

Excerpts from *I'm Carrying Beach Sand Wherever I Go*

by Tenzing Barshee

Day 1—to Facebook

Advisory: If your husband catches an Ebola virus, give him food and water and love and maybe prayers but keep your distance, wait patiently, hope for the best—and, if he dies, don't clean out his bowels by hand. Better to step back, blow a kiss, and burn the hut.

Day 2—Ben Rosenthal

The last two years of Sergei Yesenin's life were filled with constant erratic and drunken behavior, but he also created some of his most famous poems. In 1925 Yesenin met and married his fifth wife, Sophia Andreyevna Tolstaya, a granddaughter of Leo Tolstoy. She attempted to get him help but he suffered a complete mental breakdown and was hospitalized for a month.

Two days after his release for Christmas, he allegedly cut his wrist and wrote a farewell poem in his own blood, then the following day hanged himself from the heating pipes on the ceiling of his room in the Hotel Angleterre. He was 30 years old.

The poem:

Good-by, my dear, good-by.
Friend, you are sticking in my breast.
The promised destinies are weaving the thread from parting to a meeting.
Good-by, my dear, no hand or word,
Do not be sad, don't cloud your brow,

To die—in life is nothing new,
But nor is new, of course—to live.

This is a postcard from SoliCity. Cast out and well, distrusted, these cats of SoliCity, are hiding in the cracks. It starts with a crack, a pathway that originally brought us here, into this lost and found tomb.

Shuffled into one absent thing. Once a clotted sock! Brought together on sandy terrain moving down as quickly as the real thing. Something you said about morals. I flicker on and off like a dream machine but I do care and I do feel — Soft licking Tequila tears rendered lilac blue, secret bed sharing, why are we better together? Much cried lately? Morally inconvenient?

RiverRuns is our registered TradeMark. Tears inked over my cheeks, all four of them. NeverEnding, you teased us. Made us care.

Care about something the pretense knows no care about.

Don't have a plan, we say. Good for you, you say. Stop obsessing about norm already.

Never took the road back to SoliCity, we trust ourselves in this because we've made this choice and because we have to, not because we cancan like Dolly P.

THINKING OF SOLICITY, THE SO-CALLED SMELL-FREE TOWN. ONE OF THOSE, EMPTIED OF ILICIT PHEROMONES. THOSE BEAUTIFUL TOYS. EMPTIED LIKE TRASH CANNONS. EAT ROADKILL. WE RETRACT MOST OF OUR LATTER STATE SLASH SENTIMENTS. PIMPS AND QUEENS AND CRIMINAL QUEERS. THOSE BEAUTIFUL TOYS. TATTOOS OF SIMI AND TATTOOS OF TEARS. HYPERBOLIC BALLAD. LIKE SOME ABSTRACT IDEA, FLAGS ON THE MOON, YOU ARE RISEN IN MY PERCEPTION. IF LOVED MORE IN THOSE WORN OUT MEMORIES LIKE EVERY CHILD DOES ... POSSESSION CEASES TO BEHAVE AND SEARCHING FRUITLESS. BECAUSE OF YOUR IMMENSENESS AND YOU ARE GUILTY! YOU CAN BE A GENTLEMAN OR YOU CAN BE VIOLENT. A JUXTAPosition OF STARTLING BEAUTY. THERE IS A CERTAIN HUMAN LEVEL. IN ITS SUM IT USUALLY SWINGS.

SOME ARE ALWAYS FLAT. SOME CHANGE IN EXTREMIS. DRUGS AND ADRENALINAS. LET US INCREASE THIS. THE TOTAL DISTANCE OF LIFE IS THE SAME.

ONLY, THE MORE THE LINE CURBS. TO THE TOP AND DOWNWARDS, THE SHORTER IS THE MARKED-OUT ROUTE BETWEEN BEGINNING AND END.

NOT POORER. ONLY SHORTER. IT HAS TO BE DECIDED. SOMETIMES THAT'S NOT POSSIBLE. OTHER SCENTS WE'VE BEEN DWELLING ON. IT'S SOMETHING WE'VE HAD TO PUT AWAY, IN ITSELF SO OFF-PUTTING, IT'S BEEN AWAY, GONE FROM MAINE-LAND, DESPITE ITS HEALING QUALITIES.

Why can't we be close and not be possessive? Now, and suddenly, since we care, we've stopped roaming around carelessly.

We've started to step up. Ready like the brute we smelled miles away.

Offering powders and liquids to the unknown Gods.

Hug the barrel in caring farewell. Raise the jug with supernatural strength. Drunkenness is a fake/true state.

We lie in the hand-paved gutters and skies and finally, everything comes back to us ...

It's what you meant before you said it.

SoliCity, we'd like to cry-scream. You never wanted to leave but you cast us away anyways.

Stirring that icelandic nostalgia-lava meltdown.

Stay grounded and don't fly higher than this once a day.

Falling or falling head over heels, SoliCity, we sing, you were our lifetime.

Unanswered prayer-emails stacked up high like himalayan peaks.

This source of serenity.

Endless.

Even so, we remain at a safe distance. Spat on!

Perforation through patterns. We speak as soon as we leave the table and say, considering we're dealing the same odds, our gamble seems to be way more exciting than yours.

Lift any of your fingers. No game? A true player doesn't try hard. No chance? Luck leaves when unlucky men talk.

No choice? Like walking through the eye of a needle, it's betting on yourself, a true gamble. But some day we ought to be able to choose the foolish path. Find our way back to SoliCity.

It'll be more fun that way. It's never going to be any more than an approximation ...

and she, she's still hiding out in Discoland ...

but there's an irony there that points to a difficulty in wandering around today's world, which is that it's hard to know when your performance is truly «aimless» or unplanned, and when you are merely striking a insouciant pose for some omniscient or future gaze.

What can these feet level? What can these feet pound and flatten? What can these hands raise?

By fracturing the map through movement through various spaces, the oppressive pre-invented world and the sexualities are revealed. Imagine to confront this construction against all subjects in all spaces. This manipulation of space is exemplified by the explanation of our movement through space. It's the cut map, which fractures boundaries and reveals both sexuality, through kissing and oppression, through scrawled graffiti, transcending spatial boundaries. Brush fires in the social landscape. Unearthing both a sense of movement and a landscape that cuts through the urban, rural and even suburban.

Perhaps this movement through space can create a brush fire in a landscape that has become so divided in the distinction of spaces. Filthy dreams. Cruising through space.

Day 4 - to Fabrice Stroun, and Juliette Blightman

ON LAST MOTHER'S DAY I SENT A LETTER TO MY MOTHER WHICH IS VERY IMPORTANT TO ME. BECAUSE OF WHAT IT SAYS TO HER BUT ALSO OF HOW I'M ABLE TO THINK ABOUT THE LARGER IDEA OF LIVING IN OUR WORLD, LIKE WHAT YOU, FABRICE, HAVE TAUGHT ME SO WELL WITHOUT ANY CLAIM OF AUTHORITY ABOUT IDEAS AND PERTINENCE OF HISTORICITY OF FORMS AND CONTENT—I KNOW, SAME THING, SAME THING; AND A CONTINUED HISTORY IN CONSCIOUS RELATIONSHIP WITH PRESENCE AND FUTURE. HERE'S THE LETTER IN A QUICK TRANSLATION: DEAR MARIANNE, TODAY IS MOTHER'S DAY. I DON'T KNOW HOW TO FEEL ABOUT THAT. SOMEHOW THIS DAY IS NOT SO MUCH CONNECTED TO YOU. OF COURSE, YOU ARE MY MOTHER.

IT IS, IN FACT, VERY COMPLICATED FOR ME TO UNDERSTAND OUR RELATIONSHIP IN A CONTEXT OF SOCIETY. IN THIS RESPECT YOU ARE NOT MY MOTHER AND YOU ARE, OF COURSE, MUCH MORE THAN MY MOTHER. YOU'RE ALWAYS ALSO MARIANNE TO ME. THE FIRST YEARS OF MY LIFE, IF I REMEMBER CORRECTLY, I CALLED YOU BY YOUR BIRTH NAME. UNTIL YOU ASKED OR SUGGESTED TO ME TO CALL YOU MAMA.

THE AMPLIFICATION OF THIS IDEA IS THE IDEA OF FAMILY, AN EQUALLY COMPLICATED SUBJECT. I'M SAYING COMPLICATED, AND I MEAN THIS IN AN UNBIASED, NON-COMPARATIVE WAY WITHOUT JUDGEMENT. MAYBE COMPLEX IS A BETTER WORD. THE WAY I GREW UP WITH YOU AND THE ECHO OF MEMORIES, WHICH I HAVE OF MY PERCEPTION OF YOU AS A CHILD, THE PERSON, MARIANNE, MY MOTHER, IS THAT YOU ARE SOMEONE WHO—AND BECAUSE I BELIEVE TO BE PARTIALLY THE RESULT OF THIS, I UNDERSTAND THIS AS SOMETHING TRULY BEAUTIFUL—WELL, THAT YOU YOURSELF, MARIANNE, HAVE QUITE A COMPLEX RELATIONSHIP WITH THE IDEA OF FAMILY. THAT MUST HAVE SOMETHING TO DO WITH THE WAY YOU GREW UP BUT ALSO A LOT WITH YOUR LIVING CONDITIONS AS WELL AS YOUR LIFE CHOICES. I CAN SAY THAT YOU ARE A FAMILY PERSON. YOU LOVE INTENSELY AND YOUR INSTINCT TO PROTECT IS EQUALLY STRONG. WHAT I UNDERSTAND AS OUR CONTINUED FAMILY LIFE, IS IT'S OWN ENTITY—BOTH, THEORETICALLY AS WELL AS CONCRETELY, IN A REAL WAY—WHICH IS CONNECTED TO THE SOCIO-CULTURAL IDEA OF FAMILY BUT I ALSO SEE OUR FAMILY LIFE AS SOMETHING THAT EXISTS OUTSIDE OF THIS CONCEPTUALITY OR IDEA. I'M WRITING TO YOU ON THIS DAY BECAUSE I BELIEVE THAT A MESSAGE TODAY WILL MAKE YOU HAPPY. EVEN THOUGH I DON'T PERCEIVE YOU TO BE THE PERSON WHO ACTUALLY CARES ABOUT THIS DAY IN A CONTEXT OF SOCIETY. YOU CARE ABOUT US. THIS IS WHY TODAY IS ABOUT US.

(...) the most overwhelming influence on Denton Welch's childhood, perhaps on his life, was his mother. Beautiful and possessive, she died at the age of forty-one from nephritis, a disease of the kidneys, when Denton was only eleven.

(...) he progressed to an eccentric preparatory school, St. Michael's at Uckfield in Sussex. His mother was a christian scientist and the school especially welcomed boys who's parents believed in the doctrines of Mrs Mary Baker Eddy. Although in adult life Denton was to reject Christian Science on intellectual grounds, he retained a natural distrust in Doctors, and his mother's religious faith coloured and to some extent clouded his childhood.

At fourteen (...) he could endure the restrictive atmosphere of a public school (Repton) no longer, and ran away. (...) Then his father unexpectedly suggested a holiday in Shanghai. (...) Repton, and the year spent in China with his father and Paul (Denton's favourite brother), were to provide the material for his first novel, Maiden Voyage.

(...) on 7 June 1935, when he was twenty, the course of his life was changed for ever. On his way to stay the weekend with an aunt and uncle at Leigh in Surrey he was involved in a disastrous accident. A motorist knocked him off his bicycle. His spine was fractured, which led to inflammation of the bladder and kidney failure. Partial impotence resulted, he had to wear a catheter, hemorrhaging eventually developed, along with tuberculosis of the spine, and towards the end of his life he became subject to frequent and severe attacks of feverish headaches, high temperatures and pain.

(...) ill-health did mean long periods in bed, and a drastically curtailed social life.

(...) as an illustrator (he did work for Vogue) Denton might well have reached the top flight, and as an artist he progressed steadily from ineffectual student work to paintings of outstanding originality and often startling beauty.

Character he wrote occasionally juggled with paintings for dramatic purposes, every occasion about which he wrote and every character he wrote about was taken from real life. It was his power to recreate in fascinating detail the minutiae of life, as well as the sweep of sometimes terrifying, and often very funny, events, together with his belief in the relevance of unconsummated, even unaccomplished experiences that stands out as the hallmark of his work.

Note: I'm tired, I say. Always speaking about practicalities and people.

I miss the more abstract ideas. There is so much noise.

The noise, she says, is just a backdrop. It's not you. You never blush, you. It's because I'm blushing all the time.

I'm in constant blush, I reply.

She looks at me with distrust and says, That's not true.

Later the uber car is on its way but it keeps delaying its arrival.

Bit annoyed, she looks up from her smartphone and asks, you think you can make me cum in 4 minutes?

I smile.

Why don't I love you for 5 instead.

