

*What I am saying now is a lie.*

I loved her more than I loved myself. I wanted to spend every second by her side for the rest of my life. She was the most beautiful woman I had ever met, and I was loyal to her for the years that we had been together. I would forever remain loyal, honest, and kind. She deserved the moon, and I would do anything in my power to get it for her.

She never asked for anything. She was selfless and loving. She spoke only affectionate words to me, in that soft alto voice of hers that had drawn me in. She was hardworking, and every night when she would return home, right after work, she would still smile for me. Her kind words, her smiles, and the light in her eyes belonged to me and no one else. She depended only on me and I on her. We needed no one else.

We were in love and always would be. No one could take that away from us. We were a united force against the rest of the chaotic world, and in the midst of the pandemonium, we found time to reassure and comfort one another.

I was her rock, her anchor, and she was my salvation. I promised her we would spend the rest of our lives together. She promised me that there was no one else. I promised her just the same. I held her close to me and kept my other countless promises: to never scream at her; to never raise a hand at her; that I would let her leave if she ever changed her mind.

That night I let her walk out that door unharmed.

The room was a mess, because she had been packing. The hole in the wall had been there for years. The red stain on the white carpet was wine from one of our many movie nights where we had too much to drink. The claw marks on my face were from our cat. We *had not* had an argument the last night she had been seen alive.

She had not tried to leave me, because she loved me and only me.

And for that reason alone, I let her live.

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