Pain

Dear 3:00 a.m.

I can’t see you anymore, we need to break up. These nightly meetings are not working for me. Trust me it’s not you. You’re a good listener and always there for me. It’s me, I have issues. I know we’ve spent a lot of time together these last few weeks because of my arthritis pain. Let’s face it, my knees are shot. Nick turns 30 this year so I guess I need to stop saying I’m still carrying around a little extra baby weight. The years of being heavy have taken their toll. Living with chronic pain is the hardest thing I’ve ever had to do. I find myself willing to do almost anything to find some relief. After the holiday’s I’ll be starting a new therapy where they give me an injection in each knee once a week for five weeks. It makes me cringe just to think about it but honestly I can’t wait. They say that long term pain changes your personality. It can cause depression and anxiety. I try every day not to let this happen but pain is a game changer.

You know my daughter in law Kate was recently diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis. She is 25 years old and they have a 6 month old baby. I guess when you and I meet she is heavy on my mind too. I haven’t talked about it much with friends because just behind the words of speaking it out loud sit a flood gate of emotions that I can barely contain. I feel awful about the physical pain she is experiencing right now but what I can barely take however is the raw grief and devastating emotional pain she and Nick are experiencing as they try to wrap their heads around a future that will ever be different than the one they’d dreamed. That’s pain that I don’t have a pill for. That’s pain I’m not sure how to soothe.

The other day I was talking to a coworker about her daughter who has a serious medical condition. The sadness behind her eyes and the catch in her throat told me all I need to know about the pain she carries with her everywhere she goes. The girl who cut my hair last night really needed to talk about her divorce. It was two years ago and it

seemed to still hurt a lot.

REM was right, everybody does hurt. Our trials shape us, storms make trees with deeper roots, what doesn't kill me makes me stronger, yadda, yadda, yadda…I get all that but here's the thing 3:00 a.m., I can deal with the pain. I have good drugs and I've been doing this a while. After all I would not nearly appreciate the good days if I didn't have some dark days to compare them to. I will find a way to accept the things I don't want to accept like the suffering of my loved ones. I'll do the best I can to be there for my friends and listen when they need to share. I feel like I was put on this earth to help others. My circle of influence is small but it's tight. What I cannot deal with, what I don't want to unleash on my family, what you do not want to see is the complete and total mess I become when I am sleep deprived. So next time you see me tossing and turning and trying to get comfortable, do not feel it necessary to wake me. In fact, I'd appreciate it if you'd just pull up a seat and when your little buddy 5:00 a.m. gets here hit the snooze button for me would you?

XOXO

Felicia