

# After Our First Kiss, The Paranoia Sets In

*by* Kyle G

One millisecond later, I have an instantaneous, uncontrollable reaction: a feeling that the world and my life are never going to be the same. It's a brightness that manifests as a heart-sized smile that has fallen on my face.

One second later, I feel myself moving out of the gravitation of your warmth. Uncontrollable smile aside, I want to appear calm and collected, so I resist the urge to lean in again and hold on to you for the rest of my life. Deep down, I wonder why anyone would want to be anywhere other than with their lips pressed against yours.

One minute later, you linger in my body in the form of a warm tingling running up and down my soul. Your kiss has spread like a fever, persistent and catastrophic for an ill-prepared heart like mine. I need your body to wrap around me tightly and keep my life from shivering.

One hour later, I text you. It was the longest I could hold out before my hands were trembling from your withdrawals. Your immediate response only validates my immediate bout of lovesickness. A conversation with you, even if it's only virtual, gives me physical sensations that makes me realize I haven't stopped smiling. I try briefly to catch my breath, with no luck.

One day later, I'm staring at my phone, my computer, my doorstep, and my life. Your lack of presence is disturbingly disturbing. Only days earlier, I couldn't miss you because I didn't know you were there to miss. You didn't exist for me yet. And now, I fear that not

having you next to me may render my life pointless and unnecessary. I wonder if there's hope in the hopeless like me.

One week later, I'm starving. Your casual behavior in my presence makes me fear that I invented our kiss in a willful daydream. I don't understand how you can stand beside me without needing to grab me by the neck and throw yourself at me. I'm waiting for the moment when I fall to the ground in front of you because the effort I'm expelling holding myself steady has finally destroyed me. I'm trying. But I'm questioning everything beautiful around me for fear that it too was invented by my subconscious as a cruel joke to keep me living in vain. And still, I want you.

One month later, everything has reversed. The overwhelming happiness I felt just a millisecond after I kissed you is mocking me, only springing to mind to remind me of present despair. The warmth I felt makes room temperature feel freezing. I don't daydream; I can't indulge the sadness of being happy anymore.

