

Dear __,

A post-diagnosis letter for the sake of feeling something (in terminal sickness). A plea for sanity. A memoir of skin. The body's alternate in a dresser mirror. If not, just silk in its fray. Lost connection in lace, pulled across mouth and continent. To sing the primordial language of cormorants, or stubborn quartz held firm in a rift of time. The shore and its milieu of kelp and trawlers. Before existential nets cast wide. Before the catch of the zeitgeist broke the scales. Fishing villages of saga – your incarnate in every season rising between two green waves. Unsober.

To the backwash of hills and monasteries. Its tapestry, a study in patience. Compensation for displacement. Century old salt, kicked up by albino horses. From childhood to falsehood. Apricity eclipsed. Cliff-edge decisions softened by your body. Coastal malaise. The spill of coloured houses and their inhabitants — only alive, in photographs, once. Waking, gaunt cheek against warm dunes. The imprint you left, not quite dead. Seeing her vagaries through a Bombay Sapphire bottle. Your vision, hungry, still.

To those marooned. Still haunted by the Soho neon of vicious cycles, ring roads, highways — broken limits. *The dew on the victim's wreckage, scented like her perfume.*

Recklessness caught on its off day.

Wishing to be saved from above. Searching below for the pearl. The oyster clasped tight as frozen angel wings. Sheen of galactic onyx. Image of a man's heaven. A privilege to prise open. Waves moving through warm bodies. Islands of emeralds — scattered euphoria. Archipelagos glistening from deep space where satellites – Europa, Ganymede, Callisto, Titan – are just lonely voyeurs. The planetary choirs always too far away to hear the singing.

Recovery bay. Its coloured boats in refrain as bright kites above disappear into a soft white belly. The children beneath, maybe ours. Running. Away over the years. Into heather and brush. Tiny and far now. A dot in a Seurat. The cause of postnatal blues. Then, I became smaller too. Voiceless. Counselling and prescribed sunlight, never enough. Realising the child's first cry is derivative of one's own. A bloody tie. The inception of some miracle you couldn't contain. In a blitz of pleasure. In guilt. The fault of two.

Both wounded, missing a way back. A bare acoustic you left by the nightstand, in a year when traffic was a gentle whirl of lavender. The meadow gates opened to a pastel rumination. Rustic rhythm of bleached grass and bison. A time when love was a place you could reach on bare feet. The hunters, not yet conceived. And here, we drowse through pearlescent willows. Hypnotic movements of wind and water. Pausing at lake's edge, reaching for the souvenir in your pocket — places, faces, fragments, dissociations, lullabies, ruptures, mantras — and all other forms of rewilding we have yet to *endure*.