

EXTRACT: WILL BRADLEY

How did she draw what was there? What she saw inside?

From what she remembered the space was always dim, yet still seemed to glow faintly with its own cold light. A stone chamber, the floor black and smooth as polished marble, the walls a maze of carvings whose weird geometry her eyes could not complete, could not resolve. The strangeness of the chamber itself served only to render the centrepiece more disquieting, though in any other setting she would have received the sight with a pleasant sense of anticipation. For at the centre of the room were laid out the tools of her trade: a desk, a drafting table, a set of French curves, a pair of brass compasses and an antique ivory parallel rule.

And something compelled her to draw?

From that night on, she engaged only in nocturnal work. She would be called upon to draw. Every night, no matter how she tried to distract herself with gentle thoughts and comforting books, sooner or later she slept, and no sooner did she sleep than she returned to that same room. To draw. Crouched at the drafting table, she would scratch and scribble feverishly, unable to halt, much less to wake, pouring forth a stream of plans. Towering monoliths, giant mausolea riddled with lightless tunnels, vast empty courtyards and intricate warrens whose cramped corridors connected a thousand undifferentiated cells. Vertiginous Piranesian bridges of blackened stone loomed up. Images would crowd her sleeping mind and from that mind, insensible, she drew. All the endless pinnacles, the spires and all the ziggurats.

