

A Note Upon Not(h)ing

By

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ACT I

Scene 1

SPEAKER

Dear Aaron,

I don't know what to say to you. I don't even know if you deserve my words. Why am I writing to you again?

See I'm done with you. What you *did*, well, that's here, probably always will be--definitely will be, in some form, always. But you.

I guess it's easier to think of you as an abstraction. A source rather than a being. Because sources dry up. An earthquake, a drought, a few extra degrees--or in our case, a minor understanding--and sources cease. It is more comfortable to think of you as unable to feed me anything new. Note: I also considered in place of the word "feed:" contribute, give, force, inject, insert, infect, project, and whatever is the opposite of failing to protest. But when a source dries--I cannot remember now if the pain I associate with the first time you violated me came with a withdrawing of moisture, the dehydration of pillow folds--did my body respond for or against me, you?--or perhaps the blood was moisture enough--in the bible it was your brother who turned water into blood--you were the one who took people's valuables and treated them all the same--when a source dries, it does not do so all at once. No, I mean, what I really need to say is when a source dries, it goes somewhere. Water does not cease. And that is what frightens me. That you still have the potential to be the kind of source you were to me.

I find myself easily sidetracked by imagery. I think that is because you were the most vivid thing that has happened to me. (Also, tenses. Clearly: time.) I was walking down the street one day--no, it's you, so specific: I was paused, getting ice cream with a friend at the truck that does soft serve--swirl with chocolate sprinkles--that parks in the Park--Golden Gate, for anyone who does not share my background--on that stretch of road that bridges my everyday with my favorite bakery. I was with a friend, waiting in line, and it was sunny, those days when San Francisco is perfect, and I smelled you. Well, not you of course, it was someone else, but he smelled like you so vividly I felt faint. Panic, excitement--alert, danger! alert, alert--revert, alert! I am aware of you to the point of grotesque. That is, I was, because I am here now, not in that moment, not in any moment of mine you claimed,

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SPEAKER (cont'd)

I am here, and you have no claim over this moment. Here now. Vividity fades.

If moisture did flee when you invaded, where did it go? I am afraid of the part of myself that is the haven of my body's reaction to unwanted action. Of that mystery space that requires a source. Which is different than where the moisture went?

Maybe I'm being too obtuse. But abuse is confusing. I'm afraid this writing--(righting?)--reflects my thoughts. Water reflects bodies. Bodies of water. I've never before though about what a strange way that is to describe water. It makes the act of entering water seem violent. I've never been much of a swimmer. Correction: I was a mermaid when I was young--correction, a naiad--and then puberty made entering violent.

I think I was harassed during middle school. They teach you about sex but not how to use it. Burgeoning boys test the newfound power of their genitalia, translate it into uncomfortably close and box you in and can say whatever because woman is vessel. Take what I give. (I speak there in the male voice, and find it does not make me feel powerful.)

I love being female. But I more and more realize it entails violation. I think I'd rather be violated than violator, but that's what I'm supposed to think. Which doesn't mean it can't be true. No real answers.

I've always wanted a daughter. There's something to it now that feels like sacrifice. Abraham and Issac, but not glorified. Dirty, base. Raised for slaughter. Not an ascension, a lowering. I feel at this moment no safety.

It's a wonder that we are able to override our maternal instincts and bring babies into this world. I suppose lust helps, but without lust, would we be so afraid? If I have a daughter, and I somehow think I will, she will likely be violated, as I have, but with her own twist. Maybe one day your children will violate mine, or mine yours. Now I feel a bit like God--all my children, violating each other!--I feel like a parent. I've been working with kids. So many of them haven't been hurt yet.

I like to ramble, but I don't like it to seem that I have rambled. I am far gone at this point. From abuse to motherhood--a different sort of usurpation. I am in a moment right now when everything except my body being

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all my own is heinous. I long for touch that does not feel outside myself.

I am tired. I seek solace, I seek shelter. I seek the pause that comes from experiencing intensely. Those moments when you become unaware of the passage of time. You did provide me with a certain stillness. Like many animals, I freeze when I am threatened. I'm looking for a different kind of stillness. One not enforced but enjoyed. One that is not of instinct, but of the deepest higher functioning. It is funny that we use so much of our sentience trying to be more like that we call beasts. We have to fight our own awareness. Stillness lies in lacking.

You are out there. If I go with my metaphor, it is more comforting to think of you confined to a source than evaporated, scattered through the air I take into me. Source of what though?

I wonder if I was wrong. I wonder if I still need something from you. An apology, and explanation, an assurance. None seem sufficient. None seem applicable.

I shall sleep now and I imagine when I write again my tone will be different.

I awake as I do always: as if I am awaking from consciousness. From reality to reality. Life is less extreme in daylight. I wonder why that is?

I cannot muster horror now. The thought of you does not send me into existential panic. You seem small, and absurd. But then again, so does everything else. It is morning. There's something absurd to claiming reality.

Blanche DuBois spoke about deliberate cruelty: the one unforgivable thing.

I wish no one had ever hurt me. I wish I could love everyone.

I find deliberate cruelty to be rare. I believe people hurt each other mostly out of ignorance, and often out of fear. I've never seen the sense in saying "treat others how you feel you deserve to be treated." We always do.

Why are we all so wounded? What is it about our world that leaves such indelible scars?

I feel I am losing traction on this writing. Note: I also considered in place of the word "writing:" poem,

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SPEAKER (cont'd)

play, speech, rant, expression, digression, regression, dirge. It is curious how often we bring things into being and lack sense of ownership. As if we only own our successes. *That* thing, *there*, that's not quite right, not quite me. As if we don't reveal ourselves in our lack to communicate. Note: "lack" should really be "failure," but it remains lack. Note: the use of the passive voice, the withdrawing of subject. Reference: earlier, the withdrawing of moisture. Subject, moisture. Somehow, of course, we always return to the physical. Abstract notion, tangible and fundamental substance. We speak of thoughts having substance. I think this reveals our desire to be more.

Your subject, Ayelet, is abuse. Our abuse. (That is, subject's and author's.) The subject's subject. We must always speak of subjection, then. It is how we know to define relation. Actor, reactor. Someone's always first.

It makes me uneasy about the actualization of equality.

"It" is subject. I guess there is a comfort in knowing that a subject requires relation. At least we cannot be alone. Or, in a different mood--(note: mood, thought, perspective, mindscape)--yes mindscape, we are only alone. There are no answers. That is why we live.

That is: purpose.

Again, I diverge from abuse (the height of physical) and meander (flee?) into abstraction. It is comforting, when abused, to seek reprieve from the physical. To imagine I can exist solely as a thoughtful creature. Also, it is terrifying. The closest we come is spectrum. It is comforting to know that everything is everything. Also terrifying. Thus,

It is this. It was a lack of language. It was an increase in touch. Touch does not sound violent when you say it aloud. Soft sounds, no vibration. Close to breath. I suppose what I've discovered in writing this--(what I already knew yet somehow continuously need to challenge)--is that some things are not captured in words. I like that image. Of things inside words. I guess that's the difference between written and spoken language. The literal and the meaning. Does anything I've written here mean anything? And when I speak it?

That's really what I want, I suppose. To mean something. And I think I do, but you're never quite sure.