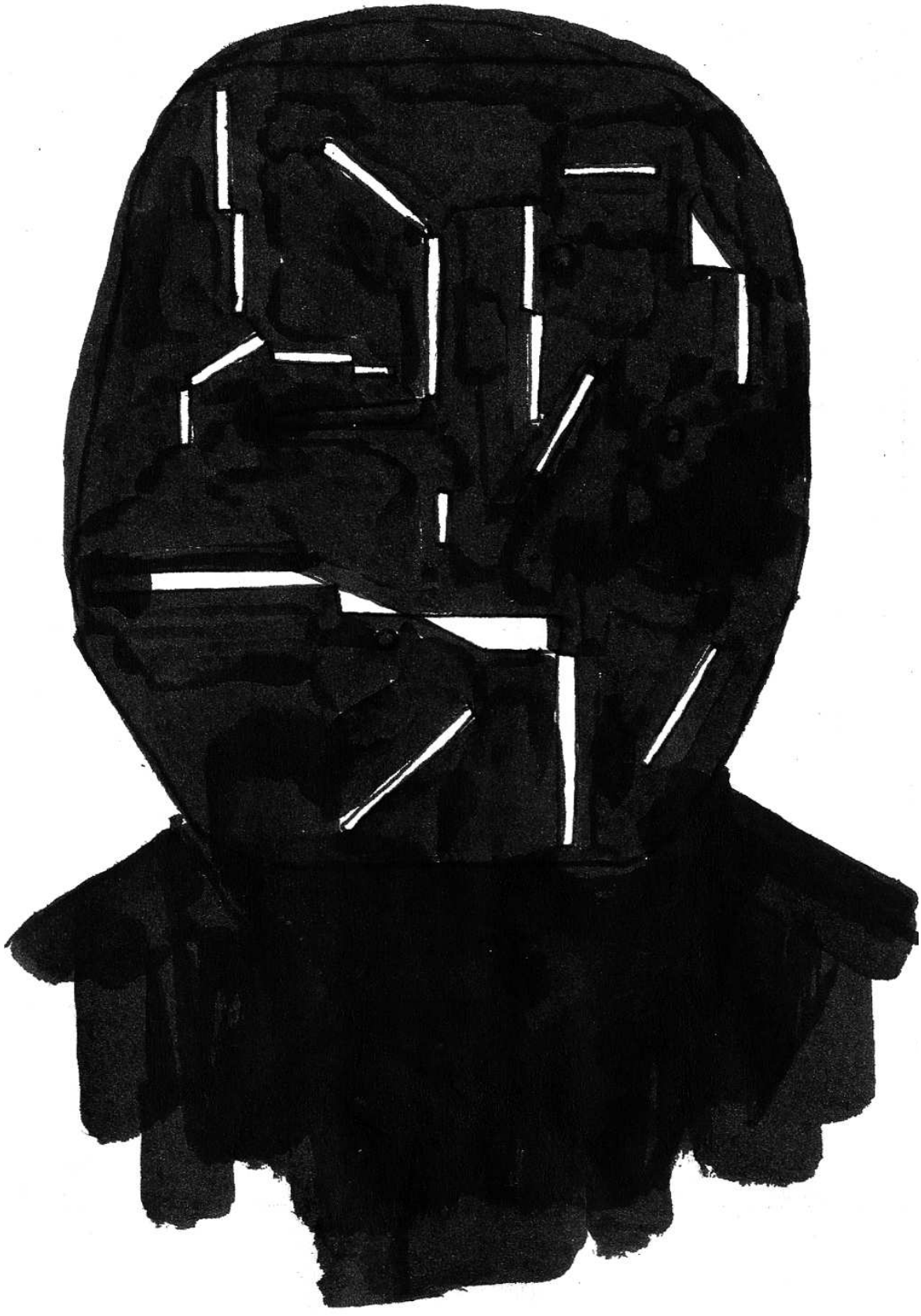


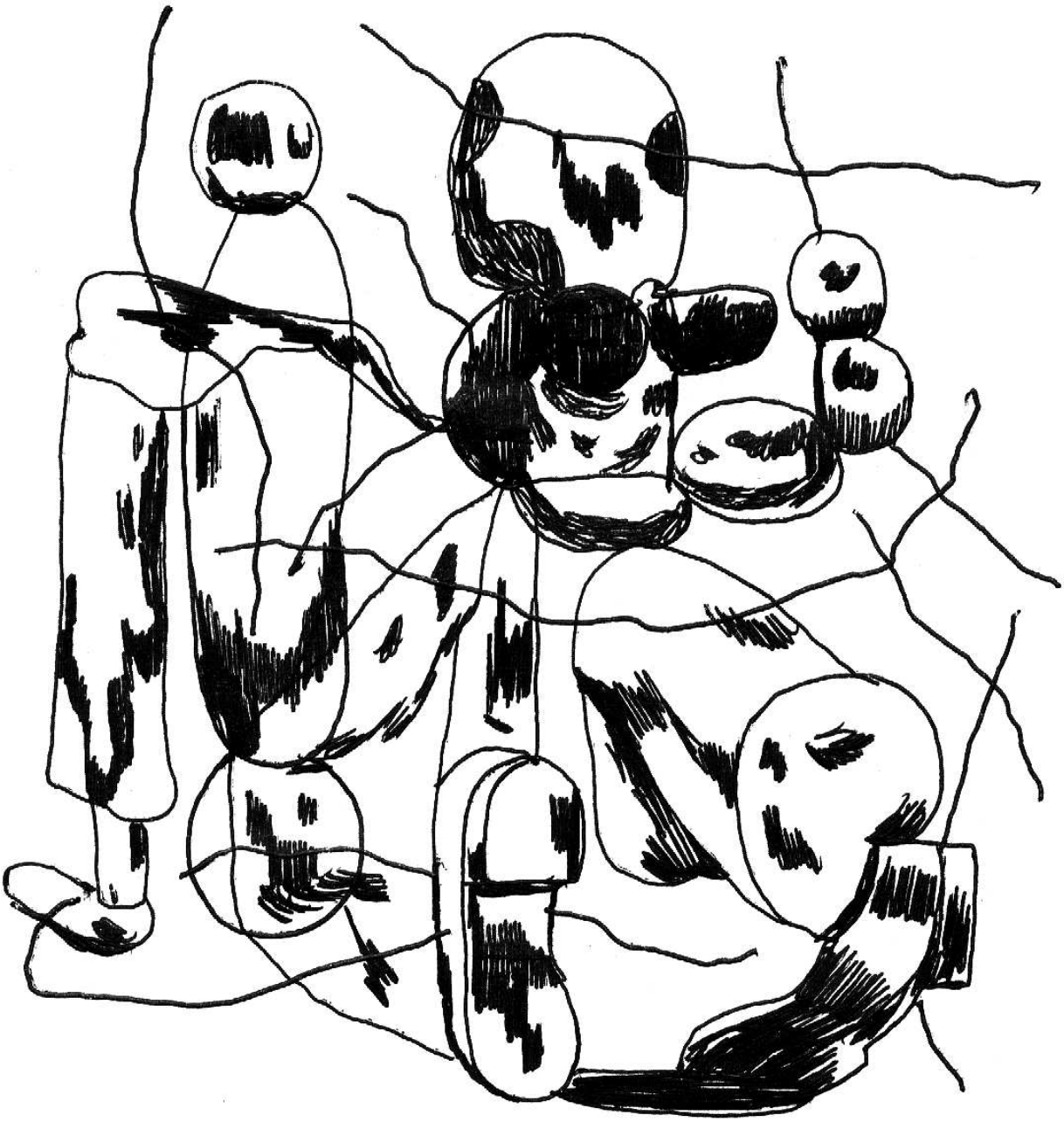
Introduction: Mind Walk II

This publication accompanies an exhibition by Karl Nawrot at Gallery Factory, Seoul, KR. The exhibition presents work made during the last three years, and follows an earlier exhibition — *Mind Walk I* — that I organised at Eastside Projects in Birmingham, UK, in 2013.

The essential proposition of the exhibition is the intricate union between Karl Nawrot's self-made *tools* — stencils, templates, models — and their various *outputs* — drawings, graphics, and typefaces. This union gives all of the works shown here the sense of being a *leftover*. At the moment in which a drawing is completed, both the drawing itself, and the tool that produced it become somehow incomplete. They retain their dependence on each other, but seem only partially to explain each other, confounding speculation about the procedures that relate them.

These technical relationships are not fixed. A drawing — initially an *output* — might prompt a model, which might itself become a tool for visualising a group of forms for a typeface. Another object might be at once a template for generating drawings and an architecture. These cycles and doublings give suggestive insights into the objects — while transitioning they seem most themselves.

But these are more than procedural exercises. This production is motivated by an opaque, inscrutable sensibility, an aesthetic that is elementary — even primitive — macabre, strangely *psychological*. The following texts, informed by the procedures described above, seek analogies and entry points into this very particular and compelling psychology.



James Langdon
Mental Notes

 and are one individual, at different ages
 is a scholar of the work of
 is 's psychiatrist
 is a colleague of
 could not have made the objects discovered by
 was found in the studio of

For a few seconds before beginning to write, ◇ absent-mindedly rotates the pen between thumb and index finger.

—

A retired archeologist, 𓀀, is preoccupied with ‘intermediate’ objects. As a young field-worker, 𓀀 assisted in the discovery of a significant specimen, the skeletal remains of a creature marking the evolutionary transition between reptile and mammal. Now, at the end of 𓀀’s career, 𓀀’s reflections are troubled by the realisation that nothing since has produced the same sensation of wonder in 𓀀.

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𓀁 has a considerable collection of rock fragments that have been shaped into extraordinary forms by natural processes. They are displayed on carved wooden plinths designed to echo their forms.

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A researcher, 𓀂, moves between the stacks in a library, identifying reference works for

a speculative project: a typology of organic matter whose growth is artificially shaped or constrained. In the biology department, finds a volume containing a chapter on the practice of growing fruits and vegetables in boxes. In the anthropology department, adds several studies on tribal customs of puncturing and stretching the soft tissue of ears, nostrils and lips with geometric inserts.

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The archive of the scenographer, , includes a single photograph of a particular model, constructed in cardboard and metal, painted in black and white. The model represents an unrealised stage for a play, set inside a human brain. Viewed from above, the stage appears as a layered field of distorted ellipses suspended from a matrix of tubular supports.

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An architect, **L**, concocts a corrosive liquid for modifying buildings. The liquid can be poured on any surface, as an act of construc-tive vandalism. Once applied, it disintegrates

the material of a building, allowing mould and other organisms to take hold, gradually transforming a room with floor, walls and ceiling into an amorphous cave.

—

A sack containing nuts and bolts, found in a room after the death of its occupant, 𖫲. Grease from the hardware has penetrated the sack, over time forming a dry crust, such that it can only be opened by cutting it apart. The discarded fragments of encrusted sack stand in stiff poses on the concrete floor.

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A squirrel is living inside 𖫳's head. Or so 𖫳 believes. 𖫳 is intelligent and lucid, and appreciates the absurdity of the situation. 𖫳 accepts that no scientific apparatus will be able to detect the animal. 𖫳's clinical psychiatrist is fascinated by the case, telling colleagues: "If you substitute the word 'consciousness' for the word 'squirrel', you have a perfect demonstration of the inscrutability of the brain."

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An architectural model placed on a table in a room. The interior is lined with the same black carpet that covers the floor of the room.

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For a rat, the skull is the only human bone structure with a habitable interior.

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As a child, ᛉ collected plastic replica kits. Following the assembly instructions disturbed ᛉ, and ᛉ kept the kits untouched in their boxes.

When you are inside the package you can't read the insignia on front or the magic Date of Expiration past which you will turn unhygenic

—

A writer, ᛟ, builds a conical structure in the exact centre of a vast forest. The building is not made according to a design, but follows a habitual, organic growth. Stone by stone, layer by layer, idea by idea, day by day.

—

A collection of indeterminate objects is found buried in a gravel pit. Their surfaces have a brittle, chalky character. Archeologists speculate about their origin. Two of the larger objects fit together to make a simple joint,

allowing a pivoting motion and resembling a jaw. A theory begins to form around this pair of connected parts. According to the theory, they belong to a mythical ‘missing link’, the ultimate paleontological discovery.

—

A stiff, dirty white blanket, draped over an incidental group of three objects. The creases in the material trace the outline of a fourth.

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One evening, O, the curator of a provincial museum, notices a small ceramic urn in one of the museum’s vitrines has been rotated on its spot. Puzzled but unperturbed, O unlocks the vitrine and replaces the urn. The following day, O sees that the urn has again been rotated, to precisely the same angle. Arriving early at the museum on the third day, O stares at the ceramic for an hour, hoping to observe its rotation. Nothing appears to be happening. Perhaps it is rotating too slowly to see? Eventually, O hears a discordant rattling as the building’s antiquated heating

system switches on. The vibration quickly travels through the fabric of the building.

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An old book on the subject of medieval depictions of mythological labyrinths. Such representations are often circular, their forms apparently derived from animal intestines. The pictures in the book are coarsely half-toned, bearing traces of the multiple means of reproduction that have processed them. The grid of misshapen blobs of ink is plainly visible to the unassisted eye.

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The artefact, ⋐, consists of two parts. First, a circular plateau with a number of strips of bent wood fixed to its outer face. Three rows of grooves are cut through this surface, following the curve of the outer circumference. The second part is a narrow arm, with two straight strips of wood fixed at one end, running perpendicular to its length. At the other end of the arm are two strap-hinges, now broken away from whatever they held.

The whole is considerably worn and shows many signs of breakage. The artefact may in fact have two ages. The plateau appears to be older than the arm. The curved strips are fixed to the plateau with hand-made nails, while the short strips on the arm are fixed with screws, and show less wear, suggesting they are later additions.

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An intricately formed lump of burned wood catches [illegible]'s eye while walking in the forest. [illegible] takes the wood, later placing it on a radiator to dry out. Returning to the object, [illegible] finds it partially melted, sending black elastic ovals creeping down the radiator.

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It is not known, from a clinical perspective, what afflicts [illegible]. But the condition transforms [illegible]'s consciousness into a sequence of vectors: points in space are inextricably drawn together in [illegible]'s perception. Chance arrangements of objects strike [illegible] with the force of sinister sculpture.

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At certain points along the mechanical arm of a pantograph, were a drawing implement to be fixed there, the lines rendered would not resemble either the original or the projected drawing.

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[illegible] gently applies an iron solution to a set of moulded plaster pieces, with a soft brush mounted on an improvised frame, to steady [illegible]'s hand. [illegible] constantly checks the appearance of the pieces against an image in a book open on the workbench. [illegible] is amazed at how closely [illegible]'s work resembles the image.

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[illegible] notices that the tide has deposited a seal carcass on the sand. Skin, flesh and organs have been stripped from the upper body, leaving only bone. It is headless, appearing as an erect rib cage with a tail. The tail, intact, wears oily black skin. Recalling this sight at some later moment, the image of the rib cage momentarily tricks [illegible]'s brain into picturing a human torso with a tail.

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Holding a pencil in each hand, 𝔚 prepares to draw on a sheet of paper. With the points of the two pencils touching in the centre of the sheet, 𝔚 proceeds to describe two spirals, arcing out from their point of origin on a vertical axis of symmetry. 𝔚's head remains perfectly still, gaze fixed on the centre of the paper.

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On 𝔠's desk is a rectangular clear acrylic template with rows of cutaway discs, used for drawing circles of various standard diameters. A collector of such objects, 𝔠 has a novel purpose for them. In each aperture of the template, 𝔠 has placed an object with a circular element that precisely fits the opening. A tiny coiled spring, the crown from a watch, a conical lens, and so on.

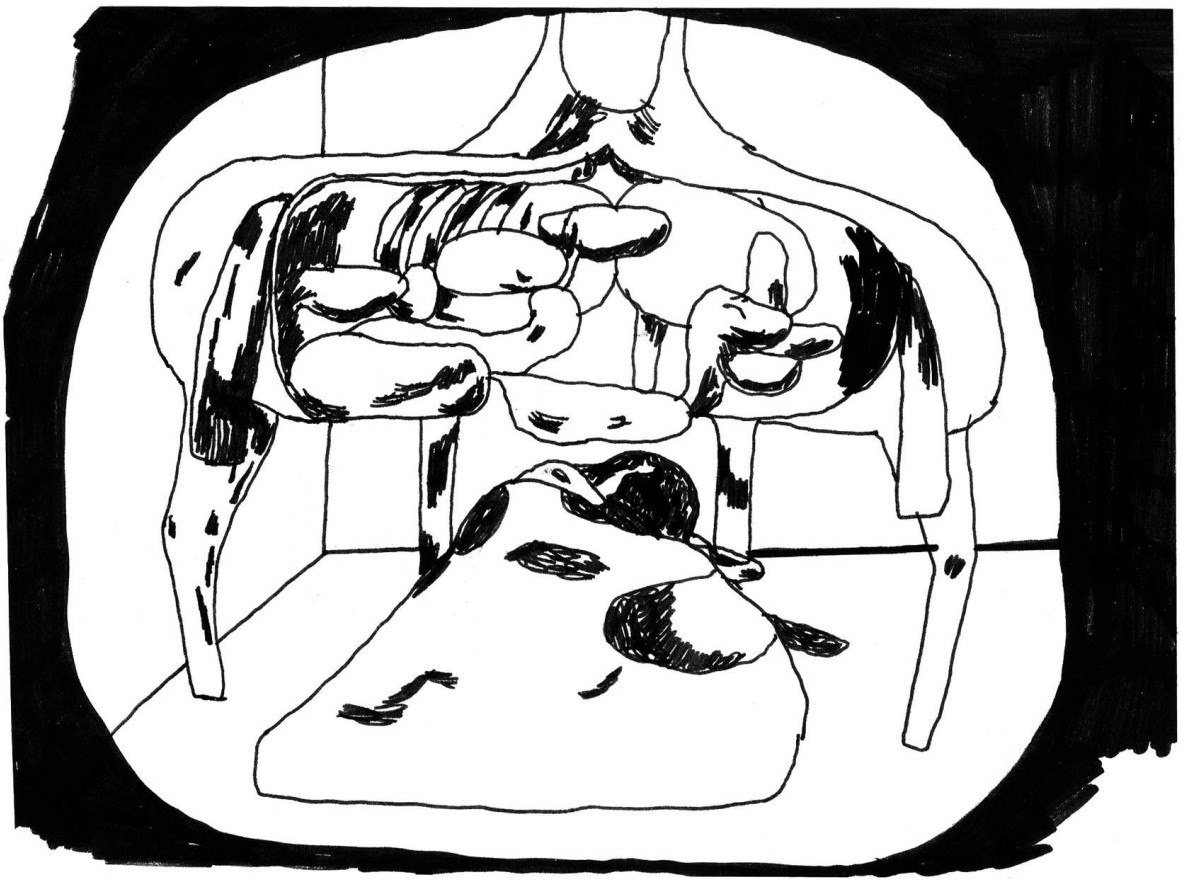
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The plan of a building, drawn from memory.

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𝔄, an amateur enthusiast for automatons, is contacted online by a stranger. Soon after,

[illegible] travels to visit the residence of the stranger, who is in possession of a peculiar machine. It is a humble contraption, with a broad nib crudely bound to the end of its protruding arm. As [illegible] knows, the mechanical movements of such machines are typically programmed with interchangeable punched cards. This example has its programme punched into a solid brass panel that cannot be removed from its mounting. [illegible] had expected to be able to determine what movements the automaton would make by examining this panel, but in this case, [illegible] cannot decipher the coded routine. The automaton's crank mechanism is damaged, and [illegible] arranges to visit the stranger again the following week, bringing parts and tools to repair and replace the mechanism. The following week, [illegible] and the stranger work on the machine, wind its crank, and observe, transfixed, as it begins to make marks in black ink on a sheet of white paper.





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