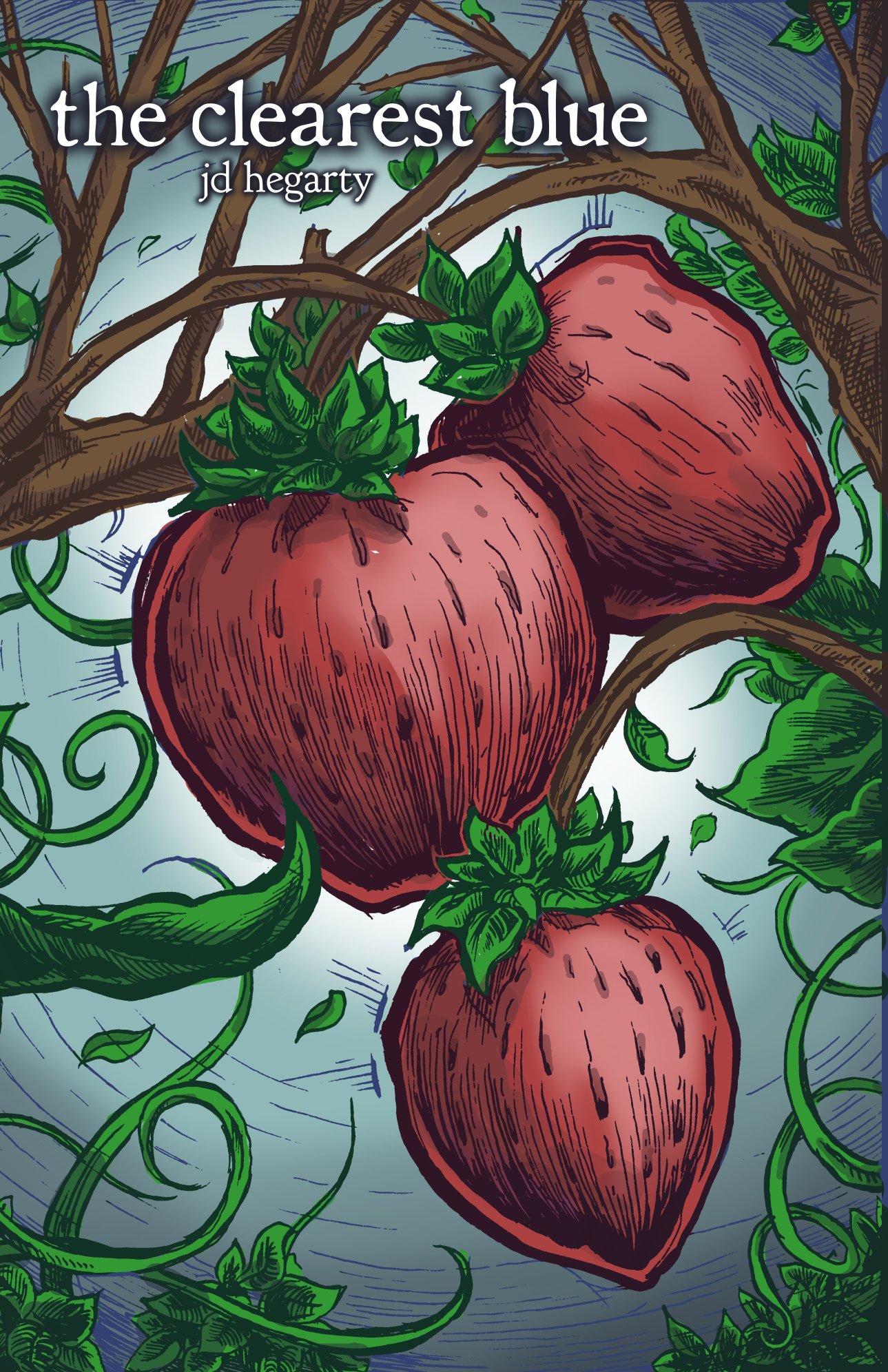


the clearest blue

jd hegarty



the clearest blue

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with illustrations by
sarah allen reed

strawberries

I had a dream about holding your
hand. My skin was hot and I woke
—nervous. I had a dream
where you kissed me. My heart
hovered above my body. I
spent hours trying to recover.
I had a dream about strawberries,
we were eating strawberries,
the sky was blue, birds sang,
you knew their names, but mostly
you were there, and we were eating
strawberries and I remembered
how sweet strawberries can be.



moon in sagittarius

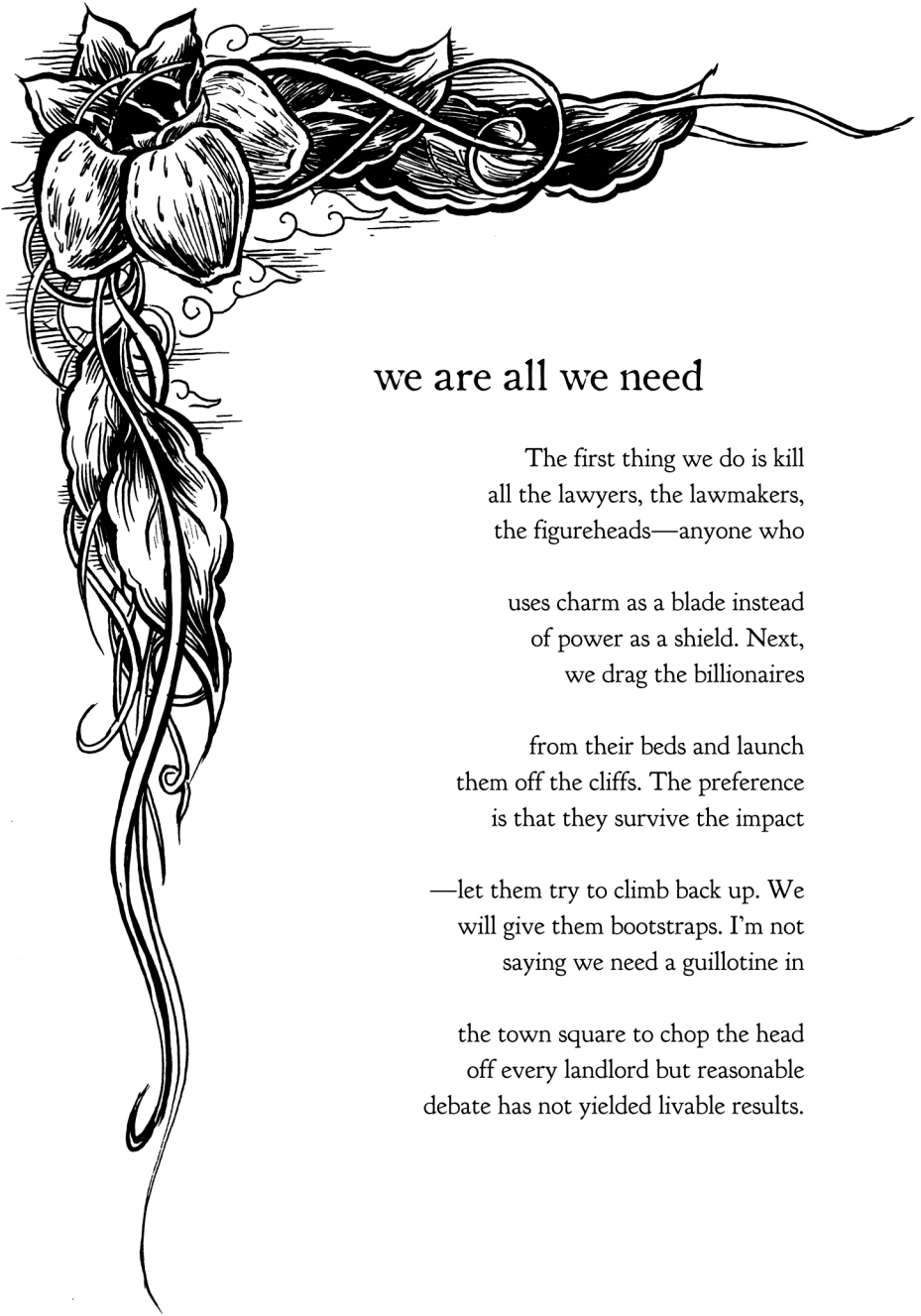
My tongue is a moonlight hunter,
my heart a thing of amethyst, the deep
night's bright dark, reflected
in polished tin. Come near—

breathe my smoke deep
with wit. This arrow flies
true, lands in the red place
between the ribs. Sail on

this heat rising. Find me racing,
running, chasing, always chasing
the blue and purple twilight sky, the
yellow yellow yellow of a morning

spent in a blissful sweat. What is
the sun to this fire? Have we known heat?
Have you known this fever? May we drop
all defenses, ripened, on the forest floor.





we are all we need

The first thing we do is kill
all the lawyers, the lawmakers,
the figureheads—anyone who

uses charm as a blade instead
of power as a shield. Next,
we drag the billionaires

from their beds and launch
them off the cliffs. The preference
is that they survive the impact

—let them try to climb back up. We
will give them bootstraps. I'm not
saying we need a guillotine in

the town square to chop the head
off every landlord but reasonable
debate has not yielded livable results.

Cherish the baker, the farmer, the
builder. Cherish the teacher, the healer,
the garbage collector. Cherish

the librarian, the singer, the care
giver. Cherish the cook, the waiter,
the truck driver. Cherish

the community. Remind yourself
that you are of it. Remind yourself
that you must defend

your community. Carry your family
on your back. Stand before them
with your shield. Hold your favored

weapon with pride when called. If
the thought of killing make you
nervous, this is normal. Hope

against hope that you will not
have to kill. Power concedes nothing
freely. We will seek another

way, but must be ready for
war. We must be ready
for anything.



big witch energy

I don't know how to charge crystals in the moonlight
or which talismans will ward against harm.

I've never collected herbs in the wilderness, cast bones,
or read the leaves. But when your heart beats, my heart beats.

I have spent a lifetime collecting the wisdom of mothers. I
have sought sisterhood longer than I have drawn breath.

I don't know which invocation will connect me to
the earth. What is my place in this choir?

The moon is bright and the wind is fierce. The ocean
roils. I am made of fire, wind, and ocean.

I deserve the space I occupy. Hold my hand. We
bring light and life to the world.

Our bodies are made of fury. I will sacrifice my
body for my sisters, if needed. I will become smoke.

If spell craft is a matter of intention, know this: all of
my fire, all of my wind, all of my ocean is ready for war.

Know this: a circle neither begins nor ends. I will
draw circles and sing until there are no more songs to sing.

on gratitude

This is the practice of appreciation
for the earth and tides. Vulnerability

sometimes corollary to the capacity
to taste sunlight. I felt my heart swell

until the rain fell. I promise the rain
will not keep me from dancing. There were

gun shots again last night, I think. I heard
the *pop pop* outside my window

that I have come to recognize too easily. Strange
how I can feel at home as strangers are

stripped of their safety. I live behind glass, inside
for this night and every, and when there is

danger, I can hide away, and the cats will
show me their bellies—hungry for

affection. A friend asks *how are you* and
sometimes a half truth is a kindness. *I'm*

okay. I'm always ok eventually. This year was the first in I can't remember how long that I stopped

expecting to be dead already and by suicide. I always wanted to be alive, and finally can accept

that I will be for so much longer. We only have so much time, and more should be spent

dancing, singing, loving. I love with my whole self. We live in hell and I love you,

which is not a way of defeating hell or capitalism, but it is a form of freedom. The

choices we have are so limited. Let us fight together until we win or die. Let us love

one another, dance, and sing, and cry. Let us hold each other's hands and

not say anything because it is so hard to say *thank you*. Let us say forever

I love you I thank you I hold you in my heart

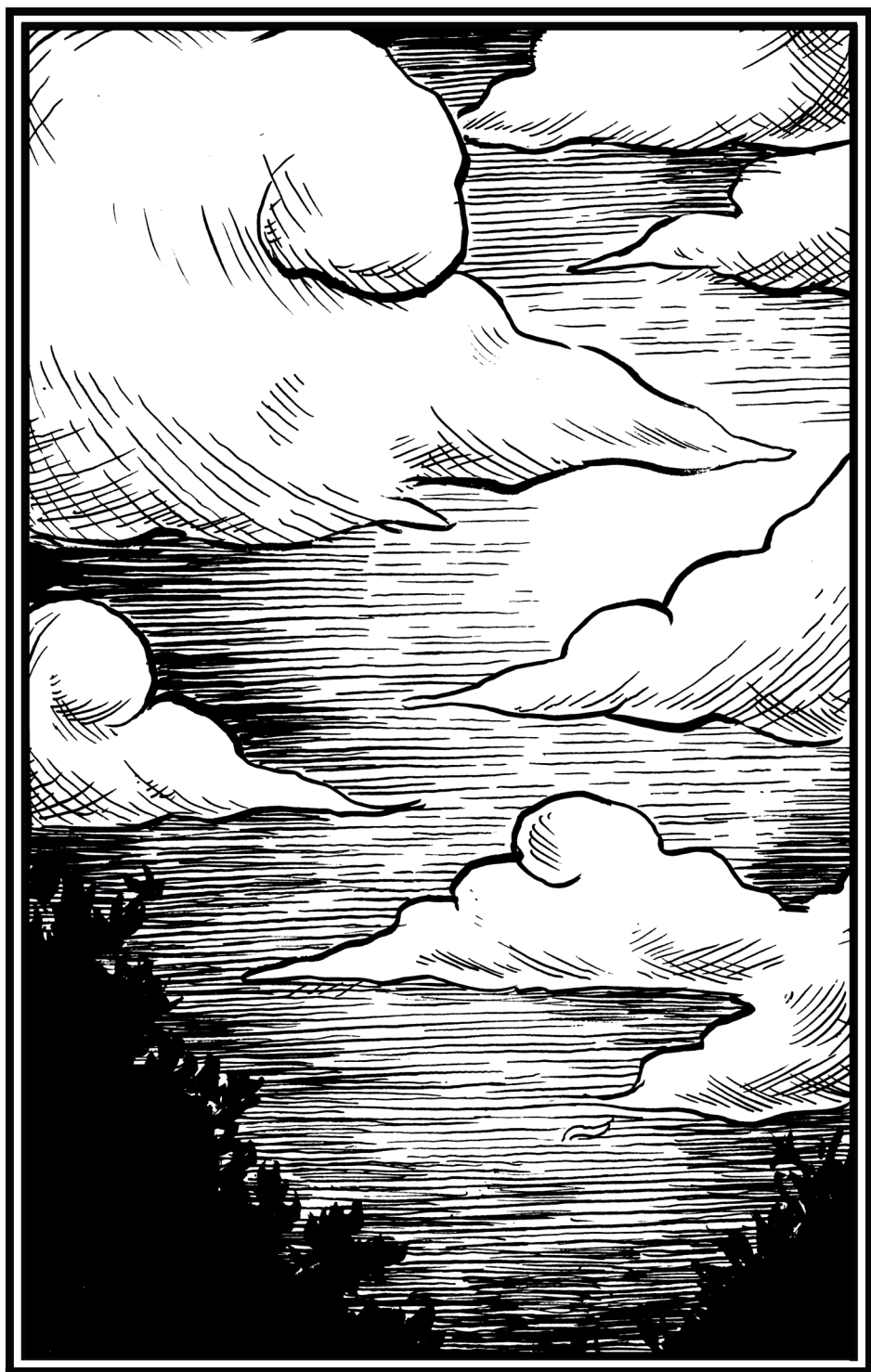






transposition

Don't make me relearn how to talk. Don't force me to retune this instrument. I just want to always be singing. Let my mediocre tenor be enough to set the bounds of my existence and waver just beyond them. Don't make me learn a new way to perform. Just let me interpret the wind and sing it back to you. There are enough lines in this song for me to hold this one close. There are so many things I will change, but I would not trade this thrum for the world.



thunderstruck

Kind one, made of steam:
you name me sweet one, you

name me and I answer in kind. Today
I noticed the color of the sky, it

was clearest blue and I never saw
the sky as clearly as when I could

share it. You see storm clouds—
you withdraw. I am nervous. I am a

cloud ready to burst. I keep spilling
the pieces of myself into your tender

hands and you hold them up as if
they were always whole. I have never

been so electrified. Your wind is a song
and I want to become it. I see the moon and

want to take you there—
watch you dance without the pull

of this spinning earth. Welcome to
this in between space, this empty

sky of possibility, this space
that is ours alone to inhabit

or to deconstruct. It is as much
humid as hot. A storm brews whether you

hold my hand or let it go. All I want
is to kiss you and every kiss

branches through me, crackling me
as I count seconds waiting for thunder.



seven tenets of the rainbow covenant

pride

I will take no shit for loving myself.
I will suffer no insult for too many selfies.
Every second spent in my presence
is a gift I give. I share my
light with you. I delight in it.

gluttony

Bodily autonomy means
exactly what it sounds like;
I will choose what is done with
my body, whether
I am making every pizza
personal, dry swallowing
t-blockers, or being choked
by a lover on a Tuesday.
If we are hungry, we
will feed. If we are ravenous,
we may never be filled.

greed

You don't get to tell me
what I deserve. It's everything
everything everything.
Flowers, hundred dollar bills,
a home on the ocean,
an emo wife, and every debt released,
a summer everywhere under the sun.
All the love in the world
and blueberry pancakes every morning.

envy

It is not that I want
to take away what you have,
but that we were taught
to believe happiness is a limited
commodity. When you parade
your small joys, I want to
snatch the smile off your face
and wear it. I don't know
how I look wearing bliss.

lust

Love may be love, but
give me freedom to burn. Every body
is a camp fire. We gather and tell
stories. We gather and see what
will turn to smoke.

If we are not free to dance without loving
or to love without touching, are we
free? If you take issue with
my unchaste behavior, feel
free to remain unfucked.

sloth

I will move at whatever pace
suits me. Today, I am slowness.
Today, I am basking, lazing about
in frivolity. Give me that.

wrath

I hate to deal in
absolutes, but if you are
not with us, you will be
fed to the wolves. We did not
call this war, but we answer
sharply. We will meet
your violence. We will end it.

the bright days

Today I was mostly
happy. There is a perversity to
melancholy—how it haunts in
the doorway vampiric. Accepting
the creak of a floorboard as
an invitation to spin illusion
and withdraw my capacity. Today,
I was vulnerable on purpose
—there was a sun in the sky
and I dedicated myself to staying
alive. I move in the direction
of happiness. Possibility. The
shadows follow in my shadow.
The bright somehow makes the dark
darker. The dark always stalking
where the light can't touch. Behind
the stars, behind my eyes, under
the cloak of night. Overcast day
—depression spins its way around
the sunlight. No feeling of joy
ever absolute—no despondency
without sparkle of silver. All risk,
all twilight. Today, I saw the moon
and she sang. Today, the clouds.
Today, a sweet sickness, the bright.

virgo season

This is the sound of / summer ending:
my body / returns to the earth /
Weeping alone in / the laundry room
while the sky / ripens purple gray / A
heart beats It's mine / She hums like
birds taking flight / but is gripped by
vines / A man on the street / calls out
at two AM lost / Or is he tired / There
are curses here / working their gravity
Bind / your heart to the warmth / I
don't want to come / back to the
earth—say goodbye / to summer's
bluest





the poet

jd hegarty is a poet, an anarchist, and a sunflower living in saint paul, minnesota with two grey cats. Their first chapbook, on passing, was published by red bird chapbooks in 2017. They and their work can be found at jdhegarty.com and other places on the internet.



the illustrator

Sarah Allen Reed is an illustrator, cartoonist, and vagrant currently living in an undisclosed location. Her PO box is in Colorado, although we can't confirm that she is still there, or anywhere near there, for that matter. One place she can be found, should you wish to find her, is at sarahallenreed.com.



