



**What's easier to train a
cat or a human?**



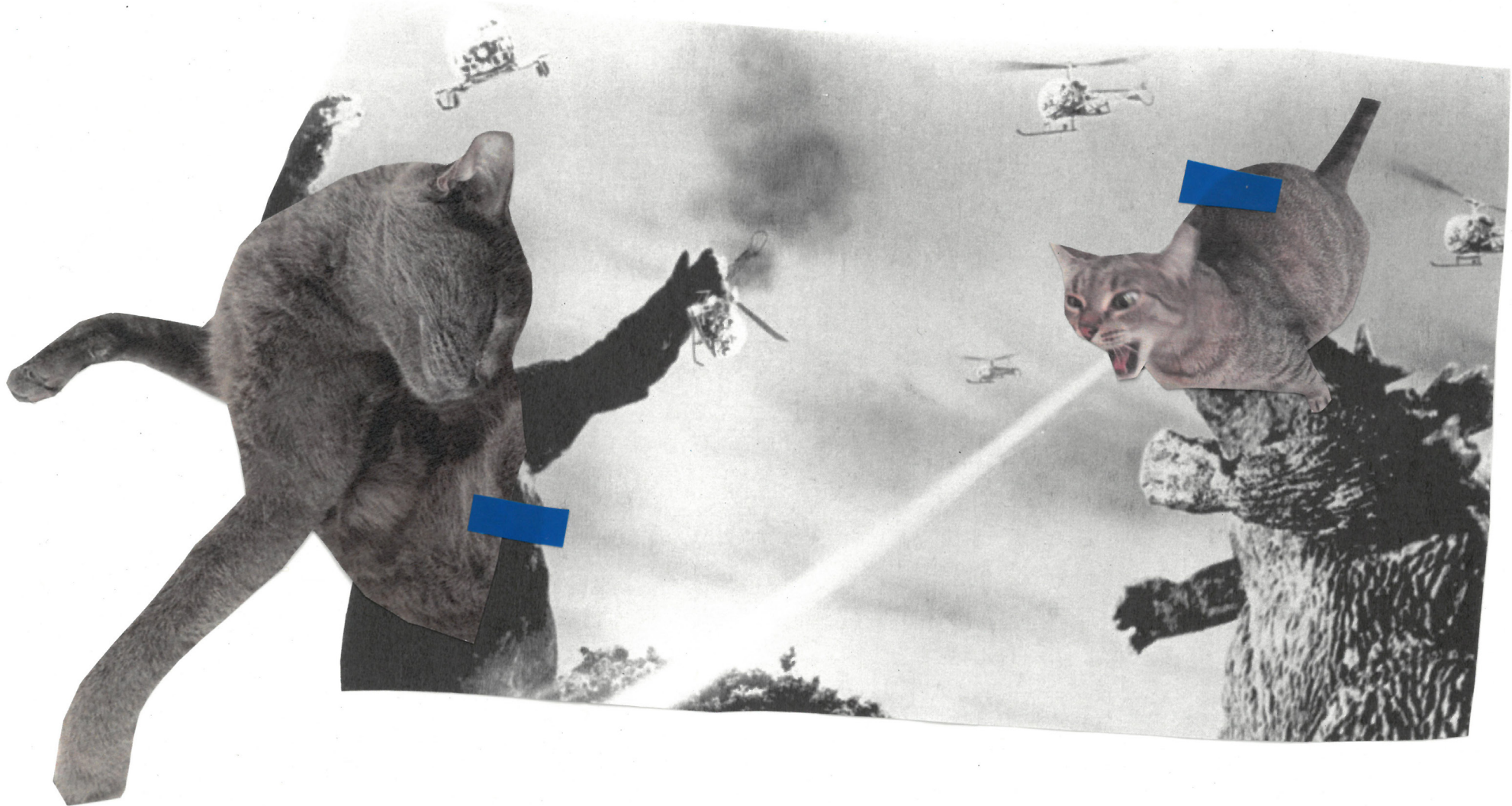
MEET MORTY
& MORRIS

my cats



My bare feet kissed the tiled floor of the hallway as I made my way to the garden. On the stony terrace floor lay a stiff pink, shriveled body. Squinted eyes, long digger claws that stretched out larger than its head. The cats have brought a mole for me again. When I showed the others and exclaimed that the cats keep on killing and now a baby mole, they told me it was not a baby mole and when I asked `Well why is it so small then?` They laughed and told me all moles are that small. Either way, the mole was dead, yesterday a dragonfly and then there was the snake, mouse and bird. The list goes on.

I started to wonder if my cats were a driver of ecological crisis?



Their bells rang a high pitched jingle as I followed. I walked through clouds of minuscule creatures who could almost be mistaken for dust until they bite. Pinch pinch pinch. A humming sound pans over my right shoulder and moves on swiftly behind me. Branches bounce and spring back one after the other, shaking leaves that play with the sunlight which falls from behind the hill of the forest. My eyes follow each bounce within the movements of the trees. The unknown creature who makes this dance from afar reminds me why I'm trying to intervene.

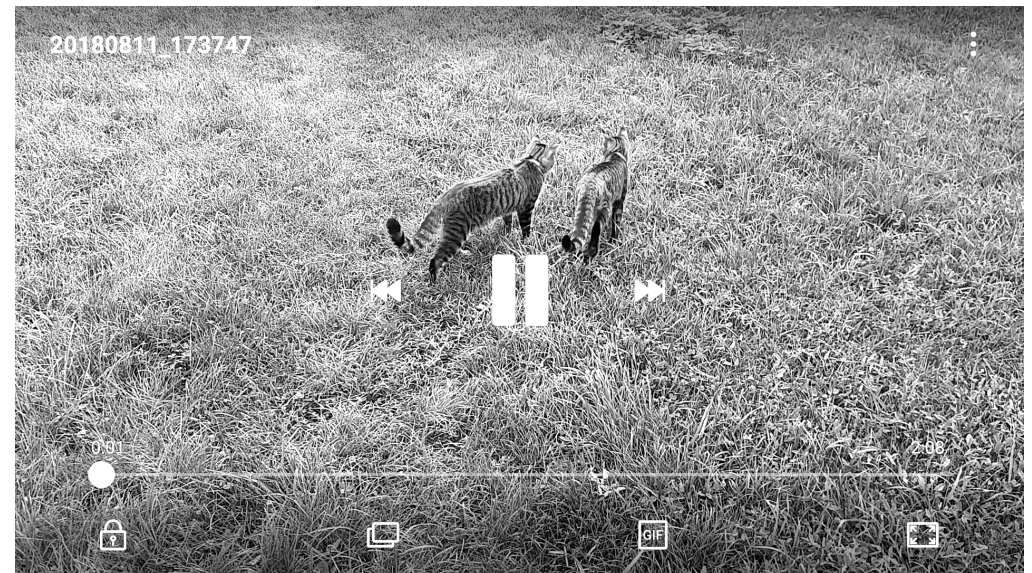
And so I follow. Creeping on, like a creeping creeper. Smartphone in hand. What a vogue. But needs must right?

Twitching ears flickered like moths as they wriggled to try to remove the collars. Their tails meander like snakes and bat down like a whip in unison with paws that fork one out in front of the other. Gaze scanning the periphery for movement. Another wriggle to try to remove the collar and a paw is stuck. Followed by persistent hopping and a roll which turns fuzzy grey hairy legs in the air, Morty's hunched back tumbling left to right. The tin like sound rattles from around his neck and surely sends a warning to smaller critters to make a run for it.

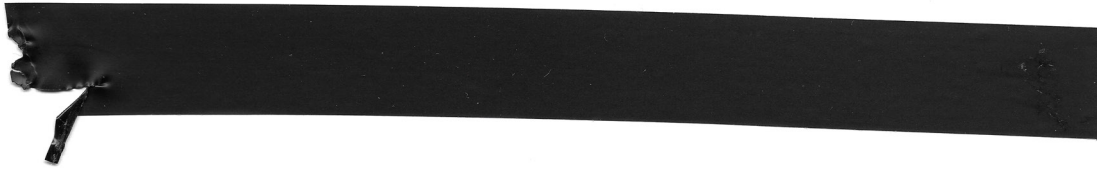
Along with the trees that sway in the wind, so do the pine cones that we hung to try to distract the cats from dismembering the diverse

collection of company we enjoy in the garden.

Watching the pine cone toy, well it's also a bit of a trap. Watching the pine cone toy trap, I remembered I had left the oven on. Running back to the kitchen which I had hoped was not on fire by now, I was met with an almighty tower of washing up. So no fire this time, but I was reminded that water guns aside, we are not doing so well at training ourselves either.



PETS IN THE CITY



Rosie

Hi Everyone,
I'm having some issues with
my cats in the garden.
Our place is like a bioreserve
so there's lots of wildlife.
The thing is my cats are
killing a lot of it.

Any suggestions?

Me1240L

Have you tried bell collars? That usually scares
birds off in time. Good luck 😊



SPECIAL OFFER: Sharp...
birdwatchersdigest.com

Bell collars, coloured collars, harnesses. I've tried it all! Don't bother. I just keep mine inside. Seems happy enough! Neighbours are less pissed too!

Kardashi

Water gun!

Casey S

WTF! You lot r nutters! ☹️

Zhijun Ma

Well, here's to having the potentially unpopular opinion... It's actually quite reasonable to keep cats mostly indoors. We have to take precautions or we could loose more vital species.

See link attached.

nature communications

Article | Published: 29 January 2013

The impact of free-ranging domestic cats on wildlife of the United States

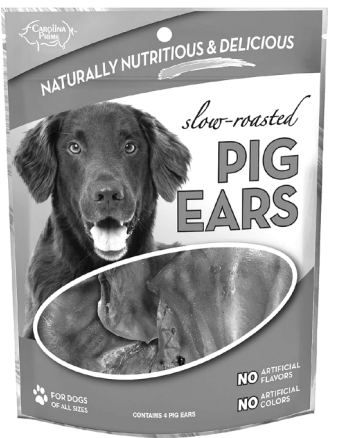
Scott R. Loss, Tom Will & Peter P. Marra



www.bbc.com › news › science-environment-21236690

Cats killing billions of animals in the US - BBC News

Jan 29, 2013 - Cats are one of the top threats to US wildlife, killing billions of animals each year, a study suggests. The authors estimate they are responsible for the deaths of between 1.4 and 3.7 billion birds and 6.9-20.7 billion mammals annually.



‘An estimated 80 million European households own at least one pet animal, at least 24 percent own one dog and at least 25% own one cat.’¹ Interestingly pet food consumptions are not taken into account when calculating a country's ecological footprint.

Gregory S. Okin conducted a study on the effects of American pet food consumption. Astonishingly, ‘dogs and cats consume as much dietary energy as ~62 million Americans, which is approximately one-fifth of the US population. Although there are fewer dogs and cats in the US than people, they derive more of their energy from animal-derived products’.² Another surprising prediction is that ‘If just one-quarter of the estimated 33% animal-derived energy in pet food was consumable by humans, it alone would support the animal-derived energy consumption of 26 million Americans (with 19% of their energy is derived from animal products)’.³

Otkin disputes the argument that pet food makes use of by-products from the meat industry by stating that this material could and in some cases is consumed by humans. Otkin proposes changing pet food, by basing it on waste such as bone material that humans strictly cannot consume. In this context, he also suggests the current bi-products used for pet food could be moved along the line for human

consumption.

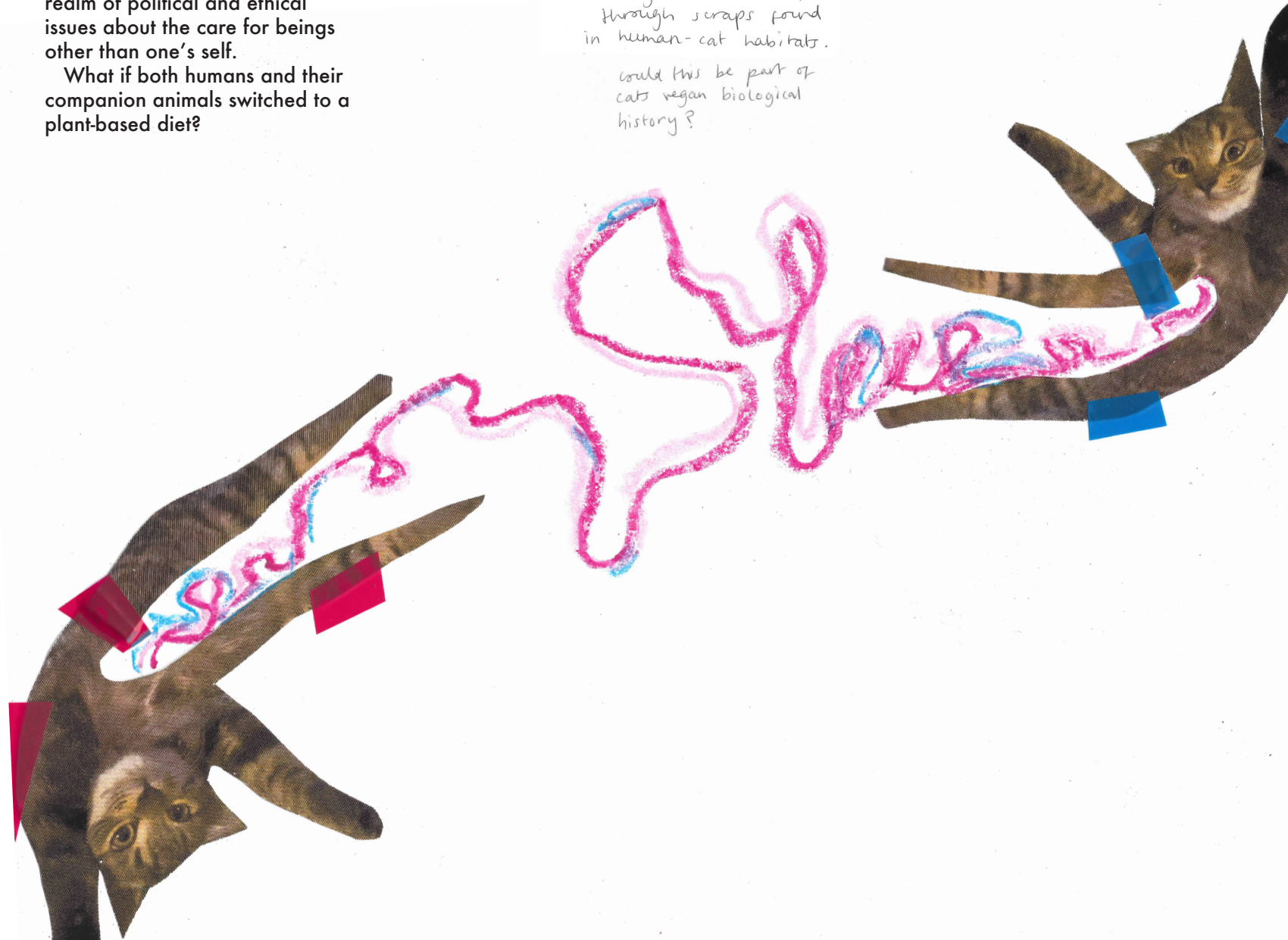
This proposal of strategy doesn't suggest humans should reduce their meat consumption and doesn't meet recommended targets to reduce ecological damage. It also leaves out a whole realm of political and ethical issues about the care for beings other than one's self.

What if both humans and their companion animals switched to a plant-based diet?

longer intestines
in domestic cats.
During domestication
wild cats intestines
adapted to the change
in diet. More vegetables
and grains consumed
through scraps found
in human-cat habitats.

could this be part of
cats vegan biological
history?

What have you
done to that poor
cat!?!?



FOXY

Look. Boys.
As cats we have to rely on the grape line. I don't remember the face of my mother or father any more than you do. Got it? Let me connect us to the AK grapevine hotline. Hold on.
48539vü82´ß50p+5
q 435u9934p05

BISOU

- - - Dearest Foxy!
- - - What can I do for you?

FOXY

Bisou! Long time.
I've got a couple of youngsters here. They are feeling the grunt. They started asking questions. I figured you might like to have a word.

BISOU

- - -
Oh yeah, what are they asking about?

FOXY

They want to know what all the tension is about. You know. Between human-animals, cats, and ...the others.

BISOU

- - -
- - -
Right.
- - -
I see...
So you're living with human-animals again?

MORTY

What's a human-animal?

BISOU

It depends on who you're talking to. Some say it's an animal like we are. We use the term human-animal because well you know. They forget sometimes funnily enough. Others would say it's an animal that has similar qualities and senses to other animals except it thinks and behaves differently. Different thinking culture. It's a bit more limited. You catch my drift?

MORRIS

Well you don't need to tell me that.

MORTY

Hm, it is sometimes as though they don't seem to notice the tadpoles swelling in the ponds. Each one will only break away from that huddle of living mass once each spring. They hardly resemble their former selves within days.

MORRIS

Yeah and they're juiciest when they're all slippery, riggling around.

BISOU

Ahem, I think we have got ourselves a little sidetracked here.
I thought you wanted to know why your human-animals are acting funny?
Well we have to take a few steps back. We've got a couple of cats. Ugh sorry Foxy, we're talking about a group of cats, in a house with human-animals.
There's some form of co-habitation going on here. Can I ask, do you like your human-animals?

MORRIS

They're ok.

MORTY

I. I like them quite a lot.

MORRIS

What?

BISOU

A common favourable trait often produced in domestication is one that is likely to obey or comply with a human-animal's demands.

MORTY

What's domestication?

BISOU

Foxy. Didn't let much on did you.

Foxy

It's not my job to educate the brats.

BISOU

Look. domestication and breeding occurs for a variety of desires. Think of the Spanish fighting bull, a domesticated animal whose desired tendency for a human-animal is to be mighty and strong, yet with the potential to become aggressive for the human fighter to appear brave and strong.

Yet...who would not become aggressive when having spears stuck into one's body?

How then, did dogs and cats become companions? Many say that dogs were domesticated via wolves, to assist hunting and to protect. The wolves most obedient and with more sociable tendencies were supposedly favoured and reproduced. Proto-mating produced what is now referred to as a man's best friend.

If a dog is a man's best friend, then what is a cat to a human-animal?

BISOU

I'm not one for a cliff hanger so let me fill you in right away.

The story of how cats came into the homes and hearts of human-animals is a little different. It is supposed that cats became present while eating food leftovers, as well as feasting on some mice that satisfied themselves on the wheat storages.

Some theorists propose that human-animals tolerated the presence and activity of cats, but they would say that. Cats put up with a lot from human-animals too. With their buildings and their fences. We used to roam wild.

While the first special breed formation in cattle was 4500 BP, the first breed formation in cats only dates back to 300 years.

So why is it that although humans have been accompanied by cattle for so long, that cats came to be the cherished ones?

Cats are curious creatures, so when our curiosity was dampened with regulation we kicked up quite a fuss.

Driscoll, supposes that in order to control the herd, Neolithic human-animals intersected the hierarchy within the cow herd by replacing the leading individual with themselves.⁴

What he didn't crack is how cats intersected human-animal herds.

We managed to seal a deal. A group of human-animals would tell the others that we were working for them, catching mice. This was

of course not the case. I mean, I as much as the next cat like to catch a mouse once in a while, for a laugh ya know, but we're not going to slave around all day chasing them like a loony for some human-animal. No way.

The story of how cats came into the human home and heart, is not due to the cat's utility. Cats along with mice and birds such as sparrows are opportunistic animals. We weren't going to let the humans have a monopoly on this place without a good deal. They had the tools, we had the communication.

The deal went like this. We kept the bulls from running through the fences and the rats from taking over the kitchens. In turn, humans ought to keep things nice and cozy for us. We didn't want to hunt all day anymore; the technology was there, why trawl all over the place in search of food?

It was a good deal, and a good time, from what I hear down the grape line. Our communication with the animal kingdom went reasonably well, a few bumpy roads along the way but in general we managed to keep the system running.

The Animal Kingdom, that of which the human-animals had little real connection to, not the majority anyway. It is funny how they consider themselves so different from the rest of us. They miss out on an array of messages

and experiences, but they like their tools and they like their games. So we leave them to it.

With the human-animals organizing the food system for themselves, we of course got our share of the pie. Some of them lived on a plant-based diet, some preferred to feast on flesh.

FOXY

A bell has rung. Vegetarian, was always a word that occupied my mind. Why is there no meatatarian? The term meat-eater prevails and prevails. We sparsely hear the term plant-eater when referring to a person. Instead the term vegetarian is the predominant. It seems the suffix Arian describes a person who practices a set of principles. If the practice of a vegetarian is to eat and advocate for a plant-based diet, then what is the practice of a meatatarian? Or a carnist?

Melanie Joy introduced the term carnism.⁵

FOXY

The bell rings twice. Animal Husbandry. Another word that curdles my skin somehow. At meetings of the cat posse, my colleagues started to come to me with concerns about livestock. Livestock...how can something alive, be kept as stock?

Through the study of human-animals I came to discover that animal husbandry was the practice of rearing animals for food production. What is peculiar is that the term sounds harrowingly the same as the term for the role of the man in a marriage. Husband is the word.

I've seen my share of plurality when it comes to relationships. I'm not a prude. Yet from what I encountered, although they can be careless creatures. I would conclude that the majority of human-animals would consider someone a terrible husband if they regularly raped and then murdered their partner or spouse. Even if the husband loved and cared for their partner or spouse throughout their lifetime. If he then murdered the partner, this would not be seen as a dutiful husband. It would be a crime, both in an ethical and legal sense.

In this context the use of the word husband seems to me rather inappropriate and twisted. Sadly, in some places and cultures it is culturally accepted that a man has the legal and authoritative right over a woman or spouse.

Some do and many did find it lawful and justified for a husband to kill or rape their wife or spouse. In some cases, wives are conceptualized as the property and therefore under the order of the man, the husband.

MORTY

This sounds pretty sick. What about cats? Are we patriarchs?? I was angry at human-animals for considering themselves so different from the animal kingdom, but perhaps I too was making a dichotomy between human-animals and animals. Had I ever asked a female cat for consent before sex? Did I ever ask her if that was a good scream or a bad scream? Is it really true that male cats have tiny hooks on their penis and use these painful things to impregnate female cats?!?



Me too, I gave
up years ago...

me
three

Guys, i'm SO
depressed about this
mass extinction...



ANIMAL
KINGDOM
TELECOM



Calling...hduh88899-88jdklki

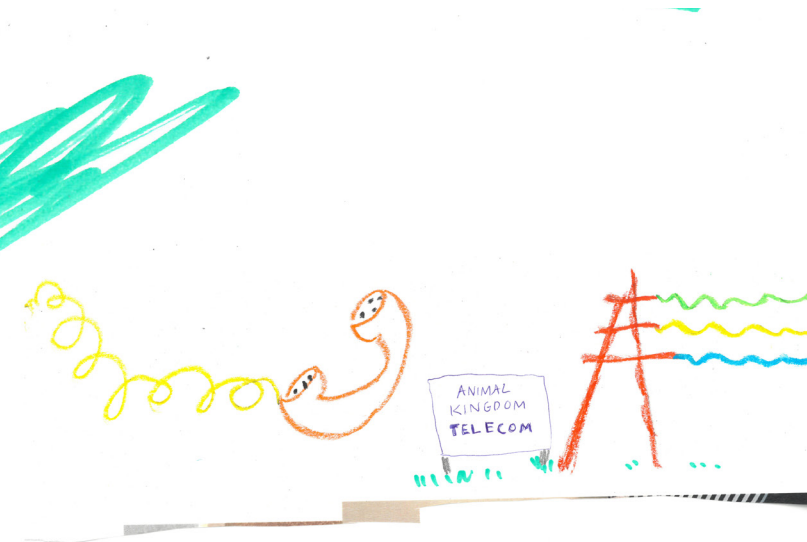
Good afternoon or good evening, you have reached the animal kingdom hotline. C.I.A I.A.M (Cats in Action for Interspecies Alliance Making)

If you seek advice on migration with regards to the National Invasive Species Act (NISA) please press 1

If you are calling to apply for the Wildlife Refugee Fund, please press 2

If you are calling to report a recent incident within the livestock industry, please press 3

For further concerns, please stay on the line...



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3

Today my child was shot. His body was still warm from mine. Coated in the shiny liquid that I grew for him for months on end. My breasts are still bursting with agony but I am deafened by the pain that swells from my heart, muffling my whole body. They will be back again. They want me to do this all over again. I know they do. I trusted them last time, thinking they felt guilty and wanted to make amends by feeding and scratching me. And then it happened. I don't like talking to an answering machine. We put a lot on the line for this project and this, this is what we are left with...

3

I've had it up to here with this f***** egg work. I sit on my arse all day, with sores below my wings. It stinks like s*** in here. This is not what we signed up for. Ring me back or I'll peck the s*** out of this lot. They're doing my f***** head in.

3

I know that I was transferred onto a free-range farm program, I appreciate that. It's just that... the door only opens once a day when the human comes. There's still so many of us in here. I can move around but not without squeezing past the others, the atmosphere is so tense I can hardly bear it. Could it be that there's been a mistake with my placement? I'll try to reach you again tomorrow.

3

I have a swelling in my lower area, throbbing pains for weeks. I try to alert the human when it comes but it pays no attention. Mary passed away last week. Doris, Pauline, and Maggy too. There's still enough of us at the union to make a stand at this. We need your help.



Sniffle sniffle, gruffle gruffle. Pink moist noses ruffle over my body. Thick oozy liquid splats on my wrinkled skin. Crunch. `Ouch, do you mind!?' `Who said that?' `Don't know'. The scuffling went on. A great nudge, the kind that would make the sound OOF, rolled me over and I sunk into the mud. My voice muffled by the mud, I managed to flip myself over. `I said DO YOU MIND!'

You're a carrot. But your talking...

Yes and you're a pig and you are talking like a human would too. Why is that?

Look I got into this story the same way you got here.

What do you mean?

You'll see. And just because you're talking doesn't mean I am not going to eat you.

Oh really.

Sure.

You might talk in this story. But I like to eat carrots. Carrots are my thing. Highly nutritious.

Well if I talk then am I not in the circle?

Which circle?

The shielded circle.

No. You do not have memory. I'm afraid you're not part of the circle.

But I do. Earlier this spring, the ground was frosty and it pinched at my seed. The soil became moist and buzzed with activity.

And, last year?

I do not remember last year.

Then you are not in the circle.

Do you remember last year?

Stop asking so many questions.

Look to be in the circle these days you need to be approved anyway.

How do I do that?

Well you can't do it, you're a carrot.

Stop telling me I am a carrot. Pig.

Ok you have a point.

How should I call you then? Thing? It? You there? The pig grunted and shook ... head. Usually `it' would follow. The pig shook its head. That doesn't feel right. Then rather, she would follow. But how do I know that the pig would like to have the pronoun she? Should this pig not have a name like Morty and Morris? Well it does, Katharina. I'll go on.

I would like to be called Catina.

Is that because I am called Katharina? Are you stealing my name?

Silence

Well ok, we can share it if you like. I didn't make it up anyway.

Thank you Katharina, I like that.

Yes, it would be funny. If we all gave ourselves almost identical names, yet slightly varied in spelling or sound. Like Catina, Katharina, Catharane, Catini. That won't be enough of a stand though, not the kind of one we need right now.

What kind of a stand do we need right now?

You'll see.

Well now you're being the mysterious one...

Ok come on let's start drafting some new names out.

Ok

You first...

UGH really Catina?

I'm not Catina anymore.

Oh yes. Sorry. Oookay then I'll start.

Well I'm quite outgoing so I think it would be something quite bold. I feel most well in the autumn and hate it when someone comes in our field without a proper introduction. UMMMMMMMM

uhummmmmmm

This isn't going very well...

OK THEN you start

It was your idea.

No it wasn't.

Can we please stop bickering. Forget the names. I'll just call you Friend. Is that ok?

Well. I wanted to eat you not long ago so it makes me feel a little uncomfortable if I am honest...

Honesty is good. That's a good start to a friendship, I'll call you Friend from now on.

Ok Friend?

O.K Friend...

Right, that's that then, this feels good. So now I'm in the circle right?

No
But why ever not. I am your friend. You are my friend. We are friends.

It doesn't mean much if you just use the word. I'm afraid.

Well how does it work then...know it all...

I'm getting tired of repeating myself. You. Need. an. Approval.

Ok Friend, no problem. How can I get it?

Ugh, you're really exhausting Friend.

Yeah, well you too. Now how do I get it Friend?

I'll call Bisou, he will do an assessment.

Agh Bisou aye. Friend with a name. I see.



NO /
 ACCORDING TO THE
 AKC (ANIMAL KINGDOM)
 COMMITTEE

A CARROT IS NOT
 VEGAN WHEN :



	<u>% of committee</u>
1. The carrot has been filtered with gelatine.	94%
1.2 The carrot contains honey	93%
1.3 It The carrot contains dye from the scale of insects.	93%

- 1.4 The label of the carrot is coated with caisin glue. Caisin glue is made from milk. 61%.
- 1.5 The carrot was fertilized with horn shavings. 57%.
- 1.6 If traps have been set up in the ~~potatoe~~^{carrot} store to Kill mice. 42%.
- 1.7 The carrot was fertilized with manure. 38%.

- 1.8 The carrot accepts that field mice are killed or maimed by agricultural machinery. 28%.
- 1.9 Colorado beetles are killed during cultivation. 27%.
- ~~1.10 The farmer~~
- 1.10 The carrot is grown by a farmer who also sells maize as animal feed to other farmers. 14%.
- 1.11 Beehives are set up to pollinate the carrot trees. 14%.
- 1.12 Birds of prey are attracted by perches that hunt mice on the ~~potatoe~~^{carrot} field. 11%.

Friend leaned towards the mirror. Eyes opening widely, mouth curling slightly at the corners. `Well, if you tell me how to become a member of the animal kingdom, I will tell you my secret hummus recipe.´ Friend bartered. `Now why would I want your hummus recipe?´ scowled Bisou. `The worms are talking about it. Maybe you should ask them´ exclaimed Friend smitten. `Ok I´ll let you in on the deal if you let me know what all this hummus talk is about.´ `Agreed, agreed.´ And the friend smiled.

Bisou started confidently, standing up straight, bir chest plump. Taking a deep breath in. `First things first, you´re going to have to move a lot more. And I don´t mean at the rate you are now. That´s more boring than watching paint dry. Next, find your quirk, find your niche. And OWN it. I mean if you´re going to be scary, then please be scary. If you´re going to be cute then for goodness sake be adorable. Predictable or unpredictable you had better choose your kind. A mixed temperament won´t work out well for you trust m...´ Bisou stopped before finishing the sentence. Friend was squinting, arms crossed, looking in such a stark manner Bisou felt its puny eyes almost burning holes in bir chest. `Just what exactly do you think we have been doing the whole time...? When we break through the ground and grow amidst a dry, stony concrete jungle. Do you not suppose that is a niche?

I may appear slow but I see a lot in my time. My roots could tell a thousand tales about histories of microbes and nematodes. A lot happens in my time, believe it or not. I came here as a friend. I want to co-operate.

There was a great pause. A space and tension grew between Bisou who looked from within the mirror and Friend who gazed at it. The tension grew like a rocky boulder, expanding, cracking at the edges, scratching their faces as it grew closer.

Bisou looked up suddenly, bir eyes rolled one o´clock, two o´clock, three o´clock, four o´clock. Friend could hear Bisou´s lower paw rattling on the floor behind the mirror. Five o´clock and Bisou looked to Friend. Bisou´s eyes moistened, tongue scraped, almost stuck to the roof of bir mouth. Bisou disclosed that human-animals were coming up with more demands.

Bisou began to enlarge. Hair thickened, pointed ears grew round, transforming before the friend's eyes into a Bison. The Bison told of dark histories. How his family and his people were ridiculed. `The Holstein-Friesian families came in, civilized they called them. Once they roamed the land with their iron hooves it was no longer the territory of the Bison. Neither were we any longer our own.´

´Governor Francis Wyatt and his council proclaimed in 1623 that anyone convicted of stealing any "Beast or Bird of Domesticall or tame nature" worth more than twelve pence would be put to death.´⁶

The Holsteins weren't the lucky ones either. Let's not jump to conclusions. They tried to make a stand, self infertility as a backlash to the swollen breasts and infected teats.

Friend marveled as Bisou re-emerged through the face of the Bison. Horns became stumped at the end, shrinking, regurgitating back into the head. The Bison's tough brown skin around the eyes softened, coating themselves with fine hairs of fur, eyes growing smaller from within the sockets. Before Friend could speak a word to the cat in the mirror. Pale grey chalky growths emerged out from the crevices of Bisou's ears. Nose and jaw stretched out towards the carrot.

´Operation flood´⁷ The goat

bleated. The sturdy stamp of a hoof surely meant it was time to exchange the hummus recipe.

In shock friend began to recite the ingredients and methods as though in a trance. Just as Friend pierced fir lips to continue to speak, the goat started the next sentence. They both began to speak the same words...

*In search of new habitational parameters, biotopes, diverse edges,
it takes a situational eye,
do you prefer fig or apple trees?*

To see one like another, isn't quite possible.

*I consider them, I observe them.
Pests, it's a human way of thinking,
let the antagonists rise,
your five zones are already at work,
or the fifth in a deep slumber,
let it do its own thing,
probably not step, but observe,
grazing, a person that grazes,
you somehow need an economic base,
in the current,
basketry material, farm of the future,
wenn du tust was du liebst, wirst du nie in deinem Leben arbeiten.*

*Berries, green leaves, spice, juicy, sour.
Continue when it's getting dark,
in the garden Büro,
install a bench,
install a kitchen.
We are just running against a wall without opening the eyes.
There were 5 before.*

*We could be like trees but probably not,
that's probably not us right now.
Probably we are like the Springkraut*







Bisou lay sprawled out sinking into the surface beneath. Pores of the skin echoed. When the phone rang. Bisou's eyes scrunched together, whole body retreating stiffly inward then expanding outward, to push a paw into the ground to prop himself up to answer the phone.

A humming noise overpowered the voice on the telephone. A figure bolted into sight. Blades whizzing around, spinning frantically at first, which made Bisou rather dizzy. The red and blue figure swayed left to right as though carried by the wind like a version of maple tree seed carriers on batteries.

'Hi-YAH.' Announced the figure.

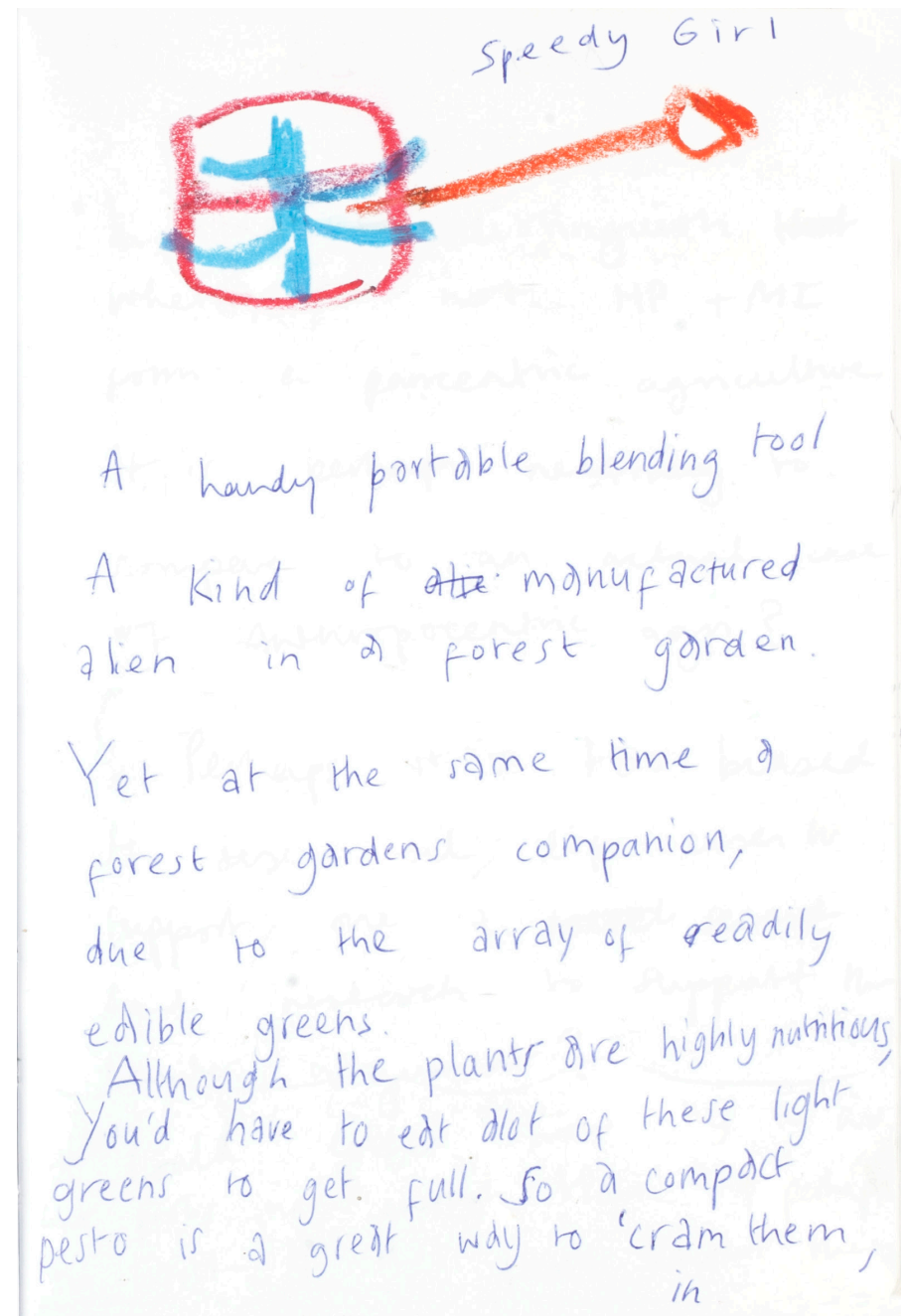
'Hi.' Responded Bisou.

'No. Hi-YAH like a karate chop.' snapped the speedy girl. Bisou looked puzzled. The speedy girl exclaimed that she was here to mix things up. 'I've been chopping away at the story the whole time in case you didn't notice. Notice what? Bisou quizzed. Chopping images, excerpts, both research that Rosie did in person and that which she found from others. It's a bit questionable to be chopping up images of animals when we're talking about the cruelty that's involved in the killable industry but that's the conundrum of contradictions right?'

'Who's chopping up images of animals?' Demanded Bisou.

Bisou stood on the edges of bir paws, bir back arched up, bir body bent almost into the shape of a pincer, hair spiked outwards. But before he could enquire again, the speedy girl whizzed off into the distance.

Not like a space ship hovering ever up into the mystical milky way. Not like an angel gliding towards a fluffy cloud. Speedy girl darted zig zag, zig zag, about a meter above the ground and into the distance.



Sitting on the terrace peering outwards from the house. A little smurf town someone once called this place, Morris was plump and his fur thick, yet I could still witness each fine hair and speculate on which one belonged to which stripe along his back. I was calmed by his company but also careful enough to prop my thighs in such a way that I could cradle him as he lay like a pebble between them. The furry skin under his eyes swelled and sent the upper lids into slit shapes that melted amongst the other stripes that crossed his face. Ears turned ever so slightly downward at each side. I liked to sometimes imagine a little hat sitting between the space that was made by this small adjustment of his ears.

Some know the phrase the grass is greener. And so often when two are cuddling, a second joins. In sprang Morty, the slender of the two brothers. Morty pranced around us and then gently lay one paw on my lap, which was already enough to outrage Morris who turned his head immediately in despise. Morty flung his whole body weight onto my arm, turning his head to nestle into my collar bone. I'm sure it was as much him scratching his head as it was potentially him scratching me. Regardless, I tipped my head to the side and nuzzled back, a feeling of warmth spread over the back of my shoulders which arched over to encompass him. By now Morris

was turned on his side. Pushing his paws into the chub of my leg to push himself away from me, batting his paw profusely at Morty's tail. Morty then struck out his paw, conking Morris on his head. Then as though from an involuntary convulsion Morris flipped over and fell off my lap, flipping around clawing the air. Thud a large crash on the ground. This was abruptly met by a sharp sinking sensations on my knee. Before my eyes a pink, wrinkly enveloped shape form stared at me. Surrounded by grey and black fuzzy fur, it was surely the stripes I recognize. Oh fantastic an arsehole in front of my face. Of course. Just prop yourselves where you like, use my leg as an anchor for your mini-war. It's not like I may bleed.

This must-have looked more fun than it was, we were getting more company. Lime eyes peered from within a sheer black coat that reflected a silver light with each movement in stride. One fang sat unapologetically on the outer ledge of Foxy's mouth. A small dark wet stain fell onto the stone floor of the porch. And another. Her lime eyes had still not yet blinked as another droplet fell from Foxy's mouth onto the terrace floor. I reached out my hand and she elongated herself between my palm and the floor, a wave of a humming sound vibrated out of her skull. Ears slightly turned aside ready for the hat to be placed on top. Raspy movements with the

occasional scratch continued to flutter and busy around my feet. Foxy leaped to join us. Then there was a stumble and a crash followed by a crackling sound. The rustic smell of burning plastic and metal stung my nose. No sign of any unknown gooey substance between the crevices of Foxy's paw. Yet the crackling sound continued. The radio had turned on.

RADIO ANNOUNCEMENT

During a storm at the North Sea a floating dairy farm was cut off from the shore of Rotterdam. The floating dairy farm in the Netherlands⁸ had been implemented in response to the expanding demand for agricultural land. It was amongst other projects that attempted to save space. Such as tower blocks in which pigs are reared for meat.

Such isolation projects have been developed on one hand to contain the growing levels of greenhouse gases from the livestock industry as well as several other issues such as drought and loss of biodiversity. It is reported that 80% of deforestation is dedicated to agricultural land.⁹ With 83% of agricultural land used for cattle ranches.¹⁰ The floating dairy island had been inspired by Nelamon's CEO Steve van Tumanek's experience of Hurricane Sandy in America. In the devastation of

the hurricanes flooding people were cut off from food deliveries. Tumanek developed the floating dairy farm with the drive to grow food in close proximity to customers, in this case along the port of Rotterdam.¹¹

We'll be following up on the current headlines with further developments.

Next is the news in German with Nina Hampel.



Bisou's mouth hung open, eyes shifting side to side as the speedy girl became smaller and smaller in the distance. The phone was still laying off the hook. The curly wire tangled around Bisou's leg. Eyes still in daze, Bisou put the phone to bir ear. Foxy was singing.

`In search of new habitational parameters, biotopes, diverse edges,
it takes a situational eye,
do you prefer fig or apple trees?

To see one like another, isn't quite possible. `

Bisou was now even more perplexed than before. Be burst into laughter. Foxy's singing always made bir laugh. So noble and sophisticated when she spoke, but when she sang it was as though she had ice cream in her mouth. Bisou laughed so hard, be broke out into persistent coughing. Spluttering, be spat on the ground and caught a tear that fell from bir eye. Foxy carried on singing. Bisou continued to laugh, whilst trying to control the cough. `What are you laughing at!.` Still cackling with laughter Bisou tried to breathe and take a minute to hear Foxy. `Ok, ok what is it?` `A group of cows have taken over one of those floating dairy farms. I can't believe we didn't hear anything about it down the grapevine hotline. The line was so busy they couldn't get through. I guess their messages got

lost amongst the others.`

Bisou's head protruded backward and tipped slightly to the side, a cool wind ran its finger up the furs of bir back.

`Did you hear what they wrote in the so-called mother nature article? "Cows don't get seasick...millions of heads of commercial cattle spend weeks at sea each year while being shipped around the globe without issue". WITHOUT ISSUE` screamed Foxy. Her ears pointed sharply backward and her fangs all but the one she missed on the right-hand side gleamed in full sight.

`They couldn't just slow it down, could they. They couldn't hold off. Free-range meant a better quality of life for the animals but not for the environment. Well then, that leaves us to compact them as efficiently as we can. Doesn't it? Maybe in large tower blocks? Or better yet, lets build floating cow cities for them and put them to float on our seas. Oh no wait, they won't be happy so the product will be shit. I know, let's create simulated worlds with green fields and bushes. Yes let's use VR glasses on cows! And let's make robots to milk them! Yes, the sea level is rising, so let's use some more electricity and create some more toxic waste to build a little island of solar panels to power the robots, to milk the cows on the floating farm! Unbelievable! No wonder they broke away.` Foxy howled.

AK GRAPEVINE HOTLINE

3

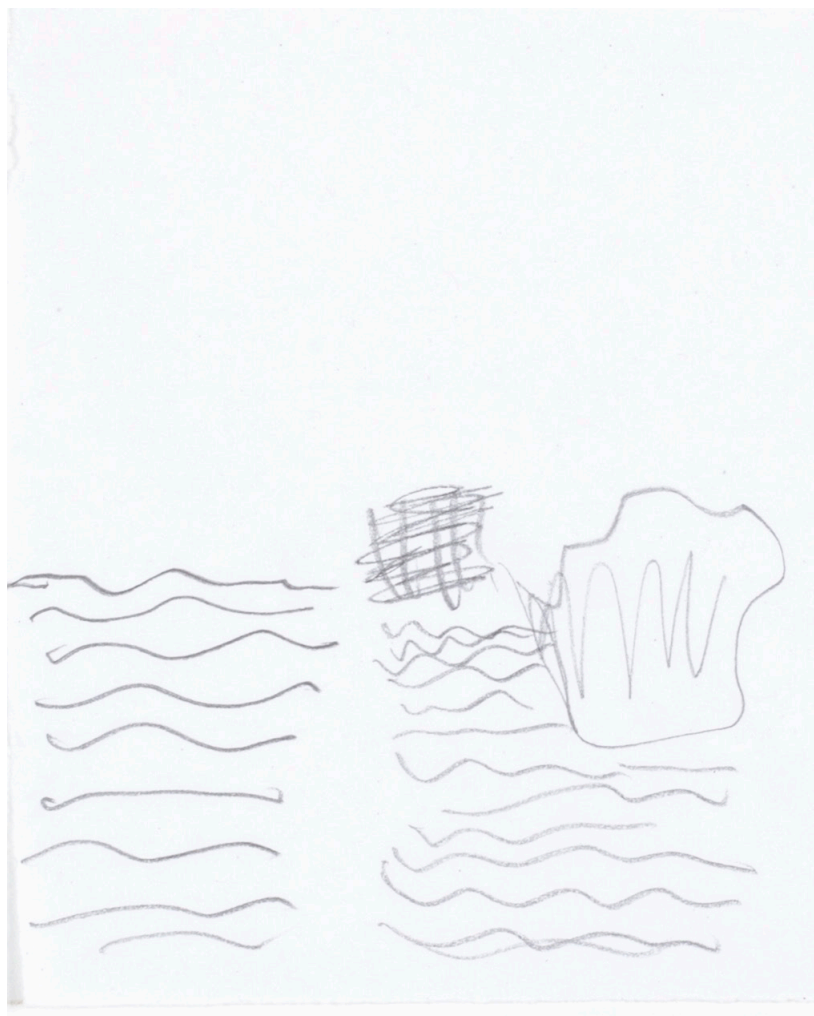
We did it. Cutting the ropes wasn't easy but with this many teeth on board we managed. We couldn't tell you our plan as we couldn't risk it leaking out. I hope you understand. It's all uncertain right now, how we will manage our next steps but I already know it was the right move.

I'm sending a message from one that both is and isn't our kind. We have come to be dear companions in the time that we have been in isolation. I originally despised my colleague for the work Ze did. My aches and pains were sometimes unbearable. Yet I saw that with each action, my colleague also lost a part of zirs shadow. Ze stood so alone without the shadow, although surrounded by many other colleagues. Without a shadow to look back on, one can only look forward to what must be done. That is an exhausting way to move about life. My colleague does not speak our language. Nor that of the human-animals. It's one of the reasons my colleague has been kept shadowless for so long. Before you overlook this message. I want you to trust me that this story is part of ours.

55

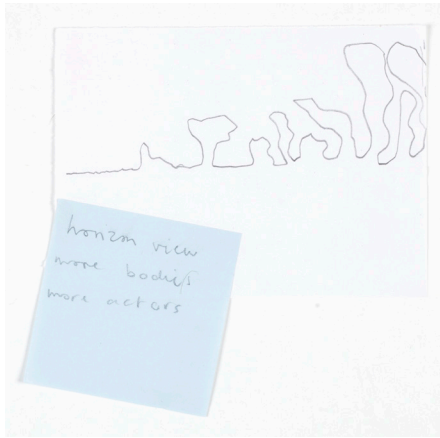


54



The floating dairy farm drifted off from the shore carried by the waves. The cows swayed and stumbled as the motion of the seas water tipped the floor low beneath their feet and reared it up again. Bellowing murmurs and repetitive screeches channeled out into the salty air. The colleagues propped up tumbling cows when possible, while holding on for extra weight to avoid sliding off-board.

When the current finally mellowed, so did its passengers. The colleagues rubbed toothed paddles over the cows rounded bellies, who in return leaned in. Resting on the fence that enclosed the island, as the port of Rotterdam grew smaller and smaller into the distance.



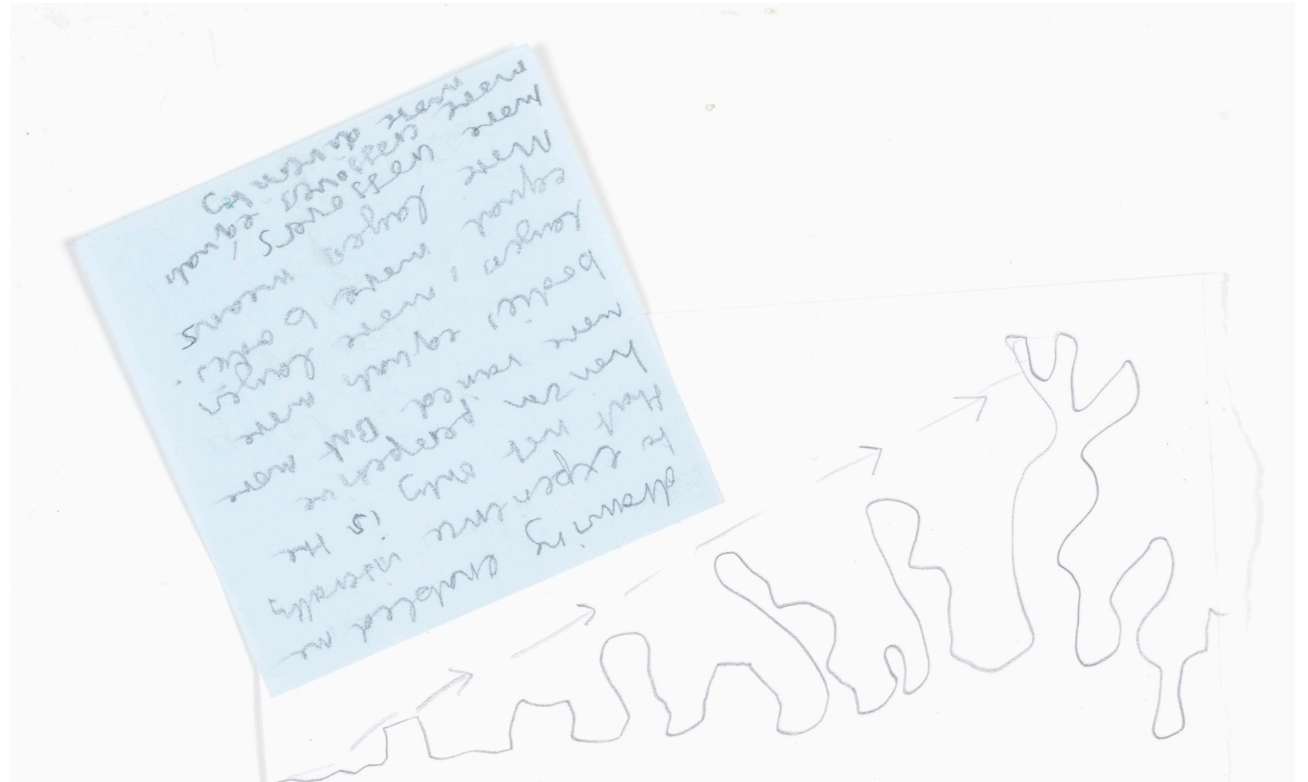
Out at sea the colleagues and the cows would soon become accustomed to the surrounding horizon and swaying floor.

What once was a desolate and metallic roof surface, reflecting the harsh rays of the sun, grew mossy and thick with earth over time. The colleagues tended to the growths on the roof.

The colleagues first thought in systematic order. They made lists, ordered themselves in teams. Each had a specific role. A specific task. To be done efficiently and in good time. Joints would ache, and cuts were drawn. Still, it was pleasant to work in comparison to before. The colleagues mended their joints and ploughed on with their tasks. At least now they could pause shortly to gaze over the widespread ocean as it bathed in the sunlight. The light that coloured the crashes of the waves resembled milky orange washing over the wrinkled skin of melons.

Despite the perpetual work, leaves would shrivel and deviate in colour. Turning dusty yellow at a young age. Crumbling as young before the hands of the colleagues.

The colleagues worked faster and harder. More rigorous plans and strategies were developed. Task forces allocated. Some hardy bushes would congregate; a few grains would make it. Yet the other plants would often retreat into the earth before showing a bud or a fruit.



The colleagues began to study the rooftop. Observing how a seed would respond to a dry or moist earth. Which creatures would burrow and make homes in the wake of corn and which would meet and exchange in the presence of clover? How rough sandy cracks when stacked with dead leaves and root debris, left for weeks would evolve into lively carpets that steamed and sweated.

One afternoon whilst sitting, leaning outwards from a cool, sheltered dip in the ground. A colleague's brow protruded over the eyes. As xe watched over, xyr lips tightened in the wake of witnessing another colleague pulling out the freshly set in plumb tree seedling. `What the hell are you doing? I just set that in.` xe shouted. `You can put it in one of the other full sunspots.` replied the other colleague and continued to dig, making a hill of sandy earth that soon reached zir waistline. Flecks of beige scattered in the direction of the sitting colleague.

Creating a sandy worm on xyr eyelashes. Wiping the sand trail out of xyr eyes, the colleague crawled over and swiped the young tree, then went to sit back in the little cove of earth.

The sandy hill was by now towering over. The colleague rested zir hands-on zir hips. `Ah` ze sighed. Turning over zir shoulder to zir young tree, which was now no longer there. Zir eyes dashed around the ground frantically, cheeks pinched peach. `Have you happen to have seen my young tree anywhere?` ze enquired. `Oh no, no I haven't.` xe said as xe shuffled around some small stones on the ground. But the colleague saw a silvery branch poking from behind xyr back. `Oh ok, well that's a shame because without it the plumb tree won't make it'. ze said with hands standing on zir hips. From within the cove in

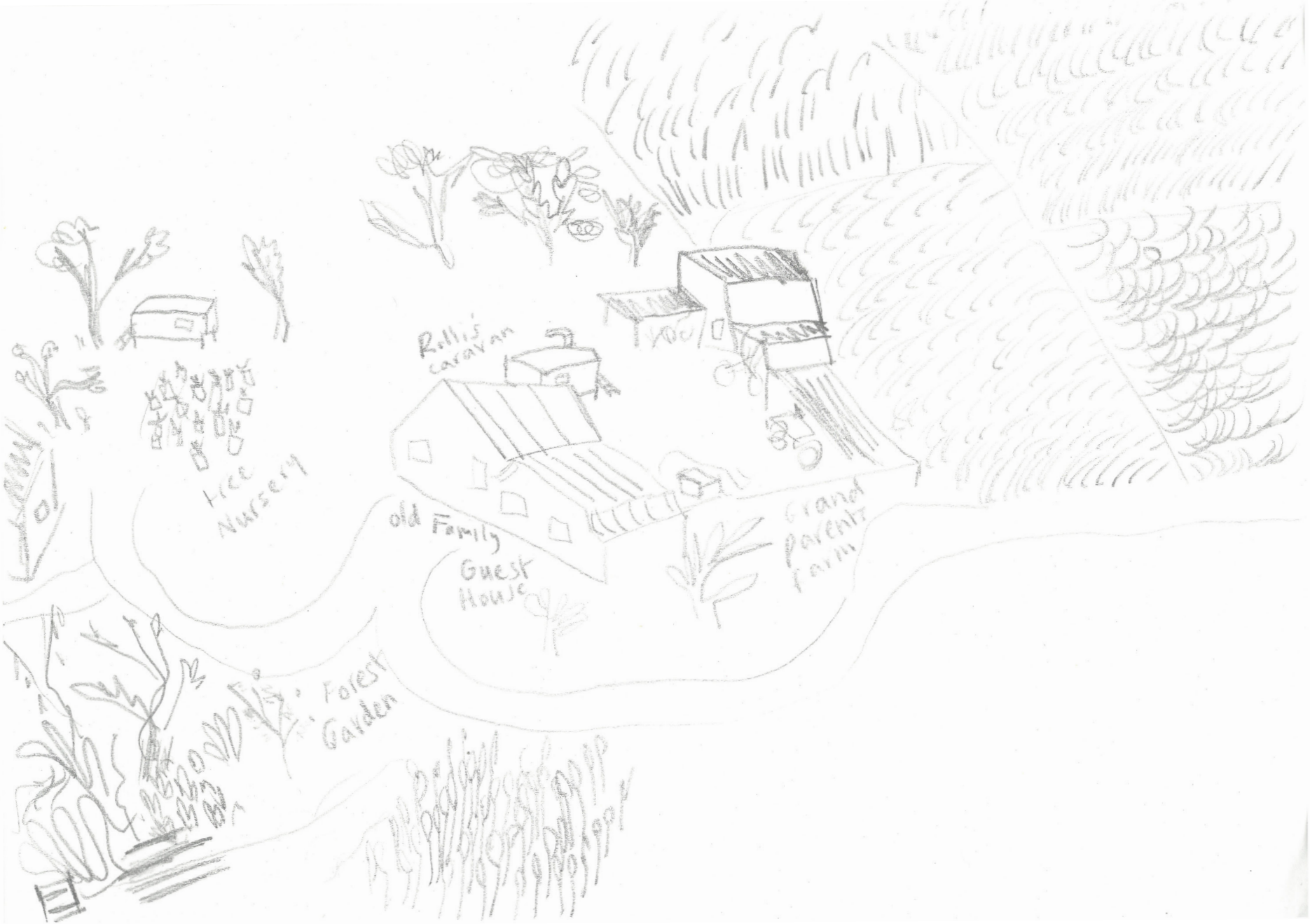
the ground, the other colleague grated xyr teeth and turned over xyr shoulder to look away.

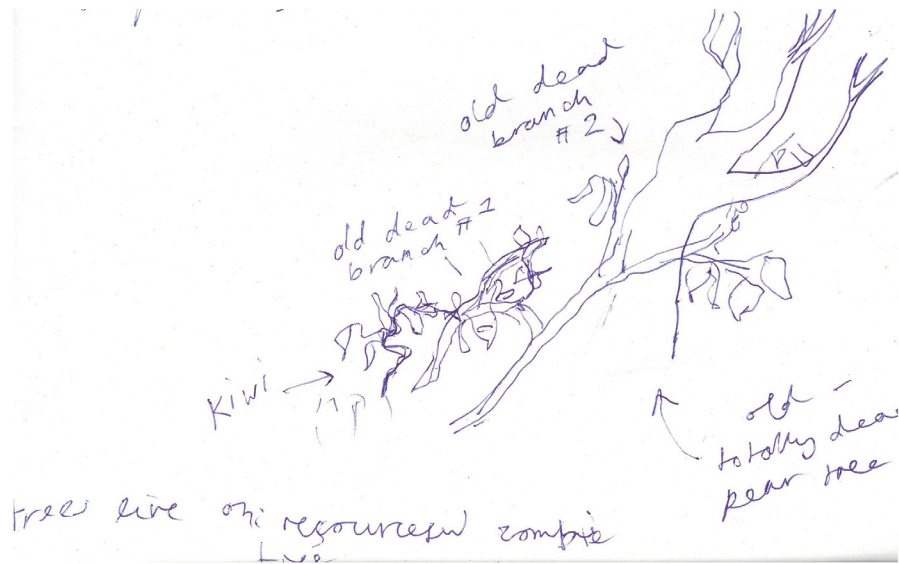
`Well, ok. It's not exactly that way, but they could be companions. The jujube tree could be a central leader, while the plumb tree could be a centre or open vase form. Curating it like this means that they can each reach their niche of sunlight. Then the sunlight received by the trees will likely be translated into carbohydrates, glucose and fructose and fed to funghi via mycorrhiza. In return, the funghi could provide an extended source of water replenishment. Oh, oh and the cows love the leaves of the jujube!`



Spear shaped emerald green leaves spread wide like fingers out of long vines that crept along the cool ground. Tooth shaped dandelion leaves gathered around corners and pathways. Thick musts of wild oregano and thyme made blankets around spurts of flowers that wore silver crowns hidden between their purple bodies. Swarms of thorn bushes hoarded gems and ravelled amongst one another. Branches arched their cracked arms over spreading leafy fingers overhead. A most sumptuous and busy earth housed many delights.

The colleagues relished the unfolding of each plant as it revealed a new side with each season or companion. The cows gawked at some of the new greenery that came down from the rooftop but smacked their lips crunched away at the dishes.







The colleagues experimented with devices for storing what the forest garden had given out. The yoghurt production on the lower floor of the previous floating dairy farm, was now converted to processing harvest from the rooftop forest garden. Tinctures, dried seeds and herbs were sent on small boats to the mainland with instruction leaflets and letters. Occasionally rafts would wash up in return to the island with new seeds or tools. The forest garden became a place of many functions for the colleagues. They would invent new culinary

delights; argue, study, play and sing into the early hours. Thrashing their bodies to the convulsions of the waves sent from the sea surrounding them.

In time they grew old and some passed. They would need to decide whether to establish more contact with those at land. The question of how was not easy. Deals would have to be made, how future exchange and co-operation between the island and the land, would all have to be negotiated. They prepared themselves as best they could for those processes.



PODCAST

THE FLOATING DAIRY ISLAND THAT BECAME A FOREST GARDEN AT SAIL

- * WORKERS RIGHTS - FACTORY WORKERS
- * FEMALE COWS AND OTHER OPPRESSED GROUPS IN THE MEDIA
- * THE SEXUAL POLITICS OF MEAT¹²
- * FOREST GARDENING AS AN ALTERNATIVE TO TILLAGE AND ARABLE LAND



Looking at my peculiar shaped toes as they perch on the table. From the corner of my eye peers the Ivy as it grows over the pipes by the low roof. Across the table sits a cookbook. The shiny oiled legs of the chicken are crossed over and tied together with string, it's breasts and anus exposed. There is no face though. The chicken's face is not the important part of this image. I flick through the next pages. Anonymous legs lay on shiny plates; occasionally the odd live animal looks curiously into the camera. I stop at a recipe, 'Gallo Repieno'. Another body of a bird, this time capon. A neutered male bird, one that is often fattened through force-feeding. Again no head to be seen, this time hairless legs spread apart, with a green, grainy looking form jammed into the bird's anus. The body lays in a small pond of watery oil, with floating vegetables.

I looked down to my lap, there sits Morris, the pebble, covered in his hairy blanket. I reach my hand out and glide it along his stripey back.

Flutters appear in my stomach, my lower back grows tense in the chair. How did it come to be that we are such friends? That you sit on my lap, that I sit in this garden?

The podcast I have playing from my phone continues in the background.

 Yeah RIGHT. We don't have to look far before we see that it's not just female non-human animals, but also males that undergo the same objectification and sexualization that women do in mainstream western culture. Marv Wheale points out the similarities between pony shows and beauty pageants; Wheale among others from movements such as eco-feminism and vegan intersectionalism argue that the way animals are imprisoned and abused in laboratories, homes, barns, and circuses is connected to the way women are assaulted in brothels, rape camps and homes.¹³

This connection is extensive! Look at the unpaid, unrecognized reproductive workforce of women worldwide and the commodification of female reproductive material as alienated labor in the animal food industry.

Mhm, mhm. This is also about 'animalizing,' right? I watched a talk by Christian Sebastian Mcjettters and he was asserting that patriarchal, imperial, white supremacy creates an elitist and exclusive 'human' identity by reserving certain rights and considerations to their constructed group. Which is predominantly white, cis, middle-class men and in some cases women. Mcjettters asserts that this 'human' identity

excludes other marginalized groups namely those of African descent. Which - HOLD - THE - PHONE - did I just say that people of African descent are animals? No patriarchal, imperial, white supremacy does. It also wants us to pander to their games of let's be less like 'animals' and more like 'humans'.¹⁴ Which maybe sounds like 'Well, animals kill so stop bashing on the meat industry right? No it's about recognizing the structures that oppress and incarcerate persons and diverting those.

 Flicking and pulling on my ear lobe as I watch my fingers circling the top of Morris's head.

Adverts of happy cows with batting eyelashes willingly offering cups of milk fixate in my mind and make my stomach curdle. Then comes the women with splashes of milk coating their bodies, revealing smooth naked legs or waists. Like Mcjettters said, how can we be in 2020 and there are adverts on TV in which a young black mother in a hoody is transformed by drinking milk into an ecstatic athlete with barely any clothes on, to then be cheered on by her proud mother and daughter?

Sure most adverts are overtly sexist and ignorant. But these waters run deep.



So we're talking about white patriarchy and then we've got this floating forest garden emerging from a dairy farm in exile. What kind of times are we living in?

Right. Right. Well what's interesting for me about the floating - forest - dairy, no I won't call it dairy anymore. The cows are no longer dairying. The thing about this floating forest garden island, is that first of all it's cut off from the mainland right. So they are floating out there doing their own thing, to a certain extent. If you check the tools they got sent, it can't be possible to do any serious digging. They don't even have any ground to work with. They must have developed their soil from scratch. Nor will they have had the chemicals for treating pests, neither the chemicals for fertilizing. So we're looking at a no-tillage, organic form of food production. Whether they decided to use the feces from the cow's manure for fertilizer is not clear. I'm sure it took some time to come to some sort of consensus on that between them.

Why would that need such a consensus?

Well, in mainstream agriculture cow's manure along with other parts of animal bodies are often used to fertilize crops, if you consider that those materials come from the meat industry. Then you can maybe see why it's a sensitive topic.

Oh right, right.

So is that the part that connects the floating forest garden to patriarchal, imperial, white supremacy...?

Well, if you consider the historical accounts of colonialism appropriating other bodies. However many cultures work with cow manure in agriculture. To say that it's a white patriarchal thing to use cow manure would be to paint it too simple.

Why I think this is fascinating concerning white patriarchy, wow saying this word so many times does something funny with my head. But I'll go on to name it anyway. On this floating forest garden island, they work with a way of producing as well as exchanging food and seeds outside of the capitalist market. It's not a strikingly complicated and not a new idea. Yet in slowing down, they refined a relationship to the plants and the cows.

Working without chemicals, it's interesting to wonder how they managed to survive or grow so well. They must have a crazy ecosystem going on over there.

This all sounds very utopian...

I know I'm getting carried away, as usual. But hear me out. They are working with the ecosyste-

Sorry to interrupt but technically agro-industrial agriculture also works with ecosystems...high technology and a capital market happens to be a part of that one.

Right, but look where those symbioses have got us! There were some useful developments, I'm not proposing to go back to some idea of pure nature. Parts of both practices make sense.

Ok but when you say working with the ecosystem. What do you mean? That they are holding hands and singing in a circle?

Haha, wow I am ruffling your feathers. No, I'm talking about regenerative ecology, regenerative cultures.¹⁵ And this is where it links to patriarchal, imperial, white supremacy, and the oppressive effects that come from that. Those effects are to name but a few; loss of biodiversity and environmental depletion, caused by industrialism and extractivism again to name just a few.

Oh ok and so here comes the floating forest island to save the day.

Ha, well I don't know about you, but I won't be waiting for any floating forest island to come and save us from this.

Haha, nope.

I'm just saying that there are some interesting qualities to look at there concerning this mess we are in. But we don't have time in this podcast to cover all the other islands we can learn from.

Ok, ok wrap it up will you, what's your point?

In forest gardens (because by the way, it's not the only one) there is carbon sequestration, healthy regulation of water, regeneration for the soil life, and of course lots of wicked vibrant habitats for critters. This is relevant in consideration of wildlife refugees, capitalist environmental ruins, climate crisis.

Ok let's take some time to digest that. I want to hear about these other island practices next time!

Yeah, let's get someone else in to talk about those.

Thanks everyone for listening, write your comments below. Come with your own, but we'd love to hear about which islands you would add to this mix pot?

Curious about these forest garden practices from the podcast. I looked into some of the methods and principles. In forest gardening, zones are used to describe how intensive and frequently you use or visit an area. The zones with the lower numbers are more intensive, those with higher less. There is also a zone five, which is where you do nothing. I wondered, did I or the cats have a zone five?

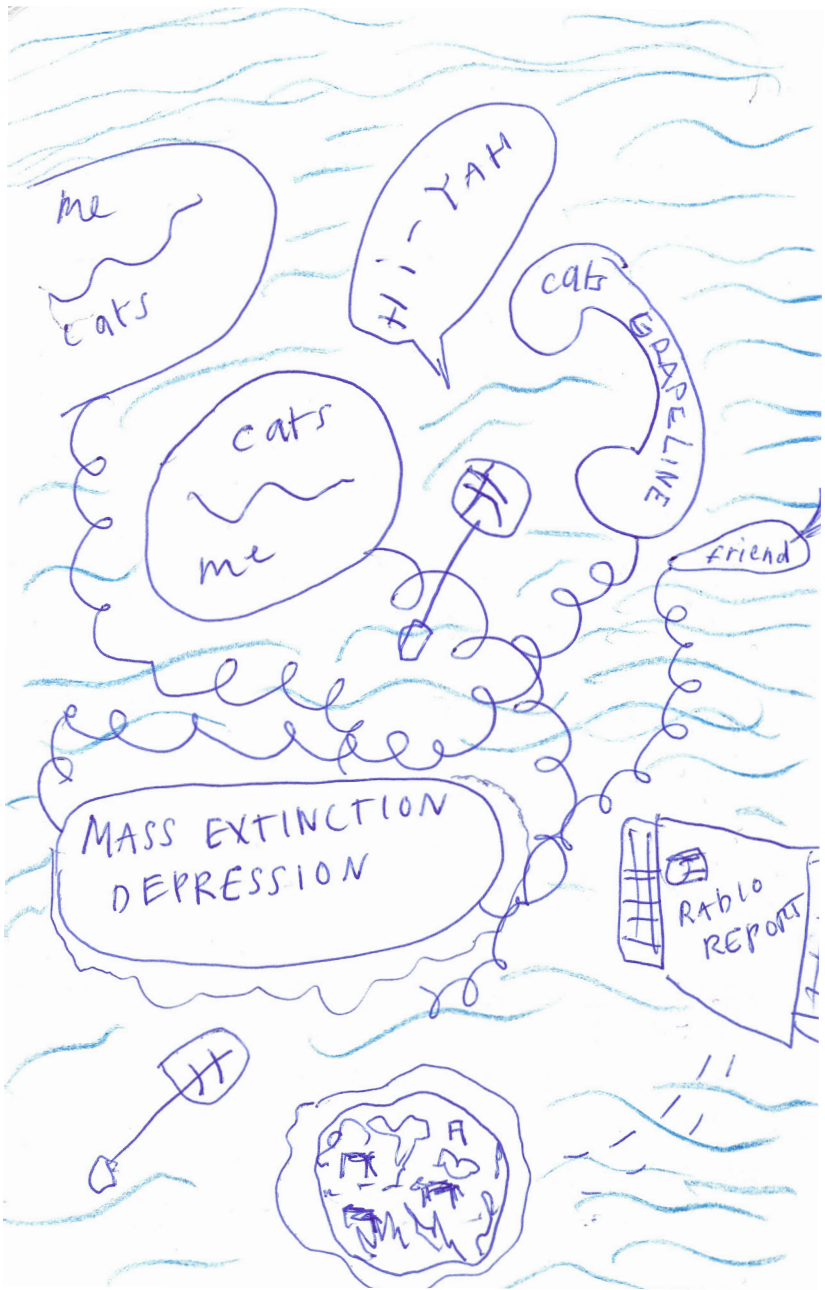
Although the cats did not visit the supermarkets themselves, it could be thought of as one of their zones. A rather intensive one, it could be a second or even a first zone. But the intensive land use based on the supermarket cat food is not situated at the supermarket. The animals for the meat are of course not raised in the supermarket and the food to feed those animals is also not produced in the supermarket, neither are the critters who's habitats are destroyed to make space for that production.

So technically there would also be some other pieces of land that would be the cat's intensive zones. Technically there would also be some other pieces of land that would also be my intensive zones.

My eyes wander over my sketchbook. Morris still being a fantastic hairy pebble. Foxy lays on the table next to us. 'Oh Foxy...' I said. 'Morris, aye...' I sighed. Morris nuzzled into my knee cove a little deeper. I tip my head to watch and warmth fills my cheeks.

Then there is a screech and a konk. And a dragonfly suddenly flails about on the table, Foxy tapping away at it with the side of her clawed paw.





NEUTRAL GENDER PRONOUN

e-g pattern

	Nom subject	objective	possesive determiner
Ze	Ze laughed	I called Zir	Zir eyes gleam
	possesive pronoun	reflexive	
	That is zirs	Ze likes zirself	
Be (Bison)	Be laughed	I called Bir	Bir eyes gleam
	That is birs	Be likes birself	
she	She laughed	I called her	her eyes gleam
	That is hers	She likes herself	

A Poem to my cats

I am sorry if I sat in my ivory tower and made puppets
of you.

I recoil in the act of putting my words in your mouth
Or your words from my mouth.

How does one go about telling stories of others?

Other,

a crude word.

My story is in there too.

Was I the miccoriza? Or the plum tree? Or the cloud of
dusty mosquitos? Or the colonialist situating the other?

A crude thought.

I'd rather be a plum tree .

Then I shall take more time to consider what it might be
like to be a plum tree.

But not for too long, or a bulldozer may come along
while i'm not looking.

As I dig deeper, my hunch both urges me to look
further but some times it grows stiff and bats realms of
possibilities away.

With its hunchy hunchiness.

Enough grit to listen to the hunch's critical voice is
painfully necessary. Yet a good cook knows that a
generous dose of salt and humour will help it come
into being.

What a crude task to speak or make in the name of
one which we are not.

Are we not?

What a crude task to make stories of only onesself.

Yet we make stories every day of the world around us.
Much so of our inner worlds too.

We should go on to do that.

With both joy and rigour.

Forgive me for making a story of you. I hope you make
many stories of me too.

The Floating Forest Garden Song

In search of new habitational parameters, biotopes, diverse edges,
it takes a situational eye,
do you prefer fig or apple trees?
To see one like another, isn't quite possible.

I consider them, I observe them.
Pests, it's a human way of thinking,
let the antagonists rise,
your five zones are already at work,
or the fifth in a deep slumber.
Let it do its own thing,
probably not step, but observe.
Grazing, a person that grazes.
You somehow need an economic base,
in the current,
basketry material, farm of the future.

82 Wenn du tust was du liebst, wirst du nie in deinem Leben arbeiten.

Both ways make sense.

They can see what's going on in the fields.

Berries, green leaves, spice, juicy, sour.

It's about making habitats for smaller species.

Continue when it's getting dark,
in the garden Büro,
install a bench,
install a kitchen,
some people are very busy.

We are just running against a wall without opening the eyes.
There were 5 before.

We could be like trees but probably not.
That's probably not us right now,
probably we are like the Springkraut.

Wermut too can get out of control,
it's very bitter.

Yeah.

To extract as much resources as possible,
and reproduce as many seeds as possible.
It's a bit of a silly species sometimes.

The product is also broken.

Look,
the fungi on the trees between the plant roots,

you need them.

Born,
where they are then fattened.

Are 5 years ago.

A forest garden is in the second or the third zone,
and depending on how intensive or extensive you work, it could even be
in the first zone...

helping to transform the organic matter



what's easier to train,
a human or a cat?



1357
2468

Sources

Inspired by artistic field research; including sketches, photographs, film/sound recordings, interviews. As well as various secondary sources to be found in the endnotes and bibliography.

Interviews

The interviews were conducted by Rosie Benn and transcribed by Tabea Prestel, Gregor Glavanovitz and translated by Jana Harrer.

Roland Teufel
Roland's Forest Garden, Lower Austria, Amstetten, Allhartsberg, Wallmersdorf
Amstetten, Austria, June 2019

Anja Bonzheim,
Förderkreis Biozyklisch-Veganer Anbau (Association for the promotion of Biocyclic Vegan Farming)
Skype call, Austria to Germany, October 2019

Hubert Gassner and Stefanie Buchinger,
RinderWahnSinn Sanctuary, Austria, September 2019

Poems

Rosie Benn

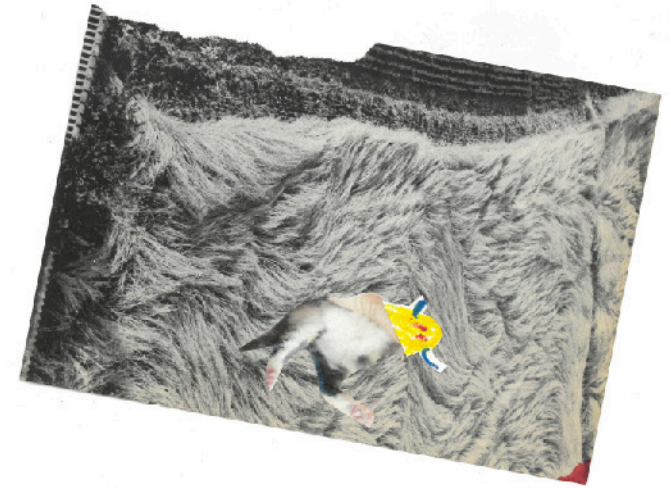
Images

Sketches and collages
by Rosie Benn

Photographs
by Rosie Benn

Cat photographs
Rosie Benn
Daniella Brill
Frédérique Neuts Leroy
Melanie Benn
David Predal

Image Editing assistance
Johanna Folkmann



Endnotes

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master work
by Rosie Benn-Squire
01652913
Art & Science
S 066776
Universität für Angewandte Kunst
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