

DEAR FUTURE EX WIFE: LESSONS LEARNED FROM MY LOVING EX HUSBAND

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THE EX-WIFE

Before we begin this guide, an introduction is most definitely needed. My name is Sora Ahmed.

Sora meaning “conch shell” in Japanese and “sky” in Korean, seemed like the perfect duality of soft elegance my father wanted to see in his daughter.

I was brought up to understand the importance of watching things grow and facilitating that growth. Out of this stemmed my immeasurable love for both planting and architecture.

If you know anyone who shares any of these interests, they're more than likely patient individuals who understand that although they may not see signs of progress, the real reward is the process and never the final stage. This is something I want you to keep in mind for later.

I am currently writing this from Geneva, Switzerland, in a home that was built with the most minute attention to detail; another crucial aspect of who I am or who I was conditioned to be for reasons I may not even have to include, depending on how long you lasted before referring to this guide.

You could be anyone but considering you're reading this, you're a special type of someone to have been picked to be the wife of Roman Atikin.

I'm sure nobody needs to give you an introduction to your husband but in life everyone is given a special pair of lenses to view the world in their own way and once you've seen a specific aspect of life to its core, you begin to realize your reality is the reality everyone should acknowledge.

Your name must be special. Something that makes him think. He abhors the generic and spits on the common and so for the purpose of this guide I will name you Alora meaning God's own light because it'll take something supernatural to see the light in him sometimes.

He loves a woman fit, yet dainty; carrying a cool and subtle air to her and so I also assume you're gorgeous.

Roman Atikin only works with the beautiful things in life. That's how he became such a good architect and an even greater perfectionist.

It's also the reason you might refer to this. You of all people should know how hard it is to tend to anything beautiful.

It would be too boring to just write simple tips so I'll take you on a short journey that will make you understand what it is you need to and if it's worth it at all.

[CHAPTER 1] — THE GUIDE

To whom it may concern, I'm currently sitting in between the inviting opening of two polished and shined French doors; gazing into an assorted orchard and wondering which sprouts should be rewatered. To whom it must concern, I am very happy.

When you're at an age that sits at the border of nagging aunt and accomplished “girl boss” you tend to have enough free time to have an orchard, polish your doors and write to a vast number of women who may or may not even exist. At this age if the world worked the way it did in self-help books it would be normal that 29, I'd been married; “been” being a buzzword here because that was a thing of the past.

I'm writing this guide to help you unknown or nonexistent women to navigate the ways of your future ex-husband by none other than “the” ex-wife.

So, as you wonder why there are different slippers for the living room, lobby, and kitchen, why Saturday afternoons are so quiet, and why you're missing a pair of work shoes, refer to this guide just before you book that flight & sign those divorce papers.

[CHAPTER 2] — GROUND RULES

Everyone in Roman Atikin's life is a boomerang which means in the literal sense that whatever and *whoever* goes away will always find their way back to him. It's a principle not a perception.

What makes this scarier is that he knows this, and you'd be surprised the wonders this does to one's ego knowing no matter what they say or do they are completely immune to its consequences.

This is a serial game of chess and Roman Atikin owns this board. This guide will be split up into different sections and amidst the numerous paragraphs under each chapter, you will realize one single principle: you are nothing but a boomerang.

[CHAPTER 3] — HOME

When you think about marriage, you think about a picket fence, a nice kitchen with an island, a sweet golden retriever that constantly looks like it's smiling, you think a fat squishy baby with a wobbly pacifier and a scarcely haired head. Roman Atikin does not like dogs.

Hell, Roman Atikin thinks picket fences are laced with the underlying roots of poverty; that it makes up for the fact that you cannot afford to have the privacy you want so you build a picket fence just so you can look at your neighbors and envy as they live their similar mediocre lifestyles.

You consider having bald baby #2 to have an upper hand; have a reason for the neighbors to come in on Sundays to check on “the baby” so you can show off the cheap pieces of China your depressing 9 to five job was able to get you after paying in installments of course.

When Roman Atikin thinks marriage, he thinks submission; not the watered-down description that makes you think childish foreplay in a bed that has grown too small for your fast-food eating gut. Which you will not be eating.

To Roman Atikin, submission transcends the bedroom. It's the way he breathes. It's the way he's able to make sure no one is trying to shoot him in the head when he's driving. He owns the driver's seat. No, you do not share or interchange when it's time to go to little Timmy's games.

He controls the narrative. He controls you and so the moment you choose to have that big break that moment you've been waiting for to scream at him, let him know how you'd like to be loved and that his random love shots aren't enough for you, remember that he's the one driving and that he never locks the door.

So, you can leave, run away, find someone who will build you your picket fence and kiss your baby through your cheap maternity gown.

Like a conditioned prisoner, you will know at the back of your mind that you want more; that *that* life is not what you want and that the mind games and adrenaline gave your life a meaning that even drowning in tears, you'd pick over complacency and installment-paid love any day and when you're wallowing in pity after seven days of not speaking to the man you love even though he's seated right in front of you, a tiny voice at the back of your mind will remind you that that's exactly who he is and no amount of kicking and screaming was ever going to be enough to change that. That's the boomerang effect.

CHAPTER 4- SPEARS AND SILENCE

There's a lot silence can do to one's mind especially in the heat of a situation. It's one of the oldest tricks of psychology and the oldest methods of torture. Roman wields silence.

Of course, anyone can give you the silent treatment but what if this indefinite silence became a lifestyle; what if there was someone so good at pretending you didn't exist, you began to question your own existence; you began to question if what you had was even real in the first place.

Did you know that there are 192 hours in eight days, it takes 11,520 minutes to make those up, to cry 12 times, to starve yourself, to pray, to decide you should probably move on and start a new life...

691,200 seconds to realize how deep your love for him really goes, you're left to ponder what it is he's thinking, who he's talking to when he's not talking to you, and what exactly it's going to take for him to speak to you again.

Every fight seems like the last one; like the silence will stretch out till eternity and die with you both.

It's not the silence that kills you, it's the wait. Surely if you could put a date and time to the silence break, it would make life a lot easier, but you can't.

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You soon start to regret it and it does not matter that he was the one that made you angry. It never does. The silence quickly turns that anger to sadness; makes you displace the anger of the situation for the sadness of the distance it caused.

“Why did I react?”, “It was probably not that serious” and it will all suddenly be your fault.

Your fault that your bond broke and nothing will make sense anymore. Every conversation you have with someone else will be irrelevant.

Has he found someone more special than me? Maybe on his way to work he decided he wouldn't speak to me till I left.

He's given up on us. *I* made him give up on us. There's a lot silence can do to one's mind especially one that loves with everything in it.

CHAPTER 5- WISHFUL THINKING

Roman is a jealous person. A very jealous person. But because he still must maintain his nonchalant stance, he won't hold you back when one of his colleagues at the annual architecture gala tries to engage in conversation.

He'd simply sip his water and walk away; smirking knowingly as your heels clack behind him as you automatically follow; like an invisible rope binds you both and maybe it does.

When he's not speaking to you every other conversation becomes time wasting. They all lack a key element. They are not with him. So, you will talk to yourself. Simply be entertained by the voices in your head telling you this will never end.

The kind of voice that whispers occasionally that with Roman Atikin there's always a chance because in the uncertain definitely lies the certain.

CHAPTER 6- BROKEN SILENCE

When Roman Atikin was a child, he was known as the child who didn't need to be taught to put his toys away at recess.

As soon as the bell rang, his toys were put away in his own personal toy box and stored away in the darkest space between the bags and coats.

Little did they know, it was his own little way of preparing the world for the man he would later become. A man that hid the things he loved the most.

When you realize you like a song your first instinct might be to get your friends to listen, set it as a ringtone or even buy the vinyl to display in your office.

The opposite is the case for Roman Atikin.

When Roman finds that he likes a song, his blood starts to pump through his veins at a peculiar speed. His breathing begins to pick and an incessant desire to keep it a secret forms throughout his being.

When Roman Atikin finds that he loves a woman, one can only imagine how deep this desire runs.

It was a dark September day like any other day 13 years ago, when Roman casually said, “I can't be a husband, I'm crazy”. My glazed eyes peered at him; silently asking him why.

“Because if I had a wife, I'd want no one but me to see her”. I smiled, wishing it were me that was loved to the fault of pure insanity and full possession. I was foolish.

Some would call me naïve; doe-eyed even. Perhaps I disagree because deep down I knew it was dangerous to wish for such a thing.

I remember thinking of those toys in his toy box; if they liked being in the dark for the sake of love, if the box ever made them feel choked or if they ever envied the other toys that were played with in the open... claimed in the open.

Did they accept their fate? Knowing they were *his* toys, and they would be serving their purpose. Or had they decided they'd be limp and let him do as he pleased.

You begin to think you're letting someone have their way with you when in fact you couldn't have your way even if you *did* try. You begin to wonder if you switched places with those toys.

CHAPTER 7- SIMPLER TIMES

You don't have to be an architect to know nothing is built without a foundation or know that some foundations are more complex than others depending on how complex what you're building is.

I had always in a way prepared to be Roman Atikin's wife.

Roman and I met at an age where all the wrong decisions are made, 17. When I met him, I was what he'd like to call "raw gold"; valuable but useless without the right refinement.

Roman was the first and only child of the Atikin household which meant naturally, he felt responsible for everything and everyone under the sun.

This sense of responsibility also meant that he was always moving, and you'd hate to be the God forsaken creature that got in his way.

I had two options. You have two options. One, make a human effort and try to catch up to him, which essentially means being left behind, or making a god-sized effort and working yourself till you're able to identify each bone protruding from your fingers by name.

Either way, your life will never remain the same. Mine certainly didn't.

Our conversations were often functional with a subtle hint of humor. This humor is probably why you fell for him.

He observed you; watched you.

What you read, what lines made you snicker when he took you to the private viewing of the movie you wouldn't shut up about, he watched the people you interacted with; silently making a mental note of their personas and storing them in the manila files he kept in the darkest corners of his mind.

He would also make a mental note to later remove your friend Jimmy, "the friend that wears the recycled golf shoes" from your life. The only thing he hated more than a chatterbox was a lack of tasteful fashion and all your friends will seem to possess both.

So of course, when he cracked a joke, fueled, and calculated but the entirety of his observations you laughed.

You thought all your days were going to be like this but as time progressed, he remained the only one laughing and you kept a tight-lipped smile; silently begging for permission to cry...

