

# A List of Ways I Have Failed to Express My Love for You

*by* Shawn Rider

- The gaudy belt buckle I got you, which would have been well-received except that you hate gaudy belt buckles.
- The custom t-shirt I made for you using iron-on felt letters that generously enhanced the shape of your breasts in a way unfit for public display.
- The wedding anniversary I knew you would forget, so I had tried to plan a surprise celebration that fell through, and we drove and argued for hours and then found a bad Mexican restaurant in which to make peace.
- When I thought it would be cute to let the dog crawl into bed with you all wet and cold from a winter's morning walk.
- The time I threw a fit about walking all over DC and then started a fight about how you liked our friends better than me. I was chafed and stressed.
- I overcooked the gnocchi, poorly spiced the curry, dried out the fish, and muddled the tofu in so many intended-to-be romantic dinners.
- Almost every time we ever had sex.
- When I criticized you too much about how hard you work and I made you cry; I didn't mean to make you cry, but you gave them more than they deserved.
- The time I bought you sexy undergarments for Valentine's Day and learned how you felt about tight shirts with too many buttons.
- Every time I hugged you so hard that your glasses jabbed the side of your head.

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- Your birthday, when I was so depressed about living apart from you that I could not appreciate the time we were together and I threw a fit about going to the opening and made you miss it.
- The bent curtain rod, the rickety bookshelves, the bulging repairs in the wall, and all the crooked pictures hung.
- When I cut your hair too short after convincing you that I would be able to trim it well.
- Not finishing this list in time.

