

Anna Wostenberg
ENG 336
Dr. Wilner
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I Won

(1) The change began on a Wednesday. (2) The early August heat insulated my tiny dorm room, leaving it sweaty and unpleasant; I wore only a sports bra and short-shorts with a wet washcloth draped over my face as an attempt to combat the heat and prove that it would not get the best of me. (3) I was feeling empowered despite my desire to not move from the just slightly cooler tiled floor. (4) Words barreled through my mind one word at a time, somehow forming the speech that I would spout off as quickly as I could. (5) I'd have one chance to say my piece.

(6) You were supposed to get here on Sunday and that was going to be the day. (7) I was going to do it. (8) I was going to break up with you. (9) I needed to do it. (10) I needed to be the one to end things so I could escape this abuse, this emotional abuse. (11) I was going to feel so liberated and so strong. (12) I was going to lay down the law, to tell you to go to Hell and to leave me alone, that I was done with all of your negativity and need to control me. (13) It had all been planned out.

(14) It was Friday when you called. (15) That's two days before your arrival. (16) I heard words from your end, but stopped paying attention after, "This isn't working out for me." (17) I was infuriated. (18) In just two days I was going to unleash the essays that were pent up feelings of the last two and a half years, list your flaws, all the times you'd done me wrong. (19) I was going to make you feel so terrible about yourself that you'd cry on your first day back at Princeton.

(20) But that didn't happen. (21) You made sure of it. (22) We both knew it was the end, what this relationship had finally come to. (23) You just couldn't let me have the last word or the power to free myself; one last time you had to seize the control and destroy me with one final blow.

(24) On that Friday when you called, I answered as banally as I knew how, "Don't worry, I'm on the same page. Come get your stuff when you can." (25) And I hung up the phone, knowing how bitter I'd sounded and also how defeated I felt. (26) For one last time, you'd won the final battle, leaving me the victim. (27) But don't worry, not that you ever could worry about someone other than yourself, because I came out the victor, really. (28) While you realized just how lonely you were without me, I realized just how happy I was with being alone.

(29) I could finally say, "I won."

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Annotations

- Repetition/Parallelism: Every other paragraph began with a sentence referring to a day of the week. Sentences 1, 14, and 24 exemplify this. I chose to do this to give some emphasis to the timing in which this event took place because time was a really important concept throughout the piece.
- Throughout the essay, I used short sentences. I chose to do this because I wanted to emphasize the narrator's spiral into this realization. It highlighted her needs and desires. See sentences 7, 8, and 9.
- Sentence 2 is particularly long because I wanted it to drag on, like the feeling the heat was causing to the narrator.
- Sentence 13 uses the passive voice because I wanted there to be a change of pace. The rest of the paragraph uses active voice and I wanted it to end with the passive for emphasis.
- Repetition: I also repeated the concept of "one" throughout the essay. I wanted to highlight the narrator's shift from being part of a pair to being independent, becoming a "one," if you will. Sentences 4, 5, 10, 23, and 26 use the concept of "one."
- The last sentence, sentence 29, is short for emphasis. I also used the quote "I won" because it is phonetic with the concept "one" that is prevalent throughout the essay. It emphasizes the final change in the narrator.
- Sentence 22 ends with a preposition, which is breaking a rule, but I chose to leave it in because it shows the awkwardness of the relationship ending.