

LE E F OM PLACE HA A ENO HE EI AN O BE

Javier A. Padilla Gonzalez

Rocio,

I am so dramatic and I think that I am dying with every second that passes, and life is so beautiful.

Hope to hear from you soon,

Javier.

Dear Colorado,

You gave me opium and imposing mountains. You were too cold for me, but I miss the suburbs and their Christmas lights. I am frightened by yucca and I saw a rattlesnake once. You make me feel like I do not belong anywhere inside of your borders, but I also cannot exist in a place where I cannot see the faint blue outline of the Front Range. Frankly, you were my first love, and I resent my mother for anchoring us to your impenetrable red soil.

Take care,

Your son.

Dear Moses,

What else did you expect from your people when you uprooted them and moved them across deserts for forty years? Of course they were going to dance and drink honey wine and search for new idols. A golden calf is appropriate imagery for people searching for home. After all, domesticated animals are part of the reason people were able to establish empires and cities.

Wishing you patience,

Javier.

To my guardian angel,

Do you like it here? It is always raining in this city. I used to love the rain, but now I am always damp and my socks are molding and if I stand in one place too long I am afraid the overgrowth will tangle me into place. I have found purpose in trying to find a place. I pity you.

I release you?

Javier.

Hi mom,

To the mosquito in my room during a full moon,

I wish that you would die outside with my blood still inside of you.

I hate you,

Me.

Severin,

I should have told you that I was not looking for a relationship with you. I cannot admit to myself that I will never be comfortable in one place, and being near you could be considered a place. I find myself replaying the music and noise I heard in Calle Jesús María in my head. I enjoyed our first date when I was rolling too hard, and I lost my debit card, and my head felt like it would fall onto the turntables. I miss the chaos, and I never wanted to cook minestrone with you because it takes too long. I would have felt restless.

You should read this,

Your Cicciolino.

Dear Canyon de Chelly,

You felt very close to divinity. The cottonwoods were in bloom and the early morning light illuminated every white cotton ball and they all looked like sprites. I was told a story about scorched peach trees, and the sprites fell into ashes. I wanted to leave and I wanted to stay. I

Severin,

You make me feel less restless and that is enough for now.

Love,

Your Cicciolino.

To the border crossing in El Paso or Juárez,

I always looked forward to seeing you. It may have been masochistic, naive or alchemical. You were change. I was either going to become brown or American. I always wondered who I was when I stood right on top of you. I could have lived in one of the border patrol checkpoint booths—the really cramped ones where the officers are always smoking. I could live in constant excitement and fear.

Loosen up,

Javier Alejandro Padilla-Gonzalez.

Pedro Padilla,

You used to be a reference point for my life. An amazing stela carved with the cardinal directions, rooted deeply into sand caves. Since your pulmonary embolism, you are a point that I try to avoid. I know all of your riddles, and I don't think that you know that you keep repeating the same riddle. Maybe you cannot recognize me.

I hope your life was enough,

Alex.

Hi mom,

I met a boy and he is really sweet. Unfortunately, I am trying to get out of this relationship. I have been cheating on him with a girl who hates me, and it is fulfilling some stressed desire or prophecy. I would move to Switzerland with him and have his kids, and that scares me. All of my friends say that he is not cute enough to be with me, but I think they are jealous that I have found a place in someone and I could die tomorrow. He hates ice cream just like me. How is dad?

Honest,

Your son.







Mom,

When you realize you have been sequestered, do you look to the lush lawns shielding your 1000-square-foot suburban home and feel some freedom? Do you also look to the mountains and imagine sprouting feet so long that you could sprint along the ridge for 20 minutes and find yourself lost in the Sierra Madre for the first time? Has English scalded your tongue so severely that if you try to roll your Rs on the roof of your mouth, it stings? Do you like to receive my letters during my quest to find a home, when you consider yourself home? Do you miss your