

Story 3,

Part 3: **roe**



September 15

After all our efforts it just fizzled. The money left would fund a trip to the Antarctic and nothing would come to fruition ever again because I'd never attempt anything again. We'll pass as the dogs of two strangers, barking at their meeting, sniffing from an inch and almost touching until our leashes beckon us away and give us only some whiff that the one we met was us. We will walk onwards, onwards with our masters traveling opposite directions on the same road.

I won't sleep beside you. I'm scared I'll steal the comic from your pillow. If I could offer you the time to finish—after you finish, what would you have left? figure it out. After you're done I want to bring you to the woods. By then, we will have all the time to figure it out. For now I'm cold, unable to control myself and sometimes jack off standing at the edge of a cliff where it spills into the darkness. In the soaked rain, I return to bed—somehow she can smell it. When I whisper in my pillow it feels like someone hears, and when I hug myself it feels like I don't own my arms. Some kernel of her's within. Someone loves me, and that knowledge makes all the difference, no matter how away they are.

I want to be content with distance, just as I was before. Put it

in amber when I find it hard to bear. But I know I can't contain it. If my visit fails then I would lose my words, and any that I sputtered would mean nothing to her again. She must've seen some capacity to care—some way to help that's not too clear to me. Could anybody do? I thought of all the ones I had to care for in my life—and the ones I'll *have* to care for. Not one of them understood me, and because of that I was content with the little understanding that I had of them. They were content with their poor lives, and I was content to let them wallow without knowing that they wallowed. At the same time, they pitied me. But

With her, I'm not satisfied with all I've found out. With her, I have the chance to love unconsciously, silently. I have the chance to close my eyes and know that someone's there. I have the chance to keep her in my heart and out—then, the boundary between them would be needless. Everything could be shared as if my skin were water, letting in and out the sun, in and out the swimming dogs.

I thought about her joints, too fatigued for even rest. Below her skin, things may be churning over and over, and I don't want to make her pretzels even worse. I believe our love exists between the form and formlessness, that my joints exist to soothe hers—and that I should loosen her, but not untangle. I believe within her knots there may be space—space identical to mine. If we could just enter in each other's spaces, hoping to be caged inside the other, large enough to be caressed, yet small enough to slip like fingers no matter how carbuncled or stiff—to feel each other's wrinkles and to turn hard work to water, I think those rivers would be worth the tears we dammed up, thinking we were dry.

September 16

I think of a home I've never been to—and when I lay on my bed, the leftover warmth soothes me. And there is no ugliness or charm, no sickness or health in warmth. Her body just left, and her soul will be here soon. She's always curled up, afraid of falling in herself and turning to a knot... hah, perhaps that way she's easier to hold. But even then, her thorns brush up on me—most of all herself. We understand so many of the other's dreams because we've already given what's decipherable to one another. And still we speak in the other's language, rather than our own. Still we question the other, not knowing what we ask. Still we answer, and the reaction stays hid.

I don't want to promise anything. I think she's hurt by promises enough. If I could keep from promising anything I would. But—

September 17

I hugged you once and flinched when you were hurt. I tend to hug too hard with everyone, but with you I'd hide my feelings, knowing that you'd see. You're letting in a brute, a beast—worse, a man

(please hide that fact from me)

I think that from the start I knew your preference and still I loved. A part of me wished to be pushed away, to feel one-sided love again. It was the only way to feel human again. I used you, not knowing whether you were a beast or god—only that the human needs an otherworldly love. But now, I'm willing to mature—to let myself be burdened, to invite your body back. To dispel all illusion—to acknowledge that I loved a person. And stranger than the tales they tell disabled kids at school, I acknowledge too that she'd been dreaming me. She is a person, after all!

September 18

I found a lifetime in your gourmet pills. I thought we'd sit down over brunch to have us a little talk. If I stay a little longer, I might see you die. I'd like that: to stay by your side and even think of following you. Imagine if I didn't know, and I just kept jamming letters in your inbox until it near burst!! No, I think you'd find that a little too funny—I do too..

So imagine I didn't know, and my messages got fewer every day. Imagine I thought you hated me when really, you were dead. And as you got more dead I'd think your hatred even stronger. Would you haunt me? I think that'd count as formless love. If cats can't find someone to die with, they'd rather crawl into a pit to die alone. This is someone's death we're talking about, working on a farm...

I think about the first four years I lived: the time before your birth. Back then, you were a ghost. Have you ever thought of the karmic crime severe enough to warrant what you've been through? I think about those four years as a time when I was far from you but didn't know it. If you die before me, I'd like to bring my youth back. In feeling, not in form. But why should my lifespan cover yours? It's as if my time caresses yours so much it chokes. If I hurt you with my body—if my health becomes greed—I won't know what to...

You might outlive me!

## Dream of Formless Love

How I held you, how your body became stone. I never made it in time--that last...you only became more beautiful as if waiting to become the autumn sky that carries you away from me. I couldn't kneel lower. That car will never be driven again. You thought you'd see it break down...who first succumbed to snow? The ants are the first step. Killing myself could not bring me closer and living could not separate me further. You're leaving slowly, piece by piece, as if you slowly walked to the horizon in a bag. Ants relieve me of this burden...they are your veil, your vehicle-- another part of you, as you'd always say. How many of your friends still think you there, naming nothing...we shouldn't hurt them any more than we have already. How many of your works you've left as if your body weren't enough. They curl like snail's shells, more beautiful without you. Yet cold so cold...I'd rather have warmth.



## a dream of two friends

I met her in a dream. She and my childhood friend merged in and out because I could not visualize her close, nor my childhood friend afar. I remember when he moved away, and I remember when she lost her house for me to visit. Their genders started to merge and I couldn't tell whether they invited me to a house or tent—whether they were religious or a coder. I waited for her to come (she wrote to me she would) until I saw his smooth hair peeking over the window. He would drop off the groceries, leave, and then transform into her letters.

September 10

The sun gives all definition. For that,  
it is blank and formless  
And blinding. Thank you, moon  
For showing us a rabbit to be loved

But don't you use us all  
As footprints of a spider  
Spindly legs but many many  
Slowly in our dreams?

Moon doesn't tire. Little things tire. When unwatched, little things stop. The moon doesn't stop behind the clouds. Is that more bearable?

Today, the full moon's wet. It can't reach anyone in this rain. Covered on the day we thought to see it nude...the cloud's light is colder. It's a small cloud, so maybe everyone else *can* see it. We climbed the hill that pokes through the sheet when suddenly, the lining on the clouds...is it really like this? do I only see the lining of you now? or do I just forget the times you wished that I would talk?

The moon comes out, and we stretch our hands. Cats turn collectively like worms, too lazy to get up as lakes and little drops attempt to grasp the moon.

It brings to mind the sun it killed. On a full moon, shadows begin a second life when the moon succeeds sun. Then, a third reclothed in light when the full moon sets. Bright on both sides, yet dark in the middle...this is fire, right? right  
Isn't that right, my little lamp? You too have a three-day life.

October 1

Drink too much, and the seasons start jumbling around. Spring comes before winter, summer before spring and so on. Not wrong, but just too fast for me. I know I've been on the shady side of a mountain--because of that, can see its shadow--and I know from the ground's seven pinecones that it's soon to get cold. Another cluster of them...!

I've been searching for a mossy rock, small enough to hold... there are lots of rocks and lots and lots of moss-- but strangely, no luck. A small enough rock...to lift?

Between my legs, there's a sapling with a split in its stem. Whether this would be a permanent split or one that goes back on itself after a time I don't know--but eagerly await as the sapling loves and fears its youth. A stray branch breaks. A tree has half its roots exposed, as if it's forever about to fall. Who's powerful enough to help it up or bring it down?

The mountains could be a deep smoke, if it weren't for the sky. As we drove, passing glimpses of the stream's reflection....it really does look like clothing on the rocks!

October 2

Some part of me wishes we had the full moon together. Originally, I could not write because I was in such a good mood, so thank you. Between two moons, our feelings went from the verge of rejection to the verge of rejection. I thought for once I'd have enough energy to make a birthday card for someone—even make a cake for her, too.

Seeing one cloud leave  
The restless sky was opened

Seeing them all leave  
The restless sky was clos

No, wait...let me change that.

Seeing one cloud leave  
The restless sky was there

Seeing them all leave  
The restless sky was here.

Better? when we said it wasn't this nor that, here nor there, we imagined a complexity we couldn't see—and that was the simplest part of it. Framing the actions of heaven in terms of hell could not make heaven but appear more hell than hell. But now, removed from such terms I no longer see the

cloudless sky, let alone the cloudy. My first mistake was to believe in her potential, which allowed her to deny mine. My second was believing that denial.

my head turns slowly  
constellations of my room  
and burns the trails,  
waiting for your

I believed in her a voyage. I still see that road, but I can't wait. If I cannot find her, then traveling alone cannot be much scarier. She too has another world to explore--and she still dallies. I believe the seconds river-leaves, weeks the rafts, and a year the barge used to jettison ourselves to who knows where. I see now there's no one to make you travel, no one to stop you. How fast the days spent touching grass can make her words just words. How fast she's lost in people, how walls become just walls.

On mystic peaks  
Where everything reflects the sun

Decaying grass  
There's our wasted breath

I see you rifling through my past letters and texts, looking for the missed signs. Even though you've had four fewer years, you've caused more harm than me--and at the end of our lives, despite the distance between my death and yours, you'll have hurt far more people--and for all your projections, you really will have made a difference in the lives of others. A profound difference. Perhaps you've even saved me from committing it. I've realized you are never satisfied with happiness--that I am grateful to be one of

your many passing joys. And now we part on the road we paved together.

## October 3

All I knew is that you fled far  
Far north, and all the things I knew and didn't know  
You burned. They burst like christmas ornaments  
And once they were all eggshells, you ended it all  
With a pop-song. For some time, I tried  
To remember the last thing you said to me until  
on a full moon, you came back  
as a still, small voice, asking if I was still there. I said yes and you said good and  
then left forever.

Since then, I have found myself beautiful but others  
ruled by the laws of life.



## October 4

I can no longer find you in my dreams  
No longer put a wildflower in your hair  
The one we made together, and how  
Have I made this place my home, yet  
Constantly not? However I have ever  
Then, no more...you were my only  
my only—and now, and now...

I dreamed of us as two silhouettes  
Connected by the cliffs, how all things  
Go—and how my dreams with you  
are dreams without desire. Could I  
sleep with you again, if it weren't  
for your bad dreams? Swinging light,  
Fire under a cold wind...I wanted you

To catch me—called for you, as if asking air...  
Why am I still falling? I'd rather touch ground.

I haven't found a way to help you. Sad!  
I've found the only way's to leave you. Even worse!

Touch me, touch me touch me. I'll never know  
you and you can hold it above me like bait.

I haven't even cooked one meal for you yet! Haven't carried anything for you,  
even your dependency  
away...

the feeling that she's sadder than me  
right now—too sad to even draw...

The terror isn't you or me. I will pave a path, with  
or without you. I will spread my feelings, catching sparrows—and whether you'll  
be there to pet them  
is...

Behind the unread conversations, frozen words  
There's us on the other ends, crying over how  
The other doesn't know—is happier that they don't.

I found that though I wrote her prayers, I'd never once prayed—that putting the  
words on paper had been unconscious, even. No wonder she got sicker...!

11/17

I don't think I can confide in you  
with what I want to confide  
without you saying been there done that  
that I can never cry in your lap without you  
looking down on me

## October 19

when Orion's in my teacup  
obsessions turn to just two things  
and steam until it's cold.

when I cried in your lap, things  
cracked like the garlic shells  
and no one found a heart.

with my foot inside the swamp  
I enter all these lives and leave  
while the mud's low growl—

since I began, Orion has shifted a bit  
and now leaves my teacup.

## October 23

The moon waning before our eyes  
the moon waning before our eyes  
& till released, the string still hesitates  
Before it's plucked. How you held me

How you held me? Loose, tight and  
loose's something I always understand  
Over time. Small bed, big bed  
Room to vibrate in, no room

Bed of feeling, bed of choice  
Bed that I unbed, couch  
that I uncouch. Lovely stars from below, lovely morning stars  
& the waning moon

## August 21

Would you place your head on my navel?  
Maybe you have other navels to rest on  
Other hands to stroke your hair. But I don't  
and I project myself on you. I remember  
when you wrote to me, your jewish mutt hair—ha  
did you feel that laughter in my gut?  
It must've rocked your curls a bit...funny  
your words came in my head—and then  
my laughter into yours. It cycles end to end  
and still the gap between us.