

THAWT¹

¹ **Thawt** noun A period of simultaneous reflection and new growth following a freeze or hibernation, generally occurring between mid-February and mid-April in the northern hemisphere.

T H A W T

Nikki Soppelsa, U.S.A.

Brandon S. Graham, U.S.A.

Sammy Slabbinck, Belgium

Filipa Sottomayor, Portugal

Helene de Winter, The Netherlands

Barbara Minch, U.S.A.

Susan Legind, Italy

Gary Ortman, U.S.A.

Flore Kunst, France

Bill Phillips, U.S.A.

Lisa Chun, U.S.A.

Mike Koppa, U.S.A.

THE HEAVY DUTY PRESS

VIROQUA, WISCONSIN

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Contents

Part 1, page 1

Part 2, page 93

for the future



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T H A W T



T H A W T

THE HEAVY DUTY PRESS

107 S. Dunlap Street
Viroqua, WI 54665
U. S. A.

20 February 2013

This morning I took a walk in Liberty, on the south facing hill along Old 56 Road, around the perimeter of our four acre plat. It was 0°. I took some photographs.

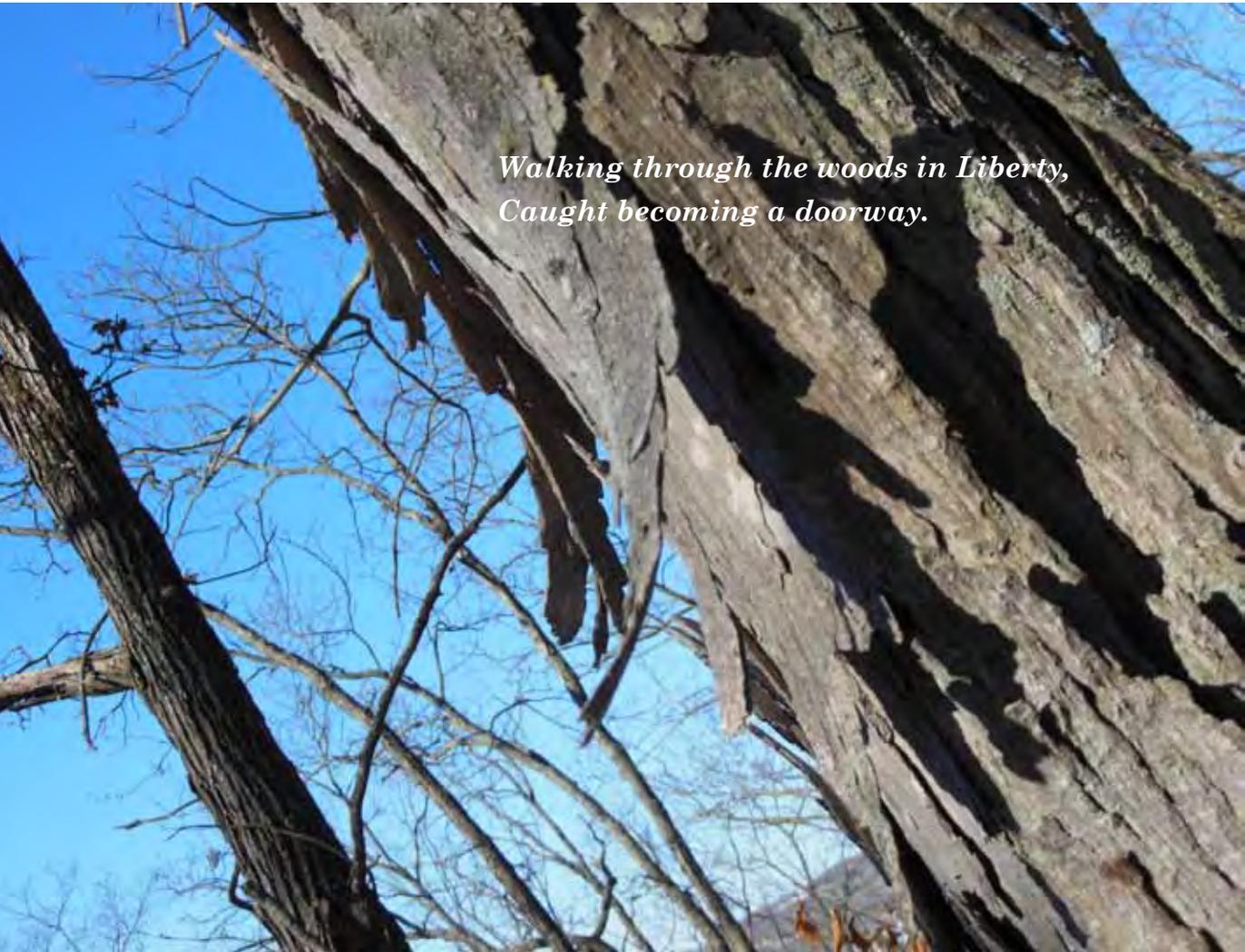
When I got home I had another one of those moments when I think about how I could try to start a new project with no defined goal, like rolling a snowball down a hill. It gets bigger, but then what? That's creation for you.

Two days ago I was at the post office to mail a letter to an artist friend in New Zealand. When asked, by the post office clerk holding up a sheet of 8 international stamps, if I send international mail often, I responded, "Not really. But I could." Now I have seven stamps to use.

A few months ago I deactivated my Facebook account. Before leaving, I asked all my Facebook friends, new and old, to send me their address if they would like to keep in touch. I have addresses for a few new artist friends.

I decided I will send seven of my artist friends each one of the photos I took this morning, asking them to add to it or alter it in some way, and return it. Maybe it could turn into a book. Maybe Brandon Graham could write something for it...he asked me to contact him if I ever need text for something. I think I will call it Thawing.





*Walking through the woods in Liberty,
Caught becoming a doorway.*

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107 S. Dunlap Street
Viroqua, WI 54665
U. S. A.

Sammy S labbinck
Fronteinstraat 16
8000 Brugge
Belgium

20 Feb 13

Dear Sammy,

Plaese see the enclosed items and respnd if you are interes5ed in participating. Very little is needed...just your addition or subtraction however you feel is best and return the picture to me. I will return the favor with prints of other artists' returns, or a copy of the book if that's what comes from it. If it becomes a book, the edition will be small (20 copies?) and sold as an "artist's book" to special collections in libraries or collectors... whomever. Scratch that, I will send each participating artist 2 copies of the book, if it happens...one to keep, one to sell? Just an idea I had this morning...I thought it felt like a good thing to do, so I needed to see hwat would happen if I tried it.

Best regards!



From: Koppa <viroquacreative@gmail.com>
Date: Wednesday, February 20, 2013 2:50 PM
To: Flore Kunst <florekunst@orange.fr>
Subject: Re: collab?

Excellent! Thank you.

From: Flore Kunst <florekunst@orange.fr>
Date: Wednesday, February 20, 2013 2:29 PM
To: Koppa <viroquacreative@gmail.com>
Subject: Re: collab?

Hi Mike,

I like your idea, thank you for thinking of me, here is my address:

Flore Kunst

██████████
69001 -Lyon-
FRANCE

Many thanks :)
Best.

Flore.

Le 20 févr. 2013 à 17:48, Mike Koppa a écrit :
Dear Flore,

As one of a handful of collage contemporaries I met through Facebook, I'm wondering if you would like to participate in a very simple collaborative exchange.

Two days ago I had to buy international stamps to send a letter to Juliet McAra (Collagista) in New Zealand and the postmaster asked if I send international mail regularly. My response: "Well, not really. But I could." So I bought 7 international stamps and I need to use them.

This morning I went for a walk in the woods on our land in the country here in rural southwest Wisconsin. I took my camera and have a few photos of the experience. My thought is that I will send a miniature photo in the mail of my experience this morning to my international collage friends and ask that they use it as the base for a very simple collage and return it.

In exchange for your favor, I will send small prints of each collage I receive back from the other artists.

If you would like to play, please send a postal address.

Thank you and have a lovely day!

Mike

Mike Koppa, organizer
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Flore ~~Ortman~~
3, rue de l'Église
69001 -Lyon-
France

20 Feb 13

Dear Flore,
I just received your email reply for the address moments # ago, thank you. A synopsis of this project is enclosed and the ideas about what it is and what it will include are growing and changeing as I type these invites...trying to keep it spontaneous and light. Simple idea simple execution. As of now I am hoping to get response enogh enough from artists invited to have it become a book, which I sell as an "art book" to special collections librarians and collectors. I can for sure sell 3...then give 2 copies to each contributor, final edition size probably something like 20 or 30, whatever it takes to cover the bases. All clear? Hope to hear (and see) back from you soon!

Best regards,



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107 S. Dunlap Street
Viroqua, WI 54665
U. S. A.

Gary Ortman
342 E. Greenwood
Morton, IL 61550

20 Feb 13

Dear Yrag,
Had an idea today. See enclosures. When I go over my address book...I used to call it a ~~mail~~ mailing list but that sounds so impersonal I don't know why the hell I ever used it--musta wanted to be a business...anyway, my address book, when I go over it I see only a few international artists, not 7, and I see a few collage friends here in the U.S.A. You is one so here you go. If you choose to sned the image back with your alterations, I'll send you 2 copies fo the book that comes of it...if it happens. I need to find out if other artists reply to these things I sned in the mail. I intend to sell the book, if it happens, as an "artists' book" to special collections librqriams and collectors. Small market. So I'll make a small edition (20...25?), give some to the contributors, sell theothers.

Yes? Best regards,



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107 S. Dunlap Street
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U. S. A.

Lisa Chun
5936 Gaviotta Ave.
Long Beach, CA 90805

20 Feb 13

Dear Lisa,

I had an idea this morning...explained in the enclosures, mostly. Take a look. If you choose to participate, and others, too...and let's say a book comes of it, as I'm hoping, then I make a small edition of 20 or 25 copies, send 2 copies to each contributor, and the others I sell to special collections librarians and collectors, which is a pretty small market, but I know I can sell at least 3 copies, so to me that makes it worth* doing*. Sounds good? I was planning to international with the project, but found I only have address for a few collage friends outside the U.S. So...whatever it takes...we shall see! Thanks for considering and have a nice day!
Best regards,

*that was supposed to say worth

*ha ha...seriously...that
was supposed to say doing!



THE HEAVY DUTY PRESS

107 S. Dunlap Street
Viroqua, WI 54665
U. S. A.

Brandon S. Graham
336 8th St.
Downers Grove, IL 60615

20 Feb 13

Dear Brandon,

Remember you said I should let you know if I need any text for any project? I have something here, maybe. The idea came this morning, see enclosures. If all 7 artists respond with an image, it could be a book with 7 images and an opposing page of text for each, like a poem, maybe, or whatever. Stream of consciousness or whatever the phrase is. I'm thinking something that would be one piece broken into seven. Or what if only six or five images...who knows? The whole thing is pretty spontaneous right now. 6 letters written about an idea conceived 5 hours ago. If you contribute (please), I will, if artists contribute and it becomes a book in the end, give you 2 copies as payment and the rest of a small edition (25 or so, 2 each to everyone and the remainder to sell as art) I sell to special collections librarians or collectors. I can sell 3 for sure. Best regards, out of room!



Da: Mike Koppa [mailto:viroquacreative@gmail.com] **Inviato:** giovedì 21 febbraio 2013 12:22 **A:** Sussie Legind **Oggetto:** **Re:** R: collab

Excellent...

Actually, the collage will be very tiny. I am sending a photo I took yesterday morning, about 2 x 3". You do what you want with it. Could be very simple...

I am not even sure how well they will reproduce in a book, because I will be scanning these little photos when I get them back, but I'll just take what I get...I think the idea is more important than the reproduction, but I'll do the best I can with it.

The Lecce thing...that story ended (or didn't end) with a little frustration. I think I've been had. I paid a lower rate to have the work included in a second exhibit. Again it didn't sell, thought he reported people were "interested." Then he asked if I wanted to pay more to show it again or have it sent back. I said send it back. He said okay and he would let me know the cost of shipping. That's the last I heard from him. So it's still there, not shipped back, either in the garbage or in their storage.

I actually was thinking I could tell him I have a friend in Rome, could he just send it to her. Then YOU could have it instead of him. Or better, supposed you wanted to go visit Lecce some day, I could just tell him you're coming to pick it up! No charge, you can have it...if that's some thing you would do and it wouldn't be any special trip or hassle. Anything to get it at least into the hands of a friend and out of the hands of a crook!

Have a nice day and expect something in the mailbox soon!

Best,

Mike



From: Susan Legind <sussielegind@gmail.com>
Date: Thursday, February 21, 2013 12:35 AM
To: Koppa <viroquacreative@gmail.com>
Subject: R: collab

Godmorning Mike...

What a great thought...I would like to join in. I miss you a lot at facebook so it would be lovely to make something together and keep contact!

My adress is:

Susan Legind
 Via Anagnina 332
 00118 Rome, Italy

What about the size of the collage-work I send to you? Would A4 be ok?...it would be esay to mail in an envelope!

Mike...what's going on with the "italian-story"...did they sell your work? Did they ask more money?...what happend?

Hope to hear from you soon...and have a nice day..
 Susan

Da: Mike Koppa [mailto:viroquacreative@gmail.com] **Inviato:** mercoledì 20 febbraio 2013 17:50 **A:** Susan Legind **Oggetto:** collab

Dear Susan,

As one of a handful of collage contemporaries I met through Facebook, I'm wondering if you would like to participate in a very simple collaborative exchange.

Two days ago I had to buy international stamps to sent a letter to Juliet McAra (Collagista) in New Zealand and the postmaster asked if I send international mail regularly. My re-

sponse: "Well, not really. But I could." So I bought 7 international stamps and I need to use them.

This morning I went for a walk in the woods on our land in the country here in rural south-west Wisconsin. I took my camera and have a few photos of the experience. My thought is that I will send a miniature photo in the mail of my experience this morning to my international collage friends and ask that they use it as the base for a very simple collage and return it.

In exchange for your favor, I will send small prints of each collage I receive back from the other artists.

If you would like to play, please send a postal address.

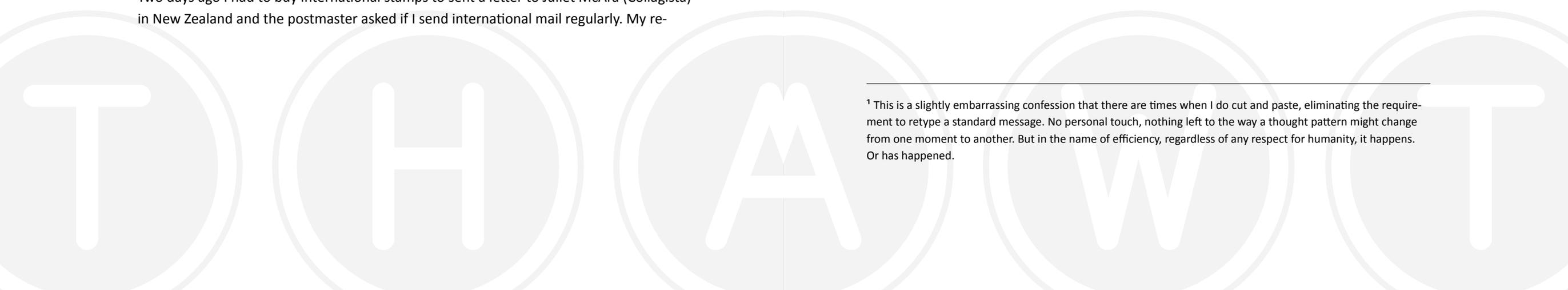
Thank you and have a lovely day!¹

Mike

Mike Koppa, organizer
Viroqua Creative Workshop LLC
 DBA Viroqua Stone Lettering & The Heavy Duty Press
 107 S. Dunlap Ave. | Viroqua, WI 54665
 608-606-5854

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¹ This is a slightly embarrassing confession that there are times when I do cut and paste, eliminating the requirement to retype a standard message. No personal touch, nothing left to the way a thought pattern might change from one moment to another. But in the name of efficiency, regardless of any respect for humanity, it happens. Or has happened.



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107 S. Dunlap Street
Viroqua, WI 54665
U. S. A.

Susan Legind
via Anagnina 332
00118 Rome
ITLAY

21 Feb 13

Dear Susan,
Enclosed are the details...well, maybe they're not exactly details...enclosed is a simple journal entry regarding how this project started yesterday morning. I am trying not to think too much about it but rather just get it going and see what happens. Alter the photo however you wish and return it. I'll scan it and include it in the book (if I get enough replies...not sure how many that is...all ??) and send you 2 copies of a small edition (maybe 20-30 books) in exchange for your cooperation. I sent a letter asking for some text to accompany the photos... we'll see if it works out. Or what. Maybe the fun is in not knowing at this point, and dreaming about these letters flying all around the world for the fun of spontaneous and experimental creativity! Thanks again for agreeing to participate. Best regards,

Mike



From: Koppa <viroquacreative@gmail.com>
Date: Thursday, February 21, 2013 12:31 PM
To: Helene de Winter <info@helenedewinter.nl>
Subject: Re: collab?

Great. Thanks.

I'll send it today.

From: Helene de Winter <info@helenedewinter.nl>
Date: Thursday, February 21, 2013 10:37 AM
To: Koppa <viroquacreative@gmail.com>
Subject: Re: collab?

Hello Mike,

Thank you for contacting me.
Your idea sounds interesting. I like the idea of a worldwide collaboration.
One of the advantages of collage making: it's relatively easy to ship :-)
I had a look on your website and I like your work!

If you send me something: please send it to my home-address, the studio-address is not ideal as a post-address.

My home address is:

Helene de Winter
Eerste Morgendreef 10
5233 ND Den Bosch
The Netherlands

Looking forward to this collage-making-adventure.

Kind regards,
Helene de Winter

www.helenedewinter.nl | 0031(0)651424258 | info@helenedewinter.nl

Op 21 feb. 2013, om 15:57 heeft Mike Koppa het volgende geschreven:

Dear Ms de Winter,

My name is Mike Koppa. I am a collage and book artist living in Wisconsin, U.S.A.

I am a subscriber to Kolaj magazine and saw your ad in the directory. I'm wondering if you would like to participate in a very simple collaborative exchange.

Two days ago I had to buy international stamps to send a letter to Juliet McAra (Collagista) in New Zealand and the postmaster asked if I send international mail regularly. My response: "Well, not really. But I could." So I bought 7 international stamps and I need to use them.

Yesterday morning I went for a walk in the woods on our land in the country here in rural southwest Wisconsin. I took my camera and have a few photos of the experience. My thought is that I will send a miniature photo of my experience to a handful of international collage artists, and ask that they use it as the base for a very simple collage and return it.

One simple act...all you need to do to participate is receive the miniature photo, do something with it, and return it.

In exchange for your favor (and if I get enough response to make it into an interesting book), I will send you two copies of a small edition (20-30 copies), for you to keep or sell.

When I went to my address book, I found I don't have 7 seven international collage friends! So I looked to my right, saw the Kolaj mag sitting there, and figured this was the right time to make practical use of it.

If you would like to play along with me and a few other collage artists, please let me know and I will send an envelope to the address listed on your website: Ateliers PK14twee, Horse Kerkhofweg 14, Den Bosch.

Thank you and have a lovely day!

Mike

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107 S. Dunlap Street
Viroqua, WI 54665
U. S. A.

Helene de Winter
Eerste Morgendreef 10
5233 ND Den Bosch
THE NETHERLANDS

21 Feb 13

Dear Helene,

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this spontaneous project. The enclosed journal entry talks a little more about how it started...I am working quickly so as not to dismiss the idea as foolish or silly or not worthy of the effort. Please alter the enclosed photo and return it. I will scan it and include it with whatever other images get ## back to me in a book and send you 2 copies in exchange for your cooperation. This is the 7th of these letters...I think I will send one more to an unconfirmed address (I have the stamp for it, after all) and hope to get at least 7 images back. If I don't get enough response from the letters to make it interesting I won't make the book. Time will tell, I guess. Thank you again for your immediate willingness to participate. And have a nice day in the netherlands. Best regards,



MMK5

From: Koppa <mvkoppa@mwt.net>
Date: Saturday, February 23, 2013 4:30 PM
To: Gary Ortman <gnamtro@gmail.com>
Subject: Re: Question

I don't remember making any rules other than what I sent in the envelope.

From: Gary Ortman <gnamtro@gmail.com>
Date: Saturday, February 23, 2013 3:54 PM
To: Koppa <mvkoppa@mwt.net>
Subject: Question

Any size limitation? OK to cut off the white border? (Being the freewheeling artiste that you are, think I know the answers.)

From: Koppa <viroquacreative@gmail.com>
Date: Thursday, February 28, 2013 6:38 AM
To: Susan Legind <sussielegind@gmail.com>
Subject: Re: R: R: R: collab

That would be incredible.

From: Susan Legind <sussielegind@gmail.com>
Date: Thursday, February 28, 2013 12:32 AM
To: Koppa <viroquacreative@gmail.com>
Subject: R: R: R: collab

Don't worry Mike...I have actually been in Urbino...so I could imagine what it was all about. Anyway Urbino is a super-place...you would love it...old old town...so beautifull. Maybee one day we can all meet in Urbino! Susan

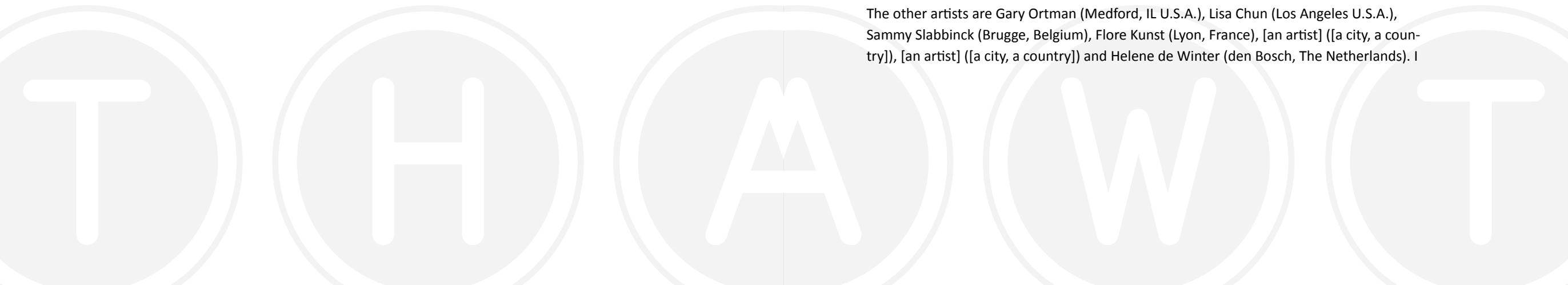
Da: Mike Koppa [mailto:viroquacreative@gmail.com] **Inviato:** mercoledì 27 febbraio 2013 22:29 **A:** Susan Legind **Oggetto:** Re: R: R: collab

Urbino is not a book artist. Urbino is a city where a book artist lives.

Irene is a book artist!

Da: Mike Koppa [mailto:viroquacreative@gmail.com] **Inviato:** mercoledì 27 febbraio 2013 22:22 **A:** Susan Legind **Oggetto:** **Re:** R: R: collab

The other artists are Gary Ortman (Medford, IL U.S.A.), Lisa Chun (Los Angeles U.S.A.), Sammy Slabbinck (Brugge, Belgium), Flore Kunst (Lyon, France), [an artist] ([a city, a country]), [an artist] ([a city, a country]) and Helene de Winter (den Bosch, The Netherlands). I



am anxious to see who will and who will not be participating, as most of them were sent the invitation to participate without being briefed with an email first!

Gary contacted me with the same question...what size. I forgot to specify that (maybe intentionally), so I think it's best to leave it up to each artist. I envisioned something added to the photo so the size would not change, but now that two people have asked the same question, I realize that the scope of the project is still evolving and open for interpretation by all involved...I'll take whatever you send and the various sizes I receive will help guide the final size and layout of the book.

I have also recently made contact with another artist in Italy, Irene Lazzarin, in Urbino. Urbino is a book artist and has a store called Slowbook on Etsy! I think we're going to have her make a book to paste all the collages into, then scan and reproduce those pages. At least that's what it looks like right now.

Another note...regarding the collage in Lecce...the quote for shipping back to U.S.A. came from Riccardo this morning...75 euros. Because the price was so high, and I am intending to buy a book or books from Irene in Urbino, I asked her if I could have them ship the collage to her, then she will ship the collage to me along with the book or books. Or perhaps the collage becomes a trade item for the books. She agreed to have the collage shipped to her, and we'll figure out what happens with that later.

Looking forward to whatever comes next!

Warm regards from Wisconsin, where today we received another inch or so of fluffy snow.

Mike

From: Susan Legind <sussielegind@gmail.com> **Date:** Wednesday, February 27, 2013 8:40 AM
To: Koppa <viroquacreative@gmail.com> **Subject:** R: R: collab

Hi Mike...

I got it...the photo is here on my table...and now....the "snowball will start rolling down the hill".

I love that kind of things...where you get something already done...and you have to alter it. It's just my style....and I would say very much "collage-like". That's actually what we do all the time...alter the things already done.

GREAT!...love it!

So now Mike...I would very much like to know what kind of size I'm supposed to use. You can have it just as you like...but I would love if it was an A4...or something like that. Easy to mail...and gives a chance to make something real. But...if you prefer something like a post-card...it's ok for me!

I am very curious..would like to know...if I know anyone of the others....who are they? Have we all got the same photo?

I think this is a lovely project...well done MIKE...let me know about the size and I will start to work right away.

And have a lovely day....Susan



From: Flore Kunst <florekunst@orange.fr>
Date: Saturday, March 2, 2013 3:28 AM
To: Koppa <viroquacreative@gmail.com>
Subject: Re: SLOWBOOK

Dear Mike,

I received your letter and photograph, thank you. I love your idea and the possibility to make a book ...

I will create a collage in this photograph and I will return shortly after.

Thank you again for the invitation to the project.

Best regards.

Flore.

From: Koppa <mvkoppa@mwt.net>
Date: Monday, March 4, 2013 2:29 PM
To: Gary Ortman <gnamtro@gmail.com>
Subject: Re: Envelope

I was hoping to see it today, but no.

From: Gary Ortman <gnamtro@gmail.com>
Date: Monday, March 4, 2013 9:25 AM
To: Koppa <mvkoppa@mwt.net>
Subject: Envelope

Mr. Koppa,

Pls. let me know when the package arrives. It's like sending a kid to camp--you always feel better when you know he got there safely.

Thanks,

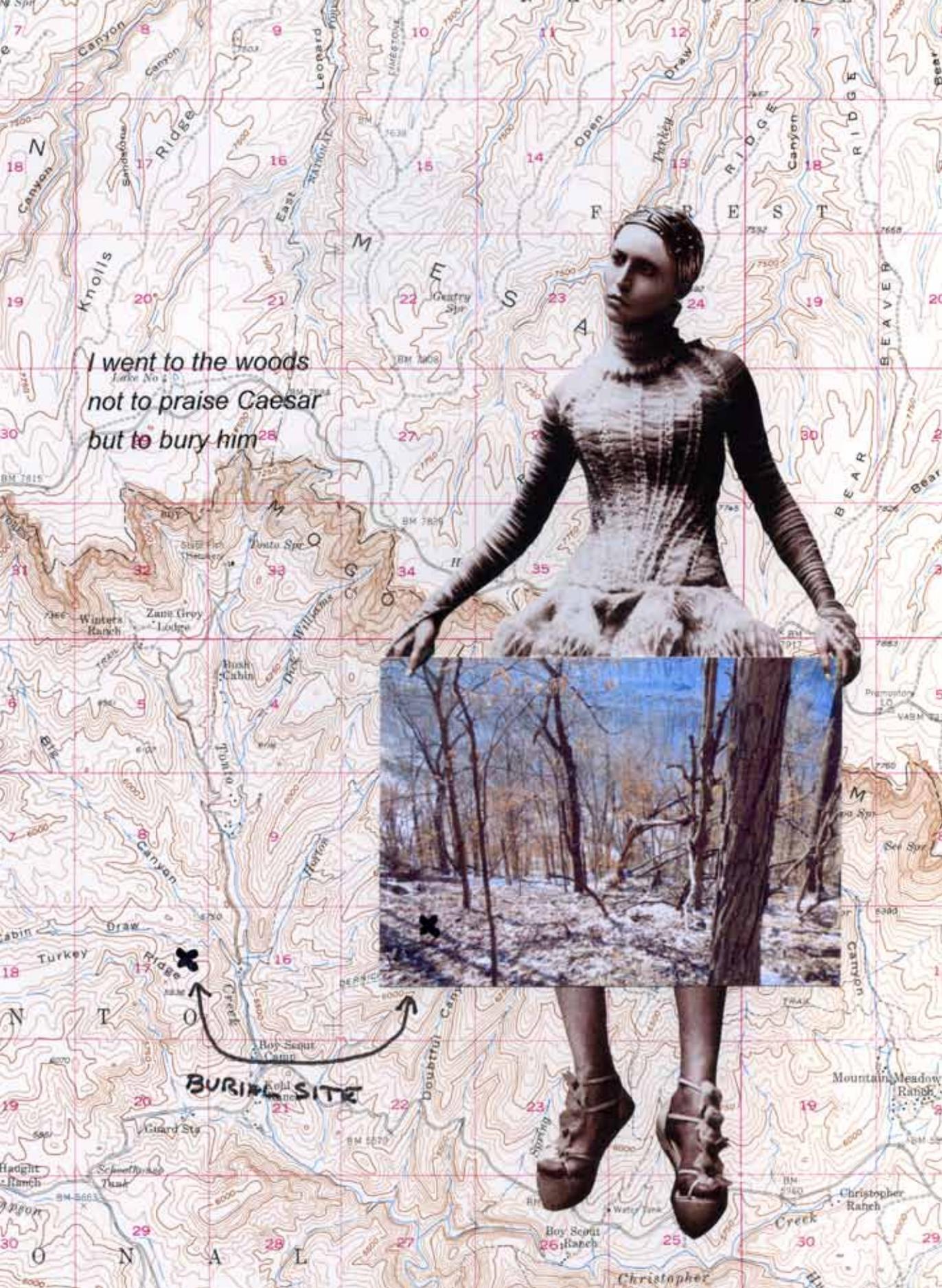
g



I went to the woods
not to praise Caesar
but to bury him



BURIAL SITE





Dear Mr. Koppa,

First you should know I'm most of the way thru my afternoon glass of burgundy. I asked Pam to make me an extra copy of the pic in case I fell victim to the evil one, error. The first printing was still set on B&W but I thought it was kind of cool so I used it. Then she ran a couple extras of the colors. Seeing as how I don't let much go to waste, I used them. The first and intended one is Catch Me If You Can. The other two are collateral damage. Unfortunately, the Canon printing paper hates rubber cement and suffers very ill effects. It looks like a pic has cement that can be rubbed off but it can't--the surface is damaged. On the B&W I took artist's prerogative and "stylized" it with more cement for kind of a ghostly look. I enjoyed doing this project because it forced me to focus on a particular thing—the pic of the woods—rather than trying to pull together an idea from my pile of clippings without a real goal. Hope I was successful and didn't disappoint. Feel free to use one, two, three or none of them. Hope you get good response from your victims. I feel honored that I was one the few to be chosen. If you get decent response maybe you could "assign" us projects quarterly or so and put them on your site.

Anyway...

Thanks,

P.S. I actually had this
*I went to the woods because
I wished to live deliberately,
to front only the essential facts of life,
and see if I could not learn what it
had to teach, and not, when I came to die,
discover that I had not lived.* ~~THORNTON~~

printed on a topographical map and got to thinking it was kind of conventionally mild when one of the voices suggested the "bury Caesar" quote. So I combined them.



From: Koppa <viroquacreative@gmail.com>

Date: Wednesday, March 6, 2013 8:32 AM

To: Gary Ortman <gnamtro@gmail.com>

Subject: SAFE!

Your package arrived safely and I enjoyed the contents greatly.

And in my head that sounded like the Mayor of Munchkinville addressing Dorothy regarding the murder of the wicked witch of the East.



From: Helene de Winter <info@helenedewinter.nl>
Date: Tuesday, March 5, 2013 5:27 AM
To: Koppa <viroquacreative@gmail.com>
Subject: Re: making collage

Mike, thanks for the good wishes.

And for the answer regarding the size; inspiration starts flowing..... :-)) Even the words you use have a roll in this.

I hope you'll be surprised in a pleasant way when the photo comes back to you as a collage.

Greetings

Helene

Op 5 mrt. 2013, om 01:57 heeft Mike Koppa het volgende geschreven:

Good to hear you have received the photo, sorry to hear of your bicycle wreck.

There is no rush...I can get anxious like any other person, but am trying my best to exercise patience with everything. The earth only spins so fast, and each of us has only so much time in a day. What will happen will happen!

Regarding size, this is the third time I've fielded this question and I can only answer one way...I never specified what to do with the picture and sent them off quickly without considering that detail, so...in the name of allowing the project to evolve in whatever it will, do whatever you wish with it and I will take what I get back and design the book around whatever is returned to me.

Heal up!

Most,

Mike



From: Helene de Winter <info@helenedewinter.nl>

Date: Monday, March 4, 2013 6:43 AM

To: Koppa <viroquacreative@gmail.com>

Subject: making collage

Hello Mike,

I've received your letter with the photo. Inspiring photo!

Unfortunately, on the day your photo arrived, I fell from my bike and now have a concussion and and badly bruised ribs.

I will not be able to go to my studio this week and maybe longer.

So if you are not receiving the collage back soon: don't worry, I long to work on it, it will come.

One more question about the photo: do you want me to work with it in this size you send me or can I scan it and work in/with an enlarged version?

I'm curious how your project will work out.

Greeting

Helene

Greetings-

I'm excited about this project. I sent my typewriter out for some badly needed service.

I am including some text I hope will work, as well as returning the specific images that I was responding to.

My thought was that the Chicago portion would stand apart, as a kind of narrative into and point of contrast, to the images and text that follows.

If you produce enough copies and are interested in having me help with placement, I could send copies to my book dealers. They would likely sell numerous copies to various collections.

Let me know.

Brandon



WINTER IN CONTRAST

I witness the first light of dawn and imagine I should consider myself fortunate. But I'm honestly not that taken with it. Winter mornings in Chicago are nothing worth writing a poem about.

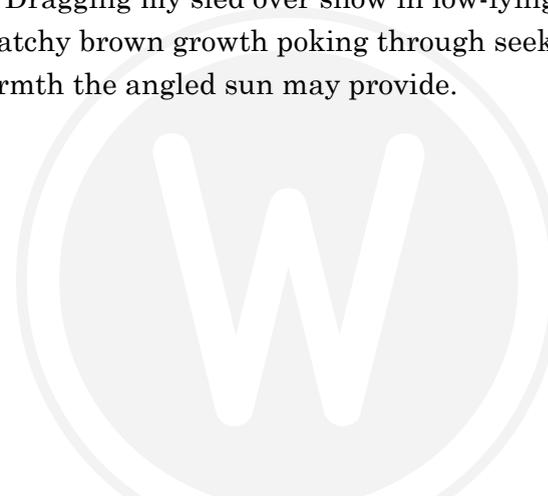
Mute, bleak shadows slowly shrinking into the recesses of dank alleys and pooling black under cars along packed curbs as weak shades of gunmetal and dirty off-white snow begin to dominate the overcast cityscape. Wind whipped trash hovers and falls in dead end corners where the lakeside gale can't find a way through.

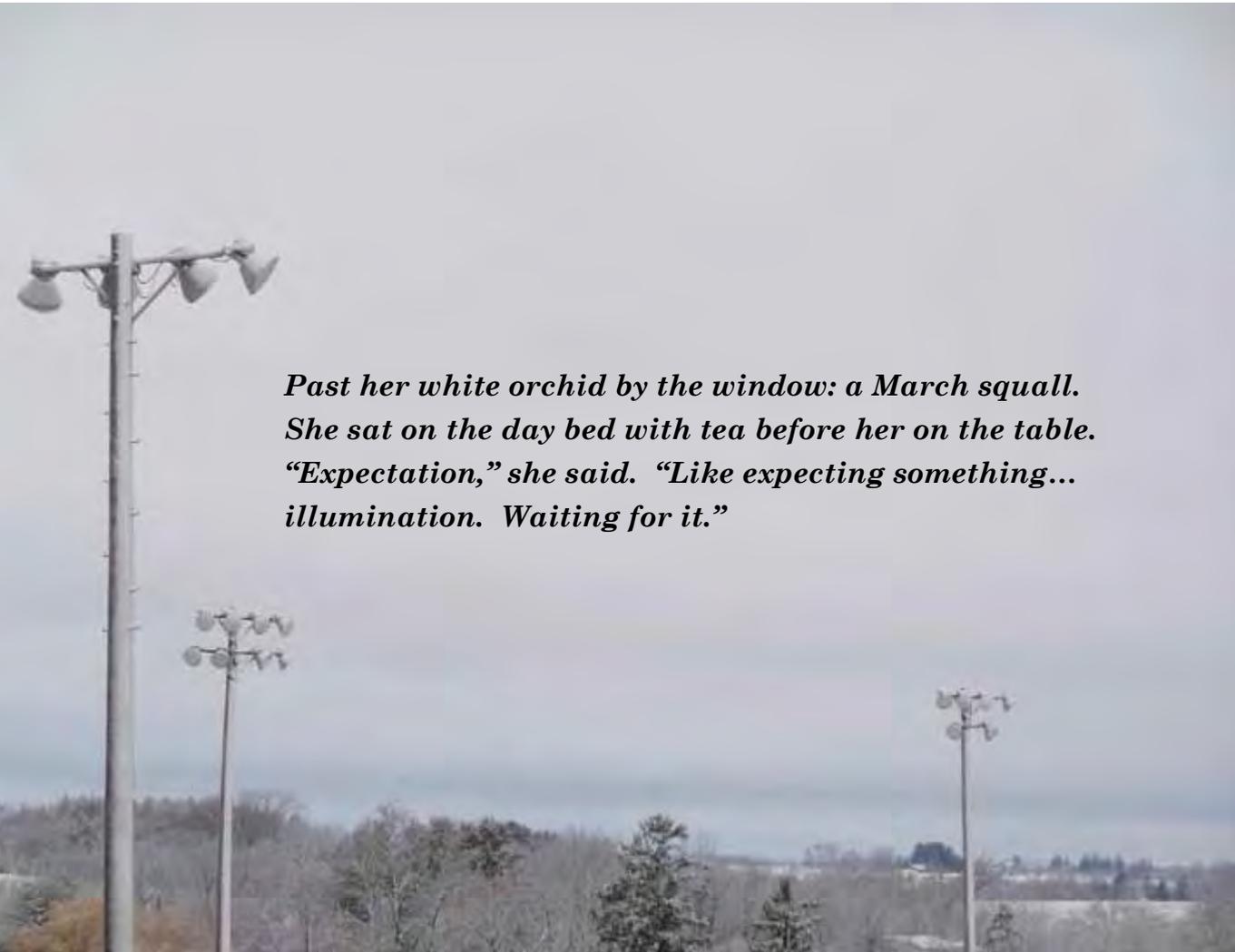
Nothing like the beautiful bright blast of clean light from my youth to the north; peering out glass panes to see piles of soft snow fluff and crystalline icicles blanketing the pines and cedars.

Stepping into the air, the saturated, cold blue sky reflected in unfrozen portions of the lake.

Walking among brittle green moss, grey stone outcroppings, orange and red leaves curled in determined fists against the chill, clinging to branches like charcoal line drawings.

Dragging my sled over snow in low-lying ribbons, scratchy brown growth poking through seeking what warmth the angled sun may provide.





T H A W T



T H A W T