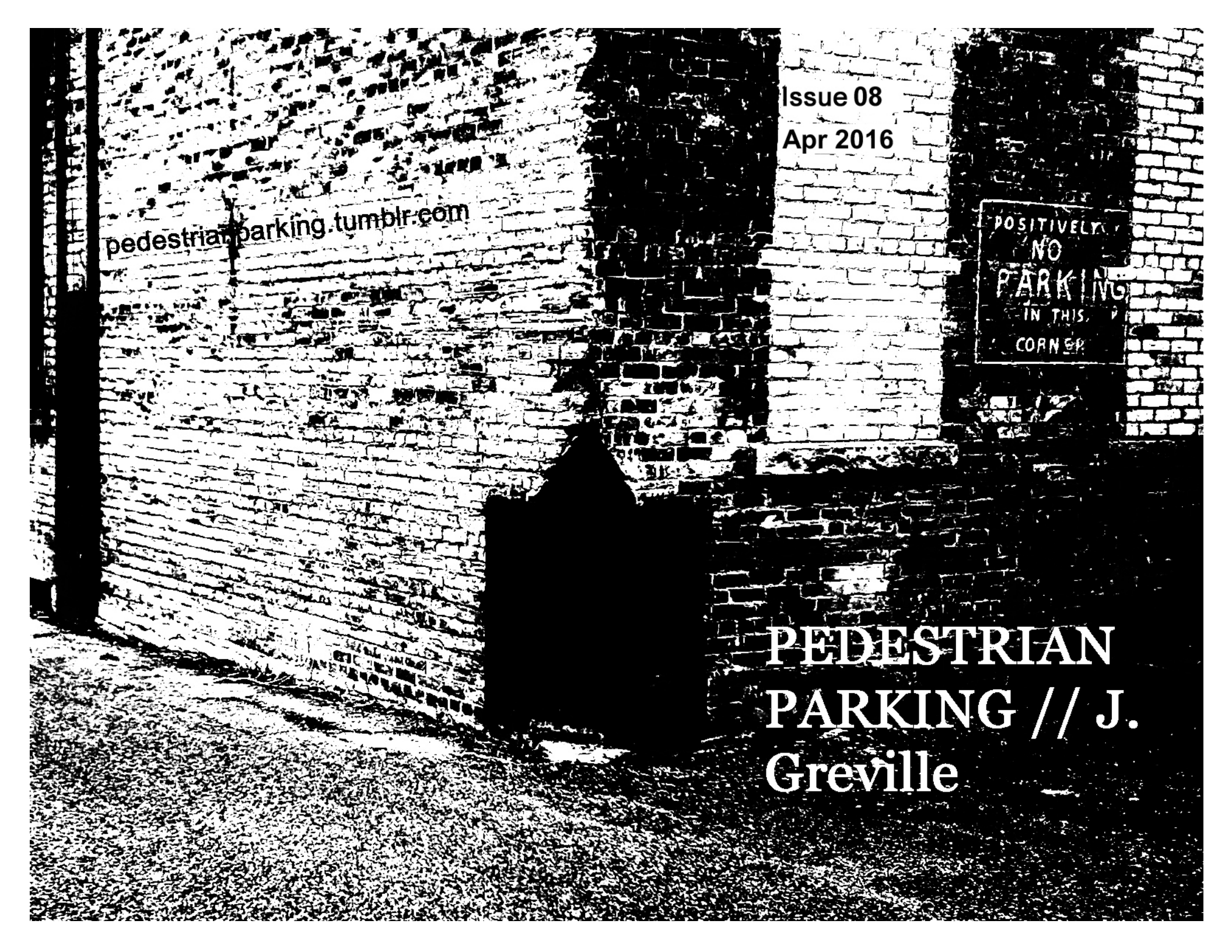




Issue 08

Apr 2016

pedestrianparking.tumblr.com

POSITIVELY
NO
PARKING
IN THIS
CORNER

PEDESTRIAN PARKING // J. Greville

WITNESS

He stumbled to the ground, and died soon after.

Trust me, I saw the whole thing.

He took two steps into the light on the path, tripped, and hit his head on the pavement, hard -- *WHACK*. There wasn't a lot a blood. Scrambled eggs, but no broken shell.

Trust me, I was there.

I saw the whole thing.



It was a while before anyone found him. It was late, you know. He loved those early morning walks. He loved being alone with the city, away from all of the stares and dirty looks that haunted him when the sun was up. At night, everyone else was afraid.

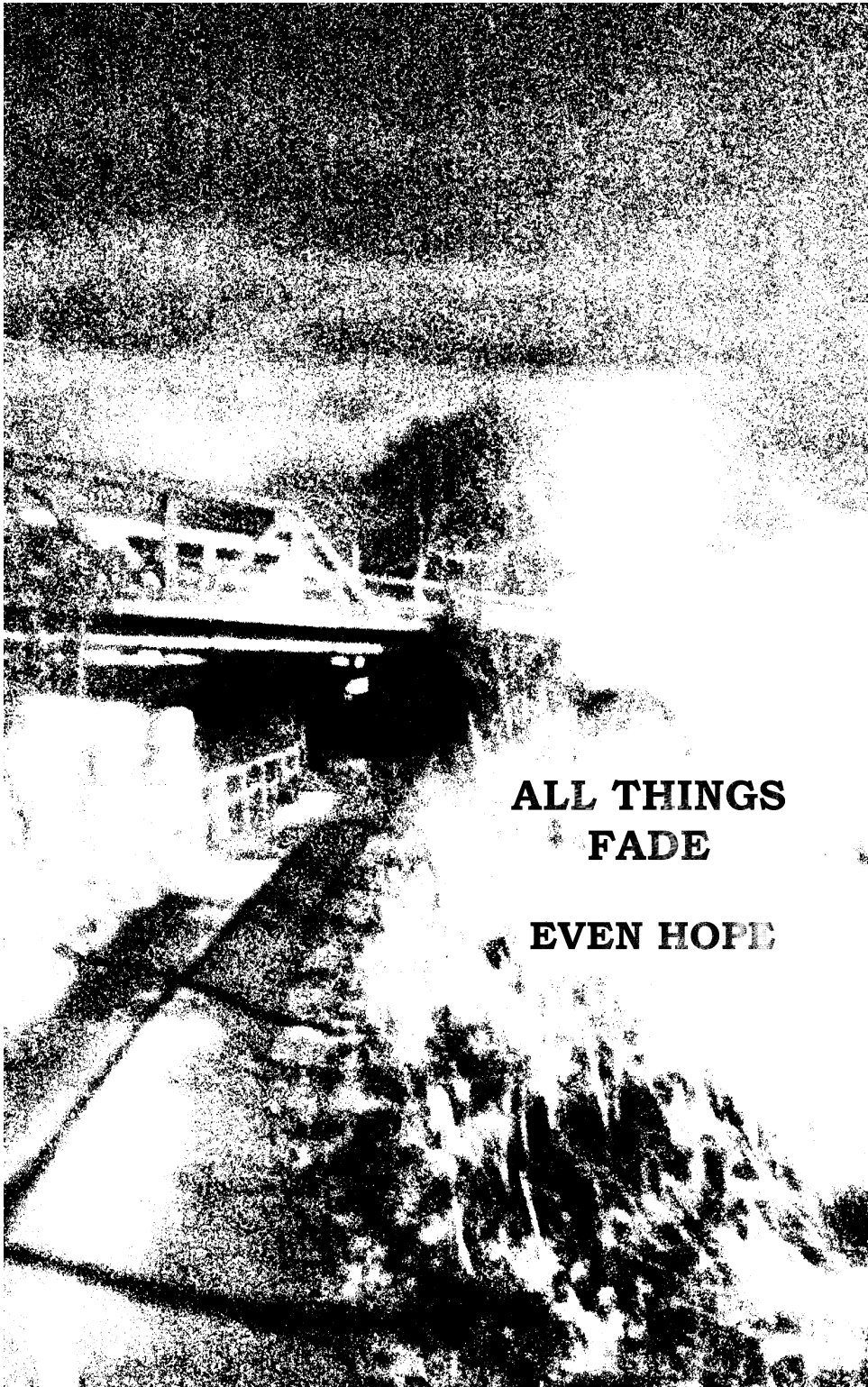
At night, he was allowed to be the thing that they feared.

A simple, stupid threat. I guess that was a comfort. At night they fear you because they can't see you. During the day they fear you because they can.



SOMETIMES

**THAT'S FOR THE
BEST**

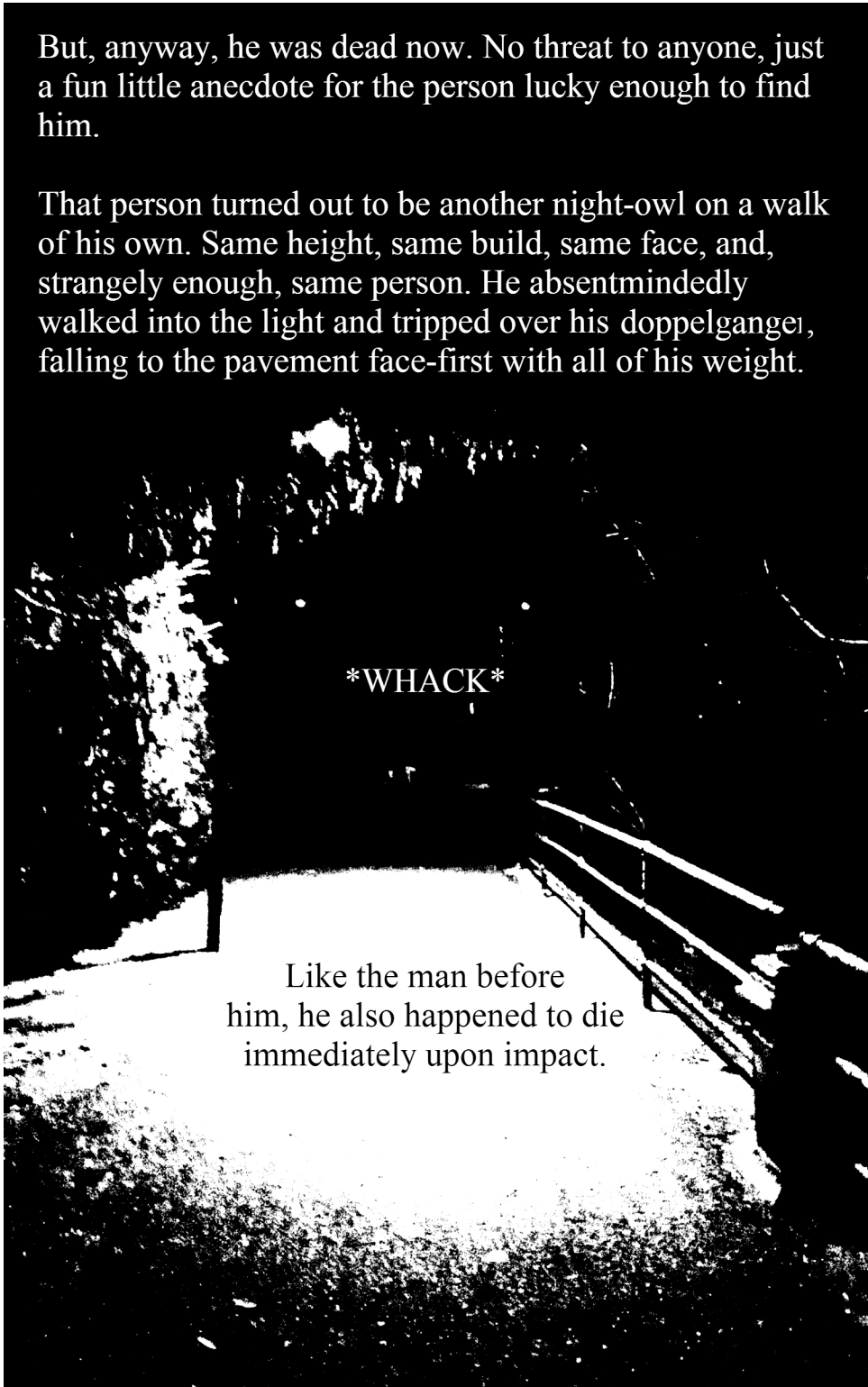


**ALL THINGS
FADE**

EVEN HOPE

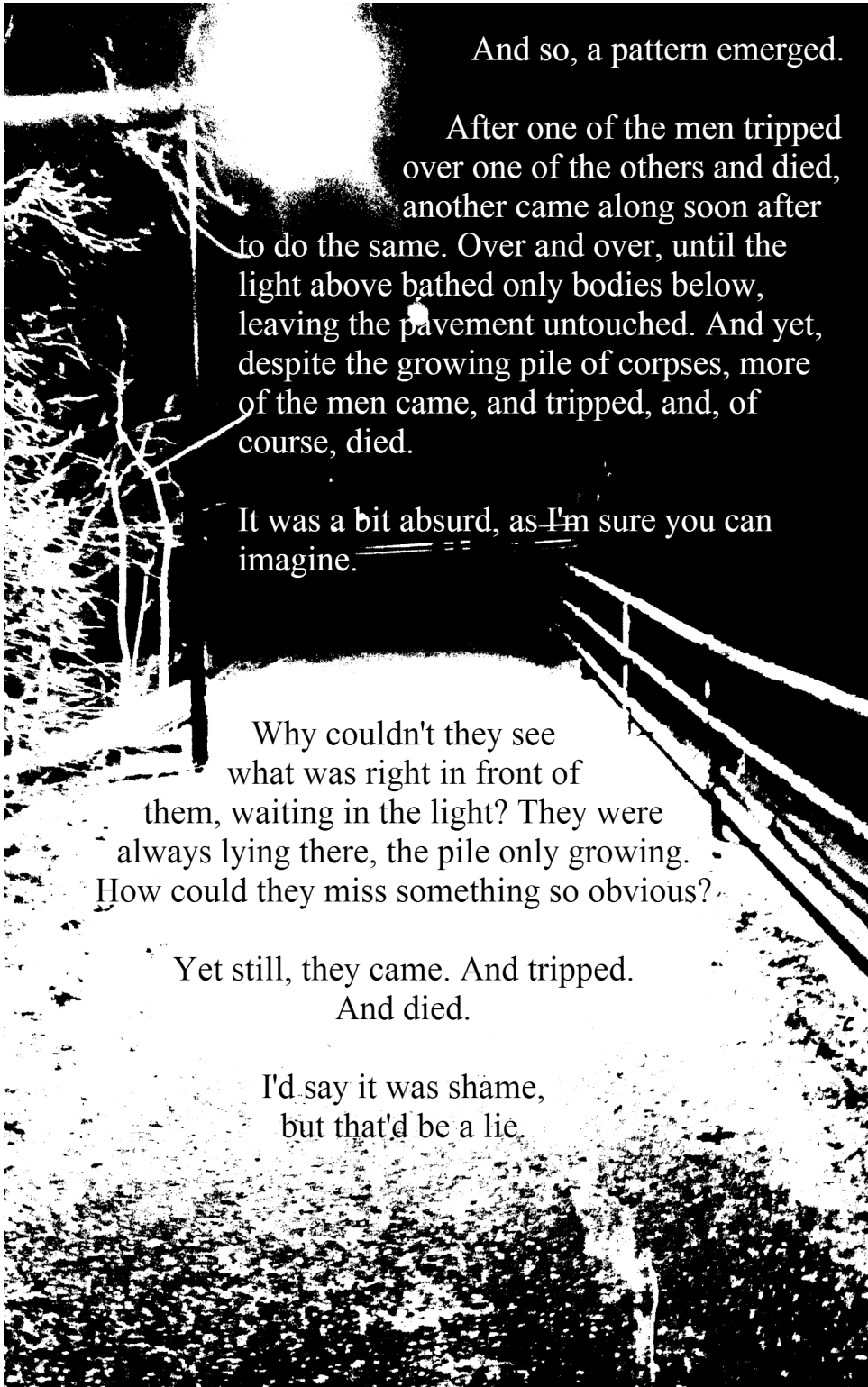
But, anyway, he was dead now. No threat to anyone, just a fun little anecdote for the person lucky enough to find him.

That person turned out to be another night-owl on a walk of his own. Same height, same build, same face, and, strangely enough, same person. He absentmindedly walked into the light and tripped over his doppelganger, falling to the pavement face-first with all of his weight.



WHACK

Like the man before him, he also happened to die immediately upon impact.



And so, a pattern emerged.

After one of the men tripped
over one of the others and died,
another came along soon after
to do the same. Over and over, until the
light above bathed only bodies below,
leaving the pavement untouched. And yet,
despite the growing pile of corpses, more
of the men came, and tripped, and, of
course, died.

It was a bit absurd, as I'm sure you can
imagine.

Why couldn't they see
what was right in front of
them, waiting in the light? They were
always lying there, the pile only growing.
How could they miss something so obvious?

Yet still, they came. And tripped.
And died.

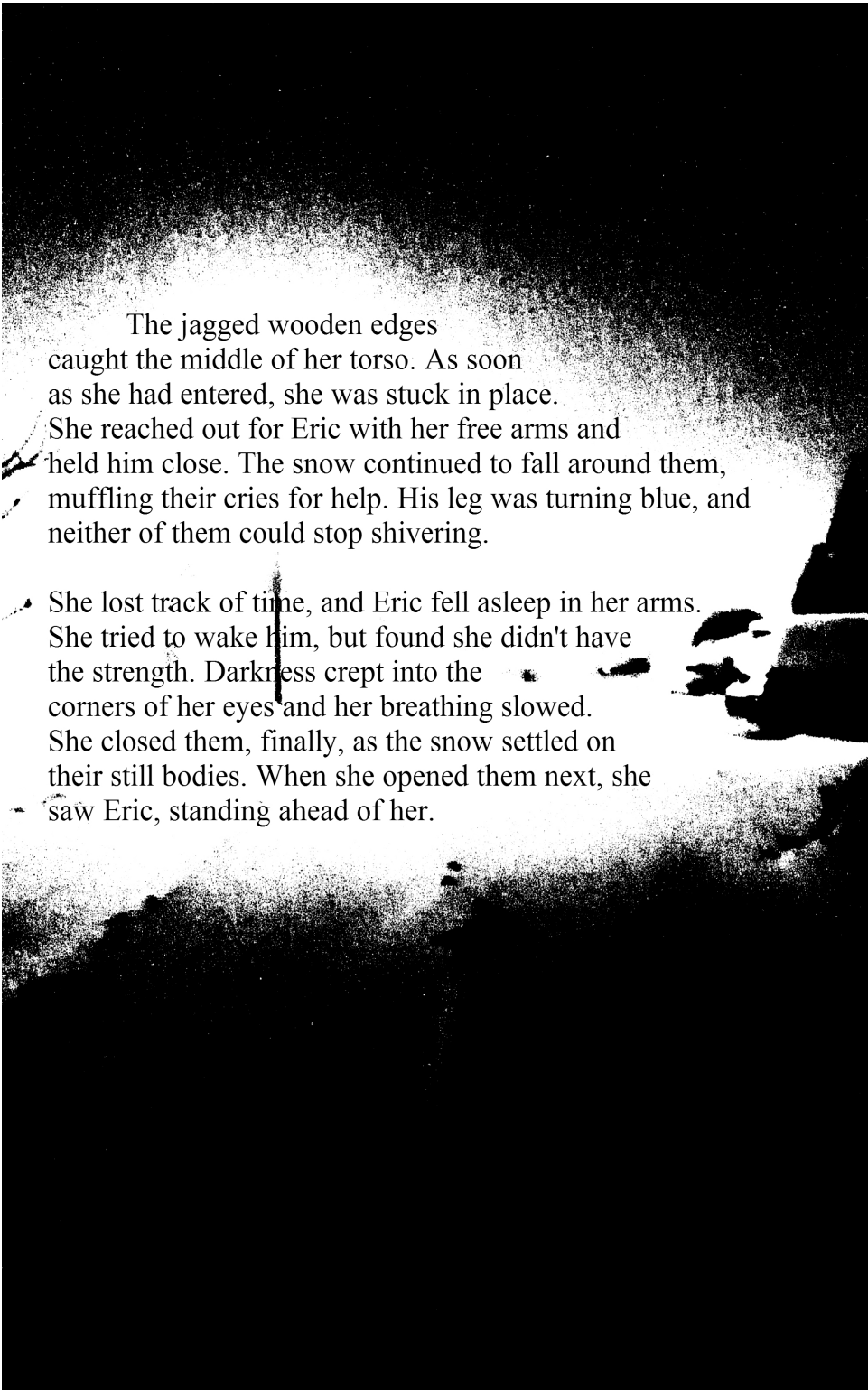
I'd say it was shame,
but that'd be a lie.

He ran out into the light,

as kids do,

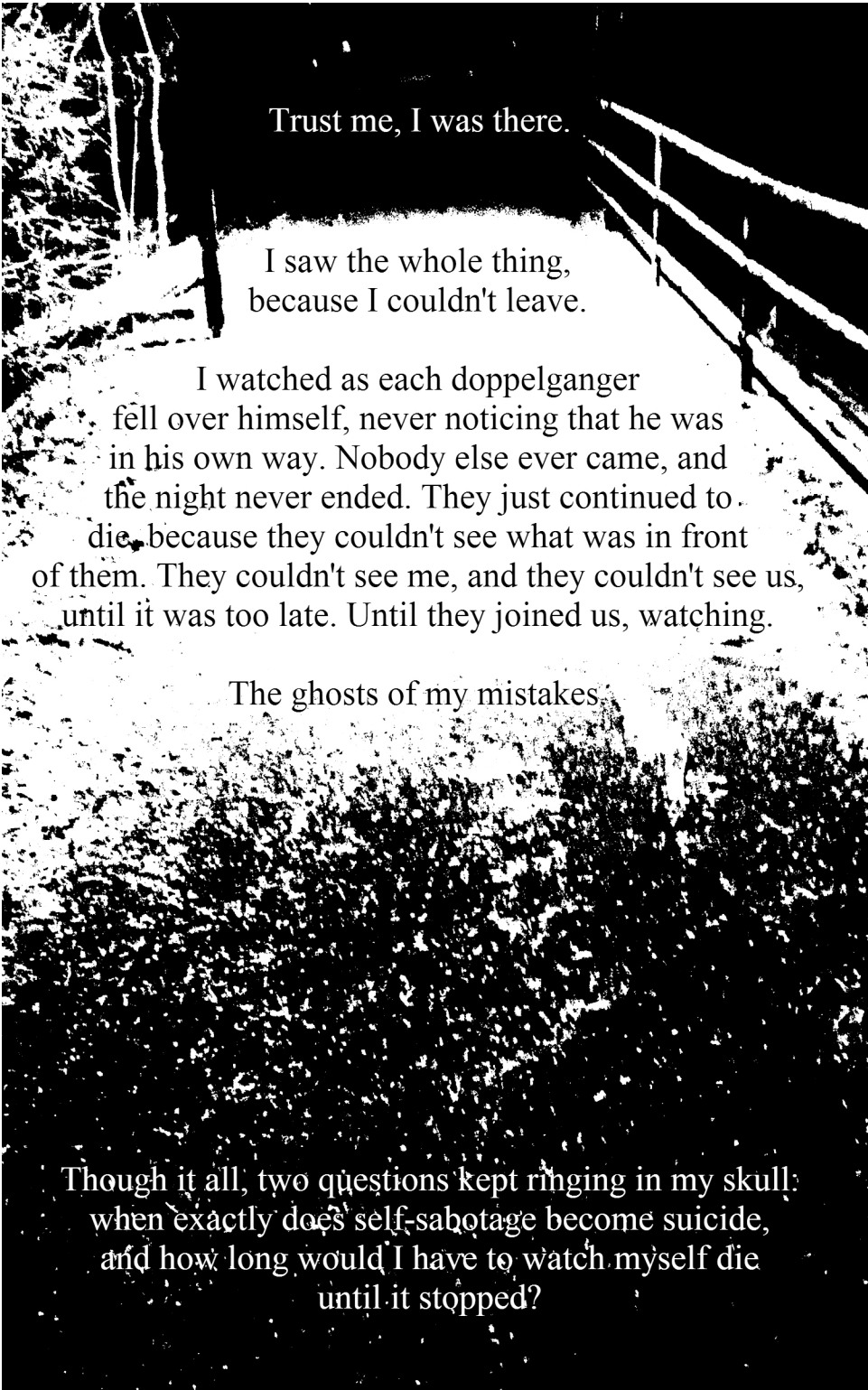
and she followed him,

as mothers do.



The jagged wooden edges
caught the middle of her torso. As soon
as she had entered, she was stuck in place.
She reached out for Eric with her free arms and
held him close. The snow continued to fall around them,
muffling their cries for help. His leg was turning blue, and
neither of them could stop shivering.

She lost track of time, and Eric fell asleep in her arms.
She tried to wake him, but found she didn't have
the strength. Darkness crept into the
corners of her eyes and her breathing slowed.
She closed them, finally, as the snow settled on
their still bodies. When she opened them next, she
saw Eric, standing ahead of her.



Trust me, I was there.

I saw the whole thing,
because I couldn't leave.

I watched as each doppelganger
fell over himself, never noticing that he was
in his own way. Nobody else ever came, and
the night never ended. They just continued to
die, because they couldn't see what was in front
of them. They couldn't see me, and they couldn't see us,
until it was too late. Until they joined us, watching.

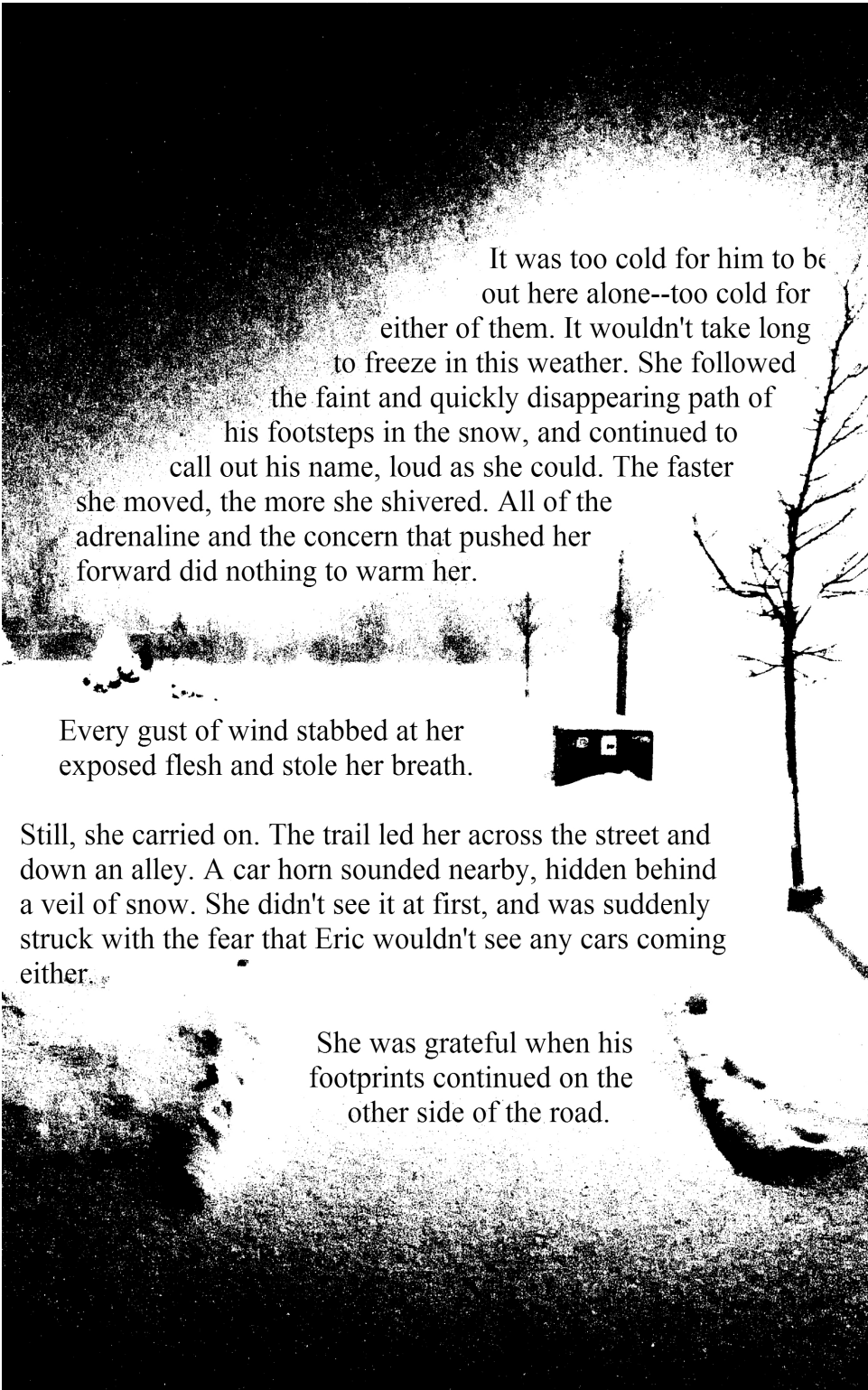
The ghosts of my mistakes

Though it all, two questions kept ringing in my skull:
when exactly does self-sabotage become suicide,
and how long would I have to watch myself die
until it stopped?



Where the trail ended, on one side of the alley, there was a wooden fence jutting out of a concrete and stone wall about two feet high. Traces of kicked-up snow adorned a small, child-sized hole in the fence, just where the tracks ended. On the other side, in a hidden driveway, she could see Eric cradling what looked like a broken leg.

“Momma,” he shouted, his teeth chattering. His face was mottled red where the tears and the snot had already frozen. She reached out to comfort him, but the holes in the fence didn’t allow her much room. She tried to coax him through the cavity that he’d already climbed through, but he was in too much pain to stand. She removed her sweater, and handed it to him through the hole. He wrapped himself in it like a blanket. She took a deep breath, knelt down, and tried to climb through the gap.



It was too cold for him to be out here alone--too cold for either of them. It wouldn't take long to freeze in this weather. She followed the faint and quickly disappearing path of his footsteps in the snow, and continued to call out his name, loud as she could. The faster she moved, the more she shivered. All of the adrenaline and the concern that pushed her forward did nothing to warm her.

Every gust of wind stabbed at her exposed flesh and stole her breath.

Still, she carried on. The trail led her across the street and down an alley. A car horn sounded nearby, hidden behind a veil of snow. She didn't see it at first, and was suddenly struck with the fear that Eric wouldn't see any cars coming either.

She was grateful when his footprints continued on the other side of the road.

They were just laying there in the laundry room.

"... 'School me'," I read aloud, slightly bemused.

"No," they said, in a breathy whisper.

"Did those panties just talk?" I asked, startled.

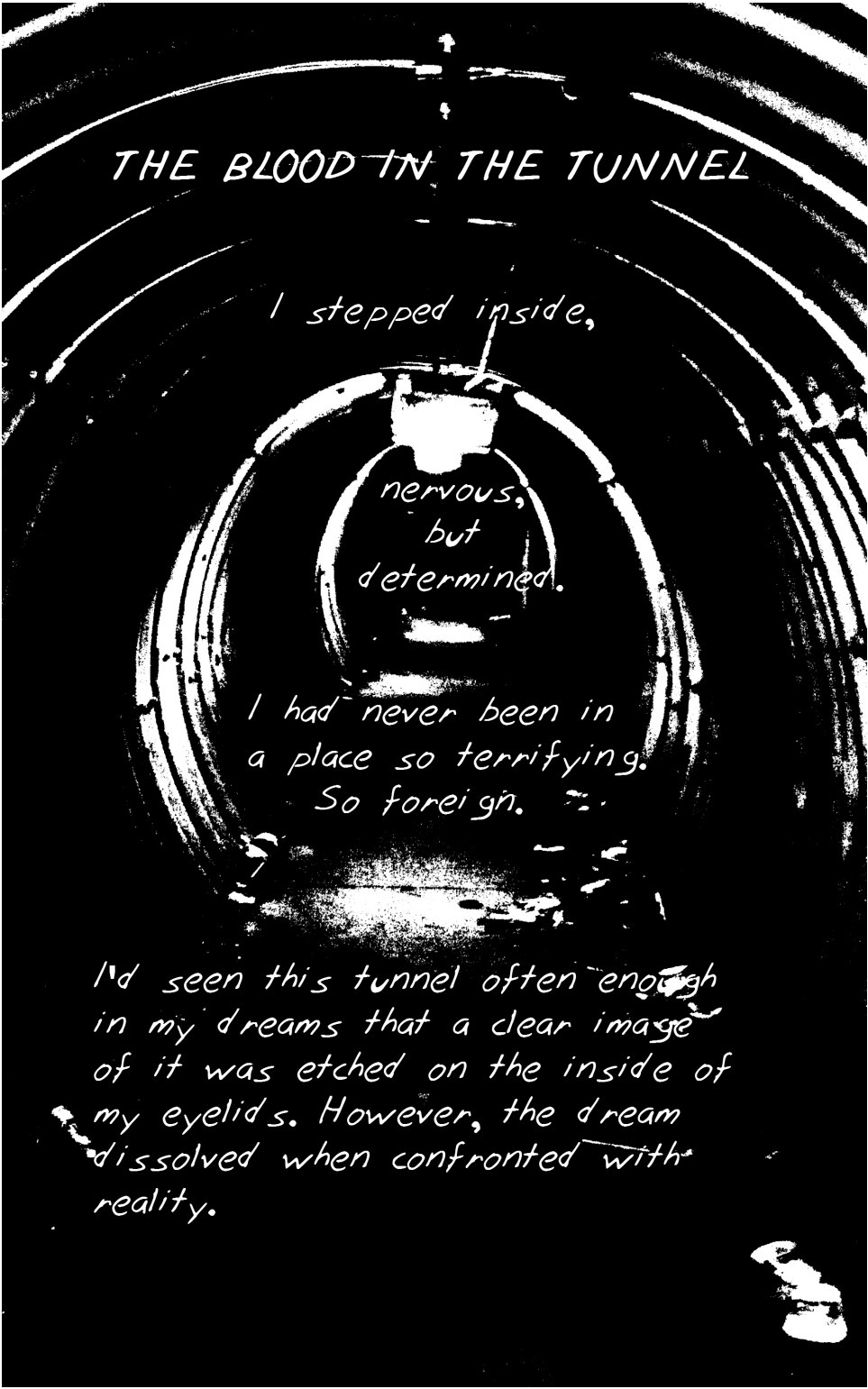
"Of course not, stupid," the panties whispered back.

"Okay," I said.

"Go away," they said.

And as I left, I felt I had learned something.



A black and white photograph of a tunnel entrance. A car is visible inside the tunnel, and the text is overlaid on the image.

THE BLOOD IN THE TUNNEL

I stepped inside,

*nervous,
but
determined.*

*I had never been in
a place so terrifying.
So foreign.*

*I'd seen this tunnel often enough
in my dreams that a clear image
of it was etched on the inside of
my eyelids. However, the dream
dissolved when confronted with
reality.*

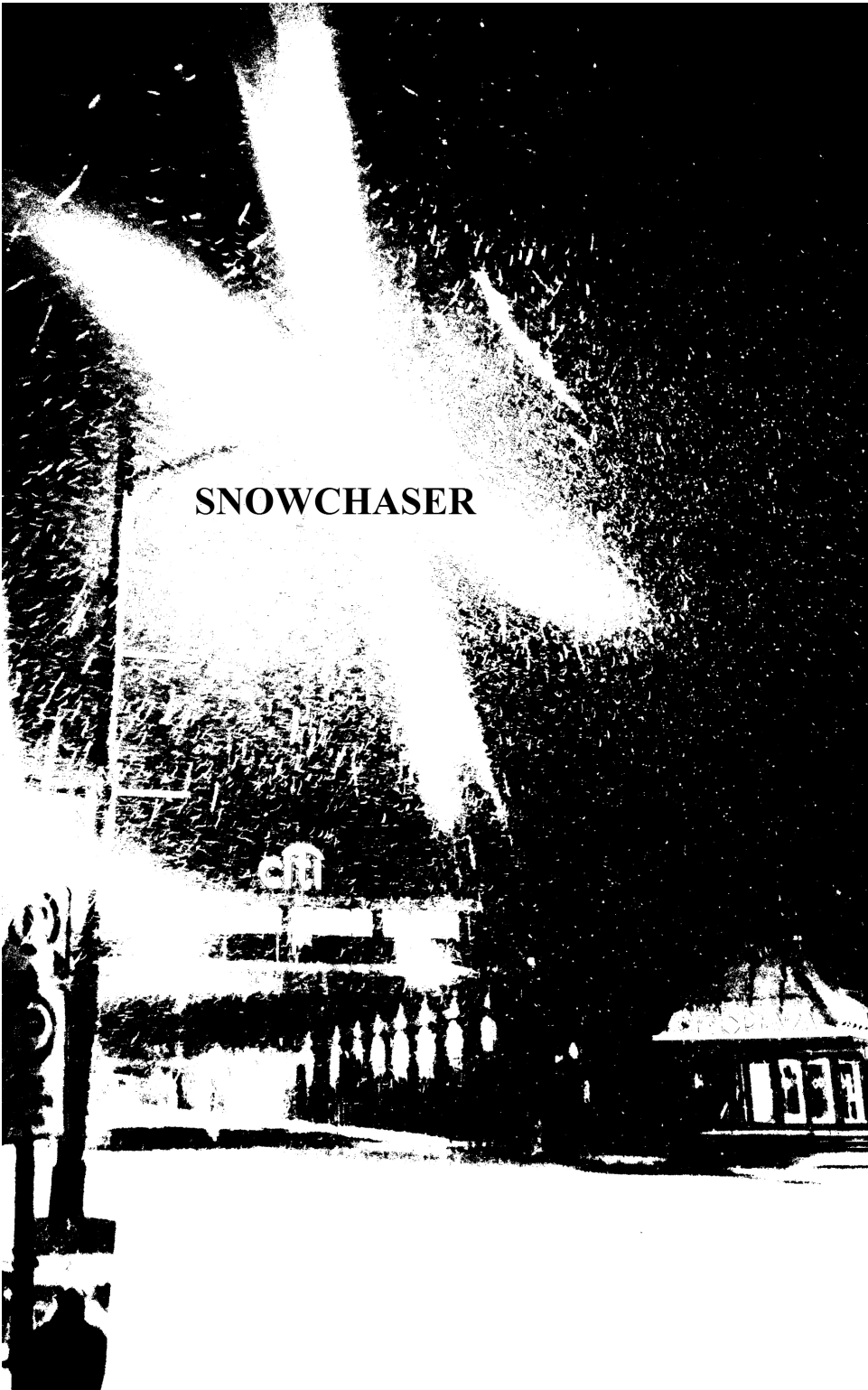


He ran out into the snow, as kids do, and she followed him, worried, as mothers do.

It was too late in the season for it to be snowing like this. Flowers and leaves were in bloom only a week ago. She didn't know why it was suddenly so cold, but right now she didn't care. He was running too far, too quickly, and the snow was making it difficult for her to follow.

"Eric," she shouted, expecting to hear her own voice echo against the buildings around her. Instead, she was greeted only with silence. It was easy to forget, especially after the snow melted, just how quiet the world could become while it was falling to the ground. Eric sped ahead of her, down the street and around the corner. All she could hear as she chased after him was the sound of her own haggard breath.

The wind battered her face with flakes that stung her eyes. She reached the corner of the street he'd disappeared down, holding tight to the building with her right hand to steady herself against the wind. She knew it before she saw it: he was gone out of view.



SNOWCHASER

The walls were smooth and warm.

*The tunnel
was far more
wet
than I thought
it'd be.*

*But I was
prepared for
the trip, and
had dressed for
the occasion.*

*As I made my way through the deep
expanse, I studied the walls. I was
shocked when I saw all of the blood.*

I ran from the tunnel and emerged,
drenched in death.

My
sheathe

had protected
me from
the worst
of it, but
more blood
pooled
around my
shoes.

I looked up and
noticed the steady
river of it flowing
from the mouth of
the tunnel.

Drip.

Drip.

Drip.





*But I remembered the dream,
and the desire.*

It was

cold

*outside,
and I
could feel
my resolve.*

soften.

*The tunnel was warm, and
smooth, and*

right goddamn there.

*I was dressed for the occasion,
so I traced the path back inside.*

*What's a little bit of blood
anyway?*

IT IS IMPOSSABLE TO BRING MIKEY AND DONNA DOWN
WHEN GOD IS ON THE R SIDE
OR IF SHE IS LEAKING FROM
HER PUSSY