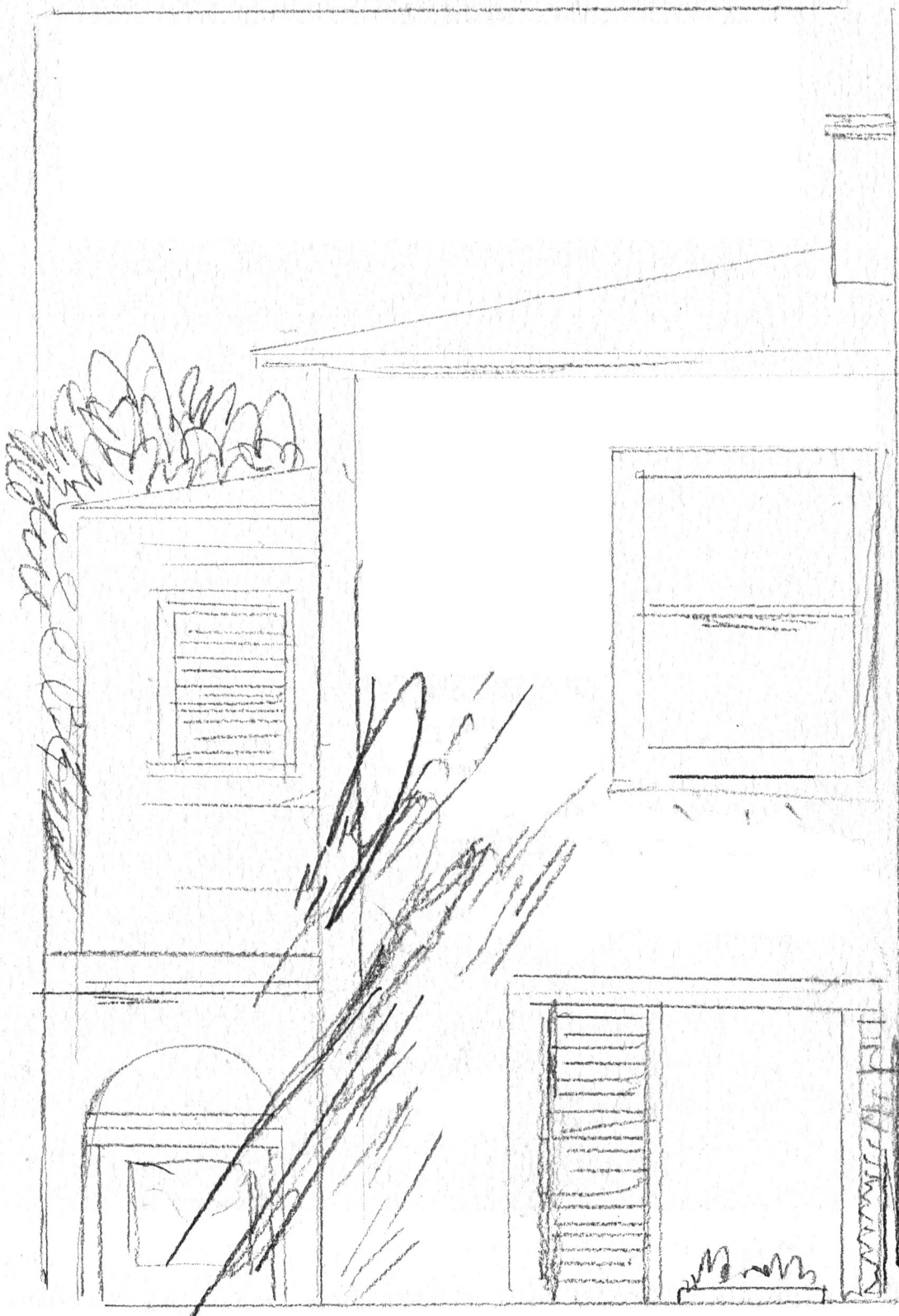


Good Morning

Hello there breather
take pause if you will
close your weary eyes
and feel the air around you like a morning mist
wash your face with my hands
I am your dishcloth
I will lie on broken thoughts for you
if you promise to cry when I leave here
touch the pages of this book and think of all the arms that made it
that it was once trees,
made mush and pressed hard enough to print on
hold that thought gently as you read
as though I know what I'm talking about
I do not
I am a musician
who can guitar-string just about a book's worth of words together
until they fall apart like cooked wood
welcome to my wordlessness
I can write big if I want to



An Evening on a Porch on North Windsor Blvd

The sky is an upside-down swimming pool.
Pink hues from neon tubes
spraying words along boulevards blue.
Joni sings 'A Case of You', across a kitchen floor,
which I haven't cleaned this week
so is sticky like a liquor store counter.

The air is like warm water,
which makes it feel like you're swimming sitting down,
if the perfect cold of the concrete steps
weren't such a home for your feet,
bare and tingling on the morning-cool stone.

'I live in a box of paint.'

It is 3 a.m. and you have given up trying to sleep,
who could possibly sleep when California
plays its song outside your door?
You try to think of the last time you felt so much
and can only think of people.

The cigarette pressed between your sleepless, dry lips
sends its twisting grey into the world.
It is quiet enough to imagine
that you can hear one thousand American humans
turning in their beds,
dreaming of acting jobs and record deals
and paying for their children's healthcare.

You think of all the songs you have to sing
and how much there is to decide on
and a smile plays gentle across your cheek.
You are surrounded
by people from the posters on your teenage walls