

Reincarnation is slow, so when your momentum gets blunted it can feel like a slog to get going again.

We were reborn again, finally, as fully adult humans, but we were born in the suburbs of Bozeman, Montana, and without any marketable skills. We need a viable body of water, a place to sleep, and a portal to the voice. So far, we've only found this abandoned pool house, with its old grey pool wishing it didn't have to touch the swampy puddle lying bored in its deeper end. There's just two of us, and while we have the ear of the universe we don't really have the ability to pay for a mortgage.

We can add to the water, a little, because there's a creek nearby. We're squatting, but whoever owns all these millions of acres apparently doesn't need them. I haven't seen a single cow since we awoke. Too bad we don't have a pump.

I stole an iPad from the Verizon store on West Main Street, plus one of those goofy solar batteries. We can probably get usage for one day a month. Our lone lucky break: The Pool knows how to code, and in a trance I was able to create a rudimentary program through which she might speak in less than three hours.

We can set up a tent (Montana is lousy with used camping equipment) to hold the iPad, but we still need to make all the arrangements for The Pool to inhabit this place. Water, check, display, check, but there's still the problem of the marbles. She arranged for the four glass marbles to be buried nearby, and finding them was easy enough, but how are we supposed to build the ramps that keep them perpetually rolling? We don't even have an axe to chop a tree, let alone a sawmill.

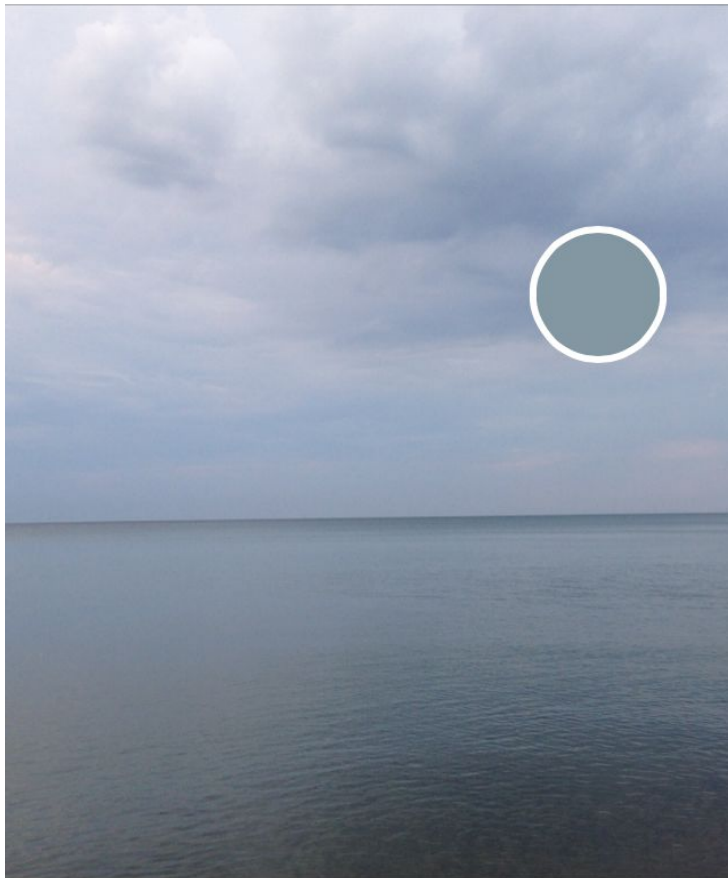
Once we can get the balls rolling, so to speak, she can be present, and we can begin to welcome pilgrims. We should also figure out somewhere to sleep, in case it rains. We have some old swimsuits and a dark refrigerator, but I can't sleep on a coffee table or a rusty juicer.

I steal another tent while you are sleeping. You can sleep in it tomorrow. Yes, I admit, I've borrowed the tablet when you're asleep. I've been on this internet, looking around, because I'm afraid to sleep. It has been useful. All the newspapers are here now. We don't need to go through libraries and microfilm to catch up anymore. I found out that the owner of this ranch killed himself 15 years ago. The land was left in a trust for one hundred years, not to be farmed, not to be sold, not to be cared for. This was his pool, his Pool House. The foundation of his house over there that he burned down the night he died.

Now there are two cloth domes, a hole in the ground, and a dirty old pool house.



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Poolhouse

