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## Modern Love

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**MODERN LOVE** Derrick Hamm

## CLARITY

Melissa Ackerman



AS I SAT ON AN AIRPLANE 30,000 feet in the air packed shoulder-to-shoulder headed to New York City, I could smell nothing but feet and the cheap perfume that came off of the elderly woman that sat beside me and I knew I had hit a crossroads. I had walked with the only person I could trust, Andrea, up and down a fast food ridden terminal over and over while she lectured me for three hours prior to the flight and I felt wedged between a rock and a hard place. Forced to choose between whom I believed could become my one true love and myself, I thought about how my heart had endured so much pain caused by a self-destructive and manipulative boy. Despite what he had told me, nothing would change. Despite what I wanted to believe, I knew it would always stay the same no matter how much I wanted it to change. I had begun to remember every harsh word, every bitter lie, and every bruise he had left me with. My soul had tarnished and when it all finally caught up with me, I couldn't help but cry. I turned to the look out the window so no one would notice the tears that poured down my face when I saw the inspiring, addictive, blinding lights of New York at my feet. Then in that moment with the push of one button, I had obtained peace. I ended a poisonous abusive relationship and started living, not for someone else, but finally for me.

I sat on the plane waiting to park at gate B24 at JFK airport and compiled all my memories of Ty and the relationship we once had. I analyzed every fight we had, all the times he won with a swing or smack. All the times I let him guide me to the wrong decision. All the fear he instilled in me. All of it came back and I began to feel broken. Then I tried to remember the good times

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