



Citrus  
Circle

IF LOST PLEASE RETURN TO:

SNOWBIRD JONES

869 Barton St. E  
Hamilton ON.  
L8L 3B4

NO SNOOPING!!!!!!

Today's the day I finally get to go on the wildest nature trip of my whole 60 years on this planet to the most thrilling corner of North America....

FLORIDA!!!

My SUV has been weather proofed for the steamy terrain and ravenous hurricanes that may prevail during my expedition to see wacky flora and fauna.

Ontario has nothing against this place, and I wouldn't be too shocked if I end up staying for good. I've always wanted my own beach vacation home anyways, so a man can dream!

Though, I don't think I'll see much beaches where I'm heading; I'm out to explore the marshes and swamps. That's where the true oddities of nature come to new lengths of life.

I got a long drive ahead of me; grant me some luck oh trusty travel journal!

Having driven for so long through thick, waxy foliage and feeling the beating sun on my face through my chipped car windows, I finally approached a beaten path that seemed to be echoing my name.

I spotted it very briefly from one of the country roads I had been thoroughly toiling down around in Central Florida for the past week to find just the right place bursting with potential of active wildlife and lush tropical treasures.

The path was small, so my SUV had to stay behind in the gutter of the road... thankfully it seems that no one comes down this way anymore as the dirt seems to be delicately untouched by human waste or developments, so I can only hope for the best for my trusty vehicle.

Gathering my things, I hit the path and began my endeavor. I went for lengthy distance, until I heard something suddenly erupt from the brush, and changing my life forever.

In the blink of an eye I was met with the presence of an alligator, deeply wounded yet still very fierce. Though what shook me to my core was the eyes peeking through its mouth. It moved so fast at the thrum of its own beat like mosquito wings, and breezed through the shallow marsh with its innards stringing behind it like a gory carnival float.

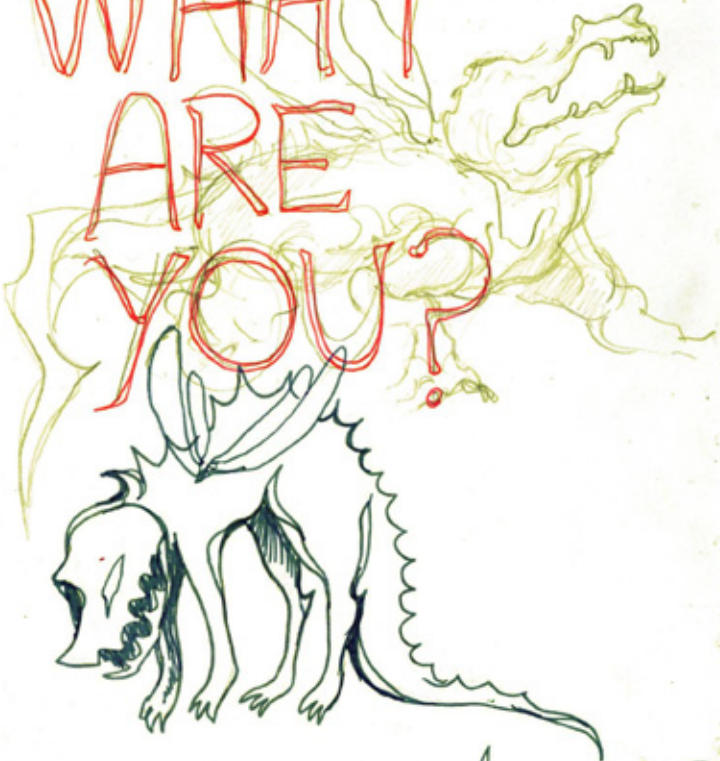


I haven't been able to stop replaying what I saw in that moment, the shock of being met with sharp eyes from something so inhuman can really send your brain to wild places.

I'm still struggling to decipher what I truly saw... Was that just that alligator's meal stuck in its throat, or did it actually have a hidden face?!



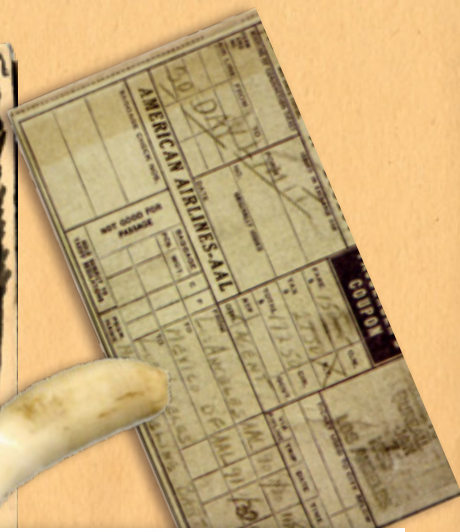
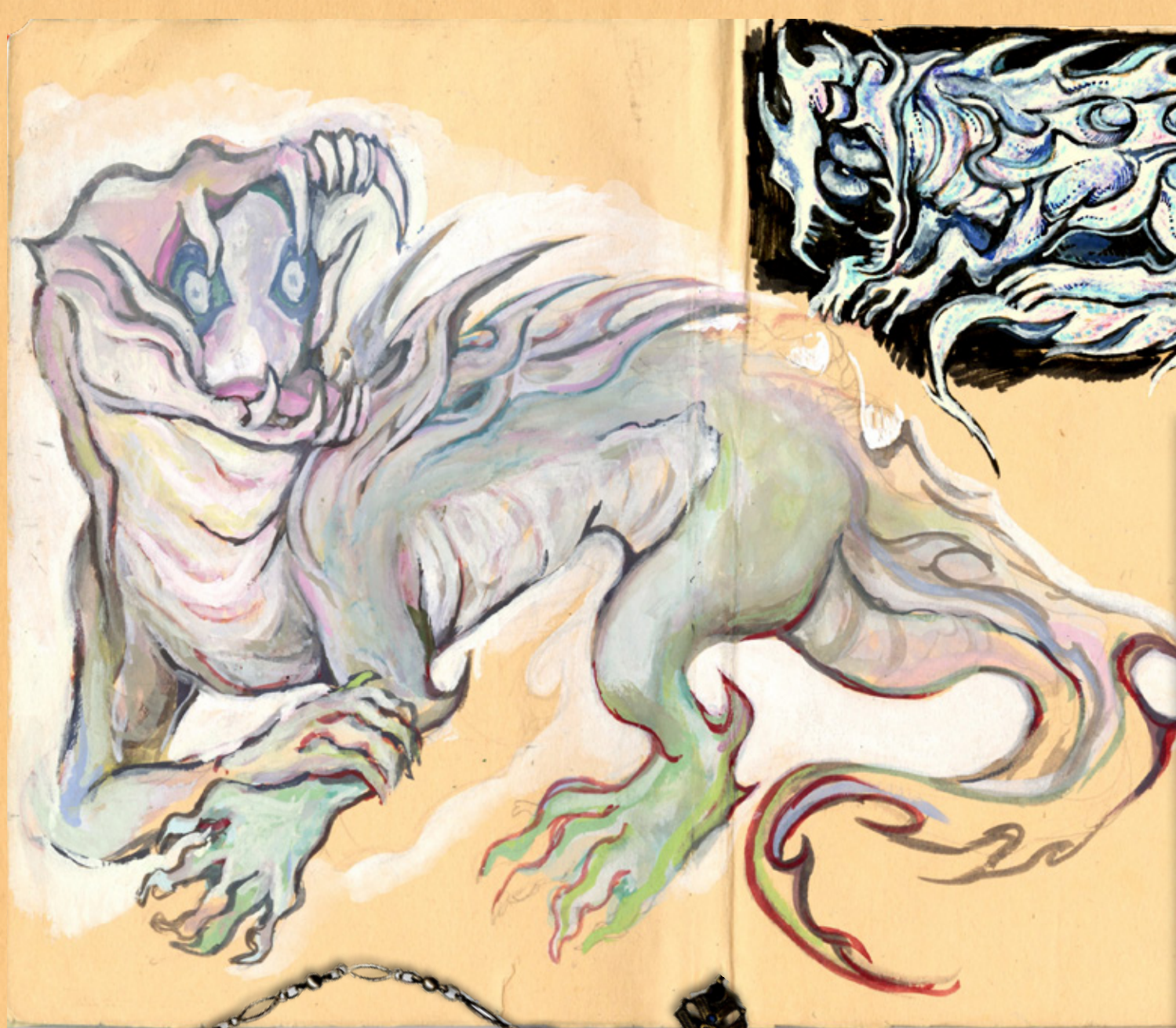
WHAT  
ARE  
YOU?



No matter how many times I draw this beast.. this... Goliath Gator.. I can't seem to fully capture it's elegant destructiveness and swift movements.

This beast gives me the impression of some sort of fallen angel, with thin wings and arches hiked on its head and back like devil horns.

Is the Goliath a threat and the reason why this town is empty, or is it a protector to make sure humans don't come back?



This Goliath Gator has become a beacon of wonder to me, and a staple as to what truly makes Florida a startling angelic place to come face to face with the closest things to demigods hiding in the swamp.

I'm still so captivated by the gator's pearlescent scales, the jagged spikes rippling from its back, and those damn eyeballs. The image of the Goliath from that moment is haunting; though it did not feel like immediate danger. The beast was injured, after all.

I wonder and fear what caused the disembowelment on the beast, because I think there are bigger threats out there that are waiting to be encountered.





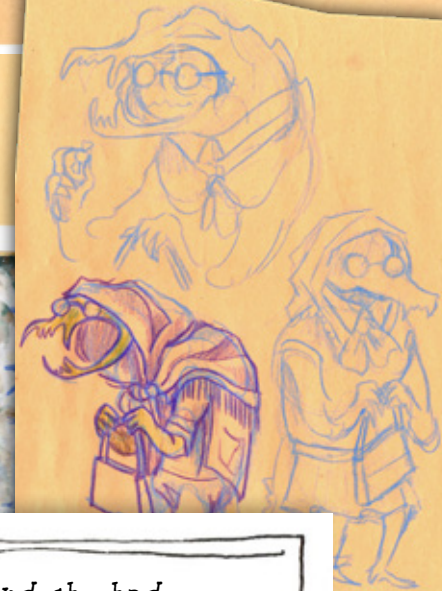
- hanging cloth
- records/gro
- old street
- fishing rod
- golf bag/ci
- carcasses
- scuba gear

It's been such a long day, and the return to my SUV before sundown seems incredibly unlikely, as does my survival being so exposed in such a foreign place like Florida. After more stumbling through the swamp and brush, my eyes are once again met with quite a surprise.

Amongst all the overgrown palm fronds and the droning sound of hissing cicadas, there's a long abandoned neighborhood in a cozy culdesac past its prime.... Well, that's what it seemed like at first, until the light from an open garage filtering through the humid evening sky caught up to me.

Incredibly relieved to be in the presence of something alive -something human - brought an intense relief upon me. But that quickly dissolved as the closer I got, what was inside this garage started becoming scarily clear. Deep and concrete, this garage was pretty barren, aside from the cuts of meat and various carcasses tucked away in various corners as some sort of poorly hidden stash.

My heartrate was higher than the moon, I NEEDED TO GET OUT!!! Though, in the middle of my silent panic and escape, a little old woman appeared out from one of the crevices of the garage, intrigued by her visitor.



Her name was Irene, and she had nothing but a warm and welcoming demeanor, despite the nightmare that her garage was a home to. She invited me inside her home and it was very different than the garage, as if it was stuck in time from a bygone era. Though, the more I observed Irene, something became incredibly odd, yet familiar about her..... particularly her eyes.

Irene seemed to be very reserved, though after a few moments of shared wonder of each other's presence implored her to open up to me, and what that entailed was unexpected but not unfamiliar. Before my eyes Irene removed her hood and revealed her true appearance- another mystifying alligator like the Goliath I witnessed before. Were they related? Mother and son? I didn't want to pry, but this opened my mind to even more internal hysteria and questions.



BINGO				
4	24	31	48	63
9	30	32	54	71
1	25	FREE	53	74
3	26	44	59	69
14	18	42	60	62



Irene treated me to a wonderful dinner from what I can assume is other alligator meat, though I can't be sure. It certainly was nothing like what we have back home in Canada!

We had a quiet evening chatting, one old traveller to another, bonding over the carnal dinner. She let me spend the night until sunrise, with the promise of keeping her secret safe.. well, this journal doesn't count for the most part.







When morning came, I said farewell to Irene and ventured outside to experience the secrets in the Sunshine State.

Having gotten some sleep and using the aide of sunlight, venturing around this overgrown ghost town yielded different observations.

I don't know if it's because of the overcast yesterday or because of the Goliath, but there seems to be more activity in the brush now that the sun is out.

At closer observation the plants and trees here seem to have more of a life of their own.. quite literally. Nothing could have prepared me for a walking palm tree.



As if the palm tree going on a stroll wasn't odd enough, in the middle of my amazement I saw a man dash on by in the distance of the mangroves.

He seemed to be in a rush, carrying a net of oranges and branches....

.....Until I noticed he wasn't holding branches. Those branches were his body. He saw me and ran off like a skiddish deer, though I hope we cross paths again.

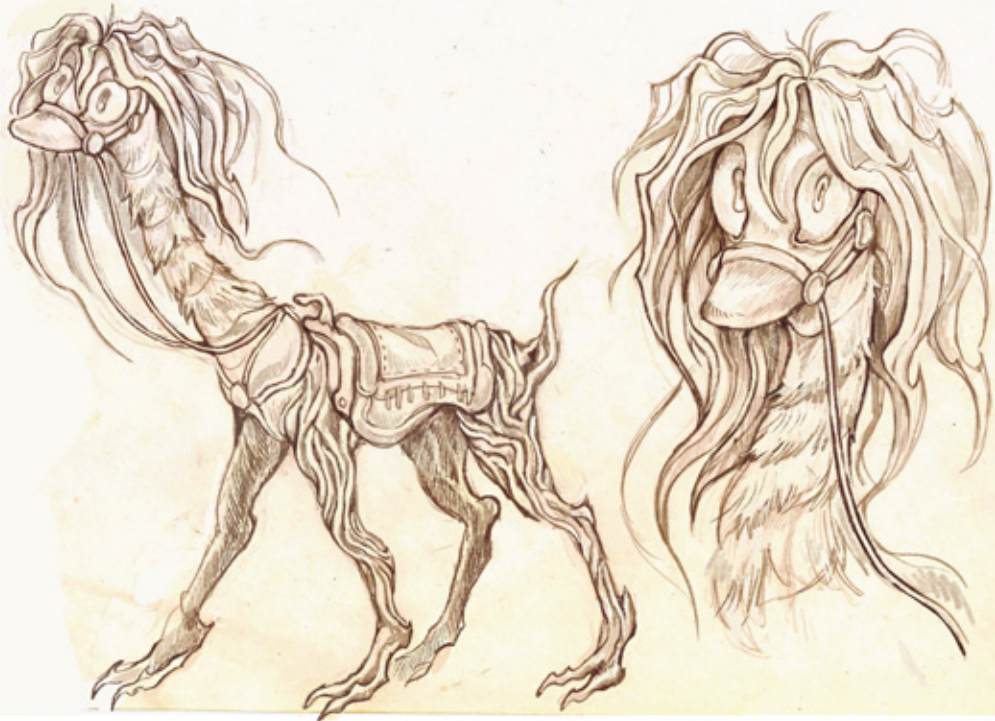


I kept going through the thick, moist marsh and observing the alternative wildlife.

The trees here do seem to have quite some personality; I had quite the staring contest with a stoic Sabal Palm and had to dodge a solo stampede from an agitated Royal Palm.



The plants closer to the ground and swamp like to keep to themselves, though I did get followed by a curious Dwarf Palmetto. I had acorns and oranges dropped on my head from cheeky Firebushes hiding in taller trees, and accidentally woke up a slumbering Clusia bush.



After some time walking and jotting down my observations, I came across a large clearing with a big swampy lake hugging all corners of the area. There were big, pale mangroves framing the water, frequently splashing their rooted hands to keep fish and insects from chewing on their bark.

And, to my luck, I saw that tree man again. This time though he had one of those Royal palms following behind him with a bridle.

The tree seemed to be fairly domesticated unlike the one I upset earlier; the sight reminded me of a seasoned cowboy with his trusty steed.

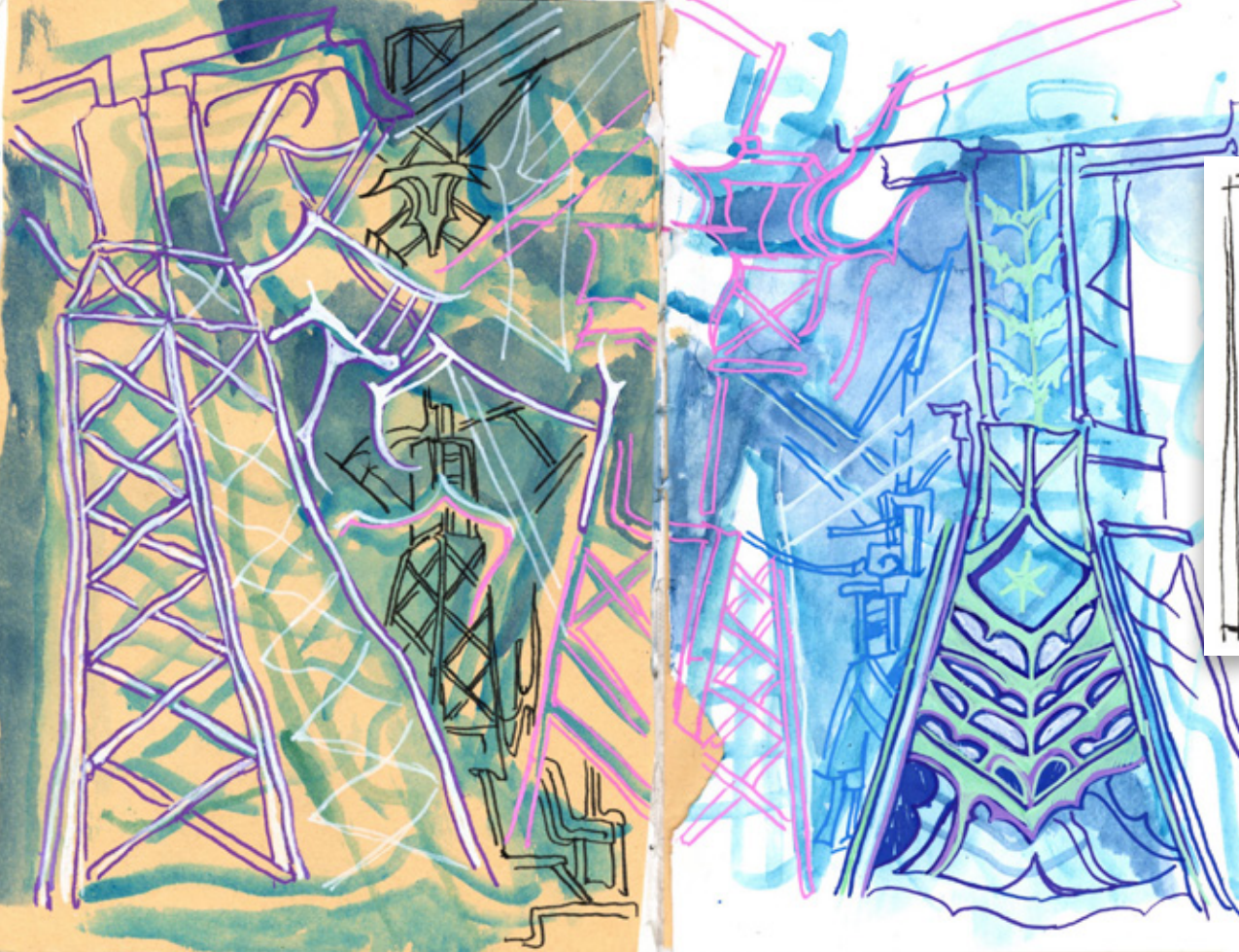
I kept watching the tree man and his steed from afar, but could finally see the fine details of this rooty fellow. He seemed to flourish in tending to the plant life and creatures around him, like some sort of landscaping wizard.



mat,  
are  
to it  
ADD MORE

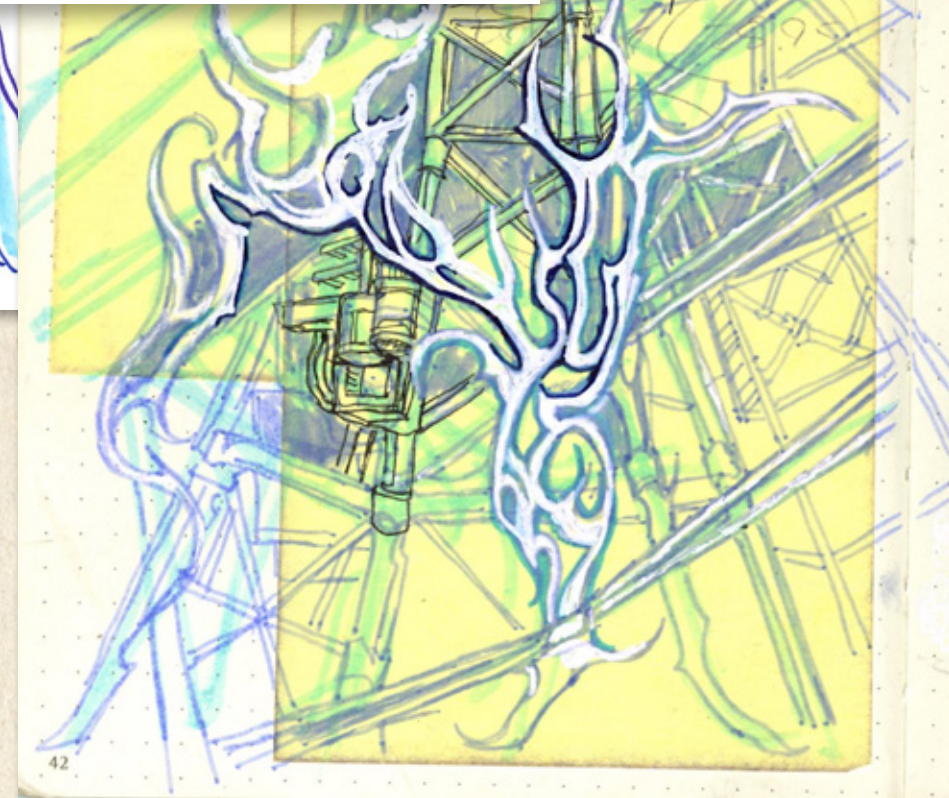


\*make a clearer  
image  
this is  
ass



I believe these once were transmission towers with their spindly wires and scaffolding, though something about them seems melted and almost other-worldly.

It could just been the consequences of climate change and heatwaves, though like everything else here, they seem to have minds of their own.



While in deep observation of the Landscape Wizard, I steadily followed his tracks from a distance. After passing abandoned houses, cracked streets, and overgrown brush, I seemed to have accidentally lost the Wizard's path.

Having gotten lost in a new part of this town has opened more avenues for insane spectacles, and nothing comes close to the daunting heights of these intricate steel towers hiding in plain sight.

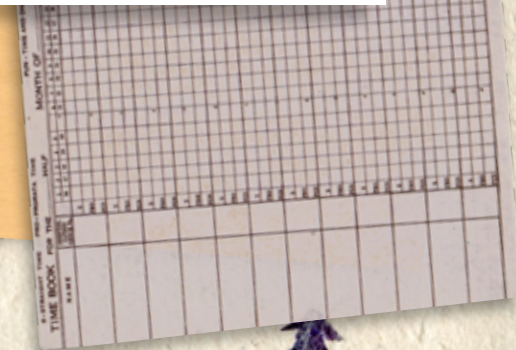


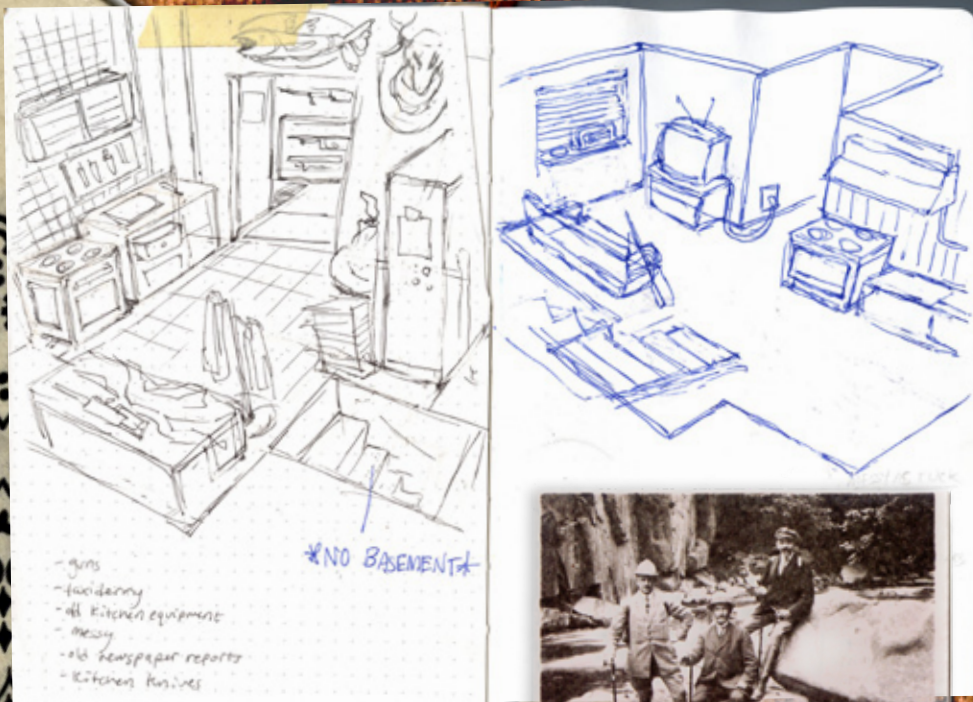
I got closer to one of the towers, and to my surprise the Landscaper Wizard had taken liberty of the gaps between the sentient towers as a place to rest with his mounted tree steed.

The site was truly peaceful: calm water across the swamp, golden rays of sun and warmth like a comforting bowl of soup, and swaths of plant creatures taking a mid day siesta with their whimsical caretaker.

The reflections of the molten towers and the beating sun cast fragments of light everywhere and for a moment, if you told me I was in heaven, I would believe you.

I already know how much I will yearn for this moment even before it's even over.





- guns
- food/drink
- all kitchen equipment
- messy
- old newspaper reports
- kitchen knives

\*NO BASEMENT\*



## ALLIGATOR HUNTER

- make less human?



comically tiny gun

As the afternoon started to near to an end, I headed back to the main neighborhood culdesac. I backtracked as much as possible to where I could remember where Irene's house was, until I was greeted to the sound of a gun being locked and loaded directly behind me.

Out of instinct, I froze and put my arms up to feign innocence. I slowly turned around and was face to face with another man - an actual human this time - and a very.. tiny rifle. My fear melted away pretty fast at the realization, though I still don't know what this guy is capable of.

13  
PAT. APPLD. FOR

This guy was not fucking around, despite his laughable arsenal. Once he realized that I was just some old fart with a journal and a sunburn, he put his weapon down and saw me eye to eye.

I asked for his name, but he acted as if he didn't hear me and immediately jumped into asking \*me\* questions. Though, they weren't questions about myself.

All he kept talking about were alligators. Or, more accurately, asking me if I saw one gator. The Goliath Gator.

His fascination for the creature was not in the same vein as mine, he has a much more.. murderous opinion on the beast.

I think I know now what caused that injury on the Goliath.



He knew that I knew something about this place and about the Goliath, and wasn't going to let me go until I gave him what he wanted, and maybe even more than what I can bargain for.

This is going to be a long night, and I pray that I can make it out alive. Despite being the only human here, he is the scariest animal I've come across yet.

... I just hope my SUV is still okay.





.....to be continued