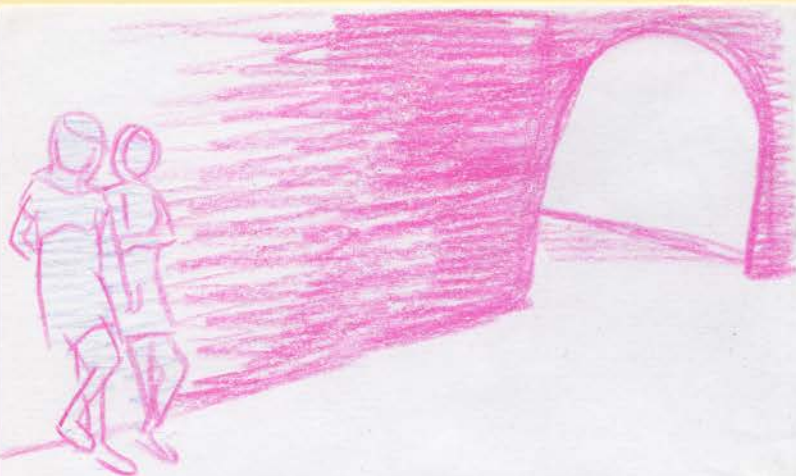




MY MOM WAS HOMECOMING  
QUEEN IN HIGH SCHOOL.



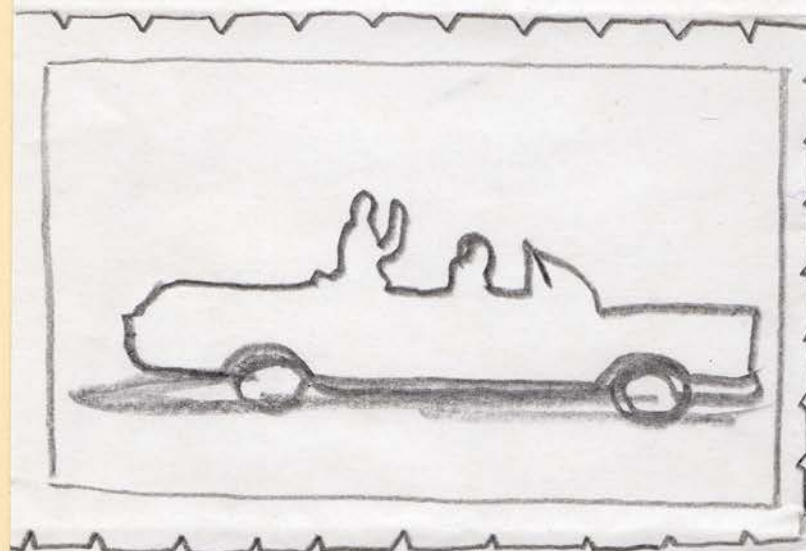
MY DAD WAS ALREADY  
IN VIETNAM.

THERE'S A PHOTO OF ~~HER~~ HER  
RIDING IN A WHITE CONVERTIBLE  
IN HER ~~WHITE~~ WHITE DRESS.



MY DAD SAID THAT  
WHEN MOM WAS  
HOMECOMING QUEEN  
SHE GOT A TON OF  
PHOTOS MADE -

AND MAILED THREE THICK  
ENVELOPES FULL OF THEM  
TO HIM IN VIETNAM.



AT MAIL CALL, THE  
COMMANDING OFFICER WAS  
~~SO~~ ANNOYED THAT MY DAD  
GOT THREE BIG LETTERS -  
AND THREW THE ENVELOPES  
~~AT MY DAD.~~ AT HIM.

THE SHARP CORNER OF ONE  
OF THEM HIT MY DAD HARD,  
SQUARE BETWEEN THE EYES.



NOW DO  
20 PUSHUPS  
FOR EACH  
LETTER



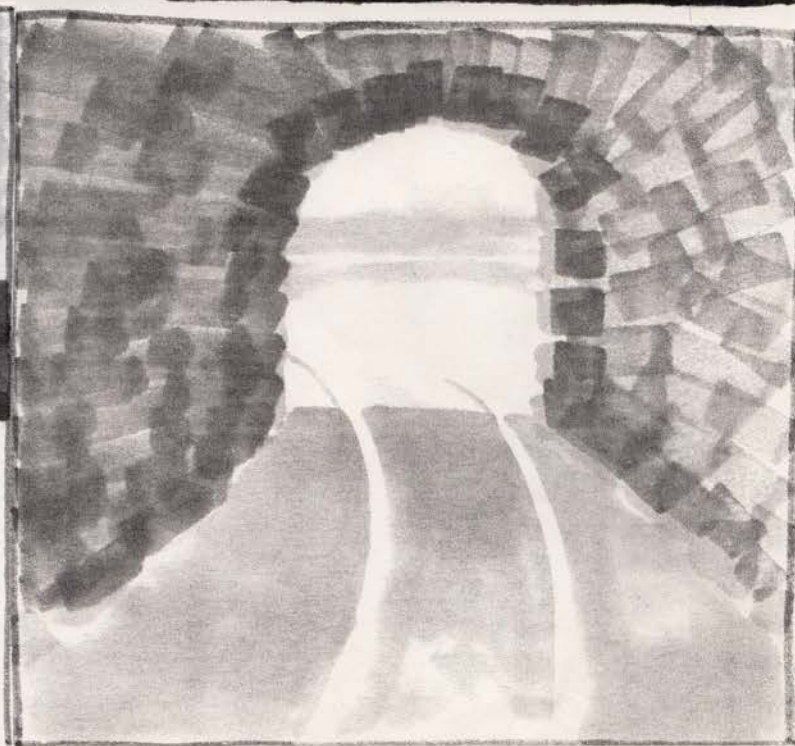
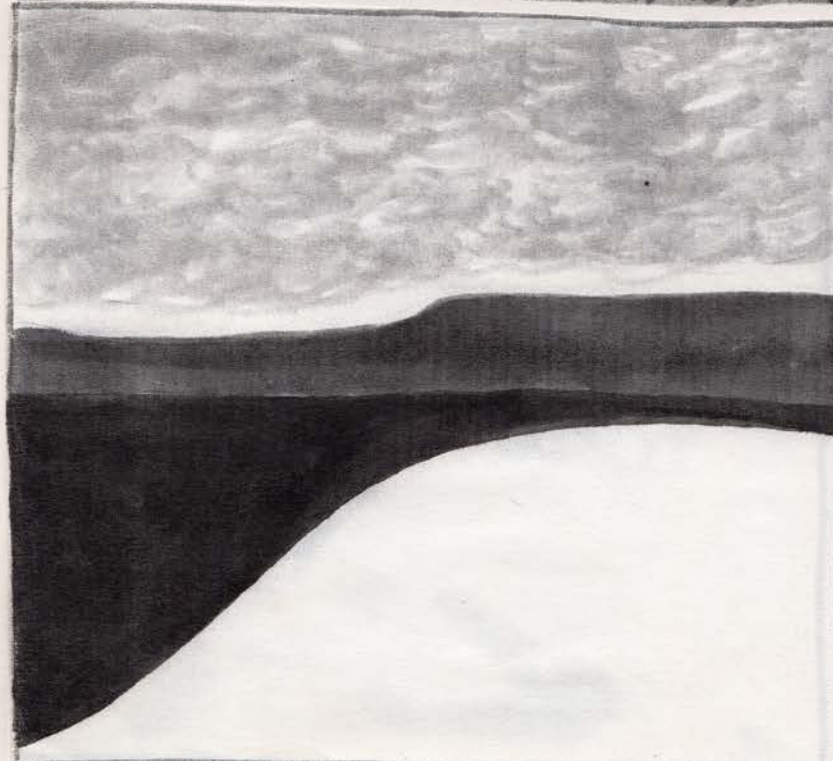
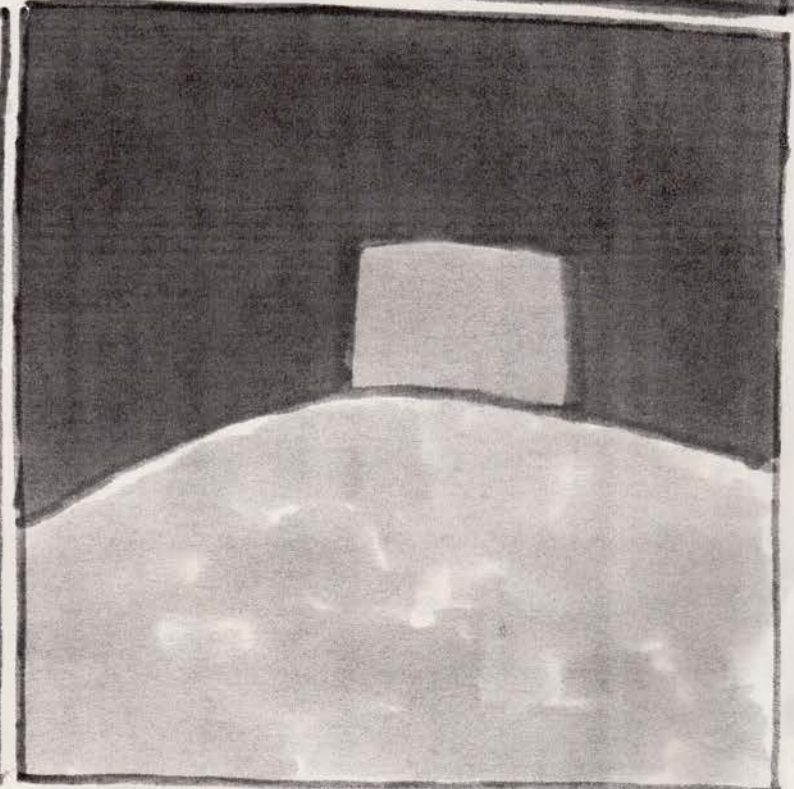
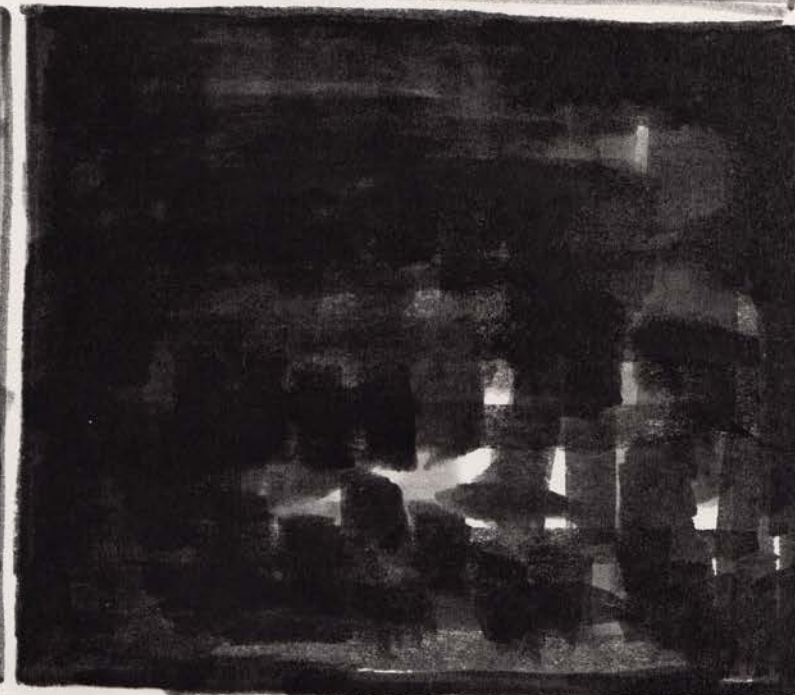
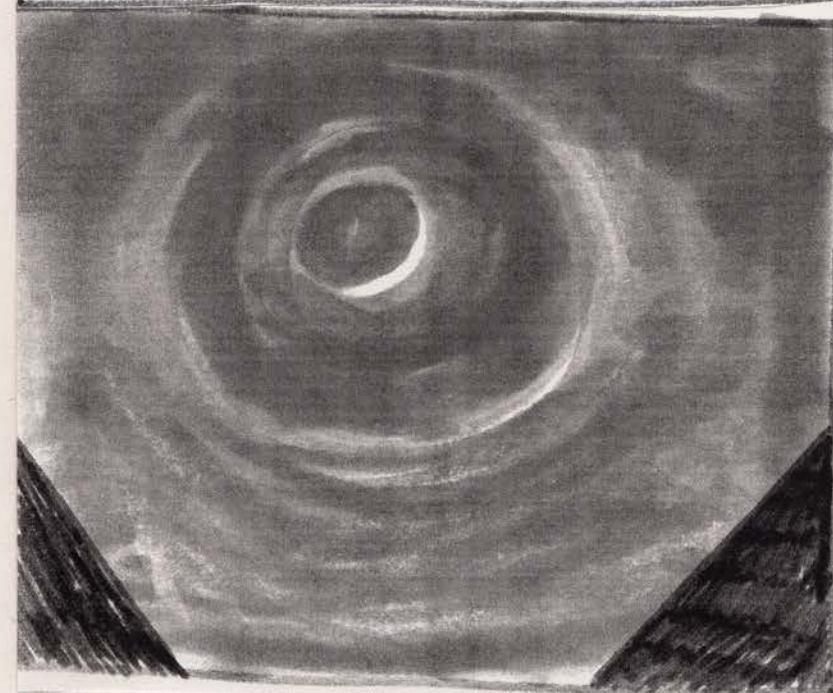
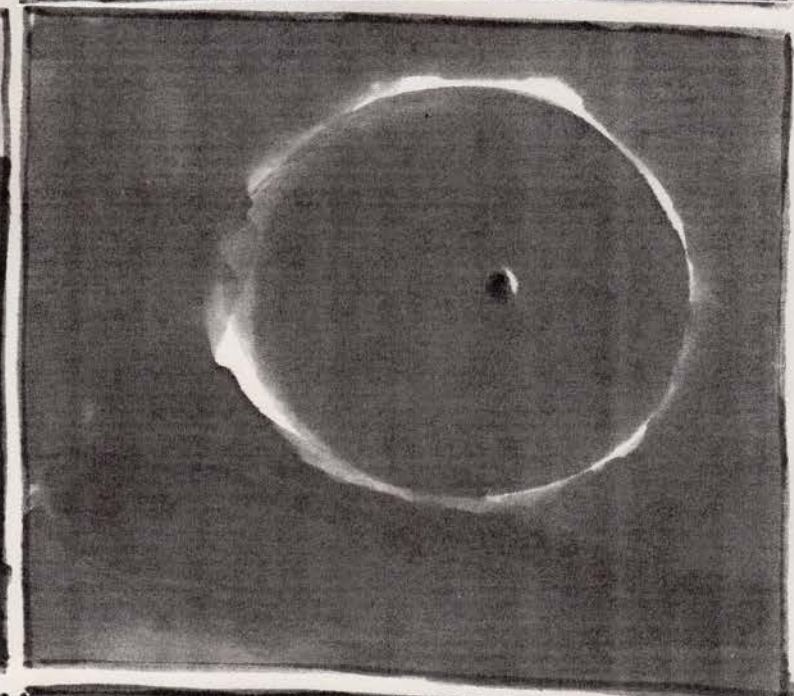
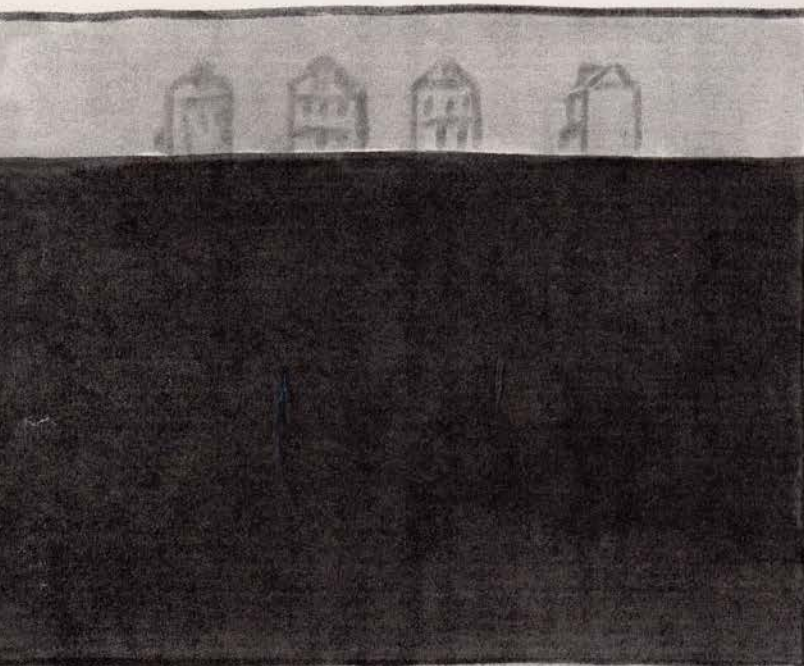
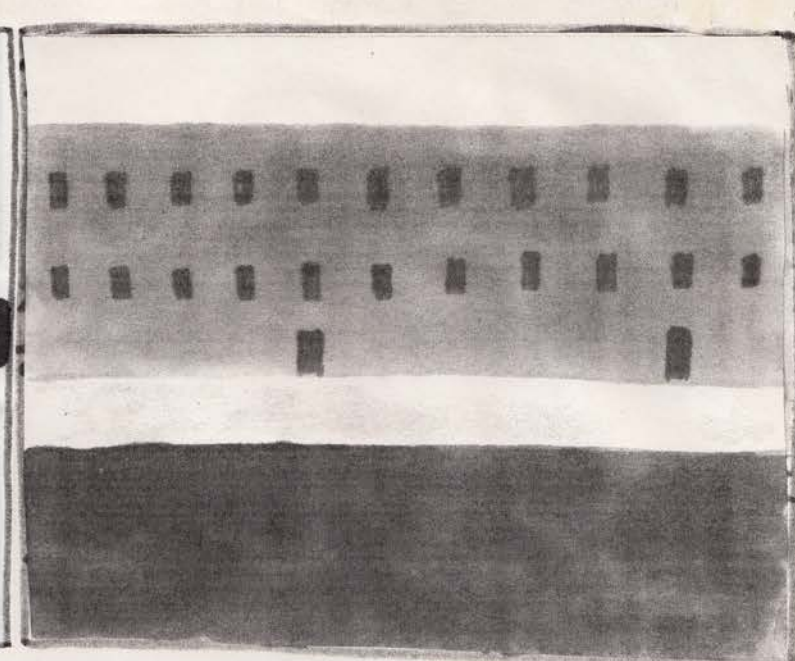
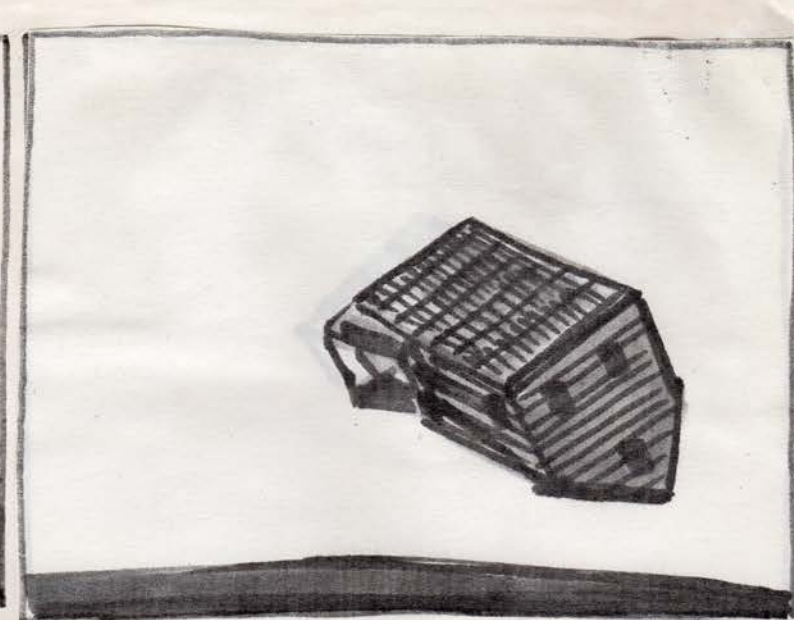
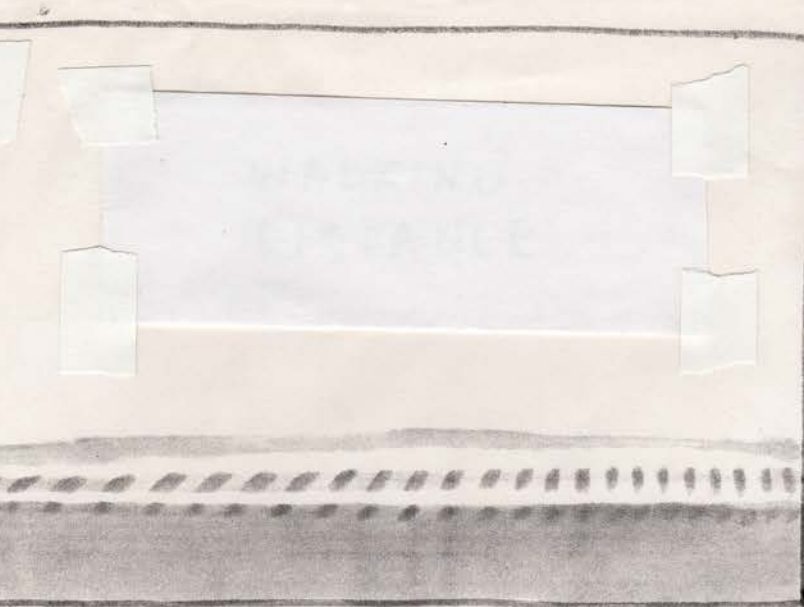
MY PARENTS  
WHO HAVE BARELY SPOKEN  
TO EACH OTHER  
IN 20 YEARS,  
DIVORCED FOR 20 YEARS —  
NOW BOTH WORK FOR THE  
SAME HOSPITAL  
IN PITTSBURGH —  
THE NEW FACTORY IN TOWN



SO, AFTER 20 YEARS  
THEY OCCASIONALLY  
RUN INTO EACH OTHER  
AT WORK,  
AND PRETEND NOT TO SEE  
EACH OTHER



THE ONLY CONNECTING THREAD  
BETWEEN THEM IS ME





I STARTED OUT TO WRITE  
A STORY FOR MY MOTHER,  
SOMETHING TO DISTRACT HER  
WHILE SHE GOT OLD

MOM -  
I'M GOING OUT  
BE BACK LATE  
DON'T WAIT UP  
XO FRANKIE

BUT I ENDED UP  
WRITING THE STORY FOR ME,  
SOMETHING TO DISTRACT ME  
WHILE SHE GOT OLD

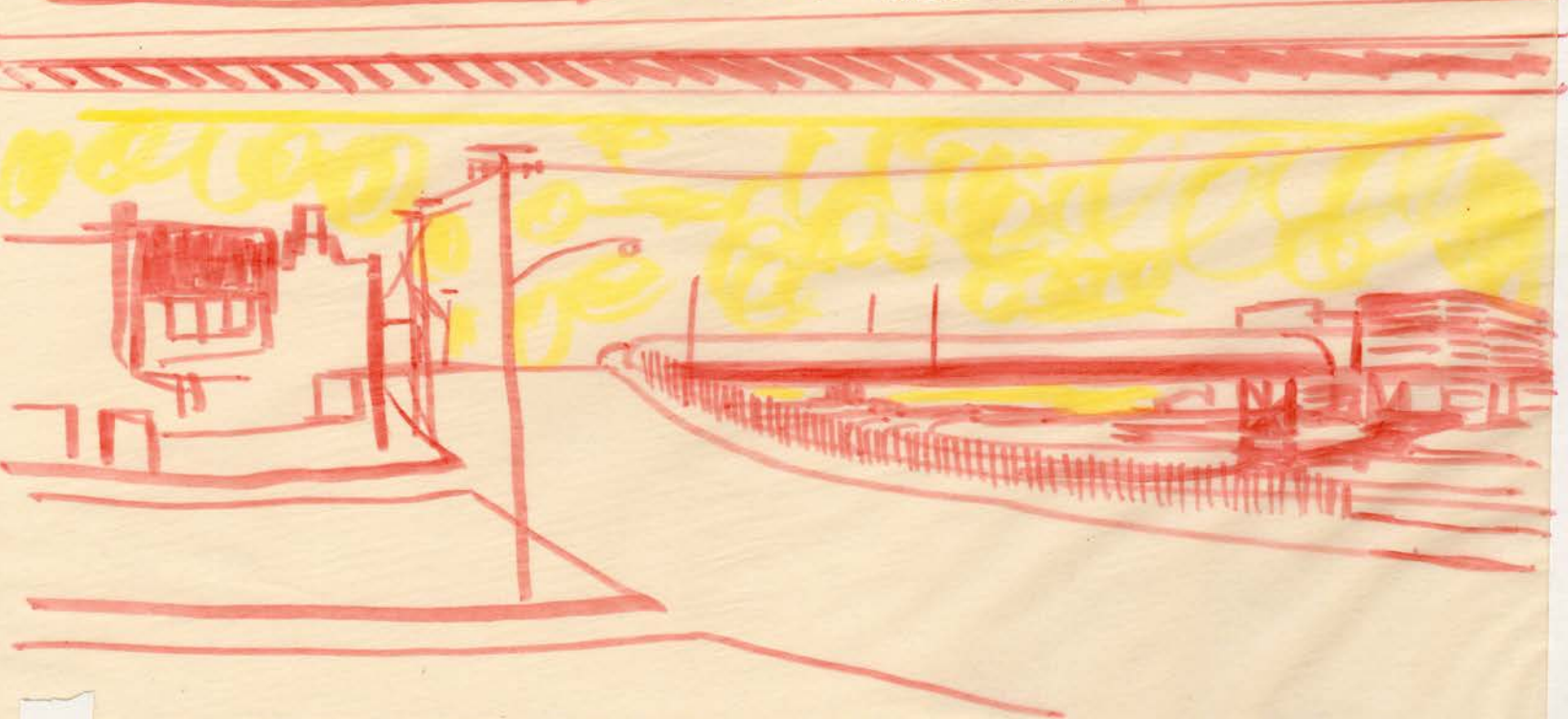


SOMETIMES  
I WISH MY PARENTS WERE  
STILL TOGETHER

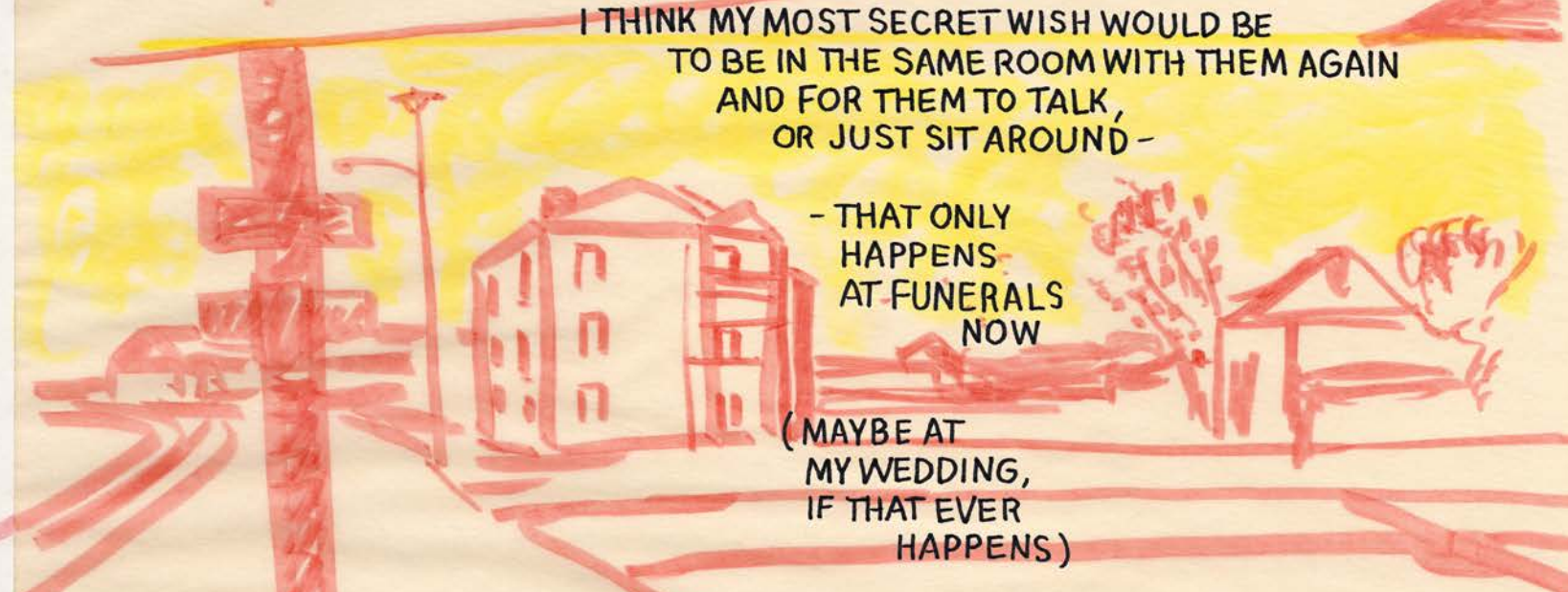


OR THAT I HAD  
A BROTHER  
OR A SISTER

SOMEONE TO SHARE IN  
ALL THIS FENCE JUMPING



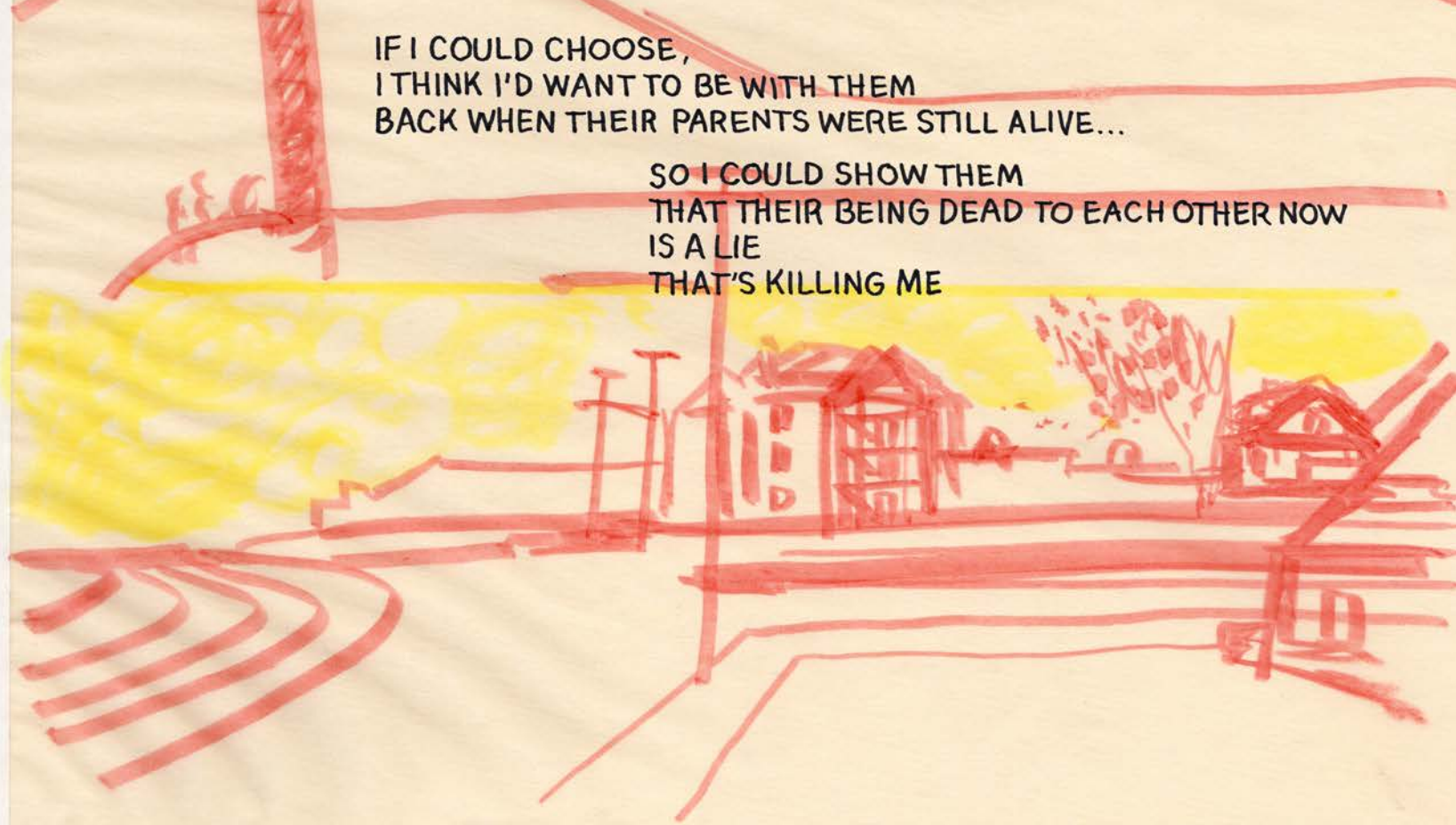
I THINK MY MOST SECRET WISH WOULD BE  
TO BE IN THE SAME ROOM WITH THEM AGAIN  
AND FOR THEM TO TALK,  
OR JUST SIT AROUND -



- THAT ONLY  
HAPPENS  
AT FUNERALS  
NOW

(MAYBE AT  
MY WEDDING,  
IF THAT EVER  
HAPPENS)

IF I COULD CHOOSE,  
I THINK I'D WANT TO BE WITH THEM  
BACK WHEN THEIR PARENTS WERE STILL ALIVE...



SO I COULD SHOW THEM  
THAT THEIR BEING DEAD TO EACH OTHER NOW  
IS A LIE  
THAT'S KILLING ME

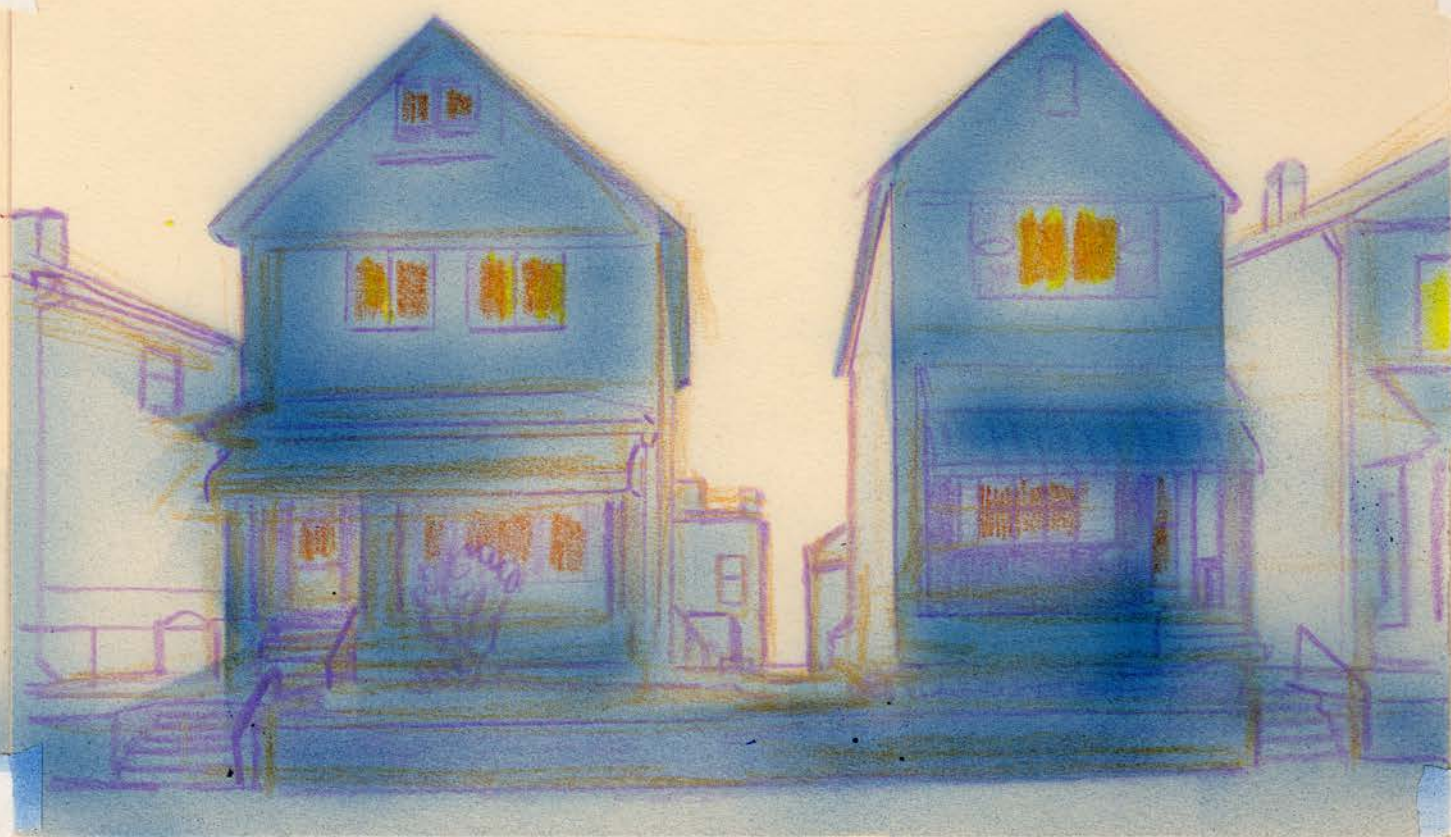


ANNE MARIE  
McQUADE  
(MY MOTHER)

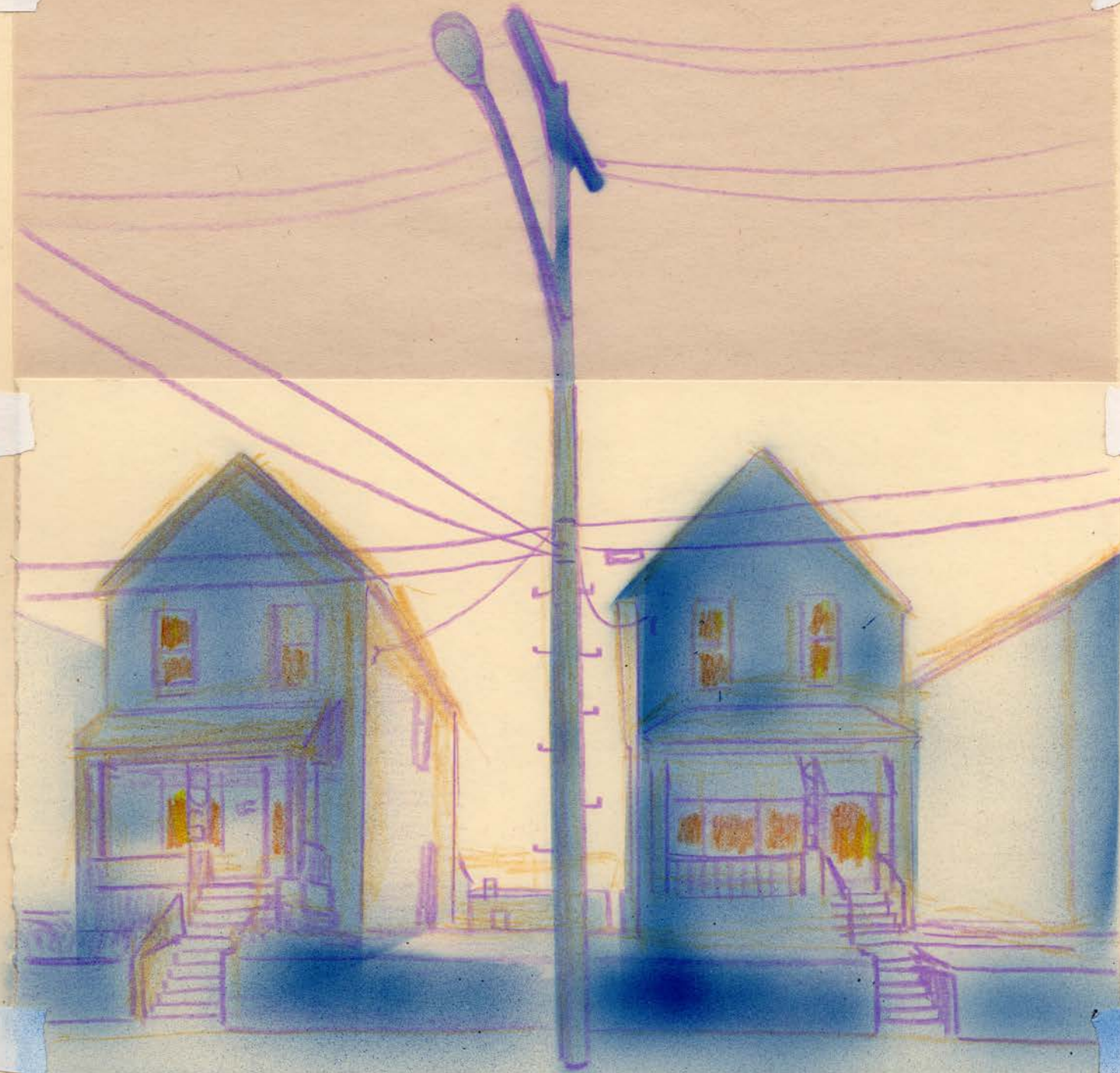


FRANK  
SANTORO  
(MY FATHER)

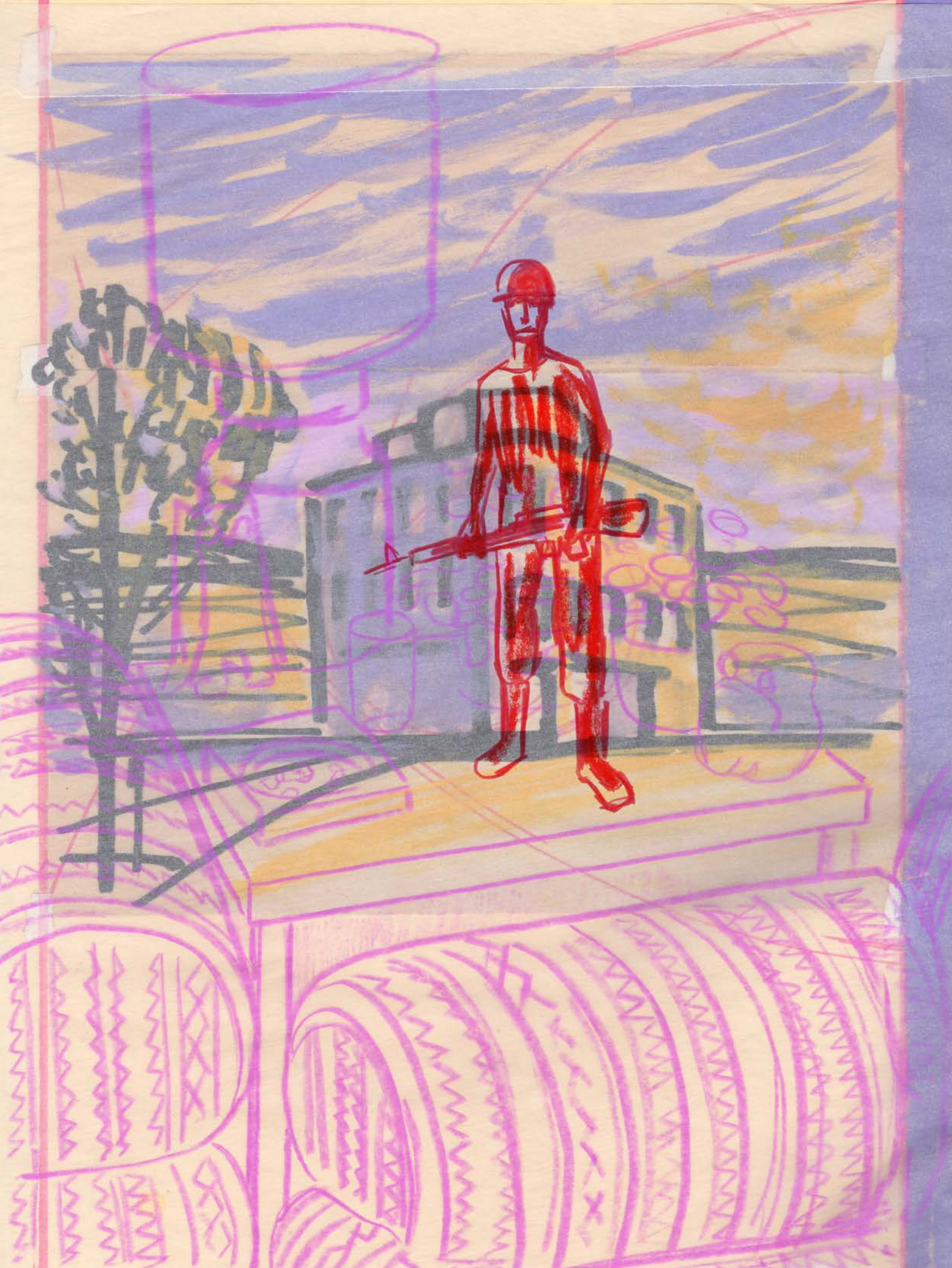
I STARTED WRITING THIS FOR DAD, TOO  
SO I COULD TRANSMIT THESE LOVING MEMORIES TO HIM,  
RECALLING COLD LONG DRIVES TO HOCKEY PRACTICE,  
EARLY MORNING SUNDAY PURPLE BLACKNESS  
WITH BRIGHT AND SUNNY MOTOWN MUSIC PLAYING



DAD DRIVING INTENTLY, SILENTLY LISTENING  
TO HIS MOTOWN TAPES ON THE CAR STEREO,  
I ASKED TO CHANGE IT ONCE, HE WAS ANNOYED  
AND SAID NO



LATER I'D CONNECT DAD'S MOTOWN MOODS  
WITH HIM GETTING A PORTABLE RECORD PLAYER  
FROM HIS MOM WHILE HE WAS IN VIETNAM

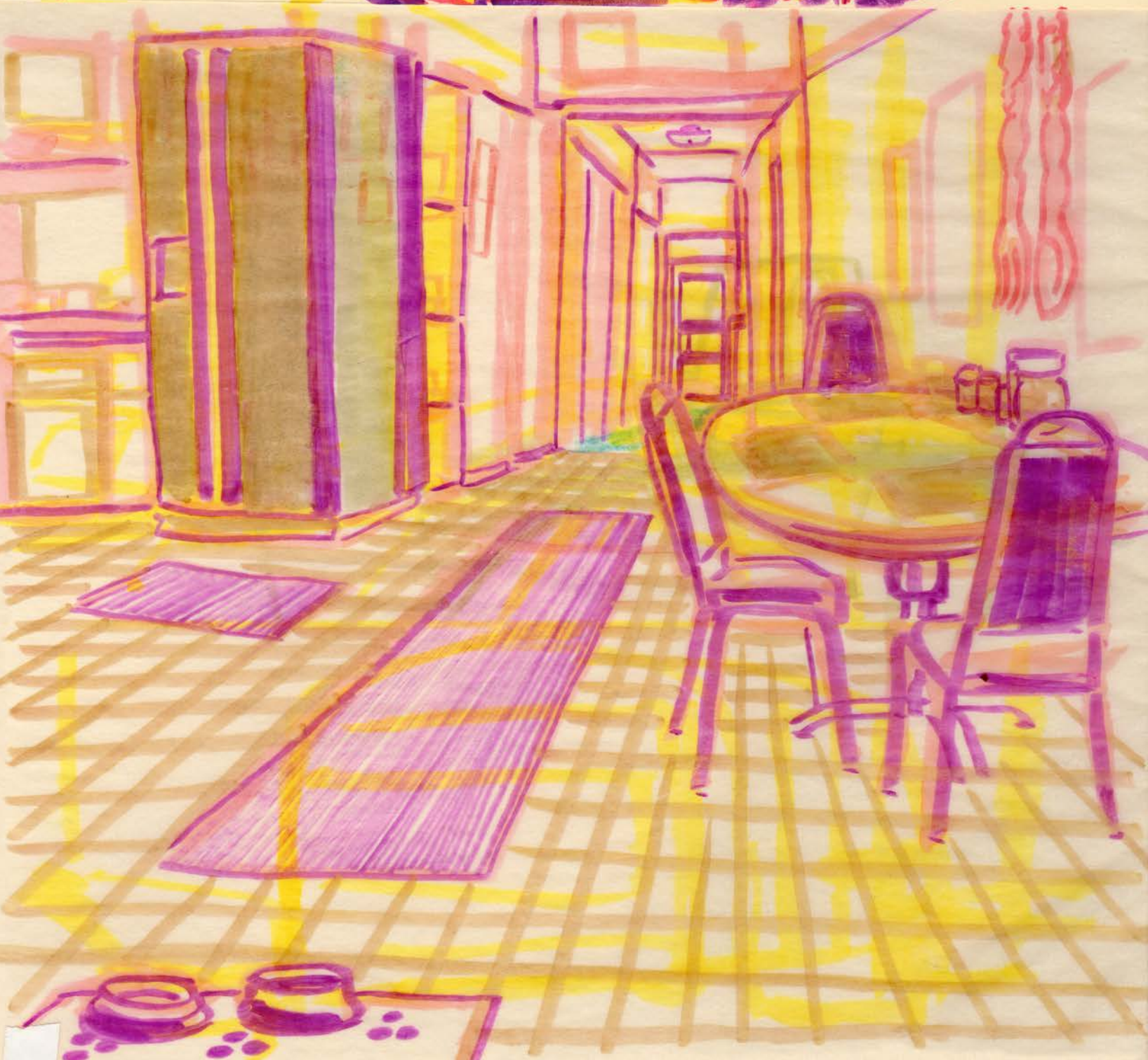


MY DAD, WHO WAS 19 AT THE TIME,  
HAD TO LIVE IN A HOLE IN THE GROUND, A BUNKER,  
FOR 76 DAYS WITH HIS SQUAD, GO ON PATROL, IN THE DAY,  
AND THEN WOULD HUNKER DOWN LISTENING  
TO MOTOWN RECORDS AT NIGHT  
TRYING TO FORGET VIETNAM  
AND REMEMBER  
HOME



ON THE 77TH DAY  
HE WENT ON R&R, ON LEAVE  
TO HONG KONG, HE WAS AWAY  
WHEN THE BUNKER WHERE HE LIVED  
WITH HIS BUDDIES WAS WIPED OUT,  
SHELLED TO A MOTOWN SOUNDTRACK





♪ All the Things You Are ♪