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Before You Cheat On Her Know This

It will teach her to hear “You are enough,” as “but you are still not good enough to satisfy me.”

By Kirsten J Robinson

Before you cheat, know this:

You will break her.

Like the violent shattering of glass as it crashes to the ground.

You will not just break her heart.

You will break her trust.

You will break her spirit.

You will break her joy.

You will break her belief in love.

You will break her sense of self.

Before you cheat, know this:

She will not sleep—not through the night, as she counts the cracks in the walls at 3 am, seeking answers from a God she didn’t think she believed in.

She will not eat—not by choice, but because she can’t stomach her reality or the thoughts of texts and images that haunt the corners of her mind.

She will not smile—not because there’s nothing to smile for, but because she doesn’t know what these things are anymore.

Before you cheat, know this:

It will teach her to hear “You are beautiful,” as “but not beautiful enough.”

It will teach her to hear “You are brilliant,” as “but not brilliant enough.”

It will teach her to hear “You mean the world to me,” as “but one person is not enough.”

It will teach her to hear “You are the love of my life,” as “but I don’t love you enough.”

It will teach her to hear “You are enough,” as “but you are still not good enough to satisfy me.”

Before you cheat, know this:

She will cry.

She will sit at her desk until 7:30 pm too embarrassed by tears streaming silently down her face to get up and go.

She will curl into a ball on her best friend's living room floor, cheek pressed into the carpet—and rather than tell her to get up, he will sit down next to her and say, “I’m here.”

She will get a lump in her throat anytime she walks past places that used to be yours until she decides to avoid these places entirely.

She will rage.

She will snap at friends, family and colleagues for no apparent reason at all. When they are stung by her anger, her cheeks will burn red with shame.

She will curse at her reflection as she’s brushing her teeth, and think if only she were prettier, funnier, smarter—if only she were more, it would have made a difference.

She will throw a picture frame at the wall, and be too dumbfounded to clean the blood off her finger when she cuts it picking up the pieces.

She will scream into the wind by the river, wondering what she did to deserve feeling this way, hoping her words will carry far enough to be heard by someone—anyone—who can tell her.

She will not feel.

She will be turned by shock into the same stone she uses to build walls to keep people out.

She will be numbed in new ways that her hopeful heart had not known to be possible.

And then she will feel everything at once.

She will feel devalued, discarded, disassembled, disillusioned, distraught—she will feel bewildered and betrayed.

She will feel foolish, frenetic, fraught and full of fear.

She will feel hate—toward you, toward them, toward herself.

She will choke on her own confusion as she tries to hold on, yet yearns to let go.

Before you cheat, know this:

She believed in you.

She believed in romance—and that a chivalrous manner meant chivalry in all manners of the heart.

She believed in honesty—and that being honest with your partner first meant being honest with yourself.

She believed in respect—and that a love respected meant not being gaslighted, nor played a fool.

She believed in goodness—and that being good meant working on being good together, even when it was not easy to do.

She believed you would protect her—and that being protected did not mean hiding the truth. She believed in you—and that believing in you, believing in each other, meant the mutual support of a two-person team through the ups, downs and everything in between.

Before you cheat, know this:

These are all avoidable.
You have a choice.
You can choose to walk away.
You can choose to let her leave, on her own accord.
You can give her a choice.

But if you cheat, know this:

You will break her, but she will grow back stronger.

You will dim her light, but she will shine more brightly in the dark.
You will lower her expectations, but she will raise her standards.
You will cause her to hate, but she will find relief, release, and beauty in the breakdown.
You will make her question her sanity, but she will learn to trust her own intuition better than before.

You will crush her ideas of love, but she will never settle again.
You will burn her world to the ground, but she will pour her heart into becoming the best person she can be—and this time, it won't be for you; it will be for her.

About the author

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Author of *Evergreen*, a poetry collection that explores personal growth through light and darkness.