

Slow Zoom, Long Pause
Sara Magenheimer

(A woman's voice with a soft Jamaican accent)

I

I

I

I

ONE

I'm alone in a plain white room.

I miss you so much everything hurts...even my skin; the membrane between the inside and outside of my body vibrates with pain and confusion of not knowing where to be if not next to you. Skin pulling in all directions at once, nearly drawing and quartering me. My eyes hurt from not looking at you for so long, and instead having to look at people and objects I find much less attractive. My entire inside hurts because my heart is sinking lower and lower the longer I go without seeing you. It's pulling my other organs down with it. Everything inside me wants to sink down into the earth and begin to decompose. My body wants to become dirt but I'm still alive.

I don't need you I don't need you I don't need you

I want you so bad, you know?

I cry all the time for no reason.

Is this fear? Do I feel Do I feel Do I feel
afraid?

...fear the bag someone left behind on the subway...fear the idea that you might not be worried enough about things and maybe have forgotten to worry about something that might harm you...fear weapons, or the idea that someone has them and you don't, fear dark-skinned people, people of other religions, sexual preferences, fear unintelligibility, fear ambiguity in general...pick a team or else you might be left alone...and we fear loners...don't do anything weird or out of character and above all make sense all the time.

Stay coherent. Don't fall apart.

Keep it together keep it together keep it together

Lately I've been thinking that we should actually be much more afraid...that we aren't afraid enough...that we should terrorize our own hearts with the idea that our petty, buzzing anxieties about misplaced backpacks and people we don't know have been distracting us from that real fear, that absolute horror that is the wilderness of our own un-unified, schizophrenic hearts.

I've been thinking that it is our human task to embrace that heavy boulder and roll it up the hill only to watch it roll back down, narrowly avoiding being crushed by the weight of it, and do it again, over and over, until we can see the terrible wild and say something, and then keep doing it. Until our pretend world of coherent images and mainstream narratives dissolves around us and all that is left is the beating pulse of blood in our ears and the throbbing of our measly human genitals. We should be afraid of living our brief blink of a life on this planet under the thin veil of a made-up convention rather than blowing that fiction up and telling the scary, messy, complicated truth in the harmonious polyphony and dissonant cacophony of voices that shoots out like fire from each singular, starving mouth.

TWO

TWO

We two do not look alike, but we are classified as the same because of the way we sound. The sound of our speech is all that we are.

CAKE

CAKE

CAKE

CAKE

I like this piece of cake.

I'm not sure if I will like the other pieces.

How can I assume they all taste the same?

I must taste every piece before recommending that my friend have some.

CAKE

CAKE

CAKE

CAKE

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THREE

THREE

THREE

Plain white is blank, a clean space, a beginning, freedom, expansiveness.

Plain white is emptiness, a vacuum, sucking sound, everything pulled into its vast space.

Plain white flattens every object into surfaces in space.

Plain white is the pornography inside my eyelids, it's the reflective surface onto which I project this blue movie in my mind's eye.

FOUR

FOUR

FOUR

FOUR

We're taught to think of sex as an object of desire and so the satisfaction of that desire as something you have to 'get.' But in reality, sex is nothing like an iPad.

Sex isn't an iPad in exactly the same way that being alive isn't a substance. There is no essence of life that fills your body but which is missing from the that of a corpse. Everyone used to think that there was, that there was something you could distill out of blood or fraction off of breath, and that the presence of this substance in medicines was what lent them their power to cure. Now of course, we know that life is not an essence you could isolate into a product, but instead that it's a process.

Same with sex. Fucking is change.

Sex is the chance to remake yourself on the anvil of nature. To remake yourself in whatever shape pleases you. It's our opportunity to unlearn the lessons we didn't know we were receiving. Every orgasm is a hammer blow, and beneath the sparks you are malleable. The vulnerability of being naked with another person does not come from being close to harm but from being close to freedom.

FIVE

FIVE

FIVE

FIVE

FIVE

You feel so far away. I ache for your body and over the phone I suggest we have a baby. Knee-jerk attempts at intimacy. What do I even really want? Forgive my aggressive fumbles toward your impossible arms. You feel so far away. And I haven't told you nearly everything.

SIX

SIX

SIX

SIX

SIX

SIX

Bend over.

You are a book I wrote that is all spines and no pages.

Bend back.

SEVEN

SEVEN

SEVEN

SEVEN

SEVEN

SEVEN

SEVEN

The womb is a fictional place inside the body.
We are all born of this fiction.
Our birth is the confluence of language and sex
As a result of a human desire to transcribe on ourselves
The story of our past and future.

The word in language is half someone else's.

Like a newborn.

*(In the following section please speak both Q and A lines. Please say "Q" and "A" as well – not "Question" or "Answer.")

Q: Why is the pool so cold?

A: Because of the sun.

Q: What are you up to in your spare time right now?

A: Getting late.

Q: Getting laid?

A: Yes, I am.

Q: What is your favorite letter of the alphabet?

A: U but upside-down. I also like O because it's the same coming and going. I was out late last night.

Q: What did you do?

A: I went to a club called "Wiggle Room"

Q: I don't like going out to clubs.

A: Why not?

Q: I always feel so alone.

A: Oh, maybe you're going for the wrong reasons?

Q: Why do you go anywhere?

A: When I need a loan I go to the bank.

Q: Tell me about how you eat when you're alone?

A: I bought \$15 worth of fruit and ate it all within 5 minutes.

Q: How old does an object have to be to be considered "Timeless"?

A: It depends what it looks like. If it's a rock it's already timeless because you can't tell how old it is by looking at it. If it's a woman, she's in her 20's, but she looks like a "beautiful woman."

Q: How long are you?

A: About 20 minutes, on average.

Q: How do you make nothing?

A: (sexy sounds, moaning, sighing) Ahhh...(sigh) oooh... yes...hmmm mmmm... (this goes on for a while and gets more and more intense, then comes to a climax)

Q: Sometimes I feel like a bunch of curtains...

A: Then open them up!

Q: What are computers?

A: New drums

Q: What is a drum?

A: Language

Q: What is nice?

A: Ice

Q: What does every word mean?

A: Specific space and time + distance

Q: What is "Q"?

A: An old drawing of a feeling

Q: What is "!" ?

A: A feeling

Q: How do we know it's real?

A: It feels real

Q: What if fake feels real?

A: Then it's real

Q: What color is the sound of your name?

A: Peach

Q: What comes next?

A: A

Q: Can you think of a thing that itself is a symbol, too?

A: A

Q: Do you know anyone whose name is just one letter?

A: I

Q: If your first name was only one letter which letter would it be?

A: I

Q: Have you ever seen an airplane write a word in the sky?

A: They let me fly one once. I wrote my name huge.

Q: What was your name then?

A: Cloud. I spelled it wrong. It looked like cloud