



PENERBIT
UNIVERSITAS
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behind the grey
veil

Joline Given Juarsa



behind
the grey veil



**PENERBIT
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Behind the Grey Veil

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Joline Given Jaursa

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PENERBIT UNIVERSITAS CIPUTRA

Penerbit Universitas Ciputra

Citraland CBD Boulevard, Kel. Made, Kec. Sambikerep,

Surabaya Jawa Timur, 60219

Email: penerbit@ciputra.ac.id

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AGED

PRETENTIOUS DECEPTOR (?)

(UN)TRUST

OPEN.

some of this was
never mine *alone*.

some of this was
never mine *alone*.

to what i could not keep.

to what i could not keep.

OI
shroud of the veil

This layer explores questions of selfhood, fragmentation, and becoming. “Mask of the Veil” suggests both concealment and revelation, how identity is often performed, hidden, or fractured. The poems and photographs here focus on the shifting faces we wear, the echoes we carry, and the tension between the seen and the unseen self.



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vanity

this flesh longs for the garden of ivy,
the sap it thirsts bleed through pores of skin,
to deny is to burn alive,
to satisfy is to die in vain.

dress of ferns is meant to adorn,
yet within shade of trees
mortality lies





to be consumed

is the cost of wanting

*what do you become
in the act of wanting?*

drowning desert

a pearly clam
lucently so,
insufficient to hide

freedom,
a drunk desert underneath
the dead sea's cue to remain
at a standstill.





what is hidden halts its own freedom.

*what feels like freedom,
yet holds you still?*

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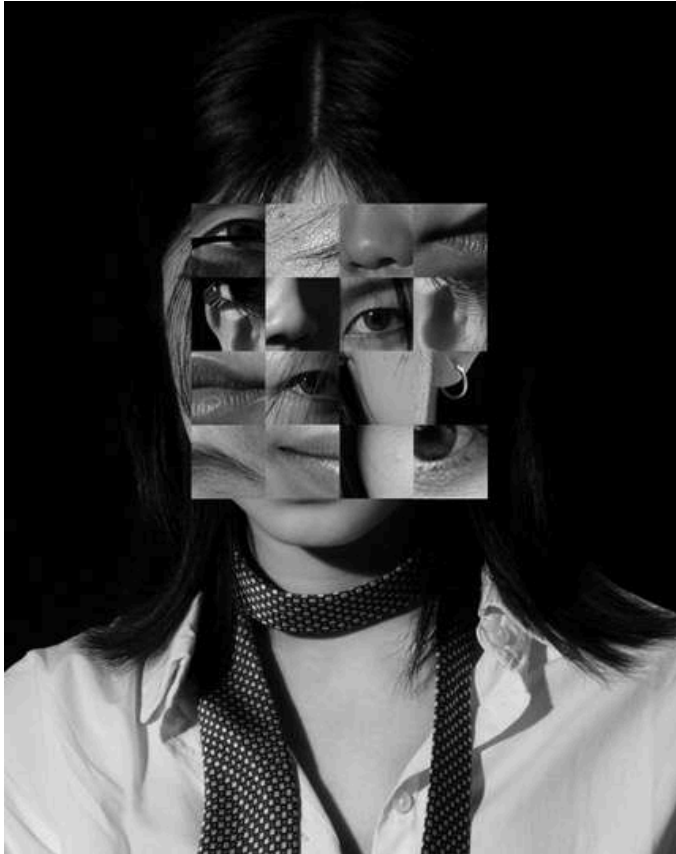
second skin's labor

a name fails where authenticity has been
reduced to resemblance;
a grafted niche stitched against the soul's skin,
a fool's ransom paid in futility.

a legible judge is a man's folly—
for none nit-pick a dust from its sediment,
to decree a fleck distinct.

trophy on empty pride, upon nothing;
the mirror tallies—
a sentenced irony for life?

what remains when desire burns itself?
who remains when façade peels,
but a pursuit without arrival?



to resemble is not to become.

what of you exists without witness?

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unseen.

envious of a foolish man.
survives solely under the rug

courtesy is a plague,
bare chest on thick lies,
upheld false pride in ignorance.

what's to boast?



ease does not *absolve*

what is *ignored*.

what in you goes unexamined?

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scald

people, self-complacent,
foolishly obscured
within their own hypocrisy.

the world burns relentlessly,
devouring flesh tirelessly.

we breathe to be.
yet perpetually, mere facades
pollute ways to exist.

might as well be,

scalded in exasperation,
torn apart from within

succumbing to flee,
dampened in bewilderment



facades endure; the rest falls through.

what in you refuses to fall away?

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O2

sliver of the veil

This layer examines the fragile traces of love, loss, and absence. “Sliver” is something torn away from a greater whole; incomplete, sharp, and fleeting. In this section, poems and images reflect on what is left behind, what cannot stay whole, and how absence leaves a residue. It resists sentimentality, choosing instead to dwell in the sharpness of what is no longer intact.



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lily's song

ember traces from her soles,
never twice
blind sighted in cowardice

heart laced lilies;
a crown of thorn

dawn dresses her love still,
evermore so

what remains;



once a whole.



the person remains not,



only the trace of loving them.

what remains when the person does not?

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kept.

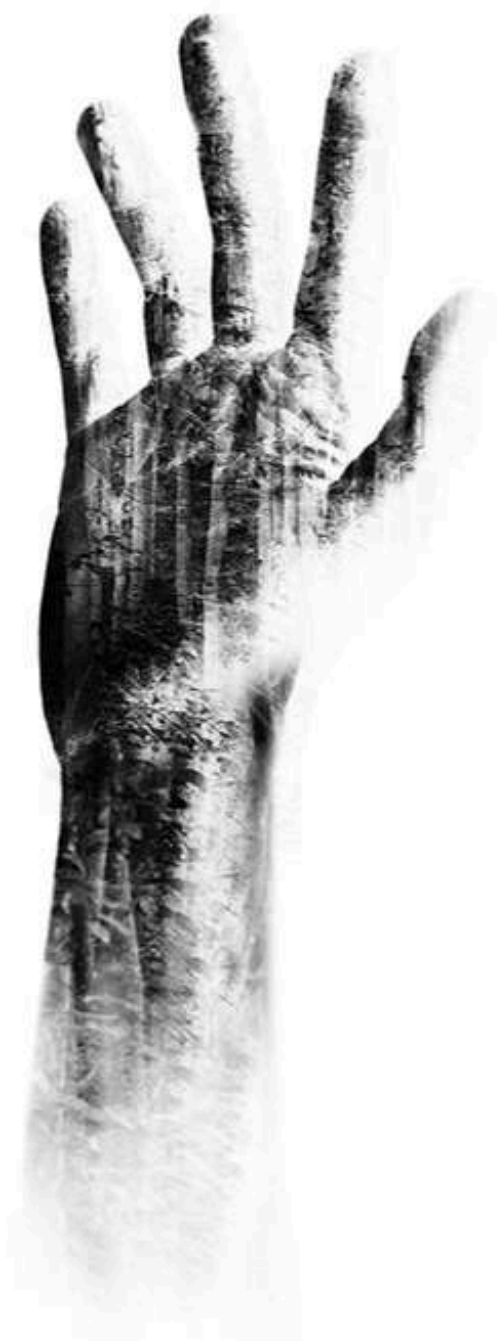
pristine tucked under flesh;
apple of a pair of eyes.

well,
well treasured.

to life's extent,
very preferably so.

blameless as a dove,
as flawless crowns wounds
ever unscathed.

some stay *untouched* in memory.



what do you keep untouched?

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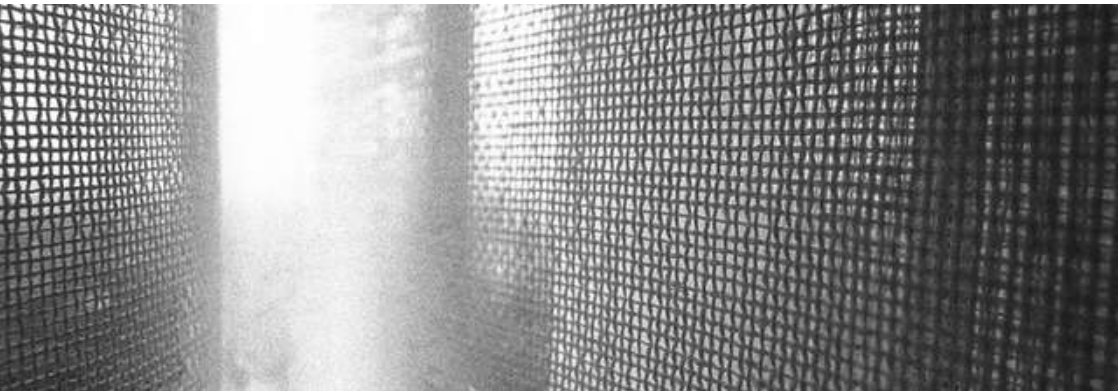
the bed smelled like cinnamon gum and
overripe pears,
wrists light as dandelion stalks,
skin warm as the space between folded sheets,
folded mouths.

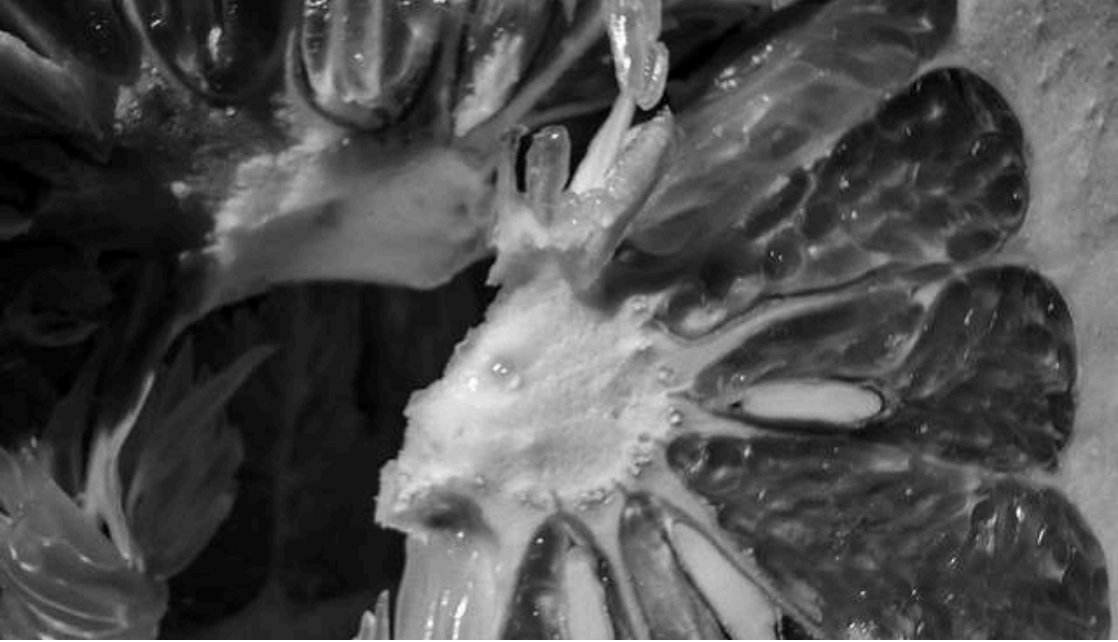
sheets & limbs

her little sister sat at the edge of the bed,
peeling an orange;
rind curling like a dead thing,
juice slick as the words you didn't say.

you blinked.
once.
twice.
slow as fruit rotting on the counter.

i counted every lash like a rosary,
your shoulder blade sharp under my hand,
a wishbone left unbroken.



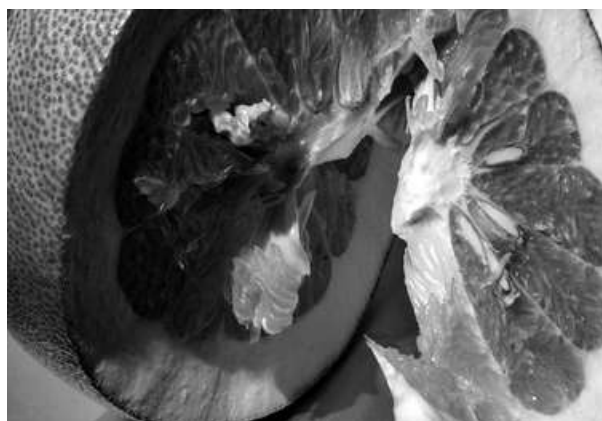


you laughed like glass hitting the sink,
clumsy, half-full,
too late to catch.

the fan spun lazy halos, indifferent.
stirred the air thick as honey. or blood.
or something we weren't supposed to name.

your breath a bare thread between us,
the ceiling a soft witness,
the night shifting—
akin to a dog untrained

circling,
waiting for a place to lie down.





the moment leaves as it happens.

you,

your touch

*what have you lived,
knowing it would end?*

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magnolia's dove

the dove lays upon muted palms
still,
a heart of innocence
and feathers of grace.

the warmth it brings
ought not wrinkle what once cradled

its delight;
spares the bluebell's hum,
sweetness sung from the valleys

what once rested in our palms remains.



what once rested in our palms remains

what has stayed gentle within you?

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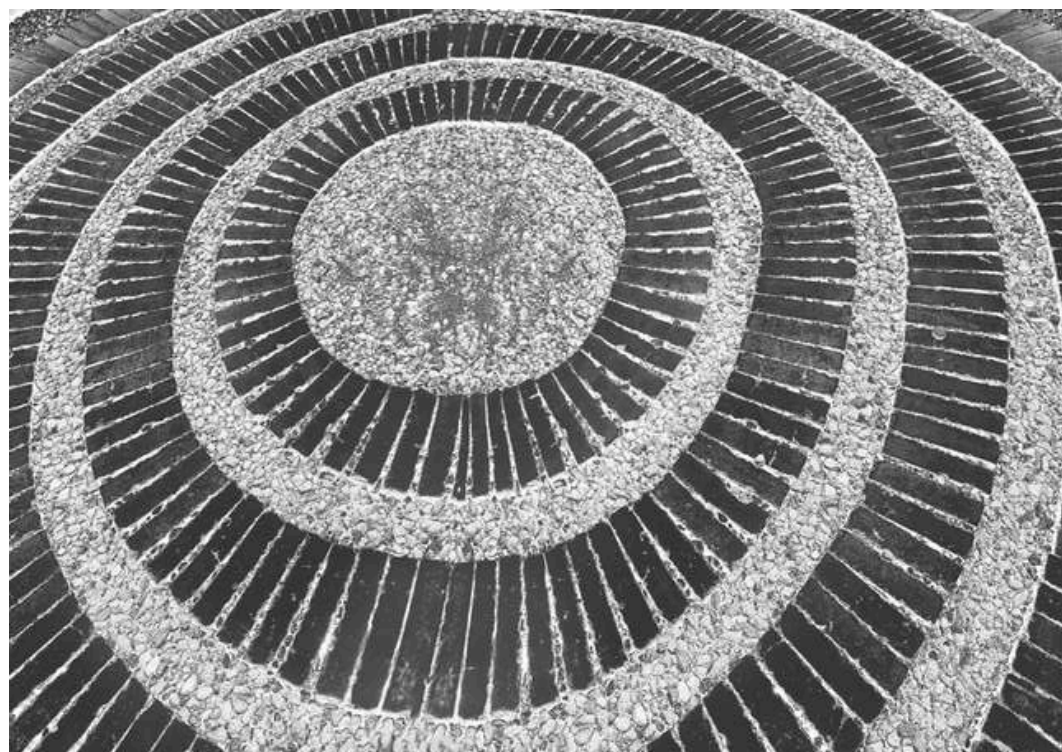
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unintended witness

the jagged lungs breathe,
yellow sparrow eyes drink back its foe:
rituals of the round road.

rights left like a hung man,
blame writ beneath sentence



the roads *remember* us
more faithfully

than we ever
lived them





what do you revisit,
though it does not let you rest?

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kindle(d)

mind a few ribs broken
burning loft stays by the shore
sandcastles built from hope that bled

dreary tangled sinews,
dragging a party of twins
a heart to flesh broken hearts

belief kneels to sanctuary's ruin
how guilty must it be for its glory?



some endings empty *both hands.*

some endings empty *both hands*.



what have you undone,
at your own cost?

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03
marrow of the veil

This layer moves inward, toward the core of being. “Marrow” is what lies within the bone. The unseen, essential, and the substance that sustains life. In this section, the work turns to spiritual longing and existential weight, not in a religious sense but in the messy, intimate way one confronts the self’s center. These poems and photographs seek what cannot be neatly articulated: the pulse of existence, the ache at the root, the truth that resides beneath skin and silence.



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fear's child

they said we were saved.
the word sat heavy on the
tongue;
a promise sewn tight
inside a stranger's coat.

god lived in the ceiling's lung.
exhaled human filth,
counted sins like greyed hair,
never missing one.

walls grew pores.
they watched thoughts
like guilt clinging to flesh.

the sky stitched shut
to keep us in.

verdicts whispered
beneath the chest
in a language the bones
understood.

god never touched us.
he hovers,
breath held
against the mirror.

this was not doubt.
this was held
without knowing.



to receive without discernment is to *stray* from truth.

what has shaped you before
you questioned it?

the stray

it comes,
whether silence lingers
or the storm weeps.

soft whimpers against aged woodgrain,
rasping claws at the walls—
long buried, now unearthed.

it knows the way breath hesitates,
a moth never learns
whether flame is warmth
or ruin.

unhook the latch,
watch it slink and drip,
gnawing at corners left untouched.
the house quivers;
dust learns to unsettle,
its presence bears scarring prints.





once wary,
now too assured to wait.

it rests its weight against the chest,
the leash lies slack in the grasp.

calling oneself its master,
yet it moves with hunger
that has never known restraint.

a guest unbidden.
do we carve into the heart,
trust it not to bite the hand
that reaches for the door,
or let it starve at the threshold,
and leave a part of us with it?

not all that comes from within
belongs to you.



what within you is not yours?

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unnamed shame

it pools beneath the marrow,
under your neck,
in virgin bone.

it does not identify.

fumes under its breath,
held half-full against skin;
kept, always kept.

it glares,
it breathes,
it runs beneath,

and never breaks the skin.



some things are *kept*

where they cannot
be *seen*.

what do you keep, even from
yourself?

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captive

what demands,
as if worth clings to labor,
labor to identity?

where does the edge begin to end,
when undoing becomes an act of defiance?



what you bind



may come to bind you.



where does your worth begin?

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what is given meets *nothing* within.

what within you has been reduced?

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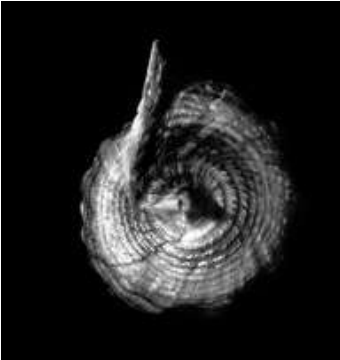
thirst

of drought, of splinters.
of worn sewers, of dried plum.
of rusts, of scraped knee.

amongst the dull,
the null.

who's known to come,
to question,
down a rabbit hole.

oh, how rome ends
where perfection lies.



what does your thirst search for?

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04
murk of the veil

This final layer lingers in the unsettled spaces where clarity dissolves. “Murk” evokes obscurity, thickness, and disorientation. A state where perception is clouded and unease hums beneath stillness. Here, disquiet takes form: the restless quiet of unanswered questions, the unease that comes with ambiguity, the weight of what resists resolution. The poems and images in this section refuse neat closure, instead embodying the haunting resonance of what cannot be fully seen or named.



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twigs of a cursed fig

who's left to hate,
worthy is a title no one able

twigs of a cursed fig,
fruits bitter towards nothing.

questions but a lost trade
 jaw clenched
 eyes never glare
 your index dug spine

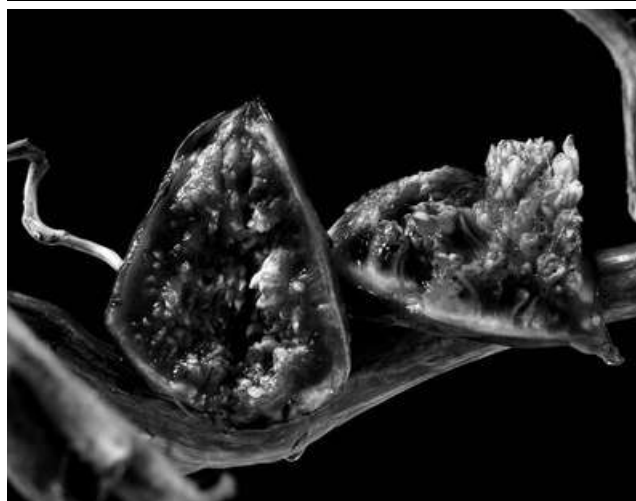
not just once.
not just twice.
not just thrice.

it sogs under thin line.

rip me.
rib me.
reap me.



what spoils is slow to leave.



what refuses to settle within you?

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aged

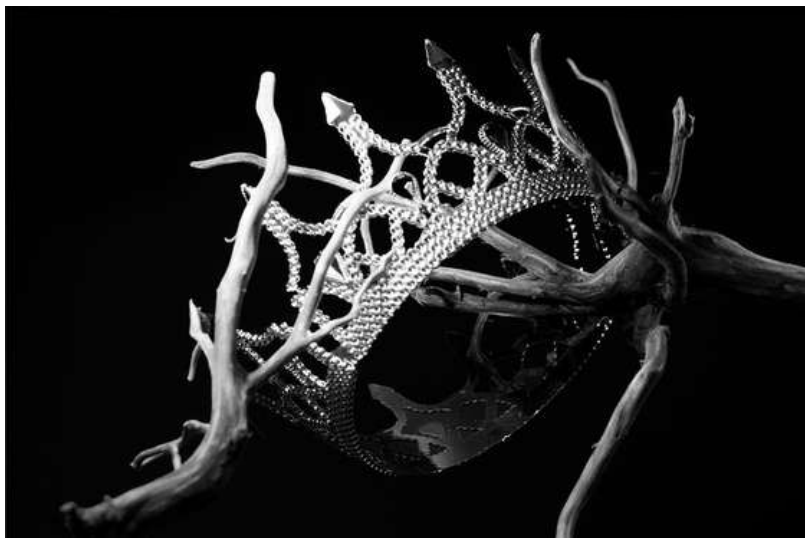
wrinkled wrists
weak and meek.

fiery claws across her tongue,
privileged to never be lost?

doubt her sorriest plague.
done never done.

rotten house,
rotten throne.

what is not questioned



holds its crown



what do you accept,
without question?

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pretentious deceptor

fire stirs
a field of ash,

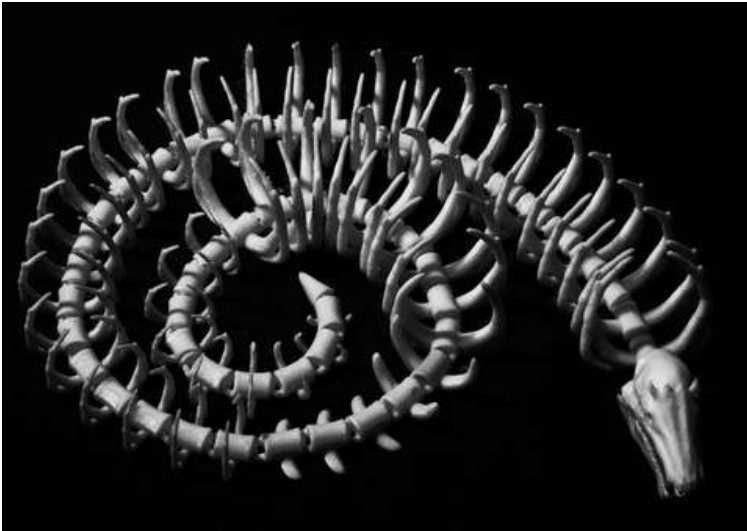
the sun
faithful as a dog
returns to lap at the earth's cold spine;

it presses its lips to ear,
a lover drunk on longing.

it lingers.
a shadow with a serpent's patience,
threading silence between waiting ribs

its fingers sneak
beneath the weight of slumber.

sometimes,



what returns speaks in your voice.

what do you let return within you?

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(un)trust

disbelief strucks your throat.
grief splits limbs again.

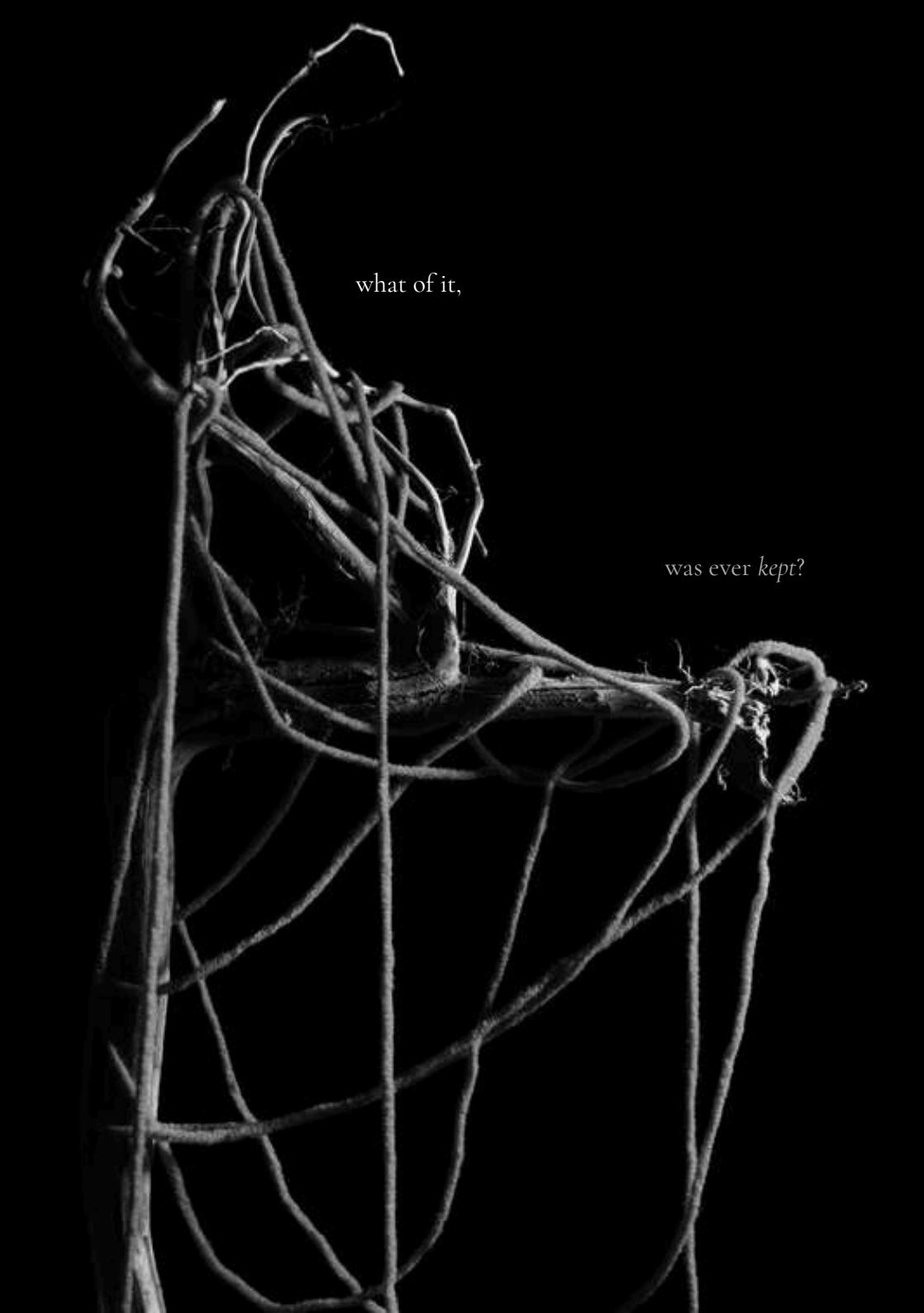
a pillar of salt,
a pillar of salt.

meaning lost between nothing;
trust, stripped of innocence,
left as if it never mattered.

wherever yours were kept,
or denied.

merry around splitting tongues.
pebbles on foot.
dead street rats.
palms muted to claw.





what of it,

was ever *kept*?



what part of you was
turned against you?

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open.

curiosity is where lab rats go.
curiosity eats from molten spoon

narcissists gladly take
soft hearts stake,
victim's mistake.



some doors do not stay behind you.



what do you open
again and again?

what do you open
again and again?

a book for all that was almost said
a home for feelings folded small.



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