



THE PUBLIC JOURNAL



*An anthology of truth.
A journal for the public.*



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Editor's Letter

You are holding us in your hands.

This is who we are. We write and make art because our souls require it and not because we want to show you or anyone else how special, talented, and quirky we are. (Okay, maybe just a little.) BUT, you will not know which contributor is responsible for what. 'Feigned' is a swear word here. Put simply, we publish that which was not meant to be published yet absolutely ought to be.

It's a marvel, really, that a quaint little campus bursting with everyday freaks such as ours has not had such a unique outlet for self-obsession and expression until this fine spring day in 2005. But we are here now and you held out your arms to hug us in droves. And we thank you, because we needed it as much as you did.

Oh, how we love you! (We're obsessed with you.) We need your warts and ill-placed hairs, your fears, your coquettish charm, that innate evilness, those fantasies, and your truest moments of reflection. Here we are safe because when we judge you, we judge ourselves.

Let's eat!

Daniela

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Evolution



most beautiful-

Frogs and toads are different from each other because of a profound difference in moral conception. These amphibious bastards have different starting points, really – the kind that alone can overwhelm their whole moral knowledge base. Regrettably even beyond that, it can restrict their mental development to the extent that denies them the knowledge that is given to my gene pool, because despite their environment's built-in rocks and natural appeal, it is, in fact, chlorinated and poisonous – poor amphibious bastards. I really contest, however, that this was all outlined in the literature of Frog and Toad – the wise versus the unwise, etc... In the end we are all frogs, you know? I like that though – there is not much wrong with amphibians, they're happy-go-lucky sorts.

In any event, the world would be a better place if frogs and toads could mentally develop more.

Just as further illustration, I ask you: is there anything in this world, or in the infinite world of the imagined and the fictional, more beautiful, more profound, and lovely than two unrelated individuals, one frog the other toad, together dressed in human clothing holding hands and together flying a kite above the beautiful landscape of New England???????? In your fucking dreams there is something better – yeah right, if you said there was – sex with mad Playboy bunnies isn't even that wondrous.

I love space cake-

J.

Sinus Problems

Nothing in this damned place ever dries. The kitchen sink grows pink slimy mold afresh every few days despite wiping it clear each time. The dishes are never dry. Even when I use a paper towel, those shiny, stubborn lines of water just wipe into glistening swirls, mocking my efforts. The towels stink of moisture. I use a dehumidifier every day, which has only one perceivable effect—drying up my sinuses. The pink mold has even intruded onto the bathroom floor. I know I should do something about it, and I will, but I keep forgetting to buy cleaning solution at the store when I do my weekly grocery run.

Sometimes I think the dampness is soaking into my brain. I move around like a ghost lately; hours pass and I don't know where they go. I try to read sometimes, but never finish more than a few pages at a time. I've been doodling, and getting great ideas for prints and paintings, but never get past the sketches. And how many times in the past few months have I stood at that kitchen counter, waiting for my hands to dry after washing the dishes in the cold and hot water, ideas for stories and characters rushing through my head, connections and plots and climaxes spinning out like a movie—all forgotten in the next moment? It's like trudging through a swamp.

Recently I picked up a light smoking habit. Whenever I buy a pack of cigarettes, I picture myself 40 years from now, diagnosed with lung cancer, thinking to myself “stupid, *stupid* girl.” The words ring in my head as I drop the coins into the cigarette pack vending machine, *stupid, stupid, never again*, but I have no real desire to stop myself. I hate the feeling of a new, plastic-wrapped pack of Marlboro lights sitting (so weightlessly) in the palm of my hand, that smack-smack sound as I knock the tobacco leaves down, that first crisp white cigarette I pull out, that flicker of the lighter, shielding of my hand, inhale,

and that first puff of smoke. I never understood the notion of picking up smoking out of sheer boredom until such a deep wave of boredom hit me in my swamp. Boredom mixed with depression, apathy, lethargy, and laziness.

I have sinus problems. Allergies to dust, pollen, and pet dander—things which clog the air in most parts of the world—give me near-constant symptoms of a cold and the occasional sinus infection. Smoking is obviously not a good idea under these conditions. But it's an *idea* anyway, something I can follow through on. It gives me a sense of calm when I'm feeling anxious. Anyway, it's something to keep me occupied, even if for only a few minutes of the day.

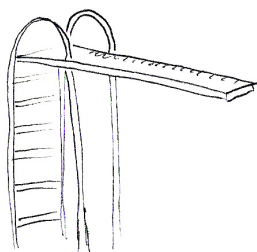
Sometimes the cigarette clears my mind, dries out my brain for a bit, and I start thinking back to the days before the swamp. There's nothing you can do about the passage of time. I was studious *enough* and sociable *enough*, I was writing a good deal and getting back into painting, and I was even, for a few short months, very much in love with a boy and with the world. Summer memories rush back: sweaty sex followed by cold intimate showers, barbeques and apple bongs, watching the fireworks over the Charles on the fourth. It was chilly for July fourth, probably due to the strong wind that evening. As the finale began, the embers, ashes, and debris from the first twenty minutes of fireworks blew our way, scattering over the heads of the crowd. Hot gray flecks landed on our eyelashes, hair, neck, cheeks, connecting our flesh with those bursting colors in the sky. The world could have ended right then.

To tell the truth, most of my time smoking a cigarette is spent watching the golden orange and red embers of the tobacco leaves glowing behind the blackened paper burning slowly down the smooth white shaft. The site of that glow, that trickle of smoke weaving into the air, soothes something inside me.

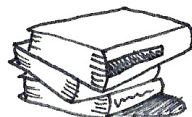
Even my dreams become more vivid after an evening of smoking. Last night, I dreamt I was attacked by a bear. It wasn't so violent as one might imagine a bear attack to be.

The bear simply approached me as I was walking down a dark street at the edge of the woods, gently knocked me to the ground, then crept over me until her body blocked the light of the moon. She—and I know the bear was female for the same reasonless reason that anyone knows anything for certain in dreams—ran her paws gently over my face and body, leaned in with her smelly, hot breath and sniffed me all over. She let out little bear grunts and puffs of cloudy heat with each exhalation. It didn't occur to me to try to do anything. I thought with a mix of fascination and apathy, *if this is my death, I should accept it and embrace it, and experience it with all of my body and soul*. I watched the bear inspect me, feeling the same dueling sense of disconnect and interaction that you experience at the most consuming sort of movie. After a few minutes, the bear stood up and walked away. I waited prostrate on the ground, listening as the heavy padding of her feet faded into the rustle of leaves, the hush of wind, the buzz of insects. The ground felt very hard and cold.

I woke up with the taste of cigarette on my tongue, the stink caught in my hair and in the moist swamp air.



Pittsburghpennsylvaniausa



I'm sorry, Pittsburgh.

Pittsburgh haunts me. The buried bones of steel lurking beyond the neon signs, the sheer despondency of this city. I can't get her scent off of me. No matter how many fresh cities I strike up residence in, she will always be my first. My first time of independence, of buying beers from seedy pizza shops with atrocious fake IDs. It's like I'm obsessed with my failure there, my inability to thrive. Everything melancholy is Pittsburgh. Everything lost is Pennsylvania. I realize this on a train, five hours in. An Amish couple speaks their acrobatic tongue behind me.

I can't believe I'm going back. It's plain masochistic.

I remember this time last year, Dad picked me up and we drove off into the fumes of the West Virginian sunset. I thought that if I never saw this filthy city again it would be too soon. But I tried there. I really did. I didn't even talk about leaving. I left because I could not overcome those sad winter afternoons. From the seventh floor apartment window, I could see the city as she coughed on her smog, stomped on to nightfall. The light would be nearly violet at four p.m., and there I'd be, sitting on the stiff couch, feet icy and dangling over the equally cold wood floor, watching the last trickles of sunlight leave me. Eventually, I'd realize that the city buildings' lights had gone on, but for the life of me I could never tell you when; I'd gone on auto-pilot. For an entire year, zoom.

The fact that no one I knew was happy there did not matter at all. I still feel like I let people down. I let Pittsburgh down. I let Jessie down, especially. She had begged me not to leave. I didn't understand her desperation. But she knew my leaving meant the end of our friendship; it wasn't her bag, the long distance thing. Her laugh, I'll lose it soon to be sure, but I remember it now. It had an airy sweetness to it, like those

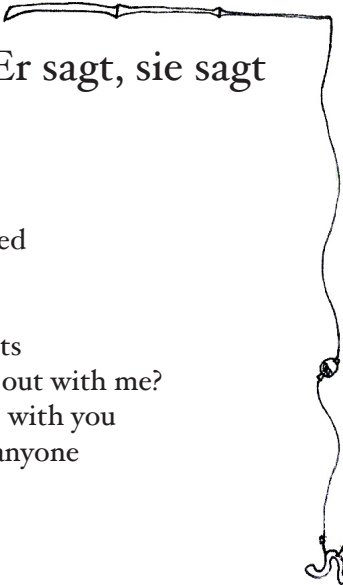
meringue cookies, with the bubbles. And so light. No, stop this. Stop getting emotional. It's pointless. You've made your choices so deal with them. You had all of them if only for awhile. Even Ben with his pink hair. Move the fuck on.

Fat chance. This taste of bitterness, disappointment continues to linger in the back of my mouth. And we've only just passed Cleveland.

I cried when I found out I could leave. I had taken my last exam. I opened my mail after the test, saw my acceptance at Tufts and started crying. Not from happiness, but out of desperation. I was so tired from my classes and work that I could not make one more decision. To leave? To stay? I fell asleep clutching the envelope. It's just, I had begun to doubt everything I thought I knew. My reflexes had developed arthritis and could not longer defend me from all those people telling me all year how "stupid", how "dumb", how "fruitless" wanting to write was. At first I'd yell that at least *I* was going to be happy. Then the doubts, the lack of motivation. Those truncated afternoons. If I stayed, I'd lose myself. If I left, I'd lose everyone. So, it was. I swear none of this was personal.

Adam, that night I spent on your couch while we sang to Midnight Vultures and that early White Stripes album while Sarah danced around reciting verse remains one of the best memories I sigh and fall back to. You're so kind, do you have any idea? It's such an amazing attribute. I feel just grateful to know you, dear one.

Oh, dear one. Oh, Pittsburgh. We're almost reunited at last. I missed you. You son of a gun. Oh, Pitts you were the *pitts*. You were misery and pavement and sparks and electric poles. You were little loves buried in bigger hates. Technology. Gasping breaths. I don't regret you. You with your 74 bridges, the most bridges of any American city, how I could never reach you.



Er sagt, sie sagt

Max sagt: hey

Estelle sagt: i'm bored

Max sagt: whats up

Estelle sagt: hello

Estelle sagt: I did sats

Max sagt: wanna go out with me?

Max sagt: im in love with you

Max sagt: dont tell anyone

Max sagt: please

Max sagt: im so shy

Estelle sagt: ha

Estelle sagt: ha

Max sagt: what

Estelle sagt: of course

Max sagt: u think im jokin

Max sagt: im not

Estelle sagt: i'm in love with u too

Max sagt: really

Max sagt: thats cool

Estelle sagt: yes

Max sagt: where are u

Max sagt: wanna come to my house this afternoon?

Estelle sagt: computer lab

Max sagt: so we can have fun

Estelle sagt: yes, fun

Max sagt: i know you are a lot of fun...

Estelle sagt: i kno u kno

Max sagt: how do u know?

Max sagt: i mean who told you that they told me?

Max sagt: im confused

Max sagt: so you know i know you hooked up with piers

Max sagt: ?

Estelle sagt: yes

Max sagt: would you mind repeating that thi afternoon with me?

Estelle sagt: yah, sure

Max sagt: i come get you

Max sagt: lets say in half an hour

Estelle sagt: ok, where will we meet

Max sagt: and after ill bring you back around 6ish

Max sagt: lets say the soccer field

Max sagt: i heard there is a game today

Estelle sagt: ok

Max sagt: i wanna see

Max sagt: ok see you there

Max sagt: bye

Estelle sagt: bye

Max sagt: love you

Estelle sagt: i love u too

‘Cigarette’ is a French word



16:49, 21 Dec. 2004, in my dead grandfather's library

He came to Boston to visit me. When I was in an altered state I let him read what I wrote about him. He commented on all the wrong things. I realized I might be a lot smarter than him. I was not surprised.

0:51, 27 Dec. 2004, la bibliothèque!

We got a beautiful hotel room the night before I left Europe. We only had sex once but we stayed up for a long time and smoked cigarettes. My legs were long and tanned and he had a great body. We laughed a lot and when we woke up in the morning we couldn't remember who'd been the one to turn off the lights by the bed.

It was raining and I only had a one-person umbrella, the one I use around campus. I was in an irritable mood (one of those) and I did not want my hair to get wet. I yelled at him, said he was holding the umbrella in the wrong direction. He looked at me and told me he loved me. He handed me the umbrella as his lovely hair was matted down by raindrops. I took it and ran because the rain was coming from every direction and there was a building I could get into across the street.

I liked it when he stayed inside of me afterwards. But I don't miss him at all.

* * *

It is now 2:25. I should go to bed.

* * *

He accidentally burned me with his cigarette once. On my knee. He kissed it and although it'd already been a month it was only then that he first noticed my birthmark. Sometimes, when I'm looking at my knee—which is not often—I see the tiny purplish scar and I remember him.

What makes me feel better

by various authors

- I made a Vietnam era playlist on my iPod when George W. Bush was re-elected and I walked all around campus to the tune of “Eve of Destruction” and “White Rabbit” for weeks.
- blast Earth, Wind, and Fire and Stevie Wonder songs and have a really extravagant dance party
- Buying things impulsively.
- Dragostea din Tei.
- Making fun of people who are inferior.
- trying really hard to cry, thoroughly exhausting myself and taking a nap
- Cow-tipping.
- Beating the utter life out of my pillow with a lacrosse stick
- Missed calls
- Flirting
- hearing that other people have it worse off.
- taking a nice, uninterrupted dump.
- Listening to Beethoven's 9th. It may be corny, but it reminds me that human beings aren't all that bad.
- Laughing and drinking.
- Andrew Lloyd Webber musicals all that big brassy, otherworldly emotional excess I never permit myself.
- Fireplaces. Flasks. Porches. Old wood. Solitude. People. Enthusiasm. Warm drinks.
- The three B's—Beauty, Benevolence and Breasts.
- a long and soft kiss on my cheek from a beautiful girl, a chat with my mom, a joke from a close friend or lastly a spliff.
- being able to look at my caller id, see it's you, and not pick it up, knowing that you'll call me back because you want me so badly
- The fact that there is still a market for PEZ candy

- isolating myself with my guitar
- pretend the given problem is actually far worse, watch myself cry in the mirror and think of how cute I look and how much whoever I'm crying about would repent if they saw me crying like that.. then write about it in my journal
- Taking a walk alone in a city.
- Going out to dinner with someone.
- Pepto-bismol
- Thinking that none of whatever the fuck I'm worrying about will matter 6 months from now and whatever I'm feeling it's better than being dead.
- I think a lot of people would literally kill to live in a place like this or to have any one of the things I take for granted every day



You Don't Remember This

I was on my way home from a relaxed evening when I bumped into her tonight. She was on her way home from a crazy evening when she bumped into me.

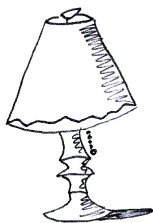
She was stumbling around drunk, but in a cute way. It couldn't dull the obscure attraction I've felt toward her since the first time she borrowed a movie from me freshman year. She borrowed Chris Rock's "Bring The Pain" that time and about twenty other movies after that. One night she called me over at 3:30 a.m. in such an urgent tone that I ran to her dorm braced to rescue her from burglars. It turned out she was just fine, and we spontaneously made out, standing in an awkward embrace in the lobby of Lewis Hall. In retrospect, we probably looked like two ten-year-olds uncomfortably re-enacting a Hollywood love scene. There has never been a romantic moment between us since that kiss.

Back to tonight. So she stumbled up to me, calling out my name and giggling. Her arms found their way to the small of my back and in an act that blurred the lines between South American greetings and drunken affection she kissed me on the neck and touched my cheek as she kissed my lips.

Nothing about this should have stood out, but this kiss left such an impression on me that it took two minutes for me to make the twenty steps to my front door. I sat in a sort of awestruck daze for an hour before I sent her a text message. Later I realized what it was that had so utterly captured me. In her drunken state she didn't kiss me the way you do to greet. By freak accident she gave me the kiss you reserve for your lover: seemingly subtle but overflowing with passionate undertones. For a fleeting moment I was a man at peace in the

elusive embrace of an old crush. For a fleeting moment I was a man entirely loved.

I think back to freshman year, amused that our first kiss, so misplaced and awkward, was followed a year later by the perfect one. It hurts strangely to think back on this new instant of sheer contentment, perhaps even more knowing that she cannot remember it. Was it worth it? Would I do it again?

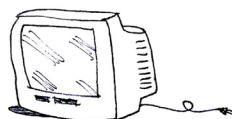


Me



Everything seems to revolve around me. Or perhaps I'm just a spectator in life and everything is going by me? I'm not sure which it is. There are so many things going on, and as I try to deal with each once at a time, my life seems to fly by. It seems it was only yesterday I was in high school, slacking, and going by unnoticed. It seems it was only yesterday I made a name for myself and came out on top in a town that breaks many and makes few. How did I get here? Did I do it myself? Were others involved in the process and I'm simply too selfish to consider them? Have I been loved? Have I loved back? I'm not sure. Things seem to fall apart as time goes by, but not really. Friendships dissolve and fade away. Connections seem to disconnect abruptly, while I make new and more important ones. Disease seems to take over my mind, but I chose to ignore it. I have met a presidential candidate, a homeless man, a whore, a diplomat, a world-renowned writer, a cancer patient, and I have befriended a crazy woman on the train. I care for none of them. I question myself often, about whom I really care for. I think I might be scared of people with problems, and I drive myself away from them, knowing that I might be able to help. I am apathetic to your problems, and I can't understand why you can't help yourself, why can't you be more like the rest of us. I've had a thousand lovers, but not a single love. I am far too cynical to care, and I think my experiences are far more valuable than yours. Did I create the creature I am today, or am I just another insignificant and recyclable product of our society? Will I be one in ten years? Does it matter? Will you cry? Will you remember me? Will you remember the silly way I walk? Or my uncontrollable laughter? Will you know that I pretended to care?

Freshman Year



February 19, 2003

One has to have a high enough level of self-importance so that others can feed off of it and take one seriously. However, if one's apparent level of self-importance obviously exceeds one's capabilities, then one is arrogant.

I wrote to Cheerios that they should have Chocolate-Covered Cheerios. I wouldn't even buy that, but if they do, I asked for 5% of their profits. What the hell is that? I have no idea. Billions? Tens? I hope it's a lot, because I want to get rich, fast, without much effort, so I can stop worrying and make a Factory in New York (WITHOUT THE GHOST OF ANDY WARHOL OVER ME, LAUGHING)

I want to do it on my own. However, I just bought a biography on him, just to learn on how to do it...ouch. *I want to be Andy Warhol*. I want to have a Factory where hippies and fags and models and artists and Bikers named James and Julius and Mr. Happy Pants live and the Bikers protect us and rape men that we hate, and they know nothing about art. They just SIT there and smoke and are happy in big fat bald ways, and we feed off their happiness and grittiness so that we never forget that we are ALL dirt and we will all die, even though we fuck and we drink and we make art that we THINK will immortalize us, and perhaps it will...perhaps it will—

I am smart enough to be this egotistical, or confident, rather.

I have never really done anything truly astonishing, like reciting the *Odyssey* backwards. If I'm not a genius, then I must apply myself prodigiously. Read? Experience? I don't know.

February 26, 2003

I am not well.

I have no energy to do anything. It's midnight, and I have

done nothing of worth tonight. I walk down the street worried about my personal worth, my value, afraid I have no real meaning in life. Anxiety. The darkness is not gone, I have to concede this—there's been a cloud over me the last few days. I had one moment when it lifted today and I was so happy to be free. I could think, I could understand that while nothing had changed, everything was different.

Now I can't think. When in my room, nothing gets done. Even thoughts stagnate. Then Hannah calls and I lose all hope. BLEAK. Is back. Do I welcome this? I have too much pride to go back to a shrink, to take medicine. IT MAKES ME FURIOUS. I cannot buy happiness, it just feels so fucking rotten. But I can't do anything like this. I just go through the days, quite fast, nothing is exciting, I wait for the next day to come, but it doesn't seem to get much better.

Heavy. Very heavy.

How I miss the lightness of yonder-years.

Told Hannah that I walk down the street asking myself, "Have you written a novel?" "No. Only a few crappy, cheeky stories of no worth."

"I never realized until now how tormented you are."

I was sardonically happy to hear this. Finally, pity. SO WHAT IF I'M FUCKING RICH! SO FUCKING WHAT! THE RESTLESSNESS IS BURNING MY SOUL. And will consume me if I do nothing. But how can I? "You need change." She tells me. Easy. Real easy.

"Why don't you sleep more? Feel like you'll miss something?"

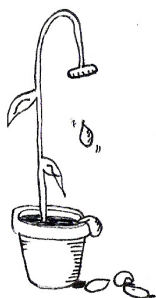
"Mostly it gets to midnight and I'm too bored to sleep. I'm mad nothing of worth has happened all day, and I just don't want to give up on the night." It gets lonely, too. I don't know why.

Diary of Cigarette Quitter

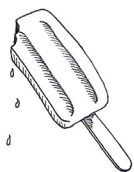
1/17/05 DAY 27 |||| |||| || sticks of nicotine gum

Someone from my camp asked if I was working again this summer. I pointed out that between the way I read a book with swastikas on the cover when I had kids in the water, the time I blew out the program director's knees, or the time I convinced the kids I fought in WWI, or all the times I smoked behind the waterfront tower, or the time I implied my boss fathered a bastard child while on coke while he was in earshot (well it was true), or the time I told my boss all I needed was a blow job and a back rub in front of a parent, or when we videotaped ourselves having gladiatorial matches on the dock while grossly misusing life jackets, or the time I made a kid cry or my penchant for calling myself Peter Pantless, that I doubted I'd be asked back. Also, I don't think the time we took a picture of a staff member drinking a slush puppy out of the dent in his chest he had due to him missing a lung helped. He ended up having water condense in his other lung due to the cold. He had to go to the hospital.

In other news my roommate declined to quit smoking which means Plan B is formed: stealing my roommate's cigs and telling him he smoked them all while drunk.



This Is What It's Like



When he signs online, and that bold black screen name stares me in the face, I get a little nervous and unhealthily excited. The pulse quickens, the heart skips some beats, blah blah, and I begin this process of nerdy S&M torture with myself. I wouldn't dare instant message him because I so badly want him to do it first. Plus, there's my whole Obsessive Mentality that encourages me to think that when I message the guy I like, he's sitting at his computer, groaning when my IM pops up, thinking, "Ugh, not this girl again."

So, like the down-to-earth girl that I am, I'll force myself to wait around to see if he'll message me first. If more than 15 minutes go by, I convince myself that 1) he hates me, or 2) he's found some new girl he's in love with and is enjoying a perfectly sane and pleasant conversation with her and doesn't need to talk to anyone else. These times spent waiting around include me walking circles around the room, trying to read a book for a class (which never works because my mind is too preoccupied and I end up absorbing maybe three percent of what I've read), or being obnoxious by doing some fairly time-consuming activity (shower, TV show) and "forgetting" to put an away message up.

But the pleasure I get from talking to him is so great that I have to give in every so often. When this happens, I proceed to feel guilty, like I'm bothering the guy and possibly boring him to death or ruining his day, so I make an effort to have a tamed yet interesting conversation.

This can be challenging, however, in any circumstance, whether I had to IM him to begin with or not. What's up with this pan-male phenomenon to not be able to hold interesting

online conversation? Sometimes, I want to bang my head against my desk in frustration as I'm nearing tears of boredom. But I hold out because I'm still obsessed and try to keep in mind that who you are on AIM is not who you are in life.

And it only gets worse.

No word, no detail, no dumb emoticon goes unanalyzed. Any other friends fortunate enough to be online at the same time have to suffer from my sudden onset of paranoia. "He just sent me the kissey face! Is that him trying to be sweet in a nerdy way, or is he just being a jackass and fooling around?" "He's been idle for 11 minutes! Who's he fucking now?"

The "hahas" bother me to no end. Like, when you just say something, funny or not, and all you get in return is a "haha." Okay, no one laughs or says "haha" that much in real conversation. Or the "hee hee" (or "hehe," I suppose). Who the hell says "hee hee" or "hehe" in real life? That's like, a sound I've never heard come from a single human in my entire life, so how did it enter AIM talk? I'm bothered by this lack of creativity and bullshit response because whenever I want to convey laughter over something genuinely funny he has said, I put 110% into it. I can do a good "HAHAHA" or a "hahahaha!!!" when it's well-earned. That, I think, is real. And two seconds later, I'll get a "haha" or a "no worries" or a "yeah" from him. ARGH.

Oh man, just typing and reading this over is embarrassing enough. This needs to end.

Confessions I

by various authors

My skin is flawless and I hate looking at people with acne.

I really dislike couples.

I push people over. A lot.

I absolutely love hearing people talk about me. I also like reading about myself on the internet.

i say i hate people who are materialistic and have nothing in their heads but i would be sooo happy if i were paris hilton. i am fascinated by the really filthy rich.

I am a tease.

I laugh at jokes I don't get.

I have never had an orgasm without the aid of vibrator.

i have not liked my body since i was a freshman in high school. sometimes i photo shop myself.

I do not like being left alone with my paternal grandparents because I have nothing to say to them and it bothers me when they look at me all lovingly. I don't know how I directly descended from you!

i never gave the only person i've ever been in love with a blowjob but i want to learn to give really good head.

My boyfriend and younger brother both have bigger penises than me.

I update my Facebook profile every day.

I am really really hairy.

I am so much smarter than all of you; if I had been less of a lazyass in high school I would be at the best fucking school in the world right now.

My parents' stupid fucking internet nanny caught me having cybersex when I was in middle school.

I think im good looking and Ive hooked up with ugly chicks

I don't brush my teeth. I use a small stick of wood occasionally but have gone for up to two months without a tooth brushing.

As a fact, my brother is a genius and I am an idiot with no memory, but my family compares us at every holiday, especially my aunt, who used to be the most fun person in the world but now I avoid her as much as possible.

After being accidentally tackled by a friend's boyfriend while he was in a drunken stupor trying to take a piggy-back ride, I wanted to lay him out and have sex but instead we laughed, rolled over and got up.

No matter what group of friends i am with, i am always acutely aware of the fact that i am the best-looking one.

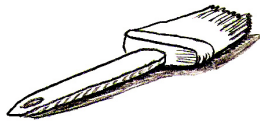
oh my god i am so in love with you and i dont think you even think of me unless im right in front of you.

I have had diarrhea for many, many years now.

I am a nicer person when I know I look good.

Soft Water

Sometimes I wait all day to take a shower. In it is my most perfect and secret routine. I love walking down the hall with my towel slipping this way and that, and my hair resting in tense curls on my shoulders after being in a ponytail all day. The floors of the dorm shower are torn up and ugly, but I love it that it's so big, with all that useless space. My hearing aides are safe two doors down, the lights are off. Showering in silent darkness is bliss. It's a skin thing. It's just me and my skin. No clothes for me to adjust when walking across the quad. All that skin being washed over by a hard stream of water. I love the feeling of sweet-smelling suds running between my breasts. I love rubbing that soap all over those young, supple parts of my body that I will long for in a few years. I love rubbing that rich shaving foam all over my legs and the slippery soft feeling when I tangle them up together before I go to sleep. I love squeezing the excess water from my hair, which I then towel dry into some witchy mess. My scalp loves it when I brush the mess out into a shiny and perfect knot at the nape of my neck. I butter my body with cocoa creams and get into those comfy old night clothes that love me unconditionally.



So Good

I.

Oh god I am so happy right now. I can't stop smiling and nothing's really happened to make me feel this way but what I feel right now is that I WANT TO LIVE. I want to live so much. I want to feel my life ooze and bounce and shine. I want to cradle it and throw it off a cliff. I want to show it off and massage it and just enjoy EVERY SECOND I am here. I am so young and I have so many opportunities, and this is just the beginning of e v e r ything! I want to eat it all up.

(Tribute to my parents: you raised me in a way that I always got what I asked for but also in a way that I never asked for unreasonable things. THANK YOU SO MUCH. I am a happy girl.)

I am so lucky. And I'm even luckier because I know this.

II.

Another thing about being young; I do a lot of questionable things. (So do you.) I smoke pot quite often and I buy a pack of cigarettes every now and then. I've done shrooms and E. I like to drink and act out of sorts sometimes. I love touching people when I'm drunk. When I went into the city I spent the day in an altered state, just so I could highlight the frenzy, the grit, and the big, stunning mess by myself. I don't NEED these things, but sometimes it's just fun.

It feels good every now and then. To defy the carcinogens, the chemicals, to think Sartre was right. Trust me, I don't want to go young. All this, everything I have, this is so GOOD. I won't do this forever and I do have limits. Like last week I didn't do coke with my friends. I was definitely curious and I've always been of the mindset that "once can't kill you" but I said no. I thought of how Sim couldn't hold a straight conversation anymore last time I saw him and how stupid everything he says

is. I thought of the road trip we took and how the entire time I just wanted to take him out of my past, present, and future. I WANT my past, present, and future.

III.

I was sitting in Someday reading *The New Yorker* tonight, drinking my cappuccino with embarrassing amounts of sugar in it (coffee still tastes like shit). I circled some movies I want to see, and some gallery openings I think I'll go into New York for. I read a short story by Updike and was so proud of him. I'm glad there's people like John Updike who can so eloquently and seamlessly tie words together. THANK YOU for John Updike.

Thank you for people who see beauty in everyday things like the Pennsylvania Turnpike, the elderly, and girls with greasy, magenta hair. Not everything in life is flowery adjective and perfect timing. We are all just one big blob of people trying to win or lose something, trying to escape our gorgeous flaws and discover something new and feel special. And isn't it great? I think it's wonderful.

IV.

I have a genius I.Q. and come from a really great family. I am pretty brave. I am funny. They say I'm good looking. But you know what's the best part? I am so far from being issues-less. I'm so afraid of failure and I fall for undeserving men and then I turn around and fail the best people in my life. (I'm sorry!) I am not always sure I'm in control and I have not (yet) experienced mind-blowing sex. I'm not too convinced I know myself yet and I don't always make the best decisions. Oh, and I am so needy for LOVE.

I so badly want to fall in love with someone and have them worship me. Even more I want to worship back because I am starting to think I might be incapable of it. I want to have crazy deep conversations and laugh about how we take ourselves much too seriously. I want to have sweaty sex in dirty

places one night and play with kids in plasticized dream worlds and faux-wood parks the next morning. I want to let go and experiment and trust and be so completely proud of someone else and I don't want the love inside of me to destroy anything; I only want it to glow, glow, GLOW and buzz in haunting, glorious tones and then maybe explode every now and then – in passion, in rage, in brilliance, in incredulity.

V.

I am happy. And this is the world at 4:34 a.m. on Thursday, 3 February 2005.



Roommate of the Year

The Hillel preparation process is unlike anything I've ever seen. She will put on one very cute, quite expensive, and totally satisfactory outfit, wear it for two minutes, and then decide it simply will not do. She repeats this process at least 10 times before finally deciding on The One: a skirt and shirt very similar to the original outfit. She will rush out of the room 25 minutes late, in a flurry of Bye-honey-see-you-laters, leaving behind a mountainous pile of crumpled rejects, a waft of fruity perfume, and scattered remnants of her designer makeup.

This Friday night façade is not isolated to Friday nights. In fact, it is a daily mask that she wears—flaunting her cute but not overly trendy (because if there is one stereotype she refuses to fill it is appearing JAPpy) outfits matched with her outgoing personality while secretly wrestling with a multitude of complex and bewildering issues. For one thing, she has the chronic habit of instantly befriending anyone. However, these relationships are rarely more than surface acquaintances. It is painful for me to see her chat idly with these people because it seems so fake to me. She hurriedly laughs at their mediocre jokes as she reaches out to them, establishing a physical connection. Her ability to connect with people is uncanny—she has at least one thing in common with every person she meets. Granted, this is no large feat, as we probably all have something in common with everybody. Few people, though, actually capitalize on these connections. Her physical touch combines with her overzealous social patterns and she is connected to most everyone on campus.

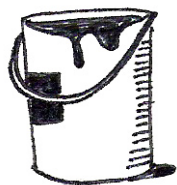
Sadly, these instant connections carry little more value than the ephemeral threads they appear to be. Though she knows most people on campus, I do not think she has any true friends. There is a very good chance that she thinks I am her closest girlfriend here, but the feeling is not really mutual.

Wait. What? Wow. I am a bitch.

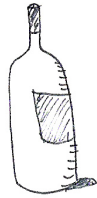
I utterly despise a girl who considers me her best friend. She may really care about me, and I can't stand to be around her. I accept her hugs with inward pangs of disgust. If she ever picks up on my repulsion, she'll ask, "What's wrong, babe?" I respond with blasé coldness. *I'm fine.*

Way to go. I'm glad I have the maturity of a sixth grader. Just as she wears the mask of being best friends with most people on campus, I fit perfectly into her brilliantly fabricated world of superficial friends and those people she "really cares about." I smile and chat with her, commenting on her daily crises with uncaring nods of sympathy or totally fake support for her life decisions. She unwittingly buys into my crap, never really knowing how I feel. My original irks about her were the foundation for a wall that I have been building over the past 6 months. By now, it is so solidly in place that nothing she can say or do will ever penetrate it.

She really likes me, or at least I think she does. Actually, there is a distinct possibility that she hates me as much as I hate her. Her stupid love notes, the stupid games she plays, our manufactured conversations. Whatever.



Caloric Intake



Monday.

Top of coffee cake muffin (300), cup of coffee w/ Splenda, some of Jen's Fruit Loops during Econ.

I am fascinated by the guy who always sits in front of me, who is the tallest person I have ever seen. I stare at him more than is healthy. This is not because I find him amazingly good looking but because I am so intrigued by his bone structure. We were both getting coffee in the dining hall; I have to reach really far and can barely reach the top row of coffee tureens. He doesn't even have to lean over the counter or go on tip toe—he just sticks out his interminable arm and, with supreme ease, fills his cup with one long push of the tureen lever. He looks like I think Leif Ericsson would have looked: perfectly Scandinavian with a robust milkmaid girlfriend.

Tuesday.

I am bizarrely drawn to my naïve literary acquaintance in my film class to whom I lent a corkscrew when we were both drunk. His nose is too big and he is indie in the "I am in college and trying to be indie but doing the same indie as every other college kid" way. I would like a secret naïve and literary fling where we make out and listen to the rain on a daybed in someone's basement. I think about kissing him when I raise my hand and talk about camera angles. I think about kissing him when I walk past, brusque, without making eye contact. But I want to kiss him and then never see him again.

I have no voice. It has up and left. Too much yelling out my window Thurs. when I had a sore throat already. Bottle of OJ (190), several cough drops (60). Iridescent yellow chicken soup,

now that is fucked up. (150 I guess?) Some salty rice. The rest of my roommate Mike's pastry elephant ear, without asking. Some Diet Coke. Some more Diet Coke. Half a roll of Saltines. Extra ginger ale.

Half Odwalla bar. I received an unsolicited copy of *Fit Pregnancy* in this mailbox. I think it's a bad omen. There must be some mistake. I am neither fit nor pregnant. Furthermore, it was the Ab Issue. No one sees your abs under an enormous fetus and disgusting membranes full of unbiblical fluid. Wanting to distance myself as far as possible from the images of burgeoning women in hot pink spandex, I flee to the gym and inhale one quarter bottle of Odwalla juice (140) hoping that its acidic traces will thoroughly purge the horrific images burning themselves onto my brain.

Thursday.

Woke up, went to class. Only thing I can remember is that alcohol is unfortunately not a nutrient. B&B muffin (500 ouch!) on the way back. Had lunch, over-grilled cheese (430?) and tomato soup style creamy (230) with some celery (-15) My friend told me she was morally opposed to plucking her eyebrows. I am morally opposed, however, to the way she chews, she sounds like a fucking cow.

Friday.

Not literary or naïve. How caloric is semen?

Saturday.

4 AM. Can't sleep. Strawberry Pop-Tarts in bed. I pick up magazine and learn that processed carbohydrates can produce low birth weights.

1 trip to the gym w/ M.

“coffee” in Dewick w/ M. = 2 cups of coffee, some eggs (160), some cereal, ketchup, grapes, cantaloupe, and Fro-Yo with fluff. Shoot me.

3 cups of coffee in lib, 1 with Ellen, 1 with Mar, 1 with myself
1 dinner hot date planned for tomorrow with Friday boy

236 pages of bio read, key terms defined

1 bag crunch and munch

1 bottle diet mountain dew

\$1.25 assorted Jumbo candy including grapefruit slices, peanuts, gummi worms, and many many many Non Pareils

8 hours in the library

8 more pages written, for a total of 16 out of 20

1 joke about George Bush and a quiche

1 affectionate but chauvinistic IM from T. who implies that I should be a housewife

1 awkward marriage proposal across food counter

1 refusal of said proposal

Carmie @ 6 PM mini quiche, 3 in. in diameter, some curly fries. I think only of George Bush. Bland spinach with salt.

11:30 PM M&M's (110), shot of raspberry vodka (120).

12:00 AM Interminable rum-and-cokes, before I kicked the rest onto the kings cards

1:30 AM half of Chris' beer (60)

2:30 AM half of Special K bar leftover in coat pocket from breakfast (60)

4:30 AM. I am still drunk after tending to drunk freshmen. Domino's is closed. Mike and I decide to cook. One hard boiled egg with salsa in sketchy dorm kitchen (80), celery with some blue cheese (70), transparent unclaimed egg noodles from fridge.

Sunday.

Church (10:30) communion wafer (10), 1 sip of wine (3).

Absolution from weekend? I think not. Jesus is still mad at me from taking communion hung over.

Gym: Concealed the cover of *FP* so I can do the lateral butt side raises (part of the revolutionary Tupler Technique, proven to blast post-baby pudge). I think it is working for non-baby related pudge, I am feeling the burn. Also 45 mins brisk walking.

Dinner date with Friday Boy:

6:00 Carrots, pink lemonade, half donut. Necessary for inspiration as I dig through three weeks of wash to find something remotely wearable.

6:20 2 pieces of gum (10).

6:45 Diet Coke with lime at bar (0). Smooth conversation about classes and Kennedy School speaker. I am so foxy. We are smooth. He is the one.

6:55 Seated, finally. His beach house is on Cape Cod, and his sister's name is Dorothy.

7:05 Seaweed salad (170?) Yes, the origami club is going well. No, I don't play intramural soccer. He doesn't either.

7:10 Hot soup (100?) Apparently his dog's favorite color is green.

7:20 (finally) 1 cup Pad Thai (760)? All I can think of is prenatal nutrition and the Tupler technique. Out of desperation I ask whether he thinks pregnant women are hot. I've heard it's a fetish.

7:23 Why is he looking at me like that?

7:24 Why did he just ask for the check?

7:25 I thought men liked kinkiness.

7:26 We're not going to Mike's?

Picnic With German Whores

1/28/05

This morning I awoke around half-past eleven. Before opening my eyes I was happily reviewing sports scores from the day before in my mind. Also, before opening my eyes I felt a giant heap to my right, and because of this I opened my eyes. There was a girl asleep with make-up smeared across her face; she was hogging the majority of my comforter. I recognized her face but shamefully had not the slightest idea who she was. We were in my room, which denied my chances of escaping before conflict.

My thoughts were minimal because of the severe hang over that crippled my mind, body and soul immediately upon waking. Regardless there was still a profound moment of truth when I realized for the first time in my life I had slept with a complete stranger and had drunkenly forgotten everything. Looking at her I wasn't too shamed—she was quite fit and I suspected she had nice blue eyes although I couldn't see them. She was naked, and under the covers I was minimally turned on by her goods.

She was sound asleep and I was trapped in bed next to her. For some reason I was reminded of an eerie painting of a woman with clown red lipstick and bright blue eye shadow, in the painting it appeared that she was attempting to swallow a petite but sharp looking man. In any case, I began theorizing that she was German, perhaps I was still a bit drunk. My thoughts carried me deep into a scene where I was surrounded by robust German women with brightly colored make up, shouting loudly in broken English at me. I couldn't understand them but I assumed they wanted sex. I grew quite afraid of

these women, and unlike a nightmare the scene ended abruptly at my will.

I spent the next forty-five minutes reviewing every cinematic depiction of the exact predicament I was in. Seems to me there are many.

Within five minutes of her waking, I was convinced that she was the dumbest girl I had ever encountered and I half wanted to pack up my things and move home.

After she left I called my mother.



When I was little... and now I...

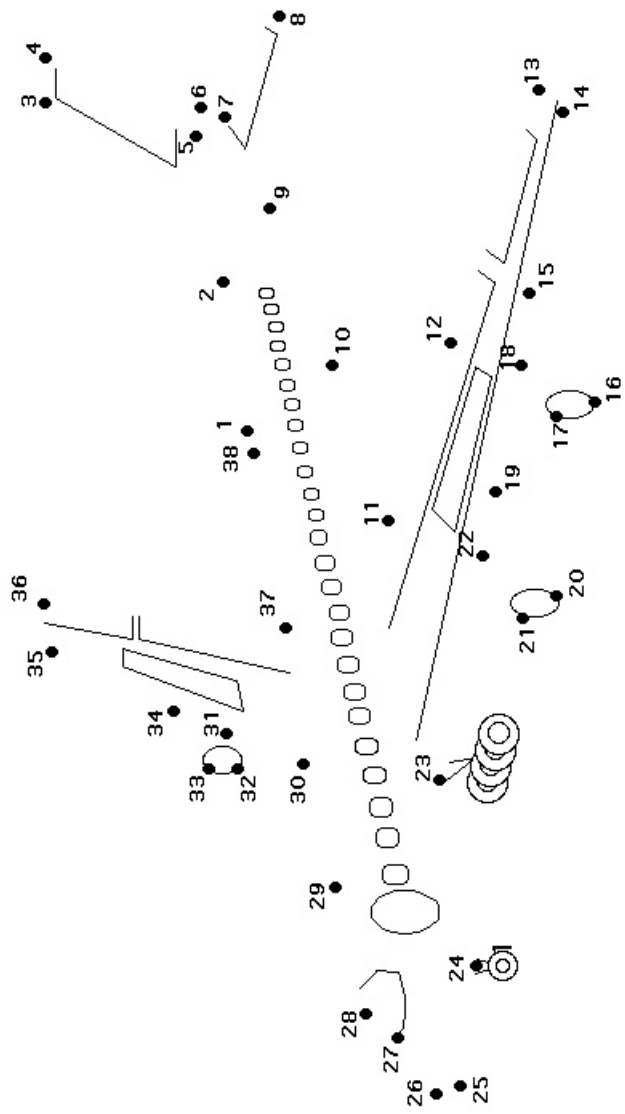
by various authors

- When I was little I got really depressed for a week or so because I knew I'd never be able to live in space like the Jetsons. And now I still get sad when I think of this.
- When i was little i used to want to be a doctor, and now i saw scrubs which erased all of those notions from my head
- When I was little I used to eat as much Fruity Pebbles as possible so my brother wouldn't get to eat more than me and now I eat only one bowl or less because it's really fattening.
- when i was little, i used to be able to drink a glass of chocolate milk, stand upside down and let it come out my nose, and now, no matter how hard i try, i can't do it anymore
- When I was little I used to see pretty girls' underwear on the playground all the time. And now I see pretty girls' thongs hanging out the back of their pants all the time.
- When I was little I used to tell my grandma to stop smoking. and now I understand why she ignored me.
- When I was little I was wealthy and now I am not.
- When I was little, I believed that jumping required no effort on the part of the jump-er so if you flapped your arms in the correct way, rocket boosters would emerge from the bottoms of your shoes to shoot you into the air, and now I am still a shitty jumper.
- When I was little I said I would never do drugs and now I do.
- When I was little I used to panic about the prospect of my death and now I still do.
- When I was little I couldn't tell left from right and now I still can't.



- When I was little I was small and now I am not.
- when I was little I thought pizza crust would make my hair curly and I did not want curly hair and now I think pizza crust is gross.
- When I was little I thought my father was invincible and now I think he is super invincible.
- When I was little I used to climb trees and go on “adventures” and now I only read about people who do.
- When I was little I used to enjoy spending nights at home and now I can’t stand it.
- When I was little I used to want to have pets so badly I collected grapes in a shoebox and gave them names and now I have a lesbian dog.





The Outskirts of Jersey

Vennill Dining Hall, Prep School X, USA

Lunch. It was usually the most hazardous and excruciating time of day for me. The two vast front doors swung open into a literal swirl of activity, of open-mouthed chewing and girls flitting about, analyzing inane boys, those boys sitting dominant in that setting. There must have been others, but when I try to think back, the social non-entities (the gays, the geeks, the goths) simply don't register.

I should be ashamed to note that, given my proclivity for the same sex, I belonged in a category that I refused to see. Indeed, in the first few weeks of school, when I was relatively unstylish, highly uncertain, and fearful that the secret might be uncovered, I had been faced with a serious decision.

First, let us picture a scale, where on the left sat the kooks. Meet the players: the fat girl (who should have been popular, but that's another bag entirely), the scrawny (homosexual) who N. quite justifiably branded a dendrophiliac (attracted to the largest phallic symbol he could climb, I suppose), the ugly lesbian (who in a bold and foolish gesture, chose to intentionally uglify herself in the name of "being different"), the scraggly-haired smoker with a speech impediment whom the wrestlers had dubbed "Swamp Donkey". A sexy bunch, if I had ever seen one.

So this was choice *A*. Let us turn to *B*. All the popular sports players, the sexy girls, the spoiled heiresses (many of them, in fact, quite sexy themselves), the ones who walked about campus in thoughtless, numbing comfort amidst the dark New Jersey woods surrounding them. My want for *B* was my guarantee that I would never join their ranks. I so yearned to be one of them, one of the boys laughing by the lockers in Bowen Hall, playing pranks, breaking the rules. I so disastrously yearned for more than that from those boys.

My desire for *B*, in so many ugly and shallow ways, absolutely all but forbade me to join the *A*'s. And so I was neither. I was solo. Often in the library, working in one of the rarely-used private study rooms.

It was the times when I would be forced to confront the reality of my situation that I hated the most. Where a look, a giggle, a name, could come hurtling at me from any direction, pointing a blinding spotlight on my innermost fears and secrets. A place just like Vennill Dining Hall.

I would often sit with Andy, the only person I ever considered to be a friend of mine at *X*. We would sometimes goof off in the sanctity of the quiet Johnson Library, looking at (heterosexual) pornographic images online. Breasts were very entertaining. Andy was a free agent between group *B* and me. We would have a lot of fun together, sometimes.

Often I just used him because he was all I had. He, the virulent homophobe who disrespected women and worked out incessantly. I couldn't choose my friends. I was incapable of reaching out to anyone, especially Group *B*, because it would be far too easy for them to discover the secret. It was never a real issue with Andy, and I'll never know why.

I lived at *X* like this for four years. I know I could have been friends with group *A*, but I was too repulsed by the thought of what group *B* would say about me then. I know what went on. Was my decision to stay independent of either group pride or insecurity? I don't know. But throughout the whole thing, my fantasies (of boys, of the future, of myself) cushioned me when I fell. Delusions are a wonderful thing.



Illusions of Grandeur



Sometime in December 2004:

SevenMonkey: us consulate in saudi arabia was attacked

GoToDengo:im 3/7ths of the way though my test

SevenMonkey: not bad

GoToDengo: curenly im making a to list for my winter break

SevenMonkey: haha

SevenMonkey: good time management

GoToDengo: curenly i have on it

GoToDengo: quite smoking

GoToDengo: carolyn a.

GoToDengo: jenna b.

SevenMonkey: who are they?

GoToDengo: win a politzer

SevenMonkey: good goal

GoToDengo: get my bottle of absinth back

SevenMonkey: i hope so

GoToDengo: drink said bottle

GoToDengo: oh those are girls from my highscool

GoToDengo: alison r.

SevenMonkey: not until i get back to tufts i hope

SevenMonkey: what are you doing with these girls?

GoToDengo: beat my brothers mug shot

GoToDengo: nothing their just girls that i knew in highscool

GoToDengo: on my to do list

SevenMonkey: beat your brothers mug shot-nice

SevenMonkey: how are you going to do that?

GoToDengo: do what ?

GoToDengo: them ?

GoToDengo: don't know from behind

SevenMonkey; no-the mug shot

GoToDengo: oh

GoToDengo: i think alcahol and womens underware could be invovlved

SevenMonkey: nice

SevenMonkey: good luck with your test

SevenMonkey: i have to get back to work

GoToDengo: amanda l.

GoToDengo: samantha m.

Auto response from SevenMonkey: I WILL finish this paper.

GoToDengo: but only if she's gained some waight

Auto response from SevenMonkey: I WILL finish this paper.

GoToDengo: i don't want to be impailed on her bones

GoToDengo: you can find those girls on teh facebook

Auto response from SevenMonkey: I WILL finish this paper.

GoToDengo: i was going though my facebook friends from other schools

GoToDengo: carolyn a. will be tricky couse she hates me and she was good friends with the girl i ended up in tim's bed with

Auto response from SevenMonkey: I WILL finish this paper.

GoToDengo: jenna could work if she's single

Auto response from SevenMonkey: I WILL finish this paper.

GoToDengo: though i did piss her off last week by asking her insensitive questions about her pubic hair

Auto response from SevenMonkey: I WILL finish this paper.

GoToDengo: alison r. is a long shot

SevenMonkey: alright-i have to do a paper

SevenMonkey: we can talk about this later

GoToDengo: amanda l. if shes drunk might work

SevenMonkey: you win, i responded

SevenMonkey: later

GoToDengo: sam i give even odds she's a skank, but she is british

GoToDengo: the politzer could be tricky

Auto response from SevenMonkey: SHUT UP SIMON, I'm writing a fricking paper.

GoToDengo: i suppose if i have enough energy from quitting smoking i could like, write a book

GoToDengo: but spelling will be an issue

GoToDengo: the key to the absinth will be getting it out of the box its in

Auto response from SevenMonkey: SIMON!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!! I've had enough.

GoToDengo: but if i do that some of the girls might work out

Auto response from SevenMonkey: SIMON!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!! I've had enough.

GoToDengo: and the whole book thing

GoToDengo: its suposed to be helpful with creativity

GoToDengo: but it might negitvly impact the spelling factor

Things I'm embarrassed to admit about my family

by various authors

- My dad doesn't read good books.
- my mom cried her eyes out when i got a kidney stone, but i was too high to notice
- my mom squeaks and honks when she cries. i hate it.
- My dad is frequently mistaken for Mr. Bean, and my mom listens to Rush Limbaugh
- Neither of my parents went to college
- I am really really really happy we are rich.
- I wish it were OK to bang my uncle. Because I'd really like to.
- Somehow most dinner conversations regress to talking about balls and pooping.
- my mom is a countess. do people still talk about these things?
- My dad listens to Shedaisy and my mom is definitely having an affair and she is an aggressive driver.
- I'm eligible for a Sons of the Confederacy membership.
- i like it when my little brother's friends have crushes on me.
- My mother is a housewife.
- We really are perfect.
- How completely dependent I am on them. And that I could never love another woman as much as I love my mother.
- My mom has no friends.
- My dad rented Showgirls when my mom was out of town.
- They're extremely overprotective.
- My dad's a republican.
- They are all soooooo innocent.

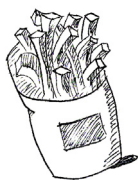
- They can be extremely prejudiced yet truly believe they are open-minded.
- They love George W. Bush.
- my grandparents are racist.
- I suspect my father has cheated on my mom but I would never tell my mom because she treats him like shit. In fact I'd stick up for him if it were true because he's put up with her not giving him ass for a long time and does nothing but complain about him.



Therapy?

I treat it nonchalantly, but bulimia has absolutely beat me down. I binge on everything. I hate it. I grab everything in front of me and just charge it down my throat. There is never a feeling of full, and the out of control hunger surges. There are scars on my knuckles from my teeth, and my throat has bled from being constantly scratched and stabbed by my fingers. I am so destructive and I hate it. I have grabbed razors and slid them along my wrists, just praying for the strength to press down. I have stared at bottles of painkillers for hours, but have never found the courage to swallow them all. I can no longer even look at myself in a mirror, and when I do, all I see is fat. Everything just seems so violent and extreme, and I'm tired of it. I am worn out, and just no longer have the capability to deal with it, so I let it happen. Oh bulimia, I've gotten used to you. In a strange way, it is comforting to know that I at least have this constant in my life.

Right now, I have, as they say, turned over a new leaf. Instead of the tiresome binge and purge ritual, I am gradually picking my summer eating starvation-mode diet again. I have not eaten for the past three days and actually, I feel great. Naturally, you are thinking that I'm screwed up, and wondering if this is some kind of desperate cry for help. Honestly, I do not know my reasons for writing this. Maybe it will be therapeutic, maybe I will change, maybe I will stop, and maybe if luck has it, I will be skinny again. Whatever the reason, regardless of what happens to me, it is going to be fine. In the end, it was all me and I can live with that, I promise.



They're Just Sheets

Mountains and valleys of 300 thread-count separate us. If I knew your fears, your tics, your real passions, this would be so intimate. But we are not near each other. I am too lost and too tired (hung over) to navigate these strange rivers and rolling fields even though the weather is beautiful and my muscles strong. You are still sleeping which both angers me and makes me feel powerful. Everything about you and I is twofold and twisted.

I am relieved that you are an attractive sleeper because I have been enamoured with the idea of you for weeks and there's nothing I hate more than disappointment. You also think we're perfect for each other in theory. Everything we've been doing now is an attempt to test that (completely unfounded) hypothesis.

But you and I, we love illusions. We are artists and we are (sub)consciously painting for each other. And so there are no flaws—the lighting obeys us and though it sometimes doesn't make any fucking sense, every phantasmagorical shadow and missing light source is there on purpose. And we love feeling omniscient and weird because we are special. We are both secretly flattered when we are told we are out of touch with reality. I don't know what I'd do if I weren't a little nuts.

I really want to read one of the four books I'm currently suckling; I want to finally start one of my own. I want to make a movie and I want it grainy black-and-white. I want to fall asleep again and have you wake me with some obscure song you put on too loudly on purpose.

I want my denouement. I sit up and I no longer see a topography of white Egyptian cotton. This is just a bed in an orangey, dimly-lit room and I don't feel that poetic (right now). I'm going to wake you up and we'll have sex. You know, because. Because I always get what I want. And so do you. And I hate it when you say I'm just like you.

God I can't stand you.



Things I've Learned In College

Note: These are all things that I, a Tufts student, have either done, observed done or been told about by reputable sources.

1. Cops and RAs will go to great lengths to avoid noticing a blow-up sex doll.
2. No one wants to smell my fingers.
3. The correct answer to an RA when he asks you to dump out the alcohol is not "All of it or some of it?"
4. Marking hands outside of the Rainbow House is not a good way to pick up chicks.
5. No matter how many times a black guy drops the n word, I can't.
6. If you're trashed when you pledge a frat, it still counts.
7. AIDS is not funny yet, even though it has been 22 1/2 years.
8. Never mention to a guy that you once saw his g/f hooking up with this sketchy ass Turkish dude.
9. The correct answer when your grandmother asks if you slept in those clothes is not "No, I couldn't find my shirt."
10. Never tell a girl she looks like your mom, especially if you're hooking up with her.
11. Never imply a professor is hung over during a C block class, especially if she is.
12. If you're high, drunk, and tripping on opium while having sex, plan on blocking out a couple hours in your schedule.
13. It is possible to date 3 girls at once, and the guy who's doing it will get pissed off if you mention it in front of one of the girls.
14. When a frat brother tells you to put on your shirt, the correct response is not "But my chest hair is like a sweater."
15. You can't bring a bench into the library.
16. You can't have a full kiddie pool in a dorm room.
17. You can have a pot hang over.

18. "I once saw your pic on thefacebook" is not an effective pick up line.
19. Pot angel food cake doesn't work.
20. If you're having sex and your roommate walks in on you, make sure you're in the right bed.
21. All relationships are built on a solid foundation of lies.
22. Justifying a remark to a girl about how your male friend has bigger boobs than her just makes it worse.
23. ALWAYS figure out which girls are hot at a party BEFORE you start drinking.
24. If your friend is found passed out and covered in vomit, do not try to argue with the host of the party about the origin of the vomit.
25. Trying to climb the Jumbo statue while drunk only results in lots of pain.
26. Nyquil really is an addictive drug.
27. Coffee and cigarettes only work as a short-term diet, though you will lose weight.
28. Professors and parents do not like getting directions with the Rape Steps as a landmark.
29. When you're written up for having a bottle of beer in the hallway of your dorm, "I'm not classy enough to drink beer out of a bottle" is, oddly enough, a valid excuse.
30. You can pop a blow-up sex doll.
31. If you're walking two girls home, making out with one will pretty much rule out making out with the other one.
32. No amount of excuses can heal the emotional scars of your friend's little brother after he walks in on you and a girl buck naked in the bed he's going to sleep in which is, oddly enough two doors down from your own room.
33. Girls don't like hickeys on their faces.
34. Blow jobs in dorm hallways, always a bad idea.
35. Hand jobs in a dorm bathroom, oddly enough, good idea.
36. If you live on a couch long enough, people will start to ignore you.
37. There are many ways to fuck up making Easy Mac.

38. There is such a thing as a 2 beer straight lesbian, and my roommate has definitely not proved it.
39. Edwards 40 Hands is basically an excuse to vomit.
40. Getting utterly smashed with your friend's mom is a good way to scare your friend for life, especially when the mother is a loud drunk.
41. After drinking 3 40's of malt liquor it is possible to be very decent the next morning when you have lunch at Gifford House.
42. Psych majors should never be intimate, because they don't fight, they just psychoanalyze each other.
43. When at a classy cocktail party, don't take bottle shots.
44. At above party, don't use the wine glasses to make rum and cokes.
45. At the above party, don't attempt to sell drugs that you do not have.
46. The line "Look even if I tried to do anything to you, I'm way to drunk to be able to actually do it" is not a good line to assuage a girl of the fear that you're trying to hit on her.
47. People don't like to be bitten, especially when it leaves a bruise.
48. You really need to shave before you make out with a girl.
49. Boring 9:25's are a lot more interesting when you haven't sleep in 16 hours and have just had pot coffee.
50. Drunk e-mailing your professors, oddly enough, not so bad an idea.
51. No matter how high your grades are, the few and scattered hung over/drunken encounters with your parents will convince them that you're a self-destructive alcoholic.
52. Never pre-game so hard you don't realize you're at a classy cocktail party.
53. Jokes about the Holocaust go over much better when the Israeli you're telling it to is high.
53. You can't take naked pictures of people in the bookstore.
54. You can take naked pictures of people in the library.
55. A kegger in a dorm will not be ruined if the cops come

twice.

56. Telling a girl who did a long keg stand that its probably due to her low gag reflex is not a good way to make friends.

57. You shouldn't spit beer on a guy in a suit.

58. If a guy takes a girl to a semi as a date, you shouldn't refer to them as dating.

59. Whenever I think my life is a mess, there's always my roommate, who so far this semester has managed to sleep through 2 quizzes and a presentation, in one class.

60. Asking your parent who's a Tufts faculty member to bring in your running shoes for you, 2 days before the Naked Quad Run is kind of awkward.

61. Nothing says awkward like striking up a conversation with a couple attempting to hook up in a back room.

62. Getting sick right before finals sucks especially when you have Genetics first.

63. If a girl takes her shoes off and lays in your bed, she may have wanted to hook up with you.

64. If it says *May cause dizziness*, don't be surprised when you fall over.

65. You can study for a Genetics final in 20 hours including a full night of sleep and no caffeine.

66. The above is called a Feat of Yours Truly.

67. The above will also have a disastrous effect on your Latin final 20 hours later.

68. Nothing's freakier then waking up and seeing a mouse staring at you from your desk.

69. Sixty-nine is always a funny number.

70. There is a fine line between true genius and utter stupidity.

71. It can become increasingly hard to tell the difference, especially in your own work.

72. It is possible to get the highest grade ever on a final that you rushed though because you had to take a shit.

73. If a girl writes her phone number on you, copy it down before you pass out as it can and will get smudged.

Confessions II

by various authors



These cannot be the best four years of my life

I do not like religious people, i cannot date religious people, i think religious people are very base and i feel sorry for them.

i dont have any idols.

i would get an abortion in two seconds if necessary. if our president takes away that right i will kill him and laura and those drunk twins. no, even better, i will send them all to iraq.

I do not believe in democracy, diplomacy and I am an IR major. I also get the highest grades in my IR courses.

I would NOT be friends with me. I am self-absorbed and wicked.

I do not like the way Nabokov is pronounced. NabOHkov. It should definitely be NAHbokov.

I hate Republicans and judge them as such. It is their own damn fault they should not have such retarded figureheads.

i have dated very unintelligent men and i think i am intelligent and worry that this may say something about my presumed intelligence.

My love interests are never as fascinating as they originally appeared.

I am an absolute idiot when it comes to girls. If it weren't for the fact that I am mildly good looking I would have had to

pay for sex my whole life.

Hardly anyone calls me.

i was recently accused of having an Electra complex and was weirdly flattered by the observation.

Oh god I love it when people touch me. Anywhere anyhow innocent, dirty.

When I get stoned I love to take pictures of myself in the mirror, and I do this when I am not stoned. So in conclusion, I have a beautiful penis.

I refuse to masturbate without utter privacy, a bowl of water, a wet towel and a dry towel.

I think girls who swallow cum are filthy.

sometimes I really only do want you for your body (your worst fear)

i consider myself a metrosexual.

I have never been kissed.

I envy ppl when they get really sick and vomit and have diarrhea and stuff cuz they lose so much weight.. I never get that sick

I'll procrastinate peeing for hours if I'm playing Solitaire on my computer.

In order to turn myself off of a guy, I picture them engulfed in flames screaming like a girl – it works.

The End

Going.

I am old. When I look in the mirror I am staring at that grown-up kid I always wanted to be when I was little. I am old and my dog is old and she is dying. It is clear now and I almost wish I had not come home. Dad is semi-chatty on the way; we discuss academic things now that I am grown-up, he feels that I am issue-oriented and I feel that I should demonstrate that I have learned something for the thousands of dollars they've been dumping into Tufts. I feel like a lab specimen under close examination. I HAVE learned a lot but I am also trying to disguise the feeling that maybe I haven't learned as much as I could have a) if I had concentrated 100% efforts toward class b) if I had gone to live four years in a cerebral cornfield at Grinnell. It's just books on a shelf; I don't care now and I can't bring across to him how much more I have learned as a human than I thought possible.

So instead we talk like grown-ups. I make a few references to kids in the house and he smiles and nods but it is clear that he doesn't get as much out of it as is there. I feel that I have failed to explain to him what is. The goofy, strong, delicious, laughing, sensational, guarded, gaudy, sneaky, lazy, thoughtful, conversational, moody lump of wood, people, and gumballs that is our house for the summer, the reason why I am living there as opposed to here. I feel that he doesn't know any of these friends. I forget that my parents have barely met any of them. References that are familiar to me are obscure to him and fall flat. We are in two different worlds.

Missy is dying. I have been thinking this in the back of my head for the past two years, just generally, a little closer each time I walk through the worn front door at home. But every time I am thankful that she is still alive and hasn't died alone. But this time I am home, it is everything that I ever dreaded

seeing. This time I am not thankful that she is still alive. It breaks the bones of my conscience, one by one, to watch her trying to walk around. I should have asked earlier, I should have been more prepared to deal with this.

We come up the driveway and there is Mom, and I have food, lobsters. *Finally*, after missing the flight, I am relieved to be home, and we go around back to get inside. I make some silly remark about smelling Missy before I see her. Later, I make the mistake of looking out the front window and seeing her sprawled there, licking at some old weepy skin sores. Her coat looks much worse, I can see ticks on her face. I make the mistake of walking outside, around the rhododendron and into the corner where she is sitting. There are at least two ticks. One is large fat brown and ugly, the other is little and latched onto the circles of black skin under her eyes that have been exposed by hair loss. I make my second mistake in trying to coax her to some food to make her feel better. "C'mon Miss! Let's go!" Up she gets, and then immediately back down again. Up again, she stumbles toward me. The smell is overwhelming, and she's trying to make it up this little dirt hill. She's tipping to the side, her whole body is staggering left, then straight again. She reminds me of Charlie Brown, pony, on tranquilizers before they castrated him at the farm.

Missy is now all the way down, she has fallen over, but she is not done, and this part is what is the worst. I want to end it, to stop it, to go back again. That dog has so much heart and so much guts she just gets back up again and keeps going, she's STILL staggering up the hill, towards me, pushing hard with her whole head dangling off of her neck as though it's too heavy to hold upright anymore, cocked to the left like an old blind woman, her whole body stumbling and swimming to the left like a drunkard and yet she is still headed in my direction, she looks to be in so much pain but her poor stringy tail is still wagging, and in her eyes, those big, tired brown eyes magnified by the hair loss around them, there is still this little happiness, she is not giving up and she is happy to see me and trying her

very best to make it to the destination, I want to scream with tears!

I want to fall over and weep and tear out my hair and rip out my arms. I want to give her a hug and make her heal 100%, to make her into a puppy again. I want to give her a bath and clean off all of the scrunge and the ticks and the sores. I owe this dog so much.

She has been my entire childhood, she has saintfully suffered through all of our little notions as kids running around jumping over massive obstacles, pulling her along, playing games as she chased hickory nuts all over the yard and snapped at water drops so they broke into a thousand tiny crystal bits in the air, chasing them until they found the ground. She supervised Dad chopping down oak trees and helped drag branches through the dirt-slashed woods after the hurricane, she lived outside in the cold winters and barged inside during summer thunderstorms. She dug holes in the flower gardens, invoking the wrath of my parents, and tore across the yard to chase squirrels. She pursued bikers furiously and buried dinner rolls instead of bones. But today she is reduced to this dilapidated state of repair, this pair of eyes and heap of a body, she is suffering and dying.

I realize that I wish she were already dead because I think she would be happier. And then I really am crying, watching her trying to walk around the yard, she is pitching to the left, curled now almost into a C-shape, trying to walk straight, Mom tells me in between words that she thinks this is a neurological problem. We are trying to have a normal conversation after I've picked the ticks off and I feel like this is something they've been trying to hide, that they did not mean for me to see and then to top it all off, Dad, who is never this fuzzy, is trying to coax Missy over to the grass so that she can lie down. I watch her try to make her way over there and she stumbles and falls but patiently gets up again and goes over, wagging her tail, aiming to please and I can't continue this conversation with my mom while watching the pitiful scene in front of me and I really am crying. I am bawling, there are tears streaming down

my face and I am scrunched in agony. I am trying hard not to do this. I am home and should be happy and I don't want Mom and Dad to feel guilty about anything, about the way they've ignored this. I am sure that she has gotten baths, plenty of care, love, care, but I can't stand it to just sit here and stare and the way they ARE reacting, this whole scene is wrong, I am having a nightmare and it's really not at all true.

Later, after dinner and after Dad is in bed, I talk to Mom about things and then at the end I ask her if she thinks we should take Missy to the vet. o be put to sleep, and now I am crying again, I am not sure if it is okay to end her life early if she still has that look in her eyes, who am I to be doing this? Why? Mom proposes tomorrow. I ask about my brother and whether it would not be better to let him stop through first and she asks what I would do if I were him. I think I would rather stay far away. Later, after everyone is asleep, I sit on the toilet and take a shit and cry and cry and cry until there is nothing left in my body, all fluids are out, there is a puddle of snot on the floor and it's still dripping down out of my nose, making long strings, and I can't move to wipe them off.

Finally I blow my nose. I flush the toilet and stand up, and my nose is cleared, I am finally aware of the smelly smell from my poop. I wash my hands and look in the mirror. I am old.



Girls Are Like Soup

I ate soup from two bowls at the same time today.

I opened the can (which looked small) and poured it into a bowl (which looked big), but there was just too much soup. So I got a new package of bowls and took out a second. All of the meat that hadn't yet fallen out of the can went into this new bowl.

Both went into the microwave: 2 minutes and 22 seconds later, the first – filled to an optimistic limit – overflowed.

Once on the table, the bowls steamed identical steam. I took a sip of the first, a bite of the second. The meat-filled bowl was hot, too hot, like the meat was heat-greedy. It was too hot to eat right then, but the first was perfect, so I ate the first bowl first and spooned mouthfuls of meat over from the too-hot bowl to balance the flavor and by the time I got to the second bowl, that one was perfect too.



Summer, Fall

Sometime in the summer, 2004:

And I just saved this document to write to you and lo and behold I get two phone calls, two minutes until the two people are here. Damn I want to write, I can feel my fingers grind as I try to re-accommodate them to the keys. I give you more credit for handwriting. And there's the car in the driveway. Bye. Hope you are happy tonight.

August 18, 2004

Eric is gone. Doubtless to say I now have some spare time, but still only some, for the first time in the last four or so summers. With this letter and a few words of my own this might make the record for written words during the summer months. Still, I am not pleased with my creative progress, or rather digression. I am entering an advanced fiction writing course this fall without enough material to be considered an advanced fiction writer. Next week I may tell Jeff that I am taking a sabbatical from people to retire to my room each night to write—it may or may not work. I look forward to being free next summer without the restraints of landscaping and Eric and Jeff.

I received your postcard the other day. It was nice to hear from you, especially as your cell phone is no longer in service. Though, I have to tell you that it was frustrating to read your news in 250 words or less. It sounds as though you are having a worthwhile time at the ranch even though you miss Bellingham. It's a never-ending cycle, home and away, or what we might consider home and away. I hope all is going well with your writing progress.

It's an arduous process to translate thoughts into words, over and over again. I have much to say, yet little to express. My fingers ache of repetition—landscaping muscles are different than typing muscles. The summer is bright and the days pass

with sweat, but my mind runs on an unknown timescale.

August 19, 2004

I just had dinner with Derek and others. The pizza was alright, but I was too distanced to enjoy anything. I can't seem to be conscious of much anymore. Each year becomes more meshed with confusion than the previous. I am leaving for school in Boston September 1st, and then things will become clearer in certain aspects. It is early to say, but visit any time you wish.

October 12

It was nice to receive an e-mail from you last week. Though it had only been a couple months since I last spoke to you, I was getting anxious to learn something of you, to know that you were doing fine. It's natural to do so, to want to keep in touch, to need to know every so often that another is in good living. Perhaps reflecting in part to my attempts to know that I am doing fine, to regain a sense of composure, because I have neither been feeling physically well or mentally motivated. And I do not know why. I do not particularly feel overwhelmed or stressed, nor do I miss something. Rather, I feel inclined toward a depression of sense, a deadening of the world.

Last week I got sick. I attempted one class on Monday, but was unable to talk in the small class, unable to feel anything toward the subject, professor, or other students. I had no care. I again attempted class Wednesday, but in the classroom found myself in reflection, feeling anxious, then paranoid. I tried to walk to fiction class on Thursday. By the time I climbed the library steps I was too fatigued and nauseous to think. Meanwhile, I had not eaten a substantial meal in four days. I did not care for anything except my bed. I am going to start running as soon as I can. I need an agent to help carry life better, something to help retain my wits because I have been losing them like a tree its leaves. It's fall.

I am going to read in bed and then get some sleep. Tomorrow is my one of my long days, classes and work. My feet are cold

and I look forward to them getting warm underneath the covers. I think I need some slippers. You are always good at being cozy when the time warrants coziness, but I struggle with it sometimes. The ability to be comfortable is admirable.

Wednesday, the 13th

I don't know what's wrong with me. I again missed all of my classes today for some lame reason. I stayed up until about 7, finished a rather short paper. It was on Allen Ginsberg and Buddhist conceptions in his poetry. I think my problem was that I procrastinated too long, allowing my consciousness to deteriorate in the early morning hours. My aptitude for thinking clearly was shrouded in musical clouds. And then I tried to get a couple of hours of sleep before the 10:25 class; my eyes opened at noon. Then they opened at four. I wish I was in Missoula with you on the bike trail or next to the river, and that's the only description of Missoula I have. Except for the fat cat Lars. He must compliment the scenery quite nicely and I would like to meet him. Anyway, seriously, enough about my arrested development at school. I am beginning to despise even that characterization, 'in school'. Enough.

October 15th

What a beautiful melancholic day, the sky a consistent, murky gray; the trees vibrant shades of fire; the ground a wet canvas for valiantly dying leaves; the air an aromatic fog of thickness with fresh decay. What more could awake a stroller, arouse the senses, and beget the sweet melancholy of the mind with a smile? And what a beginning to a stroll in such condition than receiving a card from you that tells me to get better.

October 17th: Sunday, the day that falls into itself

It's early afternoon, recovering from a late night last night, back from the dining hall. The temperature is staying lovingly below 60 and the sky, as it has been for many days, is a brash of dirty ice. I went for a run with a friend yesterday, on the wet

trails along the Mystic River. Night was beginning to fall and we talked of guy stuff and party lineups and plans, and plans of continuing life after college. He is an aspiring physician and I am an aspiring aspirer. His life is built on a stressful urgency, an underlying passion that has been relinquished by cold organization, and I told him I hate passion and am an obscure and masochistic life. I felt content talking with him about our diverging lives while absent-mindedly running, in short shorts, in bitter fall. It was timeless and comforting. We scheduled another run for today. Until then I will read and then throw the baseball around with my roommates Evan and Marc.

Passing leaves and blowing time.

It has been a slapstick day. We did play some baseball. Afterwards, the run was good and bitter. We again ran along the Mystic for a little over 4 miles. It was largely wacky conversation. Then Marc and I drove to the store and bought groceries. We cooked burritos and tacos and now my stomach is about to rupture from gluttony. And now, you know my day, which I guess doesn't bear any significant message or idea, but to make something of it, it was a day of activity, which I needed, and the fact that I have nothing more to say about it is saying something in itself.

October 19th, The Day

Okay, you sent me your address so I will attempt to send this off tomorrow. Good timing, as well, as I will have little time to write for the next couple of weeks because of a few midterms, for which I will need to complete a lot of work that I am not prepared to complete. I went on a run today by myself, in the Fells, trails in wood a couple of miles away. I may have been overzealous, running about 7 miles so soon, but I could not wait to return to the serenity of its bowls. It was raining and I was stomping on piles of saturated leaves, it was beautiful and painful and comfortable. I hope you experience the same in returning to Bellingham.

What turns me on

by various authors

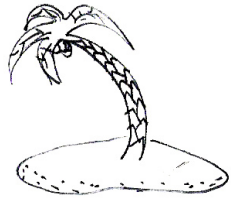


- When you stick your hand down my pants in public places. Especially when your parents are nearby.
- those guys who write intelligent IR and econ papers on topics that i can barely understand, but who play it off like it's not a big fucking deal and then persuade me to skip class with them while we stay in bed.
- When you talk about math equations. Ones so complicated they have no numbers in them.
- When you bite my lip. hard.
- Knowing what I mean when I say "I like Ween"
- Older women
- A kiss that is so great that you're so turned on but you don't want to stop kissing and do something else because the kiss is so great. I call it the "good kisser dilemma." But it's so good that it turns you on so much that eventually you will end up going beyond it.
- She turns me on when she sits beside me, holds on strong to my arm, and speaks in gentle tones with her lips lightly touching my neck; She turns me on when she plays records for me in the morning in her underwear; She turns me on when she suddenly gets lost in her imagination.
- being envied. rare but glorious.
- watching your earnest, impassioned shouting with a frypan in your hand, ranting about something important – ha, not – but the fact that you're so worked up about some kid stealing your parking spot as opposed to george bush alienating the entire third world.
- some fancy restaurant, ordering, you don't know what to get so you say I need more time to stave off the waiter. you immediately forget this and start talking, the waiter returns, you have to choose, a panicked

look and then nonchalantly you pick the first thing you see on the menu. and it's good.

- hairy legs
- Friends' moms that are just outside the frontier of an acceptable MILF
- Artists. Especially those that are slightly tortured and have rumpled hair.
- Maturity maturity maturity.
- eminent forehead, nice hair, and beautiful hands.
- if you can make parts of my body like my left shoulder feel like the most erogenous of all zones on my body.
- When a girl insists on paying her share of the bill on a first date... I am a cheap bastard
- POWER!
- Sitting next to someone in the dark, in a moving car and all you can feel is the bridge of heat from skin and see the profile of their face not looking at you.
- string cheese breath, confidence, shame
- When somebody gorgeous has no interest in me. grrrowl.
- Catching sight of my reflection in the eyes of a lover. And, of course, female derrières.
- girls who can still scare the shit out of me
- Long socks and enormous eyes. Preferably large enough to frighten a lemur or send a martian home.
- Untraditional nudity
- when you wear socks – nothing but socks – while I blow you.
- when straight guys put on chapstick.
- When a girl tries to beat me and scratches my back till I bleed when I'm going down on her.
- when you talk about books and philosophies i don't understand; it makes me want to make you reach your most climactic climax ever and make you forget you're so much smarter than me.

Armando



Contributor's Note: I went to Belize over the summer with my family, and I met a native who became my vacation-long fling. We shagged a few times and before I left he asked me to give him my e-mail address. I begrudgingly obliged, and this series of e-mails (which were NOT responded to) is what ensued.

E-MAIL #1

hello baby,

how are you, i hope fine. how was your trip back home. so you are happy now since your back home i hope you haven't forgotten about me, since it has been a long trip back home. sorry that i didn't e-mail you the day that i told you. so today is friday and it's my day off, what are you doing on your friday evening. two days has passed since i lost you from my loving arms and it has been extremely difficult from a man in love. you see how i was patient to have you that night so i am very patient for you to come back to me and take me away to a place i have never been before. because when i was with you that night it had tremendous effect on my heart. so this is what i'm gonna do for the rest of the evening i'm going spear fishing with my homies, i'll e-mail you in two days time. don't forget to send the picture please my love.

* * *

E-MAIL #2

Hey girl how do you do? Hope your fine. All is well down here. It the temperature is about 98 deg. fehr. way too hot huh. I am missing you like crazy. Wish I could see you again. I have been thinking of you alot... do belive me.

Take care now.

Love,
Armando

P.s. I cut my hair low. awaiting for the picture.

* * *

E-MAIL #3

hello L.

how are u i hope u are doing fine. well don't think i forgot u. i still remember that wonderful time we spent together i looking forward to meet again. well i working hard every day and think about u and smoking the go herb. i wish u were here with me enjoying the go high and the tropical breeze. well i will stop wishing because wishes don't come true but don't worry i still got u in my mind and in my heart. well see u when i see u.

P.S. u can call me at my number. give me ur number so i can call u. bye with lots of love

ARMANDO

Birdie

I shot a bird once, hit it in the leg with my Crossman pump action air gun, the one I got for Christmas wrapped in bright red paper, the one I promised my dad I would use only for target practice.

It happened like this: the bird was sitting on a branch watching me plug away at the cardboard box with the bull's-eye on it and in about half a heartbeat I swung the barrel up and fired with an accuracy that surprised me but probably surprised the bird more. It flew off squawking and I thought I'd missed until about a week later I saw the same bird, minus a leg. It seemed to be doing fine, hopping around on the one leg—there wasn't even a stump where the old one had been.

Now that, I said to myself, is an easygoing bird.

