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I woke up beside
a wall
I never let him in

WOLF

Carol Keogh // The Wicc

Maestoso ♩ = 76

Violin I

Violin II

Viola

Cello I

Cello II

Musical score for Violin I, Violin II, Viola, Cello I, and Cello II. The score is in 4/4 time with a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat). The tempo is Maestoso, marked with a quarter note equal to 76 beats per minute. The Violin I part features a melodic line with a 4-measure slur and an 8-measure slur. The Violin II part has a rhythmic accompaniment with eighth notes and a 4-measure slur. The Viola, Cello I, and Cello II parts are currently silent, indicated by a flat line.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc. I

Vc. II

Musical score for Violin I, Violin II, Viola, Cello I, and Cello II. The score continues from the previous system. The Violin I part has a 12-measure slur and a 20-measure slur. The Violin II part has a 16-measure slur. The Viola, Cello I, and Cello II parts are currently silent, indicated by a flat line.

24 28

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla. *8^{va}*

Vc. I *8^{va}*

Vc. II

32

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc. I

Vc. II

36 40

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc. I

Vc. II

3

44 48

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc. I

Vc. II

3

Musical score for five instruments: Violin I (Vln. I), Violin II (Vln. II), Viola (Vla.), Violoncello I (Vc. I), and Violoncello II (Vc. II). The score is written in a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat) and a common time signature (C). The first measure shows the beginning of the piece with various notes and rests. The second measure features a whole note chord in the upper strings and a half note in the lower strings. The third measure continues with similar patterns. The fourth measure shows a more active lower string part with eighth notes. The fifth measure has a similar active lower string part. The sixth measure continues the active lower string part. The seventh measure has a similar active lower string part. The eighth measure concludes the section with a whole note chord in the upper strings and a half note in the lower strings.

let's record

the

Conversation

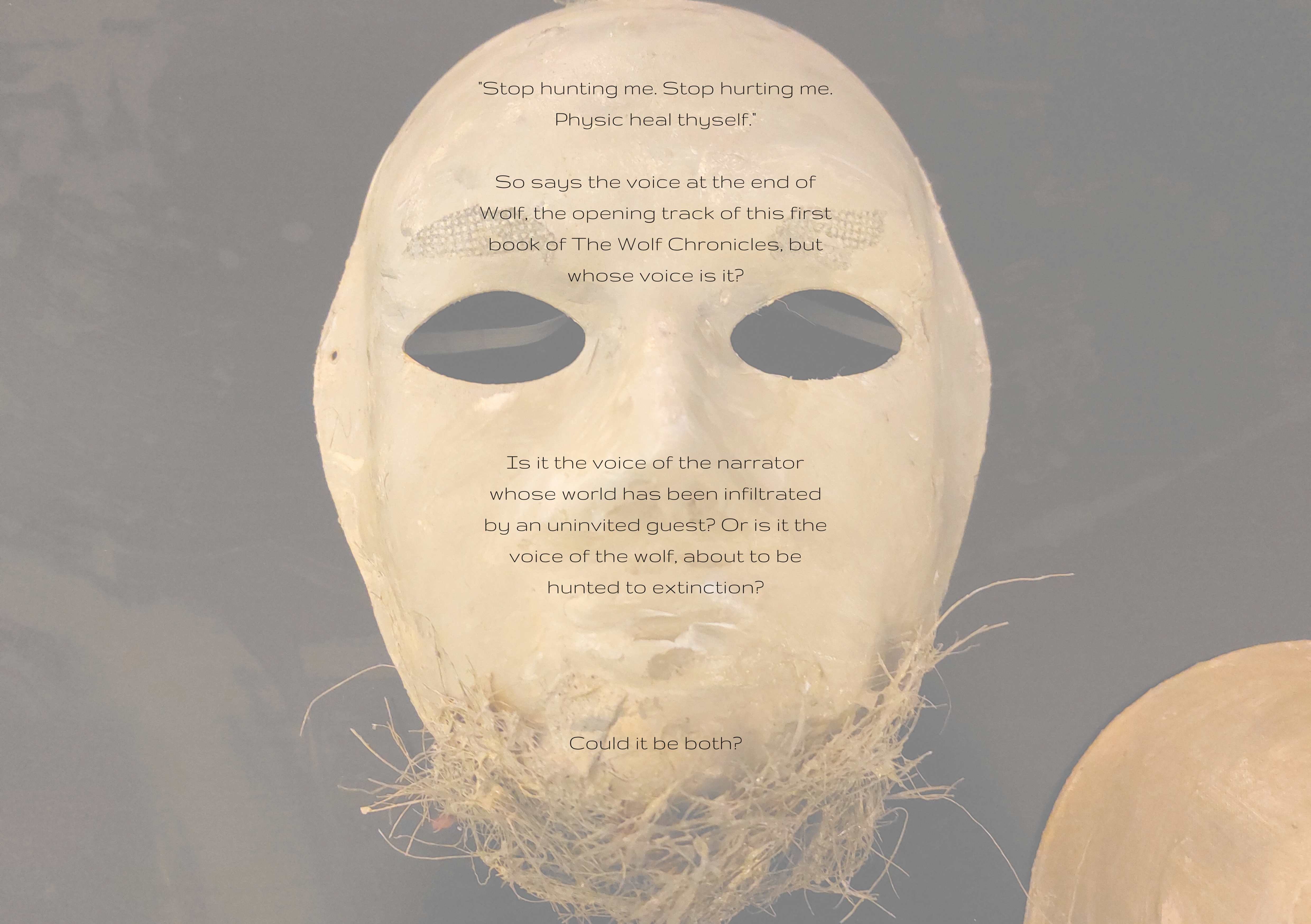


The swallows
are leaving now



Wish they could take me

with them somehow



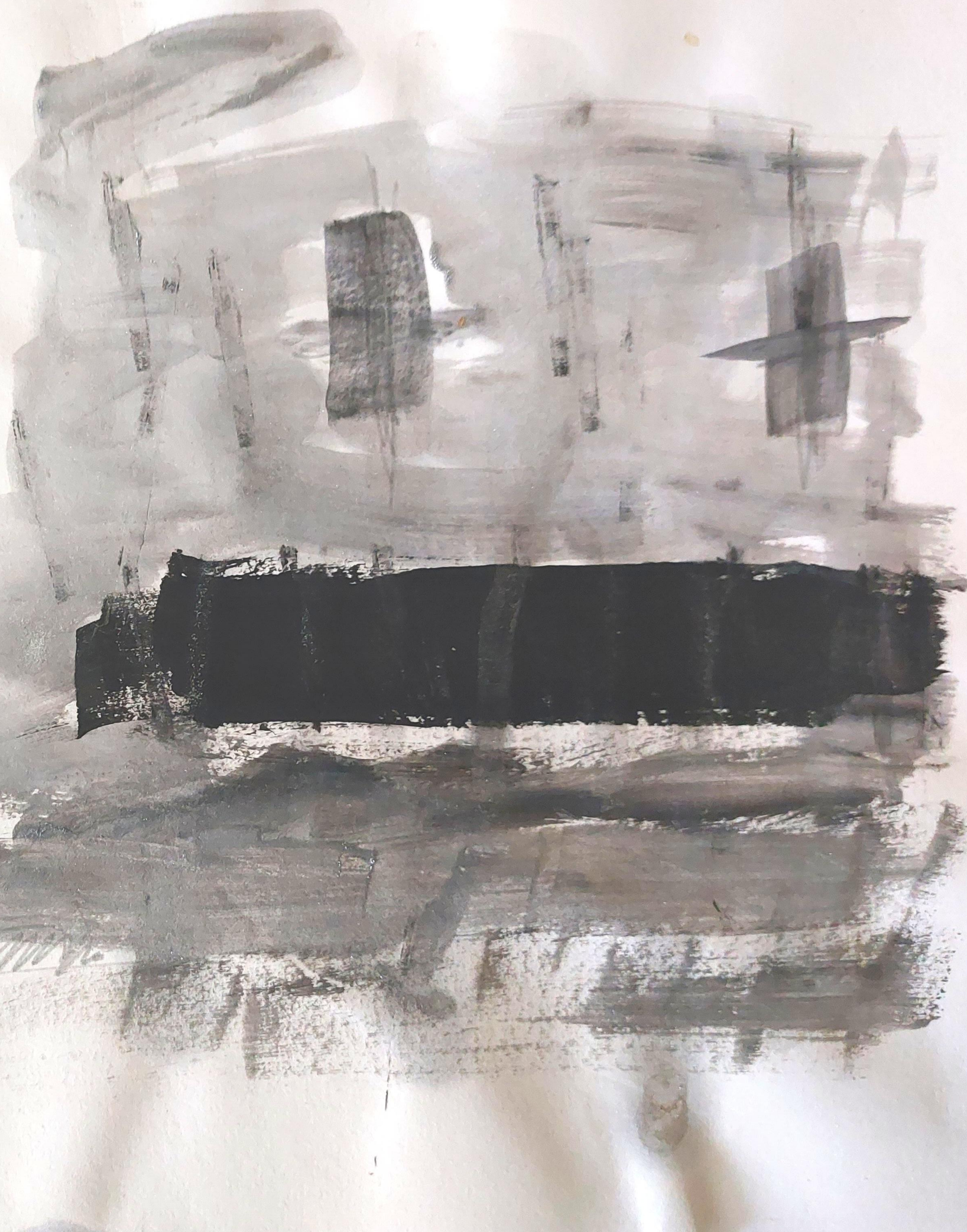
"Stop hunting me. Stop hurting me.
Physic heal thyself."

So says the voice at the end of
Wolf, the opening track of this first
book of The Wolf Chronicles, but
whose voice is it?

Is it the voice of the narrator
whose world has been infiltrated
by an uninvited guest? Or is it the
voice of the wolf, about to be
hunted to extinction?

Could it be both?

WHEN BESIDE
I MAKE HOLF ME
THE NEVER LET ME
NEVER SPEAK



HE JUST
HIS CHOSE
DESTINATION



HE JUST
CHOSE



SWALLOWNS

HAVE

AWAY

FLOWN

AME

Have they



me

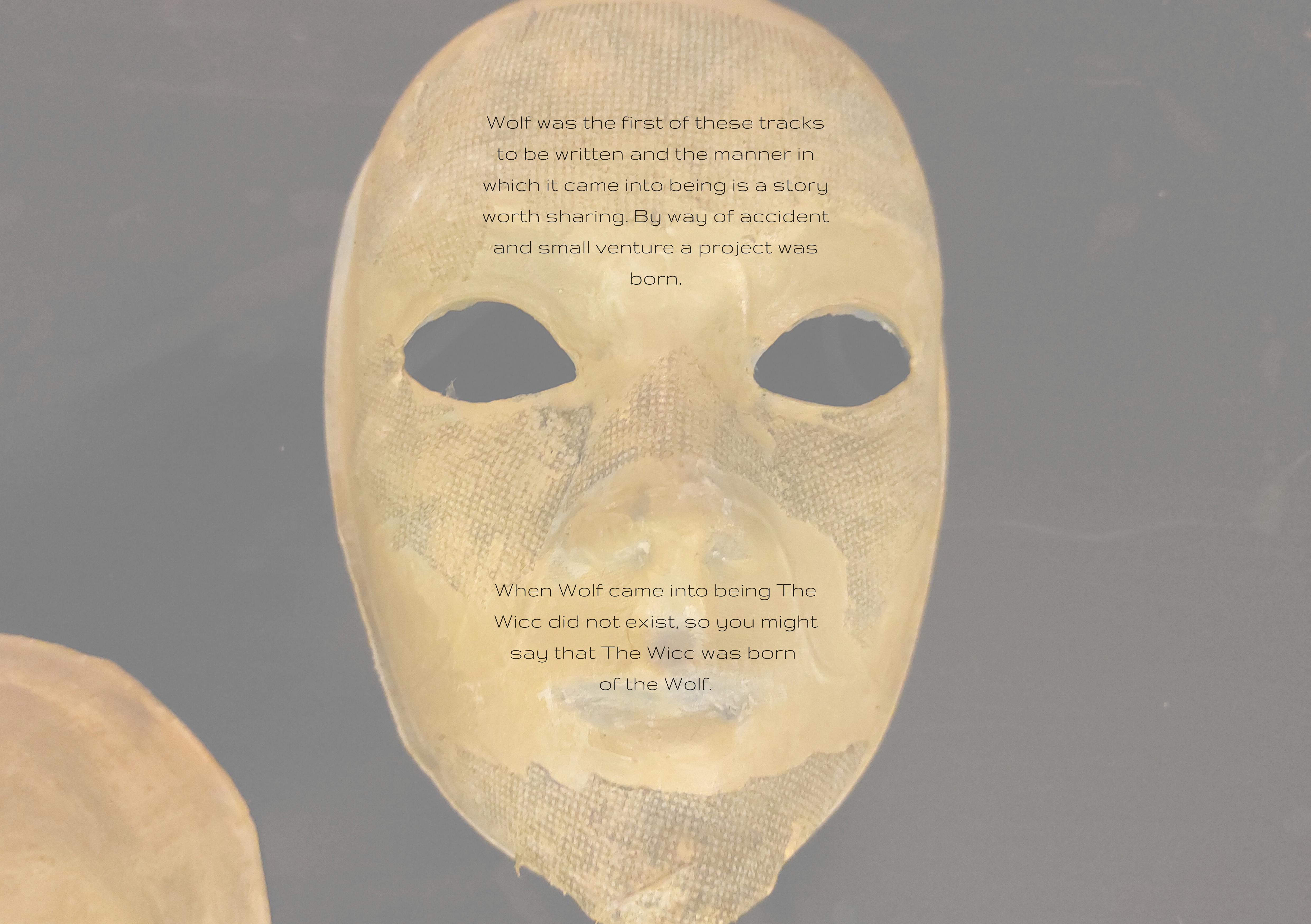
Can take

with

them

some

day



Wolf was the first of these tracks
to be written and the manner in
which it came into being is a story
worth sharing. By way of accident
and small venture a project was
born.

When Wolf came into being The
Wicc did not exist, so you might
say that The Wicc was born
of the Wolf.

I was cutting
flowers to make
me a
home



I OFFERED
HIM SOME
FLOWERS

HE HAS
NO USE
FOR THIS

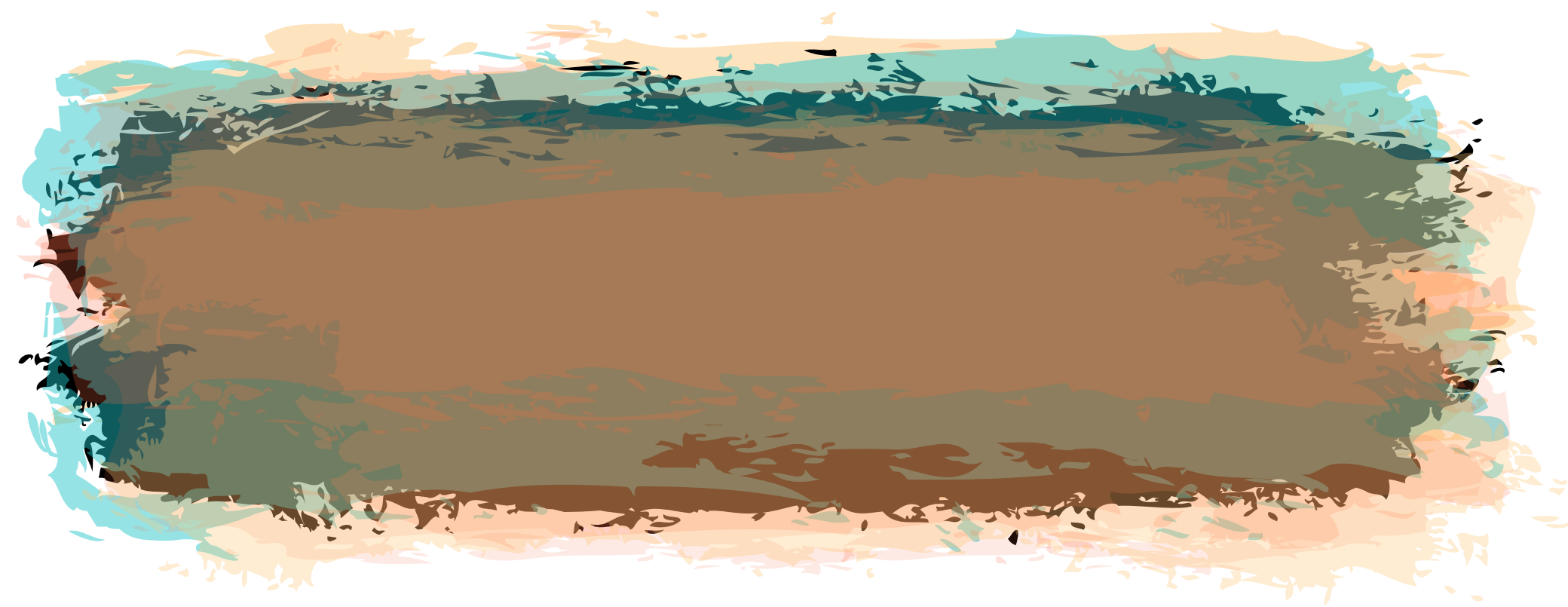


BUT HE DIDN'T
WANT TO KNOW

HE'S JUST
A WOLF



who tried
to kill me
years ago



Ireland: Mid 2017 I moved across the county line from a town on the Wicklow-Dublin border to a rental house in rural County Wexford. This modest bungalow had a sliver view of sea, onto which, on cloudless nights and in the right quadrant of the year, the moon would radiate its cartoon beam. Stars were a multitude and many a shooting one was seen. I had sufficient space to set up a music room in which I placed an ageing Apple MacBook (donated by a friend), borrowed studio monitors, a Korg keyboard on loan and a click-clack sofa (one of few things in that room I actually owned) - among other knick-knacks and thingumajigs.

The MacBook went untouched for some months. I had travelled down there with little more than an escape plan, some favours and an irrational fear of recording technology. Within two weeks of landing, a bag containing wallet, bank cards and phone was stolen from the back of my old Toyota, Gertie (I think her booty was manhandled). This distressing inconvenience led to absurd difficulties with a certain bank - owing to the recent change of address and a new, unregistered sim card - which left me without any form of debit card for several months.

Rather more quickly though I was in possession of a new mobile phone.

Foostering with this phone one Sunday morning I decided to try out its camera and on seeing a spider outside the bedroom window decided to film it. Turned out the phone had a hi-res series of lenses and the snippet of black and white footage had an atmospheric quality. I wondered how easy it would be to edit on the fly so downloaded an app (which I still use today). Said app has an audio function where a file can be imported but it can also use the phone's inbuilt microphone to record audio directly. So I set up a mic through a loop pedal (two of the few other things I owned in that room), recorded a vocal loop and left it running. I then put the phone next to a monitor, pressed record on the app and improvised a topline over the loop. The spider in the footage was a seasonal wolf spider making its web in a corner of the window-frame and without much in the way of conscious thought, out came the opening lines, melody and all:

"I woke up beside a wolf, I never let him in
I never let him."

Russia and US to hold Ukraine

POLINA IVANOVA and
MAX SEDDON in Moscow

You may have noticed that the MacBook in this scenario remains untouched, It took a while longer and a lesson in basics from a friend to get me properly started. In the following months I made every mistake short of blowing up the hard drive (that came later) and I hit many a technological brick wall but the seed of an idea planted by the inchy wolfy spider germinated without great effort into a manifest piece of work. It had a life imperative and I got out of its way. I was surprised by the kiddish joy that I found in the process (tech hitches and shortcomings aside) - midi tools are great craic altogether and you don't need to be able to play all that well (although it helps). You just, well, PLAY!

What originated had an unsettling side. A sense of pastoral disquiet in these eerie folk tales of hunted wolves and women. The wolf had let himself in and was not leaving. Some tracks arrived almost fully formed and others developed over time, with added layers of sound and later editorial decisions, but the writing throughout was fluid and unthought. As the work mounted there seemed to be two emergent threads and I followed them separately through the dark woods to end (for now) with binary chronicles, the first of which is Wolf. Part two, the name not fully decided, will follow in the coming months. It is written and recorded but there are some instrumental contributions to solicit and mixing to complete.

I have written and co-written many songs but I have never worked in this manner before - never had so much preliminary and postliminary control. Mostly I've collaborated with other musicians, bringing only part of the whole to the process, which has been very fruitful and something I will continue to do. But collaboration of this type, for me at least, has always required premeditation and intermediary dialogue. It has never been automatic.

Once basically proficient with the tools, and largely liberated from fear, I was fascinated to discover what I sounded like.

There are markedly fewer women and non-binary people in the world of music production, although that is slowly changing. It would be too easy to say that only men have traditionally been interested in this stuff. It's hard to picture yourself where you are not represented; harder to believe that such skills could be at your disposal and that you could be equally adept. But there is nothing intrinsically male about digital whizzbangs and analogue whatsits, though others may relate differently to the machinery and produce different-sounding work, which is surely a welcome thing.

It was not my primary purpose but I am happy to represent.

I have done the handwringing and hair-pulling, and the self-saboteur has been devilishly active at times but with much still to accomplish, I have managed to give the lie to an old adage.

I am an old wolf and I have learned new tricks.

No doubt the work was facilitated by the peace and solitude of where I found myself. But beyond that, how much was place a factor in this writing? Sheep's Clothing spins the tale of an apocryphal Wolf and his sticky end but in my mind's eye the Wiccy woman hides in a fold of the old Wexford town wall, such as at Selskar Abbey or perhaps where it abuts the Arts Centre which, of pivotal importance to the scene here, is currently being extended. I picture the procession of the townspeople through Wexford's curving streets to where the closing rituals take place - from the Bullring where the body of the Wolf is reft asunder, to the Quay where the carcass is immolated.

I have envisaged this from the start as a multimedia project - in fact it began as such, if you remember our wolf spider - and I am interested to see what might come of it in terms of live performance. Certainly this volume of the chronicles could be performed as written, with a large ensemble in a conventional performance space, given the means to produce such a show. But I am also teasing out ideas around collaborative theatre - perhaps a boulevard piece proceeding through the town, following the tale's trajectory, its denouement a ritual enactment not unlike ancient folk traditions in many parts of the world. In Europe alone, the Hungarian Busojaras, the Bulgarian Kukeri, Uzgavenes in Lithuania and the Sardinian Mamuthones are just a few examples. In keeping, Wexford and other parts of Ireland have a centuries-old mumming tradition centred around the twelve days of Christmas (which of course originated as a pagan holiday) and the St Stephen's Day visit of the Wren Boys. So there is no reason why any future show of this kind could not travel and translate to other towns and places.

It will be good, after two years of enforced isolation and covid-exacerbated family difficulties that ultimately saw me leave Wexford for that period, to engage with other artists, and indeed audiences, again. I think this work has great potential for interdisciplinary exploration and community participation. But it would be remiss of me not to acknowledge that I did not get here entirely by myself. Ruth O'Mahony-Brady, who transcribed the score from midi, was a key support from the off. The MacBook, the crash tutorial in Ableton Live, accompaniment at the first (and only so far) Wicc live outing, advice and encouragement over the years of this project - these are all her generous bestowments. Jay Oglesby played and recorded himself cleanly and beautifully on the drums that help to anchor so many of these tracks, allowing the project to move forward in the midst of successive lockdowns. A brief interlude in restrictions allowed for the studio recording of parts on this collection - captured under time constraints by Gavin Glass on a miserably wet Winter's night close to Christmas. Geraldine Mahon was a one-take wonder on bassoon and the four great string players, Beth, Lynda, Paul and Jenny, were exemplars of grace under pressure,

Mirona Mara, is a Romanian-born artist based in Wexford, to whom I was introduced at that first Wicc gig - a multidisciplinary event run by local writer and performer Peter Murphy in the aforementioned Wexford Arts.

Her beautiful wolf illustration features on the cover of this album (and on this page). Several other artists present at or participating in that show are now friends and future co-conspirators, which speaks to the value of community-based art and having the courage to put the "lab" into collaboration. Early on Mark Healy loaned me a mic and Dunk Murphy a Casio synth, which (covid est culpa) I still have. Simon Quigley helped with some EQ issues I was having on the string section and Dunk sensitively mastered the finished mixes. All other artworks included in this booklet are my own.

In 2019 I raised some essential funds using the Indiegogo crowdfunding resource, which helped to upgrade soundcard, speakers and software. I am very grateful to everyone who pre-purchased this work and patiently waited an unforeseen two and some years for the first instalment to be delivered. Thanks also to a separate benefactor who has contributed more than once when I was in need but who would, I am sure, prefer to remain nameless. Finally, several friends gave valuable feedback in the mixing stages, including Jay, Colin Morris, Thomas Dunning and Sean Twomey. All here mentioned, and many not here named, have been with me in some sense along the road. Not all have been human.

PHYSIC HEAL THYSELF

I have talked about place, lore and ritual but the last aspect of this work I want to mention is something more universally expressed as the environment. I have no interest in proscribing how this work should be understood but merely in providing some context to its several facets. Somewhere in the course of exploring the theme of folkloric ritual, the subjects of how we treat the earth and each other became conflated. This seems particularly prescient now as a warmonger wreaks catastrophe in Ukraine. Protracted conflicts are ongoing in other parts of the world, in Syria, Yemen, Palestine and Ethiopia to name a few, tolling destruction of built environments and misery on every living thing, and leading to mass displacement of peoples. Not all of these actions have been so widely covered and condemned by Western media.

What part does ritual, of which artistic practice is an example, play in all of this? Perhaps it's that in playing out scenes, even those of a barbaric nature, we return to them our humanity in acts of social cauterisation and communal healing. We can reconfigure events and imbue them with new layers of meaning. And come to a better understanding of ourselves. The pyre in Wolf, for example, could be interpreted as a peace lantern (made from biodegradable materials of course) floating onto a river, like in the Aarti ceremony at Varanasi on the Ganges. The wolf, is an archetypal symbol, evoking primal fear, wonder, and something deep within ourselves from which we have become distanced. But while actual wolf numbers and other endangered animal populations recover in various parts of the world, and while earth-restorative efforts increase around the globe, there may be hope. Let those who do damage and refuse to do the work be thrown to the wolves.

WOLF

I woke up beside a wolf, I never let him in
I never let him in
Let's record the conversation
The swallows are leaving now
Wish they could take me with them somehow

When I woke beside the wolf he never let me speak
He never let me speak
He just chose his destination
The swallows have flown away
Hope they can take me with them someday

I was cutting flowers
To make the place a home
I offered him some flowers
But he didn't want to know

He has no use for this trousseau
He's just a wolf who tried to kill me years ago

I woke up beside a wolf, I never let him in
I never let him in

Stop hunting me
Stop hurting me
Physic heal thyself

SHEEP'S CLOTHING

The wolf has moved on
I woke up and he was gone
I heard he found a washerwoman in a fishing town
And she has a great big barrel
For washing out his sheep's apparel
I must find a pen and page and put this burden down

And to beg the question
Who would have thought I'd miss a wolf
Like waking up in Stockholm and thinking I'm in love
The wolf has moved on

The wind is picking up again
It's picking up again

Wild blows the wind from this hillside
Wild blows the wind

It's blowing down to the town
Where the fish are brought in
Finding the wolf

One push to the chest and his back to the barrel
Thrust under the chin and he's in
No chance to clamber out
Black water up his snout

The wolf has moved on
I woke up and he was gone
This is the sound of the Wicc

And the people of the town came down and bore the corpse away
In a grave procession to the market square
And there they tore asunder
The victualler took the entrails
And fed them to the dogs
And the tailor tacked the tail upon the town wall
The mayor felt the pelt should be preserved for ceremony
And the fishermen rowed out
Hung his head from a gibbet on a rock out at sea
With the skulls of the boneyard wreckers

What of the bones?
She took the bones
She took the bones
She took the bones and ground them down

Oh oh the Wicc is awake
Wild blows the wind

A STRANGE REJOICING

Here come the wind up from the cliff that is tumbling into the sea

An accidental hit or a mute policy?

And it killed him, it killed him, it killed him

Him haw haw

POWDER

The people euphoric made a pyre of the bones
They danced in a ring till the flames turned to cinders
The revelry stopped, the people went home
And she crept from the hollow in the wall where she'd hidden
And gathered the ash, the chalk and the carbon
In a vessel held under her cloak
And the smoke rose from the bowl and curled round her fingers
She grimaced and choked all the way to the door of her home

And she ground him into powder

Oh widow of nature she crushed in a mortar
A wolf incantation to summon her daughters the weather
And the wind did howl and the wind did moan
And the wraith rose up from the white ash bone
And the wind did howl, and the wind did moan

And she ground him into powder

Oh what is this spirit I'm swallowing whole?
I feel it in my sinews, it dowses my bones
It's making me strange
I'm changing
It's making me strange
I'm changing

THE WIND

The wind might be your friend or foe
Depending on the arrows in its quiver

Let it blow some poison your way

And the wind is picking up its bow
(Let it blow some) Arrows tipped with toxin, oh

Let it blow some poison your way

And the wind begins to huff and blow
(Think you know the wind?) Oh it will deliver
Pricking its venom into your veins (Injecting something new)
Your sanity is marked

And the wind can be your friend or foe (Thinking you're in for the same old weather)
Depending on the arrows in its quiver

You may think you know the ind
The way that it will blow
But you don't know (You don't know what I know)
No you don't know

May it blow some poison your way (Blow wind blow)

The delivery is made
And the wind can be your friend or foe
Depending on the arrows in its quiver

APPETITE

What I feel more than anything is a change of appetite
Subtle changes in the pigmentation of my skin
And I'm told at times I'm more inclined to fly off the handle
Which handle?
Perhaps my cooking pot or sweeping broom
And when the moon is full
I find hair developing where it never grew before

And at times there's a quickening from this change of appetite
Thickening the hips and haws, the oohs and awes of blood
That runs a redder shade
A grade of biothermal energy is palpate in me
And the heat will bring the howl
And the bugger of the growl

When the moon is full
I wake up with the traces of journeys to places
I don't recall making
Hmm

When the moon is full
Something makes me wriggle in the bed
Something makes me funny in the head
Animorphosa, amnesiac
Crypto-zoo
Canis lupis
Whooo

Who is she?

BIG BAD

Who's afraid of the big bad (entre chien et loup)?

Who's afraid of the big bad - who?

There is talking in the village

In the warehouse, the bathhouse and whorehouse and by the home fires

Cause they don't know what she is and what they are becoming

There's a change that settles on the town when Helios is setting down his carriage

Entre temps

Who's afraid of the big bad (entre chien et loup)?

Who's afraid of the big bad? Boo

There is rancour in the village

People begging for alms at the poorhouse and by the graveyard

And they think of those who have accrued more than anyone can use

Imagining the piggy snouts and wind to blow their houses down

With huff and puff

Oui enfant

Who's afraid of the big bad (entre chien et loup)?

Who's afraid of the big bad - who?

Winds carry alarm

Things wishing us harm

There are beggars at the gates and monsters in the mansions

There's a woman on the hill and with her we take no chances

Cause she seems to have no need of anything

Who's afraid of the big bad?

Entre chien et loup

PYRE

The folk proceeded one by one
To bring the grisly skeleton
Down to the water's edge
Down to the water

She followed like a shadow on the flock
Till she slid into a nook
Along the harbour wall
They never noticed her
They never noticed her at all

They built the pyre
They built it up higher

IN THE FOLD

You'll find me in the fold
Escaping their attention
As summer lights on skin
We wander in between the trees
And a lonely spit of land
Witches finger of sand at the Raven
It's better in the fold
It's why I'm in the fold

They'll sense me in the fold
But be too scared to mention
Witnessing the plastic debris cast into the sea and away
To its forever home
A convergence zone in the Doldrums
It's why I'm in the fold
It's better in the fold

Till the rise in the mercury
Brings me down to a glittering sea
With a necklace of clams
To dance on the sand
Before a swelling tide
With nothing moving inside

Suddenly summer
Suddenly summer comes (to the fold)
It's better in the fold
Suddenly summer
Suddenly summer comes
It's why I'm in the fold