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A Bed of Butterflies

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Abstract:

Why animate that?

This question was posed to us animation students during our first week in graduate school. When one considers the amount of time, energy and money it takes to create an animated piece it is a good question to ask before starting. In the spring of 2009 I found myself asking this very question as I considered the story that I wanted to use for my thesis film. “A Bed of Butterflies” is a personal family story about my father’s brother Keith, who died at the age of twenty-two of kidney failure. A real story about real people so why animate it? My original answer was a flippant “It’s a powerful story and I want to try something with it.” Later it evolved into the more profound goal of wanting to take something *so* tightly woven into the fabric of my family and make it emotionally accessible to a wide audience while still maintaining its essential truth.

This paper will recount the two and a half year I spent making my thesis film “A Bed of Butterflies.” I will touch on topics such as creating a script from recorded interviews, the evolution of story, designing characters that are related to you, using silence as sound, and the pros and cons of digital 2D software. The documents and images I have included will serve to both illustrate my story and provide further clarification on certain points.

Preface: We begin after the end

By the time I was born in 1985 everything was already over. My father's brother, Keith Bernard Huston, had died on April 5, 1983 after his body rejected a donated kidney. He had been buried, exhumed, transported to Mt. Hope Cemetery in Rochester, NY and buried again. It was over. Except it wasn't, not for my father, not for uncles or aunt, and certainly not for my grandparents, for them there was a Keith-shaped hole in their lives that nothing could fill. It was something that sent aftershocks into my childhood. A ghost of sorts; it haunts our family not because they want to forget, but because they want to remember. I was ten when I first encountered the full force of this absence, and it was such a powerful experience that two days later I wrote down the entire conversation I had had with my Nana verbatim [see Appendix A]. Writing it down got the words out of my head, but over the years the story of my uncle churned softly in the back of my mind, waiting.

Chapter One: Spring, 2009

Story is king.

It is my belief that a good story will always carry your film because while technique dazzles story sticks and stays. That being said it will come as no surprise that story is where I started my thesis journey. I did however have some requirements. One, I didn't want anything too easy. For any practical person this sounds ridiculous, but I am overly-ambitious by nature I had decided that I didn't want a glorified joke, or a story I had already started, for my thesis. I wanted something new and challenging. Two, I wanted to make something that would exhibit my strengths (narrative development, character animation,) and that could handle the use of a variety of animation styles without compromising the story.

It actually took me a few weeks to remember my uncle. As I said before his story was always there in the back of my mind, but I couldn't figure out how it should be told. The idea of making a vignette-style film of family stories set me on the right path. I had this idea of animating a variety of family tales actually narrated by my family members, the theme of the stories (strong women), was supposed to be the unifying factor, but it wasn't quite enough, and in the end I gave up on the scheme because I couldn't think of a satisfactory way of binding the stories together. So I started to think of overarching stories that could have little stories that spun out from them, and there it was waiting for me as always, "A Bed of Butterflies."

I read the story I had written [see Appendix A] again, and the film began to form before my eyes. First the ending, inspired by my Nana releasing butterfly-shaped balloons into the sky after my grandfather died, Nana would lean down and kiss her son's forehead and his soul would burst into a thousand butterflies that would fly up into the heavens. She would watch him go, smile softly and say "I love you, so long for now." Then the other stories started to emerge, stories about growing-up together, about playing, and about goodbyes left unsaid. Stories that I could have my aunt, uncles and father tell themselves. This was the central idea that drove "A Bed of Butterflies" from conception to completion, and shaped it into the film it became; I would interview my family and use their interviews to create the film's script.

At the time I didn't recognize this as a particularly ambitious or original idea, I had seen it done in many recent films such as *Sita Sings the Blues*, *Ryan*, and *Creature Comforts*. What I did see was a way to avoid horrible dialogue writing on my part, and the stomach churning idea of trusting voice actors with roles of those nearest and dearest to me. Most importantly I this as a way to keep the story true; my audiences would be able to hear the pure tones and inflections of real people, and I knew that the strength this would give my film would be worth any amount of work.

These ideas were soon joined by others. Ideas that would allow me to experiment, for example my plan to interchange rotoscope, classic 2D animation, and live action footage for my character animation to express individuality as well as create an unsettling effect. Ideas that would cover up some

of my weaknesses, such as building a miniature set instead of drawing backgrounds .And, most importantly, ideas that would keep my narrative strong, such as the story of Keith's life and death being told in pieces by each character creating a mystery that would capture the audience.

Soon I had my thesis proposal including a treatment, a timeline, and a budget written [see Appendix B], and despite there being a lot of undeveloped sections I passed inspection and was slated for production.

Chapter Two: Choosing my Committee

When I chose my thesis committee I decided I wasn't going to put myself in the awkward position of having people on it who couldn't get along. I wanted people who were experts in their fields, open to experimentation, at least one very practical person, and one person who knew about animation but wasn't necessarily in our department. That being said I ended up choosing Professor Stephanie Maxwell as my committee chair, and Lecturer Dave Sluberski, and Associate Professor W. Michelle Harris as committee members.

Section I: The Chair

I wanted Stephanie as my chair because I had had such a positive experience with her when working on my two-quarter film. I liked that she let me explore and wasn't afraid to let a student try something ambitious as long as the foundations were solid. I knew she would approve and appreciate what I wanted to do for my thesis, and while she would guide me, she would ultimately let me make the final decisions about the film. Throughout the entire process I always found Stephanie easy to work with because her calm manner is the complete opposite of my adrenaline-charged way of doing things. When I came to a meeting vibrating with stress she would look at my work, talk me through what needed to be

done, and I would leave her office determined and more focused. While I didn't always agree with some of her creative suggestions they usually opened up new pathways of thought, or led me to make small changes that would make things work. Overall she was an excellent chair and it is thanks to her support that "A Bed of Butterflies" was completed at all let alone well.

Section II: Dave

I chose Dave for my committee because he is our department's sound expert and I knew that the power of my film would hinge on sound. I admired Dave's passion for his medium and his willingness to help students with projects. I also liked that he was a "straight-talker" someone who wouldn't let me wander too far into the realms of "what if." He helped me tremendously with picking an affordable, but high quality recording device for conducting my interviews, and was always the first to see and tell me of any major issues I might need to prepare for (i.e. that my film was going to be twenty minutes long instead of five). As the project dragged on we often butted heads because of my lack of organization, and disregard for proper sound mixing techniques, but his opinion was always valued and often spurred me to work harder.

Section III: Michelle

I've known Michelle since I was in high school, and have always admired her work with sound, movement and projections. I initially wanted her on my committee for this reason since I had planned to have a lot of intermixing footage and animation. As the film developed and took on a less complicated form I found Michelle's input as an audience member invaluable. She was good at pointing out when things were getting too convoluted, and helped me make some hard decisions about cutting characters, or

parts that I wouldn't have been able to do otherwise. She also helped keep the "look" of the film consistent.

Chapter Three: The First Year (Fall 2009-Spring 2010)

In my original timeline I planned on finishing "A Bed of Butterflies" in a year. In the 20/20 vision of retrospect this was an entirely unrealistic goal for the type of project I had proposed. However, at the time I was sure that if I kept my nose to the grindstone I would have a stunning film by May, 2010. What actually happened was that I spent most of the year in pre-production, writing and rewriting the script. Storyboards were being made, scrapped, and made again on an almost constant basis, though I only had one major overhaul. My sound was neglected. My character designs happened slowly but stayed fairly consistent afterwards. There was a culling of ideas worthy of the French Revolution. Finally rough animation started at the end of the school year.

Section I: The Interviews

The only thing I did for my thesis in the summer of 2009 was prep for interviewing my family. I had my cast picked out, my Uncle Keith's four siblings, and my Nana. Initially I had thought of interviewing some of my Uncle's friends as well since they were still in touch with the family, but decided that animating six characters was challenging enough.

Follow advice Dave had given to me in May, 2009 I bought Zoom H4n Digital Audio Recorder. He had recommended it because it was an affordable product that yielded high-grade results. With the addition of a shot gun microphone XLR cables rented from the school, I was able to have a fairly portable recording set-up that allowed me to record high-quality sound that I could immediately transfer to my

computer. I strongly feel that any subsequent problems I had with my interview-sound were the results of my own lack of skill as a sound technician, not because of substandard equipment.

Beyond the technical the interviews themselves were some of the most personal moment I ever shared with my aunt, my uncles, and even my father. I decided early on that all the interviews would be conducted in the homes of my subjects. One because for those that required travel I was more mobile, and two, I felt the added comfort of familiar surrounding would make the interviews go more smoothly. I spent a long time mulling over the questions I would ask to try and get them to open up about something as private as grief especially to a person that will always be “a child” to them. In the end I got the best results by letting the conversation flow naturally, even if it went off topic, mixing my open ended questions with easier one (like asking to hear a certain story), and mainly just keeping quiet. Each interview went a little differently.

Uncle Geoffrey was the first family member I interviewed. He is younger than my father and Aunt Sharon, but older than Uncle Keith and Uncle Stephen. He is lighter skinned than the rest of his siblings, and taller too, with a deep calming voice and an easy smile. As you might guess from the description I chose to interview Uncle Geoff first because he is the most easy-going. I felt he would put me at my ease especially because since he used to play in the NBA I knew he was used to speaking into microphones and giving interviews. Most interesting of all was the fact that Uncle Geoff and Uncle Keith were two peas in a pod growing up, and although I knew that the interview, all of them really, would be an emotional experience I was also looking forward to delving into those unexplored depths. I was right on all counts. Uncle Geoff's interview was clean and clear, and while there were some things he was unwilling to discuss, he was open where it counted most.

The only bad thing about my Uncle Geoff's interview was that it went so well. I developed a false sense of confidence that I was an expert. My Uncle Stephen's interview shattered that illusion fairly quickly. Not only did I choose the wrong room in his house (one where you could hear the washing machine), I didn't know how to tacitly control my subject. My Uncle Stephen, the baby of the bunch, was much more emotional, and as a former marine is not comfortable with showing his feelings. He kept

turning his head, hitting the microphone with his hand, and doing a lot of foot-tapping to self-sooth. This caused some interesting creative decisions to be made down the line, but at the time I didn't want to interrupt the flow of conversation for the sake of a cleaner recording.

My Aunt Sharon's interview had another more delicate problem. Her husband, my Uncle Roy, had just died unexpectedly in September of that year. I interviewed her in October as we had planned months before, but even at the time I knew it was still too early. It took about an hour before her voice gained any color, and she shied away from any great amount of detail for most of the interview. Her boon, though unconsciously given was to give me another character, her oldest son, my cousin Erick.

Erick was raised alongside of my Uncle Keith and Stephen, and had a relationship with them that I had never known about. While his part was eventually cut from the final product due to time constraints it was his interview inspired entire scenes and some of the best animation in the film.

If any of my family members were secretly unwilling to undergo an interview it was my father. Talking about death in the family has always made him uncomfortable, and talking about it to me, his daughter, probably made it worse. Eventually I ambushed him one night, giving him no time to prepare or put it off. The result was incredible. His raw, brutal, honest portrayal of his feelings gave me the most powerful section of dialogue in the film.

My Nana's interview was actually a test interview to get her used to the equipment. This meant that I wasn't as concerned about details like finding a quiet room, or asking particularly penetrating questions. However as we proceeded I realized that my Nana was emotionally shutting down, and by the end of the interview I was in serious doubt that I should attempt another. Now, my Nana is no shrinking violet, she is a strong, smart woman who used to stop street fights by walking in the middle of them. So my decision to not interview her again had nothing to do with her fragility, but my fear that I couldn't take her to an emotionally dark place and bring her out again. However, this lack of material led me to make one the best creative decisions I made during the entire film. This was to keep my main character, Nana's character, silent until the end of the film.

Section II: The Script

In all actuality I never had a formal script for “A Bed of Butterflies.” After I had collected my interviews I did write a second treatment for the film [see Appendix C], and eventually made a shot list as well [see Appendix D], but overall most of the written scripting took place on the fly. I would be boarding a scene, or just doing some experimental thumbnails when a plot idea, or solution would strike me, I would then either write it down in list form or scrawl it hastily in the margins of a notebook.

The dialogue portion of the script was handled with more care. I had over twenty hours of interviews to sift through so I felt compelled to be organized. I listened to every interview in its entirety twice before starting to extract clips that I thought I could use. I cataloged these clips by person, subject, and emotion (i.e. Geoff, talking about Keith playing basketball, happy). After reviewing all of my clips I started to create each sibling’s section of the film, deciding which pieces would be normal dialogue, and which the story that they were going to share with the audience. It was both frustrating and fun to try and clip together natural sound sentences when I was taking an “I did” from one section of an interview and a “something sooooo stupid” from another part. The most challenging part was trying to meld what I saw the character doing in my head with what I was putting in their mouths. Often the action would change because of some inflection in the voice that I wanted to express. I also had to work very hard to keep pauses, and secondary sounds like intakes of breath in the film to preserve the rhythm of natural speech, but at the same time keep scenes from dragging. The only time I wrote anything down in regards to the dialogue was during The Overhaul. This was the only time that I completely redid the story of “A Bed of Butterflies” from beginning to end. At this point I felt that I had lost contact with the emotional cadences of the interviews so I began to transcribe them so I would be forced to really *listen* to them again [see Appendix D]. This helped immensely and I was then able to create a new sound-script.

Eventually both scripts, the sound-script and the half-drawn, half-scrawled script merged into a Leica reel, which became my true script. Still, “A Bed of Butterflies” never had a truly, cut-in-stone

finished script; I was editing parts and adding and subtracting scenes up until three or four days before completion. This was the most unorganized way to go about things, made it hard for me to keep track of the flow of the film as a whole piece rather than a series of parts and definitely contributed to my inability to recognize how big this project was. My first Leica reel for “A Bed of Butterflies” was twenty-five minutes long, but for some reason this didn’t register as a sign that I might have bitten off a bit more than I could chew.

Section III: Storyboards

If you count thumbnails, digital storyboards and scribbled sketches on napkins “A bed of Butterflies” easily has over three thousand storyboards. Now more than half of those weren’t translated into the final product but that is beside the point. The point is that I drew a lot of storyboards, but only one set of formal ones. My formal storyboards were from the second treatment of the film and bear little resemblance to the finished product. I drew them on yellow sticky notes for quick and easy handling. Then I scanned them, touched them up a bit in Adobe Photoshop, and then turned them into a Leica reel in Final Cut Pro. When I overhauled the script and story of “A Bed of Butterflies” I decided to skip the middle man so to speak and do all of my new boards in Photoshop [see Appendix E]. I did this to save time, and because I had some new idea about color that I wanted to play with. As the film progressed I stopped making formal boards and Leica reels and began just thumbnailing sections that I had issues with [see Appendix E].

Section IV: Sound

One of the biggest mistakes that I made during this year of pre-production was not focusing more of my sound design. I had made a decent scratch track for my Leica reel with royalty free music and free sound effects, but that was it. I had no formal arrangements with a composer for my music, I hadn't really cleaned up any of the dialogue, and I made no attempt to do any Foley sound. This went directly against the advice of both Dave and Stephanie who urged me to at least keep sound in the back of my mind. My only excuse was my own lack of scope. I felt that when I finally had all of the dialogue pinned down and the rough animation done there would be plenty of time for sound work later. As a result the sound in "A Bed of Butterflies" is amateur-ish at best and not worthy of the time and work I put into the film. The only reason it works is because of the film's unique style and content, but in my opinion it is the weakest part of the piece.

Section V: Character Design

From the beginning I wanted the characters in "A Bed of Butterflies" to accurately represent the cast. I wanted my designs to reflect the unique spectrum of my family, to be interesting, as well as functional. I spent a lot of time looking at family photo albums studying the images, trying to figure out which characteristics to keep and accentuate, and which to gloss over. At the same time I was (unreasonably) concerned with how my family would react to my designs fearing that they would interpret them as how I saw them in reality rather than as characters in a story. Finally I gave up and just decided to wing it.

I drew my first character sheets [see Appendix F] which not only included the designs for the main body of the film but also the designs for the memory shorts that would take place in each section and would be drawn in different styles. Shape symbolism played a big part in my designs. Assuming the

traditional values of circular characters being comforting, square and rectangular ones solid and triangular ones dynamic I made most of my characters a variation of a triangle. This is especially true for my Uncle Stephen's character and my father's. As the first character to invade Nana's personal space and the last I wanted their shapes to reflect that they were the game changers. While they are both equally triangular my Uncle Stephen character is composed of curved lines (until his transformation) whereas my father's character is all straight unforgiving lines. This one design choice gives a wealth of visual clues to the audience about the fundamental differences between these two men.

I made very few changes in these designs as the film progressed. I did simplify them for animation purposes, for example changing Young Stephen's outfit from a softball uniform to a just a shirt and jeans, and not drawing individual teeth [see Appendix F]. I also added some design changes for symbolic purposes like not being able to see either Stephen or Eric's eyes until certain point in their narratives to represent hidden emotions. Some minor evolutions came about as I animated, shapes became smoother and silhouettes more exaggerated. I found myself following my designs the way I followed my script, as a guideline, but keeping myself open to organic developments.

Section VI: The Culling of ideas and the new "A Bed of Butterflies"

Like any film "A Bed of Butterflies" went through several phases of development, and at least one major overhaul. The idea of doing a physical set that I would composite my animation onto was abandoned due to story changes. It was soon joined by rotoscoped characters and incorporating clips of family films in the background because I felt they would distract the audience from the story.

By May, 2009 the only concepts that I had kept from the original proposal were the "nightmare room" a visual interpretation of grief where most of the film would take place, the choice to do my animation digitally, the interviews, and of course the *general* story. I emphasize the word "general" because while the overall concept of the story had not changed the way it was being told by my characters

had. For example, in my first treatment of the film my Nana character responded verbally to her children, and interacted with them. In my first set of storyboards the character no longer spoke, but was very active, walking around, swing baseball bats, throwing books etc. After the overhaul the character neither spoke nor was very active. She responds to her children, but is in a constant state of passive reaction. It is not until the end of the film that she embraces action, literally and figuratively moving forward. Now this development was the result of constraints (not having enough dialogue options for the character, and feeling that I could animate and active elderly woman well), but ended up taking the film in a new and better direction. Having a passive main character allowed me to improve my secondary characters' actions and solidify what they're contributions to the story.

Within a year "A Bed of Butterflies" went from a weird half-real, half-imagined wake, to a surreal hodgepodge of stories told by people duck and dodging around each other, before finally becoming what it always was; a story about a woman trapped in her own grief by guilt and how her remaining children convince her that it's time to move on.

Chapter Four: The Second Year (Fall 2010-Spring 2011)

To be completely accurate I did start my rough animation at the end of spring quarter in 2010. I also worked on it sporadically that summer, but that didn't prevent me from spending the rest of the school on it as well. Considering I was single-handedly animating a twenty minute film starring seven characters all with lip synced sections spending a year on rough animation is not too shabby. However my lack of project scope led me to think that I could finish the entire film by the end of winter quarter (February 2011), then by spring quarter (May 2011). I also experienced the several pros and discovered some cons to working with digital animation software.

Section I: Rough Animation

If I presented my animation process to a panel of professionals they would tell me that I animated “A Bed of Butterflies” in the worst way possible. That is to say I animated straight ahead, from beginning to end. They would have advised me to animate something simple like a blink or a head turn, something to get me warmed up. Instead I jumped in with first scene involving opening curtains and windows among other things. This wasn’t troublesome at the time, in fact animating straight ahead helped keep me organized and consistent. But later on, when I was inking, my poor drawing at the beginning of the film (not to mention since I had done it first I couldn’t accurately remember what I had been trying to draw sometimes) cost me a lot of time. Also, because I was trying to work as fast as possible, my rough animation was *very* rough. Many times I only drew enough to show the weight of the character or just major movement with any notes for facial expression this also cost me a lot of time later on and in actuality it can probably be said that I drew “A Bed of Butterflies” twice [see Appendix G]. Despite these and other shortcuts I didn’t finish my rough animation until week eight of the spring quarter.

Drawing the rough animation was the most positive creative period of the film making process outside of pre-production. As I ran into things I wasn’t skilled enough to animate well I would just thumbnail alternatives until I found something that *would* work. Sometimes even as I was animating an idea would strike and I would just draw it out because it felt right. So even as I struggled to meet unrealistic deadlines this was a magical time.

Section II: Scope

Realistic assessment of projects or project scope is my Achilles’ heel. Rarely can I ever accurately calculate how much work I will have to put in to a project in order to complete it to my satisfaction. If I do it is usually because the project is due the next day and panic and adrenaline lead me

to a more accurate evaluation. “A Bed of Butterflies” was no different, and suffered because of it. Many times I rushed through things trying to meet an unrealistic deadline, or left decisions unmade because I wanted to finish another step first. An example of the former is when I tried to finish the entire film in two weeks after I completed the rough animation. My sound and background design are examples of the latter.

When I showed my thesis committee my rough cut (cut of the film with rough animation and some storyboards) and then proclaimed that I was going to finish the entire thing in two weeks the ever practical Dave proclaimed “you’ve got a lot of work to do, you’re screwed.” As usual he was right. I had somehow convinced myself that because I was animating digitally cleaning up my rough animation was going to be something I could fly through. After completing the first part of the first scene I began to realize how wrong I was. Instead of cleaning my drawings (i.e. erasing some lines and closing some gaps) I was practically redrawing them, and it took a long time. As time marched forward and the deadline loomed I started cutting sections, coming up with design choices that I thought would disguise the fact that part weren’t finished (i.e. making the bulk of the film black and white). By the end of two weeks I had inked and colored a third of the film, which while impressive, was not anywhere near a finished product. While this was an emotionally devastating experience for me it did finally force me to start accepting the magnitude of the project I was working on though the full enormity still didn’t hit me until much later.

In my opinion the two weakest parts of “A Bed of Butterflies” are my sound design and my backgrounds. This is the direct result of me not developing these two areas sooner because I wanted to finish other sections I felt they were dependent on. ‘What’s the point,’ I would ask myself ‘of working on sound when I’m still changing my dialogue?’ Or ‘I have so much work to do on the characters, backgrounds will go really fast after I’m done with the animation.’ These sorts of procrastinating tendencies led me to make some major changes that affected the film. The first was that I decided to make an ambient soundtrack. I didn’t think that I would have my animation done in time for a composer to make something nice for me, plus the idea of using silence as sound intrigued me. And yes, I admit that I

assumed that mixing room tones with sound effects and dialogue would be easier than balancing it all with music.

My backgrounds slowly devolved from a physical set, to a collage that used textures to create depth, to flat digitally painted backgrounds that used some textures and some real images. While I don't regret the loss of the set the fact that I didn't even leave myself enough time to experiment with my second idea still saddens me. I feel that at least in the Nightmare Room the mixture of textures would have been interesting though perhaps it may have been overwhelming and distracting. The point is that because I did not fully consider the amount of time I would need for backgrounds, nor how many backgrounds and different angles I would need I was forced to rush through their creation and to do them digitally in Adobe Photoshop.

Section III: The Pros and Cons of Digital Animation Software

"A Bed of Butterflies was animated using Toon Boom Studio 4.5, vector-based, digital, two-dimensional animation software. While no longer the latest and greatest version of the Toon Boom studio series it remains one of my favorites due to its easy workflow and lack of superfluous features.

The main reason I decided to animate digitally was because, having done my first two films on paper, I knew that certain steps of production like playback and timing drawings would be faster. I also thought that drawing digitally would eliminate many camera issues, would save some trees, and would allow me to be more flexible with my decisions (i.e. if I didn't like a character jumping I could change it to a skip with less effort). I was right about all of these points; the instant scene playback as well as being able to experiment with different camera moves in the scene allowed me room to preform creative solutions as I went along rather than spend time planning each change. However there were several cons to working digitally that plagued me throughout my production and post-production periods. One was just the limitations of the software. Because Toon Boom is vector-based it is difficult to get a genuinely

sketchy look. There are also the common place things like program freezes or crashes. Also, drawing on a tablet is just not the same as drawing on paper. There is a disconnect, however slight, between what you are doing in front of you and what is showing up on the screen. This was the thing that frustrated me the most because I was constantly comparing my normal drawing speed with my digital one. Also the instant gratification that working digitally provides was a double edged sword for me. Because I could playback the scene instantly I didn't concentrate on creating more finished drawings like I did when I worked on paper. As I have already explained I spent most of my post production time redrawing the film, effectively losing anytime I had initially saved by working digitally.

Some more unexpected problems occurred during post production when the film was being put together. Things that looked all right in the program didn't always render correctly for some reason or other and had to be tried several times. Mouth movements didn't always sync when put with dialogue in Final Cut Pro. Character size was inconsistent between scenes because I couldn't open the files together and compare them side by side.

Despite these issues I feel the pros of working digitally outweigh the cons and highly recommend Toon Boom animation software.

Chapter Five: The Half-Year (Fall 2011-Winter 2012)

After my attempt to finish "A Bed of Butterflies" in May, 2011 I spent a summer recovering from film burn out. I wish I had worked more on inking during these months because it would have saved me some heartache later on, but I didn't. Around the beginning of August I girded my loins and began inking in earnest. It took me six months to completely ink the film; I colored it in two weeks with some help and did backgrounds, sound, compositing, and rendering in one week. I handed the film in for screening two hours before the cut off time on February 24, 2012.

On February 27, 2012 at 9:20 PM “A Bed of Butterflies” was screened for the first time, with overwhelmingly positive results.

Section I: Inking

If there was any part of “A Bed of Butterflies” that I hated doing it was the inking. As I’ve stated previously in this paper I wasn’t so much cleaning up drawings, but redrawing them. Sometimes, because I was working on a part I had initially drawn almost a year ago, I wouldn’t emphasize the right lines and would completely lose the impact of the scene. This resulted in more redrawing and an increase in bad language. Overall it was a frustrating, exhausting, and painful process. However if any part of the film taught me about workflow and project management it was this one. Having to do all that extra work taught me that I should have taken more time and care with my rough animation, and that better planning and organization would save me a lot of grief in the future. It also made me consider that the next time I work on a large project I may want to take on teammates.

Inking also led to my final series of scene cuts and edits. For example I had had lengthy transitions between each character’s section involving a cemetery. The final time crunch forced me to get rid of these confusing sequences resulting in a tighter, stronger film. It was at this point that I also decided to cut my Cousin Erick’s character from the final film, though I did end up finishing part of the dance sequence that was the highlight of his section. I feel that it was a good story decision because the fact that he wasn’t a sibling, but a nephew was a subtle break in continuity, and lengthened the film unnecessarily.

Overall I am satisfied with quality of my line work in “A Bed of Butterflies.” Some of the sections that I had inked in Spring, 2011 were a bit rough, and I wish I could have gotten more line variance, but it is my cleanest film to date, and I am contented with the final look.

Section II: Coloring

From the beginning I had planned for “A Bed of Butterflies” to be fully colored. In order to fulfill this vision I ended up starting my coloring while I was finished my inking. Luckily since I had decided to color my film in Toon Boom rather than export to another program color consisted of paint bucketing colors into my line work. This was something I could do for hours after I was too tired to ink. Even so the only reason the coloring is complete is thanks to the help I got from my wonderful fiancé Andrew. His support throughout the entire project was wonderful, but his tireless efforts to help me color, and export the film was the only reason I finished.

One of the reasons I wanted “A Bed of Butterflies” to be fully colored was because it was how I had always planned to differentiate my characters. I knew my audience wouldn’t be able to necessarily remember every character’s name, but I knew if I combined good use of color with my character designs it would eliminate character confusion. I felt this was especially necessary not only because of the number of characters in the film, but because since the film journeys through several styles, and time periods. Many of my color choices for my characters were taken from life, for example, the skin tones, the Marine uniform, and the Cleveland Cavaliers uniform. In the case of the Marine uniform it made me change Stephen’s original color pallet from green and yellow to another variation of red, gold and blue. I did this to subtly emphasize that the character’s transformation was a more a reorganization of himself rather than a complete change. With the Cavaliers uniform that Geoff wears I chose the home colors because I wanted him to pop against the dark background. I also wanted emphasize the character’s role as a comforter and as a character who has found peace unlike his mother who is dressed in black. I kept Nana in a warm black not only to support the idea of mourning, but also to have her figure almost meld with the pure black of her chair. This visually symbolizes her attachment to her grief. While I feel it might have muddled her silhouette values at some points it also draws the audiences eyes to her face and hands which is where I wanted them.

I used a lot of other symbolic color in “A Bed of Butterflies” like changing the characters eye colors depending on where they are and whether they are alive or dead, using fully saturated colors in the film’s opening and a limited muted pallet in the Nightmare Room, and The colors for the rest of the rest of the cast were inspired by photographs (my Aunt Sharon did indeed wear a purple pencil skirt once upon a time), and experimented with against the backgrounds [see Appendix H].

Section III: Finishing

The last week (or week and a half) of post-production is frankly an energy-drink fueled haze to me. I look at my schizophrenic lists and notes to myself, and the pictures of my desk empty coffee cups in disbelief. Only a few memories remain. One, that I did my final sound mix in less than seventy-two hours. I gave up trying to clean up my interview audio and just made sure it was loud enough. I also minimalized my sound effects and most of the track was just room tone. Two, that I cried during my final committee meeting because I was told that my (at the time unfinished) film did not look like a thesis. The bite from this comment fueled me to push myself to only attempt what I could finish well and really focus on the final look. Three, the day that the film was due I had been up for seventy-two hours straight was using three computers and didn’t do a final quality check before turning in the film which led to some interesting results.

Section IV: Screening and Response

On February 27, 2012, after two and a half years of work I finally screened “A Bed of Butterflies.” It was the last film that night, and while I had plenty of friends and family that came to support me I was still a nervous wreck. When the movie started and I saw that I, in my tired stupor, had misspelled the title I almost threw-up. I spent the entire film seeing only its flaws (i.e. the sound being out

of sync), and cursing quietly under my breath dreading the moment that I would have to go to the front of the room and hear what my respondent had to say, not to mention the rest of the audience. I expected to be torn apart.

I chose assistant professor Brian Larson to be my thesis respondent for several reasons. One, he knew nothing about my film and had been completely uninvolved in its creation. I wanted someone who wouldn't be able to compare my many previous versions of the film to the finished piece. I wanted a respondent who knew about and valued high quality animation, would judge the film only by what I handed in, and who would be honest. Brian was all of these, and his response was so overwhelmingly positive that I almost fainted at the time. My accidental use of silence was applauded as edgy though I was encouraged to work more on my sound design, the use of interviews as dialogue had the desired effect, and my uses of symbolism were engaging.

For the first time in months I felt that I had made the film that I intended to make, a family story that transcends itself and becomes something that captures others. It restored my faith in myself as an artist, a filmmaker, and a storyteller.

Chapter Six: We end at the beginning

Last week I went to Mt. Hope cemetery to visit my uncle Keith and my grandfather, two of the men "A Bed of Butterflies" is dedicated to. I cleaned off the graves, left my flowers, and just stood there for a while. I thought about my family, their joys and pains, I thought about myself, I thought about "A Bed of Butterflies" and how, as good as it is it does not even begin to fill the void left by a real person. Still, "A Bed of Butterflies" is everything I feel a thesis film should be. It was challenging to create and complete, it showcases both my strengths and weaknesses as a filmmaker, and most importantly it shows that despite any of those weaknesses that a good solid story trumps all.

I'm not one of those people that believe that the dead hear us in their graves; I am more of the mind that they hear us when we remember them. I have no memories of Uncle Keith, but I figure giving voice to the memories of others is the next best thing. I left the cemetery without saying anything, thinking that in another ten years I might try telling another story about Keith. However right now I see forming before me a snow-dusted street in NYC circa 1968, a little girl looking for strawberries in winter, and a man shrouded in the patchwork remains of many garments sitting in an alley smoking the butt of a leftover cigarette. A new story takes the stage and life marches on.

APPENDIX A: “A BED OF BUTTERFLIES,” WRITTEN IN 1996

A Bed of Butterflies

By Erica Hardy

I used to dread going over to my Nana’s house in the winter. Don’t get me wrong; I loved my grandparents, but their house was another story! It was always smoky, cluttered, and had none of my toys in it! In the summer visiting was great because I could play outside in the sun, but during the winter I had to stay indoors.

As I grew older, and began to take part in the adult conversations, I grew to love going to Nana’s house- winter or summer. The best room in the house was the kitchen, with its refrigerator (a patchwork of poetry, pictures, and funny magnets), stove, compactor, and cabinets. And the kitchen table was no ordinary table: it was a bar-like counter with high seats. The kitchen also featured a stairway leading to the bedrooms, a back door to the driveway, and a doorway into the living room. It was the heart, soul, and center of the whole house, so naturally this is where the best stories were told.

It was some Sunday night or other and Nana, my mother, and I were in the kitchen talking about our opportunities in life. It was a talk I was rather enjoying, so I was surprised when Nana changed the subject.

“But oh Lord, don’t you ever let me hear you all complainin’ ‘bout what you don’t have!”

“Course not Nana,” I answered “I’ve got a lot to be thankful for!”

“That’s right! I swear honey –child that if I ever hear you or Eric or what’s-his-name, Andrey complain that your parents don’t give you enough...” Here Nana glared at me and shook her head furiously, “I’ll come right over to your house and lay you flat-yes Andrey too!”

“I believe it!”

“You understand that whenever you’re sick or not it breaks your mom and dad’s hearts when they can’t help you! You understand? IT BREAKS THEIR HEARTS!”

“I understand,” I replied meekly Noting that I had never heard her talk this way before.

“No,” she said, “you don’t understand, so listen, I’m gonna tell you a story ‘bout your Uncle Keith!”

A warning light flashed off in my head! Stories about Uncle Keith were usually brief, funny ones with an undercurrent of sadness to them. For Uncle Keith had died young (barely in his twenties) from kidney failure, and my Nana had never gotten over it!

But I saw plain as day that Nana wanted me to hear this whether it upset her or not. So with great hesitance still wondering what I was getting into I whispered “Okay.” Without missing a beat Nana began her tale:

“Well Keith was in the hospital- you know after his transplant- and we were getting ready to bring him home. He was going to stay in the spare bedroom, and to brighten it up I had gotten him brand new sheets with butterflies on them.”

“I remember when we went to the hospital to visit Keith and I told him... I told him that when he came home he was goin to sleep on a bed of butterflies. And when we were goin to go home I was the last one out, and he took my hand and said ‘Let Daddy and the others go... you stay.’ But I left anyway because the nurse had said ‘Mrs. Huston let that boy rest.’ So I went home, and the next day they called and told me my baby was dead!”

Later that night I was still at the kitchen table thinking about Nana’s story, and the unhealed wounds she must have. I found that I wanted to tell the story of the butterfly sheets, still clean, still unused, and the Uncle I had never met.

APPENDIX B: ORIGINAL THESIS PROPOSAL

A Bed of Butterflies

Director/Animator: Erica P. Hardy

Techniques: Hand-drawn/Digital 2D animation, and live action footage

Length: 5-6 minutes

Synopsis

A Bed of Butterflies will be a film about the life and death of a young man as told through the voices of his siblings, and mother. It will focus on the themes of regret, mourning and memory. This film will be a mixture of live action imagery and various styles of animation that interplay with one another throughout the work.

Description

A Bed of Butterflies will be a film that is part non-fiction, part animated vignette, and part experimental film.

Non-Fiction:

The true story behind this work concerns a young man, named Keith Huston. When Keith was 22 years old he died of kidney failure, leaving behind a mother, a father, and four siblings, one of which is my father. In 1983, my grandmother buried her child and in 2007, over 20 years later, she has begun to accept his death.

The only Uncle Keith I have ever known is a gravestone in Mount Hope Cemetery. Yet, I have felt his presence all my life in the grief of my grandparents, my aunt, my uncles and my father. I want to explore this grief in my film: how a person's death can leave a hole in the lives of those who love them, and how we each have our own way of facing that death. I also want to explore how the telling of stories can help ease the pain of loss.

Animated Vignette:

Memories and stories are two ways the dead live on. In *A Bed of Butterflies* each of the people left behind will share a personal story about Keith Huston. I intend to translate these stories into self-contained animated shorts, which will play at appropriate points in the film. I am choosing to animate these stories because animation is a universal medium, and I feel it will make these personal stories accessible to a wide audience. The animation will not only allow me to understand, interpret

and convey the stories through my personal art form, but will also give me the opportunity to know my uncle better.

The style of these animations, as well as the tone and content are entirely dependent on yet-to-be-scheduled interviews with the Hardy/Huston family. While I will be adapting the stories garnered from the interviews I will not be taking artistic license.

Experimental Film:

A Bed of Butterflies will have a dramatic plot structure, characters, and a solid setting. However, the main location used in the film will be a running metaphor of an emotional state with characters and surroundings fluctuating in and out of existence. In this way the film will draw on processes and exploration of the experimental genre.

Techniques

The main action of *A Bed of Butterflies* will take place on a miniature set I build, light, and film myself. It will act as a controllable background component of the work. The set will be a simple white room arranged as if for a wake. There will be a bed in one corner, with a chair in front of it and a mirror on the wall beside it. On this set, live action and rotoscoped footage of Keith Huston's family will be composited in. Their animated stories, narrated by themselves, will cut in and out of this invented space. The opening scene, and the closing scene will also be animated in a clean hand-drawn style.

The interviews that I will conduct will be limited to the mother and siblings of Keith Huston. While I am still constructing questions they will run along the lines of "At what age were you able to accept your brother's death?" Answers to these questions will enable me to decide the animation styles, and expressions will be used during the vignette scenes. These could range from rough hand-drawn to paint animation, however I anticipate the heart of the work will be 2D hand-drawn animation.

Treatment:

Title sequence (Animation):

A butterfly flies whimsically through a sunny, blue sky, against which titles appear. It weaves its way through titles and eventually alights windowsill of a tenement apartment (NYC). Movement is seen from inside and the window is thrown open causing the butterfly to take off and dance away.

Scene I (Animation)

The woman, an African American in her early 30's, watches the butterfly leave then turns back to her task indoors. The camera follows her in and we see she is making up a bed. Around the bed we see various baseball magazines, architecture books, and other things to indicate that the room is being readied for someone's return. The woman tucks the last corner into place, smooths the wrinkles and steps back to observe her handiwork, and we see that the bed sheet has butterflies on it.

The ring of a phone is heard. The woman turns toward it and leaves the room.

The woman walks into her kitchen and picks up the phone.

NANA: "Hello, Huston residence... Yes this is her."

We hear an unarticulated voice and watch as the woman's face goes from worry to horror, then shuts down.

She drops the phone.

Scene II (Mix Animation with Model set and live action footage)

The sound of the phone hitting the wall echoes through the sparse room we now find ourselves in. The room is a dirty gray white; in the left most corner is a metal hospital bed, also white (Model set). On the bed, covered coroner-style with a butterfly bed sheet is the body of a man (we know it's a man by size and shape).

Sitting in a dark brown wooden chair next to the bed is an African American woman in her 70's (Rotoscope) She is dressed in black, and looks down at her hands that rest on the edge of the bed. As we view her in profile we see that there is a mirror hanging on the wall next to the bed.

Another figure leans out from behind the woman.

Scene III (Mix Animation with Model set and live action footage)

There is now a man (African American late 50's) sitting in a black chair next to the woman. There is an ashtray between them and he is smoking. He taps the cigarette over the ashtray, leans forward elbows on knees, and sighs.

ERIC: "Hey Keith remember that time..."

[Insert Eric's Story (animated)]

Scene IV (Mix Animation with Model set and live action footage)

The old woman sitting in the white room is alone again save for an ashtray with a smoldering cigarette still in it and an empty chair beside her. The woman looks at the cigarette, reaches, hesitates, and then resolutely turns back to the figure on the bed. It should be noted that there are less butterflies on the bed sheet than there were before.

The click-clack of a woman's shoes are heard, we hear her sit down. Suddenly a cigarette is thrust under the nose of the older woman, she turns and we see sitting beside her an African American woman in her late 50's. The resemblance between them is so strong that it is clear they are mother and daughter. They both light their cigarettes.

SHARON: "Eric was here first?"

NANA: "Yes he came to say goodbye."

SHARON: (pauses) "Me too Mommy"

SHARON: "Mommy there was that one summer ya know when we went to..."

[Insert Sharon's story (animated)]

Scene V (Mix Animation with Model set and live action footage)

We return to the white room and the old woman. The ashtray is gone and so are more butterflies from the bed sheet.

Sitting where her daughter was is another man lighter than her first two children, tall and lanky (Early 50's).

GEOFF: "Keith was sure something that summer."

NANA: "mmm"

She reaches over to Geoff and brushes some lint off of his sweater. He sits staring at the body on the bed, his face haunted, but immobile. Finally he smiles as if he's heard something sweet, and gets up to leave. Nana calls out to him.

NANA: Don't you have anything to say?

Geoff stops walking, and without turning his head says:

GEOFF: No.

Geoff walks away his image fading as he draws closer to the walls of the room. For the first time we notice that there is no door in this place.

Scene VI (Mix Animation with Model set and live action footage)

A man is sobbing.

Nana hears it as she watches Geoff disappear, then she turns towards it. In the chair beside her is a man (Late 40's, African American, loudly dressed) weeping. Behind him leaning against the back of the chair, massive arms crossed, is another man (Early 40's African American dressed in a Marine's uniform).

LOVE (Still sobbing): It's not fair!

STEPHEN: No, but life isn't fair.

LOVE: He was my best friend.

STEPHEN: He was my brother. He was a good man.

LOVE: The best.

[Insert Steve, and Love's story (animation)]

Scene VI (Mix Animation with Model set and live action footage)

Nana sits alone again. There is no longer anything or anybody in the door-less room but her sitting in the chair, the bed, the body, and the mirror. Slowly she bends over covering her face with her hands. A muffled voice is heard, it sounds as if it's saying "Mommy." Nana's head snaps toward the voice and in the mirror we reflected a younger Nana (the woman from Scene I), sitting in the exact same position only she is in a hospital, and the body in the bed beside her is alive (animated).

In the mirror (no Sound) we see a nurse come and whisper something to younger Nana. She nods rises, gathering her things. She kisses the bedridden man (Keith) on the cheek, then turns to leave. Keith lifts a wasted hand and catches the corner of her coat. He pleads with her to stay, but she gently tugs her coat away, places his hand back on his bed, and leaves.

Still watching the mirror we see the end of scene one only this time we hear what is said over the phone.

DOCTOR: Mrs. Huston I regret to inform you that your son Keith died this morning...

The current Nana watches the mirror in horror. She begins sobbing uncontrollably, rocking back and forth.

NANA: WHY DIDN'T I STAY WITH MY BABY!!!

The mirror is smashed.

Scene VII (Mix Animation with Model set and live action footage)

Nana looks up as she hears the mirror break. Standing beside the wall fist still raised is a tall dark man, with the set expression of a soldier (animated character).

NANA: Spencer?

Spencer says nothing but walks to Nana's side. He tenderly brushes a wisp of hair from her face and we see his wedding ring. He gently turns her head back to the body on the bed and she is shocked to see that there are no longer any butterflies on the sheet. She turns back to her husband but he is gone, along with the remains of the mirror.

Scene VIII (Mix Animation with Model set and live action footage)

Nana turns back towards the body covered by the white sheet. Shakily she rises from her chair, and shuffles to the head of the bed. She grabs the sheet, hesitates, the pulls it away with a flourish.

Keith is lying there as if he is dead. He looks thin, but not unhealthy like he did in the in the mirror. Nana's face starts to crumple, but then Keith roles over to his side and snuffles a bit. He's asleep. Nana's breath starts for a moment, and she stares in wonderment at her sleeping child. Finally she starts to tuck him in. As she does so he wakes a little and smiles at her. She strokes his hair, and leans down, kissing him on the forehead. As she kisses him, Keith, his blanket and his bed dissolve in to a cloud of multicolored butterflies. The walls of the room fall away turning into a sunny garden. Watching the butterflies' spiral up into the sky Nana stands wearing white. She lifts a hand skyward and waves.

NANA (V.O.) Ya know I don't like to say goodbye because it's forever and I'll miss you. I say "See ya soon" because I love you. I love you so very, very much.

CUT TO BLACK

NANA (V.O.) See ya soon...

Credits

Budget Summary

	Fee	Actual Cost
Wages and Salary	\$138,200	\$1,050
Administration	\$12,548	\$0
Preproduction/R&D	\$5,200	\$350
Production	\$18,225	\$725
Postproduction	\$10,250	\$250
Distribution	\$855	\$700
Subtotal	\$185,278	\$3,075
Contingency (10%)	\$18,528	\$308
Total	\$203,806	\$3,383

Wages and Salaries

Fee

Actual

Above the Line

Director	1 year flat rate	\$35,000	\$0
Director of Photography	2 months @ \$2000	\$4,000	\$0
Producer	1 year flat rate	\$45,000	\$0
Writer	2 months @ \$1,500	\$3,000	\$0
Above the Line Subtotal		\$87,000	\$0

Below the Line

Lead Animator	36 weeks @ \$416	\$15,000	\$0
Art Director	36 weeks @ \$416	\$15,000	\$0
Set builder	12 weeks @ \$400	\$4,800	\$0
Cinimatographer Live Action	8 weeks @ \$400	\$3,200	\$500
Cinimatographer Animation	10 weeks @ \$400	\$4,000	\$0
Audio	4 weeks @ \$400	\$1,600	\$300
Layout artist	4 weeks @ \$400	\$1,600	\$0
Compositing	4 weeks @ \$850	\$3,400	\$0
Editing	4 weeks @ \$400	\$1,600	\$0
Composer		\$1,000	\$250
Below the Line Subtotal		\$51,200	\$1,050
Wage and Salary Subtotal		\$138,200	\$1,050

Administration

Telephone and Internet	12 months @ \$79	\$948	\$0
Xerox/Printing	100 copies @ .20	\$20	\$0
Accounting	\$24 hrs @ \$20	\$480	\$0
Studio	12 months @ \$925	\$11,100	\$0
Administration Subtotal		\$12,548	\$0

Preproduction/ R&D

	Fee	Actual
Research/Development	\$500	\$0
Character Designs	\$600	\$0
Set Design/Concept	\$500	\$0
Set Building	\$600	\$150
Storyboard	\$1,000	\$0
Animatic	\$1,000	\$0
Art Supplies	\$1,000	\$200
P/R&D Subtotal	\$5,200	\$350

Production

HD Camera Package,	\$3,000	\$0
Light package, indoor	\$375	\$0
HD tape stock	\$250	\$125
Accessories (bulbs, tapes)	\$200	\$200
Software	\$2,000	\$0
Foley	\$1,000	\$0
Voice Recording	\$1,000	\$0
Meals	\$300	\$0
Travel for Crew	\$1,000	\$400
Lodging for Crew	\$500	\$0
Workstations	\$8,000	\$0
Animation Stand	\$500	\$0
Light table	\$100	\$0
Production Subtotal	\$18,225	\$725

Post Production

Edit Suite	\$3,000	\$0
Sound Edit Suite	\$1,200	\$0
HD transfer deck	\$300	\$0
Sound Mix and Mastering	\$1,000	\$0
Color Timing	\$1,500	\$0
Data Storage	\$250	\$250
Post Production Subtotal	\$10,250	\$250

Distribution		Fee	Actual
HD Duplication			
DVD Duplication	15 discs @ \$3 each	\$45	\$0
DVD Booklet	15 @ \$5 each	\$60	\$0
Video dubs			
DVCam	5 tapes @ \$15 each	\$75	\$60
BetaSP	5 tapes @ \$45 each	\$225	\$225
Promotional materials		\$50	\$15
Mailing		\$100	\$100
Festival Entry Fees	10 festivals/\$30 each	\$300	\$300
Distribution Subtotal		\$855	\$700

APPENDIX C: SECOND THESIS TREATMENT

Treatment:

Title sequence (Animation):

A butterfly flies whimsically through a sunny, blue sky, against which titles appear. It weaves its way through titles and eventually alights on the windowsill of 489 Thatford Ave. Movement is seen from inside and the window is thrown open causing the butterfly to take off and dance away.

Scene I (Animation)

A woman, an African American in her 40's, watches the butterfly leave then turns back to her task indoors. The camera follows her in and we see she is making up a bed. Around the bed we see various sports magazines, books, and other things to indicate that the room is being readied for someone's return. The woman tucks the last corner into place, smooths the wrinkles and steps back to observe her handiwork, and we see that the bed sheet has butterflies on it.

The ring of a phone is heard. The woman turns toward it and leaves the room.

Her face furrows with worry as she answers the phone.

We hear an unarticulated voice and watch as the woman's face goes from worry to horror, then shuts down.

She drops the phone and it swings down and slams into the wall.

Scene II (Mix Animation with Model set and live action footage)

The sound of the phone hitting the wall echoes through the dusky dark we now find ourselves in.

Sitting in a dark brown wooden chair (Physical Model) is Nana, an African American woman in her 70's (Animated Character). She is dressed in black, and sleeping the sleep of someone who has just nodded off. Suddenly she starts, wakes, and looks around blinking. She adjusts her glasses, and notices that she is in the dark. She heaves herself out of her chair, hobbles over to a barely visible switch composed of two buttons. She pushes one button and a low tone hum is heard. The space becomes gradually becomes more illuminated and we can finally see where we are.

(MODEL SET) The room is a dim space inhabited by muted tones and mountains of things. Noticeably there is a dead tree growing out of the right-hand wall, with ceramic cardinals strung on it like Christmas decorations. There is a dust-covered record player, with a lopsided pile of vinyl records beside it. There is a slightly rusted car door imbedded in one of the piles. Trophies, clothes, and brick'n'brack dominated the floor,

as if everything was once maintained and neatly catalogued but has now fallen into horrible disrepair.

The effigy at its center dominates the room, a large affair made of dark, dust-covered granite. The words “HE DARED TO SOAR WITH EAGLES” can be seen as can the bottom of the dates above. A sheet covered with butterflies obscures the rest of the words. Lying on top of the effigy, also covered by the sheet, is the figure of a man. On either side of the effigy are large vases full of fake flowers (Animated props). One of the vases has toppled over.

Seeing the fallen vase Nana walks over, picks it up, and rearranges the flowers. It falls back over. Finally, she sighs and turns to head back to her seat.

Scene III (Mix Animation with Model set and live action footage)

STEPHEN: “I looooooved being the baby of the house”

Nana turns quickly looking around and finally stares at the effigy. She slowly approaches it. Then from off to the side we hear:

STEPHEN: “Being the baby was the best because ya know I had Eric, Sharon, Geoff, and Keith in front of me...”

[INTERVIEW MONOLOGUE: His death was a shock]

As we listen to the voice we close in on a picture on the wall. It is a black and white photo of a black family (Drawn). The boy in the middle is talking, Nana leans forward squinting.

NANA: “Stephen?”

STEPHEN: “Mommy!” (Heard from behind)

Nana turns and her youngest son is sitting in her chair. He is older than in the pictures (about 18/19). Wearing a baseball uniform, and leaning on a softball bat. He grins cheekily at Nana.

STEPHEN’S STORY (animated in the style of UPA)

The great report card scandal

STEPHEN: “Keith was my Jailhouse lawyer, but there was the one time I did something particularly stupid...”

Animate narrative, compete with “literal imagery” etc...

We cut back to the clutter-filled room and Nana is now sitting in the chair. Stephen stands in front of her his back to the effigy.

STEPHEN: “I was angry for a long time... you always said that you lost two children that day, because that day I decided no more crying.

As he says the line “no more crying” we zoom in close to his eyes as he looks up and directly into the camera. When we zoom out he is wearing a Marines uniform. He walks to Nana and ceremonially hands her the baseball bat, and salutes her. Then he turns to the effigy, salutes, turns away again, and marches into the dimness behind Nana’s chair. We hear his footsteps fade and disappear.

Scene IV (Mix Animation with Model set and live action footage)

Nana sits in her chair, staring at the effigy, and holding the baseball bat. The sheet covering the body on the effigy is obviously missing some of its butterflies. She sighs; sounding tired, and then starts as she hears a rumbling coming from one of the piles. The car door is shuddering. Nana walks toward it tentatively raising the baseball bat up ready to strike. Suddenly the door is kicked open by a large foot. A tall man (mid-twenties) emerges from what looks like the inside of the car (1982 Cimarron Cadillac to be precise). Finally his face is illuminated and it is Geoff, the third child. He is lighter-skinned than his younger brother, tall and lanky. He is wearing a Cleveland Cavaliers warm-up suit. Nana drops the bat in surprise and they embrace. Geoff looks at the effigy, and smiles.

GEOFF: “Memories. I could go on for days about memories. I remember having to go to the store...”

GEOFF’S STORY (animated in the style of Tom and Jerry cartoons) **Grocery Storey**

Young Geoffrey Huston is handed a grocery list and basket. He looks at it grumpily. Suddenly young Keith Huston runs by with a sock ball. Geoff smiles evilly. Keith dunks the sock ball into a hoop made from a wire coat hanger. As he celebrates a shadow falls over him. He looks up and Geoff is standing in the doorway menacingly. Keith finds himself out in the snow pulling the shopping cart while Geoff walks ahead. They get ready to cross the street and Geoff kicks the light post to change the light from green to red. They cross the four-lane highway and walk into the A&P store. They walk out of the store the basket full of groceries. They approach the highway, as the light turns red and begin to cross. As they are crossing the wheel of the shopping cart breaks and Keith is now dragging the shopping cart on one wheel. Geoff signals to Keith to hurry up and walks off leaving Keith in the middle of the highway. Keith snaps. Geoff is walking casually and notices Keith passing him *without* the groceries. Glancing over his shoulder Geoff sees that the broken cart has been abandoned in the middle of the road. He gets ready to yell at Keith, but then sees Keith already on the opposite sidewalk, his leg raised. Geoff starts to plead, but it is too late Keith kicks the light post changing the light from red to green. Frantically Geoff runs to grab the groceries then races to safety all the while avoiding cars. Keith laughs as Geoff collapses against the light post. Just as Geoff is about to punch Keith a pile of snow falls on his head. Geoffrey laughs then looks back at the effigy.

GEOFF: "This is kinda a cleansing for me, speaking about Keith..."
[INSERT INTERVIEW MONOLOGUE: The last time I saw my brother]

Nana is silent while Geoff is speaking. She looks away, and doesn't turn back until Geoff stops speaking. There is a long silence and finally Nana turns back to her son, but he has disappeared. Where he was standing there is a picture face down on the ground. Nana bends down and picks it up. Turning it over she sees it's a picture of Geoff playing basketball.

Scene V (Mix Animation with Model set and live action footage)

Nana hangs Geoff's picture on the wall of pictures. She takes a moment to look at the cluttered room again. There are more butterflies missing from the sheet on the effigy. She makes a grumpy face and begins to pick up some scattered records and puts them into a box. Satisfied for the moment she straightens, cracks her back, and then heads back to her chair. There is now an ashtray next to her chair. Nana inspects the ashtray suspiciously, but then sees that there is a pack of cigarettes in it. Happily Nana sits in her chair, and lights up. She smokes expertly, but as she blows out smoke instead of dissipating it begins to take shape. Nana doesn't seem to notice, but as she snubs out the cigarette stub the smoke drops away revealing a young woman (late 20's) and a boy (age 10). They are both dressed in nice Easter clothes. The woman is Sharon, Nana's only daughter, and the boy is Sharon's son Erick. Nana's face lights up.

ERICK: "Hey Lady!"

Hand in hand Sharon and Erick walk over to Nana's chair. Sharon kisses Nana on the cheek while Erick embraces her roughly. They settle down, Erick on the ground in front of Nana, and Sharon behind her chair. All three stare at the effigy.

SHARON: "When I was pregnant, he'd call me bubbles, and I did look like a bubble..."
[JOINT MONOLOGUE W/ ERICK AND SHARON: How Erick got his middle name]

Erick looks up at Nana smiling.

ERICK: You know there was one summer that Uncle Keith hired me to clean his room.

Both Nana and Sharon have "Mom" reactions i.e. rolling eyes and hand to temple.

ERICK: But it was great! Cuz my Uncle had the sharpest clothes..."

ERICK'S STORY (Animated in the style of the thesis film "Chestnut Tree")
Shall we Dance

We see a grown-up Keith getting ready to leave his room. Erick anxiously waits for him to leave. Finally the door shuts as Erick waves good-bye. After a beat of listening for footsteps Erick quickly runs around the room cleaning. Finally he approaches the closet

revealing a cornucopia of sweet looking clothes. After tossing off his own clothes Erick dives into the closet and comes out with a pile of clothes. He goes in front of the mirror in the room and starts trying on clothes. He ends up in a pair of pants, a dress shirt, and a jacket, but everything is much too big. Erick is looking in the mirror in disappointment when Keith reenters the room. There is a moment where the two eye each other in surprise, and then Keith walks towards Erick. Erick looks scared for a second until Keith starts adjusting the outfit. When Keith is done Eric looks sharp. Keith scratches his head as if something is missing then inspiration strikes him. Erick is admiring himself in the mirror when a fedora hat lands on his head. Looking up at his Uncle, Erick grins, and then noticing Keith's dancing position Erick mimics him. A spotlight suddenly illuminates the two of them and they start dancing the hustle.

We return to the cluttered room and Erick is still sitting at Nana's feet but he is now a grown man.

ERICK: Yeah, I was his little dance partner.

Erick continues to talk but looking up Nana suddenly shushes him by putting a hand on his shoulder. Sharon is standing in front of the effigy; she is now wearing the same mourning outfit as her mother. She is holding a picture of a man in a black frame.

SHARON: I always wondered what Keith would become –especially now.

[INTERVIEW MONOLOGUE: What Sharon asks of Keith]

Sharon turns away from the effigy and stumbles towards her mother finally she collapses at her feet. Sharon cries into her mother lap while her son kneels beside her. Nana strokes her hair and looks up at the effigy trying to hold back her tears.

SHARON: But you can't curl up and die. My husband is dead but I have to keep going...

[INTERVIEW MONOLOGUE: Sharon's words to Mommy]

SHARON: I can't tell you how to grieve Mommy

All three of them are embracing at this point. We see Sharon's head from Nana's point-of-view. During Sharon's last line everything goes blurry then black. We hear the flutter of wings and cardinal song.

Scene VI (Mix Animation with Model set and live action footage)

Nana startles into awareness, blinking owlishly. She looks around for Erick and Sharon but they, and the ashtray, are gone. The ceramic cardinals that were strung in the tree are also gone; there are only a few stray feathers left. There is now a man, Eric, (African American early 30's) sitting in a chair next to her. He is wearing a funeral suit and staring at the effigy with burning eyes. There are almost no butterflies left on the sheet. Nana reaches out a hand to touch her son's shoulder.

Eric suddenly bursts into tears.

[INSERT INTERVIEW MONOLOGUE: I felt like such a failure]
Nana strokes her son's back.

NANA: It wasn't your fault; there was nothing you could have done.

Suddenly Eric looks up his tears have stopped.

ERIC: Exactly! It wasn't your fault! There was nothing you could have done! But - (and here Eric pauses and looks around the room). Guilt, you feel so guilty.

Nana is looking down at her hands darkly. Then she looks at her son with heartbreak on her face.

NANA: I should have stayed...

Scene VI (Animation)

As her words echo through the room the floor at Nana's feet becomes a mirror. In the mirror we see a younger Nana (the woman from Scene I), sitting in a hospital room, in the bed beside her is Keith. He, Stephen, Eric, and a tall dark man (his father) are talking and laughing.

The current Nana watches the mirror in horror.

In the mirror (Nana narrating) we see a nurse come in and tell them visiting hours are over. Everybody trucks out waving goodbye, but Nana is the last out. She kisses the bedridden Keith on the cheek, then turns to leave. Keith lifts a wasted hand and catches the corner of her coat. He pleads with her to stay with him. She hesitates, and then sits back down. She watches as he goes through dialysis and fall asleep. Afterwards she gets up to leave again, but in his sleep Keith reaches out a hand and grabs her coat. This time Nana gently places his hand back on his bed pats it then leaves.

The current Nana starts to cry.

Back in the mirror we see the end of scene one only this time we hear what is said over the phone. A nurse telling Nana that her son has slipped into a coma. We see a shot of Keith hooked up to tubes. Nana goes on to explain that he never woke up.

The mirror is smashed.

Scene VII (Mix Animation with Model set and live action footage)

Back in the cluttered room the entire floor is now cracked. Eric is standing holding his chair breathing hard. He and Nana stare at each other. Then Nana looks down.

NANA: I should have stayed.

Eric slowly puts the chair back on the floor. He stares at the effigy for a bit and then turns and walks past his mother. When he reaches what appears to be the edge of the room he stops.

ERIC: “Mom, you raised a wonderful son. Who loved you dearly and whom you loved dearly. And there’s nothing that can ever fill that void.”

As he says this he touches a trophy. Then walks away.

As he walks away the trophy crumbles into dust. Nana stares at this in amazement, looks up to yell at Eric and realizes that like all of her other children he has disappeared. She hears a sound like sand hitting the floor and realizes that other objects in the room have started to disintegrate into dust. As it escalates she sees that their destruction is headed towards the effigy. She gasps in horror and launches herself towards it. She reaches it just in time and throws her body over the one on the effigy. Everything goes black.

Scene VI (Animation)

Nana opens her eyes and finds herself in Keith bedroom (SCENE 1). On the bed lies the body still covered by the sheet. The sheet is now pure white. Nana stares at the bed for a beat. Finally she grabs the sheet, hesitates, then pulls it away with a flourish. Keith is lying there as if he is dead. He looks thin, but not unhealthy like he did in the mirror. Nana’s face starts to crumple, but then Keith rolls over to his side and snuffles a bit. He’s asleep. Nana’s breath starts for a moment, and she stares in wonderment at her sleeping child. Finally she starts to tuck him in. As she does so he wakes a little and smiles at her. He reaches out his hand and she holds it. There is a chair next to the bed and she sits in it still holding his hand. Soon he is asleep again. Nana stands and places his hand on his bed. She strokes his hair, and leans down, kissing him on the forehead. As she kisses him, Keith dissolves into a cloud of multicolored butterflies. The butterflies swirl around Nana changing her dress from black to white, and then fly out of the open window and spiral up into the sky. Nana rushes to the window and watches. She lifts a hand skyward and waves.

NANA (V.O.) ya know after Keith died we, none of us say good-bye, because good-bye is forever. We say “See ya soon” or “So long for now” but most of all “I love you.”

CUT TO BLACK

NANA (V.O.) I love you. See ya soon...

Credits

APPENDIX D: EXCERPT FROM SHOT LIST

Thesis Shot List:

PART I:

(Xtreme Close-up)

- ☐ Fade in Chrysalis
- ☐ Chrysalis twitches
- ☐ Chrysalis Shakes
- ☐ Chrysalis cracks
- ☐ Butterfly emerges
- ☐ Butterfly spreads wings
- ☐ 2 flaps
- ☐ Butterfly takes of toward camera
- ☐ Title

CUT TO: (Front med shot)

- ☐ Butterfly flies into screen -> from left -> to window
- ☐ Butterfly lands on windowsill
- ☐ Curtains part from inside -> see shadowy figure
- ☐ Shadow leans forward
- ☐ Window opens revealing Y. Nana
- ☐ YN leans out and smiles
 - Butterfly crawls forward and touches hand
- ☐ YN is startled and notices butterfly
 - Butterfly takes flight and hovers
- ☐ YN watches butterfly
- ☐ Butterfly flies away
- ☐ YN watches a bit
- ☐ YN turns and walks away from window

ZOOM IN: (Profile long shot)

- ☐ YN puts pillow in pillow case
 - Tosses pillow
 - Pillow lands on bed

CUT TO: (Front med shot)

- ☐ YN leans forward
- ☐ YN starts to unfold sheets
- ☐ YN turns head toward phone rings
- ☐ YN turns and walks off screen (left)

CUT TO: (Front Xtreme long shot)

- ☐ YN picks up phone
- ☐ YN listens to phone

CUT TO: (Profile Xtreme CU shot)

- ☐ YN eye widening
- ☐ YN mouth opening

CUT TO (Behind L shot)

- ☐ Phone falls out of YN's hands and hits wall
- ☐ N turns clutching sheet
- ☐ N buries head in sheet
- ☐ World morphs into darkness behind N

CUT TO: (Front CU shot)

- ☐ N looks up from sheet
- ☐ N turns and looks behind her

CUT TO: (Front L shot)

- ☐ N starts to walk forward

CUT TO: (Profile M shot)

- ☐ N walks across screen
 - Clothes morph into mourning clothes
- ☐ Shadows form into objects behind N

CUT TO: (Front CU shot)

- ☐ N looks up from sheet

CUT TO: (Profile CU shot)

- ☐ N sleeping
- ☐ N startles awake
- ☐ N “turns” towards audience and straightens headscarf
- ☐ N presses nose for glasses
- ☐ N realizes glasses are not on her face
- ☐ N pats body for glasses and finds them
- ☐ N puts on glasses

CUT TO: (Profile M shot)

- ☐ N puts hands on bottom of chair
- ☐ N rocks forward and lifts up a bit
- ☐ N falls back in chair
- ☐ N rocks backwards
- ☐ N lurches forward and straightens quickly
- ☐ N starts to fall backwards and catches herself on the chair

CUT TO: (Profile LS)

- ☐ N stands w/ hand on chair
- ☐ N walks on stage left

CUT TO: (Behind LS)

- ☐ N holds switch and goes to press button

CUT TO: (Xtreme CU)

- ☐ N's hand presses button
- ☐ Button pops

CUT TO: (Behind LS)

- ☐ N lets go of switch
 - Light starts to come up [from front]

CUT TO:

- ☐ Light comes up on left side of room
- ☐ Light comes up on right side on room
- ☐ Light come up on CU cardinal
- ☐ Light comes up on LS of cardinal tree
- ☐ Light finishes on effigy (low-angle shot)

CUT TO: (Front LS)

- ☐ N stares up at effigy
- ☐ N looks down and to right
 - C2 effigy
 - Pan left to fallen vase
 - CU of fallen vase
- ☐ N walks towards vase off screen

CUT TO: (Behind shot Long)

- ☐ Cont walk to vase
- ☐ N bends over vase
- ☐ N uprights vase
- ☐ N rearranges flowers
- ☐ N straightens up
- ☐ Vase falls back over
- ☐ N sighs
- ☐ N looks up towards effigy

CUT TO: (Xtreme Low angle Med shot)

- ☐ Effigy

CUT TO: (CU profile)

- ☐ N staring up and effigy press lips together
- ☐ N shock and turn

CUT TO: (Front LS)

- ☐ Cont N turn
- ☐ N fist clench
- ☐ Shot of left side of room
- ☐ N eyebrows rise
- ☐ Hand to mouth
- ☐ Hand down slowly
- ☐ Start to turn
- ☐ Surprise #2
- ☐ Quick full body turn
- ☐ Angry walk to left

CUT TO: Inside Pile

- *Hear footsteps*
- ☐ Ns feet appear

APPENDIX D: GEOFF HUSTON INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

E: Alright let's get started

G: Ok

E: For starters do you have a place that you'd like to start with?

G: {Laugh} Do I have a starting place? Um I dunno I guess this is like um a cleansing for me. **Speaking about Keith for me for so many years has been hard um, because all my memories and times that we shared are kinda jumbled together** [sigh], but lets start at the beginning. Growin up with, in the Huston-Hardy household is uh a unique experience for me it was um **being the middle child I got the best of both worlds. But** being with Keith, **Keith would outta all of my siblings** is probably the closest or **was the closest one to me.** Um **being 3 years older than him I never looked at it as um a little brother um I just looked at it as um my best friend.** Um mom and dad always taught us that our family wa the most important thing and that's how we carried ourselves we looked out for each other we shared all our play time, our experiences with each other and um **I guess my most vivid memories is growin up as a little boy havin this little brother who not only looked like me but um he had a sense of peace with him always from the beginning,** and I drew off of that. Um [sigh] we played all our games, Christmases, I remember Christmas, Christmas um was always a joy because any gift that we got we cherished and we shared whether it was a basketball, um the Uncle Sam, or gun set we would go outside and play with. Our dogs y'know um [sigh]...**it was wonderful having Keith in my life because not only did I have a playmate I had someone I could talk to about anything.** Y'know whether I was happy, sad, mad or whatever he was always there he was a good listener and hopefully he felt the same about me. I was real I-I feel like I-I'm the lucky one in our family, I got to do something in my life that people dream about but I would trade all that in to spend another day with my brother. Um, lemme see from childhood **I mean just growin up watch'n Keith do different things that he could do he could play sax by ear I couldn't play and instrument to save my life** so I was fascinated and awed by that what ever sports I played he played a whether it was basketball, football, baseball, swimming we did it together we learned together. Uh I never look at myself as better than him y'know um that was my, that was my playmate first person I would choose on my team if we was outside pickin y'know choosing teammates and as we grew um...only time I remember like y'now when you get to a age where you spend more times wit your friends that you your brother, I didn't have that y'know until I went away to college and up until that time when I think back Keith was there you know whether it was a party or a function Keith was there. Um and it's funny because most people or siblings after awhile you grow apart y'know "I don't want you hangin with me" I never had that. When I went away to college, y'know I guess we, we just a close knit family um the only one I didn't get to spend a lot of time with was my older brother Eric because he was always gone, but when he came it was the greatest day of my life. Y'know it's like when I saw my big brother drive in the neighborhood I'd get crazy, Keith would get crazy, cuz it was always special and the thing that was special I guess amongst all of us were um how you could look up

to each other and love their accomplishments and try to copy. And I think that made us all unique in our own ways. Um [sigh] I think it was a blessing **I know it was a blessing just having my brother for the time that I had him. For a long time I was angry, real, real angry, disappointed and hurt, because when I lost him not only did I lose a brother I lost my best friend, um I lost myself for a long time...**and doin this right now, you caught me at the right time, because if you had tried this a year ago I wouldn't be able to do what I'm doing now. Um...memories it's like a...I could go on for days and days of just memories. Um his graduation, **I remember the first time I watched him um play his saxophone at 275 at a function and it rocked my world,** my little brother up on stage and his class mates and the music, the sound that they made and how they had the crowd affected. It just blew me away it was like attending a concert and here we was just in junior high school, Um **his graduation um I felt proud that my brother was graduating** cuz you know he was very advanced for his age Keith was funny, **Keith was an old soul** his friends would tell you this I think my siblings would tell you this **you could talk to Keith about anything and he always had this calm demeanor, but he also had a funny side to him cuz he had a temper that was like a light switch he could go from calm to totally angry in an instant and back to calm.** But he was very sensible, we no angles I don't want to make it sound like we're perfect cuz we're far from that but I think what he gave me was a inner strength that carried me through times I didn't know I could carry myself through. Um I think each accomplishment I made in my life I kinda...I was happy to share it with my family, I never looked at it as I better than I just felt I was fortunate I was lucky, but I knew it took a lot a hard work, but that was something that was instilled in each of us um mommy and daddy didn't expect anything less and hey led by example, daddy through his hard work everyday, mommy through her own accomplishments. And then I had, y'know we had Eric and Sharon leading the way I picked up –it was like a baton passed on to each of us and...Keith was the next step and then **when God took him away from us it was like "Whoa" that was like reality hitting you, our family, cuz u until that point we was just going along with our lives attending graduations, enjoying parties, y'know we heard about death but it was always outside our family or like extended family, but when it hit, for me, and I can only speak for me, um I didn't know what to do.** Um I guess Poopie's my replacement in life cuz he was the 6th child; being born on the same day and having –Poopie has all our personalities which is just, it's funny. But um I really miss him everyday I miss him, there's not a day that goes by that I don't miss him but um...going to Brownsville yesterday kicked up all kinds of feelings um if you noticed I was like a chatterbox, but if I get excited I talk a lot um and every anytime I go to Brownsville memories just pop in my head, **I can remember things vividly...I don't forget things I remember grownin up at 536 and playin stoop ball and playing all the street games. I remember our first time we was able to cross the street and go into 275 park and play. I remember havin in-depth conversations with my brother and not understanding nuthin he's saying** because I was like "ok...s'like I have with you and Raquel sometimes, y'all just surprise me with the things that you say y'know?" Um **I remember us being the Jackson 5 singing in the bedroom at the top of our lungs or playin hoop basketball in the house with a pair a socks and a, a wire hanger.** I remember watchin Eric and Sharon havin a 007 party and thinking that was the coolest thing in the world, and with him right beside me. Growin up [sigh] it was...it's a

gift y'know I think the greatest gift that we have as a family we are truly a family and when I say that I don't take that lightly um cuz I know there're a lot of families that don't have that. We was blessed to have a mom and dad that cared about us, we was blessed that we cared about each other, um no matter what, through our highs and lows. Y'know just like we I know for me personally I've been blessed to play a sport I grew up and get paid for it, took me around the country, paid for my education, um let me meet a lot of interesting people, but if you look back through everything if you go back to any interview or whatever I had I always come back home. Y'know um my greatest sense of joy is my family, always has been and um and this supposed to be about Keith and I'm just rambling on because I can't find the words. I was sitting here this morning trying to think and I just –like I said it's **just it's like a picture book in my mind, um I see Keith as 5-years-old, then I see him at 15, I see him the day I dropped off at Kings County Hospital, the last time I saw him.**

E: Can you tell me about that day?

G: About the day I dropped him off? [Sigh] it was crazy um [swallow] Keith was [sigh] he was, y'know **he had kidney problems and he was on dialysis for so long and it was jut painful watching him go through that process cuz Keith was a free-spirit um but he was a fighter y'know took it like a champ, didn't complain y'know it just made him tired, and he grew a beard something I can't do so I wanted to take the medicine he was taking so I could grow a beard [sigh]. Um but the day [sniff] that a kidney became available for Keith it was his decision, y'know whether he wanted to continue taking dialysis or try for the transplant and he wanted that cuz he just got tired of people sticking needles in him.** Had, form what I understand um [tongue click] when I dropped him off, or this is my, **this is my memory** and it could be totally wrong but **the last time I seen my brother I dropped off at Kings County and he was supposed to go in and get a transplant and I went back to Cleveland cuz I was playing basketball, and I got a call one it said that my brother was, had gone into um, he was having trouble, he was having trouble bad trouble in the hospital and um I hung up the phone and I cried, but I-I-I I couldn't go home because I didn't want to see my brother in the hospital at I just didn't want to see it and I was just praying that everything would be alright and the next call I got was saying that m brother died.** [Sigh] um [sigh...chuckle] **it was like non-belief y'know somebody's playing a trick on me. I never got to see him y'know the last memory I have is him walking into King's County and the next time I seen my brother he was in a casket, with hundreds of people around [sigh] and...the day that I um went back to** Brownsville for his wake um I can remember standing there saying that, saying to myself I really didn't want to play basketball no more, I didn't say it verbally just all these internal thoughts um lot of people I cut off that day, cut out my life. **I just hurt um and it was selfish hurt because I wanted my brother back nobody could tell me anything** um and I was lost I didn't have nobody to talk to and everybody wanted to talk to me, but I didn't know how to verbalize my hurt...[tongue click] and it's crazy we're doing this on Daddy's birthday. But I-I'm much better at it now because before when I hurt um I would run away internally I didn't want to be around nobody um...I function y'know I try to do the things everyday but it was just, **it's just sad for me...**[sigh] tears now that I, I cry are

tears of acceptance um I guess when daddy died **I learnt a little bit about excepting death but it don't take away the, just missing people y'know? Everybody talks about it y'know but each individual has to deal with it in their own way. It's a lot easier when we deal with it together** y'know when we're al standing in the room and when I say we that means the who family and we, we're able to talk about it, cry about it, laugh about it, joke about it, but when you're alone um...it's just for me it's just hard. [Sigh]...I'm all over the place with this you gotta ask me questions.

E: Yeah I know, but I like to let you go on for a bit because you're giving my little bites that I can work with. Um alright how would you –like you know when you have a sitcom you have like that's the mart one that's the funny one?

G: Mmhmm.

E: How would you describe each of your siblings and your parents if you had to describe them as if they...

G: ...Were in a sitcom? Ha ha. Well, Eric would definitely be the smart one, Sharon would be the sensible, talkative one...Keith would be not only the smart one, but like I said he had a old-soul he was beyond his age, Steve is the wonder man, Steve is the mira-miraculous one, I think Steve is the most talented one out of us all. Um when I say talented when Steve put his mind to something and his, his heart and soul into it wonderful things happen. I'm the lucky one cuz I, I'm right there in the middle so I can draw from both ends. Dad was the leader, the strong silent commander...period.... Mommy is the straw that...makes us all work um mommy's fascinating to me. I watched mommy go back to school and get a degree, which I thought was the coolest thing in the world. She drove us to um be better than, just the average both mommy and daddy um made sure that we saw the world at a young age we went to, we went and lived with families in Pennsylvania, we went to the National Conference of Christian Youth at least as young kids. Just to let us know there was more than what we was growin up in, that way you can make your own decisions about life. Our sitcom would be full of music a lot of singing and dancing, maybe off key but to us we're the best things we're the Temptations in our own minds. Um whenever we get together, we have the greatest imaginations we can make the most out of nothing and when I say nothing you could put us in a room and give us some music, or not and we'll make some, we would sit there and we would debate, talk about everything from the president to a common day experience and we always been that way. Um...I think of Frankie Beverly's song "Joy and Pain," y'know our life has been, our life has been full of joy an a lot of great experiences, and the pain that we've had the best thing is that you can have family that you can share it with.

E: Hmmm...can you tell me about um I dunno tell me about a time you guys eh got in some trouble.

G: Oh trouble heh heh heh. Um one a [laugh] oh boy [sniff] I guess as little kids we do, we did things that...ok so here's an experience we lived on Thatford Ave and at 536 the

corner house on the corner was ripped down so that left you a view from our house to Hedgeman Ave so you could see the side street where we would go around to the stores. There was a bar over there and um **I remember throwin bottle caps into the bar, all of us, and come stormin around the corner runnin from the people that we threw the bottle caps at and Dady's standin in the middle of the street waitin for us, and [laugh] if you could imagine the shock and [laugh] us just runnin over each other trying to get outta the way of daddy cuz I think we was more fearful of turning the corner seein daddy than the people that was yell'n at us.** Um we used to get into trouble for things like talking back, like daddy and mommy send us to the store and jumpin up and down cursin, goin down the stairs saying we're not gonna do this and we're not gonna do that and them hearin us. **I remember me and Keith trying to sneak back into the house after a party and comin in and tip toeing up the stairs at 536 and Brutus standin at the stairs giving us away cuz he's growling and we're trying to tell him to shush and he, he's my dog but he's like "you're late and I'm telling!" I remember toast and tea. Toast and tea for me is [laugh] anytime we would go out at night we would come in and you'd be hungry so, you didn't want to make any noise but you was hungry so we would make toast and tea and for some reason everytime we opened up the silverware drawer it would seem like it would make the loudest noise in the world and you didn't want to wake daddy up and the dog would start growling and then you'd be praying that he doesn't come through that door [sigh].** Anytime we did get in trouble we preferred to get beat by daddy than mommy cuz mommy beat you for days and she'd think about things from the beginning of time and never stopped beating you. ...**Mommy was also the, the medic, anytime we got hurt, I remember Keith cracking his head open um running down the stairs and hittin his head on the concrete side of the stoop and getting a big gash in his head and y;know you would think here we go to the hospital. But not mommy she got she'd sit you on the toilet and get, she shaved the area around and put this stuff on it and bandaged his head up, sent him back outside.** Um I dunno, I'm never gonna tell you the big trouble we got in, that's something I can't say [Big laugh] what else?

E: You were telling ma story about the supermarket yesterday?

G: Ah, the A&P stories. Mommy daddy would, we all had chores so when you got old enough you would go shopping for the weekly groceries. And I remember going across Linden Blvd me and Keith. We was supposed to be –we had finished shopping, we had our little shopping cart and it's his it was his job to pull the cart cuz he was younger. Well anyway Linden Blvd is a like 4-lane highway when the light change, get across the street so you don't get hit by a car. It's snowing, anyway one of the wheels came off the shopping cart, Keith gets mad like I told you he can go from cool to angry and he was mad cuz I kept telling him that he had to pull it and he didn't wanna pull the shopping cart. Anyway my little brother left me in the middle of the street cuz he just stopped the wheel came off, stood the shopping cart off and just walked home and I can remember yelling at him dragging this cart on 1 wheel that I was gonna kill him when I caught him, and he just looked at me calmly and was like "whatever I going home, you an idiot and mommy and daddy said you to go and I'm not supposed to pull the cart!" And that's all I remember, but just going to the store was an experience because mommy would give us a

list, I would always forget it, um come back they would send us back. Daddy c -Daddy was a whole special human being. We could see daddy standing outside the store –the candy store and come all the way home and send us back to that same store to buy him a pack of cigarettes [laugh] while getting his lotto um and that was, ever since we was old enough to go get it, to the, I'm 51 years old if daddy was alive today he might call me tell me to go get his lotto and I would do it. Gladly. Um the rule of the house was wherever you went you took your siblings. Just that simple. You wanted to go swimming? I had to take...Keith and Stephen with me. If I played ball they played ball. Um and that was cool, and then there was times where you wanted to things by yourself but you couldn't. But I guess like for, for me um when I look back on it some of the best times I had in my life, just sharing those times with them.

End of Interview A

Interview B.

E: Um so can you describe yourself at the age when Keith died and besides that one event that helped shape you, who were you as a person?

G: Ah, the funny thing was before Keith –we're talking right before he died? I was playing the best basketball of my career. I dunno it was my [sniff] 3rd or 4th year in the league, I went from...a rookie in New York, which was the greatest day of my life and I think my family's life [sigh] to going to Dallas, which I brought Keith to Dallas to help me move when I got traded to Cleveland. But when I went to Cleveland, between Dallas and Cleveland I was playing, I was probably one the...considered one the...good Gods in the NBA. I never say great, but I held my own. Um I was playing very well, everything in my life was going wonderfully. Um...and I shared these moments with, with my family you know wherever I was I, they would come to my games, um I flew them in to stay with me. And I never looked at, I guess we never looked at things in a monetary sense it's just that it is really cool that you're doing something that you grew on the playground and you're playing on this big stage. And at the same time Keith was going to John Jay [E: what is that?] John Jay Community College. Um he was playing basketball for them. Y'know everybody had their own little niche so he was there Stephen was in high school developing his skills watching Steve go from a little sickly kid to the boom athlete, great baseball player, I say great, Steve was amazing and mommy and daddy coaching him. Eric had graduated from Tufts with honors, what a big thing for us and he was off doing his thing. Sharon getting married going to North Carolina doing what she does to this day, helping people in the community, um working in a law firm. So life was pretty good. For me personally I was traveling all over the world doing the thing that I love to do. Um I was in a good place, great place.

E: So did Keith ever talk to you about his dreams and aspirations? Did you find that they changed as he got older?

G: [Snort] yeah. **Keith was funny to me because, he was the first person to tell me that hip hop was going to be big. Rap**, I remember having with him when rap first came

out, cuz y'know we went from Jackson 5, Temptations this kind of music then all of a sudden this new sound came out. And he was the first one to introduce me to it, and **I was like "this is not gonna last" and he would tell me "this is gonna be bigger than anything you ever seen."** And he never lived to see it. But, when you look back your like "hey he was right. o um, he never said to me he wanted to be any one thing, **Keith was like an intellectual to me he would sit down and talk about all kinds of things,** but I could tell as his brother that his sickness changed his dreams and aspirations because like I said we all are athletic. Keith ran track and he played basketball and he could do these things real well, but when he...got y'know when he had the kidney problems that slowed him down in that aspect but it didn't change him as a person y'know um where **some people would get devastated, or be raving mad at God for, for taking something, he just took it in stride,** y'know as far as I could tell. Um it didn't slow him down as far as the things that he did y'know he still went out he didn't become reclusive, y'know if anything um **he carried on his life –unless you knew Keith you wouldn't know that he had a problem, the only difference was that, the "where did you get all that hair from?"** That was the biggest difference if you didn't know him. I mean even when he had bad times, when he was sick or whatever you wouldn't know it unless you sat down and asked him "Yo, something's goin on?" We could tell because we're family. Um but no I can't say that he talked to me about 'y'know I wanna be the president' y'know things like that um cuz we talked about all kinds of things that we wanted to be one minute we wanted to be singers, one minute we wanted to be football players, one minute we wanted to be like Eric and get a degree and go off and do some crazy wonderful things um but I guess like as a teen or as a young person you're y'know you're all over the place as far as what you wanna do.

E: That tells me a lot actually. So who were your buddies growing up?

G: My friends? Yeah ok. My friends were Nate Parker who grew across the street. "Big Nate" they was always bigger than anybody else in the neighborhood always that's why he was built, he was built to play football. I used to call him Captain Crash. Um Dennis West, um Stanley Randall those was my 3 closest friends in the neighborhood, but I had a whole lot of -Roland Smith I could go on for days. Friends that Keith and I shared? Starts with Love, starts and ends with Love. Mr. Vernell Martin, When Vernell first came into our live he was called "Wa-ah-ah-ow" man that who Keith, that's Keith introduced him to me and it was like him and Keith were two sides of a coin when you saw Keith you saw Love. Um...and I y'know I saw them at a distance cuz I never hung out with them cuz I, at that age we was doing things, we'd do things together but we'd do a lot of things apart, but Love to me became family. To go from friendship to being part of our family was what, when Keith was sick an he was in the hospital and L –we didn't have no money, Love would walk every day to go see Keith whereas y'know you have friends they we're the closest things and I remember nobody going to see him and every I mean Love went to see him every day. That's amazing to me. Um...when I think of Keith I think of Love y'know when they got to the age when we like I said I was traveling a lot, but that was his, that was his brother and then he became mine y'know he became my bother I embraced him, the Martin family um became part of our family. Now if you

wanna talk about trouble and the instances that who you need to interview is Love, Love knows all the secrets [laugh] he knows all the secrets.

E: I know Uncle Stephen's the baby; did you guys ever gang up on him?

G: Oh Steve used to, I mean Steve used to get it all cuz he was the youngest. Now it, it's funny because like I told you everything is –when we grew up, in the house like in Thatford like Eric was the first one to go away to school and that was a happy time for us cuz we were happy for him to graduate, but we all knew was all getting bumped up to another room y'get a upgrade. Steve used to be, he was the baby, but him and Keith had their own relationship, their own special relationship because, like I said when Eric went away I got my own room, Sharon had her own room, Keith and Stephen shared their room. And just like I had a relationship with Keith that was close he and Steve only 3 years apart so they had their special moments that just that was just them. But, um I know we used to get on Steve I used to get on both of them heh cuz I was the oldest and after Sharon and Eric left I was in charge and they was looking at me like “you're a nobody, you're just bigger than us and we don't have to listen to you.” So we used to have our battles. They knew how to get to me though because...you could be bigger but we can always go to mommy and daddy, **I remember Keith hitting me in my back with a hammer cuz I punched him I'll never forget that that's when I knew he was crazy [laugh] he made me mad and I had socked him and went and laid on my bed like “mmm it's over” and all I remember was getting hit in the back with a hammer ‘Bing!’ And he ran behind mommy and I was like “Oh my God I'm gonna hurt him!” And he was just stading there like _ holding the hammer.** Moments like that just flash into mind the things that we, we used to fight y'know I, we fought, we loved each other, but we used to fight. He used to get mad at me and I used to get mad at them and they would just run and be running around the cars, me chasing them y'know. But think we had more...loving, caring moments and just laugh-til-you-cry moments um than anything else...um I think each accomplishment or things that we was involved in, the whole family went y'know whether it was a swim meet and not too many swim meets cuz we was too young. I remember Eric just in his, his uh, his Canarcie jacket his swim jacket and walkin around with an aqua-lung in Brownsville and flippers. Um I remember Sharon being so cool , I remember The Beatles, the posters, um I remember like I said Keith's graduation his prom [E: Did he have a date?] Oh yeah he never lacked in the lady department, never cuz he was just smooth like that. Um Steve watchin Steve carrying a plastic baseball bat lookin like Snoopy and his friend Woodstock to actually playing the game I mean playing it well. Um just a lot of great memories.

E: Now what about school? You guys went to the same school together right?

G: Yeah we went to...we was in junir high school together that's where it started I was in the 8th grade, Keith was just coming into 275-76, and then when I went to Canrcie hgh school he went to Canarcie high school he was a freshman I was a junior. Ss my junior and senior ss year Keith was in school um and it's funny cuz when you go to high school that is the age where you don't want your sibling to be around you cuz you're too cool. But it was the exact opposite for me cuz like I said Keith was so...**Keith was just Keith**

and I didn't look at him as a little brother, I didn't look at him as a cast off, I looked at as a-a that my, my friend and y'all deal with it. But he had his own life y'know he didn't need his big brother's validation y'know he didn't need me um he became independent then and he was runnin track I ran track, but I wasn't very good at it heh I sucked at it to be honest wit you [laugh]. So, I played basketball, he ran track. When we had um [tongue click] I dunno what to call it big productions like y'know you do in high school there was a singing thing, I never would participate but I would always go, but we had big parties at the school I remember him being right there y'know and it wasn't awkward. I enjoyed spending time with him, I remember going out to clubs and taking m little brother, yeah um. [E: Wasn't he too young to get in?] Well, we all was well we weren't going to clubs in fact there was no such –we'd go to house parties. It was different y'know today you have clubs, house parties back then was big, real big, if you gave a party it was in a house and there was no age y'know if you got invited or you didn't so.... Remember he was only 3 yrs younger than me so when I started going to clubs, when I was 21 he was 18 so he was able to go wherever I went he basically went.

E: Did you guys still have curfew?

G: In high school? Oh yeah we had curfew up until, I think my curfew didn't end until I left home. {Laugh} high school, but our curfew got extended y'know when 11 'o' clock became 1 'o' clock, 2 'o' clock, which was like all night to us um. But yeah we had curfew we still had rules until you left mommy and daddy's household you abided by the rules. Dinnertime was at 5 'o'clock, [E: Did you sneak out?] huh? Oh yeah we had our ways of thinking that we uh [laugh] got away with a lot of stuff I think mommy and daddy used to just laugh at us cuz things that we tried to get away with they would tell us years later that they knew and the would bust out laughing at us cuz the stories we would make up and trying to be so slick.

E: Like what?

G: Well I'm, I know there was times where I know I missed curfew I'd come in and the sun be coming up and I know they'd be in the room either awake and just not say anything. And I think by not saying anything the guilt you would have trying cover it thinking that "I gotta carry this lie that I'm getting ready to tell for the rest of my life." I think that they just let us deal with that guilt internally you just was like on pins an needles thinking they were gonna find out and they would just carry on like nothing happened. And I think their main concern was making sure we were safe.

(More on Curfews, neighborhood with no secrets and Mommy and Daddy working in your school).

G: I remember say like Stephen being 5 which'd make Keith 8 and makin me 11...those times like I said we did a lot of playing with each other.

(Growing up poor and not realizing it)

(Getting punished by Daddy)

E: Did Keith ever get punished like that?

G: Heh yeha all of us did. But Keith was like [laugh] Keith would get mad he would get so mad...when he would get in trouble it was like –Keith was like this um if he didn't like something or something didn't agree with him he would get silent and he would give you a look like “you don't exist” um when you did get a beating it was like I'm glad you're getting beat and not me. Y'know that was the feeling? Or, if you all got a beating then we'd all be fighting blaming each other that you got us in trouble and whatever. Stephen was since he was the baby he was our guinea pig, y'know we would send him out y'know Christmas time...(about sending Stephen to unwrap presents)

(About feeling fortunate, family competitive nature, and independence of spirit)

E: What about when Eric was born? How did you respond to that whole situation?

G: Poopie? To be honest when I first heard Sharon, overheard Sharon telling Mommy I was like “ooo you are in trouble and Daddy's gonna kill you.” And then when Poopie came...it was cool I um [E: How old we you?] (Answer = about 12) All I know is when Poopie was big enough to walk I used to take him to daycare (More about taking care of Poopie and teaching him inappropriate songs)

(About Sharon being an awesome big sister)

G: I remember Keith, this is one memory, **Keith telling mommy that he was leaving home and I think he was like 10 or something, whatever and mommy packing his bags telling him to get out I mean packed his bags and told him “go ahead!”...And all of crying “Oh you can't send him away you can't send him away!” And he was like, he was so stubborn that he was like “ok” and then sitting on the porch with his little suit case [laugh] I had to go get him and bring him back** or we would run away, we would run away to Sharon's house and she'd let us stay for a couple days and let things settle down and come home.

(On the Huston-Hardy open door policy for friends)

(On moving down the street and then to Rochester)i

G:...Um but I now Keith's death really hurt her, really hurt her. Um, but they was, mommy and daddy they amazing to me. With all the pain, like I said I described my pain so I know their pain was...much more or whatever, like I said I can't speak on that, but they was always there for each one of us no matter what y'know and that to me that's amazing as a parent that you can take stuff that's affected you individually and kinda put in on the side “so I can take care of the family” that's pretty amazing to me.

(About Eric, Cars, and Driving)

G: I had a black thunderbird, had all the bells and whistles um I live d in Woodside, Queens and up until that time that I got the car I was taking trains to the games. Most of the guys that was on the team took the train. But I remember taking a ride with Keith from I ws goin to Brownsville and I was going home through the inter-borough, which we called “the snake” and I remember a car full of drunk kids pullin up next to my brand new thunderbird throwing oranges at –all I heard was thnk thnk and I was like what is that sound and I realized they was throwing stuff at my car and I was like I’m gonna get them and when I said I’m gonna get them I meant I’m gonna hurt them. I remember getting mad and yelling, cursing and speeding up trying to catch them and Keith just looking at me like “What are you doing? Don’t you know if you get closer they’re gonna continue to hit the car with oranges? Leave them alone.” I was hell bent on catching them, then eventually the voice of reason took over and I just pulled over, got out and looked at my car to make sure that it didn’t have no crazy dents, which it didn’t. One –Ima give this one experience with the car then I’m gonna leave it alone. I was driving from Dallas back to NY and we went through Washington I brought, I flew Keith and Dennis into Dallas, Texas to help me drive home. We stopped off in Washington to see a good friend of mine Roland Smith and I remember falling asleep at the wheel for a instant and waking up, and I could feel the car drifting and I hit the wheel and it took us off the highway down in Bigmen I thought we was gonna die! We slide down like this we just screamin, we slidin down sideways and we just screamin me and Dennis in the front seat yellin, screamin like two girls “Aaaaaaaahhhhhh” cuz we thought it was gonna flip over and it just slid and it stopped. The whole time, I mean the whole missing all the cars and everything and all this traffic stopping thinking that we was gone Keith slept through h the whole thing and when he woke up he sat up in the back seat and said “How the Hell did we end up down here?” I remember that vividly, and the miraculous part was that the car didn’t have a scratch on it. We was able to come up out the ditch I mean it was about 20 ft down, they got us up out the ditch the car didn’t have any problems we took it to the car wash, washed it off and kept going. So that’s a that’s a car story for you.

(Being grateful to be alive)

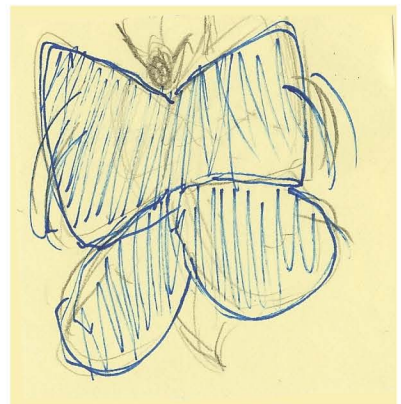
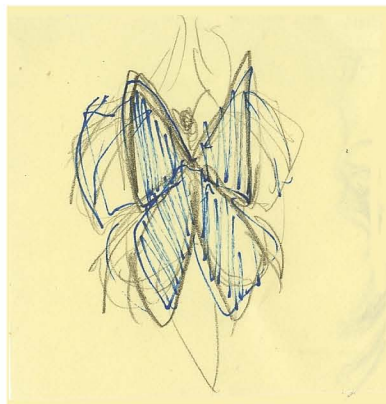
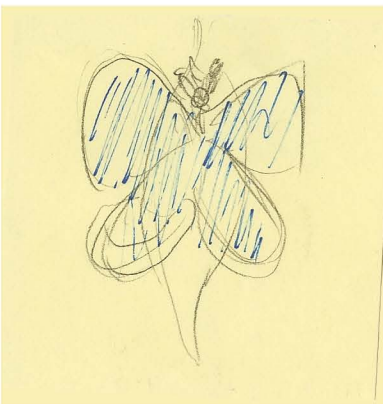
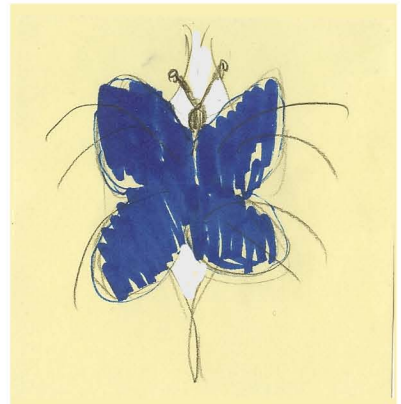
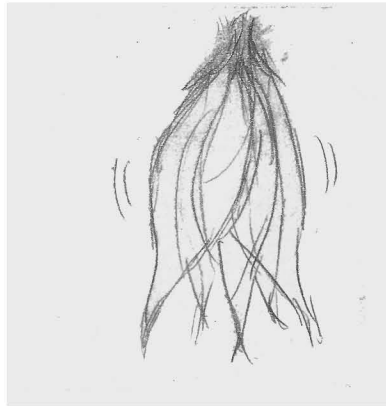
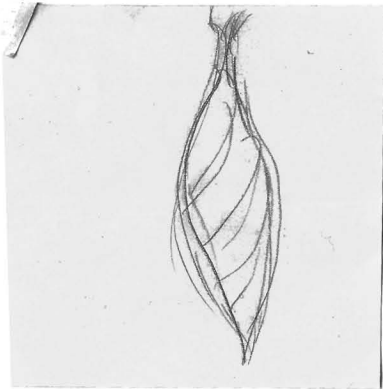
E: So what was the most profound thing he ever said to you? What words do you remember to this day?

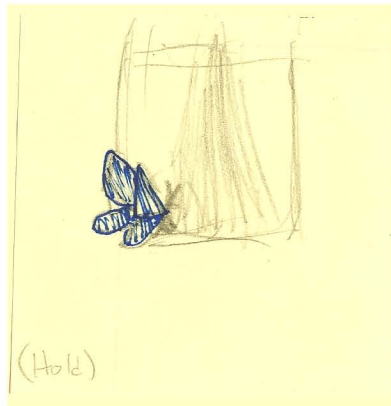
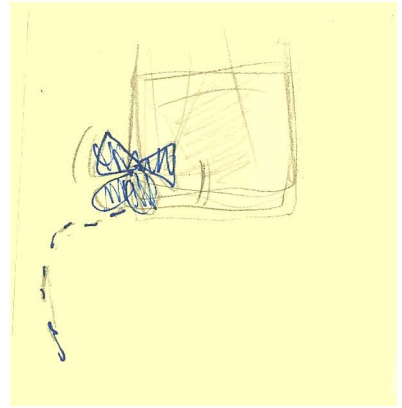
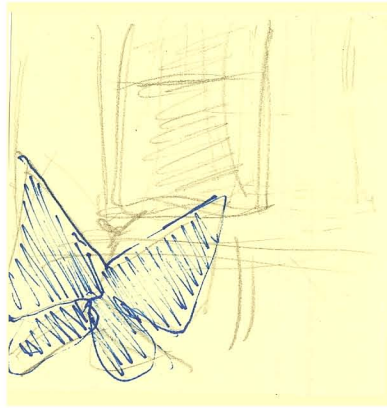
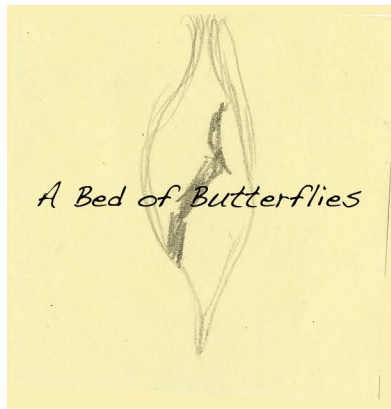
G: I think that... **I think my most precious moments with my brother Keith was just the hugs** y’know how you give your brother a hug? The most important thing to me sometimes is the non-verbal. **I remember a hug, I can still see him in my head dancing cuz he always could dance but just a hug and him telling me that he loved me. Y’know and that he was proud of me.** I guess like for me um him and Stephen for them to tell me that I inspired them that always that stays in my mind. To be a, **to be an inspiration to anybody is uh is a cool thing but for your, your little brother’s to look up to you and say “yo I’m proud of you man uh you inspire me to do better” That’s, that’s pretty special.**

(Room tone)

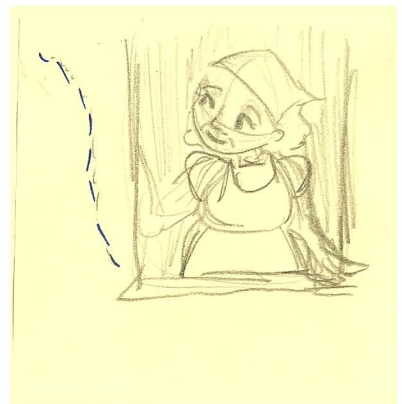
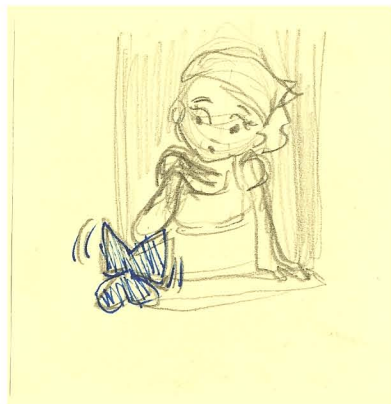
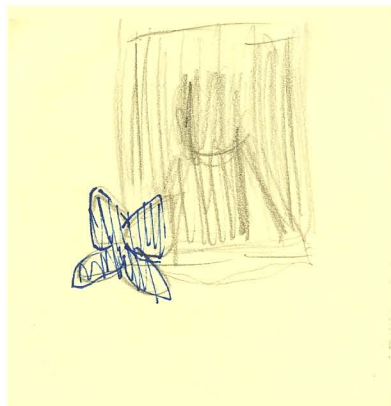
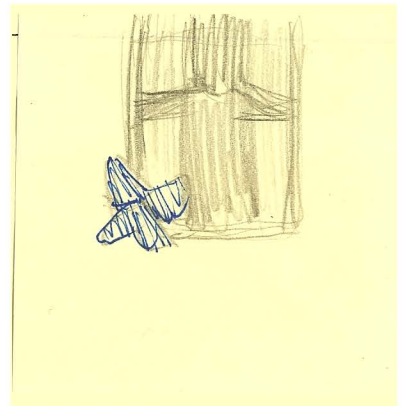
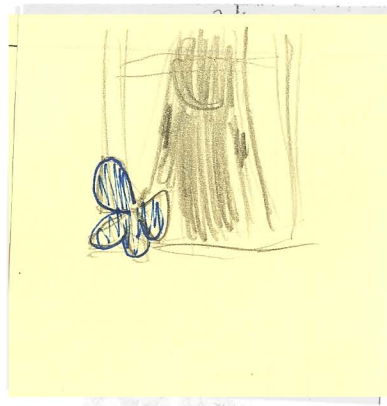
APPENDIX E: STORYBOARDS

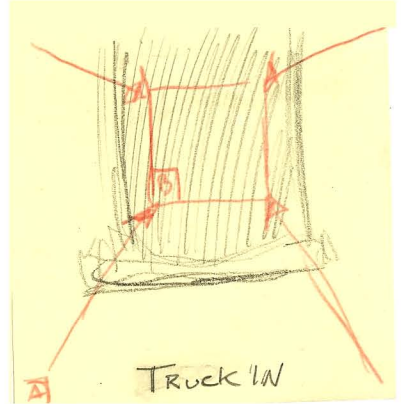
These storyboards are a mixture of my original “post-it note” boards and my digital boards. This version of the film is pretty close to the final product.

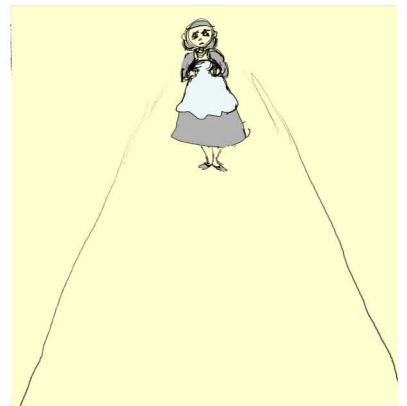
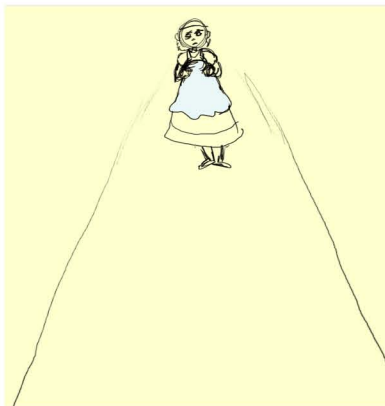


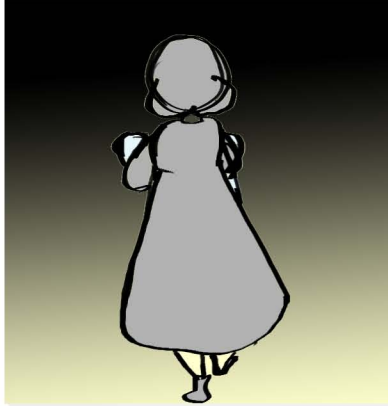


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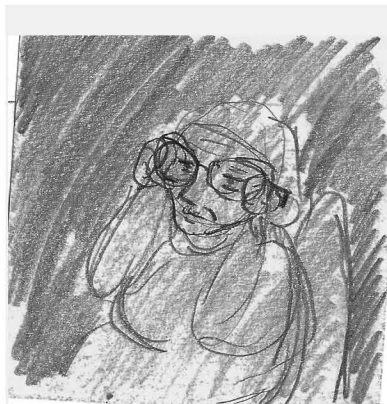


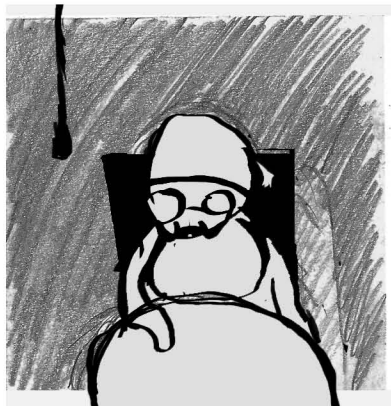
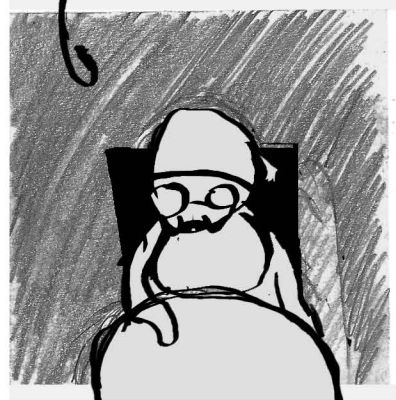
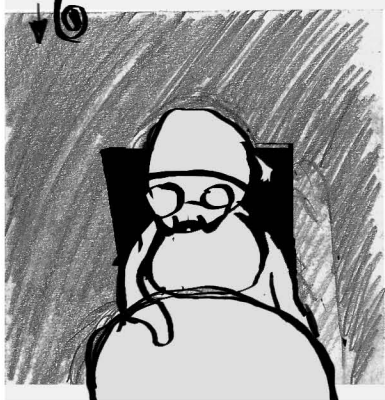
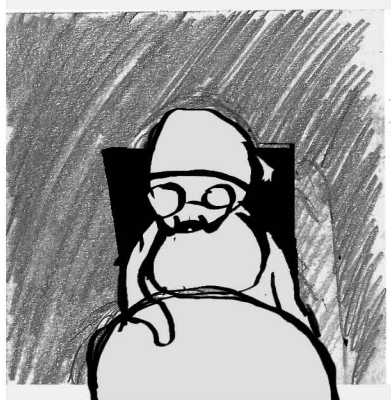
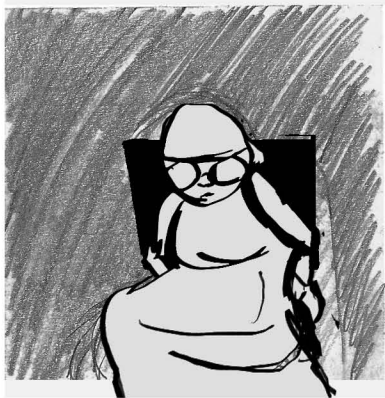


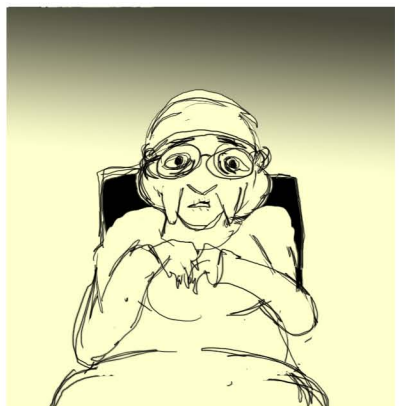
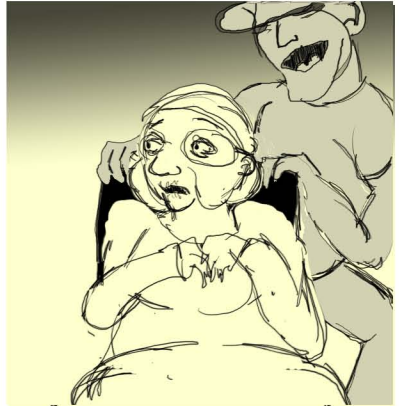
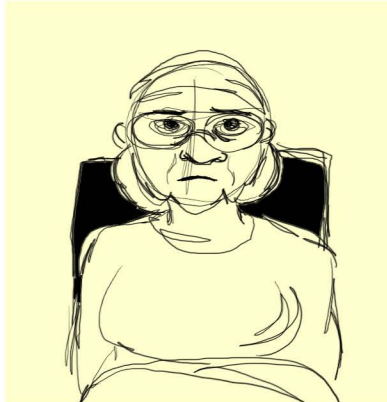
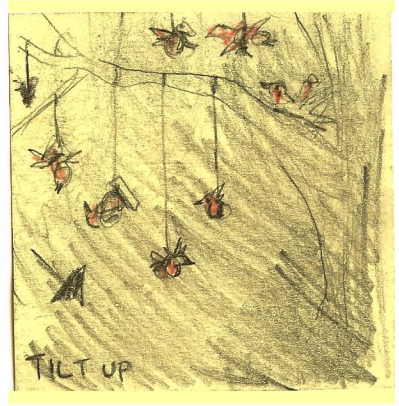
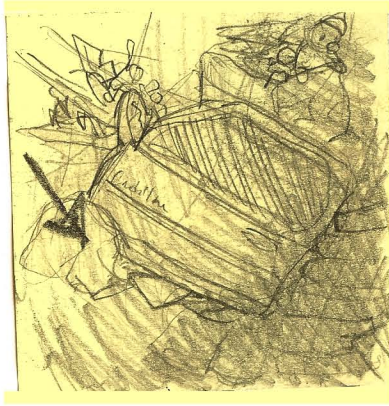


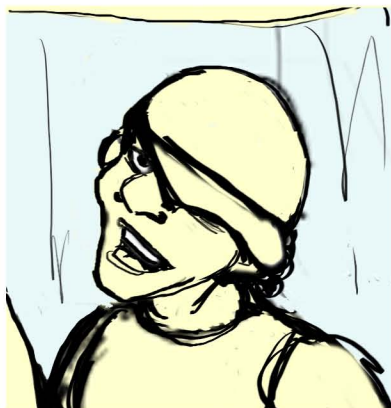
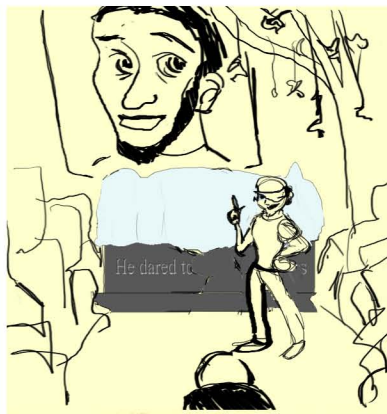
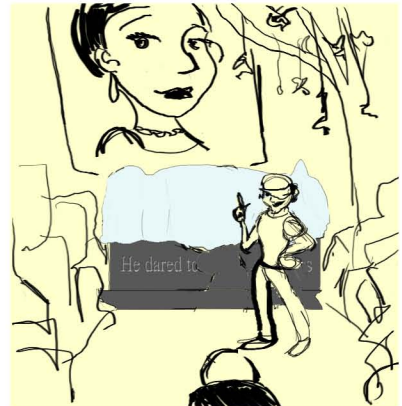


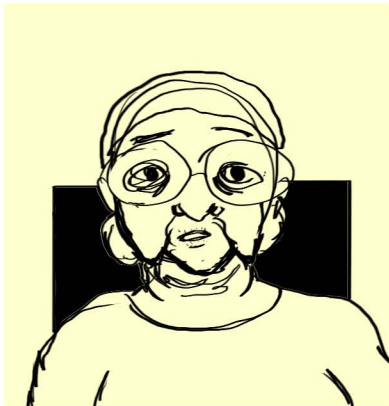
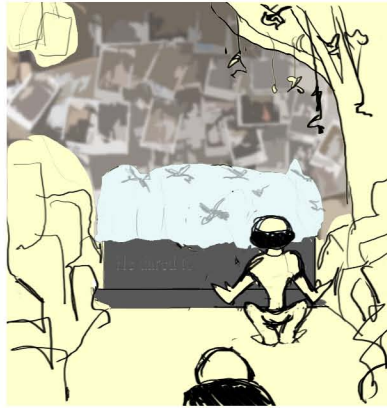




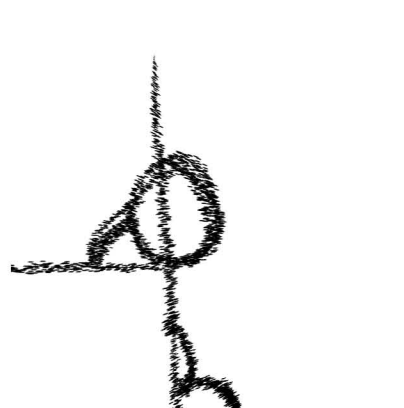
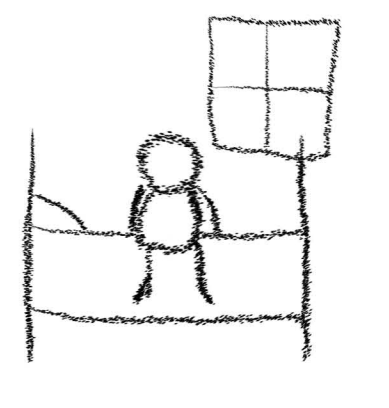
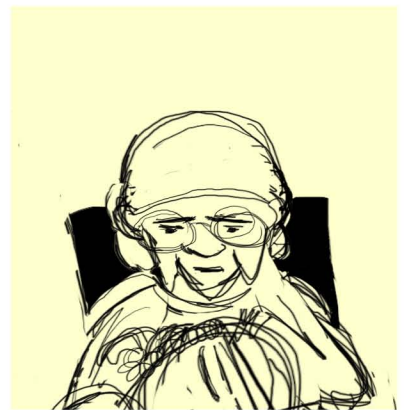


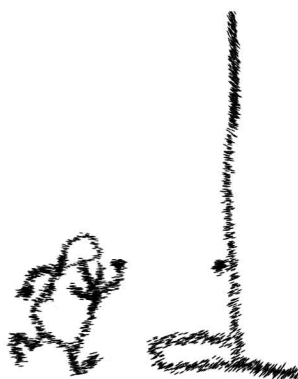


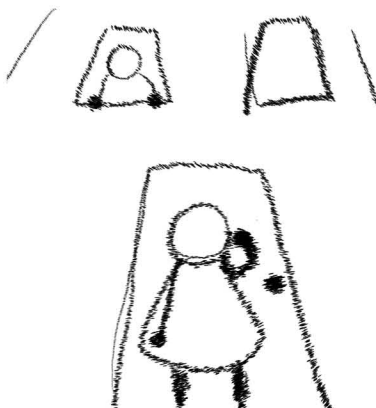
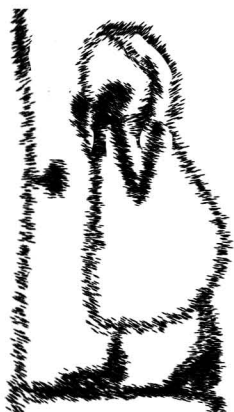
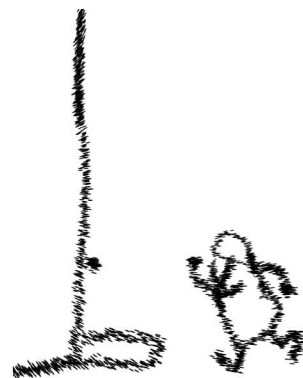
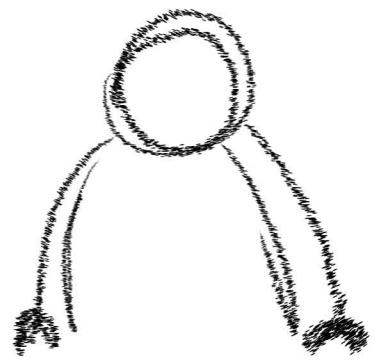
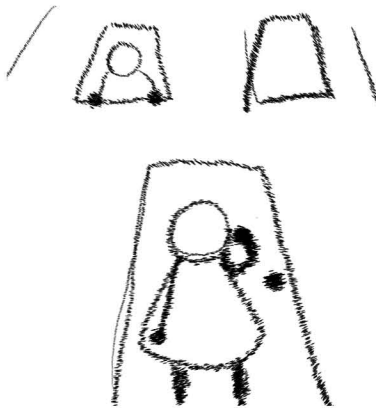


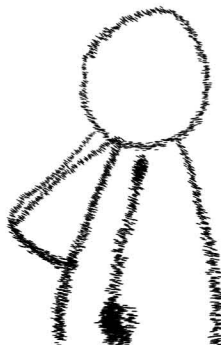
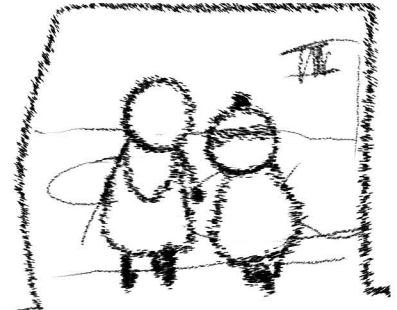
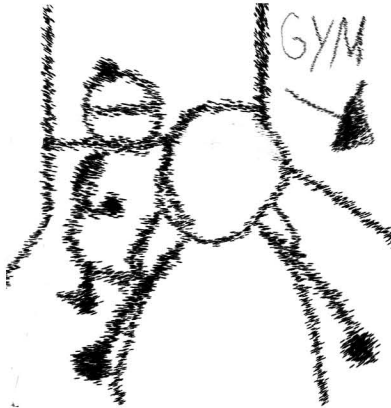
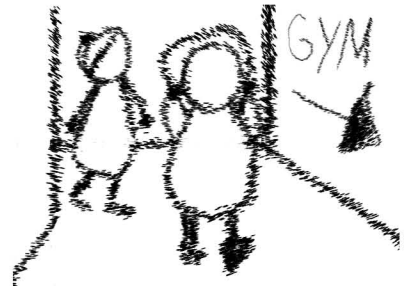
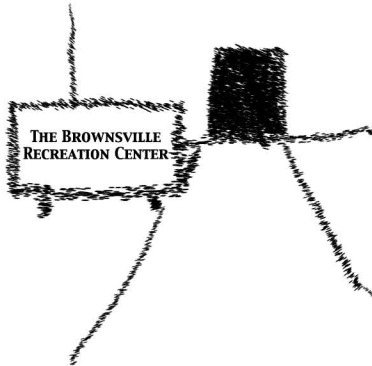
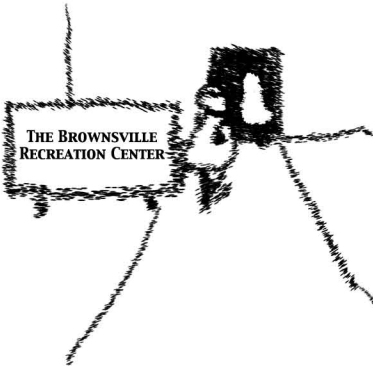
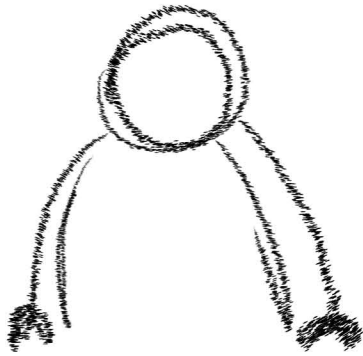


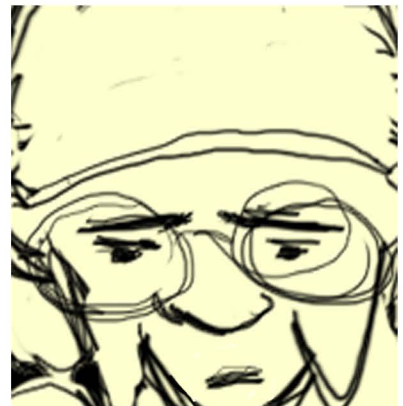
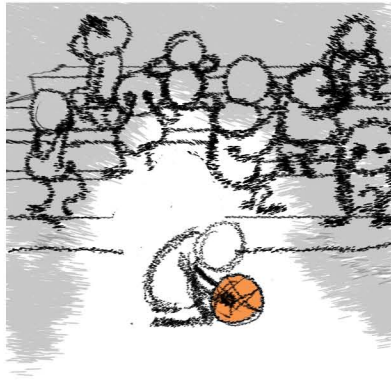
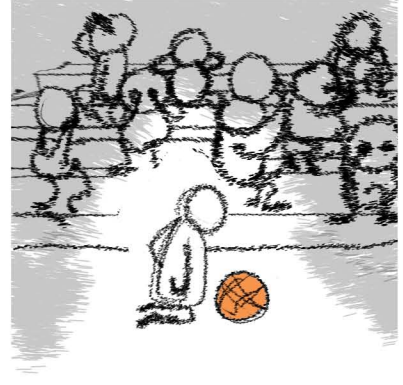
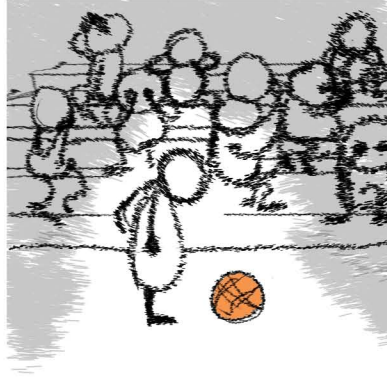
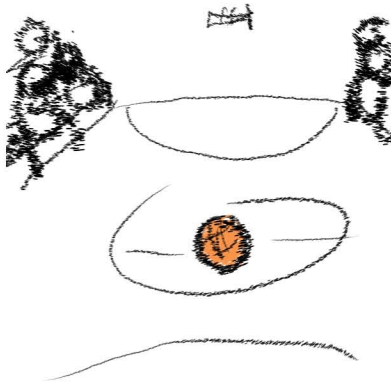


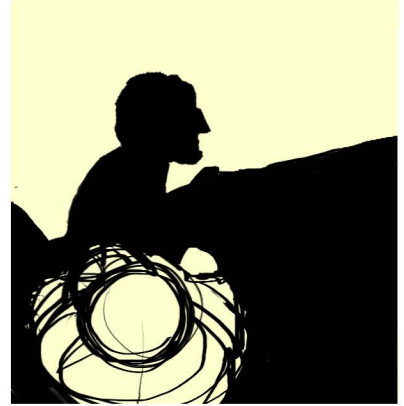


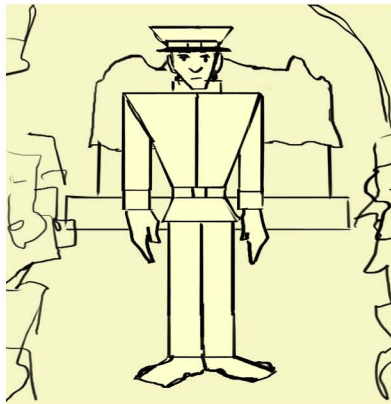


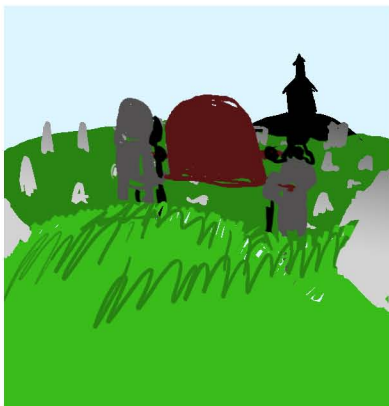
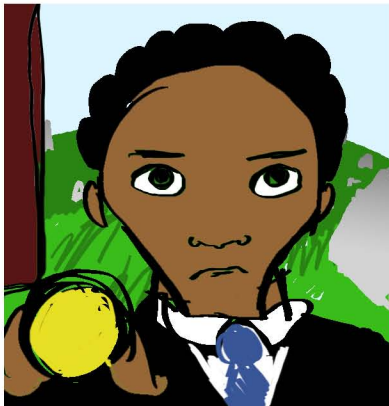
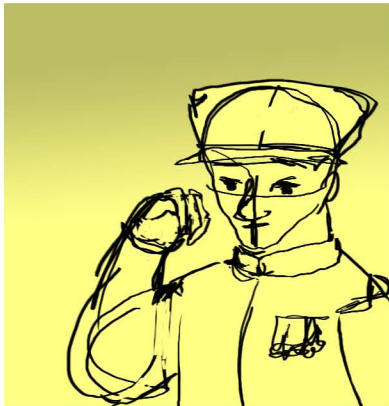


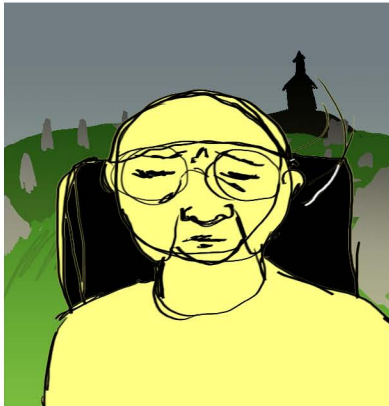
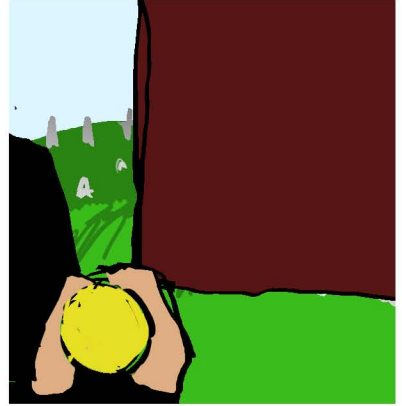


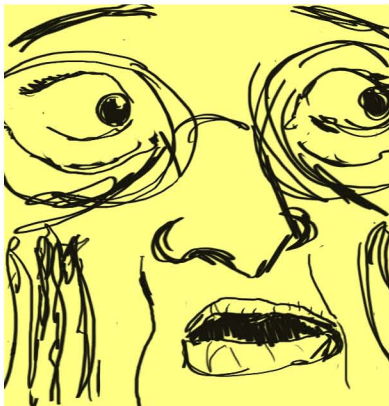
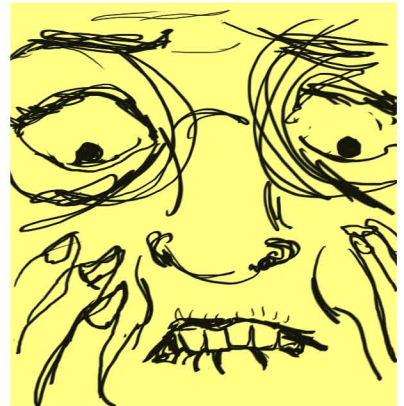
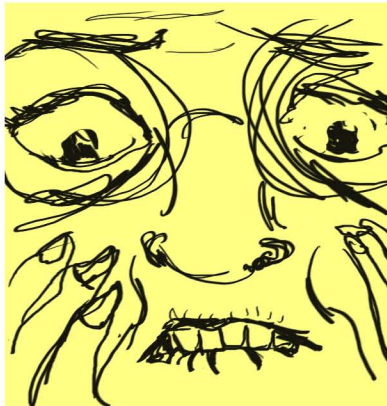
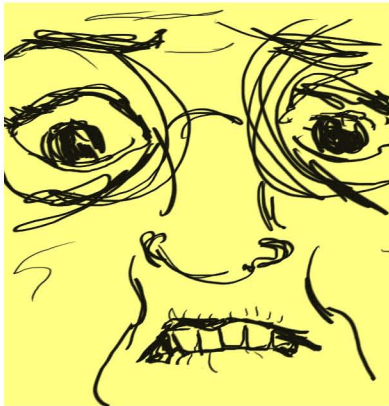
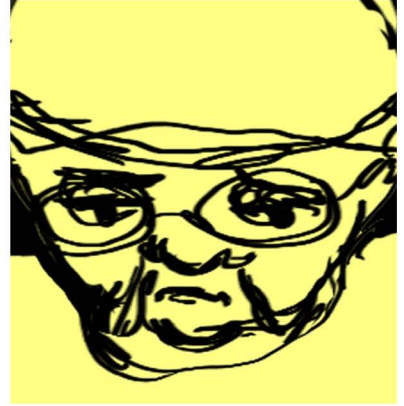
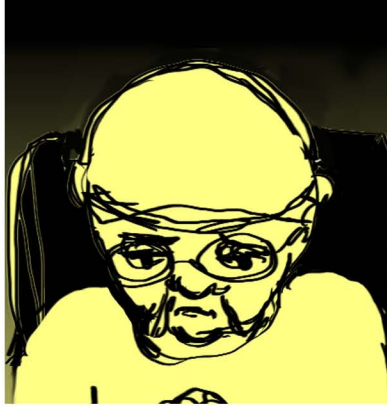




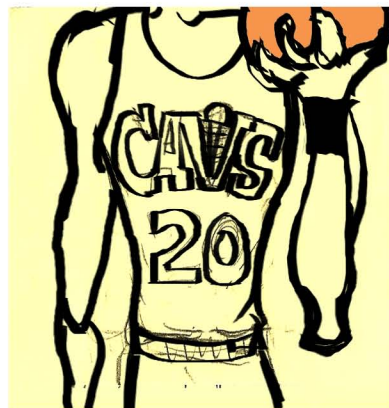


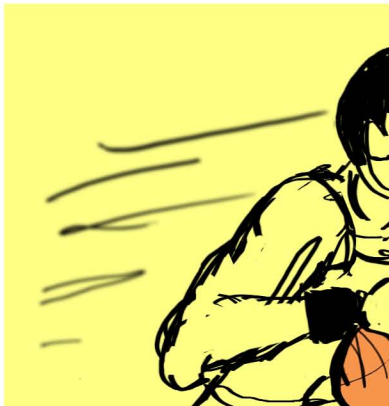
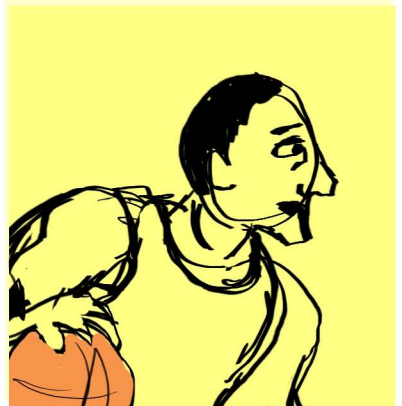
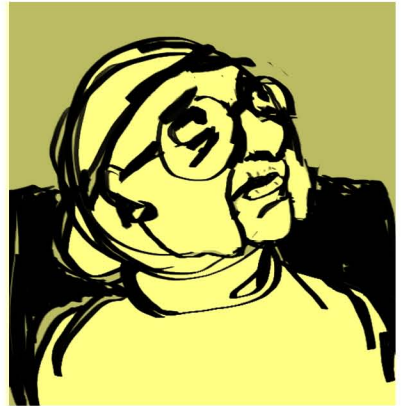
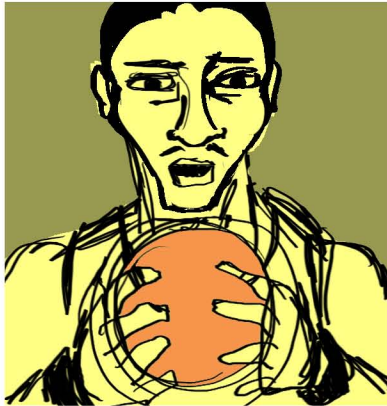
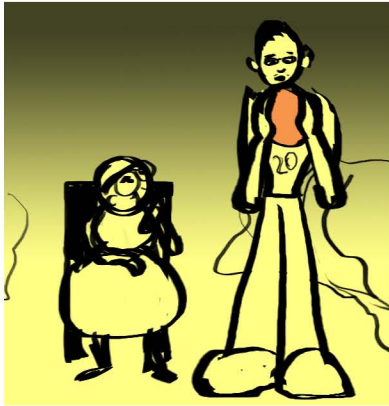
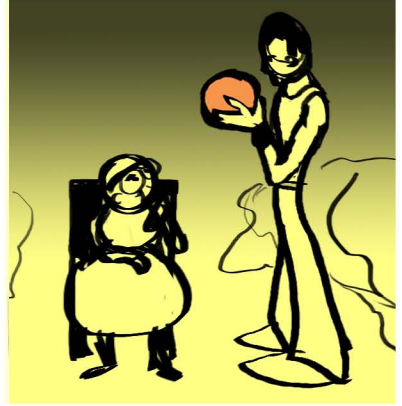


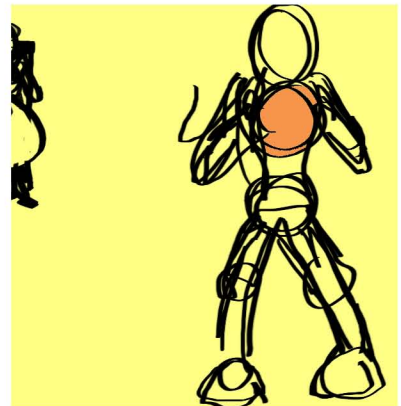
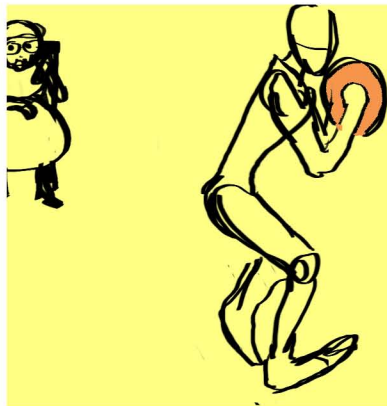
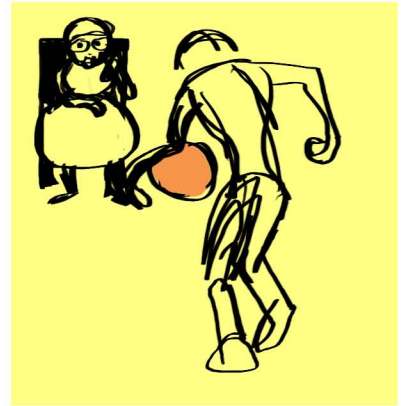


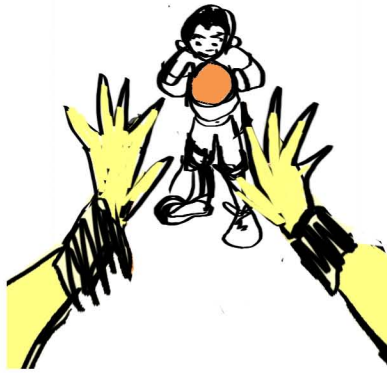


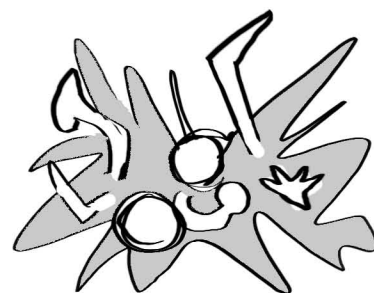


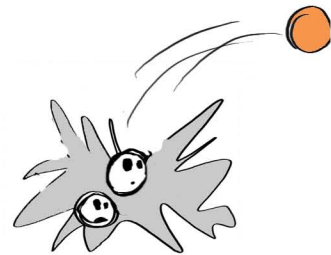
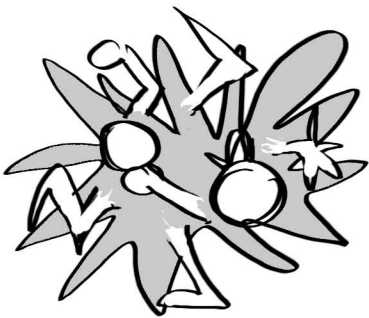


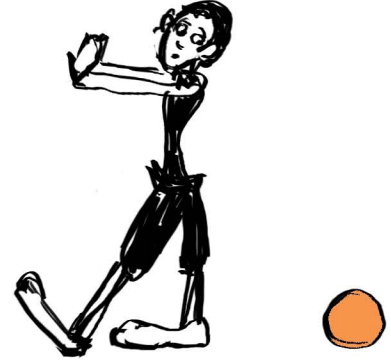
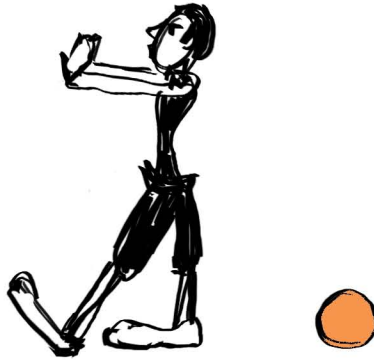




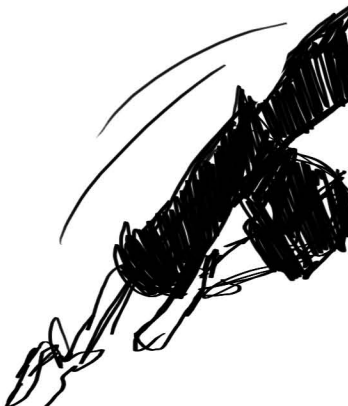
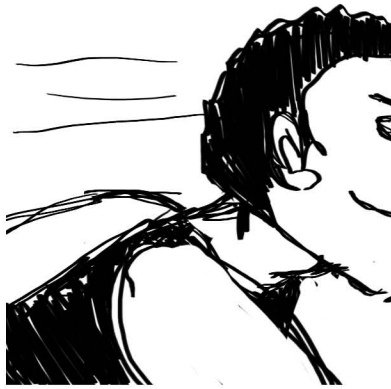




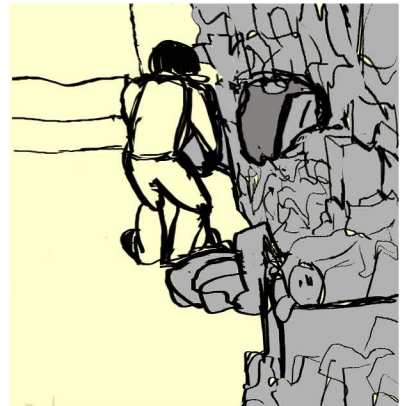
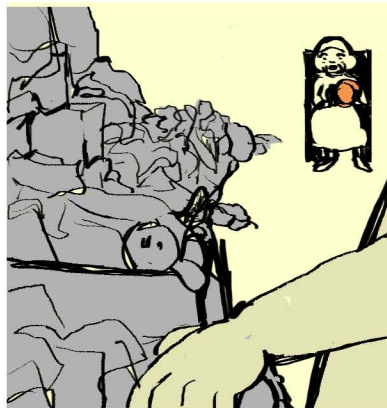
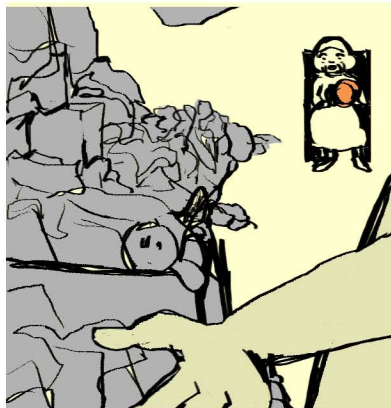
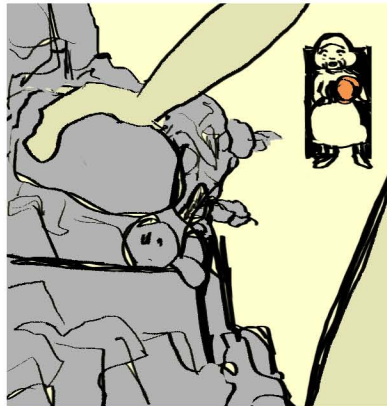
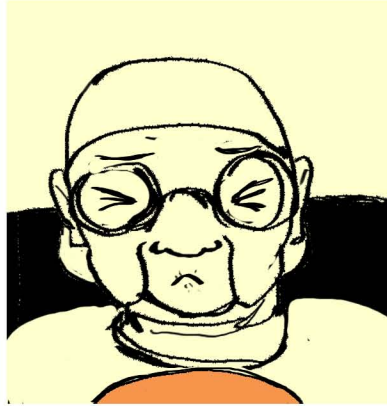


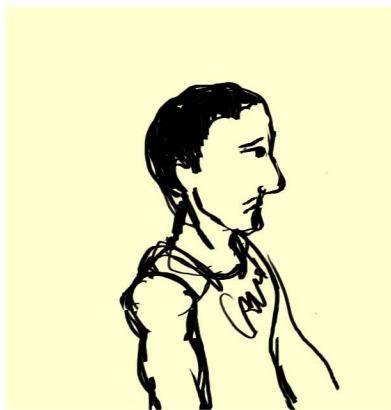
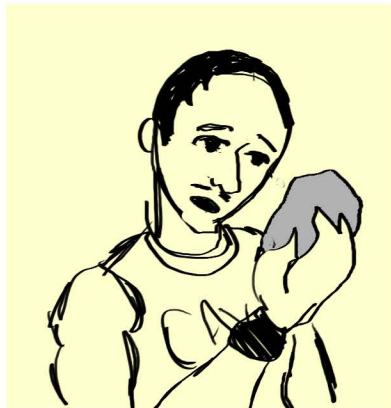


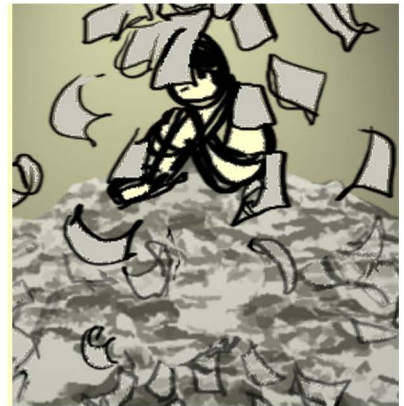


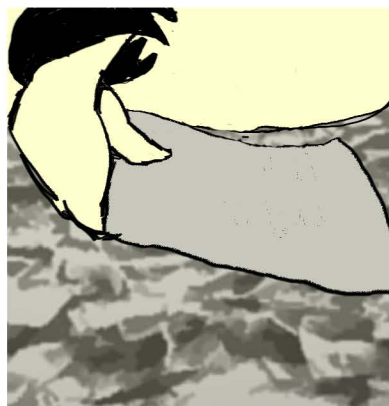
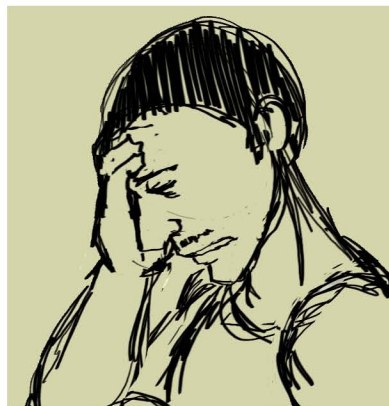
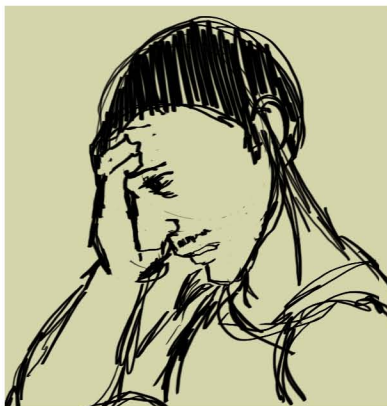


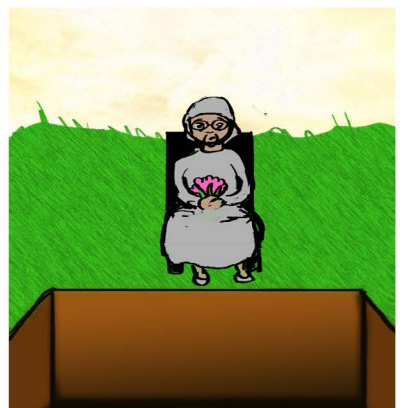
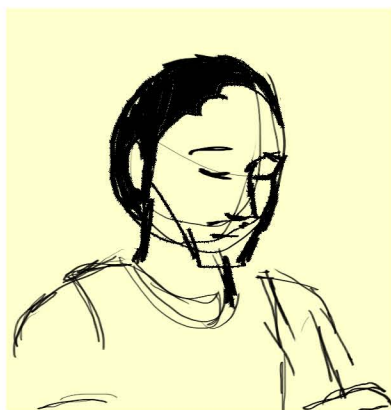


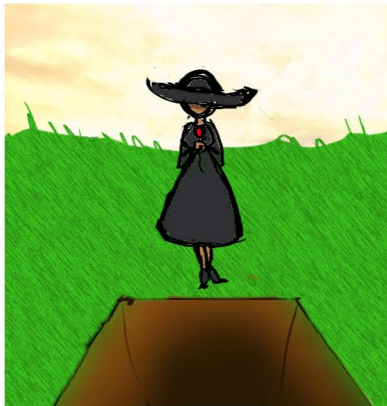
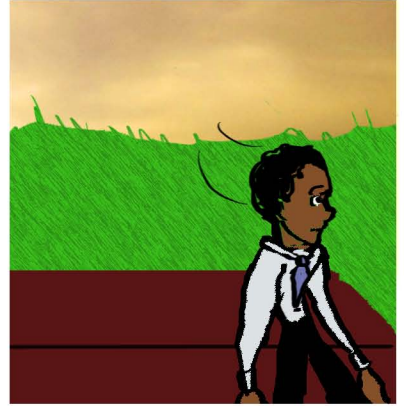
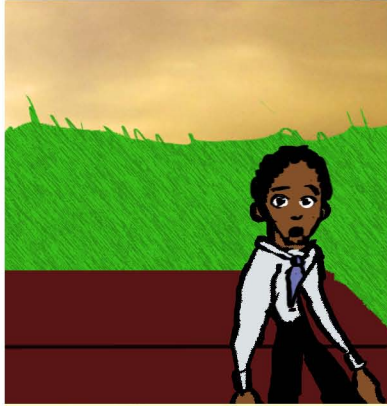
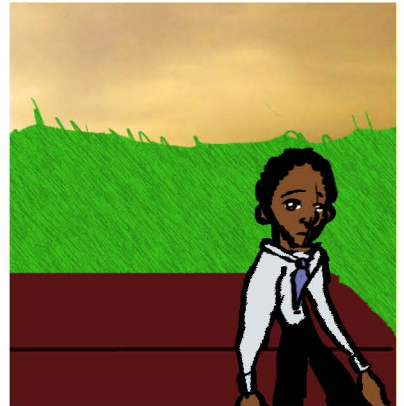
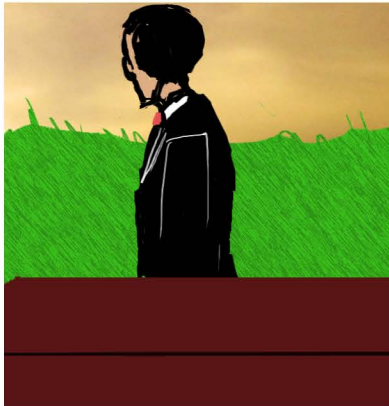
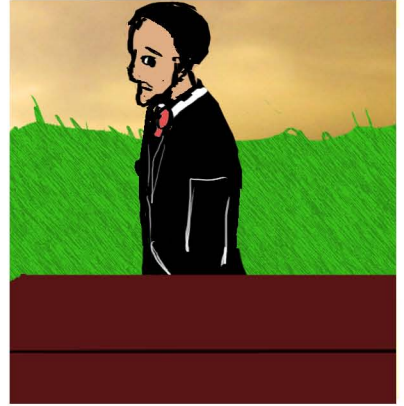
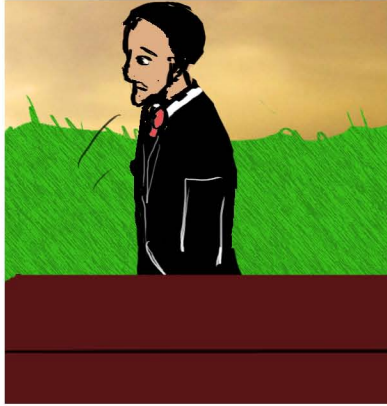
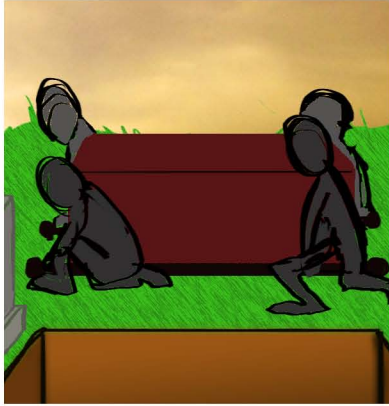




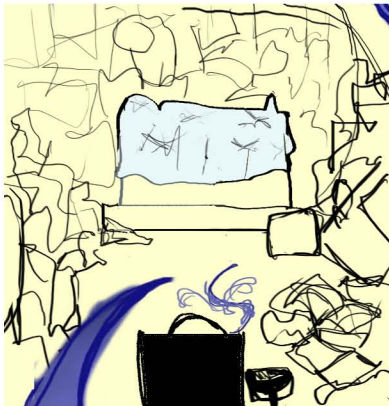
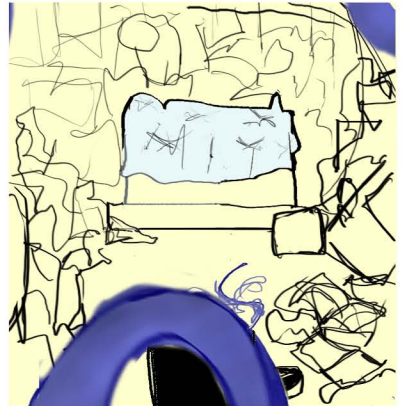
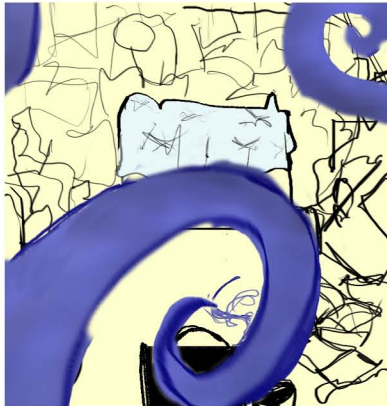
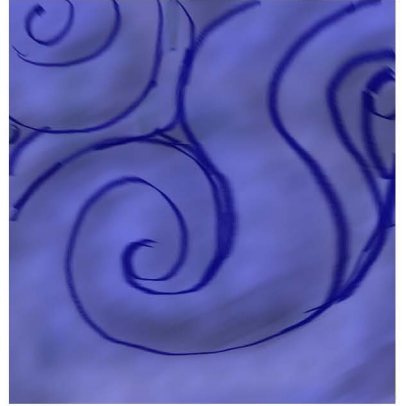
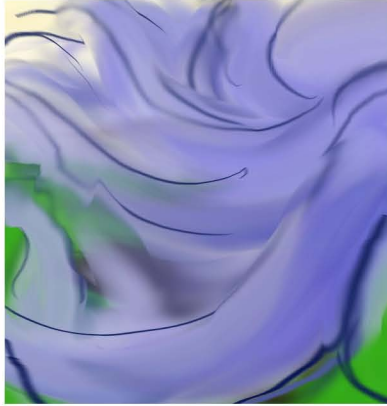




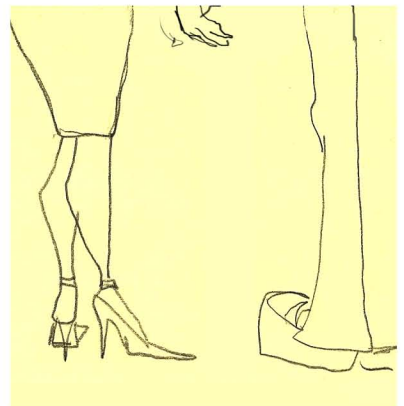
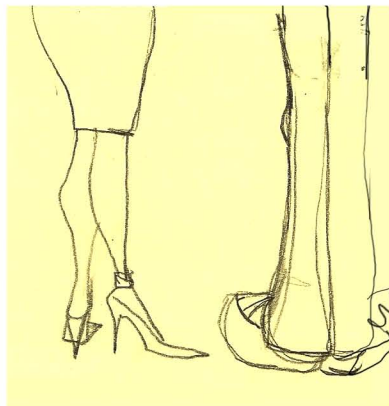
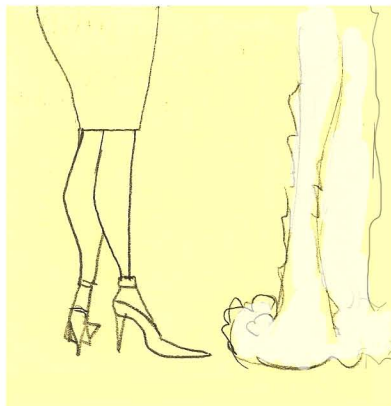
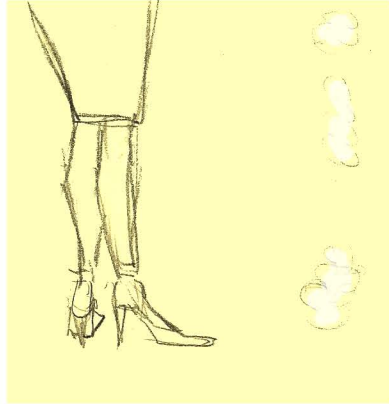
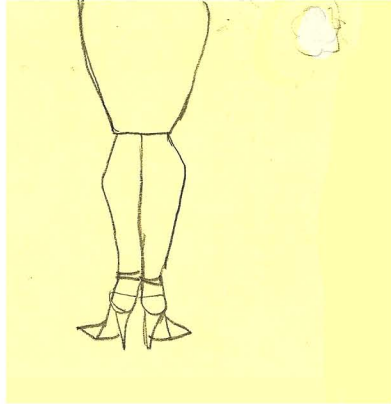
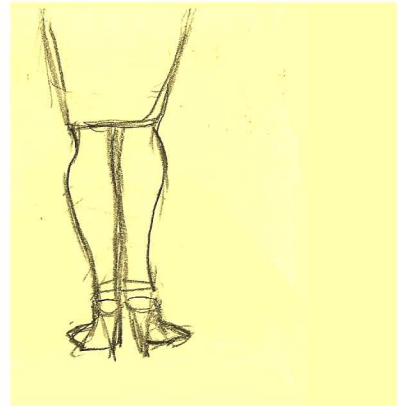


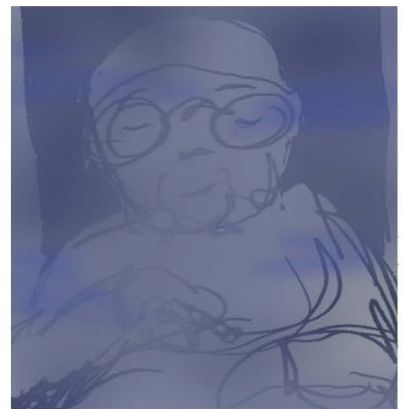
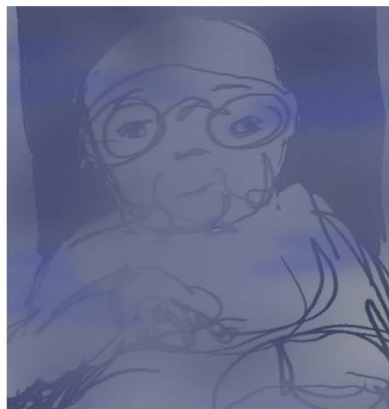
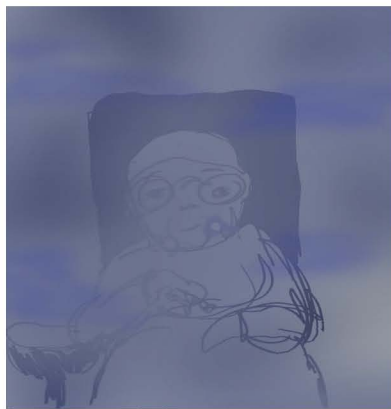
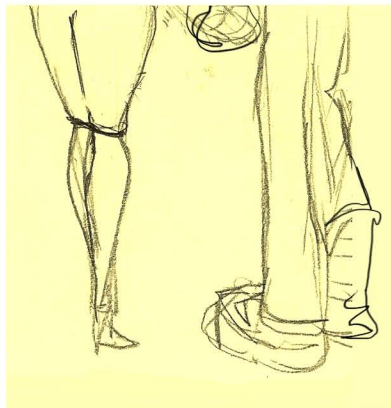
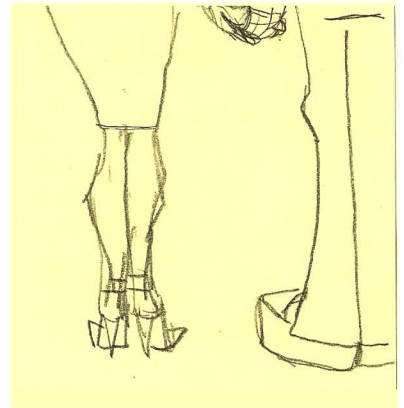
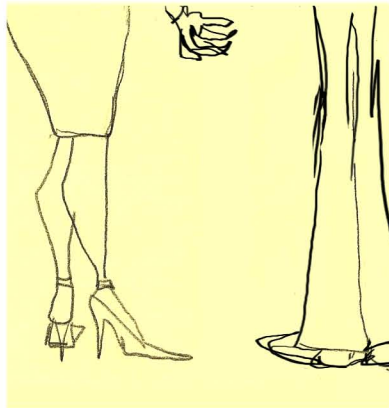
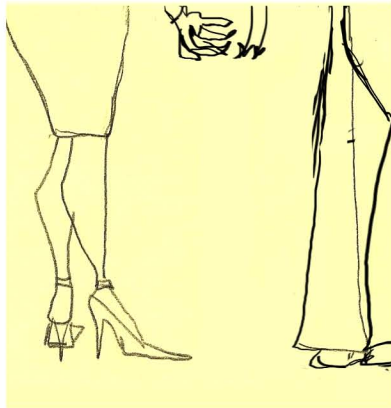
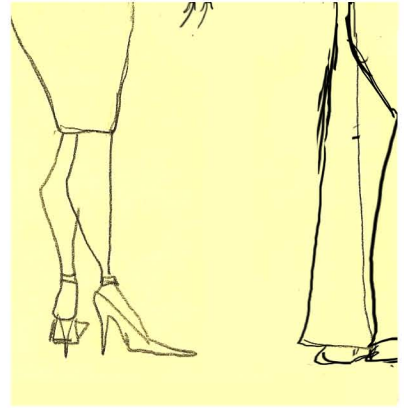
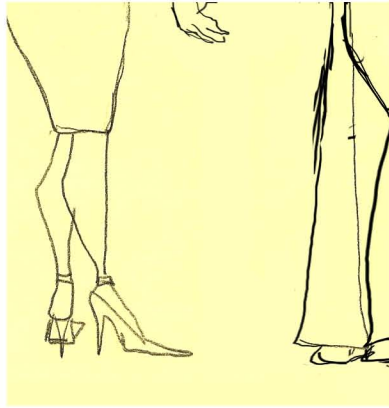
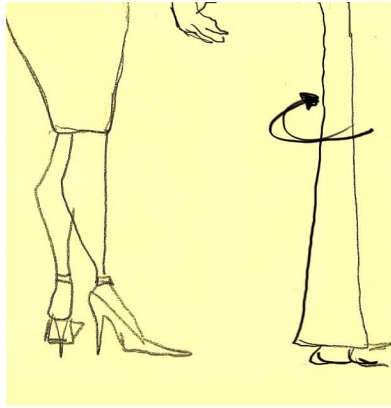


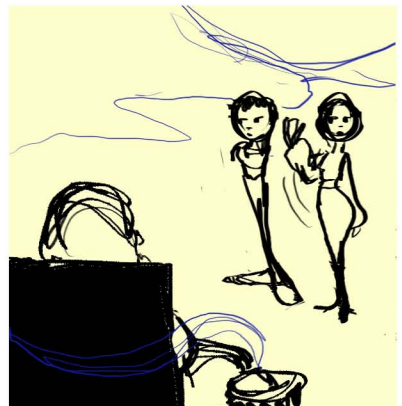
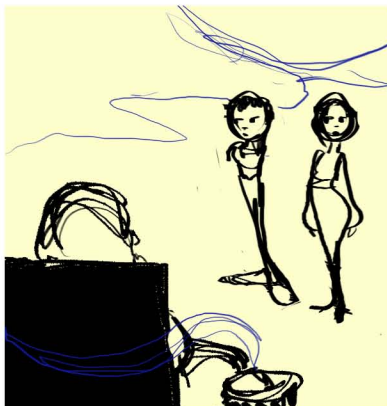
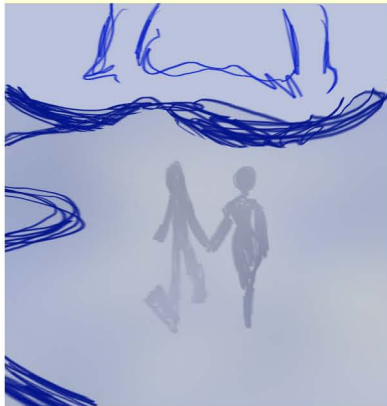


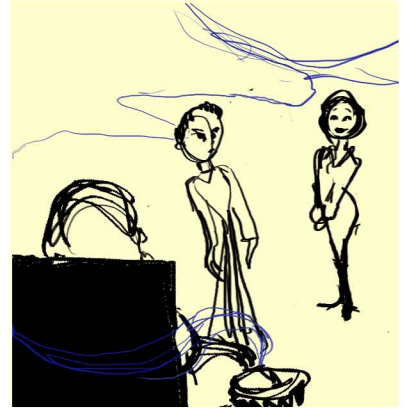
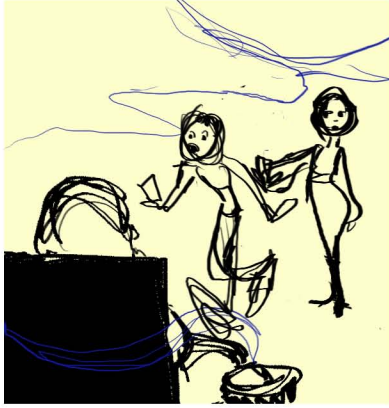


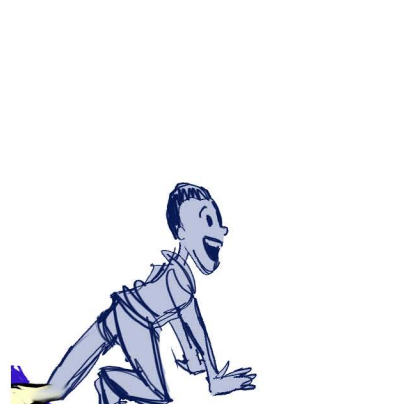
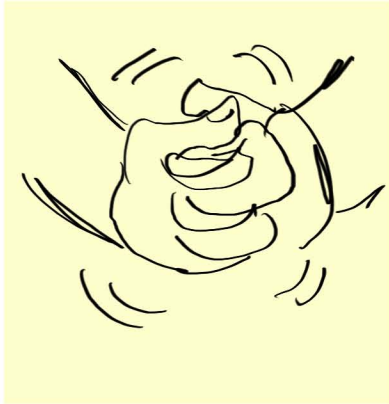


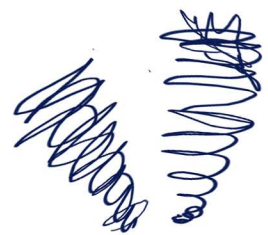
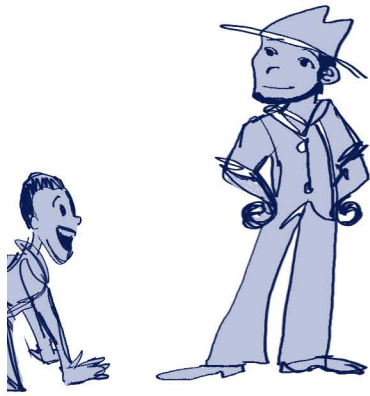


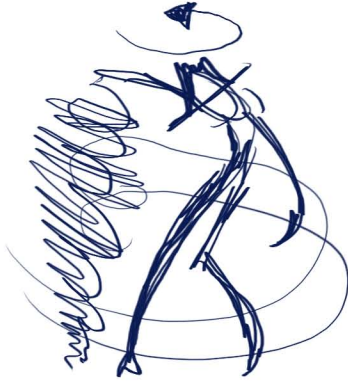




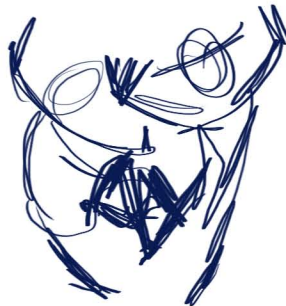


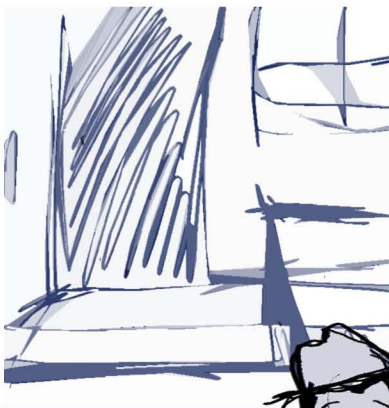
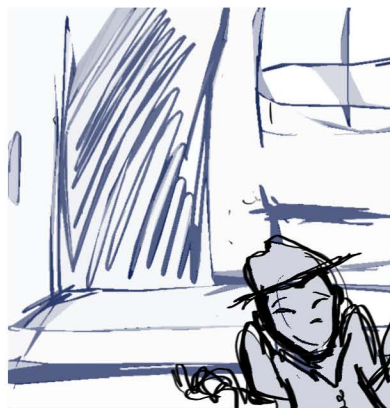
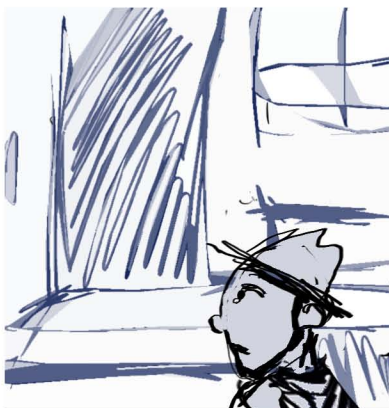
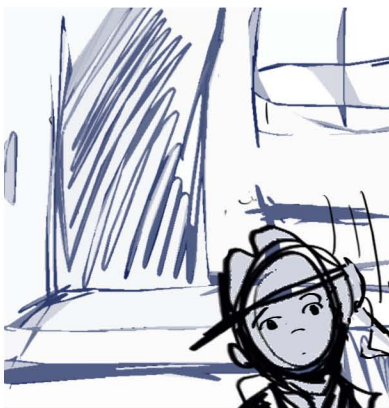
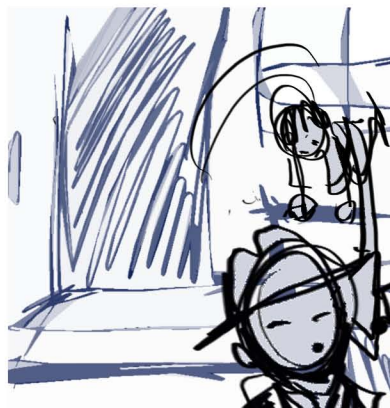
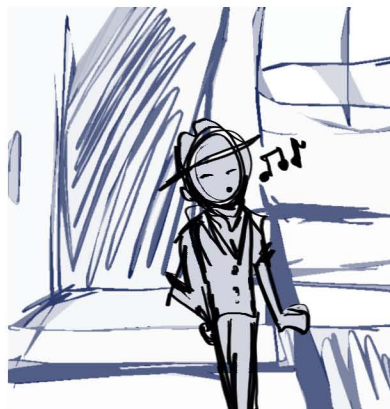


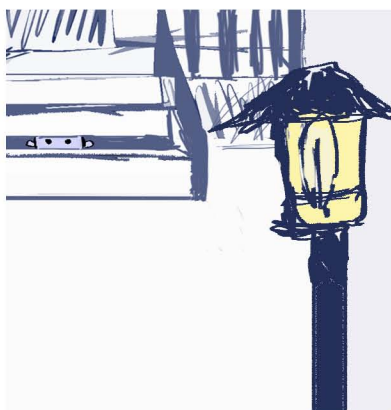
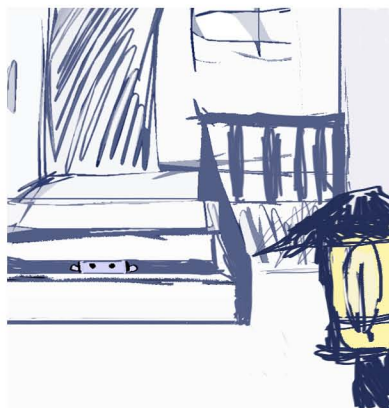
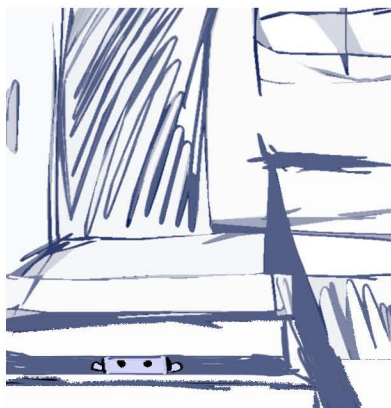
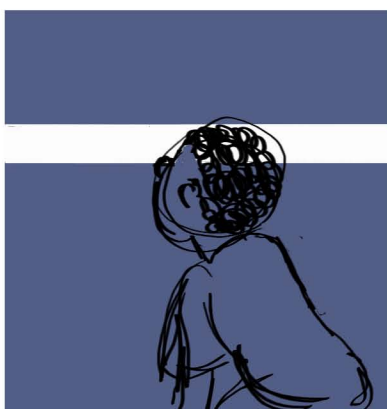


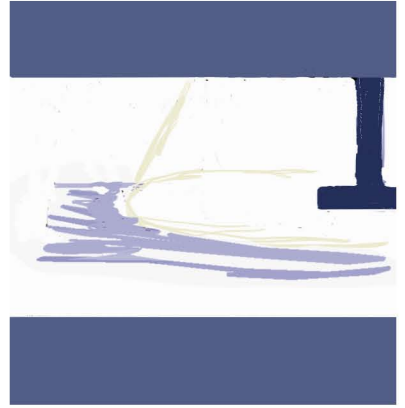
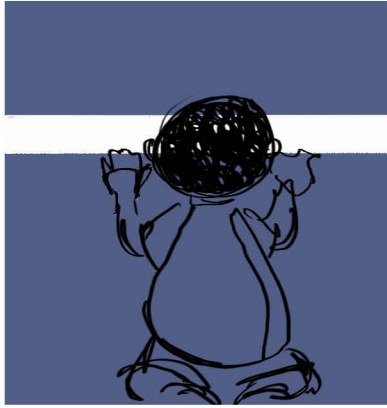
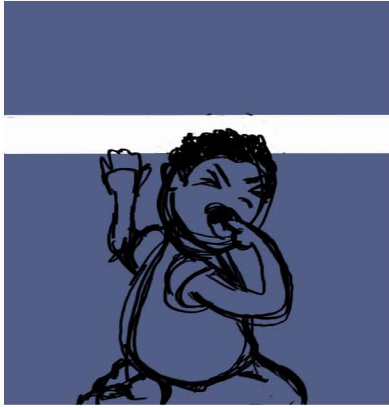
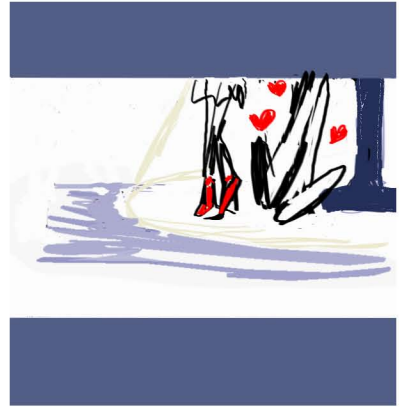
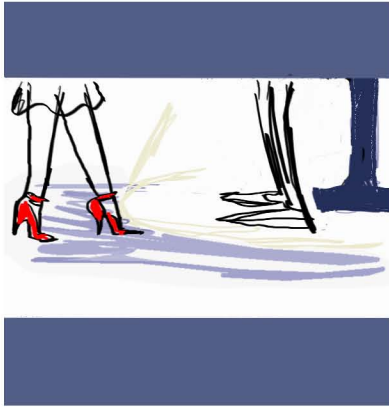
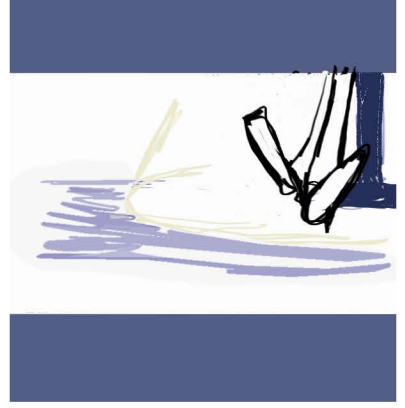
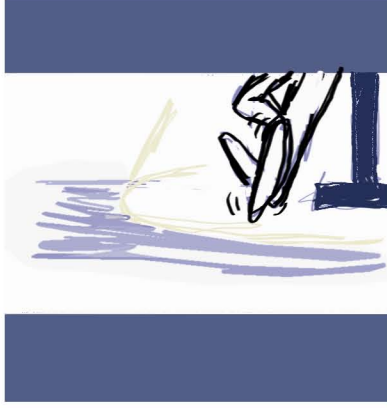


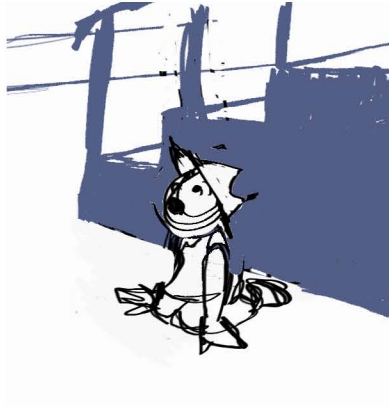
North Wall in the sky

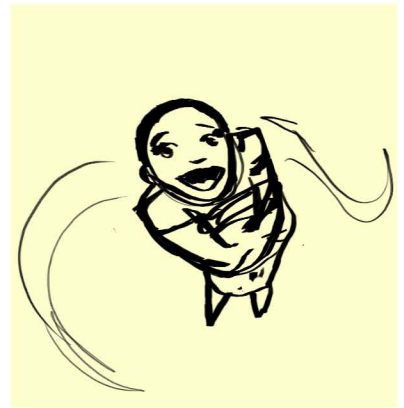
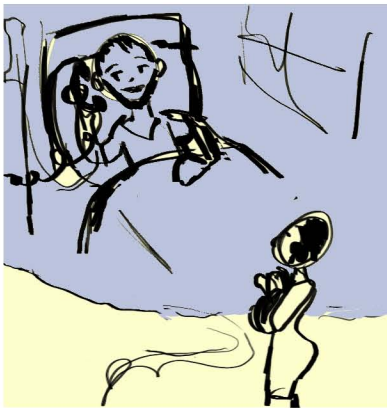


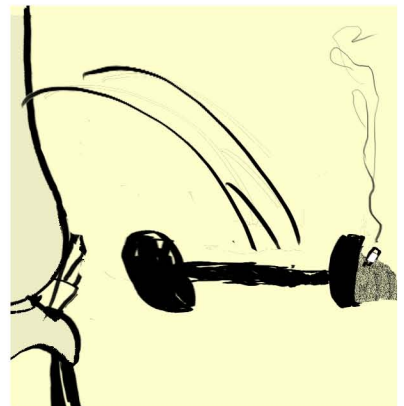
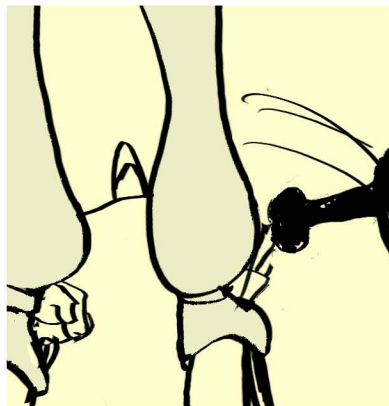
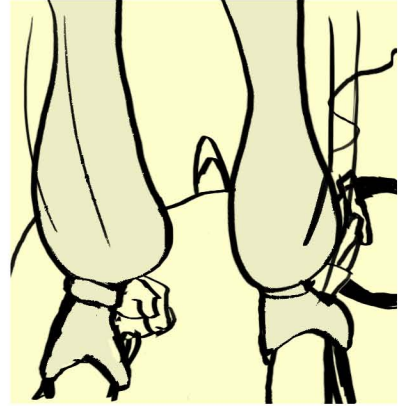
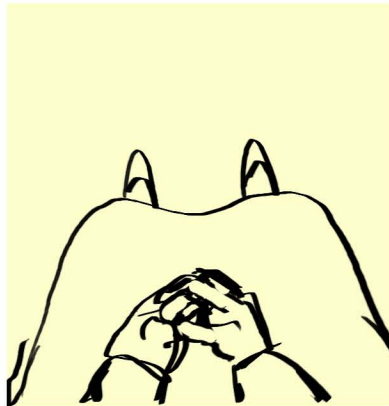
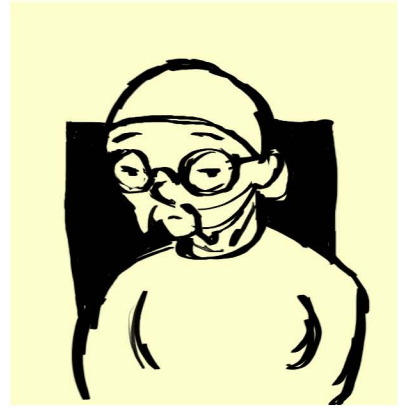


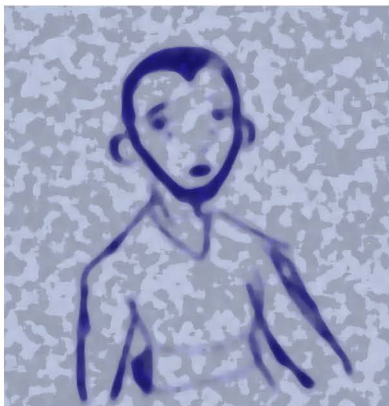
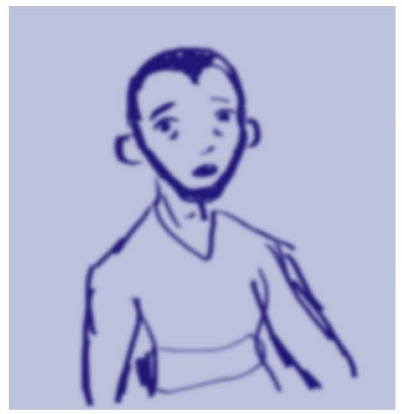
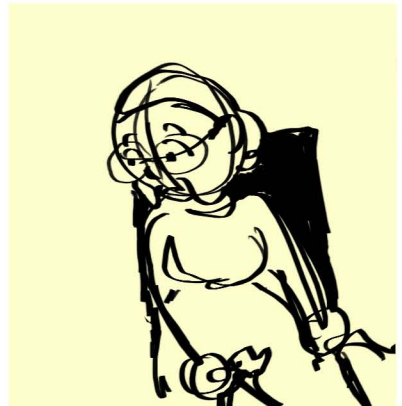


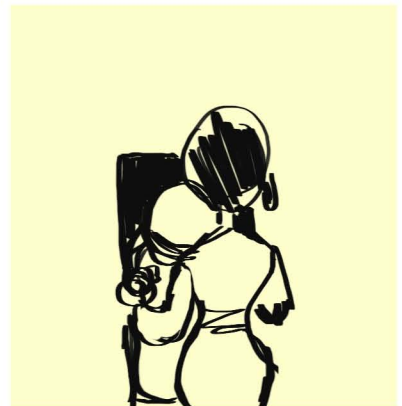
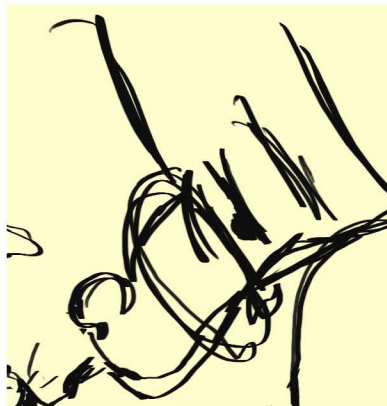


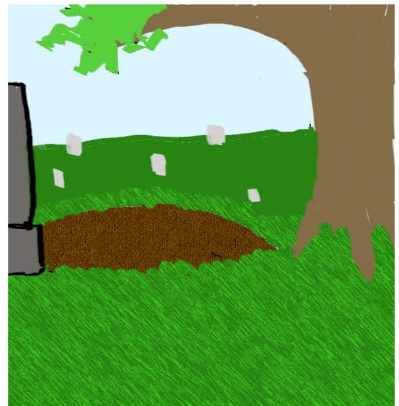
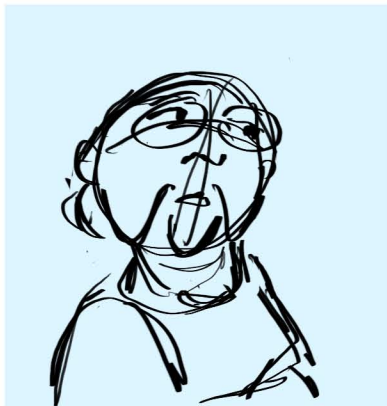
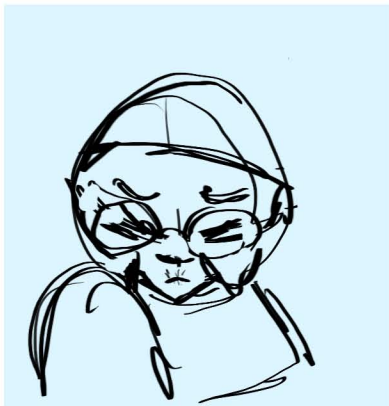
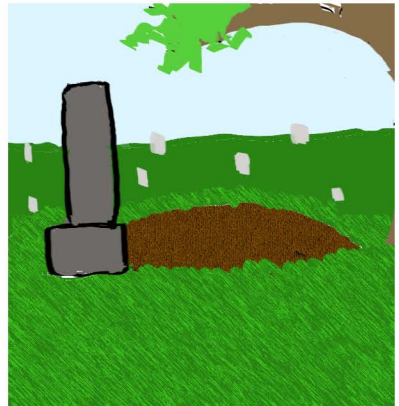






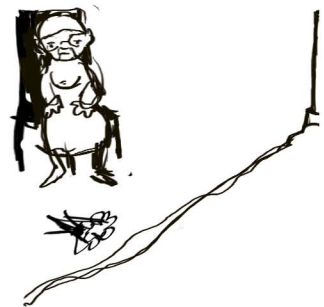
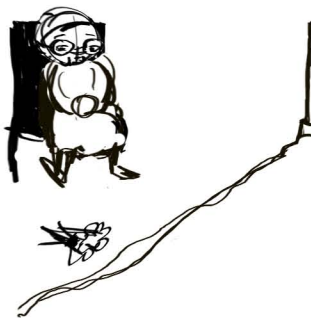


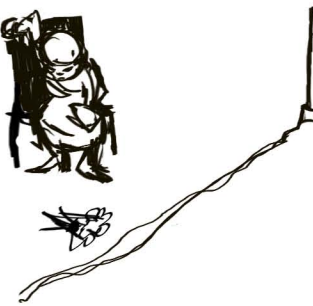
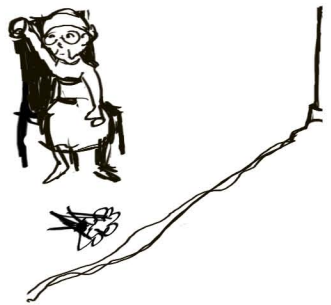
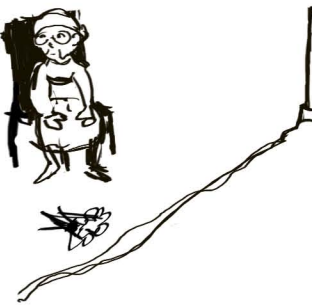
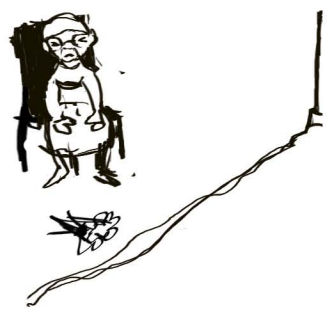
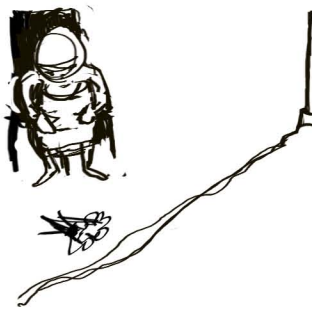
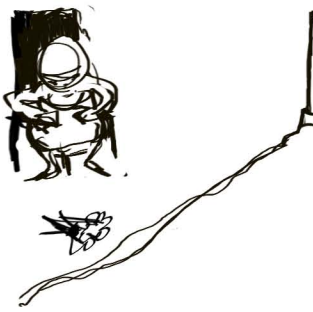








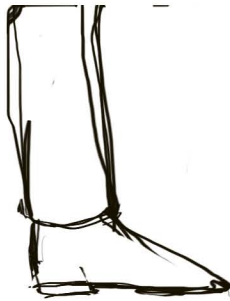


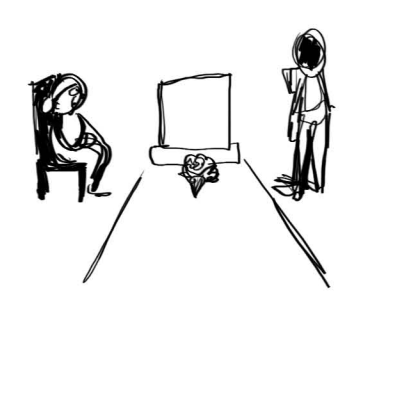
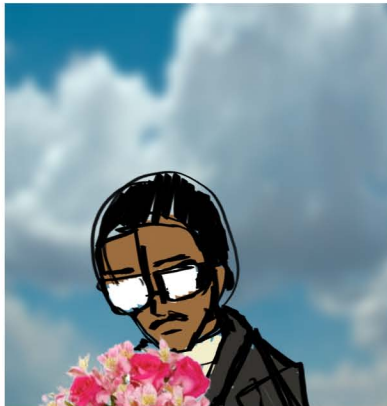


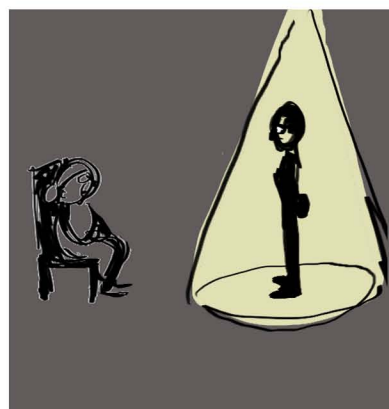
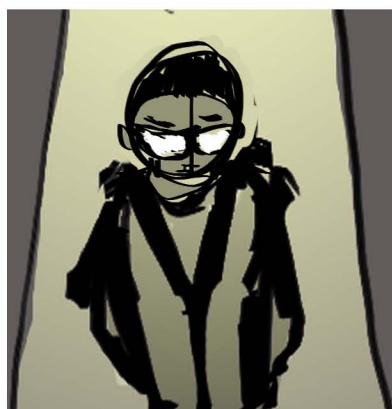


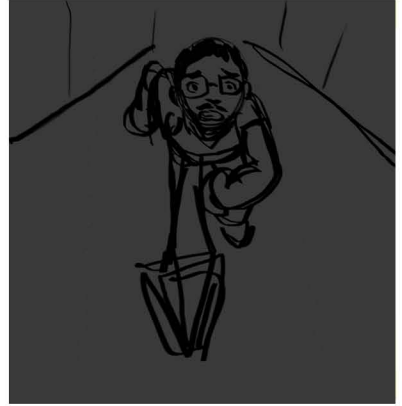


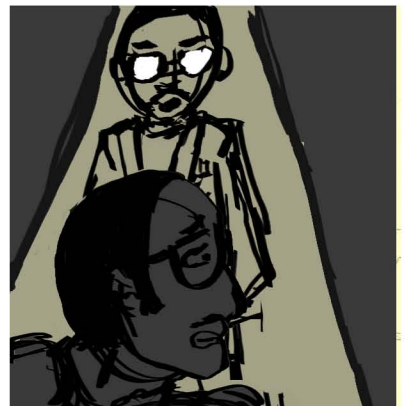
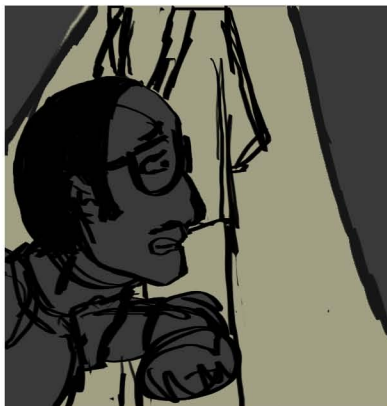
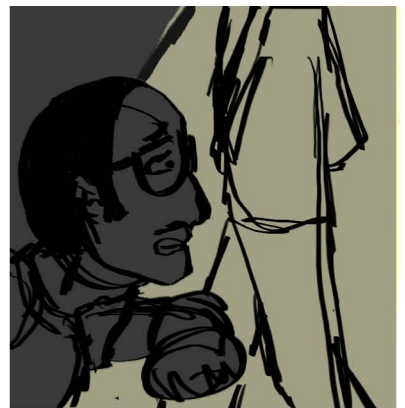




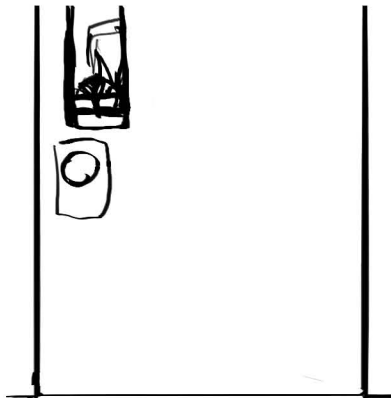
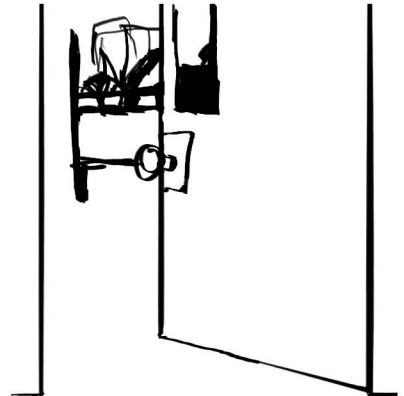


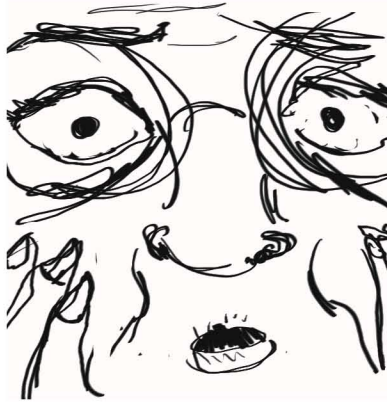






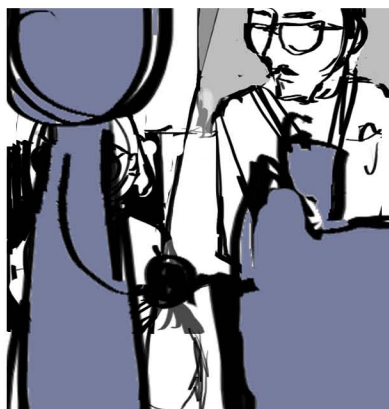


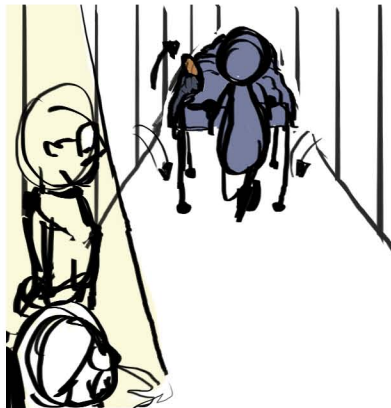
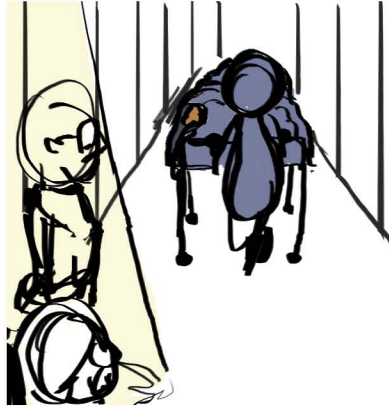
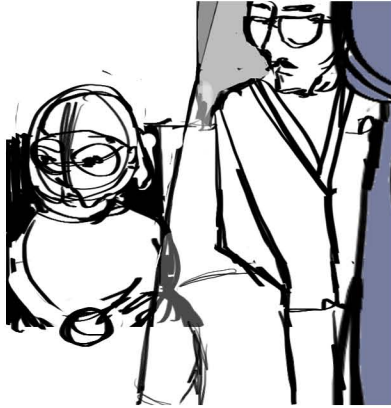


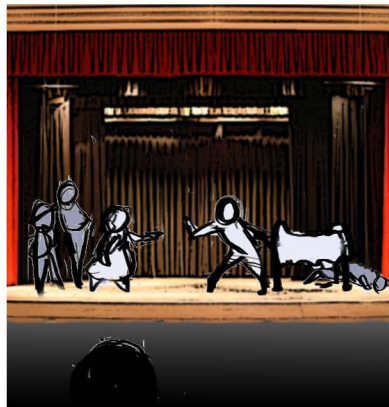


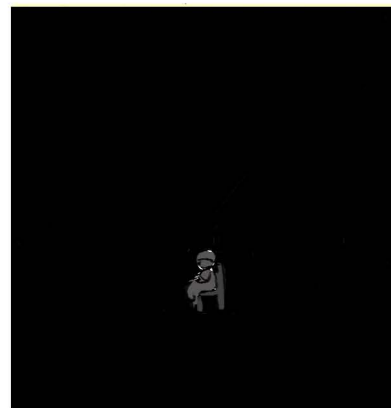
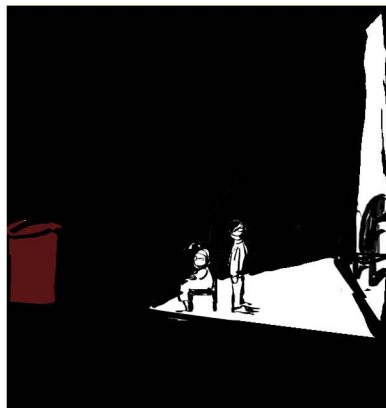
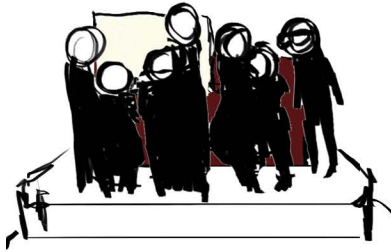


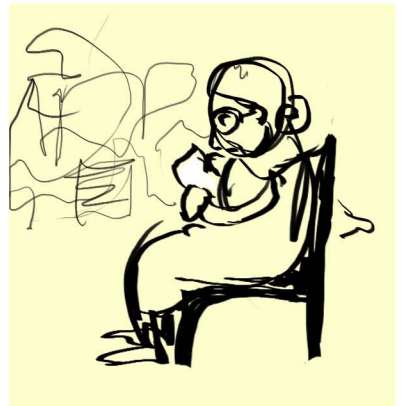


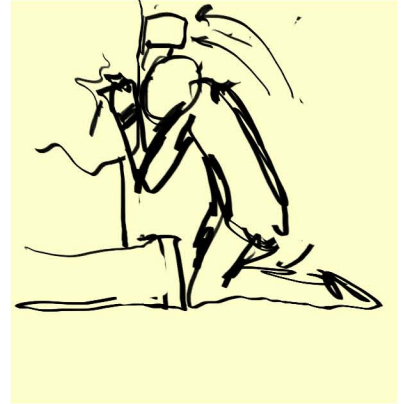
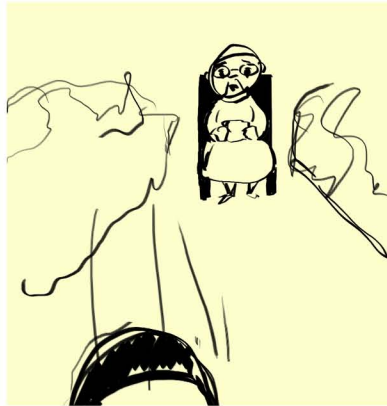


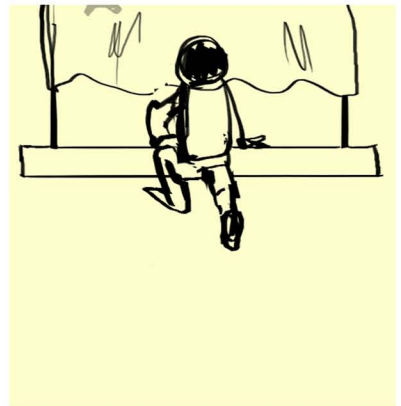
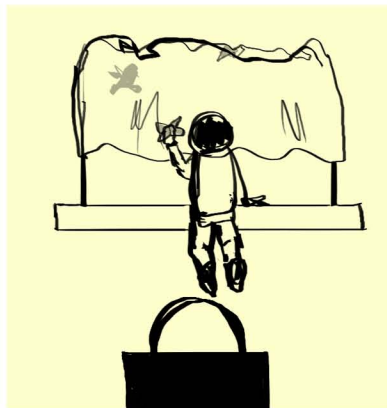


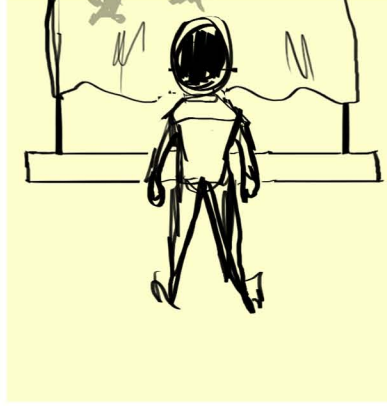
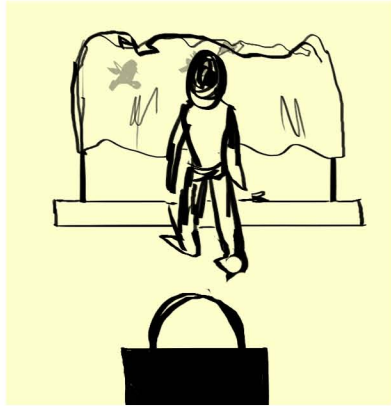


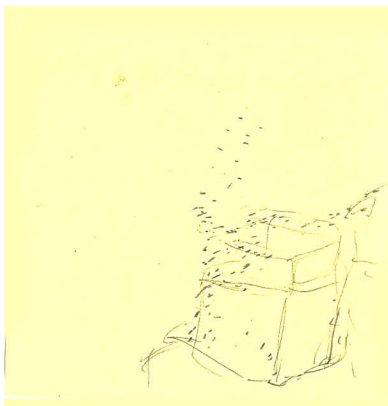
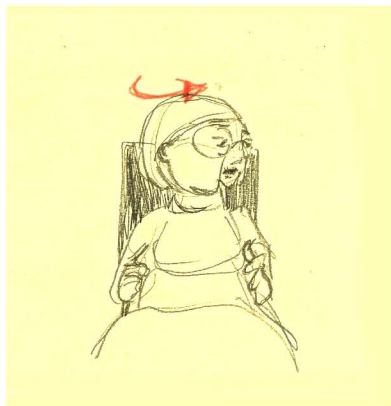


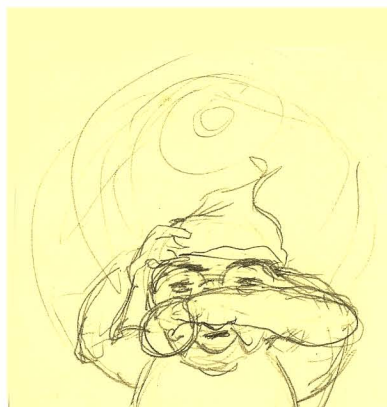
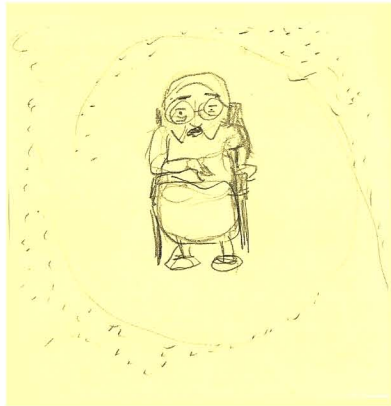
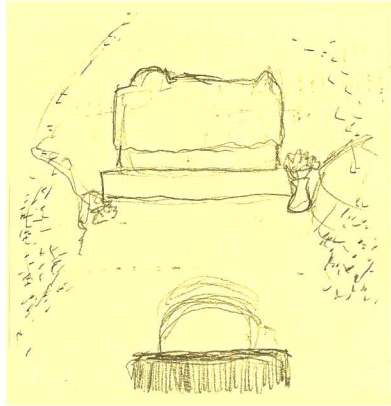


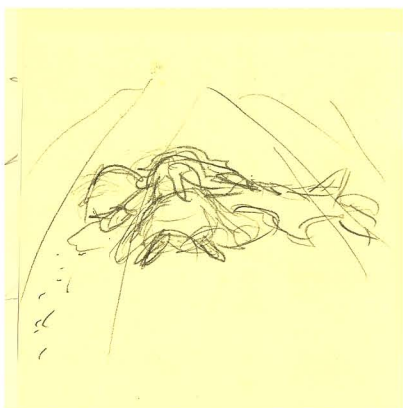
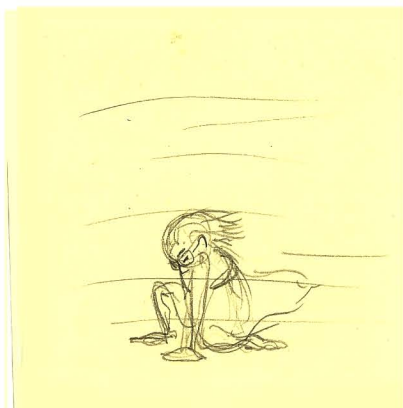


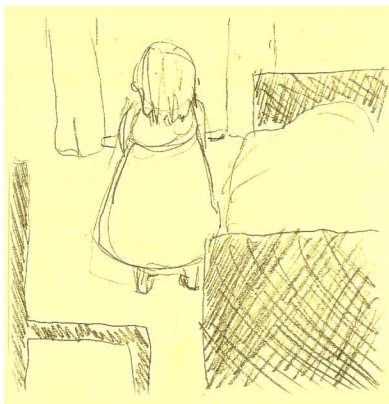
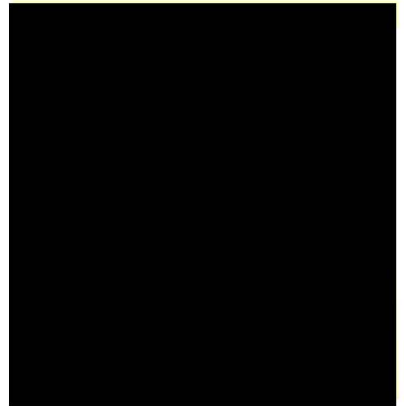
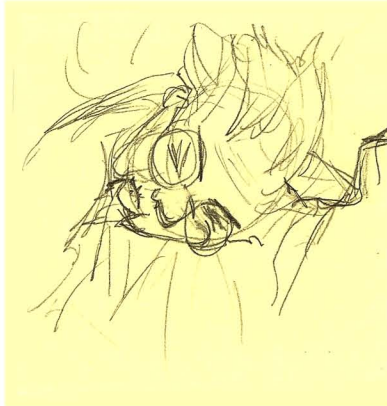


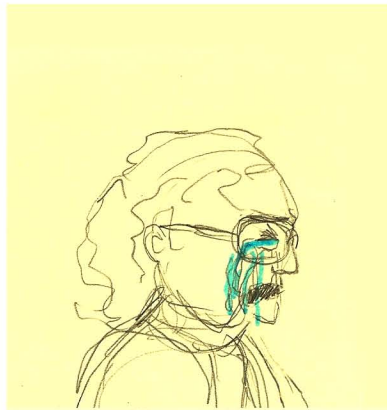
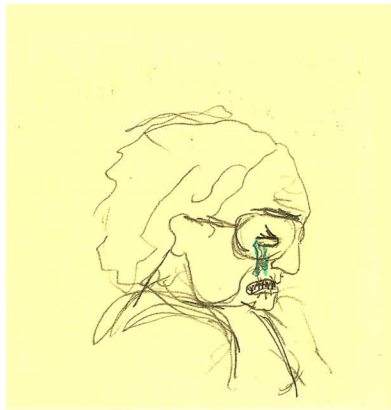
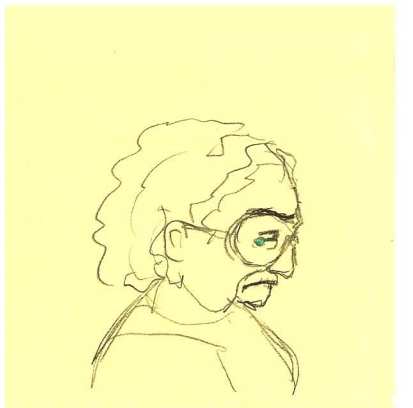
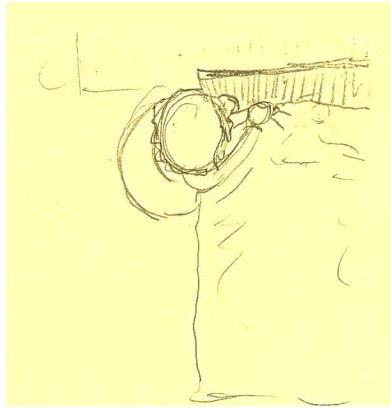


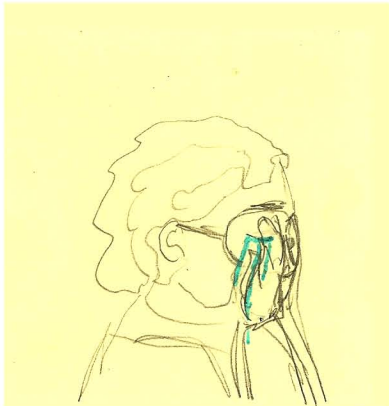


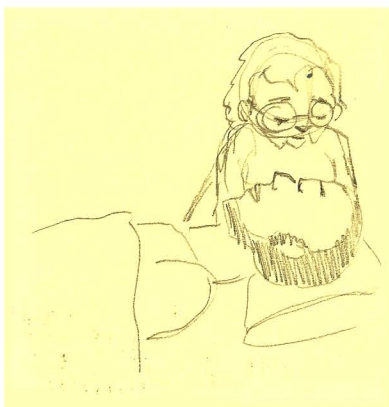


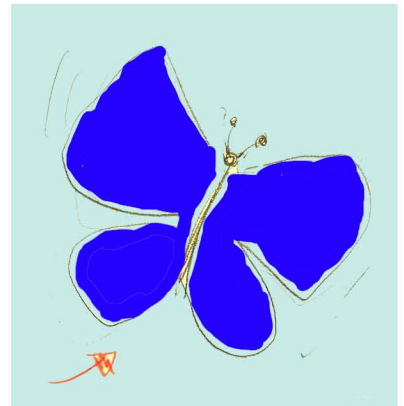
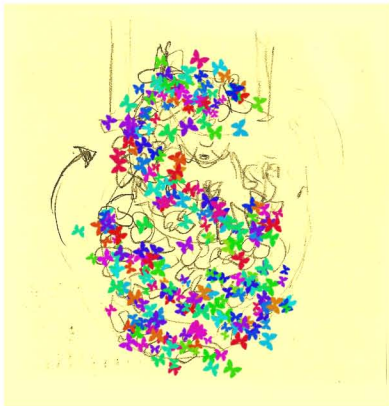
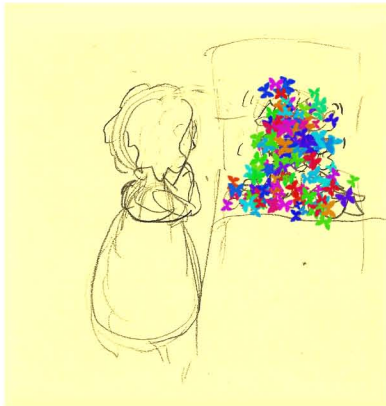
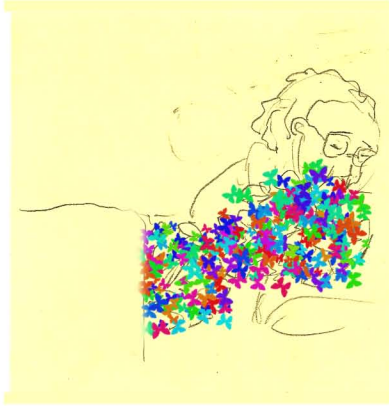


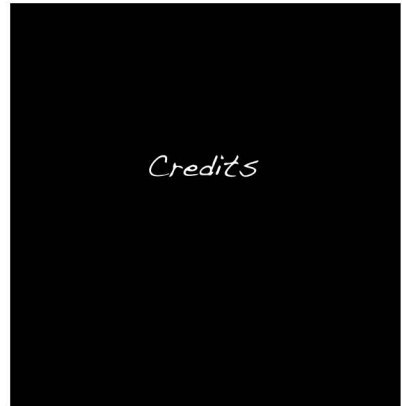
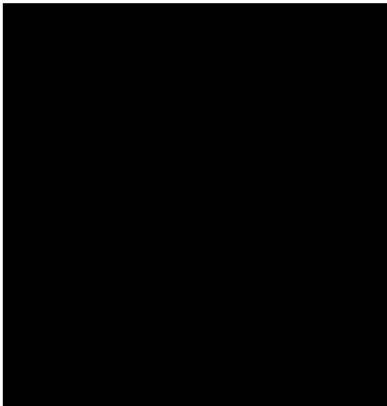
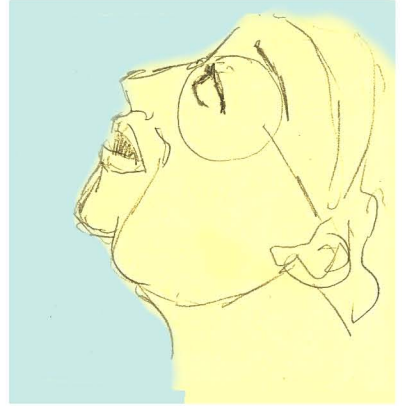
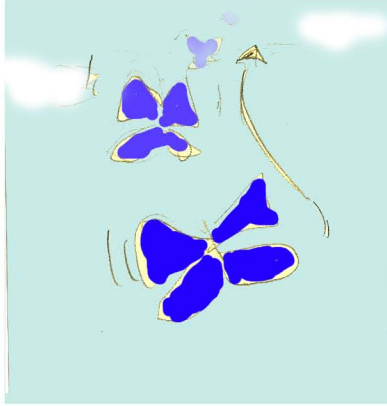






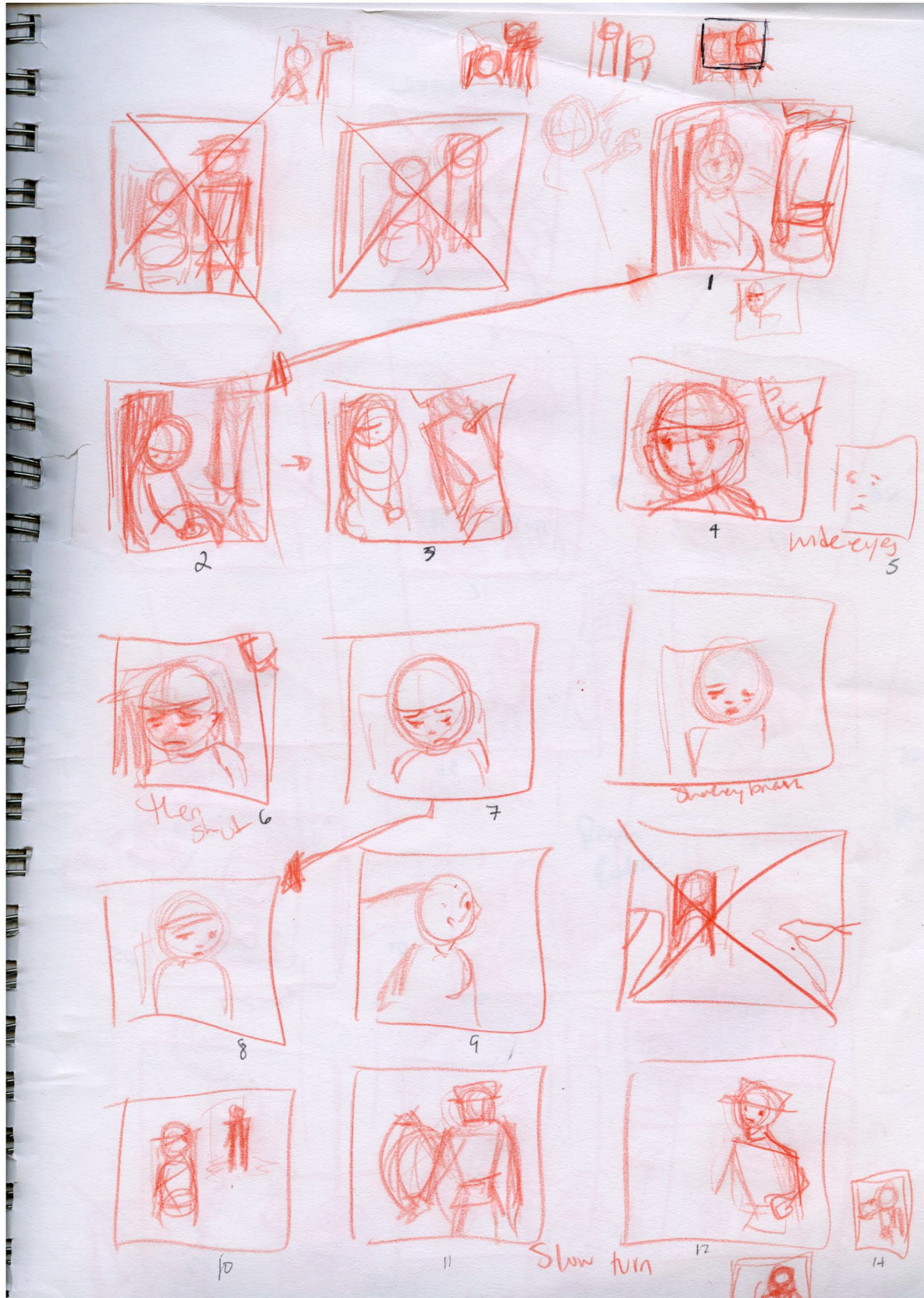






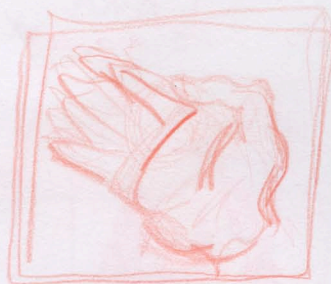
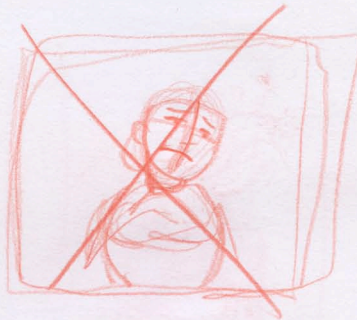
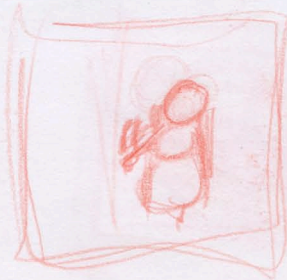
APPENDIX E: THUMBNAILS

Some examples of how I reworked scenes during production. Below is the last exchange between Nana and Stephen. On the next page are an example of a transition, and a rework of the final kiss at the end of the film.

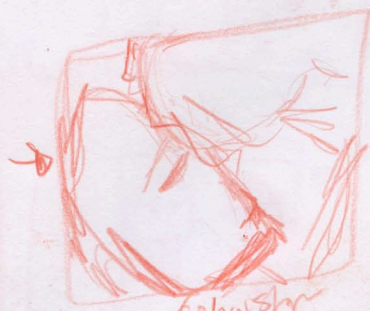
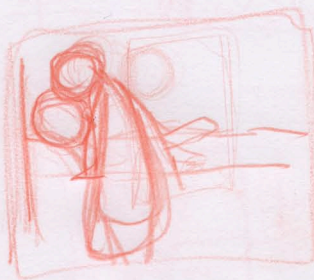




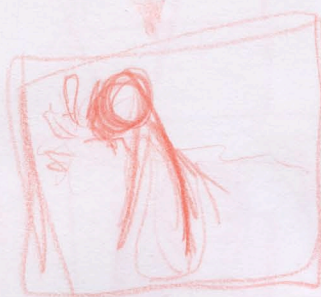
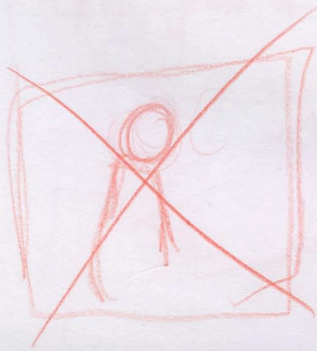
Big plan



Big



Glaustr



APPENDIX F: CHARACTER DESIGNS



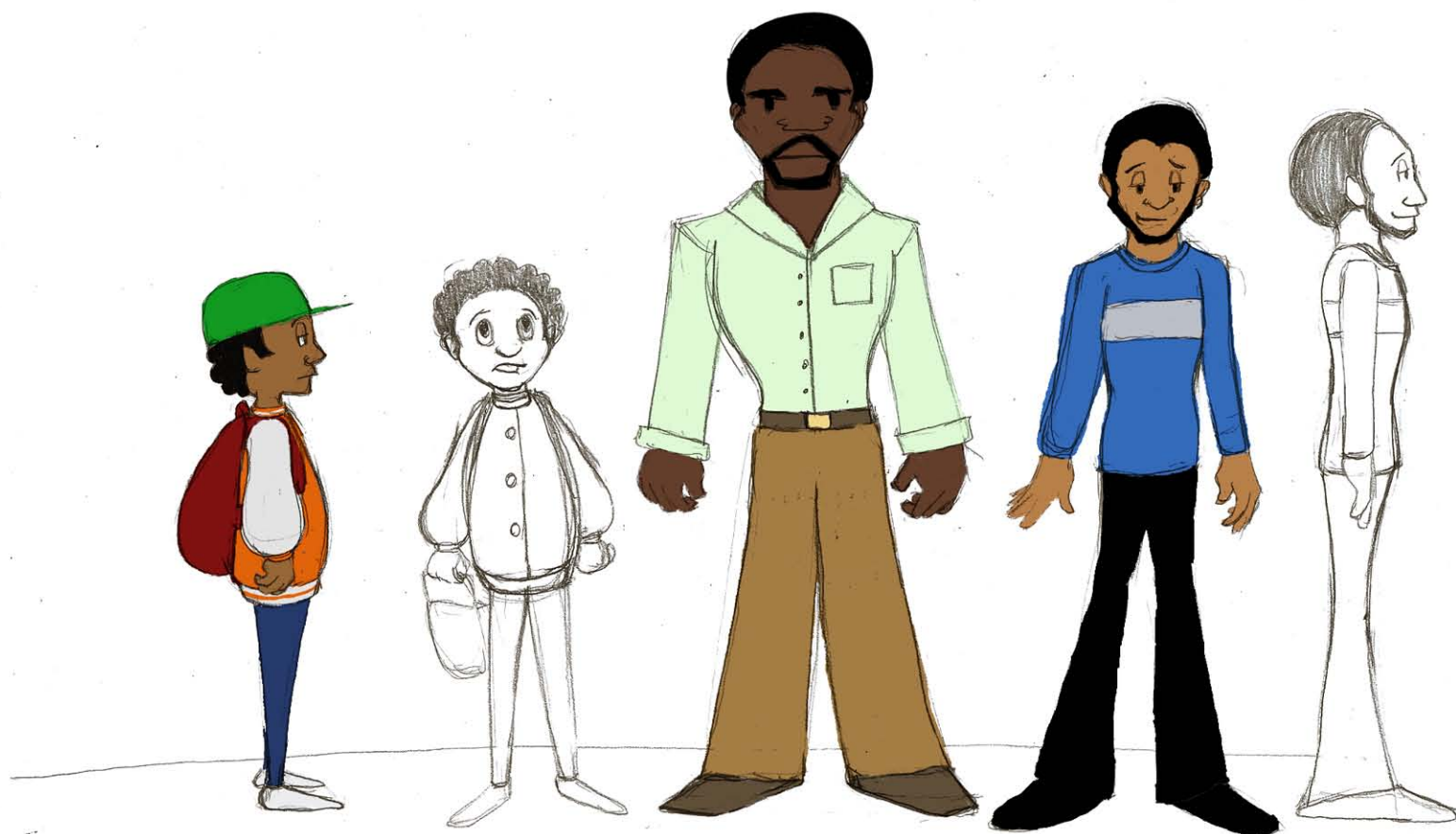
"Young Nava"
A Bed of Butterflies



"OLD NANA"
Bed of Butterflies



Stephen



"Stephen"

"Daddy"

"Keith"

actor sheet

"Great Report Card Scandal" from "A Bed of Butterflies"



"Geoffery"
A Bed of Butterflies



"Lil' Geoff"

"Lil' Keith"

"Grocery Story"
from
"A Bed of Butterflies"



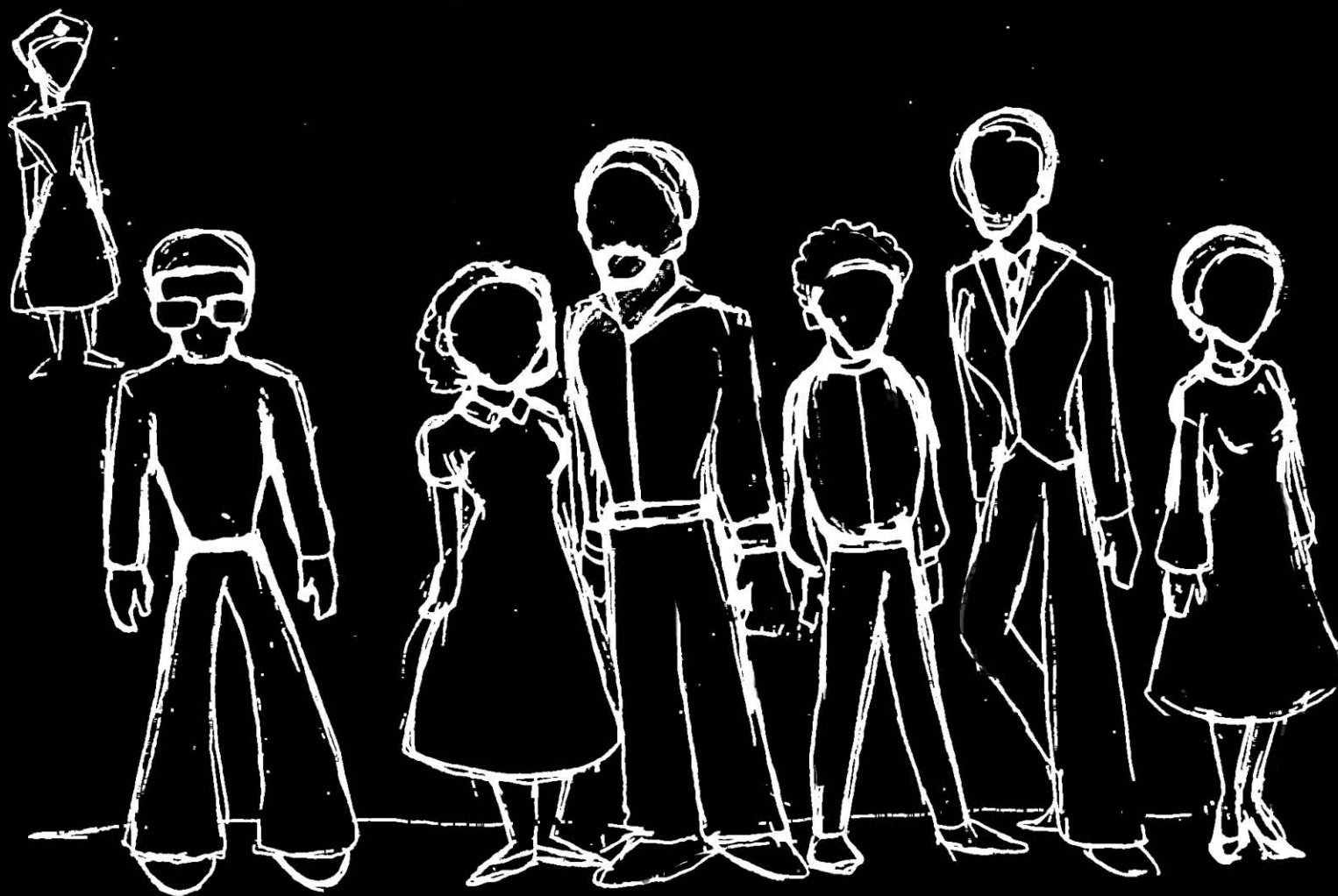
Sharon I

Sharon II

Erick



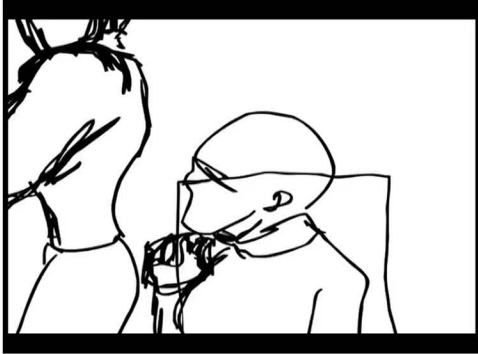
"Eric"
A Bed of Butterflies



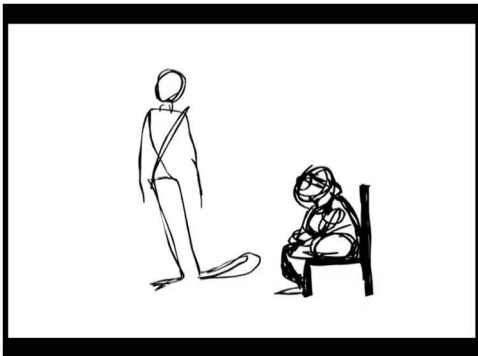
Silhouettes

APPENDIX G: ROUGH ANIMATION AND FINISHED INKING COMPARISON

Rough Animation



Finished Line Art



APPENDIX H: PRODUCTION STILLS

