

March Tenth, Two Thousand And Thirteen

by Jowell Tan

Today I felt like a broken man. Not in a bad sense, like I was beaten down until I conceded, or like I gave into something I didn't want to, but in a good way, like I'd broken the chains of my adolescence and became the person I was going to be the rest of my life.

We were at home, my girlfriend and I, and we were laying on the bed. We were perpendicular to each other, her legs across my belly. She was playing games on her iPad, and I was on my laptop, laughing inwardly at Thom Yorke's ridiculous dancing. Soon, she fell asleep, us still entwined with each other, forming a T shape with our bodies. It was in this moment that I said to myself, *this is it. this is where we'll be for the rest of our lives, relying on each other for comfort, for rest after long days.*

In many ways it seems impossible that we are even into each other, let alone been together for 2 and a half years this coming July. She's not as into music as I am. I don't appreciate jigsaw puzzles as she does. I hate travelling. She hates taking the public bus. Even the things we have in common are inherently different within themselves. Comics versus novels. Dramas versus Comedies. *Alias* versus *Leverage*. *"It's hard to understand how you guys work"* is a common phrase we hear from our friends. And to a certain extent we don't understand it either. And we don't want to.

But the things I do know are the ways we've changed since we'd fallen into each other.

She's made me appreciate things more. Good food, slow walks, simple pleasures. She's improved my etiquette. I talk nicer to others

now. I keep my harsher words to myself. She taught me how to cook. How to do the dishes and clean the kitchen and sweep the floor and keep the house clean. She taught me how to dress for events. A button-down shirt instead of a tee. Jeans instead of shorts.

I helped her break out of her shell. I made her go to parties to make friends. I encouraged her to go out with her workmates after work. I convinced her that hawker centre food wasn't that bad. I showed her that cheaper doesn't necessarily mean worse. She explored more areas of Singapore with me. She developed a taste for the classic Chinese chicken rice. She started to save money by refraining from shopping.

Every once so often, when we're at home lazing around like we do, watching TV shows or movies together on the laptop, she'll turn to me and ask, *"How did I get so lucky?"* And for the longest time, I could never answer her. I'd simply shrug and say *"I love you too."* But today, I had an answer. I said, *"Everyone gets the one they deserve."* It might not sound like much, it might not even sound logical to some. But I think for us, it's the right answer. We deserve each other. No one else is ever going to come close to what she is to me now. And I believe that she would say the same about me.

We'll be moving in together soon, and I gather we'll be married not long after that. We'll have children and pets, all in one home creating chaos and wreaking havoc. But it'll be fun. We'll have good days and bad, but in the end it'll be days that we spend together. That's the important bit. Together. And it's the best ending I could hope for.

