

home *for*
grief

A GENTLE HANDOUT, FOR THE PART THAT FEELS LIKE
BETRAYAL

the guilt is not a verdict

anticipatory grief comes braided with guilt, a particular, cruel kind. guilt for grieving someone who is still alive. guilt for wanting the waiting to end, or the suffering to stop. guilt for the moments of relief, or resentment, or for needing your own life back. please hear this clearly: the guilt is not a verdict. it is not evidence that you love them less. it is the shadow that deep love and deep exhaustion cast together.

wanting the suffering to be over does not mean you want them gone. it means you are human, and tired, and you have been holding this for a long time.

THE GUILTS THAT VISIT, AND THE TRUTH BESIDE THEM

“i am grieving too early.” you are grieving in real time, while still loving them now. that is not premature, it is honest. the grief began when the loss began.

“i wished it would be over.” wishing an end to suffering, theirs or yours, is compassion, not betrayal. it is what love does when it watches someone hurt.

“i felt relief, and then horror at myself.” relief and love are not opposites. a moment of relief does not undo a lifetime of devotion.

“i resented them, or the situation.” resentment at an illness, at being worn thin, even at them, can sit beside love. it does not make you cruel.

“i should be doing more.” you are doing something immensely hard, for a long time, with no rest. ‘more’ is not always possible, and you are not failing.

let every feeling have room. guilt, love, exhaustion, and tenderness can all live in the same heart at once. the guilt is not the truth of you. the love is.

IF THE DAYS FEEL UNBEARABLE

if you are struggling to carry on, please reach out. you should not have to hold this alone.

SADAG (South African Depression and Anxiety Group): 0800 567 567

Lifeline South Africa: 0861 322 322

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