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## LETTER TO GENERATIONS YET TO COME

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For you, who may be to come...

To you, creatures of a time that does not yet exist, whose eyes have not yet touched this world and whose language may no longer have any affinity with mine. I am writing to you with a clear awareness of the insurmountable distance between us – not only geographical or chronological, but existential.

I am 57 years old, I am a woman, I live in Petrolina, in the northeastern hinterland of Brazil, and I dedicate my

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days to the study of Philosophy. I didn't have children, but I have many great-nephews. Who knows, maybe they — or the children of their children's children — will read these words, which are born worn out, as if they had already crossed the centuries. Or perhaps these words are lost in silence, like bottles thrown into the sea. Still, I write.

We live in days when information multiplies faster than we can comprehend. Where loneliness resonates even in the midst of so many voices. Technologies advance as if they were new gods, while human beings stumble over the oldest questions: Who are we? Where are we going? How to live well?

The language I use now may no longer serve you. The words I record here may be fragments of a dead language, or perhaps, in some miracle of permanence, you still read them as one who rediscovers an ancestral echo. If this miracle happens, know: I write to you with affection. With hope. With fear.

Our time is crossed by crises: ecological, political, spiritual. The planet groans under the weight of our greed. Hatred spreads with the speed of the networks. And yet, there are those who plant trees, take care of abandoned dogs, write letters — like this one — to those who may never read. There is beauty in that. Perhaps the only form of true resistance is to love what you do not see. As now, I write loving you, whom I do not know.

You may live in different bodies. Maybe they are not even human. Perhaps they are the result of something that we do not even dare to imagine. Still, I wish you to know that there was once a woman in this hot corner of the planet who thought of you. Who wished that we were known, not for grandiosity, but for the greatness of small things—like a handwritten letter, a cup of coffee divided in silence, a poem read to no one.

I don't know what face you will have, or what dreams your steps will move. Perhaps they walk on lands that I no longer recognize, among ruins of what I now call civilization, or among constructions so perfect that they would make our time seem like a clumsy childhood of humanity. Still, what is essential, I believe, remains: the thirst for meaning, the need for belonging, the search for a place in the world.

Perhaps you have overcome wars—or, sadly, perhaps you have perfected others. Perhaps they have overcome hunger—or it has changed its name and form. Perhaps the earth is no longer the only home—or perhaps there is no home left at all. But wherever they are, I know they will continue to ask: as a human being? How to love without getting lost? How to live with the other?

Here, in 2025, many of us are lost. We have lost the notion of community. We have lost the time of listening. We have exchanged the deep experience of presence for the incessant noise of notifications. People are thirsty for

attention, but they sink into a sea of distractions. What we call progress is often just haste.

Studying Philosophy, I learned that humanity has asked itself this question countless times. From Socrates to today's thinkers, there is always an anguish that returns: what does it mean to live with dignity? I have no answers, and it would be too pretentious to try to give you any. But I can tell you what I experienced, what I felt, what I saw pass.

I saw hungry children smiling over a makeshift toy with bottle caps. I saw old knowers, silenced for not having diplomas. I saw simple people teaching with their eyes what books never dared to write. I also saw the horrors: injustice, greed, cruelty. And between all this, I lived.

I write like someone who lights a candle in the midst of darkness. Not to illuminate your path—for that is yours and yours alone—but to set alight the testimony that we have been here. That we love. That we fight. That we also made mistakes, and a lot. But we tried. That there was beauty, even in pain.

If this letter survives, may it serve as a bridge for you, not a prison. Let these words be seeds, not anchors. That when you read me, you don't see in me a woman from the past, but a secret companion on the journey. For between my time and yours there are abysses, yes—but

there is also language. And it is our bravest attempt to reach each other.

I have reflected a lot, in recent years, on what remains when everything changes. Every morning, the world looks different: new laws, new tragedies, new apps. Words are emptied, promises are repeated, and the future always seems postponed. But there is something that insists on remaining — not in the great achievements, but in the small gestures, in the silent bonds, in the questions that resist time.

I am the daughter of a sertão that learned to survive with little. I grew up watching people share bread, even when it was scarce. Here, time does not run — it does. We learn to respect the earth, to look at the sky before going out, to be grateful when it rains. And perhaps this is what I want to preserve: a way of being in the world with humility.

Philosophy taught me that everything can be thought. That even the obvious needs to be interrogated. That there is no definitive truth, but there are paths of search. Philosophy did not give me certainty — but it gave me courage. Courage to ask even when there is no answer. Courage to doubt even when everything seems set. Courage to live, even knowing that everything ends one day.

You, who are to come, may have technologies that today we do not even dare to imagine. Maybe they have

hybrid bodies, increased intelligence, new forms of consciousness. But even so — or perhaps because of it — I dare say: they will still be human. They will still miss it. They will still desire what is far away. They will still be afraid of death. And that's where we can meet.

I have great-nephews who sometimes look at me as if looking to the past. They see my hair notably dyed a bluish black, as well as the wings of the *graúna*. Will you have access to this writer? My scribbled notebooks, my handwritten words. Little do they know that it is in them that I place my bet on the future. I don't know what they will do with the world. But I know that they live, and that this is enough to continue believing.

Make no mistake: this letter is not a lesson. I don't intend to teach anything. I just want to testify. Leave a trace. Like someone who writes in the sand, knowing that the wave will come — but writes anyway. Because writing, for me, is a gesture of faith. Faith that someone, one day, will find this lost word, and hear a voice in it. A presence. One life.

It is curious to think that what I write today can cross centuries, survive catastrophes, revolutions, changes of language and species. May these words, so fragile, find shelter in your eyes — eyes that I do not know, but that I imagine attentive, curious, perhaps moved. That's why I write carefully, like someone who embroiders an old cloth by hand, knowing that each stitch needs to last.

The time in which I live is full of noise. Too much news, too little silence. Knowledge accumulates, but wisdom remains. Everything is urgent. Everything is measured in productivity, in results, in profit. People forget to look into the eyes, to listen with the body, to listen with the soul. We live surrounded by screens, but hungry for presence.

And even so, I continue to read, write, study. Not out of nostalgia, but out of necessity. Because there are things that technique does not replace: the value of a long conversation, the pleasure of a book that transforms us, the silence in front of a work of art. Because there is a part of the human being that resists calculation. A part that pulsates, that bleeds, that loves — and that, therefore, writes letters.

Perhaps my writing seems melancholy. And indeed, there is sadness in me. Sadness for the burned forests, for the decimated peoples, for the forgotten ancestral knowledge. But there is also hope. Hope that you, who have not yet been born, can do differently. Not better — different. That they can create other pacts, other ways of inhabiting the world.

The Philosophy I study taught me that every question is a crossing. That one does not think to find ready-made answers, but to open paths. That each thought is an invitation to the other. Therefore, if these words make sense to you — even if another meaning —

they will have fulfilled their role. They will have been fruitful. They will have been reborn in some way.

And what beauty there is in this: to see the word surpass the author. To see the writing slip from the hand that wrote it. To see a life, finite like mine, cross time to touch another, which may not even be human. Yes, maybe you are another kind of being. Maybe he lives on another planet. Maybe you don't even know what "Brazil" is, what "sertão" is, what "Petrolina" is. But if you understand what pain is, what love is, what desire is - then you may understand me.

If there is something I have learned over the years, it is that life is not limited to great achievements. What truly forms us are the small gestures: a long look, a silent caress, an ethical choice that no one has seen. What remains, what constitutes us, almost never fits in the headlines or in the manuals. It is between the lines of existence, in the gaps of everyday life.

Maybe that's why I've cultivated the habit of reading so much. In the books I found temporary addresses, voices with which I was able to dialogue, even if separated by centuries. In Plato, I saw the birth of philosophical restlessness. In Simone de Beauvoir, I understood the weight of being a woman. In Clarice, I learned to listen to what is not said. The books were not an escape. They were a meeting.

If this letter is a gift, as I stated before, then it is also an attempt to share those encounters. Not so that you know the same authors, but so that you recognize the power of listening to voices that come from afar — no matter if from millennia or meters. Perhaps you, future readers, will also be crossed by voices that are now just germinating. Perhaps they read thoughts that have not yet been written. Maybe they hear silences that I wouldn't even know how to name.

I write with an old and attentive heart. Old because he has seen a lot. Attentive because he is still amazed. And it is this astonishment that I want to cultivate until the end. Because philosophy is not only reason, it is also astonishment. It is looking at the world and saying: "how can it be like this?" It is not to settle for easy explanations. It's about continuing to ask, even when everything seems to have an answer.

You will inherit a world in crisis — of that I have no doubt. But perhaps they will also inherit the ability to start over. To look with new eyes. Of making choices that we didn't make. Not because of incapacity, but because we were limited by our contexts, our fears, our conditionings. You will have other limits, other challenges, other pains. But perhaps they also have more courage.

I don't have children, as I said. But I have great-nephews that I love dearly. In them I recognize what is closest to a continuity. It is for them — and for you — that

I write. Because, even without knowing what will remain of my language, my culture, my city, I want to leave this trace: we were here. We love it. We dream. We struggle to understand.

When I look back, I realize that much of what I experienced would not fit in resumes or biographies. There were sensations, doubts, presentiments, moments of silence. I saw people go away — some by death, some by the ways of life. I saw friendships turn into nostalgia. I saw ideas die and others are born in their place. And, despite everything, I kept walking.

Time, in my experience, is not a straight line. It's a spiral, it's a deviation, it's a return. There are things that come back. There are pains that seem new, but are echoes of old pains. There are unexpected joys that break with fatigue. It is in this intertwined time that I move. And it is from him that I write to you. Because I believe that your time will also have these folds, even if dressed in other names, other languages.

Today we live in a society that worships youth. There is a kind of cult of the new, the fast, the disposable. But I want to tell you that there is beauty in aging. Old age — which begins early for poor women in the hinterland — teaches another perception of the world. We learn to listen more than we talk. Measuring the value of a gesture. To respect fatigue. Accepting that not everything is solved.

Perhaps you have, in your time, overcome physical pain. Perhaps they have cures for diseases that today kill without mercy. Maybe they have longer, more comfortable lives. But this, by itself, does not guarantee wisdom. Wisdom, I think, comes from bonding with the other. With the other's time. With the suffering of the other. And that, I believe, will continue to be the most profound challenge of all existence.

If I came to Philosophy, it was because I felt that there was something that escaped the ready-made answers. Something he insisted on asking me, even when I didn't know what to answer. Philosophy was not a career choice, it was a way of being in the world. To look. To listen. To doubt.

I write now as if whispering something precious to a distant ear. Like someone who buries a seed in the hope that someone, one day, will find its fruits. What kind of world you will have, I don't know. But I sincerely hope that you know how to cultivate bonds. That they know how to listen to what is not said. That they know how to recognize the value of a letter written from the heart.

With every word I write, I feel that this letter is no longer just mine. It becomes an intertwining of voices: of the women who preceded me, of the friends with whom I shared silences, of the authors I read and who now inhabit me. Writing, for me, is a collective gesture. Although lonely, it is never done without company.

I've been thinking a lot about the idea of legacy. What do we leave behind when we leave? What remains of us when our names are erased? I have no possessions or possessions that pass from generation to generation. But I believe that the greatest legacy is the way we look at the other. How we touch the world with our words and actions. This touch, even if light, can last longer than we imagine.

If these lines survive time, perhaps you will find in them something that is not just remembrance, but presence. A woman who lived with doubts, with joy, with losses. A woman who thought, felt and wrote. A woman who was not a heroine, nor a martyr, nor a saint. Just someone who wanted to witness his passage through life.

I have wondered if, in your time, there will still be room for letters. For this type of writing that is not instantaneous, that requires delay, that asks for delivery. Perhaps everything is spoken by impulses, by images, by codes. Perhaps not even writing survives as we know it. But still, I want to believe that the need to communicate with the other will continue to exist.

Perhaps you have outgrown language as we understand it. Perhaps they speak through mental images, vibrations, frequencies. And perhaps, even so, they keep the memory of the words. Because words are more than instruments — they are worlds. They are ways of touching

the other. They are ways of saying "I was here" when we are no longer here.

At this moment, as I write, there is a warm sky over my city, but the clouds of the cold mornings will dissipate this heat soon in the evening. The cicadas sing. Sparrows group together in the late afternoon. There is something eternal in these cycles. Nature reminds me that we are not the center of anything. We are just an ephemeral expression of life. But even the ephemeral can leave a trace. Like this letter. Like this gesture.

I have always been moved by stories that did not make it into the books. The muffled voices, the forgotten bodies, the gestures of kindness that no one narrated. In my city, I met women who never studied Philosophy, but who knew about life more than many doctors. People who did not know how to write letters, but who wrote the world with their actions.

This letter is also for them. For the lives that did not make news, that were not celebrated in squares or avenues, but that sustained the world with silence, work and courage. Perhaps one day you too will wonder who took care of the world before you. And perhaps they will find traces of these anonymous hands in stories like mine.

Today there is a lot of talk about the "legacy of humanity", the "memory of civilization". But little is said about the conversations by the stove, the advice whispered in the yard, the hands that prayed for other

people's children, the ones that embroidered clothes for burials that could not be postponed. This silent humanity is what moves me. And it is she who writes to you.

It may be that, in your time, these rituals are lost. It may be that no more bodies are buried, nor are birthdays celebrated with cake and photography. It may be that the touch is no longer necessary. But if I can tell you something that seems true to me: the human resists in these small practices. He does not dwell only in progress, but in delicacy.

You who read me — whether human or not — carry, in some way, a heritage of affections. And this heritage has no DNA, no surname, no status. It's a breath. A gesture. One way of being with the other. A way of asking, as I ask now: "Are you there? Do you listen to me?"

If you listen, don't respond in a hurry. Read slowly. Perhaps this letter came long after its time, but still, if it touched something alive in you, then it was worth every word. Because writing, deep down, is this: offering without guarantees. Love without guarantees. Throw the bottle overboard.

At this moment, as I finish these words, I realize that I did not write only for the future. I also wrote for myself. To remind me of who I was, who I am, who I still try to be. Writing has this power: it gives us back what escapes us every day — meaning. Or, at least, the search for it.

I don't have children, as I said, but that has never stopped me from gestating feelings, giving birth to questions, from breastfeeding hopes. My great-nephews may one day find this letter and discover that the aunt who grew old between notebooks and books also dreamed of their future. And they may feel that they have been loved before they even understand what that means.

Philosophy taught me that all life is finite, but that not everything dies with death. Words survive. Ideas survive. Certain silences too. And that's why I keep writing, even though I know that time swallows everything. Because I believe, with all the fragility that makes me up, that some things resist. And sometimes a letter can be one of those things.

If in your time there are still schools, teachers, libraries, take care of them. If there are still trees, rivers, animals, respect them. If there are still hugs, don't despise them. If there are still questions, don't shut them up. But if all that has changed, and only words like this remain, may they serve you as affection that has crossed time. As a gesture of a woman who believed in the future.

The future – and not the future – is what moves me. The future is predictable, calculated, predicted by algorithms. The future is something else: it is what cannot be anticipated. It is that which arrives without asking permission. It is the birth of something absolutely new.

And for that, for something truly new to be born, it is necessary to make room. This letter is that opening.

I write knowing that I may never know if anyone has read it. And yet, I write. Because there are things that need to be said, even without an audience. There are words that need to be thrown in time, even without an answer. There are affections that need to be offered, even if they do not return. Such is love — and such is writing.

If you have come this far, reader who is yet to be born, receive my hug — a hug that is not given with your arms, but with words that touch slowly. This letter is not a time capsule, it is not a will, it is not a manual. It is a presence. A presence made of absence. It is the trace of someone who lived and wanted to leave a soft mark, like footprints in the sand that the wind soon undoes, but that for a moment were the way.

Petrolina is still cold in July 2025. But it feels very hot in the other months. From the window I see the river, the same one that bathed my grandparents. I think of time as this watercourse: it passes, but it remains. Names, fashions, regimes, devices pass. However, this eagerness for meaning remains. This vocation to communicate remains. There is the desire to touch and to be touched — even if by someone who has not even been born yet.

Perhaps this letter is read by a machine. Perhaps it is deciphered by a creature with another body, another logic, another language. Or perhaps by a curious young

woman, who finds her by chance in some digital repository, among so many forgotten bytes. Whoever you are, where you are, however you are: receive it as a gift.

A gift that does not require gratitude. Who doesn't ask for anything in return. A gift that neither teaches nor convinces. It just shares. It shares a time, a landscape, a way of existing. Share questions. He shares the gesture of trusting that, even in the face of uncertainty, it is still worth writing. It's still worth saying: I've been here.

I close with the awareness that there is no end point in letters like this. There is only one pause. A silence that invites you to continue. Who invites you to write your own letters, in your own time, in your own languages. Let them continue to say, write, think, dream — so that life, in its fleeting beauty, continues to be narrated.

With tenderness,  
a woman from the time of before,  
who believed in language as shelter,  
and in the future as a miracle.

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