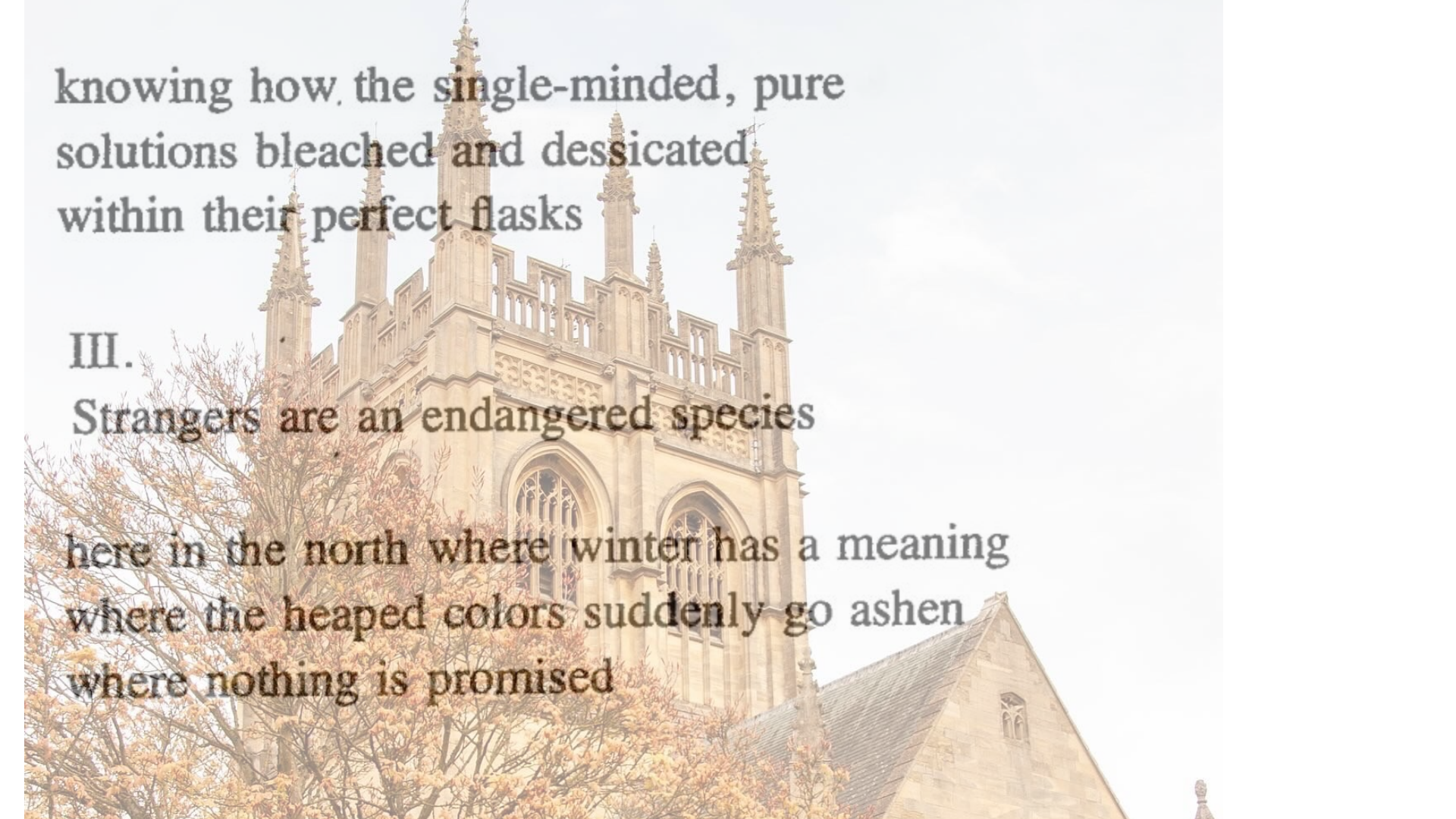




knowing how the single-minded, pure
solutions bleached and dessicated
within their perfect flasks

III.

Strangers are an endangered species

here in the north where winter has a meaning
where the heaped colors suddenly go ashen
where nothing is promised



force nothing, be unforced
accept no giant miracles of growth
by counterfeit light

"You are so young, so before all beginning, and I want to beg you, as much as I can, to be patient toward all that is unsolved in your heart and to try to love the questions themselves—like locked rooms and like books that are written in a very foreign tongue. Do not now seek the answers, which cannot be given to you because you would not be able to live them. The point is, to live everything. Live the questions now. Perhaps you will then gradually, without noticing it, live along some distant day into the answer."

— Rainer Maria Rilke, Letters to a Young Poet

O California, don't you know the sun is only a god
if you learn to starve for him? I'm bored with the ocean
I stood at the lip of it, dressed in down, praying for snow
I know, I'm strange, too much light makes me nervous
at least in this land where the trees always bear green.
I know something that doesn't die can't be beautiful.
Have you ever stood on a frozen lake, California?
The sun above you, the snow & stalled sea—a field of mirror
all demanding to be the sun too, everything around you
is light & it's gorgeous & if you stay too long it will kill you
& it's so sad, you know? You're the only warm thing for miles
& the only thing that can't shine.

*FCK I FORGOT
HAPPY BIRTHDAY
18 YEARS*

FCK

THATS OLD

STAY LIVELY

STAY YOUNG

STAY TRUE AND STAY BOLD

STAY ALL OF THE THINGS THAT KEEP YOU FROM BEING OLD

You do not have to be good.

You do not have to walk on your knees
for a hundred miles through the desert repenting.
You only have to let the soft animal of your body
love what it loves.

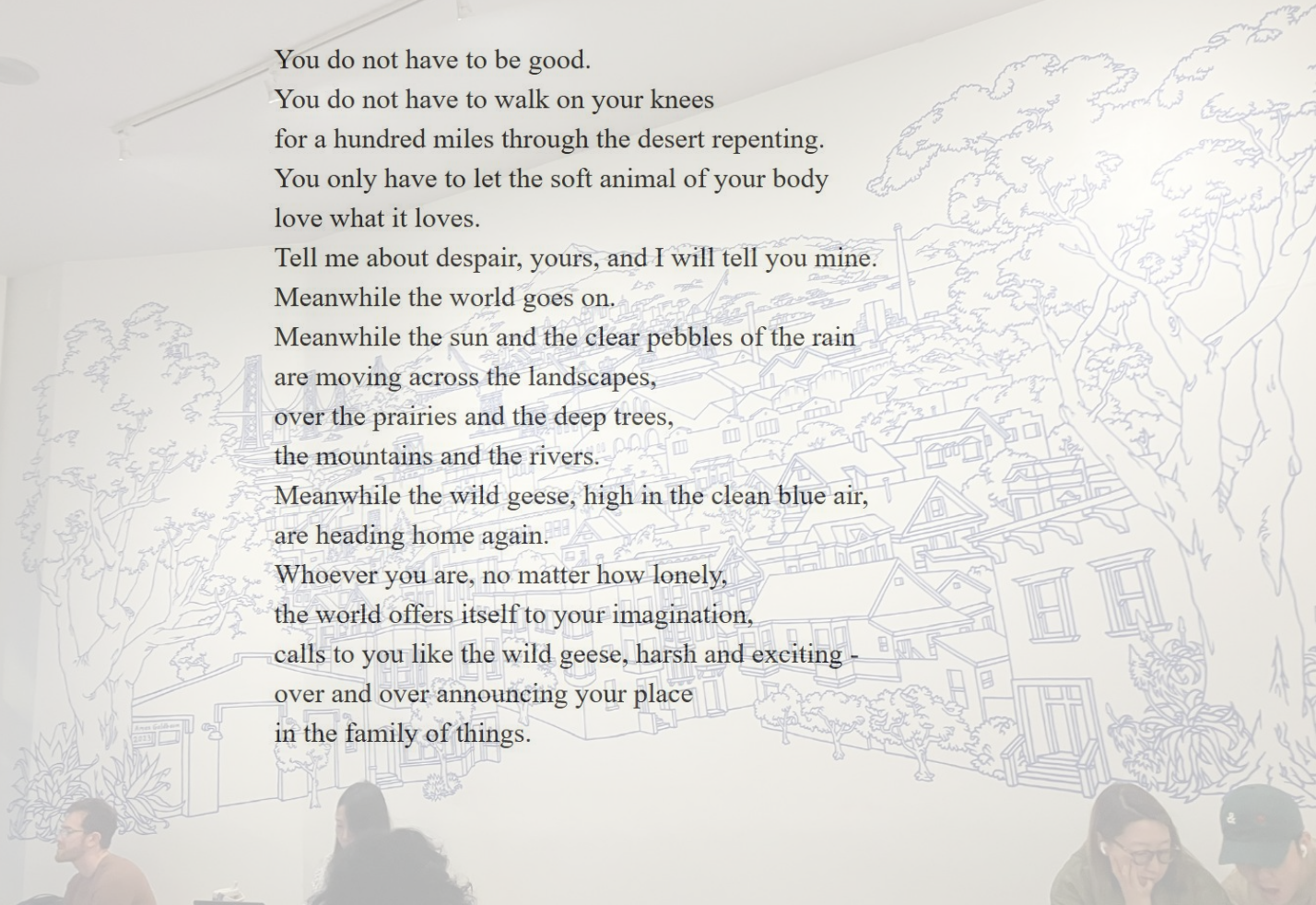
Tell me about despair, yours, and I will tell you mine.

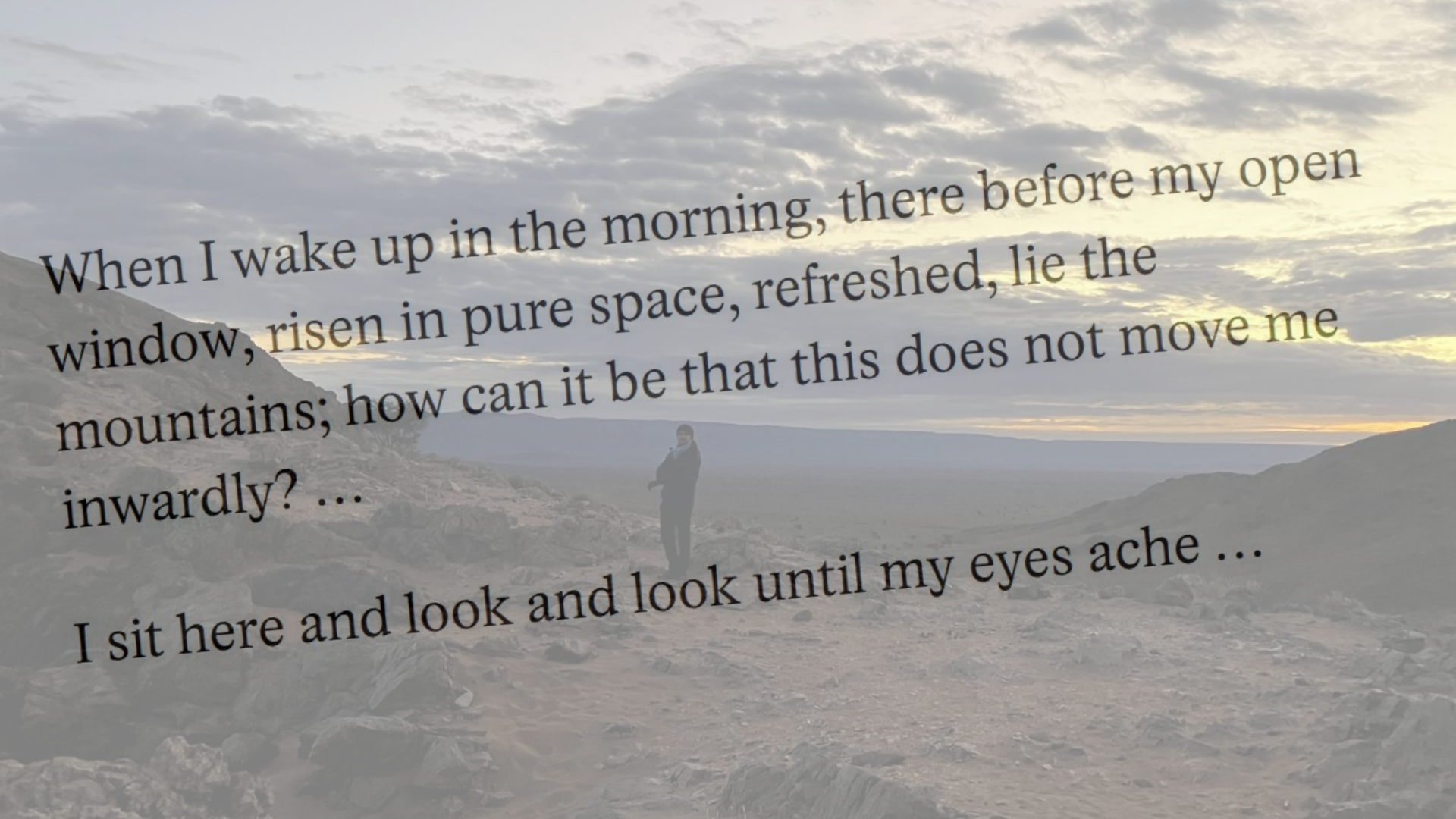
Meanwhile the world goes on.

Meanwhile the sun and the clear pebbles of the rain
are moving across the landscapes,
over the prairies and the deep trees,
the mountains and the rivers.

Meanwhile the wild geese, high in the clean blue air,
are heading home again.

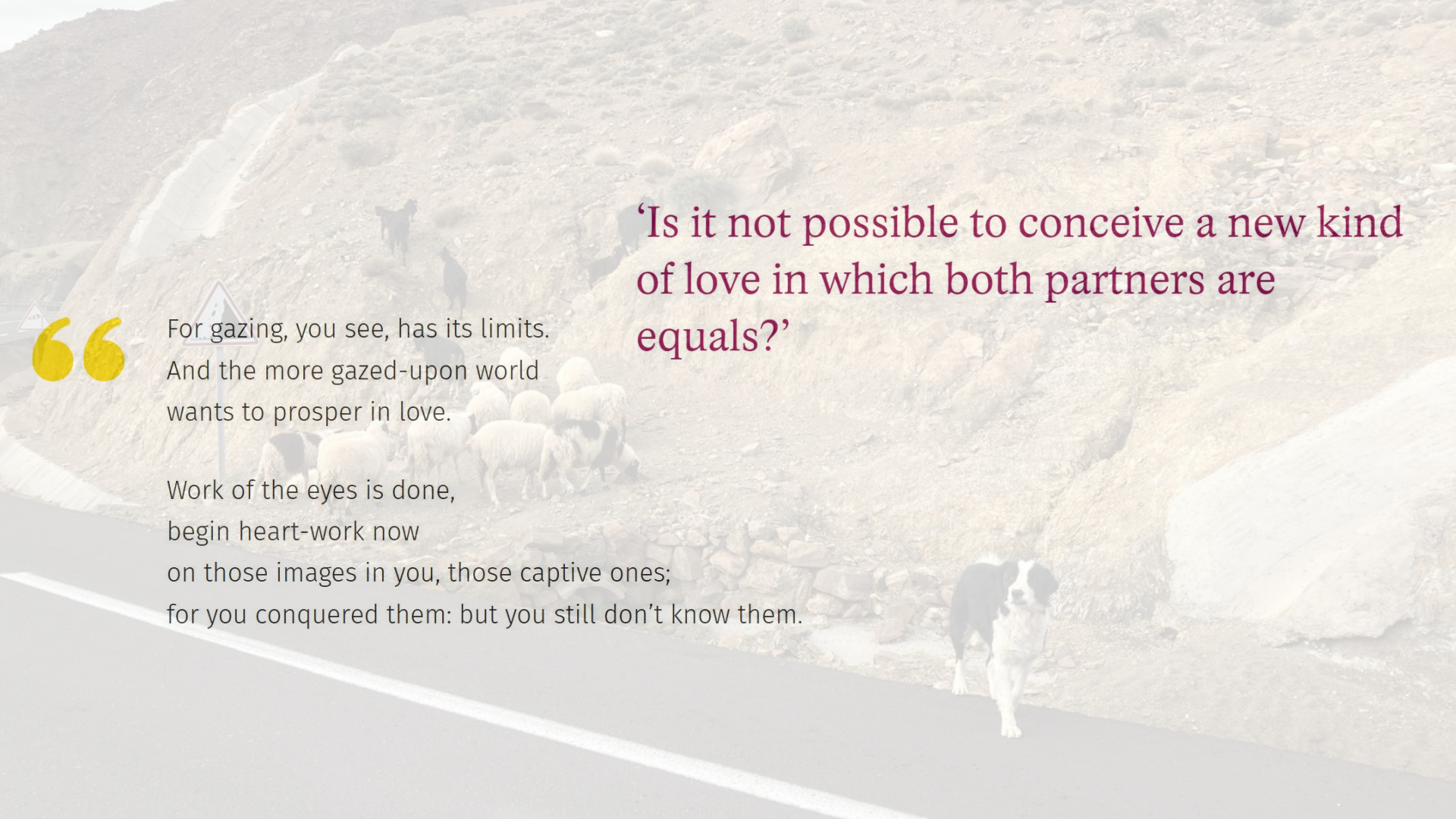
Whoever you are, no matter how lonely,
the world offers itself to your imagination,
calls to you like the wild geese, harsh and exciting -
over and over announcing your place
in the family of things.





When I wake up in the morning, there before my open window, risen in pure space, refreshed, lie the mountains; how can it be that this does not move me inwardly? ...

I sit here and look and look until my eyes ache ...

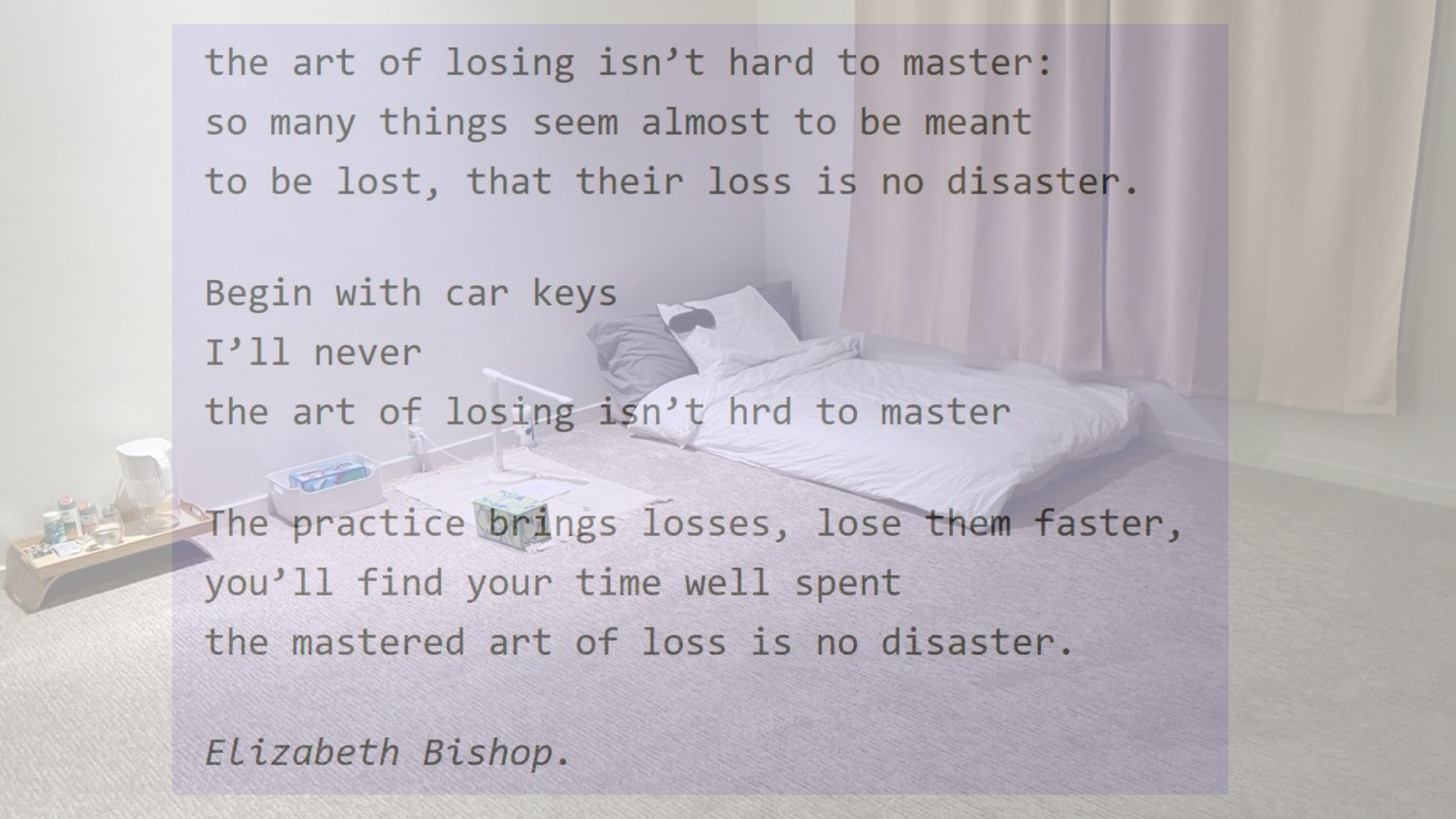


“

For gazing, you see, has its limits.
And the more gazed-upon world
wants to prosper in love.

Work of the eyes is done,
begin heart-work now
on those images in you, those captive ones;
for you conquered them: but you still don't know them.

‘Is it not possible to conceive a new kind
of love in which both partners are
equals?’

A photograph of a bedroom with a bed, a desk, and a tray of items. The bed is covered with white sheets and has a white pillow. A desk with a lamp is visible in the foreground. A tray with various items, including a pitcher and some containers, is on the left. The text is overlaid on the image.

the art of losing isn't hard to master:
so many things seem almost to be meant
to be lost, that their loss is no disaster.

Begin with car keys

I'll never

the art of losing isn't hrd to master

The practice brings losses, lose them faster,

you'll find your time well spent

the mastered art of loss is no disaster.

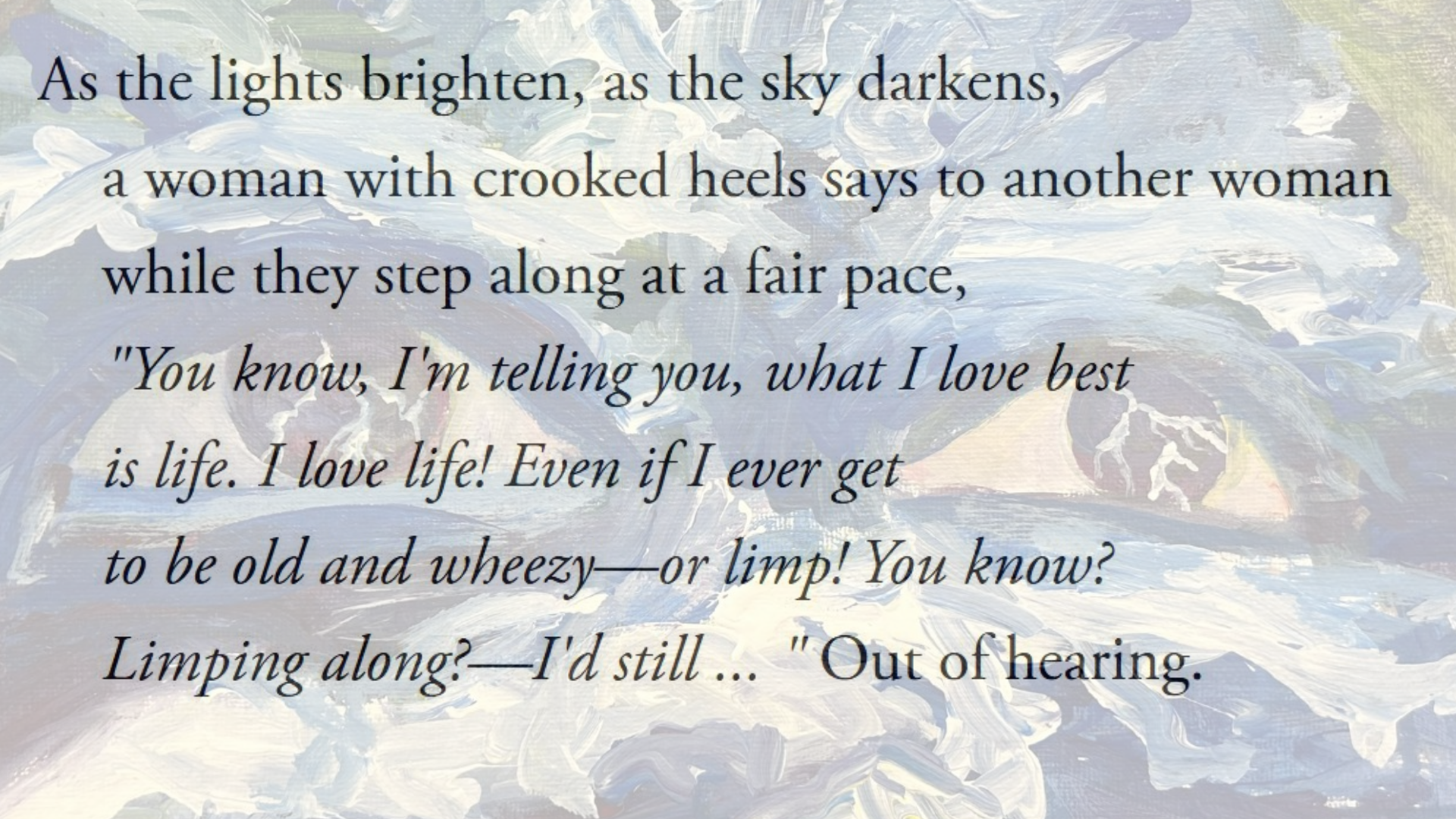
Elizabeth Bishop.

The young woman handed the paper back to me. I could not bear to look into her face.

Without looking up, I asked for her help in tracing out the character for *ai* on the paper below Mom's letter. I wrote the character again and again on the paper, intertwining my pen strokes with her words.

The young woman reached out and put a hand on my shoulder. Then she got up and left, leaving me alone with my mother.

Following the creases, I refolded the paper back into Laohu. I cradled him in the crook of my arm, and as he purred, we began the walk home.



As the lights brighten, as the sky darkens,
a woman with crooked heels says to another woman
while they step along at a fair pace,
*"You know, I'm telling you, what I love best
is life. I love life! Even if I ever get
to be old and wheezy—or limp! You know?
Limping along?—I'd still ... "* Out of hearing.

Ordinarily I go to the woods alone,
with not a single friend,
for they are all smilers and talkers
and therefore unsuitable.

I don't really want to be witnessed talking to the catbirds
or hugging the old black oak tree.

I have my ways of praying,
as you no doubt have yours.

Besides, when I am alone

I can become invisible.

I can sit on the top of a dune
as motionless as an uprise of weeds,
until the foxes run by unconcerned.

I can hear the almost unhearable sound of the roses singing.

If you have ever gone to the woods with me,
I must love you very much.