

THE LETTER R

By: B.C. Pope

Day 12 — Outer Rig Line Up

My Lovely,

Today I sought words that could explain how I feel when I see your picture. As I have mentioned before, I only have the R section of an old encyclopedia. If I had a dictionary, I am sure this would be easier. I happened across the word reborn which means being birthed again as an act of cleansing or faith. Each time I wake on the rig I know I am alone. I see your picture above my bunk and my devotion to you is reborn. Your beauty washes over me, and I am clean once more.

I close this note with a vigor reborn by love. I count the days till my hitch is up, and I can leave this place.

Always in love,

Rinn

Day 38 – Drum Collection B

My Lovely,

Today's word is robotic. The book has a very long description of the term. For me, I know that everything I do here is robotic in nature. No creative thought. No alteration of designated tasks. Every action is so coldly mechanical in shape and form. I am not a robot, but here in this place my acts are robotic, and I hate it as much as I love you.

These letters are the only task that gives me a reason to feel human. I count my breaths as I write them. On average I take 83 breathes during the time I write to you. Every one of those breaths is filled love for you. I know it is just my imagination, but there are times I smell strawberries as I write. The red of your hair and sun on your skin must be like strawberries. I hope this does not impose too much upon you. I know, as my mind knows that a beauty like yours must smell of strawberries. I long to kiss your lips to taste of the wild growth in that endless field.

Always in love,

Rinn

Day 42 – Chemical Collection

My Lovely,

Today is a rough one. Hence, that is my word for the day. I have been scrubbing the inside of the tanks. Doing this, I must wear a full HAZMAT suit. The air is stale and wet in my mask. The suit cannot be ventilated, so the heat just builds as the sweat rolls off of me. It is rough and required. If I forget to complete this task, there will be an overflow, and I will die due to seepage. I want nothing more than to remove this suit and lay with you in the open air. Feeling the wind lick at the exposed areas of skin. The light steps of your fingers upon my chest as I breathe. Your hair draped around your face hung over me like a shade. Everything fresh, clean, and free. With you I am free.

Always in love,

Rinn

Day 101 – Sewage Pools

My Lovely,

I regret to inform you that I lost my pen. It is okay though I have found an alternative. Something crawled out of the pools today. It looked like a lizard but moved like a spider. I killed it and am now using the black blood it bled as ink. I also regret a hardship you may have in reading this letter, as I had to use an old drill bit for a pen. I will keep writing as long as the blood is liquid.

Always in love,

Rinn

Day 113 – Crew Quarters

I am stupid and reckless in my love for you. I did not follow company protocol for mail delivery. I now sit with every letter I have written you with no way of sending them. Maybe I could send them once I am back Earthside. Mail them out one by one every day so that you could receive them as if I had sent them from the refinery. I will be by your side as you read them so I could explain any confusion you might have. Though the point of writing these letters was to keep me sane knowing that a piece of my consciousness was with you.

I am so close to being with you. I am so close to ending my time here. I am so close to holding you in my arms feeling your heart beat with mine knowing my aloneness was nothing but the moments between those beats.

Always in love,

Rinn

Day 120 – Earth, Living Zone 12 – Apartment 3B

Dear Miss Gaverly,

I am writing you this message to conclude case number X45-75. As you mentioned in your halo message, you had no prior knowledge/ engagement with employee Trusal Rinn. However, according to his final will all of his belongings were to be delivered to you upon his death. Included in this package are his last paycheck (after loss deductions), a single picture of yourself, and a collection of correspondence written by Mr. Rinn to you.

The case is now closed and or business is concluded. We will not seek loss of revenue against you as Mr., Rinn's slacked work efficacy, and eventual death was apparently due to his obsession with you.

Sincerely,

L. K Harper, CFO Star Refinery Corporation

Day 1 – Living Room

Dear Rinn,

I finished reading the last of your letters. Who were you? The picture you held so dearly was taken as an encyclopedia stock photo. No matter my questions, it now hurts when I breathe. The love you thought you had for me in that horribly empty place. The longing you held to be with me. The sorrow in each word you wrote about me. I find it too much to bear. You seemed beautiful and imaginative and caring. If only you were here beside me to answer the unknown.

I am sorry, and I love you for it. Wherever your spirit is may it find peace in knowing I received these letters. Rest now, you are free.

Loving you after always,

Gwen