

Dear Andreas,

by Glynnis Eldridge

Dear Andreas,

My mom is asking me to come home.

They found you amongst the ferries, down the street from the pile of unearthed bedrock I lived on as a child. It took two months before you showed up again. You left everyone scared, running to the bridges, but there was no one. You floated by the school we both went to. I would see you in the halls with the Sams and all the others who intimidated us with all their extra months and the added height and wisdom time brought even to fourth graders. Andreas, we took the bus together, the M-15 going downtown. We took it with Molly and Aukosh and Nikhil and Raoul. There were others, like my brother and the girl who pierced her nose herself in third grade, and Britt, and the bus driver. Andreas I think about your voice and I can't think about how it sounds underwater. Andreas I have been wanting to go home for so long. Andreas I thought they would find you on land in a different part of the same city with a different appearance, a disguise, different beliefs or something that kept you on your feet. They said they were able to identify you from what remained of you. They said you were face up, bobbing up between the orange boats. I can't look at the ferries anymore. I thought the city would always feel like the only home I could ever settle into but Andreas I am afraid of your unhappiness. I thought I saw you drive by me in Massachusetts but I decided it wasn't you. Someone thought they saw you asking for water in DC. What was the river like Andreas? When I was little I dreamed of diving in with scuba gear but the darkness and temperature of the deep water was too much so I observed surfaced fish in a lab on a pier on the Hudson. Do you remember the view from the library? Do you remember throwing bottles filled with messages over the playground fence and waiting for a reply? Do you remember dolphins swimming downtown? Do you remember the fall? Did you watch the water get closer? They taught us how to swim with our classmates in fifth grade. You

learned a year before I did. "Everyone looks the same in a bathing suit and cap and with goggles for eyes" is what I remember most. The water at the pool was too warm for laps. The floor was wet even when it wasn't. I had yellow sandals and felt at home almost naked. Andreas, what happened? Sometimes my friends talk about going away like you, and their talk makes me think about it too, but I think about the black hole that formed when you vanished, and it's been growing and pulling everything into itself. I try to look at it objectively. It only comes into focus when I see it peripherally.

Dear Andreas,
I'll keep looking for you amongst the ferries.

