

I LOVE YOU, BUT

A ZINE DISCUSSING EMOTIONAL ABUSE BY A ROMANTIC PARTNER

ISSUE 1: BY STEPHANIE KNIPE

DEDICATED TO THE TWO, AND LAST, CIS
MEN WHO MADE ME QUESTION MYSELF

TRIGGER WARNING, DISCUSSION OF ABUSE.
THE CONTENT OF THIS ZINE MAINLY FOCUSES ON MY
ROMANTIC RELATIONSHIPS WITH CIS MEN, AS THEY
HAVE BEEN THE MOST VIOLENT AND ABUSIVE. AS
A QUEER WOMAN, I APOLOGIZE IF THIS SILENCES
QUEER SURVIVORS OF EMOTIONAL ABUSE DUE TO THE
USE OF GENDERED LANGUAGE AND LACK OF DISCUS-
SION OF QUEER RELATIONSHIPS.
ALL CONTENT WRITTEN BY STEPHANIE KNIPE.

HAS ANYONE EVER
MADE YOU FEEL
TRAPPED? HAS
ANYONE EVER MADE
YOU FEEL SMALL?
HAS ANYONE EVER
SILENCED YOU?

(YES, YES, YES)

(2)



SWEET BOYS ARE NOT SWEET
THEY ARE ROBOTS

"SWEET BOYS" ARE NOT SWEET. THEY ARE ROBOTS. THEY WILL CRAFT A PERSONA BELIEVABLE ON THE SURFACE, YOU MIGHT EVEN FALL IN LOVE WITH THE SURFACE, YOU MIGHT EVEN THINK YOU KNOW THE SURFACE, BUT SOON THEIR WIRES WILL START TO POKE OUT OF THEIR THICK, CRAFTED SKIN AND YOU'LL WONDER WHY THEY'RE SUDDENLY POKING INTO YOU TOO. SOON THE WIRES WILL NOT POKE BUT CUT INTO YOU, AND YOU WILL BEGIN TO SHAVE OFF PARTS OF YOUR VERY FRAGILE SKIN TO MAKE ROOM FOR THEM. IT WILL BE EASY FOR YOU AT FIRST, IT WILL SEEM VERY EASY, BECAUSE YOUR SKIN IS THIN, MALLEABLE, READY. YOUR SKIN IS WELCOMING AND OPEN. YOU ARE MORE THAN HAPPY TO ACCEPT THEIR WIRES, THEIR SHIT, THE PAIN, EVERYTHING, BECAUSE YOU LOVE THEM. AT FIRST IT IS VERY EASY. BUT THEN YOU START TO WAKE UP WITH GAPING HOLLOW CRATERS IN YOUR SIDE AND ALL OVER YOUR BODY THAT WERE ONCE SMALL PRICKS, AND YOU'LL START TO WONDER WHERE THE FUCK YOUR INSIDES WENT. YOU'LL START TO PUT YOUR HAND OVER YOUR STOMACH TO FEEL YOURSELF BREATHE, YOUR FINGERS ON YOUR WRIST TO FEEL YOUR PULSE. YOU WILL GO UNDER YOUR COVERS AND TRY TO LET OUT FURIOUS SCREAMS BUT IT'S IMPOSSIBLE BECAUSE HE WILL NEVER HEAR THEM. BUT YOU CAN STILL FEEL YOUR PULSE, AND YOUR BREATH, AND YOUR HEART BEATING, AND YOU FEEL THESE THINGS EVERY HOUR TO MAKE SURE YOU'RE STILL ALIVE. YOU WILL WALK TO CLASS AND GO TO WORK WHILE SIMULTANEOUSLY FANTASIZING ABOUT CRAWLING UNDER YOUR COVERS AND CRYING SO MUCH THAT IT BECOMES EXHAUSTING AND YOU WOULD FINALLY BE ABLE TO SLEEP. AT THE END OF THE DAY ALL YOU WILL WANT IS HANDS ON YOU THAT DO NOT FEEL LIKE SHARP METAL. YOU WILL REALIZE THAT WARM HANDS DO EXIST BUT THEY ARE NOT HIS AND THEY WILL NEVER BE HIS AND YOU CANNOT TURN A ROBOT INTO A HUMAN.

//WHAT I SHOULD HAVE SAID//

I AM PASSION, I AM PASSIONATE. YOU DO NOT GET TO DETERMINE WHAT IS A HEALTHY AMOUNT OF PASSION. YOU DO NOT GET TO DISMISS AND BELITTLE ME AND FRAME ME AS A SUFFOCATING, DISRESPECTFUL, COLD PERSON WHEN I WAS THE ONE WRITHING FOR ANY SIGN OF WARMTH FROM YOU. YOU DO NOT GET TO TREAT ME LIKE A USELESS OBJECT YOU KEEP UNDER YOUR FUCKING SINK FOR LAST RESORT EMERGENCIES. YOU DO NOT GET TO TREAT ME LIKE A DOLLAR STORE BRAND PLUNGER AND THEN FRAME ME AS SOMEONE WHO IS CRAZY AND INSENSITIVE.

ALL I EVER WANTED WAS TO BE LOVED ALL I EVER WANTED WAS TO BE LOVED ALL I EVER WANTED WAS TO BE LOVED ALL I EVER WANTED WAS TO BE LOVED ALL I EVER WANTED WAS TO BE LOVED

//WHAT I DID SAY//

"I WAS BEING IRRATIONAL BECAUSE I WANTED YOU AND IM SORRY FOR SUFFOCATING YOU THAT NIGHT AND IT WONT HAPPEN AGAIN AND I HEAR YOU AND I LOVE YOU."

//WHAT HE SAID//

*THIS DIDN'T HAPPEN
BECAUSE OF ME*

*YOU WEREN'T UNDERSTANDING
SUFFOCATING ME*

GIVING ME NO SPACE

*YOU JUST SAID SOME
REALLY MEAN THINGS TO ME*

...

SSORAR

BY Y!

*"STOP APOLOGIZING"
I DON'T KNOW HOW*

(8)

BOYS DO NOT WANT TO FUCK ME
THEY ALSO DO NOT WANT TO LOVE ME
THEY WANT TO TAKE ME IN THEIR ARMS
AND MAKE ME INTO SOMETHING THEY WANT
THEY WANT ME TO TWEAK OUT THE PARTS
THAT ARE NOT CONVENIENT FOR THEM
AND THEY WANT ME TO COMPLY
OTHERWISE I AM UNREASONABLE
OTHERWISE I AM SELFISH
OTHERWISE I AM UNATTRACTIVE, UNDESERVING
I AM A FUCKING TYRANT IN MY OWN RIGHT
AND I WILL NOT TWEAK MYSELF
TO BE ABLE TO HANDLE THE PAIN YOU INFLICT ON ME

BOYS DO NOT WANT TO FUCK ME
BOYS DO NOT WANT TO LOVE ME
BOYS WANT ME TO SHAVE OFF MY SKIN
AND EXPOSE MYSELF
SO THEY CAN TWEAK
AND REWORK MY VEIGNS
SO THAT THEY ALLIGN WITH THEIR OWN
SO THAT SOON
THEY WILL GROW TRIUMPHANT WITH MY BLOOD
AND IT WILL PUMP INTO THEIR BODIES
UNTIL THERE IS NOTHING LEFT TO PUMP
AND I AM LEFT ALONE TO REGROW MY CELLS

B O Y S

DO NOT

WANT TO

FUCK ME

*THEY GET TO
SPEAK BUT
YOU DON'T*

*"YOU'RE CRAZY I
NEVER SAID THAT"*

*"YOU'RE BEING
CODEPENDENT"*

"I MISS YOU SO MUCH"

*"I DIDN'T MEAN TO
CONFUSE YOU"*

*"I JUST WANTED TO
SAY HELLO"*

"I DON'T KNOW"

"SORRY"

*"WHY DIDN'T YOU CALL
ME WHEN YOU GOT OUT
OF CLASS?" "WHERE
ARE YOU" "IF YOU
BREAK UP WITH ME I'M
GOING TO KILL MY-
SELF" "ANSWER YOUR
PHONE" "WILL YOU
MARRY ME?" "YOU'RE A
BAD GIRLFRIEND" "I'M
NOT GOING BECAUSE
YOU'RE THE LOVE OF
MY LIFE" "IF YOU GO
OUT YOU'RE GOING TO
CHEAT ON ME" "I WILL
NOT GO TO THERAPY"*

SAYING "IT'S OKAY" DOESN'T MAKE IT OKAY

AN EMOTIONAL ABUSER IS NEVER SOMEBODY WHO IS SEEN AS A MONSTER TO THE MASSES BECAUSE NOBODY KNOWS THE EXTENT OF THE ABUSE. EVEN IF YOU EXPLAIN IT TO THEM. BECAUSE EVEN IF YOU EXPLAIN IT TO THEM, EVEN IF YOU TELL THEM THAT YOU WANTED TO SLEEP FOREVER AND YOU FELT WORTHLESS AND UNLOVED AND INVALIDATED AND SO DEFEATED THAT YOU COULDN'T EVEN SCREAM, THEY WOULDN'T UNDERSTAND. THE ONLY THING THEY WILL OFFER IS SUPPORT IN YOUR DECISION TO BREAK AWAY, AND SUPPORT IN THAT YOUR EX SUCKS, BUT THEY WILL NOT HATE HIM BECAUSE HE IS A MONSTER. THEY WILL NOT HATE HIM AT ALL. THEY WILL DISLIKE HIM BECAUSE HE WAS A BAD BOYFRIEND. WHEN REALLY, BEING A BAD BOYFRIEND IS SOMETHING THAT COULD HAVE BEEN TOLERATED. BEING A BAD BOYFRIEND IS NOT ABUSE. BUT AGAIN, THEY WILL NOT UNDERSTAND, BECAUSE THEY ARE NOT YOU AND THEY DID NOT SHRINK THEMSELVES INTO A TINY SPECK IN ORDER TO COMPLY. THEY DID NOT TRY TO BECOME SO SMALL THEY COULD FIT BETWEEN THE CREASE OF THE WALL AND THE MATTRESS THAT YOU CLUNG TO SO CLOSELY THOSE NIGHTS YOU WERE ALLOWED IN HIS BED. THEY DID NOT WAKE UP EVERY MORNING AND CRY SO MUCH THAT YOU THOUGHT IT WOULD NEVER STOP AND YOU WOULD THINK THAT IT WAS ALL YOUR FAULT. "IT'LL BE OKAY IF I CAN JUST FIX MYSELF" YOU WOULD SAY EVERY DAY. AND EACH DAY AFTER YOU WOULD BE TOLD THAT YOU WERE NEEDY, YOU WERE NEEDING TOO MUCH, YOU WERE SELFISH. YOU WERE SO SELFISH THAT YOU DIDN'T EVEN DESERVE TO CRY ABOUT NOT GETTING KISSED GOODBYE BECAUSE THAT IS NORMAL AND HE WAS BUSY. BUT IT'S OKAY, BECAUSE HE WAS JUST A BAD BOYFRIEND, AND YOU TWO JUST DIDN'T WORK OUT.

BUT ONE DAY YOU WILL WAKE
UP AND YOU WILL LOCK YOUR
DOOR AND YOU WILL UNDRESS AND
YOU WILL TURN OFF ALL OF THE
LIGHTS IN YOUR ROOM AND YOU
WILL DANCE ALONE TO A SONG
THAT REMINDS YOU THAT YOU ARE
A PERSON WHO FILLS UP THE
ENTIRE TWIN BED. YOU WILL BE
REMINDED THAT YOU ARE NOT A
SPECK AND YOU ARE NOT A PER-
SON WHO COMPLIES. YOU HAVE
NEVER BEEN A PERSON WHO COM-
PLIES. AND YOU WILL SEE HIM
AGAIN AND YOU WILL GROW BIG-
GER THAN YOU EVER WERE BEFORE
AND YOU WILL BLOW SMOKE IN HIS
FACE AND RIP OFF HIS MASK.
HE IS A MONSTER BUT YOU ARE A
CONQUERER AND YOU ARE STRON-
GER THAN ANYONE WHO NEEDS TO
SHRINK PEOPLE TO FEEL BIG.

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