

First, the heat.

The metal roof of the barn is absorbing the sun, like a toaster oven, like a broiler.

I am in a broiler with the wasps' nests, their little paper mache houses grafted between old wooden studs like barnacles underneath a ship's hull. Just outside the walls, I can hear the shuffling of the pigeons on the ledge just beneath the edge of the roof. Detritus of their day to day leaks in through the gaps in the corners of the space, feathers, wood fragments, shit. I sweep it up but when I come back there will be more. They live here.

Artificial red sun on eyes made of hard earth, rammed earth, heavy earth. They are laying flat like the floor has a face. I'm tracking pigeon shit on this face while I duck the wasps. Maybe the dust in this empty old place swirled around and these eyes grew here, slow accumulations operating on a cycle unlike mine, maybe more like the wasps' nests. I'm suddenly aware that the dirt in these eyes is older than anything I can possibly grasp with my head, but not with my hands.

The light is low. Around me are glasses of water, a body, fragmented, dispersed across many volumes. The light is low and I have to watch where I step. They glow like mushrooms, spores, fungi, absorbing the light available. The next time I'm here this water will be gone. Water is a transient body, an apparition, another cycle.

The images move slowly enough for me to look at them, but too fast for me to memorize. A sequence like a series of disruptions, searching, combing, not sure exactly where to look, or what to look for. It was never meant to be airtight. Somewhere in the sequence, a snake's long fang is held over the lip of a glass vial. Extraction. The antidote is in the venom itself.

When I was young, a neighborhood kid fell off his bike and hit his head. At the hospital, they drilled a hole to release the pressure. His brain was swelling, crushing itself on the inside of his skull. I sat behind him at my neighbors Bar Mitzvah, and when he took off his yarmulke, the fresh scar stared at me like a red eye on the back of his head. It did not frighten me because I understood why it was there.

The sound; An alpha wave. A hum. It's a heavy blanket, pressure on my thoughts and my motions. I googled alpha waves and found something about the electricity in my brain. I close my eyes and try to synchronize. When I close my eyes, I think the floor closes its eyes too. I'm starting to sweat in this hot box. My body, opening a valve and releasing something vital.

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