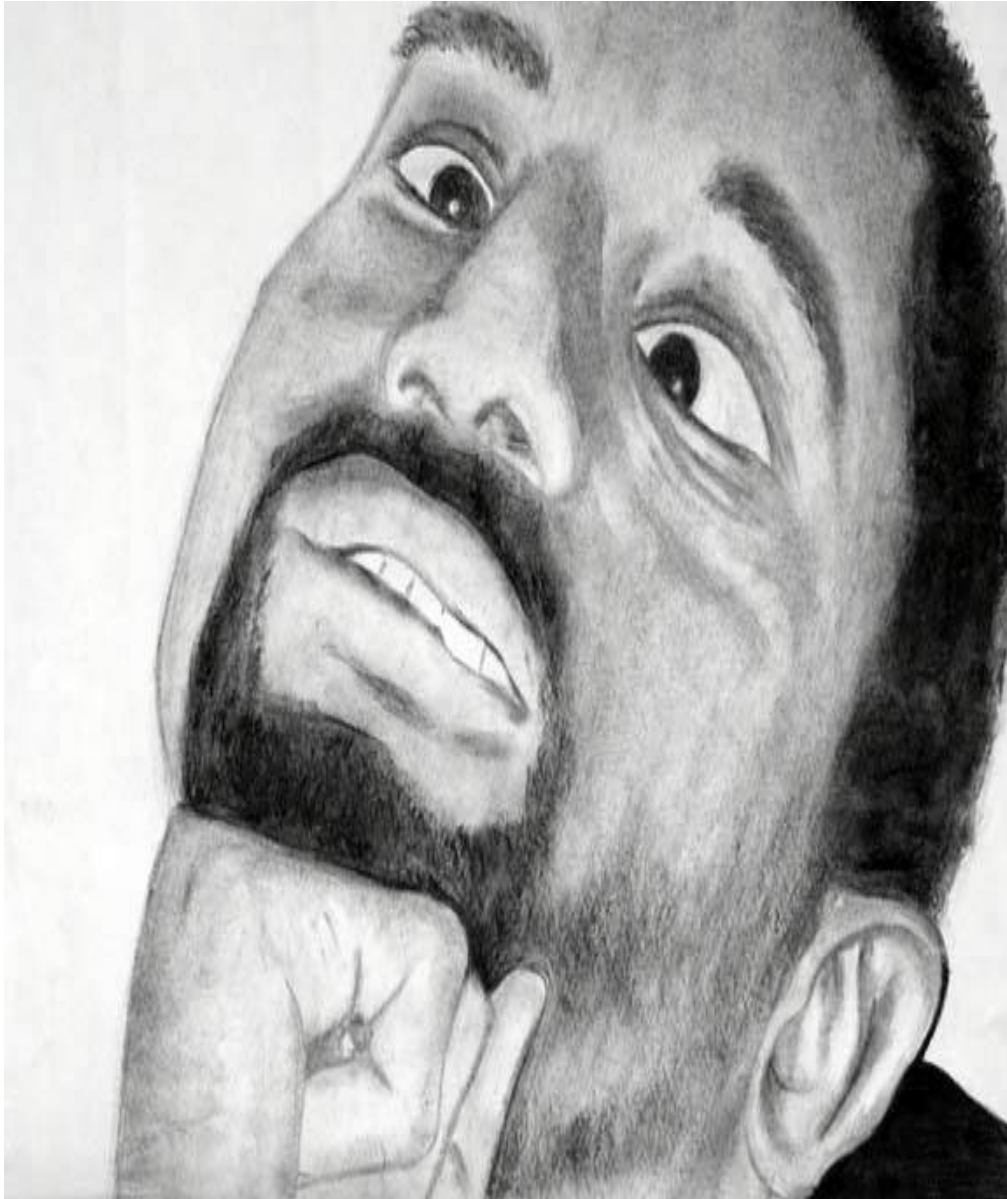
She took a few more deep breaths as she searched the forest. Wandering through her deeply under-brushed mind she stumbled over the bag for the goodwill. She was almost sure Timmy hadn't been playing with it.

She kept searching, remembering her entire day. She slowed as she came to a clearing in her thoughts. She used her key to get in the house but she didn't remember hearing that familiar click as she turned the key.

She quickly opened her eyes as the smell jumped from the woods into the clearing with her. Bill had worn the same \$5 Stetson the entire time she had known him.

She turned on her heels quickly running for the front door. As she turned the corner out of the kitchen into the living room, she ran headlong into a flannel-covered chest. She fell back hard on her backside. She didn't have to look up. She knew who it was.

That red flannel was on the top of the bag she had put together to send to the goodwill. She slowly raised her head, her amber locks falling in her face. She stared up at him through tear filled eyes. She started to sob thinking of Timmy at school all alone, and no one being there to pick him up.



“Punch”

***Artist: Lyla Agnas
Medium: Charcoal***




“Rasta Mon Vibration”

Artist: Anthony Generali

Medium: Brass

Pretty Girls Make Pretty Graves

Victoria Thornton




better dead
than left unsaid
you pretty candy-coated
piece of plastic and flesh
pink-puckered lips
smothering words we
wouldn't say
anyway
opal eyes careening us in
mischievous?



**no
hateful and jealous and spiteful
perfect skin
smooth and flawless
too bad it gets caught
snared and jagged**

**in that torn sheet
they call a soul
beautifully curved
dripping with woman
with perfection**



**hips rounded
narrow and PERFECT
breasts so full and soft
no one can stop her now
hot pink fingernails
electric
like nails on a chalkboard**


**dragging through my heart
scraping and saying
no, you're not good enough
no, you're not pretty enough
no, you're not anything at all**



**and I'm not
nothing big or small
but a coffin can house me
fine**

**and there's make-up
for a bullet wound
for rope burn
for cuts and bruises
for flaws and hair
that isn't perfect**

**but there's a casket that can fit
perfection that I don't possess
there's a hole**



**that I can slide
gently
into
no, I can't rule this world
with curled hair
and sunglasses
often make
pretty girls but I admit
prettier graves**




“Trapped in Myself”

Artist: Ryan Mojica

Medium: Charcoal

Reverie

Erin Elisabeth Fowler



**I relish in a rainy day:
The swollen clouds a dismal grey;
The ground, once dry, now
overflowing.
The air, once still, has started
blowing
Rain into my upturned face.
Cold drops that mock love's warm
embrace,
Now spilling down onto my feet
To splash into the muddy street.**



**Slowly, I start to walk away,
Turning my back on God's display.
Newly clensed, my heart rejoices.
Tomorrow, I will make new choices.**

**I leave behind my childish fears;
Dry my unrequited tears;
Walk on to face the world anew.
No longer sad, no longer blue,
Just dampened by the summer rain-
A brief escape from all my pain.**



“Cameo Pin”

Artist: Jennilea Bowers

Medium: BrassSilver



“Tiger Brilliance”

Artist: Remo Mayo

Medium: Brass Silver

A Week

Floyd Spiller

**Life goes on as usual day-by-day.
We toil, we relax, and we play.
Oblivious to surrounding beauty
Doing what we consider duty**

**Repetitions each day, same routines,
No deviation whatsoever it seems.
Looking towards the weekend, we say,
Wishing our lives away.**



**We trudge along cogs in a wheel.
Finally taking time to kneel.
Time to give God his due.
That, too, we run through.**

Byways Artist Prize Winner
2nd Place

Cassandra Phillips
“Three Dimensional”



“Three Dimensional”

Artist: Cassandra Phillips

Medium: Mixed Media

Byways Artist Prize Winner
3rd Place

Rhea Brown
“Watercolor”



Artist: Rhea Brown

Medium: Watercolor



“Pebbles”

Artist: Dinah Novy

Medium: Clay



“Awe”

Erin Elisabeth Fowler

**A firey glow fills up the summer sky
Giving the clouds, once white, a golden hue.
The rays seek out the shadows and they try
To cause the dusty world to look brand new.
The dewdrops blink and shimmer in the light,
Thus, adding depth to flower, web, and leaf.
The dampened meadows seemingly ignite
While sleepy eyes look on in disbelief.**



**The sun and water both have
kissed this world-**

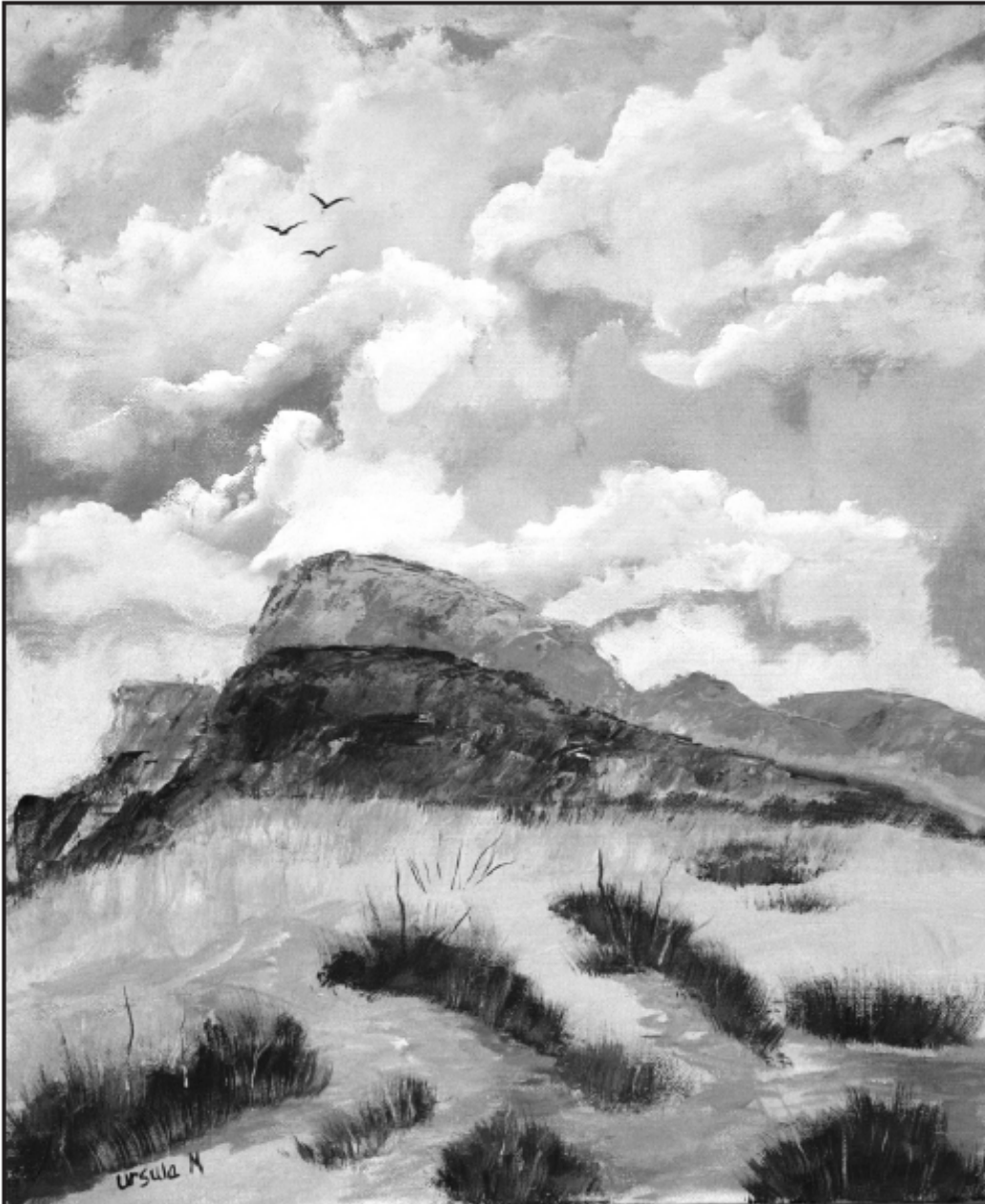
**This garden, where they lend
their loving hands.**

**No flower bud or leaf remains
unfurled;**

**No daring weed, within the
garden, stands.**

**Yet, all my life, my stubborn
eyes were closed**

**Until this sunrise left my heart
exposed.**



“Nature At It’s Best”

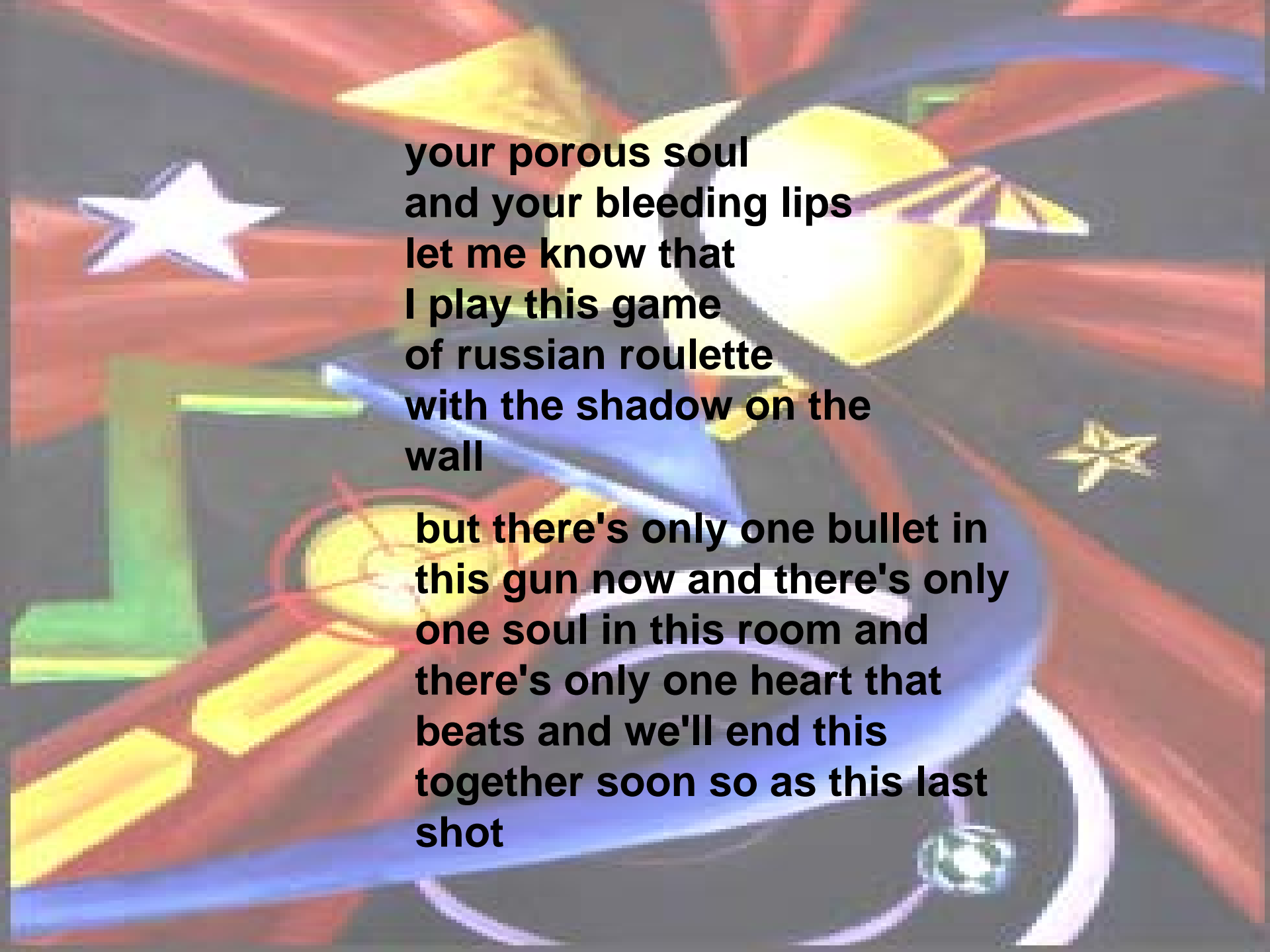
Artist: Ursula McDonald

Medium: Acrylic on Canvas

Midnight Syndicate


Victoria Thornton

**and we could end this tonight
this masquerade parade
this love affair charade
and with this gun to my head
you said
"i'm not scared"
my finger pulling the trigger...
"you should be"
and I will do this to you
I swear
your dripping heart**

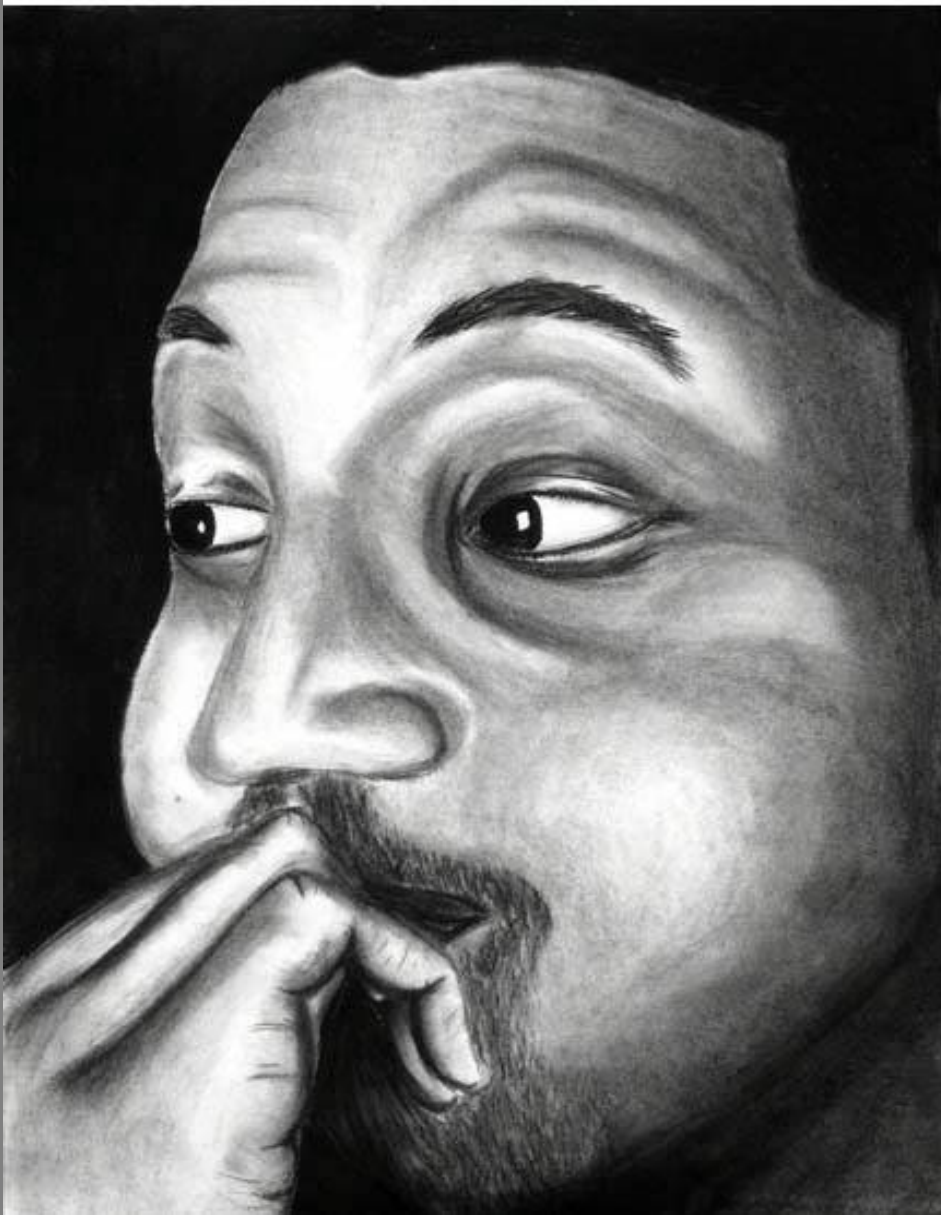


**your porous soul
and your bleeding lips
let me know that
I play this game
of russian roulette
with the shadow on the
wall**

**but there's only one bullet in
this gun now and there's only
one soul in this room and
there's only one heart that
beats and we'll end this
together soon so as this last
shot**



**fragments and tears through
I know that I haven't killed
anything except maybe
the ghost of you**



“Puffed – Up”

***Artist: Justin Cameron
Medium: Charcoal***

Blaque Man

Eugene Alexander

**Blaque Man Study Your Culture/Before You Talk
Down On Me/You My Brother But You Want To
Beef/Live in The Street Of Wilderness/Then Come
Out/And See/Blaque Man/You Fool/Choose
Wilderness/Instead Of School/Instead of Faith in
The Almighty/You Pick Up A Tool/Which leads to
more violence/You want Peace Of Mind/Live
Silent/Travel Among The Wind/Through The Life Of
Sin/Definition Of Kin/You Are Not/You
Forgot/Beauty lies within The Skin/Of The
Beholder/**



**God Believes In Marchin/So Walk Like A
Soldier/Carry On Your Culture/Instead of
being a Butcher/To Thee/ Superior Race/Our
Culture History/Is at Stake/Race With Out
Hesitation/To Protect Your Faith/From Your
Nation/**



**Eternal Salvation/Damnation to Thee Man of
Thee Flesh/God Protect Me With the Shield In
The Left/Sword in Thee Right/Ready to Protect
My Faith Rights/Under The Constitution/Time To
Quit Killing Our Earth With Thee Pollution/**

**Yo B I had Tu Rite One Tu
To Live Again Is To be Free Of Sin**



**Ready To Die For My Faith Blaque Man/At All
Times Blaque Man/SomeThin You Do Not
UnderStand/ Blaque Man/- The Speaker Of The
House**

**In Jesus Name Protect Me From Thee Life Of
Sin OH Almighty God**

Halellujah Amen



“Something Wicked this way Swims”

***Artist: Jane Zimmer
Medium: Photograph***

“Untitled”

Erin E. Fowler

**I walk down the sidewalk,
breathing fast—
thinking of nothing, just walking.**

**One
step at a time.
I make my way from here
to there. No destination in mind.**

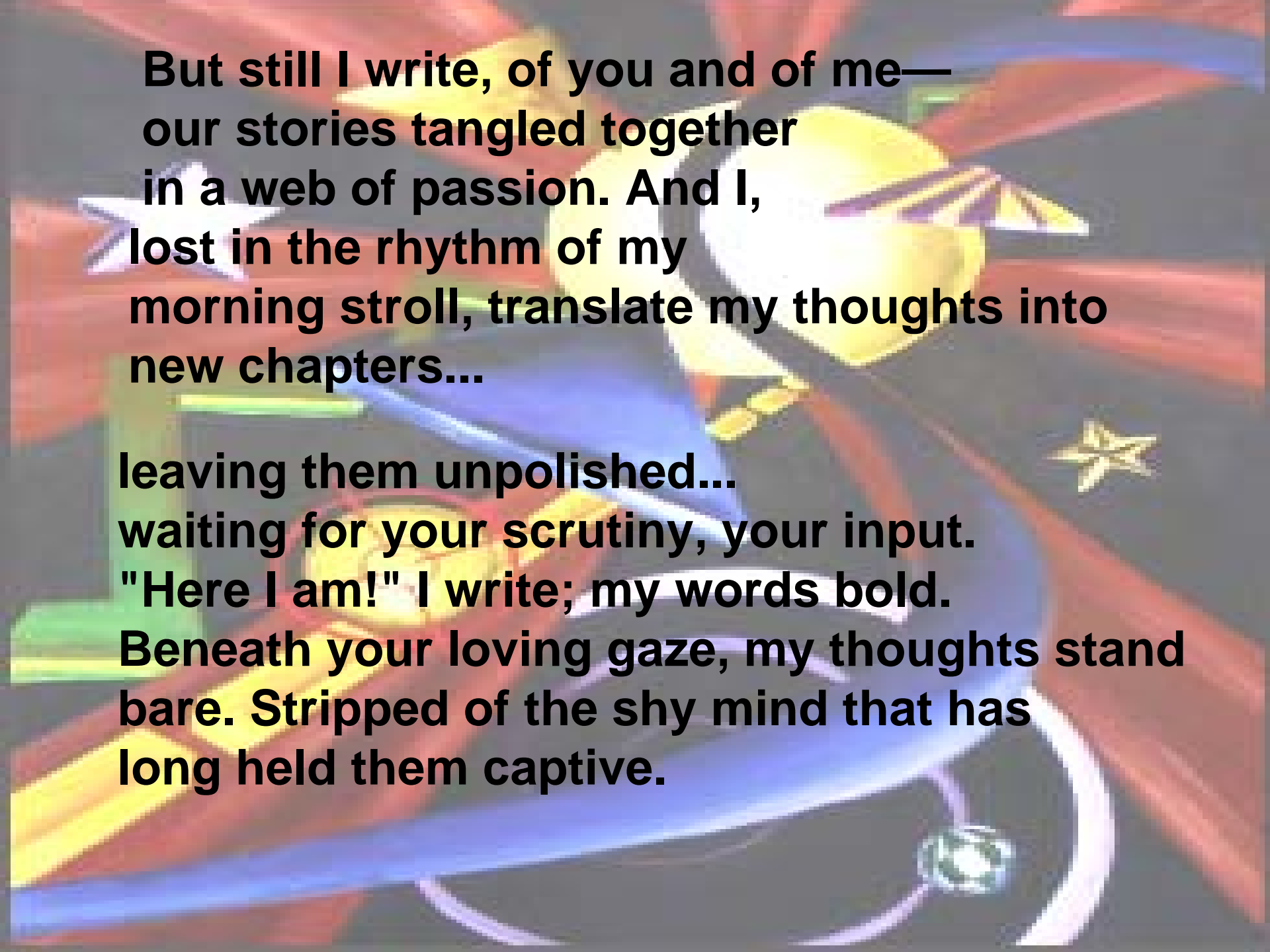
**And there you are, turning the pages
of my life; uncovering my fears...
emotions drawn in ink**



**I open my eyes and you're reading me...
memorizing every breath**

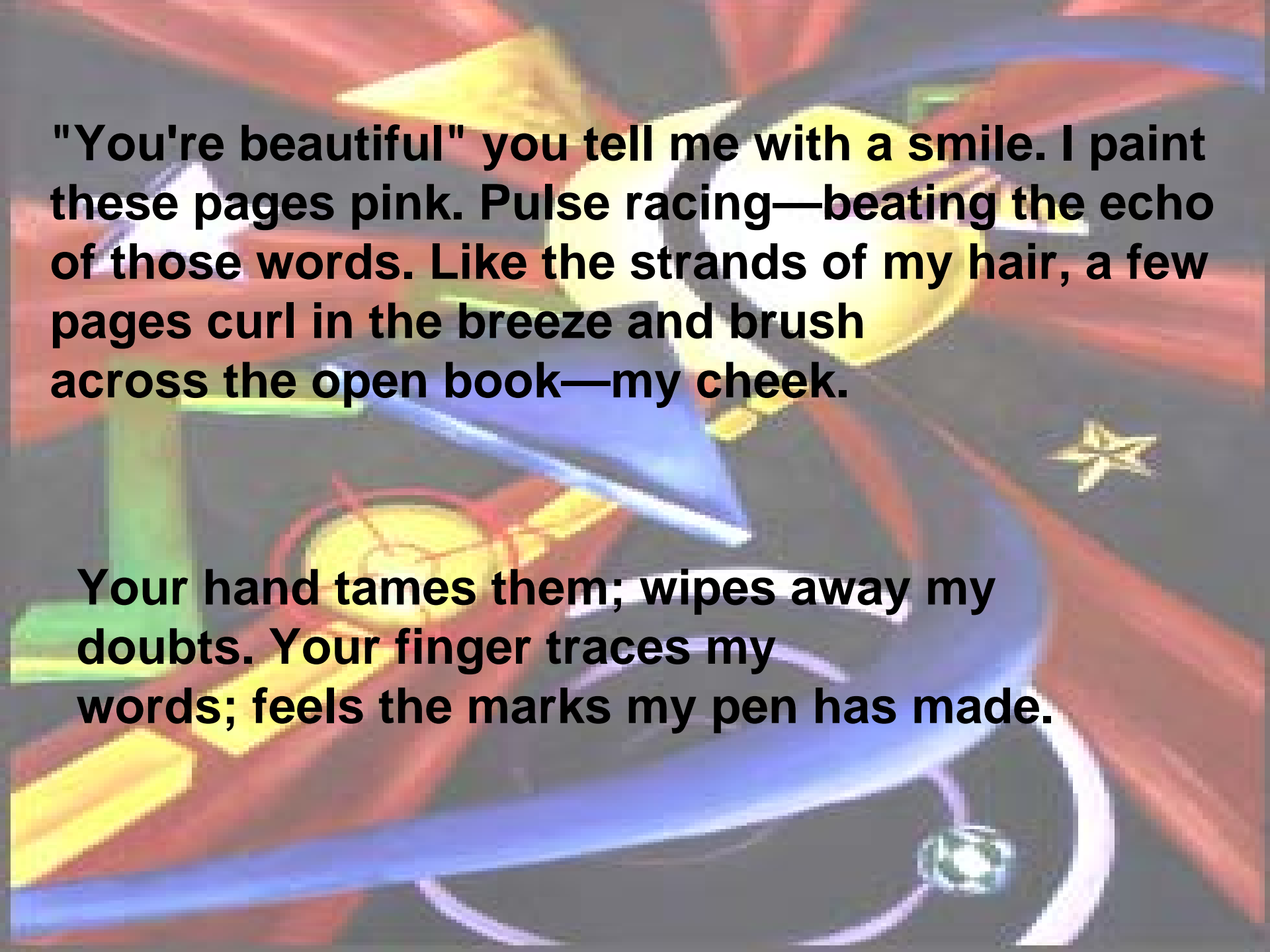
**I take. As if, at any moment, this book—
my unfinished masterpiece—will close
(perhaps in mid-sentence) and your heart,
caught up in my mystery, will
be cast away.**

**These pages, once written for you,
ripped out, crumpled up, and tossed on the
floor in anger.**



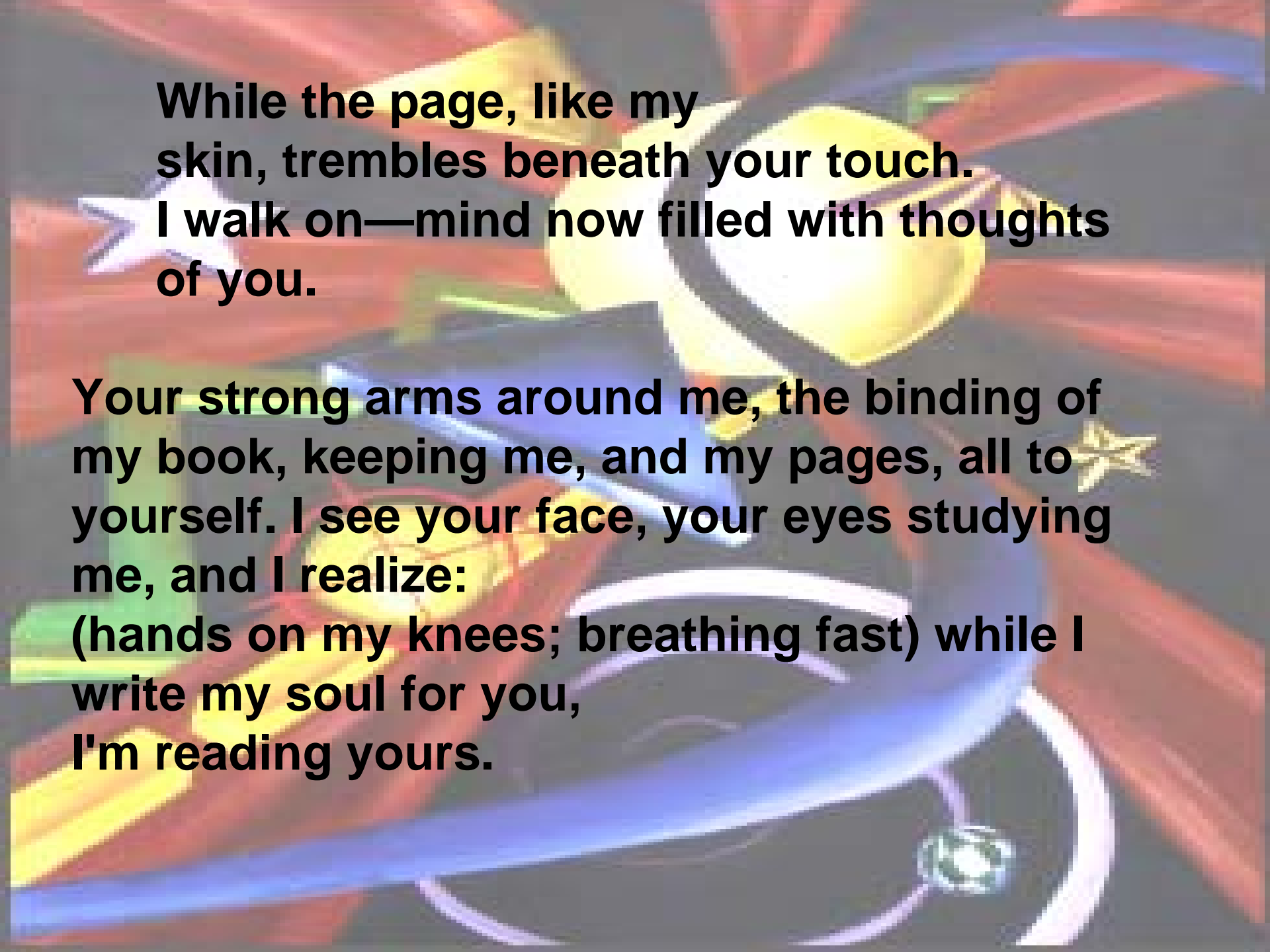
**But still I write, of you and of me—
our stories tangled together
in a web of passion. And I,
lost in the rhythm of my
morning stroll, translate my thoughts into
new chapters...**

**leaving them unpolished...
waiting for your scrutiny, your input.
"Here I am!" I write; my words bold.
Beneath your loving gaze, my thoughts stand
bare. Stripped of the shy mind that has
long held them captive.**

The background is an abstract composition of various geometric and organic shapes. Large, flowing red and pinkish-red shapes dominate the upper and right portions. Bright yellow and orange shapes, some resembling stylized suns or flowers, are scattered throughout. A prominent blue shape, possibly a stylized leaf or a piece of fabric, curves across the middle. A small, five-pointed yellow star is visible on the right side. The overall effect is vibrant and dynamic.

"You're beautiful" you tell me with a smile. I paint these pages pink. Pulse racing—beating the echo of those words. Like the strands of my hair, a few pages curl in the breeze and brush across the open book—my cheek.

Your hand tames them; wipes away my doubts. Your finger traces my words; feels the marks my pen has made.



**While the page, like my
skin, trembles beneath your touch.
I walk on—mind now filled with thoughts
of you.**

**Your strong arms around me, the binding of
my book, keeping me, and my pages, all to
yourself. I see your face, your eyes studying
me, and I realize:
(hands on my knees; breathing fast) while I
write my soul for you,
I'm reading yours.**



“Natural Beauty”

***Artist: Cassandra
Salahuddin
Medium: Acrylic on
Canvas***

Byways Literary Prize Winner
3rd Place

Jeremy Heenan


“When I was Born”

When I Was Born

Jeremy Heenan


**When I was born
You were gone
To “a better place”
I’m told**





**I hear the stories
Of who you were
The grief you gave
dad
Makes me smile**

**The corner store
Still sells your brand
Of pipe tobacco
That smells of cherry**



**Your change cup,
That I have robbed, a
thousand times
In the name of candy
Still sits on the Mantel**

**The den
Your final home
On the wall you hang
Seeing all that pass**



**Your starched blue collar
Freshly pressed and worn
with pride**

**A symbol of law and order
Ominously you hang, but
nothing more**

**These things are my
Memories of you
For you were gone
When I was a new**



“Condo”

***Artist: Susan Ledesma
Medium: Clay***



“Vassel”

Artist: Jamay Fatzinger

Medium: Clay

IV

Jeremy Heenan

**Shadows Cast On
Broken Glass
Confetti For The
Forgotten Class
Coughing From
The Rotting Air
Elastic Embrace
Pulling Hair
Candy For Their
Unfed Brains
Blood Upon A
Busted Vein**



**Huddled In A
Hotel Room
Awaiting Their
For Told Doom**

**Concious Memories
A Fading Moon
The Rapture Will Be
Coming Soon.**




“Frog Face”

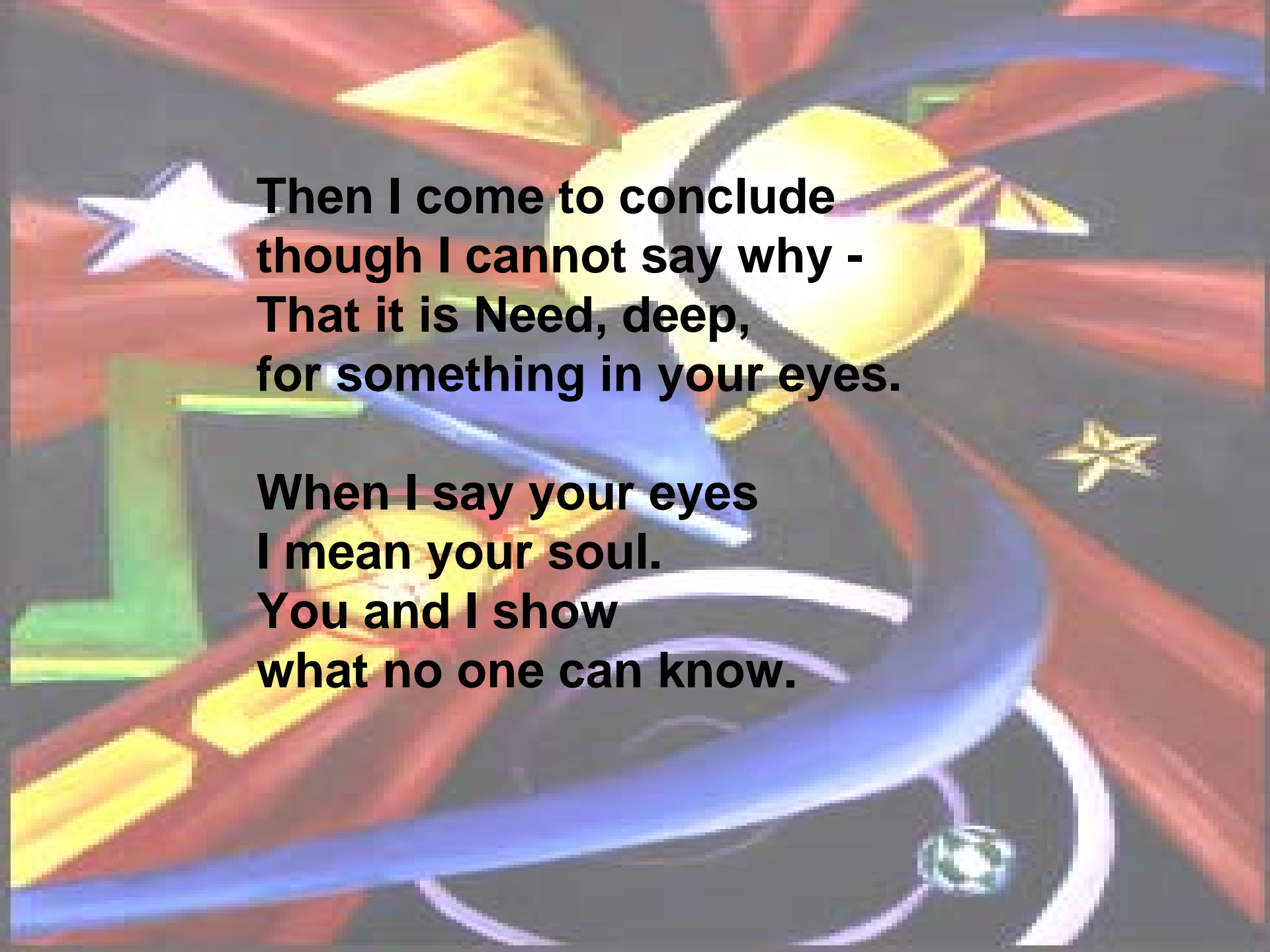
***Artist: Joy Simon
Medium: Clay***

The Long Awaited Touch

Casey J. Murphy

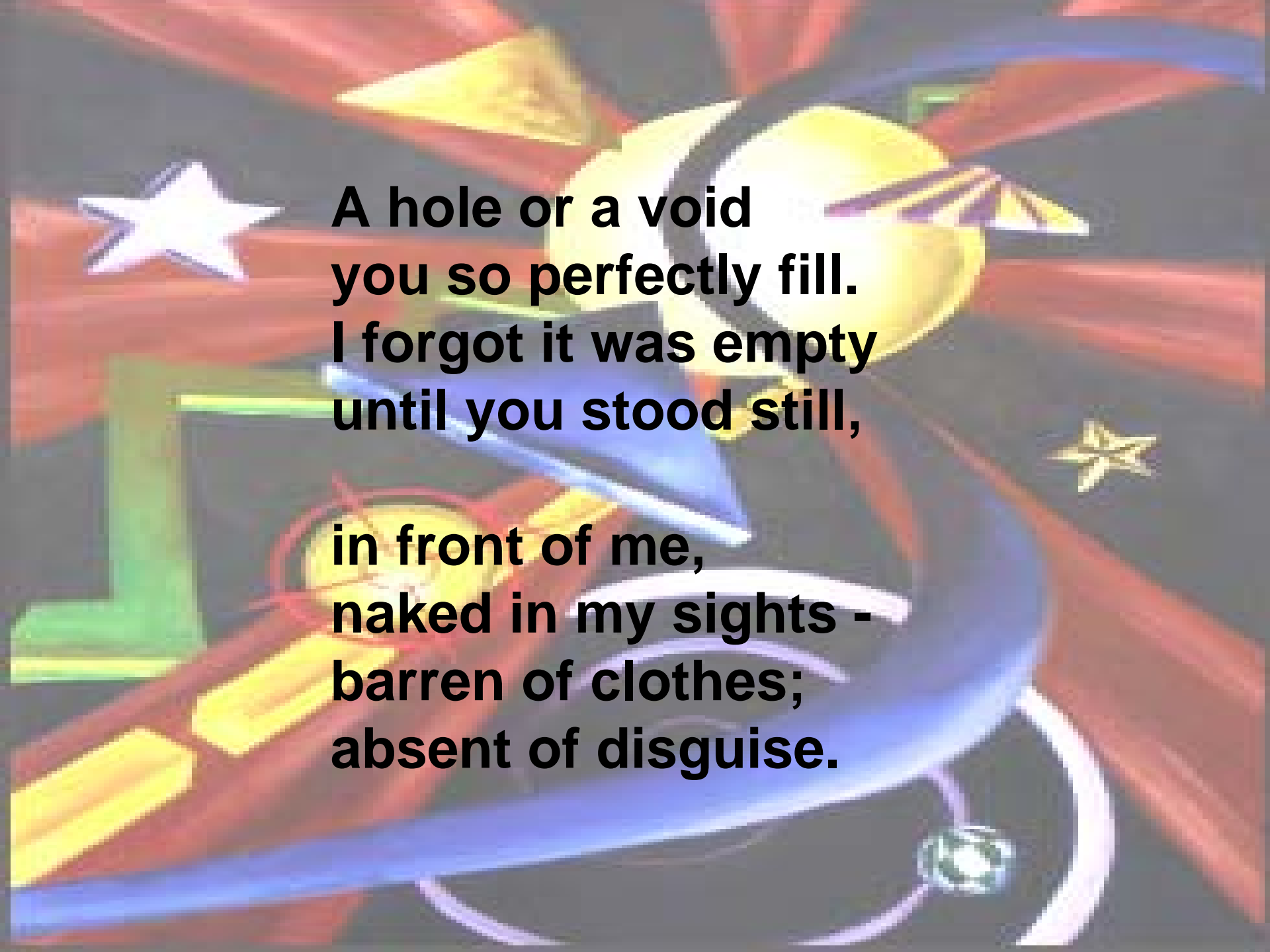


**Part of me needs you
I don't know why.
This Need, it's relative
to my pondering mind.
So I ask myself,
is it Need,
Do you think?
Or is it Want?
Desperate as thirst
is for a drink?**



**Then I come to conclude
though I cannot say why -
That it is Need, deep,
for something in your eyes.**

**When I say your eyes
I mean your soul.
You and I show
what no one can know.**



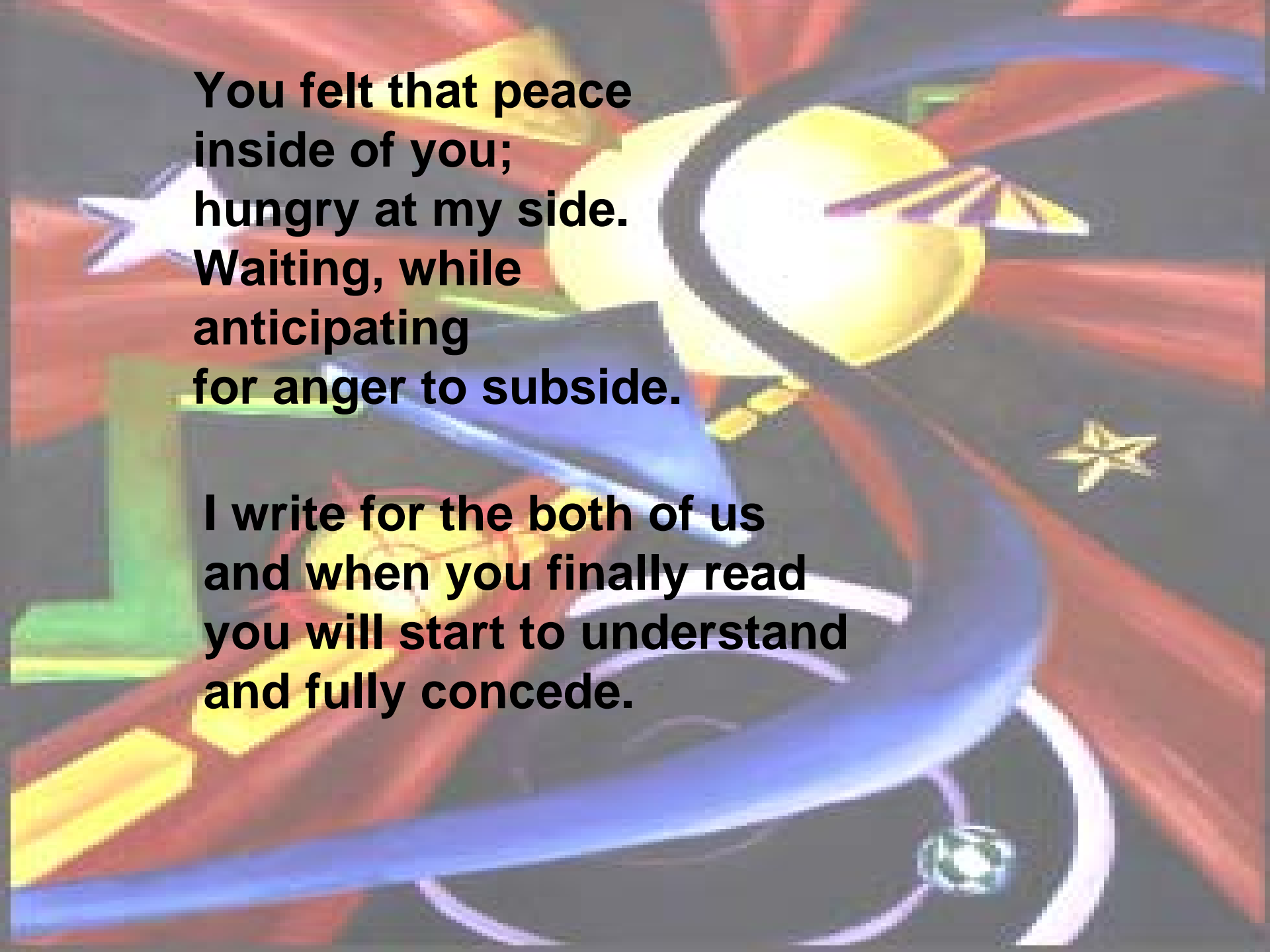
**A hole or a void
you so perfectly fill.
I forgot it was empty
until you stood still,**

**in front of me,
naked in my sights -
barren of clothes;
absent of disguise.**

The background is a complex, abstract composition. A large, stylized eye is the central focus, with a yellow iris and a white pupil. The eye is surrounded by various geometric shapes, including a large blue triangle, a yellow triangle, and a green triangle. There are also several stars, including a large white star and a smaller yellow star. The overall color palette is dominated by red, blue, yellow, and green, with a dark background. The text is overlaid on the left side of the image.

**The world lays it's eyes,
intent,
on your hypnotic way -
They revel in your wake
while you flirt with decay.**

**You know,
I know,
The mask you wear.
You know,
I know,
The pain you bear.**



**You felt that peace
inside of you;
hungry at my side.
Waiting, while
anticipating
for anger to subside.**

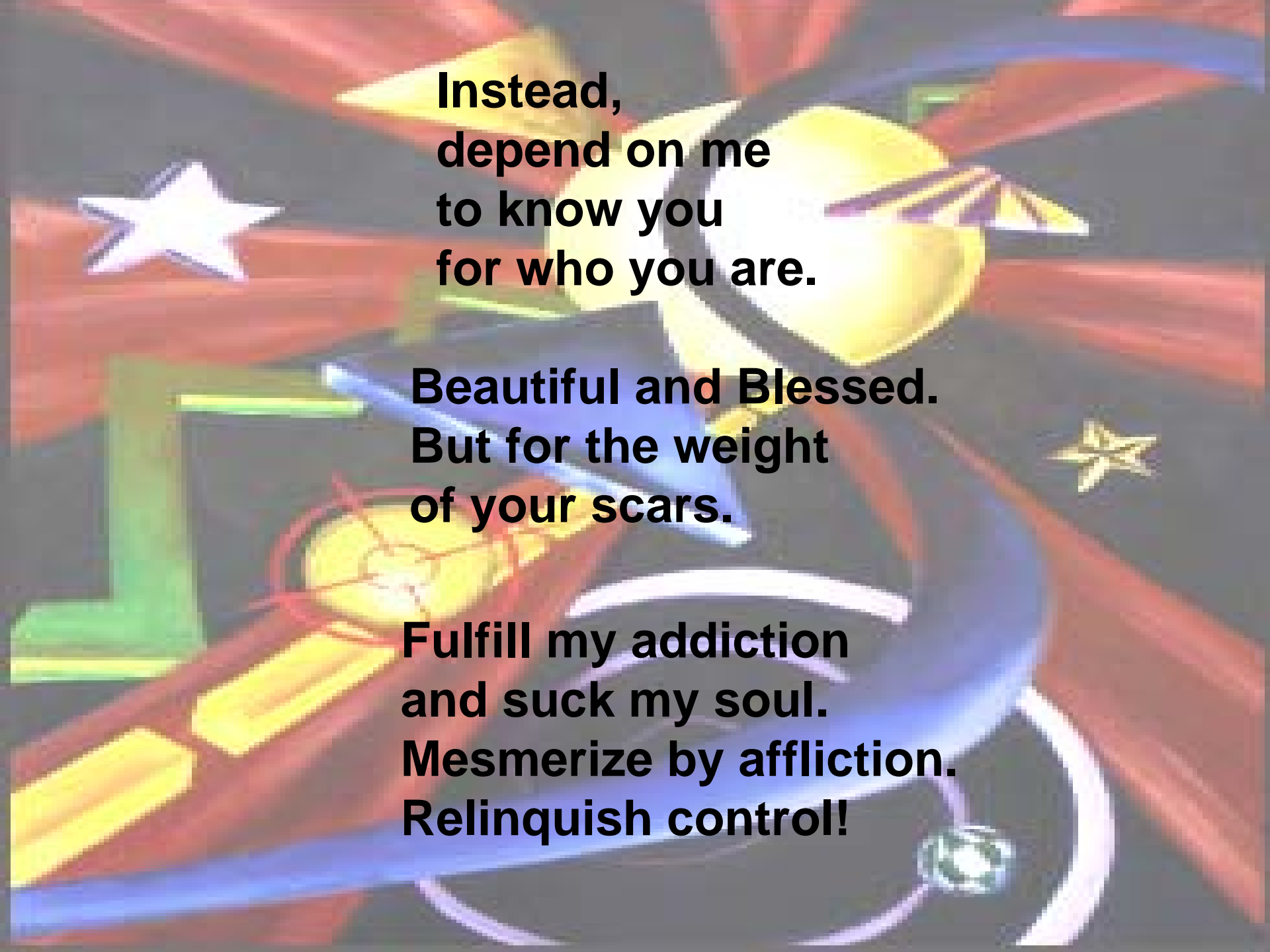
**I write for the both of us
and when you finally read
you will start to understand
and fully concede.**



That...

**Years will pass
along your endeavor.
The things you know
will debase by tremor.
Once shaken,
and not just stirred,
your life will be taken
for another turn.**

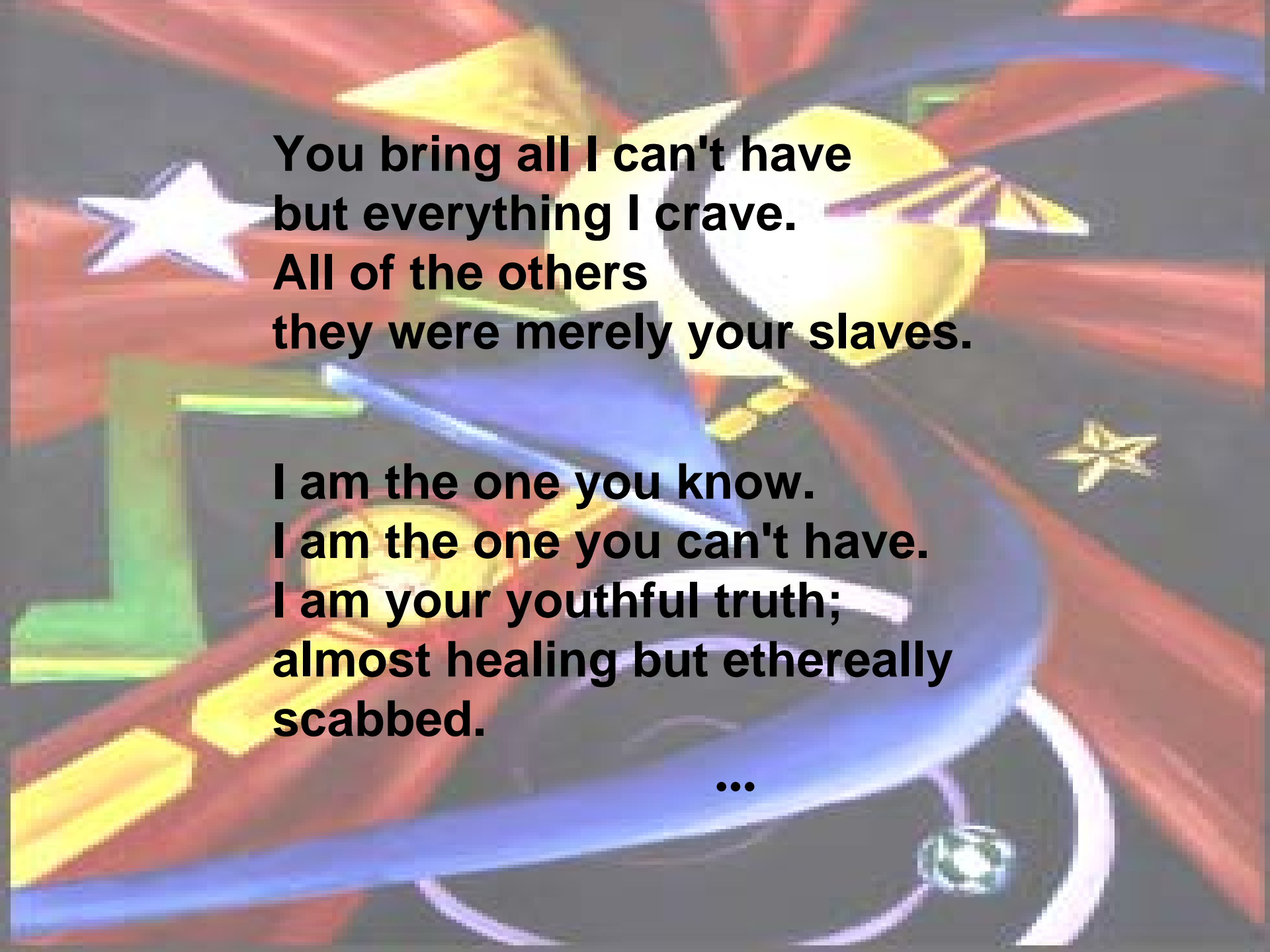
**I am here for all of it.
I am here in your heart.
Don't dawn your
costume.
Don't come apart.**



**Instead,
depend on me
to know you
for who you are.**

**Beautiful and Blessed.
But for the weight
of your scars.**

**Fulfill my addiction
and suck my soul.
Mesmerize by affliction.
Relinquish control!**



**You bring all I can't have
but everything I crave.
All of the others
they were merely your slaves.**

**I am the one you know.
I am the one you can't have.
I am your youthful truth;
almost healing but ethereally
scabbed.**

...



You are the one I love -

**Too bad the signs
are so different above.**



“The Hand”

Artist: Dinah Novy

Medium: Clay



“Daisy”


Artist: Jane Zimmer
Medium: Photograph

Excerpt from Poet of Knighthood

Casey J. Murphy

**Bigger journeys
now come to pass.
Wedding rings
and twilight dreams
float beyond my grasp-**

**but I don't reach out,
they will remain.
I can play my hand
and make my name.**



**And so it goes-
A love lost,
fabled by breakup,
emblazoned in gloss.**

**A gift of clarity
and
this noble Knight
will ride on-
into life
Awakened, Again
by the Coming
of new Dawn.**



“Twilight Universe”

Artist: Shawn Ellington

Medium: Acrylic on Canvas



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