

Site With No Real Name – Ara Dolatian
Exhibition essay: Talia Smith
c3 Contemporary Art Space - January 2020

My eyes feel thick, swollen.

It is 33 degrees at 2am.

I get up and go outside but the air is just as thick out there. I can taste ash in my mouth and I realise the fires are getting close again. I cannot tell if it is sweat or tears running down my face.

I am just so tired.

Sorry for my late reply.

Apologies.

When I was young there was a tsunami warning, my Mum drove us down to the beach to watch. I remember pressing my face against the window watching the rise of the ocean and being scared and excited. Nothing happened but as we drove away I kept looking out the window just in case. My ancestors gave back to the land just as much as they took away from it. My other ancestors decimated forests and indigenous people to make way for houses and their way of life.

Sorry to have missed this e-mail.

Once my parents took me to a friend's house where they had their own telescope, we sat out at night shivering taking turns looking at the moon and the stars. Space scares me as much as the ocean does. The expanse. The depth. The unknown.

I think that maybe the Earth is giving up. It's had enough now.

My ancestors based progress on how it would benefit a community, now it's the individual. I wonder if there is a way we can come back from that. Maybe we were always just built to fail, to stumble, to crush, to fold in ourselves, consume everything and everyone until there is nothing left.

Maybe I am just tired.

I'm sorry. It's late.

Do you think my Grandmother thought of the future of her children and what it could be? Or do you think that maybe she too was just so tired and all she wanted was that last bite of a perfect orange while looking out into her backyard as if she knew it would be the last time.

The scrape of my knee against the concrete leaving imprints of stones and dirt and sand. Every time I move my knee the wound reopens. I guess my Mother was right, I should have watched where I was going.

Sorry.