

## **A Letter To Myself Many Seasons Ago - Sridivya Tekumalla**

When I imagine you,  
You stand at the edge of summer,  
Along the rocks on the shoreline.  
Your legs are covered with sand,  
Your arms and face are stained with the sun.

I wonder how you imagine me,  
On the other side of the seasons.  
I hope I stand under the falling leaves,  
Surrounded by brown and gold.  
I hope the air turns white when it hits my breath.

Despite my hopes, I know you imagined me as spring.  
My parents have always preferred warmer weather.

I've been searched, poked and prodded, looking for you,  
I've had the dying leaves torn from my hair in hopes of  
Finding a single sapling. Every so often I look in the mirror,  
And I try to see green in my eyes  
Try to see the pink in my cheeks  
Try to see the shore along my smile.

A million shades of autumn just look like brown  
When you can't bring summer back.

I've grown older, I stand tall like the oak tree.  
Am I how you would have seen me?  
I feel my charred skin, my broken parts,  
Swaying in the wind, threatening to pull  
The earth with it as it topples.

There is a wooden picture frame of you hanging outside my bedroom door.  
I have been living in its shadow for three years now.

I thought I killed you many winters ago,  
And I held my head high at the thought.  
But I realise now you are still with me.  
Your wondrous lakes have turned to ice,  
The shadows beneath your fauna have grown long,  
I have moulded myself around you.  
Maybe that's okay.

I wish I could tell you to hold your chin up.  
I wish I could tell you we don't grow wearier  
As the years pass us by.  
But each new season is never the same.

Everything goes.  
The sunlight fades over the months,  
But the darkness never stays forever.  
We have so long to go, and even down the line,  
Your eyes will still tear at a new flower blossoming.

I'm so glad I came from you.  
I love you, hope you do too.