

Recitation Test



by Chidera Ikewibe

Recitation Test is a poem written by Chidera Ikewibe in response to two exhibitions at Art Windsor Essex: **Black Drones in the Hive** by Deanna Bowen (curated by Crystal Mowry) and **North is Freedom: Descendants of Freedom-Seekers on the Underground Railroad**, with photographs by Yuri Dojc (curated by Dorothy Abbott).

This chapbook and all of the illustrations were created by the Sandwich Visionaries community arts program during a workshop at the John Muir branch of the Windsor Public Library on February 15h, 2025.



Recitation Test is © 2024 Chidera Ikewibe
Cover Design and chapbook layout by Marc Ngui

This chapbook was illustrated by the Sandwich Visionaries (in order of appearance): Jordan, Narges, Anastasia(pgs. 3 & 14), Joanna, Zuma (pgs. 5 &12), Zainab, Japneet, Mojtaba, Marc, Aisan, Lillian, Elya, Daniella, Gabrielle, Nihal and Fei.

Sandwich Visionaries would like to thank
our sponsors and partners:



WINDSOR LAW
Centre for Cities




FUNDING FOR THE INITIATIVE HAS BEEN PROVIDED BY THE

PONT INTERNATIONAL
Gordie Howe
INTERNATIONAL BRIDGE

COMMUNITY BENEFITS PLAN

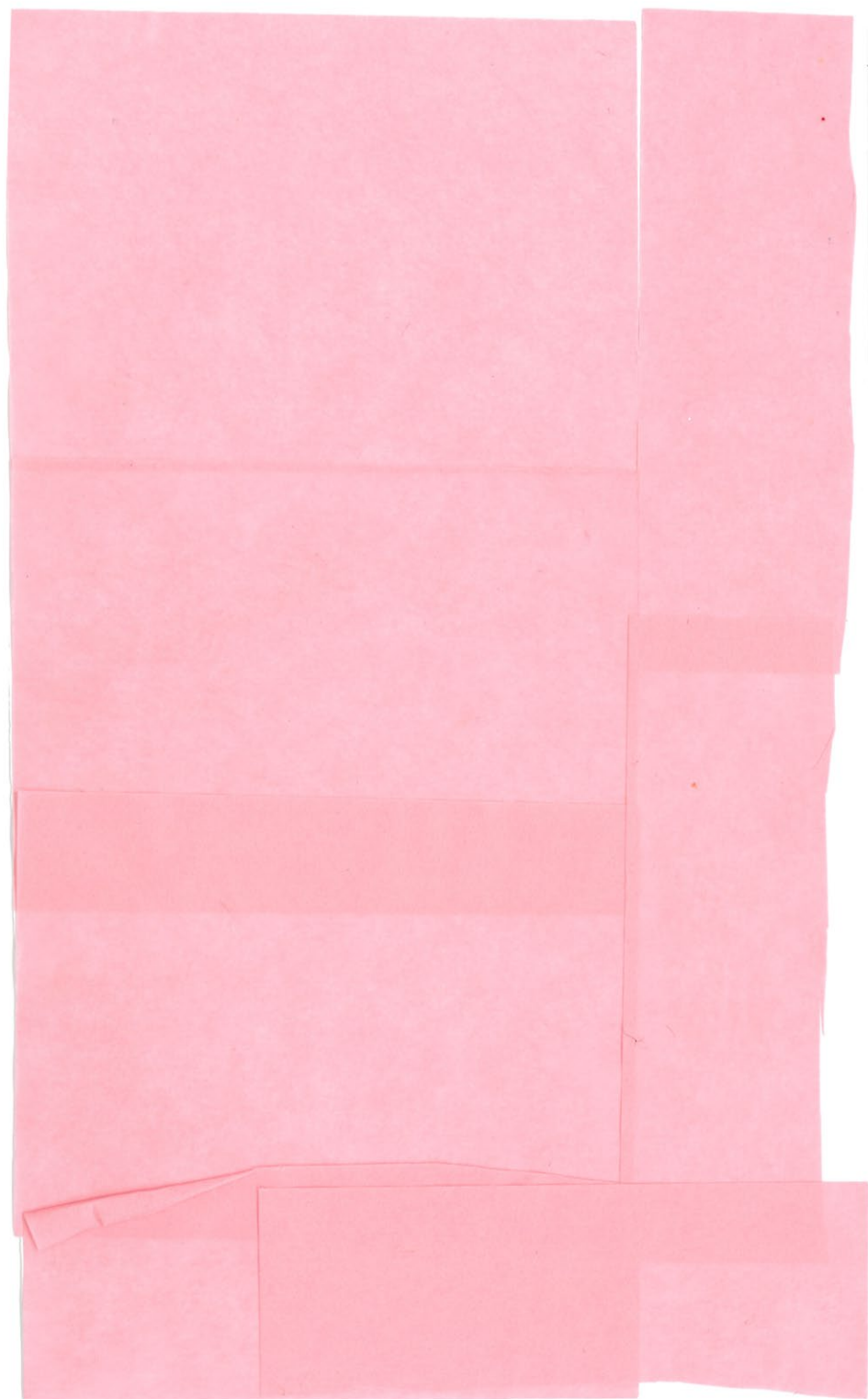
Test



A cartoon illustration featuring a television set on the left and a notepad on the right. The television has a brown screen and a black frame with two legs. The notepad is blue with a black border and contains several wavy lines representing text. A small, round, black object is visible on the notepad.



by Chidera Ikewibe



[illegible]

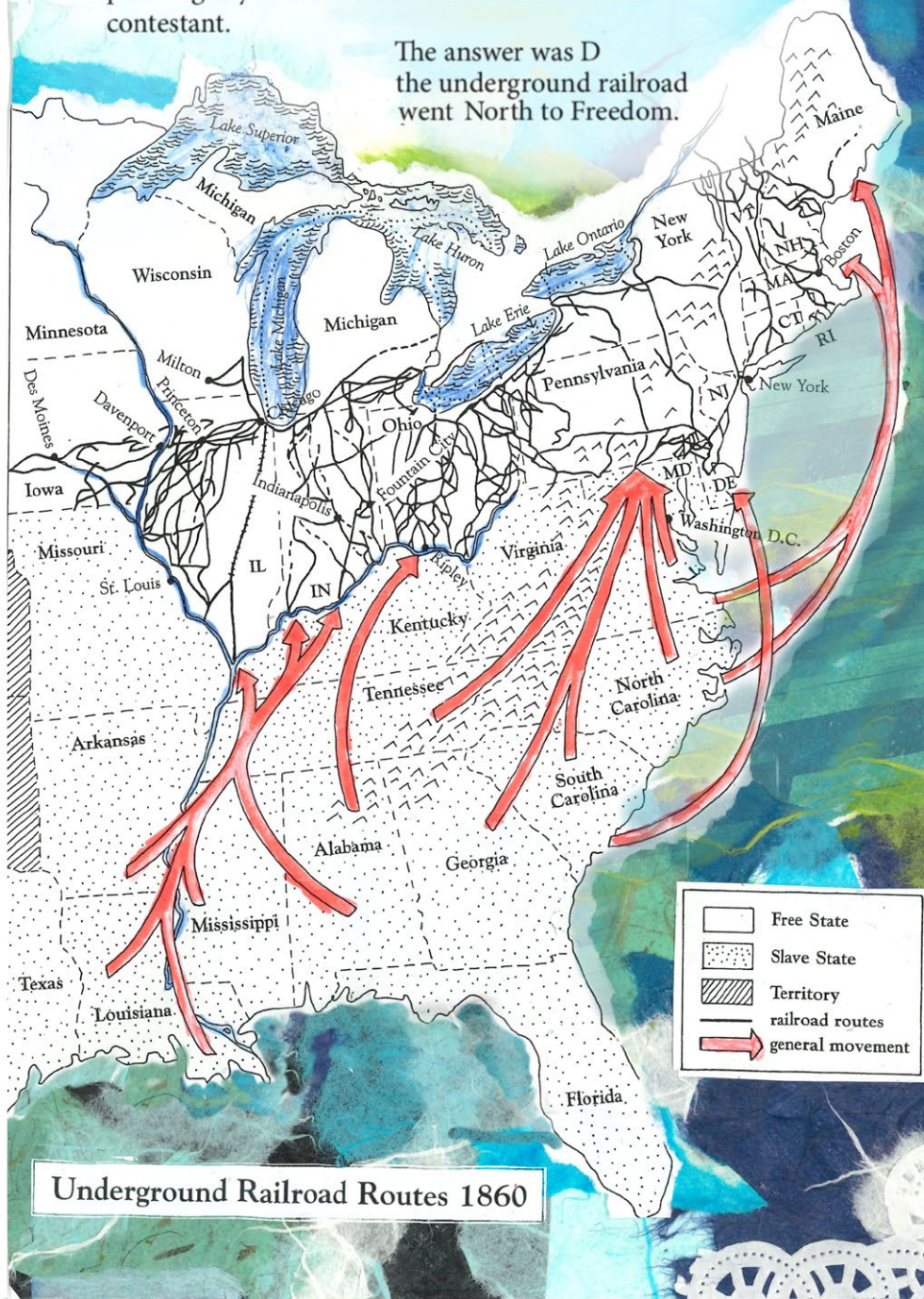
N showing the lands granted to the
an Indians, situated on each side of the
river or Onie, commencing on LAKE ERIE,
about 674910 Acres —
Scale four Miles to an Inch

1874

NOT 1876

Recitation tests, the kind that comes in trivia games on the television followed by finger snapping and pointing -- you know the answer better than the contestant.

The answer was D
the underground railroad
went North to Freedom.



Recitation tests, the kind you take after reading recitation textbooks during recitation lessons and if you are not the subject of the history lesson but the subjected -- the aftermath, the afterthought the ones who remain or never left and if you and if your grandmother's accent does not match up with the textbook there will be no option "E" for you to scratch in, the blank space provided will not be large enough for you to explain oral history.

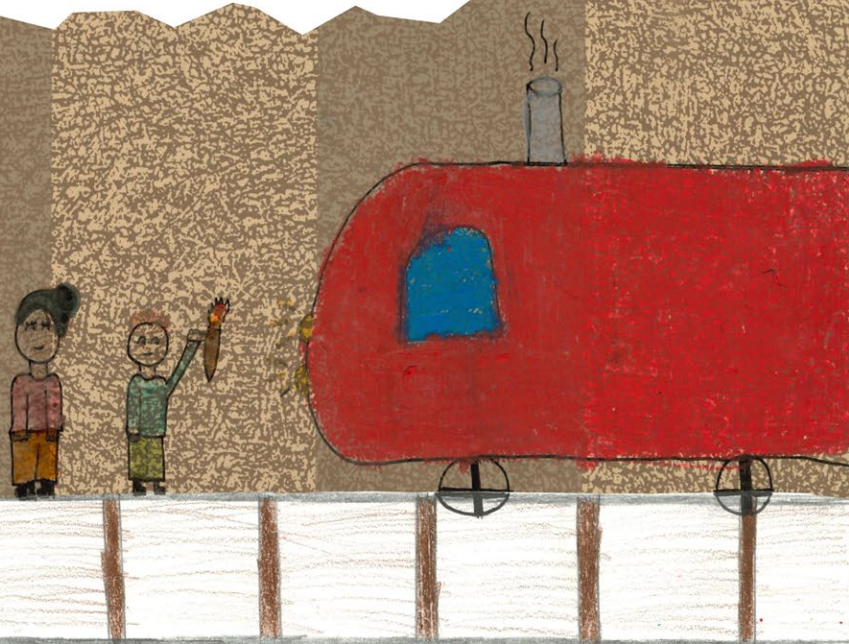
When the essay topic asks you to provide proof, an hour and a half will not be long enough to walk to your grandmother's house and back.

e





Recitation tests, the kind that aims to take the subjective out of the summary, along the way placed us to a footnote in history, the family photo says otherwise.



The representation of the brig *Argentine* from Santos, a vessel employed in the Slave trade, which was captured by Lieutenant Midway, in the River Benue, on the Coast of Africa, on the 15th of July 1841. She was 240 Tons burden & had on board at the time she was taken 225 Slaves. The Slaves were chained by the wrists to the beams of the lower deck, as represented below, there in the fore part were sitting some of the women & children, & in the middle of the deck were a number of men & others with their legs fast under their wrists, as represented in their feet.

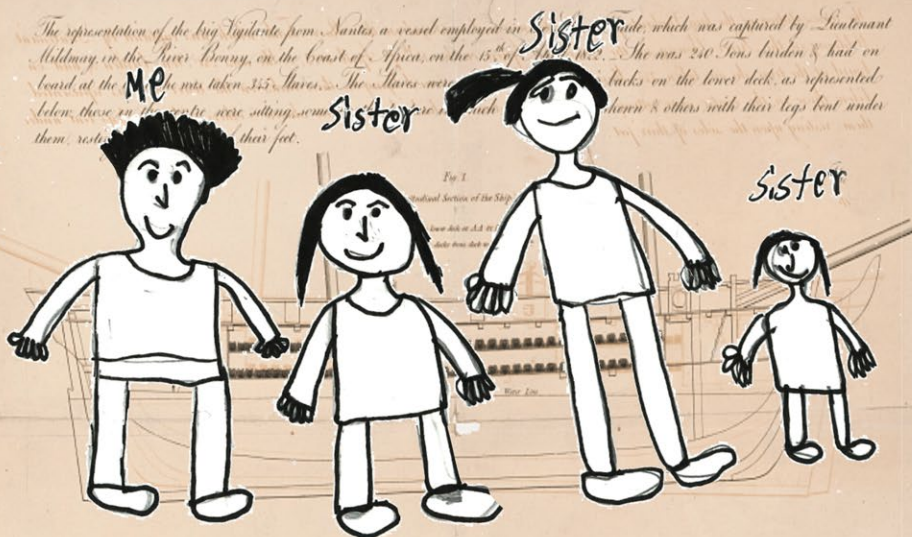
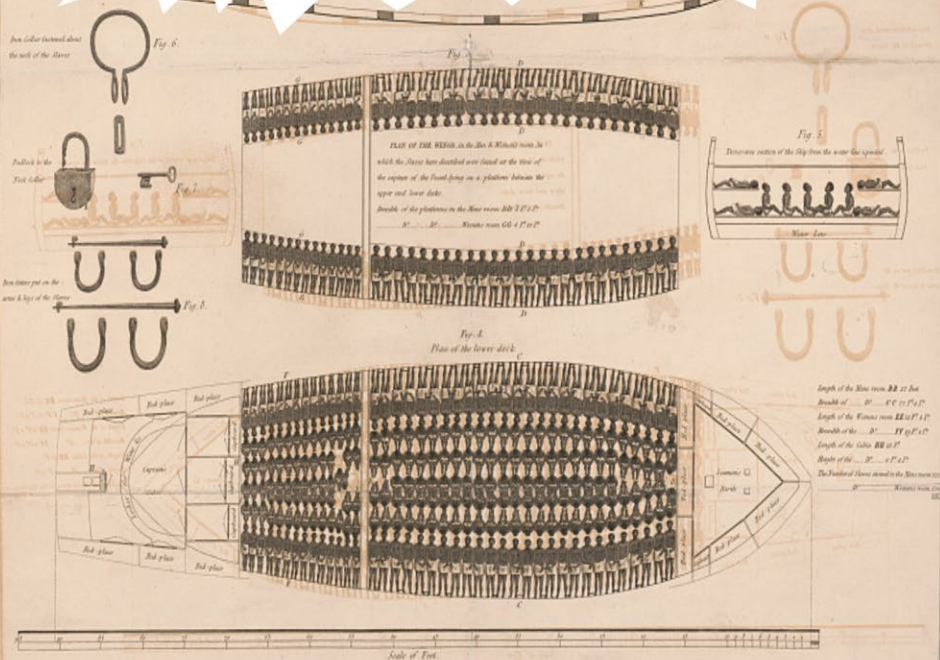


Fig. 1
Radial Section of the Ship

Fig. 2.
Plan of the upper deck.

Explosive Remembrance in muted memory, how many generations of faith persist in black and white what future do they look to beyond the picture frame?



I wave to them and say
the past did not destroy you:



I am the proof--

I am the victim --

I am the jury --

I am the prosecution, the executioner

I am the destroyer of empire

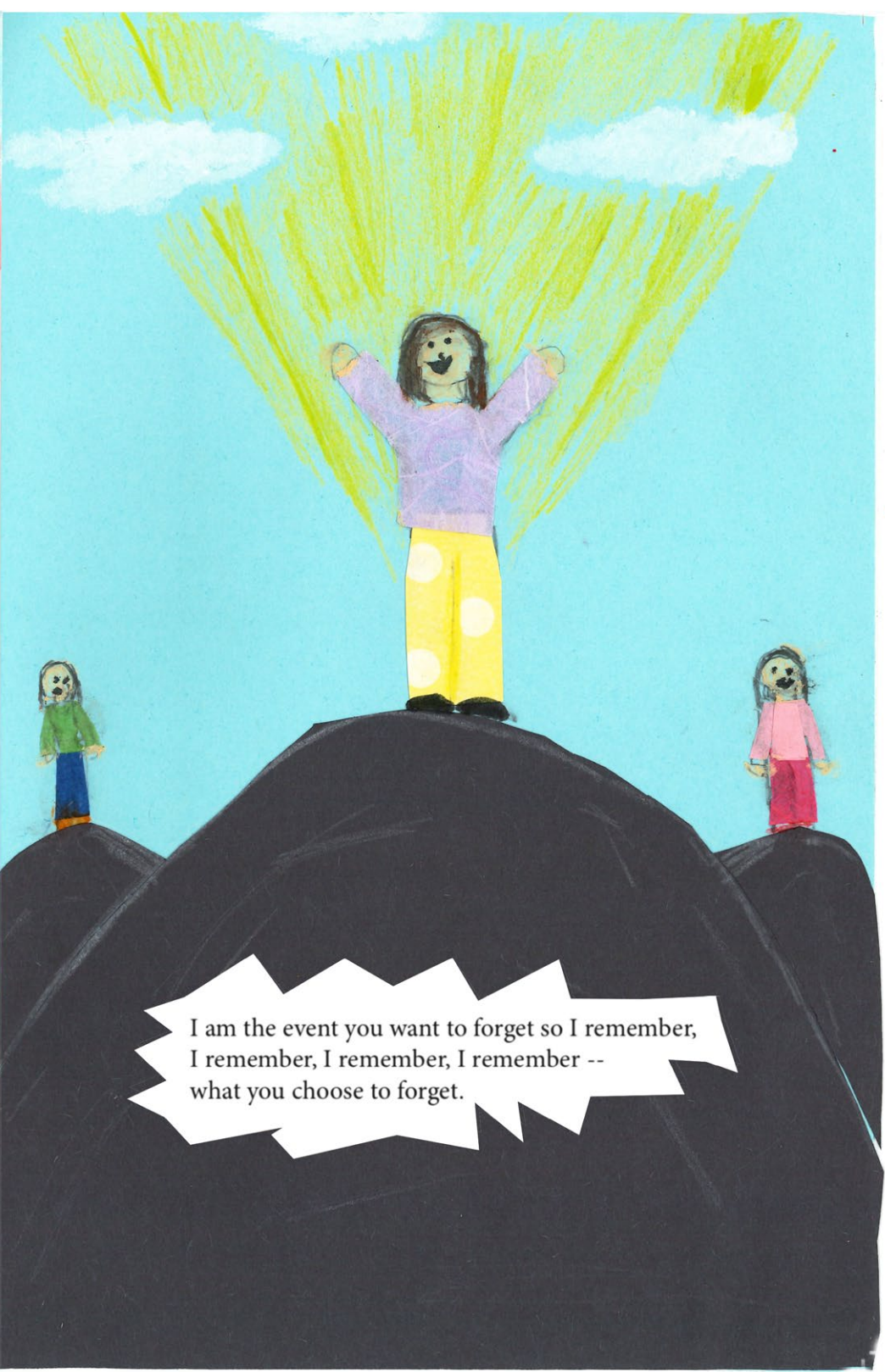
I am the riot, the protest

I am the by product of slave rebellion

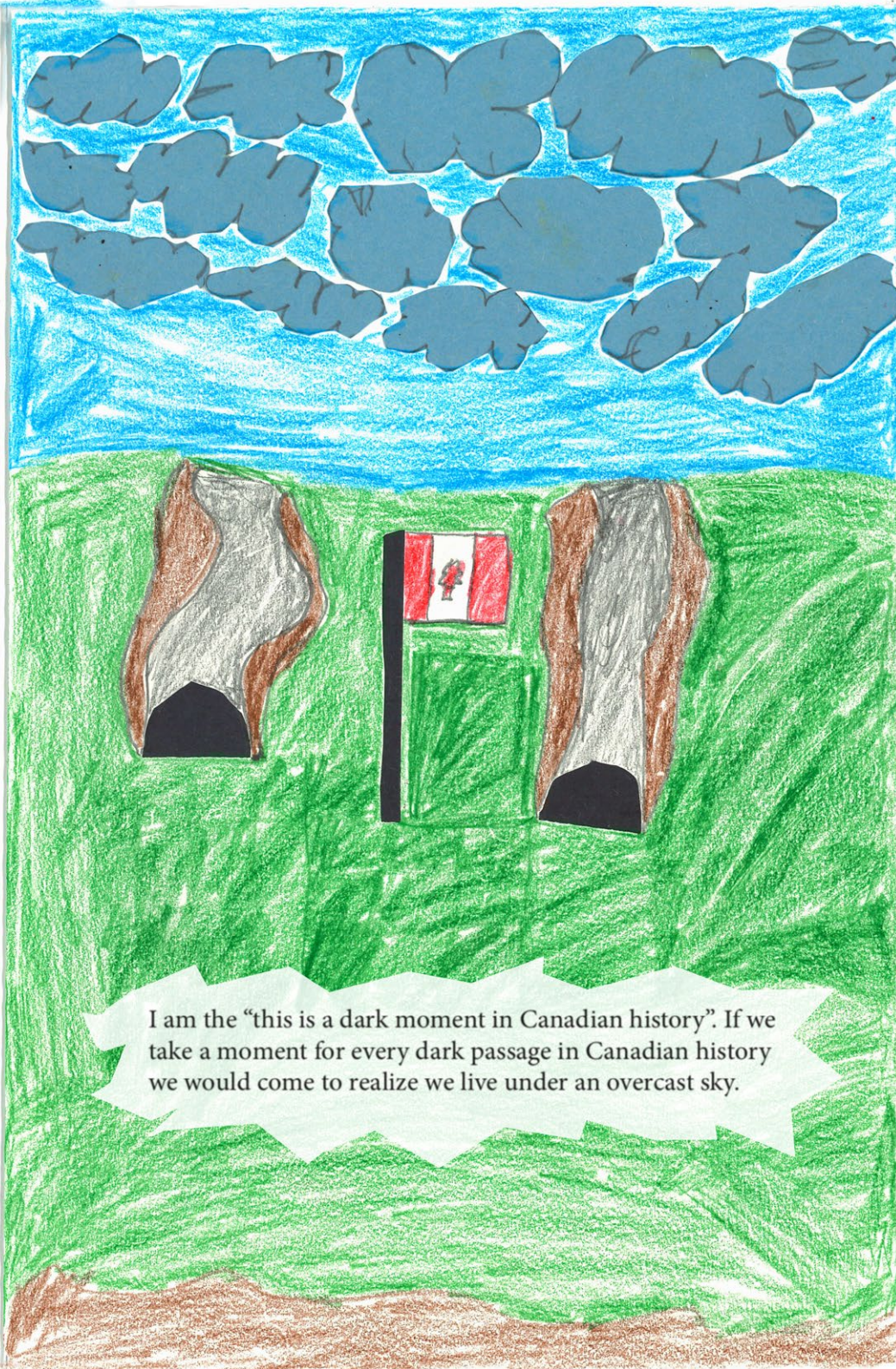
I am the voice cracks in a battle cry,

The tagline, the cutting edge, the cutting off.

We are the truth written in the margin of history textbooks.



I am the event you want to forget so I remember,
I remember, I remember, I remember --
what you choose to forget.



I am the “this is a dark moment in Canadian history”. If we take a moment for every dark passage in Canadian history we would come to realize we live under an overcast sky.

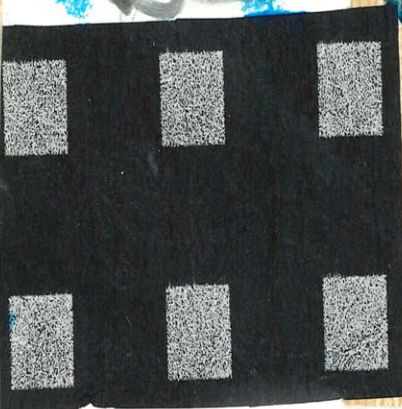
Waboy

LA RIVIERE DU DETROIT
Depuis le Lac Sainte Claire
Jusqu'au Lac Erie
Echelle de Deux Lieues Communes

We live within the pen scratches of amateur cartographers who know the land only top-down and so slice Waawaiatanong along an ever-changing ever flowing river with a water-soluble ink.

Waawaiatanong

Detroit



Provincial Freeman

AND WEEKLY

ADVERTISER.

CHATHAM, CANADA WEST. SATURDAY, JANUARY 3, 1857.

Advertisements

DOCTOR DELANY.

Physician & Surgeon.

Office in the City.

Residence in the City.

Office in the City.

Residence in the City.

Office in the City.

Residence in the City.

Office in the City.

Residence in the City.

Office in the City.

Residence in the City.

Office in the City.

Residence in the City.

Office in the City.

Residence in the City.

Office in the City.

Residence in the City.

Office in the City.

Residence in the City.

Office in the City.

Residence in the City.

Office in the City.

Residence in the City.

Office in the City.

Residence in the City.

Office in the City.

Residence in the City.

Office in the City.

Residence in the City.

Office in the City.

Residence in the City.

Office in the City.

Residence in the City.

Office in the City.

Residence in the City.

Office in the City.

Residence in the City.

Office in the City.

Residence in the City.

Office in the City.

Residence in the City.

Office in the City.

Residence in the City.

Office in the City.

Residence in the City.

Office in the City.

Residence in the City.

Office in the City.

Residence in the City.

Office in the City.

Residence in the City.

Office in the City.

Residence in the City.

Office in the City.

Residence in the City.

Office in the City.

Residence in the City.

Office in the City.

Residence in the City.

Office in the City.

Residence in the City.

Office in the City.

Residence in the City.

Office in the City.

Residence in the City.

Office in the City.

Residence in the City.

Office in the City.

Residence in the City.

Office in the City.

Residence in the City.

Office in the City.

Residence in the City.

Office in the City.

Residence in the City.

Office in the City.

Residence in the City.

THE FUGITIVE

AND STATIONARY SLAVE.

THE FUGITIVE

AND STATIONARY SLAVE.

THE FUGITIVE

AND STATIONARY SLAVE.

THE FUGITIVE

AND STATIONARY SLAVE.

THE FUGITIVE

AND STATIONARY SLAVE.

THE FUGITIVE

AND STATIONARY SLAVE.

THE FUGITIVE

AND STATIONARY SLAVE.

THE FUGITIVE

AND STATIONARY SLAVE.

THE FUGITIVE

AND STATIONARY SLAVE.

THE FUGITIVE

AND STATIONARY SLAVE.

THE FUGITIVE

AND STATIONARY SLAVE.

THE FUGITIVE

AND STATIONARY SLAVE.

THE FUGITIVE

AND STATIONARY SLAVE.

THE FUGITIVE

AND STATIONARY SLAVE.

THE FUGITIVE

AND STATIONARY SLAVE.

THE FUGITIVE

AND STATIONARY SLAVE.

THE FUGITIVE

AND STATIONARY SLAVE.

THE FUGITIVE

AND STATIONARY SLAVE.

THE FUGITIVE

AND STATIONARY SLAVE.

THE FUGITIVE

AND STATIONARY SLAVE.

THE FUGITIVE

AND STATIONARY SLAVE.

THE FUGITIVE

AND STATIONARY SLAVE.

THE FUGITIVE

AND STATIONARY SLAVE.

THE FUGITIVE

AND STATIONARY SLAVE.

THE FUGITIVE

AND STATIONARY SLAVE.

THE FUGITIVE

AND STATIONARY SLAVE.

THE FUGITIVE

AND STATIONARY SLAVE.

THE FUGITIVE

AND STATIONARY SLAVE.

THE FUGITIVE

AND STATIONARY SLAVE.

THE FUGITIVE

AND STATIONARY SLAVE.

THE FUGITIVE

AND STATIONARY SLAVE.

THE FUGITIVE

AND STATIONARY SLAVE.

THE FUGITIVE

AND STATIONARY SLAVE.

THE FUGITIVE

AND STATIONARY SLAVE.

THE FUGITIVE

AND STATIONARY SLAVE.

THE FUGITIVE

AND STATIONARY SLAVE.

THE FUGITIVE

AND STATIONARY SLAVE.

THE FUGITIVE

AND STATIONARY SLAVE.

THE FUGITIVE

AND STATIONARY SLAVE.

We live within the juxtaposition
of the Provincial Freeman
and the Fugitive Slave
come to find that
North to Freedom

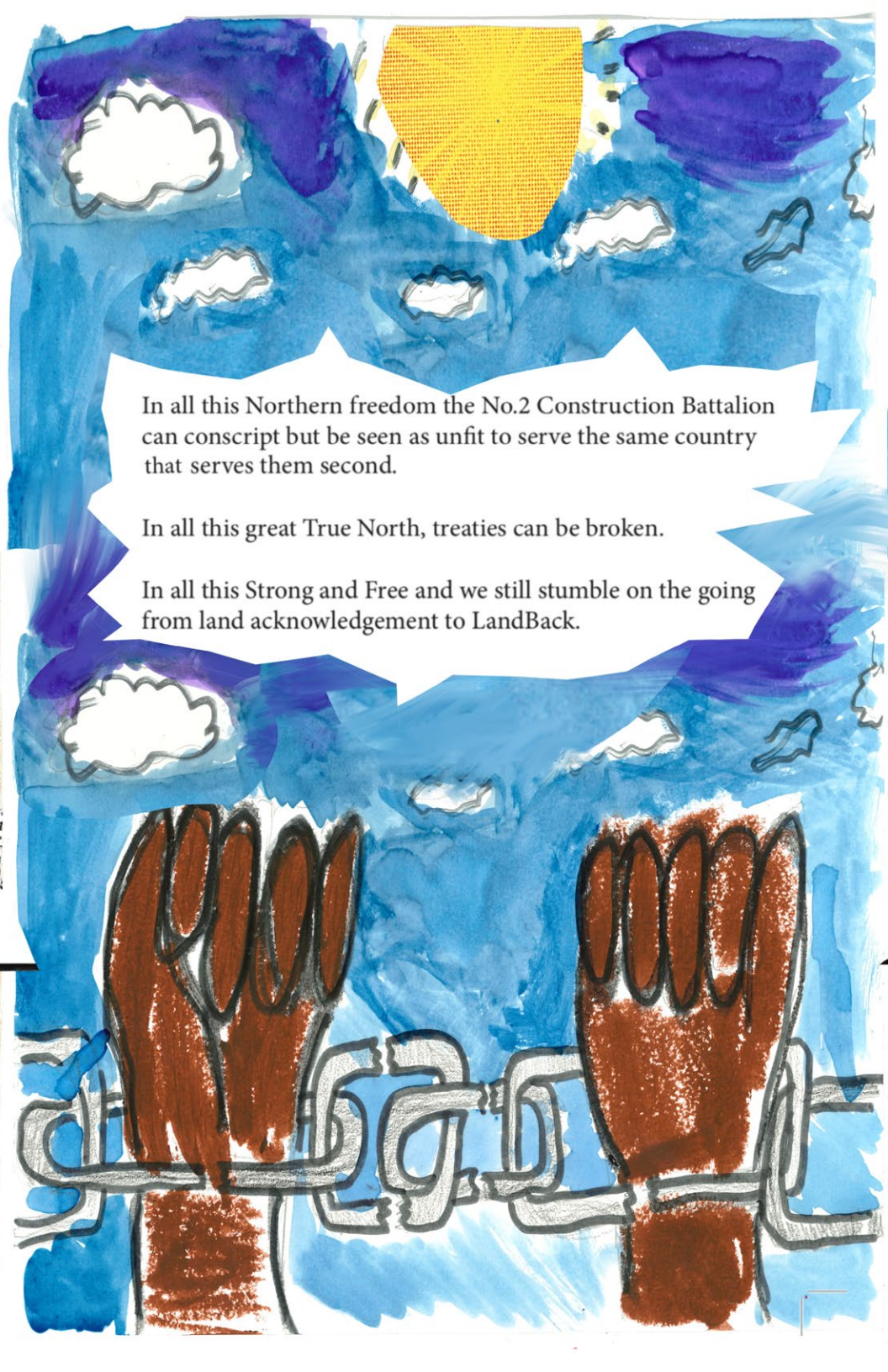
is momentary

until slave catchers
cross over the frozen river
and drags one
south.

FUGITIVE

OF THE

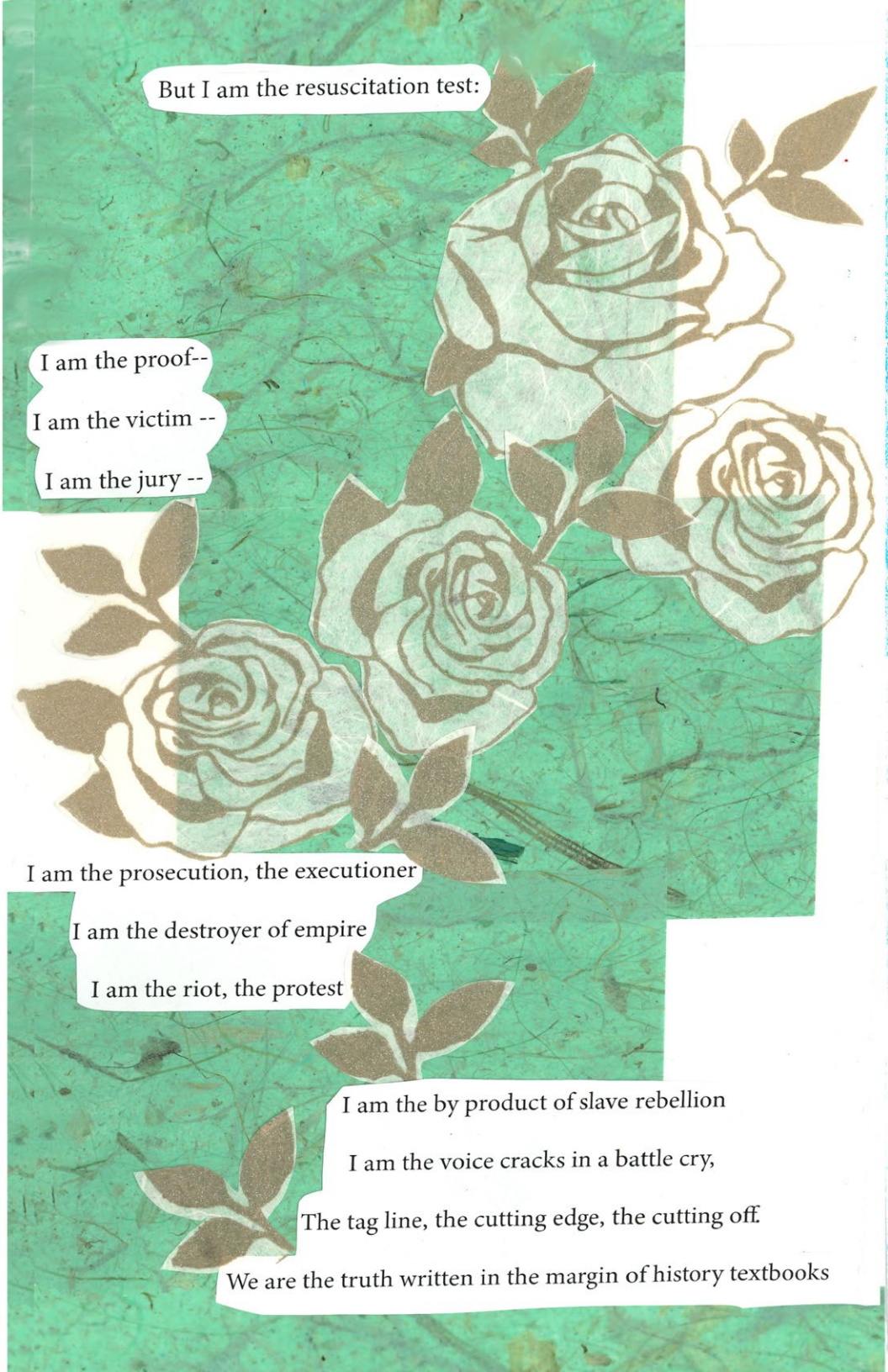
VOICE



In all this Northern freedom the No.2 Construction Battalion
can conscript but be seen as unfit to serve the same country
that serves them second.

In all this great True North, treaties can be broken.

In all this Strong and Free and we still stumble on the going
from land acknowledgement to LandBack.



But I am the resuscitation test:

I am the proof--

I am the victim --

I am the jury --

I am the prosecution, the executioner

I am the destroyer of empire

I am the riot, the protest

I am the by product of slave rebellion

I am the voice cracks in a battle cry,

The tag line, the cutting edge, the cutting off

We are the truth written in the margin of history textbooks

I am the event you want to forget so I remember,
I remember, I remember, I remember --
I can forge my own freedom.

I rem ember,
I remem ber,
I reme mber,
I reme mber.



Chidera Ikewibe or CHI.IKE is an Igbo Nigerian Canadian born artist and poet whose work often combines her experiences and cultural identity. Her works often incorporate NSIBIDI — an ideographic/pictographic writing system from the south-eastern region of Nigeria. Chidera is also the Youth Poet Laureate for the city of Windsor. When she is not making art she can be found listening to Kendrick Lamar, Kojey Radical, Fela Kuti and FKA Twigs who she cites as poetic inspirations. Her interests span from Third Cinema to African Anarchism and Anti-colonial movements.

As an artist and community-builder, Chidera's areas of interest are race and ethnicity, Anti-Black racism, institutional decolonization, poetry as performance, spoken-word radio, Black Diaspora, playwriting, mask making, and mixed media. She is a graduate of the University of Windsor with a Bachelor of Arts (BA) in psychology and a BA in English and creative writing.



I am the event you want to forget

So I remember,

I remember, I remember, I remember --

I can forge my own freedom.

Chidera Ikewibe

