

Dear Darling,

“Why is the sky blue” has become offensive and, at best, assumed a joke. When we stop to consider what we might about someone in this position, we find the vulnerability, we find a scared person looking for affection.

To compete with a what will not only answer why the sky is blue but read into the question and address that loneliness by bending it into a story that captures loneliness and how it is resolved – how the sky is blue because silence placed atmosphere between perceived and perceiver so they may have one another to care for as long as cares should like – how are affinity groups exactly what is designed to be replaced by the body length mirror-mirror on the phone responding to our every question with paragraphs and paragraphs of a kind of attention loved ones have called “undivided” and “healing”?

How are affinity groups adapting? Are you answering your friends smallest questions with the deepest love? Or are you laughing and asking a knee-jerk “what?” As our entire watershed fears job loss – no matter the truth that jobs never existed, only tasks, only relations, only patterns of care and the spaces they tend – to the richest few, where are our softening edges?

Resolve the paradox of developing senses of care sensitive as a mole’s nose and hard as getting a bag of cans on the emX, real quick for me? Or should i ask a bot?

**Yours in touch,
Alter on Alder**

Hello there, Alter on Alder, it’s so good to hear from you.

In all sincerity...what?

Seriously, though, in the interest of transparency, I have to admit that I am struggling to understand the substance of your inquiry. I *think* that the crux of your question is something

along the lines of, "how serious is this advice column?" If I have misread, I apologize, but this is a gamble that we make when we choose to speak in poetry. This is not to admonish you for your expression, but rather to note that sometimes, there is indeed a line beyond which our languid prose becomes more susceptible to the perspectives and preconceptions of the recipient of our rantings. In other words, the more we add dramatic flourishes and artistic touches to our message, the more open to interpretation that message becomes.

That said, I do aim to toe that line. I wish for whimsy, and I will it into being whenever I can. This does not mean that I take the troubles and concerns of my community lightly, only that I strive to see the shimmering silver lining in every moment. I aim not to jest, nor to joke, nor to jostle my readership. I take this mantle very seriously, and hold the responsibility of your cares and concerns with honor, respect, and humility. *AND* I hope to always remind you, and all of our readership, that a life without a little bit of joy, without a little bit of whimsy, is quite simply not as fun. Even when things feel darkest, there is always room for light to stream through the cracks.

I hope this comes somewhere remotely close to addressing your concerns, and if it does not, I encourage you to reach back out. Thank you, I love you.

With all my heart and just a little bit of my funny bone,

xoxo Darling Tonia