

At a Marathon gas station in Sparta, Kentucky,  
I must make my decision.

I sit in my tiny silver Chevy Spark,  
My black lab mix behind me,  
Debating what to do.  
North or South?

It is not too late  
(Or is it?)

To turn South  
To return to Nashville  
Squash my desire for polyamory  
Resign myself to the marriage we have  
With all its flaws and its warmth  
All its benefits and history.

I'm scared to continue North  
Away from you  
Toward my parents  
Who will never know why our marriage is ending  
Who will never read these words  
Who will never know me  
Because they cannot know me  
Because they cannot accept me.

You accept me.  
But you cannot accept a marriage  
That allows other loves.

Three years' separation  
Living different lives  
In different states  
    Alone  
Sex with other people  
    Alone  
Money earned, kept, and spent  
    Alone  
Individual investments  
    Alone  
Sleeping each night  
    Alone  
And yet our love remains  
    Alone  
And that love alone draws me

Back to you in Nashville

How can I end our marriage  
When such deep love remains?

Some say real love is exclusive.  
But we both know that isn't true.  
Yet you cannot be with someone  
Who isn't only with you,  
And I cannot be with someone  
Who wants my exclusive love.  
And though it hurts  
And though I know  
I am deciding  
To fling my life's course  
Into an unpredictable trajectory  
That may well end in sorrow

I must  
Trust  
My heart  
This impulse  
My desire  
This path  
I must honor  
Myself,  
My authentic Self.  
My authentic sense of Love  
My authentic sense of Life

And though it hurts  
Sick to my stomach

I choose North  
And weep at my decision.

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