

DATING
ALMOST LOVERS

written by *Danielle Ma* | August 1, 2015



They walked along the streets of the most romantic city in the world, the Eiffel Tower breaking the skyline ahead of them. Five friends with careers in various states of disarray—not in a bad way, just in a twenty-something way—choosing to take a break from it all and explore for the good of their hearts and sanity.

She fell in step next to him and reached for his hand. He took hers in his, and it wasn't romantic. Not really. They were both very touchy people with similar love languages and low personal-space guards up. They spent brief bursts of time together in college and hugged often, even shared a bed once or twice. He was taken at the time, so it wasn't romantic. It was just them.

They didn't even know each other that well, at least not from first-hand experience. They were the kind of friends that acquired most of their information about each other through very close mutual friends. They liked each other naturally and easily, and that was enough to make up for lack of primary research.

Her hand in his, she was expecting him to swing it dramatically, playfully. That's what he always did after all. He would swing their clasped hands three times, up and down in a large smile of an arc. Then they'd let go and continue walking with the group, unspecial to each other, not noteworthy to the crew.

But that night, her hand in his, he didn't swing. He didn't move. He stayed there holding her hand, and all of a sudden, everything had changed. She looked at him with new eyes as they walked the line of almost, flirted with the idea of more.

In that moment, their almost relationship flashed before her eyes. The learning, the phone calls, the secret sharing. The laughing, the crying, the visceral reactions. The moments of clarity, chaos, confusion, and connection. The falling fast and hard. His jokes and her laughter. His curiosity and her sweetness. His insecurities and her reassurance. His efforts and her disappointment. Tears of frustration, flushes of anger, words of ending, saddest goodbye. Hearts beaten up again.

She gently freed her hand of his and released their romantic notions into the Seine, letting them drift and float around the city for lovers.

image via <http://ucrtoday.ucr.edu/>

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Danielle is a passionate twenty-something living in New York City with too many interests and not enough time in the day. She works at a boutique ad agency next to her favorite building, the Flatiron, and spends a lot of time in parks with coffee. She frequents food festivals, listens to science podcasts, explores comedy clubs, and writes, a lot. She diaries the moments and conversations in her life, writing mostly about dating, love, and sex in the city on her blog, [Here's The Thing](#).

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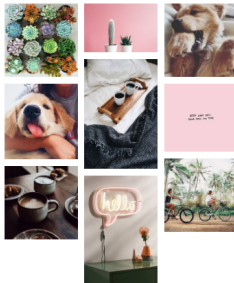


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