

Dear Rain,

What a heavy burden it must be, when everybody complains about you all the time. Zagen (nagging) as the Belgians call it. People are really good at it. And you're the one to undeservedly suffer from it. Just recently someone sent me an e-mail in which he offered me apologies on your behalf. You were around and the person mailing me apparently considers you to be of negative influence on my mood. Thus: sorry for that. We were together in San Francisco at the time. Your name says it all, of course, because you happen to be raining during depressions, you apparently make people depressed.

I'm also writing to you because I know you can do only good, without you neither plant nor tree would survive. Engage in a conversation with someone and most often the opening topic is a lament about you. You're being abused for the purpose of patching up the unease between people. When they don't know what to say, they just start nagging about you. No human being who dislikes nature, nevertheless you command little respect.

But happily there are people who like to dance for you and perhaps like to dance with you too. In places like Africa, South America, the Balkans and Egypt, people dance ceremonial dances to conjure you up, even though in a desperate attempt to protect the harvest. The effect you have is joy when you show your face. They'll keep on swinging their butts until their legs will be too tired to carry them. And they'll keep on smiling at you while you let your streaming eyes travel over them.

Don't you see? You keep on taking to your heels, creating a pandemonium.

The sun is your biggest rival. Everybody just loves her. But then there are these moments when you show up together with your competitor. It feels like a love-hate relationship. I then suspect you must be longing for the sun too, because at these moments you seem to reach out – your arms in a semi-circle, or even a closed circle – so to embrace her. People are always surprised at the heavenly treasure in the sky and shout to each other:

"Ohóóóóhhhh, a rainbow!"

You might wonder, perhaps, if it won't be better to reconcile with your enemy more often, because it gives you positive energy. I'm sorry if you're not waiting for my unsolicited advice. Meanwhile in the arts you're an aesthetic hero, all over the place, a trend to a sickening extent. But at this very moment you provoke me to think of other things. Very important things. You – the bridge – have an activist nature. The fact that I'm advising you to reconcile with your enemy is because since time immemorial you have symbolized life's essences, such as peace and equality. Centuries ago already people have created flags featuring your arched color spectrum, flags that were raised for peace. Much later, around 1980, an American artist from San Francisco named Gilbert Baker began using such a flag as a sign

for homosexuality. With pride he fought for equality and recognition of this way of life. These flags, handmade by volunteers of all sorts, have remained relevant up to the present day. The reason for this flag was the death of a San Francisco councilman who was killed for publicizing his homosexual disposition. Of course, you should know people are still being murdered because of their sexual inclination and struggle for equal rights: Matthew Shepard from the United States, Eric Ohena Lembembe from Cameroon, David Kato from Uganda. Let's not even get started about all those dead Russian homosexuals. I'm writing this letter to you, dear Rain, and urging you to have a conversion job, as often as possible, into a colored arch.

See you rainbow.

Will you think about it?

Even if just for the sake of making people stop complain about you.

Much love,

Anouk Kruithof

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