

The Acute Grief of a Friend Breakup

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If I remember correctly, my first breakup was with a kid named Anthony sometime in the seventh grade. I've forgotten the specifics, but I think our friends did the dirty work for us, feverishly ferrying our directives across the middle-school hallway like carrier pigeons. I don't remember how long we were together — three weeks? Four? — but I'm pretty sure that I cried afterwards.

I know that I cried after my last breakup, this time carried out over the phone with a guy named Dan sometime in that foggy precipice between college and adulthood. There were plenty of breakups in between — a few over the phone, several in person, some fizzling out slowly, others blowing up like a grenade. (Some didn't even happen at all, come to think of it. I'm technically still with DJ, the boy I married on the playground in third grade.) I probably cried over all of them.

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