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I Thought I Met "The One" But I Was Lying To Myself The Entire Time

BY DAYNA TROISI - OCTOBER 16, 2019

After our first date, I thought Ryan* was my soulmate, or at the very least my next girlfriend. Part of it was a champagne haze and the other part was her sexy smirk, perfect hands, cool job, and amazing conversation skills. I thought I met "the one," but I was wrong. Any date that starts out so perfectly should be an indication I was projecting a fantasy on her that would inevitably shatter.

We had met on Bumble as I was absentmindedly swiping right for every single match without even looking. Ryan really wasn't my usual type: in her photos, she wore a button-up, khakis, and a wholesome smile; her bio described her as a "professional dog-spotter"). But her first message changed my mind. She had read my writing and recognized me. The narcissist in me let out a *purrrrr*. Maybe there was a bad girl under those sensible button-ups.

We texted feverishly all night. I normally loathed texting with a passion, especially to a stranger I hadn't even met, but she was so interesting, and interested in me. I sent her a nude without a second thought. I was so stimulated by her messages, I was practically foaming at the mouth. We were so different from one another — it was like we were lesbian aliens from different planets conducting research. This intrigued me. Excited me. The messages continued for hours.

I was sick of the pretentious tattooed lesbians I usually dated who rarely asked me even a single question about myself. Not only was Ryan engaged in what I had to say, she was *nice*. I had never dated a nice person before (yes, I'm working this out in therapy). I wanted to give her a chance. We made plans to meet the next day. She picked a tapas bar right down the block from my apartment. I practically skipped there.

She got out of her chair like a proper gentleman to greet me. Then came the flowing champagne, effortless conversation, a cheese plate, and plenty of sexual tension. I was so into her (and so buzzed) that I didn't even mind the winter wind whipping at my chest as we walked out of the restaurant into the snowy night. (I, like any other self-respecting lesbian, only wear a leather jacket in extreme weather conditions.) We kissed as snowflakes fell softly around us and I left with a giddy, stomach-flipping feeling. I strutted back to my apartment, still floating on champagne bubbles, wondering when I could see her again.

That night, she texted me, "Had a great time with you, lady. Even though we disagree on everything." I almost puked in my mouth.

"Lady" was the most asexual thing a date could call me. Every time I've been on a date that ends in "lady," it's signaled we'd only hang out clothed in the future, if ever again at all. My roommate chastised me for being too hard on Ryan, and coached me through a perfectly kind response. Ryan texted me back immediately, asking me out again. She proved me wrong — she was apparently still interested in me.

On our second date, though, I realized we were wrong for each other. Everything about her bothered me, from the way she did her eyeliner (how had I not noticed that before?) to the way she disagreed with my most dearly-held opinions (she didn't even know who Lana Del Rey was!). On the first date, our differences had seemed charming — now, they simply felt annoying. But she was stable, kind, and "normal." That was a huge departure from the cheating, emotionally-withholding women I had been with before her. Our flirtation was still there, as was our conversation and attraction, but some doubt lingered in the back of my mind. I worried that maybe one day, our new relationship energy would wear off and all we'd be left with would be our irreconcilable differences.

By the third date, my doubt had turned to repulsion. She critiqued my outfit, then panned the insult off as a joke — but it stung. She critiqued how much I was drinking, which, again, seemed like a joke — but that stung, too. The feeling was mutual: She kept glaring at the prices on the cocktail menu, and cheapness is my biggest turn-off. We clearly had our reservations about one another, and yet, they worked like an aphrodisiac.

That night, we had our first blow-out fight. After too much *sauv blanc* and whiskey, I asked her if I was the only girl she was seeing. I didn't know if I wanted only her just yet, but I sure as hell knew that I wanted her to want only me. When she skirted around the question, I drunkenly slurred, "I can date or f*ck anyone I want in this city." (A gross exaggeration, as I am a curvy disabled lesbian — not an easy type.) She was acting judgmental and I was acting like an unhinged monster, which would later become our go-to dynamic.

We had sex that night, which you might think would be toxic because we didn't approve or agree with each other's entire existence, let alone taste in music. But it wasn't. It was more like making love. Because the one thing we had in common is that we were two people searching for intimacy. To be held. Loved.

A month later, she did tell me she loved me. We had stopped seeing other people and were official. She had asked me to be her girlfriend while we were snowed in at a hotel overlooking Central Park. It should have been ceremonious and beautiful, but after she asked the question, we both lay in bed in uncomfortable silence — not touching, aware of the mistake we had just made, but feeling too codependent to undo it.

I felt that she didn't really want to ask me, and even though my brain was screaming, "No! No! No!" I heard myself say, "I want nothing more than to be your girlfriend." I saw myself accepting the red roses she had

brought me. I felt sick. And yet, I couldn't bear the thought of being without her. I was grateful when she stayed the night and stroked my hair as we fell asleep.

Ryan was the first girl to be obsessed with me. I was used to being the chaser, the piner, the one who loves the most... and now, I felt a surge of power from finally being on the other side. It wasn't that I didn't love her — I did, very much — but I knew she loved me more.

At first it was a nagging feeling. Then it was all-consuming and torturing. I thought about it when we were having sex, and I definitely thought about it when we were visiting her parents in New Hampshire. Her family was quiet and reserved, not loud like mine. I never felt more like a fish out of water when I tried to pay for lunch, and her parents happily accepted. My parents would never. Before long, I was behaving like a spoiled brat, and she was acting like an uptight dad in Vineyard Vines.

The worse our relationship got, the more often I heard her say, "You're the one," or "I want to marry you." It was like she was trying to convince herself — and me — that we were right for each other.

"I think Ryan is my person," I quietly declared over diner burgers with my BFF one day. We were on the way to our friend's funeral. I was, obviously, in a very emotionally raw place, but as I said the words out loud, I knew I was trying to convince myself of something that just wasn't true. But I pushed these thoughts away because we had just signed a lease to move in together.

Our fights were never as fiery as that first one — now they were nagging, nasty, familial. As our relationship bled from weeks, to months, to over a year, the lies inside me finally erupted. I was sipping rosé in a hot tub with my best friends in East Hampton. I broke up with Ryan over text, a text I had saved for months, and finally had the guts to send as jacuzzi bubbles and wine splattered my phone screen. I didn't cry. I knew I was right, and I knew we were wrong.

I'm not proud of ending an 18-month-long relationship over text. I'm not proud of hurting someone I love. But I am proud of the moment I finally stopped ignoring the gnawing doubts that were in my gut from the beginning.

All in all, I did love Ryan. I loved her intelligence, her comfort, her practicality, and her motivation. I love her fiercely and wholly — and that can be true at the same time that her not being the one for me. Two truths can exist and once.

Our relationship, like every relationship, had moments of insurmountable beauty and moments of utter disdain. But whether we were giddily in love or screaming at each other over champagne at our local bar — one thing always remained the same — I knew she wasn't the one.

**Name has been changed.*

Source: <https://www.elitedaily.com/p/i-thought-i-met-the-one-but-i-was-lying-to-myself-the-entire-time-19222373> (with several pictures)