

*“The Loudest Silence You May Ever Hear”*

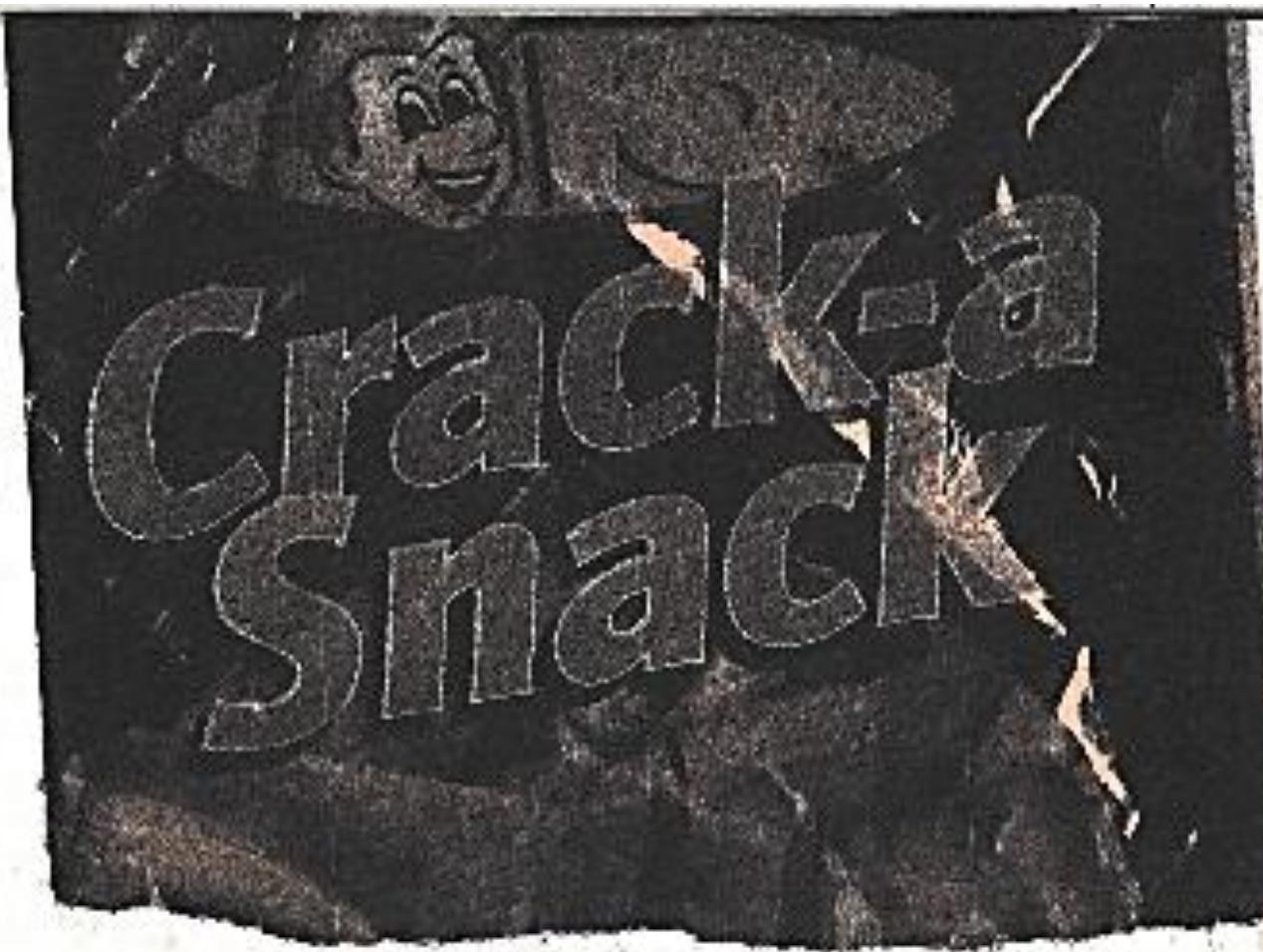
By Liam Van Der Heever

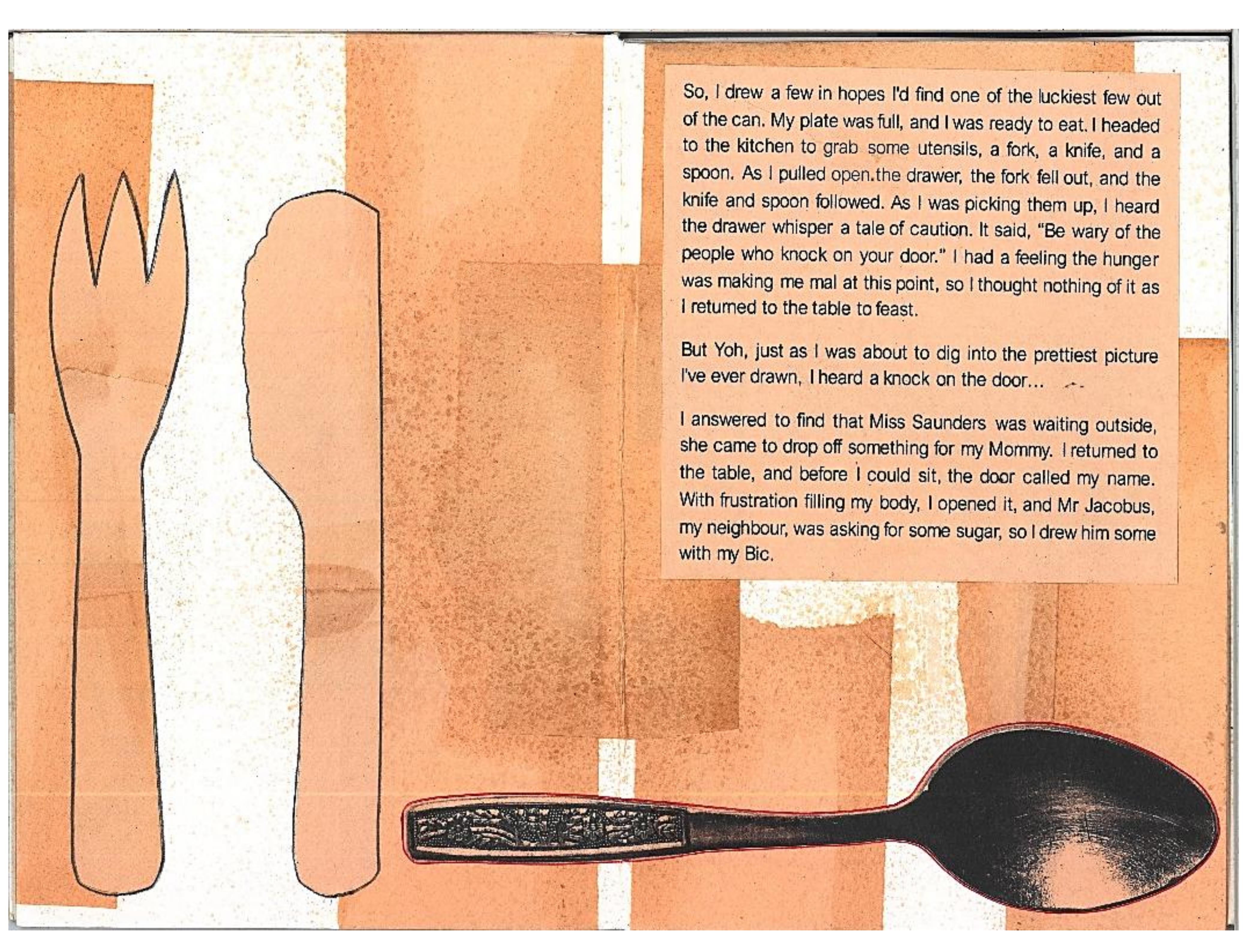


I was walking home, and picked up a few sweets at the bhai, with that change that weighed my pocket down. The day was sunny and had that very South African filter over the city line, that warm and still colour carried me home, and as I entered at the gate, I heard these whispers with silence, followed by the sound of laaities being let out of the school yard down the road.

I eventually headed towards the kitchen after resting my bag on the chair in the lounge, and realized there was no bread. I hopped from room to room, chewing my chappies to wean off the pain in my stomach, until the dining room caught the corner of my eye; the table was missing chairs, apart from one. A full table and a single chair.

I approached the seat and saw an empty plate with floral detail, and there was some very old paper on top of it, slowly gaining a deeper sepia tone the longer I stared at it. I decided to fetch my Bic and started drawing a meal, as I felt my stomach lay its plea of hunger, my eyes found clarity, then suddenly all I could see were stars.





So, I drew a few in hopes I'd find one of the luckiest few out of the can. My plate was full, and I was ready to eat. I headed to the kitchen to grab some utensils, a fork, a knife, and a spoon. As I pulled open the drawer, the fork fell out, and the knife and spoon followed. As I was picking them up, I heard the drawer whisper a tale of caution. It said, "Be wary of the people who knock on your door." I had a feeling the hunger was making me mal at this point, so I thought nothing of it as I returned to the table to feast.

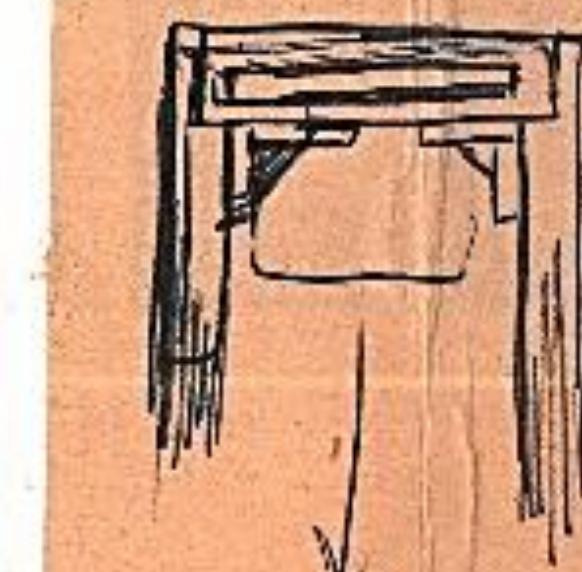
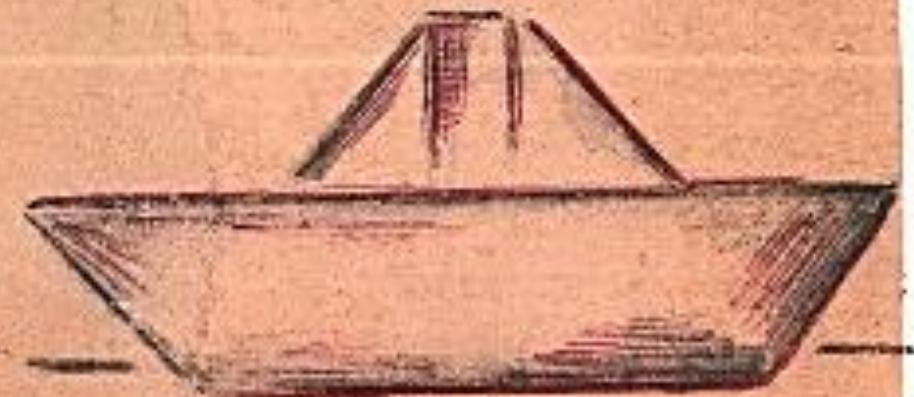
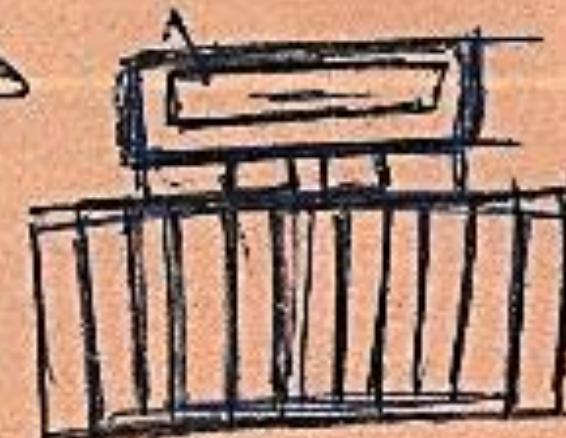
But Yoh, just as I was about to dig into the prettiest picture I've ever drawn, I heard a knock on the door...

I answered to find that Miss Saunders was waiting outside, she came to drop off something for my Mommy. I returned to the table, and before I could sit, the door called my name. With frustration filling my body, I opened it, and Mr Jacobus, my neighbour, was asking for some sugar, so I drew him some with my Bic.

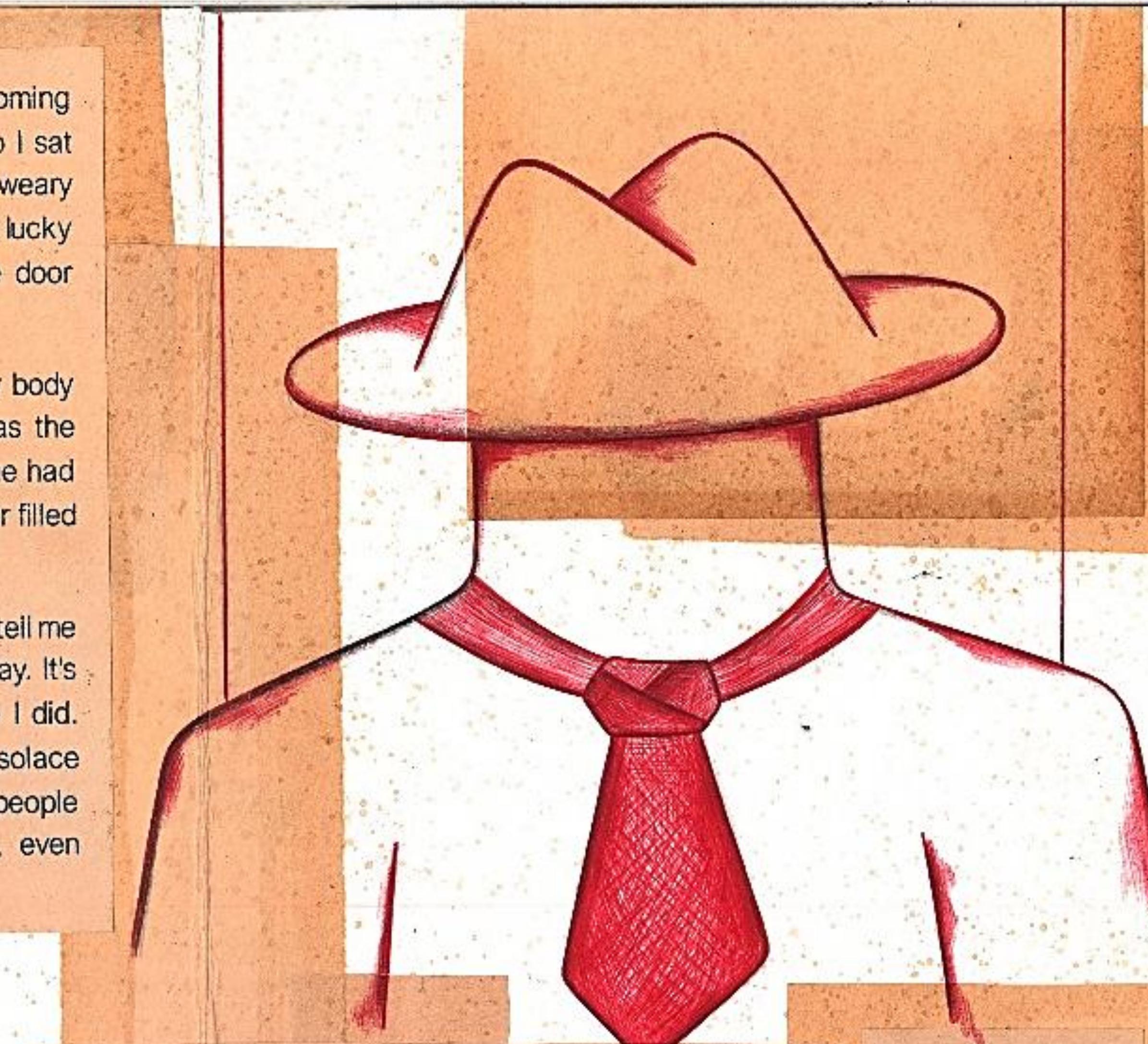
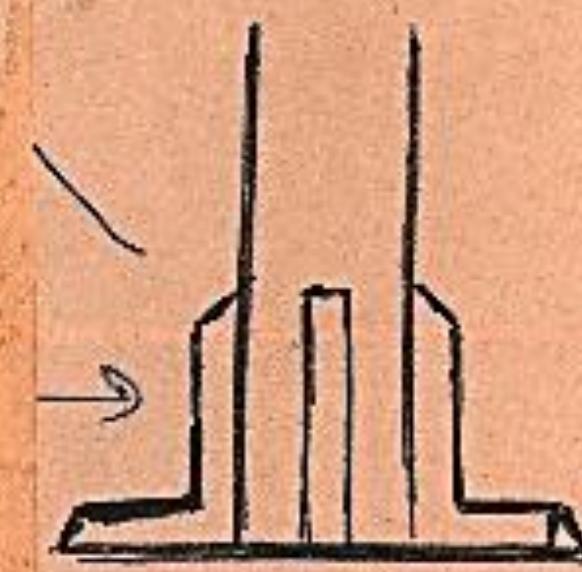
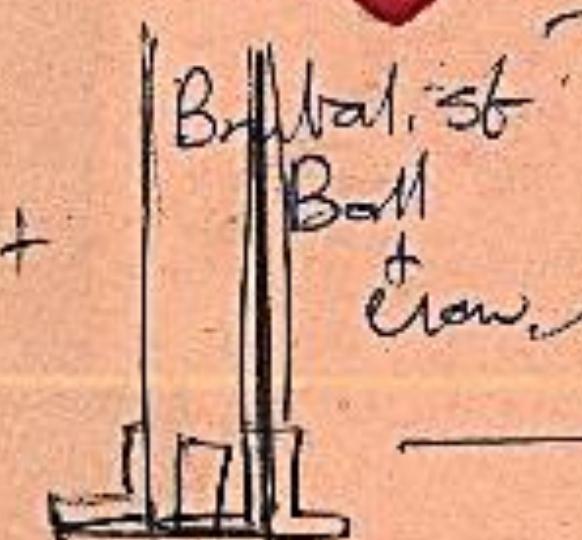
When I returned, I grew a feeling that I would be welcoming someone else to this house, but I wasn't sure who, so I sat tentatively at the door and I waited – and waited, I grew weary of my plate growing cold, so I left my post to heat the lucky dreams I drew but before I could save my feast; the door found its voice once more.

So, I opened the door, I became nervous and quiet, my body lost the warmth it held so fondly, I ran for my stars as the stranger forced his way into my home, but alas, once he had his grip on me, he folded me up and put me in his drawer filled with the rest of his projects.

I understand now what the drawer before was trying to tell me and why the house was only filled with whispers that day. It's as if the wind knew what was going to happen before I did. The drawer we were in only got smaller, but we found solace knowing we had each other. There were all sorts of people living in here with me, pencils, matchsticks, marbles, even pins and needles.



build Peripheral supports



Every now and again, I'm greeted by another page, as living becomes more of a cycle, we laugh, cry, and sing together most nights, as we hear nothing but unfamiliar footsteps inside our new home.

I just hope that someone will hear my whispers and find that star, the luckiest star I've ever seen. I hope that when they find it, they hold it close to their hearts and show the world what it means to have dreams bigger than the grip of strangers and spoons.

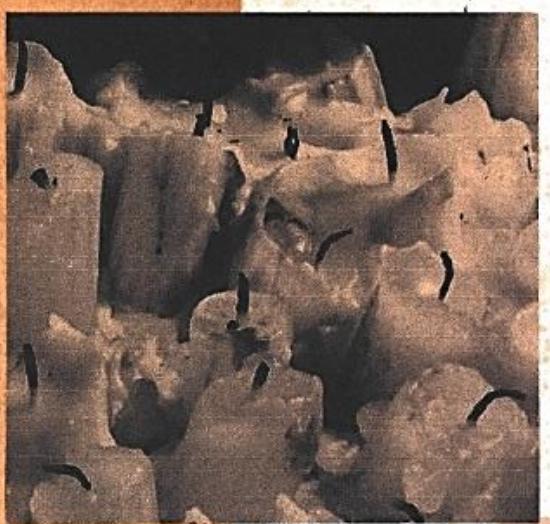
This I wish, as we are slowly forgotten in the drawers of the homes that were once our hearts, souls, and freedoms.



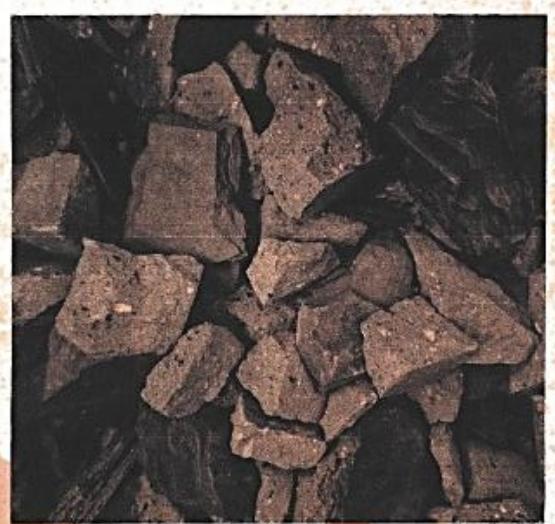
Please Unfold Me



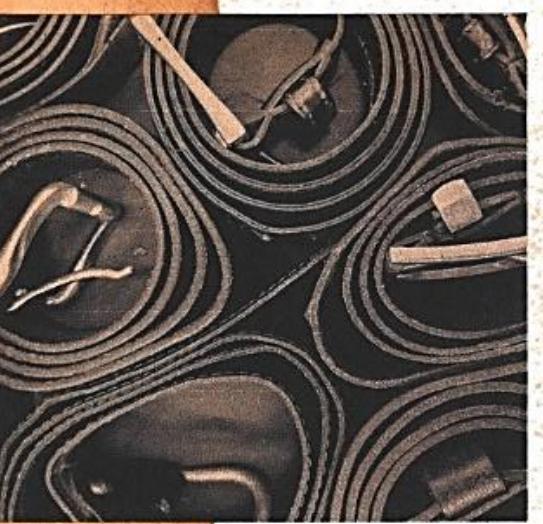
"Waars My Stoep!?"



"A Moment of silence"



"Skoon"



"PK"



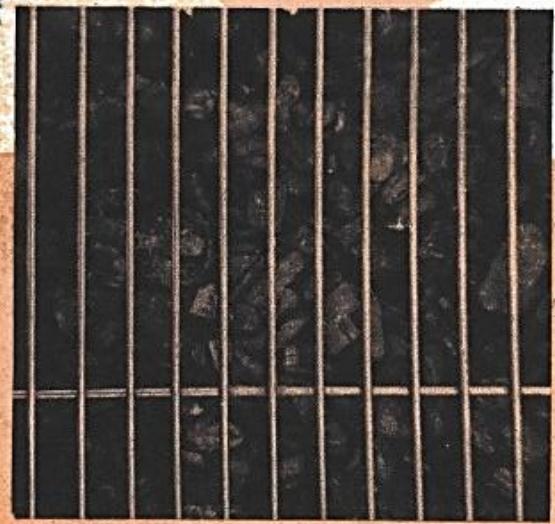
"Brown Money"



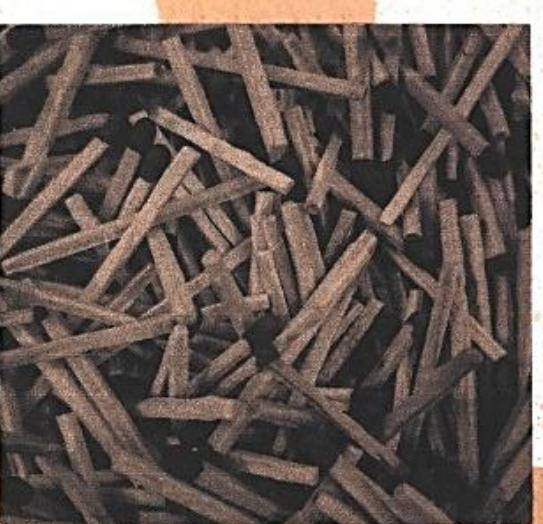
"When May we Cry Again"



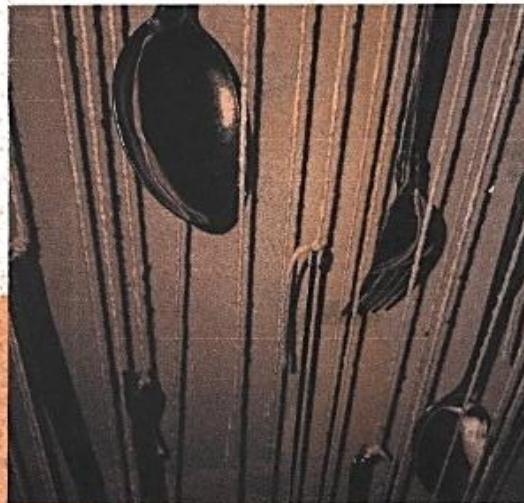
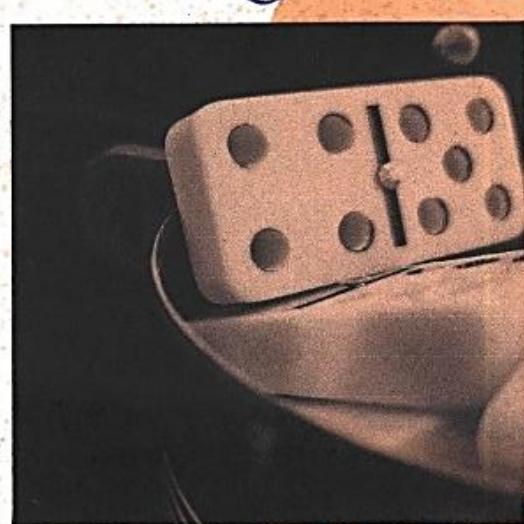
"Bhai"



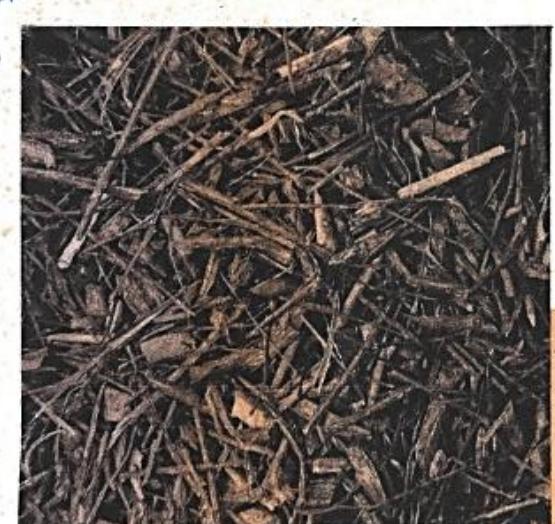
"Hold on tight!"



"No More Deals to Strike"



"Don't Drop the Spoon!"

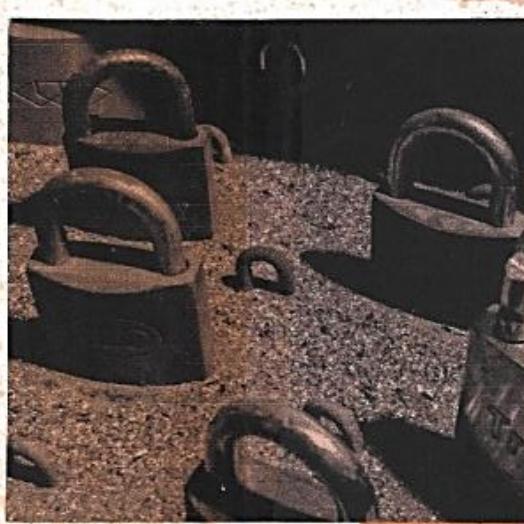


"Sunday Best"

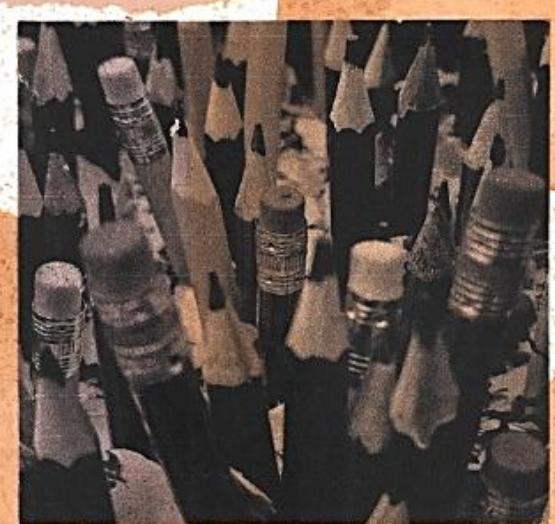
"Vat Om!"



"Spek En Boentjies"



"Safeties"



"Why so petty?"

Acknowledgements:

Uncle Stanley, Scott Eric Williams, Cheyenne Kemraj, Thato Makatu, Okuhle Gubuza, Shonell van Schalkwyk, Yonela Makoba. My Mom, Dad, Sister, as well as Aunties, Uncles and Elders.

Special thanks to my people, we wear our gees in so many beautiful ways, this work would not be without me seeing the immense joys and pains our communities are still not allowed to feel.

This is for all of us, I hope to only do good, create awareness and spread the love that we know, but is so often overlooked.

With love, respect, and care always

-LhVDH