

Dear Prudence

Marream Krollos

Dear prudence,

Once somebody said that these girls we teach are only going to go on to eat homemade pies all day waiting until their fat husbands come home to fuck them. Only a dream for the rest of us girls in the world... our bodies having already split apart with ways men make war. Myself, personally, i prefer, instead, reimagining, over and over and over again, how my naked body must have looked to another one and hoping the whole time the skin seemed less bubbly or red, as it has sometimes seemed to me less of that to myself. Today you are sober in the morning, a celebration, i say, this is what the rest of the world must feel. Then i remember that we only know things through their opposite. At night now you grab onto pillows so passionately that you can feel the fold of their shoulders and steep of their neck to the top of their soft heads. These girls have amazing bodies. Bodies of women who have not been touched, truly more like those of girls. The virgin, if truly pure, is mystical like it once was thought. They are flaccid, they are soft like a cloud, not hard like a hill, they jut out in parts and bubble up and spread out with lumps. What happens when you fatten a calf? It is the hard bone which holds on for dear life to the soft flesh. Is this what we look like, prudence? Only smeared and stained, defiled, with having thought we deserved even a very fat man. Having wanted so much the waiting for somebody to come home. You complain about their empty candy, but what else would keep so well while it waits to be eaten? What else wouldn't disappear in the meantime? These girls are happy when they can draw a picture because pictures are beautiful. They think it is most important to argue and eat and screech and entangle their fingers in another's hair or hands. They cover themselves completely even though there are no men present as they bend to the one man, as the whole world twirls in and around their kneadable kneeling bodies. I know there must be an easy simple common sense way for them to make a wonderful homemade pie... There must be something good for crushing to make a crust. There must be a cream that swirls with chocolate that makes it easy to spread. I would imagine there must be milky honey that one can whip and put on top. Then all that would be left to do is push down the tight red bubbly berries on the beds of thin crisp green mint, and wait.

Dearest, most loved, and cherished, prudence,

It can only be you tonight, pru. I just found out that the man i have wanted... only wants the woman most all these other men here want. And they have been talking about me for months, without me knowing. Yes, prudence, they have touched and other intimate things. What is it about me, prudence, that makes me want things that will not have me? This chair, my hands, my hair, these books, these people? Nothing wants me the same way i want it? Prudence, i will say your name many times tonight, because i am mournful, tonight. Your name soothes me, prudence. I am glad to say it. As i speak it in my mind, it sticks to my throat and slithers out like a poison i am expelling, necessarily, to live. Here, in this place, there is a lot of love, but none sinks in, none of it penetrates down through the skin, into the flesh, down through the bone. Many people think i am nice, prudence. Only you don't because you know me, pru. But what am i really? I want to say something, and do something, in this place, that is not temporary, tenuous, tentative, or something else. I want to tell you that you are my friend. I want you to be my friend, forever. Prudence, i care for you. Prudence, i love things about you. Prudence, how can we know each other outside of this place? It would hurt me not to see your face, prudence. It would hurt me not to hear your voice, prudence. But this is life, isn't it, prudence? So i imagine your face.

Oh, prudence,

What do i do? Everything keeps falling apart and coming back together again. Once again my imagination has made me fall in love. I have details of whole nights memorized. Ones as banal as the night he got into bed and, just as i was settling into bliss, he got a phone call and had to leave, but came back, opened the doors, took off his clothes, put his body next to mine, again. So i felt that once-in-a-lifetime rush of bliss twice that night. I wish he had the imagination to love me. People simply do not, or cannot imagine, when they look at me. All the people in this building are leaving and i do not know what to do except eat and drink without them, since that is mostly what i do while they are here. Then soon i too will leave the building, and i wonder what the palm trees and i will become to each other once i return. I want life to move slower when i'm happy, and faster when i'm sad, but when i feel both emotions... When you are proctoring with other people you see how differently things can be done. One will only stand and walk around the whole hour, one will scream shut up, another will remind you of the remaining minutes every so often. We are different, but still some of us are bad, but still some of us are good. That is the test, there is good and bad in the world, but some things are just different, and you have to know what is good and bad and what is just not right. Sometimes, some days, i pity myself for daydreaming about men who would tell him they want me, so that he could want me too, someday. One time in my life a man's mouth tasted sweet, once, and i got to taste it again and again, eventually it became repulsive time and time again every time with the sickening odors of his cruelty. So, it is good to be alone. I could tell you about all the jokes we've made in my imagination, oh, prudence, and the ecstasy, the ecstasy, but the details are scenes of and from a long life. Because if what is possible in our imaginations could come to life, be given light, then we would be happy together. Because what we imagine is partly being people who could be happy in life, a life where a body could experience pleasure without its senses dulling, a mind who can expect the unexpected and still keep wonder. People with some imagination...

