

It's Still Just Too Raw For Me

A true story written by Sophia P. Marie

Four best friends got their hearts broken in four months.

Alone in her Seattle apartment one morning, Celine got a text from her best friend, Eva. "Broke up," was all it said.

Eva and her boyfriend were together for four years. Her friends found him on a dating app four days later. She sobbed for twelve hours after hearing he hooked up with someone he matched with. "I can't stop crying. My chest hurts so much," Eva texted. "This can't be right." She sent Celine an up-close selfie of her freckle-washed face, blotchy and flushed from crying.

Some days later, they met up to talk. He lied about hooking up with someone. His dishonesty hurt Eva more than the breakup itself. "It could've ended clean and healthy, but now it's messy," she told Celine over the phone. "He fucked it up."

Two days after her friend's breakup, Celine's boyfriend, Karter, moved out of her apartment. He loaded the last of his stuff in his car and shut the passenger side door. He stood there for a second, facing her. She waited for him to offer a hug goodbye. He didn't.

Karter looked at her and said, "Bye Celine," and got in his driver's seat. She didn't try to stop him. They were together for less than a year. He moved in with her after six months. They talked about getting married and what they would name their kids. It was a short, intense, emotional love. The break-up was ugly and sluggish. Celine leaned against a brick ledge, waiting for him to drive away and out of her life.

He sat still behind the wheel, looking down. She wasn't sure what he was doing. Her phone chimed. She looked. "Karter Nichols stopped sharing their location with you," the notification said. She froze in numbness. When she looked up again, he pulled out of the driveway and onto the main street.

"I was like, 'Well, that's it I guess,' and I went back inside," Celine said. She looked around her apartment and noticed the spots they used to share – the far corner of the living room that kept his up-right snowboard and her chest of blankets, the dining table he worked from and she studied at, his half of the closet.

"I'm sad, but also relieved," Celine told her sister. Karter called her nasty things toward the end – "actually not intelligent," "really dumb," "such a princess." Celine dragged herself through the motions of her routine after Karter left. She threw herself into academics to keep her mind off the heartache.

Down in Los Angeles the next day, Celine's college best friend, Harper, texted her, "We broke up." Dan and Harper were together for two years.

"He couldn't communicate with me and it was killing us slowly," she said in the text. It was the second time they broke up. Celine checked on her the next morning to see how she was doing. "I don't even know," Harper said. "I'm drained."

Celine visited Harper a week later. After dinner and dancing, Celine stumbled outside the bar to call her ex – straight to voicemail. She lost it. She had a few or five drinks. Harper found her leaning against a wall with a lit cigarette in hand and tears streaming down her face.

"They didn't pick us," Harper said as she wiped Celine's tears with her thumb. "We need someone who's going to pick us." Their exes chose to walk away from them, and that's what hurt.

Celine said she woke up every morning feeling like garbage. "For almost two weeks it was so hard getting out of bed," she said. "But then I'd think to myself, 'My best friends are going through the exact same thing right now, and if they can get through it, I can too.'"

A few months later, Theo broke up with Andie. They were together for two years. A couple days after the break-up, Celine invited herself into Andie's studio apartment and listened. A glass coffee table was between them with a pizza-residue cutting board on top. Andie sat on the floor across from Celine and hugged her knees to her chest. Soft light bounced off her long, dark-brown hair as it slipped off her shoulders and swayed at her waist. She sank into her weight for a second. "I guess I hold myself now," Andie said.

The night Theo broke up with her, Andie said he called her a liar at dinner in front of a friend. It caught her off guard and she brought it up on their walk back to her apartment. The conversation took a downward spiral. Andie said he called her manipulative and that she twists conversations to benefit her. She said she had no idea he viewed her that way. Andie told Celine she was still a few blocks away from home at this point. She walked ahead of him. "And as I'm on what feels like the longest walk of my life," Andie said to Celine, "He was like, 'Should we get a drink?'"

"I was like, 'You just broke up with me and now you wanna get a drink?'" Andie said, still sitting on the floor across from Celine. Andie said he tried to kiss her outside her building, but she stuck her hand out to stop him. "Don't," she told him.

Andie called her sister as soon as she walked into her apartment. It was late now, after one in the morning according to her. “Yo,” she said. “He just broke up with me.” She said she cried for the next few days, hard.

About a month later, Theo sent a one-line text to Andie, “I have to know... how have you moved on so quickly?” Fifteen minutes later, she fired back. “Acceptance,” she said. “Acceptance of everything that we were, everything that happened to lead us here, everything that was done, the end of us, and where I am now,” Andie texted him. “It’s also not past tense. I’m moving. I’ve been putting in this work since the day you broke up with me.”

The names here are pseudonyms, but the experiences are real. Celine was my story. I was with each of these women when they told me what happened. I like to think it was acceptance that ultimately got us through our hurt. Harper admitted it was time to close the chapter with her ex. Eva said she’d felt unhappy for a while. I knew it was best for my ex to leave.

Today, we are happy. Andie got a raise. Harper leaned into health and fitness. Eva traveled the world. I made the Dean’s List.