

7 Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup>. November 1724

Old cold gold, long sticks with sharp pointed heads. A set of small golden wings stretched out from the middle of each shaft and thin fletching plucked from those same wings tied tight to their base. They always hit their mark and always return back to the bow. Gusionautar: the three golden arrows of time; Second, Minute and Hour zoom continuously through the air, each at their own pace. Hour represents the past and moves slowly, sluggishly striking its target with predictable and almost dull inevitability. Minute represents the present and moves swiftly, a near miss whizzing by before hitting its target from behind. Second represents the future and moves inconceivably fast, almost just a sound, a constant droning whistle through the air. It strikes without you knowing, only a pink mist and a pinhole slit. You pad yourself as if looking through the contents of your pockets only to find yourself falling to the ground.

Someone above acting a fool. A rock the size of a 5000pt period hurtles down at a hundred and twenty km/h hitting and splitting open the skull of a young hiker. A single decisive thump like a few kilos of unbaked clay thrown to the floor rings out as the body slams to the ground and the insides of their cranium pour out onto the surface below.

From the goo splattered pool of brain an idea sticks out like an arrow shot into the ground, ripples in the puddle of blood marking its target, bullseye, the point it was always going to hit. As far as ideas go this one was juicy, fully formed, executable and simple. It was in fact so defined that if someone happened upon the corpse they could've picked up the idea and implemented it without any perceivable variable to its initial form and without any suspicion to their claim to its conception.

When does it happen? Is it happening now, a parallel process to inaction? Simmering on the side until it boils over and boom there you have it. As ideas strike they present the possibility of change, a small killing or sacrifice of the self that existed before it. A fork in the road where the two diverge, the one who pressed on and the one who strayed. Ideas are like some kind of complicated dessert or canapé, something in which a series of conditions, ingredients or qualities (taste, temperature, texture, size and shape, etc.) come together to make a singular thing that is only by its own logic complete, and whose unappealing appearance only makes sense once you taste it. Ideas are (but not limited to):

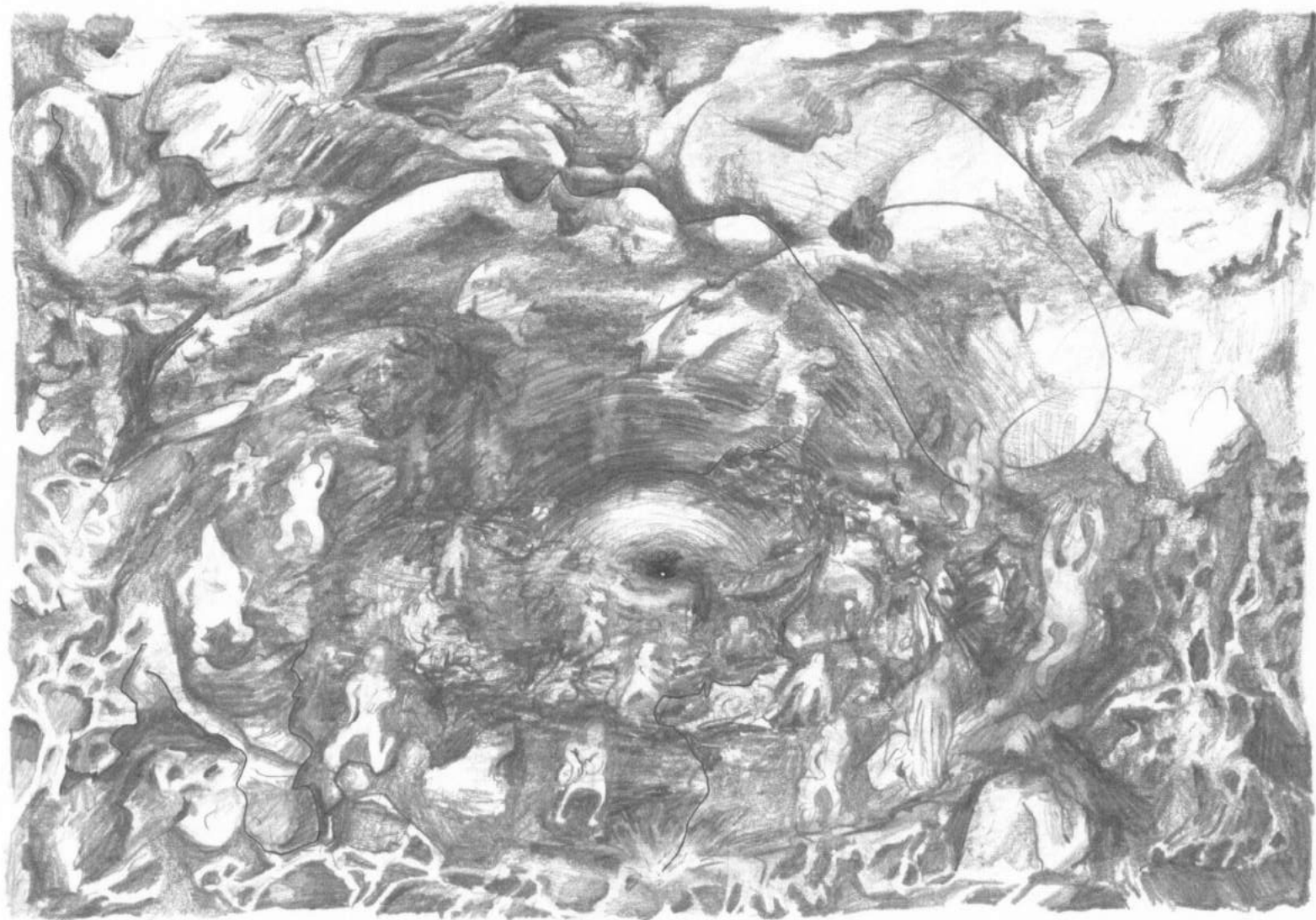
sharp, sticky, palm sized, mouldable, light, heavy, irradiate, translucent, wrinkly, smelly, moist, fresh,

fleshy,  
ugly,  
simple, cute,  
complex, hairy,  
wild, wet, angular,  
flat, circular, bouncy,  
buoyant, iridescent,  
contagious, flammable, rough,  
prickly, shiny, lumpy, tight,  
protruding, cold, mild, illusive, illustrative, fixed,  
cracked, matt, knotted, greasy, tangled, curled, dried,  
tickly, tricky, gooey, cool, silent, buzzing, humming,  
ticking, clicking, beeping, squishing, rusty, dusty, crusty,  
musty, holy, holey, tattered, tattooed, twitching, itching,  
scratchy, fluffy, taffy, scruffy, crappy, hardware,  
software, chips, chipped, clipped, trimmed, stimulating,  
emulating, elongating, elastic, plastic, nasty, crazy, lazy,  
strung, flung, rung, stiff, fluid, fancy, fertile, mushy,  
temporary, contemporary, curvy, boorish, brutish,  
limping, soft, slippery, smooth, familiar, dissimilar,  
evanescent, electric, furry, dirty, flirty, dizzy, halved,  
whole, tasty, straight, bent, foamy, purple, sour, slow,  
hanging, dangling, reflective, old, fine, hissing, meaty,  
tasteless, mute, shaggy, ruthless, course, delicate, evasive,  
kind, shallow, clumsy, ambiguous, stingy, slimy,  
boundless, gaseous, imperfect, miniature, unkempt,  
grotesque, endurable, thirsty, weak, round, clear, misty,

sneaky and  
creepy.

Long after the  
grandchildren  
of the fool above  
drew their dying breath  
and launched themselves into  
the ether the struck idea stuck  
around in the ground. The corpse of the hiker  
grew into a thick spread of deep vivid green moss,  
the kind that takes a few centuries to grow and so  
you should always think twice about stepping on  
to. At the tip of the idea, deep beneath the moss, a  
small fungus grows. Out of it, in every direction,  
fungal neural pathways and synapses spread  
throughout the soil. On the surface three distinct  
concentric circles of dead or diseased moss are  
drawn around the Idea, each larger than the one  
before, each corresponding to the passing of a  
century. Three rings like tree rings, ripples of  
time, a bullseye. Fairies and elves dance along  
these rings, the hidden people whose faces and  
bodies we sometimes glimpse from inside the rocks  
and trees. The creatures that stare back at us from  
eerie constellations of noise. Flowers, cars, clouds  
and piles of other junk heaped together in no

particular order form frozen faces with distinct expressions and personalities. Traces of peep-holes for them to peer at people through. When they dance along the rings - some above and others below - the Idea twitches and twists deeper into the ground emanating a pulse of its own distinct hum, warmth, glow and feeling. The more that join the dance the stronger the continuous rising pulse throbs. The brighter the glow, the warmer the earth, the louder the hum, the stronger the feeling resonating from the Idea.



6

Saturday 19<sup>th</sup>, July 1749

I can try to explain it. To put it into words and chase the feeling. That pulse in the back of my head that maintains it understands, as if the evidence is just a few mumbles away from presenting itself in a complete, coherent sentence that makes perfect sense. I swear I can feel it there, right on the tip of my tongue, or it might just be the lasting aftertaste of something I once knew.

As this unsubstantiated certainty surged through it, it stretched out its arms and legs and rose from the ground, shaking off a thick layer of moss and dirt. The Idea found itself standing in a valley below a steep mountain. Tip-toeing carefully over the spread of moss down off a low plateau, it stood and studied the surrounding landscape. A valley agape by the rising ridges encircling it, both as if covered by an impenetrable fog. Indistinct shadow gaining focus only momentarily when stared directly at, as if conjured up by attention. Meaning materialised at the moment of cognition, as the symbols on the page are deciphered into words, into concepts and meaning. An empty space full of shadows of things which no longer exist. Echoes of memories and notions lingering along empty

surfaces. Ghosts with the power to materialise and haunt anyone who recites them.

At the age of three-hundred the legendary hero Örvar-Oddur, the eponymous hero of the legendary saga written by an anonymous Icelander in the latter part of the 13th century, decided to voyage back to his childhood home to see who was looking after the land. Upon arriving at Berurjóður and finding nothing of his place of birth but eroded soil and overgrown ruin he said to his men,

'I think hopes must be fading about it ever coming true, the prophesy that wretched old witch made about me so long ago'.

As he spoke he saw a horses skull, terribly old and bleached by time.

Could this be the skull of Faxi?"

he said as he prodded the skull with the shaft of his spear.

The clock was always meant to be a clock. It was always meant to return in a circle. Its components were forever destined for mechanical movement, a prescribed motion that tells time. Its mechanical parts are intrinsically in



themselves their prescribed purpose, moving a certain way until they break or wither away. A clock's identity is linked to its purpose and its ability to serve that purpose in past and future terms. A broken clock, having measured its allotted time is still always a clock, existing in time much like a ruler existing in space; too small to measure the circumference of the earth, but still measuring a piece of it perfectly over and over again. Before anything, when the universe was a tiny infinitely dense speck of matter, everything was there, packed together, waiting to be deployed. This moment right now and every moment to ever exist all precisely positioned to eventually come to pass exactly as they would. A seed containing the whole of what a tree will become, its branches and leaves, its trunk and roots.

Extending from the other side before the Big Bang is a precise mirror image of our universe. An exact replica except inverted, an anti-universe made from anti-matter in which the flow of time is reversed. Both are rooted and held up by the other, both draw nourishment and grow from the other. In life things can sometimes come to a standstill and we might forget ourselves standing in a living room. We breathe to supply our brains and blood vessels with oxygen and exhale songs and poems as by-products of the process of ridding the body of carbon dioxide. When we find ourselves barely breathing the best

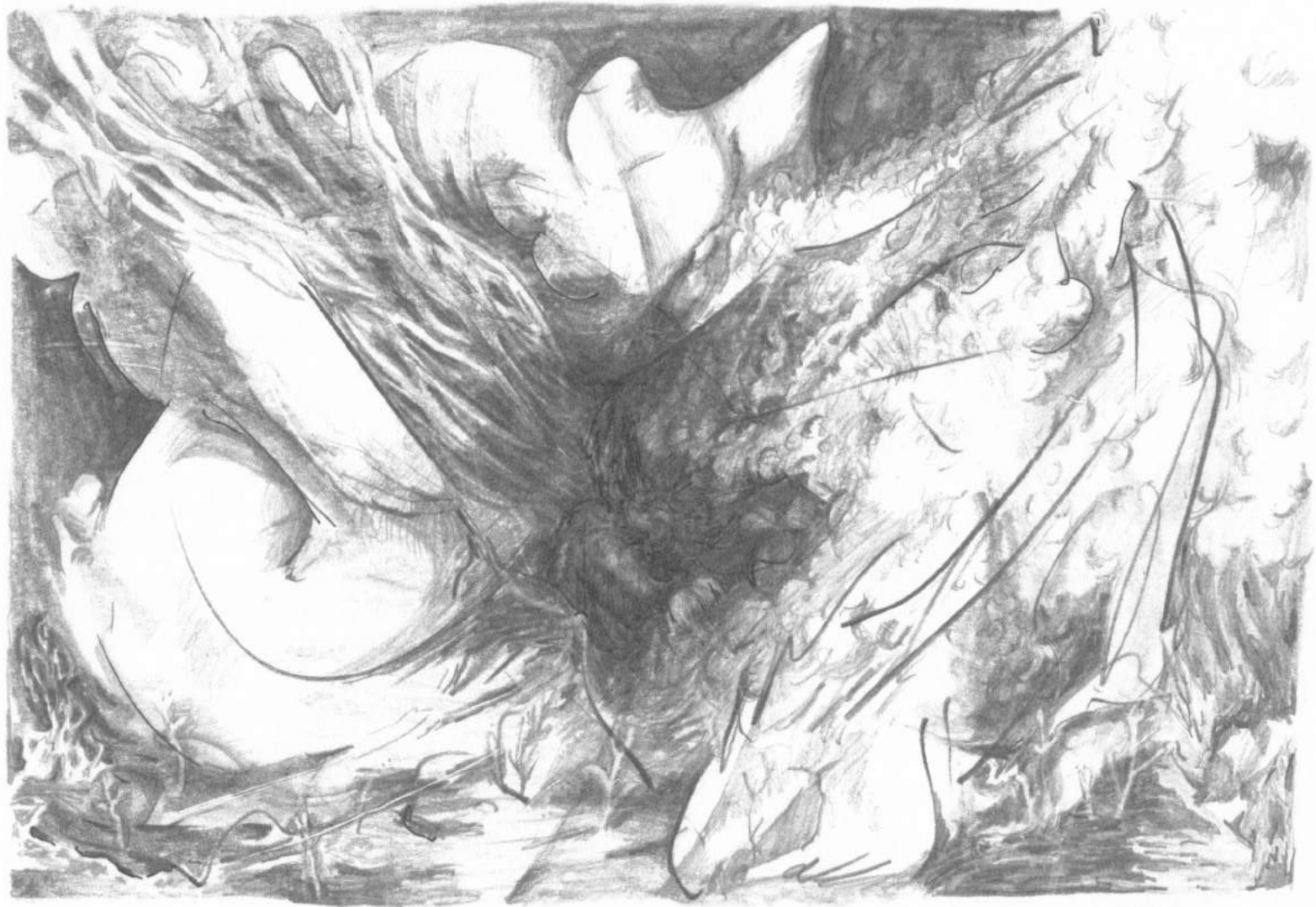
remedy is to go outside, find a path and follow it. On the path the way to go is forwards and backwards and other options are hardly ever entertained. Forwards is a steady stream from the past to now and to the future. We thread the path like a string through our eye, like a needle moving along our perception of time, marching onwards, open mouthed in the centre of an hourglass, ingesting the string that's falling and collecting in a tangled mess at the back of our skull, the worm of conscious experience that constitutes our brain.

Having walked for a full year and studied the passing of each step and how sixty steps, sixty times, twenty-four times was a unit that marked the setting and rising of the sun. And how three-hundred and sixty-five of those marked the birth and death of the seasons. And how the moon inflated and shrunk every twenty-nine days and how the stars in the sky shifted slightly every night. And how his mind would wander and alter slightly every sixty steps, thinking up something new and exciting as time progressed. He wondered if he decided to stop and start walking backwards, retracing his steps, if the sun and moon and his own thoughts would follow. If from the dirt, old frail flowers would rise and bloom and blossom and close their sepals and shrink into the ground.

If mountains would light up, melting and suck up into fiery gashes, returning beneath the earth's crust. To deconstruct rather than build. The march of regression towards devolving to a single microbe. To simplify rather than complicate. The now existing as a prophetic consequence of the future.

As Oddur prodded the skull it shifted and from under it a snake wriggled out, right up to Oddur, and struck him above the ankle. When struck you must act quickly on the impulse, so that something may grow from the moment of death and destruction. It's the body on the brink of compost, of becoming fertile soil that sees the big picture. It's only then, on the cusp, that you can make sense of it all. Meaning is ascribed and not prescribed. I've counted about seventy words in one breath. So if it were your dying breath would that be enough for a farewell to your family and friends? To express regret or some wild deathbed confession or even a declaration of love? Could you describe something to someone who has never seen it but could find it based on your description? Would it be feasible to recite a prayer or a poem? As his leg started to swell up he ordered half of his men to prepare a stone coffin and a fire and the other to sit by his side and memorise as he composed the death poem about his life.

Warriors, attend well  
to the words  
I give form to, frame  
now of my friends:  
to late  
for self-delusion,  
no foolery  
when fate rules ...

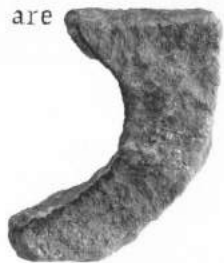


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Saturday 1<sup>st</sup>, October 1735

Far from the mountains along extending open plains it comes upon a small suspicious looking rock, a little piece of land. The rock resembles a comma or an apostrophe. Perhaps it use to separate the peaks of some far away mountain ridge or omitted some less desirable path along it.

A missing puzzle piece that somehow got displaced some centuries ago. Holding it with its index finger through the open loop and pausing momentarily, it pictured a far away mountain ridge tearing in two. A rock isn't from a place, it is a place, it constitutes the actual location. But it's a flock, a school, a mountain of rocks. Where does the mountain go when the rocks disperse? Does the mountain only exist as a collective with all of the rocks or is it still the same if some are missing? Does the first telling encompass the whole of the story, even when some characters and events aren't present yet. Aren't they rocks to the stories mountain? Broken further down to smaller rocks that become words and further to sand that become individual characters on the page. They all have an order to them that make them what they are a specific rhythm or sequence.



The prophesy is always true, each go 'round. In every edition of the story told, these two points in time connect and so the story happens. Its inevitability facilitates the story. It's as if since the writer knows what happens at the end he's tempted to tell the hero, as if he's tempted to tell the reader, not to spoil the story but to negate it. To show the essential futility of every story, that it begins and ends and that the events unfolding aren't dependant on the drama of uncertainty but on the horrors of that inevitability. Perhaps it's so the story doesn't end, but continues to repeat itself endlessly from the tip of the prophesy to the point of the prophesied. A looped hourglass connected without a top or a bottom. Creation always entails a prophetic vision of destruction and so does destruction always exist as a consequence of creation. Round and round it goes, the ouroboros eating its own tail, repeating itself in large and small synchronicities. Every time the story's told its events, characters and settings get more pronounced and more fantastic, as if it's trying to stick around for longer, to prolong the ending, exhausting all possibilities to refine itself. But beneath the surface the cogs are all connected, all editions work like the clockwork that together revolve the second, the minute and hour hand of the clock. Each at their own pace - seemingly independent - the fractal repetition of the same thing but on different scales. A tree and its branches and their twigs and the veins on their leaves.

Macro to micro, as <sup>above</sup> and so <sub>below</sub>.

A small lindworm, a gift from a 9<sup>th</sup> century king to his daughter, grew so large it encircled her bower. It was then slain by the hero who marries the princess. The hero later fathers a son and as prophesied the boy is born with the image of a snake in one eye, encircling his iris and biting itself on the tail. Upon his birth the hero pulled a gold ring from his finger to give the boy as a name-gift but as he held out the ring he touched the boys back, a sign which he took to mean that the boy would hate gold. Described by the account of a young schoolgirl in 19<sup>th</sup> century Iceland, Lagarfljótsormurinn is a great serpent that inhabits the lake Lagarfljót by Egilsstaðir. The story tells of a girl who receives a gold ring from her mother and along with it the advice to place the ring under a lingworm in her linen chest. As weeks progress the worm grows so large it breaks open the chest. Frightened, the girl throws both the worm and the ring into lake Lagarfljót where the serpent continued to grow and wreak havoc on the countryside. Two Finns were later tasked with destroying the worm and retrieving the gold but only managed to tie its head to its tail at the bottom of the lake, where it remains. In 2008 the ecology of the lake was changed forever when water diverted from a newly opened hydropower plant displaced the previously ample fish population and left the lake inhospitable.

The turbines of the hydropower plant are designed to produce 4,600 gigawatt-hours annually for a nearby aluminium smelter. The controversial hydropower plant also drowned about 1,000 square kilometres within Europes (previously) second largest unspoiled wilderness. The power plant feeds on itself and simply by proximity the day-to-day operations are run on the power generated in-house. Lights, monitors and coffee machines that drive the workforce are driven by the plant itself which is in turn run by the workforce. And so the serpent tied at the bottom of the lake Lagarfljót grows larger by the presence of precious metals and with the lack of fish it has begun devouring its own tail. As it grows, the displaced water spills over the lakes banks drowning about 1,000 square kilometres within Europes (previously) second largest unspoiled wilderness and the cycle repeats. Self sufficient, sustainable auto-cannibalism, the ouroboros is eating itself to grow. Hooked up to the spring of a resource, an equilibrium of supply and demand. Producing a new self through the devouring of its past, it's a grotesque but sustainable process.

You'd better not try  
to bully me, Odd,  
with your bit of bough,  
even though I babble:  
the words of the witch  
were wise, you'll see,  
foretelling the future  
and fate of all.

It won't matter whether  
you wander on your way  
by the broad sea-firths,  
pacing the beaches,  
or surf-borne  
by the driven spray  
here your body will burn  
at Berurjod.

The snake will spit  
venom-full, will stab  
sharp from the age-worn  
skull of Faxi:  
the serpent will strike  
at the sole of your foot,  
when, lord, you have lived  
your allotted time.

Heidur, Völva



4 Thursday 28<sup>th</sup>, June 1753

The Idea is clawing its way downhill through the undergrowth. Small trees and shrubs obscure its destination. As it moves hastily forward its clothes and hair get caught on small branches and thorns that tear at it and demand its attention. Mostly it manages to tear itself away quickly and head forward, guided by the small glimpses of light flickering through the brush. Sometimes it lingers, sticks or doesn't notice its garments unraveling around it, tying it to a place in the past.

We tend to view time as a scarce resource, a fixed amount that we barter or lose. A grain of sand from our hourglass to be exchanged for pay, to be spent at a movie theatre or lost standing in a queue. Anecdotally I've heard of Greenland-time, something which I'm guessing comes from the linguistic framing of time in Greenlandic. This produces a more optimistic view of time in which it is something that you gain rather than lose. Like air that's coming to you in an infinite supply and seems silly to perceive as wasted or scarce as it's only the past that's finite.

Reaching a beach at low-tide the Idea, covered in tree bark and branches, approaches a group of 18<sup>th</sup>





century fishermen all wrapped up in rope and leather, readying a rowboat onto the water. Introducing itself as Barkman the Idea asks if it could join their voyage for the day. The fishermen oblige and the group row out from the fjord and into the open waters. The writer, feeling as if he's lost control of the text quickly reaches for an 18<sup>th</sup> century account of a killer-whale feeding frenzy and mixes it in to drown the narrative taking form on the page.

All of a sudden the sea flayed skinless. The sudden froth of a pot of milk boiling over, rising quickly to the brim and flowing onto the stove. Black tips of backs, fins and tails flashed as quickly as they crashed back below. Some swarming sea birds above crushed down by a splash of water on their backs or simply pulled in by the whirling vacuum.

The rowboat's eviscerated almost immediately and the fishermen and Barkman are sucked down through a gaping hole in its hull.

Bubbles and fizz rise to the surface and meet the sky and as quickly as it started it was still. Far off in the distance the silhouette of a hunched man rises from the ocean. The Killer Whale has - as told - a great fin on his back,

the size of a stooped man who stands there looking back after the whale. All he sees is where he is and where he's been, the future is unknown and the past gradually forgotten as it drops into the horizon. In his peripheral vision things seem too fast, blurred and confusing. He is awkward. His hands reversed, folding behind his back so that he cannot see what he does. It's only once he moves forward that he can make sense and reflect on his actions.

### 3 Monday 22<sup>nd</sup>, October 1731

The Idea floats among the fading wreckage of the rowboat scene, sinking deep beneath the surface of a paragraph hunched over by its own load of names and dates. Reaching out it grabs a few lines and arranges the facts into a face.

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remaining paragraph and arranges the characters into an image of a beach.

Satisfied with the result and its regained control over the surrounding text the Idea grabs the

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purposes of this publication Örvar-Odds presence serves primarily as a foundation. As words to scramble and reshape into something else. After all he is only here by complete coincidence or predestined fate, depending on how you look at it. Just a few weeks before starting to write this publication I came across the story by chance while on my knees rummaging through my parents-in-laws attic. I find that instead of focusing on his many adventures it is their framing, the prophesy which connects the beginning and end of the story, as well as his three magical arrows that are most relevant to the clock. Örvar-Odds saga starts after he takes offence to a völva's prophesy and subsequently returns from his foster home at Berurjóður to his family where he insists on joining his kin on a sea voyage. Before leaving, his father gives him a set of three magical arrows called Gúsisnautar. The arrows, passed down to him from his grandfather Ketill hæng, have the magical property of always hitting their mark and always returning back to their bow. On his first adventure a storm carries Oddur to Risaland (Giantland) where he kills a giantess with one of his magical arrows, upon which the chieftain of the giants gives him the nickname Örvar-Oddur (Arrows-Point). The prophesy, which serves as the catalyst for Örvar-Oddur's many adventures, foretold that Oddur would die at his place of birth next to the skull of his horse Faxi at the age of 300. And so, before his adventures he promptly

kills and buries his horse deep underground, vowing to never return again.

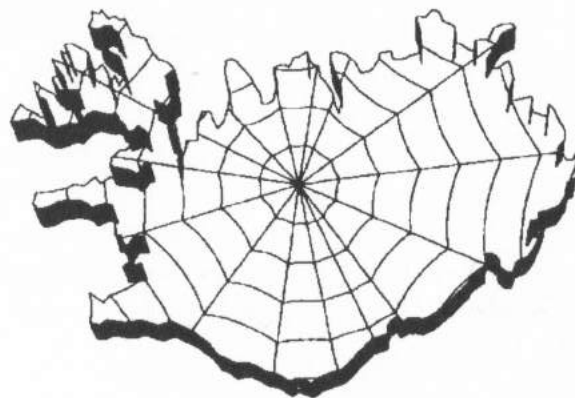
Created by sculptor Jurriaan Westerman in the year 1724 his now almost 300 year old clock is in its movement representative of a continuous unbroken lineage. In the broadest terms the cycle of the clock tells the story of the day. The ascent and descent to and from sleep is in itself a microcosm of life and death. And, in such broad terms the succession of days turned to years, turned to generations, encompass the gradual linear progression and change in circumstance, attitude and self that are encapsulated in one day. Within the original manuscript of Örvar-Odds saga details of voyages and battles are often summed up by a sentence or two, stated matter-of-factly and often concluded with "and nothing else worthy of history happened on that journey until...". Events are often presented almost as bullet-point-like notes. It is usually only when someone speaks in verse that we can find more minute details of the characters surrounding and emotional states. Gradually as the saga is republished, revised and edited, more and more flourishes and descriptions get added to the story as it's told and retold through the centuries.

A cars exhaust is indistinguishable from its thoughts. Each uttered word floats up into the stratosphere like a

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lost balloon. A character can save himself from drowning by calling out for help and wrapping their arms around their expression while an exclamation of panic can act as an airbag in a car crash. Speech balloons often occupy 20 to 40 percent of the field of vision. They physically exist on the fringes of the stories reality, implying that each frame represents relative and varying amounts of time. Each separate speech balloon represents one exhale of the characters lungs. Speech balloons can obscure the listener from the speaker and vice-versa. Here expression occupies more space than any other singular thing in the world. In reality expression has a more ethereal quality. We exhale thoughts out of our bodies where they cover surfaces and mix with the air of the room like vapour. They mix with other peoples thoughts - new and old - indiscriminately as we collectively inhale the fusion - each consequent thought less of ourselves and more of the world than the previous one.

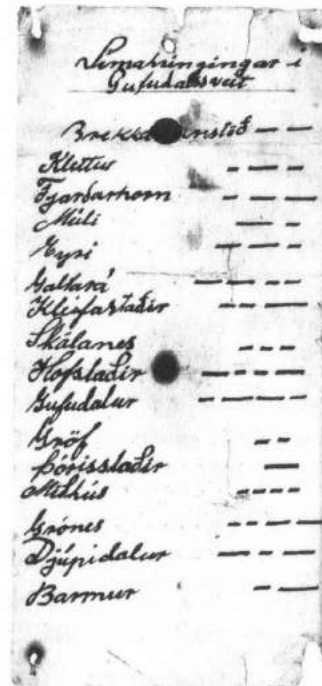
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long-ring.  
short-ring.



Out of the kitchen running up the stairs, out of breath wheezing, picking up the receiver listening in on the heavy panting of the whole provinces curiosity. In the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, despite criticism from farmers and some of the first environmental protests in Iceland, a phone line was strung from Scotland to the Faroe Island to Seydisfjörður on the east coast of Iceland. From Seydisfjörður the phone lines lead through the north coast and down west to Reykjavík. The branching system then lead into different municipalities along the way where each farm would have a specific ringtone arranged in short or long ring patterns. It was then up to each farm to recognise their own ringtone and answer the phone accordingly. These personalised ringtones were assigned this way because a branch of the phone-line was technically the same line and so anyone along it could pick up the receiver and listen in on any call.

You could always be certain that someone was listening and at the start of any phone call you would usually hear the whole province breathing heavily, having dropped whatever they were doing to run up and listen in. And so people learned to accept the farm phone since it was a great source of news and entertainment, and since everyone knew that anyone could be listening people learned to adjust their conversations accordingly. This kind of proto-social-media manifested in early 20<sup>th</sup>

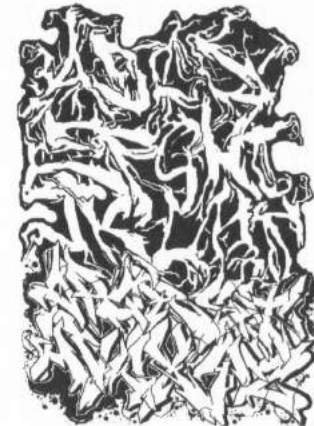
century rural Iceland well before the invention of computers and the internet. Small groups of people interconnected through the voluntary sharing of information - albeit often cherry-picked or specifically tailored - but personal information nevertheless. Their sense of self getting more and more formed by their own representation fed back to them through the eyes of others. Through sharing themselves - whether true or false - a generalised idea of who they were was formed. A reputation which actively effected how people perceived themselves. The offered information thrown between the perceived and the perceiving like a snowball. Melting, compacting, hardening until what they shared was just a cold hard lump of consensus on who they were. An affected self-portrait lurking inside a block of rock. But having revealed some hidden belief or ambition through the process, a shard of glass polished by the ocean and washed ashore is a gemstone in its own right.



2 Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup>, October 1744

Grasping at a few faint threads dangling from the future, a few sentences are trying to both begin and end this thing that doesn't exist yet. The Idea floats between the surface of the margins and the line breaks of the page. It's trying to figure out if it's in a murder mystery, in which the murder was established first and then the rest written towards it. It can see what resembles clues and foreshadowings throughout, as if all is leading up to a big reveal. But it could also just be coincidences or afterthoughts controlled by some applied logic of hindsight. It could be the exact opposite, a text which understands less and less what it's about and what it wants to be as it progresses. A story that loses its characters, textures and motives gradually until it's just the bare bones of what it was to begin with, an urge to say something without yet knowing what. An expressive act using the form of an illegible typography, ornamented and warped for the sake of some criteria exceeding comprehension. The question is then, how does the chosen text - the content and words - relate to and reflect the typography. It is not the subject or content of what is being shown but merely the medium by which it exists,

an arbitrary melody played to demonstrate the range of an instrument. But it must reflect it in some way, it must suit it, you wouldn't choose something too complicated or meant to be understood completely. It reflects the twisted branches and ornate symmetry of black metal typography which is meant to conjure two things before its meaning. Firstly, natural elements; flora, fauna, fire, water, earth and secondly, the viewers disassociation from these aforementioned elements and by association their alienation from the band and its music. In a similar way the twisted, knotted and curved arrows of Wildstyle graffiti refer back to the artists mastery of the skill with the illusory promise of indoctrination or instructions if the viewer follows the guiding arrows, which allude to traffic signs, highway systems and other urban semiotic elements. These too, ultimately make the method of delivery the subject instead of what is being delivered. These are then not just decorative but expressive forms of expression, a kind of poetry existing between the ciphered language and its form of obfuscation.



Gasping for air, clawing its way up from the remains of a paragraph describing a shipwreck in horrific detail, the Idea slowly crawls up the beach on its elbows among descriptions of the torn wooden wreckage and strewn sentence fragments washed ashore.

I'm poking the future with a really long stick, setting in motion conditions for actions that will be. Although this is not necessarily a narrative yet and rather just an aimless trail of thought, these things tend to stay neatly within a somewhat loose logic in which the end is always marked by the heroes return.

Along the shore lies an earlier vision of the future. Peering through the closed counter of characters like O, P, A, B and D the Idea walks down along the sentences to the bottom of the paragraph, up to an undefined metaphorical glass vase which stands there. Picking it up, its materiality is so unstable it falls down to the bottom of the page and shatters to a million pieces.

This depends largely on how loose your interpretation of a narrative is, but if you allow it, any idea expressed can be a kind of story. In this case the hero of the story is the words I lay out on the page and the big battle is whether

or not it works. In the likely outcome of a tragedy in which I lose the thread and find no logical conclusion to the text and the hero of the story loses, if I flip the argument on its head and present the beginning as the conclusion, a coherent story emerges. Destiny followed by a vague prophetic vision of itself. A violent scene of shattered glass scattered across the ground slowly picking itself up and rearranging itself backwards to form a vase.



1 Thursday 15<sup>th</sup>, January 1750

A circle, I've been here before and I'll probably be here again but just a little bit different. Nothing perceivable but I'll feel it, like somebody else has slept in my bed recently. If you walk the same way every day for a hundred days it's a path. If a hundred people walk that same way once it's a road. Ideas can solidify permanently when enough people entertain or accept them. A kind of mantra that loses its individual meaning but gains essence and significance through repetition.

Standing on the brink of the 5<sup>th</sup> edition the Idea looks down from the last remaining pages. On the horizon an indistinct pool of characters float around in a vast ocean.

9<sup>am</sup> this morning the almost 300 year old clock (1724) on top of the Vater-Müller organ in Oude Kerk started to run backwards. For the next two and a half months the hour-hand of the clock will be running back one day every minute and will continue to do so until it reaches a point before of its existence on November 1<sup>st</sup>. During the process I will write and publish pages online for an accompanying publication that will be available in print during a simultaneous vernissage and finissage on November 1<sup>st</sup> 2019 once the work is completed.

This is both the first and last page and I'll be gradually writing and adding them in a newest-first order throughout the process. I don't have any specific ideas yet of what this text will be and I sort of expect this to be the most heavily revised page, but then again I might just leave it unedited. In many ways writing is just an exercise in revision, of polishing past statements into a shape that fits the present. It's kind of a form of deliberate pareidolia, of gradually polishing noise into signal. Currently this present moment is alive and well on the page. The cursor remains one step in front of the sentence, blinking, and as I write I unintentionally try to catch up with it. It blinks once every second, ticking like the second hand of a clock, bobbing up and down on the waves, only making its way down the page in small steps equal to the size of the characters that are typed. It is indicative of time and distance in that sense, measuring the time of writing against the space of the text. As it moves forward it leaves a path of footsteps leading from where its been. Revision is then just a method of untangling and streamlining the path, of cutting off cul-de-sacs and leading detours back to the trail.

Pressing forward as if by some invisible force the Idea marches down the sentences. This would be the moment to fight back, to renounce inevitabilities tight grip on its existence and to leap from

the page. Pushing closer to the edge of the unknown the Idea struggles and digs its heels deep into the punctuation to no avail.

Much like our bodies, the texts path is just an ornate worm, following the laws of a rudimentary digestive system. In space-time every moving body behaves this way, drawing a worm, the tip of which corresponds to its inception that stretches throughout the world - through every instance of its existence - ending at its head in its destruction. In this way the hour hand of the clock forms a continuous snake coiling throughout itself. A multi-layered golden ouroboros eating its own tail

Pinned down on the last period the Idea pushes hard with its feet against the force of the reader. Then suddenly the period comes loose from the sentence and flies off the page.



7 Monday 28<sup>th</sup>, May 1759

Old cold gold, long sticks with sharp pointed heads. A set of small golden wings stretched out from the middle of each shaft and thin fletching plucked from those same wings tied tight to their base. They always hit their mark and always return back to the bow. Gusionautar: the three golden arrows of time; Second, Minute and Hour zoom continuously through the air, each at their own pace. Hour represents the past and moves slowly, sluggishly striking its target with predictable and almost dull inevitability. Minute represents the present and moves swiftly, a near miss whizzing by before hitting its target from behind. Second represents the future and moves inconceivably fast, almost just a sound, a constant droning whistle through the air. It strikes without you knowing, only a pink mist and a pinhole slit. You pad yourself as if looking through the contents of your pockets only to just catch yourself as you fall to the ground red handed.

Someone above acting a fool. A bowling-ball-sized rock hurtles down at a hundred and twenty km/h hitting and splitting open the skull of a young hiker. A single decisive thump like a few kilos of unbaked clay thrown to the floor rings out as the body slams to the ground and the insides of their

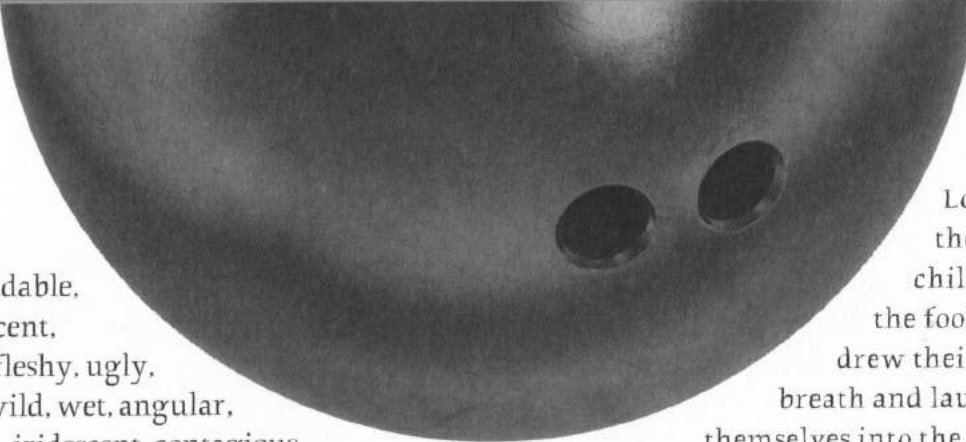
cranium pour out onto the surface below. Out from the goo splattered pool of brain an idea sticks out like an arrow shot in to the ground, ripples in the puddle of blood marking its target, bullseye, the point it was always going to hit.

As far as ideas go this one was juicy, fully formed, executable and simple. It was in fact so defined that if someone happened upon the corpse they could've picked up the Idea and implemented it without any perceivable variable to its initial form and without any suspicion to their claim to its conception.

When does it happen? Is it happening now, a parallel process to inaction? Simmering on the side until it boils over and boom there you have it. As ideas strike they present the possibility of change, a small killing or sacrifice of the self that existed before it. A fork in the road where the two diverge, the one who pressed on and the you who strayed. Ideas are like some kind of complicated dessert or canapé, something in which a series of conditions, ingredients or qualities (taste, temperature, texture, size and shape, etc.) come together to make a singular thing that is only by its own logic a complete thing and whose unappealing appearance only makes sense once you taste it.

Ideas are (but not limited to):

sharp, sticky, palm sized, mouldable, light, heavy, irradiate, translucent, wrinkly, smelly, moist, fresh, fleshy, ugly, simple, cute, complex, hairy, wild, wet, angular, flat, circular, bouncy, buoyant, iridescent, contagious, flammable, rough, prickly, shiny, lumpy, tight, protruding, cold, mild, illusive, illustrative, fixed, cracked, matt, knotted, greasy, tangled, curled, dried, tickly, tricky, gooey, cool, silent, buzzing, humming, ticking, clicking, beeping, squishing, rusty, dusty, crusty, musty, holy, holey, tattered, tattooed, twitching, itching, scratchy, fluffy, taffy, scruffy, crappy, hardware, software, chips, chipped, clipped, trimmed, stimulating, emulating, elongating, elastic, plastic, nasty, crazy, lazy, strung, flung, rung, stiff, fluid, fancy, fertile, mushy, temporary, contemporary, curvy, boorish, brutish, limping, soft, slippery, smooth, familiar, dissimilar, evanescent, electric, furry, dirty, flirty, dizzy, halved, whole, tasty, straight, bent, foamy, purple, sour, slow, hanging, dangling, reflective, old, fine, hissing, meaty, tasteless, mute, shaggy, ruthless, course, delicate, evasive, kind, shallow, clumsy, ambiguous, stingy, slimy, boundless, gaseous, imperfect, miniature, unkempt, grotesque, enduring, thirsty, weak, round, clear, misty, sneaky and creepy.



Long after  
the grand-  
children of  
the fool above  
drew their dying  
breath and launched

themselves into the ether the  
struck idea stuck around in the ground. The corpse  
of the hiker grew into a thick spread of deep vivid  
green moss, the kind that takes a few centuries to  
grow and that you should always think twice  
about stepping on to. At the tip of the Idea, deep  
beneath the moss, a small fungus grows. Out of it,  
in every direction, fungal neural pathways and  
synapses spread throughout the soil. On the  
surface three distinct concentric circles of dead  
or diseased moss are drawn around the Idea, each  
larger than the one before, each corresponding  
to the passing of a century. Three rings like tree  
rings, ripples of time, bullseye. Fairies and elves  
dance along these rings, the hidden people whose  
faces and bodies we sometimes glimpse from  
inside the rocks and trees. The creatures that stare  
back at us from eerie constellations of noise.  
Flowers, cars, buildings, and piles of other junk  
heaped together in no particular order form frozen  
faces with distinct expressions and personalities.

Traces of peep-holes for them to peer at people through. When they dance along the rings - some above and others below - the Idea twitches and twists deeper into the ground emanating a pulse of its own distinct hum, warmth, glow and feeling. The more that join the dance the stronger the continuous rising pulse throbs. The brighter the glow, the warmer the earth, the louder the hum, the stronger the feeling resonating from the Idea.



6 Thursday 20<sup>th</sup>. November 1794

I can try to explain it, put it into words and chase the feeling. That pulse in the back of my head that maintains it understands, as if the evidence is just a few mumbles away from presenting itself in a complete, coherent sentence that makes perfect sense. I swear I can feel it there, right on the tip of my tongue, or it might just be the aftertaste of something I once knew. As the unsubstantiated certainty surged through it, it stretched out its arms and legs and rose from the ground, shaking off a thick layer of moss and dirt. It found itself standing in a valley below a steep mountain.

After tip-toeing carefully across a spread of moss, it stood and studied the surrounding landscape before heading off in a direction that intuitively seemed like the right one.

At the age of three-hundred the legendary hero Örvar-Oddur, the eponymous hero of the legendary saga written by an anonymous Icelander in the latter part of the 13<sup>th</sup> century, decided to voyage back to his childhood home to see who was looking after the land. Upon arriving at Berurjódur and finding nothing of his place of birth but eroded soil and overgrown ruin he said to his men, 'I think hopes must be fading about it ever

coming true, the prophesy that wretched old witch made about me so long ago'. As he spoke he saw a horses skull, terribly old and bleached by time. 'Could this be the skull of Faxi?' he said as he prodded the skull with the shaft of his spear.

The clock was always meant to be a clock. It was always meant to return in a circle. Its components were forever destined for mechanical movement, a prescribed motion that tells time. Its mechanical parts are intrinsically in themselves their prescribed purpose, moving a certain way until they break or wither away. A clocks identity is linked to its purpose and its ability to serve that purpose in past and future terms. A broken clock, having measured its allotted time is still always a clock, existing in time much like a ruler existing in space; too small to measure the circumference of the earth, but still measuring a piece of it perfectly.

Before anything, when the universe was a tiny infinitely dense speck of matter, its components were all there, packed together, waiting to be deployed. All in position to eventually become the moment right now. A seed containing the whole of what a tree will become, its branches and leaves, its trunk and roots. The CPT-Symmetric universe theory proposes that extending from the other side before the Big Bang is a precise mirror image of our universe. An exact replica of our universe



except inverted, an anti-universe made from anti-matter in which the flow of time is reversed. Both are rooted and held up by the other, both draw nourishment and grow from the other. Our perception of time is illustrated by two cones connected at a single point in time and space. The point of connection is our conscious experience of the present in which time moves in through one of the cones, or the 'past cone' and out of the other, the 'future cone'.

Having walked for a full year and studied the passing of each step and how sixty steps, sixty times, twenty-four times was a unit that marked the setting and rising of the sun. And how three-hundred and sixty-five of those marked the birth and death of the seasons. And how the moon inflated and shrunk every 29 days and how the stars in the sky shifted slightly every night. And how its mind would wander and shift slightly every sixty steps, thinking up something new and exciting as time progressed. It wondered if it decided to stop and start walking backwards, retracing its steps, if the sun and moon and its own thoughts would follow. If from the dirt, old frail flowers would rise and bloom and blossom and close their sepals and shrink into the ground. It would seem a simpler task, to devolve. To tear apart rather than build. The march of regression

towards devolving to a single microbe rather than progressing to some inconceivable future form. Devolution as a drive of existence as opposed to evolving. To simplify rather than complicate, the now existing as a prophetic consequence of the future.

As Oddur prodded the skull it shifted and from under it a snake wriggled out, right up to Oddur, and struck him above the ankle. When struck you must act quickly on the impulse, so that something may grow from the moment of death and destruction. It's only then, after the fact, that you can make sense of it all. Meaning is ascribed and not prescribed. It's the voice on the brink of death that sees the big picture and can make sense of it all. As his leg started to swell up he ordered half of his men to prepare a stone coffin and a fire and the other to sit by his side and memorise as he composed the death poem about his life.

Warriors, attend well  
to the words  
I give form to, frame  
now of my friends;  
to late  
for self-delusion,  
no foolery  
when fate rules ...



5 Thursday 9<sup>th</sup>, December 1756

The prophesy is always true, each go 'round. In every edition of the story told, these two points in time connect and the story happens. Its inevitability facilitates the story. In a way it's as if the writer knows what happens at the end and so he's tempted to tell the hero, as if he's tempted to tell the reader, not to spoil the story but to negate it. To show the essential futility of every story, that it begins and ends and that the events unfolding aren't dependant on the drama of uncertainty but on the horrors of that inevitability. A looped hourglass connected without a top or a bottom, creation always entails a prophetic vision of destruction and so does destruction always exist as a consequence of creation. Round and round it goes, the ouroboros snake eating its own tail, repeating itself in large and small synchronicities. Every time the story's told its events, characters and settings get more pronounced and more fantastic, as if it's trying to stick around for longer, to prolong the eventuality of ending. But beneath the surface the cogs are all connected, all editions work like the clockwork that together revolve the second, the minute and the hour hands of the clock. Each at their own pace - seemingly independent - the fractal repetition of the same thing but on different scales. A tree and its branches and their twigs and the veins on their leaves. Macro to micro, as above and so below.

Far from the mountains along extending open plains it comes upon a small suspicious looking rock. The rock resembles the handle of a teacup broken clean off. Perhaps it was the handle of some far away mountain. A missing puzzle piece that used to belong to it but got displaced some centuries ago. A little piece of land. Holding it with its index finger through the open loop it pictured a far away mountain shifting to its side. A rock isn't from a place, it is a place, it constitutes the actual location. But it's a flock, a school, a mountain of rocks. Where does the mountain go when the rocks disperse? Does the mountain only exist as a collective with all of the rocks or is it still the same if some are missing? Does the first telling encompass the whole of the story, even when some characters and events aren't present yet. Aren't they rocks to the stories mountain? Broken further down to smaller rocks that become words and further to sand that become individual characters on the page. They all have an order to them that make them what they are. A specific rhythm or sequence. But, as there are stories that contain the same or similar events, features or characters, are there also mountains made up of rocks from other older mountains? Jungian mountains, Campbellian mountains? Echoes of



some ancient geographical knowledge reverberating beneath the surface, a cosmic geological sequence.

A small lindworm, a gift from a 9<sup>th</sup> century king to his daughter, grew so large it encircled her bower. It was then slain by the hero who marries the princess. The hero later fathers a son and as prophesied the boy is born with the image of a snake in one eye, encircling his iris and biting itself on the tail. Upon his birth the hero pulled a gold ring from his finger to give the boy as a name-gift but as he held out the ring he touched the boy's back, a sign which he took to mean that the boy would hate gold. Described by the account of a young schoolgirl in 19<sup>th</sup> century Iceland, Lagarfljótsormurinn is a great serpent that inhabits the lake Lagarfljót by Egilsstaðir. The story tells of a girl who receives a gold ring from her mother and along with it the advice to place the ring under a ringworm in her linen chest. As weeks progress the worm grows so large it breaks open the chest. Frightened, the girl throws both the worm and the ring into lake Lagarfljót where the serpent continued to grow and wreak havoc on the countryside. Two Finns were later tasked with destroying the worm and retrieving the gold but only managed to tie its head to its tail at the bottom of the lake, where it remains. In 2008 the ecology of the lake was changed forever when water diverted

from a newly opened hydropower plant displaced the previously ample fish population and left the lake inhospitable. The turbines of the hydropower plant are designed to produce 4,600 gigawatt-hours annually for a nearby aluminium smelter. The controversial hydropower plant also drowned about 1,000 square kilometres within Europe's (previously) second largest unspoiled wilderness. The power plant feeds on itself. It is of course connected to the country's power grid but simply by proximity the day-to-day operations are run on the power generated in-house. Lights, monitors and coffee machines that drive the workforce are driven by the plant itself which in turn is run by the workforce. And so the serpent tied at the bottom of the lake Lagarfljót grows larger by the presence of profits and with the lack of fish it has begun devouring its own tail. As it grows, the displaced water spills over the lake's banks and the story repeats itself. Self-sufficient, sustainable auto-cannibalism, the ouroboros is eating itself to grow. Hooked up to the spring of a resource, an equilibrium of supply and demand. Producing a new self through the devouring of its past, it's a grotesque but sustainable process.

You'd better not try  
to bully me, Odd,  
with your bit of bough,  
even though I babble:  
the words of the witch  
were wise, you'll see,  
foretelling the future  
and fate of all.

It won't matter whether  
you wander on your way  
by the broad sea-firths,  
pacing the beaches,  
or surf-borne  
by the driven spray  
here your body will burn  
at Berurjod.

The snake will spit  
venom-full, will stab  
sharp from the age-worn  
skull of Faxi:  
the serpent will strike  
at the sole of your foot,  
when, lord, you have lived  
your allotted time.

Heidur, Völva



4 Sunday 10<sup>th</sup>, October 1756

The Idea is clawing its way downhill through the undergrowth. Small trees and shrubs obscure its destination. As it moves hastily forward its clothes and hair get caught on small branches and thorns that tear at it and demand its attention. Mostly it manages to tear itself away quickly to head forward, guided by the small glimpses of light flickering through the brush. Sometimes it lingers, sticks or doesn't notice its garments unraveling around it, tying it to a place in the past.

We tend to view time as a scarce resource, a fixed amount that we barter or lose. A grain of sand from our hourglass to be exchanged for pay, to be spent at a movie theatre or lost standing in a queue. Anecdotally I've heard of Greenland-time, something which I'm guessing comes from the linguistic framing of time in the Greenlandic language. This produces a more optimistic view of time in which it is something that you gain rather than lose. Like air that's coming to you in an infinite supply and seems silly to perceive as wasted or scarce. It's only the past that's finite.

Reaching a beach at low-tide the Idea, covered in tree bark and branches, approaches a group of 18<sup>th</sup>



century fishermen all wrapped up in rope and leather, readying a rowboat onto the water. Introducing itself as Barkman the Idea asks if it could join their voyage for the day. The fishermen oblige and the group row out from the fjord and into the open waters.

The writer, feeling as if he's lost control of the text quickly reaches for an 18<sup>th</sup> century account of a killer-whale feeding frenzy and mixes it in to drown the narrative taking form on the page.

All of a sudden the sea flayed skinless. The sudden froth of a pot of milk boiling over, rising quickly to the brim and flowing onto the stove. Black tips of backs, fins and tails flashed as quickly as they crashed back below. Some swarming sea birds above crushed down by a splash of water on their backs or simply pulled in by the whirling vacuum.

The rowboat's eviscerated almost immediately and the fishermen and Barkman are sucked down through a gaping hole in its hull.

Bubbles and fizz rise to the surface and meet the sky and as quickly as it started it was still. Far off in the distance the silhouette of a hunched man rises from the ocean.

The Killer Whale has - as told - a great fin on his back, the size of a stooped man who stands there looking back after the whale. All he sees is where he is and where he's been, the future is unknown and the past gradually forgotten as it drops into the horizon. In his peripheral vision things seem too fast, blurred and confusing. He is awkward.

His hands reversed, folding behind his back so that he cannot see what he does. It's only once he moves forward that he can make sense and reflect on his actions.



3

Friday 10<sup>th</sup>, September 1756

The Idea floats among the fading wreckage of the rowboat scene, sinking deep beneath the surface of a paragraph hunched over by its own load of names and dates. Reaching out it grabs at the first line and arranges the words into a smiling face.

sometime  
 Written sagas  
 in. cal  
 13th sti  
 ce nta  
 nt Ö fa  
 ury r of  
 Ice set  
 land, a  
 rvar as  
 -Odd sa is sag  
 A ga. part ary  
 Of of Fornalda ,end  
 rsaga leg  
 Nordu Norse  
 rlanda or the

Satisfied with the result and its regained control over the surrounding text the Idea grabs enough

lines from the remaining paragraph to arrange their words into ladder long enough to climb up to the surface.

tthr- ee  
 to referring I'm Current-ly .ti-  
 me the of religions and  
 sen- sib-  
 ilities the reflect which  
 red- acti-  
 ons and additions own  
 their w-  
 ith each saga, Örvar-O-  
 dds of  
 editions few a quite are  
 Th- ere  
 .Hrafnista from heroes  
 le- gen-  
 dary of lineage a of gen-  
 era tio-  
 n third the him making  
 hæ- ng-  
 s, saga Ketil of hero the  
 ,h- æn-  
 g Ketill of grandson and  
 lod -ki-  
 nna, saga Gríms of hero  
 the lod-  
 kinni, Grímur of son the  
 is O ddur

Climbing up along the ladder perched against the remaining paragraphs it notices for the first time that out from the top of its head small puffs of smoke or clouds materialise.

They linger momentarily, containing meaningful non-expressions before dispersing into nothing.

editions. The first edition that I am referring to is by Gudni Jónssons and Bjarni Vilhjálmsson and was published in Reykjavík, 1943. This is the longest version of the story, with added poems and chapters which are based on the first publishing of the saga in Uppsala, 1697. The second edition that I am referring to was edited by C.C. Rafn in Copenhagen, 1829 in the second volume of Fornaldar sögur Nordurlanda and later translated into English by Hermann Pálsson and Paul Edward and published as Arrow-Odd: A Medieval Novel in New York, 1970 and later as Seven viking romances in London, 1985. From this source I've taken the translations of the poems included in this text, which are somewhat longer and more flourished than the original Icelandic texts. Finally the third edition that I am referring to was published by Dutch linguist R. C. Boer in Leiden, 1888. This edition takes the most scientific stance towards the text, it is the shortest of the three and most like the original manuscript. This was the basis for a publication by Thorsteinn frá Hamri in Reykjavík, 1977. A beautiful

little orange paperback with illustrations by Gúdrún Svava Svavarsdóttir. I came across this edition whilst on my knees rummaging through my parents-in-laws attic this summer before starting to write this publication. For the purposes of this publication I won't get much into Örvar Oddurs many adventures but rather focus more on their framing, the prophesy which connects the beginning and ending of the story as well as his three magical arrows.

His adventures start after his taking offence to a völva's prophesy, after which Oddur returns from his foster home at Berurjóður to his family where he insists on joining his kin on a voyage abroad. Before leaving, his father gives him a set of three magical arrows called Gusisnautar. The arrows, passed down to him from his grandfather Ketill hæng, have the magical property of always hitting their mark and always returning back to their bow. On his first adventure a storm carries Oddur to Risaland (Giantland) where he kills a giantess with one of his magical arrows, upon which the chieftain of the giants gives him the nickname Örvar-Oddur (Arrows-Point). The prophesy, which serves as the catalyst for Örvar-Oddur's many adventures, foretold that Oddur would die at his place of birth next to the skull of his horse Faxi at the age of 300. And so, before his adventures he promptly kills and buries his horse deep underground, vowing to never return again.

Created by sculptor Jurriaan Westerman in the year 1724 the now almost 300 year old clock is in its movement representative of a continuous unbroken lineage. In the broadest terms the cycle of the clock tells the story of the day. The ascent and descent to and from sleep is in itself a microcosm of a life and death. And in such broad terms the succession of days turned to years, turned to generations, encompass the gradual linear progression and change in circumstance, attitude and self that are encapsulated in one day.

A cars exhaust is indistinguishable from its thoughts. Each uttered word floats up into the stratosphere like a lost balloon. A character can save himself from drowning by calling out for help and wrapping their arms around their expression while an exclamation of panic can act as an airbag in a car crash. Speech balloons often occupy 20 to 40 percent of the field of vision. They physically exist on the fringes of the stories reality implying that each frame represents relative and varying amounts of time. Each separate speech balloon represents one exhale of the characters lungs. Speech balloons can obscure the listener from the speaker and vice-versa. Here expression occupies more space than any other singular thing in the world. In reality expression has a more ethereal quality, we exhale thoughts out of our bodies where they cover surfaces and mix with the air of the room like vapour.

They mix with other peoples thoughts - new and old - indiscriminately as we collectively inhale the fusion. Whereas in here expression is contained within sovereign capsules, in our world each consequent thought is less of ourselves and more of the world then the previous one.

2 Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup>, August 1756

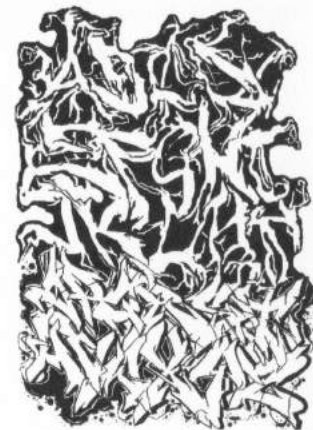
Grasping at a few faint threads dangling from the future, a few sentences trying to both begin and end this thing that doesn't exist yet. The Idea floats between the surface of the margins and the line breaks of the page. It's trying to figure out if it's in a murder mystery, in which the murder was established first and then the rest written towards it. It can see what resembles clues and foreshadowings throughout, as if all is leading up to a big reveal. But they could also just be coincidences or afterthoughts controlled by some applied logic of hindsight. They could be the exact opposite, a text which understands less and less what it's about and what it wants to be as it progresses. A story that loses its characters, textures and motives gradually until it's just the bare bones of what it was to begin with, an urge to say something without yet knowing what.

They could be illegible typography, ornamented and warped for the sake of some criteria exceeding comprehension. The question is then, how does the chosen text - the content and words - relate to and reflect the typography. It is not the subject or content of what is being shown but merely the

medium by which it exists, an arbitrary melody played to demonstrate the range of an instrument. But it must reflect it in some way, it must suit it, you wouldn't choose something too complicated or meant to be understood completely. It reflects the twisted branches and ornate symmetry of black metal typography which is meant to conjure two things before its meaning. Firstly, natural elements; flora, fauna, fire, water, earth and secondly, the viewers disassociation from these aforementioned elements and by association their alienation from the band and its music.

In a similar way the twisted, knotted and curved arrows of Wildstyle graffiti refer back to the artists mastery of the skill with the illusory promise of indoctrination or instructions if the viewer follows the guiding arrows, which allude to traffic signs, highway systems and other urban semiotic elements. These too, ultimately make the method of delivery the subject instead of what is being delivered.

Gasping for air, clawing its way up from the remains of a paragraph describing a shipwreck in horrific detail,



the Idea slowly crawls up the beach on its elbows among descriptions of the torn wooden wreckage and strewn sentence fragments washed ashore.

I'm poking the future with a really long stick, setting in motion conditions for actions that will be. Although this is not necessarily a narrative yet and rather just an aimless trail of thought, these things tend to stay neatly within a somewhat loose logic in which the end is always marked by the hero's return.

Along the shore lies an earlier vision of the future. Peering through the closed counter of characters like O, P, A, B and D the Idea walks down along the sentences to the bottom of the paragraph, up to an undefined metaphorical glass vase which stands there. Picking it up, its materiality is so unstable it falls down to the bottom of the page and shatters to a million pieces.

This depends largely on how loose your interpretation of a narrative is, but if you allow it, any idea expressed can be a kind of story. In this case the hero of the story is the words I lay out on the page and the big battle is whether or not it works. In the likely outcome of a tragedy I lose the thread and find no logical conclusion to the text and the hero of the story loses. In this almost inevitable

outcome, if I flip the argument on its head and present the beginning as the conclusion, a coherent story emerges. Destiny followed by a vague prophetic vision of itself. A violent scene of shattered glass scattered across the ground slowly picking itself up and rearranging itself backwards to form a vase.

1 Monday 12<sup>th</sup>, July 1756

A circle. I've been here before and I'll probably be here again but just a little bit different. Nothing perceivable but I'll feel it, like somebody else has slept in my bed recently. If you walk the same way every day for a hundred days it's a path. If a hundred people walk that same way once it's a road.

Standing on the brink of the 4<sup>th</sup> edition the Idea looks down from the last two remaining pages. On the horizon an indistinct pool of characters float around in a vast ocean.

At 9<sup>am</sup> this morning the almost 300 year old clock (1724) on top of the Vater-Müller organ in Oude Kerk started to run backwards. For the next two and a half months the hour-hand of the clock will be running back one day every minute and will continue to do so until it reaches a point before its own existence on November 1<sup>st</sup>. A procedure which is in a sense both a performance as well as a necessary process within the making of the work *This Clock Before It Existed*.

During the process I will write and publish pages online for an accompanying publication that will be available in print during a simultaneous Vernissage and Finissage

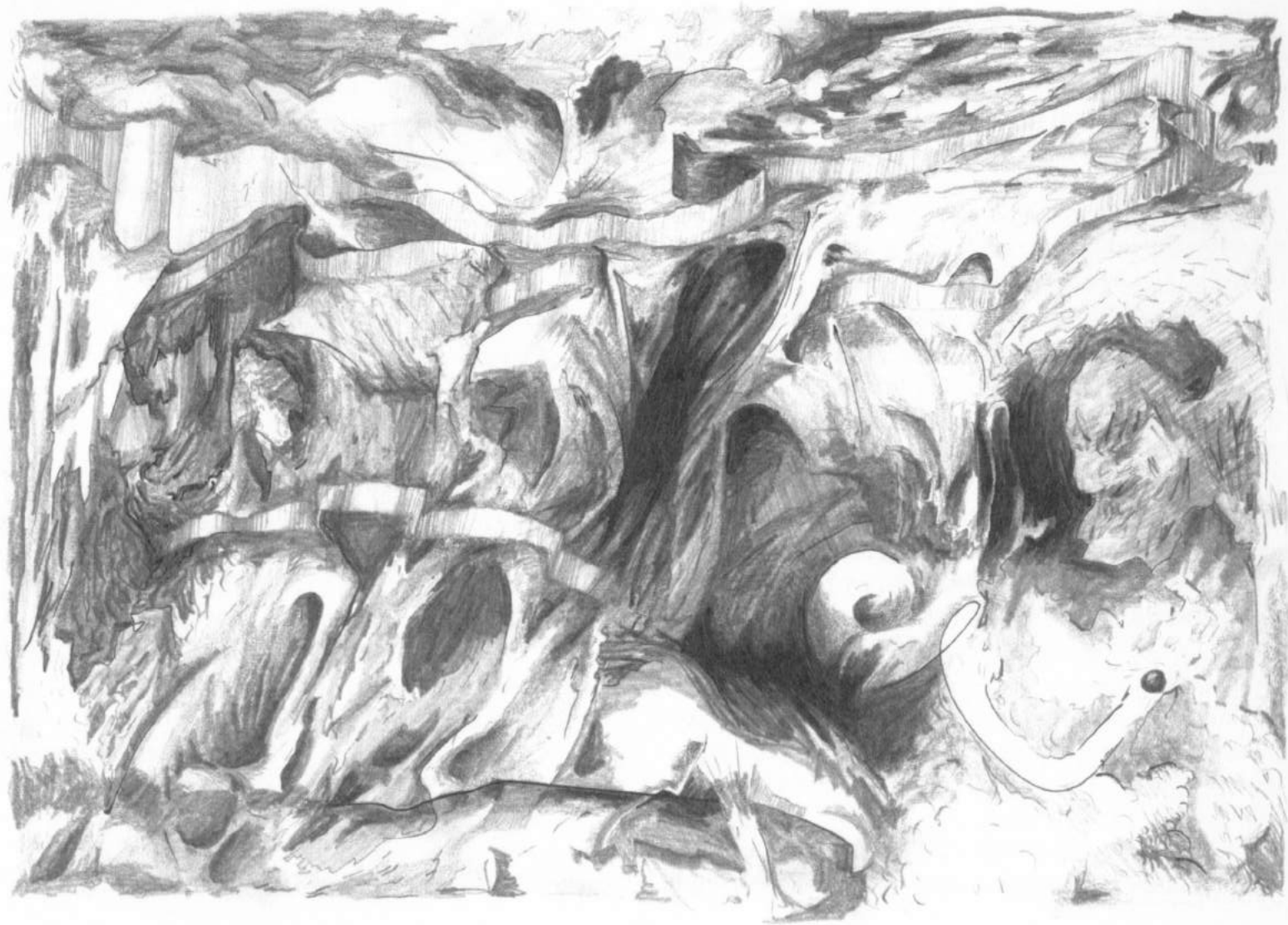
on November 1<sup>st</sup> once the work is completed. This is both the first and last page and I'll be gradually writing and adding them in a newest to first order throughout the process. At the top of each text I'll be including the clocks current time in the past corresponding to the time of publishing. In the publication and online I'll also be including all older editions to any revision I make of the text along with the clocks current date at the moment of revision. I don't have any specific ideas yet of what this text will be and I sort of expect this to be the most heavily revised page, but then again I might just leave it unedited. In many ways writing is just an exercise in revision, of polishing past statements into a shape that fits the present. Currently this present moment is alive and well on the page. The cursor remains one step in front of the sentence, blinking, and as I write I unintentionally try to catch up with it. It blinks once every second, ticking like the second hand of a clock, bobbing up and down on the waves, only making its way down the page in small steps equal to the size of the characters that are typed. It is indicative of time and distance in that sense, measuring the time of writing against the space of the text. As it moves forward it leaves a path of footsteps leading from where its been.

Pressing forward as if by some invisible force the Idea marches down the sentences. This would be

the moment to fight back, to renounce inevitabilities tight grip on its existence and to leap from the page. Pushing closer to the edge of the unknown the Idea struggles and digs it's heels deep into the punctuation to no avail.

In space-time every moving body behaves this way, drawing a worm, the tip of which corresponds to its inception that stretches throughout the world - through every instance of its existence - ending at its head in its destruction. In this way the hour hand of the clock forms a continuous golden worm coiling throughout itself eating its own tail like the ouroboros snake that's represented around it

Pinned down on the last period the Idea pushes hard with its feet against the force of the reader. Then suddenly the period comes loose from the sentence and flies off the page.





7 Saturday 11<sup>th</sup>, September 1773

Old cold gold, long sticks with sharp pointed heads. A set of small golden wings stretched out from the middle of each shaft and thin fletching plucked from those same wings tied tight to their base. They always hit their mark and always return to the bow. Gusionautar: the three golden arrows of time; Second, Minute and Hour zoom continuously through the air, each at their own pace. Hour represents the past and moves slowly, sluggishly striking its target with predictable and almost dull inevitability. Minute represents the present and moves swiftly, a near miss whizzing by before hitting its target from behind. Second represents the future and moves inconceivably fast, almost just a sound, a constant droning whistle through the air like a swarm of flies. It strikes without you knowing, only a pink mist and a pinhole slit. You pad yourself as if looking through the contents of your pockets only to catch yourself red handed before falling to the ground.

Someone above acting a fool. A round head-sized rock hurtles down at a hundred and twenty km/h hitting and splitting open the skull of a young hiker. A single decisive thump like a few kilos of unbaked clay thrown to the floor rings out as the body slams to the ground and the insides of their

cranium pour out onto the surface below. Out from the goo splattered pool of brain an idea sticks out like an arrow shot in to the ground, ripples in the puddle of blood marking its target, bullseye, the point it was always going to hit. As far as ideas go this one was juicy, fully formed, executable and simple. It was in fact so defined that if someone happened upon the corpse they could've picked it up and implemented it without any perceivable variable to its initial form and without any suspicion to their claim of its conception.

When ideas strike they present the possibility of change, a small killing or sacrifice of the self that existed before it. A fork in the road where the two diverge, the you who strayed and the one who pressed on. Ideas are like some kind of complicated canapé or dessert, in which a series of conditions, ingredients or qualities (taste, temperature, texture, size and shape, etc.) come together to make a singular thing that is only by its own logic a complete thing and whose unappealing appearance only makes sense once you taste it. Ideas are (but not limited to): Sharp, sticky, palm sized, mouldable, light, heavy, irradiate, translucent, wrinkly, smelly, moist, fresh, fleshy, ugly, simple, cute, complex, hairy, wild, wet, angular, flat, circular, bouncy, buoyant, iridescent.

contagious, flammable, rough, prickly, shiny, lumpy, tight, protruding, cold, mild, illusive, illustrative, fixed, cracked, matt, knotted, greasy, tangled, curled, dried, tickly, tricky, gooey, cool, silent, buzzing, humming, ticking, clicking, beeping, squishing, rusty, dusty, crusty, musty, holy, holey, tattered, tattooed, twitching, itching, scratchy, fluffy, taffy, scruffy, crappy, hardware, software, chips, chipped, clipped, trimmed, stimulating, emulating, elongating, elastic, plastic, nasty, crazy, lazy, strung, flung, rung, stiff, fluid, fancy, fertile, mushy, temporary, contemporary, curvy, boorish, brutish, limping, soft, slippery, smooth, familiar, dissimilar, evanescent, electric, furry, dirty, flirty, dizzy, halved, whole, tasty, straight, bent, foamy, purple, sour, slow, hanging, dangling, reflective, old, fine, hissing, meaty, tasteless, mute, shaggy, ruthless, course, delicate, evasive, kind, shallow, clumsy, ambiguous, stingy, slimy, boundless, gaseous, imperfect, miniature, unkempt, grotesque, endurable, thirsty, weak, round, clear, misty, sneaky and creepy.

Long after the grandchildren of the fool above drew their dying breath and launched themselves into the ether the struck Idea stuck around in the ground. The corpse of the hiker grew into a thick spread of deep vivid green moss, the kind that takes a few centuries to grow and that any hiker should

think twice about stepping on to. At the tip of the Idea, deep beneath the moss, a small fungus grows. Out of it in every direction fungal neural pathways and synapses spread throughout the soil. On the surface three distinct concentric circles of dead or diseased moss are drawn around the Idea, each larger than the one before, each corresponding to the passing of a century, ripples of time. Three rings like tree rings, a target bullseye. Fairies and elves dance along these rings, the hidden people whose faces and bodies we sometimes glimpse from inside the rocks and trees. The faces that stare back at us from eerie constellations of noise. Flowers, cars, buildings, clouds and piles of other junk heaped together in no particular order form frozen faces with distinct expressions and personalities. Traces of peep-holes for them to peer at people through. The joy they feel when we see them causes them to leap into dance and when they dance along the rings - some above and others below - the Idea twitches and twists deeper into the ground emanating a pulse of its own distinct hum, warmth, glow and feeling. The more that join the dance the stronger the continuous rising pulse throbs. The brighter the glow, the warmer the earth, the louder the hum, the stronger the feeling resonating from the Idea.



6

Saturday 18<sup>th</sup>, July 1818

I can try to explain it, put it into words and chase the feeling of knowing. The pulse in the back of my head that asserts it understands, as if the evidence is just a few mumbles away from presenting itself in a complete, coherent sentence that makes perfect sense. I swear I can feel it there, right on the tip of my tongue, or it might just be the aftertaste of something I once knew.

At the age of three-hundred the legendary hero Örvar-Oddur decided to voyage back to his childhood home to see who was looking after the land. Upon arriving at Berurjódur and finding nothing of his place of birth but eroded soil and overgrown ruin he said to his men, 'I think hopes must be fading about it ever coming true, the prophesy that wretched old witch made about me so long ago'. As he spoke he saw a horses skull, terribly old and bleached by time. 'Could this be the skull of Faxi?' he said as he prodded the skull with the shaft of his spear. The clock was always meant to be a clock. It was always meant to return in a circle. Its components were forever destined for mechanical movement, a prescribed motion that tells time. Its mechanical parts are intrinsically in themselves their prescribed purpose, moving a certain way until they break or wither away. A clocks identity

is linked to its purpose and its ability to serve that purpose in past and future terms. A broken clock, having measured its allotted time is still always a clock, existing in time much like a ruler existing in space; too small to measure the circumference of the earth, but still measuring a piece of it perfectly.

Before anything, when the universe was a tiny infinitely dense speck of matter, its components were all there, packed together, waiting to be deployed. All in position to eventually become the moment right now. A seed containing the whole of what a tree will become, its branches and leaves, its trunk and roots. The CPT-Symmetric or Charge, and time reversal symmetric universe theory proposes a mirror image of our universe extending from the other side of the Big Bang. An exact replica of our universe except inverted, an anti-universe made from antimatter in which the flow of time is reversed. Both are rooted and held up by the other, both draw nourishment and grow from the other. My perception of time is illustrated by two cones connected at a single point in time and space. The point of connection is my conscious experience of the present in which time moves in through one of the cones, or the 'past cone' and out of the other, the 'future cone'. How I make sense of myself and my surrounding is informed by a fractal microcosm of the passage of time.

The birth and death of a year of seasons is the reaping of a months pay, is a days waking and falling asleep, is the change that occurs over a minute of thought. If I don't think too hard about it, I can imagine the reverse of that dictating my experience and consciousness. If the laws of time were bound by causality reversed, then thinking and writing this today would mean thinking and writing something simpler yesterday. It seems like a simpler task, to devolve. To tear apart rather than build. For the march of humanity to be towards devolving to a single microbe rather than some inconceivable future form. Devolution as a drive of existence as opposed to evolving. To simplify rather than complicate and the now existing as a prophetic consequence of the future. As Oddur prodded the skull it shifted and from under it a snake wriggled out, right up to Oddur, and struck him above the ankle.

When struck you must act quickly on the impulse, so that something may grow from the moment of death and destruction. It's only then, after the fact, that you can make sense of it all. Meaning is ascribed and not prescribed. It's the voice on the brink of death that sees the big picture and can makes sense of it all. As his leg started to swell up he ordered half of his men to prepare a stone coffin and a fire and the other to sit by his side and memorise as he composed the death poem about his life.

Warriors, attend well  
to the words  
I give form to, frame  
now of my friends:  
to late  
for self-delusion,  
no foolery  
when fate rules ...



5 Sunday 13<sup>th</sup>, June 1773

You'd better not try  
to bully me, Odd,  
with your bit of bough,  
even though I babble;  
the words of the witch  
were wise, you'll see,  
foretelling the future  
and fate of all.

It won't matter whether  
you wander on your way  
by the broad sea-firths,  
pacing the beaches,  
or surf-borne  
by the driven spray  
here your body will burn  
at Berurjod.

The snake will spit  
venom-full, will stab  
sharp from the age-worn  
skull of Faxi:  
the serpent will strike  
at the sole of your foot,  
when, lord, you have lived  
your allotted time.

Heidur, Völva

The prophesy is always true, each go 'round. In every edition of the story told, these two points in time connect and the story happens. Its inevitability facilitates the story. In a way it's as if the writer knows what happens at the end and so he's tempted to tell the hero, as if he's tempted to tell the reader, not to spoil the story but to negate it. To show the essential futility of every story, that it begins and ends and that the events unfolding aren't dependant on the drama of uncertainty but on the horrors of that inevitability. A looped hourglass connected without a top or a bottom, creation always entails a prophetic vision of destruction and so does destruction always exist as a consequence of creation. Round and round it goes, the ouroboros snake eating its own tail, repeating itself in large and small synchronicities.

Every time the story's told its events, characters and settings get more pronounced and more fantastic, as if it's trying to stick around for longer, to prolong the eventuality of ending. But beneath the surface the cogs are all connected, all editions work like the clockwork that together revolve the second, the minute and the hour hands of the clock. Each at their own pace - seemingly independent - the fractal repetition of the same thing but on different scales. A tree and its branches and their twigs and the veins on their leaves. Macro to micro, as above and so below.

A small lindworm given as a gift from a king to his daughter, grew so large it encircled her bower. It was then slain by the hero who marries the princess. The hero later fathers a son and as prophesied the boy is born with the image of a snake in one eye, encircling his iris and biting itself on the tail. Upon his birth the hero pulled a gold ring from his finger to give the boy as a name-gift but as he held out the ring he touched the boy's back, a sign which he took to mean that the boy would hate gold. Described by the account of a young schoolgirl in 19<sup>th</sup> century Iceland, Lagarfljótsormurinn is a great serpent that inhabits the lake Lagarfljót by Egilsstaðir. The story tells of a girl who receives a gold ring from her mother, and along with it the advice to place the ring under a lindworm in her linen chest. As weeks progress the worm grows so large it breaks open the chest. Frightened, the girl throws both the worm and the ring into lake Lagarfljót where the serpent continued to grow and wreak havoc on the countryside. Two Finns were later tasked with destroying the worm and retrieving the gold but only managed to tie its head to its tail at the bottom of the lake, where it remains.

Remember the Idea from part 7? Well it grew into a human figure and walked in a poorly constructed narrative landscape for a year. It's been kind of floating along in the margins

of the text. Falling in and out of consciousness. It's somewhere around here, like a forgotten thought that you continue to search for anyway. But more on it later.

In 2008 the ecology of the lake was changed forever when water diverted from a newly opened hydropower plant displaced the previously ample fish population and left the lake inhospitable. The turbines of the hydropower plant are designed to produce 4,600 gigawatt-hours annually for a nearby aluminium smelter. The controversial hydropower plant also drowned about 1,000 square kilometres within Europe's (previously) second largest unspoiled wilderness. The power plant feeds on itself, it is of course technically connected to the country's power grid but simply by proximity the day-to-day operations are run on the power generated in-house. Lights, monitors and coffee machines that drive the workforce are driven by the plant itself which in turn is run by the workforce. The serpent tied at the bottom of the lake Lagarfljót grows larger by the presence of profits and with the lack of fish it has begun devouring its own tail. Self-sufficient, sustainable auto-cannibalism, the ouroboros is eating itself to grow. Hooked up to the spring of a resource, an equilibrium of supply and demand. Producing a new self through the devouring of its past, it's a grotesque but sustainable process.





4 Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup>. April 1773

The Idea is clawing its way downhill through the undergrowth. Small trees and shrubs obscure its destination. As it moves hastily forward its clothes and hair get caught on small branches and thorns that tear at it and demand its attention. Mostly it manages to tear itself away quickly to head forward, guided by the small glimpses of light flickering through the brush. Sometimes it lingers, sticks or doesn't notice its garments unraveling around it, tying it to a place in the past.

We tend to view time as a scarce resource, a fixed amount that we barter or lose. A grain of sand from our hour glass to be exchanged for pay, to be spent at a movie theatre or lost standing in a queue. Anecdotally I've heard of Greenland-time, something which I'm guessing comes from the linguistic framing of time in the Greenlandic language. This produces a more optimistic view of time in which it is something that you gain rather than lose. Like air that's coming to you in an infinite supply and seems silly to perceive as wasted or scarce. It's only the past that's finite.

Reaching the beach at low tide the Idea approaches a group of fishermen all wrapped up in rope and

leather, readying a rowboat onto the water. As an ethereal being it tags along without them noticing as they row out from the fjord and into the open waters. The writer, feeling as if he's lost control of the text quickly reaches for an 18<sup>th</sup> century account of a killer-whale feeding frenzy and mixes it in to drown the narrative taking form on the page.

All of a sudden the sea flayed skinless. The sudden froth of a pot of milk boiling over, rising quickly to the brim and flowing onto the stove. Black tips of backs, fins and tails flashed as quickly as they crashed back below. Some swarming sea birds above crushed down by a splash of water on their backs or simply pulled in by the whirling vacuum. Bubbles and fizz rise to the surface and meet the sky and as quickly as it started it was still. Far off in the distance the silhouette of a hunched man rises from the ocean. The Killer Whale has - as told - a great fin on his back, the size of a stooped man who stands there looking back after the whale. All he sees is where he is and where he's been, the future is unknown and the past gradually forgotten as it drops into the horizon. In his peripheral vision things seem too fast, blurred and confusing. He is awkward. His hands reversed, folding behind his back so that he cannot see what he does. It's only once he moves forward that he can make sense and reflect on his actions.



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Thorsteinn

Reaching the surface of the ocean there is nothing.  
A few descriptions and names but no land in sight  
in all directions. Grabbing onto the word flotsam  
the Idea bobs along waiting to be washed ashore by  
the text.

Örvar-Odds adventures start after his taking offence to  
a völva's prophesy, after which he returns from his foster  
home at Berurjóður to his family where he insists on  
joining his kin on a sea-voyage. Before leaving, his father  
gives him a set of three magical arrows called  
Gusisnautar. The arrows, passed down to him from his  
grandfather Ketill hæng, have the magical property of  
always hitting their mark and always returning back to  
their bow. On his first adventure a storm carries Oddur  
to Risaland (Giantland) where he kills a giantess with one  
of his magical arrows, upon which the chieftain of the  
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(Arrows-Point). The prophesy, which serves as the  
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underground, vowing to never return again.

Created by sculptor Jurriaan Westerman in the year 1724  
the now almost 300 year old clock is in its movement  
representative of a continuous unbroken lineage. In the  
broadest terms the cycle of the clock tells the story of  
the day. The ascent and descent to and from sleep is in  
itself a microcosm of a life and death. And, in such broad  
terms the succession of days turned to years, turned to  
generations, encompass the gradual linear progression  
and change in circumstance, attitude and self that are  
encapsulated in one day. In the same way the magical  
arrows shot is a microcosm of the narrative of the hero's  
journey. Fittingly the hour hand of the clock - a golden  
arrow with wings - resembles the Gusisnautar which in  
turn resemble the three arrows of time; Hours, Minutes  
and Seconds who always hit their mark and always  
return back to their bow.

## 2 Sunday 5<sup>th</sup>, February 1775

Grasping at a few faint threads dangling from the future, a few sentences are trying to both begin and end this thing that doesn't exist yet. The Idea floats between the surface of the margins and the line breaks of the page. It's trying to figure out if it's in a murder mystery, in which the murder was established first and then the rest written towards it. It can see what resembles cleverly dropped clues and foreshadowings throughout, as if all is leading up to a big reveal. But they could also just be coincidences or afterthoughts controlled by some applied logic of hindsight. They could be the exact opposite, a text which understands less and less what it's about and what it wants to be as it progresses. A story that loses its characters, textures and motives gradually until it's just the bare bones of what it was to begin with, an urge to say something without yet knowing what.

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I'm poking the future with a really long stick, setting in motion conditions for actions that will be. Although this is not necessarily a narrative yet and rather just an aimless trail of thought, these things tend to stay neatly within a somewhat loose logic in which the end is always marked by the hero's return.

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This depends largely on how loose your interpretation of a narrative is, but if you allow it, any idea expressed can be a kind of a story. In this case the hero of the story is the words I lay out on the page and the big battle is whether or not it works. In the likely outcome of a tragedy I lose the thread and find no logical conclusion to the text and the hero of the story loses. In this almost inevitable outcome, if I flip the argument on its head and present the beginning as the conclusion, a coherent story emerges. Destiny followed by a vague prophetic vision of itself. A violent scene of shattered glass scattered across the ground slowly picking itself up and rearranging itself backwards to form a vase.

1 Sunday 5<sup>th</sup>, February 1775

A circle. I've been here before and I'll probably be here again but just a little bit different. Nothing perceivable but I'll feel it, like somebody else has slept in my bed recently. If you walk the same way every day for a hundred days it's a path. If a hundred people walk that same way once it's a road. Standing on the brink of the 3<sup>rd</sup> edition the Idea looks down from the last two remaining pages. On the horizon an indistinct pool of characters float around in a vast ocean.

At 9<sup>am</sup> this morning the almost 300 year old clock (1724) on top of the Vater-Müller organ in Oude Kerk started to run backwards. For the next two and a half months the hour-hand of the clock will be running back one day every minute and will continue to do so until it reaches a point before its own existence on November 1<sup>st</sup>.

A procedure which is in a sense both a performance as well as a necessary process within the making of the work *This Clock Before It Existed*.

During the process I will write and publish pages online for an accompanying publication that will be available in print during a simultaneous Vernissage and Finissage on November 1<sup>st</sup> once the work is completed. This is both the

first and last page and I'll be gradually writing and adding them in a newest-first order throughout the process. At the top of each text I'll be including the clocks current time in the past corresponding to the time of publishing. In the publication and online I'll also be including all older editions to any revision I make of the text along with the clocks current date at the moment of revision. I don't have any specific ideas yet of what this text will be and I sort of expect this to be the most heavily revised page, but then again I might just leave it unedited. In many ways writing is just an exercise in revision, of polishing past statements into a shape that fits the present. Currently this present moment is alive and well on the page. The cursor remains one step in front of the sentence, blinking, and as I write I unintentionally try to catch up with it. It blinks once every second, ticking like the second hand of a clock, bobbing up and down on the waves, only making its way down the page in small steps equal to the size of the characters that are typed. It is indicative of time and distance in that sense, measuring the time of writing against the space of the text. As it moves forward it leaves a path of footsteps leading from where its been.

Pressing forward again as if by some invisible force, the Idea marches down the sentence. This would be the moment to fight back, to

renounce inevitabilities tight grip on its existence  
and to leap from the page. Pushing closer to the  
edge of the unknown the Idea struggles and digs  
it's heels deep into the punctuation to no avail.

In space-time every moving body behaves this way,  
drawing a worm, the tip of which corresponds to its  
inception that stretches throughout the world - through  
every instance of its existence - ending at its head in its  
destruction. In this way the hour hand of the clock forms  
a continuous golden worm coiling throughout itself,  
eating its own tail like the ouroboros snake that's  
represented around it.

Pinned down on the last period the Idea pushes  
hard with its feet against the force of the reader.  
Then suddenly the period comes loose from the  
sentence and flies off the page.





7 Saturday 18<sup>th</sup>, July 1818

Old cold gold, long sticks with sharp pointed heads. A set of small golden wings stretched out from the middle of each shaft and thin fletching plucked from those same wings tied tight to their base. They always hit their mark and always return back to the bow. Gusionautar: the three golden arrows of time: Second, Minute and Hour zoom continuously through the air, each at their own pace. Hour represents the past and moves slowly, sluggishly striking its target with predictable and almost dull inevitability. Minute represents the present and moves swiftly, a near miss whizzing by before hitting its target from behind. Second represents the future and moves inconceivably fast, almost just a sound, a constant droning whistle through the air like a swarm of flies. It strikes without you knowing, only a pink mist and a pinhole slit. You pad yourself as if looking through the contents of your pockets only to catch yourself red handed before falling to the ground.

Someone above acting a fool. A head-sized rock hurtles down at a hundred and twenty km/h hitting and splitting open the skull of a young hiker. A single decisive thump like a few kilos of unbaked clay thrown to the floor rings out as the body slams to the ground and the insides of their

cranium pour out onto the surface below. Out from the goo splattered pool of brain an idea sticks out like an arrow shot in to the ground, ripples in the puddle of blood marking its target, bullseye, the point it was always going to hit. As far as ideas go this one was juicy, fully formed, executable and simple. It was in fact so defined that if someone happened upon the corpse they could've picked up the idea and implemented it without any perceivable variable to its initial form and without any suspicion to their claim to its conception.

Ideas strike like an arrow. They present the possibility of change, a small killing or sacrifice of the self that existed before it. A fork in the road where the two diverge, the you who strayed and the you who pressed on. Ideas are like some kind of complicated canapé or dessert, in which a series of conditions, ingredients or qualities (taste, temperature, texture, size and shape, etc.) come together to make a singular thing that is only by its own logic a complete thing and whose unappealing appearance only makes sense once you taste it. Ideas are (but not limited to):

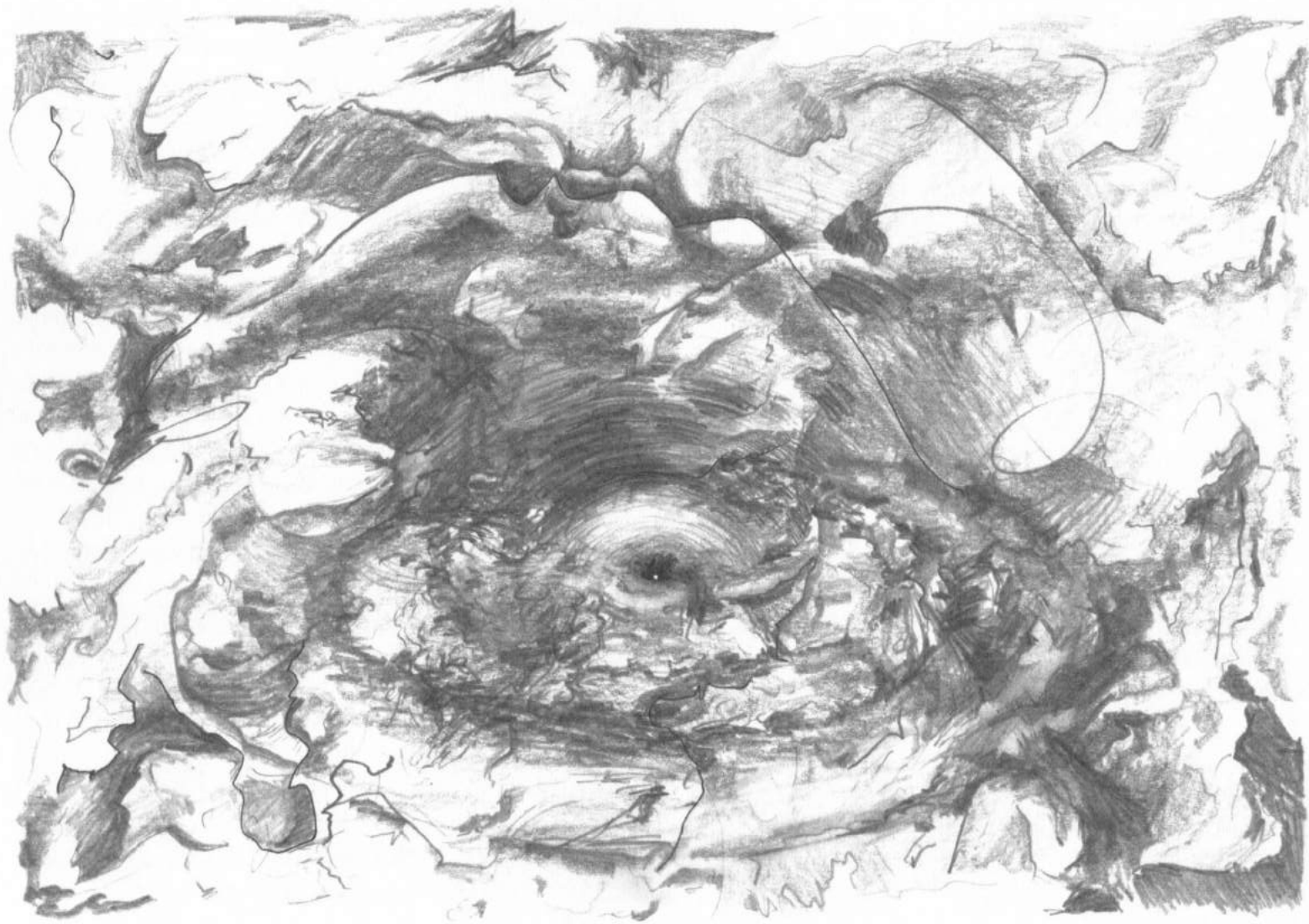
sharp, sticky, palm sized, mouldable, light, heavy, irradiate, translucent, wrinkly, smelly, moist, fresh, fleshy, ugly, simple, cute, complex, hairy, wild, wet,

angular, flat, circular, bouncy, buoyant, iridescent, contagious, flammable, rough, prickly, shiny, lumpy, tight, protruding, cold, mild, illusive, illustrative, fixed, cracked, matt, knotted, greasy, tangled, curled, dried, tickly, tricky, gooey, cool, silent, buzzing, humming, ticking, clicking, beeping, squishing, rusty, dusty, crusty, musty, holy, holey, tattered, tattooed, twitching, itching, scratchy, fluffy, taffy, scruffy, crappy, hardware, software, chips, chipped, clipped, trimmed, stimulating, emulating, elongating, elastic, plastic, nasty, crazy, lazy, strung, flung, rung, stiff, fluid, fancy, fertile, mushy, temporary, curvy, boorish, limping, soft, slippery, smooth, familiar, dissimilar, evanescent, electric, furry, dirty, flirty, dizzy, halved, whole, tasty, straight, bent, foamy, purple, sour, slow, hanging, dangling, reflective, old, fine, hissing, meaty, tasteless, mute, shaggy, ruthless, course, delicate, evasive, kind, shallow, clumsy, ambiguous, stingy, slimy, boundless, gaseous, imperfect, miniature, unkempt, grotesque, endurable, thirsty, weak, round, clear, misty, sneaky and creepy.

Long after the grandchildren of the fool above drew their dying breath and launched themselves into the ether the struck Idea stuck around in the ground. The corpse of the hiker grew into a thick spread of deep vivid green moss, the kind that takes a few centuries to grow and that you should think

twice about stepping on to. At the tip of the Idea, deep beneath the moss, a small fungus grows. Out of it in every direction, fungal neural pathways and synapses spread throughout the soil. On the surface three distinct concentric circles of dead or diseased moss are drawn around the Idea, each larger than the one before, each corresponding to the passing of a century, ripples of time. Three rings like tree rings, a target bullseye. Fairies and elves dance along these rings, the hidden people whose faces and bodies we sometimes glimpse from inside the rocks and trees. The faces that stare back at us from eerie constellations of noise. Flowers, cars, buildings, and piles of other junk heaped together in no particular order form frozen faces with distinct expressions and personalities. Traces of peep-holes for them to peer at people through.

When they dance along the rings - some above and others below - the Idea twitches and twists deeper into the ground emanating a pulse of its own distinct hum, warmth, glow and feeling. The more that join the dance the stronger the continuous rising pulse throbs. The brighter the glow, the warmer the earth, the louder the hum, the stronger the feeling resonating from the Idea.



6

Monday 14<sup>th</sup>, March 1842

I can try to say something complicated about it, chasing the feeling of knowing something. The pulse in the back of my head that acts as if it knows, as if the explanation is just a few mumbles away from presenting itself in a complete, coherent sentence that makes perfect sense. It's right on the tip of my tongue or is it just the bad aftertaste of something I once knew.

At the age of three-hundred Örvar-Oddur decided to voyage back to his childhood home in order to know who was looking after the land. Upon arriving at Berurjóður and finding nothing of his place of birth but eroded soil and overgrown ruin he said to his men, 'I think hopes must be fading about it ever coming true, the prophesy that wretched old witch made about me so long ago'. At that precise moment he saw a horses skull, terribly old and bleached by time. 'Could this be the skull of Faxi?' he said as he prodded the skull with the shaft of his spear.

You can take a rather fatalistic view of mechanics and say that a clock was always meant to be a clock. It was always meant to return in a circle. Its components were forever destined for mechanical movement, a prescribed motion that tells time. Mechanical parts are intrinsically in

themselves their prescribed purpose, moving a certain way until they break or wither away. A clocks identity is linked to its purpose and its ability to serve in past and future terms. A broken clock, having measured its allotted time is still always a clock, existing in time much like a ruler existing in space; too small to measure the circumference of the earth, but still measuring a piece of it perfectly.

Before anything, when the universe was a tiny infinitely dense speck of matter, its components were all there waiting to be deployed, put in place at the right place and the right time to become now. Recently a group of Canadian physicists proposed a theory that a CPT-Symmetric or Charge, and time reversal symmetric universe preceded the moment of the Big Bang. It proposes a mirror image of our universe extending from the other side of the Big Bang, an anti-universe made from antimatter instead of matter in which time is reversed.

My perception of time is illustrated by two cones connected at a single point in space and time, the connection is our conscious experience of the present, or the hyper-surface of the present which also represents space. Time moves in through one of the cones, or the 'past cone' and out of the other, the 'future cone'.

If how we make sense of ourselves and our surrounding is informed by a learned fractal microcosm of the laws of time in our universe then I can - if I don't think too hard about it - imagine the reverse of that dictating my experience and consciousness. If the fundamental laws of our universe were bound by causality reversed then because I thought and wrote this today I would write and think a simpler lead up to this yesterday. Devolution as a drive of existence as opposed to evolving. To simplify rather than complicate. Now existing as a prophetic consequence of the future.

As Oddur prodded the skull it shifted and from under it a snake wriggled out, right up to Oddur, and struck him above the ankle. As his leg started to swell up he ordered half of his men to prepare a coffin and a fire and the other to sit by his side and memorise as he composed a poem about his life.

Warriors, attend well  
to the words  
I give form to, frame  
now of my friends:  
to late  
for self-delusion,  
no foolery  
when fate rules ...



5

Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup>, August 1810

You'd better not try  
to bully me, Odd,  
with your bit of bough,  
even though I babble:  
the words of the witch  
were wise, you'll see,  
foretelling the future  
and fate of all.

It won't matter whether  
you wander on your way  
by the broad sea-firths,  
pacing the beaches,  
or surf-borne  
by the driven spray  
here your body will burn  
at Berurjod.

The snake will spit  
venom-full, will stab  
sharp from the age-worn  
skull of Faxi:  
the serpent will strike  
at the sole of your foot,  
when, lord, you have lived  
your allotted time.

Heidur, Völva

The prophesy is always true, each go 'round. Two points in time connected by an event. The writer knows what happens at the end and so he's tempted to tell the hero. He's tempted to tell the reader, not to spoil the story but to negate it, to show that the events unfolding aren't dependant on the drama of uncertainty but on the horror of inevitability. A looped hourglass connected without a top or a bottom. Creation always entails a prophetic vision of destruction and so does destruction always exist as a consequence of creation. Round and round it goes, the ouroboros snake eating its own tail, repeating itself in large and small synchronicities. Beneath the surface the cogs are all connected, the clockwork that together revolve the second, the minute and the hour hands of the clock. Each at their own pace - seemingly independent - the fractal repetition of the same thing on different scales. A tree and its branches and their twigs and the veins on their leaves. Macro to micro, as above and so below.

In the legends of Ragnar Lodbrók, a small lindworm given as a gift by kind Herraud to his daughter Thóra, grew so large it encircled her bower. It is then slain by Ragnar who marries Thóra. Ragnar later fathers a son with another woman named Kráka and as prophesied the boy is born with the image of a white snake in one eye, encircling his iris and biting itself on the tail, giving him

the name Sigurd (Snake-in-the-eye). Upon his birth Ragnar pulled a gold ring from his finger to give the boy as a name-gift but as he held out the ring he touched the boys back, which he took to mean that the boy would hate gold. Described by the account of a young schoolgirl in Múlasysla - collected and later published by Jón Árnason in 1862 - Lagarfljótsormurinn is a great serpent that inhabits lake Lagarfljót by Egilsstaðir in the east of Iceland. The story tells of a girl who receives a gold ring from her mother, and along with it the advice to place the ring under a lingworm in her linen chest. As weeks progress the worm grows so large it breaks open the chest. Frightened, the girl throws both the worm and the ring into lake Lagarfljót where the serpent continued to grow and wreak havoc on the countryside. Two Finns were later tasked with destroying the worm and retrieving the gold but only managed to tie its head to its tail at the bottom of the lake, where it remains. In 2008 the ecology of the lake was changed forever when water diverted from the newly opened Kárahnjúka hydropower plant displaced the previously ample fish population and left the lake virtually empty of fish. The turbines of Kárahnjúka hydropower plant are designed to produce 4,600 gigawatt-hours annually for Alcoa's aluminium smelter. The controversial hydropower plant also drowned about 1,000 square kilometres within Europe's (previously) second largest

unspoiled wilderness. The power plant feeds on itself - with the exception of safeguards for blackouts - the day-to-day operations are run on the power generated in-house. Lights, monitors and coffee machines that drive the workforce are driven by the plant itself which in turn is run by the workforce. The serpent tied at the bottom of the lake grows larger by the presence of its gold and with the lack of fish it has begun devouring its own tail. Self sufficient, sustainable auto-cannibalism, the ouroboros is eating itself to grow. Hooked up to the spring of a resource, an equilibrium of supply and demand. Producing a new self through the devouring of its past, it's a grotesque but sustainable process.





4 Thursday 20<sup>th</sup>, November 1794

Clawing his way downhill through the undergrowth. Small trees and shrubs obscure his destination. As he moves hastily forward his clothes and hair get caught on small branches and thorns that tear at him and demand his attention. Mostly he manages to tear himself away quickly to head forward, guided by the small glimpses of light flickering through the brush. Sometimes he lingers, sticks or doesn't notice his garments unraveling around him, tying him to a place in the past.

We tend to view time as a scarce resource, a fixed amount that we barter or lose. A grain of sand from the hour glass to be exchanged for pay, to be spent at a movie theatre or lost standing in a queue. I've heard anecdotally of Greenland-time, something that I'm guessing comes from the linguistic framing of time in the Greenlandic language. This produces a more optimistic view of time in which it is something that you gain rather than lose. Like air it seems silly to perceive it as wasted or scarce. It's coming to you in an infinite supply and it's only the past that's finite.

Reaching the beach at low tide he approaches a group of fishermen all wrapped up in rope and leather, readying a rowboat onto the water. He tags along and they row out from the fjord into the open waters.

All of a sudden the sea flayed skinless. The sudden froth of a pot of milk boiling over, rising quickly to the brim and flowing onto the stove. Black tips of backs, fins and tails flashed as quickly as they crashed back below. Some swarming sea birds above crushed down by a splash of water on their backs or simply pulled in by the whirling vacuum. Then as quickly as it started, it was still. Like a freshly poured glass of carbonated drink as the bubbles and fizz rise to the surface and meet the sky. Far off in the distance the silhouette of a hunched man rises from the ocean.

The Killer Whale has - as told - a great fin on his back, the size of a stooped man who stands there looking back after the whale. All he sees is where he is and where he's been, the future is unknown and the past gradually forgotten as it drops into the horizon. In his peripheral vision things seem too fast, blurred and confusing. He is awkward. His hands reversed, folding behind his back so that he cannot see what he does. It's only once he moves forward that he can make sense and reflect on his actions.

Written sometime in 13<sup>th</sup> century Iceland, the Örvar-Odds saga is a part of Fornaldarsaga Nordurlanda (Norse legendary sagas), a set of fantastical sagas that primarily take place in Scandinavia before the settlement of Iceland. Oddur is the son of Grímur lodkinni (the hero of Gríms saga lodkinna) and grandson of Ketill hæng (the hero of Ketil saga hængs) making him the third generation of a lineage of legendary heroes from Hrafnista.

There are quite a few editions of Örvar-Odds saga, each with their own additions and redactions which reflect the sensibilities and religions of the time. Currently I'm referring to three editions. The first edition that I am referring to is by Guðni Jónssons and Bjarni Vilhjálmsson and was published in Reykjavík, 1943. This is the longest version of the story, with added poems and chapters which are based on the first publishing of the saga in Uppsala, 1697. The second edition that I am referring to was edited by C.C. Rafn in Copenhagen, 1829 in the second volume of Fornaldar sögur Nordurlanda and later translated into English by Hermann Pálsson and Paul Edward and published as Arrow-Odd: A Medieval Novel in New York, 1970 and later as Seven viking romances in London, 1985. From this source I've taken the translations of the poems included in this text, which are

somewhat longer and more flourished than the previous Icelandic editions. Finally the third edition that I am referring to was published by Dutch linguist R. C. Boer in Leiden, 1888. This edition takes the most scientific stance towards the text, it is the shortest of the three and most like the original manuscript. This is the basis for a publication by Thorsteinn frá Hamri in Reykjavík, 1977. A beautiful little orange paper back with illustrations by Gúdrún Svava Svavarsdóttir. I came across this edition whilst on my knees rummaging through my parents-in-laws attic this summer before starting to write this publication. The first page is signed and belonged to my partners grandmother who was an influential artist and filmmaker. Immediately when I started to read the book the parallels to the clock in Oude Kerk became apparent and later when I recounted these events to my friend who knew my grandmother-in-law well, he half-jokingly deduced that she had handed me the book. For the purposes of this publication I won't get much into Örvar Oddurs many adventures but rather focus more on their framing, the prophesy which connects the beginning and ending of the story as well as his three magical arrows.

His adventures start after his taking offence to a völvu's prophesy, after which Oddur returns from his foster home at Berurjóður to his family where he insists on

joining his kin on a voyage abroad. Before leaving, his father gives him a set of three magical arrows called Gúsisnautar. The arrows, passed down to him from his grandfather Ketill hæng, have the magical property of always hitting their mark and always returning back to their bow. On his first adventure a storm carries Oddur to Risaland (Giantland) where he kills a giantess with one of his magical arrows, upon which the chieftain of the giants gives him the nickname Örvár-Oddur (Arrows-Point). The prophesy, which serves as the catalyst for Örvár-Oddur's many adventures, foretold that Oddur would die at his place of birth next to the skull of his horse Faxi at the age of 300. And so, before his adventures he promptly kills and buries his horse deep underground, vowing to never return again.

Created by sculptor Jurriaan Westerman in the year 1724 the now almost 300 year old clock is in its movement representative of a continuous unbroken lineage. In the broadest terms the cycle of the clock tells the story of the day. The ascent and descent to and from sleep is in itself a microcosm of a life and death. And, in such broad terms, the succession of days turned to years, turned to generations, encompass the gradual linear progression and change in circumstance, attitude and self that are encapsulated in one day. In the same way the magical arrows shot is a microcosm of the narrative of the hero's

journey. Fittingly, the hour hand of the clock - a golden arrow with wings - resembles the Gúsisnautar which in turn resemble the three arrows of time: Hours, Minutes and Seconds who always hit their mark and always return back to their bow.

2 Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup>, January 1783

Grasping at a few faint threads dangling from the future, a few sentences trying to both begin and end this thing that doesn't exist yet. The Idea floats between the margins, the line breaks and indents off the page. It's trying to see if it's in a murder mystery, in which the murder is established first and then the rest written towards it, cleverly dropping clues and foreshadowings throughout, all leading to the big reveal. It could also be the exact opposite, a text which understands less and less what it's about and what it wants to be as it progresses. A story that loses its characters, textures and motives gradually until it's just the bare bones of what it was to begin with, an urge to say something without yet knowing what.

Gasping for air, clawing its way up from a paragraph describing a shipwreck in horrific detail, the Idea slowly crawls up the beach on its elbows among the torn wooden wreckage and strewn declarative sentences washed ashore.

I'm poking the future with a really long stick, setting in motion conditions for actions that will be. Although this is not necessarily a narrative yet and rather just an

aimless trail of thought, these things tend to stay neatly within a somewhat loose logic in which the end is always marked by the hero's return.

Torn from the scene to an earlier vision of the future the Idea peers through the closed counter of characters like O, P, A, B and D. Walking down along the sentences to the bottom of the paragraph to where an undefined, metaphorical ceramic vase stands. Picking it up its materiality is so unstable it falls down to the bottom of the page and shatters to a million pieces.

This depends largely on how loose your interpretation of a narrative is, but if you allow it, any idea expressed can be a kind of story. In this case the hero of the story is the words I lay out on the page and the big battle is whether or not it works. A likely outcome is the tragedy in which I lose the thread and find no logical conclusion to the text and the hero of the story loses. In this almost inevitable outcome, if I flip the argument on its head and present the beginning as the conclusion, a coherent story emerges. A violent scene of shattered glass scattered across the ground, slowly picking itself up and rearranging itself backwards to form a vase.

1

Friday 29<sup>th</sup>, November 1861

At 9<sup>am</sup> this morning the almost 300 year old clock (1724) on top of the Vater-Müller organ in Oude Kerk started to run backwards. For the next two and a half months the hour-hand of the clock will be running back one day every minute and will continue to do so until it reaches a point before its own existence on November 1<sup>st</sup>. A procedure which is in a sense both a performance as well as a necessary process within the making of the work *This Clock Before It Existed*.

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The cursor remains one step in front of the sentence, blinking, and as I write I unintentionally try to catch up with it. It blinks once every second, ticking like the second hand of a clock, bobbing up and down on the waves, only making its way down the page in small steps equal to the size of the characters that are typed. It is indicative of time and distance in that sense, measuring the time of writing against the space of the text. As it moves forward it leaves a path of footsteps leading from where its been. In space-time every moving body behaves this way, drawing a worm, the tip of which corresponds to its inception, that stretches through the world - through every instance of its existence - ending at its head in its destruction. In this way the hour hand of the clock forms a continuous golden worm coiling throughout itself much like the ouroboros snake that's represented around it.



7 Monday 14<sup>th</sup>, March 1842

Gusisnautar: the three golden arrows of time: Second, Minute and Hour zoom steadily through the air, each at their own pace. Hour represents the past and moves slowly, sluggishly striking its target with predictable and almost dull inevitability. Minute represents the present and moves swiftly, a near miss whizzing by before hitting its target from behind. Second represents the future and moves inconceivably fast, almost just a sound, a constant droning whistle through the air like a swarm of flies. It strikes without you knowing, only a pink mist and a thin slit. You pad yourself as if looking through the contents of your pockets but find only blood soaked hands before you fall to the ground.

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of unbaked clay thrown to the floor rings as the body slams to the ground and the insides of their cranium pour out onto the surface below. Out from the goo covered ground an idea sticks out like an arrow, ripples in the pool of blood marking its target, the point it was always going to strike.

However mediocre an idea can be this one was a good one, fully formed, executable and simple. It was in fact so defined that if someone happened upon the corpse he could've picked up the idea and implemented it without any perceivable variable to its initial form and without any suspicion to his claim to its conception. Ideas are kind of like food, like a sandwich or a hot dog, like some kind of complicated dessert where a series of ingredients or qualities (taste, temperature, texture, size and shape, etc.) come together to make a singular thing that is by its own logic a complete thing. Something weird that only makes sense aesthetically once you taste it.

Ideas are (but not limited to):

sharp, sticky, palm sized, mouldable, light, heavy, irradiate, translucent, wrinkly, smelly, moist, fresh, fleshy, ugly, simple, cute, complex, hairy, wild, wet, angular, flat, circular, bouncy, buoyant, iridescent, contagious, flammable, rough, prickly, shiny, lumpy,



tight, protruding, cold, mild, illusive, illustrative, fixed, cracked, matt, knotted, greasy, tangled, curled, dried, tickly, tricky, gooey, cool, silent, buzzing, humming, ticking, clicking, beeping, squishing, rusty, dusty, crusty, musty, holy, holey, tattered, tattooed, twitching, itching, scratchy, fluffy, taffy, scruffy, crappy, hardware, software, chips, chipped, clipped, trimmed, stimulating, emulating, elongating, elastic, plastic, nasty, crazy, lazy, strung, flung, rung, stiff, fluid, fancy, fertile, mushy, temporary, curvy, boorish, limping, soft, slippery, smooth, familiar, dissimilar, evanescent, electric, furry, dirty, flirty, dizzy, halved, whole, tasty, straight, bent, foamy, purple, sour, slow, hanging, dangling, reflective, old, fine, hissing, meaty, tasteless, mute, shaggy, ruthless, course, delicate, evasive, kind, shallow, clumsy, ambiguous, stingy, slimy, boundless, gaseous, imperfect, miniature, unkempt, grotesque, endurable, thirsty, weak, round, clear, misty, sneaky and creepy.

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6

Monday 21<sup>st</sup>, December 1857

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Before anything, when the universe was a tiny infinitely dense speck of matter, its components were all there

waiting to be deployed, put in place at the right place and the right time to become now. Recently a group of Canadian physicists proposed a theory that a CPT-Symmetric or Charge, and time reversal symmetric universe preceded the moment of the Big Bang. It proposes a mirror image of our universe extending from the other side of the Big Bang, an anti-universe made from antimatter instead of matter in which time is reversed.

My perception of time is illustrated by two cones connected at a single point in space and time, the connection is our conscious experience of the present, or the hyper-surface of the present which also represents space. Time moves in through one of the cones, or the 'past cone' and out of the other, the 'future cone'. If how we make sense of ourselves and our surrounding is informed by a learned fractal microcosm of the laws of time in our universe then I can - if I don't think too hard about it - imagine the reverse of that dictating my experience and consciousness. If the fundamental laws of our universe were bound by causality reversed, then because I thought and wrote this today I would write and think a simpler lead up to this yesterday. Devolution as a drive of existence as opposed to evolving. To simplify rather than complicate. Now existing as a prophetic consequence of the future.

As Oddur prodded the skull it shifted and from under it a snake wriggled out, right up to Oddur, and struck him above the ankle. As his leg started to swell up he ordered half of his men to prepare a coffin and a fire and the other to sit by his side and memorise as he composed a poem about his life.

Warriors, attend well  
to the words  
I give form to, frame  
now of my friends:  
to late  
for self-delusion,  
no foolery  
when fate rules ...



5

Friday 5<sup>th</sup>, July 1889

You'd better not try  
to bully me, Odd,  
with your bit of bough,  
even though I babble;  
the words of the witch  
were wise, you'll see,  
foretelling the future  
and fate of all.

It won't matter whether  
you wander on your way  
by the broad sea-firths,  
pacing the beaches,  
or surf-borne  
by the driven spray  
here your body will burn  
at Berurjod.

The snake will spit  
venom-full, will stab  
sharp from the age-worn  
skull of Faxi:  
the serpent will strike  
at the sole of your foot,  
when, lord, you have lived  
your allotted time.

Heidur, Völva

The prophesy is always true, each go 'round. A looped hourglass connected without a top or a bottom. In the legends of Ragnar Lodbrók, a small lindworm given as a gift by kind Herraud to his daughter Thóra, grew so large it encircled her bower. It is then slain by Ragnar who marries Thóra. Ragnar later fathers a son with another woman named Kráka and as prophesied the boy is born with the image of a white snake in one eye, encircling his iris and biting itself on the tail, giving him the name Sigurd (Snake-in-the-eye). Upon his birth Ragnar pulled a gold ring from his finger to give the boy as a name-gift but as he held out the ring he touched the boy's back, which he took to mean that the boy would hate gold.

If there is a beginning it implies scarcity of past, even though the future is ever expanding, the past in this case would be a finite resource that can be mined and turned to capital. Though we're always producing more past, it exists in a fixed and limited supply with easily projected future earnings. Described by the account of a young schoolgirl in Múlasysla - collected, and later published by Jón Árnason in 1862 - Lagarfljótsormurinn is a great serpent that inhabits lake Lagarfljót by Egilstadir in the east of Iceland. The story tells of a girl who receives a gold ring from her mother, and along with it the advice to place the ring under a lingworm in her linen chest. As weeks progress the worm grows so large it breaks open

the chest. Frightened, the girl throws both the worm and the ring into lake Lagarfljót where the serpent continued to grow and wreak havoc on the countryside. Two Finns were later tasked with destroying the worm and retrieving the gold but only managed to tie its head to its tail at the bottom of the lake, where it remains. In 2008 the ecology of the lake was changed forever when water diverted from the newly opened Kárahnjúka hydropower plant displaced the previously ample fish population and left the lake virtually empty of fish. The turbines of Kárahnjúka hydropower plant are designed to produce 4,600 gigawatt-hours annually for Alcoa's aluminium smelter. The serpent at the bottom of the lake is no doubt growing larger with the added presence of aluminium and with the lack of fish it has begun devouring its own tail. Self sufficient, sustainable auto-cannibalism, the ouroboros is eating itself to grow. Hooked up to the spring of a resource, an equilibrium of supply and demand. Producing a new self through devouring the past, it's a grotesque but sustainable process.





4 Friday 9<sup>th</sup>, February 1917

We're clawing our way up a hill through the undergrowth. Small trees and shrubs obscure our destination. As we hastily move forward our clothes and hair get caught on small branches and thorns that tear at us and demand our attention. Most of us tear ourselves away quickly and head forward, guided by the small glimpses of light flickering through the brush. Others linger, stick or don't notice their garments unraveling around them, tying them to a place in the past.

We tend to view time as a scarce resource, a fixed amount that we barter or lose. A grain of sand from the hour glass to be exchanged for pay or resources, to be spent at a movie theatre or lost standing in a queue. I've heard anecdotally of Greenland-time, something that I'm guessing comes from the linguistic framing of time in the Greenlandic language. This produces a more optimistic view of time in which it is something that you gain rather than lose. Like air it seems silly to perceive it as wasted or scarce. It's coming to you in an infinite supply and it's only the past that's finite.

All of a sudden the sea flayed skinless. The sudden froth of a pot of milk boiling over, rising quickly to the brim and flowing onto the stove. Black tips of backs, fins and

tails flashed as quickly as they crashed back below. Some swarming sea birds above crushed down by a splash of water on their backs or simply pulled in by the whirling vacuum. Then as quickly as it started, it was still. Like a freshly poured glass of coca-cola, as the bubbles and fizz rise to the surface and meet the sky. In the distance the silhouette of a hunched man rises from the ocean.

The Killer Whale has - as told - a great fin on his back, the size of a stooped man who stands there looking back after the whale. All he sees is where he is and where he's been, the future is unknown and the past gradually forgotten as it drops into the horizon. In his peripheral vision things seem too fast, blurred and confusing. He is awkward. His hands reversed, folding behind his back so that he cannot see what he does. It's only once he moves forward that he can make sense and reflect on his actions.

3

Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup>, October 1936

The Örvar-Odds saga is a legendary saga written by an anonymous Icelander in the latter part of the 13<sup>th</sup> century and tells the story of the eponymous hero Örvar-Oddur. Oddur is the son of Grímur lodkinni, (the hero of Gríms saga lodkinna) and grandson of Ketill hæng (the hero of Ketil saga hængs) making him the third generation of a lineage of legendary heroes from Hrafnista.

After taking offence to a völva's prophesy, Oddur returns from his foster home at Berurjóður to his family where he insists on joining his kin on a voyage abroad. Before leaving, his father gives him a set of three magical arrows called Gúsisnautar. The arrows, passed down to him from his grandfather Ketill hæng, have the magical property of always hitting their mark and always returning back to their bow. On his first adventure a storm carries Oddur to Risaland (Giantland) where he kills a giantess with one of his magical arrows, upon which the chieftain of the giants gives him the nickname Örvar-Oddur (Arrows-Point). The prophesy, which serves as the catalyst for Örvar-Oddur's many adventures, foretold that Oddur would die at his place of birth next to the skull of his horse Faxi at the age of 300. And so, before his adventures he promptly kills and buries his horse deep underground,

vowing to never return again.

Created by sculptor Jurriaan Westerman in the year 1724 the now almost 300 year old clock is in its movement representative of a continuous unbroken lineage. In the broadest terms the cycle of the clock tells the story of the day. The ascent and descent to and from sleep is in itself a microcosm of a life and death. And, in such broad terms, the succession of days turned to years, turned to generations, encompass the gradual linear progression and change in circumstance, attitude and self that are encapsulated in one day. In the same way the magical arrows shot is a microcosm of the narrative of the hero's journey. Fittingly, the hour hand of the clock - a golden arrow with wings - resembles the Gúsisnautar, which in turn resemble the three arrows of time; Hours, Minutes and Seconds. Who always hit their mark and always return back to their bow.

2 Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup>, June 1960

I'm grasping at a few faint threads dangling from the future, trying to see how to both begin and end this thing that doesn't exist yet. I'm trying to see if it's like writing a murder mystery, in which I first decide the end and then write the rest, cleverly dropping clues and foreshadowings throughout, all leading to the big reveal. It could also be the exact opposite, a text which understands less and less what it's about and what it wants to be as it progresses. A story that loses its characters, textures and motives gradually until it's just the bare bones of what it was to begin with, an urge to say something without yet knowing what.

I'm poking the future with a really long stick, setting in motion conditions for actions that will be. Although this is not necessarily a narrative yet and rather just an aimless trail of thought, these things tend to stay neatly within a somewhat loose logic in which the end is always marked by the hero's return. This depends largely on how loose your interpretation of a narrative is, but if you allow it, any idea expressed can be a kind of story. In this case the hero of the story is the reasoning I apply and the big battle is whether or not it works. A likely outcome is the tragedy in which I lose the thread and find no logical conclusion to the text and the hero of the story loses.

In this almost inevitable outcome, if I flip the argument on its head and present the beginning as the conclusion, a coherent story emerges. A violent scene of shattered glass scattered across the ground, slowly picking itself up and rearranging itself backwards to form a vase.

1 Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup>, June 2018

At 9<sup>am</sup> this morning the almost 300 year old clock on top of the Vater-Müller organ (1726) in Oude Kerk started to run backwards. For the next two and a half months the hour-hand of the clock will be running back one day every minute and will continue to do so until it reaches a point before its own existence on November 1<sup>st</sup>.

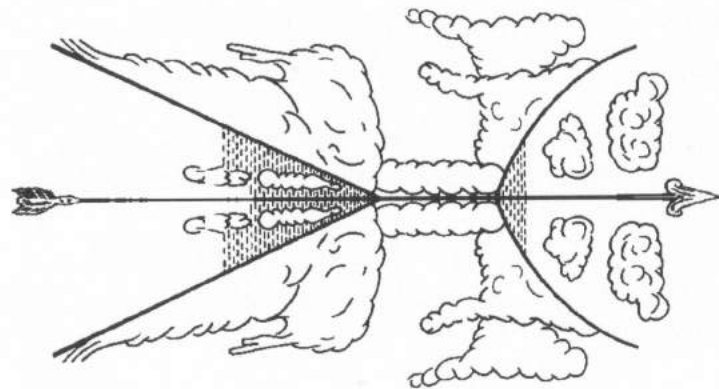
A procedure which is in a sense both a performance as well as a necessary process within the making of the work *This Clock Before It Existed*.

During the process I will write and publish pages here for an accompanying publication that will be available in print once the work is completed during a simultaneous Vernissage and Finissage on November 1<sup>st</sup>. This is both the first and last page as I'll be gradually adding them in newest-first order throughout the process. At the top of each page I'll be including both the current time of writing and the clocks corresponding time in the past. I'll also be including all older editions to any revision I make to the text.

I sort of expect this to be the most heavily revised page but then again I might just leave it unedited. In many ways writing is just an exercise in revision, of polishing statements into a shape that fits the present.

Currently this present moment is alive and well on the page. The cursor remains one step in front of the sentence, blinking, and as I write I unintentionally try to catch up with it. It blinks once every second, ticking like the second hand of a clock, bobbing up and down on the waves, only making its way down the page in small steps equal to the size of the characters that are typed. It is indicative of time and distance in that sense, measuring the time of writing against the space of the text. As it moves forward it leaves a path of footsteps leading from where its been. In space-time every moving body behaves this way, drawing a worm, the tip of which corresponds to its inception, that stretches through the world - through every instance of its existence - ending at its head in its destruction. In this way the hour hand of the clock forms a golden worm coiling throughout itself much like the ouroboros snake that's represented around it.

100 / 100



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