

Address Unknown

Laura Tuzzio

Della Dear,

He says your name. In his sleep, I hear him. I think of you often. Your hair, your face. I wonder if you look like me, or if in his attempts to escape me, you are my opposite. Maybe in every way or only in some. Do you love him? Does he love you? I don't know any Dellas, so he must have found you. Found you in a place he knew I would never be. What kinds of places would I never be? What kinds of women are there? You were there, Della Dear, waiting for him.

I wonder if his eyes look the same when he's looking at you. Are they that same endless deep blue? The same blue I see in the eyes of my children. Our children. Did you know he has children? They're beautiful and they love me. They love my hair, my cooking, my soft soothing lullabies. He loves when I sing to him. He says I'm his songbird. He says I am his comfort. Do you sing, Della Dear? Is that how he found you? I imagine he misses my voice when he is away. Maybe you sing to him and make it easier for him to stray.

He goes on these trips; he says work is work. The work feeds my children, the work buys these clothes. The work can make families; the work can break families. Work. I hate the job that we can't live without. I work. I work on the reflection I see in the mirror. I know he likes my face. He likes the way my lips curl up at the ends even when I'm not smiling. He likes my face. The rest of me I can't see. The mirror's too short. Maybe it's that part, the part I don't see, the part of me he'd rather leave be.

What about you, Della Dear? Is your mirror longer? Maybe you can see what I don't see. Maybe he wishes you were me. He's been mine for so long. I don't know when I became so giving, so sharing. Was it Missouri, Kentucky? Oh, all the places I'll never be. My mother used to tell me I was never very good at sharing. It was a problem in school and with the neighborhood kids. I suppose I never grew out of it. I wonder if you like to share, Della Dear. Maybe you are stingy? Sharing is good for some things, some people, just not for me. Your mirror is probably longer than mine.

How does it work? Do you see him often? Is he happy when he sees you? I wonder if he touches your hair the way he touches mine. No. I know him. Maybe you don't know him. You don't know him the way I know him. His coffee on the left with a splash of cream, paper on the right, buttered toast and sausage. He likes his blue tie best. I always pack it for him. Suitcase in hand, a kiss on the cheek. A kiss. On the cheek. Where does he kiss you, Della Dear? He sleeps with his socks on. But maybe you know that.

His wife,
Anna