

Loving...
Them!

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Clichés.

Hmm. Society's full of them.

Let's see. There's the always coveted “happily ever after.” Then there's “high school sweethearts” and the always great “love at first sight” and the very sentimental “We were meant to be.” Don't forget the great “meant for each other” and the ever famous and magical “We just knew!”

Fantastic. Excuse me while I scratch my throat in sarcasm and choking down the baby vomit. Mm mm.

Clichés. Yeah. Could they be any better?

But that's not real life. Real life isn't anything like that. Not one bit. Real life is totally the opposite—at least for me.

First there was Sam. The church boy, raised by the preacher parents. The best of examples to everyone, including me. He played the guitar in church, sang, preached, talked, motivated young church members.

Yeah. Mhm. All that.

Just imagine if you will the type of guy that every parent wants their daughter to be with. Prim, proper, happy, sweet, helpful to others, the *grand inspiration*. That was Sam. The absolution of perfection.

Oh wait! I almost forgot to introduce myself. I'm Odette. Yeah. My parents had an affinity for the Swan Princess. Enough said. Odette Humphrey. Yeah. Way to go with 'authentic names' Mom and Dad!

Okay, back to what I was saying.

So Sam was my number one love. Now, I know what you're thinking. You're saying, “Don't you mean 'first love'?” Well no. No I don't. I mean my number one. The difference being that I don't still love him. I don't still have feelings for him. He holds no special place in my heart. Truth be told, I could give two shits about him, where he is and what he's doing.

But at the time, all I could do was care. He was all I thought about all the time. I mean honestly, he was not only good looking—the whole tall, dark and handsome thing going on—but someone that my parents would approve of. I mean come on! Then of course there was that whole, great socialite and example thing.

Pfff. Enough said.

Our romance was your atypical teenage whirlwind romance. Two hormonal teens, reeking amorous and horny teen havoc all over the place while in private, and being the two best examples of teenage life in public.

But like with all great teen romances, it ultimately ended in a lagoon of tears, two buckets of chocolate ice cream, a few bum-rushed tissue boxes, a few calls to my best friend and a marathon of romedies.

There were of course the few rebounds, but nothing of substance.

Then there was U. U became an instant infatuation. Oh, in case you're wondering, I have no idea what the U stood for. It was a cool name, so I went with it.

My parents hated U, so I loved him. He was gorgeous, rough and strong. Stood his ground. The bad boy in all aspects.

Since he was nothing like Sam, I dove in. The last thing I wanted was to be with another Sam. U didn't let anyone look down on him, or on me.

He protected me with the ferocity of a lion. But *pushed me* around like one too.

He claimed to love me and I'd been smitten by him and all of his rebellious ways, so I fell for it, giving very little thought to how he was treating me. Looking back, I can see that I was blind. Blinded by love. He told me he loved me, he defended me from my parents' anger and other peoples' onslaughts, so I couldn't see the abuse, assuming that that was just the way he was.

Of course in retrospect all things look different.

That disastrous lovers' cyclone ended in an ugly battle of my refusal to continue to submit to his undertaking.

More tears, more chocolate ice cream, more tissue boxes, phone calls and romedies.

Done? Done!

After U, I decided that I needed to take a break from men, period. I needed to find myself. I'd lost my identity somewhere in the mix.

Of course, that didn't last long. I got horny.

A few miscellaneous dates here and there and then came Jyren. Truth be told, he was a great guy. A good guy—for the most part. There was one thing though. Jyren had his priorities all mixed up, at least in my opinion at the time.

Side note about me:

I'm not the needy girl by any means. I'm not pushy, overwhelming, not a Prima Donna or anything of the sort. But we all have our limits. I love my space. I like having time to myself and all that good stuff,

never do I ask for much. Just a little bit of your time, and a smidgen of effort.

To give you an estimate of my interpretation of a *little bit*, here is an example. One call per day. Not for a long time, just long enough to let me know you're still alive and care. This shouldn't take more than 5 minutes per day, or the occasional text message. And a few hours (by a few I mean about three to five) of your time every other weekend. I kid you not. Like I said, I like my space.

However my poor Jyren just couldn't keep up. He was way too wrapped up in his own life that he continuously forgot about his *not needy* girlfriend. And I mean forgot to the point that I wouldn't even get the occasional text messages. Finally, as great a guy as he was, I decided that the person that was to be with me needed to try a little harder. Funny thing was, that I did love him but I wanted more than what he was giving.

Cue the tears, chocolate, tissue, rinse and repeat.

Some time passed, then low and behold: guess what? Yup. You guessed it. Damn horn-ball hormones.

By this point I was adamant that I was only going to date. No more serious relationships for me. No. None. Not one. I was done! Or some such bullshit.

Until Jeffrey. Mmm. Jeffery and his sexy English accent. That's English as in British, not American. Ladies come on. Let's be honest. Tall, built like a soccer player, handsome, smooth talking and an English accent? Yeah. You know what I'm talking about.

My first thought was, *I need to snatch him up and quick! This is a once in a life time opportunity.*

So I dove in. Jeffery was the perfect English gentleman. Shit he was perfect, with one exception. He was a bit of a pot-head. Nonetheless, I made it a point of overlooking that little imperfection just to keep him around. After all, I wasn't doing the pot. I was just in the room while he did it.

Well like all good fantasy relationships, nine months later: tears, chocolate... ah hell! You already know.

By this point I was done. Done I tell you! So done in fact that I wanted a good fuck from a complete stranger in order to get over it. That's how done I was. One good hard fuck from a rebound guy that didn't know what was about to hit him.

Let's all welcome Zoltan please. Yes, yes. Applause is in order.

Zoltan was an incredibly cute, tight booty, handsome, unsuspecting Hungarian that just happened to be in my line of fire while I was on the prowl.

My problem? The language barrier. I wanted to get good and laid in order to get over Jeffery, and Zoltan interpreted that as "Hello cute, adorable, Hungarian guy with the endearing accent. Can I please be your girlfriend?"
So not what I wanted!

But he was so cute. How could I turn him away? He looked like a puppy in need of a home. Following me around, practically eating out of my hands, treating me right, but I just wasn't ready. Unfortunately, this time, it was me breaking the heart.

"Zolly, honey. You, me," I pointed from his chest to mine. "No." His eyes widened with confusion. Once again, I tried to break it down, "You, me." Pointed from his chest to mine. "No." Shook my head. His eyes welled up. I ran to the kitchen, pulled out a bucket of chocolate ice cream, grabbed a box of tissues, his cell phone in case he needed to make a phone call and my DVD of The Rebound and sent him out the door.

After dear old Zolly, I found myself bouncing from one date to another, getting a little something, something from time to time but nothing came of any of them. Either the guy was a jerk, or I was.

Hey, I've never claimed to be perfect here. Sometimes pain turns you into an asshole.

A few years later, after having dated a few guys here and there, I decided that I needed to change up my game. Try something new. A different kind of guy.

Cue in Randolph. Randolph was the epitome of a hippie. The whole shebang. The entire dreadlock wearing, tree hugging, vegetarian being, spiritually in-tune magnificence of it. Every single stereotype that you could think of in regards to a hippie, Randolph was it.

I wasn't very attracted to him, but I figured that this was what I needed.

Boy was I wrong!

This man was an emotional mess. Just plain weird. But mostly, *I wanted a fucking hamburger!* Well needless to say, that didn't last long.

"Here you go." With those words I passed him a box of soy chocolate ice cream, some Eco-friendly facial tissues, a string phone and my copy of Anyone But You, and patted him on the butt as I pushed him out the door.

Done? Done!

Wrong!

Then came Riley. To be smitten is one thing, but to be swept off of your feet and not see it coming is something else entirely.

I was thirteen years his senior, but he didn't seem to care and neither did I. Riley was perfect. Perfect. Flawless. He was gorgeous, sweet, tender, gorgeous, caring, likable, gorgeous, funny, cute, gorgeous, superb, intelligent... did I say gorgeous?

He was a dream come true. Everything I'd ever wanted. He lacked nothing. Bear in mind that by this point I knew exactly what I wanted in a relationship and from a man, and Riley had it all. Every bit of it!

My heart was a pair of ice skates and he was the slippery slope, and *vroom!* Down I went. Falling without control. I fell so deeply in love with him. I had more love for him than I'd ever had for anyone. With Riley I was ready to do what I'd promised myself years before I wouldn't do. Get married. I wanted to be Mrs. Riley. I wanted it more than I'd ever wanted anything in my life. And as far as I

knew, so did he.

We'd made plans, everything had been worked out, and we were ready to be together for the rest of our days.

When the blow came, I didn't see it coming. I didn't expect it.

My Riley, my dear and beloved Riley. The love of my life, my one and only, then man of my dreams, my everything, cheated on me. With his ex-girlfriend. Then he told me that he loved us both.

My world was shattered. A torrential destruction of the heart. An avalanche of pain consumed me until there was nothing left. The pain ripped through me to the point that I'd lost complete faith in anything related to love.

I now hated love.

All of this at the hands of the man I loved more than anything in the world.

Chocolate ice cream didn't help, tissue boxes I could never find enough of, I didn't want to talk to my best friend about it, remedies were the last thing on my mind. Nothing eased the pain.

Two years.

It took me two years to get past the pain, but never have I forgotten my beloved Riley. He was etched into my soul. Because of that, I still love and hate him.

Finally, after two years I was ready to try and date again. After Riley, I didn't want to date; I didn't want to risk another heart break of that magnitude. But wouldn't you know it, finally after two years, I got horny.

Cue Wade.

Wink, wink.