

# *in november*

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*ode to puppy love*

drawing our baths, lining up roses,  
making your favorite dinner: spaghetti with lobster pomodoro  
just for you, dear  
since i am the chef you made me out to be.

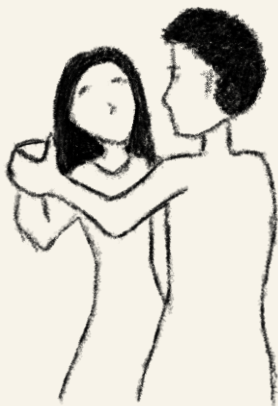
spiraling my hair  
with glittered clips,  
one on each side.

dressed in deep red—garnet, if you will,  
with my 6-inch pumps  
just as you requested.

all of this is all for you  
with all my love from all my heart  
and all my energy from all my soul

everything i have done is all for you  
*just* for you

i hope you're happy



***he can't sing for shit***

when he's really happy, he tries to sing.

even through the tone-deaf tunes  
and not being able to hit any note,  
it sounds like a beautiful melody to me.

typically, if anybody else were to be singing horribly,  
i would tell them to shut the fuck up.

with him it's different.

this type of love  
drifts into a daydream  
in a universe where it's just us  
drinking champagne while we watch  
the paint-brushed sky  
cast shades of pink, orange, and yellow

i'm creeping toward the edge of the cliff  
where i'll fall tragically into a pit of mad love  
just as his dramatic decrescendo  
leads us to silence.

if i can tolerate his dreadful singing  
as he careens through *Fly Me to the Moon*,  
as if all the birds chirp along with him,  
but truly all the dogs are howling.

i'm probably in love with him.



*guilt trip*

i like pretending.

sometimes i pretend i'm the only one in this world. the only one  
who walks through the dim lit streets in the middle of a november night,  
containing my shivers until i just can't anymore.

sometimes i pretend nobody can see me just as i see them,  
observing through an invisible cloak designed  
just for me  
— a cloak that keeps me warm on those raw november nights.

sometimes i pretend i don't feel anything. i can't feel the burn of their fist  
striking my back  
or the anxiety that floods my brain at the thought of them.  
i pretend not to feel my stomach turning at the sight of them  
— not where you're excited to see someone you love,  
but more like you'll vomit and collapse.

sometimes i pretend some things didn't happen.  
not in the silly way  
where you try to erase an embarrassing moment,  
but in never wanting to relive that instance ever again.

i don't know how i survived their murderous intentions. i think  
i just barely snuck away through a small opening  
in the corner of a hollow room.  
it wasn't a feeling of relief that consumed me when i escaped,  
but a feeling of guilt  
— as if i was meant to stay there and bear my fate.

escaping was my fate, and i've bore it ever since.

i like pretending. it makes things easier.

## *seasonal lovesickness*

we met at the beginning of summer. it was warm and your presence felt the same. i don't think there was a single day spent without each other, even if we were quietly sitting. young love is so sweet sometimes, like strawberries by the poolside. and there we were, by the poolside, laying with one another talking about whatever it is that teenagers talk about.

when we were together i heard the lovebirds chirping at my window every morning, urging me to get out of bed. you were smart, charming, and *absolutely* gorgeous (of course, which definitely helped) - it's safe to say that you swept me off my feet. every song, every drive, and every conversation reminded me of you - or maybe you were just always on my mind.

i must admit, i was scared. who wouldn't be? you seemed perfect and i was just 19, still unsatisfied with my path in life. i felt like you were such a good thing that came at such a wrong time, but right person wrong time doesn't exist.

summer came to an end, but we were still growing. i don't know if we were growing with each other or away from one another, but we thought we were heading in the right direction. you checked off one box after another on my mental dream guy list - but maybe there were more unchecked boxes than i had realized.

before we knew it, the warmth faded as fall began - and i think we did too. but i remember you bought me that emerald necklace and i bought you that ruby ring. we looked at each other, sparkling.

we were cute - seemingly the perfect fall couple. we played with orange leaves and laughed until the sun sank into the grass, stargazing and talking until two in the morning. neither of us noticed how time slipped away, not just for the world.

all the leaves fell off each tree as november passed, leaving them naked to the bare cold. as the leaves fell, our love did too, and once the ground was covered with ice, our hearts were too. i'm sure if you could look beneath the piles of snow, you could see our monthly picnics and where we planted that cherry blossom tree.

there we were, in the dead of winter, alone. away from one another, but not heartbroken, because we both knew it was meant to happen. our love was only meant to last just as long as a season would - and then linger until the final bits of warmth did. as the seasons changed, so did we.

new beginnings are approaching - spring is here. i saw you walking near our spot today, where the cherry blossom tree has now bloomed and you're still wearing that ruby ring. but i can't say much about it because i'm still wearing that emerald necklace. i guess love didn't die like the trees in winter, it just faded until it was ready to bloom elsewhere.



*ode to my love*

no more dancing in the moonlight  
no staying up til two in the morning  
expressing how we feel.

i don't get ready anymore  
tried it last week and you didn't notice.  
spiraled my hair  
while you walked right past  
like a participation ribbon  
at the bottom of your mother's drawer

i threw those 6-inch pumps  
in the back of my closet,  
since i blistered up my feet  
just for me to be taller than you?

no more for you.  
i'm done doing for you  
took off the rose-colored glasses  
and realized my own happiness  
not yours.



## *trouble(d)*

i met her during the sunny days  
when we laughed with and at each other  
and blue skies wrapped around us  
with no clouds to fog our happiness.  
her smile was unmissable shining bright like the sun  
and her glow complimented by a pink tint on her cheeks,  
her colorful personality reminded me of the sunset  
as she radiated a mix of yellows, oranges, and pinks  
happiness filled her to the brim.

soon enough in november the leaves turned red  
and as they fell to the ground, so did she;  
her strong roots couldn't hold themselves up anymore.  
i no longer knew her and  
i hadn't heard her laugh in a while.  
her smiled slowly drifted and her cheeks lost color  
as the pink turned grey and her nail polish chipped away  
as if the frost had bit her - hard - and watched her light  
bleed out.

she lost herself just as the weather lost its warmth  
but in her case, nobody was prepared for her bleakness  
as winter came, she never told anyone why her lips turned blue,  
why her heart shriveled up or why her fingers withered  
she just froze up, unable to tell us why she couldn't speak  
without her teeth chattering, preventing her from telling us the truth  
the only part of her that dared not change were her brown eyes  
still looking like honey but now mixed with pain  
i saw her frozen tears through the warm facade of her eyes.

the heat of words left unsaid have burned me since november.



## *Love, Rue*

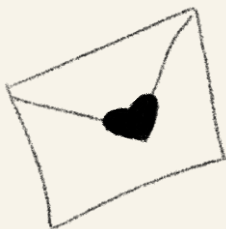
sometimes i think of you  
and the nights we spent together  
we sat in the darkness  
and laughed at the brevity of life.

you told me to let loose for once  
and i did just that  
                    for you  
but maybe i took it too far.

i forgot the difference between  
unwinding and running away and  
it wasn't until i was across the world  
that you disappeared behind my shoulder.

i was your muse and you:  
an illusion that  
left without a goodbye  
and kept me running from you.

i tried to forget you  
and the dismay you left behind  
as if it were your signature written as  
                    “Love, Rue.”



each day grew colder,  
    nights grew darker,  
        and trees grew barer.  
            i took a stroll (or two)  
                through memory lane  
            because i knew i'd  
                run into you.  
        a few times,  
i did pass you,  
    but we missed each other  
        by a millisecond.  
            i kept running to you,  
                lost in the forest  
            of forgotten trees,  
                searching out your warmth  
        to shelter me from  
the frigid air you left behind.  
    we weren't meant to be  
        no matter how hard we tried,  
            running around in circles,  
                a connection inside.  
            i've loved you before.  
                *whatever our souls are made of,*  
                *yours and mine are the same.*  
i think we both know,  
    that when we meet  
        in another life,  
            i know it will be  
                in november.

