The Perfect Mango

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The Convalescent

“Do not speak on, O convalescent!” thus his animals answered him; “but go out where the world awaits you like a garden. Go out to the roses and bees and dovecots. But especially to the songbirds, that you may learn from them how to sing! For singing is for the convalescent; the healthy can speak.”

I am Zarathustra it is time for me to sing. I’m not sure you will understand my song perhaps it will not reach your ears but if you listen carefully you will hear the melody of my convalescence followed by the words of my health.

My day is a mountain range. In the early morning I open my eyes to the world I spread my wings and soar high the peaks barely touching my toes. Mid-morning arrives I sense the landing time approach. I slow down and feel my feet as they hold the earth firmly beneath them. As the sun begins to droop I feel my footing falter and I slide down the slippery slope falling into the abyss. By evening I have recovered from the crash and am ready once again to climb toward the peaks and fly.

It is mid-afternoon and I am waking up my head dizzy from the intensity of my fall. The descent steep today I feel the burden of the climb on my limbs. Far away I see the healthy ones still standing tall on the peak. I am a convalescent forever recovering from the fall. At night in my dreams I try to extend the bones the ligaments the
muscles in my legs in order that someday I might be able to leap from peak to peak without falling into the abyss. High above me I see the sun a round yellow ball beckoning me. I know the bright sphere of light will call my name every time I fall as long as my will remains to conquer the mountain. Today the climb is long and awkward my body weak.

The hardest climbs deserve love stories. I have promised you a love story. Today I will sing to you while we climb side by side. If you listen to the symphony of sounds as they approach your body you will hear the most beautiful love story you have ever imagined. With every new note your feet will dance and before you have time to look up we will have reached the peak.

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It is many chapters since I first laid my hands on your body. You are my lover yours is the body that sings to me in my dreams yours are the words from which my story is created. Once we sang together. I hadn’t known you long my lover you asked me if I wanted to sing with you you pulled out your guitar together our voices separate and often out of tune we sang.

Today we sing together. It is late our bodies unaccustomed to one another the music creates a closeness we feel our bodies approach as the song holds us together. One by one we sing the songs you keep in a pile beside your guitar always the same ones the songs we are familiar with the music of the pasts we did not share. We are separate connected by songs we both sang before we knew each other. Through the songs we touch. We sing for hours the darkness dimming the first colours of the sun rising you ask if I want to follow you to your bed. I listen to the music as it fades into your question I know you are waiting for my answer I know I will follow you I am relieved that it is a question. Yes I smile. Together we
climb the steps into the rising sun our bodies heavy with sleep. No longer protected by the songs of our past we stand facing one-another the bed closed before us. Our bodies still foreign to one-another we are silent as we slowly remove our clothing leaving a few layers of protection bits of our past still clinging to our skin. Soon we will soar together morning will come we will fly next to the sun but now the darkness has not yet risen out of its cave our feet still firmly implanted in the earth we face one-another our silence full of questions.

The songs still resonating in our bodies we lie on the cold white sheet. You cover me with a blanket your hand gently caressing my face. Like all lovers we are convalescents not yet recovered from the multitude of notes singing in our bodies as we approach one another as our bodies melt into love. We are alone in the sea that surrounds us. There is no experience that can guide us our touch the only navigator. Our eyes wide open we watch the sky the metamorphosis of light and colour exploding before us. Our bodies gently reaching touching caressing we prepare for our flight to the sun.

I don't remember when we first made love. In every glance we spoke our desire in every touch we felt our bodies soar into the light with every question we could not ask we touched a thousand answers. That night our bodies met in the closest intimacy I have ever known. That morning I landed on the sun.

Today we have been lovers for many nights we have flown together we have seen the sun sometimes bright orange sometimes magenta sometimes purple. Sometimes we have walked into the depths in the middle of the afternoon sometimes I have walked alone and you have reached down with your arm and pulled me out sometimes we have slept in the abyss. Today we have been lovers under many moons our bodies no longer foreign we have allowed night to descend around us we have given in and slept our exhaustion knowing we would soon fly
again. Today I know your body intimately I know the cre-
vasses I have felt the curves the hardness the softness I have felt your skin break open beneath my fingers I have felt you sigh I have felt the urgency in your breath. Today we no longer need the songs of our past.

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*In every Now, being begins; round every Here rolls the sphere There. The center is everywhere. Bent is the path of eternity.*

Evening is approaching soon we will reach the peak the heights from which I will fall again the next time I lose my footing. My love story has distracted the pain from my ankles my body now strong with desire. Some of the larger bruises have already dispersed left behind in pockets of time along the way. Only the subtle marks remain as the signs of the fall on my body. As my feet lead me along the well-trodden path I am aware that within me lives the center that is the gateway to eternal return the center that is the secret of being. This morning before I fell I ignored the center. I covered the path to eternity with a thick dull cloth and I closed my eyes in order not to see the Now from which my center begins. Sometimes I forget.

The day is long. Often I search for the first sign of darkness. I look forward to concealing myself behind the sun’s shadow. From this position I dream and watch the world without fear of being uncovered. The one I run from cannot find me in the shadows of the darkness. You look for me in the reflection of the daylight or in the spotlight of my nightmares. You cannot see when my eyes light up the dimming night. You are the bearer of memory the culprit of my pain the one I long to throw up the one who pushes me over the edge of the precipice. This afternoon you almost caught up to me as my arm was reaching for the last branch as my feet approached the peak you stood before
me your face grimacing you laughed so hard you scared away the trees and left me dangling in mid-air. But underneath me I felt the wind she held me up and pushed me over the top she waited by my side until you grunted and walked the other way. You are not patient the detector of my weakness but your resistance is strong. Without the wind at my side you may have had the strength to overpower me. Today I may have had to sleep in the abyss. It did not happen the wind reminds me that there is a There in every Here she says there is a bend in the path below my feet that will confuse you and steer you in the wrong direction. As long as I follow the crooked path you will not find my center. You always looks for straight lines.

I am the convalescent. I wake to the sounds of the world resounding in my ears I look for health among the lines and wrinkles of my body. In my convalescence I see a direction it is not clear the path is strewn with leaves and mud and wild flowers I must walk step by step uncovering my way a little at a time. Impatience leads me to the other path that points straight ahead toward self-destruction. I have followed that path before. It is not the path of health nor the path of convalescence. It is your path. You own shares in the nightmares that cross it. It is the path of resentment. It is the path that leads nowhere. Bent is the path of eternity says Zarathustra bent is the path of love I say. The language of desire leads to the center from which the Here the There the Now and the Then begin. The language of Desire is my link to health it is the hand that connects me to you my love.

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