

This will pass. It could have been worse. It could have happened years later. Somehow this thought provides no solace.

I feel like a part of myself is gone, that part of myself that I ignored and lied to so consistently throughout all this. I feel like I have sacrificed that for a relationship not worth sacrificing for. I think that is where this sense of emptiness, this sense of being wounded, comes from.

Knowing that I had a part to play in his feeling that he couldn't be up front. This borders on blaming myself and excusing him, I know.

I just want this to pass. I want to be beautiful and confident and successful and busy. I want to jump to some far future where this is all behind us and we are back to being just a group of friends, some who have known each other longer than others, and between whom everything is as it should be. I want to jump to a far off future where we could be friends – the silliest of dreams. I want to jump to a far off future, in another place, where our paths cross, and we are both more mature, more developed adults and finally able to have a healthy relationship. All silly dreams.

I would never have been able to make it through the past month had it not been for my friends. Through this experience I have really learned to let people help me, tell them how I am feeling, and trust their advice. I am really thankful for my friends. To have someone to cry on at any time of day or night is a true blessing indeed, and one that I did not take enough advantage of during the end of my previous relationship.

The reason I feel all the more lost and broken at this time is also because I have lost my faith in my work – my writing. Apart from the fact that I like doing it, I'm not sure *why* I am doing it. Sometimes I wish I had a type of job that required me to clock in and clock out, where the tasks were very definite, where my soul is not involved, where my mind could be completely distracted, where there are other people besides myself. I want this not only for financial reasons, but also because it is less lonely and it involves less constant confrontation with myself.

So much of my doubt also has to do with the subject matter of the play, of where I come from, and my constant fear that I have no business doing this, nobody is going to want to hear or see this.

Having come in such close contact with the way that "real" Ethiopians live in the city – a bread & butter survival, more often than not made possible by tricking the system, illegal means, etc. – through the course of this past relationship, I am doubting myself more than ever before. Doubting myself as an artist, thinking that what I am doing is very silly and meaningless in the face of the day to day lives of my people. It feels laughable and trivial, children's play. It does not feel relevant. In the face of all this, I find it hard to find refuge from all this post-relationship trauma in my work, when the validity of my work was one of the very things that was brought to question during the course of this relationship. If I worked in an office job, or a retail job, or a food-service job, or any j-o-b, it would all be far simpler, because it is simply a matter of earning money so I can eat and live and everybody automatically respects that.

I don't know if I want to do this anymore. But I don't trust that feeling, either. The level of guilt that I carry is enormous. While I am feeling guilty about pursuing a hobby as a job, I feel guilty again for having the time to sit down and write about how I am feeling guilty. The very fact that I have the time and space to reflect on my feelings at length, rather than making me feel better, makes me feel even worse. There is nothing I would like more than to belong to that anonymous mass of "people" with "jobs". Could I do it? Probably. Would I very quickly become miserable? Probably. But isn't that the normal state of "people"? Wouldn't my misery finally make me a member of the community of "people"?

Then I wonder, what is it that makes me care so much what "people" think? Who are these "people"? I don't know. They are the people whose life experience I do not share, but who 2