

*The Heart, as Faithful as a Flame*

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- 1) Cut a piece of thin mat board roughly 7" x 16". (Other paper will work too. It just needs some weight to it.)
- 2) With 2" wide blue tape, tape out a window roughly 5" x 14", letting half the tape extend past edge of paper.
- 3) Find a flat piece of wood, thin metal or other item that you can tape the piece of paper to flat.
- 4) Horizontally hang or mount this wood/metal with the taped paper at a height above your head. It should be at a height so you can stand, squat or kneel under it and still comfortably reach with your hand. You can adjust this height as you proceed with next steps after you find the right relationship.
- 5) Take two, long wax lighting tapers and light the ends. Hold them close enough to produce one flame together. (You can also use long candles as long as you make two flames join into one.)
- 6) Standing under the elevated board, hold the flame about an inch away from paper and start moving hand at steady pace across the paper, end to end. You will start to figure out how fast or slow, how close or far you need to hold the flame. The objective is to gather enough sooty residues on paper that it becomes a rich, velvety black.
- 7) Once it is a rich black, extinguish the tapers, remove the paper and slowly take the blue tape off.
- 8) Put the paper somewhere where it won't be smudged and begin a search for a thin twig/stick, the stem of a leaf or other natural item that can be comfortably used like a writing tool (think thin pencil, chopstick, long paintbrush). You may need to adapt or craft to find the right length and proper stylus point. You can tape, glue, tie, whatever you need to make this work. You can also shave the tip to get it sharper. The objective being finding the right balances between delicate and sturdy. To test, close your eyes and picture the stylus head you've created slowly tracing the outer contours of 4 blades of grass caught in the wind. You'll know when it's right.
- 9) Find a partner and both of you take your paper and writing tool to an area where you have some privacy and feel you can concentrate.
- 10) Whether you know your partner or not, take a moment with them to imagine their heart beating behind their ribs, their arteries pulsing under their flesh. Take this as seriously as you can because you are about to be temporarily responsible for

remembering their heart. Close your eyes if you need to, take as much time as feels right.

11) After this moment, sit on the ground and face each other. You can also find a table as long as you are within touching distance of each other. Position your soot-covered paper in a way you can comfortably reach it with your drawing hand and place your writing tool next to it. Work through the awkwardness with kindness or embrace the intimacy already there and, at the same time, reach to find each other's pulse either in the wrist or in the neck. (The neck artery tends to be the easier one to feel quickly and strongly.) Take a moment to make sure you are feeling it with enough sensitivity that you understand the rhythm and time logic of this heart and pulse.

12) When you find this moment, take your writing tool with your free hand and, with some thought about when is the right moment to "jump in," start to make a pulse wave drawing with the tool into the soot on the paper. You will have to adjust to how hard or soft you need to press to make a mark. Move as fast or slow as the other's heart demands, and, if possible, shift the height of each pulse as you feel the artery pulse harder or softer.

13) When you have reached the end of the paper, put the writing tool down, take your hands back to yourself, and look at the tracing your partner made of the past actions of your heart.

14) Take your pulse wave drawing of your partner and join a larger group of people who have also finished their drawings. This meeting should occur in one of the schoolrooms or other place with walls.

15) Each person should cut or tear the short ends of the paper up to edge of the soot window and then place some folded blue tape on backside of each end. One by one, starting left to right, tape your pulse drawing at chest height to the wall. The person who follows the next should align the pulse wave line from their drawing with the pulse wave line of the previous drawing.

16) With this joined pulse wave spread across the wall, take a moment to look at it. Then, randomly, each person should approach an individual drawing, making sure it is not your own. In a synchronized way with those around you, and with the full flesh of your index finger, slowly trace the pulse wave through the soot.

17) With the memory of another's heart now absorbed into your skin, continue your day: choose to wash it off or not, pass on its trace when you touch someone else, shake a hand, grab a cup, touch your cheek or forehead, type on your phone or keyboard, make a fingerprint, grab the steering wheel, point to the sky. Forget it's there until a few days later you discover some residue under your nail or a smudge on your shirt.

18) If you remember, I'll remember.