Metagestures

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On particularly loud, wet nights they would each retreat from their respective roomsful of boom-musicking and loud-talking and appliance-noising wherever they were and gather in a quiet office building on the edge of town in the silence of a nothing-special seminar room with a large oval table. As they sat they flexed their hands and placed them on the table, and when each had done that, one snapped her fingers. Thus they became the mothers of monsters, absenting the remainders of themselves to transform into a society of hands. Thus the carnival was called to disorder. Step right up!

Here are the five-legged spiders. They burst forth one day from a pair of very fine flowered silk scarves wrapped around the stumps of two arms someone had planted in the ground in a garden bursting with basil plants. They think by weaving. Watch them work long threads of celery string and shaved carrots and parsley stems between themselves as they plot their escape back into the soil!

Here are the five-tentacled octopuses. They were born from an arm reef that grew in warm waters and if you look closely you can see them pulse and stretch alongside each other as they search for prey to hold and press and suck and know.
Here are the five-headed earthworms. They were found in a dumpster full of extra wrists and elbows, crawling up out of the rotten remains of a large heavy book. Look at them study a can of coffee, prodding and provoking as they worm through the grinds and spread them out in fractal patterns that spell the names of gods.

Here is the angel with five-feathered wings.

Here are the tree-women crowned with five branches.

Here is the mothman who grew from a candle made from arms that were coated in wax and lit and left. Watch as he sculpts a lover from a pile of ashes. Watch as she struggles away from his making.

Here are the egrets with thumbbeaks and knuckleeyes. Look as they poke at a pile of eggshells to shape them into their favorite faces.

Here are the dragons with long spiky backs, born on a rainy day as arms reached up to squeeze the clouds. See them swimming in a bowl of thumbtacks, bloodily shaping them into nest.

After some time, one by one the creatures turned to one another and offered a gift. A parsley scarf. The foot of a charcoal girl. A hard white smile. A little sharp slick red pillow. Each quietly accepted what was offered. And once that was done, monsters unmade and hands unfolded and palms opened out to the air, one snapped her fingers and each of the people got up and put on their coats and went back out into the rain.