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the letter

writing session 1:

To 손송이 (~Son Songyi):

“first of all”

This is being written at 4:00AM. You probably shouldn't read this. Hahahah!

Hmmm, I was just going through my memory of people that I, at the time, desired / should have spent more time with, you know, if I weren't busy doing whatever I desired at the time.

Thus enters the peculiar Songyi. Yay!

Actually, I've been meaning to write, message, or send some form of communication for a long time. This is me being late as usual. I finally got my laptop (and backpack) back after living 6 months without it and finally got a little bit of time to sit, and talk to whoever I think of.

Warning: this entire letter may be of a bit of a surprise to you, but this is how I normally communicate and talk. I don't use Facebook, though I'm now using the separate Messenger app on my [smart]phone. I usually only talk to people face-to-face, one-on-one. Maybe it's the introvert dilemma. Heh. However, when I do find reason, my communication can become quite long-winded, like this letter.

First of all, I'm a bit sorry that our communication plummeted after meeting in Seoul a few times (bombarding your workplace at gallery /art space (? , or was it K'art?), the tea cafe, and the restaurant). I'm guessing I was just in my goal-oriented mindset, which at that time and place was to figure out whether South Korea was a viable place to live. Apparently it wasn't, as I chose Taiwan, which I already had quite set in my heart anyway.

I think not physically being in South Korea destroyed the communication any chance of further communication, as I normally only talk to people nearby, and often fail to communicate using telephone technology. It's a strange personal problem of mine that has screwed up relationships in my past too. If not communicating afterward hurt in any way, again, I'm quite sorry. I'm quite aloof to close social relations.

Usually my friends notice gestures and feelings for me, haha.

Hmm, maybe I should read the e-mails first? Well, I'll just throw out what's on my mind first, then read the old e-mails:

straight to talking!

Of that trip through Asia, I actually only met two girls that I would could firmly say that I was attracted to: someone else and you. I didn't react to either, for the aforementioned reason: my mind had it's own goals, perhaps a Western mind set, failing to go with the flow of daily or hourly life. Conversely, I have no idea how many were attracted to me because, as I also said, I don't pay attention to those things. Hahahah. I'm terrible at this stuff.

Anyway, I just felt like writing back to people during my travels, what I thought or still think of them, what attracted (romantic or not) me to them, etc. You know, the reasons people write post-travel post-cards.

Hmmmm Songyi.

I quite remember coming very aggressive, goal-oriented, narrow-minded, insular-minded, in many ways: from worldview to aesthetic to mindfulness of others. I believe I still had my mind on new media / interactive / physical art, maybe some urban planning, and very little cultural theory, and less attention for everything written in human languages. I was a super physical traveling person, as opposed to the life of mind — ideas. You, perhaps were, the opposite. Yet, you somehow tolerated my brashness.

You asked me what I thought about some materially crafted art, I said I don't care because it wasn't interactive, not caring for the mind of the person who created it, or whatever concept it had. Actually, I still feel this way, haha! Now I almost don't care for fine art at all, and never cared for it's history. :P

Anyway let's get away from art now!

“what attracted me”

What attracted me, or, I would say, lured me, is a kind of enigmatic intelligence. Airy, thoughtful, yet flowing. **I just had to know more!** I had to see you again and again. Your mind was a puzzle for me to figure out. I wanted to be behind your mind's eye. If time and body weren't variables, I'd have desired to drink tea and talk forever until I reap everything from that little brain of yours! And it would have been fun, or funny, full of communication errors. Oh! That was another reason why I didn't bother spending more time with you (or the other girl). I often felt there were communication problems, thought your reading / writing was at a near European philosophy book level! Hahah, hearing you talk was cute.

I didn't begin reading much until I was 27(!!!). I think I'm older than you? Much older? Especially, if you were a student at that time. But when I began reading it began with Western Philosophy and continued weaving around critical theory stopping at David Harvey's human geography and condition of post-modernity, then stopping again at CUNY's environmental psychology. Clearly books no sane person should ever be reading. I read, argued, and wrote until I put whatever was on my mind into words and then I stopped communicating in human language to live again. Super unhealthy.

...But back to you...!

Perhaps you had some books in your mind when I met you, giving your enigmatic aura. Books can do that: estrange people from the world. But it suited you well.

I remember when I went home (in Virginia) I had a package that I had sent to myself from Taiwan. It included your art books. I read your part, but skimmed the rest. A good memento.

I think at that time I did want to communicate to you, but perhaps didn't have any contact information? I'm not sure if the book had your e-mail or not.

Anyhow, simply typing your name in my Gmail shows your e-mail, so I obviously didn't try too hard...

OH! Another super interesting bit about you was your Mongolia exchange(?), and your meditation(?). I probably replied that I couldn't do either / didn't have the social patience for either / depend on having many many people around me. You otherwise, were super independent, thinking, being aware of a different world it seemed. And that's awesome. I didn't quite have the time to figure out what you thought of or were thinking about, but those choices and experiences made you quite a unique person.

I absolutely remember you saying that ~"**you wouldn't mind being next to me as I was doing whatever computer stuff**". I remember that meaning a lot to me, in it's sign of affection, but perhaps even still, at the time, I was still on my goal-oriented way, and wasn't phased by it too badly. I'm guessing I still prioritized personal work, community, society, etc. over personal social relationships. Heck, I still do. I definitely pondered upon that single sentence later. Perhaps too busy at the time to really think about it. Haha, it's a bit surprising now that such a simple remark felt so powerful. Yet, that's how you spoke. Your English was strangely poetic. You thought before speaking every time. I didn't. Yet, it was super enjoyable and interesting to talk to you. I'm quite sure I simply thought, I wouldn't mind either. What did I say anyway? Nothing? Was it an email? Was it a dream? Hahahah, I have no idea. I often day-dream my desires.

EDIT: I found the quote!

If I can save some money, I'll be sitting next to you reading, not bothering you, while you are doing some computer works.

Hahaha such cute pause-filled English. Such a wall-flower! :)

Mmm, perhaps another attractive thing about you is something I like about Taiwan in general, and hostels, especially hostel staff: characteristically being able to enjoy the simple pleasures — tea, picnic, hiking, sharing, cooking, nature. You could live a simple life, as proven by the solitude of Mongolia exchange and meditation. Though I probably wouldn't want to be in solitude for long, the previous phrase and the idea of being with you in solitude seemed like a pretty good dream (at the time).

Hmmm, well, that may be all I've got for this writing session. I'll read the e-mails then write some more.

I don't know what good it is to write about something of the past. People live in the moment. It's nearly always bad to 'dwell on the past'. Anyway, I think I just needed to talk, that's all. No big deal, yo!

I feel I took a picture of you at the restaurant, on the bench, sitting against the wall, but can't find it. :(

[todo:

mention change of awareness after homeless travels, etc.

mention sorry for not replying after a rather personal tragic email]

Writing session 2

the e-mails

Hahahahaahahahhahah. These e-mails are sooooo goooooood. You *are* poetic, and **humorous**! How did I forget this black, quirky humor!?

I'll credit you like this. "someone who doesn't do anything: Rahil." Hahahahaha.

And that in turn made me reply in a copied / matched form of your poetic humor:

I'm going to eat bokguk / fugu. Farewell!

Hahaha.

Wow, nearly three years ago. Holy moly.

My grandma is having a hard time with my grandfather who is suffering Alzheimer's disease.

It's also hard time for me.. though I haven't told about it to anybody so far.

If I won't send replies soon, please understand my current state of mind.

Don't skip your meal, and smile!

Let's try not to be a complainer easily.

Wah, I totally remember your grandparents problems. I probably didn't react much (or at all!?!?) / offer as much care as I should have. And there seems to be a 4 month gap between the next communication! I remember feeling very bad about that. Hmm, my mind was probably in Taipei, or wherever I was. It's such a silly problem of mine: to not spend a few minutes to communicate. I'm guessing I didn't respond because at the time I just didn't plan to go to South Korea, and by not being in South Korea, I felt it was impossible to further the relationship, or even offer comfort. I'm a spatial person, and felt that we chose difference spaces. I should have communicated.

Also, there's SO MUCH PRETENTIOUSNESS in the first writing! I still have no idea how the person is connecting Aristotle to his/her work.

Whoa, I was kind of a mean person in my past? Or anti-intellectual? Or anti-art history / philosophy? Sounds right.

Oh right, there was a huge email you sent about your opinion on art school! I'm pretty sure I had no idea who Kierkegaard or Eric Hoffer were at the time, and just used Wikipedia to check, hahahah! Though, it was very close to the time I read a history of philosophy. Our education and minds were set on super different things: you on academics / books / history of art and philosophy whereas mine may have been on slums in India, aboriginals / farmers in Taiwan, deciphering capitalism. culture, and human geography. Anyway, once I went back to New York, I tried Parson's for a whooooo week! Hahaha. My mind was elsewhere (probably on the people on the streets of New York and the non-sense of cities), and nowhere near designing for capitalists, fine art, not-so-fine art, or anything. Travel surely changed the state of my mind, and I can never plan my mind a year ahead. Darn you institutions! Hehe.

miss you.

...miss you more!

I don't remember this? How is that possible? :/

If I can save some money, I'll be sitting next to you reading, not bothering you, while you are doing some computer works.

If you were sitting here, I probably wouldn't mind doing computer work, and I wouldn't have to pay for cafes to be near people. Problem solved!

Whoa. So I did reply to that line! Crazy.

...

See you someday.

...

My recent computer-heavy job knocked me into a slower pace of life, resulting in me reading books. I thought of you.

...

If you would stop over in South Korea, then let me know.

Thus concludes the study of contemporary relationships circa 2013–14? LOL!

Otherwise there were just very few emails over a long period of time (9–4–13 to 7/24/14). I guess that's how busy people communicate. Strange!

Hmmm, so I didn't forget too much. And I don't even have anything to say about it. It is what it is.

post-e-mails

Hmm, I guess we both proceeded with our own, busy lives. Over-thinking, over-philosophizing, exploring the limits of art, figuring out social / political problems, understanding how humans develop in overly confusing ways, and so on?

I definitely missed some of those family values often shown in Japanese films and any culturally old places in the world. I'm guessing you fared much better than I. I kept the Western mindset for oh so long, even while living in Eastern countries. So difficult to change it, live in the moment (time and place), be happy, simply, without desires, like these Taiwanese people.

reason of writing

Hmmm, actually, there wasn't much reason to write. I have no idea where this letter was going. I just wanted to talk.

Well, there is a reason, but it's totally unrelated:

I'm guessing I'm writing this after somewhat recently accidentally **breaking a heart** because I focused on other things for too long and failed to communicate, as usual, **then in turn breaking my own**. My guess is that it's quite difficult for my personality to consistently be with / communicate / spend time with more time-demanding, social-demanding, feeling, dynamic personalities.

At some point I decided to sacrifice all Western values (social development, art, design, tech, etc.) for love, and it backfired. And now I have to piece my heart *and* mind back together.

Perhaps now I'm investigating my past for past failures in communication?

Or perhaps this is the phase during a heart-break where a person seeks comfort, and without nearby shoulders, seeks digital shoulders. Yeah, this is very likely. I need a doggie bone, a shoulder, an arm, and a hand!

I don't know of your current relationship Songyi, but it is from this experience that **I sincerely wish the best of your relationships** (current and/or future). Though, I'm sure you're way way better than me at social relations, communication, keeping your identity, and so on; Flowing with the world, trying to spend time, like a responsible family member.

“Argh”

But too late now! I don't think I could handle love again for some time! Hahahaha. But I do desire a another home. Maybe I'll have to go back to an old one.

Love is so effing difficult yo! Especially because I'm more of the [stereotypical] woman of the relationship — I love more (, always unconditionally), I feel more emotion, I am more responsible, I constantly try to appreciate her mind / art / way of thinking, I use her language, I adapt to her cultural nuances, I try to help or allow her figure herself out and [help her] progress. Surely I'm doing something wrong here?
Ahhhhhhrrrrrrghhhhh.

Anyway, after a week of dense communication [with her] and a few weeks of soul-crushing heartache, I'm slowly turning back to my former, independent, somewhat-American self! I think. It's such a strange process, to go from dependent Asian mind to independent American mind. Soon off to begin again, somewhere.

Hopefully? Or maybe I'm hoping to join some old friend, as opposed to beginning with absolutely nothing. Blah, still so dependent. I don't know. Argh.

I hope all is well in Songyi's world; Doing as you wish. The world is yours!

—

26/7/2016

Rahil

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facebook.com/rahil627 (I think?)

on the roof of a co-working / co-living space in Tainan, Taiwan