

A farewell to my lockdown fuckbuddy

I've rolled over to scroll on my phone while he goes to sleep. It's midnight and I'm not at all tired. Not from the sex, not the driving, not any of it. In fact, just being beside him, I could stay up all night. But I've told him it's our last night together.

Day 1: I was adamant about not wanting anything serious.

Swiping for fun, I was disgusted that a guy off Hinge wanted to buy me coffee. How desperate. We had only been matched for an hour. Did my ex put him up to this? If so, I needed to know, as that would be a breach of an AVO. I interrogated him with questions, but he passed the robot test, proved he wasn't my ex in disguise, and from then on, the messages didn't stop.

Day 2: we said I love you.

He called me to help him decide what burger he should get from McDonalds. I'd ignored his first five calls but answered when he said it was an emergency. It was the first time I heard his voice, higher pitched than I expected, and full of energy. I decided the chicken burger, he said that was a 'shit choice', and the call ended abruptly. I liked that. Rough.

He called again to talk as he drove from Sydney down the coast to get home. I kept him entertained for an hour as we got to know one another at a pace too fast for my liking, and at the end of the call he said, 'Whoops I nearly said I love you.'

'Oh, do you now?' I asked. Was I that good?

'Yeah. I love you,' he teased.

‘I love you too,’ I said, and we laughed gloriously. How ridiculous. Love. Our second phone call. I don’t even say that to my parents, and rarely friends. Usually, I wait until they say it first, to check. I had one boyfriend that I would occasionally mumble it to, because I felt I should say it, but otherwise ‘I love... sandwiches’ was the most emotion I’d ever communicated.

Suddenly, I wasn’t interested in replying to anyone else. I had achieved the goal of finding connection. These poor lost Hinge souls now meant nothing. I pitied them.

Day 3: we spent the night together.

After avoiding him for as long as I could, I succumbed. I told him I was on my period, and he insisted I come over anyway, happy to settle for my presence. Fucking Hinge. I knew I should have been using Tinder.

I usually get so nervous to meet guys for the first time, but his determination gave me confidence. The coffee he initially suggested turned into a sleepover and I broke my therapists’ rule to meet him in the daytime, or in other words, not sleep with him on the first night. The morning coffee that I initially thought *hell no* to, was lovely. It tasted like shit, and I don’t drink coffee, but it was lovely. He was so good at the dating thing that he instantly felt like home. That is where it got confusing. Over coffee, that he bought, while I wore his clothes, after he’d cradled me to sleep on our first sleepover, I broached the serious topic of what this was, and he said, ‘I’m not emotionally available, my ex left me heartbroken. We broke up last week.’

Oh.

Day 4: why am I upset?

It is all beginning to make sense. I am a rebound, a warm body to fill the gap. He has merely revealed he is not looking for anything serious, and neither am I, but maybe it's the loss of hope that hurts?

Addicted to the attention, I see him again. I don't get told I'm loved very often, and he is experienced. It's the kind of love that's good enough to miss work or skip class for, just to stay in its embrace.

Day 5: we came to an agreement.

If I promise not to fall in love with him, we can see each other, so of course, I agree. I don't fall in love. Never have. I'm the perfect girl. I don't have feelings and I only come over at night. We're a match made in Hinge heaven.

He quickly depended on me to stay every night, so much so that I could go over in any shape or form. I could cough phlegm, snore, leave my tampon on his windowsill, or pick my nose. He didn't mind. It also meant I could be more experimental and make queries and this transparency made the sex even better. When I farted in his bed, I thought he may be the one. Since the pressure of a relationship was off, I'd somehow ended up in a marriage. In sickness and in health. Until his ex do us part.

Day 10: I found myself only wanting to talk to him. My friends could no longer compete.

Day 14: he picked me up from a train station at midnight when I was stranded.

Driving home, fingers interlocked, getting comfortable in our fake relationship, I whispered, 'I love you.' The three words had started rolling off my tongue. He needed to hear it just as much as I needed to say it.

‘I love you too.’ He replied, but ruined it with, ‘Ha! It’s so funny cause I used to say it for real.’ He laughed like I’m impossible to love. Should I be laughing at myself too?

Day 21: he thinks I’ve fallen in love with him. Cocky bastard.

One night, I said, ‘I love you,’ and for the first time he didn’t respond. He thinks I meant it. I think I did too. I have a habit of falling for the potential of someone. Every affair feels like love at the time though, right?

‘Can we just make sure we’re not perfect for each other?’ he asked, mid-sex.

‘Why does it matter?’ I replied.

‘Cause I’ll start to feel bad.’

‘Ok well I don’t want a relationship. I want to work,’ I answered.

‘Oh, good cause I don’t want a workaholic.’

‘Glad we got that sorted. Can we continue?’ I asked, impatient, but then I stopped us.

‘Why can’t you just let go and see where this goes?’

‘No, I need to know it will go nowhere,’ he said.

‘I like thinking things can always go somewhere?’

Day 22: ‘I hope I’m not leading you on?’ he continued into the morning, and it started to get on my nerves. It’s hard enough spending all my time with someone and actively trying not to fall for them. Love is about experimenting, leaving inhibition at the door, and learning about yourself through others, and I’ve only been able to achieve that through him, the one man I’ve agreed to avoid loving.

I angrily began swiping through Hinge beside him, wanting him to tell me to stop. Unfortunately, he was so confident that I would fall for him, and this was the sexiest bit.

‘I’ll play a song for you, but don’t fall for me,’ he said, before playing me piano while I was still twisted in his sheets.

‘Don’t tell me what to do,’ I said as I watched him sing and play.
Unfortunately, he was incredible.

‘Stop! Are you falling in love with me?’ He paused, and a staring contest began.
Reading one another’s minds, I fluttered my eyes, and he knew I was in love, and I knew he was not.

Day 27: I’m working for it.

I shave my legs, dress in my best bra and undies, and pucker on my lipstick. Getting ready to have sex is like preparing for a live show. You shower, stretch, consider your bowels, and walk out on stage to perform, hoping for the best. To get to his, I drive by many houses of tried and tested men that don’t deserve another visit and turn the car radio on to Cardi B’s WAP for inspiration. He is the furthest I’ve driven for sex, but it is worth it.

He’s good at everything. That’s the problem.

Day 30: everything changed.

Just as I got in the habit of saying ‘I love you,’ he got in the habit of saying, ‘Don’t fall in love with me,’ and the fighting began. I didn’t even notice when the joke went too far. I was blindsided by the fun of it. I pushed him away hoping he’d pull me back, but instead, he let go.

‘You know I’m joking and not really in love with you?’ I tried to convince him, or myself, even I got confused. Our transactional relationship existed to satiate a need, so why were my needs suddenly romantic when I have been fine with physical satisfaction for years? Every time I said, ‘I love you’, even as a joke, I pushed him away more.

What started us, also ended us.

Months later: it's his call.

Our conversation is naturally lubricated but slimmer every time. He messages less and less, later, and later into the night, and once again, I put everything aside, even my period, to be with him. But as he comes crawling back, I see it for what it is, not an act of love, but desperation, and nothing feels more powerful than not replying. 'Hi' means come over, but I no longer wait by my phone for his message. In fact, I sometimes say no. I want to be wholly wanted, for every part of me, not just my body.

We are just friends who have sex, and when we stop having sex, we won't be friends anymore.

Tonight: is a call to arms, the last goodbye.

Recently, I have been talking to someone on Hinge that I like. It's been a week and he's just asked for my number. I like the pace. It feels more natural. But when I receive a message from *him*, I jump at the opportunity for closure.

I meet him at his apartment door and try to ignore his shaved head that has been traded for a beard. I signed up for the afro on top, not party on the bottom, but I haven't come all this way for nothing. He asks if I am staying the night and I can tell he wants me out after. Old him would never ask that.

'Guess what? I've met someone so now I'm the same as you.' I tell him.

'Same as what?' he asks.

'In love.'

'In love,' he repeats my words, chuckling, recognising our despondency, but his outlook shifted. This being the last time means something. He won't boot me out now, in

fact, he may even put effort into morning sex for once. His sweat drips into my ear, our souls touch, our lips brush, our thighs rub. Our bodies become one pile of effort moulded together.

It's pure carnal bliss.

'Best orgasm ever,' I rejoice, and I mean it. For once my mind didn't have to imagine Jude Law, the thrill of this possibly being the last time, was it.

When I finished, he hadn't, and I considered leaving. I felt how every guy out there must: selfish but satisfied. *I got mine.*

Before he rolled over to sleep, he asked if my new guy was hot.

I replied: 'he has hair on his head.'

I found a difference.

Phew.

Goodnight.