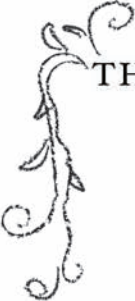



The background is a complex, layered composition. It features a vibrant red base with white, textured brushstrokes that create a sense of depth and movement. A prominent, partially visible pink flower with a golden center is positioned on the right side. At the bottom, there are dark, swirling, ribbon-like shapes that resemble a decorative scroll or a stylized wave. The overall aesthetic is artistic and expressive.

# THE PUBLIC JOURNAL


a tufts student publication  
issue four



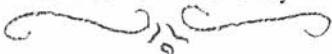
THE PUBLIC JOURNAL



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



Spring 2006  
Tufts University



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## *Editor's Letter*

I discovered that at sometime, a rather long time ago I assume, whoever made the very big, very important decisions (in life I mean, not at the PJ), decided that originality and authenticity should be wound up like two laffy taffy's. For awhile everyone marveled at tie-died play between the two, but then finally it was left in the sun and it melted and congealed, and since then no one has been able to tell the two apart. All that was left to do was recognize that clichés are a wholly different color and are therefore inauthentic. What a silly idea that is? We are all originally, authentically and oh so typically ourselves, no? Thus this journal's contents don't differ markedly from those before it, and probably not from those to come either, as we all just seem to be thinking relatively the same things, feeling the same things as we have been and will be; just as love songs never fail to be written, dreams sequestered, affection exploited, smiles wrought, etc. We bring you more of the same and are very proud of it. This is only what you needed to write, needed to read. The authenticity/originality/cliché is going to stain all of our pretty fingers as we thumb these pages.

I brought gloves, enough for everyone.

-benjamin



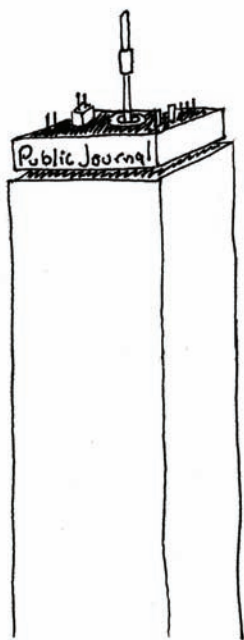
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# Op-Ed

The Public Journal is a load of shit. I don't want to believe that these are the things with which people consume their inner thoughts. I don't want to believe that the majority of us students are so constantly wrapped up in the mundaneness of sex and self-identity. I don't want to believe that because I read this publication. Are we that shallow? Aren't we more than the obsessions with our bodies, or sex lives? I support the idea, publicize the worries that plague us all, the self-loathing and loving thoughts we keep to secret, the criticisms. But come on, I think we should expect more from ourselves.



# Learning To Fly.

*November 30, 2005 / United Express flight no. 7167*

Oh God, seat 9C, next to that senile old man, another case of the vomit of humanity that Hurricane Katrina thrust upon the states of the southern US. I quickly looked around for any other available place to sit; emergency exit row---taken, seat 14D is empty---wait, a woman is sitting down there, shit. Forced to take my assigned seat, I slowly move in, hoping not to grab the attention of this raggedy man raving about a natural disaster that had taken place months earlier. When I was on my way to start the fall semester, I had watched CNN hotel to hotel to see the updates on the storm's progression, but I had little relationship to the people affected. The only person I knew afflicted by the hurricane was this kid from high school I really didn't like, good riddance I thought. But now, it appeared as though I was going to have to bear out a flight with a smelly, poor old man who from the looks of it was not going to give his banter a rest of the course of the flight. Trying to read a book due the next day for class, the man's interruptions left gaps in my reading the same way worms bore holes into apples. His banter was unceasing as the plane shook in preparation to move from the gate towards the tarmac and eventually the runway, sky bound.

"Did I tell you I am a Katrina survivor," the rough voice indicated many years of smoking and cheap 40s.

"Yes, sir," I returned in a meek voice, not wanting him to think me unsympathetic and therefore I need of further explanation of how the City of New Orleans has slighted him.

"I'm going back in--I'm going to sneak back into the city!"

"So I take it you miss it then, the city that is?"

"Man, the government is trying to keep me out, they're sending



me to Texas to keep me out,” his voice grew exasperated, clearly growing angry because my not understanding his situation.

>>>LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, PLEASE FOLLOW ALONG AS WE REVIEW THE SAFETY FEATURES OF THIS CANADAIR REGIONAL JET...<<<

I hear giggles of young sounding girls in the seat ahead of me, so I look out onto the aisle and in front of me sit a row of women no older than twenty in military uniforms that suggest by their attention to detail and the close polish of their shoes that they are fresh out of boot. One girl, introducing herself as Amy, begins to strike up a conversation about the military. She talks about the military in that classic recruiter style, endorsing it in such a way that one would think her a southern Baptist proselytizing her faith to a sect of pagans.

“The army showed me world. I got to see a whole bunch of states, before then, I’d never even left my town.”

Her southern twang reminded me of home, though, much stronger than I was used to hearing.

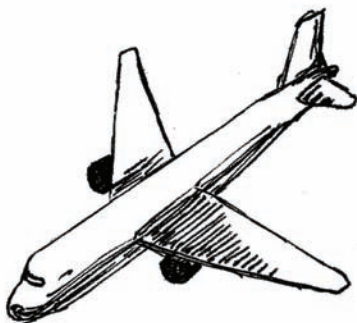
“That’s great,” I interject positively, trying to convince her to consider me an ally and therefore not in need of further indoctrination.

“No really, I come from a town of a couple hundred folks, I love my country as much as I love the Lord.” That explains the heavy accent.

“I hate Christians,” I thought but did not have the nerve to say.

Just as this conversation begins to head towards God and the Bible, I am saved by the grinding of the engines that signal this godforsaken plane’s departure. The sharp smell of body odor hits me like knives from the old man who I guess was too busy, too poor, or too senile to understand the benefits of deodorant; however, if I stick my head out into the aisle to take an odor-less drag of air, I’ll have to enter round two with Amy from Anytown,

USA and listen to her further ruminations on the apparent divinity of George W. Bush, the importance of Southern Baptism on this girl's life, or how I should join the military. Can't breathe...Don't move...Can't breathe...Don't move. I moved. And I still had 57 minutes to go.



# Thank You Tufts For...

*by various authors*

- Showing us the true meaning of the letters J-A-P; if we didn't think the world was overrun by trust fund kids, we know better now.
- Closing down the last three parties I've been to on or before 1:30 am. Because of you, my sex life is nonexistent.
- Teaching me that 'beer before liquor...' is a bunch of bullshit
- Fucking up in the admissions office and admitting me
- All those parking tickets
- Brushing off the fact that you put me on academic probation BY ACCIDENT, after sending a letter to my parents and all. Thanks for the explaining I had to do too.
- Shocking the world of entomology with the discovery of 13 new species in Wren Hall
- Giving me a place to realize that it's not my parents who bring me down
- Your heavy foreign language requirement. Because taking six years of language in middle school and high school wasn't enough.
- The feeling of belonging I get walking into East Hall.
- Enabling our pathetic dream that an IR major means something to the real world.
- Ridding me of my parents for significant increments of time.
- Letting me prove that no matter where I go I will be the smartest and certainly funniest person I know. Ha, so funny!
- Reassuring me that there are other people out there who are even more socially awkward than I am
- Introducing me to thousands of other people who are

for the most part and by necessity quite intelligent, interested, interesting, and worthwhile people, all here at this stopping point for just four years to briefly touch and connect and know one another and then to shoot off again as changed people but with an unavoidable network of similarly fabulous friends

- Taking my virginity (technically)
- Reminding me of the joys of the love triangle
- Perpetuating my phobia of STDs.
- Teaching me that everything is subjective, including the idea of being fully clothed.



# Sandwiches

Dear Mom and Dad: I know it's been a long time since we've talked but here's what's been on my mind lately while studying abroad in Spain.

European Sandwiches... Suck:

Why is it that America is the only country in the West that knows how to make a goddamn sandwich? Not that I've been to every country, but after seeing the most important ones, it's become clear that no one on this continent has a basic understanding of how to make a decent fucking sandwich. Many have tried, some have gotten close, but largely due to lack of food, (the most common problem) every single attempt has failed miserably.

In France, they've got cheese, even good cheese. I'll give them that much. They have even gone so far as to put it between two pieces of bread. Sometimes they add lettuce and tomato. In fact, for a country filled with so much hopelessness, I'd say France has come the closest to making a legitimate sandwich. But come on now. What's with the baguettes? Too much bread, not enough "umph." While in a cafe in Paris, I rolled my eyes about the price of a one layer baguette sandwich and the clerk asked me if I'd like it warmed up. Will warming it up add bacon, lettuce, tomato and 4 more layers of meat to it? Exactly. Take the fuckin' 3 Euros ya dick.

Spain is completely obsessed with pigs. Pigs' heads, pigs' tails, noses, ears, and of course bacon, ham, chops and all

the other ridiculous products that just mean pig. So you'd think THEY could make a nice sandwich right? They could if they put more than 2 fucking ingredients on them. The only sandwich in Spain with more than one thing in it is ham and cheese and my 4 year old cousin with one functional arm can make a pretty damn good ham and cheese. The best sandwich I had in Spain was from Subway, and as I'm sure you all know, Subway sandwiches fucking blow.

Germany has sausage. Like France's cheese, Germany's sausages are good, but they don't make a fucking sandwich. A sausage between two pieces of bread is a hot dog gone all wrong. Good try Germans. Get back to me when you get a Subway.

Great Britain: HA! Stick to the fish and chips. You know while I was in Spain, I actually met a British dude drunk on the street looking for a fish and chips place? Jesus. Grow up buddy and try expanding your horizons. Now I know the more skeptical of you out there will now accuse me of not expanding my horizons, but wanting more than cheese between government issued stale bread does not make me hypocritical. It's reasonable.

So the question is... What the fuck is going on? Have these people ever been to America? If so, have they tried a sandwich there? If they have, why don't they open up a place in Europe that sells REAL FUCKING SANDWICHES and make a killing, and maybe retire to a private island or something. Why do they insist on choosing one thing in their sandwiches? Are these people starving? What the hell is going on?

THEORY: So what I'm thinking is that Europe has a lot of glitches in their past during which people couldn't eat food. Backward policies, and ethnic/religious/political conflicts led to many tragic wars. These wars inevitably prevented food from being shipped or produced and thus kept many people from eating well throughout European history. So now people in Europe who are doing fine and living well still place too much value on food even if it's just bread and two slices of shitty hard cheese, because at least it's food. Meanwhile, across the ocean, the deli meats, cheeses, and condiments on American sandwiches have been piling up higher and higher at a rate of one inch every decade since the end of the Great Depression. Don't get me wrong now. Living and (not) studying in Barcelona is amazing. Shit, it's a Monday at 4 pm and I'm still drunk from lunch. Oh yeah this place blows Medford out of the water. But what I'm saying is that if I had a fucking Tasty's toasted sourdough turkey melt with seasoned fries right now... I don't think I would ever come back.

-Love Your Loving Son

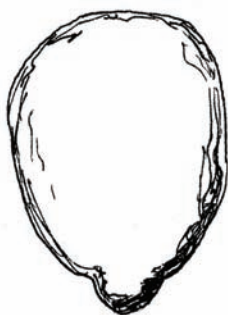


# Confessions...

- Strippers really turn me on, their miniscule outfits, potent perfume and everything.
- My grandmother was in Hitler Youth, and I am not ashamed.
- I started smoking because I knew you'd hate it.
- I've convinced myself that everyone I care about secretly hates me.
- Most of the girls I've befriended are girls I originally wanted to sleep with.
- I hate the Daily. I hate how they can't seem to run spell-check, or manage to proof an article before publishing it. I hate how they can't write about anything worthwhile, and how the Editorial is always filled with the same repetitive bullshit—stop rewriting Op-Ed articles from the fucking New York Times! Yes, I do read real news. Yes, I did notice. I hate how even the Primary Source and Tufts Traveler contain better prose. But most of all, I hate that fucking rabbit.
- I put up with a lot more shit from girls if they're good-looking
- I think VH1 is fantastic television
- My ex girlfriend thinks I use her for sex, when in reality I still really care about her
- I don't know if I'm going to miss you after graduation.
- I intentionally walk on cracks in the sidewalk, because it doesn't matter anymore.



- I wish I had the will power to have an eating disorder.
- I will tell people that something that looks bad on them is “SO CUTE!” if it’ll make me look like the hotter of the two of us when we go somewhere.
- I really like how Tiffany’s rings look on some guys, and I want one. I’m afraid that I’m going to look like a douche bag though.
- I think the fact that he gets hot over the idea of me cheating on him is basically the sexiest thing ever.
- When I was about six, I stole a lemon from a fruit stand so my kleptomaniac old-woman babysitter would think I was cool. When my mom found it in my pocket, I told her it grew there.



[stolen] LEMON

# Dead Skin on Trial

All by alone, cramped in the window-seat of the plane's claustrophobic cabin, I attempt to prepare myself for what I know will be one of the worst experiences of my life. I'm thinking everything through, imagining your presence in the plane with me, though I know it's only wishful thinking. Your dead, I'm still here and now frightened as hell to live. I don't know whether I will cry at your funeral... Oh God I have to see your parents, your brother and sister, your Grandparents who I've yet to meet, your lovely gay uncle(s) who gave us the keys to their East Village apartment last New Years. How can I be in any pain? It's not my son who's dead; it's not my son *who killed himself*. I want to keep chocking on all of the sorrow that no one else seems to understand. Though Damien Rice is on repeat blasting through the headphones his words continue to lose in the competition against the heavy drone of the jet's engines. "Slight turbulence" states the pilot after the craft jolts violently up and down, no bother it only adds to the sick feeling that's dwelled in my stomach ever since I got the phone call from TUPD two days ago:

Me: "Hello?"

Officer "Hi this is Officer So-And-So, is this Mr. Jumbo?"

Officer: "You have an urgent message from Mr. Freeman"

Me: "Yes this is he, is everything ok, could you please tell me what's wrong?"

Officer: (Pause) "I...I'm afraid I'm not at liberty to say"

What followed was like a scene straight from a film as I spoke to Chris's normally chipper father as was informed of the bad news.

What the fuck man? Winter break was incredible; we were undoubtedly the closest we'd ever been, spending much of it at your parent's house sitting drunk in the outdoor hot-tub while the steam rapidly melted the large slushy drops of snow just before they could settle on our exposed arms. The algid drops would gently prick our pruned skin and ultimately served as a reminder that even through the numb of our alcohol induced stupor we were very much alive. We shot the shit about anything and everything as only the best of male friends can for hours on end only leaving our watery cocoon for the odd piss causing the snow to burn our rosy feet...you seemed so happy. At least you hugged me goodbye on our last night before heading off to our respective universities...we were brothers, in a bond that we both knew to be irreplaceable.

Anyway that was then and this is now, I'm still on the plane and it's about to land so no more headphones. Fuck I hate this city, always have, only now for good reason. After being herded off the plane I can only notice how bland and hopeless everything seems. Here you all are, over-caffeinated and obese, while lumbering towards the baggage claim. I fucking hate them all as they return to their smiling children, fat-assed spouses, gas guzzling SUV's replete with 'support our troops' magnets and fish emblems. Everyone and everything here seems empty, and all I want is to do is wake up from this 48 hour and counting nightmare and realize that it was all a cruel twist of my imagination. Why isn't this dream like any of the other horrible dreams I've had such as the one where Mum dies in a car crash before I can let her know how much I love her more than anyone or anything, only to wake sweating with tears in my eyes thankful that it was all just a twist of my imagination? I get my luggage, Mum's late as usual. She arrives a few

minutes afterwards and following the expected hugs and kisses I get into the car only to quickly settle back into our usual silence, which is both a comfort and an annoyance. The rotting elephant stinking up the car eventually implodes and she asks how am doing, hopes I'm not blaming myself. However much I try I can't, this is something that doesn't happen to me or anyone I know, this situation is meant to be reserved for the movie screens. I believe that I knew you well enough to know that if you had designs for suicide you would have aired out your pain. Nevertheless I know that everyone has their secrets and that one never truly can know anyone, but still I wish you could have said something and given me the chance to talk it out...too late now.

The obituary is in the paper with your name boldly printed and your senior year picture nicely framed in the middle. What the fuck, your only twenty, I'm still nineteen...this isn't what is supposed to happen! You're going to be the best man at my wedding, and we're meant to run the world together, remember? Weren't we were supposed to be spending this summer in a flat in London together? I had already gotten a job lined up for us in case the internship fell through. Damn it you can't really be gone, I still can imagine your voice through the phone, you'll ring any minute now I just know it, this all just a joke right? We'll laugh about this when were rocking out in London...right?

Your mother is in tears. She's preparing all of the pictures of you she can find and trying to smile at all the memories while placing them on a large framed display. She put that picture of us taken in New York at the top left-hand corner. Here you are all mapped out by all the smiling images of you from every stage of your life. She cries into my shoulder for

what feels like hours, probing me for every detail of what I may know. I feel numb.

It's the day of the wake, and I'm not ready for this. At least the funeral home looks pleasant. Your immediate family members line up ready to shake hands. Everyone came, even those that I know you despised. They all cried. Your dad is quite a man, asking if I would like to go with him to see how you're doing. His concern has me choking back tears. How could your old man have a heart this big? "This is your son", I think to myself and I tell him that he mustn't worry about me as I'm doing just fine. I hesitantly head to the ugly polished wood casket, why couldn't it be sleek and black like in every gangster film, which would have been much your style. Your cold body lies in the front of the room. You smell of chlorophyll like that used to preserve soon to be dissected animals in the high school biology classes we were in together. Your lips are deep purple and your features are hardly recognizable, your collar and tie go all the way up to your jaw hiding your neck. What have you done to yourself? Wake up, take off that stupid makeup, your skin is far too orange, could you only find fake-tanner to make your skin look this terrible? Good one man, good one...scary and a bit morbid but whatever. You're not moving. It's good that your makeup is so thick, you hardly look normal. I won't touch you, I'm too frightened that you'll be icy cold and all of this will suddenly become real.

I'm a pallbearer. Fuck what if I somehow slip and the casket comes crashing to the floor? I don't want to think about it. So now I'm driving to the cathedral and imagining what it must feel like to be in the President's motorcade zooming along heavily ensconced in one of the requisite Yank-Tanks

utilized by the US government. The music reminds me that this is real. Saves the Day's "At Your Funeral" blasts from the speakers as one of your university friends sits besides me...fuck this is going to be so sad. But I shoot the shit with him anyway, inquiring into what its like to go to school in a massive cornfield and pretending to enjoy listening to his equally full hearted responses.

I know that this isn't going to be nice. The organ plays. I sit just behind the family. Fuck I don't want to see your sister cry, she's stunningly beautiful and suddenly seems to bear a strong resemblance to you in a manner that I had never noticed before. The fat little priest comes and does his piece about life and death and God, and I detest every word he spits out of his 20-something year old mouth. What the fuck is he saying about suicides and heaven? You dumb-ass there is no heaven or hell you're wasting your life and I hate you, and why aren't you crying you bastard? Don't you see how sad all this is? I sit still, too enraged to feel anything, I still feel numb to it all, but my armor is being chipped away. I watch as your parents rise to say their words, I'm still too pissed at the priest and how trivial he has made the death of my best friend to let too many of their words pierce through my defenses. Everyone seems to be breaking down, but that's not how you would have wanted me to be, I know that if it had been me I would have expected you to get on with your life whilst still remembering the good times. Green Day's *Good Riddance* pierces through the vaulted ceilings. Holy shit this is sad. This was your favorite band. The chorus rings, "*It's something unpredictable but in the end it's right. I hope you had the time of your life*". Everyone is completely silent or in tears. We all rise and I make my way to your body but the casket has been closed...don't fuck this

up...don't fuck this up...no worries it's surprisingly light as we load it into the back of the black hearse.

My Mum is outside, she's been crying. She looks old, frail even. I can't stand it anymore and I squeeze her tightly doing my best to let only a few tears fall...the funerals not completely over yet. However hard I try I can't stop shuddering, I'm five and my world has ended but my Mummy is there for me isn't she? All she can say is sorry, but it helps more than anything anyone has ever said up until this point. I love her more than anything or anyone and I wish more than anything that nothing ever happen to her.

We lay your body to rest...its over, right? I collect myself and drive silently with Saves the Day still blasting. I feel as though I've felt too much, I need to get away. The reception is held in your neighborhood's clubhouse where we used to swim drunk from of rum and cokes the summer before college began. Everyone pretends to smile. It's the high school reunion I never wanted, I'm reminded of how fake everyone is here, all blonde and toothy. There are bouquets of white flowers everywhere; some planted others in extravagant vases. I stay behind and help your family load everything into the trunks of cars. In my hands is the last of them, a white lily of some kind. As it's packed into the back of the car I suddenly realize that all this is real. You're gone with nothing but these fucking flowers left. Your dead...I feel myself break down, my armor lays scattered around me and I'm left exposed to painfully raw emotions. I weep. I miss you. Your mother walks by me and shoots me an angry glance as if she had been expecting me to break down earlier and is cross that I will never know the amount of pain that she will continue to go through every day.

So here I am still exposed, though my skin has grown more callous with time. But don't worry I will never forget you my friend. And however much I may doubt it I still hope that there is a heaven for us to meet in someday.



# Oral Sex vs. Cheese

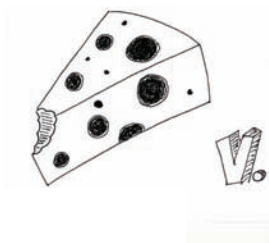
*note: –we here at the PJ would like to thank whomever contributed the now infamous “Oral Sex vs. Cheese” piece to the last issue, seeing as it has sparked what can only be described as a dialectical struggle in which the two, as thesis and antithesis, struggle and synthesize, thus further elucidating profound truths and the greater meaning of life, the universe, and everything.-*

- How about both! Cheese-whiz and oral sex? No? No takers?
- Makes me think of lying naked on cushions in a roman court, forgoing fellatio and having deep, sweet, slow, sex. after which a beautiful slave girl comes and feeds us grapes and delicious cheeses as a reward for just getting to it and fucking. penetration is good, so is cheese, forget the rest.
- Oral sex :: Sex = American Cheese :: Cabot Sharp Cheddar
- You can still eat good cheese when you’re old
- Cheese is always vegetarian. Aka, no meat.
- With cheese you can use your teeth.
- It’s a lot harder to get off with cheese
- I’m keeping oral sex, who wants to eat moldy milk anyway?
- I’m lactose intolerant, I say “No Cheese please...” except gouda.
- It has been in my understanding, clearly and distinctly, now for many moons that Marie Antoinette was a prophet, as one may have their cheesecake and eat it, too. You see, if I had to make

a choice, oral sex would be the come hither option because you get the best of both worlds. Smegma. Look it up.

- Cheese! Duh! - - this is assuming regular sex is still as good as always!
- they ALWAYS have cheese at Dewick.
- I would give up oral sex, but my boyfriend would give up cheese. I'm that good.
- Oral sex has to be superior, otherwise everything weekend I would just sit in my room, eat cheese and watch science fiction movies.
- Let's be honest with ourselves, ladies, and admit that in general, unless you are dating a man you've personally trained and tutored, oral sex is subpar in college (and in the case of one night stands sometimes so acutely awkward that it basically reverses the experience of sexual gratification to one of slobbery horror). And in the case of giving, well, unless you've got a guy who consumes pineapple juice on a daily basis there is no way of knowing if you're going to encounter funky spunk. Cheese on the other hand is reliable. You always know what you're getting. It's always deliciously amazing. It won't, after a few nibbles, turn to you and exclaim "MY TURN!" It won't leave you for a better cheese eater. It'll happily sprinkle your favorite dishes. It won't turn around and start snoring after you're done. It won't turn the lights on when you're eating it for a "better view." It won't judge you if you slobber a little. It won't get mad if you use your teeth. While I am the first to admit that an oral job well done is a journey of the senses, so is the eating

of cheese. Besides... think of all you'd have to give up if you chose oral sex... Pizza. CHEESY Bread. Philly CHEESE steak. Fondue. Chicken Parm. Calzones. Ricotta stuffed Ravioli and Tortellini. Gold Fish. Most Pastas. The good kind of omelets. Provolone. Mozzarella. Parmesan. Cream cheese. Life would basically be incomplete without cheese. But life without oral sex would mean more kissing and cuddling. It would mean more sex. It would mean more emphasis on different kinds of foreplay. It would probably cause fewer car accidents (if you know what I mean). It would mean that Bill would have either just kissed or done the whole dirty deed with Monica and reverted the whole controversy of "is oral sex cheating?" Perhaps you think my opinion is biased and unfair, perhaps you think my experiences with oral sex and cheese have been unfair, but I assure you that both have caused me pleasure and pain, happiness and sadness, butterflies in my stomach and stomach aches. Regardless, I choose cheese, even though I'm lactose intolerant.



# My Worst Nightmare....

by various authors



- Fruma Sarah from Fiddler on the Roof
- 7<sup>th</sup> grade girls; the most bloodcurdling creatures on the planet
- If ghosts were empirically proven to exist
- Getting pregnant before I'm ready and being faced with the decision of either being a hypocrite and having an abortion, or making a lot of sacrifices to have the baby. Knowing that either decision will change my entire life, and that I'd probably never recover from the guilt.
- Being sucked up by a vacuum
- Knives and other sharp objects surrounding me
- Stopping in a car on a hill, especially driving through the LA Hills or San Francisco
- Spiders, bugs, and my mother naked
- Having my brain damaged and then living the rest of my life knowing that I used to be smarter/normal.
- Opening my eyes after washing my face and finding someone standing behind me
- getting herpes
- Blue aliens with incandescent veins all over them from this one episode of *star trek: the next generation*

# Victor

The camera is at ground level, snaking, twisting in between empty beer cans and crushed ping pong balls used as part of some inane drinking game. Dirt, old beer, and various other forms of grime coat the floor as if it were the interior of some disgusting beast's stomach. Slowly raising itself to waist-height, the camera tracks in on the lone game of beer pong — a college creation designed to develop alcoholism faster than anything short of a keg stand — still continuing in the frat.

As Victor, a new brother at the fraternity house, tosses a ping pong ball into the opposing team's lone remaining cup, he screams out in excitement. It's 2:30 AM and he's twelve beers into the proverbial sauce, despite being three or four drinks *behind* all of his other friends. The camera rotates 180 degrees to follow him as he grabs his jacket from underneath a half-finished 30-pack of cheap beer and sets out for his dorm. With any luck, he'll make it back before his friends become desperate and end up ordering Chinese food. His salvation lies in that food; it will be a long night without nothing but Milwaukee's Best in his stomach, and he is surely doomed to a hangover if he doesn't have something to combat the alcohol now flooding his system.

The camera tracks him as he exits the fraternity, tripping down the front stairs onto the muddy front lawn, following every shaky step with grace to provide contrast against the stumbling 19-year-old's movements. Classical music plays softly in the background as he walks up the street towards

Carmichael Hall, music he once played in a piano recital as a sixth grader. He silently recalls how miraculous it is that one can remember precisely the movements of a classical piece nearly seven years after last hearing it, much less while ridiculously inebriated. Nonetheless, the music is fitting for such an adventure; Victor's perceived grace is worthy of Rachmaninoff's finest works. From the observer's point of view, Arthur is little more than an intoxicated ballerina, dancing in the streets to music no one else can hear. To Victor, he is an intoxicated ballerina, dancing in the streets to music no one else can hear. But that's fine for Victor.

The walk grows longer and longer. He thinks to himself, "There can't possibly be much longer to go. I've walked this way hundreds of times before, and it always seems longer than it really is. Or at least longer than I remember it to be when I'm sober. Go figure." The irony of Victor's statement is lost on such a drunkard. That's not to say he's amoral in any way, but rather that the hilarious part is his ignorance of the true comedy of his life. He pauses to reflect on this, but gets lost mid-thought and resumes salivating over Pork Fried Rice and Crab Rangoons ("It's like . . . like . . . Ambrosia, man, like 'food of the gods' or something", he mutters).

Approaching Carmichael Hall, he fumbles for his FOB device that allows him access to his building. Searching desperately, he discovers the most devastating fact any college-age alcoholic must face: that they have lost their keys. Luckily, he has retained his cell phone up to this point (a first for Victor; any time he's taken his cell phone on his drinking escapades, it somehow *always* gets lost) and pulls it out to call his roommate to let him in to the building. After three attempts to get in touch with his roommate (#1 was

a wrong number, #2 was to his friend of the same name back home in New Jersey, and #3 was his own telephone number — which was, surprisingly, busy), he finally gives up, deciding to wait outside until someone else, surely intoxicated as well, comes along with keys. Relaxing on the bench just outside the door, he decides to unbutton his shirt and get comfortable; after all, it might be a while and even at night, it's still quite balmy outside. To his amazement, the buttons on his shirt are already undone; the tightness around his neck was, in fact, his lanyard with his keys on it. “Irony be damned,” he screams, “I should drink some water before going to bed”. Fade to black.

Victor awakes the next morning at 8:30 AM in the fetal position, hung over beyond belief, in the hall of the healthy living floor. “Irony be damned,” he says again, completely unaware that those were among his last words at the end of the previous night, and that the comment is in itself quite ironic. Picking himself up (and neglecting the puddle of drool he left on the carpet), he continues his odyssey to his dorm, now only minutes from his bed and eventual salvation. As he climbs the staircase, one mortal enemy stands in his way: sunlight. Flooding his tortured eyes with bright, omnipresent white light, it looks as though he is staring directly into the face of God. Shielding his eyes with a flier he tore down from Carmichael's entryway (which was mysteriously stuck to his chest via a piece of tape when he awoke), he ascends each stair as if it were a massive hurdle to conquer. Now gasping for breath, he reaches his destination — the second floor — and stumbles towards the sanctuary of his bed. As he opens the door to his room, the lights are already on and his roommate looks at him in disbelief.

“Dude, where have you been?”

“Mmmnnmph. Gonna sleep go until 5 then you get me up...ok?”

“Sure, dude, but what about our Computer Science test today? That’s in like two hours.”

“What? Isn’t it Sunday?”

“No way, man, it’s Thursday. You had a Wasted Wednesday”.

And then Victor discovered the ultimate hangover: that *your* reality is not the same as everyone else’s. Did he learn his lesson? We’ll just have to wait until Wednesday night to find out.



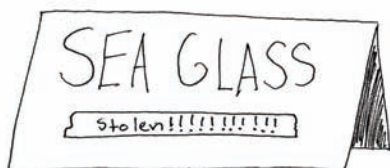


# Significant Childhood Moments

*that have stayed readily in my memory, though for what reason i do not know...*

- Hiding in the lilac bush in my backyard, or *thinking* that I was hiding although the lilacs were sparse and it was more like a large gangly tree than a bush. And it smelled like heaven...
- When I pulled out my mother's prized chives planted in vast quantities on the side of my house and gave the whole handful to my friend Rachel. She was moving to another town about 20 minutes away and I wanted to give her a going away present, roots and all.
- Singing in choir at synagogue during Chanukah. I don't remember the song, but there was a line that sang, "Banish darkness, banish light, banish it with candle light" During the part "banish it" we would all yell "baniSH....IT!" loudly. Swearing was such an act of uproarious rebellion if only in our heads.
- The Goldman family perished in a fire in their house, all five of them, three children. Their drier caught fire, from those lint traps they always warn you about. From then on, I have never once failed to clean out.

- Alex stole my little green piece of sea glass that I had won in a raffle in 2<sup>nd</sup> grade. He kept it all year in his desk, and I cried all the time because I apparently it represented something very sacred to me. He gave it back to me guiltily at the end of the school year, and I still have it in my desk at home. What a weird and oversensitive child I was.
- Dad told me they were going to put Kitty down. She had failed kidneys and was peeing all over the house. She would whine all day. I said to Dad that I understood and then he stood up and said, Okay, I'm taking her now. And I screamed, *Now!?* And rushed to her and cried.
- I drew a self-portrait in second grade and Mrs. Miller, the bitter old art teacher, told me my neck was too skinny in the picture. I explained to her, (stupid woman) that my neck was actually very thin and the picture was anatomically correct. What I looked like. And the self-portrait stayed as was.



# It Happened To Me

Bright eyed and ready to take on the world, that's how I felt first semester freshmen year. I was so excited about my classes, my new friends, just about every opportunity that was revealing itself to me. I broke up with my boyfriend from high school. This was it. I was starting a new life, and I was so excited.

I especially enjoyed going out and getting drunk with my friends. Thursday, Friday, Saturday night. I was out all the time. I loved going to frat parties. I loved it when I would meet a boy I just faintly knew and would start making out on the dance floor, maybe sometimes going back to his or my room, but no sex. I had just broken up with my high school boyfriend. I was in no way ready to have sex with anyone else. But, I was ready to let someone whom I hardly know stick his tongue in my mouth and grope me. I guess it was some sort of sick validation that other boys found me attractive and that I wouldn't roam the earth single for the rest of my life.

One Saturday night, my whole purpose of going out was to get some ass. I dressed oh-so-sexily and even shaved. Everywhere. I also got disgustingly drunk. On this particular Saturday night, on this particular weekend, this particular frat was not only giving out beer but specialty drinks. I know I had at least 5 blow job shots there. I had at least 4 shots of Captain Morgan's Spiced Rum pregamging. I had completely lost count of the number of

beers or other specialty drinks I had while I was at the frat. Whatever the number was, it was too much. Way too much for my short five foot not even quite 2 inches body.

“Wow, you have a great body.”

“No, I don’t.”

“Are you kidding me? Let’s dance.”

So I danced with this boy whom I had never met. I think he told me he was a junior. I have no idea what his name was. We started making out.

.....

And then I woke up. I woke up and saw my naked breasts. I looked around the room, and it was bare except the mattress I was lying on. I think I saw a laptop over in the corner and dirty clothes. There were dirty clothes strewn all over the room. There was my bra, my shirt, my underwear. I looked down again. Everything was so blurry. My contacts hurt my eyes. My head was in pain. I was feeling a weird sensation. I looked down again. I saw his head bobbing in between my legs. I was in pain. I did not want this to be happening. I didn’t even remember getting here. Oh, he’s the boy you made out with at that frat. Did he even know I hadn’t been awake? Is that what he wanted?

*Move. Just move damnit. Get yourself out of here.*

He started going harder. He was almost biting me.

*I want to leave.*

*No, just stay for a little while longer. No, I have to go. I don't want to be here.*

He starts to unzip his pants. He takes them off. He throws them on the ground. He holds me down by my wrists. I can smell me on his breath.

*Move. Fight back. Don't let this happen. Please, please, please God, don't let this happen.*

I could feel his hard unprotected penis in between my thighs. He was trying to lower himself inside me. I wanted to vomit. Somehow, I don't know how, but I wriggled out of his grip. I put my clothes on as quickly as I could. He tried to grab me. I pushed his white, pimply, hairy body back onto the mattress. I opened the door and saw that I was in a basement.

*How the hell do I get out of here?*

“Can I get your phone number?”

So I ran. I ran up the stairs. I ran through a living room full of boys drinking beers. I think I heard one yell nice ass.

*Where the hell am I? I'm so scared. Oh, this is College Ave.*

# Special Things...

*kept in boxes or drawers and ordinary things kept in special boxes or drawers...*

*by various authors*



- Barbie dolls
- My dog's baby teeth
- Peppermint schnapps i sometimes add to my hot cocoa on the way to class
- Box of cards and letters from my friends and family from important occasions and certain birthdays, so I can look back and remember who I was close with, and what I meant to them at the time.
- My roommate and i keep all of our sex paraphanelia in a little white shoebox under her bed.
- I keep fiber pills in my underwear drawer. Nobody really wants somebody else to know that at the ripe age of 20 they have to take fiber pills to stay regular.
- Every card or letter that anyone has sent to me since I got to school.
- Hand scribbled design of my tattoo in a special box
- Spraypainted/glittered cardboard Burger King crown I have from winning my high school's first/only male beauty pageant in a drawer at my house.
- Fortune from every fortune cookie i've ever eaten
- ID tags from my dog who died's collar
- Tylenol container filled with assorted pills that I never returned to my apparently pill-popping friend, a beer bottle cap with a wise quote, a cigarette that I will never smoke, a piece of rolling paper that I keep forgetting to use, condoms
- My vibrator

# Love Hurts

Her mark teases me; as I get closer and closer, it gets larger and larger, letting me know that she's been here recently. She often leaves me computerized notes. Maybe she has isolated me from the rest, and thinks I'm special? I start to bite my lip as I approach. I retract her mark from between the rubber and glass, and slowly turn it over. Eager, I read what she has to tell me.

*Violation 1: Parking in illegal lot*

*Violation 2: Amount due: \$15*

Again, she leaves me an identical note. 'Why does she want my fifteen dollars?' I ask myself. Again, I make believe her note is one of love and affection. As I open the door, and start the engine, I realize that her love has cost me over \$100 this semester. Thinking of her, I yell out "WHORE!" as I drive out of the Carmichael lot. Quick stop at Dunkies, and off to the battle for a parking spot at Hill. Maybe her love won't find me there.



# God Bless Us

I have not believed in god for a very long time. The most religious person I have ever known was my grandfather. He woke up at 5:30am seven days a week to attend mass and a few years ago he sat on a solitary park bench and slit his throat. A college student walking his dog put pressure on his neck for the few minutes before he went comatose and eventually died.

There are few people I feel more sorry for than this person whom I have never met, who held an elderly stranger in his arms while he gagged blood like pints of communion wine down his golf shirt and worn pleated khakis all the way to his Velcro'd shoes.

I feel no gratitude towards a god who created a world only to demand constant thanks for the gift. And I abhor him for making the life he gives so unbearably intolerable for so many. Should hell exist I will embrace whole heartedly. Should I see the blue prints of god's plan I will piss on them. And should I get a final word to the man himself, I will assure him that my grandfather showed more love than god is fabled to possess and he never asked for anything in return.

I don't have to live with such contempt however, because I know that there is no god. This world is beautiful and ugly. A god only makes the beauty something with which to feel guilty about the ugly something you must be complacent



with. To simply exist out of the randomness you have won a lottery incalculably grander than the most ostentatious of Texas Powerballs.

To have been loved someone, even one who is gone, not because god has made it so, but because you are just simply *that* lucky, is more humbling than any religious epic. You can feel that like a crucifix to the solar-plex. *That* is a my mysticism. And I thank god as often as I can that he does not exist.

# This Isn't Seduction



*17 Dec. 2004 - Logan Airport*

I got off at Union Sq. and put my sunglasses back on. I started walking to 19th. My phone rang, Matt on caller ID. I stop to pick it up; it stops ringing. I look around and he's in the middle of Park Ave., waving. I didn't have a very good mental image of him seeing I'd seen him in the dark that night I met him a few months ago.

His hair was lighter than I remembered and he was just generally better looking. I kissed him hello on both cheeks. He didn't expect the second one, but I pretended not to notice. He hugged me hard. I don't know why it didn't seem weird that we didn't/don't really know ea/o. It's okay.

We went to Toys 'R Us and reminisced. We were both shocked by how bleak and dirty it was. Also, we criticised LEGO for making Spiderman a helicopter, Superman a van, and Harry Potter a triple-decker bus when they obviously have better powers that allow them cooler means of transportation, making the use of aforesaid vehicles null and void.

Went to his apt. Saw pictures of his family. I asked if he was rebelling, he said he supposed he might be. I asked if he wanted to be famous he said no, but he'd like to be "recognized." He told Lyz he wants to be famous. I wonder if he changes stories according to whom he's speaking to. I know I do (though rarely) sometimes.

I met his sister & mother. They were short and very happy. He convinced me to take a bus at 12:30 instead. He hugged me in front of his mom and played with my hair. I liked his family. Then we went out again.

We had cappuccinos. My first. He paid; I didn't offer to. I actually finished it all, with 4 spoons of sugar, but still. My hands felt tingly and I got all Adderall-y. I liked it (with the sugar). We talked a lot. Lyz called. Both chatted w/ her. He told me a story about how the last time he'd been at Reggio's he'd been drunk and peed on a part of his scarf when using the bathroom. I told him I have horrendous feet.

We walked through the Village and SoHo. We went into an old bookstore and I lamented the fact that there was a book called *Remembering John Wadesmith* (or something like that) and I don't even know who he was. I also felt bad for Whitman because someone apparently wrote a biography of him entitled, *Walt: A Gay Life*.

We walked more until we ended up back at Washington Sq. Park and had dinner (late) at Dojo. We ordered burgers and only really ate our fries. He ate my cucumbers. We went Dutch. Then we went to Cheap Jack's (or maybe this was before. I don't remember) and try on vintage. We both have enormous heads. Hardly any hats fit us. Especially him. This is our Jewishness, I think.

He suggested we go back to his place. We did. Hello again to sister and mom. Weird since I'd already said bye to them. We go to his room and he closes the door. He puts on jazz music and he says "this isn't seduction" and he turns down the lights. Good lighting. I sit on a couch, he lies on his bed. We

talk. Pregnant silences. He asks me to come closer. I say the couch makes me feel like I'm rocking on a boat. He insists. I go. To the other end of the bed. Curled up. I know where this is going and don't know if it's a good or bad thing. Lyz has had crescendoing crushes on him. He's magnetic.

"You're not really close," he says. I give two, three inches.

He pulls me and hugs me very tight. All of me. I've missed this. I miss Gill. The beginning of our relationship. Legs intertwined. Me feeling smaller. Only Gill is 6'2" and Matt is 5'9". (I forgive this.) All of a sudden I'm aware it feels too good. We're mostly quiet, I think. He kisses me on my forehead several times. Plays with my hair. Oh, god.

I move away somehow.

He's looking right at me. We may have been talking. Maybe not. And he says, "You're too far away for me to kiss you. A few inches closer would help."

I inch away... But I smile, in spite of everything.

That's all he needs. He kisses me and it's really good. I'd forgotten what it was like to really kiss a boy. Since Gill I'd only really kissed gay boys. Briefly, mechanically. Nothing.

He's playful and intense and his hands are strong, which surprises me a little. He moans a little when he really likes it. He's a good neck kisser. Teases he's going to leave his name in hickeys—we'd been talking about the nonsensical nature of hickeys over dinner.

We kiss with eyes open part of the time. The playfulness

reminds me of Gill. The patch of hair under his lips of Mick, of all people.

“You’re the first girl I’ve kissed in awhile that I actually like,” he said.

“And you’re not gay.”

“I am.”

His hands are in my pants and I’m glad I recently waxed. Lyz was right. He’s obviously experienced. Usually this can be intimidating. But it was nice. I think Gill and I didn’t know what we were doing half the time.

It’s time to go. Need to catch the bus back to Boston in time to get on my flight to Miami. Lights on. Escape, nonchalant music.

I meet his dad outside. All three members of his family act like this is absolutely normal. Maybe it is. It feels like high school. Or that time in Greece with Xaris and his mom the next morning. We run all over trying to get a cab. We finally do.

*18 Dec. 2004 - Miami Intl. Airport, in Departures*

Miami can be a really depressing place. Concrete, palm trees, humidity. Tons of SUVs. I just saw three Expeditions go by. I see yellow “Support Our Troops” ribbons everywhere. I think it’s like the Gulf War again but I remember it really is.

We kiss in the taxi until we get to Port Authority and I

remember he doesn't really like pets (not even dogs!), is a total snob on paper, and I won't know what to tell Lyz.

We run to my gate—it's the last one. Murphy's Law, I say. He says he doesn't think it applies to bad planning. He kisses me a few times. He leaves. I get onto the bus; I'm the last one. I get to sit next to the largest, blondest man I've ever seen.

*American Airlines check-in line, First Class. (there are so many babies crying)*

I like being a girl when I'm with a boy, I don't mind being on top (kissing, sex, whatever) but I like it more when they are. I like pulling away and lightly breathing out from a kiss because I know it feels good. I like boys who are very subtle in their approach to dry humping because although it feels good there's always an air of ridiculous to the act.

I like pregnant pauses in the conversation. Comfortable ones. I like being able to say random things like, "I'm going to associate things with you now" and hearing that he felt bad saying, "You're nice. I'll probably never see you again" when we said bye that night we met a few months ago.

I love his hair and how we looked together in his mirror as we tried to rearrange ourselves before going out and facing his parents. And it made me feel bad that I liked it. I love Lyz.

# Categorical Imperatives

I have developed a very odd method of classifying people I meet. I do not classify them on purpose; this method of classification has developed in my subconscious over time. The system is simple: everyone can be classified into three categories. When confronted by someone, I act according to what category they are in. The three categories are simple, yet fundamental:

Category A: You're cooler than me

Category B: I'm just as cool as you

Category C: I'm so cooler than you

The closest of friends are located in Category B, where I feel most comfortable with being myself. Because I'm just as cool as a B, I can be myself and not worry about anything. I like the people in B. They're cool.

People in Category A are a little too cool for me. They are either extremely intelligent, or very good-looking. I get nervous around them. I try to impress them. I'm very cautious of what I say, in order to ensure that I do not embarrass myself. I try to say something smart, and be charming, but usually end up hiding in a corner with a drink and a cigarette.

Category C is not particularly large. However, with

these individuals I feel confident, I feel smart, even good-looking. I can be incredibly funny and charming. I don't feel the need to impress Category C, but receive a certain satisfaction after presenting them with my coolness.

One is given a position in the system upon my first impression of them. However, one's original placement can very well change with time. Many C's that have become B's; the more time I spend with A's, the more they are likely to become B's. Quite a few number of A's, over the years, have degraded to C's as well. As I read the description I have just wrote about my system, it seems a little ridiculous, but is it?





# Public Journal Haikus

*by various authors*

hey used condom  
i don't remember you sir  
oh no good no good

running from the cops  
I pissed upon the jumbo  
they never caught me

it was to err, friend  
giving fellati...oh keep  
it on the hush hush

never live with a  
crazy person. oh, housemate!  
when does our lease end?

i'm sorry, oh shoe.  
ten drinks, and a bathroom line?  
there's still no excuse

i graduate soon:  
i will be unemployed for  
a very long time.

stolen music plays  
stolen kiss long time coming  
like only in movies

elliptical girls  
stare at their old magazines  
while i stare at them

can't go home tonight  
two others between the sheets  
can i sleep with you?

the public journal  
it takes a very long time  
to make, ah fuck fuck



{ { *Intermission* } }

## Fill in the blanks:

Notice that on this account, no noun is being defined by (a) gymnastic event of prominent European politician. Non-moral properties run on a level parallel to fashionable clothing outlet, which supervene at the level of number between people and friend of yours in EPIIC and states of being and circumstances. sexual position rests on this relationship, not on properties  $P$  and  $Q$ . Let us return to the ethnicity example. The relational property of same ethnicity is not created, or derived from the most esoteric term you actually know the definition of as much as it is realized in the relationship. your favorite drink, it is said, exists equally in the perceiver and the least desirable summer internship in a potential, or latent form. The latent potential for good in properties  $P$  and  $Q$  exist objectively on the level of the moral, relational property  $M$ . This is what certain individual you want to take your pants off more than anyone means when they write, one can “derive from oughts, values from values” (R & M 166).

### Pros:

- 1) sunburntastroturflexicontuftinitous
- 2) philanthopictoothbrushwinedrunkarisol
- 3) emochandeliertoohighshortbuscelestial
- 4) effervescentmissles and the lillylightweightpolities
- 5) trustfundlaxativereligiouslapels

### Cons:

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) \_\_\_\_\_
- 4) \_\_\_\_\_ and the \_\_\_\_\_
- 5) \_\_\_\_\_

{ { *Intermission* } }

*over/done*

# Beach in Four Parts

## I.

With Thanksgiving comes the promise of the ocean. I won't be spending hours on a sun-bleached shining beach; at most I will stand for twenty minutes on the gray sand and stare out at the gray seals on the gray breakwaters, the infinite darkness of the winter Atlantic lapping at their fins. My coat pulled tightly around me, as if the closeness of the wool to my body will make any difference.

## II.

This reminds me, of course, of every other beach I've ever visited. Until I was eleven, the beaches I'd seen were all in New England, a thin strip of either tiny rocks or imported sand, depending on the wealth of the town, declining toward the cold briny water. In fifth grade, I saw the Pacific for the first time: we were in Mexico, on a surreal green trip to visit my mother's friend in the small, ancient, cobblestone-streeted village of Comala. There is a novel, called *Pedro Párama*, about this village. I've heard it called the Mexican equivalent of Dante's *Inferno*; it is about a man who returns to Comala, his hometown, to find that the sun-drenched adobe town has turned into a necropolis, a town populated by ghosts.

## IIa.

Comala sits in the shadow of the Vulcan del Fuego, a constantly-smoking, hulking thing with a glowing red ring at the peak. We stayed in the front room of my mother's friend's house, across the street from a butcher's shop and

visited an archaeological dig, a complex of ancient worn-down tan pyramids arranged to align with the volcano. Underneath one of the pyramids was a small crypt. There were lizards and snakes everywhere, and it was possibly the first time I was aware of death.

### IIb.

We drove to the beach one day. Simon and Garfunkel through the impossible green hills of western Mexico, and then a vast expanse of black sand. I had never been so sunburned before, and have never been so sunburned since. I couldn't find a comfortable position in which to sleep that night, the fever of scorched skin keeping me awake.

### III.

Hyannisport is, in my memory, a cool drink of water. I have been there, in person or, I suppose, half-way, as a haploid cell in my mother's ovary, for forty years. It is summer home to the Kennedys. On the main street, which is, like the rest of the village, residential, there are signs from the mid-1960s prohibiting tour buses from entering certain areas inhabited by the family. My mother ate lunch with Caroline and John, Jr. once, and remains to this day impressed by Jackie's stateliness and the way she spoke French. I don't remember this, not having been born.

### IIIa.

The village recalls for me sunsets over the salt marsh and the golf course and the ocean seen from the clubhouse at the Hyannisport Golf Club, from the top of the craggy hill, the mixture of the restrained New England opulence and the restrained salty savagery of the New England seashore. I am bound inextricably to this land: my mother before

me slept in the big gray shingled house, laid out in the sun hoping to beat genetics, that her Irish skin would turn not red but a glorious dark gold, a hope that got her biopsies and diagnoses and surgeries thirty years later, the recurrent theme of her life, cancer.

#### IV.

There were other beaches, of course: the one we drove by in Newport after my first friend died, the two in Southern Maine that my cousins bring me to in the summer, the complete circle of a shoreline on Peaks Island that Haley and I toured several times in my Volvo, annoying the tourists with my radio and The Who, the immensity of the distance between beginning and end of sand in Southern California, the postcard kitschiness of the Jersey shore. Where else than here, though, with the waves not so much crashing as painfully (for the cold) tumbling, with the proof that salt water is thicker than blood back in the stumbling warmth of inside, can I look backward without turning around?





# Seppuku

I could never tell you and I still won't. He is much taller than me. Looks Turkish, Lithuanian, exotic—not me—not even close. I didn't want you to stay perpetually as alone as me, but was easier knowing we were at least together in that. When you call I hardly answer. Most of the time I am too scared. I can talk to you face to face, but if you only here my voice I would give myself away. A stuttering, short of breath boy who laughs too quickly at anything you say that might be funny and gives his most sincerest condolences about the most trivial of unfortunate happenings. Yes my voice would snap in two and you would hear it. A good friend who is so fucking hopelessly in love with you that beads of sweat like torrential Amazon rain run down his scoliosis spine every time he sees you; who knows not to hold the hug too long or your hands might just go prune through his pea coat. Maybe I should have said it. Spilled my guts with a samurai sword right in front of you and let it all slide down my jeans. Stirred it like a bowl of cereal, so the milk gets evenly over every piece and it becomes perfect for consumption. Then it would be out and not gestating amid my intestines waiting for you to smile so it can writhe its way up my torso before I swallow my tongue to keep it down. The first words you ever said to me I could recite like a dying Hamlet, lying prostrate on the ground, bathed in raspberry stage light, with only one breath left, word for word for word for word. So now when I seem reticent to crush your ribs with a hug, a little less well kept, a little more quiet, you will remain as oblivious as I have tried to keep you. Rest assured I will just be tired, too

busy, underfed, overworked, perhaps loosing a protracted battle with an unnamed ailment. Yes that will be my excuse, because that is not so much a lie, just the truth that smells like shit but has been drenched in Burberry cologne. I will remain the ash tray that has embraced its fate, never blaming the smoker whose Parliaments drill relentlessly with a cinder bit. Because when that happens your hand gets as close to me as it will ever get. He is much taller than I am.

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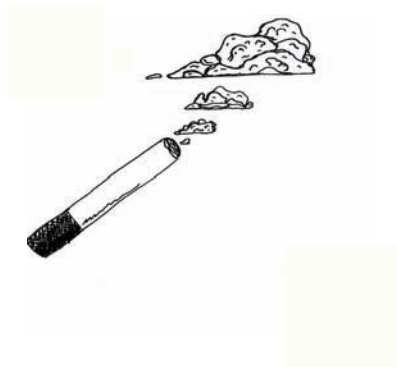
I want love. I mean I want love like a fucking middle school dance where I stare at you for half an hour before I can even ask you to dance at arm's length. We bob back and forth two feet away while my arms stay stiff and my fingers go soft. This distance is a blessing when I get an erection even though I can hardly see a thing in these rented strobe lights. And the cheesiest love song from 1990something screams nothing but the fucking truth at 4:30 in the afternoon when the chaperones break it all up. We split for different buses with a hug and there's a smile on my face so wide that the pigments fade at the seams and it all almost tears in two. I want love like that and I have this feeling you do to.



# What I Shouldn't Have Done Over Winter Break...

*by various artists*

- Flirted on AIM until 5 o'clock in the morning each night like a tried and true computer geek.
- Walked through a neighborhood of mud huts, around chickens and through chicken feces in southeastern Turkey during the avian flu outbreak there.
- Drank so much red wine, tea, and Nescafe that my teeth all but turned black and fell out of my head.
- Slept with my ex.
- Smoked so many cigarettes.
- Spent \$80 to get in to that shitty ass bar.
- Lied to all the people back home by saying I had a fabulously beautiful girlfriend from Hong Kong.
- Have sex right above my boyfriend's parents' room at all hours, then sneak back into my own house at 4 AM.
- Rear-ended somebody because I was distracted by my text messages.



# D in Descartes



i hate. i am a total hater. who do i hate? that kid in my class, well more like nine of them. actually anyone who has spoken, i pretty much hate. sadly i probably speak more frequently than most of them combined, but that is not really pertinent, as i am well aware of when i am rambling and wasting everyone's time. i censure myself. i am a self-censurer. you know you hate too, and you, just like me, formulate all kinds of shit about the those you hate.

there is always the one kid, who is just so far from intelligible thought he sounds like a three eleven year-old autistic children playing boggle® when he speaks. of course then you are like "how the fuck did you get into this school? your dad must be some wealthy foreigner business mogul, i bet your dad owns hieken beer. yeah I got you pegged pat (of course you invent a first name too). pat fucking hieken, i bet i facebook that shit right now." then there's the kid who just takes a long time to say anything, they always pause, like after every clause they suffer some sort of brief but intense rectal inflammation. "yes professor i aaaahhh....i was just thinking that in this context....aahhhh...would you agree that...aaaaaahhh." subsequently they begin to squint intensely, as though they have just been beaten in connect four® and cannot figure out how.

when there's the kid that i like to call "the class stenographer" because they do nothing but fucking reiterate the last 5 minutes of class. the worst part is they inflect everything

likes it's a goddamn question, as if they have just stumbled upon profundity. "so it seems to me, given this we can then deduce that descartes thought animals were just machines?" yes we fucking can! it's bullet number three on the fucking powerpoint! the D in descartes is as large as your fucking head. my penis could have figured that out, and it only reads at a third grade level!

my favorite kid to hate is the one who you have no good reason to hate on, you merely annex your friend's hatred of them. you'll be sitting there, waiting for class to start and your friend goes, "i hope that kid doesn't show up to day, i fucking hate that kid." despite the fact that this individual has flown under your radar, and remained a noncombatant thus far, you feel obligated to mobilize against him. then someone walks in fitting your friend's description, you look for the sign, your friend nods (that's the motherfucker), thus commences the hating. you look at the clock and think, "three minutes late, you fucking would. fucking jon bon jovi rockstar 'I don't fucking need to be here on time' bullshit. yeah you take your fucking laptop out. WHAT?! you have to turn it on? i have to listen to that shit?! i hope that your screen burst and LCD fluid scalds you like sulfur and hellfire. COULD YOU TYPE LOUDER! fucking chubby fingers click click clicking away. big fucking orangutan chubby fingers you have. short too. you could never play electric bass. i bet you fucking tried but the dudes at the music store advised your mom against it."

# My Vagina Monologue

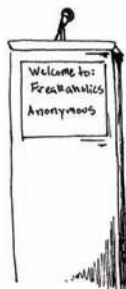
I swear it, my vagina was angry before I saw “The Vagina Monologues.” I discovered this one Sunday morning at 5am, post ecstasy-trip. My roommate and I were working on art projects—I don’t usually do much art, but the genius E-induced creativity inspired me to draw my vagina.

My vagina was bright, swollen. I scratched over my entire vulva with orange pastels. My green pearl energy center was terribly disjointed from my vaginal opening; mutually touching the two erogenous zones appeared impossible based on the drawing. I scrawled words all over my vagina: rape, anger, oppression... Before I had always found power in my sexuality. My body was a shrine, my vagina was an altar. I bid entrance. Unleash my power. I dare you.

But now my pleasure is hidden. I push at my body, pulsing, pressing, kneading, pleading...only I can find it. My body has isolated itself from mutual pleasure.

I want to shudder at the caress of another hand. I want to be titillated. I want someone to explore my body. But my sexual energy is gone. I once lived and breathed it, but now sexuality is mere discussion.

# Call For Freaks



I play a game at Tufts. I call it Freak Prowling, a “Where’s Waldo” of sorts. The freaks on campus stick out, and I am here to find them. Do you wear leg warmers? Is your hair an usual length? Have tattoos or piercings? Display one too many buttons on your backpack? Wear homemade clothes? Tacky jewelry? Band t-shirts?

Probably not, if you go to Tufts. But if you do, I am here to find you.

I like to think that I have an instant connection to any of these social deviants. Although we really only obviously deviate in physical appearance, I think it’s safe to assume that we have the same taste in music, the same attitude towards sexuality, and the same political views. See how many ways we connect?

If I see you, you freak, I will try to make eye contact. I will comment on an aspect of your clothing. I would talk about all of the things I KNOW we have in common, but that would be tokenization, and I try to be as PC in public as possible. I feel like the freaks at Tufts are in exile. On a good day, I see three of us. Where do all the others go? I know that we must pervade; we are the underground of Tufts social culture, but we have no base that I know of. We need to congregate. I’ll be honest. My motive is entirely self-centered. I just need someone to fuck.

# Irony-ing

People say that the truth is always crazier than fiction. That's bullshit and I find it ironic that they would lie about that sort of thing.

I love lying. I tried to explain this to him in some dimly lit barroom the other night. I think he's the only one ever to have that conversation with me, which is weird because, at the time, I was sitting on a table, being bumped in the back by drunken passers-by, drinking beer and playing Kings, pretending I will make something of myself, pretending I already had.

I've written a lot in my day. None of it was any good. Not that it was bad either, just not good. Maybe I'm not quirky enough?

My roommate writes good emails. I don't write good emails. Well, they are good, just not great. She's really quirky.

Too bad you can't learn to be innately quirky and original. Then I could train myself to write good emails. They could show my depth and intrigue and my obvious awesomeness without seeming self-serving or arrogant.

I lie because my life bores me. Maybe because it's the same everyday. Everyday I am me. Even if I don't act like it, I still am me. Can't ever fucking escape. I am my own

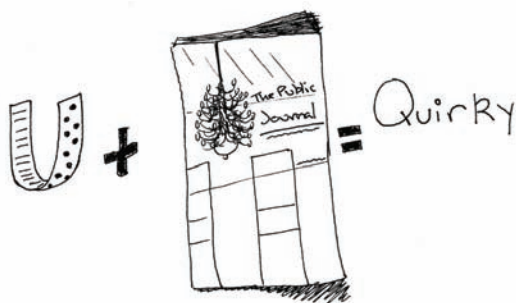


maximum security. Maybe it also is just that I am dull. I've got to work on being quirky.

I can't make a poignant commentary of the soul's darkest caverns and closets by pointing out the squirrel that just ran by me. No one would comprehend me if I wrote a first-person perspective defining the meaning of life through the eyes of a toad. There's nothing quirky about my writing, and there's nothing deep about my thoughts. I don't even think I deserve to be featured here...

If I lie, I am no longer boring and mediocre. I am interesting and unique and everyone loves me. I am all those things that I see others being – funny, interesting, engaging, or at least, I am someone else. Another person who is boring and mediocre. Just not me.

The thing is... I just really want to be quirky.



# Things Someone Should have Said a Long Time Ago...

*by various authors*

- I don't really know what girls do to be "prepared for anything", maybe it's a haircut or perhaps a manicure, but I can tell you what it is for men, it's taking a shit. "Oh no! a chemistry test / 3-headed hydra / avian flu epidemic! This would have been so much worse had I not just pooped."
- Girls, when you're having an on day, you are not as cute as you think you are.
- And when you're having an off day, you are definitely not as ugly as you think you are.
- The woman who drives the Joey in the morning on weekdays is a menace, an accident or crushed compact car waiting to happen. And when I see her driving a hulking white bus toward me, I see in her vacant face framed by that blonde hair the makings of someone's ruined day, and I am afraid.
- Your worst fears will ALWAYS be realized.
- Res. Life dropped the ball and we pay way too much money to have dorms that are as aesthetically unappealing as most of our are.
- How is it that no one at ATO has not died of some previously unidentified disease that spawns from putrid, stale beer?
- There is no more awkward situation that when you are in big public bathroom, pooping, and there is someone in the stall next to you, pooping, and the only sounds are those of the two of you pooping.
- You have herpes, so shut the fuck up and stop trying

to get with me.

- Waiting until you've run out of underwear to do laundry is never a good idea.
- Losing your virginity isn't like it seems in the movies. It hurts. A lot. There is no beautiful moment; it's a gradual process, a sort of fumbling around in the dark.
- If your huge Chanel sunglasses, your Burberry scarf, and your Uggs were to be stripped away, you'd have nothing going for you.
- If you're going to dress like a slut, at least act the part.
- Why does the hockey team get all the cute girls? They always lose their games! I should join the team, contribute to their losing streak, and get cute girls too.
- Ugg boots are disgusting.
- You'll never be in an ideal situation.
- I don't love you! or even like you! or love you as much as you love me, just give it up!



Dirty: Do Not  
wear  
←

# Meat

I know what you think of us. You Harvard boys look at us in our smart little ensembles, our hair falling sexily over one eye, a plunging necklace ending at a hint of cleavage. You look at us and you think, “These girls will be fun to party with”, “I bet I can get her naked by the end of the night” or “This bimbo seems easy enough to nail”.

We sit down at the restaurant and you order me a drink. You boys immediately begin talking about your classes, having forced intellectual conversation amongst yourselves. You compete with each other: who can be the most profound for tonight? Who has the most extensive knowledge of some obscure and unrelated topic? You do this for show; you do this because you’re at Harvard. But that’s not even the worst part. The most horrible offense is that you *assume* we don’t know what you’re talking about, these pretty girls sitting next to you at dinner. We’re here so that you can look at us, so that you can fuck us.

I down the drink, thinking how ridiculous, how childish you boys sound. Remember those big words you used to make your point? You used them incorrectly. Let me tell you something: I’m bored. One more beer please... I drink two.

Suddenly I realize how quiet I’ve been and that I have given the impression of being intimidated by you silly crimson and your rhetorical games. That’s it.

“I completely disagree with you,” I say out loud.

You look at me shocked, truly incredulous that an attractive girl should have the audacity to pipe in and not assume the responsibility of being your sexual object for tonight. Yes, you may find me sexy; but, that does not detract from my most important attribute: my brain. We all know that looks don't really mean shit: what matters is what you know, that you're smarter than the next guy.

I know the drinks have made me bold but I continue my rant. I show you my mind in order to prove you wrong; hopeful that maybe it will change how you look at us. Maybe you'll stop assuming that because you go to Harvard you're the most intelligent, most unique, most talented person this side of the river. Just because I don't feel the need to assert my intellectual superiority every second of every day does not mean that I'm not smart. It means I have managed to overcome the social retardation which you apparently still struggle with.

When it comes time for you to leave your insular Mecca for the high minded you will have to compete with me and many more like me. You'll go up against us, girls with brains, strength and a whole lot of sass. Let the games begin.



# Cali-Forni-Ay

Auto response from Procrastinator3:

dear self-

stop dreaming of grad school. you are not in yet. you only have an interview. sitting around looking for apartments in berkeley is not a valid use of your time, especially when you have so much to do before you leave for the interview. you are not allowed to be excited until they offer you acceptance, and that is of course dependent on them actually doing that. therefore, self, tomorrow you must focus all your energies on your school work. i know it is hard because california seems sooo close after all these years of suffering through boston winters, but you are just going to have to be disciplined and freaking do some work for goodness sake!

sincerely,  
your logical side

# The Boy Next Door

There are a few things I'd like to say to my neighbor. I'm worried that no one has ever bothered to tell him these things before. But maybe the next time I talk to him, between locking the door or taking out the trash, I'll manage to convey the three following truths:

"Your dick is tiny. My boyfriend, who is half your size, has about twice your dick. And *he's* not a dickhead." Maybe, during the course of this conversation, I would even have the benevolence to give him a few suggestions, to let him know the way things work. You know, share my insight:

"Don't feel bad about it, though. Really, your tiny penis has very little to do with how pathetic you are. If you want women to like you, concentrate on fixing all of your personality deficiencies before you worry about the physical ones. For example: the problem with last weekend was not the size of your dick. The problem was that you snuck into my apartment, took your pants off, and got into bed with me while I was sleeping. Asswipe.

And oh, by the way, leaving a case of Miller Lite outside my door a week later does not make it alright to have called me a cunt. Nor does it purchase future contact of any kind between your soft, pathetic, miniature penis and me. Sorry, dude."

I think that, one day, he'd be grateful for my insight. He'd

appreciate my wisdom eventually. The one thing he's really got to figure out now, though, is that when he rings the doorbell and I don't answer, it's because I'm busy having great sex with my big beautiful boyfriend. And I'm not going to answer the door. So if he really must, he can ring it once...and then he can fuck off.





# This is Love.

I love the Public Journal--just wanted to put that out there. That being said, however, I do have one complaint: everybody that writes is so freakin' despondent! It is so "okayIamgoingtowritethisandthendrinkabottleofarsenic." I mean, c'mon, can't there be any happy people on this campus? With this in mind, I set out to create a happy piece. Thus I am giving you, and the entire campus, the top 10 reasons why I love and adore my boyfriend. Now be happy bitches!

*Note: There will be unabashed descriptions of homosexual acts below. If that isn't your bag, flip the page. Bitch.*

10. I love his cock. Flat out, love it. Not too thick, but thick enough to really fill me up (literally). It is a good length; I can still get most of it down when I am blowing him (sometimes all of it), so that works well too. And he can work it very well in my ass. Nobody wants to be dating somebody with a ginormous cock. Well, actually, it is the gay man's dream--but then once you get it in reality, you realize how fucking annoying it is. That is why I love my boyfriend's. It is perfect size, length, and thickness. Yum.
9. I love the birthmark on his butt. SO CUTE! I love

kissing and biting it. hehe.

8. I love that he is rich. Sorry, that had to be said. Who doesn't want a rich boyfriend? Honestly, it is the American Dream. I always remember my mom telling my sister to go out and get a rich boyfriend... and I beat her to it! Suck on that one mom.
7. I love that he lets me eat food in bed. One time, I ate half of a tray of brownies in front of him in bed...and I STILL got my dick sucked! Nothing tops that.
6. I love his face when he cums. He does this cute thing where he bites down on his bottom lip as he shoots his load. I like feeling his load come up out of his cock too, but I guess that is a more general thing that happens with everybody. But that cute thing with his face...damn I'm kind of getting hard writing this!
5. I love how he looks when he hasn't shaved in a few days...the scruff is really becoming on him. It is really sexy, it makes him look much older and more sophisticated. Usually I think scruff makes people look dirty and homeless, but on him...it is just fabulous.
4. I love that he is intellectual. He is not at all an elitist intellectual, you know, those kids in class who think they are so smart but come off sounding dumb as shit. He is articulate, well-spoken, and usually has an intelligent voice to add to a conversation.

3. I love his lips; soft, luscious, full.
2. I love the way that he cuddles me every night. At first I hated it--I would push him off me every night. But then the feeling eventually grew on me, and now I really miss him when we don't sleep together. the bed feels so empty without him.
1. And finally, the number one reason that I love my boyfriend: he stuck with me through thick and thin and did not give up. And he was blowing me the entire time. Again, nothing tops that.

# Hardly Working

I trolled down the brick sidewalk towards the T, twirling a purse around my wrist. 12:30, 12:45, the trains run all the way up 'till 1 AM here in the Harvard square stop, and I am 60 feet away. Everyone else is playing, going out, on their way out; I'm pretty clearly on the way in. Absolutely finished working in this place. Sweat had seeped through my tank top and into the corporate, blue, carefully-pressed blue waiting shirt. Cuffs rolled up. Rumpled. Cheery cherry and blue striped corporate tie. The customary black pants, plain and empty. I was still put together but I felt like wilting into a seat like a wee piece of goop; amorphous, green, salty... Jesus, what a stupid idea! Waiting tables??? Catering, at their beck and call, kissing the bottoms of their dead presidents, honoring their random, prolific requests for seven hours at a time. There's the Harvard swim team, giggling in to request a giant table of 35. Bitches. They loiter in the entryway. Arrangements are made—the restaurant re-organized, waitresses huffy. Water is prevalent; tips, meager. A long time afterwards, half the staff are furiously smoking outside, and in walks this guy who sits alone every day, examines the menu and pointedly asks for the manager, noting a 35-cent discrepancy between the menu price and the charge. The manager recognizes him on the security cameras, lumbers upstairs and flies into a rage; he threatens to call the corporate headquarters and walks out, comes back to start hitting on the 20-year-old hostess. Later during the 11 to 12 pm slot there are those few picky people, those pretentious Harvard bastards and their prized friends crashing in like fools, demanding a booth seat, getting upset

at the lack of immediate gratification, stormily asking for supervisors. At this time, the “supervisors” are drunk from below the action, snickering to themselves in the basement and watching it unfold on security cameras. But, in spite of the fake establishment with its strange mixture of standard dishes, politically-correct greetings bumping against the raw emotions of the people who are being cut up and set on fire by this store’s abysmal attempts to move up along the food chain of pizza restaurants, its real-ish. I would like to plink a piece off of the croutons next to the dish washer and just stay, and stay, and stay, and walk away. What makes something real? I’m here, showing up with a group of maybe 50 other people, working like a beast, attempting to move up in the world of hosts and servers towards a “real” restaurant. Not on this paycheck. I am going to quit soon; I can exercise that option. But they’re doing this as a real job. Maybe what seems real is permanent? Maybe that’s why Tufts does not seem real to me? These people show up to grind, six days a week, 16 hours a day. In and out, swinging wash rags, joking about Sean’s pants and looping back and forth with ever-towering piles of dishes. They’re clean in the kitchen, winking and working it out to Daz that’s blasting So So Def just a wall away from the corporate mix UNOs picked out for the dining room. I just hang out sometimes, I don’t even know what I’m doing, I’m just some casual part time, half-pint, Paris Hilton-ey collegiate sort of a “Simple Life” idiot of a worker, arriving like a well-packaged lemming from the vaunted Tufts Hill to experience the world and earn cash that I don’t really need. And I’m not rich by comparison. Cassio, the head host, is philosophical... Chill out, he says to me. I’m late and ironing my shit. You’re already late. Just take some breaths and go do it. He’s right; at Tufts we stay up over papers, agonize over details, plow through other

peoples' lofty theorems that codify the way the world works, but really, THIS is where it's working—in front of your face in some random chain restaurant with some anonymous people who have to be there, or they're going to be sent home, 2,000 miles away. Or be fucked up by Somerville landlords. It's that simple. Blatant, so many sacrifices from the sacrificed, all the time. For what? These people have to show up each day in order to survive, and maybe I do, too. There were a surprising number of people were standing by the tracks, waiting for the last T to mumble its way out towards the end of the red line. I sat towards the end of them, glowing in a bizarre camaraderie, wondering if they detected my saltiness.

# ...Makes Me Think Of...

*by various authors*

- Every time I think about my ex-girlfriend, I wish I hadn't talked her out of suicide.
- Oral sex makes me think of cheese.
- Oral sex now makes me think of cheese (thanks for ruining that one, Public Journal) *your welcome*
- He makes me think of the hottest fuck I will probably never have
- Axe cologne makes me think of an awkward dance to "Hey Ya" with a boy from Oklahoma.
- Dewick food makes me think of laxatives.
- My boyfriend... catching my breath on top of a mountain when the wind is blowing in my face.
- Guitars me think of why I am not playing one right at this very instant in front of very many people.
- My ex-boyfriend's face makes me think of a plastic surgery patient whose Botox treatment went completely awry.
- Cocaine makes me think of "Oh great! Cocaine!"



# Poodly Doodly

**four2:** tre blunted

**SMH:** tight

**SMH:** how was break?

**SMH:** you give that envelope to bradley?

**four2:** no

**four2:** that's my b in a big way

**SMH:** dude

**SMH:** mail that

**SMH:** haha

**SMH:** just drop it in the mail then

**four2:** i'll mail you

**SMH:** no

**SMH:** mail it to him

**SMH:** it's addressed to him

**SMH:** its got a stamp on it

**four2:** i'm gonna mail you.

**SMH:** !?

**four2:** poodly doodly

**SMH:** Donald

**four2:** moodly doodly

**SMH:** goddammit donald

**SMH:** mail that fucking envelope, i want my money!

**four2:** this is fucking fun goddammit!

**SMH:** ...

**SMH:** i will

**SMH:** ...



**SMH:** slay

**SMH:** ...

**SMH:** you

**SMH:** if you don't mail my envelope

**four2:** i'll mail your envelope to you.

**SMH:** YOUR DEATH IS IMMINENT

**four2:** boomhauer.

# Saturday Night Limbo

My deliberately low and even breathing is pretty good. But even still, soon I give it up wriggle out of the sheets, picking his arm up and gently putting it back down, sans me. It's dark, even though soon light will be streaming through the cracks in the heavy blankets ducktaped over the windows. I fumble—that all to familiar fumble in a strange room for articles discarded with abandon hours before—for my phone, bangles, and boots. The shaggy red carpet is soggy. Yellow and red cups, used and unused, litter the floor. My jeans? Nope, his. Here are mine, I pull them on, the favorite jeans, alright even though tonight they've been through a lot. Have: boots, bangles, tee shirt, thong, jeans. Missing: a bra, one damp sock, and one cubic zirconium earring. Ok, so where is my bra? I could leave it here, but really I like it and there is a small spot of blood on the inside of the right cup—from a scratch on my chest—but still, who wants her bloody bra found the next morning? Finally I find it in the corner where it was dropped hours before. Me, up against the wall; bra, on the floor. I decide to forgo the damp sock and the fake earring. I pull on my wet boots and find a plastic insert in the left boot, still there from the store, two weeks ago. I leave it on the floor. It will more than blend in with the other trash in the room—cups, cans, broken ice luge, and empty bottles. I crawl up onto the enormous bed, clean oasis in the room, and because it was that kind of night, kiss the boy goodbye on his forehead. He mumbles goodbye, though I think he's more awake than he's letting on. He knows I want to leave and secretly he doesn't mind, he can now sleep undistracted,

which at this hour is what we both want.

I pick my way outside, and the morning is soft and misty—not unpleasant really, in my delirium. I basically fall down the long hill, it’s just a really balanced falling where my body is upright but I surrender myself to the forces of gravity and inertia, letting my legs move independently of conscious thought. My wooden heels strike the hard granite curbstone, making a nice hollow wet sound and I stalk and sway, stalk and sway, down the long hill. Across the street a fuzzy woman stands on a stoop and bangs on the window. This is the low-rent district. She must be locked out, she is crying. The dimly lit “T” sign is here, at the bottom of the hill, and I hope hope hope that now at 5 in the morning a train will come. I don’t have a plan beyond extracting myself from the strange apartment. I cross the street, not sure which side is inbound and which it outbound, I don’t even know if the T is running. I could take a cab—though I have three dollars in my wallet. There is another woman coming from an apartment building. She is white, gray haired, and is carrying bundles. I can’t make out if she looks like she belongs in this part of town or not. She yells across the street and up the hill to the sad locked out woman, “Rick! Rick! Rickyyyy!” and then more to herself, “What is this fucking bullshit?” I decide she does. I wonder if the sad dark woman up the street is really Ricky and if this is a nightly occurrence and if the gray woman always swears this early in the morning. I must look like a hooker. I kind of feel the part. Skinny white chick walking alone in this neighborhood at 5 a.m., nice bag, tall boots, messy hair. I hail a cab to ask what time the T begins running, the driver doesn’t know what I mean, but can tell me that to get to Medford costs \$50. Nope. The cab drives away, dismissed. There is a man in a black Mercedes, he drives by,

looks, and pulls over down the block. Wait are you serious? I move behind the lit T stop, out of the line of his rearview mirror. That had to be coincidence of my previous thought and my odd circumstance. In a deeply tired, delirious, and casual kind of way, I wonder what the hell I'm doing.

Then are cops, across the street. I think they are there for the woman who I don't think is named Ricky. I cross, they will know what time the T starts. They ask me if there is a man yelling around here. I point around the corner but tell them I think it's a woman. They don't know what time the T starts, but say they will take me to Park Street if I give them a minute. I wonder what choices I have. More cops come, no siren, just graceful blue lights in the misty rain. I don't bother with an umbrella. My phone battery is dying. There is another cop, this one is black and not quite handsome, the other two look Italian or something. Actually I dunno, they have dark hair...the not-quite-handsome one is self-important in a calculated machismo kind of way. I wonder what is up with the clichés tonight. Maybe it's a night shift thing. This one doesn't know what time the T starts either. "I don't take the T." Well, I wouldn't expect that you did, but seeing as you are a cop you might know what time the thing starts running in your own city. "Do you want company?" I half-wonder if he thinks we're at a bar, and then decide it's more weird because of the time of night/morning and I suppose it's easier to just accept the surrealness of it all. "Oh." I stand on some steps, and don't answer the question. I am now level with him. "Can I call you?" Huh? Then I say yes and wonder why I did. And then I remember that I do silly things like that sometimes. But I don't give him my number. "Do you know that it is politically incorrect to call those things Paddy Wagons?" He says he does know that ,

and then “But really can I call you?” Because it’s now past 5 am, in Saturday/Sunday limbo and because I am standing alone on a street corner in Mission Hill with cops and rain and a wailing drug addict I say yea sure and give him my real number. As he puts it in his phone and then calls me to see if I gave him the right one I think it might be very useful to have a cop friend. And I am in no state to be thinking of fake numbers to give out to strange cops. “I’ll give you a call.” The cop tells me his name is J.P. and we shake hands. The wailing woman who I don’t think is named Ricky comes around the corner, flanked by the pseudo-Italians. One of them carries her knock-off Coach bag. It is open and he looks silly carrying it out in front of him as if it is emanating noxious gas. There is spittle on her lips, her mouth is open and a string of saliva stretches from her cracked top lip to her cracked bottom lip. She is wearing all black and makes loud noises of general distress. The purse cop and the other one inform us that the woman has a five-year warrant for marijuana possession. She will go to jail now. I think of all my friends who buy and have and smoke and sell marijuana. I think of the hit I took tonight and how nice it tasted. I wonder what the woman did with the money she earned five years ago from selling weed.

The cop who’s name is J.P. asks if I want to see the computer system in the truck that is not called a paddy wagon. Sure. He puts me in the drivers seat and my legs touch his and I am a bit uncomfortable but then I remember it is Boston and he’s a cop and it’s 2006 and I’m a college student. I’m not one of those people who can slip from one social role to the other, I am very much in my place and work from there always. The other cops work the woman into the back of the truck. We, with some difficulty, type my name and birthday into

the black and red screened computer in the cab of the truck that is not a paddy wagon. I have no record. The woman's distress has turned to despair. Her head knocks against the walls of her box and she wails and her world is breaking.

No one seems to think it's odd that machismo cop has let me into the cab and is showing me the computer. I have no record, he tells me, I'm clean.

The others are leaving now, I can go with them they will take me to Park Street. The other one says he'll call me. Oookk. The back of the cruiser is not like a cab. The seat is high, shiny and very hard. Like the fiberglass shell of a boat. I am referred to as a stranded motorist over their C.B. I mumble something about finding a cab, but I don't mean it really. It's sort of interesting to ride down Huntington Ave. in a cruiser at 5:30 in the morning, seeing familiar buildings and streets from an unfamiliar time and place, talking to cops about things I don't know and will never have to know.

I finally arrive home at 7 am. I have made friends with two drunk grad students on the Red Line, coming home from a night they will not remember. The rain filled umbrella thrown hastily in my bag has saturated a book for class, my phones battery has finally died, my contacts hurt my eyes, I have walked home in the rain, and my boots are officially not new anymore.

*P.S.*

*Machismo cop actually called...needless to say, I did not return the voicemail he left.*

# Confessions...Part II

*by various artists*

- I never tell my best guy friend, “I love you,” because it’s a little too close to the truth.
- There are too many things to appreciate in people: a bizarre love of fish tanks, an obsession with video games, or a superstition about matching socks; I could fall in love with some aspect of a different person every day.
- Every time I see a food delivery person leave their car unlocked with the engine running, I really want to get in and steal it. I will someday.
- Sometimes when I’m wearing pants that feel a little tight, I like to think that I am superhero and my muscles are just about to bulge out.
- I’m jealous of my roommate and her boyfriend even though I’d never date him... or her.
- I say I love you to my parents when I say goodbye, but I don’t know if it’s really true. I don’t think they actually know who I am, nor do I know them.
- You know those lines I always say will never work on me? Well, they actually do.
- I’m going commando because I haven’t done laundry in over a month, despite running out of underwear.
- There are \$10 in my bank account, and I’m embarrassed because I’ve never been broke before.
- I have no talents. I’m absolutely mediocre in everything I do.
- I’m starting to dislike my best friends for little things like the sound of their voice, their music

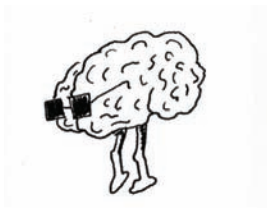
choices, and their constant complaining.

- I'm self-conscious when I'm on my period, because I think everyone else can smell my vagina.
- I accused someone of sexually harassing me in eighth grade, but he didn't actually do everything that I reported.
- I'm embarrassed to tell people that my boyfriend is six years older than I am.





# Brain Petting



Really it's the sound that I like. And the feel. My mom once told me she had always known I was slightly OCD, which was cryptic of her. But I don't think this is what she was talking about.

It's just that when I'm reading, or checking my e-mail, or talking, it's the gorgeous sound—and the feel—that I can't get enough of. At first I don't think about it. And then I like it, and then I take pleasure in it, and then I can't read or study unless I'm doing it.

It's better when my hair is down, take a long strand from the back or side and hook it with my thumb, then run it between my pointer and middle fingers. The hair will be pulled taut against the top of my ear, which makes for the perfect sound. My hair is wintery dry, crackly split ends, each hair a different jagged length. The sound of my finger pulling it taut resonates through this dead hollow protein beautifully, right into my ear, and into my brain.

I read in a book this summer that this kid would go and lock himself in his room, curl in the fetal position, and just rock back and forth for hours—and that fulfilling this compulsion was like brain petting. And it is. It's not exactly convenient for me to rock back and forth in my room for hours, and I wonder if compulsions come basically at random, or if they mold themselves to ones life. And it does feel so good. I was going to stop doing it for Lent, all my hair is broken, even if only I can tell. But it's very hard to study without doing it, I just begin doing it without even thinking—which I guess is the trouble. It takes thinking *not* to do it. It's brain petting, and ooohhh I do love the sound.

# I Have This Smile

I have this smile. It's involuntary. I can try to fake it, try to pull the corner of my mouth up, put a wry look in my eye, but it's like when you try to regular smile for the camera and think you're doing a great I'm-having-a-fucking-crazy-time smile and then you see the picture later and you just look moderately amused. I think I've heard that it's because you can't make the muscles around your eyes move—you can only fake smile with your mouth muscles and being the observant creatures that we are we can always tell the fake from the real. But anyway, I haven't smiled this smile in a long time. It's my flirting smile, it's my I-like-you-and-I'm-being-sarcastic-and-you're-giving-it-right-back-and-not-letting-me-get-away-with-anything-and-that's-so-hot smile and I try and try and try and no one can get this smile out of me anymore. But that's ok. I'm not complaining. I'm just saving them up. And eventually someone is going to get inundated with these involuntary smiles and they probably won't realize that I've been waiting for that self-assured little muscle twitch on the left side of my mouth to come back and that's fine. They don't have to know because I will.



# A Study of the Reading Room

The Tisch Reading Room is a microcosm of Tufts . . . no, scratch that- it's really a world onto itself. Don't believe me? Well, that's because you are a "foreigner." No, I don't mean *foreigner* in the pejorative sense used by most of Middle America to describe anyone that isn't white and Christian. I use the term "foreigner" to mean anyone that isn't *from* the Reading Room. Yes, "from" the Reading Room. You are or you aren't; it's that simple. For a man who isn't afraid to admit that I spend more time in the Reading Room than in my own bed (really, check my Facebook profile) you should believe me. For all those who know what I'm talking about, feel free to stop reading this. But if you aren't "in" on the ways of the Reading Room, let me try my best to explain to what it is like to be on the inside. You might want to grab a box of tissues (take that suggestion in any way you would like). The truth must be told.

I guess it all began when I decided that I had had enough of the drunken roar that is constantly Second Floor Tilton, and ventured out of the downhill boundaries I had taken to be my own. I needed to get some homework done, so I decided that I try the library. Being a few-week-old freshman, I was amazed by what I was to encounter. The first time I entered the Reading Room, I knew I would always belong. Something about the obsessive nature of the studiers, the peaceful sound of rustling papers and typing keys, the roar of the Tower Café released when the far corner door was opened- it all made sense. I sat down, and lo and behold, I

actually *got* shit done! Before long, I was hooked.

As I immersed myself in the world of the Reading Room, I learned more about the customs, the language, the food, and what one ought and ought not do. I learned most of this knowledge from the “residents.” The “residents” are those studiers who come to the Reading Room at least a few times a week, perhaps even more. They are those recognizable faces that you feel like you have known forever, though you don’t even know their names. Then there are the “frequenters.” These people are the ones who come in, maybe once a week, when they need to complete a paper they have procrastinated on finishing for a few months. You can always pick these ones out. They usually have a laptop, a pile of library books, and sometimes-scattered notes across an entire table. But what gives them away is their frantic, hopeless eyes, their collection of Amps and Red Bulls, and their pajama-casual attire. They are the ones that forget what it is like to be in the Reading Room until they need it the most. Yes, the Reading Room gives us all a kind of- well- spirit. Please excuse me while I tear . . .

Then there are the “foreigners.” They come in to the Reading Room as if they own the place, plopping their large bags onto the desks so loudly you’d swear you were at a Metallica concert. They usually plug their laptops into the outlets in the study modules, a clear-tale sign. What they have failed to notice is that there is a sticker above the outlets reading “electric outlets are **not active** at this carrel.” In fact, the outlets are not active at any . . . *carrel*? Please, this is not *France*. No need for the French-sounding jargon. S-t-u-d-y M-o-d-u-l-e. Probably damn foreigners who made those stickers . . . You may call the “Freedom Study Modules,” if

you like.

Many of us, who have at one point or another wished they'd fix those damn outlets, have laid to rest these hopes. There are some things that we all realize are just *part* of what makes the Reading Room so great. And the minor grievances are nothing when compared to the many *wonders* that make the Reading Room so magnificent.

For example, it is commonly understood that the Study Room is a place of fashion. If you aren't wearing Ugg boots, aviator sunglasses, Burberry scarves, Rolex watches, perhaps a Northface jacket, you might as well just leave. The Reading Room is a place to strut your stuff, search out the hotties, and make connections. For example, it is customary when you walk into the Reading Room that you have an iPod in ear, and that you walk unassumingly, though in a obviously model-like fashion. Some studiers come to reside with friends and family; others go solo. It doesn't matter too much, as long as you do it in style.

Unfortunately, there are times when things can get awkward. For example, you might have the unabated urge to go and take a shit in the men's bathroom at the back of the Study Room, only to realize that your crush has to go the bathroom so badly that she waits for yours since the ladies is currently occupied. I mean, who can say their shit don't stink? It's life people, and the fact of the matter is, it's life as usual in the Reading Room.

But sometimes, Reading Roomers find *love*. And boy are they not afraid to show it! Some of these budding lovers will kiss each other for a few minutes. Other time, they fondle

each other, caressing their sex-starved bodies for hours on end. Never mind how poignantly rude and nauseating it is for the people around them; it's love – pure and unadulterated love.

Other times, the Reading Room is a place to be with friends. Some friends will whisper hour-long conversations until they have annoyed every single person around them, and eventually, someone makes a loud and obvious coughing gesture that is roughly taken to mean, “Shut the hell up.” In some situations, a quick glance over the shoulder is enough to get the message across. Friends will also come to the Reading Room to have incessant IM conversations too - from the comfort of their own laptops! They talk about their boy friends, the laundry they have yet to do, how crappy the food is getting at Dewick, the fact that they are typing on IM instead of typing up their philosophy papers, or perhaps the latest news as to why in the hell Johnny Damon left the Red Socks. And other friends come to write their 40 page IR papers and finish their 100 problems for their Calculus class.

As in any other society, the Reading Room has subcultures that live and breath within it. For instance, there are the international students who are curiously congregated by race and language. The Europeans usually kiss each other on the cheek so profusely that you can sometimes hear the smooches 10, or even 15 feet away. Other times you may feel a few drops of saliva hitting you unexpectedly on the cheek. It's business as usual, though, in the Reading room.

There are others too. There are the nerds, the jocks, the artsy-fartsies, the graduate students, the lonely people

who compulsively check Facebook instead of doing their homework in the off chance they find a friend. And then there are the security guards. You see, there have been diplomatic security issues recently with other parts of the Library. Our neighbor, the Tower Café, sometimes can instigate outcry when there are too many starving Café people crossing the border in hopes of finding a better study life. Many of them don't speak the language of the Reading Room, and this has prompted the creation of such organizations as "Protect Procrastination" and "The Reading Room is for Readers." The current climate had made it necessary to hire security guards to help protect this proud society. You never know when things will get out of hand in the Reading Room.

It is imperative that you know that the Reading Room is, at its core, a place of devotion. Religion is not compulsory, but you will soon enough find it upon coming here. I have bared my soul to reveal that. I hope that this will lead to a better of understanding of why so many students *must* study in this room. To all those that now that the real name is the "Hirsch Reading Room," and not the Tisch Reading Room, I solute you. And to the others, I bid you adieux, for I have decided that I cannot live in both worlds. I have decided to live in the Reading Room forever. Go there and you'll find me, typing away as I prepare for my next test and paper. And if you don't, well . . . you may find for yourself what this all really means. Good night, Good morning, and may the power of caffeine and nicotine be with you!

# Robotic Minions

New conversation started at 2/27/06 9:40:08 PM.

**Stinger:** what's shakin' bacon?

**ClimbingtheWalls:** a fucking cognitive science take home midterm

**ClimbingtheWalls:** i am in the dungeon of the library right now

**ClimbingtheWalls:** procrastinating obviously

**Stinger:** ouch my brotha

**Stinger:** sounds like as much fun as a bucket full of frogs

**ClimbingtheWalls:** oh no the frogs would be much more fun

**ClimbingtheWalls:** you could lick them and trip out and if that didn't work you could just blow them up

**Stinger:** especially dry roasted with a tangy glaze...mmmm

**Stinger:** see how our minds work?

**Stinger:** this is why we are friends

**ClimbingtheWalls:** haha

**ClimbingtheWalls:** indeed

**Stinger:** you think about blowing shit up, and i think about eating the same stuff

**ClimbingtheWalls:** and probably the most disturbing part is that most people would assert that frogs are really for neither

**Stinger:** yes, this is true. but that's why they're robotic minions, and we are not

**ClimbingtheWalls:** maybe i should make an application to be my friend that would begin "given a barrel of frogs, or anything other small and not particularly likable vertebrate,



what would be the most obvious/desirable course of action?"

**Stryker4:** ha. a good screening process. however, i prefer the "finish this sentence" test, as in, "so i was patronizing an illegal apple vendor the other day..."

**ClimbingtheWalls:** ha!

**ClimbingtheWalls:** that's a good one too

**ClimbingtheWalls:** well i better actually start working

**ClimbingtheWalls:** if i plan to get anything done

**ClimbingtheWalls:** later

**Stinger:** alright

**Stinger:** t

**Stinger:** good luck

Conversation ended at 2/27/06 9:54:16 PM.

# Confessions...Part III

*by various authors*

- I like my mom more than my dad, but I think they like my brother more.
- I never cry due to a personal misfortune, but often tear at a sad story on the news
- I am happy right now. I am not pensive or brooding or trying to be impressive or scholarly or entertaining or any of my usual behaviors. I am just happy and it is wonderful.
- When you walk up to the counter to order your drink and you're talking on your cell phone at the same time, it makes me manic and I want to lunge across the counter and tear you apart.
- I have the easiest job in the world
- I have a history of spreading nasty rumors about girls who
- I think have oral herpes.
- My ex cried in front of me when he saw a centipede.
- I want to ball my neighbor. If we had a boy I would name him Fats Domino.
- I judge people the INSTANT I meet them based on appearance, and 99% of the time, my perceptions are dead-on.
- Whenever I'm bored/sad/lonely, I walk past my crush's dorm and watch him do work through the window.
- I think about sex during church. A lot.
- Took a lot of money from my parents in order to

go on a trip, but hung out with friends in my home town for the entire week. I was loaded with cash.

- I pierce my body or stretch my ears after a breakup so I can be “more hardcore” than my ex-partner.
- I am a slut.
- I eat my roommate’s food and then tell her it was our neighbor who ate it.
- When someone close to a friend dies, I’d really rather run away than try to help them because I never know how to respond.
- The past three days I have woken up naked next to this beautiful woman, and despite it being Sunday, I have a smile so wide my face is going to tear at the creases.



# The Problem of Shitty Handjobs

It is time to discuss the giant elephant in the bedroom... The Handjob. Every guy knows what I'm talking about and has experienced the awkward pain of enduring a handjob. So here it is. Ok, you're hooking up... making out... shirts come off.... Dooly dooly doo... things get a bit steamy and then one of a few possibilities occur.

The lady might utter..."do you have a ummmm...", the universal code for sex. Clearly she isn't going to finish,, "Do you have ummmm a 401k, or do you have ummm any Doritos I could eat." Clearly she is opening the gates of Troy and its up to you to frantically search for where the hell you might have stashed a condom. But that's another story altogether.

Possibility two is the awkward marathon make out. This occurs when a girl has made it clear she isn't going to take anything too far (which is perfectly fine by the way) but she wants to continue making out. During this the guy's member is quite upset with him and the troops are ready to pack up their gear and go. You are caught in-between a rock and hard place however, so you cant go anywhere. The girl just keeps on keeping on while the denim jeans dry humping is about to make you cry out in pain. I mean what is your exit strategy? "Umm wow... so can we stop making out now?" The truth is the marathon make out can only end with an angel in the form of a cell-phone ring. This of course never happens. The

ring only comes when it shouldn't, like when your mother calls right when you face is buried between your girlfriend's legs.... which is very bad for your psychology...but that's another story altogether. Anyhow, the marathon make out usually ends at the women's discretion, at which point she smiles and stares at you with a crazy glossy eyed look. Failing to recognize your misery, she buries her head in your "nook" and then you're fucked for another hour or so with snuggling. But then there is option three.

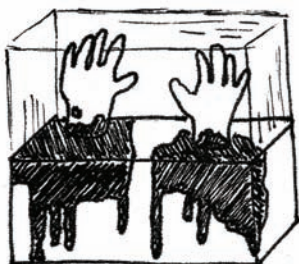
The final possible hookup transition is the reciprocation of services. This is ok.... except for one fact..... the blowjob is apparently a dying fad. Ok so every guy should be a gentleman, ladies first... do what you do... by all means try to get the girl off,, study the anatomy of your adversary and get the job done. Seriously ladies, when it comes down to it most guys care more about pleasing you than themselves. But! After the girl has gotten off or finished faking it, (which no girl should do by the way... false positive reinforcement.. you're only hurting yourself)... it is time for reciprocation. For whatever reason, many girls won't give head. There are a thousand different reasons for this, but they all just make me sad. Blowjobs don't oppress women anymore than box-munching oppresses men. Blowjobs won't make you fat. Blowjobs won't turn you into a goat. Look, there are a thousand crazy reasons girls don't give head. The only reasonable one is that a girl might not want to give an easy impression if she is interested in something more with a guy. This is totally legit. However, under no circumstance should you ever, ever, ever finish him off with an un-lubed hand-job. If there is some lotion lying around then what the hell it's a mess but go for it. This is a worst-case ticking time bomb scenario though. Otherwise don't give him a hand-job.

The problem of shitty handjobs is as simple as it is complex. I mean the hookup is like a business exchange, an exchange of services. A farmer exchanges 5 eggs for the plumber fixing his toilet. In a hookup we exchange an act that we can't perfectly duplicate by ourselves. There is one simple truth in life. That truth is that no person can give a guy a better hand-job than himself. Trust this fact. We have been practicing for nearly 20 years! It's one of the only constants in a man's life. A lot has changed for me since the 7<sup>th</sup> grade, but my hand-job has remained the same. I can give a pretty mean hand-job. I can't however give myself head. It's impossible, but that's another story altogether. The fact is we exchange services that we can't do by ourselves. I mean you don't higher a babysitter to shit your kid's pants do you? The kid is pretty good at shitting his own pants. He isn't however, very good at wiping his own ass.. so presto an exchange of services. But this is getting confusing.

Ladies, I'm not saying you don't get an A+ for effort, its just that you suck at giving hand-jobs. There are the "tight squeezers" who nearly strangle the damn thing. On the flipside there are the "loose grippers" who go very fast and loose. It doesn't take a fucking 3<sup>rd</sup> grade science course to realize this may cause an intolerable amount of friction. Lady, you are not an Eagle Scout and my dick is not made out of flint. Then there are the "petters" who think your donkler is a Yorkshire Terrier. You just sit there as they smile at you and stroke at a less than medium pace. This is just weird. It's like an awkward physical examination or something. None are as bad as what I like to call the "Are you fucking kidding me" hand-job. In this lovely affair the girl twists her furthest arm across her lap and grabs the dude with her hand upside down. At this point you just brace. Next, since she can't

really move her arm up and down, she just starts yanking all around like a lunatic. Pray to god that she doesn't have any pubes in grip because she starts slamming it around like a little kid with a joystick in a fucking arcade. Meanwhile you are trying to think of the dirtiest shit imaginable so you can get off and end the wretched affair. This of course is impossible. She just yanks and yanks and yanks until finally she looks at you like you are the one with the problem and says, "My arm is tired." Thank fucking God!!! At this point say you're too drunk or have ED or just are really in miserable pain because someone just tried to rip off my dick. Then you exit quickly and quietly.

In conclusion.... Well there isn't really a conclusion. Just.. for our sake,... for your arm's sake... for your butchers sake,,,, and your daughters sake.... make with the head or send the guy down the road to finish the job like a professional.



# Perils/Joys of Foreign City X

*by various authors*

- Driving from one end of the city to another, accelerating through yellow lights, cutting off motorcyclists, dodging senior citizens, in order to finally slow down and cruise the avenue parallel to the beach while observing the lovely ladies tanning and playing volleyball topless (Athens)
- Getting the “what are we doing tonight?” call at 1 a.m. (Athens)
- The Sex Machines Museum. NEVER GO THERE. (Prague)
- There are NO good looking men. Very false advertising on their side. (Athens)
- Diving into swimming pools covered in leaves and frogs. (Dar es Salaam)
- Having the one subway line you need be closed, so then your stupid French teacher can’t read a map and gets the entire group lost at 1:30am, so that she decides it’s best if all 40 of us take taxis back to the hotel, but one chaperone pulls your best friend diagnosed with anxiety and depression out of the taxi because she wants to get back first, and the taxi with your best friend in it gets lost, and your French teacher still refuses to admit that a taxi is missing, and an hour later your best friend’s taxi finally returns, and your best friend is bawling tears, and there’s nothing you can do about it except hate your French teacher and laugh hysterically when you hear two years later that she chopped off two of her fingers in a food processor. (Paris)



- Having a fever during a heat wave during July. (Istanbul)
- Having your Gameboy stolen out of your dad's backpack. (Florence)
- Performing in the Fringe Festival. (Edinburgh)
- Finding your great-great-grandmother's tombstone. (Dublin)
- Eating at McDonald's. (Shanghai)
- Having a drunk gondola driver and getting lost in the bell tower while being accosted by horny Italian men (Florence or Rome)
- Drinking all the Red wine I want (Venice)
- Getting drunk in an Molly's Irish pub off Las Ramblas with a bunch of English soccer hooligans during the euro cup, then trashing the place and parading through the streets with the mob while they chant "Beckham's a cunt cunt cunt!" David Beckham missed his shootout Pk against Portugal. England subsequently lost. summer '04. (Barcelona)
- Cigarette smoke, chickens, children, cold beans, mud. (Diyarbakir)
- Tex-Mex restaurants, not only are the waitresses skeezy, but the food looks like it was scooped out of the local cesspool and will seriously fuck you up later. (Prague)



# Assault at 161 College Ave.



I'll be honest with you.

I was assaulted during my first week of freshman year.

I did not call T.E.M.S., nor I did not get to a blue phone in time; I did not call Ears for Peers, nor did I contact my Resident Advisor about my situation; I simply stood there and accepted it. More accurately, I stepped, tripped, stumbled, and at times, only *attempted* to keep my balance in time with DJ Skribble's heinous barrage of Top 40 dance anthems—all of which seamlessly merged into one, gigantic, nonstop song wherein I could not escape my assailant.

When I say that I was assaulted, I do not refer to horror stories heard during In The S.A.C.K. lectures or comparable acts of violence told to Tufts freshmen at Safety Awareness meetings. I simply mean that I was attacked in rather unique manner: it was fifty percent tango, fifty percent rape, yet somehow one hundred percent nightmare. I was strangely assaulted on the dance floor of the Fall Ball by a female friend of mine whom I can only describe as an epileptic willow tree, at once both gracefully waving her hands and writhing in fits of (apparently) uncontrollable seizures. Video evidence, if only it existed, would testify to my victimization: it was the dance party equivalent of those police brutality videos set to strobe lights and Usher's "Yeah".

I'll admit that I was not properly prepared for the situation. Having rarely danced in high school (I'm an eighteen year old awkward male, doesn't that pretty much explain things?),

I didn't quite know what to expect from any of my female friends for whom I was told to save dances. However, true to the sentiment that baptism by fire is the best method by which to learn something new, I figured I'd thrust myself into the situation with true gusto—"Give it the good old college try", as the saying goes—only to soon find that I'd instead thrust myself into the path of a speeding, flailing Mack truck in blue heels.

I was completely, totally, and inescapably screwed. And I didn't even know it.

If I had planned on being accosted on this particular night, I may have worn heavy football padding—perhaps even ear guards, a la water polo—but, having expected to enjoy a typical evening, I entered instead with pressed slacks, my favorite dress shirt, and a slick, solid black tie as my only protection from the sheer assault I was about to experience. It was some of the most physical, insane, queer, and for lack of a more descriptive term, weird-ass, dancing I've ever encountered.

In the midst of dodging her wildly swinging arms, which flew (believe me, it pains me to use this expression, but I must, for the sheer comedic factor) to and fro with reckless abandon, I actually tried—quite hard, in some cases—to appear as though I was enjoying myself. In all honestly, her repertoire of moves consisted of:

- (1) shaking her arms pseudo-seductively over her head,
- (2) breathing heavily while holding her hands around the back of my neck and staring into my

eyes, perhaps only two or three inches from my face

- (3) forcing me to perform strange, oddly-timed spins
- (4) performing such spins herself (as if it wasn't fair to let me have all the fun!)

She leaned in during one of our 'closer moments' (i.e., when she wasn't busy hiking her skirt up in a move that simultaneously mimicked and parodied Flamenco dancers) and said, "I would've been a much better dancer," she paused so that I could dip her, gracelessly, and then continued, "if I could've stretched out beforehand". Personally, I think she would've been a much better dancer if she had been comatose, but let's be realistic—what do I know? I'm only the one who was repeatedly flung about the dance floor for the first fifteen minutes of my first college social event.

After enough humiliation, I mentioned how tired I was from walking around the Tufts campus all day, and fled to the refuge of the men's bathroom. I agree, it was a lame excuse, but my only other option was to punch her in the mouth, yielding only a split-second opportunity for me to slip away while her senses were distorted. Frankly, I wasn't about to risk her misinterpreting my desperate attempt to break free as a new dance technique should I have missed my mark ("Oh, that's a hot new move from Sisqo, isn't it?" she'd say, only to cling even tighter to my shirt).

I'm currently speaking to President Bacow about holding an open forum on bad dancers and the people they hurt: Students Against Bad Ballroom And Techno/House dancers, or S.A.B.B.A.T.H. for short. Something tells me that the

# A Helping Hand

*Author's note: This is a conversation with my best friend from high school. Oh, how I wish you all knew him.*

**bestFriend:** how do i get rid of some bush?

**me:** do u have a beard trimmer?

**bestFriend:** yeah

**me:** use that

**bestFriend:** where?

**me:** on ur bush

**bestFriend:** in the bathroom?

**me:** yea - do it over the toilet

**bestFriend:** haha omg

**me:** and then tidy it up with a razor in the shower

**bestFriend:** or should i do it in the shower?

**me:** DON'T BRING THE TRIMMER IN THE SHOWER

**me:** u will electrocute urself

**bestFriend:** nooo

**bestFriend:** just like in the shower stall?

**bestFriend:** and then put it away?

**me:** oh no

**me:** do it on the toilet

**me:** it's more fun

**bestFriend:** i don't have good aim

**me:** do it

**bestFriend:** i think im gonna do it in my room

**bestFriend:** and throw them in the garbage

**bestFriend:** hahaha this is so awky

**bestFriend:** the bathroom isn't private at all

**bestFriend:** people will know what i'm up to

**me:** is ur roommate in the room?

**bestFriend:** haha no

**me:** i was going to say u could ask him to do it for u

**bestFriend:** this is so awkward. at least we have a vacuum

**bestFriend:** it'll be filled with PUBES

**bestFriend:** hahahahahahahahaha

**me:** EW little pubies

**bestFriend:** haha no, big ones

**bestFriend:** oy vey

**me:** oy

**bestFriend:** omg this is ridic

**me:** what?!

**bestFriend:** BUSH

**bestFriend:** !

**me:** BUSH

**me:** SHAVE IT

**bestFriend:** I AM

**bestFriend:** OMG I CUT MY BALLS

**bestFriend:** I'M BLEEDING!

**me:** WHAT?!

**me:** WHAT?!

**me:** ARE U ALRIGHT?!

**bestFriend:** hahahaha

**bestFriend:** holy cow

**bestFriend:** it's just like a little pool of blood

**me:** are u serious

**bestFriend:** yeah

**me:** maybe u should stop

**me:** are u using scissors? 

**bestFriend:** no the razor

**me:** are u using shaving cream?

**bestFriend:** its electric

**bestFriend:** i'm getting like pubic razor burn  
**bestFriend:** hahahaha  
**me:** oh man this sounds bad  
**me:** are u still doin it?  
**bestFriend:** well icant just like do hald  
**bestFriend:** \*half  
**bestFriend:** haha  
**me:** are u almost done?  
**bestFriend:** yeah almost  
**me:** how's it looking? bigger?  
**bestFriend:** nope, small as always  
**me:** oy vey  
**bestFriend:** OUCH  
**bestFriend:** just cut myself again  
**bestFriend:** damn it  
**me:** where???  
**bestFriend:** scrotal sac  
**me:** FUCK  
**me:** good thing u don't have to run Naked Quad Run  
**bestFriend:** fuck my grundel smells  
**bestFriend:** how do you stop that  
**me:** do u put soap on it  
**bestFriend:** i will when i shower  
**bestFriend:** haha okay time to vacuum  
**me:** u wanta good tip  
**me:** u should only shit when u are about to shower  
**bestFriend:** omg i have pubic stubble  
**me:** do u like it bb  
**bestFriend:** this will be awkward  
**bestFriend:** hahaha  
**me:** what if she tells her gf and then she tells your friend  
justin and he tells u  
**bestFriend:** "uhhh no i didn't have anything in mind about

tonight”

**bestFriend:** alright im gonna try to nap

**me:** ly GL!

**bestFriend:** then I’m gonna bring down my bag full of  
pubes to the garbage room

**me:** ewwwwwwwwwwwwwwwwwwwwwwwww

**me:** bye judes

**bestFriend:** k love you

**bestFriend:** bye

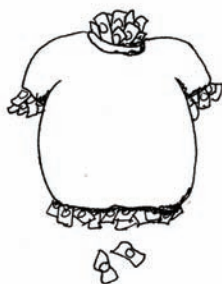


# Fat People Are Stealing Your Money!!!

Okay skinny to moderately sized folk here's the heads up. We all wear clothes, every one of us, quite a lot in fact.... well except for nudist colony James but he's a whole 'nother bag. Not only do we all wear clothes but my guess is we all pay for it too. Go to the store say hi to the nice often sexy women and/or men depending on preference and buy yourself some article of linen, wool, or some super long string of carbon-protein breathable shit you piece of euro trash. Then after trying it on and saying how sexy you look in said new clothing you probably either attempt to run out of the store with it in a scene that ends with you being jumped on by mike the 400 pound mall security officer who just went through a divorce and now spends his nights huffing whip cream in his trailer not 40 feet from the mall watching porn pretending each actress is his new wife to be. Or....you go to the cashier and buy it. What size are you? 32 waist, 34 waist, or for you women a 0 a 1 a 2 heck maybe even a 6 or so I don't know you guys have fucked up numbers that make no sense anyway.

Once you buy these clothes their yours but wait I say! wait! Those 32 inch waists you have guys, do you notice those numbers go up into the 50's and even 60's in some places? That's right some people have DUAL WAISTS or at least with all the fat around it it looks like it. What does

that mean? That means that they are paying THE SAME AMOUNT for TWICE the material. There it is folks we are all paying for fat peoples' clothing material. Do you think those pairs of jeans you love would really cost 200 dollars if fat people didn't need to buy the same kind of jeans at the same price as skinny people? FUCK NO! Fight the power, next time you see a fat person tell him he owes you a shitload of money, but be nice, explain to him that your willing to fore go him paying you if he uses the money for liposuction. See you guys can still help make the world a better place.



# Admiral Jean-Luc Pierre

I blinked slowly and realized that I was having profound closed eye visuals. The act of closing my eyes was like bringing a line slowly down across my field of vision. My sight would remain unchanged, except for a slight color change towards greens and silvers. I turned to look at Josh and Helene who were lying on Helene's half-unfurled futon. When I closed my eyes Josh would get up and reach behind my ear and press a button or flick a switch of some sort. When I would open my eyes, he would be sitting in the same place he had been before, having not moved at all. I turned my head away from Josh and Helene and looked down at my hands and thighs. I saw every part of my body and every part of the room begin to divide in three, like a triangle with the angle bisectors added. The triangles started to collapse into my stomach. The triangles eventually took over my entire field of vision such that everything I saw was made of them and all the triangles were collapsing like a waterfall into my gut. The triangles eventually took on a mirror like silver quality and then, to my surprise, three pairs of eyes blinked back at me in the mirrors. When I turned to look at Josh and Helene again, I saw Josh again and again reaching up to flick a switch behind my ear. The auditory hallucinations came on strong in my own voice: "envelope, lope, frump, unfollld, Wednesday, cloud, soft, paw, hidden, en, en, occluded, occluded". I looked up at Josh once more and saw him reach up to flick the switch behind my ear, but this image started rotating to counter-

clockwise and flew into my stomach replaced again by the blinking eyes inside three triangles, which rotated in to replace reality. I turned my head down to look down at my thighs again, in an effort to deflect some of the intensity of my hallucinations, but it was no use. The triangles began moving like a kaleidoscope, collapsing upon one another and then rebuilding themselves larger and larger. My head snapped upward and I saw an 18<sup>th</sup> century French Admiral standing before me. He was grotesquely large, like an NFL lineman, extraordinary in size, with muscles well-developed on his neck and face. Billions of particles of silver light were hitting him and reflecting towards me at light speed. I was struck by the immense speed of these particles that surround us at all times. There were no places in the space between me and the Frenchman unoccupied by photons. At this moment I had what I believe to be a profound realization about the universe. That light particles are pieces of matter with mass and that there is no empty space anywhere in our universe, not one tiny shred of space unoccupied by some particle vibrating, moving, at a temperature above absolute zero. We live in an enormous, seamless soup of matter.

The Frenchman was washed out by a stream of silver particles that came from above and was replaced by the largest triangle set I had seen yet. The three blinking eyes were much larger now, and I could see the whites and pupils of each pair. Gradually, three humans came into view, the owners of the eyes. The pair to the far left belonged to me. I sat on a couch and looked at myself smiling. The middle pair of eyes, a little higher belonged to Emily, my girlfriend. She stood leaning towards the real me with her hand on my duplicate's shoulder. The look in her eyes was one of surprise and love. Of one who cares

so immensely for my health and well-being, and overjoyed to be able to look upon me and explain a profound truth. The third set of eyes belonged to another doppelganger of myself, but this one had much darker skin and blond hair and a thin blond beard. He had his hands in his pockets and was also smiling and seemingly pleased to be a part of the vision. I knew these three people to be representations of the people I loved, the people I could ever love – myself, my significant other, and my fellow man. The three people were pure and honest, definite love, not to be questioned, not to be doubted, but to be cherished and cared for above all other things. This is the basis of my existence, beneath self and ego, beneath everything I have learned in 20 years, there is love. And that I know is the truth.

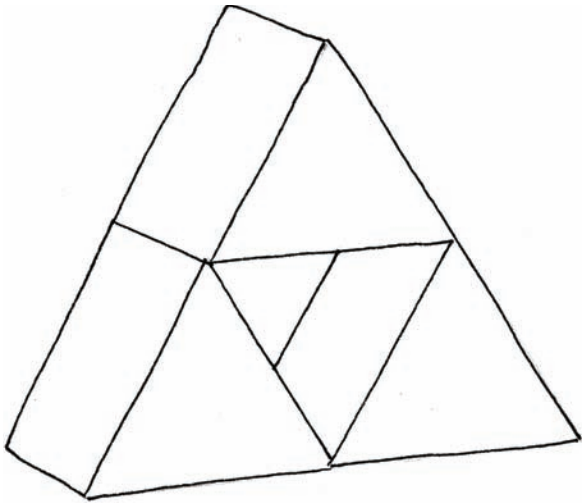
The triangle was washed out by another waterfall of silver particles. At the left edge of this cascade I saw an image of a cartoon black man in the throws of sex. Just one little hip thrust, bam! I was horrified by the image's presence in my hallucination. The things I had seen before were fundamental truths about myself and my being, but how could that image have slipped in there? I tried to reverse the stream of silver particles to unsee what I had seen. But what I had thought could never be unthought. A horrendous confusion descended upon me and my sense of purity and love vanished. I felt violated and filthy.

I took it to be lust for the little black man. How could I have lied to myself for 19 years? How could this be a truth about my being while it was so horrid in my mind the instant afterwards?

I looked up with a horrified expression at Josh, who was laughing like a hyena on the futon. His eyes opened with shock and intense laughter. I was convinced that he had seen my hallucination and was reacting to my shocking

realization that I was gay. We stood to leave the room, something we had been trying to do for hours. We both stopped and looked into a mirror to the left of Helene's door. Josh pointed to the mirror and said

“Look at the mirror. What do you see?” I expected to see a black man looking back. That was a pretty strange expectation.



# Your Face on My Shopping Bag

You know that feeling when it's mid june and you're driving to the beach on a perfect summer day and the road is humming under your tires and the music is just right, an emphatic beat and soaring melody and your friends are all talking and laughing about nothing and you have no responsibilities and there's someone along for the ride that maybe, just maybe you're interested in but hey, it's summer and nothing matters and maybe tonight when we're all sun-washed and glowing and exhausted and huddled around the bonfire listening to someone play the guitar you'll snuggle up to them and just lie there looking at the waves and the stars and then you'll go FUCK. This is an Abercrombie ad. But sometimes it happens in real life and these are the days you'll wax nostalgic on when you're 55 and going bald and haven't had sex in months and are working sunny Saturdays to pay off the mortgage while your wife drags the kids to soccer practice so I guess I'm just saying I try to appreciate it. That's all.







*The End.*

... and ...  
produces ...

