

Moon Phases

By Simon Reinhardt

Preface:

This is a work of fiction.

Names, characters, places, and incidents either are products of the author's imagination or are used fictitiously. Any resemblance to actual events or locales or persons, living or dead, is entirely coincidental.

Especially you...

We are a collision of desire and ignorance.

Dedications

To my midnight hallucinations. Sincerely, stop.

Introduction

Well, I can't do anything tonight. I have nothing else to think about except Moon right now and I have a book due by the end of the year. Might as well make it about her.

I don't smoke and I don't drink. I'm bound to live through the torment of real life sober thanks to the wonderful history of alcohol and drug abuse in my family. My only escape has been writing tiny notes in large journals. One of which has been specifically authored to document my entire relationship with Moon

The purpose of that journal routinely changed in the span of five months. At first, it was to take note of my behavior during my relationship with her however it may be: physical, intimate, friendly... I write quite a lot of those whenever I meet someone new due to my hoarding nature for thoughts and stories. Then, it became a tool for conversation between Moon and me when spoken words wouldn't suffice. In the end, It turned into the incoherent rants of an unhinged personality suffering from delusions of imprisonment.

A fun read, I promise you.

I guess Moon and I both know how it all began. The sunshine, the awkward conversation, and the fountain pen which surprisingly I haven't seen since that first day.

I'm not writing this journal to anyone in particular, except for my biographer of course. I'll try to recount the story to the best of my abilities. Though, If I keep writing past three in the morning. I can't promise you it's going to be any good.

I should be in a more positive mindset while writing this. In fact, my mindset shouldn't even get involved with the process of writing this book.

Seeing that I have tomorrow off. I'm heading towards the kitchen now to pick up a glass of orange juice and stay up deciphering whatever I wrote in that journal.

Sit down, everyone. If you like mental breakdowns, you're gonna love this.

Phase 1: First Sighting

I love predefined stories. I love what had already happened because the plans were laid out, the events had taken effect, and the world spun enough times for us to do nothing but remember.

My Moon, ironically a Tuscan Sun, sat all alone in a chair on the eighth of march this year. Obviously, she was doing important things on her phone, as was her habit, like scrolling through sketchy twitter pages and infinite social media paginations.

A suffocating crowd of endless human beings surrounded her, barriers of textile-covered flesh and open lips that filled the room with forbidden curses such as Mathematics and physics. My cleaver gleaned with blood as it chopped through the crowded masses, arms and legs fell at my feet oozing with sounds such as “Hey, watch it!”

I used their teeth as breadcrumbs to find my way back, though I didn’t have to. I was looking for where to sit. And I could only see one empty spot.

In reality, There might have been other places to sit at. Yet, something about sitting next to Moon felt right; An inviting sense of security and understanding I could perceive in her. We’ll learn more about that in a minute.

Words don’t mean anything. They are a tool that can be used to produce an incredible amount of... anything. A person can generate fake love with words; another can generate hate instead... Words are nothing more than complicated vocal sounds to display and communicate any feeling you want, as long as you have the vocabulary for it. I learned that a while back, and I still believe in it to this day.

What’s truly important is the actions of a person. I know you must have heard this quite a lot, but it goes deeper than giving a gift or sharing a ride. The defining actions of a person are the sincere miniature behaviors you can’t see unless you closely keep up with their conduct.

She used to hold her smile. But, you can see her lip quivering when my dumb incarnations of so-called jokes planted themselves in her mind. The only way to break the laugh out of her is to make her talk. As soon as she parts her lips, the giggle flies out of her, and the light of day is restored.

I later noticed she only held her laugh with me. I never understood why.

As I had assumed. She was into the things I was into. She was interesting, understanding, and friendly... all the qualities you would be looking for in a friend. We walked out of that deadly, virus-infested, and worm-ridden library together and parted ways at our classes.

But not before exchanging emails.

“Side note: I met Moon during a time when I didn’t use the internet for personal reasons. The only way I could have communicated with her was using emails since I needed them for school affairs”

The question arises: what would have happened if I didn’t sit there next to her? That would have never happened unless I hadn’t seen her. Even in parallel universes, something in me is attracted to moments of destiny. When the world sets itself like a chapter in a book or a scene in a movie. When the stars align and the world is no longer spinning; When It’s waiting for you to make the next move in your story.

Meeting Moon was exactly that. The next chapter of my infinitesimal history.

Pop Quiz: How do you become close friends with someone?

It's quite simple really. You spend the majority of your time with them while forgetting about the rest of the world. My best friend and I used to play video games for hours or walk around the streets, organs crushed with hysterical laughter. It didn't take long for me to become close to nice people. I have a tendency to focus on what I start, even if my process is flawed, the outcome is more or less beautiful.

What you also need is a common interest. Something that glues you both together for hours at a time; A shared activity to occupy one half of your mind while the other is conversing with theirs.

The library stopped being the jungle I once knew, It had elevated and transformed slowly into a haven for us. The ringing in my ear died down and the human limbs scattered away. Leaving Moon and me room to breathe whenever we went back to our newfound refuge.

We sat hidden in the shade or under fiery bursts of sunlight, we sat in the far corners of dust-ridden shelves or close to the wooden exit sign... It didn't really matter as long as we were able to comfortably browse her vast selection of music. I'll be quite honest, it wasn't exactly my style but she had some great ones that I still listen to. Sadly, they've become requiems for a lost past.

Fun arguments became a daily occurrence, barely an annoyance. We'd argue and fight over everything, including facts that we were too lazy to look up on the internet. I'd run my mouth wide over the dumbest possible subjects, and she'd almost always have the upper hand with a scalpel to dissect my crap.

We'd walk around and around. We'd sit here and there. Anywhere I was. she was.

Soon enough. I'd found out enough about her interests to keep half a conversation going. She was shy but outgoing enough to keep me engaged. We laughed over the same subjects. She knew things my mind couldn't grasp; like fashion. if you had met me, You'd have already guessed that I know squat about fashion.

It was on a cold winter day that I first held her thin waist. She leaned against me while we were both staring at bookcases; gazing beyond the covers into the realization we might actually like each other past friendship. The firelight that kept me warmer on that freezing day formed itself in the promise of kissing her later in the evening.

As we're standing atop the university building, gazing at dark highways and darker skies. She stood close to me, talking in gibberish, words I could not comprehend. My mind lost itself in the wonder of locking lips with her. To this day, I still do not know what she was talking about when I was staring at her soft mouth punching words out in clouds of winter smoke. The glistening peach lipstick and the sparkling eyes invited more action from me than staring at her like an idiot. It didn't take much more for me to pull her in and the rest is a pretty passionate history.

Sitting in class after that warm kiss was close to a dream. I could barely focus; spacing out and staring at raindrops making their way across the frosted glass of my classroom. The bus ride home was anything but surreal. I wrote her an email about the kiss... so did she.

Throughout my twenty years of living on this god-forsaken earth. I have had one relationship. She was gentle, sincere, loving, and a perfect match for me. She was the romantic movies my eyes widened at as a kid; she was the safe sitcoms I huddle up in bed for; she was warm blankets covering my back while reading on a winter evening. I couldn't ask for a better relationship than the one I had with her, and I never did after we broke up over long-distance issues. With all her flaws and qualities, Maybe I had the perfect relationship that would have lasted if some things were different. But they weren't and that is life for me: A constant stream of stories with a beginning and an end.

I claimed I didn't want a relationship after her, but I was wrong. Sometimes I believed I had the answers to my own questions but I didn't. I never did. What I had was a plethora of reasons to explain doing things. After all, words were nothing and you can form whatever you want with them, even excuses.

I won't find out about the above until after my breakup with Moon. During those five months. I vehemently resisted the idea of a romantic relationship.

Back to the story: Moon and I agreed that since we both are so opposed to being with someone, we'd stay like we are: close friends that touch on a relationship, yet never commit. We did everything we wanted to experience with each other, but it was never going to become a full-fledged love, ever...

or so was the plan.

That agreement didn't mean I went around and started dating again.

After understanding that there would be no romantic prospect to what we do and that it's strictly an affaire of lust and desire. An emptiness grew within my act. The more we did, the deeper we delved, and the closer we were, My void and distance from her expanded, and I finally began to realize why some people only act on their passion within relationships.

What I failed to recognize, and this is one of the many mistakes I will make throughout this story, was that as my emptiness expanded, so did her love.

[4/24, 02:29] Moon: *I know you are stupid*

[4/24, 02:30] Moon: *You are too stupid for me, that's why I'm not catching feelings*

[4/24, 02:32] Moon: *You're just not my type*

[4/24, 02:34] Moon: *Don't take it the wrong way.*

To be frank, I am quite dumb. It's past midnight and I can concur my brain cells aren't ordered correctly.

What you see up there is one of the four nails in the eternal coffin of this so-called relationship.

The story is quite simple and one I have not told many about.

It all began two weeks prior to the 4 "horse-messages" of my apocalypse.

At that point in time. Things were going pretty well. I get out of bed in the morning for the sole reason of meeting her, spending the day with her, and coming back home in the evening. We were highly intimate at that point and have gotten used to each other's rhythm of intimacy. I knew more about her every day, and while I still

haven't opened up as much. Everything was alright and one would call it perfect.

I just had to want more.

Except, we had agreed from day one that our relationship must never become a romantic one, and the one who will catch feelings will probably get hurt.

Practically, We were both single.

Enter Merry.

As we sat one fine evening in our usual spot, before the backdrop of gigantic ethereal clouds covered with sunset rays and visible wind carrying the last leaves of autumn, with some of our friends, engaged in a conversation about traumatic childhood experiences and K-pop. I see her for the first time.

I could go on a story to tell you why I decided to do what I did, but it wouldn't matter. The main idea is that I liked her from the moment I saw her; a slight Coup-De-Coeur, and while I was saturated with physical affection, I was starving for emotional intimacy; to have a truly meaningful conversation.

I conveyed to Moon I was interested in that girl. No reaction, at least no visible one. Everyone else around me didn't seem to mind. So I started thinking of how to approach someone like her.

The easiest way to start talking to someone is to leave them a letter. I, due to my dumbass decision-making, gave her a note instead.

I can't remember what the note said but it was something along the lines of:

"Text me later on (my contact)"

Side note: I had spoken to her a couple of times before in small sentences but never anything concrete. Barely an acquaintance at the time.

Let's play a game:

where did I screw up? Was it...

- a) When I told Moon on Thursday I'm interested in someone else?
- b) When I gave a note to Merry on Monday DIRECTLY in front of Moon?
- c) When I believed the physical affection would continue past that point?
- d) All the above?

On that fateful Monday, I committed a grievous act I wasn't even aware of. The girl I had liked didn't text me as fast as I thought and that thought consumed my being for the next couple of days. Did I embarrass myself? Was I too forward? All these questions while, in my boundless wisdom, completely unaware of the flames I had started on Moon's end.

It's better if you read the relevant part of my diary directly to understand what happened next:

" Apr 24.

*And nevermind.
The downfall begins...*

I don't know what's up with her. At first, she was very outgoing and experimentalist... but now, she's closed onto herself; a shell of her former being, and I don't know why.

She was already quiet. Now, she's hateful quiet.

She gives off the feeling she doesn't like me anymore.

Very uninterested in anything I ask or try to initiate with her.

I would've understood if she gave reasons, but all she does is fight back with vague answers that serve absolutely no purpose.

Miscommunication has always been a thing between us, but now, it's a wall I don't feel like jumping every time I want to make sure we're alright. "

I always thought about it rationally. We both agreed on no romanticism so why the hate? If I put myself in her shoes. I'd probably just start seeing someone else at the time and slowly turn the blossom into a mere mundane friendship.

Dumb me.

She sent that missile barrage of messages that night and showed even more disgust for my existence the next day I met her to talk about it. While giving absolutely no reason for her hatred, thinking I'm already aware of my transgression. I wasn't on account that the only thing on my mind was the sheer embarrassment of handing that note. With too many factors around me crashing, I decided its time to handle one of them so I can think about the other. That's when I decided I'd had it with this unprecedented hate and just left her sitting in the garden where we usually hung out, She stayed there, unphased by my sudden leaving, scrolling on her phone and simmering with hate.

On a Friday morning after not talking to Moon for a couple of days. I went out with that girl from earlier.

Slander time.

With Moon, there was always this invisible barrier while talking; I never knew more than I should. It stood on a question/answer style I could rarely get past, and frankly, I was tired of doing the same dance every day.

With Merry, The conversation weaved itself like silk. Somehow we'd manage to morph a conversation about spiders into a conversation about marriage. The flow never broke, it bent and refolded itself a thousand times to fit our topics. We walked, talked, laughed... We tried to understand the basics of what makes a working relationship; We spoke of the past; we spoke of future homes... Anything that got our minds going.

I was saturated by sunset; Exhausted of topics. That need for a deep understanding and connected conversation was filled to the brim because I had picked the perfect candidate to have an engaging chat with.

She asked the right questions, she gave interesting opinions. She was funny, interesting, imaginative, creative... A brilliant girl with lots of things going on for her.

We are still friends at the time of writing this book. Sometimes talking about interesting stuff, other times just messing around over tv shows and serial murders...

I still didn't want a relationship with anyone. So I never tried asking her out. Even so, I think she was in the same position as I am. So it was pretty clear we'll just be friends

I also didn't want to repeat the Moon cacophony with this one too and preceded with care and restraint.

Back to reality.

Phase 2: Honey Moon

In the last episode of “Undecisive”: Simon gets a cool girl, but miserably fails to understand basic human emotions such as possessiveness and jealousy.

The dawn of my hell began the day after that fantastic Friday. It was utterly normal until her music began to shuffle with mine on Spotify. It was one song in particular that baked my indifference into fresh-out-of-the-oven sadness. By midnight I really couldn't go on a minute without thinking about her.

The thing about Moon was that I grew so comfortable around her that I had basically forgotten how desolate my life was at that point. I had barely any passion for my hobbies at the time, no plans, or ideas... If you've ever heard of the story of the falling man who kept saying “so far so good” before smashing into the ground. That was me.

Diary Entry: Apr 28th, 2022

Maybe it's sadness making me weak.

Maybe it's the hand that wants to reach out and touch her.

Maybe I did the wrong thing.

I had the world for a moment though.

Did misery get the best of me,

Or is nostalgia kicking in?

I honestly missed her. No, I craved her. I couldn't think about anyone else besides her and my thoughts were filled with her smell, her touch, and her adorable smile. They were tiny details, but added epic proportions to the sadness I felt that day.

But I still didn't understand why she was mad at me. Even though two of my closest friends repeatedly reminded me that she might have caught feelings and I hurt her by showing interest in someone else, I couldn't believe them because she explicitly

conferred in me she had no feelings or attachments. As stated in the messages above, and in real-life before the Merry ordeal ever happened.

Side Note: What I'm recognizing now is that the girl loves revenge. She said hurtful things that day to me and said more hurtful things to me the last day we talked.

Moment of destiny:

I'm sitting in my bed contemplating eating more and watching more episodes of who the hell remembers when I get the brilliant idea to... wait for it. Talk to her.

It seems quite obvious now but at the time. I couldn't fathom existing in the same hemisphere as her, let alone communicating actual thoughts.

All I had to do was outright call her out for being a terrible person the last days in a long email, explaining my point of view on all of this. The email was long, detailed, and pristine in writing. I must've edited the draft a hundred times, and conjured hell-bound demons and heavenly angels to check my flow of thoughts and spelling.

I went into a deep slumber and rose from the confines of my blankets to an electronic scroll from her, explaining I was being a terrible person for expressing interest in someone else right in front of her, and how much she hated reminded her of how we'll be without any strings attached.

In retrospect, I should have known better than to do so. But I failed to see what I could have done that didn't produce the same reaction. Even if I was much gentler about it. She wouldn't have accepted it.

The upcoming days were different. After several talks both in real life and on the phone. I realized she did have feelings for me. And from my reaction to not talking for just a couple of days, how much I'd fallen for her. It skipped me how my feelings had grown distant not from lack of conversation, but to avoid being attached to her. The void that was building inside me, was nothing but a ravine separating my emotions from real life. A defense mechanism against getting hurt.

We both handled the communication problems and took charge of trying to explain ourselves to each other with every tool we could think of: Notes, emails, doves with

letters on their feet... Anything that explained our feelings to each other clearly and got the message to the other person.

Now that I knew Moon liked me back, and that it was open season for being in love. I let go.

I fell completely for her. A deeper attachment grew within me enveloping her entire being in my mind. I committed to her and promised her I wouldn't show interest in any other person besides her.

This is where my next mistake came, and this is a big one. I really should have accepted that I had just entered a relationship.

We were exclusive, but never specifically defined each other as "boyfriend/girlfriend". My reasoning ranged from past trauma to commitment issues. But in reality, I was fooling both her and myself. Only recently did I find out the real reason why I never officially called my relationship with Moon a romantic one.

I was already in a romantic relationship.

But, more on that later.

Suffice it to say, I didn't want to be in a relationship, but I wanted to be with her. As confusing as that sounds. It seemed the most logical thing at the time for... both of us? just me?

Anyways, This was the Honeymoon phase, and I'm in the perfect mood to write about it.

Oh to see her laugh like that again. Truly a miraculous girl when you spend enough time with her. Her stark sincerity and close loyalty are out of this world. When I expected to get hit by her, she caressed my hair. When I thought she was not interested in spending time with me, my phone would hum and vibrate to her calls.

She felt more comfortable sharing about her past after getting together. I began to speak more of my interests without fearing she'd find me more of a geek than I

already was. She'd feign interest in the Warhammer universe even though she has no idea what I was explaining for the past couple of hours.

I knew she didn't follow my explanations completely, but I adored how she tried to be interested in the things I love.

She had her cute moments, Some stuff she's embarrassed about that I utterly loved and fell deeper for. We bugged each other to read our notes and diaries to understand more about our behavior. We play fought over everything.

My hand never left her side. I could not stay away from her. Something in me craved her skin ferociously. She never minded. In fact, She encouraged it by caressing me every so often or resting on me. Her back against me when standing still, her leg atop of mine when sitting down, her hand gently pressed against my face every so often...

My memories of those days cement themselves as the happiest I've been with someone in that university. I loved her entirely. I know that now, I didn't have to hide it in any way. I could be myself around her, and her judgment would be nothing short of sarcastic and sweet.

Side note: It's 3 am and I feel like watching 13 reasons why.

I recommend listening to "the only boy awake - Meadows" while reading this next part because I wrote it while listening to it.

If we wanted to compare for reference. If Merry was the hazel forest of inspiration. Moon was the winter rain tapping on your glass panes, surrounded by blankets in the middle of your room where you feel most safe to be your true self.

Did you think I was over? We're just getting started.

I even forgot about most of this, I'm reminded only by my notes.

We watched a tv show together. First time I ever did that with someone, and I loved it. We watched the last few seasons of Shameless together and what an experience it was for me. To send her a note now and then about the characters of the show;

To listen to her gush over them; To read her notes about the story... Everything about that experience was pretty incredible.

We went to the beach with our friends. They went off somewhere while she and I sat on the hot sand under even hotter sand, facing the ocean, kissing her soft lips and gently brushing her flushed cheeks.

We sat one sunset on the stairwell after an eternally lasting kiss. I could swear her eyes glistened with love. The sparkles I leave out in my drawings of eyes, on the lower right for light reflections, glistening and radiating frequencies of admiration and endearment. The smile and flushed cheeks. The ruby puffy lips and gaze that I can never forget.

She did many smaller things in my regard like reading about physical affection and calling me to hang out, sending me updates about her life...

Diary Entry: May 24th, 2022

*"This feeling comes and goes but man am I in love with her tonight.
I smile at her pictures.
I smile when I think of her.
I miss when she's not around."*

It was when I recognized that we reached the apex of our happiness. That I began to realize I'm supposed to structure my life around her. I began to think about moving with her in the future. To go abroad and travel with her. To build my home with her and see that we both stay as comfortable as we were.

I had a reason to pass that year of exams. She was my reason. I studied harder than I ever did in the past two years, It felt like warfare. Digging through the mud, trying my best to pass my exams and win so that I could be with her faster and for a longer period of time. I loved her and nothing was going to stop me from being forever with her.

Remember when I said I was already in a romantic relationship?

Yes, I did. With her.

From day one, she had been this kind of person with me. I thought this is how she behaved with everyone. Clearly, I didn't have enough references because I only saw her interact with me and her friends. Which she treated with the same level of affection and love. She'd speak very highly of all her friends, claim that she wants to live with them in the future and mention them always in the highest regard.

It was a no-brainer to think, that if someone acted that way with you from day one, that's who they are. But I was wrong. It wasn't a personality, it was a love-driven behavior.

I never needed nor wanted a relationship with her because I already had her. I was in a relationship but I didn't know it. She acted as a proper girlfriend would. Yet, I was just being myself. I wasn't overly affectionate, I wasn't engaging and responsive enough... To put it simply, I wasn't trying to be a proper boyfriend because I never knew, nor accepted that I was.

I did things out of sincere love and admiration, but that's how I acted with everybody. I treated her the same as everyone else with the exception of some minor stuff.

I was also so adamant about not being in a relationship out of fear of getting hurt. I hated... No, I despised how depressed, and manic-driven I became after.

Side note: Me now as I'm writing this book.

I thought about finally calling it a relationship but all I could realize was how much of our intimacy we'd lose by finally being a stable couple, how the rush would die off. The incompatibilities clearly shone when I thought about that prospect, but the worst, and my driving factor for absolutely refusing, were two simple words.

Long distance. The bane of my existence that I will gladly get rid of the second I can afford traveling cities without going bankrupt...

I told her how I felt and she was quite understanding. But it could also have been the same veil of indifference as the no strings attached situation.

Phase 3: Lunar Eclipse

I passed my exams after hard grueling work. I couldn't be happier to pass since I had wanted to largely for the sake of Moon, and barely for any personal reasons.

Everyone went back home, I worked in an office located in the big city. Marching from the train station to the office building and back took over two hours plus the train ride made my commute over three hours long. A walk I had to do every single day, and I couldn't be more overjoyed.

I had a sense of purpose, a self-awakening realization that once I'm finished with university. I'll be in control of my life. That internship was my taste for adulthood, and I wanted more.

After the internship finished I engrossed myself in reading more books and writing for longer periods of time. I don't think anyone understood what I meant by the most fun week of my life because, from July 1st to July 7th, I knew nothing but happiness.

It was a perfect Sunday. The sort of day you read about in books of rich people doing terrible things. When the tide is calm and the water is a clean blue; When the families are calmly having conversations at the edge of the beach, their hummed muffled voices accompanied by far-away seagull cries. their kids giggling and playing in the wet sand.

Moon and I met at ten in the morning. Set up our sunshade in my favorite spot at the beach, and If I recall correctly, Nothing was amiss. Everything went perfectly.

Can I tell you the truth? It's hard to write something good about someone you don't want to think about. When I started this book several hours ago. All I could think of was our past relationship. But I've gone through my whole mind searching for memories and feelings, that I find it hard to... to... I have no clue.

It was a... maybe another Sunday. When I met one of Moon's closest friends for the first time. Glaring heat in the air, high tower buildings shifted their shadows across

giant murals painted on project housing. Cars flew by my side as I walked towards a mall by the beach. I was sweating and completely exhausted, but I couldn't stop since I needed to see her before she left for her vacation in France.

When I met her, she was very welcoming since mall hangouts are not my domain. I mainly stay at home most of the time. Moon introduced me to her friend and we all took walks around the labyrinth of storefronts and rising-falling elevators.

At first, I felt like a wheel on a boat. downright useless and tagging along with girls who were engrossed in matters I had no idea about. I also felt extremely cheap since I didn't have enough cash that day due to, well not having a job.

The day went well, Moon seemed excited about it after I went back home. Her friend gave her some kind of approval of me which I was delighted about.

I'm reaching for stories here. Okay, one last story and then we'll get to the last two coffin nails.

As enormous planes landed and departed. Straight-haired Moon sat next to the terminal gate, talking to me on the phone while I was playing an old game on my computer. Laughing about her plans and ideas on what she could do there. Also about how we'll miss each other, and that we'll totally spend time together like that fine summer day when she gets back.

Spoiler alert: we didn't.

That call is cemented in my head as the final pure, no intrusive thoughts, happy moment I had with Moon.

After 16 hours of travel. Moon finally landed in France.

Side note: It's five am, and I feel like crashing and abandoning this book. I'm more nauseous the closer I get to the end. I don't want to half-ass write the next chapters because they are important to understand everything.

When Moon finally settled in France. Loneliness swept me like a leaf in the wind. If I was sad because we were cities away, imagine how I felt when we were parted by oceans.

I wandered around an empty house, listening to my breathing. No one was home, and I was left to my own devices, sleeping in my room and watching silent birds sitting on my window sill, singing inaudible melodies. The ringing in my ear came back.

Reading books was my only escape from that hell and I fell in love with it. I read from my waking point to my sleep. I traveled through books and lived a hundred lives that month. From famous works of literature to unknown obscenities. My computer had infinite open tabs discussing books, My desk overflowed with paper notes written in smudged black ink. Dark hollow bags formed under my eyes and I gained more and more weight, but at least I was occupied.

Moon didn't disappear. She was more engaging and quite present throughout the entire trip.

This one was on me.

One morning, I woke up at around seven in the morning. Had a shower, Made breakfast, and sat in my room reading some sci-fi novel, fantasizing about falling robot suits and brotherhood sacrifices. After about three hours, I get a notification on my phone from Moon.

I can't explain to you how it happened, or why it happened. But I had blotted out her existence that morning until she texted me. It sounds impossible but I had literally forgotten all about her from the moment I woke up. I didn't think about her, I didn't have her in the back of my mind. She just disappeared. No trace left. not from last night's texts, not from morning thoughts, not from anything... She had been completely obliterated from my mind.

The worst part was that it happened again a few days later.

I didn't hate Moon and didn't want to forget her. I was very comfortable in my relationship with her. So cozy, I lost track of the person I talk to on a daily basis.

Now it could be that I'm exaggerating the events of that day, or that I have memory problems. But I can clearly remember the shock of seeing that notification. It woke me up to realize I'm not acting on my feelings. It prompted me to behave quite differently after that.

After feeling guilty, I was a tad bit clingy after that. It went well for quite a while, talking before sleep, and talking when she woke up. Asking more questions and being more chatty, and engaging.

I'd follow her plan of events, and trace back her routes on Maps. Give recommendations based on what I find online and try my best to be present in her life.

It all came to fruition as we got closer for a while during her travel. But what had really made me understand her was non-other than drunk Moon.

Record scratch*
Cue drunk Moon.

I'm not going to divulge her personal private business publicly, but I can say a few things.

My resolution is rarely a fickle thing. It only wavers when faced with true sincerity. I.e every word spoken by drunk Moon on those starless nights.

Either I was extremely oblivious or Moon was terrible at conveying her true feelings because what she had said those dark long summer nights proved that she had loved me more than she let on at first.

I believed her.

Later that night, I promised myself I'll ask her out on a date the day she comes back from France.

When her words rang deep within me to bring forth a change in our relationship. I'm guessing she felt embarrassed by the whole ordeal. She was more reserved and calculated with her love after that. Defensive at times and trying her best to stay with me without revealing too much.

From her actions, I sensed pressure the following days to ask her to be my girlfriend, and after several nights of thinking about it. I came out with a long email explaining how I had already planned to ask her when she gets back, and that I'd be more than happy to hers, and hers only. My fears didn't matter, and I wasn't going to let them stand in the way of her happiness.

The third nail in the coffin was the reply email:

" [...] I like the idea of going on a date with you but I'm not sure if it's a good idea. [...]"

The courage it took for me to ask her out dissipated when I found out the next morning that she rejected me out of fear that I wouldn't meet her expectations. In our last conversation, she explained that she wanted to go back to being what we were before. No romantic prospects, just friends with benefits.

What lies beyond that email reply is a forgotten, lost peace of history. Countless talks with my close friend and wiped memories. My diary entries in that period are blank pieces of paper.

A few days later, I wrote nothing in my journal except every problem I had with our relationship. I grew colder and barely made any attempts at conversation. I'd let the phone sit still for hours, silent. The screen stared at the ceiling with flashing colors of unread messages.

Who the hell subverts someone's core ideology of something - relationships in this case - only to prove their fears of it the second they try and accept it?

I grew restless and annoyed. I was suffocated by what transpired to be a game of chicken with my values. The pink mist vanished, revealing a dark truth I was avoiding since day one.

We should never have fallen for each other.

After not talking for a few more days, I decided it was time to end both of our sufferings and send an email explaining how we should never step into the grounds of a relationship, and how we can't go back to being with each other due to the history around our decisions.

Before I could send the email, I glanced at my phone to see she had sent me one a few minutes ago. After days of silence, we both had the same idea, and she beat me to it.

The email was about how she didn't understand what made me stop talking to her. How she'll try to forget me if I keep up with my attitude. I sent her my email as a reply and no words were spoken after that.

Emails Sent Draft: August 30th, 2022

"No matter how I try to phrase it. I can't seem to find the right words.

I should've been more honest earlier but I... I don't know.

I'm not ready to be in a relationship, even though I tried my best to get into that mentality but something in me fights back.

I don't think we can go back to being what we were before since there's too much history and conflict of emotions, Since all my feelings for you throughout the entire time I've known you were real, genuine, and sincere.

I'd love for us to stay friends, Real friends who talk now and then, and share books and music...

But I really can't give any more false promises that I'll change any time soon to the kind of person you want me to be.

I'm sorry"

You'd believe that was the final nail in the coffin, and you'd be wrong.

Phase 4: Moonless Planet

I walked into my last university year prepared to do my best and study harder this year. This time with personal goals and future project ideas in mind, no external motives.

It was quite lonely there. No company was in sight since my friends had failed to join my class. I sat by an old friend of mine, trying to remedy something I should have fixed a long time ago. She became quite friendly with me, but it was barely enough to satisfy my hunger for companionship. She was obviously a little distant which I understood. I had the same underlying feeling of separation from her.

When I was getting my bus card printed, I met moon for the second time after the email.

Moon was very generous with gifts. Something I never had before and was contemplating not revealing in this book just because of how much it meant to me. She got me quite a lot of stuff that I really loved and couldn't thank her enough for.

We met in my town a few weeks before school started since she wanted to give me something she got from France. I didn't really want to accept it but she insisted. We walked and talked, which was quite endearing and friendly. No hard feelings were projected. So I assumed the best.

After I got my card printed. I sat with Moon at school looking over her shoulder at her phone as she passed through galleries of images and outfits. I was slightly enchanted by her scent. Something I hadn't gotten a taste of in months since she left.

Remember when I said Moon acted her loving personality with everyone? Yeah, I couldn't be any far off.

The conversation later in the evening, beneath the rays of a molten sunset, fell first on our relationship. She'd probably tell it better because I sincerely stopped

listening to her the second I heard her say that the feelings and everything we had meant nothing. That she forgot about them soon after.

I realized that even though I tried to stay close to her without a relationship. It wouldn't have worked because she has always seen us in the light of a romance. The person I was with was a "girlfriend", not just a close friend. By sending that email, I killed a switch I didn't know was on. I would have been fine without the really intimate behaviors, but small things like sitting closer on a bench were now off-limits.

I realized I was tricked into a relationship by both of us. By believing I could grow feelings for someone without a horrible outcome in the end. And by believing that the person she was, was nothing but her genuine self.

Clang, bang! Lower the coffin. The final nail has settled

This giant smile drew itself on my face and grief kicked in with denial. I persisted in staying friends through rose-tinted glasses but I would later that night find out I couldn't. I couldn't look at her the same after the weekend. So I... I walked.

What really scares me now is, how I believed I didn't need to be with someone to be happy. Only to find out, I was with someone and that's why I was happy.

I couldn't sleep. I couldn't think in class so I skipped some. I couldn't work so I abandoned it. The loneliness really settled in after talking to her.

The midnight hallucinations were the worst part. Most people simply cry, But no. I couldn't let a single tear out and woke up in the middle of the night walking deliriously looking for who the hell kept staring at me when I'm asleep.

I had the same problem every night.
Until I decided maybe sleeping was the wrong thing to do;
That it was time to just deal with it.

I opened my laptop and...

Conclusion

I wrote an entire book in one night. I can't believe it. It's been a couple of days, and I feel a lot better already. Right now, I'm editing the first draft for review and I'm ready to just pick up where I left off with my life, and move on.

I'm working harder in class and actually made a friend the next day after finishing the story. Things are looking up.

As for Moon, she was an amazing experience in my life. I can accept what has been said and live with it. I hope the best for her.

I also hope someday in the future, we can look back on this with jokes about how dumb our whole handling of the situation was, how our screwed-up communication and processing denied us of what could have been a great... something. who knows at this point, right?

As for me, Moon will always have a spot in my heart. I can't forget people and I'll never try and do so. I am the product of everyone I have ever met. I am witness to her love and her admiration, She is proof that I can fall in love even though I thought I couldn't. She is, and forever will be, a cosmic core memory in my vast infinite history.