

Dear Me (then),

I know you're really struggling right now. Trust me I know. I lived through each moment that pains you to think about. Yes, I still don't like to look back on such a terrible time, but at least I have perspective. I know that you will rediscover yourself. Dye your hair change your clothes. None of these things are permanent, but your love and acceptance of who you are is.

You'll never shake the anxious tendencies, but you will break free of me! Downy things get better. She's not in your life anymore and you are immensely happier for it. It wasn't hard to make friends in high school (shocker). You're proud of the work you did and you're going to do great things. Hang in there, I believe in you.

Love,  
Me (now)

Dear mama y papa

Firstly, let me say how much I love you both. I am extremely proud and grateful to be your daughter.

While growing up Mexican-American has been a challenge, it has also been a blessing.

While I know you hold on to your traditions tightly, I want you to understand how important this is to me.

I am queer.

I am still your daughter, the little girl who would steal papa's hoodies and use them as blankets. I am still me.

I hope you can find it in your hearts to understand.

I love you both more than words could express.

yours with all my love,

## Lesson 1 - Everyone is Going Through Something That We Can't See

Dear [REDACTED]

This is you but four years later. You must feel so numb and fragile, feeling like your world is coming to a halt. You are growing into a bright woman, but also watching others betray you and leave you out to dry. The people you thought you could trust, now abandoned you and left you with new and terrible insecurities. I know it's hard to get up in the morning, and gather the motivation to venture into that middle school hallway. People may have called your curly hair obnoxious, your stomach too big, or your skin color not the "correct shade". But you are starting high school soon and I know you will find people who care about you as a person not just based on your appearance. You will find new styles, new passions, new friends, and new smiles to chase everyday. You have the opportunity now to control your future. Don't be afraid to smile in front of a camera! Don't cover up your stomach anymore and wear whatever makes you shine! Don't hide your hair with hats or braids, let it flow and shine in the light! Don't overthink your actions or what you say, don't worry that people don't like you or you're not worthy to be their friend. Embrace your goofiness, your inner nerd, and never be afraid to speak your mind. Don't bottle up your emotions, don't pretend to be something you're not, just to please others. Right now I am starting Senior Year, and I am the happiest I have ever been. You are strong and I know you have the courage to get through this.

Thank You life for existing, for bringing  
to creation all the things that i love.  
the Yummy food, my beautiful abode, but most  
of all, for bringing the people that i  
love, my whole life is a culmination of  
all the love and support everyone has  
given me, i am who i am and in  
here where i am thanks to all of  
them.

Mami, i know you are looking proud of  
me, you're seeing your baby boy  
in the US, like you dreamed off, and  
you're seeing him prosper, please rest easy

Mom, I love you, i didn't get into  
properly know you until recently but  
i am glad i have a beautiful mother  
who loves me dearly and whom i love as  
well

Papito, you are helping me by giving  
me the tools to live like you've always  
promised, thank you.

My family, always there to look out

for me, my friends, supporting me, and  
staying with me despite it all.

Thank you life, thank you death, in fear  
of you, terrified, but you make me appreciate  
it all 1 billion times more.

I love this world, I love my life,  
you could ask me a trillion times to  
change it all, but I will always live  
in this wonderful world.