

A NOTE ON THIS EDITION

This is the **Full Manuscript Edition** of *The Demolition of Love*: the complete five-act text as written for the stage, with prologue, dramatis personae and epilogue intact, typeset for print and for the rehearsal room.

A second, shorter edition exists online. The reading edition — *Demolition Lite* — breaks the same play into acts and scenes formatted for screens: searchable, shareable, and free to read at lovesreckoning.app/play. Nothing in the verse is rewritten between the two; the online edition simply presents it in screen-sized movements, while this manuscript keeps the continuous shape of the play on the page.

Read this edition if you intend to stage it, cast it, study it, or hear it whole. Read the online edition if you want to move through it act by act.

The play runs roughly two hours with one interval. It asks for a small cast and almost nothing in the way of set — a table, a door, a change of light.

— Ella Tan

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The Demolition of Love

A Tragedy in Five Acts

Full Manuscript Edition

Written by **Ella Tan**

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A work of fiction. The characters, incidents and dialogue in this play are products of the author’s imagination, or are used fictitiously. Any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, to real events, or to actual places is entirely coincidental and is not intended by the author.

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THE DEMOLITION OF LOVE

A Tragedy in Five Acts

Set in the Low Countries, in the present age. After the manner of William Shakespeare.

For Yasmina —

who called his name a hundred times and meant it every time.

For Eurydice —

who loved completely, wrote poems in the dark, and remained.

Ella Tan · lovesreckoning.app

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

GIJSBERT	Prince of Almere. Fifty. Brilliant, wounded, fatal. A man who sees himself clearly and cannot stop. He was in bloom once. He dismantled it himself. His recurring line: Het komt nu niet goed uit.
EURYDICE	A woman made to love him. Strong and fragile both. A poet — she wrote six poems for him while loving him, and one final poem when he left. Always shy when their eyes met.
YASMINA	Eurydice's daughter. Seven. She inline skates and plants in gardens and called Gijs's name a hundred times. She knows he is the boss.
QUINTIN	Gijsbert's son. Twenty-one. Who runs the kingdom.
THE FATHER	Gijsbert's father. Who loved Yasmina as his own granddaughter.
THE STEPMOTHER	Who held her hand when she arrived.
ANGELIQUE	A ghost. His ex-wife. The betrayal of 2009 that haunts everything.
KHANH	Another ghost. Yasmina's father. Eight years of emotional abuse. He threw them out with a court order, cancelled the visa, and was driven mad that Gijsbert had his keys.
THE FRIENDS	The boys of the university reunion. Rosencrantz and Guildenstern of Almere.

The scene is Utrecht, Amsterdam, Almere, London, Paris, Maarssen, Keukenhof, Monaco. The time is April 2025 to May 2026.

The wound is ancient. The love was real. She wrote poems in the dark. The house is finished.

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PROLOGUE

Irving Berlinhof, Utrecht. Before the play begins.

Before we meet Eurydice in love, we must meet her in survival. The stage is bare. A single light. Eurydice speaks to the audience.

EURYDICE

You should know what I was before he found me.
Eight years with Khanh. Eight years of being made
to feel too much, too foreign, too inconvenient.
Eight years of love that was not love at all.

He gave me Yasmina. That I will not deny.
But then he left. And threw us out with lawyers.
A court order. Irving Berlinhof, Utrecht.
Yasmina watching with her seven-year-old eyes.

He tried to take the country too. My visa.
I fought. I applied again. I made myself
permanent in this country by my own hand.

I am a poet. I write what I cannot say.
I wrote six poems for Gijsbert while I loved him.
Morning Dance. The Quiet Gardener. Gentle Shears.
Kisses in the Kitchen. Dinner Can Wait. Peachy Plans.
I wrote them all for him. He knew.

And then — because God has a sense of theatre —
I downloaded Bumble.

The light widens. The play begins.

ACT I

THE ENCOUNTER Amsterdam — April 18th, 2025

In which two wounded souls find each other, a child skates through a forest, and love begins.

SCENE I — Irving Berlinhof. The First Messages.

April 16, 2025 — two days before the first date. They are already talking. Eurydice is stressed about work. Gijsbert is encouraging from the very first hour.

GIJSBERT

You can do it girl!!!!

EURYDICE

Two days before the forest and the hand held,
he is already cheering for me.
I am freaking out about conference targets
and he says: you can do it girl.
That is the first true thing he gave me.

She puts down her phone. She is almost smiling.

SCENE II — The Oriental Chinese Restaurant & Amsterdam Bos. April 18th.

*The first date. Yasmina between them. Gijsbert — genuinely, unexpectedly funny.
Then: Amsterdam Bos. Yasmina on her inline skates. Wheels humming. Fast. Free.
Not looking back.*

GIJSBERT

Very important question, Yasmina. Spring rolls or dumplings?

YASMINA

Both.

GIJSBERT

Correct answer. I knew immediately I liked you.

Amsterdam Bos. The forest path. Dusk. Without ceremony — his hand finds hers.

EURYDICE

I am in love. I know it the way you know a change of weather.
He is not looking at me. He watches Yasmina.
Not that he holds my hand — but that his eyes are on my daughter.

SCENE III — The Departure. He Drives to Quintin's Football Match.

He goes. His car disappears. Yasmina stands beside Eurydice, skates under her arm.

YASMINA

He held your hand the whole time.

EURYDICE

She sees everything. She always has.

He held my hand. He drove to watch his son.

I know only this: I will see him again.

They walk into the evening. Ahead — everything.

End of Act I

ACT II

THE KINGDOM Utrecht, Almere, London, Maarssen, Keukenhof, Monaco — April to October 2025

In which love is built, daily and completely. She writes poems for him in the dark. He calls her his wife. Everyone believes it. For a season — it is magnificently true.

SCENE I — Irving Berlinhof. The Keys. The Poems Begin.

He has keys almost from the start. Eurydice gives him everything — openly, gladly. And in the evenings, when the house is quiet, she writes.

EURYDICE

I am a poet. I write what I cannot say out loud.

I wrote him Morning Dance — how we move
around each other in the morning kitchen,
two people learning the steps of a new life.

I wrote The Quiet Gardener — his hands in soil,
patient, knowing, tending what he loves.

I wrote Gentle Shears — the way he trims and shapes
without ever cutting what should live.

I wrote Kisses in the Kitchen — his mouth finding mine
over the cooking, over the ordinary day.

I wrote Dinner Can Wait — because some things
are more urgent than eating.

I wrote Peachy Plans — the future we were making,
ripe and possible and sweet.

Six poems. All for him.

I told him: generosity is more than money.

It is the everyday moments — the kisses,
the eating together, the unspoken moments.

They are all captured in my poems. I wrote them all for you.

SCENE II — The MG. The Omakase. Keukenhof.

Three images from the kingdom at its fullest.

EURYDICE

The MG. Windows down. Dutch roads.

His hand finding mine across the gearshift.

He went to Manchester with Quintin and came back
with records for us both. He thought of me.

That is its own language.

June 13th — his birthday. The omakase. Four hundred euros.

GIJSBERT

No one has done this for me. Not like this.

EURYDICE

Then it was time someone did.

Keukenhof. Millions of tulips. Yasmina running ahead. Gijsbert standing among them — vibrant, exhaling joy.

GIJSBERT

I am in bloom. That is exactly how I feel. In bloom.

EURYDICE

He said he was in bloom. Meaning me. Meaning us.

I will hold that image against everything that follows.

SCENE III — Almere. Gijsbert's Garden. Yasmina Plants.

His garden. His most private space. He brings them here — Eurydice and Yasmina. Yasmina on her knees beside him in the soil.

YASMINA

Gijs! Gijs! Is this one a tomato? Gijs! Look! Gijs!

EURYDICE

He loves hearing her call his name.

A hundred times. And each time

it lands in him like something warm.

SCENE IV — Maarssen, London, Monaco, Sunday Dinners, Yasmina's Birthday.

The kingdom in its summer fullness. Maarssen — her birthday, the three of them on the river. London — Coldplay in the rain, their first trip alone. Monaco — Yasmina running at the Mediterranean. Almere — Sunday dinners, his father, his stepmother. Yasmina's birthday — Gijsbert the jester.

GIJSBERT

All the way to Africa, Yasmina. Perhaps we'll go.

EURYDICE

Perhaps we'll go. Three small words containing a future.

I believe him. I choose to believe him.

This is the kingdom. This is before.

Gijsbert carries Yasmina to bed after the birthday party. Eurydice watches from the doorway. The kingdom is whole.

End of Act II

ACT III

THE UNRAVELLING London, Paris, Utrecht, Almere, Lavenderstraat — October 2025 to March 2026

In which the wounds beneath the love begin to speak. In which a man accuses the woman who loves him of the very things he himself is doing. In which she answers every accusation with openness and he calls her the master of turning things around.

SCENE I — London & Paris. The Last Great Trips.

London, August 2025. Coldplay in the rain. Paris, December 2025. The flower market. Gijsbert buys a bat house. Duck confit. Candles.

EURYDICE

He sings along at Coldplay — badly, joyfully,
as if he is seventeen and nothing has broken yet.

In Paris he buys a bat house at a flower market
with the joy of a boy who has never been broken.
I love him most in moments like this.

GIJSBERT

When Lavenderstraat is finished — I will put it in the garden. I promise.

The bat house on the chair beside him like a small wooden guest. This is the last golden evening before the unravelling speaks.

SCENE II — The First Accusation — The Bumble Truth.

May 10, 2025. The Bumble second account. Gijsbert accuses. Eurydice opens everything to prove her innocence — her conversations with her foster mother, her BFF Sharon, even the Bumble date. She is completely transparent. But the truth is more complicated than he knows.

EURYDICE

I created the second account to check if his was still active.
Because I was afraid. Because I loved him.
Because the woman who trusts completely
also needs sometimes to know she is not being a fool.

He was active. He was checking out other women.
He admitted it: probably for the same reason
as you created a second account.

And yet — he was the one who accused.
He was the one who made me sick in my stomach.
He was the one who made me send my private conversations
as evidence of my own innocence

while he was the one who was still looking.

May 12. Eurydice asks directly:

EURYDICE

Gijs, can I ask you why you were checking out other women on Saturday morning?

GIJSBERT

Yes you may. Tried to explain already. Probably for the same reason as you created a second account.

EURYDICE

He deflects. He always deflects.
The man who hired a detective for Natalia
was the one checking other women on a Saturday morning
while accusing me of having a second account.
I was checking on him. He was looking for someone else.
That is the difference between us
that he could never see.

SCENE III — The Visa Accusation. The DARVO.

July 2, 2025. The visa crisis. Eurydice has just discovered her permit is not approved. She tells Gijsbert immediately. He responds:

GIJSBERT

You are forgetting a very important component. You never told me your permit was at stake. Maybe also a reason why you did not want to tell me from the start. Because you realized I worked my ass off in your house — which is on top of not yours — and you had potentially to leave in four weeks.

A pause.

GIJSBERT

You are the master in turning things around afterwards.

EURYDICE

The master in turning things around.
He said this to me. After I had given him my keys,
my bank account, my wardrobe, my daily cooking,
six poems written in the dark.

The visa was applied for before Amsterdam.
Before the forest. Before the hand held.
I did not know it was at stake until a week before.
I told him immediately when I found out.
I am not the master of turning things around.

He helped because he chose to. Because he loved me.
Not because I manipulated him.

But a man who cannot trust
will always find betrayal in the evidence of love.
He found it everywhere. It was never there.

SCENE IV — Two Losses — Yasmina & Irving Berlinhof.

October 2025. Yasmina departs. November 2025. The court order. Irving Berlinhof is gone. Gijsbert answers immediately and insists on helping.

GIJSBERT

I'm coming. We will find something. Together. I insist.

EURYDICE

Eurydice searches the listings. Gijsbert drives.
He talks to the homeowners. He insists on every viewing.
He will not let her do this alone. That is love.

SCENE V — Lavenderstraat. The Renovation. The Grooves. More Accusations.

February 2026. The keys. The renovation begins. Gijsbert on his knees filling the grooves. Eurydice brings him coffee. The house is becoming whole. And then — the second Bumble accusation. The keys accusation. The pattern repeating.

EURYDICE

He fills the grooves with such care.
I bring him coffee and think: this is the life.
And then the shadow comes again.

I explain again. I am patient again.
He concedes again. The renovation continues.
And I watch him and think of what I wrote him —
six poems about the ordinary extraordinary —
and I wonder how a man who received those poems
can still not trust the woman who wrote them.

SCENE VI — The Ghost of Angelique. The Therapy Line.

The ghost of Angelique speaks. Then: Eurydice opens her fear of abandonment. Gijsbert tells her she needs therapy.

ANGELIQUE

I am sorry, Eurydice.
Not for leaving him — I had to leave him.
But for what my leaving made him. And for what that made of you.

The ghost fades. An evening. Eurydice speaks her fear.

GIJSBERT

You should speak to someone. A therapist. This is something you need to work through.

EURYDICE

He could not hold my wound
because it mirrored his too perfectly.
So he named my vulnerability a diagnosis.

I closed the door I had opened.
Later — the recovery. Within the hour.
Making love through the night as if nothing was said.
But something was said. And I remember everything.

SCENE VII — Het Komt Nu Niet Goed Uit. I Have Done Enough.

His pattern of withdrawal — in words. Het komt nu niet goed uit — It doesn't come at a good time now. Repeated across months. Repeated across years. And finally: the last visit to Lavenderstraat.

EURYDICE

Het komt nu niet goed uit.
He said it the first time in July 2025 at midnight
when I called and called and he would not answer.
He said it again in March 2026.
Again in April. Again and again.
It never came at a good time. Not once. Not ever.

GIJSBERT

I need distance. I have done enough here. I need to choose for myself now. For my mental peace.

EURYDICE

I have done enough.
As if love is labour with a completion point.
As if the grooves he filled — the poems I wrote —
as if all of it was a task that ends.

He leaves. The bat house stands in the garden. Unmounted. The kingdom fallen.

End of Act III

ACT IV

THE DESTRUCTION *Lavenderstraat, Utrecht — March to April 25th, 2026*

In which a king abdicates the kingdom he was freely given. In which love dismantles its own architecture with careful, ordinary hands.

SCENE I — He Was A King In Her House.

Eurydice speaks to the audience directly.

EURYDICE

I want you to understand what I gave him.
My keys. My bank account. His toiletries stocked.
His wardrobe space made. Six poems written for him.
Daily cooking. Sunday dinners for his father.
Yasmina's voice calling his name in his garden.
He was a king in my house. Treated as a king. Loved as a king.

And he hired a detective for the woman before me.
He accused me of a second account while checking other women.
He called me the master of turning things around
while turning everything around himself.
I trusted where he could only investigate.

SCENE II — The Last Ordinary Night. The Bed Dismantled.

The night before the boys trip. Gijsbert fixes the bed. Wrong size. He dismantles it. Then they make love. As usual. Then breakfast. Then he leaves.

EURYDICE

He came the night before he left.
To fix the bed. He assembled it with his hands
and it was the wrong size.

So he dismantled it.
Piece by piece in the half-finished room.
And then — the bed gone — we made love. As usual.
As if nothing was ending. As if the wrong-sized bed
was just a practical problem.

He tried. He got it wrong. He took it apart.
That is the whole story. In one night.

Breakfast. He sat at my table. Ate what I made.
As if this was simply — Tuesday.
He left for the boys trip.
I packaged up the bed frame. Wrong size. To be returned.

Doing the practical work of an ending
he hadn't yet announced. Love dismantles.

SCENE III — The Weeks of Distance. Choosing the Lights. Eurydice Decides.

She chooses the lighting for the house while he barely calls. Then — she forces his hand.

EURYDICE

I choose the lighting. I stand in each room and think:
what warmth, what angle, what would make him walk through
the door and feel — immediately — that he is home?

He does not call much. He is with his friends.
He was looking forward to it.

No. Not this. Not the hanging.
Return my things. Not: come back. Not: please.
Return my things — because a woman who forces clarity
cannot be left in fog indefinitely.

SCENE IV — April 25th, 2026. The Oleanders. The Hug. The Day.

Gijsbert at the door. Nervous. Sweating. A pot of oleanders. He always brings flowers.

GIJSBERT

These are for you. For the beautiful memories.

EURYDICE

Before I can think — I hug him.
I show him how happy I am to see him.
He is happy that I am happy. I feel it.

The three of us in the April sunshine.
Yasmina in her green shirt. Photos cheek to cheek.
Later — the intimacy. His body telling the truth
his words sometimes could not.

SCENE V — The Checklist. The Departure.

The loan. The joint account deleted. The social media — unfollowed. He came prepared. He came with oleanders. Both are true.

GIJSBERT

I will not be coming again, Eurydice.

EURYDICE

There it is. The sentence. Final. Clear.
I look at the oleanders. For the beautiful memories.

EURYDICE

I know.

He goes. The MG starts in the street. 36 minutes to Almere. He will watch Quintin play football. Eurydice puts the oleanders in water. The bat house stands in the garden. Unmounted. The play has one act remaining.

End of Act IV

ACT V

THE RECKONING Lavenderstraat & Almere — April to June 2026

In which the house is finished and the woman remains. In which a man sits alone with what he chose. In which a poet writes her final poem and sends it into the silence.

SCENE I — April. The Silence. The Last Messages.

After the boys trip. After March 30th when he says Het komt nu niet goed uit — four times in one day. Eurydice's messages to him, unanswered.

EURYDICE

April 7th. Yasmina is not home and you will not talk to me.

I tried very hard not to call you.

I missed the times we had. The old us.

When you were so kind and happy always.

Why did you have to change?

Pls call me soon. I m running out of oxygen.

And on April 1st — before the silence swallowed everything —

I wrote you this:

Gijs, I chose not to play games or make you chase me

with feminine games cos we r older and wiser.

All I want is us to be happy together.

We have gone through so much the past year together.

I can't help believing I was made to love you.

SCENE II — Withering Blooms. April 8th, 2026. Eurydice's Final Poem.

Eurydice sends him a poem she has written. He does not reply. This is the last poem. The seventh. Written not in joy but in the moment between hope and understanding.

EURYDICE

Withering Blooms

Last spring— a shy peony

came into your warm, gentle embrace—

from the moment you stepped right in,

your light shone through

her door,

to her face—

and you showered her

with your warm, moist kisses.

and blushing,
she bloomed,
slowly,
where you stood.

Under your light and warmth,
she was in full bloom—
and your loving warmth
made her feel fresh and beautiful.

She did not know
how much of her
had turned toward you
until you chose distance.

Cold and abandoned by the sun,
The wind shakes her petals and she has nowhere to take refuge.

Will her sun return to draw her back to bloom,
or leave her there to rot in decay?

*She sends it. He does not reply. After April 25th — one more message from him.
May 5, 2026:*

GIJSBERT

Hi Eurydice, would be great if you could stop using my phone number for your contractors! ■■

EURYDICE

That is his final word.
After the omakase. After the forest. After Keukenhof.
After the bat house and the grooves and the oleanders.
After six poems written for him in the dark.
After Withering Blooms sent into the silence.
Please stop using my number for your contractors.
That is the last thing the king said to his queen.

SCENE III — Yasmina Returns. The Rain Barrel Email.

Yasmina at the door. Thursday evenings. Then: Eurydice writes to Gijsbert about the garden. The magnolia. The olive. The rain barrel. And at the end — gently, intelligently — the question about the foundation.

YASMINA

Is he still the boss though?

EURYDICE

You are the boss, Yasmina. You have always been the boss.

She presses send. 36 minutes east to Almere.

SCENE IV — Standing at the Rubble.

The house completely finished. Eurydice alone. She speaks in prose — the way a woman speaks when she has stopped performing grief and is standing in her truth.

EURYDICE

He said we had no foundation. Those were his words.

He said it standing in this house. On these floors. The floors he filled. With his own hands. On his own knees.

He built the ruptures. The disappearances. The accusations — the Bumble he made about me while he was the one checking other women. The visa he twisted into manipulation. The cruelties said in anger. The distance dressed as mental peace. He built every crack between us and then stood in them and called them mine.

He called me the master of turning things around. After six poems written for him. After the omakase. After Keukenhof where he said he was in bloom.

I am standing in what he called rubble. Look at it. The walls — standing. The grooves — filled. The bat house — mounted. By me. Two attempts. Yasmina holding the ladder.

This is not rubble. This was never rubble. This is Lavenderstraat. This is mine.

He said we had no foundation. But I am standing on the foundation. Solid beneath my feet. The foundation was always here. He was the one who could not stand on it.

I gave him a kingdom. He called it rubble. He abdicated. And left me the crown.

The king has abdicated. Only the woman remains.

And she is standing. And the house is finished. And the bats will come when they are ready.

She stands in the golden light of the room she chose. She does not move. She is not waiting. She is simply — here.

SCENE V — Almere. Four in the Morning. The Vegetable Garden Waiting.

Gijsbert at his window. The rain barrel email open. Read four times. The sauna too hot for summer. Tomorrow — the vegetable garden.

GIJSBERT

The rain barrel email. I have read it four times.

Yasmina says I am still the boss.

Yasmina — who planted tomatoes beside me and called my name a hundred times.

The foundation was never the problem.
The foundation was there — in her keys in my pocket,
her wardrobe making space, six poems in the dark,
four hundred euros of omakase trust.

I called her the master of turning things around.
She was the master of loving completely.
Those are not the same thing. I know that now.

The sauna is too hot for summer.
Tomorrow I will tend the vegetable garden. Something manageable.

SCENE VI — What Remains.

Lavenderstraat in early summer light. The house finished. The bat house mounted. BillMeister growing. Yasmina returning.

EURYDICE

I was made to love him. I believe that still.
And I loved him — completely, daily, without reservation.
With six poems written in the dark.
With my keys and my wardrobe and my omakase.
With my hands in his in a forest while my daughter skated
and the whole world held its breath.

That love was real. That love was enough.
It was not enough to save him. That was never my job.

Eurydice in the doorway of Lavenderstraat. The June light. The bat house on the wall. The grooves filled beneath her feet. The house complete. The woman — standing.

EPILOGUE

Both sides visible — Lavenderstraat and Almere. Eurydice in her doorway. Gijsbert at his window. 36 minutes apart. Both present. Both still.

EURYDICE

What Eurydice knew:
That she was made to love him.
That love, however real and freely given,
cannot heal a wound the beloved refuses to name.

What Eurydice knows now:
That the house is hers.
That Yasmina's wheels still hum on garden paths.
That a woman who forces clarity finds her ground.
That six poems written in the dark were not wasted.

From the other side — quietly.

What Gijsbert knew:
That she was made to love him.
That he believed her.
That he fled anyway.

What Gijsbert knows now:
That calling someone the master of turning things around
while you are the one turning everything around
is not intelligence. It is its own kind of blindness.

A long silence. The 36 minutes between them.

EURYDICE

The house is finished.

GIJSBERT

The house is finished.

*The lights on Almere dim. The lights on Lavenderstraat hold. Eurydice remains.
Standing. The June light on everything.*

End of Act V

APPENDIX

Poems from the Story

Eurydice wrote seven poems during this love story.

Six were written in joy, for him, while the kingdom was whole.

The seventh — Withering Blooms — she sent into the silence.

THE SIX POEMS FOR GIJSBERT

Written while loving him — April 2025 to July 2025

She told him: Generosity is more than money.
It is the everyday moments I write in my poems —
the kisses, the eating together, the unspoken moments.
They are all captured in my poems.
I wrote them all for you.

Morning Dance — how they moved around each other
in the morning kitchen, learning the steps of a new life.

The Quiet Gardener — his hands in soil,
patient, knowing, tending what he loves.

Gentle Shears — the way he trims and shapes
without ever cutting what should live.

Kisses in the Kitchen — his mouth finding hers
over the cooking, over the ordinary day.

Dinner Can Wait — because some things
are more urgent than eating.

Peachy Plans — the future they were making,
ripe and possible and sweet.

WITHERING BLOOMS

The seventh poem. April 8th, 2026. Sent into the silence.

Last spring— a shy peony
came into your warm, gentle embrace—

from the moment you stepped right in,
your light shone through
her door, to her face—

and you showered her
with your warm, moist kisses.

and blushing,
she bloomed, slowly,
where you stood.

Under your light and warmth,
she was in full bloom—
and your loving warmth
made her feel fresh and beautiful.

She did not know
how much of her
had turned toward you
until you chose distance.

Cold and abandoned by the sun,
The wind shakes her petals and she has nowhere to take refuge.

Will her sun return to draw her back to bloom,
or leave her there to rot in decay?

DEMOLITION OF TULIPS

Written for the play. On Keukenhof and what happened after.

He said he was in bloom.
Standing in Keukenhof —
millions of tulips in every direction.
He exhaled joy. He was vibrant. He was here.
Yasmina running ahead. Meaning me. Meaning us.

Here is what they do to tulips after the season:
they cut them down. At the height of their beauty.
Gijsbert deadheaded himself.
He took the shears of his own fear and cut it down.

I hope he blooms again.
I hope the bulb beneath the cutting
finds its way to the spring
he keeps demolishing before it arrives.

He said he was in bloom.
That is what was lost.
Not just the love —
but the man who was capable of saying it.

THE MAN WHO STAYED AT NIGHT

and ran in the day

In the day he needed distance.
In the night he could not keep it.
Once. And then again. And then again.
As if his body knew what his wounded mind refused.

The ways he ran:
Days of silence dressed as space.
Accusations dressed as concern.
DARVO dressed as honesty.
Het komt nu niet goed uit — dressed as unavailability.
Oleanders dressed as goodbye.

Both were Gijsbert.
She loved them both.
He could only keep one of them.

FINIS

The Demolition of Love
A Tragedy in Five Acts

For Yasmina — who called his name a hundred times and meant it every time.
For Eurydice — who loved completely, wrote poems in the dark, and remained.
The king has abdicated.
Only the woman remains.