

I Called Him Temptation (Intro)

I remember the days I looked forward to what every day had to offer. I was doing great in school. Playing piano and singing at my favorite open-mic spot every Friday, taking pictures of the best food and most interesting people in my town was my heaven. And, best of all, I had a boyfriend who I was proud to call “my man.” I was Magenta Harris and I knew who I was! I stayed smiling and stayed positive. It was great, until it wasn't.

I wanted to do more with my time. I needed more adventure. I had been planning on going on some, too, venturing from my college classes to my boyfriend's, Donellius, place all the way on the other side of town. It was the thought of going through the inevitably bad traffic home that stopped me, though, even though I had done it multiple times before. The pressure had really been growing, too, as he'd ask me practically every call when I was coming to visit again. Honestly, his near daily check-ins of when I'd come to visit again felt draining, but I kept telling myself it wasn't him, it was just my depression kicking in again. It had only been 2 weeks since the last visit.

“I’ll visit after school!” I kept promising, sure that it would happen. I had the time, at least, I wanted to believe I did. But things felt different.

“You have to watch this, though! It’s my favorite show because it’s just so funny and charming. Please? You’ll love it.” I said grabbing the remote and switching to my favorite show, Parks and Rec.

“No, no. I’m good, I don’t really want to watch something like that. But you can still play it.” Don said, turning over so his back faced me and the TV.

I frowned and looked at his back then back to the TV. We were supposed to be watching shows together, but whenever I try introducing him to what I like, he pushes it away. Maybe he just wanted me here for one reason. One no good reason. I tried watching the episode, but it wasn’t any fun when I wanted him to watch with me, which was the whole reason I chose to play it.

“Let’s watch *Game of Thrones*, then.” If he didn’t want to watch what I wanted or even see what it was about, I could compromise and try watching his favorite show.

“You don’t have to change it for me. Gone head and watch it, Im taking a nap.”

I still turn it on anyway. Maybe it would get his attention. But I was wrong. After laying there for a while, I still couldn’t figure out what he liked about the show. I kept watching, though. When he started snoring, I quietly got up and picked up the underwear on the floor that my eyes kept drifting to while watching TV. I just couldn’t get into it. I pulled on my panties, bra, and socks as quietly as I could. Then his phone buzzed.

“Where you going, babe?” He asked rolling over and putting on his glasses as he grabbed his phone.

I couldn't go anywhere, I didn't even drive myself up there. Not that I was thinking about it. “Nowhere. I just...got cold.” I said and crawled back under the sheets.

“Some friends are out front and we're gonna smoke. You can come out there with me or you can stay in here.”

I stared at him, disappointed he wasn't joking. He was for sure serious. “I'll stay here.”

“You sure? You can come out if you change your mind.”

“Mm-hmm.” I said. He kissed me on the cheek and I got up so he could go in the living room with his friends.

I held my pants and shirt close to me as he said “I love you” with a smile and closed the door. I smiled back, but felt like crying as the voices grew louder. I put my pants and shirt back on and checked my phone for the time. I paced the floor wondering what else I could do, then I stopped at the door. I stood frozen in the dark room. On the other side of the door were a bunch of strangers, to me at least. His roommates and friends who I barely knew, and they were smoking while I stayed in his room. Where would I fit?

I couldn't go out there. I don't smoke, and he knows I don't do well with strangers, especially with my hair a mess like that. I was hungry. And thirsty. And kinda needed to go to the bathroom. But I couldn't let them see me. Me walking out of his room and saying hi to all of them. How would that look? How awkward would that be? I

already knew they'd know what we had done and I didn't have the confidence to act like it was no biggie. I couldn't do it, so I laid back in the bed and stared at the TV, wondering when he'd be back.

That sums up how things have changed since we started dating. It's always more chill than Netflix.

Despite that, I still think about visiting and things going the way I want. Visiting from 12 to 2 is my ideal, for him, 5 or later. But I hate driving after 5, and I have studies. He's important to me, but so is my education. What about lunch and dinner? Oreos aren't a meal. He sure as hell wouldn't feed me, and a girl's gotta eat.

I would cry in my room after calls or video-chats with him. I would drift off into my own thoughts or just doze off during lectures. Shared Facebook and sex memes via text make me yearn for simpler times even more. Am I really happy? Would I ever be happy again? Of course! I was just being ridiculous, all I needed to do was tell him how I really felt, he would work on it, and things would be back to normal.

At times, I wished he would come visit me sometime like he used to, but it's been since August. He didn't even visit me for my birthday in September. Our birthdays are on the same week, and I visited him. It's October now. What happened to that date he promised me? A real date and not one with all his friends? Just me and him? We

haven't been on a real date in months. At this point, I feel like I have to take myself out on the dates I so badly desire. I told him this one night, and he saw it as a joke. He laughed!

I am serious, one date at least once a month is all I want. Is that too much? He told me he had been planning on taking me to the Aquarium once I'm—get a load of this—done with exams. Unfortunately, I would have to be the main one driving us to dates. He keeps telling me he's getting a truck soon, but just the thought of him driving himself makes me anxious. How will he drive this far with his condition? The voice in my mind keeps telling me that I want to break up with him, but my heart keeps telling me to hold on, we can fix this. No, *I* can fix this.

I paid him for my part in a trip we're supposed to be going on with his friends in December, and I'm trying to hold on until then. It's just that, it doesn't look like things are going to get any better between then and now. Each day I stay in this relationship, the longer it seems until then. He is the first guy who never compared me to another girl. He is the second guy who made me feel like I'd only ever felt with one other person in my life. He is also the only other guy I have felt so comfortable spilling my whole self to. But most of all, he is the first and only guy who has ever seen me naked.

Nobody knows this, not even my parents, because I know they would go ham on me if they ever found out. Even though I'm 19, they still see me as a little girl. I didn't post about it on Snapchat, Instagram, Twitter, or anything when it first happened! I wanted to so badly, needed to share it with someone, somewhere, anywhere. But there was no one to share it with, so it remained a secret only he, I, and of course his friends, knew. Sometimes, I feel like he gets whatever he wants. They say a relationship is 50/50, but ours is closer to 80/20.

The depression I had been trying to maintain became my new normal each day. The days became a blur and the thing I looked forward to most was going to sleep at the end of the day. Letting him know each day when I was out of class or when I'd get home started to seem like a chore. The emptiness in our conversations made me continuously question my ability to hold a conversation, even though I was the one desperately avoiding his inescapable "wyd." With each one, I'd die a little inside. It was either that or sex memes and jokes.

School was hardly my escape, as 2 hours each day was just class and going home to do my online classes. Fridays, clubs and open mic at the cafe, were my only good days. Even that was barely notable with Honor Society, Art Club, and Photography. I sometimes wouldn't go because I would rather die. I stopped going to

the cafe completely after a while. I have no energy. I'm depressed, and nothing gives me that joy I had. All I have now is Don, sleep, and school. I'm not Magenta anymore. I don't know when I will be again.

I didn't really have anyone but him and the multiple group chats his friends would make. I'll miss those group chats because his friends stay lit and their exchanges became the highlight of my days. Aside from that, school was super boring without any real friends. But that all changed today, a Tuesday. I had gotten out of my Statistics class early after a test review and corrections. I was feeling pretty good, like the old Magenta, especially since I had gotten an 'A' on my test and had 30 extra minutes to explore the campus or visit my boyfriend if I wanted to. As the thought of him popped into my mind, I made up my mind to go home.

Walking with a new, positive attitude, I passed through Student Services and glanced into the Student Life Office, like I usually do. I saw a familiar face walk out then in again. I waved with a big smile as soon as he looked my way. Then, I kept walking as he waved back. Taking another look, he came my way. He pressed pause on whatever the hell he was doing to give me a long bear hug, right in the middle of everything.