MARTIN VAUGHN-JAMES

THE CAGE

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Martin Vaughn-James

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Coach House Books

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Les impressions nouvelles and mécanique générale / Les 400 coups

This book was commenced in January 1972 in Toronto and completed there in February 1974. The major part of the work was done in Paris during 1972 and 73.

Originally printed in an edition of 1,500 copies at the Coach House Press in Toronto in 1975.

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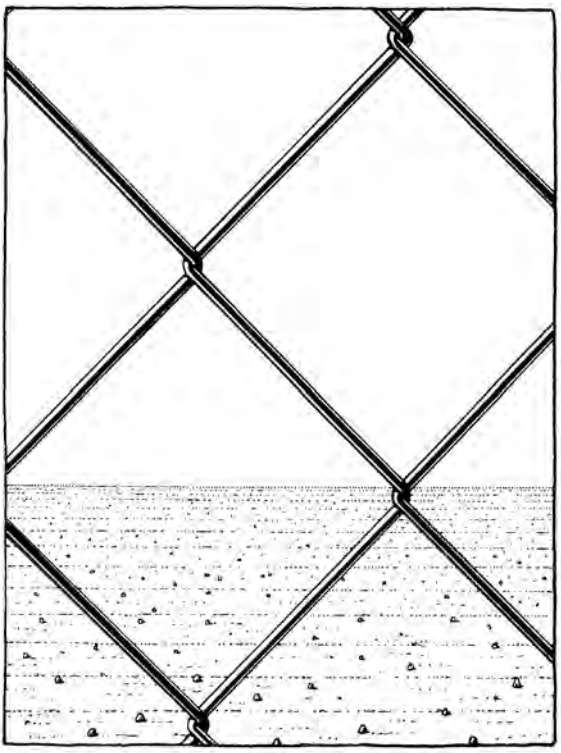
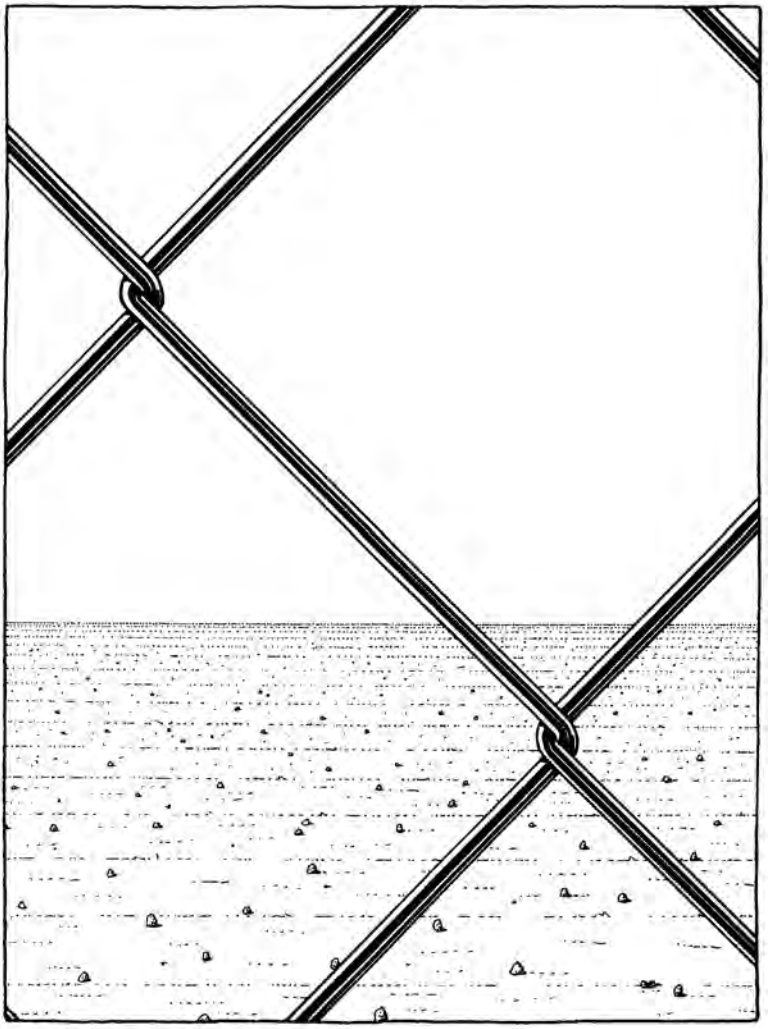
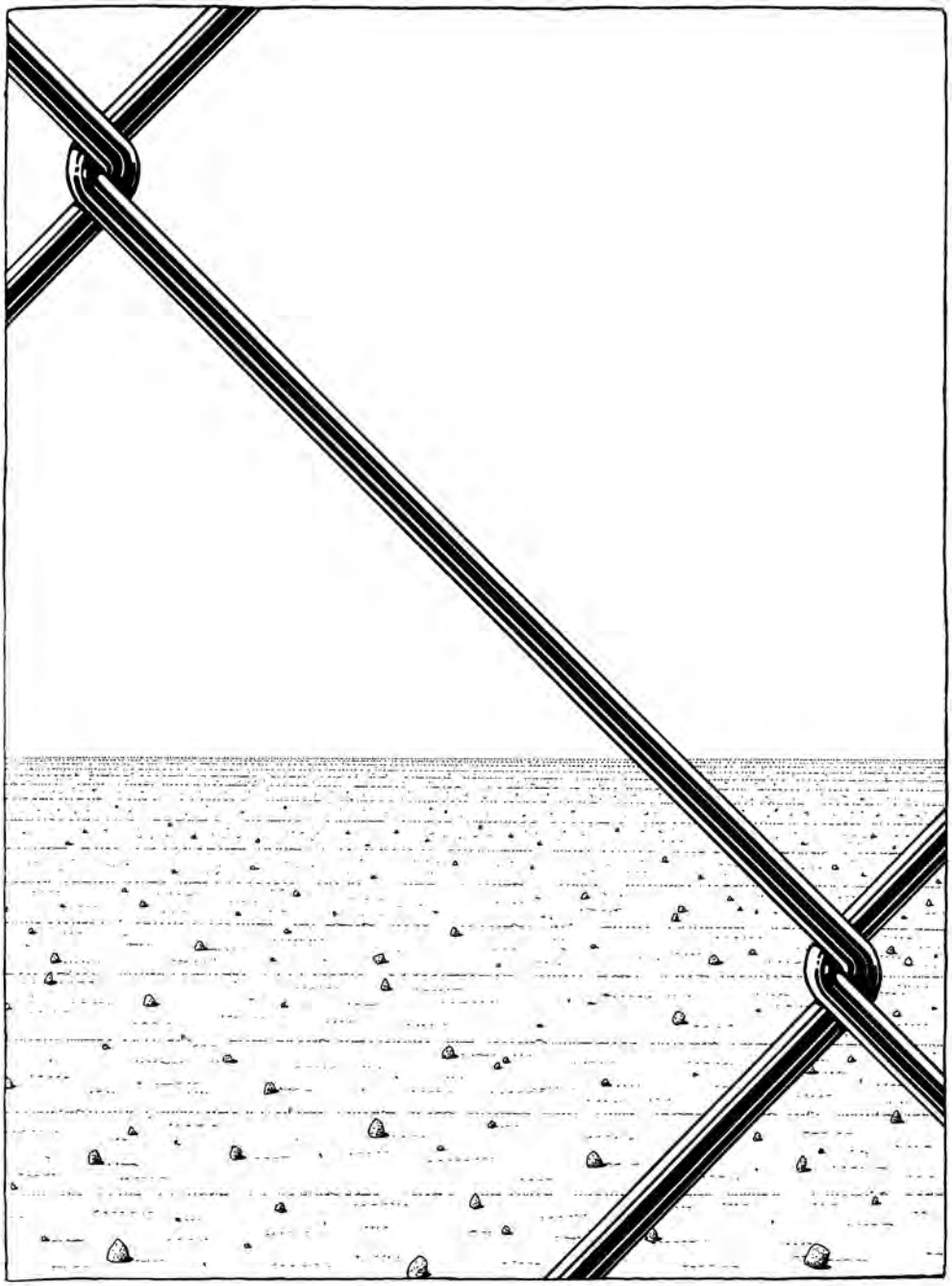
THE CAGE



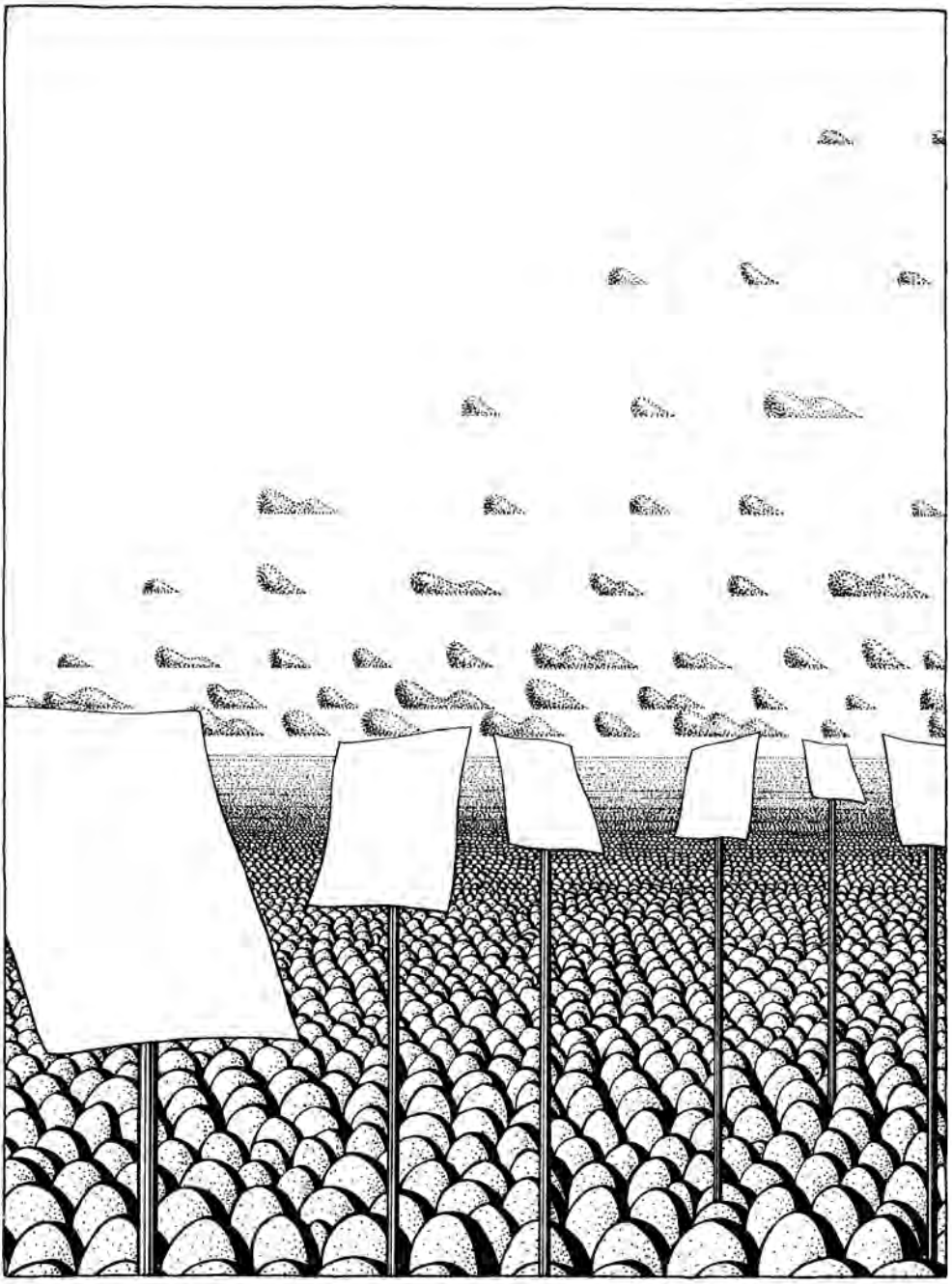
for Sarah

through the arcades, indestructible longing casts its dangerous and lovely shadow on the heart

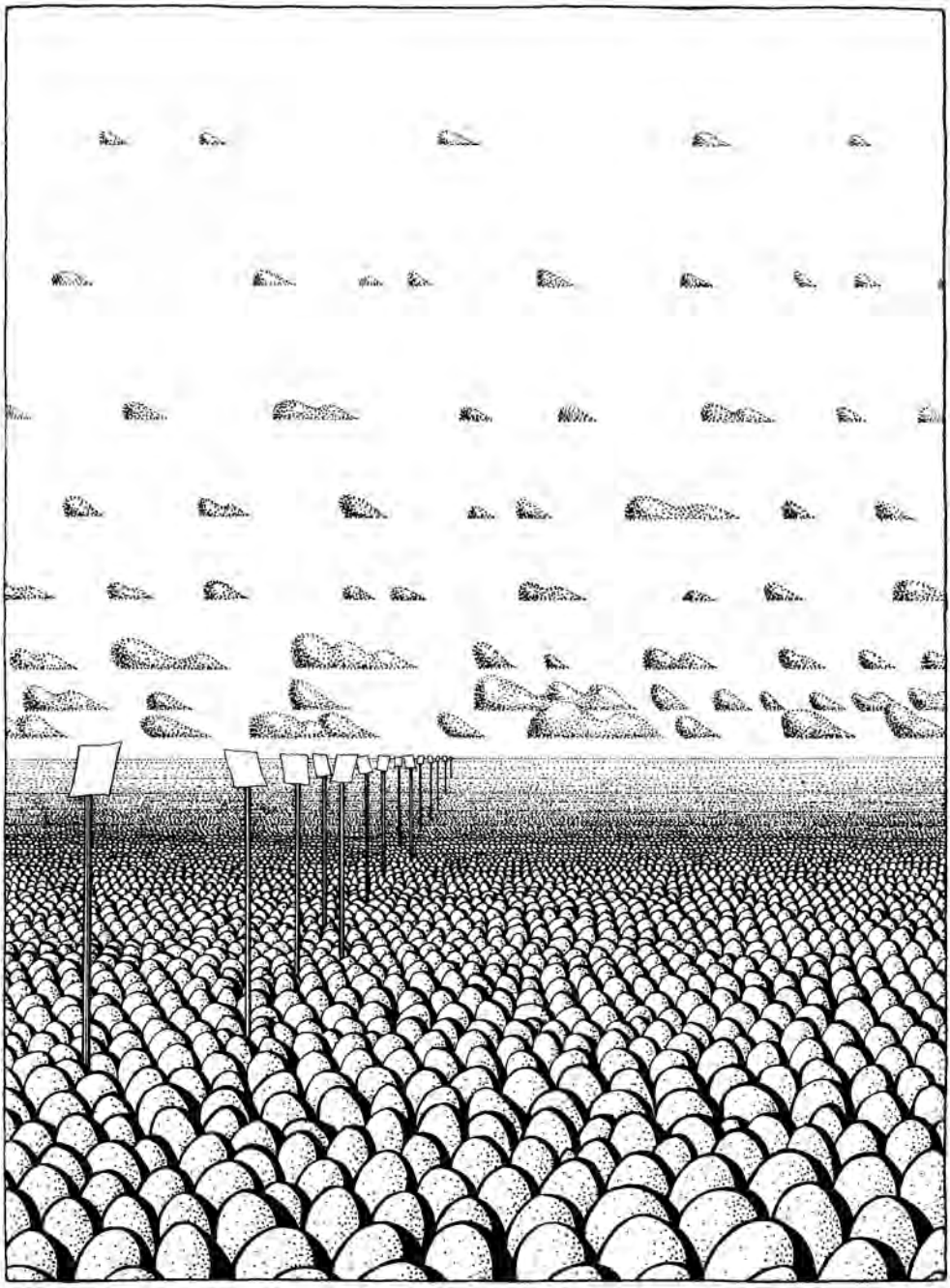




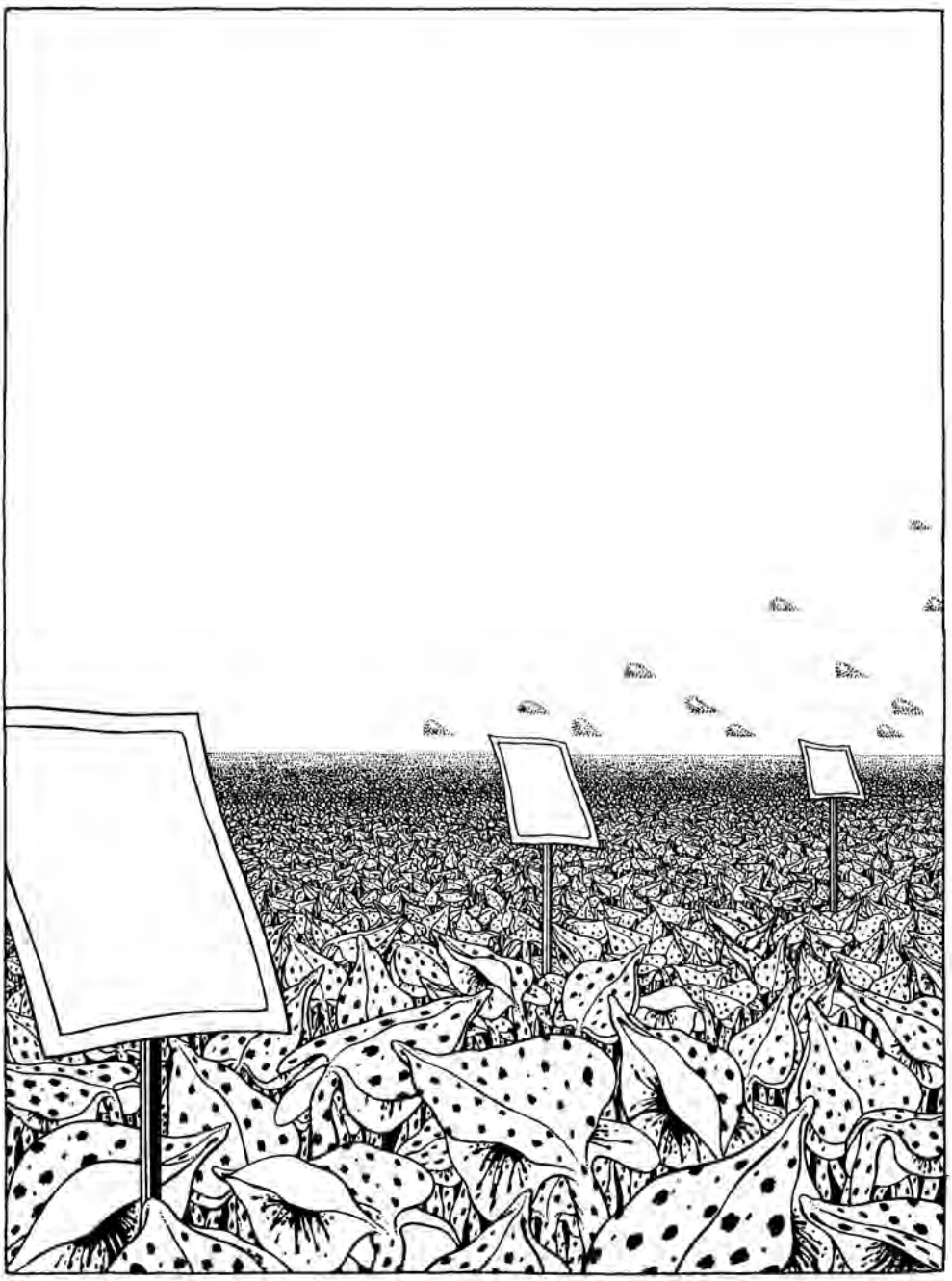
... the cage stands as before ... unfinished and already decayed



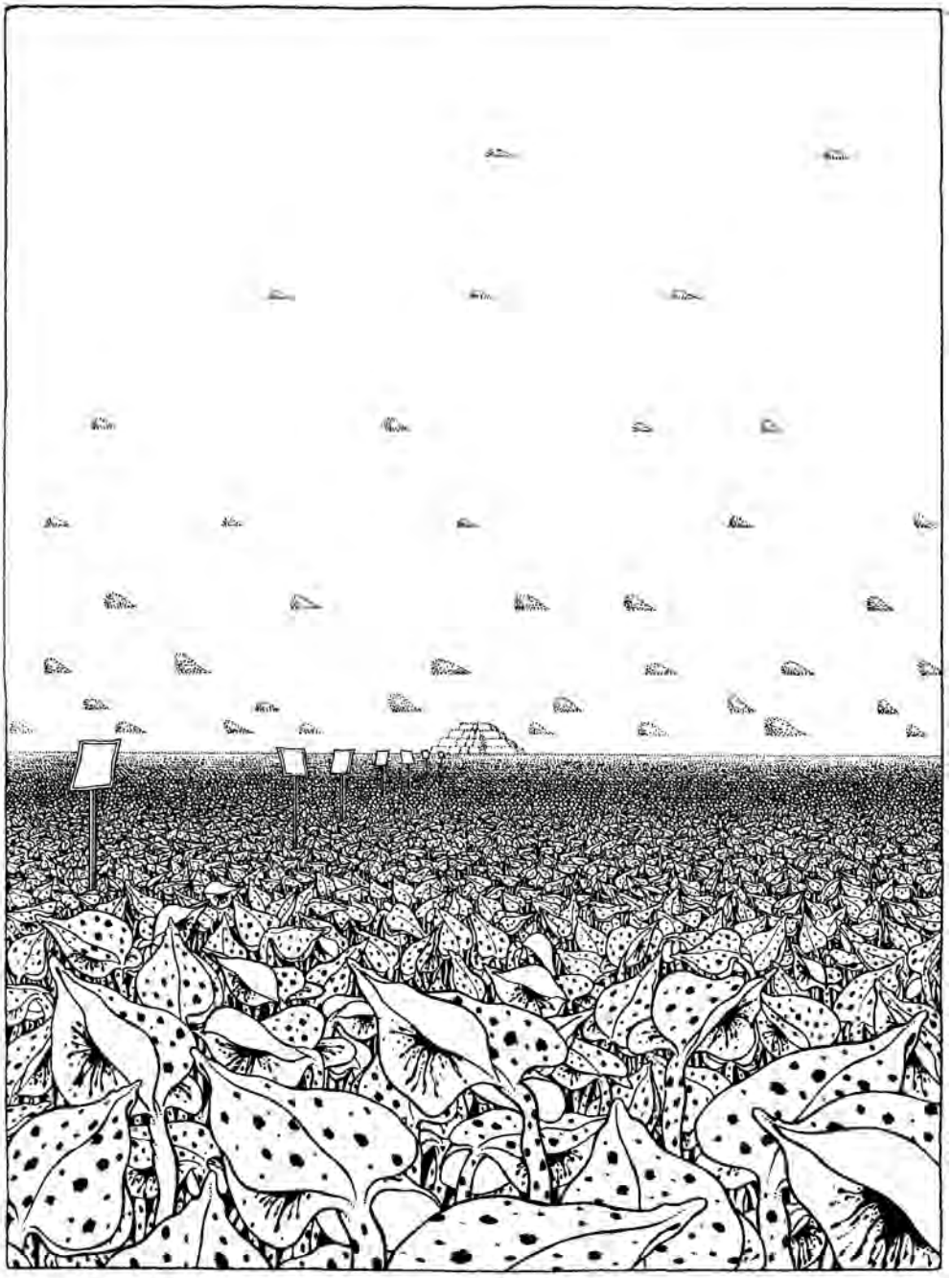
as if its construction had been abruptly and inexplicably arrested ...



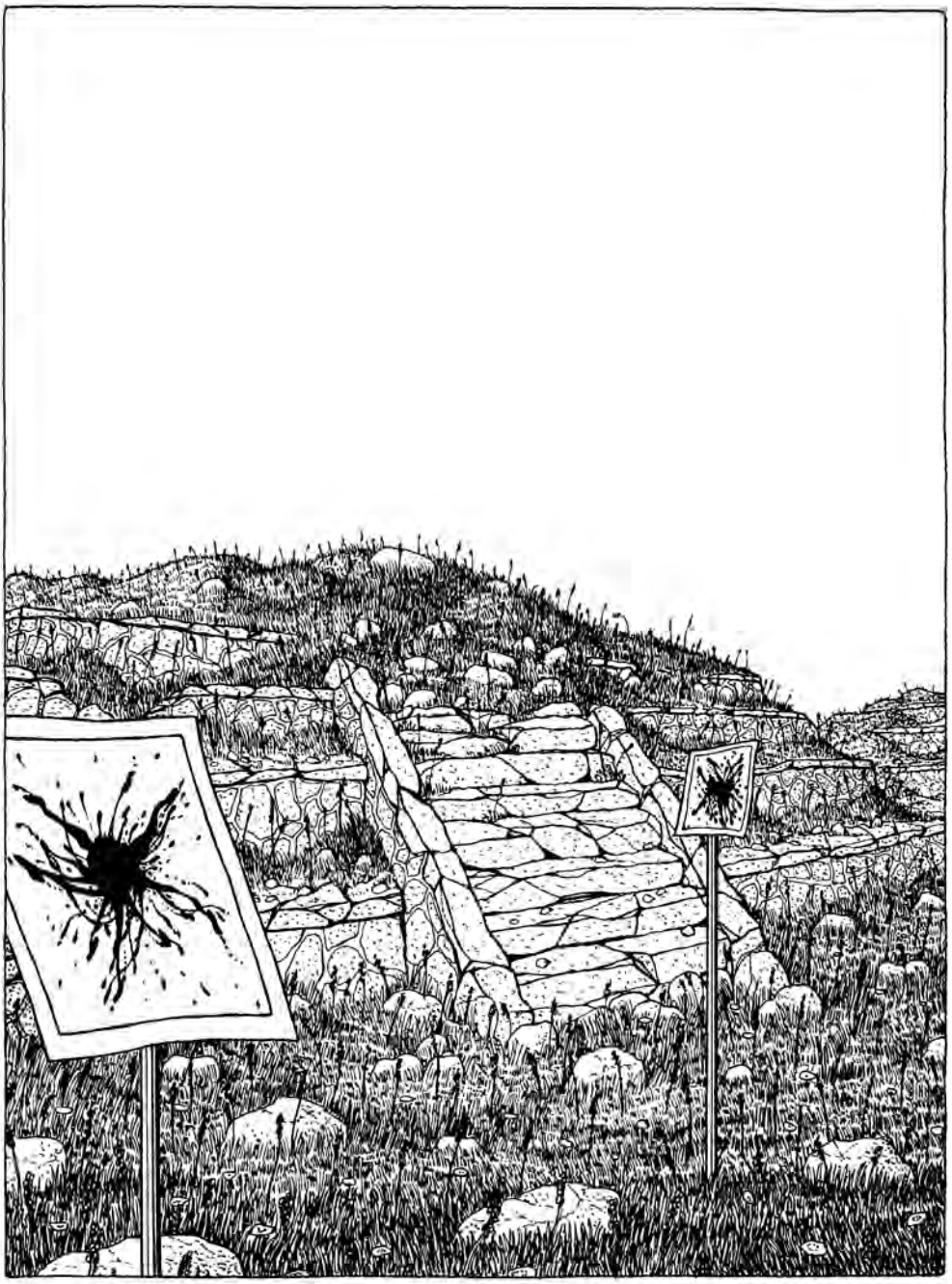
... its builders overtaken in their endeavour by some event



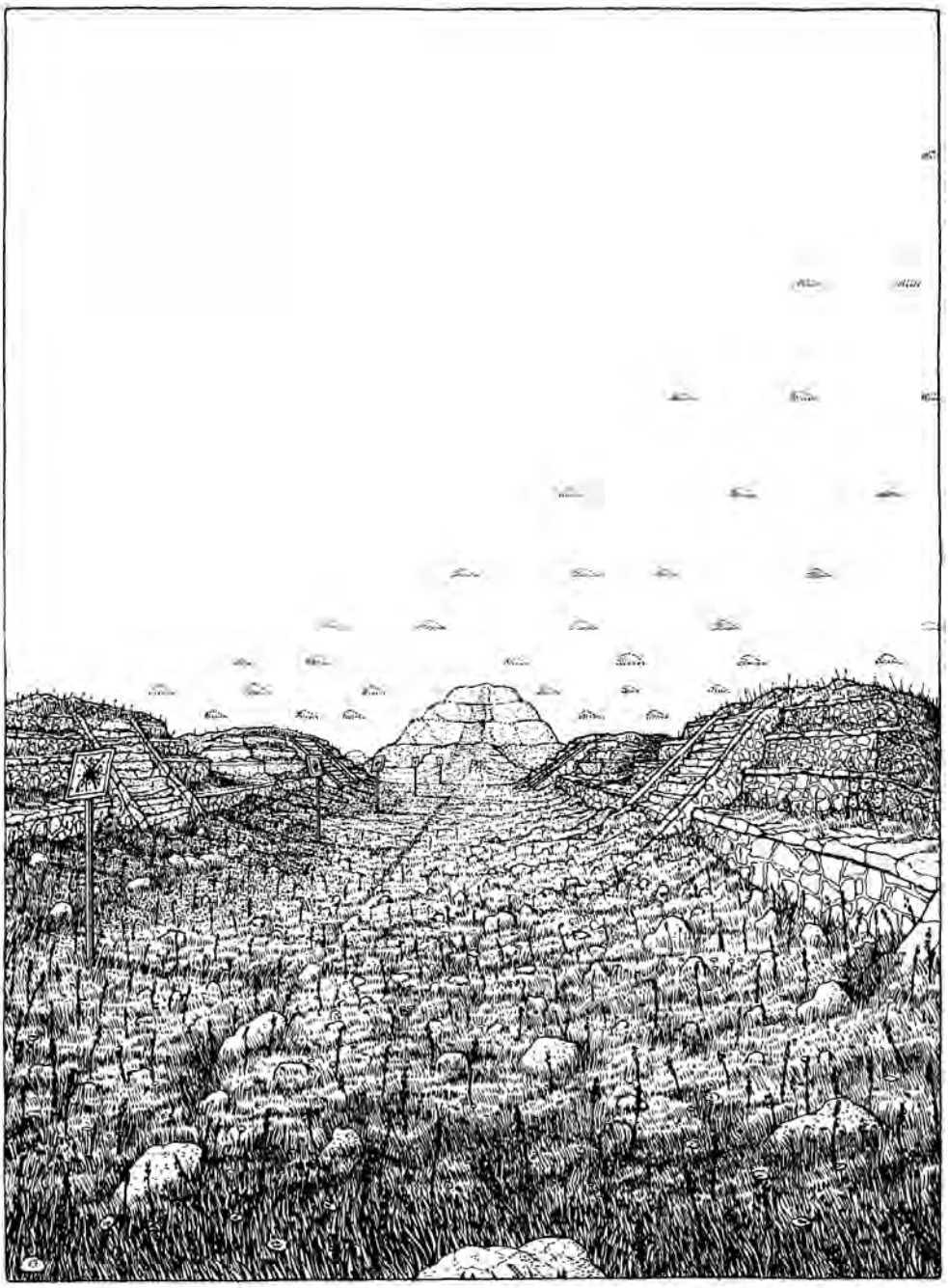
which for all their skill they had never for an instant anticipated



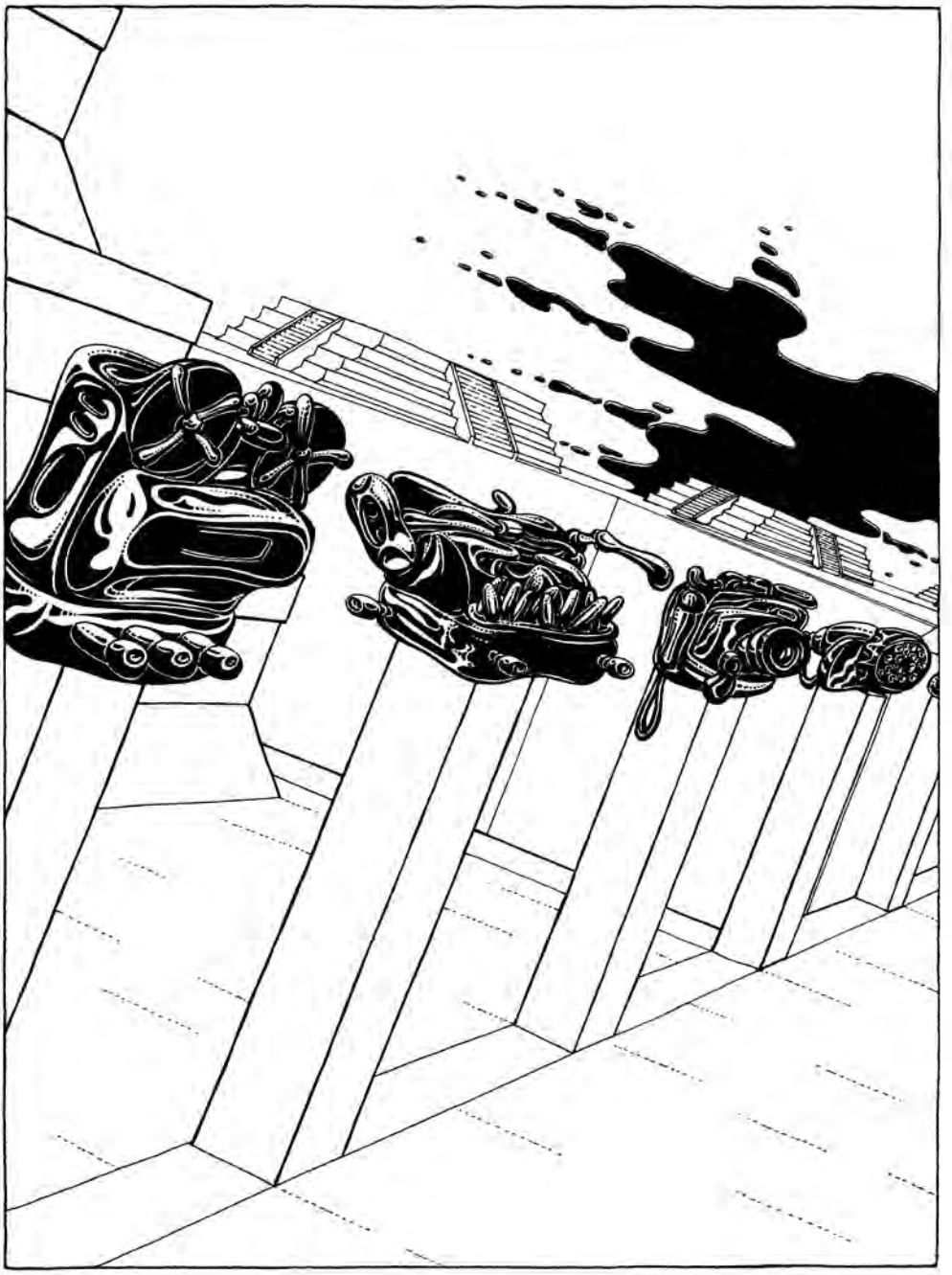
... an eruption so sudden and so violent that it reduced to rubble



the elaborate structure (of which the cage was merely one feature)



one facet of a complex network of forms arranged according to some logic

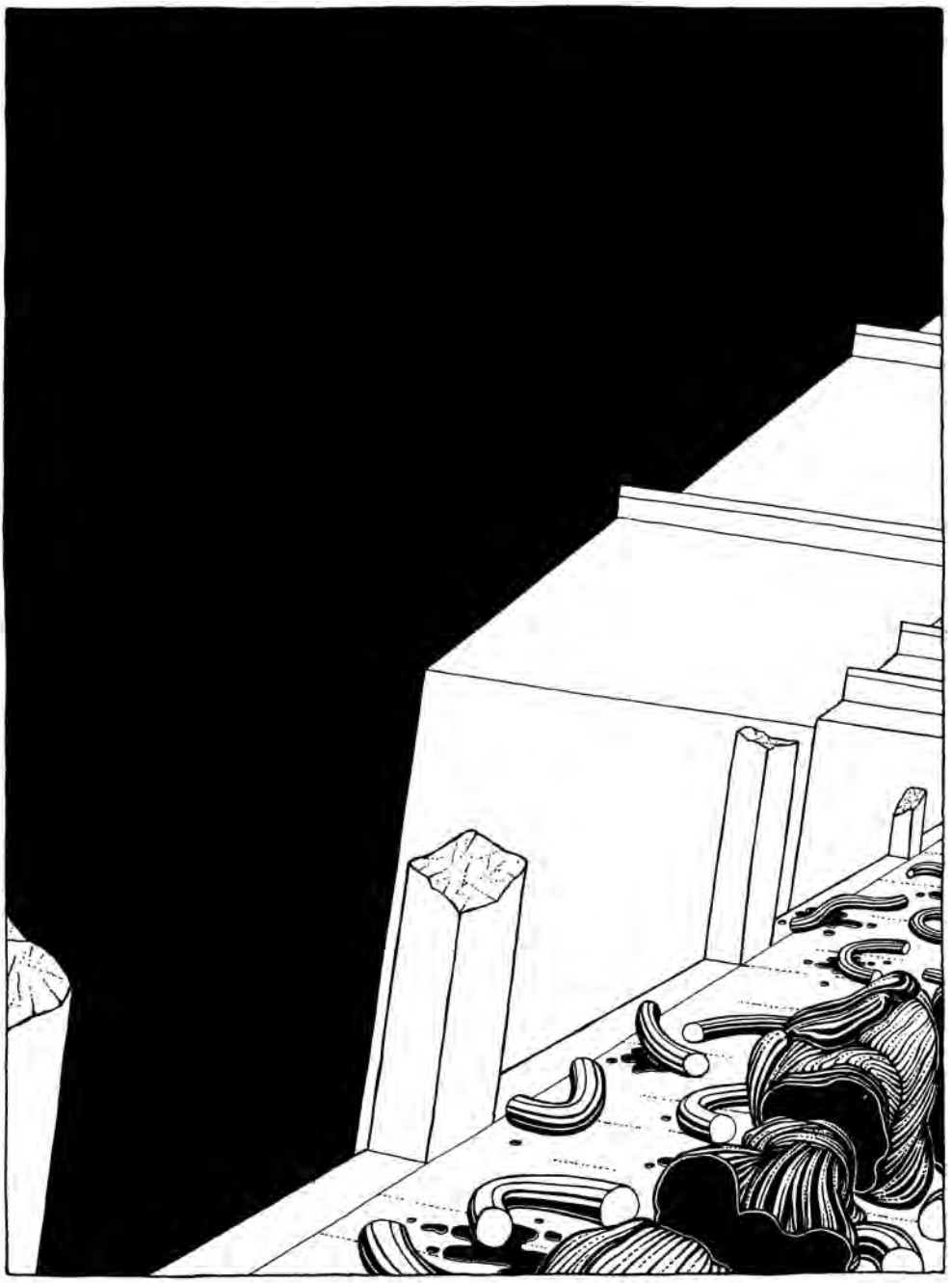


separate and alien to the surrounding desolation ...

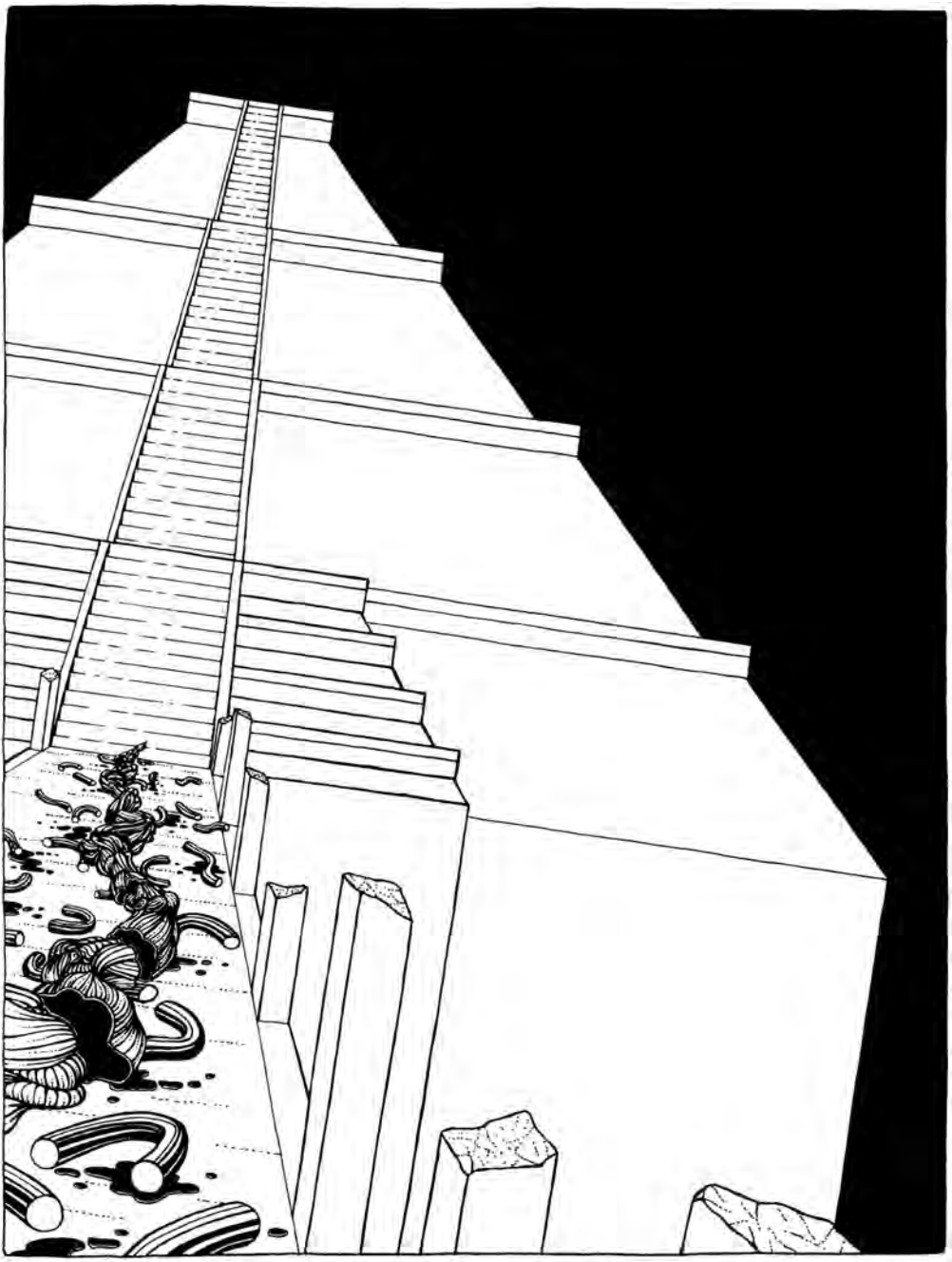
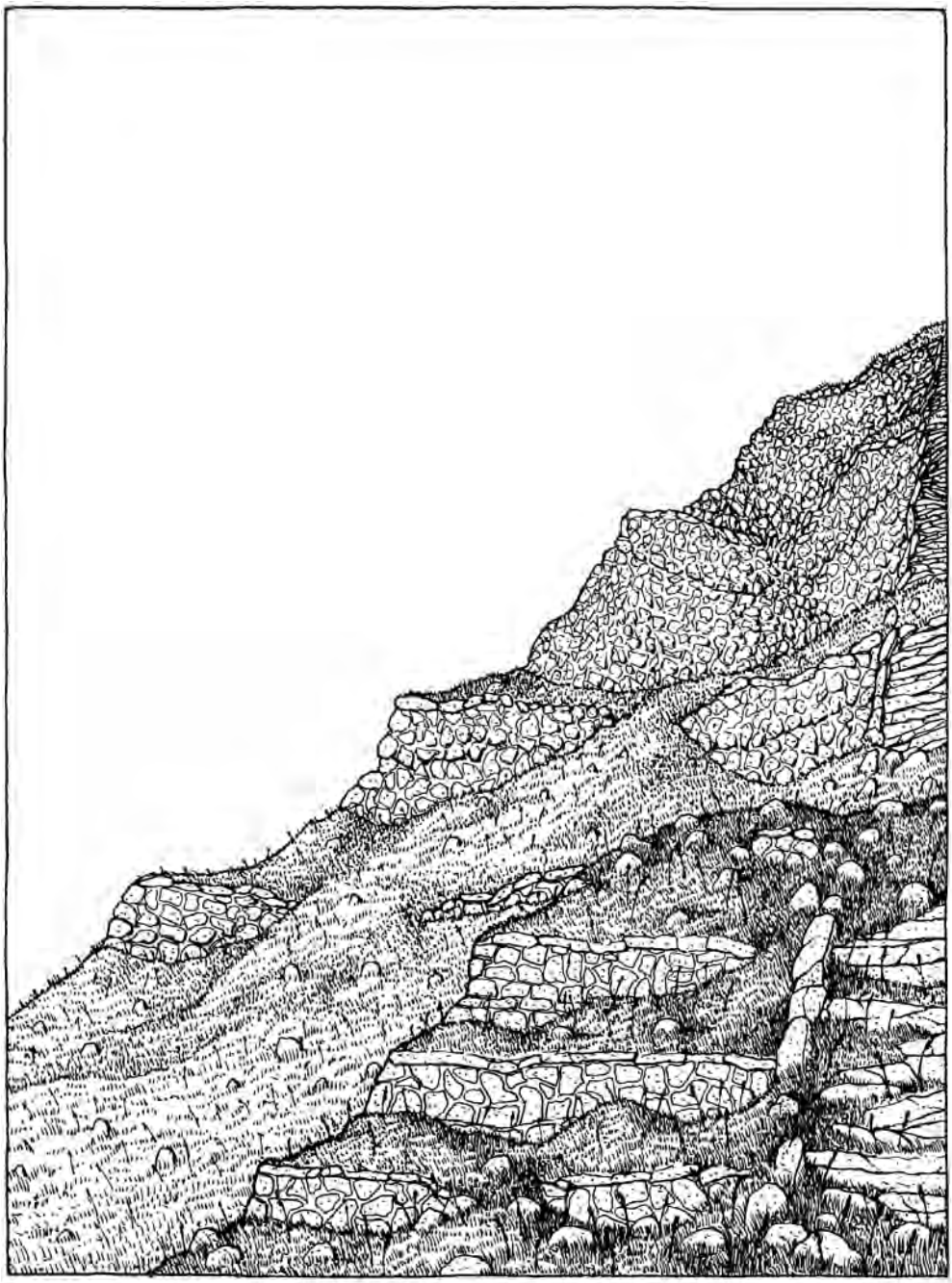
a labyrinth of distorted signs stretching out across the plain ...

a wild attempt to contain the inevitable flood of mute destruction

... a string of bloodied rags and broken nails obliterating everything



... but this barren cube ... significant only because it remains ...



an empty analogy ... a vacuous, stale and airless bag of words ...