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it takes a long time to move

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A doorway.

A grave.

A body.

A scar.

The hole was dug in my studio a month after I had moved in and the day after I burned my foot in the metal shop. A new navel sits on the top of my left foot and a raised scar marks an accidental grave in the ground of studio ten in Red Hook, New York. It came from water. A leaking pipe. Blueprints of the building did not point here as the source of the water main because there are no blueprints. Instead, a pipe in the corner and a shot in the dark designated mine as the studio to be cut into. Uninvited wound that let the world come rushing back into that space, pushing me out of a stagnant staring at indecision. The Universal Builders Supply dug the hole seven feet long, almost two and half feet at the widest, and around three feet deep. The ground gave me my material and a pooling of water seemed to laugh at the mistake; the water main was not here.

Each detail holds a larger gesture on a pin prick. Water carved my studio like it carves the small pool on the headstone. The rock that was chipped away collected at its base, reaching back towards something like knowing. A reddish substance leaks from the lowest points in the ground. There is a sheen of oil and orange water sweating on the wall. A conduit strike pierces, or maybe nestles, between the floor and the ceiling, anchoring a new gravity. The room begins to pull inwards and warp. What's becoming is the material that's been left over, sitting somewhere, aging. A single copper wire, like a strand of hair, catches a spotlight. It carries the action of this labor between rock and bone. All this seeping from the space, sweating and crying like unroofed blisters, lays a soggy biology on the architecture. Skin grows like concrete over wounds, stronger for their new covering.

The grave, a gift and a warning, was the skeleton of some home: pipe and foundation and that spongy mush. This loss from the ground, this loss from my body, this reaching back towards something before knowing. I didn't want to touch anything, to claim with my hands. These markers of a life leftover, memorials to the seams where they tore off, hold the memory of a violent separation. It takes a long time to move and the moving is changing and giving, attention and love. How the smallest gesture can tear a hole in concrete. Time closes in on the joints, pushing on like gravity and aging fast.

The doorway as a metronome to set the pace or record the time of all this sinking and piercing. A rubbing of the hole as a doorway. I created a new gravity and invited this weight to sit on my shoulders. The lower I had to be to steady myself, it seemed, the larger and heavier it became. When I was able to untie everything that had become knotted with time, the sudden absence became a wrenching upwards. Bumping up against the ceiling, trying to get past the architecture to become airy. Have you ever wondered how far into the atmosphere a spider can fly on its silk? This method of travel is called ballooning or kiting. The threads, like protein floaters in your eye, lost in blue and fixed in some soft agitation are unwilling or unable to settle.

*Many thanks to Keith, Justin, and the workers at UBS in Red Hook for their work digging and filling the hole.







