
unfair maiden 6: suicidal goth

Wesley Sueker
Spring 2024
twentytwozines.com

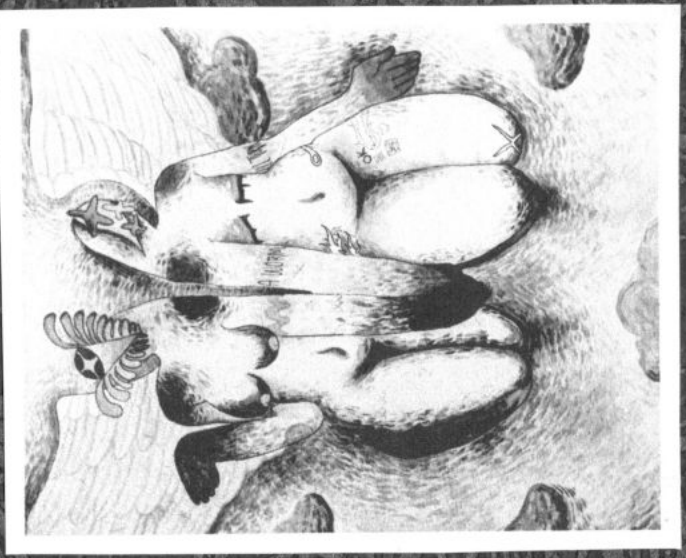
I started this issue about a year ago. I'm feeling a lot better overall now than I was last year, and last year I was feeling better than the year before. I considered not finishing this zine since it is pretty depressing and it doesn't totally reflect how I feel right now. But last night I hopped on my typewriter and started sobbing, and I know it's important to get my sadness on paper.

I am happy to have zines in my life. I will keep making zines forever.

content warning:
Please be mindful that this zine expresses some deep stuff, each page written in the throes of depression. It includes talks of suicide, grief, family death, anxiety & panic.

thank you to MJ for the incredible cover art they made for this issue, for immediately embracing my sadness, and for their incredible patience. they also sent me these pieces to share with you here <3





MJ is a peer support specialist and multimedia artist living in Boston with their chosen family. Their work tries to represent the monstrous and protective nature of our own minds. you can find them at @toadbabe on Instagram or mud.griego@gmail.com

SPOOKY SILHOUETTES

This morning I ended up dressing very goth. It started with trying to get a new eyeliner pencil to work and the next thing I knew I was in a cloud of hairspray for my backcombed mane. I wore a Siouxsie Sioux pendant and a lady at the café asked if it was a picture of me! That's gotta make you feel good. So, I'm starting to... well, think about makeup. I've worn it very occasionally, and usually just some crappy black eyeliner to try and look slightly more goth. I don't always like makeup but I think it completes my trad goth, new-wave aesthetic desires. Without it I look like an 8 year old. I'd really like to learn to do the strong cheekbone contouring thing they did in the 80s. But honestly I feel very intimidated. I wonder if I'm some sort of hypocrite for being halfway between things, like dressing super goth and doing my hair and makeup and whatever one day and wearing a pair of moose-patterned pajama pants and an argyle sweater that evening. I know, that's stupid, it's just some clothes for fun. I think it ties in with some insecurities I have about parties and concerts and nightlife. Basically, I get really uncomfortable and nauseous being out late at night. And I get this weird thought that if I'm not participating in the goth/punk "scene" (meaning clubs and shows and whatever at night) then I'm just a poser.





I think I tend to demand a certain level of "consistency" from myself that for some reason is in especially sharp relief when it comes to fashion. I expect myself to stick with one "look" and keep it up perfectly every day. In middle school I literally wore the same clothes every day, washed once a week. I used to demand a consistent "art style" of myself too, but zinemaking broke me out of it. I just need to remember that very basic rule — different clothes don't make me different.

At this very moment, I am having a panic attack!

At least I'm pretty sure. I'm not a fuckin... doctor or whatever, and I don't have generalized anxiety nor do I have panic attacks very often. But I have had them a few times before and I'm pretty sure this is what it feels like.

The thing that usually makes me notice the panic attack first is it feels like the blood is draining from my face. Like that's my strongest and most noticeable fear response—all of a sudden I can feel all the life in my face just disappear. Physiologically, it might actually be the opposite? I can't remember, is it that the blood rushes to your brain so you can make quick decisions, or rushes away from your brain and to your heart and your limbs so you can run faster? Either way, my face gets kinda tingly, and it feels like my forehead is sweaty or itchy even though it's not actually.

I've been fiddling with an eraser that somehow came out of one of my mechanical pencils (the yellow ones with the twisty tips and the pink erasers; I hate the clicky ones with flimsy lead you're supposed to refill). I don't know where it came from; I found it in my backpack the other day. Now I've been squeezing it and petting it and when I had the sudden urge to just chew it to pieces I figured I'd better write instead.

I've had a lot of things come up that made me think "man, I should write about this and stick it into a new zine", but the things are really hard to write about and I guess I'm too close to the situations-in-progress to want to delve into them emotionally. To write about something tough, I either need to have a lot of distance between what happened or I need to be in full-on panic stream-of-consciousness mode. Obviously I prefer the former but what are you gonna do.

So the thing that kinda triggered this panic attack right now... god, I don't even know if I want to talk about it. It's a money thing, and I hate talking about money things, and I don't know if I want to share that information in a zine. Whatever. I'll cut it out later if I want to.

[Eds note: I did. Basically I was waiting for some money to come in from the inheritance my dad left me for school when he died).

I just feel like such a rich asshole, like this is what I get for not having a job that covers all my expenses and you know how many people don't have anything to help them? You stupid, spoiled fucking brat, you're using depression as an excuse to feel justified in wasting money from your dead father when you could have a full-time job that covers everything right now. And now you have the gall to -complain- about it in a zine to a bunch of people who probably have way more money struggles than you. You absolute fucking loser, you class traitor poverty player, this is just karma for being an entitled bitch your whole damn life and not truly appreciating what you had. You could kill yourself and deserve it except that it'd leave your partner stranded with nothing since you're not legally married yet.

Oh yeah, your partner. Look what you've done to him. You've said you'd take care of him and now look at you, you're just burning through blood money from your dead relatives instead of making something of yourself. You haven't even been in grad school for two straight semesters now. You've been doing nothing. You distract yourself with stupid games and art projects that mean nothing. He's out there in the kitchen washing dishes and I'm just sitting here freaking out and feeling sorry for myself and feeling guilty about it.

god, I've made myself cry.

I'm trying to be a good person, I'm trying to have the life my dad wanted me to have. I know he would rather have me alive than dead but with a degree attached. But I'm just fucking awful either way because if this isn't my best, then I'm just greedy and disrespectful and not honoring the tremendous gift my dad was able to give me in death. And if this is my best, then I'm just a pathetic loser who's going to use up all my undeserved luck one day and end up leaving things worse than when I got here because I've dragged my partner down with me.

If I were alone I would kill myself and leave the money to someone who would use it properly.

eric at the 988 suicide chatline, i love you buddy and you're trying really hard but i just don't think you can help me. i've heard all this stuff before. i mean our conversation took long enough that at least i'm not panicking anymore. so i'm just gonna try to politely say that you've been helpful and thank you for your time and i'm feeling better and quietly wait for you to end the chat.

it's not your fault, eric, you've listened to so much more from me than any human being should have to hear. i'm certain that nobody has trained you nearly enough to deal with me right now.

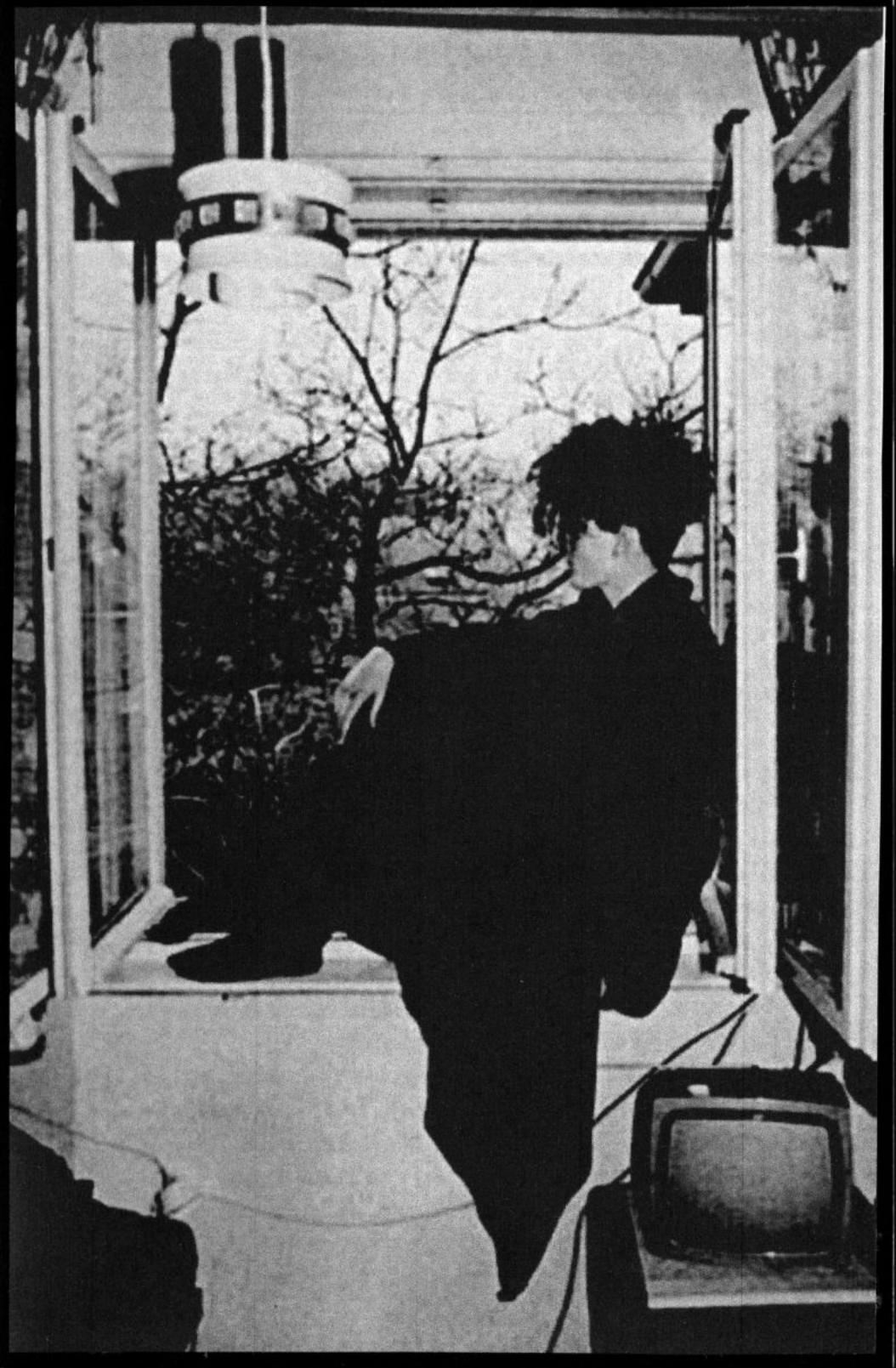
i probably could have prevented this by doing some qi gong or breathing exercises or something when i started freaking out instead of writing a zine about it and working myself up even more in between watching sad videos about disabled shelter dogs slowly learning to trust people again.

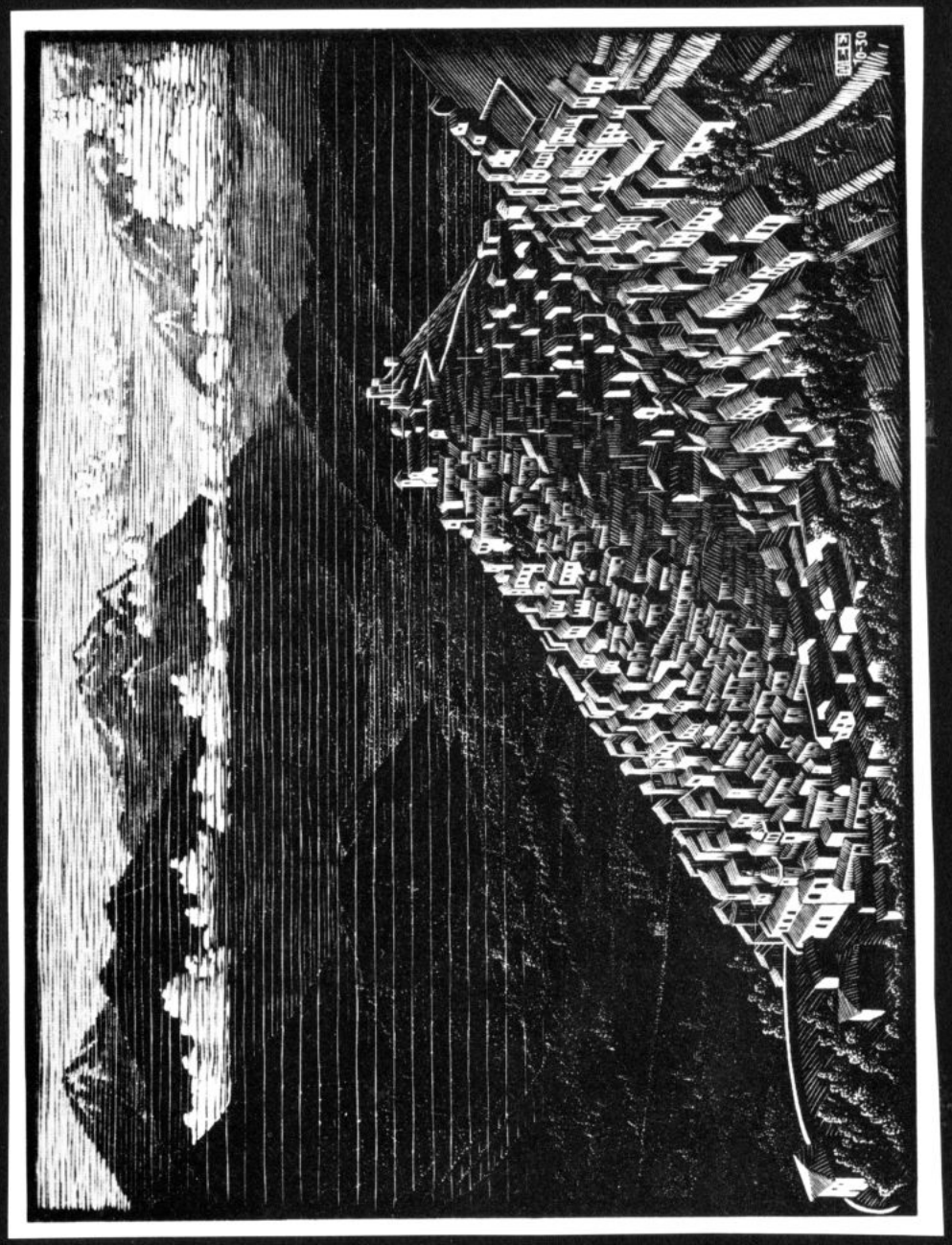
you can probably tell i ran out of my meds this morning.

i thought i was doing better. i thought i was really handling my stressful situation. way better than last time. i held out a good six weeks before breaking down and finally having to contact the 988. that's triple my last record.

but i guess i can't trust anything. not myself, not others, not life, not fate, not even my supposed "progress."

the only one i can trust is my dad and he died eight years ago.





no quotas



no masters


am I really selfish?
is it selfish to be unhappy?
is it selfish to have desires?
is it selfish to think I deserve abundance?
is it selfish to leave some parts out from my story in fear that they could be used against me?
is it selfish to receive something I didn't ask for and use it for myself?
is it selfish if I did ask?
is it selfish to want even more?
is it selfish to eat my cookies and milk?
is it selfish to call them mine?
is it selfish, by nature, to be alive?
is it selfish to wish for death?

message from dad:

DEATH. i'm dead, and it's different now.
but i still love you.

8 OF CUPS. just let it out. you'll feel
better soon.

9 OF COINS. it's okay. we're alone here.
you're safe here.

what should i do?

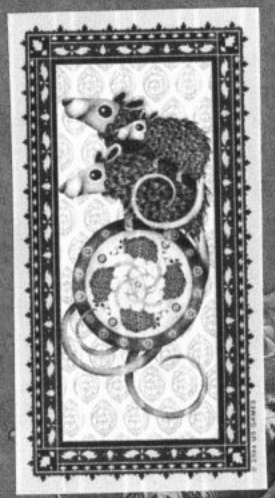


6 OF WANDS. you have made progress. you are doing better.

ACE OF COINS. the wheel is in motion. i promise it's on the way. i promise things are happening.

4 OF COINS. we're unlocking everything. just hold on a little longer. it'll be okay.

STAR. it'll be okay. the worst is over.



but should i call? should i wait?
how do i know i'm doing the right thing?
what should i do? what's going to happen?

HIEROPHANT. i know you feel like you have to do it all yourself. but i promise there are people working on it for you. they have their own rules and processes, but they love you and they know what to do. i know what to do.

WHEEL OF FORTUNE. you feel like you're stuck waiting. remember when i took you to the hospital when you broke your arm? all the nurses said how patient and calm you were. i said it's because you had martial arts training, and of course i believe that helped, but i also think it's just you. you've always been so mature. you've always been able to be patient and strong even when things are spiraling around you.

10 OF COINS. the money is coming. i'm still here to help you.

PAGE OF WANDS. you've been watching bluey lately. isn't there an episode where bluey is getting anxious about going to the park while bandit stops and chats on the way? remember his advice? bingo came up with a game of pretend to play while she was waiting. you can keep doing your creative projects, you can come up with some things to do in the meantime to keep your mind off it. inventing games is more important than you know.

2 OF WANDS. keep planning for the future. don't give up now.

3 OF SWORDS. please don't hurt yourself. i love you so much. i want you to feel better. i just want you to be okay.

PAGE OF COINS. you are doing something. you are planting seeds, you are growing. you are taking good care of yourself. please don't give up. it will pay off. you will feel stronger.

WORLD. i'm here. everything will be okay.

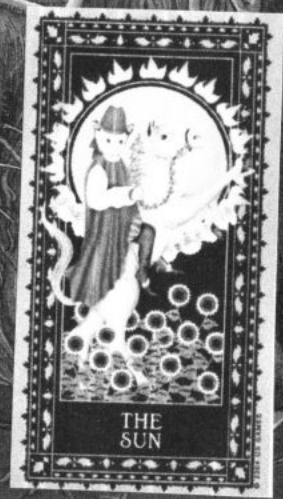
okay dad. okay. i'm going to go to bed like you always told me, that things will be better in the morning.

7 OF CUPS. there are a lot of options for what to do next. but you can decide after you've had some sleep.

i love you dad. i miss you a lot.

QUEEN OF SWORDS. i miss you too pooh bear.
i love you even more seeing you grown up.

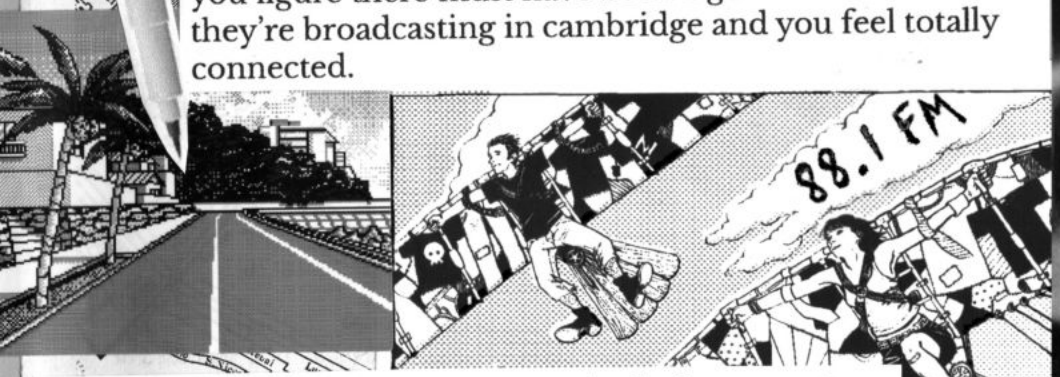
SUN. everything will be okay in the morning.





god, you know what i love about being an adult? if i need to drive down to the art store and pick up more of my favorite brush pens because I ran out of ink while in the middle of a project, i can just get in the car and fucking go there. i can say hi to the guy working there, whose name is sean just like my partner, and i can ask him to point me to the micron pens, and i can grab eight pens because that's how many i can get with my $20 budget, and i can go up to the register and get those and just those and then get back in the car and go home.

my partner found a local radio station while flipping through the channels the other day that plays a bunch of underground punk from the 80s through now. it's a college radio station (no fucking surprise there) out of MIT (also no fucking surprise there) and it comes through pretty crusty this far north, but it's perfect to listen to in the car. every time there's a gust of wind you get some static and everything feels physical and real, and sometimes you get static for no apparent reason and you figure there must have been a gust of wind where they're broadcasting in cambridge and you feel totally connected.



while i was driving there was an suv in the lane next to me with a big bright yellow "thank you Jesus!" bumper sticker. we stopped right next to each other at a light and we must have looked like quite a pair to the cars behind us, what with my bright pink "Hail Satan" bumper sticker!

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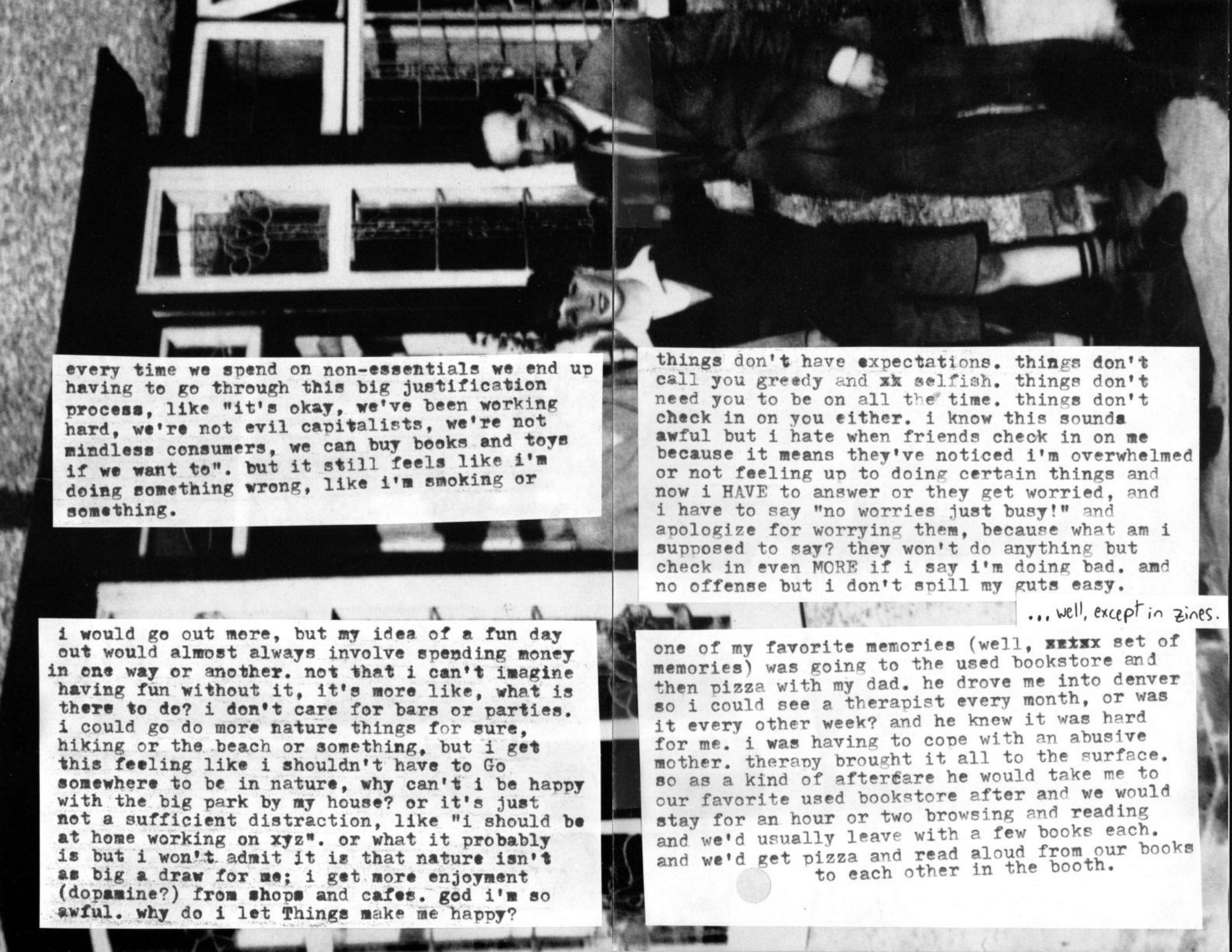
18 MONTHS LATER

i I havent used my typewriter awhile.

lately i've been working a lot on the distro. trying to get in other zines and fix up the website and make a bunch of resources on zines like i'm always saying i want to. i guess it's starting to feel more like work than not work.

i feel like i should be doing something to take advantage of living where i do and not having a kid, like go traveling around new england. marbleheaders travel all the fucking time. i was deconstructing an outdated new england travel guide weeded from the library for collage materials and it made me sad. guilty, almost, for being such a homebody. even though sean and i went out awhile literally yesterday.

it was to go shopping at our favorite hobby shop (hobby bunker now in wakefield). then we went to a little bookstore and i got some books ($144 worth) even though i work at a library. we also just bought some manga and toys online (like $600 worth, mostly on amazon to make it worse). we can afford it now, and we don't binge like this often at all, and wait a sec it's my damn money, but i still feel guilty for being such a Consumer.



every time we spend on non-essentials we end up having to go through this big justification process, like "it's okay, we've been working hard, we're not evil capitalists, we're not mindless consumers, we can buy books and toys if we want to". but it still feels like i'm doing something wrong, like i'm smoking or something.

things don't have expectations. things don't call you greedy and xx selfish. things don't need you to be on all the time. things don't check in on you either. i know this sounds awful but i hate when friends check in on me because it means they've noticed i'm overwhelmed or not feeling up to doing certain things and now i HAVE to answer or they get worried, and i have to say "no worries just busy!" and apologize for worrying them, because what am i supposed to say? they won't do anything but check in even MORE if i say i'm doing bad. amd no offense but i don't spill my guts easy.

... well, except in zines.

i would go out more, but my idea of a fun day out would almost always involve spending money in one way or another. not that i can't imagine having fun without it, it's more like, what is there to do? i don't care for bars or parties. i could go do more nature things for sure, hiking or the beach or something, but i get this feeling like i shouldn't have to Go somewhere to be in nature, why can't i be happy with the big park by my house? or it's just not a sufficient distraction, like "i should be at home working on xyz". or what it probably is but i won't admit it is that nature isn't as big a draw for me; i get more enjoyment (dopamine?) from shops and cafes. god i'm so awful. why do i let Things make me happy?

one of my favorite memories (well, xxxxx set of memories) was going to the used bookstore and then pizza with my dad. he drove me into denver so i could see a therapist every month, or was it every other week? and he knew it was hard for me. i was having to cope with an abusive mother. therapy brought it all to the surface. so as a kind of aftercare he would take me to our favorite used bookstore after and we would stay for an hour or two browsing and reading and we'd usually leave with a few books each. and we'd get pizza and read aloud from our books to each other in the booth.

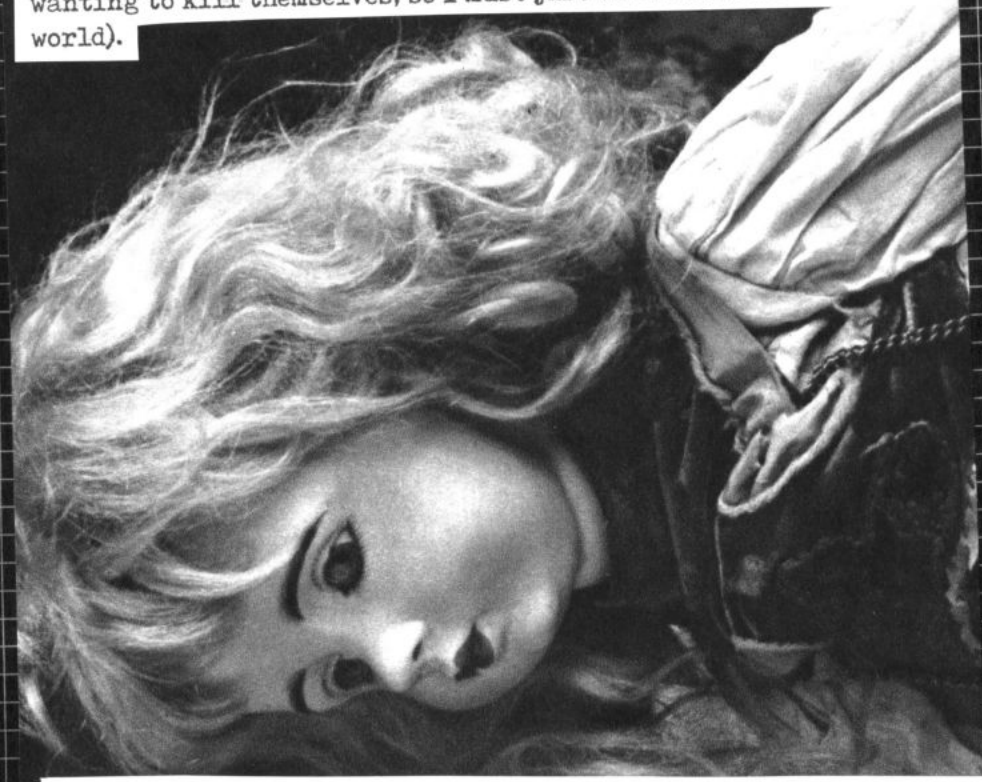
my mom commented on it one time, how many books i had and how muchwe must have spent on that bookstore. i was so afraid she was going to take it away somehow. she said it was okay as long as i was reading them. i wasn't. at least, not at the rate we were bringing them in. i felt so guilty. my dad wasn't spending us out of house and home at the bookstore or anything. but i knew we had money problems and i felt so guilty watching him hand over a check to the therapist and then a card to the bookstore. but i also really didn't want it to end.my face would light up, actually, my whole world felt lighter when i found an old book on renaissance italy or astronomy (i was really into both at the time), and it happened again when i'd show it to my dad and he just seemed xx so proud of my books, like he was happy i loved to learn and that i was still excited about things and then he'd tell me the renaissance artists were also scientists and mathematicians, and he was so happy i liked both art and science and saw the value and play between both. he came in my room one night when i was painting a panda and i don't know why but it made him so happy, he was so proud of me.

things don't die, either. i can keep them as long as i want them. as long as i need to.

i don't think i'm greedy. i don't think i'm selfish. i don't think i'm comsumerist. i think i see the beauty in things.

i love my things. i value them and take good care of them. i don't want to feel bad for buying a book, even if i never finish it.

I think the main trigger for my suicidal thoughts is when my greatest fear gets nearer - the feeling that I can't survive in this world without abject misery. Maybe it's because of some personal failing or flaw (laziness is what I often accuse myself of) or because things outside of my control will beat me down no matter what (my dad's death), or a combination of both (having an abusive boss is not in my control, but other people deal with it without wanting to kill themselves, so I must just be too sensitive for this world).

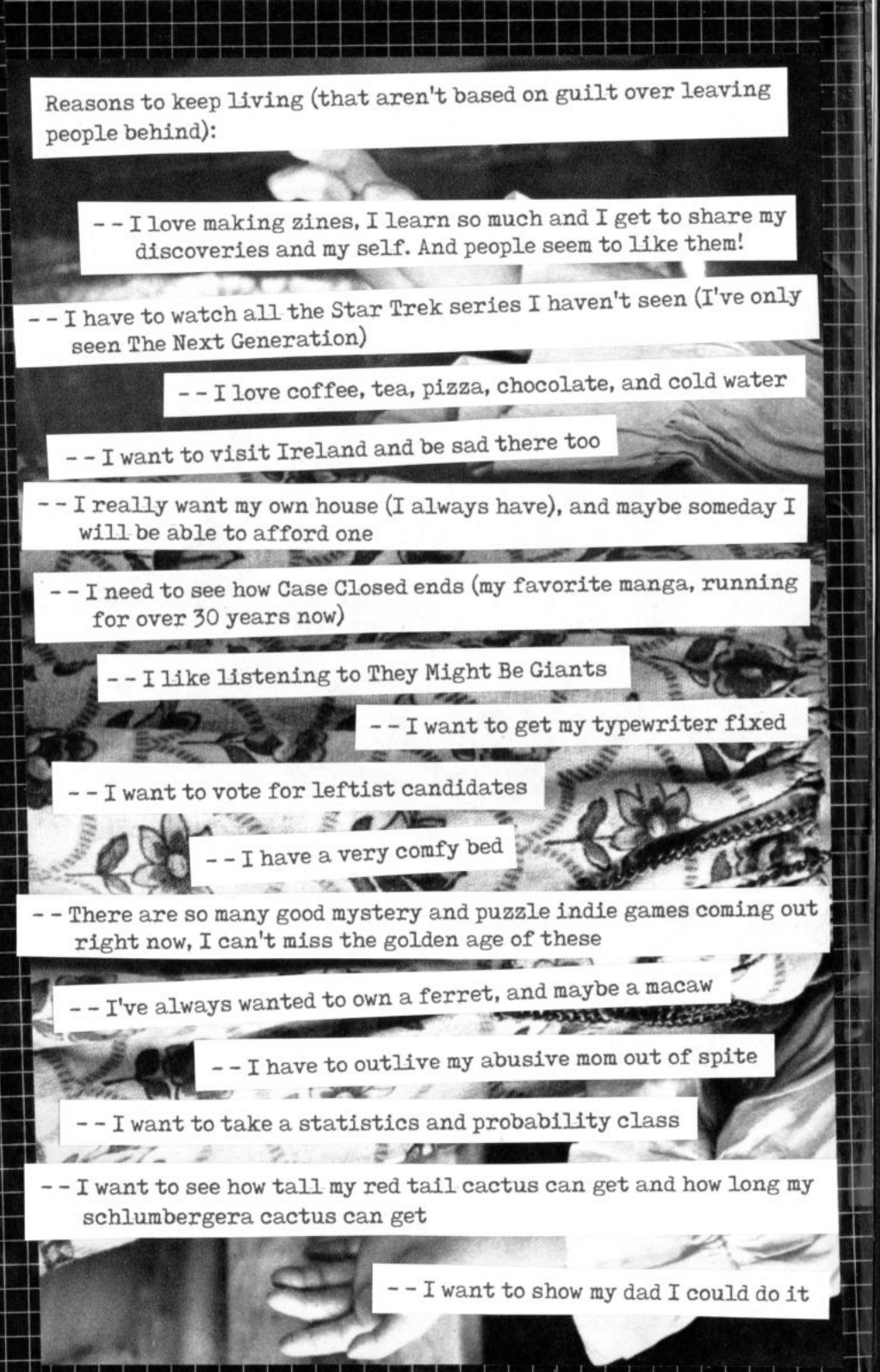


Much of that feels tied to money. If I didn't need to earn money, I could be sad sometimes without worrying about it causing me to become destitute. If I didn't have my dad's life insurance when he died so I could take a year here and a year there to grieve and be sad I probably would have killed myself already.

I'm trying not to tell myself that I'm lazy or weak because I can't imagine working when I feel this way, or because I'm worried any job will again make me want to kill myself. Or maybe I am weak, but it's not my fault.

(Incidentally, did you know my blood type is B+? Ironic.)

Reasons to keep living (that aren't based on guilt over leaving people behind):



- - I love making zines, I learn so much and I get to share my discoveries and my self. And people seem to like them!

- - I have to watch all the Star Trek series I haven't seen (I've only seen The Next Generation)

- - I love coffee, tea, pizza, chocolate, and cold water

- - I want to visit Ireland and be sad there too

- - I really want my own house (I always have), and maybe someday I will be able to afford one

- - I need to see how Case Closed ends (my favorite manga, running for over 30 years now)

- - I like listening to They Might Be Giants

- - I want to get my typewriter fixed

- - I want to vote for leftist candidates

- - I have a very comfy bed

- - There are so many good mystery and puzzle indie games coming out right now, I can't miss the golden age of these

- - I've always wanted to own a ferret, and maybe a macaw

- - I have to outlive my abusive mom out of spite

- - I want to take a statistics and probability class

- - I want to see how tall my red tail cactus can get and how long my schlumbergera cactus can get

- - I want to show my dad I could do it

wesley sueker
fall 2025
twentytwozines.com

I took another break before finishing this zine. It's now been about 2½ years since I wrote the majority of it. Ironically I am now in the same position as when I started — jobless, not in school (though it's because I finished my degree), and I had my first suicidal thoughts in months crop up again. At least I'm not desperate for money yet, though that may change in a few months.

I'm working on another zine that will explore thoughts on money and specifically material consumption because I want to give it thought outside of the depression space.

I do feel better now, and I know it for sure because I cried again rereading this zine, cried at the reminder that I felt that low.

I hope I'm able to keep keeping things up. I will still keep making zines forever.



This was the last photograph ever taken of Marilyn Monroe.