Writing Water
An Untimely Academic Novella

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"This recent turn to self-conscious concern about the social acts of writing has led to a clear demarcation between writing as a reflection of research to writing as formative – as shaping the very knowledge (or life narrative) we are trying to present. (Plummer 2001, 171)

"One curious breed of life document, largely neglected by the social scientist, is the writing that takes on the form of a fictional novel but which is dealing with true events fully researched by the author." (Plummer 2001, 56)

"Most of the western human sciences are 'verbal' and structured through narratives and the written word: (...) Yet we also inhabit worlds of other senses – of sight and touch, of sound and smell." (Plummer 2001, 58)
A trilogy of untimely academic novellas

- The Professor’s Chair: An Untimely Academic Novella (Life Writing Vol. 7. No. 2: 155-168)

- The Snow Angel and Other Imprints. An Untemily Academic Novella (International Review of Qualitative Research Vol. 3. No. 1: 103-124)

- Writing Water. An Untimely Academic Novella (in the process of being written)
A Textual and Visual Methodological Approach

- Perkins Gilman’s The Yellow Wallpaper (1892) and Cixous’ Enter the Theatre (2004)
- Academic poetic language
- Letters to a friend
- Photography /Visual symbolism
- Documentary writing
- Memory work
- I/She, integrating/shifting different writing strategies.
Had it not been too late, I would have claimed I am writing water,
In the age of untimeliness.
The letter is sent too soon, too late.
The recipient has moved.

Waves,
Woes,
Hope.

Had it not been too late,
I would have claimed that I am writing water.

Through all uncountable years of metaphoric captivity I was always writing water;
but it was just now when you were leaving with the train and the lake through rain at our faces, that I was astonished to know this.
Unseen, in the season of speechlessness,
When the ice covers the surface,
Coldness speaks the language of time,
Written in the layers of ice, cracks, breaking the line.

Had it not been too late,
I would have claimed that I am writing water.


Dear Maj,

I write to you with a troubled mind. I have reached my goal to achieve a position as a PhD, but I worry about my health. I suffer from terrible nightmares about women who have their eyes and mouths covered by some kind of tape. I sometimes hear a peculiar sound from the bedroom where I keep the chair which I brought home from the department. To be honest I actually stole it and had to make up a lie to my colleagues that I had never seen it in the corridor. The odd thing is that I took it in bright daylight when I arrived early one morning. Universities can be the emptiest spaces and this particular morning and I have to say it was indeed timely! But to continue to tell you about the peculiar sound from the room, I cannot help going there to investigate what the sound really is. The worst thing is that every time I do so I am struck by an intense feeling that someone has visited and just left. I need you to search through the room when you arrive. What should I do without you? There is no one else I can share the uneasiness of emotions that life has brought. Looking forward to talk to you face to face soon!

Love, Mona
She is lying on the frozen ground, embraced by soft, dry, powdery snow.

Face touches sky.
Arms and legs spread out.
The language of folding cloth marks a temporal figure.
Carefully rise to upstanding position,
Hold balance and step out of the imprint,
Watch the contours of a Snow Angel.

Snow beneath her jacket; a miniature stream of water is running down her neck. Changing form and silently disappearing.

A bodily imprint; white on white.
Creation of the timely; dissolvable by time.
Translations of body and landscape.
Once, when she thought she had written, she found her body surrounded by grayish blue, the bluest grey of all colors there were at all times. She is standing on the soft grass in the morning light, looking at the brownish landscape of stones. Making a decision; turning her back on grief.