

Making Something

I have the sensation of needing something. I need something to hold, grip, pull. Something that's mine that I can have and know and be with.

It's taken considerable labour, perseverance, effort, but I've made something. Something to try and satisfy this need. Now to know it.

I have made it inside me. I did make it inside first. I haven't yet located its exact whereabouts, maybe it rests within brain, maybe abdomen, possibly within the skeleton, the cellular fibres. Maybe within a hand.

Certainly when I started, I sketched it out in between my eyes, built it up tentatively as an apparition just in front of my forehead. Lift chin, tilt head slightly clockwise, eyes to top left corner, see it forming there, coming into being above nose. Feel it tingling bits of itself together.

As I continued like this, hoping my hoping would be enough to build something; the sliver of object, it retreated within, into a darkness. As if the more solid it became, and the lumpier its mass, the less tangibly it manifested itself to me. It withdrew until it was necessary to squeeze eyes really tight clamped shut to block out the light that was making it fearful and brick up the other noise trying to drag me out and away from it. Scrunch eyelids together, use nose muscles to scrunch them harder, turn eyeballs backwards within sockets to face brain, to find its edges creeping out into the grey mush.

Inevitably, these methods of seek and hide weren't successful for long: the thing either evolved to outsmart or I became desensitized to them. They weren't enough. Soon more was necessary in order to know this thing.

The next phase of attempts began at imagining a mime between me and the thing I was creating. Just thinking about being with it in the darkness, not moving anything on the outside; picturing how I'd hold it, how it would hold me, how we could coexist in a space. And it was the slipperiness of the thing that meant rehearsing a set of actions in my head was the only option available. It had yet no substance to play with, just vague shape, only the slightest ability to push out into the world. That through making a space for it within my pictured sphere I could coax it out. With thought: lower shoulders, arms relaxed but poised, held in an ovoid shape, hands in front of the thighs, not touching but a little in front, elbows out to the sides, then up to first position, maintain the oval but arms opposite the waist now, palms towards body, shoulders relaxed, then onwards and up a bit more, coming up to perpendicular from body but stopping way before, now fingers closing in. And repeat.

This way it started to grow. Like dough proving it became expanded, took on more room inside of it. Became a bigger version of what it had been before.

Gaining confidence from this sense of progress I pushed on, started summoning the mime I'd practiced into my real moving limbs. Felt sinews tug on tendons, cartilage slip past bone, muscle contract into itself and move the weight of myself upwards and across. The first time I made these forms I realised I hadn't prepared. Elbow hit arm of chair, other hand got caught on underside of desk, eyeball got stuck on an image of a frog, entire head got stuck on an essay about butchers. With the debris released from these jolts I had no hope of finding the thing I was making. I moved into the round, shrugged off the furniture, pulled up the carpet to reveal the earth below. Just me and it in a space. Repeat the movement. Cycle through the postures, hope its body falls out somewhere into me.

With a sensation of quiet surprise, I learned to feel it through this mime. Isolated points on the outside of my body where it jutted out and began gently to prod me. Elbow crook, sternum, horizontal crease in palm. Zones where I felt sure our outers were conversing. And then sensed locations for parts on the inside where I knew its presence too, in the way that only the less-specific nerve endings of the inside can record. Lower trachea, uterus lining, point where ribs push something onto something else when I breathe in.

But still fuzzy. Not as clear as I longed for. I thought that perhaps my clothes were the problem. That they were mediating our time together too strongly, getting in the middle, in the way, breaking the body-body circuit and stopping subtle sensations of the objects' form coming to rest on me. It needed the delicate touch of trying to find the boundaries of someone's aura. I took all my clothes off to try to feel it harder. Hoped that with the closed loop of our entities it might light up and announce itself to me differently. I repeated the actions here but progress was slowing.

Recalling the coordinates I'd established for some of its corners, both external and internal, I set about forging its form in something stronger. From the recycling pile I gathered cereal boxes, delivery packaging: borrowed containers in which to attempt to catch the moving object. Ripping up this cardboard I fashioned markers - rudimentary symbols to map the thing to my pinging nerve endings and act as stand-ins for its extremities. I placed them across my body outside and in, and, willing muscles into contractions I tensed them into place.

At this point I could see where I thought my object was residing. But because I could now feel the markers themselves, my knowing of the whereabouts of the thing had been lost.

And what of the bits in between the points? The lines outside the markers. The depth, weight and thickness of the lines? The next strategy I tested was radar. Sending out a frequency that the thing couldn't hide from. A frequency that would be returned to me as pure raw knowledge data. I chose plaster as my scanner, for the speed with which it could entrap the object, thinking it might be able to slop over it silently, without announcing itself, and force it to stop with it as it became solid. Column of cream lollops up against forearm, smears across chest. Wet wallowing spread.

I sunk to my knees to cup the liquid that had escaped. Draped it back on, back over the object somewhere underneath. I felt it setting, cooking, radiating out. Now that I had squeezed the thing, got it smothered and melded to me under the plaster, in between my body and the negative space my body made, I was surely getting nearer.

I'd lost all flexibility, fluidity of form. We were set together in place, down on the floor. I reached for another way of animating myself around the object, and attempted this time to write it down and transcribe it into a new version of itself that I could absorb differently. I flicked through mental dictionary, thesaurus, instructional pamphlets and cookbooks, searching for words that could be considered a fair translation of my thing. I pasted these on it, tried out the fit, observed as some less acceptable options slid off its faces. Those that spoke as it did, that within reason manifested in the same frequencies, I piled up and collected on one side.

After some time had passed I'd produced a document of the thing I had made out of the mass of words and letters available to me. Searching for a likely beginning I inhaled and began to read it. Opening my mouth and engaging my lips, tongue, teeth, chords I spoke it out into the space. I began to usher it out into the world.

(Now, start again, from the top.)