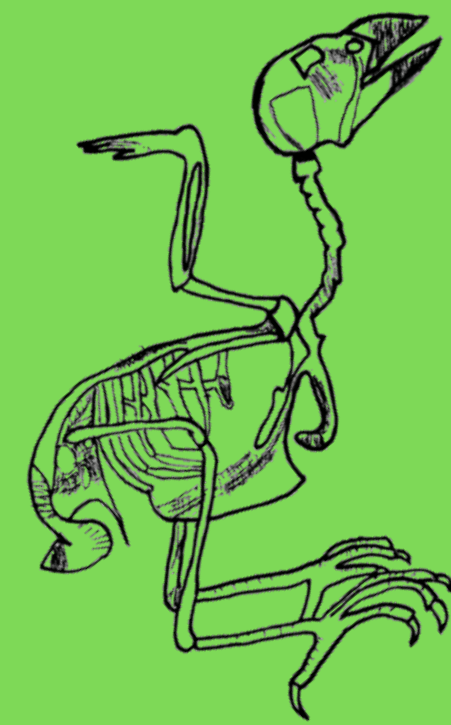


# Inner Child & I

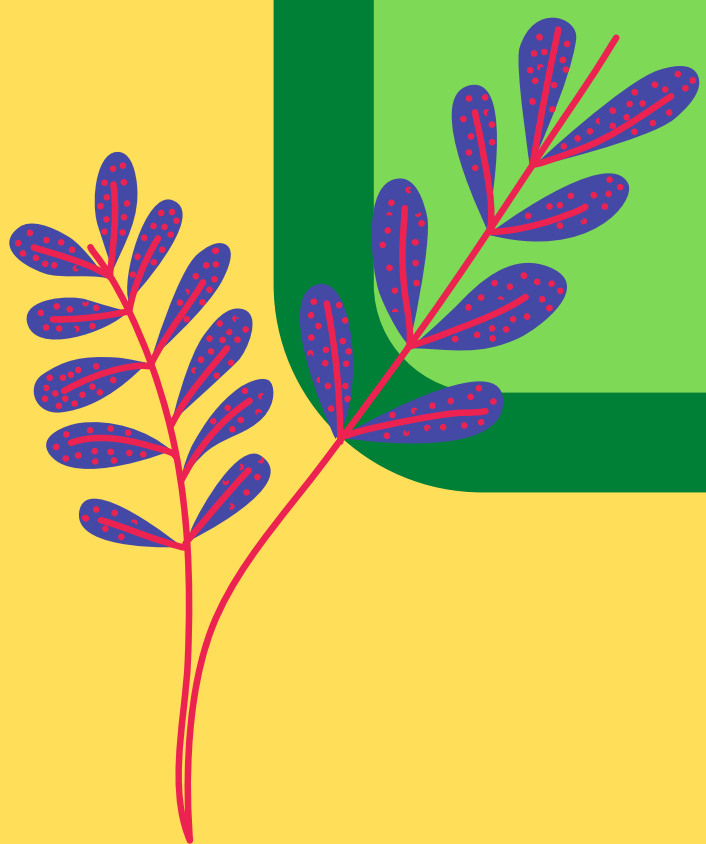
I will meet you again, I  
whisper to the child  
in me. I'm not sure  
if she believes me. She  
crouches under covers,  
blocking out her mom's  
husband's voice filled  
with gravel & vodka.  
Does she get up, when  
she hears the thud  
on the wall, the yelp?



I don't remember.

In therapy, I cradle  
this child, remembering  
her laugh & her favorite toy,  
a stuffed duck, that quacked  
when you squeezed its wing. I  
soothe her with words & reach  
back in time to hold  
her hand. "See, I told you  
I'd be back," I tell her. We  
cry together, our sobs echoing  
across decades. Finally she  
says, you carry so much,  
"it's time to let me go."

The wind catches her, a feather  
floating towards the clouds.



Karo Ska