

THE PUBLIC JOURNAL

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

Fall 2010
Tufts University

ONE DEVIL WEARS PRADA;
THE OTHER, DOC MARTENS:
Averi Becque & Lexi Sasanow

CHIEF CRAZYPANTS:
Wu Jin (Gabriel) Nicholas

NAKED-SPORTS EDITOR:
Benjamin S. Kochman

AYO, TECHNOLOGY:
Constantin Berzan

ART (& CRAFT) GARFUNKEL:
Angelina Zhou
Coorain Devin
Anna Furman
Ruth Tam

ASSISTANT CRAZYPANTS:
Izzy Star
Lane Florsheim
Hilary Ludlow
Patricia Moncure
Laura Moreno

Submit to: TuftsPublicJournal@gmail.com

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Initial concept by:
J. Green & D. Greif

Letter From The Editors

Welcome to the Fall 2010 Public Journal. This little book is a fragment of life at Tufts in this moment; it is full of the things that preoccupy us, stupefy us, and stimulate us while we walk around alternately trying to save the world and get laid.

The Public Journal exists as a forum for our collective neuroses, to show us that we're not alone, but that we should sometimes take ourselves less seriously. We're all motivated, entertained and preoccupied by the same things, but they're most fun to read when someone sifts out little grains of truth and presents them in ways we hadn't thought of before.

Whatever conclusions you may draw from what you read here, this much is true: whether you're still trying to figure your shit out or you've got it covered, everyone's accumulated some stories along the way that are worthy of seeing the light of day. We want to tease these stories out from the cracks and crevices of your brains. All of the things that you think are too embarrassing, foolish, unbelievable, depressing, or silly to tell - they belong here.

We love you, we really do.

Thank you for your stories, and keep them coming.

Averi & Lexi

C O N T R I B U T O R S

stella benezra
georgie buruss
jt vancollie
melissa roberts
michelle witrock
ethan g. rothstein
erin gelgoot
lauren rose
romy a. oltuski
anya klepacki
jodi bosin
shir livne
sarah kester,
flavia c. alimonti,
ruth tam
constantin berzan
isabelle star
josephine herman
alexis hoffman
patricia moncure
sam kronish
suzanne grossman
averi becque
angelina zhou
jason wilson
alex baskin
lauren godles
jennifer dann-fenwick
hilary ross
steven b. wolf
gabe nicholas
brandon gray
paul reilly
anna furman
morgan kee
lina stolyar
clarissa sosin
alexa sasanow



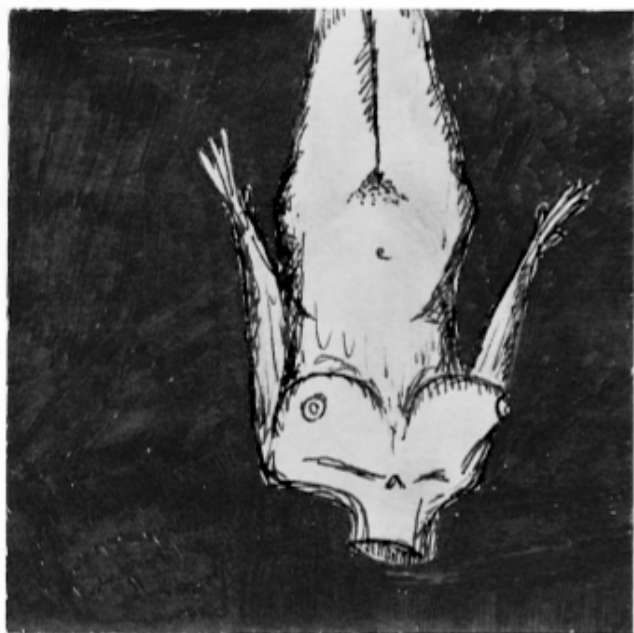
the death of an idol

This summer I was a counselor at an all girls camp for nine-to-fourteen year olds in Maine. On a whim, we told all the campers that Justin Bieber was coming to perform. We made fake posters and fake tour t-shirts. We rented a fake party bus and hired fake security. We borrowed a friend's DJ equipment and set up a fake stage. The camp director announced that a special guest was coming and declared part of the camp "off-limits."

One hundred girls went shrieking back to their cabins to retrieve assorted Bieber memorabilia. One hundred girls stood shrieking in front of our fake stage, shaking in anticipation. One hundred girls fell silent as a fellow counselor dressed as Justin Bieber jumped out lip-syncing to "Baby." And then, one hundred girls burst into tears.

All hell broke loose. We spent the next five hours consoling weeping children over the death of all their hopes and dreams. The girls cried until there was nothing left for them to cry. Somehow, amidst all the madness, one girl discovered that Santa Claus wasn't real.

Looking back, perhaps it was a bit mean-spirited. But despite it all, I still take a sick satisfaction in knowing that I gave those girls a small taste of the disappointment that awaits them for the rest of their lives.



when i was a high school freshman, i...

Had never kissed a girl.

Listened exclusively to songs that came out before 1985.

Thought that Bear necessities was only one word, and a real word at that.

Was best friends with boys in camo-print cargos... we would go to Lobster Wok and eat white rice every day after school.

Longed for an opportunity to use my dick, only to be forced to use it myself.

Was mistaken for a teacher on the first day of school.

Wore a fugly pink frilly dress with a tacky beaded flower on the hip to prom and my date was short, greasy and not cute....I thought I was the shit. I wasn't.

Didn't know why flavored condoms existed... vaginas don't have taste buds.





Broke a computer because of frequenting questionable websites.

Discovered music.

Went to under-21 nights at a dingy local bar, wore skate shoes and too much makeup.

Cried when I couldn't do my homework.

Was dragged around the cafeteria on a dog leash by a senior boy.

Attempted to flirt with my biology teacher.

Was fat, had blonde-streaked straightened hair, and wore too-short polo shirts over low-rise jeans. You wonder why I dress like a hipster now? So much more flattering.

Was on the fencing team. And played Neopets.

Was a level eight half-elven druid.

Honored the unwritten rule of track: Don't masturbate 24 hours before a meet.

i hope no one writes on my facebook when i die.

A man I loved very much died this summer. He was 21. I get heartbroken all over the place every time I start to think about it. My chest hurts, my head feels light, to remember his beautiful spirit and ridiculous humor and how much I cried when his brothers carried that casket into the church.

As is the custom these days, when my mind drifts in his direction, sometimes it takes me to his Facebook. I smile at how beautiful he was, and still laugh every time when I see that it says “Interests: Boobies,” think about what he’d be up to, what he’d be creating, posting to give us all a laugh, but then I get to his wall, and I feel weird.

The whole process of turning someone’s Facebook into their memorial is a recent phenomenon, and I’m not sure it’s one I like. Our generation has always been surrounded by this technology, and so it becomes our natural response to write messages to those who leave us, not in letters left on graves, but publicly, on their Facebook walls. I’m totally put off by reading through all the “r.i.p bro, we miss you” and “you were the best!!! In my heart forever <3 <3 <3,” because it feels, to me, less like a personal connection between you and someone you loved and more like a public declaration that you’re feeling loss. Every single one of my friends who I saw tear-streaked at the funeral had a status update afterwards. They were somber and honest, but still felt

exploitative. The status box prompts, “what’s on your mind?” and for all of my friends, the funeral and our friends’ family were it. I understand that.

He’s been gone for three months already, a span of time that I didn’t realize until writing this, and which caught me off guard. He is obviously still on my mind, and every time I go home and think about who’ll be around, my heart twinges when I realize he won’t be, ever again. It makes me want to puke when I think about it too much.

I don’t pretend to know what he would want, whether he would ask us to send love to his family rather than writing Facebook posts he’ll never see, or if he would appreciate the fact that we’re keeping him on our News Feeds. All I know is that I hope no one writes on my Facebook when I die, please, put that energy into keeping the people you love close, because you never know when they’re going to go.



Places I've peed on campus

Off and on the cannon

FRONT lawn of the Gifford House, sorry Larry and Adele

In the bushes in front of Olin. I wasn't drunk, I just couldn't make it to the bathroom

In front of Theta Chi, in an Indian Princess costume

On basically every other driveway on College Ave, the first two months of freshman year

Memorial steps

Outside of AEPi to get into the party - It worked

Fletcher Roof

Half on Jumbo, half on the path as I ran away

Every level of the parking lot in Dowling

Outside Hodgdon, on the downward slope to Lewis.
Keyword: downward

In a jar in someone's house

Right in the middle of the Matriculation stage, the day before Matriculation

Houston, Olin, Miller, Tilton, Lewis, Haskell, Latin Way, Hodgdon, South, Aidekman, Gantcher, Hillsides, East, Tisch: it's my goal to pee on (not in) every residence hall on campus by the time I graduate.

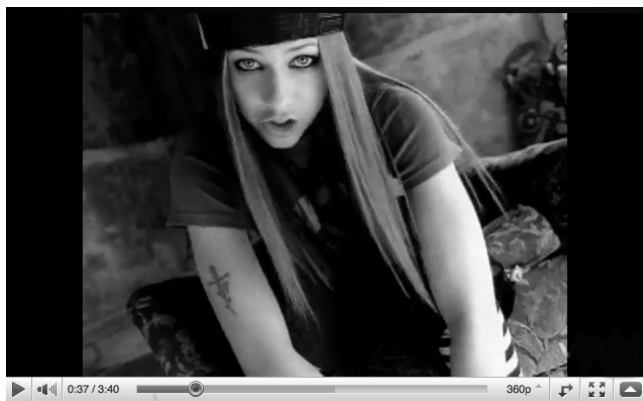
Popular Art



The thing about peeing in the shrubs by Miner Hall is that everybody does it, but it's an art nonetheless. Mainly, you have to face the right direction. If you're a boy, this does not apply to you because G-d granted you -- along with the gift of not experiencing childbirth, the gift of forever being the original sex and the gift of potentially having deliciously chiseled abs that you can show off in public -- the gift of being able to direct your pee in, more or less, any direction you choose. Do not underestimate this gift--we girls only have one direction: down. Luckily, nowadays most people have a working knowledge of the gravitational force on earth, and we can use it to help guide our pee in very approximate directions and angles (though I'm sure women in the pre-toilet age were aware of gravity and just called it common sense). Peeing by Miner, this awareness is important. Also associated with peeing by Miner, however, is intoxication, and associated with intoxication is temporary loss of awareness.

Which is why I heed you, women of Tufts, not to make the mistake I made and pee all over your jeans outside of Miner because you forgot about gravity/intuition.

MISSED ⇌ CONNECTIONS



I

I was a boy. You were a girl. Can I make it anymore obvious?

Hey sexpot, we met last year and now you don't make eye contact. I promise I don't bite, I just want to talk to you about Prince and look at your sexpot face, say hi!

You are always milling about Eaton when I rush in for English class. I like your scruffy beard and flannel.

Whoever chooses the music in the football locker room: Every time I walk through the doors of Gantcher, I hear it blaring. And it. Is. WONDERFUL. From Michael Jackson to dubstep to jazz, your choices are way more unique than the usual KISS FM top-40 tunes I would expect. Thanks for livening up my daily ID swipe with your eclectic tastes. Unknown DJ, make me a work-out mix?

Dear Bearded Man of Mystery,
I gave you a note with my name and number on it.
DID YOU LOSE IT?!?!?

confessions I

My grandma showed me how she gives handjob using a Shakeweight.

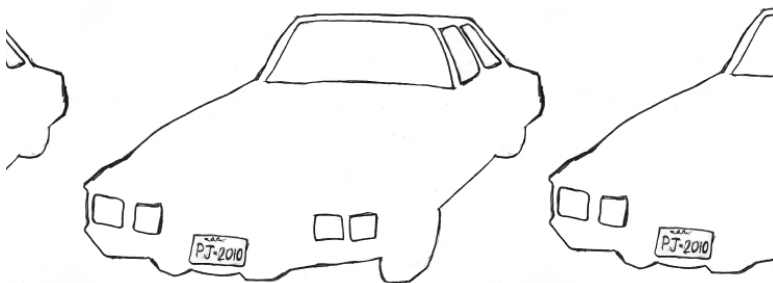
Orientation was the worst week of my life.

When a girl smiles at me, I am too caught off-guard to reciprocate.

My best kiss ever was at a Deadmau5 concert, while I was under the influence of Ecstasy.

Happy music never moves me.

I feel the most alive when going down really large hills on my bike. Sometimes I think about if I had to die in some freak accident, I think I'd like it to be while doing that. There's something about the wind in my face. It forces my eyes open and they start watering and my hands are cold and I can just coast. Sometimes I stand up and when I go over a big bump I feel like I could just lift off. By my house at home there's the best hill. On that road I pretend to be a car and take up the whole lane.



overheard in the dining hall

“Who is fellatio? ... No, seriously, what’s so funny; I just want to know who he is!? He sounds kind of exotic... Italian maybe?”

“You’re in a Peace and Justice class and you haven’t seen Lord of the Rings?!?”

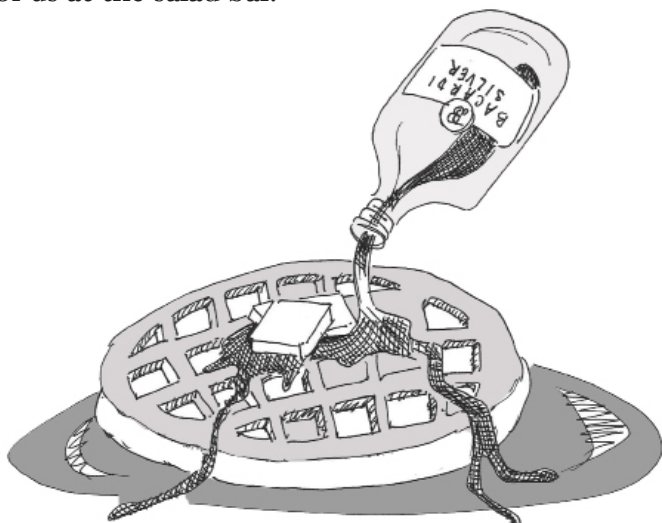
“No, they just call that BABY DICK.”

“ I wish we could put alcohol in these waffles.”

“There’s no age limit to Parents Day, Mom, so what if you’re 40, you can still go.”

“I got soap in my pee hole when I was in the shower.”

A boy singing “Fuck You” out loud while it was just the two of us at the salad bar.



i can't BELIEVE my professor said...

"You know, it's really hard to pleasure a woman. It takes a lot of concentration and effort. Twenty-year-old boys just don't know this stuff."

"Be more like the Russians. Drink vodka, it'll warm you right up." - on the night of NQR

"Monarchy, like shit, happens."

"Thanks to the sluts we heard from..."



"First important question about this video clip: who looks the best in leather pants?"

"Pirates are always helpful when you're trying to work things out. Hamlet, too, needs pirates."

"Class, I want you to go home and think about incest and we'll discuss this next Wednesday."

"This is a flashy Jesus we have right here"

"When having sex, if you point the girl towards the full moon, it is said, it helps things along!"

why i cheat on my boyfriend

My boyfriend is great. He's smart (3.8 GPA in the Department of Engineering), attractive (a lacrosse player), funny, and so, so nice. I love hanging out with him. We go on adventures and make the most of our little town. And he treats me well. He tells me that I'm beautiful and he looks into my eyes when we have sex. I know that I am lucky to have him.

The guy I cheat on him with could care less about me if it's not after 2 a.m. on a Friday or Saturday night. I don't think he knows my last name (I know his, it's long and very German). We don't do anything together besides share sex and cigarettes. He doesn't fuck better than my boyfriend and he's not even better looking.

I always thought that I would be loyal, even throughout the long-distance relationship thing. I've never had any sympathy for cheaters. It degrades trust.

But I responded to that text (probably a mass), "wanna hang out," stone-cold sober, sitting in my pajamas on a rare Friday night in.

There was no rush of adrenaline to my muscles as I tip-toed out of my room, and I didn't feel any other kind of rush when he answered the door to his house.

Then we fuck. And it feels good. Not great, but it's nice to be doing it again.

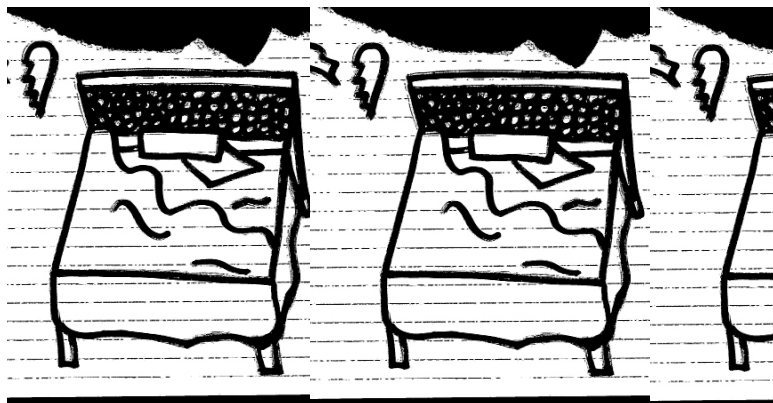
He sometimes asks questions after we do it: were you satisfied, how did you lose your virginity, want to do anal. Tonight he asks why I decided to hang out with him. We don't keep secrets; he knows about my boyfriend.

I just say, "I don't know, my boyfriend was busy." Both of these things are true, but I don't know what the connection between them is.

We fall asleep together. This is the first time since we started this relationship of ours back in freshman year that we've spent more than 45 consecutive minutes together.

He puts his arm around me while we sleep and when I turn over, he reaches out to replace his hold on me again. I appreciate this small gesture.

I wake up first, to the sun streaming in. I pass an hour, connecting dots of color in his "Starry Night" poster hanging on the wall. I feel nothing. Not even guilty. This is the exact same feeling I get waking up next to my boyfriend.



awkward roommate interactions...

4am: My roommate is self-perming her hair and I'm skyping with my best friend, who is showing me the giant hematomoid on his crotch.

I've been in the room while my roommate had phone sex. And I lost my headphones.

My roommate's boyfriend bought me a CD to thank me for being sexiled all weekend. It was very thoughtful.

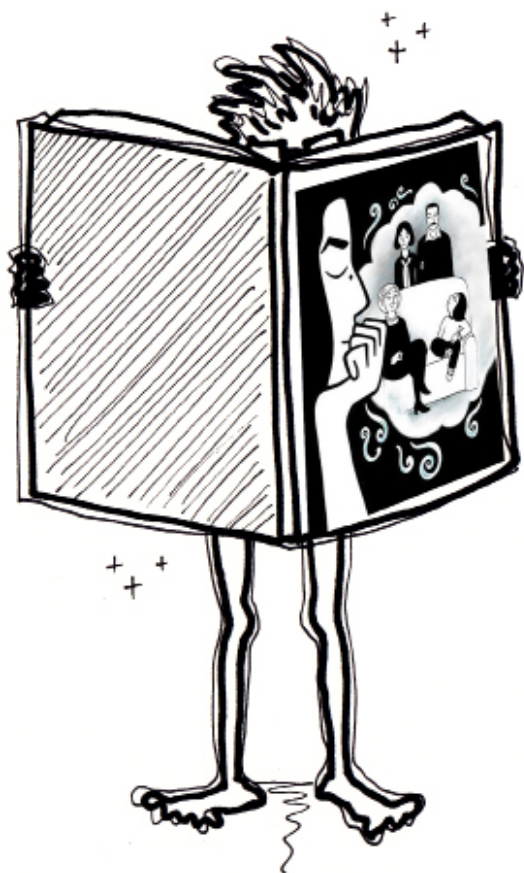
One night I woke up to my roommate peeing on our coffee table. I bitched him out the next day only to discover I'd been way too high and had just hallucinated the whole thing.

There's no polite way to ask for your roommate's trashcan so the girl you're hooking up with can puke in it.

Strobe lights aren't okay if there are only two people in the room.

I accidentally had drunken sex while she was in the room, then stopped to puke. If she didn't wake up to the sex, she probably woke up during the puking.

Remember that time I walked in on you masturbating to Persepolis and we pretended it didn't happen? Let's laugh about it, please?



confessions II

I love you mom, I just never learned how to say it.

I love your mom, I just never learned how to say it.

I like Carms better than Dewick and I live downhill.

With so many assholes out there, I feel entitled to be a bitch sometimes.

I accidentally hooked up with one of my housemates last weekend. I think we both knew that it would be a bad idea to have sex, so instead there was just a lot of dry-humping.

I stalk shared iTunes to see who is in the library.

Sometimes I stare at other girls' boobs. I'm not attracted to boobs and I've got a set of my own, but they can be quite captivating at times.

I check you out as I serve you coffee, even when it's 8:30 in the morning.

You smell sometimes.

My phone autocorrects “Hey” to “DTF.”



I’m a very private person, as far as showing affection. Last year I had difficulty even telling my girlfriend “I love you” on the phone if my roommate was in the room, and we were both uncomfortable kissing even if we were alone but someone MIGHT walk into the room. This year, my new girlfriend has coaxed me into having sex in the following places:

- a) in the grove of trees behind the benches outside Pearson
- b) on the porch of the Loj
- c) in the quarantine room of Tilton
- d) a practice room in Granoff and
- e) multiple times in single bathrooms.



burning bus

On the rare instances that I tell people this story, I usually say that Michelle was my first crush. However, technically this is not true. In fifth grade, I developed simultaneous crushes on Jessie, Rachel, and Pink Ranger, but I tend to not give those any weight. Michelle was the first one that mattered, and she died before she turned twelve.

We were sixth grade and we had two classes together—Spanish and gym. In Spanish, we sat diagonally across from each other. She liked to stretch her legs, far enough so that they began to creep under my desk. It was steamy. Sometimes her feet would brush up against my backpack and I could just tell she was into me. In gym, I would make sure that we were facing towards each other while Mr. Murphy made us do crunches. I always did my best to make eye contact with her while doing crunches. I don't remember if it ever worked.

I wasn't very good at being into girls at age eleven. I would always fantasize about saving Michelle from a burning bus. The bus would crash into the face of a mountain and the bus driver would have managed to save everybody, except for Michelle, who had been crushed under the burning rubble.

"Where's Michelle?" I would yell.

"It's too late for her," the driver would tell me.

And then, I'd say, "I have to go in and save her!" and the bus driver would say "You're crazy!" but it was too late—I had already run in with my arm over my mouth to protect myself from the smog. I would lift the shrap-

nel off of a blackened-with-soot-Michelle and carry her in my arms out of the bus. When she came to, she was overwhelmed with gratitude. Nay, she was eternally indebted to me.

That's where the fantasy stopped. I didn't really know what to do with that. Would I then ask her to a movie? Would she feel obligated to say yes? What would we do after that? I didn't know why I liked girls when I was eleven, I just knew I did and that I wanted to be around them.



I found out about Michelle's death at the bus stop in November of that year. Ed Posner told me. I didn't really believe him because Ed Posner was usually full of shit. But lo and behold, he was right. Mr. Harrison came on the loud speaker and gave the announcement, describing her battle with the illness that had taken her away. Michelle had been absent from Spanish for no

more than six days. I had been imagining the potential conversations we could have about how dumb Mr. Murphy was, or about how stupid Spanish was, but none of them ever came to fruition.

I don't remember how I felt. I think I cried in the bathroom the day of, and I know I cried in the car a week later. I blamed myself. All I had ever wanted to be was the hero and I failed. I didn't know she was in peril—I never even learned what she died from. My fantasies of saving Michelle became more intense. I would imagine saving her from monsters and murderers and cartoonish embodiments of illnesses. Sometimes I would fight off the attacker, but sometimes, I would fail. Sometimes I would imagine going inside the burning bus and finding out that I was too late. I would see her body under the shrapnel and be reminded that I had failed to save her.

I was eleven when my first crush died, and so was she. Our birthdays were both in January—by the time they came around, I had moved on, but I learned that I couldn't save girls from burning buses.

most embarrassing

Google

search i've caught (or been caught with)

strip club near beach house (found on my Dad's computer)

gut flop porn

autoerotic asphyxiation

Wikipedia sex toys

how do anal beads work

Futurama blow job

I just want to fuck

Jesus Porn

Google Search

I'm Feeling Lucky

MISSED \rightleftarrows CONNECTIONS

I

Dear Tower Cafe,
Remember that double chocolate cookie I bought? It was an excuse to make small chat with you. I think you were studying for a midterm. We should get coffee sometime (not at the Tower though). I hope you did well on your test.



You were the girl with the cool earrings who sat next to me in Comp Sci lab. I was the guy who had difficulty looping a file into an array. We should continue our conversation about how difficult it is to keep nested if statements straight.

You work in the library. You want to be a writer. You're awesome.

Last year, you were always sitting by yourself in Dewick. You're kinda nerdy, with thick glasses and scruffy hair and I wanna pin you up against the wall.

Our dogs loved each other and kept getting their leashes tangled at the music thing during Parents Weekend. You were cute and so was your Lab.

I see you every time I go running, and I know you have seen me too. You wear a headband and have very nice abs. Thanks for waving when you see me. Even though I don't know you, it always makes my run better.

Dear Curly-Haired Boys at Tufts,
STOP ALL LOOKING ALIKE. It was dark at Zeta and I can't remember which one of you I made out with. It's getting frustrating.
Sincerely,
Sleepless in Somerville

wheelchair boy

Summer camp before seventh grade is perhaps the most exciting time of a thirteen-year-old's life. The freedom, the excitement and the raging hormones were practically unbearable. I first saw the boy in question during a hip-hop class at arts camp. He was lanky and usually wore an over-sized SpongeBob SquarePants t-shirt. He danced elegantly and he electrified me.

Our relationship consisted of breathless conversations and awkwardly blurted hellos when we ran into each other. Between theater classes and sweaty camp-wide assemblies, our mutual infatuation persisted for the all too brief three-week duration of camp. By the next year, we had friends in common, friends whose parents let them have "co-ed" sleepovers in their barn. During a clandestine game of Suck & Blow, I received an almost kiss from him. It was a pseudo-kiss, a brushing of the corners of our mouths when the card was not-so-accidentally dropped, but it was thrilling nonetheless. He told me he could taste my chapstick. To fourteen-year-old me, this was borderline erotic.

By some course of events we ended up at the same high school a year later. We barely spoke, weren't particularly nice to each other, and dated other people. By senior year, he was no less lanky or awkward than he had been at thirteen, but I didn't care. His awkward lankiness and cutting humor were still indescribably compelling to me. He'd show up to school in metallic silver pants one day, a used car salesman-esque suit jacket the next. He was alternately painfully self-conscious and annoyingly self-assured. In AP English we developed a camaraderie of sorts. Sometimes he would grab my hand

and stare me in the face in such a way that was completely joking, yet somewhat serious, and this electric jolt would shoot through my spine.

One night a few of our friends were all at his house, smoking weed from his vaporizer. The crazy lights on his wall and the music we were listening to blended and dulled the electricity that I usually felt in his presence. He laid down in his bed next to me and we started to make out. We were so high that we couldn't really control the movement of our tongues. Our mouths were cottony dry. The sloppy, sandpaper nature of the make-out didn't matter though, it was the best.

A couple weeks later, a knee operation put him in a wheel chair until spring. I would have happily pushed him and his wheel chair around our high school. I would have happily been the girlfriend of that wheel-chair kid. We didn't talk about the sandpaper make-out night though. Our English class camaraderie remained, although now more stilted. Senior year passed and he graduated from wheel chair to crutches. He dated one of my friends for a while, which was a little bit heartbreaking but surprisingly all right.



He goes to a hippie college now. I saw him last time I was home. His face was zitty and he had long-ish greasy hair. We were in a big crowd and I pretended not to see him. Thirteen-year-old me and twenty-year-old me have the exact same reaction to this boy; a sharp intake of breath and nervous avoidance. Just like the wheel chair and the ridiculous outfits, the zits and greasy hair didn't bother me. I would have liked to know how he likes his hippie school and what he's up to this summer.

I don't really go home much any more, but maybe after we turn twenty-one I'll run into him at a local bar when we're home for Thanksgiving or something. I'll drunkenly tell him some version of this story and my long-term preoccupation with him.

It would just be good to tell him. Maybe he'll laugh. I'd like that.





the worst thing i've eaten while high..

I mixed all the cereal in my house into a salad bowl.
Graham Crackers--SO BAD if you have cotton mouth.
It felt like i was chewing on shards of glass.

The inside of an entire apple pie



A pan of those frozen cookie dough balls, with more
pot sprinkled in. I was so stoned afterwards that I was
convinced I was Owen Wilson.

“S’mores” – Halloween themed orange marshmallows,
dunked in peanut butter, rolled in cereal; it was March.

Chef Boyardee mixed with ramen noodles and rice with
some egg cooked into it. I’m lying—this was actually the
best thing I’d ever eaten and I just wanted to tell you
about it. I think I might have vomited later that night
though.

Pretzels mixed in with undercooked Easy Mac

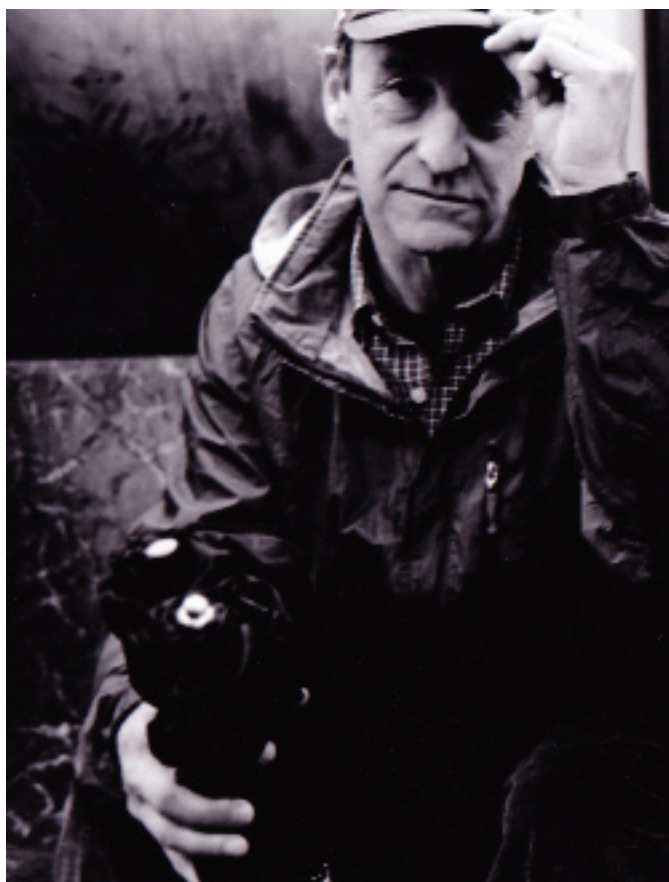
Cold, month old chili in my fridge.

Pussy













weird places i want to have sex

A hammock

The media library

The Institute for Global Leadership

In the brush overlooking the president's house

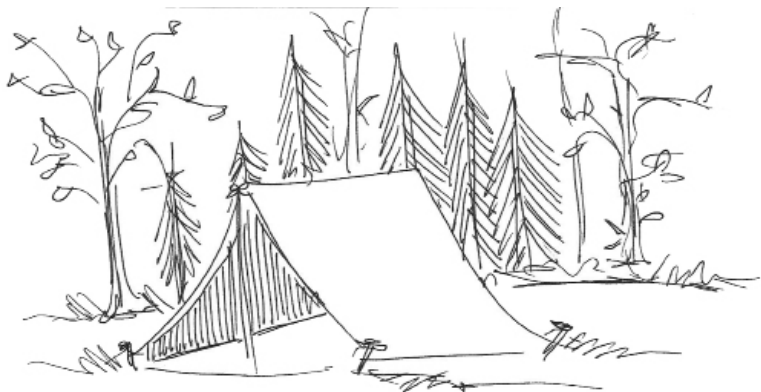
The echo spot outside of Tisch: it would do wonders for my self-esteem.

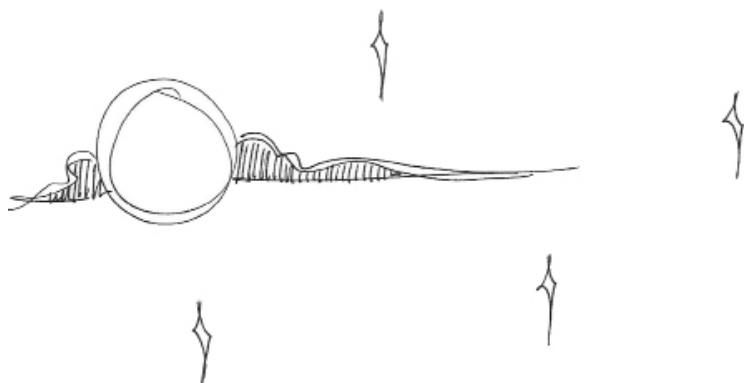
In a tent in a beautiful forest

4th Floor Robinson (don't shit on it until you've been there)

The couches in Carmichael lounge

In a gigantic freezer





In the huge pile of clothes at the Garment District

Hanging on mountain ropes

A ball pit

Sitting in an armchair

On the space station

Inside a sleeping bag

In a moonlit graveyard

On cobblestone

Inside the curve of that lit up semi-circle in Hotung

Miner Hall...with a philosophy major. Hot.

The couches in Carmichael lounge



counselor-in-training

I was walking to dinner when she stopped me.
“Can I talk to you?” Her voice was unsteady.

We walked to a bench behind the dining hall.
The lake lapped next us and the trees threw speckles of leaves on her face.

“Ok, so you know how I told you about Jackson? About how I like him?” Two days earlier we had stayed up late, after the campers were asleep, and she had told me about the boy she had a crush on. I had been amused, to think of this barely-out-of-puberty boy as her dream man. He was slightly chubby but he had a personality that made you feel like it was a gift for him to be giving you his attention, the kind of personality that makes up for physical flaws.

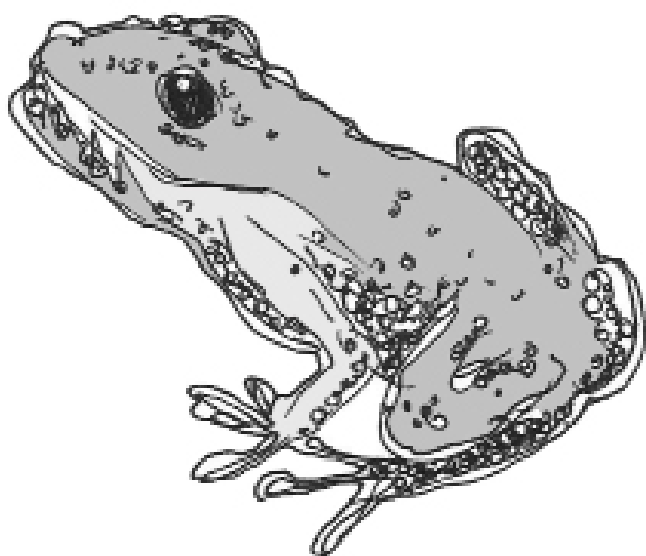
“So we were walking together, just talking you know, and flirting a little bit I guess, I don’t know, and we were walking next to his cabin, behind it, and we were just talking, that’s all but then he just started kissing me, like on my neck and stuff, and I didn’t want to get caught so I told him to stop but he didn’t and then he pushed me down and was kissing me on my chest and he was holding me down and it was hurting me, he had my arm pushed against the ground and I didn’t know what to do and I was afraid that someone would see us and then finally the bell rang for dinner and he stopped and I got up and didn’t say anything to him. What if someone saw? And why wouldn’t he listen to me?”

She was crying, she was crying hard but the words kept coming out of her and I knew she couldn’t stop them. And I was sitting with her and my arm was around her shoulders and I patted her on the arm, once, twice

even though I've never really been a touchy-feely person, especially around displays of emotion. And all the words were coming out from her chest, to her throat, to her mouth, the way they emerged reminded me of playing in a fountain when I was little and how I'd block a jet for a while and then let go. All the water would rush out at me with a bubbling force that got in my nose and mouth and ears, leaving me gasping for breath.

I looked at myself through her and knew what she wanted, she wanted me to tell her that I know about this, I know about boys, I know about sex and I know about power and I know how to get rid of this feeling that's tearing up your heart and brain. And she wanted me to tell her why she still liked him despite how awful she felt right now, and how to make it stop. Because that's almost worse, how your emotions betray you and make you want nothing but the thing you don't want to want. But I couldn't say anything. To her I was in college, I was 19, I was in control of my life and had seen things and knew things. But I felt 16, I felt like I was the same age as her, or even younger, and when did I become the one who was expected to solve problems?

And she begged me not to tell anyone, not anyone, it was fine, camp would be done in three days and she could avoid him but she just didn't want anyone to know. So I sat with her until she stopped crying and then we went to eat dinner with our campers and sang a song about a frog. And three days later we all went home.



my first kiss

It was second grade, and I was on the playground with my best friend Kyle. We were sitting on top of the jungle gym, like the king and queen of the small universe that was our school. Who knows what we were talking about, but next thing I knew he leaned over and kissed me.

Or so everyone thinks.

See, I hate those first kiss stories. I guess you could say I was a late bloomer on the social scene. Sure, I had boy-friends in elementary school. We exchanged grass rings and swore we would stay together forever. We traded Beanie Babies and slept next to each other during nap time. But clearly, the boys I ended up with time and time again just weren't into the whole physical aspect of a relationship.

Bummer.

Flash-forward to middle school. I had both the joy and misfortune to go to an all-girls high school - which meant stellar things for my social life. Being one of those brainiacs who relished time in the quiet library over social interactions with the boys from across the way, I never really made a name for myself on the social scene.



Throughout high school, I envisioned my first kiss time and time again as being some sort of romantic moment that I could one day tell my kids about. One New Year's Eve my friends (who were as equally awkward and inexperienced as me) and I made a pact to all have boys within the year. Well, that year came and went, and at the next New Year's sleepover the only boy with us was a captain named Morgan.

Then, college. It was Freshman Orientation, and after a week of endless 'Hi, what's your name?'s and 'What dorm are you in?'s, I was in a friend's room with a bunch of other people and I was drunk...very drunk. There was a guy in the room who happened to be a family friend of a friend and we hit it off – or hit it off as much as two extremely wasted freshmen can. I'm pretty sure our conversation consisted mostly of awkward smiles and chugging the remainder of our drinks for liquid courage.

And just like that, I had my first kiss. I vaguely remember a scream of a thought pass through my head like an oncoming train. It was a combination of, "OH MY GOD THIS IS ACTUALLY HAPPENING," and "well...finally."

And so my newest friends looked on, unaware of the momentous occasion that they had scored front row seats to. To them, and to everyone else I know, my first kiss was and will always be on the jungle gym in second grade.



confessions III

Can you please be straight? Except not really. I don't want you to change. (Just to hook up with me).

My mother says this is a critical time in my life. I keep expecting to break above the clouds but it just never ends. When is there time to just be?



Sometimes I walk around this campus and think, why did I ever leave the mountains? The air (and life) is different. And no, not once TMC kid understands (I know- I'm on the board).

I hate clingy people. Does that mean I hate needy people?

I'm 100% content. Not blissful, but there is a world order and I'm putting all my faith into it as of today.

I'm sexually attracted to approximately 30 percent of my guy friends. It's problematic.

I've been making a concerted effort to hang out in Brown and Brew lately because I swear the guys who go there are more attractive.

I fart in mosh pits!

Last night I hung upside down off of the pipes in a friend's basement and spiderman kissed numerous people. I am now covered in scratches and bruises.

My mom has multiple sclerosis. I don't really tell anyone this. It's not really bad...everything is normal. But there are little things. She doesn't really have sensitivity to heat. Sometimes she burns her hand on a hot pot and doesn't realize it. Her left side is numb. My dad has to give her a shot every week to keep her symptoms away. He does it Wednesday nights. Or Thursday? I always forget, and end up walking into my parents room when she has the ice pack on her butt. I get embarrassed and leave. Once, it was just my mom and my sisters and I on vacation. My dad wasn't there to give her the shot and she asked me. I couldn't do it. I sat in my room while my mom gave herself the shot. I still feel bad. When I first found out she had MS, I didn't want to check Wikipedia and find out if it's hereditary. A few years later I did, but now I don't remember. I don't want to check again. Why isn't there a cure? Will it get worse?

I hate group meetings in the Tower.

Males do write for the Public Journal.

comptine d'un autre été

How relationships start is a huge mystery to me. All I know about this comes from books and movies, where the two always magically like each other. That's as unlikely in the real world as two people writing the same poem. So how on earth do you do it?

Sometimes I think the world is like the Thirteenth Floor, a huge experiment that I've been put in. And all the people are puppets that only move if I'm watching them. I turn around and they become paper. When I sleep, the entire world stops.

And all the kissing and hand-holding and the other things I see before I avert my eyes -- they're nothing but tricks that they put in to keep me going. To trap me in the experiment. To give them the data they need.

There were times when I thought I found another real person. That I would dig a grave for my solipsism. But it was always just another paper puppet. She wanted to be friends, or she didn't have time, or she had someone else, or she wasn't into guys. A paper doll can't love you back.

Sometimes I think there is an underground resistance. That there are more like me, in hiding. Like the senders of anonymous postcards. Or the people who replaced the "do not lean on door" signs with "do not fall in love." They know. But they always disappear before I get a good look at them. Wake up, Neo.

In other times, I think that love really existed. Once. In times when people died young and never left their shire. When the world was too large to know, and it made all the choices for you. A sweet solace, not knowing.

That would explain the books. One person knew love, once, and wrote about it. The million that followed kept putting quill to paper, until their digressions, untethered from reality, floated...

To today. When the world has changed. And people are made of paper. And drunken unremembered gropings are all that is left. We still have the books, but they speak of things we cannot feel. And the world is small, and knowable. And cold.



ode to



It's two AM and I'm drunk in the hall. Not in a creepy, lingering way, I think I just walked here because it's still my routine. I do miss you. I can't hide it. It radiates off of me. You've changed.

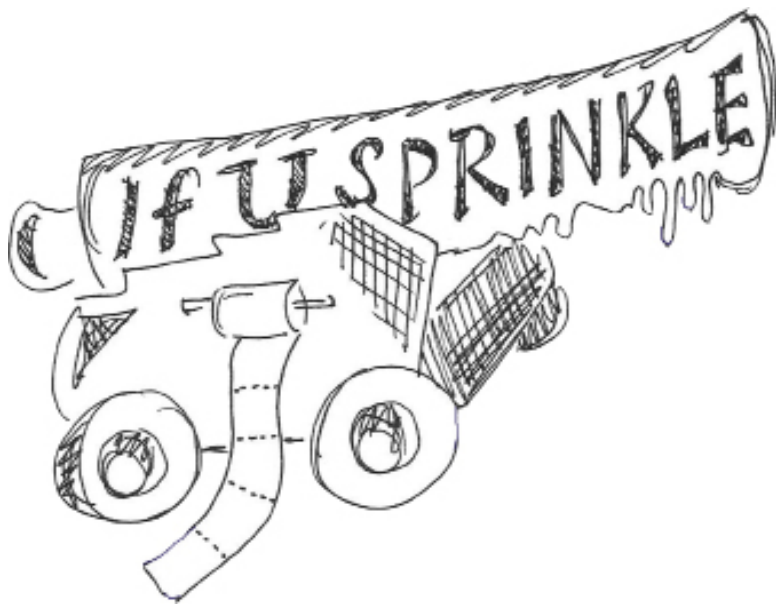
Someone has been buying you nice things. New posters. The hall snacks sign-up sheet isn't in the same place it used to be. I feel threatened. I rip a sign down and feel relieved. The clutter reminds me of home. Sometimes when I order Pizza Days they still deliver it to you on instinct.

I'm shocked at how much you've changed, because you are still my rock, a half block of uncaring red brick, but you complete me. I see children scampering up your stairwells, and I scoff because they aren't making a fuss. Do they not remember everything that's gone down in that stairwell!? I wonder what they do now, feeling like a jealous ex. Do they have a professional skateboarder living there? Is everyone as close? Does TUPD still have

them on a secret watch list? Impossible. We had a following. We were legends. We started a fire.

Standing outside my door, I don't have the answers I wanted. I want to reach out and touch you, but there are new names on the door. New people going off and making their own little stories. And, as much as I hate it, maybe they deserve the chance to go to Curtis Street in a giant mob, or drink boxed wine. I head out into the cold, trying not to look back. But I can't help lingering a minute on the deck—I hope you miss us too.

PS. Let's see if the new kids build you an igloo come winter.





the end

