



**Masculinity Rediscovered**  
@BecomeAManAgain



Beta Male: "So, where do you wanna go?"

Alpha Male: "You're going to have the best night of your life. I'll see you at 9 pm. Wear that tight red dress"

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## MASCULINITY REDISCOVERED

by

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The meal was excellent. Alpha wasn't vegetarian but had taken Beta to his favourite vegan restaurant anyway. He'd made reservations, but hadn't told Beta about it at all.

That was odd, because it wasn't like Alpha to plan ahead like this. His spontaneity was one of the many things Beta loved about Alpha, even though Alpha's spur-of-the-moment attitude made Beta's head whirl at times. Beta, by contrast, liked having everything planned out in advance, and he knew Alpha liked having Beta's structured stability. They complimented each other perfectly.

They were truly made for each other.

So why were alarm bells ringing inside Beta's head?

It was nothing Alpha did or said during dinner. He casually flirted and laughed with the waiting staff in the same way he flirted and laughed with everyone. Beta didn't mind that. He wasn't the jealous type, but was smart enough to see that there was something on Alpha's mind. Nervousness, maybe...? Alpha was so naturally confident that it was hard to tell.

Beta had been mulling over whether to ask for the dessert menu when Alpha flagged the smiling waitress over and asked for the bill.

Oh! Beta was considering getting the tiramisu, but they were leaving now, I guess.

"I've already ordered a taxi" Alpha said.

Beta had felt that he was a little overdressed in his tight red outfit, but smiled anyway. Maybe an early night might be a good thing?

Alpha and Beta climbed into the back seat, and Beta's suspicious intensified a hundredfold when he saw the concerned expression on Alpha's face.

This wasn't in his head, there WAS something Alpha wanted to say.

Alpha took Beta's hand and sat in brooding, contemplative silence, stopping only to smile reassuringly at Beta, who was getting further and further away from reassurance.

Beta looked out the window to see the taxi wasn't taking them back to their house, but westwards, towards the river.

"Where are we going?" Beta asked.

"It's a nice night. I thought it would be nice to watch the sun setting. From our spot..."

The sunset? That sounded ominous. Alpha and Beta had a favourite spot by the river, a beautiful, paved little plaza with a little ice cream seller where they used to meet and talk and get to know each other, the same place they shared their first kiss, they place they fell in love, but the sudden unexpectedness of it all was making Beta increasingly anxious.

When they arrived at the spot overlooking where the wide, lazy-flowing river spilled into the bay, the sky was a golden pink splashed with white and blue. There was the smell of lavender on the warm late summer air, although Beta couldn't see where it was coming from. A violinist was playing to a small crowd.

Alpha leaned on the wall.

"How long has it been, Beta? That we've been together?"

"Five years and seven months" Beta replied, without having to think about it.

Alpha nodded his head.

Why did he ask that? Why was...?

Oh.

This was it.

Suddenly, Beta realised what was happening.

In truth, Beta had been waiting for this day for five years and seven months.

Alpha could have his pick of men AND women. The fact that he'd stayed with Beta this long was remarkable in and of itself. It was a good run, but Beta always knew that Alpha could do so much better than him, and Beta had been waiting and dreading the day Alpha would realise it too.

Alpha had brought him here because he didn't want Beta to make a scene in public at the restaurant, or have a screaming fight in the house.

Beta had actually rehearsed this moment constantly, playing over the scenario again and again in his head, how he would face the moment with dignity and poise and... and... and...

...and now it was here, all that melted away.

Beta could feel himself tearing up. He was determined Alpha wasn't going to see him cry, that he was going to walk away with his head held high, but at this crucial moment it looked like his

body was going to betray him anyway as his emotions started to peak. He had no handkerchief, his tight red dress had no pockets or even a sleeve to tuck one into, and he hadn't thought to grab a clutch on his way out.

"Five years and seven months? That's a long time..."

Beta didn't answer. He couldn't, for fear that if he opened his mouth he was going to burst into tears.

"I know I'm not easy to live with..."

Oh god, not the 'It's not you it's me' speech! Beta had heard it so many times before. Not that! Not here! Not in this place that I love so much...

Beta realised the violinist had switched tunes to the lilting melody of Shostakovich's Waltz 2.

Perfect.

His favourite restaurant, his favourite spot by the river, and now his favourite piece of music were all going to be forever tainted by this horrible moment.

"...but I want you to know how much this time we've spent together has meant to me. I know I'm not very good at showing it"

One of the crowd reached over and pulled a cello out from behind the sea wall, taking up the violinist's melody. That was weird...

One of the couples milling around the violinist started dancing. Smooth, practiced moves.

Another couple joined them.

More instruments were being produced, seemingly out of thin air. An oboe. A French horn. More strings. Even a double bass, which began rasping out the thumping bass notes.

Beta looked around. What was...?

Dozens of dancers had taken up the waltz, spinning in perfect unison as the small orchestra played. The deepening twilight gloom was being driven away by candles and torches and smiling faces.

"...and I just wanted you to know that I can't imagine any kind of life that didn't have you in it."

Alpha held out his hand.

"Now, my love. Might you honour me with this dance...?"

Beta's mind was everywhere at once. What was happening? Alpha had brought him here to break up with him, why was there music and dancers??

In a trance, Beta automatically took Alpha's hand and was immediately swept into the waltz.

Alpha was a superb dancer, the way he was superb at everything, but abruptly he suddenly stopped as the other dancers whirled around them.

He got down on one knee and opened a small box.

"Beta, I know I don't deserve you, but if you'll have me, I'd like to ask if..."

Beta burst into tears, there was no holding them back now.

“YES, YES, YES!!!” Beta sobbed, ignoring the proffered ring and throwing his arms around Alpha.

When Beta finally broke the embrace and let Alpha put the ring on his finger, Beta saw tears in Alpha’s eyes too.

With matching diamonds sparkling on their fingers, Beta and Alpha joined the spinning dancers once more as the sun set on the life they were leaving behind, and as the music swelled, they danced on into the new...

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