GRIEF THAT DOESN'T LOOK LIKE GRIEF

For the losses nobody sent flowers for.

"Nobody died. It still felt like someone did."

— from He Called It Love

BEFORE YOU START

Nobody brought you a casserole for this.

There was no funeral. No sympathy cards.

But you lost something real.

This is a guide for naming it.

YOU'RE GRIEVING SOMEONE WHO'S STILL ALIVE

He's still out there, living his life.
You still have to grieve him anyway.

That's not dramatic. That's just what it is.

YOU'RE GRIEVING THE RELATIONSHIP, NOT THE PERSON

You don't miss him.
You miss who you thought he was.

Those are two different people. Grieve the one that mattered.

YOU'RE GRIEVING THE FUTURE YOU HAD PLANNED

The house. The holidays. The person you'd grow old with.
None of that gets to happen now.

Let yourself mourn a future, not just a past.

YOU'RE GRIEVING THE VERSION OF YOU THAT TRUSTED SO EASILY

She's gone too.
The one who believed people without checking twice.

You can miss her without wanting her back.

YOU'RE GRIEVING A FAMILY THAT NEVER EXISTED THE WAY YOU NEEDED IT TO

Not the family on paper.
The family you needed and never got.

That loss is real, even if nobody else can see it.

THIS GRIEF DOESN'T FOLLOW A SCHEDULE

No five stages, in order, on a deadline.
Some days you're fine. Some days
you're on the kitchen floor.

Both days are allowed.

WHAT TO DO WITH IT

Name it out loud. Grief you can name
gets smaller.
Let it move through you instead of
guarding the door.

You don't have to explain it to anyone
who wasn't there.

Grief doesn't need a headstone to be real. Yours counts.

— Sara from He Called It Love