

I was hoping to find something that could be shared between us;  
just something minor is what I had in mind.  
I thought I would take this time to give a reading of my words, if I may, in my own voice.

So, to begin now:  
Right now as I'm forming the words in my mind,  
the future they are meant for has not yet arrived —  
and right now, as I stand before you reading those words,  
that future has become this present moment.  
(And that too is already past.)

What do you feel as you hold this paper in your hands?  
What do you feel as you read these words of mine,  
and not in my voice but in the voice of your own?  
Can you get a sense of it, I wonder?  
Can you get a sense of the sort of index of time that exists there;  
that exists in this present moment of now, on paper, between me and you?  
You see: the future there is already something nostalgic for me,  
while for you reading my words, that past is something new.

This might be a sudden shift, but:  
Vibrations.  
They are just purely captivating.  
Wavering and trembling.  
Continuous, sustained and momentary.  
Sensual and sensory.  
Ripples that are static or dynamic.  
Sound and voice.  
The place where I was raised was by the seashore.  
That's a relevant fact, it seems, but it might not be.  
Or irrelevant then, but it might not be that either.

My intention here is to offer a glimpse of some part of myself,  
and I might employ some rhetoric along the way.  
I don't know how much of the substance I will be able to convey.  
Not all perhaps, but perhaps some,  
or maybe I'll just feel I've gotten the drift myself.

Even when we're virtually face to face,  
or close enough to be knee to knee, as one might say,  
we often rely on satellites drifting in space to relay our messages back and forth.  
That has gotten to be such a common approach these days,  
and whether that's for better or for worse is a topic for another day...  
But there is one thing I can add about that:  
The use of an emoticon, or maybe a smiley face sticker,  
can really smooth out communication in certain situations.

And now you might be wondering: when will I be lifting my face up?  
I understand you might wonder... and don't mean to be impolite.  
There's an obvious contrast between the type of communication I've just described,  
with the reliance on technology that is so common now.  
And yet... it does seem that there is one common thread between them:  
You're not able to see my face while I'm talking now either.

Let me offer a word of explanation for you, the reader who is not in attendance now:  
I'm standing in front of visitors who've come to the opening reception,  
and I'm shoe-gazing, as they say, as I read out loud these words I've written.

I tend to get nervous, and I'm poor at conversation.  
To make a statement like that, though,  
before there's been a chance for the conversation to begin,  
is to shut a door and might discourage you from approaching me.  
But there's a simple question I wonder about:  
Are any of us really completely comfortable talking to people we're meeting for the first time?

Is it possible that the people who are the most sociable, talking and laughing non-stop,  
might also be the ones who are less comfortable, in some sense,  
filling in every gap in the conversation to avoid having a wordless moment?  
There are two sides to the coin,  
and this is like a doorway into a labyrinth of such observations.

Dots, assembled, produce the Line,  
the Line forms a Circle,  
and the Circle too forms a Dot.

If one recognizes that everything is interconnected like this,  
then it might be knowing oneself that offers a guidepost,  
or a first step towards unlocking a door.

Do we want to know the answer? Will we find out? Will we stay in the dark? Will we just pretend to know?  
Is it even meaningful to know? Is meaning something that can be found? Is it merely a waypoint?  
Despite what we might expect, is it no big deal? Will we be happier not to know?  
And what is happiness anyway?

To not understand is to understand,  
and to understand is to not understand.  
What is it that we might actually grasp?  
And what are we ourselves?  
Before we even know it, we might find ourselves on the outside looking in.

This might come as a sudden shift again,  
but I would like to add an observation:  
Expressions of appreciation have beauty,  
even just the ring they have,  
and I imagine that must be true in any language.

So to you who are listening to my voice now: Thank you.  
To you who have read this far ahead of me: Thank you.  
To you who have come at a later time, taken this paper in your hand and read through to this point:  
I'm pleased to meet you, and thank you too.  
That you have given me the opportunity to share this time with you, I am very grateful.  
This has been me and my voice. My name is Ko Kirk Yamahira.