

# UC Merced

## The Vernal Pool

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A Letter to Myself

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## A Letter to Myself

My heart stiffens when I write.

“What the flip!” I shake my head

Gripped by terror, “...she was funny,” were the only words I could utter as I journal the comedic presentation of my supervisor today. We were at the California Room gathered in a circle, she mentioned a joke that made me laugh heavily, and I forgot what she said but that’s not the point...

I don’t understand why words don’t flow out of my hand. Perhaps it’s my fear that the words I use to share an experience will be misunderstood and therefore I, as a human being, will be devalued for my ignorance and my poor expression. And it’s perhaps out of that fear my brain shuns a lake of words, damned from rushing out of my mouth and even more damned from rushing out on paper. When words do come out, the sentences and ideas they portray are cluttered, incoherent, weak beyond doubt.

“...she was hilarious.” Fuck, stuck again.

Who would’ve thought writing for myself would be so hard. I’ve always enjoyed the thought of writing outside the grasps of academia but now with my rediscovered 2-3 hours of free time between college classes I’m starting to miss it. It’s only been 3 months since I took my last writing class and 17 years since I took my first which was before pre-k when my mom thought it was better for me to start writing at the age of 3 not the age of 4. I was armed with a red crayon and those standard gray paper for kids with lines two inches apart, I was motivated by my mother to start early. She swears I’m gifted but, I just think: “...she was hilarious. [and she still is]” because I don’t think so.

While I do admire and appreciate my mother’s efforts to give me a relative advantage over other kids and while I do applaud and celebrate my 17 years of A++ “academic” writing practice, I don’t think I’ve advanced far in my writing education to be confident in letting my words flow and express who I am and what I’ve been through. It’s tough committing to a few words that allow others to enter and understand my reality, the world as I see it in their eyes, reimagined and experienced by their thought, and felt by their heart. I have to be careful. Otherwise, I’m misunderstood by them and, worse, devalued by their conceived notions of my ignorance through my words...

“TO HELL WITH THEM!” I shouted giggling—they DON’T KNOW I’ve been practicing with my red crayon and pre-pre-k standard two-inch wide line gray paper since I was 3!!

--But shucks, evidently enough, my writing doesn't know that either