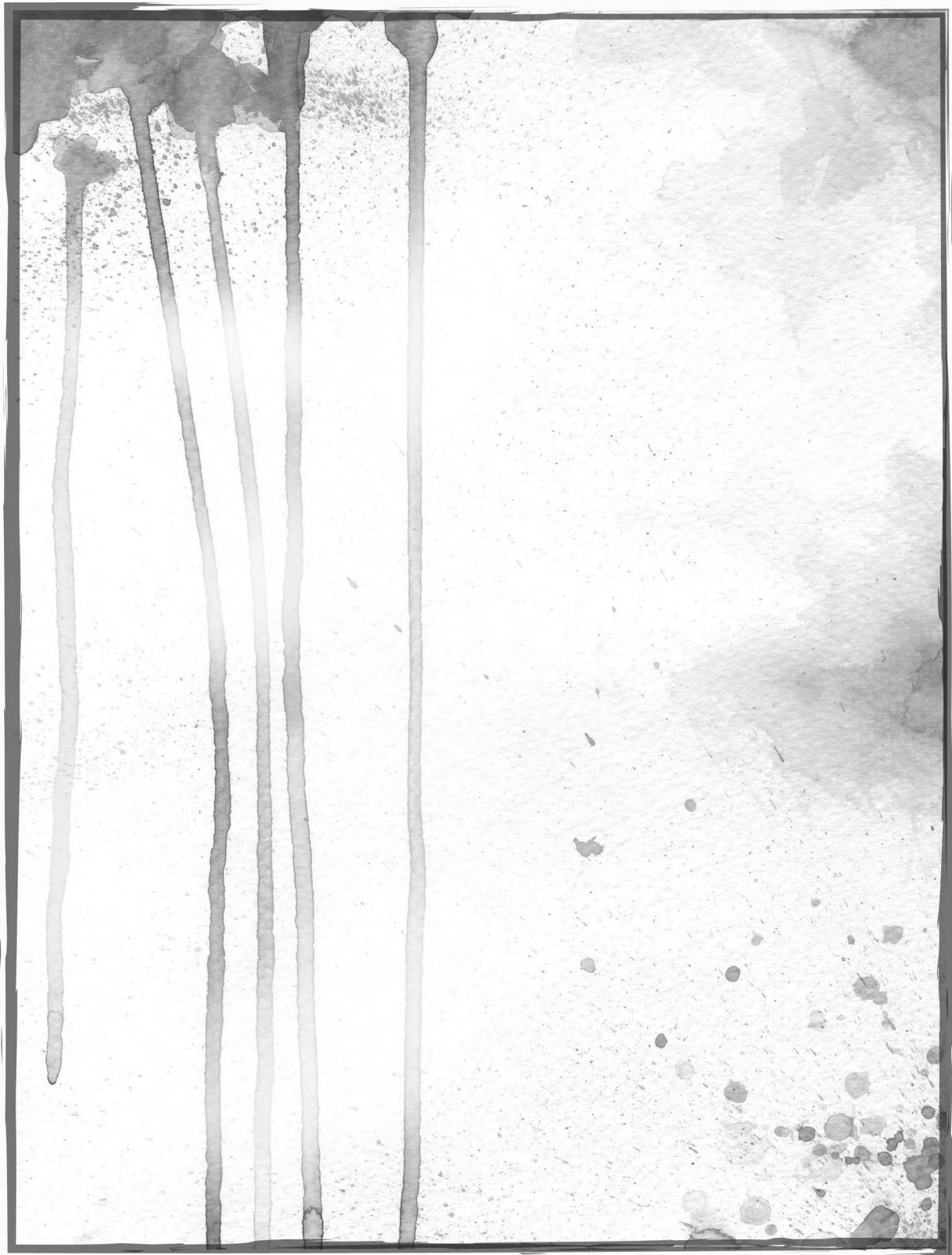


sacrifice

by
Kirby Israelson

(a teaser booklet)



The girl

had always meant to keep her promise.

But when she told him,

i WOULD
Die
FOR YOU

she never imagined it would be so soon.

It


was the first few weeks of summer

when she began noticing

something

was wrong.





They had often talked of death.
So often, in fact, that it had become a topic
both familiar and banal. But now, now it
was being brought up in conversation more
often than she felt comfortable with. And
the way he talked about it, as if in awe.

As if he was
envious.

Those jokes of
suicide --

jumping out of a moving
car to avoid being
around your parents,
hanging yourself off
your school desk to
escape a boring
lecture -- all of them
took on a subtle,
more serious turn.

Instead

of immediately laughing it off
as ridiculous, he hesitated for
just one second too long. And
his mouth turned up ever so
slightly at the edges,
as if he was smiling at a secret
joke that

only **he** found funny.



She
pretended to ignore it.

She
smiled on the outside,
laughed when she was upset,
and if she gave him hugs goodbye that were
maybe a little too forceful, or lasted one
moment too long,



he never said a thing.

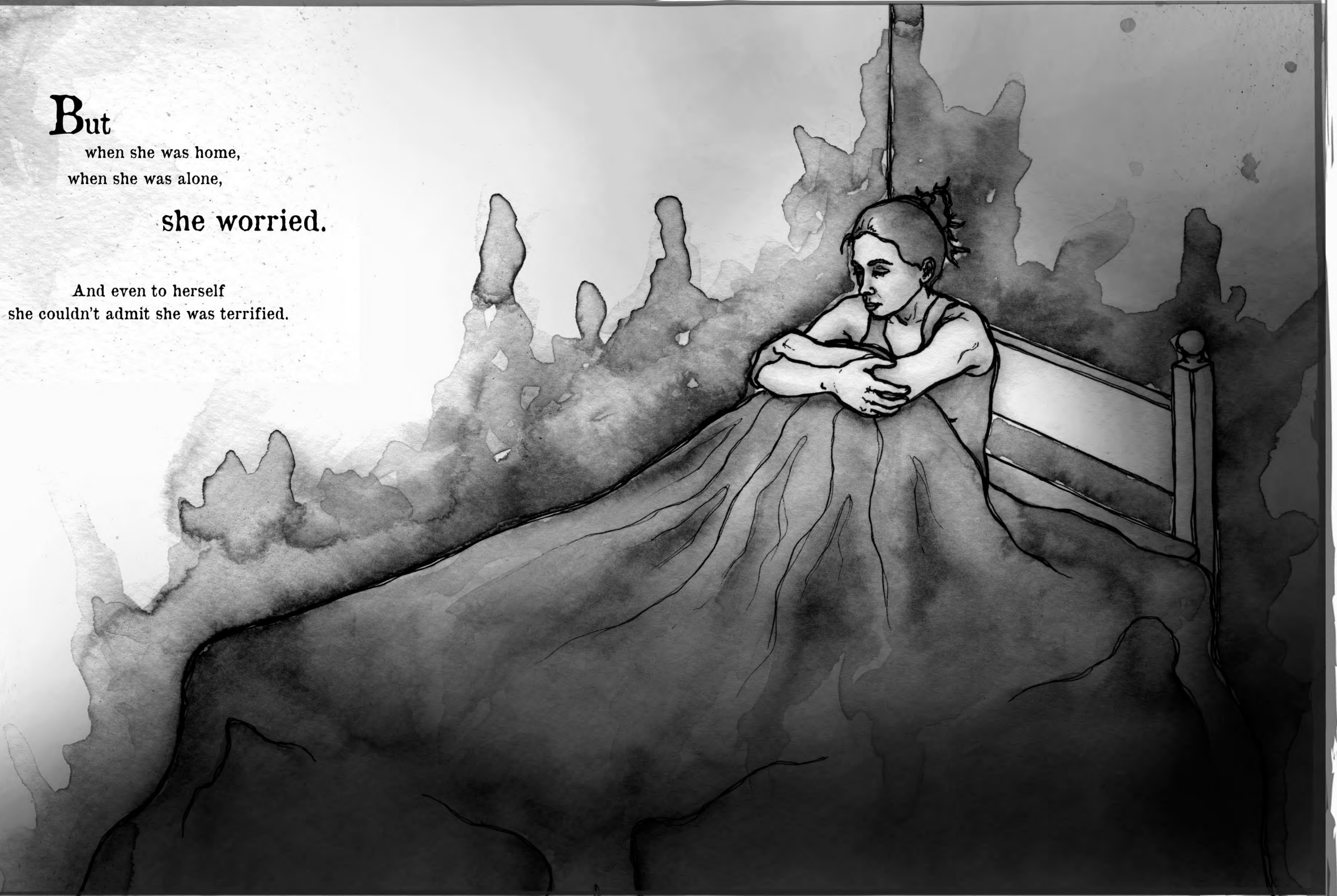


But

when she was home,
when she was alone,

she worried.

And even to herself
she couldn't admit she was terrified.



She

began watching for signs, watching for changes.
watching for changes.

She looked
at his skin and
saw when it
paled.
She watched
his cheeks and
saw them
sinking.
She watched as
day by day,
one by one,
the lights
went
out of his eyes.



He

wasn't eating.
He wasn't sleeping.
He was
dying.

He was killing himself,
and there was
nothing
she could do.

But

he'll be fine,

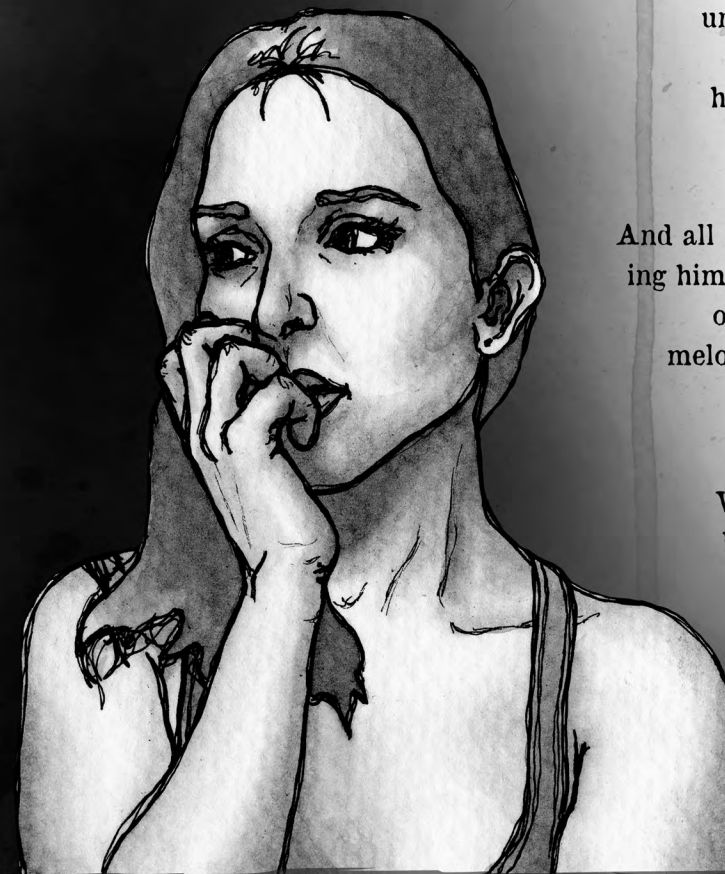
right?

I mean, all teenagers get a little
moody sometimes. It's practically
part of growing up!

And you know what? Parents
and adults might not
understand, but his cutting is
actually a good thing! It's
healthy to find some sort of
release, isn't it?

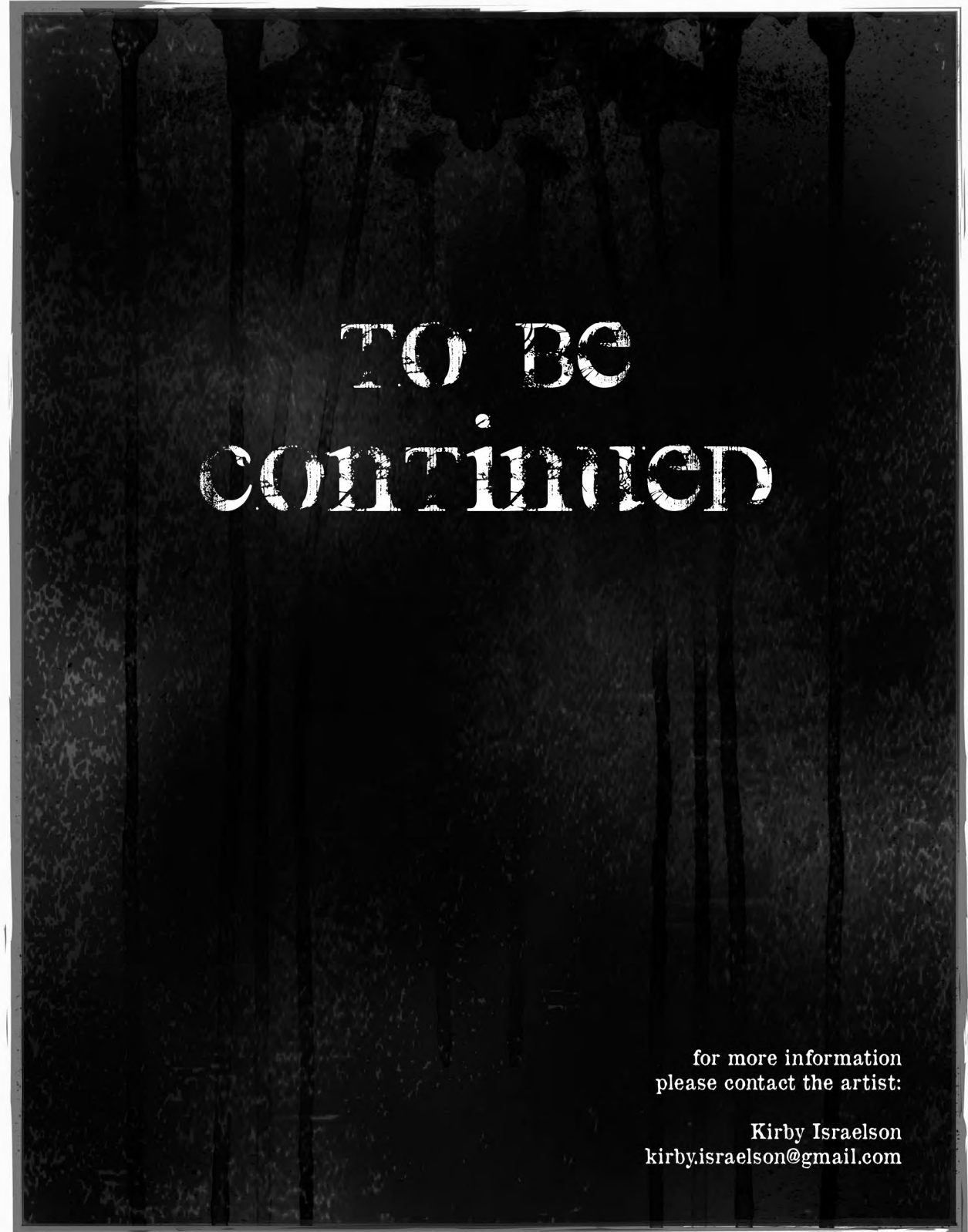
And all of that talk about kill-
ing himself, well, we all have
our moments of
melodrama, you know?

We all have those thoughts,
but we never act on them,
right?





...Right?



TO BE
CONTINUED

for more information
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