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## To Remember You By

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Most relationships can be defined  
by the hoodie haver and the  
hoodie taker.



I was the latter.



WE BROKE UP

IN JANUARY &

IN FEBRUARY

MY TWO BEST

FRIENDS DROVE

ME 40 MINUTES

TO YOUR HOUSE

TO DO THE POST

BREAK UP

BELONGING

SWAP



i was 16.

WHEN YOU ASKED  
If WE COULD  
tALK

I said no



Days later, I noticed your hoodie  
in my purple dresser drawers. It  
was a good hoodie, it wasn't its  
fault that you had manipulated me  
for the year and a half we were  
together.

I put it on.



even though the smell made  
my nose wrinkle and  
turn up.





A heavy letterman's jacket, with patches that represent your accomplishments as a soccer goalie. You let me borrow it when we started dating



only a few short months after I gave away the big brown hoodie.



At first we seemed perfect  
for each other. We were both  
traumatized in similar ways  
by our previous partners,  
who happened to be both of our  
first gay relationships.  
Our friend groups meshed together  
seamlessly and we spent the  
summer camping & hiking  
& exploring each others  
home towns.





ON MY 18TH  
BIRTHDAY YOU SAID  
YOU WOULD FOLLOW  
ME ANYWHERE  
WHICH SCARED ME &  
I REALIZED I WASNT  
REALLY IN LOVE  
WITH YOU BRUTALLY  
I BROKE UP WITH  
YOU ON THE PHONE THE  
WEEK YOU  
COMMITTED TO THE  
SAME COLLEGE I  
DID





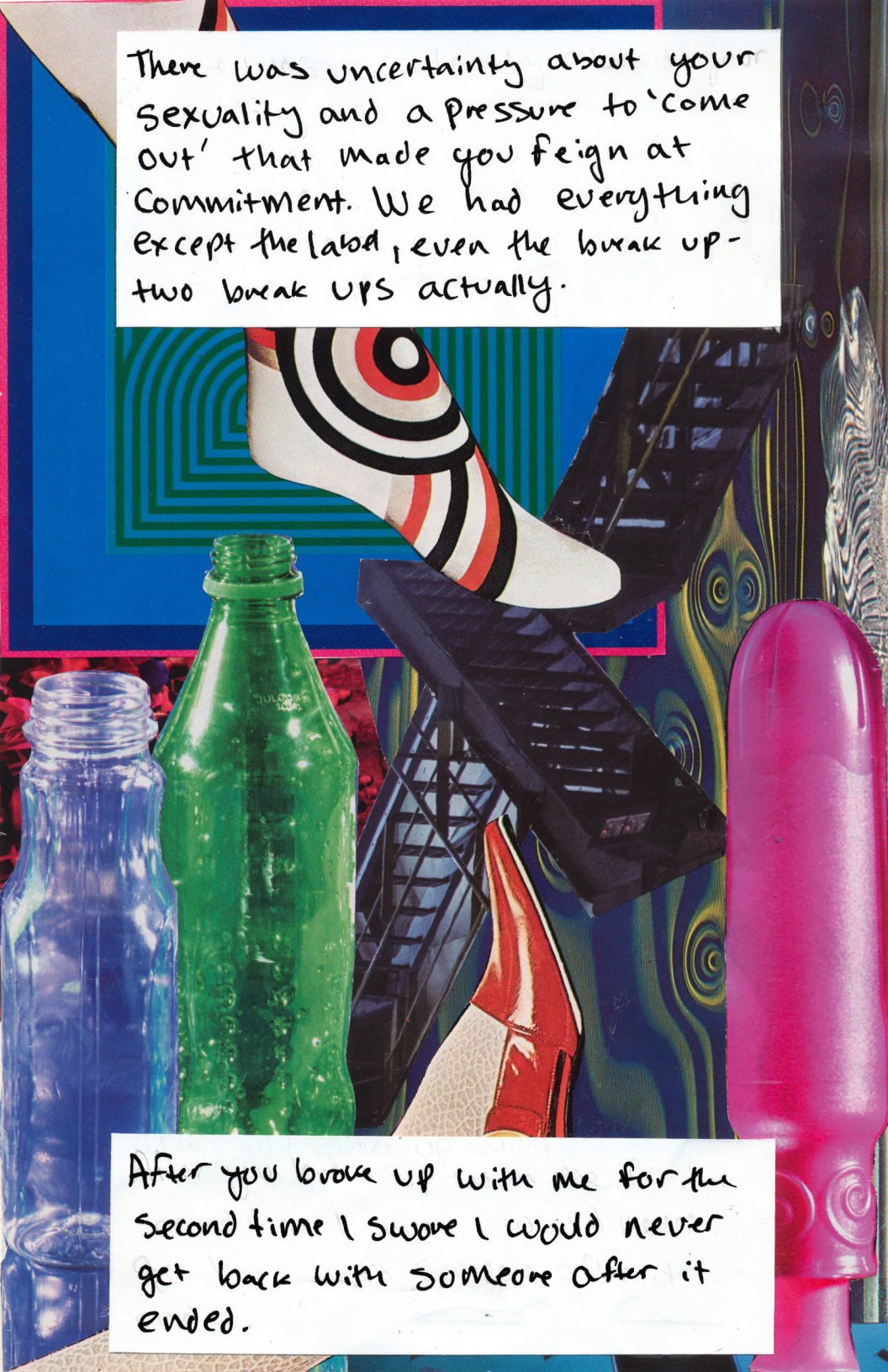


You left the Shirt in my dorm and  
you got the wish bone necklace for me  
because I always reminded you to wish  
at 11:11 and at the Shooting Star we  
Saw on the roof once.



We had been together for a few months  
even though we were never really together.





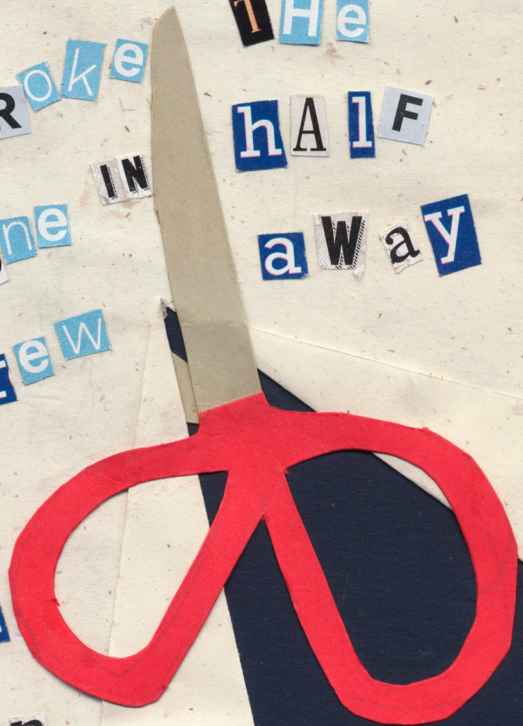
There was uncertainty about your sexuality and a pressure to 'come out' that made you feign at Commitment. We had everything except the labd, even the break up - two break ups actually.

After you broke up with me for the second time I swore I would never get back with someone after it ended.



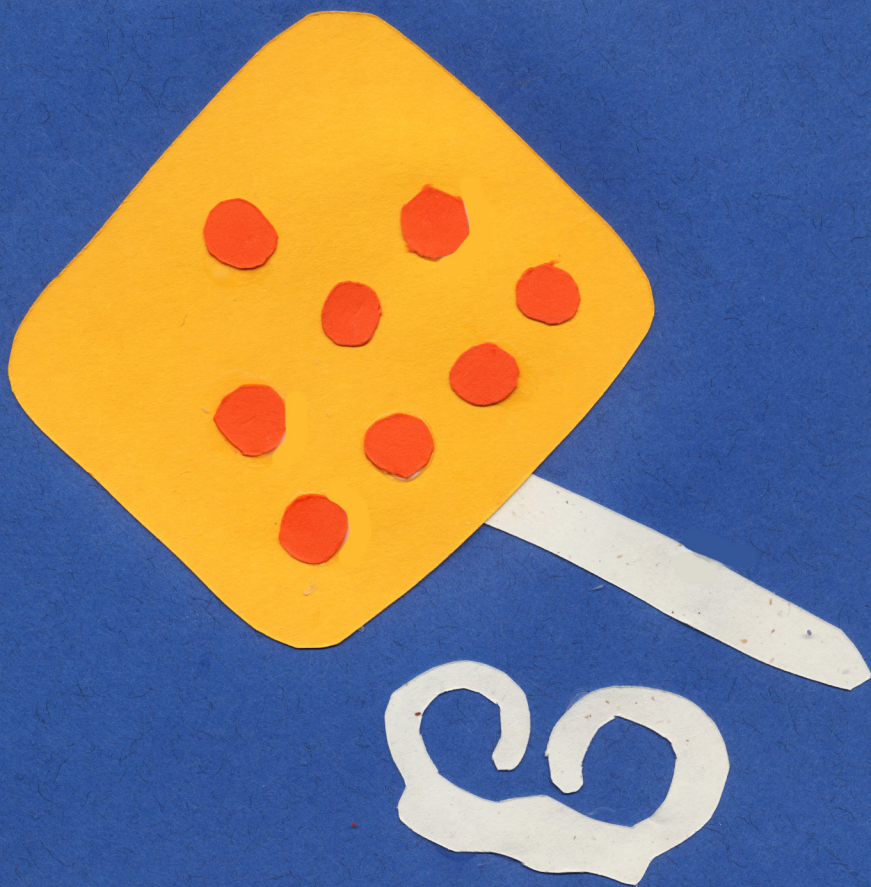


I cut up your shirt  
and used it as rags  
and I broke the  
wishbone in half  
and threw away  
all  
except  
the chain






A broken stud earring that must have fallen out while you slept in my twin bed. I met you during my tinder date phase. Only a few weeks before we all moved out for summer break.



I wanted desperately to stay in touch even though our respective summer homes were over four hours away.



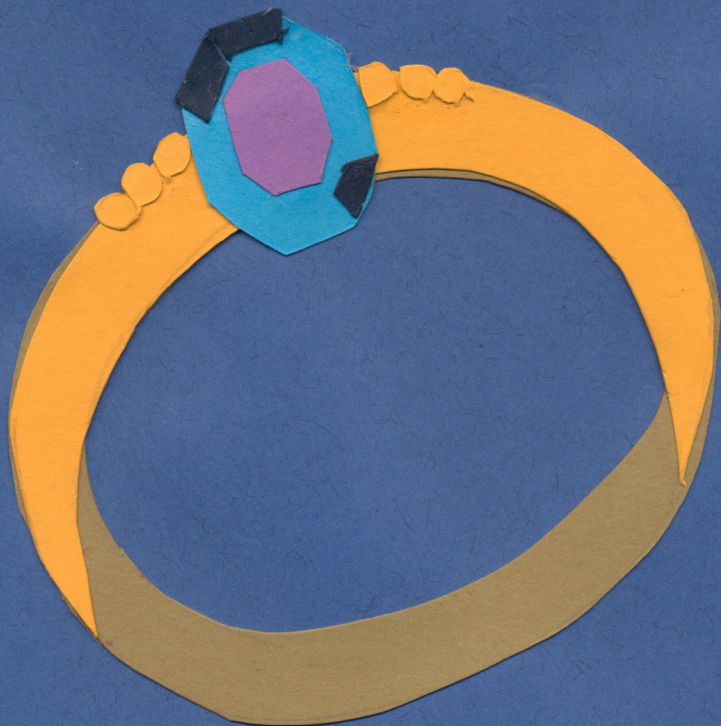


Even though the earring was broken beyond repair I kept it in my jewelry box, hoping you would ask for it back. As the summer progressed and we slowly stopped talking, I realized how futile my hope was.

Four years later it still sits in my jewelry box, long living past our relationship's expiry date. It doesn't represent my desire for you anymore, just some nostalgia of the times we shared.



A gold Synthetic ring that you wore every day on your right pointer finger. You took it off while you slept at my apartment and left it on my bedside table, lost to us for weeks.



We were a new couple when the pandemic started and unofficially moved in together as a result. It was either that or be alone.



OUR RELATIONSHIP

QUICKLY

DETERIORATE

AS  
DID  
OUR

SLEEP, GRADES, ALCOHOLISM



NOT A DAY WENT

BY WITHOUT

TENSION, BUT

IT WAS BETTER

THAN THE THOUGHT

OF BEING ALONE



Summer came and alleviated just  
enough tension to last us until two  
weeks before my birthday.

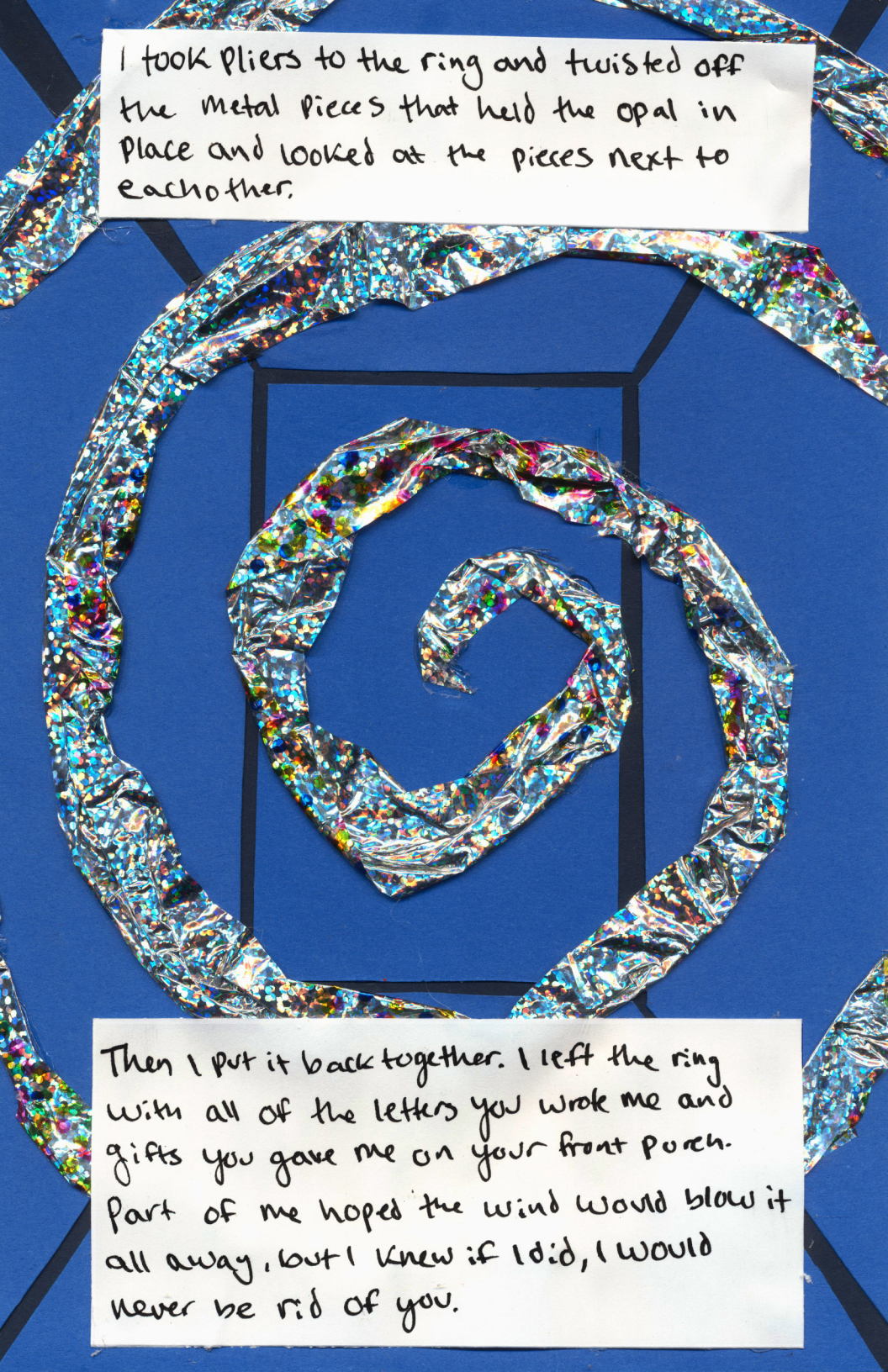




I found your ring where you left it next to my bed. I was still heartbroken and hopeful that something could mend this hurt between us, but I wasn't ready to confront you either.

I held onto it for a couple more months until you texted me one night, angrily accusing me of gatekeeping our friends after you hadn't been invited to a Halloween party.

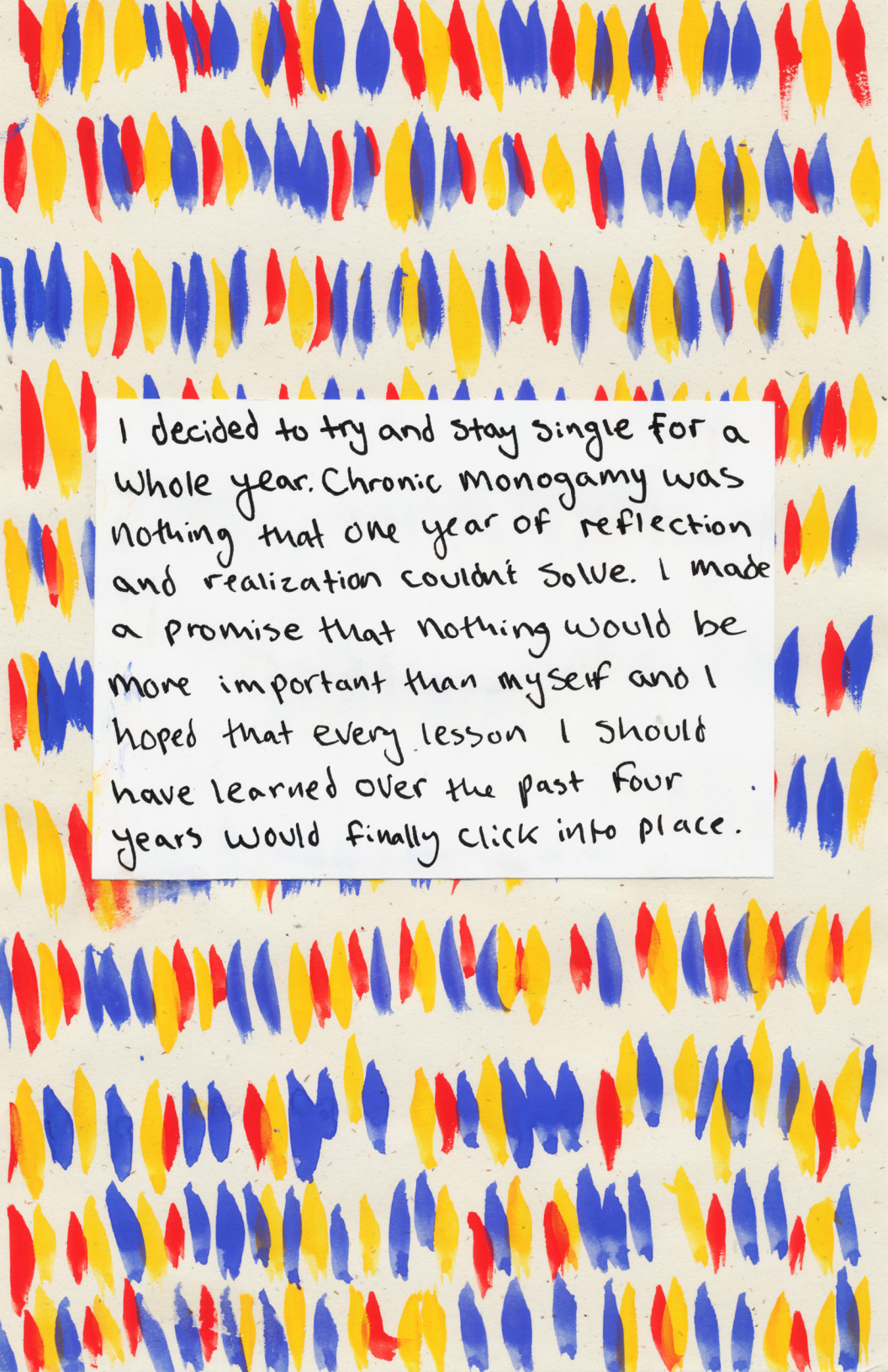




I took pliers to the ring and twisted off the metal pieces that held the opal in place and looked at the pieces next to each other.

Then I put it back together. I left the ring with all of the letters you wrote me and gifts you gave me on your front porch. Part of me hoped the wind would blow it all away, but I knew if I did, I would never be rid of you.





I decided to try and stay single for a whole year. Chronic monogamy was nothing that one year of reflection and realization couldn't solve. I made a promise that nothing would be more important than myself and I hoped that every lesson I should have learned over the past four years would finally click into place.



like trying to hold onto good  
memories, remembering my

value, goals, individuality, &  
self worth. I try not to make the same  
mistakes now that I am with someone  
new.





the

SWEETEST

MOIST

HONEST

SOMEONE

i have

ever been

With



I have many things of yours strewn  
around my apartment, left and lost  
during our nightly sleepovers.





In my closet there is a loose black dress you wore to my house the first time you slept over. I found it the next day and you told me to keep it for now.



You said you would get it back eventually. Ten months later it's still hanging in my closet.



I hope that it won't get shoved into  
a trader joes bag for the ceremonial  
post break up exchange,



or cut up into rags out of spite,  
or left outside of your apartment  
in a storm.



Despite a lifetime of heartbreak and tragedy, I can still hope with naive optimism that one day,



When we are old and farty, one of us will pull that dress out of a box and reminisce about the summer we met.