

MY MOTHER WANTS TO KNOW IF I'M DEAD

ARE YOU DEAD? is the subject line of her email. The text outlines the numerous ways she thinks I could have died: slain by an axe-murderer, lifeless on the side of a highway, choked to death by smoke since I'm a city girl and likely didn't realize you needed to open the chimney flue before making a fire (and, if I do happen to be alive, here's a link to a YouTube video on fireplace safety that I should watch). Mom muses about the point of writing this email. If I am already dead, which is what she suspects, I wouldn't be able to read it. And if I'm alive, what kind of daughter am I not to write her own mother to let her know that I've arrived at my fancy residency, safe and sound, and then to immediately send pictures of everything, *like I promised her!* If this was a crime show, she posits, the detective might accuse her of sending this email as a cover up for murder. *How could she be the murderer, if she wrote an email to her daughter asking if she was murdered?* her defense lawyers would argue at the trial. In fact, now that she thinks of it, this email *is* the perfect alibi for murdering me. And that is something I should definitely keep in mind, if I don't write her back as soon as I have a free goddamn second to spare.