



Dear Scott,

I am scared. I am scared of showing my emotions. I am scared of appearing vulnerable. I am scared that admitting vulnerability is inevitable.

I am scared of losing control of this facade I've created. I am scared of being rejected. I am scared... terrified... of being alone. You'd think I have it all pulled together. I have an amazing family. I am a great athlete. I have friends, good grades. People like me. I am happy with my body and my looks. I am involved in activities. You'd think I have it all pulled together. But I don't. I never will. "Having it all pulled together," means perfection and no one can have perfection. I feel like no one ever looks at me and sees me. It is so hard for me to write that because my life is wonderful, perfect from society's standards. But it's not. It can't be. It's got to be okay for things to become chaotic, for emotions to flow, for despair to appear and disappear, to have doubts and fears. It's got to be okay.

Three nights ago, I lay in my bed as my boyfriend slept next to me and I felt completely invisible. I felt so desperately lonely. And I don't even know why. I didn't know what to do. I felt pathetic and ashamed because I had no concrete reason for my emotions. But I believe that it is okay to be alive with my emotions.

I walked across campus tonight and I cried. I cried for loneliness in others and in myself. I cried because it feels so good to value my life and my mistakes. I cried because I just want someone to see me

and care what I'm about. I want someone to say, "I get you" and for his/her statement to be true. And I fear that I won't ever find the person who can do that for me. I cried. And the tears ran down my cheeks and my face got cold... really cold. But I didn't wipe away my tears because they were real, and things that are real are rare. Sometimes, no matter how uncomfortable reality is, you want to cling to it, to try to make it your own. I find myself absorbed in so much that is false and I can't get away from it. I lie to myself all the time and I don't realize I'm doing it. When I cry, I know I'm being real.

I want to tell these secrets to the people I'm close with in my life. I want to tell my best friend, my mother, my boyfriend. How can I get people to listen to me? It often seems that they don't care to know. They never ask. Though, I never ask them either and I want to know about their secrets. I think we are all so afraid of letting others see our souls, our core. Sometimes it feels so messy and chaotic and this is unsettling. We want perfection. How do we escape that want? We can't have it, but we continue to strive for it.

I am reminded tonight that life is so unbelievably wonderfully special. I am reminded tonight that honesty and realness are refreshing. I am reminded tonight that, in my accountability, I am not alone.

- Janessa, age 18

something
you extremely
made it instead the
being made for so long
be a person
INVISIBLE KINGDOM
PM