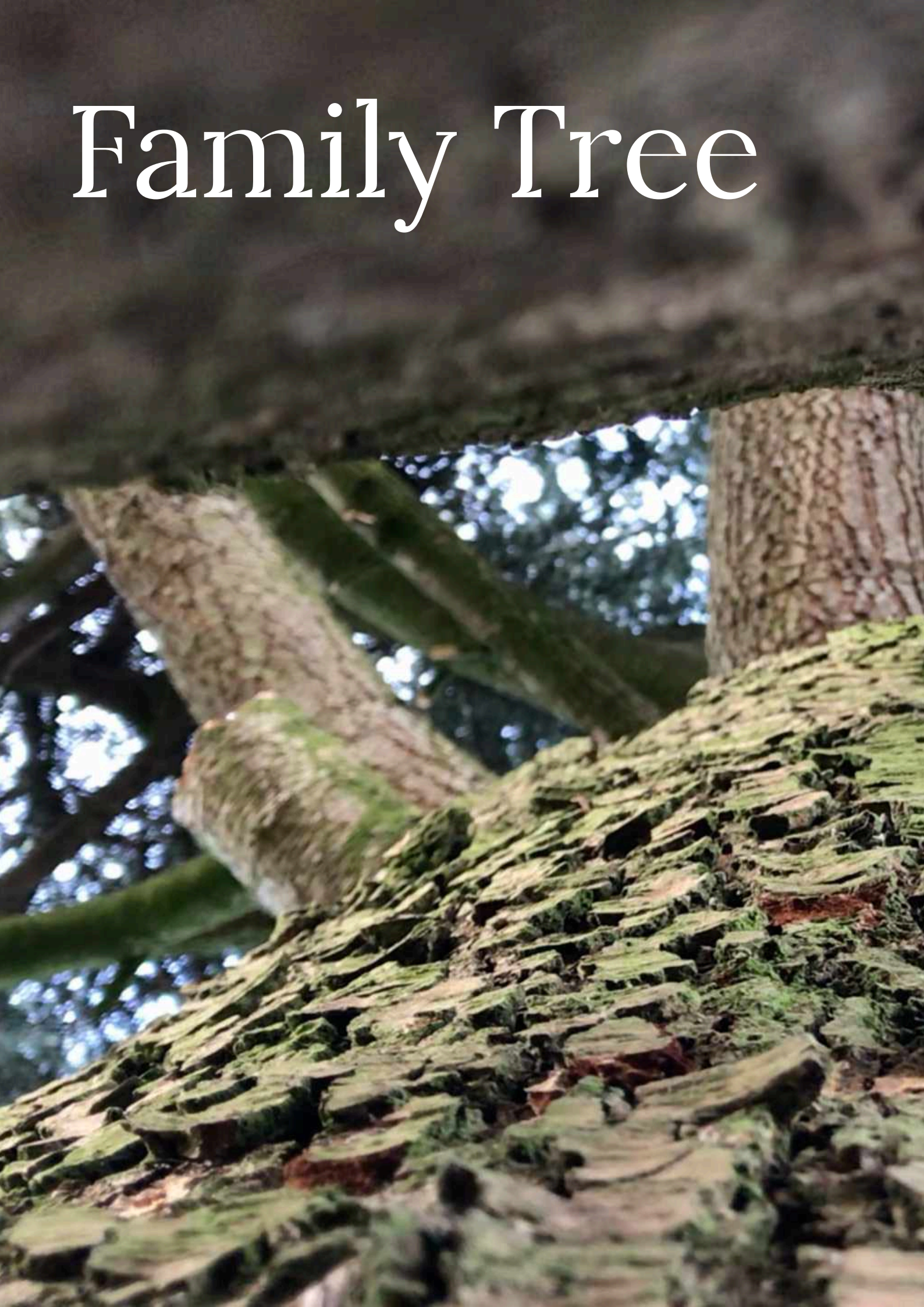




Grandmother Clock

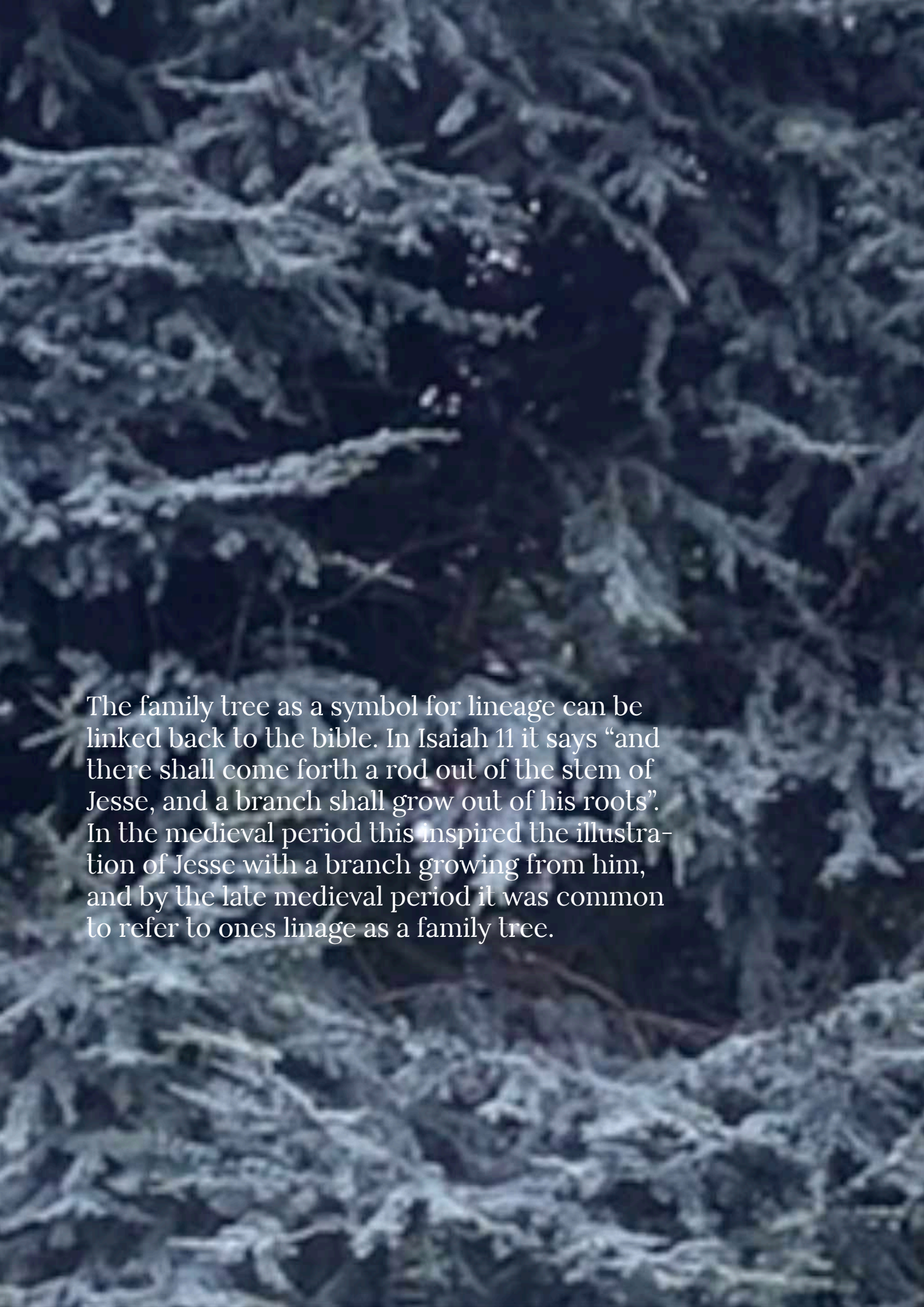
Play
Family
Love
Nature

Family Tree



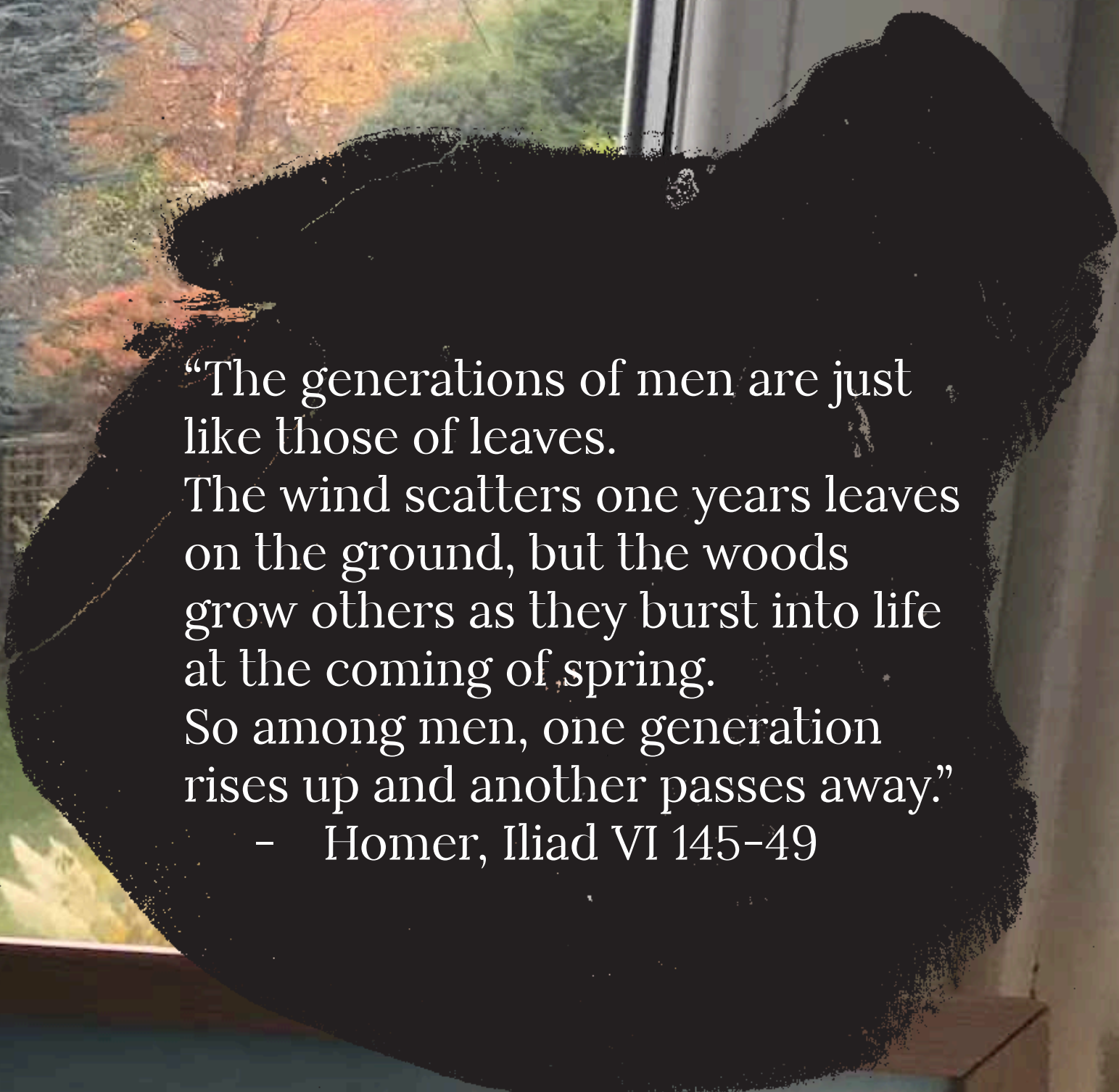






The family tree as a symbol for lineage can be linked back to the bible. In Isaiah 11 it says “and there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots”. In the medieval period this inspired the illustration of Jesse with a branch growing from him, and by the late medieval period it was common to refer to ones lineage as a family tree.





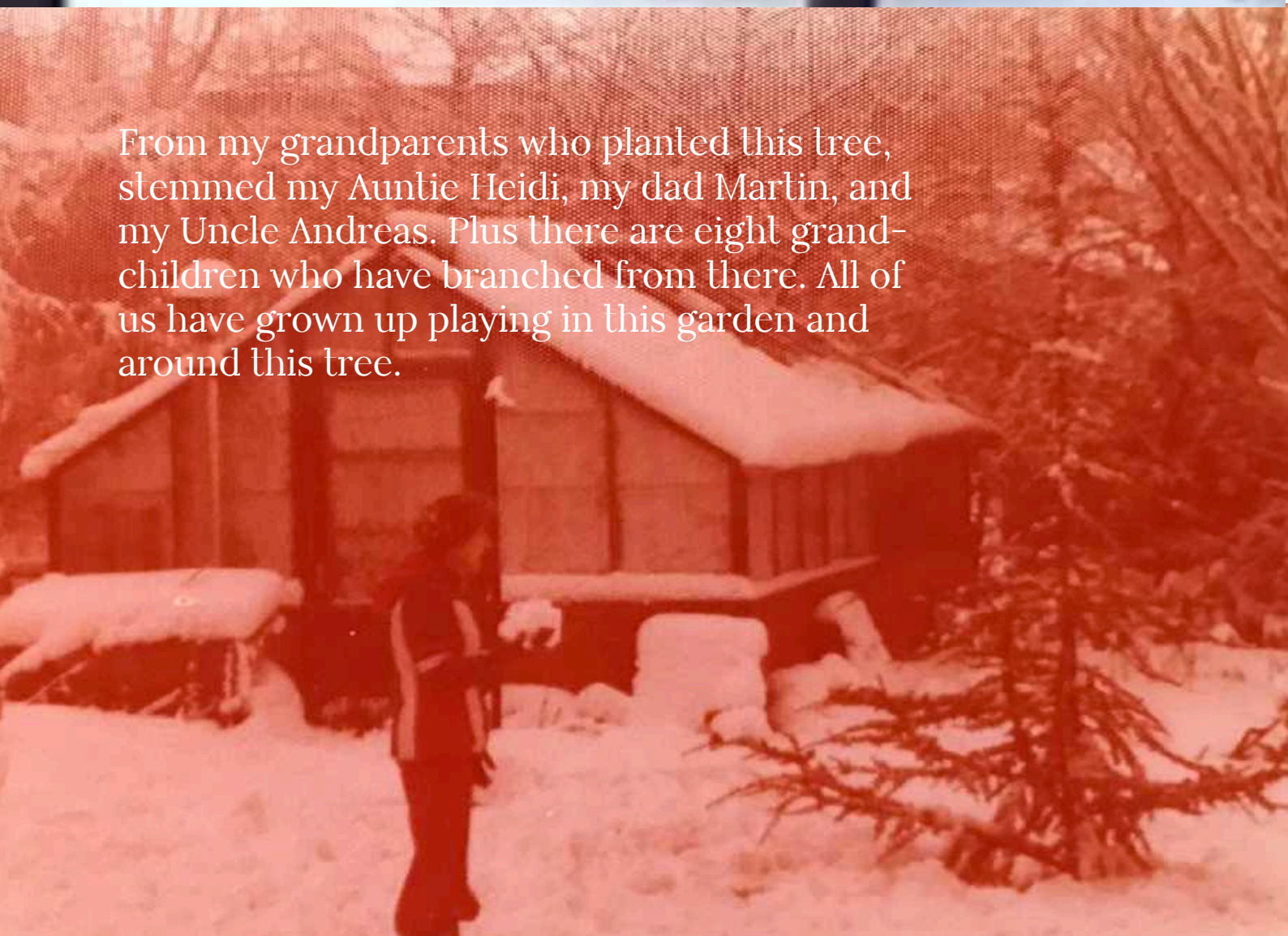
“The generations of men are just like those of leaves. The wind scatters one year's leaves on the ground, but the woods grow others as they burst into life at the coming of spring. So among men, one generation rises up and another passes away.”
- Homer, Iliad VI 145-49







From my grandparents who planted this tree, stemmed my Auntie Heidi, my dad Martin, and my Uncle Andreas. Plus there are eight grandchildren who have branched from there. All of us have grown up playing in this garden and around this tree.

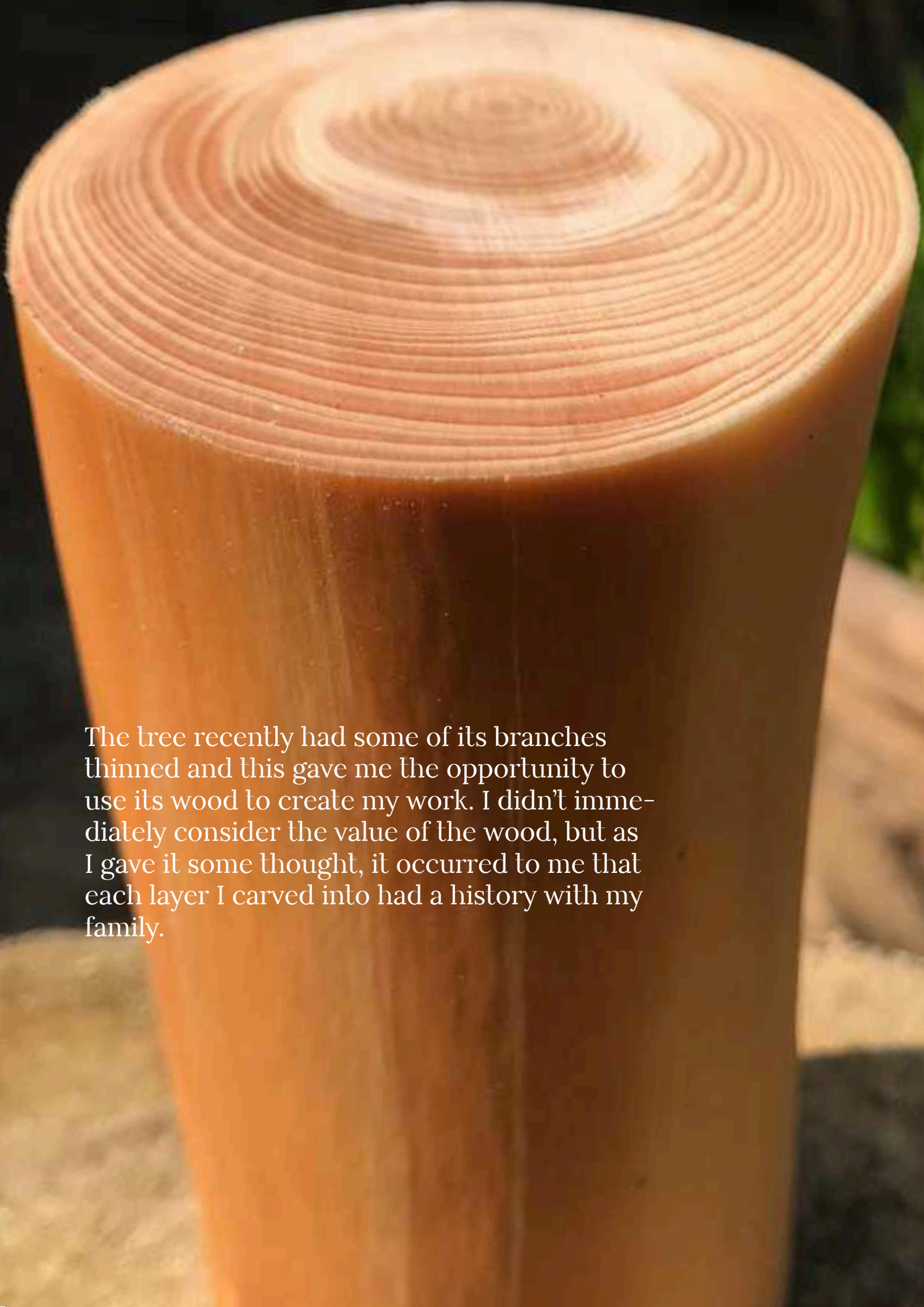




“When you include everything that is alive in that space, and it’s a huge space and there’s a lot of specimens of everything that you can possibly imagine there with you, and then you grow up knowing that these are all your family. You can never feel lonely in that situation.”

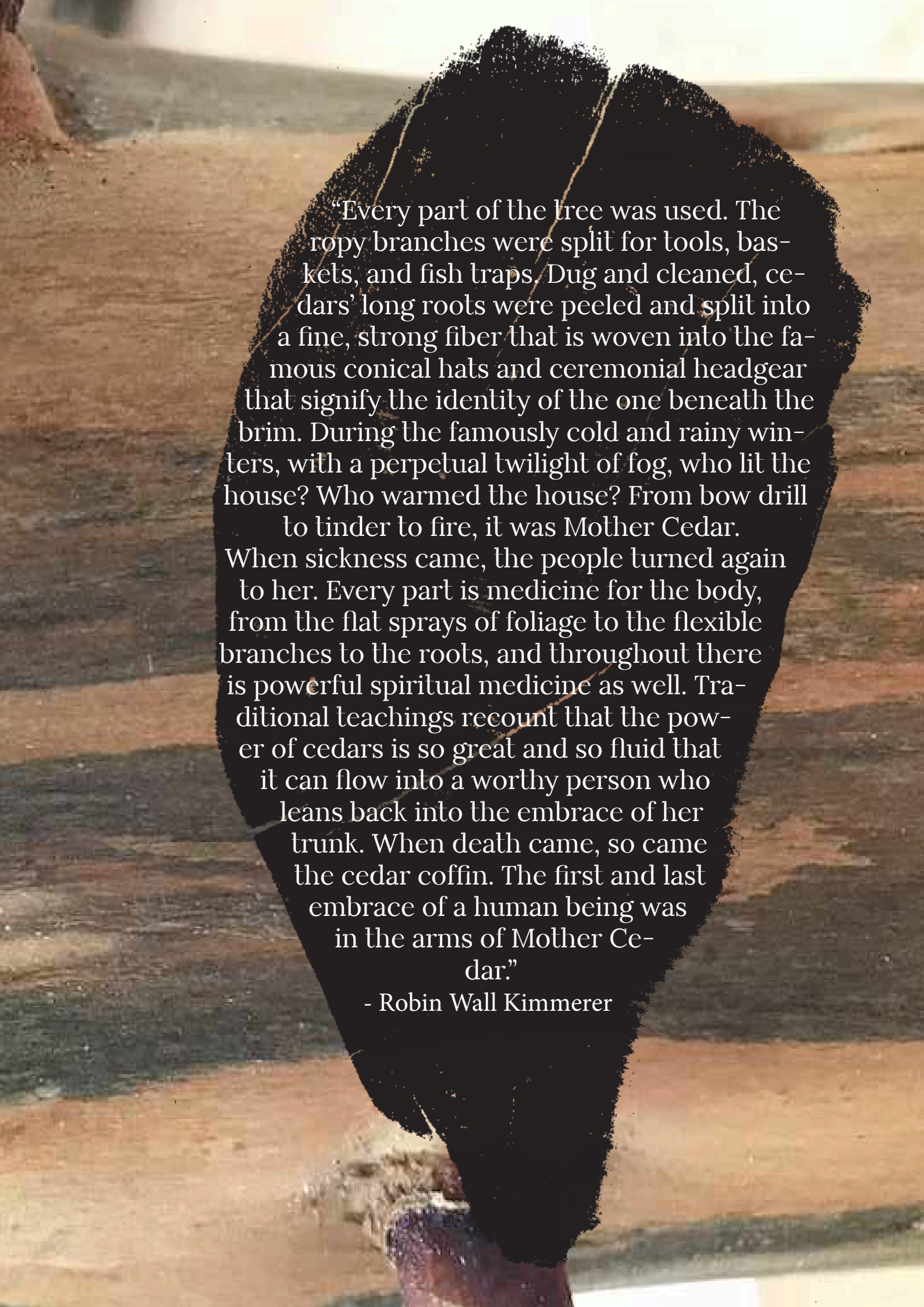
Bob Randall 2009





The tree recently had some of its branches thinned and this gave me the opportunity to use its wood to create my work. I didn't immediately consider the value of the wood, but as I gave it some thought, it occurred to me that each layer I carved into had a history with my family.

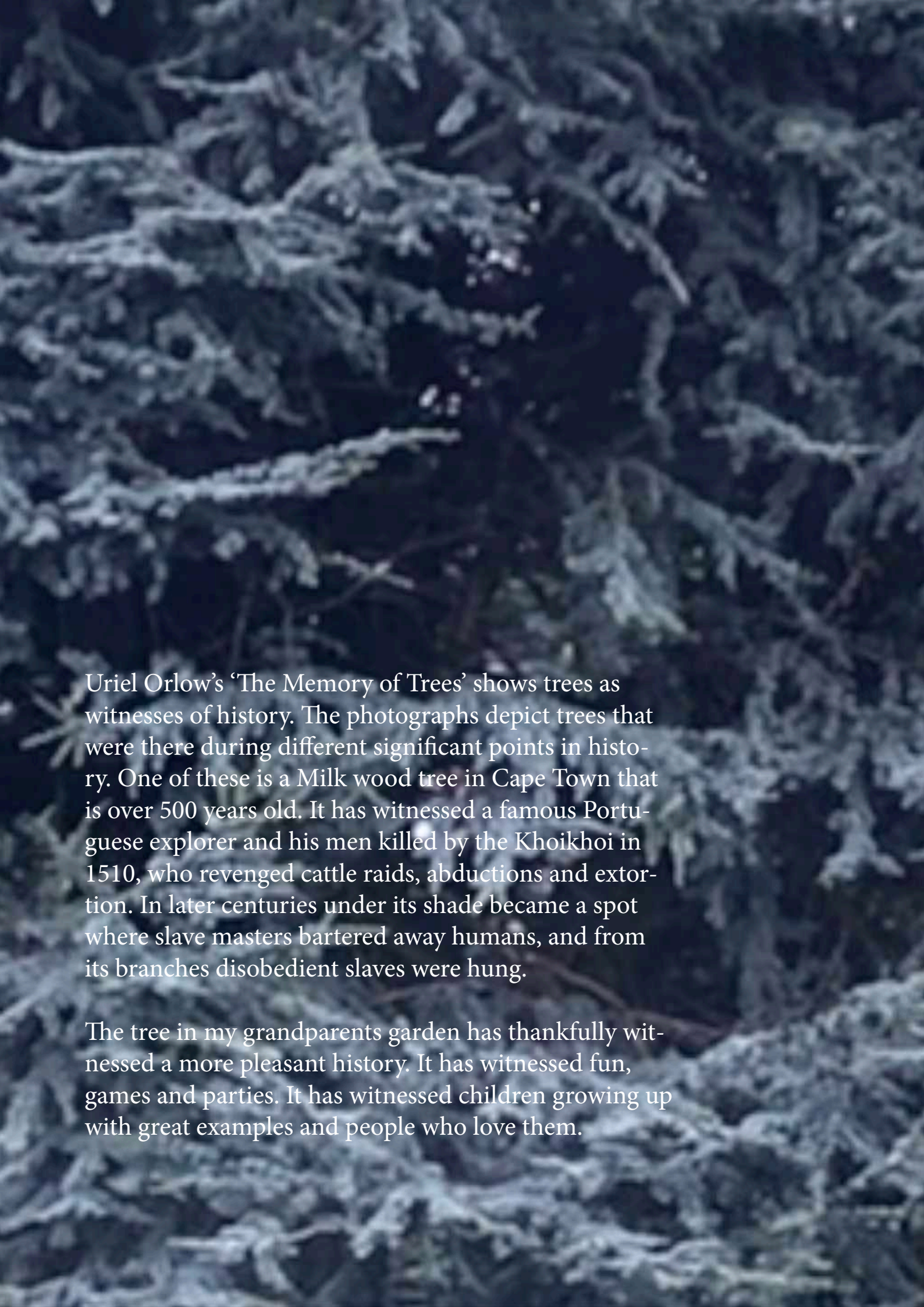




“Every part of the tree was used. The rosy branches were split for tools, baskets, and fish traps. Dug and cleaned, cedars’ long roots were peeled and split into a fine, strong fiber that is woven into the famous conical hats and ceremonial headgear that signify the identity of the one beneath the brim. During the famously cold and rainy winters, with a perpetual twilight of fog, who lit the house? Who warmed the house? From bow drill to tinder to fire, it was Mother Cedar. When sickness came, the people turned again to her. Every part is medicine for the body, from the flat sprays of foliage to the flexible branches to the roots, and throughout there is powerful spiritual medicine as well. Traditional teachings recount that the power of cedars is so great and so fluid that it can flow into a worthy person who leans back into the embrace of her trunk. When death came, so came the cedar coffin. The first and last embrace of a human being was in the arms of Mother Cedar.”

- Robin Wall Kimmerer

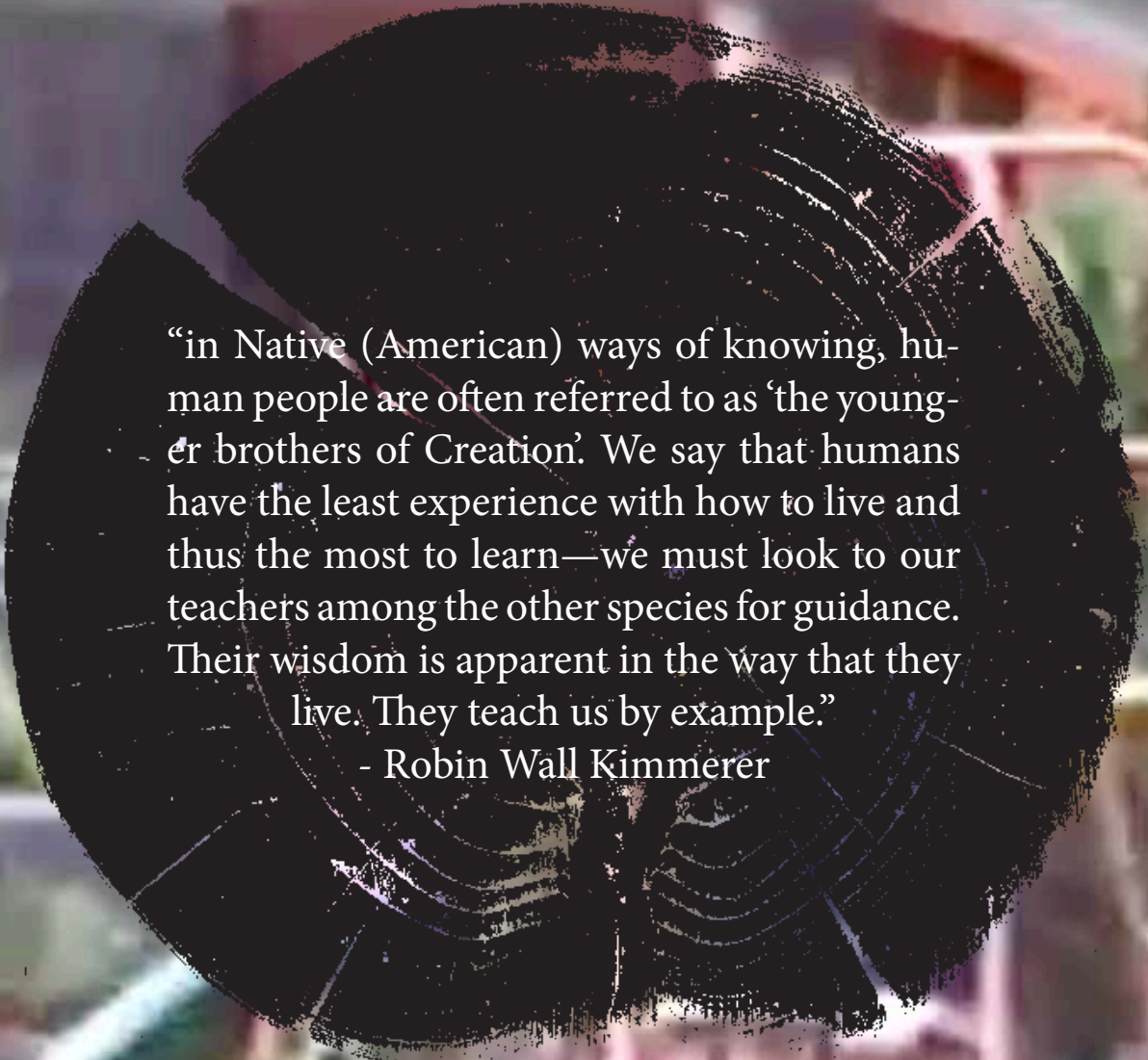




Uriel Orlow's 'The Memory of Trees' shows trees as witnesses of history. The photographs depict trees that were there during different significant points in history. One of these is a Milk wood tree in Cape Town that is over 500 years old. It has witnessed a famous Portuguese explorer and his men killed by the Khoikhoi in 1510, who revenged cattle raids, abductions and extortion. In later centuries under its shade became a spot where slave masters bartered away humans, and from its branches disobedient slaves were hung.

The tree in my grandparents garden has thankfully witnessed a more pleasant history. It has witnessed fun, games and parties. It has witnessed children growing up with great examples and people who love them.





“in Native (American) ways of knowing, human people are often referred to as ‘the younger brothers of Creation’. We say that humans have the least experience with how to live and thus the most to learn—we must look to our teachers among the other species for guidance. Their wisdom is apparent in the way that they live. They teach us by example.”

- Robin Wall Kimmerer

Examples

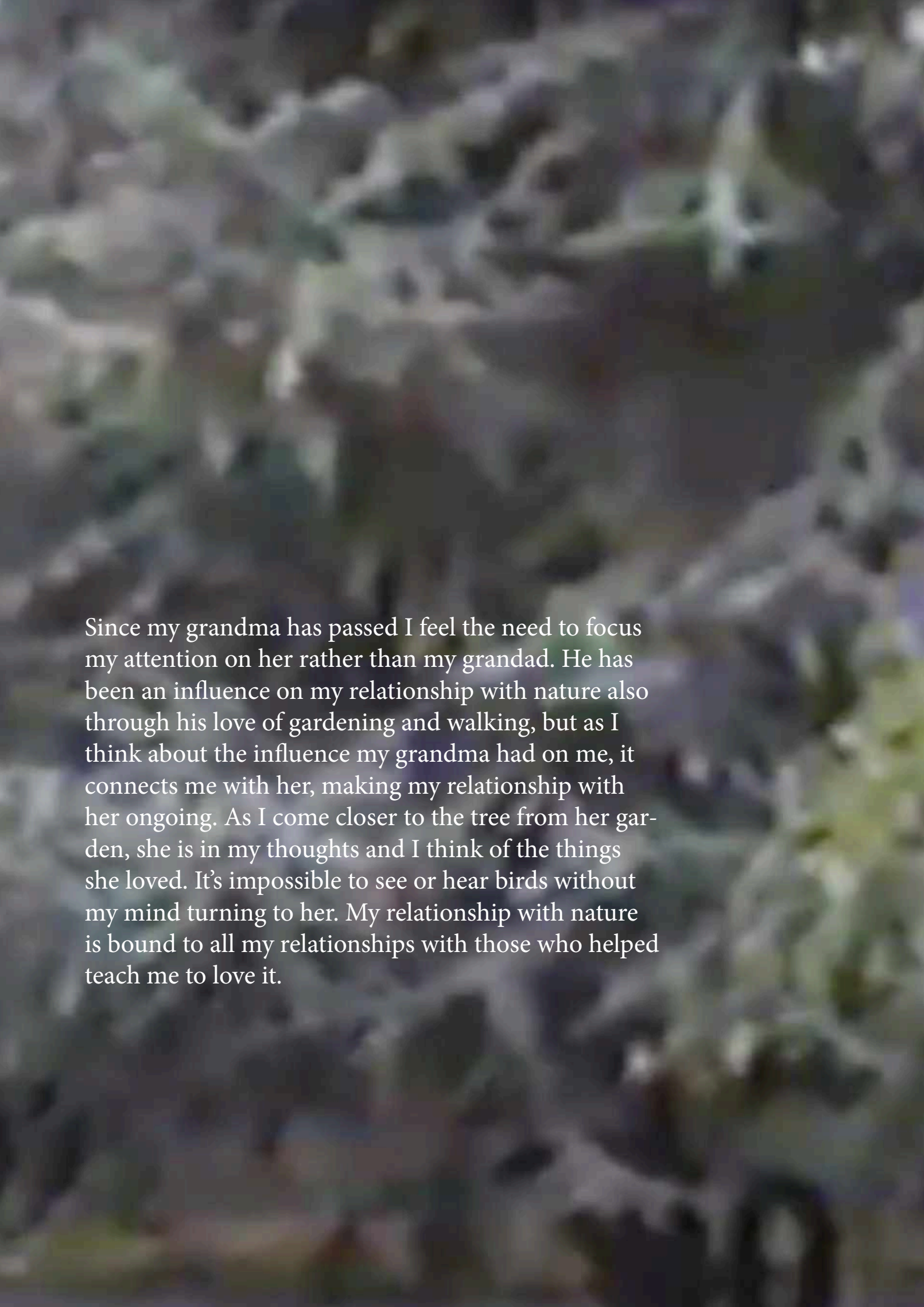




2:52 PM


23 JUN 1994





Since my grandma has passed I feel the need to focus my attention on her rather than my grandad. He has been an influence on my relationship with nature also through his love of gardening and walking, but as I think about the influence my grandma had on me, it connects me with her, making my relationship with her ongoing. As I come closer to the tree from her garden, she is in my thoughts and I think of the things she loved. It's impossible to see or hear birds without my mind turning to her. My relationship with nature is bound to all my relationships with those who helped teach me to love it.

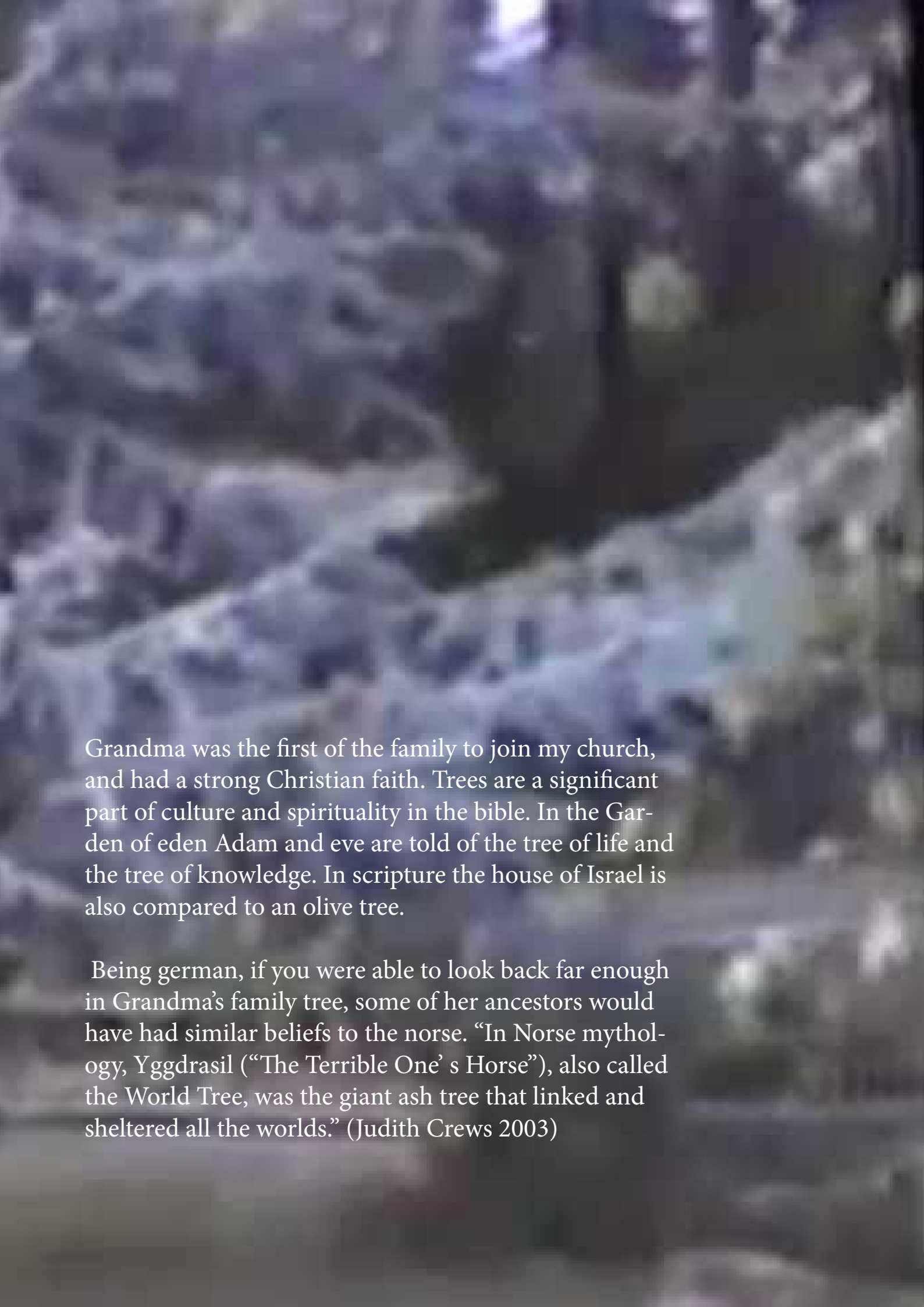




“Before we paddled away from any camping place she made us kids scour the place to be sure that it was spotless. No burnt matchstick, no scrap of paper escaped her notice. “Leave this place better than you found it,” she admonished. And so we did. We also had to leave wood for the next person’s fire, with tinder and kindling carefully sheltered from rain by a sheet of birch bark. I liked to imagine their pleasure, those other paddlers, arriving after dark to find a ready pile of fuel to warm their evening meal. My mother’s ceremony connected us to them, too.”

Robin Wall Kimmerer

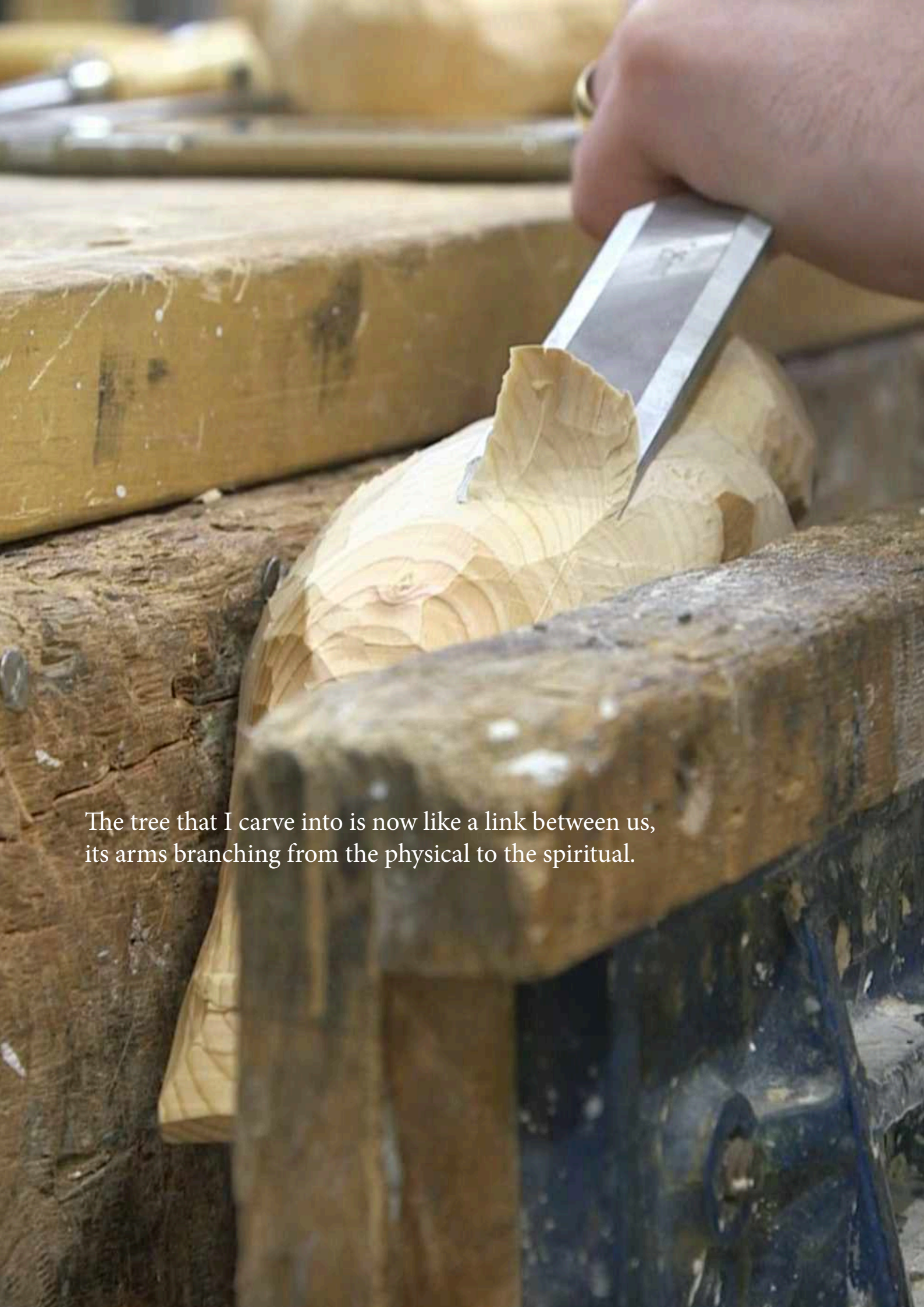





Grandma was the first of the family to join my church, and had a strong Christian faith. Trees are a significant part of culture and spirituality in the bible. In the Garden of eden Adam and eve are told of the tree of life and the tree of knowledge. In scripture the house of Israel is also compared to an olive tree.

Being german, if you were able to look back far enough in Grandma's family tree, some of her ancestors would have had similar beliefs to the norse. "In Norse mythology, Yggdrasil ("The Terrible One's Horse"), also called the World Tree, was the giant ash tree that linked and sheltered all the worlds." (Judith Crews 2003)





The tree that I carve into is now like a link between us,
its arms branching from the physical to the spiritual.




“I’ve always had a complicated relationship with nostalgia. Why does a nostalgic object cast such an inescapable spell? It is a malady I suffer from, mildly mostly, with occasional intense lapses.”

– Andy Holden

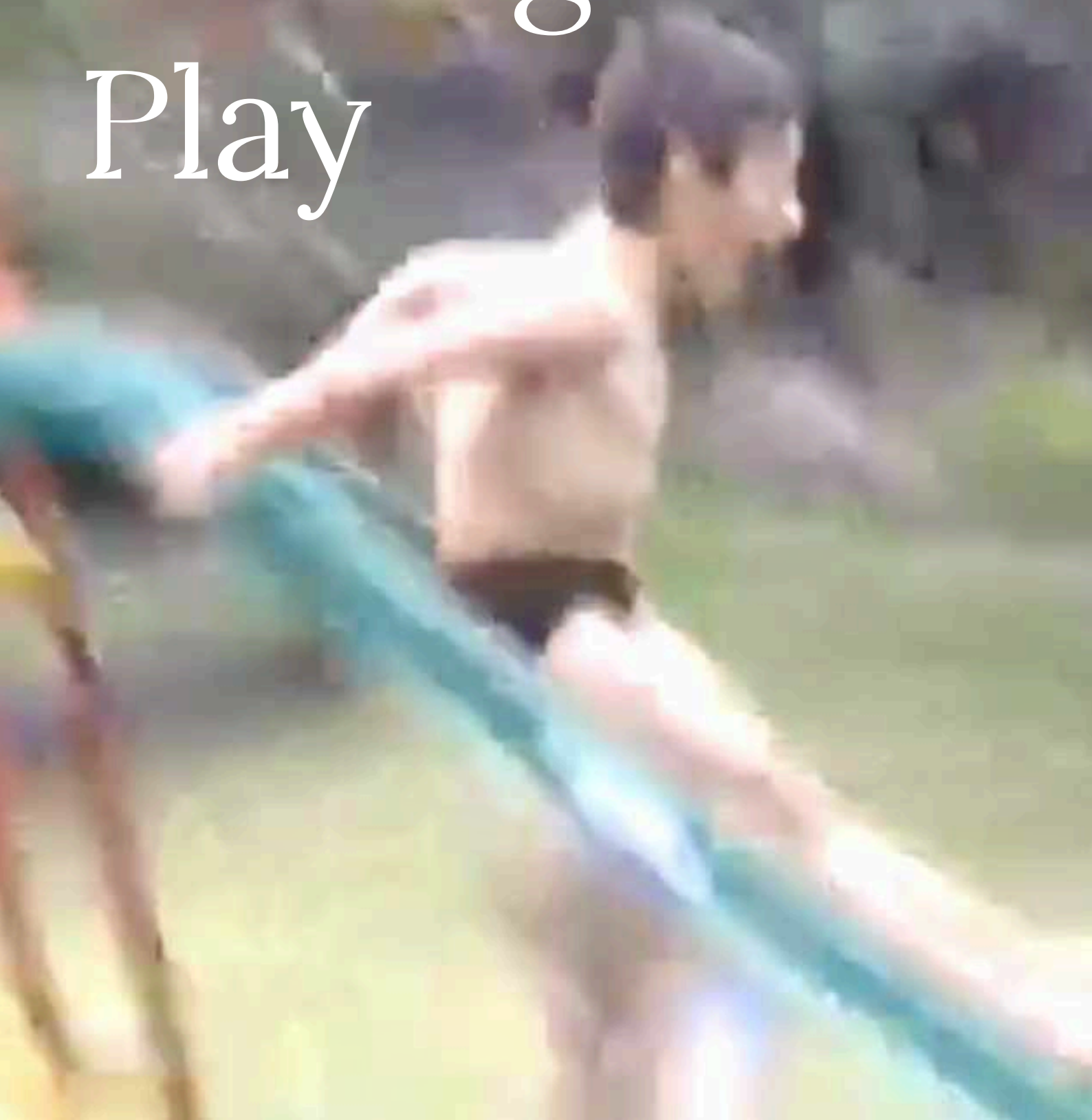
Cat-tharsis (2016/21)

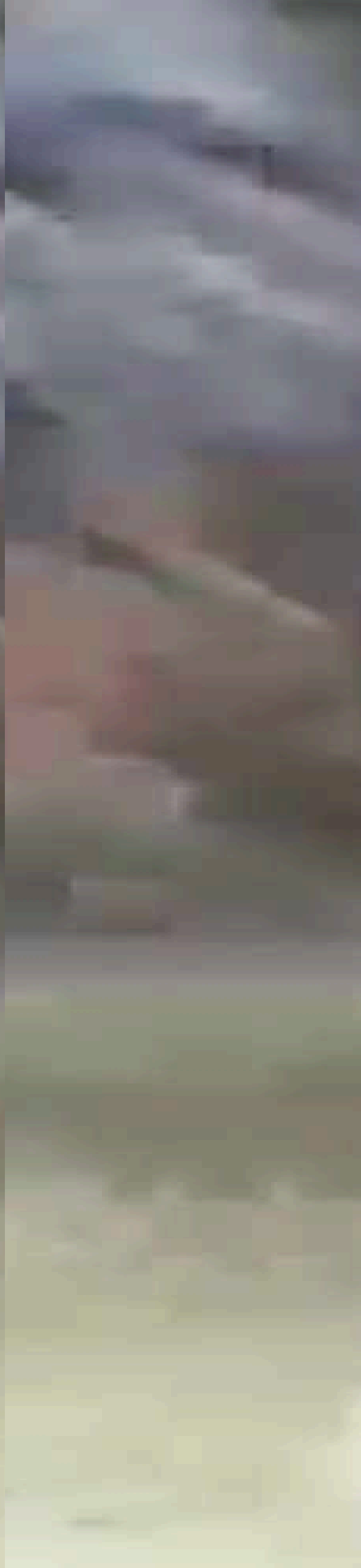
Andy Holden, *The Arrow Stork (Never a Straight Line Between Two Points)* (still), 2021, in collaboration with Peter Holden.



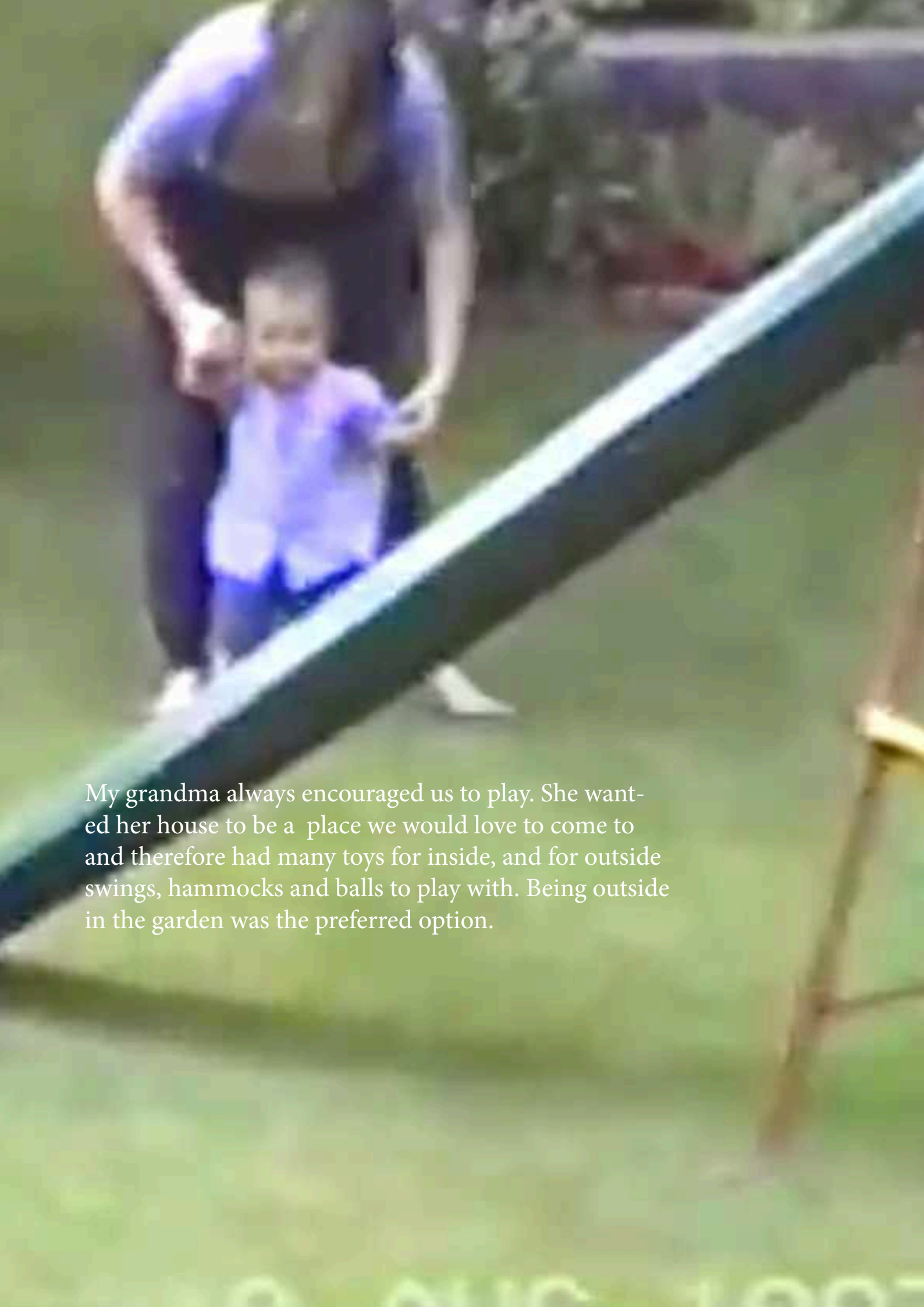
Andy Holden's collaboration with his late grandmother and his father are beautiful. It is reminiscent of a child's interaction with a parent. In my family I have seen the collaboration between a mother and her son as she draws a picture for him to colour in. They have created two things together, the picture itself and the extra link in their relationship. Andy Holden clearly still sees the value in making these links as he creates with his father who is a photographer. It also seems that he does not give up on the links once his loved ones have passed, as he uses his grandmother's old possessions to create work that reignites the bond they had through shared interests.

Learning Through Play









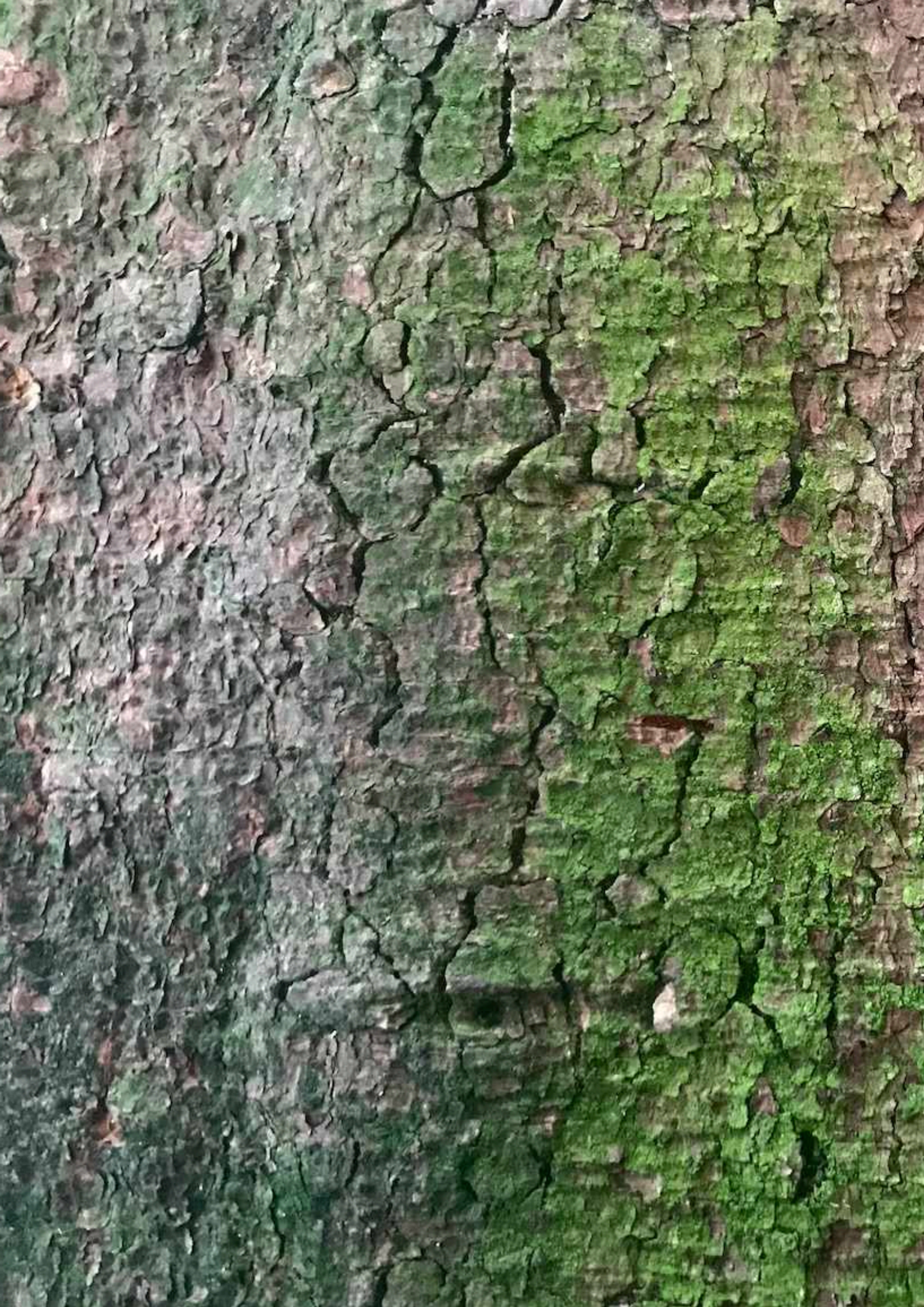
My grandma always encouraged us to play. She wanted her house to be a place we would love to come to and therefore had many toys for inside, and for outside swings, hammocks and balls to play with. Being outside in the garden was the preferred option.

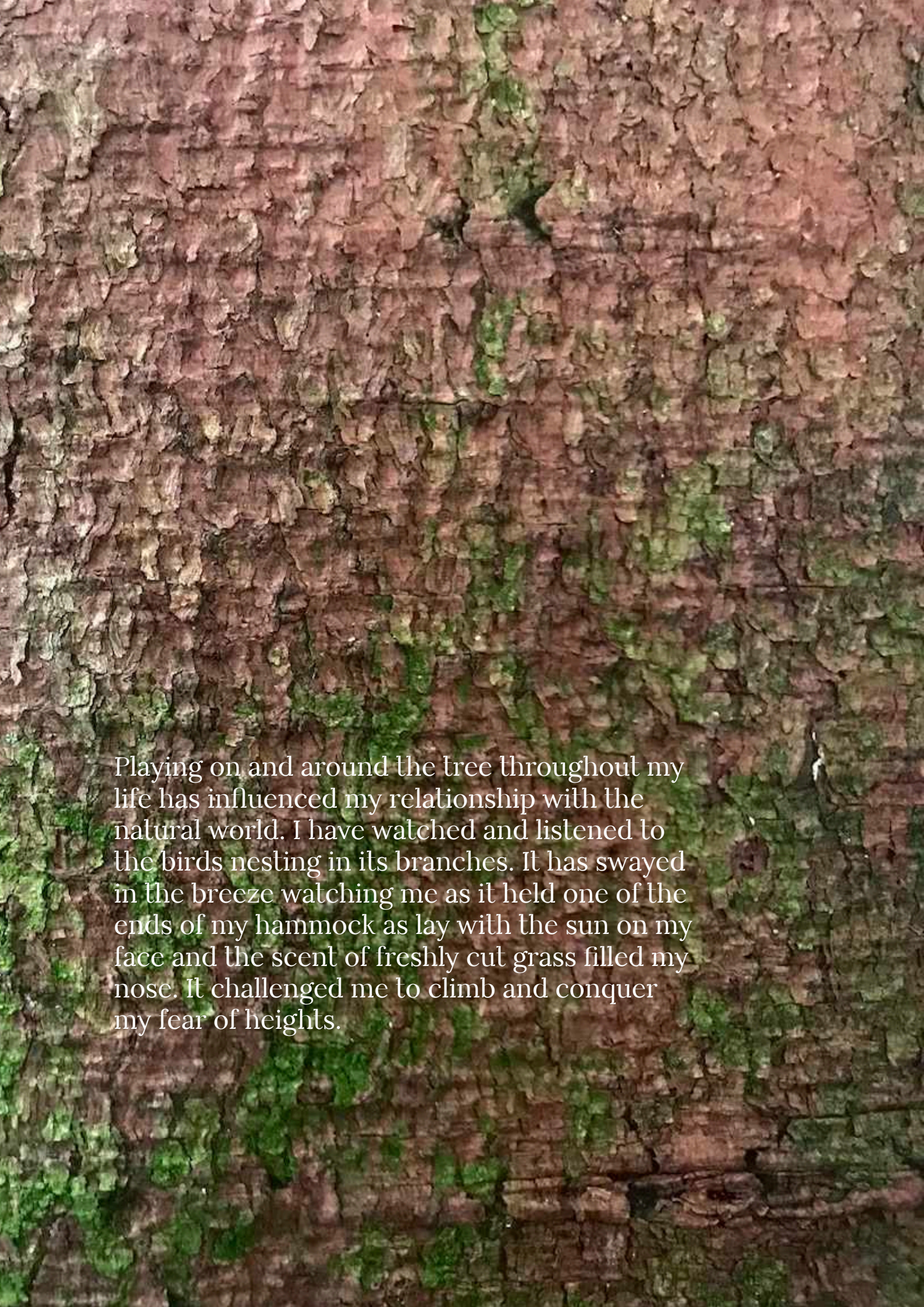




“there are all
these things that children
learn in play that cannot be taught.
They learn in experience, and for
children experience comes
from play”

(Dr Gray 2018)



A close-up photograph of tree bark, showing a rough, cracked texture. The bark is primarily brown and reddish-brown, with patches of bright green moss growing in the crevices and along the cracks. The lighting is natural, highlighting the intricate patterns of the bark and the vibrant green of the moss.


Playing on and around the tree throughout my life has influenced my relationship with the natural world. I have watched and listened to the birds nesting in its branches. It has swayed in the breeze watching me as it held one of the ends of my hammock as lay with the sun on my face and the scent of freshly cut grass filled my nose. It challenged me to climb and conquer my fear of heights.





Within play, relationships are important. When a child plays with someone they grow a bond that can last throughout their life. This is especially important for parents and family. The fact that Paul Klee created puppets for his child and would perform and interact with him is beautiful to me. It, like the family tree and the birds I'm making, becomes more than just an item or a piece of art, but an artefact of a relationship. One that recounts tender moments with family.

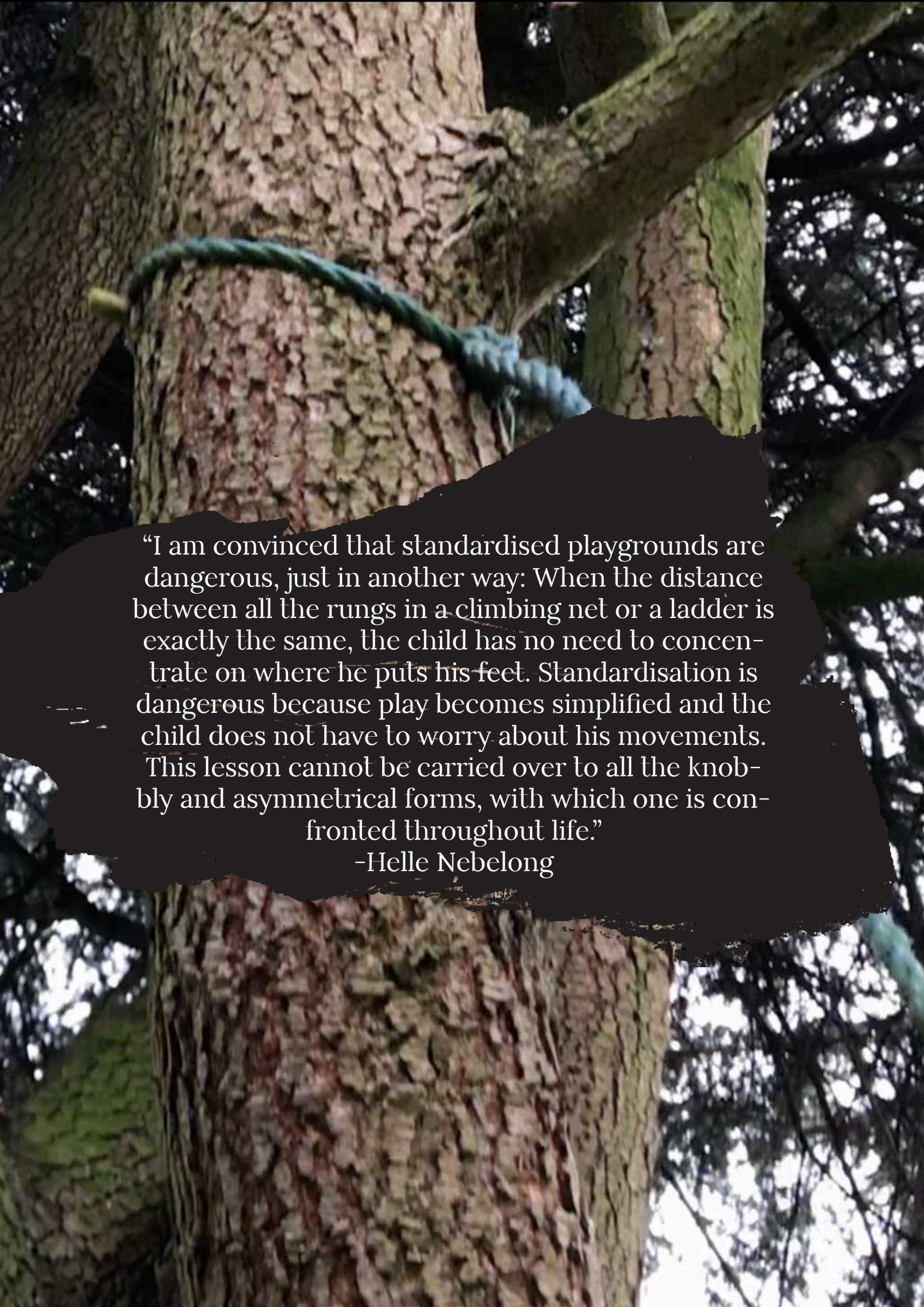


A photograph of a backyard scene. In the foreground, a blue plastic swing seat hangs from a rope. In the background, a large, grey, ostrich-like bird stands on a patch of dirt. The yard is surrounded by lush greenery, including trees and bushes. A large, black, circular graphic is overlaid on the center of the image, containing a quote.

“Play is the ‘breath of life to the child, since it is through play activities that he finds mental ease, and can work upon his wishes, fears and fantasies so as to integrate them into a living personality”

-Susan Isaacs





“I am convinced that standardised playgrounds are dangerous, just in another way: When the distance between all the rungs in a climbing net or a ladder is exactly the same, the child has no need to concentrate on where he puts his feet. Standardisation is dangerous because play becomes simplified and the child does not have to worry about his movements. This lesson cannot be carried over to all the knob- bly and asymmetrical forms, with which one is confronted throughout life.”

-Helle Nebelong

Time

Robin



Tawny Owl



ZEON

Chaffinch



Cuckoo



Colin Self

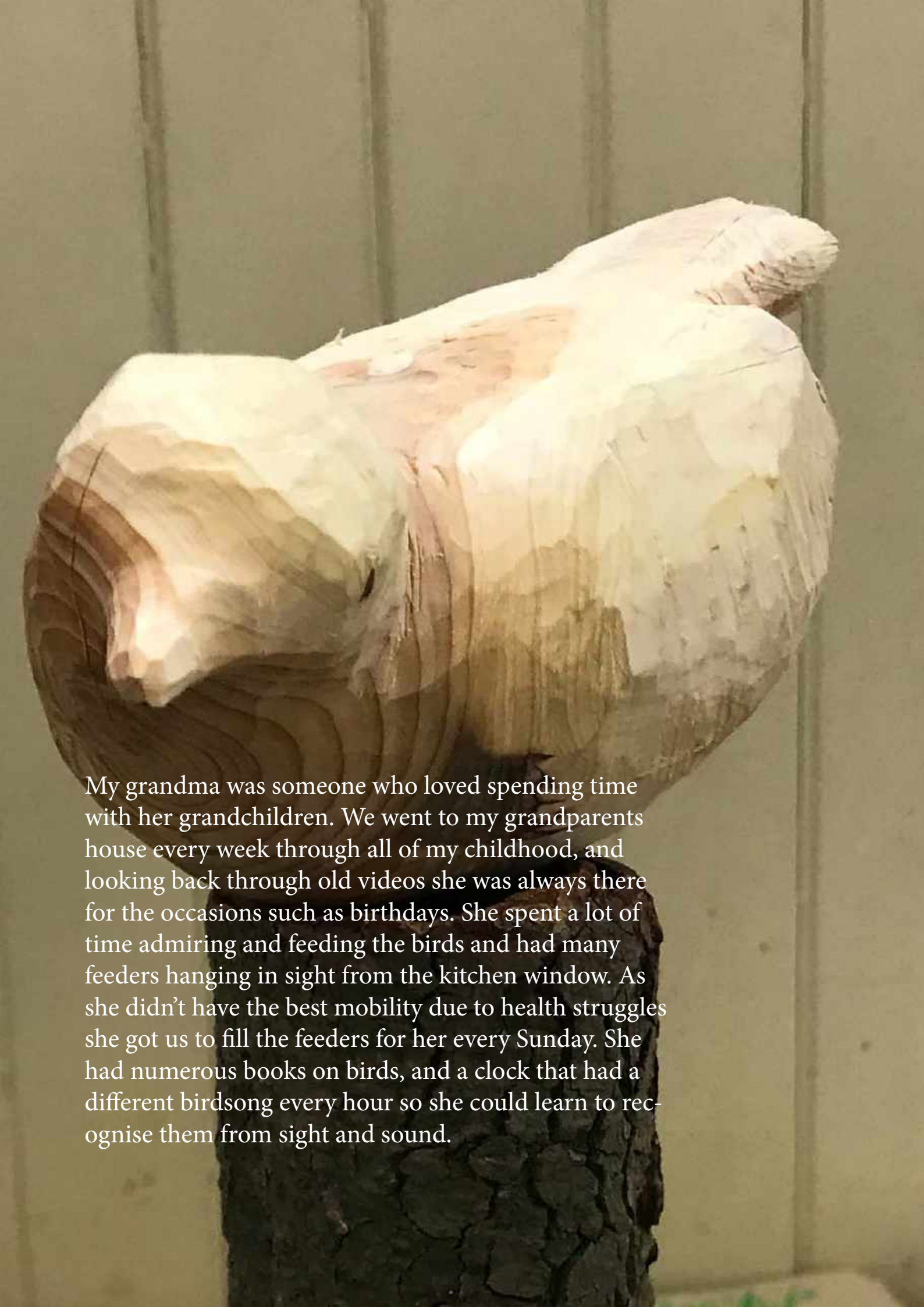


out of focus object & flowers. Trial proof ① ③

Colin Self 1968.

'The out of focus is the mind blurred by some event in one's infancy which "clouds one's vision" but it happened so early one doesn't "know" what it was. The flowers are nostalgia. The past, sweetness, new hope growing.' Colin Self's depiction of memory is rather apt as the memories I have are brought forwards by the videos taken by my mum. They themselves are blurred but help me to piece memories together and unearth them from the depths of my mind.



A large, light-colored wooden birdhouse is mounted on a dark, textured wooden post. The birdhouse is made of light-colored wood with a smooth finish and has a rounded, dome-like shape. It is positioned against a light-colored wooden wall with vertical planks. The dark post has a rough, bark-like texture. The text is overlaid on the lower left portion of the image.

My grandma was someone who loved spending time with her grandchildren. We went to my grandparents house every week through all of my childhood, and looking back through old videos she was always there for the occasions such as birthdays. She spent a lot of time admiring and feeding the birds and had many feeders hanging in sight from the kitchen window. As she didn't have the best mobility due to health struggles she got us to fill the feeders for her every Sunday. She had numerous books on birds, and a clock that had a different birdsong every hour so she could learn to recognise them from sight and sound.

Great tit *Parus major*

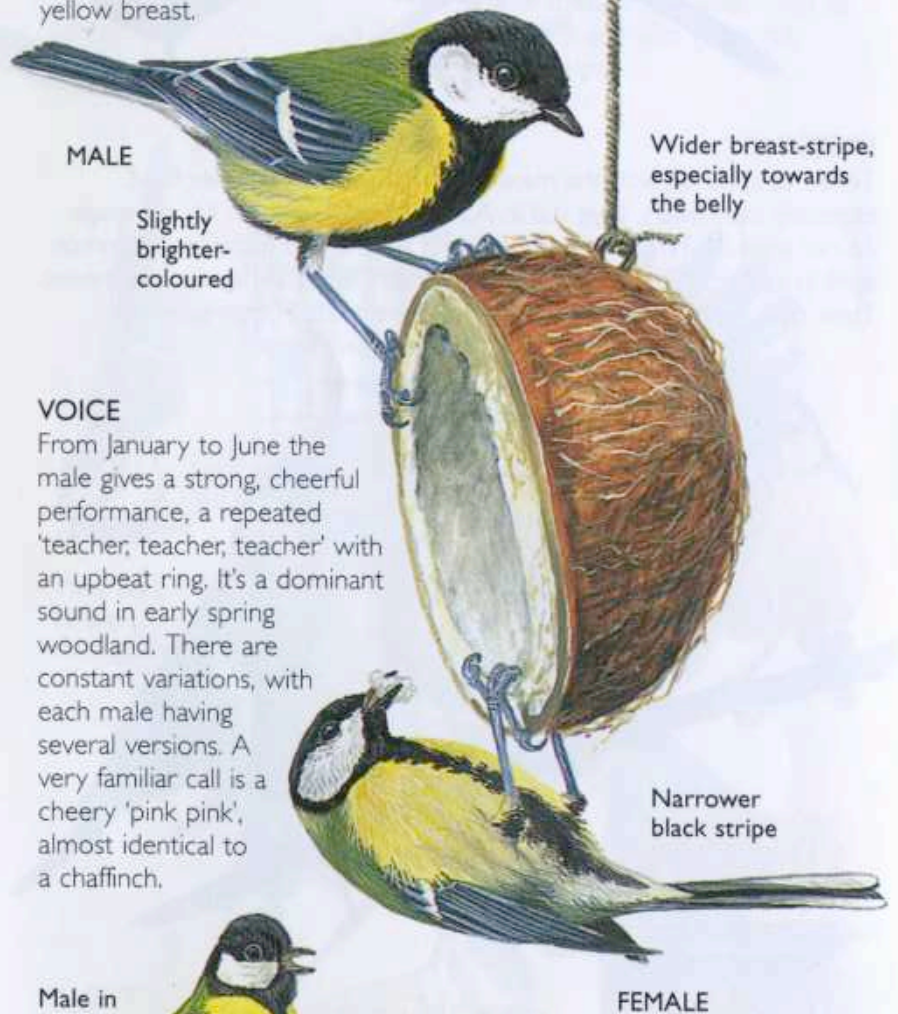
Being the largest of the tit family, the great tit's bulk makes it the dominant species at feeding stations, with a tendency to bully other birds away. It also gets the best tree-hole sites in which to nest – there's no democracy in the bird world. Occasionally this aggressive bird kills nestlings or adults of smaller species, but this is a rare event, and far more often it terrorizes the local caterpillar population! In behaviour, the great tit is typically perky like all the members of its family, moving briskly and breezily, but perhaps without the feverish restlessness of a blue tit or coal tit. It also spends more time feeding on the ground and on tree trunks.

IDENTIFICATION

A colourful species, strikingly turned out in yellow, blue, green and black. Both sexes have a bold black stripe down the yellow breast.

WHERE FOUND

Abundant: the second most common tit after blue tit. Occurs year-round throughout our area. Also woodland.



YOUNG

From June onwards, young great tits appear. They are similar to the adults, but less brightly coloured; the black head markings are dusky, not shiny.

A selection of pages from my Grandma's book, with her notes.



GARDEN TIPS

Great tits feed on nuts (peanuts, hazelnuts), suet and other scraps. They are very enthusiastic nest-box users, more so than any other bird, and will use an enclosed nest-box, with an entrance hole of 29 mm (1¼ in) or more.

CATERPILLARS

In summer, adults and young feed on insects, especially caterpillars. A pair may capture 10,000 individual insects at this time, taken into the nest-hole one by one. This might seem to be a devastating exploitation of the caterpillar harvest, but it isn't: in fact a single large oak tree might hold 100,000 caterpillars.



YOUNG

Dusky head markings

Single white wing-bar

FLIGHT

Confident. Flies fast and straight in short bursts, more smoothly and undulating in longer trips – never looking as feeble as, eg, a flying blue tit. Shows a single wing-bar and white outer tail feathers (not on other tits, but beware nuthatch).



White outer tail feathers

GREAT TIT

NUTHATCH

CHAFFINCH



GROUND FEEDING

Great tits feed on the ground more regularly than most tits, often joining other birds above feeding with a nuthatch and a chaffinch on fallen beech mast.

female - narrow breaststipe 115

Great spotted woodpecker *Dendrocopos major*

This is the commonest woodpecker in gardens, and is intermediate in size between the larger green woodpecker and the smaller lesser spotted woodpecker. All woodpeckers cling to vertical trunks, resting on their stiffened tails, and move up and down (but mostly up) with heavy, ungainly hops. The sharp, powerful bill is used for searching in wood for food, for excavating nesting and roosting holes, and for drumming, a quite distinct activity, where the bill is beaten rapidly against wood to make a territorial sound. This is really the 'song'. Some great spotted woodpeckers have been known to use inappropriate sounding-boards on which to drum, such as drainpipes and aluminium ladders! This species is becoming more and more frequently seen in suburban gardens.

WHERE FOUND

Widespread resident, but not found in Ireland. Any kind of woodland.



MALE

Clinging to a bird-table pole

Red spot on nape

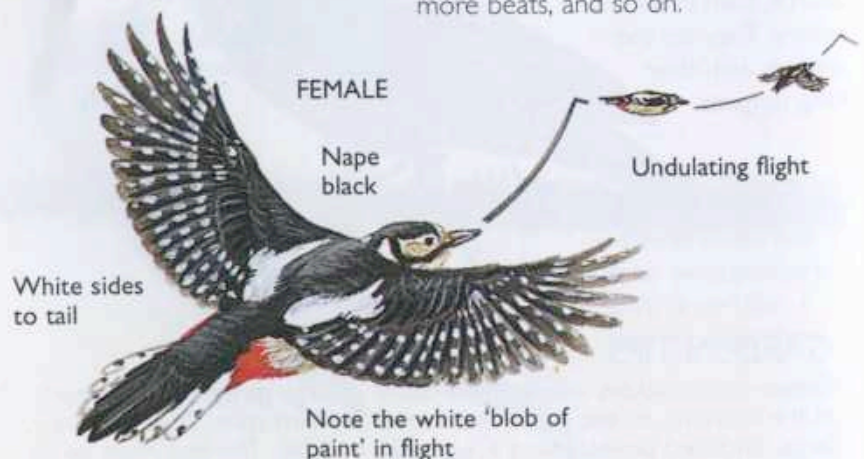
Crimson underbelly

IDENTIFICATION

Bold black, white and red pattern. Only this species has the distinctive crimson underbelly and the large, white 'blob of paint' on its back and shoulder.

FLIGHT

Great spotted woodpeckers look starling-like in flight until the up-and-down, undulating flight is noticed: a few rapid beats, wings closed, then more beats, and so on.



FEMALE

Nape black

Undulating flight

White sides to tail

Note the white 'blob of paint' in flight

GARDEN TIPS

Loves peanuts, suet, fat and oats, but this shy visitor is easily disturbed. Nests in enclosed boxes, with 5 cm (2 in) entrance hole, 30 cm (12 in) deep. Place the box high and fill with chippings. Predates nestlings of other birds, hammering through nest-boxes with its bill. Use a metal plate to protect the entrance.



Red vent

Nest excavation

Female

FEEDING

Commonly seen clinging to peanut bags, as here. Usually only one individual will dominate the garden scene, as territories – held by both sexes separately in the winter – are large.

NESTING

A great spotted woodpecker excavating its nest, expelling wood chips. Both sexes do this. Like many other activities, it is accompanied by a common, explosive 'chip' or 'tchick' call, also used in alarm.

Complete red crown



YOUNG

Pink vent

YOUNG

Show a full red crown and a pale pink vent. Beware of similarity to male lesser spotted woodpecker (see page 62), which is nevertheless much smaller.

Unusual garden birds



White breast



Long red tail

NIGHTINGALE

Luscinia megarhynchos, 16–17 cm (6½ in). Justifiably famous for its rich and powerful song, the nightingale *only* sings in spring, mostly from April to June; birds heard at night at other times are not nightingales (often robins). Quite robin-like to look at, but with white breast and long, prominent, rufous tail. Shy and skulking in Britain, often tame and very common on Continent. Winters in Africa.



Heavy bill

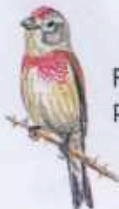
Grey-brown plumage



GARDEN WARBLER

Sylvia borin, 14 cm (5½ in). Mostly a bird of low scrub, the garden warbler breeds in some larger gardens. Extraordinarily featureless, just grey-brown, with dark, quite heavy bill giving it 'tough' expression. Melodic, warbling song, similar to a blackcap's but more bubbly, almost recalls skylark's. A summer visitor.

SUMMER MALE



Pale eye patch

another small species of finch

FEMALE



Silvery wing-bar

LINNET

Carduelis cannabina, 13–14 cm (5 in). Small finch with confusing plumages. Doesn't feed in trees like redpoll or siskin, but more typically on ground in fields and on farmland. Male in summer unmistakable, otherwise looks more grey-headed than female. Juveniles and females are more streaky. All birds have pale patches around eyes, and silvery wing-bar. Cheerful, hurried 'chup-chup' call. Resident and common. Sometimes visits bird-tables for seeds.



Thin bill
White throat
Pink breast



Grey head
Brown wings

WHITETHROAT

Sylvia communis, 13–15 cm (5½ in).
A common, lively bird of scrub and farmland. A warbler, with thin, insect-eater's bill. Look for warm brown wings, greyish head (noticeably peaked), and white throat contrasting with pinkish breast. Male is much greyer than female. Has perky, dancing song flight, accompanied by a fast, scratchy song. Summer visitor; very common.

MALE



Crossed bill

FEMALE



No wing-bar

CROSSBILL

Loxia curvirostra, 16–17 cm (6½ in).
A finch that specialises in conifers, mostly pine, spruce and larch – the latter in winter. Large-headed and plump, male with brick-red plumage, female green. Can resemble greenfinch, but no wing-bars. Crossed mandibles are a giveaway when visible. Loud 'chip-chip' or 'jip-jip' call. Sometimes comes to garden ponds in order to drink.



Broad white wing-bar

Huge, stout bill

Large head



HAWFINCH

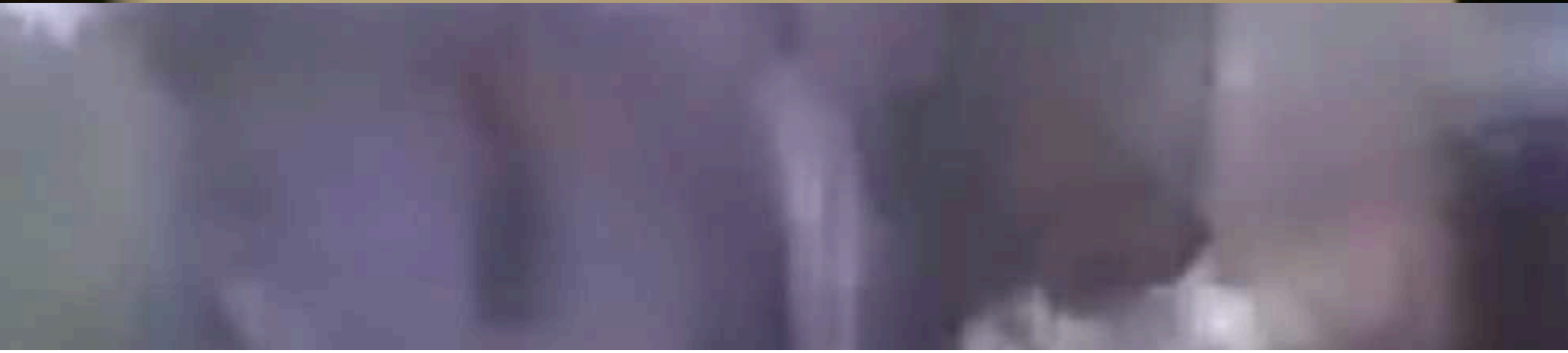
Coccothraustes coccothraustes, 16–17 cm (6½ in).
Scarce and incredibly shy. Visits gardens from neighbouring mature woodland, especially if this contains hornbeams. Large-headed, with huge bill. With short tail, this gives top-heavy profile, especially in flight. Female is somewhat less brightly coloured. Occasionally visits bird-tables in early morning.





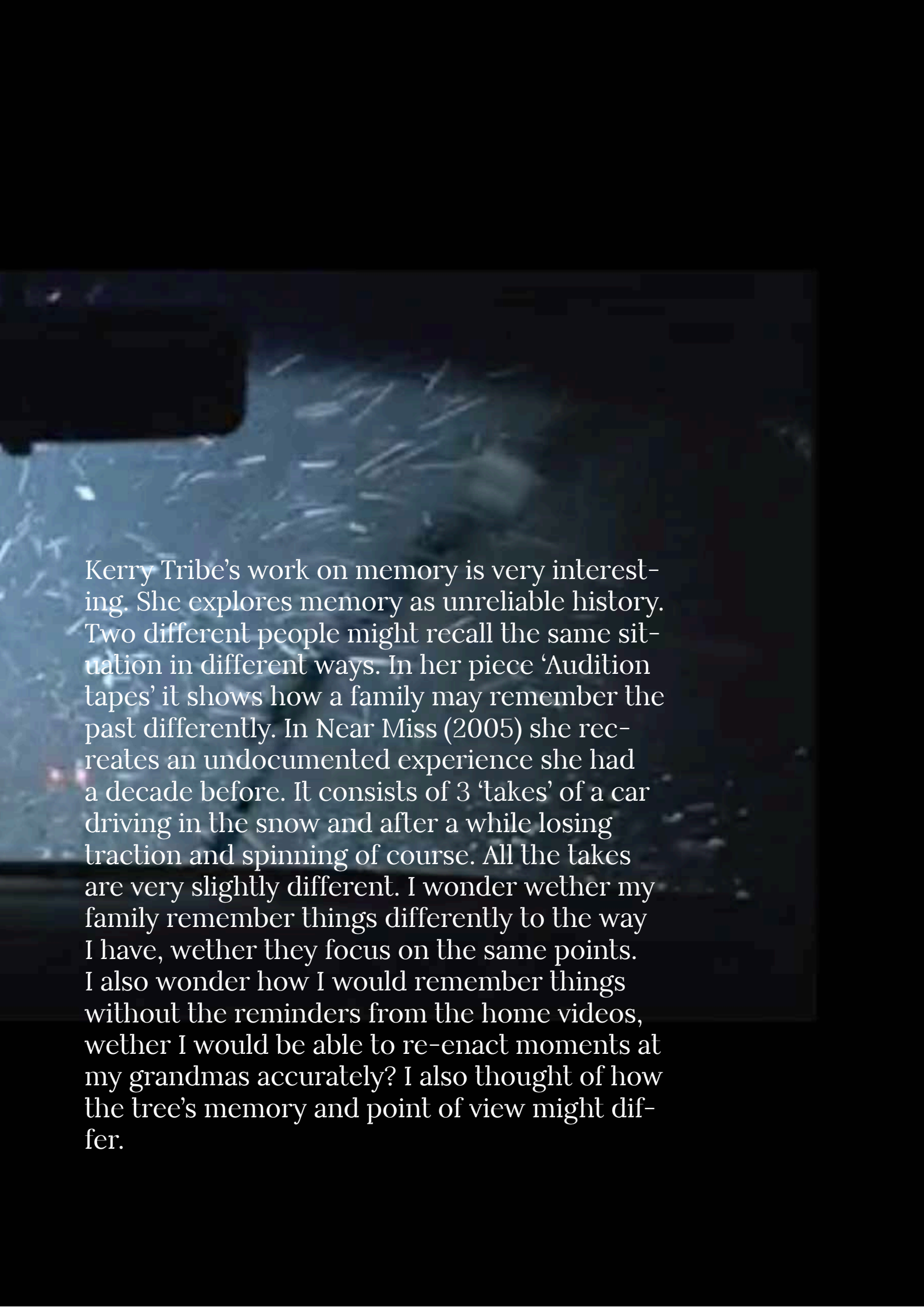












Kerry Tribe's work on memory is very interesting. She explores memory as unreliable history. Two different people might recall the same situation in different ways. In her piece 'Audition tapes' it shows how a family may remember the past differently. In *Near Miss* (2005) she recreates an undocumented experience she had a decade before. It consists of 3 'takes' of a car driving in the snow and after a while losing traction and spinning of course. All the takes are very slightly different. I wonder whether my family remember things differently to the way I have, whether they focus on the same points. I also wonder how I would remember things without the reminders from the home videos, whether I would be able to re-enact moments at my grandmas accurately? I also thought of how the tree's memory and point of view might differ.





‘Shou sugi ban’ is a Japanese method of preserving and finishing wood by burning. It is traditionally used on Japanese Cedar.

The birds I make sit onto these charred stands, likewise will preserve the memory of my grandma, the tree, and the experiences shared amongst both.





THESE GALLERIES
WERE PRESENTED TO THE NATION
BY
LORD DUVEEN OF MILLBANK
MCMXXV



‘Mike Nelson has transformed the grand spaces of the Duveen Galleries into something between a sculpture court and an asset strippers’ warehouse. He has carefully selected objects from the post-war Britain that framed his childhood – including enormous knitting machines, woodwork stripped from a former army barracks, graffitied steel awnings and doors from an NHS hospital’. Objects are powerful tools for the mind. They are anchored to memory and can come to mean a lot to people. We keep objects that belonged to lost loved ones to keep them in mind, and they become some of our most precious belongings.





I hope that the objects I create, [these birds] become precious. That as they are kept by me and my family they remind them not only of my grandma, but the garden, and the tree where memories and the wood was made. I hope that future branches of our family will connect the love for birds and plants not just to my grandma but to me, and that these objects that I've laboured to make will be grafted to memories of their love for nature and family.

















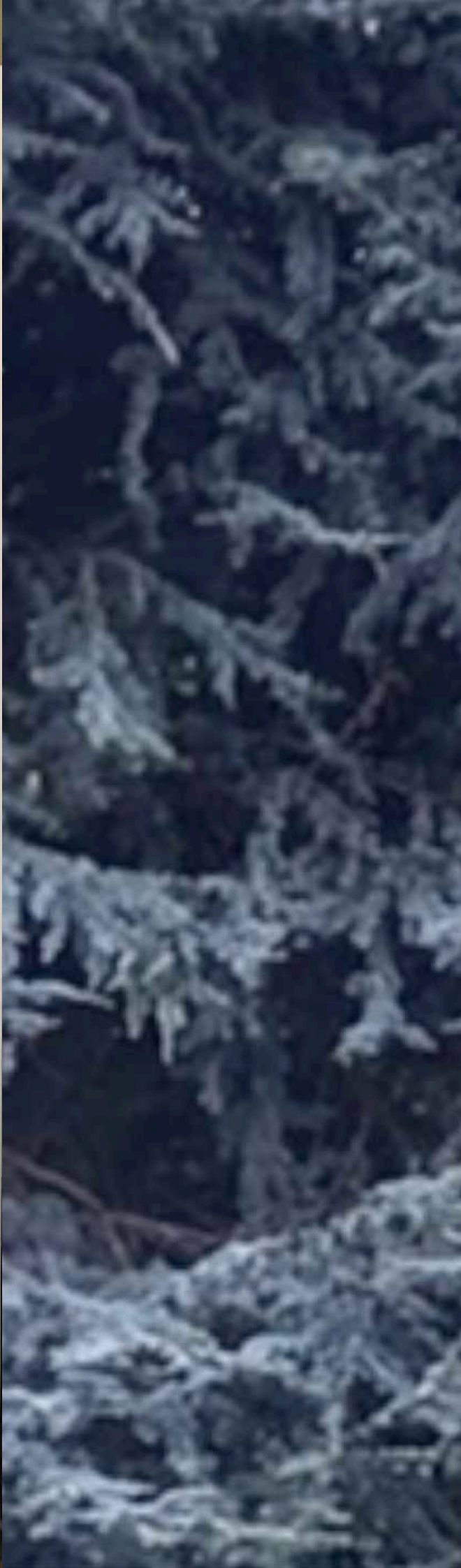
















My grandma's clock was the perfect thing to recreate. A clock is a symbol of time, and the time we give to people shows our love for them. As my grandma once spent time learning about birds, I have spent time making them. Whittling through memories and wood has not only shown my love for my grandma, but developed it. She through this process has shown me how to care and love a little more, and that spending time on things that matter is really worth it, and family (the natural world included) matters.