



Lindsay Lohan

"Over"

Speak

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Universal Island Records

# Lindsay Lohan Sings of Endings

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I don't know if I love Kurt, but he *does* have a car. I love his car, maybe. Does that count for anything? Probably not. Do I love him? I don't know. It's 2005 and we're two teenagers in maybe-love, cruising down the main thoroughfare in his car that smells very specifically like a slightly moldy boat floating on Pine-Sol instead of water. I'm 14 and he's 16; we're young and running out of things to do in our one-Applebee's town, so sometimes we just park next to the woods and read the Bible out loud to each other. I keep a stack of CDs in his car, choosing moment-by-moment soundtracks. Choosing how we will remember each other. Choosing the sounds that will turn into forevers. Today, we listen to Something Corporate's *North* and study the Book of Isaiah.

Lindsay Lohan's *Speak* carries us home before curfew.

We're only one grade apart, but 9<sup>th</sup> grade is at the middle school and 10<sup>th</sup> grade is at the high school. It's hard to be in a long-distance relationship. It is excruciating to be so far apart. Our schools are on the same road, 1.5 miles from each other, and our church is in the middle. Also, and I may have mentioned this already, he has a car. The car makes things easier.

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In the beginning of us, back in the late fall of 2004, AOL Instant Messenger helped me lay the necessary groundwork for our relationship. I knew we were going to date long before he did. Like, a really long time before he knew. Maybe a week and a half before he knew. We'd met through some mutual friends, exchanged screen names, and had a lot of long conversations that were basically some variation of

him: hey

me: hey

him: what's up?

me: not much, u?

him: same lol XD

[3 hours pass]

me: well i g2g to bed. talk tomorrow?

him: yeh. g'night

I'd put up away messages with popular (but not TOO popular) song lyrics about loving, being in love, falling in love, having a lover, being old enough to be in love. He took the bait. He asked my friend Natalie if I had a crush on anyone, and she messaged me right away to tell me what he'd said. I told her not to answer him just yet. I had a plan. I always had a plan.

Everyone loves a good romantic comedy, right? I sure do. Big romantic gestures. The drama of it all. The tragedy. The depth. The hyperbole. The drawn-out monologues spoken by a lover trying to connect with the only heart they've ever truly wanted. Why can't life be more like that? Ugh.

The middle school and high school cross-country teams practiced (ran?) together after school. Kurt was on the high school cross-country team. Know who was on the middle school team and saw him every day? Natalie, who sat beside me in middle school wind ensemble. So one day at school, when the band director was focused on the trumpet section (as usual), Natalie and I had a chance to put down our clarinets and scheme. I'd written a rough outline the night before but my handwriting was messy, so I asked Natalie to write out a new note in what I can only describe now as cursive bubble letters.

I don't remember what the note said, but I know he wrote back. We passed notes back and forth via Natalie for a few weeks, and the notes got sappier each time. AIM was fine, I guess, but it was difficult to explain my feelings with as much detail as they deserved after being asked "how r u?" for the millionth time. In a note, I could talk for paragraphs and paragraphs without being interrupted. I wrote poems, copied my favorite song lyrics, told him which parts of my day reminded me of him. He did the same, kind of. I would write *The happy sun snuck its warmth through my window while I was sleeping and I laid there for a few minutes this morning, eyes closed in thought, hoping it was the same sunlight holding you. Hoping one day soon you'll be the one holding me.* Similarly, Kurt would write *I had a good day at track.*

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That winter, we ended up at a holiday party together in the church auditorium. It was all finally happening. Everything had been leading up to that moment. He sat down on the floor next to me. My hand was on the floor, palm down. Right there. RIGHT THERE. All he had to do was put his hand over mine. I pretended to crack my knuckles on the carpet to make sure he knew my hand was there. (What if he couldn't see it? My hands are pretty small. They were probably even smaller back then. This was months ago.) I cleared my throat a few too many times, a little too loudly. I tried to catch his gaze then briefly look away. He didn't take my hand. HE DIDN'T TAKE MY HAND. He DIDN'T take my HAND.

I stood up and stomped to the bathroom, trying not to cry. My girlfriends promptly followed to tell me that I didn't need him anyway. They tried to tell me that he sucked and I could do better. I told them I didn't want to do better; I just wanted to hold hands with Kurt. I'd been having a really rough time with guys. Earlier that year, my former friend Brandon said I was pretty, kissed me on the cheek, and told me he carried one of my poems around in his wallet. But the next day, he announced that he was suddenly dating Laura. LAURA. Like...it was fine, I guess, if he didn't want to be with me...but LAURA? Of all people? *Laura*. Okay. Sure. Whatever. I didn't care. I still don't care.

Did Kurt suck as much as Brandon? I couldn't give two frickin' fricks about Brandon. He was with Laura, anyway. "Brandon." Bbbrrraannndooooonnnn. Man, I hated Brandon. Still hate Brandon. All I could think about in the tearful moments following *The Lonely Hand Predicament* was *Am I going to end up hating Kurt, too? Will I end up hating everyone I used to dream about kissing? Would Kurt beat up Brandon if I asked nicely? Kurt doesn't even like me enough to hold my hand, so why would he beat up Brandon? Jesus probably said don't beat up boys named Brandon. I should look that up. Bbrraannddoonnnnnnn. What a terrible name. Kurt is a cute name but Brandon used to be a cute name, too. Will I end up hating everyone's names? I don't want to hate everyone's names. If I hate everyone's names, how will there be any names left for my future kids? Will Kurt make a good dad? Brandon won't. Brandon'll be the worst dad. Brandon sucks. Kurt has a "sweet dad" vibe. He's gentle. He's patient. He can drive. He has a car. He's cute. He isn't named Brandon. He's the whole package.*

I stayed in the bathroom for most of the rest of the party. Natalie made sure to tell everyone it was because I was solemnly thinking about life and not because I had an upset

stomach. When I finally came out, Kurt sauntered up to me, asked for a hug, gave me a hug when I said okay, then shyly mumble-asked if he could drive me home. I know what everyone must be thinking: wow, this is moving a little fast. But I didn't care. Everything that had transpired over the last few weeks had made me an adult. Brandons of the world be dangd. I was in maybe-love.

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Now we're together and he's perfect. We're perfect. He drives me home from school every day. Sometimes we'll go straight home but other times we'll sit in the park and talk. He also drives me home from youth worship service on Wednesdays, which is very cool. We feel so grown up, driving through town doing whatever we want (even if what we want is to go to church, then Applebee's). We play basketball at the church gym and I always win. Not because I'm good, but because he'll stop paying attention to the game to say something like, "Did you know that 6 PM is the average American dinner time? I heard that on the news." He says boring stuff like that a lot. A whole lot more than he says interesting stuff. I do most of the talking. It's better this way.

So, maybe *perfect* isn't the right word to use about him, or us. But he's sweet and kind. Full of a gentleness I don't quite recognize. I'm antsy and full of thunder. He takes the loud parts of me and soothes them until they're manageable. I'm more respectable around him. My parents don't know we're together because I'm not allowed to date yet (sorry for lying, God!) but Kurt's parents know. They love me. They send food and well wishes whenever they know Kurt's going to see me. I can see myself becoming one of them someday. They're a family I could learn to fit into, I think.

I'm trying to love all of him, even the parts I don't understand.

I'm really, really trying.

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It's the night after Valentine's Day now and I don't know what to do. I've always hated V-Day and I don't know why. Seems boring. It's in February which means it's colder than a brass toilet seat on the shady side of an iceberg...but the Valentine's Day mascot isn't wearing clothes? That's annoying. Give the baby a coat, at least.

The whole sex expectation thing is annoying, too. We've been together for months and the most Kurt and I have done is hold hands. We haven't even come close to talking about intercourse, besides a general agreement that people should wait until marriage. Everyone else wants to talk about sex in February, though. As I said, it's annoying. Valentine's Day is the most annoying holiday and I can't wait until I'm an adult so I can ban anything cupid-related in my house. When I'm an adult, I'll be whatever the opposite of annoying is.

Lately, I'm weird and grumpy all the time. I don't know if that's Kurt's fault or my fault. I don't like dealing with him more than I have to. Love has mountains and valleys. This is normal. I avoid him sometimes and assume these feelings will pass.

Brandon and Laura posted their cute Valentine's Day photos all over their Xanga and MySpace pages on, like, the fourth day of the month somehow, but I don't care. And for once, I kind of mean it. My cell phone has free minutes after 9 PM, so Kurt and I stay up until at least midnight talking most nights. I love him more on the phone than I do in person. I think we could be happy for a long time together, if we only communicated by phone. I'm not sure why. Talking to him on the phone is easier than talking in person, or even on AIM.

Last night he called both phones (cell and landline) several times but I didn't pick up, and I told my mom to please just take a message. I didn't feel like talking; we'd agreed to not do anything for Valentine's Day until next weekend. A few hours later, my mom knocked on the door to my room, said, "That boy's been outside since six." It was 8 PM. He'd been outside for two hours, and I'd had no idea. I felt awful. Guilty. Like I'd accidentally punched one of the apostles in the face. Everyone at my house was still pretending I wasn't dating anyone, so I met him outside. He understood why I could never invite him inside. He was okay with it.

He hopped out of his car, smiling like always. He handed me a card and some chocolates. I did the whole *but I didn't get you anything* song and dance. He said it was fine, like always. Said we were fine, like always. Kissed me on the cheek (a first!), jumped back in his car, and drove away.

I watched his car putter down the street and turn the corner. But for the first time, I didn't miss him. I didn't consider running inside and logging onto AIM to wait for him to message me, letting me know he got home safely. I wasn't really even thinking about him at all. It scared me. If love can just *leave* like that, what's the point of it? Would I have felt this torn apart if I'd ended up with Brandon? Is this kind of thing why my parents got divorced? Is this why Britney Spears and Justin Timberlake called it quits? Kurt was still head-over-heels for me, as far as I could tell. So was I the bad guy? What had I done wrong? Did I need to pray about it more?

I opened the card once I got back to my room. Kurt had written *I love spending my life with you inside*. I set it on my shelf and haven't picked it back up since then. Later, we talked for a few minutes on the phone before I told him I was tired and needed to go to bed. That was another lie. I'd never lied to him before. And now, a day later, I don't know what I'm doing. Love goes through ups and downs. Everyone says it. Everyone says that after a honeymoon period, you get bored and complacent with your partner. Are being in love and being bored the same thing?

I toss Lindsay Lohan's *Speak* into my CD player, since it's the last album Kurt and I listened to together. I keep the song "Over" on repeat. Maybe there's an answer in there somewhere. I've made huge life decisions based on song lyrics before, so why not this one?

*I watch the walls around me crumble,  
but it's not like I won't build them up again.*

If we break up, it will be entirely my fault. I've seen what happens when my friends break up with their boyfriends. No matter whose fault it actually is, it always gets blamed on the girl. Am I strong enough to break everything down then build myself back up higher than before? Does one of us get custody of our church or do we both just keep going to the same one? Did Jesus ever break anyone's heart? Maybe there was someone who was sweet on Jesus when He was alive, but then He had to be like, "My Father says I'm not allowed to date," or, "I actually love everyone the same amount so I can't just focus all my affection on you, Susan."

*I'm always stuck with these emotions,  
& the more I try to feel, the less I'm whole.*

I guess the adult thing to do would be to discuss this with Kurt. Maybe he feels the same as I do about it all. Maybe he wants to end it, too. The way he still hugs me a little too long suggests otherwise, though. The other day he told me, "My parents were high school sweethearts. Wouldn't it be nice if we ended up like them? They got married right after college."

How could I even explain to him why I wanted to sledgehammer our future into nothing? "Uhhh, I just sort of stopped liking you. You didn't do anything wrong. Every single mannerism you have annoys the ever-lovin' fool out of me now, though. I don't even like the way you turn doorknobs." I just need to figure out one decent reason to leave. One good reason for goodbye. But *what?* He's perfect. He holds doors open for me and lets me finish his breadsticks. He's okay with it when I talk for hours on end about how secretly sad I still am that \*NSYNC broke up.

*I can't live without you. Can't breathe without you.  
I'm dreaming 'bout you. Honestly tell me that it's over.  
Cuz if the world is spinning & I'm still living,  
it won't be right if we're not in it together.  
Tell me that it's over & I'll be the first to go.*

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I burned "Over" onto a blank CD. I wrote *I'm sorry* on the front of it and left it on his car. I guess he got the message, because I didn't see him around for more than a month. I don't know how I can be so sure of a decision and so sad about it at the same time. I wasn't happy with him and I'm not happy without him. How is it possible that I could break both of our hearts at once? Maybe I just have to wait until I'm older to understand any of this. Maybe the reason I can't find my giant box of jawbreakers is that I left it in his car.