

How long would the corridor need to be? How wide? What shape would it take? And orientation, were points of the compass important? A Northerly direction? North of North-East? That was always a favourite of mine. Would it be light or dark? Constant or diffuse? Would there be colours? Like Oz, would you move from black and white to colour. Would that be triggered by crossing the memory threshold, When the recall machine would shift into a forgetting machine. And the scale? Were we building a monument to forgetting or to forget in? Surely more memories fit in a crater than in a shoebox. How could you throw something so small as a memory into something so vast? Would it make a sound as it dropped? Would you know the shape of the memory by its clatter or clang or tinkle? Instead of hoping one wish into the bottom of a well, would you keep running up to the top with all the bits of memory you could find, throwing and throwing until your hand held less than a grain of sand and your head had no idea where it had begun. Would that then be the cure? Should it be vertical or horizontal? Bowling or a boomerang? How many times would you visit? Would you need to rest between each one? What if you dropped parts of the memory on the way? Would these bits stick your clothes like burrs or start trying to snap your car's radio aerials like Whipsnade monkeys?

Did I need to know what she wanted to forget? Or just how memory worked? How her memory worked. Would it be different? Is each person's memory like a different toy? Would hers be a wind up object? Would it spin and spin? Could it run out of steam? Wouldn't they all just wind down and fall apart in the end? The teddy deflated. Its stuffing long lost to chewings and mawlings and cuddles held tight in the night. The spinning top on a wonky axis barely able to spin for a second before skidding into collapse. Why did she need my machine now and how could I build it for her? Would she ever come out again? If she forgot it all, no door, no groove, no trace, what shape or edge would be left of her?

Did she even know what she wanted to forget? Could she feel it in its entirety or just get a sense of its edges. Like bumping into furniture in a dark room. This must be the coffee table. The door must be over here then. No, I'm in the fridge now.

This was a time machine not to travel to the future or past, not to visit anything that has gone before or skip the anticipation by jumping in to what is to come. This was a machine for a pure and empty, constant instant. A present to hide in. A present that defied its parameters and kept locked tight to itself.

She wasn't looking for eternity outside the present. She wanted an eternal present. She went swimming against the tide and even though she knew each wave she pulsed over was different to the one that came before she felt the fear of unchange, more than the fear of possible change.

She feared an unchanging present but she wanted to avoid both past and future. What direction was left?

I tried to rebuild time for her. I could only manage dioramas and models. She told me that they were already dusty. Before she had even passed through them.