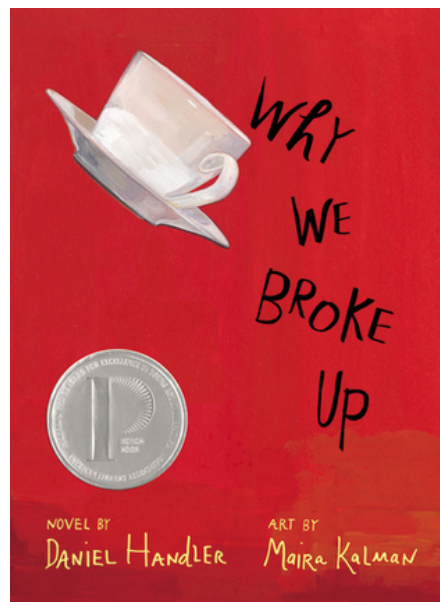




Why We Broke Up

Daniel Handler , Maira Kalman (Illustrator)

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I'm telling you why we broke up, Ed. I'm writing it in this letter, the whole truth of why it happened.

Min Green and Ed Slaterton are breaking up, so Min is writing Ed a letter and giving him a box. Inside the box is why they broke up. Two bottle caps, a movie ticket, a folded note, a box of matches, a protractor, books, a toy truck, a pair of ugly earrings, a comb from a motel room, and every other item collected over the course of a giddy, intimate, heartbreaking relationship. Item after item is illustrated and accounted for, and then the box, like a girlfriend, will be dumped.

Why We Broke Up Details

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From Reader Review Why We Broke Up for online ebook

Aj the Ravenous Reader says

3.5 stars

What happens when an “arty”, “different” kind of girl like Min dates a popular, selfish prick like Ed? Why We Broke Up happens. ^^

Remember how your English teacher brought out the artistic and literary side of you when she/he tricked/forced you into telling something about yourself through show and tell? This book is kind of written that way. It is about a box of Ed Slaterton treasures Min Green collected during the entire course of their relationship.

It is a very cute concept with the matching illustrations that made the entire thing interesting. The book is basically one long letter written by Min to Ed and in it she explains how each token inside the box contributed to the reasons why they broke up. Broken and emotional, you could truly feel every emotion of Min through her narrative. She uses appealing imagery and vivid descriptions that will remind you of that time when you were experiencing the worst or perhaps most painful break up. The long, almost endless run-on sentences which she kept using reflect her raw and honest feelings, her anger at her experience, at Ed and even at herself. It's also very interesting how she relates every incident to scenes from classic movies. The only thing that annoyed me is her out of place cursing. ^^

But this book is so much more than just what it is because it teaches you how to face a break up and how to move on in such a healthy manner. Of course, you can always go for the easy way out and that is to maybe do this?!

and this...

and this...

and...you got my point. Lol. ^^

But what better way to release your emotions than write? Once upon a time, I did something that slightly resembles what Min did. I can't believe I'm sharing it now but well, here goes nothing.

ANTIDOTE

*I was so naive
How could I believe*

*Everything you said
Should have used my head*

*You asked for a chance
Deceived me with your glance
Into your evil spell
Unfortunately I fell!*

*My reason in oblivion
Forgot I had opinion
I drank your poisoned potion
Caught in lifeless motion*

*In my nearly endless slumber
Just about as long as forever
A drop of antidote from nowhere
Awakened I am elsewhere...*

*A loud sigh of relief I exclaimed
From sure doom I was saved
Vulnerable- I shall be never
I have discovered the permanent cure!*

Kim says

I have never experienced a break up.

You know, one of those, 'she doesn't have to have her fresh young fellows tape back, but there's not a long of things that she'll take back' kind of break up or the 'And I'm here to remind you of the mess you left when you went away-It's not fair to deny me of the cross I bear that you gave to me' angsty throw yourself across the room break up. Or the pathetic 'It's been seven hours and 15 days / since you took your love away'- no... can't say that I have... unless you count being widowed but that wouldn't be fair, right? No, the only thing close is losing my virginity to a guy who I had been 'dating' (I guess I thought that was what it was) and then having him not call me for like 2 weeks and me not calling him and then him going off and ending up with some slutty girl that wrote a famous blog turned book and discussed having sex with him in weird ass places...and he wasn't even that good!

Nope, I am one of those that never really tried so never really had to deal with the whole dramarama of break up. My god, if any of you know me, I can't even handle it when Leonardo finds Claire Danes in that ruined church! I break down when people mention Treat Williams dying in Hair instead of John Savage! I am a pussy. I know this...

So, what do I do? I read books. I read books that break my heart, that make me wistful for that time when time goes by so fast when you're with *the one* and when girls sit in their rooms staring out their window for months waiting for their shiny vampire to remember her. I read books that detail breakups through music and

death and stupid high school crap reasons. And, I love them. I really really do. I must really hate myself.

Why we Broke Up. I should have known, right? But, there's a great illustration of a coffee cup on the cover and I love coffee and angst, so....

Min is writing Ed a letter... that's what this book is... a break up letter. Wow, I've always imagined being the scorned one who wrote clever, hurtful things to a boy that broke my heart. In fact, I did do this with my husband who was not yet my husband. I did it like 5 times.... Finally he just started lying and said he didn't get the letters, it must have gotten lost in the mail, what was I talking about? Yeah... smart one, that guy. But, those letters were awesome.... They don't compare to this letter though. This letter comes with a treasure box of collected memories and illustrations of items in that box. This letter is like if Griffin and Sabine were to call it quits. (did they? Never got that far.) Min is everything that I wish or thought or wished I thought I was in high school. She's different. She's in love with old movies and lives her life through scenes that make Catherine driving Jim off a cliff leaving Jules to raise Sabine look like Meatballs II. I can relate to Min, I can appreciate her innocence and her blindness and her pain. I can want to kick Ed in the balls and cut off his hands so he never plays basketball again. I would do this for Min. Because, as her friend Al says 'What's the use of friendship?' if you can't dismember people for people you love.

I won't quote from this book because it's one long high school lament that should be read in full. I can tell you that pages 336, 337 and 338 is my new mantra. It will take me awhile to get that down but it will be worth it. I will also tell you about this website... and I will quote from one of the posts because I hate myself for not writing this and I encourage you to write your own and let me know... because I'm a sucker for a good break up story.

Xoxoxo

Do not read this break up story. Close your eyes. Turn off your laptop. Do not read this particularly miserable break up story. Hug a skunk that has lost a battle with the semi whose driver was too busy eating a ham sandwich he picked up from the tiny diner with the one light above the day old donuts that were flickering exactly in tune with the polka music playing quietly from the radio belonging to the man in the corner smoking a pipe for some unhygienic reason. Hug that poor, dead skunk because it will be more pleasurable than reading this dreadful, tired breakup story. Turn around now. You still have time. Pretend your eyes never fell upon these words and leave your home right now to talk to your local government representative about pulling all military funding to turn public buses in to ice cream trucks. Ask him to abolish marriage for group hugs. Suggest all textbooks smell like fresh cookies. Buy a kitten on your way home, take him to dinner and pretend you never laid eyes on this break up story. You still have time. I warned you.

I wasn't dead. Now you are.

Now, to lighten the mood... here's an awkward family photo. Happy Dating.

Jon says

My old review was pretty terrible so one of these days I'll rewrite it!

Maureen says

Book #3 for booktubeathon 2017

Wowee I'm sad but it's the good kind of sad I think? So many things so many things.

1. Ed is the worst
 2. I love Min
 3. I have never experienced that kind of heartbreak and break up and I hope I NEVER DO.
 4. I enjoyed the writing style for the most part even though sometimes it got to be a little too much and I felt my eyes skipping down past to the next part.
 5. All in all pretty good.
-

❄️Nani❄️ says

0.5??

WOW. Oh wow.

What an astonishingly infuriating... girl (and not the word I'm actually thinking of).

He treats her like trash and she.... goes with it. SHE JUST TAKES IT!!!

Ohhhh, AND!! Of course she has a best friend who treats her like gold and is madly in love with her but, does she give him a second thought??... that's right - You guessed it!! Blockhead.?

And the thing is, I would've accepted it all—kill me as it might—had there been some kind of a lesson or anything resembling that at the end (you know, accountability or ANYTHING) but nothing got sorted (THE WAY IT SHOULD HAVE BEEN!) and that crap of an ending.... WOW! Yeah...NO. ABSOLUTELY NOT! What the fuck kinda lesson is that?? I can't even get into it... Ughh

If I could ask for anything bookish this Christmas it'd be an invention of some sort that'd allow you to bitchslap a sense or two into a character. ???? One can hope...

Carolina Stroschein says

• "My hymen is extremely flammable" •

Debo admitir que me compré este libro por los dibujitos (♥) y, sin siquiera haber leído la contratapa, lo empecé a leer. Ya desde el comienzo, me sorprendió mucho la originalidad de la historia, es decir, que la protagonista le diera cierre a su relación con Ed Slaterton poniendo todos los objetos que de alguna forma u otra estuvieran ligados a su pasado en una caja y devolviéndosela:

Como si eso fuera poco, cada objeto cuenta una historia y es así como Minnie va reconstruyendo los hechos y haciendo catarsis a la vez: diciéndole a Ed en una carta todo lo que siempre quiso y no le pudo decir.

El libro me pareció súper inspirador, al punto de creer que, en muchos casos, sería muy necesario escribir ciertas cartas y devolver ciertos objetos a sus dueños originales.

Alexa says

I read up to page 41 in *Why We Broke Up*, and I could not bring myself to read more. I felt like the story was going so fast, and I got irritated with Min's voice (the story is a letter Min wrote to her ex-boyfriend, some jock guy from her school called Ed). And Ed? Who? I couldn't even picture him in my head. Seriously, I just saw a blob. I even skimmed to see why they broke up, and it was very annoying. If I actually read the entire book, I'm pretty sure I would have gotten a headache.

Now, with the way Min talked...or how the author wrote. I did not like the writing AT ALL. This was the main reason I didn't like this book. There were many run-on, *never-ending* sentences....!! I started thinking, 'AHHH! MAKE IT STOP! IT'S TOO LONG! SOMEONE GET ME A PEN SO I CAN SCRIBBLE IN PERIODS!' And by the time I was done with those crazy did-not-even-make-any-sense sentences, I couldn't even remember what I read. It also didn't help that the ARC was pretty heavy to hold.

Thanks Crystal for letting me borrow it; I wish I had liked it, but unfortunately, I couldn't finish it. :(

Tatiana says

This breakup story has a nice premise, but the narrator, as written by Daniel Handler (aka Lemony Snicket), is too artsy/quirky/hormonal/annoying for my taste. Her penchant for run-on sentences and pages-long angst-filled paragraphs is hard to appreciate. The dialog is mostly annoying too.

It is worth mentioning though, that this book got starred reviews from pretty much every major professional review publication. So I am clearly going against the grain here.

Hannah says

This book will make you fall in love and then break up with you without a second glance. I loved it.

Jesse (JesseTheReader) says

I feel like I just went through a break up.

Ariel says

Wow. I haven't read something I so enjoyed in quite a long while.

I read this book with my friend Jesse. Every day we would set a target and read up until that point, sharing what we thought of that section, gushing or ranting. That experience was so much fun and it definitely added to the reasons why I loved it - it was something I shared with a friend.

However, this book didn't need that added loveliness for me to give it five stars. The biggest point of WOO for me is the writing. Daniel Handler really has his own style, and he can really work it. The novel read as a stream of consciousness, as a person thinking and feeling without the filters of editing and proper grammar. Some of the passages were so poetic, so well constructed, that I reread them. I never highlight things, never take notes while reading, but I did with this book. It was so deserving.

The plot can also not be forgotten. We are all aware, even before the book has started, that the two main characters will be splitting up. But I found myself searching for hope that maybe they could make it work, searching for loopholes. Even though I knew exactly where the plot was going, could even guess a bit of the ending, it still had me excited and intrigued.

Finally, the realism of this book. In a lot of ways it is instalove, but done ironically. In a lot of YA novels instalove isn't done on purpose.. the author simply doesn't know how to write love. In this, however, the instalove was bold and true. It was the reason that they had to break up. Because it's instalove. It isn't real. The characters too, had so many flaws that you don't often get to see with YA novels. I hated them sometimes, but relished in their flaws.

I loved this book. I enjoyed every moment of it. It had it's setbacks of course, there were several times when I was quite confused, not understanding what was going on, misinterpreting. But I think that might have been a bit on purpose. You can't understand everything.

What I do know is that I loved this book. Loved it loved it loved it.

Cece (ProblemsOfaBookNerd) says

I'm going to try to keep my review brief... I did not like this book. At no point in the book was I enjoying the process of reading it. The relationship felt ridiculous and nonsensical, and I spent the entire 375 pages wondering "why did they get together in the first place??" This question was never answered for me. The lead character, Min, was pretentious and unbearable. And every time a character said she was great because she was different, I wanted to throw the book across the room. I hated the "prose", if that's what you call 2-page paragraphs of metaphorical crap that's nearly impossible to follow. What I'm saying is that I really didn't like this book at all. We clear?

Ylenia says

I kind of feel bad for her about how it ended but yeah, this wasn't really for me, at all.

(I don't think I'm going to write an in-depth review on Why We Broke Up, but if you want one just ask.)

Reasons why I didn't like this book at all:

- I.** The author wasted all the potential of the book, because the idea and the art inside were really good but the rest is a big **nope**.
- II.** The writing style is just a mess. I don't why he decided to go for this type of writing but WTF, I skipped paragraphs and paragraphs. I wanted to DNF it after 50 pages or so.
- III.** I'm sorry but when I read that the relationship lasted for like a month I just couldn't take the book seriously. The number of times they say they love each other infuriated me.

IV. I couldn't stand any of the main characters, maybe Al was okay sometimes, but the author made another big mess with Min and her personality.

Do I recommend it to you?

Bern says

I'm going to tell you something, whoever-is-going-to-read-this-review,

if anybody will be reading this piece of junk that I am writing as I go at all. I'm going to tell you something, and you better believe me because I'm not one to give advice to strangers (unless they're lost on the subway, or wondering where the nearest KFC is. I *always* know where the nearest KFC is). I don't know how personal or convoluted this might get, but I guess it's what some people say, right? "The important thing is to try"? Never mind that those people are mostly losers, let's forget that for a moment.

Whatever it is that I end up telling you is going to start now, so if you're in dire need of a potty break, I suggest you do it quickly. Some serious feeling-dumping is about to take place here.

I honestly hated this book. For a while there, for who-knows-how-many-pages, I saw reading this pretentious bundle of heavy and colorful pages as a chore. I did. Thinking back to the time when I honestly wanted this book to burst in spontaneous combustion and who gives a damn about the 20 dollars I spent of my hard earned money on this piece of crap?, I can actually understand where all the hatred and deeply rooted annoyance came from.

Really, it makes sense. I hated this book right off the bat and I did so with reason because it wasn't what I expected. I wasn't really sure of what I expected, but it certainly was not *this*, all these dormant feelings just waiting around the corner to beat me in the head with a shovel, all these run-on sentences that ended up forming something eerily cohesive, all these words and words and more words and where's-this-damn-story-going?

I hated how the main character's - Min's - train of thought were literal train wrecks, I hated how everything was so pretentious and seemingly unreal, I hated the pages and pages and pages of run-on sentences depicting the most trivial, tedious stuff that had me doubting I could even finish what I'd initially dubbed a piece of utterly arrogant crap. In short, I wanted it gagged, tied up, driven to the woods in a shoddy pickup truck and shot dead.

But you see, the freakiest thing is that I didn't. Don't. Hate it, I mean. It's not my favorite book - although it could be, and maybe tomorrow it might, once all the haze that finishing it has got me on is gone. I don't really know what adjectives to attach to this book, because compared to its savvy way with words, nothing that I come up with right now will ever do it justice. What I *can* say, is that it was a thing of beauty. And that's not an adjective so don't give me that look like I'm pretentiously contradicting myself, thank you very much! But I'm veering off the point here:

This book didn't make me cry. It has, it seems, made lots of people cry, but not me. It did shock me, though. It made me tremble, gasp, and stare at it agape, like some that one idiot who wasn't in on his or hers surprise party. This book made my heart hurt. This book crushed my feelings and handed them back to me in a platter, shrugging when I asked what the hell was I supposed to do with them now, This book made me lots

of things but the one I liked the most - the one that stayed with me for as long as it could before I started dramatically PTSD'ing about it like a traumatized grandpa who fought in 'Nam back in the day and has seen it all - was that it made me smile.

As I said, the smile didn't last long - when you're this shocked about something, it's kinda hard to stop your mouth from freezing in a permanent "O". But it was there and it was beautiful and blissful and all those gushy things we see and watch and read about but never really happen to us - to me, at least. It was there and for one brief moment, I didn't want to let this book go. I didn't want to put it back on my shelf - the one it sits in now, still all pretentious-looking and looming over its lesser peers - and have it more than inches away from me. I fought back the overwhelming feeling, obviously, and I did win, kinda-sorta-not-really, but although I am not clutching it with my wishful fingers or staring at its cover like it just whispered dirty and unknown things in my ear, this book is *Why I Smiled*, an establishing shot of *The Idiot Who Made Assumptions That Weren't The Least Bit Right*, a whole box filled with insignificant feelings that I now give back to you, person-who-has-probably-not-read-thus-far.

Make what you want of this because I'm done. I am done and I never want to revisit this, not today, not ever, probably tomorrow.

Bernardo

Hassan says

when i saw that book in the bookstore i really liked how it looked, and the illustrations were amazing it was very tempting to buy, so i did buy it, not expecting for a book with this amazing illustrations and an author like Daniel Handler a.k.a leemony snicket, to be bad but sadly *All that glitters is not gold*.

i had a lot of major issues with this book like the second person point of view narrating, and the characters who didn't actually feel like humans, they're like a human qualities had been personified into *things*, and the side characters didn't have any significant role in the book.

and as i said the characters are not even characters, they talk like robots had been programmed to speak in specific range, and if the dialogue got out of that range, they keep repeating the same sentences over and over like the most stupid thing on earth.

i'm really disappointed in this book, it's my first leemony snicket book and it was a *series of unfortunate events* that i found myself really disliking from the first 100 pages, i didn't care about the character or the plot *if there's any* and frankly i kept reading mainly because of the illustrations

Oriana says

First, here's just one elided line—not even the most wonderful line, just a lovely one—out of a million beautiful lines that encapsulates why Daniel Handler is the most wonderful startlingly unique best ever: "You snacked away into the other room, and the rubber band sat in my hand, a loose worm, a lazy snake, a

wide-open lasso ready to rodeo something." Who writes like that? Who is more fantastic than Daniel Handler? No one, no one, no one. Holy goodness gracious this book is so good.

Another thing this book is is long. And now that I bike instead of subwaying and spend smoke breaks on my phone with the Facebook, it takes me way way longer to read things. So in the spirit of this beautiful brilliant book, which is the story of a collection of objects that together make up a few-month relationship, I will tell you about all the things I stuck between its pages over the month I was lugging it around.

postcard listing yoga classes at Body Actualized Center

I don't do yoga, but I do write Brooklyn Spaces, for which I interview crazy people doing crazy shit in Brooklyn. Body Actualized Center is a former chicken slaughterhouse remade into a yoga school and venue for "chill-out" parties. If you think that's neat, you can read an interview with the space's founder on my site [here](#).

business card for real estate agent Daniela H_____

My parents want me to try to buy an apartment. Because I live in Brooklyn, this is a laughably impossible idea, but I went so far as to answer a few of ads, and Daniela, a kind but firm Russian lady, showed me a couple of apartments that are the size of a postage stamp half a mile from any subway and cost a million dollars or so. Oh Brooklyn.

Old Navy coupon

I am way too morally superior to buy sweatshop-made, unfashionable, fall-apart-after-the-first-wash duds from this stupid store...except when I am really broke and super desperately need jeans. (I am not proud of this.)

business card for Laura _____ on the back of a Swedish Tarot card

Laura is an artist who is collecting \$1 million in losing lottery tickets, among other things. I met her at an art salon, and then I left the salon and biked around and met up with my boyfriend and we went for Chinese food, and there was Laura, sitting at the bar. Also, what a neat idea for a business card.

little menu for Mrs. Dorsey's Kitchen

This place has THE MOST AMAZING grilled cheese sandwiches, holy shit.

flyer for Hackertown

I guess I got this at the Maker Faire? It looks pretty rad, I should check them out.

scribbled bicycle directions to Maker Faire

That was a long-ass bike ride, but sooo worth it. Although also a reminder that Queens is a goddamn lot less bicycle-friendly than Brooklyn.

business card for Andrea _____

Met her at the Brooklyn Book Fest. She's the niece of one of the writers I work with at my weird day job, which is at a ghostwriting firm.

a paystub

Proof of how little money I make at my weird day job, and how I will never be able to buy an apartment or even another grilled cheese from Mrs. Dorsey's Kitchen. Fuck.

receipt for dog food

Goddamnit, dogs eat a lot.

receipt for cigarettes

Obviously a totally reasonable expense.

card for a tumblr called Poncili

I have no idea what this is or where I got it. The site is in Spanish, which I do not speak.

an actual bookmark with a watercolor of orange flowers

This is from one of those charities that send you hopeful packets stuffed with greeting cards and return address labels and tiny calendars to try to guilt you into giving them money. I was not so swayed.

another paystub

FML.

receipt from a bank deposit

The deposit was my paycheck, not a several-thousand-dollar mystery inheritance or gift from a secret admirer, alas.

statement saying that I owe my doctor's office \$___ for some tests I had done like six months ago

Um. I will pay this really soon.

and

a few tiny rhinestones

that fell off of a super cheap pair of jeans (who knows where *they* came from) and that I thought I should save to craft with.

And there you have it! A selection of detritus from a month of my life. If I were 1/100th as amazing as Daniel Handler, you would now know everything about me and my loves and my fears and my style and my friends and their weaknesses and struggles and triumphs. Also this would be 100x longer. And I would be able to afford a pair of jeans that are not morally reprehensible.

Raeleen Lemay says

This book was BEAUTIFUL and AMAZING, but something that bothered me was how some of the things Min talked about made me think the book should have been titled *Why We Shouldn't Have Dated in the First Place* . You can see how these things about Ed bothered her right from the beginning, but she just went with it anyway. grrrrr.

tiph says

Let me tell you, book, why we broke up.

You were in first person, the narrator being a girl who (constantly, constantly) was being called arty, different, and who always hated it, who always repeated herself and wrote in run on sentences like it would sound different. And that's why we broke up.

Her boyfriend, this different girl's boyfriend, is a jock, and quite clearly from day 1 an asshat and a loser, and

yet she dated him and loved him within two weeks of ever knowing him, and it was such a stupid and ludicrous thing for her to do, and that's why we broke up.

And to make matters worse, this girl, this Min, as her name is, turns out to be a sort of manic pixie dream girl who is inspiring the best in the jock. She's amazing, of course, but Handler didn't make her believable at all, not the way she had friends or didn't have them, or the way she planned things or did whatever she wanted while apparently being Jewish with an overprotective mother. We don't really get to know who she is other than two things: she's obsessed with films, arty films, and her entire identity apparently resides in her boyfriend. And that's why we broke up.

Also, most chapters ended with "and that's why we broke up," right after talking about something nice he did that had absolutely nothing to do with why they broke up. But you know, that's why we broke up.

Also I dislike books with extremely static characters. Especially if all the characters are static. Just, no.

And that's why we broke up.

Imani ♥ ? says

I did not finish this book.

Nor, do I have any intention of doing so.

I don't pretend to be an expert on Lemony Snicket or whoever. I did not read that 'series of unfortunate events' series and frankly, never plan on doing so, either. But I can say, that this author, has-theoretically-disappointed me.

It's not that the plot was bad...necessarily.

It's just that...the whole thing was very annoying. I didn't like the main characters. I didn't like how every little thing of every thing someone did had to be wry, sarcastic or overly angsty. I didn't like um...what's the guy's name? Rob? Joe? Something generic like that. I didn't like the narrator, either (which I think is important, don't you?). Wasn't her name Miranda or something? I don't know. I can't remember anyone's name.

But I suppose that doesn't really matter.

Because I did NOT finish this book. I've had it for what feels like years and it's cost me an arm and leg (4 bucks) at the library. And for what? Thirty pages worth of complaining? Thirty pages worth of 'this is why we broke up, bill' (or whatever his name is). I just hated it.

but....and this is a HUGE but...maybe i should give this book another chance in the future sometime. say, 2036?

oh...and why the heck was this thing so heavy??? i couldn't carry this anywhere --

Reynje says

Why We Got Together by Reynje

Dear ‘Why We Broke Up’,

It wasn’t that long ago that I thought I would be writing you a break-up letter. A terse, thanks-but-no-thanks, it’s-**not**-me-it’s-**you**-now-kindly-get-lost note. I can be acerbic when I’m annoyed and there it is, the admission, the honest truth that I thought you would annoy me.

It makes me wonder why I buy books sometimes, whether it’s truthfully the book itself I want or the simple act of acquisition I crave. Is it the words I tell myself I need, or just the covetousness that accompanies a rush of cover-lust? There you were on the shelf, distinct and red and beautiful - a waxy-covered, solid weight in my gluttonous hands. *I will have this book*, I thought, and I took you home.

But the longer I left you on my shelf the more I resented your smug presence. If ever a book could be self-satisfied, I thought it would be you. Your illustrations, your thick paper, your heavily-blurbed back cover lush with accolades. Everything about you from your painfully hip cover typeface to your “novel-by and art-by” declarations started to grate on me. This book, I told myself, is trying to *be something*. This isn’t a book, it’s a pre-packaged hipster experience, it’s something to be seen with, it’s something that wants to tell you what’s cool and how you should feel about it. Well, excuse me. I see enough of that on the city streets, I don’t need your judgement on my bookshelves as well.

So, I ignored you. Pushed you to the bottom of the stack, threw you over for other books time and time again. Occasionally, as I ran a searching finger down the column of spines I’d pause at yours. I’d feel guilty for owning a book I didn’t want to read, then assuage it by telling myself it was just that I wasn’t in the mood to read about intellectualised misery or the painful disintegration of a relationship.

Until one day, I was.

That’s not to say that I liked you from the first page, because I didn’t. I was wilfully resistant to your efforts at charm. I didn’t like Min’s stream of consciousness narration. I didn’t like the way you interrupted the dialogue in awkward places with “is what she said” or “is what you said.” I didn’t like the contrived quirkiness of the characters and the quaint turns of phrase. I didn’t like your “witty” banter that sounded so pleased with itself. I didn’t like Min’s habit of constantly referencing films and directors and actors. Alright, I get it, okay, enough – Min is different, Min is cool, Min is the Manic Pixie Dream Girl that doesn’t really exist. I just didn’t like you.

Until suddenly, I did.

You crept up on me, somewhere in between the pages of softly-coloured illustrations and vignettes that form Min’s letter. Item by item, with each relic dropped into the box, I fell for you. As Min and Ed’s story telescoped down to its fragile and bitter heart, I was drawn in. I found Min in those dashed down anecdotes and I knew her. I knew this person who wanted so desperately to be something but thought herself nothing. And I saw in her story another hurt, another bad decision, another break-up that ended in a pile of photographs and mementos on fire in the backyard, in a moment of youthful drama and heartbroken pyromania. I saw the thing that was cherished and coveted and cost nights of crying to sleep, the thing that wasn’t worth it, that didn’t work, but hurt all the same. All the moments that were never quite right, but were still precious; all the reasons it was prolonged and not put down, put behind, put out of its misery like it should have been. The thing you think you want with everything you have, until it’s too late and you lose more than you have to give.

And damn you page 335, for twisting up my chest until I cried ugly tears and felt all over again what it is to get hurt like a kick in the solar plexus. To feel so diminished and bereft and empty of everything worthwhile. To know that deep down you were right but that doesn't make it hurt any less, doesn't take away that some of it was good, some of it was special.

'Why We Broke Up', I admit that I judged you before I really knew you. I thought you were pretentious and insincere and I was determined to hold everything I possibly could against you. But I've read you now and I can't. I can't not like you, you stupid book, because I think of kind of love you even though you stomped on my freaking heart and made me cry in public.

I can't stop thinking about you.

Love,
Reynje