

# “Hard to Explain”

Kelsey Koshinsky

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Creative Writing

## Hard to Explain - Synopsis

A woman named Daniela loses her husband in an accident. She feels numb while people come to her house to offer their condolences. All of the flowers on her kitchen table make her sad because they symbolize the death of her husband and she finds it ironic that she's supposed to keep them alive. She tries to take a bubble bath but even looking at the soap her husband gave her makes her flashback to when he was alive.

She soon finds herself driving to his graveside. The drive gives her time to remember him and their lives together. She finds herself regretting not marrying him sooner, she made him wait because she was scared he would leave her if they got married.

Her mind wanders the whole time. She remembers their perfect wedding and recently celebrated 7th anniversary. It's then that she realizes that she is considered a widow. She compares herself to her elderly neighbor who she now shares the title with. When she gets to the cemetery she sees his mother there and decides to leave and go back home.

When she opens the door to her house she can hear the television. She walks through her house and sits down on the sofa, not sure what to do with herself. The news is on and as she watches that night's lottery number draw she sees that the ticket her husband bought matches the TV's numbers perfectly.

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It seemed like she was always in motion. The buzz rushing through her tired muscles never ended and a decent sleep never came. Everyday tasks seemed near impossible, yet they were completed like clockwork. The house was empty now, gone were the rush of neighbours, old classmates, co-workers and do-gooders from their tiny kitchen and living room. For people trying to help they didn't seem too eager to leave. The delivery of tin foil covered casseroles and dry carrot muffins seemed to be an excuse to invade her family's privacy and interrupt their time to collect themselves. She felt like this was the time she needed to mend the quickest. There was a short time allotted for things like this to fix themselves, if she missed it, she might stay broken.

No one seemed to understand this, not even her neighbour whose husband had died a couple of weeks ago. Daniela thought that when their eyes met, her neighbour would understand and tell everyone to get the hell out of there and let them grieve as a family, but all she received was a bouquet to arrange next to the others.

Now that they were gone, Daniela ran to the bathroom and locked the door. She bent down to get her strawberry bubble bath from under the vanity sink but stopped short of her fingers grazing the soft plastic. She felt the tears swell in her eyes when thoughts from last Christmas came back to her. He had asked his mom for help to order the bubble bath from the Avon catalogue. He was never great with presents but the long, handwritten notes that always came with them were the real gift. When her co-workers showed off their gold necklaces and surprise vacation photos, Daniela saw hollow love tokens compared to her drawer full of letters.

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He had asked her to marry him the year previous, he had been patient but was starting to press Daniela for her answer. Everyone said that they had never seen a couple so right for each other; they seemed to mesh into one perfectly happy and content person. She was bright and funny and nothing ever kept her in the dark and he was subtle and sweet, when he said something to you, you listened. She loved movies, books were okay but she could spend hours on websites, reading summaries and reviews of the latest French or independent film. There were torn pieces of paper all through their house with random movie titles on them, some circled or starred. He loved books; the first thing built in their new home was the oak bookcase on the top floor of their house. Biographies were his favourite, Daniela remembered teasing him about his high chances of winning on Jeopardy if categories like “Ellen DeGeneres” or “Gene Wilder” popped up.

Daniela didn't want to think of the time she wasted not giving him his answer. It was obvious that she wanted to say yes, but she was scared. After her parents messy divorce, the fear of conflict of any kind consumed her. Years of overachieving and living for others followed. It wasn't until he came along did she allow herself to slow down and take life as it came. They were so in love that if they ever did fight about something, by the time they verbalized the issue they were laughing so hard at their “grown up” issues it didn't matter anymore.

Daniela sat up and walked across her house to grab her car keys. She got into her SUV and carefully backed out of the driveway. She turned her GPS off; she knew where she was going.

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The drive along the gravel road was a long one, she felt safer taking this route than the one that went downtown. She was the only one out there for as far as she could see. Daniela took this time to think back to her wedding. Both of their parents had made small contributions to help fund the occasion but ultimately the cost was up to them. He knew she had always wanted a small wedding so there was no pressure on them to throw anything extravagant. It had been a beautiful summer day, the sun was shining and nearly everything went as planned. It was almost as if this was supposed to be perfect. She felt like fate was being kind, like there were going to be hardships later in her life when she would need these memories to keep her going.

The high, black metal gates showed themselves over the hill sooner than Daniela had expected. She slowed down and turned into the cemetery. Maybe she just needed to talk to him, maybe he would talk back. He believed in that kind of thing, ghosts reconnecting after their death. It freaked her out. When she drove up to the entrance, was surprised to see the iron gate doors open. A red minivan was parked and Daniela saw a woman holding flowers at her husband's gravestone. When the woman started to cry Daniela quickly drove out of the lot. His mother had left straight from Daniela's house to see her son in his final resting place.

Her mind was spinning as she drove home, Daniela was so deep in thought that when she arrived at her front door she couldn't even remember turning down her street. Her home still smelled like the casseroles and cabbage rolls sitting on her kitchen counter. As she looked around her living room, Daniela didn't know what she was doing there, or anywhere. What was she actually supposed to do? Every drawer, wine glass, and fridge magnet reminded her of him.

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How was she expected to plan a meal, outing, or outfit without having it reflect on him? She went upstairs and changed into her old pajamas from college. With the house so quiet she needed something to listen to; Daniela turned on the TV and watched the news all night, she still didn't feel like sleeping. The next evening that week's winning lottery numbers were announced. It wasn't until her dad came to visit her three days later did they discover Daniela's husband's last purchase, the state's largest multimillion dollar lottery ticket in over two decades.