

# The Pink Book

Volume Two

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# Dedication

To those who hide away  
Wishing only to be seen

To those who harden  
For fear of being seen as soft

To those too familiar  
With cruelty

To those who long  
For beauty

To those who weep  
For safety

To those who feel gaslit  
By the world

To those who feel  
Forever misunderstood

To give voice  
To the lost  
For I,  
Too

Have been lost

1. You are seen
2. You are beautiful
3. You are safe, here
4. You deserve love
5. Your feelings are valid

# Soundtrack Of Healing

Dearest Reader,

I've noticed, throughout my life, a certain love for music. And, over time, I've realized why. The degree to which I experience the feelings in my heart, and interface with the world most deeply, is through music. It could be described as a form of synesthesia, even.

Throughout the last year, and as I've written this book, I've found myself finding and returning to certain songs, over and over. A good many of the poems contained here were even written while listening to a number of them. At the very least, these songs contributed greatly to the emotional milieu. Through them, I have been able to process and feel a lot of my traumas, experiences, and emotions.

I hope, in this list, you find a song or two that can help you, too.

The Lipstick Lounge	–	76 <sup>th</sup> Street
Paper Crown	-	Alec Benjamin
Go Screw Yourself (GSY)	-	Avery
Keep Holding On	-	Avril Lavigne
please put me in a medically [...]	-	carolesdaughter
sound in my head	-	Chloe Lilac
TNT	-	Chloe Star
human	-	Christina Perri
Fix You	-	Coldplay
MILF	-	Daisy Grenade
Don't Talk About Me	-	Elyse Myers
Scared of the Dark	-	Em Beihold
Monstarr	-	Ennaria
Wild Thing	-	Gen and the Degenerates

Better Now You're Gone	-	Hannah Grae
CAUTIOUS	-	House Parties
Stupid	-	Karen Dió
You Don't Know	-	Katelyn Tarver
This Is Me	-	Kaela Settle
Praying	-	Kesha
Sister	-	K.Flav
i could have been worse	-	KiNG MALA
Diet Coke	-	Leanna Firestone
Oh!	-	The Linda Lindas
death wish	-	LOLO
debbie downer	-	LOLO
omg	-	LOLO
hurt less	-	LOLO
The Sisterhood	-	Mackenzie Johnson
d e a d	-	Madelline
Happy As Hell	-	Madelline
Participation Trophies	-	Madelline
Titanium	-	Madilyn Bailey
Good Dream	-	Mae Martin
Note To Self	-	Meet Me @ The Altar
Strangers	-	Meet Me @ The Altar
I Wanna Thank Me	-	Meghan Trainor
Winner	-	Meg Smith
Absolutely (Story of a Girl)	-	Nine Days
I've Seen It	-	Olivia Dean
Secrets	-	OneRepublic
Fuckin' Perfect	-	P!nk
i think i'm getting better	-	porch kiss
NEVER FUCKIN KNOW	-	poutyface
Stand By You	-	Rachel Platten

Lost Boy	-	Ruth B.
The Best Thing (That Never Happened)	-	Scene Queen
Little Talks	-	Snt
fight!	-	Sophie Hunter
Untether	-	Sophie Truax
Waste My Wishes	-	Sophie Truax
you broke me first	-	Tate McRae
In My Head	-	Taylor Acorn
Shake It Off	-	Taylor Swift
Hell Yeah!	-	tiLLie
Hot Mess	-	Zoe Clark



*Débuter*

16<sup>th</sup> of October, 2025 – 9:26 am

Someday  
When I die  
I hope...

I hope only  
That I will have helped to light  
So many candles

...

That  
On that fateful day  
On that night, of my departure

If I have helped you  
Light for me, a candle  
Small, and warm

Gather them together  
All of my loved ones  
Holding any candles of their own

And  
Into that great dark  
Let free, the light

...

Look upon them  
Those hopefully many  
Little berths of light

And see  
See how much light  
Can be lit, from but one flame

Take into yourself

That light

And carry it

Carry it forth,

My loved one

And let us light the world

# 3<sup>rd</sup> of November, 2025 – 8:30 pm

Easy Tiger – Holly Humberstone

Maisie Black shoved her cigarette butt into the top of the wet rail with a sigh. The paper and bits of leftover tobacco crinkled quietly, as she twisted it back and forth. “Look, honey,” she said, looking back up at her twin sister. “All I know is, I heard *Jesus* was perfect. Not just in that ‘oh, no, no one’s perfect, but he’s perfect in his imperfections’ way, either. Like, *actually* perfect. And, if I remember the legend right, they crucified even him.”

“What, so I’m Jesus, now?”

Maisie B smiled and rolled her eyes, giving her twin a playful punch. “No, dumbass. You know what I mean.” She turned back to the rail, crossing her arms and setting her elbows on it. With the black leather jacket on, her upper frame looked even more intimidating. To others, anyway.

To Maisie Flowers, it made her sister look that much more self-assured. It was something she admired. And envied. She rubbed her chest, wincing each time she touched where she’d been punched. “First of all, did you seriously just punch me in the tit? Dude, you of *all* people should know not to punch me in the tit right now. Especially with those hard-ass gloves on.”

Maisie B grinned, unfazed. “I see that smile trying to hide, dork,” she said.

Maisie F allowed the smile through, and joined her sister in setting her elbows on the rail. “I get what you mean, though.”

“Of course you do. You of all people know how hard you try.”

“Every day,” Maisie F murmured.

Maisie B nodded. “Every day. And I see how much it bothers you. How much it hurts.”

“It’s not even me I’m really—”

Maisie B put up a hand. “I know. It’s not you you’re worried for. It’s them. Even the possibility of causing them pain, or discomfort.”

Maisie F nodded, but didn’t go on. Her eyes followed a group of boys walking across the street. They appeared to be trying to decide if they wanted to see if anyone was at Upstairs, or just call it and go home.

Maisie B watched her. How she looked at them, as though from another plane. Distant. Separate.

Maisie F felt a nudge at her shoulder. She looked over, to find her sister looking at her. She'd scooted closer; their arms were touching, now. Maisie F made an attempt at a small smile, but just looked back down at the boys.

They shared the quiet, for a while. Maisie F watching the people. Maisie B occasionally glancing at her sister. But she didn't speak again.

...

Maisie B was glancing at her phone, checking that the bar wasn't about to close, when she heard, "You know, mom would've said we were feeling sorry for ourselves. Probably."

Maisie B couldn't stop her lip from curling as she scoffed. "Yeah. Well, there are reasons we don't talk to her, anymore."

Maisie F nodded.

Maisie B chewed her lip, gazing at her. Trying to find the right words. Before she could, her sister looked back at her. And Maisie B's heart broke. She looked so tired. More than sad. More than frustrated. Just...tired.

Her sister smiled. A small one. But nonetheless sweet. "I love that about you, you know."

Maisie B blinked. "What?"

"How soft your eyes are." She made a gesture. A line, leading from the corner of her eye outward. "You always make your eyeliner look so sharp. Almost vicious. Like knives. But..." She let her hand fall back to the rail. "But your gaze is always so soft. Well—" She grinned, albeit for just a moment. "When there aren't any douchebags around, anyway."

Maisie B didn't know what to say, at first. But then she smiled back. "And I've always loved that about you."

Maisie F cocked her head.

"How you just...say shit like that. Completely out of nowhere."

The weak little smile grew, a bit. "Never save—"

"The china," Maisie B finished. She chuckled, turning back to the rail. "I remember."

The quiet settled back in. But not for long.

"I know it's hard," Maisie B said.

Her sister didn't respond. She was looking off toward Sample Gates. A group of girls was walking through, heads down, most definitely having decided to go home. They all

had their arms about themselves, in that way girls did when they were cold. But the way they huddled together as they walked did make her smile grow again, a little.

“Having to raise ourselves,” Maisie B continued. “Teach ourselves...more than she ever did. About people.”

“We didn’t do it alone.”

Maisie B shook her head. “No, we didn’t. But don’t be so quick to take it from yourself. How much work you’ve put in.”

Maisie F shrugged a tiny bit, in her way of conceding a point. She still didn’t look back.

There was a pause.

“I know it’s hard.”

Maisie F felt a gloved hand touch her shoulder. She turned, then. Her sister was looking at her. Without expectation. Without pressure to hurry up and get the point.

“Every single second,” Maisie F whispered. “Of every single day.”

Maisie B squeezed her shoulder. But the cold of the leather felt comforting. Firm. Not hard.

“You live in service to others,” Maisie B said, for her.

Maisie F didn’t nod, this time. But her eyes said enough.

“Or, let’s be honest.”

Maisie F blinked. The knowing calm in her eyes, ever unsurprised, was replaced for a moment by curiosity.

Maisie B took in a breath and puffed it out, as though preparing herself. She took her chance. “It’s agony, yes. But that’s because what you’re doing is *agonizing*. Spending every second of every day, wondering what to do. Doubting yourself. Second-guessing every word.

‘What if this makes them feel that? What if that makes them think this?’ What if, what if, what if?”

Maisie F’s eyes roamed her sister’s. Listening.

“I guess I think that’s it. That’s the difference. Between feeling sorry for ourselves, and just...self-reflection.” She smiled. “Or, I guess I should say the difference between reflection and rumination.”

Maisie F gazed at her sister some moments more, then shrugged. “That’s a good point.”

Sensing the “but,” Maisie B’s smiled turned to a wry – albeit sober – smirk. “But it’s not enough, I know. Knowing is so rarely enough.”

Maisie F's gaze broke away, eyes widening for a moment in a look of, "don't we know it."

Maisie B finally took her hand away. "So. What to do?" she asked, setting her elbows back on the rail. This time, it was her that felt a nudge at her shoulder. She looked over, to find her twin giving her a small, thankful smile. It was the funniest thing. The lopsided way she did it—with just one side of her mouth—was probably a remnant from when they'd read *Twilight*.

"Well—" She puffed up her cheeks, then blew out. "—We've gathered plenty of data. Years of it. And it all seems to point to one *possible* conclusion, at least. No amount of overthinking or bending over backward seems to reduce risk of adverse outcomes past a certain point, if at all. So..."

She gazed down at the street, eyes narrowing in concentration. They flit from passing person to passing person. "If the behavioral model fails to consistently predict and prevent adverse outcomes... Maybe we just need to dispense with the model."

Maisie B's lips parted, but it was her turn to be interrupted by her sister's raised hand.

"If you say 'English please,' you *know* I'll kill you."

"Actually, I was going to say you're such a sexy little ner- *Ow!*"

"So," Maisie F continued, "Maybe the lesson isn't what to *do*. But what *not* to do. Maybe the issue has been..." Her jaw fell open, and her eyes widened.

"What? What is it?"

Her twin turned to look at her, eyes darting this way and that, looking through her to something else. After a moment, she said, "Do you remember what we learned in clinical neuro?"

Maisie B shook her head.

Maisie F rolled a finger in circles, trying to summon a better description. "It was something like how... How there are two models. One, that a region of the amygdala has been permanently sensitized. The other..."

It dawned on her. Maisie B's jaw fell slack, too. "That there is a failure of extinction learning."

Maisie F was nodding. "A failure of the organism to extinguish a fear memory. A failure to adjust or dispense with a model, in spite of countervailing evidence."

Maisie B turned to look back at the passerby. It was so obvious. How hadn't it occurred to them before? "PTSD," she whispered.

"Maybe the lesson isn't *what* to do. Maybe it's..." Maisie F put her hand on her sister's shoulder. The armor beneath the leather felt cold, and hard. A protective shell. "Maybe it's been what *not* to do. To finally dispense with the model."

“To step back. Believe the evidence. Recognize that adverse outcomes are too inconsistent to predict, because of the variability of people. Operant conditioning. Variable schedule reinforcement, all over again.”

Maisie F was nodding. “When an organism can’t predict a particular reinforcer for a behavior consistently—say, a punishment cue—it will maintain the behavior.” She paused. “Maybe an example of that behavior... Is hypervigilance.”

“Every single second, of every single day,” Maisie B whispered.

15<sup>th</sup> of November, 2025 – 12:23 am

“I watched you do that,” Maisie Flowers said.

Maisie Black turned, eyes quickly finding her sister. She wasn't hard to find; the sheer mass of bargoers had them pressed shoulder to shoulder.

“Hmm?” she hummed.

“That sweet little smile doesn't fool me for a second, you crazy bitch,” Maisie F said. Of course, she couldn't help but grin back. It was infectious, her sister's playfulness.

“Maisie Flowers, I cannot say I have even the slightest clue what you might be talking about,” she purred. Of course, as skilled at deadpan as she was, even she couldn't help but grin back.

“I'm not gonna lie, I always love to watch it happen.”

“What, you mean when I stare back?”

“Well yeah, but also all the ways you just...don't back down.”

Maisie B lifted her drink to her lips, winking. “God forbid a girl have hobbies.”

21<sup>st</sup> of November, 2025 – 11:49 pm

“You do realize that, right?” Maisie Flowers was saying. “You’re pretty much the only trans girl we’ve ever seen here. Before tonight, anyway. You’re a pioneer.”

Maisie Black, gazing at her sister across the booth, didn’t say anything. Her slender fingers plucked, absent, at her black and pink striped arm warmers. One of the silver stars along it—hanging by a single, panicked black thread—glinted and winked under the lamplight as she fidgeted.

“What?” Maisie F said, smiling. “Lost for words, for once?”

Maisie B still didn’t respond. Her eyes simply continued to roam her sister’s. The booth. The bar. The other bargoers.

So, Maisie F simply gazed back. Without expectation. Allowed her sister the silence, to contemplate.

29<sup>th</sup> of November, 2025

“Perfume. And popcorn,” Maisie Flowers was saying.

Maisie Black couldn’t help but smile. “And what do you see?”

“Well, nothing right now. You told me to close my eyes.”

Maisie B rolled her eyes. “Okay, well, what do you hear?”

Maisie F didn’t answer, at first. Until, “People having fun.”

Maisie B, watching her, kept smiling. It had been working. Slowly. Quite slowly. But the mindfulness—working so hard, to stay present—had been working. She felt pride swell her chest, and balloon her smile. “And what do you feel?”

Maisie F didn’t answer.

Maisie B waited, but her sister still said nothing. But, she could see her mind working. In little twitches of her eyebrow. In the micro-furrows in her brow, and the corners of her eyes. But quiet, she stayed.

So, so too did Maisie B. She kept her hand on her sister’s shoulder. Occasionally, she would give it a tiny squeeze, to let her know she was still with her. But otherwise, she gave her twin the space of silence.

In the meantime, she looked around. Took stock, too, of where they were. It was the only gay bar in Bloomington, but they had a way of making up for it. As they did tonight. Through the hazy purple glow, the night’s drag performers cavorted, throwing a cascade of silver twinkles about the wall.

...

Once, it had been their home. The one—the only—place they could go, to feel truly safe. To feel like proper girls. To run into so many once dear friends. Loved ones. To enjoy the effortless joy. To flirt. To compliment. To yap. To breathe.

Her smile stumbled. On the memories. The pain. The indescribable loss, they had suffered. Trauma they both still struggled to describe. What they had only just begun to heal from. What they—

“Home, again.” Maisie F said.

Maisie B blinked. The tunnel walls faded, albeit over more than a moment. “Hmm?”

Maisie F smiled. A small one. The kind Maisie B loved most. Playful. Mischievous. Knowing. “You too, hm?”

Maisie B just smiled. A small one. But even with her sister’s eyes closed, she knew it was no use trying to hide that it was also slightly sad.

“I’d said, ‘home, again,’” Maisie F said.

Maisie B’s smile grew back, with sincere warmth. “How do you mean?”

Her sister thought. “Like... I’m home, again.” She paused. “Because I have noise-canceling headphones on.” Her finger caressed the rim of her drink, on the table. She had yet to let go of it. But Maisie B sensed it wasn’t a clutching grasp. Just...there.

“But...” Maisie F murmured. “I have a feeling... That yes, this is a temporary feeling. But...” She paused again—this time for a while. Until she smiled, and added, “But I know I’ll feel this way, someday. When I’m not...”

The smile curved into a grin. “When I don’t have noise-canceling headphones on.”

Maisie B thought—had thought—her smile couldn’t go any wider, but it did. Her sister looked so...peaceful. The furrows in her brow had smoothed. The worry lines in the corners of her eyes had melted away. She just looked...content.

Her chest swelled once more. Both with the deliberate breath she took, and the sheer pride and love she felt, for her twin.

“I see you’re ‘feeling it’ too,” Maisie F said.

Maisie B blinked again, and her eyes narrowed a minute amount, refocusing as she peered at her sister. Lo and behold, her right eye had opened a tiny bit, revealing a teeny glint. Her own smile, too, morphed into a grin. “And so what?!” she bellowed, into the still louder music. “We fuckin’ deserve it, don’t we?”

Maisie F opened her eyes fully, and turned in her seat to her sister. She didn’t speak, first. But her eyes. How they glittered, with love. “I’m so proud of you,” she said.

Maisie B’s head reeled back. “Bitch, that’s *my* line! I was gonna say that!”

“Sure, but I said it first,” Maisie F said, giggling.

Maisie B recoiled in mock pearl-clutching shock. “You *dare!*”

Her sister laughed. A sincere, warm, belly laugh. “Come here, bitch,” she said, spreading her arms.

Their hug was tight, and true. The kind one does when they hope their love can somehow be channeled, through their arms. And, even in her tipsy haze, Maisie B felt her twin’s arms squeeze. And she knew she was doing the exact same thing.

The kind of hug—the kind of love—that can pass straight through any amount of jacket leather.

Any amount of armor.

30<sup>th</sup> of November, 2025 – 3:35 pm

“Steady, tiger. Return to breath. You were true to your heart, and your ethics. The ball is in their court, now. Whether they pass it back, or keep playing, or not, is for them to decide.” Maisie B jerked her head in a beckoning motion, and smiled. “In the meantime, let’s get ice cream.”

# 1<sup>st</sup> of December, 2025

“Well, but I just...can’t help but wonder, you know? Like as a byproduct,” Maisie Flowers was saying.

Maisie B could tell immediately. The distance was returning. Encroaching, once more, into her gaze. Tiny furrows at the corners of her eyes, deepening imperceptibly. Carved. Gouged, by plows of sadness. Guilt. Fear. With every flit of her deep brown eyes—looking at nothing in front of her—Maisie B could see it. Could watch, in real time, as each new stab of guilt and fear pierced her sister’s heart.

“I just wonder now, too...” she continued. “Am I worrying so much because I actually care? Or because I’m just afraid of the consequences? Because I’m afraid of pain? What if me sitting here like this, at the other end of the whole bar from her, is just me feeling sorry for myself, hoping she would come by to console *me*?”

“You are literally the Mike Tyson of beating yourself up,” Maisie B blurted.

Her sister’s head recoiled. She—well, they both did it—really was cat-coded. Every time Maisie B watched her do it, all she could think of was how cats pulled their faces away from things they didn’t like. Typically, it was just another way of them being silly, but this time there seemed to be genuine shock at play. Otherwise, her stare looked quite blank. That is, until her eyebrow twitched, followed closely by the corner of her lips.

As though looking in a mirror, Maisie B felt her own face do the same. “What, am I wrong?” she said, letting a grin spread across her face.

Her twin’s lips flattened. It was really quite impressive actually, how she could so effortlessly make that straight of a line.

Maisie B spread her arms. Palms facing out. “Look, but *am I wrong* though?”

Maisie F glanced away; the fledgling smile faltered. “I...”

Maisie B let her arms drop. She jerked her chin upward. “Hey.”

The little line in her twin’s lips trembled. She didn’t look back.

Neither of them said anything.

# 1<sup>st</sup> of December, 2025

Maisie Black clapped her hands on her sister's cheeks. The goofy, surprised, lip-puckered face she made as a result nearly made Maisie B crack into laughter. But somehow, with valiant effort, she managed to keep her composure as she looked her twin dead in the eyes. "Girl. Come on. What if *they're* intimidated by *us*? What if-" She gently shook her sister's face. And of course, she knew the affectation of increasing terror that resulted was just her being silly, but god damn did it make it that much harder not to bust.

"What if we're on the other side, now?" she continued. "What if, now, *we're the girl people want to approach, but don't know how?* But are too scared they'd come up short, looking like a dumbfuck in our catlike slow gaze?"

Her sister blinked. This time, the surprise was real. It dawned first in her slowly widening eyes, then spread like morning sunlight across her face. Her knit brows smoothed. Her eyes flitted around Maisie B's. "Oh my god I think you're right," she said, as her cheeks were at last released.

Maisie B stepped back into her iconic hip cock, grinning. "Duh, asshole."

4<sup>th</sup> of December, 2025

“Girl,” Maisie Black was saying. “Come on. Did you really think it wouldn’t still happen? Just regular old rejection?”

Maisie F, gaze downcast and kicking her feet, went stock still. She didn’t say anything, but her eyes had flicked to alert so rapidly that Maisie B felt her eyebrows raise.

Maisie F stayed quiet a moment longer, and then murmured, “...oh my god.”

Maisie B grinned.

4<sup>th</sup> of December, 2025 – 11:59 pm

Maisie Flowers' eyes said it all. She had seen her. "Please?" she mouthed. The music at the bar was way too loud, and she felt quiet.

Maisie Black reached out and grabbed her sister's hand, then squeezed. *I'm here*, she said, through her gentle—and comfortingly firm—grasp. "Return to breath," she mouthed back.

5<sup>th</sup> of December, 2025 – 12:33 am

Maisie Black rubbed her sister's shoulder, smiling warmly. "See? That wasn't so bad, right?"

Maisie Flowers took in a deep breath, and let it out slow. After a moment, she nodded, and gave her sister a wide smile.

Maisie B was relieved to see it didn't look forced. She let out a sigh through her nose, but her smile didn't change. "Poor thing. That really had you stressed, huh?"

Maisie F nodded.

"Oh don't give me those doe eyes," Maisie B chuckled. "Everybody already knows you're the sweetest little cutie patootie."

Her sister giggled, and spread her arms.

They shared a tight, deliberately long hug.

As Maisie F pulled away, Maisie B heard her sniff. "You feel better, hon?"

Maisie F nodded again. And, though there was a glint of wet at the corners of her eyes, she was smiling. "You've been... Such a rock, you know that?"

23<sup>rd</sup> of December, 2025 – 3:18 am

Any god

That takes their tithes

In pain

Is no god

Worth worshiping

1<sup>st</sup> of January, 2026 – 6:29 pm

I find myself feeling  
Some measure of relief

For I have long felt  
It is unjust

That a loving god  
Would demand worship

In spite of all

Like some kind of  
Abusive parent

That demands, unyieldingly  
Supplication

...

But

When I look about  
And feel my fortune

I feel...  
Something

...

I still know not  
If there is any God

...

But when I look about  
At my fortune

In my loved ones  
In the good things,

In my life

It comes to me, that clearly  
I never needed worship them

To earn such magnificent blessings

17<sup>th</sup> of January, 2026 – 8:56 am

Little Life – Robert Gromotka

Let not the eulogies be saved  
Let not the love of your loved ones be spared

Save not the china  
For some special day

For  
Who among us knows

When the curtain shall call

When the cabinet  
Should come crashing

When the wine  
Should spoil

When “too late”  
Comes too soon

...

So spare not, your love  
Spare not, the china  
Spare not the wine

Pour it now, into your finest cups  
And toast, with a finest friend

Leave no joy unfelt – ungiven  
That there may only be smiles

At the end

3<sup>rd</sup> of March, 2026 – 8:15 pm

“Hey. Hey. Breathe, Dandelion,” Maisie Black said.

Maisie Flowers – the newly nicknamed Dandelion – shuddered. She looked for a moment like she might pull away from her sister’s hand, at her back. She closed her eyes, lips trembling. Shaking. After a moment, she threw herself into her sister’s embrace. Where she buried her face into her neck, Maisie Black immediately felt the [touch] of hot tears.

“Hey. Hey...” Maisie B breathed. “Hey...”

Dandelion’s whole body was shaking, now. Her breaths got shorter and shorter, until in one long wail, she cried out. Muffled though it was, the leather of Maisie B’s jacket did nothing to diminish the sheer anguish of the sound.

Maisie Black, rubbing her twin’s back, looked up and around, at a loss for words. Whatever it was she hoped to find in their surroundings, it was nowhere to be seen. The field they laid in offered nothing but grass and flowers, rustling in the breeze. If only their whispering could form words. A quiet snort escaped her. *If anyone would be able to speak to flowers, it’d be her*, she thought. But, no words forthcame.

She looked back down at her sister. She was still shaking like a leaf in a storm, in her arms. The sight nearly brought tears to her own eyes, too. *Jesus*, she thought. *This year’s been so much rougher on her than I thought. We both knew it was bad, and it’s been rough on both of us, but...*

She shook her head, looking back up. A twinkle caught her eye. She glanced up, to the paling yellow horizon, where a lone star dimly glinted hello. They’d gotten here when it was still day time, and it’d been delightful. Even just getting ready to go out had been wonderful. They’d sung along to their favorite songs, excitedly texted friends...

“I still—” She hiccupped. “I still can’t cry properly,” Dandelion croaked. A wet sniffle followed shortly behind. “I can’t...”

Maisie Black just squeezed her closer. A few things came to mind to say—“Don’t focus on that, right now,” “I know, it’s bullshit”—but she discarded all of them. She had a feeling none of them would help.

“It’s fucking bullshit.”

Maisie Black’s eyebrows shot up. “Madame *Dandelion!* That is no language befitting a lady!”

Dandelion cough laughed.



10<sup>th</sup> of March, 2026 – 10:00 pm

Fuckin' Perfect – Pink

Dear me,

Hey. ... .. Hell of a year, huh? ... .. Yeah.

...

Took a lot of courage, you know. ... To survive all we went through. To write about it, even now, at one of the straightest bars in town. Where any number of looks and jabs have probably already been traded. In private. Under hushed breath.

...

But...I guess that never really stopped you, did it?

... No stranger to being the school outcast. The freak. The spaz. The weird kid. ... Different. Whether you knew it or not. Whether you knew then, or had to find it out years later. About people you'd thought were your closest friends.

...

It never stopped you. From being yourself.

...

The last year really tried its best, to take that from you.

...

Got damn close. ... Real damn close.

...

...

We've made mistakes. Been misunderstood. More times than we can count. Or even remember. ... So much. So much, lost to the sempiternal shell shock.

...

Shell, after shell. Blast, after blast. ... So many times, you poked your head out of the trench, only to have it blown clean off. Over. And over.

...

Even now, as it seems the last of the thundering is rolling away – as news of a transfer to the rear comes down the line.

...

Even still. You clutch the bunker beams, waiting for the next concussion wave.

...

Even as a former – possibly soon to be reconciled – friend sits nearby, possibly waiting for a chance to make up. ... You fight to keep your teeth from gritting. Don't want them to shatter, when the blast hits. But can't be caught unawares, either.

...

...

Oh, my dearest love. How traumatized, you have truly been. How trained, your nervous system. ... And this long overdue possible change of fortune...still heralds yet more work.

...

The long, arduous, grueling process...of *unlearning*, it all. ... Or, at least, the worst of it. The innumerable fear memories, you know all too well were cemented, into your amygdala, by and over the last year.

...

It's going to be hard, hard work. Breaking up that hard, old cement. Filling it over, with new – and smoother – material. Or however you wanna put it. I know the whole cement angle was like...uhh...hm.

...

Anyway.

...

Yeah.

...

Hell of a year.

...

...

But oh, my love. Oh, my god. Imagine for me, that I am placing my hands, gently, upon your cheeks. Imagine for me, my gaze. Of so much love.

My dearest me...but *look* at you.

(Pause for moving spots in the bar)

Girl. *Look. At. You.* You are the first, if not only, trans bitch we've ever seen here, at one of the straightest bars in town. Listening to fucking Show Me How

To Live by Audioslave, giving off the most “don’t fuck with me” gaze and aura, *of all time.*

Like, not only are you- *Girl.* You aren’t just a pioneer, you are a bona fide fucking **badass.** GIRL.

(Rest of footage lost, to a wonderful night)

11<sup>th</sup> of March, 2026 – 2:39 am

Time to drink water

Time to come down

But it’s been a good night

Not even a frown

Freed, from worry

By alcohol and crowns

From fellow queens

Whose love knows no bounds

....

Time to wind down

Time to get ready

To head on back home

Fairly soon, now

...

But

I’ve needed this night

A carefree waltz

About the town

16<sup>th</sup> of March, 2026 – 7:00 pm

Connected – Stereo MCs

And

Just like that

The Empress

Was back

18<sup>th</sup> of March, 2026 – 3:22 pm

Garden – Meet Me @ The Altar

She grinned, and even the sun and big blue sky seemed brighter for it.

“You wanna know what the best part of the come-up is?” she said.

“Bringing all your loved ones with you.”

19<sup>th</sup> of March, 2026 – 1:34 am

Dearest Reader,

Hello again, my friend :) It feels like it's been some time, since I wrote to you, like this.

...

It's been a hell of a year. I feel like I've...traveled the globe. Gone all around the world, in 365 days. Become that "woman of the world," I've dreamt about. In my own way. Until I can *actually* start traveling the world :) And...to think, I started the first Pink Book around this time, last year.

...

I really had no idea what I was in for.

...

But...here I am. Still standing. Still alive. In spite of what has felt like one of the worst years of my life, I remain standing.

...

...

...

Sure. You can make the argument, to what I'm about to say. "But surely you know your survival is in no small part due to your own strength? Your own undying will?"

...

Sure. You could make that argument. But...here's the thing.

My will, many times, *felt* like it was very nearly about to die.

...

That I have my own strength—the insistence of my heart, brain, and body—to survive, is not something I dispute.

...

But I doubt, very much, that I would be here without all of my loved ones.

...

Because at one point, my will was basically surviving by nothing more than life support.

...

And what was in that IV bag, feeding tube, respirator, whatever-have-you... Was love. Hope, within myself, sure. But by far and away, it was love.

...

...

*That.*

*That* is what I hope you get, from this book. Love.

...

I do not know you, Dearest Reader. I do not see you. I cannot hear you.

...

But I know you have a heart. And I know that a heart needs love, to survive. And...I hope that this book helps give some, to you. Because you deserve it. Even an asshole deserves love. Accountability, absolutely. But yes, love too.

...

Van Gogh once wrote about what drove him. What drove his very soul. ... *"I see paintings or drawings. And my mind turns in that direction as if with an irresistible urge."*

...

I've realized, in stages, what drives me, too. What drives me to be a doctor. To care, for the people around me. To give, so freely, of my love and compassion.

...

It's the same thing.

...

As I posted on my Instagram story recently: *"Everyone has a heart. Whether you think yours is dirty, or pristine. And that is what I want. Be it in my life, or after it. I want to go into that heart, and place love upon its hearth."*

22<sup>nd</sup> of March, 2026 – ~12:00 am

Maisie Black slapped her on the back. Hard. Maisie Flowers, smiling and visibly tearing up, opened her arms and wrapped her in a tight hug.

“*Cheers, bitches!*” Maisie Black roared. “To the power of rage, *and* love!”

Maisie Flowers grinned as she wiped at her eyes. Maisie started to laugh.

They all picked up their drinks from around the small metal table, and toasted heartily.

Maisie Black momentarily appeared to choke on her drink. “*WAIT. SHUT UP,*” she shouted, wiping her mouth, a wild look in her eye and grin plastered on her face. “*LET’S DANCE, BITCHES.*”

25<sup>th</sup> of March, 2026 – 1:50 am

And to think

Barely over a year ago  
I found myself in my first bar

Here  
In this town

...

I thought then  
As I think now

“My god  
It’s loud in here”

...

But  
I find myself smiling

For I find myself  
Feeling at home

In the throng  
The crowd

...

Amongst the living

25<sup>th</sup> of March, 2026 – 1:50 am

I suppose

I have done

All this time

Through fortune

And fear

As I wrote about

So long ago

Barely over a year

...

I have set the bones

Of life

Between my teeth

Clenched my jaw

And broken them open

....

I have drunk

Heartily

The marrow of life

...

...

I have witnessed

Some of the very best

Some of the very worst

Life has had to offer me

...

...

And to think

All of this

In barely over a year

...

And

To think

How much more

There is, left

To taste

..

...

To think

Even with all I have seen

The many places I've been

My world

Is still

But so small

...

And

Oh

How much more world

There is, to see

25<sup>th</sup> of March, 2026 – 11:45 pm

Hate To See Your Heart Break - Paramore

Dearest Reader

Should my dearest dream

Come true

Should these books

Find their way

To you

...

Should they help you

And

Should you happen upon me

....

I would not refuse

Your gratitude

But

I *will*

Remind you

To give *yourself*

That same gratitude

For...

Oh

Dearest Reader

The light

The ember

Was within you  
All along

...

All

That I should *ever*  
Have wanted

Was...

To remind you  
It is there

To give it  
A little kindling

To help shelter it  
When it rains

...

The shine  
Was always yours,

Dearest Reader

Yours to nurture  
Yours to love

...

It's a big responsibility  
I know

...

I believe in you.

26<sup>th</sup> of March, 2026 – 1:27 am

I desperately miss

When there weren't people

In this town

I had to pretend not to see

26<sup>th</sup> of March, 2026 – 2:08 am

ILTWYHM – Koe Wetzel

Maybe

I've been looking at this wrong

...

Maybe

Instead of

Do / pass

I *should*

Be asking

Do *you* pass

Do you pass

Muster

Can you look

Beyond

What you see

To

Who I truly am

...

...

26<sup>th</sup> of Maeach, 2026 – 2:12 am

Go ahead

Stare

I grin

At the opportunity

To be a bitch

26<sup>th</sup> of March, 2026 – 2:39 am

Fuckin' Perfect - Pink

I've heard

So many times

Derision

At the idea

“No one's going to hold your hand through life”

...

But like

Wouldn't it be nice?

...

This whole living thing is

Kinda hard, no?

Wouldn't it be nice?

If someone could be there?

To guide

To support

To love

To remind you

Of your shine?

...

...

I suppose,

Dearest Reader

I have just invented

The idea

Of a parent

...

And thus, I am forced to reflect

On my yearning

And how it seems to have brought me

Full circle

...

It *is* validating

In its own way

...

We yearn

For those things we lack, no?

...

For things we never had

Or

Don't remember having, anyway

...

...

I suppose...

It only reaffirms my desire

To write these books

For people like me

For people who...

Deserved more

Who deserve love

Just as they are

Who could use

Some encouragement

Who could've used

A loving parent

...

...

Oh

Sweetheart

You poor dear

You

Who reads this, now

You

Who knows the pain

You

Most tender one

If it is a friend

If it is a sister

If it is a mother

You yearn for

...

Oh

Dearest Reader

I hope

In my heart of hearts

I hope

In my very soul

This book

These books, I write

I hope

They might give it to you

The love

You have always needed

...

I have no sister

And I am no one's mother

But

Nonetheless

You are so dear to me

Dearest Reader

So

If a friend

A sister

A mother

Is what you need

I hope you find

Here

What you need

And  
Let me remind you  
Once more  
And evermore

You are loved.

26<sup>th</sup> of March, 2026 – 2:55 am

Oh

Dearest Reader

It pangs

In my chest

When I see people

In my social media

So many people

I run into, that greet me

That...

I don't even remember meeting

...

There is so much

I don't remember

And...

I am not incorrect

To make a claim

On being a neuroscientist

...

I am quite familiar

In many ways

How

Chronic stress

And trauma

Can impact learning

Memory formation

Et cetera

...

But...

My god

But/How it pangs

To experience it

26<sup>th</sup> of March, 2026 – 7:25 pm

I Think I'm Getting Better – Porch Kiss

I have heard

Many times

Derision

Of the idea

“No one's going to hold your hand”

...

But

My god

Sometimes

Wouldn't it be nice

26<sup>th</sup> of March, 2026 – 9:28 pm

Secrets - OneRepublic

Dearest Reader,

You know

I've wondered

Many

Many times

“Will this really help people?”

Sharing

So much

Giving you

A view

Into my life

...

But...

...

I think it might.

...

Because...

We live in a day and age

Where it is normal

To share your highlights

Your victories

Cinema scenes

Triumphant  
And clean

...

But

Life is comprised  
Of so much.

The victories  
The downfalls

The epiphanies  
The late night calls

Asking loved ones  
“What the fuck?”

“Am I crazy?”

“Am I the bad guy, here?”

...

Life is *messy*.

...

So

Maybe

Through showing you  
My bomb zone room

And how  
I have tried

To tidy it up

Let you tune in  
To my silly little life

You might realize  
You aren't doomed

Either

26<sup>th</sup> of March, 2026 – 9:54 pm

Secrets - OneRepublic

Dearest Reader,

...

My...

My god.

I don't...

I don't know what did it

But...

For whatever reason

...

I wrote

What feels like...

Forever

Ago

Quite a bit

Describing...

What I realize now

Was...

Dissociation

Separation

....

And...

Here I am

In the middle of a bar,  
Once more

(Go figure, lmao)

...

Maybe it's the song  
Maybe it's the Spring

Maybe it's the blush  
Of alcohol

...

But...

I feel it

I feel it,  
Dearest Reader

Connected  
With everyone

All of them

...

And...

The love  
That overflows

From my heart

...

I have missed this,  
Dearest Reader

...

Happiness

26<sup>th</sup> of March, 2026 – 11:50 pm

Secrets – OneRepublic

Dearest Reader,  
It's definitely the alcohol

And the music  
In my headphones

But...

I have greatly enjoyed this

...

People-watching  
At the bar

...

Complimenting girls  
Now and then

From across the bar  
With hand signals, and mouthed words

...

...

It's been so nice

...

Peaceful.

...

How sorely  
I have missed it

...

Peace.

27<sup>th</sup> of March, 2026 – 12:09 am

Secrets – OneRepublic

Dearest Reader

Maybe...

It's the vulnerability

The soft

"I am letting you in"

Feeling

I am feeling

Now

...

But...

It's dangerous,

You know

When alcohol

Brings you peace

...

Because...

Right now...

I feel something

So good

Something

I can only compare

To how good I felt

When I was a kid

It's almost...

It's actually

Nostalgic

...

To a time

To flashes

Of being in the back seat

When it was raining

And my worries

Were as small

As beating

A video game

I was playing

On the little screen

Of the rental car

Mom was renting

...

...

Back

Back

To when I was a kid

...

I...

...

I wish

I could feel like this

When sober

...

I can even smell it

...

Panda express

And rain

On the window

With a backdrop

Of grey

...

...

Flashes

Back

To when life

Was simple

...

Flashes

Back to when

I was happy

...

(But

Even then

Was I really happy?)

...

27<sup>th</sup> of March, 2026 – 12:12 am

Secrets - OneRepublic

God

How I miss it

27<sup>th</sup> of March 2026 – 12:20 am

Secrets – OneRepublic

Do you see it  
Sweetheart?

The girls  
I have made eye contact with'

At this bar

...

That I am safe?

...

That I try  
So hard

To be safe?

...

That it's okay?

That  
Not just your body

But your mind  
And heart

Are safe  
With me?

Do you see it, sweetheart?

27<sup>th</sup> of March, 2026 – 12:24 am

Secrets - OneRepublic

Do you see it,  
Honey?

That...

I  
Am the one in need?

That...

I  
Need an ear

A heart

Eyes  
To see me

Ears  
To listen

A heart  
To feel

That my heart  
Is trembling?

27<sup>th</sup> of March, 2026 – 12:27 am

Secrets - OneRepublic

And

If you do

Why do you not approach

Sweetheart?

Does my appearance

Fool you?

Do you see

A boy?

Or

Do you see

My heart?

...

Do you see it

Sweetheart?

27<sup>th</sup> of March, 2026 – 12:30 am

Secrets - OneRepublic

God damn

I need to pee

27<sup>th</sup> of March, 2026 – 12:40 am

Secrets - OneRepublic

Dearest Reader

It's strange

I'm quite drunk

And...

Maybe that's why

I'm laughing

Silently, to myself

While I listen

To this song

For the...

What?

Third?

Straight hour?

...

Making sure girls are okay

From across the bar

Forming...

Momentary connections

Of compassion

Of momentary love

...

It's everything

You know?

...

Taking care  
Of my fellow girls

In a place  
When they may need

...

It doesn't matter  
If they don't remember

...

Taking care  
Of hearts

...

Oh  
Dearest Reader

...

What joy  
What true  
Joy

27<sup>th</sup> of March, 2026 – 12:47 am

Secrets - OneRepublic

Inspired by

The motion

Of pulling

My second chair in

So a girl can dance

...

I don't mind it

Making myself smaller

So that...

Other hearts

Might grow larger

27<sup>th</sup> of March, 2026 – 12:50 am

Secrets - OneRepublic

Take pride  
My Dearest Reader

Take pride.

When  
You are shown

Be it by alcohol  
Be it by anything

What is truly  
In your heart

...

If it is good,

...

Take pride.

As I do  
Now

27<sup>th</sup> of March, 2026 – 1:00 am

Secrets - OneRepublic

It's strange

Or...

Perhaps obvious

...

Seeing

The joy

Of girls

With their girlfriends

I only wish

That much more

I was born one

Too

27<sup>th</sup> of March, 2026 – 1:07 am

Secrets - OneRepublic

Dearest Reader,

It's crippling,

You know

...

I'm okay

But...

..

It's crippling

Always knowing

...Always

27<sup>th</sup> of March, 2026 – 1:11 am

Secrets - OneRepublic

Or maybe  
It's crippling

Maybe  
It's both

Always knowing  
And...

Being a girl

In the body  
Of a boy

Surrounded

By girls

You wish

You could reach out to

27<sup>th</sup> of March, 2026 – 1:16 am

Secrets - OneRepublic

And

They can't even tell

The ones I do approach

The ones I do

And the ones I don't

...

They can't even tell

1<sup>st</sup> of April, 2026 – 12:42 am

Fuckin' Perfect - Pink

It is a radical

Radical act

Of self knowledge

Self acceptance

Self love

Self forgiveness

Far

Far more radical

More

Even

Than / knew

At first

...

To be able to admit

“If the body

Reflected the soul

I would be one of the most beautiful girls

You could ever know”

...

...

1<sup>st</sup> of April, 2026 – 12:57 am

My god

I can't wait

Until I never have to go into a men's bathroom again

1<sup>st</sup> of April, 2026 – 2:26 am

No one came  
To my celebration

But...

'T'has been a lovely night  
Nonetheless

...

As I've said

What's a night  
To let go?

To let the alcohol  
Bring forth

A goofy little smile

To feel...  
Joy, again

To relax

And to feel joy  
Again

...

We deserve it, don't we  
Dearest Reader

We can afford it  
Finally

And, my god  
Yes

How we have deserved it



1<sup>st</sup> of April, 2026 – 4:08 am

I've Seen It – Olivia Dean

This

Is a story

Of a girl

Whose love

Was so great

For all the world

She cast it up

Into the wind

To carry it off

Streams of glitter

Currents of light

A million dancing tiny poffs

Of little smiling stars

Blown to the breeze

Like a dandelion wish

“Lay before the hungry

My love, upon a dish”

Off, she sent them

All around the globe

To give fellow flowers

Roses

Laced with gold

1<sup>st</sup> of April. 2026 – 8:23 am

I wonder

When the question comes

“How do I stop caring about ...?”

I wonder

Might it be that

An answer could be found

Not in trying to *stop* caring

But, instead

What if we tried caring

About something else

...

Not in an avoidant way, exactly

But more

A redirection

Take the care you have

The genuine

Sincere care

And redirect it

To something else you care about

Something else

That matters, to you

...

I doubt that it could erase

Old pain

But

Perhaps  
It could lead  
To new joy

1<sup>st</sup> of April, 2026 – 10:01 pm

Jack And Diane – John Mellencamp

You know

It's a damn good thing

That life goes on

Long after the thrill of it

Seems to be gone

...

Because otherwise

How should you make it through

And discover the thrill

All over again

2<sup>nd</sup> of April, 2026 – 12:20 am

Casual – Chappell Roan

I have written  
On the matter  
At least twice, before

But  
Oh  
Dearest Reader

...

I vastly  
Vastly prefer  
Writing from joy

2<sup>nd</sup> of April, 2026 – 12:31 am

Casual – Chappell Roan

Share with me,  
Dearest Reader

A private grin

...

I think

The best part  
Of acts of kindness

Is when people don't know you're doing them

...

It's like

A little surprise

"They have no idea  
Their life is going to be easier"

...

It's an indescribable  
Indescribably wholesome

Tiny joy

2<sup>nd</sup> of April, 2026 – 12:35 am

By the way

Take it from drunk

Silly grinning me:

If someone tells you

“It’s cringe to move with theater”

Laugh

And say

“You’re really missing out”

2<sup>nd</sup> of April, 2026 – 12:38 am

“I have to pee,”

She mouthed

To the ceiling

...

“Fuck,”

She added

Grinning

Excited

To make another round

Around the bar

2<sup>nd</sup> of April, 2026 – 12:45 am

And then

Her smile flickered

As she made her way

To the bathroom

Sighing

At the sight

Of a male silhouette

One she chose, similarly

As she always did

To avoid causing issues

For the ones behind the bar

2<sup>nd</sup> of April, 2026 – 1:17 am

Casual – Chappell Roan

Remembering

With the background knowledge

Of all she thinks

And all she does, as a result

Or does not do

She remembers the quote

“If all is as it should be

They won't know

They won't have any idea

You did anything at all”

3<sup>rd</sup> of April, 2026 – 12:47 am

Casual – Chappell Roan

Dearest friends

I write to you

From a better place

...

It is heady

And warm

And

I feel

Such bliss

...

If I should let myself

I should weep

For joy

...

Dearest friends

Thank you

For getting me here

...

I feel it

Once more

...

Joie

De vivre

4<sup>th</sup> of April, 2026 – 12:09 am

Waste My Wishes – Sophie Traux

But when

The alcohol wears off

And

The bar is suddenly colder

And

You see a hat

On a boy,

Saying,

“Life is good”

And

You wonder

...

“Is it?”

...

“Have I just

Upgraded the diameter

Of my orbit?”

...

...

4<sup>th</sup> of April, 2026 -12:26 am

And just like that

She had lost

The ring

And she was crushed

...

And just like that

She was

Again

Just another girl

Crouched, on the bar floor

Crying

4<sup>th</sup> of April, 2026 – 12:47 am

And then

And then

She found it

Under a distant bar stool

Of all places

...

And all the way back

To her seat

Elbows

Hitting the bar

Head bowing

As though in prayer

Close to tears

Of sheer relief

She clutched it

Tight

For dear life

...

“Damn the finances,”

She thought

“I’m having another drink, now”

4<sup>th</sup> of April, 2026 – 3:58 am

Lost Boy – Ruth B

He doesn't know it

But

That ~~dumb~~

Very drunk boy

Made a difference, tonight

...

Maybe not for the girl

Also quite drunk

We were both

Concerned for

But...

...

In me

4<sup>th</sup> of April, 2026 – 4:42 am

Lost Boy – Ruth B

I understand my ex

A little better, now

...

Scratching

Where the bra used to be

Is heaven indeed

4<sup>th</sup> of April, 2026 – 4:47 am

Lost Boy – Ruth B

And suddenly

The state of being  
Perennially childlike

A lost boy

Takes on  
A whole

New  
Sadder

Meaning

4<sup>th</sup> of April, 2026 – 2:12 pm

Wildflower Woman – Little Luna

I just felt it

Dearest Reader

I just felt it

...

It's cloudy

And rainy

And I'm listening

To a perfect song

This one,

In fact

...

I felt it

Not just

The nostalgia

But the happiness

Of...

Of my childhood

...

...

And

The best part?

I'm sober

4<sup>th</sup> of April, 2026 – 5:00 pm

I haven't even  
Gotten that far, yet

In this next stage  
This new era

I feel  
Brewing

...

But  
Already

Looking back, I...

...

It makes a lot of sense

How I got  
So bad

At responding to people

Going days  
Weeks

Between messages

Never a guarantee  
When I would reply

...

I was so  
So

So gone

...

You know how social workers  
And therapists

Psychologists  
Psychiatrists

Mark, for patients  
If they're "oriented?"

To who they are  
To where they are  
To what year it is  
And so on

...

...

I was so...  
So

Disoriented

To time  
To everything

So to speak

...

I fell  
Out of time

Lost  
Disoriented

In the dark

Constantly, just...  
Just...

Surviving

4<sup>th</sup> of April, 2026 – 5:42 pm

Wildflower Woman – Little Luna

I don't...

I don't know what did it

But...

Oh

My god

Dearest Reader

...

I feel...

I feel it

I feel....

Like...

...

I am finally

Getting to rest

4<sup>th</sup> of April, 2026 – 6:00 pm

Wildflower Woman – Little Luna

And so

Sobbing

And laughing

Through the rainy drive home

Transported

Back

Not through time

But

Back

In her heart

To when she was a child

By the kind of drive

By something, in the music

She had cherished

So long ago

...

She sobbed

And laughed

And cheered

For herself

...

And the ghost

Of her inner child

Sitting in the passenger seat

Watching on

...

Smiled

For the first time

In far

Far

Far too long

4<sup>th</sup> of April, 2026 – 6:45 pm

Maybe

It's simply

As it always

That April showers

Bring May flowers

...

:)

5<sup>th</sup> of April, 2026 – 3:10 am

One Without The Other – Katelyn Tarver

*And now*

*Comes the rest of life*

*I guess,*

She thought

Standing alone

Outside the bar

In the cold night air

And

Though her heart quavered

A little

For

There was still

So much

...

...

She smiled

Bravely

A tenuous

Small little thing

Just the corner

Of her lips

...

Nonetheless

She smiled

5<sup>th</sup> of April, 2026 – 3:37 am

One Without The Other – Katelyn Tarver

She grinned  
And giggled  
Privately

*Wouldn't be me*  
*If there wasn't one last thing,*  
She thought

Looking down  
At the photo she'd taken

At the girl  
The woman

She beheld

...

For the woman she saw  
Was who she'd hoped  
For so long

To grow up, into

...

There  
In the photo

She saw it  
At last

...

The eyes  
And the gaze  
Of such endless depth

Eyes  
A gaze  
That had seen

And yet  
No less, still  
Left one feeling, so

And  
Upon her lips  
She saw it

She saw it, at last

...

The red wine smile

5<sup>th</sup> of April, 2026 – 3:36 pm

“I feel like... This is the second time. That I’ve died, and come back,”  
Maisie said.

Her friend just smiled. “Oh, that’s gonna keep happening.”

Maisie grinned back. “Oh, I know.”

*But what a joy, she thought, later. To get to be reborn. Over, and over.  
Constantly evolving. Constantly growing. ...*

She thought, for a moment.

*Life does end, she thought, then. It very much can. But... How  
wonderful. That it can die. ... So that new life can begin, again.*



*I remember hearing  
A quote  
So very long ago  
I wish I could find it  
But it went something like...*

*"We exist  
As three different people*

*We can only help  
In one direction*

*In the now  
For the later*

*And*

*We can only truly know  
In the other direction*

*Looking back"*

*...*

*...*

*But  
I remember thinking*

*So very long ago*

*A little addition  
Of my own*

*...*

*"But we can love  
In every direction"*

*...*

*In the now  
Looking back*

*In the now  
Looking ahead*

*And...*

*In the now  
Now*

*...*

*...*

*But it's funny,  
Dearest Reader*

*It's one thing  
To look back*

*By remembering*

*It's another  
Entirely*

*To look back  
On true form*

*...*

*In videos  
In pictures  
In diary entries*

*...*

*But I find  
It's precisely then  
I feel the most love*

*...*

*So...*

*Take videos*  
*Take pictures*  
*Write it all down*

...

*For...*  
*One day*

*You, too*  
*Will know*

...

*And I hope*  
*On that day*

*You feel so*  
*So much love*

*Roll Credits*

Playing Dead – Chunk! No, Captain Chunk!  
City Of Ocala – A Day To Remember  
Right Back At It Again – A Day To Remember

Lights Out – bludnymph  
Greed – Sophie Powers, DE'WAYNE  
TNT – Chloe Star  
The Sisterhood – Mackenzie Johnson