

A note on the soul.
For Giles.

by Kostas Stasinopoulos

I once told a friend, while being vulnerable under grey skies, that summer is a state of mind. She replied that yes, it can be, but most of all, summer is a matter of heart.

A heart can be warm, while your whole body and soul are shivering. When you're alone, indoors, thinking of others in the same situation, or of days of glory, shared, maybe long gone by. A heart can bring summer back with the warmth of a thousand suns, capable to conjure days of future past.

91 days of clear blue skies, you say. I lose count. Or at least, I hope to. Because those nights are inhabiting me, the sunshines haunting me. An ecstatic drum of love and loss within my enclosure.

The weight of a summer breeze and the lightness of a midsummer night sky are caressing my skin. My blood and my vessels; they are open, and viral.

I enter places I've been before. Real and imagined. I enter bodies. Some I've visited and those I yearn to travel to. I proceed with mark-making on paper, on the soul. To place it somewhere. To draw, to photograph, to embellish, to establish; even when I don't have to. Because it will say something to others. I trace paper because I have to. Because if I don't, I don't know where I dissolve. Where us, dissipates. Where it becomes thin air. Because that's also where I thrive. In solitude together.

A whole generation becomes a flock of birds, flying away, traveling [sic], going to an unexplained place. and we in shock, watching from down here.

I struggle to index the dead. But it must be done. Because there is joy to be found in doing it. Because it's a coping mechanism. Because their beauty was not seen. Because it was expendable. Like flowers in a vase that you throw away. Because this way, the happiness in all these moments will transcribe, translate, transform.

My tongue is numb, my teeth are clenching. A rush of blood to the head. It feels like my meds, it resembles my high. I want my mundane loss to be your everything. I want my trivial joy to become yours. I want to travel through your imagery and I want you to sniff my imaginary. *Trapped between anxiety and hope.*

I want to document the periphery of my life in colour, so that my core can maybe make sense to you. I'm lost *between abstraction and pictures*. What I wish for, is that my reality blends with yours. So that my dreams may bring you expanse. So that your pain and opposition mark my soul, I can take it. God knows I have, and, God knows, I will.

I don't want something to be more special than others. Or maybe I do, because it matters. And it can get lost. Like my love, or my love of summer. Of flowers. Of flutter. Of us.

I dive, in clear blue water. I dive in dive bars, in nights out, I dive in lazy summer suns. I dive *in a place of the best memories, a possibility of renewal, a chance to share, a fragile truce*. I dive because *first he gives you poetry and then gives you more*. I dive. *It's a small gesture, but it's the only way I know*. I sink. *The deeper you go, the more difficult it is, but there's always poetry*. I hold my breath under water. *It's the poetry that gets harder.*

Don't get me wrong, I enjoy. I have and will forever. I just measure things differently. I index: *new & old friends, tough art objects, unexpected flowers, suckable hands, sweating in bed, long walks, blue waters, salty air, salty balls, queer culture, Democratic Government, views to remember, long interviews, memorable cheap dinners, carrot juice, new shoes, white t-shirts, and high hopes*. How can I infect you with my love for all the moments we've shared in a way that you can compute? Please laugh at my list-making. *I always want things to say too much. Emotionally*. Make me dance. Kiss me. And get me another drink.

I remember the sunrise, the headache, your touch; every, single, time. The sun and your kiss burning stronger than my body could cope, than my skin could hold. And yet each one of my cells holds entire worlds. A twisted, cosmic hangover – somewhere between loss, sunstroke and feverish love. *Those mornings are so solid.*

I remember that night that I was spinning. *A moon like no other moon*. Coming to you at high night when the sea is orange, when my face is messy, and when my iris is wide open. Spinning on the bed together, ghosts of a tough winter, our bodies, *belonging, again, to the light of summer*. Sweat-covered sheets, and salt, and glitter. *Here was peace*. A balcony built on top of waves, *a summer, of yes, more love*.

My love, let's drink *to a year full of justice, blue deep skies, tough beautiful art objects, good gentle friends, happy children, long unforgettable trips, health, hope, compassion, and more hunger for life*.

Let there be light. On the skin of the bodies that are beating and on the imprints of those that are perished; shining. The bodies that are here and those that feel far away. *This luck of living*. It's a matter of heart.

Save the date
Saved across the sky