

It's still Day 10.

Same day as all those other recordings. I don't know whether to joke about it being a long day or a busy day. And maybe that's a sign that I should have gotten more sleep, but I don't know. I'm too tired to know.

Anyway, today is the big day. So I definitely should have gotten more sleep because my hip does so much better when it's rested. I remember the doctor explaining exactly why I needed to be on the top of my game on the whole 'taking care of myself' front. I remember. I just don't always do it. Valid points aside, I have definitely experienced the consequences of my actions and all that. So I--I do know better. But it seems alright today. My mistakes notwithstanding. It looks like my hip will hold up as long as it needs to. And if it comes up short, I should still be able to stay in the 'I can pretend that I'm fine' range.

And I did look up a bit more about the mountain itself, which is what I probably should have been doing instead of falling down that random... Okay, it's not random, and it's not a rabbit hole, but I should have spent that time planning out the logistics of me being physical in a place that prevents a wheelchair rescue if things get too bad. Then again, with so many people coming, carrying me down the mountain is within the realm of possibility. Maybe someone can bring a tarp, and we can make a big show of it.

*(Pause)*

That was mean. To me. *(Sigh)* Either way not my point. I'm outside on the resort's porch-ish testing this portable recorder. There's like a little outdoor space here

that has a nice aesthetic to it, so it can't be too off-limits. But no one's here, and I can get clear-ish audio.

See, the USB mic I have running through my computer is not portable at all. It has to be plugged in directly, and it's a bit bulky, I'll admit, but the results are great. I saw your comments about the audio coming in clearly, which was what I wanted. I know you're being super lenient about quote-quality on this assignment, but I don't want my recordings to be painful to listen to. Technical-side-wise, I mean. Like, I can do that much.

On the other hand, it also meant that I would record off in a room by myself, which I liked. I liked that I had solitude and an ongoing excuse for solitude. Or not solitude. That's a bit strong of a word. Sometimes, I just need a breather, and that was true before the accident because it's a lot of people and a lot of comings and goings around here. It's genuinely tiring to deal with all of that. I'm not as extroverted as other members of my family are. I never have been.

Right now, my little hand-held device can do that too, but we'll see how far it can go. I'm somewhat testing that too.

*(Pause)*

No one's going to come out here right now though. I did talk to my mom this morning about yesterday. Or I tried to. She didn't really want to talk, so it was me trying to check in but her diverting the conversation, usually into silence. I really can't handle the silent treatment, and I---I don't know. I thought that was just a weird me-trait for a while, but the other day, I fell into a digital rabbit hole, actual digital rabbit hole, that talked about how abusive the silent treatment from parents to their children really is.

Because, like, you're dependent on them. You need their help and guidance, and they are telling you that this sort of thing is conditional and dependent on you adhering to whatever sort of thing you're getting the silent treatment over, which you can't adhere to. Like sometimes what they want is actually impossible.

Like right now, I get that my mom feels terrible, but I can't do anything about that. Maybe she thinks I should have checked in on her sooner? But check in for what? Obviously she felt bad, and she was going to feel bad. We all knew that was the outcome, but I couldn't do anything about that. I couldn't help her, and I shouldn't be expected to. And she's wrong for demanding that of me, and I just need to accept that. I need to accept that and stop taking it so personally when she gets like this. But I can't.

*(Sigh)* Moment of rushed introspection, but--like--what's the alternative, right? What's the alternative to just pretending everything is fine? Do I end up realizing that she's been doing something that would be classified as abusive my whole life? And where does that line of thought go? How far, I should be asking. Because obviously, or I want it to be obvious, she's not an abusive parent. I wouldn't call her that. We have our bad moments, and yeah, she's brought me to tears a couple times. But no parent is perfect. And--like--she's never been confident in her English, so if she thinks there's only so much she can do and it won't be enough anyway, then not trying makes... Well, it doesn't not make sense, you know? But something close.

She did the best that she could, and I doubt she meant to cause the hurt that she did. What is that worth?

*(Pause)*

I've heard a lot of people say 'forgive your parents,' but I never hear the reverse. And I get it, 'forgive your parents' isn't a great take, and it's something a great deal of people can't or shouldn't do, and no child needs to be forgiven for anything because it's not their fault, but--like--there's more to it than what's stated. To me, that's all about acknowledging that something went wrong, different choices could have been made, and that actions had unintended consequences. To a great extent, it doesn't matter to me who did what or why or how things went wrong. They did, and I think even seeing that and bringing attention to it would be nice. It's a step my parents don't normally take, so... you know, not a great improvement but it's technically an improvement. Technically.

But more than that, 'forgiveness' is a sign that things are going to move on, that they can, and that you want them to get better. 'Forgiveness' is a promise that things will get better. Or that's what I think it means because that's what I want. I don't need my mom to tell me that she forgives me for everything I didn't do or couldn't be expected to do. I want her to tell me that things are going to get better. Not just between, but especially between us. After all, that's my mom.

*(Pause)*

I could tell during office hours there were many times when you wanted to be more outwardly critical of her because of something I said that did not land. Or--I guess--it did land, but I didn't know what I was looking at because this was my normal. This was all I'd ever known. That was my side of it, and I get it, that was probably all distressing to hear from your side of things. I'm sure you really wanted to tell me to go no contact or something in that vein, but my situation is complicated because my

mother is still my caregiver. And the emotional fallout of the accident still gets in the way of my physical recovery, so my physical recovery is delayed. See, I am self-aware. Sometimes too much. That's the problem with me.

But all the same, I'm not at the point yet. I'm not at that point that I could ever let her go. It's not just the bad hip, 'can't always walk well' stuff. Like I said, I'm pretty sure there are businesses out there that can fit a house to a disability and maybe nonprofits that either can also do it or can help you pay for it. I know it's possible. What's not possible for me is to let go of everyone. To let go of my family. There are good times, and the good times are intentional, but more than that, I just want a family, you know? I want to feel like I have a home if not in some place but with some people.

When I tell someone that, they always suggest I find a spouse or partner, but honestly, I've never felt much of a strong desire for one. It's not about... Okay you couldn't see me gesturing at my leg, but I was. It's not about the accident. It's not about me not feeling good enough. For once. It's just not the sort of thing I was ever into. But I was into the idea of my family. This family far away that never got to be mine. I want that. I want them. Just on better terms.

*(Pause. Music fades in)*

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