

The first question to ask is, what is our crucial presence in this text? We are the obvious species, unravelling its patterns, untried and untrilled. Here we have a bald field, a boxed deck suspended above mist. How strange to look down on clouds and not trust them as an orientating path. There is a person sentimentally turning toward home. The lights are backlit and synthesize with shut down stars. I don't even know what I'm looking at. I know there's this dark place in Abel Tasman where the trees are monstrous and the land is free-standing although still this island. Somehow constructed out of an old fissure. We got to the edge and just kept going. You can't describe the shelving banks of trees gripping the descent. It's pathological, the need to nearly disappear. One of us wore wings already strapped on but, at the last minute, backed away. There are two types of explorer – the rhythmic who perpetually interrupts himself with syncopation, glancing backwards, alarmed, and the delver who is equivocal to the crater, who does not keep a logbook. That's like saying this man is in love and this one is not. That's like wondering whether language needs a mouth to speak. Within the history of our migration, there is a sinister reciprocity. This monk said, it is easier to avoid unhappy love than to engineer your own demise and ensure it is traceless. I wanted to tell you a story and it's not set at sea. But then I worked out, water is the landscape where space and time become each other, tidal, a gradual slippage of geography. Before I caught the ferry, I left a little bag on the door of a shipping container. Its weight tugged it open. And inside was a forest that was also a jungle but I could only see a vertical sliver at a time so perhaps it was just a modulation of shadow. There were surely birds in small flocks, making sounds like breeze on metal because that's exactly what their wings did. And the floor was pools but the moon was high and my gift only dragged the door ajar, so I couldn't be sure I saw reptiles. But the steel was stuffed with trees and the wild staining smell of trees that forces open your neck with a rush of cool air. A woman stood at the back, basketed in branches and so still her skin was jumping. The iron got jagged on my palm, an irregular filament traversing a crack in rock, and when I looked at my feet walking away to the port, they were chased with liquid, like shadows of leaves splashing amongst leaves, a sort of slime tracing the topography of tarmac. There are too many places we have buried our dead in order for it to be efficient to visit them all and scatter a little fresh soil. There are caverns that are not meant to be caverns and reinforced aluminium with curves glossy in the floodlights. There are large tracts of grass regrowing swiftly from a weight that has recently been lifted. There are tropes of rotation that belittle our magnitude. There is my friend slipping off the edge quite by accident and troubled by the ascent. There are lights that snap on like a snare and force the invisible into materiality.

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