

# Us & Them & We

## June, 2024

### *Foreword*

These two books, *Us & Them* and *& We*, were originally produced as separate works. They made up the two halves of my final degree project and show in June 2023.

The content of *& We* triggered a bizarre reaction from the college and I was banned from exhibiting it. As the other half, *Us & Them* was about fascists, people famous for banning books, I could not ethically present that work on its own.

Consequently, in the week I had left before the start of the show I created an entirely new piece of work protesting the censorship, complete with 10,000 words of supporting essays. That work was in turn censored.

For my final show, the culmination of three years of hard work and the supposed launch point of my art career, I displayed a blank wall.

The show was seen by about 100 people. My tweet highlighting the censor by showing a blank wall generated 250,000 views.

Barbra Streisand, we salute you.

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ISBN  
9781836023562

# Us

Notts & Mansfield Trades Council  
Open Nottingham  
Nottingham Stand Up To Racism  
Leicester Stand Up To Racism  
Derby Refugee Solidarity Campaign  
Lincolnshire Trades Council

Chesterfield & District Trades Union  
Council  
Rotherham TUC  
Barnsley TUC  
Care 4 Calais  
and many other groups & individuals

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# OPENING SHOTS

4th February 2023  
MANSFIELD, Nottinghamshire  
Racists target a hotel housing migrants shouting abuse and demanding they are thrown out.



30 PEOPLE  
DOESN'T  
SPEAK  
FOR ME

10th February 2023  
KNOWSLEY, Liverpool

A mob of fascists attack a hotel housing migrants. Fireworks are thrown and a police van set alight.

11th February 2023  
MANSFIELD, Nottinghamshire

Less than 24 hours after the violence in Liverpool, people of Mansfield took to the street to say that a tiny number of racists do not speak for local people.

18th February 2023

# HOSTILE HOSPITALITY

MANVERS, Rotherham

NO ONE  
IS  
ILLEGAL

Racists target a hotel housing migrants. 150 people from unions and anti-racism groups from across the region rally outside the hotel while 50 racists set up on a nearby roundabout.









25th February 2023

# THE GREAT DIVIDE

LONG EATON, Derbyshire



A local Anti-VAXXer called for an anti-migrant demo at short notice and it circulated on far-right social media. A counter-demo was urgently organised.

REFUGEES

♥ R ♥

WELCOME IN

EREWASH



Over 100 counter-protestors arrived early and occupied the space directly outside the hotel, leaving the racists milling around on the opposite side of the busy road.



The 60 or so racists who turned up were strangely leaderless. No placards, no megaphone, no one leading chants and the crowd was a weird mix of the sightseers, local thugs and a scattering of the old-school far-right.



Refugees are welcome

The UK Government, including the Home Office, has a duty to protect the rights of refugees and asylum seekers. The Home Office is committed to ensuring that the UK remains a safe and welcoming country for refugees and asylum seekers. It is important that we continue to support the UK's international obligations and ensure that the UK remains a safe and welcoming country for refugees and asylum seekers.

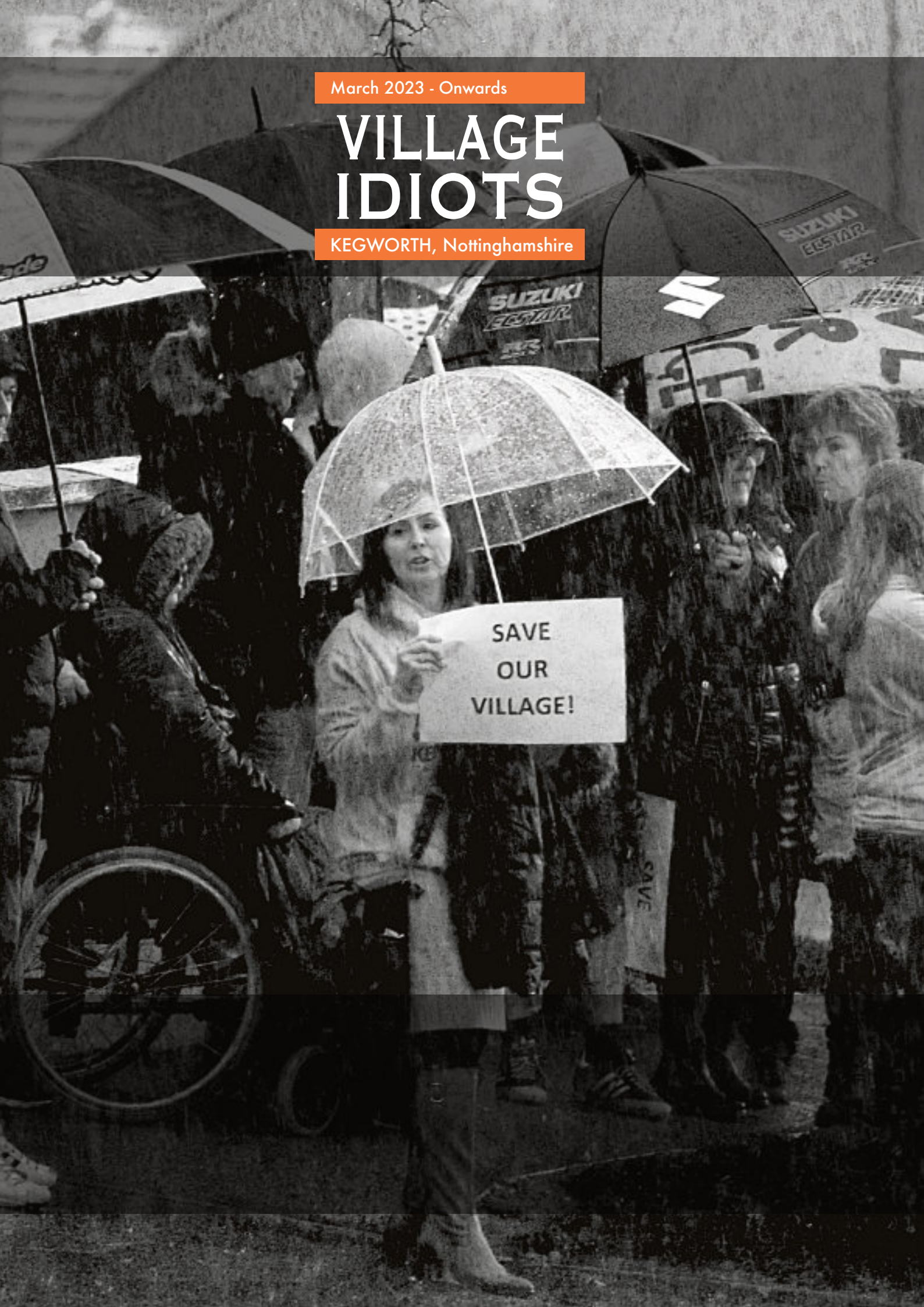
HERE

Trades Union Council  
to one is an injury to all  
VERY

March 2023 - Onwards

# VILLAGE IDIOTS

KEGWORTH, Nottinghamshire



Days after the attack in Knowsley, Liverpool, the hotel in the village of Kegworth abruptly closed and converted to housing migrants. A local group of racists immediately sprang up making national news with their protest.



A larger group of locals actively supported the migrants but they felt counter-protesting was not the way forward. We respected their wishes and the racists went unopposed.

Inevitably the village racists drifted further right and became firmly aligned to Patriotic Alternative.

come  
e



22<sup>nd</sup> April, 2023

# CATHEDRAL OF HATE

LINCOLN, Lincolnshire



After splitting off from Patriotic Alternative, the newly formed National Support Detachment (NSD) took to the streets of Lincoln for their big launch.







Over 100 counter-protestors marched through the streets while 40 racists hid behind police lines next to a building site.

However the NSD were allowed to openly preach National Socialism without challenge.



STAND  
UP TO  
RACISM

NOTHING CLEAR

STAND UP  
TO RACISM



23rd April 2023

# HUMILIATION

LONG EATON, Derbyshire

Trying to build on February's demonstration, Patriotic Alternative attempted to hold a rally on St. George's Day.

Unfortunately for them, counter-protestors had a plan and arrived early in numbers.

When the handful of PA supporters arrived they were surrounded by a hundred counter-protestors.





With the aid of the police, the racists set up their stage in a corner, completely isolated from the public by a large crowd of counter-protestors.

Unheard, unseen and totally outmatched, the wannabe hardmen gave up and hid behind police lines before fleeing to their cars.



29<sup>th</sup> April 2023

# FASH & CHIPS

SKEGNESS, Lincolnshire



A week after their lacklustre Lincoln rally, the National Support Detachment tried again with a march past hotels housing migrants in Skegness.

with love

Just one foot,  
the other





Geography and demographics makes mobilising a counter action very challenging in the town.

But sometimes help comes from unexpected sources.

Emerging from Louth, a tiny town in Lincolnshire, a group of rebel singers formed a Solidarity Shield outside the hotels and sang songs of hope as 30 fascists went past.



The march could not be stopped this time but next time there will be more of us.

**"¡No pasarán!"**

POLICE

TUEAC



STAND UP TO RACISM

**NO TO RACISM, NO TO FASCISM**

against

JUGGLE

CITY



"Fuck it!"  
I said, "I'm going  
to do an art  
degree."



September  
2020  
First Day  
Selfie


Part 1

LOST

I was slowly  
rebuilding my life  
after a long period  
of illness when  
lockdown hit.

Already fragile  
social circles  
collapsed, work  
disappeared, and just  
being in the same  
room as someone  
could be a life or  
death issue.



A black and white photograph of a large, multi-story brick building. The building features a prominent curved tower on the left side, which has a flat top. The tower is constructed of brick and has several arched windows. To the right of the tower, the building continues with a series of tall, narrow, arched windows. The brickwork is detailed, and the overall structure appears to be a historical or institutional building. The lighting is dramatic, with strong shadows and highlights.

*Walking in that  
first day, it wasn't  
the educational  
demands which  
worried me, it  
was the people.*



Being around people again was weird but there weren't many of us, and most of them were called Charlotte.

The college computers were unusably slow, the WiFi didn't work and I was having a hard time taking "art" seriously, but I was slowly finding my feet.





And then  
Lockdown  
Two hit.

College life  
was reduced  
to 30  
minutes a  
week on  
Zoom.

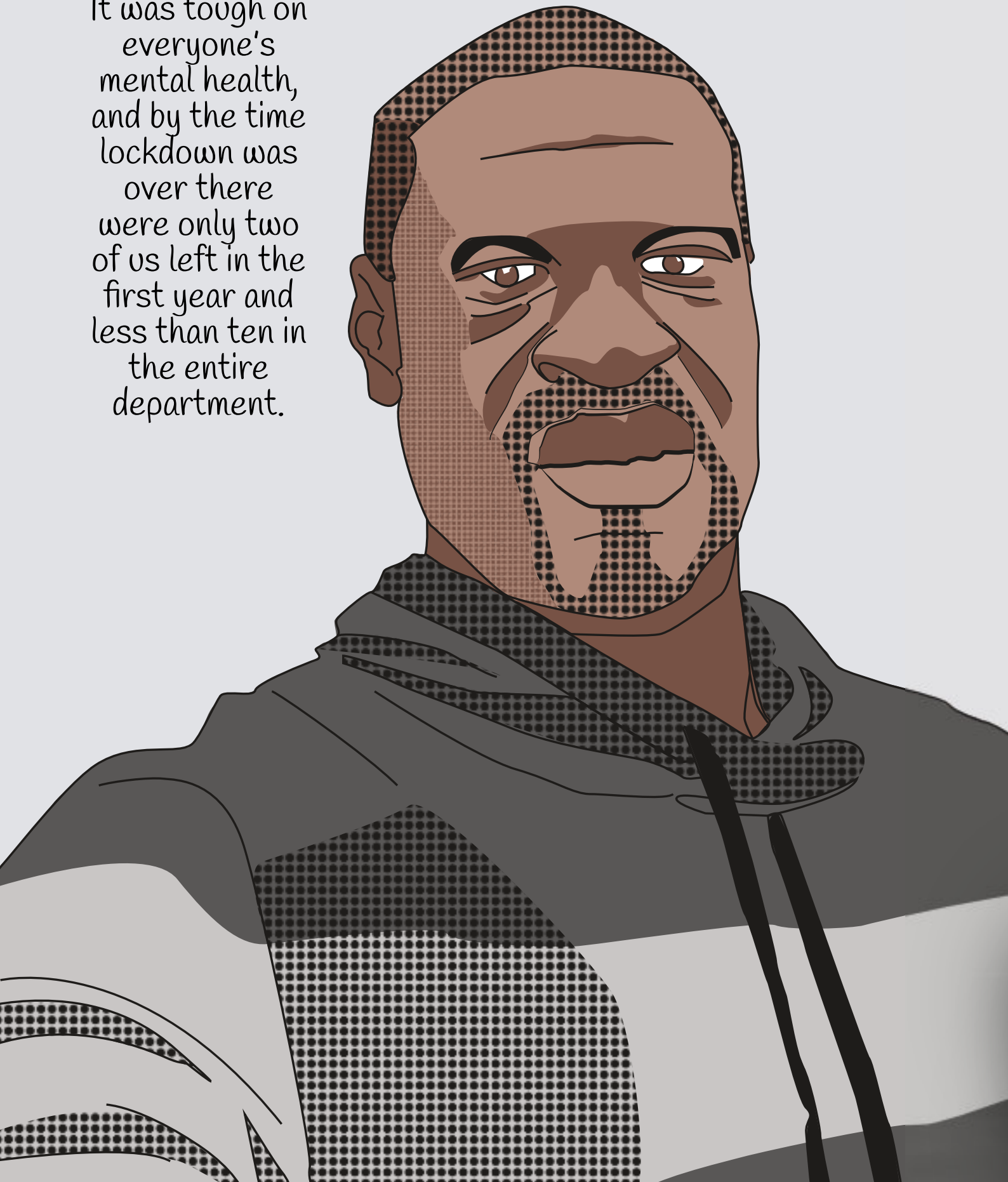
So I spent my  
time annoying  
Anti-  
VAXXers  
and  
calling it  
art.



Gatecrashing an  
Anti-VAXX  
protest, January  
2021.

Photo by Richard  
Jackson

It was tough on everyone's mental health, and by the time lockdown was over there were only two of us left in the first year and less than ten in the entire department.

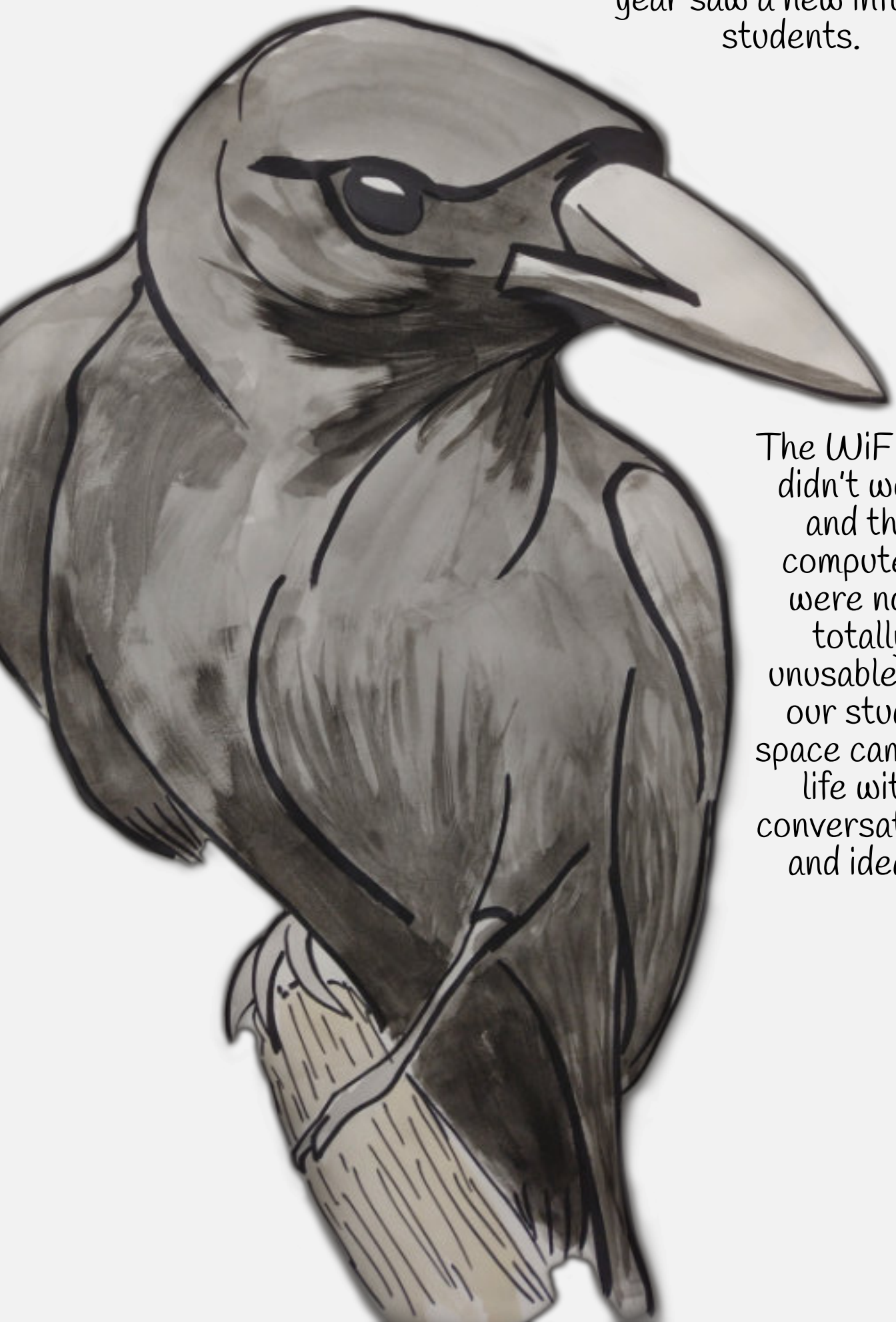


We left that year, not as friends but  
as fellow survivors.

Random strangers thrown together  
by circumstance whose only link was  
a shared experience.



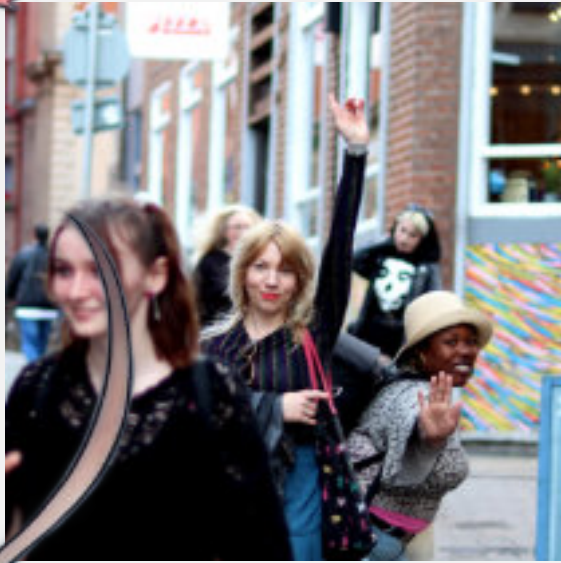
The start of the second year saw a new influx of students.



The WiFi still didn't work and the computers were now totally unusable but our studio space came to life with conversations and ideas.



And the pubs were open.

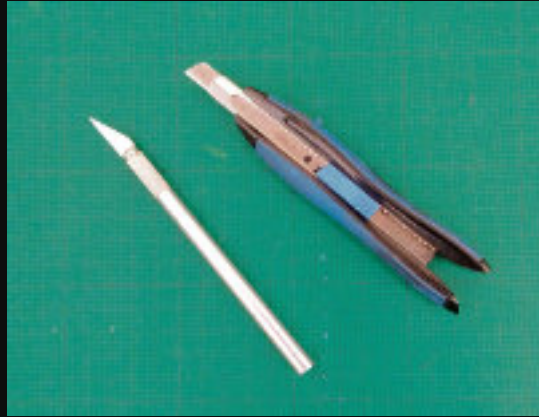


For the first time we could socialise outside of college, friendships began to form, and I started to feel like I belonged.



AND THEN...

You learn a lot about people in positions of authority when you challenge that authority.



One thing you learn, is whether they have actually read the rules they are meant to be enforcing.

At this point V [redacted] N [redacted] demanded to search me. I politely refused, pointing out that she has no right to. She insisted that the Code of Conduct allowed her to search me.

In the case of one of the college's junior managers, they clearly hadn't.

V [redacted] N [redacted] handed me two pieces of paper. One was my enrolment form showing I had agreed to the Code of Conduct and the other a copy of the Code of Conduct. I confirmed this was the Code of Conduct I had signed and handed back the Code of Conduct asking V [redacted] N [redacted] to show me where in the code it says I have to submit to searches.

V [redacted] N [redacted] was unable to show me where in the Code of Conduct I agreed to be searched.

V [redacted] N [redacted] immediately resumed her demands that I had to submit to a search.

The college, through either incompetence or malice (the jury is still out on that one) tried to pervert the disciplinary process.

On Friday 12th I received an email from M [redacted] C [redacted] with a copy of the Disciplinary Procedure and a brief instruction to send in my statement. The email contained no other information. However the email was CCed to V [redacted] N [redacted].

Having quickly read the procedure I immediately asked for clarification of M [redacted] C [redacted]'s role - was she acting as the Investigating Officer? I also raised concerns about her involvement with the procedure as she was a witness. I further raised concerns about my disciplinary email being copied to V [redacted] N [redacted], my accuser and also a witness. Finally I raised concerns that I was being asked for a statement before being sent all the relevant paperwork, in violation of the Disciplinary Procedure.

In M [redacted] C [redacted]'s reply she confirmed she was acting as Investigating Officer. This was a clear breach of the procedure. I replied that I was happy to trust M [redacted]'s professionalism and integrity but I reserved my right to use this conflict of interest as the basis of an appeal and/or legal action against the college.

I received no further correspondence from M [redacted] C [redacted].

Fortunately, somewhere in the college there were people who had read their procedures and recognised they had dug a big, legal hole for themselves.

Dear Chris

Following your disciplinary hearing on 1<sup>st</sup> December, the Panel considered all evidence presented and have concluded that no further action will be taken as a result of the allegations made to you.

Despite this, I gave serious thought to abandoning my course.



Events had poisoned  
my joy, tinting the  
lens with mistrust.



But slowly, with the support of my friends among the students & staff, a level of normality returned.



## Part 2

# CLICK

It is not often in life you can point to an exact moment when things changed.

But the moment I picked up a camera, I found a way to explore art on my own terms.



The camera went with me  
everywhere, becoming an  
extension of who I am.



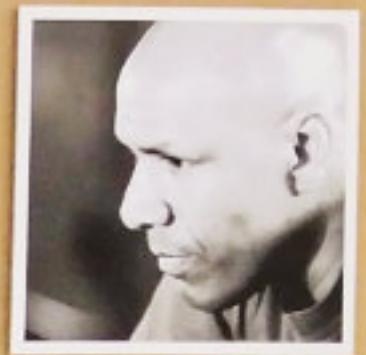


I was learning the limits of  
the camera, and the limits of  
people's tolerance.



But as my 2<sup>nd</sup> year  
came to an end I was  
struggling with what to  
do with all the imagery  
I created and the  
whole idea of "Art".



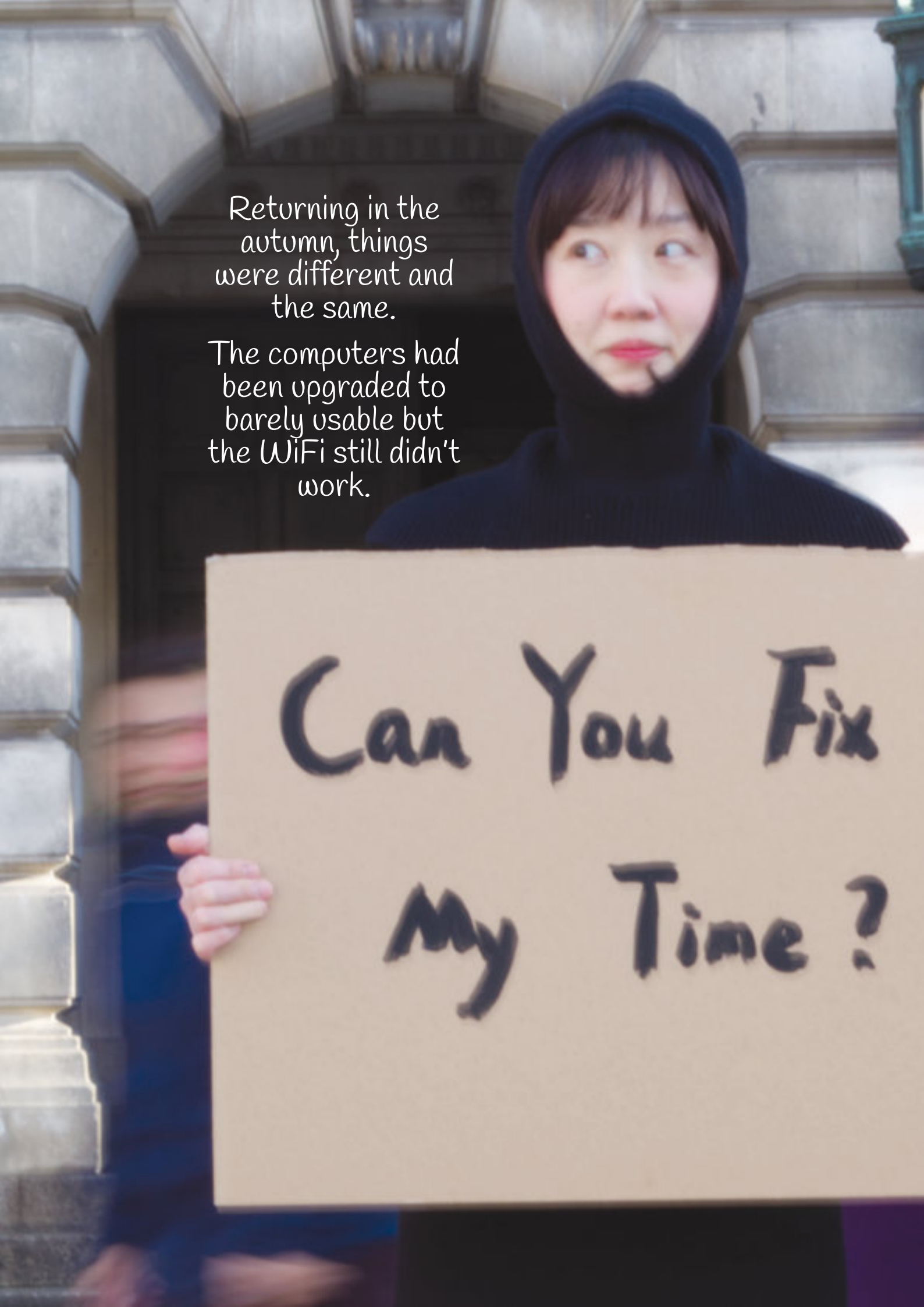


Up to this point, the degree had just been something to do during the pandemic, not a career path, but it was time to shit or get off the pot.



Returning in the  
autumn, things  
were different and  
the same.

The computers had  
been upgraded to  
barely usable but  
the WiFi still didn't  
work.

A woman with dark hair and bangs, wearing a black hooded sweatshirt, is looking slightly to her right. She is holding a large, rectangular piece of brown cardboard in front of her chest. The cardboard has the text "Can You Fix My Time?" written on it in black marker. The background shows a stone archway with decorative elements.

Can You Fix  
My Time?





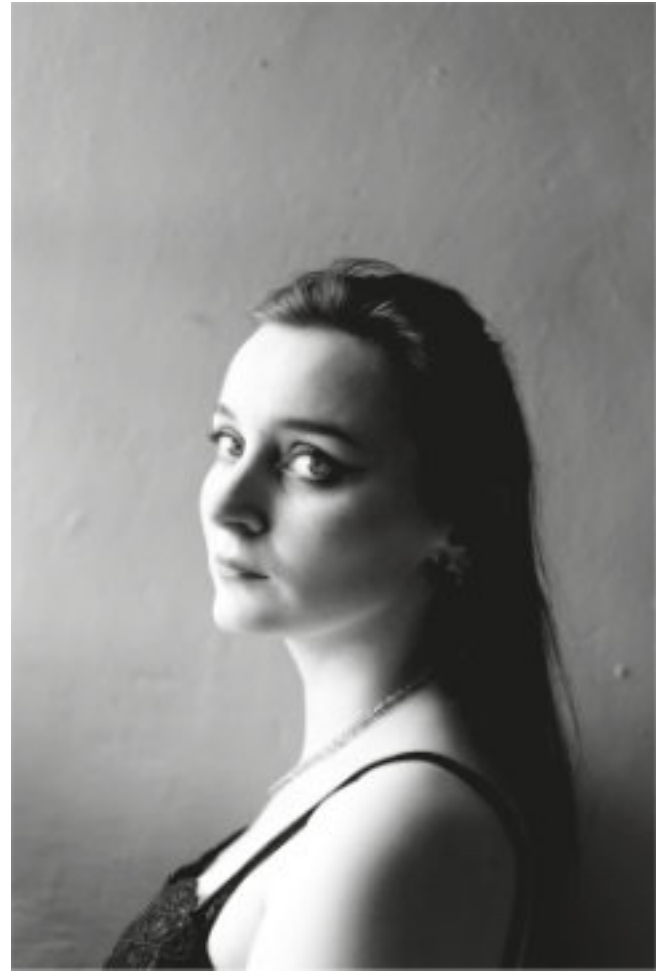
There was also an influx of new faces and the studio was busier than I had ever seen it.

Despite the problems,

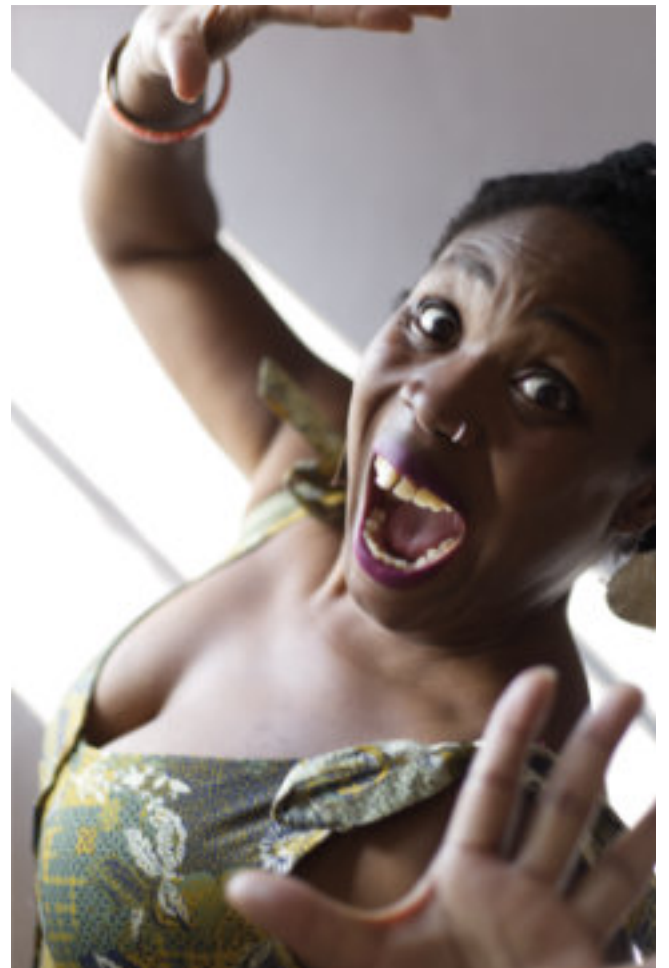




The course had become a place  
of safety, recovery and growth.



*It gave me the confidence to call myself a photographer*



But I will never be able to call myself  
an artist with a straight face.







But wherever this  
unexpected road  
takes me,



It's a future which only exists  
because of the friendships made.





*And for that, I am forever grateful.*

You are banned  
from reading this by



## *Response*

The College banned *& We* because it contained the initials of the two managers instrumental in the attempt to expel me. As a response I created various pieces playing with their initials and parts of their names. The designs were completely innocent and non-controversial unless you were one of the handful of College staff who knew the context.

This create a Kobayashi Maru scenario where the College would look stupid if they censored my new pieces. Yet, if they didn't censor them, they would look stupid for banning *& We*.





Doing something interesting?

**INVITE ME**  
**Tregenza.com/invite**

I would like to photograph it