

## Real Love

**O**nce upon a time in a small tight-knit school, in a tight-knit town was a young man that was every girl's definition of perfect. He had dreamy dark brown eyes and gorgeous chocolate brown skin that seemed to always glisten. He was tall, dark, handsome, and his name described him in itself, it is Ailill, which means “beauty” in Gaeilge. To top off his dreamy stature he was captain of the football team and the basketball team. He was intelligent beyond his years and every girl in all the halls was in love with him, but he could not love. If he were to find true love his beauty, talent, and intelligence would fade slowly away. The deeper the love the more unattractive and clumsy he became. Because of this he remained Ailill, the jerk. He had to choose to love and to lose it all... or to remain beautiful and bury love in the deep depths of his heart.

Ailill woke up early on Monday morning to catch his bus to school. Before he left, he looked at himself in the mirror and recited:

*Love cannot be real.*

*Love cannot be true.*

*You must keep your beauty.*

*You must remain you.*

When Ailill arrived at school he met up with girl number one. They had been dating for about a month now and today was the day that Ailill planned to end it. He could feel himself beginning to lust for her kisses and look forward to spending nights cuddled with her watching movies and eating popcorn on the couch. Because he could not fall in love he had to devise a plan to end this fling he had going. When he saw girl number one in the halls he walked past her, when she texted him he read it and ignored it, and when she called he was sure to send her to voice mail. He could not allow himself to find true love. He had to remain the jerk he was known to be. Again he recited to himself:

*Love cannot be real.*

*Love cannot be true.*

*You must keep your beauty.*

*You must remain you.*

The next day Ailill arrived at school and saw girl number two. Girl number two was the girl he called when girl number one was working or studying. This is the girl he took out on dates and went home with afterward. Her parents were never home and he took full advantage of their absence. Girl number two was becoming too clingy. She always wanted to know where he was and what he was doing and when he was going to take her out to her favorite restaurant again. He got tired of having to explain himself so he started the process of pushing her away. So when he saw the girl in the halls he walked past her, when she texted him he read it and ignored it, and when she called he was sure to send her to voice mail. He could no longer spend time with her, she was becoming too attached and he could not allow her to fall in love. So again he recited:

*Love cannot be real.*

*Love cannot be true.*

*You must keep your beauty.*

*You must remain you.*

On the third day things were different. Ailill had gotten rid of girl number one and girl number two. They glared at him in the halls and they left him voice mails crying over the phone apologizing for things they hadn't done and begging him to come back. But still he ignored them. When he saw them in the halls he walked past them, when they texted him he read it and ignored it, and when they called he was sure to send them to voice mail.

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During lunch that day he noticed girl number three, he hadn't noticed her before. She was beautiful, and gentle. Her long brown hair was like silk, and her golden complexion was sweet to the touch. She had big brown eyes that sparkle and a smile that lit up the room. Allil quickly learned that she was called Orla, or "golden princess". He looked over at his friend sitting next to him,

"Who is *that*,"

he asked in a suave voice.

"Orla?," his friend replied,

“Oh *she's* hot dude!”

He continued to talk to his friend only to find out that she was captain of the volleyball team, class president, and president of the student council. You could see the confidence radiating from within her. He decided at that moment he had to have her, not her heart of course but he needed just one night at least. She was perfection; He'd met his match.

“I'm going to talk to her,” he called to his friend as he got up from the lunch table.

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As her approached her table he began to get nervous. His palms were sweaty and his heart was beating heavy. He had never felt this way so once again he recited:

*Love cannot be real.*

*Love cannot be true.*

*You must keep your beauty.*

*You must remain you.*

As he approached the table he put out his hand and looked Orla in her big brown eyes, “Hello, my names Ailill,” he said. Orla looked up at him and smiled her biggest smile and then turned to her friends and let out an innocent giggle.

“Hi Ailill, I'm Orla, nice to meet you.”

Her voice was a sweet as Grandma's apple pie and he tripped over his words a little. Ailill spent the last 10 minutes of lunch talking to Orla. She carried herself with such poise and respect. Her intelligence was beyond her years and that smile... he could watch it for hours at a time. Before he got up to walk Orla to her next class he smiled and put on his suave voice,

“Orla, do you want to go on a date with me tonight?” he asked shyly.

“I thought you'd never ask!” she chuckled. Her humor made her that much more desirable. They talked and laughed all the way to Orla's next class.

“I’ll pick you up at 8, text me your address!” he shouted down the hall as he rushed in order to make it on time. Alill spent the last two blocks of the day mesmerized by the thought of his date with Orla. He couldn’t believe it was really going to happen.

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Before Alill left for his date he recited:

*Love cannot be real.*

*Love cannot be true.*

*You must keep your beauty.*

*You must remain you.*

Alill arrived at Orla’s house at exactly 8:00, walked up the steps, and knocked on her door. She opened the door with a beautiful printed rose dress that accentuated her tiny waist and her golden brown skin. She wore little white sandals that exposed the red polish on her toes to match the red in her dress. She wore her hair in a long braid down her back with gorgeous diamond earrings that matched her bright smile and sparkling eyes.

“I see you don’t go by the usual ‘fashionably late’ protocol,” she chuckled and closed the door behind her. They walked down the steps hand in hand and to the car.

“You look amazing,” he said as he opened the car door and she slid in crossing her dainty ankles and buckling her seat belt.

“Thank you,” she replied her cheeks a shade of pink and her smile blooming once again. When they arrived at the movies Alill paid for both of their tickets and they sat in the back row fingers intertwined. Orla was engaged in the movie and Alill was engaged in her beauty.

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At the end of the night Alill did not walk Orla to her door, he did not respond to her text when he arrived home exclaiming what an amazing night she had, and he sent her goodnight call to voice mail. This time the reason was different. He was not lusting for her kisses or irritated by

a clingy personality. He was avoiding love. He could feel it in her finger tips, see it in her big brown eyes, hear it in her sparkling smile and sweet chuckle; she was the one that would steal his beauty, take away his talent, and devour his intelligence.

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The next morning he arrived at Orla's house with a single rose in hand and when she came to the door he recited:

*Love is real.*

*Love is true.*

*You are my beauty.*

*My heart belongs to you.*

He handed Orla the rose and began to move in for a kiss when she replied:

*Your love is not real.*

*Your love is not true.*

*Because of your past,*

*I do not trust you.*

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With her last word his beauty faded away his skin no longer glistened his eyes no longer shone. He had common intellect and every rule he'd ever learned in either sport was dismissed from the gates of his memory. Alill was devastated. He remained plain and lonely for the rest of his days. He was incapable of finding true love because he had broken so many hearts. No female trusted him, fore he was still known in the tight-knit school, in the tight-knit town, as the jerk who broke hearts and ignored calls.

***T***<sub>he</sub>***E***<sub>nd</sub>