

Sheffield Hallam University

Divination at art school: A speculative methodology for an expanded reading practice

PEPPÉ, Hestia Zephyrine

Available from the Sheffield Hallam University Research Archive (SHURA) at:

<https://shura.shu.ac.uk/37004/>

A Sheffield Hallam University thesis

This thesis is protected by copyright which belongs to the author.

The content must not be changed in any way or sold commercially in any format or medium without the formal permission of the author.

When referring to this work, full bibliographic details including the author, title, awarding institution and date of the thesis must be given.

Please visit <https://shura.shu.ac.uk/37004/> and <http://shura.shu.ac.uk/information.html> for further details about copyright and re-use permissions.

Daughters of Necessity

By Hestia Peppé

25548 words

Table of Contents

<i>NOTES ON THE DAUGHTERS (NOTA)</i>	4
<i>DAUGHTERS OF NECESSITY (I.)</i>	6
<i>DAUGHTERS OF NECESSITY (II.)</i>	35
<i>DAUGHTERS OF NECESSITY (III.)</i>	73
<i>DAUGHTERS OF NECESSITY (IV.)</i>	102
<i>DAUGHTERS OF NECESSITY (V.)</i>	132

NOTES ON THE DAUGHTERS (NOTA)

LACHESIS

A word for a container (Clown) (carrying, drafting, dragging)

Three Questions

Three oracles

Three fictions

KLOTHO

(Cast) (set spinning, assign lots, copy, on/off)

Three Parallel strands. Not iterative but plied together.

The Fates are not subject to human time.

Borne of Necessity.

ATROPOS

(Clew) (cut piece, wind, and unwind, spiral, auto-relation, wayfinding)

Each Strand is a question. (Verbs in brackets relate to the thesis)

The text that follows transcribes the notes I made in a chronological order in the first few months of the PhD, rewriting and sharing them between the daughters.

[...]

DAUGHTERS OF NECESSITY (I.)

DE-CANT-ATION

TRANSCRIPTION

DRAFTING, DRAWING, NOTING, TRACING, SPINNING, READING.

SCROLL DOWN

LACHESIS

Leaving the list of books out for now as they are outside the chronology.

I had my first supervision meeting on the day of Fazal Inayat Khan's death anniversary, no – I wrote up the notes on that day – the day after the meeting.

Hester recommended I read Giorgio Agamben on 'The Contemporary' and emailed me a pdf.

(54 words)

KLOTHO

Hester showed me around the workshops at SIA (no one seems to use this acronym) I wanted to have a ceramics induction (this decant-ation from the notes has shifted me into the past tense) and introduced me to the technicians.

She told me: you don't need to know what you are going to do but you need to know what's possible.

Send reading material in advance of the meeting.

(2 years ago, now)

(72 words)

ATROPOS

Divination and induction procedures, and their documentation.

The reading group.

Is this reading? Is this expansion outwards?

She says I could start it myself (a great claim!), that you can make your own methodology based on your own practice.

(39 words)

LACHESIS

One page of that notebook blooms as three in this one.

Not what but how.

I have been reading *Calamities* by Renée Gladman and I don't yet know, I don't yet know, I don't yet know what's coming.

I talk about Mum's things, [...] and storage and house-sharing and neighbourhood and living with others.

The process is initiated. (*I began the day*)

I would like to read Brecht.

I am grateful to Julia Bardsley for showing me how to develop character through practices of randomisation.

(87words)

KLOTHO

You are so encouraging – I have used the pronoun you instead of your name because I am trying something. It would be hard to do this transcribing without Roland Barthes.

You are so encouraging – especially about how I talk about reading. I was suspicious but I need not have been.

The first time I mention linearity is in relation to genealogy and rhizomes I suppose it would always have been something I cared about in relation to drawing.

(In the present I am distracted by an interview by Cait Doherty with Nisha Ramayya)

(93 words)

ATROPOS

Talked about processes and gestures that spin, spiral, oscillate, make lines and circles and vessels and spaces, spinning, pots, throwing, knitting in the round.

I should be recording these notes in audio as I transcribe, re-scribe, de-scribe them, all the ways to envelop and reproduce and grow, multiply, difference, repetition. I don't realise yet how much I am going to be seeing of Deleuze.

I want to read Emmy Noether on conservation and symmetries.

We talked about genealogies and rhizomes.

(80words)

LACHESIS

We began to talk about the mystery – we began to talk about *it*. You told me about the place where you live alone. I can protect you all in this expansive second person we are sharing, I want to. I showed you my old website from 2005 but it wasn't there, tried to explain how it must have come down like an old broken branch.

Grand brutalist architectures brooding and disintegrating overhead like Gormenghast or just Sheffield being like itself.

(80 words)

KLOTHO

Three pages in the morning for each of you every day before anything gets typed up. [...]

I WAS READING

IN REPLY TO ME

BERNADETTE MAYER

SENDING SHARON'S

BOTH WAYS ON THE

BIBLIOGRAPHY: I

TRAIN TO SHEFFIELD

DIDN'T READ THE AGAMBEN

(MIDWINTER'S DAY)

UNTIL EARLIER TODAY ON

HESTER SENT THE

THE WAY TO SEE

AGAMBEN PDF

JESSE' DARLING'S SHOW AT

(WHAT IS THE

TATE B

CONTEMPORARY?)

I MEANT TO GO LAST WEEK

FOR THE OPENING WAS AND I MISSED IT.
 EXCEPT OF COURSE I FUCKED R SAID IT' S BETTER
 UP TO SEE THINGS IN YOUR
 I DIDN'T KNOW WHAT DAY IT OWN TIME.

(107 words)

ATROPOS

I talked to you about misogyny and racism when I guess I meant occult fascism – or just imperial colonialism – I still wasn't sure that I was using the right words or if they were in the right place, should they be in the ethics statement? I say clearly that I can, I will address (verb) my own whiteness and hold myself accountable.

I talked to you about neurodiversity, about my upcoming ed psych assessment. You said if it's not ADHD that they think I have that I should perform it anyway. I talked to you about how I process faster in conversation, but faster than in what?

(107 words)

LACHESIS

IT'S TRUE I THINK JESSE'S DEAR HALOED BEASTS SEEM TO GET THAT

A bēot in the Anglo-Saxon was a heroic boast about what monster you would kill but in our house a beast or beijst (cribbed from Dutch) is the highest (the dearest) form of affection.

Writing up meeting notes -Tracking reading - send links - Read papers - See friends- Visit my aunt's grave, leaving rose petals and stones.- Walk in the country park at golden hour.

(76 words)

KLOTHO

The Michaelmas daisies were in flower then, I think they are still out now this year too. Calendar flowers, missing M but don't call him. The water levels in the pond were low and I started reading *Spell of the Sensuous*. I watched Garry's film *Low Rise* on my phone (to try the format): I drew the High Priestess from the deck, it must have been the first time I assigned a card to my notes.

Sharon says it will make more sense the more you do it.

Each of these pages is a single index card, a free entity moving in and out of a parallel sequence like the starlings on the edge of the driving range nets above the tram stop. An index card, a punch card, a tarot card, a playing card, a revision card.

(138 words)

ATROPOS

Each iteration is a layer in the palimpsest of the clew.

PLAN TO:

DRAW CARDS TO MAP SITES TO THE STUDY.

MAKE A PRINT OF TRUTH CAN DESTROY ANY SYSTEM

INSTALL DOT JOINING WEBSITE ON AN OLD PHONE

SPECULATIVE SELF (SELVES)

IT IS ALL HERE BUT NO ONE ELSE CAN SEE. AS IF I HAD DONE THEM IN
SOME VERSION OF SOME THREAD...

I have lost track of who is speaking, interior monology follow swallows the
external sounds, overlays the perceptual like a blanket.

(84 words)

LACHESIS

'Reading' groups, mailing lists, reviewing, drawing line, reading aloud, live
and in situ, readings of space in time (curse you, Descartes), to map, to plan. At
this time, I was still editing fiction for the online magazine where no one else
who worked there responded to emails. A submissions inbox full of edge lords.

I want to do durational performances that make spaces for being together, I
want to write poetry, I have a long poem about artificial intelligence that I don't

know what to do with. In a separately coloured pen I write PLAYING GO, FELDENKRAIS, SPINNING + other aspects of textile production. The separate-coloured pen is lilac, the rest of preceding list labelled (PRACTICES) was written in kelly green.

(121 words)

KLOTHO

TURMERIC STAINS [emperor]

I go early to the Moors Market when I arrive in Sheffield so I can get some food before the seminar. I choose the thali from *The Laughing Buddha*, a Nepali kitchen in the Moor's food market. The takeaway portion is huge, cheap, and generous. I try to walk with it in a bag and it leaks bright yellow neon on my new cream painter trousers. I am hot from travelling up on the train and walking across Sheffield and I have not allowed time to stop and eat the food. I end up sitting on a low wall beside some steps, spilling even more and giving up before I have eaten enough even though the food is completely delicious.

Days in Sheffield thrill me, I am excited and wildly overstimulated every time

I am there.

(139 words)

ATROPOS

You suggest, in the seminar group, that we might choose to write a chapter of our thesis in a particular genre as an exercise. Sitting there thinking about the chapter I need to write now, wondering which genre. I pull a card from my half coloured-in deck, the nine of cups, joy, and sensual delight.

[nine of coins]

[ink colour shift]

On that day two years and three days ago, I was there in the Head Post Office café, first time meeting the Roland Barthes Reading Group, noting down their thesis titles, plotting a list of dream guests to our 'guild' programme. I would draw the nine of coin s/ drew. I was trying to draw a card at each location in Sheffield. I had not yet come up with my title and only now really fully see what I mean when I say I see Tarot as part of the field of drawing as a discipline.

[nine of coins]

Enjoying the fruits and company of what you have grown.

(168 words)

LACHESIS

[...]

I note that L is writing (in the assumed genre style of) historiographic meta fiction, V in avant garde absurdism, E in screenwriting and the annotated

script, and D (new like me) is writing monologues. A lost note at the bottom of the page directs me to Anthony Vahni Capildeo's Instagram account. I think E suggested them as a guild speaker.

(124 words)

KLOTHO

The pages in this book are a constraint, not those in the one I decant from. Each page of that book blooms as three pages or more in the daughters of Necessity, one at a time before another voice begins. The first time I went to Site Gallery to see the show *Liquid Crystal Display*. For this location I draw the eight of swords and spill tea all over myself, like a lot of tea.

[8 of Swords]

Site Gallery has honey for tea (good), but the tea is pricey. Soon I will start to bring my own honey on the days I travel to Sheffield.

The exhibition is great. Suzanne Treister's watercolour pieces are really good, I love the posters colours and softness. I make a note to buy her Hexen 2.0 deck but I am broke, so I deny myself buying them now. They sell out of print at some point during this show so I shall probably never own them now, sadly.

(168 words)

ATROPOS

Waad Al Bawardi's images of crystal slices are gorgeous.

Ruskin's calcite block had beautiful rainbow inclusions.

I recognise Fred Moten's voice in an Otolith Group video so clearly, I am surprised by it. I don't remember many details about either time I have seen him read and speak but the texture of his voice hits with intense familiarity. In my notes I wrote only: 'I love Fred Moten's voice.'

In the bookshop there is what feels like half my proposal bibliography:

YMEDACA, Hester's book, and one of Sharon's (which was it?), along with Treister's Hexen 2.0

(96 words)

LACHESIS

[3 of swords] I go to print out TRUTH WILL DESTROY ANY SYSTEM I have lost the reference for where I pinched this title from, but I think it may have been an online astrologer.

At Adsetts Library. I get lost and confused trying to find the correct floor from which to access the main library entrance which is completely hidden behind layers of successive campus redevelopments.

The next day is the 4th of October 2018. (I should get my diary out to check but I think I was at home) I write:

DON'T CRY FOR ATTENTION ONCE YOU HAVE IT and, at the time this feels really true. I think I meant that I don't have to keep appealing to be heard now I can just acknowledge that I am attended to.

And speak.

(135 words)

KLOTHO

SHEFFIELD AS PILGRIMAGE SITE (MAKE A SHRINE)

SPEAKING (SOME ANXIETY) READING (LOW ANXIETY) WRITING (HIGH ANXIETY)

(DIAGRAM OF A TRIANGLE) FEAR OF BEING ALONE

IN NO PARTICULAR ORDER

A NON-EXHAUSTIVE LIST OF TYPES OF READING 3 PAGES LONG.

(38 words)

ATROPOS

IF MY RESEARCH WERE

A LITERARY GENRE

IT WOULD BE POETRY

IN THE FORM OF A LIST

OF APHORISMS

IN NO PARTICULAR ORDER

(23 words)

LACHESIS

There's this poem by Eileen Myles from *I Must Be Living Twice* that I couldn't get enough of then:

WRITING

my face

I can

Connect

sometimes

I don't

Any two

Want to

Things

See my

That's god

Face in

The mirror

Teeny piece of

bandaid

I write:

I ran

When you are reading like when

to the

you keep thinking of a poem and

bathroom

you go to look for it in the book, but

you keep reading all the ones before

to see

it and when you finally get to it you

realise it was already bookmarked

because you loved it last time

(104 words)

KLOTHO

Myles's poem continues:

Sometimes

I can't

Bear

My thoughts

Sometimes

I can't

do anything

but that's

okay

bandaid

book

god

that's

right.

This poem, the idea of line here, as connections often broken but that's okay,
sometimes it's still right.

(40 words)

ATROPOS

SPEECH (I changed out of all caps)

Learning how to hear myself and to listen to myself having worked so hard to be good
at doing so for others.

Q: How are listening and reading connected?

A: Both are ways of being both alone and together with others.

PRINTING LIKE HEALING

A WOUND

PRINTING A SCAR

(57 words)

LACHESIS

WRITING: THE SKETCHBOOK IS

MY DONKEY SHRINE (I haven't told you that story yet)

EVENTUALLY OTHERS

WILL COME

WILL HAVE BEEN THERE

ARE THERE

ANYWAY

MOST OF WHAT WE INHERIT IS SHAME, ERROR, AND DEATH BUT STILL WE
MOURN WHAT WE LOVE AND GREET ALL GUESTS AND TRAVELLERS WHO
JOIN US TO SIT W THE MYSTERY

(56 words)

KLOTHO

I get my first funding cheque. I am anxious about replying to many emails. I get emotional. I am reading the poems at the end of *Your Silence Will Not Protect You* by Audre Lorde so I can finish it and lend it to S (in exchange she will lend me *Get Out of Your Own Way*, a favourite of hers). I hope she doesn't hate it or find it upsetting or presumptuous of me to give it to her.

I am reading the last poems in the book when I find out Lorde used to work with the *I Ching*.

I am reading an excerpt from Mathilda B. Sycamore's *Sextasy*.

I am reading a study: I am less likely to die when treated by doctors who are not men.

I am reading a poem by Morgan Parker.

(138 words)

ATROPOS

I ask how I am doing today. I ask you how I am doing. You ask me how I am doing. I draw the three of wands. [3 of wands] I ask you how I should get money. I draw the Sun. [the Sun] I ask you what it is important that I should consider leading up to my research plan. I draw the four of coins [4 of coins]. This last card is difficult for me. I read: IMPOSE STRUCTURE AND LIMITS BUT DON'T LAY CLAIM TO ANYTHING. ASK FOR WHAT YOU NEED BUT ACCEPT THAT FULL CONTROL IS IMPOSSIBLE.

(101 words)

LACHESIS

A rule: remember to start from the bottom of the pile of fates (notebooks) each day. I have definitely fucked this up at least once. This is the third day of de-cant-ation (draughting) drawing from.

Two years ago today, I watched the Netflix documentary about AlphaGo, I wrote to you about my old Go research proposal to use Go games to trace a record of collaboration between artists. That was in, what, 2012? Anyway, that proposal was before Deepmind's AlphaGo beat a human at the old game – in the documentary those

who lost describe their experience. The grace of Fan Hui and Lee Sedol moves me deeply.

(107 words)

KLOTHO

Something about their grace made me think of clowns, what I always love about that discipline, the willingness to learn from what brings you down. An old quality shared between (some) clowns and (some) engineers and a pattern that I will always love.

The number of possible Go game outcomes is so large as to function as a procedural and collaborative random image generator, the outcomes of which I thought once could function as scores. Did I mean scores or random seeds? It is hard for me to remember how I was using the words then.

(96 words)

ATROPOS

The documentary about AlphaGo suggests that AlphaGo's AI gameplay at Go challenges received, traditional, and expert knowledge of the game – particularly its preference for a win (moment of completion) over claiming territory on the board.

Can this be said to challenge the zero-sum military metaphor of intelligence.

Deep Mind and other machine learning AIs use processing power to generate worktime for 'learning' through exposure to or witnessing (see lacework TK) huge datasets that mortals such as humans do not have the time to read. Machine Learning might not be intelligent, but it makes use of a time dimensional advantage. You could say it has a lot of attention to give.

(110 words)

LACHESIS

GO IS A DURATIONAL/COLLABORATIVE/GENERATIVE

WINDOW INTO POSSIBILITY

GO IS JUST TWO RULES THAT ENABLE US TO ENACT, OBSERVE AND LEARN HOW INTERACTION CAN STRUCTURE RELATION OVER TIME. IT SHOWS US THE MOVEMENT OF ATTENTION BETWEEN TWO SUBJECTS OVER TIME (I am paraphrasing myself paraphrasing the documentary and my old proposal)

GO IS ABOUT AS GESTURALLY ABSTRACT AS YOU CAN GET.

(60 words)

KLOTHO

After losing to AlphaGo Nick Weiping, China's Go world Champion said:

'Go is not as simple as we thought, there's still huge room for humans to explore. Either AlphaGo or Master, it's sent by the Go God to guide humans.'

Even when imagined as a teacher, and even with the military metaphor challenged, Go is still imagined in terms of exploration and discovery. Can humans not let go of the idea of territory? Perhaps more specifically I mean those humans interested in the development of Machine Learning as the forefront of innovation and automation.

I want to play Go with you.

(101 words)

ATROPOS

I am reading Fiona Duncan writing about Noo, her cat, and their relationship. Thinking about noetics reminds me sharply in turn of my research for my MFA. Roy Ascott and 'the telematic embrace'. Is there love in it? I still hope so. Fiona and I have at least three friends in common and many interests, a cluster of coincidences gaining its own centre of gravity in this work. In just over a year, we will meet for a second brief time – I will fuck it up by saying things – at one of the last events I attend before the pandemic. Her book, *Exquisite Mariposa* which I will buy at that event will be, I think, the last I read before what we will come to think of as 'it' sets in for real, and I will love it. I still mean to write to her about it.

I would love to read it with you.

(155 words)

LACHESIS

At some point I will have to see if I can do this draughting directly into the computer but for now writing by hand to make use of my handwriting and the notebook page as constraint for these sections as I remember writing at school, perhaps the clearest I ever wrote, copying my own text out, looping it into better and better shape.

I was reading about the use of algorithms to score the Lakota language, even more gracious acceptance of the technics of stochasticity.

I make a note about a researcher called Michael Davies' work with the Kantu tribes in Borneo.

(102 words)

KLOTHO

I forgot to tell you about Crystal Bennes's newsletter Bad Luck Stones. We will start to see now, how much I have forgotten. I will have to go looking for things in between the lines to reconstruct. I wonder if what I am doing now will split into theory and practice. Which will be the wool and which the apparatus? How will it feel in my fingers and hands? I hear the manual and the digital approaching with the movement of the air and the scratch of my pen.

At this point I noted that *Spell of The Sensuous* was so much better than I thought it would be. I note that on page 124 he discusses reading, following references to Maurice Merleau Ponty and Ivan Illich.

(126 words)

ATROPOS

It was then that I started to with Merleau Ponty. I made a note to look at his thinking on 'the intertwining' and 'the chiasm'.

This is in his final and unfinished work, *The Visible and The Invisible*:

...Chiasm means criss-cross, the optic chiasm means the point where the optic nerves from right and left cross and intervene...

but also here I think it refers to the synthetic (or synaesthetic) relations between different senses.

This is going to become important to me in thinking about my own embodied perception, but I have still not managed to read the relevant Merleau Ponty. The book is hard to get a copy of in English and as raw philosophy is hard to ingest fast enough for the PhD timeframe.

(126 words)

LACHESIS

I have so much I want to tell you about *Spell of The Sensuous*, especially the fourth chapter.

My biggest problem with it is that it ignores the literate animism of, say, Japanese culture, where people must often be animists but also read kanji and western alphabets.

I would also prefer a treatment of perception and literacy that challenged ableist terms and points of views.

Later the work of Khairani Barokka against racist, ableist art school pedagogies will help me so much but I am not there yet. Before that I must establish the somatic connection to neurodivergence and medical racism to ableism so that I can begin to make sense of it within my own frameworks.

(117 words)

KLOTHO

New Rule:

You have to take note of where it is that you break off from this to read. This time it was Twitter, a lot went past in the scroll, but it was when I got to someone pointing out that the 'barbies' leg' has replaced the 'triangle arm' as a basic-bitch posing gesture-of-the-moment or something that made me stop.

I was already hoping to see how 'learning difficulties' might map into/be darned into relation with *Spell of The Sensuous*. I had wanted, right from the start since I declared

mental health in the application form, to make space in this work for this type of constraint, but I am not yet using the term neurodivergence. Ultimately *Spell of The Sensuous* still ascribes to a positivist model of 'progressive thinking' and improvement.

(133 words)

ATROPOS

There's this idea that I we have 'lost' orality that David Abrams both ostensibly denies and also reproduces, I think.

I wonder how this relates or compares to or is in dialogue with Derrida's *Of Grammatology* or Mel Y. Chen's *Animacies*. The way language, humans, animals, and the transmission of what is read are configured in relation to each other in these texts seems to set a scene I need. These texts were Sharon's coordinates apart from the Abrams, which I found by coincidence in my local allotment's garden reading room. Sharon read me, and my proposal, well. I leave out Drucker, as I write now, or I almost do. I found her work on the alphabet so useful for context, but I didn't find it helped in other ways. (Margin note: on the pre-literacy of children)

(137 words)

LACHESIS

So much of this is coming out as theory. I am still looking for the fiction and the visual aspects of the practice but this draughting feels good. I feel the pressure of the need to write the chapter on gathering and not finding the references in practice yet. I am worrying about time while also wanting to melt into the duration of transcribing.

I sit on the floor to work on a cork yoga mat I bought at the beginning of lockdown so I could stretch. I haven't done much yoga, somehow, I have just started to spread my work out here on the floor in the way I have never had space to do before. I can't always face my electronic devices but drawing or writing longhand on the floor feels so good.

(135 words)

KLOTHO

A single page on which I have written in purple:

Words are also gestures (cf page 145 *Spell of The Sensuous* ref Otto Jespersen and Roman Jakobson)

I am unsure now whether this is quote, paraphrase, response or tangent but I can perhaps reverse engineer it.

It will be another two years before I make the connection between the Latin *geste*, as in Brecht *gestus* (via Barthes) and gesture; and the Anglo-Saxon 'cast'.

(70 words)

ATROPOS

Sometimes I just make lists of the field I am traversing with this reading:

Phenomenology, philosophy of mind, genealogy, pedagogy, weather and predicting it, mitsein/being with, duration, gesture, performance, post-cognition, somatics (I come back and add things), rhetoric, ethics, feminism, decolonisation (and better words for this than this), queerness (it takes me a while to make sense of the neuroqueer position but I get it now), disability studies (cross out studies put justice put crip pride), neurodivergence (it's the first time I wrote it here)

(84 words)

DAUGHTERS OF NECESSITY (II.)

SCROLL DOWN

LACHESIS

The next time I write to you is the 10th of October, the notebook is getting lossy already.

On the 10th I attend the induction for C3RI doctoral students with Becky Shaw and Fran Slack. I draw the 2 of pentacles, the juggler.

[2 of pentacles]

That was the meeting I met S and A at. We draw timelines of the Ph.D. and I find it hard to make sense of it, hard to model. I am distracted by the overstimulation that characterises every arrival in Sheffield and will do until (spoiler) the pandemic stops me going.

We discuss questions and methods in the afternoon. I make a lot of lists of them, objectives too. I draw the 8 of swords again, and in the afternoon the 2 of swords.

[8 of swords] [2 of swords]

(136 words)

KLOTHO

On the 16th of October I was assessed by an educational psychologist engaged by university support services.

[...] He notes possible ADHD, dyspraxia, and visual stress, and cannot rule out ASD, though he considers it unlikely, citing (or alluding to) Theory of Mind and my own concern about 'how others experience me', a rationale I, respectfully, reject.

He is kind and I feel very validated but also a new weight of fear stemming from the phrase 'learning disability' that I had not quite expected. Doubt crystallises around the idea of planning and writing. I draw the 2 of swords again, a significant moment of tension and balance.

[2 of swords]

(111 words)

ATROPOS

That night, after my assessment and possibly (I don't recall now) the night before, I stay at the Kadampa (Buddhist) Meditation Centre in Sheffield – at Hunter's Bar, across from a big park. There is an old black and white cat called Tam in the upstairs kitchen, and the atmosphere of shared kitchen calm I associate with places long since lost to me. I draw the 8 of swords again.

[8 of swords]

I have never travelled to work and chosen where to stay before, and I love it. I feel parts of my independence coming back, a new autonomy I have needed for so long.

In the morning I wake early, eat breakfast, talk to a woman who is staying for work also, pack my things, go to the bus and travel into Sheffield to meet Sharon for supervision in the HPO.

(143 words)

LACHESIS

I have a meeting with Sharon at the HPO, my first formal supervision with her. The HPO café is a strange cavernous space in which echoes from the tiny coffee counter resonate and dissociate unpredictable – it is very difficult to hear myself think or speak, let alone others. I draw the page of wands, little apprentice of desire, I have not quite recognised them yet.

[page of wands]

(68 words)

KLOTHO

At S1 I draw the page of pentacles. He who I will come to think of as the one slowly learning to find small things on the ground (to find what they need). Perhaps all the pages are learning to read/divine in different ways, but I am once again racing ahead.

[page of pentacles]

After lunch I cross the tracks once again to attend the RF2 presentations at Owen building. I draw the two of pentacles, the juggler, again. All these twos, eights, and pages, the first shoots of the Ph.D. orienting themselves to the work like gear teeth.

[2 of pentacles]

(102 words)

ATROPOS

In the RF2 presentations I get a bit too uppity in the face of a computer studies guy with a machine learning triage machine that decides who (doesn't) die(s) in A&E, he doesn't have any good answers for me about ethics. We are supposed to ask questions across departments, but it becomes clear as this goes down that it's not usual here for arts Ph.Ds. to get involved in tech thinking. I am overstimulated and bouncy again, it

has been so long since I was in a work context with so many adult peers, to whom I could say what I think. Perhaps I have never actually had it to this extent before. It is overwhelming, thrilling, and exhausting.

Getting the train back to London is often a wrench to leave but also a valuable processing time.

(137 words)

LACHESIS

When it's too hard to think do the process: follow the steps, feel your way along the line in the dark with your fingertips.

At the bar at the train station, the Tup, with its shining brasses and dark wood, smell of the craft beer brewing, I draw the two of cups, the gossips pouring language back and forth. I show my poor little colouring in cards to new friends, try to explain the Ph.D., expect them to laugh at me but they don't. Someone asks me what card game we are playing, an older guy, settled and boozing in the corner. The tiny spectacle of the cards, taken out in public, is surprisingly powerful.

(115 words)

KLOTHO

The next week, I attend at Doctoral School-wide induction for the whole of Sheffield Hallam's PGR community. I draw the Judgement card. Here all the proceduralism of the Ph.D. is presented from the top, a view from above.

[judgement]

Feel, as always, exceptionalised as an artist, at the same time fascinated at the size and spread of systems in the mass of a university as large as Hallam. I write down the advice to set search and database alerts for updates in 'my field'.

I will not do this as such but thinking about it now, I have some equivalent strategies that work just as well. My partner in the breakout session is in the English department and seems perplexed that I would try to study reading in the art department.

(131 words)

ATROPOS

University digital library access feels like a way into the hoard of an enormous dragon.

I have a meeting with Hester for supervision. We meet in the café in the station in the late afternoon before my train back to London. I draw the page of wands again!

[page of wands]

By now, they are an art student – Hester asks, can't we both be students together? She doesn't want to be in the place of the master. I understand her meaning, but also know (can feel) the power of the constraints of the dragon on student and supervisor relations.

I list practices: Design for encounter, scores for improvisation, game structures, reading ----- outcome.

(113 words)

LACHESIS

We are already talking about the ethics of the encounter that takes place in reading. I am trying to find the title of what this work will become, I write drawing and reading, the verbs I commit to, an academic colon, then 'divination' – the noun: uncountable.

Phaedrus, Plato on the invention of writing, as a coordinate, also Levinas, suggested by Hester for ethics I think (you know he was an *I Ching* head though, right? No that's Leibniz). Is the invention of writing also related to how we understand interior voices,

the telematic, the noetic, some kind of similar dimensional shift? Or was it the printing press? Was it Augustine, or mass literacy?

(114 words)

KLOTHO

I am learning to use the word autoethnography to describe the way I am doing the things I am doing – I don't love its proximity to anthropology, but it works in places where saying 'fiction' upsets people. This formulation will ossify over time into 'fiction as an ethnographic method', sometimes if I am feeling over the top, fiction as a method of data encryption.

That part of the Ph.D., as I wrote it then, feels like being a teenager, practicing as in getting ready for the real.

[...]

(104 words)

ATROPOS

Continuing notes from the supervision with Hester at the train station.

I write:

Breach

Encounter

Reading

Drawing

Esoteric methodologies: Is divination a method or a methodology?

What do I need a methodology for? Choosing a method. Asking myself questions (knowing where what I do not know begins). Reading and asking questions with others reading together. Working with the pedagogical potential of the absurd.

(63 words)

LACHESIS

The day before Halloween, I end up on a panel at the ICA discussing Chris Kraus's films from her early career with Ruth Novacek and Diarmuid Hester when Joanna Walsh, who was scheduled to do it, is unwell. There is a recording of the discussion online now. I feel like we do a good job but there are moments when I feel really uncomfortable. David Morris is the chair. I draw the emperor card.

[Emperor]

There are a lot of people I know (t)here, I make a list:

[...]

(102 words)

KLOTHO

It is good to see old friends again, surprising also, to think of these ones as that, though they are by now. So much so that F and P will invite me to celebrate their wedding a few days later, at Persepolis in Peckham. I make a note on the same page as this and the film screening at the ICA about Dial House, where Gee Vaucher and Penny Rimbaud, of Crass, live – so P and I must have discussed this then.

Conscious now, as I pour out this text, that this decanting from diaries of course, is all the art writers I have loved have ever done. But saying that – acting like authenticity is important – betrays us and robs us of fiction.

(123 words)

ATROPOS

I pull notes from an email of Hester's, after the session:

Supervision meeting notes, coding skills, reading workshop for L5s date.

WHAT DO I NEED A METHODOLOGY FOR?

Learning pedagogies divination practice collaborative performance John Dewey
gesamtkunstwerk there are better models (see David Abrams)

I am rewriting this on Indigenous People's Day, begging people on twitter not to use
'tribe' as a metaphor for neurodivergent bonding and kin-making, seems somehow
relevant to David Abrams, and yet, and yet.

I like D's reading of his reading through the lens of her Ph.D. better than mine. (95
words)

LACHESIS

[...]It's the wave when Europeans resident in the UK are trying to make sure they can
stay here if/when Brexit. [...]

This was a snag in the draughting, something looped back in here, a lump in the yarn
I can't remember the technical term)

There is more needed here, perhaps to say how important R is to this work, hers
 sparking mine alight.

(117 words)

KLOTHO

Workshop props (a category to which Hester gives great emphasis, and rightly):

String, go board, tarot cards, *I Ching*, small texts, bibliomancy (I now see the cards and
 the *I Ching* as specific instances of bibliomancy)

These all imply certain approaches and assemblages, modes of interaction, dynamics,
 dimensions of abstractions and perspectives.

Updates to the list: flashing mouth, E L wire, red contact juggling ball, prism,
 sunglasses, light-up LED egg, hour glasses, index cards.

(74 words)

ATROPOS

On Halloween I listen to a *Suite 212* episode, in which So Mayer, Sarah Shin, and Tom Overton discuss the New Suns feminist speculative literature festival at The Barbican, *Myth-Making, Occult Poetry, and 21st Century Feminism*.

Sarah Shin's curation of New Suns and editorial work at Ignota Press, (whose anthology *Spells* Sarah edited) and at Silver Books, whose publication of Audre Lorde has been a huge influence on the new new age witch wave that my research is undoubtedly a part of. At Ignota, with Ben Vickers (who I have worked with in passing via various groups of which we have been mutual members) Shin has done much to join the dots between spiritual, esoteric writing, avant-garde feminist practice, and occult esoteric history. [...]

(135 words)

LACHESIS

Sarah Shin references the Federico Campagna book *Technic and Magic* that I have been aware of for quite a while but which I feel quite hostile to reading, in many ways. I find it really hard to trust people whose careers depend on making technology 'cool'. The relationship with visibility and spectacle feels wrong to me. These things 'technic' and 'magic' are not unrelated, but I don't want them elided without a real critique of power, and material conditions. This is what everyone says, of course, but the way such ideas are sold, and who benefits remains too much uninterrogated often. The fact

is, it is too obvious to me that a main point of intersection between magic and tech is fascism, and it cannot be taken for granted which side of a razor's edge any given discourse or action falls.

(141 words)

KLOTHO

I wish I could convey how odd it is to hear my younger contemporaries openly lauded for their discussion of 'techniques of awakening' or saying things like 'initiation rather than education'. Growing up in a milieu where these things were frequently discussed in private groups but rarely in public it is very strange to experience. I was always scared to discuss such things, I found if I did, I was then marked with something, if not laughed at openly, then shunned and avoided. Perhaps it was not mine to do with as they do, but I do not think it is a matter of that.

I am wary, but also hungry for exactly these discussions, and wary too, of my own learned wariness, and how, so far, it has always kept me on the furthest edges of all the circles of all this.

(141 words)

ATROPOS

Still, this will be the first time I hear the name Khairani Barokka – I note that I don't know how to spell it from the audio – I note that forthcoming work by Huw Lemmey, on Hildegard Von Bingen will come out with Ignota and also a pamphlet of *The Carrier Bag Theory of Fiction*, all these links with what I want to look at are here, and yet I feel outside, as only the London art world can make me.

Of course, it is not just me, or even just them and me. Elvia Wilk already nailed it with her essay on the new Weird/Wyrd. Tai Shani's art works too, although perhaps I have not yet heard of these. Already Sarah Shin can link this groundswell to Black Lives Matter and to MeToo, pointing back also, to Wages for Housework. She is right about this, and to describe language as a bridge between insides and outsides.

(156 words)

LACHESIS

For my own research concerns it is interesting that Sarah Shin doesn't mention divination explicitly, despite the emphasis on both justice, and not/unknowing. Ableism is not mentioned either, though self-care and healing are.

It is odd, to me, to be able to hear all this from Shin and not really be able to get a sense of their lineage- of-study – not that people should feel it necessary to disclose this, but it would seem relevant to say. I want to better than just assume context.

I am doing that thing where I am most critical of that I feel closest to, perhaps.

(102 words)

KLOTHO

I do love what Sarah says about Ursula Le Guin's thinking on naming as magic: 'power with', naming' vs 'power over', unnamings – and the relation of this to written and oral culture.

I also love how she speaks of 'tuning in' to these forms of knowledge and practice (magic).

Le Guin's line from feminisms to the speculative is very important to me too.

I want to know what Shin means by 'to read with intention', I am desperate to see the seams of this thinking.

(85 words)

ATROPOS

There is a huge breach in this process of transcription now.

Grieving W and starting teaching again. The sudden onset of compulsory podcast life. I am still longing for collective art strike. I just want everyone to stop and cry. The teaching online demands so much energy of everyone in the Universities, and we have not paid for any of it yet, not even scratched the surface of the cost.

I told you that, in that Suite 212 episode, that Sarah Shin spoke about 'tuning in', and I said that I would come back to that, and this is that turning. This year it is somehow Halloween all month in October. The astrologers say that this time is written big.

(121 words)

LACHESIS

The note I made says:

Non-Dualism, I suppose Shin mentions it in the podcast. I let the word stand unadorned without comment because it needs work. It is one of 'their' words. Who I mean by 'them' in this case also needs work.

I call it a word, but really, it is two words.

Yesterday, (am I getting the tenses right?) I listened to a talk by Tai Shani, organised (on Zoom, or some equivalent) by the Courtauld Institute, about her work, and the idea of Occult Feminisms, (the fact that October is Frieze Week for witches now!) and in all seriousness, even though I missed the beginning because I misremembered the start time, I was so glad I caught it. Tai Shani talked so openly about growing up 'with hippies' that I am released somewhere from something long knotted and painful.

(142 words)

KLOTHO

Sarah Shin talks about (though I didn't make clear notes, and now that I think about it, I should listen again to check which was Sarah and which was So Mayer, and which was my paranoid reading) 'the broken open' in relation to trauma, not as I had hoped at the time, in relation to divination, so this remains unclear also, the refusal/elision/submergence of divination as a distinct concept in relation to magic.

Looking back, I see that I have been trying yesterday to plot the relations between Ignota, Tai Shani, and The Serpentine Gallery, whose statement/interview to launch their research programme on machine learning and art was just released. Tai seems only as connected as any artist with a profile inevitably is to one of these.

[...]

(134 words)

ATROPOS

I started looking into this thing at The Serpentine; the machine learning research collaboration with KCL again just now because I had seen a couple of Ignota things that wound me up. One, a black T-Shirt with a print of the Rider Waite Tarot Tower card with 2020 written where usually 'THE TOWER' is written. Though it does speak to this year's surge of support for abolition if you know it that way, it seems to me somehow so ironically explicitly cryptic un-cryptic.

In contrast, Tai Shani's insistence on her work as art, on her right as such to make a language, on her insistence on the possibility of 'other lives' felt responsible, accountable, without denying collapse. Her insistence does not seek to lay claim to the outcome of her making but to open up to it.

(137 words)

LACHESIS

I have realised there is a snag in the yarn, or think I have. Suddenly convinced that the three books are not on the same page anymore (though I see now, on the third pass, that they in fact were).

It is all intact still but somehow that makes a tangle or a knot anyway, I forget the word for the bunched up/hump in hand spun yarn (is it *slub*?). I will come back to that.

Perhaps it is just that. Tai's approach, that she articulates so carefully, is the one I need for what I, in my whiteness am called to do, her ethics are well-spoken to me also. I cannot and do not want to be laying claim to anything, and it is entirely good and right if that is not the same for Sarah Shin. It is not her that I don't trust though, it's the big guns of the Serpentine. But I am not Tai Shani either, or I don't have the reach, so I am fine with staying out of the light of visibility.

(180 words)

KLOTHO

That round of New Suns, back in 2018, when Silver Books had just brought out *Your Silence Will Not Protect You*, and all of 'us' were reading it, and most allowing the assumption that they had done so before. Poems written with the *I Ching*, and everything. I was also very glad to be reading it. In my notes on the Suite 212 episode, I write the names of the essays *Poetry Is Not a Luxury* and *The Uses of The Erotic*. I think I had already read it at this point but to be honest it has become unclear to me. We carry on reading these books a long time after we sit down and drink them in. When

the Black Lives Matter protests begin again in the Spring of 2020, Lorde's words in these essays are everywhere again. 'We' are still reading them now.

(145 words)

ATROPOS

Patrice Cullors, one of the founders of Black Lives Matter works with an African divination system, I found out in a recent surf of the Wikipedia entries around fate, destiny, and chance (a mental climbing frame I have very tender feelings towards, and which has a tendency to shift slightly between visits). It is something I guess I might have been able to find out had I had Google alerts set up for 'divination', which I still do not. I am more interested in using almost anything other than Google as a navigation tool, where at all possible.

Here are siloed a number of stubborn reminders: an urgent need to read Saidiya Hartman.

I remember what it was.

(118 words)

LACHESIS

What it was is that I need to be clear in one intention as far as I can see, and that is to sit down to this work of reception, to writing not as transmission but as openness and devotion to a signal, and all of this always in service to keeping a channel open.

In other parts of my practice, it is necessary to transmit, as a gig worker, a gig artist, trying to keep the flame alive with a shell hustle. I just had to turn the hourglass (the twenty-minute glass).

It is so important to disambiguate divination from all of this, not exactly because of purity or spiritual hygiene, but because, though it's secrets are clearly part of magic lore, it is not so clearly part of magic's language.

(134 words)

KLOTHO

I want to tell you about *Monsieur Deligny* now, but I haven't turned the page yet, and I think maybe that's a cheat.

Tiny moment of bibliomancy suspended in not knowing, scattered in all directions by my working memory of two years ago's response to the day's static.

Writing truly is time travel.

Nothing on the page, no date. Just the page left blank, apart from the phrase: 'Erin Manning on neurodivergence'. Of course, this is the key I have chosen. I think I knew even then. King of Cups is the active power of compassion. An architecture of tenderness.

(101 words)

ATROPOS

This tracing, this following, this opening up is working, I know because sitting here I let my first tea of the day go cold and ride the waves of it. Because I stop worrying about time while I am doing it, because I am remembering more, adding in rubrics and loops each time that help. Sharon's faith and Hester's energy and commitment to my vulnerability, Chris, and Becky's recognition of my self, it's all really converging. I am using the sand timer I bought to tutor and it's working, time is coming into confluence with space, and the music of it, the tuning, is starting to work, like with a singing bowl when the resonance comes in.

(117 words)

LACHESIS

Like that moment you find the balance on the bike, that moment most people experience once and then each time after it becomes less and less important because the way to that fluency lives in the muscles and nerves, well it doesn't stay in mine, and I relive that moment every time but for me now it's scary because I know what comes after it is always a fall, if not literally in space and pain or stress or overwhelm. Anyway, it's like that, that the resonances of power, or of the beauty of existence, the possibility of the world become fearful, and start to be perceived as danger.

That's why I need Erin Manning

(114 words)

KLOTHO

It's one of many reasons why I can't leave the neurodivergence paradigm alone – Erin Manning will get me in, but it will not be that straightforward.

I have to teach myself everything from scratch. I remember Melanie used to say something like that back in sixth form. I don't know why I didn't think like that then. I think maybe a state school habit of thinking that hard study was overrated – or just back then having very little else to crowd my mental bandwidth with so I didn't find things so difficult, or I was happy to leave the stress to an immense all-night binge of hyperfocus. OK I suppose I was relying on hyperfocus then.

(116 words)

ATROPOS

I just flipped the sand timer again for company and durational continuity more than anything else.

Writing longhand is something I did not expect to be so somatically useful.

Anyway: on the second of November I must have torn most of a page out but on the stub, I left in so as not to damage the flat-lay binding. I noted two drawn cards for that day with queries:

What do I need a methodology for?

SUN: generative radiant transmission

What is my methodology?

8 of Cups: forgetting

I added the readings today (20.10.20)

(95 words)

LACHESIS

By the seventh of November I was already messing up the bookings for all the train journeys to Sheffield, using the wrong tickets, booking the wrong dates, forgetting to pick up tickets before travelling. The SHU timetable – once the first wave of inductions was finished – was chopped, changed and liable to sudden additions. Having not worked since the end of the school exams in the Summer, due to not taking on any new tutees this year, I was broke and living off fumes even after the stipend kicked in at the beginning of October, mainly because of advance booking my travel for the first semester with the last of my tutoring money in August, trying to save money and hassle by booking low cost in-advance tickets before they were all taken. Things would even out financially by the middle of the second semester though the need to occasionally pay for overnight rooms slowed that recovery down.

(157 words)

KLOTHO

The first seminar with Becky and the rest of the art and Design Research Centre (at that time situated in the C3RI research cluster with Computing and Communications).

Other than making note of Becky's distinction between 'crits' and 'discussing the material reality of 'a work'', I only note the dates of key events and how I will need to rebook transport in order to attend the next seminar. I don't remember everyone who was there, but I think that, apart from Becky and myself it was [...] I don't remember if R and L from the Roland Barthes reading group were there or not, but they may have been.

(138 words)

ATROPOS

I did also note that there was no way in the world I was getting to Sheffield for a seminar scheduled for the second of January. On a good New Year's I have rarely gone to sleep on either the 31st or the 1st so travelling North on the second would probably kill me. New Years has always been my favourite party. It's so abstract and so arbitrary, and it's celebrated all year round if you consider how differently different cultures mark their years. I love the idea that it takes, like two or more people minimum to decide that tomorrow will be a New Year and all you need is a party to make it happen and fresh start. I love to celebrate New Year in January, but I am also a big fan of Halloween and Chinese New Year, both traditionally marking the death of one year and the birth of the next.

(155 words)

LACHESIS

I will end up going to an actual club on New Year's Eve for the first time in years, and with the exception of enjoying some house music, wish that I had not. NYE parties are once a year now or will be if there is such a thing in the future, and I cannot be sure what I did that Halloween apart from listening to Suite 212. I think I had been out tutoring then came home and sat alone while J was working late. I will have to check. I am pretty sure I would have tried to carve a little pumpkin. As the parties become rarer and rarer, I begin to see clear benefits of spending more time alone. Going to the pub has finally, after years of effort become, at least in London, completely intolerable to me. Possibly the contrast between the actually good pubs of Sheffield and pubs in London has something to do with the new clarity about it.

(decanting this just following NYE 2020 which I spent at home with J and the cat and Netflix's fireplace re-enacting Hiller's Belshazzar's Feast with a new TV)

(184 words)

KLOTHO

In the first session of a four-part workshop course entitled *Teaching Skills for Doctoral Students* (an unfortunate ambiguity), after a night spent at Kadampa Meditation Centre, in November: All doctoral students with GTA awards like me are required to

attend this course in our first year. The large class is led by two women from the teacher training dept, and they open with a bang, explaining their meta-teaching approach. They teach teaching by telling us how they are telling us something as they tell it to us! This session is a delight to me, the bravado and tenderness of our instructors is the most instructive thing, they care about pedagogy, and they believe we can do it. One of them is the first Black woman (outside of The Solomon Islands) that I have been taught by.

(141 words)

ATROPOS

I write: (explicit pedagogy) to teach teachers you need to explain what you are doing while you are doing it.

This is meta teaching.

My teacher teachers have a background in social sciences, and they are proud of that heritage: without apology they have us spend easily a third of the session learning each other's names and faces in a circle playing 'the name game'. This is much to the annoyance, I will find out later, of the bioscience Ph.Ds. who are outraged at being asked to give up research time to learn teaching as a practice at all.

I note: An alternative to the name game for situating, where it may not be inclusive enough, is 'discuss and introduce in pairs'.

I note: K says it's better to talk about 'ways of communicating information' rather than 'what problems people have.'

(143 words)

LACHESIS

I wrote at the top of the page 'Realist Methodology' in red pencil, then outlined the phrase in red in the purple ink, from the pages prior, the outline culminates in a tale off the purple lined frame, triangular like a speech bubble from a PowerPoint slide. Across the top part of the purple outline, I have written in the same purple Nefarious Nathalie, one of the name mnemonics from the name game. Below this, now inexplicable notation, a line has been drawn in purple across the page. Below the line are two post-it notes, one pink and one orange with writing in all caps in the blunt red pencil. On each is written a memory about a teacher, one favourite, one worst from school. In another exercise in the teaching session, we stuck these in clusters on the wall to show what people remember about teachers.

(155 words)

KLOTHO

On the pink one I wrote:

SENT ME OUT OF THE CLASS FOR BEING DISRUPTIVE WHEN I WAS BEING ENTHUSIASTIC.

I think I was referring to the time I was sent out with H, from the library, as we were talking too loudly and disturbing others in year 8 or 9 in history class. The teacher sent us to 'watch the video' with the other class upstairs. Turned out the video was a very graphic documentary about Auschwitz, the exact details of which we had not been prepared for, not knowing what we were being sent to watch. I spent the entire time watching it in shocked and disoriented tears. I did not carry on with history after this when given the choice to choose. I think I made the decision with the rationale that since the same History department had also made me go and look at the trenches in Ypres where I had nearly had a panic attack, I had learnt quite enough about my teachers' pedagogy, and not enough context.

(173 words)

ATROPOS

On the orange post it note I had written:

MR G (ENGLISH) TREATED US WITH RESPECT READ US ALOUD FROM GREAT BOOKS.

H and I loved Mr G and for some reason always referred to him as Pumpkin. He taught us in year eight, and had us read *To Kill A Mockingbird*, *Paddy Clark Ha Ha Ha*, (which he read aloud until he had himself in stitches, laughing), and *1984*. He liked to roll with a kind of Roald Dahl-ish amused cynicism, and pretend to be ruthlessly strict, but he actually wasn't very. He was the first English teacher I had who actually seemed to enjoy and believe passionately in what he had us read, and starting with him I would, over the years, come to learn much of the history I needed in English, Art, and Drama classes.

(138 words)

LACHESIS

(Choosing texts to be: the sample

the flesh

the matrix)

I am trying to begin to map divinatory processes. I want to know how the choice of sample should be determined, whether the 'curation' of the sample needs to be controlled or not. I write:

'curation for oracular encounter'

I am looking at this page now, now quite charmed, or something, to see the word oracular –

I think perhaps I am getting sick of the word divination.

Then I saw the sample, the flesh, and the matrix combining to result in the score to be read.

I was not sure, though.

(101 words)

KLOTHO

Hester doesn't agree with me about the score, thinking of it, I think, as a neurotypical concept, and I get that (typing now, do I though?). I was thinking of Cornelius Cardew's scratch orchestra rather than say, Rackmaninoff or whoever, or even choreography. Whether or not linearity is normative will become a major 'thread' of the study. I think it is the straightness of lines, not their linearity that leads people to think of them this way.

Curation of the sample:

(Choosing texts) the flesh

The matrix (query) -> the score as outcome

Everyday life as 'case study' (sample to which query is applied)

But this diagram is also a score.

Layers of threaded algorithms attuned to everyday life.

(118 words)

ATROPOS

I draw the two of wands [two of wands] again!

Making the space needed for the future to come, for growth desire and process:

Diagram:

Constraint > the matrix > the irrational > the score

➤ The matrix > the irrational > the score

> the querent's case >

the query > the matrix >

the irrational > the
score>>>>

Repeats with additions.

(63 words)

LACHESIS

My computer (a MacBook Pro that I bought halfway through my MFA) is so heavy that to carry it to Sheffield on my travel days that I come to the conclusion it really uses an unsustainable amount of energy to bring it. By the time I get back to Kings Cross at like 9:30 in the evening each time I am ready to drop, and I find that it does not make it easy to work on the two-hour journey out from Kings Cross to Sheffield. The computer is so big that it is quite anti-social to all my fellow travellers. I do the research and the consumer comparison algebra, but I am still broke. I think a tablet with a stylus would be much easier to use on the go. Is this trivia? I don't yet realise how it will be material and physical factors exactly as prosaic as this, like this, which eventually will help me more than anything else.

(164 words)

KLOTHO

As I write this, I take a moment to look at my phone. On Twitter, everyone is 'talking' about how NASA have announced the discovery of 'probably significant amounts' of water on the moon, which, of course, they plan to drill for to enable further and deeper space exploration. Of course, I wish they would leave the poor moon alone.

Drexcia seems to be the exactly correct music to be listening to in order to receive this information.

This year Halloween falls on a full moon, a blue moon, the first time in like three hundred years or something and everyone has been making a fuss about it. On the third of November, Mercury will station direct, as well as— I think: Saturn. Until then there are something like five or six planets retrograde. The US election is on the fourth or the third or something.

The Narrative Continues to Converge.

(151 words)

ATROPOS

After looking up the cost of computers I leave the next page blank, as well as two thirds of the one on which I have noted prices and specs. I clearly had great

expectations of what I needed to know about them all. Either that or true to my impossibly precious child self I did not want to mar the other things I might write later by placing them in such proximity to crass stuff like consumer tech purchases.

This weekend the clocks went back for daylight savings, no parties for the found hour for I don't know how long now, maybe 2012 or even before that. Travis Alabanza tweeted about suddenly realising with your friends on the dancefloor in the club that you get an extra hour. I Quote Tweeted, saying this: 'The collectively found hour is a blessed thing'.

(140 words)

DAUGHTERS OF NECESSITY (III.)

SCROLL DOWN

LACHESIS

In the second Teaching Skills session on the 15th November in what was left of 2018 we covered roles and hierarchy in a classroom, the ‘teacher’s’ *responsibility* for the space of teaching (a scene of reading, a cloth laid out, the cards drawn and spread: cast)

The teacher arriving ten minutes before the class/lesson to ‘set space and set up and initiate any pre-session tasks’.

Our teachers teach us to teach in ‘no PowerPoint style’, useful, they say in labs where there is ‘no equipment’ or for focusing on ‘in-classroom activities’.

We discuss the values of dividing groups up by theme or by mixing them up.

(106 words)

KLOTHO

Our teachers showed us the value of the one with the responsibility to lead the session being the only person needing to think about the structure of the session – something here about the teacher as the one who takes on responsibility in a bounded time-space in order to free others of the cognitive load of navigating interpersonal power

dynamics. They showed us ways to indicate the need for attention without the need for shouting. The power dynamics and the constraint and performance to enact mutual growth are familiar from art but the explicit way the encounter is structured in terms of ethics, albeit limited by institutional forces, new to me, and more welcome than I expected.

(118 words)

ATROPOS

SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS: or the things you need to know before teaching – or indeed planning – teaching. The before planning space is emerging from the noise of the assumed-obvious.

Number of students

Length of session and time.

Room, room's equipment, software, size, furniture.

Assessment mode or style

'Learning Contracts' and range of learning needs.

Will the session be recorded?

Has recording been consented to?

Are there any existing group guidelines in place for how to interact?

Liasing with other teachers working with the group.

What digital platform access is needed and for whom?

Student's prior knowledge and course stage, what they have been told to expect.

Is it compulsory or elective?

(110 words)

LACHESIS

Having been a private tutor for so long, it feels incredible to be in a room full of peers in a post-92 university discussing the ethics and practice of pedagogy, incredible to be trusted with responsibility and have the basis of that trust demonstrated and made collectively visible and to negotiate this process with those around me.

In *The Preparation of The Novel* Barthes speaks about rhapsody as a practice of reparation and patching together. I insert it here in fear of forgetting it later and to mark how profoundly this session of teaching felt reparative like very few things have to me. What was so strange was that there was no denial of the ethical precarity/contingency of our institution. Our teachers constantly referred to it and drew our attention to it, it became the terrain of thought, the treacherous ground before us.

(143 words)

KLOTHO

I think the strikes were already called, or about to be. I must check that.

I had for so long been struggling with teaching governess style, from scratch, with only an art education, and my completely off beat educational trajectory behind me hyperlexic, interpersonal sensitivity, experience working in healthcare as a receptionist and a care assistant in a nursing home, a telephone manner based on answering the phone when my mother was on call, intimacy with homeopathy. I made it work well enough as I could, but I was exhausted by the force of the mastery required and the fear of dropping it.

(103 words)

ATROPOS

What can I say? I think my family think teaching, certainly teaching art, is all kind of a swizz – or they simply hate school in general – the shit they have been through I know, and hate too, along with what happened to me. I guess I need a job and I think I understand contingency, like I have an idea of something that is needed, that I need, that they didn't get, or weren't given. I dunno but you know I do know this trauma, anyway I just kept on with the tutoring because it was a way I could keep on with this reading I love, a way I could, however temporarily and contingently summon the

encounter someone else needed and negotiate its terms without furthering harm. The only other place I found this was in art.

(136 words)

LACHESIS

Over the page, there is more:

-inclusive strategies

I read Elizabeth Grosz's words, just now encountered by chance, on how architecture controls what is inside and outside – the inclusion is just the flipside of the exclusion, the institution requires both to maintain itself, but of course I don't quite see that yet, but I will come to prefer the more transparent term, 'access' and better, access intimacy and justice, but for now, the practicalities.

'Make all materials work for everyone possible: large print reading copies, diagrams, images'

'Use lower case writing on whiteboards, it's better for people who struggle with reading.'

(101 words)

KLOTHO

'Learning contracts are available through the class timetables on BlackBoard – some are good, some are less detailed – you may need to ask...'

It will take another two years before, due to compound and multiple second and third order signal interference in the process, I will work out how, as a teacher in the institution, to access these, long before which I will have been working with students.

At no point is the possibility of a teacher's cognitive needs being atypical raised, except in private over coffee breaks between me and C and K, who are, like me researching communication and sensory needs, divergences, and norms.

(105 words)

ATROPOS

I left a page blank perhaps to write up notes from the session later, so I guess better now than never.

I spent two years being home-schooled with my younger sister – my dad taught us. For someone who doesn't believe much in pedagogy beyond (his joke) 'benign neglect', he was a really good teacher. There's something to getting out of the way of

someone's process but also maintaining the boundaries they need in the background – it's not nothing but my Dad doesn't see his own skills as well as he fosters them in others. If I am like him in that way I try to learn from his mistakes as well as his successes. There are plenty of both.

(119 words)

LACHESIS

I come from a family that used the word healing where others would use health or illness. We used the word intelligence but were suspicious of schools, and ranking people in terms of superiority in any kind of skill was unacceptable. Because we didn't have a word for disability, internalised ableism retained itself in the interstices, despite our disavowal of hierarchies of kinds, and there was much that could not be named, in spite of a solid ethic of care, responsibility and individual agency that we consciously nurtured without losing sight of the value of collective life, and access to it. Asking for help was only effective if the assumption of help as healing was undisturbed. We loved each other but didn't know well how to express limitations or needs.

'In your own way' was emphasised, sometimes at the cost of interpersonal dynamics of reciprocity. Not wanting to be alone was an imposition on others.

(155 words)

KLOTHO

COME OUT AND SAY IT, YOU ARE GOING TO DETERMINE WHAT YOU ARE GOING TO DO USING DIVINATION.

When I was about fourteen years old, I read *The Diceman* by Luke Reinhart – a really terrible book, I thought at the time – Now I am scared of being terrible the way I thought it was. This shadow won't leave this work and I see it now as a key question I still need to find a way to read for. How do 'we', engaged in divinatory practices differentiate ourselves from those who would wield disorder to dominate and harm. That text that has helped me most with this since I made this note is Arun Saldhana's *Psychedelic White*.

(117 words)

ATROPOS

REMEMBER THAT WHAT YOU ARE DOING SHOULD HELP TO STRENGTHEN YOUR FIELD, WHATEVER IT IS.

The question of what 'my field' 'is', has been fraught for me for a while. I do think of an actual field immediately, rather than any particular field of knowledge or practice

to which I might 'belong'. I have little idea what that is, even now. After my MFA exam Andrew Shoben told me he didn't know 'what your field is but I think you know a lot about it'.

Can you have been initiated into a lineage without realising that it was happening?

To get out of your own way is to turn in a spiral motion, outwards, [...]

(116 words)

LACHESIS

I messed up the order of the books, a lump in the yarn, a little knot, maybe a loop – of course, I got up and did something else and then fell in the family trauma hole. How can you measure love? I love them a lot, despite all the difficulties, the misunderstanding, and the confusion.

AIMS	vs.	Learning outcome
What you want for the session		what 'learners will take away'.

The 'assessment' checks how 'well' learning outcomes have been delivered.

(80 words)

KLOTHO

In the reading group we discuss the plan to invite Anne Boyer to address our 'guild' in an *unmasterclass* for a modest fee using the funding we received from Hallam to set up a 'guild'. Sharon will write the abstract. Notes about sculptural haikus and Semiotext(e) galleys.

We met in the HPO and I drew the queen of swords.

Queen → casts and reads patterns →

No fucking
about, to the
point, tells the
truth,
dispassionate

Swords → ideation, language, concept, abstraction, the mind →

No notes on the text, we may not have got to the reading that day. I feel young in the group, anxious to please, and nervous of turn-taking.

(112 words)

ATROPOS

My supervision meeting is with Sharon. I note:

Suggestions of rapporteurs for my upcoming assessment:

Luigina Ciolfi (if not too Social

Science)

When writing for the assessment remember that this person will be coming from outside of our field and still needs to be able to understand.

Otherwise: education, disability.

Divination is the form, the method, and the subject of your PhD.

Replace 'creativity' with speculation.

Constraints come from the everyday life of the querent: autoethnography → autofiction.

(78 words)

LACHESIS

Before a supervision meeting, I write down the questions I am thinking about. I need to know the dates of my assessments. I need to know if the time I spend on 3AM is

wasted. I am writing a review of the Kathy Acker show at the Badischer Kunstverein in Germany for Afterall because Matias asked me to. I need to know if I need to blog and who will be my third supervisor. I am writing about Kathy Acker because I am obsessed (strong but why not) with her practice as defined by reading and art, despite its being marked with the status of writing. I don't really know how to fit it in. I recognise a feeling of activation, like a jolt. I left pages blank and did not fill them in later. Beneath the questions I return to block caps.

(142 words)

KLOTHO

The lists are coming in again now, imperative, speculative, overly optimistic, only a few things ever get checked off, I try to use the new Bullet journal methodology, and parts of it stick, cognitive mapping tools for productivity are so boring but I like the shapes they make, and the idea that thought has forms that are manipulable outside of the mind. On this page, two items are crossed off, the notes for my supervisions have been sent to Hester and Sharon, and I got in touch with Anne Boyer.

I think by now there are notes forming elsewhere, most likely in the tablet or the sticky notes app in my phone, possibly also some message threads, some emails, desperate ill-advised tweets, conversations with fellow travellers on the train home, fags in between seminars, flurries of likes.

(137 words)

ATROPOS

In Becky's seminar on the literature of practice-based research I draw the justice card.

A talks about the use of arts methods outside the arts and the accounting of this to the academy, she associates art methodologies with different ways of disseminating.

B reads from *The Journal for Studies in Material Thinking* on writing and weaving and the articulation of material processes in words, 'seaming, writing, and making strange'.

I talk to you about linearity, how no making process, even writing, ever feels linear (or did I mean straight then, the way people often do?)

Dark striations move in from above.

(101 words)

LACHESIS

Is this what happened to Cassandra, to Ariadne, to Christa, to Chris, to S, to Hester, to Sharon, to F, to my Mother?

Syntax, semantics, structure, the spun and the scattered, reading and casting and drawing.

Divination not as mapping or discovering or revealing or telling the future but as orientation to ecology, pathfinding, navigation, diagnosis, not as something done to but done with, despite or in spite of.

I suppose we are filling in the blanks together, now?

(79 words)

KLOTHO

I draw the page of cups, on the page opposite the note on the Cosmic Trilogy by CS Lewis. They are learning to look softly and closely, to hold gently but securely, to carry water and the secrets it contains.

(40 words)

ATROPOS

I got flattered into writing the review of Kathy Acker: GET RID OF MEANING, an exhibition at the Badischer Kunstverein, a gallery in Karlsruhe, Germany, by Matias Viegner, one of the curators, and because I feel like it is a good opportunity to think about Acker's work from the perspective of Fine Art, I decide to try to make it work. I really want to see the show, but I am also interested to see if I can make this pitch work and write something I actually know about and am invested in that other people may also actually read for once. I am always trying to talk about writing as art.

(111 words)

LACHESIS

Discussing the structure (again), I need it repeating. Introduction of fifty words, what is the project? Why, how (lit review), who is it for? (Contribution to knowledge) Finish developing the methodology in time for the second assessment point. Go to Delphi, go to Leipzig.

Sharon tells me, a plan is just what you want to get done, not what you feel you have to do.

I draw the two of cups, discuss gossip, the dialectic of affection.

Reading this now is painful, like reading an old to-do list I thought teleology was a joke the concept of telos feels like a prank, the concept of wanting, a tragedy.

(108 words)

KLOTHO

I read that Pforzheim is where Noor Inayat Khan was taken by the Nazis from Paris on the way to Dachau where they killed her, so I recognise the name when I see it on the Autobahn signage. I have not been to this part of Germany before, and in fact would have struggled to place either Stuttgart or Karlsruhe on a map before this trip. The name Pforzheim lands with a cold shock. The sun feels barely up though it is perhaps 11:30 am and it is snowing slightly. All I have seen in Germany is roads and overpriced food kiosks. I want to change clothes before my appointment with the curator and I am concerned I won't have time. I have brought a bag that is far too heavy considering I am likely to be on the move all day and night. I have booked a dorm bed in a budget hostel tonight – in Stuttgart to be close for catching my flight tomorrow.

(165 words)

ATROPOS

When I arrive in Karlsruhe I am somehow so late – I get a tram to roughly the correct street. It's still almost snowing, and I realise I haven't yet changed into smart clothes. I duck into an obscured goods entrance and change under my coat. I spend so little formal time in the art 'room' but also over a long enough time now to know I don't need to be wearing any particular type of clothes – after all it is a Kathy Acker show! But it's more than that, I need a mask for this performance, a version of myself I have not been for a while. In London I am trying to leave it be, but here, I need her. Nobody sees me change. In about two minutes I am back on the shopping street outside under Christmas lights and expensive window displays, looking for the gallery door.

(149 words)

LACHESIS

I have an interesting conversation with U from the PhD, about mysticism, Christianity, group meditation and prayer. U recommends *The Cosmic Trilogy* by C S Lewis and tells me about her practice of durational mass prayer with the Burn24 movement. This is the first of surprisingly frequent conversation with both colleagues and students in Sheffield about faith, religion, and magic. One of the things I come to really treasure about this work is the invitation it extends to discuss and make visible the presence of these ways of doing and knowing in the most mundane but also intimate way.

(99 words)

KLOTHO

The doorway of the BKV is tiled in black and green art nouveau tiles with white veins in their marbling. Stairs up and turning right at the top from the street. An imposing marble lobby with publicly funded gestures of social friendliness like a rail to hang coats on and publications relevant to the exhibition to browse. Introduce myself to the attendant, leave my bag and outerwear with much relief, and enter the show.

Kathy's books are all here, along with a photocopier so that visitors can copy whatever they would like. Her notebooks are mounted in vitrines. The stuffed animals are represented by a single cuddly tarantula.

Overwhelmed, I attempt some bibliomancy with the different books about Sufis.

(119 words)

ATROPOS

Kathy says:

'Pussy tells this story the way she talks' *Pussy King of The Pirates*

'(Alan Sondheim) you'll put me in a position of being in control of you'.

'(Kathy Acker) I do, why because it's the only safe position.' *The Blue Tape*

I draw the three of wants and the page of cups.

The stuffed animals

Coffee with the curator in the café next door. I should have eaten more but they were paying, and I was shy to order more.

(82 words)

LACHESIS

I pitched the Acker review to David Morris for *Afterall* magazine and he offered me £200 for it, Matias hooked me up with the press officer at BKV, who bought me a plane ticket from London to Stuttgart, returning in under 24 hours.

I couldn't get my head round booking websites in German, so I don't sort out connecting transport in advance and don't ask anyone about accommodation. BKV is in Karlsruhe, and I stupidly take a bus straight from the airport in Stuttgart instead of the much more efficient train. The bus gets stuck in traffic on the Autobahn outside Pforzheim in the Black Forest. I am exhausted, stressed and stuck next to a fellow

traveller eating a tuna bean salad. My battery keeps running out and I am worried that if it dies, I will be lost and miss my appointment with the curator.

(146 words)

KLOTHO

I draw a second spread with questions more specific and derived from problems I am currently thinking about.

Where does Badiou fit in?

He works with specularity so possibly in the methodology.

(star)

Where does drawing fit in?

The marks that conjure a portal

The way

(two of wands)

What is at stake for me?

Breakthrough

Emergence

Becoming visible

Leaving the woods

(nine of wands)

(65 words)

ATROPOS

I certainly don't feel urgently about Badiou one way or another now. I won't be needing him going on. The two of wands, for drawing is very clear, the two posts between which a line can run or the way-markers for a path that doesn't exist yet. The two-fold and or bothness of the way forward and the way we came. Today I finally let myself read Italo Calvino's *Castle of Crossed Destinies* that G lent me when I started the PhD. I didn't know how he joined Oulipo later or that he knew Barthes. I take D's book down from the pile to go back into as I know she has read him. I write to L about Calvino's Knight of Cups.

(122 words)

LACHESIS

Breaking now to look at Facebook, I see a few people sharing the news that there is a TV show being made about Noor starring Frieda Pinto. About a year ago there was an episode of the new *Dr Who*, where Noor was a character along with Ada Lovelance. Dr Who is played by Yorkshire-woman Jodie Whittaker and some episodes have

recently been set in Park Hill where our PhD studios were until the pandemic. People on my timeline are happy about Noor's upcoming TV show. I am glad it will be based on Shrabani Basu's novel *A Spy Princess*. Of course, I enjoy TV myself, in some ways, but, but but...seeing novels you love made into TV shows (badly: *I Love Dick*. Pretty great: *His Dark Materials*— this year also) is one thing – seeing history you love televised – is another.

(141 words)

KLOTHO

I woke up wishing that someone would tell me about something I had been writing about and, while I was reading Calvino, O texted to tell me thank you for the gift of *The Next World Tarot* deck. She sent a picture of the three of cups, a happy legs wide and sturdy butch on a rock in the sea surrounded by three sea mammals and the legend 'JOY'. The card sits in beautiful morning light on a window sill with a chunk of amethyst and a shell.

This is more interesting than the planning notes for a meeting about the GTA role with I. I needed teaching dates, Blackboard access, budgets for expenses, learning contracts, structure of art teaching at SHU.

(122 words)

ATROPOS

I offer them a workshop on collaboration and group working for the L6s. I offer them coding for artists for the L4s (intro to Bricolage programming).

Syllabus design seems both completely fraught and dystopian at the same time as being framed as a necessarily super utopian thing.

In the end all teaching and learning is about the recognition of and facing up to mortality, that incredibly un-straight line drawn between birth and death and read for us by us with us through us from us.

(85 words)

LACHESIS

I draw a big Tarot spread, a card for each question I have about the PhD.

What am I overlooking?

(field of implicity)

What I want

(king of wands)

What is the project?

Attuning/Receiving/Myriads

(ace of cups)

Why is the project?

Speculation/Courage

(ace of wands)

How will I do it?

Context: Grief

(five of cups)

Method: Speculation

(star)

Methodology: THIS DIVINATION

Who is it for?

Those who would seek/those who need rest and recovery from meaning
and choice. (four of swords)

(81 words)

KLOTHO

It seems important that I am asking, not being told, although the minute I enrolled, having disclosed my mental health status, the system has been telling me that I need to ask for help or I cannot be accommodated. I want accommodations so that I do not have to ask anymore, as if help were available that would actually work. Having

worked in private sector student support for 12 years, I already know intimately what the problems with this model are. Every time I speak to student support I am frustrated to the point of tears by the end of the call. I can't keep straight what is considered disability and what is considered illness, and no one I speak to understands the system they are providing.

(127 words)

ATROPOS

DSS – Uni-wide disability support via LEARNING CONTRACT

DSA – National funding body (Student Finance England, like student loans)

+ Application as either learning support (assistive tech, organisation and study skills)

OR

mental health (one-to-one mentoring over the phone)

+ 'Needs Assessment' in Sheffield or London

+ Going to GP

Either/and/or:

Anxiety

ADHD

Eyes

++ Wellbeing Services, Study Skills via Library Services.

(60 words)

LACHESIS

Tomorrow is G's birthday, so I text her to tell her about how wonderful that she knew to recommend the Italo Calvino to me. When I last saw her, she gave me a gift of a tiny seedling of rue, an abortifacient herb, she said it was a plant given by witches to their sister-witches so that you know a witch's garden by the presence of the herb. L said she was writing about Daria but that she was overthinking it. I said that means she was writing *like* Daria and that's just as good if not better.

(98 words)

KLOTHO

The industrial scale of Sheffield Hallam is, I realise, probably the biggest institution I have ever experienced from the inside, and the way stress and information moves through its infrastructure is very new to me. I am conscious in new ways of how I have avoided such environments almost completely since leaving school and getting disentangled from the NHS. It's a shock and large parts of my nervous system seem to be responding to it as if it were a trap.

I needed at least a change of trap, and now I have it.

(94 words)

ATROPOS

In order to operate outside of the norms, you are constantly asked to justify yourself so that by doing so you reinforce the norms you want to resist.

I don't want help, I just want to use some words to describe myself, and to not have to keep re-inscribing myself into reality over and over again in order to be present.

I am just trying to be responsible for my own shit and communicate well. Interacting with institutions feels— always – like no one has ever had the specific set of problems I have in relation to anyone, like I am an alien from outer fucking space.

(106 words)

LACHESIS

I can't help but recognise the way this is all being run by third party contracts and agencies. Like, down to the mentoring assessment or provision. I recognise it as a terrifying hybrid of what I saw in the NHS over fifteen years ago, and the private

educational consultancy types I have been gatekept by as a tutor. It's funny that they are who I have to turn to for support now in order to show my good faith.

I am at Park Hill when I take a call from Student Support during which I am overwhelmed by rage and tears, and which ends with the girl on the phone recommending Wellbeing's 'Big White Wall' online. I put down the phone, sit down on one of the empty sculpture plinths, and allow myself to messy cry in the crisp blue morning.

(140 words)

DAUGHTERS OF NECESSITY (IV.)

SCROLL DOWN

LACHESIS

Watching N's films in a windowless room in the main university building. E has baked delicious cakes; sticky fruit, sugar and cardamom glazed buns, I think just because or perhaps there was an occasion. I get sleepy and then enthusiastically critical. N and I like a lot of the same things – films and creepy hotels and second-hand bookshops – so I am probably insufferable while giving feedback afterwards. I don't like all the neuroscience she is interested in, or the part about the veil. The age gap between us is wrong perhaps, or I am just sugar crashing. I remember thinking I was being self-important.

(104 words)

KLOTHO

I was being self-important for someone who couldn't stay awake in the warm dark movie light and had eaten too many buns. I think as always with N's work there was an element of jealousy and generational resentment. In my notes I am rude about the grading of the shots and the special effects but admit I love the screens within screens and the hotels. I still wish I could have introduced N to Garry. I think they would have got a kick out of each other's work and sense of the uncanny. I am very conscious of

having to manage myself, and of others having to manage me. N is nervous and vulnerable showing her work and I am not helping!

(122 words)

ATROPOS

Someone was late, either Sharon or S, so we hung out at the beginning of the session, eating E's cakes. I drink tea I have brought my own honey for. I was in a hurry to get to the session on time so I'm pretty sure I have spilt some tea before I even arrive, after getting lost – these all becoming standard bits for me at the university – then I sugar crash, become over critical, then worry about managing myself. Is it too repetitive?

I make a note that I like 'the big abstract kaleidoscope' in N's film. I don't remember it now. This was before I start using MirrorLab.

(110 words)

LACHESIS

RDF (Research Development Framework) 'planner' training. My notes here are optimistic and confident, written before I realise this corporate form filling exercise is enough to really break me when I come to try to use it. The planner divides into four sections:

A 'knowledge and intellectual'

B 'personal skills and qualities'

C 'standards and requirements of research community'

D 'skills you need to work with others and contribute more widely'

I write: 'Actions' at the bottom of the page with twelve tally marks next to a smear of blood or chocolate.

(92 words)

KLOTHO

How to describe the Research Development Framework (I can barely remember what the anagram stands for): one of those proprietary content management systems the university likes to offer 'trainings' for in the first year, slick but pointlessly complex pages of counter intuitive graphical user interface that has its own working logic unlike any system I'll ever use again (I hope). It seems to be geared to more automated or automatable ideas of research documentation than I am working with. If you find filling in forms triggers panic attacks this one is to be avoided if possible. I think I complained about it in the student survey. I don't know how long I finally spent working on it but my total lack of memory of the details suggests it all went in the

trauma bin. I have not needed to refer to it again since and no one has ever asked about it since it was initially reviewed by Hester in the first instance.

(163 words)

ATROPOS

I feel sick just thinking about the RDF planner. When I took these notes, I didn't yet realise how much torture would be involved trying to comply with its logics. I turn the page early to avoid thinking about it any further.

(42 words)

LACHESIS

A page on which is written in all caps:

A DRAWN LINE

IS A REGISTER

OF THE TRAJECTORY

OF ATTENTION.

For me this is a fundamental truth, a foundation of my work, something I've long known but may not have articulated as clearly before, or if so, not for a long time. I think I drew the lines opposite before I wrote the words. The lines of the drawing are

fast and strong, quite discontinuous and networked out from nodes, but the curves are sprung and confident, fitted to the page, on the right with the text on the left-hand facing page. The caps are also fast and confident, very much written with the same energy as the drawing. I remember vaguely or read back now in the lines again the feeling of being upset. It's not the best drawing but it is a register of that frustration – a defiance coming into clarity.

(154 words)

KLOTHO

I don't often think, or I try not to, about my drawings as 'good' or 'effective' or not but this one is nothing special, it wouldn't attract anyone's attention let's say, not without its caption. There's a braid in it, some sort of fishtail movements, the twist of a whale but overly cute, a childish affect to the twirls. The thing is pitched too big for the page, which, high on its flat lay binding means my hand was off the page and unsupported as I drew, I wonder if I was on the train. Some lines are shakier and more misplaced than the speed they were drawn at makes sense of. Nodes between lines fail to join up. I wonder if I was using the graphite stick, but I think not as the pencil line seems harder than that, more HB than 2b.

(143 words)

ATROPOS

Worth it for the text anyway, I think now. I wonder if I drew it in the RDF planner training session. I think the lines are too fast for me to have drawn while in a session for something else, it has a different cadence. It seems the same pencil that actions were written in and the tally from that page of notes but not the same as the other text that day. Looking at the drawing makes me want to draw back into it, or draw again, or put it through mirror lab, to see the error lines balance out.

(101 words)

LACHESIS

This notebook has lined and unlined sections and after this point the chronology breaks down because I start drawing only in the unlined section, the timeline splits a little. It's the eighth and the 10th of January, or it's been split a while maybe. I am diagramming the cards now when I read them, drawing the spreads with cues for the questions in the labelling. It's nearly four years later and of course the context is lost. Bad documentation but in the ruins is space for the fiction now. I wrote a do list for the RF1 assessment, what to add, what to cut, what to leave until later. Some of it reads like poetry now:

Cut some devotion

Cut some lovely repetition

Cut all the posthuman riff

(128 words)

KLOTHO

It's January and I'm planning the RF1 and the ethics form. I fill a whole page with asemic scribbles line by line, not like a drawing, more like I'm trying to make myself write, sitting down to meet the page. Just a step away from this writing. I'm breaking the rules a bit now or the rules are changing. I list activities for the risk assessment: interviews, meetings with other artists, office work/writing/ using screen, teaching/leading workshops, filming/photographing/recording, studio work, drawing, durational performances, reading in public. Already I am failing to be specific, to choose a particular path, to define a plan.

(102 words)

ATROPOS

I diagram a system of pathways branching off the word 'READING' into 'ART' and 'DIVINATION' then from these main branches to other terminations 'art writing', 'learning', 'neurodivergence', 'wisdom traditions', and 'anti-racism'. It's a good map of my thinking even now. The posthuman is orphaned off the diagram without a branch, which is why it's mostly getting cut from the RF1.

Below this chart, from which the lines travel upwards, is another diagram – more of a flowchart:

DIVINATION (META READING)

READING(S)

V

ART WORKS

With 'art works' detailed in all formats below this. I am working hard to keep options for what will be made, open.

(105 words)

LACHESIS

Drawings in the same black pen in which I wrote about N's films. One is clumsy and frustrated, framed oddly towards the top of the page, lines coming out from a high centre, radial like a Sacre Coeur with a dart piercing an ovoid with a downward pointing tip. Triangular formations develop from the radial lines. The whole thing is roughly symmetrical but highly irregular.

Following this, in the same pen is a more fluid, vinelike construction, leaves branch off from each other, a circular, halo like spiral in the centre like a fruit. One scrolled line through the core is made out in black dots along its length, the bottom half of the page is empty.

(117 words)

KLOTHO

Despite the flow being stronger, the second image is weaker and tighter overall – it doesn't have the speed and staccato drive of the mis-framed Sacre Coeur on the page before. The second image looks like calligraphy or tattoo flash with errors left in instead of having been cleaned up and corrected. I may have been paying more attention elsewhere. These are stim drawings – done to keep hand busy and mind ready, perhaps while N was discussing her films.

A third drawing in the same black pen shows my lines with flow having settled in. The whole thing is irregular but balanced by a sense of gravity. Lines hang from networked nodes at the top and progress downwards to terminating ends with circles around them as if weighted with beads. In between loops and tangles hang, supported like plants growing down from a wall.

(143 words)

ATROPOS

I can imagine the feeling of drawing with the black pen, a French style 'stylo', which emphasises the end of any given line drawn as gesture when the hand comes to a stop,

it kicks. It makes me want to copy the drawings for you here instead of writing. I am really breaking the rules now, but this will need to be typed up so I can't draw them again. Let's say I drew three cards: The first is the ace of hearts, it's sacred heart and its waterfalls are clear.

Ace of hearts

Second is temperance for its back and forth and horizontal scrolls.

Temperance

Third is the nine of wands for its nodes like vines or candle wicks or electrical wire bundles like synapses.

9 of wands.

(129 words)

LACHESIS

I said I could leave out whatever

I want.

The drawings read as overflow, banks bursting, boundaries wrecked and tattered flags in a cold wind. I am hung out to dry in this flow, all washed up.

(37 words)

KLOTHO

I wrote (in the same black pen)

In any act of transmission there is some collapsing of context, and this is precisely the vulnerability and power of being with others. With the acceleration of communication potential as a result of digital networking technology the need to recognise this power becomes more significant. Divinatory or speculative reading is reading that acknowledges the role of context collapse in meaning making.

Perhaps the vines are electrical wires or communication channels.

The context shifts, saturated with flows of some kind anyway.

It's almost four years later and I've lost my nerve or burnt out the nerve centres around all this. I said I could leave out whatever I want but what's left?

(118 words)

ATROPOS

These are the questions I asked taken out of the diagram (context collapsed)

Where am I now? 2 of swords

What did they do? Chariot

What effect did it have on me? 8 of swords

What should I do? 5 of pentacles

What made these feelings? Fool

It wasn't about N but now it reads as though it had been, and it is a better reading for it.

I'm leaning into a waterfall looking for candles, following marsh lights, getting lost again on purpose for your benefit. It's not a mixed metaphor it's a fragment of a story. You could just say feelings overwhelmed or meaning breaks down and we keep going.

(112 words)

LACHESIS

Slow, confident lines of irregular shapes, attached at leaf corners, evenly spaced, in pencil, the whole page filled but the image comfortably framed, a continuous feel to the lines even where the hand has lifted from the page. Where the lines waver nothing is thrown out of balance. The forms are reminiscent of leaves, speech bubbles and jewellery. In 3D wire it would move like a Miro.

(67 words)

KLOTHO

One of those drawings where I let myself stop when it's still pretty, let the unevenness of my lines breathe in space and just be so that, as a whole, it almost seems regular, the dyspraxia barely showing – almost good enough for someone with standards except too slight for that. Its whole impact comes from that slightness though, any more effort or application and the whole thing would fall apart into cliché at best. I think it's a good exercise in a sort of Keith Haring space filling – like a nice bit of graffiti but without the visual wit you might expect with that as this has no symbolic content.

(110 words)

ATROPOS

There's no date on this but the flow is good. I think it might be done using graphite stick or at least a very blunt pencil but the weight and spacing suggest the heft of my graphite stick's metal casing, the care taken where the lines meet and still, they miss or only almost touch – you can tell I was taking care.

Anyway, I doubt it was the first drawing I did that day, maybe it was after I wrote about the drawn line being the register of the trajectory of attention and that's with the graphite stick too, either that or I was just taking a break from the black pen –

perhaps that's more likely. This drawing has a similar underlying structure or stretch to the last one in pen, the nine of wands drawing, this one is more like the empress.

(143 words)

LACHESIS

Now there's an angry black pen line drawing where I've just let myself scribble in a field to the right of a jelly fish or a brain cross section looking thing with the swirls of haloes or Venn diagrams peeling off to the left almost onto the left-hand page, well, a little, which is otherwise empty. I can tell I gave up on this picture hoping I'd come back to it but I never did. I would have left the left-hand page so as not to damage the gentle pencil empress on the back. This drawing has a sort of five of cups energy, grief or facing the wrong way at least although I think if I were trying to fix it I'd make it strength, the thick black wall trying to engulf the delicate alien mind. It might be a good one for mirror lab.

(148 words)

KLOTHO

I try to be gentle with this drawing in the app, allowing its space on the left side to stay in the crop but its one-sidedness makes it difficult. I mirror it along a weird alternate axis so that it makes a cross in the centre of the image like old school playing

cards that look the same whichever way up you hold them but in a square ratio. From there it makes sense to make a sixfold kaleidoscope image but once folded that way it loses its directionality completely though the lines gain a grace the original didn't have. Only by reducing the count to twofold does some of that contrast come back, even at three it's a generically pretty line-drawn set, dominated still by this clumsy jellyfish formation.

(132 words)

ATROPOS

Rendering the image in polar coordinates brings out a weirdness, some uncanny that the original hasn't quite yet got to, which I like – it emphasises the almost right angle from the way I mirrored the drawing at first, creating an almost empty rectangle to the right of the square field off the image in the app, across which are stretched four simple cords almost meeting at the centre of the outside edge of the rectangle. Four jelly fish sprawl out, away from the rectangular field, out through the thicket of tangled lines, the image's energy has shifted more toward that of the four of cups, or the world now, with a portal ready to step through into somewhere else. Saving the image and running it through the polar algorithm again shows the place, after some rotation, the straight lines offer up a horizon like looking back down the wake of a ship on its way into harbour.

(157 words)

LACHESIS

I get a key to the studios at Park hill allowing twenty-four-hour access after paying a £15 deposit. I have to practice working the lock on the door a few times and cut up my hands a bit doing so. In my notebook is a post-it note with the address of the studios written in someone else's handwriting from the induction. On the right-hand page facing is a list of things I want to do for the studio set up. It's cold in the studio and I don't want to carry or wear as many layers as I need there on the train every time I travel up to Sheffield.

(110 words)

KLOTHO

Studio, to do:

Key from S1

Key for filing cabinet

Mark out wall space

Snacks

Books for swaps

A blanket

Spare chargers

Spare gilet

A mug

Paper

Other kit

Eventually I will sort most of this out so that everything is there on the days I travel up to Sheffield. In the hours when I don't have meetings scheduled I spend time there, despite the cold and the noise from the ongoing building works from Park Hill. Often C is there and usually B. My favourite times at Sheffield are in the studio drinking tea and talking with the other PhDs before and after seminars. Some days I get a lot of work done. One day I get the overnight bus to Sheffield from London and then the tram from the shopping centre at five in the morning and come in and sleep on B's armchair until eight.

(148 words)

ATROPOS

It's a long walk up behind the station from the university, either through the station or along the tram tracks up above the main ring road, up into the middle of Park hill where the sound of grinding concrete carries on all day. There's walls of pigeons and derelict windows one side and brightly framed new development with a creche and a

hipster café on the other. I love it but it's not comfortable in the studio, which is part of the old car park that has been given over to the S1 Gallery. I imagine the things that happened in the car park 'before', and it becomes a scary place, though the architecture is graceful in a brutalist way – there's this amazing skylight – the sound of the rain on it is nearly as loud as the concrete grinding from outside and the whole place echoes like a drum. The sculpture gardens outside are empty except for plants and the plinths themselves, birch trees, recently planted shield us from the road on one side. Past the blocks on the other side, above the tram tracks and then the station, the view at night is amazing.

(195 words)

LACHESIS

I'm planning a workshop on collaboration and working together; I must have had a meeting with Hester about it. I write the building name, the date, the room numbers, and the times at the top of the page. The workshop will be about an hour and a half long, in about a week's time, in Aspect Court. It's one of the least glamorous, older university buildings but I quite like the rooms, which are high up with nice windows all around and good glass drawing boards. I think I remember Hester saying something similar.

In my notebook I sketch out diagrams of the interactions possible between people in different sized groups, I think to show Hester how I plan to talk to students about group dynamics. I think we must have been in the café at the train station for our meeting. I count the number of connections/relations for each number of individuals from one to six. My diagrams are very heavy handed with circles joined by straight lines and clumsy arrows.

(172 words)

KLOTHO

I have a feeling this workshop got cancelled for some reason, maybe even a strike. I don't remember running it in Aspect Court though I think I did one on this subject another time but in the Charles building. That one ended up being for a whole year group of students, like one hundred and fifty people! I also put the group dynamics stuff in my performance workshop, which did run in Aspect court but was a longer session with other elements. I remember demonstrating by asking students to live draw on the whiteboards in groups to show the increasing complexity of interaction as the numbers involved increased. I wish I had documented these GTA workshops better in some ways, but then I wouldn't have so much to write about now and perhaps at the time they would have been less spontaneous and effective.

(144 words)

ATROPOS

The tenses are shifting awkwardly now as I try to remember things too hard. It doesn't exactly matter which workshop happened when – I could check my diary if I wanted after all – but that's not really what I'm interested in documenting now, not specifically. I'm not being vague for the sake of it but interested in maintaining the limit of what can be said in order to maintain a different focus, to record my response to the marks I made at that time and in the sequence available from the notebook. What matters is that here is where I was thinking about workshops, about sites in the university, about group dynamics. Here, in the train station, I tried to show someone something with a diagram, here I had not yet given up the idea of working with others.

(138 words)

LACHESIS

[...]

(131 words)

KLOTHO

[...]

(98 words)

ATROPOS

[...]

(107 words)

LACHESIS

In the seminar later that day Becky is talking about negotiated ethics, E is talking about fiction as methodology. I love E's assertion the 'truth is structured like a fiction', it makes me think of scripted reality, of the way we 'wrote' *Drunken Butterflies* with the cast – in the film I worked on with Garry Sykes five years before. L is talking about her work with local museums and U is talking about Hollis Frampton. I make notes on this. I'm writing in the black pen, neatly, as if I'm going to write a lot that will need to be fitted in but then the notes stop, giving way no doubt to a drawing on the facing page in the same pen, tightly coiled in the same register as the handwriting.

I'm aware I've started to switch to talking about the whole of each double page spread now that I'm describing the drawings too, if it seems like they were drawn in parallel, it makes sense, attention shifting in the writing the way it does in the notes. I'm hoping it doesn't disrupt the flow of the method too much. I think it's part of the expansion from the registering of the trajectory.

(202 words)

KLOTHO

I stopped to look up pinwheels, I stopped to look up 'negotiated ethics'.

[...] At this point in the notebook, I haven't read Yergeau yet but my understanding of my drawings and how I employ them is already similar to the idea, common in neurodivergent circles, of a stim toy or stim strategy to maintain attention. When I'm drawing in some ways I listen better and am more present to others' voices than when I am taking notes. I am also more actively present, as in, I can make better contributions. While I take written notes I glitch in and out of auditory attention somewhat, go off on tangents. The drawing from the seminar is slow and pleasurable. I can tell I was listening well. What's sacrificed or lost to written record is still present as tacit in the drawing, but even more so in my ongoing relationships with those who were speaking and their work.

(170 words)

ATROPOS

I stop to look up 'Nostalgia', the film by Hollis Frampton that U mentions. I've never watched it before, it's playing now, as I write. It consists of recollections of

photographs taken years before. In the film the pictures are being burnt as Frampton describes his response to them. Frampton speaks from a script off camera, as if I were reading this text aloud. You can hear him turning pages as he reads. Some of the details of his recollections are extremely personal and about famous people. After the pictures are completely burnt up you can see the hot plate of the stove on which they have been burnt.

'That was years ago, now I'm sorry, I only wish you could have seen them' HF

(125 words)

LACHESIS

Following some notes on a lecture by Benjamin Bratton that I don't think I agreed with much of is a note on the planning for a 'tele-performance' with The Carousel. I suggest reading the poem I wrote the year before on residency there, a slideshow, performing a ritual bibliomancy. This performance was staged for other members of the Carousel group, probably over facebook messenger (before the ubiquity of zoom by some two years) and I think I ended up just reading the poem, which remains unpublished and probably some of my best work. The Carousel isn't the best forum for poetry, most performance practice there is non-verbal, but the poem is about exactly this, so I persist bloody-mindedly presenting them with this awkward gift. It's about nettles and smartphones and relations to reading. The other members of The Carousel put up

with my hyper-verbosity with immense patience and I am always and forever grateful for the space they allow me.

(160 words)

KLOTHO

The Carousel Institute of Arts (C.I.A is Jonny's little joke) is a loosely affiliated group of performance artists and a place in Derbyshire set up and 'organised' by Jonny and Sally Roberts on a small farm. Physically it's a circle of three or so caravans around a bonfire space, a wagon stage, occasionally an outdoor heated bath mounted on kiln bricks over a fire, and a trampoline, all at seasonal risk of being engulfed by nettles. Around the fire pit are armchairs in various states of decay and becoming sculpture. There is a boat stage also, painted in pink and blue circles with nucleating dots. Aside from being performance artists Jonny is also a potter and Sally an animal whisperer and their two sons both perform and build sculpture and stage sets alongside them. Dogs, chickens, goats and the occasional sheep wander in freely at various intervals.

(147 words)

ATROPOS

I met Sally performing with her as part of curation by durational performance artist Amanda Coogan in 2011 or 12 we've been friends since. All the performers from that

project have kept in touch, with Sally's farm and the carousel as an ongoing node in the network playing a huge part in making that happen. It makes such a huge difference that there's a place to meet, however irregularly. Apart from the performers who met Sally through Amanda the Carousel's core members are all more local artists, many of whom are former students of Jonny's, who for years was a teacher at a local sixth form college.

I'm writing this in the present tense but much has changed in the intervening years and it's been a huge struggle for The Carousel, which continues but in very different and constantly shifting relation to the spaces it can inhabit.

(147 words)

LACHESIS

Portfolio list:

The Small Glass

A piece I made based on an I Ching reading for a carousel exhibition. A drawing engraved on glass 3 by 1 and a half inches.

The Juggler

A video of my face, refilmed on mobile phones in a mirror to create a video vortex, with sound made using sonic pi for a Carousel showreel for Sluice festival.

String Figure

Durational performance piece made using a large ball of string or Clew, originally developed for Amanda Coogan's curation in 2012.

And Cum Or

Audio of 'the poem'

Drawings

Sort out website.

(89 words)

KLOTHO

At this point I'm reading so much I'm not making new work in practice and I'm not taking notes on the reading. The problem with this is obvious now. I'm trying to stay present but if the reading is the practice, then how is it documented if not by writing? That's what this transcription practice is, almost four years later. I will only start using

Zotero in earnest in August of that year. I think I felt I had to refuse writing in order to focus on reading.

(89 words)

ATROPOS

A lot of what I was reading at the time was about neurodivergence and disability justice as well as other forms of justice. At that time my twitter likes are probably the best record, apart from this notebook and my calendar diary. I'm trying to justify myself now – something I wanted to avoid in this writing, and why I've imposed the limits I have. It's easy looking back from this distance to be critical – harder to just recall. This page is also a sincere attempt to honour my own history of practice, highlighting works I hadn't shown widely and collaborations I wanted to preserve. In a real sense I was trying to deal with what I understood already as old work backing up without getting shown. What reason, in that case, was there to make more?

(134 words)

LACHESIS

On the twenty fifth of January, I make a drawing in green calligraphy felt tip that feels like a real breakthrough. It is neatly dated on the back and marked up with a sign for the sun card in Tarot below the date. I think I pulled this card from the deck for it. The

drawing looks like a landscape or a horizon enclosed in crystal or resin, on an almost heart shape of lines with a matrix-like cluster at the top left that seems like the origin the other lines emanate from. When I come to do my residency at Access Space this image will form the basis of an embroidery.

(111 words)

KLOTHO

The drawing medium makes such a difference to the experience of drawing and the haptic memories associated with it. In this case the calligraphy cut tip makes explicit the relation between my drawing and writing, how it's kin to both graffiti and calligraphy and therefore in some ways also a writing. I wish I had recorded just where I was when I drew it though. I think I pulled the sun card for it though there is a very large circle sort of hidden in the lines so I may have read it from the image. It adds to the landscape impression, I often draw sun's submerged against horizons. I'm interested in how these two methods of reading an image for Tarot cards contrast. One is a question (to pull a card), it asks 'how should I read this?', the other is an answer read from the image itself, and a distance of time helps to bring out the more latent of possible readings.

(164 words)

ATROPOS

It's harder to write about the pictures I like the most of course, or it's just hard to write today. It's been a long week and I feel diary voice creeping in. It's as though I've really pushed the limits of the constraints, I've set myself this week and they aren't standing up as much as I want, like an electric fence that needs adjusting on the farm. Or perhaps it's me that's not standing up to my constraints enough. I'm worried I don't know where the embroidery I made of this image is now, if it was part of what got left in the Park Hill studios or part of what got lost when I was ill. I think not but I can't be sure until I look for it. My lack of memory is frustrating me today too, and how long I've left things. Coming back to this writing feels more stupid than brave today. Maybe as I type things up, I'll remember more. This picture is the first of a series of good ones in the same set of pens over the next few days. The sun card stands for creative power and radiant warmth.

(198 words)

DAUGHTERS OF NECESSITY (V.)

SCROLL DOWN

LACHESIS

There are three more drawings in the coloured calligraphy pens. The first is rusty red brown, for which I pulled the five of cups and dated January 26th. It's like a lopsided leaf or nut, boiling inside with more leaf and nut forms. This one is the most overtly calligraphic of the three, hard to say why but I think it's a predominance of loop forms and a terminating tail at the base like a leaf or a letter would have.

I put this one through MirrorLab just now and it was hard to reframe as it already fills the page quite well – it's already composed. Mirroring it in a wider ratio worked well, expanding some elements and introducing tree and arch forms. I can't find the five of cups in it visually, confirming I think, that I pulled the cards for these pictures rather than reading them out from them.

Five of cups

(154 words)

KLOTHO

These pictures are so replete I don't dwell on them, I want to go faster now. The next image, drawn on the 27th of January is a sort of shell-form with three spirals superimposed against the top corner of the shell. It's in black calligraphy felt pen, a simple wound or vulva, or not unlike a pieta too. It's funny how I've come full circle to describing my drawings with similes – normally when people ask me what I'm

drawing I just reply with 'this'. I think something literal about trying to translate from images to words is the reason. Something to do with this writing functioning as an extended image description for the notebook. I've pulled the eight of swords for this image.

Eight of swords

Like a sort of bereft pieta in need of shells rather than reminiscent of one, although there is something about boundedness in both the drawing and the card. It's a simple drawing, I haven't messed with it much.

(163 words)

ATROPOS

On the same day in red, on the following page, is my favourite of this suite of images. It's a snail shell type of spiral with radial lines and out of stepped stripes all round its curves in different thicknesses with a big open mouth pointed downwards. The whole thing is tightly bound by its thick strong outer edge. I've drawn the ace of wands for this, and the way the mouth is oriented it stands up on its spiral like a fiddlehead fern would, perfect for the ace's green staff.

Ace of wands

In the same red calligraphy pen on the next facing page overleaf I've written out a quote from Susan Hiller, who died 28th January:

"I try to choose the most appropriate medium for the subject matter".

(130 words)

LACHESIS

Below the quote from Hiller I write, by way of explanation 'the material *is* the question'. I have just taken a picture of this page in the notebook and run it through MirrorLab. The light in the room is golden hour times electric light perfect and the colours of everything are subtle and glowing. I don't bother to crop much and end up with my knee in the final composition, green sweatpants setting off red pen and violet notepaper.

I've been a huge fan of Hiller since I saw her work, probably on my foundation year or before. Rough seas postcards *in memory of unknown artists* is a really important work for me but so is all the rest. She was a fine reader of the image if anyone was. I recall her passing with tenderness. What an artist!

(139 words)

KLOTHO

On January 30th I am in Sheffield for a seminar with Becky and a supervision with Hester, taking scrappy notes I can't read much from now. I was probably talking a lot.

In the seminar I write:

Ludology

Emancipatory research

We are discussing academic disciplines as 'homes or barricades' I write:

Art and design is the position not the identity.

For the supervision session I write:

Elements of practice in current play

Reviews of art books

Poetry

Diagrams

Drawings

Find an interface.

(82 words)

ATROPOS

That day I drew out a diagram of a Tarot card reading, a full spread for the day. It's quite a challenging spread and I don't want to reproduce it. I can see this is where I begin to get stuck from the questions I am asking. 'Blank slate', 'cliff edge', and from the state of my notes, my handwriting. I am struggling to talk about practice not finding the medium for the subject, or not hearing the question in the material right.

On the facing page is another fine image drawn with black calligraphy pen. In my residency at Access Space, I will use this image to test the laser cutter.

When it's all burnt MDF glue, and four times bigger people will take the image more seriously. I pull the king of cups for this drawing.

King of cups

I always think of him as the architect of kindness.

(151 words)

LACHESIS

The following week I attend Sharon Kivland's lunch seminar in the design department, 'on the difference between theft and gathering': Die Holzdiebe'. It is both funny and pathetic as all discussions of theft should be. Sharon speaks with great emotion. It is by far the most animated and convincing argument for Marxism I have ever witnessed. I manage about a page of near verbatim notes before I give up and just listen in awe like a stunned little taxidermy squirrel.

(80 words)

KLOTHO

The black pen drawing is made up of leaf forms, mainly vertical to the page, and takes up about half of the horizontal width of the page, closer to the right-hand margin than the left, framed perfectly for comfortable drawing with the right hand. It could be a view through the woods or some other thicket or it could be a blazing fire in a hearth.

When I run it through the laser cutter the narrow lines of the calligraphy catch fire under the heat of the laser and in some places break and move the design, doubling lines and changing the forms, the glue that holds the medium density fibre board into a solid burns acrid and poisonous, leaving char marks on the final form.

(127 words)

ATROPOS

On the difference between theft and gathering:

(Marx's formative experiences: the massacre of the wood gathering peasants in the Rheinland – extract from Raoul Peck's film *The Young Marx*)

Pathos

'Illegitimate appropriation'

Gathering fallen wood, Marx argues is distinct from theft as it is not the property of the tree/tree owner.

(Using an analogical legal argument)

Sharon works through images used to illustrate 'Grimms'' stories.

The gathering of stories by Grimms and their appropriation is linked to/contrasted with the gathering of wood by the poor.

Types of wood bundles: faggots, benders and pimps!

(92 words)

LACHESIS

This next drawing is a sort of unspooling winged clew with grass-like striations flaring off the wing structures on the right. It's not dated and there's no card pulled for it. It's drawn in pencil first then traced over in a teal calligraphy felt nib, extra downward flaring striations are added, feathering off from the right-hand wing structure in the felt tip only. It doesn't matter if it's good, but it isn't. Poor little 'informe' angel glyph.

I have no memory of drawing it.

(84 words)

KLOTHO

I considered skipping these unmarked pages, well, marked, but not verbally, poor little gestures. I made myself – I am making myself – sit with them anyway and am in so doing making you sit with it too. Does the reader mind this? I am troubled by the graphite's interaction with the felt tip, how it muddies the transparency of the colour and shows off the faltering of my hand, its vagaries as I trace. As is often the case I want to draw back into it. Just another unfinished orphan stub.

(90 words)

ATROPOS

It doesn't help that the teal colour clashes fashionably with the yellow and brown of the next drawing on the facing page. The combination of the two reminds me of a friend's graphic design tells. That thing about proprietary artificial pigments, when you don't mix your own colours, you are vulnerable to their associations. I feel bad for exposing this drawing here when I could have just let it be untranscribed, quietly unfinished and unbothered on the faded violet pages. I hadn't yet started to solve these problems with the fountain pen and coloured ink cartridges I will take to using later and am using now for these transcriptions. This is clumsy and I let it be.

(117 words)

LACHESIS

Opposite, another picture I didn't annotate in any way finds far greater fluency. There are two colours and no graphite, a yellow and a brown like two different types of mustard mark out a shape like an eye or beak of a bird, bordered by a hemispherical arc at the top, rippling away below, striations inside the arc's boundaries, heavier on the right like all my drawings and slanted like handwriting in the calligraphy felts. I have no memory of drawing this either, but you can see me finding my hand. Should I draw a card for these two in retrospect or try to read them out. This one is an obvious Empress, even without the figure it easily reads as a cornucopia.

Empress

(124 words)

KLOTHO

I don't know why but returning to the orphaned one on the page before with the generous eye of the Empress, I see it now as Judgement, a card I have great trouble reading, a sort of lopsided Judeo-Christian angel, the ones with all the eyes and wheels and trumpets. It also has a nine of wands energy, another card I have trouble reading. This insistence on embracing weakness seems like it is reinforced by the Empress. With so little context here I don't know, but then also there's nothing to lose. This is the gift of abstraction. I've been reading Susan Hiller again and thinking about automatism in my work. It's so hard to talk about.

Judgement

(118 words)

ATROPOS

In the end I have to let my drawings speak to each other for you, the 'good' one and the 'bad' one stuck with each other for better or worse, their relation isn't arbitrary, like siblings they must to some extent bring each other up through the transcribing

this becomes more apparent, that's why I can't cut them out of the books or whatever. They need each other. I think about running them through the app, but I really don't like the way the colours interact. They need to be in the text together I think, I'm fairly sure they were drawn in succession.

(104 words)

LACHESIS

Over the page, facing is another unannotated drawing, this time in vigorous, heavy-handed graphite, perhaps it's this which is the nine of wands. A rod form bursts into blossom above and forks below at the root, lines flare off both sides like wings or wave forms, the whole thing shudders and shakes. From a point on the top edge of the page, slightly right of centre, seven lines descend like the roof of a tent from its apex, another line loops and jolts back up to leave from the top right, and any given part of the drawing could be read as a fire.

nine of wands

(108 words)

KLOTHO

Unusual horizon emerging without being a line.

It's more like a seam with stitches converging along a fault. Sometimes the relation between drawing and embroidery is as noticeable as the relation between drawing and handwriting.

Still thinking about the nine of wands, the picture is like a blossom tree struck by lightning. I always think of that card as like the final trial, but I don't know if that's right, maybe I have it mixed up with the seven.

Seven of wands

(82 words)

ATROPOS

Looking it up (on learntarot.com) I find that the difference between the nine of wands and the seven of wands is the difference between perseverance and defiance. So which is it and how to tell the difference? It seems important to know, though the two ideas are complementary the conflation of the two implies like an unnecessary force multiplier which might overload or overwhelm. There is an important difference in the pattern of energy use and force.

I think given the weight and speed of the drawing it's more of a seven than the nine, the number of lines in the upper part of the drawing that are marking out the tent formation is seven too, and the sense of strike is palpable.

Important to remember that while to persevere is to continue, to defy can mean to stop.

(140 words)

LACHESIS

I attend, I was attending, I'm attending a conference in Manchester. I take notes (in pencil that needs sharpening, I think from the drawing on the page before) on each speaker, their names, at least some key words, themes, and quotes. I remember the presentations as short and rushed at twenty minutes on panels of three or less, but fascinating. There is not much time to move between rooms and panels, the feeling presiding is chaotic and rich.

A Canadian delegate Sarah Jane Cervenak has access copies available of her paper on neurodiversity and I feel really recognised as I go up to take one, find they have all gone, get a smile and an apology anyway. Later I say I'll email her and don't. She writes about Gayl Jones, Renee Gladman and Erin Manning. I quote 'writing's all-inclusive structure.' I should have emailed her.

(145 words)

KLOTHO

So much happened at the Gestures conference and this is just the first page. All my notes look like this:

Christodoulos Makris

Super relevant on reading and algorithmic encounter/ digital life 'online behaviour' as 'gesture history'

habit/convention/power

I don't know the first three speakers I have notes for but there are a lot of people I do know both presenting and in attendance. People keep saying 'everyone from Twitter is here'. It's nice but also overwhelming. Holly Pester (who I know mostly from Twitter) and comedian Emma Bennet present on tricks, gimmicks, and seriousness: 'time as a substance the poem delivers in gesture.'

(103 words)

ATROPOS

How to expand my extractions, my contractions, from these already super compressed papers, this hectic day? 'We' had come up on the train all bonny with day out energy, missing the opening keynote so everything in the notes stays somewhat out of context. It's a long way to Manchester but many of the delegates have travelled further. Everyone is excited to see Renee Gladman speak tomorrow.

I move to a panel at the smaller venue where there is barely room to sit down, maybe after lunch, which I don't recall, to see some friends speak. Before them, Joey Francis, talks about Bhanu Kapil. Crowded notes at the bottom of my page tell me that he employs the same quote I found during a bibliomancy session about women dyeing. He connects Kapil's work to Rosi Braidotti.

(135 words)

LACHESIS

Over the page is a quote without attribution but from Joey I think, or from Bhanu Kapil: 'colour as an interface between two embodied contexts' (Recently I have been wondering about reading and the relation between texture and gesture.)

For my Twitter friends Irene Revell and Karen DiFranco, on Scores, I have more notes, so many in tight pencil hand, it almost makes less sense now. They're talking about Donna Haraway, Karen Barad, Trinh T. Minh, Carolee Schneeman, Pauline Oliveros and Kathy Acker on iteration and transdisciplinary intergenerational collaboration: 'matter and meaning as iteratively co-constitutive'. You can read the thrill of coincidence in the shape of my writing, I am electrified and caught in flow. I've not had this sense of a room of people reading together before or since.

(131 words)

KLOTHO

I don't know how to do this justice. Someone whose name is lost speaks about Yvonne Rainer's hand film, the name of which is also lost, is it 'hands'? I look it up and it's just 'Hand Film' or 'Hand Movie'. She speaks of Rainer as employing 'autobiography as found object', something I think I aspire to greatly. The speaker is a dancer. I write out in full the sentence 'the capture of the incidental movement by recording in which 'recording as notation' occurs, leading to the possibility of verbatim performance of gesture.' I really need to sharpen my pencil. The writing on the page here is all smudged graphite with impressions from the facing page.

(116 words)

ATROPOS

Nowhere else in the notebooks are there such densities of notes. Will the reader want to read all these extracts from context? I doubt it but I carry on. Reading them back is for me almost as exhausting as attending the conference was. Are the notes any more useful than looking up the documentation would be? I'm sure the organisers would be happy to supply the programme, even four years later. I wonder if I would remember it so well without these notes though, or without having taken them anyway. Almost certainly not. I just can't use them for much, or can I? (That word, 'use' keeps returning, despite my attempts to substitute others for it) How 'much use' is this transcribing now?

Recently I saw Y and Z and D at the Small Publisher's fair and Y had the Gestures tote bag with her. We were all jealous! It seems so long ago and yet so recent – pandemic effects playing havoc with memory. I went to four conferences on the Ph.D. I wonder if they even happen still. It feels impossible.

(181 words)

LACHESIS

I have at least three different ways of paying attention as marked in the notebooks. I either draw while listening, take feverish notes, or begin to take notes and stop after noting only a few key facts and then listen wrapt. I don't think any one of these is any more effective than the other but obviously the marks made by this attending are useful or meaningful or employable to a greater or lesser extent. I suppose each represents a different strategy for managing my energy or attention in listening and I prioritise that listening even when it means I won't have notes, or drawings, to work with afterwards.

Notes on the morning of the second day of Gestures are less extensive and hectic. I can see I've decided to prioritise listening. We are back in the main room, as hilariously, unnecessarily big as the other is small and crowded. It's possible it was harder to write at the chairs available in this room.

(155 words)

KLOTHO

Some people I just don't want to paraphrase, no matter how much I'd like to represent them for you. Fatema Abdoolcarim is one of these. I remember her paper well, perhaps better than any other at the conference. I remember feeling almost angry with those who missed it to go to the other panel, this anger fading to gratitude that I got to see it. I look her up and find her online self-described as a film maker doing her Ph.D. at the University of Manchester. I have only the briefest of notes on her presentation, maybe because I was crying. Is this cowardice or just working out when to shut the fuck up?

(114 words)

ATROPOS

I find again in the notes, or remember, a few sources of tension at the conference, splits between positions in relation to, to speak plainly, race, time and research; all bringing me to pause and raising questions. That is: questions around race and appropriation of racialised research by white researchers writing 'about' academics, writers and practitioners of colour, the potential violence in the way 'we' speak 'about' the work of 'others' in general; questions about the use of time (at the conference) and who gets to take it up; and questions about the predominance (at the conference) of academic

theory over creative practice in research. All of these questions map onto and across each other. Should I say they intersect? Perhaps that is obvious?

(124 words)

LACHESIS

There's a problem with the transcribing now, pages in the notebook are coming up longer here as I write out and up. I haven't even mentioned the incredible panel on graffiti, calligraphy, and propaganda the same morning. I go back and run the notes through MirrorLab trying to fit more in. Phrases like 'relation between coding of symbol and flow of physical gesture', 'things crossed out/visible in erasure' emerge as I process the image. I'm already late to tell you about the afternoon, for which my notes are business-like and systematic. Everyone's presentations are good but it's the ones I don't know of in advance that feel the most relevant, perhaps surprisingly. I would have thought it would be the other way around.

(123 words)

KLOTHO

I give up and let the pages blur a little into each other. It's the afternoon now, or at some point there was lunch. I stay in the big room all day. I watch Carl Gent, Allison Balance, and Daisy LaFarge. I know Daisy from Twitter but not Carl or Allison though

after this I'll follow them both. All clever, witty, pretty stuff. By the time it gets to someone called Judy Browning I'm fading a bit. At some point someone puts up a slide with a quote from Susan Hiller which I copy out in full about being a woman being an advantage. I think I felt it differently then than I do now, four years later and not even totally sure I'm a woman. It cuts both ways as a statement. Judy Browning's paper describes a man's body as if it's life drawing. The whole conference is genderskewed towards the feminine, the femme, (I hate to say female though I would have found it easier then) though there was no reason for it to be based on the premise of gestures, lets's just say it was a feminist gathering in a beautiful way though perhaps tending a little cissexist if I'm honest. Carl's performance's much needed genderfuckery notwithstanding.

(211 words)

ATROPOS

Carl's performance is messy, trashy, queer, and willing to talk about homeopathy and Anglo-Saxon shit, which I find super endearing if a bit hard to keep track of. I remember it was exciting to see someone embrace silliness for the first time over the weekend. I was really drawn to the chaos of the presentation.

Of course, the night before everyone had been out, lateish, or very late in Manchester, some people are really hung over. I'd made some really nice conference friends. I am becoming conscious of how isolating not drinking can be, just how much everybody

else is always kind of waiting to be drunk. The new friends were from Falmouth and Ireland, so I've not seen them again, despite how exciting it was to meet them. Instead of drinking I talk to people about Tarot.

I make a note from Carl's presentation that says 64GB is more 'info' than existed in the whole world in the Saxon times. Thinking about it now it's actually still quite a lot if you imagine it all as text. I guess paintings and statues don't count.

(186 words)

LACHESIS

Again, I'm looking at the page I should have just finished, wanting to go back over it. Would it be better to just write out the notes in full? It's hard to go back later but then, the pencil marks leave their backward impressions on the wrong page too so perhaps I can allow it. Here's what I wrote for Daisy verbatim:

Daisy Lafarge on cliché

Lisa Robertson (you need to read it)

Sianne Ngai

Cliché is a word from printing technique.

(Letterpress clicking)

'by-product of mechanical reproduction'

Permits access to shared experience (ambiguously (in)authentic)

Denise Riley on cliché (u need to read this too)

Homelessness of the Black meme (Aria Dean) Afropessimism

Relatability

(115 words)

KLOTHO

[...]

(113 words)

ATROPOS

[...]

(147 words)

LACHESIS

[...]

What sort of space am I making with this writing? What can live here, be live here, because it is a sort of live writing this method I'm using, going back is only slightly possible within the bounds of my three-page buffer, my backwards pencil impressions, my handwriting it first.

I'm anticipating Renee Gladman again, as we all were. As the keynote I am happy to represent her words in describing the conference, and because I learned so much from her it forms a significant citation rather than an incidental event in this text. I have

multiple pages of notes and drawings from when she was speaking. I remember the conference was running behind and I was resentful of every extra minute taken up by others' papers in the run up to her presentation. I can give her space here and now though.

(165 words)

KLOTHO

She started by saying: 'Bear with me, I'm going to spin a little bit.'

I note:

'the paradox of when things happen in language'

'writing down what you did but not at the time that you had done it'

'story of writing is the story of my hands when I am writing'

'autofiction – a useful confusion'

Reference to Thought in The Act by Manning/Massumi

'drawing cracks open the syntactic line and peers into the clock face'

(76 words)

ATROPOS

Surrounding my note 'writing down what you did but not at the time that you had done it', I draw lines that loop and flow in a block like scrappy pencil illuminations

above and below the text and I feel like this is still really a transcription. The lines of the drawing are dense and confident and fit perfectly around the text, something I would normally find hard to do. Unlike Gladman's drawings mine don't have words in them though they share many qualities with my handwriting.

I am so blown away by her commitment to the event of the line, what she calls the commotion. Listening to her I am completely happy.

(113 words)

LACHESIS

The second page of notes on Gladman's speaking to us is spacious but filled to the point that the final sentences still have to turn around the edges and margins, crammed into the top corners like a bag packed well but overenthusiastically. I have tried to make enough space to preserve this treasure. My pencil needs sharpening again but even after all this time these pages remain unsmudged.

I can't remember whether she read from notes. I don't think the presentation was pre-written or indeed published anywhere afterwards. She was just 'spinning'.

The word DANCE is written in all capitals.

(100 words)

KLOTHO

'I make the correction because I want to maintain the commotion'

DANCE

'how to prepare a space for thinking'

'sentences that try to free up the commotion in the event itself'

Beckett's Molloy – sucking stones

'the story of the body writing'

'the essay as a gesture towards the novel, like how do I think about you?'

'passage'

'what I had seen,

what I had read,

what I had drawn'

'in drawing a way to think about narrative'

'the presence of the sun'

'trying to get at an energy'

Coming back at the end of what she'd read to the beginning (spinning).

(101 words)

ATROPOS

On one edge or margin of the page is written lengthways:

Fiction/the novel as a working space or a living space

A desire for correction

'refuse to be alone' reading

And on the other:

Architecture is always about subjectivity.

Essay: 'the sound of trying'

The conference ends in the pub or on the train home.

(55 words)