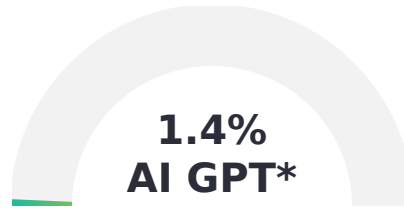




ZeroGPT

Your Text is Human Written



The First Time I Tried to Forgive Myself

They never tell you that self-forgiveness isn't a single moment.

It's not some cinematic release where you cry, breathe deep, and walk away renewed.

No.

It's slower than that.

Quieter.

And far more violent on the inside.

The first time I even tried to forgive myself, I couldn't say the words out loud.
They caught in my throat.

Because the moment you say, "I forgive you,"
you have to admit what you did.

And I wasn't ready to face that yet.

Not really.

Not without flinching.

I'd done the court appearances.

I'd stood in front of the judge.

I'd said "guilty" because I was.

But that's not the same as facing yourself.

Not the polished version.

Not the public version.

The one behind your eyes when you lie awake at 2am,
replaying every mistake like it's on repeat.

I sat on the floor that night.

No music. No talking. Just silence.

I looked at a photo of myself from before the collapse.

Smiling. Pretending. Hopeful, maybe.

And I hated him.

I hated what he'd done.

I hated that he could let people down and still go on breathing like nothing had
changed.

But I also saw something else.

Fear.

Confusion.

A boy in a man's skin who had never really learned how to handle being seen.

Let alone being abandoned.

I didn't say, "I forgive you" that night.

But I did stop blaming him like he was a stranger.

I realised that man was me.

Not a version. Not a phase. Just... me.

And if I was ever going to walk forward,

I had to learn how to carry him, not exile him.

That's where forgiveness started.

Not with forgetting.

Not with justifying.

Just with accepting that I did those things—
and I am still here.

I'm still learning how to forgive myself.

Some days it feels impossible.
Some days I can barely look at the mirror.

But every day I don't lie about what I did,
every day I choose truth over denial,
I inch closer to a version of myself I can live with.

That's what forgiveness looks like for me.

Not erasing the past.
But refusing to let it be the only thing that defines me.

– Billy Coull

■ Highlighted text is suspected to be most likely generated by AI*

2048 Characters

374 Words