

## **Love and other Drugs**

### **Act 1**

I wish I could turn back the clock and bring the wheels of time to a stop.

Would it be much different from stopping the motors of the world? John Galt allegedly did it. It's just a story, you moron! And you haven't even read it till the end, so you don't know what you are talking about. But wishes are something that know no reason. There is no logic in this universe that can explain away our most secret desires, our innermost wishes.

So, what do you do when all that is left with you is your memories of a time gone by? Well-intentioned advice tells you, don't brood, look at silver linings blah blah blah.... But you know that for the aching heart, such advice almost invariably falls on deaf ears. With Blues playing on loop as your music choice, you and your loneliness are perfect companions for a never ending pensive party.

I simply cannot believe she doesn't love me anymore. She has stopped loving me, fallen out of love, you want to point out? You know what I think? Baloney. Reason for my confident assertion? Let me tell you one thing, smarty-pants, not everything in life can be reasoned. Such as Love. And I completely refute any condescending hogwash that I am denying truth. All I am saying is that yes, I know things have been a bit dicey between us lately, and I am the first one to accept that. But categorically stating that she doesn't love me anymore? No no no! It isn't true, it just cannot be true. All I need is a time machine to turn back the time a little while back, so that I could mend the moments when things became dicey and then all would be well again. I am absolutely sure of it.

### **Act 2**

Why? I think you missed the cut when they were distributing brains. If you had any, you would clearly see how much in love she is with me, and I with her. You have seen us together, haven't you? And what do you think makes you qualified to air your doubts about her and me?

Getting worked up, am I? Who are you to ask me to calm down? Why should I listen to your false and prejudiced opinion? You are deliberately trying to provoke me by telling me it's all over between her and me, and on top of that you want me to be just cool about it! And perhaps you also want me to say, it's ok, buddy, you didn't piss me off at all! You pretend to be my pal and poison my thoughts, and then expect us to remain friends? Not in my book!

Yes, I am angry. At you. At your insinuations. She loves me. Period. And I love her. What's so difficult to understand about it? I don't have any expectations from you, but it still boils my blood to think that you can presume to know her mind and mine better than we do.

Ok, tell me what you are thinking. Ok, ok, I will listen to you. Just don't pretend to be my well-wisher and expect me not to react to your poisonous words that you try to cloak as friendly counsel. What did you say? WHAT? W-H-A-T?

Calm down? Calm down? Calm down, my foot! Did you even hear what you are saying? You think that this anger which is, what was your word, simmering, yes simmering inside of me, is actually directed at her! You think that I am being mad at you by proxy? Bull! Why would I be mad at her? We love each other, man. There are no unresolved issues, no hidden bitterness, no lingering resentment. Where do you get all these notions? Really, you are one piece of work! No, there is nothing wrong between us. Never was, and mind you, it never will be.

And let me educate you why. Because our love is near perfect. A little flawed perhaps, because as individuals, all of us are flawed. But still our love is beautiful, it's magnificent, it's wonderful! I could have easily proved it with crystal clear evidence to penetrate even your dull brain if only I could take you back in time with me. And show you what we had, have, had.... no what am I saying, what we have, definitely present. See how upset you have made me?

Why are you shaking your head and smiling, you clown? You think I am living in illusion? Fool's paradise? You are the most idiotic person I have ever known. What? Yes, yes, I know I said things were a little bit dicey. But our love is greater than such trivial issues. I will show you, just you wait. Very soon when we are together again, what a laugh I will have at you!

What exactly happened? Well, I don't know if I should confide in you. You are acting so stupid that you will, in all likelihood, take it in a wrong light. Ok, I will tell you. We had some minor flare ups. But every relationships has ups and downs, any fool knows that. What kind of flare ups? Not important. Oh, well we had some cross words spoken to one another on a few occasions. Why? It's none of your business, you meddlesome jerk. Ok, ok I will humour you.

The last fight is what you want to know? Well, I was a bit mad at her. Lately she had started to show lesser and lesser interest in spending time with me. Her excuses were preposterous. She once even babbled that she regretted whatever it was that existed between us, and refused to call it love. More like lust, she said. So I flared up, and then she flared up. Ok, ok, I concede it was ugly. Quite a scene it was. But it was her fault. Anyway.

Do I resent her for dumping me? Does this make me madder that she has betrayed me by leaving me? Tell you what, honestly, it does make me mad, - your line of questioning full of rotten nonsense. And you seem to have quite a knack of it, provoking and then trying to placate me. Well, let me make this clear to you, for the last time. I am not, repeat, not angry with her at all.

You know, let me try to make you understand this with logic. I had once promised her that nothing in this world could ever make me be mad at her, no matter what. I don't make casual promises and am not one to break them either, once they are made. Our love is of a much higher quality than you can imagine. Whatever our issues and our fights, a few words exchanged in the heat of the moment is all that it

is, nothing more. So, the bottom line is that I am not mad at her. There is no question, there is no doubt about it. You are crazy, just barking mad to even suggest it!

Am I suppressing rage at myself and trying to disguise this by being mad at you? Who are you, man? My psychiatrist? I am not mad at anyone, least of all myself.

Careful. You have been trying to pull this stunt for quite some time now. Deliberately poking to get reactions out of me and trying to label it all as my being mad at her, myself, the world at large. Careful. Even my patience has limits.

I am not shouting. Raised voices be damned! Hell. HELL. HELL. HELL.

Back off, just back off!

### **Act 3**

Tell you what, let's change the subject. Really, man, you should be more careful. You could rub up some guy the wrong way who is not so nice as me, and then you would know the difference.

So, what do you think we should talk about?

May I choose a topic? Ok, this is a favourite one with me. Second chances. You have any expert opinion? Context? Well, just imagine the things one could accomplish if it was not just a wishful thinking but a reality. Turn back the clock and get a second chance while there still was a possibility of one. You see what I am getting at? In my case, I could get my whole life back on track just by making things up with her, avoiding fights and rash words.

Yes, yes, I know. I am being maudlin here. Need to get a grip on myself. What do you mean that I don't have a handle on my emotions? No no, I am not getting angry again. Listen my friend, you are my friend, right? Did I ever tell you what kind of a person I am? You might not guess it, but I am really very patient and matured. So, you can tell me what's on your mind and I will listen, without judging.

Oh, you want rather me to speak? Ok, I can do that. In fact, there is something weighing on my mind for quite some time. How long? Is that important? Well, since we allegedly "broke up". I don't agree to that conclusion, mind you. But coming back to what I was saying, something has been playing on my mind.

Did you know that once we almost got married? Ok, ok, engaged, not married, we almost got engaged, but it was a very close affair. Then it didn't come to pass. So, I was thinking that if I could just somehow bring that point of time back, who knows? What do you say?

Details? Forget about the details. I am telling you that it could work. If only we could be together, everything will become better, by and by. Couples do fight sometimes, married couples more so, don't they? So even if we have some fights, in the end we will always make up. And I unconditionally promise, I give my solemn word of honour to have a check on my temper and think before blabbering. I'll zip it next time, I promise! Only if she would come to me and say all is well between us, just like

it used to be! I promise I will make everything perfect this time around. All I ask, all I need is a second chance. Is it too much to wish?

#### Act 4

By the way, I was thinking of mixing myself a drink, would you care for one? No? Suit yourself. I need one anyway. Too early to drink? Tell you what my friend, I don't think you understand what I am really going through here. I don't need your criticism uttered from your moral high ground. I don't have the energy to counter.

Do you understand that I am grieving? Do you even believe me? You do? And you say drinking is no solution? You know what? Somewhere deep down I agree, but right now I am not in any mood, in any frame of mind to rationalize this. All I know is that drinking makes me feel buzzed, and when I am buzzed, anything is possible. It is so easy to forget. Even her and me. It is so easy to find closure. It is so easy to want to live again.

What? Sorry, I was thinking about something, didn't notice I had gone all silent on you. This sometimes happen to me, my thoughts wander and I become very silent. Not that I am much of a talker anyway. What kind of thoughts? Difficult to explain or put into words. I wouldn't even know where to begin or what to say. What the hell! Who cares anyway?

Hey, do you want to join me for a reefer? That you can do, right? Oh, come on, it's just an old bias not to mix booze and pot. Unsubstantiated myth passed around as fact. There is no harm in it, I'm telling you. Trust me, I know. After all, I'm a veteran in these matters. Really nothing happens. Except you feel so on top of the world, floating in bliss where nothing can ever go wrong.

What? Oh yeah, this is my fourth drink now, so what? Let me drown in my gloom and please don't lecture me like you have nothing better to do.

Go easy on the booze? Talk with you instead? I am talking with you mate, ain't I? And also feeling so good. Why do you grudge me a little drinking? How can this be wrong when it feels so nice? Come let's not bicker over this. Come the reefer is rolled, do the honours and light it. No? Never mind, let me take a drag and we will continue.

Mmmmmmmmm, that's so better! Mmmmm.

Yes, so where were we? Finding closure? What closure? What are you talking about, man? Do you think you can just mess with my head because I had a few drinks and a reefer? Oh, yes, I remember it now. I was talking about her and me, right? There you are. See, I am not muddled at all.

You know, ever since she and I first came together, I had known that ours was a match made by destiny. Does saying that we are soulmates sound corny? So what if it does? It's the truth anyway!

Why did she go away? Where is she now? What is she doing? Who is she with? Oh, all these questions torment me, night and day. Did you hear that song by Labyrinth? I am not the jealous kind, mind you. But I simply wept when I heard it for the first

time. Let me play it for you, man. You'll love it too. Ahh. What do you say? Isn't it the greatest song ever? Hmm hmm hmm hmm ... "happy without me"...

You know, this is how most of my weekday evenings and almost all my weekends go. I sit with myself, my drinks and my weed, and time flies away with this playlist on a loop. I am good at it too. Really. I have great control, so I show no effect at work. Some of them talk, I know. Behind my back. People always talk. As if I care. I don't give a damn as long as they let me live my life in peace and don't interfere.

Yes, of course. Was that a question? Sorry, I thought it was obvious. Of course, I binge in the weekends. How else would I go on with this irksome drudgery? Daily routines tire me so much, so easily.

Many of my long weekends happen due to them starting early on a Friday or ending late on a Sunday, spilling on to Monday. When people feign interest and sometimes ask me what I do over my long weekends, which are, I am afraid, quite frequent, I tell them I go for long drives. I am a good storyteller, you know that, right? So if anyone asks, I make up a story. Sometimes they are good stories too.

So what was I talking about? I just lost a little thread here. Thinking about one fantastic weekend we had at the beach, her and me. We had so much fun. We had always wanted to go again, but...

What now? Do you know you change track so bloody much that anyone would have difficulty to follow you?

So where was I? Yes, yes I often have long weekends. Same old story of drinking and pot. Did I tell you that there used to be a time when I only drank seldom and socially? And weed, never. Huh! What do you say to that?

Yes, so I am on my ninth drink and also had a couple of reefers to go with them already. What's the question here? Going too fast? Hey, could you please stop mothering me? This is how you irritate me. By being a fussy. I am not going to collapse and die, ok? So, just relax. Everything is fine.

It's funny, you know, how your mind wanders when you are sitting on your own. No one knows why I do this. Truth? I long to ease into unconsciousness. But I never do. So all I have is getting high and a general feeling of being lost, and next morning hangovers. I wish I could be utterly oblivious to the pain eating away inside of me, but I simply can't. I envy those who can pass out, you know.

It's my heart that actually aches like a physical affliction. Do you know who said that the heart was merely a muscle to pump blood, and not the seat of emotions as popularly pretended by romantics in their conceit? Buddy, I am not drunk. Seriously. A little tipsy, yes, but not drunk. No, no I am not asking pop quiz because I am drunk. I am still quite sober. I think so. Hmm hmm ... "could it be worse" ... hmm hmm hmm ... "fix you" ... Beautiful, isn't it how these songs can so well capture and express what you want to say? I wonder sometimes at the genius of it all!

So, you were saying something.

Who said what? Oh my question. What was it? Oh yeah, she said that to me one time when I had called to beg her to take me back. I swallowed my pride, and grovelled. Cried in the phone and accepted everything as my fault. Don't believe me? I swear to you it's true. Wait, something is wet, I think I have spilled some drink. No? Oh, I'm crying!

Where's my handkerchief? Oooops, dropped it. Sorry. Thanks buddy. I don't know why I am crying. Tears often well up and stream down after I get really high. I think I am really high now.

And how did you know that already? Slurred speech? Me? Is it so? Sorry.

I think we must be best chums. None of my other friends know this side of me. Not that I have many friends, though. Ha ha. You knew that too, didn't you? Would you be a real pal, and not tell anyone else? Yes, yes, I am crying again, I know. Thank you, my dearest friend, for just being here and listening to me.

I will tell you a secret now. So listen carefully. I have not said this to another living soul. One minute, why is my glass empty? How long? Really? Wait a minute, wait a minute, I think I have another bottle stashed somewhere. Ahh, got it!

Yes, so I was saying that this is a secret, ok? So, you cannot tell anyone about it. I have found out a secret about myself. I know for certain that all my sorrow and my drinking and my smoking pot are part of a weird dream, like a nightmare. Not make believe kind, but real nightmare. Just like in Inception, I will wake up soon and I will find everything is alright again. Her. Me. Our love. Our life. This is what I really believe. All I have to do is find that point of time when reality and dreams got reversed. What do you say?

The only one really serious question is - do I have to kill myself to wake up? Is that the answer? Hush. Let this be our secret. What, am I crying again?

## **Act 5**

I wish I could turn back the clock and bring the wheels of time to a stop.

I would then know exactly what to do, when to do it and also how. There was a time when I used to pray so hard for this wish to come true somehow. But it's a hard fact that I can't. No one can. We are men of the world, aren't we? So let's be practical.

You know when I watched Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind, I was so livid at the movie. It offered a solution that was imagined, not real. I cannot erase my memory and start over as if nothing has happened. So I am always cursed with the knowing of how things were, and what could have been, and how it can never again be like that now. Only if I could change everything, only if I had the power of time. Oh, I hated the Doctor Strange movie for the same reason. Impractical crap!

So, what are you left with when there is nothing else to do? It is said that we are the architects of our own destiny. We can do anything, we can be anyone. It's a lie, you know. One of the greatest con of man. It's just said because otherwise people, in general, would become frustrated and go insane without the promise of hope. Optimism is so overrated!

We are encouraged to dream, when that is all it is – a dream which is not real and can not be true. We are encouraged to hope, when that is just like any other drug taking you high to flights of fancy but nothing is ever fulfilled actually. We are encouraged to believe that faith is rewarded, eventually, if only you would invest your trust in it. I have come to realise the futility of all these fantasies they sell. They are good at their job too, because so many times I have caught myself almost give in by listening to them and start believing the mirage of hope they construct.

It's all a matrix. Designed to deceive us. So seductive is its cloying charm that we hardly question it. And why would we when things are going well with us? And when they don't, there is always hope. I have thought and thought hard about all this. And I have come to the conclusion that hope is the most damning poison of all. A Greek philosopher once said, a couple of millennia back, that hope is the most universal feeling that remains locked in human heart even when all is lost. A more modern philosopher, one I agree with, suggested that hope is only necessary as without it, despair would be incomplete!

Silly sentiments? No, sentimentalism is past. I have come to the very edge of my reason. And now I have a clear vision of everything about and around me. I accept the world as it is, as I also accept that I am not part of this world, I just don't fit. And to me there is no greater sin than to try matching round pegs and square holes, just because conformity is a comfortable tendency.

Sometimes I think that life with all its manifestations is really an aberration. Only because we are so afraid of our lack of immortality. Life, as we know it, is a desperate plea, seeking attention so as not to be forgotten, not to be ignored. It was an accident that started life, and like a disease it has spread. But it is such a mind-numbing pleasant sensation, that while we will eagerly put on arms to defeat any other virus, we will not take any action against the cancer called life. And instead of hypocrisy, we will actually call this inaction a triumph!

I am now sure why my two earlier attempts on my life were botched. Because I was still clinging to infantile hope of love, of life, of a meaning to it all where there was none. It was sickening the regret, the denial, the unrealistic fear to open myself to the possibility that after all, there is no meaning. In this world. To our life. For our rainbow of emotions. I see it now. And frankly, I am not scared anymore. It's rather a sense of relief.

What would I do then, you ask? I have made up my mind. I know exactly what I am going to do. A quote comes to mind. "*It is a far, far better thing that I do, than I have ever done; it is a far, far better rest that I go to, than I have ever known.*" Apt, isn't it?

I am really being pragmatic here. Not romanticising about being an ordinary guy with an ordinary life with an ordinary wish with an ordinary end. I am merely going to a finish line predestined for me, like every other living form in this planet, on the day, the very moment I came into existence. What is anything romantic about it? Believe me if you can that there is no vanity in being killed by love!

And other drugs. Literally. Spent all my savings to procure these. I will sit then, just with myself, with my playlist on loop as usual, and open my full bottle of whiskey. Much better to use it instead of water to gulp down the drugs. Very potent as I was assured by the guy who sold me these, and warned, with a dubious wink, not to take them all at once. And then I'll drift away to sleep. A rest from which I won't have to wake up again and face this world.

So, it's goodbye my friend. Goodbye!

**Postscript:** Found. Face down on the pillow. And, scribbled almost illegibly this note - "I'll love her till I -".

“So?”

“Mmmmmmm... *I love this pizza. Nice. Remind me to order it next time too.*”

“Well?”

“*What’s the matter with you? You hardly ate. What?*”



*“Well, how did you like it?”*

*“Like? Oh, your story, right. Well, it was nice.”*

*“That’s all you have to say?”*

*“What more do you want me to say? It was nice. Honestly though, not very original, the ending was inane, but overall really nice.”*

*“Why do you have to do it all the time? Make me seem insignificant? Can’t you feel anything? Don’t you understand what I am feeling?”*

*“Oh, please. Don’t start all this drama. I am tired of it. Nowadays you have become so boring. There is nothing new to talk about or do. Most of what you write, they suck. You have nothing new to say. But god forbid if I say anything to contradict your vanity or refuse to stroke your ego.”*

*“So my writing is not good enough, huh? What’s wrong with it? Come on, say it now that you have started it.”*

*“See? That’s all you get from what I’m trying to say here. It’s impossible to have a sensible conversation with you. This is beyond childish. Can we have this talk later, please? Or never, if possible? I didn’t use to have migraines earlier, you know?”*

*“Oh. Oh.”*

*“See? Drama again. Stop it. Seriously. Why must everything be always about you or how good you are at your hobby? For god’s sake, stop acting up. Or I will just leave.”*

*“Oh.”*

*“Ok, so I am full. Do you want the last piece of the pizza?”*

*“Goddammmmit!”*

*“That’s it. That’s just it.”*

*“Sorry, sorry, I am really sorry, it was a mistake, really I didn’t mean it like that, don’t leave, please don’t. It’s ok, everything is good. I am sorry, please. Don’t go. Please, please, pleeeaaase...”*

*“Why did I have to open my big mouth? I should have been more careful and not rock the boat. She did say it was nice, didn’t she? What am I to do now? Oh god, she has switched off her phone. Why did she do that? All I did was call her because she left in that foul mood. Ok, ok, I called her twenty-three times in ten minutes or so.*

*But she didn't pick up the phone, so I called, and now I cannot get through to her.  
What to do? What to do? Oh god, what am I to do now? I wish, oh how I wish I  
could turn back the clock ...."*

**The End**

DC

Workstation @ office, smartphone, friend's laptop

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