

Dear Kami,

I had a surprise visitor today. And soup... Melissa came to see me and brought soup. Chicken noodle soup from Chick-fil-A is my fav!

I was so happy to see Melissa! Apparently, she and Dr. Lydia have been in contact about me.

I started to cry when I saw her. Until I started sipping my favorite soup, that is... My short emotional display surprised me, and I think it surprised Melissa too because she had a shocked look on her face which she quickly suppressed.

I told her about my new friends, Olivia and Harry. She was happy I was making friends and not isolating myself too much which is kind of my M.O.

I talked a little about Ian and asked how and where he was. I could tell it threw her off a bit. Not sure why... After all, we were inseparable. Until I ratted on him...

Melissa fidgeted with the buttons on her jacket and finally said, "Look, I know your head is reeling right now. You have been through a lot and I am beyond the moon proud of you. I want you to know that foremost. Ian has a long way to go. He is physically okay but has a lot of suppressed anger to work through. I really don't want to see you go backwards in your progress. You're doing so well. Thinking about Ian is normal and is part of what makes you human. I am afraid any more than a thought, like focusing on him, will just set you back. I want you to continue to focus on getting better. You're such a strong young woman. You deserve to be happy. I know you think that is impossible, but once you learn to embrace happiness, it will not make you feel so uncomfortable."

Silence followed and lingered for what seemed like forever. Melissa broke the awkwardness by clearing her throat and saying, "I need to get back to work but promise to come back and visit as long as you continue to do your best. And I know you will."

I knew the visit couldn't last forever, so I smiled and braced for her to wrap her arms around me. She's a hugger. I don't usually like having people in my personal space, but Melissa never seems to care. I think she hugs everyone whether they like it or not.

Finally, she said, "Keep up the awesome work and I'll see you in a few weeks. I don't want to visit too often because I don't want to impede the great progress you're making."

I knew Melissa was a person of her word and knew I would see her again. It didn't stop my heart from skipping a beat, but I strapped on a smile and told her I'd see her later. I'm not a fan of *good bye* because it sounds so permanent. Like death...

Later,

Eva