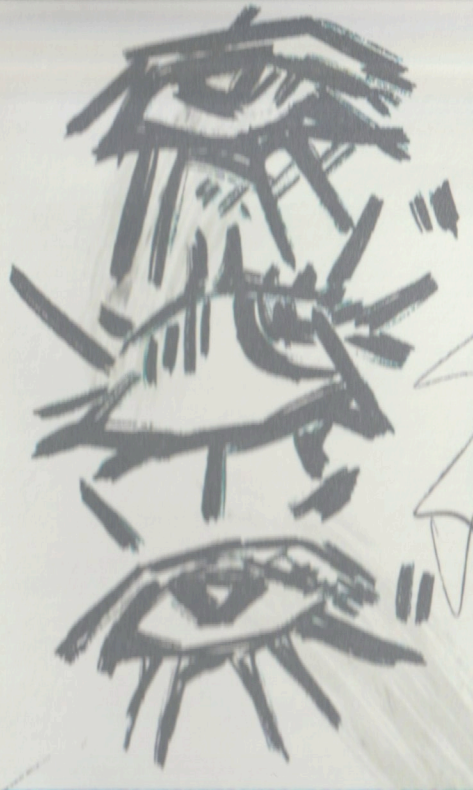


i had a hungry dream is a collection of art, poetry, prose by tiny lei. inspired by a probable future, and ghosts in the rearview mirror, *i had a hungry dream* situates you—us—at the edge (end?) of the world.

published winter 2025 by
sleeping dragons press *
handbound with love

DO YOU
THINK ABOUT
IT AT ALL

AFTER THE
END OF THE
WORLD



I HAD A HUNGRY DREAM

我做了一个饿梦





I HAD A
HUNGRY
DREAM

我做了一个
饿梦



sleeping dragons press

**a world boundless; in search of return;
a proverbial future**

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THE END OF EVERYTHING WE KNOW
DO YOU THINK YOU'VE
GIVEN UP ON
LIVING?



almost there



**DO YOU THINK ABOUT IT AT ALL?
THE END OF EVERYTHING WE KNOW?**



almost there

mother, tongue

说好不哭, i tell myself.

i wonder what a translator would tell me.
something about how it's okay not to cry,
probably. literal translation: talk good, no cry.

none of them say what i need them to —
we've been over this, i thought we weren't going
to cry. how sick and perverted it
is, to learn a language only to have a machine
built by the hands of an anglospheric god tell you
that you're wrong and that you've always been
wrong. maybe being wrong is the point.

maybe that's what
tongues are for anyway.

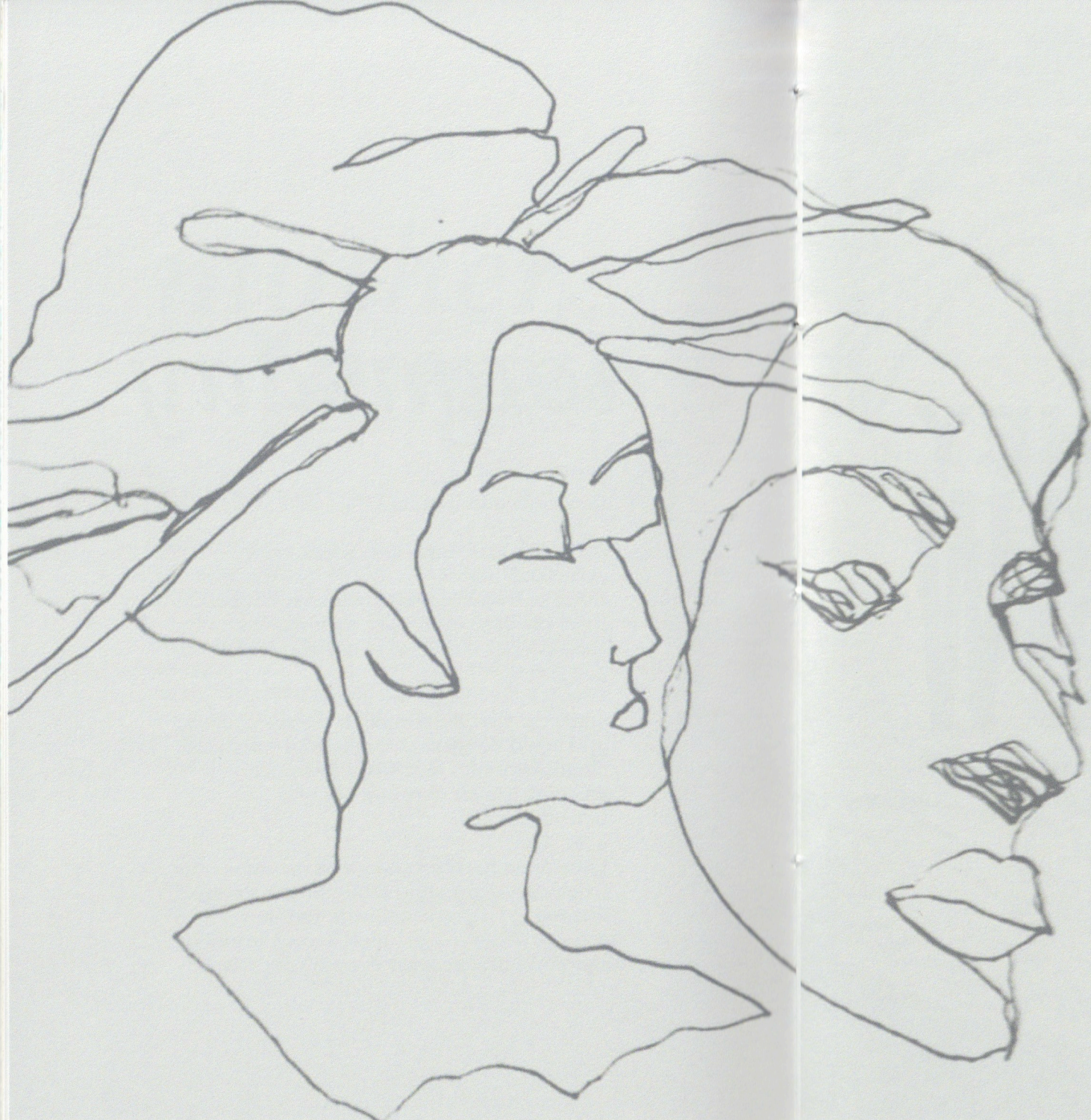
doomsday

time calls and it breaks.

curse this little body of horrors. body:
surveilled. body: broken. the
thing is, i watched the doomsday happen
from the edge of the sea, looking over
shoulders as if they were horizons to be
conquered.

when the first black hole in the sky opened,
all i could do was stare at it, and watch the
clouds turn into thin wisps of smoke,
writhing snakes crawling out of a
bottomless hell.

i imagined partial versions of the same
fragments zigzagging around the cosmos,
waiting for a grand collision that never
came. look, i saw the end of
the world and decided it wasn't for me.



i've got a Three Body Problem for u

my body;

tired body, worn body, body-that-
feels-not-mine-body, beautiful,
beautiful, earthly-body

somebody;

sun kissed body, glorious body, body-
that-is-not-mine-but-oh-my-god-do-i-
wish-it-was?-yes-body, beautiful,
beautiful, heavenly-body

complicated bodies, mathematical
bodies, body-that-does-not-sound-
like-a-real-word-anymore-body,
celestial bodies, empirical bodies,

how beautiful that this body does not
have an answer; how beautiful
that this body seeks none.

WHEN THEY SWALLOW THE SUN

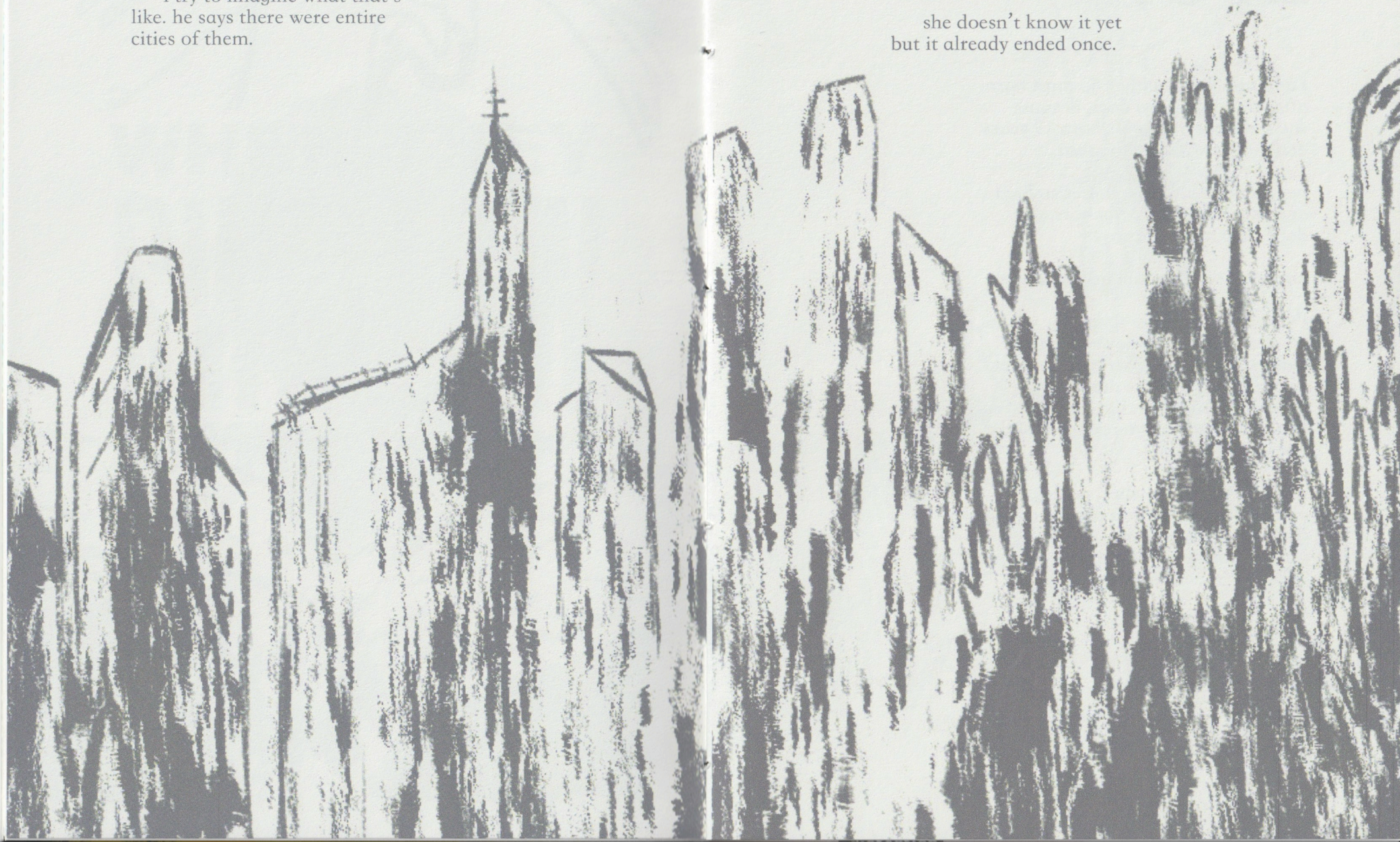


waigong tells me that before the shift
there were skyscrapers — buildings so
tall they scraped the sky.

i try to imagine what that's
like. he says there were entire
cities of them.

i can't wait until the sky splits open
and all sleeping dragons wake. li ayi
says they will wake, and then the
world as we know it will end.

she doesn't know it yet
but it already ended once.



2067

i don't sleep — neither do most born
after the shift. li ayi does, because
she's at least nearly 70, born 19 years
and 106 days before the shift.

her husband says she snores so loud,
and that's why the neighbors next
door keep moving away.

nobody's told him about the ghosts.

i've seen them a few times, the ghosts.
on occasion, the three children will
leave the house to play on the street.
we used to watch the ants move
mountains together, but i kept getting
stared at by the alive-residents of the
house. so i stopped.

nainai used to say you'll never get
along with them if you can't see them,
that's why she sent me outside to find
signs of life. that's why i pray to my
ghosts, make peace with my gods.



prayer

as a growing boy i dream hungry dreams,
caught somewhere between
becoming

undone

i've never prayed
to anything but death
and what is loneliness if not
the devil sitting in the corner

she said a line break is a prayer
a whisper
somewhere on the 道

i am trying to remember
i don't know how to get home

mirage

i scare the shit out of myself
looking in the mirror. the feeling
feels like some name on the tip of
my tongue but cannot seem to tug
out of my skull.

the shushu at the store today told
me i reminded him of his daughter.
she's only two years old, which
means the version of her that is old
enough to resemble me doesn't yet
exist. the palm readers said she will
die soon, too, which means she
won't ever exist.

i find myself wondering about what
it means to resemble someone who
has no form— not yet, not ever,
not even in the glimpses of a
fictional nostalgia. what does it
mean, anyway, to resemble? to
become?

quake

went to the bridge today, saw a new lock.
tagged here and geomarked forever. names
one and two, locked in a heart, in this place
they'll never come back to. if they break up
in two weeks but the lock stays here, do
their spirits ever really split?

maybe in their next life they'll
still be stuck together in the same
game map. that'll teach them.

on my way home, the trees start shaking.
another quake. third time this month.
according to the scientists, the quakes
happen much more now than fifty years
ago, but there are no
more high rises to shake down, so it doesn't
really matter.

li ayi down the street says she saw it coming
because of the earthquake clouds.

dizhenyun, she says.

they look like normal
clouds to me.

there is no difference between the seasons
anymore, which means nothing really
grows.

before she passed, nainai told me stories
about seeds and soil. how things grew with
the passage of time, how things changed
with the seasons. it was cold during her
winters, hot in the summers. back then
there was a rainy season, and occasionally
a dry spell where people wished for wet
roads. not anymore.

once all the governments figured out how to
manufacture clouds, it rained on demand.
like gods, they controlled the skies, marking
borders between particles of air, as if the
sky wasn't living itself.

at some point the rains became
uncontrollable, and toxic. nainai said that
once there was acid rain that came down
from the sky, burning entire populations to
a crisp.

then came the floods.

i'd heard this story once, about
how the deserts turned into forests,
and how the floods started getting bigger,
worse. bad spirits in the desert, but
nobody listened to the warnings, just
started planting the trees.
hundreds at a time, so much that the
lizards fled and the dam broke.

沙漠

REMINISCENCE

ORIENTAL COMPLACENCY

existence?

maddening

control

power,
purpose.

preserved

Dear idiots!

descendant
imagine,

INCENSE

Doubtless

wartime

futile

disappear

我做了一个饿梦

白沙

my home is missing the smell of baisha
cigarettes and regret.

i wonder if motherland dreams of the
diasporic, or if dreaming is synonymous
with the hurt.

UNTIL DEATH DO US PART

homage to a tradition in which love and
death walk hand in hand; light my
cigarette so i can microdose death like a
sickly child crawling home to mother — if
death is yearned for, where is the
motherland?

*originally published in thanatos review

apple, season

there was that summer i started smoking green tea leaves out of a makeshift bong made out of the plastic tube part of a stolen office highlighter and an old gatorade bottle. i'd heard about smoking out of apples before, but they'd told me the apple store down the street closed — something about apples not being in season anymore, which is funny because there are no more seasons. whatever.

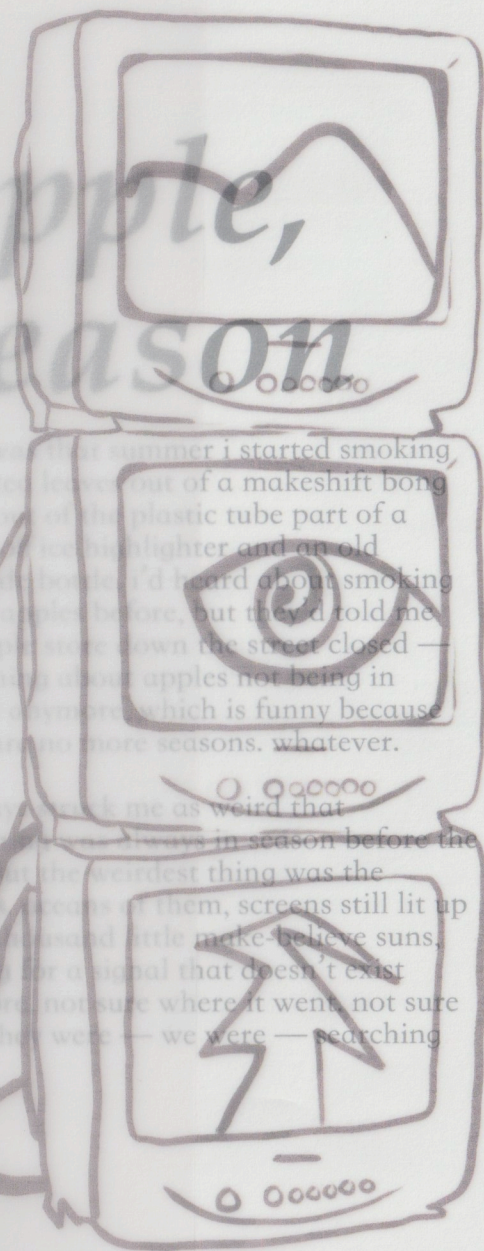
it always struck me as weird that everything was always in season before the shift, but the weirdest thing was the screens. oceans of them, screens still lit up like a thousand little make-believe suns, waiting for a signal that doesn't exist anymore. not sure where it went. not sure what they were — we were — searching for.



*to hungry ghosts
amongst others*

WHAT WAS I LOOKING FOR?

WHAT WAS I LOOKING FOR?



*to hungry ghosts,
amongst others*

tomorrow

could be better

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