

Stereo
Atypical
Healing

Devika Chotoe

“Stereo Atypical Healing”

By Devika Chotoe

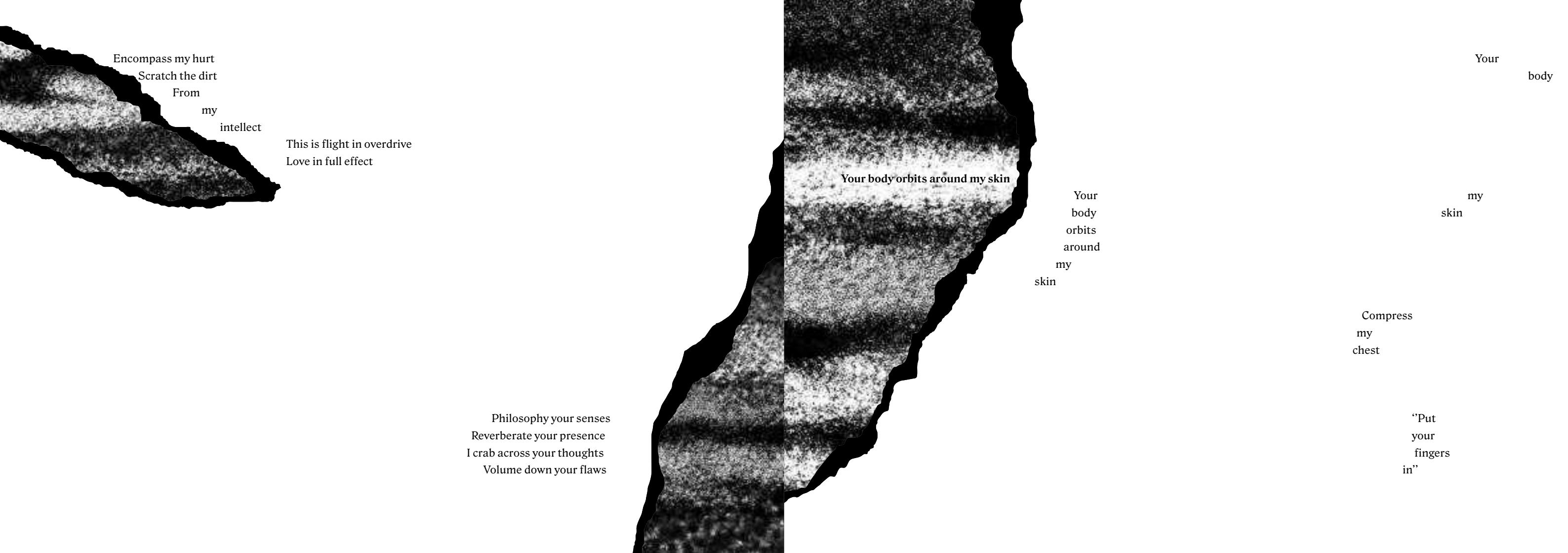
Graphic Concept: Devika Chotoe and Ricardo Mateus

Graphic Design: Ricardo Mateus

Photography: Carla Curado Gloria

Amsterdam, June 2020

Daily check in:
My sword is rusty and stained
The opening of my 3th eye gave me insomnia
My loneliness sounds crowded



Encompass my hurt
Scratch the dirt
From
my
intellect

This is flight in overdrive
Love in full effect

Philosophy your senses
Reverberate your presence
I crab across your thoughts
Volume down your flaws

Your body orbits around my skin

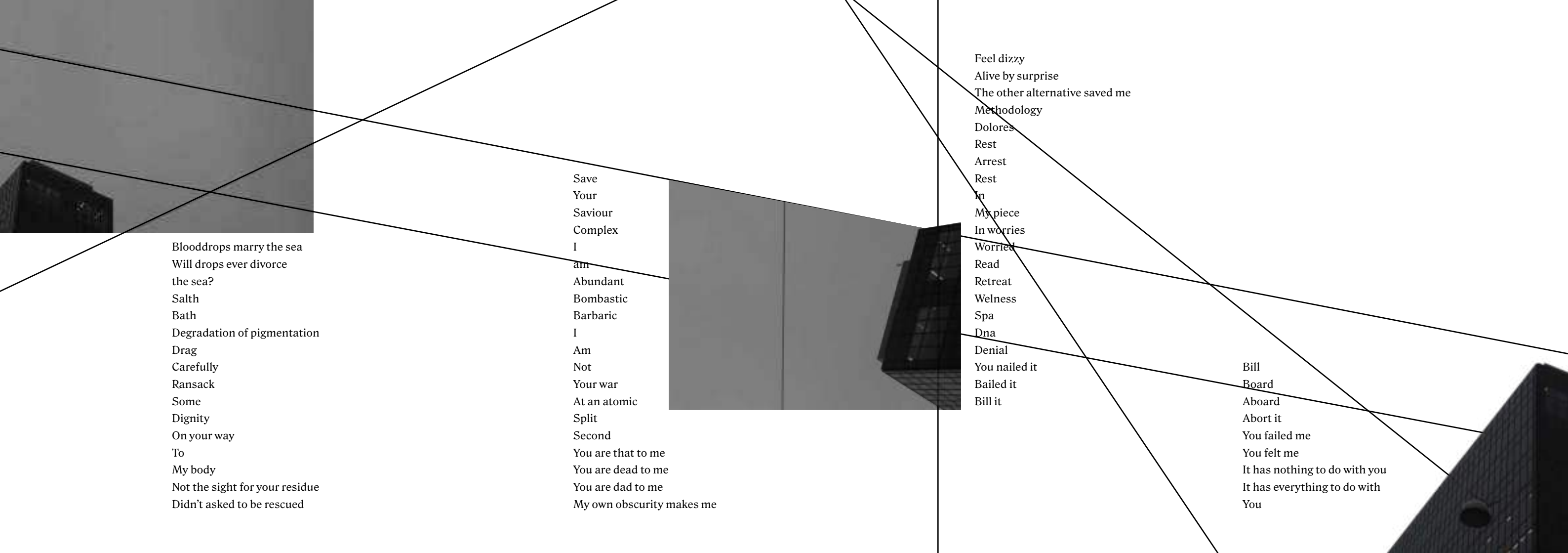
Your
body
orbits
around
my
skin

Compress
my
chest

“Put
your
fingers
in”

my
skin

Your
body

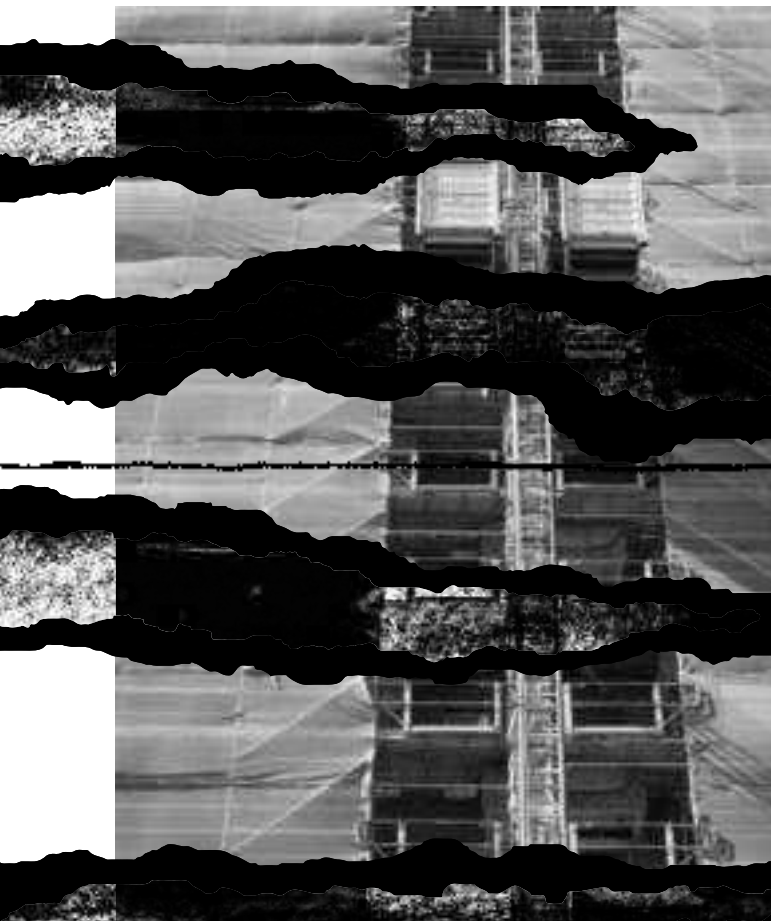


Blooddrops marry the sea
Will drops ever divorce
the sea?
Salth
Bath
Degradation of pigmentation
Drag
Carefully
Ransack
Some
Dignity
On your way
To
My body
Not the sight for your residue
Didn't asked to be rescued

Save
Your
Saviour
Complex
I
am
Abundant
Bombastic
Barbaric
I
Am
Not
Your war
At an atomic
Split
Second
You are that to me
You are dead to me
You are dad to me
My own obscurity makes me

Feel dizzy
Alive by surprise
The other alternative saved me
Methodology
Dolores
Rest
Arrest
Rest
In
My piece
In worries
Worried
Read
Retreat
Welness
Spa
Dna
Denial
You nailed it
Bailed it
Bill it

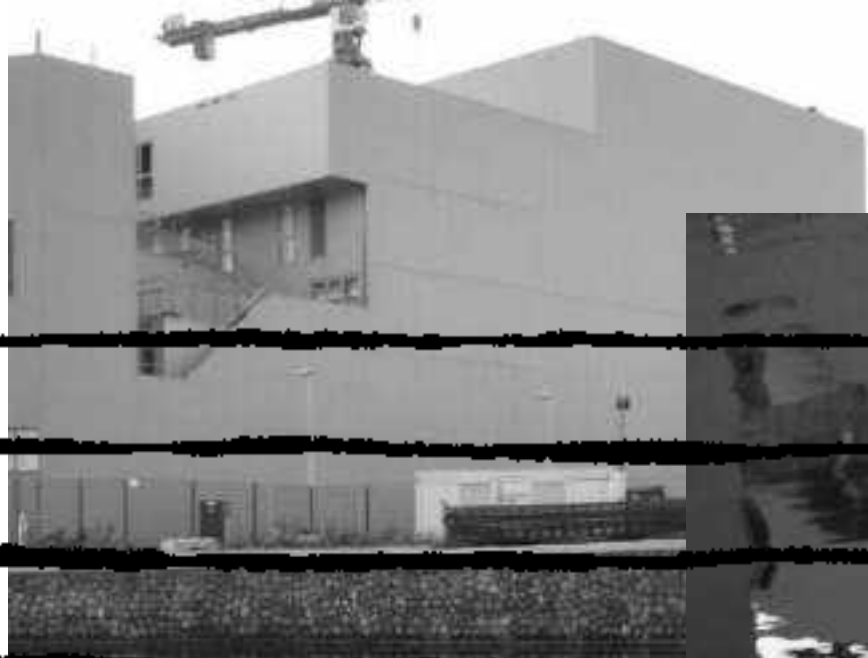
Bill
Board
Aboard
Abort it
You failed me
You felt me
It has nothing to do with you
It has everything to do with
You



Fundamenteel
Met jouw
Beton Betonb

[illegible]

Tombe
Ben je boos
Pluk een roos
Plaats het op een graf
Want morgen was d'r af

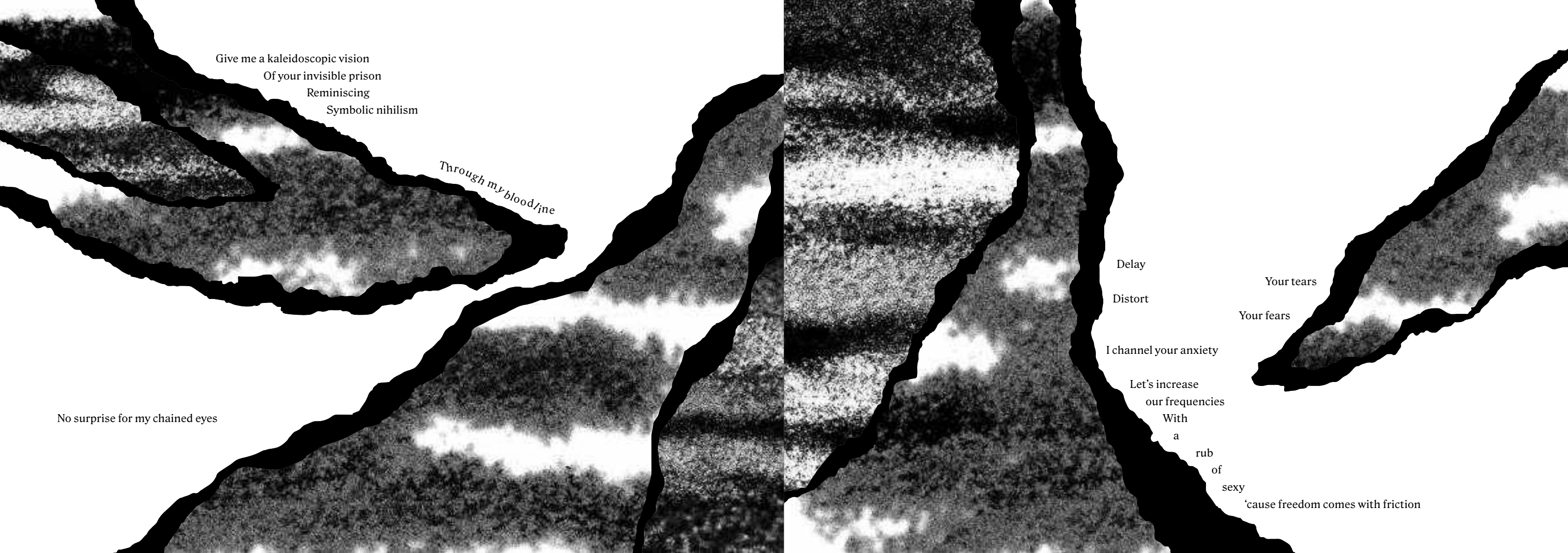


Amnesia, meu amor

Enigma, my bella

I've got so much love to give!





Give me a kaleidoscopic vision
Of your invisible prison
Reminiscing
Symbolic nihilism

Through my blood/ine

No surprise for my chained eyes

Delay

Distort

I channel your anxiety

Let's increase
our frequencies

With

a

rub

of

sexy

'cause freedom comes with friction

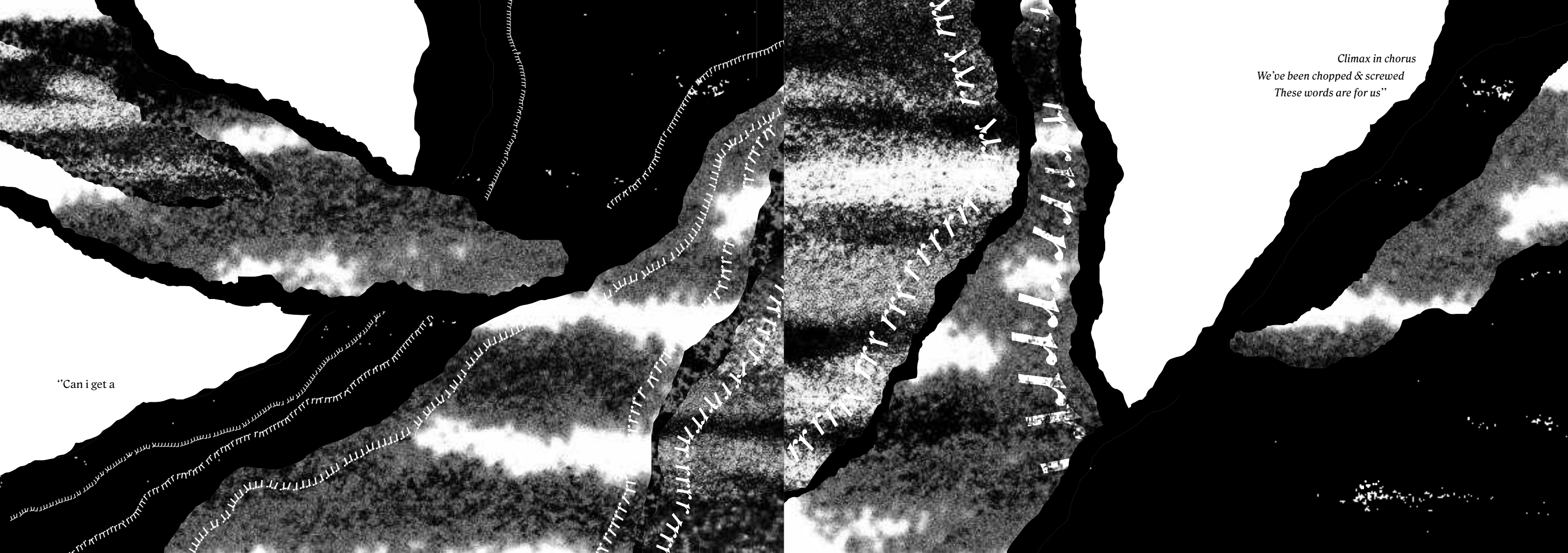
Your tears

Your fears



What do I miss
What do I miss
What do I miss
What do I miss
What do I miss

when I miss you?
when I missyou?
when Imissyou?
when I'mwithyou?
when I'm with you?



“Can i get a

Climax in chorus
We’ve been chopped & screwed
These words are for us”

*I tried to grab a floating dandelion with my hand
But it multiplied during the gesture
Resulting in my incapacity of grabbing anything at all
Apart from the memory of the multiplicity that flew away from me*



I tried to grab you
But you multiplied during the gesture



Unleash holy water
On this witch's daughter

I ask
(tell)
Cast a Spell

Be blessed
Transform this mess
Into endless darkness

This Darkness

Endlessly

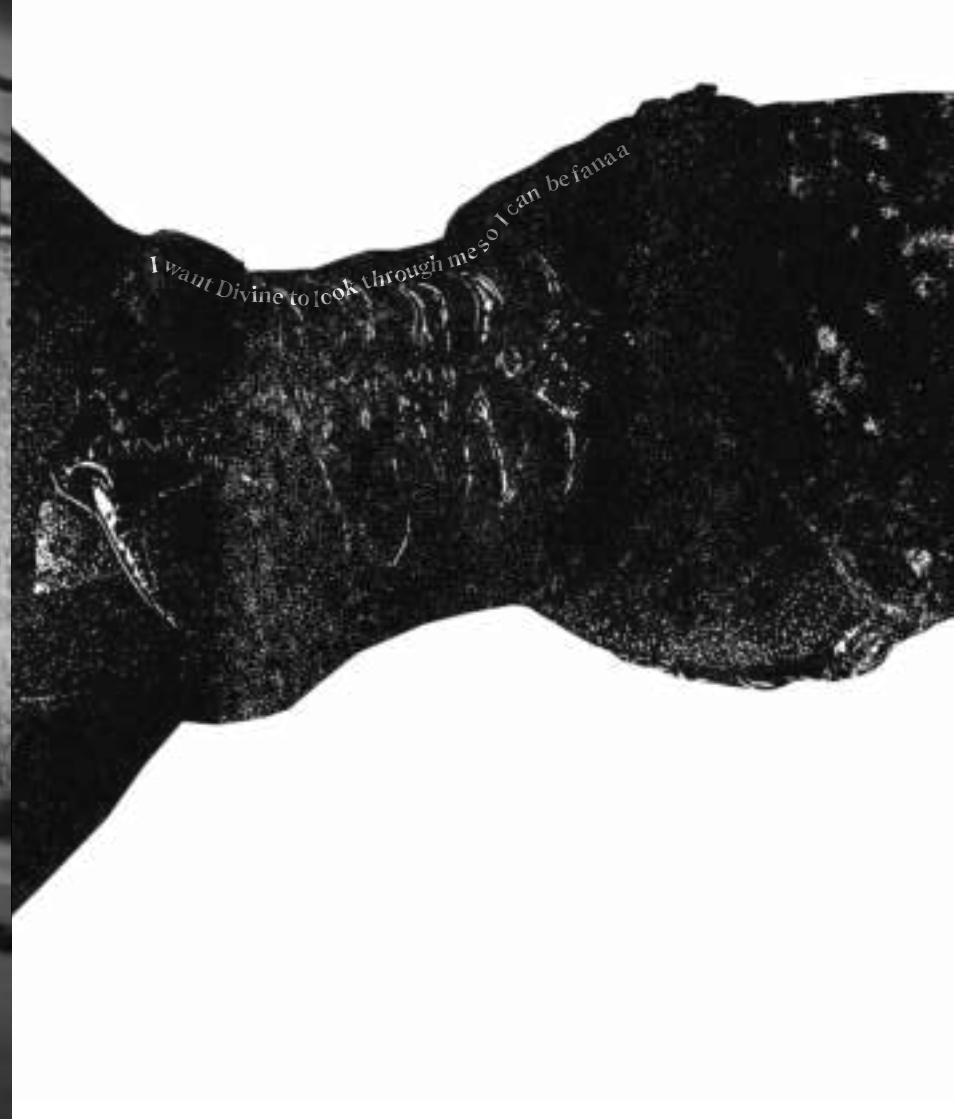
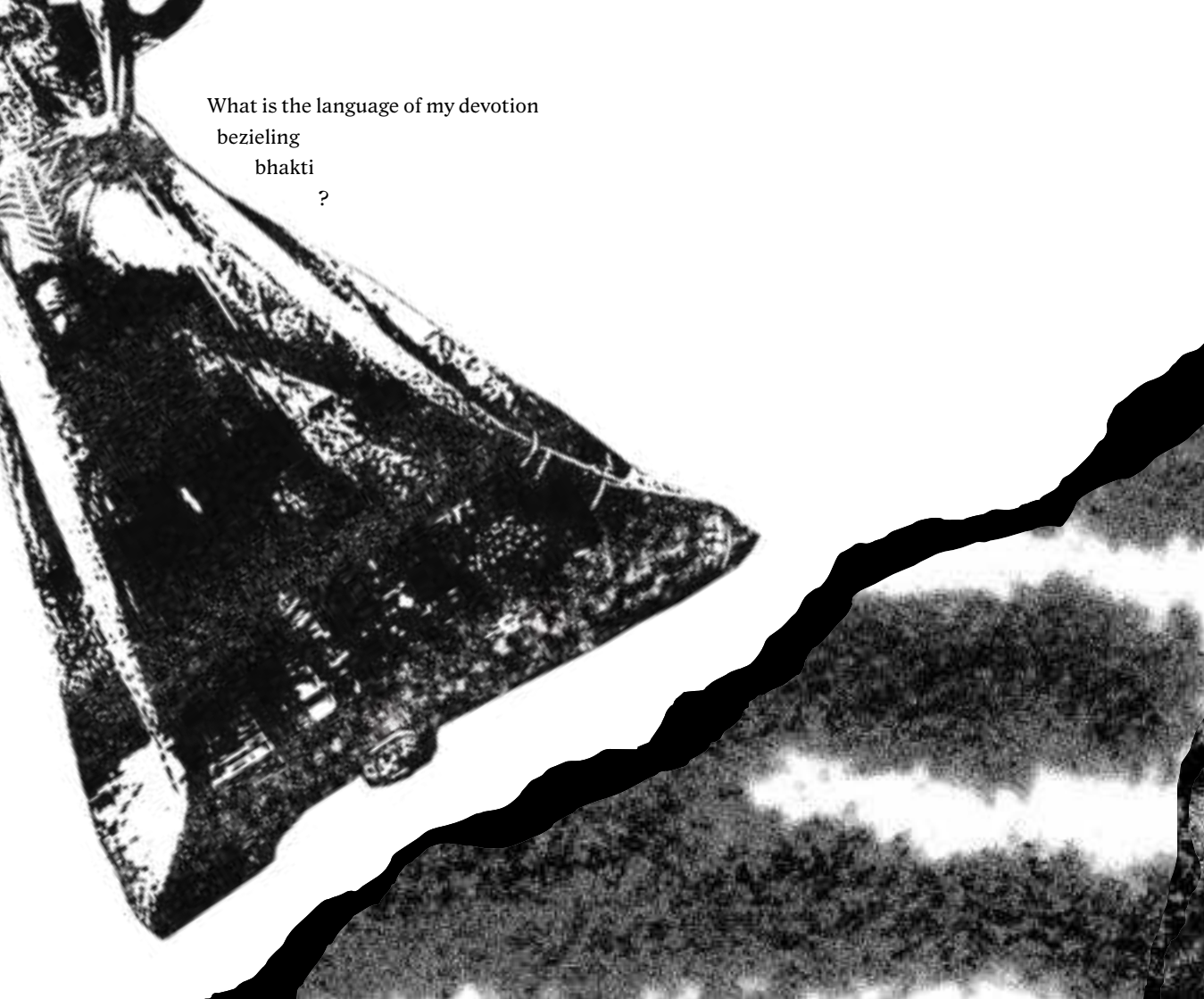
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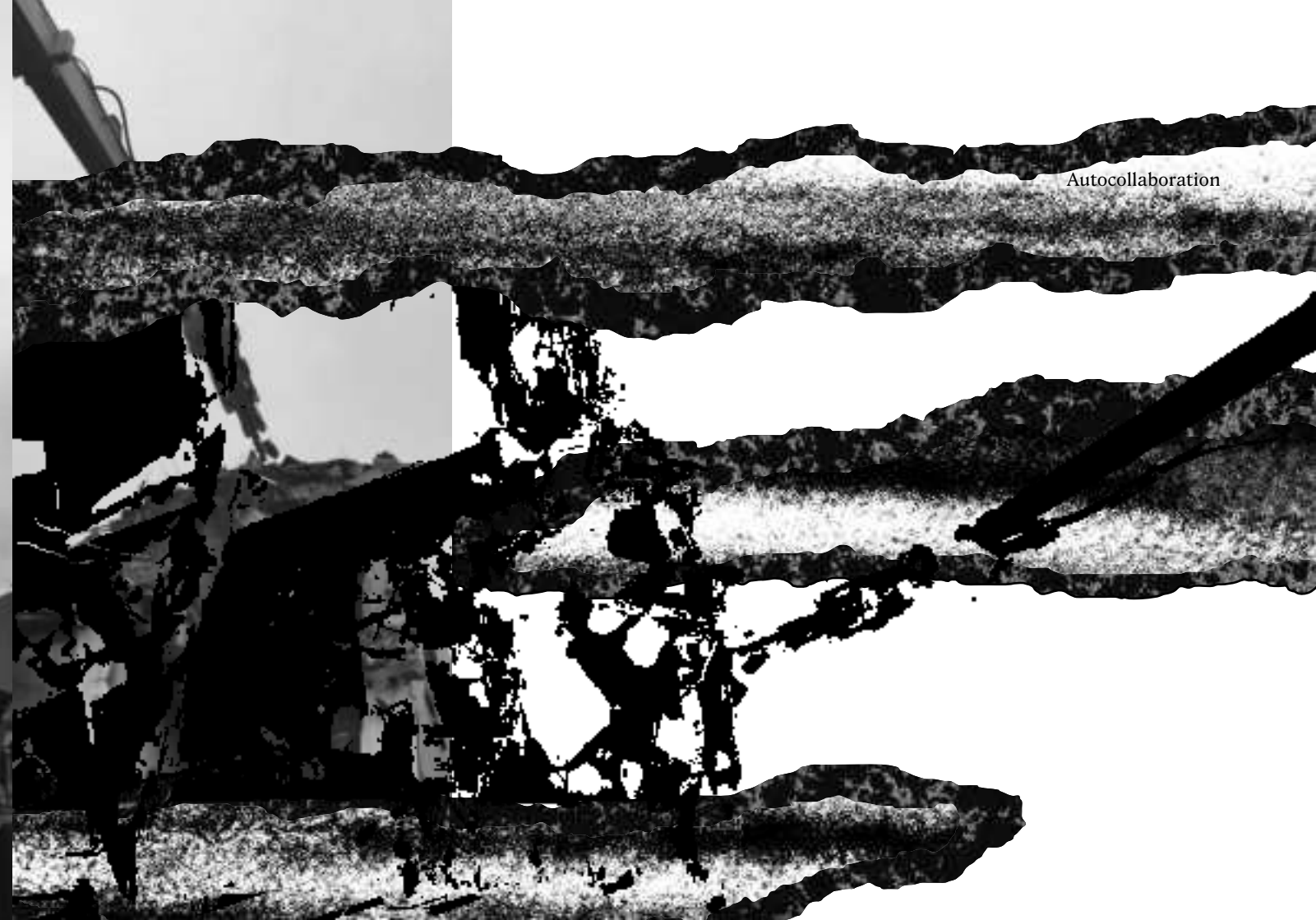
My

Amplify

Fly

My spirit butterfly







My skin melts out of herself

Jaan Nishaan
Anjaan Armaan

Fariyaad Yaadein
Saanson mein apne

Khoyi Khayaal
Kabir Fakeer

Raaz Avaaz
Riyaz Ehsaas
Saanson mein apne

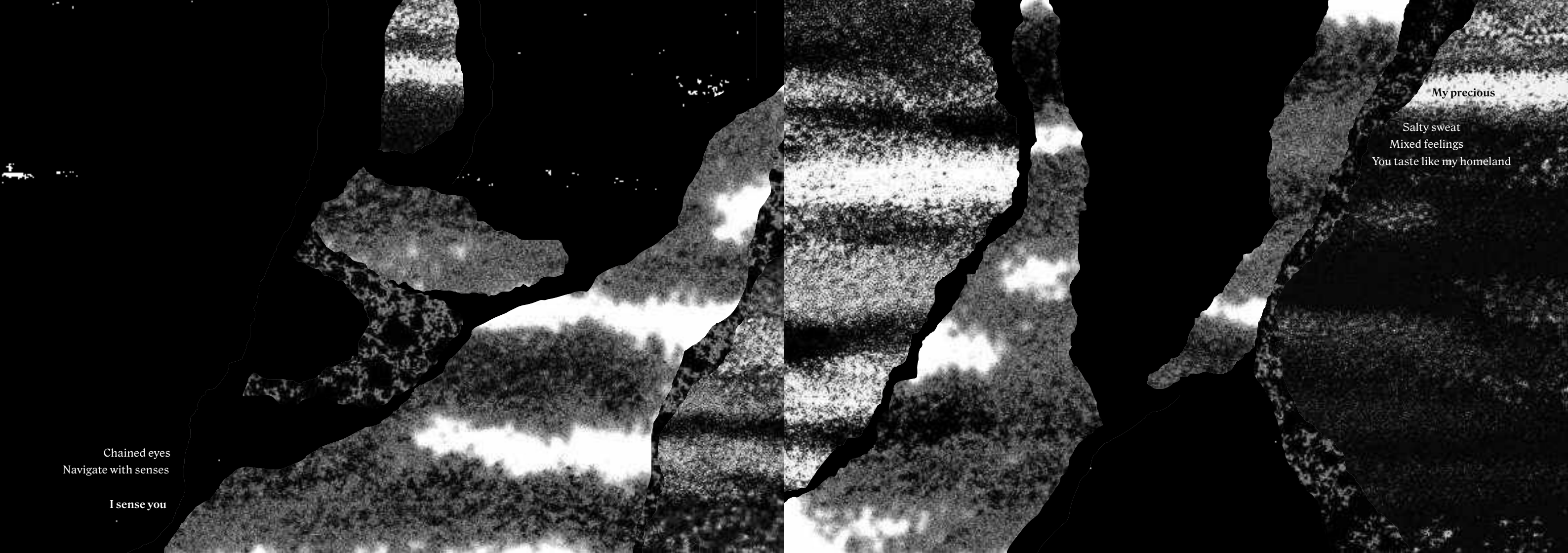
Dil Meinfi
Manzil

Can i get a

Climax in chorus
We've been chopped & screwed
These words are for us"







Chained eyes
Navigate with senses

I sense you

My precious

Salty sweat
Mixed feelings
You taste like my homeland

I'm writing this in tumultuous times. Within less than a half year we went from the burning of the lungs of the heart #prayforamazonia to a global virus chasing our lungs causing a pandemic and within this pandemic a viral video of the murder of George Floyd, his last words being "I can't breathe". Global upheaval. I suddenly find myself amidst five thousand demonstrators on Dam Square using my breath, my voice, to make noise for justice. Our mouths invisibilised by masks. The image was five thousand sealed lips, but our sound was magnificent and coloured by tremendous pain and communal desire. This time serves introspection and I found myself indulging in decoloniality by reading, watching and putting reflections on paper. To such an extent however that this night I even had the horrible nightmare of Donald Trump raping me with a pen. I understood the symbolism of this vision. Luckily I can lucid dream, so while I was dreaming I changed it and the result was a juicy pleasurable dream. Yess, I have this power to flip the script!

Almost one year ago I ignited a fascination for darkness in it's most infinite sense. It started from a preferred light setting, or rather absense of light, during my performances and afterwards the question to myself why I made the quite political choice to put my brown queer body in the dark. To deliberately hide myself from the gaze of the audience during the moment when it was actually my time to have eyes on me. Further investigation of my interest in obscurity has been a catalyst for intensifying decolonial processes and contemplations. I have experienced multiple lovingly stretched out arms guiding me in the dark in the form of writers, conversations with beloved ones and self imposed practises. I'm not going to say that they were holding torches or bringing to light what is there for me in the dark, a capital NO, because this text and my life are a manifesto for the cultivation of more dark. I say: Yess Darkness! Let Obscure Occur! I want to march with you to and in shady places, let go of your boundaries in any sense and be torn down. Torn down so that there is space for another You to emerge. I want you to pay attention to emergence rather than fixation of what is known or aimed to be known. This is an invitation to think, be and embody dark.

I have been occupied with the question what darkness is and whether or not it's colonised. If it is, what does it mean then to decolonise darkness? I'm at Zandvoort right now and I close my eyes with these questions as an opaque guide. I memorise the landscape I just departed from and any new audible, tangible, tastable or smellable input fictionalises further the imagined panorama. On top of that there is an increased intensity of perception through my senses. The border between the horizon of the North Sea and my body is not present anymore. My body disperses into the audible sounds of the waves. My skin doesn't stop where she caresses the sand, rather the sand becomes an addition on me and I extend endlessly. An annihilation of the self occurs while being still present to the whole. I become aware of a certain paradox that resides within darkness: the destruction of visible borders leads to a certain destruction of the self which as an effect causes an expansion of the self through bodily and imaginary sensations. Darkness is a host for multidimensional perceptions where

there exists a constant dialogue between the inside, outside and whatever other sides there are. This is a quality light doesn't possess. It is true that when I discern an object to be outside of myself, the object is still perceived within me so the definition of inside and outside are in a sense illusory. However, there is still very much the tyranny of what is visible and it lacks the mental or spiritual space for circumambulation. Light needs to focus and the movement of focus is straight and linear, whereas I like to conclude that the movement of darkness could be defined as queer.

I believe that the dark is a space-time to abide in for building resilience and resistance. It is resisting the totalitarianism of the light, which means resisting all the vectors of power light is highlighting. Darkness is the lubrication for pleasure to rub off me. It is my intoxication on the dancefloor or during my freewrite at night. It is the filter for my flirtatious outgoing or insightfull withdrawal. Being in the dark means being influenced by its qualities. Embodying its traits of discerning multi-dimensionality by experiencing multiple dimensions of You. Embracing auto-infinity, which is too much space to hold for the narrow LED-lightbeams and frames of numbered representation of time capitalism runs by. When being struck by immediate bright light the instant reaction is to repel: pupils get smaller, eyes are pinching and the head is turning away or being covered by the hands. When struck by immediate darkness the pupils get wider, the other senses sharpen and arms stretch out instead of pulling back. I would like to use this reaction as a metaphor to initiate an extended view on darkness. I posed the questions if darkness is colonised and what it then means to decolonise darkness. My observation at the moment is that ontological darkness can't be colonised, because as soon as a beam of light tries to infiltrate darkness, she takes off. Dissapears. There is something fugitive about the quality of obscurity. You can't grasp dark, because it doesn't fit with her personality of demolishing borders. I guess the closest thing to colonising visual dark is the opaque space where amalgamation exists of light and dark. However, reflecting upon the use of linguistic imagery around darkness versus light in English and Dutch, two Western languages I'm fluent in, embedded connotations derived from these imagery do most certainly reveal a certain powerrelation. In Western tradition metaphors like "the natural light of reason", "being enlightened" or "seeing the light" are connotated with intellectual apprehension and the experience of moral values. Darkness, on the other hand, has an undertone of fear and the savage; it is all that you want to avoid. I'm looking up synonyms for light and some words I stumble across are "brilliance", "point of view", "radiant" and "fair". If I do the same for darkness I read "evil", "devilish", "tragic", "dreadful" and "immorality". I start to feel very affected by the existing connotations around these terms. If the term "dark" is a term I associate myself with regarding the description of my complexion or descentance, the narratives around dark in the western part of the world, the part where I live in now, undermine my existence. When it is so embedded in our daily communication that a basic feature of BIPOC is something to be afraid of or preferred to be avoided, what does this do subconsciously, mentally and psychosomatically to us? Language can be a

tool to indoctrinate, but even within certain words there is already indoctrination happening and I wonder how this indoctrination of the connotations of light and dark then reverberates in the psyche and bodies of BIPOC and white people. More specifically on a social level between them.

So yess, connotations around darkness are linguistically colonised in my opinion. After acknowledging this the next step would be to reflect upon what it means to decolonise darkness. Like the qualities of the dark itself I believe it means to stretch out other potentialities that reside within this word. As BIPOC it specifically means reclaiming and subverting the word by cultivating new atmospheres. To dismantle darkness from it's linguistic white haze. Darkness, and abiding within, the invisibilised knowledge, stories and bodies are attributes to embody and celebrate rather than fear. That the aim isn't always "bringing to the light" or clarification according to westernised methodologies, but perhaps an absence of aim. Basing choices and contemplations on whatever is emerging from the unknown. A big part of decolonising on a personal level is first and foremost admitting to myself that repercussions of colonialism still reside within me. After this comes the dismanteling and healing: releasing oppression through my body, channelling subconscious and generational embedded pains and chains and dance me free. Listen to my body, spirit and ancestors thus cultivate other ways of obtaining insight. Mentally I make sure that I repaint whitewashed words with ruby, mossgreen, black, purple, sapphire and darkbrown. Because Dark matters. My self-talk is peptalk and if I'm not satisfied with certain existing narratives around an expression I use as self-identification, I make sure I change it. Nothing is fixed anyway, not even language. I am that badass goddess, that Kali, who slays the outdated that isn't serving her anymore, so there is space for the new to emerge. Darkness is Kali. Is divine, feminine, black holes, charcoal, ink, exciting, comfort, embracing, soft, without speed, forgetting, remembering, strength, expansion, annihilation, infinity, complex, complexion, deep, mysterious, sexy, intoxicating, warm, non-anthropocentric, fertility, cleansing, prophetic, black Tourmaline, Obsidian, Kyanite. Dark is resilience. Dark is resistance. Is me.