

Deceit

Lying next to him on the bed she strokes her fingers down his naked back as she listens to his deep breaths. He looks peaceful when he's sleeping, like a child, like someone who couldn't cause anyone any pain. She used to see him like that when he was awake too. In her eyes he could never do anything wrong. At least never to her.

They had always had a rocky relationship, they were both high tempered, neither liked to admit to being wrong, so they would argue. A lot. They always made up though, without a fail, and God how good it was when they did. Some things you cannot fix though. However much you may like to. Any functioning relationship should be based on trust, whatever else you may have, or not have, if you do not have trust, you have nothing. Once trust is broken, that's the end.

She quietly gets out of bed and walks into the living room. Sitting down next to the window she looks out at the city whilst lighting a cigarette. She can hear someone laughing below her somewhere, students on their way back after a night out. For a second she wishes she was younger again, careless, able to just stay out all night and not care. Then she remembers how things were never easy anyhow, she was just better at putting the bad things on the sidelines. She inhales deeply before blowing the cigarette smoke into the cold night air. A smile lingers on her lips as clarity comes over her mind, a feeling she has not felt in months, many months.

It had started over a year before, he stopped touching her the way he used to. When she made an effort it was never appreciated, at least not in the way it has used to be. Before her. She thought maybe the spark had just finally died down, after all the honey moon period was probably well overdue to crash into oblivion. Then one night whilst he was sleeping next to her she had done something she never thought she would be capable of. She took his phone from his side of the bed and started scrolling down the messages. The funny thing is, she had felt guilty for doing it. She knew she had no right to spy on him like that, but she did. The guilt disappeared quickly when she saw a message from a number that didn't have a name saved to it. The words fell to her stomach as she read them, tying a knot that she was never able to loosen afterwards, however much time had passed. "I love you. I can't wait to see you again. Xö those few words was all it took for her world to tumble down around her.

At first she didn't say anything. She kept it to herself that she knew, let it build up like a volcano waiting to erupt. Every time he went for dinner with his friends, every time he stayed late at work, every night he spent working on his computer, she kept her thoughts to herself, driving her mind to the verge of insanity as she wondered if he was really with her, if he was talking to her. If he was telling her he loved her. As the weeks passed by she could feel the distance between them growing, slowly it was eating away at her, killing her soul. One night as they were having dinner he made a mistake. He told a lie he shouldn't have told, one she knew to be a lie. Said he had been to lunch with a mutual friend of theirs. Someone who had rung her earlier, and had mentioned that they should catch up. He had told her another lie, after however many others he had told her, and she couldn't take it anymore.

They were up most of the night arguing. Not like any of the arguments they had ever had before, not one that could just be fixed by getting into bed and fighting it out till they were both exhausted and too satisfied to hold on to the anger. After hours of him making excuses. Of telling her more lies. Saying he was sorry. Saying he would end it. That they would make things right again, like they were before. He said he would go to bed, and wait for her. She didn't go to bed, the thought of laying next to him made her skin crawl. Instead she sat up all night, staring out the window,

oblivious to the tears that were running down her face. She was so angry. Not with him anymore, just herself for putting up with it, when she had known. Known what he had been doing, and how little he had cared that what he was doing would break her heart if she found out. How little he had cared about her to not just be honest with her, when he knew how she loved him. How even now she longed for him to be next to her. She had loved him more than she thought she could ever love anyone, trusted him when she had never felt she could really trust anyone. Not till she met him and her whole world had changed. The day she had met him had been like the first day of spring. When the darkness finally lifts, and everything seems fresh, new, beautiful. She had thought he was beautiful, inside and out. Now she was back living in winter, and the far away memories of spring were crashing down around her leaving nothing but pieces too small to put back together.

She had left the apartment before he had gotten up that morning, not wanting to see his face again, not having the strength to hear anymore apologies. Feeling so desperately lonely and wanting nothing more than to be back in his arms, feel his warmth, feel him inside her again, be in that place where nothing else matters but them. She didn't go back till she knew he had gone to work. Got out of the clothes she had been wearing since last night, turned the shower on warmer than she should have done. Crying again as she felt the water slightly burning her skin, even the pain of that numb. She didn't bother getting dressed again, just sat on the sofa, staring at the TV all day, smoking too much, drinking. She never drank in the middle of the day. Then she seemed to be doing a lot of things she never usually did today. She was still sitting there when he came home. She couldn't even look at him as he walked over to her and put his arms around her. Her skin crawled as he told her what had happened. His breath on her neck making her feel sick with pain and anger, but she never uttered a word. He told her he was sorry again. That he didn't love that woman. That it had been a mistake, one that had gotten out of control, one that he regretted so badly now he may lose her. Whispered in her ear that it had always been her. That she was the one who understood him, that she made him feel like no one else ever had. Then he took her to bed, and he kissed her, and she kissed him back, wanting so badly to believe him. Still when he moved off her, turned his back and went to sleep, the tears were still running down her cheeks, and she loved him so much. Despite everything. She loved him so much.

For months she tried, they both pretended it had never happened. For a while things were like they had been, he was making an effort again, she was doing everything she could to make him happy. They talked about getting married. Talked about having kids. His eyes shining every time he saw a picture of a baby and said how badly he wanted that with her. She believed him. She loved him more than ever, and everything he said she believed. She wanted to believe, but still that knot in her stomach refuse to untie and every night she watched him sleep and she thought about who was really in his dreams.

She finished her cigarette and thought back at all the time she had wasted. Years of her life spent trying to make someone happy, someone who didn't really want her to be the one he woke up next to. She put his phone back on his side of the bed, and kissed him on the forehead. He had lied to her again, it had never been over. This time though she would not stay around for the arguments, she didn't have to. It was OK that he no longer loved her. She had shed too many tears over someone who didn't deserve it, and she didn't love him. Finally. She didn't love him.