Life by a calendar

Julie Birkey

College of DuPage

Follow this and additional works at: https://dc.cod.edu/plr

Recommended Citation
Available at: https://dc.cod.edu/plr/vol34/iss2/76

This Selection is brought to you for free and open access by the College Publications at DigitalCommons@COD. It has been accepted for inclusion in The Prairie Light Review by an authorized editor of DigitalCommons@COD. For more information, please contact orenick@cod.edu.
I used to mark it on the calendar, the 20th of every month. A heart next to the number, another month we’ve been together. I even circled the 20th that December. A year of our relationship bottled down to one day.

I used to mark it on the calendar, our weekend plans our day trips to Chicago our double dates our movie nights. Every day written on there reminding me of the history we were creating the story we were writing the legacy we were leaving.

I even marked the calendar, when you wanted to break up with me. When you going away to school would come between us as you packed up your whole life into just one box, leaving me stranded, cold miserable and alone, in the middle of the street suffocated in the exhaust not even looking back in the rear view mirror. When you decided long-distance relationships weren’t for you. When in reality you were only going a mere 45 minutes away. Staying up, waiting by the phone cord to cord, just for a chance to hear your voice. Driving out of my way for a surprise visit just for a chance to see your face. But even that was too difficult for you. I marked down, documented the day I was crushed like a soda can, flat as paper.

I marked the calendar, three days after breaking up with me.
you wanted to make things work,
or at least try.
That was the happiest day of my life
and will forever be written down on paper.
That night at the party,
the smell of the febreezed couch,
the sound of beer bottles clinking
when you said it was breaking your heart
knowing you broke mine.
When you decided I was worth the try.

I used to mark it on the calendar,
the day you left for college.
How terrified I was
if we made the right decision.
I felt like I was saying good-bye to you forever
as if I was saying farewell to my soldier.
I didn’t know what I was getting myself into,
if I had the strength.

I used to mark it on the calendar,
the 10\text{th} of January
shortly after we celebrated
our one year anniversary.
That Monday you took me out for coffee.
The Caribou down the street,
“our” Caribou,
our now ruined Caribou,
from the sweet smell
of a Campfire Mocha,
to the bitter smell of nothing but pure coffee grinds.
The corner table,
right next to the sweating glass window
when the words from your mouth
nearly killed me,
each one piercing through me
like needles in a pin cushion.
“I think it’d be best if we were just friends.”
The same exact line I heard
six months earlier.
The same exact line
that broke my heart the first time.
The same exact line
I hate you for.

I used to mark it on the calendar,
our life by the month,
our future by the day.
Now I have a new date to heart.
Every 10\text{th} of the month
I mark.
One less month without you
one more month
to finding someone better
someone who deserves me.