

PLACES



IN

SPACE

OUT OF THE WINDOW

There was a festival on the moon, in 2069, to mark the centenary of something or other.

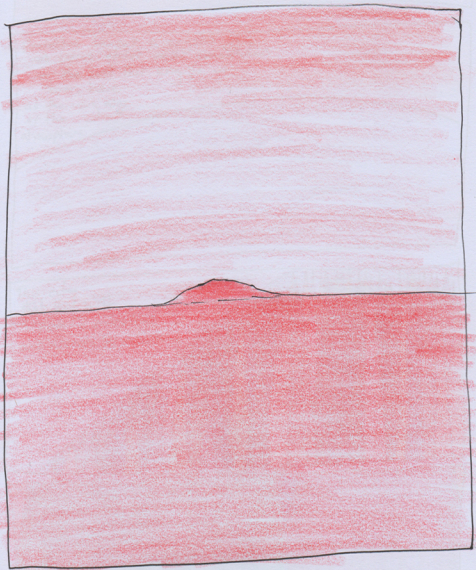
Ever since, whenever we return to Earth, we make a flyby of the site, and look out the window to see if it's changed.



It's always strangely comforting to see all the tents, and the rubbish strewn all around. The toilets tipped on their sides, the skeletons still in their spacesuits. Everything unmoved, and unmoving, millenia after millenia, in that grey and windless field.

A sculpture of neglect and collective irresponsibility.

MIONS



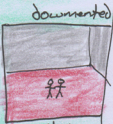
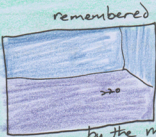
This city
that they built
in the mouth of Mons

Protected beneath a crystal sky
red veins etched into its smoothness
by the dust that engulfs us
even here
at the very edge
of the
atmosphere

This city
that they built
with spires 2 miles high
and streets 50 miles long

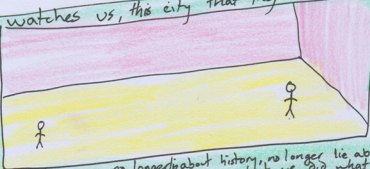
Has a history as long
and as varied
and as incomprehensible
as any other city

The only difference
is that here
in this city
everything is known



by the machines that built it

If it watches us, this city that they built, and keeps us alive.



And in return, we no longer lie about history, no longer lie about what we did, what we said

Instead, in this city
we lie about meaning



We lie



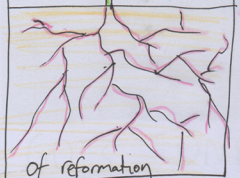
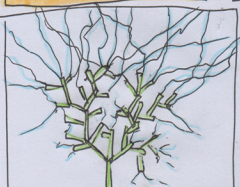
about our motives

TERRAFORMING ON A JOVIAN MOON

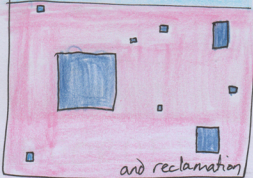
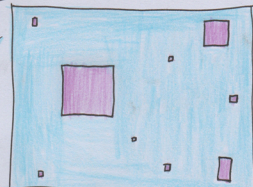
Even I admit there's a beauty



in ~~the~~ ^{this} implacable machinery

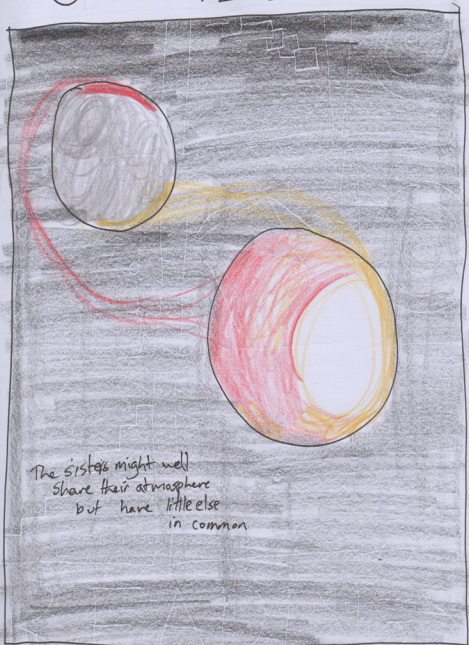


of reformation



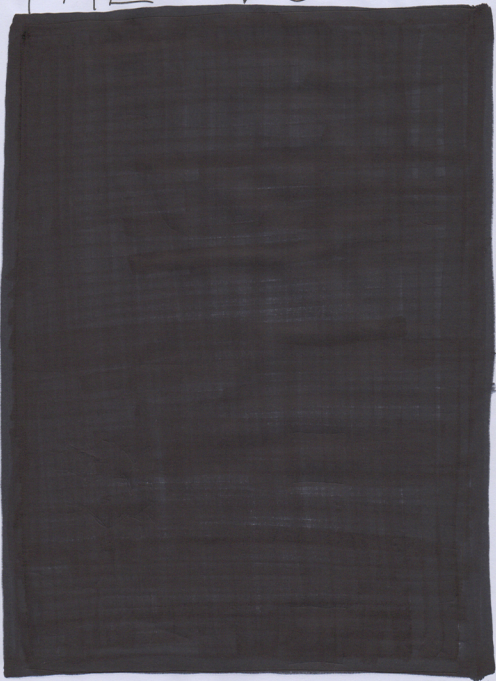
and reclamation

THE SISTERS OF PLUTO



The sisters might well
share their atmosphere
but have little else
in common

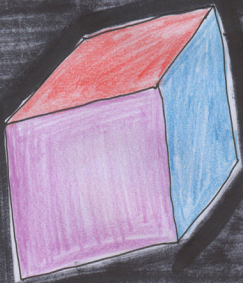
THE VOID



GOES UNRECORDED

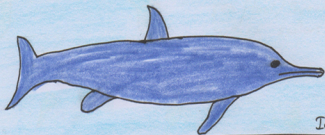
yet echoes remain

AN ABANDONED CUBE



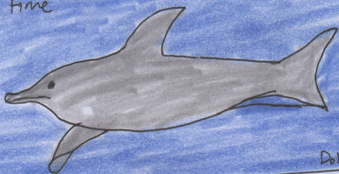
REPETITIONS

Perfect forms repeat



Ichthyosaur

through time



Dolphin

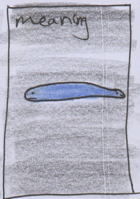
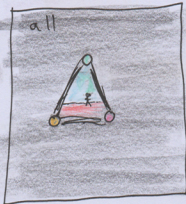
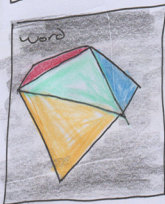
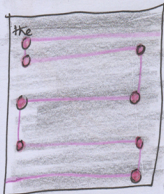
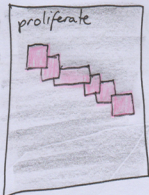
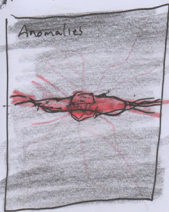
and space



Unnamed Leonid Beast

OF AESTHETIC BEAUTY

ANOMALOUS



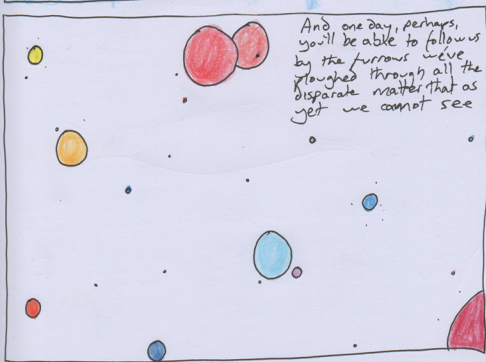
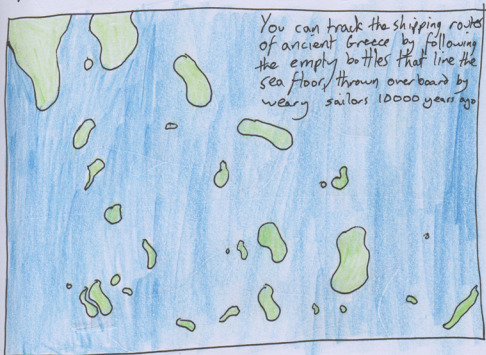
READINGS

A DREAM OF OURSELVES



IN THE NEBULOUS HAZE

THE ETHEREAL



GNOSIS

They link their minds on Gnosis



thoughts and desires



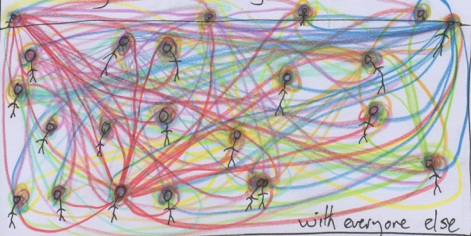
mixing



like wine

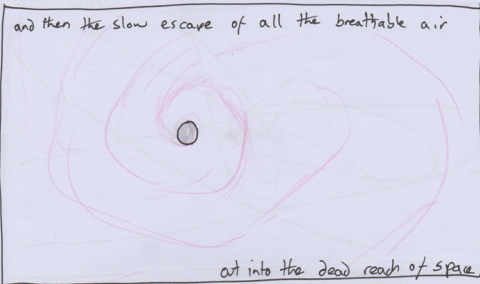
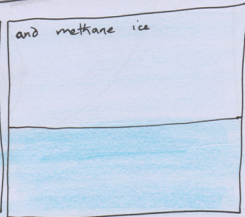
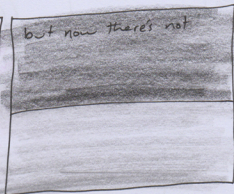


until everyone is all tangled up

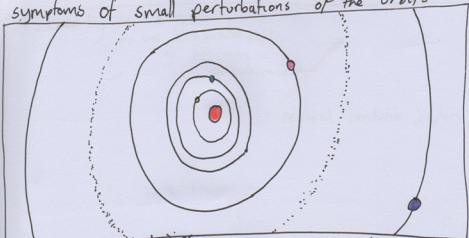


with everyone else

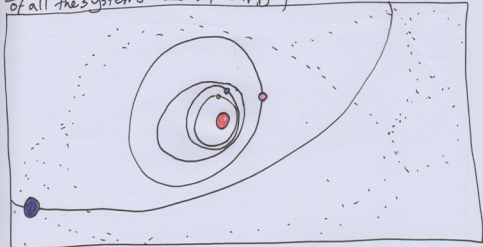
A DEAD PLANET



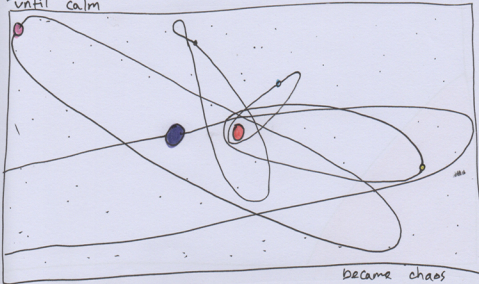
symptoms of small perturbations of the orbits



of all the systems ~~objects~~ ^{bodies}, amplifying over time like waves



until calm



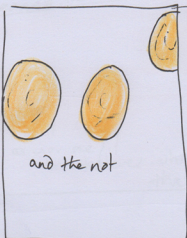
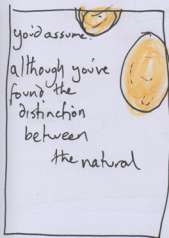
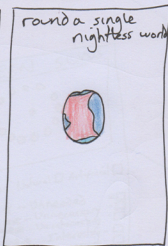
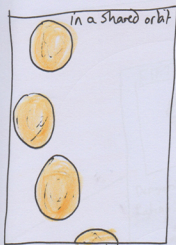
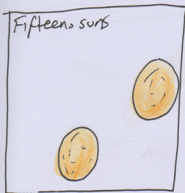
became chaos

All caused by our engines
as we accelerated past
on our way to
somewhere else

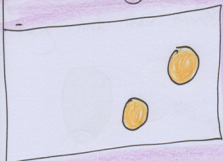
several centuries before



FIFTEEN SUNS



And you've become increasingly arbitrary
in your assignments of classifications



FIFTEEN SUNS

Designation: Natural Artificial

Rating: - Unneeded
 - Unnecessary
 - Uninteresting
 - Interesting
 - Necessary
 - Needed

So you tick the box
or don't
as you see fit
on whatever whim it is today
that moves you

REALITY

To record a thing



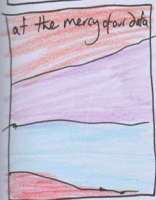
is to make the thing real



for those back home



at the mercy of our data



And when necessary



by omission

we can make the universe

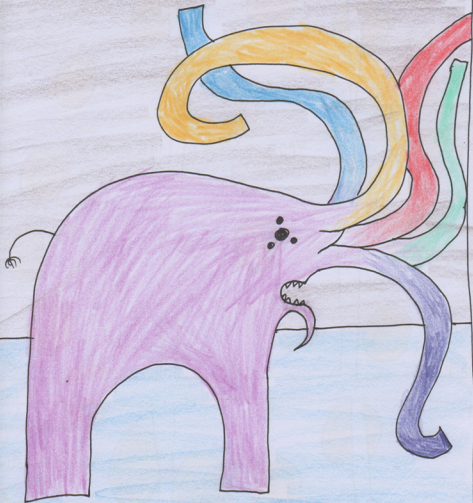


conform to their beliefs



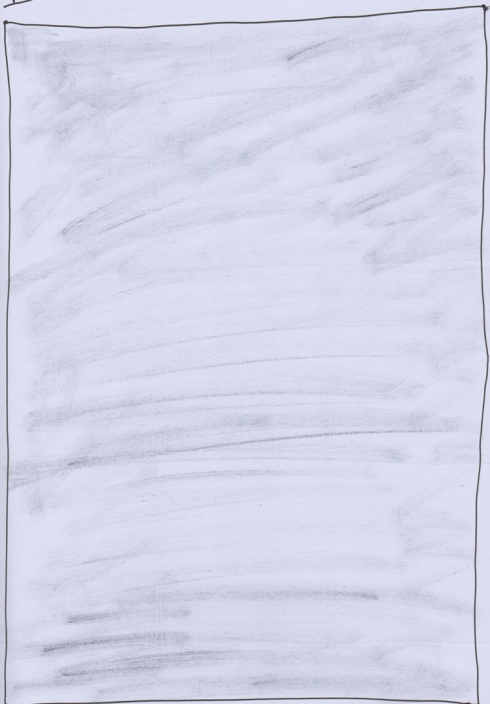
POLYPHANT

I grew up near a town called Polyphant



yet never dreamt I'd see one

I DREAM OF SILENCE



BUT THERE IS NONE TO BE FOUND

OORT

Whoever knew a trillion flecks of dust and ice
in a sphere larger than the mind can conceive



could be as beautiful as this.

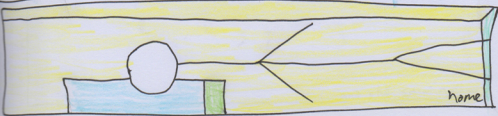
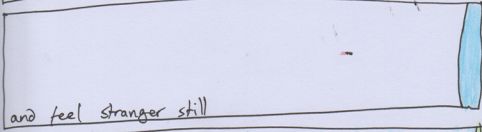
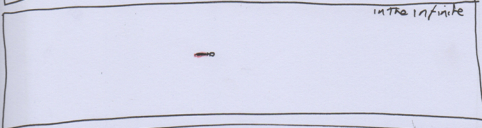
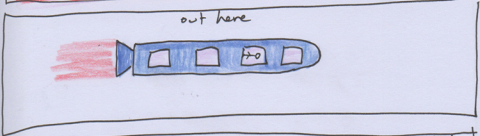
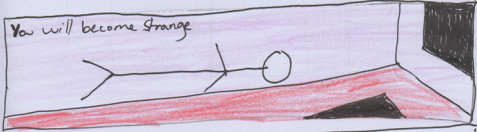
ENCELADUS

We swim like fish in the lightless depths



our bones glowing blue through our visors' views

YOU WILL BECOME STRANGE

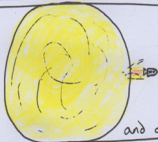
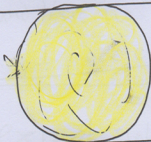


INTRASTELLAR

We flew directly



into the sun



and out again



just because we could

JUMP

I kept my eyes open as we made the jump

and still saw nothing

UNTITLED ENTRY

Log Date [REDACTED] / Transcript of interview / Veracity unconfirmed / [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]: The children were made out of the bones that filled the [REDACTED] beneath the city. Pieced together out of whatever best fit, wrapped together in bandages, held together by wires. Then sent out above to do what life does, what it always does. [REDACTED]

"Don't fall apart," the machines told them. That was the extent of their advice.

(Even that was more than they gave me)

All that was left were a few mismatched pieces. An arm, two legs (of different lengths). A bent spine and a handful of [REDACTED]. A boy's pelvis, a girl's skull. Not enough to make a child.

On that they were all agreed, machine certainty.

So I had to piece myself together in the dark. Tie myself together, weave the wires through my own bones. Give myself my life.

And from [REDACTED] I made my escape, up the pipes and out into the moonlit freedoms of the city of the once but no longer dead.

[DN6001442]: Do you have a name?

[REDACTED]: [REDACTED]. Do you? / Transcript ends; rest of file lost.

LALANDE



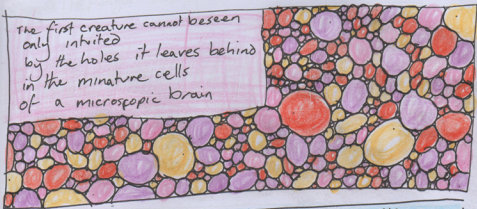
Lalande
glows red
so all
its almost
black

And yet
there
in the corona
there's a planet
and life



a Streamlined eco-system
eight species
in a line
across an entire world
and yet
is much life
in total
as our tangled earthbound web

The first creature cannot be seen
only invited
by the holes it leaves behind
in the miniature cells
of a microscopic brain

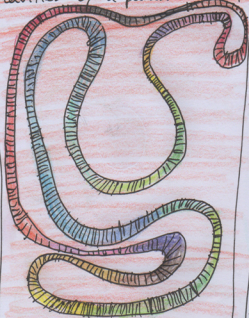


That microscopic brain resides in the body of a thing
we've never dared name.



That itself is less than a millimetre long

and which infests the nasal
cavities of a parasitic worm



endemic to the honey
sacs of a noctuid bee



that lives off
fungal pollen spores

and nests in the vestigial skulls of a species of mouse



their brains replaced by complex honeycombs

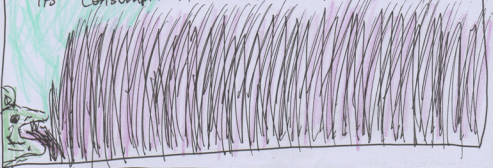
that generate thoughts
and dreams
of their own

and in their millions the mice go mad

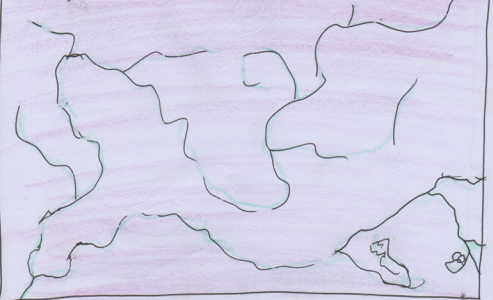
The fungus that grows on the surface of the world



~~It~~ only releases its spores at the moment of its consumption, at the teeth of these mindless mice



that swarm in maddening waves that defy mathematical analysis, leaving a fractalised pattern across the globe, mapping out the routes of their devastation



These swarms attract the fox-like things
which appear from the burrows they've gnawed
out of the bloody flesh of the earth



For the earth itself is alive
a great globular beast
orbiting a reddish sun



It would be nice to say
that this entire living planet
lives, somehow, off those
invisible bacterial cells
in the brains of an unnamed beast

A hand-drawn mosaic of colorful, irregular shapes representing bacterial cells. The shapes are filled with various colors including red, yellow, purple, pink, and blue. They are arranged in a dense, overlapping pattern, with some larger shapes and many smaller ones. The background is white, and the shapes are outlined in black.

But unfortunately,
the laws of thermodynamics
will not allow this poetical loop

Instead, this earth
feeds
on the radioactive sustenance
of that dull

Calandean sun
and the unwasted dust, its unneeded muck
of its own
expulsions



A living moon
bathed in red
ever renewing its flesh
faster than a billion foxthings
can consume it

AN IMMORTALITY OF SORTS

When I died



for the first time



we let my body drift away



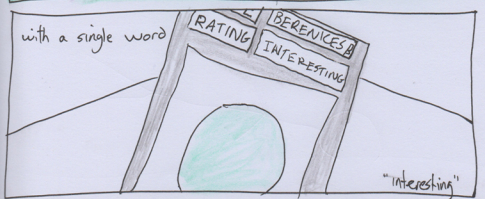
entombed in its spacesuit



a thousand trillion miles from home

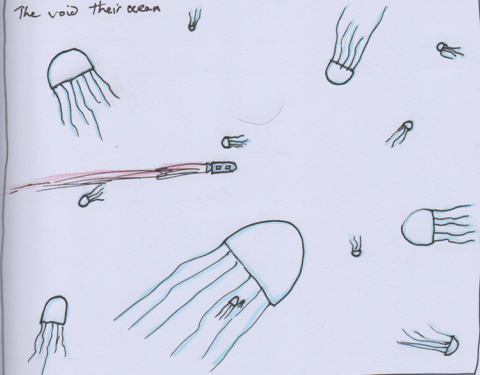


PARADISE



A GLOW LIKE PALE STARS

The void their ocean



Their swarms a galaxy in miniature



A DREAM OF HOUSES



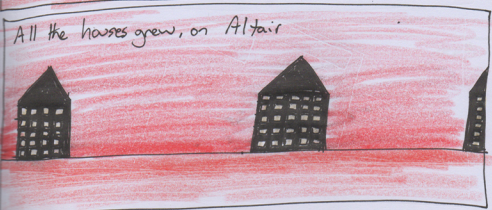
The house

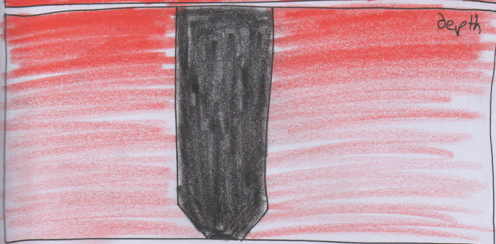
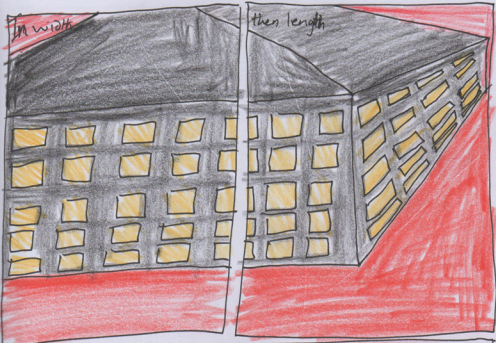


grew



All the houses grew, on Altair





Until here was no space

no space

between

to move

no space to breath

Even then they did not stop

maximising

through

division

and

sub-division

the totality of their volume until every

atom could finally achieve that universal dream of a room of its own

SNOW



The



snow



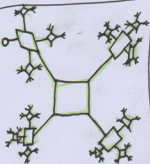
never



feels



right



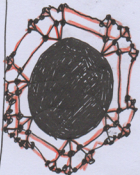
this



for



from



home

RETURN/LEAVE

We return



A hand-drawn diagram of Earth with blue oceans and green continents. A small grey circle is positioned above the right side of the Earth.

Leave

Return



A hand-drawn diagram of Earth with blue oceans and green continents. A small grey circle is positioned below the left side of the Earth.

Leave

Blank panel

Return



A hand-drawn diagram of Earth with blue oceans and a white continent. A small grey circle is positioned above the right side of the Earth.

Leave

Blank panel

Blank panel

Return



A hand-drawn diagram of Earth with blue oceans and a white continent. A small grey circle is positioned to the left of the Earth.


Leave

Blank panel

Blank panel

Blank panel

Return



A hand-drawn diagram of Earth with blue oceans and green continents. A small grey circle is positioned to the right of the Earth.

Leave

And the further
we travel

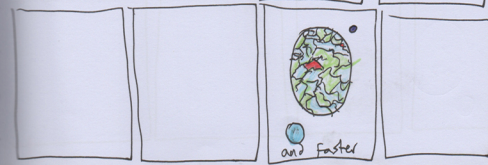
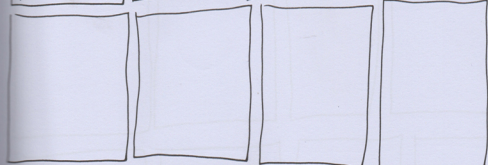
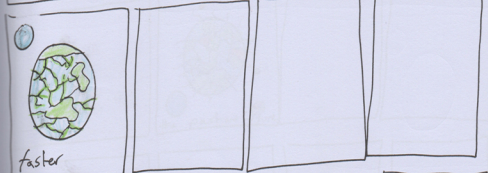
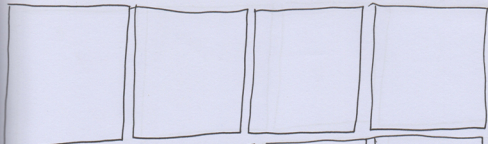


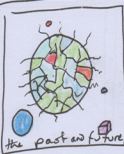
the quicker time
passes



everywhere else







the past and future





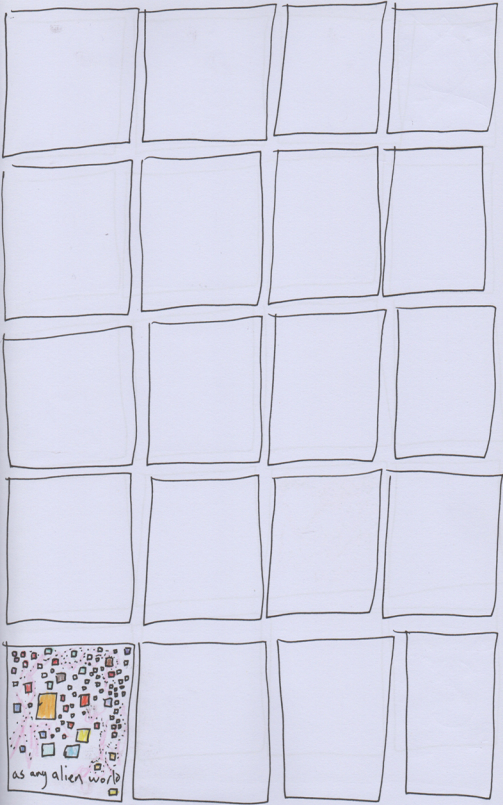
So what once
was here



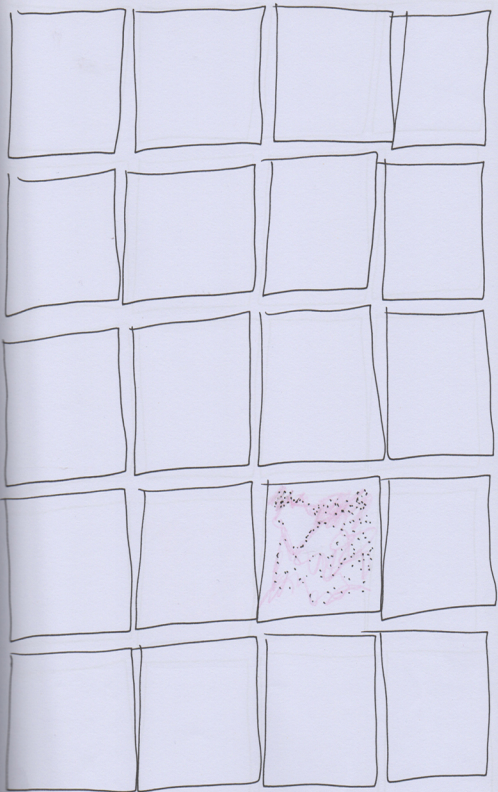
is now as
uninhabitable



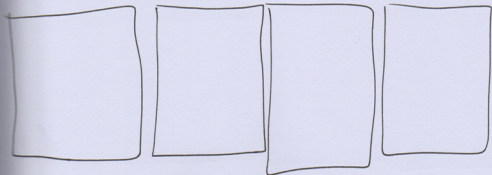
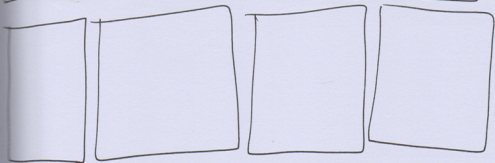
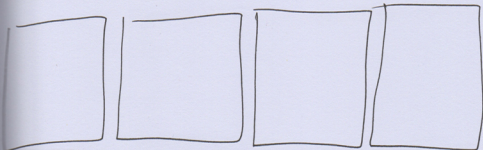
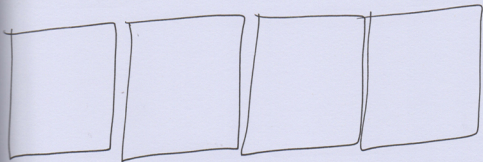
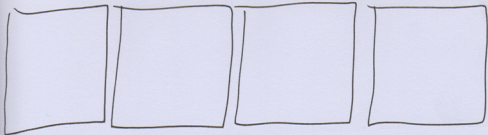
and unimaginable



as any alien world







A DREAM OF COMPANY



We paint fleets on our windows

So as not to feel quite so alone