

The Monster Within

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There is a monster at the door, which I find hard to invite in. It shows up with one of my patients as she sits down and states, "I am a monster." I feel anxiety and an urge to tell the patient that there is no monster, to dismiss and hide the monstrous she brings into my space. Monster means "an imaginary creature that is typically large, ugly, and frightening." Oxford English Dictionary. This definition does little to define what monster lives within my unconscious. The monster in me that wants to run and hide when my patient's monster enters the room is initially elusive. I can't find it in the images I look at, though I can feel its monstrosity. It's looming largeness taking up too much space. The idea of allowing its existence makes me nauseous.

As Paul Klee stated, "Art does not replace what we see; rather, it makes us see." So, instead of looking, I drew with a surprising urgency, and my monster burst into the open. The monster I drew is thin, a hermaphrodite with both phallus and breast has no arms, and is vomiting out of large teeth. It is a jumble of body parts. Opposites exist in one being. This monster, less frightening, drawn on the page, needs to be

broken down into parts to take in; otherwise, it will cause indigestion rejection of its parts. I need to assimilate it in bite-size pieces. The whole being too much to swallow at once.

The feminine is a small part of this monster, with just one small breast. I have always loved my breasts, their size and shape of them. They need no support. I sculpted and made breastplates and bras from metal, leather, and other materials in college. "Breast is source. It is a provision. It carries the potential for life within it. It is linked biologically, etymologically, psychically and symbolically with life-giving source." *The Book of Symbols: Reflections on Archetypal Images*, p.388. My body has never gone through pregnancy with a swelling of the abdomen or breasts. Any slight inclination of a belly creates angst and restricted eating. It can never be flat enough.

My conscious world contains the celebration and rejection of the feminine body at times with vicious cruelty.

I wish the erect phallus were not there. I judge myself for drawing the phallus. It's not that it is there. The fact that I drew this phallus that it came out of my psyche. The familiar churn of the belly. Nausea starting. What a stupid drawing, the chorus that seems always to emerge and stand behind me in moments of doubt chants. I tell myself. It is gross to me. The phallus is "Seed bearer, penetrator, begetter" *The Book Of Symbols: Reflections Of Archetypal Images* p406. And to be sure, the phallus is also the violence of the creative impulse and "the sudden, obsessive invasion that plucks away at the flower of thought." Galasso p52. Penetration, libido, life energy. Creation. The power in the phallus carries a frightening aspect: the fear of exploding that the penetration will be deep or painful.

The mouth is all teeth protruding off its head ready to bite. "Our chisel-like front Incisors cut into food, our bicuspid hold a morsel of flesh in place so it can be torn loose, while our back molars grind food into digestible Mbits." All this gives rise to the symbolism of aggression, of biting off portions of life for one's survival, adaptation and growth, of chewing over the stuff of life so that it can be assimilated. Symbolically, teeth represent a kind of individual psychic mill where what is too rough to take in directly can be ground up by conscious consideration, digested and metabolized." *The Book Of Symbols: Reflections Of Archetypal Images* p370

The vomit coming out of the mouth. "Originating in the belly, the mythic seat of the passions, vomiting is associated with psyche's tumultuous affective spewing from the depths, like so much volcanic lava. But the belly is also the locus of devouring, holding and incubation, so that vomiting becomes symbolically related to the energies of the initiatory process, transformation and dramatic emergence. Vomit evokes the stuff that cannot be contained, as well as what must be let go of in the service of evolution." *The Book of Symbols: Reflections on Archetypal Images*, p.736

There are masculine and feminine energies in this monster. I think of Shiva, who has been a figure in my life throughout my yoga studies. Shiva is said to carry masculine and feminine energies, which intertwine with Shakti to unleash energies. "Shiva is one of the most anthetic, paradoxical conceptions of a deity ever expressed by man. He is at once everything and its opposite, and then again, neither one of them. When Shiva begins the process of fully manifesting himself, he may do so in the initial stages as a duality of corresponding opposites - light and dark, left and right, and so forth. Duality is the price of birth." Daniellou, Alain, *Hindu Polytheism*, p 20.

Duality as the price of birth. The cost of breathing, being alive, and assimilating, Taking in, Digesting. The internal pain of holding both this monster I don't want to look at and this woman I want others to see. The breast is also said to contain opposites: "From the basic level of anatomy to complex Christian and alchemical images, the breast expresses opposites, containing both the creative and the destructive. It represents the fiery center, the divine spark, from which comes the elixir - milk or poison." *The Book of Symbols: Reflections on Archetypal Images*, p.388.

Jung says about Libido :hunger denotes a desire or impulse unchecked by any kind of authority, moral or otherwise. It's appetite in its natural state." CW 5p194. My analyst said maybe the monster was eating when I show him the picture. The monster is hungry, it seems. It carries life energy, penetration, creating, giving of life, digesting, releasing, and transforming.

The powers necessary to assimilate and hold the opposite of a perfected version of self. These energies are life-giving, not necessarily energy that will pull life out of me, as I fear if I let the monster sit beside me. If I let these energies exist, the lust and hunger for life in the monster's body, do I destroy my life, relationships, and myself? Or do I transform into a more conscious version of self, bite by bite, chewing pieces of this energy?

In the end, the monster surprised me. I thought it was dirty and unwanted, and it was something I had never imagined. It points to the need to feel and allow hunger, desire, and life into my psyche. When I speak of this, I feel the sadness behind the cool exterior. How not feeding myself both literally and psychically leaves me starving.

Lifeless. Dead even. Von Franz stated, "The process of Individuation is a process of Inner growth to which one is attached; one cannot get away from it. If one says no to it and does not accept it, then, since you are not in it, it grows against you. Then it is your own inner growth which kills you." *The Problem of the Puer Aeternus*, pp. 39.

Hello, my friend. I say to the monster. It's time to come in.

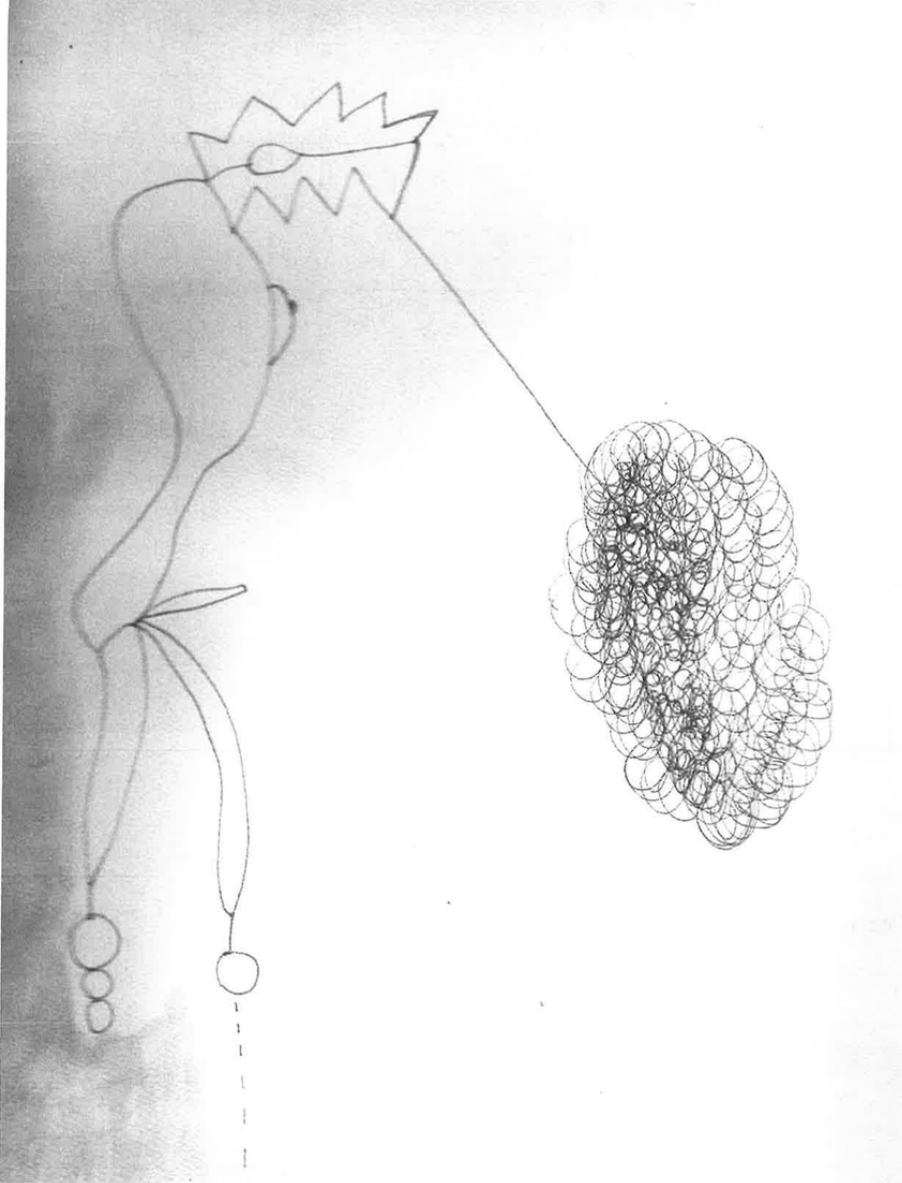


Figure 1



Figure 2



Figure 3



Figure 4

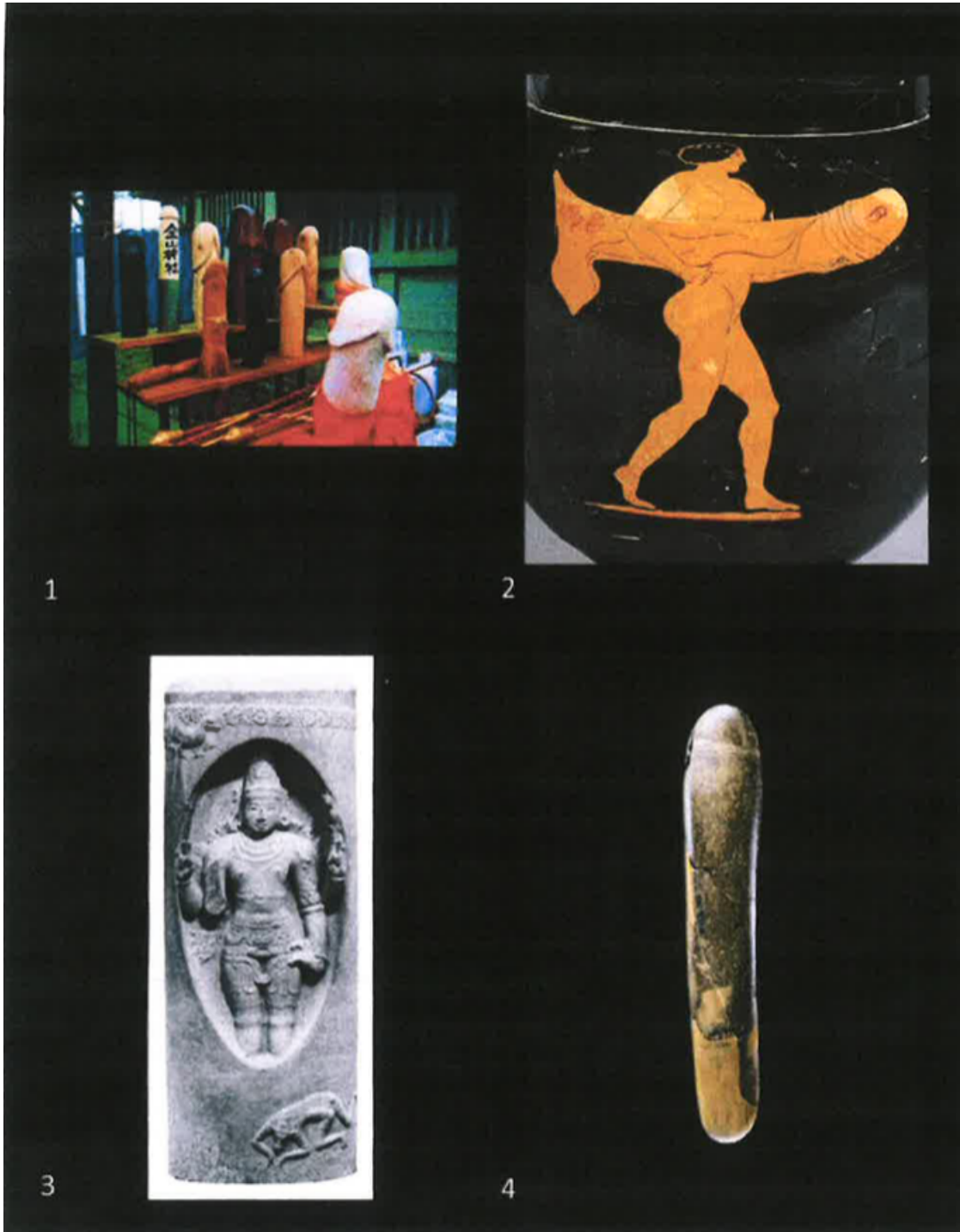


Figure 5



Figure 6



Figure 7



Figure 8