

Dear Robyn,

Thanks for your letter. Still can't believe this works! (Can you send some more of your paper? This is the last slice.)

Reading about your 'trip' was way buzzy. Tell me more stuff!! It's like since your letter I got this brainthirst. I did a sneaky Old-Era interro but couldn't find much, + anyway, you say it better, you're actually back there.

What news from here... well... Pop's up by 12, which is good – I think we're getting over the parasite thing. They changed the airfilters – I mean it was scheduled + everything, but it meant 2000 pips of Low-Oxy Podtime, which, ugh. Otherwise... boring.

Explain how you do your scenery. Is it like totally, 110% convincing? How is it powered? I loved that bit you said about the mountainal area you went to and it had loads of like outside water you could actually touch forreal? Mazing.

But though, so how do you deal with being atmospherically compromised for any long clocktime? Bet you're paying for it now, right?! I was outside for like 10 pips once, when we had a total de-contam after this really nasty burster? + I just vommed straight off + got this sledding headache for like a week or whatever.

Must be so weird living like you guys.

I can't stop thinking about what you put, that long bit about you got really high up, and your eyes were somehow seeing superfar, with all the greenings laid out before you like a mazing deepscreen, but forreal? And how there was like a freshness + a rightness in it and in you, like you + it were part of the same thing? It's funny, I sort of knew what you meant. It was nice, and but also, it kind of hurt a little bit?

Write back,

R 0 8 1 N

but then, so how do you deal with being atmospherically¹ compromised for any long clocktime? But you're paying for it now, right?! I was outside for like 10 pips once, when we had a total de-contam after this really nasty burster? + I just vommed straight off + got this studding headache for like a week or whatever.

Must be so weird living like you guys.

I can't stop thinking about what you put, that long bit about you got really high up, and your eyes were somehow seeing superfar, with all the greenings laid out before you like a

¹ This is a work of fiction, we assume. We also assume that it won't be necessary to point out that some idiosyncrasies of spelling and syntax have been incorporated as key elements of the fictional worldview created by the author. Although, to be honest, we're not quite sure whether 'seenery' is just our misreading of the handwritten original, but we love the coinage and so have decided to keep it anyway.

² Ruby Cowling was born in Bradford and lives in London, working as a freelance editor and researcher. Her short stories appear here and there online and in print, most recently in *Unthology 4* and *Notes from the Underground*, and have been produced in audio format for *4'33"* and *Bound Off*. She is currently working on a short story collection.