

Waves

Echoes in The Sea

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Prologue

A wave is a disturbance or oscillation that transfers energy from one point to another. If we are talking about the building blocks of reality, these pieces of energy can behave like particles or waves depending on the observer.

But the waves or echoes you are about to read, dear reader, cannot be rationalized. There is no math to explain them. The only way to understand them is by experiencing them.

This is a meta-anthology or an attempt, if you will.

Introduction

elu hira?

Aeon

his words meant to land softly, without a splash.

nua ala

Maga

she replied

hira lye mir sel

Aeon

he spoke, eyes fixed on the frame where time once lived

hira, nua ala

Maga

There was a stammer in her breath, but the words stood firm once they left her lips.

I Still Do

It was late afternoon. The sun hesitated. Light lingered in the room like it didn't want to leave.

My mother lay in bed, agonizing.

And for a brief moment—I was at peace.

How things quickly fall apart

Maga

The thought echoed inside her, or maybe inside me. I still don't know.

Her breathing changed. Sharp. Uneven.

The end announced itself without ceremony.

She lifted her hand. A small gesture. I understood.

I stepped closer.

You are the reason why I was never happy with my life

Mother

Each word clawed its way out—starved for air, half-formed, but determined.

That was it.

It wasn't a storm.

No.

Calling it the worst would still miss the point.

No.

This was a woman who had never been happy with her life. Not once. Not truly.

Every decision she made had already been made for her.
She never told me she loved me. She hit me. Again and again. For as long as I can remember.
Even now, I don't understand why she had children at all.
She never loved my father. She drove him out of the paper-thin house we pretended was a home.

But none of that mattered then.
Not in that room. Not in that moment.
Because something else surfaced— quiet, undeniable.
I realized I had to love her.
Not because she deserved it. Not because she earned it.
But because it was the only thing left that was mine to choose.

All the pain. All the struggle. All the damage.
It fell away, not erased— but irrelevant.
They say it's rare to find someone you can be yourself with.

All broken, but I was myself
Maga

A truth worn beneath the skin, steady, unarguable.

I loved her.
I still do.

Who Deserves Better

Mom... why are you and Dad getting a divorce?

Maga

Her voice was a thin thread of innocence, trembling, still trying to protect the person she loved.

What do you mean why? Are you stupid?

Mom

She shouted, already knowing the fault was not mine.

It's all your fault. Your dad is leaving me because of you.

Mom

Her words carried a hatred too large for a child, even as she herself was the one being abandoned.

His eyes gave it away. The pity. The quiet horror.

He was probably wondering how I had managed to survive this long.

Is it over already?

Maga

I thought, glancing at the clock.

When did your mother say that?

Therapist

Careful. Measured.

I think I was nine.

Maga

Is there anything else?

Therapist

He already knew there was.

There is always a moment.

One moment.

One question.

You think you can avoid it. Sidestep it. Talk around it.

I tried. For years, I tried.

But now I was here.

No more running.

No more pretending.

Maga... is there anything else?

Therapist

He asked again, certain we had arrived. Certain I was ready.

Yes.
Maga

I said it aloud.

There.
I was in it.
The moment I had been avoiding.
The words burned on my tongue— the same ones my mother once gave me.
Time stopped.
The pain did not.
It stretched on, endless, as if the universe itself had forgotten how to move forward.

I looked at him.
And for a brief moment, I let myself fall backward into memory.

You know what I realized?
Mom

She gathered herself, each word heavy with grief.

You are the accident for people who deserve better.
Mom

She spoke as if tearing herself apart with every syllable.

Do you know what happens when two black holes collide?
The tearing isn't gentle. It isn't clean.
It's violent— so violent the ripples tear across the fabric of the cosmos, breaking everything they touch.
But not those words.
Not even close.

Those words did not break.
They lodged themselves inside me— immovable, eternal.

Honey, how was therapy today?
Husband

He asked, hope fragile but real.

I kissed him hello.
And somehow, through his eyes, I finally understood.
Words I had once read, but never believed, made sense.

*The less forgivable the act, the more must be forgiven. The less lovable
the person is, the more you must find the means to love them.*

I forgave her.
I forgave myself.
I love you, Mom.
Always.

Take My Picture

*How much am I good for you if you won't believe?
How much can one heart do as the second leaves?*

Sin Cos Tan — Sooner Than Now

The music drifted through the air, deliberate and soft, like the unseen hand guiding a photographer's lens.

I let the sound settle into me, sliding beneath my skin, whispering against bone.

I didn't know the band. Not their faces. Not their story.

But the words fit.

Like makeup stretched over my body.

Modeling was never mine.

It was assigned.

I was always hungry.

Always reaching.

But Mother— for once— that was enough.

Turn your head right

Photographer

The words landed with the quiet authority of a verdict.

*Today's session was good. Please, smile more. You embarrass me in
front of John.*

Mother

Her voice carried disapproval, stitched into the low hum of the engine.

Yes, Mom.

Maga

The words left my mouth already hollow, as if language itself had given up on me.

For as long as I can remember, modeling had been my life.

Not a choice.

Friends? I had them.

Faces that smiled wide for cameras. Voices polished smooth as glass.

But truth?

Truth doesn't last long in a world where reflection matters more than reality.

Yes, Mom.

Maga

The phrase released again, untethered from meaning.

Boyfriends? Sure.

They loved the skin. The smile. The body shaped by a thousand flashes.

Not me.

Sometimes I caught my reflection— really looked— and wondered who that stranger was, trapped behind glass.

Yes, Mom.

Maga

Barely a breath now. A thread unraveling.

Her phone rang.

Sharp. Shrill.

It cut through the silence like a blade.

Father.

The only person who had ever truly loved me. And even that hadn't been enough.

Not against her gravity.

They were fighting again. Of course they were.

Years of it. The same war, replayed.

I was almost nineteen. Old enough to see the cracks were not cracks anymore— they were fault lines.

This time, I thought, it might finally be over.

*You—WHAT? Daniel, what are you saying? Divorce? NO. Daniel. I
won't talk about this. This is bullshit.*

Mother

Her words came out sharp, furious, even as she already knew the war was lost.

The call ended.

She stared at the road ahead.

Then snapped.

Words flew— senseless, cutting, like broken glass.

He had done it. He had left.

A strange pride bloomed inside me. At least one of us had escaped.

Mother was never a good driver.

A cliché, really.

And the rage twisting through her wasn't helping.

The world lurched.

Shifted.

I blinked.
The ringing in my ears was alive.

The car stopped— but not because we chose it to.
Twisted metal. Silence.
I turned my head.
Blood.

And for the first time in my life, I saw her cry.

*Did you know your grandma was never satisfied with my life decisions?
Everything I did was never enough for her?*

Mother

Her words slipped out between ragged breaths, caught between pain and release.

I hated her all my life.

Mother

The sentence carried the fragile weight of something final.

I remembered.
No one had ever been enough for Grandma.
Not for her.
Not for anyone.

I looked around. The wreckage. The bent metal. The bleeding woman beside me.
We would survive this.
Somehow.

But as I looked at my mother— small, broken, reduced to something I had never
seen before—
a thought formed, clear and steady, inside my bruised mind.

The cycle has to end.
And it will end with me.

Would you forgive me?
Mother

She cried, exposed, unguarded.

You have done nothing wrong, Mom.
Maga

My voice was soft. Calm. Carrying the weight of truth—and the quiet mercy of forgiveness.

Her Wedding

You're going to make this about yourself, Mom, right?

Maga

She meant to keep the thought caged. It slipped out anyway.

Pardon me, love?

Fiancé

His voice hovered between confusion and concern.

Oh—sorry. I thought I was still in my head.

Maga

She gathered herself carefully.

Yeah, but... what was that?

Fiancé

Still searching.

You know. My mom is going to make my wedding about her.

Maga

A soft surrender.

Ah, love... I'm sure she means well.

Fiancé

He said it gently, as if he had already learned how to live beside the truth.

How do you do it?

Maga

The question carried admiration—and envy.

Do what?

Fiancé

How do you always see the good in people?

Maga

Half a question. Half a confession.

I don't know. Things are complicated, I guess.

Fiancé

He sounded unsure even of himself.

It's hard for me to believe in evil.

Fiancé

A small smile. Unarmored.

There you are! Your mother is looking for you everywhere.

Wedding Planner

Barely holding it together.

Here. We. Go.

Maga

She felt the weight settle on her shoulders.

Why aren't the Johnsons at table nine?

Mother

Judgment sharpened into command.

Because—

Wedding Planner

She barely began.

Doesn't matter. Make it happen.

Mother

*And while you're at it, I need to move two tables. The Wayans and the
Jeffersons are very important. Influential families.*

Mother

Why are you so calm?

Mother

Sigh. Never mind.

Mother

I can't believe how much work I had to do to make this wedding even happen.

Mother

Her voice slipped easily into monologue.

Shut up.

Maga

Thought.

Honestly, if it weren't for me, there wouldn't be a wedding worth attending.

Mother

Shut up.

Maga

I picked the venue. I chose the menu. Let's be honest—my daughter has no real taste. And don't get me started on the guest list.

Mother

Shut up.

Maga

My friends deserved to be here. Half these people came because of me.

Not her.

Mother

Shut up.

Maga

*Everyone kept telling me how stunning everything looked, how beautiful
the arrangements were, how they could feel the love— as if I hadn't
orchestrated every detail.*

Mother

Shut up.

Maga

I basically saved her from embarrassment.

Mother

Shut up.

Maga

*Her dress? My choice. Her makeup? Thank God I intervened. She
would've looked like a washed-out little girl without me.*

Mother

Shut up.
Maga

This day— let's be honest— is as much about me as it is about her.
Maybe more.

It's my legacy walking down that aisle. Everyone saw it. Everyone knew it. They were applauding me too— whether they admitted it or not. *When she walked down the aisle, all I could think was: Look at what I created. Look at the masterpiece I made.*

This day— let's be honest— is as much about me as it is about her.
Maybe more.

It's my legacy walking down that aisle. Everyone saw it. Everyone knew it. They were applauding me too— whether they admitted it or not.
Mother

The air felt thin. Like it might finally run out.

Shut up.
Maga

Oh dear Lord in Heaven! Damian—that tie, no!
Mother

She shouted.

No. Shut up. SHUT UP. SHUT THE FUCK UP, MOM!
Maga

The storm broke. There was no holding it anymore.

*This is my goddamn wedding. This is my fucking husband. Get it
through your head!*

Maga

Sigh. Whatever. I have other important things to attend to.

Mother

Dismissive. Unmoved.

...

Maga

She swallowed what was left. Some battles are lost before they're spoken.

Come here, love.

Fiancé

Steady. Present.

I love you, Damian. I really do.

Maga

She said it like a prayer— not asking, but anchoring.

Oh Sweety, That's Wrong

The old lady reached into her bag and finally found what she was looking for.
A piece of candy.
She unwrapped it slowly, deliberately, as if the act itself mattered.

Here.
Old Lady
said simply

Maga accepted it, surprised by the tenderness of the gesture. It tasted like childhood.
Sugar and time.

You see, Sweety. . .
Old Lady
paused, choosing her words with care

Sometimes the question isn't why you don't want what others want.
Old Lady
...

Sometimes the question is who taught you what wanting looks like.
Old Lady
...

Maga felt something shift—not click, not resolve—just tilt.
The old lady leaned back against the bench, eyes following a child chasing pigeons
across the grass.

We don't grow up free.

Old Lady

said quietly

We grow up trained.

Old Lady

...

Maga swallowed.

Love, ambition, desire... they don't arrive unfiltered.

Old Lady

...

They pass through hands first.

Old Lady

...

And some hands...

Old Lady

paused

hold too tight.

Old Lady

...

The words didn't accuse.

They didn't absolve.

They simply *were*.

Maga stared ahead, watching a couple argue softly near the fountain. The woman gestured wildly. The man folded into himself.

So what if I don't know what I want?

Maga

asked

What if I never do?

Maga

...

The old lady smiled—not sadly, not kindly—but knowingly.

Then maybe wanting isn't your work.

Old Lady

...

Maybe listening is.

Old Lady

...

A breeze passed through the park, scattering leaves, lifting hair, erasing the outlines of the moment.

Maga blinked.

The bench beside her was empty.

No old lady.

No candy wrapper.

Only the faint warmth where someone had been sitting.

She looked down at her hands.

The candy was gone.

Had it ever been there?

Children still laughed. Lovers still clung. The world resumed its careless choreography.

But something lingered.

Not an answer.

A permission.

Maga stood, brushing invisible crumbs from her palms.

As she walked away, one thought followed her—not loud, not demanding—but persistent enough to matter:

What if nothing is wrong with me?

And somewhere, beneath that thought, quieter still:

What if it never was?

A Cigarette After Sex

The man didn't answer right away.
He inhaled—not theatrically, not as a performance—but as if he needed air before truth. His eyes never left the canvas.

It feels like the moment after pretending you're fine

Man in the back

said at last

When no one's watching anymore

Man in the back

...

Something in Maga tightened.
Not pain. Recognition.

Yes

Maga

answered too quickly

Silence settled between them, not awkward, not empty. The kind that only exists when two people stand at the same edge without needing to name it. Around them, laughter bloomed and burst. Glasses clinked. Applause erupted somewhere near the front of the gallery. Someone was congratulating someone else for being seen.

The man finally turned to her.

He wasn't remarkable. Not handsome in the way magazines trained people to notice. Not impressive. Just... present. As if he hadn't arrived to be validated.

It doesn't ask for sympathy
Man in the back
continued

That's what makes it uncomfortable
Man in the back
...

It doesn't beg to be saved
Man in the back
...

Maga let out a breath she hadn't known she was holding.

I didn't want it to be forgiven
Maga
said

I wanted it to be honest
Maga
...

He nodded.
Once.
A small gesture, but it carried weight.

Most people want art to absolve them
Man in the back
...

This one doesn't
Man in the back
...

They stood there a moment longer, side by side, watching the painted smoke curl upward into nothing.
Then the man stepped back.

Thank you
Man in the back
said simply

No exchange of names.
No promise.
No attempt to turn the moment into something it wasn't.
He disappeared into the crowd, absorbed by the noise, leaving behind only the echo of being understood without being claimed.
Maga stayed where she was.
For the first time that night, she didn't feel invisible.
Nor exposed.
Just... intact.
Later, when the gallery emptied and the lights dimmed, she stepped outside alone.
The night air was cool, forgiving. The city hummed with lives intersecting and diverging without ceremony.
She leaned against the brick wall and reached into her coat pocket.
A cigarette.
She turned it between her fingers, feeling its fragility. The promise. The lie.
Maga smiled.
And then—
She put it back.
Not because she was healed.
Not because she was stronger.
But because, tonight, she didn't need to prove she existed by burning.
She walked home with the quiet certainty that some acts of survival don't look like victory.
They look like restraint.
And sometimes, that's enough.

The Guru

Maga felt something loosen.
Not relief. Not peace.
Permission.

She had spent her life choosing. Or believing she was.
Choosing survival. Choosing silence. Choosing the least dangerous exit in a room
full of knives.
Every choice had cost her something. Every decision carved away a little more skin.

But if I don't choose...

Maga

her voice barely existed

If I don't run, don't fight, don't submit... what happens to me?

Maga

...

The Guru smiled—not kindly, not cruelly. Precisely.

*Then you discover who remains when fear no longer negotiates on your
behalf*

The Guru

said

The words landed softly, like ash. They did not burn.

That night, she dreamed.
No monsters. No memories.
Only rain.

She stood naked beneath it, not ashamed, not exposed. The water struck her skin without judgment. Each drop erased a demand. A name. A role she had been forced to play.
She did not ask the rain to stop. She did not ask it to stay.
She let it be.

In the morning, something had shifted.
Not healed. Not resolved.
But quieter.

The retreat ended. As retreats always do. People hugged. Exchanged promises they would forget. Packed enlightenment into suitcases too small to hold it.
Maga left without ceremony.

She did not become holy. She did not become pure. She did not forgive the world.

But she stopped searching for shelter in the wrong places.
Not in bodies. Not in titles. Not in being wanted.

For the first time, she understood something simple and terrifying:
She had survived not because she was broken, but because she had adapted to an impossible terrain.

And adaptation, she realized, is not weakness.
It is intelligence under siege.

Maga walked back into her life without answers, without vows, without illusions.
But now, when the storm came—and it still did— she no longer mistook endurance for love.
She stood.
She breathed.
And sometimes, just sometimes,

she let the rain touch her without asking it to mean anything at all.

Epilogue

I don't say that to diminish it.
On the contrary.

If nothing were fleeting, nothing would matter. If every wound healed by default, there would be no courage in bleeding. If every goodbye were reversible, no hello would ever feel brave.

Mortality is not the flaw in the design.
It is the design.

I have watched beings curse their last breath and beg for more time. I have watched others walk toward death with a calm so complete it frightened even me. The difference was never strength. Never wisdom.
It was meaning.

Those who lived as if time mattered did not fear its end.
Those who wasted it demanded eternity as compensation.

I have been both.

There were eras when I hid from loss, when I believed detachment was enlightenment. I told myself I was above longing, above grief, above the smallness of human ache.
I was wrong.

Detachment is not transcendence.
It is anesthesia.

You numb yourself long enough and even wonder disappears. You stop asking ques-

tions not because you found answers, but because nothing surprises you anymore.
That is the true death.

So if you are reading this from within the brief flicker of a human life, listen carefully:

Do not envy the immortal.
Do not pray for endless time.
Do not curse the fragility of your days.

Your fear is the proof that something matters.
Your grief is the echo of love having existed.
Your anger means you still believe the world can be better.

Even your mistakes are holy.
They mean you were present when the choice was made.

I would trade centuries for one unrepeatable moment.
One imperfect decision.
One love that does not last long enough.

Because eternity explains everything.
And explanation is the enemy of wonder.

So go.
Live quickly.
Live clumsily.
Forgive badly.
Love without guarantees.

And when the end comes—and it will—do not greet it as a thief.
Greet it as the quiet proof that your life was finite enough to matter.

*Nothing eternal can teach you this.
Only something that ends.*