

JAN: I want to tell you a story.

It's a story about someone who listened.

Let's call them "You Character".

Or just "You".

"You" found a person who didn't know who she was anymore, who felt entirely alone, but who wanted to be seen and heard, and wanted to figure out her story.

"You" felt a lot of different things about this.
But for a reason only you know: you listened to her.

You listened to her finally let in her pain.

JAN: But for a moment I want to be authentically here now and say this is bad, I would choose the story where this didn't happen

You listened to her try to be honest:

JAN: The more honest I am about the things that scare me, the more the things that scare me get put in a place where they can't hurt me anymore.

You listened as she clumsily, messily, figured things out for the very first time.

JAN: I didn't think I was being lied to, I thought I was pretending.

And you listened as she stumbled backwards into her own grief.

JAN: What if he would have been so happy to know me before he died. Why didn't I think of that?

Eventually her game began to fall apart. The story she was writing while also living started to crack open and fray and fall off its own rails because it couldn't contain the magnitude of what she was actually doing: healing.

JAN: I'm going to be fine. And this will always hurt. And I have a story. And I know who I am. I'm a person who has some regular pain!

And you gave her a small miracle: you kept listening anyway.
You didn't abandon her.
You showed her that she's not alone.
That her messy but honest story is good enough.
And you held a tremendous amount of space for a regular person to heal.

I love this "You" Character.
You've shown me how to bear witness to someone's ugliest messiest truths.
You've shown me what it's like to be known and loved anyway.
"YOU" have taught me tremendously what it is to be a human being.

That's only one story that I know about you.
But I know you you have more.
Regular, horrible, beautiful, unique or cliché things that have happened to you.
I don't know what happened. I don't know how it happened.
But I do know that you can extend yourself dignity in your imperfect, messy current draft.
I know that you can decide to decide that your story is worthy, because you did it for me.

It is underwhelming how obvious it is to me that you, this "you" character and your story is worthy.

Of course you are.
You matter,
And you've mattered this whole time.

So I don't have any other stories for you right now.
I bet I will soon, I'll let you know.
But in the meantime: Why not work on your story?
I'd love to hear it.

Thank you for listening. It means the world.