

DATING

## CONFESSIONS OF AN OPTIMIST: I WANT TO QUIT DATING

written by Danielle Ma | May 23, 2015



I want to quit dating. And I'm not the girl who hates dating. I'm not the introverted girl or the too-busy girl. I like meeting new people, I like the discovery phase, the opening up, the probing, the surprise at commonality every time. I like the stories it produces, I love when my heart races, and even when it doesn't—I think it's kind of pretty that we tried.

I want to quit dating not because I'm tired of it, not because I'm disheartened to not yet have found The One. I'm in no rush to be in the happily-ever-after phase. While that's lovely and wonderful and ultimately the dream, I'm young and have so much exploring ahead of me.

No, I want to quit dating because for the first time in the history of the world, I was really, really wrong about someone. We've all had fluttery first impressions of people that were later proven wrong by the second or third or even fourth date. And I've been there. It's not that I'm always right about people, but I do consider myself to have a high EQ, a knack for reading and connecting with others. I've just never been wrong so far into a relationship. Jason and I were a committed, exclusive, loving couple. We talked often about us and our future, and every morning, I woke up to his "good morning" messages.

Until one day, I didn't. His last words to me the night before were via text, "Talk to you tomorrow sweetheart," kissy emoji and all. All day, my attempts at reaching out were met by radio silence. My imagination ran wild as darker and darker possibilities replaced the potential explanations before them. That night, I was a mess. He blew off the dinner plans he himself had made for us earlier that week, and I came one step short of filing a missing person report.

The next day, I sat at work wholly distracted and sleep deprived from a night of tossing, turning, and crying. And then the email hit my inbox. It was a formal, unemotional, condescending breakup message, signed "all the best." As he wiped his hands clean of our relationship, I began the process of trying to understand what had happened. I'm still in the middle of that process. It's not the breakup itself that even bothers me—we were always so different and had so many factors working against us. Big stuff like value and world view misalignment. The hurt and anger come from the absurd, nonsensical, cruel ending. The complete lack of respect that I deserved.

I wonder about when those feelings will subside, about whether they're here to stay for a while. I usually don't let negativity linger, but this is new territory for me. Because it's not the kind of hurt that comes from heavy emotions, complicated relationship dynamics, and heartbreak. That's the beautiful complexity I can better understand. No, this is the kind of hurt that comes my personal morals falling from grace, a too-real reminder of how awful people can be. And of how good some of those people are at pretending.

Through a certain lens, none of this even sounds dramatic, really. Because we're so used to insane stories from "Friends" and "Sex in the City"—Carrie gets broken up with on a post-it, remember? And we all think it's crazy, but mostly we laugh. But it's just not funny when you're closing out of the NYPD tabs on your phone, shaking your head in disbelief, tears streaming down your face. It's not funny when you're wearing a bright shade of betrayal because it's the only thing that fits. When you've realized that the trust you placed in the palm of someone's hand was crushed, turned to dust, and littered on the streets of this city.

Consider these confessions of an optimist. I wouldn't be this affected by it all if I didn't believe so surely in the goodness of others. And I know that I'll get there again. I'll be the girl who loves dating again. But for now, my vulnerabilities are closed for business. My spring clothes are ready and my lipstick is on, so take me out, take me dancing, take me home with you. For now, I'm skipping the feelings and just doing me for a while.

### Image via The Daily Edge

DATE DATING FEELINGS OPTIMIST RELATIONSHIP SEX IN THE CITY SINGLE

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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 diarizes 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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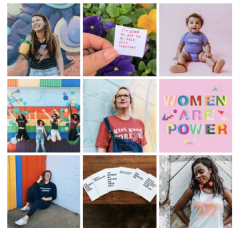


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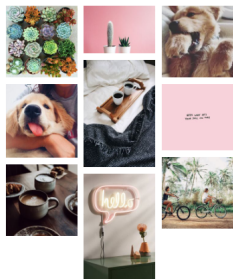
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