May 6th, 2015

I’ve been thinking about this a lot, trying to process everything, trying to figure out where we went wrong, *why* we went wrong, why things still feel not quite right; and I think I’ve finally figured it out, after spending these past few days thinking about it.

I’m not okay. I’ve been “not okay” since Mom died, even before. This isn’t new; we knew this already, and no one should expect me to *be* okay. But right now, what I’m not okay with isn’t that (or at least, not all of it). I’m not okay with how things went between us, not okay with the unresolved tension, not okay with the way I feel right now about everything.

I told you wanted to try and come up before AN for your birthday; that I really wanted to surprise you, but that it just didn’t work out. I said it was because of both my mental health, and my car. I suggested instead that I come up a little later, and spend one-on-one time with you, maybe ride ponies, and that since it couldn’t work before AN, that we could meet instead at Grey’s, like we did last year, and spend time together, still see each other, just in a different place and with another friend to both of us.

You became distant, bitter, wary. You talked about your (understandable) disappointment, but instead of working with me, acknowledging the fact that I was sincerely trying and just being excited we could see each other, regardless, you became cold and irritated, expressing hurt that I wasn’t making *more* of an effort. When I began to have a panic attack, talking about how I couldn’t breathe, and needed to step away, your reaction was basically the equivalent of going “okay me too, bye.”

I spent the evening trying desperately to understand. When I finally managed to fall asleep, I woke up to your text messages, angry and hurt, accusing me of putting everyone before you, wishing I hadn’t even told you of my failed plans to come up and see you on your birthday, feeling betrayed that I wasn’t making any promises to you, but apparently to everyone else.

Here’s the thing, though; I wasn’t putting everyone else before you. I was putting *myself* before you, my own safety, my own well-being because I *knew* the state of my own car and my own mind, and yet I was still going to try because I knew it was important.

But things didn’t get better. It went back and forth, exhausting both of us mentally and physically, until we both finally seemed to come to an agreement. We both apologized, we both tried to move past it, together.

Then you asked me to tell you, straight out, if I could come, and I said I didn’t think it was possible as much as I wished it could be.

The reaction was *instantaneous.* You turned on the offense, became bitter and sarcastic, mocking even, and with everything that has happened between us, I can honestly and truly say that I have never once, ever, mocked you. I have never set out, ever, to be deliberately stinging in my words, and it was like a slap in the face, followed by a punch to the gut, because it felt like a trap, set up with only one right answer, and when it wasn’t the one that either of us hoped it would be, you immediately lashed out, without taking into consideration the reasoning behind it, the good intentions, the desire to see you happy.

I was quiet for a while, desperately trying to come up with a possible solution that would work. But three hours and a late night conversation is not enough time. I came up with a plan, but it wasn’t ideal, and it would still compromise my own head and my own safety.

And immediately you were repentant. Immediately you started coming up with ideas and plans and even ways to spend Grey’s birthday, which seemed a little strange, given everything. I thought I was relieved, that everything would be fine from now on.

But it’s not fine. I still can’t breathe, still can’t remove everything from my mind and my heart.

I haven’t been pretending things are okay. I genuinely believed them to be. But the more I tried to breathe, the more I realized that I couldn’t.

There is no dumping guilt here, no ladling offenses at either of us. But the hurt I feel, the deep-rooted pain at how you spoke to me, I can’t get over that so easily. I can’t pretend that it didn’t happen, that it can be brushed aside.

Sam, you know how much I love you, how much I have endlessly, honestly, truly cared for you, and that hasn’t changed. Nothing will ever change the fact that I think you are a wonderful, caring, beautiful, *amazingly* talented person who loves very deeply. I have never once taken our friendship lightly, and have never treated it with anything less than the utmost care and devotion and loyalty, even with the rough patches, and I will never *not* treat it that way, regardless of what happens.

I’m not saying that we should end our friendship. I’m not saying that I am in any way perfect, that I make no mistakes, or am guiltless, because I make a thousand mistakes a day and regret each and every one of them. I remember very well and understand very well all that I have done, every misstep I have taken, every pit I have unintentionally drowned in, even with the memory problems.

But I also can’t get over this so easily. This isn’t a grudge. This isn’t a desire for retaliation. I’m not in any way telling you how you should feel. I’m explaining how I feel, why I am not okay right now, in a form other than text messages and IMs that are based solely around immediate response and instant reactions.

I realize this might start something again, that it might cause more pain to both of us, and that’s terrifying. But I would rather try to work through it; would rather try and set things right than let all of the unsaid words and tension build into a breaking point.

I need you not to reply to this immediately. I need you to honestly and truly think about it, about everything, about the fact that something isn’t right here.

I want to fix things. I want to work through this with you, so we can be even stronger in our friendship. I want to make things right again, and I want to you to remember that I’m not writing this out of spite, or anger, or irritation, but out of a strong and passionate desire to move forward and be happy again. I know you said I “sure as hell wasn’t making any promises to you,” but I can promise, with this, that there is no anger in anything that I have written.

I’ll be quiet for a while, because I’ll be thinking too, and this weekend will be hard. But Sam, please never doubt that I have always, always had your best interests at heart, and when I say I love you, I absolutely and truly mean it. I’ve already learned the hard way what it’s like to not be able to say it, and I promised myself that I would always mean it when I say it; that I wouldn’t just toss it around lightly, and I never have.