

Dear me.

When it happens, you won't want to believe it. You'll take their word for it when they say their busy. They'll make time for you, they always have. You'll make excuses for them, put your ringer on extra loud, just in case they call. Switch on notifications, just to see that one message. You feel that change, nagging you at the back of your head. But because you can't rationalize it, you ignore it.

It's a specific kind of loneliness, that hits you like a wave of nausea. And nostalgia. As you realise the two of you have been staring out the same window, for twenty minutes, nothing to say. Small talk throws itself in, a few words, here and there. The opposite of a comfortable silence.

When you scroll through your contacts, and stop at their name, and almost call. But you don't, suddenly feeling inexplicably abandoned and confused.

You look through pictures, back from the times you were happy. Reach for the phone. Attach that photo to a message, and slowly type. "Remember this?" and 'I miss you.' When an overwhelming, horrible emptiness clouds you. And you press backspace, watching each letter disappear. Locking your phone, leaving it untouched.

Sometimes there's no huge fight that marks the end of a friendship. No falling out, no major disagreement. Sometimes it just falls apart for no good reason. Distance. Priorities. New people. New lives. Somehow, these things become more important than your connection. As we get older, we trim the corners of our lives. Sometimes, we stop needing people in our lives, and it isn't even conscious. No one ever wakes up one morning thinking 'Maybe I'll stop being friends with her today.' It fizzles out.

Friendship is a special kind of love that's not supposed to fade. You never expect the one person you thought you could always depend on to disappear without saying goodbye. And when they do you feel sickeningly stupid and cheated, wondering what you meant to them all along, whether you were just convenient or in the right place at the right time. You never really know for sure.

And the worst part is, you don't even know how to explain yourself. You know if you bring this up with them they'll give you a blank expression and a blank excuse. You don't want to explain how you feel. You can't. You just want them to get it, to read you like they used to be able to. You want to take them by the shoulders and shake them, screaming Where are you? What happened?! . But you can't do that either, because you're no longer on the same level and it's going to make you feel crazy.

In life, it's given that we lose people. People flow in and out like curtains through an open window. But losing someone will always be a huge blow, and you'll never see it coming. Which

makes the friendships that do hold out, the ones that make it through countless breakdowns and breakthroughs and changes and years, so damn important.

Love,

The person you will be.