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# COMING OF AGE





LOSS  
OF  
INNOCENCE



# CYBERCRIME: LOSS OF INNOCENCE

Abstract: Cybercrime, once associated with idealistic visions of freedom, exploration, and boundary breaking innovation, has matured into a global threat prompting extensive regulation. Initially emerging from a hacker ethos advocating openness, decentralization, and technological creativity, cybercrime now evokes complex, bureaucratic international frameworks and pressing debates about digital security and freedoms. This essay examines the maturation of cybercrime and its regulatory responses, focusing on how optimistic ideals surrounding technology have gradually eroded in the face of increasingly sophisticated cyber threats. It analyzes

From Tech Optimism to Regulatory Realism

how regulatory measures have developed or stagnated amidst rapid technological advancement, weighing their effectiveness and implications for innovation and civil liberties. By analyzing historical developments, case studies of landmark cyber incidents, and contemporary legislative frameworks, this paper critically evaluates whether existing regulatory maturity successfully balances security imperatives with innovation and individual freedoms. Ultimately, this reflection seeks to highlight the delicate and crucial balance regulators face, arguing for adaptive regulation that captures the complexity of modern cyber threats without stifling the very digital freedoms it seeks to protect.

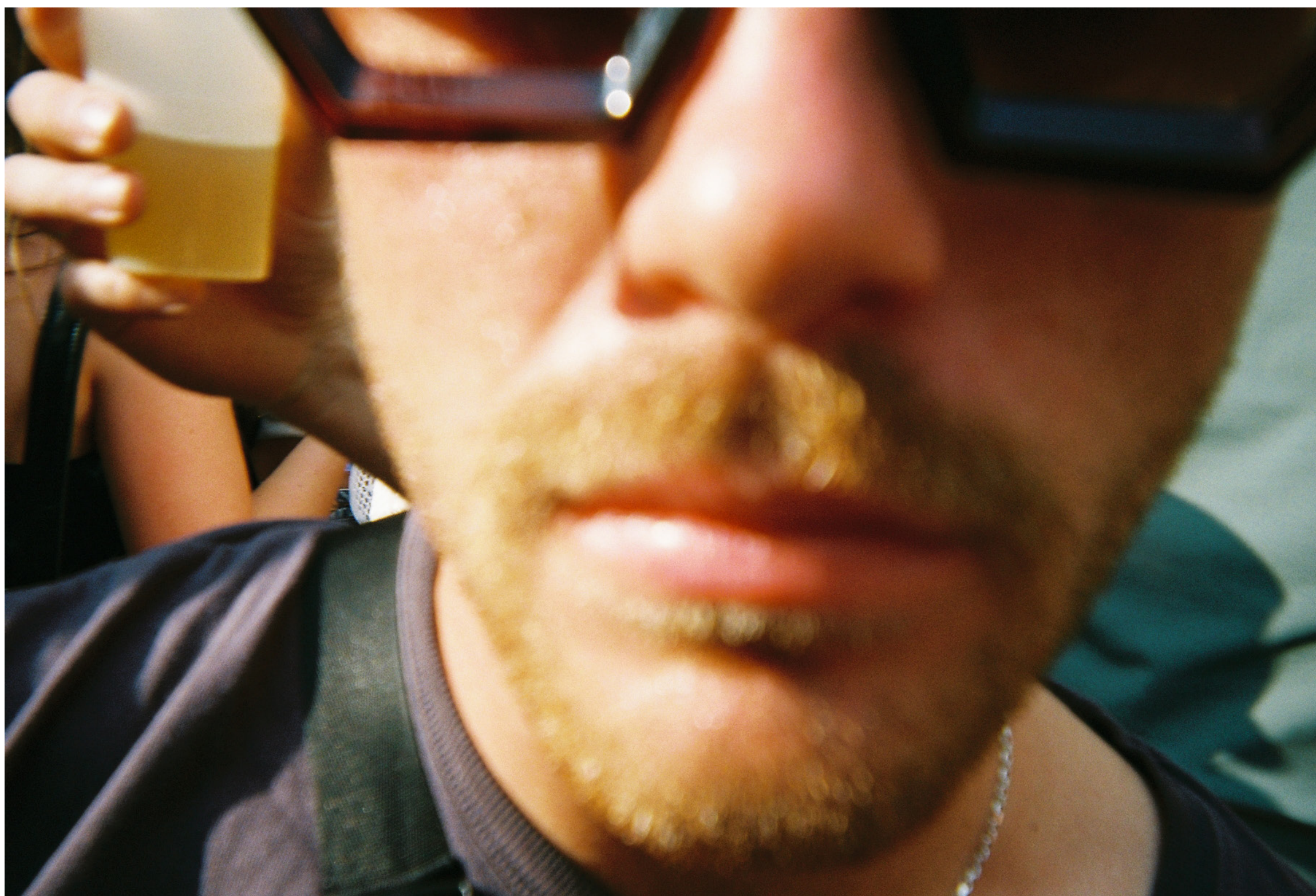


Introduction: In a dimly lit interview on the YouTube channel Soft White Underbelly, the hacker known only as Gummo reflects nostalgically on the early days of the internet—an era marked by curiosity, optimism, and boundless creativity. He recounts sleepless nights spent discovering vulnerabilities, driven not by malice but by sheer fascination and an idealistic belief in digital freedom. To hackers like Gummo, cyberspace was a frontier for exploration rather than exploitation, a landscape of endless possibilities where rules were few and innovation thrived. Yet, Gummo acknowledges that this

innocence could not last; as technology matured, so too did its darker applications, prompting increasingly rigid and bureaucratic regulatory frameworks aimed at controlling what had once been seen as uncontrollable. This maturation from optimistic idealism to complex regulatory realism epitomizes the very notion of “Coming of Age”—marking cybercrime’s loss of innocence and posing critical questions about how effectively our legal systems balance security, innovation, and freedom in an ever-evolving digital world.









# DREAM UNBURDENED

Abstract: This poem is about my struggle with ambition and setbacks. Often, excessive ambition can distort achievements into trivialities – a mountain becomes simply a ladder to climb – but

small setbacks can crash that worldview back into realism violently. Here, I try to come to terms with what life is beyond simple ambition, beyond the next goalpost.







Dream unburdened,

running water,

swelling blood beneath my  
skin.

The mountain is a ladder is  
a system

but moving boxes stand  
soaking up Merlot.

My sister calls me fit for it  
which kills me

and I know nothing

if language is a game then  
what is this?

the more I learn the more I  
feel like falling

running water, sweet  
Merlot, come catch me!!

I'm liquid smooth, a game  
that's fit for mountains,

until they settle like a flock  
of birds in boxes

I fold and unfold, dream  
unburdened, surely not?





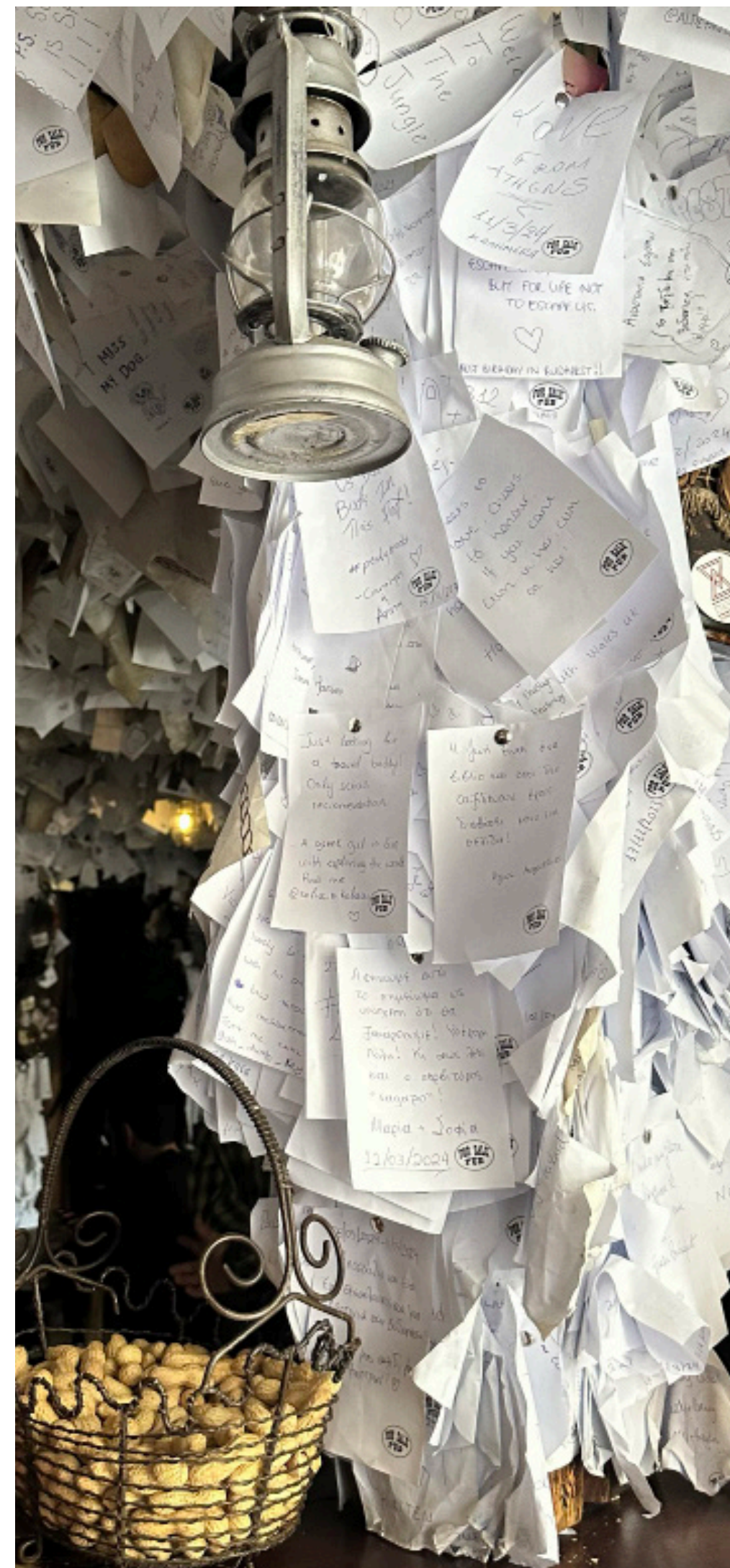
The mountain is a ladder  
but who am I?





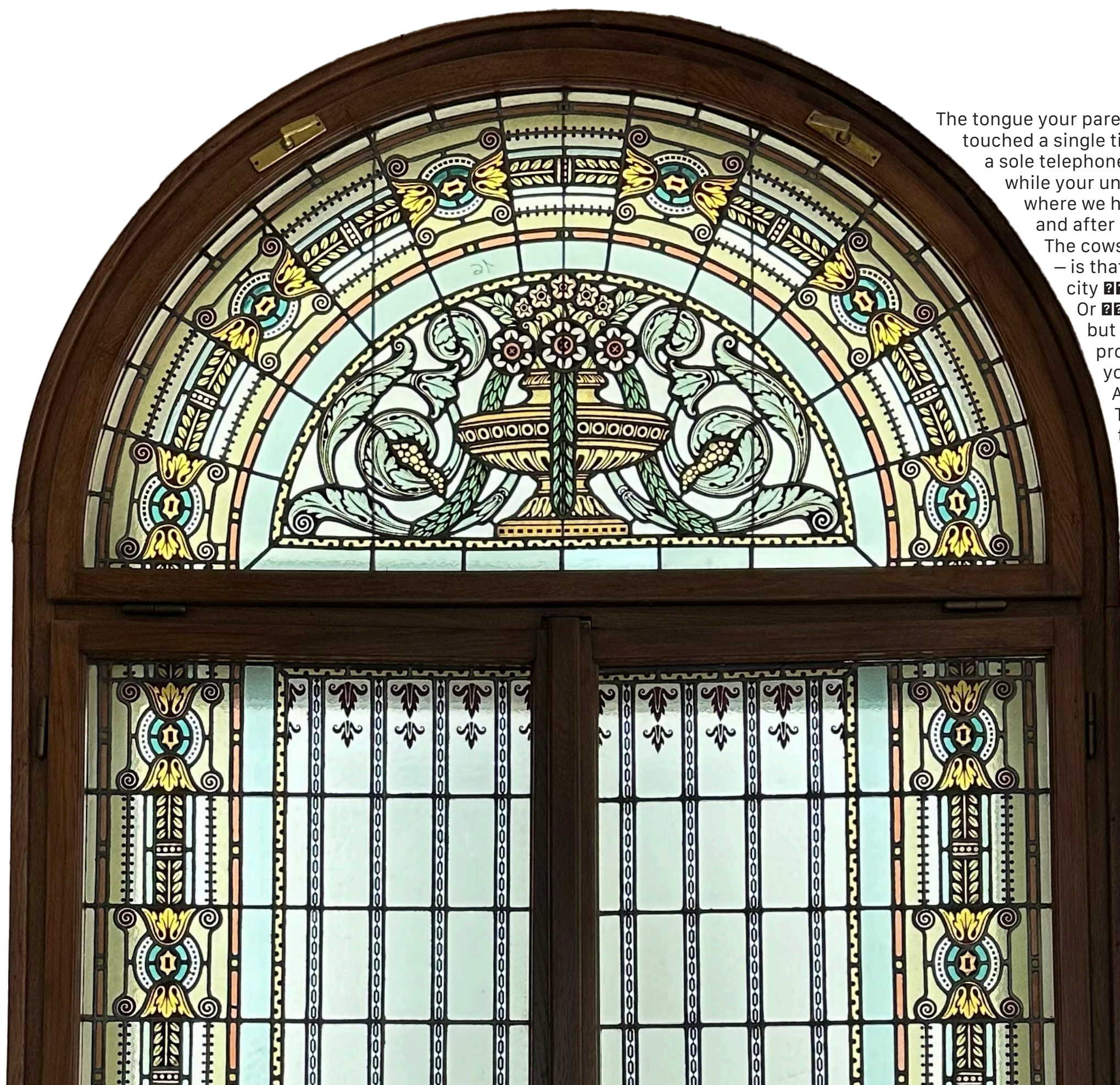


# TONGUE TILLING



This poem is about my experience interacting with my father's Ukrainian family and their hometown. While growing up, we went to Ukraine about once a year, but I have barely any memory of the tiny village my grandmother and those who came before her grew up in. The problem of the Russian and Ukrainian languages coexisting in my heritage, as well as my troubled relationship with my father, comes up as well. I only speak Russian, whereas the Ukrainian countryside — especially due to the current war — speaks only Ukrainian.





The tongue your parents had I only  
touched a single time in a village with  
a sole telephone pole Cracking,  
while your uncle showed me  
where we hid during the war  
and after and even now.  
The cows with crooked horns  
– is that why they call the  
city 222222 222?  
Or 222222 2i2, rather,  
but I can't even  
pronounce that the way  
your parents did.  
An army of them.  
The bells, the cows,  
the cracking graves.  
Do you still cross  
yourself, every time  
you pass them?  
Do you still tear  
the weeds from  
between the  
marble, sweating  
and tugging all  
day long? I didn't  
see the change  
you promised me  
you'd brought. I  
was too young to  
help you out, you  
said. I touched the  
marble crushing  
my father's father  
after death that  
day, a tongue of  
stone. The earth  
dry and cracking.  
Something about  
to break