

I thought I loved you. I didn't

It's crazy how many times I've started writing this and how many times I've had to start again.

You make me question just how good of a writer I am because when I think back at what we called a relationship, I find it incredibly hard to articulate the experience into words. Honestly, I guess I shouldn't be too surprised, seeing as I was always at a loss of words with you. I mean, I could never say no to you.

You were my kryptonite. My Achilles' heel. My weakness. I tried to fight this for a while, you know? The fact that I ever felt something for you. It was hard, daunting, and exhausting even. I keep asking myself if I ever loved you. What even is love? A character flaw? A sacrosanct emotion set aside for special people?

As I continue to explore the intricacies of how I feel right now, I can't help but wonder if the concept of love is as elusive as it appears. Is it truly a character flaw, as some might suggest, or is it a divine, sacrosanct emotion reserved for the most extraordinary of connections? It's a question that has plagued philosophers, poets, and ordinary individuals like myself for centuries. Perhaps the answer lies in the very essence of love itself, in its ability to both uplift and confound us.

I think I loved you, or not. Either way, you made me happy. For a while, at least. The first time I ever felt like you may have loved me or even felt strongly about me, was the day we broke up. Crazy right? I vividly remember you calling, telling me all the reasons why I couldn't and shouldn't do this. You said, "Aren't you the one who told me that love wasn't a fleeting emotion? Are you saying you don't love me anymore?" and then it hit me. How could I love you, when I barely knew what love was?

I believe we live many lives in one lifetime. I lived a life with you and when we ended things, I started another. You did, too.

We had had issues for a while. My anger stemmed from a place of confusion. I could never seem to figure out how you always had your shit together and I could never seem to find my stride. How your notes were always up to date, your assignments and projects completed with the ultimate sense of perfection.

I, on the other hand, was a walking mess. I never seemed to have enough time. 24 hours just weren't enough anymore. I struggled to find the problem and when I couldn't figure it out, I realized it was you! You were the problem. You and your perfectionist self were the issues all along.

I got even angrier. We needed to talk, but instead, you started to avoid me, and I did the same. We were great at bottling up emotion, you and I should have won an award for that. We were that good.

Finally, the climax. I was at the movies with some friends. I had been moping for days and they had decided it was enough. I saw you, on the right side of the theatre, 2 rows up, maybe 4. I honestly don't remember. It was a surreal moment, as if the universe had conspired to bring us together one last time.

The rows that separated us felt like an unbridgeable chasm, a physical representation of the emotional barrier we had put up between us. Whether by chance or fate, this encounter had the power to force a confrontation, to bring our unresolved issues to the forefront.

I texted you. "We need to talk about this," I said. You didn't reply. I waited. A few hours later, the movie came to a horrifying end. It was a horror movie, you see. Just like the one about to play out in our lives.

You finally called and I picked up. "What do you want to talk about?" you asked. In my head, I wondered. 'How could he not know? I mean, was I the only one who felt like we were venturing towards the end? If we had any hope of saving this, it was now or never.' "Let's talk in person" I replied.

"Say whatever you want over the phone." you snapped. Your words stung, igniting a self-righteous fire within me. Anger surged, and without thinking, I retorted, "I should say whatever I want over the phone?! Fine. We're done."

A deafening silence followed, stretching on for what felt like an eternity. It was as if the universe itself held its breath, waiting to see how this dramatic scene would unfold. All I could hear for exactly 54 seconds were the sounds of signals and waves conversing and transmitting to each other. I wondered what they were saying. Probably something like, 'can these kids get off the phone already? they seem to be over anyway.'

You eventually spoke and said, "You're joking. Call me when you get to your room." Your tone had shifted, revealing a hint of vulnerability beneath the earlier indifference. It was a cliffhanger, a moment of uncertainty where the outcome hung in the balance, much like the unresolved plot of the movie we had just watched.

I had so many responses for you but none of them seemed appropriate enough so all I said in reply was, "I don't have credit." Now that I think back on it, that was pathetic. I should have cussed you out. Yelled at you for invalidating my decision. Anything but what I said.

"I'll call back," you said before ending the call, leaving me in a state of uncertainty. In the aftermath, doubt crept in like a shadow, casting its long fingers over my thoughts. Did I make a mistake by ending it? Should I reconsider and try to salvage what remained of us? My mind was a whirlwind of questions, each one vying for my attention.

You did call back. You said all the right things. All the things I always wanted to hear you say, but they didn't matter anymore. The connection that had once bound us so tightly had frayed, and your words, while sincere, seemed like echoes from a distant past.

You didn't matter anymore. In my head, you no longer existed. It's remarkable how easily we can forget, how swiftly we can move on from someone who was once the center of our world. The memories, once vivid and all-encompassing, began to fade like a sepia-toned photograph.

At a point, you got all emotional. I was told you cried. I cried too, but for different reasons. I cried for what we could have had. I cried for the memories that were already starting to fade. I cried because you were too easy to forget. I cried because I felt too much. I cried because I would see you the next day and the day after, and we wouldn't speak. I cried because thoughts of you were now tainted with hurt, a dull continuous pain.

The next morning, as I stepped out of chapel, I looked across the pavement, and there you were, in all your glory. I couldn't help but smile, and you returned the gesture, perhaps thinking that all was perfect again. But yesterday felt like a distant, hazy dream, one we were fortunate enough to wake up from.

You blocked my path, and I deftly sidestepped you, like a child playing hopscotch. You decided to walk beside me instead, until I finally stopped, and you seized the opportunity to ask, "Can we talk?" I considered it briefly and decided it was okay. "Sure," I replied, and we walked a bit further to find a bench.

As you spoke, I leaned back against the bench and allowed my mind to wander. For the first time, I noticed the ordinary sounds of campus life—the pitter-patter of shoes as students headed back to their rooms or off to lunch after the service, the laughter of friends and lovers intertwined with their conversations. Just as I was reveling in the beauty of the mundane, like any true artist should, you tapped me and brought me back to reality. "Huh?" I asked in confusion. "You weren't even listening, were you?" you accused. "Do you want the truth or a lie?" I retorted. "The truth would be nice," you replied.

"I'm sorry. I wasn't listening. Could you kindly repeat the koko of it?" I admitted, my mind still wandering. You laughed. "I was just saying maybe we could stay friends," you said. Deep down, I knew that was never going to happen. We were definitely not the couple that stayed friends. But I wanted to appease you, so I smiled and said, "Of course." You stood up, dusted off your pants, and looked at me. "I guess I'll see you around," you said. "I guess you will." I watched you walk off, and then I leaned back again, attempting to resume my zoning.

As I sat there, my mind still drifting amidst the sounds of life around me, a cascade of emotions rushed in like a tidal wave. Watching you walk away triggered a complex blend of feelings that I struggled to untangle.

Relief, first and foremost, washed over me like a cleansing rain. It was the realization that the turbulent chapter of our relationship had finally reached its conclusion. The weight of unresolved issues, anger, and emotional turmoil that had burdened me seemed to have lifted, allowing me to breathe freely once more.

Yet, alongside relief, there lingered a tinge of sadness. It wasn't sadness for the loss of the relationship itself, but rather for the inevitable changes it brought to my life. The routines we had established, the shared moments, and even the arguments had been a significant part of my existence for some time. Now, I was faced with the daunting prospect of navigating life without your presence, without the person who had once been a huge part of my life, of me.

With a sigh, I allowed myself to fully embrace the ordinary sounds of campus life—the laughter of students, the casual conversations of friends, and the simple joys of everyday existence. It was as if I were rediscovering a world that had been momentarily obscured by the intensity of our relationship. As I leaned back on that bench, I couldn't help but wonder about the chapters that lay ahead. Our encounter marked not just an ending but also a new beginning. It was a moment of liberation, a recognition that I was now free to chart my course, to explore new horizons, and to discover what love truly meant to me. With a newfound sense of clarity and a heart unburdened by the weight of the past, I took a deep breath and welcomed the uncertainty of the future. It was a moment of renewal, a revival even, a chapter yet to be written, and I was ready to embrace it with open arms.

I thought I loved you. I didn't. These words, like ink spilled on a blank page, hold the power to reshape a narrative that once seemed immutable. They're the kind of words that writers like me live for – a revelation that cracks open the façade of a seemingly complete story, inviting us to explore the hidden depths of the human experience.

The adage, "People accept the love they think they deserve," reverberates with profound significance. What we shared was not just toxic but bordering on the obsessive. I embraced the love you offered because, at the time, I couldn't fathom anything better. It's as if George Jones' song, "It Don't Get Any Better Than This," played in the background, underscoring the resignation that had settled in.

I did so many things wrong with you and I honestly wish I could go back in time and change them. But life doesn't give those types of second chances.

You'll find solace in knowing that I'm on a journey of self-discovery, seeking to grasp what love means to me and, more importantly, the love I truly deserve.

Love is a choice. It's choosing to look above and beyond our flaws as humans and love each other regardless, every day.

Love, as I've come to believe, embodies the virtues described in 1st Corinthians 13:4–8. It's patient and kind, devoid of envy or boastfulness, humble and free from arrogance or rudeness. True love doesn't insist on its own way, nor is it prone to irritability or resentment. It rejoices in truth, bears all things, believes, hopes, and endures. Love, as this scripture declares, never truly ends.

Love is the ultimate sacrifice, that a man shed his blood and died on the cross, all that we might be saved.

Love becomes a refuge, offering comfort in the most uncomfortable of places. It's a space for pain and growth, a sanctuary where two souls can find solace in one another's presence.

Love is reading a book together from the first page to the last.

It's the harmonious blend of voices in worship, a chorus that drowns out the world.

Love takes root in the quiet moments, those stolen glances and subtle gestures that speak volumes. It thrives in the genuine support we offer one another, in times of joy and adversity alike. It's the unwavering presence in the sidelines, the silent strength that bolsters us when the world seems against us.

It's the shared journey, hand in hand, as we navigate the intricate path of life. Love isn't just a feeling that washes over us; it's a steadfast commitment, an ever-present force that guides our steps.

Love is laughing together until tears are streaming from our eyes.

Love. Some say a feeling. Others, a choice.

I say, we simply love because He loved us first.