

Robert J. Hansen

2557 Farmcrest Drive, Apt. 803
Herndon, Virginia 20171
319-541-5250
rob@hansen.engineering

March 30, 2017

Gelsey Jaymes
2585 John Boone Court
Mount Pleasant, South Carolina 29466

Dear Gelsey,

We don't know each other, but we had a good friend in common: Shelel Joseff. When the anniversary of her death was upon us Joribeth mentioned that you were missing her something fierce, and asked if I might be willing to reach out to let you know you were far from alone in missing her. I said yes, of course, absolutely so! — and then my winter was filled with never-ending crisis. I'm sorry it's taken me this long to reach out to you.

But I'm getting ahead of myself: where are my manners? I'm Rob, and Shelel was a dear friend of mine for a dozen years. Every few months we'd get together for a fine dinner and hours upon hours of arguing. Not arguing like you see people on news shows arguing with each other — but when two people with brains in their heads and strong personalities have dinner, the very best kind of arguments erupt, things that are punctuated with laughter and fueled by the occasional glass of wine.

I miss her a lot. I miss how fast she talked, so fast that sometimes it was hard to get a word in edgewise. I miss how well she listened, when she realized the time had come to do that instead. I think about her a lot.

Joribeth tells me you do, too.

One of Shelel's favorite poets was Leonard Cohen, who wrote a play called *Night Magic*. In an early scene angels visit a man, who realizes that now he can ask for anything he has no idea what he really wants. The angels suggest,

*You can ask for peace on Earth. There's a few
that do. Or you can ask for peace of mind;
it's very rare but we've had one or two.
Or ask that human suffering unwind
and justify itself by what's behind...*

Peace on Earth would be an amazing thing. So would peace of mind. But the last one, an answer to why it hurts so much, an answer to whether it's worth it? We have those

answers, Gelsey. It hurts so much because we loved her so much, and of course loving her was worth it.

If only having the answers made it hurt less, we'd be all set.

You're not alone. There are many people who miss her. If you ever need company in missing her, reach out to people who knew her. I can't imagine anyone who knew her would object.

Respectfully yours,

Rob Hansen