

He's Just Not That Into You -Part I

by Jennifer Donnell

Goose likes sparkling water first thing in the morning when he takes his pills. Orange flavored, he takes a swig straight out of the bottle and wipes the drip from his trimmed beard. His hair has hints of red, which catch in the early light. I wonder if our son will have the same, once he's grown.

I like silence in the morning, but seeing Goose's face wakes a patter in my heart even at 7 a.m., which in turn sends a memo to my brain. My eyes stay fluttered open, all blue, and I smile.

If you knew Goose, I expect we'd get in a fist fight over who was more worthy of his affections. Who wouldn't love how excited he gets about quantum physics and can beat almost anyone at Monopoly. Or, the way he explains his feelings, even the hard ones. Who wouldn't love the dejected child who grew into a man, without anyone's help.

I reach for him under the cream colored covers, find his belly and teasingly poke at his belly button even though he hates that. He feels like home. He swats my hand away and strokes my blonde strands of hair off my face. I wrinkle my nose, wondering if I look okay. We may have love, but I'm never sure if its unconditional. I know my hair is messy, but love just feels lovely and I moan like a purring cat. As he leans over and kisses me on the lips, I think about how, warts and all, I'm the luckiest woman in the world. I don't care that bills are due, that Hayden hates him or that my ex hates me, so long as we found one another. However, my moan wakes the baby who seems less enthused by the sight of our faces and wants to fall back asleep, which he promptly does in my arms.

Goose covers my legs with a floral silk robe, for light warmth, and whispers that he's leaving for work. He winks and places 4 chocolate kisses on the dresser, which I devour the moment he's out of sight. *Breakfast of champions*, I text him in jest, not knowing he's leaving for good.

That's the thing about the last time you spend with someone, in surrender, it's easy to second guess everything. Should I have made him breakfast, would he have stayed then? Should I have hired a night nurse for our son, so we had the bedroom to ourselves. Should I have given him more blow jobs or does even considering that revoke my feminism card. Every do-over fantasy I have always involves me doing more, being more, being more perfect.

"Too perfect." my therapist intervenes in assurance, "You did enough, really. More than anyone else would." The subtext is that I did more than I should. My appointment was coincidentally later that day, after his goodbye letter arrives in my email inbox. Maybe he thought he was doing me a last act of goodwill, sending it hours before my appointment. Likely not realizing that my driving blurry eyed while choking back hysterical tears so intense I could barely see the road or stop lights, made me a risk to myself and everyone else. In the months that followed, I'd replay that morning or the night before and look for holes. All I wanted was a hole so big I could fall into it, make sense of everything, and cry awhile.

"You know he's probably depressed." my therapist confirms for the umpteenth time. It is weeks later and we are still rehashing it. I sometimes wonder if she's as sick of the sad person I've become as I am of myself. "Are you sure he's taking his medicine?"

I nod empathically, 200% positive. It'll be another 2 months until I find out I'm wrong.

