

You

Dear

Dearest

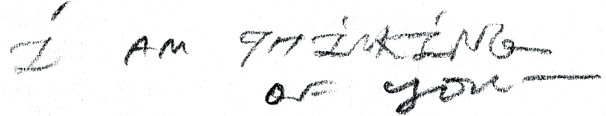
Beloved

Darling

Sweet One

Hello

Hi



## The Love Letter

lettre / letter

This figure refers to the special dialectic of the love letter, both blank (encoded) and expressive (charged with longing to signify desire).

It is the last day of Summer and I am sitting on my porch; I want to keep all the flowers, I want to press you like a tender petal between the pages of my book. For a year I have stared out into the field. Saw it fallow and full. Saw it rolled into hay bales and abundant with goldenrod and thistles. The morning pokeberries adrip with dew. I think of you like I think of dirt, the wet earth - a thing I want to bear my face down into. When my body is away from yours I am an envelope torn open, the letter extracted, something pulled out of.

A small gray bunny runs into the lilac bush. Before I left for Paris in May I rubbed the lilac blooms across my face, I poured honey over them, I slid some stalks into books and envelopes. In June I returned and they had browned and fallen to the ground. I am always trying to keep forever. And I enjoy the knowing that I cannot ever. Everything changes and rots. Lilacs are to me the flavor of love's innocent beginnings. I flip through the pages of an old beloved book, there's a couple lines scribbled into the inside back cover. Something that felt so sweet before the love story ended. Does it ever end?

This is a love letter to love letters. This is a dedication to all the parts of the story, all of the stories within the story. This is a letter to you. I am moved by your absence because then I can sit in the longing. I like to want for. I like to use the word *longingness* even though I know full well it is "not a word." I enjoy the emphatic wistful undertone of the unnecessary *ness*. *Longingness*. I love how slutty letters are, the kind you make words out of, how you can lay them anywhere. I adore their invitation to play. In my love letter I set a scene and I invent a version of myself. Here is where I am sitting, thinking of you. I fold the landscape into the page. It smells like smoke and cut grass. My hands are a little shaky because I am shy even though you can't see me write that. You unfold my letter and a confetti of petals falls into your lap. "The gift is contact, sensuality... a third skin unites us."<sup>1</sup> I touched tenderly this page that you touch. *Tenderness*. It is a kind of time travel. I send my skin through the mail. And how many other hands will alight upon the surface of its paper on its way to you?

I keep hoping  
that we can be reunited. —A single piece of information is  
varied, in the manner of a musical theme: *I am thinking  
of you.*

What does "thinking of you" mean? It means: forgetting  
"you" (without forgetting, life itself is not possible) and  
frequently waking out of that forgetfulness.

Often I describe myself as wistful. Nostalgia my drug of choice. When my body is away from yours I am an envelope torn open, the letter extracted, something pulled out of. I can sit in the longing. That's the poem place. My flogging room. I punish myself not because I like it but because I am good at it. I think about the word *wistful* and understand that it is imbued with a tinge of pain. And that is the attraction. A delightful absence. I wade into those waters languorously. "In languor I merely wait: 'I knew no end to desiring you.' (Desire is everywhere, but in the amorous state it becomes something very special: languor."<sup>2</sup> Perhaps languor is my new wistful. Something delicious to need for.

Is the poem a letter? I think a lot about *you*, about whom and what that *you* is. *You* appear often though I can't quite pin *you* down because your shape is always shifting. I put *you* in the poem but I think we all know that's not much of a container. The poem is always expanding or shrinking down into. I can say whatever I want but you can take the poem anywhere. "Like desire, the love letter waits for an answer."<sup>3</sup> Is the poem a love letter? A dedication? Whether we speak the same language or not you must interpret it. There is devotion in the act of translation. I send you photocopies of pages I like, I send you books, my underlines and annotations are places where I touched my hand to my pencil, the pencil to the paper. It is a kind of intimacy that turns me on. Maybe we are both you, the other. I am thinking of you; I am sending myself. My poem is a love letter is a mystical act before god. I slide my tongue across the glue of the envelope and kiss the seal.

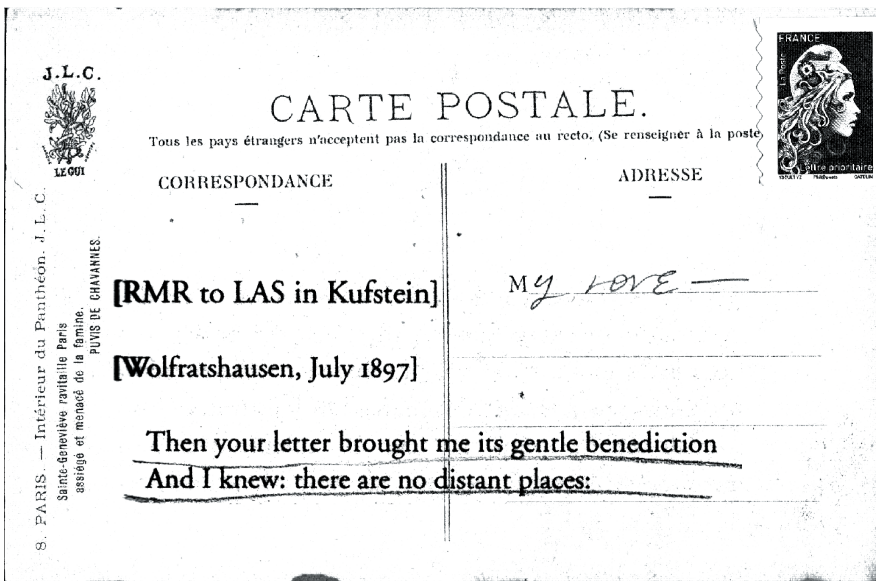
I cannot wait  
I cannot wait to see you  
*I am thinking of you*



TENDERLY  
WITH LOVE  
ALL MY LOVE  
YOURS  
KISSES  
KISSES .

*Subbi*

Alex Patrick Dyck's forthcoming book with  
1080PRESS is titled  
**BUTTERFLIES COME OUT AT NIGHT**



<sup>1-3</sup> Barthes, Roland. *A Lover's Discourse*  
RMR to LAS, Rilke & Andreas-Salomé: *A Love Story in Letters*



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