

This Is Where I Leave You

If your closed-up, masked, false self just keeps hanging around, take our advice: Write her a breakup letter.

Dear Fake Me,

Listen, it wasn't all bad. We had a good run. I know you were trying to protect me when you kept me from admitting _____, and that time you got me out of saying _____ to _____, which would've been really uncomfortable. (Remember? We just quietly seethed instead. Good times!) Plus, there were all those relaxing nights at home, when we could've been _____ or _____ or _____, or any number of other far more fun things that weren't possible because you made sure I was too afraid. That's really what held us together all this time, you know? Fear. Of being seen. Of being disliked. Of _____ Of _____

But now—and I hope you won't take this personally—we've grown apart. Remember that time you said I couldn't _____, even though I wanted to so much? I always thought you were looking out for me. But really, you were controlling me. I was too scared to tell the difference.

And so here we are.

We're through. I'm ready to start speaking up. I'm ready to be the version of me that _____ and never _____. I'm ready to stop _____ and start _____. I don't want to keep bottling up my feelings when I'm with _____, and when I _____, and every time someone _____. But most of all, I plan never again to fake it—to pretend I'm _____ when really I'm _____, or that I'm okay with _____ when I just want to _____.

You served a purpose in my life, but we want different things. It's not you—it's that you're not me. So take care of yourself. You won't hear from me again.

Signed, the Real Me