

Evolution of a Romance

By

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FADE IN

INT. - JAMES'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Various shots of JAMES'S family room: the TV, the couch, the video game console, the half-eaten bag of cheetos, etc.

ADIN (V.O.)

My name is Adin Smith. My story is pretty conventional, in my opinion, but I'm here to tell you how I fell in love. No, it didn't just hit me one day that I was with "the one" and no, I didn't fall in love with my best friend, but I did fall in love with the "boy next door." Not literally, but rather figuratively. But before we get to that part, I have to tell you about my ex boyfriend, James. He was a real jerk, but I had myself convinced that I loved him. Now I realize that I didn't love him at all, but I merely loved the idea of him, of having someone to call my own. Anyway, that's beside the point. Let's start here. This was the turning point in my relationship with James. I'll catch up with you later to make sure you understand.

INT. - JAMES'S HOUSE - NIGHT

JAMES, a 6' blonde teenager dressed in skinny jeans and vans, sits mesmerized in front of the TV screen, playing Call of Duty while ADIN, a short blonde girl in a summery dress, sits uncomfortably next to him. There is no physical contact between the two and Adin awkwardly looks at her nails, occasionally biting them. She sighs and James does not even notice. Finally she speaks up.

ADIN

Hey, James, do you maybe want to go out and see a movie tonight? Your choice...

JAMES

Uh...yeah...sure, Babe, just let me play one more game. I'm just about to get a new best KD.

(CONTINUED)

ADIN
(disheartened)
Sure...no problem...

JAMES
Actually, I just want to stay in
tonight. You don't mind, do you
Babe? I just don't really feel like
going out.

ADIN
Oh...okay then. Can we at least do
something I enjoy as well then?

JAMES
(looks at ADIN, shocked)
Uh...you wanna grab a controller? I
can show you how to play.

ADIN
(frustrated)
No, James. I do not enjoy playing
video games!

JAMES
Okay...what do you want then?

ADIN
(sighs)
You know what? I think I'm just
going to call it a night. I'll see
you later, I guess.

JAMES
Okay, if that's what you want to
do.

ADIN gets up from her place on the couch, grabs her purse
and keys, quickly pecks JAMES on the lips, and leaves his
house.

EXT. - OUTSIDE JAMES'S HOUSE - NIGHT

ADIN closes the front door and leans against it, resigned.
A tear slowly escapes from her left eye and rolls down her
cheek.

ADIN
Get a hold of yourself, Adin! What
are you doing crying? This is
ridiculous!

Frustrated with her sudden sadness, she pushes herself off the door and walks quickly to her car, gets in, turns the ignition, and drives off.

INT. - ADIN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

ADIN, visibly upset, sits in her bed with her DAD, an older salt-and-pepper-haired man in a T-shirt and worn out jeans, who is giving her advice. Her music is playing quietly in the background.

DAD

What's on your mind, Adin?

ADIN

Oh, it's nothing...

DAD

I've known you for eighteen years, Adin. I know when you're upset. Your eyes don't have the same shine that they usually do and your smile isn't genuine.

ADIN

(smiles)

Thanks, Dad. It's just James. I really care about him and he can be so charming and funny but I just feel like he doesn't care about me. Or he does, but only when it's convenient for him. Otherwise, I'm just someone that's sitting in the room while he plays hours and hours of Call of Duty.

DAD

What's Call of Duty?

ADIN

(rolls her eyes)

Dad...it's a videogame...

DAD

Oh, right, I knew that. Well, it seems to me it's time to judge whether you're getting everything you want out of the relationship or whether it's worth all this pain and upset it's causing you.

(CONTINUED)

ADIN

(eyes watering)

I know...and that's the sad part. I'm really beginning to realize that he's not good for me and he doesn't treat me well. But I still care about him and don't want to hurt his feelings. Because I don't think he sees what he's doing. I think he cares about me when his attention is focused on me and he just forgets about me when it isn't. It's just so sad to figure this all out.

DAD

(hugs ADIN and rubs her back as she cries)

I know, Adin, I know. Fuck him, he's a douche anyway. It'll be okay, though, I promise it'll be okay.

INT. - JAMES'S HOUSE - DAY

Once again, JAMES sits glued to the TV as ADIN sits there next to him. This time she is reading a magazine that was laying on the coffee table. Other friends are present, playing video games with James, drinking sodas, and talking.

ADIN

Hey James!

JAMES doesn't hear her. ADIN looks around at another couple that is there. The girl is sitting on her boyfriend's lap and they are happily talking. Adin decides she's had enough and that it's really time to end things, but she hates confrontation. Feeling as though nobody would notice, she gets up off the couch and walks toward the front door with all her things. She stops by the door and turns back to survey the scene.

ADIN (CONTINUED)

(sighs quietly)

Goodbye, James...

Silently, ADIN slips out the door and clicks it shut without anyone noticing. The rest of the teenagers continue on with what they were doing.

FADE OUT

EXT. - DAYCARE CENTER - AFTERNOON

ADIN walks up the pathway to the daycare center to pick up the little boy that she babysits. Another boy from her class MASON, a tall blonde boy in jeans and a button down shirt with the sleeves rolled up, is just in front of her and holds the door open for her and they walk in together.

MASON

After you, Adin.

ADIN

Thanks, Mason. How're you?

MASON

I'm well, thanks! I didn't know you had a little sibling.

ADIN

Oh, I don't. I babysit a little boy named Cole. He's pretty cute. Although, I didn't know you had a younger sibling, either.

MASON

(flirtatious)

But of course! A little sister. She's four. Her name's Samantha. She's pretty cute, too, if I do say so myself.

ADIN

(getting nervous with the flirtatious interaction)

Oh, well I suppose I'll have to take your word for it. I've gotta get Cole home. See you around.

MASON

(confused)

Okay. Yeah. See you around.

INT. - ADIN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

ADIN sits on her bed with a bottle of water and a cookie, and opens her laptop.

INSERT - ADIN's laptop screen.

Tumblr is open on ADIN'S laptop screen and the voice over is being typed on the screen.

(CONTINUED)

ADIN (V.O.)

I saw Mason more often at the daycare center after that first day. It was almost as if he tried to make sure we'd arrive there at the same time. Not that I minded or anything, because Mason was a nice guy. I'd never had a problem with him and we'd gone to school together since kindergarten. We talked more and more and I grew to enjoy his company. We'd chat about school, our weekend plans, anything, really, that came up. The conversations were always short though, because they only lasted as long as it took us to sign the kids out and walk back to our cars. Then, one day, this happened.

FADE TO NEXT SCENE

EXT. - DAYCARE CENTER - AFTERNOON

MASON and ADIN are walking together back toward their cars. Suddenly Mason stops walking and Adin stops a few steps ahead of him and turns around.

ADIN

(blurts out)

Did you forget something?

MASON

Do you want to go on a date with me sometime? I mean, we talk almost everyday and I'd like to think that we get along pretty well and I think I like you. So, will you go on a date with me?

ADIN

(shocked)

Uhm...uhh...I don't know what to say...

MASON

You could say yes.

ADIN

I'm really sorry, but I just don't think I'm ready yet. I'm sorry.

(CONTINUED)

MASON
(poorly hiding his
disappointment)
Oh okay. Don't worry about it.
Forget I said anything.

ADIN
So I'll see you around?

MASON
Sure, I'll see you around.

INT. - ADIN'S CAR - AFTERNOON

ADIN sits in her car, confused and embarrassed about her encounter with MASON. COLE sits in the back seat and asks her about it.

COLE
What's a date?

ADIN
When two people go out and do
something together.

COLE
Why don't you want to go out with
him and do something together?

ADIN
Because...because I'm scared.

COLE
Why are you scared, Adin? It
doesn't sound very scary to go out
and do something. You could swing
on the swings at the park! That's
doing something, right?

ADIN
Because the last boy I went on a
date with hurt my feelings very
badly, Cole. And I don't want that
to happen again. I mean, I guess it
would be pretty harmless if we went
to swing on the swings together,
huh?

COLE
Yeah! Nobody's feelings get hurt on
the swings because everyone's happy
on the swings!

(CONTINUED)

ADIN
(smiling)
I think you just might be right,
Cole. Let's go to the swings.

INT. - ADIN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

ADIN sits on her bed once more, with her laptop open to
Tumblr. She blogs once again.

ADIN (V.O.)
I didn't know what to do. I didn't
want to ruin what had started to
develop between Mason and me but I
also knew I wasn't ready to start
dating again. But on the other
hand, why not? Mason was a great
guy and what was the harm in just
trying to be friends? We didn't
have to date to hang out, after
all. So it's decided. I was going
to be friends with Mason.

MONTAGE - ADIN AT THE DAYCARE CENTER

--ADIN arrives at the daycare center only to find MASON
isn't there. She looks around, confused, but leaves to take
COLE home.
--The next day, ADIN again arrives but MASON still isn't
there.
--The third day, MASON still isn't there and ADIN begins to
show a sadness on her face.
--On the fourth day, she doesn't even try to look for MASON.

FADE TO NEXT SCENE

INT. - SCHOOL HALLWAY - DAY

ADIN spots MASON by the drinking fountain in the hallway
during lunchtime. She quickly walks over to him and greets
him.

ADIN
(awkwardly)
Hey, Mason. I haven't seen you
around at the daycare center
lately...

(CONTINUED)

MASON
(indifferent)
Oh, yeah, I guess I've just been
going a bit later than usual.

MASON begins to walk away down the hallway. ADIN follows.

ADIN
Well that's a bit unfortanate. I
guess I kinda missed seeing you
there...

MASON stops in his tracks. He turns to face her.

MASON
(surprised, raises eyebrows)
You did?

ADIN
Yeah, I did...

MASON
Wow, I thought you didn't really
want to see me anymore. I mean,
after you rejected me and all.

ADIN
I kinda wanted to talk to you about
that...I want to be friends with
you, Mason. I know I'm not ready
for another relationship, but I
want to be friends. I think you're
really nice and I've grown to enjoy
your company over these past few
months. Do you think we could start
there?

MASON
(smiles)
Yeah, I think we could start there.
I'd rather like that. No pressure,
just friends.

ADIN and MASON resume walking down the hallway, but this
time, next to each other.

ADIN
Exactly. So...what are you doing
this weekend?

MASON
(flirtatiously)
Well, now I'll have to check my
schedule. Perhaps I can pencil you
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

MASON (cont'd)
in...looks like I can clear all my
Friday appointments, so I'll pick
you up at seven?

ADIN
(laughs)
Seven sounds good.

INT. - MASON'S FAMILY ROOM - FRIDAY NIGHT

ADIN and MASON sit on Mason's couch in his living room. The TV is on quietly in the background. Adin sits hugging her knee while Mason sits facing her. They are talking comfortably with each other.

MASON
So, Adin, tell me about
yourself. All I know is the little
stuff we've talked about at the
daycare center.

ADIN
Well, what would you like to know?

MASON
Favorite color.

ADIN
Easy. Blue. Yours?

MASON
Mine too! Favorite book?

ADIN
The Lovely Bones. And yourself?

MASON
Tough one...honestly though?
Probably Great Gatsby. It's a
classic.

ADIN
Nice choice. That's a good book.

MASON
(looks into her eyes)
Alright, change of subject. Why are
you so scared?

(CONTINUED)

ADIN
(surprised)
What do you mean "scared"?

MASON
You know exactly what I mean,
Adin. Why are you so afraid of
dating other people? Who hurt you
so badly?

ADIN
(takes a deep breath)
Do you really want to know?

MASON
Yes. I genuinely want to know.

ADIN
Well, okay. But you asked for it.
My ex-boyfriend, James hurt me. At
the beginning, I thought he was
exactly what I wanted. He was fun,
happy-go-lucky, and funny. I
thought that was the lifestyle I
wanted. I started drinking a bit
with him, thinking the partying was
what every high school kid did at
some point. But then things began
to change. I didn't want to drink
or smoke anymore. It just didn't
seem necessary. So he stopped
paying attention to me. He'd make
me sit there for hours on end,
while he played video games. And
he'd make plans over our plans. And
he would stop calling me or texting
me. And if I brought it up, he'd
turn the whole situation around and
pin it on me, calling me clingy and
needy. But then, every time he was
mean to me, he'd do something
really sweet to make up for it. It
was a vicious cycle and it took me
way to long to see through it
all. And in the end, I stopped
trusting people. And I thought
that I was this horribly needy
person, so I didn't think people
would want to be with me. And
that's why I'm scared.

(CONTINUED)

MASON
Change is mandatory. Growth is optional.

ADIN
What?

MASON
Change is mandatory. Growth is optional.

ADIN
I don't follow.

MASON
It seems to me, that things began to change for you two. You started to mature and grow. He stayed stuck in his world of video games and alcohol. He avoided his problems and when he was forced to confront them, he'd put them on someone else. He didn't grow when you did.

ADIN
Wow...I never thought about that before... All this time I thought it was me.

MASON
Of course it wasn't you. You're an amazing girl, Adin. Any guy would be lucky to be with you.

ADIN
(blushes)
Thanks, Mason. That means a lot to me.

MASON
Anytime, Aid. Now, let's see what movies are on TV tonight!

ADIN
Dibs on the remote!

MASON
What? No way!

ADIN and MASON playfully fight over the remote as they decide what movie to watch.

MONTAGE - ADIN AND MASON GOING OUT

--ADIN and MASON laughing at a movie
 --ADIN and MASON eating dinner together
 --ADIN and MASON swinging on swings at a park
 --ADIN and MASON swimming at a pool
 --ADIN and MASON star gazing at a park and Mason slowly reaches for Adin's hand. She doesn't pull away.

BACK TO SCENE

INT. - MASON'S CAR - DAY

ADIN and MASON are driving to Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk where they promised to go before their summer ends and Mason goes to New York University in the fall. There is music playing, but the two are silent. Adin is staring blankly out the window. Mason notices her silence and asks her about it.

MASON

Adin, are you okay?

ADIN

What? Yeah, I'm fine.

MASON

You can't lie to me, Adin, I know you better than that.

MASON reaches over and gives her hand a gentle squeeze. She remains silent for a few moments and he glances at her every few seconds until she responds.

ADIN

(sighs)

I'm fine, Mason, I promise. It's just hitting me how much I'm going to miss seeing you every day. I mean, the last six months have been amazing and I can't believe you're actually leaving, to go to New York no less.

MASON

Aid, I know. Everything you're feeling, I'm feeling, too. But I cherish every moment we've spent together. You mean so much to me and being with you was so easy and natural. You know that, right? How much I care?

(CONTINUED)

ADIN

Yes, I do... Let's just make the most of today then, okay?

MASON

(smiling)

Okay, then. Deal.

EXT. - THE BEACH - SUNSET

ADIN and MASON have found a quiet spot on the beach to watch the sunset. The mood is calm and serene. Adin sits with her head leaning on Mason's shoulder. He leans down to kiss the top of her head gently. She smiles.

ADIN

Hey, Mase?

MASON

Yeah, Aid?

ADIN

I just wanted to say thank you.

MASON

For what?

ADIN

For everything. For today; for not giving up on me; for giving me a second chance. It means a lot.

MASON

You're very welcome, Adin. It was my pleasure.

ADIN

No, really. It means more than you know. I'm so lucky to have someone like you in my life.

MASON leans his head on hers in acknowledgement of her words. A few silent minutes go by. As the sun finally meets the horizon Mason turns to Adin, looking in her eyes.

MASON

(whispers)

I love you, Adin.

ADIN

I love you, too, Mason.

(CONTINUED)

MASON gently tilts ADIN's chin up and kisses her on the lips.

FADE TO NEXT SCENE

INT. - MASON'S ROOM - DAY

ADIN sits on MASON'S bed, staring down at her hands. Mason's room is empty, save for his bed and dresser. It's moving day. Mason sits down beside her and takes her hand in his.

ADIN
So...it's really happening, isn't it? I never thought this day would actually come.

MASON
Yeah...it is.

ADIN
Is it bad if I don't really want you to go?

MASON
No...only if it's bad that I don't really want to go.

ADIN
(voice wavers)
It won't be so bad, right? You'll be home for Christmas and that's really only a few months away.

ADIN leans against MASON'S chest, trying to hide back tears. He kisses the top of her head and pulls her close.

MASON
Exactly. And we have Skype so we can see each other and we can talk on the phone. It'll be just like I'm here with you. We won't let a little distance get the best of us, don't worry.

MASON stands up and pulls ADIN with him. He begins to walk outside to his car, still holding Adin's hand.

ADIN
I know, I know. I'm just going to miss you is all. I'm strong, I'll be okay.

EXT. - MASON'S CAR - DAY

ADIN and MASON stand by his car on the driver side. Mason hugs Adin tightly and for a long while.

MASON
I love you, Adin.

ADIN
I love you, too, Mason.

ADIN and MASON release their embrace and Mason begins to get into his car. The window is rolled down.

ADIN (CONTINUED)
Be safe, Mason. But have fun.

MASON
Always am, Beautiful. I'll call you
as soon as I land.

ADIN
Okay.

EXT. - OUTSIDE MASON'S HOUSE - DAY

ADIN leans down to kiss MASON one last time. She smiles weakly. He turns the ignition, rolls up the window, and begins to drive away. Adin waves to him one last time before he turns the corner.

ADIN (V.O.)
And then he was gone. But not for
forever, like in a lot of the
movies. Just for a few months. It
was really sad, yes, but he and I
could do it. Like he said, we
weren't about to let a little
distance come between us.

FADE OUT