



## Drawing Lessons-

### Drawing Friends:

This is such a lovely interplay. There is a required stillness in exchange for a kind of intimate attention, and also a type of surrender - sort of like getting a haircut. And there is a mutual independence in the gazes of the participants. You are looking at Mindy, observing the shape of her face with careful scrutiny, but are oblivious to the fact that she is rigorously watching you look at her. There is more accuracy, but less recognition. An essay comes to mind by a girl who insisted on posing for her painter boyfriend, thinking that the looking might somehow be desirable. In reality, it was not at all this kind of gazing, and she hated the objectivity with which he regarded her. There should be different words for this kind of seeing, knowing, and recognizing...

Now you are sussing the angle of Mindy's cheek as her eyes are looking down at her cell phone. She can do whatever she wants with her eyes for most of the drawing, since you'll "do" them last. She talks about her family, and her cousin named Shy. She keeps looking down. You're both quiet for a few minutes, so you work on her lips, which have a looseness to their volume that you hadn't noticed in your everyday interactions with her. She talks about the pinching game she and her brother played when they were little, decades before he would start locking himself in his room for days, tapping methodically, coming out only to ask her if she could see the alien in their living room. You're trying to "get" her glasses now. What is happening with that cat-eye shape at this angle? You've been looking at her without the kind of connectedness that comes with eye contact. Suddenly her eyelids lift and, and since you're working on the area around her eyes, she looks right at you, which seems somehow miraculous in this instance. The sentience behind the shapes is startling and you almost look away, as if you've been caught staring. She speaks to you and, although you were having a conversation only minutes ago, now there is something disarming in this, too that these silent but specific forms you were intently rendering can blossom with the abstractness of sound. It's as if the character on the screen in the movie you were watching were to direct her lines down at you in your scratchy red theater seat, "Do you ever think that maybe you're not the best historian for your life?" Initially it feels like a psychic accusation,