

**I THOUGHT THIS WOULD**  
**Göksu Kunak**

06.10.2017

She was sitting in front of the computer, drinking coffee with milk while trying to prevent the need to stalk your ex-wife.

I should be productive, working for my future, yet I keep scrolling down her newsfeed or travelling through her photos. Exuberantly. I realize that I've been into her beforehand. Before I befriended her, I looked at her photos with a question in mind. Why am I so fascinated? Jealousy? No, this is not jealousy! I'm just into her. That simple. After analyzing the sensations, which I've gotten better at after I've started meditating and doing drugs in the church, a realization occurred: I am just into her.

She wrote to me: I've been thinking about friending you for a while.

I see a childhood picture of her, holding a bodiless hand; the contraction of her facial muscles indicates a moment of sobbing. It reminds me of the times I wanted to whine, yet my dad didn't allow me. That's why I cry a lot now.

I check my checklist. A checklist without a check. A checklist without a check demanding to be checked. I stay silent for a minute and say fuck it. Instead, I listen to Nina Simone's *Feelings* and sob and watch the perfection of a group of birds flapping their feathers and bones in the sky instead of getting

on the subway and to run important errands. Isn't it what queer timing is or am I (ab)using the theory for my own untamed desires? Then I listen to *Alice im Wonderland* part 1. The rabbit: I'm late! I'm late! How fascinated I was by that VHS video. When Alice becomes a giant and the house dwellers start to throw cookies at her enormous face, I used to crave for cookies. One day, after watching an episode of the series *Full House*, I called my mom and asked for those American cookies wrapped in shiny purple plastic. It was the end of the 90s, and we didn't have such exported products. I was sad, my grandmother's cookies weren't packed in glitter.

Time flies, inevitably. I'm a completely different person right now. Alas, I remember. Instead of Proust's sponge cakes, which evoked childhood, I (ab)use your ex-wife's, my new crush's photos for my involuntary memory moments.

I'm at home on 143rd Street in Harlem. I have wilted pink roses in front of me, there is some glitter on them, which make them look sadder. Glittered wilted flowers. An October morning with bright sunlight. I somehow got attached to a tree that I encounter every morning since I came here last Sunday—today is Friday. What is unique about the tree that says good morning every time I open the window to get some fresh air? It looks like a palm tree even though it is not. It looks like something else with its leaves. It looks like a palm tree with different leaves. The hybridity of this tree recalls the beauty of a black cat with rainbow wings or the drag queens that I imagine as my angels while being guided by a YouTube meditation video.

The streets are only filled with tweets and horns. The music coming from the speakers is sleeping now. I woke up with numbness, a feeling that took "I'm ok?" away and replaced it with tears.

08.10.2017

It's insane how expensive the drinks are in this city. I've been splurging on fancy cocktails and luscious food. I was feeling good—unexpectedly. Something happened (I can't tell) and the pain came to rest on my chest. We will be family but not partners. My (utopic) project/ideal of queer relationships: Is it falling apart?

I'm awake I'm awake and high from jetlag, from a lousy theatre show, from an unexpected passionate kiss that came from a friend, from a glass of wine, from your refusal to be with me anymore.

No more drama!

This sadness is reminiscent of a childhood feeling: when I didn't want to go back to my hometown after a lovely holiday, I used to go through a mix of emotions of pity, sadness, and refusal. "I don't want to leave here and go back." But you always have to. Our process recalls this void I used to have.

I fear: when my reality transforms into a dull gray typical Berlin day, I don't know how my blood pressure will react. Loneliness? Being trapped?

This makes me sad.  
This makes me sad.  
This makes me sad.

These were the notes I took yesterday.

“Let’s not see this as a breakup in the literal sense. The word is a normative term: the combination of two words reveal violence.”

Afterwards as we want to stay as family, we decided to call this process an evolution of our relationship, a different extension of the past instead of a normative understanding of the end of a relationship. This talk led me to contemplate kinship, the so-called romantic relationships. How could this term be queered and how could the violence of the word (break it up/cut it!) be rethought? It’s insane how words might create fears in us and change the ways our neurons function. When you transform a word, then the whole concept varies itself into a vastness of possibilities.

Since we’ve decided to call this process a transformation of our togetherness, I’m released, feeling much better about us. We won’t be broken up, on the contrary, as you have said, this will be a new beginning of our relationship. We are family. A transformation of what we are. Family and best friends and soulmates. Still, because of all the Hollywood films, the strong performances I was expected to stage as the future mother of the nation, I’ve realized that a part of me goes back to the old tenets. The family is bond with biology. The family requires monogamy. This creates fear in me.

Break up break cup break a cup broken luck brecht cup  
brecht up

Recently in another world some words are banned: evidence-based, science-based, entitlement, vulnerable, diversity, transgender, fetus.

Department of Health and Human Services should avoid using these words when the 2019 reports will be written. I thought about the ones banned since the Ottoman Period. Such acts reveal the vigor of words.

2016

31, Adrienne, Animal, Hayvan, Baldiz, Beat, Buyutucu (meaning: Enlarger), Ciplak (meaning: Nude), Citir, Escort, Etek, Fire, Girl, Ateşli, Frikik, Free, Gey, Gay, Gizli, Got, Göt, Hatun, Haydar, Hikaye, Homemade, Hot, İtiraf (meaning: Confession), Liseli, Nefes, Partner, Pic, Sarisin, Sicak, Sisman (meaning Blonde), Hot, Fat, Teen, Ban, Local, Yetiskin meaning Adult, Xn, XX

Sometime between 1842 and 1918

Independence Folk Riot Cell Anarchy Justice

Cemiyet Denaat Hun-har Hafiye Mel’un Mefsedet Mecnun

Jön Türk Republic Dream

millet, hürriyet, murat, Reşat, vatan, dolap, isyan, zulüm,

izar, ihtilal, yıldız, hücre, anarşi, içtima, cemiyet, tamam, hitam, denaat, su-i kast, hal' (çözme), meşveret, firar, hafiye, hun-har, mel'un, mefsedet, mecnun, kaval (buruna kinaye olabilir), hain, müsibet, mahkum, gasp, rüya, riya, dinamit, bomba, zeval, konferans, miting, müsavat, adalet, asi, avene, çete, istikbal, içtihat, cumhuriyet, Jön Türk, buhran, sukut, vesvese, şakavet, tebeddül, meşum, esayet, nefiy, mensup, gözde, Hamit, taraftar, kıyam, irtikap, irtişa, kıtal, fıkra, siyaset, iclas, barut, namzet, ahrar

Bosna Hersek Makedonya Kıbrıs Gibrit Yıldız

(Terrorist)(Bomb)(Missile)(Gun)(9/11)(Explode)(Explosion)  
(Killing)(Suicide)(Chemicals)

Ssshhhhhshhhshhhhhh

Islamic terror Burqa Shariat West Hizbullah Seculars

dar'ül erkan, dar'ül harp, dar'ül İslam şeyh'ül İslam  
hizbuşeytan Imam

melle, mücahid, mümin, münafık, müstaz'af, müstekbir,  
seyda, şehadet, şehit, şeriat, şeyh, şirk, şura, tağut, tebliğ,  
tekke ve tevhid.

Socialism Dynamite Explosion Chaos Big Nose

Law

state, assert, describe, warn, remark, comment, command,

order, request, criticize, apologize, censure, approve,  
welcome, promise, express approval, and express regret.

Ban

Heavy as frost and deep almost as life!

God Bless the Turk

09.10.2017

I just threw the wilted pink roses into the trash. Their wilted state transformed into a suffocation; the pink became yellow, like a dead body; the water started to stink. It was the time for me to accept that despite the glitters they still had on them, the roses were dead.

We shouldn't have put the roses in the water, trying to make them stay alive longer. Instead, they should have dried slowly.

10.10.2017

Today I woke up without pain. Am I getting used to this transformation of our relationship even though it hasn't been a week?

I'm thinking about the sculptures of Richard Serra.

How does public art affect movement and is there a

possibility to create a bond with them as kin? How does public art intervene in our lives? How we react to it has strong resemblances to how we respond in our relationships.

*Tilted Arc* (1981, RIP), commissioned by the United States General Services Administration Arts-in-Architecture program for the Foley Federal Plaza in front of the Jacob K. Javits Federal Building in Manhattan, New York City. Serra's sculpture made out of a monumental plate of crude steel was removed in 1989. Some claimed that the sculpture disrupted their daily routines. The attempt to remove the *Tilted Arc*, placed in the middle of a square, appears to be almost, well, fascist in the first sight. Thinking about how and why squares and avenues are built or, say, about how this interruption/intervention would drive us to reconsider our routines and patterns, isn't it necessary to have such detours in our lives? What was the use of this semi-circular plaza and how did the sculpture break the movement? In my opinion, the sculpture of Serra on the semi-circular plaza where, say, FBI workers pass by provoked the whys-and-hows of the office life around that takes place in the Federal Building and the Court of International Trade. In that sense, one could even argue that Serra's sculpture was an intervention to agitate the fascist synchronicity, the normative rhythm.

The sculpture was carted off. Serra requested that the relationship continues. The other couldn't bear to see any remains.

Misogynistic and patriarchal power structures are aware of how problematic their views are, therefore at the moment

you mirror their behaviors, an outrage begins.

Erdem Gündüz, a contemporary dancer, stood still for eight hours at a historically significant spot, during the Gezi Protests. At a time when anyone who protests could have been imprisoned, he chose to do nothing and standing still was an act of demonstration. The local shops supporting Erdoğan started to watch him and ask themselves: "What the fuck is he doing?" What the fuck was he doing by standing close to the Gezi Park and Taksim Square, facing towards the Atatürk Cultural Center, places where memories of the modernization of Turkey took place, which the new conservative government aims to delete and redo? Gündüz was doing *nothing* at a point where everyone moves quickly, urging to reach to somewhere, where businessmen aim to enter to the luxurious hotel nearby, where the poor cleaner is running to the bus station—maybe thinking about her sick kid—where she will be squeezed even though it is not even the rush hour. The dancer used the power of cutting a rhythm, the effect of not doing anything in our accelerated world, in this city, in which everyone is so used to running somewhere like Alice's rabbit. He cracked open time, a dimension where no one could tackle in the mishmash of the demonstrations.

(Another artist group from Turkey, HaZaVuZu, had a performance called *Cut The Flow* (2009). They asked people to join them and walk in a line on a busy street. At one point, they reformed themselves from a vertical line to a horizontal one—taking the road as the axis—and by standing arm in arm, they cut the flow of the passersby.)

Several hours later, the police frisked Gündüz while he kept standing still. At the end of eight hours, they threatened him: if you don't stop—*well, stop what? Standing still?*—we have to take you to the police station.

“Once you walk through the grandiose entrance and turn into its inner sanctum, the outside world seems far away,” writes Jonathan Jones in an article about Serra's *N7-2* (2017). I feel the same about you.

Serra's sculptures maroon you just like a break up does. When we were walking in one of the *Torqued Ellipse* in Dia:Beacon two years ago, I felt strained, yet at the same time, so excited. I was scared but continued walking into the center of the ellipse. The soundscape changed as if I was inside of a seashell. Like eco-sexuals who lick the barks, rub themselves against the naturally carved surfaces, I had the urge to feel the cold, rusted surface of the metal—I only dared to touch it with my hand.

I agree with your skepticism about Serra's work. As you've once said, if two workers die at different times during the construction of your work, you should maybe radically start doing the opposite and constructing incredibly tiny sculptures. Nevertheless, I think we should create (a) space(s) in our lives that those patterns of normativity, neoliberal capitalism, misogyny unwind and his work whether he intends to do so or not, gives me ideas of how to achieve this goal.

I know we don't want to call this a break-up or separation. Breakups consist of violence, a path towards an end. That's

why it was eerie for me until we had this talk about calling what is happening to us as a transformation, a new way of togetherness. We're still family and best friends—maybe even lovers for a while but not partners. The word break-up belongs to the terminology of a normative romantic regime. You are either monogamous or a loser in life. The construction of this relationship is built for that moment when the sperms leak down the vagina towards the uterus, fighting their way to the egg, the future womb. The aim is to reproduce for the sake of the society. Feel free to buy new products for your family. Moreover, as Donna Haraway mentions in her latest book *Staying with the Trouble*, we should beware of the resources of this world and how we overpopulated: we, the residents of this world, take so much space, which results in the extinction of so many animals. I know some people want kids or queer friends who raise non-binary kids but I also observe that a lot of people drag themselves to this path as a result of the tenets and pressure of the society. There is an economy around the normative romantic regime and reproduction. Hetero-love. I suffered from the *dos* and *don'ts*—unnecessary games, emotionless flings and the rules of touch—when I was a heterosexual woman. Since I call myself a queer person, sometimes while using the pronoun *they* I feel reprieved from the burdens of rules of flirting and the regime around such romanticism, with the foremost goal being reproduction. All those Hollywood movies are creating a specific model and expectations difficult to fulfill. What could be the *Tilted Arc* of this regime? How could we cut the flow of this public square?

Dirk Bell's sculpture *2FREE SPACE* (2015) on Otto-Suhr Allee, Berlin is a 4x4x4 metal construction with the word

“Free.” The word is duplicated, and the letters are joined (F,R,E,E,F,R,E,E) in a specific way that Bell designed. I remember Dirk telling me about some criticism he faced because of talking about freedom with the money of Deutsche Bank. However, the word FREE in its enclosed territory makes so much sense regarding our era. The red structure on its blue platform is reminiscent of an unhappy relationship. I ponder, what about our relationship with Berlin? We are “FREE” in it (Well, are we?), but the moment we move out of its borders, the separatist, misogynist and normative teachings slap our face. We are free nailed on a platform just near the skyscraper of Deutsche Bank.

Eija-Riitta Berliner-Mauer, who married the Berlin Wall is having a monogamous relationship with the wall, and according to her the pronoun of the Wall is he.

As you already know, I had an affair with the crane at the construction site facing my window. For a while, I thought “I’m just into cranes!” But no: When a second yellow one came, I didn’t have the same emotions. I even masturbated looking at the reflection of the sun from the long red steel structure—the yellow one didn’t excite me at all. I still don’t know why I was attracted to the red *caterpillar* of that construction site.

The new public sculptures protruding towards the skies of Berlin are cranes. The object of my platonic love had no idea what they were doing: a typical Fordist story. What are they building? I’m so skeptical about the unending constructions in the city. Do you remember my dream, in which people

were warning us to be quiet in Berghain because of the luxurious houses built around, while we were stepping our feet on the floor?

Do you think Serra cried, talked with his friends, got drunk and woke up feeling terrible the next morning, asked himself how to move on with new sculptures when the Arc was removed? I don’t think so. I know by heart that we will go through this tough time while celebrating our queer love that embraces new perceptions of family and resists the disruptive wordings. At least we are free on our own unfree platform.

...

Maroon: leave (someone) trapped and alone in an inaccessible place, especially an island.

15.10.2017

I thought this would be easier. I thought I wouldn’t have missed you or felt so uneasy and not be able to enjoy the stupid series *Friends*. There are six-and-a-half more hours to land, and I have to use every cell of mine to not to burst into tears and lose control of myself. I feel the panic. I can’t even continue writing now, fearing what might happen if the memories come visit.

How will I heal? I still cannot believe that this is happening. It’s such a cliché to say that, but it feels like this is just a bad dream, and I will wake up, and you will hug me and tell me

it was just a dream and we will cuddle, you will put your arm around me and return to sleeping. How long will this healing take?

A part of me is craving to beg you. Beg you not to do this. But me pleading won't help anything at all. It's just the last emergency call.

Somehow this time the lights are annoyingly white. Whiter than before.

I'm afraid to cry because then I'm afraid of feeling worse and feeling like I'm getting crazy or panicking.

Wailing, sardonic notes of a sob subside slowly.

The legroom area on the board is for weird people. We need it for necessity not luxury. When I was flying to NY to visit you, there was an obese man sitting next to my seat. I asked to pass, from the other side, and the woman who was sitting on that aisle said: this won't be a pleasant flight for you. Why? I have breast cancer. Then she politely pointed at the guy on the other side. She was imagining this woman sitting in between an obese person and a cancer patient. Is there a politically correct way of talking about these? Is politically correcting politically correct? I have panic attacks. I never pathologize myself, but I might have been the nut sitting in the middle.

This time, on the return flight, the guy on my left side is a quiet man who has been playing video games, non-stop. The

one on the right watches nothing, just looks to the emptiness and laughs by himself from time to time.

Alas, I'm actually the weirdest of them all. I have books piled up near my shoes, and I constantly change the one I read not to burst into tears. Stretching out a hand to take the next one means hitting the others.

I'm clumsy. I've always been. I keep accidentally pushing the passengers next to me; not just once but regularly.

I order wine but stop drinking and every time I want to take something from my bag, there is a danger scene; blood—well, wine—might splash from the glass. I ask the stewardess if she could throw it away.

I feel cold and wear my jacket. Oops, sorry. Sorry. They stopped responding to my polite smiles. When I feel hot, I immediately take off my jacket. The same scenario.

I do face yoga and airplane yoga. I inhale and exhale, bring my palms together and reach my hands up toward the ceiling. I interlace my fingers and turn my palms up. I bend my elbows as I draw my right elbow to the right. I inhale, straighten my arms, and I reach my palms toward the ceiling. I do seated cat-cow. I place my hands on my thighs and draw my chest forward. I round my spine and don't forget to inhale and exhale.

I drop my pen or book, and a hustle begins. The tabletop is open, untouched wine glass sitting on it and I try to reach

down to the pen. A horror movie. I'm the one who bursts into tears out of the blue, almost pretending it's because I couldn't get my pen back. The convict is a Proustian involuntary memory flash; a smell reminisces of our trips to the seaside: Ostsee, sleeping on the beach with our sleeping bags, the smoked fish sandwich we had with a beer. Well, we will keep doing these, I suppose, in a different format.

We landed, and the guy on my right side put away his headphones plugged into a smart phone—apparently, he was listening to something funny, maybe a comedy podcast, and therefore gazed at emptiness and laughed nonsense.

It's time to drag myself to the passport control and to the silent home where is, actually, yours. Will I feel bad and empty when I enter this home with such memories? How will I move on? You, on the other hand I guess, always do, right? It's not an issue for you.

You just move on.

19.10.2017

I'm using Eileen Myles' *Chelsea Girls* to write you these. I'm using those pages to escape the emptiness of sleepless nights, full of ideas and fears.

Last night, I woke up with a feeling of suffocation and with blue dots on my sight. Lots. I lost the sense of being me and being here. My inner whisper gently commanded me to

stay calm and breathe. I walked to the toilet, in full horror; I was aware of my present, yet my soul was in a void. It happened a few times before, after some drugs. This time it took longer to land. Uncanny. Maybe you're right. It was my soul still traveling: Aborigines believe that the soul migrates slower than the body. My suffocation was the moment of *zir* entering back to the body that *ze* borrowed for this life span.

I'm in the U Bahn and dealing with a gibberish fear: what if something breaks, say, a Club Mate or beer bottle, and a piece of glass jabs my face: a Dario Argento moment with pink, red lights and the weird pattern of Berlin subway seats covered with fake blood. My cabinet of curiosities of violent imagery that you were surprised of is still vibrant.

Last Tuesday I went to my first physiotherapy session because of the muscle contraction in my back. In order to give me these appointments, they had already seen the prescription written by the doctor—otherwise, it's not possible. Despite that, and the fact I was punctual like a soldier, they didn't let me in as I didn't bring the prescription again. Today I went for the second appointment and, upon hearing me say that this act was nonsense, the woman at the counter rejected my criticism by simply saying "Nine!" *Nine*. This one word tells lots in this country. After *nine* there is no discussion possible. I said *nine*, haven't you heard? *Nine*, you cannot have that croissant because it is 11:15 and we sell croissants until 11:00, even though they are on the counter at just an arm's distance. *Nine* you cannot have an insurance without a residency permit, but *nine* you cannot apply for a residency permit without insurance. *Nine* I understand you're gluten

intolerant and you'd like to have dish number 21 but we serve the dish number 21 with noodles and *nine* it is impossible to replace it with rice because it is not in our menu even though we have rice in our menu. *Nine* you cannot enter the theatre bar, cause there are still two more minutes until the play ends. *Nine* I cannot accept the papers since my shift was until 12:30 and now it is 12:35; you have to come next week. *Nine*, I said, *nine*, haven't you heard?

I just recalled the day we were running to M41, and even though the bus was waiting at the red light, the driver didn't let us in as he had already closed the doors. He saw us running like crazy, and we were just an instant late. I remember what you said: this is such a Nazi behavior. I don't care about your effort, I've closed the doors. It's over. You weren't on time. *Nine!*

Funny, before coming to Germany, I used to hear about the German precision and the importance of being on time. In the first year I moved there, my roommate told me about a newspaper article she read written by a journalist who was angry because the train was 3 minutes late. Since I'm living in Berlin, I've realized that the precision of time in Germany is a play as well. Say, the LED sign is indicating the subway will arrive in 5 minutes. Minutes pass and still the LED sign is showing the number five. If the authority says so, it has been only five minutes as we have to adjust ourselves to the time of the power.

At the end of the Ottoman Empire, the beginning of the new Turkish Republic, there was a strong time shift: from an

understanding of time that moves slowly according to, well, the sun's movements or *kismet*, to a Western notion of machine time, punctuality, and efficiency. Ottoman writer Ahmet Haşim called this Muslim time, and in a recent article called "The German Time," journalist Can Dündar mentions how, despite the modernization, time in Turkey differs compared to German time. Thinking about the book *Time Regulation Institute* by Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar: the mockery of Turkish modernity, where a train may be timetabled yet still fail to arrive, depicted perfectly the time and the lives in a void between the devil and the deep blue sea.

Another woman came into the room. She put a fancier version of a hot water bottle on my back. After twenty minutes she gave me a massage. I had massages before, and it had always been intimate, there was a sense of energy coming from the touch of that person. Once Luana started crying at a massage session: "You have to let it go! I feel the emotional pain in your muscles."

The mouth with a chewing gum was smacking on my head. It was like a bad one night stand, which I've heard of but haven't experienced. It was like someone choking you and running away, which I *have* experienced. I said "Vielen Dank" to the woman and with a dull sound she replied without even looking into my eyes: Bitte...

What about care? I remembered what my insurance consultant told me: Deutschland ist ein Papier Salad—Germany is a paper salad. Does that paper have such significance to reject a person with back pain? What about

care? What about intimacy? Is it worth it?

Mhe and Mshe visited me in İzmir just before I moved to Germany. We went to a 14th-century Hamam, which I had found through Google. The moment we entered the neighborhood, men (there were only men on the streets) started to look at us with such interest and lust. Later Mhe even told us that a guy asked him how much Mshe and I cost while he waited for us at the tea place close by. The two Germans were happy about the experience; I was scared and trying to navigate ourselves without any danger.

I recall the moss on the dome; light beaming through the small rounded openings; the obese half-naked woman was giving me a massage while her belly rubbed itself against me. The echo of the water hitting the *kurnas*, the echo of the laughter coming from the crazy elderly woman dying her hair, the echo of the female bodies cleansing themselves: the echo of the mumbled prayers and songs of Jews, Muslims, Christians; Armenians, Tatars, Turks—the so-called Ottomans and the proud Turks of the new Republic.

23.10.2017

how to heal from a relationship

how to heal from a relationship with a narcissist

how to heal from a relationship break up

how to heal from a relationship with a sociopath

Why do you think I'm more interested in Kathy Acker or Eileen Myles or CA Conrad or Fred Moten instead of the

writers in Europe or Turkey?

Would it be related to the Americanization of Turkey?

During my mom's childhood, USA used to provide cheddar cheese and milk powder for the primary schools as a part of The Marshall Plan. Do you think those products entered my mom's body, became a part of her flesh and genes and transferred into mine as a result of epigenetics? That said, what about the contamination of fears from the people who worked to produce the cheese and the milk powder? Don't you think the factory worker's sweat, smell and fears were carried with a touch? If those everyday products manufactured with the help of various US citizens in the fifties were consumed by my mother, isn't it possible that I inherited their energy as well?

I don't know how to forget you as my lover partner I don't know how not to miss you I don't know how to forget your smell and what it brings to me.

how to heal from a toxic relationship

how to heal from an abusive relationship

how to heal from a codependent relationship

how to heal from a borderline relationship

how to heal from a relationship after fighting

These are what Google offers you when you type "how to heal from a relationship." All scenarios are linked to traumatic experiences. Our relationship is neither abusive nor toxic, yet we need to heal. This has been a tough process for both of us. I feel that I should be there for you. What else can I do?

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