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## The Ceremony

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A Letter to My Imperfect Self  
By Melissa Flamand  
Journal Prompt: letter to a place

Chère rue Mercière,

La façon dont vos pierres se déplacent sous mes pieds me manque, alors que je marche sur chacun d'eux, me rappelant que la plupart des choses ne sont jamais vraiment permanentes. (I miss the way your stones shift underneath my feet as I step on each one, reminding me that most things are never really permanent.)

I am hoping that you are being treated with respect, that those who amble through your alleyway are thinking of each step they take and how it affects you. Everyday as I walked through, I examined your stones. Some of them sat in a perfect symmetry, while others were strewn across the alley in a bedraggled manner. (And that was ok.) In some spots I noticed that your stones were chipping at the edges, and at times there would be spots where entire stones were missing, leaving an open hole. (And that was ok.) I watched the stones pass by my feet as I walked (and sometimes I ran). I saw the way you presented yourself to the world, and it was beautiful. You were an imperfect puzzle of pieces that was perfectly pieced together.

I hope you are missing me as much as I am missing you. Please don't think that I have abandoned you, for I have not. Just remember the lesson that you taught me, that many things are not permanent. Please recall the memory of me, as thoughts and feelings seem to be the only things that can last forever.

I want you to know how much you've helped me since I've left. You've taught me values which I have learned to appreciate more. (Thank you.) You've taught me how to relax, how to problem solve, and how to just take a few steps back (or forward) when I start to freak out. You said, "Take a look at the big picture, go on, step into it...but don't tread too far so as to end up falling out of the frame." Thank you for telling me that I shouldn't be putting too much value into things/people/experiences, and rather, what I should be doing is searching for how much value things/people/experiences actually have. More importantly, thank you for showing me that the real value in these things lies within myself and how I choose to remember them. Thank you.

One last thing I want you to know is how much peace and composure you've brought (and continue to bring) to me. In taking this time to reflect, I have learned to become more forgiving and self-compassionate. I've been shown that change is possible and that people are not perfect, no matter how much you want them to be. I may not be a completely changed person, but I am definitely different from the person you met that day that I first set foot in your alley. Writing this letter for you has proved to be very meaningful for me, and it may be even more so to me than it is to you. Nonetheless, I hope that you will be able to recognize the intentions that this letter strives to elicit. Once again, thank you for helping me realize that nothing is ever really set in stone, because stones, well ... they're breakable too.

À bientôt, Mon Amie,

Melissa Flaman