

Litong,

Do you remember the second time we ever met, I told you I would write you a very long letter? You probably don't remember, but I remember it very clearly. To be honest I have attempted to write this letter many times, but the right words never really came to me. I guess there's something about you that's hard to capture on a page. When I think of you, the picture isn't so simple. You aren't someone who is perfect, far from it. But the shattering of my heart left jagged shards of glass all over my room; millions of small reminders of our time together that cut deep into my feet. Do you remember the temperature of the crisp warm water when we walked in that shallow beach in Puerto Rico? The scent of wind in your hair when we first strolled across the Brooklyn bridge the night we met? The sound of the soft music playing when we drove across the scorched red desert in Las Vegas? I remember it all, but the most vivid one of all was perhaps the first day we met. I was late, and I will finally admit to you that I did not have a broker meeting that day. I dressed up for you and only for you. I still remember what you ordered that day, it was Salmon with an artistically shaped avocado salad; I got a pasta. We talked about nothing special that day, but after that short brief dinner, perhaps I already started to savor the aftertaste of our future memories. It was chilly that day, cold enough to end the night early, but we talked and somehow made it from Manhattan all the way to Brooklyn. At one point I remember we had our gazes fixed on the New York skyline, and you subtly leaned into me. The strong wind blew your hair into my face, obscuring the view. That was the first of many times that I'd feel the warmth of your head rest on my arm. A feeling I would come to call home.

The next time we met, it rained. I confess I secretly hoped it would, imagining us sharing an umbrella. Unfortunately, you had yours, and mine wasn't big enough for us both. I took you to my old street, where we bought Soju – Grape and Yakult flavored. At my old building, the usually stunning view was obscured by the weather, so we headed to my place, where you'd step foot for the first time. It would later become our shared home. I'm sure you remember the rest of the night, but eventually I had told you in a spur of passion that I would write this letter for you. I told you that I had a lot to say in just two days of meeting you. I secretly woke up that night after you had fallen asleep to write. I remember the dim light of my monitor illuminating the room and you peacefully sleeping behind me. I opened a blank page and stared blankly at the cursor. Nothing came out. I realized then, at that exact moment, that our story would be a long one. Our story could not be written then because it had just begun.

For a long time, I think you convinced yourself that we were nothing serious. Afterall, your time in the US had an expiration date. Not to mention the fact that you had a boyfriend back in China. I was also not exactly in the seat of the victim as I had a girlfriend back at my Alma Mater at the time as well. We were two people just enjoying ourselves, but slowly you made your way deeper and deeper into the recesses of my heart. In fact, I remember that I had written a list of reasons why I liked you: perhaps to justify why I had been acting like such an asshole to my ex.

- You are happy: I loved that every day I spent with you was a happy one. When I saw you every day without fail, I would smile, you would smile, and we would "hi hi." Such a small pleasure went such a long way. Even today when I open the door and am greeted by the empty apartment, I long for your voice.
- You make me a better person: My mom to this day still wonders how you got me to learn to drive, after all, she had been trying for so many years. Despite my complaints, I love that you always make me work harder to be better and to improve myself. Without you I truly wouldn't be the person I am today.
- You are logical and open minded: Despite your lack of STEM skills, you are a very reasonable person. This isn't very romantic, but I really liked this about you. We could talk or argue, and you

were almost always reasonable. You were open to new ideas and shared some of your unique perspectives with me too.

This list isn't at all exhaustive, but it seems these were the main points I had written in my notes app when weighting the pros and cons between you and my ex. Reading this list back now, I was stupid to even question whether I should have chosen you.

I know I've told you this before, but I want to tell the story to you again. In *The Little Prince*, the prince asks a fox who he had tamed, "What was the point of it all? Why did you let me tame you if you were going to leave?" Or perhaps said better by Dickens in *Our Mutual Friend*, "Is it better to have had something and lost it, or to have never had it at all?" The fox says to the prince, "The point is that when I run through the golden fields of wheat, I will think of your hair and remember you." Litong, you've left hundreds of fields of wheat for me. Everywhere I look, I will remember you, and I will think to myself, "I wonder how she is doing?" And I will smile because I know that somewhere, maybe across the globe, you are smiling too. You asked me many times "让后呢?" You wanted to know what happens next. Are we to never talk again? I will tell you my answer now.

Despite priding myself in being scientific, I cannot help but believe in some level of fate in the universe. That's why I love the story of quantum entangled particles that came from a random supernova billions of years ago in some random corner of the galaxy. Part of me, no, a large part of me believes in fate. I am sure that if we are meant to be, then one day we will end up in the same place. Maybe you will have a boyfriend at the time, or maybe I might even be married. Maybe you might accidentally hit me with your car, maybe we will just bump into each other in a grocery store, maybe we do end up married, or maybe we just become good friends. Either way, I do not think that our story ends here, as I cannot find a good way to end this letter. Just like a year ago, I am sure that our story is still very long and will continue to be very long.

There will never be a time when my floor is fully clear of the shards of memory from our time together. You will always have a place in my heart as you are now a piece of me. I hope I am a piece of you too, and that we will carry each other through this weird journey of life so that one day we may meet again and finish writing our story.

I love you.

Your 多多,

Justin L. Wang

P.S. I can say with certainty that the happiness I've ever been is with you. I am a happy person, so it is without doubt that one day in the future I will be with you again. Please live your life to the happiness while I am gone, so that we may one day share all the stories with one another, like family that is reunited after a long journey.