

Spring

Yes. Desire is a time traveller who sleeps in the body of a white horse. A body is removed and memory remains as all memories remain objects people pack tightly into their dresser closets. But hearts are wanderers. Even wrapped in comfortable lives they wander in libraries pulling down heavy tomes searching for all of their soulmates. All stories are love stories. All letters are love letters. All creation is a love creation.

Libraries come undone. *I kiss and press my body against piles of old books spread across the dirt floor of an abandoned building. I'm by the ocean. I feel my body violently as I feel the books and their broken spines cracking beneath me - a bed of books, a bed a library.* The painter remembers and inside she is living memory. Dangerous. As no moment repeats, forever is a cruel thing to promise. She kneels to gather every book to soak in water until every word dissolves.

Fictions' realities are stars in motion. As Earth rotates around the sun the painter rotates. Stars send messages speaking of secret places describing images of dense verdant forests growing on other worlds. Everything is a story; every story is a fiction.

Sometimes when I look at someone I find them living within my body and here I find light and darkness. I try to understand why it is the shadows that cross their faces, their dark hair and black eyes that I'm drawn to, as though I am possessed by a shadow and I feel as though I could obsess over the singular movement when the veil of a body parts like curtains on a stage and I feel deeply inside another. Then I can reach into them and touch something - a pearl caught in the wet organs of a mollusk.

Summer

Time is soft and forgetful, all previous events having been quickly put behind. The spirit of the painting is held at its beginning: a dog eats a vegetable and the vegetable is so happy to be eaten by the dog.

A vegetable speaks. In a low but feminine voice the words come, "Oh, love! Is it you? All winter I've waited to be with you completely. To join you. I let go. I'm ready. Ooh! Yes yes my love. Ooh yes! Eat me! Please take away my shape. Ooh!" In the next moment the vegetable falls to the ground from a tree where it was tied and a hairy dog with slobber and big teeth tears apart the vegetable, to which the vegetable only cries out with joy, "Ooh yes! yes! Ooh!" The cries of the vegetable fade into sounds of ecstasy mixing with the snarling and drooling of the animal. The vegetable, when eaten by the dog, is an embodiment of the joyful fate of life. *There is an idea in painting that infinity is either loving or frightening. Really, infinity can be both, but the vegetable is never frightened and the reason for this is simple: the vegetable is circular. The vegetable has no mouth and no ass. People have mouths and asses; it's what lets them have both love and fear of infinity.*

The painter lives in the city as a solitary animal. To be in the city grants her solitude within herself. She communes with people and understands how impossible it is to paint without true solitude. She paints fictions as place. *Place is outside and inside. The image out there in me. The word out there in me. The story out there in me. The library out there in me. I fill myself and then expel. I am not round but I long to be round as a fruit is round. A fruit never longs for place. Ooh! To be round and never long for place!* The painter understands that she must look at place and to see it she closes her eyes. Light pours in through two big windows. It is raining. Inside the air sticks to her skin and little curls form along her brow hiding small beads of sweat same as the pearls gathering and falling between her breasts. She wraps her hands around her neck, firmly presses them against her throat and remembers that she is still alive.

Thank god.

What does it mean to love? I was mistaken. I don't just have love, feel love, or want love. I mistook love for a noun when really it is a verb. When I read the words VIVE L'AMOUR I - for a long time - under-

stood this to mean something like LONG LIVE LOVE. Lately the words' meanings have changed - as words often do change. I saw their new shape and sound as LIVING LOVE. And I no longer saw or felt the need for love as a declaration. This is the form of love - continuous action. Painting is an act of representation; it is the formation of images and put plainly: there is no image of love. Love cannot be represented but the objects it produces - endless relationships between things. All libraries are filled with representations; images log all words in all forms both pre-word and post-word. Painting eats its own tail preceding language as it follows language trying to fix an image in memory - a fool's errand since in the end all memory is essentially loss. Painting images recycled from memory every painting is a memory a loss and so a painting is living because it communes with grief; it has felt itself pass away; it speaks in tombs with death. Words wind through us just as the library winds through us as an infectious disease, but I'm watching and I see love as growing. I observe it in segments point-to-point painting-to-painting and I realize that time is neutral. The future is neutral. Desire, having kept us from the present, is a time traveller who the painter befriends in order to pass through walls.

"Let time tell me how it is," the painter speaks. She's never heard her voice before and it is soft and vibrates as bird wings flap rising on gusts of wind. *In a moment I was afraid to lose love so much I forgot love, causing myself inordinate amounts of pain. Love is cruel when it is not love. When another falsely dresses in love's clothes it makes a harbor for fear and distributes it to every organ in the body. Fear is the fear of loss; worse than loss is the fear of loss.*

"To write to you I write to the dead." She pauses, takes a deep breath and wipes a few lingering tears from her eyes with the back of her hand. "I call up the ghost. I kiss her, but I know she doesn't exist. To hear and taste and feel her I paint. I love. I paint to love. I paint to love her." *A painter listens, searches for sound and finds an image resonating. Make heart music for heart people.*

Winter

She has always been a painter. Her earliest paintings of horses running wild through wide bright green and flowering meadows later melded into a love she fell into with a dog.

"If you're a dog," she tells the animal, "then I am a dog painter." The painter traces the dog's form onto the concrete floor. Over and over she circles the fragile body until it slowly changes into galaxies of repeating spirals roses and seashells that dance in composition.

"Composition is spirit," she says, picking up a small round brush with bristles fashioned from a horse's mane. And as if the brush were a needle she dances across the dog's fur then penetrates the first layers of hair and flesh with ink the color of springtime painting words an image of nothing. The dog asks her what it says and she replies, *everything*. Five arms stretch outward turning inward with no explanation for their existence and never question their own entanglement.

We could do without words but then there are words. Speech doesn't always come easily and it's not ever without bias. Perception is what my senses feel and it becomes what my heart believes. Within experience there is always a constant unfolding of understanding. The sun is setting over the city and I watch it from the window of my living room wishing that another could perceive this beside me and we could share without words the feeling. Memory is funny. It chooses us as we choose it and it is never trustworthy. Say I took your head between my hands one afternoon. The sun was very warm casting warmth across your face. Say I took your head between my hands early one morning. The sun was barely breaking the horizon, the light had no temperature but was purely blue.

The painter dreams she dies and becomes a river as her body moves away from days and bleeds into overlapping lines of radiant color. *Gardeners were the first painters. Their heroes were the dictionaries of certain gods like the rocks and trees who whisper back and forth tales so old and slow not even they know their beginnings, cold winds, heavy rains, the horse, the tiger.* One side of the bed grows cold and she rolls over into it just to keep herself company with the change in temperature. *It's only to pass time. Loneliness and dying are normal.* She wishes that it would rain inside. The dog dreams he is a red fish.

To grieve. This is how grief widens the heart: on the page little circles of light are forming. Each circle is an image of the sun and the word sun without needing to be shaped like S U N. Around these - so many suns! - are shadow webs who possibly forgot or never understood that the spider never was their weaver. Their weavers are giants - tall broad and with wide reaching branches. *What could be more erotic than a lonesome tree in a landscape? It's not phallus. It's not feminine beauty. It's not human, but movement and growth. Longevity and peace. These things we wish to reap and consume but are endlessly unattainable.*

The painter carefully and free lays her body onto canvas and paints. The time of day is night.

The moon is rising just above the snow. She is listening and hears the snow and the moon having a conversation. Every word they say is *blue blue blue*. Long slender clouds drift above as moonlight casts deep violet shadows onto them. The wind blows hard across the surface of the snow kicking it up into frozen misty pockets of air to travel as might sand or dust. The painter wonders how - like the rain - snow might swell the waters. Is it snow that falls crystals? *Pure crystals*, she says. When the wind blows it does it remember where it was before? Does it tremble and pick up memories? *The snow travels across snow dunes. Winter. This is snow country.*

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