

11/03/04

Dear Mom,

I'm here in San Francisco. You know that. But did you know I'm here alone? It often feels that way. There's this song I've been listening to a lot lately. "Souls are like birds flying upwards over the mountain." There's a lot of truth in that line for me. I feel that way especially whenever I leave, suspended in the air in an airplane over the Rockies. I'm a bird flying away.

And there's another line that always stops me: "Mother, remember that blink of an eye when I breathed through your body?" It doesn't feel that way to me. Each day is so long for me. But I'm sure you think you just blinked your eyes and I'm 23 now. What is that? $\frac{1}{4}$, $\frac{1}{3}$ of my life over.

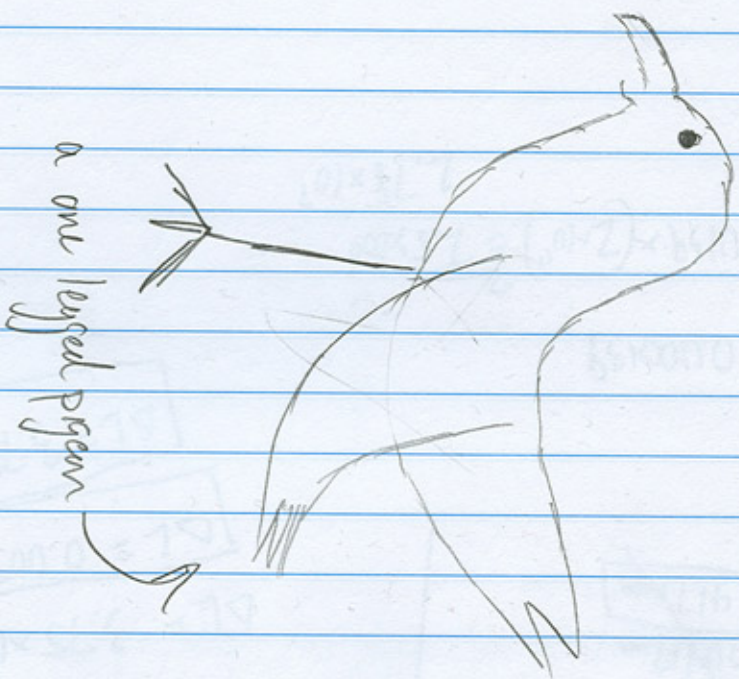
Remember that Mother's Day I flew home to surprise you? I think I told you in the weeks preceding that I didn't know when I'd be back again and it was hard to lie, I've never been very good at it. I almost gave it away because when I lie I'm not very convincing. But you know that. I've gotten better though. Not that you should be proud. When people ask me if I'm okay or upset or sad I just say I'm tired. "Busy." I say, "Real tired." Sometimes I'll throw in an "exhausted," and most people are fine with that answer. I think it's because people don't really care. They want to ask so they think they care. But they don't. If I was honest about what I was feeling, this shadow over me, this melancholy that pervades all my internal thoughts, people wouldn't be able to handle it. Please don't cry. I'm crying and I can't bear to have us both cry at the same moment. I do such a good job most of the time. Oh, there's Dominic. Isn't he so funny. Isn't he just so entertaining. I just can't let people get too close. I can't bring them down to where I am inside.

You're such a happy person, Mom. I don't want to bring you down either,
I'm sorry. I'm so sorry for writing this. Please forgive me.

I've included a photo of me from recent days. I know you miss me,
And I miss you too. So I thought this might help. I've been real involved
in my writing lately but also trying to take self-portraits, some kind
chronicling of my life right now. It's me outside my apartment. You
were here. You know that. ~~What~~ Are you coming out here again soon?



THIS IS HOW YOU FEEL



a one legged penguin