

Narcos, by a salty Colombian x

A photobook by Mula

2022

“Inspired by true events”
says the show about to tell a lie
“Inspired by true events”
as a way of washing their hands
“Inspired by true events”
as if those *true events* did not hurt real people.



“Magical realism is defined as what happens when a highly detailed, realistic setting is invaded by something too strange to believe”

“There is a reason magical realism was born in Colombia”





Our reality is not your entertainment.
Otherness does not equal *magical realism*.

Our reality is only hard to believe
because you treat it like a fairy tale
Belittle it
Mystify it

Stop using archival content on a fictional narrative
The dead do not want to be associated with you.



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We are the victims

He is not a king
He is not a hero
He is a murderer
He is a terrorist

He is not our hero
We are our heroes and heroines
We who survived
And we who died for justice





That mug shot.

That one mug shot
that you love to see,
that you look up to.

That mug shot killed us.

He killed us for it.

Threatened

Harassed

Burned

Terrorised

For it.

And you have it on your bedroom wall.





“And with the money... come the violence – the hippies had been replaced by Colombians, and these guys didn’t wear flip-flops.” [shows man shooting a gun at themselves instead of running away]

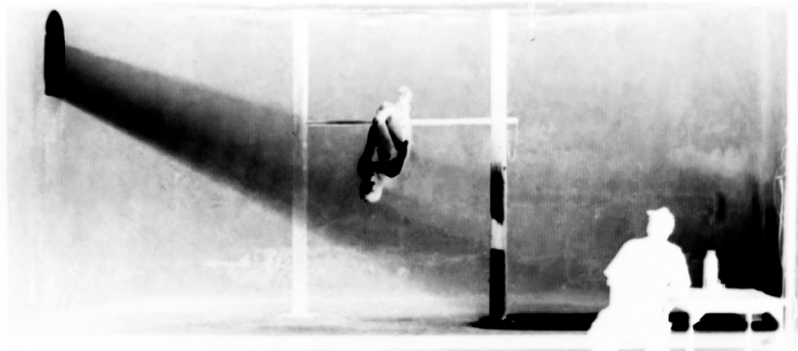


Trapped a little bird.



Trapped a little bird.

There are many of us out there.
So many of us.
You might not be aware,
yet we are.
But don't be confused,
we are irreplaceable.
You will not replace our stories with some fantasy
dream.
Your dream.
As if we were just your actors and actresses
To do as you will.
But we are real people,
With a real will to tell the truth
And keep fighting for justice



Trapped a little bird.

Colombians are known for being very dedicated people.

Loyal,
reliable,
unstoppable.


We call it *berraquera*.

This means that when we commit to something,
there is no stopping us,
and that, is something to look up to.

We are people to look up to.

Not this.

*“The Miami coroner said Colombians were like Dixie Cups.
Use ‘em once, then throw ‘em away.”*



for your safety
and everyone else's here.



You will not throw us away.


Never again.

You will not throw our stories away.

Never again.

You will not take our dignity away.

Never again.



**for your safety
and everyone else's here.**

TERRORIST



[Shootings on the streets] “Well, welcome to Bogotá”



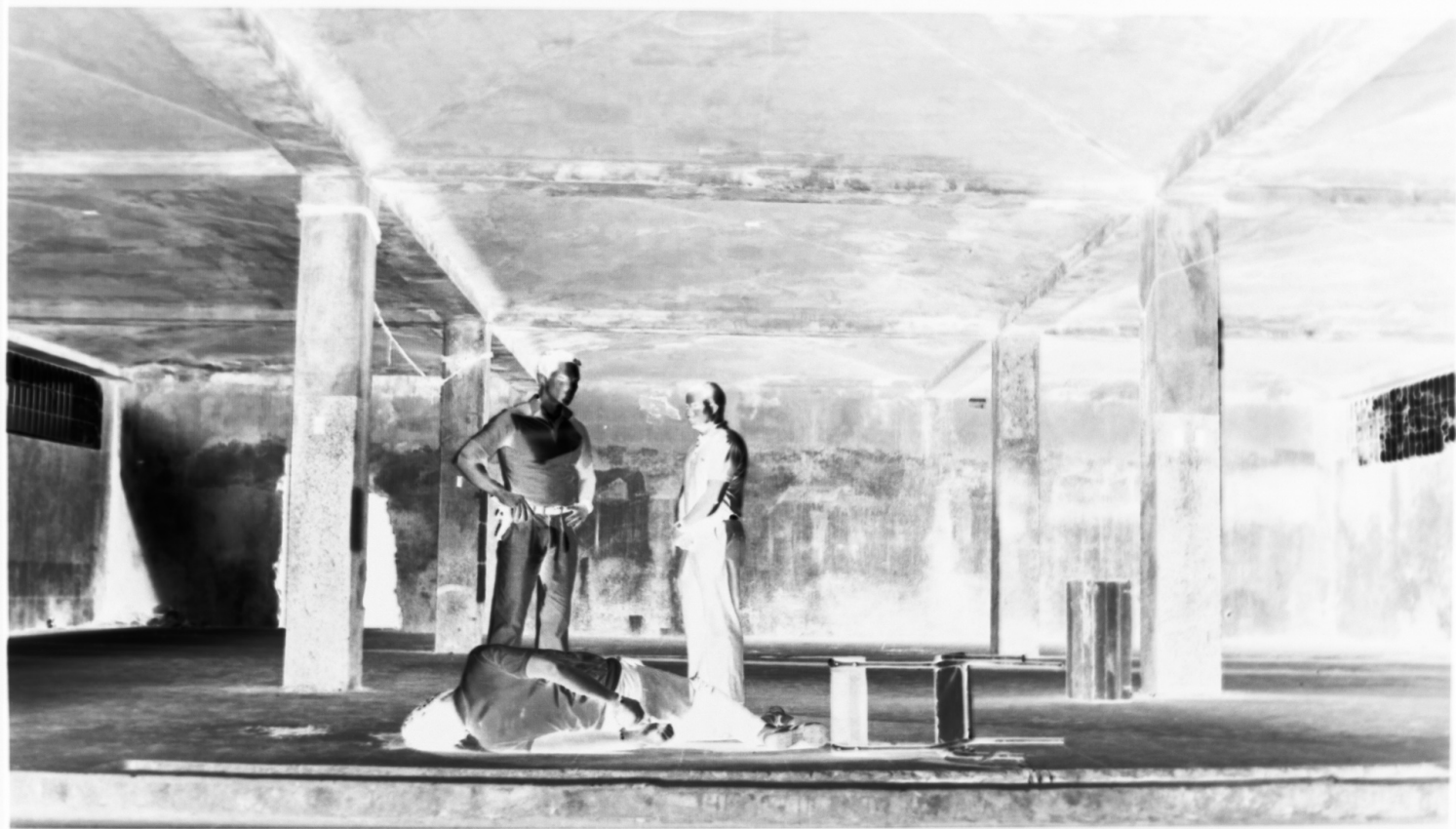


Killing won't give you the masculinity you lack.

Women are not yours to own.

Guns are not yours to point.

And our pain is not yours to show.



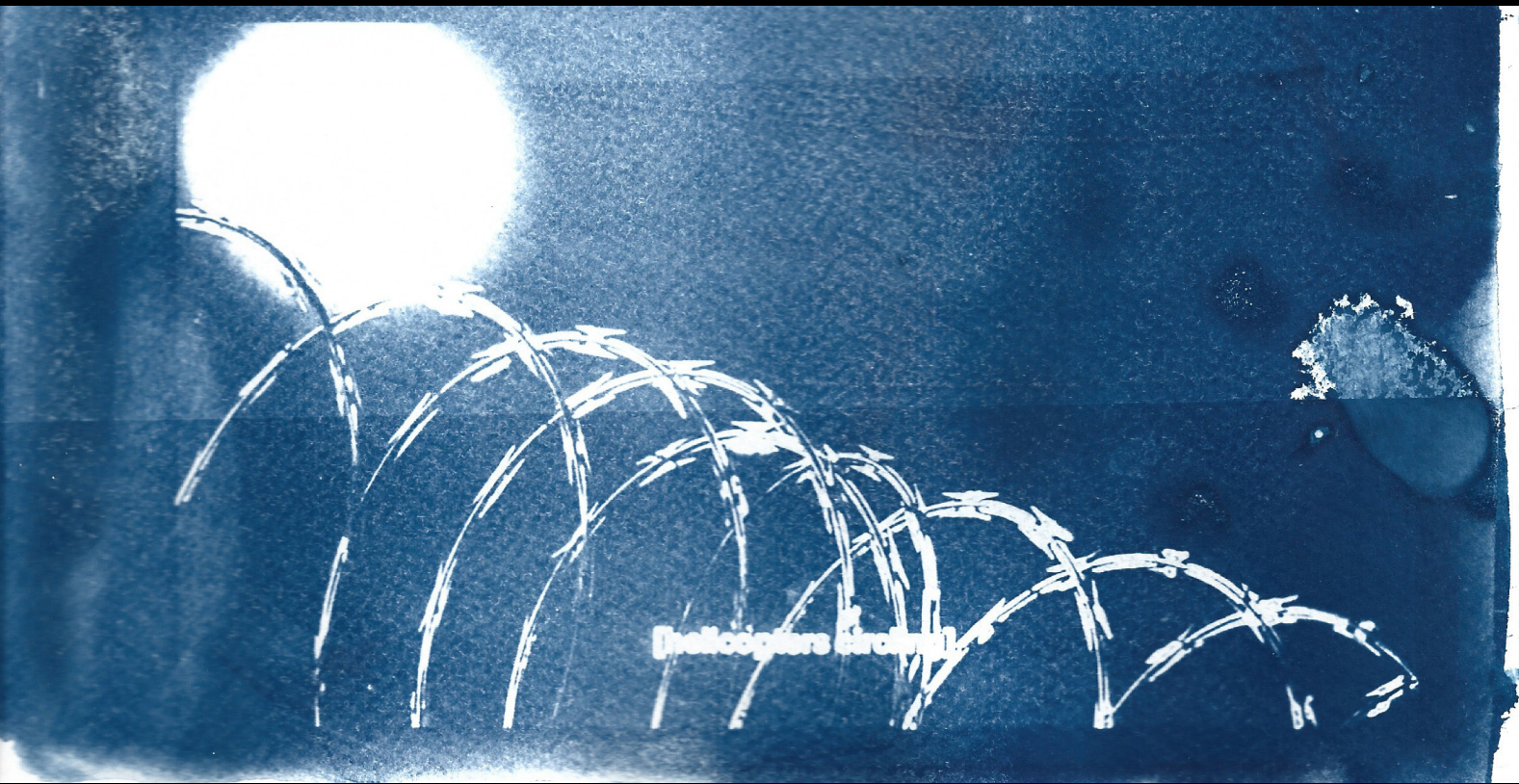
Y ramilletes negros y marchitos
que son como cadáveres de flores
y tienen un olor triste
como el recuerdo borroso
de lo que fue y ya no existe



*“A drug dealer running for president. It was crazy, right? –
Well, not in Colombia. Not in the mid-80s!”*

A glowing green, grass-like structure with multiple curved blades, set against a black background. A bright, circular light source is visible in the upper left corner, casting a soft glow on the scene. The text "[helicopters circling]" is overlaid in white at the bottom center.

[helicopters circling]




Helicopsis cirrata

We are our own leaders
Not our fears
Not our terrors

We will not be guided by pain
But we shall be fuelled by it
We will always be guided by
Peace



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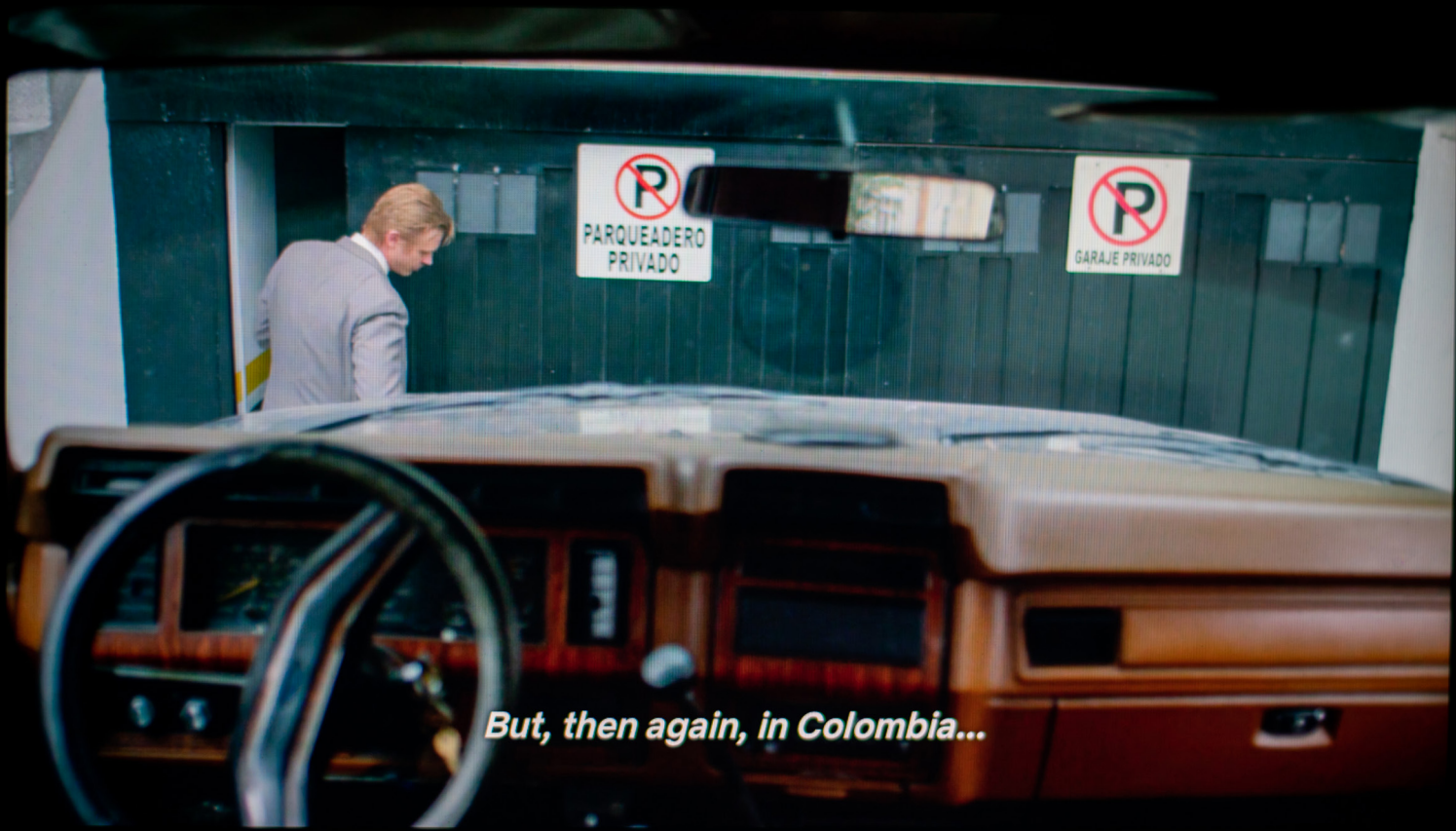
Y el cansancio aquél es triste
como el recuerdo borroso
de lo que fue y ya no existe!

Hay un hondo cansancio que
acaba de matarla a las heras de
Vago como el calor del agua
como el olor de los perfumes

Inteligencia Visual



*“The problem is nobody can control the dreams they have.
Especially if you were PE. Especially if you grew up in Colombia”*



But, then again, in Colombia...



But, then again, in Colombia...

We can not control
the dreams we have
But you can control
The path to them?

Who gave you that power?
Who gave you the authority?
Over our representation
Our reputation
How we are seen
Treated
What we are given
What is taken away

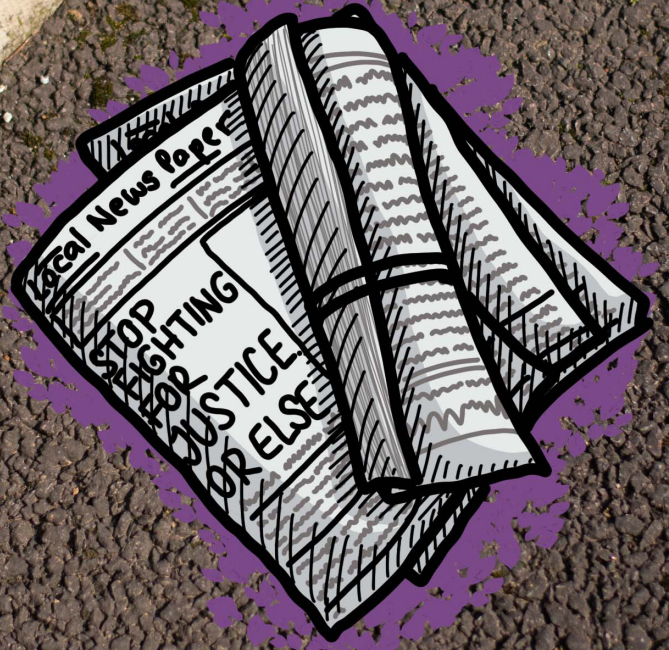
Who made you a god to tell
Who Colombia is



But, then again, in Colombia...



But, then again, in Colombia..



“In the United States, the Mafia makes witnesses disappear so they can’t testify in court. – In Colombia, PE made the whole court disappear.”





Power play
Power trip
Gotta be above it
To step on it

Coward play
Guilt trip
No threat
Can scare us away



Y un color opaco y triste
como el recuerdo borroso
de lo que fue y ya no
existe

He took them
from us.



“Colombians say ... God made our land so beautiful ... it was unfair to the rest of the world. So to even the score ... God populated the land with a race of evil men”





No blaming our curses
On our blessings

We will not be labelled,
Not by those who hurt us

We will not be broken
Into a race of evil



al llegar de los fríos, cuando rojas
vuelan sobre los musgos y las ramas
en torales linos, las marchitas hojas



“Once again, Escobar used violence to bend the world to his will”





Once again
And again
And again

He killed
Again
And again
And again

And again
And again
And again
You say his name


And again
And again
And again
We scream the names
Of ours heroes





OUR STORY TO TED
NOT YOURS

*“There’s one thing I’ve learned down here in Colombia, good and bad
are relative concepts”*

A man is sitting on a sidewalk at night in front of a two-story building. The building has a central entrance with a set of stairs and a decorative door. There are windows on both floors, some with curtains. The ground floor has dark panels with small blue lights and 'P' parking signs. The scene is dimly lit, with some lights from the building and streetlights providing illumination.

*word had spread all over Colombia
that war was coming again.*




*Word had spread all over Colombia
that war was coming again.*

Debating good and bad
As you do bad
Makes it obvious why you want to blur the line

Maybe you lack empathy
Maybe you lack research
But I can tell you
What he did was bad
And there is no good to make up for it

Yet you choose the bad
And you celebrate the bad
And erase the good
For the sake of views

No need to play the devil's advocate
when the devil clearly speaks for himself

A black and white photograph of a modern, two-story building. The building features a central entrance with a patterned door and a set of stairs leading up to it. The ground floor has several windows and a row of small, square openings. A person is sitting on the steps leading to the entrance. The text "word had spread all over Colombia that war was coming again." is overlaid on the bottom of the image.

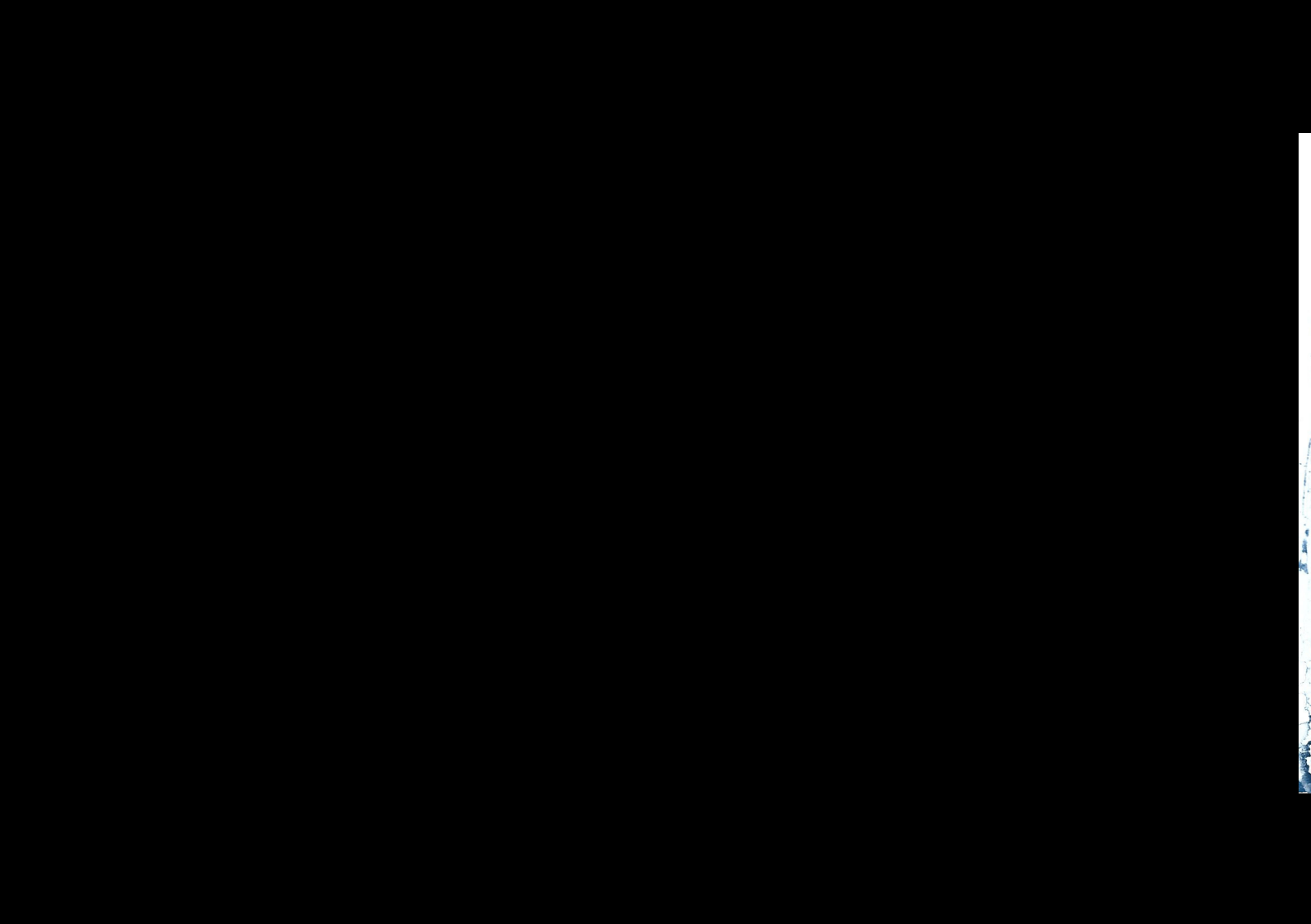
*word had spread all over Colombia
that war was coming again.*



word had spread all over Colombia
that war was coming again.

“But then again, in Colombia... nothing goes down the way you think it will”

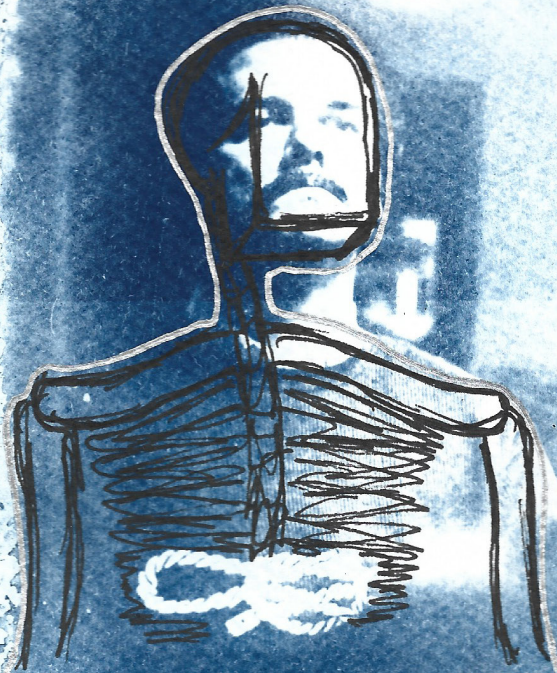






And it never will
Because you expect the worse from us
But we will always have the best to offer
Resilience
Strength
Determination
A reason to fight back
And a million heroes behind us





You will not
idealize he who
killed my people.

You thought
You really thought
You were powerful enough
To scare us
To scare her
To stop us
To stop her

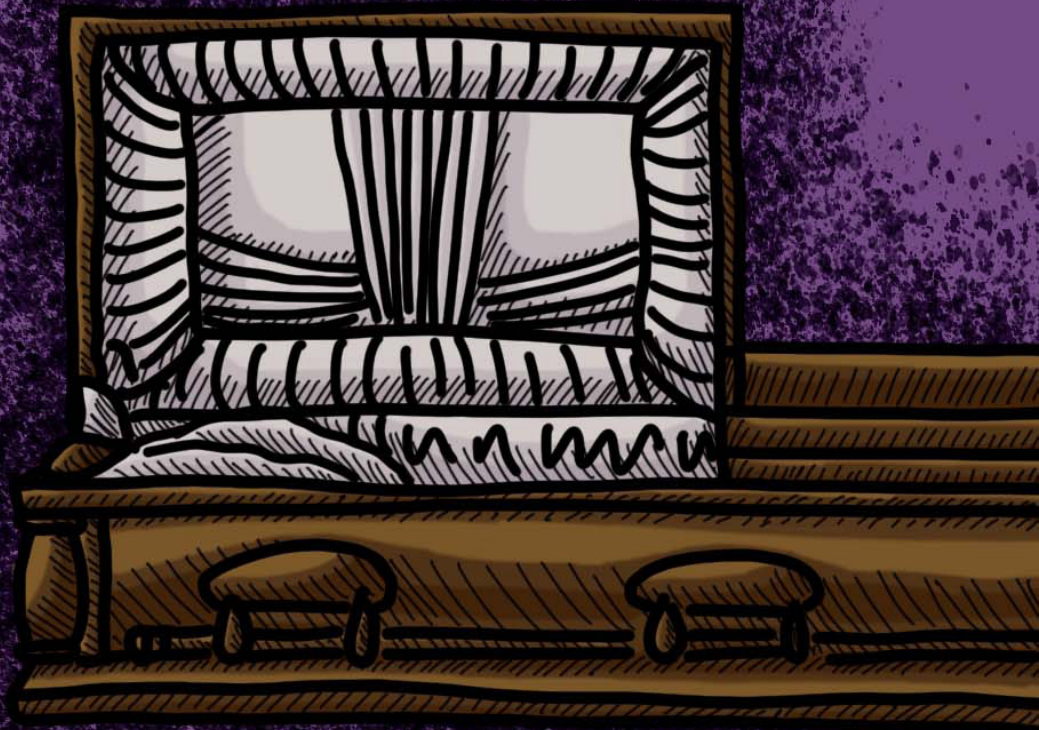
Flowers
Calls
Announcements

Fires
Coffins
Explosives

Thirty eight bullets
Thirteen men

All to stop one's justice
One's defiance
Of your abusive power

The one woman who was determined enough
Brave enough
Stubborn enough
To stop you



*In honour of my great-aunt, Mariela Espinosa Arango.
Your fight for justice will never be forgotten.*

