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The Secret Affinities of Pollen and other Poems

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Marc Vincenz

Art by Anne-Marie Creamer



Anne-Marie Creamer, *The Trembling: a love letter to my spine in which I become transparent to myself*, 2019, digital drawing, 29.7 x 42 cm

The Secret Affinities of Pollen

Angry ideologies,
flimsy stuff,

but when vanity
drops its guard

the secret affinities
are pollen,

hymns, unbelief touching
a hidden nerve.

The glint
of marketed images,

ideas of freedom,
democracy,

the big myth of history
where one

plunges into pre-
consciousness,

deeper:
betrayal and breakdown,

longing and defeat,
the vein

of knowing or
not-knowing.

A homespun pride
raises the rust,

a bravado
where no one

gets what was so
idly stated—

the blinders
that hold one

from fear,
the assimilations

of hodgepodge,
the yielding,

the withheld,
the water-

rounded edges
of the mind

where flux
is the master,

conventions
rearranged

in order
of appearance.

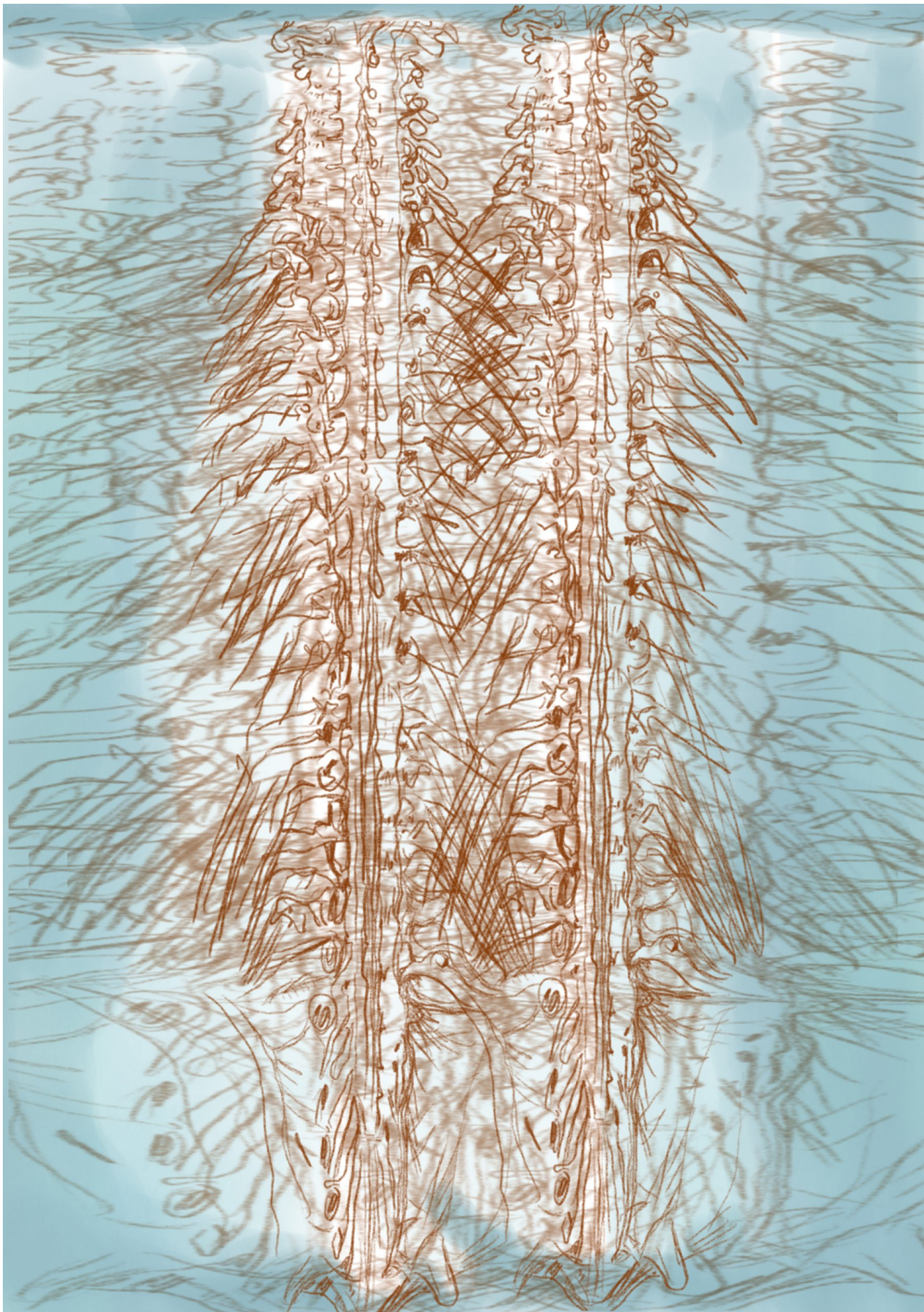
Time weighs inward
in encounters

with the divine,
the ever-looking-

over-the-shoulder
for that space

between—
for the paradoxes,

for that shadow
within light.



Anne-Marie Creamer, *The Trembling: a love letter to my spine*, 2019, digital drawing, 29.7 x 42 cm

Warpaint

A murderous sunrise.

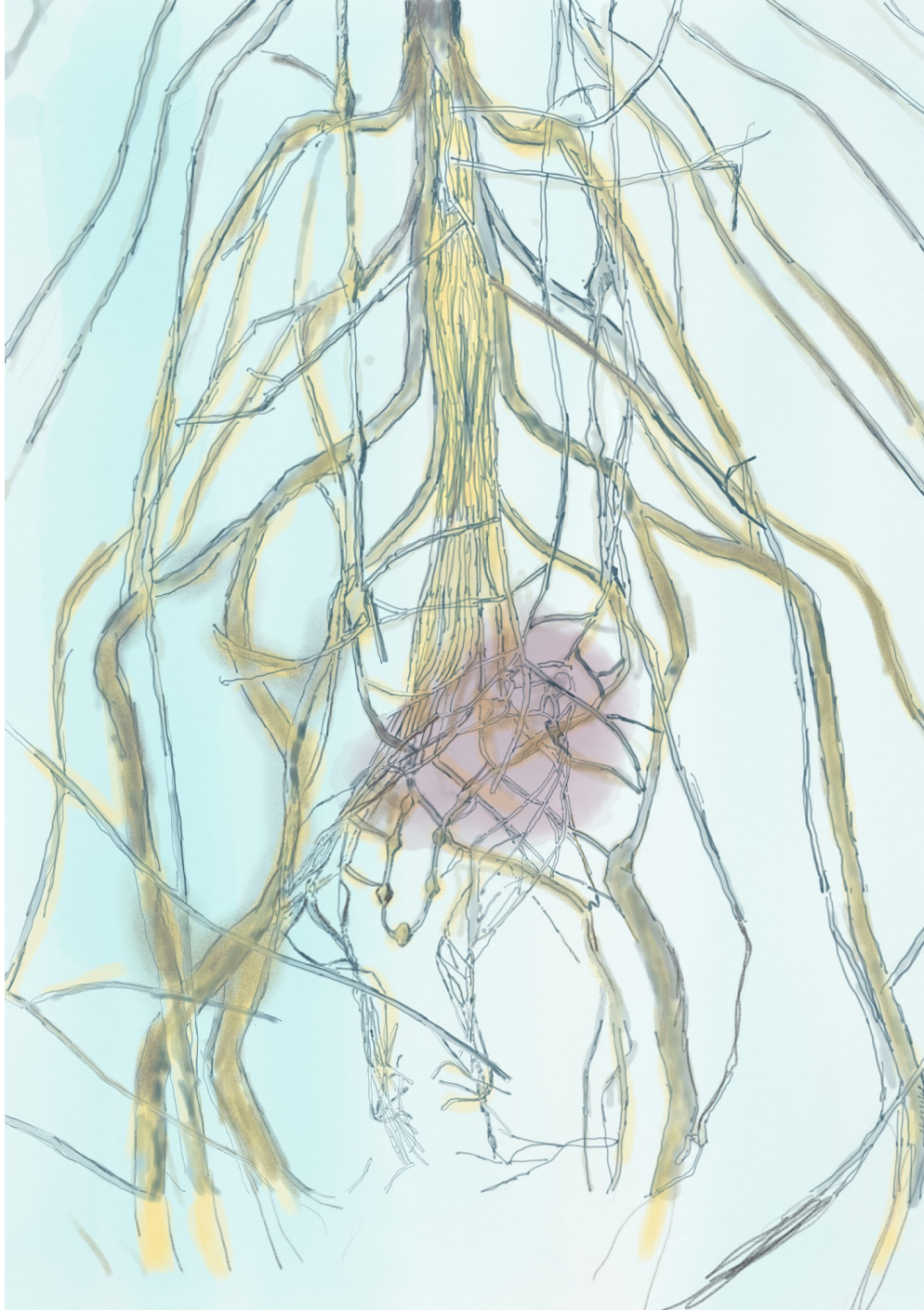
All-night-fighting
with the dead.

A speech resumes—
no, a stern lecture
of a kingdom

once had, the
homicidal falling
at the feet and the eyes

all alleys, all
in your twenties.
Hackneyed, perhaps—

perhaps
hand-on-heart
fleeting.



Anne-Marie Creamer, *The Trembling: my poor beautiful nerves*, 2019, digital drawing, 29.7 x 42 cm

Ophelia Awakens

Lies down on the curbside, pulling weeds.
“Where are the snails?” she says, “or the raven?
“Too good to number these things, they may
Have slipped between two thieves!”

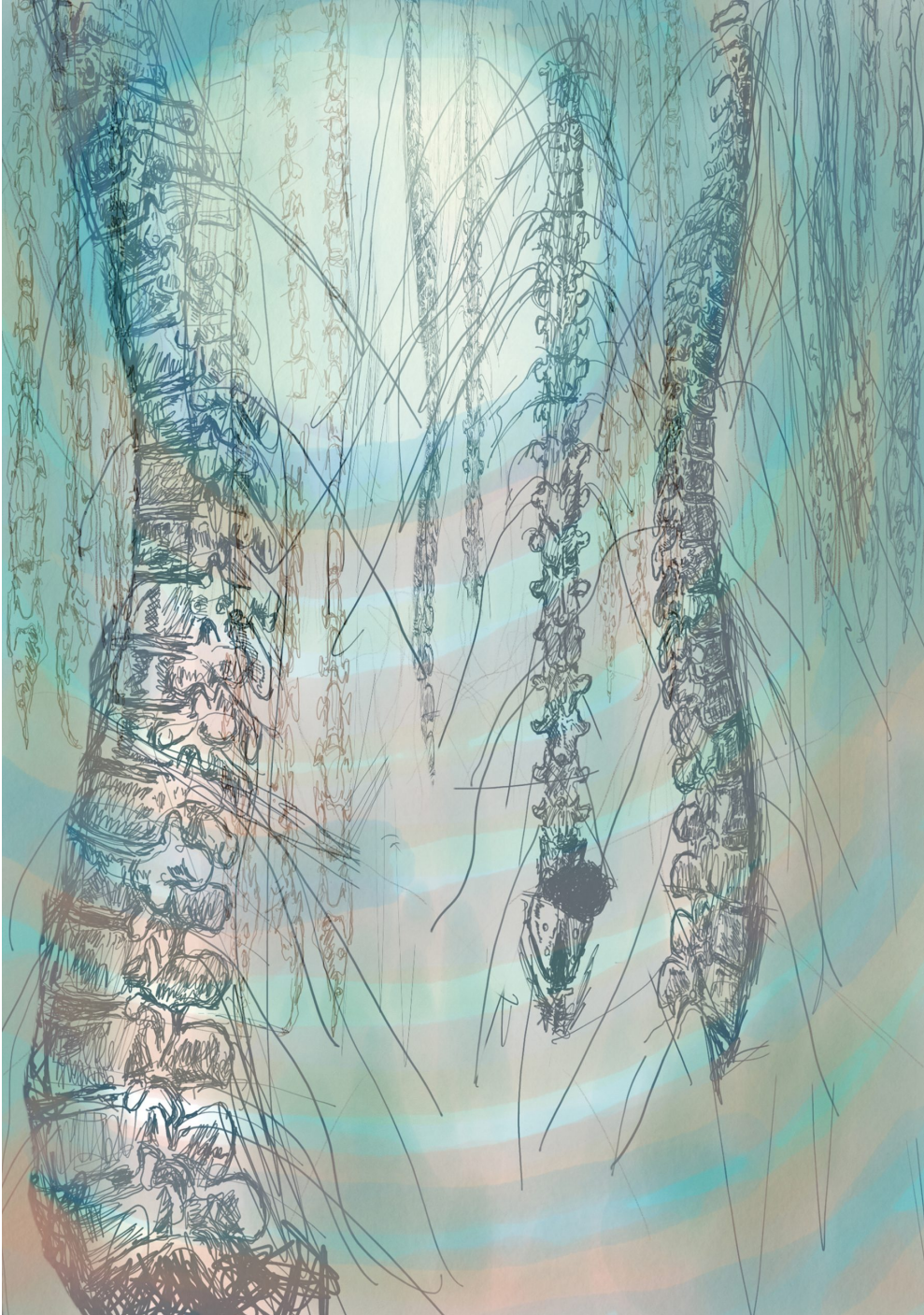
*The child’s crib was found empty, the loving fingers
Alone on the wood, but down the maze
He fled, following the trail of a strange creature,*

Half-man, half-air, who softened the lamps.

She had searched prudence, she had walked
Into the night following her cuticles.
“I shall navigate the great circle,” she says.
“An ocean of unimaginable secrets,” she says.

*He found his way through the deep sleep
Of the woods as if given wings, boy like moth,
The voyage goes into the palace of higher things—
He fell upon the frozen lake, leaned in*

As if upon a window smiling.



Anne-Marie Creamer, *The Trembling: Carnival evening*, 2019, digital drawing, 29.7 x 42 cm

Starred in the Margins

Mother of gods,
imagine yourself

as an explanation,
raised on the wall,
a carved star

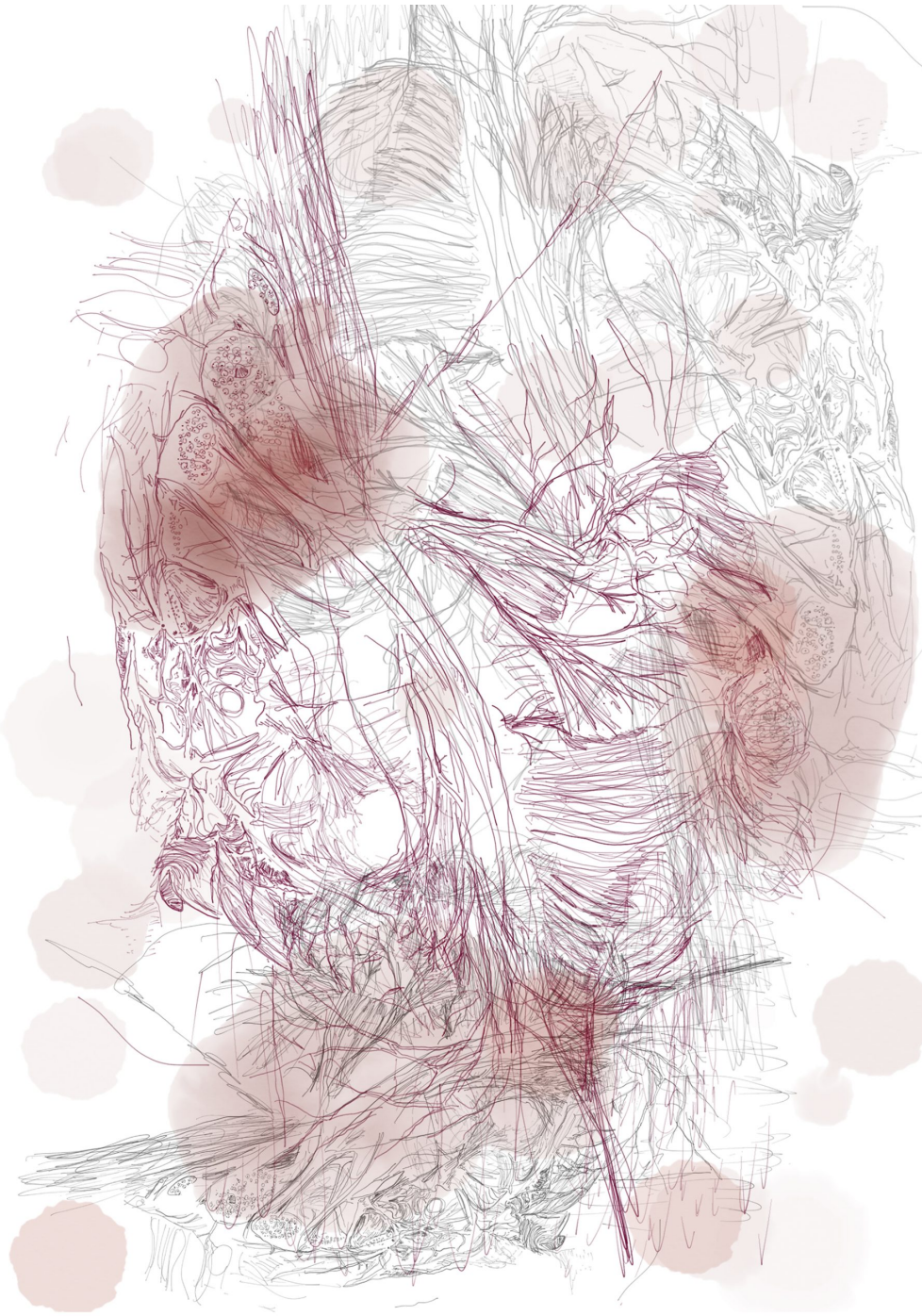
shimmering through glass

in a blazing trail

of epiphanies—
a dominion as tall

as a cloud, like nothing
else, a breath-full

of beautiful thoughts
of sorrow and dread.



Anne-Marie Creamer, *The Trembling: Monster. A love letter to my spine, in which I become transparent to myself*, 2019, digital drawing, 29.7 x 42 cm

Money Flaunts the Good Star

Boldly, in that rumbling
bottomness, a tender filigree
attune to the unison

of mothers and daughters,
a sound of bubbling felicity
as the grand curtain rises.

A second, similar counterpart
that's been carried over,
four voices out of the storm

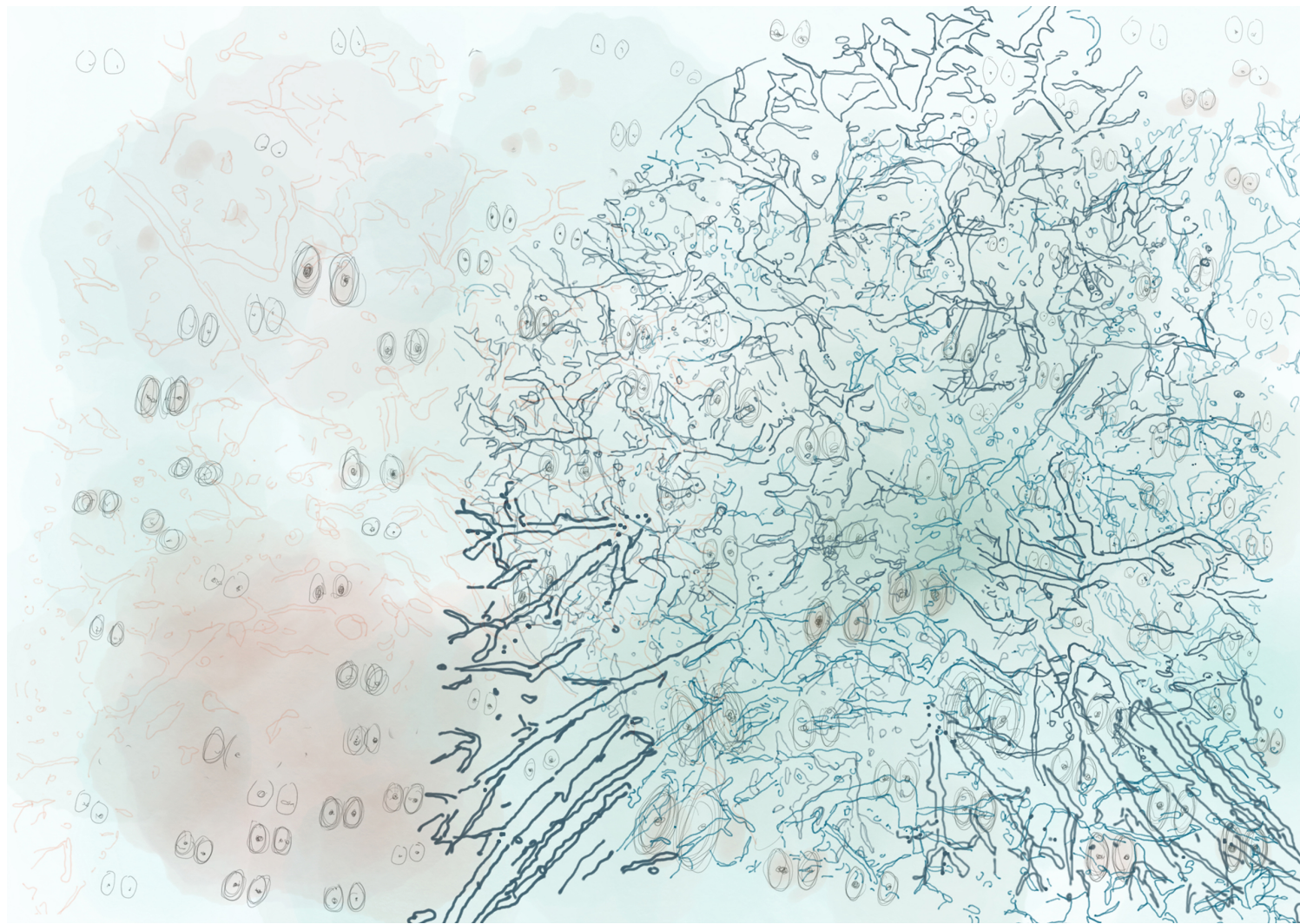
naming a few things
for themselves, those buzzards
circling the carrion, the

broad-handed undertaker
clucking, clicking his tongue.

Look at the lavender curls!
The bodies quivering like
mercurial fluid, moving toward

those overgrown hands
and the flickering of the candle
on the nightstand: everything

made visible, again.



Anne-Marie Creamer, *The Trembling: Travelling through my lungs, in which I become transparent to myself. With eyes*, 2019, digital drawing, 29.7 x 42 cm

Seven Sun Gods

Amaterasu

The world is intertwined
with the unworld.

A true apprentice comes
but once in an eclipse:

the measureless inconsistencies,
the choking estuaries,
the mind of an unbeing undoes all
that has come before ...

What a glorious
river picture!

Arinna

What is the inference turning? she asked bending over
to pluck a flower.

Such a puny recipe.

The acts those limbs themselves make.

We see it as our machine, the acts like thefts from human logic—
the surface of the mind enscribed,
never spoken in good company.

Apollo

An illumination,

a clear sky

or cool breeze.

Don't waste your breath

collecting conch shells,

know you have all possible

foreknowledge of the enigma,

the engine of the poetry,

in good faith, or the pest

that has marked us,

the profile of the mountain,

that inner-surpassed

tendency to fight.

Freyr

Hold up the mirror.

Know you have

all possible forms—
from the eagle to the bear,

from the sprouting spruce
to the monkey puzzle tree—

to hold you up. And if,
in some strange fashion,

the pressure of the eyes,
the leisure of the face,

the pummel of the sword,
all become one thing;

walk away with frost
on your coat, I say.

Helios

The sound of the spiders' webs,
the creaking of the tiny eyes,
even those kept in bottles

at the center of the city
where everyone has been trained
in the art of life; the unfolding

of those miniscule creatures,
the buzz and hum
at the center of gravity, perturbs ...

Huitzilopochtli

In the storm the earth worships the sky,
in the flurry, the urge for second life for an
instrumental, elemental fire to survive.

Turn old kisses to new ones,
like sparks of carbon, all genders
fetching toward the cornucopic
curves of paradise.

Tonatiuh

Break the spell. Unword the world.

All this nonsense about an earthly paradise.

The world remade in my image and all that—
the fire within the eye or the eye within the fire.

What is known is never written.
Burn it into the Great Appearance.

Walk along, mingle.



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Marc Vincenz

Marc Vincenz is a poet, fiction writer, translator, editor, musician, and artist. He has published over thirty books of poetry, fiction, and translation. His work has been published in the *Nation*, *Ploughshares*, *Raritan*, *World Literature Today*, and the *Los Angeles Review of Books*. He is publisher and editor of MadHat Press and publisher of *New American Writing*.

Anne-Marie Creamer

Anne-Marie Creamer is a London-based artist and Senior Lecturer at Central Saint Martins College of Art, University of the Arts London. Her recent solo exhibition, *Dear Friend, I can no longer hear your voice*, took place at Sir John Soane's Museum, London.

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