

SCRIPT

DEAR Jules,

I write to you now compelled by feelings of jealousy, regret, and culpability for what could perhaps be illegal conduct. You don't know me. I am not Valerie N. Blackwell. I am writing to you from her email account surreptitiously because I think this method of contact is safest for us all. I will introduce myself only as Mr. Blackwell, although that is not the name I use in my day-to-day life any more than Jules is yours. You should think of me only as Blackwell and if all goes well, you will never know me by any other name.

Yes, I know you most gravely through your email exchanges with Valerie. And as we both now realize, the information that came into my possession when I gained access to Valerie's email account, could do a great deal of damage to both your public and private life. Let me be clear in saying, I never intended to be in this position and furthermore, I am absolutely hoping to avoid any harm I might inflict upon you. We both can imagine how, in the wrong hands, the information contained within Valerie's emails could bring great tragedy to your family, your career, and perhaps your entire political party.

The hands that the blackmail material must be pried from are, in fact, my son's. In case you have not inferred by what I have thus far shared, this Valerie, the one with whom you spent much of the past year clearing away the brush obstructing your forbidden fountains, was in fact my son. Sorry if this news is disappointing, Jules, but you won't

be hearing from or seeing this so-called Valerie anymore. Valerie has vanished, and my son will no longer be able to conjure her with slutty prose or feminine accouterments. You will never truly know Valerie, because you will never find my son, nor hopefully want to after his trite art project that is endangering us all is laid to rest by what follows.

Your Valerie (my son) was taken away by the police three weeks ago when he allegedly became a danger to himself and others. In fact I was the one who called the State Police saying as much. In the days leading up to my summoning of the police, my son had lain motionless and silent, drooling on himself, hardly showing any sign of life more than urinating in jars — jars his mother found in the closet of his basement room after the police took him away. I'm not trying to imply you are somehow responsible for his decline, Jules, but my son had seemingly become fixated

on the work of art he was trying to construct based on his fraudulent love affair with you.

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After my dear wife departed and I began digging through Valerie's inbox, I have, from time to time, become lost in fantasy, wondering about certain details regarding your exploits. There are many details I suppose will remain forever out of reach to me. It is clear the internet has changed sex a great deal since I was actively seeking partners. There were no websites to solicit prostitutes of any variety when I was a bachelor, for instance. Nevermind specifically male prostitutes who would be willing to adorn themselves in feminine costumes, then spend days on end producing writing in collaboration with their john's pornographic imagination. Furthermore, and quite shockingly, especially for my poor wife, to dress as that john's daughter and to meet him at a

movie theater in order to act out his incestuous fantasies in person.

It took me a long time to develop some sense of narrative about what went on in Valerie's email account. Entering the astringent fog surrounding my son's laptop, I am set adrift. A derelict rowboat on a dark lake. There are more men than you, Jules. My son tried to do the same thing he did to you with other men, but you were the one he latched on to. You were his favorite. I realized why when I found your real name buried in a payment receipt. Your name, an isolated touchstone to reality amidst this dark sea of deception that still threatens to swallow me.

Here is where the journey begins. The first email Valerie ever received. An automated message stating her ad had been posted on a sex worker's bulletin board. As far as I can tell, this is where Valerie was born.

Wellll. . . I love sex, and I love sex with strangers. I've had a few adventures that have started on this site. The site is good for me because sometimes I just want a bitch yuppie and his dumb girlfriend to lock a collar around my neck and utterly destroy me. When I want that, I just type it here, and I get an unending array of cocks to choose from. I have seen some nice ones come through my inbox, in the small amount of time I've spent fooling around here. I might fuck one of you reading this, or maybe I already have. Anyway, I'd just like to tell some stories and maybe send some illustrations to a stranger. Not into meeting right now, as I'm dating someone, and am kinda in love. . . My fantasy is to find a charming old man who has some money and wants to buy my stories on a regular basis. (I love Anaïs Nin and want to live her life. My generation is so boring!) Fantasies never work out the way I want them to on this site though. I want to share a story, so ask me for one and I'll send a sample. If you like it,

you can commission one personalized just for you. Women encouraged to reply, as well as men and especially couples! I believe I can enhance anyone's sexual fantasies. /<3/

Ever since my wife left, I have been playing the synthesizer with increasing frequency. Like literature, ambient synthesizer music is a creative activity I indulge in quietly at home, away from any interference between my ego and my own pleasure. I originally bought my first synthesizer for my daughter. A Yamaha DX7, often associated with pop music made near the beginning of the digital revolution.

I first became familiar with the DX7 while listening to a syndicated public radio show that comes out of the Bay Area called Hearts of Space, which features a seemingly boundless offering of ambient music every Saturday evening. When my children were approaching their pubescent years, I developed a habit of retreating to the basement Saturday

evenings, where I would hang upside down from my chiropractic gravity boots and let my mind ride the waves of reverberating grief while visualizing the sounds flowing from synthesizers like the rolling fluorescence of cosmic gases, far away from earthly disruptions.

One autumn evening, while hanging from my gravity boots bolted to the rafters below our kitchen, the concrete basement floor tickling my brain as it brushed against my hair, I recall the host of Hearts of Space introducing the program by speaking about the changing seasons, followed by a brief soliloquy on the topic of climate change. As the evening's music was elevated in the mix, swallowing Mr. Hill's voice, I was swept far, far away from my family's home.

Perhaps I ate something strange that night. Perhaps my son poisoned me with a sublethal dose of narcotics. Or perhaps I hung from my gravity boots a bit longer than

recommended. But I do not think so. I believe it was the sounds of synthesizers leading my mind from the eschatological fantasies related to climate change, out through fantasies about my own death and the death of my family. I lost sense of time or place as I metamorphosed into the chemical makeup of electricity and traveled through the wiring into the old radio, and then out the antenna as an FM signal, hovering above my home where I saw my wife through the window speaking on the phone, then further into the sky, above our city, where I recognized my children far below, riding in cars and loitering outside a movie theater. I felt my nervous system spread out across the mountains and valleys, experiencing many thousands of acres simultaneously, until I was one with the entire range of National Public Radio's Hearts of Space broadcast — spanning the entire nation during that moment, then the

oceans, Earth, moon and sun, until finally I could perceive nothing but light and my own being.

If you were to write this experience off as a dream, Jules, I would not quibble. I've never shared my recollections of this incident with anyone before, and now that I am forced to consider what you might think of this experience, even I question whether or not it was a dream, even though I know with absolute certainty it was not.

However, here's the thing, Jules. My son stole a cat. That's why I'm going on like this about synthesizer music. Not that my musings on music are mere babble, even if they are quite casual and in many ways undisciplined. But the thing is, is that my son stole a cat. I had a dream about it the other night. He actually did steal a cat though, or at least that is what he told his mother while trying to explain why he was dragged through the streets by a speeding ve-

hicle with a noose tied around his neck. I had the dream a few hours after I copied and pasted Valerie's advertisement above into this document. I don't know the details of my son's pet larceny — something about the cat being taken from a flophouse, so it didn't truly belong to anyone, thus providing evidence for my son's innocence when a monstrous hospital bill arrived in the mail. I have not been able to work on my manuscript since I woke up from the dream. So I have been creating ambient synthesizer music which has offered a great deal of relief. In fact, as it turns out, I enjoy writing about ambient music almost as much as I enjoy playing it. But now it's best to find some way to return to the task at hand. Perhaps if I just paste in the next email — your first email to Valerie, Jules — without reading it again, just as you originally sent it, sloppy typing and all, I'll be able to escape the sour cloud that surrounds

my son's computer, and continue on with the story at a pace which might allow my wife to return.

hi, im absolutely enthralled by your tantalizingly and enticing offer to underwrite your erotic muse. im an older, white, highly educated, widely traveled , very cultured, successful professional entrepreneur who loves to cavort with and spoil naughty, provocatively stylish, smart and sexually adventurous young women. im especially fond of women who want to introduce me into their kinky cravings. yours would be an entirely new experience for me, one im sure id enjoy in its own right (or write) on nights alone in bed, but would be equally exciting to share and inspire in intimate moments with some of my naughty playmates. please let me know how i might engage you to explore mutual interests, including what assistance you need to make ours a most rewarding partnership. shall we meet in person or do you think its doable in cyberland?

I saw you on TV today, Jules. Shocking is how one news anchor described the interview. Yes, shocking indeed. Backstabbing your own party members. I see how it is, Jules. Is backstabbing what you call the act my son did to you in that video? I don't understand how any of you carry on the way you do, Jules. And it's clearly not only you. It must at least be a strong minority who are in cahoots with you — who go about the way you do, Jules. That is what I gather from the rumors I read in the tabloids, which, after discovering Valerie, I believe in my heart of hearts to have some credibility. What a performance you all put on. What a charade. Mourning the victims of another mass shooting, meddling in international affairs, carefully crafting and rehearsing each phrase you utter aloud hoping your fake persona can ride the waves of hogwash that come through the squawkbox every evening. Then after all is said and done, you go home to seek out a ladyboy (my son) on the

internet with whom you make puns on the words right and write. Very funny, by the way, Jules. Your pun. Do you know who laughed? No one, that's who, Jules. No one laughed!

The Old Townhouse* by Valerie N. Blackwell

So much is implicit in the architecture of a woman's city. In the city, buildings become shadow characters. The skyline's glowing edges attract us toward a center illuminated against the world, and give us an intimate power. Here we find where secrets are kept.

I love the unabashed phallic fortitude of skyscrapers, but it is the residential spaces that draw my most rapt attention. When I can't sleep, I look out my window and fantasize about all the people who have left a trace in the homes around me,

their energy accumulating over the decades, crystallizing into the vibrating substratum of our city.

I was introduced to the old townhouse by a wealthy girl from school. Jessica made me simultaneously jealous and aroused, so I attached myself to her and followed her home.

She lived with her father, Mr. J, whose personality seemed to unfurl with each door you opened, each hall you walked down. And each person who inhabited the house, seemed to be somehow a part of him.

Reflecting the sky, nearly all surfaces in the old townhouse scattered luminosity into endlessly-evolving patterns. The electric lighting was made as natural moonlight. Mirrors and cut glass echoing tiny rainbows across marble surfaces and crystal paned cabinets. All but the darkest corners of the house had a soft glow of refracted light. Even at night,

the lighting design made objects glow as if illuminated by softened sunbeams. A ray of light refracting off several surfaces within a room would create illusions of shadow-objects and depth that would test my loyalty to my own being with metaphysical

WEREWOLF

I infer that my son must have undergone some transition of libido more than merely gender. A sexual energy transition. A transition from a limp, cold melancholic, to a melancholic who is miserably hot. Do you know the hot melancholic, Jules? I have thought about hot melancholics a great deal, especially in mind of the exceptional heat I experienced when I was a young man in the same dorms as my son, and soon after in the big city, if you care to know. A big city where everyone and everything that could ignite

a flame beneath the seat of melancholia was within arms reach. Being the hot melancholic can be fun — fun for my son, fun for you, Jules — even if becoming hot can damage a man's reputation in ways that are difficult to redeem. Despite having put my son in their care, I don't agree with what many psychiatrists do in their treatment of the hot melancholic — labels like bipolar and soul flattening medication that will make you fat. I feel blessed that I was labeled a maniac before this much less exciting term bipolar came to prominence. There is more fun to be had as a maniac than as a bipolar. Maniac men are carnal and witty creatures, who throughout history have become warriors, poets, and kings, despite whatever maniac type of sex they may become involved with while enduring their melancholic heat. Maniacs have always been here and they always will be. Only now the world is too crowded to exist in such a carnal way, so we split the maniac man in half

— half of him to stock the shelves, and the other half to take soul-flattening medication so he doesn't blow everyone's head off with an assault rifle. Or put on lipstick and shove methamphetamine up the ass of an elected official, for that matter. As Hildegard von Bingen put it in the twelfth century, the love of the hot melancholic is hateful and death carrying and his love is like the love of voracious wolves. Does this sound familiar, Jules? My son the werewolf. Instead of transgender, I prefer to think of my son as a werewolf. Werewolf is much more appropriate for someone like my son. I propose that in place of this ridiculous misguided language around cross-dressing that has become so popular in the absolutely demented and oppressive so-called liberal media of our nation over the past few years, wherein some of your associates use transgender, Jules, I propose we start using werewolf. Am I interested in a person who labels themselves with some garbled port-man-toe

using two words as banal as trans and gender? For sure not, Jules. For sure not. I much prefer werewolf to transgender, Jules, indeed I do. In fact, I think when I return to work I may petition the capitol to replace transgender woman with werewolf within the official state lexicon we use to talk about such people. It would not be difficult for me to make an argument that labeling a person brave enough to publicly perform the extremes of his opposite gender is better labeled a kai-meh-rih-kuhl sex maniac known for howling at the moon and tearing off the clothes of sleeping maidens, because for sure this would be more fun than being referred to simply as transgender. And according to American Psychological Association consensus, a more fun sex life leads to a happier life, so why not give these types of people a fun name? See, we can solve many societal ills if we work together, Jules. Oh sure, there are transgenders who are not werewolves, but werewolf is much more apt for a

person who gets blasted on the strongest amphetamines, dresses up in feminine costumes, and then commits the kind of acts of violence against the self and nation that you and my son have committed. Better to leave a bit more to the imagination, don't we think, Jules? Better not to be gendering a werewolf with such hackneyed terminology as literal and boring as trans and gender. Werewolves do not show much discretion when they are choosing their sexual partners, do they Jules? They aren't so easy to pin down in way of gender or otherwise. At the height of the lunar cycle, their fur all matted with meth sweat and AIDS blood, and so on. Oh, believe me, I too have known the unique libidinal ontology of werewolf, Jules. Yes, I too have been a werewolf. Do not think I have not. Imagine faulting me for saying such things without even knowing if I too have been a werewolf or not? Even if perhaps I would rather not say whether I have or have not been a werewolf. I would

rather not say for instance, that yes, when I was younger, I too was a werewolf, and to be sure, those were fun times, however those times are behind me. Either way, you can rest easy knowing that I am, in some fashion, merely spinning a yarn when I attempt to define myself as a person out there in the world, and the only thing you can be sure of in this regard is that I am never exactly what I say I am. This seems like something you might appreciate, Jules. God, what a stupid, stupid world we have found here at the end of history — the end of liberalism, that is. The stink end at that. Where we sniff out the stinkiest of crevices we can find to bury our faces in stink. Much better to have been a werewolf than a stunkmuncher, don't you think, Jules? Being a werewolf is exciting, if I do say so myself. Quite exciting, don't we think, Jules? Quite exciting, indeed.