



SENSING CROSSBONES

bodies

in

place

A COMMUNITY ZINE

# About this project

Over winter 2025–2026, a group of eight volunteers at Crossbones Graveyard took part in a journaling activity exploring community wellbeing. Guided by prompts inviting curiosity about the site through the senses and body awareness, journallers reflected individually on their volunteering sessions.

Together, they have generated a body of community research, tracking their interactions with the site through time. The individual contributions have been brought together in this zine, compiled during a collaborative collaging session.

Huge thanks to Michael Church, Caroline Grimshaw, Stephen Mugford, and all of our journallers for their contributions to this zine. The project was led by Hannah Reeves with support from Casper Sanderson.

To find out more, visit: [piecesofcrossbones.blog](https://www.piecesofcrossbones.blog)

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Wendy

Crossbones  
stands

ALONE

The place I go  
to cut off

- my moments.

Crossbones thousands of 30, I  
I felt

encountered  
Crossbones, I was overwhelmed  
with sadness, and anger, for the  
people who had been used and  
abused throughout their lives  
and shown so little respect at





## SOUND

There are many enjoyable sounds in the garden. The 1 p.m. church bells always get my attention. Occasionally I register the trains crossing the railway bridge, but most times they happen without me knowing. When I hear helicopters I tend to think how travel has changed over the past five centuries and the people buried here could never have imagined such things.

Sound of a frog croaking are the chains rattling on the main gate. It is very familiar to me and somehow gives me comfort. Sometimes there is a chatter of wardens and visitors, it's a lovely sound of people interacting.

Scattering leaves so as to peck into the ground for worms or insects. a female blackbird

The Green Man is come

The Green Man is come

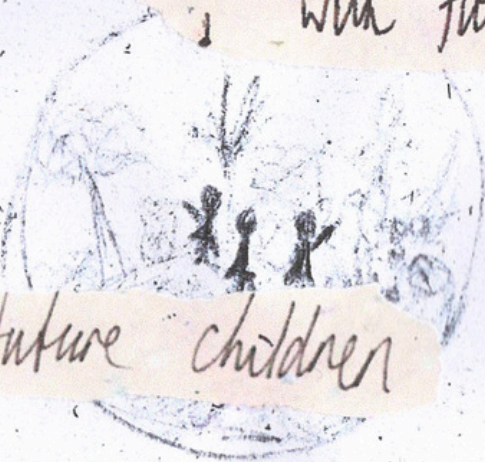
rain in pond

- To bless our garden



12 Dec  
25

With flowers + trees



for future children

Heard the sound of a  
helicopter today and  
+ felt like it was something  
outside our gardening  
bubble

chats with people

boots rustling the autumn leaves  
lovely, makes me remember childhood

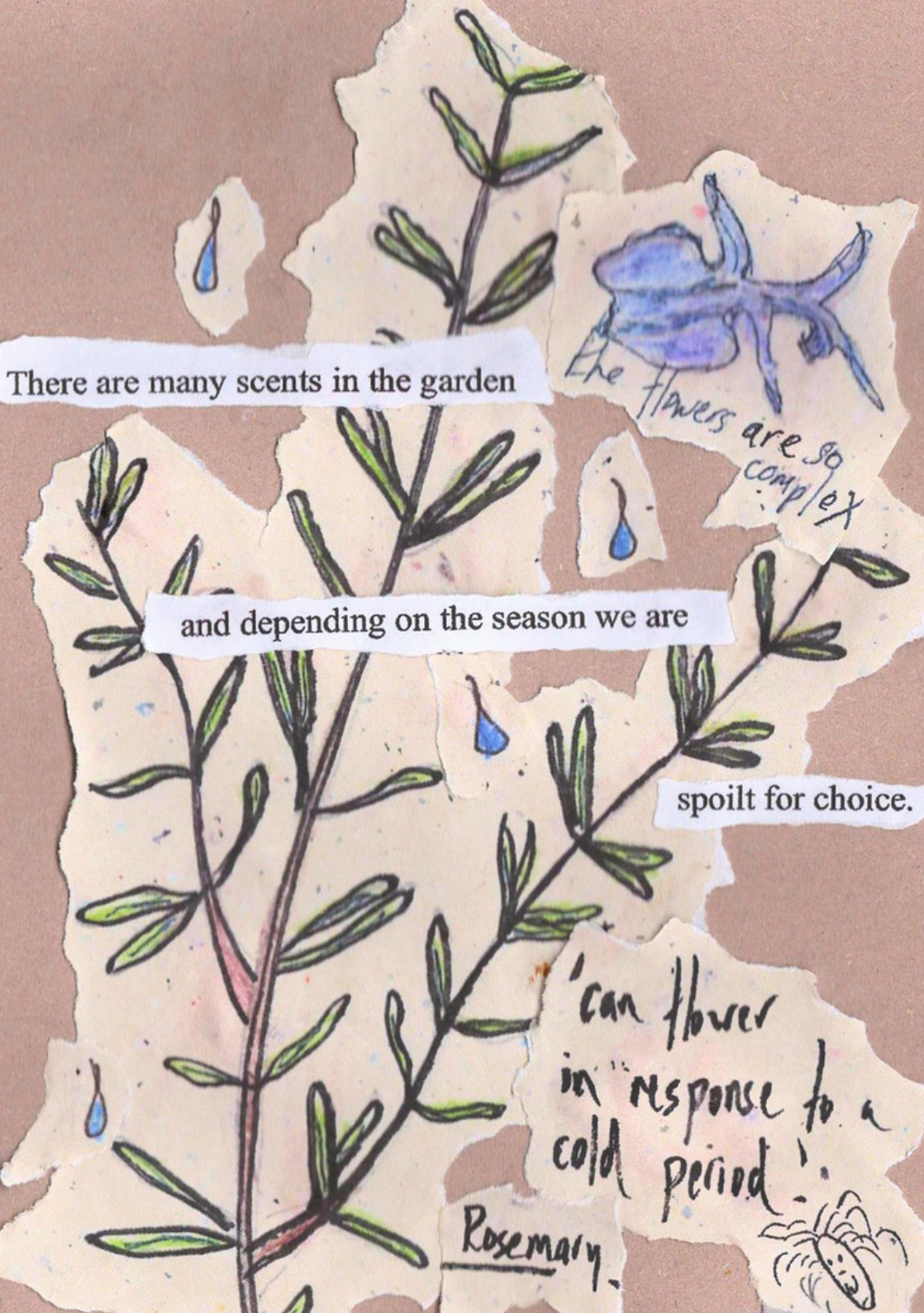
# NOVEMBER

Autumn  
colours of  
the leaves.

Rustling



The cold also makes me think  
of the poor souls dropped into their  
cold, cold graves - many with no  
care or concern shown to them.



There are many scents in the garden

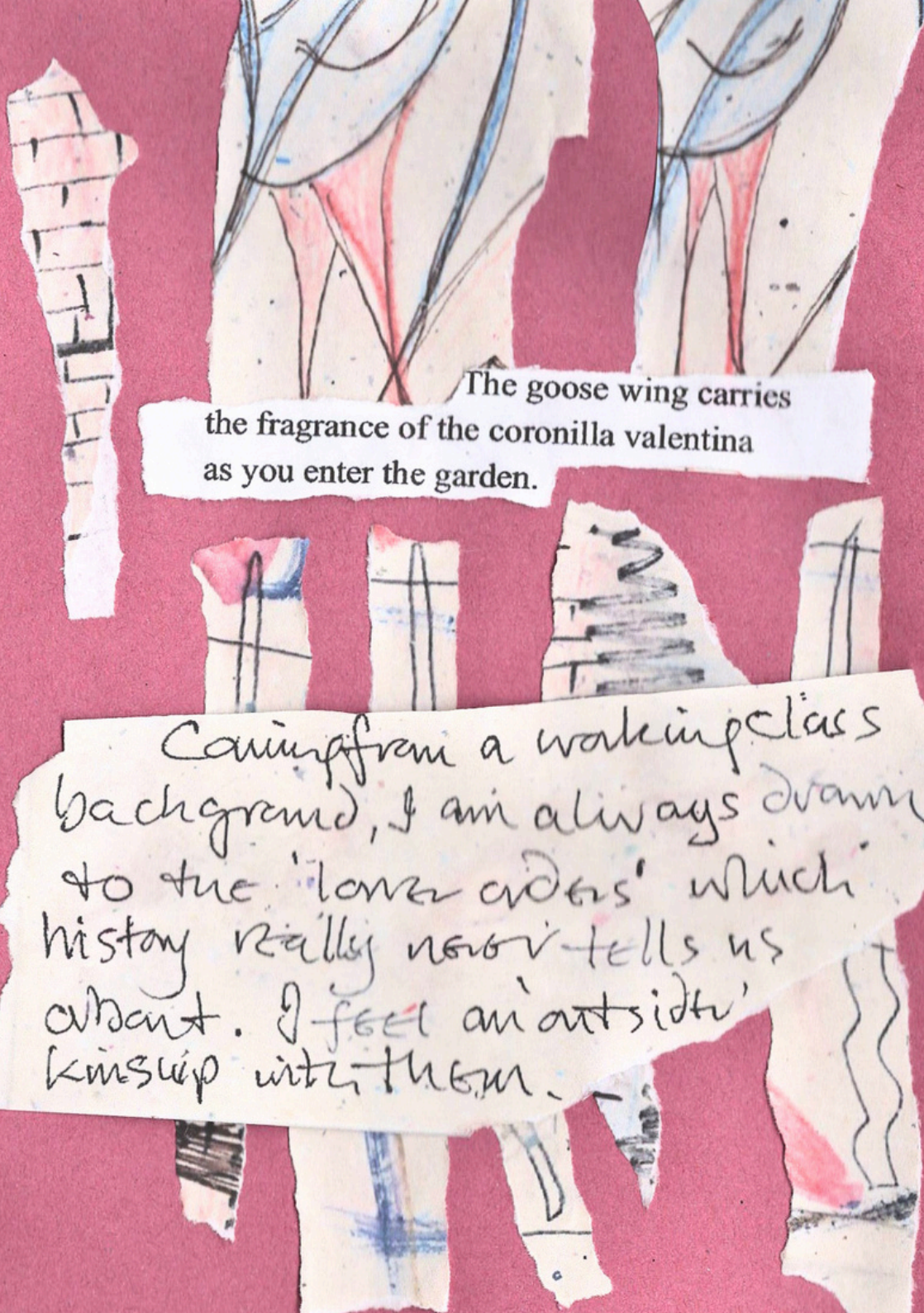
and depending on the season we are

spoilt for choice.

'can flower  
in response to a  
cold period'

Rosemary

The flowers are so  
complex



The goose wing carries  
the fragrance of the coronilla valentina  
as you enter the garden.

Coming from a working class  
background, I am always drawn  
to the 'lower orders' which  
history really never tells us  
about. I feel an 'outsider'  
kinship with them.

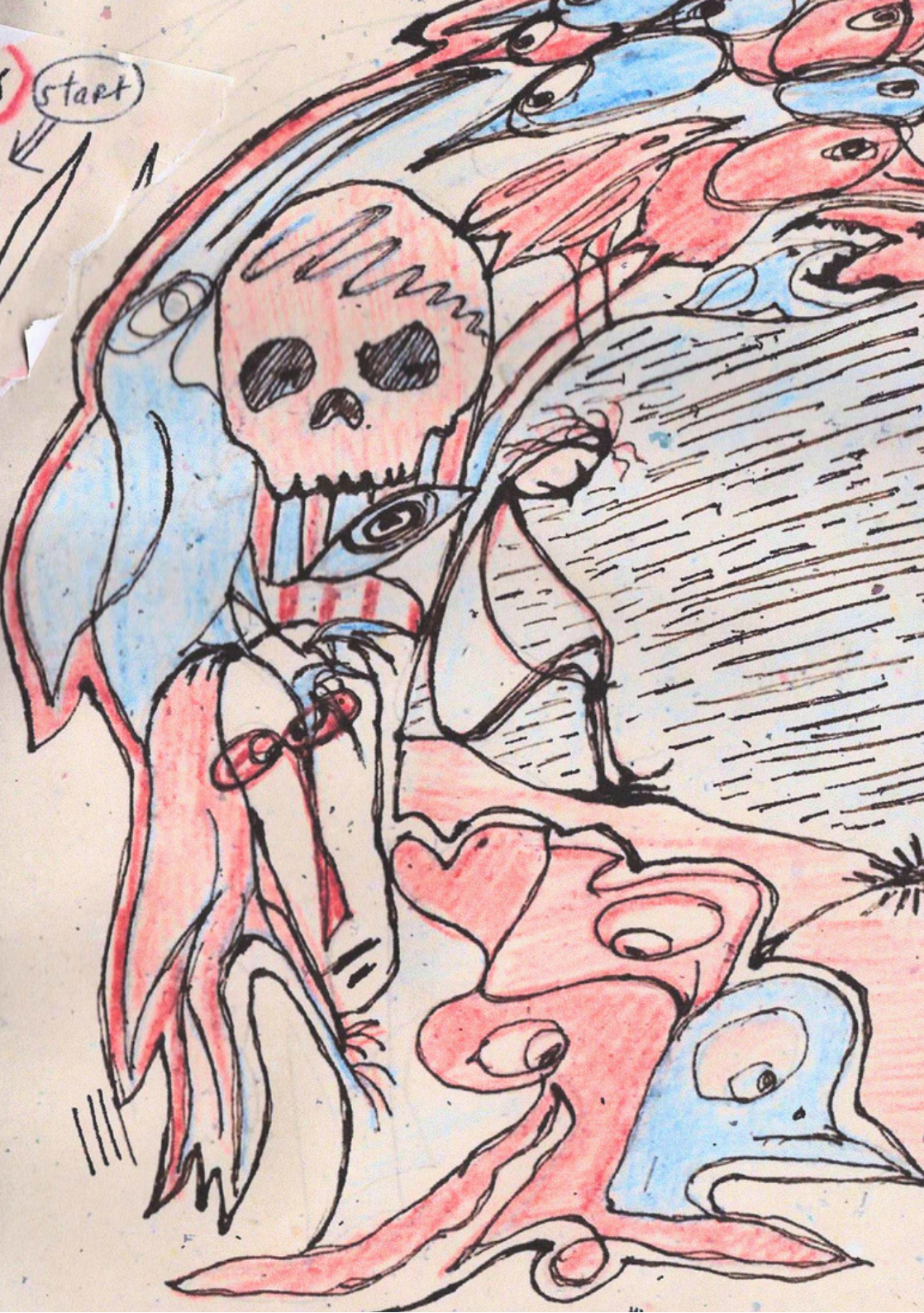
There are always odd jobs to do, litter picking, cobweb clearing and even animal waste to be removed. They are all worthwhile jobs and make me feel I am contributing to the wellbeing of the garden. That is my reward.



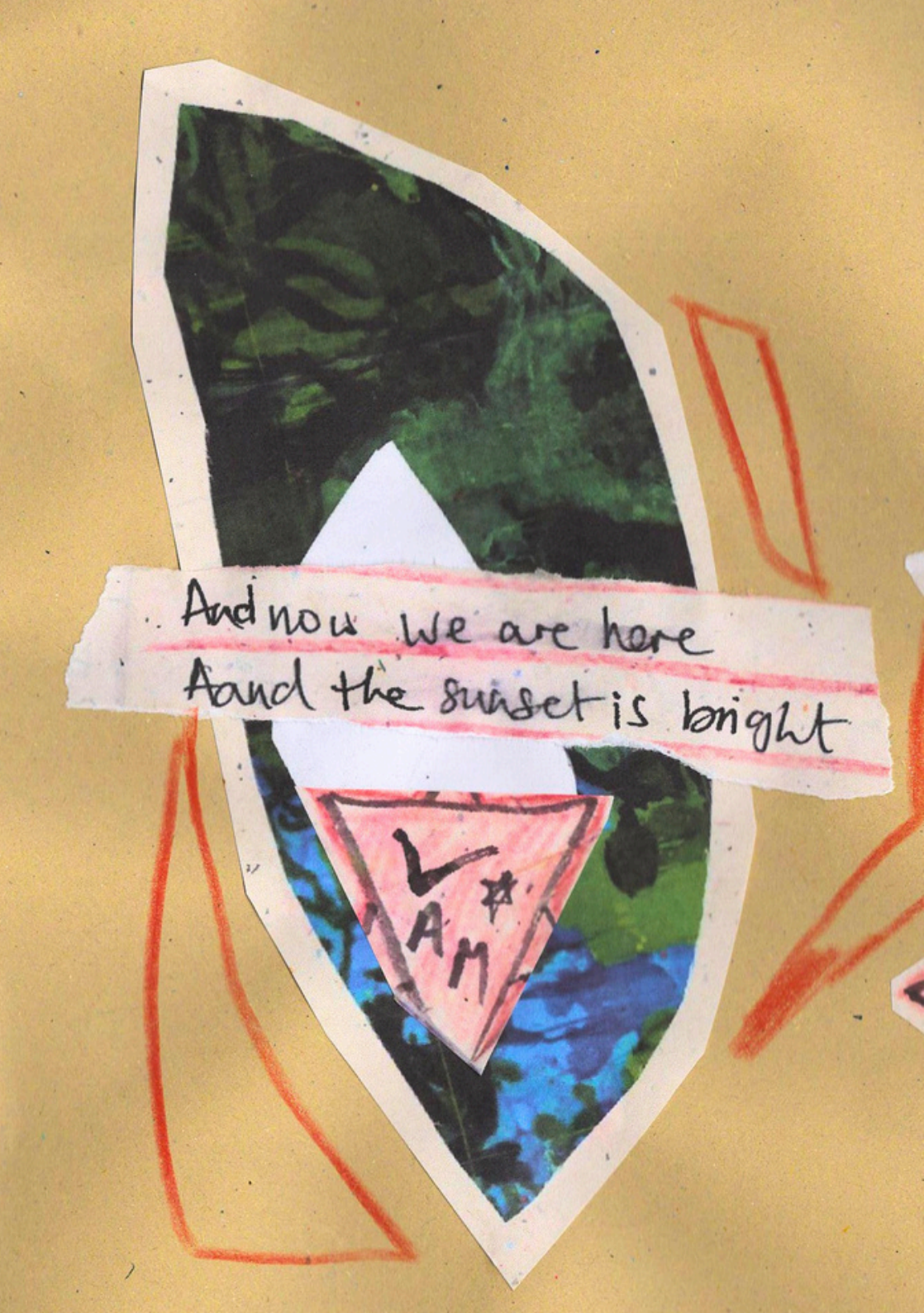
Everything we do to damage it, nature, despite keeps coming back.

Do you  
Remember me?  
How we used to be?





start



And now we are here  
And the sunset is bright

L  
\*  
A  
M

Looking through the  
GAPS To see Secrets

Another train rolls by  
A police car drives past the ribbon gates  
and then a police van  
Another train this time coming out of  
London Bridge.







Who walked here  
Then looked out  
Who looked out  
The windows?



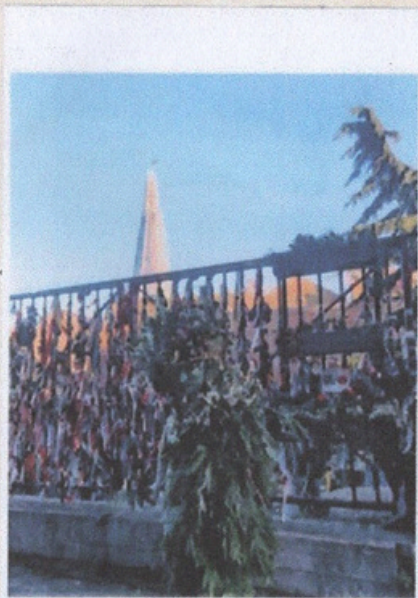
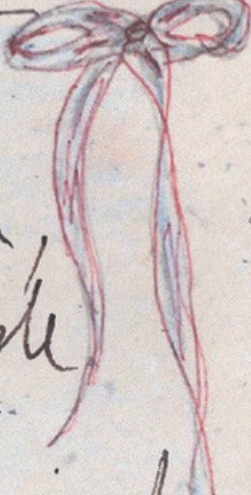
## TACTILITY

There are many things to touch and gain pleasure from. I am constantly running my hands along the structure of the goose wing, which still seems alive to me.

The trans angel draws me to its structure and concept. Maybe because I was present when it was being constructed. I think it is a wonderful piece of sculpture.

La Catrina is always in need of a brush up to keep her tidy.

They flutter  
behind you,  
your possible  
pasts,  
Some night-eyed  
and crazy, some  
frightened and lost



String out behind us  
the banners and flags  
of our possible pasts  
lie in tatters + rags



Your possible pasts Van Floyd



the garden is empty.

It's just me and the wind and the plants  
and the embroidered flag



for the purposes of this  
journal, I'm recording the  
heart softening in my  
very chest, feeling the heat  
of him, coming from his  
head and the Scent of  
Baby when I stuck my nose  
on to him. (That's a Big Smile)  
(My little - - - - -)

And the day is clear.

The garden at the  
entrance today  
looked so vibrant  
and open and  
welcoming. Visual  
beauty + room  
for thinking

  
An inviting space

Brain tangled with  
the world's noise

Clipping the hops + their  
vines  
TACTILITY

The open space  
created in the entrance  
area after the removal  
of the hops

Soothing

Decorative

MEDITATIVE

Light flickering through the  
leaves.

The bug needs, from the rain water pond,  
wave in the breeze.

# DECEMBER

I raked a lot of leaves. Liked the sound of the rake on the cement. Heard the church bell go at 1pm.



Sweeping up  
the leaves today

I admired the areas I had cleared of leaves. I found an oyster shell

today under a  
blue sky + sun

19 Dec 25

Wednesday 10/12/25

Again a sharply cold day with a beautiful blue sky. My favourite tree ~~with~~ whose leaves have been variegated yellow for weeks.

Finally all flame away or floated to the ground.





Shrines, women's  
Faces, eyes closed - HALO

There is a skull embroidered onto a flag,  
catching the wind. The wind lifts the branches  
of the trees and plants around the trees  
The trains roll around in the background

e  
x  
hato



I think about the many shades of green here which are dazzling, particularly in the rain. The colours make me smile.

### VISION

Today I saw our robin, together with sparrows and female blackbird, all enjoying the compost heap. There were

So - silence ten into the garden,  
desire, to light the shrine

I was happy to see the *Wionilla valentina* in bloom and hope to get the full fragrance soon. Also the ivy seems to be making a

I feel some sadness at Crossbones but above all an empathy with the people buried connection to the people buried

remember a perfume I had experienced  
its smell like church incense

Sending my thoughts to an ecclesiastical place, and may be right back to the contradictions of the garden's original founder

01 shadows & light colour & flurry around my senses.  
02 The trains come through every couple of minutes,  
03 but we never notice their regularity at Crossbones  
04 Time stands still at the edge of the city  
05 The boundaries of the garden become blurred,  
06 The materials of the garden, the materials of the city blend  
07 Becoming the background to our thoughts.  
08 People walking past animate the spaces at the  
09 center of our vision.  
10 The smaller objects that hang from the trees,  
11 or sit at the edge of the garden, become as  
12 prominent and as important as the plants, trees & flowers  
13 On a windy day like today,  
14 they add to the sound scape of the garden &  
15 the city beyond  
16 The colour in the garden is more vibrant, more precious  
17 as light is shorter and sharper.  
18 the low sun more scarce as we approach  
19 the winter solstice  
20 Strange connections become apparent between the  
21 substation and the Jubilee line and the constant  
22 rattling growl of the main line trains as they  
23 roll at high level into London bridge  
24 always paint the windows in the buildings  
of the surrounding the garden  
They do not allow us to penetrate the building  
They reflect the rest of the city and a larger world  
Probably least significant is the garden's scent  
today  
The wind in the garden, takes away any  
remnant of smell quickly  
Must think harder about the sensation of smell



No silence  
in a cloud

protonion



Soub →

feed them  
here

End of YEAR



H  
+

N



Back in the garden today, Sunday as it's sunny

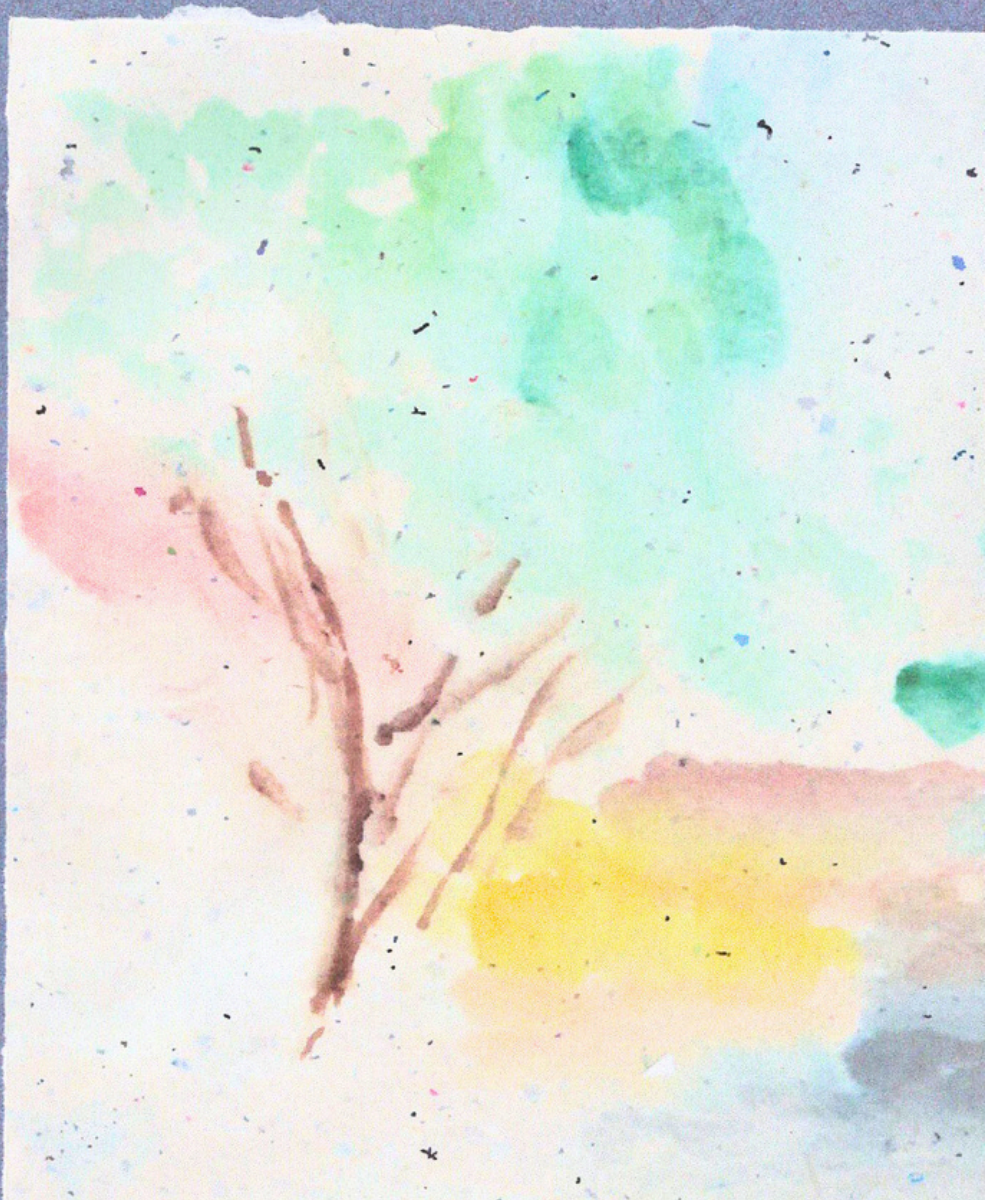
There's a breeze to my back, so maybe that's southeasterly.

The gardeners have been working in the garden this week. It has been cleared of weeds and dead plants.




Such an array of  
autumnal + winter  
colours

6 January 2026



- I saw a little tiny flying thing,  
too far away to see what it  
was but was glad, for the journal  
so I had something to write...



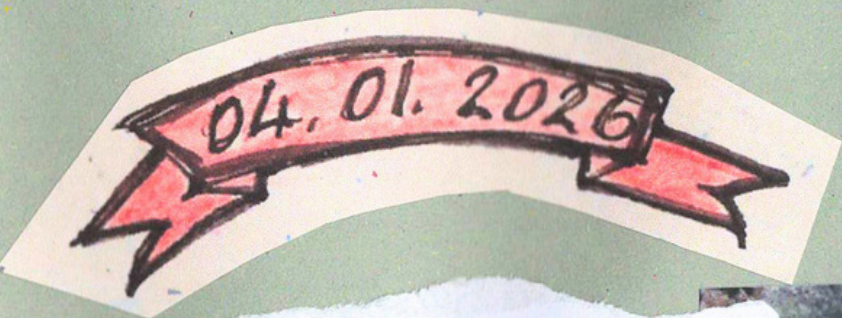
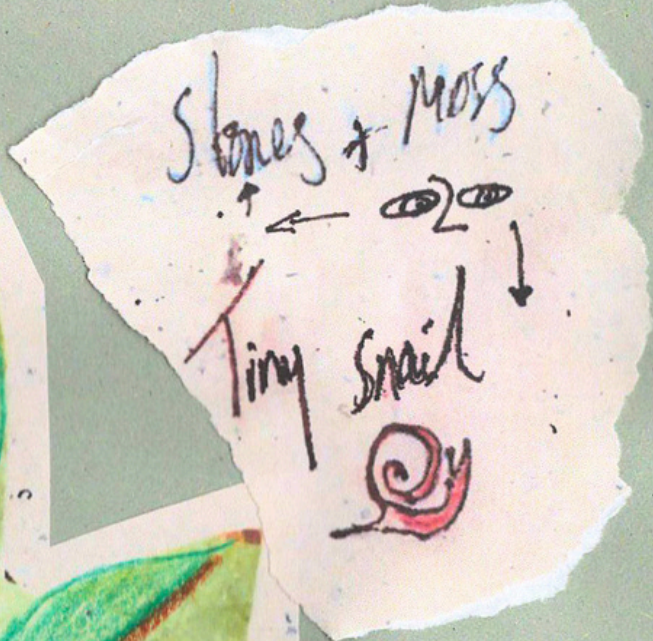
3/4 and 7 January 2026

A robin in and out of the cedar tree, blue tits flitting between trees - all against a vibrant blue sky. It's said that a robin is the spirit of someone who's passed which is fitting for Crossbones.

The feel & smell of our own  
home made compost

Living one of the mulch  
pits in the compost area  
today felt like a new  
beginning for the garden -  
an end to 2025 and  
the start of a new  
project, a new composting  
opportunity, a new  
space for mulching,  
a new earthy year.

the leaf pile - what does it  
smell like? Dry ~~as~~ opposed  
to damp and earthy on the  
outside



I also enjoy smells from the compost, in its various stages, as it takes me back in time to my Grandmother's garden and makes me feel contented.





You can make a place magical by  
 adding it of the things that make  
 it ordinary."

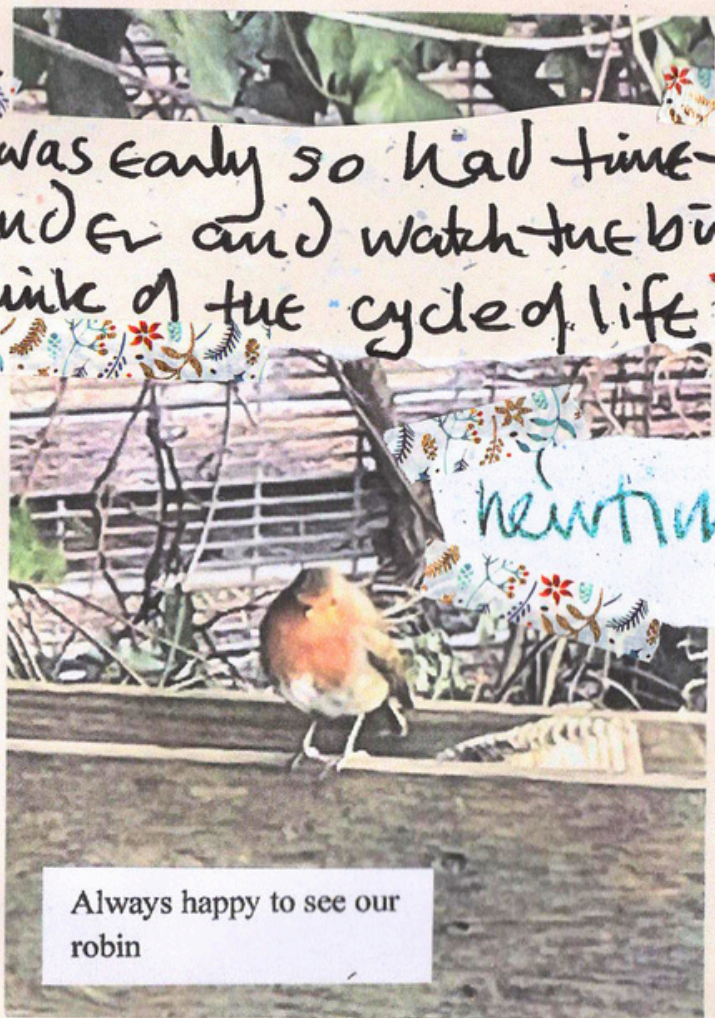


The incense  
 it wafts up into the air,  
 dancing & spreading in the breeze.



Mother nature's decay produces some of the best abstract art


was early so had time to  
wander and watch the birds and  
think of the cycle of life.



Always happy to see our  
robin

new times

always 'something'



always find a  
space

HERE

FRIDAY  
9.1.26



1° - 5°

93%  
@ 12:00

16

Storn Corelki

St. Maria Corelki



X 114

Patron saint of  
1992 victims  
& power

It's a special place, there's nothing else quite like it. If I wasn't volunteering

**Crossbones Friday  
gardening group**

As a volunteer, I suppose I like the feeling of having made this space 'mine'

**Alotly end to me.**

ownership sense but in a 'custodial' or 'guardian' sense. I like feeling

The smell and rust  
leaves on the S

continued existence and  
change of and to Crossbones

**humans and nature  
working together**

historical continuity -

present throughout Southwark,  
and London more generally.

GREEN  
MAN

Veins  
eyes  
Costumes

ing of he  
rine as 1

do this  
forever

A sense of joy

please



## COHABITATION

I am always happy to be at Crossbones  
and if anyone dwelling at the garden notices  
me I hope that I don't disturb them.

Bee buzzing drowsily  
around the entrance, finding  
its home in the dry stone  
wall of one of the beds.

Wind moving the tree branches  
and skittering the leaves.

The harsh sound of a  
seagull soaring above.  
And then people talking, and  
work!



I hope I see their offspring this year





Crossbones - here we are  
always → it never leaves  
you - safe space for the  
long gone and those who  
come today -

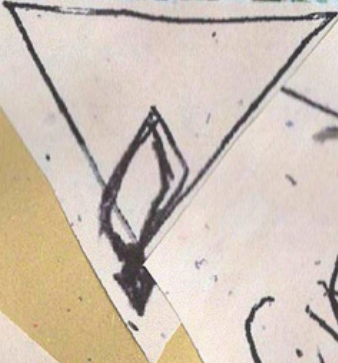
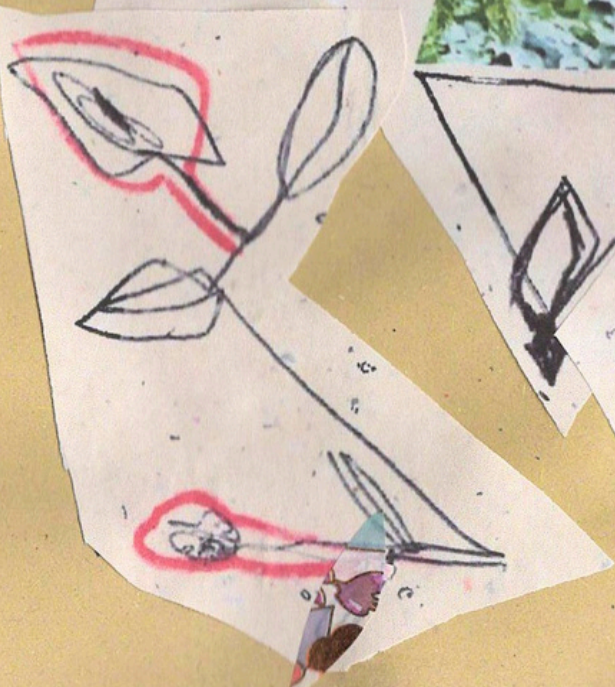
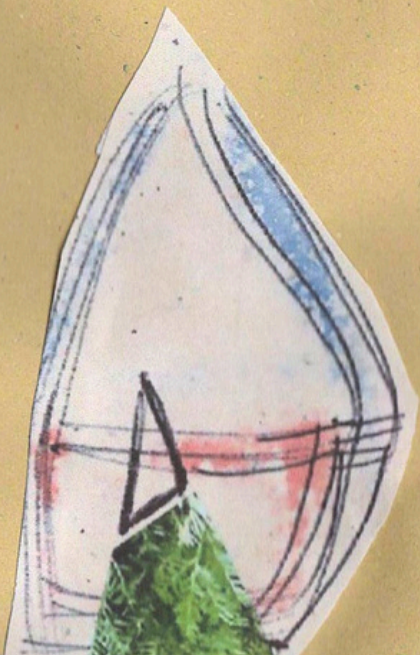
Thank you.

and points out our disguise, while  
slowly the buds return for the new year

We are waiting for the green Nuns  
blessing

HERE

Long autumn shadows in Crossbones

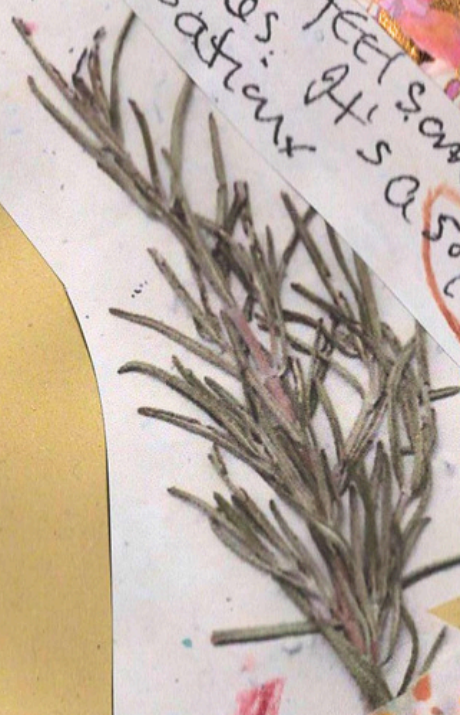


↓  
Crossbones is  
Endless



and I feel some of her spirit and  
Crossbones. It's a soft, gentle stroking  
Sensation

I like to think that everything I do is  
positive and loving. I feel a responsibility  
to protect the garden.





# RIBBON GATES

IN MEMORIAM


IN MEMORIAM

IN MEMORIAM

IN MEMORIAM

IN MEMORIAM

IN MEMORIAM



Purple light in the garden today  
It is the blessing of the green man  
He comes with a throng of people  
Dressed in rags and open hands.

The garden will be vibrant,  
Still a lot of green shrouding the bones  
of those that are laid over the centuries

