

LA FLORA

Already Here

A letter to the listener.

Before you begin — The meditations were written to be met without explanation. If you have not yet listened to the album, you may want to do that first. The letter will be here when you want to know more. But there is no wrong order — some find the meditations deeper once they trust where the album is taking them.

You do not have to reach for what is already here.

The aliveness. The belonging. The kindness that is already moving through you. These are not things to arrive at, or earn, or become ready for. They have been here the whole time — under the reaching, waiting to be noticed.

You might come to this album on a day when everything in you is reaching. When it feels as though you have to become someone, or arrive somewhere, before you are allowed to rest. When a question will not resolve, and keeps asking. When the world feels like something you are standing outside of. When something is changing and cannot be held, and you are tired from holding it. The album does not answer any of that. It stays beside you while you notice that you are already here — already alive, already inside the world you thought you had to reach.

The meditations do not assume you have done this before, or know anything in particular, or are trying to get somewhere. They meet you where you are. The meeting is the thing.

A brief note for those arriving here without context: La Flora is a contemplative practice — a library of guided meditations, organized into albums, and a newsletter called Field Notes. Already Here is the first album. The letter you are reading or listening to is its companion.

The meditations descend from voices I have carried for a long time. Clarice Lispector most of all — I came to her young, and she is the closest of them. Leonard Cohen and Nina Simone arrived later, and stayed. You will meet each of them inside the tracks, named as they arrive. They are not here as teachers. They are here the way a line from a book can stay with a person for years and quietly change how they see — as company.

None of this is accidental. La Flora's whole practice refuses to explain. The plants explain themselves by growing. The poets by their lines. The meditations only by being met. This letter is the one place where I name what they were built from, and why. The meditations themselves stay quiet. They are the experience, and explaining would diminish them. But the work behind them is real, and I would like you to know about it.

Track 1

For when you feel cut off, numb, or like you're watching life instead of living it.

Hear Me With Your Whole Body is the album's opening. It begins not with an instruction but with a recognition: that the listener has already arrived. Nothing needed to be prepared. Something was already listening.

From there the meditation moves the listener from observer to participant. Lispector's line — "hear me with your whole body" — proposes that hearing is not only an ear's job. The skin hears. The spine hears. The heart hears. The border where the body ends softens. By the end, the meditation has named what it has been showing the whole time: *you are not inside the world. you are occurring with it.*

That is the album's first proposition. Everything that follows rests on the listener's willingness to consider it.

Track 2

For when you can't fix it, can't let go, and can't stop turning it over.

The Intelligence of Surrender stays near the unanswered. The questions it sits with are the ones the meditation does not pretend to resolve: *why this, why now, why me*. Instead of answering them, the meditation proposes that a question, held long enough, becomes a kind of company.

The intelligence the title names is the body's. The heart has never once asked permission to continue. The lungs do not wait for belief. Most of the listener is already living by trust — and surrender, in this meditation, is not defeat but a quiet recognition of that fact.

Lispector again, from *Água Viva*: “nothing is more difficult than surrendering to the instant. That difficulty is human pain. It is ours.” The meditation does not erase the difficulty. It stays beside it. Its closing line — *and still, life arrives* — is the one I keep returning to.

Track 3

For loneliness and the feeling of standing apart.

In Love We Disappear takes its title from Leonard Cohen: “we are so lightly here; it is in love that we are made; in love we disappear.” The disappearance Cohen names is not loss. It is the dissolving of the position from which the listener stands apart.

The meditation places the listener among other living things. Somewhere a tree is breathing through its leaves. Somewhere roots are holding in darkness. Somewhere water is traveling unseen. The listener is no different from any of them. The same world that moves the rivers moves the listener's blood. This does not diminish anyone. It places them. Not at the center. Not outside. Within. The meditation closes with what may be its quietest claim: *the world has not changed, only your distance from it*.

Track 4

For when you're hard on yourself.

Everything Began With a Yes is the album's longest meditation, and its loving-kindness practice — but built differently than most. Most loving-kindness practices ask the meditator to generate good wishes outward. This one begins by noticing that goodwill is already moving through the world.

The phrase comes from Lispector's *The Hour of the Star*: “everything in the world began with a yes. One molecule said yes to another molecule and life was born.” The meditation opens before the listener was named, before they were expected. Life was already underway. The consent that began everything was quiet, ordinary, unheroic — and has not stopped. From that recognition, the wishes flow. *May all that lives be held in some measure of gentleness. May all that trembles find some shelter. May all that is wounded meet some tenderness.* The wishes are offered outward — to sleeping things, to small lives hidden in grass, to those who grieve, to those who keep watch through the night.

Then, near the end, the wishes are turned toward the listener too. The meditation's closing line returns to where it began: *everything is still beginning.*

Track 5

For when you feel you have to do more to prove you care. A loving-kindness meditation.

Sometimes Kindness Is Simply Staying is the album's most intimate meditation. If *Track 4* widens to all that lives, this one narrows to one person — or to one's own self. The listener brings someone to mind. Someone they love. Someone carrying something heavy. Or themselves. The person is not approached as a problem to solve, or as someone who needs to be fixed. Only as someone who is alive and deserving of gentleness.

The wishes follow — quiet, unhurried, the kind one might make privately, for someone who cannot hear them. Then the same wishes are turned inward. The meditation's closing line names what the practice has been the whole time: *sometimes kindness is simply staying*. Attention, offered without ceremony, is itself a form of love.

Track 6

For loss, change, and the fear of letting go.

Everything Must Change is the quiet center of the album, carried by Nina Simone. The song gave the meditation its title. Her memoir, *I Put a Spell on You*, gave it the line underneath: “what kept me sane was knowing that things would change, and it was a question of keeping myself together until they did”. The meditation does not console. It does not ask the listener to accept anything. It asks the listener to look.

What it looks at is change. What alters, what passes, what cannot be kept. The voice in this meditation is different from the others — observational, plain, sitting near what moves without trying to steady it. Nothing here is fought, and nothing is resolved. Only witnessed. The meditation closes by naming where the listener has been the whole time: *not outside change. Inside it.*

Track 7

For when your mind feels noisy and scattered. The closing meditation — the only one with eyes open.

One Living Field is the closing meditation, and the only one in the album that begins with eyes open. The listener is asked not to look for anything — only to let seeing happen. The field arrives with the inhale. The boundary loosens with the exhale.

What the meditation does next is ask the listener to look for the watcher

inside. To notice whether there really is such a place, or whether it is mostly a habit. And if the habit relaxes, what remains.

What remains is what the album has been pointing toward from the first breath. One movement. One openness. Appearance and awareness without a clear edge between them. The meditation closes plainly: *and you are here.*

That is the album.

What the album does not do is part of what it is. The meditations will not coach the listener on posture, or breath, or attention. They will not say what should be felt. They will not deliver transformation, or arrival, or any of the outcomes meditations nowadays tends to promise. The familiar phrases that have come to stand for contemplative practice — “letting go”, “being present”, “noticing without judgment” — appear nowhere in them. Not because those phrases are wrong, but because they have been spoken so many times they no longer arrive anywhere.

The meditations also will not interpret themselves. They will not state their argument, or announce what they are doing, or tell the listener what to take from them. That work happens here, in this letter. The meditations themselves remain silent.

What they do, in place of all that, is sit alongside. The listener is trusted to be present because they are. The meditations ask for nothing — no agreement, no belief, no understanding.

This is the first album. There is more work to come. But the first album is the beginning of being here, and that beginning is its own task. The meditations do not announce what is next. They keep company. They let the listener feel what it is to belong to the world without having earned the belonging. In this first album, we are just settling in.

If the album has done its work, you will not need this letter to have been moved by the meditations. You will already have been moved. The letter is for the part of you that wants to know what the meditations were built from, and why. That part deserves an answer. This is the answer.

What is being spoken of through the seven meditations — the aliveness, the inclusion, the company of other living things, the kindness already moving through you — does not live in memory. It lives in you. It has always lived in you. The album is only a reminder.

You may stay.
— Iara

[Listen]

— May the body listen with everything it knows —

