



Using an Axe

(after Alberto Giacometti, sculptor)

*"All I ever wanted to do was put my forehead against the cliff-rock
and move it a fraction of a millimeter"*

(Samuel Beckett)

This is how you make a head
from the inside.
First you get in there
and figure it out.

It will start as a sketchy mass
you'll need to claw your way.
It hardens quickly.
Above all don't be afraid,

There's more earth where that came from.
In fact shapes are still rising
from the dust
and, god must know, always returning.

You'll find it shapes itself
makes a point
and regrets it again and again.
This is how it works inside the skull.

Dig in.
It's messy.
This is why it's called a vocation,
This being.

You'll get the feeling
as your thumbs press in
and the wet clams down your arms and legs
that you're only scratching the surface.

And you are.

Eventually the head will take shape
like an axe.

It won't be long
before you use it.

Then it will lie there
gazing
with an element of truth
and some aspect of harsh reality

and with any luck at all
it will tremble,
if only
for a fraction of a millimeter.

