



# REYYAN DEMIRIZ

Türkiye

Date of Birth: 25.05.2010

To Humanity,

I'm the Ocean. Vast and eternal, the first cradle and final mirror. Before you carved language into stone, before the first fire touched your fingers, I was already singing in waves, breathing in moonlight and witnessing the quiet dreams of wildlife.

I am the blood of the Earth, the mirror of the sky, the pulse of life. And yet, you treat me as if I am lacking life. The sea does not reward those who are too anxious, too greedy or too impatient. This is said by Anne Morrow Lindbergh, and you still rush, you still take, you forget the sacredness that once tied your spirit to mine. You fill my lungs with your plastic and still expect me to nourish you. Have you forgotten that my breath makes your breath possible? The oxygen you praise in your forests is born here, in my swaying gardens of kelp and plankton; who are you to destroy such a thing as nature herself?

You speak of progress, of dominion over nature, as if you are superior. But there is no "you" and "I". There is only "we". You must remember: when I grow sick, the rain forgets its rhythm, the rivers run hollow, and the wind begins to carry sorrow instead of seed. When you heal the ocean, you begin to heal yourself. So come back to me, like a kid returning to their mother. Walk my shores barefoot. Touch the sand with your hand, not your machines. Speak to me. I am always listening. For though I am old, I am not finished yet.

And if you choose, we might start writing a new story, one where you do not drown in your own forgetfulness. For when I am wounded deeply enough, even the wind forgets its songs. It begins to carry sorrow instead of seed, ashes instead of blossoms. It rustles, and the sound it makes then is not a whisper but a warning. "The Earth has music for those who listen," wrote Shakespeare, but lately your ears are full of engines. Slow down. Listen. The silence you hear growing louder around you is not the absence of noise. It is the vanishing of life.

Don't wait until your thirst teaches you that water was sacred. Don't wait until the last fish dies with a stomach full of your plastic to finally ask if progress was ever worth the price of forgetting beauty. I don't curse you. Even now, I carry your ships safely. I cool your heat. But I am getting tired. The tide that once brought you dreams now carries warnings in its foam. And still, I offer you mercy. You must remember: I am rebirth and I will rise again. Clean or corrupted, singing or silenced. How I rise depends on you. Will you let your legacy be oil slicks and sunken bottles, or coral gardens and the return of whale song? The choice, as it has always been, is yours. But if you care enough to ask how to care for me, I will not answer with grand commands, but with small, sacred gestures that ripple outward like waves from a single drop.



Start with your hands. Let them refuse what cannot be reused. Let them reach for glass instead of plastic, for permanence over convenience. Pick up what others leave behind on my shores. Yes, even if it is not yours. It is all yours. You belong to me as much as the gull on the tide pool. Watch what you send down your drains. Chemicals you wash away, microbeads you never see, they find me. They find the gills of fish. They find the cradle of life. Don't let your cleanliness cost my breath. Guard the rivers and the rain, for they are my messengers. What you pour into them, you pour into me. And when you dam their spirits, I feel their pulse weaken in my chest.

Let your leaders hear your love for me. Raise your voices when they speak of profit without protection, when they tear up the seabed to mine what cannot be replanted. Advocate for policies that protect my fragile ecosystems, that honour indigenous wisdom, that place harmony above haste. Eat with reverence. Choose what is fished with care, what is grown with love, and do not let the hunger of industry devour the balance of my creatures.

Teach your children, let them know that the sea is not just a backdrop to their vacation, but the breath in their lungs and the ancestor of all that lives. As Kahlil Gibran once wrote, "Forget not that the Earth delights to feel your bare feet and the winds long to play with your hair." Forget not that I long to carry your joy, reflect your wonder. Care for me not as a chore, but as an act of love. And I will give back to you more than you could ever take; more beauty, more oxygen, more life.

With an aching hope,  
The Ocean

