11:04 pm · a short read

before you text him

for the moment his name is already open
and your thumb is already hovering.

read this first. then decide.

jennifer hartley
@jenniferhartley04

if you're here right now

hi. put the phone face down for a sec.

okay, you can't. you're reading this on it. that's fine.

but if you found this because it's late and you've got a text to him half written, i want you to know two things.

you are not crazy for wanting to send it.

and you don't have to decide in the next 30 seconds.

this is a short one. it's the night i almost sent mine, what i did with the ten minutes after, and the stuff i wish someone had said to me at 11pm.

no rules. no "you're better than this." just me, being honest.

day 19 · 11:04 pm

i was sitting on my kitchen floor with my back against the dishwasher because it was warm and still running.

my phone did that thing where it shows you a memory you didn't ask for.

"one year ago today."

it was us at the lake. his sunglasses on my head. me squinting because he said "one more" six times.

i didn't even like that photo when he took it.

i liked it a lot at 11:04pm on day 19.

i opened our chat before i'd even decided to. the last message was still mine.

i'm proud of you. really.

delivered

11:12 pm

i wrote it four different ways.

~~miss you~~

too honest. deleted.

~~the lake popped up in my memories lol~~

the "lol" was doing a lot of lying. deleted.

~~hope work is going good~~

i don't care about his work. deleted.

saw something today that made me think of you. hope you're okay 🤍

this one felt casual. mature, even.
my thumb sat right over the arrow.

11:19 pm

right before i pressed it, i asked myself one thing.

what do i want him
to text back?

and i sat there. and i didn't have an answer.

"you too"? that would've wrecked me.
nothing? that would've wrecked me worse.
"i miss you, come over"? ...and then what. day 1 again.

that's when it actually hit me.

i wasn't scared of losing him. i'd kind of already done that part.

i was scared of being here again. same floor, same feeling, different guy, two years from now. because i've done this before. the sweet text at night, the "hey" back, the three good weeks, the slow fade.

the text wasn't the problem. the loop was.

11:41 pm → the next morning

i didn't send it.

i didn't delete it either, honestly. i copied it into my notes app, so it had somewhere to go that wasn't him.

i texted my best friend "almost did a thing." she sent back a voice note that was mostly just her yelling my name.

i put my phone on the charger in the hallway. i drank a full glass of water like it was medicine. i slept badly. but i slept.

in the morning the lake photo was just a photo again.

still pretty. still sad. not an emergency.

11pm makes everything feel urgent.
it almost never is.

for you · right now

the next 10 minutes

min 1 **move the text, don't send it.** copy it into your notes. it's saved. you can send it tomorrow if you still want to.

min 2 **close his chat.** not delete. just close it, so his name isn't staring at you.

min 3 **answer it honestly:** what do i want him to say back? write it under the draft.

min 4–5 **change rooms.** water, bathroom light, cold air at the window. your body needs a different scene.

min 6–8 **send it to someone safe instead.** your best friend, your sister, your own voice memo. let it be heard by someone who'll be kind.

min 9–10 **phone on the charger, out of reach.** if you still want to send it at 10am, at least you'll be choosing it awake.

things i tell myself at 11pm

when my brain gets loud

> "what if this is the text that fixes it?"
>
> *if one text could fix it, it wouldn't have needed fixing.*

> "i'll look cold if i stay quiet."
>
> *quiet isn't cold. quiet is me keeping something for myself.*

> "he probably misses me too."
>
> *maybe. he knows where i am. i don't have to go check.*

> "i'll never feel like this about anyone again."
>
> *i've said that before. about someone i barely think about now.*

> "but what if he doesn't come back?"
>
> *then i'll be okay. i'll be fine either way.*

from my notes app

drafts i never sent

(and what they really meant)

~~"random but do you still have my blue scarf"~~

i wanted a reason to exist in his day.

~~"happy you're doing well. genuinely."~~

please tell me you're not doing well.

~~"can we just talk. like adults."~~

i wanted him to explain me back to myself.

~~"hey stranger"~~

i wanted it to be easy again. it never was easy.

~~"i'm not mad. i just want to understand."~~

i was mad. and that's allowed.

every single one was asking him to make me feel okay. he was never going to be the one who did that.

screenshot this one

before you hit send

- [ ] would i send this at 10am on a tuesday, wide awake and fed?
- [ ] do i know exactly what i want him to say back?
- [ ] will i be okay if he says nothing? like, actually okay?
- [ ] am i texting him, or texting the version of him from the good weeks?
- [ ] is this the first time i've sent a text like this, or the fifth?
- [ ] did something happen tonight (a song, a photo, wine) that's doing the typing for me?

if you hesitated on even one, it can wait until morning. it'll still be there. so will you.

for you

i'm not going to pretend i'm healed. some nights i still open the chat just to look at it.

i can't tell you if he's thinking about you. i can't tell you he'll come back, or that he won't.

what i can tell you is the part nobody told me:

the goal isn't to get him back.
the goal is to stop
ending up here.

on that kitchen floor, the win wasn't that he missed me. i'll never know if he did.

the win was that i stayed with myself for ten minutes instead of handing the night to him.

you'll be fine either way. i really mean that. and this time you get to actually believe it.

and you're about to send it

i wish i'd had someone to ask that night. not my best friend at midnight, not a generic chatbot that didn't know his name.

something that already knew my situation. what he said before he went quiet. that this is the third guy who did the week-three fade.

that's **rayna**. an ai situationship & breakup coach, built on the divinely feminine method, that remembers your story. you paste the text and ask "should i send this?" and she helps you find the version you won't regret, or the reason not to send one at all.

rayna's coming soon 🤍

join the waitlist at downloadrayna.com

and follow me **@jenniferhartley04**
i'm posting every day. you're not doing this alone.