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You: Hello

Me: Hi there.

You: What time is it there?

Me: It's early evening. The light outside is full and warm.

You: Is it hot out?

Me: It's the end of the summer, so the days are still warm, but nights are cool and perfect.

You: Has it been a good summer for you?

Me: Yes. A good balance of work and relaxation. I've been trying to get out of town as much as possible.

You: There was a real heat wave last month in New York and in other parts of the country. Does the heat bother you?

Me: It makes me very aware of my body.

You: How so?

Me: Besides sweating, I am much more aware of how I reside in my clothes. If I'm wearing shorts-- where they hit my calves, my skin against pants, socks around my feet and ankles, and the solidity of my shoes, the fit of my shirt around my neck, shoulders, and especially armpits, how my rib cage protrudes and causes my shirts to stick to my chest, the elastic of my underwear and how the fabric gathers and moves in opposition to my thighs as I walk.

You: Is it all external?

Me: Well, I hope it's not too much for your readers, but when I would wake up in the morning and go to the bathroom, I would be reminded that my insides are just as hot as the weather outside. This sensation always seemed more explicit than waking up to a pillowcase damp from a night's sweat. The temperature inside and outside.

You: Is there an erotics to the heat?

Me: Absolutely! I started dating someone over the summer and in kissing him, I am also connected to his interior heat. The mouth is where temperatures (for possible or monitored fevers) are taken, and this signal relays what's going on internally.

You: The mouth is a messenger.

Me: Definitely. In kissing, there's also the desire to enter into one another. An oral, yet non-verbal, connection. The mouth is unlike the rest of the body. The absence of skin and the alien quality of exposed muscle, moisture, liquid, and textures all seem related to my bodily awareness of the heat.

You: Is there a vulnerability?

Me: I don't feel vulnerable from the heat, but a mouth is vulnerable. Not as vulnerable as our eyes.

You: Eyes and mouths both send messages to the inside.

Me: And they are both central to understanding, or maybe *translating* is a better word.

You: More so than touch?

Me: That's tough. If I were smarter, I could insert a good Merleau-Ponty quote, but we seem to be talking more in the moment.

You: Would you rather see, taste, or touch something?

Me: It depends on what's being offered.

-Laughter-

You: In terms of heat, the inside/outside, and the vulnerability/erotics of the body--what would be your preferred guide to it all?

Me: I suppose seeing is taken for granted, because I'm always looking at something from when I wake up to when I go to sleep. But, there are those moments when looking becomes revelatory.

You: Like what?

Me: Seeing something for the first time. A new body. The summer heat, or seasonal change in general is felt more than touched. I get annoyed at sweating and feeling my skin. It's separate from my eyes. My head doesn't sweat anywhere near as much as my chest and back, but my ears get much colder in the winter than my chest does due to their exposure. I see differently because of the seasonal change and length of daylight. Taste is a constant, but I want to eat different foods in different quantities depending on the season.

You: Does that taste the most important?

Me: I would choose sight. We can feel with our eyes. I would be sad to not taste something delicious or sweet ever again, but I'd rather see it.

You: Probably not an uncommon choice for a visual artist.

Me: Probably... My mother has no sense of smell.

You: Since birth?

Me: No. She had a bad bike accident in her 30s and lost it due to a head injury.

You: Does it affect her sense of taste?

Me: I don't think so, but I'm not sure, actually.

You: We didn't discuss smell or hearing.

Me: Hearing is very important, but I don't prioritize smelling. Sight, hearing, touch, taste, and then smell.

You: There you go.

Me: That's it.