I've broken up with 42 women.

That number sounds bigger to me now that I said it out loud.

I don't remember every one. Some of them are more like hunches. Like, "Oh I think I dated a girl that month on the Vineyard." But maybe I didn't.

Some are vivid. I can feel the physical pressure of them in my arms if I think about it.

All of them: I broke up with.

That sounds like I'm bragging.

"I broke 42 hearts. 42 intelligent beautiful women weren't good enough for me."

I'm not bragging.

I actually feel terrible.

That word is dumb.

I feel...dark.

Like there's a thing in me...something that doesn't want it to work.

Something I'm not aware of.

That's my worst fear - that I'm somehow sabotaging things. That after 12 years of therapy, 3 rounds of couple's therapy, two meditation retreats, 26 hikes alone into the wilderness... what if I'm secretly sabotaging everything? And I still can't see it?

It's hard to be present in something when you're so aware of how it looks from the outside. I know what I seem like:

"Fear of commitment"

But it's really really really not "Fear of commitment."

I've been in love.

More than once.

But then I fall out.

And most times, I don't get close at all.

The most disconcerting thing is that She always seems to get there.

How can She be falling in love when I'm not?

The moment I realize it's happening... I feel sick. Like when I snuck out of the house in high school and I drove my friend Greg's car and crashed it. The moment the car hit the tree I wished I could close my eyes and undo every choice of the night.

It's sickening immediate regret. "Oh no. It's happening. Again. She's falling in love. Stop, Stop."

But we usually keep dating a little while longer. Because I want to fall too. I don't want to die alone. So I stick it out another few weeks, by which time she's talking about meeting my parents and I'm realizing she doesn't laugh at my jokes and that's a deal-breaker.

I've seen so many women hate me. It's an unmistakable look.