



A Commentary on the Composition of a Simile

You are like a deer, dead
on the side of a highway.
I am like a car that did not
know how to stop, skid
marking a funeral alter *



** I know it is contrived but I think / it says a lot about the nature of love / naive, trusting, the consumption of affection seeping / into the greed of humanity; acquired only when something is / truly wanted—only truly wanted when it is possessed, only possessed / when it will not leave: permanence / in death, to love you is to kill you*

I USED to THINK
hell WAS a PLACE



YOU'VE PROVEN
It's a PERSON



Is it me?



At 29 years old, it's sometimes weird for me to say that I've never had my heart broken, at least not relationship-wise. I've never even held hands with a guy, let alone been on a date or in a relationship with one. At this point, if I ever do wind up on a date, the guy will probably look at me like I'm weird because I don't have any experience. I scroll on my phone day-in and day-out, watching people I went to school with and grew up with, getting into relationships, engaged, married, starting families, and I can't help but think how behind I am, how I want what they have. After that, I often ponder what's wrong with me. Is it because I'm ugly, fat, just plain weird? It could be because my expectations are just too high. I want a guy who looks like Harry Styles, has the same values as me, doesn't mind me obsessing over my interests, and will take me to concerts and travel with me, among other things. And sure, friends can give me a lot of that, but it's just not the same. The People always say "It'll happen when you least expect it," but at this point I'm not expecting anything. I've started saying "If I get married" when I used to say "when I get married." So, come on universe, I'm not expecting anything, bring me a "best friend who I think is hot," as Taylor Swift said. But, maybe it's a blessing that I've never had my heart broken.

Brittany Sims





Single and *Not* Ready to Mingle

Reframing Your Mindset on the Single Life

“Being single gives me room to have a deeper relationship with myself. Being in a relationship, I morph into an other—a unit. I think this unit can be just as confining as it is empowering.” —Ezra M.

*“I love being able to do whatever the f*ck I want to do. Being single gives me so much more time to spend with my friends, my family, and myself.” —Holly K.*

Most people cannot wait to be in a relationship, even labeling themselves as “hopeless romantics.” Every day, we navigate a culture that aims to feed the little bit of hopeless romantic that lives in all of us. Romantic relationships are often regarded as measurements of success and happiness; however, romance does not have to be our end goal.

The notion that people who spend long term periods being single are lonely—experiencing a fear of rejection, lower self esteem, and increased social anxiety—has been popularized in the modern era of dating apps and reality TV shows. They market the ideal that being alone needs to be “fixed,” perpetuating the concept that there is something wrong with those who do not have romantic partners. While these negative experiences may hold true for some, they do not act as accurate portrayals for the entirety of single life. There is no blueprint for a “good” life and we must stop equating singleness with failure. Being single opens up our inner worlds, allowing us to walk through doors that we may never have

noticed otherwise. Studies have shown that we often lose sight of who we are when in relationships. Our own needs, passions, and desires no longer appear to be our main priorities. Instead, we are distracted from necessary inner growth. Being single allows us to reconnect with these previously neglected aspects of ourselves.

Being Single Isn't Second Best

Studies have shown that single people show higher levels of determination, confidence, and self sufficiency than those who are in romantic relationships. These traits are influenced by one of the most exciting things the single life has to offer: freedom. When we do not have a romantic partner, we have complete control over our own time, hobbies, careers, and finances. There is no one that we are required to compromise with. This allows single people the chance to fully commit to shifting their priorities and focusing on themselves. Instead of worrying about our next date or emotionally regulating a partner at home, we can spend more time on pursuing fulfilling careers and hobbies, practicing self care, and engaging in self exploration and personal growth.

Additionally, it has been proven that single people have richer inner circles than those in romantic relationships. Not focusing so heavily on a partner leads to more time spent with family, friends, and coworkers. Societal norms would like us to forget that these platonic or professional relationships can be just as meaningful as romantic ones. Spending time with people we are not romantically involved with can lead to insights on effective communication, emotional intelligence, and an understanding of diverse viewpoints. As well as, helping us set our own personal boundaries and standards for what we are looking for. Thus, improving the quality of the people we surround ourselves with.

For many of us, being single will not be a permanent stage. However, the opportunities for personal growth and the relationship building it affords us will result in us being stronger partners in better quality romantic relationships. Until then, do not forget that your life is happening now and you do not need romance to make it more meaningful.

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Green Thumb — Ezra N. Mignoles

There are trees falling in a forest
that we'll never hear
and yet
they fall all the same

I hear your voice
before your mouth moves
words planted over early mornings
and later nights
left to germinate.

Caked.

I know what I'll say too.

Pregnant pauses in a staring game
dared to hold your gaze
turned away
tightened chest
An outline on an empty bed

o

o

o

Will this make a sound?

My first date was with a guy I considered a friend, but I was willing to see where it went. We got dropped off at the movies and he bought us seats for The Hunger Games: Mockingjay pt 2. I was irritated about having to see a movie I wasn't interested in, and that's when I noticed that he kept looking at me. I decided to let him go in for a peck but instead he grabbed my face and shoved his tongue in my mouth. The worst part is, I saw someone from school I actually had a crush on and I knew I blew my chances with them after that. —E.H.

I received an email from a boy I went to highschool with entitled "Letter of Affirmation." It was a weird little love letter but I decided to be nice and go on a date with him. When it got down to it, he wasn't really "up to it" if you catch my drift. My friends still call him *expired mister softee*. —N.J.



I was dating a girl in the small southern town I grew up in. Eventually, things fizzled out and I broke up with her. When I did, her "best friend" did not take it well. He challenged me to a fight.....at their church. That *really* helped me develop a love of southern churches (NOT). —G.R.

Dating Disasters

Lumbricus Terrestris

Why do they do that—they being worms¹. Why do they believe the rain when it calls, wetting pavement: a mirage². Crawling and settling there, unaware of sun³ that is to come. Warmth that may feel good; lulling, drying and burning before they have a chance to escape. Why do they do that—that being die⁴ when they should have known better?



¹ Worms being me

² Mirage *n.* see definition “when you tell me that you love me”

³ It is a common trope in literature that the sun brings life, goodness but here we watch it act as a decoy for something sinister; much like you did

⁴ See “death of self,” “death of super ego,” “death of the hero”

The End



and I chose the one
was surety with it
can pick but shoes
looked up
and it was
just
it's
black
black
as my
as I
elphers
to coll
it was

LOVE
YA

NET WT.
1 3/4 OZ.

Sweethearts

Love.

A Commentary on the Composition of a Metaphor

You are a deer, dead
on the side of a highway.
I am a car that did not
know how to stop, skid
marking a funeral alter *



** I know it is contrived but I think / it says a lot about our nature / hasty, reckless, the consumption of humanity seeping / into the innocence of love; harnessable only when something is / truly ours—only truly ours when it is possessed, only possessed / when it cannot leave: permanence / in death, to kill you is to love you*

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