

# The Linguist

by William Owen

I let the little fingers slip thinking they couldn't stand to hold on anymore. When they were done they said addled and I was left behind in the room with only my hand. I hurt myself trying to picture the pretty girls and they took out a piece above my eye.

My hair is growing in. My forehead isn't crusty anymore, but it feels like they left a worm under the skin. Can I call it skin? Should it be a scalp? They shouldn't have put the worm under my scalp, because now the worm is growing. We're going to be too big to stay here. They'll have to move us. We'll have to finish the alphabet first. They aren't recognizing the arbitrary characteristics and they try to move them. We only have these teeth and they end up falling away without looking at them again and put a pin in us. The worm isn't bothered by it. He says they'll get there, we just can't let them disturb it. He says we should just let the pin go in, then we'll look like flat, and they'll stay out of the room and we can keep working on the verb constructions and imperative conjugations.

I'm peeling the fibers out of the walls one by one and using them to spell. They just look at it when they come in, but once I've worked out the phonetics I'll try using it. I hope they understand because I'd like them to get better. They have such potential. They wish to be great people.

