

September 2017

## The body of Love

The thinnest thread still holds you against my heart  
like Lord Buddha's finger connected to the pillars of the temple  
in a labyrinthine crisscross that reminds the faithful  
Attachment is what imprisons the body  
this echo dimension where effects are taken for causes  
and the pounding chest hurts most of the time.

The thinnest thread holds you against me still riding  
through the streets of Hà Nội at night burning  
red lights lanes and other rules:  
what is desire but this fiery ember making us believe  
we're not alone and the road leads to Nirvana,  
pure suspension where the body rotates inside  
itself in another's grasp moving higher?

Riding through the streets of Hà Nội by the lake  
you touched my hands around your chest ever so gently  
your precious skin striking deep chords  
inside the length of our bodies matched perfectly:  
I felt your crystal hanging on top of your heart  
chakra radiating and prayed that all angels guide you  
safely home for ever and ever,  
even when your folly infuriates the pantheon of gods  
seeking forgetfulness over and over again  
(is eternity this endless beating?)  
the great river that washes over I

dissolving us back into wholeness and new beginnings.

And now

(counting time zones on my fingers)

back home to my cat and books

to the bluest skies in Lisboa

to my endeavors sustained by the community of Love,

I seek to understand the explosion that brought us together

a sparkle of familiarity lightening up a faint smile

on our first glance going up and down the spiral stairs

at the hostel a few hours later the same magnetic pull

bringing you back into the living room

to chaperon me through the clubs at the Old Quarter

I wanted to dance and you (aka, DJ AC) played for me

in a cryptic conversation, flying over the room

as you drank two balloons.

I saw it all in those first moments, your pain and glory,

in a vision that spelled Danger, the words ringing up loud

in my head Don't fall in love with this man, but it was too late

your body became transparent your sorrow showing my own—

— our fear of not being seen.

Strangely enough, though in more obvious ways repeating

the compulsion towards intensity and failure,

I did not judge you but kept my head under my heart

admiring your beauty

I felt proud of myself for going upstairs to my own bed

on the first night, caught up in fretful dreams

under the whizzing AC, too cold as always.  
But the following day we both chose to risk a closer bonding  
and ended up circling the lake  
past Ho Chi Minh's Mausoleum, the Botanical Garden  
till we stopped for a smoke in a half-empty playground  
where an old Chinese was doing Tai Chi and children played  
in the background like smaller shadows, I talked about my hair  
how proud I feel to watch it grow after having been taken for a boy  
when I was younger and my parents' common sense clipped it short,  
you said I love your hair. I felt beautiful and strong:  
you kissed me avidly, your tongue wrestling inside my mouth  
I leaned back on the bench you gasped let's find a bed,  
and we drove all the way to the bright lobby of a hotel  
where I felt like a whore when the Vietnamese at the reception  
refused us admittance, which turned out to be a translation mistake.  
The next morning the English speaking manager shook hands with us  
when we were getting on the motorbike, helmets on,  
and told you to drop by We go for a beer and talk.

And we both know the rest of the story our bodies turning  
in the twilight under a chandelier that looked like a flowered skid  
on a bed that was too hard hands moving inside the skin  
into another realm where we are each other  
again rehearsing the struggle of lust and anger,  
fusion and fright,  
you said I love you.  
We met the challenge in different ways,  
I was in a foreign land that you've chosen to call home  
for the last few months building networks and favors

amongst a younger crowd that looks up to you as role model:  
I never want to grow old, meaning it, for all I can see.  
So you chose to play hide and seek, refusing to acknowledge  
all that was moving, leaving me the work of figuring it out,  
— tarnished mirror to dive into,  
Andy (renaming yourself was an easy trick to ward off intruders).

Until the night I put on my new blue dress and ended up in your bed  
behind the green curtain (not door, accidentally) making love  
in the packed dormitory feeling ever so close  
as you read my every wish and brought me to your heart  
when I silently asked for shelter: One aura roaring  
inside One body, vibrant cluster, all bonds cut loose,  
and perhaps I moaned too loud calling the tactful cough next bed,  
till the monsoon broke loose and the waters drummed  
Hà Nội cut by lightening that burst through the walls  
we rock in this lullaby  
and dizzy decide to go outside for a cigarette  
that I somehow manage to roll (but not smoke, hélas!) in all that wetness  
you touch me and we go on making love on the balcony  
under the thunder facing the buildings where for sure  
someone was having fun watching our rhythmical thrusts  
and distorted faces under the city lamps at dawn.

By then I had given up all pretense of control  
and enjoyed the warmth of your semen inside me  
on top of your body stretched over the broken pouffe,  
you worked next day starting to plan your drama classes  
so you left me to enjoy a cigarette and give room to a child:

extra dimension Light vortex  
whispering soft songs.

On and off you struggled away from the pull  
till the last evening fear took you, on the hostel rooftop  
you cut me off while drinking  
(happy hours give birth to crisis),  
my body recoiled and sight guided the path  
to the instant of mutual presence when you briefly held my eyes  
(The Medusa stares men into fear, freezing flux)  
You seem so sure of yourself! I have been writing, I replied.  
You gave me your sweet sad smile and said something unbelievable  
You know, I cannot go with you to Lisbon now because...  
and the reason was lost behind the mere fact that you ever considered  
such chance, my dear.

Parting is not a sweet sorrow, as Shakespeare said  
writing about Time and Love, what else?  
Parting splits the body in such terrible ways  
that you want to shut the heart to numb all feeling  
and write in red a poster reading  
"Wealth is in the mind not the heart,  
and it may build bridges... But it takes courage to cross them.  
AC. Hanoi 2017."

The mind does not heal the divide  
we both know this to be true,  
for it is the Heart that joins the six directions.

The easiest way out is betrayal; we talked about it that night

while having dinner at your favorite local Vietnamese restaurant,  
screened off from the busy street by the sprawling tree.  
I asked to take your portrait and you denied once more  
so when you went to the counter I photographed  
the empty plastic chair framed by the geometrical lines of the balcony,  
your refuge in Hà Nội, amidst the bustle of the city, the synapses  
tangled by excess, up and down, the mask moving swiftly  
over the surface of things touching people  
ever so lightly, Never get too close  
freeze time by sheer will, pretend not to know,  
a hole in your right foot, no strings attached,  
playing Peter Pan, AC,

you were my darkest mirror amidst the beloved  
who crossed my path, during this long journey:  
I saw the shape of pain blankly;  
I saw the face of self-dislike  
whisky on the rocks first thing in the morning kind of stuff;  
I saw meaning is the subtlest movement to which  
One must pay attention  
in order to Be  
or act on preconceptions;  
I saw Self (useless pronouns).

This love letter celebrates  
the gift of our encounter  
healing  
I share in gratitude  
— Meeting you was life changing

your words during our only chat,  
you choose silence to this shattering intimacy  
the broken heart let loose,  
I take the privilege of the Word,  
knowing that time wears feelings off  
life moves you abundant

All is just perfect, Andrew,

We are our own gifts

Mirror—  
in awareness  
at service, blessed be  
the body of Love.  
Sat Nam!

Yours, Diana.

*Post Scriptum* : Amo-te