

Introduction

A History Of Dating and Breakups

Dumped, ditched, split, separated, parted ways, ended, severed...finito.

It's over.

Maybe it happened last night or maybe you've spent the past few weeks schlepping through the ice cream aisle in the grocery store in your flannel PJs and fuzzy pink slippers hoping the clerks aren't keeping tabs on how many gallons of chocolate chip cookie dough you've bought this month. Hey, at least it's not chardonnay (or is it?).

I totally get it.

You've been camped out on the kitchen floor crying into your empty tub of "chocolate therapy." You feel sad, alone, worthless; trying to decipher how the heck this happened. You've listened to his final message a dozen times, hanging onto his every word like it's your last drink of water on "Misery" Island. You keep thinking that maybe he'll have a change of heart and realize what a colossal mistake he's made and beg you to come back.

I understand exactly how you feel—thick in the forest of “ick”—and I know exactly how to get you out. Because of all my breakup knowledge, there’s one thing I know—he actually did you a favor.

Which may sound like one of those trite things that your oh-so-smart girlfriend might say, but it’s the truth.

You may not believe it now, but you will. That’s just what we’ll work toward together, as you read this book.

I wrote it to help you because I have seen it all.

I’ve dated guys who needed to find themselves; guys who decided they’d rather be friends with benefits; moochers, including a guy who dumped a Snickers bar on a convenience store counter when I was checking out and said jokingly, “Thanks mom.” (ugh); mama’s boys; guys who’ve said, “I’m falling too fast for you and I’m scared” (I believed them); and my super-duper specialty: the quintessential player. Yep. I’m the good girl who was always falling for the bad boys.

I’ve been on *both* sides of the breakup hammer with producers, promising politicians, professional dancers, prop guys, directors, writers, actors, waiters, store managers, stock boys, musicians, and once, a magician who moonlighted as a donut finisher. Yeah, really.

Through every breakup, I believed every lame-ass excuse, took all their phone calls, cried my ass off, lost weight, and gained weight. After months of sadness and serious self-doubt, I’d pull myself out of the muck and throw myself back into the dating pool, only to get my heart busted again by the same type of guy (more on that later).

Then one day, I finally met my Prince Charming.

With this guy, I believed I’d found true love. He was handsome, charming, and successful. When he proposed, I was

sure he was The One. We got married at the Four Seasons in Maui and I wore Vera Wang. Two years later, when I got pregnant, I thought my happily-ever-after was complete...

...until I found out my husband was having an affair. I was eight months pregnant.

At that point, he had become my entire world. I had no friends, no job, and no life of my own. All I had was this baby. The one we created together after two arduous years of trying. Now here was this man whom I had made the center of my universe, standing in front of me while my back was literally up against the wall, telling me he wanted out. I couldn't believe it. I couldn't believe the man I loved and cherished would do this to me.

I couldn't believe I had it so wrong.

When my husband left, my self-worth was at an all-time low. My emotions were a twisted mess. I was embarrassed and ashamed about my situation. I'd go about my day, putting up a good front, but the moment I got home, I'd have another meltdown. My life was over (or so I thought).

During much of this time I worked as a voice-over actress in film and television from *Street Fighter* to *Xena: Warrior Princess*. I played tough, kick-ass heroines who battled the most vengeful villains and won, every time. But I was losing the battle in my own life. The bad guy (aka, my ex) seemed to be winning, and I was doing nothing to stop my own self-destruction.

When my daughter was born, everything changed. It changed the way I saw myself, the way I saw my life, and how I was going to live it from here on.

A month later, I woke up one morning and these words popped into my head: "He Did You a Favor." Those five

simple words lifted the gorilla of self-loathing off my chest and allowed me to officially move forward with a clear purpose: to let go of him and find myself. I hit the brakes on my self-loathing and began to take charge of my life.

How did I do it? It started with letting go of obsessing about something I couldn't control—my ex and the relationship. Instead, I focused on what I could control—myself. I paid attention to my thoughts, stopped fixating on him, asked for help, and started taking better care of myself. I worked at it every day, rebuilding my fragile self-esteem, until I emerged confident, happy, and loving myself in ways I never had before.

I realized all that cartoon warfare taught me something about standing up for myself. It also taught me not to back down from a challenge no matter how bad it got. I was finally able to seize my sword and become the Warrior Princess I was always meant to be.

It was also during this time that miracles happened. Not only did I have this miraculous, new relationship with myself, I developed one with my ex-husband as well. My relationship with my ex became a new, but different, storybook ending—we became loving, supportive friends who helped each other through our own divorce and now have a terrific co-parenting relationship. Additionally, I got incredible new friends, started writing again, and launched a successful screenwriting coaching business.

My life changed in ways I never imagined. I'm now in a relationship with a guy who treats me like the awesome woman I am (yes, I can say that about myself now without throwing up). I'm doing what I love. And I've got an incredible daughter who inspires me every day.

Which leads me to the purpose of this book; and why it's time for you to read it.

You can do this, too. You don't have to go through years of bashing that heartless husband who cheated, the boyfriend who left you in Italy, or the date-from-hell who made you feel like crap and ducked out on dinner leaving you holding the check. The truth is, obsessing about him only hurts you, keeps you spinning in circles, and prevents you from fully becoming the awesome woman you're meant to be. It's time to break free from being locked in a relationship that no longer serves you.

The truth is you are loved.

The truth is you can overcome anything.

The truth is you are a powerful superwoman.

Even after the most devastating breakup, you can come out a winner, too. And right now is the best time to start because...

He did you a big favor!

This breakup happened in order for you to learn and grow. It happened so you can have a more fulfilling life. It happened so you can learn how to have more satisfying relationships and attract men who'll treat you like the amazing woman you are.

Here's the thing about every guy I've ever dated: I can see now that each of them did me a huge favor. I'm grateful because every experience taught me something about myself and brought me to where I am today—happier, healthier, and stronger than I've ever been in my life. For that I can thank each and every one of them.

Now, if you're still looking for a bitch-fest about the guy who dumped you, then go grab a girlfriend, a bottle of chardonnay, and your breakup ice cream, and have at it—go ahead, get it all out. Then read this book; because this isn't about focusing on what's wrong about your breakup, but on what's right.

So let's get busy healing your broken heart and living a joyful life, instead of killing yourself by drowning in an emotional sea of self-wallowing and shame because of the jerky guy who dumped you, who wasn't worthy of you to begin with. Use this breakup as fuel to empower you, and you will be much better for it. Trust me. I'm living proof. Now grab your sword, Warrior Princess, and let's slash this sucker out of your life.