

REALMATTER



#22

All will be April



REAL**MATTER**

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Preface

William Durante was my maternal grandfather.

I never met him, but my mother chose my middle name, 'William,' after him.

I have therefore always carried William with me.

Apart from that, I know very little about this grandfather of mine. I know that he was one of the first taxi drivers in Naples and I know that he once agreed to take a customer all the way to Paris.

And I know that he couldn't bear to be alone after the untimely death of his beloved wife Anna.

My mother told me about her parents through the tale of this love - without reservation, without excess and without restraint.

My grandfather William was sent to Africa as a soldier in the late 1930s. He was forced to leave his wife and newborn daughter behind to take part in a military campaign on a faraway continent.

From there, he sent these letters to Anna.

In them, I recognised and rediscovered the love my mother used to tell me about. A love that, as William said, does not die.

Asmara 1938

In the hospital, not knowing how to pass the time, I amused myself by writing a few things, only for you.

I am not a poet, but this great melancholy - especially in a hospital - somewhat inspired me.

The heart shattered by distance dictated these poor verses, and I wrote them down.

1. All will be April

When we meet again, let it be April!
With its pale summer
And with our youth, there will blossom again
- with new cheerfulness -
all our love.

All will be April
in the year and in the heart.

Sweet thoughts,
dreams and tales of yesterday,
tales of love.

Everything will
re-live in the heart
the enchantment that was spring.

When we meet again,
all that we have already suffered
We will not have suffered in vain.

With my hand in yours,
we will resume our journey,
Nor will we ask where we are going.

As long as we go there together, it will be good.

We will walk on
and the sunset will be like dawn,
and living will be divine.

We will live dreaming not to die,
I will live for Anna and for Maria.

This will happen.
When we meet again.

2. Fever

Fever, but little.
Drowsiness, much.
Pain that is not pain.
But only melancholy.

Longing for you,
who are not beside me.

Memories of happier days
- too vivid -
in a heart that does not know how
nor wants to forget.

Fever, little.
Pain that is not pain.

3. Sleepless

Tonight I cannot sleep.
The clear stars smile,
embroidering a serene sky,
awakening in my heart
immense melancholy.

I would weep,
but of what I do not know.

How painful to dream of you,
to be far away from you,
unable to caress your hand,
unable to kiss your mouth.

On the door of the heart
bangs the cold hand of dawn.

The first dull light
dilutes every sound.

4. Farther and farther away

Strays from every path,
searching for a star,
pursuing a chimera,
believing in spring.

Onward, onward,
the ascent is gentle
for those who climb and sing.

Our song is in vain,
we march on and never reach;
we journey towards another shore
farther and farther away.

But who grieves?

Troop of unrepentant dreamers,
walk on without sorrow,
onward, walking, always onward,
will it ever come to pass?

Who cares!
Each one who falls,
to others will leave the way:
wonderful legacy.

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