

Lunar Field

by
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‘Not all pull is personal.’

You learn to apologize before the water reaches the steps.

It’s a small skill at first: a tightening in the chest when someone else’s voice sharpens, a preemptive softness in your tone. You say *I’m sorry* the way other people check the weather—automatic, preventative. You watch for changes in barometric pressure inside the house. You can feel it in the hinge of a door, in the way a cabinet closes too hard, in the pause before someone exhales.

You become fluent in tide tables no one admits exist.

When the mood changes, you change with it. You lower your shoulders. You make yourself smaller at the edges. You smooth out what you can reach. You learn to speak as if your words might steady the surface.

You apologize for timing. For being hungry when someone else is tired. For needing quiet when someone else needs noise. For asking a question at the wrong moment. You apologize for the rain that interrupts plans you didn’t make. For grief that arrives unexpectedly.

You apologize for silence that lengthens beyond comfort.

You apologize for the tide as if you created the moon.

As if your gravity were the cause of the pull. As if the water rose due to your carelessness with your mass.

No one tells you to do this. That would be too easy. Instead, you learn through pattern recognition. Raised voices come before slammed doors. Withdrawal follows disagreement. Love diminishes when the air becomes tense. You learn the sequence. You assume causality. The equation settles: disturbance plus you equals flood.

It feels safer that way.

If the tide is your fault, then you can fix it. You can anchor the furniture. You can close the windows before the storm arrives. You monitor yourself for excess weight, excess wanting, excess sound. You can discipline your orbit.

You begin to believe that your presence bends the room.

There are nights when you lie awake and gauge the distance between your breathing and someone else’s. If they turn away, you note it. If they sigh, you file it under evidence. You replay the day, looking for missteps. Too much laughter. Not enough enthusiasm. A hesitation that might have come across as disapproval.

You study yourself the way astronomers study gravitational pull. You look for proof that your mass distorts the field.

Outside, the ocean continues its indifferent mathematics.

The moon does not wake with regret. It does not look for damage on the horizon. It exerts force simply because it exists. The Earth keeps spinning. Water responds accordingly. The cycle continues whether or not there’s an apology.

Then one evening, the air shifts once more. A familiar metallic taste forms at the back of your throat. The floor feels unsteady. You brace for the climb.

You start to say it—*I’m sorry*—before you know what you’re apologizing for.

The words stall.

Nothing you’ve done in the past hour explains the pressure building in the room. No mistake. No careless comment. No shift in tone. The pattern doesn’t hold.

The tide comes anyway.

It lifts the air. It drags at the edges of the furniture. It crests in someone else’s voice. You stand there, unmoored from the equation.

Later, you step outside.

The yard is dark, and the grass feels cool under your feet. The sky is stripped of cloud cover. You look up not for comfort but for confirmation.

There it is.

A pale body hangs at a distance that makes your chest ache. It does not look back. It does not track your breathing. It does not notice your restraint. It pulls at entire oceans without knowing your name.

You stand under it long enough to feel scale return to you.

Your body is not tidal machinery. Your presence is not a celestial event. Rooms have their own weather. Systems predate you.

The water will rise whether you apologize or not.

You inhale.

For once, you do not interfere.