Once In Love With Amy

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Abstract
In lieu of an abstract, below is the essay's first paragraph.

"And I'll have the angel hair pasta with marinara sauce please," I jokingly mocked Kim in my falsetto voice. 'Why is that the only thing you ever order?' I questioned. I knew why, Kim was a vegetarian and every single time we went to dinner she ordered the same thing. This really didn't bother me, but, in a way, it actually did. I mean there were just certain little things about Kim that really bugged me. But to look at her in the big scheme of things, she really was a wonderful girlfriend."

Cover Page Footnote

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was a wonderful girlfriend.

"Hi, my name is Dave and I'll be your waiter this evening.
Would you like to start off with some drinks?"

"Yes, two red wines, please."

That was another thing about Kim, she would never drink
water, soda, or beer over dinner, just wine. Not to mention we could
never sleep in past eight, because she claimed the morning was the
best part of the day. And whenever she had the remote control there
was no doubt the damn Home and Garden channel would be on. I
realize these are all just littleicky things, she really does have
numerous magnificent qualities that overshadow the details. I guess
what I'm getting at is the fact that she's not Amy.

"So Kevin, when do you foresee our first child?" Kim
questioned.

"First child, we're not even married yet."

"So Kevin, when do you foresee yourself proposing?"

"Kim you know you make me extremely happy, and lately I
have been thinking about marriage, but I just don't want to rush into
things. We haven't even been serious for a year yet."

"It will be a year two weeks from today," Kim was eager to reply.
I'll admit it, the past eleven months, well eleven and a half months,
have been nothing short of terrific. Kim showed me that life was
worth living. Right after Amy and I split up, I didn't see the sense of
getting out of bed each morning.

I had been with Amy for almost four years and we were engaged
to be married, when suddenly two years after college we were each
offered our dream jobs. Unfortunately, hers was in Miami, while mine
was a five-year stint in Australia. We agonized over the decision for
weeks, and after every option had been discussed, we decided to take
the jobs. It all made so much sense at the time. We would each have
five weeks of vacation a year, plus time off during holidays. Since we
were both seriously in love and forever committed to each other, it
didn't seem possible to tear our hearts apart. Nothing would stand in
the way of our future together, not even an ocean. Once my five years
in Australia were up, we would reunite and begin our endless future
together.

Well, as it turns out the first year we spent apart was absolute
torture. It was so bad that our story book romance came to a
screeching halt after only thirteen months apart. The next three years
of my life were hell. I did nothing but think of Amy and wallow in my
own self-pity day in and day out. I didn't date, I didn't hang out with
friends, and I didn't even care! And that's when I met Kim. Yeah, I
was in love with Amy, but being down under in Australia with Kim
made me forget about all that. She enabled me to close out that part
of my life and move on. Before I knew it, I had fallen in love all over
again, only this time with Kim.

"Are you ready to order now?"

"Yes, I'll have the chicken parm please."

"And I'll have the angel hair pasta with marinara sauce please,"
Kim giggled. All through dinner I had a blast. I mean I always have
fun with her, but tonight something weird came over me.

For the past week, I had been carrying an engagement ring in
my pocket constantly contemplating popping the big question. As
soon as Kim and I returned to the states, we decided to move in
gether. So far, to this point anyway, things couldn't be going much
better at all. I was just so scared to get all worked up over marriage
again, and then have some strange twist of fate take it all away from
me. But I was in love and everything in my heart said go for it, so I
did. I asked Kim to marry me.

She was so overwhelmed with shock, but quickly accepted.

"What about all that not wanting to rush into things mumbo jumbo?"
she wondered.

"I guess it just occurred to me that the time is right," I
responded. Needless to say the rest of dinner was filled with a lot of
emotion and even more energy. Due to the excitement, we lost track
of time. It had gotten to be 9:00 p.m. and Kim was meeting her
mother at 8:30 p.m. so she had to leave. We had met at the
restaurant after work, so we had separate cars. Kim took off and I
stayed behind to pay the bill. Kim's face lit up as she kissed my lips
and said; "Thanks for dinner, fiancé, when we get home maybe we'll
discuss that first child."

"You're rushing again Kim."

"I meant we can practice for when we are ready to have our first
child! Okay I'm late, Kevin, so I'll catch up to you at home, probably
about 10:00 p.m., I love you!" And Kim took off. Let me tell you I felt
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“I meant we can practice for when we are ready to have our first child! Okay I'm late, Kevin, so I'll catch up to you at home, probably about 10:00 p.m., I love you!” And Kim took off. Let me tell you I felt...
like a million bucks for the first time in five years. I hadn't felt this happy since, well, since Amy.

Two minutes after Kim left the bill arrived. As I struggled to figure out the tip, two arms were wrapped around me from behind. "Sorry baby, I forgot something."

"You're always forgetting something, what is it this time?" I wondered. "My man, but I'll never make that mistake again." As I turned, I was greeted by familiar lips that outlined the most incredible smile that I've ever seen. A smile that had been out of my sight for some four years now. "Times may have changed but our love never will." Amy explained in a voice I had needed to hear for so long. She held out her left hand and showed me the diamond on her ring finger. It was the same diamond I placed there almost a decade ago. "I haven't taken it off Kevin. I always knew something would bring us back together and, suddenly, here we are. We have so much catching up to do. Let's go grab a drink, what do ya say?"

"I say that would be great Amy, but I only have an hour," I explained. She winked at me reading my misty eyes, knowing all the feelings were coming back. "An hour huh? We'll see about that!"

--Scott Grates

Your Own Devices

The demons attack your soul.
They've grabbed hold and won't let go.
You have become their hapless victim.
As your life spins out of control,
Things don't appear as they did before.
You live in a fairy tale, without an escape.
Their hold strengthens, you can't shake them.
They own you. You're their creation.
A green puppet, held up by red strings.
The fire burns inside you, relentlessly.
As their grip on you increases,
Your grip, on reality and your life, decreases.
It feels like you're constantly being pulled,
In every which way but up.
You can't move out of this purgatory,
The demons own your being.
You're trapped in yourself, by your own devices.

--Jen Enright