For Your Birthday I Got You The Human Condition

The human body is not comfortable for me, but you wouldn't let me close my eyes to these, if you were here: the gape of our mouths and hungry, angry bodies. Ceramic or flesh, I am surrounded only by strangers, all of us standing, talking, walking, eating, and no one is looking at art. From here I see dye jobs growing out in the crowd, grotesque, tortuous apertures and parts oddly placed.

I know, I know how we seek to collect something, anything, even ourselves amid the chaos of days, radiation of stars, stones, fallout.

I know we wish only for protection, unlikely and lovely limbs, somewhere a throat. We are warned again and again the ceramics are fragile but walking among them, I am the one who is broken, my pages filling with arrows pointing at absence, writing this letter to friends I half-imagine and copying down someone’s birthday card that reads, *Notice that you are looking at a future version of yourself and you wonder where you are.*

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