

Dad,

October 2013
age 22

Happy birthday! The niff old age of fifty...
I forgot sorry! I know its simple maths as well but
I've had a long day!

I love you very much and its really nice that
I get to see you on your birthday. I can get very
much absorbed in my own little bizarre world sometimes,
as you well know... and ok its more than sometimes!
My point is its nice to get an opportunity to touch
base with you guys in the middle of term. Can you believe
I'm been at uni now for nearly a month and a half?
If I remembered [!] I would text you and Tracey every
day to say thank you, but since I'm way too busy
for that to ever be a practical promise, please know that
I do think it every day, and am constantly grateful for
your support and your love. I do, sometimes stop suddenly
and think - 'I'm doing a masters! Amazing!' And actually
extremely unusual. I'm conscious that early on when I expressed
a desire to pursue postgraduate education it was from perhaps
a fear of falling left behind, of being distanced from the
achievements of my peers. Turns out the person who's been
distanced is me. It doesn't mean that in a cocky way, just
in a literal (and not just geographical) way. The fact that
I have been able to do my masters straight away, and
not have to stop it in (hates for a year (or, heaven preferred,
MORE FESTIVITIES)) just to get the opportunity is almost
beyond belief. Bit slow on the uptake me + so aren't
I very, very lucky to have parents like you and Tracey.

I know I haven't been the best daughter in
several pronounced ways. I've always felt that I was inherently
an odd person. Didn't fit in at school, and had a rough time
with the bullies, and I soon the way I was inclined to express
myself - quite organically - was not shared by a lot of
the people around me. It sometimes even caused animosity.
And I've never meant to offend anyone. The dreadlocks,
the tattoos, the erratic behaviour on occasion... even and
maybe especially the anorexia + manic depression... despite
the misguided and even often painful manners of expression these

were, they still felt to me, normal... I don't really know how to explain that really. I know I have often scared you and disappointed and for that I am really, truly sorry. The only method of explanation I can think of, is, that they never felt unusual to me. Just external manifestations perhaps of my disordered, creative self! So I guess what I'm trying to say, is that I have always felt odd... and that, to me, is normal!

What frightens me most is the idea that maybe in the future I will disappoint you again and that you will look on this period of great benevolence towards me with regret. I can't promise I won't, but I can promise I will try. I suppose I've always been slightly confused as to what society expects of me, demonstrating perhaps why I so often get it wrong! When I do something 'strange', I never intend for it to hurt anyone. In fact, it often stems from a misguided desire to do 'good', in some way, either simply to myself or for other people. I've long learned that my mind doesn't tick over in quite the manner everybody else's seems to and thus I can come to rather unfortunate conclusions that to my perspective have throughout the process only been formed by a narrow logic! Mum said to me recently that I have a 'secret life' that she feels only occasionally is she permitted a glimpse into. This is not very intermin. I guess I'm a private person often because my disordered brain doesn't always benefit from public exposure. I hope you don't feel I'm secretive with you. Trust me, it's more likely, if you feel I'm being evasive, that I'm just embroiled in one of my daily visits to planet Naomi!

I'm sorry for hurting you in the past. I love you very much Dad and could never thank you enough for raising me and Rebecca single-handedly after mum left. And now you're helping fund my education way past the point where a lot of parents would have thought it was no longer their responsibility. Thank you so so much. I hope to do you proud. And I will do whatever I can to pay you back, as soon as I can. THAT IS A PROMISE. and we insist

Happy birthday Dad! Naomi x x x (the younger one)