

One postcard, and then another, comes falling across the passage of time, and I wait until I receive them in order to make sense of the puzzle. Then the picture perfect portrait of the undying blue embodies immortal Greece. “Sophia,” a voice calls out. A richly perfumed scent wafts across olive groves. The postcards arrive like thoughts rising from memory's melancholy tune, and they carry the whisper of air and crashing noise of the sea, both of which become one and make the sound of the present slowly giving birth to tomorrow.

“Sophia,” I can hear someone calling out again. “You leave and return to me while I keep giving you kisses. Sweet child, don't grow up. Stay eternally true to the purity inside you.” The voice fades, my aunt's. Her eyes remain as blissfully untouched as endless blue summer sky. The waves often rise unusually high, near-unflappable dunes of aimless blue azure. But the mystery remains, vast and untold. They nearly carry the same familiarity as home-cooked meals such as spinach pie and moussaka or the beautifully translucent simplicity of olive oil. I always try to fit the words written on them with a mystifying piece of some previous experience. As I read the postcards again one by one, I hope to make sense of all this. The cards often refer to a number of love stories that take place on the island of Santorini, and

all the postcards are images of that island.

I am hoping to gather more cards and understand what they mean before going on a trip to Santorini. The love stories are bittersweet as some of them end in tragedy and others in blissful harmony. It is my duty to make sure that I understand the purpose of these cards. I feel as though I am an important piece of this large puzzle. Perhaps I will be able to understand myself better once I see the pattern behind these postcards, which continue to drift across the passage of time.

The postcards arrived in different European countries I traveled to. They followed me across the globe. In the end, I know that I will return to Santorini. I remember the last time I visited Greece. A fisherman went out to the sea and nearly vanished from sight. There was the bluish white haze on the edge of the horizon. Every day I looked at the boat returning, but it was a different boat and a different man. Years seemed to speak like messages sent from across the sea. I remember when I was a small girl and went to look at the fish an elderly man had caught. And then I saw the fish almost leaping to life again and entering the same depth it was caught from. The next day, I felt that years had passed.

Different boats returned with different people. One of the fishermen observed me curiously, as though feeling that I had grown up before the sea in mere moments just like I did. "You look like you are lost at sea, young lady," he said to me. And then I saw one boat vanish after another as days passed. Small boats came and went, vanishing into the distance but then reappearing as if mere moments later. And then words unwritten instantly

become written, sweetly lingering on the large twisting tongue of ocean blue. I feel that these postcards are my future. I am ready to tell their story as they continue to drift across time like boats drifting aimlessly on the sea but then miraculously redirected towards their true destination.

A volcanic heart erupts. A poet witnesses the birth of an island. The land collapses, and all that remains is the sublimely ethereal outline of a caldera. Steady rock formations spring from the complete ejection of magma from the volcanic chamber. A large, rectangular lagoon begins to form, and lofty outcrops sprout around the volcanic center. The island of Santorini is born. The poet writes down words to infuse this moment with all the timelessness it merits. Infinity is there, too. She gazes upon the large rock formations. Then she witnesses the rushing forth of a richness unfathomable. The poet writes down what he sees: white houses appearing on lofty outcrop, spreading throughout the island and dotting the sun-drenched expanse. But then the poet finds himself back in the moment when the volcano erupts and ejects magma.

Infinity sees the various moments from Santorini's history. She sees Atlantis shining like a pearl under the blinding sun. Then she observes the glory of Minoan civilization. She sees the light of the sun shine on her blue dress. She witnesses the volcanic heart erupting once again. She sees the volcanic eruption of Thera, which destroyed Minoan civilization. A plume of smoke rose high into the sky. The volcano slowly dissolved into an island-

shaped caldera, which then refilled with magma and formed a new volcano. Minoans living on Thera drifted to and from Crete until the earthquakes and ensuing tsunamis intensified. They were unaware of how the earthquakes caused tsunamis, and perilously large waves consumed the Minoan ships that headed for Crete.

Then Infinity sees the moment when houses gleaming white dot the rocky expanse. She sees how the infinite sea narrows in a single geographical location. The sea's infinity becomes Santorini's "now." But the poet finds himself in the moment when rocky formations emerge and give shape a larger crater-like formation, the caldera. The volcano remains alive, and the poet's words become unsteady. The poet tries to steady his thoughts, but then his creative effort dissolves into infinity. I look upon these words as they hover invisibly above the splendidly-festooned view of Oia. She takes these words and scatters them over the island. The words become various moments in the history of Santorini's residents. These moments allow me to embrace the "now" in which all of infinity seems to have dissolved.

An old man observes the lofty view from his home in Santorini and then takes out an unfinished love letter he wrote many years ago. He spreads the sheet on a table and then looks over words infused with their own stream of sentience. He observes how each word takes him back to the past, and he believes that he must complete it. He takes a pen and then sets out to finish the letter and let his emotions reach their climax. The old man feels inspired as the words seem to write themselves of their own will. He feels the past fade into the "now," which allows the love letter to be perfect and complete

in his heart. Then he feels himself drained of energy. The creativity stemming from his steady, pulsating heart becomes depleted. The “now” once again fades into the past.

The old man knows that his time has come. Words follow each other with the quick succession of each heartbeat. He sets out to write the last word his heart has imparted to him. But then he falls lifeless on the letter before he writes the last word. The letter remains incomplete, but then Infinity looks upon the letter and allows the last word to appear. It is as though she briefly resurrects the old man in order for him to write the last word and then see the face of lost beloved before he dies. Infinity appears beside him and looks over his shoulder to see the completed letter. She feels the “now” of this moment, and then she feels herself drifting inexorably toward the moment when the man first began writing the letter.

Another eruption occurs, and then the ocean ripples. She sees the fabled city of Atlantis in all its glory. She sees its populace moving in myriads through golden streets. The city is comprised of concentric circles that shine in the light of the noon sun. Infinity sees Atlantis before it is about to sink into the depths of the ocean. A tsunami arises and casts the entire city in its ominous shadow. The city descends into the shadows of the deep, and dim rays of sunlight gently caress the remnants of its former glory. Then she returns to the moment when Santorini was born.

First Postcard:

Arrived in Athens, Greece 1988

I was born under a bright blue sky, as clear and pure as the sea and sky that shone around me. From the moment I opened my eyes to the sea and sky, I was in a state of becoming, as if my birth was perpetual, becoming part of different generations that have shaped this island, Santorini. The relationship between the past and the future is a parting kiss, a long, withdrawing embrace that takes centuries to happen for the light to shine between the eyes in which time is reflected.

As I write and send out these postcards to different parts of the world, I feel as though I have become part of different times spanning different generations. I know that my postcards fly across time. I feel as though my consciousness has spread beyond the confines of the moment when I send out

these cards to different parts of the world. These postcards are part of my effort to unite my past, present, and future, and ultimately to separate them in order to know who I really am.

I have become one with this island, this majestic piece of land that shines across the sea like a diamond. Tourists flock here to capture the scenery and enjoy the views of the sea. I know exactly what they feel when they absorb everything they see. They feel a connection that is subtle at first but then gathers in strength. I hope that whoever receives the postcards will be able to help me unify my heart and mind in order for me to move forward with history rather with my own fragmented perception of time. My perception of time is like this island, separated by sea and land from the rest of the world. But this place seems to maintain a connection to all the travelers who have come here.

I feel as though sending out these cards allows me to maintain a connection to these people. I feel as though I am able to penetrate the boundaries of various cultures and understand the common purpose of all people who have come here. To whomever finds this postcard and reads it, I hope that you will help me find my way.

Love, From Santorini

The first postcard eventually became the first piece of a large puzzle. I still don't know why I received the postcard when I did, or why the postcards

arrived when they did. I was a little girl then. The sense of unknowing that the postcard embodied made me wish for more. I feel a sense of urgency now. I know that the first postcard is an important part of understanding who is sending these postcards and why, but traveling around the globe has made these postcards even more mystifying than before. I wonder if I am the only one who knows about the postcards. I have recently taken a break from my job in order focus on traveling more. I believe that these postcards are leading me somewhere and I am supposed to follow every scrap of information until I eventually find my destination. I have never been to Santorini, but the image of that beautiful island on each postcard and the words written on them tell me that I have already been there. And I see images of Santorini in my mind as it is born.

The man who wrote the letter is called “Stelios.” He was born and raised on Santorini. His father was a fisherman and had a business selling fish. Stelios grew up feeling alone as his father was too busy to pay attention to him. Then, years later, he met a girl called “Eleftheria.” Infinity sees how he develops strong feelings for her, and how he secretly longs for her to be with him. Years later, Stelios takes over his father's business and decides that marriage should be on his horizon.

Eleftheria remains oblivious to his desire for her, but she remained within the circle of friends in which he regularly interacted and of which he was a constant part. Stelios and Eleftheria dated on and off over several years. Eleftheria had decided to end their relationship as she felt the need to

move on. But Stelios believed that she still loved him. He believed that Eleftheria was merely afraid that he did not truly love her. Stelios desired to prove that he wanted to spend the rest of his life with her, and he believed that she secretly waited for him to reveal his undying love for her. One day, he began writing a love letter in the hope that it might convince her to return to him and rekindle their relationship. He wrote two paragraphs, but left the last part of the letter incomplete. He did not know how to finish it.

Infinity sees the past as if it were unfolding in the confined space of the present. The past becomes the “now,” and Stelios gazes out at the view at Oia. Oia overlooks the other large rocky outcrop formed by the volcanic eruption. Stelios holds an engagement ring before this majestic view, and then he imagines seeing Eleftheria's face spread across the horizon. He remembers the moments of his childhood, and how the various events that shaped his early life gradually ushered him forth into the uncertainties of adulthood. At that moment, Infinity gazes into the sea and sees magma coursing deep within the crust of earth beneath the ocean. She sees magma becoming larger and larger, and then she fears that it may cause seismic tremors. Stelios observes the scene before him and then hears footsteps nearby. He turns to look and sees Eleftheria looking at him.

“Hi, Stelios, it's nice to find you here. I was on my way to work.”

Stelios smiles nervously and says, “I'm glad to see you, Ellie. I wanted to talk to you about something.”

“What is it?” The look on her face is full of concern.

Stelios approaches her but then remains still. “I know our relationship ended

years ago, but I want to tell you something. I love you. I always have. I want us to be together again.”

She looks at him with wide eyes. He removes a small box and says, “Not only that. I want to spend the rest of my life with you, or at least what remains of my life.”

A brief silence passes as Eleftheria looks away and tries to process what he just said.

“Eleftheria, I have terminal cancer. Last week, I learned that I will die in three months. There is nothing the doctors can do about it. I am asking you to marry because I just want to spend these few months with you. I want to marry you and enjoy the little time I have left. I only have the present. I only have the “now.”

Eleftheria begins weeping. Then she stops and sobs in-between her words. “Stelios, I can't believe. You're going to die.”

“Please marry me, Eleftheria.”

After a brief silence, she nods slowly but then vigorously. “Okay, I will marry you, Stelios.”

Stelios smiles with a trace of bitterness in his eyes, and then he takes her in his arms and holds her tightly. Infinity sees the magma underneath the island becoming more inflated than before. She sees it become unstable, and then she realizes that an earthquake is about to happen. At that moment, Stelios and Eleftheria smile at each other. Then they feel a large seismic

tremor. The island is vibrating, and Eleftheria screams in fear. Stelios holds her tightly and tries to shout words of comfort. The small tremors develop into a series of catastrophic tremors, which cause Stelios and Eleftheria to lose their balance. Eleftheria screams and realizes that she is about to fall down the large outcrop. Stelios sees her as she dangles precariously on the edge of the large white balcony. Then, in what seems like only a second, Eleftheria falls. Stelios screams and runs to see her fall down the outcrop and into the sea. He weeps as he realizes that she injured herself fatally on the way down. There is no way she survived. Stelios becomes oblivious to the earthquake as his only thought is with the woman he just lost. He maintains his eyes on the sea below and realizes that he will never see her again. Infinity sees him cry and fall to his knees. Moments later, the large tremors come to a stop. A week later, Stelios learned that his cancer had somehow gone into remission. Learning this only made Stelios feel even more pain as he realized he would have to live knowing that his beloved was gone forever. Then Infinity returns to the moment when Stelios finishes his love letter. Stelios remembers how the earthquake killed his beloved and how she fell into the sea. He remembers how he desired to fully live in the “now” with Eleftheria. Now, the aging Stelios felt that he could live in the “now” again by finishing the letter and feeling that he could be with Eleftheria again. Then Stelios fell lifeless on the letter before he could complete it. Moments later, Infinity allowed the letter to be completed. The last wrote itself as it by its own will. Infinity wondered if it was Eleftheria or Stelios who had somehow done this together, and whether the strength of their love gave Infinity the

power to do this. Then Infinity is taken to another moment created by the poet's fragmented rhyme.