Dear 2023,

After parting with 2022, I was gazing into the imminent beyond with feverish anxiety and harrowing anticipation, perched on the threshold of a waning plane of time, the little hope I had conserved over the year flickering feebly in its hearth. As my hope diminished into obsoleteness, I spotted you, emerging from the hazy darkness, brandishing an alluring grin, extending your hand and ushering me across the chasm into the realm of tomorrow, right as the clock struck midnight. You rekindled my dying hope into a roaring inferno, you illuminated new goals, enlightened me with new possibilities, and in doing so, made everything seem – achievable. I woke up every morning exhilarated, eager to see you and seize the day, to take my strides towards realizing my aspirations, the resolutions that we jotted down together in the beginning of us.

However, after each awakening, my enthusiasm would begin to ebb; each day, it would take more and more will to drag myself out of bed and face you. My ambitions soon evaporated as you brewed anxiety inducing concoctions – served daily - with on the side of breakfast. Every time I felt like I was breaking through the surface, you dunked me back under again. Time with you was Chutes and Ladders, every time I gained my footing, every step forward, you sent me tumbling ten spaces back. You let me gullibly conquer a hill, only to conjure a mountain in its wake. Every victory, every moment of happiness flitted away just as soon as I grasped it. Every time I sought solace, every time I found inner peace, you would shatter it with another hurdle.

I have never felt so aggravated and frustrated before I met you, I cannot count the number of times I wanted to abandon you for elsewhere. Why did I stay? Because of what you promised me in the beginning, I somehow still believed that you could fulfill my aspirations.
That sliver of optimism empowered me to endure you throughout our entire cycle around the sun. I should have known that you only sought me out just to break me like the promises you made me.

I began to harbor tremendous loathing for you, your deceiving facade, for the crushing pressure you subjected me to. I began to internalize my resentment for you until I began to crack. Eventually, you yourself had to heave me out of bed just to force me to look you in the eyes. I tried to avoid you, to retain control, but you kept pulling me out like the tide. I could never rest with you perpetually convicting and sentencing me for every misstep.

Don’t get me wrong though 2023, we had our moments, some of the highest highs in my life, as well as some of the lowest lows, both with you. Even though we had a mostly rocky relationship, by the end, we were on the same frequency, and we found a balance. You drove me forward, the perpetual fear of what loomed over me drove me forward, and even to new heights. We could have been great, but our respective cruelty and stubbornness stunted our vast potential, but in the end, we found ourselves.

After intense reflection and recollection, I am still thankful for you; despite the frustration I harbored throughout our time together, despite the setbacks, I grew. I grew stronger, smarter. I became more at peace with myself, more forgiving to myself and to others, including you. So, thank you. Thank you for conjuring all the bad so that after the dust has settled, I still stand, okay with myself. Thank you for introducing me to the bad so that I can now tame the anxiety that festered at me for so long. Thank you for proving that, even after
everything, I can still look at myself in the mirror. Thank you for pushing me to a new zenith, which always arose from adversity.

From now on, I will expel your self-deprecating influence, your unforgiving disposition, your perpetual distressing air, and the anxiety tank you never failed to overflow. However, I will preserve the pearls of wisdom you dispensed throughout the year, and I will learn from the lows, and cherish the sky-high peaks I triumphed over, with your help. With 2024, I hope to sleep, to indulge in rest, to enjoy my victories, and to love myself. Goodbye, 2023, it was a ride.

Love,

Me