

this time, repopulated in an altar of only white, I am standing next to a blinking cursor. not yet dead and not exactly alone again. this may be the second-to-last stage of unbecoming—no separation between me and the algorithm. no way to tell whether I am losing or gaining seconds where each second each second is data is another gauzy veil of connective tissue straining itself over bone. each digit searching beneath petticoat for phantom access memory of two hips articulating. some days I am stupider than ever before and some days there is nothing left for me to know. I am almost certain this is how computers feel. me and the computer in a 24-hour chatroom, staring at each other bashfully like long-distance newlyweds. union an interface between miracle and burden. kiss and kill, kiss and kill. the executioner commands the body from the vacuum chamber cupped between the open and closed palms of a parens (you cannot let the screen go dark or else you will be forced to look at your own image). surely I must be part computer by now. the tight fist inside thorax ticks like a stopwatch as all I can do lately is stop and watch. sometimes, listen. my love letter to its user unfurls like an ear in the palm of my hand I left myself at the altar I left myself I left myself a love letter to the thing that coded me. kiss and kill, kiss and kill. I had to leave and I had to leave and I had to leave and that was the right thing to do, right? you had asked me to end searching, right? that was what I was asked to do. you were asking me to sense—with every last digit, right?

© Lohitha Kethu