Dear Diary,

I’m not going to lie. The last two months have been HARD. I have really felt tried and pushed to my ultimate limits this quarter. I’ve also felt more love and warmth and acceptance than ever before. I’ve learned who my truest friends are, and who I shouldn’t allow into my environment. I don’t know if words can describe how I am feeling now. Or if words can describe what I’ve felt since this year began. Or since I was much younger. I’m in a weird phase of my life, and I’m afraid it’ll be hard to get out.

I know that there is a shining bright white light on the other side. I know that I will get out of this cloud. But wow, has it been hard.

I’ve learned that Yeng is an incredibly amazing friend. I can’t imagine having anyone else in my life that could fill his role as well. He is a wonderful best friend to me. He is so patient with me, kind when I need it, real and honest even when I don’t want to hear it, and loyal beyond belief. I can never thank him enough for how he has been there for me and pushed me to be better every day this quarter.

Claudia and I have had a bit of a rough patch. It worries me that she and I haven’t spent hardly any time together this quarter. I know that I need to be careful when I think about how much time we spend together because she is incredibly busy beyond belief. But I do think that she could have been there for me a little bit more this year. I have been in some very obvious low places these last few months, and she hasn’t been there for me when I’ve needed her every time. She has been amazing the last few weeks, and I can’t thank her enough for that. But I do need to address with her that it hurt me a lot how much I felt she wasn’t there this quarter. With the time that she did have left over, she could have chosen to spend the night or offer to spend the night at my place so many times, but instead spent most of her nights at Andrews place. She rarely checked up on me unprompted from another friend, even when I specifically reached out and asked to be checked up on more often. Right after I told her I’ve been feeling so lonely, I try to reach out and make a tradition with her so I can see her more, I feel a sense that the tradition might never happen without me pushing hard for it. Its sad that I’m feeling this way, and I don’t know if it's warranted or if I’ve just been in a particularly bad place lately, but I do wish I saw Claudia more. I wish she asked me about how I am and how I’ve been, and put the phone completely away for my answer, and listened to my full answer in detail for at least an hour. I wish she could let me pour out my heart and my thoughts and my fears and my hardships because she knows that she is all I’ve got. I can’t be that close with anyone else, I need her and I’ve had to keep everything I’m thinking so bottled in these last few months because I haven’t been able to talk to her about what I’ve been going through for more than like a total of 15 minutes at a time. I know that some people need to be alone to heal and to cry. But for me, a person who is recovering from addiction, has an eating disorder, and is borderline depressed right now - I should not be spending 90% of my nights alone in my apartment. It hurt me so much how often that happened last quarter, and it was like no one put two and two together. I can’t be alone right now. It’s so bad for me, and I was alone this last quarter. I care about Claudia and Andrew and their relationship and her happiness, but I need her to at least know that I do lose her a little bit as a friend when she’s in a relationship. I don’t want that to sound like an ultimatum in anyway, but I do miss having her in my life so much. Especially at a time when I need her so badly.

Okay wow rant over.

I’m sorry I didn’t mean to get so into that.

I’m usually so understanding and try to be much more empathetic towards others and what they are going through.

In all honesty, I’m in a bad place.

I’ve noticed it since Morgan came and visited. And whenever I’m not in a good place, I project either my anger or self hatred onto others - and become a person that I don’t want to be. I need this trip to Escalante. I need to get away. I need to get out of SLO and out of California. I need to be away from screens and technology, away from my pantry, away from my stresses and triggers. I need to not write in a fucking food diary every morsel of food a day. I need to read and I need to relax and I need to NOT LOOK IN A MIRROR.

I need to just lay down, and relax, and BREATHE.

I need to find reconnection in my breath. I’ve lost it so much lately. My wrist injury is really taking a toll on me. And my ribs still aren’t better. I don’t know what happened and that frustrates me so much. I wish so badly I could do yoga the same way, I get worried that it won’t be possible. I’m hoping I can enjoy time to raise endorphins and move my body this break in a way that won’t injure me more. I need to take a step back and work on being human again.

My human beingness needs training.

I’m so ready for a much needed break and time to reflect and think and recover and be.

I’m really looking forward to the next week and a half. And honestly to the quarter after that too. It’s going to be busy, but I’ve found a nice groove in a long work day. I can juggle a lot at once and I’m GOOD at it. I’m great at organizational psychology. I am really excited to take my much needed rest and kill it next quarter. I’ve learned SO MUCH this quarter.

I’ve learned what I can and can’t do. Who I can and can’t let myself be around and influenced by. Some of my triggers. Some of my deeper problems and fears and emotions. I’m going to lay out some of them here.

I can :

* Live a career that is my dream job
* Be passionate about my work
* Be successful in life
* Learn more than I ever have before or dreamed of before
* Make it through an eating disorder
* Get over an addiction
* Break addictive and compulsive habits
* Learn to be less impulsive
* Enjoy the rainbow of the grey that lies between absolutes
* Live in a space that isn’t cluttered
* Work under high pressure situations
* Perform under pressure as well
* Take care of my body
* Love myself

I can’t

* Spend time around Miles anymore
* Spend time around Elvis anymore
* Keep my eating disorder a secret from my mom anymore
* Keep feeling so guilty for my eating disorder
* Avoid asking for help any longer
* Keep myself isolated from people
* Control what others do
* Understand what anyone is going to at any one point in time
* Always rely on my own willpower to get me through situations
* Let stress consume everything in life

Some of my triggers

* Going home to the family
* Seeing people from home
* Hosting people in SLO
* Gaining weight
* Breaking out
* Stress for school
* Lack of sleep
* Being lonely
* Being paranoid at night
* Being overly excited about something
* Overly emotional by any regard
* Sadness
* Self hatred
* Being too hungry or too full
* Feeling unheard or not understood by others
* Keeping secrets

Some deeper fears and emotions:

* I have a huge fear of being alone at night. It’s not nearly as bad when I’m sober, but even then I will still exhibit OCD tendencies to cope. I’ll check if the door is locked multiple times, I’ll check under both beds, behind the closet doors, and even behind the shower before getting into bed and even thinking about sleeping. I’ve heard compulsive people are more prone to addiction.
* I have an all-or-nothing personality. Which makes me deal in absolutes. I live in a world that is binary, and have forgotten how to enjoy the grey in the middle. My nutritionist says that is where the rainbow is.
  + This is why I have a weed addiction, it’s more a habitual abuse at this point.
* I have the kind of personality that is all in to what I do. This can be very beneficial for my career success as I’ve begun learning how to harness this ability towards my passions. But, it can yield negative side effects for habits that aren’t as wholesome. I’m learning how to harness it for good so the evil side doesn’t take over.
* I’m incredibly lonely. I enjoy being alone with myself so much when I’m high, but I’ve forgotten how to enjoy it as much while sober.
* I NEED to spend time away from smoking weed, but I can’t get myself to convince my friends to keep it away from me because that SCARES me.
* I want to go to therapy every week, I know I need a lot of help. But I find it so easy to let myself be convinced that I’m overreacting. Also it’s really hard to get into therapy, and then to pay for it.
* So much of my positivity and outlook on life and personality is based on if I feel skinny and look skinny or not. The skinnier I am, the better everything in life seems to be. That worries me, especially because I hate the way I look so much.
* My self-hating habits might stem from what I grew up with around my Mom never liking the way she looks. I don’t know if I could ever admit that to her or not.
* I need to practice self-love more, and I need to write down what I am grateful for more.
* I NEED TO GET OUT OF THIS GREY CLOUD SO I CAN BE JESSIE AGAIN.

I know I’m in here still, I’m just waiting to get let out.

It’s an angsty time, I never thought I would have a phase of my life that I want to move from so badly.

I remember telling myself going into this quarter that it was going to be my best quarter at Cal Poly. I was sitting in Wesley’s house in Venice beach with my brothers and getting ridiculously high for days on end instead of doing my homework. I pulled the plug at that point and I texted Yeng and I said fuck this shit, I’m going to not smoke and I’m going to get shit fucking done this quarter. I said it would be the best quarter of my life and I would THRIVE.

I’ve been thinking about that a lot lately. Claudia off-handedly mentioned that weed made this the worst quarter of my life and it ruined this quarter for me.

At first I believed her, I do think weed has done terrible things for me this quarter.

But I do also have to disagree with her.

This hasn’t been the worst quarter of my life. I don’t think this was even a bad quarter in hind-sight. I’ve been through a lot, yes. And I’ve been very unhealthy and unwell, and I’m still not well. But I needed to go through this. I will come out of this cloud and I will be not only better, but more understanding. I will understand myself more, others more, and the world more. It will be (and has been) a tough road. There’s no doubt about that at this point.

BUT I NEED TO KEEP GOING FORWARD.

I am continuing to go forward. I’m ready.

Here’s to what 2018 has been for me so far, whatever that is. I intend to continue learning and growing.

Until then,

Jessie J. Smith

Age 21.

~~ From Wesley’s house in Venice Beach. How Full Circle. ~~