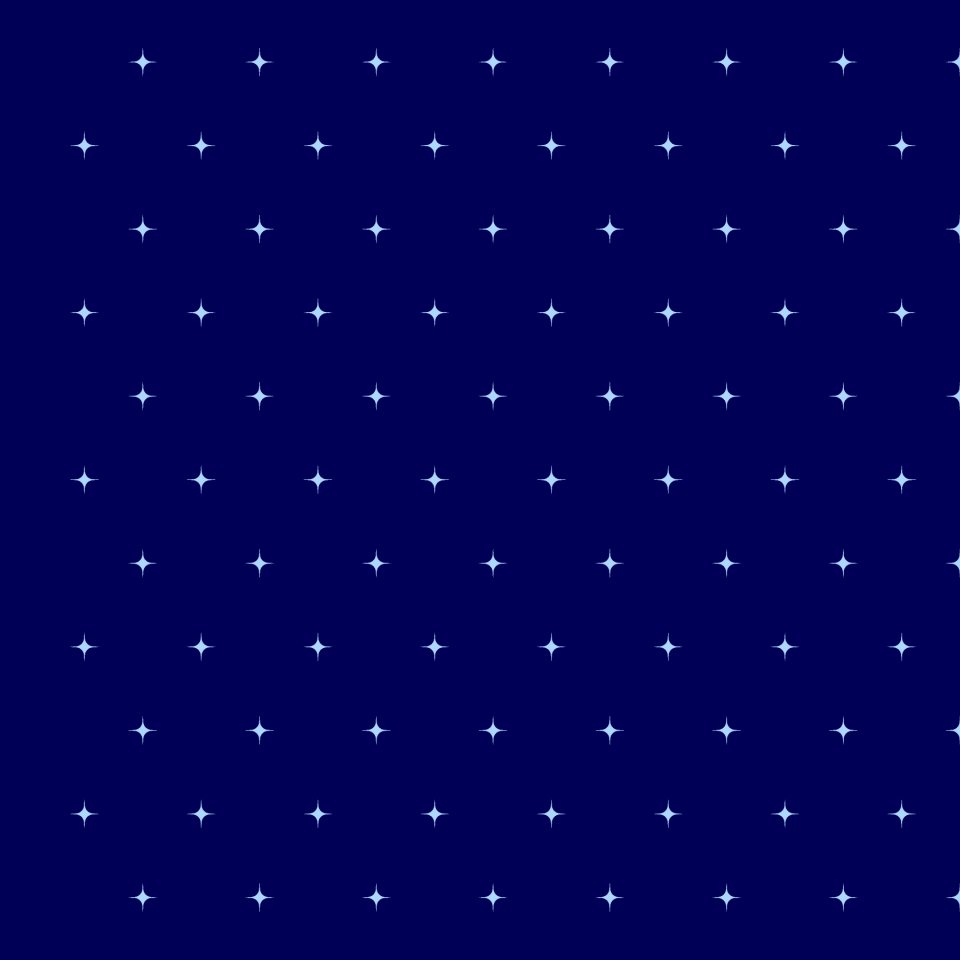
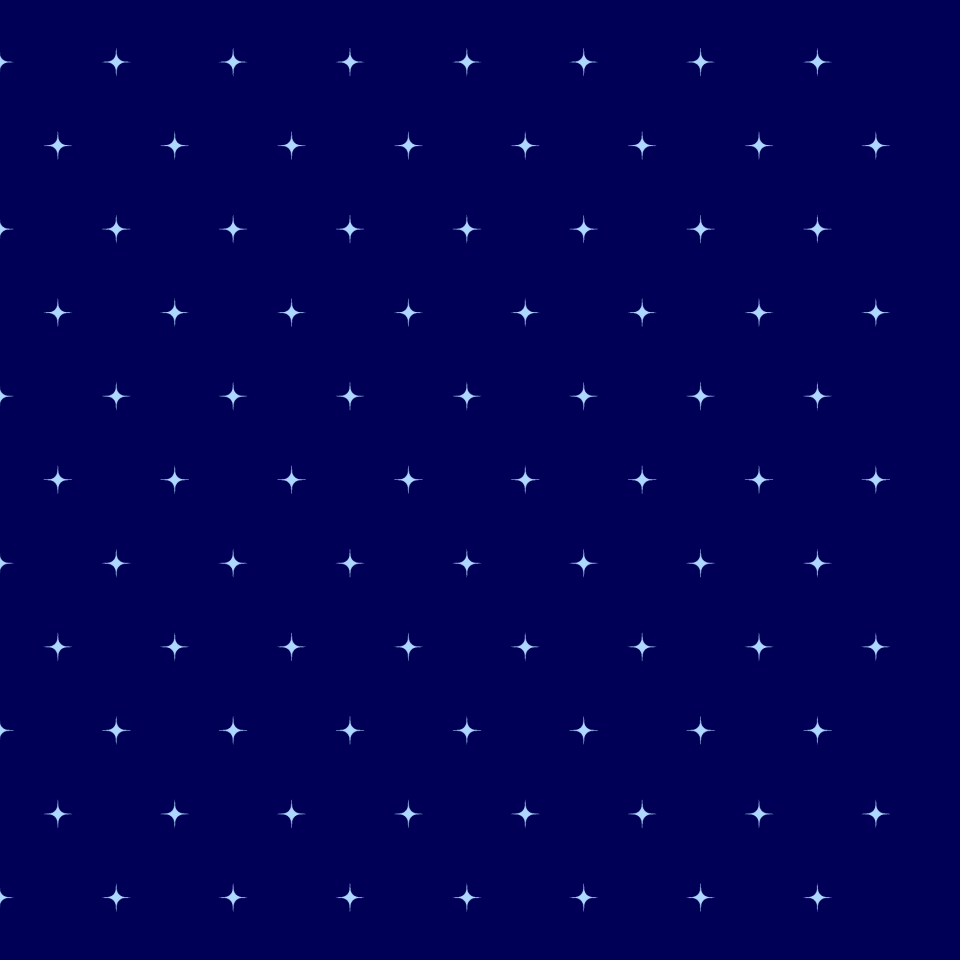


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RECONCILIATION

Jason Houge

First Edition - 2025 - Artist Proof

































































RECONCILIATION

This autobiographical story intends to acknowledge and talk about the hidden scars of my past. Childhood was not accompanied by the usual troubles of youth. I was born to a poor Catholic family that never seemed to settle for very long. The first of my many nomadic changes happened just a few months after my birth. My parents moved from where I was born in Oregon back to their home state of Wisconsin. Along the way, an axle broke on their International Scout stranding us for several days along the highway in the openness of the American plains during an early snowstorm. By the time I was in the first grade my parents were divorced and I had already attended nearly every elementary school in the city of Green Bay. As I approached the point where most boys are starting to come of age, I was sent away to live in a variety of institutions, shelters and a group home. This resulted in the loss of nearly four years of important life experiences, education and development. I was suddenly thrust into a world of violence, gang influence, doctors, stiff beds, and heavy medications.

This pattern of cycles only began to end when I turned 18 and was finally old enough to set out on my own. In the decades since, I have often found myself mirroring my parents' earlier struggles with poverty and continued to live semi-nomadically. My self-healing process began during my mid-20s after realizing most people saw the world very differently than I. Healing over the years has led me to rediscover what it is to feel emotions, what it means to be a friend and how to embrace myself. This "rebirth" has relied heavily on my own inner spirituality, the love and care received from my closest friends, mentorship, education and learning to forgive myself as well as my family. As much as this body of work intends to acknowledge my past from this new and earned perspective I have on life, I cannot deny this story also represents the people who appear in these photographs. By photographing and sharing their personal traumas and triumphs, feelings of solitude, depression, and kinship, this story is as much about who they are as it is about who they are to me, my chosen family.

PHOTOGRAPHS

2011-2016

01: One of many late nights at the laundromat. Green Bay, WI, 2015

02: Kayla waits as our friend Mike and I try to fix our car.

Green Bay, WI, 2015

03: Kayla and her mother, Lisa, wait for me to release the turtle.

Marinette, WI, 2015

04: Kayla on Wednesday Morning. New Franken, WI, 2015

05: Kayla and I visiting Justin at the hospital two days after he was hit by a car while walking the two blocks home from work.

Green Bay, WI, 2015

06: The site of the now demolished hospital I once lived in.

Green Bay, WI, 2015

07: Budgeting all the money we have. New Franken, WI, 2014

08: One of Kayla's frequent headaches. Green Bay, WI, 2015

09: Buddy in a month of unwashed clothes. New Franken, WI, 2015

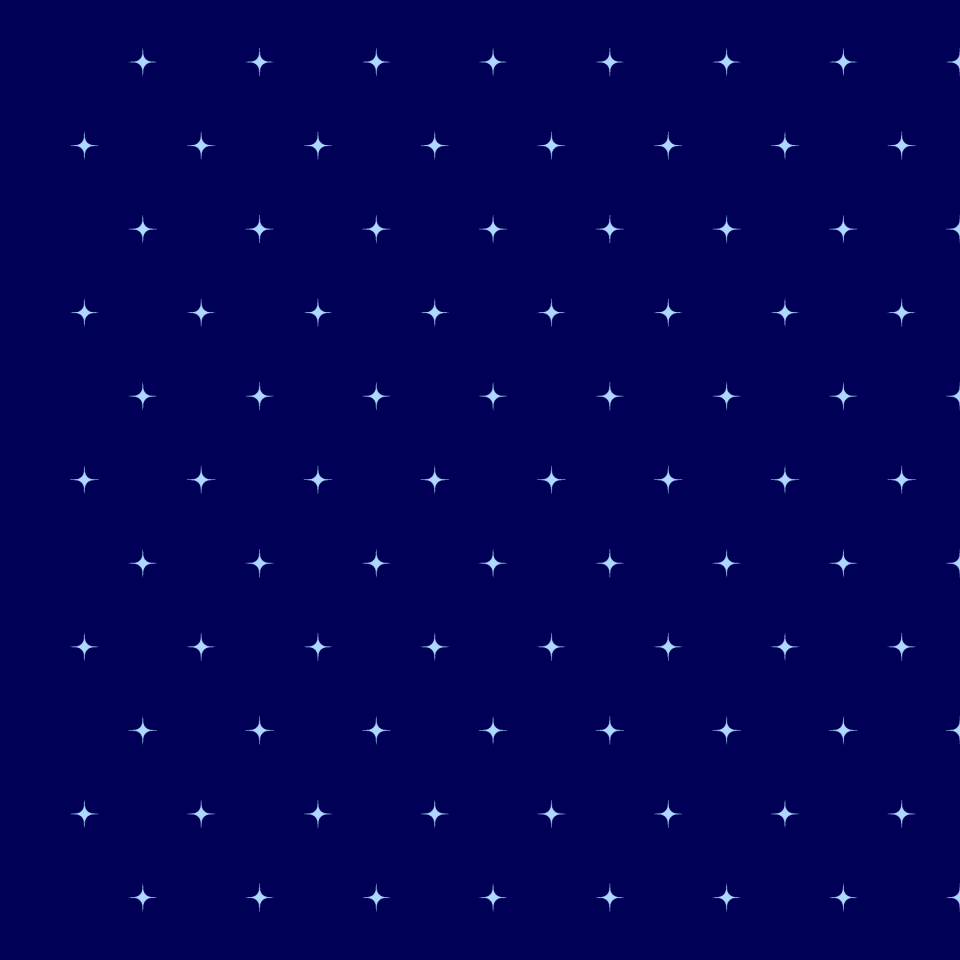
10: Thifty Last Supper. Green Bay, WI, 2015

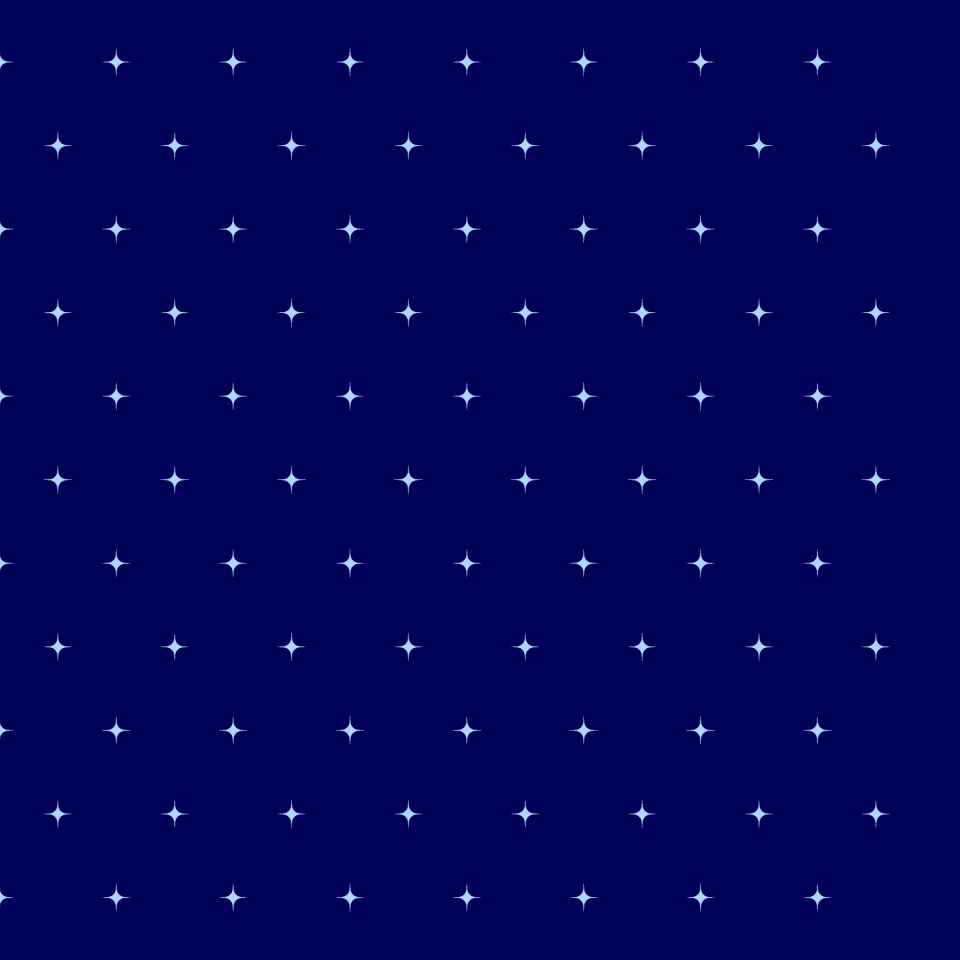
11: Kayla as a Bathtub Mary. New Franken, WI, 2016

12: Taking Justin to see his doctor. Ashwaubenon, WI, 2016

13: "Arbeit Macht Frei." Algoma, WI, 2011

- 14: Bedtime story with Kayla. Green Bay, WI, 2015
- 15: Crossroads during the first blizzard of the winter.
New Franken, WI, 2015
- 16: Cheap take out. Green Bay, WI, 2015
- 17: Pieta, Shrine of Our Lady of Good Help, Champion, WI, 2016
- 18: Lisa in the entry of her father's (Kayla's grandpa) home,
Menominee, MI, 2018
- 19: Justin stayed with us for a few weeks after he left the hospital.
New Franken, WI, 2016
- 20: Christmas breakfast with my stepdad, Pete, and his fiance, Lana
and Kayla. Green Bay, WI, 2015
- 21: At just 27 years old, Justin had acute pancreatitis resulting in
permanent diabetes. Green Bay, WI 2014
- 22: Pay day came and we can finally wash our laundry.
New Franken, WI, 2015
- 23: The cold November night we found ourselves stranded until the
end of the year. Green Bay, WI, 2015
- 24: Kayla's homeless doll house. Green Bay, WI, 2016







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