

# Exhibit C

Dear Alli,

I've been falling from the sky since you left.

I wake up every morning, and a bus hits me -- even when someone else is in my bed. My therapist helped me with a coping technique. The second I wake up, I open my journal and write down the intrusive thoughts. Most days, the first thought is: Alli is gone.

I have nightmares almost every night. But last month, I dreamt that you came back to me. In my dream, you stood a few steps away. I said, "come back to me, my baby." You gave me a hug, and I told you I would never let go again. I woke up feeling happy for the first time in months.

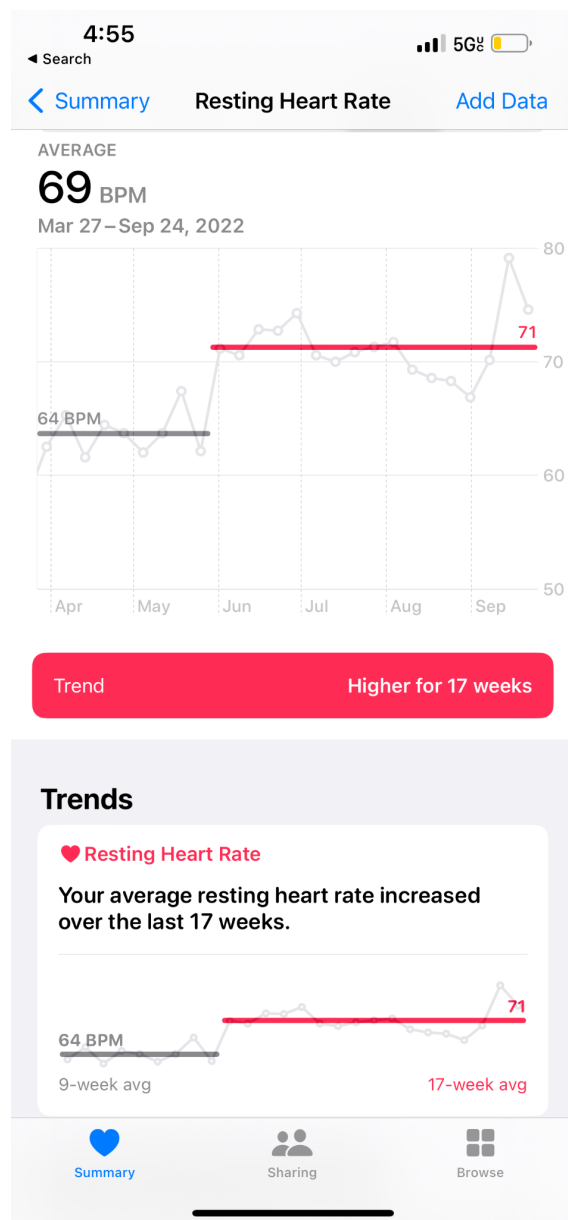
I close the journal and get up. I take my meds and drink coffee. I don't eat breakfast. I read my morning emails on the toilet alone. Sometimes Pluto joins me. I call him "Basboos" when the kids are not around.

I have a few mugs with different stages of mold under the fireplace mirror. It looks like a science experiment. I feel like I am a part of the science experiment too. What happens to a human after a heartbreak? I get notifications from my phone about my heart; my phone wonders what happened on June 2.

I silent-cry in the shower. You forgot your hairbrush. It's covered with your golden hair. I look at it every morning. I hate taking showers. I miss discussing morning news and daily plans while I brush your hair and kiss your neck. I don't want to shave my neck by myself. I don't want to brush my hair by myself.

Lunch is tasteless. Food has no taste. I barely eat anything. I have lost thirty pounds since you left. I miss your food. I miss eating breakfast in bed - overnight oats with hand-picked fruits that are not mushy.

I don't know what to wear. I don't want to pick my clothes by myself. I stare at my Zoom calls like a zombie. They call on me, and I say "can you please repeat the question?" I leave to get



the kids at 5:45. They talk to me, and I say “oh yeah?” They say, “baba, you’re obviously not listening.” I come back home with them to play with Pluto. I sit on the couch and look at the exposed brick wall. I whisper a line from your poem.

I have flashbacks all day. On June 2, you made me breakfast. You drove me around. You got a parking ticket. Flashbacks of our last anniversary in New York. Flashbacks about Mariam’s apartment. I drive the kids to Niki’s. Sometimes I go out right after. I sit there and think about you. I nod my head and say “oh yeah?” I come back home and work on my second job. Sometimes I have time to work on house refinancing documents. Sometimes I can’t. I just sit on the couch and swipe on dating apps. Nothing fills the hole in my heart.

I miss your body. I miss having sex with you. I miss our love soundtrack. Kissing you. Gently biting your lip. Feeling your skin. Smelling your breath. Your underarms. I miss your orgasms. I miss snuggling after sex. I miss having you twitch in my arms after 10 seconds when you fall asleep.

I read the news, and I want to share it with you. I have political analyses about Iraq, and I don’t have anyone to share them with. Al-Sadr pulled an amazing stunt. Shireen’s family has an update about her murder. I want to hear your take. I host political meetings, but they’re meaningless.



Last month, I traveled to Colombia with someone. We went up the mountain in Bogotá, and I sat in our spot in the sun. It was cloudy this time. I closed my eyes and imagined you there with me. Closing my eyes helps me think about you without admitting you are gone. The rain mixed with my tears.

My nails are long. You used to cut them for me. I don’t want to cut them by myself. I want to cut your little dinosaur pinky toenails but not right before you get in bed because you don’t like how the sheets feel then. My hair looks crazy. You used to cut it for me. It’s a full Arab-fro now. My shoulders hurt. You used to elbow them.

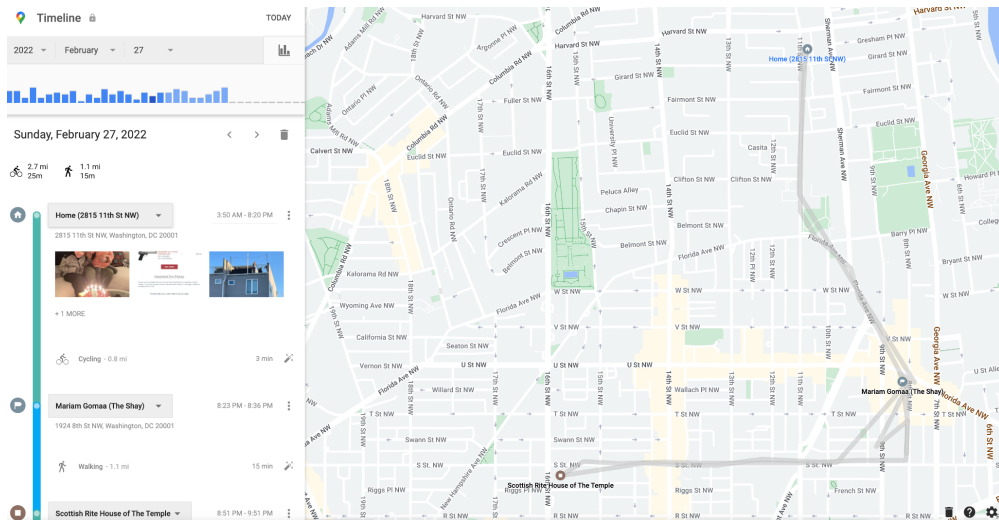
I was my worst enemy. I had you, and I lost you. You were my universe and my reality, and now I only see you in my dreams. I made the wrong choices, and I regret my actions. We spent 2280 days together. That’s six years, two months, 28

days, and six hours. I miss every single day. Every minute. I did not appreciate you as much as I should have. I truly did not deserve your love.

When I felt suffocated this year, I should have centered my actions before complaining. I asked you to come closer and closer over the years. When we first met, your vision for our relationship had more independence. It was not productive or mature to unilaterally request space without having a big-picture conversation about where we were at -- a conversation that starts with recognizing my role in the issue.

I regret letting Mariam come into our lives. That was not the right way to handle my needs. I should have listened to you from the get-go. I knew she was interested in me, but I didn't see her as a threat to our marriage. I thought I could pull it off. I changed the nature of our marriage to accommodate Mariam and to give my relationship with her space to grow, but what grew was cancer that

killed our marriage. The first time I went on a walk with her by ourselves, on February 27, we sat on the steps of the freemason temple on 16th - she asked if we could kiss. I said no. I said I



couldn't kiss her without telling you first. Those were the rules of our marriage. I said I could ask for permission, but you'll most likely say no. Mariam expressed reservations about asking for permission. I suggested that I will have a conversation with you about changing the rules to accommodate kissing her. So rather than asking you if I could kiss Mariam, I made the wrong decision: I asked you to change our rules to allow us to kiss other people without permission or report. You reluctantly agreed after a few days. That was the first time I kissed her.

Mariam complained about your Whiteness and about how much you controlled my life. I agreed with her and internalized some of the talking points. I became distant from you and got closer to her. I pushed you away -- emotionally and physically -- and gave her more and more access. I betrayed you by letting someone else talk about us behind your back. I should have stopped her and reported the conversations to you. When you asked me if Mariam and I ever talked about you, I lied. I said no.

I pressured you to accept the new terms of our open marriage in April to give myself permission to have sex with Mariam. It was in late April that I realized that I was in trouble when she asked if I would leave you and marry her. I said no. I said that although I had feelings for her, my relationship with her was not a replacement for our marriage. She got mad and said, "what is it for me then?" She called me a coward for not choosing her. She said I was like her ex, Yousef,

who refused to leave his fiancée for her. Mariam checked out, and I tapered that relationship off. I should have just ended it, and I should have immediately confessed to everything -- but I was too scared to admit what I'd done: I had made the most catastrophic mistake in our marriage.

I betrayed your trust. My approach to changing the nature of our marriage was manipulative. At the time, I rationalized it as fair because I was expressing my needs and wants on the front end rather than cheating on you, but I know I gaslighted you and pressured you in a disingenuous way to change your mind. I admit that my relationship with Mariam amounted to a full-fledged affair.

I am deeply sorry about the physical abuse that I inflicted on you meanwhile in April and May. I look at my hands and think about how I pushed, slapped, choked, and hit you. There is no excuse for what I did. I'm ashamed of my actions, and I am sincerely sorry for all the pain that I have caused you. Not only am I remorseful for the physical violence, but I also realize the verbal violence was horrendous. This is not Mariam's fault, and I won't blame it on the shingles -- I hold myself 100% accountable, and I am the only one to blame for crossing the line, breaching our values, and violating your trust. I am committed to working on myself to ensure I never repeat my mistakes for the rest of my life. I don't know if I will ever be able to forgive myself for hurting you and breaking your heart, but I hope my apology helps you heal.

Sid is dead. I tried to save him, but I don't think he can live without our love. I stroke his dead leaves every day and water him once a week. I know he's not coming back, but I still say "come back to me, my baby." My poor baby, Sid. I loved him so much. I'll bury him next to the World War I memorial.

I met with Celine and Ramy this week. They're adorable. She shared a story about how before he was arrested, she always told him she'd raise hell if he were in prison. You used to say the same -- that you will save me from any prison. I'm in prison now. I'm isolated. Weak. Lonely. In pain. I'm in a prison that I built with my own hands. The only prison you won't save me from, and I accept my fate.

I love you, Alli. I love everything about you. I fell in love with you at first sight, and I love you more every day. I love your smile. I love your face. I love the way you walk. I love the way you drive. I love your food. I also like that you've never cooked before we met. I love your courage and your enthusiasm, but I also love your self-doubt and hesitation. I love your qualities, and I also love your imperfections.