



# MY OWN MYSTERIOUS SKIN

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When I submitted this piece, I had a concern: whether it was too far off track. But after I asked myself what comes to mind first when I think about the brief, “How does a voice travel?”, I thought of how my voice was taken, and how I battled through my trauma to get my voice back. I think I was coming from the place we often talk about when we explore having your own voice, your own power (聲音/話語權/力量).

I remember the first time I watched *Mysterious Skin*, my body froze. I couldn’t believe a movie could depict how I felt so directly and truthfully. Even when the main character moved to NYC and wanted his body used and tossed around. The sense of disowning your own body was so clear to me. I felt understood immediately.

Only years after the event did I realize it’s all part of how I became who I am today. To decolonise it was never to clean it up or erase it, but to own it, reclaim it, and turn it into my own story. I want to share so that my voice comes back to me. The narrative is mine, not his.

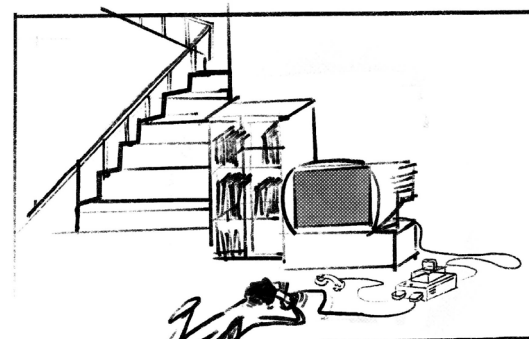
Often, I need the physical distance and a completely unfamiliar setting to get away from the frame I am associated with, and in many cases it lets me be more truthful. I sometimes think this is what drives

me to travel, often abroad. It helps me to start on the work that is closest to home, to my land, to my island, to my identity. Travelling is not just a geographical experience, but a journey of self-discovery from within, deep down.

— Yun-Pei Hsiung

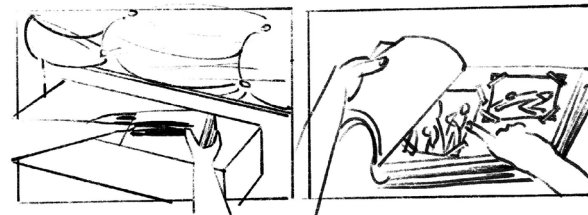
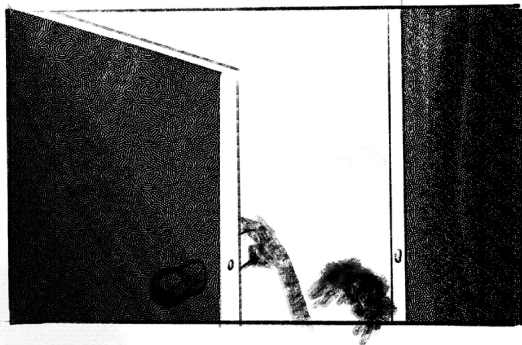


I still remember the disturbing  
feeling I had when I first watched  
Araki's movie *Mysterious Skin*. Perhaps it  
was too close to what I had experienced  
as an 8 year old boy; maybe it was  
a way-too honest depiction of a secret  
to a young adult who actively wanted  
to forget.



I used to go to his house to play  
the Nando video game after school  
when my parents were still busy at  
work.

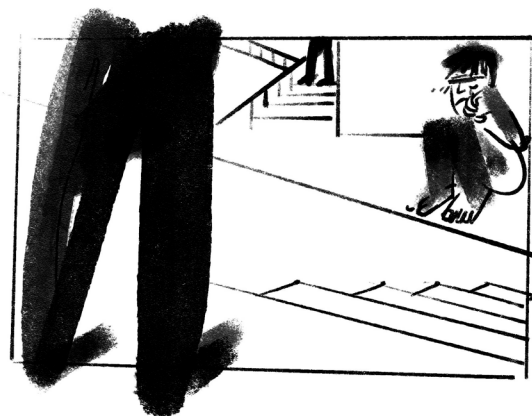
that day, He called me to his room. He opened the door, there was no natural light, only a low hanging light painted the room red. He pulled a scrapbook out from under the bed.

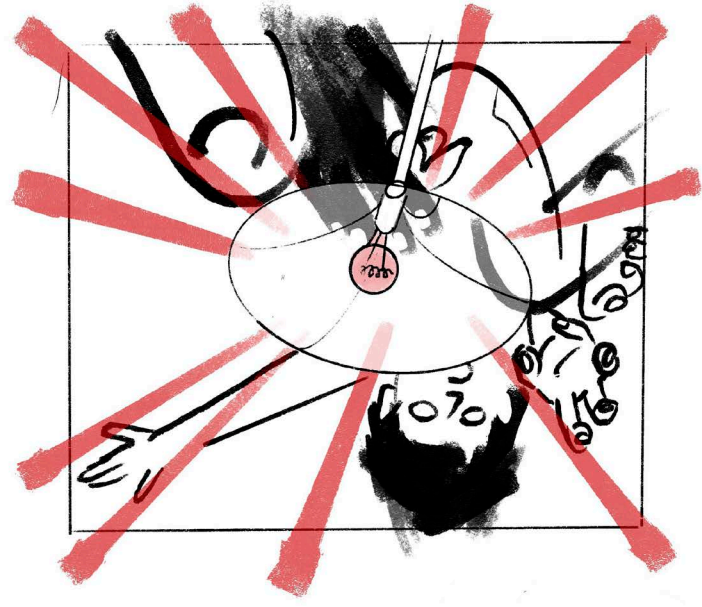


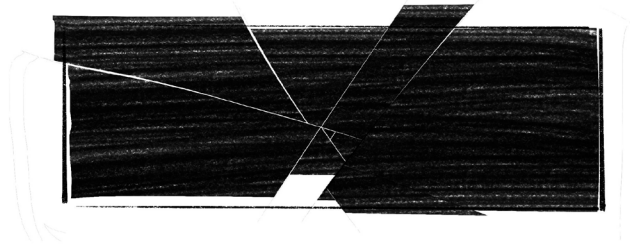
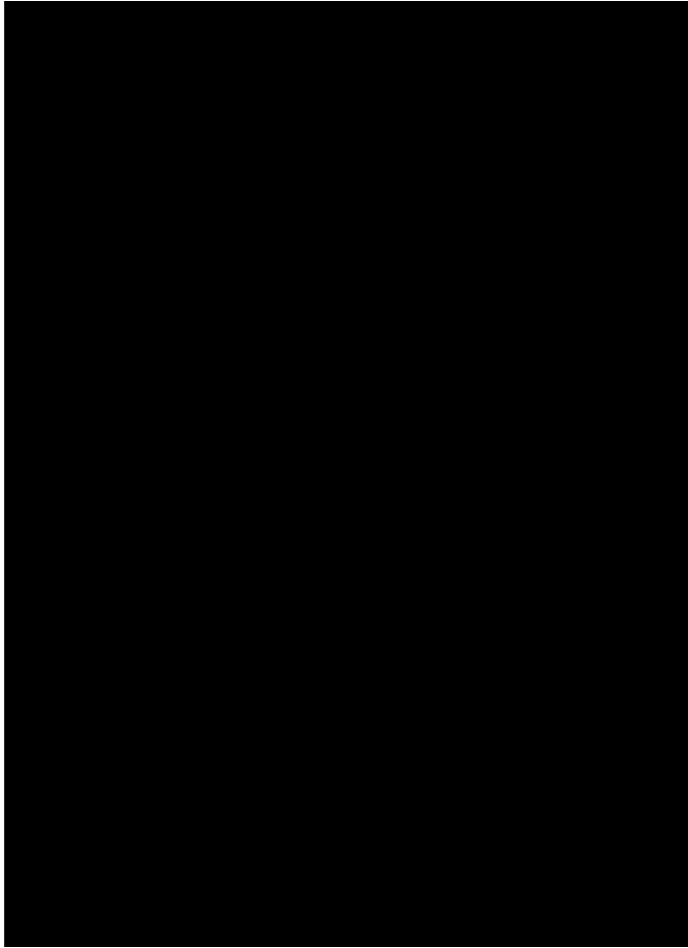
It was full of cutouts of the very young boys in nude, just like me,

He whispered, "See, all these  
boys are naked, It's a normal thing  
to do!"

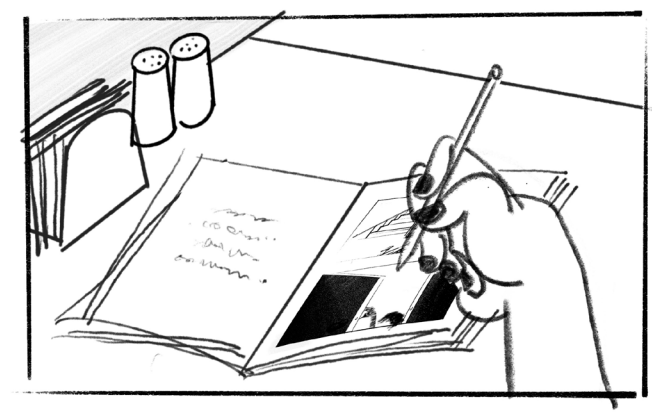
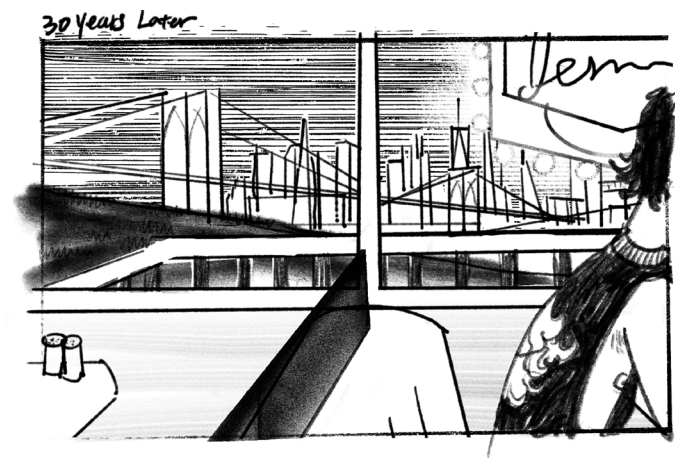
I cried, and ran.  
He stood at the second floor,  
Stared at me, and said, "if you  
don't come back up, you will  
never be playing my video game  
again!"







He colonized, and dominated  
my queer identity as if I were  
gay because he taught me so.  
The first person I trusted had  
broke me apart.





The voice comes from within,

deep down,

and nonstop

*My Own Mysterious Skin*  
Yun-Pei Hsiung

