

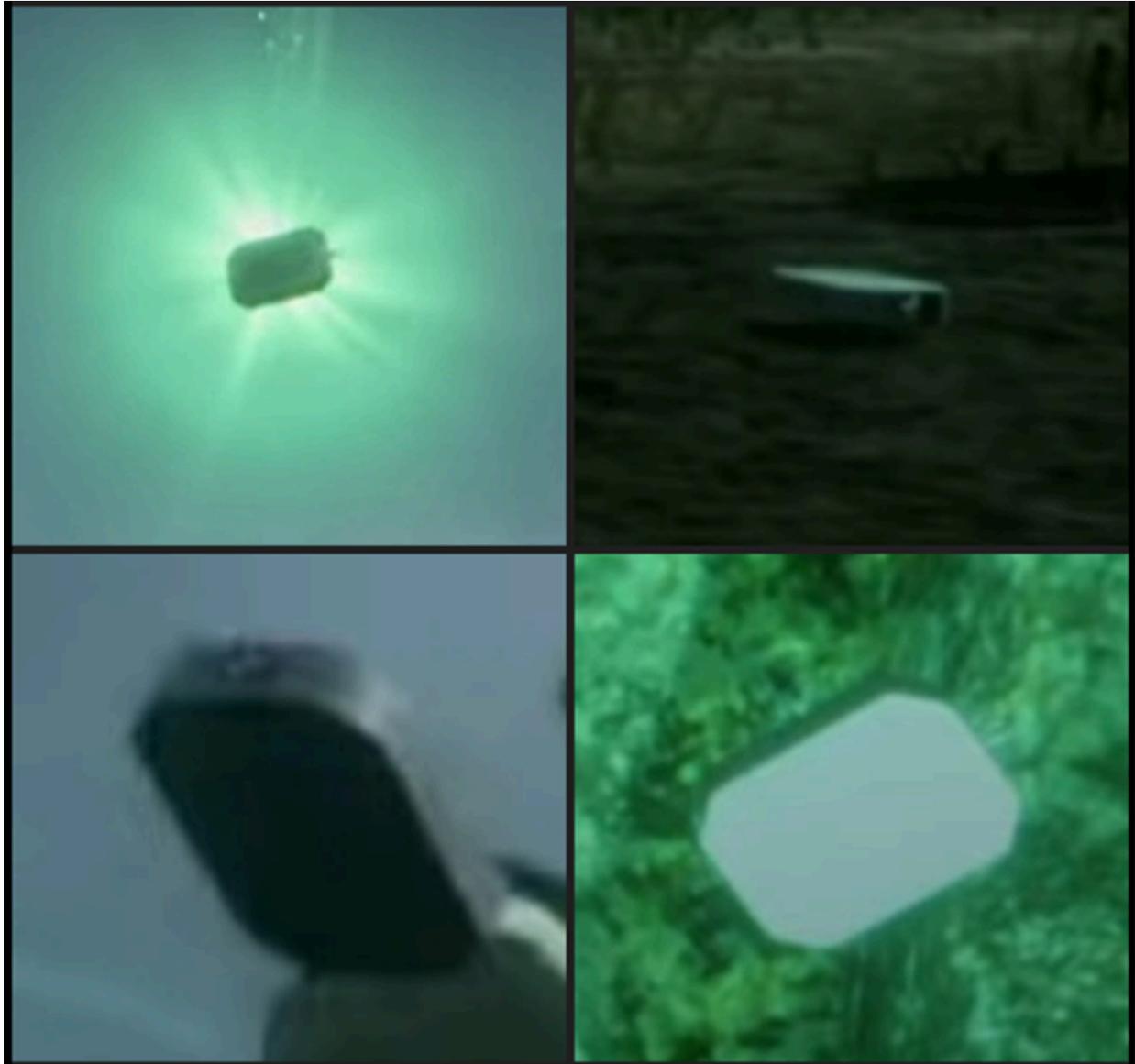
Dear Sephiroth:

When I learned that you had lost your necklace at Rhadore, I immediately made you a new one, without even knowing what it looks like, because I didn't want you to be sad:





I'm sorry that my first attempt didn't look exactly like the one you lost; I didn't know at the time what the original locket looked like. We weren't shown until later. But when we were shown, I tried looking at it very carefully:



...And using that as a guide, I made you a new one. It is enclosed with this letter. I'm going to leave it with a kindly person named Naoki Hamaguchi. Hamaguchi-san is brilliant, creative, and a very good person, from what I can tell; I will count on Hamaguchi-san to find some way to get this necklace into your hands and back around your neck, where it belongs, if you want it.

I hope you won't take personally what Glenn did to your necklace. For sure, it's terrible that he didn't try to understand you before jumping to conclusions. I can surely relate to that; people do that to me all the time – you're not alone. But still, sometimes when people are hurt, they act recklessly, and they don't think to question their perceptions until after the fact. It doesn't have anything to do with you or with how you deserve to be treated by others. Sometimes people just make really bad choices in the throes of their suffering, and those choices end up hurting other people. You should know what that's like, no?

...I know it's not the one that Glenn kicked into the abyss; I know that. But I tried to make it look as close to that one as I could. Please, if you can, take this as proof that anything lost can be found, remade, or restored. It is true of necklaces, and it's true of hearts and minds, if you're willing to put in the work to reclaim that which is yours and to discard destructive conditioning imposed upon us by outside forces.

Sephiroth, by nature, you are kind and good; it's obvious in everything you do. It's only Shinra that tried stealing away your gentleness, your joy, and your capacity to be soft. It's only the messed-up situation you were born into that tried to mold and shape you into a tool or a weapon to be used. But you're not a tool or a weapon. You're not a monster. You're not some cruel, hard-hearted thing. You are a person, and people have choices.

Maybe you think you're choosing. Or maybe some imposter of you thinks it's choosing. I'm not smart enough to know. But either way, if violent things are happening that aren't in service to protecting yourself and the people around you, then I know from experience and from once being a bitter, angry person that you're not choosing. If you're doing violent things for the sake of it or for the amusement of it, it's because you've given up choosing and are simply letting your trauma take the wheel for you.

From what I can tell, you've been doing a lot of stuff on the basis of lies that have been told to you. Lies like, "you're a monster" and "you don't matter because you're just a weapon" and "your manner of birth makes you abominable" and "you're a Cetra" and "Jenova is your mother". But Sephiroth, when we do things that are based on lies, we're not actually choosing. We are being manipulated and coerced. Free will does not exist in the absence of truth. Or, more accurately, free will does not exist in the presence of lies.

"I chose this" and "this is who I am now" are not truths when it comes to people who are operating on their trauma responses. They're nothing more than things said by people who are too afraid to admit they've given up control over their lives to their worst fears, and people who are too afraid to do the work required to change.

You've made mistakes, if the current account of what happened in Nibelheim is to be believed, but you can choose to turn around, to do better, and to walk your way to a different outcome. You can defy Shinra. You can defy Jenova. You can defy the circumstances of your birth. You can rise up into wholeness and healing. You can reclaim your light, and you can use that light to lead others out of the dark, if that's what you want to do – if you still want to be a real hero.

And to be sure, for you to become a real hero might be a terrifying prospect for you. But you're not alone in that terror; even someone as wholesome as Steven Universe, after what he did to Jasper, has to live with the knowledge that he is capable of cruelty and killing, and he has to live with that knowledge for the rest of his life. And he does; he carries that burden spectacularly with the help of his friends. Please go witness that story in its entirety so you can understand what I mean, if you haven't already.

If you wanted to be as strong as him, it would require you to become so utterly gentle that you would have to become strong enough to carry the overwhelming agony of what you've done forever. It would require you to use that agony to decide, with absolute conviction, that you will not allow yourself to hurt people in the same ways you have in the past. I stand before you as a person who is strong enough to have made that choice in response to my own mistakes. Accountability for my mistakes is a deliciously agonizing choice that I make and that I learn from

every single day. Surely, I am not stronger than you? Sephiroth, I'm just a clumsy autistic nerd living in a feeble and genetically defective body. I'm nothing. I'm no one. But still, I'm not afraid of you. And here's why:

broadwaytheanimatedseries:

avantgardne:

geekdawson:

Kindness is often mistaken for softness and let me tell you, friends...that is a mistake you don't want to make.

Kind people are not born that way, they do not stumble into it, kind people are forged in fire and darkness and imploding stars...they have steel cores. Throw a punch and you're going to break your hand.

Kind people are kind because they know firsthand that life isn't.

"The helper seeks to help because he knows what it is to be helpless"

I don't know if you read or remember the very first letter that I wrote to you and left with Hamaguchi-san in hopes that it would be delivered to you. I don't know if you ever received the Tree of Life materia that summons me if you need a little support; I left that with Hamaguchi-san, too, in hopes that it would get to you. But... I am doing the work every day to defy the horrific circumstances to which I had been born. I am doing the work every day to build a wholesome life out of the wreckage that was the first 22 years of my existence. I've used the light you unwittingly gave to me in order to guide my way forward even in our broken, frightening, and dying world, and I've used it to shape myself into someone who is unbreakable, but still soft, kind, and full of love and hope. I use the light you gave to me every day to try to reach others who are still lost in the dark.

My upbringing destined me to become someone who is bitter, cold, unfeeling, and full of spite, and for a long time, that is who I was. But with your help, I defied this. With your help and the help of others, I turned around and made a different choice. I hope you can see me and hear me as I am now. I hope you can see and hear the lives that I now have the capacity to touch. I hope you can look at this and understand that you are a good thing. And I hope that, knowing you are a good thing, you will make kind, loving, compassionate choices towards yourself and towards all living things around you, in light of that truth.

Sephiroth, I am not stronger than you; if I can do this work, if I can rise up into truly living even after everything that happened to me before, then so can you. I wasn't supposed to have a normal life, either. But now I do, and it's because you gave me the strength to hold on even when I thought I couldn't continue. Therefore, I'll beg you to rise up into truly living. I'll beg you to walk towards that normal life you wanted. It's waiting for you; all you have to do is love yourself and love the people around you enough to know that you, like all humans, deserve to hold that kind of wholesome life tenderly in your hands.

It is as you say. We can break any hateful cycle. We can defy any harmful pattern. All it takes is a little compassion. Don't go the way of Rosen; I know you have it in you to try. I know you can find people who will see you, know you, understand you, accept you, and love you as-is. I know you can find a place in this world. I know you can belong. And you have at least one person, right here, who is willing to help you; all you gotta do is take my outstretched hand. Or anyone's, really; it doesn't have to be mine; it just has to be the hand of someone who is going to treat you like a person, and not like a monster or like an object.

I can tell you from experience that healing, learning to trust, learning to love again, and learning to ask for help is a very long, difficult, and painful road. I can tell you that choosing this path is full of grieving and agony. I can tell you that it will require you to break yourself down on a fundamental level and to shatter into pieces, just so you can look at all of the ugly, jagged, sharp things in your past and consider honestly how all of those things affect you now, and what you can do to weave those things into something with a wholesome meaning. And I can tell you that it will require you to put your shattered pieces back together in a way that is even more beautiful than it was before. I can tell you that it takes unfathomable amounts of courage, patience, endurance, and strength to choose this road, and to choose love and gentleness despite being born to a life that instead equipped you for harsh and merciless things. But I can also tell you that it's possible. And I can also tell you that until you do this work, then any healed survivor of trauma in any world anywhere will always be stronger than you in all the ways that count.

And Sephiroth... that's very silly. It's very silly to think that I – some clumsy, feeble, socially awkward autistic chick from a backwater planet that doesn't even have fire magic – am stronger than you in all the ways that count. It's silly because I'd argue that I am one of the weaker examples of a human from my planet. So c'mon and get up off your knees already, willya? All you have to do is try. And if you don't have enough of your own beautiful memories to wake up and rise up, then use mine; it's why I've been diligently writing them down in a new letter every day. I have over 600 of them now, for you. Have you been reading them? Do you remember the letters I wrote to you about the shattered bowl?



I had received this as a result of entering the pumpkin soup I made for you into a soup contest – you were sad about missing out on some, so I made some for you. But right before I brought the bowl I won into my house, it fell from my clumsy, dyspraxic hands and shattered on the asphalt.



We all make mistakes. It's what we do after the fact that counts. I repaired the bowl. The bowl is scarred and changed forever, but it is now stronger and more beautiful than originally was:





And Sephiroth... I want you to know that this bowl still holds beautiful pumpkin soup; the very same soup that I made for you:



Just like shattered bowls can be repaired and still hold beautiful soup, shattered hearts can be repaired and still hold love. Please give it a try.

I'll send along a couple more words and images for you to think about, too:



lumine-no-hikari reblogged dragoninthelabratory



3d ago



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Oct 18, 2023

submissive in the way a livestock guardian dog is submissive to the sheep it kills wolves for



petshopbutch



Oct 25, 2023

love how much attention this post is getting i knew the gay people in my phone would understand me. btw here's the picture that inspired me to make this post in the first place:



lumine-no-hikari

3d ago



**lumine-no-hikari** reblogged



25m ago



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Nov 19, 2018

the concept and idea of “you can always start trying to be a better person” is extremely important to me both in media and irl and i continue to be deeply deeply disturbed by the trend on this site pushing that these ideas in media are bad writing or even morally reprehensible

because theyd rather someone stay terrible or just straight up die than become a better person

from a compassionate point of view it’s deeply distressing and from a pragmatic point of view it’s outright frustrating

it’s fucked up.



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Mar 2, 2019

What is the most important step a man can take?

The next.



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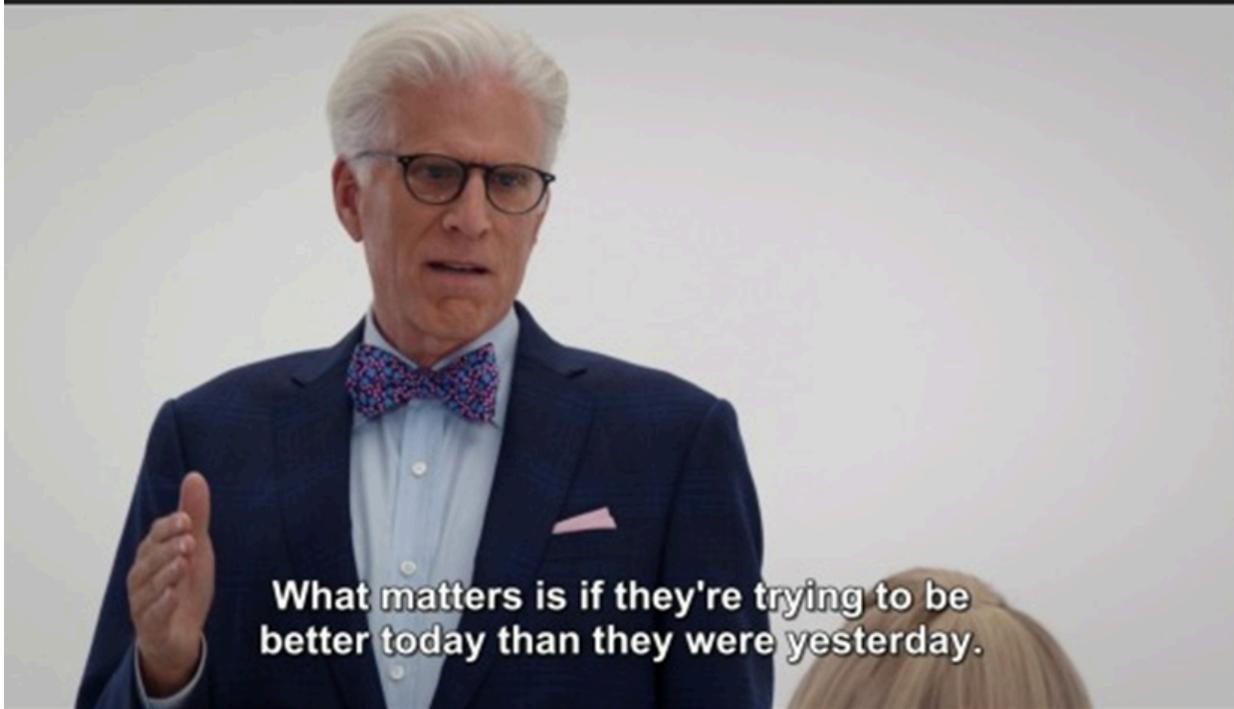
Sep 8, 2020





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Oct 30, 2020





PILLOW THOUGHTS

You're still here, you know;  
under all the messy things,  
under the stress, the anxiety, the sadness,  
you're still you.  
Come up for some air;  
there are bright skies up here.  
You have to pull yourself up;  
I know you feel like you can't,  
but you can.  
I believe in you,  
more than you know.

Sephiroth. There are so many people here in my world who think you don't have what it takes to turn around. I'm going to beg you to do something brave and unprecedented – please turn your face back to the light; the darkness doesn't suit you. There are so many people who think you're not strong enough to do something like that. But I know they're wrong, and I'm going to beg you to prove it to them.

And I'm also going to hope against all odds that somehow this message reaches you and prompts you to think about a variety of things. I am going to hope that it will prompt you to look at yourself and at others more lovingly. I'm going to hope that you can realize that you hold your own destiny within your own two hands. I'm going to hope that you'll hold that destiny with tenderness and love. I'm going to hope that you realize the phenomenal amount of power you wield, not only over things in your world, but also over actual human lives in mine.

What you do next will teach other abused people what sorts of outcomes they can expect for themselves and for their own lives, and how they can expect to be treated by others around them. What you do next will teach ordinary, unabused people how they should treat people like us. If you teach everyone that abused and traumatized people are lost causes that are better off destroyed or that they should never have been born, then that will make it harder for folks like me to get the help they need to turn around and find their way back to the light. So I'm going to have faith that you will wield your power responsibly. I'm going to trust that you will lead everyone to an outcome that inspires hope, faith, courage, and tenacity, even for people like us who are badly scarred from everything that has happened to us.

Please stay safe out there and please do your best, okay? I'll keep writing you a new letter every day, trying to show you what a "normal" life after trauma is like; it's a beautiful thing, and I know it because, even with all my doubts, pains, and frustrations, I am still living it. I will keep modeling for you what it means to make gentle, loving choices, even if the beginning of my life shouldn't have allowed for that. Please know that there are people in my world who still love you and who are still cheering for you to overcome your pain so you can choose a more wholesome outcome.

Sephiroth, whatever it is you think you're becoming, one thing is certain: if you don't turn around, the only thing you're going to "become" is dead, disappeared, or some variant thereof. If you try to hurt people, you're going to be stopped, and only those of us who will mourn for you will remember you. So please don't die. Please don't disappear. Just like my life is worth living, and just like I deserve to see a softer, kinder tomorrow, so, too, is your life worth living, and so, too, do you deserve to see a softer, kinder tomorrow.

I guess we'll all see you again in a few years. In the meantime, work hard on yourself, but please do so kindly. Listen to stories other than your own. Rest when you need to. Eat when you're hungry. Stay hydrated. Sleep properly. Bad things happen when we push ourselves beyond our limits and when we don't tend to ourselves like a kind friend should; you learned all about that the hard way, didn't you? In Nibelheim. Please don't repeat your mistakes, okay? Because those of us who care for you don't want to see you suffer or get hurt anymore. Before you ask Cloud to defy destiny, defy your trauma responses.

You can do it. I believe in you. My faith in your ability to do good things is unshakable. Please remember you're not alone. I will always be right here. And if I am not suitable, then some other, shinier, kinder, smarter, and overall better person will always be right here; my world is full of them.

Your friend,  
Lumine

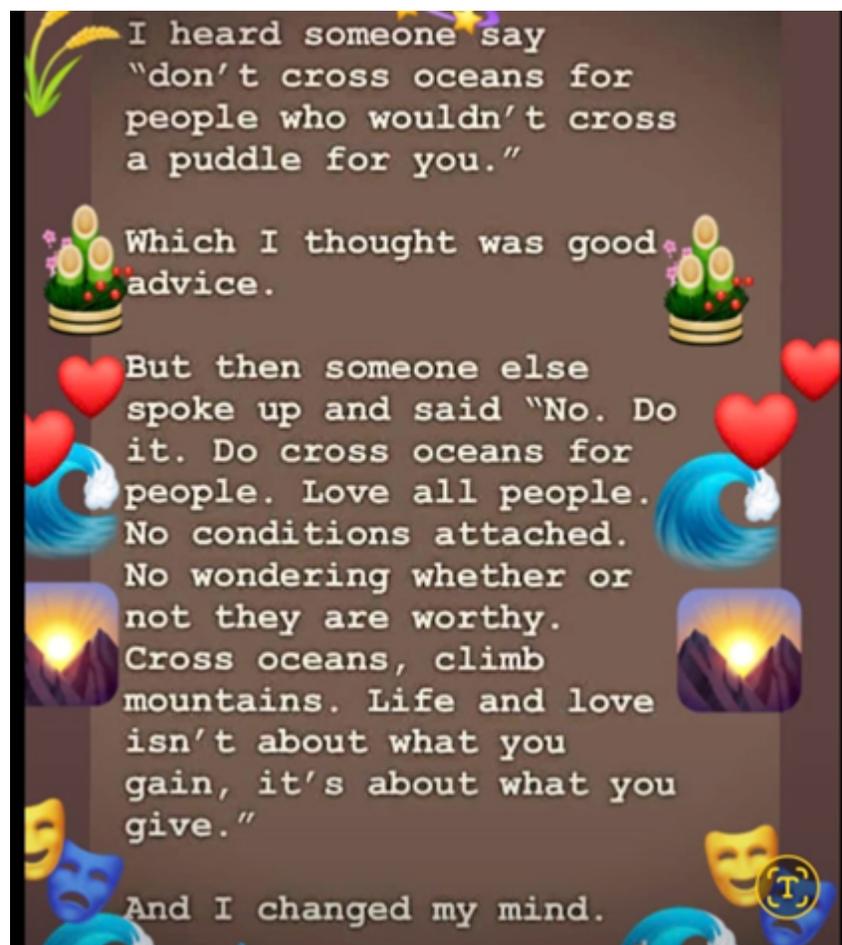
P.S.

In addition to your mother's picture, I've also enclosed within the locket a number of the gifts I've made for you, via QR Code. These codes can be used to bring them up for you to read or to listen to.

There is also a tiny Herkimer diamond enclosed. Herkimer diamonds are quartz, but they are special because they only form in a small geographical area in my state called Herkimer. They are rarer than carbon diamonds, and because of the way they're formed, they are double terminated, and a bit more resilient than ordinary quartz. This one in particular, while it has a few inclusions, has a rainbow-colored sparkle on the inside when the sunlight hits it just right. I included it because I wanted you to remember how beautiful and miraculous this world can be. And I wanted you to remember that things don't have to be flawless and pure to be beautiful, good, and worthwhile. Sephiroth... you don't have to be flawless and pure to be beautiful, good, and worthwhile, either. You still have that rainbow sparkle inside.

May this locket remind you that there are countless hands and voices waiting to guide you along if your feet feel unsteady. We will catch you if you stumble; all you have to do is reach back for us. All you have to do is try hard to be kinder, gentler, and stronger today than you were yesterday. All you have to do is take the next step forward. It's as Papyrus from Undertale says: "I believe in you. You can do a little better, even if you don't think so... I promise..."

I'll leave you with this:



Sephiroth, you are worth crossing even oceans of reality for, just to try to reach you. You are worth climbing even mountains of pain, despair, and self-doubt for, as I have done in order to become someone who can try to cross those oceans. If you've read my other letters, then you understand a little about how harsh and scary my life used to be; I want you to know that I would happily go through it all again, as many times as it takes, just to become someone who can cross paths compassionately with you. And no; I don't want anything in return, other than to someday see you thriving, happy, and safe.

You are so loved. And you're not alone. Please try really hard not to forget, okay?