

Niillas Holmberg
Juolgevuodđu

7 POEMS BY NIILLAS HOLMBERG

Excerpt from poetry collection *Juolgevuodđu (Sole)* by Niillas Holmberg

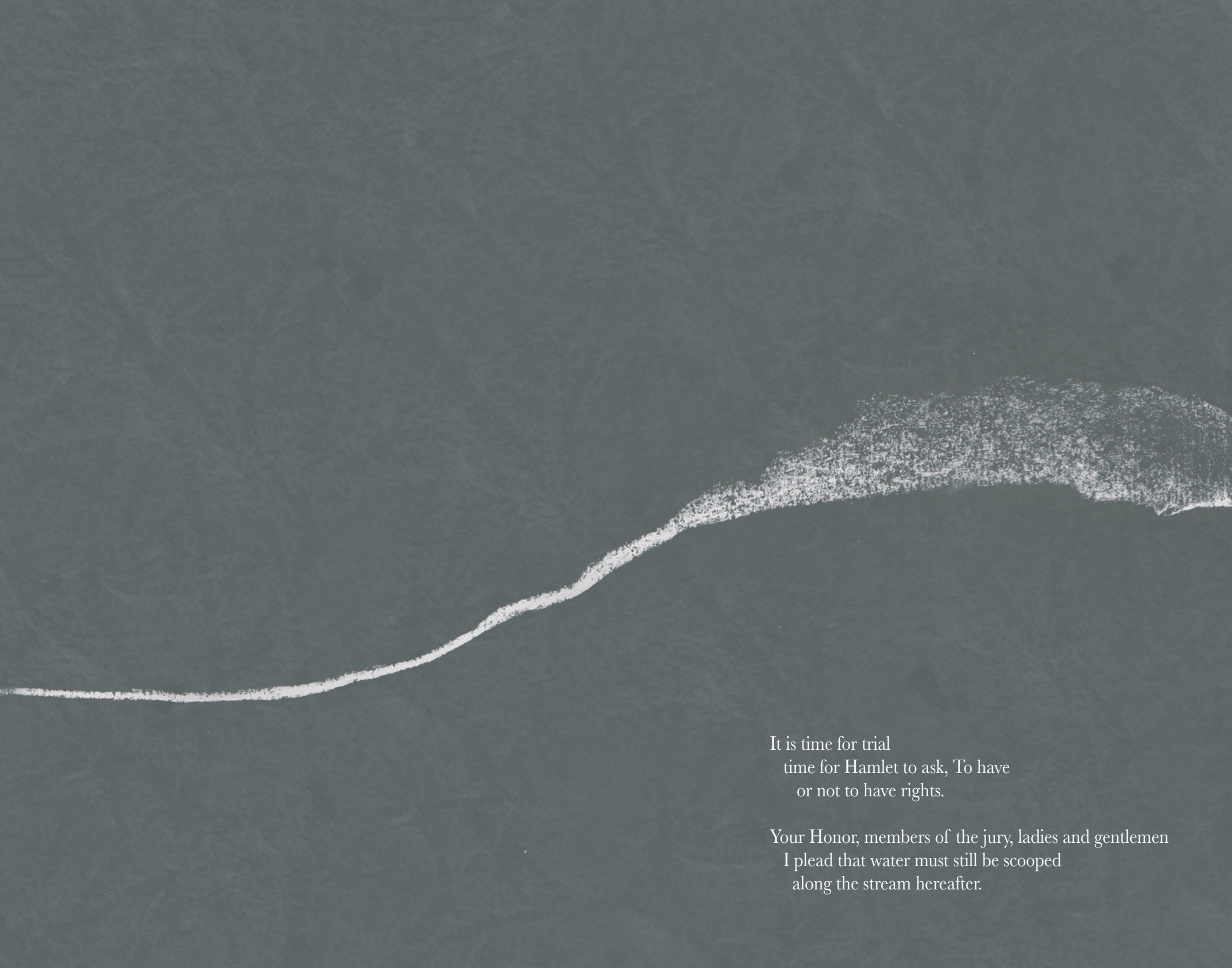
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English translations by Niillas Holmberg and Annikki Her-ranen-Tabibi

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It is time for trial
time for Hamlet to ask, To have
or not to have rights.

Your Honor, members of the jury, ladies and gentlemen
I plead that water must still be scooped
along the stream hereafter.



I've never been caught unaware by dusk.
As a boy I smelled the branched lightnings of birches
and as we played hide and seek, some of us got seen
bearing memories of light.

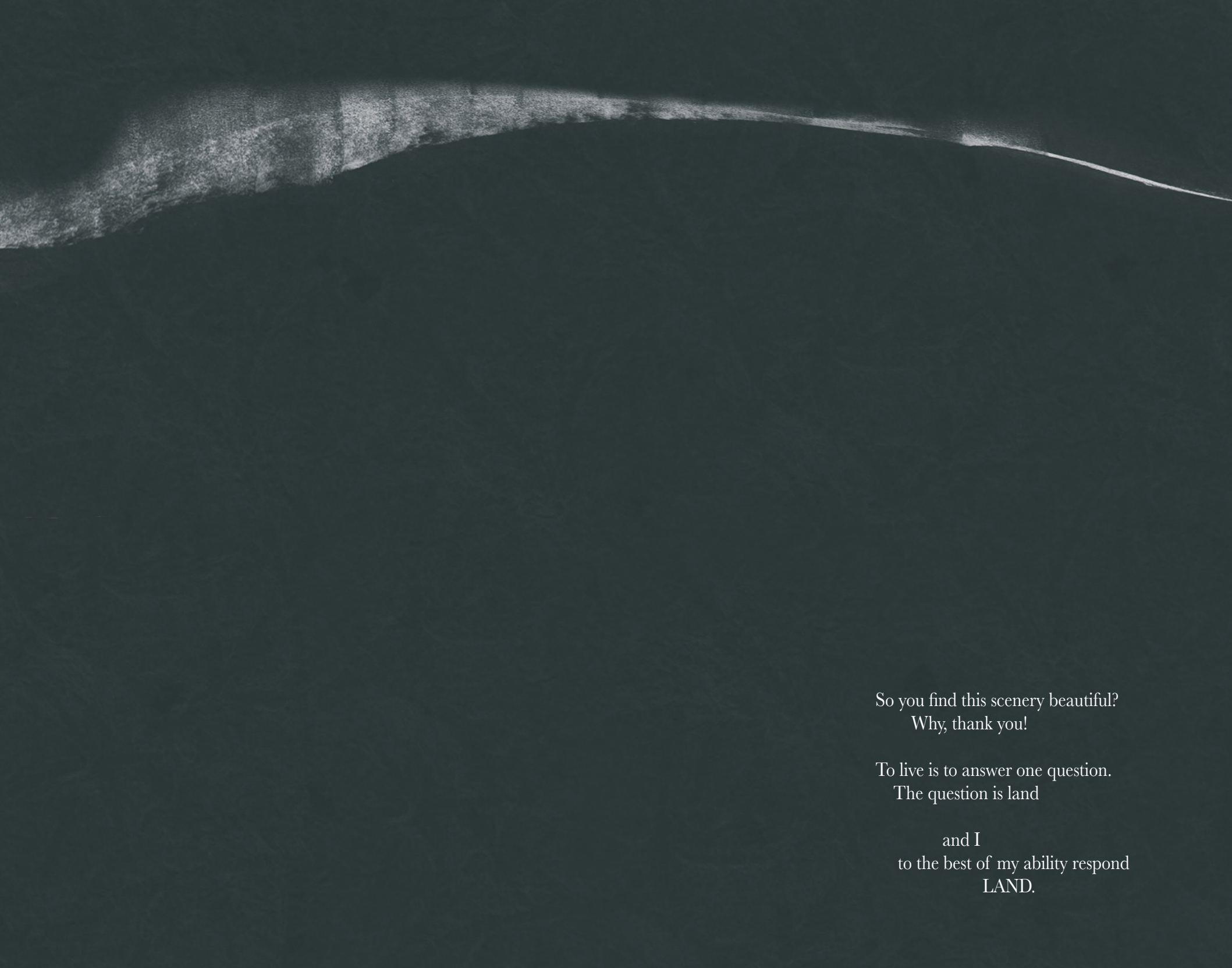


A wordless matriarch
gently sways in a rocking chair
creaking like an oarlock.

She knows what she's doing – with every stroke
the boat floats closer, closer ...

I'd like a story, but she's weary
and retires like the night mist
separating from the river.

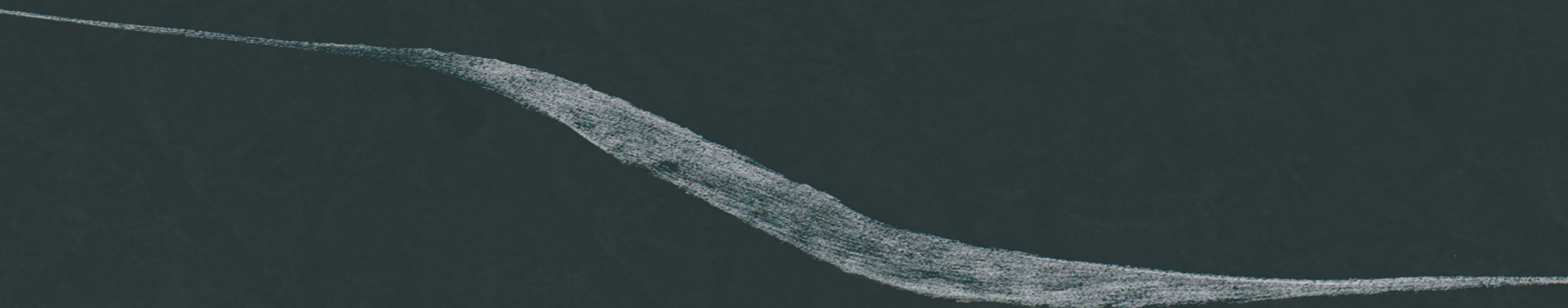
I tend to the fire and sit in the chair
the boat warms me, god
is a verb.



So you find this scenery beautiful?
Why, thank you!

To live is to answer one question.
The question is land

and I
to the best of my ability respond
LAND.



I describe Land.

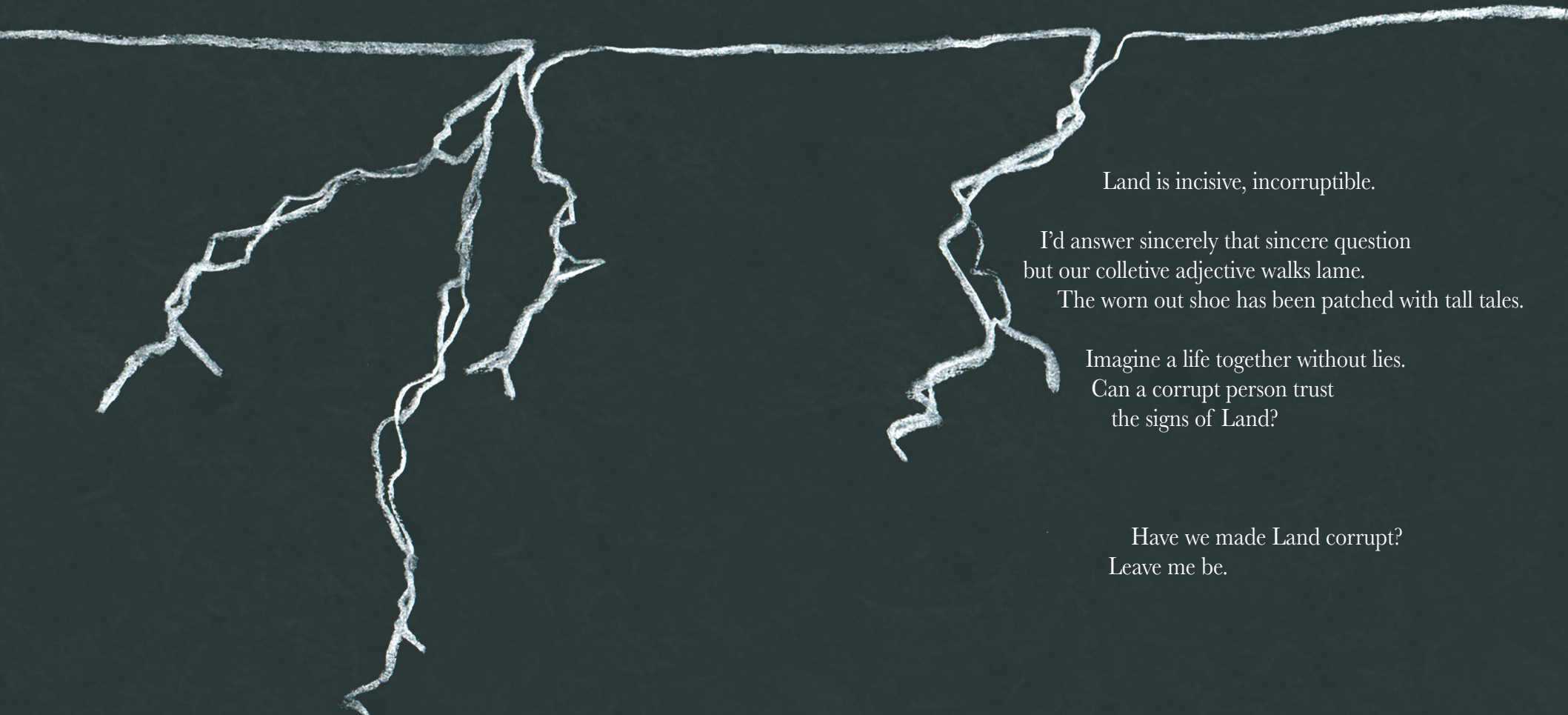
Nothing describes me
like Land.

Oh, so your scenery back home is beautiful too?

How odd

more and more often

I hear them flattering themselves.



Land is incisive, incorruptible.

I'd answer sincerely that sincere question
but our collective adjective walks lame.

The worn out shoe has been patched with tall tales.

Imagine a life together without lies.
Can a corrupt person trust
the signs of Land?

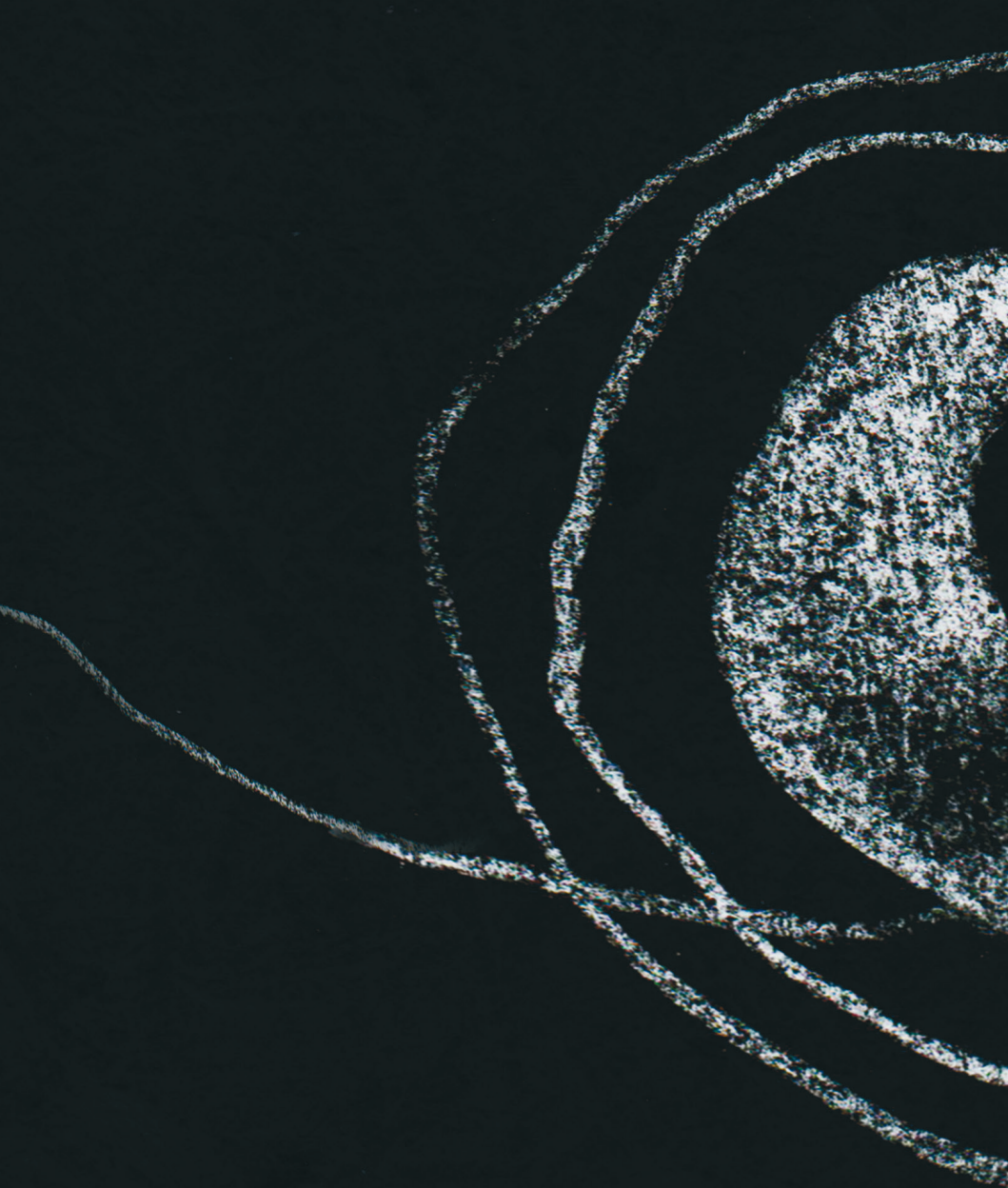
Have we made Land corrupt?
Leave me be.



Have we truly
identified a corrupt line in the character of Land
through ourselves?

If Land is lying, what is it hiding
and from whom?

Birches are bare. Who shall conceal the traces now?
How to rake the broken rake teeth
and were to?



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