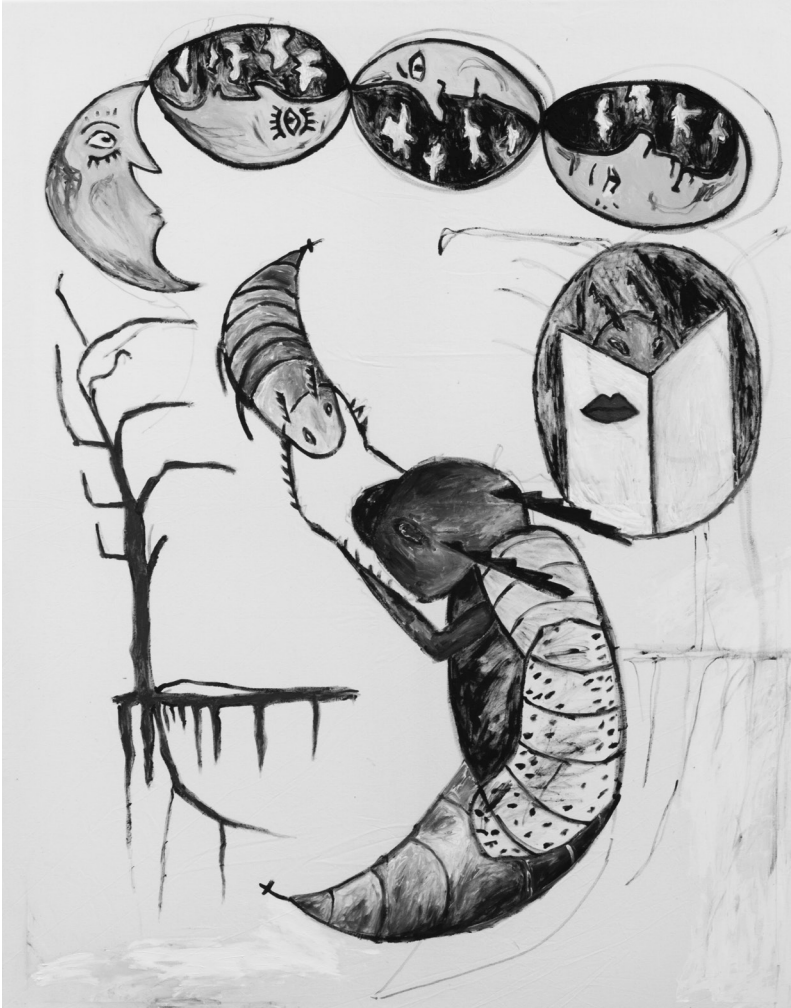


# VANESSA SCHMIDT & MATTHEW GREGORY

## Studies in Interior Dark



We made every day count,  
though, our days were all nights.

We lived in oak cellars,  
cold basements, meat larders.

We danced among the pickle jars and beets  
deep in our cavernous century...

Far overhead, the old love battles  
came to their various ends.

Sometimes, we would sit in reverie  
on the broken furniture

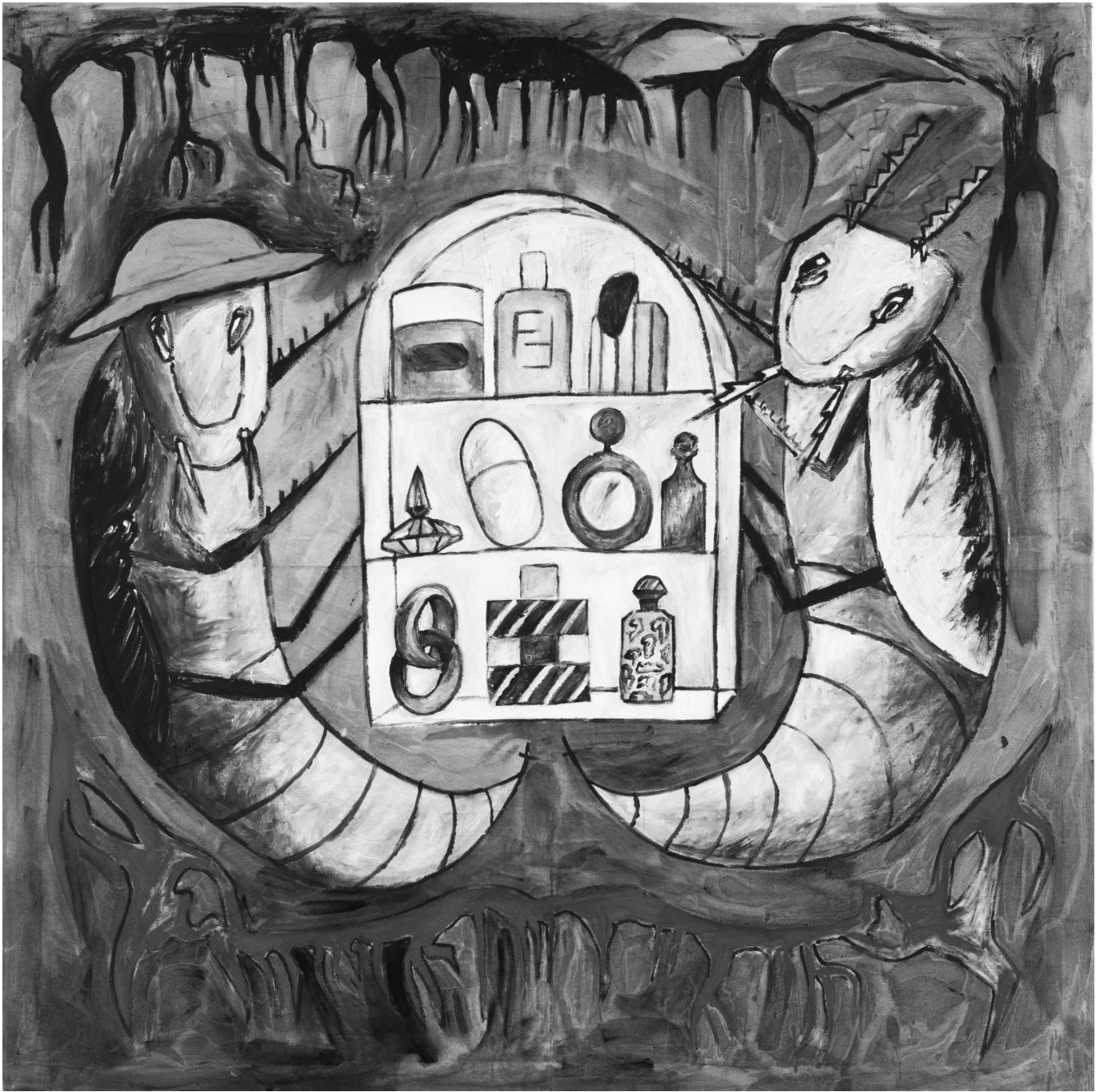
then sketch, on old napkins, on menus,  
quiet works of longing

& subterranean light.



Summer  
was an ocean liner powering  
through the night to meet us.  
It was always just a little way away.  
It'd never quite reach us.





A drop of old cologne splashed  
by someone, somewhere in the darkness:  
*eucalyptus, lime, nightflowering orange.*

Then, a villa set between Montgomery palms.  
The beautiful villa, only accessed by water,  
up steps climbing a sheer granite face,  
with a passcode whispered at the gates.





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Living underground  
what did we miss, if anything?

I would've liked a maraschino cherry,  
to see the faded décor

of certain hotel lobbies.  
A few old movies. A stormy beach.

But we managed with a little  
contraband, a few good books, our art...

We lived like embryos in the dark.