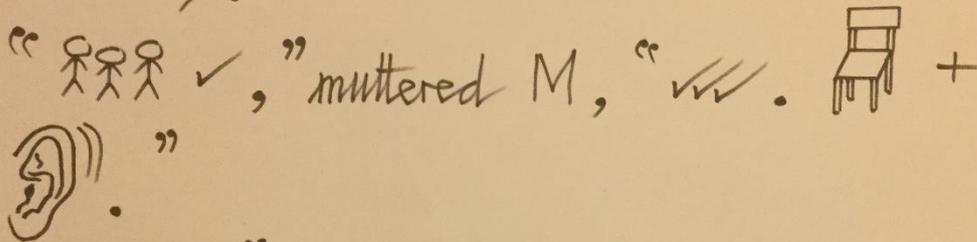
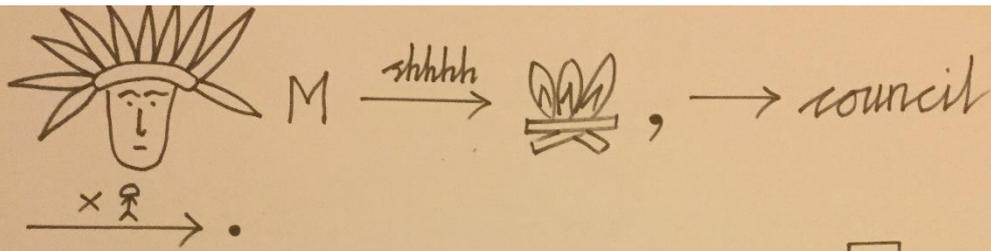
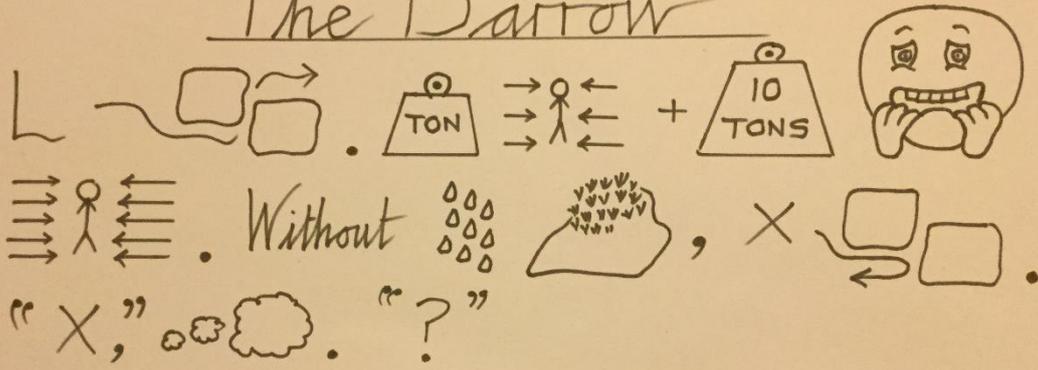
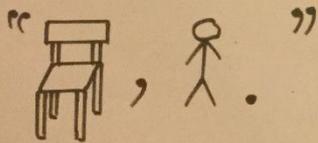


The Barrow



"But..." blurted L.



M ~~Y/N~~, accepted no hesitation. Then
[speech bubble], S+S, [downward arrow] that [eyes] L →.

" stick figures X. (up arrow), hordes (black blob) (down arrow) foes (tent)
 (up arrow) borders. Vast hordes. Soon (sword) (pickaxe)
 Soon (double arrow), (heart) (double arrow), (down arrow) X, (black blob) + (RIP tombstone)
 (down arrow) (circle with minus) unless (question mark) (stick figure) (wand) (witch) + (zombie) " "
 M (dashed line) + (eyes) (arrow) (fire)
 " (ice cream cones) (speech bubble) (arrow) (zzz) (wand) (witch) . Now
 (hand), (down arrow) (zzz) (z) (z) (z) (z) (sword) (pickaxe) (ghost) (crown) . But
 (up arrow) (stick figure) + (bomb) 1. (up arrow) (down arrow) . "

L (checkmark) . Now (down arrow), (stick figure) desperately
 (down arrow) (up arrow), where X. (square) (square) (skeleton) (zigzag)
 L's (heart) (zigzag) + (cave), (down arrow) (up arrow),
 where (stick figure) (THUD) , was (black blob) that (down arrow)
 penetrated (bone) .

(zigzag) • motionless (up arrow), (face) COUGH WHEEZE GASP for (face) (arrow)
 that (square) (square) (hand) . As (face) (arrow), (arrow) (hourglass) +
 ((candle)), (candle) . By (candle) (candle) (candle) (candle), (eyes) 4 (candle) (candle) (candle) (candle)
 (arrow) (cave) . Which? Apprehension (brain) .
 He (only) (arrow) .
 Did he go N, S; E or W?

The Barrow

Lin struggled between the massive slabs. The huge weight of stone pressed in on him and a greater weight of terror squeezed him more. Without the oozing droplets of dew from the ancient growth of moss that coated the stones, he wouldn't have made it through the narrow gap at all.

"I can't do this," he thought. "Why me?"

The chieftain Magh had called him secretly to the tribefire, to the council where no boys came.

"Your tribe has need of you," muttered Magh, "great need. Sit here and listen well."

"But..." blurted Lin.

"Sit, boy."

Magh gave no choice, accepted no hesitation. Then he spoke, slowly and solemnly, in the deep, resonant voice that had awed Lin all his life.

"Our tribe is in great peril. Even now, hordes of our darkest ancient foes are encamped around our borders. Vast hordes. Soon they will attack. Soon all this, all that we know and value, will end in loss, in darkness and in death. It will end, that is, unless someone can find the magician and wake him."

Magh paused and gazed deep into the embers of the fire.

"Our old ones say that under Barrow Hill, there sleeps a great magician. Now he waits, deep in enchanted sleep, guarded by the warriors of a ghostly king. But in our hour of need he will awake and save us once again. That hour is now."

Lin understood. Now here he was, scrambling desperately into the ancient barrow, where no living flesh should be. The stone was deathly cold. Lin's heart was colder still and the chamber, deep inside the barrow, where he fell with a dull thud, was full of such darkness that it penetrated his bones.

Lying motionless for a moment, he wheezed and gasped for the breath that the unforgiving stones had squeezed from him. As his breathing eased, he pulled out the lamp and flint he had been given and, shivering, lit the flame. By its flickering light, he could see four stone passageways leading north, south, east and west out of the chamber. Which should he take? Apprehension flitted through his mind. He did the only thing he felt he could.

Did he go

NORTH, SOUTH, EAST or WEST ?