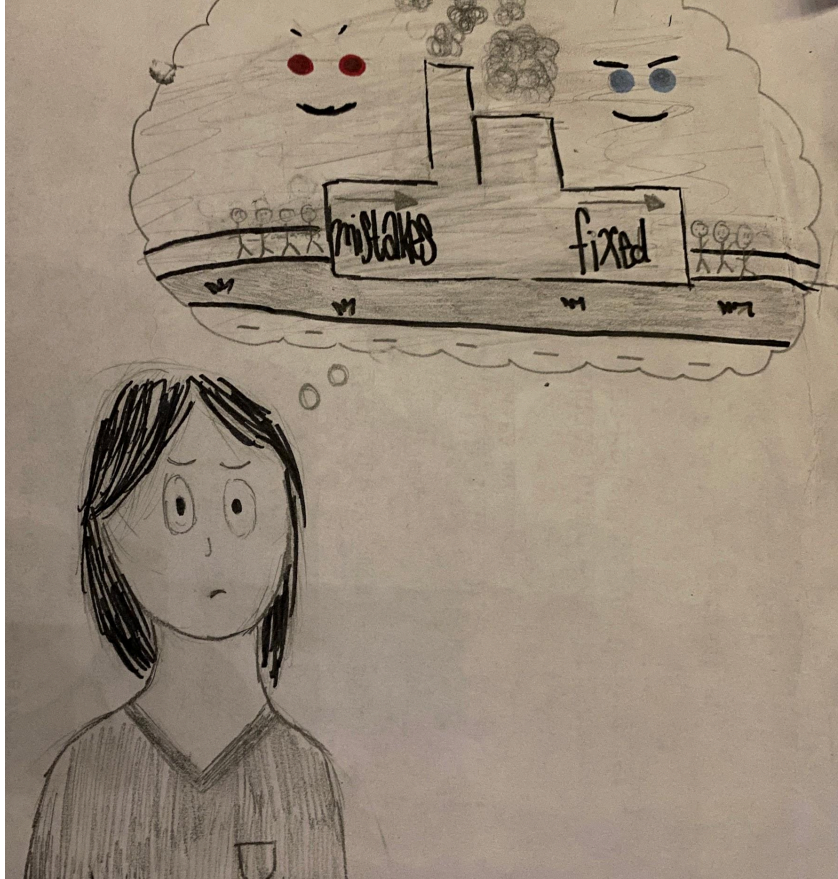


The Combine



For this art piece, I drew the Combine in a visual way. The combine is a concept Chief Bromden defines as a dehumanizing force that tries to fix people, against their will. Chief Bromden often compares the Combine to machinery and factories. As he says, “The ward is a factory for the Combine. It’s for fixing up mistakes made in the neighborhoods and in the schools and in the churches, the hospital is.” (36) Inspired by his definition, I drew a factory that is meant for “fixing” people then sending them back to society. The people coming in as “mistakes” are patients entering the ward then when the patients are “fixed” they’re sent back out to society. To match the novel’s 1960’s setting and overall theme, I chose to keep most of it in black and white. I also used monochrome colors to highlight Chief Bromden’s grim view of the world.

The image above Chief Bromden’s head is intended to be blurry and not clear, especially the patients. He often talks about the fog throughout the whole novel. His narration can be distorted by the fog, there are gaps to his stories. The blurriness highlights the vagueness in Chief Bromden’s narration. The vagueness brings mystery, it makes the readers question his reliability

as a narrator and if he is right.

The Combine imagery appears in Chief Bromden's thought bubble above his head, reflecting his internal struggle with the oppressive forces he sees around him. The alert/ worried expression on his face shows how he has paranoid thoughts and visions. His paranoid thoughts and visions shape how he interprets the world and the people within it. He pretends to be deaf and mute to be able to hear about everything that goes on in the ward. He uses that to his advantage to be a judge of people, to determine if they can be trusted or not.

The red glowing eyes on the left of the combine factory is Nurse Ratched. Red is typically associated with evil and bad, which is how Chief Bromden describes her. I wanted her red eyes to be one of the only colors in the art piece to stand out. Her character was the first to stand out in the novel because of how Chief Bromden would describe her. In one of his visions he says, "I see her sit in the center of this web of wires like a watchful robot, tend her network with mechanical insect skill, know every second which wire runs where and just what current to send up to get the results she wants" (26) He describes Nurse Ratched as a robot-spider that controls everything. The red eyes reflect the robotic spider characterization of her which emphasizes her role as an authority figure in the ward. By making the red eyes stand out, it highlights her sinister presence and dominance by drawing attention to her and her ward (the factory.)

To contrast the nurse, the bad, the blue eyes to represent the "good" on the right side. I wanted to highlight the "good vs evil" imagery that Chief Bromden creates when McMurphy became a big character in the novel. McMurphy becomes a symbol of strength for not being affected by the Combine. Unlike other patients, McMurphy refuses to be affected by the Combine. Chief Bromden admires him, hoping McMurphy will help him and other patients. He says, "The Combine hasn't got to him in all these years; what makes that nurse think she's gonna be able to do it in a few weeks? He's not gonna let them twist him and manufacture him." (140) The readers can see that Chief Bromden's faith in McMurphy grows as he watches him challenge Nurse Ratched on multiple occasions. He sees a man that tries to resist the physical and psychological impacts of the Combine. The blue eyes embody the feeling of hope that McMurphy brings to Chief Bromden.