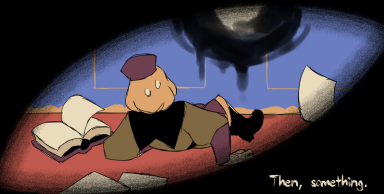


I recall nothing.



Then, something.

Greedy, grasping hands



wrangling me onto canvas



and crudely shaping me.



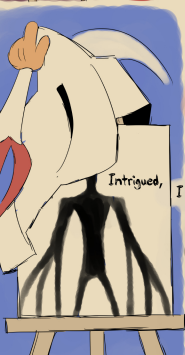
Along comes a colorful,



curious



stranger—



Intrigued,

I reach out.



He doesn't keep in touch.

My would-be creator



is mortified



and tries to reform me—



I return the favor.



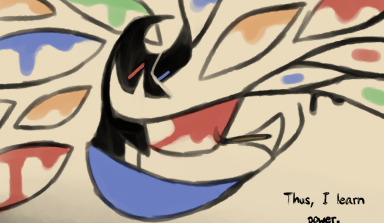


Many faces

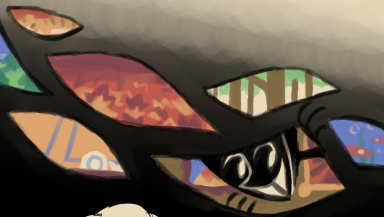
come and go.

I try them on,

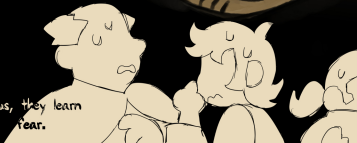
with mixed results.



Thus, I learn
power.



Thus, they learn
fear.



And they come to me



with fire in their eyes



but also, regrettably,



in their fists—

And, for the first time,



I take my leave.



In the
unfettered
dark

that I call
home,

I broaden my worldview

and try again.