

# Love Me at my Worst

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## Chapter 1:

**A SENSE OF MELANCHOLY** and a feeling of sorrow. My personal sanctuary of comfort & emotions. In other words, my bedroom.

I lay down on my bed in the darkness with my phone in my hand. I let out a yawn and glance at the time.

11:48 pm.

Go to sleep for heaven's sake Aiko you have school tomorrow.

I open up Instagram and proceed to go to the chat with Michaela. My crush, who eventually became my girlfriend. It's a long story.  
I scroll through our conversations and the corners of my mouth start to rise.

This is my comfort space. The I love yous, the flirting, the paragraph of her saying why she loves me.  
I take screenshots of some of them, and tears start to form in my eyes.

Why does this always seem to be a nightly routine? My breathing shortens and deep pessimism envelops my mind.  
I wrap myself in my blanket, trying to keep myself snug from my bitterness.

What does she even see in me? I stroke and trace every flaw and blemish on me. My body and face, each one lowering my self-esteem.

If she saw me so vulnerable like this...

I never talk to her about how I'm truly feeling.

It's like this wall has formed between her and me. A wall I want to break so badly, but I'm scared of what will be on the other side.

I'm tired of keeping up this carefree facade.  
But I don't want to be a burden to her. I bury myself in my pillow and sob.

Happy thoughts...

Happy thoughts...

Drifting away and falling into a deep slumber.

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The train whistles a noisy screech, and I abruptly open my eyes. I irritably mutter under my breath.

The bright beam of sunlight welcomes me and says a warm good morning.

“NEXT STOP WELLINGTON,” the automated message announces.

I glance to the left to see an angel resting on my shoulder and smile.

I turn to Michaela and brush the loose strands of her hair away from her face.

**SCREECH!**

The train begins to decelerate and comes to a halt.

“Hey, wake up, we’re in Welly now,” I whisper to Michaela.

She awakens from her slumber and mumbles moodily. We step out into the chilly air and start heading towards school.

I blow on my palms and rub them together vigorously.

“My hands are freezing. How do you always have warm hands?” I ask.

“Well...dunno, maybe I’m just really hot,” Michaela grins and cheekily nudges my arm.

I gaze at her hands and ponder.

Hesitantly, I offer my hand to her, hoping she’d accept it.

She reaches for it and squeezes it, intertwining our fingers together.

It’s moments like these that I love.

I take a mental picture of this moment and keep it safe in my box of memories.

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We turn the corner and arrive at school.

“We have English first, don’t we?” Michaela asks.

I nod in response as we start walking towards the staircase.

Reluctantly, I reach to grab her hand and tug her towards me.

Eeriness surrounded my mind and body.

“Hey, what’s up? Is something wrong?” She asks with a frown.

I stare down at the ground, and my mouth starts to tremble.  
I imagine myself in bed again. Those endless nights of wet eyes and bawling.

That feeling of loneliness.  
Those horrible thoughts of negativity.  
Am I really ready to break down the barrier...and be open with my feelings with her?

Can she love me at my worst?