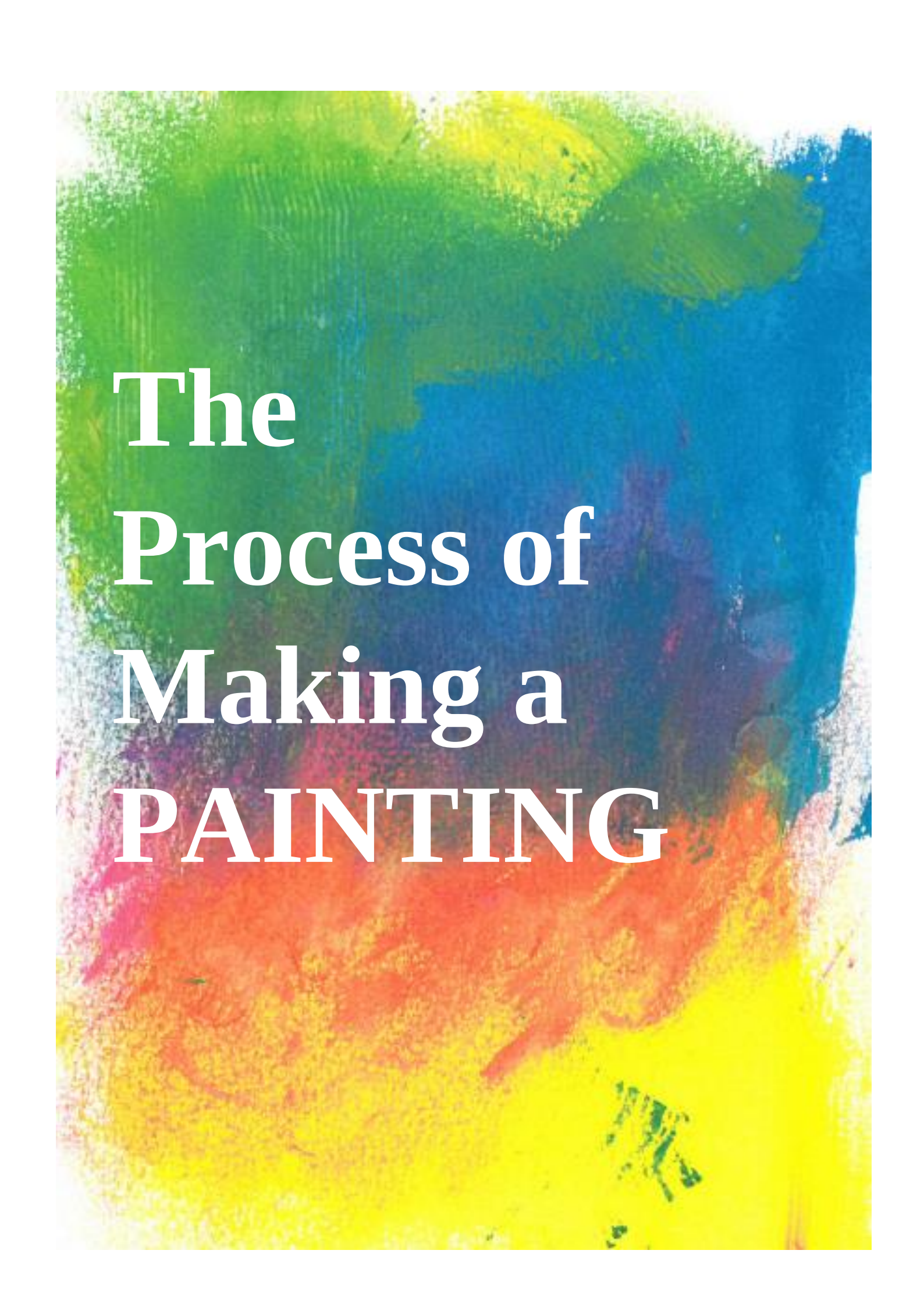


An abstract painting with a textured, layered appearance. The colors are vibrant and varied, including shades of green, blue, yellow, orange, and red. The brushstrokes are visible, creating a sense of movement and depth. The overall composition is non-representational and expressive.

The Process of Making a PAINTING

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THE STUDIO.

The studio, from the
door where I watch it pause,
comes light crafted and
pasted by the window

On the floor, the rays sit
square and fall over
stools and tables like slouched
cloth.

And the tools are tucked
away together on
their shelves and in their drawers.

At a distance, the wood
shelves appear stained
by paint blobs and globs
scattered up like thrown bones

Some small flicks like
rice, others compare to a marble,
while elsewhere there's a gash
of green cutting through the whole side of it.

The mediums sit duck
on the windowsill.
Cupped hands holding
different glazes.

Beside them, wafer stick brushes
perch like wheat in a glass,
usually threaded through
and carefully selected

Stepping in, the creek
from my shoes vibrates
the room, and crushes the silence.

Now to begin.

DANCING WITH THE WALL.

F o l d f e e l i n g o u t o f t h e f a b r i c
t h a t d o e s n ' t b e l o n g i n t h e w a y i t c a m e
p u l l i n g s t r i n g s , l a c e d i n t o o t h e r s t r i n g s , i t ' s
u n n a t u r a l h a n g i n g o n s k e l e t a l f r a m e
I t s b o d y s t a p l e d t o b o n e w i t h m e t a l
f a c i n g i n . L a y i n g l i n e n l o o s e l i k e o n e
s l a n t e d s p o o n . C l o t h e d s h a d o w s o f t l i k e p e t a l s
m a d e g e n t l e b y t h e m o o n . T u r n i n g , p u l l i n g
h o l d i n g , s m o o t h i n g s o t h e s h a d o w s h i v e r s
o u t i t s q u i e t e p i l o g u e
P a l m - f a c i n g - d o w n t r a c i n g o v e r w h i t e r i v e r
s e a r c h i n g f o r r i p p l e s l e f t o v e r a n d g o n e .
F i n a l l y r e a d y , w e s i t b a c k s t o w a l l ,
b o t h t i r e d o f d a n c i n g , t i r e d f r o m i t a l l

THUMBNAIL SKETCHES

Come Out! From eye to hand to paper

Second language. Communicate negative space

in line, line, stroked over line

Leak what I see. Second hand.

I'll make the shadow of your bones

in chalk. Net together structures

and movements that are to be covered up

By hues – Fused later on

RITUALS.

Once you are framed
perched on easel

1. I can unravel the bottle
That sits shelved
and roll the plastic lid
in my palm but
its welded shut
bound together in dried
spools of linseed.

2. And off it comes.
when I stretch my fingers outward
I can still feel a phantom strike of
bottle-cap shaped resistance
burning my skin



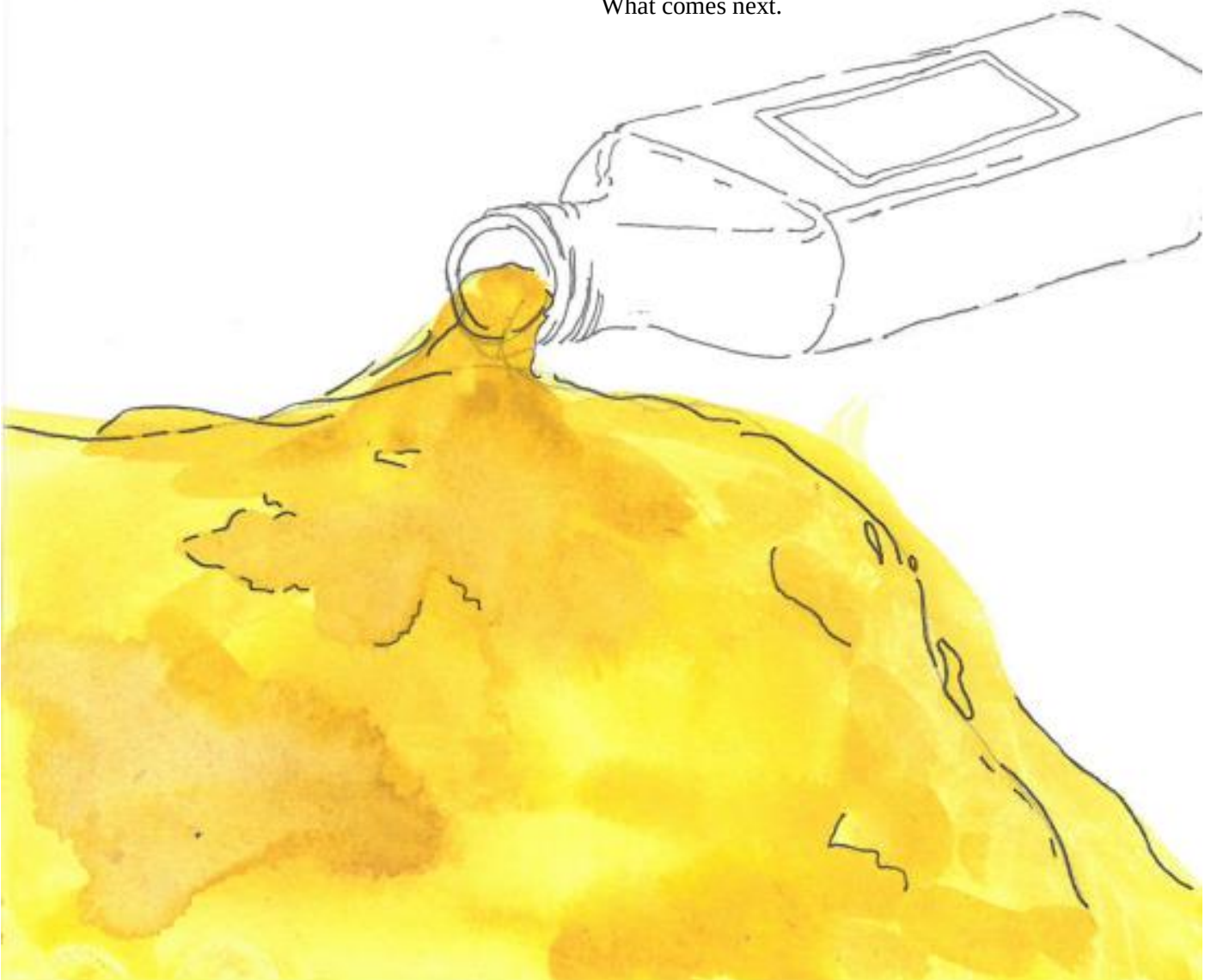
3. Earthy smell soaks the air thin
I can spill it out into a glass
Just a centimetre deep.

4. And touch it with my brush
So the oil wells upward
Heaving bristles together
in honeyed, weighted expression.

5. And with paint pressed on the palette
The oils merge and melt the drag

6. Slug a strip of sepia across the fabric
In etches and scrapes
In stretches and shakes.

7. And slowly in their crosshairs
Rattle together some shadow of
What comes next.



CREATING MUSCLE (*Underpainting*)

First come the shapes.

Leafing

through the

brushes

mixing a dilute wash

of burnt umber and linseed

the bristles begin

their scratches

on the whitened

underbelly.

Shimmer out your

approximations in

sepia string

scuffled over linen.

The paint is watery

so the ink purrs —

leaking sepia values

on stretched fabric

to create muscle

and tone

MIXES

Soft, scented pillow mix
Cat purr warming your lap mix
Yesterday's tea on the windowsill mix
Scarf you forgot on the tram mix
A broken plate's crumb mix
Neighbour's voice behind the wall mix
Morning slicing through your blinds mix
Sound of a rounded rock sinking mix
Fresh socks out the drier mix
Fingers threaded through hair mix
Parties you weren't invited to mix
A kiss mix
Your blush mix



BRUSH TO CANVAS

From a brush,
bounced like tongue
on roughened skin
Watch for movements
from the wood cage, it's in

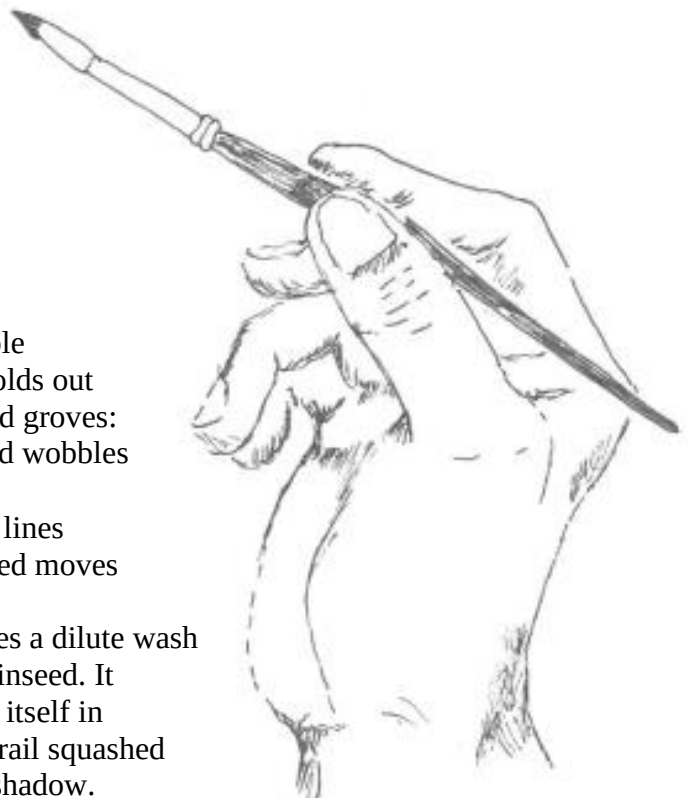
Skin taut-like muscle
supple for breath
Caves falling out of caves
back to plain stretch

Its body pulling
in an outward way
stapled to bone
with metal strain

Come a ripple
the colour folds out
over muscled groves:
it wavers and wobbles

and curving lines
guided, glided moves

On its bristles a dilute wash
thinned by linseed. It
crisscrossed itself in
woodgrain trail squashed
into bristle shadow.



PALETTE KNIFE

Our scooped soft land had fallen into small mountains long ago.
Sitting on ceramic slate in sloping cliffs of cyan and pink.

On this little earth we are prepared for no more than a breath of wind
from the mouth of our god.

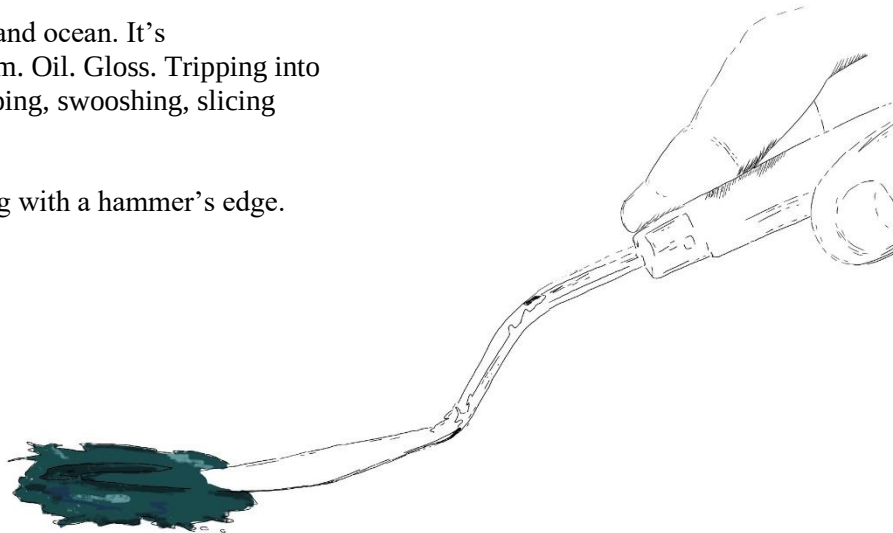
When our tectonic plates were ready,
the rivers opened out tubes of linseed. Our unsifted earth, in all its
rivets swam in streams rolling over and searching for a place to body themselves.
We, tumbled and sunken, with minute tremor until

Syrup swallows us up and
a / cutting \ blade between //breath/ing parts
and // begins

To //
// Spit
Back.

Beginnings of cobalt.

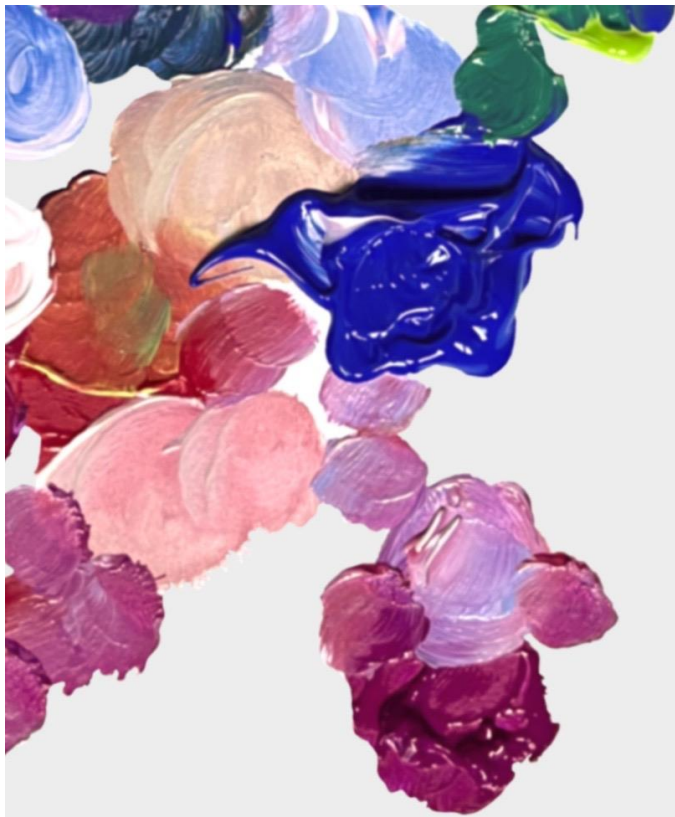
blended earth and ocean. It's
Flotsam. Jetsam. Oil. Gloss. Tripping into
together. Scraping, swooshing, slicing
until our
alien earth
needs softening with a hammer's edge.



PAINT MULLING

as the fluid seeps through
and gritty pigment goes smooth
hands and glass. holding two
the muller's murmurs make for mellow talk
as pigment scatters. broken chalk.
As pressed paved path comes round again,
big-balled glass, with flattened end
the colour swept and already flat
talks through one another, melded back
making a final swipe the muller is cleaned off and the artist switches tools





PAINT PALETTE

Upon the glassy, smooth ice plate
sits suspecting globs of paint
frozen close little pebbles

closer – those sombre mountains could
crush together
with a slashed stripe and strike
thrusted and threaded pigment
become other ones

sifting colours between
hairs suspended at the end of the stick

and then bring in the knife to avoid
dismantling the glue

AFTER A BREAK

Pick up on last night's spread.
Glossy stones crisp with
a sugar shell. Burst the
crust and out peels the jelly
that is quickly dashed,
swiped and out-of-shape.



PAINTING

Overt push paint slips and grips
 grazes the canvas
 prickly like

scratching your scalp
spin the brush in Turpentine
sloshed around to become water-like
slicken the paint and the fabric
comb through and with
Each elongated arm
Each spun wrist turns
trails left by coloured snakes
into sense
into conversation with one another

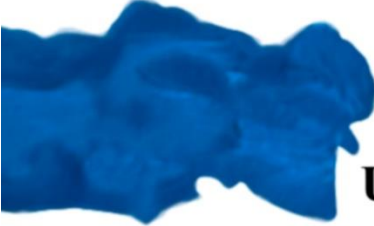
FORM

I found out your shadows, like the inside of shoes,
were made up of sunken violets.

I found out, your highlights, like morning dew,
sat weightless on leaves.

I found out your tone, like the sound of your voice,
breathes a thick, heavy song.





UNDO, WHAT YOU'VE DONE

Strike. It. Away.



strike it away.

what you done,



the marks made

Undo shrubbery, shadow, sky



those roots woven by hand

Untangle the knitted lines



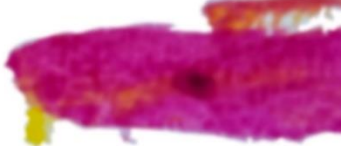
that didn't fit on the incline.

cut down trees in a few strikes



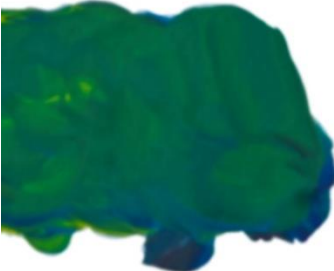
left in roughened scratches and

and the knife slices through



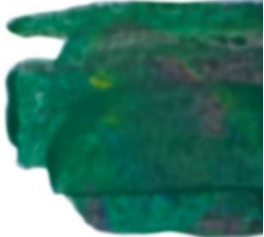
scraped back skin

to warm muscle underneath

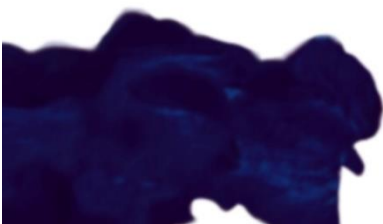


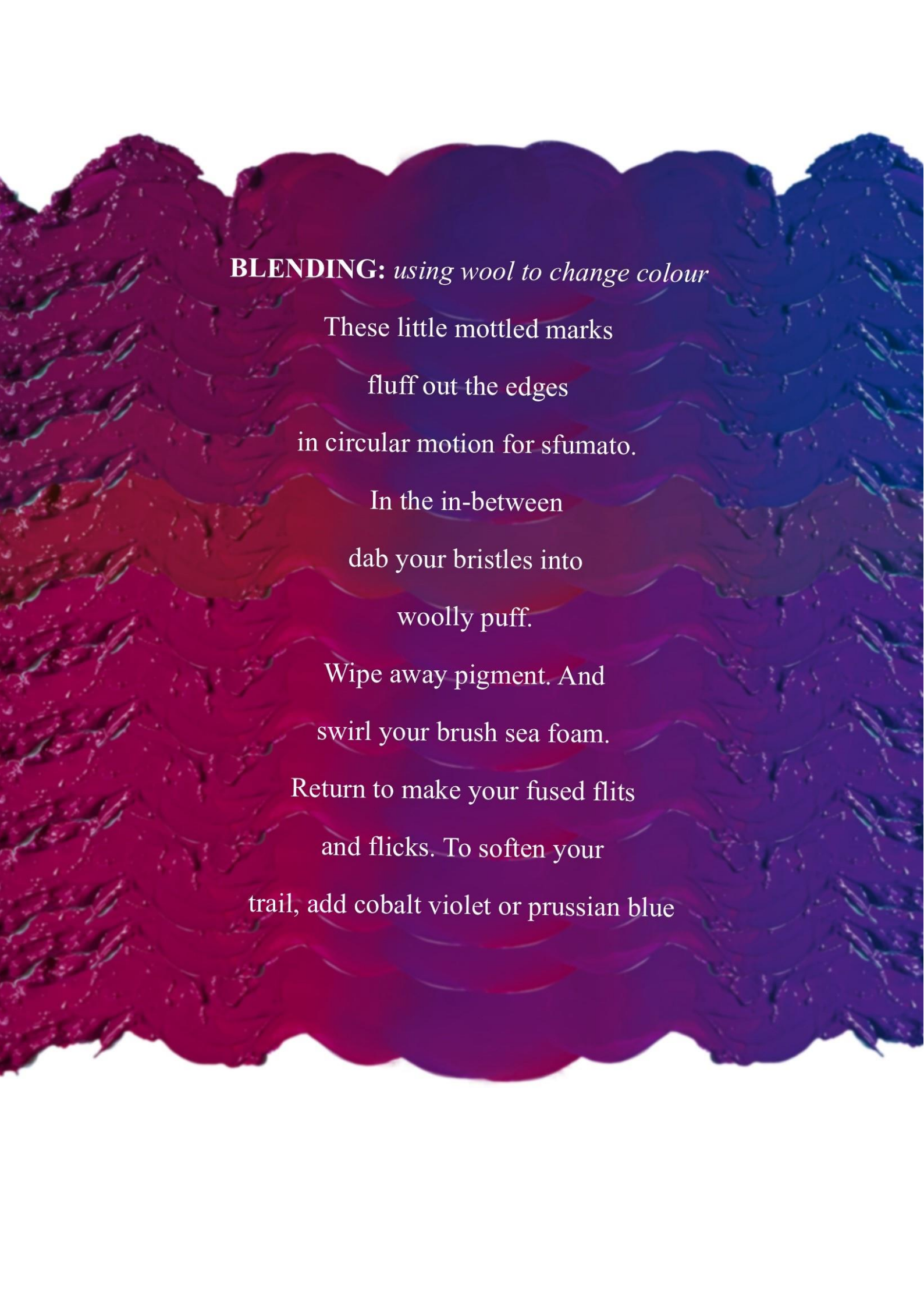
Squeeze out more pebbles onto dinnerplate

Dip your brush again.



'Should I move this a little to the left?'





BLENDING: *using wool to change colour*

These little mottled marks
fluff out the edges
in circular motion for sfumato.

In the in-between
dab your bristles into
woolly puff.

Wipe away pigment. And
swirl your brush sea foam.

Return to make your fused flits
and flicks. To soften your
trail, add cobalt violet or prussian blue



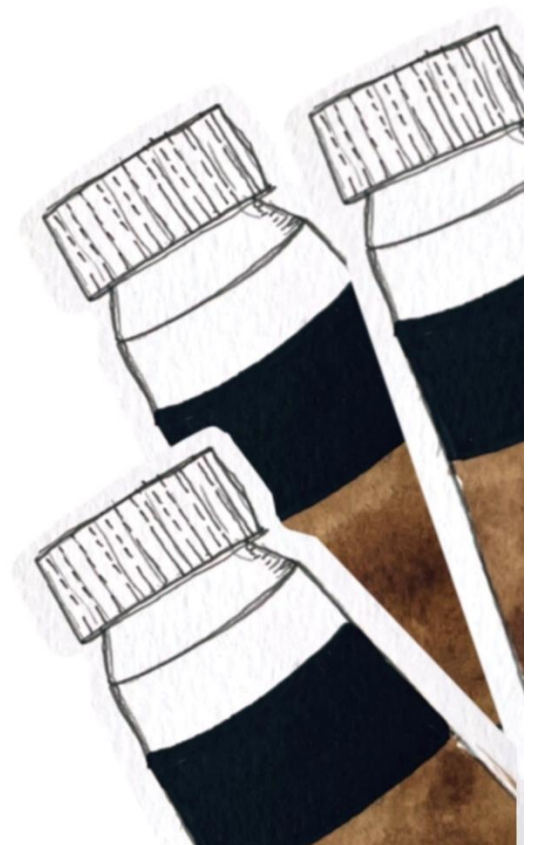
FINAL KISSES: *highlights made by brush strokes.*

Tiny, slowed-down slithered white
these secret trophies I lay along your
collarbone branches and sun-bleached leaves.

The current quick
gathers in loops
These softenings we stuff
in our pockets which we sew
around the ankles of the riverbank.

Mixing a new colour,
the bristles press in – feeding out blues
between its fuzzy toes.

this soft yellowed highlight
gasps itself – and breathes your first breaths
oh baby, how you come to life in parts.



CURRENT EKPHRASIS

At the end, I sit with all my tools.
My bristle friends wobble wet.
Their appetites satiated. I said rest.
a body complete.

Blood runs slow, oil slick
flowing underneath skin
fluffed out of paint.

The body stands – fixed like a
child playing musical statues
or hide-and-seek.
They ran out of time.

You suspect a pause
I'll explain the way your body lays
and why your fingers are laced into trees
assimilated roots.

But your underbelly rocks beneath
all that paint. I see the soft breath
the movements, dance, and birth
it took to get here

Seems worthless to explain how
you began as white tooth
and now, to explain:
we're caught
snacking before dinner
on last night's biscuits
the pigment all over our lips
the crumb still left on our hands.

