

Dear B

No, I don't speak Arabic, or Korean. Your assertions. One bizarrely obscure Asian language does not make me the possessor of others, either common or not. Nepali is hardly child's play at this point, but symbols: Don't forget the door, the brother, the long passageway, after which, time, 7 years worth, passed in an instant. Next to the red and black door. Austere, complete, nothing behind it. A door for a door's sake.

Did you know that the shields had teeth embedded in them? In the back, for protection. Only those that hold them up can see.

Why would you want to play with someone where you can anticipate 12 moves in advance? That's absurd. He met you because i was the link(e) between V and P. I know that. So. So? But what? There was an extra r in the email after I complained I was missing R, but little does not make up for big. 5, Russian. A kopek is not a quarter. A nickel in time saves 9.

Then the cat does drown. Drowsily. All at once, slippages.

I've been downsized. Retired to an office. A prison of a pasture. My underground work is done. Only signs and symbols remain. I'm a screaming head to attract attention. Warning! Warning! Burgundy on top of red, so what. Another sodden piece of paper. One shoe or two, buckle it, snap it, throw it across. Nonsense streams out. Clack clack.

Clack clack, down the train track. Safely, here. Only 13 bottles killed. Every moment un-realized or in-comprehensible must be chased. My tongue hangs out like a flap, the saliva drips down. Eyes roll.

Run, run!

You know what I mean: thank god for outer shells, the way trees bend in the wind, the smell of an orange.

Love,
A

Bb:

Screams again? Child, it is time to be quiet. To realize there is no cookie in the jar, or the jar has edges rimmed in blood, or that the mother only listens to the screams of one child and not the other.

'oh – this has never happened before' she said.

There are five red slashes at 96th street.
Don't think i have not noticed that
There are two before being watched.

7 is the telling number, the telling year. One way or the other, one must chose at that point. But do not forget this:

"I am only one, but still I am one. I cannot do everything, but still I can do something. And because I cannot do everything, I will not refuse to do the something I can do."
Edward Everett Hale.

There's the hope. The sunshine. The truth.

And the fall.

"I want to keep my dreams, even bad ones, because without them, I might have nothing all night long." Joseph Heller

And the nights are long without anyone, anyone at all.

Love

A

Dearest b

I'm in despair, I'm really in despair I'm trash and my life is too, there's nothing here for me, I'm just a a shred, a thread, hanging on by a thread a L who is leaving me and then what will I have I'll have nothing and I can see nothing nothing in my future and I just kill myself for this meeting that calms me that thought calms the hysteria it make the pain my shoulder go away, a plan like this keeps me calm makes the buzzing in my head lessen makes me more calm. What I would do. I would call the meeting, everyone would come, because there's something to discuss, the department has sent a new letter, there's something to be said. But I no longer believe in the group, I no longer feel as if I have any support but that's ok, i can stay strong, I can continue to work for this I do not have to be disposed

I thank S for presenting a solution that keeps me from having to be a martyr, from -
Or, considering the rise and fall of cities glorious, i can remove the crown and step into the battle, the alien city alarmed.

Love A

Dear C

Today, the same impulse that created witchhunts still exists, but it is translated into subtle and silent signals, covert language, movements and groups which appear quotidian.

In highly developed or 'first world' countries, the suicide rate is much higher. Soon the United States will catch up.

It is no longer necessary to perform lynchings, to drown witches, to drive a person out of a community with sticks and stones. Words and attitude, a denial of resources or love will do the same.

Subtle signals tell us it's time to quit a community, to exit a life. The fight to remain engaged is Herculean, and after a while the body and heart tire. I know this.

Please, keep fighting. I am with you in spirit, if not in body.

Love

A

Dear cc

I saw you in dream time again, lurid animal. You avoided me, there were five, and I was shuttled around again. There was meaning to none of it. The plains were long, burnt grasses, the hum of cicada wings rubbing, self on self, a fight to silence. Why, I can't even make the second move, I've been beaten down so much. I'm nothing now, this was how I used to play, as only those who play in earnest play: three in a line, lights shining, urns.

I don't even recognize myself. The horns honk again, one long blast, and I'm a small black child, when I look intently, without shielding others from myself, they recognize me and wave or respond, always. I should wear glasses, sunglasses. Her eyes turned crystalline and silver, the derregotype burnt through as if with the sun.

Please, why don't you inscribe something, a poem, on this, on me?

Nobody would, worthless ANiMAI. da only is left. I'm replaced like this: what does a white girl matter, in the reckoning? What does anyone? What do I do to deserve my friends as I have them? The world well lost, is it?

Love and turpitude,

A

Ccc!

I must write again. I know I just bothered you a moment ago. But suddenly I am filled with such a hope that I could weep. I want to be able to laugh at myself so extremely.

I bothered

I bother

I both love and hate am uplifted and connected with the despair that chases me, that runs like a deep unse(e)n!

River

My heart burns red.

A

cC,

The signals start again. not only the rogue wireless, available only after a certain action, but the horns. As usual. One for yes. Two for no. three, for waiting or uncertain. Above that, I can't say here. It's not difficult to figure out. Every system has its logic, even if it seems complex, the key is usually so simple, again. O!

Where is sam? Please, the light is blinking in double time, searching for him 'sam sa s'

There's the whistle. The popping sounds, the sudden silence then burst of noise again. the tightness around my heart, as if i knew something or was being squeezed. Somehow.

Dhri dhri

Would you were here with your oldfashioned maps of the city so we could escape this labryrnth. Where's the thread, that single white one, slung over the upper caste shoulder, or the red one to lead me home?

How do I escape?
Through writing to you.

I don't know why you didn't get my previous letter. Sometimes my trust of the mail system is slim. I thought i would share this with you:

"Your Honor, years ago I recognized my kinship with all living beings, and I made up my mind that I was not one bit better than the meanest on earth. I said then, and I say now, that while there is a lower class, I am in it, and while there is a criminal element I am of it, and while there is a soul in prison, I am not free." Eugene V. Debs

That's all for now, I just wanted you to know that I care and am thinking about you.

Love
A

Dearest cCc

My intention was never to frighten or scare you. I came to the evening filled with trepidation: I felt I had been sent there as some sort of present from B to you, and that there were expectations that I was meant to fulfill. Of course, I recognize my part in creating this situation.

I enjoyed meeting you, but as you certainly could tell, I was in a state of mind which was hardly presentable or desirable. Your kindness, intelligence and gentle nature were a balm to a hurt soul, and I shudder to think that I somehow intimidated you. I project an aggressive air as a shell, but am nothing akin to cruel on the inside.

I do not and did not dare to expect anything.

P sent me a beautiful copy of 'The Waste Land and other poems' that was owned by Arthur E. Lambert, a Portland resident. He died January 15th, in 2005. His death notice was released, and the corpse dragged out of the basement, two days from now. This probably doesn't mean anything to anyone but me, but there it is.

I think this book has been misaddressed, and should go to you.

Yours,
A

Dear D

This is a moment from memory of (my) mom – for they are two different people, and our language about her proves it. Or perhaps caused it. We were only children yet had siblings. She was one person to you, another to me. Perhaps we are lucky to have this so clearly illustrated in the text of our lives. But this is a memory that I think we could both agree would happen, with this woman called (my) mother.

I write it to her, but only through this letter to you:

I remember the time we were so ill together that we lay abed, two hot and rotting corpses, oozing. The air swam with virus, vision barely cut through it. A loud buzzing in the ears. An enormous bee, the size of a turnip, fat, bursting. It was the most terrifying thing I remember. Yet it was no match for you. You crushed it after hunting, after weaving from side to side, cotton nightgown thin fabric, a string hanging down, brushing your pale and thin legs, short growth of hair. The buzzing like a firestorm. The buzzing suddenly ceasing, on the outside.

My memories are brought about by these actions of others, I speak to my past through M, who buzzes. Through F, whose eyes are. Well, everybody loves a mystery. Everyone tries to impose something on it. Isn't that true. D knows it.

D. You're my only dear brother. You know I love you, how can you not?

I won't write of this again.

Your sister,
A

Dearest ddd

To avenge myself from having been born. I want nothing more than to be home now, i am without home, i am groundless, i am floating, i want to be working on a project, my path is taking me elsewhere. I am glad J is continuing with this project, that he started so long ago, i do remember that day, two years ago, his apartment, he started 'Love' so long ago, we've been working on it our whole lives some of us the practitioners.

Ugh.

To day. To date. To this date i am speaking on ly. Lonely only of myself, I will scrounge up bit of my life. A personal pulling up, someone has to have the soul and the heart. Someone has to be suffering. Otherwise it's all men. Is that what they, finally, want? Just a group of men, jerking off for each other? Perhaps so.

So. So.

There's a firestorm in my head, a maelstrom of images words on their own, ambiguous noises, crashing synapses.

Love

A

Dear E

I've forgotten everything now, there's nothing to prove anymore, no reason for it all, and I'm left only with a memory, well, not that, a pile of symbols and signs, a laundry list of events and objects: a shoe, with an M on it, one visa from a man far off, trying to create sustainable ecologies, a coin, in the shape of a triangle. A void that is completely different for one person than it is for another. This is madness, indeed. I've seen that first edition, the symbols, written out, the parallel lines discussed. Mine, oh A, my void is not that which B has. What is this, this thing that happens?

And Bb has not yet read it. It figures. There is nothing left to do but figure, add up the days, one by one, a pile of slim, nay emaciated things, slips, cowslips, at the gate, an unsteady stack.

Well, I suppose memory is there. But I'm trying to forget. Is that not enough? I am attempting to do the bidding of those that require bidding done.

Can I help it if my spirit rebels? Rebels again and again? It is not easy to check, indeed, I think it may be impossible.

As always,

Love,

A

Dearest eEe

I miss your marbles, and your collections. I wish I were part of your collection, the main one, the queen bee. I would bear your babies, your fardles. I would minister to those things which needed ministering and tending.

I woke this morning thinking of your movie, your beginning hint, 'American Psycho.' I did my 8 minute abs, not looking like C, but still strong and sleek. Of course we speak of a different C than the one I met yesterday. Or was it the day before? Sometimes my computer gets off a day. Then I don't know what to do with myself – I'm coming and going. So what day is it? Is it time to meet you again? Are you still seeing someone else?

I want to be a mother. To pass on to others what I have learned, to take care.

Perhaps I've only been collected: put in a box, marbles, stones, a feather, long and slender with gilded edges, and a butterfly, blue, lightly hovering.

Will you call? Or must I? I find myself paralyzed by fear and unknowing, I find myself unsure of where to turn. I find myself typing to you, in everything I do.

Always,
A

PS. I know that the time is now, this is the time, now I know. This time, this time. Ahah e! It was you all along. You're hunting me for sport, blood sport. I know I keep saying this to you, again and again. What's the point? So am I writing / running for my life? How fragmented am I? Speak again . . . how fragmented am I? // Not so fragmented that I cannot (canaught) see what is happening is done/ is being done. Is engaged and underway. // Well, the most dangerous game has its moments of pleasure and joy. As if your complete conquest of me in your apartment and wasn't enough, I had to continue down the path of your perception, which was that I was am is are were to be will never again: a whore. /// Is that what pushes us finally to marriage? A fear and a need for security/ will i ever listen to that fear, or will I let the world envelope me or will i become annihilated in a flash of white light, bright light and electric light. Aniline c-6 h-5 nh2 dye. And flowers burst out, open up. And the last voice I heard was yours. /////

REMEMBER THIS SENTENCE FOR WHEN I DISAPPEAR.

(You have gone already, I'm writing out of time again, writing to the past because sometimes I cannot tell the difference. What is tim(e) T ime. I/me with something added or subtracted.)

These are no t errors. The space(s) the capital or NOT capital. Oh captain.
There are no mistakes and god is in the details.

Love
A

Dear E

I'm feeling a bit of a blank – not unlike the pristine pages of this book. Spent today with J and M, not doing too much. I'm back here in the US, after 'time away' a 'vacation' a moment, really, accountable and according to those i know. Everything is easy in a body numbing way. After this summer of constant movement, being constantly on the run, I am flailing in space, open space. I'm sitting here wondering if I'll ever trust any (m) an again – already the world has shown me the kind respect of l, certainly b and all the males that don't wish to pillage my take over my body landing here I don't have much inner monologue. Landed here, as I am. The witches all have an iconographic language that they use to cast their spells, wield their power. This language will being to infect mac(beth) /lady (vir!us) the three murderers/witch.es?bit.ch!es. Should we show lady M killing herself – yes! The times, now, calls it indulgent in B, but I'm speaking from 1 month into school, the 11th, 2001. We don't yet know what we know but it has just hit.

We think yet, that we are victims. The tape runs through the day. I sit with students, we chat, we circle round a roll of toilet paper, placed like an alter: weep if you wish, where weeping is allowed.

For costumes, what? Simple lines. Did I tell you that B and I kissed last night? It was his birthday. I jump ahead now, six days.

Really rather sexy. Dang.

What are you going through, there on the other coast?

Eugene V. Debs, opposing World War I, told an assembly in Ohio that "The master class has always brought a war, and the subject class has always fought the battle,"

"Real tragedy is never resolved. It goes on hopelessly for ever."
Chinua Achebe

"Power never takes a back step- only in the face of more power."

"You can't separate peace from freedom, because no one can be at peace unless he has his freedom."

"I believe in the brotherhood of man, all men, but I don't believe in brotherhood with anybody who doesn't want brotherhood with me. I believe in treating people right, but I'm not going to waste my time trying to treat somebody right who doesn't know how to return the treatment."
Malcolm X

Love,
A

Dear F.

Do you know that you remind me of M? That the moment I saw you I was struck, again, with that shock of recognition. I don't know how it's possible – since I am continually struck- if not in spirit, in body, mind – but on top of the consistent whirl and daze, you. I should send you this poem that I first sent to her, years ago. You would instantly understand.

I am afraid. Now I know what I do, I no longer have the excuse of innocence. I play parts, no, I *am* parts. Nothing original: I am torn in the middle, and this time I find it comforting. That is why I fear. Perhaps I have forgotten how to feel much of anything. Or there is nothing left but ash, unbitter, dry, caking the mouth. Tasting of nothing. Or I no longer know how to take that feeling and share it with anyone. I do not act, now, for example, on these desires. Neither for you nor for S.

Yours,
A

Dear G

Good morning. Your film comes at the right time, yet the wrong time. Is it congratulated because it puts what is happening in the present in the past? I mean, I loved it. Do not doubt that I found it a beautiful film, and found the acting remarkable, and laude you for saying much more than most - but are you hiding the terror that is happening now? Do most that see the movie think you are speaking historically? I suppose the world is very simple. Are you saying that it is a daily struggle, that life is a war, all in black in white, in the past? This country cries, but I cannot leave it.

I should learn to be simple. To pare away. To peel with a small sharp knife, a green apple while wearing the crucifix around my neck.

Don't doubt that there is a purge going on right now. That Macarthy has come again, but it is so much more subtle, more deadly. Will my career be destroyed? My life? Will I disappear? Will those I know and love cease to trust one another? Will we be only able to speak in code? In reversals and exercises? Am I mad? Am I i nd and and i am divided by I i am, not a dog, I'm A man, da. (don't forget what Jeni Holzer says about what exists in a name).

And I am just a man still learning how to fall

If you start doubting me
I start to doubt myself
I keep close to myself

Oh ghost, where are you now?

Women are the most reviled, and the only way to get through this tragedy is to keep laughing.

Ha ha.

Reading Beckett remembering remembering Beckett again this morning. Remembrances of moments past. He was a rich bastard, Beckett. Two maids living upstairs. Dogs, golf buddies. I'm just not the right class, am I? And I feel like something I'm not. I hate my white privilege but it's branded in my skin. I wonder where that Wallace Shawn prologue is...where?

Is this a love letter any longer? Contact me. I'm drowning without you.

Goodnight.

Yours truly,
A

Dear H

The war continues, I live inside a shell that I and others have helped construct. Identity has no meaning, it is three card monty. Yet the only thing visible is the shell. How does Fromex deal with this? If divested of RX, fome only is left. Of me comes the RX. Only of oneself is oneself cured. Yet this is not about illness, nor about meat smoking nor about leather (though I admit that his leather face terrifies me, it makes me want to run). The man with the swollen leg, the wet shoe, the high pitched cry for help gets on the subway again. The beats are dead, they're good and dead and gone, all men, they're dirty, a pile of ego, curly hairs, cigarette butts, name dropping, cum swapping. I cannot be contained. Some things are pure diversion, and I'm suddenly very jealous. I no longer have an artistic partner? Do I want an artistic partner? Do I want a life partner?

Bbb, I call out to you again, where do we go from here? I used to know the answer. Blood's running out, the vein in my Achilles, cut. Thank god they're caught. They wanted me to be a part, a part the hats, the numbers, the gang? Is it, could it be?

bB on the beach offered a straw hat to the girl after telling her not to swim. This was only one of the actions that proved that yet another murder had taken place. The weight of the responsibility was beyond that which a hat could shield. It was as if the sun had come crashing down only feet away. How could one not be annihilated?

It is dangerous when one needs, but does not want.

Love

A

Dearest I:

Don't you know that the sun is a big orange ball? That every moment of hot, frustrated anger can be forged into syllables, sentences? I do so many things I do nothing. I am so many things that I am nothing. The man who is my neighbor possesses liquid brown eyes that are younger than his face, and they dance or sparkle. We all believe that it's a large game we play or daily capitulation takes too grand a toll.

What else is there to be offered, to be taken from these moments. Now, these are my people.

Yet I'm always searching.

Love

A

J

Look for what is missing. There's always something, though it be small, though it be minute. The devil's in the details today, is it? Where are we going from here?

I'll be excluded again. What's it like to read this? Where are you, in time, space? Have you moved on, because I haven't yet, I'm still circling here, looking forward and back concurrently.

High five. Shiver. Frightening. It doesn't happen like that here anymore. What's the need with nano-technology? My madness spreads like a virus bloom. I've got to quit eating so much damn sugar. One whistle, the radiator clunks from downstairs, and it's time to go, isn't it.

I never checked the red boxes on the stairwell. I thought I didn't need to. Tonight i saw a street performer in the subway. I fear for his life! Stomping downstairs. Loud. Angry. He wore safety orange. He wore white-face. If one gave him change they got a ticket. If one didn't pick up the ticket, well, his shoes were likely to end up slung over the electric wires in front of the apartment.

What is going on. What.

I should have picked up a ticket but at the same time, someone screamed at me an t he f EAR came on strong.

Love protects love through (confusion) confusing, less confusion. More. Well out of that.

When will all of THIS have been just – play?

Love

A

Dear K

I should warn you right now not to read this missive. I should not even write it, or if writing, I should not send it. You don't seem to understand how cut off I am, and how the idea of being tied up interests me not in the least. Why would that be sexy? To be contained and boxed? My interest in sex has been closed off. Too much violation. A lack of listening. This is not aimed specifically at you, it's just that I'd rather go swimming. For physical exertion, I'd rather take a dance class. In bed, I'd rather sleep, I'd rather read a book. My insides hurt after an evening with the wrong person, and everyone is the wrong person. Too much hammering. Too much assumption. Too little voice on my part, I'm drowning. There's nobody gentle enough for the raw, rent, redness that is my interior self.

Sometimes people die inside, but the outer shell keeps going. I don't mean that to be dramatic, merely fact.

Love, if it ever existed, is something that I cannot find, it has been murdered.

And yet, I sign:

Love,
A

L -

I'm rereading a letter of yours. A few sentences stick out: You're talking about your father and you say "Poor man, he shouldn't have set up home." I feel that right now, especially after seeing how doctor clown fathers can slap and destroy as with missiles, their wide open-mouthed girls.

I heard they build a huge Citibank tower (or was it Chase? – does it matter, other than one must eventually align with one or the other if you owe a certain amount, which now, I do – this brings me to the second thing you mention ((and realize that you are speaking to me from the past, from 2002, writing from warsawasraw)) is that you have empty pockets and worried parents. Oh. Oh, I hear you, L, I really do.)

But is it true that blue glass cuts through the skyline, the old train station where we first met, with the clock-tower, the hands black against the white face, beautiful, reading, almost too far to touch, for the blind.

But. I am thinking also: Imagination allows us to be other, to be again, to be brother. It is a powerful tool for pulling oneself out of despair.

I have imagined, in these last months, that I am not reviled. Your letter reminds me so: "You are amazing girl so thankful and keeping us in mind" says your mother. Oh gentle souled L, I need you now, as a prop for this crumbling scaffolding called my body where I live.

With love and a fierce joy amidst it all,
A

Dear M

What are these lines we write, the rules like steel, the success of the visual effects.
Practicing using power, practicing controlling.

It's hard to be confronted with oneself and past events, constantly. This is not to mention the future, which I feel that I've been falling into lately. With your pointy square way of looking at the world, this will seem unreasonable. Unmanageable. But particular things stand out during the day, and then later, there it is! An element is given flesh. I try to anchor myself to the present, but language betrays me: was, will be are all pulling with their hooks. Now is what is.

I hope I can find you again. I don't care where in time you are, please return to me.

Love
A

M(m):

I'm turning into a fucking cunt again. I swear it wasn't my intention. I don't know why you don't like F. She reminds me of my ex. When you said that B reminded you of someone you knew who died of leukemia, I could not very well speak after that. It seems ridiculous to say, yes, by the way, F reminds me of my ex-girlfriend. Do you see that I feel something, undercurrent, strong, for her? My body is collapsing in on itself with its desire and need to be held. I think my shoulders have permanently become part of my ears.

I'm filled with ridiculous need. If I could tell this to anyone, and find it funny, bearable, and dismissible it's you. You're like an iron bar, a solid rock, something to bang my head against. You feel safe. I know it's wrong of me. I enslave myself wherever I go. Don't we all?

What I'm trying to say is, I notice when you order me to do things, and I do not mind it. It's a way to keep me in line, I know. It's effective and I'm ok with it. There are still parts of me that are free, as you also know.

And of course, I exact my own price.

Love,
A

Dear M:

I'm creating a massive fantasy for myself. I was raised in a land of symbols, it's the only way I know how to speak. But it takes time to build that with others – if it's too quick, resultant violence sweeps through like tornado. I'm looking at my hands while I'm writing this to you, and they're older than I remember – the skin is fragile, map of a desert - scars, bunkers. Veins, rivers. Hills, those, too. Thick bands of silver that keep me remembering why I exist in the world. Underneath, the skin is shiny and moist, an oasis.

It is important to be tied to something, to someone other than oneself. You are incredibly lucky. Smart woman. And yet you manage to find freedom as well – I think that it must be such a complex thing, your marriage. Is that trite to say? Any overlap of human life, and revelas! How we feel about one another – in the warm sun, with a gentle breeze the people might become like their surroundings. Tranquil, enlivened without hyperactivity. That's the great theory, isn't it? Chekhov espouses it. And then, oh, and then what? I'm exhausted; my mind runs in circles, my computer overheats.

The reader of this letter will know to whom it is addressed, but I will not name them because of the public nature of this missive. Real and obfuscating signs exist side by side, perhaps they are even the same sign -

God, it is cold, bitterly so. The temperature outside is moderate, but it is as if I am in the palace of the Snow Queen again. The constant clicking in the background is time going by, endlessly, into the future. Time marches on, but my time is broke. Everything already said. All cold: bodies covered with invisible layers of ice, my head bursts open with the constant rupture of frozen cells. A pomegranate. I am nothing if not encased. I am nothing if not enveloped. I am nothing without you. Please come back to me, can't you hear me calling to you? I know that distance doesn't matter one bit. Nor space, nor time.

I can feel you hovering, looming, floating around me like a scent.

I cannot choose the closing. I will not.

A

N:

Immediately, and quickly, I must tell you that S has taken your place. Has succeeded in usurping your spot, and not somewhere inconspicuous. Not behind closed doors, no – right out in the open, on the cover. It makes it hard to breath for me. I change color as a leopard changes spots. I gasp for air, I count to 179, red and black swims in front of my eyes and, confused, forms stripes. They dance, these lines. The posture of lions is taken over by other animals.

Time. New York. Er, what to say more than this: I'm embarrassed, I want to flee, the way this was set up, this meeting, makes me want to crawl out of my skin. You know this façade I put forth, it's only a façade – so to have B and R try to cojoin, create, force – well, it happens too quickly, and we're both put off. The physics of love do not allow it.

I am rash, but no longer in love.

Love,

A

Dear O

I met my brother the other day. He wore a pale blue shirt with three lucky 7's on the front. His head was shaved, but horribly, horribly, uneven like a forceable accident. Like a woman in mourning, a woman under attack. A woman with a green painted head, a cross inscribed on her forehead.

My brother, not my brother, was looking for his friend, the one with the letters, the one who would be able to spell it all out for him. Well, he was searching for that mirror, actually. Searching for the barbarian, o the barbarian who attacked and ate B.

We're a few days later.

I asked for more of this, more of the same, more of the game, and C said yes. So I can't complain. It's good to have something to wonder about as one's body and head trace the arc from vertical to horizontal. Falling is grace, sometimes.

Love

A

Dearest P

I received your present and burst into tears. Somehow the line from Sarah Kane's '4:48 Psychosis' ran through my head: her doctor or self or an(other) interrogates her, asking what she does to deserve such wonderful friends. I ask myself that now. You are gracious and generous, I hardly know how I have such wonderful people in my life.

I somehow felt that C should have been the recipient of this gift - though I don't know if he loves Eliot the way I do, and rather doubt it from the way he rolls words around in his mouth "I would like to consult a menu" - the previous owner of the book hauntingly prefigures him. What do I mean by this? I do not know, yet I know. I hope I am wrong.

Your generosity is without peer. You're a wonderful man and I know you will do much with your beautiful life.

Thank you dearly for your kindness.

Love,
A

Dear Q

I'm truly perverse, I'm sorry. I don't know what it is, it's like a door that opens and once one person steps through, the world rushes in. I am terrified of anyone that might know me, it causes me intense worry. You see something of me, I know, but I'm afraid I will end up destroying, well, everything. You, me, the American dream. The fifth corpse is near the ravine, you will be able to tell them about it. The cloisters, the unicorn, the flashing light within the red light. You know, I can't stop smiling around you. You stand there, unconcerned, with your lovely large hands, and I realize I'm in love with love. They can touch everything except each other, you say. Then they clasp each other tightly, a light and sardonic defiance.

It might seem weird but it's obvious. R, don't forget him. He knows left from right, he knows where the numbers go and how to add. He knows the sound of secret underwater passages, the bracing cold of sea salt spray.

And I'm no longer in existence, I'm already disappearing, he says. I've taken it in, the grotesque, monstrous, white face with the sneering eyes, the leering nose and the noise of millions of screaming silent faces, the death toll rises again, and the death toll climbs up. And some of us are unprotected, and some of us have

Protection around.

Do not forget that I will watch over you and you will be safe.

Love

A

Dearest R

You sent me a blank letter today. Roland Barthes, in 'A Lover's Discourse' says:

Goethe
Why do I turn once again to writing?
Beloved, you must no ask such a question,
For the truth is, I have nothing to tell you,
All the same, your dear hands will hold this note.

Did I ever tell you that when C broke my heart the one (and only) thing I thought to do as retaliation was to send a plain white envelope to him every day for a year. After that year, I would change the sending rate, making it sporadic, some days, two letters. Some days, one. Another day, nothing, perhaps nothing for long stretches of time. Then a flurry of seven all together. Each envelope with nothing in it, or with a plain sheet of paper.

The reason I think of this now, is that I sent C a text message with nothing in it. I think he took it to be the latter, rather than the former meaning. That is disheartening.

Yours,
A

Dear S

I saw the book, the Harvard collection of unusual animals, plants, old bones, bugs in jars – a childhood collection of animistic elements, curios, but adultly and adroitly collected. The blue butterfly, hovering, not so lightly anymore, caught my eye. It was the back cover.

A robin was on the other side, the front cover, and I know that this was the first of the animal seen with an eye to another time – molecules and atoms splitting off – oh remarkably clever, you might think, that one can remember these moments of nothing, of a bird hopping across a lawn, under a shrub, but there it was – both when saying goodbye, and at that long ago, earliest moment.

But now I wish to speak of the blue and not the red, the cut and divided, the controlled: Iridescent wings, this butterfly is male on one side and female on the other. Try it – one side is slightly bigger, there's something going on “worth the weight, she said, all 12 minutes of it – the steak sandwich had to make its transformation from bloody to cooked, and it doesn't happen in no time” something going on that is different depending on your vantage point. You will be perceived differently depending. It's not unusual. It's solved. It's known.

Please, I don't know what to say to you in the ‘real world.’ Won't you approach me? I've switched over again, haven't I? There was that moment where I was torn apart, yet again, though nobody else seems to question it, or themselves, or the fabric of their lives or tapestry. There is very little beauty left, the light that used to shine out when I am rent open has lessened.

Don't forget the cloisters. The picnic. The other symbols New York spits up to me. Certainly, we have been taken over. I cannot do it again, can I? First New York, then Berlin. I'm dreaming about it. They let me know, they keep me informed.

His head was a chess board, I nearly didn't recognize it, I thought they were leopard spots – you know how dappled they are, in the shade they nearly disappear, they are yawning grins and teeth and whiskers at odd angles only. Fur hidden. His entire head, a game.

The things, they said, the things they say.

Love,
A

Dear sS.

You know I love you and it doesn't matter if you love me or not. I know that's ridiculous. I am that type of creature. I saw you catch that, yesterday, at the table. You were happy about my acquiescence, though you may not realize it. Generally, your micro gestures when dealing with me are of disgust and contempt – I am not saying I know why, of course I don't (perhaps it is with yourself in dealing with me, perhaps it is with my foolish, foolish existence), but after that odd glance, you were happy, contented. Your mouth was new. I always watch mouths, though with you I cannot help but watch your soft eyes as well, and such a steady gaze. But not like F.'s gaze. Why, I wonder? And now, the usual heartbreak, the usual mad typing for no reason with nothing in mind but the obsession to communicate something to someone to anyone before it's too late. And so I am split again. And I wish to flip backwards out of my chair and stand on my hands, feet pointing to heaven. And I wish to stop reading the symbolic language and cleanly have one meaning for each word, measures, like rice, one grain each – still a feast, so many words. Selfish and pitied, I would rise, toes first. The hanging man. Change. Always.

I am sorry for hunting you last night. I can't help myself sometimes. I've stopped on the literal levels, but my spirit is more difficult to restrain. To rein in. She rides out, she prowls. I caught you, I met you at dawn. I am not sorry for that, but then in the end it was too much too fast and though you were deep in me, I...well. We entered sleep-space and dream time. You, hero, angel.

I thought your answer was precise. I don't want you to be alone, in a dark paneled alcove, nor do I want to sit across the table from you (signifying aggression). I would rather cross the river, see the odd phenomenon – fish above the water, round, clean pebbles, no – stones. And leave you, be left. A fish half in, half out of water. That's brilliant, Dr.

Enough. I barely speak, and it is too much.

I am yours.

A

(S):

I hope you are ok. I went to the theater, and the theater was the same. It was what I have been living for the last 7 years, but it was clown (not). I am not a clown? I am, and i can't wash it away.

The missing character in the play was S. I thought of minstrel shows. Early Chaplin? Twin Peaks? A chess game with unknown intent and outcome?

Well. This is just a note across space to wish you well. I trust you are not missing, but fear that someone is somewhere. I have the urge to check and check to ensure safety.

Oh no. [wu :: truth (racism)]

Don't forget to consider this in building your case:

REVERSALS

Blackface was not just entertainment, but a symbolic inversion of social order. The social implications are very interesting. In the minstrel show, white becomes black. White men will pretend to be black, but only as clowns. There were also sexual reversals: men would pretend to be women. Racial and sexual reversal are powerful means of expression. White minstrel troupes had to reassure their audience that underneath the burnt cork they were white! (In small Scottish towns they were not believed and had to remove the makeup publicly.) Posters showed the troupes both as elegant whites and as grotesque Negroes with sloping foreheads and bulging eyes. Even black minstrels wore blackface makeup on stage-they were not minstrels without it. Reversal colors such songs as Old Dan Tucker: in the original lyrics, Dan washes his face and combs his hair to change from black to white. The minstrel shows originated in a milieu of racial and sexual tension, and by diverting tension over roles available for both blacks and women they helped make society laugh at its troubles. Jim Crow "weel'd about/and turned just so" in more ways than one, it would seem.

Love,

A

Dearest S –

You asked why the body? I have always lived in a world of silence, or that of meaning less phrases, empty nothing that echoing, signify nothing. I do not wish to speak again. the dialogue i have had with myself, or with books, has never equaled that I could muster in life. I simply cannot heave my heart into my mouth, and so I am easily led.

Is it because I am lost? My heart has been lost? Or perhaps because it has been stolen, by your dark eyes and gentle questions, not to mention your quiet intelligence. What would C say, I wonder? He kills the white king without conscience. Our chess game continues, and though I notice that the moves are lost, because I keep track on my physical board, that i carry with me, I cannot prove anything. So much is at stake – lives, loves, lands. The terror looms. But this doesn't answer your question- why the body? Why indeed/ The moment i knew i wanted to be an actor was the moment i saw someone express the pain of being composite onstage. A Frankenstein wishing only to be whole, to have his own body, to own his body. To be free, not to be enslaved. I suppose this is part of 'why the body' to reclaim what has been property. To reclaim what was supposedly mine but never seemed it. to reconstruct, to, as suzan lori parks says, to (re)member. Each time i physically confront myself I try to make myself whole, wholly devoted, whole and present. When I write thus to you, I am also (re)membered, but variously. And concretely, my words are left and on the page after i am gone, when my body is gone, its expression is gone unless captured on film, but that is not the medium for the body, space is the medium for the body. As the medium of thought is the page.

Yes, thought animates the body. And emotion. These two things in space are what brought us together.

Certainly, S, you are a guardian. Certainly, you have helped my up and out of this pit into which I had fallen.

Yours,
A

Dear T

That was probably the most misogynist thing I've seen in a long time, yet funny, because it's true! A biting commentary on an oppressed subject position, on any underground movement, political or otherwise.

But deeply misogynist on one of the central tracts/tracks – this woman creates, directs and acts in her own piece, everyone rebels, nearly kills her and then we find out she was merely a pawn of the actual male director, D. I mean, C. And it's a statement on the culture we live in. On the powerlessness of women w/o men.

If I keep saying this, noticing this, I may come to believe it. That would be the true tragedy.

Why, C, do I feel as if I am being watched at every moment? Why do I feel as if that was me up there? Both S and the nameless, faceless girl.

Oh hell.

Class. That much was clear, a biting indictment of - huh, I wonder what A would have thought? I wish I could have had my whole class there. Hilarious.

C asked if the fiction of the producer was believed – no, I didn't believe it, I could tell she was acting from the first moment. But maybe that was just me. What did I think? I should ask him since he does tend to take everything at face value, as L said. That's part of his charm. He looked deeply confused and upset at the end of the show. I felt elated to see 'myself' defaced on stage. That's what has happened through my life, always trying to help and getting fucked. So hilarious to see with clown as a metaphor.

L is in love with you. I beg you to be kind to her. You probably don't understand what it's like that unrequited love. You're happy with your partner. She's alone. I want to say, 'be kind to her' but of course you are.

Well, I thought the physicality could have been sharper in many parts – mostly the clown parts – but it was great structure, great thought.

“Let me tell you about betrayal. It is nothing neat nothing clean. The dick beats me every time.”

Love

A

Dear U –

I came back tonight, to our apartment, and it is too quiet. You're not here and I miss you intensely, immensely. I come back to the living room, and the room is not the same. I may lie on the floor, but you are no longer on the couch to speak to, to kiss, to hold, to love, so I return to my room and fumble nervously with objects, useless things. Lying in bed, I smell you on my sheets. This may be worse than if suddenly there were no reminders of you.

I should have sidestepped this next month and gone with you. I know it wouldn't have been practical. I don't speak Greek, you have work to do, my family would not understand. I may not be built for such actions of extravagance, but I long for them.

I tried to tell my best friend about our once a month fat Tuesday, but she didn't find it as funny as we do. Too violent? I still think of the guy in the orange shirt, across the street, the way we laughed and laughed, the greenness of your eyes.

I miss you. I love you. I haven't felt this way about anyone in such a long time, it is an amazing gift and I'm grateful to have known you. I am comfortable with you, intimate, without unnecessary passion. What next? I think I must make a trip to Greece. I fear you have already forgotten all about me.

At breakfast, over the plastic cups and talk of my mother, the actor's ability to cry, Beckett's *Waiting for Godot*: The tears of the world are a constant quantity. For each one who begins to weep somewhere else another stops. The same is true of the laugh.

Well, this will be the only such morose and melancholy letter.

Love

A

Dear V

There was blood on the wall this morning. It's splattered on my bike tire. K had the flashlight that they needed. Now he just has a rash, something itchy. We're all princesses, aren't we? Sensitive to one another, to peas in the bed, twitches, slow, fast, in muscle fiber at night, standing, running, reaching for things unseen, with the body, with the mind.

I hear the sounds last night, as if there were a fight. Muffled. Voices overrode it all. How is it possible that this happens? Then an innocent question about blood splattered and needing something to clean it up with. No, needing a flashlight. And then the wooden pole that he carries. It's the stick from the training, the one we balance with.

Protection around?

Is this real? Unbelievable. What is going on. If I didn't see it, did it still happen? What did happen? I'm leaving, will M be safe? What's going on? I see that we're all in a line, connected one to the other. A chain, unbroken, until now. Too many layers. Leap from one world to another: that's what I advise. Maybe you'll be able to see something new from that vantage point. Maybe it will merely tie more tightly the knots of the senses.

Let me know? I miss your touch, gentle. Perhaps this is why the world becomes so violent.

Love

A

W

What keeps the woman separate from the sea? It's only one of us, here, it's one of us, it's a vast blue palate, but not a natural light, a filtered gelled and controlled light, hours of time spent focusing to make it fall just so, on the index finder, held aloft, or pointing, pointing, always pointing somewhere. That shaft of light following. Illumination. Illuminati.

I feel the swells, the drifting, the sting of salt, and then, as Z divides, so we are separated.

Do not, though, for one moment confuse one Z for another: There is artificial Z, theatrical. There is literary Z, peachy, peaceful there is Z now, that comes between myself and the sea, it stands like wires, burns like a brand, but in the end a means only. Look for me there, for there I will be.

Love

A

Dear X

Oh Madame, oh dear, oh darling.

I drew you today, there you were, a card, a black x on a white background, you doubled in my mind and suddenly you were a cross, a swastika, a star of David. Parallel lines fell down. I shouldn't read that stuff, should I though. I imprinted one of you in my skin, I pledged myself to you, oh.

I'm being groomed to take the fall for something.

Love

A

Dear Y

I know that M needs you to complete the pattern for her. It seems like a game, but it's not, it's simple, I'm stupid, I'm picking up on things, but I can't say them aloud, it's too strange. There's a type of fear in the air.

What time is it in Athens? Not too late, it never is. There's a sort of perpetual blue purple dusk, a dark haze enhanced by the pollution of the city, but counterpointally contradicted by the bright, rolling sea.

You need to meet up with me.

I know the feeling of being stopped at a red light, with nothing to allow free movement, floating, running, a sense of joy in the body. I'll help you with that, and also, I have something to give you for/from M. That one is always coming and going at the same time...watch for her.

Love

A

Dearest Y

At first, I was frightened. But now I know that resistance takes a long time, and as the many days of physical battle exist and stretch on, the battle on the inside, passed person to person – a touch, a look, the right ring or color scheme – and again someone else is saved, or enemy territory is sabotaged. We're working on it. Soon we'll be safe. My parents generation thinks that we're lazy, or uninvolved, but they have no idea, and cannot understand how it is that we're involved. This is a generation gap that i think may be left unbridged.

Although I write this now, in clear words, which can be understood.

The methods, though, they're not clear, are they? Or are they.

It's not the memory that's the problem. A little processor speed, some bravery. More:
_____ as Diva: _____

There was a car, a physical object. A sweater in the front seat, a rained out cab, everything a little flattened with the humidity. The sweater had the label 'more' the, what are they? Not necklaces, not decoration, the cord, the noose the thing that holds a whistle, that's funny, isn't it, 'the noose that holds the whistle' had 'diva' written on it. It was purple, wasn't it.

Well.

I'm driving her around in a trashed out car, something heated up, maybe the backseat is filled with heads of lettuce, I imagine it iceberg lettuce, covered with slugs, snails, a hole in the roof, the rain coming through constantly, an old -

There's nothing more to say, really, than that.

Love

A

Dearest Z

At night, the alphabet comes and marches through my mind. Heavy boots, but not heavy enough to keep it rooted to the ground, thank God. It's as if gravity disappears. Letters float up, untethered, balloons of delicate meaning.

The only thing that will save B is if she follows the 26 all the way to the ocean.

And still, night terror claws at words, at language, at anything that orders the universe. These rough claws rip it to ribbons. Words fall asunder, letters are missing from the order of the 26.

Please, do not let yourself be trapped. Some must remain free.

Love

A