Just broke up with Dylan.

Wow I am feeling so many things right now…

I honestly need to think through all of the things that I hated about my relationship with Dylan right now to get me through this and to stay strong, because as it stands right now, I am *very* sad and I am most definitely questioning my decision…

It doesn’t help that he continuously repeated that I was making a mistake tonight. He basically berated and lectured me for an hour after I made the decision to break up.

I’ll add that to the list.

Actually yeah, I’m literally going to make a list of all of the things that weren’t good about this relationship (and it will help me take my mind off of the fact that as of now, I am pretty sure that Dylan is going to throw away our business and any relationship that I have with Basil.. Which is making me feel ***awful***).

Things that I hated about my relationship with Dylan:

1. He was far too serious in the relationship for me. This manifested in him *constantly* talking about the future and wanting to pin us down *way* too early on in the relationship, as well as him not allowing me to be honest with him about where I was at and how I didn’t see a future with him.
2. He wanted monogamy. I didn’t. I tried on monogamy for 9 months for him… there were some parts of it that I definitely loved. But I’m focusing on the bad right now. So I’ll just say that there were definitely many parts of it that weren’t for me.
3. He wouldn’t let me talk about my ex-boyfriends for the vast majority of our relationship. Any time I brought up *anyone* from my past, he assumed they were a man, and he assumed I had slept with them.
4. He slut shamed me. A lot. (unintentionally most of the time, but still, a lot).
5. He was actively dealing with his divorce during the entirety of our relationship. He started our relationship with a lie by hiding from me that he was still married. His ex-wife decided to initiate the divorce because she found an album that Dylan made for me online. I had to hold him crying while he dealt with the reality that his ex-wife wanted to get divorced. I had to deal with his constant stress and struggle to deal with logistics. He even told her in a moment of weakness that he missed her and still wanted to be with her, while I was in Colombia, and then *kept that from me* until I found it. He continued to conceal and lie to me about being in contact with her. He was never fully over her before he started dating me. He inserted me into the end of his marriage *without my consent* and **I had to deal with the aftermath**. He was incapable of being alone and standing secure on his own because he didn’t give himself any time to learn how to do that after the ending of his marriage. He literally didn’t decide to officially call it off until after he and I had already slept together. Fuck that. He has some growing up and some growing in general to do in order to process and recover from that. And I don’t need to take any part in that.
6. He has anger problems. It came out whenever we fought and whenever he was mad at himself or frustrated. When he drove while angry, it made me scared.
7. He was undiagnosed bipolar for the first ⅔ of our relationship and it made things **hard.** It made our relationship ridiculously rocky, and unnecessarily serious and difficult and emotional and dramatic for the first ⅔ of our relationship. I had to give so much of myself to support Dylan through so many hard times while he finally got himself to start therapy and find a psychiatrist and adjust to taking medication. It destroyed me in a lot of ways during that time.
8. He is not great with strangers. He thinks that he is, but he’s not. And it makes me uncomfortable sometimes the way he fakes getting to know them. I can tell it's genuine and a lot of the time they can too. It isn’t my style either. Very east-coast and very forced and rushed. Makes it hard for me to be myself.
9. He is controlling.
10. He didn’t respect my boundaries so many times throughout the relationship.
11. I got to the point where I spent the vast majority of my time at his place during our relationship. It forced me to sabotage other relationships, especially in my own home.
12. He tries to be adventurous, which I appreciated, but it wasn’t what I want and need in a partner. I need someone who is going to **push me,** not someone who I need to motivate to be pushed. Outdoors, physical activity, adventurous sports, spontaneity… those were things that were all missing and things that he *tried on* for me, but not things that came naturally.
13. When he is mad at me, he is *vicious*. I remember even when I first moved back to Boulder after I told him I wasn’t physically attracted to him (which btw if I said that back in August that should have been a red flag for both of us!!) -- he psychoanalyzed me after that to the point where I began to believe literally everything he said about me, good and bad. **I let him define who I was as a person and I believed him.**
14. I was never fully attracted to him in the ways that I needed to be. We had amazing sex, and I was always surprisingly sexually attracted to him. But physically, he didn’t tick my boxes, and it manifested in many ways in our relationship. I should *want* to show off my boyfriend to others, and I didn’t feel that way with Dylan. It took me a long time just to stop thinking about what others were thinking when they saw us together. That should be a red flag.
15. I didn’t get to do a lot of the stuff that is really important to me while in relationship with him. I didn’t get to build out other relationships and show love to other people as fully. I didn’t get to be as present or as lost in other people and other activities as I would have liked to be. I was never able to fully unplug because he needed that reassurance and those check-ins from me…
16. We built some bad habits together. We watched too much tv for far too long. We ate a lot of unhealthy food. We spent WAY TOO MUCH MONEY TOGETHER. Like seriously, WAY TOO MUCH FUCKNG MONEY. We began to smoke too much weed (mostly my fault though I will admit). We didn’t work out as much as we should have over the 9 months of time, though we did try a lot of the time.
17. He was ridiculous about me travelling! He got pissed at me for going home on a whim to say goodbye to Wesley. Was unreasonably pushy about coming home for Thanksgiving. There’s like 20 red flags I could say from the way he acted about me going to Colombia for xmas and new years. He pushed back on the bachelorette party. He refused to let me go to this wedding without him. He got upset about me going to see Claudia. And then got upset all over again when I extended the trip to see Yeng! WtF!!?
18. He isn’t okay with me doing drugs with friends. But is okay with me doing them with him? But actually isn’t… but is? He just wanted to control me. That’s all.
19. So many times when he would hold my hand or tell me about our future or how happy he was in this or how good things were going, I thought in my head “I don’t feel the same way.” Even months and months ago, I would still think that. For a long time in November / December, I genuinely thought I was going to break up with him when I returned from Mexico, because every time he tried to kiss me I felt like I was lying to myself. For MONTHS.
20. He CONSTANTLY asked for my affection or asked for words of approval and love from me. CONSTANTLY. He would place words in my mouth and then ask me to repeat them to give him peace of mind, when a lot of the time, I didn’t agree with what he was making me say!!
21. When we fought, he would want to have sex after. I hated that.
22. He was so incredibly not okay with anything like an open relationship until he became desperate towards the end of our relationship.
23. He has so many things he needs to work on on his own: his mental health, his organization, his career, his clutter in his space, his relationship and care for his dog, his finances, his dependence on his mother, his relationship with his mother and his family, his community, his hobbies, his habits… and he ignored all of those things by prioritizing our relationship first (when I never asked him to do that).
24. He had no community, and it manifested in our relationship by him censoring me and my ability to form my own community. He got upset when I would hang out with people without him, or when I didn’t want to invite him to something. Once he finally started putting an effort into making a community - IT WAS MY COMMUNITY. It was just all of my roommates!!!
25. He ridiculously enmeshed himself with me. In EVERY FUCKING POSSIBLE WAY. He made a business with me. He signed a contract with me. He made a business bank account with me. He got a puppy and made me come pick up the puppy with him. He named the puppy with me. The puppy started to think I was his owner. He needed my support to take care of the puppy well. He JOINED MY FUCKING PHD PROGRAM, IN MY FUCKING DEPARTMENT. He moved 5 minutes away from me. He made his community be *my* community. His ability to slowly encroach on every facet of my life was astounding. And now I have to pay for it.

It feels bad to be saying all of this right after breaking up with Dylan. Because I love him *so so so* much, and still. I **still love Dylan so much**. And I always will. If it were up to me, I would just transition smoothly into a friendship with him, and remain business partners. But it doesn’t sound like that will be a healthy option for him. So I will have to respect his boundaries. We will work through it… somehow.

\*\*\* 30 mins later \*\*\*

He just stopped by again. He brought all of the things that were mine that I left at his place. He also brought all of our shared things. He told me again how much of a mistake this is and how fully he has loved me and how fully he would have loved me and how **I was choosing to walk away**.

He cried. He sobbed. I cried. I sobbed. We hugged. We held hands. He pulled back. I waited.

He said he loved me. I said I love him. He said goodbye.

I watched him leave.

Clauds sent me a bunch of kindness. Morgan did too. Paige did too. Here is my favorite thing that Claudia said:

“You did what is best for you right now - *sometimes what’s best for you hurts really really fucking bad*. You are still you. You are still Jess. You are still loved. Give yourself grace right now.”

She’s spot on.

This *is* what is best for me.

And this *does* hurt really, really, fucking bad.

And I am still loved.

And I deserve grace.

So I will give myself that.

I will persist. As I always do. And I will do it with *grace*.

I look back at all of the times I have called it off with someone I loved. Chandler, Nick, John D., Roshan, Lazare, Maxwell, Matt… and now Dylan.

In the past, I have **burnt shit to the ground** to get out of something. And it has been so painful for everyone involved. This time, I didn’t do that. **And it was *more* painful** **for me**. But I sat there and I took every word that Dylan threw at me tonight. I agreed with him. I told him he was right. I let him tell me who I was and call me things that I know I’m not. But I let him have it, because I know he is hurting. And I know that I have made this choice for him. Which I can only imagine brings on a world full of pain.

But I handled this maturely this time. I told him in advance that this was coming up in my mind. I told him that I was going to eventually end it. I told him I didn’t see us together in the Fall. I told him I felt a calling to be single. I told him that I was having confusion and doubt. Then, I told him tonight that it was time.

We were sitting in the parking lot of movement, about to go rock climbing. And we were planning on having a conversation tomorrow about how we did this week on the things we were trying to work on (not bringing up the relationship so much and me spending more time at home). Instead, in the parking lot I realized that I forgot to sign us up for climbing. Before we decided to walk in and ask them if we could sign up, he grabbed my hand and told me:

“Just so I can have some peace of mind and know what to expect, is our conversation tomorrow just going to be about us discussing how this last week went and what we need to do going forward? Or is it going to be a breakup conversation?”

If he had asked me that any other time, I might have said it was the former. I might have given in and been dishonest to myself. But today is Earth day. I meditated with the stones and with the trees and with the grass and I asked mother earth and the universe for guidance. I asked, and I received.

I told him that I was originally planning on just discussing how we did this week and how things could be better… but that I was honestly feeling pretty confused and unsure, and that I would probably want to talk some things through with him.

We both decided it was dumb to wait 24 hours to discuss.

We left the climbing gym and went to a random neighborhood 5 minutes away and walked outside under the moonlight together.

I told him that it wasn’t a matter of if, but when. And any effort to make the relationship better in the meantime felt disingenuous.

He disagreed.

He continued to disagree all the way home.

He took all of my stuff out of his car and left it on my lawn. RIGHT WHERE MATT LEFT THE MARIMBA. And he told me he was just joining in on leaving my stuff on the lawn… (btw that was a very shitty thing for him to say, but I get it, he is hurting).

We talked more and more and more. He told me that our business is over. He told me that I was throwing everything away.

We talked more. He took my stuff to the front door.

He hugged me with one arm. Kissed me, and said that he wished me the best. Then he drove off.

Then I walked inside and started journaling…

GGAAAAAHHHHHHHHH

Why is life so hard????

Eric literally got diagnosed with skin cancer yesterday, and now I am going through a breakup today, and Matt left the house on Wednesday, and I am signing a new lease to leave the house, and EVERYTHING AND ITS FUCKING MOTHER IS CHANGING AROUND ME HOLY SHIT.

When I was in a bad place over the last few months, all I wanted was change. I just wanted to flip everything upside down… I wanted to burn it all to the ground.

And then this week, that is precisely what happened.

I know that things will get better. I **know that I have made the right choice here.**

But god damn it hurts so bad.

I’m sure it will for a long time. In many ways.

Dylan offered for us to be cuddle buddies or fuck buddies.

That made me realize that he might just be speaking impulsively about ending the business, and perhaps we still can remain friends in the future and be mature and run the business at least for a little while longer, and be amicable in the department, and possibly even cuddle on occasion….

I can only do those things if they won’t hurt him though. And he told me that it is time for him to be selfish and think of himself and put himself first, just like I am doing with myself.

I think that would be good for him.

Fuck this is awful.

I need to force myself to not think through the amazing parts of our relationship. For tonight, I need to hold onto the pain of the relationship.

I need to hold onto the things that never felt good and never felt right.

I need to listen to my heart.

**I NEED TO LISTEN TO MY GUIDANCE.**

I’m going to go pull a tarot card now, and hopefully it will give me some answers….

Then, I think I just need to continue taking care of myself….

Slowly,

One day at a time.

Oh lord.

Thank you, universe. Thank you for guiding me.

I will continue to listen and respect and appreciate your infinite wisdom.

Om namah shivaya. Swaha.

Change has arrived. Let’s see where it takes us.

More soon, most definitely.

Pain now, healing later.

With love,

Jess.

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