Since no one is ever too young to die, a few months ago I started to ask myself what my life would be like if I were to die. I didn't have to imagine, but rather dream the dream of dying. On the Moon, there was only one idea that returned with insistence: to visit Sri Lanka.

I would have to tell my whole life story in order to explain the impact "the tear of India" had on me. I have forgotten the precise moment in which the island seared me forever. I want to say that it was when I was just a kid, watching the beauty pageants, trying to figure out why the contestants coming from Sri Lanka seemed to be the happiest of them all. The name sounded like music: Sri Lanka, the resplendent island. At the time they had just adopted the new name as a symbol of their independence, after being called Ceylon for many years under colonial rule. Exploring the map I discovered that it was almost at my disposal. I asked myself "why I was born where I was, why I wasn't born on the island of the happy people?"

In March 2012 I finished writing a book for which I rented out my hand and pen. The check came big and without delay. That very same day I purchased the ticket that would take me to the only place I was really interested in visiting. Kashyapa reappeared in my life, like a magician, to give me the keys to the island. One single message to his family and friends and plenty of doors and hearts opened. I didn't go as a tourist, but as one of them.

My love for Sri Lanka has been blessed with the gift of discovery. When you are looking for something, the world seems to align itself to work in your favor. There was serendipity in my coming across certain books and people that were shaping me the way I am, little by little, to the place on earth that I have always felt would be my resting place. That is what I found thanks to the narratives of the travels of Marco Polo and Sindbad, of Fa Hsien and Ibn Battuta's pilgrimages; and followed the steps of Leonard Woolf, luminos de Vasto, Mark Twain, Pablo Neruda and Thomas Merton. There was serendipity also, seventeen years ago, when I met Kashyapa Yapa, the wandering Sinhalese, in Cartagena de Indias. Since then, I have been writing a posthumous novel that bears witness to my love for that land. Sri Lanka, the island seduced me forever. I want to say that it was when I was just a kid; the very same year that "the tear of India" had on me. I have forgotten the precise moment in which the island became my home.

The Resplendent Island

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