

# AA-BA

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## THE WORLD OF ILLUSION

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Chapter A-1      **THE CLOUDS** (continued ...)

Chapter B-1      **THE MASKS**



Aa encroached upon their little circle, unnoticed of course. It placed itself right in the middle of the blue between the pensive heads. Brrr ... it certainly was cold.

The blue within which Aa now found itself was crowded with thoughts, ideas, words, calculations, explanations, theories, definitions, statements, and above all else questions. Aa found out soon enough that its positioning in this bubbling and bursting frigid cloud was all wrong because it was right in the line of fire.

Thoughts were constantly being created inside the three heads and then wham, out they went into space, missiles pointed at one member of the trio.



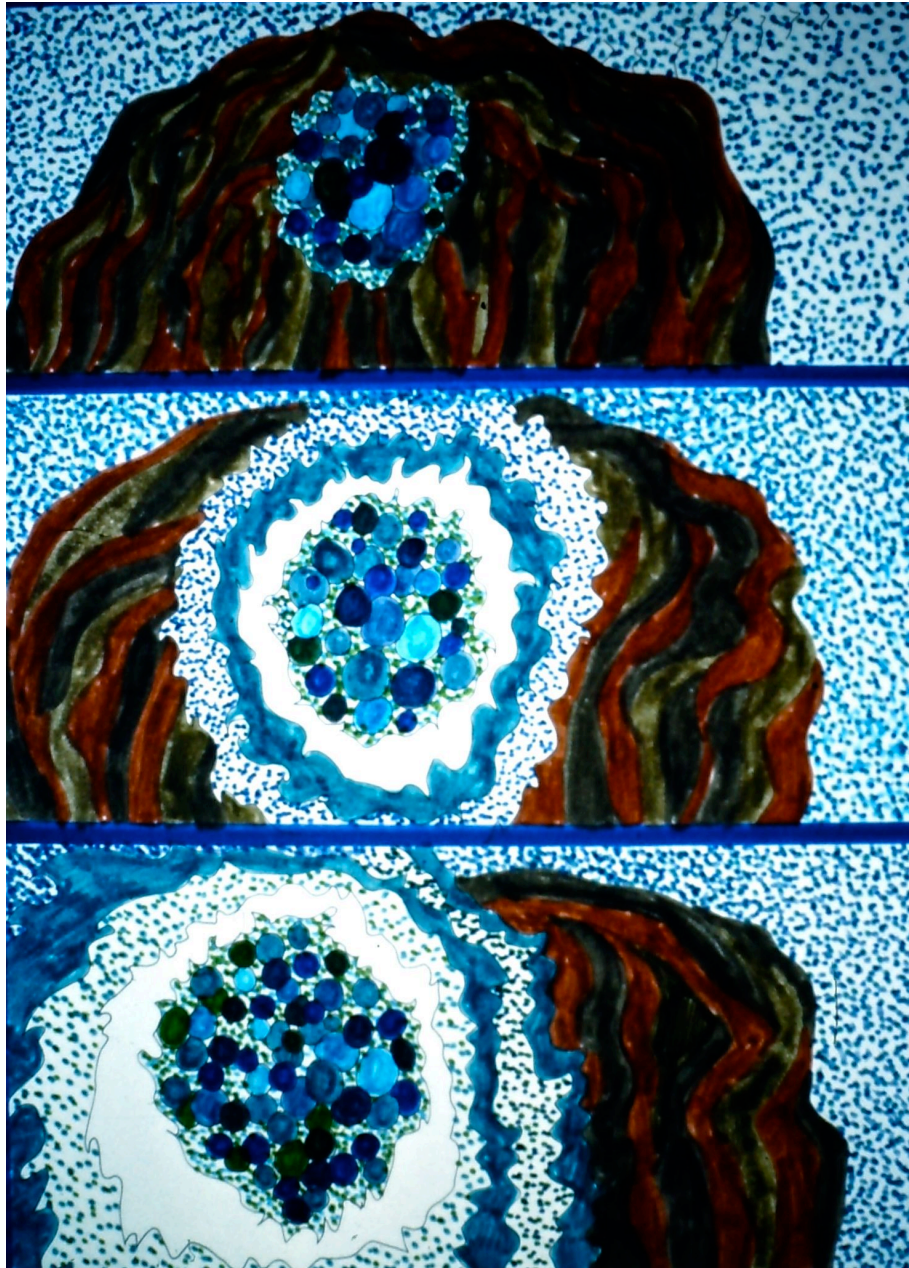


Sometimes a pause would follow such a torpedo. The brains would the contain all the energy within them ... manipulating it, twisting it, playing with it, rephrasing it ... then bam! The words would begin to fly once more, but this time with much more gusto and strength.

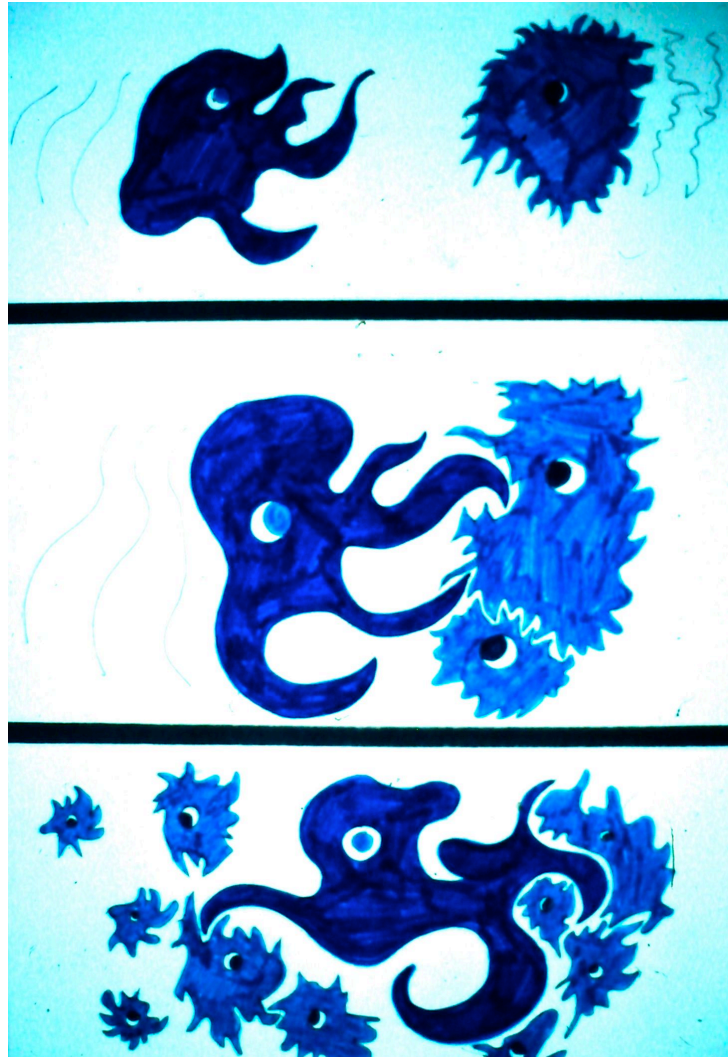




There were no pauses now; the thoughts flew swiftly and incessantly. As they left the head of one, they would infest that of another, pick up more weight, and then fly out again. The thought would assume a new form or shape, growing in size and bulk each time it emerged anew from a head.



Sometimes two would depart simultaneously and there would be a clash, a difference. The building would cease temporarily and a weighing of thought forms would follow. The heavier and stronger one would then proceed to shatter the weaker into incoherent pieces.



The shaping and creating would start again. Poor Aa was right in the middle of all these flying thoughts, conceptions, and ideas. It stayed despite the discomfort – this was the only way to learn about the blue cloud.



Upon closer scrutiny Aa could still find no warmth, emotion, or moisture. It was very cold, dry, and exact within this bluish air. Aa was amazed at the mathematical precision that surrounded it. All the pieces fitted each other perfectly. The shapes would grow and grow, then chaos would occur – the shapes would change as the pieces were rearranged and a new form appeared. It was definitely a very difficult, demanding, and involving game that required a lot of training, skill, and background. The players had to have a lot of pieces to play with – the better padded they were at the beginning, the more of a chance there was of winning the transitional phase of the game.



No matter how refined and exclusive, this was still only a game. Aa saw that these were only forms that were created, forms to hold something indefinable and indescribable. The something was hidden more and more as the game went on. All the thoughts used only surrounded this something, they played with it, playing around it. But the purpose of the game was to win by strength and strength meant weight and padding. As a game it was fine but as a means of finding truth and essence it was a failure.

Since Aa was not appropriately trained for the event, it could find no meaning in anything said. It could not follow the visual patterns too far either because they became too deep and complex. How they intertwined and twisted was indecipherable after a while. Aa saw that the players themselves no longer knew just what they were throwing at each other. It became a totally meaningless occupation. The trio was lost in the forms, the diagrams, in the maze of thought they had created. They were drowning in their privately created ocean of symbols and words within the deep blue water of the blue cloud.





Aa withdrew confused, not knowing what it was thinking, or should it be thinking at all, and if so what was it supposed to think ... maybe it could ... or then again ... however ... on the other hand ... in other words ... whereas ... nevertheless ... perhaps ... but then again ... Aa went along totally perplexed.

Its mind squeaked with effort; It was trying to find the answer to an unintelligible question that it could not even name – trying to verbalize a nonexistent question ... and a nonexistent answer. Aa could feel the mechanics of its mind working, struggling to understand, to explain. Poor Aa had been too strongly influenced by those infamous three. Now it too was playing the game for which its mind was not suited. Aa was straining a head that it did not have, the head was a thought form ... a thought form playing with thought forms, how utterly ridiculous. Someone had to save Aa from this senseless straining of a nonexistent head - of a concept.

Aa was now going through a park – not looking around but calculating and measuring with words. It glanced quite casually across the park. Suddenly the game ceased as Aa saw a white cloud hovering over the heads of two beings. It was saved. Aa hurried across the grass toward the two. By now it had even forgotten the existence of the mind game.

The novelty of the white cloud was overwhelming: What a find! This was the first cloud of this sort that Aa had seen over two creatures at once. But what a strange pair they were.





One was a little blue-eyed girl and the other a strange being that had a body that looked Illushan but somehow just wasn't. The two sat and stared at one another. They were communicated on a very high level – an unusual one here on Illusha. The white cloud seemed immense as it glistened over them. How wise they were in comparison to the other creatures around them. Gradually, as it observed them, Aa began to feel a link with the being beside the little girl, as if they had met before. Strange ... the creature felt something too for upon communicating with the girl's inner essence it began to generate more energy. The cloud began to glow. It was the first time anyone had even appeared to sense Aa's presence. It was exhilarating for Aa to have this one do so. Yet suddenly and quite abruptly the cloud evaporated as another creature appeared on the scene. Aa sighed and left them. It looked back once. The unique one had gotten up and was walking away out of the nest also. It had its back turned to Aa. Somehow Aa knew that they would meet again. Aa too left the nest ... it had seen all it wanted to see.

# THE MASKS

## [CHAPTER B-1]

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Ba grew up to be a wandering soul also. At about the same time was Aa, it decided to visit an Illushan nest as well. Soon it was to find itself in the same place at the same time as Aa. Instead of drifting towards its destination, it walked, thinking about the creatures living there. Ba did not really know what to expect from those beings; could they be trusted, would it be safe, what did they look like, were they friendly, how did they communicate, or did they communicate at all? All these questions gnawed at Ba's mind. Ba too remembered all the strange rumors it had heard about the Illushan race from the land and sea. Ba was afraid but it went on with its plan anyway, being led on by its curiosity.

As Ba came closer and closer to its destination, more and more sounds could be heard coming from the distance. Along with the growing noise Ba's fear of what lay ahead grew as well. The noise continued to grow louder still. Ba listened with interest hoping for some clue as to the ones it was soon to meet face to face. That is what Ba thought was going to happen not knowing that it was to face a little more than just faces. Anyway, Ba listened; there was a lot to be heard. There were a number of ways to go about this task of listening. One could either focus in on individual sounds or else hear the prevailing drone. Ba heard both ways, thereby getting a more interesting and complete concert. When concentrating on the undercurrent, the drone, Ba was amazed at the loudness.



The harder it listened the louder and more powerful did it grow till it resembled a tremendous roar that could be made only by a powerful force of nature in action. This deep monotonous hum seemed to grow louder and louder till it filled and occupied the very air one breathed. When this eerie music became too intense for Ba to endure, it would simply begin to dissect the sound and therefore listen in the other of the two ways. At first this method was fine. Ba heard one meek and innocent little sound at a time. It swam forward and backward in space sweetly singing the one melody it could call its own. But this method became disturbing also since Ba noticed that the harder it concentrated on the one sound, the more subtlety and variety did it acquire. Then the sound would divide into two new ones born as a continuation of their parent. These in turn would divide also till Ba had so many sounds to choose from and keep track of that it could not keep ahead of this game. There were far too many choices to choose from. Ba became frustrated and gave up.

It proceeded to block off all exterior sounds and listened to its own interior thought instead. But these interior sounds were disturbing also. What it had heard triggered off a lot more fear in Ba. Whatever could produce such a lot of noise certainly must have quite a bit of power in it. Deep in thought it hardly realized that the surface upon which it had been walking was not the same any longer. Not luscious cool and soft, the ground on which Ba stepped was now hot, dry, and very hard ... Ba was already in the nest.

Abruptly Ba's ears reopened to the exterior – what a shock they received. Ba found itself right in the midst of the drone and the millions of individual sounds. The

noise was incredible; but nothing made any sense at all. As a matter of fact the noise was very destructive – it induced nothing but tension and anger in the nest. The very ground on which one walked shook and trembled with frustration. So much was stifled and suppressed. Ba looked down at the struggling grass trying to force its way between the rigid slabs of concrete.



Whatever the Illushans had created was arrogant – having no consideration for life, burying it deep under thousands of pounds of stone and cement, hidden ... withheld ... Ba wondered how life could survive here; it must hide or do something to protect itself. It would not be safe at all for it to show itself. The key to survival seemed to be camouflage - the deception of others as to your true nature in order not to be hurt. "The better you hide the more you achieve here, the more successful and

popular you are. The less honest you are the more others like you because you never reveal them – you don't unmask them ... unmask them, hmmm..." thought Ba to itself. It then lifted its gaze and looked ahead where there seemed to be a gathering of some sort.

Ba approached the first Illushans it was to see in its life. To its surprise they resembled its own appearance to a large extent. There was a marked difference though ... the beings hid their life; their true faces with masks.





How strange and funny it all seemed ... to Ba they all looked the same but they tried so hard to appear different, to be individual. You could therefore be either better or worse than everyone else; it was impossible to be equal. Ba was amazed at the fake facades it saw. They believed all the lies and illusions they had created too! Layers and layers of these masks stood upon the face of each and every person.



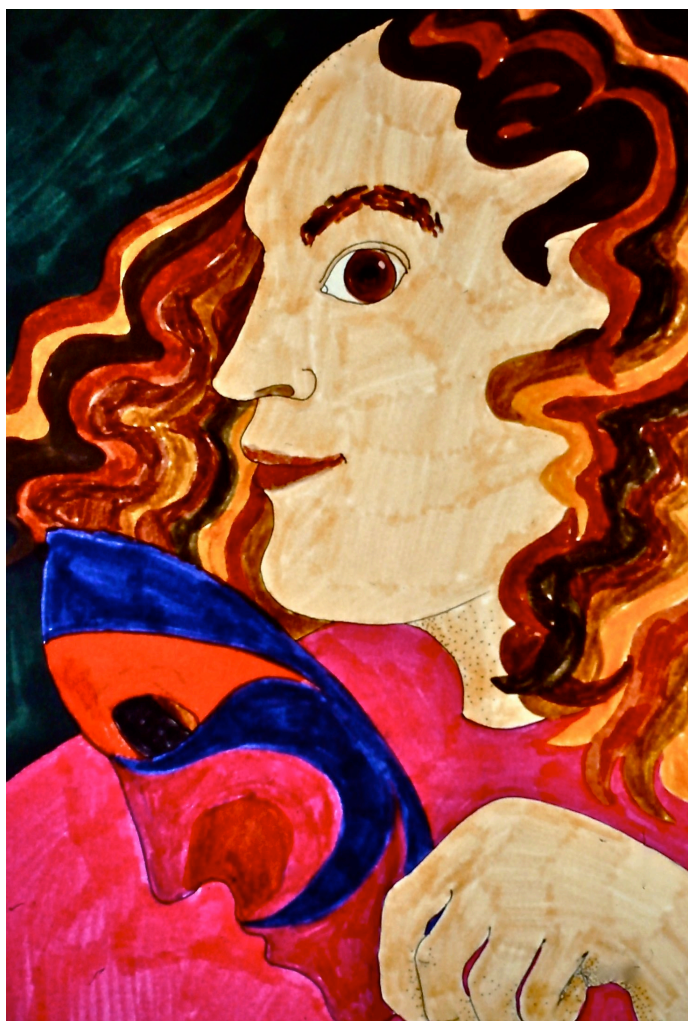
Some, especially the females of the species had even more screens on. They painted their faces on top of the numerous disguises already there.



Ba noticed how they all took pride in themselves and the masks they had acquired. The ones whose masks were most refined and perfected took to ruining their fellows' faulty ones with delight – finding holes in them through which to get at the hearts of their bearers. “How difficult it must be for everyone, the weak ones are constantly scarred by not having the time to gather their strength and burn their confinements from within, while the strong ones, the ones better covered are so safe from discovery that when they are ready to discard their masks, they use the designated energy to improve the ones they already have and get their hands on new ones instead ...” thought Ba to itself.



“They get so used to living inside of their castles that they don’t want any changes. It is the ones in the middle that are the lucky ones ... they are neither too strong nor too weak. When they will be ready they will be able to let go of the masks and will be capable of living safely without them ... yes, they are not attached and are not afraid – they can succeed ...”.



As Ba looked at the specimens here before it, it also came to notice that they never looked into each other’s eyes. They would look away quite rapidly if you dared to gaze in that direction. The strong ones and the weak ones were most



afraid of this contact ... the middle ones not as much. Ba noticed that they were all gesticulating and contorting their mouths, lips, and tongues in very exotic and varying ways.



Out of these mouths came sounds – the very sounds that made up a large percent of the nest’s noise. Yet with all this vocal dancing some communication must result, no? No! Only rarely. Ba listened and listened but could understand nothing. The Illushans were composing music, not exchanging meaningful thoughts. Words and tongues were not the instruments to use to effectively reach someone. Ba could not understand why, but it knew that in order to really communicate these creatures must look into each other’s eyes. But that is exactly what they would not do.

Ba decided to choose one of the Illushans and look deep within it; look past the masks, through the eyes, to its heart. Ba glanced over at the miniature crowd of

such very busy and important looking Illushans, trying to find a victim for its little scheme. It searched eagerly but everyone was so preoccupied and did not seem to want to be disturbed. They were all divided into small groups. The strong ones were always surrounded by swarms of meek weak ones who stood by in admiration and at attention to these heroes of theirs.



But lo and behold, there, way in the corner of the expanse of green lawn, sat one Illushan alone. What a find indeed! It was a little girl, pensive and pretty.





Ba moved closer to the child. She had beautiful auburn hair that hung in thick locks about her face. The face was as all others – masked – but the camouflage here was still fresh and delicate, with only one or two layers to it.



Ba, although excited and impatient, managed to approach slowly and with caution. The girl did not move, she sat and stared. Ba felt that it would be safe to meet her.



It looked around once more to make sure. No one looked threatening, so Ba walked right up to the girl smiling reassuringly. The little one looked up at Ba with huge blue eyes ...



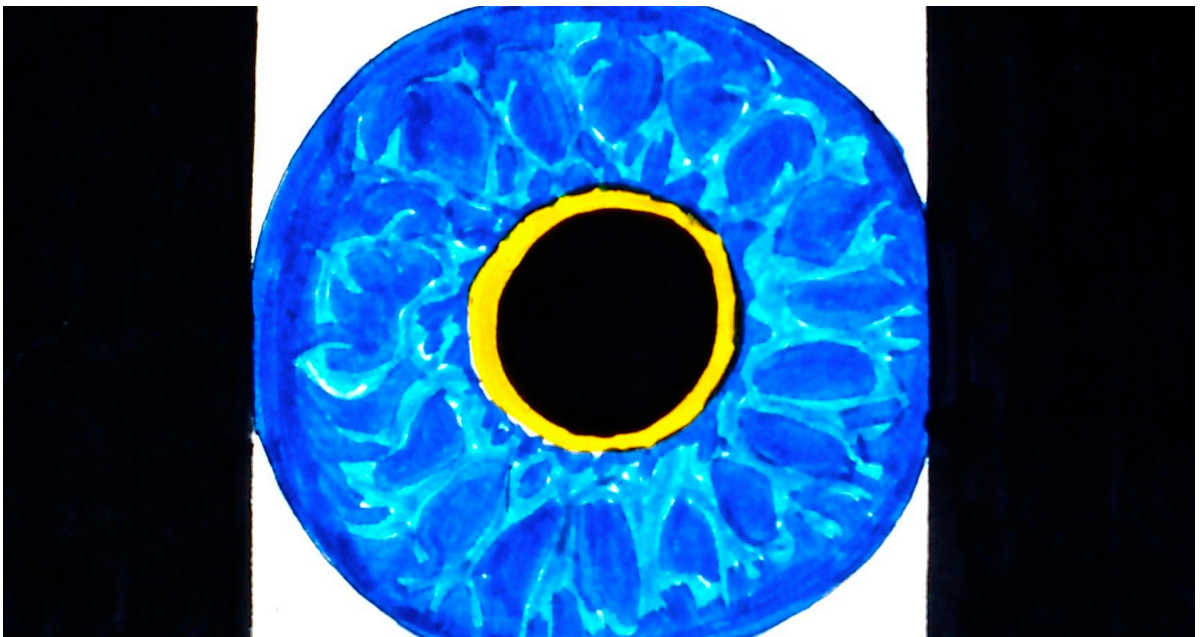
“Perfect “ thought Ba, “... what promising eyes.” Ba’s smile must have been very convincing because the girl slowly curled the corners of her mouth and then tugged at them till her whole face broke into a radiant smile.



With such an invitation Ba could not resist, but sat down immediately. The two new friends were at eye level to each other. The smiles continued to play with the faces that they now commanded. Ba and the little girl just stared at each other, or that is what it looked like to everyone around them. In the meantime, like a flash of lightening, the girl had already told Ba all that was important. What a penetrating gaze she had ... in no time she was deep inside of Ba and Ba was sinking into the girl through her eyes. Already it flowed through the blue forest where all the twigs twisted towards the black at its center.



Ba swept across as fast as possible towards the middle.



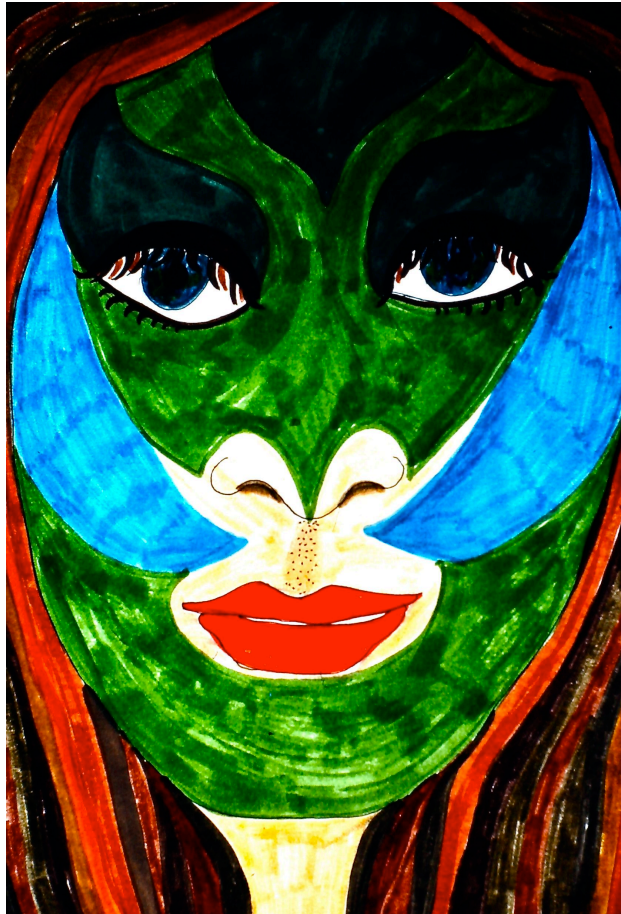
It was being pulled into the abyss. It was on the outer rim now, a rim of gold that surrounded the hole.





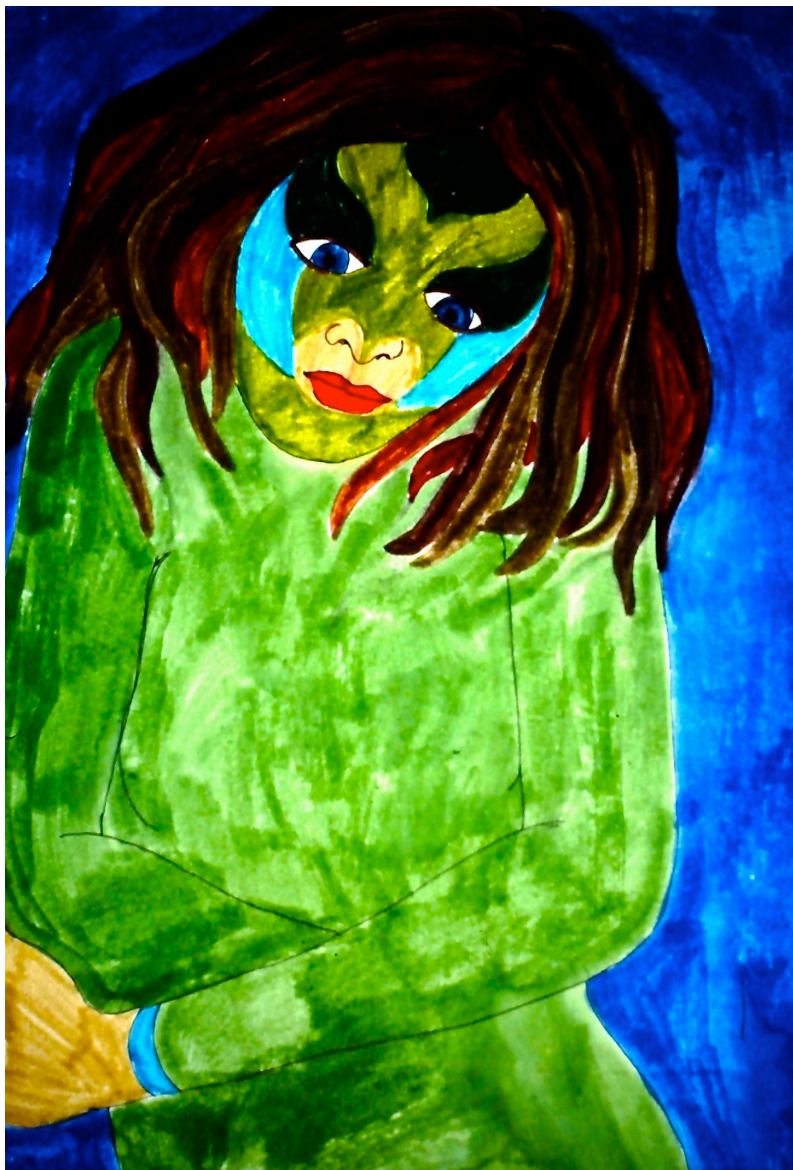
Then it happened. Ba leaped or was hurled into the center of the girl's dilated pupil. Once there, Ba was in complete communion and oneness – not only with the girl but also with something beyond. Ba felt a strange emptiness – as if part of itself was missing. Little did it know that that very part, Aa, was so near at this point. Actually Aa was right beside Ba now. Ba felt as if it had been in this blackness before, but had not felt as it did now. Ba was remembering Aa, its other half. The recollection was becoming more and more vivid ... Ba began to tremble.

Suddenly the tension broke. Ba was tossed out of the pupil, through the golden ring, then the blue trees, and finally back into the daylight, the park, where it sat, and the presence of the blue-eyed girl. She had turned her exquisite head and now peered up at an astonishingly attractive woman well equipped with several masks and a good layer of paint on top of them all.



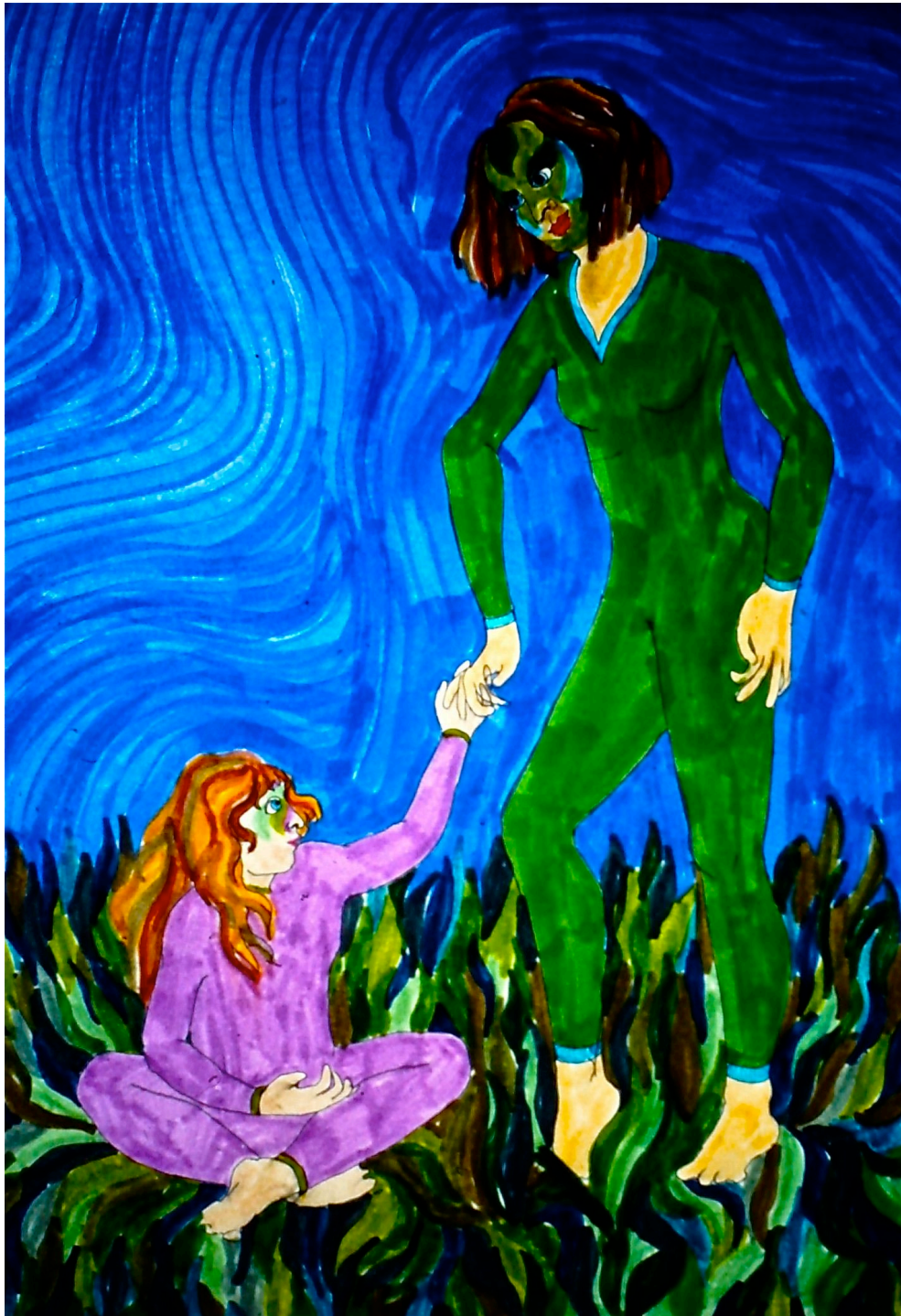
She, the mother, smiled an elegant smile. From half dropped eyelids and through drooping eyelashes she observed. Her eyes were focused on her daughter and then on Ba but she did not seem to see either. She dropped open her red lips and spoke ... “Sama is deaf and dumb: She cannot hear, nor can she speak. Her understanding of both you and me is very weak.” Ba stared at this gorgeous creature, watching how she fluttered her eyelids as she moved her lips. Ba did not really know what she had said but knew that it was not true. The phrase had been very musical, pretty and pleasing to the ears. Ba turned to the little girl; she smiled and laughed. “How strange; this little one communicates without even moving her lips and yet she does it so much better than her mother” thought Ba.

Meanwhile the woman looked down at Ba in an uneasy way, thinking that maybe Ba too was so unfortunate as to be lacking the gifts of communication – hearing and speech – as Sama was. At the same time Ba was pondering upon the fact that this poor woman was lacking the gift of communion that the little girl Sama had. Time passed. Ba now stared at the lady hoping to see if maybe she could at least try to understand. The mother grew fidgety and evasive. Her eyes were being threatened by this silent spy.

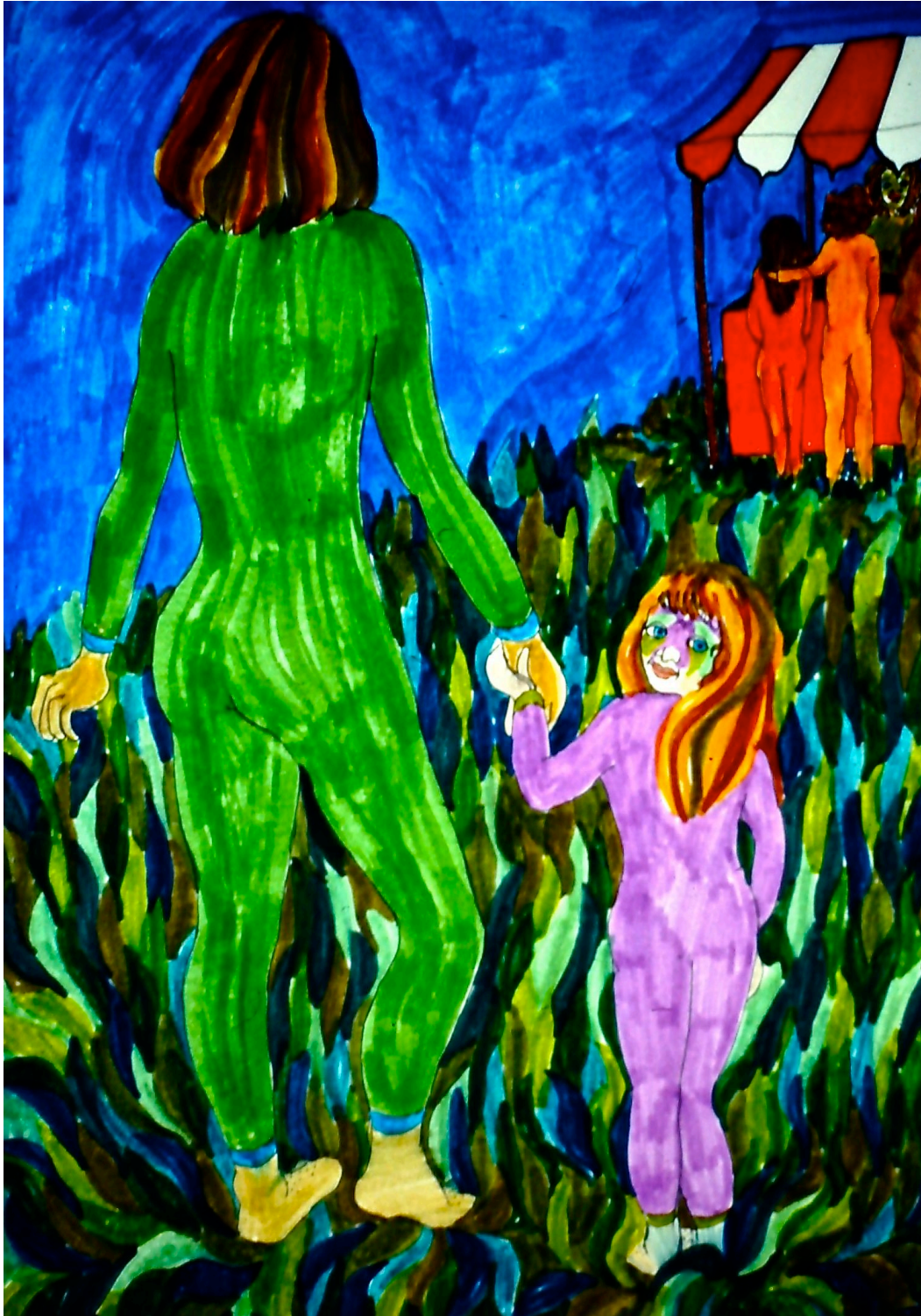




She took but a moment to grab her wits, and then emitting a breathy sound from between her lips, she grasped Sama's hand, pulling her abruptly from the grass and away from the penetrating and possible dangerous eyes of Ba.



She turned and walked briskly and surely towards the gathering of Illushans, the food stand.



Sama looked back at Ba sitting there alone and smiled one last and lonely time before going back to her pensive and melancholy expression of before ... this time maybe never to come out of it again. Ba laughed lovingly at her, she laughed back. Then both turned away. The smile ran away because the faces would not respond anymore.

Ba peered at the grass beneath as it fluttered in the breeze feeling its own pain as it wavered in the wind also. Like the grass, it was at the mercy of the wind, of everything that was around it. Ba got up. Never looking back it left the nest, the liars, the masks, the noisemakers ... but among them all, Ba left Sama – Sama alone to face her fate. Who knows, maybe they would meet again one day ... maybe ...